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# **Design of Compatible New Construction**

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## Introduction

The major development of Tampa Heights extended from the late 1870's through the mid-1920's. Just as Tampa Heights includes a diverse set of architectural styles reflecting the evolving architectural thoughts of each of these four decades, architecture as an art continues to evolve. Creative solutions reflecting current architectural design theory and practice are encouraged in the design of new construction in the historic district.

While these guidelines set general criteria for compatible new construction, exceptions to these criteria may be made by the Architectural Review Commission when necessary to acknowledge and encourage creative design solutions that are sensitive to the character of the district.

Construction of new buildings within the Tampa Heights Historic District can have a positive revitalizing impact on the district if steps are taken to assure that the historic, architectural and cultural features of the district are preserved or enhanced. The focus of design guidelines is on the compatibility of new construction with the existing character of the neighborhood without dictating style.

The term "compatible design" refers to architectural design and construction which will fit harmoniously into the historic district. Most new construction in Tampa Heights will be in the form of infill on a site adjacent to existing buildings.

These design guidelines do not dictate style, but they set up criteria under which new design can be accurately compared with the setting the historic district creates. New construction is encouraged to be unique in design while reflecting the basic scale, materials and quality found in the early buildings in Tampa Heights. Replicating styles from the past does not allow creativity and integrity of expression of the present, and should not be confused with compatible design.

Any new construction within the Tampa Heights Historic District will require a Certificate of Appropriateness. All applications for Certificates of Appropriateness will be reviewed by the Architectural Review Commission to assure that the design guidelines have been followed, and that the new construction will be compatible with the Tampa Heights Historic District.

It is recommended that advice be sought from the Architectural Review Commission during the early planning stages of a new construction project.

# Design Criteria for New Construction and Additions: Compatible Design

Design guidelines focus attention on those special visual and spatial qualities that a historic district is established to protect. The following list of criteria will be considered by the Architectural Review Commission in the review of applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness. The criteria applies to new construction, both commercial and residential. Since architectural styles and details vary within the district, the A.R.C. will review new projects on an individual basis in terms of neighborhood context.

Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness must be made for all new construction and additions. The A.R.C. will consider the following eleven items during their review of the application:

1. **Scale: height and width.** The proportions and size of the new building compared with other contributory buildings within the historic district.
2. **Massing and building form.** Relationship of building massing and form to other buildings in the district.
3. **Setback.** Maintaining the regular building setback which occurs in the block.
4. **Orientation and site coverage.** The front of the new building in relationship to the front of other buildings along a block, and the percentage of the site that the building covers compared to nearby buildings.
5. **Alignment, rhythm and spacing.** The effect a new building will have on existing patterns along the block.
6. **Maintaining materials within the district.** The use of materials common to the district and the avoidance of use of inappropriate materials in construction.
7. **Trim and detail: Link between old and new.** New construction should be compatible with contributing structures without necessarily copying their detail.
8. **Façade proportions and window patterns.** Location and proportions of windows and their relation to the overall size of the building.
9. **Entrances and porch projections.** Size, shape and proportion of entrances and porches.
10. **Roof forms.** Shapes and materials.
11. **Maintaining quality within the district.** Maintaining the quality of design, detailing and execution in new construction that was present in early buildings in

the historic district. Many modest buildings represent that quality in their carefully executed design and detail.

The A.R.C. offers suggestions for the following item, and the staff of the A.R.C. is available for discussion of this item:

12. **Paint and stain colors.** Recommendations will be made to the applicant when plans are reviewed by the A.R.C.

These standards apply to a building moved to a new location within the district as well as to new construction.

## Scale: Height and Width

The proportion of a new building and the major relationship to neighboring buildings are components in establishing compatibility within the neighborhood.

The height-width ratio, that is, the relationship between the height and width of the front façade, (in the case of corner lots, two façades including porches, wings and porte cocheres), should be of similar proportions to the neighboring buildings.

### **It is Permissible to...**

Add a new building on a site that is similar in height and width to buildings on adjacent sites.

Integrate a new building wider than the buildings on adjacent sites by breaking the building mass or dividing the building width to conform with building widths on adjacent sites.

