



Downtown Design Standards

(Approved by the Plan Commission on December 12, 2006 and the City Council on January 8, 2007)
Implemented by Amendment to Section 82-579 and adding a new Section 82-84 of the Municipal Code)



Developed in association with the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana

Objectives:

1. To help preserve the architectural integrity and “character” of the downtown area.
2. To help assure the streetscape is organized and maintained so that it is attractive to visitors and is a user-friendly area.
3. To sustain a downtown area that is a desirable place to live, shop, work, and enjoy!

CREDITS

National Main Street Keeping Up Appearances
Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana

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Greetings:

Clearly the downtown area is the "front door" to the City of La Porte. It sets the tone for the rest of the city to visitors and residents alike. If our downtown is seen as a run-down area with a "mish mash" of buildings that have no harmony in the appearance of the streetscape, people will assume that's representative of the rest of the community. We are extremely fortunate that after years of neglect we still have attractive and viable structures in our downtown area. We also have some very successful businesses in the downtown area. Our objective with the establishment of these standards is to help assure that we build on the strengths we already have to create an even more attractive and vibrant downtown area that will excite and enthuse our residents and visitors.

These standards are one step in a comprehensive process to strengthen the downtown area. In 2005, the City (with help from the private sector) engaged Hyett Palma, a nationally known consulting firm specializing in the revitalization of downtown areas, to help us build the strategy to make this happen. Since the study was completed, a Downtown Action Committee has been at work systematically pursuing each and every recommendation made by Hyett Palma. The development of these design standards is one of those important recommendations.

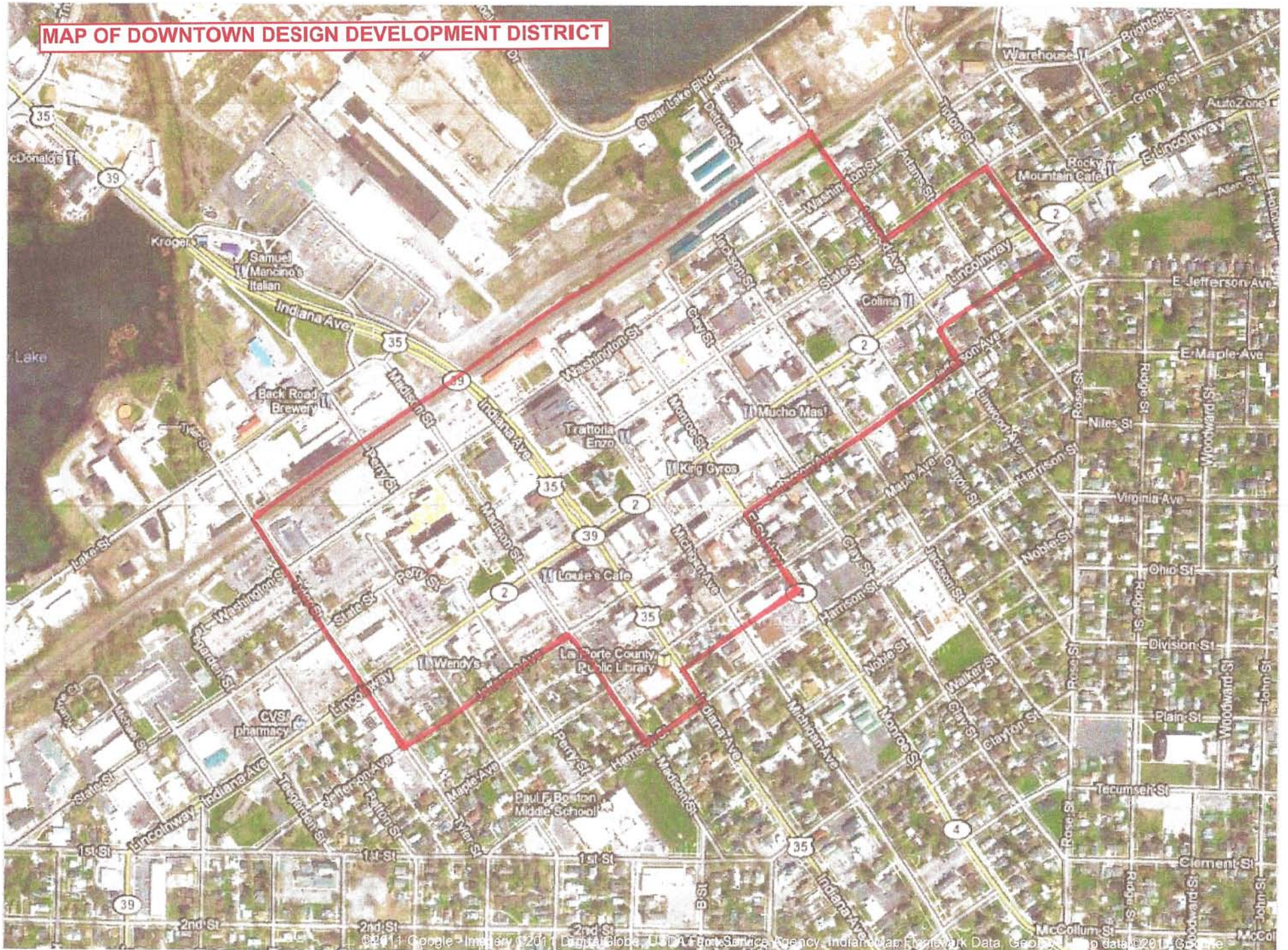
The goals of our Downtown Action Committee are to help assure that downtown La Porte:

- ✿ **Is a desirable place to live.** We want to substantially increase the number of relatively young somewhat affluent residents in the downtown area.
- ✿ **Is a desirable place to shop.** We will be initiating an aggressive recruitment strategy to recruit and retain vibrant and successful businesses in the downtown area that will enhance the overall attractiveness of the downtown as retail and service center.
- ✿ **Is a desirable place to work.** We want to grow the workforce in the downtown area.
- ✿ **Is a desirable place to play.** We want to schedule a variety of permanent and event-oriented entertainment that will attract residents and visitors.

In addition to the Downtown Action Committee, the Urban Enterprise Zone Association, the Business Improvement District, the Redevelopment Commission, the Historic Preservation Committee, the Greater La Porte Economic Development Corporation, the Greater La Porte Chamber of Commerce are important members of the team joining with the city itself and business and property owners to enable us to reach these objectives.

City of La Porte

MAP OF DOWNTOWN DESIGN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT



APPLICATION PROCESS AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The goal of the application requirements is to provide the Design Review Committee (your neighbors and friends) with enough information to help them understand what it is you want to do but not burden you the building owner with un-necessary paperwork. With that in mind the Committee requests the following information based on the proposed scale of your project.

Minor Rehabilitation: Window repair/reconstruction, new awning, removal of inappropriate later materials, paint

Photo of the building, and detail shots of specific areas of work, Paint color selection, name of contractor performing the work, general description of the proposed work, color/sample of the awning material

Moderate Rehabilitation: New storefront, Window replacements, masonry repair/replacement

Photo of the building and details of the proposed area to be worked on, Architect drawing of the proposed storefront with supporting manufacturers materials, color selection, General narrative of the proposed work, manufacturer's material for the window company, contractor performing the work

Major Rehabilitation/reconstruction

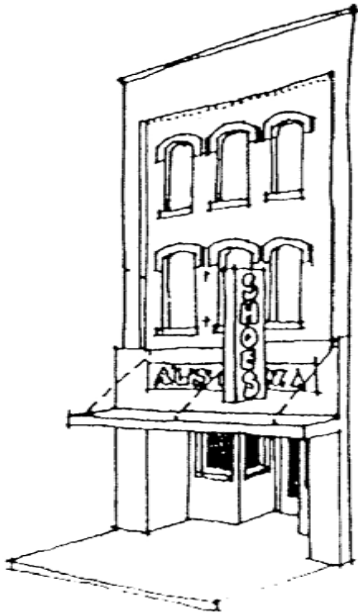
Photo of the building and details of the proposed area to be worked on, Architect drawing of the proposed storefront with supporting manufacturers materials, color selection, General narrative of the proposed work, manufacturers material for the window company, contractor performing the work, Complete architectural drawings of the proposed work detailing existing versus new work.

Submission process

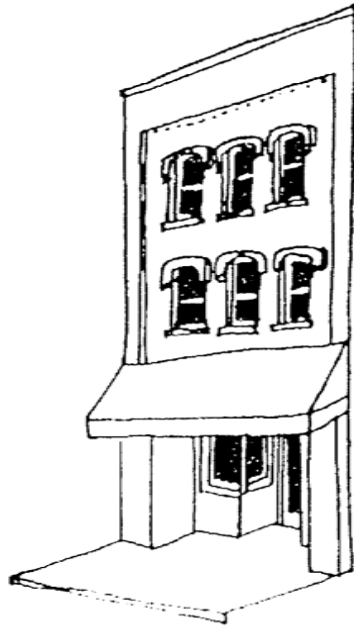
Development plans may be submitted to the Engineering and Building Services Department for consultation or review at anytime. If the proposed work is a Minor Rehabilitation, the Director of Engineering and Building Services may approve the development plan if he or she determines that the plan complies fully with these design standards. Proposals for Moderate and Major Rehabilitation and Minor Rehabilitation Proposals not approved by the Director of Engineering and Building Services will be reviewed by a Design Advisory Group consisting of the Director of Community Development and Planning, a member of the Plan Commission, a member of the Redevelopment Commission, a member of the Historic Preservation Commission and a member of the Common Council. The Design Advisory Group will have 15 days to review the development plan and to submit their verbal or written comments to the Director of Engineering and Building Services. The Director will then either approve or modify and approve, or disapprove the development plan based solely on a determination that the development plan does or does not comply with these Design Standards and issue a written determination to that effect. If the Director fails to make a determination on a development plan within 30 days after it is filed with him or her, the development plan will be deemed to have been approved. A consultation with staff may be requested anytime prior to submission to assist in the development of a design.

REHABILITATION APPROACHES

FACADE IMPROVEMENTS



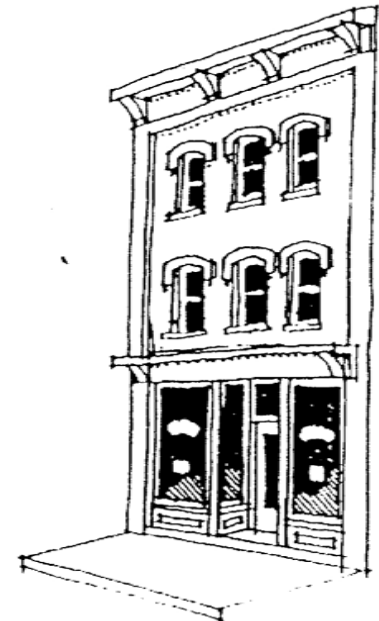
EXISTING FAÇADE



MINOR REHABILITATION



MODERATE REHABILITATION



MAJOR REHABILITATION

REHABILITATION APPROACHES

A number of approaches can be taken in making improvements to the exterior of a building.

Maintenance/Preservation

Keeping a building in good repair improves its appearance. This may involve minor repair or replacement of broken materials, removal of oversized or inappropriate signs, cleaning existing surfaces, caulking, tuck pointing and painting. Cleanliness and neatness communicate success and proprietary concern for the community, one's customers.

Minor Rehabilitation/Restoration

This approach begins with basic maintenance and goes a step further. Selective removal of extraneous or inappropriate materials can reveal attractive and exciting details. Canvas awnings provide protection from the elements, add color and movement to the façade, and offer an additional location for signage, addresses and the like. Awnings can also hide unattractive or inappropriate elements of a façade. The proper selection of paint colors can accentuate the good features

Major Renovation

This approach involves the removal of all inappropriate or deteriorated materials and redesigning the façade based on the existing original elements. This approach may be restorative in character, complimenting the existing building and its features, or may project an almost entirely "new" image. The experience of the past thirty years with "new" images is that time tends to render them anonymous and cheap, particularly in comparison to historical styles.

Restoration

Restoration means returning a building to its original condition. If a building has historic significance or has undergone only minimal alterations, this may be the most desirable approach. Moreover, maintaining or restoring an older building, irrespective of comparative historic or architectural merit, increases the sense of place and time that is unique to each community.

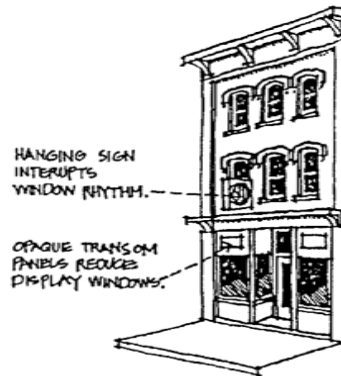
DESIGN PRINCIPLES

A Façade Evolution: From Good to Bad

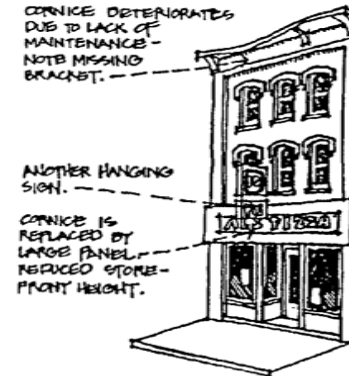
1. THE ORIGINAL FACADE—
THE VISUAL RESOURCE



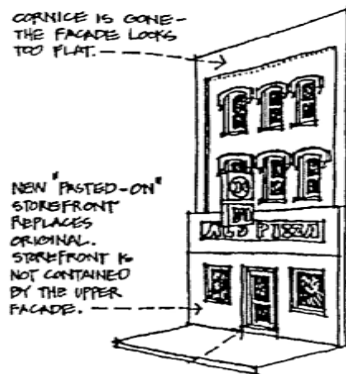
2. MINOR FACADE CHANGE



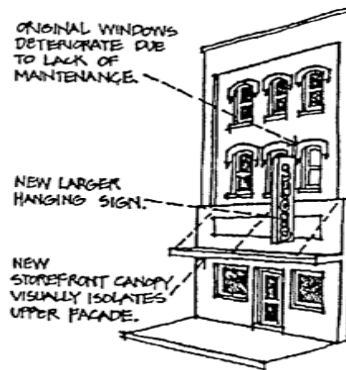
3. MORE MINOR FACADE
CHANGE



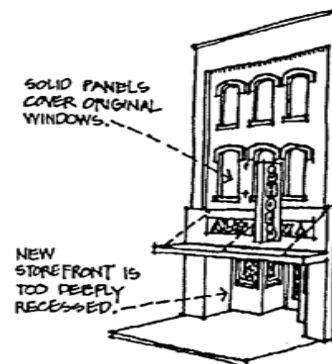
4. STOREFRONT
REMODELING—
THE FACADE LOOKS
CUT IN HALF.



