

MASKING THE PARKING LOT

A guide book for the City of Mobile's Downtown Development District (DDD) Code requirement that all parking lots be masked along street frontages; Section 64.3.1.11.(B).3 (04/25/17)

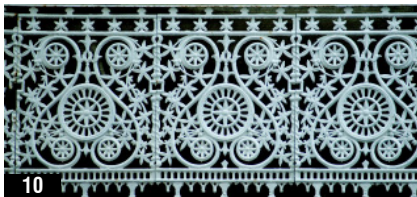
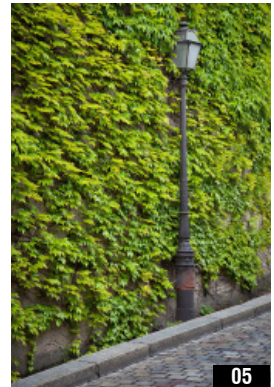
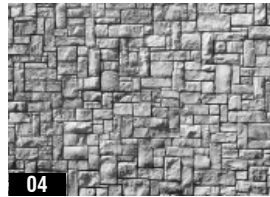
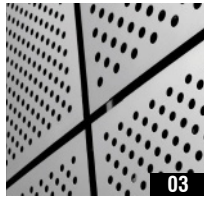
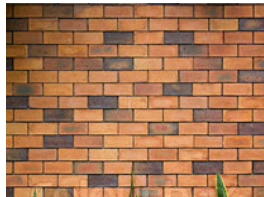


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Front Cover	i
Masking Materials - ALLOWED by the DDD Code.	
Table of Contents	ii
Disclaimer	
Introduction.....	iii
Statement of the DDD Code Section 64.3.I.11(B)3	
Permitting Process	
OPTION I Masking with Liner Buildings	1
OPTION II Masking with Fences & Walls	3
OPTION IIA Metal Fence with Evergreen Plants	
OPTION IIB Masonry Fence with or without Evergreen Plants	5
OPTION IIC Combination: Masonry Wall and Metal Fence, with or without Evergreen Plants	7
Back Cover	9
Masking Materials - NOT ALLOWED by the DDD Code.	

ON THE COVER

Examples of masking materials ALLOWED by the DDD Code, as well as ideas to consider for the finishing touches:

- 01 Pre-finished metal fence.
- 02 Brick wall with evergreen planting at base of wall.
- 03 Perforated metal paneling integrated into fence design.
- 04 Stone veneer wall.
- 05 Consider integrating lighting into/onto the masking wall.
- 06 Security fence with anti-climb triple-pointed fence pales.
- 07 Pre-finished metal grid panel fence system - great for evergreen vines.
- 08 Consider puncturing the masking wall to set up views or focal points for the pedestrian where appropriate.
- 09 Stone veneer wall.
- 10 Historical cast iron fence.
- 11 Contemporary metal grid panel fence system - great for evergreen vines.
- 12 Stucco finish wall with evergreen plants at base.
- 13 Consider incorporating free standing planters into the masking fence/ wall design - with CRC pre-approval.
- 14 Consider trees and/or architectural elements within the masking wall at street corners or parking lot entrances.
- 15 Consider puncturing the masking wall to set up views or focal points for the pedestrian where appropriate.
- 16 Pre-finished aluminum fence.
- 17 Existing parking lot with chain link fencing along street frontage - No longer permitted under the new DDD Code.

DISCLAIMER

This guide book has been developed, compliments of the Downtown Mobile Alliance, to clarify the City of Mobile's Downtown Development District (DDD) Code Section 64.3.I.11.(B).3 (amended 04/25/17): Parking Lot Masking Options, with user friendly terms, diagrams and images.

The information provided in this guide book is a work in progress and should be viewed strictly as informative. All new development within the DDD, including parking lot masking, must adhere to the DDD Code 64.3.I.



INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Development District (DDD) Code was passed by the city council in May 2014. Since then more than 100 projects have met the code and have been approved for permitting. These projects have been scattered in every corner of downtown.

