

Design Guidelines for the Downtown Overlay District



City of Durango, Colorado
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Special Thanks

A special thank you to all the community members who participated in the workshops during the design guidelines process.

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THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW SYSTEM

Introduction

The Durango Central Business District is the historic commercial core of the city. It consists of three major north-south avenues and the numbered cross streets that link them. The western boundary is generally defined by the Animas River and the eastern edge is flanked by the Third Avenue Historic District.

Main Avenue is the central spine and has historically been the focus of commercial activity. Second Avenue, to the east, reflects a transitional character, with a mix of commercial, residential and institutional properties. Camino del Rio parallels Main Avenue to the west and reflects a more automobile-oriented flavor. Collectively, these streets support an active mix of activities that serve local residents and also appeal, increasingly, to a large visitor population.

Downtown has been active since it was first established in the 1870s. Over time, many of the historic structures in downtown Durango have been preserved and the result is a distinctive character of buildings and street atmosphere that supports an active and diverse economy.

The success of downtown has been, and continues to be, the result of a combination of factors. Of these, the preservation of historic resources, a pedestrian orientation and a concentration of successful businesses are key. In this regard, historic preservation, urban design and economic development are partners in the city's strategy for downtown.

Recognizing the importance of the character of downtown, the city established design guidelines for the area in the 1983. Since that time, the guidelines have helped to establish a reliable framework for investment that has encouraged owners to improve their properties in a manner that contributes to the character and function of the entire area, while also meeting individual needs. Many older buildings have been rehabilitated, some have experienced additions

and a scattering of new structures have appeared, all influenced by the design review process. The result is a Central Business District with a sense of visual relatedness.

This document builds on those earlier policies and guidelines. It contains the basic design principles from the original document, and expands on them to provide greater clarity of their intent. It also addresses some new design issues that have appeared in more recent years.



The 800 block of Main Avenue, in 2003.

Objectives

The City seeks to achieve the following objectives with the Design Review System:

1. To preserve the city's heritage.

The intent of design review is to maintain downtown as an authentic place, with an appeal to local residents and visitors. As a town that services the community and region, Durango must address the additional challenges created by a changing tourism market and the accompanying expectations of the out-of-town visitor. The guidelines help protect the downtown economy by providing options for development in a manner appealing to locals and visitors alike.

This means preserving historic structures and encouraging new, compatible construction that

enhances the area as a place for pedestrians and reinforces a sense of continuity, visually and functionally.

In order to do so, the design guidelines seek to ensure that new construction and rehabilitation within the Central Business District will be compatible with the district's special character, a portion of which is recognized as a National Register Historic District.

The guidelines also respond to the existing character of the downtown as defined by the prevailing architecture, building materials, and urban design features.

It is not the intent of these guidelines to recreate a bygone era, nor to fabricate an artificial past. Buildings teach us the technology and values of the era of their construction. Imitations muddle the record and are discouraged. New buildings should represent their own times, while respecting their older neighbors.

2. To support economic development.

The guidelines promote building designs that are effective for business. This includes storefronts that line the street edge, inviting pedestrian activity, and buildings that convey a human scale. They also seek to create an atmosphere that is conducive to the visitor-oriented segment of the economy, which is an important factor for the community at large.

They also anticipate that a moderate increase in development density, through compatible additions and infill, can occur while respecting the historic character. This is especially true along Camino del Rio and portions of Second Avenue.

3. To enhance the livability of downtown.

The guidelines also support the strength of neighborhood character that contributes to a desirable quality of life for residents and visitors. They acknowledge that residing in the Central Business District is an option that should be available, along with places to conduct business.

Fundamental Community Values

While the guidelines in this document focus on the design character of development in the downtown, they are based on key values the community holds in general. These are:

1. Durango protects its historic resources, and its heritage in general.
2. The community maintains its unique character.
3. Downtown is safe and inviting for visitors, residents and workers.
4. Downtown users are diverse: economically, culturally and in age.
5. The community maintains a high quality of life and livability.
6. Downtown is relatively dense in population, which supports a variety of activities and enhances the efficiency of alternative modes of transportation.
7. Downtown maintains its economic vitality. It is a place to work, conduct business and be entertained.
8. Cultural activity, including art galleries and performance venues, is vibrant downtown.

How Guidelines Are Used

The guidelines provide direction to property owners and their design professionals when they plan improvements to properties in the Central Business District, such that alterations, repairs and new construction will help to achieve the design objectives for the area. The guidelines also provide a basis for the city to determine the appropriateness of such improvements when they are proposed.

Use by Owners

Property owners, real estate agents, developers, tenants and architects should use the guidelines when first considering a project. This will help establish an appropriate direction for its design.



Strater Hotel at 7th Street and Main

For any project subject to review, the applicant should refer to the guidelines at the outset, to avoid planning efforts that later may prove to be inappropriate.

Use by the City

The City will also use the design guidelines for the formal review of proposed projects. In this review, the interaction of the applicable design guidelines is an important consideration. It is important to recognize that, in each case, a unique combination of design variables is at play and, as a result, the degree to which each relevant guideline must be met may vary. While the guidelines suggest approaches to certain design problems by offering alternative solutions, they do not dictate a specific outcome and do not require a property owner to instigate improvements that are not contemplated.

Key Considerations

In making its determination of the appropriateness of a project, the city's overall concerns are that:

1. The proposed work complies with the guidelines in this document.
2. The integrity of any affected historic structure is preserved.
3. New buildings or additions are designed to be compatible with design goals for the area.
4. The overall character of the Central Business District is enhanced.

Applicability

The downtown guidelines shall apply to all uses within the Central Business District (CBD). Any improvements, excavation or construction of any principle building or structure, or alteration, expansion, conversion or repair of any building or structure prior to the issuance of a building permit for that activity, shall be in accordance with all applicable provisions of the Land Use and Development Code (LUDC) Sec. 5-2 Downtown Overlay Zone and Sec 12-3 Design Review Board. These guidelines also apply to any requests for new or modified signage for any building or site within the Downtown Overlay Zone. Refer to the LUDC Sec 10-3 Sign Provisions, Standards and Procedures.

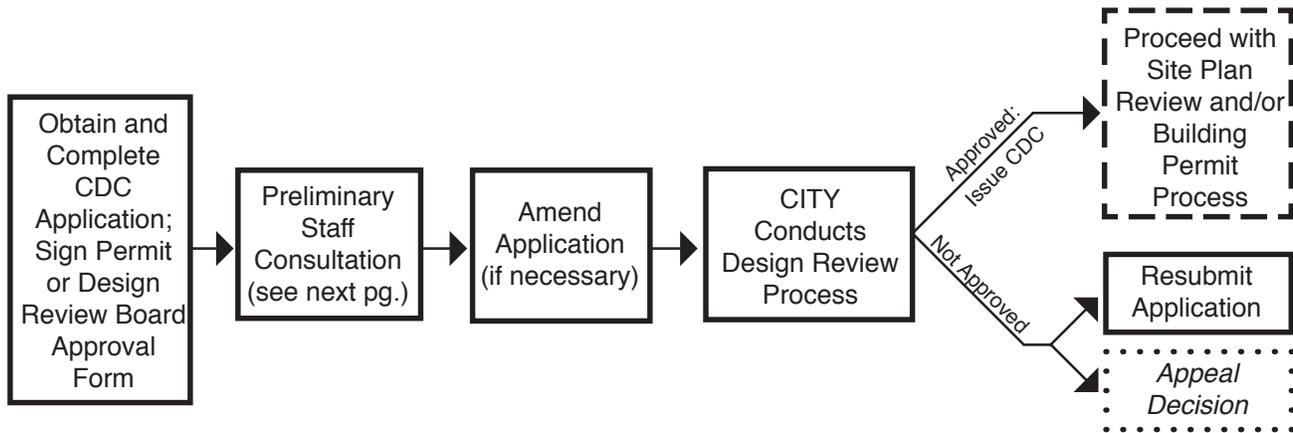
Note that these guidelines also apply to temporary buildings and kiosks, to the extent that these are permitted. These structures should comply with these standards as any other structure in the downtown would.

A Certificate of Design Compliance is required prior to initiation of construction or fabrication of improvements for any of the elements defined above, as it relates to design and site plan review and/or signage review in the Downtown Overlay District.

The following are among those elements that require a review, approval and a Certificate of Design Compliance prior to implementation:

- The construction of a new structure
- The alteration or restoration of any exterior features
- Addition to a structure

The Design Review Process



- The removal or demolition, in whole or in part, of an historic resource
- The construction or modification of any new or existing sign or the addition of new signage
- Applying a new exterior siding material
- Adding a new window, door or dormer
- Creating a driveway or a parking facility
- Adding a satellite dish (TV)

Step 2. Check other city regulations.

The guidelines supplement other adopted city ordinances. The City of Durango, can provide information about these regulations, which also may affect the design character of a project. Examples include:

- Durango Comprehensive Plan
- The City of Durango’s Zoning Ordinance
- The City of Durango’s Land Use and

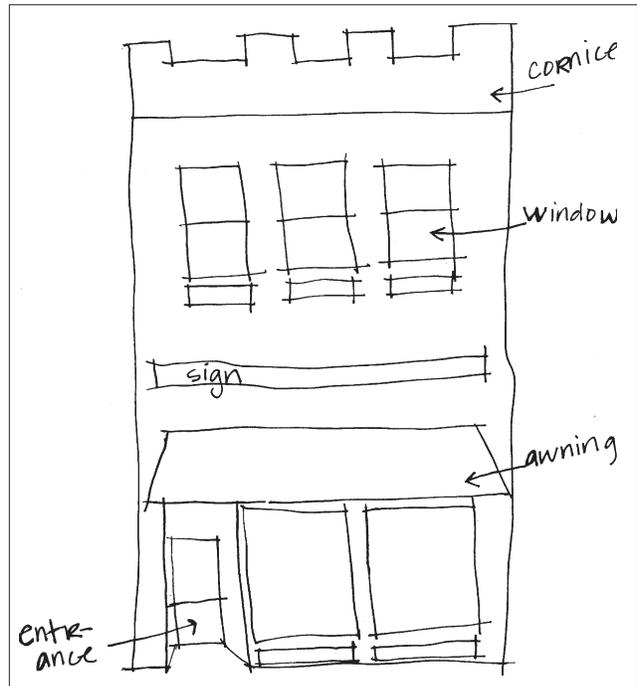
Applying for a Certificate of Design Compliance (CDC)

The formal review process is defined in specific procedures adopted by the city and outlined in the LUDC Sec. 12-3 Design Review Board. In general, the process described here is employed.

Step 1. Consider professional design assistance.

Property owners are strongly encouraged to engage licensed architects and other design and planning professionals to assist them in developing their concepts. Preservation consultants may also be helpful in cases in which historic properties are involved. Doing so may facilitate a more efficient review process.

Working with an architect will help owners to formulate clearer design requests, communicate concepts more effectively, and to be certain that the design approach is oriented in the appropriate direction.



Inappropriate drawing: the scale and character are not clearly conveyed, nor are there any dimensions.

Purpose of Design Guidelines

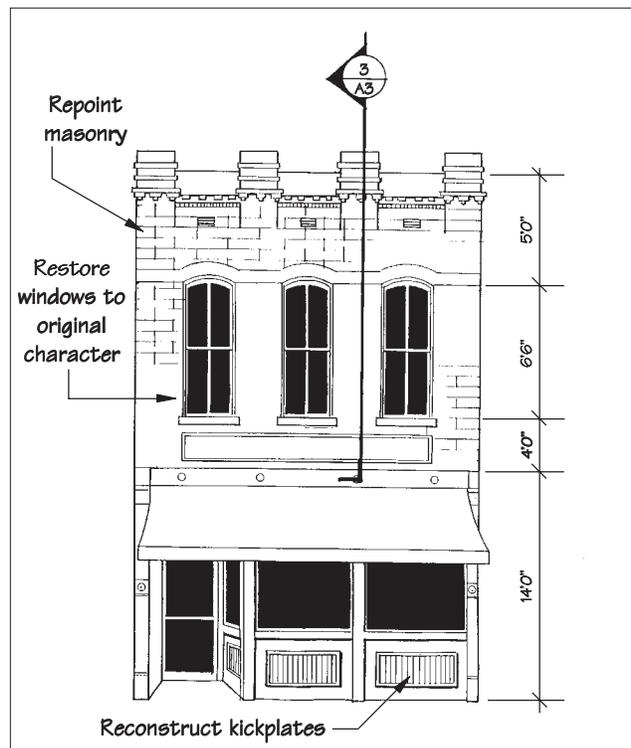
- Development Code (LUDC)
- Subdivision Regulations
- Sign Ordinance
- Site Plan Review Procedures
- River Corridor Overlay Zone (RCOZ)
- Special Use Permits (SUP's)
- Parking and Landscaping Regulations
- The International Building Code (IBC)
- International Energy Conservation Code (IECC)
- Green Building in Leadership in Energy and Environmental (LEED) regulations
- Outdoor Lighting Ordinances

Step 3. Become familiar with the design guidelines.

Review the basic organization of this guidelines document and determine which chapter(s) will apply to a project. Contact the City of Durango's Planning and Community Development Department with any questions.

Step 4. Review the project context.

Consider immediately adjacent properties and also the character of the entire block. In many cases,



Appropriate drawing: mechanically drafted to scale, this drawing best conveys the character of the proposed work.

the character of the entire Central Business District is also an important consideration.

Step 5. Develop a design concept using the guidelines.

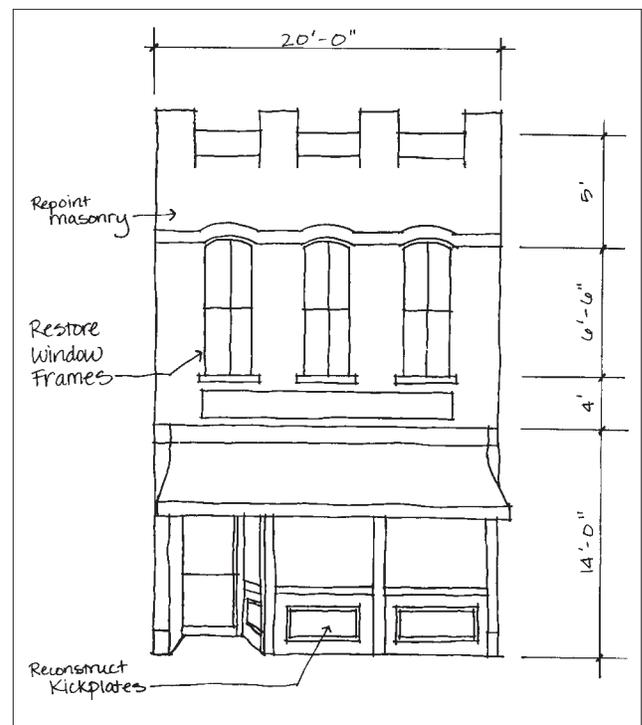
The guidelines form the basis for the city's decisions. Applicants should be able to describe how the proposed work meets the guidelines.

Step 6. Preliminary review

Prepare a packet for preliminary review by the city staff prior to creating drawings for formal review. This step is **highly recommended**, but optional, for new construction, major alterations and additions.

Step 7. Submit a complete application packet for formal review.

An application packet should be prepared and submitted to the City of Durango for the Planning and Community Development Department Staff and the Design Review Board to evaluate. The



Appropriate drawing: while in freehand, this drawing does adequately convey the scale and character of the proposed work.

City of Durango appoints a board of citizens who serves as volunteers on the Design Review Board (DRB).

Adequate documentation is essential to provide a complete understanding of the work proposed. Applicants are encouraged, and may be required, to submit the following documentation:

- Completed application form
- Site plan/roof plan (drawn to scale)
- Proposed building elevations (to scale)
- Photographs of building conditions (existing and historic)
- Product literature or specifications
- Materials samples and color samples

If a drawing is to be included in the submittal package, it should be drafted to scale and executed in a manner that clearly depicts the character of the proposed work. While a professionally produced drawing is encouraged, it is not required, as the sketches that follow

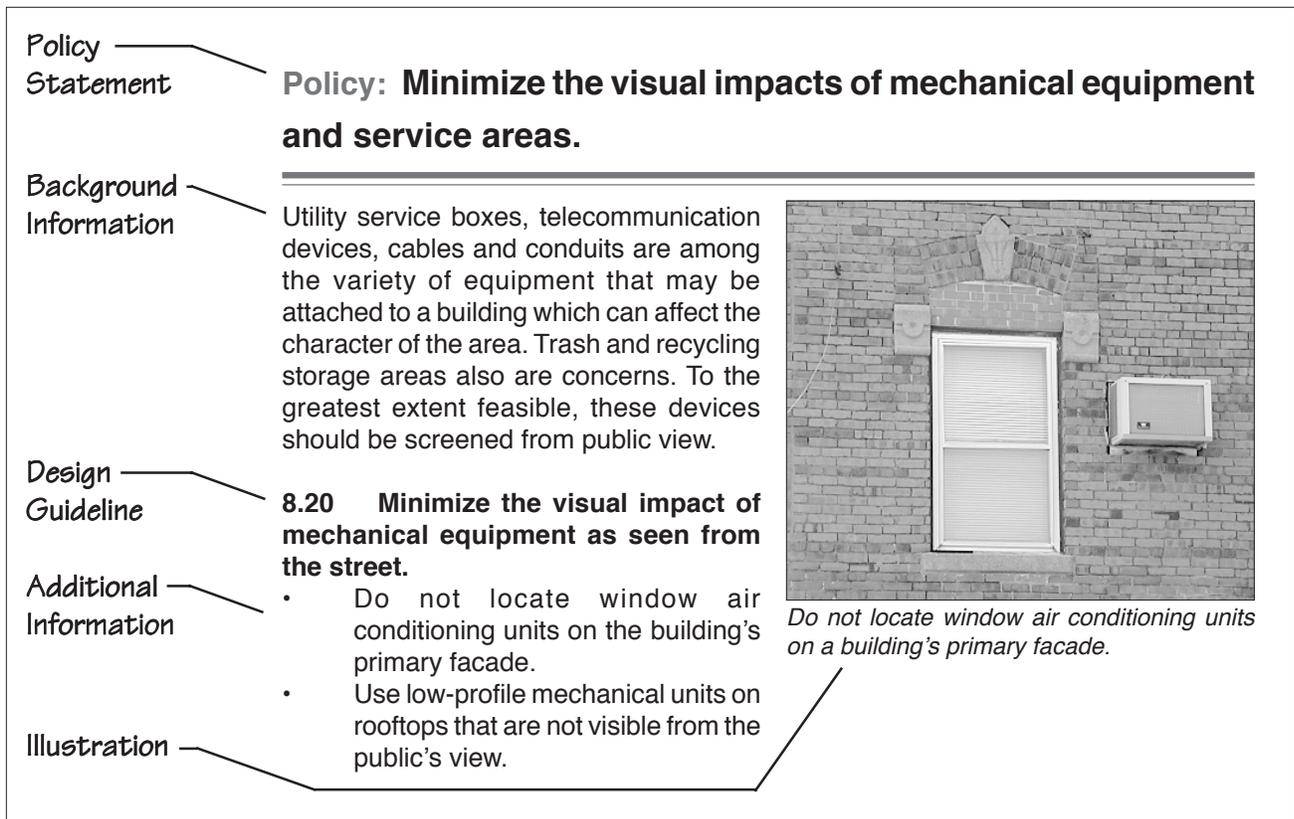
illustrate. For a complete list of required submittal documents, contact the Planning and Community Development Department.

Step 8. Present the application.

Each project will have a formal presentation by the applicant. The presentation should focus on how the proposed project complies with the design guidelines. The public will also have an opportunity to comment after the presentation has been made and staff recommendation on the application has been presented. Comments by the Review Board will follow, and a decision will be made.

Step 9. Apply for a building permit.

Once an application has been approved, the City will issue a Certificate of Design Compliance. This “certificate” is the applicant’s proof that the proposed design meets the intent of the city’s adopted design guidelines. At this point, the applicant may apply for a building permit.



A sample of the format of a design guideline and its components, as used in this document.

The Guideline Format

Each chapter containing design guidelines is organized in a way that provides background information as well as specific regulatory language. A typical guideline contains the following components:

Pertinent subtopics

The chapters are divided into subtopics. For example, in the chapter addressing "Site Design," the subtopics include: public streetscape, building and street lighting, historic landscape features, mechanical equipment and service areas, and parking. This organization allows the user to quickly select the relevant design topics within a chapter.

Policy statement

For each subtopic, one or more broad policy statements explaining the city's basic approach for the treatment of the design feature being discussed is given. This statement provides the basis for the more detailed background information

and design guidelines that follow. In a case in which special conditions exist that do not appear to be anticipated in the guideline, then this broad policy statement serves as the basis for determining the appropriateness of the proposed work.

Background information

A discussion of the issues typically associated with the specific design topic is presented next. This may include technical information, such as factors associated with the preservation of an historic building material, as well as general preservation theory that is relevant to the topic at hand.

Formal design guideline statement

Specific design guidelines are presented as **bold face** statements. These are also numbered to indicate their relative position within a chapter and to aid in specific reference in the design review process.

Supplemental information

Also provided with the design guidelines are supplementary requirements, which clarify the primary design guideline statement and may suggest specific methods for complying with it. These supplementary requirements are listed as bulleted (*) statements.

Illustrations

Design guidelines are further explained through the use of photographs and illustrations. The examples given should not be considered the only appropriate options. In most instances, there are other possible solutions that meet the intent of the design guidelines, as well as the needs of the property owner.

It is important to note that **all** of the elements of the design guidelines (i.e., including the introductory and informational sections, the policy statement, and the sub-points) constitute the material upon which the city will make its determination of the appropriateness of a proposed project.



The Second Avenue Character Area serves as a transition between the Main Avenue Historic Character Area and the Third Avenue Historic District.

Downtown Character Areas

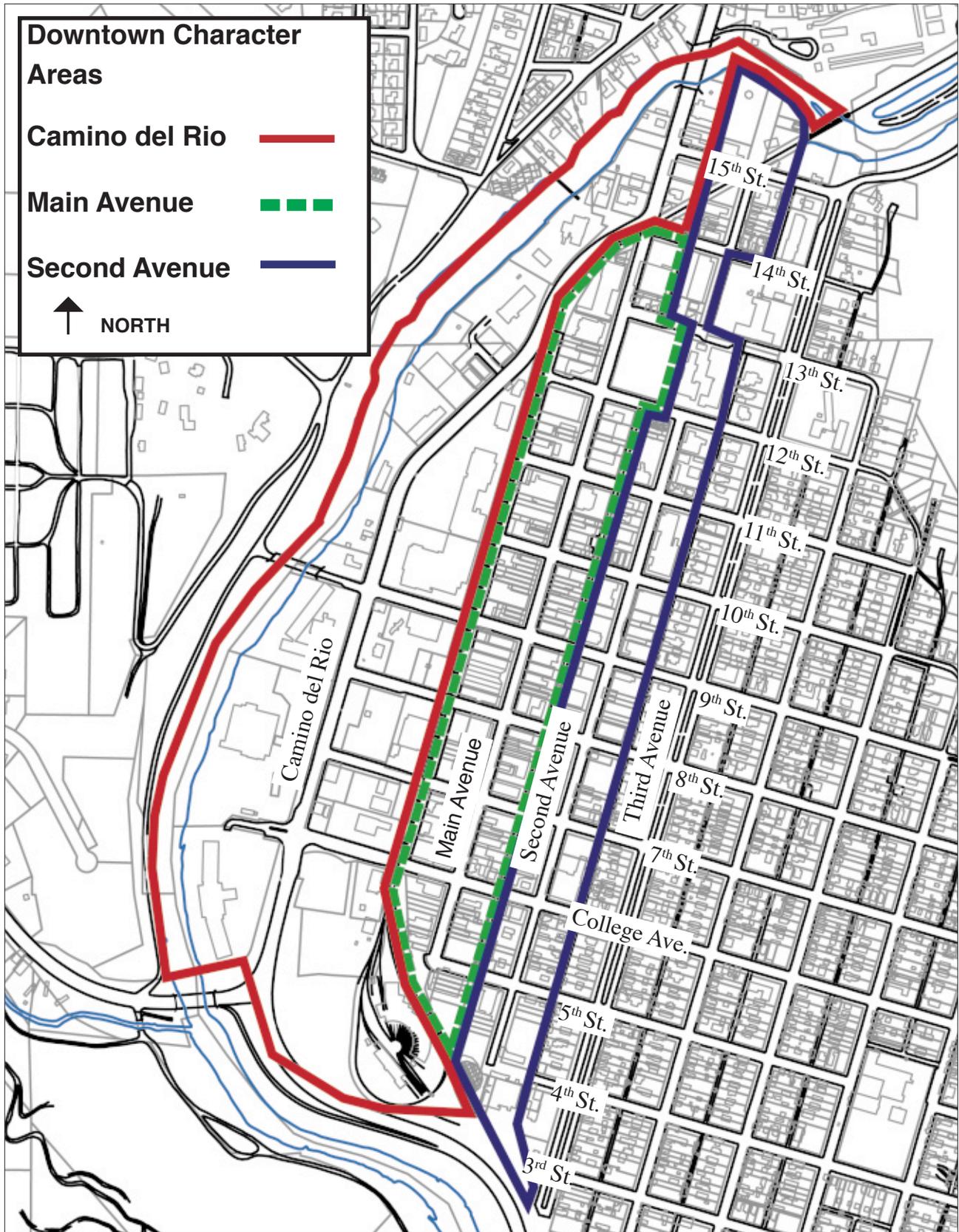
For purposes of design review, the Central Business District is divided into three different “character areas,” for which specific design objectives exist. These areas are: “Main Avenue Character Area,” the “Second Avenue Character Area,” and the “Camino del Rio Character Area.” The names correspond to the major north-south streets in the downtown, but other streets, particularly the numbered cross-streets, are also included.

The Main Avenue Character Area contains a high concentration of historic structures that reflect the early development of downtown. A large part of this subarea also is a National Register Historic District, in recognition of these important cultural resources.

The Camino del Rio area is a major entry to downtown. Major views to the Animas River and to downtown are key features. What one encounters on Camino sets up the images and expectations for the core of town; therefore, the future character of Camino del Rio is important. Presently, Camino del Rio lacks a positive image.

The Second Avenue Character Area is a transition between the Main Avenue Historic Character Area and the Third Avenue Historic District. It has a mix of building types and, in general, conveys a pedestrian-friendly image.

Some projects will be located on the edge of a Character Area. In these cases, the context may be defined by more than one of the districts. The characteristics of adjacent design districts will be taken into consideration in these situations.



This map of the Downtown Overlay Character Areas is for reference purposes only. All data including parcel lines and building footprints are for referencing purposes only. Contact the City of Durango Planning Department for specific questions relating to the boundaries.

Interpretation of Terms Used in this Document

These definitions apply to terms related to compliance in the chapters that follow.

Appropriate - In some cases, a stated action or design choice is defined as being “appropriate” in the text. In such cases, by choosing the design approach referred to as “appropriate,” the reader will be in compliance with the guideline. In other cases, there may be a design that is not expressly mentioned in the text that also may be deemed “appropriate” by the Design Review Board.

Consider - When the term “consider” is used, a design suggestion is offered to the reader as an example of one method of how the design guideline at hand could be met. Applicants may elect to follow the suggestion, but may also seek alternative means of meeting it. In other cases, the reader is instructed to evaluate the ability to take the course recommended in the context of the specific project.

Context - In many cases, the reader is instructed to relate to the context of the project area. The “context” relates to those properties and structures adjacent to, and usually within the same block as, the proposed project.

Guideline - In this document, a “guideline” is a requirement that must be met when it is relevant to the project under consideration, in order to be in compliance with the City of Durango’s design review process.

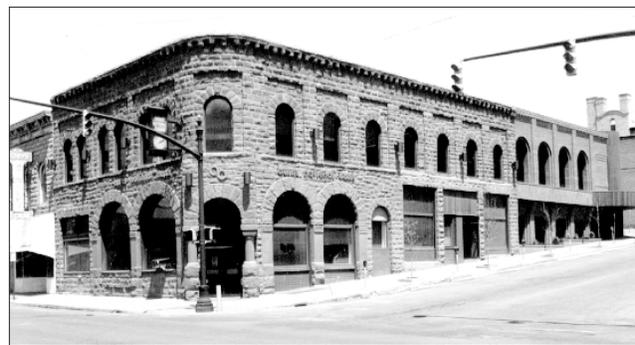
Historic - In general, an historic property is one that is at least 50 years old or older, associated with significant people or events or conveys a character of building and design found during the city’s period of significance. In the context of this document, an “historic” property is one that is determined by the city to have historic significance and therefore the section of the guidelines addressing historic buildings shall apply.

Imperative mood - Throughout this document, many of the guidelines are written in the imperative mood. The reader is often instructed to “maintain” or “preserve” an established characteristic. For example, one guideline states: “Preserve significant storefront components.” In such cases, the user **shall** comply. The imperative mood is used, in part, because this document is intended to serve an educational role as well as a regulatory one.

Inappropriate - Inappropriate means impermissible. When the term “inappropriate” is used, the relevant design approach shall not be allowed. For example, one guideline states: “Signs that are out of character with those seen historically and that would alter the historic character of the street are inappropriate.” In this case, a design out of character with those seen historically would not be approved.

Preferred - In some cases, the reader is instructed that a certain design approach is “preferred.” In such a case, the reader is encouraged to choose the design option at hand. However, other approaches may be considered.

Should - If the term “should” appears in a design guideline, then compliance is required, unless specific circumstances of a project make it impractical to do so. In such cases where the Design Review Board determines that compliance is not required, then the applicant must demonstrate how the related policy statement still will be met.



In general, an historic property is one that is at least 50 years old or older, associated with significant people or events or conveys a character of building and design found during the city’s period of significance.

Benefits of Preservation

Across the nation, thousands of communities promote historic preservation because doing so contributes to neighborhood livability and quality of life, minimizes negative impacts on the environment and yields economic rewards. These same reasons apply in downtown Durango. Even for those parts of downtown that have fewer historic resources, it is important to recognize the importance of respecting the genuine historic context.

Because downtown Durango is rich in resources and offers an outstanding quality of life, it continues to attract development that challenges the community to seek creative ways of protecting its character. Preserving historic resources is a part of an overall strategy of maintaining community identity and livability. A key goal is that, as Durango continues to grow, it will maintain its ties to the past through the preservation of its architectural heritage reflected in its historic resources.

Preservation of the built environment provides a fundamental link to the past. Many of the buildings tell the story of Durango's unique historical development, and keeping these resources creates a sense of place for those who live here and provides visitors a connection with this unique heritage.

Construction quality

Many of the historic structures in the downtown were constructed with high quality materials and good craftsmanship. Also, these structures were thoughtfully detailed and the finishes of materials were generally of high quality—all features that owners today appreciate and value.

Adaptability

Owners frequently find that the floor plans of historic buildings easily accommodate modern lifestyles and support a diversity of users. Many spaces are large, permitting a variety of arrangements while retaining the overall historic character of the structure.

Livability and quality of life

When older buildings occur in groups, they create a street scene that is "pedestrian friendly," and encourages walking and neighborly interaction. Decorative architectural features also contribute to a sense of identity that is not found in newer areas. These historic buildings, therefore, help create desirable places to live and work.

Environmental benefits

Preserving an historic structure is also a sound environmental conservation policy because "recycling" saves energy and reduces the need for producing new construction materials. Four types of energy savings occur:

- First, energy is not consumed to demolish a building and dispose of the resulting debris.
- Second, energy is not used to create new building materials, transport them and assemble them on site.
- Third, the "embodied" energy which was used to create the original building and its components is preserved.
- Finally, by "reusing" older buildings, pressure is also reduced to harvest new lumber and other materials that may have negative effects on the environment of other locales where these materials are produced.

Economic benefits

Nationwide studies prove that preservation projects also contribute more to the local economy than do new building programs because each dollar spent on a preservation project has a higher percentage devoted to labor and to the purchase of materials available locally. By contrast, new construction typically has a higher percentage of each dollar spent devoted to materials that are produced outside of the local economy and to special construction skills that may be imported. Therefore, when money is spent on rehabilitating a building, it has a higher "multiplier effect," keeping more money circulating in the community.

Historic preservation efforts also foster a charm and character that attracts visitors. Many cities throughout the country have made tourism based on their historic resources a profitable and effective development strategy.

Responsibility of ownership

Ownership of an historic property carries both the benefits described above and a responsibility to respect the historic character of the resource and its setting. While this responsibility does exist, it does not automatically translate into higher construction or maintenance costs. Ultimately, residents and property owners should recognize that historic preservation is a long-range community policy that promotes economic well-being and overall viability of the city at large and that they play a vital role in helping to implement that policy through careful stewardship of the area's historic resources.



Downtown civic facilities include museums, churches, schools, libraries, courts and governmental offices.

Design for civic institutions

The design guidelines focus on principles for rehabilitation and infill of commercial and mixed-use projects that should reinforce the historic building fabric and enhance the pedestrian environment of downtown. To do so, they draw upon principles established in traditional commercial and residential buildings. While these are the majority of property types that will occur in the area, civic facilities should be a part of the urban mix as well.

These civic facilities include museums, churches, schools, libraries, courts and governmental offices. Traditionally, buildings for these uses have contrasted with the framework of storefronts. This tradition of designing civic institutions as landmarks in the urban fabric should be continued. At the same time, the basic principles of urban design outlined in this document should still apply. Among them are these key principles:

Design principles for civic facilities:

- Civic facilities should be located such that they encourage pedestrian traffic to nearby downtown businesses.
- Civic facilities should be designed to reinforce the downtown fabric of streets and sidewalks.
- Convenient pedestrian connections should link abutting civic buildings.
- The edges of a civic property should be inviting to pedestrians.
- The visual impacts of automobiles should be minimized.
- Primary entrances should face the street, not to parking lots.
- A sense of human scale should be conveyed.
- Impacts on adjacent historic resources should be minimized.
- Outdoor spaces designed for public use should be provided.

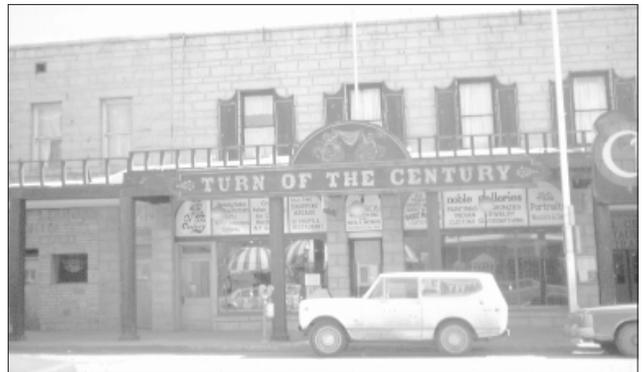
HISTORIC OVERVIEW OF DURANGO

Introduction

The City of Durango is located in the Animas River Valley in the San Juan Basin of southwest Colorado. It serves as the La Plata county seat and is a major regional service center. The city was founded in 1880 by the Denver and Rio Grande Railway and since has evolved from a frontier mining depot and supply center to a tourist and recreation destination with a state college.

The history of Durango's evolution from frontier town to destination city is evident in the architecture in the downtown area. Many buildings have gone through numerous alterations over time; some have been restored to their original appearance while others continue to evolve.

