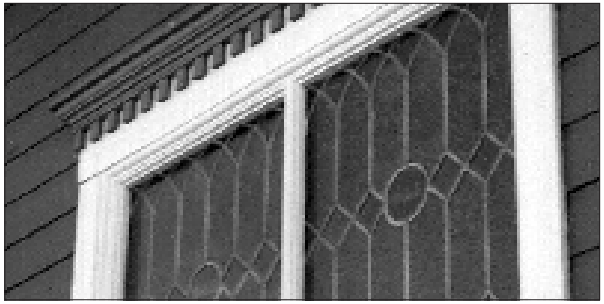

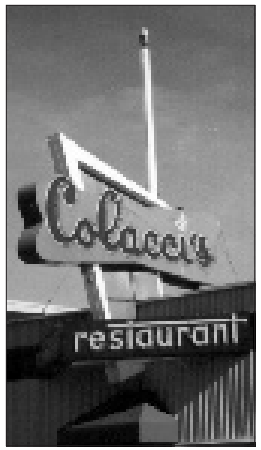

Design Handbook for Downtown Louisville

THE DESIGN HANDBOOK FOR DOWNTOWN LOUISVILLE, COLORADO

July 1998

Prepared by: Winter & Company
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HOW THE HANDBOOK WAS DEVELOPED

In recent years, residents and property owners in downtown Louisville have expressed concern with the quality and character of development. The lack of commercial design standards specific to the historic downtown core was identified as a concern. In response, the city initiated the Downtown Design Guidelines and Framework Plan Project to generate strategies to identify downtown's character and to promote sound urban design standards and guidelines. The primary concern of this project has been to identify downtown design elements and issues and to develop design standards and guidelines that may be applied to enhance the existing fabric and help ensure a continued sense of place. The result is this document, which provides guidance to property owners concerning design solutions.

The Design Handbook for Downtown Louisville, Colorado, is the product of years of planning and hard work by many people who have recognized the importance of the downtown to the life of the city. Community planning efforts have consistently recommended building preservation and improvement in the downtown and many community groups, recognizing this need, have worked to initiate this and other planning related documents. It represents a combination of interests in preserving heritage, strengthening the economic base, upgrading property values, and beautifying the physical setting of downtown.

This handbook is based on ideas developed by concerned citizens who have worked to promote design improvements downtown since public workshops began in the spring of 1997. This document incorporates a wide range of opinions about how design should be a public discussion within the community. The intent is to provide those who live and own property in the area with information to assist in making informed decisions about design. The goal is to find a balance between the needs and desires of individuals with the needs and desires of the surrounding community.

The design handbook was developed in conjunction with a Framework Plan and Preservation Master Plan. Although funded separately by the City and the Downtown Business Association of Louisville, these plans call for a concerted effort by property owners to renovate their old buildings and to invest in new construction which relates to the traditional buildings in order to maximize the benefits of a historic downtown.

The framework plan and design handbook were developed by Winter & Company under the direction of the City of Louisville. As a part of the process for developing the plan, the City Council assembled a Downtown Design Guidelines Steering Committee of citizens who represented downtown residents, property owners, merchants and community organizations who have an interest in downtown. The Committee worked throughout the process, participating in a series of work sessions and reviewing draft materials. Staff of the various city departments also contributed ideas.

For the purpose of these design standards these two "character areas" will be referenced by their current functions.

- **Core Area of downtown**, *will refer to the traditional business center for Louisville—those three blocks along Main and Front Streets that exhibit the traditional storefront and false-front commercial buildings.*
- **Transition Areas of downtown**, *will refer to the surrounding blocks of residences which currently have both residential and commercial uses.*

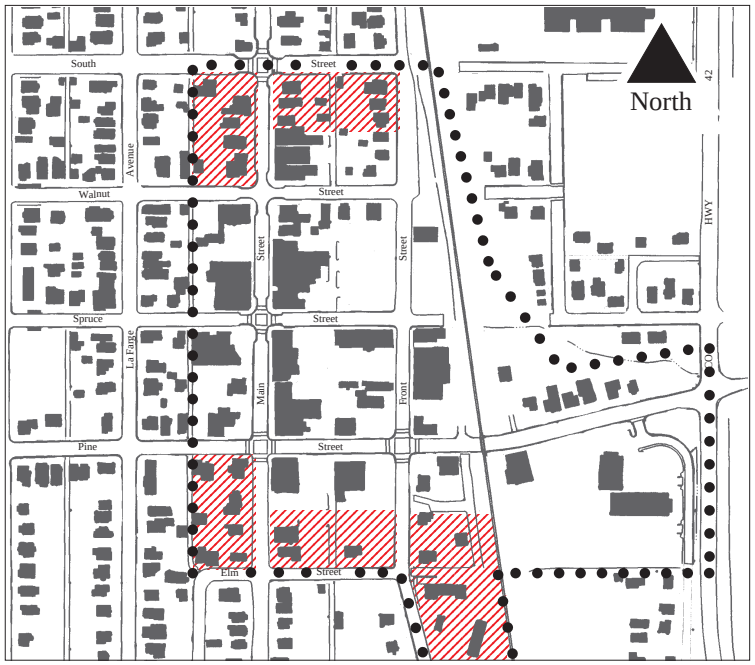
WHAT ARE DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES?

These design standards and guidelines convey community policies about design in downtown Louisville. As such, they provide a common basis for making decisions about work that may affect the appearance of individual properties or the overall character of the area. However, they do not dictate solutions. Instead, they define a range of appropriate responses to a variety of specific design issues. For example, the standards suggest that new buildings should have architectural details similar to those seen historically but do not dictate which details must be used or in what manner. The standards and guidelines also identify some design approaches that are inappropriate in this context. For example, one standard states that large areas of off-street parking should not be located along Main Street, because this would erode the wall of buildings at the sidewalk edge.

WHAT ARE CHARACTER AREAS?

One of the underlying development concepts for these design standards and guidelines is the current urban design framework for downtown Louisville. New construction, building additions or historic building alterations should relate to the traditional building character in the Commercial Core. This tradition, however, is both commercial and residential in nature. As the city has evolved, the need for more commercial spaces around the Central Business District were needed. With residential neighborhoods so close to the traditional downtown, local businesses could only expand to the suburbs or the surrounding residences.

Louisville is not unique in this respect—many communities are dealing with commercial uses in residential buildings. Obviously building forms and details are much different on simple vernacular homes than on downtown commercial storefronts. Therefore, these two differing traditional downtown contexts need to be accounted for when planning projects in the Commercial Core. At the very least, the three blocks of traditional commercial storefronts and false-front commercial



Within the "Commercial Core" of Louisville, exist two distinct character areas. The Core Area of downtown *(unshaded areas) contains the traditional commercial storefronts, whereas the* Transition Areas of downtown *(shaded areas) are more residential in nature.*

buildings along Main and Front Streets should remain the dominant types of building there. So too should the residential character seen in the outlying blocks to the north and south of the traditional Central Business District.

Where these two areas of distinct character meet a transition between them needs to develop. The larger commercial structures typically associated with downtown should step down in scale towards the adjacent smaller residences, as well as those across the alley.

The Transition Areas of downtown exhibit strong residential contexts despite the number of businesses located there.

HOW THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN HANDBOOK IS ORGANIZED

The design handbook is organized in seven sections:

1. The first section provides the foundation and understanding for the preparation of this document, as well as the history of the area and its development patterns.
2. The second section provides the reader with general design standards and guidelines for all projects in downtown.
3. The third section provides design standards and guidelines for projects targeted for the Core Area of downtown.
4. The fourth section presents design standards and guidelines for projects targeted for the Transition Areas of downtown.
5. The fifth section provides rehabilitation standards and guidelines for historic and traditional buildings located downtown.
6. The sixth section provides design standards and guidelines for signs.
7. Finally, the seventh section includes ideas for the day-to-day maintenance of both historic and new buildings alike.

THE FORMAT FOR A STANDARD OR GUIDELINE

Each design standard or guideline in this document typically has three components:

1. **Design Policy -** a broad statement explaining the city's basic approach for the treatment of the design feature being discussed is presented.
2. **Design Standard or Guideline Statement -** typically performance-oriented, describes a desired design treatment.
3. **Supplementary Information -** may include additional requirements, or may provide an expanded explanation. This information is listed as lower case letters.
4. **Illustrations -** may be provided to clarify the intent of the standard or guideline.

A typical design standard or guideline in this document contains three components:

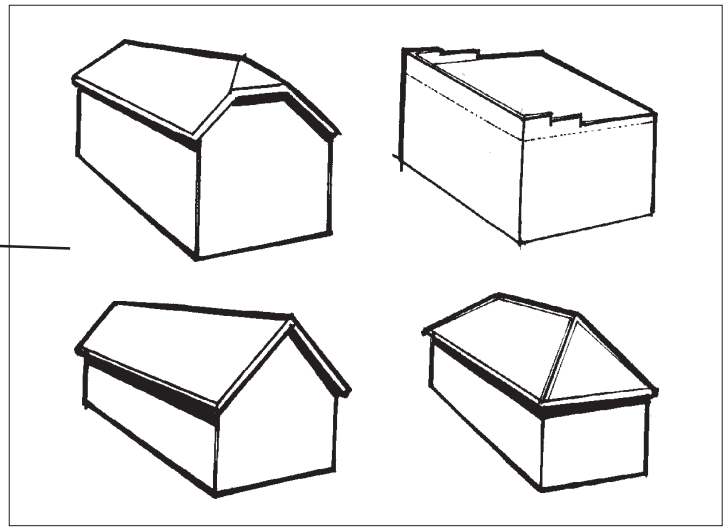
The design standard or guideline itself. This sets forth a basic principle for treatment of a selected design topic.

Supplementary requirements, listed under the guideline. These clarify the primary design guideline statement and may suggest specific methods for complying with it.

An illustration, in the form of a sketch or photograph that depicts a method of complying with the standard.

G27. Buildings that are predominantly rectangular in form are encouraged.

1) One simple form should read as the dominant element in a building design.



Buildings that are predominantly rectangular in form are encouraged.

A sample Design Standard

HOW MANY SECTIONS APPLY?

When considering a project in downtown Louisville not all of this document may be relevant. In order to determine which sections apply to a project, consult the following chart. Find the proposed "type of work" in the column and the left, and see which sections of this document should be used.

Type of work: / ***Sections to use:***	Historic Overview	General Standards for all Projects in Downtown	Design Standards for the Core Area of Downtown	Design Standards for the Transition Areas of Downtown	Design Standards for Historic Buildings	Design Standards for Signs	Maintenance Ideas
To make site improvements to a property in the core area of downtown:	X	X	X				
To make site improvements to a property in the transition areas of downtown:	X	X		X			
To construct a new building in the commercial core of downtown:	X	X	X			X	X
To construct a new building in the transition areas of downtown:	X	X		X		X	X
To construct an addition to a building:	X	X			X		
To renovate or alter a historic property:	X	X			X		X
To alter or construct a sign in the downtown:	X	X				X	

The boundaries for the Design Handbook for Downtown Louisville follow the Commercial Community and Commercial Business zoning districts.

INTRODUCTION

This guidebook presents design standards and guidelines for downtown Louisville, Colorado. The district boundaries include roughly ten city blocks, and are zoned as "Commercial Community" and "Commercial Business." The district is bounded on the west by an alley between Main Street and La Farge Street and on the east by the ditch. The northern boundary is South Street. The southern boundary is, for the most part, Elm Street, except where the boundary is extended down Front Street to include the historic grain elevator.

The standards and guidelines reflect the City's philosophy *to encourage the preservation and careful treatment of the historic resources within the district, while recognizing the need for the contemporary economic use of these structures.* The standards and guidelines neither dictate taste nor assure good design. Rather, they are intended to be a means for balancing the historic qualities of these structures with the demands of contemporary use.

Additionally, the standards and guidelines provide guidance to owners seeking approval for alterations. The standards and guidelines address alteration of historic structures with the understanding that a sound preservation approach is just as important for a simple vernacular cottage in the commercial district as for a larger turn-of-the-century commercial building.

POLICIES UNDERLYING THE DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

These standards and guidelines are based on fundamental urban design principles that promote pedestrian activity and seek a sense of visual continuity for the area. With respect to historic buildings, the design standards and guidelines also incorporate principles set out in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, a widely accepted set of basic preservation design standards. It is the intent of this document to be compatible with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards,* while expanding on those basic preservation principles.

OTHER REGULATIONS

Note that other regulations also may affect design in downtown Louisville, including the following:

- The Louisville Municipal Code (LMC)
- The Uniform Building Code (UBC)
- The Uniform Code for Building Conservation (UCBC)
- The Americans with Disabilities Act
- Federal income tax credits for certified rehabilitation of historic buildings

Copies of these and other regulatory documents may be obtained by contacting any member of the Louisville Historical Commission or the City of Louisville:
Planning or Building Divisions
749 Main Street
Louisville, CO 80027
(303) 666-6565

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

1. Keep it Simple.
An individual building should have a simple, **unified design** that serves as a frame for the windows that display goods or reveal services offered inside. If the design and its colors are too “wild,” they will detract from merchandising, and if they are too plain, they will not draw enough attention. You must establish a balance that is visually pleasing. The standards that follow will help you find that balance.

2. Relate to Traditional Buildings in the Area.
There is strength in numbers. As more and more buildings are invested in, they will improve the overall image of downtown as a pleasant place to do business. This is especially true when similar design concepts are applied throughout downtown, because a sense of visual continuity results. You can help contribute to the visual continuity of downtown while also developing a design that meets your own needs. These standards give general principles that allow room for individual solutions, but at the same time, if each owner applies them to their buildings, the overall image will appear coordinated.

3. Use the Entire Building Front as Your Image.
Coordinate upper and lower floors into a single design concept, even if the upper floors are not a part of the ground floor business. This can serve the “attention-getting” function and can be much more effective than a large sign.

4. Develop a Clear Presentation to the Street.
A single, clear design concept that avoids clutter and forcefully directs the customers eye where you want it is important. Your design scheme should easily lead the viewer’s attention to displays of goods, views of activities inside and ultimately to the business entrance. Use only a few colors throughout and keep signs to a minimum. Place them where they will lead the customer’s eye to products or activities.

5. If the building is an older "traditional" building, respect its earlier character.
Many of the structures downtown have historic value, even many of those that have experienced some later alterations. It is important to consider the significance of basic forms, materials and details when planning improvements. Preservation of Louisville’s heritage is important to its sense of community and its economic development.

Other buildings convey a part of downtown's tradition as well. An early 1950s storefront, for example also contributes to the scale and character of the area and should be respected.

Regarding this concept of what is compatible with the traditional context of Louisville, consider the following as a general *STANDARD* for new construction:

New interpretations of traditional building types are encouraged, such that they are seen as products of their own time yet compatible with their older neighbors.

1) Historic details that were not found in Louisville are inappropriate.
2) However, using traditional proportions of height, width and depth are very important to be compatible with the established mass and scale of downtown Louisville.

INTERPRETATION OF TERMS RELATED TO COMPLIANCE

These definitions apply to terms related to compliance in the text that follows.

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. However, in other cases, there may be a design that is not expressly mentioned in the text that also may be deemed "appropriate" by the City.

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 within the same block, as the proposed project.

Guideline - In this document, a "guideline" is a requirement that does not need to be met, but the advice given should be taken into consideration in order to be meet the intent of this document.

Imperative mood - Throughout this document, many of the standards and guidelines are written in the imperative mood. The reader is often instructed to “maintain” or “preserve” an established characteristic. For example, one guideline states: “Maintain the traditional pattern of doors along the street.” 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: “Primary building entrances should be at street level. "Garden level" entrances are inappropriate.” In this case, a garden level entry 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.

Primary facade - The primary facade is the principal elevation of a building, usually facing the street or other public way.

Shall - Where the term “shall” is used in a design standard, compliance is required. For example, one guideline states: “The front of a primary structure shall be oriented to the street.”

Should - If the term “should” appears in a design guideline, compliance is strongly encouraged, but is not required.

Standard - In the context of this document, a “standard” is a requirement that must be met, in order to be in accordance with the intent of this document.

When feasible - In some design standards for historic buildings, the reader is asked to comply with the statement “when feasible.” In these cases, compliance is required, except when the applicant can demonstrate that it is not physically possible to do so. For example, one standard states: “Replace missing original features in kind when feasible.” In this case, the owner shall replace the original feature, unless they can demonstrate that it has deteriorated to the extent that it is not practical to do so.

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Mining for coal was the genesis for many of the towns in eastern Boulder County, and the foothills community of Louisville was no exception. The town was historically a commercial hub for the northern coal fields of Colorado, propelled first by large coal deposits, and then the agricultural and railroad activities in the area.

