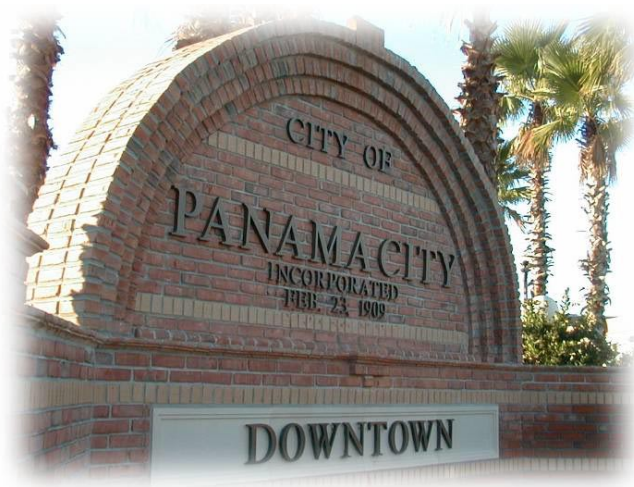


Downtown Community Redevelopment Area  
Downtown North Community Redevelopment Area

# DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

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*Design Guidelines for the Downtown and Downtown North Community Redevelopment  
Agency*



## INTRODUCTION

The Panama City Downtown Improvement Board (DIB) is a dependent taxing district created by a special legislative act in 1974. Established with an initial mission of eliminating slum and blight, the DIB was designated in 1984 by the City Commission as the Community Redevelopment Agency for the Downtown District, St. Andrews District and Downtown North District, which includes the Greater Glenwood area. The DIB serves as a business advocate between the public and private sectors. This partnership between government and business has been the catalyst for successful, well-planned growth and economic development.



*McKenzie House Gateway  
Park*

Community based Design Guidelines were originally created in the mid-1980s for the Downtown CRA District and more recently for the St. Andrews and Downtown North CRA Districts. The Design Guidelines are intended to be administered in a flexible manner to achieve the highest quality built environment for Panama City's urban core. Each Development Order submitted within the CRA Districts, or Special Treatment Zones, is reviewed by an Architectural Review Committee or Design and Planning Committee (Glenwood Working Partnership, St. Andrews Working Partnership, Millville Community Alliance and Panama City Main Street), as established for each of the Districts.

The Panama City Main Street Program, an incorporated not-for-profit volunteer group of residents and business owners, is endorsed in resolution by the City Commission of Panama City, and guided by the Main Street Advisory Board and the Panama City Downtown Improvement Board. The Main Street Program is an initiative of the Florida Department of State and was created by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a blueprint for historic district revitalization. Panama City was among the first five Florida communities to be designated a Main Street district in 1985. The Panama City Main Street Program area spans the Downtown and Downtown North West Community Redevelopment Areas.

The eastern portion of the Downtown North Community Redevelopment area, an area known as Greater Glenwood, started an organized community-based revitalization effort in April 2003. Goals, objectives and strategies have been identified by the Glenwood Working Partnership, which now serves as the advisory voice of Greater Glenwood in collaboration with the Downtown Improvement Board in its revitalization efforts.