A wide variety of architectural styles can be found in downtown Durango ranging from the eclectic and revival style buildings of the 1890s, to Art Deco commercial storefronts, vernacular cottages and International style structures. This variety is evidence that the area has changed progressively over time and has remained economically viable through its history.



Buildings along Main Street have evolved over time; while some may have lost original features, they still help convey the history of downtown Durango. The stone structure above has had several different canopy treatments.



Some of the residential cottages in the downtown area, such as the one seen above and at right, have been adapted to commercial uses.



Adaptive reuse of a residential cottage along Second Avenue, seen during rehabilitation at left.



In 1930, Main Street, looking north at Ninth Street.

Note these characteristics:

1. Brick and stone dominate.
2. Variety of building heights (1 to 3 stories)
3. Storefronts align.
4. Buildings are capped with cornices.



In 2000, Main Street, looking north at Ninth Street.

DURANGO HISTORY

“Durango.” The name is said to have been chosen by a founder because of a recent trip to the Mexican town of that name. To an editor of The Durango Record it was “another monument to the energy, pluck and perseverance of the American people who constitute the planters of empire.”



Early Durango, looking southwest toward the river. (Photo: Colorado Historical Society)

To read other early chroniclers, one would think they had discovered the promised land. Durango was well situated in the Animas Valley, with its mild climate, agricultural and grazing lands and hot springs. It benefited from the Animas River for irrigation and had outlets on each of its four borders, thus making expansion possible. The San Juans to the north held gold and silver deposits and the La Plata Mountains lay to the west.

Durango was selected as a townsite by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad after the railroad clashed with the town fathers of Animas City. In late 1879 the Durango Trust was established to organize the purchase of coal land and townsite property. Ex-Territorial Governor Alexander Hunt and British physician William Bell headed the Trust and purchased 160 acres.

The history of the Main Avenue District virtually begins with the original platting of the town. The layout plan was that Main Avenue would be the

“wholesale street,” Second Avenue the “retail business,” and Third Avenue the “residential boulevard” with “rows of trees down the middle like Colorado Springs.” Third Avenue was also to be known as “church street.” The rationale for this scheme was to situate businesses near the river and residences on the elevated land with a view away from the noise, traffic and dust.

Early on, the Trust recommended that the town’s central four blocks be constructed in brick and stone, the first “design standard” for Durango. Although many Main Avenue buildings were originally of wood-frame construction, others originated as brick. Between 1881 and 1888, many wood buildings were quickly constructed on Main Avenue, only to burn to the ground in the fire of 1889. The 1889 fire eliminated many of the frontier-style buildings in the downtown. They were rapidly replaced with brick and stone buildings, fulfilling the expectations of the settlers who came from similar Midwestern towns. Most of the surviving wood buildings were replaced by masonry structures as soon as the owners could afford to make the improvements. Masonry buildings embodied a sense of permanence and prosperity necessary to attract investors. As historian Duane Smith puts it, “Small mining camps, like Animas Forks, never went beyond the false-fronted, frame buildings; towns like Durango, Telluride and Silverton quickly did.” Several of the buildings left today are the first built on that site.

Local industries supplied many of the construction materials: brickyards, lumber yards and sawmills were among the first in operation. The San Juan and New York Smelter also moved here from Silverton. The proximity of the coal fields and extensive railroad lines helped make Durango the major smelting center of southwest Colorado, with mining the second major industry.

The speed and quality with which the core of Durango was built is evidenced in this visitor’s observation in 1881: “Substantial brick blocks line the business streets, there are three hotels in full blast and all kinds of business represented and represented well...And in this really wonderful little town, less than a year ago not a single house was standing.”

The respected Engineering and Mining Journal described Durango as “an unusually attractive community with a class of buildings doing credit to any new town.” Surely the First National Bank and Strater Hotel were two reasons for these good impressions.

Durango became the region’s commercial center. Farmers, ranchers and personnel from Fort Lewis shopped here and arranged shipping on the rail-



Ninth Street looking west to the river from Main Avenue. Much of this area is now in the Camino del Rio Design Review District. (Photo: Colorado Historical Society)

road. Smith thinks Durango’s “instant urbanization” resulted from the settler’s combination of optimism and opportunism—faith in hard work and hopes for a quick buck. The motto “grow or die” means more than words; it was the town’s *raison d’être*.

The Eighties and Nineties were decidedly materialistic years when the quality of life translated as wealth and greatness. The young businessmen from the East and Midwest who were also town leaders fought against a frontier image. The downtown went from log cabins to frame and brick construction overnight. They would have “no pioneer cabins from corporations.” Soon, the town proudly pointed to electricity, telephone service and water companies. Smoke from wood stoves and the smelter covered the town in soot, a factor taken for granted by these “planters of empire.”

In their haste to settle the town, the riverfront garbage dump was also ignored. This area, some-

times called “poverty flats,” was home for Mexicans, Chinese and other minorities throughout the years.

The early boom years had their reckless side. The area west of the railroad housed prostitutes, gambling halls and saloons. And although these activities were officially prohibited, fines levied against the ladies of the line became a source of “official” town revenue.

The fire of 1889 proved to be the “blessing in disguise” some hoped it would be. Seven blocks of the residential and business district were destroyed and then rebuilt in brick and stone. Many of these buildings stand today.

Photographs document the character of Main Avenue in the early 1900s: brick structures were predominant, varying in height from one to four stories, but most were two stories. Corner buildings tended to be taller, presenting a finished, almost fortified, look for the block. Most first floors were used for stores; thus a pattern was set with display windows, awnings and cornices aligning down the street. Most buildings assumed individuality with the use of architectural detailing and ornamentation in stamped metal or stone.

The area west of Main contained a wide variety of buildings: small frame houses were mixed among warehouses, boarding houses and an occasional retail business. A great deal of open space was left undeveloped or utilized as storage yards.

Residential and commercial buildings were mixed on Second Avenue. A two-story brick store with a squared false-front might be flanked by one-story gable-roofed cottages. Trees and lawns were typical elements of the Second Avenue streetscape.

Throughout the hardships of the Nineties (far from “gay”), Durango held on. There was a drought in 1891; the last half of ‘93 brought a depression and the drop in silver prices hurt little mining towns around Durango. The temporary closing of the smelter and unrest in the mines added to the woes.

Now that the unabashed promotion of “the Denver of the southwest” was subdued, by 1910 a

comfortable routine was established. The first part of the century was a reforming and progressive time for Durango. The government listened to citizens' complaints about unpaved roads and the poorly maintained wooden sidewalks. The business district now stretched from the depot to 11th Street. There were the usual hardware, drug and retail stores and 22 saloons for a population of 4,686.

Farming made a major contribution to the economics of the Twenties and Thirties. Most businesses catered to the agricultural clientele. And to growing tourism—the Pueblo Cliff Dwellings were discovered, Mesa Verde was named a national park and became a strong attraction. Newly groomed ski runs brought out-of-towners.

Will Rogers said of Durango in the Thirties: "...a beautiful little city, out of the way and glad of it: gold, silver, and Mesa Verde Cliff Dwelling Ruins, where civilization flourished before it started to go backwards."

New buildings that appeared downtown in the Twenties and Thirties expressed the changing styles of the time: streamlined facades, with curving corners, derivative of "Moderne" styles, used a new material—glazed terra cotta tiles. Earth-tones were used, which helped these buildings fit in with their older neighbors.

During World War II the smelter was reopened for vanadium and uranium refining and its revenues were partly responsible for the post-war boom. Oil and natural gas also beefed up the economy. Houses were built on farm and ranch lands in the valley. The Fifties housing shortage spurred development of new subdivisions such as Crestview and Riverview. Smith cites Fort Lewis' relocation as the most significant event since the turn of the century. The college, built in 1957 on the mesa above town, brought in new jobs, fresh ideas and cultural activities.

In the Fifties, the town that had once struggled to be a model of an Eastern metropolis capitalized on its wild and wooly image for the tourist dollar. Hollywood shot several films here, not so much for the legends as for the scenery.

Boosterism brought the generic American "miracle mile" of restaurant chains, motels and gas stations to the northern end of Main Avenue. Family-owned businesses were challenged by chain stores opening. The small town feeling and quality of life were somewhat threatened when the emphasis once again turned to expansion.



These storefronts survive today on Main Avenue. (Photo: Ft. Lewis College)

Main Avenue was not frozen in turn-of-the-century architecture. Its buildings changed with the times—some of them went deco and some older buildings were "remodeled" with aluminum and wrought iron in the Fifties.

The Seventies were a time in which discussion focused on growth and the means with which to control it. The Heritage for Tomorrow Committee was established to heighten community awareness about the architectural and business character of the town, and later planning efforts continued to call for enhancement of downtown. When a portion of the west side of Main's 800 block burned in 1974, it was rebuilt as the Main Mall.

These new buildings reflected a new trend which attempted to provide new architecture that is compatible with historic structures. Redevelopment at the south end of Main Street was stimulated by the development of the Narrow Gauge Railroad as a tourist attraction. The development expressed a "turn-of-the-century" image. In the late 1970s, the Burns Bank addition was built as an example of a very contemporary style blending with a historic building.



The Palace Grocery in 1900 exhibited typical storefront components, such as a kickplate, display window, and clerestory. (Photo: Ft. Lewis College)

By 1980, given these different interpretations, many felt it was time for Durango to create a guiding document for design in the downtown. The convergence of recommendations from the Heritage for Tomorrow Committees, the community's bicentennial planning ideas, and the city's decision to become a Main Street Program community all helped to get the City's initial design guidelines document underway.

Following an intensive two-year citizen involvement process, the *Durango Design Guidelines* document was adopted in 1983. Initially, compliance with the guidelines was to be voluntary. The city decided to utilize a Community Development Block Grant to help fund demonstration projects of how the guidelines could be applied and benefit property owners. In conjunction with this, the city also made low interest loan monies available for downtown storefront renovation projects, with the only caveat being that the renovation needed to be done in compliance with the guidelines.

Led by certain astute property owners, the popularity of the low interest monies spread, and in turn use of the guidelines increased significantly. Once certain properties were renovated, acceptance of the guidelines grew to the extent that by 1989, compliance with the guidelines for downtown projects became mandatory, rather than voluntary, in order to obtain a building permit.

In the early 1990s, debate arose over a developer's proposed project to reflect a theme design, in this case a 'western' theme that was not reflected in the guidelines. There then ensued an almost two year process to amend the guidelines to clarify terms related to 'theme', 'authenticity', 'replication', 'image', 'tradition', and 'context'. After significant discussion at the City Council meeting, the guidelines were amended to help clarify if not all, then at least some of these terms.

By the mid 1990s, it was evident that there was significant support within the community about the value of the guidelines and the impact that they had. Spurred by one property owner's strategic lobbying, the City Council directed staff to amend the guidelines to regulate paint color on buildings.

In 2002, following successful city negotiations with Wal-Mart and Home Depot to create new stores unique to Durango, citizens, as well as Design Review Board members, requested that the city develop and employ design guidelines in all of its commercial corridors, outside of the Central Business District. While pursuing this larger project, the decision was made to update the existing Downtown Design Guidelines in conjunction with the Citywide Guidelines process. That is how the process to revise this current document came to be.

Downtown Durango, despite development pressures on the city's periphery, continues to be a vital center. Government and citizens groups remain interested in planning for a future that respects the past.

The question that the community still faces is: "How shall we manage the quality of change downtown?" These design guidelines are intended to provide direction for new development and redevelopment projects that respects the heritage of Durango and preserves it for the future.

Architectural Resources

Change has always been a factor in downtown Durango, as these photos demonstrate. The key is to assure that change occurs in a way that preserves the historic character.



The First National Bank in its original condition. (Photo: Ft. Lewis College)



This picture, taken in 1978, shows the building was partially covered. Although now restored, the renovation issues are typical of other buildings.

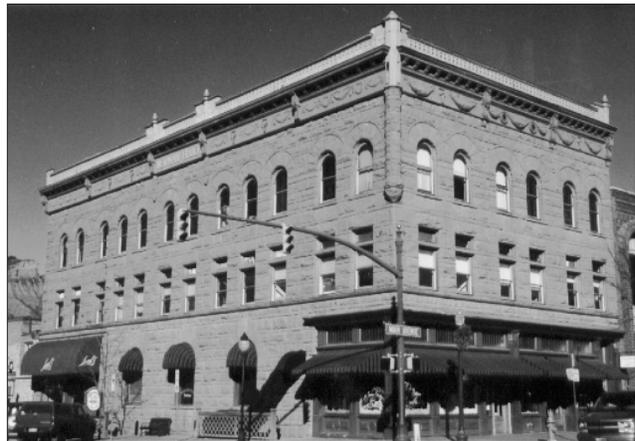


This picture was taken in the year 2003. In 1982, this building was renovated, respecting its historic character.

Early photos often provide details that can be reconstructed. In this photo, the Newman Block displays strong Italianate features. (Photo: Ft. Lewis College)



Unsympathetic alterations often weaken the visual impact of a business, as these alterations to the Newman Block once did.



Sympathetic renovations can preserve the inherent character while incorporating new uses. At left renovations are in progress. Today the facade is part of the pedestrian-friendly Main Avenue commercial core.



Because of its ornate details, such as bracketed cornices, the Italianate style was easily adapted to simple buildings and storefronts.

Italianate

• circa 1885-1900

Originally inspired by building in Northern Renaissance Italy, this blending of classical and romantic features became one of the most popular of the picturesque styles in the United States. Because of its ornate details, such as bracketed cornices, this style was easily adapted to simple buildings and storefronts. As the details and features of this style were capable of being interpreted in wood, masonry or iron, it was also very adaptable in the various regions of the country. With this adaptability and the sensibilities of the times, its popularity grew for commercial buildings.

Characteristics

- Tall, narrow, double-hung windows, often with arched or round arch heads (commonly referred to as “punched” windows as opposed to “ribbon” windows)
- Window sash are either one-over-one or two-over-two
- Protruding sills
- Quoins at building corners
- Double doors with glass panels
- Transom, often curved, above the front door
- Brackets, modillions and dentil courses
- Flat roof with ornate cornices
- Decorative paired brackets



Some vernacular buildings have ornamental detail, but these are simple, limited to a shallow molding such as a cornice.

Vernacular Commercial storefronts

• circa 1890-1920

Usually between one and four stories, the vernacular commercial building is divided horizontally into two distinct bands. The first floor is more commonly transparent, so goods can be displayed, while the second story is usually reserved for residential or storage space. The upper floor is typically supported by a steel beam that spans the glass opening. However, many one-story examples also exist. A kickplate is found below the display window while above the display window, a smaller band of glass, a transom, is seen. Also, the main door is frequently recessed.

These buildings have stone and brick facades. Ornamental detail exists, but is simple, limited to a shallow molding such as a cornice. Some cornices were made of masonry, while others were made of stamped metal. Many carry simplified Italianate detailing. In essence, these buildings lack distinctive detail, contrasting them with the revival styles that were also popular during this period.

Characteristics

- Cast-iron supported storefronts
- Large display windows
- Transom lights
- Kickplate
- Recessed entry
- Tall second story windows
- Cornice



Classical Revival detailing includes classical entablatures, simple window surrounds and door surrounds consisting of transom and sidelights.

Classical Revival influences

• circa 1880-1920

The Classical Revival style became quite popular during the late nineteenth century. Based on classical detailing that originated in ancient Greece, these buildings are known primarily for columns with Doric, Ionic or Corinthian capitals. Other detailing includes classical entablatures, simple window surrounds and door surrounds consisting of transom and sidelights.

Characteristics

- Rounded columns with capitals
- Pediment roof
- Tall first floor windows
- Entablature
- Doors with transom, side and corner lights
- Gabled or hipped roof
- Frieze band windows



Vernacular houses are constructed of simple designs, some of which remained common for decades.

Vernacular Residential (c. 1885-1910)

Sometimes referred to as “other,” “no style” or “folk houses,” the vernacular residential style focuses on being functional. The houses are constructed of simple designs, some of which remained common for decades. Many of these designs were indeed based on popular styles of the time, but the vernacular structures were much simpler in form, detail and function. Elements from other styles found in the area will appear on the vernacular but in simple arrangements.

While Downtown Durango includes “folk houses” of several types, the most prevalent is the Gable Front. The Gable Front Vernacular, usually one-story, has a front-facing gable roof with a full-width front porch.

Other types, such as the Gable Front and Wing, I-House, Hall and Parlor and Pyramidal exist as well. The Gable Front and Wing Vernacular had L-plans with one section having a side-facing gable roof and the other with a front-facing gable. A long porch sometimes appears on the front elevation. In Durango these buildings are not highly ornamented.

Characteristics

- Hipped roof over the main block; projecting wing with front-facing gable
- Porch, extending the length of the building, with shed roof on one-story; often a gable on two-story examples
- Usually round columns
- Tripartite, often Palladian window in upper story of gable
- Tripartite division of windows on projecting wing
- Clapboard wood siding, or shingles

Mission Revival

(c. 1890-1920)

The Mission Revival style began when Californian architects turned away from the revival architecture of the East and looked to the state's Hispanic heritage for inspiration. Several Californian architects began to advocate the style in the 1880s and early 1890s. It was further popularized when railroad companies and hotels adopted the style for their centerpiece buildings. This was the first architectural style to move eastward from the West. Most commonly, typical Hispanic design elements were adapted to the style (such as shaped parapets, arches and quatrefoil windows). While no "pure" Mission Revival style exists in downtown Durango, influences appear in some building details.

Characteristics

- Traditionally shaped mission dormer or roof parapet
- Red tile roof covering
- Widely overhanging eaves
- Exposed rafters
- Plain wall finish
- Quatrefoil windows or details
- Little decorative detailing, exceptions include arches, gables or balconies
- Small balconies or balconets



The Durango Elks Lodge No. 507 is one of the few examples of the use of Mission Revival details in the downtown area.



Small balconies or balconets are an example of the simple decorative detailing found in Mission Revival architecture.



The Art Deco style is characterized by a sculptural use of abstract ornamentation and geometric forms as seen in the glass tiles in the above facade.

Art Deco

(c. 1928 - 1940)

The Art Deco style is characterized by a sculptural use of abstract ornamentation and geometric forms. It was a break from traditional and classical styles and ornamentation. Vertical elements soaring to the full height of a facade often formed dynamic silhouettes.

Characteristics

- Smooth wall surface (usually stucco)
- Zigzags, chevrons and other stylized and geometric wall ornamentation
- Towers, piers and other vertical projections above the roof line
- Vertical emphasis
- Flat roof, usually with parapet

Art Moderne

circa 1930-1940

Often closely related to the International Style in appearance, the Art Moderne was devised as a way of incorporating the machine aesthetic into architecture, in the sense that buildings could emulate motion and efficiency. It is also referred to as the **Streamlined Moderne**, and always carried the aura of the futuristic. Whatever the term, in this case architecture followed industrial design, as "the slick look" was used for everything from irons to baby carriages. It is characterized by unbroken horizontal lines and smooth, curving display windows. The streamlined effect helps to distinguish this style from Art Deco, in which angular patterns are more typical.

Characteristics

- Smooth wall surfaces
- Flat roof
- Canopy
- Use of glass block and curved ceramic block
- Use of metal sash windows
- Horizontal bands at the cornice
- Metal doors with large panels of glass



The Stuart's Building is one of the rare examples of Art Moderne details in Durango. Glazed ceramic block is the base material.



Modernist theories were reflected in what some now term the International Style.

International Style

circa 1930-1940

The use of the words "international style" refers to the title of the exhibit promoted by the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 1931 presenting the work of forty architects from fifteen countries. It has become synonymous with Modernism and post-World War II architecture. It is based upon modern principles and materials with an emphasis on functionalism and simplicity. Bands of glass and solid materials were often used to create a horizontal feeling to buildings.

Characteristics

- Flat roofs
- An emphasis on volume, rather than mass, most often expressed through an extensive use of glass and angular, horizontal shapes
- Use of modern structural materials, such as concrete, glass and steel
- Metal casement windows
- Cantilevered elements over entrance
- No surface ornamentation
- An attempt to create smooth wall surfaces

PRINCIPLES FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Policies Underlying the Guidelines

Many properties in the downtown area have historic significance. For those, basic principles for preservation apply.

The design guidelines in this document incorporate principles set forth in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*—a widely accepted set of basic preservation design principles. This document is compatible with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*, while expanding on how these basic preservation principles apply in Durango.

The concept of historic significance

What makes a property historically significant? It is generally recognized that a certain amount of time must pass before the historical significance of a property can be evaluated. The National Register, for example, suggests that a property be at least 50 years old or have extraordinary importance before it may be considered. Durango also employs the "50-year" guideline; however, structures that are more recent may be considered significant if they are found to have special architectural or historical merit.

A property may be significant for one or more of the following reasons:

- Association with events that contributed to the broad patterns of history, the lives of significant people, or the understanding of Durango's prehistory or history.
- Construction and design associated with distinctive characteristics of a building type, period, or construction method.
- An example of an architect or master craftsman or an expression of particularly high artistic values.
- Integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.



Every historic building has a period of significance—or the time span during which it gained architectural, historical or geographical importance. Many commercial structures on Main Avenue date from the late 1800s.

Period of significance

Every historic building has a *period of significance*—or the time span during which it gained architectural, historical or geographical importance. In most cases, a property is significant because it represents or is associated with a particular period in history. Frequently, this begins with the construction of the building and continues through the peak of early occupation. Portions of the building fabric and features that date from the period of significance typically contribute to the character of the structure.

Concept of "integrity"

In addition to being historically significant, a property also must have integrity—a sufficient percentage of the structure must date from the period of significance. The majority of the building's structural system and its materials should date from that time and its key character-defining features also should remain intact. These may include architectural details, such as ornamental brackets and moldings, as well as the overall mass and form of the property. It is these elements that allow a building to be recognized as a product of its time.

The Basic Preservation Principles for Downtown

While the guidelines provide direction for specific design issues, some basic principles of preservation form the foundation for them. The following preservation principles apply in Durango:

1. Respect the historic design character of the building.

Don't try to change a building's style or make it look older than it really is. Confusing the character by mixing elements of different styles is not appropriate.

2. Seek uses that are compatible with the historic character of the building.

Every reasonable effort should be made to provide a compatible use for the building that will require minimal alteration to it or its site. An example of an appropriate adaptive use is converting a residence into a bed and breakfast establishment (when zoning regulations permit).

3. Protect and maintain significant features and stylistic elements.

Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship should be treated with sensitivity. The best preservation procedure is

to maintain historic features through proper maintenance from the outset so that intervention is not required. This includes rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint.

4. Preserve key, character-defining features of the property.

Key features are those that help convey the character of the resource as it appeared during its period of historic significance. These may include the basic structural system and building materials, as well as windows, doors, porches and ornamentation. Typically, those features that are on the front of a building or that are highly visible from a public way will be most important.

5. Repair deteriorated historic features, and replace only those elements that cannot be repaired.

Maintain the existing material, using recognized preservation methods whenever possible. If disassembly is necessary for repair or restoration, use methods that minimize damage to original materials and replace the existing configuration.

Developing a Preservation Strategy

Each preservation project is unique. A project may include a variety of treatment techniques, including the repair and replacement of features and maintenance of those already in good condition. In order to define the range of preservation treatments that may be needed in a project, consider these steps:

1. Research the history of the property.

This analysis should begin with an investigation of the history of the property. This may identify design alterations that have occurred and may help in developing an understanding of the significance of the building as a whole as well as its individual components.

2. Assess existing conditions.

Historical research should be combined with an on-site assessment of existing conditions. In this inspection, identify those elements that are original and those that have been altered. Also determine the condition of individual building components.

3. List use requirements.

Finally, list the requirements for continued use of the property. Is additional space needed? Or should the work focus on preserving and maintaining the existing configuration?

4. Summarize a preservation strategy.

By combining an understanding of the history of the building, its present condition, and the need for action, one can then develop a preservation approach.

Defining Preservation Treatments

When developing a preservation strategy, consider the application of these terms:

Maintenance

Work that often focuses on keeping the property in good working condition by repairing features as deterioration becomes apparent, using procedures that retain the original character, materials and finish of the features is considered maintenance. In some cases, preventive maintenance is executed prior to noticeable deterioration. No alteration or reconstruction is involved. Property owners are strongly encouraged to maintain their property in good condition so that more aggressive measures of rehabilitation, restoration or reconstruction are not needed.

Preservation

Keeping an existing building in its current state by a careful program of maintenance and repair is preservation. It will often include repair and stabilization of materials and features in addition to regularly scheduled maintenance. Essentially, the property is kept in its current good condition.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is the process of returning a property to a condition which makes a contemporary use possible while still preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural and cultural values. Rehabilitation may include the adaptive use of the building and constructing additions. Most good preservation projects in Durango may be considered rehabilitation projects.

Restoration

To restore, one reproduces the appearance of a building exactly as it looked at a particular moment in time; to reproduce a pure style—either interior or exterior. This process may include the removal of later work or the replacement of missing historic features. A restoration approach is used on missing details or features of an historic building when the features are determined to be par-



Rehabilitation is the process of returning a property to a condition which makes a contemporary use possible while still preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural and cultural values. Rehabilitation is often a step in the process of preparing a property for adaptive reuse.

ticularly significant to the character of the structure and when the original configuration is accurately documented.

Renovation

To renovate means to improve by repair, to revive. Renovation is similar to rehabilitation, although it includes the use of some new materials and elements. The basic character and significant details are respected and preserved, but some sympathetic alterations may also occur. Alterations that are made are generally reversible, should future owners wish to restore the building to its original design.

Adaptive use

Converting a building to a new use that is different from its original purpose is considered to be adaptive use. For example, converting a residential structure to offices is adaptive use. A good adaptive use project retains the historic character of the building while accommodating new functions.

While adaptive use allows the building owner to convert the building to a purpose other than that for which it was designed, it should be done with respect to the original building form. For example, it would be inappropriate to turn the living room of an historic building into a bathroom. The reason for this is that when the programmatic uses of a building are drastically altered, this often results in a major change to the original floor plan as well as to the exterior appearance of the building. When adaptive use is the preferred preservation alternative, the proposed design should make use of the original building function as closely as possible.

Inappropriate Actions:

Remodeling

To remake or to make over the design image of a building is to remodel it. The appearance is changed by removing original detail and by adding new features that are out of character with the original. Remodeling is inappropriate for historic buildings.

Demolition

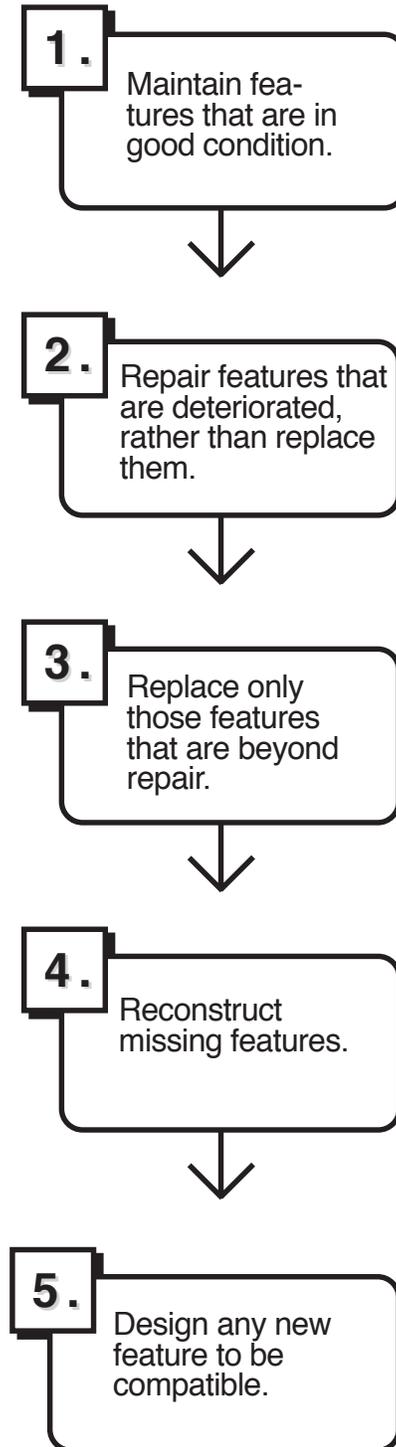
The removal and destruction of the majority of a building's historic materials, details and structural systems results in its loss, or demolition. This should be avoided.

The Preferred Sequence of Preservation Actions

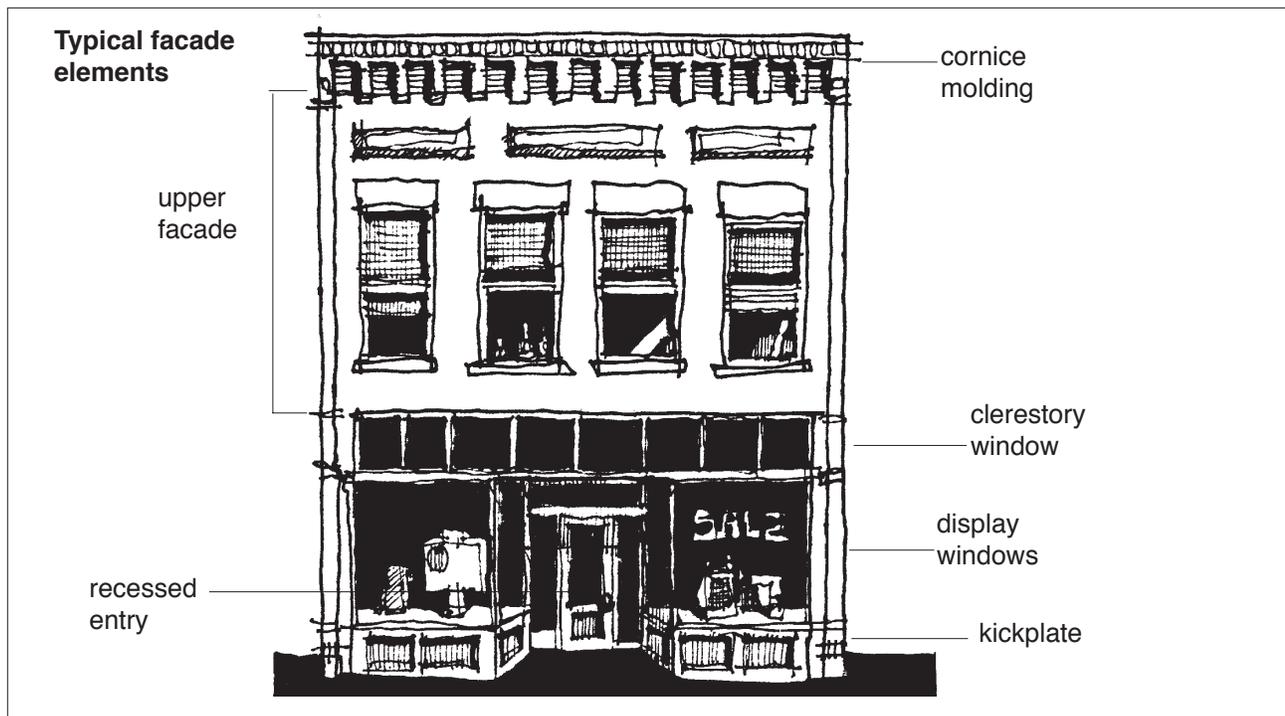
Once the basic approach to a project has been defined, it is important to assess the property and to identify any significant character-defining features and materials. Retaining these elements, and then using the guidelines to select an appropriate treatment mechanism will greatly enhance the overall quality of the preservation project. In making the selection, follow this sequence:

1. If a feature is intact and in good condition, maintain it as such.
2. If the feature is deteriorated or damaged, repair it to its original condition.
3. If it is not feasible to repair the feature, then replace it with one that is the same or similar in character (materials, detail, finish) to the original one. Replace only that portion which is beyond repair.
4. If the feature is missing entirely, reconstruct it from appropriate evidence.
5. If a new feature or addition is necessary, design it in such a way as to minimize the impact on original features.

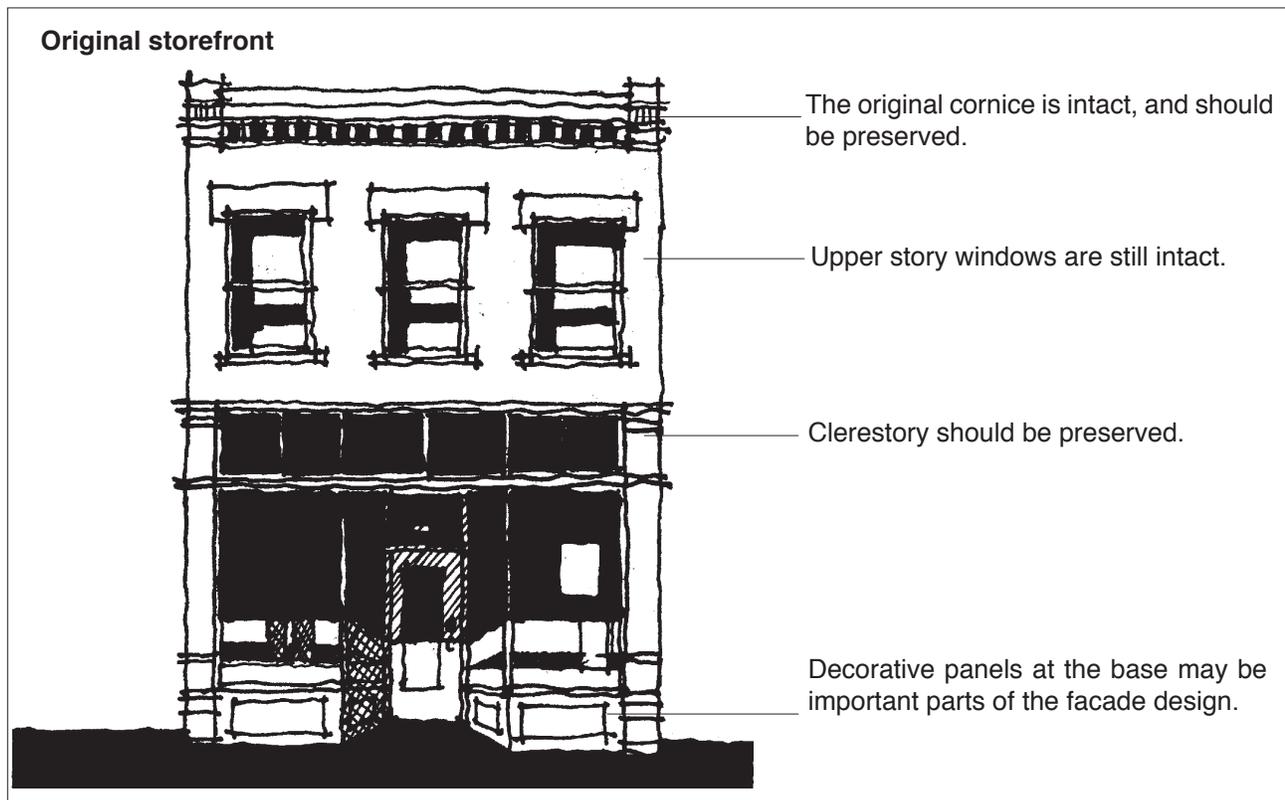
The Preferred Sequence of Preservation Actions



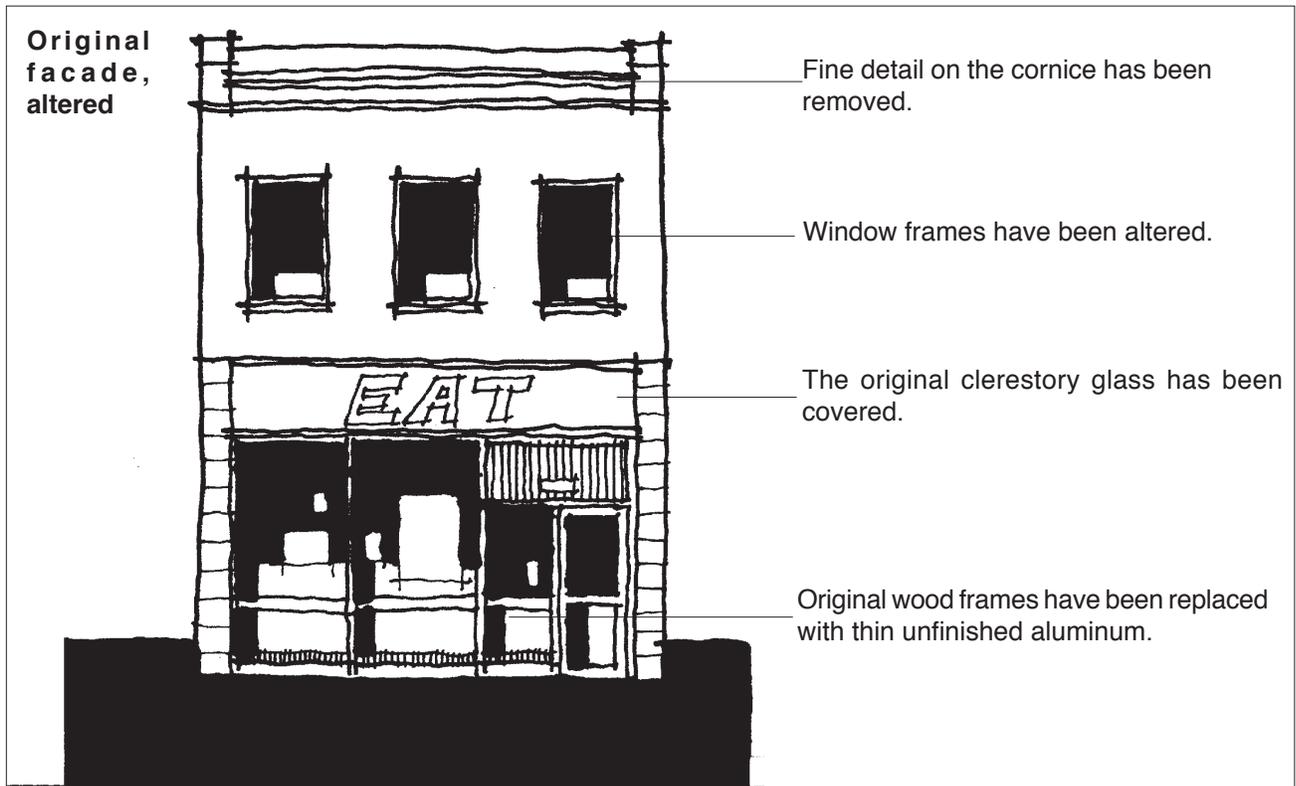
Developing a Strategy...



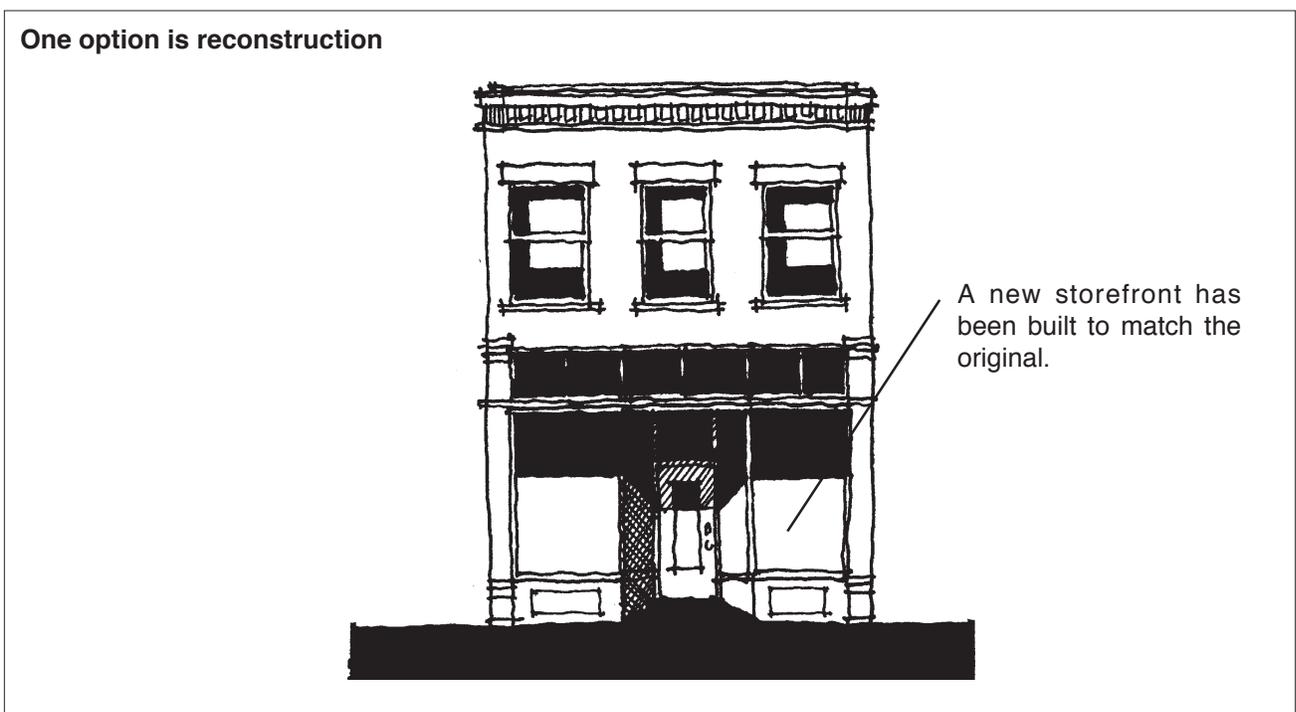
These components can be found on many buildings downtown.



If the building front is still in its original condition, it should be preserved. Restoration or replacement of some portions may need to be done. The original features are usually an asset, because they add visual interest that can improve marketing image.

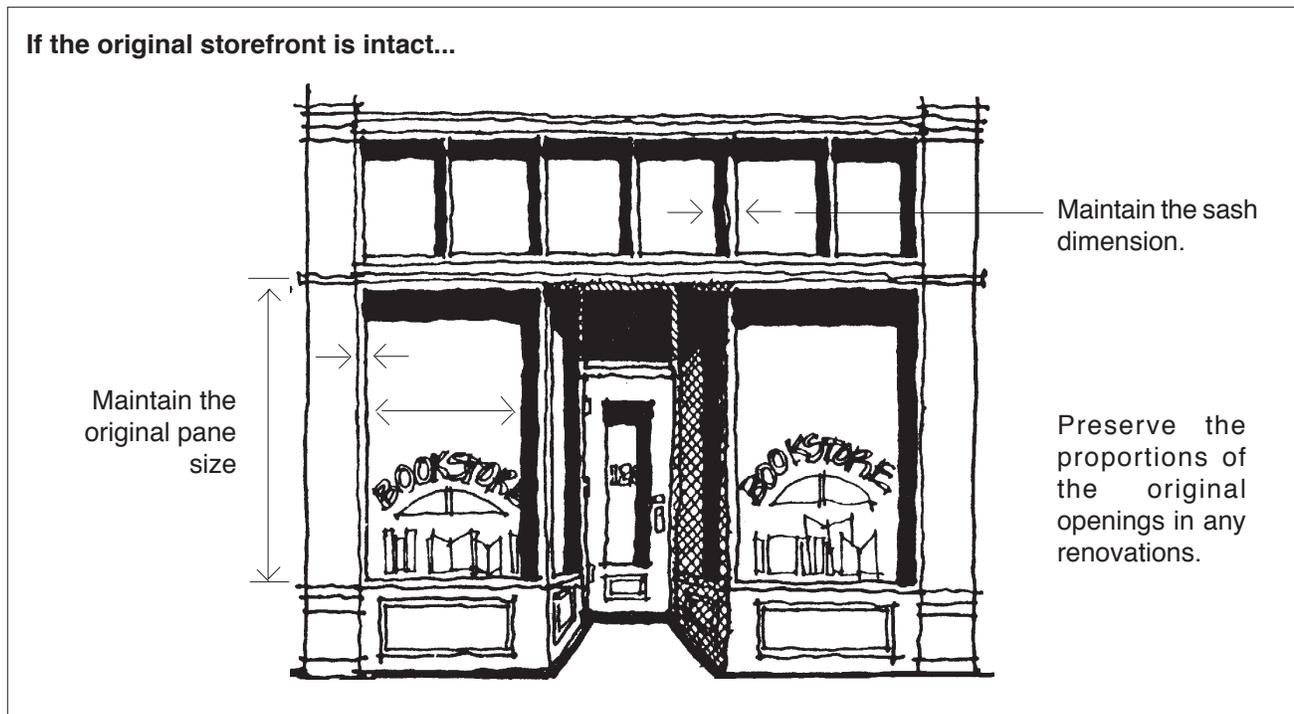


Don't remove original elements; avoid covering them. Doing so will weaken the historic integrity of the building. If the facade is presently in this condition, reconstructing the original is one option.



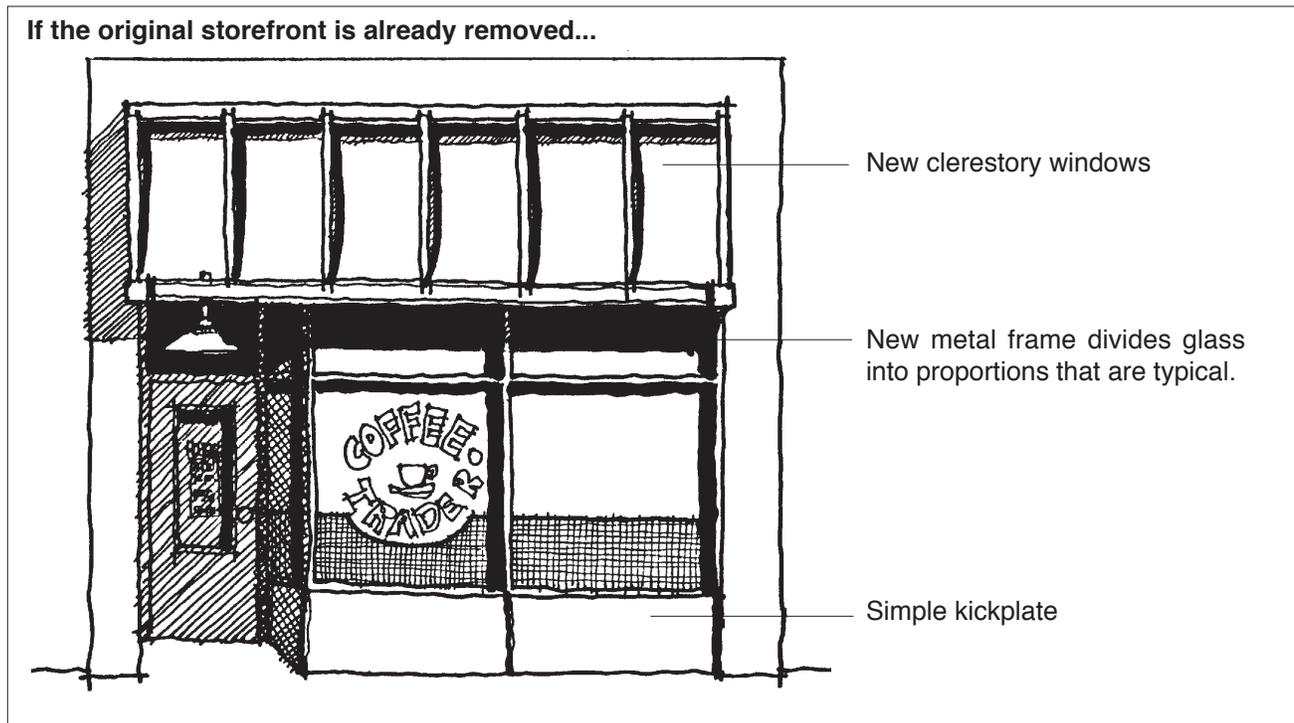
If the original storefront has been destroyed, consider an accurate reconstruction.

Next consider the details of the storefront itself...



Preserve the original size and shape of the display windows. This is especially important on the Main Avenue buildings and for any historic structures, where the details of the storefront should also be preserved. Where pieces are missing or deteriorated, use replacements that match the original.

However sometimes the original storefront is not intact...



A modern storefront may be used. The design should still incorporate the traditional elements—kickplate, display window, clerestory. New storefronts are preferred where evidence of the historic condition is not present.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

This chapter presents the design policies and guidelines for the rehabilitation of an historic resource located in the downtown.

Architectural details add visual interest, distinguish certain building styles and types and often showcase superior craftsmanship. Such features, including window hoods, brackets and cornices exhibit materials and finishes often associated with particular styles, and therefore their preservation is important.

Treatment of Architectural Features

Preserving original architectural details is critical to the integrity of an historic building. Where replacement is required, one should remove only those portions that are deteriorated beyond repair. Even if an architectural detail is replaced with an exact copy of the original, the integrity of the building as an historic resource is diminished, and therefore, preservation of the original material is preferred.

Materials for Replacement Details

Using a material to match that employed historically is always the best approach. However, a substitute material may be considered for a detail when it appears similar in composition, design, color and texture to the original.

In the past, substitute materials were employed as methods of producing architectural features. Many of these historic "substitutes" are now referred to as traditional materials. For example, a stamped metal cornice on a commercial building was a substitute for stone. Just as these historic

In This Chapter:

- Preservation of architectural details
- Repair of architectural details
- Replacement of architectural details

substitutes offered advantages over their predecessors, many new materials today hold promise. However, these substitute materials should not be used wholesale, but only when it is absolutely necessary to replace original materials with stronger, more durable ones.

Substitute materials may be considered when the original is not easily available, where the original is known to be susceptible to rapid decay, or where maintenance access may be difficult.

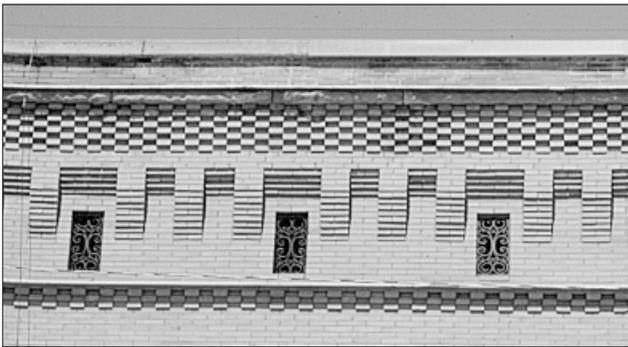
Another factor which may determine the appropriateness of using substitute materials for architectural details is their location and degree of exposure. For example, lighter weight materials may be inappropriate for an architectural detail that would be exposed to intense wear. Also, it may be wise to avoid using a fiberglass column on a front porch where it may be accidentally damaged; whereas, the use of fiberglass to reproduce a cornice on a commercial building may be successful.

Architectural details—including their scale, texture and finish—contribute significantly to the character of a structure. Windows, porches, turned columns and brackets, cornices, storefronts, foundations and window and door surrounds are examples of architectural details that should not be removed or altered. The best way to preserve many of these features is through well-planned maintenance.

Policy: Original architectural details should be preserved in place whenever feasible.



Protect and maintain significant stylistic elements.



Original architectural details should be preserved in place whenever feasible.

4.1 Avoid removing or altering any significant architectural detail.

- Do not remove or alter architectural details that are in good condition or that can be repaired in place.

4.2 Avoid adding elements or details that were not part of the original building.

- For example, details such as decorative millwork or cornices should not be added to a building if they were not an original feature of that structure.

4.3 Protect and maintain significant stylistic elements.

- Distinctive stylistic features and examples of skilled craftsmanship should be treated with sensitivity.
- The best preservation procedure is to maintain historic features from the outset so that intervention is not required.
- Employ treatments such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint.

Policy: Deteriorated architectural details should be repaired rather than replaced, whenever possible.

In some cases, original architectural details may be deteriorated. When deterioration occurs, repair the material and any other related problems. It is also important to recognize that all details weather over time and that a scarred finish does not represent an inferior material, but simply reflects the age of the building. Therefore, preserving original materials and features that show signs of wear is preferred to replacing them.

4.4 Repair only those features that are deteriorated.

- Patch, piece-in, splice, consolidate or otherwise upgrade existing materials, using recognized preservation methods.
- Isolated areas of damage may be stabilized or fixed using consolidants. Epoxies and resins may be considered for wood repair. Also, special masonry repair components may be used.
- Removing damaged features that can be repaired is not appropriate.
- Protect features that are adjacent to the area being worked on.

4.5 When disassembly of an historic element is necessary for its restoration, use methods that minimize damage to the original materials.

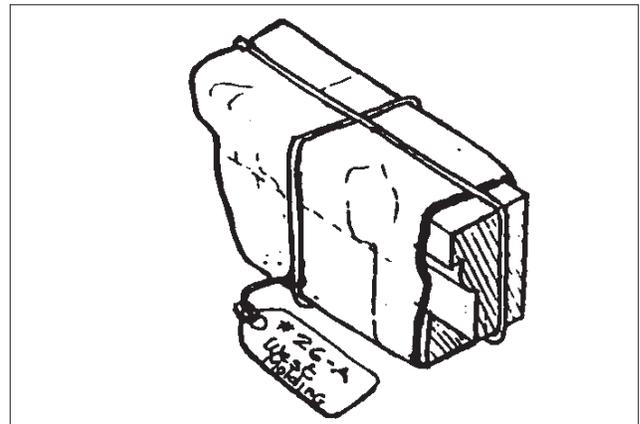
- When disassembly of an historic feature is required in a restoration procedure, document its location so it may be repositioned accurately. Always devise methods of replacing the disassembled materials in their original configuration.

4.6 Use approved technical procedures for cleaning, refinishing and repairing architectural details.

- When choosing preservation treatments, use the gentlest means possible that will achieve the desired results.
- Employ treatments such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint.

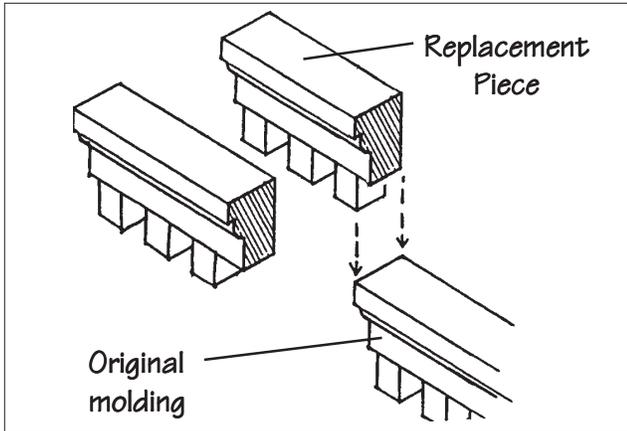


Repair only those features that are deteriorated.

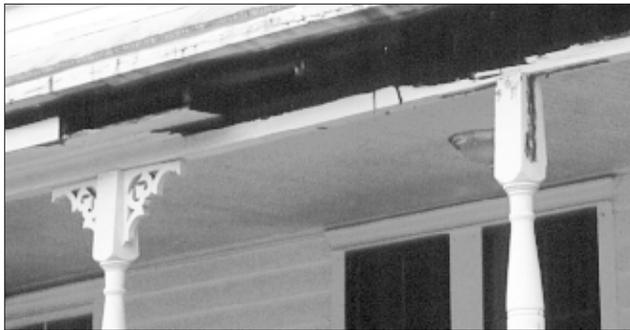


When disassembly of an historic feature is required in a restoration procedure, document its location so that it may be repositioned accurately.

Policy: Original architectural details that have deteriorated beyond repair should be replaced in kind.



Where replacement of a detail is required, one should remove only those portions that are deteriorated beyond repair.



Replace missing original details in kind.

While restoration of the original material or feature is the preferred alternative, in some situations a portion of the original building material may be beyond repair. Replacement should occur only if the existing historic material cannot be reasonably repaired. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match that being replaced in design, color, texture and other visual qualities.

4.7 Remove only that which is deteriorated and must be replaced.

- Match the original in composition, scale and finish when replacing materials or features.

4.8 Replace missing original details in kind.

- If parts are damaged or missing, replace them with the same material as the original.
- In some instances, substitute materials may be used. If substitute materials must be used, then they should convey the visual appearance of the original materials in design, scale, proportion, finish and appearance.

4.9 Replacement of missing or deteriorated details shall be based on original features.

- The design should be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence to avoid creating a misrepresentation of the building's heritage.

4.10 When inadequate information exists to allow for accurate reconstruction, use a simplified interpretation of the original.

- The new element should still relate in general size, shape, scale and finish.

4.11 Avoid adding decorative elements, unless thorough research indicates that the building once had them.

- Conjectural "historic" designs for replacement parts that cannot be substantiated by documented evidence are inappropriate.
- Dressing up a building with pieces of ornamentation that are out of character with the architectural style gives the building a false "history" it never had, and is inappropriate.

Ornamentation and details are important elements of a building design. With proper maintenance, they will last a long time. The same range of choices is available for dealing with ornamental details as was described for facades in general.

4.12 Preserve original details.

- Employ preventive measures such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and re-application of paint. These should not harm the historic materials.

4.13 The original details may be reconstructed, if good evidence is available.

- The design should be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence to avoid creating a misrepresentation of the building's history.
- Use the same kind of material as the original when feasible. However, a substitute material may be acceptable if the size, shape, texture and finish conveys the visual appearance of the original.

4.14 A simplified version of the original may be considered. Be sure to use the major lines of the original detail.

- This is appropriate when inadequate information exists to allow for an accurate reconstruction.
- The new element should be similar to comparable features in general size, shape, texture, material and finish.

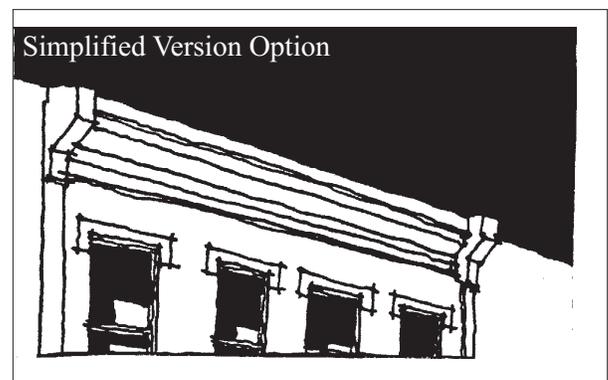
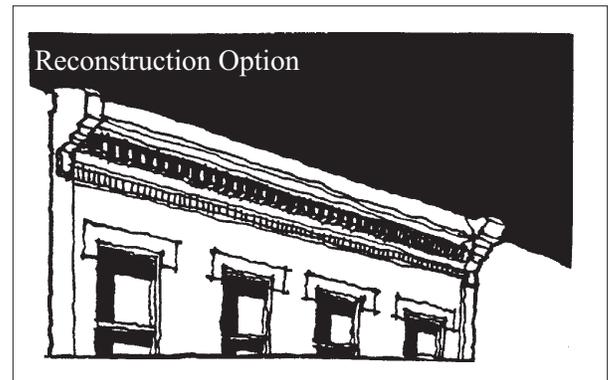
If original is intact...



Preserve original details

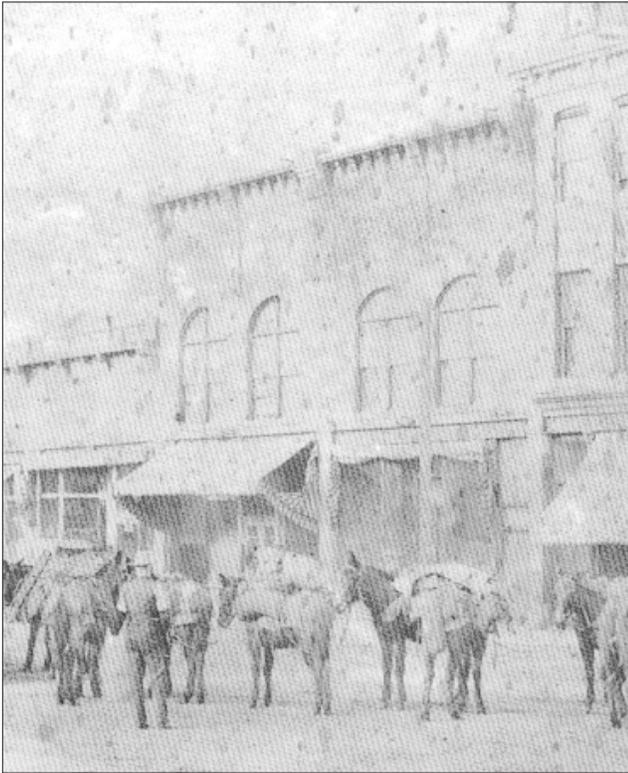


If the original features are missing there are two options, illustrated below – reconstruction of the original or a simplified version.



How to develop a design to reconstruct a detail?

The storefront to the right has ornamentation missing. To help in deciding whether to reconstruct or simplify details, historic photos, such as the two below, can provide information. (Upper historic photo courtesy of Ft. Lewis College, lower historic photo courtesy Denver Public Library Western History Photo Collection)



In the case of this building where only half the structure represents the original facade design and elements, it is appropriate to cover upper windows with awnings until such time that a full restoration could be completed.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR HISTORIC BUILDING MATERIALS

This chapter presents the design policies and guidelines for the rehabilitation of historic building materials. Although these design guidelines are intended primarily for those historic resources located along Main Street and Second Avenue, property owners along Camino del Rio are also encouraged to review them when considering a rehabilitation project.

Brick and stone—used for building walls, chimneys, porch supports and foundations—were the primary materials used in downtown. Wood siding also occurred on residential-type structures. Painted, horizontal clapboard was the most popular. In each case, the distinct characteristics of the building material, including the scale of the material unit, its texture and finish, contribute to the historic character of a building.

The best way to preserve historic building materials is through well-planned maintenance. Wood surfaces, for example, should be protected with a good application of paint. In some cases, historic building materials may be deteriorated. When deterioration occurs, repairing the material rather than replacing it is preferred. Frequently, damaged materials can be patched or consolidated using special bonding agents.

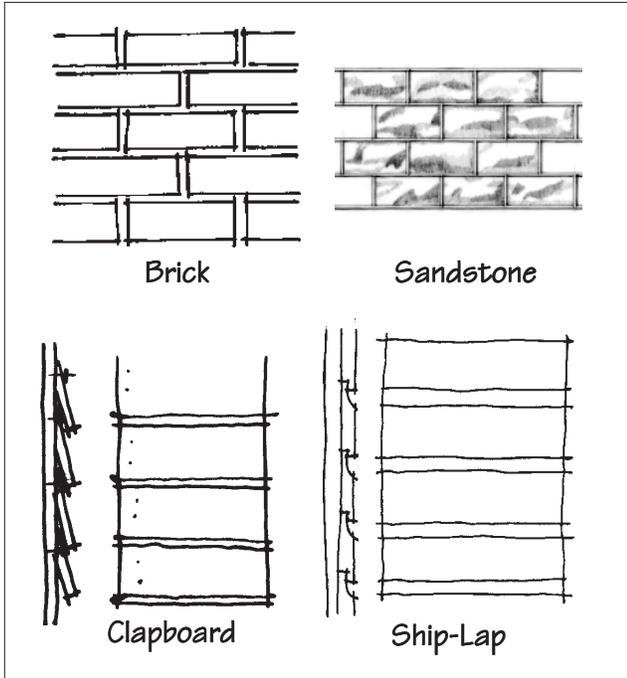
In other situations, however, some portion of the material may be beyond repair and may be replaced. The new material should match the original in appearance. It is important, however, that the extent of replacement materials be minimized, because the original materials contribute to the authenticity of the property as an historic resource. Even when the replacement material exactly matches the original, the integrity of an historic building is to some extent compromised when extensive amounts of original materials are removed.

In This Chapter:

- Preservation of original materials
- Repair of original materials
- Replacement of original materials
- Covering original materials
- Maintenance of original wood
- Preservation of masonry
- Preservation of metals

Rather than replace original materials, some property owners may consider covering them. Aluminum and vinyl siding are examples of materials that are often discussed. However, using any material, either synthetic or conventional, to cover historic materials is inappropriate. Doing so would obscure the original character and change the dimensions of walls, which are particularly noticeable around door and window openings. The extra layer may in fact cause additional decay, by its method of attachment, because it may trap moisture inside the wall and because it also creates cavities in which insects can live. For similar reasons, if original wall materials are presently covered with a more recent siding, consider removing the outer layer and restore the original. When damaged, original materials also can be more difficult to repaint, repair or replace.

Policy: Original building materials should be preserved in place, whenever feasible.



Examples of the variety of exterior wall materials found in Durango.

Building materials—including such characteristics as their scale, texture and finish—contribute significantly to the character of a structure. The best way to preserve many of these features is through well-planned maintenance.

5.1 Maintain existing wall materials and textures.

- Avoid removing materials that are in good condition or that can be repaired in place.
- Remove only those materials that are deteriorated and must be replaced.
- Avoid rebuilding a major portion of an exterior wall that could be repaired. Reconstruction may result in a building that is no longer historic.
- In many cases, original building materials may not be damaged beyond repair and do not require replacement. Repainting wood, ensuring proper drainage and keeping the material clean may be all that is necessary.



The Rochester Hotel exhibits a sampling of the variety of building materials found in downtown.

Policy: Deteriorated building materials should be repaired rather than replaced, whenever possible.

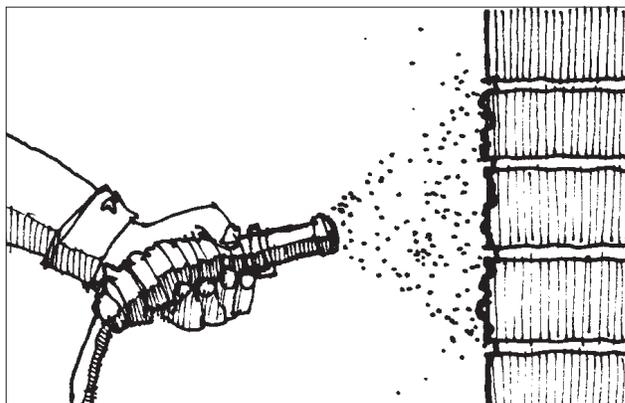
In some cases, original building materials may be deteriorated. When this occurs, repair the material and any other related problems. It is also important to recognize that all materials weather over time and that a scarred finish does not represent an inferior material, but simply reflects the age of the building. Therefore, preserving original materials that show signs of wear is preferred to replacing them.

5.2 Repair deteriorated primary building materials by patching, piecing-in, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the materials.

- Avoid the removal of damaged materials that can be repaired.
- Isolated areas of damage may be stabilized or fixed, using consolidants. Epoxies and resins may be considered for wood repair. Also, special masonry repair components may be used.

5.3 Use technical procedures that preserve, clean, refinish or repair historic materials and finishes.

- A professional experienced in the cleaning of historic buildings should be hired to advise on the best, lowest impact method of cleaning that is appropriate for a project.
- Perform a test patch to determine that the cleaning method will cause no damage to the material's surface or to surrounding materials. Many procedures, such as sandblasting, are not appropriate, as they permanently erode building materials and finishes and accelerate deterioration.
- If cleaning is appropriate, a low-pressure water and detergent wash, using plastic or fiber bristle brushes, is encouraged. A steam wash may also be considered.
- Clean masonry only when necessary to arrest deterioration (but not for cosmetic reasons).
- See also *Preservation Briefs #6: Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings*, published by the National Park Service.



Use the gentlest means possible to clean the surface of a structure. Harsh cleaning methods, such as sandblasting, can damage the historic materials, changing their appearance. Such procedures are inappropriate.



Use technical procedures that preserve, clean, refinish or repair historic materials and finishes.

Policy: Original building materials that have deteriorated beyond repair should be replaced in kind.



Replace missing original details in kind.

While restoration of the original material or feature is the preferred alternative, in some situations, a portion of the original building material may be beyond repair. Replacement should occur only if the existing historic material cannot be reasonably repaired.

5.4 Match the original material in composition, scale and finish when replacing it on a primary surface.

- If the original material is wood clapboard, for example, then the replacement material should be wood as well. It should match the original in size, the amount of exposed lap and finish.
- Replace only the amount required. If a few boards are damaged beyond repair, then only replace them and not the entire wall.

5.5 Do not use synthetic materials, such as aluminum, vinyl siding or panelized brick, as replacements for primary building materials on an historic structure.

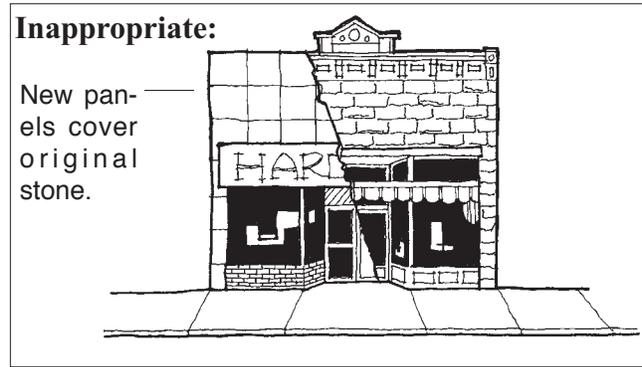
- Primary building materials such as wood siding and brick may not be replaced with synthetic materials.
- See also *Preservation Briefs #16: The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors*, published by the National Park Service.

Policy: The covering of original building materials is not appropriate.

Using replacement materials to cover historic materials is inappropriate. This practice can actually cause further damage to the original materials. In addition, covering the historic materials alters the character of the structure and disrupts the alignment of facade elements on a block face.

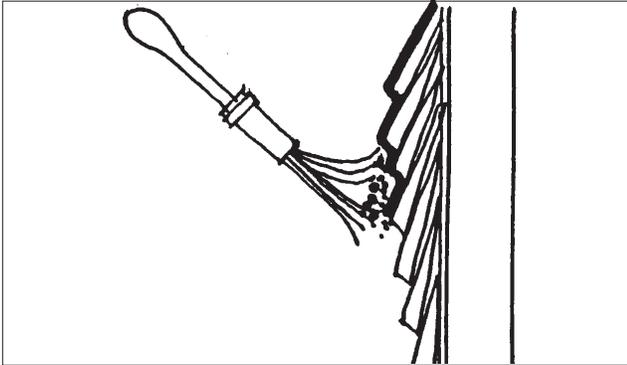
5.6 Historic building materials shall not be covered.

- No material shall be applied as a covering to historic materials.
- Synthetic stucco, panelized brick, vinyl, aluminum or other composite siding materials are not appropriate.
- See also *Preservation Briefs #8: Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on Historic Buildings*, published by the National Park Service.



