

PSJRA 2008 Facade Grant Program Design Guidelines



Photo by Florida Rental Services, Inc. 11105-25-02
Aerial of Port St. Joe Historic Downtown *by Debra Hooper*



The Draper Plan – circa 1930 *courtesy of the St. Joe Company*

PSJRA 2008 Facade Grant Program Design Guidelines

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PSJRA 2008 Facade Grant Program

Design Guidelines

Overview

What :

Matching reimbursement grants are being offered by the PSJRA for “brick and mortar” improvements to the visual appearance and pedestrian-appropriate qualities of the facades and streetscapes of commercial properties downtown.

Why :

- To assist downtown merchants in capturing additional retail / tourist traffic.
- To create a unified shopping district, promote cross-shopping, and increase gross sales.
- To assist in reducing existing material and functional deficiencies on the street and entry conditions of existing downtown entry facades.
- To assist in ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliance and accessibility for parking and entry conditions of existing downtown entries.

Where :

3 neighboring zones of improvement are targeted: US 98 Corridor; Reid Avenue; Williams Avenue – all from 1st Street to Costin Blvd and including adjacent side streets and rears of all businesses that face the 98 corridor.

How :

Emphasize pedestrian-friendly elements: additional shade, properly scaled elements, pedestrian amenities, accessible parking.

Auto-oriented signage on US 98, emphasizing the existence of the historic downtown.

Pedestrian-oriented signage on Reid Avenue emphasizing the products available.

Complimentary but not identical color schemes for each zone.

Hierarchy of composition and massing to the pedestrian comfort scale.

Harmony of styles emphasized over contrast of styles.

Encouragement of a unique “Florida BayTown” vernacular for commercial buildings.

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Design Guidelines

Introduction to Planning & Design Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to be flexible, variable and to encourage design freedom and diversity, while also encouraging coordination of a development style (“theme”) within the historic downtown. The original investment and development patterns will be protected as well as enhanced. Quality in design will attract increased retail and tourist-oriented customers, and will enhance development and financial success.

Increased and carefully planned traffic flow and pedestrian access to the historic downtown is a primary issue in the evaluation of proposed designs. Specific standards are based on the unique aspects and qualities of the different streets. Coordination of traffic, pedestrian access and design result in a unified and organized composition.

There are 3 Zones of Targeted Improvement in the 2008 Façade Grant program:

- A. US 98 Corridor
Extends from 1st Street to Costin Blvd (5th Street)
- B. Reid Avenue
Extends from 1st Street to Costin Blvd (5th Street)
- C. Williams Avenue
Extends from 1st Street to Costin Blvd (5th Street)

Each zone has similar, but varying parameters.

The US 98 Corridor

1. Auto-oriented signage closer to the road and advertising the entire Historic Downtown
2. Pedestrian-friendly facades and pedestrian-oriented signage indicating the individual businesses.
3. Designs which break down larger uses into smaller scaled elements are strongly encouraged.
4. BayTown commercial vernacular is encouraged as appropriate.
5. Full size tree plantings are highly encouraged.

Reid Avenue Zone

1. Distribute pedestrian traffic up and down the length of Reid from 1st to Costin.
2. Facades and signage are all pedestrian-oriented and shall encourage getting out of the car and exploring on foot.
3. A BayTown commercial vernacular is strongly encouraged.
4. This zone includes all facades on side streets (1st thru 5th) from 98 to Reid Avenue.

Williams Avenue Zone

1. Encourage destination-type venues that would benefit from repeated pedestrian exposure to Reid Avenue.
2. Larger uses/facades are encouraged with more of a trendy/commercial approach to the BayTown vernacular is encouraged.
3. This zone includes all facades on side streets (1st thru 5th) from Reid to Williams.

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Façade Improvement Priorities

1. Removal of deficient/end-of-life elements.
2. Complete repair or replacement of any maintenance items.
3. Ensure complete accessibility at entry conditions in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
4. Improve the integrity, composition and massing of the architectural aspects of the façade (design that works, makes sense and appeals to customers).
5. Provide additional shade and/or pedestrian amenities wherever practical.
6. Harmonize the architectural, visual and signage elements of the façade with adjoining properties.
7. Complementary design to the “Florida BayTown” vernacular’s ethic.

