



BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS

TOPEKA NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

APPROVED BY TOPEKA PLANNING COMMISSION 12/17/2018

APPROVED BY GOVERNING BODY 1/8/2019



Topeka Non-Residential Design Standards

Section 1 (18.275.010)

Purpose and Intent

The Non-Residential Design Standards are intended to provide a minimum level of acceptable design for non-residential development projects. The design standards establish basic requirements for development of buildings and their architectural components, which are common to all types of commercial development. The design standards are not intended to promote a particular style of architecture or design theme, but will enable developers, architects, landowners and the general public to anticipate and plan for building design as a key element of the overall project approval process. The standards accomplish the following objectives:

- (a) Ensure design that enhances a sense of place and strengthens the identity of Topeka;
- (b) Enhance pedestrian-oriented design;
- (c) Relate development to surrounding community;
- (d) Support property values in new development/redevelopment;
- (e) Encourage higher quality in design and use of materials in new development; and
- (f) Balance functional and economic objectives of community residents and business owners through aesthetic considerations affecting the community at large.

Section 2 (18.275.020)

Application of design standards

- a) Except for properties listed on local, state, or national historic registries, non-residential design standards in TMC 18.275.050 apply to the following:
 - 1. New construction or an alteration to an existing structure which increases or decreases the gross floor area of the structure by more than 50 percent.
 - 2. Any project requiring a building permit for a remodel of at least 50% of the front and/or street facing facades.
 - 3. Institutional uses in any zoning district and all developments constructed under the provision of a conditional use permit, in any zoning district.
 - 4. Any construction within the O&I-1, O&I-2, O&I-3, C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, M-S, I-1, I-2, X-1, X-2, X-3, D-1, D-2, D-3, U-1, and all planned unit development districts for the above listed use groups.
 - 5. Accessory buildings that meet the following conditions:
 - i. 1000 square feet or larger;
 - ii. visible from the street; and
 - iii. require a building permit.
- b) Type A building design standards in TMC 18.275.050 apply to O&I-1, O&I-2, O&I-3, C-1, C-2, X-3, D-1, D-2, D-3 and all planned unit development districts for the above listed use groups, and all developments constructed under the provisions of a conditional use permit and any of these districts. Buildings in any "D" district shall also comply with the design in TMC 18.200.090.

- c) Type B building design standards in TMC 18.275.050 apply to C-3, C-4, U-1, M-S, X-1, all planned unit development districts for the above listed use groups, and all developments constructed under the provisions of a conditional use permit in any of these districts. Type B building design standards in TMC 18.275.050 shall apply to institutional uses in any zoning district.
- d) Type C standards in TMC 19.275.050 apply to I-1, I -2, X-2, and all planned unit development districts for the above listed use groups, and all developments constructed under the provisions of a conditional use permit in any of these districts.
- e) Non-residential design standards shall only apply to those portions of a building that is undergoing expansion or alteration.

Section 3 (18.275.030)

Exemptions; alternative compliance

- a) The following are exempt from TMC 18.275.020:
 - 1. Any construction, building expansion, or remodeling that does not require a building permit.
 - 2. The planning director may exempt building design standards if:
 - i. The applicant demonstrates that strict application of the design standards results in undue hardship due to one or more of the following factors:
 - 1. the function, size, or use of building renders compliance impractical or economically infeasible, or
 - 2. the building, expansion or remodel is not visible from the public right-of-way, or
 - 3. the design requirement is inconsistent with the overall context of the area, taking into consideration current conditions and comprehensive planning policies for future development.
 - ii. The strict application of the design standards would result in peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties to, or exceptional and undue hardship upon, the property owner; provided there is no substantial detriment to the public welfare and the purpose and intent of the standards are not substantially impaired.

Alternative Compliance

- b. The planning director may approve and alternate building design under the following circumstances:
 - 1. If the design fails to meet one of the requirements for building materials, architectural details, or windows/doors in TMC 18.275.050, the applicant shall utilize at least one of the elements in subsection (c).
 - 2. If the design fails to meet two of the requirements for building materials, architectural details, or window/doors in TMC 18.275.050, the applicant shall utilize at least two of the elements in subsection (c).

