

Historic District Design Manual

Purpose and Intent of Design Manual

The purpose of this Manual is to provide property owners with information to assist in maintaining, repairing and making appropriate additions to their historic and non-historic buildings located in the Historic Pearl District or Historic 4th Street District. This manual is intended to improve the physical appearance of the districts, to protect and preserve the value of property, and to protect the buildings within the districts from inappropriate and harmful development. The guidelines within the Design Manual will assist in promoting unique design to the Historic Pearl District and Historic 4th Street District in downtown.

The concept for the Historic Pearl District and Historic 4th Street District is to create historically sensitive districts in addition to contemporary design. Historical design elements should be enhanced on the buildings. Purposeful awnings, lighting, building materials, landscaping, color palette, and signage are all significant elements of the plan and are addressed within the Design Manual. Additionally, artistic innovation and creativity are encouraged. Buildings in a Historic District should be highlighted with glass and metal materials and period lighting for accent. The District should evoke a contemporary ambiance with historical significance. Property owners in the districts should consult designers and/or architects for the various aesthetic elements requested of this plan.

The guidelines contained within this Design Manual serve as a tool to direct development and redevelopment consistent with the zoning district for the Historic Pearl District and Historic 4th Street District. This manual has been constructed to clearly explain the procedures for property owners and public officials to follow. When filing a Façade Improvement Application for a building in a Historic District, the petitioner shall adhere to the guidelines set forth in this Manual. City staff are available to assist in interpreting these Guidelines and completing the Façade Improvement Application.

General Guidelines

The following Guidelines, paraphrased from the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation*, are general rules to be applied to all rehabilitation and new construction projects within a Historic District.

- Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the deterioration is too severe, replace the deteriorated feature with a new replica which matches the old feature in design, color, texture and material. Where replacement is necessary because a feature is missing, use written documentation, physical evidence or historic photographs to create an exact replica.
- The historic character of a building shall be retained and preserved. Historic features that are important to the building's character shall not be removed. Rather, alterations that create a false sense of history, such as adding architectural elements from another building that are fundamentally different in style (i.e. terra cotta elements), shall not be allowed.
- Distinctive features, finishes, materials, styles and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved. Architectural features that were not a part of the original design but have gained historical significance over time shall also be retained and preserved.
- The surface cleaning of buildings and structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other abrasive cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials will not be allowed.
- New construction, exterior site improvements, exterior alterations and additions shall be compatible in size, scale, color, material and character with the building and district. Designs that achieve these standards and that do not destroy significant historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural material and character will be permitted.
- New additions or alterations to historic buildings shall be done in such a manner that if the new construction were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic buildings would be unharmed.

Traditional Facade

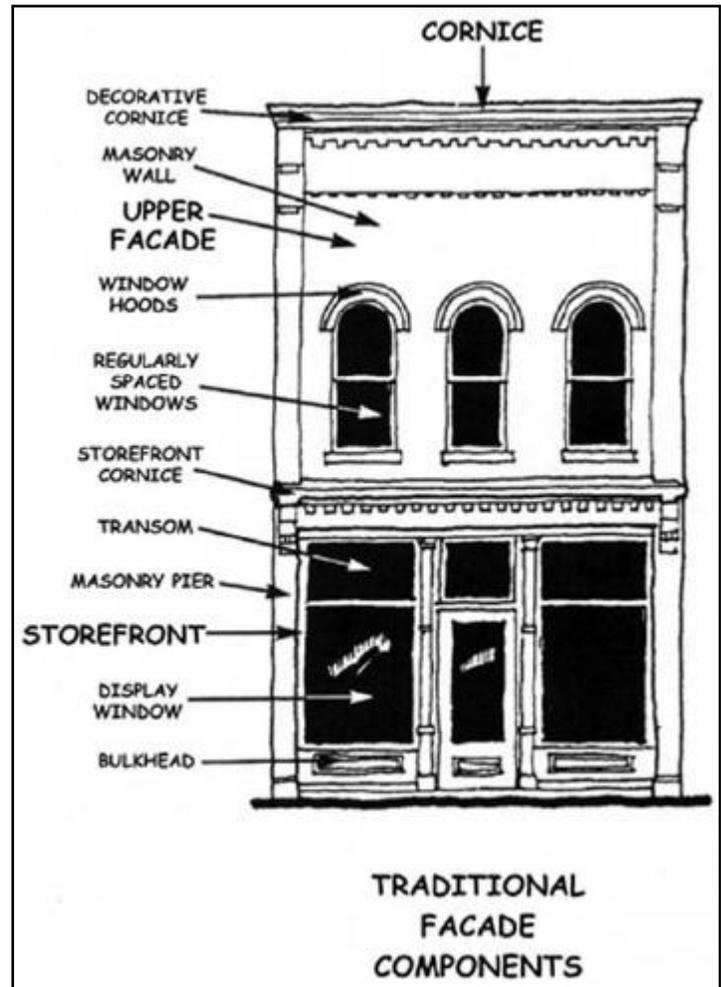
The traditional commercial storefront can be considered the most important element that sets apart and gives historical significance and character to the Historic Pearl District and Historic 4th Street District. The majority of the historic buildings in these areas date from the late 1800's to the mid 1900's. When originally constructed, these buildings shared a consistency in design and proportion that created a strong visual image.

Changes have occurred to the buildings within the districts over the years in response to various merchandising trends, technology, and changing tenants. In most cases, the changes affected the storefront area while the upper facade remained intact. Many revisions to the storefront areas are superficial, leaving the structural integrity of the original storefront design intact. In some of these cases the original storefronts may still be in place but covered over or in need of maintenance and repair.

The basic commercial facade consists of three parts: the storefront with an entrance and large window displays, the upper masonry facade with regularly spaced windows, and the decorative cornice that caps the building. These components may appear in various shapes, sizes, and styles but the result is essentially the same facade. Within the Historic Districts, the typical building facade is a multi-story masonry construction.

Key features to consider:

- The storefront should be composed almost entirely of glass. If glass is not appropriate for the business, consider the use of window treatments as a solution.
- The entry should be maintained and restored in its original location and configuration. If the original entry is gone, the new entry should be designed and placed considering traditional design themes and its relationship to the overall building facade and symmetry.
- Transom windows that are covered or blocked should be reopened and restored.
- Storefront bulkheads should be restored or renovated.
- Original elements such as cast iron columns, storefront cornices, entry doors, and lighting fixtures should be restored.
- Signage should be integrated into the storefront design.
- Lighting should be integrated into the storefront design.
- Appropriate awnings should be integrated into the storefront design.