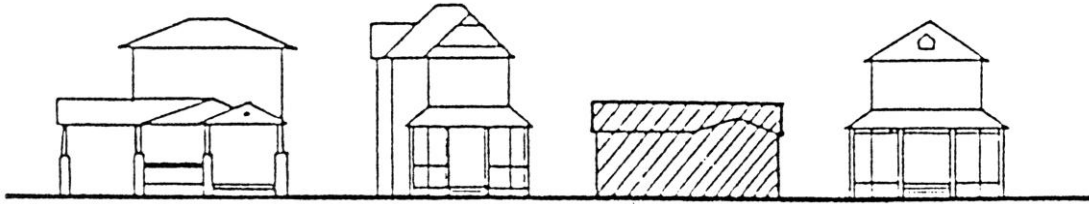
Add a new building which is wider and higher than buildings on adjacent sites if the new building is divided up to suggest buildings of similar width to adjacent buildings, and if the height of the building at the street façade and at sides facing adjacent sites is similar to the height of buildings on those sites. This is achieved by placing the taller masses away from the street and adjacent buildings.

### **It is Not Permissible to...**

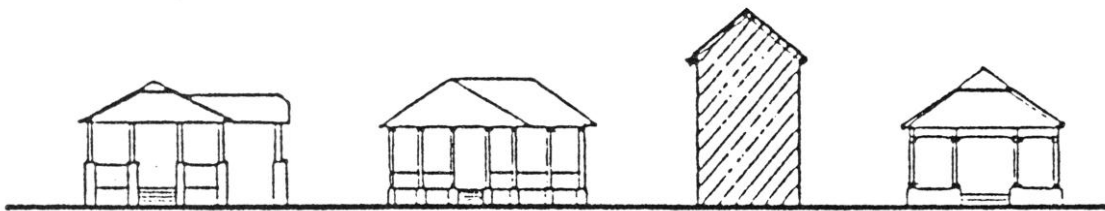
Add a new building to a site which does not maintain or suggest the widths of buildings on adjacent sites.

Add a new building to a site which does not maintain or blend with the heights of buildings on adjacent sites.

## Residential Buildings: Height and Width for Infill Construction



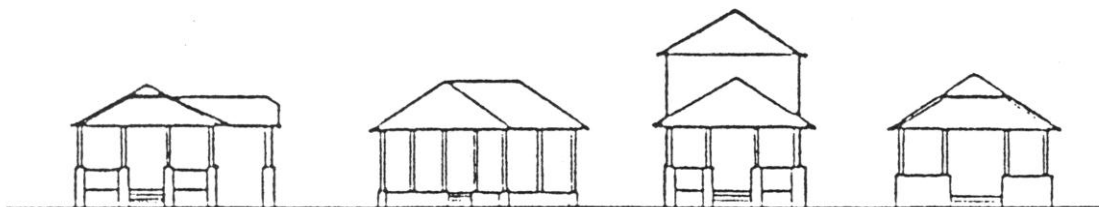
**Inappropriate: too wide and low.**



**Inappropriate: too narrow and tall.**

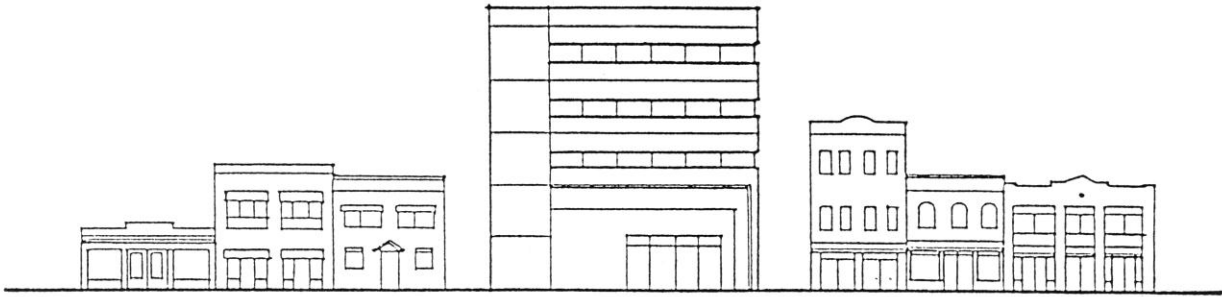


**Appropriate: height and width consistent with neighboring houses.**



**Appropriate: porch and hipped roof break down height and mass of building.**

## Commercial Buildings: Height and Width for Infill Construction



**Inappropriate:** New building's height and width are out of scale with rest of street.



**Appropriate:** New building steps down in height and breaks up in width to reflect scale of street.

## Massing and Building Form

To maintain the existing character of the Tampa Heights Historic District, new buildings should have similar massing and building form to neighboring buildings. Massing may be defined as the three-dimensional geometric composition of a building, or the overall “bulk” of a building and how the building is placed on its site. Having a consistency of massing will allow a new building to be compatible with the adjacent building and the entire neighborhood.