3. If the design fails to meet all three of the requirements in TMC 18.275.050, the alternate building design elements in subsection (c) cannot be used as an alternative building design.
- c. Elements that may be utilized in lieu of full compliance with the design standards in subsection (b) include:
1. excess landscaping (at least 25% more points accrued than required) concentrated along public rights-of-way;
 2. additional parking lot islands (with trees) beyond what is required by the landscaping regulations sufficient to cover at least 25% of the parking area;
 3. landscape screening of blank or under designed walls;
 4. addition of a front or street facing storefront with an entryway, terrace, outdoor patio, or similar feature with architectural materials and scale that are compatible with the building, and a minimum width of 8 feet and minimum height of 10 feet;
 5. the addition of integrated planters, landscaping features, or wing wall compatible in design and scale to the building;
 6. addition of art that is placed prominently on the site, viewable from the public street, integrated with the design of the building/site, and permanent. Art includes, but is not limited to, murals, sculptures, and integrated architectural or landscape architecture work.
 7. parking located to the side or rear of the building, with at least 50% of the lot frontage occupied by building facades with a public entryway.
 8. bringing existing signs on the property into compliance with current sign code standards, or at a minimum removing or replacing an existing pole sign with a monument sign;
 9. a minimum of 20% higher percentage of required windows/doors;
 10. additional required architectural details (at least 1 additional detail per insufficiently met design standard).

Section 4 (18.275.040)

Design Considerations

The applicant shall demonstrate that the design standards in this chapter comply with the following:

- a) Building elevation design determinations must consider the character of the surrounding architecture and neighborhood and incorporate design elements that further reflect or enhance surrounding community character.
- b) In areas where the existing character is not definitively established or is not consistent with the purposes of these standards, the architecture of new development shall conform to the City's Comprehensive Plan or any area plans for future projects or redevelopment in the area.
- c) Non-residential buildings shall not have a single, large dominant building mass.
- d) Non-residential development shall comply with the building design standards on all elevations (360 degrees architecture).
- e) The street level shall be designed at a pedestrian scale.

- f) Buildings shall be designed with predominant materials, elements, and design features tailored to the site and its context.

Section 5 (18.275.050)

Building Design Standards – Type A, B, and C non-residential buildings

- a) The specific design standards in the table below apply to Type A, B, and C non-residential buildings.
- b) When calculating building material and window/door percentages identified in TMC 18.275.050, the façade width will be multiplied by the average façade roofline height or a standard height of 12', whichever is less, to determine the total square footage of the façade. The window/door area will be deducted from the square foot calculation of the total façade area before determining the percentage of building materials.
- c) Garage doors do not count towards the required window/door percentages.
- d) The Planning Director may approve other building materials or architectural details not listed in TMC 18.275.050.

Building Design Standards		Building Types		
		A	B	C
Type A & Type B Building Materials	<p>Total square footage of all stories of <u>front and/or street-facing facades</u> shall contain the following <u>minimum</u> percentages of the building materials listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Natural stone * Brick * Cast Stone * Synthetic Stone, such as pre-manufactured fiberglass, cultured stone, or glass fiber reinforced concrete, if it is identical in appearance and of equal or greater durability to natural stone or greater durability to natural stone * Traditional stucco or gypsum concrete/plaster materials with smooth finish * Exterior insulating finishing system (E.I.F.S) * Integrally-colored or glazed concrete masonry units * High quality pre-stressed concrete systems (Pre-cast w/veneer or textured finish) * Glass curtain wall * Architectural metal panels – must be a higher quality material than standard industrial, ribbed, pre-engineered metal panels. * Cement Board siding * Solid wood planking and decorative cement fiber panels may be used for accent features <p>The remaining exterior surface area of all stories of <u>front and/or street-facing facades</u> shall be comprised of these materials, or cement fiber panels, or integrally-colored split-faced concrete masonry blocks.</p>	85%	60%	
	<p>Total square footage of all stories of <u>non-front and/or non-street-facing facades</u> may integrate the following <u>maximum</u> percentage of materials into the composition of the materials listed above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Cement fiber panels * Integrally-colored split-faced concrete masonry block 	65%	75%	
Type C Building Materials	<p>Total square footage of all stories of <u>front and/or street-facing facades</u> shall contain the following <u>minimum</u> percentage of the building materials listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Any of the designated materials for Type A and B * Glass block or curtain wall * Integrally-colored split-faced concrete masonry unit * Pre-cast concrete tilt wall with a decorative or textured finish * Industrial, ribbed, pre-engineered metal panels with permanent baked-on enamel finish, or painted to manufacturer's specs <p>The remaining exterior surface area of all stories of <u>front and/or street-facing facades</u> shall be composed of these materials, or those materials listed for use within non-front and non-street-facing facades for Type C buildings listed below.</p>			60%
	<p>Total square footage of all stories of <u>non-front and/or non-street-facing facades</u> on Type C buildings may integrate the following <u>maximum</u> percentage of additional materials into those listed above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Cement fiber planking (not panels) * Solid wood planking and decorative cement fiber panels * Metal with permanent baked-on enamel finish, or painted to manufacturer's specs 			85%

