



Building Design and Materials

**Article
XIII**

Fort Mill Unified Development Ordinance

Section 13.1 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide exterior building wall material standards and related provisions to enhance the visual environment of the town, thereby improving property values, stimulating investment in various business districts, encouraging quality industrial and research and development projects, and enhancing the quality of life for the residents of Fort Mill. The provisions of this section are intended to promote quality architecture to ensure that buildings retain their value, investments by adjacent landowners are protected, development blends harmoniously with the streetscape, and a positive image is created and retained within business and employment districts.

Section 13.2 Applicability

This section shall apply to all new construction, except single-family detached and two-family residential structures, and shall consist of those materials and combinations of materials specified in this article. The requirements of this article shall apply to all zoning districts, except for those requirements specific to the DC, Downtown Core District. Architecture shall be reviewed by the planning director or planning commission, as applicable, as a part of development plan review under the requirements of *Article XIV*.

Section 13.3 Building Materials

- A. **Building Materials.** Minimum requirements for building materials are as follows. Calculations for material wall percentages do not include areas of the façade used for doors and windows.
1. **Residential.** All multiple-family, attached single family, continuing care, retirement, nursing care and other residential buildings, except single family detached and two-family, located in any district shall meet the following elevation material requirements:

Elevation	Permitted elevation materials	
Front façade and other elevations facing a street	50% minimum brick, face brick or natural stone	Up to 50% may be wood, vinyl, or fiber cement (hardie board) siding, stucco, or other similar quality material approved by the reviewing authority
Side and rear facades that do not face a street	Brick, face brick, natural stone, wood, vinyl, or fiber cement (hardie board) siding, stucco or other similar quality material approved by the reviewing authority	
Basements and foundations	Concrete block, including split face and scored block, precast concrete, concrete formed in place	

2. **Commercial, Office, and Institutional.** All non-residential buildings located in a residential zoning district and all buildings located in the commercial or mixed use zoning districts shall meet the following elevation material requirements.

Elevation	Permitted elevation materials	
Front façade and other elevations facing a street, a parking lot or an	75% minimum brick, face brick or	Up to 25% may be split face block, scored block, EIFS, wood, vinyl or fiber cement (hardie board) siding, stucco, or other similar quality material approved by the reviewing authority

Table 13-3a, Commercial, Office, Institutional Building Materials	
Elevation	Permitted elevation materials
adjacent residential zoning district	natural stone
Side and rear facades that do not face a street, a parking lot or an adjacent residential zoning district	Any masonry material or other similar quality material approved by the reviewing authority

3. Industrial. All buildings located in the LI zoning district shall meet the following elevation material requirements:

13-3b, Industrial Building Materials	
Elevation	Permitted elevation materials (a)(b)
Front façade and other elevations facing a street or an adjacent residential zoning district (c)	50% minimum brick, face brick, natural stone, cast stone or C-brick Up to 50% may be any other suitable fire-resistant material, excluding metal, that meets the building and fire codes
Side and rear facades that do not face a street, or an adjacent residential zoning district	Any suitable fire-resistant material that meets the building and fire codes and is a color that is compatible with the front façade

- a. For buildings over 80,000 square feet that are set back more than 100 feet from the front lot line, split face block or tilt-up panels may be substituted for the 50 percent brick required on the building's front façade; provided the amount of required landscape material within the frontage greenbelt is increased by 50 percent.
- b. The building material requirements of this section shall not apply to the façade of a building of any size that is set back more than 300 feet from the front lot line; provided the amount of required landscape material within the frontage greenbelt is increased by 50 percent.
- c. Overhead doors for truck loading areas shall meet the requirements of *Section 10.7 C*.
4. Downtown Core District. RESERVED

Section 13.4 Allowance for Other Materials

The reviewing authority may waive or modify the material requirements of this section if it finds that a proposed building design and the materials or combinations of materials are in keeping with the purpose of this section. The reviewing authority shall also consider the established or desired character of the area, visibility of the site, proposed landscaping, building scale and design recommendations of the comprehensive plan. Acceptable substitute materials may include tilt-up panels, split-face block and similar high quality, durable and aesthetically compatible materials. However, metal siding and plain concrete block shall not be permitted.