### **It is Permissible to...**

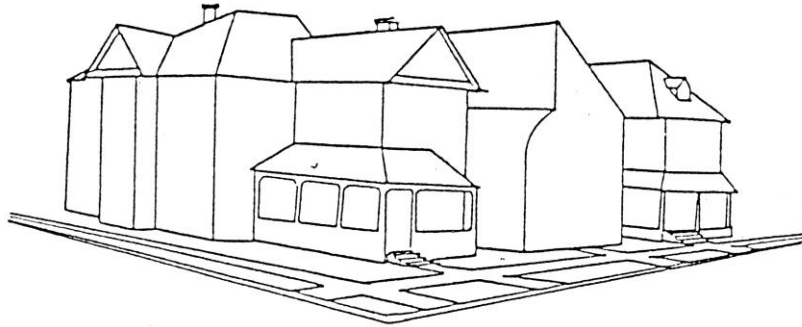
Use massing and form in new construction similar to adjacent historic buildings.

Have a building form which is unique in Tampa Heights but relates to the neighboring buildings and to the neighborhood through its overall massing.

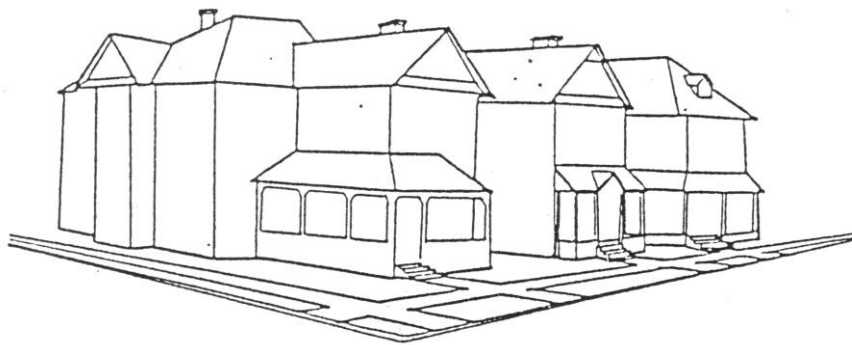
Use elements such as roof forms, lines, openings and other characteristics which are similar to those found in the district.

### **It is Not Permissible to...**

Use massing and building forms which are completely foreign to the Tampa Heights Historic District.



**Inappropriate: Large massing and uncharacteristic form.**



**Appropriate: Massing and form reflecting that of its neighbor without replicating them.**

## Setback

To maintain the existing character of the façades within a block, the construction of additions and new buildings should be in conformance with the existing setbacks along that block. Maintaining uniform setbacks of the porte cocheres, porches and main building addresses prevailing patterns of an area and promotes the compatibility of the new building with the neighborhood.

### **It is Permissible to...**

Keep the visual mass of the building at or near the same setback as buildings on adjacent sites.

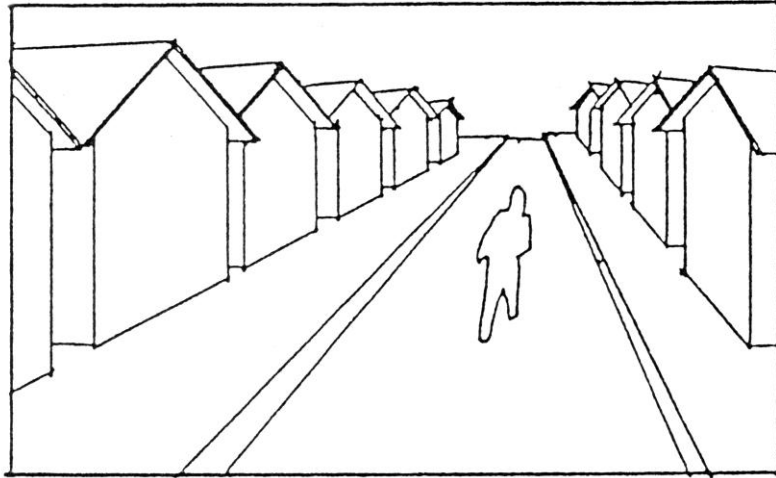
Keep wings, porches, and secondary structural elements at similar setbacks to porches and porte cocheres on adjacent buildings.