The storefront design must be true to the time period in which the building was constructed. When planning the renovation of a storefront, it could be very helpful to contact the City of Sioux City staff or the Historic Preservation Commission to see if there are historic photographs available. Old photographs can be a valuable tool to help determine original design, materials, and signage used on the buildings.

Storefront Design

The traditional Historic District building façade likely has a well-defined opening that the original storefront filled. The opening is bounded on each side by piers which were usually constructed of masonry. It is bounded on the top by the storefront cornice which is the structural member supporting the upper facade, and bounded below by the sidewalk.

The storefront is composed almost entirely of windows. The large glazed opening of the storefront serves to display goods the business has to sell as well as to allow natural light deep into the store thus minimizing the need for artificial light sources.

The visual openness of the storefront is also important because it is part of the overall proportion system of the facade. The proportion of window to wall areas in the traditional facade calls for more glass and less wall at the storefront level, balanced by more wall and less glass on the upper facade. When these buildings were built, their owners recognized the importance of maintaining these proportions so that the downtown would maintain a consistent theme, thus making it an attractive place for its customers to do business.

Detailing:

The Historic Pearl District and Historic 4th Street District have an assortment of masonry structures from the 1880's through the 1950's. The architectural ornamentation includes a variety of decorative features characteristic of early commercial storefronts. Articulated tin cornices, corbelled brickwork, pronounced window lintels and sills are examples of the ornamentation most often seen in the Historic Districts.

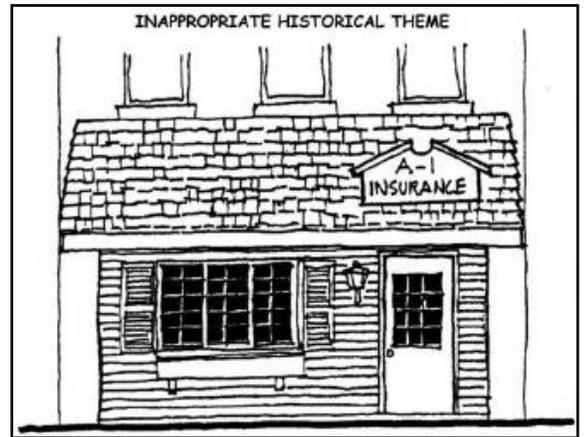
Guidelines:

- The characteristic architectural features should not be removed or altered unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Building alterations should restore architectural details of cornices, lintels, brick arches, chimneys and ironwork of the original building as appropriate and feasible.
- Infill architecture should reflect some of the detailing of surrounding buildings in window shape, cornice lines and brick work.

Storefront Improvements:

In considering improvements to the storefront, it is very important that the original opening be recognized and maintained. The remodeled storefront should be designed to fit inside the original opening and not extend beyond or in front of it.

The basic storefront design should include large windows with thin framing members, recessed entrance with overhead transom, a storefront cornice, exposed structural element or a horizontal sign panel at the top of the storefront to separate it from the upper facade, and low bulkheads at the base to protect the windows and act as a platform for window displays. The basic configuration can be constructed from traditional or contemporary material, achieving the same results.

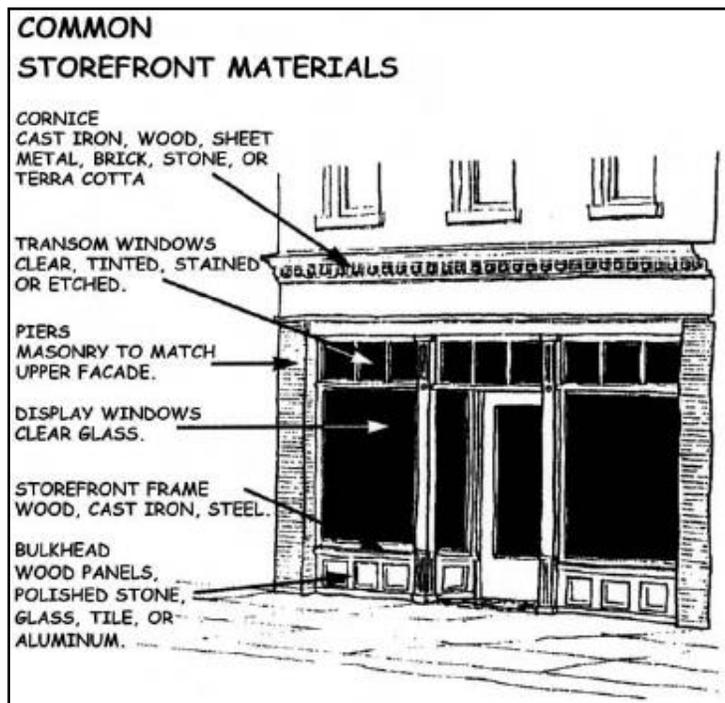


Storefront Materials:

When designing a new storefront or renovating an existing storefront, remember that the goal should be a transparent façade. There is no need to introduce additional types of building materials to those that originally existed on your building (i.e. the use of terra cotta in these districts would be inappropriate). Whether building new or renovating an existing storefront, use materials that perform their intended function well and use these materials consistently throughout the design. By doing so, you accomplish simplicity in the design and create uniformity in the overall storefront appearance. Always try to utilize existing materials. It is better to repair them than to replace them.

Typical examples of materials and their location on the storefront:

- Storefront Frame - wood, cast iron, anodized aluminum
- Display Windows - clear glass
- Transom Windows - clear, tinted, stained, or etched glass
- Entrance Door - wood or aluminum with a large glass panel at least ¾ in size
- Bulkheads - wood panels, polished stone, glass, tile, metal clad plywood parts
- Storefront Cornice - wood, cast iron, sheet metal
- Side Piers - should be same material as upper facade (typically brick or stone)



Certain materials should never be used on the traditional commercial building because they have no relationship to the original building's design themes and therefore flaw the consistency of appearance of the building and the Historic District. Such inappropriate materials include:

cultured stone, fake brick, rough textured wood siding, wooden shingles on mansard roofs, gravel aggregate materials, efface, plywood sheathing, plastic, fiberglass, and stucco materials. Additional exterior materials may be permitted on building facades in the Historic Pearl District and Historic 4th Street District. Materials other than those recommended above must receive approval of the Community Development Department.

Façade Openings:

It is important to recognize the difference between upper story openings and storefront, or street level openings. There is a much greater transparent or glazed open area at storefront level, for pedestrians to have a better view of the merchandise displayed behind and there are wide windows with little or no spacing between openings. Upper story openings are predominantly narrow with a vertical orientation that accompanies double-hung windows.

