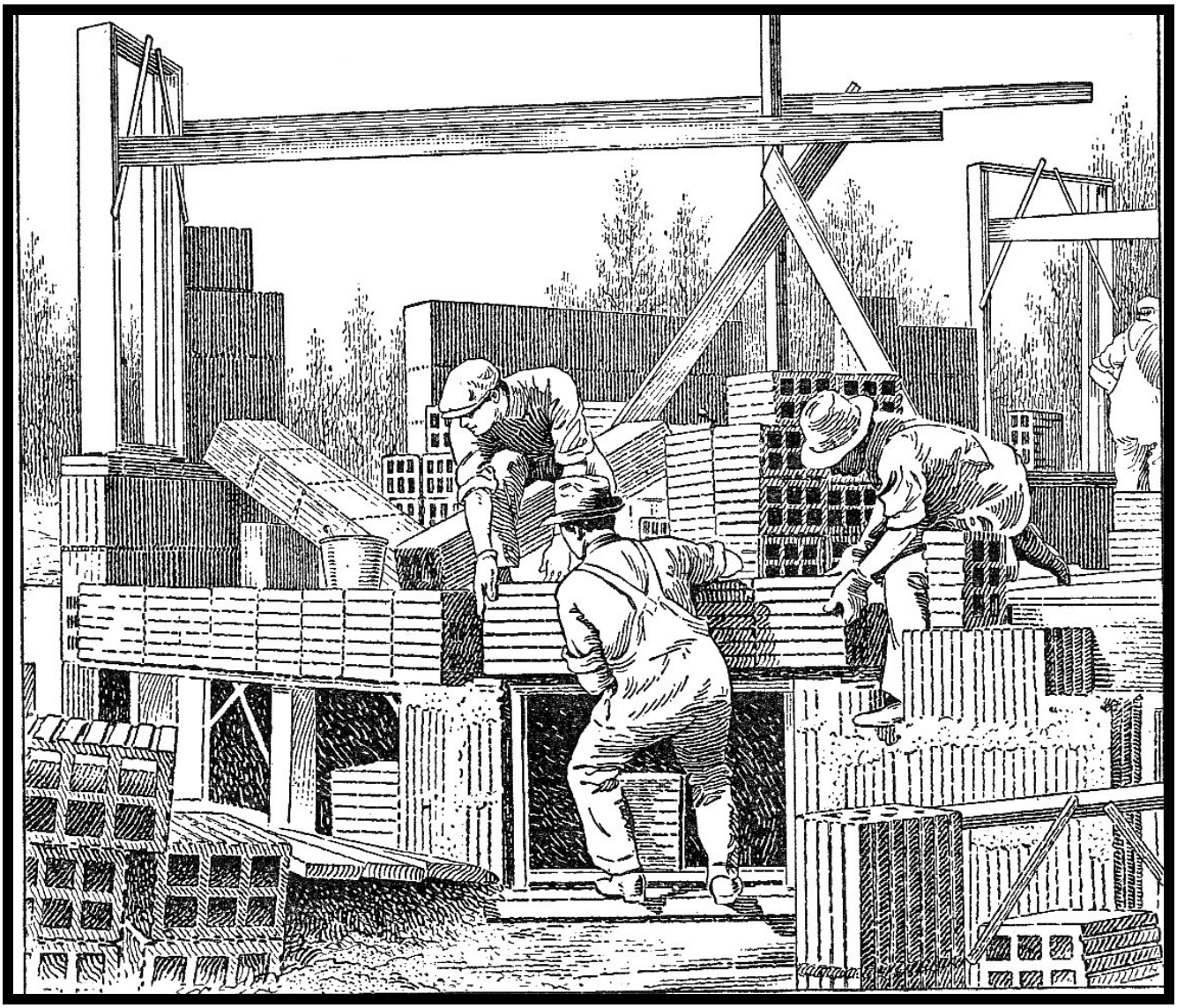
DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

Including Additions to Historic Properties & Minor Exterior Alterations

IN THE DOWNTOWN MEDFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT



LANDMARKS AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEDFORD, OREGON

JUNE 2008

ADOPTED JUNE 2008

By the Medford Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission, Cathy DeWolfe, Chair.

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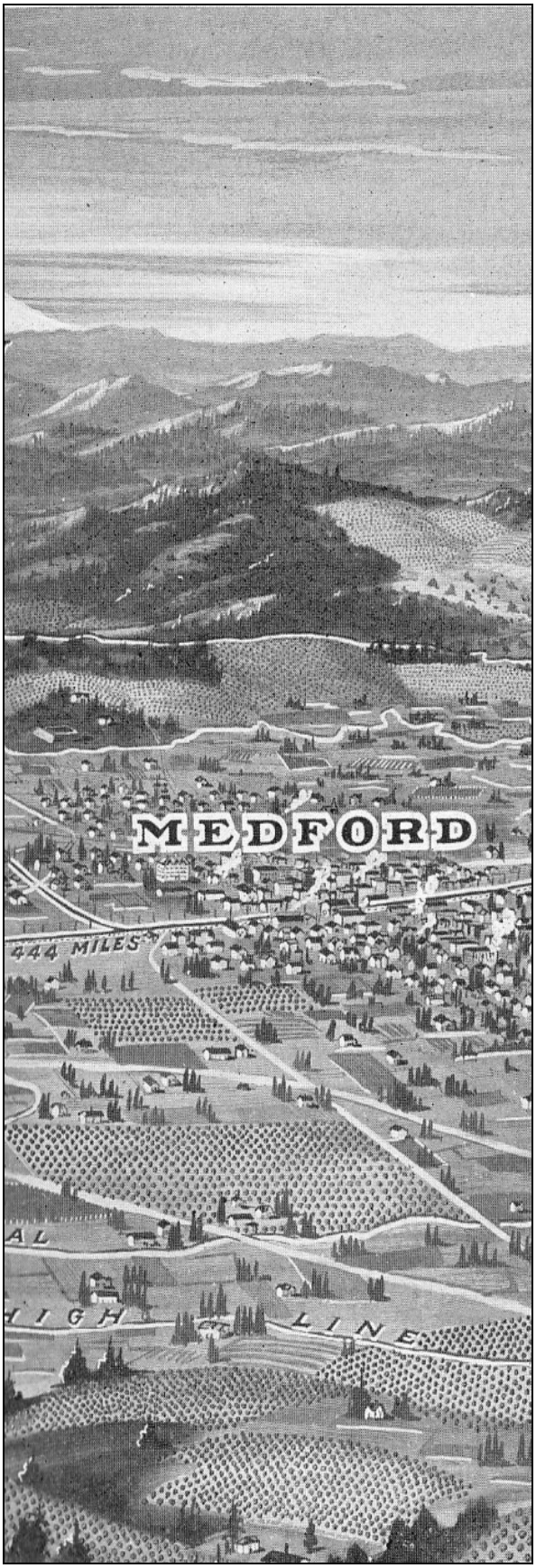

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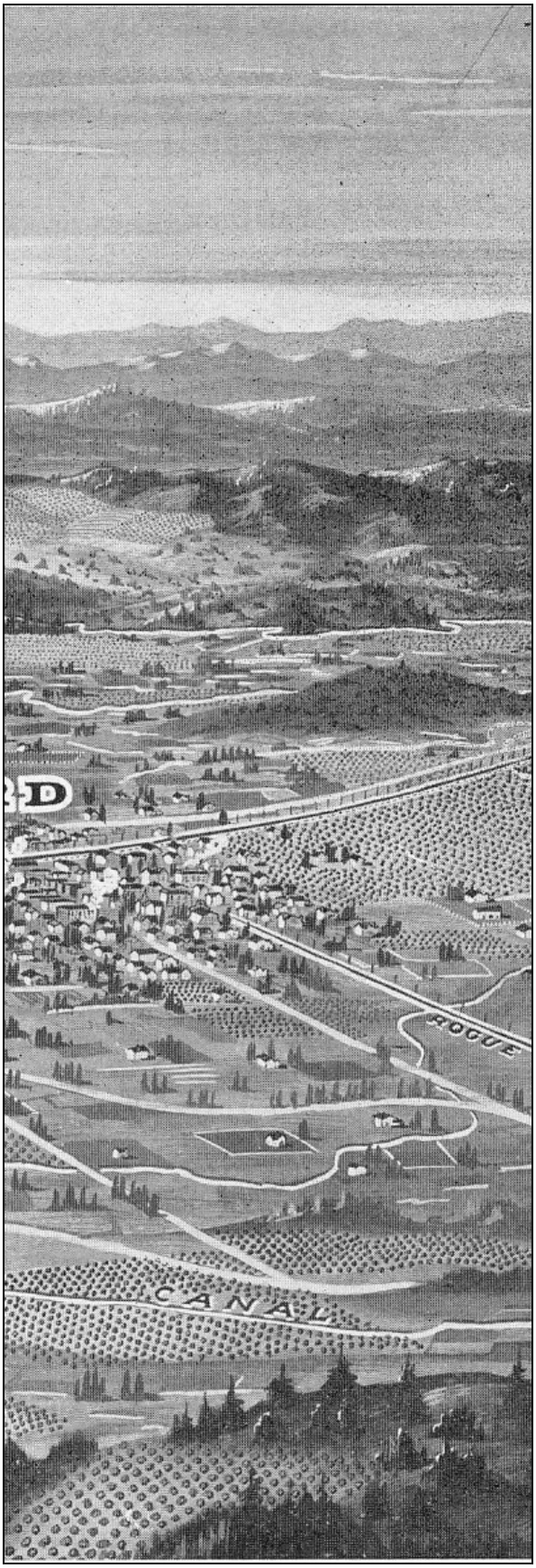

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APPENDIX:
Checklist

The following guidelines have been adopted by the City of Medford Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission to assist applicants with the design of compatible new commercial, mixed use, or multi-family residential construction and major additions within Medford's downtown commercial core. This area of the city includes a wide variety of architectural styles, building materials, and uses that collectively reflect the city's historic development from the pioneer era through the boom years of the 1950s and 1960s. Formally recognized for its historic significance through National Register listing as a historic district in 1997, the downtown core has increasingly become the focus of renovation and new development activity as it continues to serve as the community's central commercial area. These guidelines will assist property owners, architects, designers, and contractors in developing projects that maintain the area's traditional character while still allowing growth and change.

1. PURPOSE & INTENT:

The City of Medford initially recognized the significance of the historic character of the downtown commercial district through the establishment of the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone and the creation of what has since become the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission to review and approve proposed exterior changes, alterations, and demolitions. As stated in the Environmental Element of the City of Medford Comprehensive Plan, the purposes of the Historic Preservation Overlay are to:

- Effect and accomplish the protection, enhancement, perpetuation, and improvement of such buildings, structures, objects, sites and districts that represent elements of Medford's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history;

Main Street, Looking East from Holly, c1930

- Safeguard Medford's historic, aesthetic, and cultural heritage as embodied in such buildings, structures, objects, sites and districts;
- Complement the National Historic Preservation Act and National Register of Historic Places designations;
- Stabilize and improve property values of such buildings, objects, sites and districts;
- Foster civic pride in the beauty and noble accomplishments of the past;
- Protect and enhance Medford's visitor and tourist attractions, and support and stimulate business and industry;
- Promote the use of such buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts for the education, pleasure, and public welfare of the residents of Medford;
- Further the provisions of Statewide Planning Goal 5; and,
- Implement and supplement the Medford Comprehensive Plan.

These guidelines elaborate upon the essential characteristics of site, design, and use of materials for compatible projects. They will assist proponents, staff, and the Commission in reviewing applications for new construction, major additions to existing resources, and certain minor exterior changes to commercial buildings in the Historic Preservation Overlay district. These guidelines are consistent with the goals adopted as a part the City Center 2050 Plan, a document that stated;

Downtown Medford from the Air, c1927

> As new infill development and redevelopment is completed … the new construction should be undertaken with a sensitivity and respect for the existing historic fabric of the downtown city center.

These guidelines are not intended to provide a prescriptive "cookbook" approach to infill design. New construction proposed within the Historic Preservation Overlay is recognized as what it is: new work that should reflect the times, the conditions, and the materials available at the time of its construction. No expectation, nor any preference, is made toward copying the past or building new structures that imitate old ones. New buildings should not pretend to be other than what they in fact are — new buildings.