Section 13.5 Design Standards

- A. **New Non-residential and Multiple Family Buildings (including attached single-family).** Buildings shall have architectural variety, but enhance the overall cohesive community character. At a minimum, the following standards shall be met:
1. Buildings shall provide architectural features, details, and ornaments such as, but not limited to, archways, colonnades, cornices, peaked roof lines, hip returns, operable window shutters, transoms, gas lights or towers to accent and add interest.
 2. Building walls over 100 feet long shall be articulated with recesses, varying building lines, vertical architectural features, windows and architectural accents.
 3. Building entrances shall utilize windows, canopies, and awnings; provide unity of scale, texture, and color; and clearly identify the entry.
 4. Building-mounted mechanical equipment shall be screened from view in accordance with [Section 13.6](#).
- B. **Existing Buildings.** The following shall apply to additions or remodeling of existing buildings or to accessory buildings on existing sites:
1. Where a new wall material is proposed for an existing building wall, only that portion of the building being altered shall be subject to this section. However, in considering the proposed alteration, the reviewing authority may modify the material requirements of this section to ensure consistency with the architecture of the remaining building.
 2. Where an addition is proposed to an existing building, the reviewing authority may allow the use of existing or compatible wall materials for the addition; provided that the design of the alteration is consistent with the existing building wall design.
- C. **Downtown Core District.** RESERVED
- D. **Site Elements.** Signs and other site features shall be designed and located so they are aesthetically consistent and harmonious with the overall development. Sign bases shall be constructed of material which is compatible with the principal building. Mechanical equipment shall be screened in accordance with [Section 13.6](#).

Section 13.6 Mechanical Equipment

Ground-, building-, and roof-mounted mechanical equipment and utility structures including, but not limited to, heating units, cooling units, air handling units, refrigeration units, blowers, ventilating fans, water and gas meters, elevator housing, tanks, generators, and utility transformers are subject to the following regulations:

- A. **Ground- and Building-Mounted Equipment.**
1. Mechanical equipment and utilities visible to the public and located on or around any non-residential building shall be screened by landscaping or by decorative walls compatible with the material used on the building in accordance with [Section 11.3](#).
 2. Ground-mounted mechanical equipment in a non-residential district shall not be located within 20 feet of a residential district boundary.
- B. **Roof-Mounted Equipment.**
1. All roof-mounted equipment shall be screened by parapet walls or a pitched roof integrated into the architectural design of the building of sufficient height to screen the rooftop equipment and provide sound attenuation. The location, height, and screening methods shall be shown on the required development plan.
 2. All roof-mounted mechanical units must be set back a minimum of 20 feet from the front of the building and any side of the building facing an adjacent residential district.

Section 13.7 Lighting

This section shall apply to all new development in the Town of Fort Mill subject to this ordinance, unless otherwise specified. When a building, structure, or lighting fixture is extended, enlarged, or reconstructed after the effective date of this ordinance, the applicable lighting standards shall apply.