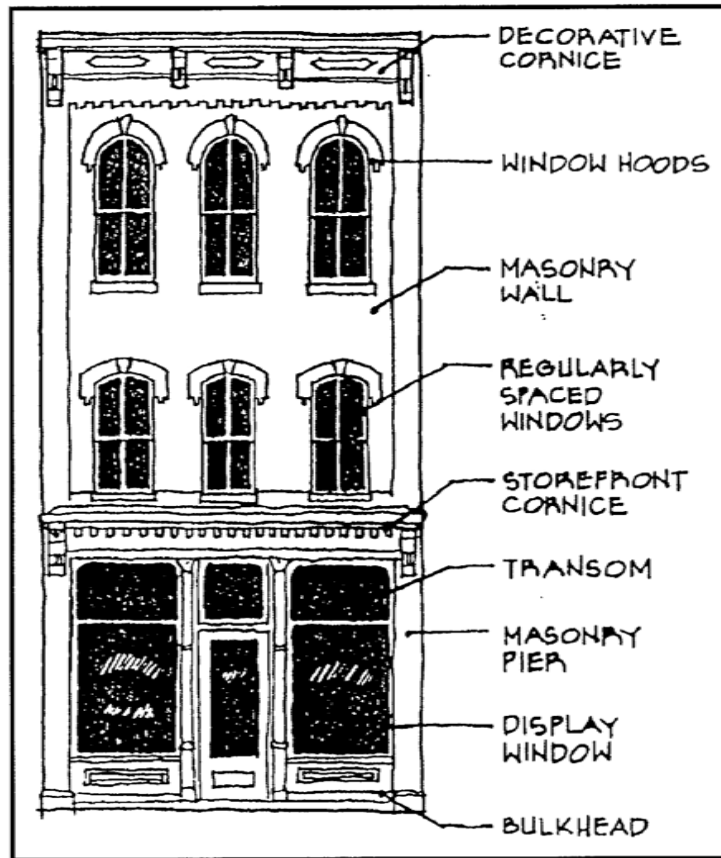
5. MORE STOREFRONT
CHANGE



6. ANOTHER STOREFRONT
REMODELING

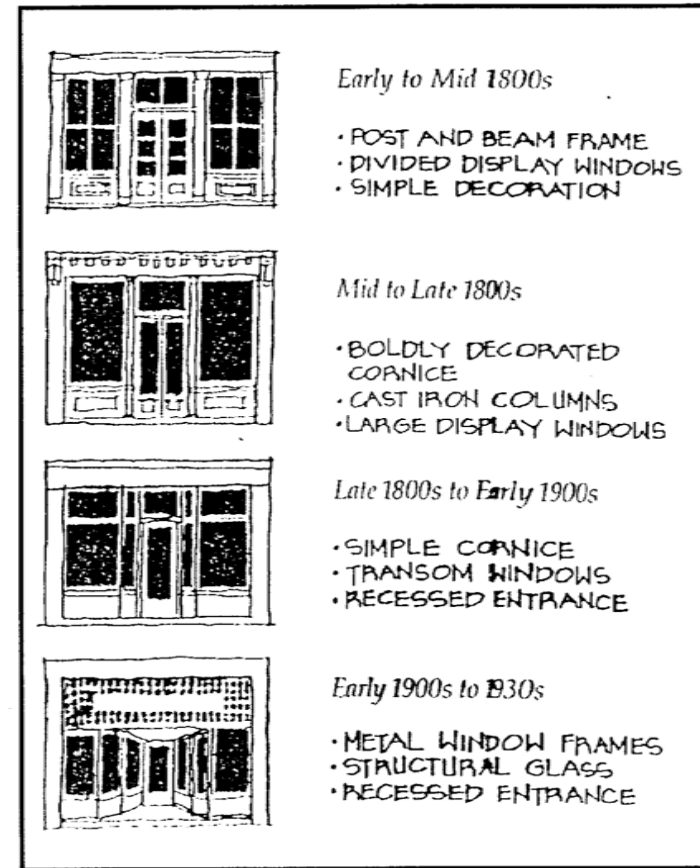


DESIGN PRINCIPLES



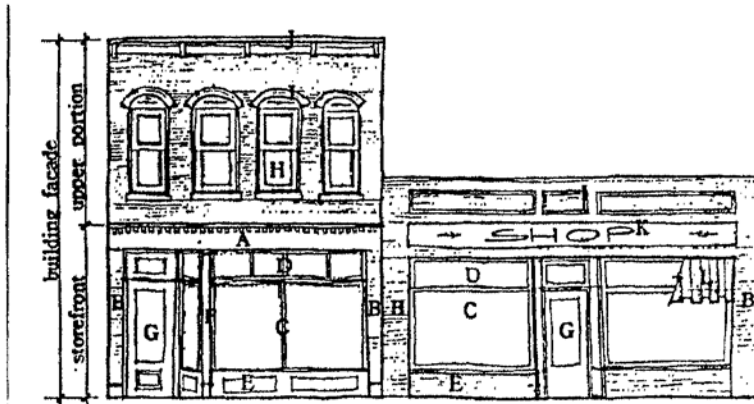
A good façade design works within the framework of three basic elements: the base, the middle and the top. On a typical or traditional building these elements take the form of the storefront, the upper floors and the cornice.

The successful coordination of the storefront, upper story and cornice elements within a single façade as well as with adjacent buildings helps create an attractive and exciting downtown.



The relationship of these elements to one another, to the street, to the people that walk and drive along the street, and to other buildings on the street is critical to a good façade design.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES



STOREFRONT:

The storefront or base provides the human scale that invites people to walk along the street and allows them to feel comfortable while doing so. Window shopping, created by the transparency of a storefront which allows direct visual access to a shop's interior, is the essence of a downtown commercial area.

STOREFRONT CORNICE/LINTEL (A)

The horizontal span located above the display window/transom and below the second floor windows, balconies or bays. This space may contain supporting as well as cosmetic elements

PIERS (B)

Vertical supporting members which frame the width of the building. Piers provide support for the upper story.

DISPLAY WINDOWS (C)

Area of glass which extends from the supporting bulkhead to the transom or cornice/frieze.

TRANSOM (D)

A window or horizontal series of windows located above the display windows and/or entrance doors.

KICKPLATE (E)

The space that occupies the lowest level of the storefront. The base which supports the display window.

STOREFRONT COLUMN (F)

Often decorative in nature, support for upper façade.

ENTRANCE (G)

Recessed or flush constructed area where entrance to the interior is obtained.

WINDOWS (H)

The windows of the upper floors establish a rhythm along the street, again at a human scale, and give the buildings an appearance of vitality.

WINDOW HOOD (I)

Highly decorative window lintels.

CORNICE (J)

The cornice emphasizes the height of the building, completes the building in an attractive manner and gives identity to the building at the skyline.

AWNINGS (L)

Traditional awnings shade the storefront and sidewalk from sun and rain during the warmer months. During the winter, awnings could be retracted to allow natural sunlight into the store for light and warmth.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The façade of a building forms one image from the interaction of many different elements. Each individual element of a façade has an important role in defining the building's overall character. It is therefore very important to carefully consider every component in a façade during a renovation or restoration.