However, these guidelines do elaborate upon those elements that the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission have determined as essential characteristics that can allow new work to remain compatible with the historic character it is charged with safeguarding. These guidelines are based upon, and consistent with, the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, as adopted by the National Park Service. They provide additional descriptive material to determine compliance with Standard 9, which states:

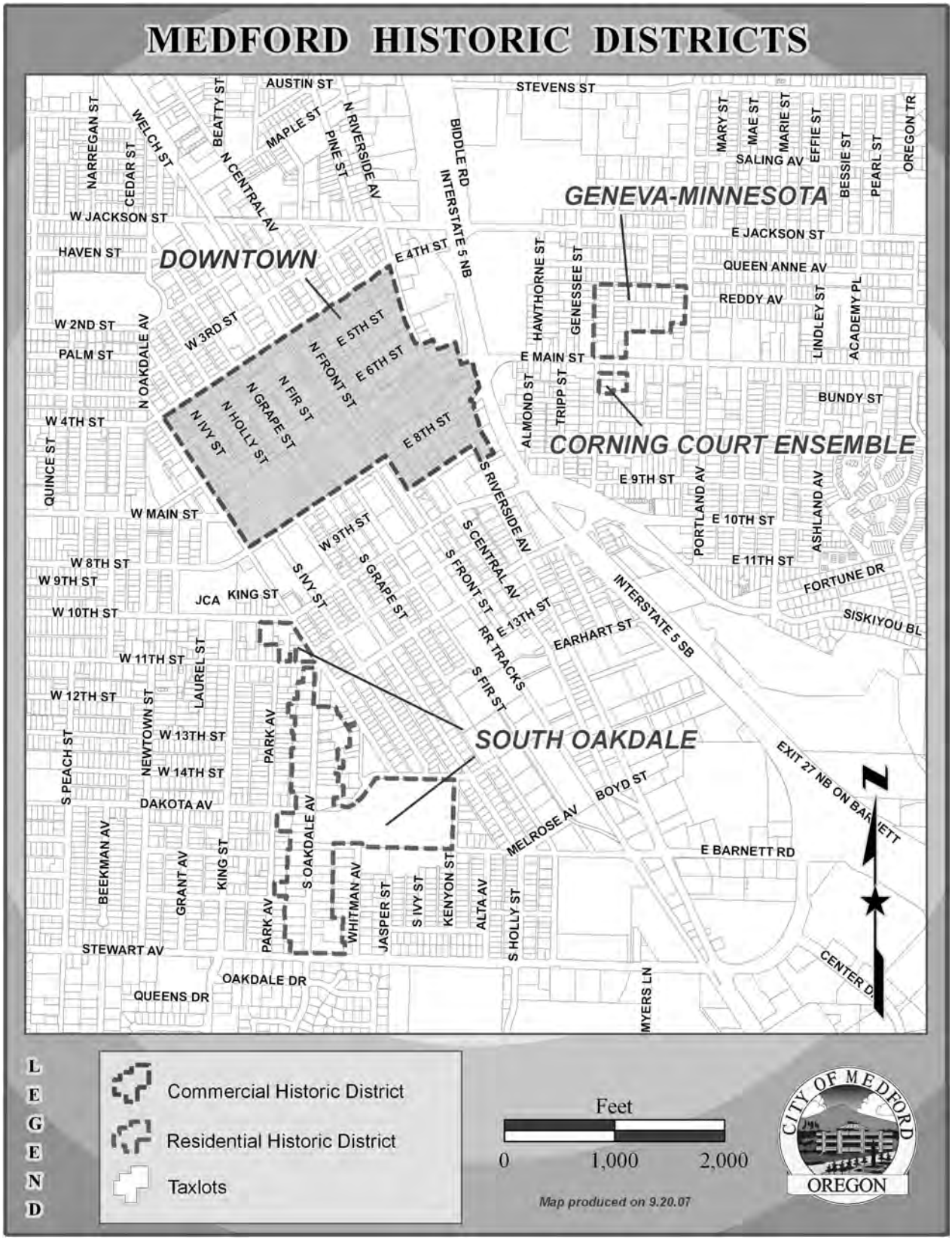
> New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment (NPS, 1991,:65)

Main Street, Looking East from RR R-O-W, circa 1908

The guidelines assist the Commission and the applicant by providing a common language for assessing the compatibility of new construction and additions to existing resources. Compliance with the guidelines will enable new projects in the downtown core to enhance and support the Historic Preservation Overlay District rather than distract from the qualities that led to its designation.

2. AREA OF APPLICABILITY:

The following guidelines apply to a portion of the Medford Downtown Historic Preservation Overlay zone as defined by the City's Land Development Ordinance. This area is roughly bounded by Riverside, Oakdale, Eighth, and Fourth street and contains more than 35 blocks and approximately 200 structures or sites.



City of Medford, National Register-listed historic districts
(DOWNTOWN Area of Applicability shaded)

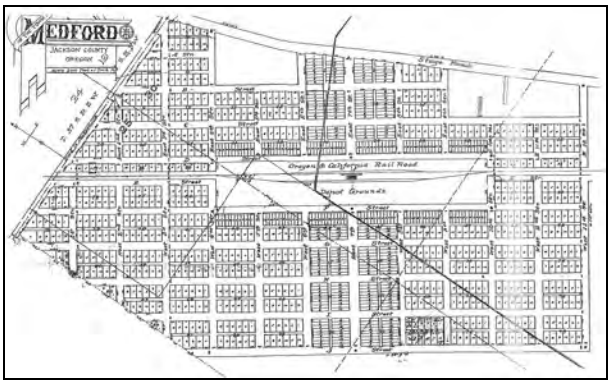
3. LEGAL AUTHORITY:

Section 10.136 of the Municipal Code enumerates the powers and duties of the Landmarks and Historic Commission. Section 10.136(2)d recognizes the Commission's authority:

> To adopt design guidelines for new construction and exterior alterations within an Historic Preservation Overlay. Such guidelines may be general or specific in nature and shall be in the form of approaches intended to aid applicants in preparation, presentation and implementation of development proposals that comply with the Medford Comprehensive Plan and implementing ordinances. Guidelines shall be advisory and shall not limit applicants to a single approach.

The Environmental Element of the Medford Comprehensive Plan, as revised in April 2003, notes that the "…preparation of design guidelines for the Historic Preservation Overlay would provide property owners and the Historic Commission (now the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission) with additional guidance to achieve consistency and predictability in the review process". Policy 11-E states that "The City of Medford shall continue to recognize the downtown City Center as the historic core of the city, and its historic attributes shall be a factor when developing programs for the downtown area." Implementation Goal [11-E (1)] states;

> Prepare and implement design guidelines for Site Plan and Architectural Commission and Historic Commission review of properties in the downtown to assure that exterior alterations and new construction are compatible with the historic character.



Medford, Original Town Plat, 1883 (Note the large "Railroad Reservation" that divides Main Street)

Main and Front streets, Looking NE, c1900

4. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Founded in 1883 in anticipation of the arrival of the railroad to Jackson County, Medford's downtown commercial district initially developed along Main and Front streets, surrounding the railroad depot. The Original Town Plat shows a block-wide swath between 8th and 4th streets, lining what are now Front and Fir streets, as the "Oregon and California Depot Grounds." In November 1883, narrow 25-foot wide lots, twelve to each block, were announced for sale to the public by the railroad. On the prime commercial land facing the Depot Grounds, lots were even further divided, to create twelve 12½-foot wide lots facing Front Street. Referred to at the time as "the new town on the valley floor," Medford quickly developed into the primary shipping point in southern Oregon, a bustling center of economic development.

Simple buildings of wood or brick, most in what is now termed the "Western Falsefront" style, were built facing the Depot Grounds along Front Street between 4th and 8th streets. Development soon expanded onto Main, east of the tracks. Cross-town traffic was limited by the depot, which sat facing the tracks across the middle of Main Street, both an impediment to cross-town traffic and a clear indication of Medford's economic focus.

As the city prospered, merchants replaced early wooden storefronts with more imposing "brick blocks." This provided evidence that Medford's future was strong while also reducing the constant threat of fire. By 1900, less than two decades after its founding, Medford east of the railroad reservation was dotted with one- and two-story brick stores intermingled with a few remaining frame structures, lining the graded dirt streets of Main, Riverside and Central. The railroad depot, moved out of the center of the street in by 1900, was replaced by a larger wood frame structure at the SW corner of Main and Front,

Main Street, Looking East from Holly, c1912

opening Main Street across the tracks for the first time.

The first brick building west of Front, the Thomas Building (135 West Main), at the SE corner of Main and Grape, was completed in 1902. In 1907, Medford renamed its north-south streets after fruits, plants, and trees in alphabetical order. From Apple Street, on the east, the new street names continued west to Rose. Only Front Street, facing the depot, Central Street, and Oakdale, deviated from the pattern.

By 1911-12, most of Medford's modern downtown had taken shape, with one-, two-, and three-story buildings (plus a few taller examples) occupying the full area of the narrow lots lining most streets west of Bear Creek. The city had grown at an incredible rate during the decade between 1900 and 1910, the so-called "Orchard Boom," when Medford's population jumped 327%, making it one of the fastest growing cities in the nation. Fueled by surrounding agricultural development, Medford's future appeared especially bright. In 1910 a new passenger station, this time of brick construction, was built at the head of 5th Street, designed to serve the community of 100,000 that Medford expected to become within the decade. New brick commercial buildings, some with glazed "face" brick facades, joined the earlier red brick storefronts and other "modern" styles became popular. "Old" buildings were often stripped of their 19th century details, their extended parapets, turrets, and elaborate cornices as owners tried to better reflect the modern era.

Main Street, Looking East from Central, c1908

Medford's growth slowed substantially after 1914 as the Orchard Boom went bust, a victim of over-planting and lack of a stable water supply. Downtown development slowed to a near stop during World War I and then, with Armistice, began to pick up again in the early 1920s. In 1926 the railroad finally relented

against strong community pressure and allowed 6th Street to be developed as a thru route, connecting that road across the tracks for the first time, only the second such thru-street in downtown. Opening 6th Street sparked a flurry of new construction within downtown.

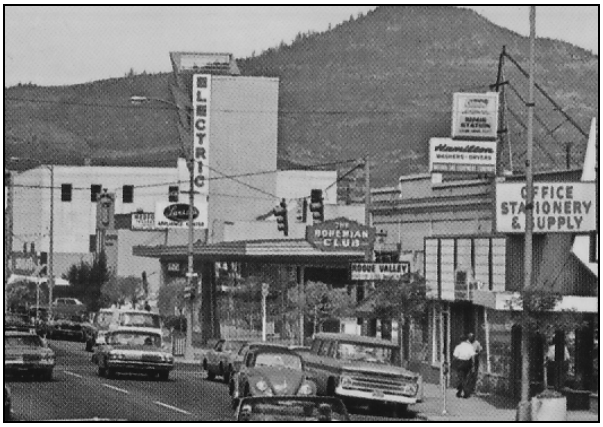
Developed to reflect the newest construction technologies, many of the new buildings from this mid-1920s period were built of poured-in-place concrete, sometimes brick faced as at the Holly Theater, but more typically treated with a smooth stucco finish. Johnson's Market at 6th and Grape (built in 1927, later the Groceteria), is typical of this style.

The Groceteria, 6th & Grape, c1935

Not to be outdone by new designs, owners of earlier buildings once again "modernized" and covered their "old fashioned" red brick fronts with smooth stucco, obliterating even more of the original 19th century detail in the quest to keep up with the times. Cornice lines, even the simple ones that remained from earlier remodeling, were often removed entirely.

During the 1930s, as the nation battled the economic challenges of the Great Depression, little building or remodeling occurred in Medford. This trend continued during WWII, despite the phenomenal economic activity that occurred throughout Jackson County as the result of Camp White, a U.S. Army Cantonment (training facility) built in the Agate Desert, at what is today White City. While some remodeling occurred in the early 1940s, including storefronts converted to USOs and other amenities for the soldiers, most work, certainly most new construction, would await the war's end.

By the late 1940s, the pent-up demand for new construction in Medford was again met by the availability of new materials and building styles. Streamlined Moderne buildings became popular after the war, with structures like the J. C. Penney's (now SOHS/Lithia Motors) seen as almost gee-whiz futuristic designs. Clean stucco walls, nearly devoid of any surface decoration, were pocked with large display windows. Building exteriors had flowing, often curved, surfaces, modified only by narrow incised horizontal "speed lines" or the occasional portal window.



Main, Looking east from Grape, c1960

Also in the late 1940s, portions of the Railroad Reservation that separated Medford from east to west, were finally subdivided and sold for development. To no surprise, much of this new construction focused upon the automobile, including gas stations and, most notably, the Winetrout Building, home of Crater Lake Ford (later Sims Electric). This later structure, with a nearly all-glass frontage for display and a large pylon sign, marked a major break in the traditional architectural

character of downtown, foretelling the increasingly auto-centric designs that would compete with Medford's traditional storefronts over the next three decades of the 20th Century.

Continuing through the 1950s, new stores, financial institutions and other structures were built in Medford, many in the "International Style," which by design was intended to sweep away much of the early architectural standard. Smooth brick and stucco facades, often with limited windows above the ground floor, created "boxy" exteriors. Buildings were placed back from the street, as off-street customer parking, became a near necessity. Medford's first "drive-up window," at the First National Bank of Portland's new home at corner of Main and Front, opened in 1956.

Postwar construction in downtown marks the first major demolitions of earlier structures, as the smaller footprints and construction character of the city's late 19th and early 20th century structures were considered non-functional. Most, of multi-story design to serve pedestrians, lacked off-street parking areas. As the city expanded its boundaries, single-story development became the norm. Major areas of re-development included the entire block of West Main, between Ivy and Holly, where the St. Marks Block and the California-Oregon Power Company offices were removed to allow construction of single-story suburban-style structures, both with parking to the rear. During the 1960s and 1970s much of the 1920s construction on Sixth Street was removed, most to create additional surface parking.