The area was once a seamless grassland before David Kerr preempted his 160-acre farm in 1864 and began one of the first settlements in the area. By the time the Colorado Central Railroad arrived in 1873, the area boasted a few hay fields amid the prairie grasses. Yet, even with new access to markets, it remained a rural and agricultural place. Finally, large coal deposits were discovered on Kerr's farm and the area west of the initial coal strike boomed when the first miners arrived in 1877. This provided the opportunity to make the place into a real town.

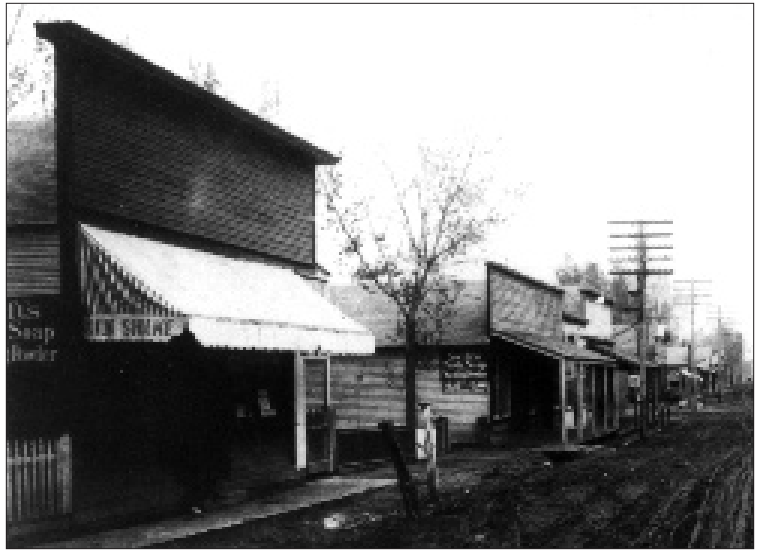
The earliest known photograph of Louisville, Colorado, taken at the intersection of Main Street and Spruce Street.

C. C. Welch, vice president of the Colorado Central Railroad, financed the first underground drilling on the property, established the Welch mine, and secured the Coal Creek depot site to service it. Louisville was founded on October 24, 1878, when Louis Nawatny, a manager for the Welch mining operations, laid out a townsite near the newly opened coal field. The new settlement was stimulated by the railroad and depended upon it to transport coal.

Louisville grew vigorously with the rapid industrialization of the area's mines. Born in the wake of a post-Civil War migration, the town's first settlers came from the United States, England, Austria, Scotland, Ireland, Nova Scotia, Germany, France, Wales, Canada, Russia and Switzerland. Later, in the 1890s, Italian and Slovak immigrants began populating the area.

In the early 1880s, Spruce Street boomed in the remote Western track town of Louisville, where false-fronted buildings near the railroad tracks advertised to people riding by and reassured those already there that the town was prosperous and would continue to grow.

Louisville literally grew on top of the Caledonia and Acme coal mines. Under the neat middle-class homes and flowers of "Old Town" was the active underground world of the miners.



Dense rows of Western false-fronted buildings from one to two stories formed a wall of facades along the sidewalks, interspersed with an occasional residence.

In 1881, the pioneers incorporated their town. They also built a schoolhouse, which served as the town's social center. By 1882, Louisville was a bustling center. The town's population had reached 550, and miners throughout the region obtained their supplies here. Businesses in Louisville were similar to those in other Colorado towns and reflected the town's role as a mining center. Four general merchandise stores, a Miner's Co-operative store and eight saloons were operating that season.

The mining community was a transient one. When one coal field fizzled, another beckoned. However, Louisville, because of its railroad and agricultural economies, continued to show signs of permanence. The town developed as a service center for farmers, and it generated capital through its railroad exports, chiefly coal and grain.

Soon, Louisville settlers became increasingly confident of their progress. They had successfully addressed many of the economic, political and social problems that confronted frontier settlements, and their community had evolved into a booming small town. It boasted a seemingly content work force, clean water and houses fronted by neatly cropped lawns and gardens filled with fresh produce and flowers. Its Main Street, with sidewalks and shade trees and a string of significant businesses, was the driving force of the downtown.

Saloons assumed a very important role in the community. The town had an amazing number of drinking establishments, which acted as meeting, eating, sleeping and relaxing spots. One saloon even provided a bowling

Front Street at Spruce in 1909, showing the DiFrancia saloon building, now the Old Louisville Inn.

An interior view of a Louisville saloon in 1914. Front Street served as the corridor for the saloon trade.

alley. Since Louisville's bars catered to the rough-and-tumble mining crowd, they were restricted to Front Street by town ordinance. At least thirteen saloons were in operation along three blocks of Front Street in 1908.

However, Louisville's economy began to decline almost as soon as it reached its glory. When World War I curtailed the country's coal, mines began to close. The demand for bituminous coal in 1921 skidded to a low that hadn't been seen since 1906. Simply, the industry found itself with too much supply. Rising competition from other fuels, such as oil, gas and hydroelectricity, further threatened the coal industry. Coal and railroad revenues further declined with the construction of a natural gas pipeline from Texas to Denver in 1928 and with the gaining popularity of the automobile.

The Great Crash of 1929, depressed Louisville's coal production even more. Yet, for the most part, Louisville survived the Great Depression in a stronger position than most Colorado communities because its farming and bar economies remained sound. By this time, the town had become distinctive for its Italian food industry. When Prohibition was repealed, in 1933, Louisville reclaimed its role as Boulder County's most popular "wet" community. In addition, the first industrial development in the Denver-Boulder metro area provided residents with new job opportunities.

By the end of WWII, the nation's coal industry had bottomed out and coal towns were dying all across the United States. Coal supplied only 34 percent of the nation's energy needs, where it had once supplied 85 percent. Instead, natural gas and oil were now in demand. After the last coal mine closed in 1954, residents looked to other areas for employment outside the community and therefore became "commuters." The Rocky Flats Plant, along with other new techno-industries, became the area's new employers. Louisville thus became a "bedroom" community.

LOUISVILLE TODAY

One-hundred and twenty years later, the chronology of this small suburban city is easily read in the materials used to build its structures. A glance at either side of Main Street today reveals a variety of media: wood, brick, stucco and vernacular stone, hauled in from the Flatirons and the fields. There are walls of plate and block glass, cinder block, concrete, aluminum and even plastic. There is a clear time line here, one expressed in a sequence of structural building materials starting with wood moving to brick, then to what might be called assorted materials and finally, to metal. Most of the buildings are a single story. A few are two-stories.

The majority of traditional buildings located downtown were one-story in height. A few historic examples (the State Mercantile Co, far left) did, however, rise to two-stories.

Main and Front Streets are, to this day, the bustling commercial arteries in what is now Boulder County's fifth largest city. Main Street is twelve blocks long with blocks of residences on its north and south ends and three blocks of businesses sandwiched between them. The commercial area of Front Street is three blocks long, with three residential blocks on its north end.

The character of this small town commercial center can easily be described as pedestrian friendly in nature. Many area residents still walk downtown to visit one of the many restaurants or to get their mail at the Post Office. Many citizen and business organizations, as well as the City, are working hard to see that the downtown environment maintains its human scale and clean business environment. Recently the city has completed many downtown improvements, which include landscaping, new street lights, brick paving and other streetscape amenities.

Today, most historic buildings remain privately owned and continue to have important social and economic functions in the old downtown. For example, the elementary school has become an arts center, the historic depot has become a dance studio and preschool and the old bank building has become a restaurant. Some properties retain their original uses, where historic houses remain residences, historic churches remain places of worship and so on.

Many of Louisville's buildings that date from the turn of the century are in need of maintenance and renovation to bring them into full service for the growing community. However, modern demands for new uses and expansions on old buildings often conflict with the integrity of the original structure. As a result, a startling amount of historic fabric is being destroyed, discarded or replaced with new materials rather than being sustained or reused.

A population boom along the Front Range in the last twenty years has brought rapid construction development to Louisville. As the population grows and more people move into Boulder County, developers compete for any available land. Typical targets for development are old buildings that are seen as "useless" or dilapidated. As a result, many of these old buildings are demolished. Development also can bring inappropriate infill to historic neighborhoods, and inappropriate, out-of-scale structures intrude upon the visual harmony of the historic area. Suburbs and new commercial areas now circle the Old Town much like the coal mines did. New industries, including Colorado Technological and Storage Technology, are employing large work forces. Still, the Old Town neighborhoods continue to offer the atmosphere and amenities of a small town.

Many businesses downtown are aware of the special character downtown and are beginning to capitalize on its success. The shops on the left are seen here before their upward expansion (see photo at right).

Recently, as the development potential increases in downtown, several buildings are seeing improvements such as 908 Main Street, which is receiving a second and third story addition setback from the sidewalk edge.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Downtown contains several traditional architectural styles that contribute to its identity. This rich architectural heritage enhances the entire city, provides a strong “sense of place” and illustrates the evolution of Louisville.

Because of the differing nationalities of settlers—particularly Italian, German, Anglo-American, French, Irish, Canadian and Russian—architectural diversity flourished. As a result, the architectural heritage of Louisville is best expressed in terms of stylistic influences rather than mainstream architectural styles, which were often based on English styles. Many buildings were built in the “vernacular,” as opposed to being of a distinct style. In fact, it has been written that: Distinct variation in architectural detail resulting from many influences is the rule rather than the exception. Therefore, many buildings in the district can be categorized loosely according to common elements and forms, a summary of which follows in the next section.

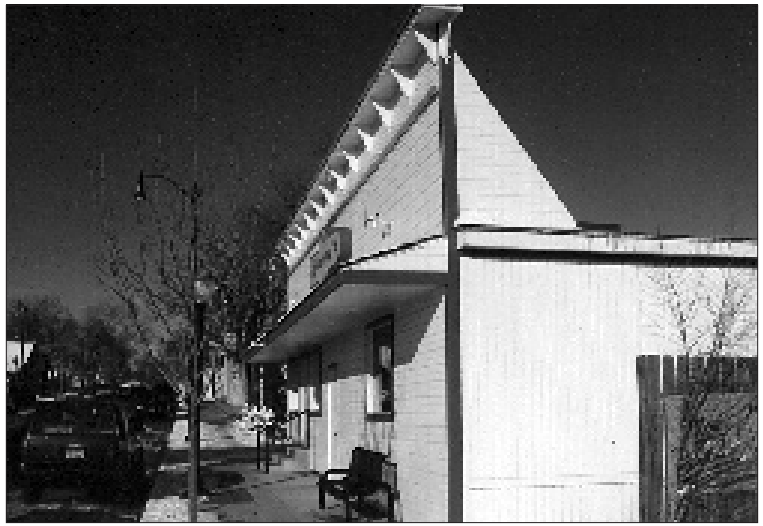
COMMERCIAL BUILDING TYPE

Louisville's traditional commercial buildings are located in the core area of downtown along Main and Front Streets. The styles range from vernacular with Italianate or Queen Anne influences, to original false-front commercial storefronts. The town's commercial building types fall into two categories as listed below.

False front with gable roof:

Found along the main streets, the false front vernacular buildings are wood frame construction. Most are one-story and have little decoration. Distinct features are:

- false front
- gable roof
- recessed entries
- large glass display windows
- simple bracketed cornices
- bay windows



A typical false front commercial building in downtown Louisville.

Flat roof:
More decorative elements are seen on the flat-roof style building than other commercial types. They varied in size from one- to two-stories, and most of the two-story buildings used their upper floors as apartments or additional commercial space. Decorative features often reflected the Italianate style and usually included:

- metal facades
- glass storefronts which extended along the ground level of the street facade
- recessed entries
- bracketed cornices
- drop cornices
- bay windows
- doors with transom lights

The original Louisville bank (right) is a good example of a flat roof commercial building.

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING TYPES

Almost all of the residences in Louisville are considered "vernacular." This means that they reflect local taste, custom and materials. The majority of the structures are wood frame construction. Wood siding is the most common exterior treatment, and variations include clapboard, board and batten and simple drop siding. The early residential buildings were constructed for the sole purpose of providing shelter and, for the most part, did not seek to imitate any other styles.

L-type:
The L-type house has an intersecting gable roof and very often has an attached porch which runs along the street-facing facade. Most of the L-type houses are one-story. Other features include:

- one-story, covered porch
- bay windows

The Neihoff/Austin house is an early example of an L-type residence.

Gable end:
This house has the gable end of the roof facing the street. Most are one- and few are 1-1/2 story. Other features include:

- bay windows
- full width, one-story porch
- decorative shingles
- gable ornaments
- clipped gables

The residential building on the right, although a business now, is a good example of a gable end facing the street.

Hip:
Hip-roof homes were mainly square in plan with a small porch on the street facade. They are predominantly one-story. Other features include:

- hipped or gabled dormers
- bay windows
- front porches

Hipped roof residence with hipped dormer and wrap-around porch.

VERNACULAR BUILDING TYPE

Sometimes referred to as “other,” “no style” or “folk,” vernacular building types strive only to be functional. Its purpose is to provide spaces without any interest in fashion. The buildings 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 are distinguishable due to their simplicity.

GENERAL STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR ALL PROJECTS IN DOWNTOWN LOUISVILLE

These design standards and guidelines apply to all projects in downtown Louisville, including alteration to any existing property as well as construction of a new building. Taking on a project in a historic community can, at its outset, appear quite challenging. One of the purposes of this document is to help clarify the goals and objectives of the City for enhancing its historic sense of place. To assist in this endeavor, utilize the following Design Standards and Guidelines for All Projects in Downtown Louisville.

Standards and guidelines within this document build upon the five "Basic Principles of Design" identified in the Introduction (p. 2). They are grouped in categories that reflect the typical design sequence, from broad-scale issues down to more detailed concerns. The standards and guidelines in this chapter are organized into the following categories:

Category	Page
Urban Design	15
Site Design	19
Building Mass, Scale & Form	24
Architectural Elements & Details	25
Additions to Buildings	30
Miscellaneous	31

Note: Design standards and guidelines for individual buildings in the Character Areas apply in addition to the general standards and guidelines in this chapter.

URBAN DESIGN

Policy: Relationship to Site Context
Downtown Louisville has a distinctive identity that is a result of common ways of building. Buildings were typically sited on their lots in similar manners, built with similar materials and were similar in mass and scale. This visual sense of continuity should be maintained in all new developments.

G1. All projects should respect the traditional context of downtown.

1) In all cases, consideration should be given to the broader context of the block and the town at large.
2) If historic resources exist on the property, then the *Design Standards and Guidelines for Historic Buildings* also shall apply.

Policy: Relationship to the Town Grid
The grid arrangement of streets and alleys is one of the most fundamental organizing elements of the design framework which helps establish a sense of continuity throughout the downtown.

G2. Respect the established town grid in all projects.

1) Maintain the alignment of streets and alleys whenever feasible.
2) Alleys are used by pedestrians as well as vehicles. Design them to accommodate both user groups.

Respect the established town grid in all projects. Maintain the alignment of streets and alleys whenever feasible.

Policy: Pedestrian Systems
A project should be designed for the pedestrian at a human scale and provide visual interest along the street. These areas should develop as a pedestrian-oriented environment. Streets, sidewalks and pathways should encourage walking and bicycling within this area.

T2. Develop the ground floor level of all projects to be at a pedestrian scale.

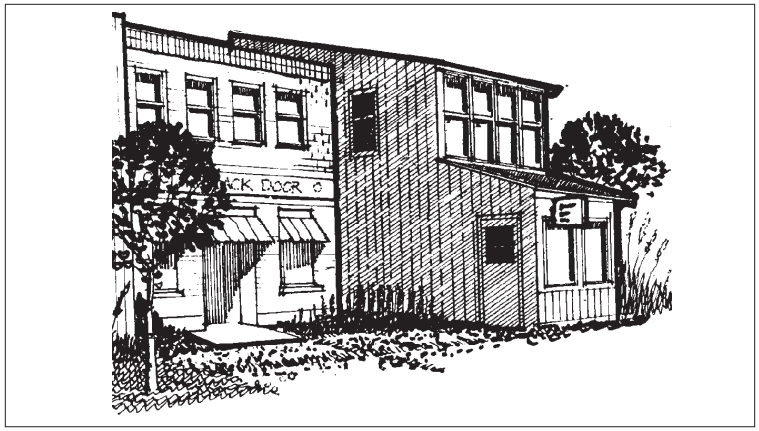
1) Provide visual interest on all facades which will be seen from streets, alleys and pedestrian ways.
2) As seen up close, buildings should express human scale, through materials and forms that are familiar building elements in town.
3) Porches, bays and other building details similar to those seen on nearby historic buildings are encouraged to provide visual interest and human scale.