If a storefront is covered or obscured with a later alteration (top photo), then restore the storefront to its historic character (bottom photo). (Austin, TX)

Policy: Original wood should be protected against moisture and deterioration.



All wood surfaces should be painted.



Maintain protective coatings to retard drying and ultraviolet damage. If the building was painted originally, it should remain painted.



Protect wood features from deterioration.

5.7 Consider removing materials that cover original siding.

- Removing later covering materials that have not achieved historic significance is encouraged.
- In some instances a later covering may have achieved historic significance, especially if it was applied early in the building's history. When this is the case, the later covering may be maintained on the structure.
- An applicant may not re-side a building with another covering material if one already exists. Removing the covering to expose the original material is appropriate in such a case.
- Once the covering siding has been removed, repair the original underlying material.

Wood appears frequently in downtown Durango. It is used for siding, trim, windows, doors and porches. To preserve the wood, it is important to maintain its painted finish.

5.8 Protect wood features from deterioration.

- Provide proper drainage and ventilation to minimize rot.
- Maintain protective coatings to retard drying and ultraviolet damage. Exterior wood walls should be painted, not stained. If the building was painted historically, it should remain painted, including all trim.

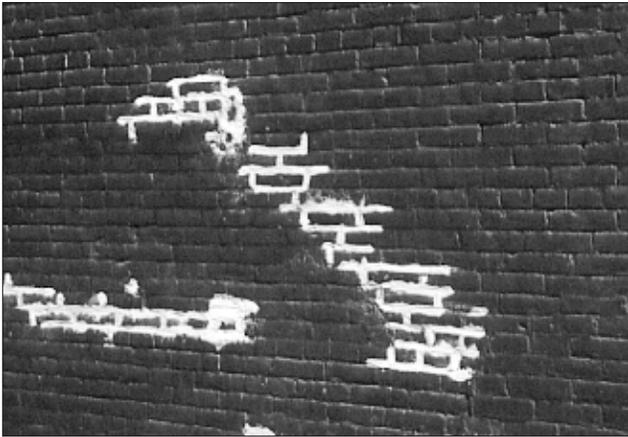
5.9 Plan repainting carefully.

- Note that frequent repainting of trim materials may cause a buildup of paint layers that obscures architectural details. When this occurs, consider stripping paint layers to retrieve details. However, if stripping is necessary, use the gentlest means possible, being careful not to damage architectural details and finishes.
- Good preparation is key to successful repainting, but the buildup of old paint layers is an important historic record of the building. The removal of old paint, by the gentlest means possible, should be undertaken only if necessary to the success of the repainting.
- Old paint may contain lead. Precautions should be taken when sanding or scraping is necessary.
- Prepare a good substrate and use compatible paints. Some latex paints will not bond well to earlier oil-based paints without a primer coat.
- See also *Preservation Briefs #10: Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork*, published by the National Park Service.



Note that frequent repainting of trim materials may cause a buildup of paint layers that obscures architectural details. When this occurs, consider stripping paint layers to retrieve details. However, if stripping is necessary, use the gentlest means possible, being careful not to damage architectural details and finishes.

Policy: Masonry construction should be preserved in its original condition.



Avoid using mortar with a high portland cement content, which will be substantially harder than the brick and does not allow for expanding and contracting. The result is deterioration of the brick itself.

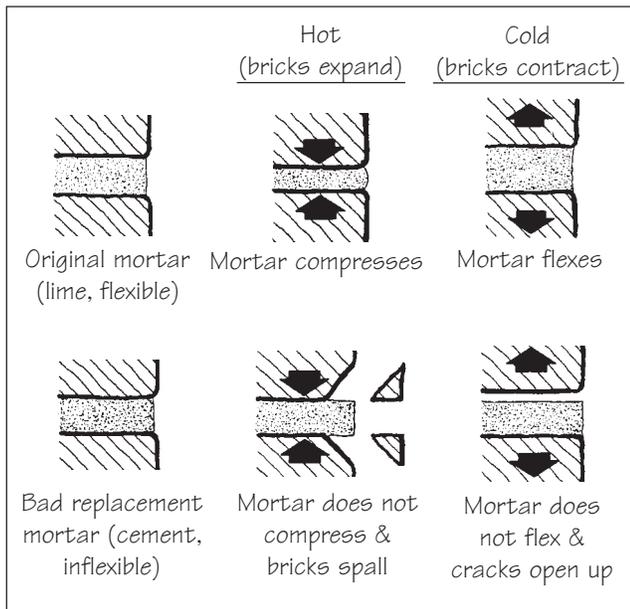
Many buildings include brick or stone for structural walls, foundation piers and chimneys. Although it is a very durable material, masonry is not invulnerable. Therefore the proper maintenance and preservation of masonry is important.

5.10 Preserve the original mortar joint and unit size, the tooling and bonding patterns, coatings and color of masonry surfaces.

- Original mortar, in good condition, should be preserved in place.
- See also *Preservation Briefs #1: The Cleaning and Waterproof Coating of Masonry Buildings*, published by the National Park Service.

5.11 Repoint only those mortar joints where there is evidence of moisture problems or when sufficient mortar is missing.

- Duplicate the old mortar in strength, composition, color, texture and joint width and profile.
- Mortar joints should be cleared with hand tools. Using electric saws and hammers to remove mortar can seriously damage the adjacent brick.
- Do not use mortar with a high percentage of portland cement or white masonry cement. It will be harder than the masonry and will not allow for expansion and contraction. The result is deterioration of the material itself.
- A mortar formula containing lime should fill the joint but should not overfill it, and it should not be smeared on the faces of the masonry units.
- See also *Preservation Briefs #2: Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Brick*, published by the National Park Service.



Repoint mortar joints where there is evidence of deterioration. Duplicate the mortar joints in width and profile.

5.12 Masonry that was not painted historically shall not be painted.

- Painting masonry walls can seal in moisture already in the masonry, thereby not allowing it to breathe and causing extensive damage over the years.

5.13 Protect masonry from water deterioration.

- Provide proper drainage so that water does not stand on flat, horizontal surfaces or accumulate in decorative features.



Repointing should match the original, rather than contrast with it.



Protect masonry from water deterioration.

Policy: Architectural metals should be protected against corrosion.



Maintain protective coatings, such as paint, on exposed metals.

Metals were used for a variety of applications including columns, storefronts, siding, roofing, window hoods and decorative features. Metal applications should be maintained where they exist.

5.14 Preserve architectural metal features that contribute to the overall historic character of the building.

- Examples are columns, roofs, window hoods and storefronts.
- Provide proper drainage to minimize water retention.
- Maintain protective coatings, such as paint, on exposed metals.

5.15 Repair metal features by patching, splicing or otherwise reinforcing the original metal whenever possible.

5.16 Use the gentlest cleaning method possible when removing deteriorated paint or rust from metal surfaces.

- Harsh abrasive cleaning methods should be avoided.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUAL BUILDING ELEMENTS

This chapter presents design guidelines for the preservation of individual historic building elements in downtown. The guidelines are organized into a series of relevant design topics. Within these design topics are individual policy and design guideline statements upon which the city will base its decisions.

In This Chapter:

- Commercial facades
- Windows and doors
- Roofs, gutters & downspouts
- Porches

Commercial Facades

Ornamental items include hood molds, trim at doors and windows; plaques and medallions; date or name stones; and simple geometric shapes in metal, stone, or concrete.

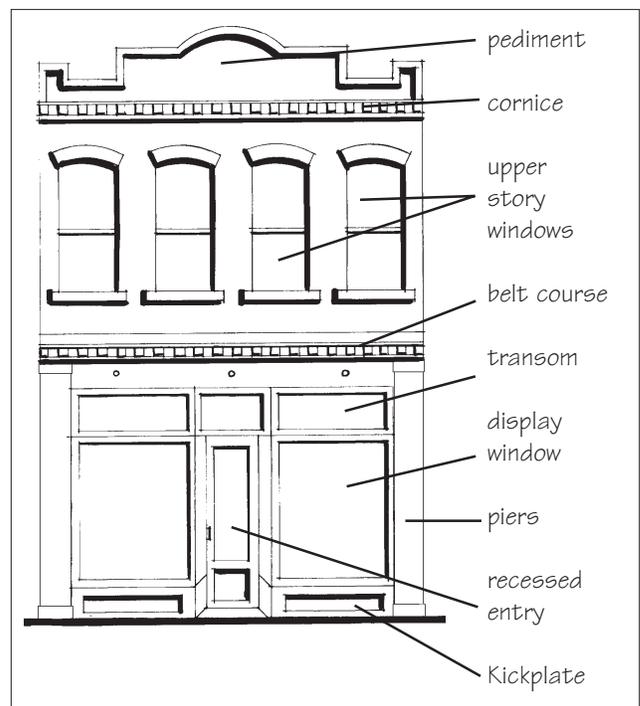
Cornices, which are usually found at the top of building walls, and ornamental moldings or belt courses, which are located just above storefronts, are horizontal projecting elements that provide a visual break in a wall. A parapet is an upward extension of a building wall above the roofline, sometimes ornamental and sometimes plain, used to give a building a greater feeling of height or a better sense of proportion.

Cornices are most apparent on late 19th century commercial structures, when several ornate, bracketed types were used. Early 20th century buildings were, as a rule, less decorated and had simpler ornamentation. Rather than cornices, they tend to have parapets, some low and some extending several feet above the roof surface. A parapet may be capped with brick, stone or tile, and frequently decorative elements or panels are placed in it.

Commercial buildings should, for the most part, all relate to the street and to pedestrians in the same manner: with a clearly defined primary entrance and large windows that display goods and services offered inside. The repetition of these standard elements creates a visual unity on the street that should be preserved.

Windows & Doors

The size, shape and proportions of windows and doors are some of the most important character-defining features of historic structures. They give scale to buildings and provide visual interest to the composition of individual facades. Distinct window and door designs in fact help define many historic building styles. Windows and doors often are inset into relatively deep openings or they have surrounding casings and sash components which have a substantial dimension that cast shadows which also contributes to the character of the historic style.



Typical commercial storefront components.



When roof forms are repeated along the street, the repetition contributes to a sense of visual continuity for the neighborhood.

Roofs, Gutters & Downspouts

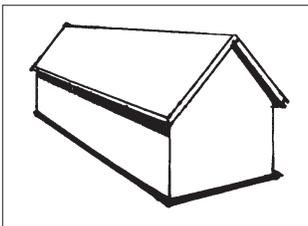
The character of the roof is a major feature for most historic structures. When repeated along the street, the repetition of similar roof forms contrib-

utes to a sense of visual continuity for the neighborhood. In each case, the roof pitch, its materials, size and orientation are all distinct features that contribute to the character of a roof. Gabled and hip forms occur most frequently in residential areas while flat roofs appear on most historic commercial buildings in Durango.

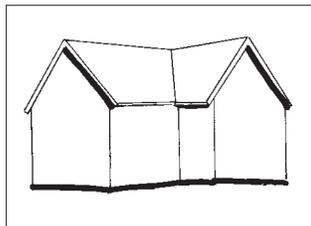
Porches

Many residential styles and building types developed with the porch as a prime feature of the front facade. Because of their historical importance and prominence as character-defining features, porches should be preserved and they should receive sensitive treatment during exterior rehabilitation.

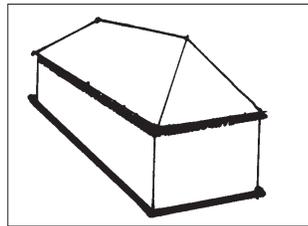
Typical Roof Types



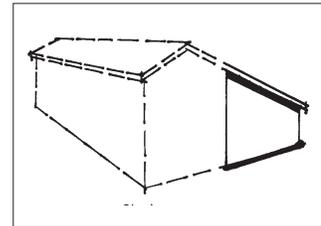
Gabled roof



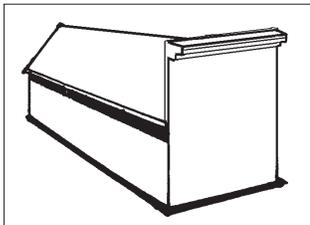
Cross-Gabled roof



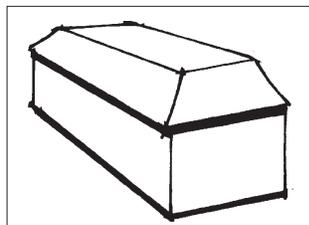
Hipped roof



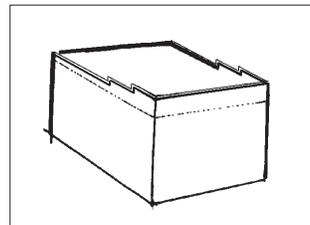
Shed roof



**False front
(pediment)**



Mansard roof



**Flat roof
with parapet**

Policy: Maintain an historic storefront and all of its character-defining features.

6.1 For a commercial storefront building, a rehabilitation project shall preserve these character-defining elements:

- **Display windows:** The main portion of glass on the storefront, where goods and services are displayed. This will help maintain the interest of the street to pedestrians by providing views to goods and activities inside first floor windows.
- **Transom:** The upper portion of the display window, separated by a frame.
- **Kickplate:** Found beneath the display window. Sometimes called a bulk-head panel.
- **Entry:** Usually set back from the sidewalk in a protected recess.
- **Upper-story windows:** Windows located above the street level. These usually have a vertical orientation.
- **Cornice molding:** A decorative band at the top of the building.
- These features shall not be altered, obscured or removed.

6.2 Maintenance of storefronts.

- Wash display windows.
- Repair damaged kickplates.
- Re-caulk display windows to reduce air infiltration.
- Install weather-stripping around doors.

6.3 If a storefront is altered, restoring it to the original design is preferred.

- If evidence of the original design is missing, use a simplified interpretation of similar storefronts. The storefront still should be designed to provide interest to pedestrians.
- Note that, in some cases, an original storefront may have been altered early in the history of the building, and may itself have taken on significance. Such alterations should be preserved.
- See also *Preservation Briefs #11: Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts*, published by the National Park Service.



Before:
If a storefront is altered, restoring it to the original design is preferred. (Compare with the photo of the same building below, after rehabilitation.)



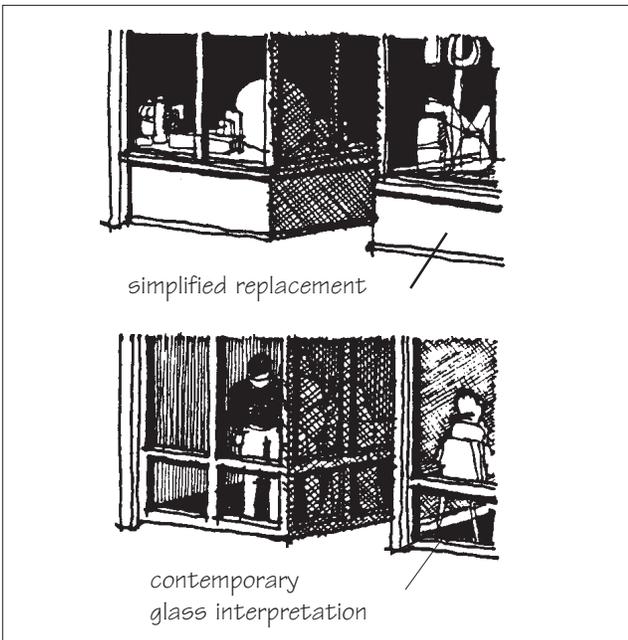
After: This rehabilitation preserves surviving details, uncovers original materials and reconstructs missing elements.



If evidence of the original design is missing, use a simplified interpretation of similar storefronts.



Retain the kickplate as a decorative panel.



If the original kickplate is missing, develop a sympathetic replacement design.

6.4 Alternative designs that are contemporary interpretations of traditional storefronts may be considered.

- Where the original is missing and no evidence of its character exists, a new design that uses the traditional elements may be considered.
- However, the new design should continue to convey the character of typical storefronts, including the transparent character of the display window.

6.5 Retain the kickplate as a decorative panel.

- The kickplate, located below the display window, adds interesting detail to the streetscape and should be preserved.
- If the original kickplate is covered with another material, consider exposing the original design.

6.6 If the original kickplate is missing, develop a sympathetic replacement design.

- Wood is an appropriate material for replacements on most styles. However, ceramic tile and masonry may also be considered when appropriately used with the building style.

6.7 Preserve the character of the cornice line.

- Most historic commercial buildings have cornices to cap their facades. Their repetition along the street contributes to the visual continuity on the block.
- Many cornices are made of sheet metal. Areas that have rusted through can be patched with pieces of new metal.

6.8 Reconstruct a missing cornice when historic evidence is available.

- Use historic photographs to determine design details of the original cornice.
- Replacement elements should match the original in every detail, especially in overall size and profile. Keep sheet metal ornamentation well painted.
- The substitution of another old cornice for the original may be considered, provided that the substitute is similar to the original.

6.9 A simplified interpretation is also appropriate for a replacement cornice if evidence of the original is missing.

- Appropriate materials include stone, brick and stamped metal.

6.10 Retain the original shape of the transom glass in historic storefronts.

- Transoms, the upper glass band of traditional storefronts, introduced light into the depths of the building, saving on light costs. These bands should not be removed or enclosed.
- The shape of the transom is important to the proportion of the storefront, and it should be preserved in its historic configuration.
- If the original glass is missing, installing new glass is preferred. However, if the transom must be blocked out, be certain to retain the original proportions. One option is to use it as a sign panel or decorative band.

6.11 A parapet wall should not be altered, especially those on primary elevations or highly visible facades.

- When a parapet wall becomes deteriorated, there is sometimes a temptation to lower or remove it. Avoid doing this because the flashing for the roof is often tied into the parapet, and disturbing it can cause moisture problems.
- Inspect parapets on a regular basis. They are exposed to the weather more than other parts of the building, so watch for deterioration such as missing mortar or excessive moisture retention.
- Avoid waterproofing treatments, which can interfere with the parapet's natural ability to dry out quickly when it gets wet.



When a building is missing its cornice, consider the two options presented below.



Reconstruct a missing cornice when historic evidence is available.

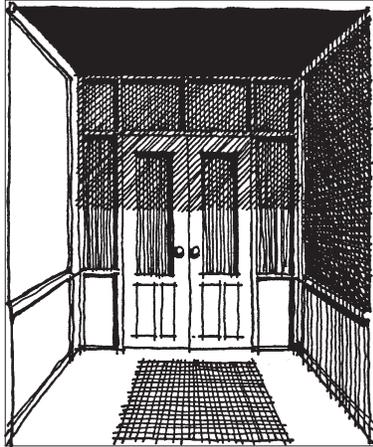


A simplified interpretation also is appropriate for a replacement cornice if evidence of the original is missing.

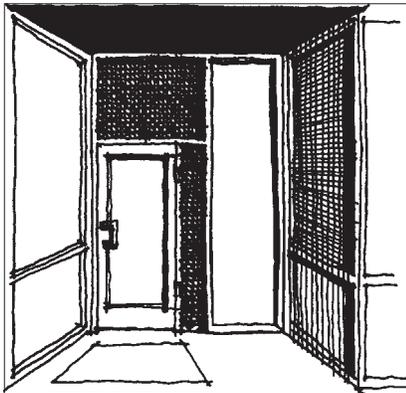
Policy: Historic windows and doors significantly affect the character of a structure and should be preserved.



Preserve the position, number, size and arrangement of historic windows and doors in a building wall.

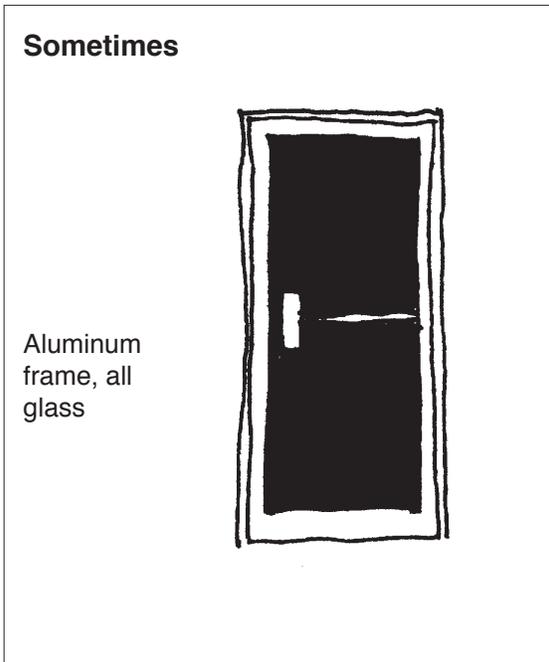


Don't close down the opening to make a smaller door fit.



6.12 Preserve the position, number, size and arrangement of historic windows and doors in a building wall.

- Enclosing an historic opening in a key character-defining facade is inappropriate, as is adding a new opening.
- Do not close down an original opening to accommodate a smaller window or door. Restoring original openings which have been altered over time is encouraged.
- Preserve the original size and shape of door openings on storefronts with historic value.
- Entries that provide clear visibility into the building are encouraged.
- Historically, windows had a vertical emphasis. The proportions of these windows contribute to the character of each residence and commercial storefront.



“All glass” doors with thin metal frames are not appropriate in many historic commercial storefronts on Main Street and Second Avenue. Some architectural styles, such as Art Moderne, Art Deco and International, typically exhibit the “all-glass” door. These are also acceptable on any modern structures, such as those along Camino del Rio.



Enclosing an historic opening in a key character-defining facade is inappropriate, as is adding a new opening. Avoid solid doors or ones with small windows on commercial buildings in downtown. Dutch door types also are inappropriate.



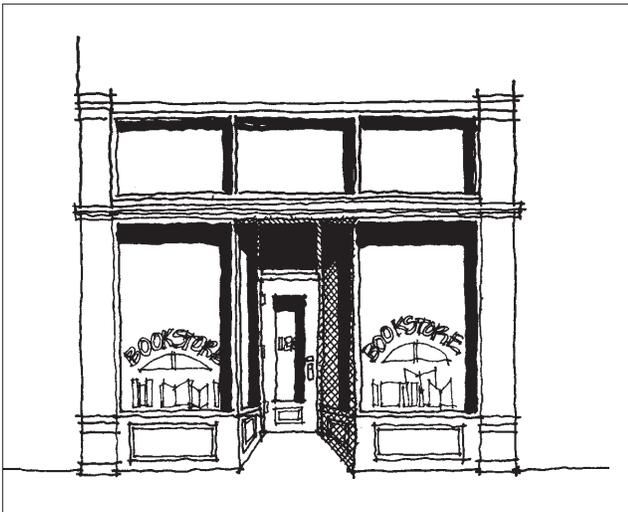
In renovation of late 19th and early 20th century commercial storefronts, use doors with panels or windows that have vertical proportions. Wood doors are encouraged in the downtown area.

6.13 Preserve the functional and decorative features of an historic window or door.

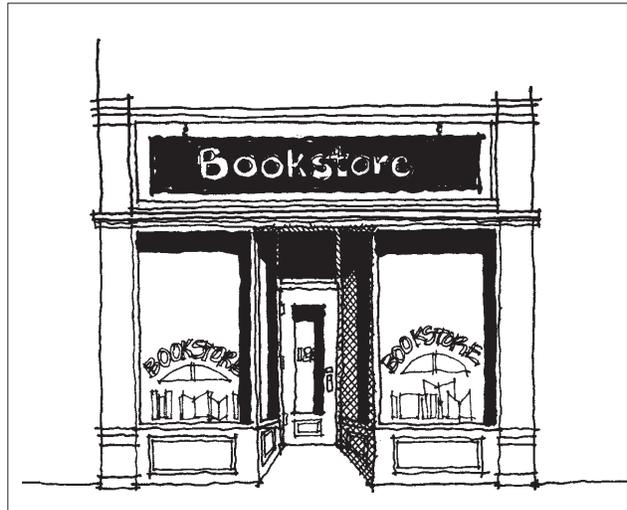
- Features important to the character of a window include its clear glass, frame, sash, muntins, mullions, glazing, sills, heads, jambs, moldings, operation, location and relation to other windows.
- Features important to the character of a door include the door itself, door frame, screen door, threshold, glass panes, paneling, hardware, detailing, transoms and flanking sidelights.
- The transom above the primary display window is important because it adds to the lower level.



Although this commercial storefront is serving as an office space, the character-defining features of the windows and door have been maintained,



Preserve the transom as glass where ceiling heights permit.

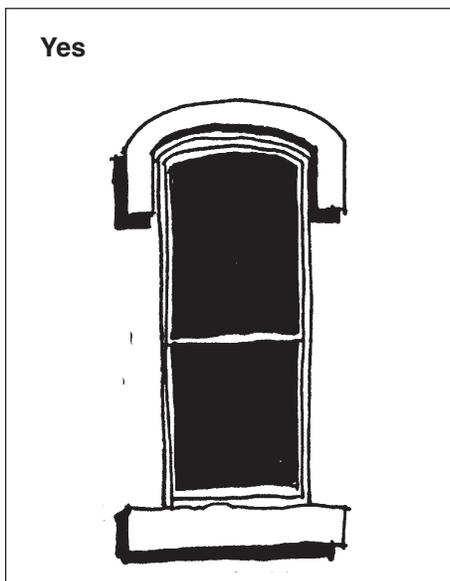


Where ceilings are now lowered, consider retaining the shape of the clerestory as a sign band.

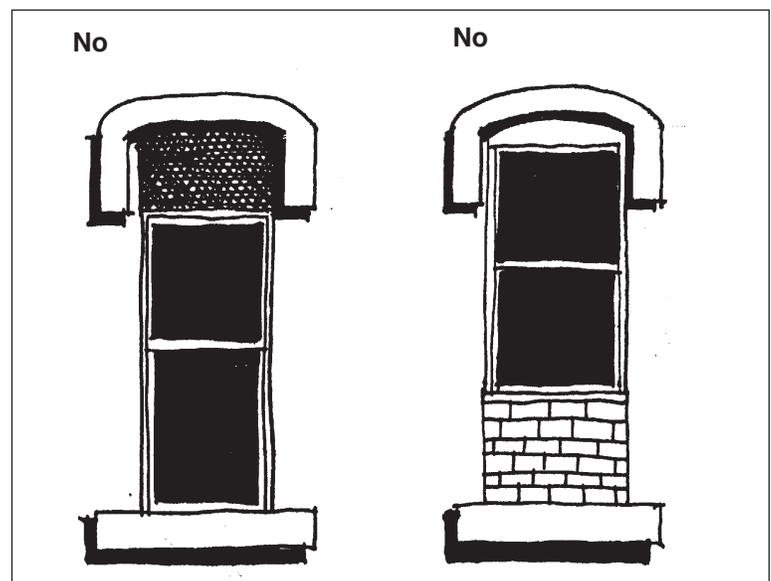
Individual Building Elements



Even with a lowered ceiling in the store, the original glass can be preserved by a special soffit detail or sloping up the ceiling to the glass.



Preserve the shape of the original window opening.

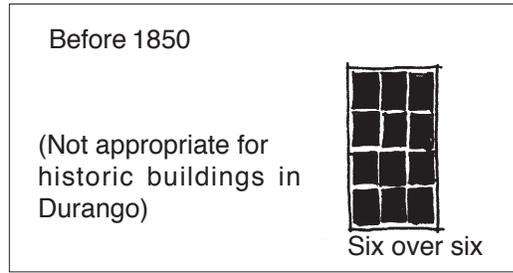


Avoid closing down the original opening to fit new window sizes. If the original openings are presently blocked, consider restoring them.

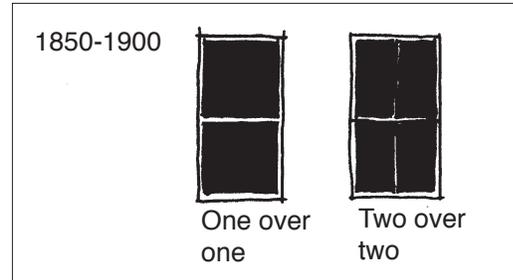
Now consider pane size.

- Preserve the sash configuration of original windows.

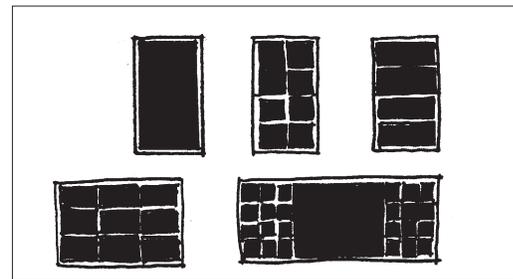
These windows were not in style when Durango was settled, beginning in 1880.



These windows are appropriate for many historic buildings in the downtown.



These windows are not appropriate for most buildings on Main Avenue. However, they may be appropriate for particular architectural styles such as Art Deco, and newer buildings in other areas.



6.14 Maintenance of windows.

- Wash upper story windows.
- Clean debris from upper story windows.
- Replace loose or broken glass in kind. This will reduce air leaks.
- Install weather-stripping. This will enhance energy conservation significantly.

6.15 Repair wood features by patching, piecing-in, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the wood.

- Avoid the removal of damaged wood that can be repaired.
- See also *Preservation Briefs #9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows*, published by the National Park Service.

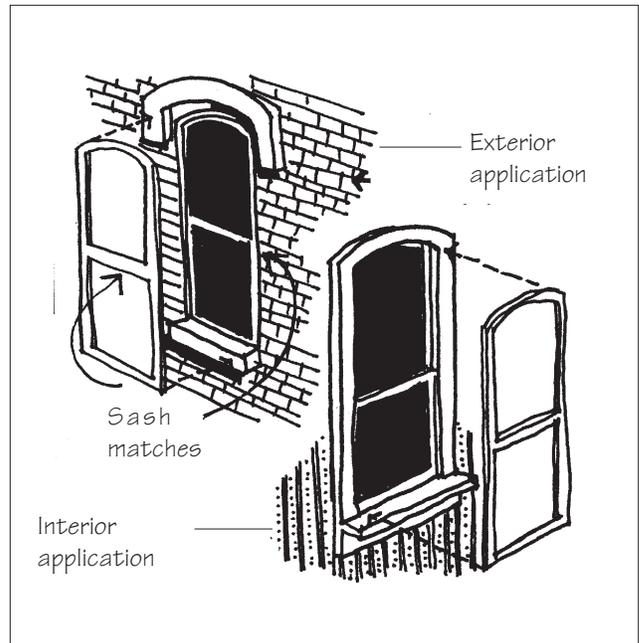
6.16 Glazing in doors should be retained.

- If it is broken or has been removed in the past, consider replacing it with new glass. If security is a concern, consider using wire glass, tempered glass, or light metal security bars (preferably on the interior).

6.17 Installing window air-conditioners in windows on building fronts is inappropriate.

6.18 Maintain recessed entries where they are found.

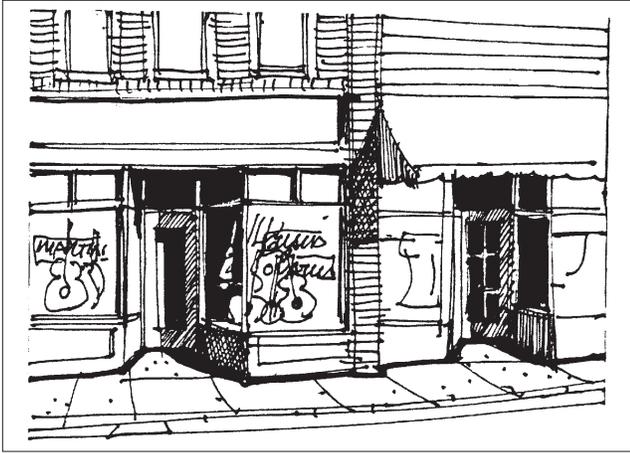
- The repetition of recessed entries provides a rhythm of shadows along the street, which helps establish a sense of scale.
- These recessed entries were designed to provide protection from the weather and the repeated rhythm of these shaded areas along the street helps to identify business entrances. Typically, recessed entries were set back between three and five feet.
- Restore the historic recessed entry if it has been altered.
- Avoid doors that are flush with the sidewalk, especially those that swing outward.



Storm windows should also have the same sash divisions as the original.



Maintain recessed entries where they are found.



Maintain traditional recessed entries.

6.19 Where entries were not recessed historically, maintain them in their original position.

- However, one may also need to comply with other code requirements, including door width, direction of swing and construction.
- In some cases, entries must comply with accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Note, however, that some flexibility in application of these other regulations is provided for historic properties.
- See also *Preservation Briefs #32: Making Historic Properties Accessible*, published by the National Park Service.



Setting a storefront back is inappropriate.

Policy: A new or replacement window or door should match the appearance of the original.

While replacing an entire window or door is discouraged, it may be necessary in some cases. Although wood is preferred as a replacement material, metal is common on the market today and sometimes is suggested for replacement. It is possible to consider alternative materials, if the resulting appearance matches the original as closely as possible. The substitute also should have a demonstrated durability in this climate.

6.20 When window or door replacement is necessary, match the replacement to the original design as closely as possible.

- Preserve the original casing, when feasible.
- If the original is double-hung, then the replacement window should also be double-hung, or at a minimum, appear to be so. Match the replacement also in the number and position of glass panes.
- Very ornate windows or doors that are not appropriate to the building's architectural style are inappropriate.
- Dutch door types also are inappropriate.
- Using the same material (wood) as the original is preferred.

6.21 Maintain the historic ratio of window and storefront openings to solid wall.

- Significantly increasing (or decreasing) the amount of glass will negatively affect the integrity of a structure.
- On traditional storefronts, first floors should be more transparent than upper floors.
- Upper floors should appear more solid than first floors.
- Avoid a blank wall appearance that does not provide interest to pedestrians.
- Large surfaces of glass are inappropriate on residential structures and on the upper floors and sides of commercial buildings.
- If necessary, divide large glass surfaces into smaller windows that are in scale with those seen traditionally.



In the before image of the outlined building, inappropriate replacement windows are seen on both the upper story and street level. In the more recent image and in the close-up below, appropriate replacement windows (which maintain the historic ratio of window and storefront openings to solid wall) were used in the rehabilitation of the building front.



Policy: **Preserve the original form and scale of a roof.**



Most commercial buildings have flat, or slightly sloping roofs.



In residential structures, most roof forms are pitched, such as gabled and hipped.

6.22 Preserve the original roof form of an historic structure.

- In residential structures, most roof forms are pitched, such as gabled and hipped. Most commercial buildings, on the other hand, have flat, or slightly sloping roofs.
- Avoid altering the angle of an historic roof. Instead, maintain the perceived line and orientation of the roof as seen from the street.
- Retain and repair roof detailing.
- Often repairing a basically sound roof can be much less expensive than a complete replacement. If a new roof is necessary, try to match the color, material, and pattern of the old as closely as possible.

6.23 Locate downspouts to minimize impacts on historic canopies and other facade details.

- Water from downspouts should drain away from the building properly.
- Ideally, a downspout should empty into an underground drainpipe that takes the water to the sewer or street.
- If this is not possible, a downspout should empty onto a metal or concrete splashblock that slopes downward and away from the building.