It is important to note that the code was developed as a specific response to the recommendations in the master plan for downtown adopted by the Planning Commission and the City Council in 2012 as well as surveying that the Downtown Mobile Alliance conducted in 2013 and 2014. The overarching goal in every plan that has been developed for downtown over the past 25 years has been to return to our roots and rebuild downtown as a dense, urban pedestrian-focused place.

How buildings are built, how parking lots are masked, how sidewalk cafés use the street are all vitally important. In downtowns, the details matter. The frontage - or what is along the Right-of-Way (ROW) where the sidewalk meets the property - is of the utmost importance to the human's experience of our city. This code was written specifically to guide Downtown Mobile's rebuilding in a way that is respectful of our city's amazing architectural heritage, while making our city competitive with the thriving cities of the American South, AND taking full advantage of the research on human behavior that has informed civic design over the last 30-40 years.

Elizabeth Stevens
President & Chief Executive Officer

DDD CODE SECTION 64.3.I.11.(B).3

The Downtown Development District Code (04/25/17), Section 64.3.I.11.(B).3 states:

For Parking lots along frontages, one of the following masking options is required:

- I. Liner Buildings may be used to mask parking lots.
- II. A hedge, evergreen vines, other evergreen planting materials, combined with a metal fence or masonry wall, with or without a hedge or evergreen plantings, may be used to mask parking lots. Alternative materials for fences or walls may be considered by the CRC provided the intent of masking is achieved and sufficient documentation is provided to justify allowance of the alternative materials. Shrubs for hedges shall be a minimum of 3 feet in height at the time of planting, evergreen vines or other evergreen planting materials shall be of a variety that will form an evergreen barrier as would be formed by a hedge; walls and fences shall be a minimum for 3 feet in height.
- III. When parking lots are surfaced with crushed stone, brick, rolled concrete pavers, or cellular grassed concrete pavers, screening requirements may be satisfied by trees spaced a maximum of 30 feet on center.
This option is not featured in this guide book at this time.



PERMITTING PROCESS

The City of Mobile requires that a Building Permit be issued for new development within the DDD, and that includes parking lot masking.

Prior to issuing the Permit, the masking design proposal must be approved for code compliance by the Consolidated Review Committee (CRC). Per the DDD Code Section 64.3.I.4.(A), the CRC was developed as this Authority in order to expedite the permitting process.

The CRC consists of a max. (5) members from various city agencies. and meets every Thursday at 9am (unless otherwise noted) within the City of Mobile's Planning Department on the 3rd floor of Government Plaza. Applications are due the Thursday prior to the desired scheduled review meeting. In order to expedite the review process, applicants are required to attend the review meetings in order to answer questions. The CRC meeting is intended to be the starting point in the permitting process. It is a casual, sit-down, conversational review of development proposals, meant for the benefit of the applicant.

RESOURCES

Copies of the DDD Code 64.3.I can be downloaded from the following links:

City of Mobile
<http://urban.cityofmobile.org/pdf/DDD%20Code%20with%20Amendments%20merged%204-25-17.pdf>

Downtown Mobile Alliance
<http://www.downtownmobile.org/policies.php>

PERMITTING QUESTIONS?

City of Mobile
Planning & Zoning
251.208.5895
planning@cityofmobile.org

City of Mobile
Mobile Historic Development Commission
251.208.7281
mobilehd@cityofmobile.org

“One of the top requirements of a great place is “spatial enclosure,” which is design-speak for “feels more like a room than a highway.” No building type encloses more space for less dollars than a liner building. Yes, you can enclose a space with a freestanding wall, but walls are usually much less interesting than a building because buildings have people, windows, and other interesting things.” - Steve Mouzon from his blog & his book: *The Original Green*.

- I.1 Perspective of existing parking lot on St. Michael Street downtown Mobile, AL; required to be masked per the DDD Code 64.3.1.11.(B)3.
- I.2 Perspective of concept Liner Building to mask the existing parking lot - two story with parking on 1st level.