Develop the ground floor level of all projects to be at a pedestrian scale. Porches and large areas of glass are both appropriate treatments.

Policy: Alleys
Alleys are a part of the tradition in Louisville. They help to express the arrangement of the town grid and provide service areas away from the street. Existing alleys are framed with outbuildings that help define the alley edge and contribute to the low scale of these places and helps make Louisville's alleys unique pedestrian routes.

G3. An alley landscape design should be simple in character.

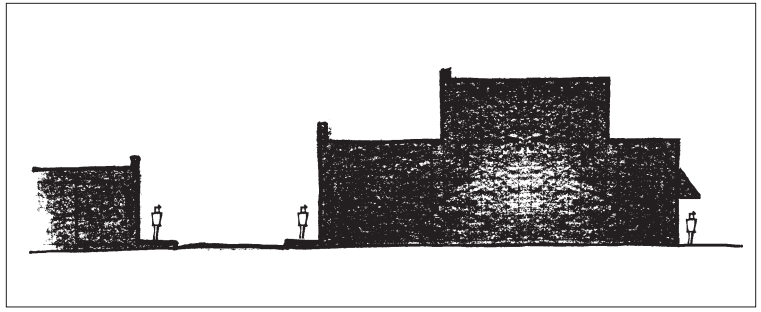
1) Avoid highly elaborate planting schemes and ornate furnishings along alley edges.



✔ *Alley facades should be visually interesting.*

G4. Develop the street and alley edges of a property to be at a pedestrian scale.

1) Provide visual interest on all facades which will be seen from streets, alleys and pedestrian ways.
2) A building should step down in scale along the alley edge.
3) Buildings should express human scale, through materials and forms that are familiar building elements in town.
4) Use varied building setbacks and changes in materials to create interest and reduce the perceived scale of buildings along alleys.



✔ *Develop the street and alley edges of a property to be at a pedestrian scale.*

Policy: Site Furniture
Site furnishings, including bicycle racks, waste receptacles and light standards, are features of contemporary life in Louisville. The City has undertaken a downtown streetscape improvement project in which several of these features are included. In order to maintain the visual continuity within downtown, the same style of furnishings used for public improvements should be used in private endeavors as well.

G5. Site furniture should be simple in character.

1) Avoid any highly ornate design that would misrepresent the history of the area.
2) Benches, bike racks (which are strongly encouraged) and trash receptacles are examples of site furnishings that may be considered.
3) A bike rack may be located along a street front where space is available and a minimum clear walkway can be maintained.
4) Design of private furnishings should be consistent with public site furniture.

G6. Street lights within a project should be compatible with the City's streetscape design.

1) Designs which reflect the simple standards the City has used in its public streetscape improvements are encouraged.
2) Historic styles that are out of character with the history of Louisville are inappropriate because they could misrepresent the heritage of the community.

Policy: Public Art
While public art is a new feature to occur in the community, it enhances the quality of life and can contribute to one's appreciation of the natural and historic features of the area. The use of public art is therefore encouraged, particularly in larger private projects and in public places.

G7. The use of public art is encouraged.

1) Consider locating public art in a courtyard or at a building entrance where it may be viewed from the street.
2) Also consider installing public art along alley facades or in the sidewalk itself.
3) Art that is developed as an integral part of the architecture is also encouraged.

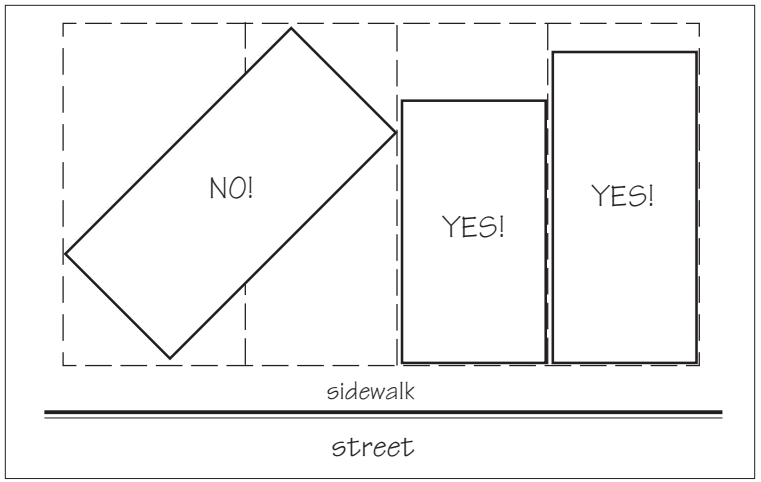
The use of public art is encouraged. Consider using public art in the sidewalk itself.

SITE DESIGN

Policy: Building Orientation
Traditionally, a building was oriented with its primary wall planes in line with the parcel's property lines. Since most buildings were rectangular in form, this siting pattern helped reinforce the image of the town grid. These traditional patterns of building orientation should be maintained.

G8. Orient a new building parallel to its lot lines, similar to that of traditional building orientations.

1) The front of a primary structure shall be oriented to the street.
2) Buildings should have a clearly defined primary entrance. For example, provide a recessed entry way on a commercial storefront, or provide a porch on a residential type structure, to define its entry.



Orient a building parallel to its lot lines.

Policy: Exterior Lighting
The character and level of lighting is a special concern. It should be a subordinate element. Traditionally, exterior lights were simple in character. Most used incandescent lamps, which cast a color similar to that of daylight. These were relatively low in intensity and were shielded with simple shade devices. This overall effect should be continued.

G9. Exterior lights should be simple in character and similar in color and intensity to that used traditionally.

1) The design of a fixture should be simple in form and detail. Designs similar in character to those used traditionally are encouraged.
2) Lights along alleys should be utilitarian in design.
3) All exterior light sources should have a low level of luminescence. Lamps with a maximum equivalent of a 40 watt incandescent bulb (490 lumens) are preferred for site lighting. Lower intensities should be used in architectural fixtures such as step lights.

G10. Minimize the visual impacts of site and architectural lighting.

1) Prevent glare onto adjacent properties by using shielded and focused light sources that direct light onto the ground.
2) Un-shielded, high intensity light sources and those which direct light upward will not be permitted.
3) Shield lighting associated with service areas, parking lots and parking structures.
4) Avoid placing lights in highly visible locations, such as on the upper walls of buildings.

Policy: Site and Building Lighting
Traditionally, exterior lighting was used to illuminate building entrances. On commercial properties, it also may have been used to highlight building details and signs. However, it was not used to illuminate an entire facade. In general, lighting should help identify entrances and improve safety.

Illuminating site features, such as walkways and court yards, is a relatively new occurrence in Louisville. Site lighting should encourage pedestrian activity and safety. While it may be necessary to light such features to enhance their function, it is also important that the overall effect be subdued so the night sky is still visible.

G11. Provide site lighting that encourages pedestrian activity at night.

1) Site lighting should be at a pedestrian scale and help define different functional areas of the property.

Policy: Auto-Oriented Uses
The automobile was subordinate in Louisville's early history and downtown's character derives from a way of building in which the automobile was not a factor. The visual impacts of features associated with storage of automobiles, including driveways, garages and parking areas, therefore should be minimized.

G12. Large areas of off-street parking will not be allowed along Main Street.

1) No new curb cuts will be granted along Main Street.

G13. Where appropriate, design a parking area to be accessed from an alley rather than the street.

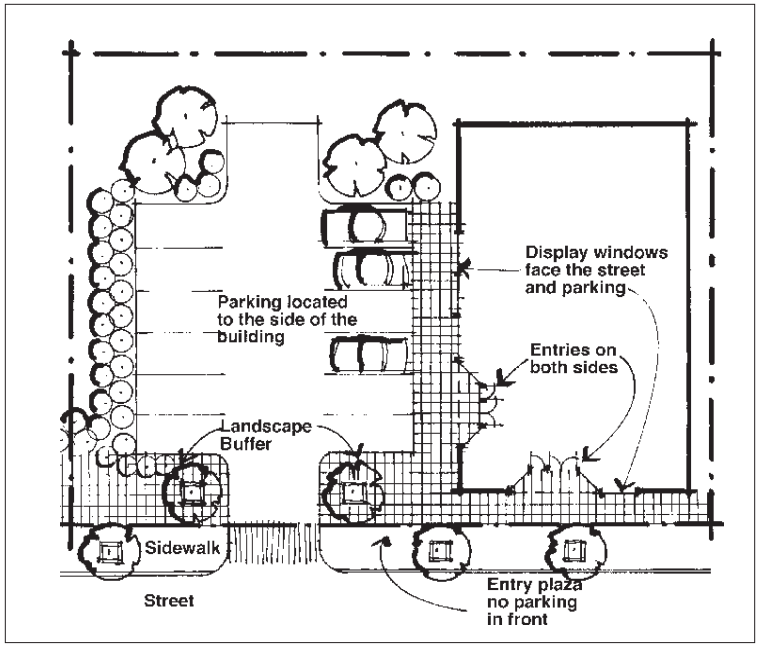
1) In a residential context, the use of a detached garage, located along the alley, is especially encouraged.
2) If parking is located within a garage, minimize the width of the driveway.

G14. Screen a parking lot from view from the street.

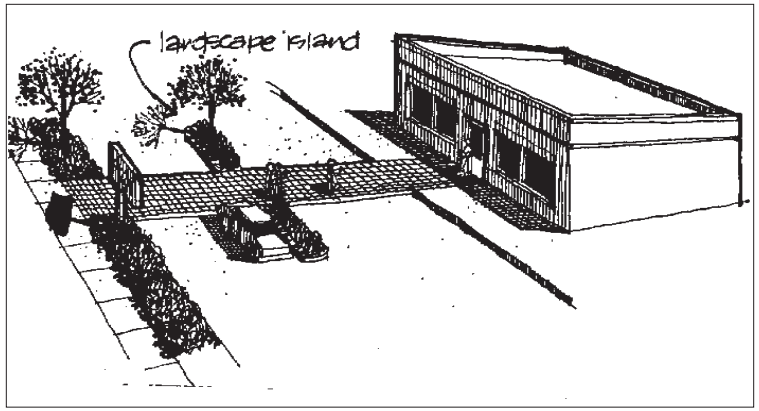
1) Provide buffers between the edge of a parking lot and sidewalk.
2) Use planted areas, decorative paving, fences, hedges and decorative walls.
3) The landscape should be at least 5 feet in width.

G15. Locate parking such that it will be subordinate to other site features.

1) An on-site parking area should be located inside or behind a building, where its visual impacts will be minimized.
2) Minimize the surface area of paving and consider using less impervious material. Options to consider are modular pavers in the Core Area and “grasscrete" in the Transition Areas.



Screen a parking area from view from the street. A minimum of 15 feet should be used as a buffer from the inside sidewalk edge.



Auto oriented business should incorporate landscaping within the site and along street edges, as well.

G16. Minimize the visual impacts of a parking structure.

1) Cars in a parking structure should be screened from view from the street.
2) Street frontage should be reserved for commercial uses. This may be accomplished by locating the parking below grade, with commercial space above, or by "wrapping" parking at grade with a row of commercial spaces.
3) Design a parking structure so as to allow space for active uses at the sidewalk.

Design a parking structure to allow space for active uses at the sidewalk edge, such as the Spruce Street garage does in Boulder, CO.

Policy: Service Areas

Service areas include loading areas, trash storage, recycling containers and site maintenance equipment. Many of these require access year-round and should therefore be carefully planned as an integral part of a site. At the same time, the visual impacts of service areas should be minimized.

When laying out a site, adequate provision should be made for these uses. They should not simply be located in "left over" side yards, for example, and they should not be visible from major pedestrian ways. In commercial uses, service entrances should be separate from those used by customers. When feasible, the location of service areas should be coordinated with adjacent properties such that the amount of driveways and other paved areas can be minimized. A centralized service handling area also should be considered.

G17. Minimize the visual impacts of trash storage areas.

1) Trash enclosures should be constructed with similar materials as those of the primary structure.
2) Locate a service area along the rear of a site, accessed by an alley, when feasible.
3) Trash areas, including large waste containers (dumpsters) should also be screened from view of major pedestrian routes, using a fence or hedge. For a larger storage facility, consider using a shed to enclose it.
4) Combine service areas with other properties, when feasible.

G18. Provide access to a service area such that service vehicles will not interfere with pedestrians and other vehicular traffic.

1) The use of an off-street loading zone is encouraged.
2) In large structures locating a loading area in the building is preferred.

✘ *Minimize the visual impacts of utilities and service equipment*

Policy: Utilities

Utilities that serve properties may include telephone and electrical lines, ventilation systems, gas meters, fire protection, telecommunications 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.

G19. Minimize the impacts of utilities and service equipment.

1) These impacts include those associated with visual appearances and noise levels.
2) Provide adequate space for utilities. It should not simply be left over space that abuts the public right-of-way.
3) Locate utilities in the rear of a property and screen them.
4) Minimize the visual impacts of vents and exhaust hoods by integrating them into the building design.
5) Screen rooftop appurtenances, such as mechanical equipment and antennas, from view.

BUILDING MASS, SCALE & FORM

Policy: Mass and Scale
The mass and scale of buildings in downtown Louisville are among the greatest influences for compatible construction in the community. The height, width and depth of a new building should be compatible with existing buildings in the area and especially with those structures that are immediately adjacent to a project. The scale of a building also should relate to its lot size and placement on the lot.

New construction should appear similar in mass and scale to structures found traditionally in the area.

G20. New construction should appear similar in mass and scale to structures found traditionally in the area.

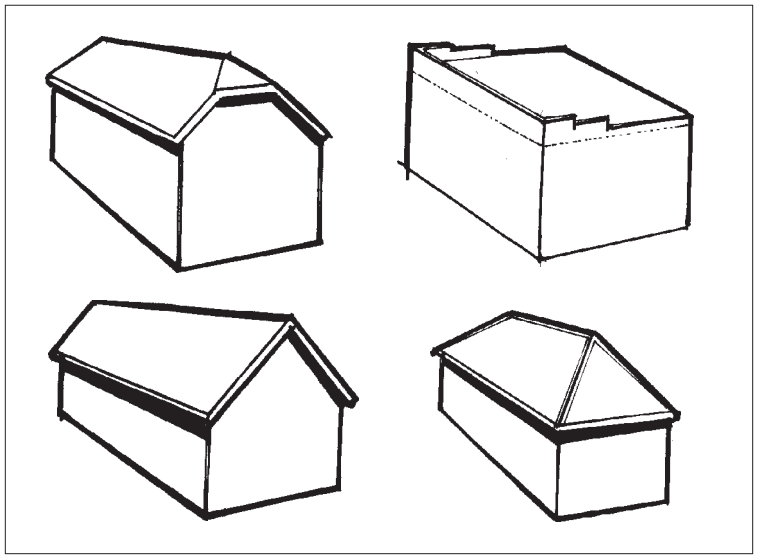
G21. A larger building may be divided into "modules" that reflect the traditional scale of construction.

1) If a larger building is divided into multiple “modules,” these should be expressed three-dimensionally, by having significant architectural changes, throughout the entire building. A single form should remain the dominant element, such that the overall mass does not become too fragmented. (See also Guideline C5 on page 35.)
2) Consider stepping down the mass of larger buildings to minimize the perceived scale at the street.
3) Building elements should be in scale with the overall mass of the building.

Policy: Building Form
Traditionally, simple building forms were used in downtown Louisville. Most were modest rectangular shapes. Maintaining this tradition of building is vital to the character of Louisville.

G22. Buildings that are predominantly rectangular in form are encouraged.

1) One simple form should read as the dominant element in a building design.



Buildings that are predominantly rectangular in form are encouraged.

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS & DETAILS

Policy: Architectural Character
Regardless of stylistic treatment, a new building should appear simple in form and detail, in keeping with the tradition of Louisville. Buildings also should be visually compatible with older structures without being direct copies of historic buildings.

G23. Respect the sense of time and place in all projects.

1) One should be able to perceive some of the character of the area as it evolved historically.

G24. New interpretations of traditional building styles are encouraged

1) A new design that draws upon the fundamental similarities among traditional buildings in the community without copying them is preferred. This will allow them to be seen as products of their own time yet compatible with their older neighbors.
2) Applying highly ornamental details that were not a part of building in Louisville is discouraged.

Policy: Building Components
Projecting elements, such as dormers, bay windows and cornices, help to provide visual interest to a building and can influence its perceived scale. These features should be compatible in size, shape and type with those seen traditionally and should be treated as an integral part of the building design.

G25. Building components should be similar in scale to those used traditionally.

G26. Using awnings to provide weather protection and create interest is encouraged.