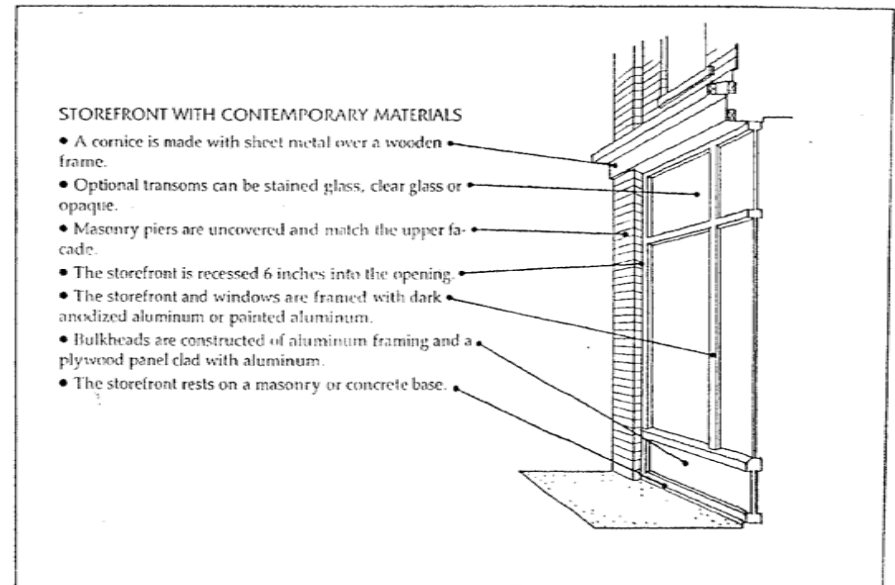
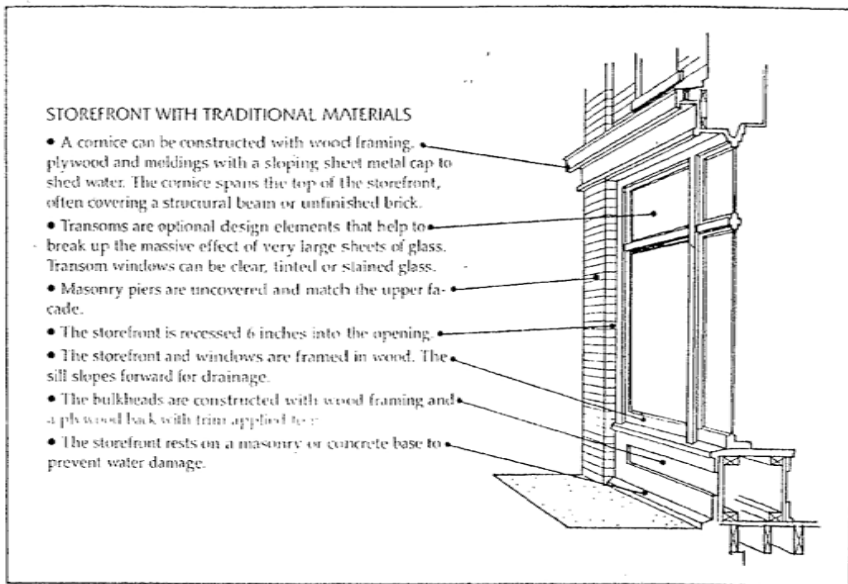
- ❑ The integrity of the basic elements of traditional façade design should be respected and coordinated. Decorative details such as window hoods, string courses, quoins, brackets, corbels and lintels should be retained, or if they have been lost, replicated.
- ❑ The scale and proportion of original or traditional façade designs and elements within the façades should be respected. This is especially true of buildings that exemplify particular historic periods or styles.
- ❑ Inappropriate materials that obscure the original façade should be avoided. The feasibility of removing such materials is preferred.
- ❑ While each building should maintain its own identity, in some cases it is possible for specific elements such as cornices, upper floor windows and kick plates to align with adjacent buildings. This helps to reinforce the continuity of the streetscape. Sometimes current legal descriptions of individual parcels are subsections of what originally was one building.
- ❑ Honesty and authenticity in style should be favored over superficiality. A redesigned façade, or portion thereof, should make an effort to preserve the primary elements of an existing style rather than adopting a false or irrelevant style.
- ❑ Buildings should establish rhythmic intervals at several scales. The primary urban rhythm is created by repetitive blocks, i.e. the interval of streets. The next rhythm is created by the subdivision of blocks into individual parcels, and the buildings erected on them. Within each building are the intervals of the structural bays (the space between the major structural elements), and doors and windows, which establish a human-scaled rhythmic interval.

Storefronts

- ❑ Storefronts should not extend beyond the plane of the façade.
- ❑ While recessed entryways are acceptable and often desirable, the entire storefront should not be recessed..

A storefront may be recessed when it is part of a system of covered walkways, such as a loggia.

- ❑ Entrances should relate logically to upper floor windows and/or pedimented cornices (cornices featuring a gable). An entrance placed directly below an upper floor window or a pedimented cornice, or an entrance spaced evenly between upper floor windows is favored over an entrance randomly placed with no reference to the other elements of the façade.
- ❑ Doors to businesses should be largely transparent and should not be residential in character.



DESIGN GUIDELINES

Storefront Windows, doors and upper windows

- ❑ Original windows should be rehabilitated instead of replaced. When missing or beyond repair, new windows shall match the original windows in size, configuration and style. Window openings should not be blocked down. When replacing windows, mullions and muntin bars (the non-glass strips between panes) should be used to imitate, if not replicate, the original window subdivisions.
- ❑ Original openings (such as storefronts) on commercial buildings should not be either partially or completely blocked or closed up. Residential, double hung or other types of sash are in-appropriate for storefront spaces. If a storefront style window is not required for the proposed use of a commercial building – consider blacking out the glass or creating a display area behind the glass instead of blocking down the windows.
- ❑ Window openings and window subdivisions should be related to, and a logical subdivision of, the architectural/structural bay.
- ❑ If a dropped ceiling is necessary inside the building, it should be pulled back or sloped away from the original windows so as to preserve the original proportions of the windows.
- ❑ When it is absolutely unavoidable to close a window opening, it should be done in a manner that replicates the original window opening in terms of scale, color and detail.
- ❑ Avoid storefronts that extend more than 60 feet unbroken

Awnings

- ❑ The use of awnings is encouraged to provide protection from the elements, add color, movement and scale to the façade, and to offer an additional location for signage and addresses.
- ❑ Awnings should be made of canvas or other durable fabrics. Metal awnings that have historical significance may be used. Wood, wood shingles and plastic lite or non-lite should not be used.
- ❑ The positioning of awnings should be designed to complement other façade elements and should not detract from the integrity of such elements.

Materials

- ❑ Wood should not be used except for traditional and/or trim elements like storefront doors, kickplates and window frames.
- ❑ New materials should be similar in texture and quality to existing materials.
- ❑ High reflectance materials in storefronts are encouraged. These materials include: polished stone, glazed brick, glazed terra cotta, brass, bronze, stainless steel, chrome, glass and paint finishes. Such materials generally appear cleaner than materials finished to a matte or low reflectance level. Subtle reflections contribute to the visual dynamics of the city street.
- ❑ Asbestos, asphalt, cast stone, concrete block, rough-sawn wood, artificial brick and similar materials should not be used.

Signage

- ❑ Traditional signage such as lettering on windows, flush mounted in the storefront cornice, traditional hanging signs and other traditional signs are encouraged. Plastic back-lit signs and signs that obscure display or other building elements are inappropriate.
- ❑ Back-lit awnings are not appropriate and should be avoided. Traditional signage/lighting is encouraged.

Color and Paint

There are two types of color—integral and applied. Integral colors are the actual colors of the materials. Applied colors are added to the material.

- ❑ Integral colors of the primary original building materials should be painted over only when it is absolutely impossible to maintain or provide adequate protection to a deteriorating surface. Original materials intended to be painted should be painted.
- ❑ When using applied colors, select colors that coordinate with one another and compliment the existing integral colors.
- ❑ For small areas, and especially for shaped, molded or modeled surfaces, glossy paints should be used, particularly with dark colors. Shaped surfaces depend on light reflectance to reveal their shape. Glossy finishes increase reflectance and make shape more apparent.
- ❑ Flat paints should be used where it is necessary to decrease apparent shape variations, especially on damaged or dented surfaces.
- ❑ Unpainted masonry surfaces should not be painted.