By the 1960s, national economic forces began to affect the architectural character of downtown. Many long-time downtown businesses closed or relocated. Markets like Groceteria closed and Safeway moved to the new Medford Center, built outside the downtown core, on Jackson. Locally-owned, businesses closed as their owners retired. These buildings were soon occupied by lessees. Little investment, either in the form of remodeling or new construction occurred and what did was often of inexpensive character, reflecting the stagnant land values as downtown struggled against the changing habits of American consumers.

First Fidelity Savings, 6th & Grape, c1965

After the opening of the Rogue Valley Mall, in October 1986, downtown Medford faced ever increasing vacancy rates and disinvestment. Interest in revitalization that capitalized on downtown's history and architectural character began with a series of events held in concert with the local architectural community called "Medford Renaissance." Later, with the formation of the Medford Historic Commission in 1986 (now the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission), the City initiated the formal review of development projects in downtown with the goals of protecting, preserving, and enhancing its historic character.

Downtown Medford was formally listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1997. Since that time, bolstered by state and federal tax incentives, in addition to programs of the Medford Urban Renewal Agency and the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission, dozens of historic structures in downtown have been rehabilitated to better reflect their historic character.

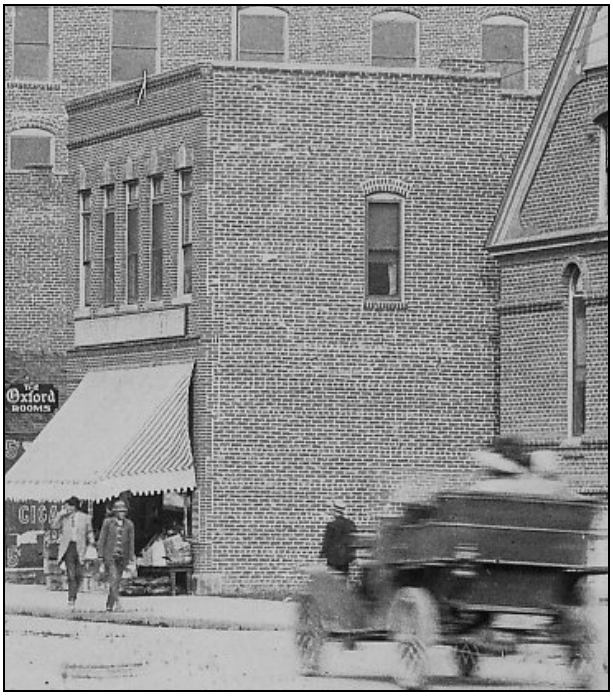
5. ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Architecturally, most of Medford's earliest permanent buildings were simply brick versions of the standard commercial forms. Called "Flatfronts" or "Brick Blocks" by the people that built them, such structures are termed "Chicago Style" by architectural historians, in reference to the simple buildings that became popular in that city as it rebuilt after the Great Fire of 1871. Typically built of red brick in common or running bond, narrow width buildings (bays) were developed either singly (25 feet wide) or in groups of two or three to create wider structures, all based on the underlying land divisions established by the railroad.

The following brief descriptions cover the major architectural styles found in downtown Medford during its historic period (1883-1949) as defined by the National Register District nomination. In understanding Medford's architecture, it must be stressed that most buildings were locally designed, almost universally by their builders, men with little or no formal design background. While a few late-19th and early 20th Century buildings in Medford were architect-designed and exhibit recognizable stylistic elements, few "pure" examples of any particular style exist until the latter portions of the historic period. As a result, most structures in Medford exhibit elements associated with more than one architectural style, a trend exacerbated by serial remodeling over time.

Unless otherwise indicated, ALL architectural styles in downtown share the following:

- Zero setback, building oriented to the street and full lot coverage (some small rear setbacks)
- A clear sense of entry
- Pedestrian-level visual interest
- 1-2 story heights, taller structures located at intersections



A. Vernacular (Chicago Style)

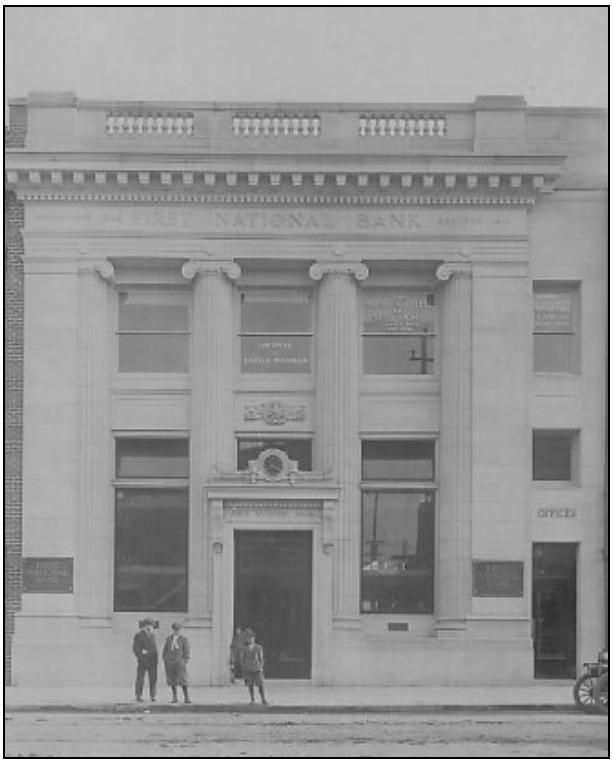
1883 through circa 1930s

"Vernacular" is an ungainly, and largely academic, term that is used to refer to buildings built with little architectural pretense. Vernacular forms are those that evolve from basic construction and materials, adapting and incorporating little or no formal stylistic elements.

In Medford, and most of the western United States, vernacular commercial architecture evolves from the Western Falsefront Style. That style, the classic row of one and two story wood-frame storefronts made famous by the Hollywood Western, was typically painted white in most towns, though not always. As brick became available locally, either as the result of local clay deposits and kilns or the arrival of the railroad, similar forms, dubbed "brick blocks," were built in this more substantial, and fireproof, material.

TYPICAL ELEMENTS:

- One or two story construction
- Typically exposed, common-bond, red brick
- Inherent detail through brick patterns, including cornices, stringcourses, and other divisions
- Multiple narrow bays combined for wider volumes
- Tall first floor storefront
- Recessed entry, often framed in wood
- Side (center) stair entry to upper level
- Arched-top or square, symmetrical window openings
- Projecting cornice defines the top of primary elevation.
- "Inset" storefront originally of wood or cast iron set within masonry opening.



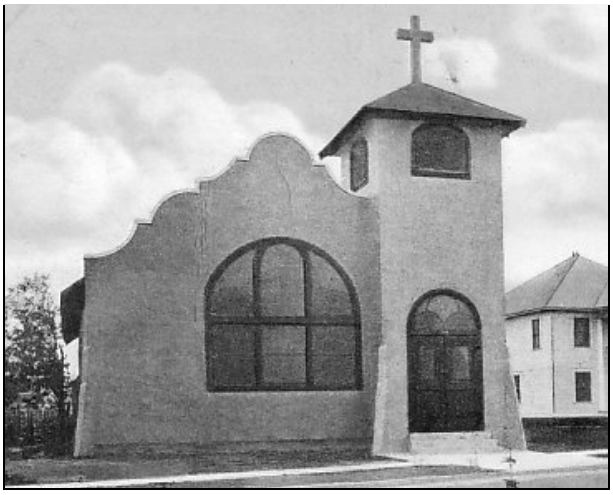
B. AMERICAN RENAISSANCE

1900-1920

Spurred by the prosperity of the early 20th century, the American Renaissance period traces its roots to both Thomas Jefferson and the 1892 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. In the early decades of the 20th Century, the style became popular for public buildings, especially schools, government structures, and financial institutions, although some elements appeared in commercial structures as well. In downtown Medford, the best example of the style was the First National Bank of Medford, a mid-block example of the form that is called a "Temple Front" for obvious reasons.

TYPICAL ELEMENTS:

- Classical columns
- Strong cornice/entablature
- Symmetrical designs and fenestration patterns
- Massive "block" treatment of stone or concrete imitates coursed masonry.
- Arched-top, Palladian-style, upper story windows, many with dense, multi-light, muntin patterns
- Glazed "face brick," terra-cotta or similar "fancy" surfaces to suggest marble, stone, or other more elaborate materials (rear and side elevations in common red brick or concrete).
- Highlighted entries, with elaborate flanking columns.
- Extensive cornices and entablatures with dentils, crown moldings, frieze panels and similar details that "cap" the structure.



C. Spanish Colonial Revival

1920s-1930

Popularized after the 1915 Panama-California Exposition in San Diego, California, the Spanish Colonial Revival Style enjoyed a short but influential period of popularity in Medford that coincided with the city's post-WWII construction boom during the mid-1920s. Typically built of poured concrete or hollow clay tile structural systems and then stucco-coated, Spanish Colonial Revival created inexpensive, attractive, and modern designs for a number of downtown structures. Several existing buildings, most notably the Adkins-Webb Block in the 200 Block of East Main, were remodeled to reflect the style, yet another example of the Medford's typical drive to keep up with times.

Spanish Colonial Revival was particularly popular for religious architecture, including the now-demolished Catholic Church, at left center, and the surviving Methodist and Presbyterian churches in downtown, the latter of which reflects a particularly exuberant version of the style.

TYPICAL ELEMENTS:

- Stucco exterior surfaces
- Arched-top parapet details
- Arched window/door openings
- Terra cotta roof or pent details
- Terra cotta surface detailing such as embedded "roundels" highlight plain stucco surfaces.
- Heavy wooden/split turning elements as pilasters and opening trim (see Craterian window detailing)
- Limited color palette reflects "adobe" walls and traditional tile roofing.
- "Pents" or tiled intermediate cornices and stringcourse lines serve as mid-level horizontal elements.

D. Streamline Moderne

(incls. Art Deco & "Stripped Classical")
1930-1950

A group of approaches to developing a "post-Classical" architectural vocabulary that reflected America's rise as a world power in the "Modern" era, these styles all share a respect for traditional massing and fenestration while using modern materials and very simple, typically engaged, detailing.

"Stripped Classical," a modernistic interpretation of the same concepts that informed American Renaissance earlier, remains monumental, with a prominent entry, but relies upon modernistic detailing. A typical example is the NR-listed 1932 Jackson County Courthouse.

Streamline Moderne, which trends toward the latter end of the period of use, relies on more rounded, or 'streamlined' forms that evoke the round surfaces of mechanized transportation, particularly airplanes. Medford's premier example of the form is the 1948 J. C. Penney Building at 6th and North Central.

TYPICAL ELEMENTS:

- Minimally defined cornice
- Formal symmetrical design and fenestration pattern
- Steel sash windows, aluminum or natural metal finishes
- Smooth surfaces (stucco) or masonry panels in larger modules. Rounded elements in "Moderne" without hard corners.
- Strong horizontal divisions that reflect classical styles but treated with entirely ahistorical character (such as block or asymmetrical capitals)
- Highlighted entries, with elaborate flanking columns and entablatures.

MURA Image

MURA Image

E. International Style

Late-1940s-1960s

Although largely occurring outside the defined period of significance in downtown Medford, some examples of the so-called International Style were constructed in downtown during the period and many more earlier structures were remodeled to reflect its influence on post-WWII architectural design.

Classic examples include the 1948 Pacific Greyhound Bus Depot, shown at top left, which also shows a Moderne influence, along with the remodeling of both Mann's Department Store (into Miller's) on North Central and the Cuthbert Building (into Newberry's, shown at left center).

One of downtown's most pristine examples of the International Style, somewhat unusually made of brick, is the First National Bank of Portland Building, at the NW corner of Front and West Main streets, built in 1954 (see lower left).

TYPICAL ELEMENTS:

- Minimal or no cornice
- Smooth walls with irregular window and door openings
- Cubist massing
- Broad flat surfaces, often devoid of windows
- Modern materials
- Indistinct entryways.

MURA Image

F. Roadside Vernacular

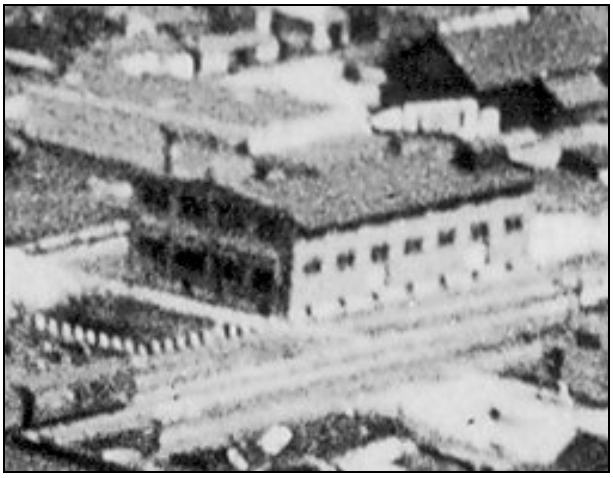
1920s-1950s

Defined more by function and siting that any particular architectural treatment, "Roadside Vernacular" is here used to defined those structures there were built primarily to serve a driving public rather than a pedestrian one. Such buildings are (were) concentrated along North Riverside through the downtown but also occurred at corners such as the Mobilgas Station that stood just east of Medford Hotel (center left). The key feature of Roadside Vernacular is that they were set back from the public right-of-way, to create off-site auto related access.