- A. **Purpose.** The purpose of this section is to permit reasonable uses of outdoor lighting for night-time safety, utility, security, productivity, enjoyment, and commerce while minimizing the effects of excessive or uncontrolled light in order to:
1. Maintain consistent and uniform light levels for traffic and pedestrian safety along roadways, sidewalks, and in parking lots;
 2. Ensure uniform lighting for security and law enforcement;
 3. Minimize glare, obtrusive light, and artificial sky glow by limiting outdoor lighting that is misdirected, excessive, or unnecessary;
 4. Curtail and reverse the degradation of the nighttime environment and the night sky;
 5. Minimize light pollution and light trespass from light sources onto adjacent properties; and
 6. Conserve energy and resources to the greatest extent possible.
- B. **General Standards.** Unless otherwise specified, the following standards shall apply to lighting fixtures in all zoning districts and applications.
1. **Light Fixtures.** Outdoor lighting on all sites shall be directed downward and confined to the ground areas of lawns or parking lots. In addition, the following standards shall apply to all light fixtures, except as may otherwise be provided:
 - a. Lighting shall utilize full cutoff fixtures that are recessed sufficiently so the light source is not visible from off site.
 - b. Bollard lights are permitted to light driveways and pedestrian areas.
 - c. All lamps shall be metal halide, unless otherwise approved by the town.
 - d. All lighting fixtures shall have internal visors/panels or external visors that control offsite light spill and glare.
 - e. To control light spill and glare, lighting fixtures shall be properly aimed when installed, and proper aiming shall be maintained at all times.
 2. **Ornamental lighting.** The requirement for downward directed lighting may be waived for street lighting and ornamental lighting which is part of an overall architectural theme.
 3. **Accent lighting.** Accent lighting for sculptures, statues, trees, landscape features, flags, signs, architectural features and entrances may orient light upward, provided the directed light shall be substantially confined to the object intended to be illuminated to minimize glare, sky glow, and light trespass. Accent lighting shall not shine directly into the window of a neighboring structure or directly onto a roadway.
 4. **Floodlighting restricted.** Floodlight type fixtures shall be used only for building accent, landscaping, and sign lighting.
 5. **Sign lighting.** Illumination of signs shall comply with the requirements of **Article XII**. Internally illuminated signs shall be permitted and light fixtures directed at a sign may be permitted where the fixtures are shielded so not to cause visible glare to persons on adjacent streets or adjacent property.

Insert Light Cut-off Graphic

C. **Prohibited Lighting.** The following types of lighting features shall be prohibited: search lights, strobe lights, laser source lights, or any similar high-intensity or flashing light, except in emergencies by police and fire personnel or at their direction.

D. **Nonresidential Lighting**

1. Except as otherwise provided, lighting fixtures in nonresidential districts and for nonresidential uses in residential districts shall not exceed the following height, as measured from ground level to the top of the fixture:
 - a. Eighteen (18) feet in the downtown core (DC), local commercial (LC) and for non-residential uses in the neighborhood mixed use (NMU) districts and residential districts.
 - b. Twenty-eight (28) feet in the light industrial (LI) and general commercial (GC) districts, as well as for non-residential uses within the community mixed use (CMU) and transit oriented mixed use (TOMU) districts.
2. The planning director may approve lighting fixtures up to 35 feet in height if all of the following conditions are met:
 - a. The area of development is at least five (5) acres in size;
 - b. The property is located within the following zoning districts: Light industrial (LI) or general commercial (GC). Property located within the community mixed use (CMU) or transit oriented mixed use (TOMU) districts may be approved if the proposed use is non-residential;
 - c. The total square footage of any building or buildings to be constructed on the property is at least 50,000 square feet; and
 - d. The applicant submits a lighting plan, certified by a licensed lighting engineer, demonstrating that lighting levels will not exceed 0.5 foot-candles along any public right-of-way or any shared property line.
3. Light levels shall meet the following minimum and maximum requirements for the developed portion of the site containing buildings, drives, and parking lots.

Table 18-4 Required Site Illumination

Lighting Location	Min. Illumination (footcandles) ¹	Max. Illumination (footcandles)
Parking lots, loading areas, sidewalks and building entrances	3 fc ²	10 fc ³
Under canopies such as gas stations, drive-thru banks, porte-cochere	3 fc	20 fc
Along front lot line adjacent to the street frontage	0.5 fc	3 fc ⁴
Along a property line adjoining a non-residential use or district	0.5 fc	3 fc ⁵
Along a property line adjoining a residential use or district	0 fc	0.1 fc

¹ Lighting levels may be reduced to half (0.5) footcandle with a uniformity ratio of not more than ten to one (10:1) after 12:00 PM, or after established hours of operation.

² The minimum illumination levels shall not apply to portions of the site that are fenced to restrict public access, such as storage yards.

³ For automobile dealerships and other types of outdoor sales areas the maximum illumination may be increased to fifteen (15) footcandles, provided the limits at the property line are not exceeded.

⁴ These regulations shall not apply to ornamental street lighting, public street lights, or driveway/intersection lighting necessary for pedestrian and traffic safety.