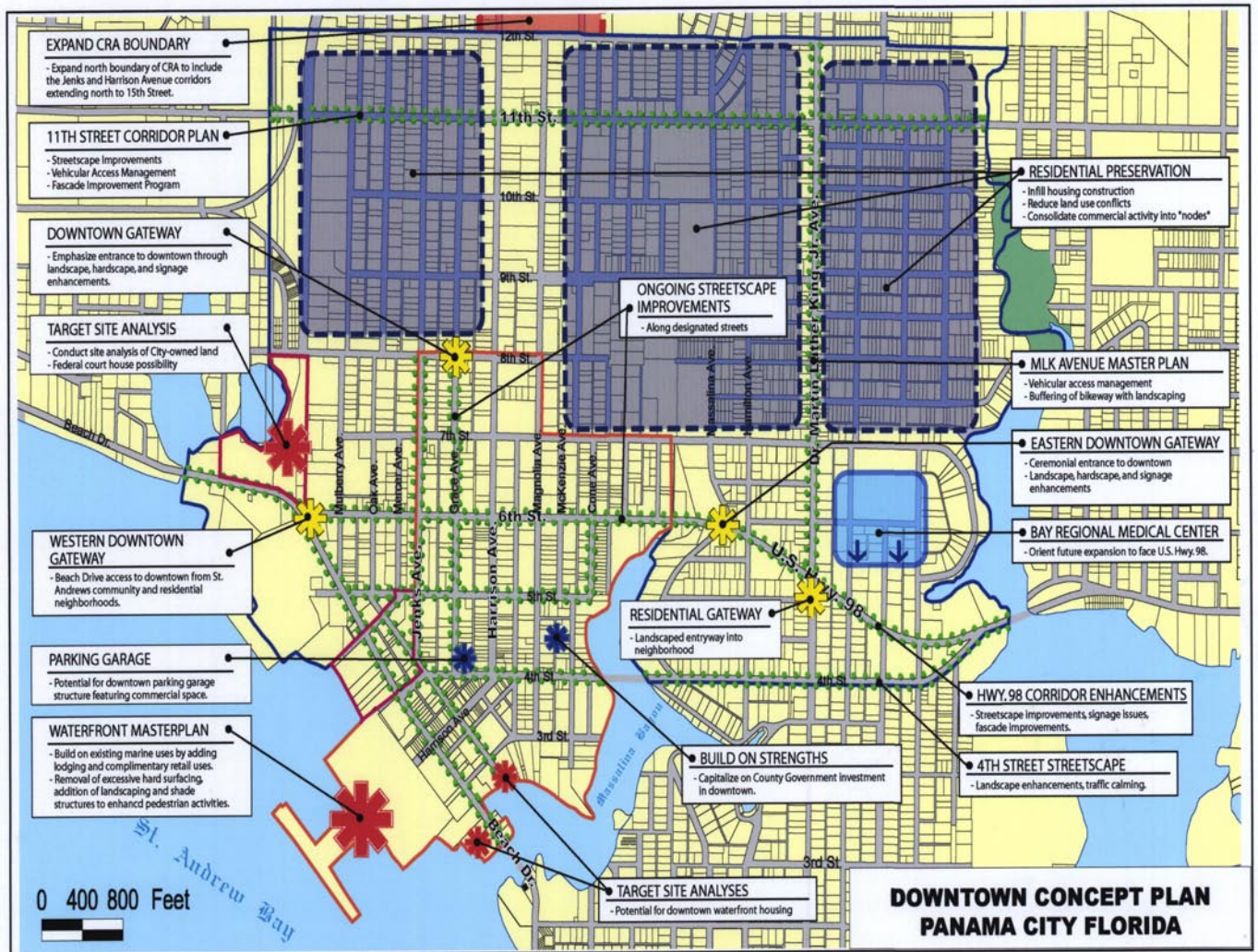
The intent of these Guidelines and Standards is to ensure that the exterior of all new buildings and exterior rehabilitation of existing buildings conforms to and reinforces the vision of each sub-district in the downtown and downtown north areas. It is expressly not the intent of these guidelines to unduly restrict design creativity or material selection. If a property owner believes that any portion of this guideline inhibits their ability to develop their property in a manner consistent with the stated vision for their sub-district they should bring the issue to the attention of the Architectural Review Committee (ARC). If the ARC agrees with the property owner, the design standards could be amended or the ARC will assist the property owner through the proper variance or appeals process.

The first reaction of many property owners to any sort of standards is that they will be deprived of their right to make their own decisions concerning the development of their property. After reviewing these guidelines, however, we believe that most property owners will realize that these guidelines are written for their benefit.



This document is structured to aid business and property owners who are relocating into the CRA areas, renovating an existing building, or constructing a new building. Each new development should compliment the community's unique character and ensure aesthetically pleasing architecture.





*Panama City Strategic Master Plan, January 2002*



## FUNDAMENTAL GUIDELINES:



*Pedestrian friendly sidewalks offer visitors a safe, aesthetically appealing environment. All sidewalks along arterials and retail streets should be properly landscaped.*

- Addition of appropriate detail consistent with the vision, goals and objectives of the sub-district is encouraged.
- Windows, doors and other architectural elements should be in proportion to the building height and width.
- Use of gabled or hip roofs, non-reflective material, wood or asphalt shingle, standing seam, and tile are encouraged. Use dormers, raised roof, and awnings to identify entrances. The character of adjoining and adjacent properties should be considered when designing a roofline and selecting materials.
- In using stucco, use the Art Incorporation Section to provide some character to the building through tile, murals, tabby, or other decorative work.
- The streetscape not only portrays the character of the sub-district through its landscaping and lighting, but through its storefronts. Storefronts which attract and hold attention are more successful and indicate immediately the type and quality of merchandise.
- Storefronts must be kept simple and clean, letting the merchandise or activity take center stage. Each building must address the street and sidewalk while maintaining a safe walkway for pedestrians.
- Not only does landscaping enhance the street visually, but it also provides some protection from the elements, buffers noise, and removes pollutants from the air. Such landscaping also offers further identity to the sub-district character. These treatments need not and should not be ornate or overly expensive. For private property standards, see the Panama City Land Development Regulations.
- To minimize glare, use multiple low intensity lights rather than high intensity lights.
- Signage is an important aspect of any design guideline. Building owners should realize the entire storefront is a "sign" constantly sending a message to potential customers. The building exterior can be used to draw positive or negative attention. Common problems with signage are design, size, and placement.
- All signs should be in keeping with the goals and objectives of the sub-district.
- All signs should be constructed from structurally sound material that can tolerate exposure to the environment for a number of years. Styrofoam and other materials that don't weather well should be avoided.
- Sandblasting to clean brick or stone is discouraged as it further deteriorates the brick surface and can damage the existing mortar joints.
- Joint use parking is highly encouraged.
- Property and business owners are encouraged to provide rear entrances for their customers.
- Landscaping along streets with trees and native vegetation is encouraged. Native vegetation is cost-effective to maintain, therefore its use is encouraged. Planters should be used and maintained when there is inadequate space to plant vegetation in the ground.



*Downtown display windows should be inviting, letting the merchandise take center stage.*

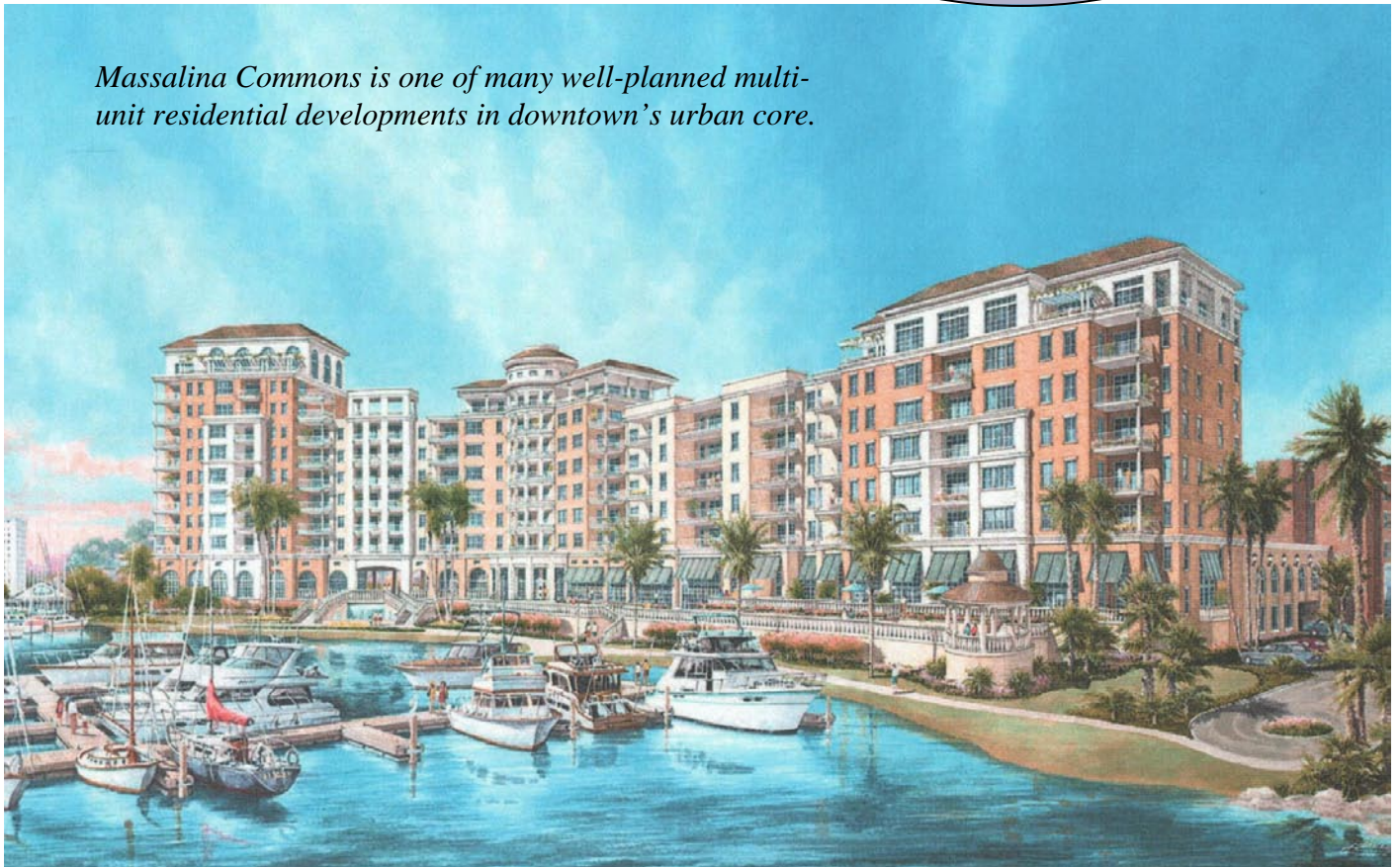


***Downtown Improvement Board  
Community Redevelopment Agency  
Mission Statement***

**'To provide leadership dedicated to the physical improvement and economic development in the Community Redevelopment Area Districts.**

**The DIB/CRA creates and facilitates development, promotion, and preservation activities designed to enhance the economic well-being of these areas by improving the appearance, desirability, and vitality of these districts, thereby increasing the property values.'**

*Massalina Commons is one of many well-planned multi-unit residential developments in downtown's urban core.*







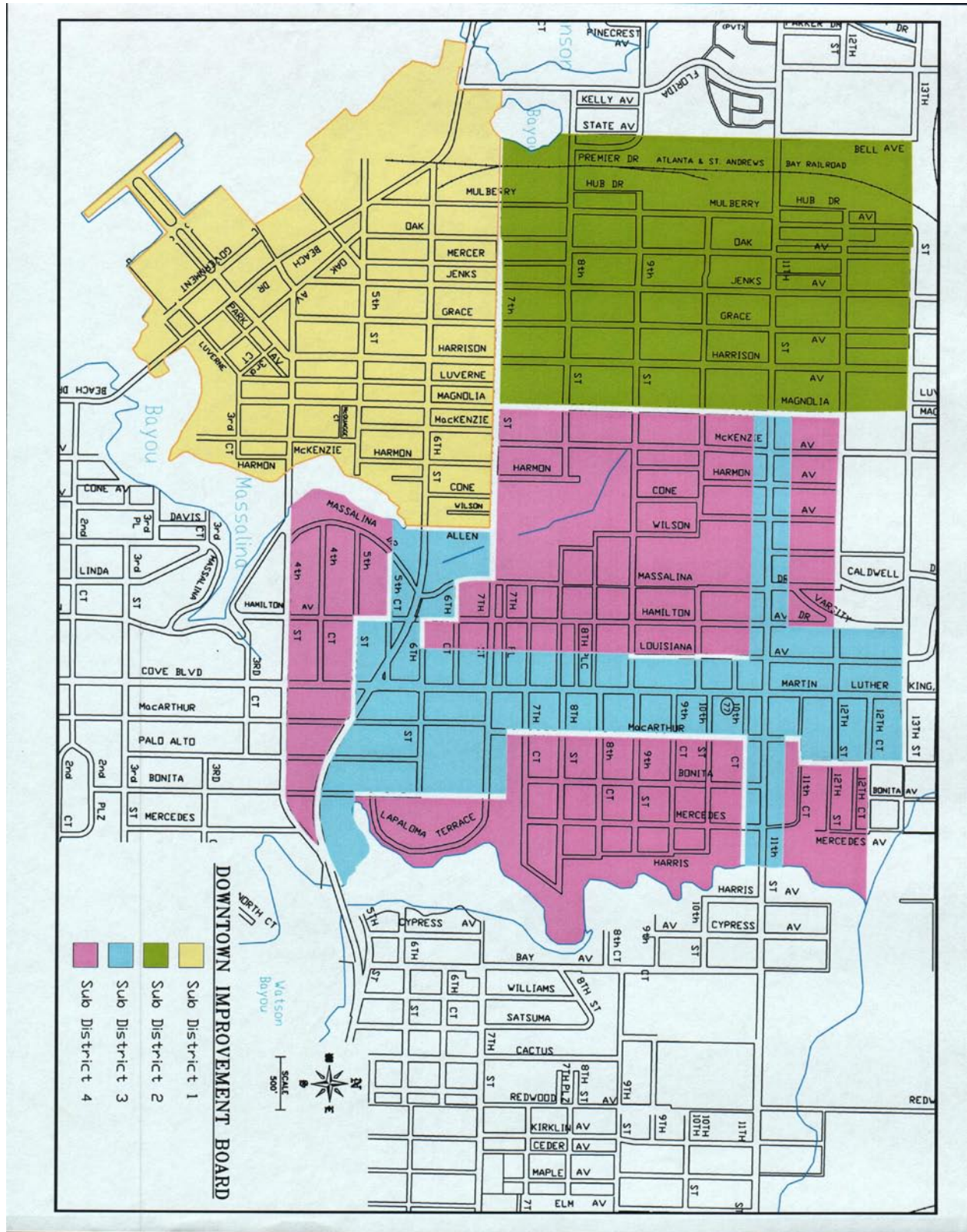
**Sub-District 1** encompasses downtown's historic urban core and is within the Downtown Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). Historic downtown is pedestrian-oriented and offers inviting human scale 'places' at the street level of all buildings. The design encourages pedestrians to walk and gather for community activities in a park-like coastal setting. New construction, as well as renovations to existing buildings, should follow the original historic flavor of the sub-district. Signage should be creative, unique, simple and discreet. Renovations to existing buildings shall try to retain historic elements and/or add historic elements in keeping with the original historic look. New construction shall utilize historic design elements that are complimentary to the original historic character. Building colors will reflect Florida or coastal vernacular themes. Building exteriors and window displays at the street level should be large in area and should appear to be like a "room" located on the street.