Guidelines

- The size and proportion of windows and door openings of an infill building should be similar to those on the adjacent façades.
- Avoid infill panels when providing new windows in existing masonry openings.
- Storefront restoration should return the facade to its original character appropriate.
- Avoid concealing the original façade.

Transom Windows:

Transom windows were smaller windows above the display windows that functioned as early energy savers. They allowed daylight to enter deep into the interior of the space. When operable, they allowed excessive heat to

escape. Transoms also continued the transparent quality of the storefront up to the top "frame" of the front facade, and are therefore an important element in the proportion of the building front.

Guidelines:

- Often transom windows can still be found in downtown buildings underneath exterior cover-ups, and or above dropped ceilings. They should be retained whenever possible. If the ceiling inside the store has been lowered, the ceiling could slope up 2 to 3 feet back to meet the transom, or dark painted panels can be placed behind transom windows to help simulate transparency and depth.

Display Windows:

The display window is the link between the pedestrian environment outside and the business inside.

Guidelines:

- For remodeling, the original size, division and shape of display windows within the overall storefront frame should be preserved.
- Reflective glass is prohibited.
- Mirrored or heavily tinted glass on the first floor or street level should not be used because it conveys a conflicting modern design feeling. It also creates a blank wall effect, which may be offensive to the pedestrian.

Entries:

Commercial storefront entries were typically recessed from the front plane of the structure. This provided a sheltered transition area to the interior of the store, more area for display space, and helped to emphasize the location of the entrance.

Guidelines:

- Recessed entries should be retained in existing buildings and required in new storefront construction.
- Commercial entry doors use large, glass panels with vertical proportions to aid a sense of invitation and openness to the business.
- Solid or residential-type doors with small areas of glass should be avoided.
- Openings containing double entry doors should be retained.
- Painted wood doors and wood framing are preferred. Aluminum doors and doorframes, aluminum windows and their accessories with a clear aluminum finish are acceptable in certain cases; although colored anodized aluminum is preferred.

Kick Plates:

The kick plate, or bulkhead, functions to protect the display window by raising the glass area to a safer and more easily viewed height. Historically, materials have included wood panels, stone, brick and ceramic tile.

Guidelines:

- The original kick plate materials should always be retained, maintained, or uncovered when possible.

Maintenance and Repair.

Before considering any repair or remodeling, exterior materials should be examined by an architect or contractor as to their actual condition and potential for cleaning or repair. Once evaluated, cleaning and repair may proceed. All work should be professionally done, as proper equipment, working experience, and basic knowledge can be utilized.

Wood:

The Historic Pearl District and Historic Pearl District's existing buildings use wood on the exterior primarily for window and door framing, trim, cornices, bracing and brackets. Although masonry dominates storefronts, maintenance and repair of wood is essential in restoring original building design and integrity. If wood is found to

be in need of repair, replace or patch that particular piece of wood. Replacing the wood frame, for example, is not necessary if just one section of the frame is damaged. Replace with the same species of wood if possible for uniform finishing. Conversely, refinishing wood should not be a patch job. Rather, the entire frame, as an example, should be refinished. Paint or stain can be removed by several methods including wet sanding, heat/melting, or dissolving with chemicals. Sandblasting should not be used as it pits and separates the grain.

Architectural Metals:

Architectural metals such as cast iron, galvanized steel, aluminum, copper, zinc, and tin, are used sparingly at roof parapet and flashing. Aluminum is also used for flashing, but mainly for window frames and doors. Any metal encountered can be cleaned. As with masonry, care should be taken to avoid damage by using gentle methods. Sandblasting is to be avoided with cast iron being the only exception. Softer metals can be cleaned with solvents or sanding.

Ferrous metals (metals with iron content), such as steel door frames, should be painted. Copper, stainless steel, or other similar metals, were meant to be exposed. Aluminum can be left unfinished, painted, or factory finished with a baked coating.

Most metals in need of repair can be fabricated and replaced. Metals damaged beyond repair are replaced by wood, fiberglass, epoxy, or other metal. Dissimilar metals must be insulated from each other to avoid electrolysis, a naturally occurring reaction.

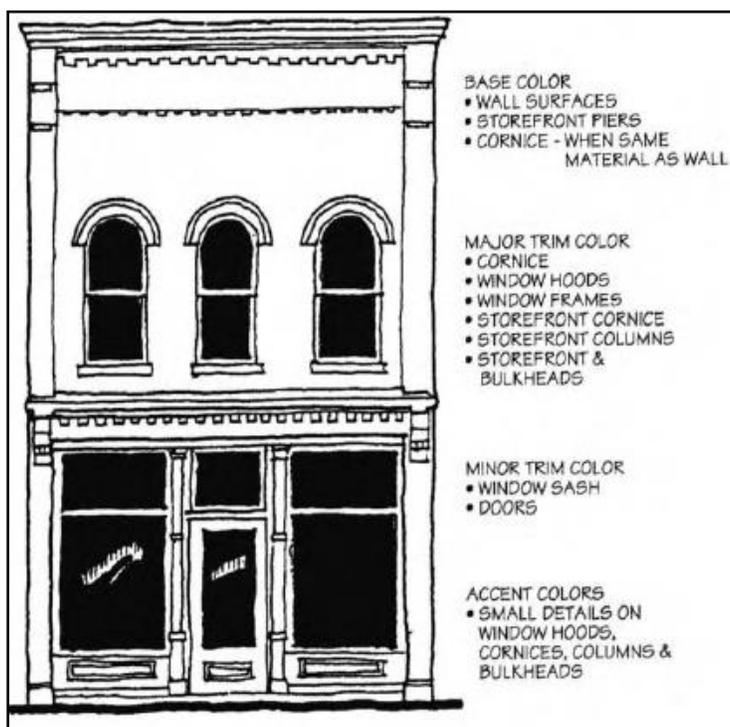
Paint Color:

As with materials, the color scheme chosen for the facade should be sensitive to the time period the building was built. To determine the color scheme to be used, consult a professional, ask City staff for direction, or contact the Historic Preservation Commission.

If you have a masonry facade that is already painted and the paint seems to be holding - paint it again. If masonry is to be repainted, the colors used should be within the natural color range of the existing material. Masonry should not be painted if it was not painted previously.

Guidelines:

- The color of buildings should relate to the adjacent buildings colors to create a harmonious effect.
- Avoid colors which visually overpower or strongly contrast with adjacent building colors and established downtown color schemes as a whole.
- The color of brick or other natural building materials should dictate the color family choice.
- Painting new infill buildings is prohibited.
- Develop a comprehensive color scheme that accentuates the architectural details of the building. Please see the drawing above for clarification.



