

# Storefront Rehab Comparison



*Façade improvements should add a combination of architectural details, transparency, awnings, and quality signage.*

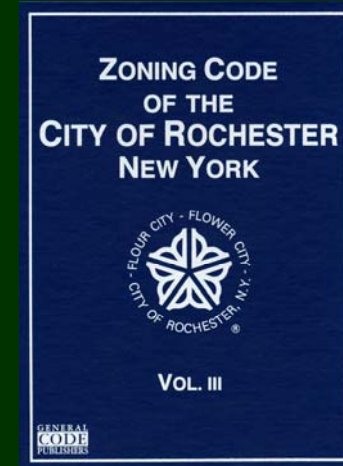
### Relevant Code Sections...

The following code sections address the construction and renovation of neighborhood commercial buildings within the City.

- Chapter 120-36: C-1 Neighborhood Center Commercial District
- Chapter 120-44: C-2 Community Center Commercial District
- Chapter 120-158: Non-Residential Building Design Guidelines

Other related sections include Chapter 120-167 on Fences & Walls and Chapter 120-173 on Off Street Parking.

# City of Rochester, New York Neighborhood Commercial Design Primer



### Introduction

One of the key campaigns in the Rochester 2010: The Renaissance Plan is to create vital urban neighborhoods throughout the community. In order to help achieve this campaign, the City Zoning Code includes design guidelines and standards. The commercial design guidelines were created to ensure that new construction creates an attractive streetscape that fosters a high level of pedestrian activity. The information presented in this handout is meant to illustrate the regulations contained in the City's Zoning Code. A review of this document should NOT serve as a substitute for a thorough review and application of the City's Zoning regulations. The Zoning Code can be found online at [www.cityofrochester.gov](http://www.cityofrochester.gov).



*These images illustrate the type and style of new construction that the code is trying to promote. New construction that is multi-story, up to the street, with a large amount of window coverage creates an attractive streetscape for merchants and patrons.*



*These two photos illustrate the type and style of neighborhood commercial streetscapes that the new code is trying to limit. The City is trying to transform auto-oriented commercial strips to pedestrian friendly areas by restricting front yard parking, pole signs, one story buildings, and blank facades.*

### How To Apply The Design Guidelines

The City recognizes that a combination of public and private investment is necessary to create a successful neighborhood shopping district. The elements of the photo (shown to the right) that are labeled without a number are the responsibility of the City of Rochester or a Business Improvement District. These items are located in the public right-of-way and typically include street trees and plantings, benches, decorative street lights and sidewalks, as well as trash receptacles.

By comparison, the design guidelines and standards included in the City's Zoning Code are intended to guide the investment in private property to enhance the streetscape. The following criteria applies to new construction or renovation of existing buildings in C-1 and C-2 districts:

- 1: Building height must be a minimum of two stories or 20 feet;
- 2: Along street frontages, all exterior building walls and structures shall be constructed with durable materials such as masonry, stone, brick, finishing wood, stucco (EIFS) or glass;
- 3: Rooftop mechanical equipment must be screened from view;
- 4: All glazing shall be clear or lightly tinted;
- 5: Quality signage shall locate above the first floor (see Sign Primer );
- 6: Maximum square footage for a use or structure in C-1 is 3,000 sq. ft. and 6,000 sq. ft. in C-2;
- 7: The front facade and main entrance shall face a public street and shall have a direct pedestrian connection to the street; and
- 8: All new construction along the street shall provide areas of transparency equal to 70% of the wall area along the first floor.

Any deviations from these standards will require either a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals or approval by the Director of Zoning.



The photo to the left shows an infill project built in 1979 that is completely out of character with the three-story, brick buildings adjacent to it. By comparison, the photo to the right shows a new commercial building completed in 2005. The scale, window patterns, and façade details make it difficult to determine which structure is newly built. As a result, the building adds to the overall character of the street rather than detracting from it.



Source: Pardi Architects