1) The awning should fit the dimensions of an opening, to emphasize these proportions. It should not obscure ornamental details.
2) Avoid exotic forms that are not traditionally found in Louisville.
3) Coordinate the color of the awning with the color scheme for the entire building.
4) Operable fabric awnings, balconies and galleries are appropriate in downtown Louisville.
5) Backlit awnings are inappropriate.
6) Adequate pedestrian clearance below awnings should be provided. This should be at least 8 feet.

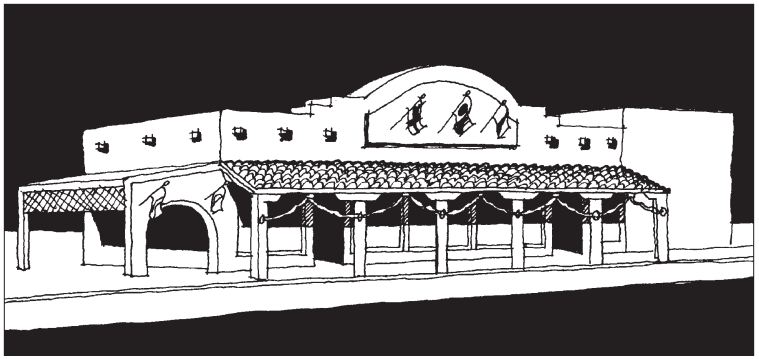
Policy: Architectural Details
Architectural details should be similar in scale with and reflect the simple character of those seen traditionally.

G27. Avoid stylistic details that confuse the history of Louisville.

1) Use ornamental details with restraint.
2) Historic details that were not found in Louisville are discouraged.
3) Elaborate "Victorian" ornamentation, which is atypical in Louisville, is discouraged. The exact copying or replication of historic styles is also discouraged.

G28. Theme designs are not appropriate in downtown Louisville.

1) New contemporary designs that are compatible with older buildings are encouraged.
2) Other styles that would also be misleading about the history of Louisville are inappropriate.



✘ *Theme designs, such as "Spanish Southwestern," are not appropriate in downtown Louisville.*

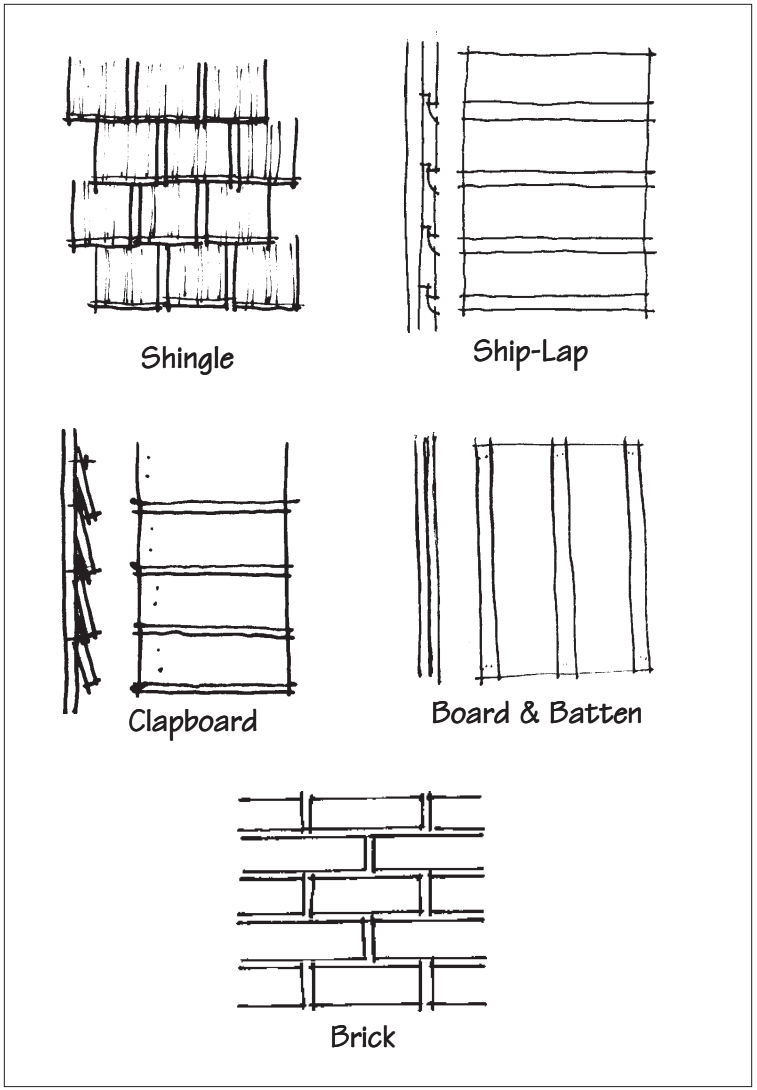
Policy: Building Materials
A mix of building materials are found in downtown Louisville. From the early wood frame construction to the steel frame and brick veneer seen today. This range of building materials should be maintained. New materials also should have a simple finish, similar to those seen historically.

G29. Maintain the existing range of exterior wall materials found in downtown.

1) Appropriate materials for primary structures include horizontal and vertical siding, shingles and brick.
2) The lap dimensions of siding should be similar to those found traditionally. Typically 4-6 inches exposed.
3) Stucco is generally inappropriate as a primary material on the street.
4) Reflective materials, such as mirrored glass or polished metals, are inappropriate.
5) Rustic shakes and timber are inappropriate.
6) For larger buildings, consider a combination of appropriate materials as a means to reduce the apparent size of the project.
7) Check with the Planning Department regarding appropriate exterior wall materials as they relate to fire retardation. (In some instances, the Uniform Code for Building Conservation may be used.)

G30. Materials should be applied in a manner similar to that used traditionally.

1) A "hierarchy" of building materials should be used, with heavier coarser materials used as foundations and more refined materials used above.



Typical siding materials in downtown are wood, stone and brick. In most cases, stone was found on the foundations only.

G31. New materials may be considered, if they appear similar in character and detailing to those used traditionally.

1) New materials must have a demonstrated durability in this climate and have the ability to be repaired under reasonable conditions.
2) Details of hard board siding, and their joints, should match that of traditional wood siding.
3) Synthetic materials such as aluminum and vinyl siding may be considered on new construction, if details and lap dimensions are similar to those seen traditionally. They should not be used, however, to cover historic building materials (see also *Design Standards and Guidelines for Historic Buildings*).
4) Check with the Planning Department regarding the acceptance of new, substitute materials.
5) Exterior wood finishes should be painted or stained on primary structures. Rustic or natural finishes may be considered on secondary structures.

G32. On buildings with sloping roof forms, materials should appear similar to those used traditionally.

1) Asphalt shingles in muted colors may be considered.
2) Metal sheeting or standing seam metal roofs with a baked-on paint finish and galvanized or rusted steel sheeting are generally appropriate. Metal roofs shall have matte finishes to minimize glare.

Policy: Windows

Windows are some of the most important character-defining features of structures downtown. They give scale to buildings and provide visual interest to the composition of individual facades. Because windows so significantly affect the character of a structure, their appropriate use is a very important consideration.

Traditionally, buildings of the same type had common window-to-wall proportions. This helped contribute to the sense of continuity in a neighborhood. This ratio of open surfaces (windows and doors) to enclosed surfaces (walls and roofs) of the building exterior should be similar to that seen traditionally in the area.

G33. Windows should be of a traditional size and relate to a pedestrian scale.

1) Windows should be simple in shape, arrangement and detail.
2) Unusually shaped windows, such as triangles and trapezoids may be considered as accents only.
3) Windows with traditional depth and trim are preferred.

G34. The ratio of windows to wall surface should be similar to that seen traditionally.

1) Large surfaces of glass are inappropriate on residential structures and on the upper floors of commercial buildings.
2) For commercial type buildings in the Core Area a solid-to-void ratio of 1:2 is appropriate. For residential type buildings in the Transition Areas a solid-to-void ratio of 2:1 is appropriate.

G35. Upper stories, on a street facade, should appear less transparent than the first floor.

1) Upper story windows with a vertical emphasis are typical, but occasionally horizontal windows were used. Either are appropriate in downtown, but their use should be compatible with the building type.
2) Windows with traditional depth and trim are preferred.
3) This also applies to windows found on most residential type structures.

G36. Skylights should be limited in number and size.

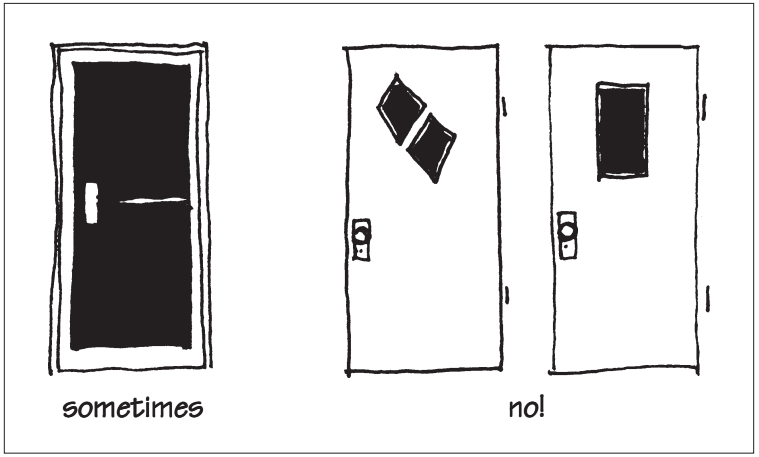
1) Skylights should be located in areas that minimize visibility and should not break or penetrate a ridge line.
2) Skylights should be flat.

Policy: Doors

A door, which is often an important character-defining feature of a structure, gives scale to a building and provides visual interest to the composition of an individual building facade.

G37. Maintain the traditional pattern of doors along the street.

1) All buildings which face the street should have a well-defined front entrance.
2) A new opening should be similar in location, size and type to those seen traditionally. The entrance should be at, or near, grade level.



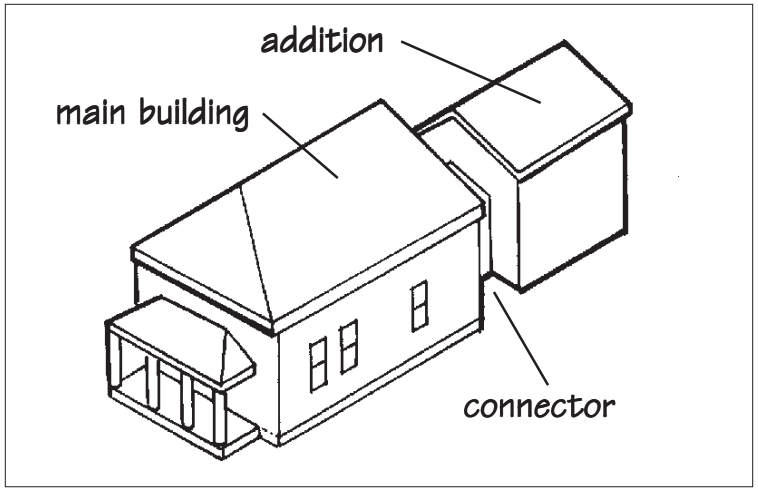
✘ *"All glass" doors with thin metal frames are generally not appropriate in downtown. Avoid solid doors or ones with small windows.*

ADDITIONS TO BUILDINGS

Policy: New Additions
When planning an addition to a building, consider the effect the addition will have on the building itself. Also, an addition, if inappropriately designed, can significantly affect the character of downtown. Therefore, avoid introducing or continuing building traditions that are inconsistent with buildings seen traditionally downtown.

G38. Design an addition to a building such that it will not diminish the character of building traditions in downtown.

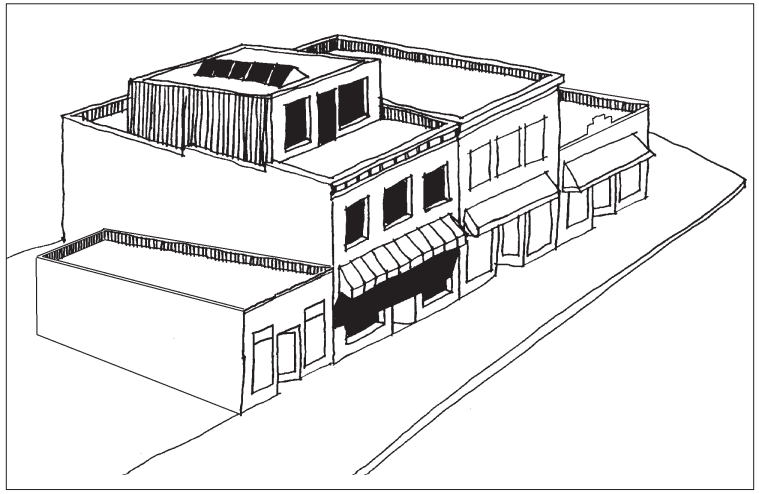
1) An addition should be an asset to the building, enhancing its overall character.



✔ *An addition should be compatible in size and scale with the main building. This residential addition is separated from the main building with a connector.*

G39. An addition should be compatible in size and scale with the main building.

1) An addition should respect the proportions, massing and siting of the building. This includes dormer additions.
2) The form and detailing of an addition should be compatible with the original building.
3) If an addition would be taller than the main building, set it back substantially from primary character-defining facades.
4) For a residential type building, a small "connector" linking the main building and the addition may be considered.



✔ *An addition should be compatible in size and scale with the main building. This third story addition is smaller in scale than the main building and is distinguished from the main building through the treatment of materials.*

MISCELLANEOUS DESIGN TOPICS

Policy: Color
Color should be used in a manner that blends the building with its context, as well as enhances the structure and its character-defining features. Use color to your advantage. Some of the most noticeable results are achieved with a fresh paint job. The most effective and economical schemes often start with the natural colors of the building materials themselves as a base.

G40. Use color schemes that will complement other buildings nearby.

1) Look to see if colors used by others in the block may be incorporated in your scheme.
2) "Mix and match" colors from several nearby buildings in your color scheme; don't simply copy one building entirely.
3) Companies such as Sherwin Williams offer a "Preservation Palette" for Victorian, Classical, Colonial, Arts and Crafts and Postwar Romanticism style buildings. Contact your local paint store for more information.
4) See also *Paint in America: The Colors of Historic Buildings.* (Moss, Roger W. The Preservation Press, NTHP. Washington, DC. 1994. ISBN 0-89133-255-4)

G41. Use color to coordinate facade elements in an overall composition.

1) Use only one base color for the majority of the background wall surface. Base colors should be muted earth tones or pastels.
2) Look for “built-in” features of the facade that can be highlighted with an accent color. Window frames, sills, moldings and cornices are potential elements to dramatize with a contrasting color.

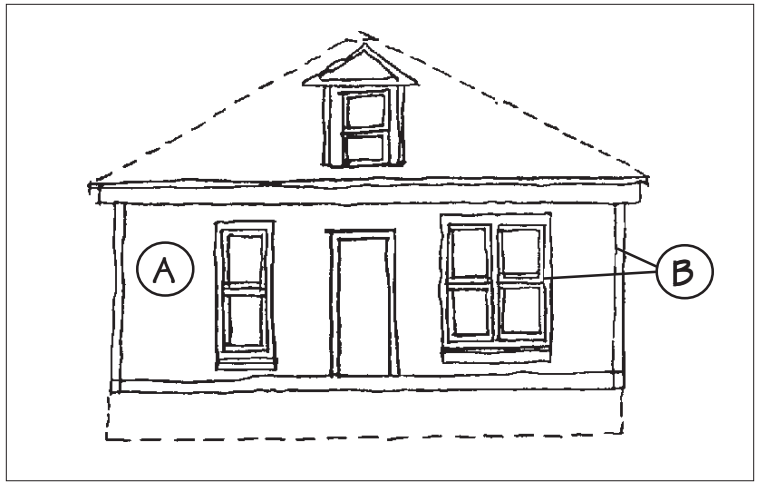
G42. Reserve bright colors for accents *only*.

1) Use bright colors only in *small* amounts. Place them at the first floor level to direct the customer's eyes to the business.
2) Consider accent colors for signs, awnings and entrance doors.
3) Earth tones will hold their color well, as will darker pastels. Check for color stability in ultraviolet light; some colors, such as red, tend to be unstable and will shift in hue over time.