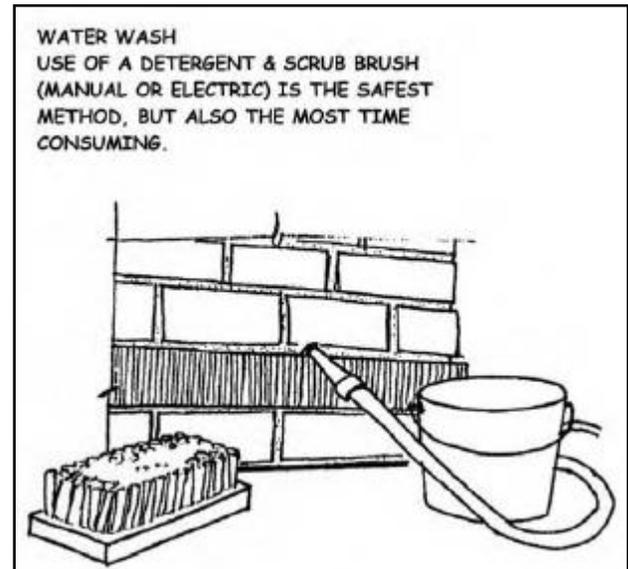
Masonry

Masonry features as well as masonry surfaces are important in defining the historic character of buildings. It should be noted that while masonry is among the most durable of historic building materials, it is also the most susceptible to damage by improper maintenance or repair techniques and by harsh or abrasive cleaning methods. A large number of the buildings within the Historic Districts downtown consist of brick masonry. First

and foremost, any masonry work must adhere to the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. It should not be an assumption that all masonry needs cleaning. Several buildings have already been cleaned and repaired, and others were never painted. Minor staining or discoloration can sometimes add character to a structure, or simply remain as an acceptable condition. If, however, the masonry is unacceptable, several cleaning methods may be used.

Water Cleaning:

Washing with water and a detergent is the simplest of all methods and is successful on lightly soiled masonry. This method is probably the easiest for the amateur, but also time consuming. Water cleaning involves two steps. The first is spraying to presoak the masonry, removing dirt deposits not tightly bonded to the surface. The second is time consuming and more difficult as it involves scrubbing with a hand or power brush. Whether done by an amateur or professional, care must be taken to use water efficiently. Cracks in walls or around openings can lead to interior water damage. Brick cleaning should be done before finishing the interior of that particular wall. Water cleaning should be avoided in cold weather, absorbed water can freeze and fracture surfaces. Test washing a small area of the wall will determine how long it takes and who will finish the job.



Other Cleaning Methods:

Sandblasting, water blasting or any other abrasive cleaning or paint removal method is not recommended. Blasting can cause very serious damage destroying the protective exterior surface and exposing the softer interior surfaces to rapid deterioration. Blasting also pits the surface, leaving horizontal areas and pockets for moisture and dirt to collect. This procedure is irreversible.

Chemical cleaning is best utilized for paint removal and elimination of deep stains. Care must be taken in the use of acids. Even in a diluted solution, acids can harm limestone and marble. Because of the complexity of this process, professionals must be utilized.

Tuck Pointing:

Weathering of masonry also involves the mortar joints. If masonry is to be cleaned, the addition of new mortar to the joints is necessary. This is called tuck pointing. The joints are first thoroughly cleaned out to existing sound mortar. Then, the new mortar is filled in and finished to match the depth, color, and style of the intended original joint. After tuck pointing, the surrounding masonry must be cleaned as it is impossible to fill joints without touching them with mortar.

Toothing:

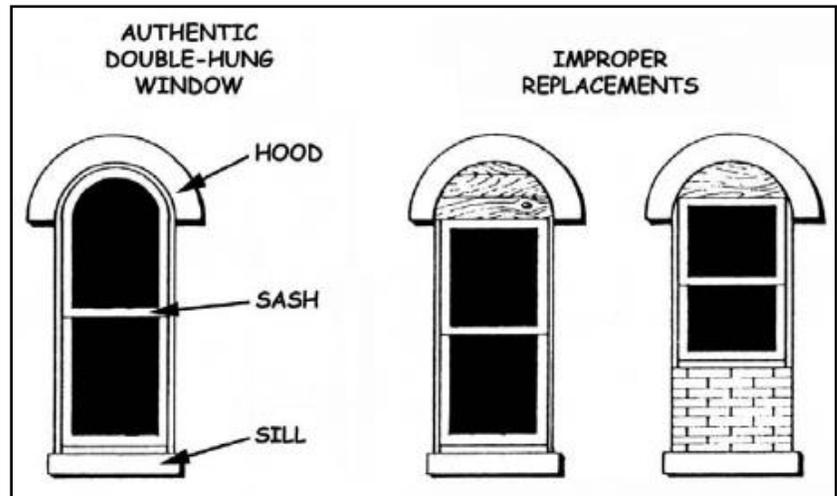
An occasion may arise when an opening must be cut into or enlarged in an existing masonry wall. As the opening is cut into the wall, every masonry unit is cut back to the adjacent vertical joint. This allows new masonry units to be set in such a way as to blend in with existing masonry while creating a stronger joint.

Windows

Windows are one of the most prominent and important features of storefronts. Unfortunately, they are often the most altered and neglected of the storefront materials. Window replacement can be expensive, but worth the cost when replaced with the proper unit. Good windows contain several attributes.

Guidelines:

- Energy Conservation. Modern units contain insulated glazing and "thermally broken" frames. Both glazing and frames contain an air space and gasketing to eliminate frost and moisture penetration. If original units are repaired, custom fabricated storm units can be installed to achieve the same result.
- Light Quality. Proper sizing of the storefront window can enhance the amount of natural light entering. Glass can also be rated to control the type of light entering through, such as E-rated glass which prevents discoloring of merchandise. This can be valuable to the store owner for merchandise display.
- Aesthetics. Window manufacturers offer a wide variety of color, shape, and style of standard units. With additional cost, custom units can be made to fit any opening or building style. Properly designed windows will enhance the original character of the buildings.



If windows are completely replaced, the new units shall contain the same proportions as the original. (This is not to be confused with replacement units that may be presently installed.) Consideration should be given to horizontal and vertical mullions that provide design continuity throughout the building. Always use the entire original window opening, even if the opening was partially filled in from previous remodeling.

Awnings

The canvas awning was an important design element of the traditional storefront. Photographic records show how the use of awnings softened an otherwise hard and rigid streetscape. Their main function was to shade the building and the merchandise located within; however, they were retractable to allow more daylight in when needed.