Note: Roadside Vernacular is now seen as generally inconsistent with the traditional pedestrian development pattern of downtown. This style and its elements should only be used to inform the design of new construction with careful planning and forethought. Unless related to the proposed use of a new structure, roadside vernacular is accordingly discouraged for new construction in the downtown.

TYPICAL ELEMENTS:

- Single story only
- Gable roofs provide more 'residential' design than is typical
- Set back from street to allow auto access
- Modest building designs with large advertising components



G. Utilitarian/Industrial

(entire period)

Historically, the entire center core of the downtown was an industrial or manufacturing center based upon its proximity to the railroad line through town. Buildings here, all initially built on land leased from the Southern Pacific Railroad, were almost entirely warehouses, packing plants, lumber yards and similar industrial-focused structures. Built in a simple and functional style they followed a different architecture model than Main Street retail.

Railroad-focused utilitarian and industrial structures in Medford tended toward dual orientation, both to the street and the rails, with covered loading docks. Generally free-standing (rather than sharing common walls) these structures often had hipped or gable roofs, followed by barrel vaults after World War II. Industrial volumes typically had substantial open space for storage or staging areas surrounding them, yielding a character more typical of modern "suburban" development. Architecturally, industrial architecture has very limited exterior surface decoration, relying upon simple construction to enclose large interior areas.

TYPICAL ELEMENTS:

- Single or two-story design
- Loading docks, covered porches
- Roof-top monitors or "industrial" type windows set within masonry or frame walls.
- Limited detail or trim
- Brick, unpainted poured concrete, or wood siding exteriors.
- Painted wall graphics, particularly facing the rail corridor.
- Later examples use concrete masonry units, galvanized metals and other "utilitarian" materials of the period.

6. ELEMENTS OF COMPATIBILITY:

"Compatible" construction within an existing building pattern, often termed "infill," requires attention to multiple design factors, the relative value of which shifts from project to project. The following elements of compatibility are not a "cookbook" that can be applied uniformly to any lot or project to guarantee success, for no such "recipe" exists. Indeed, were compatibility and appropriate infill design so easily reckoned, guidelines such as these wouldn't be needed.

Compatible construction is more art than science: a process where the sum of the work exceeds its component pieces and where success is never guaranteed. However, there are certain basic principles that can inform quality and point toward the right direction. Not all projects will equally address the following elements, just as not all existing buildings within the downtown completely and unquestionably reflect this approach.

*This is **not** a checklist! Successfully compatible projects do not need to address each and every one of these elements and, where they do, need not do so equally.*

These are *guidelines.* A proposed building that addresses the following concepts is more likely to result in an attractive, though clearly new, project that adds to and supports the historic character of downtown. It should be clearly stated, and clearly understood by all, that no new construction can be 'historic" until many years have passed.

The following general considerations should be taken into account for new construction or major additions within the downtown portion of the Medford Historic Preservation Overlay Zone.

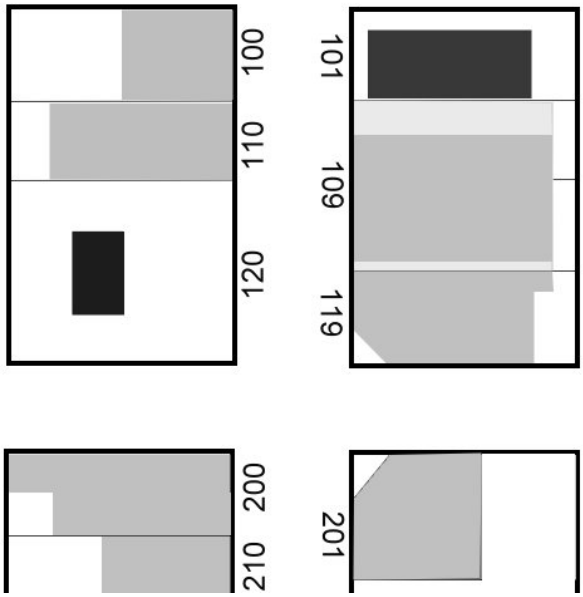


Figure 1: Building Setback

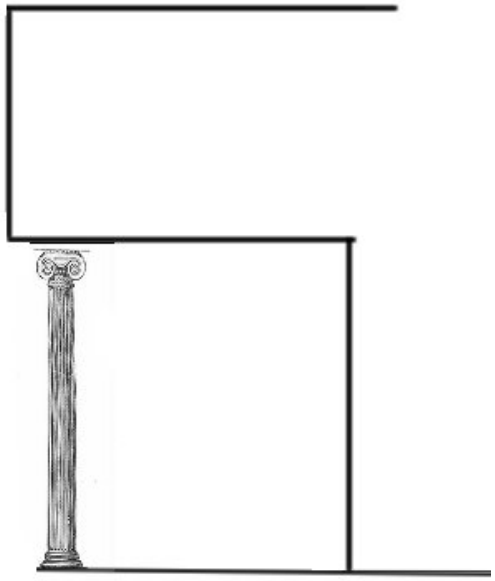


Figure 2: Recessed 1st Floor Gallery

A. Site

In general, new construction should match the site characteristics of the downtown core.

Specific elements are:

A(1): SETBACKS:

All buildings should have zero setbacks abutting the public right-of-way, especially along the primary elevation.

In Figure 1, neither site 120 or 101 meet this guideline, being set back from the property line. Sites 119 and 201, at corners, have zero setback and respect the intersection and sight visibility standards through their "clipped" entry corners.

A(2): LOT COVERAGE:

Buildings should generally occupy the full width of the lot, filling the streetscape along the primary elevation to create a continuous "streetwall" facing the public right-of-way. First floor galleries or recessed areas beneath zero-setback upper stories allow protected sidewalk gathering spaces while maintaining the continuous streetwall effect.

In Figure 1, Site 109, while maintaining zero setback, does not fill the full lot width, creating a pedestrian corridor at the bottom that may be appropriate and a larger open "plaza" at the top that most likely isn't.

A(3): PARKING:

When off-street parking is included in a downtown project, it should be located to the rear of the building and be visually screened from the public right-of-way to the extent feasible (alleyways excluded). Off-street parking is generally not required in C-C zoning including the majority of the Historic Downtown Overlay.

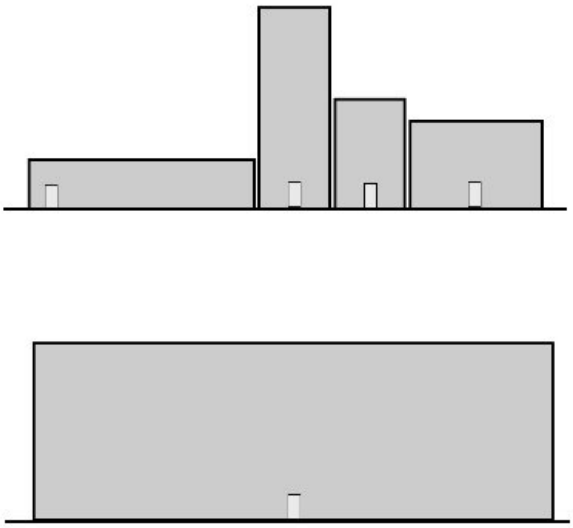


Figure 3: Traditional building mass and scale in varying forms (top) versus a single, full-block, "modern" mass

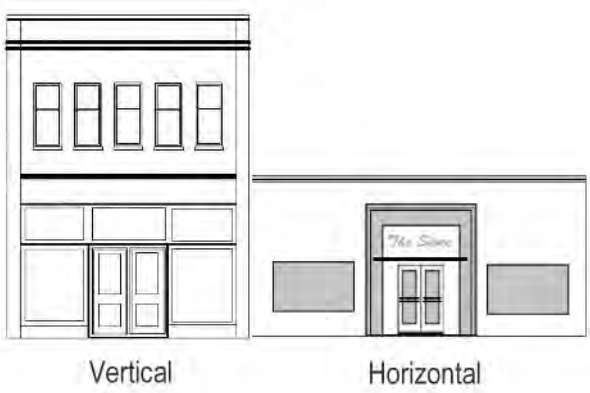


Figure 4: Vertical and Horizontal Building Rhythms

B. Scale and Mass

Historically, as determined by both land ownership patterns and building technology, commercial structures in downtown Medford tended toward a predominantely vertical orientation. This was driven by the high cost of prime commercial land and the narrow (from 12'-6" to 25' wide) lots in the core area. The limited ability of wooden beams to span much beyond 25' feet of width without a central support system also had a significant effect on the scale of most early volumes.

The historic "mass" of buildings, meaning their basic form independent of openings or decoration, tended toward smaller volumes than are built today. New construction, benefiting from technological and material advancements, easily allows buildings of larger scale or mass than could be found historically in the downtown commercial core. Functionality, as well as construction economics, typically mean new construction is of larger scale. It is a given that few if any entirely new buildings in downtown will be twenty-five feet wide.

Addressing the impact of mass and scale to achieve increased compatibility with historic volumes involves visually dividing the mass through separation and detail, breaking large areas into smaller, more historically-scaled, elements. In short, the goal is to make large volumes appear smaller than they in fact are.

The following concepts are <u>not</u> intended to limit the scale or mass of new infill projects in the Downtown. Those factors are already governed by existing building and planning code. Instead, this section provides some concepts whereby those larger scales can better mesh with the existing historic character.

Figure 5: Exceeding Three Stories: Compatible

B(1): BUILDING HEIGHT:

Few buildings in downtown Medford during the historic period exceeded three stories in height and most were either one or two stories tall. Notable exceptions included the Liberty Building and the Medford Hotel, both of which were prominently located at intersections, soaring to five and six stories respectively. After WWII, newer projects in downtown took advantage of new technologies to rise higher, and that trend will likely continue. Increased density is a positive force in an urban environment, supporting the revitalization of downtown by increasing the numbers of workers, patrons, and residents per square footage to promote the vital, walkable, community center that has long been the City's goal.

In order to integrate new projects of greater than three stories into the existing urban fabric, dividing mass into horizontal and vertical "sections" is recommended, with particular emphasis on the lower, street level, portions. This can be through a strong one-story "storefront" or even a 2-3 story division that respects the surrounding structures. Strong horizontal lines, emphasized by articulated details (see Section C(3), on Page 38), shifts in materials or surface treatments, and other approaches allow multi-story structures to be compatible with historic character even while exceeding traditional building heights by a significant factor.

Strong internal divisions that respect the scale of adjoining historic properties are encouraged, forming a street-level base for a taller project rather than a single uniform volume.

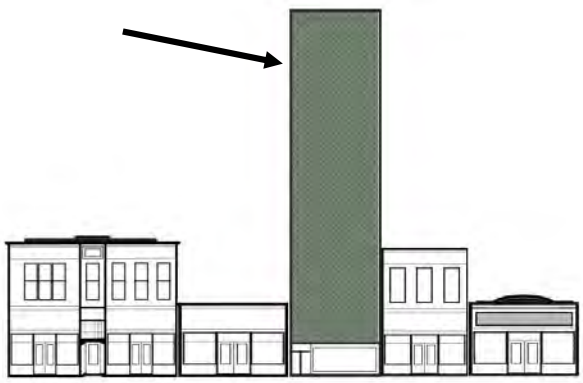


Figure 6: Exceeding Three Stories: Not Compatible

Figure 7A: *Non*-compatible single horizontal bay at right

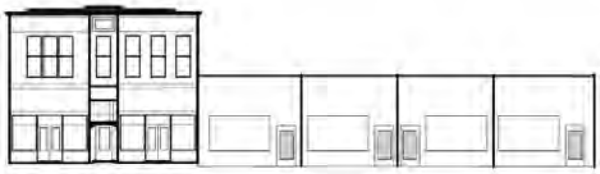


Figure 7B: Improved, but still not compatible, horizontal building at right. Single lines such as these, do not sufficiently create vertical divisions, requiring further articulation.

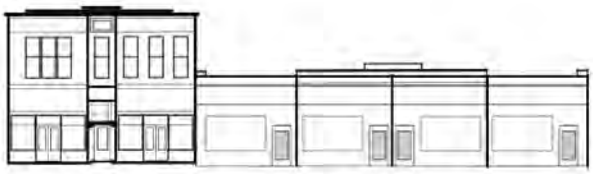


Figure 7C: More compatible horizontal volume, broken into four bays with horizontal and vertical divisions, at right

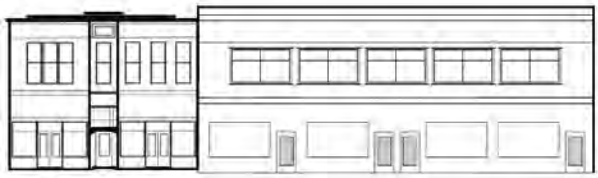


Figure 7D: A multi-story, generally horizontal volume, uses different internal rhythms between its storefront and upper floors to minimize the effect of the larger mass.