Building Design Standards		Building Types		
		A	B	C
Types of Architectural Details	<p>For the first 50 linear feet (or less) of front and/or street-facing facades, all building types shall be designed with the following minimum number of architectural details. One additional architectural detail shall be required for each additional 25 feet of building street frontage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * At least 15% more windows/doors than the required minimum percentage * Display or other ornamental windows * Recessed entries * Horizontal or vertical recesses, projections, or off-sets at least 1-foot wide, located an average of every 30 horizontal feet, and with a depth at a minimum of 4"-6" * Modulating facade. Individual tenant spaces in multi-tenant buildings must modulate facades of the individual tenant spaces. Modulated facades help break up the mass of the building and create visual interest. * Variation of roof heights * Porches or balconies * Breezeways * Courtyards * Awnings or canopies (permanent) * Alcoves * Arcade, gallery, veranda, or pergola * Arches * Art that is integrated into the façade. * Structurally different building materials (i.e. stone and brick) * Decorative tile work, brick patterns, moldings or other materials integrated into the façade * Ornamental cornice * Varied roof forms. Large uninterrupted expanses of rooftop ridgelines must include architectural details that add articulation and visual interest, such as gable-roofed dormers, hip-roof elements, or other design measures to achieve an equivalent result. * Premium roofing materials such as tile, or standing-seam metal * Tower cap * Tower or raised parapet 	4	3	2
Doors & Windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The area of all stories' front facades of all building types shall contain the following minimum percentage of window or door openings. * The area of all stories' non-front street-facing facades of all building types shall contain the following minimum percentage of window or door openings. For non-front facades, faux windows may be applied when the interior function of the building is not conducive to being seen from the exterior. 	45%	35%	20%
Non-Street Facing Walls	<p>Maximum length of non-street or non-front-facing facades without architectural details.</p>	30'	50'	75'
Mechanical Systems	<p>All roof mounted mechanical units (including evaporative coolers, HVAC units, vents, etc.) for all building types shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from the project's property lines that are adjacent to public and private streets, as well as adjacent to residential properties (unless height difference makes screening impractical). The screening methods/materials shall be consistent with and incorporated into the design of the building.</p>			
Location Considerations	<p>Projects located within an industrial context, or not visible from the street, may design to a lesser building type standard than required by zoning, provided that the project complies with the design requirements of the lesser building type and meets the design considerations in TMC 18.275.040.</p>			

Section 6 (18.275.060)

Appeal

- a. If the planning director determines that the design plans are not in conformance with the design standards, the planning department shall deny the plans and notify the applicant, in writing, of the design features that do not comply.
- b. The applicant may appeal the planning director's determination to the board of zoning appeals as provided in Chapter [2.45](#) TMC.

BUILDING TYPE EXAMPLES

TOPEKA NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS



Non-Residential Design Standards – Building Type Examples
The following are Building Type A, B, and C examples.