Per the DDD Code: 64.3.1.11.(B).3.I :
MASKING WITH

LINER BUILDINGS

OPTION I

LINER BUILDINGS MAY BE USED TO MASK PARKING LOTS



- I.3 Existing “Single Crew” Liner Building - BRASH Coffee Shop in Atlanta, GA. Constructed from shipping containers.
- I.4 Existing Liner Building - Catholic Services on Dauphin Street in downtown Mobile, AL.
- I.5 Existing Liner Building on Dauphin Street in downtown Mobile, AL.
- I.6 Cloister in Europe, image from Steve Mouzon’s blog - *The Original Green*.

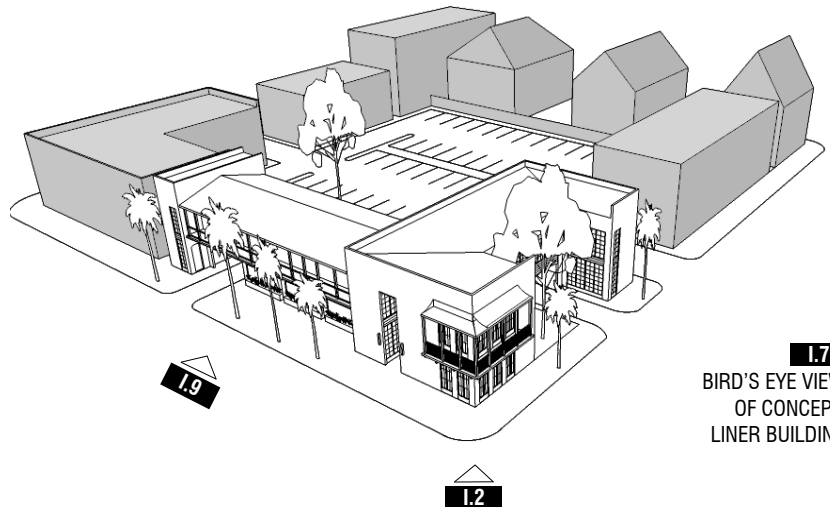


WHAT IS A LINER BUILDING?

A Liner Building is a thin building that “lines” the edge of the city street, plaza, square or other public space. It can be as thin as 8 feet deep for “single-crew” retail use (Figure I.3) or 12 feet deep for residential. It can be single or multiple levels (Figure I.8).

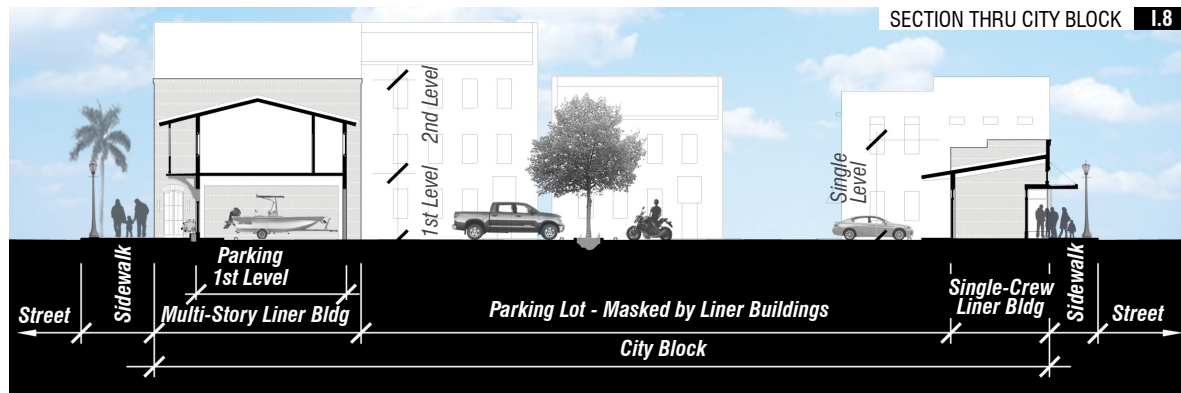
It is an effective tool to define the street edge, while responding to unique conditions of an individual property within the city. For instance: a Liner Building can be used to shield desirable spaces from the noise of a busy street, such as courtyards (Figure I.6). And it can be used to hide undesirable property conditions that diminish the street experience if located along frontage, such as parking lots (Figures I.4, I.5 & I.7).