B(2): BUILDING WIDTH:

Historic structures generally have an overall "vertical" character to them, reflecting the earlier narrow lot divisions of the land and the technology of the times. Larger volumes were created through the construction of multiple "bays," segments of a volume that could be combined to form wider facades. Typical "bays" are 25' feet wide, based on the lot line, with multiple examples of wider storefronts of 2 bay (50'), 3 bays (75') and so on.

Bays are generally *articulated*, or visibly defined, through the use of integrated horizontal and vertical detailing such as engaged columns (or pilasters), window patterns, stringcourse bands, and other devices (See C(2) and C(3) below). This allows a single larger volume to reflect a more traditional, narrow-bay scale, while still containing larger interior spaces.

Even when a larger volume is not divided into "bays" per se, the impact of building width can be minimized by careful window and entry placement, breaking up the mass as in Figure 7D. Variation in surface treatments, through the use of multiple materials or even multiple colors, can also help to visually divide a façade into component elements and so reduce the impact of mass.

Figure 8: Roof Forms:
Compatible "gable" at left. Non-compatible "Wedge" at right.

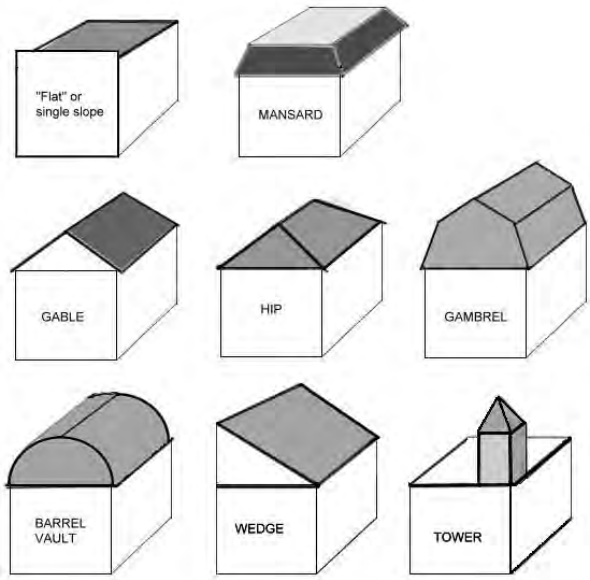


Figure 9: Roof Types

B(3): ROOF FORM

a. Flat or Single-Slope: The vast majority of commercial projects are of single-slope or "flat" roof that virtually eliminates the roof as a design element. In general, roofs are hidden behind projecting parapets and, as the result of height and narrow street widths, cannot be seen from ground level. *Similar roof forms are encouraged and will be appropriate for the vast majority of new projects*.

b. Gable: In very special circumstances, visible roof elements, particularly gable roofs or sheds, *may* be appropriate in the downtown core but should be avoided except with careful consideration. An example of a compatible gable roof is shown on the narrow lot building at the extreme left Figure 8.

c. Residential Forms: Gambrels, hips and mansard-type roofs are largely residential in nature and, while occasionally adopted by large national chains, were almost entirely unknown throughout downtown Medford's history. These forms are generally considered non-compatible.

d. Modern Roof Forms: Sharp wedged roofs, most curvilinear roofs, and other modern forms are generally not compatible with downtown character though they may be appropriate with careful design for towers or certain auto-related uses such as dealership showrooms, etc.

e. Towers: Tower, or turret-type elements, especially as corner-defining features, can provide significant visual interest and are encouraged at major intersections.

f/. Barrel Vaults/Curves: Barrel vaulted roofs, a common warehouse form (using laminated wood trusses) are a common industrial roof and may be appropriate for larger volumes in the downtown.

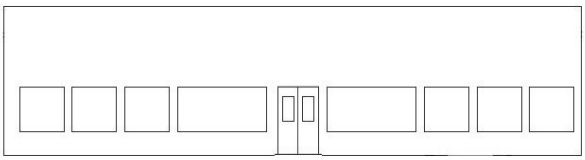


Figure 10A: Industrial-style structure is bilaterally symmetrical but generally bland.

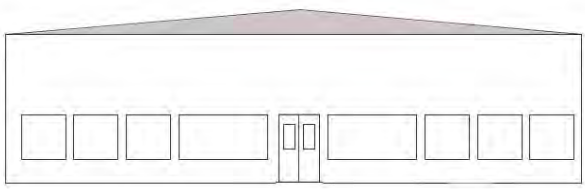


Figure 10B: The same building, with a small gable roof has slightly more character.

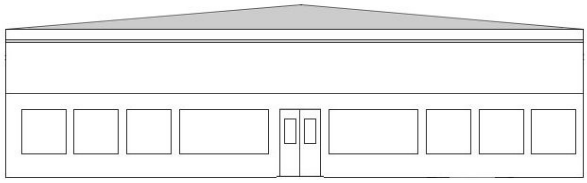


Figure 10C: The addition of a single cornice line creates additional visual interest.

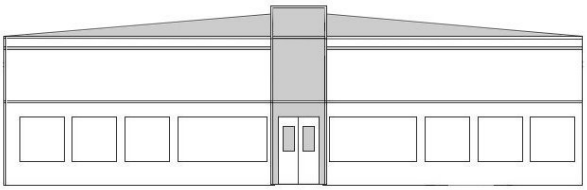


Figure 10D: A vertical panel breaks the façade mass and provides a strong sense of entry (See Section D(2)).

B(3) ROOF FORMS (CONT.)

Since much new construction in downtown Medford will be of larger mass than was typical, roof treatments for full-block width buildings can play a role in defining compatibility. Certainly, flat-roofed structures or shallow vaults can often be hidden behind a parapet or, more likely, by the combination of height and sightlines that preclude their impact at street level.

In some cases, particularly in the railroad core's "utilitarian" structures, visible roofs can play a compatible design role, interacting with vertical and horizontal elements as shown in the series of facades in Figure 10.

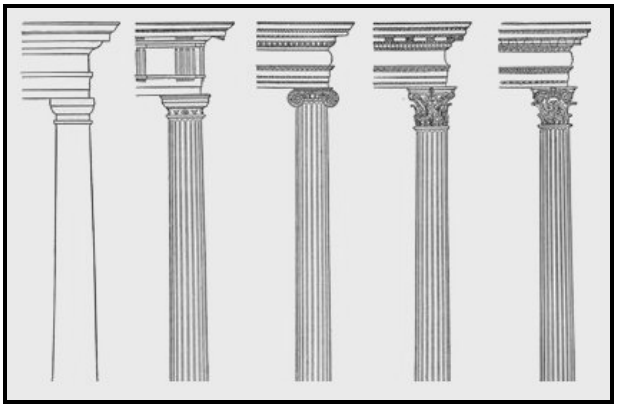


Figure 11: The Classical Column Orders

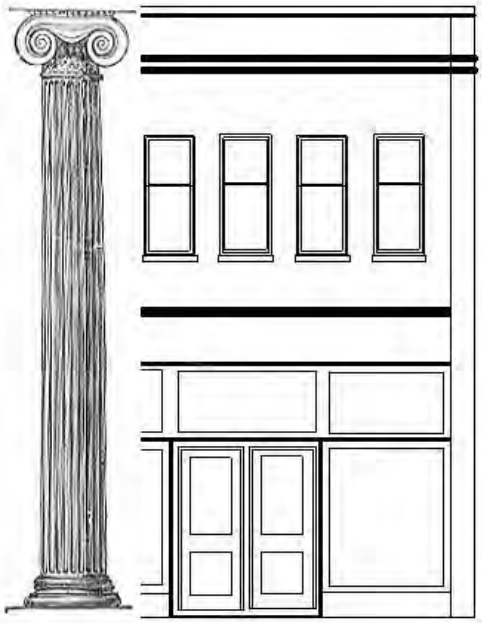


Figure 12: Traditional buildings reflect the basic 3-part column pattern; they have a "base," a "shaft" and a "top," or capital.

C. Surfaces:

The exterior surface of a building, its "skin," plays a major role in its appearance. Material choices and surface design elements can significantly enhance or detract from a building's compatibility and ability to visually fit into the historic downtown of Medford.

Surfaces are comprised, in general, of two parts: the actual exterior surface (which may or may not be the same as the structural system) and the decorative elements that are either integral to or applied to it. Surface and decoration can provide a mechanism to better integrate larger scale projects into the Historic District in an attractive, and compatible, manner (See Section B, above, on how surface treatments can be used to reduce the visual "mass" of a project).

Design and visual character of traditional architecture is based upon the columns of classical Greek and Roman buildings. That three part division (base-shaft-capital) can typically be seen in late 19th and early 20th Century architectural facade and serves as a starting point for the arrangement of trim and surface character in compatible designs.

Building facades should have visual layers, starting from a strong, delineated BASE, rise through the floor levels (the SHAFT) and terminate at a strong "top," the CAPITAL, to mark the upper edge of the facade.

The base of a building, formed by a poured foundation, an extended watertable, a bulkhead detail, or even a shift in materials, grounds the building and provides a visual foundation for its floors. A "capital," formed by a cornice line, an entablature, or even a detailed flashing line, provides a visual coda to the façade, marking the upper boundary to "finish" the structure.

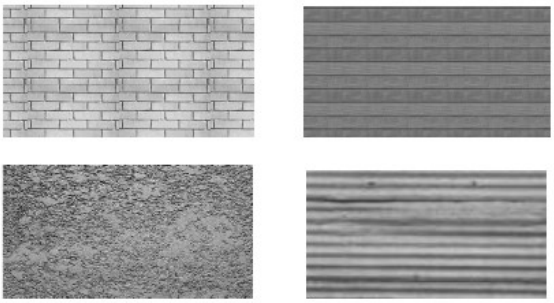


Figure 13A: Brick, clapboard and stucco surface materials were common during Medford's historic period. Corrugated metal (bottom right) is also appropriate in certain situations.

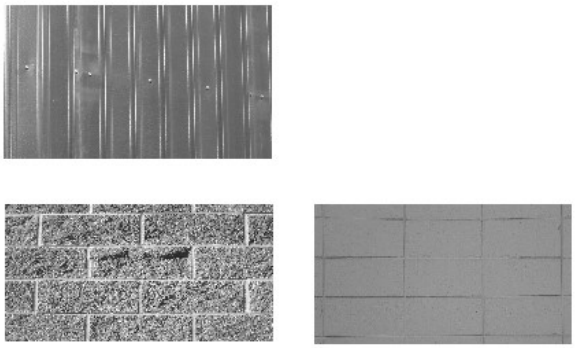


Figure 13B: Materials such as standing seam metal, exposed/painted concrete block (including split-faced concrete block) and external insulating foam systems (EIFS), *may* be compatible with downtown. Poured concrete, not shown, can also be compatible.

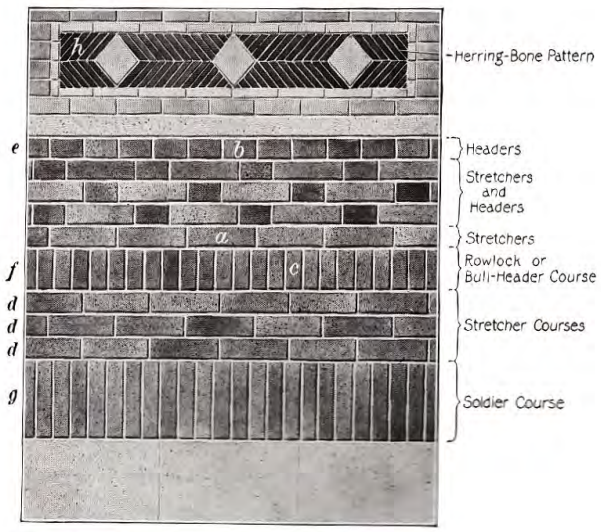


Figure 14: Face brick terms (1920)

C(1): MATERIALS

During its lengthy historic period, 1883-1949, Medford's commercial architecture advanced from simple wood-sided structures through red brick, structural clay tile and finally to poured-in-place concrete. Almost all exterior masonry surfaces were stucco coated either as part of the original design or, in the case of red brick, later remodeling, although some red and even cream colored brick did survive.

Each of these materials, especially the masonry surfaces, remain consistent with modern architectural design and can be compatibly used in new construction. Mixed or varied brick *color or tone* provides variation and reduces the impact of large projects, using exterior surface as type of detail, to create a horizontal band (known as a stringcourse) or vertical lines. Bond patterns and mortar also can become a design element to reduce the impact of mass.

Poured-in-place concrete and corrugated metal can also be compatible when handled properly, particularly for use in "utilitarian" designs. Even pre-cast or "tilt-up" concrete sections, when designed to avoid unrelieved large-surface areas, may be found to compatible used in some downtown applications.

Brick, in particular, given its nature, allows for inherent detail to break a larger surface into component parts. Historic ornamental face brick patterns are shown in Figure 14. Cast stone or concrete lintels and window sills, along with similar mixed materials used to accent or decorate standard running brick surfaces as engaged stringcourse bands or cornice lines, can be a particularly effective mechanism of creating visual interest.

<u>Variety</u> of materials adds visual interest, supports compatibility, and minimizes the impact of mass.