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Florida BayTown Vernacular

The Florida BayTown Vernacular is a unique style, developed for Port St. Joe Historic District, evolving out of the Bay climate and nautical uses (and the architectural and technical responses to them) and the positive aspects of the legacy of a “cracker” culture of this area of the Southeast US (self-sufficiency, self-reliance, a sometimes brutal honesty, and a penchant for a simple, direct approach to people and problems – Dana Ste. Claire, 1998) carried forward to a more urban and commercial use in the downtown.

As such, the planning should promote shade (arcades, porches, trellises, deep canopies, etc.) and natural air flow to maximize outdoor comfort during the hot summer days. There should be many inviting spots for pedestrians to stop and rest in comfort, visit with one another, and have opportunity to be attracted to adjacent businesses.

All designs should maximize an honest, straightforward and functional approach using indigenous materials and elements.

Exposed structural elements (beams, columns, supports) as a component of the visual composition is encouraged, provided that the structural elements left exposed are crafted in lieu of merely constructed, i.e. that connections are carefully designed to be clean, visually appealing, and constructed with due care.

Facade designs shall not be allowed to create visual clutter; and the use of the architecture and building colors to stand out and effectively act as signage is specifically prohibited. Any corporate franchises shall be required to modify their brand standards to comply with these requirements.



Both are excellent examples of Florida BayTown vernacular; the permanent use of temporary signage is discouraged.

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Excellent adaptation of a challenging existing condition (curtainwall glazing) overcome by the addition of awnings. Recessed entry increases the effect. Great opportunity for bldg. ID at top.



Excellent use of Florida Bay Town vernacular going three stories and incorporating a full wrap-around porch to soften the massing. Good landscaping.



Good example of off-street parking orientation.



Good example of wrap-around porch effect.



Good example of two tenants in a single facade. Street signage is good; pedestrian signage would be effective.

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Historic District Signage Guidelines

All signage is to be custom-made, and all materials are to be considered; they should be selected for design honesty and sustainability and longevity for our climatic conditions.

Size at 98 Corridor: No greater than two (2) square feet per one lineal foot of building.
Size at all other locations: No greater than one (1) square foot per one lineal foot of building.
All signs, with the exception of the 98 corridor, will be under four square feet and will be hand-crafted.

No animated or internally lit signage is permitted. Fluorescent signs will not be allowed. Signage will be externally lit (halo lighting is acceptable), with cut-off deflectors/design to limit 'night-sky' pollution.



All basic geometries (e.g. square, round, rectangular, oval, etc.) of signage require a border trim / frame to create contrast and depth.

Color schemes shall comply with the palettes provided for each area.

A building address identification sign shall be required at the entry to each business, with a 4" minimum height for each numeral, and all numerals shall be easily legible.



At left are examples of custom-made signs that provide information and attract interest. Colors are muted and do not overshadow the concept.

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Principle 1: The Signage System should be flexible enough to allow businesses to express their identity.

The signage system should encourage and not limit good design. Designers can combine elements—color, light, texture, material, three dimensions, form—within a flexible framework that takes into account the appropriateness of graphics for the use as well as compatibility with the visual environment and surrounding areas.

Principle 2: The Signage System should result in displays appropriate to the use.

All businesses in the Historic District share the same zoning.

Principle 3: The Signage System promotes compatibility with the surrounding visual environment.

The Historic Business District will “tune” the performance standards to reinforce its historic identity and to distinguish itself from other areas of the city. In historic areas, signage enhance the unique quality of the place by limiting the types of display through the use of design elements—lettering style, color, lighting—can be regulated or encouraged.

Principle 4: The Signage System promotes compatibility with adjacent areas.

Turtle lighting and lighting compatible with an historic designation are critical elements.

Principle 5: The Signage System promotes legibility.

To achieve pleasant and effective street graphics, the limits to what a driver can see and remember should be understood. Signage within the Historic District should invite exploration and discovery rather than being bigger or brighter than anyone else.