### **It is Not Permissible to...**

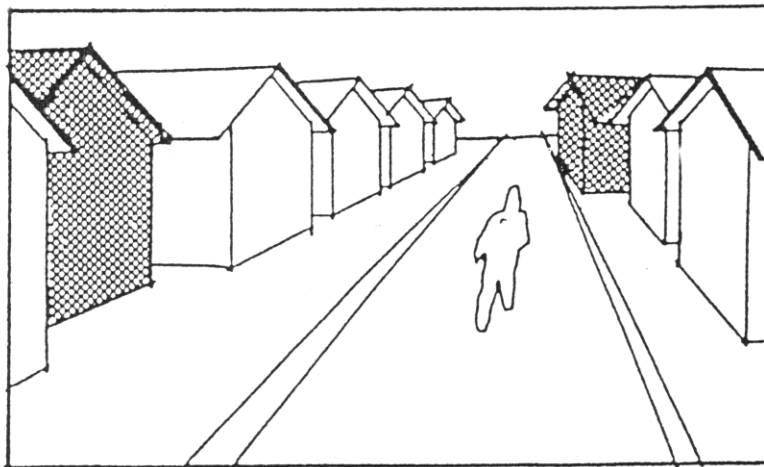
Place a building on a site in a location which is greatly different from the location of buildings on adjacent sites.

**NOTE:**

If a variance is necessary to allow a new building to have a similar setback to the buildings on adjacent sites, the Architectural Review Commission will review a site plan indicating proposed setbacks and may grant the variance at the regular public hearing in conjunction with the Certificate of Appropriateness approval process.



**Uniform setbacks and building spacing are typical.**



**Inappropriate setbacks will be discouraged.**



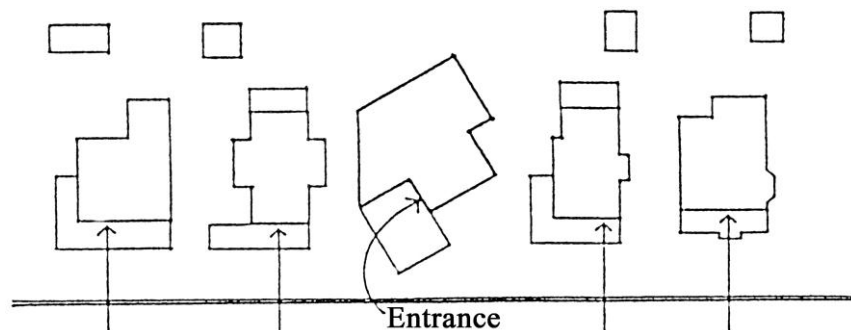
## Orientation and Site Coverage

The principal façades of new buildings within the district should be oriented parallel to the street. Also, main entryways should be located along these principal façades. This is a consistent pattern throughout the district which should be preserved to maintain the prevailing visual continuity. When this pattern of primary façades and entryways is moved from the street side of the building, the activity along the street will be lost and the character of Tampa Heights will change.

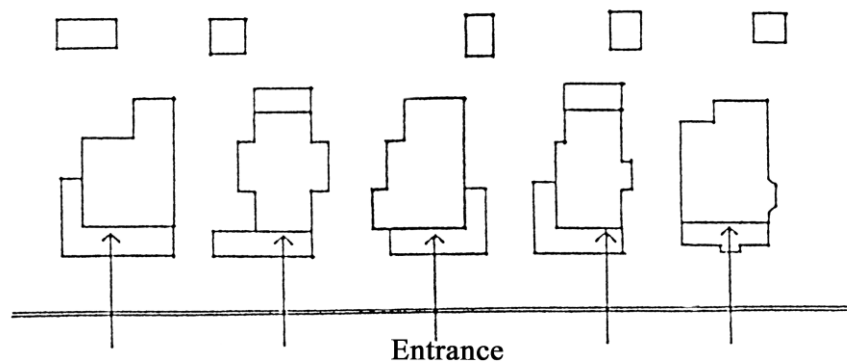
Lot coverage, or that percentage of lot area covered by buildings on a lot, should be of a similar proportion to the site coverage on adjacent lots. Side and rear setbacks, as governed by zoning regulations, limit the minimum spacing between buildings; however, the overall proportions of building-to-lot area should remain consistent from lot to lot along the block. If lots are combined to create a larger development, the building-to-lot proportions should be “suggested” by breaking large building masses into smaller elements. This will visually suggest a relationship with adjacent buildings.