Other materials, including marble, granite, ceramic tile, decorative tin, and more modern "accents" such as stainless steel, are generally appropriate only as detail treatments, used sparingly to add color or visual richness to the exterior. Tile, marble and granite, for example, are typical bulkhead treatments that add color and texture at the pedestrian level.

In general, historic materials such as brick benefited from their small unit character, providing visual interest by breaking large planes into smaller modules. Stucco coatings, applied to brick specifically to hide that small unit character (seen as "old fashioned" after WWI) creates an entirely different surface treatment. Modern designers can employ almost any of these materials, using detail and trim to achieve visual interest in a compatible, but not imitative, manner.

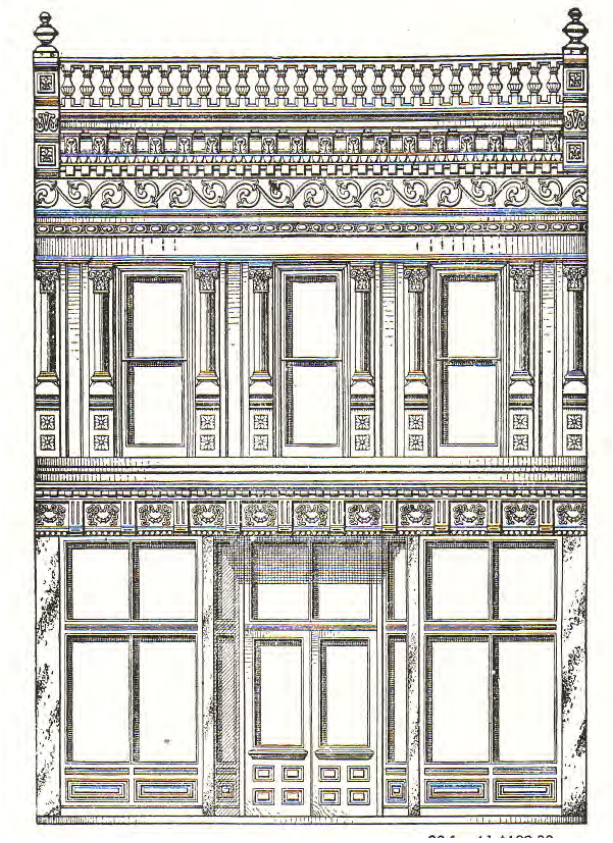


Figure 15: A prefabricated sheet metal storefront (circa 1910) uses elaborate surface decoration to create strong vertical and horizontal rhythms that break up the façade.

C(2): Details-Vertical Rhythms

As noted under Section B: Scale and Mass, historic architecture tends toward strong vertical appearance with larger buildings comprised of multiple narrow "bays" that are combined to form wider volumes. "Bays" are delineated by vertical elements such as columns, pilasters, or other trim that create "Vertical Rhythms" that divide a façade into multiple zones or areas. Creative use of trim can have a significant impact on the appearance of a building and can mitigate the visual effect of larger scale and mass.

An elaborate example of vertical rhythms (Figure 15), shows prefabricated sheet metal or cast iron elements that were "assembled" to create complex, probably unrealistically decorative, storefronts that still retain the basic three-part internal division of space and illustrate the basic concept.

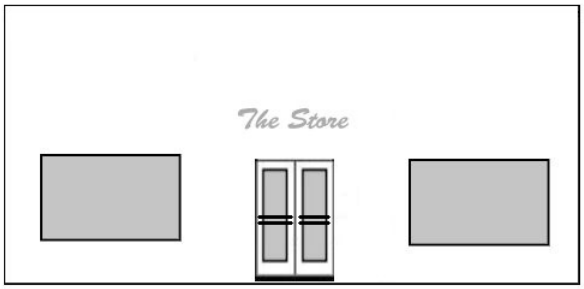


Figure 16A: *The Store*, a fictitious project with strong horizontal orientation, shows little vertical rhythm beyond its entry door.

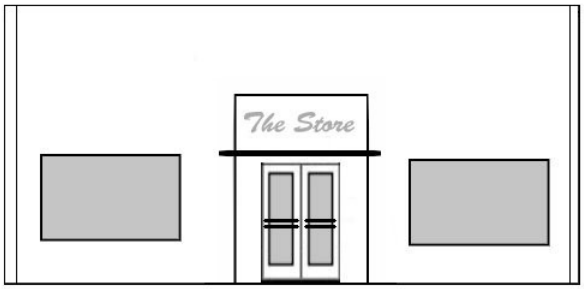


Figure 16B: *External* columns at the building edges and *internal* pilasters around the doorway give *The Store* some vertical character despite its generally horizontal massing.

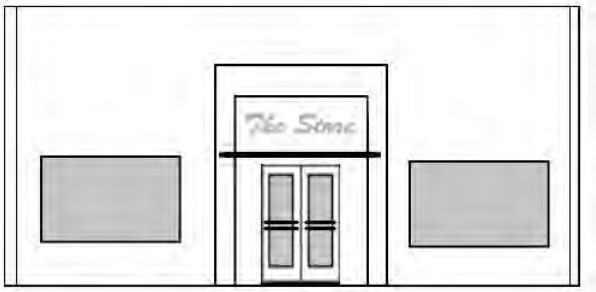


Figure 16C: A secondary internal panel surrounding the door, possibly offset with color or materials, provides additional vertical character while improving the sense of entry too.

Vertical rhythms can be either "internal" (i.e. within the façade area and not necessarily full height) or external (i.e. at the outer edges/corners of the façade, separating and defining it as independent from adjacent volumes).

Adding vertical rhythm does not require significant modification to the exterior. Simple applied or engaged elements, including brick coursing or, for stucco, built-up bands or panels, can be sufficient with or without material change (see Figures 16A-16F). In some cases paint alone can work to create these sorts of divisions on an otherwise "flat" façade surface.

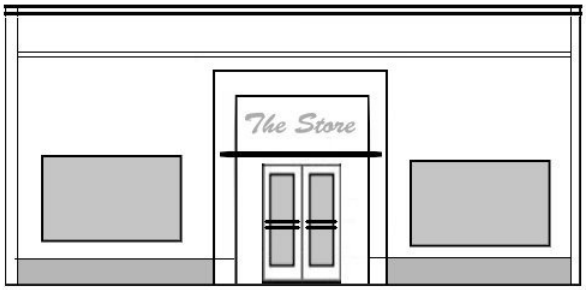


Figure 16D: A simple cornice line and a stringcourse band below it, provide some horizontal rhythm to *The Store*. Changes in materials or colors would accentuate these divisions by defining "zones" in the façade.

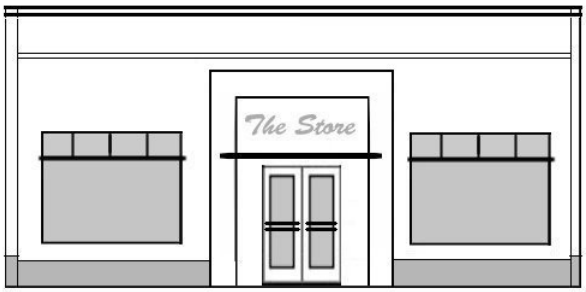


Figure 16E: A base, added below the window openings, muntin patterns to create a transom window band, and a very minor added detail to the lower sign area, increases horizontal rhythms and gives *The Store* a hint of the standard-three-part column façade.

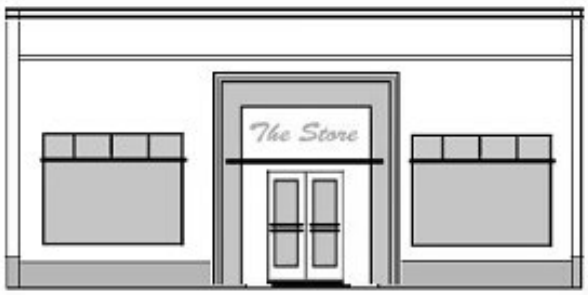


Figure 16F: Elaborating the entry surround, while including vertical detail, also creates additional horizontal character by "framing" the door, firmly establishing the "Sense of Entry" covered in D(2).

C(3): Details-Horizontal Rhythms

Balancing vertical rhythms by working in both tandem and opposition to it, strong horizontal lines serve to additionally break up a façade and play a pivotal role in addressing the three-part base/shaft/capital aspects of historic design. Horizontal rhythms can take advantage of integral or applied ornament, changes in materials and the pattern of window and door openings. Subtle lines can be created simply by varying the spacing of joints or masonry units within the main wall plane.

Horizontal rhythms have traditionally been used to define near-standardized elements of a building façade; the bulkhead panels (below storefront windows), the display windows themselves, transom bands, the lower sign areas, the upper floor areas, the upper sign area and the cornice. Not all structures have, or even need, each of these layers, however most buildings have at least three distinct zones from ground level to top (See Figures 12 and 19).

Some divisions are created by stringcourse bands (today often called "bellybands") that can be made of a shift in brick pattern, an *incised* joint in a stucco wall, or a *projecting* trim element. Articulated lines (meaning lines that have a 3-dimensional character that projects from or recedes into the primary wall plane, as opposed to *painted* lines) create shadow and visual interest without incurring maintenance costs.

As shown in the series of Figure 16, minor vertical and horizontal elements have an additive effect toward reducing the visual impact of the same basic building mass.

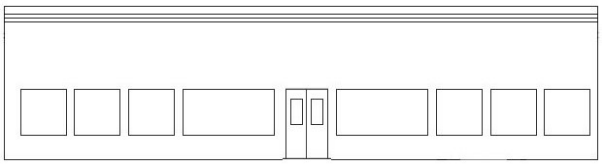


Figure 17: Speed Lines create a 'cornice' like element

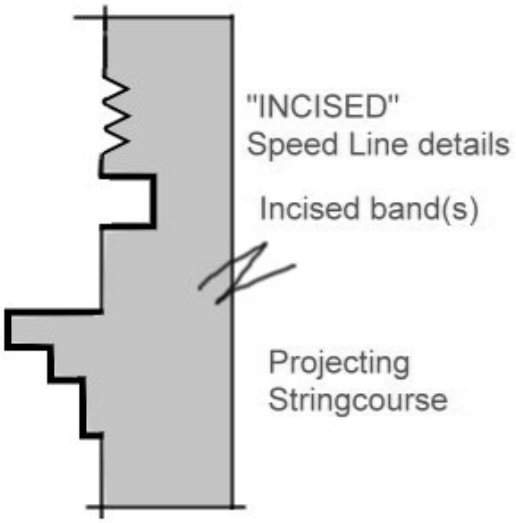


Figure 18: Shown in cross-section thru a building wall, horizontal rhythms can be created by "incised" lines the recede into the wall surface or by projecting elements, that extend beyond it.

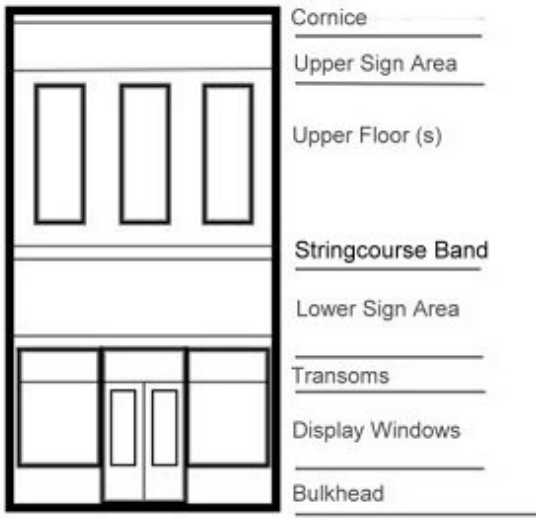


Figure 19: Standard Horizontal Divisions of a Facade

In Streamline Moderne architecture, narrow incised lines, either square or triangular in section (Figures 17 and 18, top) were often created in tightly spaced groups of three. These features, stemming from the work of the industrial designer Walter Dorwin Teague, are generally referred to as "Speed Lines," and reflect the sense of motion that much of the Streamlined style attempted to convey.

C(4) STANDARD HORIZONTAL DETAIL AREAS: (See Figure 19)

A. Base/Bulkhead: A material panel located below the first floor window openings, often including a change in material from the surrounding wall. "Bases" may be of concrete, brick, ceramic tile, or a variety of other water-resistant materials that perform well in ground contact. Changes in color, plane, or detailing can form a base where a change in material are not desirable.

B. Transom Windows: A re-light panel above the primary storefront window openings.

C. Stringcourse(s): Also called "bellybands," and technically an intermediate cornice line. A stringcourse is usually placed to relate floor or ceiling levels of the interior. Entire first floor height can alternatively be treated as a "base" by using a stringcourse line to divide that level from the upper stories of building.

D. Sign Areas: Generally located above either, or both, the first floor storefront or uppermost floor window bands, a "sign area" is a framed or generally flat space between other horizontal elements. Sign areas, as the name implies, often contain building identification or advertising.

E. Cornice: A decorated area at the uppermost portion of façade or parapet. A cornice can be a simple projecting band or an elaborate "entablature" that extends down the wall surface with considerable detail.

