



NEW CONSTRUCTION

Successful design of new buildings in an existing context requires plenty of creativity, and the most successful designs are contemporary in character. However, they take important design cues from what exists around them.

Old Orland's unique character has already been noted: it is a blend of buildings, spaces, landscapes, street patterns and other elements that has grown over time and is not duplicated anywhere else in the Village. New buildings in the district should be designed to fit into this strong existing context. The most appropriate designs for new buildings take account of the context and make an effort to respect it and fit it visually. This should not be interpreted to mean that new buildings should try to look old or should assume a historic character they never had. It also does not mean that there is no room for contemporary design or creativity.

The following recommendations can help guide the process of design for new construction, but it is important to remember that each project is different. The Historic Preservation Review Commission is required to review all new construction proposals in Old Orland for compatibility with the existing historic setting. All applicants for new construction approval should be prepared to show that they have taken account of the existing context during the design process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Placement and Orientation on the Lot:** Old Orland buildings typically are free-standing but closely spaced along the street. Some buildings in the commercial sections of the district have shared or abutting walls typical of more traditional downtown commercial areas, but the free-standing structures are more common. Appropriate placement and orientation for a new structure will vary with location, but the site plan design should resemble the placement and orientation of adjacent structures. The design should also follow the same setback as other buildings, per the Land Development Code, which also may vary per location.
2. **Scale and Proportion:** *Scale* refers to the size of a building in relation to that of a person. Old Orland is distinctive in part because of its intimate scale—nearly all buildings have a small pedestrian scale that is inviting. *Proportion* is the relationship between a building façade's width and its height, and it has an impact upon the building's sense of scale—a building with strongly vertical proportions will impart a different feel from one with a lower profile. Any new construction should be designed with a sense of scale appropriate to that of Old Orland, with proportions carefully controlled. The most appropriate approach is to study existing buildings in the district and to try to achieve similar proportions and sense of scale. This may, for example, require designing a building in a series of smaller masses rather than a single large form.
3. **Height:** Buildings in Old Orland do not exceed 37 feet to the top of the structure at the street grade. In designing a new building, observe typical nearby building heights; try to use a similar height, but in any case do not exceed the 37 feet.
4. **Materials, Textures, and Colors:** New buildings should use materials that have been traditionally used in Old Orland (note Exterior Materials Recommendations) such as wood, brick and stone. This will help ensure that new buildings have an appearance and a visual texture

compatible with what already exists. Color, too, should be selected according to traditional color use and also should be compatible with the color(s) of the new building's materials.

5. **Massing, Form, and Roof Shapes:** *Massing* refers to how the basic shapes of buildings fit together. Most Old Orland buildings have fairly simple massing, generally plain rectangular shapes. Some buildings from the later Victorian period have more complex massing consisting of multiple overlapping blocks. Appropriate new building designs should use massing similar to that in adjacent and nearby buildings. *Form* grows out of massing and refers to the kinds of massing typical of various architectural styles or building types. Form can be affected by later additions. As with massing, new buildings should employ forms typical of Old Orland and appropriate to the building site. *Roof shapes* in Old Orland are primarily in a gabled form, with an equal slope to either side of a central ridge. Cross gables and intersecting gables provide variety in roof shape, and there are some examples of a modified gable known as a hipped roof. Some roof shapes in Old Orland are also flat, which tend to be on the commercial buildings along Union and Beacon Avenues. New building designs should employ roof shapes that exist in the historic district.
6. **Rhythm of Openings:** In any architectural style of building type, door and window openings have certain patterns. The spacing of these openings in a building wall is known as *rhythm*. Note that both symmetrical and asymmetrical buildings can have similar rhythms of openings. Old Orland has a variety of rhythms due to the age range of its architecture. Designs for new buildings should employ rhythms of openings similar to those in adjacent and nearby buildings.
7. **Window-to-Wall Ratio:** This refers to the amount of window surface in relation to the amount of wall surface in the façade of a building. It varies with a building's age, style, construction type, and use. For example, in the late 1800's frame construction and the ability to produce readily available large panes of glass meant that buildings could have a much higher window-to-wall ratio for the form, style, or type of building being planned. Prior to the late 1800's, in buildings which were made of heavier materials, like stone, buildings typically had low window-to-wall ratios because stone construction required massive walls with small openings to make a structurally sound building, and window glass was relatively scarce and expensive.

Commercial buildings, because they typically had large display windows, usually had the highest window-to-wall ratio of any building type or style. In planning new construction in Old Orland, it is important to observe typical window-to-wall ratios for the form, style, or type of building being planned.