Historically, the proportions of building to lots along the streets of Tampa Heights are consistent. This is a design feature of the district which should be preserved or, at least, visually suggested.

### Residential Building Orientation and Site Coverage



**Inappropriate: Building has an angled entrance and covers a disproportionate amount of its site.**



**Appropriate: Building entrance is oriented to street; site coverage is proportional to neighboring street.**

### **It is Permissible to...**

Orient the primary façade of a new building parallel with the street.

Provide primary entrances on the street façade.

Maintain the building-to-lot proportions present on adjacent sites.

Suggest the same building-to-lot proportions of adjacent sites by altering the mass of a large building.

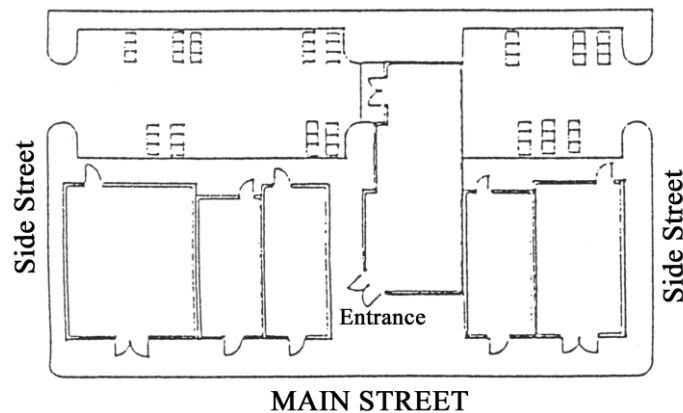
### **It is Not Permissible to...**

Orient the primary façade of a building other than parallel to the street.

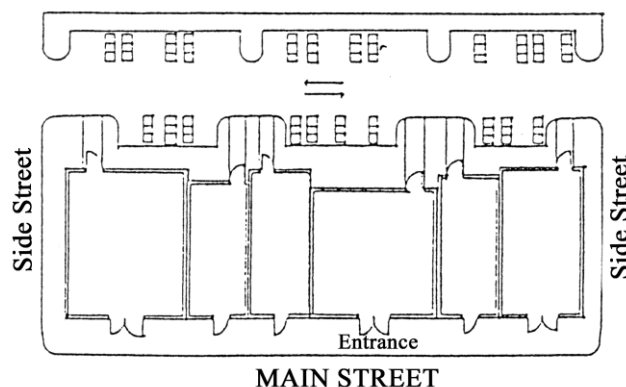
Provide primary entrances on non-street façades if no primary entrance exists on street façades.

Develop a building which does not maintain or suggest building-to-lot proportions of adjacent sites.

## **Commercial Building Orientation and Site Coverage**



**Inappropriate: Building pulls away from main street; awkward siting breaks up parking at the back.**



**Appropriate: Building faces main street and uses existing parking along the back.**

## Alignment, Rhythm and Spacing

Along a block, the uniformity of the proportions of the façades and the spacing of the buildings must be considered in new construction to achieve harmony along the streetscape. Spacing between buildings should be consistent along the street. The consistent spacing of buildings maintains or establishes a rhythm which is historically prevalent in the district. This applies to new construction in both residential and commercial areas within the district.

Porches, protruding bays, balconies, colonnades and other façade elements should be aligned with those of existing buildings along the street. This alignment creates harmony and maintains the rhythm of façade proportions along the block length.

Front widths of new buildings should correspond with other building widths; however, a long façade can be broken into separate elements. This would suggest front widths similar to those of neighboring buildings.

### **It is Permissible to...**

Align the façade of a new building with the façades of existing buildings on adjacent sites.

Allow the addition of a new building to continue the rhythm of buildings on a block by having similar spacing relative to other buildings along that street.