The Liner Building is essentially a wall, one that is large enough to be occupied and activated by people, which enhances the pedestrian’s experience of the street.



I.7
BIRD'S EYE VIEW
OF CONCEPT
LINER BUILDING

- I.7 Bird's eye view of the concept Liner Building to mask the existing parking lot along St. Michael Street in downtown Mobile, AL - two Story (See Figures I.2 & I.9).
- I.8 Section thru a typical city block, masked with Liner Buildings. An example of a multi-story Liner Building with parking spaces on the 1st level is shown on the left. An example of a single-story “Single Crew” Liner Building shown on the right.
- I.9 Elevation of the concept Liner Building along St. Michael Street- two story with parking on 1st level.



SECTION THRU CITY BLOCK I.8



CONCEPT ELEVATION I.9

When developing a Liner Building to mask the street frontage of an existing parking lot just isn't feasible, Option II of the City of Mobile's DDD Code permits the frontage of the parking lot to be masked by installing a Fence or a Wall, in any one of the (3) configurations listed below.

Per the DDD Code: 64.3.I.11.(B).3.II :
MASKING WITH

FENCES & WALLS

OPTION IIA

METAL FENCE WITH EVERGREEN PLANTS OR VINES

OPTION IIB

MASONRY WALL WITH OR WITHOUT EVERGREEN PLANTS

OPTION IIC

COMBINATION: MASONRY WALL AND METAL FENCE WITH OR WITHOUT EVERGREEN PLANTS

These (3) sub-options allowed by the DDD Code are single or two part component assemblies that, when installed as a whole, mask the parking lot along street frontage **visually & physically**. Thereby enhancing the pedestrian's experience of the street.

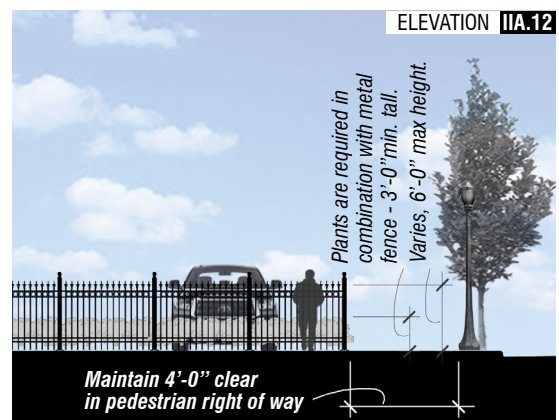
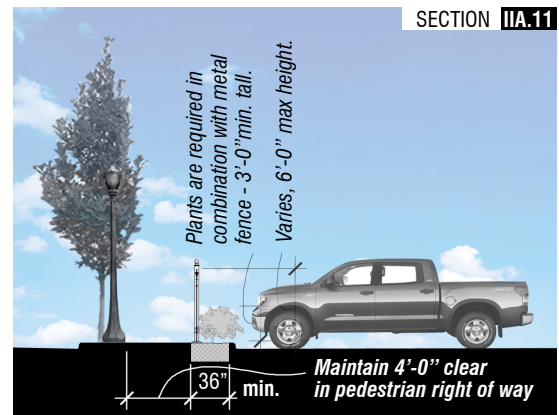
OPTION IIA: CODE DIAGRAMS

In this Option IIA, the metal fence component of the assembly provides the **physical** edge. The evergreen plant component of the assembly does that as well, but also provides the necessary **visual** buffer. Together, these components serve to mask the parking lot from the street.

Per the DDD Code, 64.3.I.11.(B).3.ii, the metal fence installed to mask the frontage of a parking lot shall be a minimum of 3'-0" tall. The evergreen plants shall be a minimum height of 3'-0" at the time of planting and shall be spaced a maximum of 3'-0" o.c. The evergreen vine shall be planted/ spaced so that at maturity they form an evergreen barrier of 3'-0" min. height. The planting component of the masking assembly is subject to perpetual compliance. See diagrams IIA.11 and IIA.12 for clarification.