Wall Graphics

Correct proportions with the building on which the wall graphic is displayed is an essential element. A “signable area” is an area unbroken by doors or windows. It is calculated by selecting a continuous facade free to architectural details, then drawing an imaginary rectangle within the specified height limitations and computing the square footage of this area. The maximum size of the wall’s graphic display is then determined by applying the appropriate percentage of the signable area selected on the wall. More than one wall graphic can be allowed, and the graphic may be located outside of the “signable area.”

1. If a wall graphic consists of a boxed display, the total area of the display, including both copy and background, must be no greater than 40% of the signaled area.

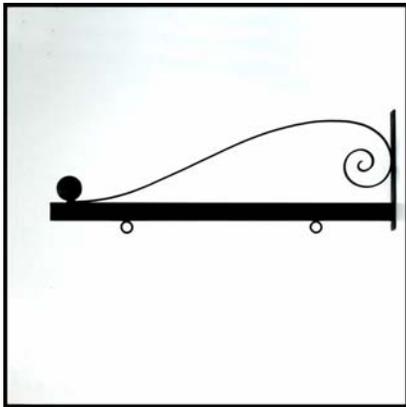
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2. If a wall graphic consists of individual letters, only the total area of the imaginary rectangles continuous to and surrounding each letter is assessed against the signable area.
3. No wall graphic may violate the architecture of the building to which it is attached (i.e. would not cut across columns).
4. The height of boxed graphics or individual cutout letters placed in the space between windows should not exceed two-thirds of the distance between the top of the lower window and the sill of the upper window.
5. Roof graphics are discouraged at heights of more than 20 feet from the ground.

Blade Signs

The visibility of business is dramatically improved by adding signage on a hanging bracket that projects out from the front of the building. The bottom of the sign must clear 6'8" minimum to comply with code and safety requirements. A standard bracket for blade signs will be specified by the PSJRA. The blade sign will not be counted in the overall signable area and is encouraged for each business.



Awnings or Overhangs

Awnings and overhangs can be an attractive visual feature. If graphics are included on the awnings, they are considered as part of the total signage allowed for the signable area. Projecting features must follow the guidelines below:

1. Clear the sidewalk by eight feet.
2. Project from the wall at an angle of 90 degrees.
3. Approved awning samples are provided by the PSJRA.

Window Graphics

Window graphics are considered either temporary or permanent. Window graphics should not include hand-written signage, unless this is professionally done, with the font and size of the letters consistent.

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Permanent Window Graphics

1. Hand-written signs are prohibited.
2. To increase/enhance sales, no more than 10% of the glass should be covered with graphics, text, or flyers.
3. In “like-new” condition, without scratches or chips.

Temporary Window Graphics

1. May cover no more than 15 percent of the total window area.
2. Hand-written signs are not allowed.
3. Must be removed after conclusion of event or after 30 days, whichever comes first.
4. Windows may not be covered with boards, newspapers or cardboard. During a remodel, for example, an appropriate banner, covering the entire window area, may be installed to announce the grand opening dates or business advertising.
5. Flyers or notices may not be attached to the window with tape/adhesive but may be framed and placed in the window, attached from the ceiling, attached with suction cups or displayed on an easel.



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Historic District Block/Lot Considerations

1. Increase the number of shade opportunities available up and down the street (particularly on Reid Avenue).
 - a. overhangs
 - b. awnings
 - c. trellises
 - d. porches
 - e. arcades

2. Increase the number of pedestrian amenities available.
 - a. seat walls and planters
 - b. seating benches
 - c. consolidated free publications kiosks
 - d. trash receptacles
 - e. smokers' urns

3. Consolidation of existing lots into larger lots to effect a "big box" venue is prohibited in these three areas of improvement. The trend toward smaller, more "boutique" shops of complementary specialties is encouraged.

4. Make the most of the opportunities available for empty lots and storefronts.
 - a. Target thru-lots to expand pedestrian circulation opportunities from one targeted zone to the next.
 - b. Promote pocket parks where appropriate.
 - c. Promote false façade/gateway elements where pocket parks are not appropriate.
 - d. Promote landscape walls where none of the above is appropriate.
 - e. Utilize empty storefronts to advertise viable businesses and civic events.