**Sub-District 2** is located within the Downtown North CRA and spans from 7<sup>th</sup> street north to 12<sup>th</sup> street and from State and Bell avenues east to Magnolia Avenue. This moderate speed corridor features buildings from the 1940s through 1960s, however most building exteriors have been altered to the point that the original character has been lost. Buildings in this area are typically 1 to 2 story block or brick with flat or hip roofs. New construction in this area shall utilize design elements, materials, and colors that are in harmony with and complimentary to the sub-district. Renovations to existing buildings shall try to retain historically significant design elements and/or add back historically correct design elements complimentary to the look of the sub-district. This moderate speed sub-district should also be oriented to pedestrian traffic, with wide tree-lined sidewalks to offer an aesthetically pleasing environment.

**Sub-District 3** is located within the Downtown North CRA and is the Martin Luther King, Jr. corridor with wings extending from Louisiana east to McArthur Avenue, from 6<sup>th</sup> street north to 12<sup>th</sup> street and the 11<sup>th</sup> street corridor from Magnolia avenue east to the Watson Bayou. This commercial corridor through Greater Glenwood is typically moderate speed. This historic African American corridor lost many structures, which reflect the community's heritage through the widening of State Highway 77. While some historic buildings remain, this sub-district has the potential to create a link to its past and a unique look to the traffic, attracting interest in the area. This can be accomplished through interest from business owners to enhance the building exteriors and by using well-designed signage. Signage is important to a higher-speed area such as this, but bigger is not always better. This is an area where the façade contributes heavily as "signage". This sub-district is well suited for neighborhood retail and mixed-use development.

**Sub-District 4** located in the Downtown North CRA and spans from 4<sup>th</sup> street north to 12<sup>th</sup> street and Magnolia east to the Watson Bayou. This district is the residential area surrounding the Martin Luther King Jr. corridor in the Greater Glenwood district. Many homes are older, built in the 1940s and 1950s. These homes are 1-2 story, clapboard or board and batten style, featuring porches on 1-3 sides. The residential areas should be maintained as such, with any commercial designated property being restored to residential character. Mixed income/mixed-use quality residential development is encouraged and should compliment the look of the sub-district.





The following tables describe development standards according to each district as depicted on the Map on page 7.