Type A Buildings



Type B Buildings



Type C Buildings

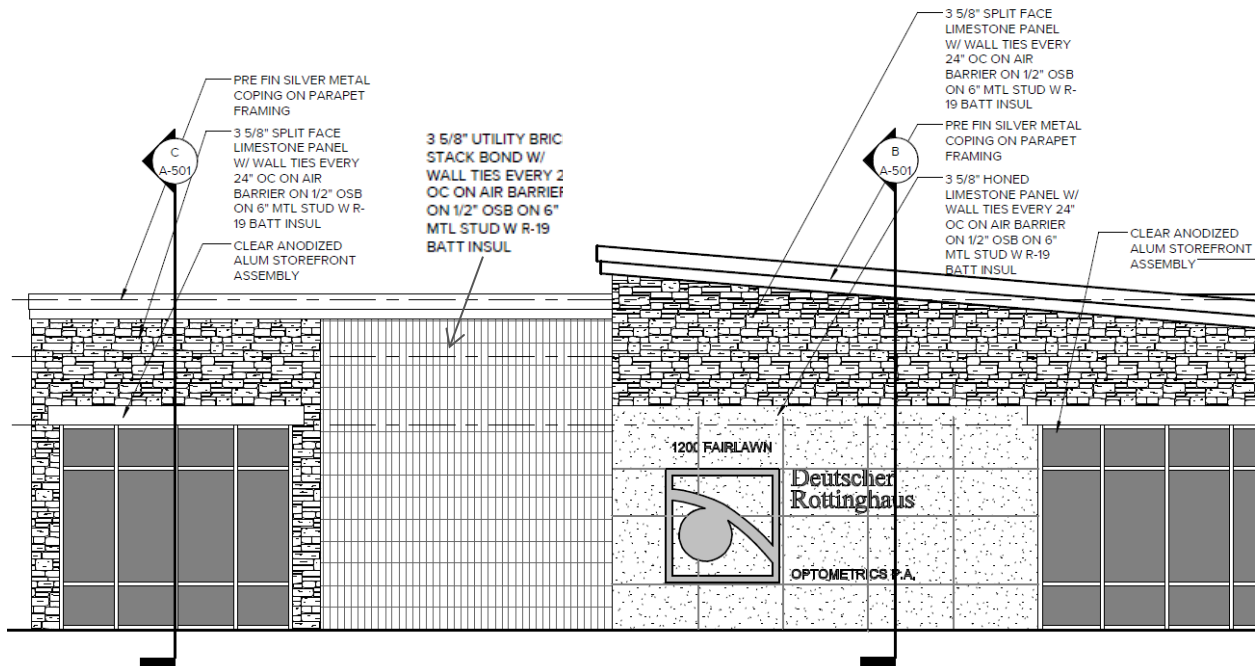


Non-Residential Design Standards – Building Design Review Examples

The following examples detail the key elements (building materials, architectural details, and windows/doors) required for each type of building design review. The examples are meant to depict compliance with the standards for each building type and how to identify the particular elements. The examples do not show all of design standards, nor do they show all of the compliance options available for each standard depicted.

Type A Building

Building Materials (85% stone, brick, etc. on street and/or front required)



Architectural Details (4 architectural details on street and/or front required)



- Architectural Details**
- Varied roof line
 - Cornice
 - Modulating facade
 - Canopies

Windows/Doors (45% of the area of the front façade required)