Secondary Elevations

- ❑ Rear entrances should encourage the use of secondary parking areas and increase the accessibility of a business. Use of awnings, signage, lighting, landscaping, quality materials and coordinated paint colors is appropriate.
- ❑ Service areas should be screened from public view with wood, masonry or landscaped enclosures.
- ❑ Dumpsters should be screened and properly maintained. Shared dumpsters are encouraged to minimize the locations for waste to accumulate.

Maintenance

All features of the exterior of a building or property should be maintained in such a manner as not to create any public safety hazard or nuisance, and as to convey the appearance of neatness and vitality in the downtown area. Vacant buildings should also be well-maintained.

Building Illumination

The use of exterior lighting is encouraged to identify signs and entrances and to accentuate architectural features.

Interior Connections, Sidewalks

The feasibility of making connections to other buildings and other businesses should be considered whenever possible. These connections should be made without destroying important architectural features. Skywalks should not cross major roads or disrupt vistas.

Vacant and Parking Lots

- ❑ Vacant lots and off-street parking areas should be well maintained and should carry the rhythm and continuity of the street through the use of landscaping and/or fencing. Fencing should generally be brick and/or wrought iron. Wood and chain link fences should not be used.
- ❑ There should be a landscape buffer between all off-street parking areas and public rights-of-way.
- ❑ All off-street parking and loading areas should be surfaced with durable all-weather, dust-free surfaces with adequate drainage and lighting.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

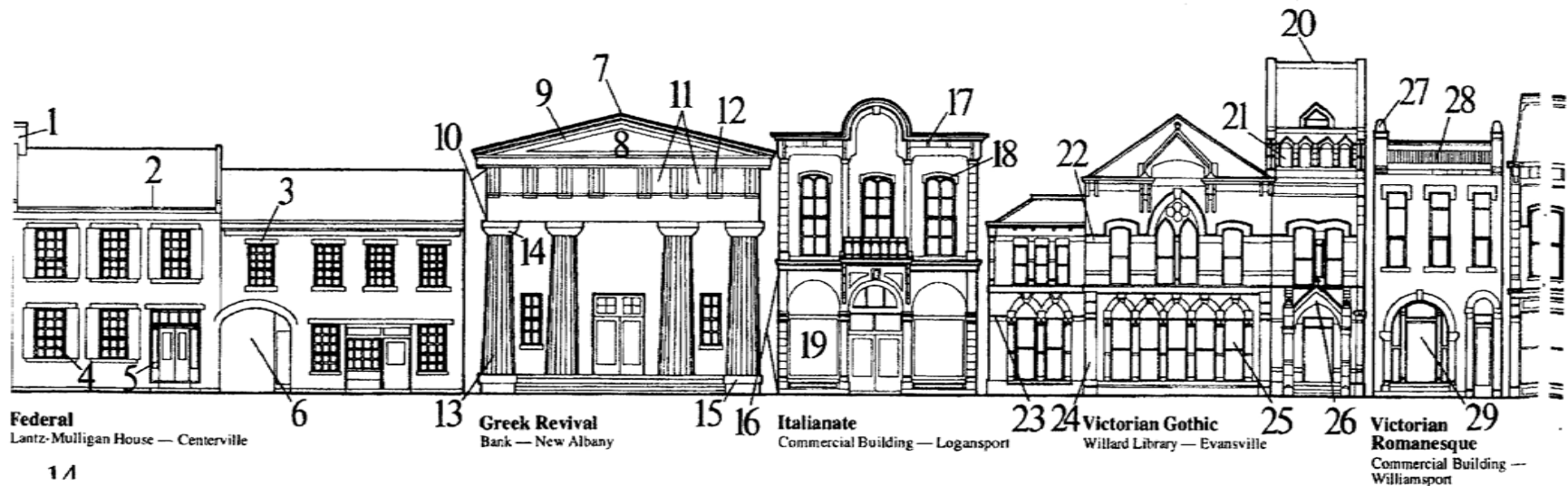
New Construction

1. Buildings should strengthen the continuity of the streetscape at a pedestrian scale and help reinforce an urban atmosphere by following the established building set back along the same block.
2. On-site public areas such as plazas should be designed to work with sidewalks and other public areas in such a way that they do not become visually or functionally competitive.
3. New construction should not seek to imitate historic styles. It should seek to be visually complementary by relating dominant lines, proportions and scale of adjacent structures.
4. Exterior materials should have characteristics of high quality and permanence such as natural brick and stone.
5. Materials such as pre-cast concrete, metal and glass panels are discouraged as primary exterior materials.
6. Artificial brick veneer, cast or irregular-shaped stone, concrete block, stucco, wood, asbestos, asphalt siding and similar materials should not be used.
7. Solid, unmodulated walls, particularly at the street level are inappropriate.
8. Street elevations should have strengthen the continuity of the streetscape at a pedestrian scale and help reinforce an urban atmosphere by following the established building fenestration along the street.
9. When sighting a new building, important views should be retained/enhanced.
10. Mechanical equipment should be contained within the building. If it must be located outside of the building, it should be heavily screened with materials similar to the building and landscaping. Penthouses should be avoided whenever possible.
11. Additions to existing buildings should not change the scale of the original architectural character of the building or destroy important architectural features. Materials and designs should relate to the existing building but should not attempt to look historic.
12. Parking areas should be located away from street frontage, pedestrian areas and park facilities, and screened with landscaping.
13. Historic paving materials should be retained.
14. All conduits should be contained within the structure of the building.
15. Whenever possible, utility lines should be located underground.

Identifying Architectural Styles and Elements

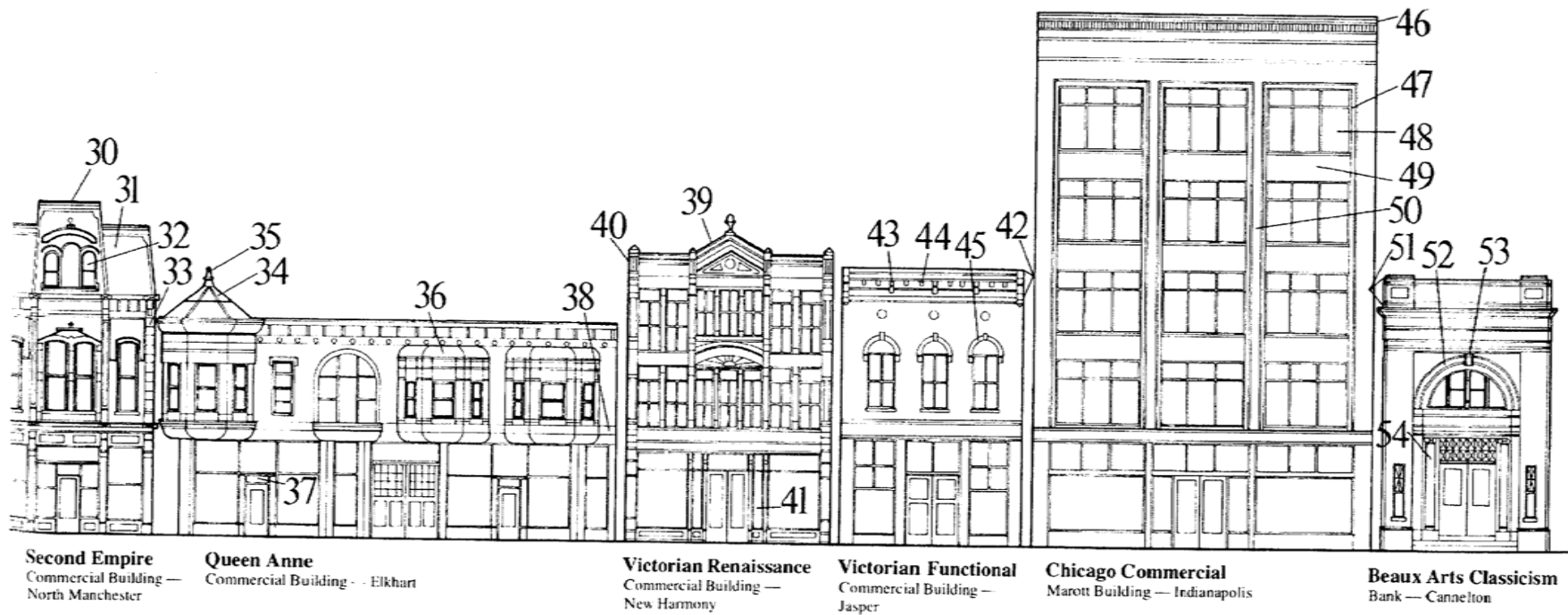
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|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. End Chimney | 9. Raking Cornice | 17. Brackets | 25. Gothic arched openings |
| 2. Eave | 10. Entablature | 18. Hooded window | 26. Gabled entry |
| 3. Lintel window head | 11. Metopes | 19. Plate glass | 27. Conical turret |
| 4. 9 over 6 sash | 12. Triglyph | 20. Tower | 28. Corbel |
| 5. Sidelight | 13. Doric Order Column | 21. Lunettes | 29. Semi-circular arch |
| 6. Elliptical arch | 14. Capital | 22. Stone banding | 30. Central pavilion |
| 7. Pedimented Gable | 15. Base | 23. String course | 31. Mansard roof |
| 8. Tympanum | 16. Arcade | 24. Buttress | 32. Dormer |

Illustration by John Wells.



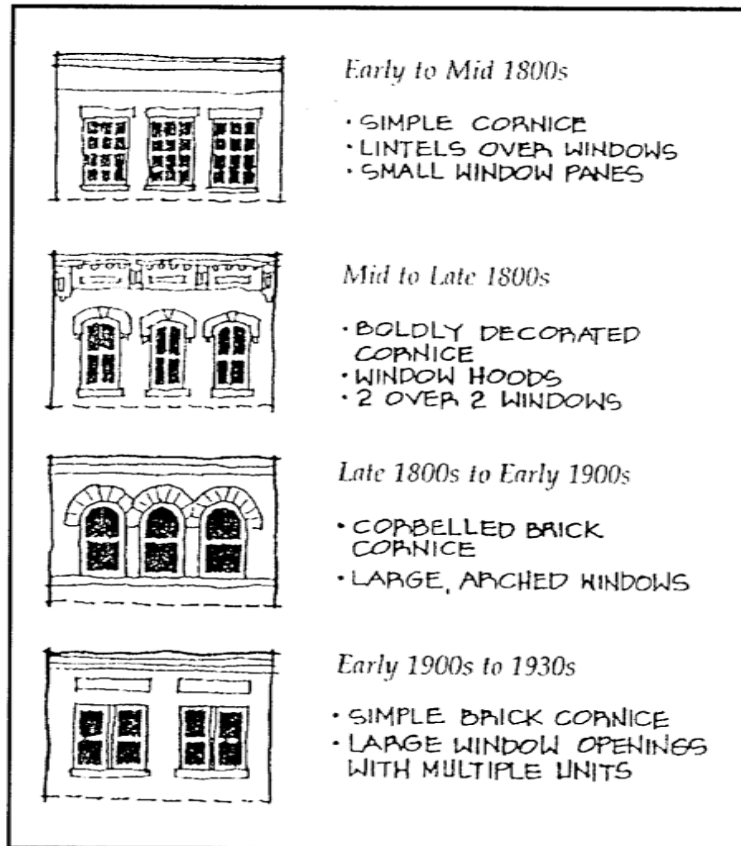
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- 33. Quoins
- 34. Turret
- 35. Finial
- 36. Oriel
- 37. Transom
- 38. Belt course
- 39. Pediment
- 40. Console
- 41. Pilaster
- 42. Cornice
- 43. Modillion
- 44. Dentil
- 45. Masonry round arch
- 46. Projecting eave
- 47. Window enframement
- 48. Chicago window
- 49. Spandrel
- 50. Pier
- 51. Parapet
- 52. Roman arch
- 53. Keystone
- 54. Ionic order column



SECOND FLOOR REHABILITATION: CONSIDERATIONS

TYPICAL UPPER FACADES



One of the most overlooked opportunities in the central business district are upper floors of commercial buildings. Long underutilized or abandoned, these upper story spaces give the buildings a black eye with boarded up or broken windows and general lack luster appearance. They represent a loss of potential economic value to the building owner and a loss of tax revenue to the city. They may be a health hazard, definitely an eyesore and the deterioration and abandonment of these spaces contribute to the decline in the health of downtown buildings and the eventual loss of the valuable historic identity the central business district possess.

Why rehabilitate upper story areas? For the money. These spaces represent a potential for a favorable rate of return on your investment and a good business opportunity. If the first floor is a commercial usage, tenants on the upper levels provide built-in security for after hours and potential customers for that business. By adding additional usable space to the central business district, the quality and viability of the district is improved.

Upper floor development must be well thought out. The created space must respond to special market needs. There are no easy answers and no short cuts; only quality rehabilitations keep tenants.

SECOND FLOOR REHABILITATION: CONSIDERATIONS

To help ensure a successful upper floor development, the following tips are offered:

- a. Identify buildings with profitable potential (ones with stairways in good locations along the front of the buildings or onto a side street).
- b. Select uses for which there is a market and where these uses are feasible in upper level space.
- c. Design and development economically, but with a measure of quality. Don't overdo for the market.
- d. Carefully evaluate financial potential and risk.
- e. Is the building structurally sound?
- f. Is there enough revenue producing floor area to justify the cost of renovating the space?
- g. How costly is the existing vertical circulation to rehab (stair towers, elevators; in many instances effective design can control these costs).
- h. What is the configuration and number of exposed vertical walls? Is the space limited to commercial use or is residential an option?
- i. Is there available parking nearby?

Keeping Costs Down

- Estimate the cost of the project on paper before construction.
- Leave brick walls exposed; or paint or prime brick walls rather than insulating and covering them over.
- Expose structural elements to increase visual appeal and reduce costs.
- Maintain existing wood or exposed joist ceilings.
- Sand and urethane existing wood floors.
- Install exposed sprinkler system (if needed).
- Incorporate stock rather than custom designed items (i.e. cabinets) in the design keeping in mind that most of what you need can be acquired locally and the quality will be the same.
- Use local small contractors.
- Select good quality, traditional materials such as drywall and wood trim and do some of the work yourself.

SECOND FLOOR REHABILITATION: CONSIDERATIONS

Ideas for Reuse

- ❑ Non-Profit Organizations – The value of lease concessions may be partially or fully deductible.
- ❑ Services Supporting Professional Needs — Clerical, accounting, resume services, computer services such as desktop publishing, software sales or hardware servicing, watch, jewelry or small appliance, musical instrument repair.
- ❑ Open Space Use – For telemarketing or light assembly.
- ❑ Professional Space – For legal, counseling, planning, designing, consulting, architectural or other potentially “low inventory” type service. Individual professional on second floor; consultation, meeting or conference space on ground floor.
- ❑ Shared Office Space – Efficiency offices
- ❑ Studio Space – Photography, framing, video production, fashion design and/or alteration, tailoring, music, dance or art practice or instruction.

If the space was previously residential, you may only need to upgrade the systems (HVAC, electrical, plumbing, entrances, etc.)