It's recommended property owners consult with a landscape architect to specify the proper plant species for the owner's specific application in order to better assure perpetual compliance.

See additional photos of materials **ALLOWED** on the adjacent page and the front cover of this guide book. See examples of materials **NOT ALLOWED** on the back cover of this manual. The Code allows for the proposal of alternate materials for masking fences and walls for consideration by the CRC, provided the intent of the masking is achieved & documentation is provided to justify the alternative material.




IIA.1

IIA.2

IIA.3

IIA.1 Custom steel fence - with evergreen hedge.
Note: Hedge shown does not meet minimum height of 3'-0" requirement. Shown for material example only.

IIA.2 Metal Fence (per-finished aluminum) with evergreen hedge, inside fence.

IIA.3 Metal fence (pre-finished aluminum) with trees and evergreen hedge, inside fence.

IIA.4 Metal fence (pre-finished aluminum) with trees and evergreen hedge, outside fence. Note: Hedge shown does not meet minimum height of 3'-0" requirement. Shown for material example only.

IIA.5 Metal fence (pre-finished steel) with grasses both sides of fence. Note: planting shown does not comply with the minimum 3'-0" height requirement. Shown for material example only.

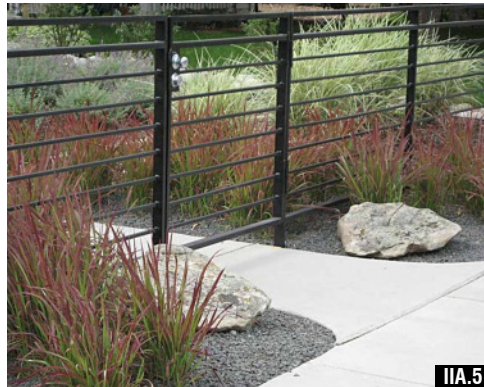
IIA.6 Custom steel fence - with evergreen plants, outside fence. Note: planting shown does not comply with the minimum 3'-0" height requirement. Shown for material example only.

IIA.7 Metal Fence (pre-finished) - Note: planting shown does not comply with the minimum 3'-0" height requirement. Shown for material example only.

IIA.8 Custom steel fence (cor-ten steel) with evergreen grasses integrated into fence.

IIA.9 Metal fence (galvanized steel grid wire & posts) - with evergreen vine, outside fence.

IIA.10 Metal fence (pre-finished) - with trees and evergreen hedge, both sides of fence. Fence color is used as business branding/identifier. If your property is within an historical district, verify that your color is allowed.