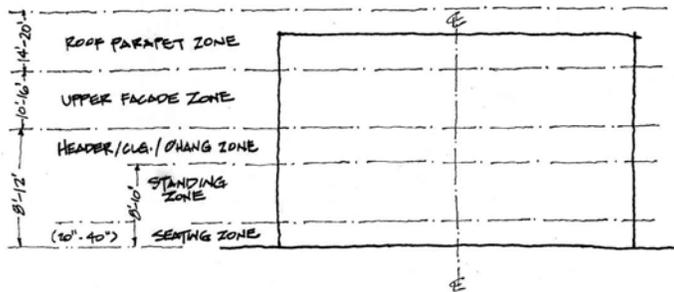
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Façade Form & Fenestration

1. **Massing and Composition** – responsive to the pedestrian scale

Vertical Hierarchy – provide elements which respond progressively to the following pedestrian conditions:

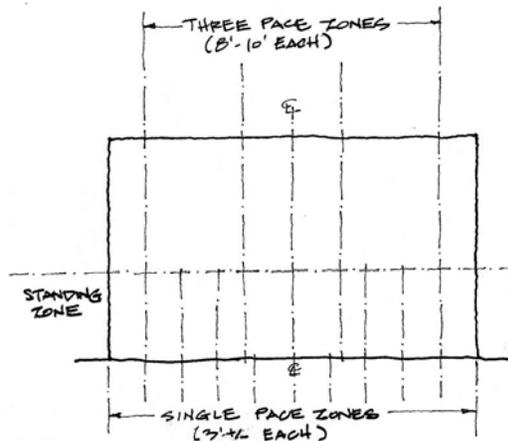
- sitting (20" – 40" above the walking surface)
- standing (40" – 7' above the walking surface)
- ceiling (8' – 12' above the walking surface)
- parapet (14' – 20' above the walking surface)
- roof (higher than a parapet height, if appropriate).



VERTICAL HIERARCHY

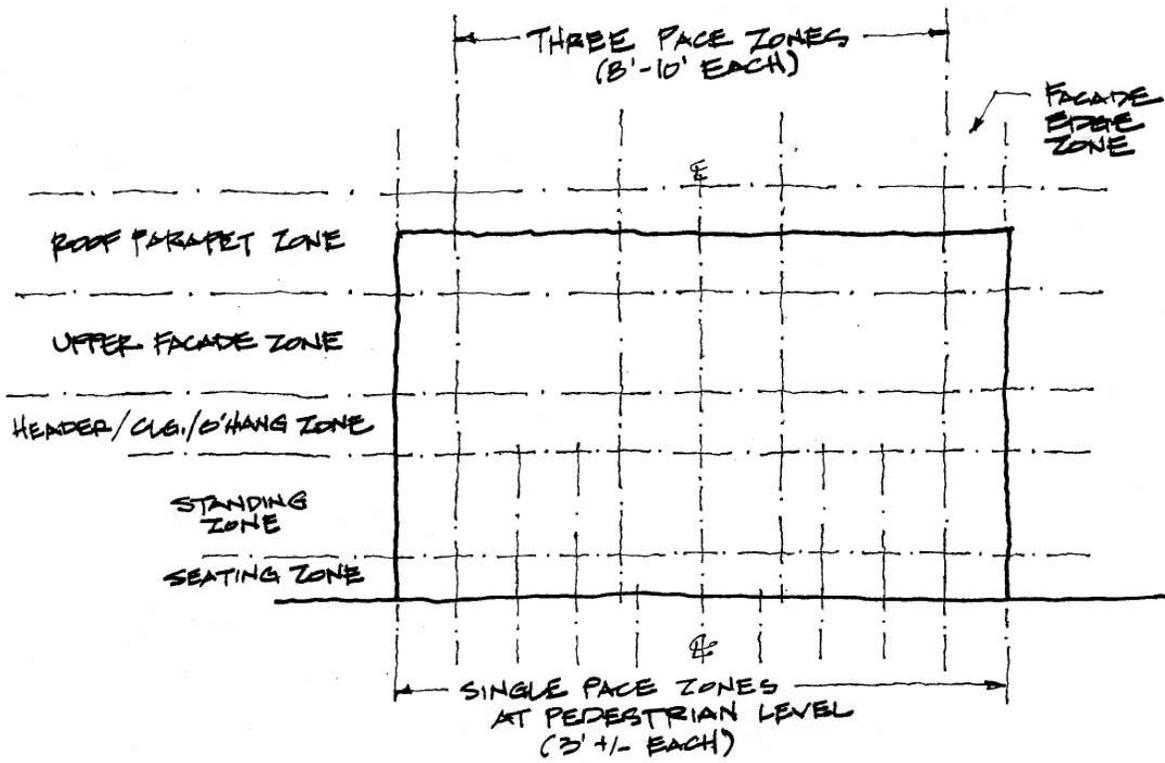
Horizontal Hierarchy – provide elements which respond side to side progressively toward the entry condition from each side to the following pedestrian conditions:

- one step (3' +/-)
- three steps (8' – 10' +/-)
- overall length of façade / length of a + b above.



HORIZONTAL HIERARCHY

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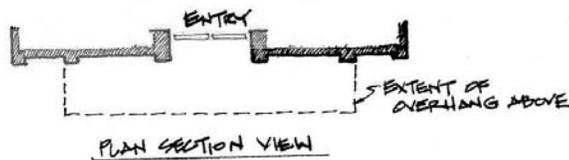


FACADE HIERARCHIES

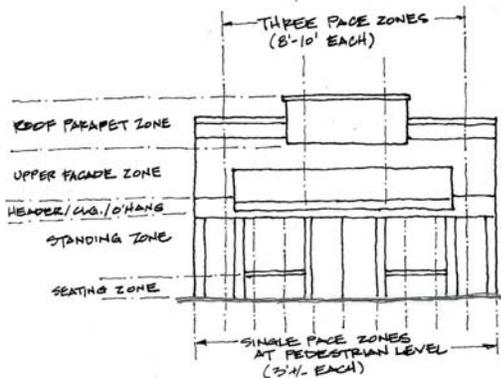
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2. **Scale Elements** – emphasize and delineate the spatial progression from the parked automobile, over the curb, across the sidewalk to the building entry using architectural and landscape features.

Features which can successfully emulate residential spatial comfort and familiarity (without compromising commercial effectiveness and viability) such as fences, porches, view towers, pitched roofs, divided-lite windows, hearths, soft footpaths, gazebos, etc. are to be encouraged where inspired.