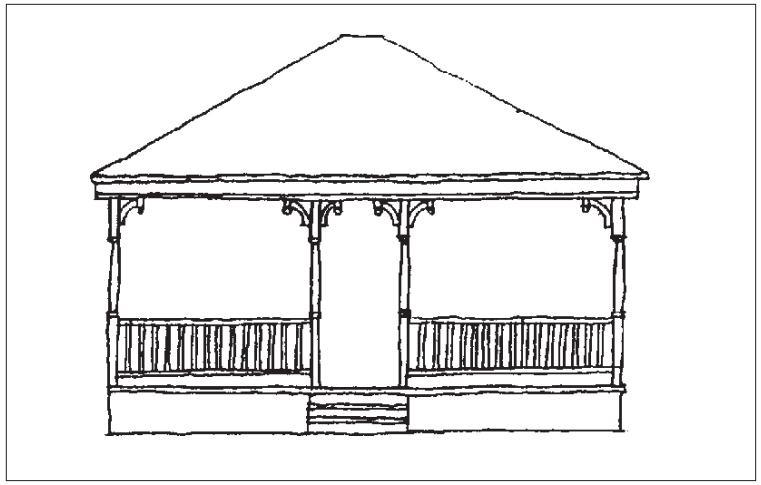
When designing your own color scheme, consider the entire composition:

a) The back plane of the main facade is a major surface for which a scheme should be devised.

b) A color scheme for the front plane, composed of a porch in this case, also should be designed.



Apply a base color to the main plane of the facade (A). Next, apply the first trim color to window frames and edge boards (B).



When developing a color scheme, use a limited number of colors. Apply one or two colors to porch elements; avoid making the scheme too busy. Consider using a different shade of the first trim color—or even matching it exactly for porch trim.

DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR THE CORE AREA OF DOWNTOWN

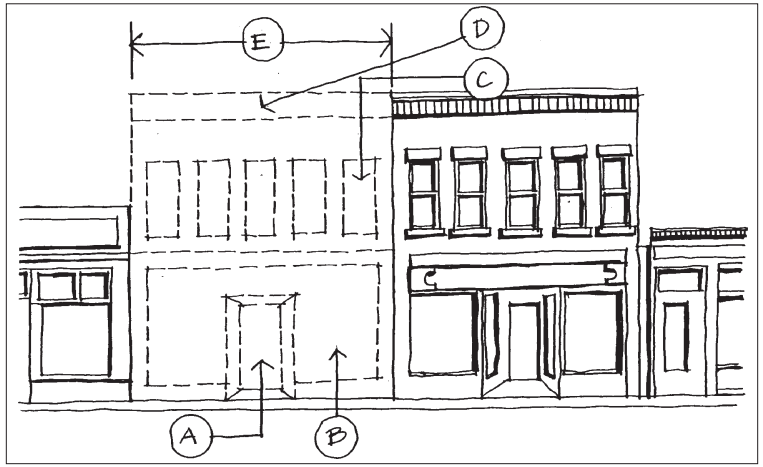
Traditionally, ground level floors were oriented to pedestrian views, with large display windows highlighting goods and services offered inside. Recessed entries were also typical. A horizontal band of molding usually separated the ground floor from upper portions of the facade and the parapet was capped with a decorative cornice. These features and similar patterns are some of the most important characteristics of downtown and should be respected in all new construction. In general, new buildings should be harmonious in form, material, siting and scale with the established downtown character.

URBAN DESIGN

Policy: Pedestrian Activity
The downtown should continue to develop as a pedestrian-oriented environment. Streets, sidewalks and pathways should encourage walking, sitting and other pedestrian activities; buildings should be visually interesting to invite exploration of the area by pedestrians. Existing pedestrian routes should be enhanced.

C1. Develop the ground floor level of all projects to encourage pedestrian activity.

1) Use commercial storefronts to provide pedestrian interest along the street.
2) Commercial storefronts should include traditional elements such as display windows, kickplates, transoms and parapets.
3) Large storefront display windows, located at the street level, where goods or services are visible from the street, are particularly encouraged.
4) Primary building entrances should be at street level. "Garden level" entrances are inappropriate.



Use typical facade components in new designs to encourage pedestrian activity: A) provide a recessed entry, B) use large surfaces of glass on the first floor, C) consider smaller, vertical windows on upper floors, D) cap the building with a cornice or parapet, and E) express the typical building width found on the block.

Note: *General Standards for All Projects in Downtown Louisville* (p. 15) also apply.

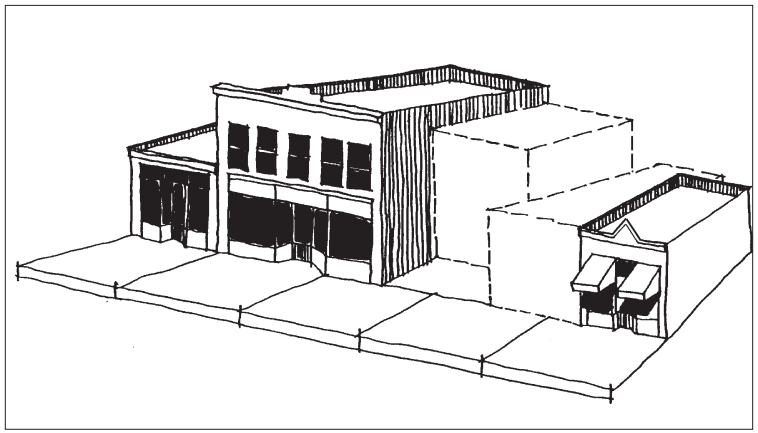
For individual buildings in the Transition Areas, the *Design Standards for the Transition Areas of Downtown Louisville* will apply (p. 47).

SITE DESIGN

Policy: Building Setbacks
Buildings in core commercial area were aligned immediately at the inside walkway edge. This contributes to a sense of visual continuity in such blocks. The distance from the street or property line to the front of the building should be similar to that established traditionally.

C2. Maintain the storefront wall at the sidewalk edge.

1) Pedestrians downtown are accustomed to having the inside edge of the sidewalk clearly defined by a wall of storefronts, all presenting interesting activities and merchandise to the street. This characteristic is an essential element of healthy downtown retailing.
2) Preserve the glass at the sidewalk line when feasible, to define the pedestrian zone.



✘ *Facades should be aligned at the sidewalk's edge. Locating entire building fronts behind the established storefront line is inappropriate.*

BUILDING MASS, SCALE & FORM

Policy: Mass and scale
Patterns are created along the street by the repetition of similarly-sized building elements. For example, uniform facade widths evenly spaced along Main Street create a rhythm that contributes to the visual continuity of the area. Most facade widths match the 25-foot lot dimension or they are a ratio of that dimension. These features and similar patterns are some of the most important characteristics of downtown and should be respected in all projects.

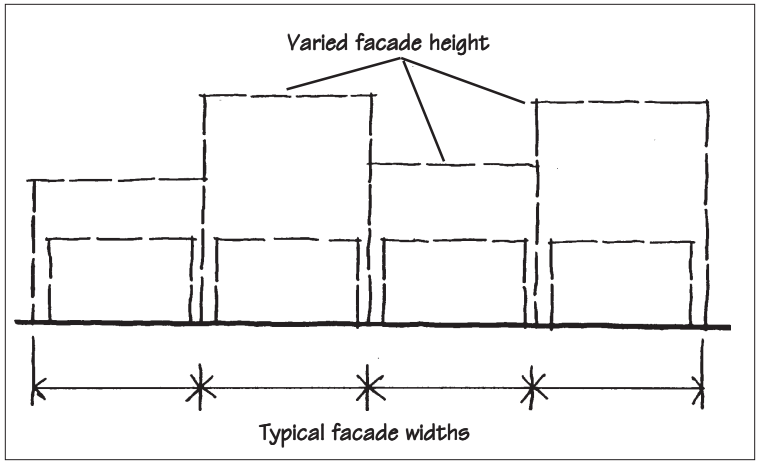
In a few cases, however, building owners may see the need to provide a third story. While these exceptions should not become the rule, they do suggest that in limited circumstances, a third story may be incorporated into a commercial type building.

C3. Maintain the average scale of one-story buildings at the sidewalk.

1) Traditionally, most commercial storefronts in this area were one- or two-stories in height and, while each block contained a mix of these heights, an overall sense of unity in scale was established.
2) In larger projects, a mix of one- and two-story modules should be used to maintain variety in heights.
3) New construction should present a tall one-story or two-story facade at the front property line. This facade height should not exceed 30 feet.
4) Floor-to-floor heights should also appear similar to those buildings seen traditionally.

C4. Where large buildings are planned, use a change in design features to suggest the traditional building widths.

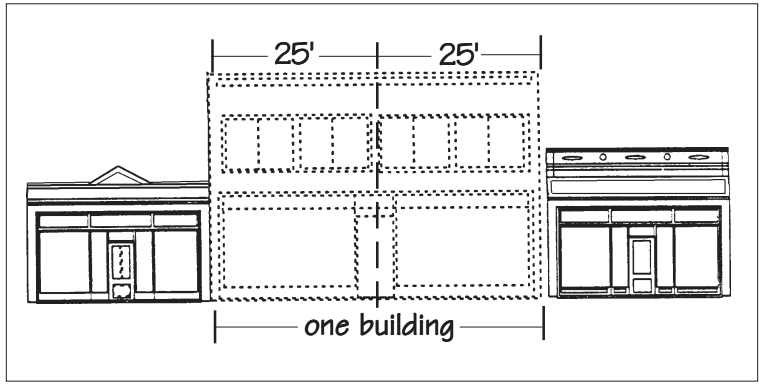
1) Changes in facade material, window design, facade height or decorative details are examples of techniques that may be considered.
2) These variations should be expressed through the structure such that the composition appears to be a collection of smaller buildings and additions.



✔ *Facade heights should be within the established range of heights for the block.*

C5. A larger building may be divided into "modules" that reflect the traditional scale of construction.

1) If a larger building is divided into multiple “modules,” these should be expressed three-dimensionally, by having significant architectural changes, throughout the entire building. A single form should remain the dominant element, such that the overall mass does not become too fragmented.
2) Step down the mass of larger buildings to minimize the perceived scale at the street.



A larger building may by divided into "modules" that reflect the traditional scale of construction.

C6. If a third story is to be used, it should appear as a subordinate "addition" to a two-story building.

1) In downtown, a third story may be incorporated into a commercial type building when it satisfies all requirements established in the *Downtown Louisville Framework Plan*.
2) The third floor should be set back substantially from the sidewalk edge such that the building will appear to be two stories in height as seen from across the street.
3) The third floor should also be set back from alley facades as well.
4) Materials and details should be simpler than those of the primary facade.

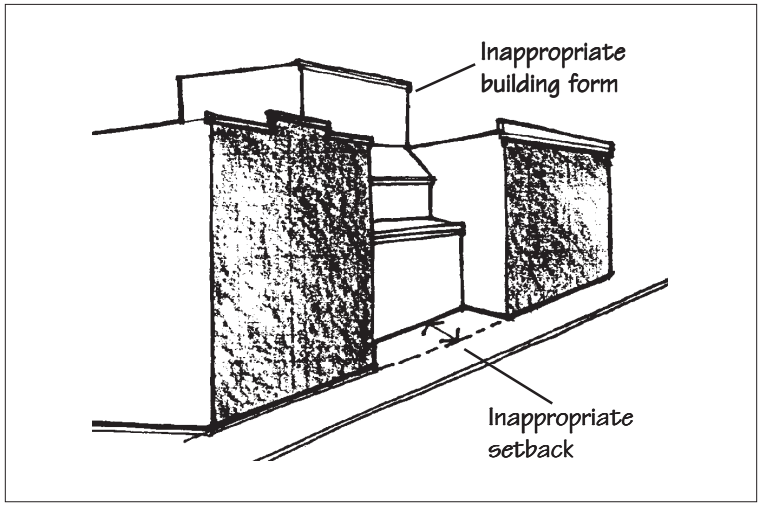
✔ *This infill building in Telluride, CO, appears to be a two-story building, but has a third-story element to the rear (below) which is set back substantially from the street and is differentiated in materials.*

Policy: Building Form
One of the most prominent unifying elements of downtown is the similarity in building forms. Commercial buildings were simple rectangular solids, deeper than they were wide. This characteristic is important and should be continued in new projects.

C7. Rectangular forms should be dominant on Core Area facades.

1) The facade should appear as predominantly flat, with any decorative elements and projecting or setback "articulations" appearing to be subordinate to the dominant form.

C8. Along the rear facade, a building should step down in scale to the alley.



✘ *Rectangular forms should dominate. The facade should appear as predominantly flat. This infill building is inappropriate.*

Policy: Roof Form
Traditionally, commercial roof forms appeared flat, sloped or gabled, but all had false fronts as seen from the street. This characteristic is important to downtown and should be preserved.

C9. Use a flat roof line as the dominant roof form.

1) Historically, commercial roof forms were flat, sloped or gabled, but each had a false front that gave the appearance of a flat roof as seen from the street.
2) False fronts and parapets should be considered for new buildings with gabled roof forms.
3) Parapets on side facades should step down towards the rear of the building.

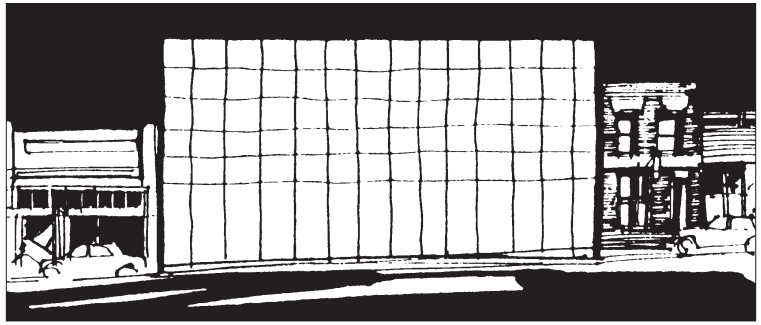
Use a flat roof line as the dominant roof form.

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS & DETAILS

Policy: Storefront Character
The storefronts of traditional commercial buildings are clearly distinguishable from the upper floors. Usually used to display goods, first floors are predominantly glass, with a small percentage of solid materials. Upper floors, used for offices or housing, are the reverse—solid materials dominate, and windows appear as small openings "punched" in the walls.

C10. Maintain the distinction between the street level and any upper floors.

1) The street level is generally taller than the upper floors. Store fronts of 12 to 14 feet high are typical, whereas second floors of 10 to 12 feet are typical.
2) The first floor of the primary facade should be predominantly transparent glass. Maintain the full height of this area in glass.
3) Upper floors should be perceived as being more opaque than the lower floor.
4) Express the traditional distinction in floor heights through detailing, materials and fenestration.



✘ *Avoid facade designs that fail to make a distinction between upper and lower floors.*

Policy: Facade Elements
The diversity of facade elements greatly contributes to the character of the street. In particular, windows, details, ornaments and cornice moldings reoccur frequently. These details have “depth,” such that they cast shadow lines and add a three-dimensional feel to the facade. These elements combine to form a composition for each facade that has variations of light and dark, solid and void, rough and smooth surfaces. This variety within an overall composition is an essential characteristic to be respected.

C11. Ornamentation should reflect the simple, restrained decorative tradition of Louisville.

1) Repeat similar shapes and sizes of details seen on traditional buildings.

C12. Avoid introducing new architectural elements at the front facade that were not used traditionally.

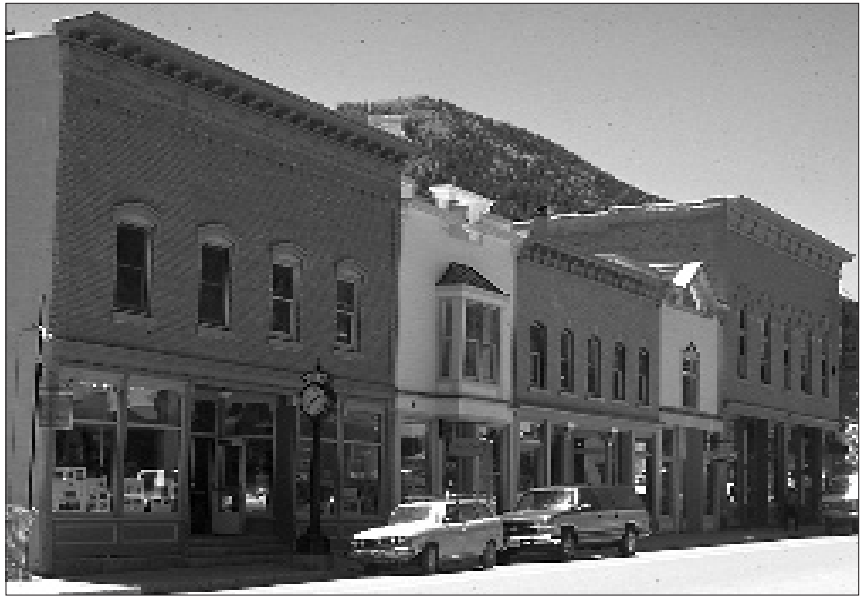
1) Parapets should be high enough to screen roof top appurtenances, as seen from the street.