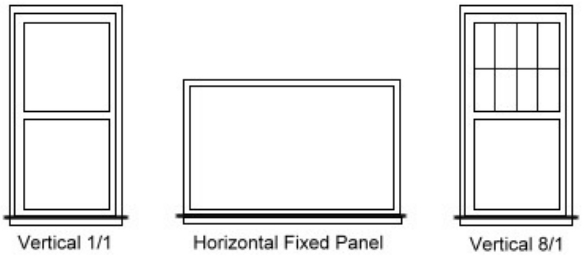


Figure 20: Basic window orientation, with sash divisions, as in 8/1, meaning "eight panes over one."

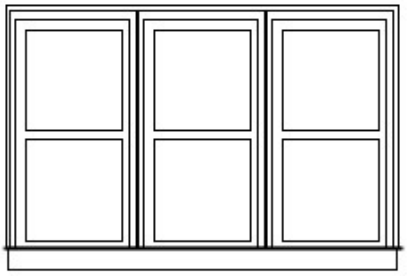


Figure 21: Three windows "ganged" to create a larger opening.

Figure 22: Varied, generally symmetrical window spacing at left, with asymmetrical openings at right. Overtly asymmetrical openings such as these are typically incompatible with traditional downtown architecture.

D. Openings:

The exterior shell of any structure is necessarily "punctured" to let light, and people, inside. These openings, windows and doors, play an important role in exterior design. They can and should be treated as integrated elements of a façade. Placed in a generally symmetrical fashion, opening design and character should reflect the essential lines of the building.

D(1): WINDOWS :

Several elements work to make windows compatible or non-compatible with the historic character; orientation, spacing, and materials.

a. Orientation: (See Figure 20) Given the vertical character of most traditional building forms, windows are typically also vertical, particularly on upper stories. Wider openings are filled by banked windows, set in grouped or ganged jambs, retaining strong internal vertical divisions (See Figure 21). Large first floor storefront display windows violate this rule.

b. Spacing: Windows are generally placed in a bilaterally symmetrical pattern across the façade or, where strong vertical divisions exist, centered within them (See Figure 22).

c. Materials: Historically almost all operable upper story windows in downtown were wood sash. These remain appropriate choices, as do certain metal-clad wood and coated-wood options.

Commercial storefronts, traditionally of wood, or iron, were supplanted by brass, steel, and even copper systems prior to WWI. Today steel-sash, as well as powder-coated aluminum windows are also available and appropriate.

Vinyl clad windows, because of finish and lack of sash profiles, are generally non compatible and should be avoided.

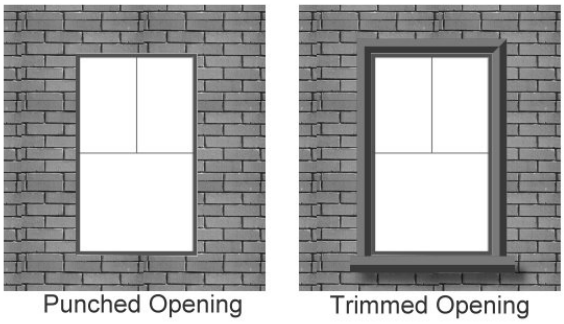


Figure 23: 2/1 window shown in a punched (left) and trimmed (right) opening in a masonry wall.

d. Trim: (Figure 23) In all situations, windows offer the opportunity for visual detail through the way the opening is trimmed. "Punched" windows, a window set into the main wall plane with no surround, may be appropriate but traditional window design typically includes a true projecting sill and some other sort of "detail" that highlights the opening.

D(2): ENTRY:

Buildings should have a clear *sense of entry*, directing pedestrian traffic into the interior. A strong sense of entry is an important component of compatible design that can be achieved by door placement, trim or decorative design, material changes and signage.

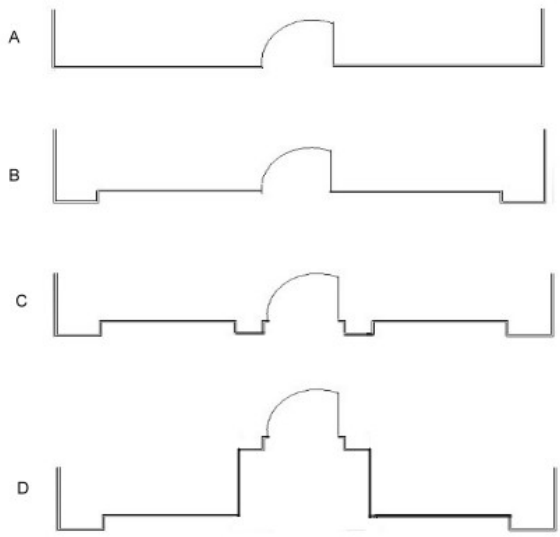


Figure 24: Progressively more articulated or recessed entry treatments in plan view.

a. Recess: (Figure 24) Entries can be recessed from the main wall plane and set within the building envelope. Recesses can be square, rectangular or angled in plan, providing additional glazing areas for display. Recessed floor surfaces of tile, concrete, or other weather-resistant materials create pedestrian interest.

Buildings located at an intersection are encouraged to employ "corner entries," oriented to the pedestrian intersection. Such entries can be angled or curved, recessed, or nestled beneath a projecting marquee or tower-base element to improve visibility and create pedestrian access from both adjacent right-of-ways.

Figure 25: A strong, symmetrical, sense of entry can be the focal point of a facade.

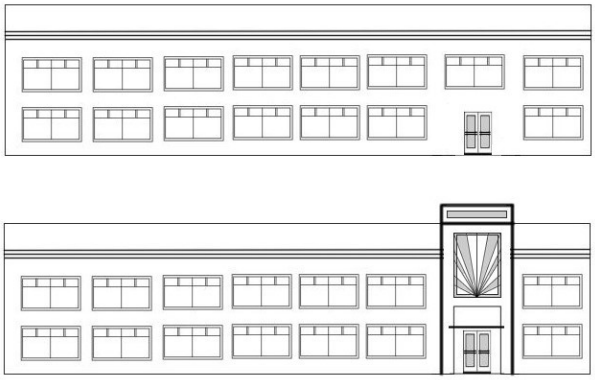


Figure 26: Asymmetrical façade with minimal 'sense of entry" shown above the same facade with a more elaborately articulated entryway design.

Figure 27: Surface treatment in recessed entries defines private v. public right of way, creating a sense of entry.

b. Placement: Entries should be prominently located within the façade. Entries can be located within a highlighted architectural bay, and framed with vertical or horizontal elements. Use of differentiated materials or trim to create a strong focus is encouraged.

Entries may be symmetrically located within the façade but do not necessarily have to be. Offset entryways, especially for larger full block buildings, can provide an attractive and compatible character. Entries should be clearly articulated to create a strong character wherever they are located.

c. Design Options: Depending upon the character of the facade, entries should be highlighted through design, such as enframed openings, raised headers, projecting elements, or shifts in materials for accent. Flanking columns, intermediate cornices, and similar "frames" create a strong entry upon an otherwise flat exterior surface.

d. Materials and Other Options:
Modern code requirements generally dictate the use of aluminum or steel door systems for commercial work. Varied sash and glazing patterns allow for some differentiation.

In general, vertically oriented doors with transom or fixed-light panels correspond with traditional vertical exterior character. Transoms provide a logical location for building identification, sandblasted or etched glass designs, and similar decorative elements.

Recessed entry surfaces (Figure 27) also provide opportunities for "sense of entry" by marking the transition between private and public space. Exterior tile, acid-etched concrete, and other non-skid treatments can both serve as building identification and highlight the opening to the pedestrian public.

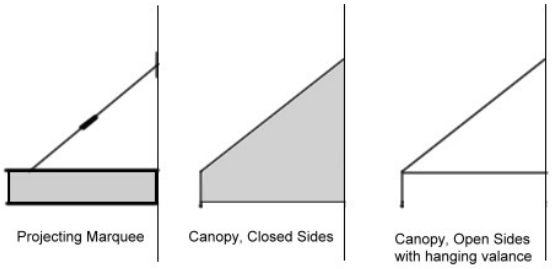


Figure 28: Marquee v. Canopy types, in profile

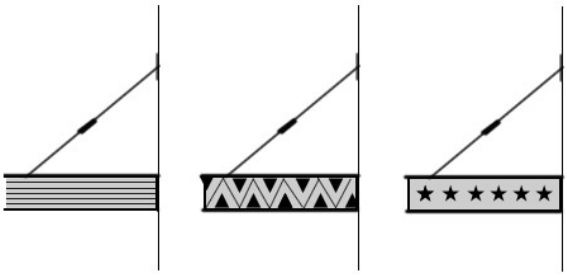


Figure 29: Marquees can be easily decorated with applied patterns of varying designs.

Figure 30: A projecting marquee divides storefront glazing and the transom band above.

E. Marquees & Awnings:

Projecting away from the building façade and over the public right-of-way, awnings and marquees are primarily functional, protecting pedestrians and window-shoppers from the weather, while reducing solar gain to the interior. They also offer a design opportunity that can "dress up" an otherwise plain façade with a splash of color, playing a role in creating an inviting sense of entry.

E(1): MARQUEES

Marquee refers to fixed, permanent, elements made of hard materials such as metal, wood or stucco that project as a cantilevered 'slab' with an integrated roof system. Marquees, typically associated with hotels and movie theaters, are often appropriate in a variety of other uses including public buildings and, when scaled appropriately, small retail storefronts.

Marquees can have elaborate "edge" treatments and often include down-lighting and other illumination. Support bars, of chain, cable or bar stock, can be made from a variety of materials. Support elements offer design opportunities though the use of mechanical stays, turnbuckles and the pattern of decorative wall-mounted support plates.

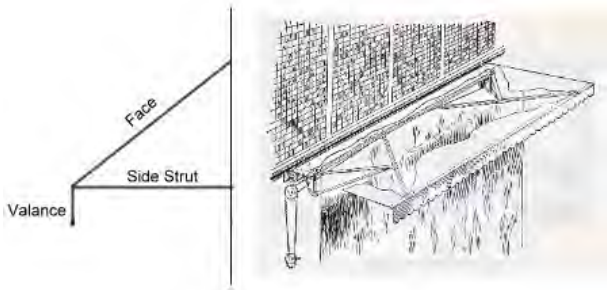


Figure 31A: Standard Awning Terms
Figure 31B: Early Retractable Awning

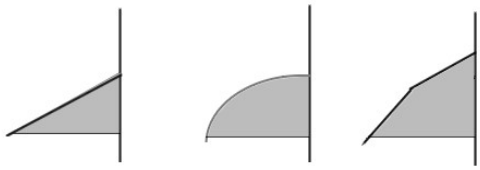


Figure 32: Awning Profiles, (Single Slope, Bubble and Multi-Slope)

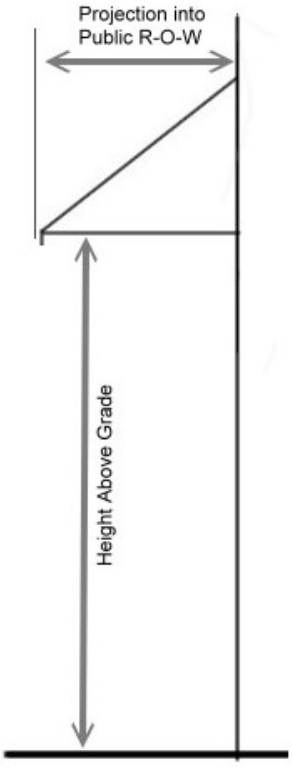


Figure 33: Height & Projection Measurements

E(2) AWNINGS

Awning is used here to refer to canvas or vinyl materials stretched over a metal frame mounted to the exterior of a structure. Awnings offer the possibility of color and a contemporary aspect that marquees do not. Made of fabric, awnings typically require recovering after an extended period of exposure.

Traditional canopies were retractable (Fig. 31B), allowing merchants the choice of creating shade on sunny days but retaining window light during the darker winter months. Modern retractable awnings are preferred in downtown because they retain this option.

Fixed awnings are made of canvas stretched over a metal framework that is mounted directly to the structure (Fig. 31A). A side strut is typically required for additional strength and can be a place for decorative elements including logos or emblems. Awning fabric is available in a wide variety of colors and patterns, including solids and stripes, and can include valances, double valances, and even screened signage.

Awnings, large and colorful elements of a façade, can help unify or provide interest to an otherwise undistinguished exterior. Conversely, they have the ability to distract significantly from the character of the community when inexpertly installed or designed.

Awnings take many forms, from “round” or “bubble” awnings, to single slopes, multi-slopes and most every permutation between (Fig 32). Face angle and length of projection into the public right-of-way can increase or decrease the visual weight of an awning (Fig 33). Projection into the right of way, as well as minimum height above grade, are governed by the building code.

Figure 34: Awning Locations
Within the Bay Outside the Bay

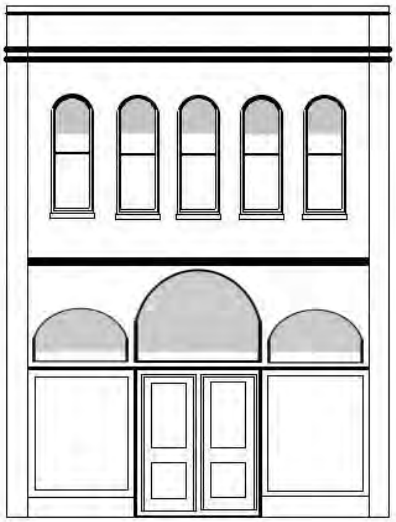


Figure 35: Round or Arched Canopies within round or arch-topped window and door openings.