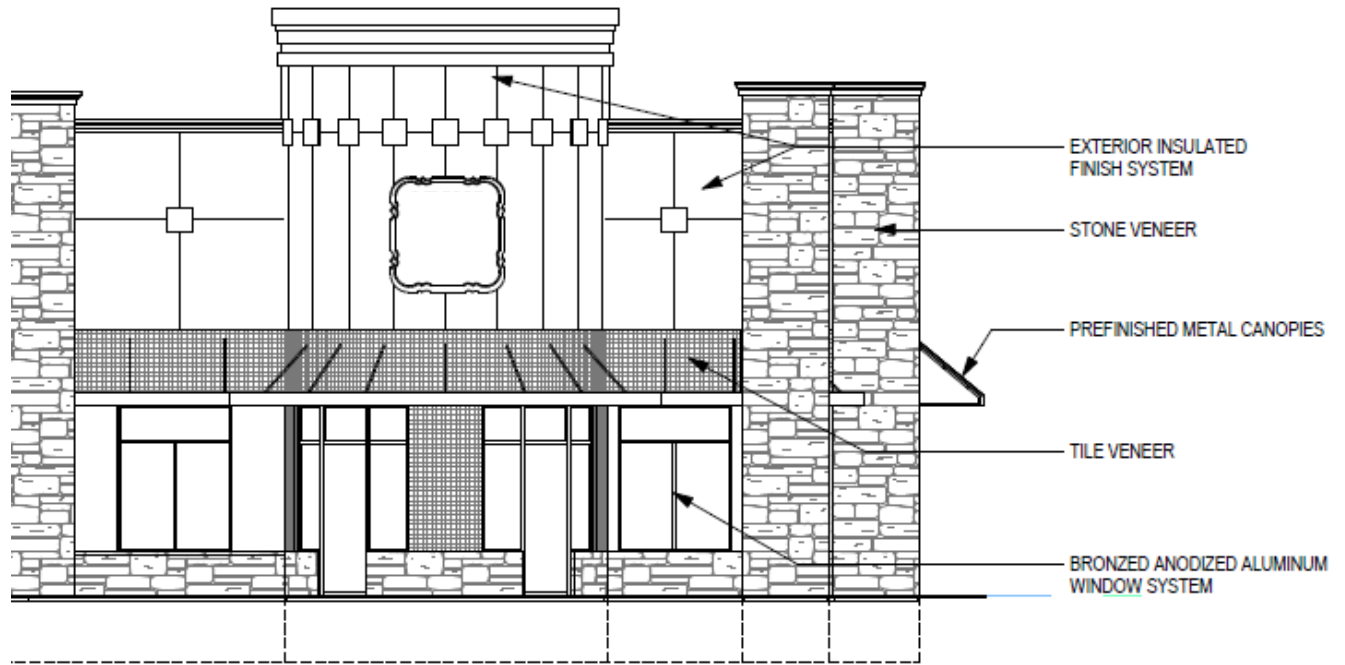


Windows/Doors

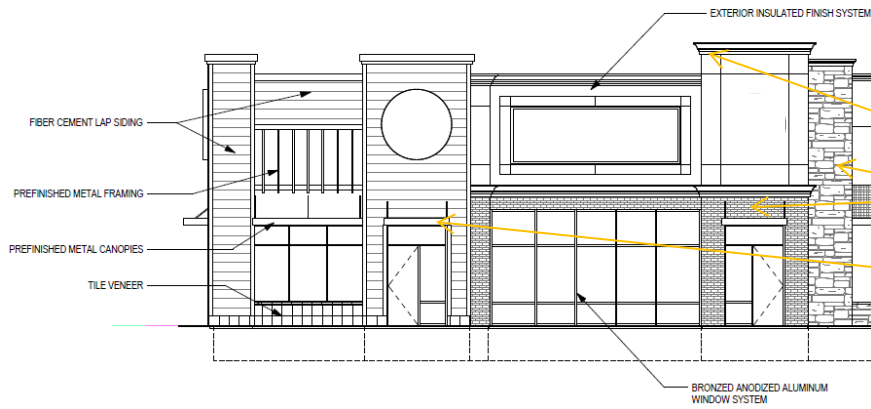
- Calculate percentage of window/door area versus front façade area.