6.24 Regular maintenance and cleaning is the best way to keep your roof in good shape.

- Inspect the roof for breaks, or holes in the surface, and check the flashing for open seams.
- Many commercial buildings have shallow sloping flat roofs that are hard to see, so there is a tendency to forget about them until problems develop.
- Clean debris from gutters and downspouts to prevent the backing up of water.
- A roof should not hold water.
- Patch leaks in the roof. This should be a high priority for ongoing building maintenance.
- Replace deteriorated flashing.
- Re-solder downspout connections to prevent water from leaking into walls.

Policy: Maintain a porch and its character-defining features.

Historically, porches were popular features in residential designs. A porch protects an entrance from rain and provides shade in the summer. It also provides a sense of scale to the building and provides a space for residents to sit and congregate. A porch provides stylistic details to the house, and in some cases is an integral part of an architectural style.

6.25 Maintain an historic porch and its detailing.

- Do not remove original details from a porch. These include the columns, balustrade and any decorative brackets that may exist.
- Maintain the existing location, shape, details, and columns of the porch.
- Missing or deteriorated decorative elements should be replaced with new wood, milled to match existing elements. Match the original proportions and spacing of balusters when replacing missing ones.
- Unless used historically, wrought iron porch posts and columns are inappropriate.
- Where an historic porch does not meet current code requirements and alterations are needed or required, then retrofit it to meet the code, while also preserving original features. Do not replace a porch that can otherwise be modified to meet code requirements.

6.26 Avoid enclosing an historic front porch with opaque materials.

- Enclosing a porch with opaque materials that destroy the openness and transparency of the porch is inappropriate.
- When a porch is enclosed or screened, it shall be done with a clear transparent material. This material should be placed behind porch columns.



Maintain an historic porch and its detailing. Do not remove original details from a porch. These include the columns, balustrade and any decorative brackets that may exist.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS & ALTERATIONS

This chapter presents design guidelines for additions and alterations to historic buildings in the Downtown Overlay District. The design guidelines are organized into a series of relevant design topics. Within each category, individual policies and design guidelines are presented, which the city will use in determining the appropriateness of the work proposed.

In This Chapter:

- Alterations
- Commercial Additions
- Residential Additions
- Adaptive Use

Design of Alterations

Alterations may be considered for historic buildings; however, these alterations should occur in a manner that will not diminish the historic integrity of the property and they should be reversible for future property owners. Alterations to structures that do not have historic significance are also anticipated.

Additions

Many buildings have experienced additions over time, as need for additional space occurred, particularly with a change in use. An historic addition typically was subordinate in scale and character to the main building. The height of the addition was usually positioned below that of the main structure and it was often located to the side or rear, such that the primary facade remained dominate. An addition was often constructed of materials that were similar to those in use historically. In some cases, owners simply added on to an existing roof, creating more usable space without increasing the footprint of the structure. This tradition of adding on to buildings is anticipated to continue. It is important, however, that new additions be designed in such a manner that they maintain the character of the primary structure.



Large areas of glass usually identify the first floor. Using similar shapes for window openings can help relate new buildings to old.

Policy: Design an alteration to be compatible with the historic character of the property.



This row of buildings had lost some details over time and a monochromatic color scheme obscures the original design character. Overhead garage doors that had replaced original storefronts were later alterations without historic significance. (Compare with the “after” photograph below.)



After rehabilitation, the row of buildings shown in the photograph above conveys a stronger sense of its historic character. Note that some old uses were retained, while other new uses were also introduced. Some noncontributing alterations were removed and storefronts reconstructed. One was retained, but was painted to minimize impacts. (Ft. Collins, CO)

7.1 Avoid alterations that would damage historic features.

- Avoid alterations that would hinder the ability to interpret the design character of the original building.
- Alterations that seek to imply an earlier period than that of the building are inappropriate.
- For example, mounting a sign panel in a manner that causes decorative moldings to be chipped or removed would be inappropriate.



The windows in this structure were boarded and architectural details needed repair. (Compare with the photo below.)



Storefront windows were reopened and upper-story windows were repaired. (Ft. Collins, CO)

Plain front buildings can provide important links with historic buildings. Buildings with plain fronts— and no historic importance— are found in all districts. These guidelines apply whenever such buildings are found. How signs are used on these buildings is also very important. While reconstruction or restoration of the original is encouraged, it may not be feasible and therefore a simplified interpretation may be considered.

- When considering design options, think of the building as a new design, not as an historic facade.



Existing condition

- New simple moldings and awnings are an appropriate option. A new paint scheme can create interest also.



A recommended option

- “Old West” and other themes are not appropriate.



An inappropriate solution

In summary:

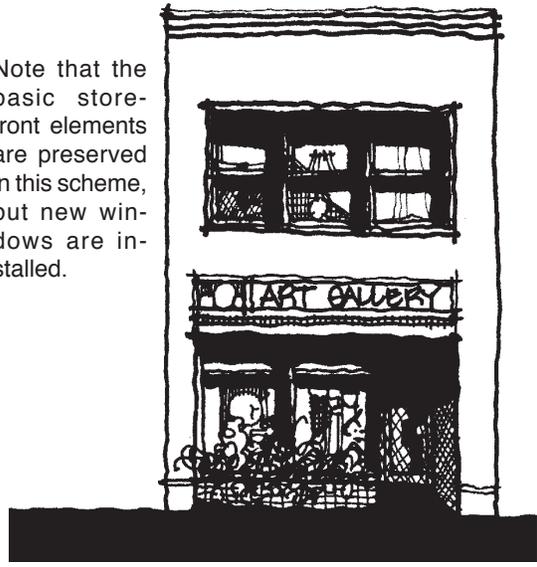
Use paint patterns, awnings, signs and simple moldings to link plain front buildings with their more decorative neighbors.

One option



Another option

Note that the basic store-front elements are preserved in this scheme, but new windows are installed.



- Simple design schemes may be developed for plain facades, using signs and colorful graphics.

- More elaborate remodeling of plain fronts are also appropriate.

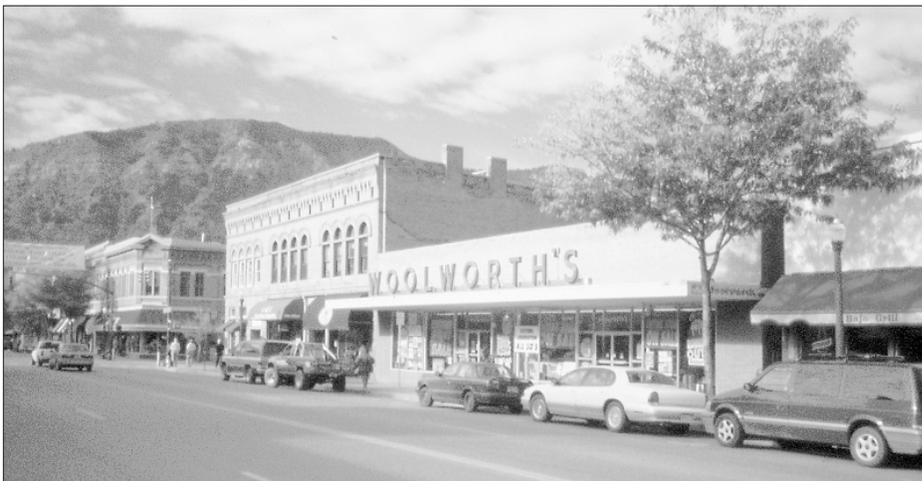


Simple graphics and a patterned awning add variety on this plain front building on Second Avenue.

Design of Alterations, continued...

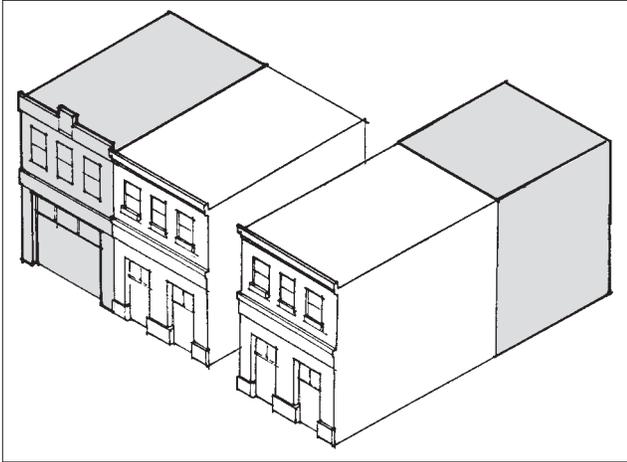


A modest building can also be renovated to be compatible with the context. In the photograph to the left and below, the original Woolworths had a simple facade. (Compare with the current photos at the bottom.)



Renovations to the Woolworths storefront created compatible recessed entries along the street edge with appropriate building materials and contemporary design interpretations of the historic character.

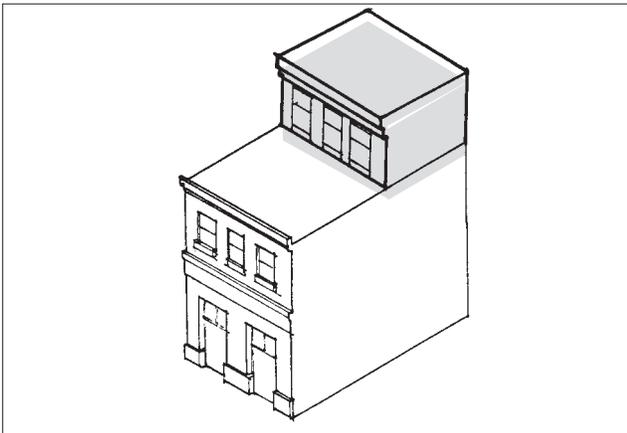
Policy: Minimize the visual impacts of an addition to a commercial building.



New ground-level additions to the side and rear.

Two distinct types of additions are considered to be appropriate by the city: ground-level or roof-top. First, a ground-level addition that involves expanding the footprint of a structure may be considered. Such an addition should be to the rear or side of a building. This will have the least impact on the character of a building, but there may only be limited opportunities to do this.

Second, an addition to the roof may be designed that is simple in character and set back substantially from the front of a building. In addition, the materials, window sizes and alignment of trim elements on the addition should be compatible to those of the existing structure.

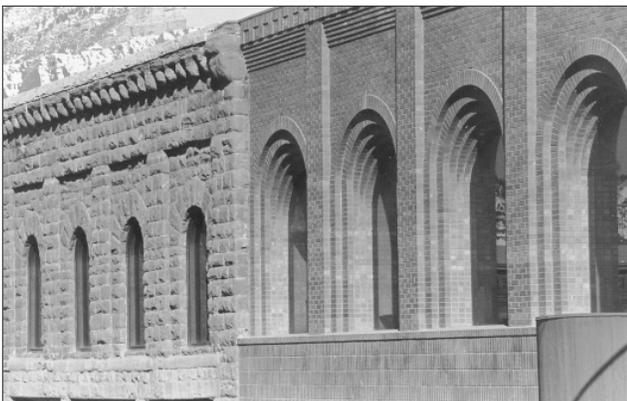


New roof-top addition set back from the front facade.

Another option, which will only be considered on a case-by-case basis, is to design an addition to the front wall plane of the existing building. This option may only be considered on a “newer” or more contemporary building that was originally constructed set back from the front property line or sidewalk edge.

7.2 An addition shall be compatible in scale, materials and character with the main building.

- An addition shall relate to the building in mass, scale and form. It should be designed to remain subordinate to the main structure.
- An addition to the front of a building is inappropriate. However, where a building is set back from the front property line, the first consideration for the placement of an addition should be to fill the gap between the existing building and sidewalk. This will maintain the consistent “street wall” desired in the downtown.



An addition shall be compatible in scale, materials and character with the main building.

7.3 An addition shall not damage or obscure architecturally important features.

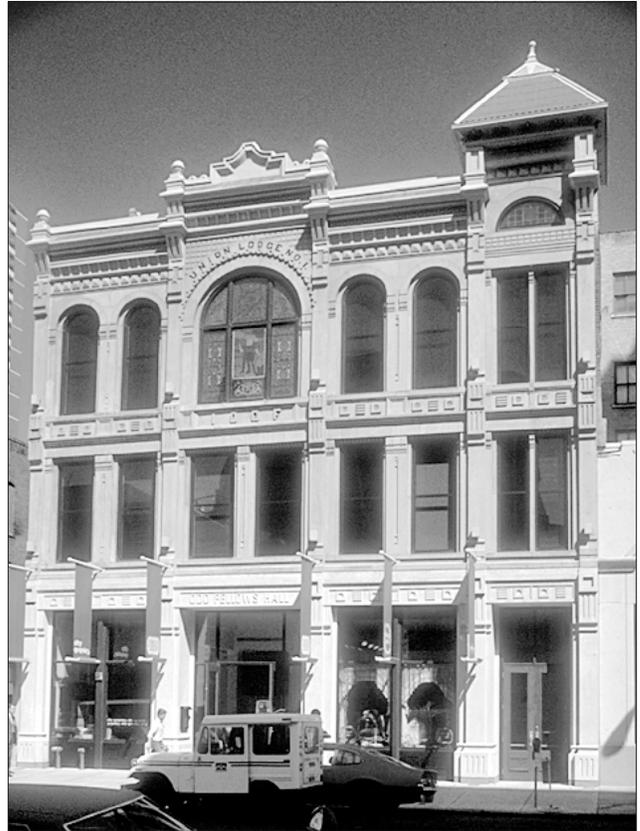
- For example, loss or alteration of a cornice line should be avoided.

7.4 An addition may be made to the roof of a commercial building if it does the following:

- An addition should be set back from the primary, character-defining facade, to preserve the perception of the historic scale of the building.
- Its design should be modest in character, so it will not attract attention from the historic facade.
- The addition should be distinguishable as new, albeit in a subtle way.



An addition should be set back from the primary, character-defining facade, to preserve the perception of the historic scale of the building. (Boulder, CO)



In the angle view above, two newer floors are visible. Note how in this building the addition cannot be seen when looking at the building straight on in the top photo. (Denver, CO)

Policy: Design an addition to a residential structure to be compatible with the primary building.



Design a new addition such that the original character can be clearly seen. This addition to the front of the historic structure is inappropriate. (Washington, MO)



If an addition in front is necessary, use roof forms that are similar to those of the original.

An addition to a structure can radically change its perceived scale and character if inappropriately designed. When planning an addition, consider the effect the addition will have on the building itself. When creating an addition, keep the size of the addition small, in relation to the main structure. If an addition must be larger, it should be set apart from the main structure and connected with a smaller linking element. A design for a new addition that would create an appearance inconsistent with the character of the building, especially an historic one, is discouraged.

One also should consider the effect the addition may have on the character of a street or neighborhood, as seen from the public right-of-way. For example, a side addition may change the sense of rhythm established by side yards in the block. Locating the addition to the rear could be a better solution in such a case.

7.5 Design a new addition such that the original character can be clearly seen.

- In this way, a viewer can understand the history of changes that have occurred to the building.
- An addition should be made distinguishable from the original building, even in subtle ways, such that the character of the original can be interpreted.
- Creating a jog in the foundation between the original and new structures may help to define an addition.
- Even applying a new trim board at the connection point between the addition and the original structure can help define the addition.
- See also *Preservation Briefs #14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings*, published by the National Park Service.

7.6 Place an addition at the rear of a building or set it back from the front to minimize the visual impacts.

- This will allow the original proportions and character to remain prominent.
- Locating an addition at the front of a structure is inappropriate.

7.7 Do not obscure, damage, destroy or remove original architectural details and materials of the primary structure.

- When preserving original details and materials, follow the guidelines presented earlier in this chapter.

7.8 An addition shall be compatible in scale, materials and character with the main building.

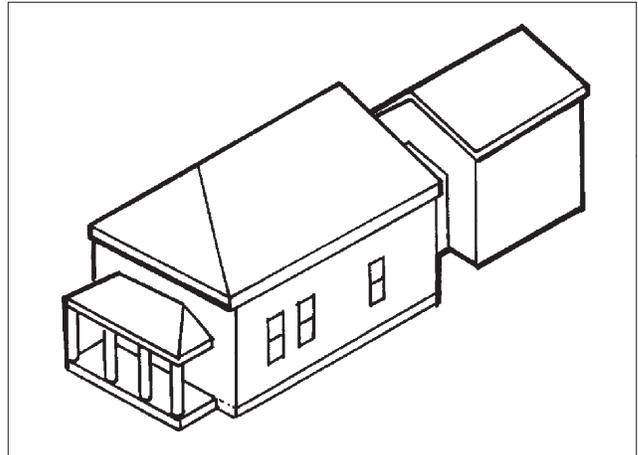
- An addition shall relate to the historic building in mass, scale and form. It should be designed to remain subordinate to the main structure.
- While a smaller addition is visually preferable, if a residential addition would be significantly larger than the original building, one option is to separate it from the primary building, when feasible, and then link it with a smaller connecting structure.
- An addition should be simple in design to prevent it from competing with the primary facade.
- Consider adding dormers to create second story spaces before changing the scale of the building by adding a full second floor.

7.9 An addition shall be set back from any primary, character-defining facade.

- An addition should be to the rear of the building, when feasible.

7.10 The roof form of a new addition shall be in character with that of the primary building.

- Typically, gable, hip and shed roofs are appropriate for residential additions. Flat roofs are appropriate for commercial buildings.
- Repeat existing roof slopes and materials.
- If the roof of the primary building is symmetrically proportioned, the roof of the addition should be similar.



Place an addition at the rear of a building or set it back from the front to minimize the visual impacts.

Policy: When adapting a residence to a commercial use, respect the residential character of the building.



When residential use ceases to be viable, the first preference is to choose new uses that minimize the negative changes in building features.



When adapting a residence to a commercial use, respect the residential character of the building by preserving the overall form of the building, the front porch and front yard character.

Converting a building to a new use that is different from that which its design reflects is considered to be "adaptive use." Often there are new uses that are inherently less disruptive to residential structures such as a bed and breakfast, professional offices, small specialty restaurants and personal service businesses.

7.11 Seek uses that are compatible with the historic character of the building.

- The primary goal should be preserving the original residential character, appearance and scale of the structure.
- Building uses that are closely related to the original use are preferred. Avoid radical alterations to either the interior or exterior of the structure.
- Avoid altering porches and original windows and doors.

7.12 When use changes demand that structures be altered such that little or no use can be made of the original structure, consider moving the structure to a compatible location.

- This move can be made to another location on the same site or to a vacant site in the area.
- While moving is discouraged, it is preferred over demolition.

7.13 Only as a last resort should an historic structure be considered for demolition.

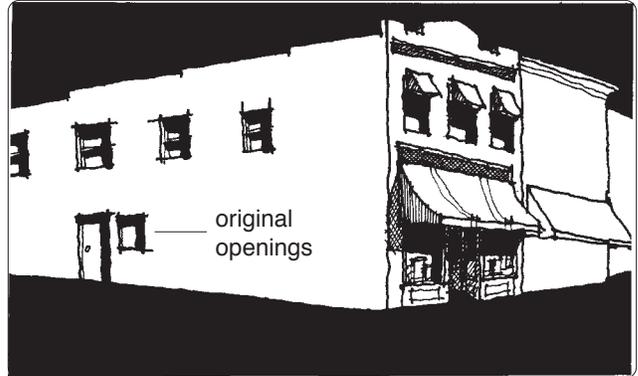
- This applies only to structures of little or no historic significance.
- Where a structure must be razed, then a record shall be made of it prior to demolition. This shall include photographs and architectural drawings.
- A structure should never be demolished as a matter of convenience.

Policy: Alterations to secondary walls may be considered when the overall character is maintained.

The side elevations of buildings are important features on downtown cross streets. Some are just as detailed as front facades and should be carefully preserved. Many, however, are more plain. The original character of these sides should be respected in alterations, although more flexibility is appropriate here than on the fronts.

7.14 An alteration to a secondary wall may be considered where it does not substantially alter the character of the building.

- When developing new designs for sides of buildings, incorporate original openings when feasible.



Original Condition: A simple wall with small side door



Acceptable alteration: New storefront is modest in character and overall simplicity of the design is maintained.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SITE DESIGN

This chapter presents design guidelines for site design in the Downtown. The design guidelines are organized into a series of relevant design topics. Within each category, individual policies and design guidelines are presented, which the city will use in determining the appropriateness of the work proposed. These guidelines apply to both public and private sector improvements.

In This Chapter:

- Public Streetscape
- Building and Street Lighting
- Mechanical Equipment and Service Areas
- Parking

Public Streetscape

Fundamentally, streetscape designs should help to establish a sense of visual continuity in an area. A streetscape palette has been established in the downtown that should be continued. This palette includes benches, light fixtures and trash receptacles. Other elements that may be installed, such as newsstands and planters, should be in character with the existing design palette and should be located to be compatible with safe pedestrian circulation.

Building and Street Lighting

The character and level of lighting on buildings and streets is a special concern. Traditionally, lights were simple in character and were used to highlight entrances, walkways and signs. Most fixtures had incandescent lamps that cast a color similar to daylight, were relatively low in intensity and were shielded with simple shade devices. Although new lamp types may be considered, the overall effect of modest, focused light should be continued. The city would like to reduce nighttime light pollution, while maintaining a safe and secure environment. Lighting should be directed where needed with minimal glare, and hours of illumination should be kept to a minimum. Lighting designs must comply with the Durango Outdoor Lighting Ordinance. (Sign lighting is addressed in Chapter 9.)

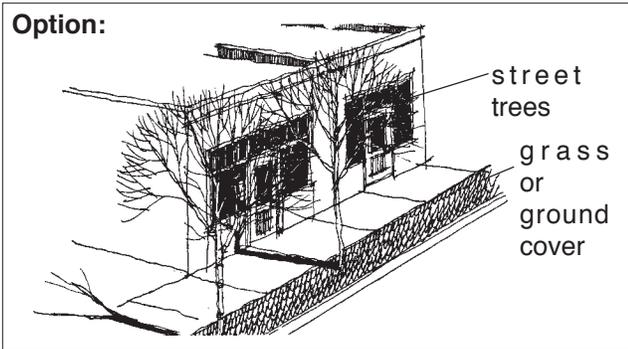
Mechanical Equipment and Service Areas

Utilities that serve properties may include telephone and electrical lines, ventilation systems, gas meters, air conditioners, fire protection, telecommunication and alarm systems. Adequate space for these utilities should be planned in a project from the outset and they should be designed such that their visual impacts are minimized. Service areas for trash and recycling containers and loading facilities should be carefully planned as an integral part of a site. At the same time, the visual impacts of service areas should be minimized.

Parking

Public parking lots and garages were not a part of Durango's early history. However, cars are a fact of life in the downtown today, and the visual impacts associated with their storage should be carefully planned. Locating cars in structures is encouraged, because this will minimize visual impacts of cars and permit more density in development, which in turn will promote pedestrian activity and the use of other alternative modes of transportation. Creating and maintaining connections between parking areas and public right-of-ways also is an important component of planning public parking areas. Safe and convenient bicycle storage should also be considered when planning for parking.

Policy: The public streetscape should enhance the pedestrian experience without being an obstacle to traffic or commerce.



Provide landscaping in the strip between the street and sidewalk.

Sidewalks, street lights, landscaping and street furnishings all contribute to the pedestrian-friendly environment of downtown Durango. These elements should be maintained, enhanced and expanded. Sidewalks vary in construction and quality. While many are concrete, some include brick as an accent element, or are completely brick themselves. Curb ramps have also been installed at some corners to facilitate access. Also, while several areas already have amenities in place that enhance the pedestrian experience, additional furnishings should be considered to enhance the area.

8.1 Preserve significant sidewalk features.

8.2 When new sidewalks are to be installed, they shall be compatible with the traditional character of the streetscape.

- A new sidewalk should align with those that already exist along a block.

8.3 Expanded sidewalk areas (bulb-outs) may be considered at street intersections.

- These may include decorative paving, but should remain modest in overall character.

Policy: Street furniture should complement the character area in which it is located.

8.4 Street furniture should be simple in design and match those already established in downtown.

- Benches, bike racks, planters or pots, statues, trash receptacles and, in the event of a sidewalk sale, merchandise displays are examples of street furnishings that are appropriate.
- Where utilized, benches should be the same as those already in use in the downtown.
- Advertising promotions on benches is not allowed under any circumstance.
- Individual furnishings should be of designs that may be combined with other street furniture in a coherent composition.

8.5 Avoid materials that are incompatible with the character of the downtown.

- Exposed aggregate, unfinished wood and polished metal are inappropriate.

8.6 Street furniture should be located in areas of high pedestrian activity.

- Locate furniture at pedestrian route intersections and major building entrances and near outdoor gathering places.

8.7 Street furnishings should be clustered in “groupings,” when feasible.

- Street furnishings and sidewalk displays should not interfere with pedestrian traffic.
- Use planters and waste receptacles to frame spaces for benches, for example.
- Install benches in high pedestrian traffic areas and/or areas of interest.

8.8 Position a bench to provide a sense of comfort.

- Buffer the bench from traffic; for example, position a planter between the bench and the curb.
- Avoid locating a bench close to the curb.



Street furniture should be simple in design and match those already established in downtown.



Street furnishings and sidewalk displays should not interfere with pedestrian traffic.



The design of the receptacles should be compatible with other existing furnishings.

8.9 Cluster waste receptacles with other furnishings.

- The design of the receptacles should be compatible with other existing furnishings.

8.10 When feasible, cluster planters with other furnishings.

- Install freestanding planters on either side of a store entrance, at seating areas, along edges of parking lots, in pedestrian plazas and in clustered furnishing areas.
- A planter should be large enough to be easily seen, but not so large as to cause an obstruction to pedestrian traffic.
- Conventional home-style planters, such as those constructed of redwood or ordinary orange pottery, as well as over-sized concrete plant tubs are not appropriate.



When feasible, cluster planters with other furnishings.

Policy: Boxes for distribution of printed materials should be coordinated with the downtown streetscape palette.

8.11 Newspaper boxes should not block pedestrian flow or create hazardous conditions.

- Newspaper vending boxes should be located out of the pedestrian walkway and clear of loading zones.
- Vending boxes should be located in areas with convenient pedestrian access.
- Newspaper vending boxes should be set back a minimum of five feet from crosswalks, fire hydrants, transit stops and loading zones.

8.12 Newspaper boxes should be designed to coordinate with the overall streetscape design.

- Where a streetscape design program is adopted, newspaper distribution shall be in coordinated boxes.
- Newspaper boxes should be clustered with or near other appropriate street furnishings.
- These clusters should not overwhelm the streetscape pattern.

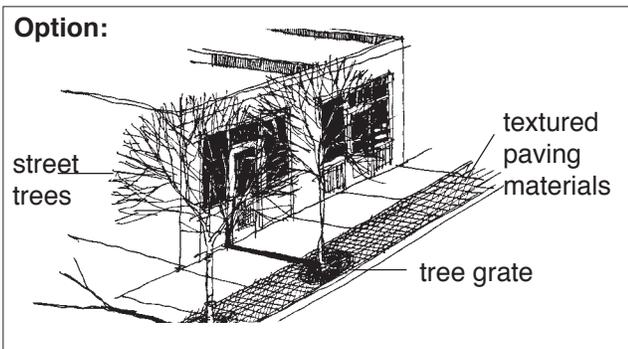


Newspaper boxes should be clustered with or near other appropriate street furnishings.

Policy: The use of trees and flowering plants is strongly encouraged.



Use indigenous, native and drought-tolerant plant materials when feasible.



Locate street trees along edges of sidewalks, maintaining a clearly defined pedestrian travel zone.

Trees and flowering plants help provide interest to pedestrians, as well as shaded protection from the summer sun. Therefore, the use of street trees and planters is strongly encouraged.

8.13 Use indigenous, native and drought-tolerant plant materials when feasible.

- Locate street trees along edges of sidewalks, maintaining a clearly defined pedestrian travel zone.
- Locate street trees in larger planting areas, such as buffer strips adjacent to parking lots and/or pocket parks.
- Provide underground irrigation systems where long-term growth will not impact the irrigation system.
- Use flowers to provide seasonal colors.
- If planter boxes are used, they should be placed to avoid damaging or obscuring historic building details.

8.14 Install new street trees to enhance the pedestrian experience.

- Install new trees where walkway widths permit.
- Replace trees that are diseased or have passed their life cycle.
- The height of a street tree should be minimized, however, to avoid blocking views of storefronts and interesting details.

8.15 Provide electrical service for string lights in trees.

Policy: Site lighting should be used to enhance the pedestrian experience at night by providing a well-lit environment.

Lighting on a site is important for aesthetics and safety and, on commercial properties, for customer awareness. Traditionally, lights were simple in character and were used to highlight buildings, signs, entrances, first floor details, walkways and buildings. Today they are also used to light parking lots. Most fixtures had incandescent lamps that cast a color similar to daylight, were relatively low in intensity and were shielded with simple shade devices. Site lighting should reinforce the visual continuity of downtown. The light fixtures (luminaires) and poles (standards) should be unifying design elements that promote visual interest and variety.

8.16 Use lighting for the following:

- To accent architectural details
- To accent building entrances
- To accent signs
- To illuminate sidewalks and pedestrian routes
- To illuminate parking and service areas, for safety concerns

8.17 Provide low-scale lighting for pedestrian routes.

- Lighting along the right-of-way should be a combination of pedestrian-scaled street lights and spillover from lights on adjacent buildings. Lighting in this location should be designed to be comfortable to pedestrians.

8.18 Where decorative lighting is to be used in the downtown area it should match the acorn style used along Main Avenue and adopted by the City.

- Note that while these design guidelines encourage the use of shielded light sources, some of the luminaires in use by the city on Main Avenue are not.
- New lighting should have a cap or be internally shielded to avoid uplighting.



Lighting along the right-of-way should be a combination of pedestrian-scaled street lights and spillover from lights on adjacent buildings. Lighting in this location should be designed to be comfortable to pedestrians.

Note: All site lighting shall be in compliance with the city's Outdoor Lighting Ordinance.



The light pole, or standard, should be designed to accommodate special decorative accessories. Poles along Camino del Rio provide attachments for seasonal flags.



Use lighting to accent architectural details.

8.19 Lighting for parking areas, service areas, buildings, pedestrian routes and public ways shall be shielded to prevent any off-site glare.

- Light sources shall be installed in a manner that will shield the lights from public view and avoid glare and light spill.
- The light source shall not emit a significant amount of the fixture's total output above a vertical cutoff angle of 90 degrees directly visible from neighboring properties. Any structural part of the fixture providing this cutoff angle shall be permanently attached.
- Keep parking area lighting at a human scale.

8.20 The light pole, or standard, should be designed to accommodate special decorative accessories.

- Mounts for hanging planter baskets and banners, for example, should be included.
- Mounts for seasonal lighting schemes also should be considered.

8.21 Minimize the visual impacts of architectural lighting.

- All exterior light sources should have a low level of luminescence.
- Wall-mounted floodlamps shall be shielded so that the light source is not visible off site. Spotlights without shielding devices are not allowed.
- A lamp that conveys the color spectrum similar to daylight is preferred. For example, metal halide and color-corrected sodium are appropriate.
- Lighting fixtures should be appropriate to the building and its surroundings in terms of style, scale and intensity of illumination.
- Wall-mounted light fixtures should not extend above the height of the wall to which they are mounted.

Policy: Preserve any existing landscape elements.

8.22 Preserve and enhance existing landscape elements and natural features.

- Existing trees, other established landscaping, and natural features should be protected and incorporated as assets on a site, when feasible.

8.23 Landscape designs should be in scale with the site and surroundings while complementing the building design.

- For example, large trees are inappropriate on small sites.

8.24 Planting materials should be drought-tolerant selections that are native to the area or adaptable to the soil and climate conditions.



Landscape designs should be in scale with the site and surroundings while complementing the building design.



Planting materials should be drought-tolerant selections that are native to the area or adaptable to the soil and climate conditions.

Policy: Minimize the visual impacts of mechanical equipment and service areas.



Do not locate window air conditioning units on a building's primary facade. (Oskaloosa, IA)



Trash areas, including large waste containers or dumpsters, should also be screened from view, using a fence, hedge or enclosure.

Utility service boxes, telecommunication devices, cables and conduits are among the variety of equipment that may be attached to a building that can affect the character of the area. Trash and recycling storage areas also are concerns. To the greatest extent feasible, these devices should be screened from public view.

8.25 Minimize the visual impact of mechanical equipment as seen from the street.

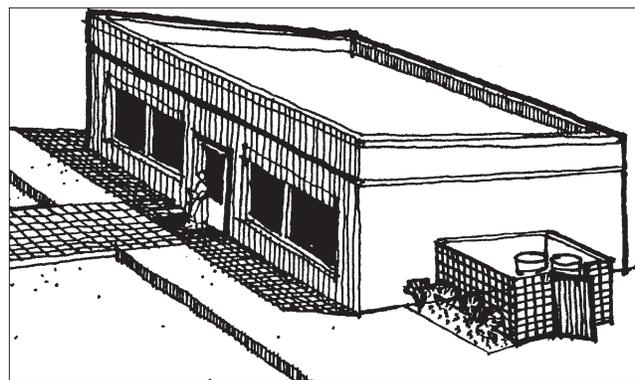
- Do not locate window air conditioning units on the building's primary facade.
- Use low-profile mechanical units on rooftops that are not visible from the public's view.
- Locate a satellite dish out of public view, to the extent feasible, and in compliance with other regulations.

8.26 Minimize the visual impacts of utility connections and service boxes.

- Locate them on secondary walls, when feasible.
- Do not locate gas or electric meters on the roof.

8.27 Minimize the visual impacts of recycling and trash storage and service areas.

- Locate service areas away from major pedestrian routes; typically place them at the rear of a building when feasible.
- Dumpsters should be screened from view.



Use fences or plant materials to screen service areas.

Policy: Minimize the visual impacts of a parking lot.

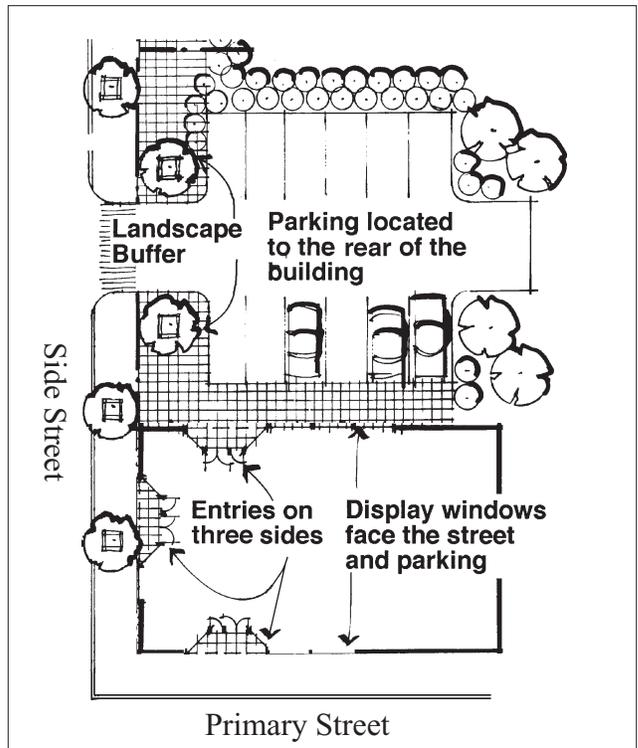
New parking facilities should be designed to be attractive, compatible additions to the downtown. Using high quality materials, providing a sense of scale in architectural details and providing active uses at the sidewalk edge are methods that can mitigate the potentially negative impacts of new parking facilities. In general, a new parking facility should remain subordinate to the street scene.