## Sub-District

	1	2	3	4
<b><i>PARKING/ PARKING STRUCTURES</i></b>				
Parking area shall be hard impervious surface such as concrete, light colored asphalt or pavers.	*	*	*	*
Parking area shall be landscaped appropriate to pedestrian scale.	*	*	*	*
<b><i>SIGNAGE</i></b>				
Each business shall be allowed two attached signs, unless they are located on the corner of an intersection where three are allowed. One sign can be a wall or flat sign mounted on the façade, while the other can be projecting, awning, and marquee or window sign.	*	*	*	
Buildings with a rear public entrance are allowed one flat wall sign up to the size of front sign – to be placed at the rear entrance.	*	*	*	
Wall sign cannot project more than 12” from building surface.	*	*	*	
Wall sign cannot extend above lowest point of roof, nor beyond ends of wall that it is attached to.	*	*	*	
Signs cannot obscure architectural details of the building.	*	*	*	
Vinyl lettering shall be applied to windows and may not cover more than 25% of the pane and is excluded in the total signage allowed.	*	*	*	
External illumination shall be provided by a continuous light source that is installed to prevent direct light from shining onto the street or adjacent properties. All signs in the historic district, whether ground signs or wall signs, shall only be illuminated by an external light source, and through craftsmanship and materials, shall reflect downtown district design aesthetics. Reverse lit channel letters are allowed.	*	*	*	
The centered horizontal line of a monument sign face shall be 5.5 feet above surrounding grade, and the sign may be up to 36 square feet in size, and is included in total allowable signage.	*	*	*	
Total signage of one square foot per linear foot of store frontage.	*			*
Total signage of four square feet per linear foot of store frontage, max. 200 sq. ft.		*	*	
Freestanding single pole signs may be up to 12 ft. in overall height.		*	*	
Freestanding single pole signs prohibited.	*			*
Signs must be permanently fixed, excluding approved A-frame/Sandwich Board signs, which must be placed to allow 5 ft. pedestrian clearance in front of business entrance only. For additional information of A-Frame Signs, see Outdoor Café Section.	*	*	*	
Projecting Signs: projecting signs up to 6 square feet per face must be stabilized so as not to swing and must have a minimum pedestrian clearance of 8 feet. The sign must be at a 90-degree angle from face of building. Must be 6 inches from wall, but not beyond vertical plane set two feet inside curb line. For multi-story buildings, projecting signs shall be suspended between the bottom of the second story windowsill and top of doors or windows of first story. Single story buildings shall not have projecting signs above roofline.	*	*	*	
Blade signs: One sign per business is allowed and not to exceed 2 sq. ft. with 7 ft. minimum clearance from sidewalk and is not to swing.	*		*	
Three dimensional object signs cannot exceed 9 sq. ft. at largest section.	*		*	
Awning signs shall be located on the fabric awning and made an integral part by painting, printing, sewing or other approved method. Must be painted or attached flat against surface of awning and cannot extend beyond ends or attached to underside of awning. Letters/numbers for business name and/or street address cannot exceed 10 inches in height; bottom edge must maintain a clearance of 8 ft above sidewalk. Phone numbers on awning signs are prohibited.	*		*	



The following tables describe development standards according to each district as depicted on the Map on page 7

## Sub-District

	1	2	3	4
Directory signs may list name/locations of buildings occupants and shall not cover architectural features of building; shall be mounted flush with wall and cannot exceed 4 sq. ft. One directory sign per building. 50% of total sign area may be used to list tenant names.	*		*	
Prohibited Signs: Neon signs; Ghost signs, painted business signs on building surface; electronic message signs; foam letter signs that are not treated with bird-proof coating; internally illuminated or box signs that are plastic signs with internal light source; roof signs that are erected over the roof of building; trademark signs that show registered trademarks or portray specific products such as Pepsi unless that is the principal product sold; portable signs that are not attached to a building and are illuminated; banner signs (except as temporary and permitted by city for up to 30 days); billboards (except those registered with the city); snipe signs; flashing signs; and obsolete business signs which advertise a business which is no longer on premise. Signage on benches or street furnishings is prohibited.	*	*	*	*
Changeable letter signs are not allowed, except along Harrison Avenue business corridor beginning at 7 <sup>th</sup> Street, where changeable letter signs are formed and embossed, with track chemically welded, no rivets. "Zip change" plastic letter signs are prohibited.	*		*	*
<b>AWNINGS</b>				
Awnings must be at least 8 ft. above sidewalk and shall not project beyond vertical plane set 2 ft. inside curb.	*	*	*	*
Awnings must be solid color or have 3" wide stripes – colors must compliment building.	*	*	*	*
Awning material shall be fabric.	*		*	
Awning material may be other than fabric.		*		*

<b>STREET FURNITURE/FURNISHINGS</b>				
Street furniture such as benches, drinking fountains, newspaper racks, etc., that are privately owned are not permitted in public right away. Street furnishing shall follow the architectural design of the community.	*	*	*	*
<b>LANDSCAPING, PLANTERS AND WINDOW BOXES</b>				
Window boxes to match the style of building made of durable material. Replace plants seasonally. Privately owned window boxes are not permitted in public right away.	*	*	*	*
Planter boxes to match the style elsewhere on the street. Replace plants seasonally or use hardy evergreen plants. Privately owned planter boxes are not permitted in public right away.	*	*	*	*
<b>PUBLIC ART</b>				
Art enriches our urban landscape by engaging the mind, eye and spirit of the observer. A suggested budget for public art is 5% of fixed costs. Public art includes paintings, sculptures, fountains, mosaics, are encouraged in private courtyards and entryways.	*		*	