If it is simply vacant with little demolition needed, and you wish to keep rehab costs low, lease it as a studio or loft unit. Generally market demand will be helpful in determining the best residential rehab. One or two bedroom units will be more common. Local ordinances should also be consulted for residential use of upper floors.

Marketing Your New Space

- ❑ Advertise in a local paper or feature it in a main street story.
- ❑ Put a banner on the building or a sign in the ground floor window.
- ❑ Host a pre-construction party to benefit the local Main Street organization.
- ❑ Direct contact with most likely tenants.

SECOND FLOOR REHABILITATION: GUIDELINES

The basic approach to a design for the interior of a building is the same as the exterior. Look for original detail and respect them in rehab plans. Commercial buildings commonly still contain their tin ceilings, ornamental moldings of wood or metal, and doors with decorative hinges, doorknobs and paneled spaces. These guidelines have been developed from the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation (see Appendix I). A complete copy of the Secretary of the Interior Standards is available at the City of LaPorte Planning office. You are encouraged to consult this resource for a more detailed discussion of interior rehab that respects the historic integrity of the structure.

Quality rehabilitation materials should be used in the rehabilitation. Use of natural materials such as plaster, drywall and wood in the design and construction will improve the quality of the project and make the project more successful in the short and long term.

- ❑ Evaluate the existing condition and significance of surviving details.
- ❑ Preserve existing ornamental details. If these have been covered up, consider uncovering.
- ❑ If the original details have been damaged, consider reconstructing them or developing a simplified version of the original.
- ❑ Maintain the open feel of the space. If partitions are necessary, stop them short of ceiling height to maintain the open feel.
- ❑ Consider retaining the high ceilings and opening up the clerestory for energy conservation.
- ❑ If a dropped ceiling is necessary, maintain original ceiling height at the windows creating a bulkhead to absorb the difference in heights.
- ❑ Exposed portions of the structural system such as load bearing brick walls, cast iron columns, roof trusses, and posts and beams should be evaluated as to their importance in defining the character of the space or the history of the building technology and should be respected accordingly.
- ❑ If new floors, stairs and partitions are necessary for a rehab, then these items should be constructed with the least amount of harm to the surviving architectural details.

GENERAL REHABILITATION GUIDELINES

Character retention and money savings through proper maintenance

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Perhaps the most important task any building owner undertakes is the proper maintenance of the building. Proper maintenance not only helps ensure the long term investment of the owner, it also protects the character of the building. A regular maintenance program is essential to prevent the development of public safety hazards or deteriorated building materials. A small amount of preventative maintenance will save the building owner money and time in the long run.

It is important to remember that new technologies are constantly being developed to combat physical deterioration of the building environment. These guidelines are intended to give broad rules to apply when designing a rehabilitation project or maintenance program for your building. Since technology is constantly changing, the latest publications should be sought out when tackling a particularly unusual or severe problem.

These guidelines expound a particular attitude about historic buildings, their use/reuse and continued care. These are not intended to be used as a “do-it-yourself” guide to building rehab. The LaPorte Planning Department is available for consultation services and you are encouraged to contact us or another qualified professional to aid you in planning a project.

STRUCTURAL CONSIDERATIONS:

As buildings age, they settle and move. One of the first considerations in any project is the structural integrity of the building itself. Look for clues to structural failure such as cracks in the walls along the foundation line, around doors and windows and at the building corners. Cracks may show on the interior or exterior of wall surfaces. A crack is an indication of movement. While cracks may indicate structural problems, this is not always the case. Most cracks are simply the result of previous settlement, freeze thaw cycles or movement within the finish material itself. Always determine if the crack is active or dormant and explore possible causes.

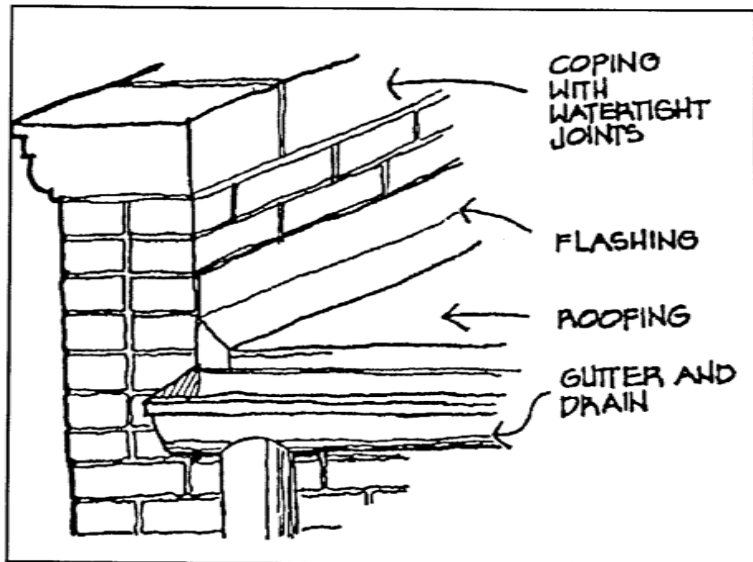
GUIDELINE: Review bearing capacity of roofs and floors for code compliance.

Examine walls for evidence of structural problems. Test wood framing for roofs and floors for adequate load capacity. Always determine if the new use of a building will be supported by the structural capacity as older buildings were often designed to carry lighter loads.

GENERAL REHABILITATION ADVICE

ROOFS:

The roof is a building's first line of defense against the ever-changing weather. Of any element of the building, it is subject to the most extreme conditions and must be routinely inspected for water dissipation. Many times roofs left to leak will cause structural problems in other parts of the building as water enters and deteriorates elements. Check not only the roofing material but also that the gutters, downspouts and splashguards are in place and properly draining. Inspect flashing. Make sure all roofing materials are compatible when installing new.



Detail of a typical roof

WINDOWS:

Another important line of defense against changing weather are windows. Windows keep rain, snow, sleet and extreme temperatures out of the building. Windows also serve as a very important character-defining element. An owner can save money by repairing damaged windows with like materials rather than replacing them wholesale. If windows must be replaced, select windows that match the original configuration in size and detailing. Avoid using a mirrored film, keep windows transparent and use interior shades or blinds to provide privacy. Many reputable contractors can repair or replicate windows, and several manufacturers can provide quality replacement windows that match the original size and style.

MASONRY:

CLEANING: The cleaning of masonry surfaces is a project to undertake with great thought and consideration. While brick and other masonry units appear to be very hard and indestructible, they are in reality very susceptible to severe damage due to improper maintenance and cleaning. **NEVER SANDBLAST OR USE HARSH CHEMICAL CLEANERS ON MASONRY BUILDING FAÇADES.** Sandblasting removes the protective outer coating of the masonry unit exposing it to rapid decay due to the exposure of the soft inner material to the elements. Some chemical cleaners may work but be sure to perform a test spot. A gentle scrubbing with a mild soap and water is often sufficient.

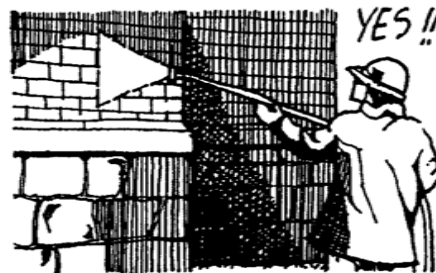
Painting is often used instead of cleaning to brighten or change a building's appearance. It is best to leave masonry unpainted. If masonry has already been painted, then scrape off the loose paint and reapply a new coat.

GUIDELINE: Do not sandblast or use strong chemicals on masonry buildings.

ABRASIVE CLEANING:



Low Pressure Water Cleaning



REPAIRING/TUCKPOINTING:

Masonry surfaces require less routine maintenance than do most any other material. However, when masonry does need repairs it is critical to follow proper procedures in order to insure the material long-term survival. Mortar between masonry units is designed to wear and need replacement. This is so that masonry units such as brick do not wear out as fast. When tuckpointing, it is critical to match the consistency of the new mortar with the old. Mortars

used today are much harder than earlier lime mortars. The stronger mixes are incompatible with the softer bricks found on historic buildings and will cause the masonry units themselves to crack and deteriorate. Softer mortar gives and takes during freeze thaw cycles, therefore saving the bricks.

It is important to tuckpoint a building to keep water from sitting in the joints and causing damage during freezing weather and wear from rain.



SOUND MORTAR

DETERIORATED
MORTAR JOINT

REPOINTED MORTAR,
MATCHING ORIGINAL
STYLE, SIZE, COLOR
AND COMPOSITION

GUIDELINE: When repointing masonry walls, use mortar similar to the original to avoid damage to existing brick and stone.

REPLACEMENT OF MASONRY UNITS:

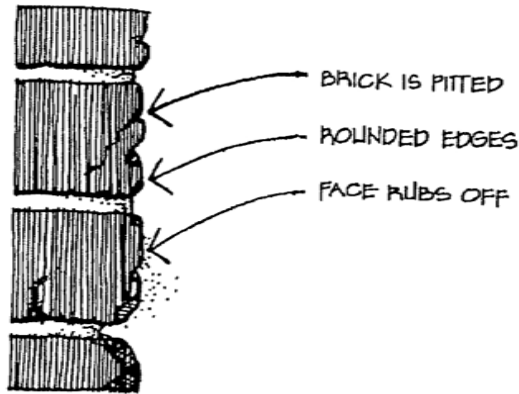
Often times when buildings are tuckpointed, some of the units will need to be replaced due to age and deterioration. It is important to try and match the units.

There are some general rules to follow in order to get the best match possible.

- a. Look at the color, texture, and size of bricks.

- b. Look at the width of the joints between the bricks.
- c. Look at the color and tone (degree of darkness) of the mortar.
- d. Match the type of the joint that is used elsewhere.

GUIDELINE: When replacing stones or bricks in a damaged wall, try to match the repaired section to the rest of the wall.



METAL FAÇADE COMPONENTS

Commercial buildings are often capped by a metal cornice. This cap helps complete the top of the building by providing a decorative and interesting termination to the façade as a whole. This element of the historic commercial building is very vulnerable to weather and deterioration and must be inspected and repaired on a regular basis to avoid large repairs in the future.

Many different metals were used in the construction of these cornices. Entire façades were sometime fabricated from metal to imitate stone or other exotic building fabrics at a fraction of the cost. It is very important to identify the type of metal that needs repair at the outset of a rehabilitation project. This can be done by

a laboratory or through research into the historical building permit files. Different metals require different cleaning or patching treatments. Always contract with professionals who have experience with metal repair. Keep metal painted and dry. Ensure that water is running off of flat surfaces.

Suggested cleaning treatments:

- a. Cast iron: Hand-scraping and low pressure grit blasting.
- b. Aluminum, copper, lead, zinc: Mild chemical
- c. Bronze: Mild chemical treatments or low grit.

GUIDELINE: Clean metal storefront components only when necessary , and only with the gentlest means possible.

REPLACING METAL FAÇADE COMPONENTS:

Sometimes metal façade components have been destroyed and need replacing. Replacing these components with exactly the same type may be expensive. Before changing the design of the element, consider recasting it to resemble the missing piece with substitute materials such as fiberglass or aluminum.

Also consider “catalog” replacements. Many companies now make replacement parts for ornamental metal work.

GUIDELINE: Metals that have been destroyed should be replaced.

GUIDELINE: When sandblasting metalwork, protect those materials that may be damaged by the blasting such as wood and brick.

| |
|-----------------------------|
| INDIANA CODE: RULE 8 |
|-----------------------------|

Chances are the building which is subject to upper floor development is either on the National Register, contributes to a district, is a candidate for placement or is better than fifty years old. The project may or may not be part of a tax credit rehabilitation. Whether or not the building is significant, the Indiana Building Rehabilitation Standard (IBRS) was created to facilitate the reuse and revitalization of historic and existing structures. In many cases, the use of Rule 8 can reduce the cost of rehabilitation.

Previously, the State's building code was so restrictive as to prohibit the kind of historic rehabilitation taking place on Main Street. The restrictive and inflexible nature of Indiana's building code prior to 1988 made renovation and rehab so costly that many building owners were faced with demolition as their only alternative. As a result, many valuable structures were torn down and the gaps gave many Main Street communities a toothless appearance.

Indiana revised its Uniform Building Code with Rule 8, the IBRS. Under Rule 8 an owner can elect to rehab a structure according to its building classification. IBRS identifies 11 building types and proscribes mandatory scores for each type in the categories of Fire Safety, Means of Egress and General Safety. A numerical value is assigned to each element to test code compliance. The total score must equal or exceed a specified mandatory score for the building type. The entire building is scored; not just where the work is being performed. An itemized approach reveals a range of options available to bring a project at an allowable score. Features may be upgraded in the plans and design to pass by the State.

The following items are scored:

Height and Area
Fire Sprinkler/Extinguishing Systems

Corridor Walls/Partitions
HVAC Systems
Smoke Control/Windows
Dead-End Corridors
Elevators/Elevator Control
Uses Within a Building

Space Division
Fire Area
Vertical Opening/Shafts
Smoke Alarm Systems
Exits/Exit Capacity
Exit Travel Distance
Lighting/Egress
Communications

It is strongly recommended that a qualified engineer or architect review your rehabilitation plans and the structure, especially one familiar with Rule 8. In many communities the local building inspector is not necessarily "up" on this tool. When in doubt or further information is needed, contact the LaPorte Planning Department, The Indiana Building Commissioner's Department of Fire and Building Services may also be of assistance at 317.232.1437.

APPENDIX II

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Money Savings Through Energy Usage Reduction

As building and energy costs rise, it is important to make historic buildings energy efficient. This does not mean that a historic building must be gutted and rebuilt with new materials. That in and of itself is a waste of natural resources, both those used to construct the building in the beginning and the materials that must be made for the rehabilitation. Historic structures were built to take advantage of natural heating and cooling with high ceilings for summer heat and large windows to let in natural light.

Many times a simple fine tuning of existing systems and components is all that is needed to make a historic building energy efficient at a fraction of the cost of an entire retrofit. Listed below are some hints on making your building environmentally friendly and save your money in the long and short term.

USE AWNINGS, CANOPIES AND TREES:

Historically, these were used to provide shade during the summer months. Used in conjunction with open windows and high ceilings, interiors will stay cooler during summer months. With central air, these items will keep the cooling costs down. Make sure the trees are deciduous so they do not interfere with winter solar heating. Trees should be planted at least 10 feet from the front of the store.

REDUCE AIR INFILTRATION:

Use caulking and weather-stripping to improve efficiency of doors and windows. Air will enter through cracks in trim, windowsills and door jambs. Be sure to use materials that will not detract from the appearance of the building.

USE STORM WINDOWS:

Storm windows also help reduce air infiltration at a fraction of the cost of replacing the entire window. Mount the storm window on the interior to preserve the original appearance of the exterior. Add weep holes in order to prevent any moisture condensation. Exterior mounting of storms is another option. When this is done, match the existing size and configuration of the window itself.

USE INSULATION:

Insulate the attic area of your building. Heat loss through the roof is a major cost and can be prevented with a minimal investment. Consult an insulation professional to determine the best type for your situation. Be sure to ventilate the space properly.

INSULATE DUCTS AND WRAP PIPES:

Low cost and effective, this will help decrease your heating and cooling bills in a hurry.