8.28 Locate a surface lot such that it will be subordinate to other site features.

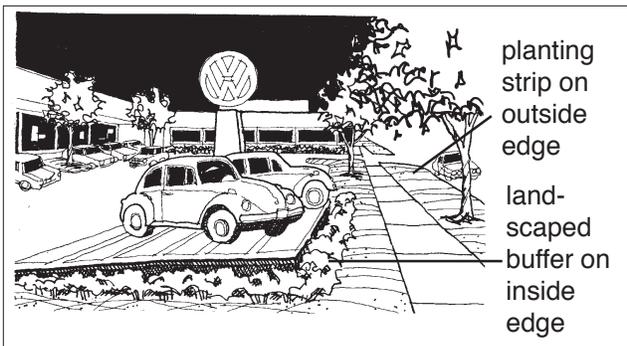
- An on-site parking area should be located behind a building, where its visual impacts will be minimized, when feasible.
- Minimize the surface area of paving materials. Consider using a less impervious material such as “grasscrete.”
- It is not appropriate to demolish a structure on a building’s lot or surrounding lots in order to create additional parking.

8.29 Site a parking lot so it will minimize gaps in the continuous building wall of a block.

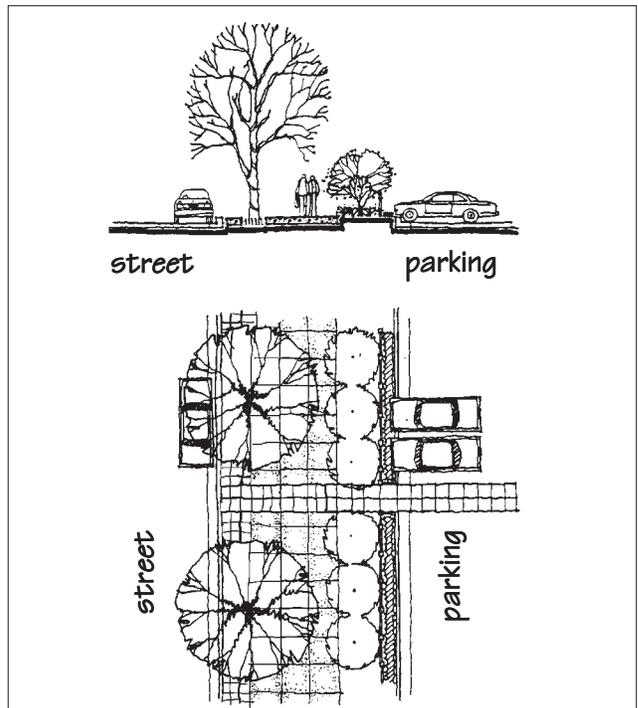
- Where a parking lot shares a site with a building, place the parking at the rear of the site (preferred) or beside the building (acceptable when necessary).



An on-site parking area should be located behind a building, where its visual impacts will be minimized.



Provide landscaped buffers at the sidewalk edge where open lots occur.



Where a parking lot abuts a public sidewalk, provide a buffer.



Where a parking lot abuts a public sidewalk, provide a visual buffer. Consider the use of a wall as screen for the edge of the lot. Materials should be compatible with those of nearby buildings.



Where a parking lot abuts a public sidewalk, provide a visual buffer. (Bellingham, WA)

8.30 Where a parking lot abuts a public sidewalk, provide a visual buffer.

- This may be a landscaped strip or planter.
- Consider the use of a wall as screen for the edge of the lot.
- Use a combination of trees and shrubs to create a landscape buffer.
- Where a parking lot exists that is presently not screened or landscaped, consider a landscaping program or an infill building that relates to the surrounding historic context.
- See also the City of Durango's Zoning Ordinance for more guidance on appropriate parking lot landscaping and screening.



Use a combination of trees and shrubs to create a landscape buffer.

Policy: Provide for alternative modes of transportation.

8.31 Providing facilities for storage of bicycles is encouraged.

- Bicycle storage should be sited in a safe and convenient location with access to pedestrian routes and primary building entry.

8.32 Connections from development sites and parking areas to pedestrian routes, as well as local and regional trail networks, are encouraged.

- In some cases a protected bike enclosure may be appropriate.

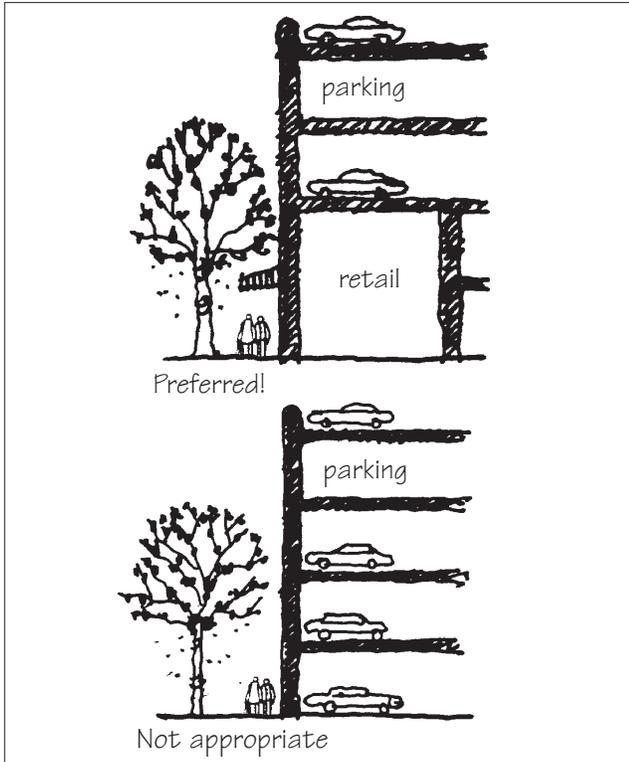


Bicycle storage should be sited in a safe and convenient location with access to pedestrian routes.



Connections from development sites and parking areas to pedestrian routes, as well as local and regional trail networks, are encouraged.

Policy: Minimize the visual impacts of a parking structure by designing it to enhance the activity of the streetscape.



The ground level of a parking structure should be wrapped by retail, office or some other active use along the street edge.



A part of this infill building is a parking structure that is set back from the front and sides of a retail wrap. The openings in the parking section reflect window proportions similar to those seen historically in the area. (Boulder, CO)

Parking structures should be designed to enhance activity of the street level. At a minimum, a parking structure should help to animate the street and be compatible with the surroundings. The visual impact of the cars themselves should be minimized.

8.33 Design a parking structure so that it creates a visually attractive and active street edge.

- When feasible, a parking structure in the area should be wrapped with retail, commercial or another active use along the street edge to shield the cars from the street and to add activity to the street.
- Other methods of accomplishing this include, but are not limited to:
 - Retail/commercial wrap
 - Murals or public art
 - Landscaping
 - Product display cases/show windows



New parking facilities should be designed to be attractive, compatible additions to a commercial area. Using high quality materials, providing a sense of scale in architectural details and providing active uses at the sidewalk edge are methods that can mitigate the potentially negative impacts of new parking facilities. (Lexington, KY)

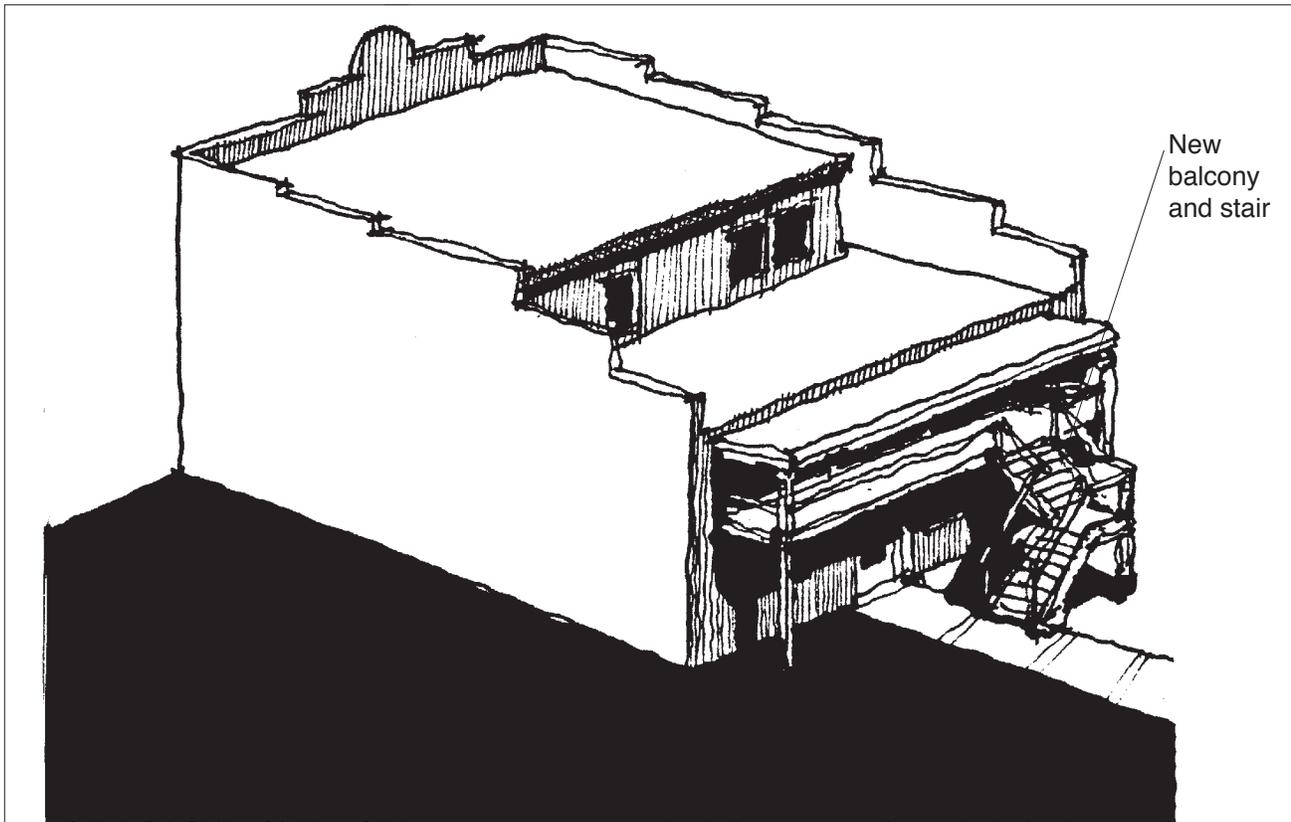
8.34 In the Downtown Overlay District, a parking structure shall be compatible with traditional buildings in the surrounding area.

- Respect the regular window pattern and other architectural elements of adjacent buildings.
- Maintain the alignments and rhythms of architectural elements, as seen along the street.
- Continue the use of similar building materials.
- Avoid multiple curb cuts. These complicate turning movements and disrupt the sidewalk.
- Express the traditional widths of buildings in the area.

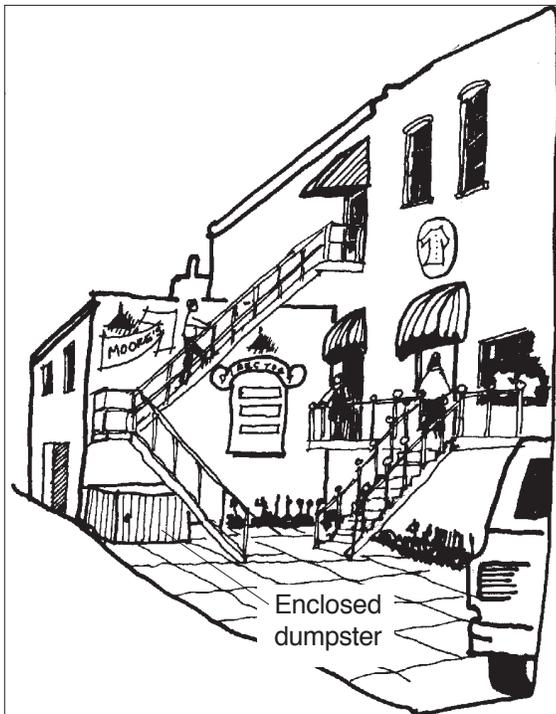


This parking structure incorporates a wrap of retail stores along the street edge. The storefronts are contemporary interpretations of the historic downtown context. (Boulder, CO)

Improving access to second floors can improve leasing ability while also creating shelter for first floor entrances.



Consider developing second story retail access with balconies. Opportunities are particularly good along Narrow Gauge Avenue and the alley between Main and Second Avenues.



When planning rear entries such as this new stair providing access to upper floors, consider enhancing the appearance of the area. Design enclosures for dumpsters and other service equipment that coordinate with the character of the building.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SIGNS

This chapter presents design guidelines for the design of new signs in the Downtown Overlay District. The design guidelines are organized into a series of relevant design topics. Within each category, individual policies and design guidelines are presented, which the city will use in determining the appropriateness of the work proposed.

Note that the city’s sign code in Section 10-3 of the Land Use and Development Code establishes certain limits on signs, including the amount of sign area that may be used. This provides supplementary guidance about the character and placement of signs that is appropriate downtown. The goal of these guidelines is to improve the quality of signage in the downtown and to assure that the signage responds to, complements and enhances the architecture and character of the community. Therefore, the guidelines apply in addition to the standards set forth in the sign code. Where there is conflict between the two, the more restrictive shall apply.

Traditionally, a variety of signs were seen in the downtown. Five different types occurred:

- Small, freestanding signs mounted on a pole or post; located near the sidewalk because the primary structure or business was setback from the street (e.g., an area with residential character); printed on both sides
- Medium-sized signs that projected from the building above the awnings or canopies; printed on both sides
- Small, horizontally-oriented rectangular signs that protruded from the building below the awnings or canopies but above pedestrians’ heads; printed on both sides
- Medium- to large-sized, horizontally-oriented rectangular signs attached flat against the building, above and/or below the awnings; printed on one side only
- Window signs, painted on glass; used at the street level and on upper floors
- Signs on awnings

In This Chapter:

- Sign context
- Appropriate signs
- Sign content

Historically, signs that were mounted on the exterior of a building advertised the primary business conducted in the building. Typically, these signs occupied a street level space and sometimes upper floors as well. Window signs were the only ones used for businesses above the street level business. In the case of a large structure that



The overall facade composition, including ornamental details and signs, should be coordinated.

included several businesses on upper floors, the name of the building itself was displayed on an exterior sign. Tenants relied on a directory at the street level.

Historically, sign sizes varied. Most signs were a few square feet in area, but some of the projecting, blade signs were quite large. In general, these



When several businesses occupy a building, they should be coordinated in form, materials and graphics.



Signs were mounted to fit within architectural features. In many cases, they were mounted flush above the storefront, just above moldings.

larger signs were for a cultural or institutional facility, such as a theater, or for an office block. In a few instances, major retailers also used them.

The earliest signs had no lights, but in time a variety of methods were used. Many signs in the early twentieth century had incandescent lamps focused on the sign panel. By the 1950s, neon appeared occasionally.

Even so, throughout the history of the area, signs remained subordinate to the architecture. While some large signs have existed, they were relatively limited in number, such that one's overall ability to perceive the character of sets of buildings was maintained. Therefore, the key unifying features of the area, including the alignment of first floor elements and the rhythm of building fronts and windows, have remained clearly visible.

In addition, signs were mounted to fit within architectural features. In many cases, they were mounted flush above the storefront, just above moldings. Others were located between columns or centered in "panels" on a building face. This method of sign usage helped enhance the design character of individual structures.

In later years, some properties developed with larger, freestanding signs, especially along Camino del Rio, in response to automobile traffic. Some of these are large "pylon" signs, while others use large scale directory signs. In general, the objective is to reduce the scale of signs and emphasize the visual qualities of the entire property, rather than the sign alone.

In general, signs should provide information, identify businesses and enhance the visual character of the area with high quality materials and designs.

Therefore, the tradition of having a diversity of signs that remain subordinate to the overall context and signs complementing architectural compositions, should be maintained.

Sign Area Permitted:

Note:

Sign area limits are established in the city's sign code.

The Design Review Board may grant an increase in total sign area up to a maximum of 10% greater than that allowed in the sign code, if ALL of the following conditions are met:

- a. A master sign plan is approved and is in force for the entire property.
- b. The Planning Director determines that the overall result of all the signs on the property are in compliance with the intent of the policies and guidelines in this section, including being in overall proportion to the property and compatible with surrounding properties.
- c. The Design Review Board also approves the increase, based on a finding that the overall result of all the signs on the property are in compliance with the intent of the policies and guidelines in this section, including being in overall proportion to the property and to surrounding properties.
- d. No sign on the property is internally illuminated.

Appropriate signs for downtown include:

- monument
- flush-mounted
- window
- projecting
- awning
- directory



Appropriate signs include awning and flush mounted signs.

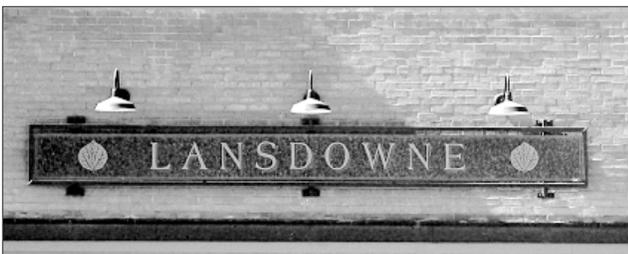
Policy: Design a sign to be coordinated with the overall character of the property.



Coordinate a sign within the overall facade composition and with other signs on the property. These signs, for example, are aligned, use similar graphics and fit within individual bays of the facade, which is appropriate.



Mount a sign to fit within existing architectural features. Use the shape of the sign to help reinforce the horizontal lines of moldings and transoms seen along the street. This sign, for example, is centered to fit within the shape of the parapet, which is appropriate.



This sign is coordinated in its design with others on the building, which is appropriate. (Compare with the photos above.)

A sign typically serves two functions: first, to attract attention, and second to convey information, essentially identifying the business or services offered within. If it is well designed, the building front alone can serve the attention-getting function, allowing the sign to be focused on conveying information in a well-conceived manner. All new signs should be developed with the overall context of the building and of the area in mind.

9.1 Consider the building front as part of an overall sign program.

- Coordinate a sign within the overall facade composition and with other signs on the property.
- A sign should be in proportion to the building, such that it does not dominate the appearance.

9.2 Develop a master sign plan for the entire property; this should be used to guide individual sign design decisions.

- This is especially important along Camino del Rio where some parcels include multiple businesses, sometimes even in more than one building.
- A master sign plan should specify the location, number and size of all signs on the property. The materials, methods of illumination and graphics standards should also be defined.

Signs

Inappropriate:
Signs are irregularly placed.



Develop a master sign plan for the entire property. Avoid a wide variety of sign shapes and sizes.

Appropriate:
Signs are aligned.

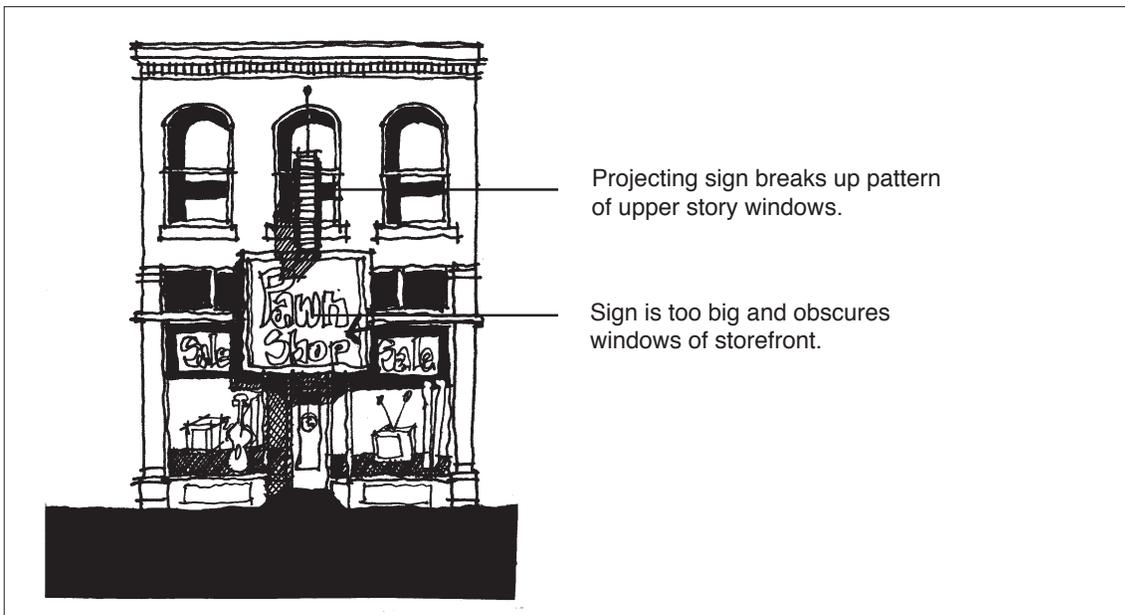


These signs are aligned, easier to see and enhance the business edge.

9.3 Position a sign to be a part of the overall building composition.

- Locate a sign on a building such that it will emphasize design elements of the facade itself.
- Mount a sign to fit within existing architectural features. Use the shape of the sign to help reinforce the horizontal lines of moldings and transoms seen along the street.

9.4 Preserve an historic painted sign where it exists, when feasible.



Avoid signs that cover architectural features.



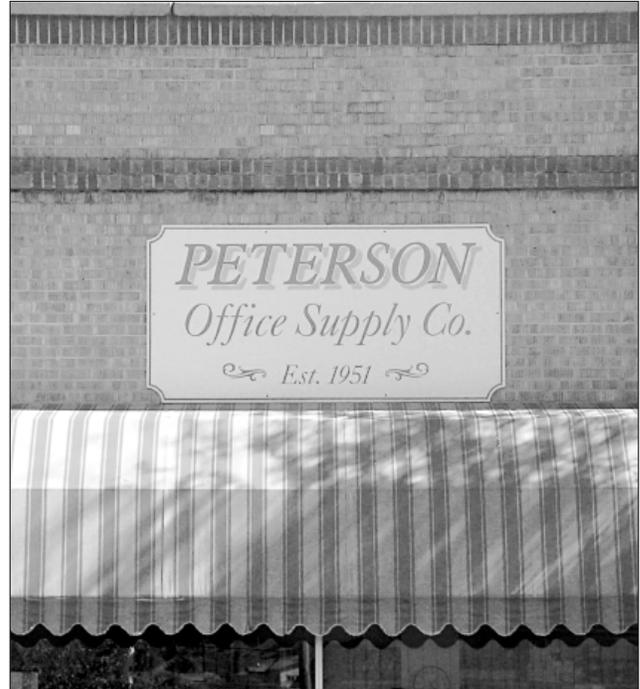
Signs may be located in the clerestory/transom panel.

Policy: A sign should be of a type seen traditionally downtown.

The placement or location of a sign is perhaps the most critical factor in maintaining the order and integrity of the Downtown Overlay District. Consistent placement of signs according to building type, size, location and even building materials—particularly along Main and Second Avenues—create a visual pattern that the pedestrian can easily interpret and utilize to the mutual benefit of merchants, tourists and customers.

9.5 A monument sign may be considered.

- A freestanding sign may be used in the front yard of a residence with a commercial use.
- A freestanding sign may also be used in areas where the primary use is set back from the street edge.
- The sign structure for monument signs should relate to the building housing the business being advertised.



A flush-mounted wall sign may be considered.

9.6 A flush-mounted wall sign may be considered.

- In many cases, turn-of-the century building types common in Durango have a sign frieze. This is the ideal location for the *primary* building sign. The sign frieze is typically located above the transom and below the second-floor windows.
- When utilizing a sign frieze as the sign placement location, it is important to respect the frieze borders.
- When feasible, place a wall sign such that it aligns with others on the building and within the block.



A flush-mounted wall sign may be considered.



A window sign may be considered. A window sign may be painted on or hung just inside a window.



Signs on glass are effective for pedestrians and for drawing attention to merchandise.



A hanging sign is easier for pedestrians to read and is encouraged.

9.7 A window sign may be considered.

- A window sign may be considered in addition.
- It may be painted on the glass or hung just inside a window.
- A window sign should cover no more than approximately twenty-five percent (25%) of the total window area.

9.8 A hanging sign, which projects from the building front, may be considered.

- A small hanging sign is easier for a pedestrian to read than other sign types and is encouraged.
- A small hanging sign should be located near the business entrance, just above the door or to the side of it.
- A hanging sign should be mounted perpendicular with the building facade.
- A hanging sign should provide clearance between the sidewalk surface and the bottom of the sign for pedestrians.



A hanging sign may be considered.

9.9 Awning and canopy signs may be considered.

- An awning or canopy sign should not dominate the awning or canopy surface to which it is applied.
- Consider application of a sign centered on the canopy where a flush-mounted sign would obscure architectural details.
- Awning signs should be primarily pedestrian-oriented.

9.10 A directory sign may be considered.

- Where several businesses share a building, coordinate the signs. Align several smaller signs, or group them into a single panel as a directory.
- Use similar forms or backgrounds for the signs to tie them together visually and make them easier to read.
- The manner in which a directory sign is mounted to a building, either flush to or projecting from a wall, will determine the maximum allowable sign area.



Signs may be mounted on awnings.



Signs on awnings are colorful and easily viewed from across the street.



Symbol signs add interest to the street, are quickly read and are remembered better than written words. (Durango, CO)



Locating a project sign above an awning is appropriate.



A directory sign may be considered.



An awning may be considered.

Maintenance of signs

- Re-secure sign mounts to the building front.
- Repaint faded graphics.
- Repair worn wiring.
- Replace burned out bulbs.
- Remove non-historic, obsolete signs.
- Preserve historic painted signs in place as decorative features.

Policy: A sign should be in character with the material, color and detail of a building.

9.11 A sign should not obscure or compete with architectural details of an historic building facade.

- This is especially important for a building with historic significance.
- A sign should be designed to integrate with the architectural features of a building, not distract attention from them.

9.12 Signs that are out of character with those seen historically and that would alter the historic character of the street are inappropriate.

- Animated signs are prohibited.
- Any sign that visually overpowers the building or obscures significant architectural features is inappropriate.

9.13 Sign materials should be compatible with that of the building facade.

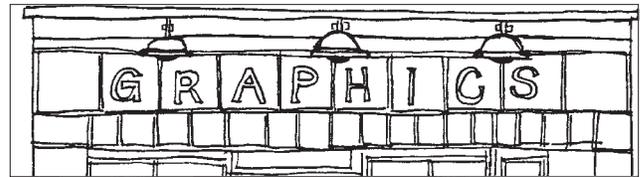
- Painted or stained wood and metal are appropriate materials for signs. Their use is encouraged. Unfinished materials, including unpainted wood, are discouraged because they are out of character with the context.
- Highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read are inappropriate.
- A painted sign on a blank side or rear wall may be considered.

9.14 A simple sign design is more legible.

- Typefaces that relate to the business or with other signs in a Master Sign Program are encouraged.
- Generally, these are typefaces with serifs.
- Avoid hard-to-read or overly intricate typeface styles.
- Interesting, complex or intricate pedestrian-oriented signs are also encouraged.



Typefaces that are in keeping with those seen in the area traditionally are encouraged.



Light should be directed at the sign from an external, shielded lamp.

Policy: Sign content should be designed to be visually interesting and clearly legible.

9.17 Using a symbol for a sign is encouraged.

- A symbol sign adds interest to the street, can be read quickly and is remembered better than written words.

9.18 Use colors for the sign that are compatible with those of the building front and building materials.

- Bright colors are inappropriate as primary colors and for backgrounds, but may be used as accents or used on sign lettering when deemed compatible with surrounding signs and buildings.



These signs make use of symbols and have typefaces that are easy to read. They also are mounted to align, which is appropriate.



The use of symbols and pictographics is encouraged.

Policy: Sign size should be in proportion to the property and building, as well as being in a scale appropriate to downtown in general.



Calculate sign area by measuring the simplest geometric form that encloses the sign.



Sign area should be calculated by enclosing all of the parts of the sign face in the simplest geometric form that is possible.

9.21 The following size limits are recommended in the Camino del Rio Character Area:

- Total sign square footage maximum area for a property: 100 s.f.
- Maximum area for any individual sign:
 - Level 1 - Seen from the street: 70 s.f., no more than 30 s.f. per sign face
 - Level 2 - On site, wall mounted: 20 s.f.
 - Level 3 - One site, business entry: 6 s.f./sign

9.22 Sign area should be calculated by enclosing all of the parts of the sign face in the simplest geometric form that is possible.

- For a sign with an irregular shape, a simple geometric boundary is drawn around the form.
- If however, two or more elements project in a manner in which they effectively define a larger area, then the enclosing form shall extend to include that space.

.....
• Note:
• Sign area limits are established in the city's sign code.
.....

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR AWNINGS & CANOPIES

This chapter presents design guidelines for the use of awnings and canopies in the Downtown Overlay District. The design guidelines are organized into a series of relevant design topics. Within each category, individual policies and design guidelines are presented, which the city will use in determining the appropriateness of the work proposed.

The tradition of sheltering the sidewalk with awnings and canopies is well-established. Awnings were simple, and fit into the building opening which they were covering. Some were operable (i.e., could be raised and lowered), while others were on a rigid frame. Awnings were used frequently on first floors and occasionally some buildings had them on upper stories as well. Historically, awnings were noteworthy features of buildings in downtown and their continued use is encouraged. Canopies were prevalent in Durango's early days, but are rarely found today in the downtown. Where historically documented canopies exist, their preservation is encouraged; however, canopies that appear historic are not appropriate on new structures.

In the Main Avenue and Second Avenue Areas, it is important that awnings reflect the character of those used historically downtown. Awnings in the Camino del Rio Area should also be compatible with these early design traditions, although greater flexibility is allowed here because of the wider variety in building types and site conditions that exist there.

- In this chapter:
- Types of awnings and canopies permitted
 - Design of awnings
 - Forms & shapes
 - Materials
 - Illumination



When the bottom edges of awnings align, as these do, they contribute to a sense of visual continuity in the block. This is encouraged.

Policy: An awning should be similar in form to those seen traditionally.



A simple shed shape awning, with matte finish fabric, is encouraged for awning designs.

10.1 Simple shed shapes are appropriate for rectangular openings.

- Odd shapes, bullnose awnings and bubble awnings are inappropriate.
- A greater variety in awning forms may be considered in the Camino del Rio area.

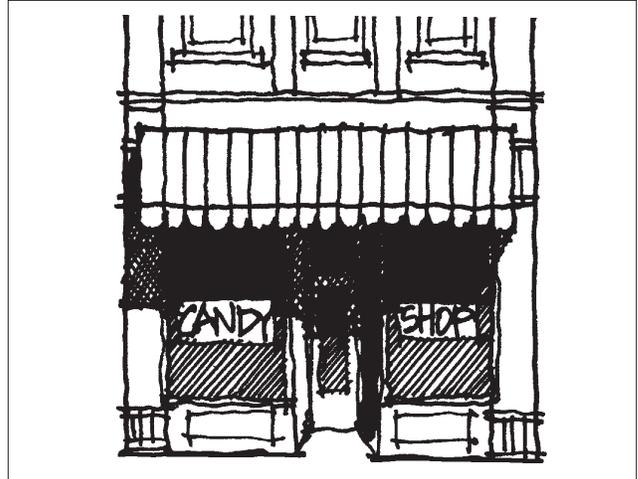
Policy: Awning materials should be similar to those used traditionally.

10.2 An awning compatible in material and construction to the style of the building is encouraged.

- Operable awnings are encouraged on historic buildings.
- Use colors that are compatible with the overall color scheme of the facade. Solid colors or simple, muted-stripe patterns are appropriate.
- Awnings made of vinyl or other shiny materials are inappropriate.

10.3 Internal illumination in an awning is inappropriate.

- Lights may be concealed in the underside of a canopy, however.



Operable awnings are encouraged on historic buildings.

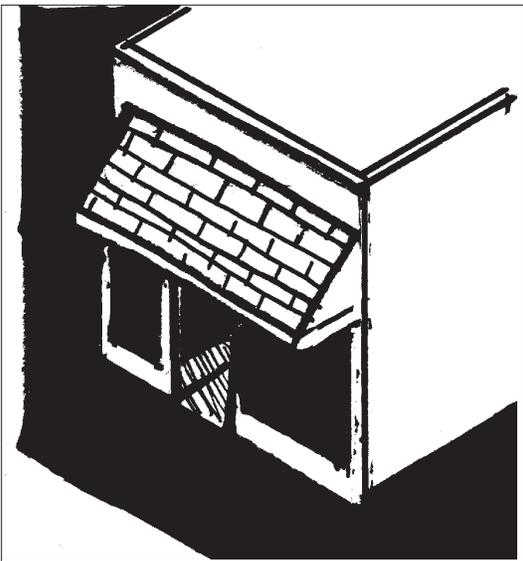


Canvas or other fabric awnings are encouraged in all districts.

Policy: A canopy should be compatible with the character of the building on which it is mounted.



Wood canopies are not appropriate in the Main Avenue District.



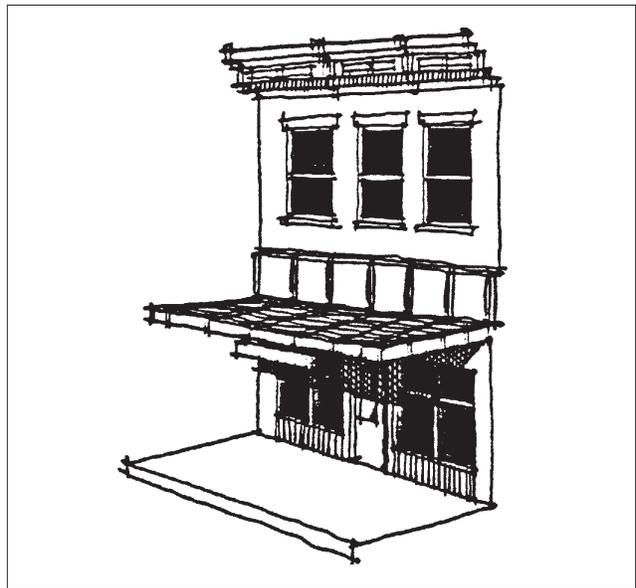
Shingled sheds are not appropriate on Main or Second Avenue.

10.4 A canopy is not appropriate on historic buildings, unless documentation shows that one existed on that structure during its period of significance or the canopy has gained historic significance as an individual element.

- Although wood canopies may appear in early photographs they were generally found on architectural styles that pre-date the historic buildings that survive.

10.5 Horizontal canopies may be considered on Camino del Rio.

- They are generally inappropriate in the Main Avenue and Second Avenue Character Areas.



Metal canopies are not appropriate on any historic buildings downtown or anywhere in the Main Avenue District.



On a plain facade with modest details, an awning provides an opportunity for an accent color.



A contemporary interpretation of traditional awnings is an appropriate alternative.

Maintenance of awnings and canopies.

- Replace worn fabric awnings or damaged metal canopies.
- Re-secure loose hardware.
- Wash fabric awnings regularly. This will help extend the life of the fabric. Spray with water from the underside first, to lift dirt particles, then rinse them off.
- Paint metal canopies regularly, to reduce the potential for rust. This will extend the life of the canopy.