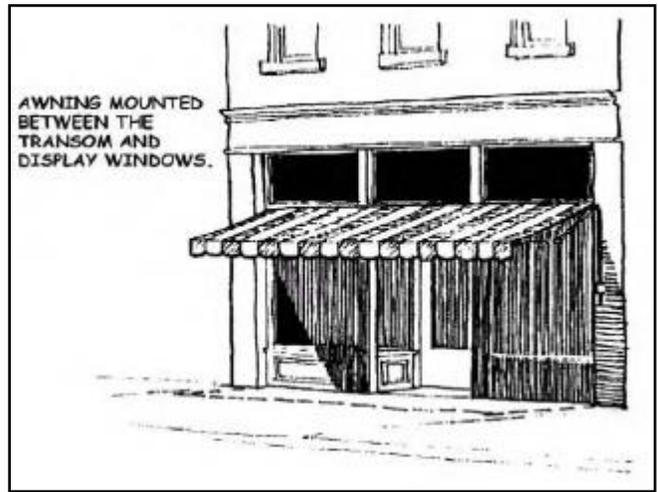
The awnings also provided shelter for pedestrians from sun and rain, added color, and acted as a transition between the storefront and the upper façade. Only on occasion was the awning used for signage. In these cases, lettering on the awning was primarily located on the valance, making it visible in either in the lowered or raised position.

If an awning is to be used, its shape should reinforce the frame of the storefront opening. It should be attached below the storefront cornice or sign panel and should not cover the piers on either side of the storefront. The standard street level awning should be mounted such that its valance is at least six feet above grade. The awning can also be a useful tool to disguise inappropriate storefront alterations while maintaining the proportions of the traditional storefront.

Awnings are available in several materials and colors of varying cost and durability. They are also available in a variety of profiles. However, the traditional commercial awning material is canvas and its profile is the watershed design. Other profiles tend to be too contemporary when placed on a traditional façade. Awning color should be selected to insure compatibility with your building and with the color of adjacent buildings.

Guidelines:

- Retractable or operable awnings are encouraged. Fixed awnings should mimic the profile of operable units (one to one pitch).
- The emphasis of the awning should remain one of shelter and protection, rather than signage.
- The awning should be loose and flowing, not stretched tight, subtle and subdued in color, not bright, extending well out over the sidewalk, not a mere window dressing.
- The width of awnings should fit the geometry of the building façade. They should not extend across multiple storefronts of different buildings, but should reflect the window or door openings below.
- The use of water-repellent or vinyl-coated canvas is in keeping with awnings of the time. Plastic or aluminum awnings or canopies are not appropriate.
- Fixed awnings should incorporate a “free” valance that allows movement with the wind.
- Back lighting of the awnings is inappropriate.
- Use plain or striped fabrics. Large areas of bright colors are inappropriate.



Signs

Storefront signs are those which are located on the horizontal band dividing the storefront windows from the upper façade of the building. During the peak of commercial activity in downtown, the signs had a distinct character that was a part of the overall streetscape. Many of the historic buildings were built to accommodate a storefront sign band in their original design. The efforts of the Design Manual are not meant to turn back the clock, but rather to preserve and enhance that distinct and historic character of the District. All signage is subject to City of Sioux City building and zoning codes.

Signs are an integral element to any urban district. Pedestrian signage should be sensitive to scale, location and design for foot traffic. Vehicular signage should be viewable from the street, yet cohesive with the pedestrian signage regulations. For example, signage should direct vehicular traffic to the appropriate parking facility and business signage should inform pedestrians of the contents of the establishment. Unique and contemporary designs are encouraged with signage. Neon lighting may be permitted if used behind signage lettering. This creates a three-dimensional effect and is appropriate for the Historic Districts.

Murals are not permitted on the front façade of buildings and should comply with the requirements of both signage and color palette. Several ‘ghost’ murals exist on structures in the Historic Districts. It is highly encouraged to recreate these original designs as much as possible.

Guidelines:

- The storefront sign should be used to display the primarily name of the business only. Use only one line of lettering if possible, leaving out secondary information.
- Use simple, bold lettering with sufficient contrast between the lettering and the background.
- “Trademark” or “Logo” signs may not be acceptable if the color and character of the sign is not in keeping with the historic character of the building and/or the area.
- The maximum area of the sign is regulated by the sign ordinance.
- Projecting and roof signs are encouraged in the Historic Districts.

Quantities, Locations and Size:

In the past, streetscapes had a variety of sign types that not only identified the business, but also the name of the buildings, dates of construction, etc. The signs were simple, bold and well crafted. Lettering was in clear, no-nonsense styles, maximizing the contrast between the background and the lettering. Varying sign types can be found in the historic streetscape including, architectural signs, window signs, awnings, projecting signs, painted wall signs and murals, and roof signs. Every building should select the most appropriate sign type for its architecture and location.

Guidelines:

- The maintenance and restoration of any existing historic signs is encouraged in lieu of replacement.
- Signage for a business not located within the building is prohibited.
- Roof signs and projecting signs are encouraged.

Signs are important to the store owner for reasons of advertising, identity, and image. As they are an extremely visible element of the storefront, signs must be used carefully so as not to detract from facades. With a little forethought and careful planning, signage can embrace the storeowners' needs as well as the Historic District's image.

Architectural Signs:

Architectural signs are integrated into the building fabric and are constructed of permanent materials such as stone or metal. Names and the dates of construction were common signs included on the façade. They were typically located in the roof parapet detailing or in a cornerstone detail. These add a sense of history and place to the character and fabric of the Historic Districts.

Guidelines:

- Preserve existing architectural signs.
- Promote the use of the original building names in new signage.

Window Signs:

Window signs were historically applied on the inside of the glass, painted directly onto the storefront glass, upper floor windows and doorways. The main focus of this style of signage is to target and inform approaching pedestrian. Therefore, window lettering typically provides more detailed information about the business. Today, most window signs are made of vinyl and applied to the outside of the window.

Guidelines:

- It may often be desirable to keep the display space clear. In these cases, insert the sign at the base or the head of the window, or both.
- Keep the lettering small remembering that the reader will be in close proximity to the sign. Use several lines where necessary and consider curving the top line at the head of the window.
- Lettering formed with neon may be used in the inside of the window, provided the size, light intensity, color and style are consistent with the theme of the building.
- Display street numbers on or directly above the door, and business hours on the inside of the door or in an adjacent window.

Projecting Signs:

Projecting signs are at right angles to the building face, either fixed to the wall or hanging from a bracket, and are encouraged within the Historic Districts. Their major advantage of projecting signs over storefront or window signs is their ability to be seen by pedestrians and motorists from a distance down the street. Projecting signs must follow all applicable sections within the Sioux City Municipal Code.