IIA.4

IIA.5

IIA.6

IIA.7

IIA.8

IIA.9

IIA.10

Per the DDD Code: 64.3.I.11.(B).3.II :
MASKING WITH

FENCES & WALLS

OPTION IIA

METAL FENCE WITH EVERGREEN PLANTS OR VINES

OPTION IIB

MASONRY WALL WITH OR WITHOUT EVERGREEN PLANTS

OPTION IIC

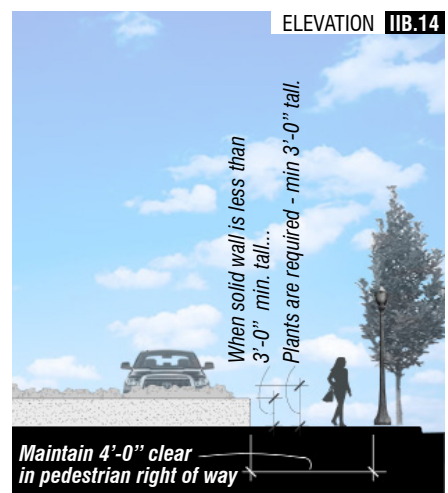
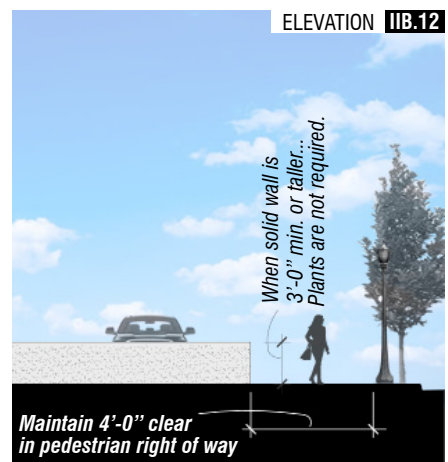
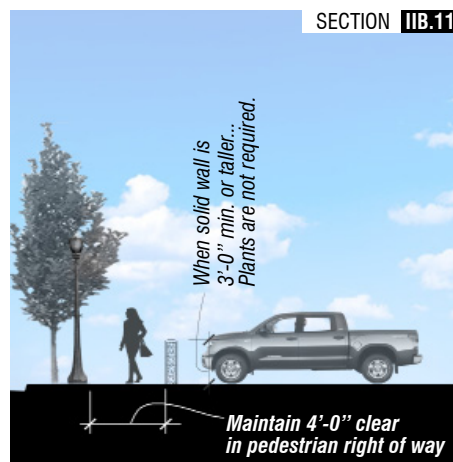
COMBINATION: MASONRY WALL AND METAL FENCE WITH OR WITHOUT EVERGREEN PLANTS

OPTION IIB: CODE DIAGRAMS

Per the DDD Code, 64.3.I.11.(B).3.ii- When the masonry wall is installed at a minimum height of 3'-0", evergreen plants ARE NOT required for masking. See diagrams IIB.11 & IIB.12. When the masonry wall is installed at a height LESS than 3'-0", evergreen plants ARE required for masking. See diagrams IIB.13 & IIB.14.

The plants shall be a min. height of 3'-0" at the time of planting and shall be installed a max. of 3'-0" o.c. The evergreen vine shall be planted/ spaced so that at maturity they form an evergreen barrier of 3'-0" min. height. The planting component of the masking assembly is subject to perpetual compliance.

See additional photos of materials ALLOWED on the adjacent page and the front cover of this guide book. See examples of materials NOT ALLOWED on the back cover of this manual. The Code allows for the proposal of alternate materials for masking fences and walls for consideration by the CRC, provided the intent of the masking is achieved & documentation is provided to justify the alternative material.

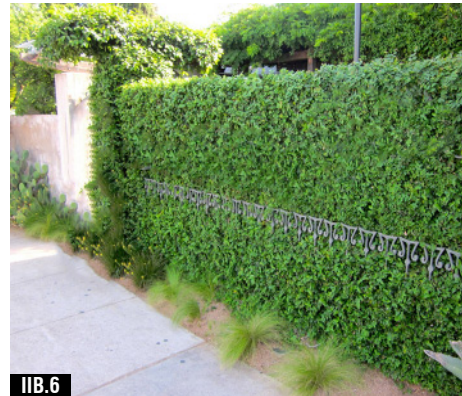



IIB.1

IIB.2

IIB.3

IIB.4

IIB.5

IIB.6

IIB.8

IIB.9

- IIB.1 Masonry wall (stucco finish) - with evergreen vine and hedge combination, both sides of wall.
- IIB.2 Existing brick wall- within downtown Mobile, AL. Where wall is installed at minimum height of 3'-0", the DDD Code does not require hedge combination.
- IIB.3 Masonry wall - with creeping evergreen vine coverage. Where wall is installed at min. height of 3'-0", the DDD Code does not require hedge combination.
- IIB.4 Brick wall - If wall is installed at min. height of 3'-0", the DDD Code does not require hedge combination.
- IIB.5 Masonry wall (stucco finish) - with bamboo (trimmed & maintained) in planter with uplighting.
- IIB.6 Masonry wall (stucco finish)- with evergreen vine - custom signage can be integrated into wall.
- IIB.7 Brick wall - If installed at min. height of 3'-0", the DDD Code does not require hedge combination. See IIB.10 also.
- IIB.8 Brick wall - with creeping evergreen vine on diagonal cable trellis.
- IIB.9 Custom designed gabion wall - welded mesh cages made of sturdy galvanized, coated, or stainless steel wire that won't bend when filled with rocks, masonry or concrete debris.
- IIB.10 Brick wall - If wall is installed at min. height of 3'-0", the DDD Code does not require the hedge combination.