Type B Building

Building Materials (60% stone, brick, etc. on street and/or front required)



Architectural Details (3 architectural details on street and/or front required)



- Architectural Details**
- Varied roof line
 - Varied building materials
 - Canopies

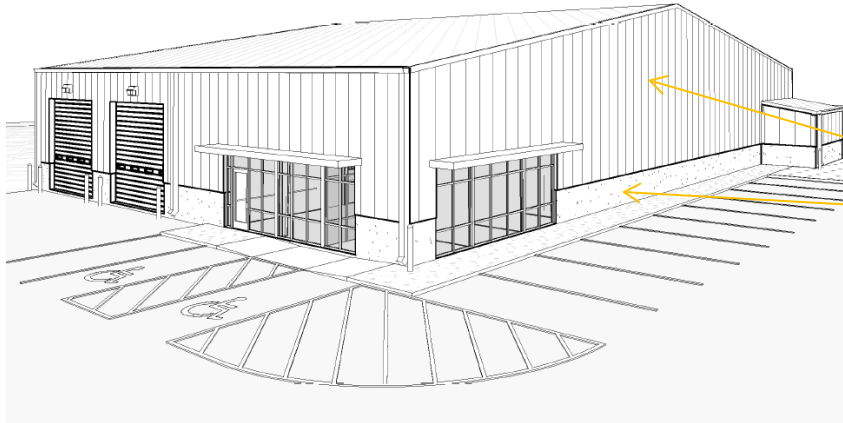
Windows/Doors (35% of the area of the front façade required)



- Windows/Doors**
- Calculate percentage of window/door area versus front façade area.

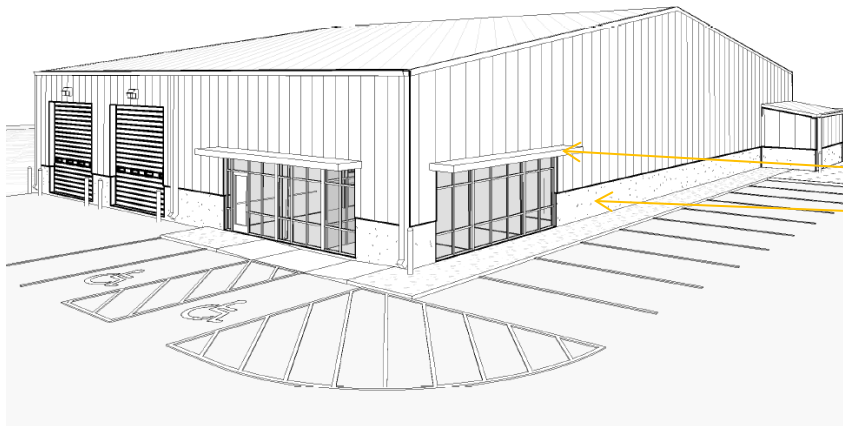
Type C Building

Building Materials (Type A/B, concrete tilt-wall, metal with baked-on enamel finish, etc). on street and/or front required



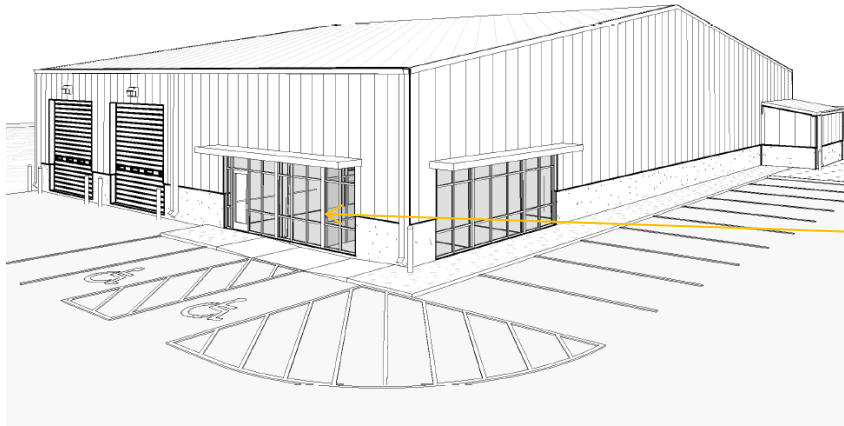
- Materials**
- Metal
 - Concrete

Architectural Details (2 architectural details on street and/or front required)



- Materials**
- Awnings
 - Concrete material different than the metal

Windows/Doors (need 20% of the area of the front façade required)



Materials

- Calculate percentage of window/door area versus front façade area.