H-1 Historic District
Architectural Guidelines

Adopted September 13, 2007
Amended July 9, 2009

ROANOKE
PLANNING, BUILDING
and DEVELOPMENT
# Table of Contents

Introduction 1  
Working with the ARB 4  
Building Forms and Styles 6  
Building Facades 9  
Storefronts 13  
Windows and Doors 19  
Signs 23  
Painting 29  
Awnings and Canopies 33  
Roofs, Parapets, and Cornices 37  
Masonry 39  
Exterior Lighting 42  
Hardware and Accessories 45  
Utilities and Rear Facades 47  
Off-Street Parking 50  
New Construction 53  
Relocation and Demolition 57  
Alternate Energy Sources 59
Introduction to the H-1 District

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR THE H-1 DISTRICT

The City of Roanoke created the H-1 Historic District to:

- identify properties (buildings, landmarks, structures and areas) of architectural, cultural, and historic significance within the city that are on or eligible for inclusion on the Virginia Landmarks Register or the National Register of Historic Places,
- encourage the preservation, enhancement, and maintenance of such properties, and
- develop and maintain appropriate settings and environments for such properties.

The H-1 District in downtown Roanoke includes properties contained in two of the city’s National Register Districts—the Roanoke City Market Historic District and the Roanoke Warehouse Historic District—and a number of individually listed buildings. The City Market district is bounded by Norfolk Avenue, Williamson Road, South Jefferson Street, and Church Avenue, with Market Street and Campbell Avenue as its main thoroughfares. The district contains more than sixty buildings.

The H-1 District also includes three of five warehouses contained in the Roanoke Warehouse Historic District, also known as “Warehouse Row,” located adjacent to the Norfolk and Western Railway lines and fronting on Norfork and Western Railway lines and fronting on Norfolk Avenue.

HISTORY OF THE H-1 DISTRICT

The City Market District

The core of the H-1 District is formed by the larger of the two downtown historic districts, the City Market district, a six-block area laid out in a grid plan. The focal point of the district is the 1922 Georgian Revival City Market Building, which is three-and-a-half stories and is set in the middle of the central Market Square. Area farmers have gathered to sell produce in this location since 1874; the existing market building replaced the city’s first market building, which was constructed on the same site in 1886. Expansion of the market area accompanied the rapid growth of Roanoke at the end of the nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth century. Marketing produce in front of the building gave rise to the development of the square. Grocery stores and other businesses grew up around the market, giving the area much of its present commercial character.
When the first City Market building was erected, the Italianate, Second Empire, and Richardsonian Romanesque styles were the fashion of America’s commercial architecture. The Roanoke City Market Historic District preserves a number of buildings influenced by these late-nineteenth-century revival styles. Although most buildings in the district are eclectic in their combination of stylistic detailing, many convey a strong impression of a specific style. The district also contains a number of significant examples of twentieth-century styles, with Beaux Arts Classicism and Art Deco styles well represented. In addition to the City Market Building, other notable buildings in the district include the classically inspired building at 108-114 Campbell Avenue and the Georgian Revival style red-brick Fire Station Number 1, with its richly detailed bell tower.

Although much of the city’s downtown commercial development now lies west and south of the City Market, the area has become the focus of the city’s cultural life with the rehabilitation of the 1914 McGuire Building as Center in the Square. This cultural arts center, completed in 1983, includes the Art Museum of Western Virginia, the Arts Council of the Blue Ridge, the Roanoke Valley History Museum, the Science Museum of Western Virginia, and Mill Mountain Theatre.

The market traditions of the district have been maintained by renovations to the City Market Building and the outdoor market stalls along the western side of Market Street. The combination of farmers’ produce, specialty shops, restaurants, and cultural attractions make the City Market Historic District a center of activity within the city and a popular visitor destination.

The Warehouse District

The other major component of the H-1 District is a series of three warehouses which comprise the eastern portion of the Roanoke Warehouse Historic District. Closely identified with Roanoke’s emergence at the turn-of-the-century as the wholesale capital of Southwest Virginia, the warehouses—built for wholesale food storage—exemplify early industrial warehouse design. With their adjacent railroad access, these rare surviving warehouses evoke Roanoke’s period of development as a significant railroad center.

Built between 1892 and 1902, the characteristic features of the three brick buildings include rows of segmental arched, deep-set windows, iron door and window moldings, and post-and-beam timber supports on the interior. The buildings exhibit the fine corbelled brickwork that is characteristic of Roanoke’s historic commercial architecture. A stepped, gabled roof with brick corbeling, reminiscent of buildings in the Dutch vernacular tradition, is a notable architectural feature of two of the warehouses.