IIB.7

IIB.10

Per the DDD Code: 64.3.I.11.(B).3.II :
MASKING WITH

FENCES & WALLS

OPTION IIA

METAL FENCE WITH EVERGREEN PLANTS OR VINES

OPTION IIB

MASONRY WALL WITH OR WITHOUT EVERGREEN PLANTS

OPTION IIC

COMBINATION: MASONRY WALL AND METAL FENCE WITH OR WITHOUT EVERGREEN PLANTS

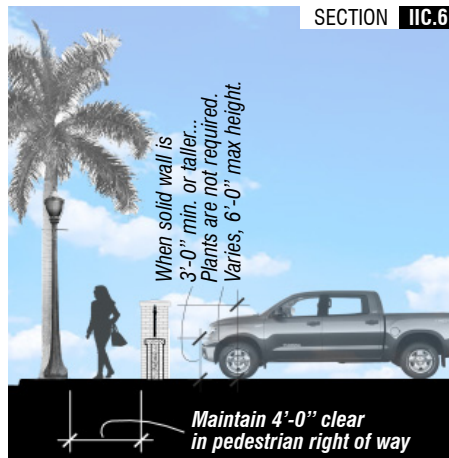
OPTION IIC: CODE DIAGRAMS

Per the DDD Code, 64.3.I.11.(B).3.ii- When the masonry wall is installed at a minimum height of 3'-0", evergreen plants ARE NOT required for masking. See diagrams IIC.6& IIC.7. When the masonry wall is installed at a height LESS than 3'-0", evergreen plants ARE required for masking. See diagrams IIC.8 & IIC.9.

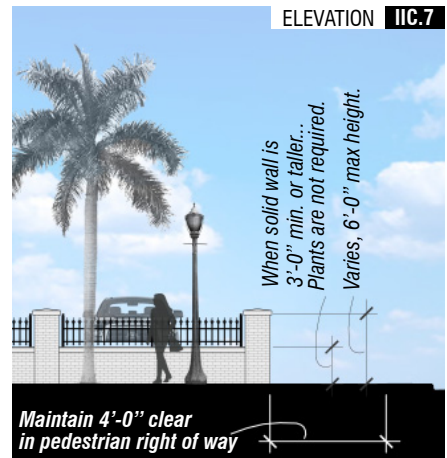
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SECTION IIC.6



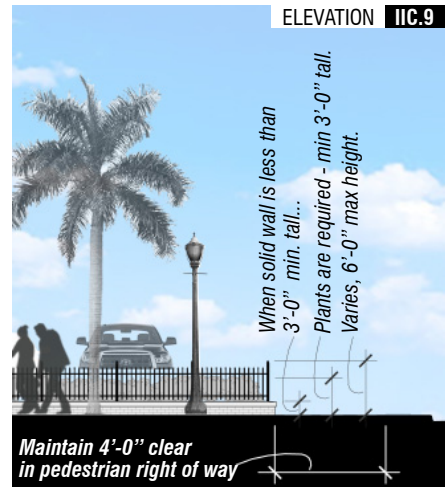
ELEVATION IIC.7



SECTION IIC.8



ELEVATION IIC.9





IIC.1

IIC.1 Masonry wall (stucco finish) and metal fence (per-finished aluminum), within downtown Mobile, AL - with evergreen vine and hedge, both sides of fence. If masonry wall is installed at the minimum height of 3'-0" vine and hedge are not required.



IIC.2

IIC.2 Masonry wall and custom metal fence. Note: Lower wall shown does not meet minimum height of 3'-0" requirement. Shown for material example only.



