



CITY OF FORT BRAGG
Incorporated August 5, 1889
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 20, 2024
TO: PLANNING COMMISSION
FROM: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT (CDD)
SUBJECT: DISCUSSION ON USE OF DARK PAINT COLORS IN THE CBD

Historically, building color palettes proposed for buildings in the Central Business District (CBD) have consisted of lighter, brighter, or more neutral hues. However, staff have observed an increase in paint applications proposing darker colors, up to and including very dark shades of black. While commercial building paint color applications are Administrative Design Review per ILUDC 18.71.050, and as such are typically approved by the Community Development Director in the absence of concurrent processing at a public hearing, department staff are seeking Planning Commission's input on the matter.

The following is an excerpt from the Design Guidelines as well as several examples of building facades in the Central Business District. We look forward to your discussion and feedback.

Fort Bragg Citywide Design Guidelines, updated April 2022 –

Colors

Preferred Standards

1. Colors should enhance different parts of a building's façade and be consistent with the desired architectural style.
2. Colors west of Highway 1 should recede in the view shed or be subordinate to the view shed. Dark earth tone colors are preferred where the view shed is dark and lighter earth tone colors may be preferred where the background is lighter.
3. Colors should visually relate building elements to each other, and also individual facades to each other. The colors chosen for a building façade should complement neighboring facades (but should not replicate).
4. Color should be used as an important design element in the development's appearance. Historically, certain color palettes were associated with particular architectural styles. Whenever possible, exterior building colors should reflect the basic colors of the architectural style or period of the building or its environment. For example, bright and rich color combinations associated with the Victorian Era are appropriate downtown. However, in the coastal zone color pallet should focus on earth tone colors. Bright and sharply contrasting colors should be avoided.

5. Colors used on exterior facades should be harmonious and contrasting compatible colors are encouraged to accentuate details
6. No fewer than two colors should be used on any given façade, and three or more colors are preferred. This includes any “natural” colors such as unpainted brick or stone. The three preferred colors should constitute the primary base color, secondary color and minor trim color.

Here are some examples of colors most commonly seen in the Central Business District, which trend toward both lighter and brighter shades, with contrasting trim in alignment with the Design Guidelines:

East side of Franklin Street



West side of Franklin Street



North side of Laurel Street



The old Tip Top is a bit of an outlier, with its dark shingles and brick facade:



Lastly, a couple of examples of existing buildings of a darker hue, approved in more recent years:

