

DESIGN CRITERIA

Atlanta Civic Design Commission

This design criteria is a guide by which the Atlanta Civic Design Commission can objectively and analytically review the urban design merits of a proposed architectural project. It is a tool both for the reviewers and the architect submitting work. Hopefully, this review process will encourage architects, other design professionals and developers to better relate their individual projects to the overall urban environment.

1. How does this project relate to the man on foot?
 - a. Does the relation of the building to the street and to adjacent buildings create meaningful pedestrian spaces - plazas, squares, courts, atriums?
 - b. Are the exterior spaces pleasant in all seasons? Is there a feeling of enclosure? Is there shade in summer and protection from icy blasts in winter? Are there a variety of spaces - intimate as well as large ones? Are a rich variety of experiences perceived when moving through the space - events, focal points and surprises? Is everything seen at one glance or does the picture unfold as one circulates through? Does the landscape architecture bring the space more to human scale?
 - c. Does this project separate pedestrian from automobile traffic?
 - d. Does the building provide to the pedestrian a real sense of entrance-clear and identifiable gateways, a place to reflect?
2. How does this project relate to man in automobile?
 - a. Is there a clear and identifiable automobile entrance? Does the entrance's architectural form express entrance or is a sign necessary?
 - b. Is the walk from parking safe, eventful and human?
 - c. Is the entrance from the parking side designed as an important entrance?
 - d. Is the parking area a sea of asphalt carried to the street or is it broken up by landscaping, changes of levels or other devices? Are the edges of the parking area landscaped or screened?

- e. On parking decks, does natural light penetrate lower levels?
 - f. What is the quality of artificial lighting on parking decks?
 - g. Are number and location of curb cuts - egress/ingress points - detrimental to traffic flow?
 - h. How does the top of a parking deck appear from taller buildings?
3. How does this project relate to contiguous environment, to the general neighborhood, and to the city as a whole?
- a. Does it have respect for adjacent buildings?
 - b. Does it harmonize or contrast?
 - c. If it contrasts, does its use justify this degree of importance (such as a municipal, civic, religious building, or an outstanding institution)?
 - d. If it relates by harmonizing, does it echo similar materials, colors, textures, rhythms (structural bays, solids to voids, window groupings), similar proportion, similar details such as arches, cornices, corbeling, string courses, brick coursings and jointing?
 - e. Does it have respect for its neighbors or does it scream out "look at me". Is it quietly sophisticated, understated, or is it ostentatious and showy.
4. What kinds of "humanization" factors are present? Does the building make an aesthetic and functional contribution to the city?
- a. What is the quality of its landscape architecture?
 - b. What is the quality of art, sculpture, murals or reliefs?
 - c. What is the quality of the exterior lighting?
 - d. What is the quality of the street furniture, graphics and heraldry?
5. What kind of "street life" will this project generate?
- a. Will its uses create life and activity as many hours a day as possible?
 - b. Will its uses look out on the street and will it be visually open from the sidewalk?
 - c. Does its use generate an intensely and diversely used area?

6. What architectural character does the project have?
 - a. Is it expressive of its use?
 - b. Is there a feeling of permanency?
 - c. Will it age gracefully?
 - d. What is the main idea, its design concept, its philosophical base? What new statements does it make?
 - e. Is it an honest expression of our region's culture, climate, technology?
 - f. See 1.a., b., e.
7. Is the building in an important Urban Design area as established by the visual survey? Is it of appropriate quality and use to be located in a strategic position of importance in the city?
8. Are there blighting influences?
 - a. Are service and garbage areas screened?
 - b. Are there unappropriate and distracting signs?
 - c. Are there exposed utility lines?
 - d. Is handling and storage of the automobile unsightly?
9. Scale
 - a. What is the quality of scale of the spaces enclosed by buildings? Does one perceive an eyeful of space or is the space too large?
 - b. Will the relative height of this building dwarf or visually block a historically prominent building?
10. Does this project conform to the overall objective of the C.B.D. plan (future)?
11. Is the project in the route of the future rapid transit lines?

Paul Muldawer, Chairman
Architectural Committee