Materials:

Apart from architectural signs, the original exterior signs within the Historic Districts were constructed of wood and painted. Window signs were painted, etched or gilded. The modern sign materials of today are acceptable, provided their design is handled with an understanding of the Historic nature of the area.

Guidelines:

- Use painted wood where practicable. It is the authentic material and will look appropriate against the weathered brick of City of Sioux City's commercial façades. Modern materials that simulate wood may be acceptable, and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Backlit and internally lit signs are not appropriate.
- Supporting brackets for projecting signs should be metal, painted black.

Coordination of Signs:

At the time of the commercial boom in the Historic Districts, most buildings were owned and occupied by single businesses. Merchants thought of their entire façade as potential sign space. For this reason, the signs were all well coordinated. Ownership and business use patterns have changed over the years and many buildings now contain multiple businesses. It is important that tenants and owners cooperate to design a sign package, which will help to reunify the building façade.

Guidelines:

- Multiple-tenant buildings should coordinate sign types, locations, and sizes whenever possible. The building should be viewed as a whole and a unified design strategy to take advantage of all possible sign locations should be created.
- Tenants and owners should use a common lettering style and color scheme on the building
- Consider giving the entire building an identifiable name, i.e. "Dineen Block", with individual business signs near the entrances, or on a common directory.

Installation:

With the high turnover of businesses in many of the historic buildings, signage has become temporary in nature. Every effort must be made to make sure that damage to the building is minimized when signage is installed.

Guidelines:

- The installation of any signage must have a minimal impact on the building and must allow the building to return to its original condition upon signage removal.
- Reuse of existing mounting brackets, studs or holes is desirable. Never drill holes into bricks, stones, etc.

Lighting

In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Historic Districts would have been dimly lit. Today we expect our cities to be bright and lively at night. An acceptable standard of lighting must be achieved without compromising the essential character of the historic setting.

Accent lighting within the district should be located on the buildings themselves or on other private property. Furthermore, accent lighting on buildings should be sensitive to the architectural detail of the structure. Lighting for all parking lots should conform to the lighting standards provided by the Municipal Code of Sioux City. Additionally, the lighting fixtures for parking lots should be consistent with those located on public rights-of-way in the Historic Districts.

Creativity is encouraged when designing and constructing lighting. Flexibility is offered within these guidelines, alongside the approval of City staff. Additionally, artistic expression and innovation are advised. Consult the Procedure section to view the approval process.

Guidelines:

- Do not use flashing, moving or intermittent lights.

- Lighting fixtures should be concealed or integrated into the overall design of the project. The light source should be hidden from direct pedestrian or motorist view.

Pedestrian-Oriented Design

The development of the Historic Districts was originally centered on the pedestrian. Although the district has been altered throughout the years, basic qualities of building orientation are still suitable for pedestrian activities. Maintaining, restoring, and encouraging the pedestrian quality of the Historic Districts through the use of "pedestrian-oriented design" is critical.

Guidelines:

- The design of the building should help make the street enjoyable, visually interesting and comfortable. Individual buildings should be integrated with the streetscape to bring activity within the building in direct contact with the people on the sidewalk.
- Avoid vast blank walls.
- Displays should allow the customer a full view of the store interior.
- Window displays should be attractive when viewed from the sidewalk.
- Existing uninteresting street facades can be enhanced with detailing, artwork, landscaping or other visually interesting features.

Pedestrian Access:

Building and business identity are important considerations to the store owner. Accesses must be considered important to insure convenience, safety, and repeat business of the customer. Pedestrian access must be associated with parking and a clear identity of entry points.

If possible, the front entrance should be the most important. Front entrances are integral to storefront design, giving the street the "hometown" image, inviting browsing and window shopping. Canopies, color, signage, and proportions of the building can combine with the front entrance to create a strong image.

In the past, rear entrances served as service entrances only and were not intended for public use. Today, with the emphasis on automobile parking taking place behind businesses, the rear entrance is an important public access. Rear and side entrance treatments should include the entire exposed rear and side walls for identity. The potential impact of these walls is often overlooked.

Guidelines

- The rear façade entrance should be clean and well maintained and present a welcome appearance. A small sign, awnings, display windows and planter boxes can improve the appearance.

Front, side, or rear entrances must share a common characteristic of presenting an attractive door to the pedestrian. Usually, the best doors are the original units properly maintained and repaired. If these are beyond repair, new doors can be made to closely resemble the original doors. Another option is to use simple, cleanly designed aluminum doors that will not detract from existing wall treatment.

Blank Sidewalls of Buildings:

The introduction of vehicular and pedestrian circulation routes, as well as adjacent building demolition will create a potential of exposing sidewalls. These walls are more difficult to aesthetically treat because there is less to work with. Trim is held to a minimum, and there generally are few windows, doors, or other features to treat. However, there are several treatments that can be used to help "dress up" a blank wall.

If it is determined that the wall in question contains sufficient architectural elements to leave unaltered, cleaning and painting may be satisfactory. It is important though to keep in mind that painted masonry is costly to maintain, requiring touch-ups every few years. In the long run, chemically cleaning/removing paint from the exterior surface may be more cost effective. Cleaning, painting, and repair of wood and metal trim would complement the remainder of the wall.

Landscaping

While there is little historic photographic evidence of extensive landscaping within the Historic Districts, there are many roles which plants and related landscape amenities can assume either as central features or as adjuncts to modern urban development. They include a variety of clearly functional uses such as the creation of shade, the buffering of active pedestrian areas from streets and parking lots, and the screening of unsightly development. Also included are equally important visual uses such as helping to establish a comfortable environment adjacent to large buildings, providing a sense of structure and organization to urban open spaces, and adding a wide variety of color and texture to the overall setting.

Landscaping of the streetscape can help to soften the pedestrian environment along the sidewalk by adding color and life to an otherwise hard, somewhat noisy area. Plantings can be used at rear and side entrances of buildings to make them more attractive. These plantings can be permanent or in planters which are portable. Plantings can be used to screen trash receptacles, non-accessible doorways, and parking areas.

It should be noticed that landscaping requires maintenance and is susceptible to damage. If you incorporate plantings into your plans they must be maintained. An empty or poorly maintained flower box can be unsightly. Shrubbery or trees that are not properly or regularly trimmed could be an eyesore.

Consult with a qualified nursery to select plantings which will perform well given the locations and conditions of your site.

Guidelines:

- Highlight important architectural features and structures by use of distinctive landscaping.
- Visually and physically buffer parking lots from adjacent buildings and pedestrian walkways with groupings of plant materials.
- Frame and edge existing and proposed building where feasible with appropriate types of plant material to achieve human scale.
- Carefully locate street trees and shrub plantings with the downtown area to buffer and separate walkways from traffic. Create shade where needed for pedestrians to establish more clearly defined pedestrian use areas.
- Provide canopy trees to shade parked cars, but establish where practical. Tree planting in parking lot islands will reduce heat-gain and should be encouraged.