An awning may be used to identify the entrance to a building.



The valance, or vertical panel of an awning, is an appropriate location for a sign. (See also Chapter 9 Design Guidelines for Signs.)

Policy: An awning should be considered a part of a facade composition and pattern of the context of the block.

10.6 Position an awning to align with others nearby, when feasible.

10.7 On a historic building, mount an awning or canopy to accentuate character-defining features.

- It should be mounted to highlight moldings that may be found above the storefront and should not hide character-defining features.
- Its mounting should not damage significant features or historic details.

10.8 An awning should fit the opening of the building.

- Position it such that distinctive architectural features remain visible.



Mount awnings so that they emphasize existing window dimensions. This awning fits within the width of the existing opening.



Align an awning with others in the area.



These awnings are divided, to fit within the dimensions of the columns on the first floor. This is appropriate.



Coordinate awnings on upper and lower floors. Awnings can enhance the visual interest of a building and help tie upper and lower floors together.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC ART

Installations of art works in public areas provide a means of personalizing downtown Durango, by creating unique “place makers.” Freestanding sculpture, wall murals and decorative sidewalk mosaics are examples of familiar media. Other more unusual forms may include wind, water and earth forms, even plant materials. A series of such art installations should accent the town fabric while also challenging a new awareness on behalf of the viewer.

This section provides guidelines for the placement of public art in the Central Business District. They do not address the selection of specific art installations. It is anticipated that actual selection of artworks will be conducted by a commission to be established by the city to address public art. The guidelines in this section will be used in determining the appropriateness of art sites within the downtown setting.

The Design Review Board will work in conjunction with the City Public Art Commission on appropriate locations for public art installations. It is the intent that the selection of public art commissions will be the responsibility of the Public Art Commission and not the Design Review Board.

Relationship of Public Art to Downtown

The nature of public art is to provide accent in the urban fabric, to help to distinguish individual spaces as unique and to enrich the cultural experiences of the community. In this regard, it may address a wide range of topics and employ a variety of media. On the other hand, the city seeks to maintain a sense of visual continuity throughout the downtown and especially to respect the historic context. For this reason, when public art is located downtown, it should be installed with these broader urban design and preservation objectives in mind.



Installations of art works in public areas provide a means of personalizing downtown Durango, by creating unique “place makers.”



The use of public art is encouraged. Consider locations such as gateways, bridge crossings, small plazas and points where views terminate at a public open space.

Categories of Public Art

Four categories of public art may be considered in the Central Business District:

Art Parks

These are sites where artists are commissioned to develop an entire site as an art installation. They should be considered a part of the parks system. An art park could expand on a theme, such as an interpretation of the history of downtown. In some cases, an artist will collaborate with landscape architects or other design professionals to develop the art park. Potential locations are at existing parks and other open spaces where high levels of pedestrian activity occur.

Art Sites

These are places for art that are integrated into the city's streetscape plan. They are strategically located to serve as accents in the sidewalk beautification design, such as at gateways into the downtown or as focal points in public parks and at civic buildings. In general, an art site is conceived to be an object integrated into the urban environment.

Streetscape Art

These installations are designed as integral components of the streetscape plan and therefore have more constraints. In these cases, the artist would "customize" or reinterpret conventional features of a streetscape beautification design. For example, a new waste receptacle design may be commissioned that would be unique to the area.

Murals

Murals have a tradition in older painted wall signs that sometimes appeared downtown. Today, they may convey a wider range of themes. However, they should be used today with caution, because they have the potential to substantially alter the character of the street. This is a special concern where there are concentrations of historic structures.

General Guidelines for Public Art

11.1 The use of public art is encouraged.

- Consider locations such as gateways, bridge crossings, small plazas and points where views terminate at a public open space.
- Commercial signs should not impede access to or obscure public art.

11.2 Public art should be compatible with the historic context of downtown.

- Art installation should not impede one's ability to interpret the historic character of the area, especially along Main Avenue.
- Murals and other public art installations are inappropriate on facades that face Main Avenue. They may be considered on side and rear walls where they do not impact historic building materials or details.

11.3 Locate public art such that the ability to perceive the character of historic buildings nearby is maintained.

- Placing a large sculpture in front of a significant historic building front, for example, is inappropriate.

Murals

A mural should be an asset to the downtown. Non-commercial murals (i.e., those that do not advertise or suggest advertising) can benefit a plain wall if the work complements the overall design of the entire building and character of the area. A mural design should comply with all of the following guidelines:

11.4 Mural content should be appropriate to Durango and its environs.

- The mural content may not depict commercial product brand names that are currently available for sale.
- A mural may depict products that are no longer available commercially and that reflect the authentic heritage of the community.



This mural depicts a part of the cultural heritage of the community, which is appropriate. It faces south, however, which will require careful maintenance.



The size, shape, style and general color scheme of a mural should be designed to be compatible with the surrounding streetscape.



The mural on the side of this building depicts vegetation that complements the real trees on the site, which is appropriate.

11.5 The size, shape, style and general color scheme of a mural should be designed to be compatible with the surrounding streetscape.

- Any other murals in the immediate vicinity should be considered.

11.6 A mural should be incorporated as an element of the overall building design.

- The mural should be designed to complement the wall on which it is proposed.
- It should not obscure key features.

11.7 A plan for maintenance of a mural should be adopted as part of the design proposal.

- This may include a legal and financial guarantee for ongoing maintenance.
- Locating a mural on a south or west facing wall is discouraged, because of the intense sun that may accelerate deterioration.

11.8 A mural may not be located where it would damage or obscure historically significant building materials, details or features.

- Historic unpainted brick and stone should not be painted.

11.9 Commercial signs should not be placed over an existing, maintained mural.

- Signs adjacent to murals should respect the artwork and consider impacts of the signage upon the mural.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR COLORS

Traditionally, color schemes in downtown Durango were relatively muted. A single base color was applied to the primary wall plane. Then, one or two accent colors were used to highlight ornamental features, as well as trim around doors and windows. Since many structures were brick or stone, the natural color of the masonry became the background color. Sometimes a contrasting brick or stone was used for window sills and moldings. As a result, the contrast between the base color and trim was relatively subtle. These traditions of using limited numbers of colors, and muted ones, should be continued.

Historically accurate paint schemes incorporated darker, richer colors. Brick and masonry colors are common in the downtown. Natural features such as the vegetation along the Animas River and the river itself will influence areas along Camino del Rio.

These guidelines do not specify *which* colors should be selected, but rather *how* they should be used. In addition to the following guidelines, the Planning and Community Development Department has a helpful handout about using color.

12.1 Use a single color scheme to coordinate an entire building front.

- Consider the building as a whole, even if it has multiple storefronts.
- Avoid colors that visually split the upper floors from the lower floor.
- Using the same color on the same architectural elements (i.e., window frames) can reinforce the patterns which tie together the storefront.
- The accent color should not contrast so strongly as to not read as part of the composition.

12.2 Use muted tones in a color scheme.

- Avoid bright high-intensity colors.

12.3 Building elements should be finished in a manner similar to that seen traditionally. The following are recommended treatments:

- Brick and stone - unpainted, natural color
- Stucco - muted earth tones
- Window frames and sash - wood, painted; metal, anodized or baked color
- Doors - wood, painted or stained; metal, anodized or baked color
- Wood siding - painted

12.4 Using the original color scheme on an historic property is encouraged.

- Collect samples of early colors from existing features where feasible.
- See the Planning and Community Development Department for information on collecting historic color samples.

12.5 Limit the number of paint colors on a building.

- Where there is more than one module to a building, one set of colors should be used for the different storefronts.
- However, if an owner would like to distinguish the different building modules, they may alter the colors that are used for the trim. This way each module is distinguished but there is a general relative sense of continuity for the row.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION IN THE MAIN AVENUE CHARACTER AREA

This chapter presents design guidelines for the construction of new buildings within the boundaries of the Main Avenue Character Area. The design guidelines are organized into a series of relevant design topics. Within each category, individual policies and design guidelines are presented, which the city will use in determining the appropriateness of the work proposed.

In This Chapter:

- Building setbacks
- Mass and scale
- Building form
- Building materials
- Architectural character

Summary of Key Characteristics

This area is the core of the downtown and much of it is a National Register Historic District. Key design characteristics of this area are:

- Building fronts align with adjacent historic structures at the sidewalk edge.
- One- to three-story, traditional commercial buildings (some buildings reach greater heights, however).
- Masonry construction dominates
- Transparent ground floor with smaller windows “punched” into predominantly solid upper floors
- Flat-roof buildings
- Sidewalk uses and activities

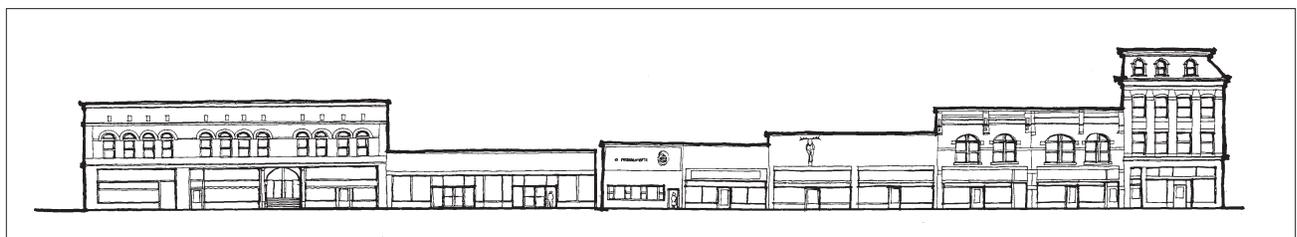
Specific characteristics that help tie the street together visually are:

1. **A variety of building materials exist:** Brick, stone, terra cotta, stucco and glass are major materials used for building fronts. Wood and metal are found as trim materials.

2. Buildings with **first floor storefronts that are predominantly glass** are the most typical type of structure.
3. **Buildings vary in height:** Currently building height is limited between one and four stories.
4. Virtually all of the storefronts are built right up to the inside edge of the sidewalk, creating a **uniform wall of storefronts**.
5. **Taller buildings are located on corner lots.** This is probably because these were considered the more valuable, and more substantial buildings went up on these sites.

Design Goals

The Main Avenue Area should continue to develop in a coordinated manner so that an overall sense of visual continuity is achieved. The dominant character of this area should be that of a retail-oriented, commercial environment, with an active street edge that is pedestrian friendly.



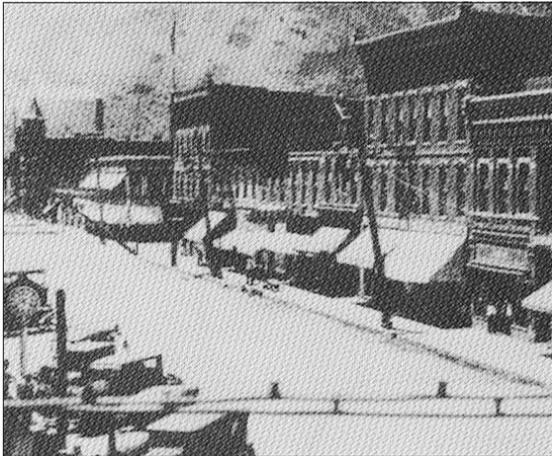
The design goals for Main Avenue are:

- To preserve and rehabilitate existing historic commercial buildings
- To continue the use of traditional building materials found in the area
- To maintain the traditional mass, size and form of buildings seen along the street
- To reinforce the retail-oriented function of the street and enhance its pedestrian character
- To promote friendly, walkable streets
- To provide site amenities to enhance the pedestrian experience and complement the historic character of the area

Building Setbacks

Building fronts align immediately at the inside edge of the sidewalk. This contributes to a sense of visual continuity.

A typical building in the area also has its primary entrance oriented to the street. This helps establish a “pedestrian-friendly” quality. Entryways are evenly spaced along a block, creating a rhythm that also contributes to the sense of visual continuity. These entrances are also typically recessed from the sidewalk edge.



Historically, buildings aligned at the sidewalk. (Photo: Ft. Lewis College)

Mass and Scale

Patterns are created along the street by the repetition of similarly-sized building elements. For example, uniform, evenly spaced facade widths create a rhythm that contributes to the visual continuity of the area.

Building Form

One of the most prominent unifying elements of the Main Avenue Character Area is the similarity in building forms. Commercial buildings are simple rectangular solids. This characteristic is important and should be continued. Also, commercial roof forms appear flat, although there is typically a slight pitch to it for water to drain. This characteristic is important and should be preserved.

Building Materials

Building materials of new structures should contribute to the visual continuity of the area. They should appear similar to those seen traditionally to establish a sense of visual continuity. Brick and stone are the dominant materials and their use in new construction is preferred.



Buildings that are similar in scale and overall character to those seen historically are strongly encouraged.

Architectural Character

The street level floors of traditional commercial buildings are clearly distinguishable from the upper levels. First floors are predominantly fixed plate glass with a small percentage of opaque materials. Upper floors are the reverse: opaque materials dominate, and windows appear as smaller openings puncturing the solid walls. The floor-to-floor height on the street level is also generally taller than the upper floors. This feature should also be expressed in new construction.

While it is important that buildings be compatible with the surrounding traditional commercial context, it is not necessary that they imitate older building styles. Designs that respect historical styles without literally copying them are preferred.

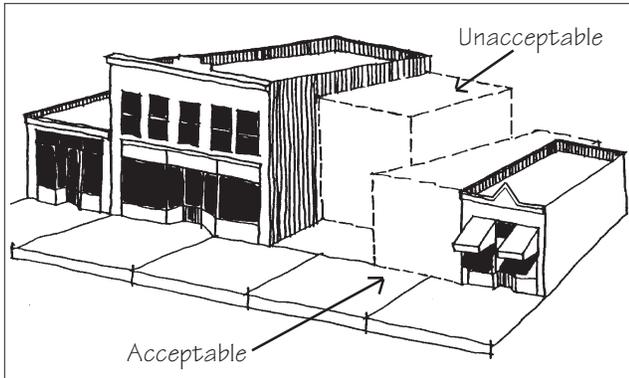
13.1 New interpretations of traditional building styles are encouraged.

- A new design that draws upon the fundamental similarities among older buildings in the area without copying them is preferred. This will allow the building to be seen as a product of its own time and yet be compatible with its historic neighbors.
- Buildings that are similar in scale and overall character to those seen historically are strongly encouraged.
- In essence, infill should be a balance of new and old in design.
- This applies to architectural details as well as the overall design of a building.



A contemporary interpretation of a traditional building entry, which is similar in scale and overall character to those seen historically, is encouraged.

Policy: **Maintain the line of building fronts in the block.**



Align the building front at the sidewalk edge.



Before: New buildings should be compatible with the commercial buildings seen traditionally. Creative new design is especially encouraged that is compatible with the design goals of the district. Here, a parking lot awaits compatible infill. (See below.)



After: Simplified interpretations of traditional building elements, including a transparent first floor with display windows and an ornamental cornice, help this new building fit into its context.

Structures in the Main Avenue Character Area should contribute to a strong “building wall” along the street. A new building should align at the front lot line and be built out to the full width of the parcel (i.e., to the side lot lines). Although small gaps can occur between some structures, these are exceptions.

13.2 Maintain the alignment of buildings at the sidewalk edge.

- Locate the front building wall at the sidewalk line when feasible.
- Where a building must be set back from the sidewalk, use landscape elements to define the sidewalk edge.

13.3 Orient the primary entrance of a building toward the street.

- A building shall have a clearly-defined primary entrance. For most commercial buildings, this should be a recessed entry-way.
- Providing secondary public entrances to commercial spaces is also encouraged on a larger building.



Maintain the alignment of buildings at the sidewalk edge.

Policy: A building should appear similar in scale to traditional commercial buildings.

Building heights vary in the Main Avenue Character Area and yet there is a strong sense of similarity in scale. This is in part because most buildings are one to two stories in height, though some significant structures are taller.

13.4 Maintain the traditional range of building heights seen in the historic core.

- Traditional floor heights should be expressed with horizontal moldings, alignment of windows and other architectural details.
- Alignment of horizontal elements, such as window sills, moldings and cornices should also be maintained.
- Maintain the established building scale of one to three stories in height, though some significant structures are taller.
- Taller structures (above three stories) may be considered at the end of the block, if the upper floors are set back from the building front.

13.5 Buildings shall appear similar in width to those seen historically in the block.

- Traditionally, buildings were built in 20- to 30-foot increments. Buildings should reflect this pattern.

13.6 Consider dividing a larger building into “modules” that are similar in scale to buildings seen traditionally.

- If a larger building is divided into “modules,” they should be expressed three-dimensionally throughout the entire building facade.

13.7 Floor-to-floor heights shall appear to be similar to those seen traditionally.

- In particular, the windows in a building should appear similar in height to those seen traditionally.



Maintain the established building scale of one to four stories in height, though some significant structures may be taller with appropriate approvals.



This single infill building is divided into four smaller building modules that reflect traditional building widths. Upper floors step back from the front, thus maintaining the traditional two-story scale of the street.

Policy: The form of a building should be similar to those seen traditionally.



Rectangular forms shall be dominant on commercial facades.

One of the most prominent unifying elements of Main Avenue is the similarity in building forms. Commercial buildings are simple rectangular solids, deeper than they are wide. This characteristic is important and should be continued.

13.8 Rectangular forms shall be dominant on commercial facades.

- Rectangular forms should be vertically oriented.

13.9 Use flat rooflines as the dominant roof form.

- Parapets on side facades should step down towards the rear of the building.
- Gable roof forms may also be considered if they are obscured by a “false front” storefront similar to those seen historically.

Policy: Building materials should be visually compatible with the predominate materials of this area.



Materials shall appear to be similar to those used traditionally.

Traditionally, a limited palette of building materials was used in the area—primarily wood, brick and stone. This same selection of materials should continue to be predominant. New materials also may be appropriate when they relate to the scale, durability, color and texture of these predominate materials.

13.10 Materials shall appear to be similar to those used traditionally.

- Wood, brick and stone were the traditional materials and are preferred.

13.11 A simple material finish is encouraged for a large expanse of wall plane.

- A matte, or non-reflective, finish is preferred.
- Polished stone should be avoided as a primary material and mirrored glass is inappropriate.

Policy: A new building should be visually compatible with traditional commercial structures.

13.12 Maintain the distinction between the street level and the upper floor of commercial buildings.

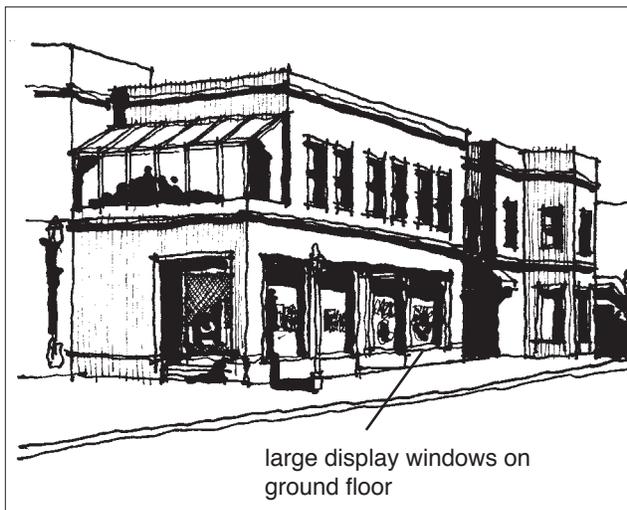
- The first floor of the primary facade should be predominantly transparent glass.
- Upper floors should be perceived as being more opaque than the lower floor.
- Highly reflective or darkly tinted glass is inappropriate.
- Express the traditional distinction in floor heights between street level and upper levels through detailing, materials and fenestration. The presence of a belt course is an important feature in this relationship.



Contemporary interpretations of traditional building elements are encouraged. In this case, shed form awnings are stretched across rigid frames. Transom windows are expressed with a metal grill design.

13.13 Upper-story windows with vertical emphasis are encouraged.

- A typical, upper-story window is twice as tall as it is wide. These proportions are within a limited range; therefore, upper-story windows in new construction should relate to the window proportions seen historically.
- Windows should align with others in a block. Windows, lintels and their trim elements should align with those on adjacent historic buildings.



Maintain the distinction between upper and lower floors.



A new commercial storefront building should incorporate display windows, a transom window, a kickplate and recessed entry.



Maintain the distinction between the street level and the upper floor.

13.14 Windows should be trimmed with wood, painted metal or anodized aluminum.

- This trim should have a dimension similar to that used historically.

13.15 Window dimensions that are similar to those used traditionally are encouraged.

- Many windows are “one-over-one,” in that a single pane of glass is in both the upper and lower sashes. Others are “two-over-one,” with two panes (or lights) in the upper sash and one is in the lower sash. These arrangements are preferred.

13.16 The ratio of solid-to-void shall be similar to that seen traditionally on commercial storefront buildings in the area.

- First floors should be more transparent than upper floors.
- Upper floors should appear more solid than first floors.
- Avoid a blank wall appearance that does not provide interest to pedestrians.

13.17 Building entrances should appear similar to those used historically.

- Clearly define the primary entrance with an awning, canopy or other architectural feature.
- A contemporary interpretation of a traditional building entry, which is similar in scale and overall character to those seen historically, is encouraged.
- Building entrances should be recessed.
- Clearly define primary entrances.
- Secondary public entrances are also encouraged on a larger building or along an alley if there is parking in the rear of the site.

13.18 Doors should be trimmed with wood, painted metal or anodized aluminum.

- This trim should have a dimension similar to that used historically.

Policy: The edge of a property that abuts Narrow Gauge Avenue should be designed to enhance the appeal to pedestrians and railroad passengers.

13.19 Provide public secondary entrances that open onto Narrow Gauge Avenue where feasible.

- Landscaping is encouraged to help identify rear entrances.

13.20 Provide a visually attractive facade that is clearly secondary to the Main Avenue facade.

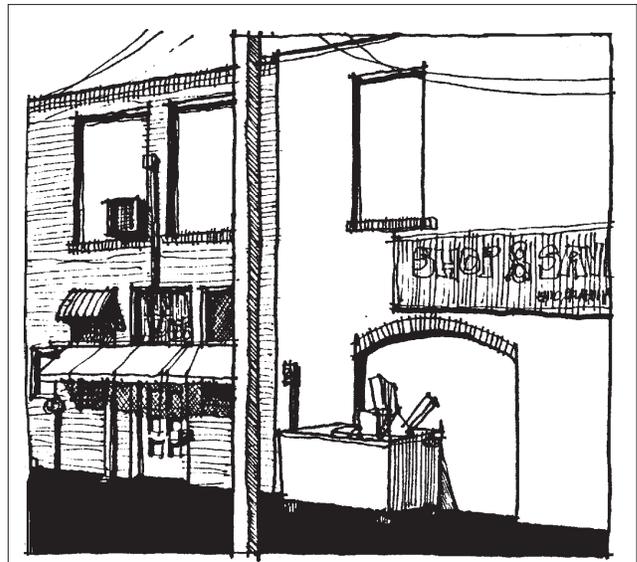
- Rear facades should not imitate the front entry. Though it may have the same architectural features they should be less ornate in design.

13.21 Provide screening for any mechanical and service areas that face Narrow Gauge Avenue.

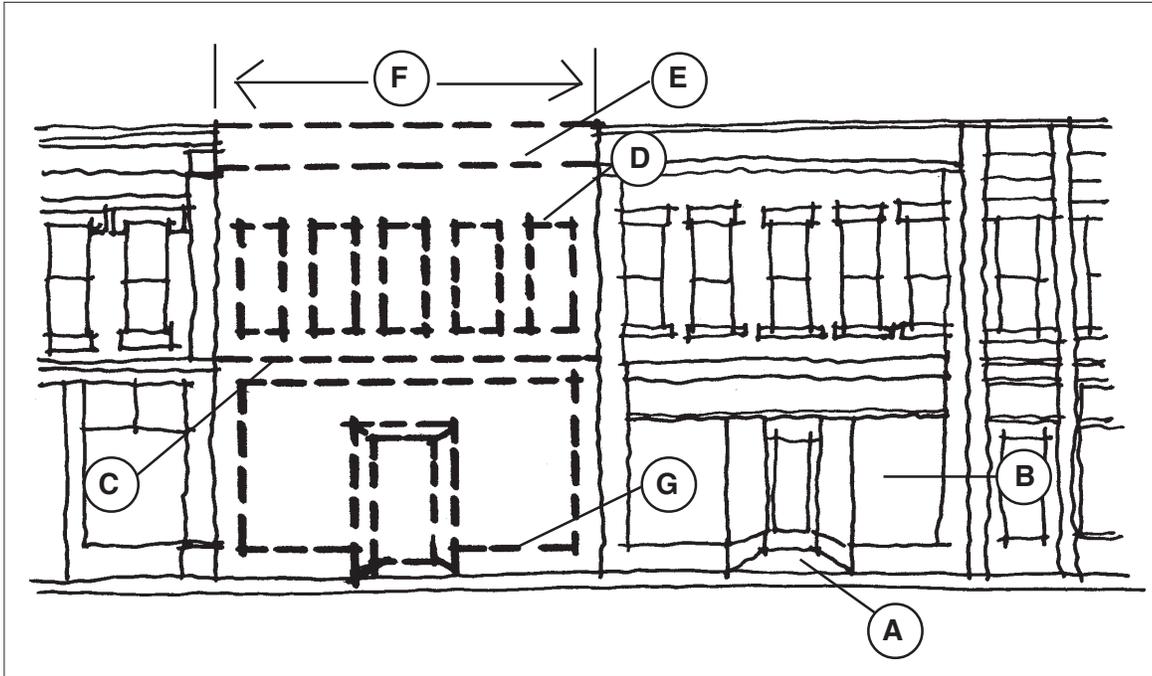
- Planters are recommended to separate service areas from customer entrances.



.....
• These guidelines are written for the properties that abut Narrow Gauge Avenue, but can apply to all alleyways in the Downtown Overlay District.
.....



Planters are recommended to separate service areas from customer entrances.



Typical facade components that should be interpreted in new designs.

- A. Provide a recessed entry.
- B. Use large surfaces of glass on the first floor.
- C. Match height of adjacent display windows.
- D. Use smaller, vertical windows on upper floors.
- E. Cap the building with a cornice.
- F. Express the typical building width found on the block.
- G. Match the height of kickplates.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION IN THE SECOND AVENUE CHARACTER AREA

This chapter presents design guidelines that apply to Second Avenue Character Area. They are organized into a series of relevant design topics. Within each category, individual policies and design guidelines are presented, which the city will use in determining the appropriateness of the work proposed.

Note that if a property in the Second Avenue Character Area has historic significance, then the guidelines for rehabilitation, in Section 3, also apply.

This area has continued its heritage of a mix of architectural styles and uses. Offices, commercial, governmental and residential uses are all found on the street, each with distinctive building types.

Some of the buildings are historic commercial structures, similar to those on Main Avenue, but in addition to these, there are office buildings dating from the 1950s and 1960s. There are also early twentieth-century commercial buildings, some of which are Art Deco style. Residential cottages survive, mixed in among the commercial buildings, often in short rows of three to four structures. These buildings are of course markedly different from others on the street; they are set back from the sidewalk, with front lawns. Trees and landscaping are typical characteristics. Since most of these are turn-of-the-century residences, gabled roofs and porches are special features.

Perhaps the strongest characteristic that distinguishes Second Avenue from the other districts is the amount of landscaping that exists. Rows of trees occur in portions of the blocks, and the sidewalk is separated from the street with a planting strip.

In This Chapter:

- Building setbacks
- Mass and scale
- Building materials
- Pedestrian-friendly character
- Transitional character



The School Administration Building terminates the view on Second Avenue.



Residential cottages survive mixed in among the commercial buildings, often in short rows of three to four structures.

Specific characteristics of the Second Avenue Character Area are:

1. A variety of building styles exist.
2. Pedestrian orientation remains in all building types; windows and entrances look out onto the street.
3. Landscaping is prevalent, especially at corners.
4. Views are very important: The view along Second Avenue to the north terminates with the School Administration Building. Views across the street to the west look out to the river and the bluffs beyond.



Second Avenue includes a mix of commercial, residential and institutional building types.

Second Avenue is expected to continue as a street of mixed uses, but the trend toward increasing office space, residential condominiums and general retail here is expected to continue.

Preserving the historic resources in this area should be encouraged and should be incorporated



One of the key design goals for the Second Avenue area is to preserve individual structures of historic significance. Seen above is a commercial structure that was used as an automobile dealership. Below is the same building in its current use as the Durango Arts Center.



The Durango Arts Center is located in a structure formerly used as an auto dealership. This adaptive reuse is an example of an appropriate adaptive reuse along Second Avenue.

in new development. A special concern is the eastern edge of the area, which abuts the Third Avenue Historic District. Improvements that occur along this edge should be planned to be considerate of this.

Design Goals

All improvements in the Second Avenue Area should help to accomplish these design goals:

- To preserve individual structures of historic significance
- To enhance the street as a pedestrian-friendly environment
- To minimize the visual impacts of automobiles
- To respect the edges of the abutting historic district

These should be considered when proposals are evaluated, using the guidelines that follow.

Building Setbacks

Building setbacks vary, reflecting the mix of building types and uses that are a part of the design traditions of Second Avenue. Commercial storefront types are typically located at the sidewalk edge, while residential buildings, including single family, multifamily structures, as well as hotels and institutional buildings, are set back with small front yards or plazas.

Mass and Scale

Most buildings are one or two stories, but three and four story examples also exist. All of these appear to be of a similar scale, in part because the ground floors have elements that contribute to a human scale. Building widths vary, but are usually divided into modules that reflect the size of an individual lot.

Building Materials

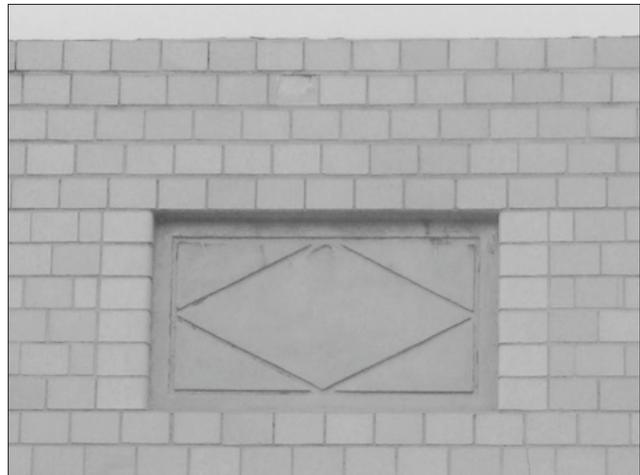
Brick construction is the dominant material. This occurs in a variety of earth tone colors, including red, ochre and tan. Wood lap siding is also seen, particularly in residential style structures. Other materials and colors may be considered if compatible with adjacent structures and the streetscape in general.

Views

View opportunities to the west exist from Second Avenue at the cross streets. These provide a sense of connection to the larger part of downtown.



Most buildings are one or two stories, but three and four story examples also exist. All of these appear to be of a similar scale, in part because the ground floors have elements that contribute to a human scale.



Brick construction is the dominant material. This occurs in a variety of earth tone colors, including red, ochre and tan.



View opportunities to the west exist from Second Avenue at the cross streets.

Policy: The overall mass of a new building should convey a sense of human scale.



Where a large building is needed, divide the building into modules that reflect the traditional size of buildings.



This infill building is not only broken into modules but also draws upon both traditional residential and commercial characteristics. (Boulder, CO)

Buildings along Second Avenue should appear similar in height and width to commercial structures seen traditionally in the area.

14.1 Consider dividing a larger building into “modules” that are similar in scale to buildings seen traditionally.

- If a larger building is divided into “modules,” they should be expressed three-dimensionally throughout the entire building.

14.2 Where a large building is needed, divide the building into modules that reflect the traditional size of buildings.

- A typical building module should not exceed 30 feet in width. The building module should be expressed with at least one of the following:
 - A setback in wall planes of a minimum of 5 feet
 - A change in primary facade material for the extent of the building module
 - A vertical architectural element or trim piece
- Variations in facade treatment should be continued through the structure, including its roofline and front and rear facades.

14.3 Building heights of larger projects should be varied.

- A larger development should step down in height towards the street or smaller, surrounding structures.

Policy: Building materials for new construction should be visually compatible with the predominate ones of Second Avenue.

New materials should relate to the scale, durability, color and texture of the predominate materials of downtown.

14.4 Masonry materials that convey a sense of scale are preferred. Wood lap siding is also appropriate.

- Brick and stone are preferred for new construction.
- New materials should appear similar in character to those used traditionally. For example, stucco, cast stone and concrete should be detailed to provide a human scale.
- New materials should have a demonstrated durability.

14.5 A simple material finish is encouraged for a large expanse of wall plane.

- A matte, or non-reflective, finish is preferred.
- Polished stone and mirrored glass, for example, should be avoided as primary materials.

14.6 Traditional building materials such as wood, brick and stone are encouraged.

- Horizontal lap siding is appropriate in most applications.
- Brick or stone, similar to that used traditionally, is also appropriate.
- Highly reflective materials are inappropriate.
- New materials that are similar in character to traditional ones may be considered. Alternative materials should have a proven durability in similar locations in this climate.



Masonry materials that convey a sense of scale are preferred. Wood lap siding is also appropriate.



New materials should appear similar in character to those used traditionally. For example, stucco, cast stone and concrete should be detailed to provide a human scale. (Boulder, CO)

Policy: A new building should contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment by providing an active street edge.



A new building should contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment by providing an active street edge. (Boulder, CO)



Develop the ground floor level of a project to encourage pedestrian activity.



A courtyard may be used to provide activity along the street edge.

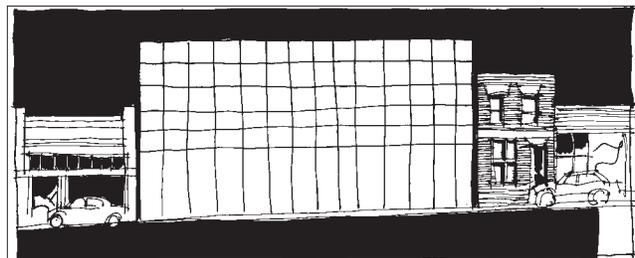
Second Avenue should continue to develop as a pedestrian-oriented environment. Streets and sidewalks should encourage walking, sitting and other outdoor activities. Buildings also should be visually interesting to invite exploration by pedestrians. Existing pedestrian routes should be enhanced. These are important concepts because pedestrians experience buildings at close proximities.

14.7 Develop the ground floor level of a project to encourage pedestrian activity.

- Provide at least one of the following along primary pedestrian ways:
 - A storefront
 - Display cases
 - Landscaping
 - A courtyard or plaza
- Include traditional elements such as display windows, kickplates and transoms on commercial storefronts.
- Avoid a blank wall or vacant lot appearance.

14.8 Orient the primary entrance of a building toward the street.

- A building should have a clearly-defined primary entrance.
- The building entrance should be recessed.
- A primary building entrance also should be at or near street level.



Avoid facade designs that fail to make a distinction between upper and lower floors. See also Guideline 14.7.

Policy: Traditional setbacks should be maintained.