Policy: Corner Lots

Many buildings on corner lots exhibit special features that add accent to both Main Street and the crossing streets. Corner entrances and storefront windows that extend along both street facades are examples. These elements are appropriate in many corner lot locations and should be encouraged. These locations often served as focal points for public activity and therefore sitting areas and other gathering spots are appropriate. The architectural designs for corner lots should encourage this.

C13. Special features that highlight buildings on corner lots may be considered.

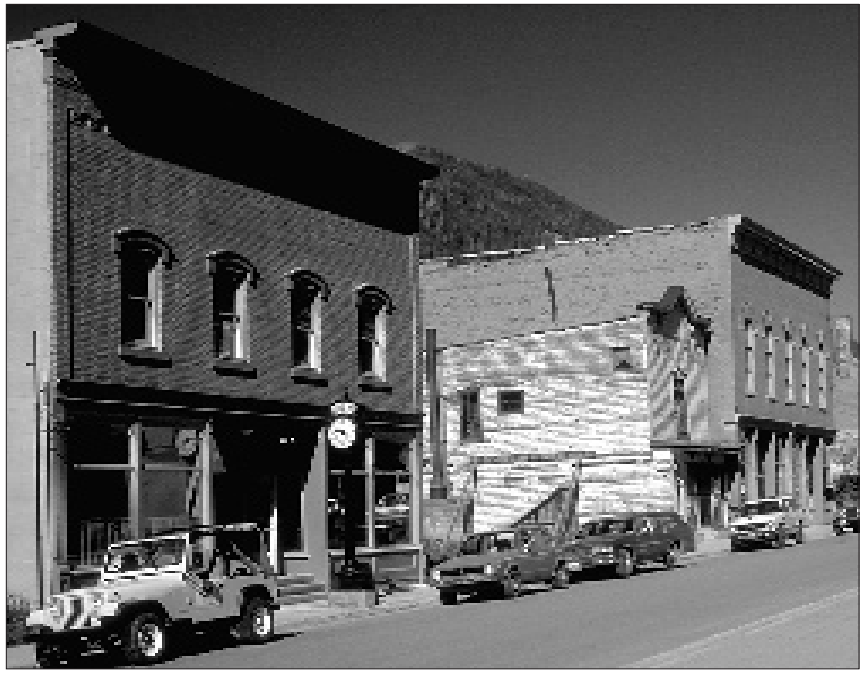
1) Develop both street elevations to provide visual interest to pedestrians.
2) Corner entrances, bay windows and towers are examples of elements that may be considered to emphasize corner locations.
3) Storefront windows, display cases and other elements that provide visual interest to facades along side streets are also appropriate.

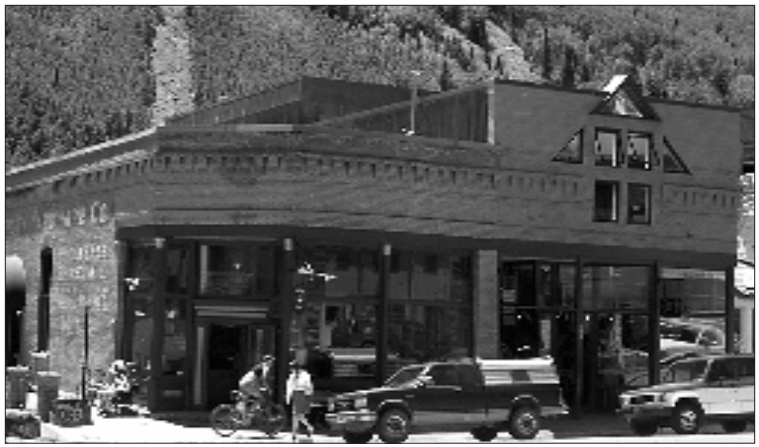


A new building divided into modules:
In the far left photo, a vacant lot lies between historic structures. In the upper photo, a new building is divided into "modules" that reflect the traditional building widths. Contemporary interpretations of historic details are used to demonstrate that the building is new. The detail of a cornice, immediate left, shows how this traditional element has been treated as an open railing for a roof deck. (A third floor is also set back from the street edge.)

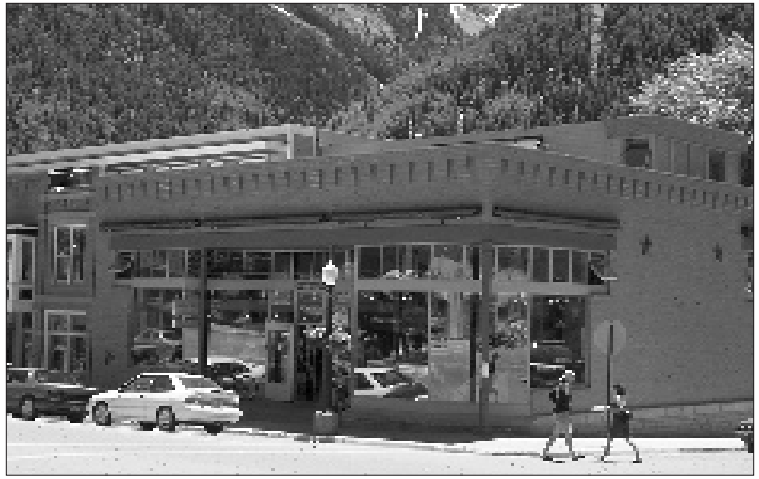
NEW CONSTRUCTION METHODS

The preceding design standards can be summarized in the following pictorial essay describing a variety of appropriate approaches to new construction in downtown Louisville. This includes examples of infill construction, a contemporary addition to a historic structure and the rehabilitation of a non-historic structure. Although a larger town and buildings that are a little more massive, these case studies from Telluride will provide some basic principles of how buildings can respond to their context.

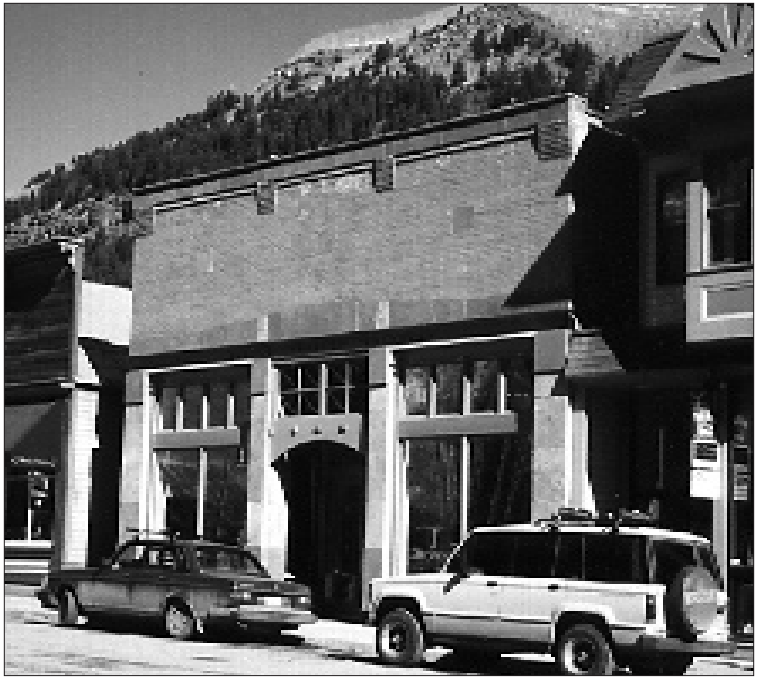




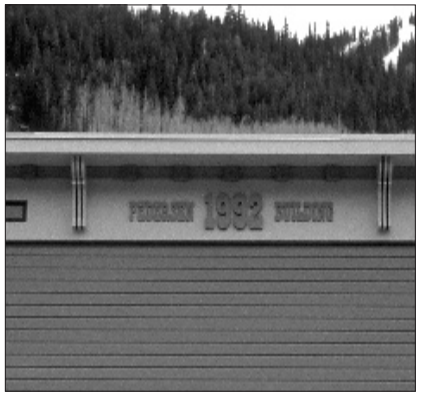
An addition to a historic building:
In the upper photograph, before construction, a vacant lot lies to the right of a one-story brick storefront. The addition, shown in the bottom photo, continues the molding of the cornice. A second floor sits behind a contemporary interpretation of a pediment, a detail seen in many false fronts.



A contemporary infill:
A one-story brick storefront incorporates display windows and transoms with new metal components. A reinterpretation of a traditional cornice caps the facade. While quite similar to many historic buildings, overall the building design is discernible as being new in its details.



A contemporary infill:
In a more "modern" abstraction of traditional elements, than on the preceding page, a new storefront is trimmed with stone. Steel framing is used as a transom over the recessed entry and a wood panelled kickplate supports the display windows. Stone also is used as a contemporary interpretation of the cornice at the top and at the midbelt line above the transom.



A "historic" design:
This new storefront is clad in wood siding and uses traditional historic details quite accurately. A stepped cornice expresses the traditional facade widths of the street and upper story windows have traditional trim. A building date in the cornice reveals that it is new construction.

A rehabilitation of a non-historic building:
In the upper photograph, a one-story building, constructed in the 1960s, is out of context and is set back from the sidewalk edge. In the middle photo, a new brick facade aligns at the sidewalk edge. Stone trim is used at the cornice and arches (photo below). Awnings fit the shape of the arched openings.

DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR THE TRANSITION AREAS OF DOWNTOWN LOUISVILLE

The Transition Areas correspond to two special sections of the Community Core of Louisville. These two areas retain much of their original residential character, but are zoned for commercial uses. Both Transition Areas are located just outside of the commercial Core Area, one to the north and the other to the south. These areas are now a mix of residences and businesses. The residential structures still establish the architectural tone, however.

These Transition Areas exhibit many features that are particularly attractive to pedestrian activity. Most houses have porches that orient the fronts of buildings toward the street and provide interest. Smaller outbuildings contribute to the character of side and rear yards and add visual interest to alleys. The design standards presented in this section are intended to encourage the continuance of the traditional residential context. This applies to both residential and commercial projects.

SITE DESIGN

Policy: Building Setbacks
As a group, buildings in this area have setbacks that vary within each block between 5 and 25 feet. There is, however, a general alignment of building fronts which is reinforced by small front yards. Most building entrances face the street and many are defined with porches. This is a distinct characteristic of the area and should be reinforced in rehabilitation and new construction.

T1. Maintain the general alignment of building fronts.

1) Front yard setbacks range from 5 to 25 feet. This range of setbacks should be maintained in new construction.
2) Where similar front setbacks are characteristic, maintain the alignment of building facades.
3) New construction should be set back to match the general alignment of buildings on the street and to maintain the traditional front yard.
4) Landscaping and fences that help define the yard's front edge are encouraged.

T2. Use porches to define entrances and to provide a sense of scale to building fronts.

1) Open porches are preferred, but enclosed porches may be considered on new buildings where the basic character of the porch is retained.
2) Porches are strongly encouraged; whereas, decks are not appropriate in front yards.

Note: *General Standards for All Projects in Downtown Louisville* (p. 15) also apply.

For individual buildings in the Core Area, the *Design Standards for the Core Area of Downtown Louisville* will apply to your project (p. 35).

T3. Maintain the pattern created by the even spacing of building side yards.

1) Buildings should be evenly spaced with side yards.
2) Use side yard setbacks that are similar to those seen historically in the area. Typically this was no less than 5 feet.
3) Consider especially the traditional rhythm of building spacing in the immediate block.
4) Although the actual spacing dimension may vary, it should fall within the established range of the block.

Use porches to define entrances and to provide a sense of scale to building fronts.

BUILDING MASS, SCALE & FORM

Policy: Mass & Scale

The original residences contribute greatly to the character of this area. The regular spacing of residential buildings, their smaller scale and sloping roof forms dominate the scene. Typical building heights are one-story. The widths of buildings vary between 20 and 30 feet. Evenly spaced along the street, these facades establish a rhythm that also contributes to the visual continuity of the area. New construction should be similar in scale to this context.

Traditionally, lower wings were attached to the rear and sides of primary buildings. Although the total aggregate floor area of new projects may exceed that of older buildings, the perception of the traditional scale should be maintained.

T4. New construction should be similar in mass and scale to the established context.

1) Traditional mass and scale is of primary importance. Where a new project abuts a smaller residence, step the building down at the property edge to minimize abrupt changes in scale, or increase side yard setbacks to reduce the impact.
2) Maintain the traditional proportions of building height, width and depth found in traditional residential buildings.
3) Attachments that provide variety in building form are encouraged. Rear additions that step down in scale are also encouraged.

T5. Maintain the average perceived scale of one-story residential buildings.

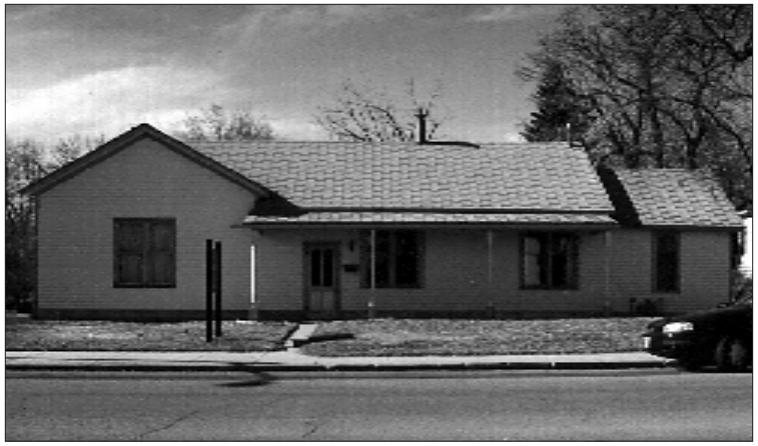
1) As a means of minimizing the perceived mass of a project, consider developing a set of smaller buildings, with one primary building and other subordinate structures, rather than one large structure.
2) Consider a series of small building modules, or components, that may be interconnected.

T6. Maintain the similarity of building widths.

1) No primary building facade should exceed 20 to 30 feet in width without sufficient setback in wall plane in order to minimize the apparent mass and width of the building.
2) Buildings that are wider than 20 to 30 feet should be made to appear as two or more small structures by changing materials and / or by "staggering" setbacks. This will also help to reduce the perceived scale of these structures.

T7. Maintain the traditional scale of buildings along the alley.

1) A variety of one- and two-story building forms and elements is encouraged along alley edges.
2) New sheds should be similar in height to sheds seen traditionally in the area. Usually less than 15 feet in height.



Maintain the average perceived scale of one-story residential buildings in the Transition Areas.

Policy: Building Form
Traditionally, simple building forms were used in Louisville. Most were modest rectangular shapes. Maintaining this tradition of building is vital to the protection of the character of Louisville. Therefore the size, shape and "degree of articulation" of exterior building walls should be compatible with those of historic buildings and the community at large.

T8. Buildings that are predominantly rectangular in form are encouraged.

1) One simple form should read as the dominant element in a building design.

Policy: Roof Form
Traditionally, individual roof forms were simple gables, with some hipped roofs and shed roofs on secondary structures. The surface area was sometimes broken up by smaller attached roofs or penetrations. This variety of roof forms may help reduce the perceived scale of buildings and adds visual interest to the area.

T9. Use roof forms that are similar to those used traditionally.

1) Sloping roof forms, such as hip, gable and shed, should be the dominant roof shapes.
2) Roofs composed of a combination of roof planes, but simple in form, are also encouraged.
3) Roofs should be in scale with those on historic structures.
4) Non-traditional roof forms are inappropriate.

T10. Roofs should be similar in scale to those used traditionally on comparable buildings.

1) The length of a roof ridge should not exceed those seen historically on comparable buildings. Traditionally, in residential contexts, the maximum ridge length was 35 to 40 feet.

T11. Roof materials should also be similar to those used on traditional residential buildings.

1) Appropriate roof materials include composition shingle, tile or standing seam metal.
2) In all instances, these materials should have a matte, or non-reflective finish.

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS & DETAILS

Policy: Architectural Character
Although individual buildings in the Transition Areas were simple in style, they did have variety in architectural details. With the current development of this area as one that is more intensely pedestrian-oriented, this visual interest continues to be important. The architectural components typically found in this area should continue to be expressed in new projects.

T12. Use porches, balconies, bay windows, decks and stoops which are similar in form and scale to those found traditionally, to provide visual interest and a human scale.

1) In new construction, bay windows should be similar in scale to those used traditionally. Position them to reinforce established alignment and pattern characteristics of the block.

T13. Building details that maintain the simple character of this area are encouraged.

1) Use simple ornamental trim and decoration that is in character with that seen traditionally.
2) Use architectural ornamentation in limited amounts on individual buildings; they were never a dominant element in the design vocabulary of Louisville and the neighborhood.
3) Traditional locations for decorative elements are porches and eaves.