The following tables describe development standards according to each district as depicted on the Map on page 7

## Sub-District

	1	2	3	4
<b><i>FENCES/STORAGE SHEDS</i></b>				
Chain link fencing is prohibited	*		*	
Privacy fencing which closes front views to pedestrian environment prohibited	*	*	*	*
Storage sheds and accessory buildings shall be restricted to rear yard residential locations and should not be visible from the front of dwelling unit.		*	*	*
Freestanding sheds, accessory buildings are prohibited, although may be approved for single-family residential units, if not visible from street.	*			
Freestanding storage sheds prohibited in GC-1 and GC-2 zoning areas.	*	*	*	*
<b><i>DRIVEWAY ACCESS</i></b>				
New driveways must be constructed to the streetscape paving standards in each sub-district with regard to design and materials	*	*	*	*
<b><i>SAFETY/SECURITY</i></b>				
New development and redevelopment shall provide clear sight lines to building entries, parking areas and adjacent buildings and pedestrian circulation areas.	*	*	*	*
Adequate lighting is required at public entries, parking areas and alley ways.	*	*	*	*
<b><i>OUTDOOR CAFÉ AREAS</i></b>				
Outdoor seating areas and pedestrian proportioned signage is encouraged. For all signs and seating areas, a minimum five (5) ft. walk way must remain accessible within the right-of-way and in accordance with American Disabilities Act requirements, including flags, festoons, and streamers which are to be a minimum of 7 ft. above sidewalk. Removable outdoor menu board signs shall be no larger than eight (8) sq. ft. (2 ft wide x 4 ft tall), per face and shall be of quality design, materials and workmanship both to ensure the safety and convenience of users, and to enhance the visual and aesthetic quality of the urban environment. Menu board signs shall be displayed by restaurants and cafes only. No advertising signs or business identification signs shall be permitted on the sidewalk other than menu board signs which shall require a development order and review process	*	*	*	
Menu board signs are permitted on the sidewalk adjacent to a business. The number of signs shall be limited to one per sidewalk per business frontage. Sidewalk signs shall not be placed within three (3) ft of an adjacent property line	*	*	*	
Outdoor seating areas are only permitted as an accessory use to a licensed restaurant or café and are restricted to the adjacent sidewalk of the licensed business. The number of tables and chairs shall be determined by dividing the total square footage of outdoor area available by fifteen (15) square feet. The result will represent the number of tables with two to four chairs. This area shall include any streetscape bulb-out immediately adjacent to the business. The table and chair locations shall satisfy other requirements of the Design Guidelines including the 5 ft. walkway.	*	*	*	
Tables, chairs, umbrellas and any other objects associated with the tables and chairs shall be of quality design, materials and workmanship, both to ensure the safety and convenience of users, and to enhance the aesthetic quality of the urban environment. Plastic tables and chairs are prohibited. Design, material and colors shall be complimentary and harmonious with the environment and design and paint colors shall compliment the building.	*	*	*	



The following tables describe development standards according to each district as depicted on the Map on page 7