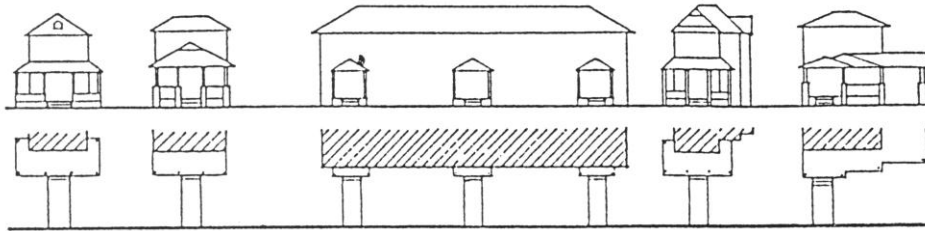
Allow the addition of a new building larger than the buildings on adjacent sites by dividing up the long façade to suggest smaller building masses.

### **It is Not Permissible to...**

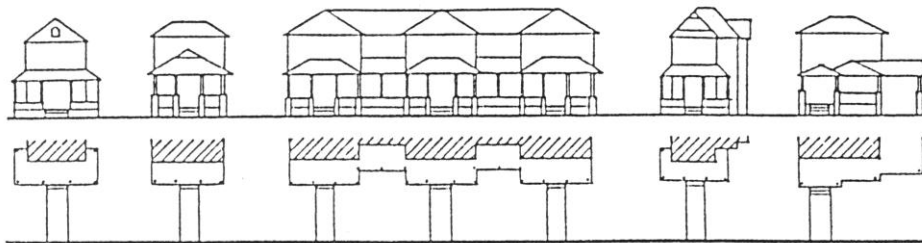
Place the primary façade of a new building out of alignment with the existing buildings on adjacent sites.

Add a building to a site which does not maintain, or suggest the spacing of buildings on adjacent sites.

## Alignment, Rhythm and Spacing



**Inappropriate: Massive building is sited out of alignment with other buildings on the street.**



**Appropriate: Building is shaped and sited to reflect street's alignment and rhythm.**

## Maintaining Materials within the District

The prevalent styles found within the district utilize various common building materials of the Tampa Bay area. Wood siding and brick flourish as the dominant wall materials with stone, rusticated masonry (a concrete product cast to look like cut stone) and stucco used primarily for ornamentation. Rusticated masonry or stone was sometimes used as wall material. Stucco is found primarily in Mediterranean Revival style buildings.

It is important to utilize building materials that are commonly found within the historic district. Materials which are not part of the historic fabric of the district may detract from the continuity and character of the area.

Wood siding is preferred over aluminum, vinyl and other synthetic materials. Artificial siding may be considered; however, the specific material and profile must be approved by the A.R.C. Imitation brick or imitation stone is inappropriate and will not be approved by the A.R.C.

A materials source file is kept in the office of the staff of the A.R.C. for use by persons involved in a rehabilitation or new construction project.

**It is Permissible to...**

Use materials present in the historic district as exterior wall materials in new construction.

**It is Not Permissible to...**

Use stucco on buildings where it is incompatible with the building style.

Use prefabricated buildings.

Use metal buildings.

## **Trim and Detail: Link Between Old and New**

The exterior details and forms of new construction should provide a visual link between the old and new buildings. New buildings should not copy a style or period of architecture found along the block within the district. New construction in the historic district should be compatible but should not copy historic detail. Using similar forms such as those found in windows, doors, parapets, rooflines, and other façade elements, can help establish continuity and compatibility within the block and the historic district as a whole.

Detail and trim should be used to accomplish purposes similar to those used historically, for functional as well as decorative purposes, such as to express a change of plane, to finish what would otherwise be a ragged or rough edge, to act as a transition between different materials or even the simple function of shedding water. Copying historical detail and trim is not necessary and generally should be avoided.

Detail should be functional with a high level of craftsmanship, rather than applied decoration.

**It is Permissible to...**

Design a new building using similar forms to those present in the historic district.

Use details which are functional and contain a high level of craftsmanship.

**It is Not Permissible to...**

Apply incompatible decoration or detail from the past on a new building.

## **Façade Proportions/Window Patterns**

The front façades of buildings within the historic district may vary in style and detail; however, certain proportional relationships exist among buildings in the immediate setting. It is important, to maintain the relationship between the width and height of the front elevation of buildings on the block. Also, the proportion of openings within the streetside façade, or more specifically, the relationship of width to height of windows and doors and their placement along the façade

should reflect the same relationships within existing façades along the street, or visible from the street.