T14. Repeat the patterns created by similar shapes and sizes of traditional residential building features.

1) Double-hung, vertically proportioned windows and triangular gable forms are examples of traditional building features.

DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS

IDENTIFYING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

In order for property owners to know which design standards and guidelines apply to their project (i.e. new construction versus historic building rehabilitation), a comprehensive survey of downtown Louisville's historic resources needs to be completed. A similar survey was conducted several years ago, but is incomplete. When a new survey, or survey update, is conducted it should use the following rating system. Therefore, when a building is rated as contributing, contributing with qualifications or non-contributing with qualifications, then the design standards and guidelines presented in this section shall apply.

Historic Building Rating System

"**Contributing:**" Those buildings that exist in comparatively "original" condition, or that have been appropriately restored, and clearly contribute to the historic significance of downtown. Preservation of the present condition is the primary goal for such buildings.

"**Contributing, with Qualifications:**" Those buildings that have original material which has been covered, or buildings that have experienced some alteration, but that still convey some sense of history. These buildings would more strongly contribute, however, if they were restored. Restoration will not be required of the owner, but such actions are strongly encouraged.

"**Non-contributing, with Qualifications:**" These are buildings that have had substantial alterations, and in their present conditions do not add to the historic character of downtown. However, these buildings could, with substantial restoration effort, contribute to the downtown once more. Such a restoration effort is not required; it is the owner's option. If an owner wishes to restore portions of a building to its historic condition, then these *Design Standards and Guidelines for Historic Buildings* should be used. If, however, the owner does not wish to restore the building, then the standards for new construction in the *General Standards and Guidelines for All Projects in Downtown Louisville* apply.

Make note of which category applies to your building, because some of the rehabilitation standards are applied differently, depending on the significance of the structure. Designs for the rehabilitation of buildings other than those in the above-mentioned categories shall be reviewed using the *General Standards and Guidelines for All Projects in Downtown Louisville* and the standards and guidelines for the appropriate Character Area.

"**Non-Contributing**": These buildings do not contribute to the historic significance of downtown. This category includes older buildings that have been altered to such an extent that historic information is not interpretable, and restoration is not possible. This category also includes newer buildings that have not achieved historic significance.

If you have determined that the *Design Standards and Guidelines for Historic Buildings* do apply to your building, the **next step** is to select a preservation approach for a rehabilitation plan.

BASIC PRESERVATION THEORY

The Concept of Significance

A building possessing architectural significance is one that represents the work of a noteworthy architect, possesses high artistic value or that well represents a type, period or method of construction. A historically significant property is one associated with significant persons, or with significant events or historical trends. 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, requires that a property be at least 50 years old or have extraordinary importance before it may be considered. 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 Louisville'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 that form a district as defined by the National Register of Historic Places Guidelines.

The Concept of Integrity

"Integrity" is the ability of a property to convey its character as it existed during its period of significance. To be considered historic, a property must not only be shown to have historic or architectural significance, but it also must retain a high degree of physical integrity. This is a composite of seven aspects or qualities, which in various combinations define integrity, location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The more qualities present in a property, the higher its physical integrity. Ultimately the question of physical integrity is answered by whether or not the property retains a high percentage of original structure's identity for which it is significant.

The Period of Significance
Each historic town has a *period of significance*, which is the time period during which the properties gained their architectural, historical or geographical importance. Downtown Louisville, for example, has a period of significance which spans approximately 70 years (1880-1950). Throughout this period of significance, the downtown has been witness to a countless number of buildings and additions which have become an integral part of the district. Conversely, several structures have been built, or alterations have been made, after this period which may be considered for removal or replacement.

SELECTING A PRESERVATION APPROACH

Each preservation project is unique. It may include a variety of treatment techniques, including the repair and replacement of features and maintenance of those already in good condition. Some of the basic preservation treatments are described in the standards that follow. In each case, it is important to develop an overall strategy for treatment that is based on an analysis of the building and its setting.

This research 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.

This historical research should be followed by 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.

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? By combining an understanding of the history of the structure, its present condition, and the need for actions that will lead into the future, one can then develop a preservation approach. In doing so, consider the terms that follow:

Adaptive Use
Converting a building to a new use that is different from that which its design reflects 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 its new functions.

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

Preservation
The act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity and material of a building or structure, and the existing form and vegetative cover of a site is defined as "preservation." It may include initial stabilization work, where necessary, as well as ongoing maintenance of the historic building materials. Essentially, the property is kept in its current good condition.

Rehabilitation
Rehabilitation is the process of returning a property to a state 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 reuse of the building and major or minor additions may also occur. Most good preservation projects in Louisville may be considered rehabilitation projects.

Renovation
To renovate means to improve by repair, to revive. In renovation, the usefulness and appearance of the building is enhanced. 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.

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

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 in Louisville.

Combining Preservation Strategies
Many successful rehabilitation projects that involve historic structures in Louisville may include a combination of preservation, restoration and other appropriate treatments. For example, a house may be adapted for use as a restaurant, and in the process, missing porch brackets may be replicated in order to restore the original appearance, while existing original dormers may be preserved.

DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Policy: Historic Building Character
The original character of the building—i.e. residential, commercial, institutional or industrial—is part of what gives historic significance. In all projects, this original character should be retained. Especially in projects which are proposing a change in the historic buildings original use.

H1. Respect the original design character of the building.

1) Analyze the building to determine which elements are essential to its character.
2) Don't try to make it appear older (or younger) in style than it really is. Instead, the genuine heritage of downtown should be expressed.

H2. New uses that require the least change to existing structures are encouraged.

1) Every reasonable effort should be made to provide a compatible use for the building that will require minimal alteration to the building and its site.

Policy: Site Relationship and Orientation
A building's historic significance includes its orientation and physical relationship to the street, alley and other structures on the site and adjacent properties. Many buildings have non-conforming setbacks. In such cases, it may be necessary to reposition a structure and to raise it for a new foundation in order to preserve it. When doing so, care should be taken to preserve the historic relationship of the building to the site.

H3. Preserve an historic structure in its original location on the site when feasible.

1) This includes orientation, setbacks, building height and the relationship of the first floor to finish grade.
3) Existing historic landscape features, such as fences, sidewalks and mature vegetation, should be preserved, and should be protected during construction.

PRESERVATION OF ORIGINAL QUALITIES

Policy: Historic Features and Materials
Historic features, including original materials, building and architectural details, window and door openings, building form, materials and scale contribute to the character and significance of a structure and should be preserved when feasible. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship should be treated with sensitivity. Continued maintenance is the best preservation method. Rehabilitation work should not destroy the distinguishing qualities or character of the property and its environment.

H4. Avoid removing or altering any historic material or significant architectural features.

1) Original materials and details that contribute to the historic significance of the structure are qualities that should be preserved whenever feasible.
2) Rehabilitation work should not destroy the distinguishing character of the property or its environment.
3) Retain and preserve original wall and siding material.

H5. Avoid adding materials, elements or details which were not part of the original building.

1) For example, details such as decorative millwork or shingles should not be added to buildings if they were not an original feature of that structure.

Policy: Historic Elements
Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible.

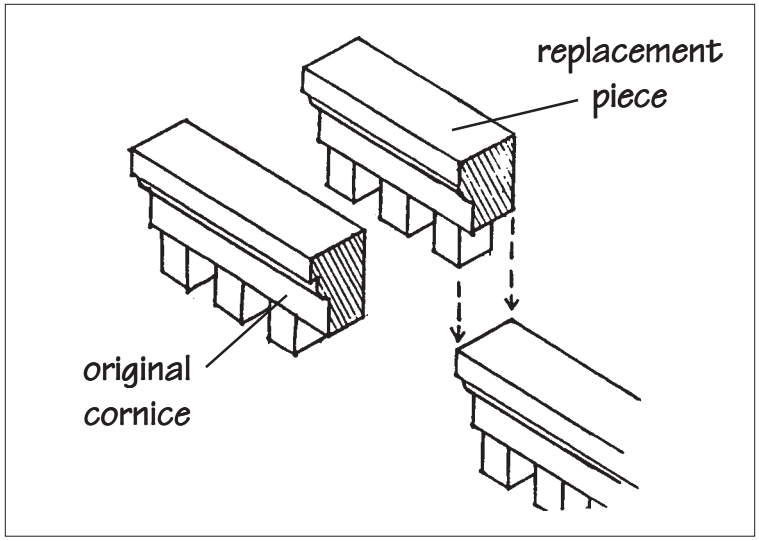
H6. Maintain existing significant stylistic elements.

1) The best preservation procedure is to maintain historic features from the outset so that intervention is not required. Employ treatments such as rust removal, calking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint.
2) Protect historic material with maintenance treatments such as rust removal, caulking and re-painting.
3) Repair only those features that are deteriorated. Finally, replace only those features that are beyond repair.
4) Patch, piece-in, splice, consolidate or otherwise upgrade the existing material, using recognized preservation methods whenever possible.

If the original historic detail is intact preserve it in place.

H7. Replace only missing portions of original elements when necessary.

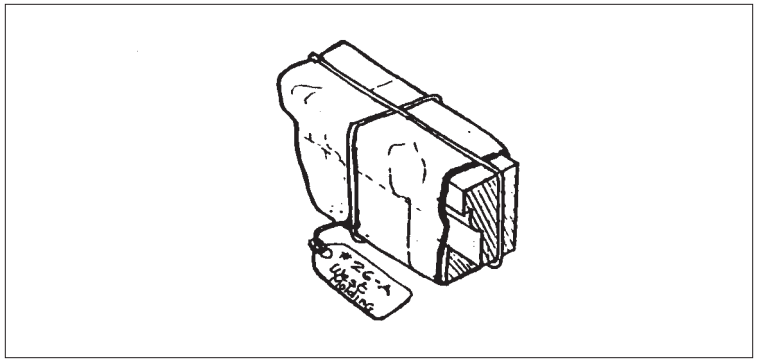
1) Don't throw out an entire window frame, for example, if only the sill is rotted.
2) Match the original material when patching with new material.



Replace only missing portions of original elements when necessary. Match the original material as closely as possible when patching with new material.

H8. When disassembly of an historic element is necessary for its restoration, use methods that minimize damage to the original materials.

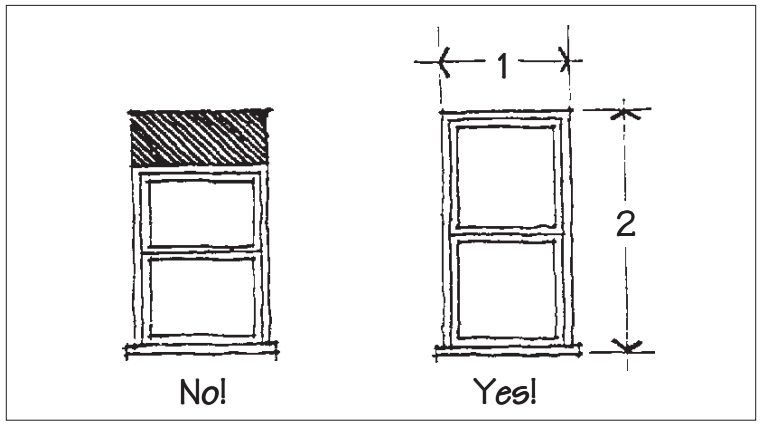
1) Sometimes trim elements and other materials must be removed in order to repair or refinish them. Always devise methods of replacing the disassembled materials in their original configuration.
2) Code trim pieces, for example, so you can replace them accurately.



When disassembly of an historic element is necessary for its restoration, use methods that minimize damage to the original materials. Code trim pieces, for example, so you can replace them accurately.

H9. Consider re-opening windows if they are presently blocked.

1) Window manufacturers now offer replacement windows that will fit the original opening; others will provide custom-ordered windows to fit exactly.
2) Do not block down the opening to accommodate a stock window that does not fit the building!



Consider re-opening the windows if they are presently blocked.

REPLACEMENT OR SUBSTITUTION OF ORIGINAL FEATURES

Policy: Missing Elements

While restoration is the preferred alternative, replacement in-kind is an option. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match that being replaced in design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Replacement should occur only if the existing historic material cannot be reasonably repaired.

H10. Replace missing original features in kind when feasible.

1) Use the same kind of material as the original when feasible. A substitute material may be acceptable if the form and design of the substitute itself conveys the visual appearance of the original material.
2) Replacement of missing architectural elements should be based on accurate duplications of original features. In some cases, an entire detail must be reconstructed. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the original in design, color, texture and other visual qualities.
3) Where reconstruction of an element is impossible because of a lack of historical evidence, then a new design that relates to the building in general size, scale and material may be considered.

Policy: Materials
Wood is the dominant building material throughout the town. To preserve the wood, it is important to maintain the painted finish of the siding.

H11. Original building materials should not be covered with synthetic sidings.

1) If original materials are presently covered, consider exposing them once more.
2) Vinyl, aluminum, imitation brick and stucco are inappropriate.

✘ *Original building materials should not be covered with synthetic sidings. Avoid concealing original facade materials.*

H12. Preserve original siding when feasible.

1) Avoid removing siding that is in good condition or that can be repaired in place.
2) If portions of wood siding must be replaced, be sure to match the style and lap dimensions of the original.
3) Maintain protective coatings of paint. If the building was painted historically, it should remain painted, including all trim.

H13. Use the gentlest procedures for cleaning, refinishing and repairing materials.

1) Deteriorated architectural features should be *repaired* rather than replaced, whenever possible.
2) Patch, piece-in, splice, consolidate, or otherwise upgrade the original material, whenever possible.

ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS

Policy: Existing Alterations and Additions
Some changes to a building may be evidence of the history of the structure, its inhabitants and its neighborhood. Such changes may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected. Some historic elements and alterations may have been a piece of another building and relocated and reinstalled.

H14. Preserve older alterations that have achieved historic significance in themselves.

1) Some changes to buildings are themselves evidence of the history of the building. These changes may have developed significance in their own right, and this should be recognized and respected.

More recent alterations, like these western and southwestern "cover-ups," that are not historically significant may be removed.

H15. More recent alterations that are not historically significant may be removed.

1) You may wish to photograph the process of removal to document it for future reference if others wish to research the building's history.
2) For example, asphalt siding, often designed to simulate brick, has not achieved historic significance in this context and its use would obscure the original clapboard siding. In this case, removal of this alteration and restoration of the original material would be encouraged.

Comparing this historic photograph to the current street scene seen at the left, many original facade elements can still be seen—they are just covered up. Consider removing these later coverings.

H16. Design an addition to be as inconspicuous as possible.

1) An addition should be visually subordinate to the main building.
2) Set an addition back from the primary facade in order to allow the original proportions, form and overall character of the main building to remain prominent.
3) Consider setting an addition back from the sides of buildings, as well.
4) Additions to buildings in visible locations, such as corners, require greater sensitivity.

ACCESSIBILITY

Policy: Accessibility
Federal regulations require that buildings which are generally open to the public be readily accessible to physically-challenged persons; this includes historic buildings. At the same time, the Americans with Disabilities Act recognizes that some alternative measures may be needed to adapt historic structures. Therefore, access should be provided in a manner which is compatible with the character of the building.

H17. These standards should not prevent or inhibit compliance with accessibility laws.

1) In some circumstances, property owners may be required to comply with ADA provisions and these design guidelines should not prevent their doing so.
2) Owners of historic properties should comply to the fullest extent possible, while also preserving the integrity of the character-defining features of their buildings and sites.

H18. Designs for new or additional access should be compatible with the building and its setting, while providing the highest level of access reasonably possible.

1) Alterations to buildings for the purpose of handicap accessibility should not obscure or destroy character-defining forms, features or materials.

H19. Generally, a solution that is independent from the building and does not alter its historic characteristics is encouraged.

1) In *Preservation Brief #32: Making Historic Properties Accessible*, The National Park Service has suggested some general solutions: creating convenient parking and providing ramps that are in scale with the building and located to the side of the building.
2) Identify the historic building's character-defining spaces, features and finishes so that accessibility code-required work will not result in their damage or loss.
3) Alterations to historic properties that are designed to improve access for persons with disabilities should create minimal negative effect on the historic character or materials.
4) Provide barrier-free access that promotes independence for the disabled to the highest degree practicable, while preserving significant historic features.

DESIGN STANDARDS FOR SIGNS

These sign requirements apply to all buildings that are found in downtown Louisville, both those that are considered "historic" and also those that are not.