⁵ The light level along a non-residential property line may be increased to up to five (5) footcandles where there is shared access/vehicular connection with the adjacent use or the adjacent use is a similar use (e.g. commercial adjacent to commercial).

E. Residential Lighting.

1. Except as specified below, light fixtures in any residential district, including residential uses within any mixed use district, shall not exceed 16 feet in height, except light fixtures within any multiple-family development in any zoning district may be up to 18 feet in height.
2. Light fixtures mounted on a building in a residential district may not be mounted above the 1st floor of the building; however, this restriction shall not apply to any single-family residence.

F. Decorative or aesthetic light fixtures. The planning director may approve decorative or aesthetic lighting fixtures, including those that do not orient all light downward, if the following conditions are met:

1. The fixtures shall not exceed the maximum height specified in this section;
2. The fixtures shall offer a design element that is complementary to the architectural style of the adjacent building(s); and
3. The fixtures shall not negatively impact neighboring residential properties or any public right-of-way.

G. Lighting exempt from these standards. The following types of lighting shall be exempt from the standards set forth in this section:

1. Lighting within swimming pools or other water features that are governed by South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control regulations;
2. Athletic field lighting;
3. Exit signs, stairs, ramps, and other illumination required by building codes;
4. Emergency room entrances;
5. Airport lighting;
6. Lighting of the American flag; and
7. Any lighting fixture that is exempt from the provisions of this section by state and/or federal law.

H. Photometric Plan. A photometric plan, prepared by a licensed lighting engineer, is required as part of any development plan reviewed by the planning commission. The photometric plan shall be overlaid on the development plan illustrating the planned layout of lighting fixtures and footcandles of site lighting. The following are required for review:

1. Lighting plan showing light pole and fixture locations and type designations;
2. Photometric plan showing horizontal luminance levels in a point by point format with contour lines. Canopy lighting will also be included in luminance levels;
3. Lighting manufacturers' equipment specifications and data sheets on the photometric plan; and
4. Any other presentations required to convey the intent of the design.

Section 13.8 Trash Receptacle Enclosures

A. Minimum Requirements. Outdoor storage of trash shall be within trash receptacle enclosures for all residential and non-residential uses, except single family detached and two family dwellings, and shall meet the requirements of this section. Trash receptacle enclosure locations and construction details shall be shown on development plans.

1. Location. Trash receptacle enclosures shall be located in the rear yard or non-required side yard, unless otherwise approved by the development plan reviewing authority. Trash receptacle enclosures for commercial and industrial sites shall be as far as practical from an adjoining residential district boundary.

2. **Access.** Access to the trash receptacles by refuse vehicles shall be designed to prevent damage to automobiles in designated parking spaces; provided, the enclosure doors shall not be highly visible from traffic entering the site from a public road.
 3. **Base.** The trash receptacle base shall be at least nine (9) feet by nine (9) feet, constructed of six (6) inches of reinforced concrete pavement. The base shall extend six (6) feet beyond the dumpster pad or gate to support the front axle of a refuse vehicle. Where grease disposal receptacles are used, curbing shall be provided around the enclosure base to contain any spillage.
 4. **Screening.** Trash receptacles shall have a lid or cover and be enclosed by a wall on three (3) sides with a wood gate on the fourth side. The enclosure shall be constructed of brick or split face block that matches the building color with a height of six (6) feet or at least one (1) foot higher than the dumpster, whichever is greater. Other decorative masonry material may be approved if it matches the material used on the principal building. Poured concrete with false brick design or plain concrete slag blocks are not permitted.
- B. **Exceptions.** The development plan reviewing authority may waive the requirement for a trash receptacle enclosure for businesses, such as banks, that store all waste material indoors or other uses that provide alternate means of handling waste disposal.

Section 13.9 Mail Box Clusters

- A. The location of mailbox clusters shall not conflict with pedestrian or vehicular circulation. A dedicated pull-off area shall be provided that is out of the main travel lanes.
- B. The design of the mailbox cluster shall be integrated into the design of the overall development by utilizing decorative structures that are compatible with the site design and building architecture.