Outdoor Seating (On-premise as well as sidewalk and alleyway)

In order to further enhance the pedestrian experience, outdoor seating areas are encouraged within the Historic Districts. Outdoor seating / entertainment areas on private property should adhere to the same aesthetics as those located within the public right-of-way.

The city of Sioux City, for the purpose of serving food and alcohol, may allow outdoor seating areas on the public sidewalks and vacated city-owned alleys within the Historic Districts provided that building owners meet certain criteria. Restaurants and bars or pubs wishing to serve food or alcohol on the public sidewalks and alleys must apply for a temporary encroachment permit through the City Planning and Neighborhood Services office and comply with the guidelines specified below. These guidelines are written for the purpose of providing a defined boundary between the outdoor serving area and the public walkway. They are intended to maintain adequate pedestrian circulation and to allow a lively, traditional use of public walkway within a historic district. All outdoor, sidewalk and alley seating areas must comply with the stipulations enumerated in the temporary encroachment permit in addition to the guidelines below.

Guidelines:

- Seating areas must be enclosed within a clearly defined, but temporary, boundary. The seating and boundary must be limited to a width of 7 feet as measured across the sidewalk perpendicularly from the building. If the seating area is located in an alley, the boundary must be limited to 8 feet

as measured across the alley perpendicularly from the building. In the event that neighboring property owners who abut an alley desire outdoor seating, the boundary shall be placed such that the seating area allows a minimum of 4 foot pedestrian right of way through the alley;

- The boundary shall be no greater than 48 inches in height and can be made in a variety of materials including, but not limited to, the following: wrought iron, planters;
- In order to secure the fence, the vertical supports may be imbedded into the sidewalk however, when the fence is removed during the off-season, the imbedding mechanism must be covered with a metal plate that is mounted flush to the sidewalk so as not to constitute a hazard to pedestrians or snow removal equipment;
- Tables, chairs, and other furnishings shall not be permanently fastened to the public sidewalk;
- Tables, chairs, fencing, support structures and any other objects or furnishings to be placed in the public right of way shall not be placed on the public sidewalk or alley earlier than May 1st and shall be removed by November 1st;
- All tables, chairs and fencing shall be stored indoors, off the public right of way between November 1st and May 1st;
- Tables, chairs, fencing, support structures and any other objects or furnishings to be placed on the public right of way shall be reviewed by the City Planning and Neighborhood Services office, or their designee, for design, compliance with the guidelines, and compatibility with the Historic Districts.
- Site specific designs are encouraged that reflect the history of the area or public art. No signage, advertising, goods or merchandise should be placed on the railing. Railing designs should reflect an open, transparent feeling. Visually closed-in railings that "box-in" the extension are not appropriate.
- Decorative elements incorporated into the railing design are encouraged. In general, metal surfaces should have a black enamel finish although colors that are incorporated as part of a coordinated color plan for the building, or that are considered in the context of a work of public art, may be considered.
- Light weight or movable handrails that may be hazardous during times of intense pedestrian crowding should be avoided. Chains, ropes and unsupported railings are unacceptable materials.

Visual Screening

In attempting to create the most aesthetic pedestrian experience possible, it is important to conceal the visually intrusive material from view. Historically, utility areas or service entrances were located off of a service alley. Today, many of those service alleys or streets are now utilized by pedestrians as entrances from off street parking areas. Also, the amount of mechanical equipment has increased dramatically; therefore it is important to minimize the visual impact as much as possible. Trash receptacles, condensing units, electrical transformers, and other types of equipment are obtrusive and often impair pedestrian traffic. As essential as they may be, these objects do little to add to the aesthetics of the building.

Guidelines:

- **Elimination:** If possible, eliminate these objects. Trash receptacles can be located inside if there is space available without endangering health or creating an odor problem. Air conditioning condensers can be roof mounted and electrical transformers can be installed inside the building. However, this is a costly procedure as transformers must be housed in a fire-rated and ventilated area.
- **Placement:** The most economical method of "screening" is placing unwanted objects away from pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Consideration should be given to access for maintenance and pickup especially if the objects in question are trash receptacles. Attention should also be given to adjacent property owners and their pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns.
- **Concealment:** In many instances, trash receptacles, condensers, or transformers must occupy the same general area desired for pedestrians. The only option is concealment. There are many visual barriers available on the market. Wood fences, or metal fences with wood or plastic slats are a few. These are acceptable, but a preferable method is to construct visual barriers with materials consistent with the adjacent building. A blending of materials is more compatible with the

storefront. Another method of concealment is the use of landscaping. With professional assistance, the proper pattern and species of plants can be realized. It should be noted that landscaping will need care.

Surface Parking Facilities

The proper placement of the parking areas in a traditional downtown are important factors in ensuring commercial success and maintaining a unique pedestrian experience. Surface parking facilities in the Historic Districts should be sensitive to the pedestrian traffic in addition to the vehicular traffic. The intent of this section is to address these issues and direct proper development and redevelopment of surface parking facilities.

First and foremost, all surface parking facilities within the Historic Districts should be paved within the current standards of the Municipal Code, Section 25.96. Additionally, surface parking facilities should delineate pedestrian walkways and vehicle lanes within the surface parking facilities. This can be accomplished through the use of alternate paving materials. For example, pedestrian walkways should be established with paving materials different from the parking lot itself.

Parking lots within the Historic Districts should be located behind buildings whenever possible. This placement is intended to buffer the pedestrian from expansive parking facilities which can be intimidating and unsafe. Shared parking facilities are encouraged in the Historic Districts in order to eliminate the need for multiple parking lots. Parking agreements should be arranged between private property owners to accommodate parking for patrons.

Guidelines:

- Every effort should be made to maximize the retail space directly on-street and locate parking areas behind the buildings.
- The same care should be taken in the design of the parking as with any other building regarding setbacks, height, proportions façade openings, detailing and materials. The structure should complement the streetscape through the accent landscaping or other pedestrian amenities.
- Each linear 10 foot of surface parking facility abutting the public right-of-way shall include the following:
 - 1) A three foot knee wall constructed of brick or other material, however, in no circumstance shall be constructed of manufactured or pre-fabricated material, or a three to four foot fence made of wrought iron or other metallic material, however, in no circumstance shall be constructed of chain link or wooden privacy fencing materials.
 - 2) Three groundcover landscaping elements.
 - 3) One overstory tree of caliper 2 ½ inches and height of 6 feet.Additionally, the interior of surface parking facility shall include lighting consistent with the Historic Districts. The lighting and screening of all surface parking facilities shall be approved in conjunction with the Façade Improvement Program application.