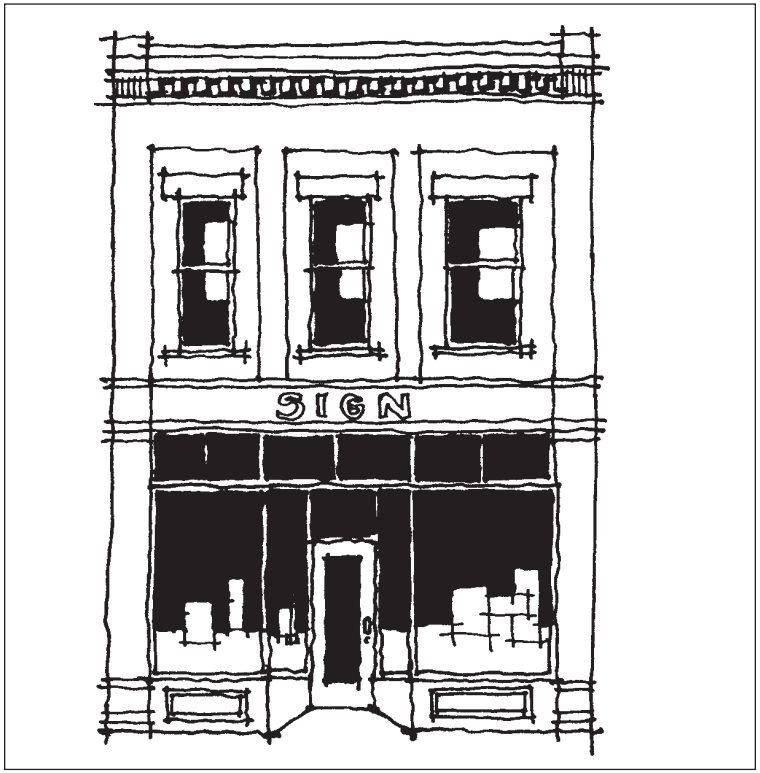
Policy: Sign Design
Wherever they are used, signs should be subordinate to the overall character of the area and they should be subordinate to the individual buildings to which they are related. Traditionally, signs were relatively simple in character in Louisville. Historic photographs illustrate a limited range of types. Along commercial streets, signs were mounted flush on storefronts or projected over the sidewalk. Today, the number of signs is greater than seen historically and it is important that their character remain subordinate to the overall street scene.

S1. Signs should be located in a master sign plan for the entire building.

1) The sign plan should designate the number, location, size and type of signs to be included.

S2. Locate signs to be subordinate to the building design.

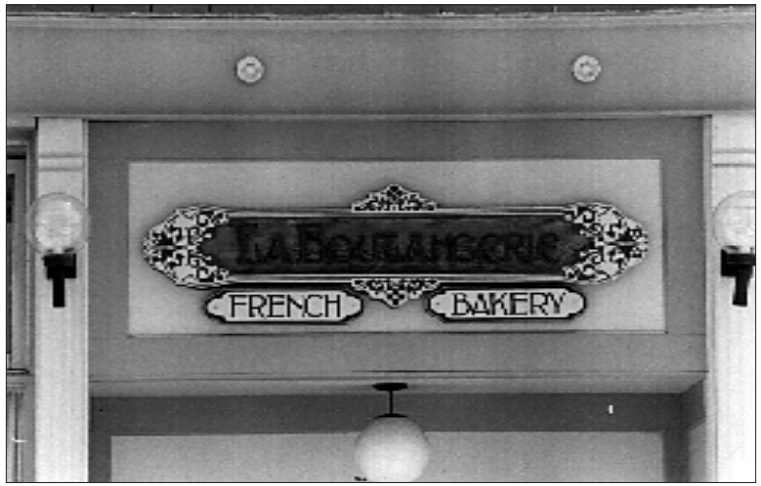
1) Signs should not obscure historic building details.
2) Small scale signs, either mounted on the building or free-standing, are encouraged.
3) Free-standing signs should not be so large as to obscure the patterns of front facades and yards.



The overall facade composition, including ornamental details and signs, should be coordinated. Signs also should be in proportion to the building, such that they do not dominate the appearance.

S3. These sign types may be considered:

1) Flush-mounted signs (usually mounted flat to the wall, just above the display windows).
2) Short free-standing signs (usually for businesses located in residences).
3) Projecting signs (near the business entrance, near eye level).
4) Window signs (painted on or hung just inside).
5) Awning signs (often including a symbol).
6) Monument signs affixed to the ground for auto-oriented businesses.
7) Neon signs may have achieved historic significance on building styles related to the modern era and may be allowed to continue.



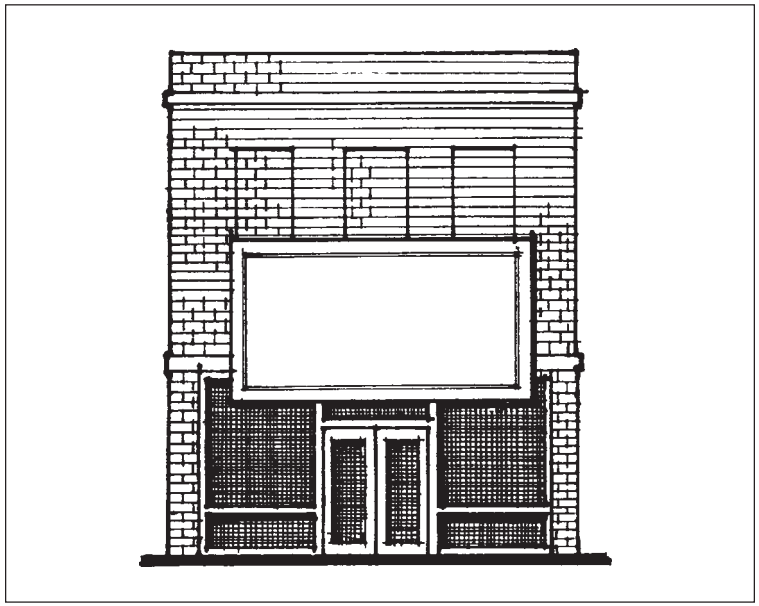
✔ *A flush-mounted wall sign is one that is mounted flat to the wall; in most cases, a flush-mounted wall sign should be positioned just above the display window.*

✔ *Symbols are appropriate as signs. Some may be three dimensional, adding special interest to the street.*

✔ *Monument signs are appropriate for auto-oriented sites. They are most effective when "anchored" with landscaping.*

S4. These signs are inappropriate downtown:

1) Tall free-standing signs.
2) Flashing signs.
3) Signs that visually overpower the building.



✘ *Oversized signs compete with the building itself and often distract viewers from window displays.*

S5. Position flush-mounted signs so they will fit within architectural features.

1) These should help reinforce horizontal lines along the street.
2) Coordinate the *color scheme* with the building front, and have a consistent color scheme between various building mounted signs.
3) Locate flush signs so they do not extend beyond the outer edges of the building front.
4) Look to see if decorative moldings define a “sign panel” for flush-mounted signs.
5) In general, the maximum wall sign area on a building should not exceed 7% of the overall facade area.
6) The maximum height of an individual flush-mounted sign shall be 2 feet.

S6. Locate projecting signs along the first floor level of the facade, not above.

1) Place signs near the business entrance, to guide your customer’s eyes to the door.
2) Clearance above the sidewalk should be no less than 8 feet.
3) Use *symbols* in projecting signs. These are more easily identified and remembered. They also add interest to the building.
4) The maximum size of an individual projecting sign (one face) shall be 6 square feet.
5) It may not extend from the building facade for a greater distance than 6 feet, or a distance equal to two-thirds the width of the abutting sidewalk, whichever distance is less.

S7. Where several businesses share a building, coordinate the signs.

1) Align several smaller signs, or group them onto a single panel as a directory to make them easier to locate.
2) Use similar forms or backgrounds for the signs, to tie them together visually and make them easier to read.

✔ *Create a directory to consolidate multiple signs in one convenient location.*

S8. Monument signs may be considered in the Transition Areas.

1) Keep them low in scale so they relate visually to the building.
2) The maximum size of a monument sign shall be 8 square feet.
3) Sandwich boards should not exceed 2 feet by 3 feet and should not obstruct pedestrian traffic on sidewalks.

S9. A window sign may be painted or hung just inside a window.

1) Painted window signs should be painted on a glass storefront window. The wording and graphics should be simple and concise.
2) The maximum area of a window sign may not exceed 20% of the window or 8 square feet, whichever is the lesser amount.

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

S10. Sign materials should be similar to those used historically.

1) Painted wood and metal are appropriate.
2) Plastic and highly reflective materials are inappropriate.
3) Internally illuminated pan channel letters are not appropriate. Neither are internally illuminated cabinet signs.

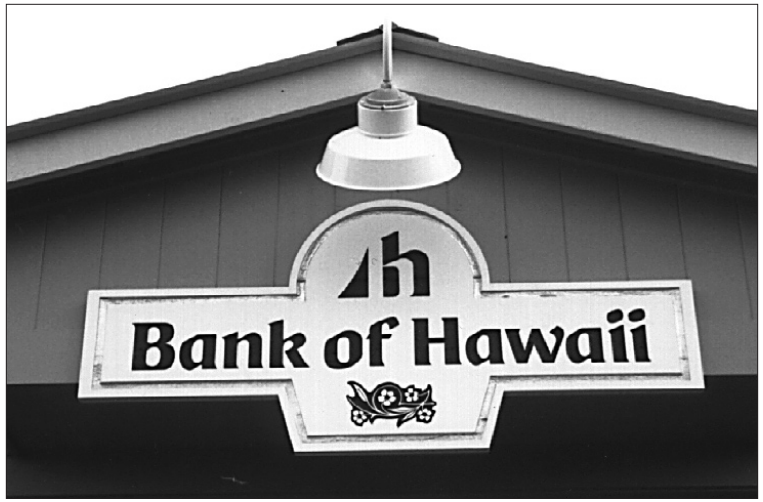
S11. Invest in high quality sign materials.

1) Good craftsmanship will pay off in longer service for your sign, and it will convey a stronger image to the public.
2) Select high quality materials, because signs are exposed to extreme weather conditions, and a deteriorating sign presents a poor image to customers.

✔ *Sign materials should be similar to those used historically. Painted wood is most appropriate.*

S12. The light for a sign shall be an indirect source.

1) If signs are to be illuminated, use external sources. Light sources should be placed close to, and directed onto, the sign and shielded to minimize glare into the street or onto adjacent properties, and should be very low wattage.
2) Internal illumination of signs will not be permitted.
3) Moving or flashing signs are not allowed.



✔ *Illuminate a sign such that it complements the overall composition of the site. Use external, shielded light sources.*

S13. Neon is acceptable if used in limited quantities, and where it is appropriate to the context.

1) The sign should remain subordinate to the overall building front composition.

Neon is acceptable if used in limited quantities, and where it is appropriate.

MAINTENANCE IDEAS

In addition to the design improvements that you plan, also include these basic maintenance tasks:

STREETS AND ALLEYS

1) Clear debris from sidewalks and alleys, especially where site drainage may be affected.
2) Clear garbage around dumpsters.
3) Keep snow removed.

Alleys, although not the primary "public" facade, still need to be kept clear of debris.

WINDOWS

1) Wash windows regularly.
2) Clear debris from inside windows. This will improve appearances greatly!
3) Repair shades or curtains in windows or replace with new.
4) Re-glaze loose glass. This will reduce air leaks.
5) Install weather-stripping. This will enhance energy conservation significantly!

STORE FRONTS

1) Wash display windows.
2) Repair damaged kickplates.
3) Re-caulk display windows to reduce air infiltration.
4) Install weather-stripping around doors.

Regular and periodic maintenance of a historic building assures that more expensive preservation and restoration measures will not be needed at a future date.

ROOFS

1) Clear debris from gutters and downspouts, to prevent their backing up.
2) Patch leaks in the roof. This should be a high priority.
3) Re-solder downspout connections, to prevent water leaking out onto walls.
4) Don't allow water to run out at the foundation of the building.

AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

1) Repair leaking downspouts for metal canopies.
2) Replace worn fabric awnings.
3) Re-secure loose awning hardware.
4) 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.

SIGNS

1) Re-secure sign mounts to the building front.
2) Repaint faded graphics.
3) Repair worn wiring.
4) Replace burned out bulbs.
5) Remove obsolete signs.
6) Preserve historic painted signs in place.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

It's a myth that thermal glass will make a substantial impact. Generally, the problem is that older glass has dried and shrunken glazing compound around it, which allows air to leak around the glass. The best strategy is to re-glaze existing glass. You may also consider installing storm windows. Be certain that the frame styles of the storm windows match those of the original windows. Follow these steps:

1) Re-glaze all loose glass.
2) Weather-strip doors and windows.
3) Install destratification fans to circulate air.
4) Install insulation in the attic.
5) Consider installing insulation in the crawl space or basement.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHITECTURAL TERMS

BASE: The lowest part of a building; the lowest part of a column.

BALUSTRADE: A railing or low wall consisting of a handrail on balusters (small supporting posts) and a base rail.

CAP: The top member of a column or pilaster.

CLERESTORY: An upper zone of wall pierced with windows that admit light into a large room.

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: The surrounding environment of a building or site, including other structures, site features, landscape and streets.

COPING: A capping to a wall or parapet.

CORBEL: A bracket of stone, wood, or metal projecting from the side of a wall and serving to support a cornice, the spring of an arch, a balustrade or other element.

CORNICE: A projecting ornamental molding along the top of a building crowning it.

DORMER: A window set upright in a sloping roof; the roofed projection in which this window is set.

ELEVATION: A “head-on” drawing of a building facade or object, without any allowance for perspective. An elevation drawing will be in a fixed proportion to the measurement on the actual building.

FACADE: A face of a building, usually the front.

FASCIA: A horizontal band of vertical face trim.

FREESTANDING SIGN: A detached sign which is supported by one or more columns, uprights or braces extended from the ground or from an object on the ground, or a detached sign which is erected on the ground.

GABLE: The triangular wall enclosed by the sloping ends of a ridged roof.

HISTORIC: In general, a 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 officially designated by the city under its local landmarks ordinance. Note that in some cases, a locally-designated property may also be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

HOOD MOLDING: A projecting molding around the top of a doorway or window to throw off the rain.

INDIRECT LIGHTING: Light only from a concealed light source outside the sign face which reflects from the sign face.

INTERNAL ILLUMINATION: A light from a source concealed or contained within the sign, and which becomes visible through a translucent surface.

KICKPLATE: A solid panel beneath a storefront display window.

LATTICE: An openwork screen or grill made of interlocking or overlapping strips.

LINTEL: A horizontal beam spanning an opening.

LUMINAIRE: A lighting unit; the housing for a light bulb, used for exterior lighting.

MOLDING: A shaped strip of wood, metal, brick, etc., usually mounted horizontally, and used as ornament on a surface of a structure.

MOTIF: An element in a composition, a principal repeated element in design.

MONUMENT SIGN: A free-standing sign, generally low to the ground with a continuous connection to the ground, as opposed to being supported on a pole.

PARAPET: Either the edge of the roof or the top of a wall which forms the top line of the building silhouette.

PRESERVE: To keep in perfect or unaltered condition. Preservation usually includes the overall form of the building, its structural system, and finishes, as well as any decorative details. Landscaping materials may also be preserved. Note that preservation of a structure may include keeping alterations and additions that have become important.

PRIMARY FACADE: The primary facade is the principal elevation of a building, usually facing the street or other public way.

RECONSTRUCT: To create again. A building, room or detail may be reproduced in its exact detail and appearance as it once existed. Accurate reconstruction requires good evidence of the original design. One approach to construction includes using the same construction methods as were used originally, whereas a second approach allows the use of substitute methods and materials, so long as they achieve the same visual effect as the original.

REHABILITATE: To return to useful life. Rehabilitation is the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural and cultural values.

REMODEL: To remake; to make over. In a remodeling, the appearance is changed by removing original detail and altering spaces. New materials and forms are installed. Applying a “modern” front to an older building is an example of remodeling. Often, these changes are not reversible.

RESTORE: To bring back to a previous condition. In a restoration an earlier appearance of the building is recreated, both in form and detail. Original elements that have been covered are exposed, and missing pieces replaced with new ones that match the original.

SHAFT: The main portion of a column, between the base and capital.

SILL: The horizontal bottom member of a window or door frame.

STABILIZE: To make resistant to change in condition. A building is usually stabilized to retard deterioration until it can be repaired. A weather-resistant closure, and a safe structural system are minimum stabilization efforts.

STANDARD: In the context of this document, a “standard” is a requirement that should be met, in order to be in accordance with the intent of this document.

STRING COURSE: A thin projecting horizontal strip of masonry on the facade of a building.

TRANSOM: A horizontal cross bar in a window, over a door or between a door and window above it. Also refers to a window above a door or other window built and often hinged to a transom.