Walking or driving down a street in Tampa Heights one notices a pattern of window and door openings on each of the houses along the block. This rhythm of solids to voids, walls to windows, and alternation of strong and less dominant elements should be reflected in the façades of a new building.

Windows are an important design element as they help to establish the scale and character of the building. Windows and window patterns in new construction should be of similar proportion and size to the windows of the other buildings on that block.

Most of the original doors in the Tampa Heights Historic District are divided into wood panels and glass. Many doors also have glass side lights and transoms. New doors should reflect these patterns. New doors should capture the basic character of doors on contributing structures without copying them.

Screen doors, although popular, seldom blend with either the inner door or with the building. Further, most stock screen doors have incompatible embellishments. If screen doors are used, they should be of simple design and blend in with the design of the inner door and the house. Use wooden screen doors and not shiny aluminum or metal louvered doors.

#### **It is Permissible to...**

Maintain similar proportions of width to height on the façade of a new building to façades of buildings on adjacent sites.

Provide windows of overall proportions similar to the windows used on buildings on adjacent sites.

Provide doors of overall proportions similar to those used on buildings on adjacent sites.

Provide a pattern of windows and doors on a new building façade which recalls similar patterns on façades of other buildings in the Tampa Heights Historic District.

#### **It is Not Permissible to...**

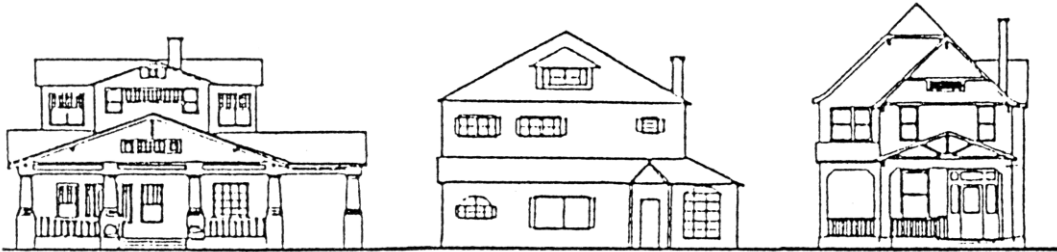
Erect a new building which does not maintain the proportions or pattern of windows similar to those in the district.

Provide windows of overall proportions which are greatly different from windows on buildings on adjacent sites.

Use window and door types incompatible with the character of the district.

Install single pane picture windows where they previously did not exist.

## Façade Proportions and Window Patterns



**Inappropriate: Doors and windows are spaced awkwardly and window style is out of character with neighborhood.**



**Appropriate: Fenestration follows rhythm set by adjacent buildings; windows are patterned after existing styles.**

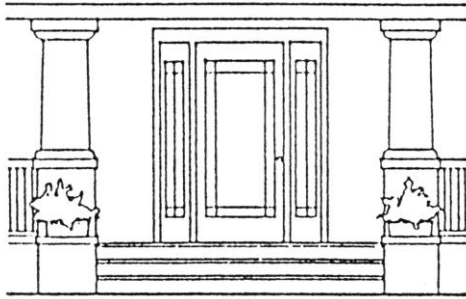
## Entrances and Porch Projections

Moving past a sequence of buildings in the historic district, one experiences a rhythm of entrances and porch projections. The main entrances of the buildings in almost all cases are parallel to the street. New buildings should have comparable elements, such as porch projections, to establish visual continuity and create a pleasant transition between building and sidewalk. These porches also divide the length of the street in a pleasing pattern and relieve an otherwise flatter appearance of the buildings.

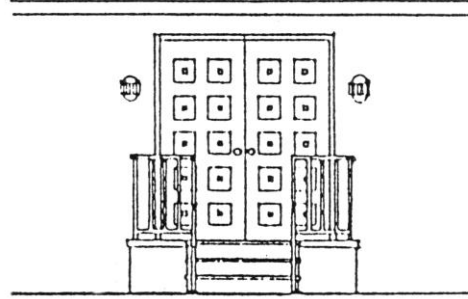
Entrances into buildings in the historic district are usually raised above ground level a few steps. New buildings should reflect the pattern of raising the first floor a few steps above street level to continue this pattern of construction in Tampa Heights.

The design of porches in new construction within the district should capture the character of the porches on contributing structures within the district without imitating them. Ornamentations and details of new porches and entrances should also be compatible with detail on contributing structures without copying them.