New Construction and Additions

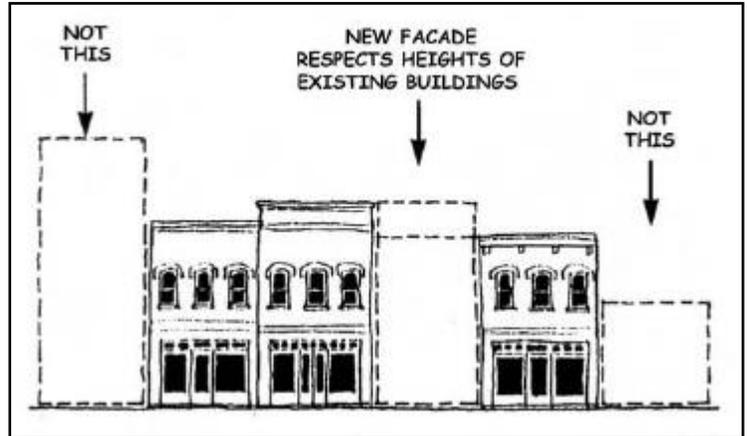
Infill Structures

New construction on vacant lots within the Historic Districts is encouraged. The success of these buildings can be enhanced by recreating the original rhythm of existing building facades. It is important that individual buildings act as part of the entire street facade. When a building is missing and a parking lot or park takes its place, the streetscape is disrupted where these obvious "holes" exist.

The design of new buildings must be appropriate and compatible with neighboring buildings. Because these infill buildings are new they should look new and not attempt to duplicate historic structures. Their appearance, however, should be sensitive to the characteristics of its surrounding buildings. Infill structures must take design cues from existing architectural parameters already established in downtown.

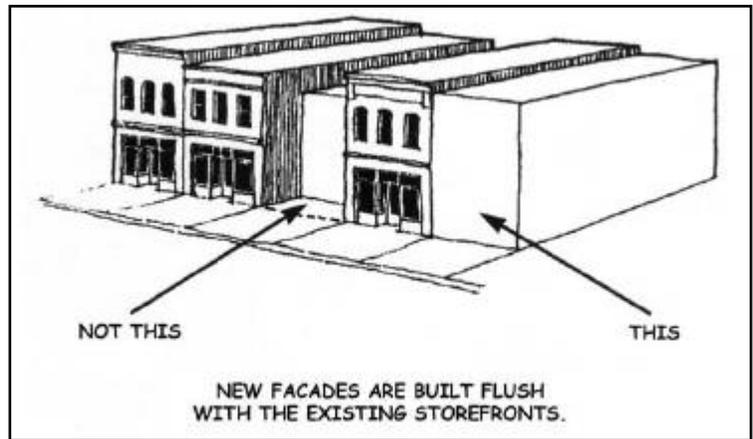
Proportion:

The height and width of infill structures will be determined by the proportions of buildings immediately adjacent. Height should be the same as adjacent buildings. This is one of the important elements to consider when designing new structures or additions to existing structures. While varied heights can mix with each other in visually interesting ways, a building, which is significantly taller than adjacent development, will seriously disrupt the existing scale of the downtown area. The width of a new structure should fill the entire void between buildings. If the void is very wide, the facade should be broken up into discernible bays which mimic the rhythm of facades on the streetscape.



Guidelines:

- The heights of new buildings shall conform to the average height of buildings on the block street face.
- Proposals should strive to maintain compatibility with adjacent cornice lines, floor to floor heights where these are strongly expressed, sign bands, and any other elements which serve to unify the street elevation as a whole.
- The proportion of infill buildings should be sympathetic to the proportion of their neighbors.
- Break up building masses into units of scale that relate to adjacent structures.
- Design façade details, window openings and entries to conform to approximately the same proportional patterns of adjacent structures.



Composition:

The organization of elements of new facades should be similar to that of surrounding facades. Storefront cornice heights, cornice heights, bulkhead heights, rhythms that exist throughout the block should be carried out in the new facade. Existing window opening patterns of the upper facade and existing window openings of the lower storefront should be acknowledged in the new design. The ratio of window opening to solid wall should also be in keeping with nearby buildings.

Building Setback:

Infill structures should align their facades flush with the adjacent buildings to reinforce the rhythm and consistency of the streetscape. Nothing does more to negatively change the social space of a small downtown street than the front building setback. The recent emphasis on the automobile and parking lots in front of commercial structures can effectively destroy the pedestrian experience. It is far better to build right up to the sidewalk and facilitate the chances for browsing and social interaction.

Guidelines:

- Infill buildings shall be built to the front property line, flush to adjacent buildings, per the HC-2 zoning code requirements.

Materials:

Most of the original Historic District buildings built in the late 1800's and early 1900's were constructed of masonry. Infill facades should be constructed with materials similar to that of the adjacent buildings and should blend in the other architectural styles. Material color should be chosen that is compatible with adjacent facades.

Guidelines:

- An infill building and façade should be composed of materials similar to original adjacent façades (i.e. local brick or stone).
- New buildings should not stand out against the others but be compatible with the general area.
- The use of exposed or painted concrete masonry units is not acceptable.
- The use of materials that attempt to mimic traditional materials is unacceptable. An example would be fiberglass panels that are molded to look like real brick, or vinyl molded to look like wood horizontal lap siding.
- No mirrored glass.

Trademark Building Design

Trademark buildings, such as those that have been designed to reflect a corporate/franchise appearance, have been designed in such a way as to make the services or goods sold immediately recognizable through the use of a specific architectural design, materials, and colors of the building. These were first developed on or near high-speed freeways where taking the time to read a sign would be too difficult. Such designs are generally in conflict with the characteristics of pedestrian oriented commercial storefronts.

Guidelines:

- Trademark buildings are prohibited

Additions

The design of a new building or an addition within the Historic Districts carries special concerns. The new façade should be sensitive to the character of the historic buildings without mimicking them, and yet be designed such that it "blends-in" with the district.

Guidelines:

- Design new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.
- Traditional designs should be used for new buildings that harmonize with the buildings in the historic district and yet does not try to copy the historic building or create a design that never was a part of the historic district.
- Design additions to roofs such as elevator housing, decks, terraces, dormers or skylights when required by the new use so that they are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way.
- Design foundation in new additions to match the foundation of the original historic building.
- For an infill building, window frames should be wood, or appropriately colored aluminum or vinyl clad.

Additional Resources

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