SAMPLE FACADE COMPOSITION



SAMPLE FACADE COMPOSITION W/ HEIRARCHIAL GRID

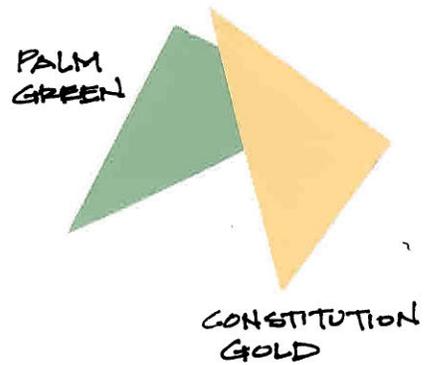
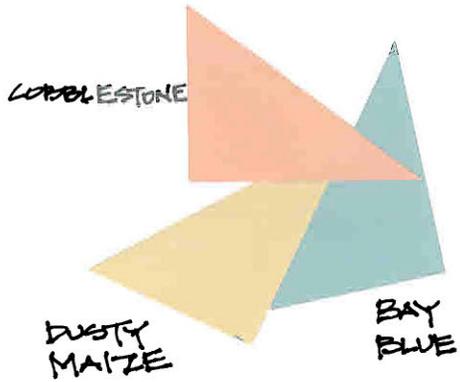
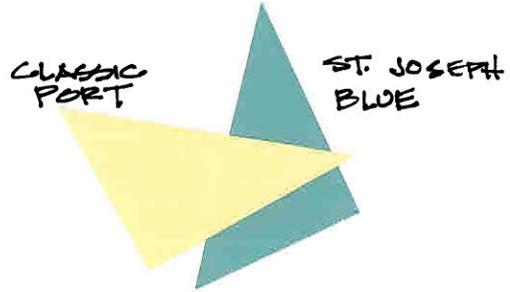
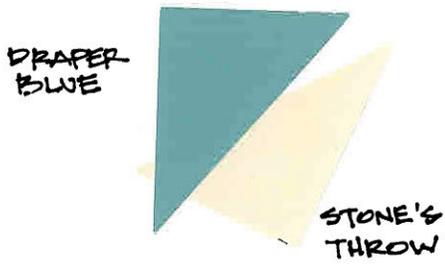
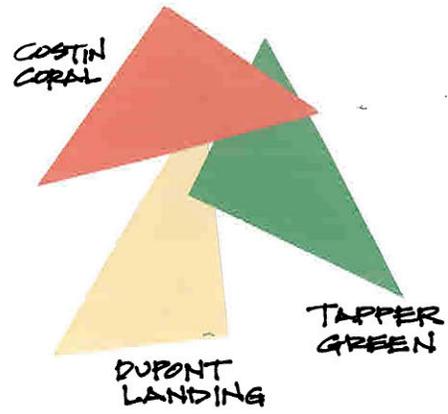
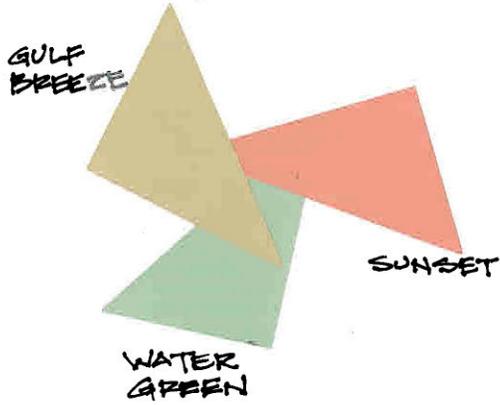
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3. **Style and Tone** – complement the adjacent conditions as appropriate (can be similar without being the same). Adhere to the “Florida BayTown” vernacular wherever possible to achieve the results desired.
- a. No fluorescent or intense colors.
 - b. Harmony and complementation affirmed over stark contrasts.
 - c. Playful elements complementing the pedestrian experience are encouraged.
 - d. Trim – used as appropriate at material and/or surface plane changes should be functional and simple in craftsmanship.
 - e. Applied Ornamentation – to be discouraged if it does not fulfill a functional necessity.
 - f. Proportion and Scale – within the overall composition of the façade should be reasonable and appropriate (not contrasting)...each element should inform the whole of the composition wherever possible.
 - g. Materials should be natural and unfinished wherever it would not be problematic or unsustainable (metals and woods in particular). In any case, materials should be selected for their functional honesty and capacity to age gracefully. No reflective glass or glass block.
 - h. Fenestration – Horizontal and vertical Hierarchal rhythms (per #1 above) strongly encouraged...no continuous bands of windows...no curtainwall (solid window) storefronts or commercial grade brushed aluminum glazing...deep setbacks from the face of the façade encouraged.
 - i. Entry – should emphasize “Welcome” and be inviting...should not only be a punched opening...should be the most prominent feature of the façade.
 - j. Walls – one primary color, with a consistent color palette within the ranges specified for each improvement zone; should utilize simple material/pattern changes which contribute to a compositional hierarchy, distinguish volume and emphasize the various elements of the design.



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Awning Colors



Parchment
4683-0000



Charcoal Tweed
4607-0000



Spa
4673-0000



Black
4608-0000



Brass
4658-0000



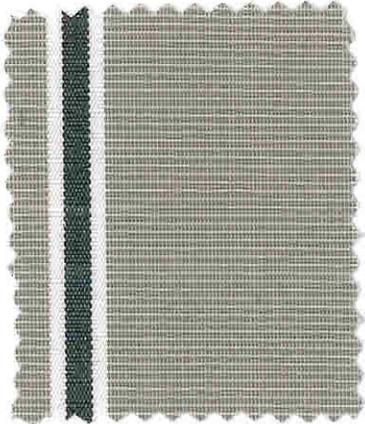
Sea Spray
4611-0000



Linen Tweed
4654-0000



True Brown
4621-0000



Putty Regimental
4961-0000



Roanoke Blue Mist
4983-0000



Cooper Black
4988-0000