IIC.3

IIC.3 Masonry wall (stucco finish) and cast iron fence (painted) - with evergreen hedge, inside fence.



IIC.4

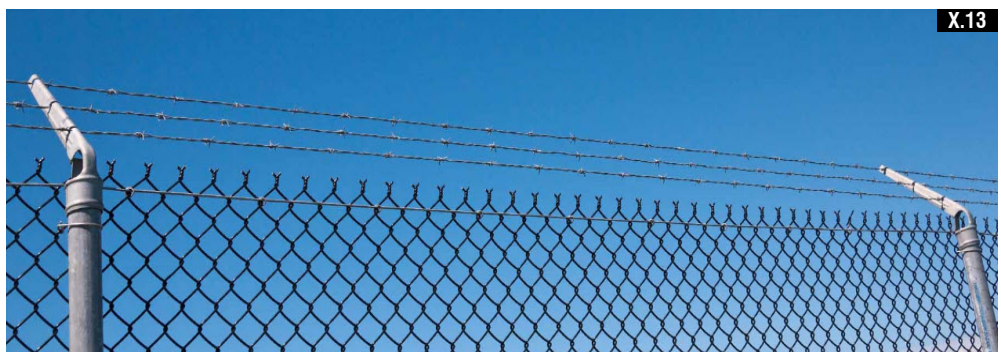
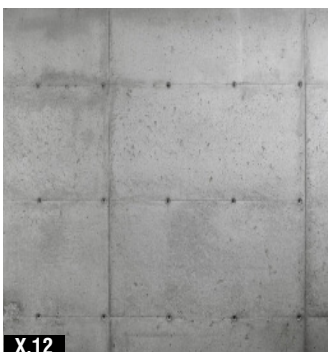
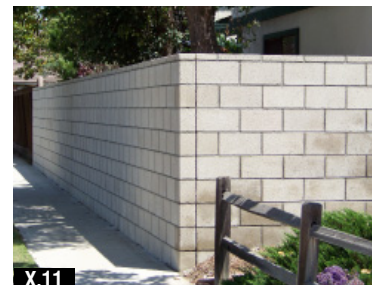
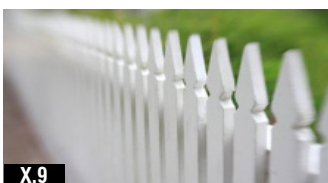
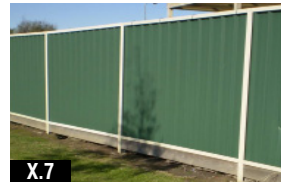
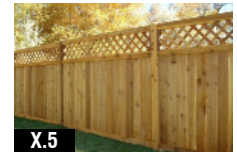
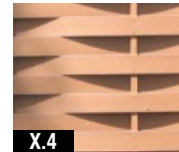
IIC.4 Masonry wall (stucco finish) and metal fence (pre-finished aluminum louver panels) - with palms on outside of fence.

IIC.5 Brick wall with metal fence (painted steel) - without hedge. Note: Lower wall shown does not meet minimum height of 3'-0" requirement. Shown for material example only.



IIC.5

- X.1 Exposed concrete masonry unit (CMU) wall - not allowed.
- X.2 Chain link fence - not allowed.
- X.3 Concertina wire for security - not allowed.
- X.4 Wood or wood composite fence - not allowed.
- X.5 Wood privacy fence - not allowed.
- X.6 Wood privacy fence - not allowed.
- X.7 Corrugated metal panel fence - not allowed.
- X.8 Concertina wire for security - not allowed.
- X.9 Wood picket fence - not allowed.
- X.10 Wood picket fence - not allowed.
- X.11 Exposed concrete masonry unit (CMU) wall - not allowed.
- X.12 Exposed cast-in-place concrete wall - not allowed.
- X.13 Chain link fence with barbed wire for security - not allowed.



MASKING MATERIALS

NOT ALLOWED

The Downtown Development Code does not permit materials such as those shown here to be used for masking the parking lot along street frontage within the Downtown District.