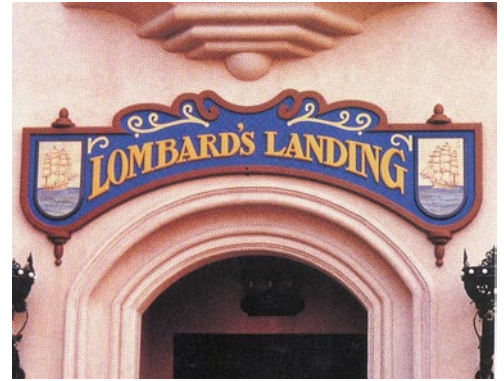
	Sub-District			
	1	2	3	4
Restaurants and cafés shall be required to comply with any regulation regarding noise in the sidewalk area	*	*	*	
No permit or development order shall be issued for either outdoor menu board signs or outdoor seating areas unless the applicant executes a hold harmless agreement in a form acceptable to the City Manager and provides proof of insurance.	*	*	*	
The serving and consumption of alcoholic beverages as part of the operation of a sidewalk café shall be permitted subject to the applicable regulations of other governmental entities.	*	*	*	
<b>MAINTENANCE</b>				
All signs, fencing, storage sheds and parking areas, shall be properly maintained and exposed surfaces cleaned/painted. Defective parts shall be replaced	*	*	*	*
Awnings shall not exhibit mildew and awnings which exhibit damage or excessive wear shall be replaced.	*	*	*	*
Exterior building envelope shall be properly maintained, painted and cleaned on a regular basis. Missing bricks, tiles, plaster and other exterior finishes shall be repaired/replaced immediately.	*	*	*	*
Permitted sidewalk café areas shall be cleaned daily to remove any stains or other dirt resulting from the placement of tables and chairs. This cleaning shall be the responsibility of the restaurant or café.	*	*	*	
Outdoor café areas shall not allow trash or debris to collect or remain within the seating area at any time nor to have trash or debris generated, which presents a burden to adjacent properties.	*	*	*	
Landscaping, including planters and window boxes, shall be watered and maintained on a regular basis to present a neat appearance.	*	*	*	*
Graffiti shall be immediately removed.	*	*	*	*
Street Furnishings shall be cleaned as required and maintained in proper working condition.	*	*	*	*
Burned out exterior light bulbs shall be replaced immediately.	*	*	*	*
Boarding up of residential and commercial structures is prohibited unless authorized by ARC or during hurricane warning periods.	*	*	*	*
Dumpster enclosures are encouraged	*	*	*	*
The back of buildings shall be properly maintained, painted and cleaned on a regular basis, so that alley ways shall be pedestrian friendly. Alley ways are public. Landscaping is recommended adjacent to alley ways when appropriate and shall be maintained on a regular basis. Landscaping shall not comprise safety concerns.	*	*	*	*



Examples of good sign design.



Wall Sign



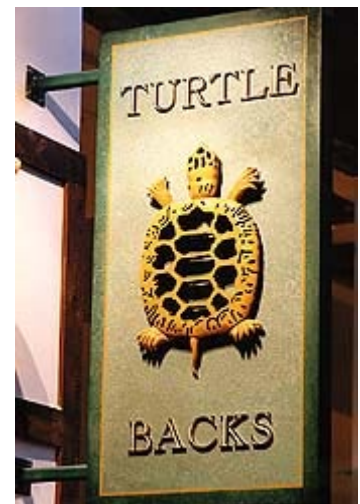
Wall Sign



Awning Sign



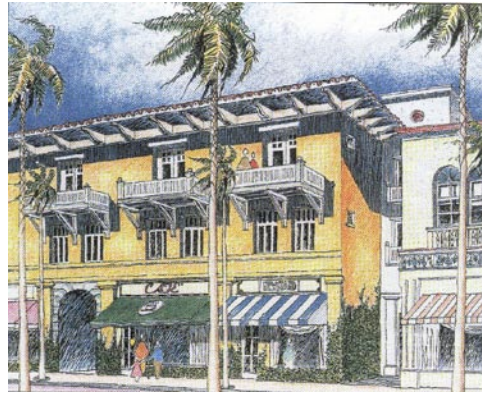
Blade Sign



Projecting Sign







Mixed-Use Design Examples.

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Multi-Family.

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Monument Signs.

## SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

### For Construction or Renovation:

The applicant shall supply plans, sections, and elevations as required by the City of Panama City. Accurate descriptions of materials and colors shall be included. When available, actual samples of the material or color shall be provided.

### For Signage:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Development Order application
- \_\_\_\_\_ Site plan showing location of sign
- \_\_\_\_\_ Legal description of the property
- \_\_\_\_\_ Graphic showing the sign design, lettering, colors and measurements
- \_\_\_\_\_ Material sample or description
- \_\_\_\_\_ How the sign will be mounted
- \_\_\_\_\_ Photograph of the building and measurement of the width of building street frontage





### Administrative Process

The Architectural Review Committee is available to offer design options and recommendations, and to provide a variety of reference resources.

Development Orders are submitted at City of Panama City, Land Use, 9 Harrison Ave., Panama City, FL, 32401. Certain documents must be supplied for accurate representation of the project.

Proposed Project Idea

Meet with ARC (optional)

Determine application of guidelines and standards

Formulate concept and design

Prepare plans and development order application

Submit plans to Panama City Land Use Department

Design and Planning Committee review (sub-districts 3 & 4)

Architectural Review Committee (all sub-districts)

Land Use Department review

Prepare and submit variances (if needed)

County Building Department review (if required)

Begin Construction



Panama City Downtown Improvement Board and Community  
Redevelopment Agency  
P.O. Box 1124, Panama City, FL 32402  
(850) 785-2554