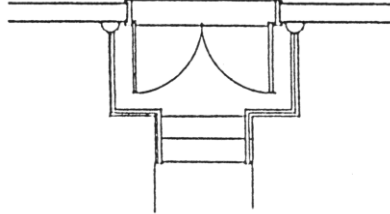
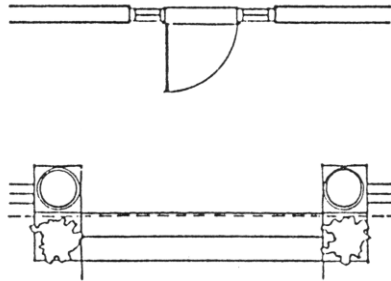
## Entrance Plans and Elevations



**Appropriate scale and details.**



**Inappropriate stock double doors and narrow stoop.**



### **It is Permissible to...**

Place the main entrance of a building parallel to the primary street.

Raise the entrance and first floor a few steps above street level in keeping with the buildings context.

Design an entrance which uses elements of a porch to create a transition from outside to inside for specific styles.

Design a porch or entrance with modern detail that reminds one of detail present on other porches in the historic district.

**Interior Lots:** On interior lots, houses shall have a front porch extending a minimum of 60% of the street façade.

**Corner Lots:** On corner lots, houses shall have porches extending 50% of each of the street façades.

### **It is Not Permissible to...**

Place the main entrance on the side or rear of a building.



Design an entrance which is simply a door, and creates no transition from outside to inside.

## **Roof Forms and Materials**

In new construction, it is important to use similar roof and parapet forms drawn from contributing structures in the district.

Often, the architectural character of an older building is expressed in its roof form and roofing material. Most of the roofs in Tampa Heights are either gabled or hipped, some with combinations of both. The roofs project beyond the building walls to protect the window and door openings and to provide shade. These eaves are sometimes enclosed with wood soffits (the underside of a roof overhang) which are vented. (Enclosed metal soffits are inappropriate.) Wood fascia boards (a horizontal board between the edge of the roof and the soffit) are also quite common among the various architectural styles. Each of these elements is important in defining the character of the house and its surroundings.

The materials used for the roofs of buildings throughout the district vary. Clay tile and flat parapet roofs are common in the Mediterranean Revival style. Other styles incorporate clay tile, metal, slate or composition materials such as asphalt or asbestos shingles. Design of roofs for new buildings should relate to the size, slope, color and texture of other roofs on the block.

### **It is Permissible to...**

Add a new building with a roof that relates to the overall size, shape, slope, color and texture of roofs on adjacent sites or in other areas of the historic district.

Use materials on a new roof which are similar to materials found on roofs in the historic district.

### **It is Not Permissible to...**

Use a roof of a size, shape or slope not present in the historic district.

Use a roof material which is not in use in the historic district.

## **Maintaining Quality within the District**

Construction in Tampa Heights through the 1920's contained a high degree of quality. This quality can be seen in the materials that were used. The detailing and execution of these materials also shows a pride of workmanship. The quality which was present during the early development of Tampa Heights is one element which has given the historic district its character. In new construction quality of materials, design, detailing and execution should be present to assure the continued positive character of the historic district. Modes buildings constructed on relatively low budgets can show quality of design and detail with careful material selection and construction.

## **Suggested Treatments**

Use a design which is planned for the specific site.

Use quality materials which approach the level of quality present in older buildings in Tampa Heights.

Utilize construction methods and techniques which allow quality design and detailing to be realized.

Consult an architect with preservation experience to assist in the project.

Do not use universal or stock design solutions designed to “fit any site.”

## **Paint and Stain Colors**

In selecting paint and stain colors within the historic district, it is important to consider how the color selected will blend with other buildings on the street.

Generally, the number of colors for the exterior should be limited in keeping with other buildings within the historic district. Light colors visually reduce the massiveness of a wall and absorb less heat.

Historic precedent shows that a wide range of colors were used in Tampa Heights. Light chalky tones, deep rich tones, and pastels all have their place in Tampa Heights’ development. Successful color combinations unify a building, while inappropriately chosen colors may emphasize unimportant details or draw attention away from more important elements of a building.

Wood surfaces should be stained or painted and not left untreated.

A reference palate of a wide range of suggested colors is available from the staff of the A.R.C.

## **Suggested Treatments**

Use color to accent important detail.

Do not allow wood to weather.