In those portions of Second Avenue that retain residential structures, a “transitional” character—a blend between commercial and residential structures—should be maintained. Several blocks of Second Avenue were originally part of a single-family neighborhood. It is now, in essence, a place of transition between Main Avenue and the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Although commercial uses are expected, residential-type structures still establish the architectural tone for many of the blocks. Therefore, new developments should sensitively relate to these traditions while also building upon commercial characteristics seen elsewhere in the downtown. In other areas, commercial storefronts predominate and this pattern should be respected.

14.9 A building shall fit within the range of setbacks seen in the block.

- The setback of a new building should match the established range of adjacent buildings.
- Where the setbacks are uniform, the new building should be placed in general alignment with its neighbors.
- In those areas where setbacks vary slightly, but generally fall within an established range, the new building should be within 10 feet of the typical setback in the block.



Maintain the line created by the buildings at the sidewalk edge, where parking lots occur by providing a screen of landscaping.



A building should fit within the range of setbacks seen in the block. (Boulder, CO)



Buildings shall convey a sense of human scale. Provide a one-story entry element that is similar in size to those seen traditionally. (Boulder, CO)



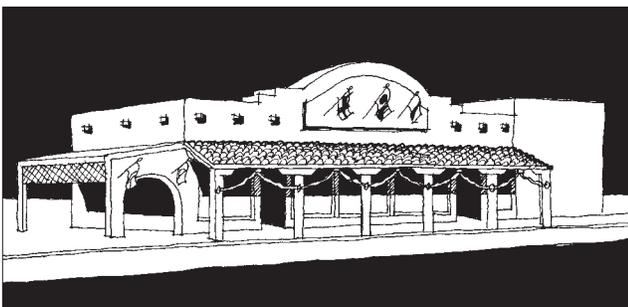
Maintain the sidewalk edge with buildings, landscaped buffers or courtyards. Avoid leaving open parking areas without landscaping.



Gable and hipped roofs are appropriate for primary roof forms.



New interpretations of traditional building styles are encouraged. (Boulder, CO)



Mimicry or imitations of historic styles detract from the value of the original historic buildings.

14.10 Flat, gable and hipped roofs are appropriate for primary roof forms.

- A blending of sloping roof forms and flat roofs may be appropriate for larger projects.

14.11 New interpretations of traditional building styles are encouraged.

- A new design that draws upon the fundamental similarities among commercial and residential buildings in the community without copying them is preferred.
- Replicas and imitations of historic architectural styles confuse the history of Durango. Designs clearly exemplary of their own time can be compatible with their historic neighbors and contribute to the ambience of the district. Mimicry or imitations of historic styles detract from the value of the original historic buildings. Minor historic allusions within the overall building design may be acceptable when they are designed as part of a structure clearly representative of its own time.

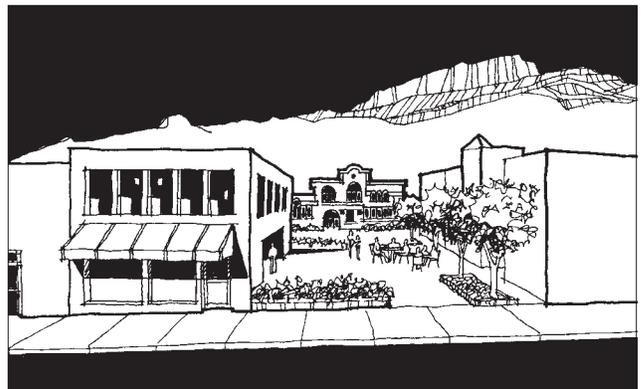


A new design that draws upon the fundamental similarities among commercial and residential buildings in the community without copying them is preferred. (Aspen, CO)

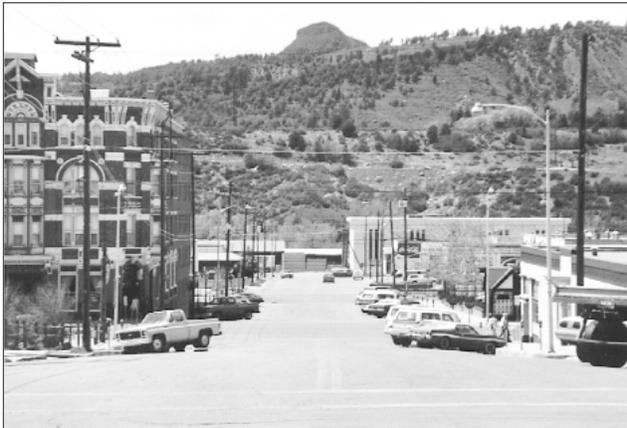
Policy: View opportunities exist throughout the Second Avenue District, both to the north and to the west. These should be retained wherever possible, because they are important assets to the community. When a new building does not extend from lot line to lot line (such as when a parking lot is included), developing views to the Main Avenue is encouraged.

14.12 In new construction, protect and enhance important views to landmarks and natural features.

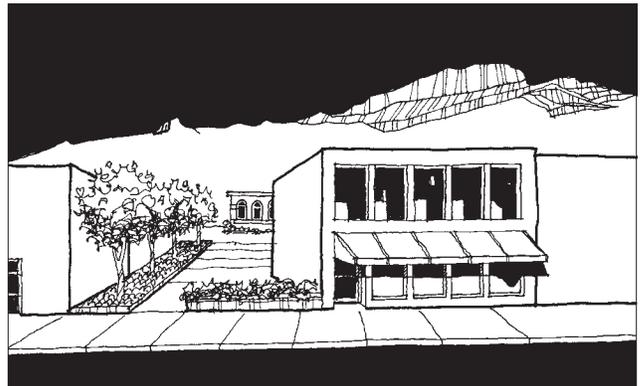
- Consider the impact of building heights on views and seek to “frame” views with architectural or landscape features.
- A special consideration should be the positioning of a new building on its site.
- When siting new buildings, place them so they will allow views to Main Avenue or river edge when feasible.
- Avoid blocking important views.



When siting new buildings, place them so they will allow views to Main Avenue or river edge when feasible.



Views to Animas River Banks, and the hills beyond, are assets of Second Avenue.



Avoid blocking important views.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION IN THE CAMINO DEL RIO CHARACTER AREA

This chapter presents design guidelines that apply to Camino del Rio. They are organized into a series of relevant design topics. Within each category, individual policies and design guidelines are presented, which the city will use in determining the appropriateness of the work proposed.

Camino del Rio developed more recently in Durango's history and exhibits the characteristics typical of a highway commercial strip: buildings are oriented to cars rather than pedestrians, and therefore the site relationships are intended to better facilitate automobile access. Parking lots are set in front of buildings, leaving large areas of paving exposed. Businesses are often found in small shoppettes, with several in a row.

Signs are large, in the interest of attracting motorists, but in general the scene is confused with visual clutter. Traffic signs are difficult to distinguish from private signs.

Camino del Rio is significant because for many it is the entrance to Durango. The image here "sets up" one's expectations for what will be found elsewhere in town. The street is the foreground for visitors approaching from the highway; it is foreground, that in effect, obscures the historic attractions of Main Avenue and the beauty of the river.

The assets of the scenic river edge are also obscured by development along Camino del Rio, although opportunities do remain for developing better visual connections between the river and the street.

Because Camino del Rio is so important as a gateway to downtown, the guidelines for this district focus on reducing visual clutter and enhancing connections with other areas. Even though automobile circulation is important here, improved pedestrian connections with Main Avenue are encouraged.

In This Chapter:

- Building setbacks
- Mass and scale
- Building materials
- Architectural character
- Pedestrian environment
- Transitional character
- Applying the guidelines



Camino del Rio developed more recently in Durango's history and exhibits the characteristics typical of a highway commercial strip: buildings are oriented to cars rather than pedestrians, and therefore the site relationships are intended to better facilitate automobile access.

Basic characteristics of the area are:

1. Views to Main Avenue and the mountains are important; these are often obscured by signs.
2. Many signs are oversized for their functions, and they are not coordinated within individual buildings.
3. Parking is exposed to the street.
4. A wide variety of building materials exists, including metal panels, concrete, wood, glass and stucco.

5. Although not well-developed presently, opportunities exist to provide “view corridors” across private property on the riverside so that the beauty of the river and streamback vegetation can be seen from the street.
6. A special potential asset is Narrow Gauge Avenue, the “alley” between Camino del Rio and Main Avenue. Although undeveloped, opportunities exist to enhance the visual quality of this area.
7. The Animas River is an important visual asset.

Design Goals

The Camino del Rio area should develop in a manner that is inviting to pedestrians while also accommodating automobiles. Development should include a mix of building types, including older structures and more contemporary ones. Each should reflect the design trends of its own time, while also contributing to a sense of visual continuity and strengthening the pedestrian experience. In addition, a combination of uses is encouraged, including residential, office and retail.

The design goals for Camino del Rio are:

- To define the sidewalk edge with elements that are amenities for pedestrians
- To establish a sense of scale in buildings and streetscape design that can be understood by pedestrians
- To minimize the visual impacts of automobiles
- To strengthen the pedestrian network of sidewalks, plazas and paths, including connections to the Animas River

Building Setbacks

A wide variety of building setbacks can be seen throughout Camino del Rio. This variety is due to the influence of the automobile and need to provide on-site parking. This parking typically has been provided in front of the building for consumer convenience. New development should re-establish a more pedestrian-friendly edge by encouraging building at the sidewalk line.

Mass and Scale

A variety of building sizes exist in this area. While contemporary design approaches are encouraged, developments should continue to exhibit a variety in sizes similar to the buildings seen traditionally.

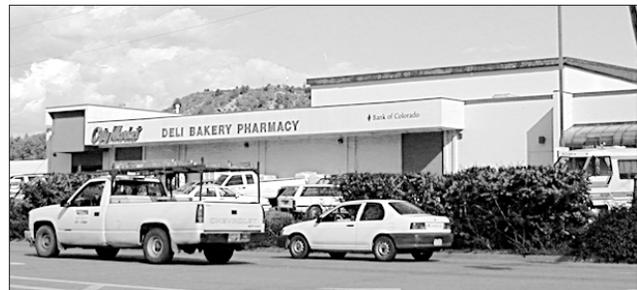
Building Materials

Building materials should contribute to the visual continuity of the area. They should appear similar to those seen traditionally in the downtown core to establish a sense of visual continuity.

Architectural Character

Commercial buildings should relate to one another through the consistent use of similar building materials, storefronts, recessed entries and the alignment of these different elements along a block.

One of the concerns in building design is that when national chain companies or their franchises construct buildings, that they do so in a way that reinforces the design traditions of Durango. Some typi-



Parking typically has been provided in front of the building for consumer convenience.

cal issues associated with national chain or commercial franchise designs include:

- Bright logo colors are used over large expanses of a building.
- Large blank walls on “big box” buildings are bland and out of scale, and discourage pedestrian activity.
- Buildings are surrounded by parking lots and cars. Primary entrances are typically oriented to these parking lots, rather than to the street.
- Metal panels and large areas of featureless stucco have sometimes been used and these are out of character and not of human scale.

Instead, these building types shall comply with the design guidelines that follow.

Pedestrian Environment

Camino del Rio should provide a controlled, organized automobile system which provides a safe pedestrian environment. Streets, sidewalks and landscaping should define the road edge and encourage walking, sitting and other pedestrian activities.

Automobile circulation patterns, both internal and external, should be clearly identified and should not interfere with pedestrian circulation systems.

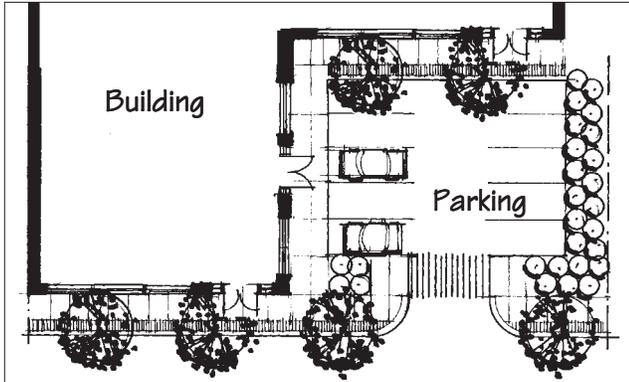


A typical issue associated with commercial franchises relates to primary entrances that are typically oriented to parking lots, rather than to the street.



Automobile circulation patterns, both internal and external, should be clearly identified and should not interfere with pedestrian circulation systems.

Policy: A new building should maintain the wall of buildings at the sidewalk edge.



A minimum of 50% of the street frontage of a property should have a building wall at the sidewalk edge, when feasible.



Define the edges of a lot with landscaping, such as low-scale urban street trees or shrubs. (Washington, DC)

Continuity of design is a goal of the city, both in terms of connecting individual projects and blocks. A new building should be located at the sidewalk edge and it should be designed to provide visual interest.

15.1 Locate a new building at the front property line, when feasible.

- Align the building front at the sidewalk edge.
- A minimum of 50% of the street frontage of a property should have a building wall at the sidewalk edge, when feasible.
- Where no sidewalk exists, one should be installed that aligns with others nearby.

15.2 Where a portion of a building must be set back, define the edge of the property with landscape elements.

- For example, define the edges of a lot with street trees or shrubs.

Policy: The overall mass of a new building should convey a sense of human scale.

Buildings along Camino del Rio should appear similar in height and width to commercial structures seen traditionally in the core. Note that the maximum height permitted in the River Corridor Overlay Zone is 35 feet.

15.3 Consider dividing a larger building into “modules” that are similar in scale to buildings seen traditionally.

- If a larger building is divided into “modules,” they should be expressed three-dimensionally throughout the entire building.

15.4 Where a large building is needed, divide the building into modules that reflect the traditional size of buildings.

- A typical building module should not exceed 30 feet in width. The building module should be expressed with at least one of the following:
 - A setback in wall planes of a minimum of 5 feet
 - A change in primary facade material for the extent of the building module
 - A vertical architectural element or trim piece
- Variations in facade treatment should be continued through the structure, including its roofline and front and rear facades.

15.5 Maintain views to the river.

- In certain circumstances, views to the river shall be taken into consideration when designing a new building.



A larger development should step down in height towards the street or smaller surrounding structures. (Boulder, CO)



Consider dividing a larger building into “modules” that are similar in scale to buildings seen traditionally. (Lexington, KY)

Policy: Building materials for new construction should be visually compatible with the predominate materials of this area.



Masonry materials that convey a sense of scale are preferred. (Boulder, CO)



A simple material finish is encouraged for a large expanse of wall plane. (Lexington, KY)

New materials should relate to the scale, durability, color and texture of the predominate materials of downtown.

15.6 Masonry materials that convey a sense of human scale are preferred.

- Brick and stone are preferred for new construction.
- New materials should appear similar in character to those used traditionally. For example, stucco, cast stone and concrete should be detailed to provide a human scale.
- New materials should have a demonstrated durability. For example, some facade materials used in new construction are more susceptible to weather and simply do not last as long as stone or brick.

15.7 A simple material finish is encouraged for a large expanse of wall plane.

- A matte, or non-reflective, finish is preferred.
- Polished stone and mirrored glass, for example, should be avoided as primary materials.

Policy: A new building should contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment by providing an active street edge.

The Camino del Rio area should continue to develop as a pedestrian-oriented environment. Streets and sidewalks should encourage walking, sitting and other outdoor activities. Buildings also should be visually interesting to invite exploration by pedestrians. Existing pedestrian routes should be enhanced. These are important concepts because buildings are experienced at close proximity by pedestrians.

15.8 Develop the ground floor level of a project to encourage pedestrian activity.

- Provide at least one of the following along primary pedestrian ways:
 - A storefront
 - Display cases
 - Landscaping
 - A courtyard or plaza
- Include traditional elements such as display windows, kickplates and transoms on commercial storefronts.
- Avoid a blank wall or vacant lot appearance. This applies to building walls along Narrow Gauge Avenue and the Animas River.

15.9 Orient the primary entrance of a building toward the street.

- A building should have a clearly-defined primary entrance.
- The building entrance should be recessed.
- A primary building entrance also should be at or near street level.



Consider using display cases on the ground floor where an active storefront is not a possibility. (Boulder, CO)

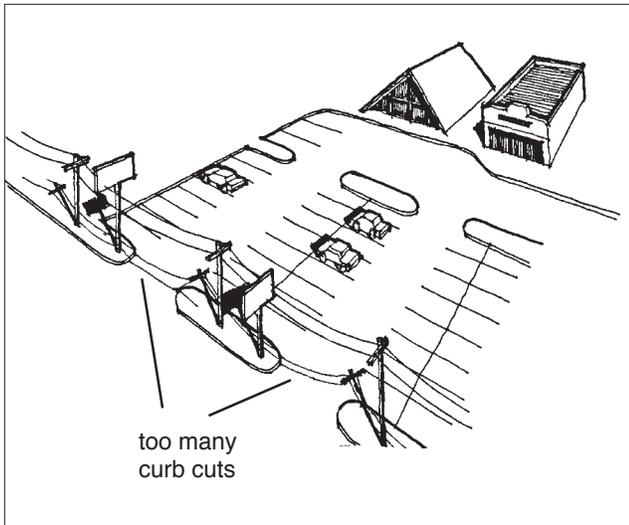


Develop the ground-floor level of a project to encourage pedestrian activity. Consider providing a courtyard or plaza. A plaza that serves as a walkway and outdoor dining area for this market is provided behind the low brick wall that defines the street edge and separates the pedestrian from the automobile. (Boulder, CO)



A new building—such as this gas station in downtown Boulder, CO—that draws upon the fundamental characteristics of building in Durango is encouraged.

Policy: Provide a safe pedestrian environment by minimizing the impact of the automobile.



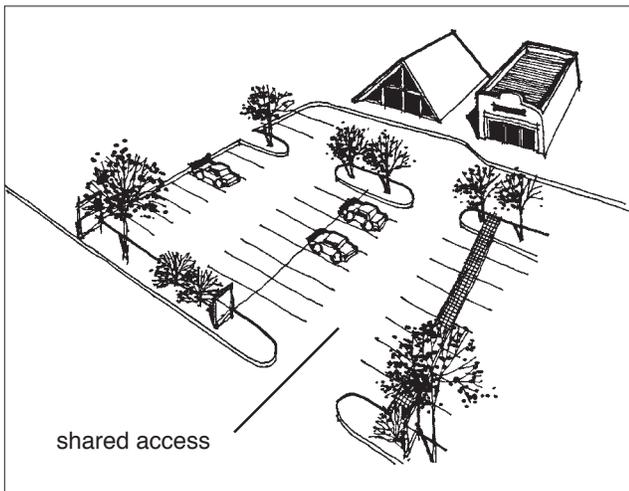
15.10 Clearly identify the road edge and site entrances for both automobiles and pedestrians.

- Use landscaping and lighting accents to identify entrances.

15.11 Minimize the number of automobile entry points along a street edge.

- Sharing ingress and egress points with neighboring projects is strongly encouraged.

Avoid multiple curb cuts. These complicate turning movements and disrupt the sidewalk.



Minimize curb cuts by combining driveways within adjacent properties.

15.12 Place parking areas to the rear of a site when feasible.

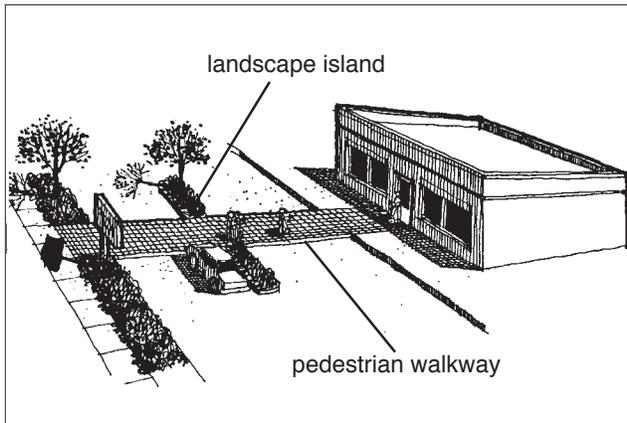
- See also the design guidelines for Parking found in Chapter 8, Site Design.

15.13 Provide pedestrian connections to trails and destinations.

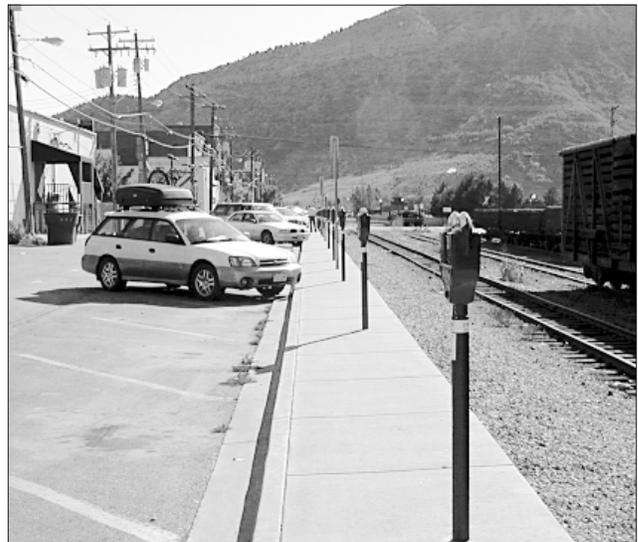
- Walkways from public parking areas to commercial complexes should be considered.
- See also the design guidelines for Parking found in Chapter 8, Site Design.



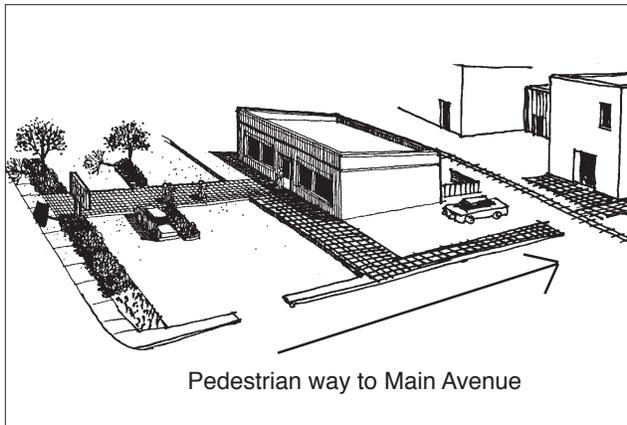
Provide pedestrian connections to trails and destinations.



Accent paving is encouraged to tie a parking lot to a building and to identify pedestrian ways.



Walkways from public parking areas to commercial complexes should be considered.



Pedestrian ways that connect businesses on Camino del Rio with those on Main are encouraged.

Policy: Portions of Camino del Rio that border the Main Street area reflect a “transitional” character.



Traditional building materials such as wood, brick and stone are encouraged in the Camino del Rio area.

15.14 Traditional building materials such as wood, brick and stone are encouraged.

- Horizontal lap siding is appropriate in most applications.
- Brick or stone, similar to that used traditionally, is also appropriate.
- Highly reflective materials are inappropriate.
- New materials that are similar in character to traditional ones may be considered. Alternative materials should have a proven durability in similar locations in this climate.

15.15 New interpretations of traditional building styles are encouraged

- A new design that draws upon the fundamental similarities among commercial and residential buildings in the community without copying them is preferred.

Policy: The edge of a property that abuts Narrow Gauge Avenue should be designed to enhance the appeal to pedestrians and railroad passengers.

15.16 Provide public secondary entrances that open onto Narrow Gauge Avenue where feasible.

- Landscaping is encouraged to help identify rear entrances.

15.17 Provide a visually attractive facade that is clearly secondary to the Camino del Rio facade.

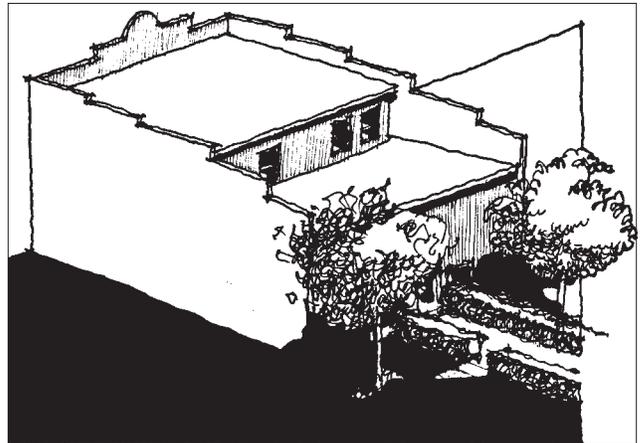
- Rear facades should not imitate the front entry. Though it may have the same architecture features, they should be less ornate in design.

15.18 Provide screening for any mechanical and service areas that face Narrow Gauge Avenue.

- Planters are recommended to separate service areas from customer entrances.



Provide screening for any mechanical and service areas that face Narrow Gauge Avenue.



Landscaping is encouraged to identify rear entrances.

Policy: The edge of a property that abuts the Animas River should be designed to enhance the appeal to pedestrians and River Trail users.



Canopies are encouraged to identify rear entrances.

15.19 Provide public secondary entrances that open onto the Animas River and River Trail where feasible.

- Landscaping is encouraged to help identify rear entrances.
- Canopies or awnings are also encouraged to distinguish rear entries.

15.20 Provide a visually attractive facade that is clearly secondary to the Camino del Rio facade.

- Rear facades should not imitate the front entry.

15.21 Provide screening for any mechanical and service areas that face the Animas River and River Trail.

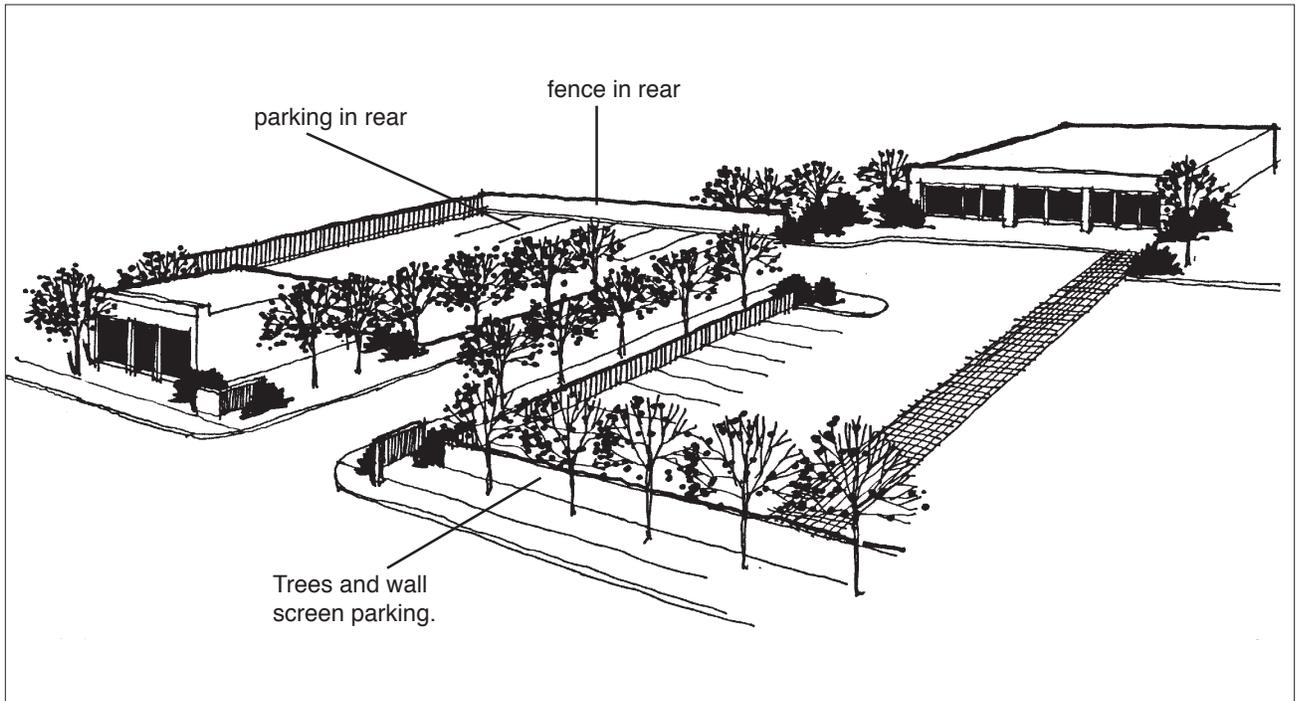
Property owners should also consult the River Corridor Overlay Zone (RCOZ) standards found in the LUDC Chapter 27, Section 5-1.

Policy: The visual impacts of parking should be minimized.

Because large surfaces are given over to auto service and parking, open spaces are major portions of the visual field. Therefore, enhancing these spaces is important. Camino del Rio is the “first impression” many people have of Durango. All site designs in this area should enhance the overall image.

15.22 Use landscape elements to screen edges of open sites.

- Break up large parking areas with landscaping and accent paving. A minimum of 10% of the area should be landscaped.



Use landscaping and fences to screen parking.

Policy: Views to mountains and the historic downtown should be maintained.

Developing views and access to the river can do much to enhance the image of Camino del Rio while highlighting an important community asset. This should be encouraged.

15.23 Develop views to the river wherever possible by careful siting of new buildings.

- A special riverfront ordinance exists to encourage such development.
- Landscaped areas along the river are also encouraged.

15.24 Enhance views to Main Avenue by landscaping open spaces that are part of the foreground.

Applying the Design Guidelines: How may the infill guidelines be applied in real situations?

The design guidelines for new commercial construction in the Camino del Rio area presented in this chapter can be combined to develop a comprehensive program of development for a property. The images on the following pages depict two infill examples from other communities and a potential infill development scenario for Durango. These examples all address situations where auto-oriented areas have re-developed to appeal more to pedestrians.

The first case study, in Danville, California, includes the redevelopment of two blocks along a major arterial, which parallels the historic Main Street. Design standards required that new buildings be constructed at the sidewalk edge.



This row of new, double-fronted buildings defines the sidewalk edge of a major arterial street in Danville, California. The building is also divided into modules that reflect the traditional building characteristics.



Seen from the interior parking lot, the "second" storefront facade is apparent.



The edge of the infill site in Danville reveals the parking area, which is located in the interior of the lot and accessed between the two rows of buildings.

The second case study, in Boulder, Colorado, involves an entire city block along a state highway. Major “big box” retailers are set at the rear of the site and supporting retail buildings frame the edges of this corner site. Parking is located in the middle of the block.



The Boulder site, circa 1990, was an auto dealer with cars parked along the primary street edge.



After redevelopment in 1999, the edge of the Boulder site is framed with a row of “double-fronted” retail. A “big box” establishment, Circuit City, is located in the interior of the block.



The Boulder site before redevelopment. Compare with the same view after development, at right.



After redevelopment, specialty retail defines the street edge. A Circuit City store can be seen in the center of this photograph. This “big box” retailer is located in the interior of the site. A walkway leads from the intersection to the interior of the site.



The Boulder site sidewalk edge, before redevelopment.



The Boulder site sidewalk, after redevelopment.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Alignment. The arrangement of objects along a straight line.

Appurtenance. An additional object added to a building; typically includes vents, exhausts hoods, air conditioning units, etc.

Arch A structure built to support the weight above an opening.

Ashlar A square, hewn stone used in building. It also refers to a thick dressed, square stone used for facing brick walls.

Balcony A platform projecting from the wall of an upper story, enclosed by a railing or balustrade, with an entrance from the building and supported by brackets, columns or cantilevered out.

Baluster A short, upright column or urn-shaped support of a railing.

Balustrade A row of balusters and the railing connecting them. Used as a stair rail and also above the cornice on the outside of a building.

Bargeboard A projecting board, often decorated, that acts as trim to cover the ends of the structure where a pitched roof overhangs a gable.

Bay Window A window or set of windows which project out from a wall, forming an alcove or small space in a room; ordinarily begins at ground level, but may be carried out on brackets or corbels.

Board and Batten Vertical plank siding with joints covered by narrow wood strips.

Bracket. A supporting member for a projecting element or shelf, sometimes in the shape of an inverted L and sometimes as a solid piece or a triangular truss.

Clapboards Narrow, horizontal, overlapping wooden boards, usually thicker along the bottom edge, that form the outer skin of the walls of many wood frame houses. The horizontal lines of the

overlaps generally are from four to six inches apart in older houses.

Clerestory. A row of upper windows on a wall, or above a storefront.

Column A slender upright structure, generally consisting of a cylindrical shaft, a base and a capital; pillar: It is usually a supporting or ornamental member in a building.

Dormer A window set upright in a sloping roof. The term is also used to refer to the roofed projection in which this window is set.

Double-Hung Window. A window with two sashes (the framework in which window panes are set), each moveable by a means of cords and weights.

Eave The underside of a sloping roof projecting beyond the wall of a building.

Elevation A mechanically accurate, “head-on” drawing of a face of a building or object, without any allowance for the effect of the laws of perspective. Any measurement on an elevation will be in a fixed proportion, or scale, to the corresponding measurement on the real building.

Facade. Front or principal face of a building; any side of a building that faces a street or other open space.

False Front A front wall which extends beyond the sidewalls of a building to create a more imposing facade.

Fascia. A flat board with a vertical face that forms the trim along the edge of a flat roof, or along the horizontal, or “eaves,” sides of a pitched roof.

Fenestration. The arrangement of windows and other exterior openings on a building.

Gable The portion, above eave level, of an end wall of a building with a pitched or gambrel roof. In

the case of a pitched roof this takes the form of a triangle. The term is also used sometimes to refer to the whole end wall.

Head. The top horizontal member over a door or window opening.

Lap Siding See clapboards.

Lintel A heavy horizontal beam of wood or stone over an opening of a door or window to support the weight above it.

Masonry. Construction materials such as stone, brick, concrete block or tile.

Module. The appearance of a single facade plane, despite being part of a larger building. One large building can incorporate several building modules.

Molding. A decorative band or strip of material with a constant profile or section designed to cast interesting shadows. It is generally used in cornices and as trim around window and door openings.

Muntin. A bar member supporting and separating panes of glass in a window or door.

Orientation. Generally, orientation refers to the manner in which a building relates to the street.

Panel. A sunken or raised portion of a door with a frame-like border.

Pediment. A triangular section framed by a horizontal molding on its base and two sloping moldings on each of its sides. Usually used as a crowning member for doors, windows and mantles.

Pier The part of a wall between windows or other openings. The term is also used sometimes to refer to a reinforcing part built out from the surface of a wall.

Pilaster A support or pier treated architecturally as a column, with a base, shaft and capital that is attached to a wall surface.

Quoin. (pronounced *koin*) Dressed stones or

bricks at the corners of buildings, laid so that their faces are alternately large and small. Originally used to add strength to a masonry wall, later used decoratively.

Sidewalk Furniture. Any item used to embellish the facade of a building or the streetscape (including statues, planter boxes, pots or vases, benches, trash receptacles, art or signs).

Siding. The narrow horizontal or vertical wood boards that form the outer face of the walls in a traditional wood frame house. Horizontal wood siding is also referred to as clapboards. The term “siding” is also more loosely used to describe any material that can be applied to the outside of a building as a finish.

Sill. The lowest horizontal member in a frame or opening for a window or door. Also, the lowest horizontal member in a framed wall or partition.

Stile. A vertical piece in a panel or frame, as of a door or window.

Stucco An exterior wall covering that consists of Portland cement mixed with lime, applied over a wood or metal lath. It is usually applied in three coats.

Transom Window. A window or series of panes above a door, or above a larger window.