Figure 36: An open-sided corrugated metal awning

E(3) DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

a. Placement:

Awnings and marquees should be entirely located within the architectural bay that defines the window or door opening. In general this means that no awning or marquee should cross a major vertical element (a column or pilaster) while also being placed with respect to horizontal divisions. This serves to accent, rather than obscure, the façade elements that create horizontal and visual rhythms (Figure 34).

b. Shapes:

Historically awnings were usually of single slope designs, with or without valances. Retractable awnings were either open-ended or had collapsible sides. Today modern retractable awnings rarely have sides and, for fixed awnings, side panels have little function but obscure building character..

Open-sided, single-sloped awnings are preferred in the downtown. Multi-slope awnings are appropriate when building scale limits the use of other choices.

Rounded, oval, or bubble shapes, *unless matched to a round or arched opening* as in Figure 35, are considered inappropriate and should be avoided in the downtown.

c. Materials:

Major awning fabric manufacturers offer a wide variety of canvas materials in solid, stripe and patterns. In general, solid colors should be used with care, as they show the impact of road dirt and debris more than do patterns. More elaborate schemes, with “skirts” of contrasting colors, can be an effective design element.

Use of standing seam metal or other hard materials for awnings is rarely appropriate, with the exception of “industrial” style single-slope corrugated metal awnings (Figure 36).

d. Illumination:
Although internal illumination of awnings was common in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly for "bubble" type awnings, this is not considered compatible with the downtown.

When down lighting is important for marketing or pedestrian safety reasons, the use of building-mounted lighting is recommended. Lights designed to create an internal "glow" within a projecting canopy are not appropriate in the downtown core.

e. Signage:
The use of silk-screened graphics on canvas awnings is not generally consistent with traditional awning design. When graphics are required, they should be limited to valance areas only.

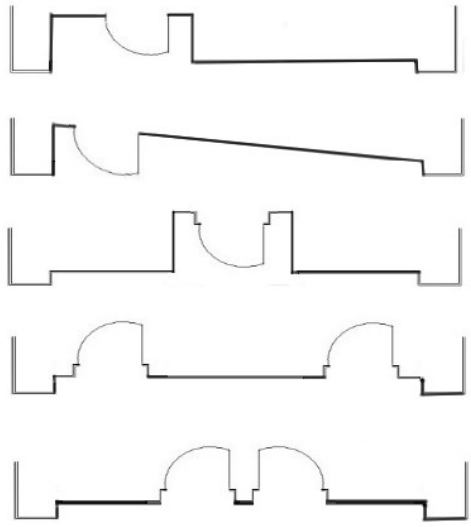


Figure 37: Recessed entry patterns in plan view. Angled entries are particularly appropriate for Streamlined Modern-inspired designs .

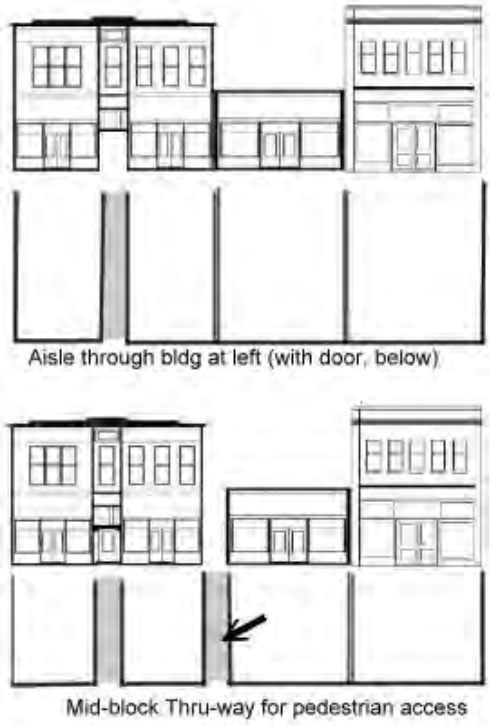


Figure 38: Aisles thru building interiors are not typically appropriate. Thru-ways can provide pedestrian connectivity mid-block.

F. RECESSES, AISLES, THRU-WAYS:

Recessed entryways, inset into the storefront system, create a small pedestrian refuge, accommodate door-swing, and support a sense of entry. As noted earlier, floor treatments of tile, acid-etched concrete, concrete patterns and similar designs can define the separation between private and public space.

Recessed entryways create opportunities for pedestrian-oriented "display" windows that are consistent with traditional design.

As shown in Figure 37, recessed designs can be square, rectangular, angled, centered or used to create multiple spaces within a single structure. These smaller scale approaches, reflecting pedestrian access, support the overall character of a traditional downtown and add to the compatibility of any storefront system.

Aisles or thru-ways connect the main elevation to the rear of the building. Aisles are used to create multiple interior spaces in a structure along its centerline but should be accessed via a standard shared entry, not an open corridor. Such open corridors break the "streetwall" of the block, create the potential for vandalism and vagrancy, and collect debris. Where a thru-corridor is required, it should be accessed via a system of standard entry doors that are integrated into the façade and can be used to control access after hours of normal operation.

Compare the building at the left side of Figure 38. The example at the top of the Figure has an open central corridor, with no doorway, where the lower version provides the same access, but retains an traditional entry to the street, with a recessed doorway.

G. FENCING & LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS:

a. Fencing: In most situations there is little historical precedence for perimeter or landscape fencing in the commercial core of downtown. The installation of such is discouraged.

In industrial or utilitarian situations, where fencing is required by the use, simple industrial character designed for minimal visual intrusion is preferred. Good choices include steel or iron, in dark black colors. Chain link, except in Industrial/Utilitarian situations abutting the railroad corridor, is rarely appropriate in the commercial core of downtown.

The use of vinyl, picket, or wood fencing more typical of residential landscapes is not compatible.

Where buildings include landscaped areas that require definition, the use of low-height walls of standard commercial-quality building materials (brick, stone, concrete) is recommended.

Figure 39: Anti-Sit devices includes spikes or other elements that discourage pedestrians

b. Plazas/Landscaping: Recessed plazas, open spaces, and similar ground-level improvements are not typical elements in downtown except as public open space provided by the City. Where proposed development includes an open plaza area traditionally urban hardscape surfaces and strongly urban materials (concrete, brick) are recommended. For off-street parking areas, standard City code regarding landscaping applies.

c. Other Landscape Elements: New work that includes “Anti-sit” or other design devices that are counter to improving pedestrian character in the downtown is strongly discouraged.

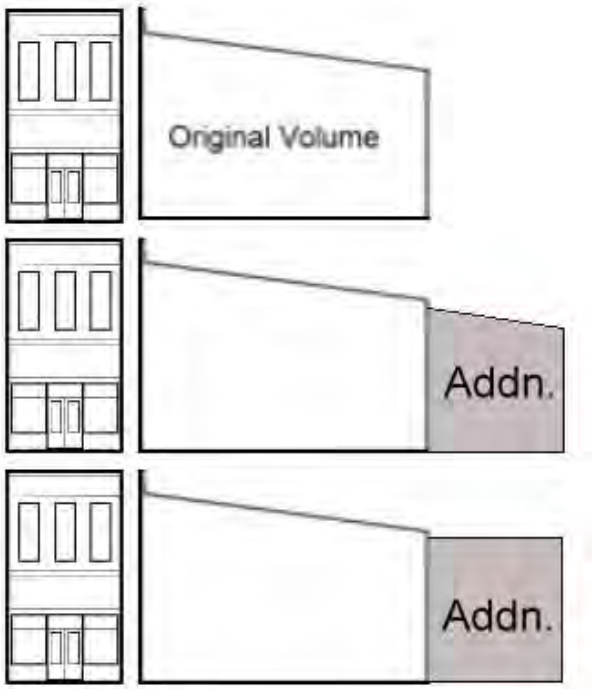


Figure 40A: Compatible additions to the rear of a two-story historic volume are secondary in scale and do not adversely impact the street-facing storefront (at left).

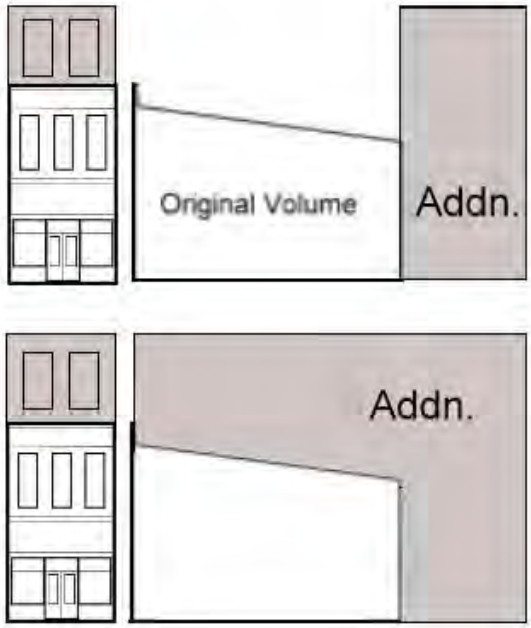


Figure 40B: NON-Compatible additions to the rear dwarf the historic volume and impact the street-facing storefront.

7. ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS:

While the primary focus of these guidelines is toward new construction in the downtown core area, similar issues of compatibility are associated with additions to existing structures. Additions to designated historic structures are governed by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, particularly Standard 9, which reads;

> *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

Compatible additions to historic properties should, by definition, meet the above Standard. Specific elements to consider in designing an addition to a historic structure include:

a. Location:
Additions to historic structures typically occur to the rear, extending a volume toward an alley, or above the roof, adding an additional floor level. In an established urban situation only rarely will an addition expand the width of façade.

b. Compatible Scale & Mass:
No addition should be of such scale as to visually overwhelm the mass of the original volume. Additions should be visually "subservient" or secondary to the original volume, allowing the historic structure to remain obvious as the primary element of the combined volume, as in Figure 40A. See Figure 40B for examples of additions that clearly overwhelm the original volume and are accordingly non-compatible.

Figure 41: Two approaches to compatible addition

At left the addition is treated as a slightly smaller 'bay' that largely replicates original detail but slightly alters detail height to avoid matched lines.

At right, in addition to reduced height, simplified horizontal lines match the pattern of the main volume but do not replicate its detailing.

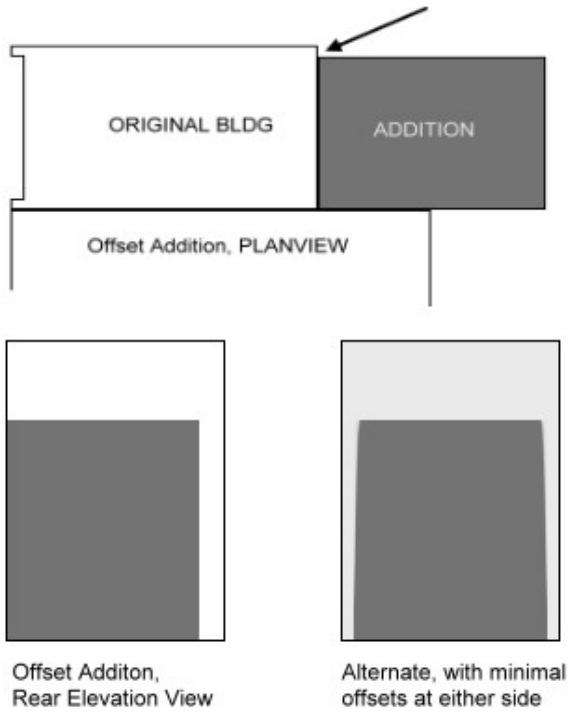


Figure 42: Using reduced height (top), single (lower left) and dual (lower right) offsets to differentiate a rear added volume from the historic. Height and width offsets should be combined to maximize differentiation.

c. Visual Impact:

Additions should be compatible, but not duplicate the character of a historic volume. As with mass, additions that do impact visible elevations of a historic structure should respect its elements but not attempt to replicate them exactly.

Compatible additions respect the horizontal and vertical divisions of a façade but are either detailed in more simple fashion, slightly shifted to differentiate the change between new and old elements, or built of different materials. Note the slight shift of detail in Figure 41.

A key test for compatibility fails when the casual observer can not determine which portion of the building is historic and which is not.

No addition to a historic building should appear as an "original" element of the structure. Doing so diminishes the true character of the original volume and masks the actual history of the structure. Instead additions to historic structures should largely recede as "background" structures, reserving the visual priority to the original volume.

d. Offsets

Slight offsets for rear additions (Figure 42) ease construction issues by avoiding in-plane seams, and also serve to differentiate an addition from the original volume while reinforcing its subservient visual character. Where dual offsets are not possible, a single offset serves the same function.

Even minimal offsets (3" or less) can be effective in visually separating adjoining facades. This "near-zero" setback approach (see Section A(1)) can also provide visual separation between historic and adjacent new construction.

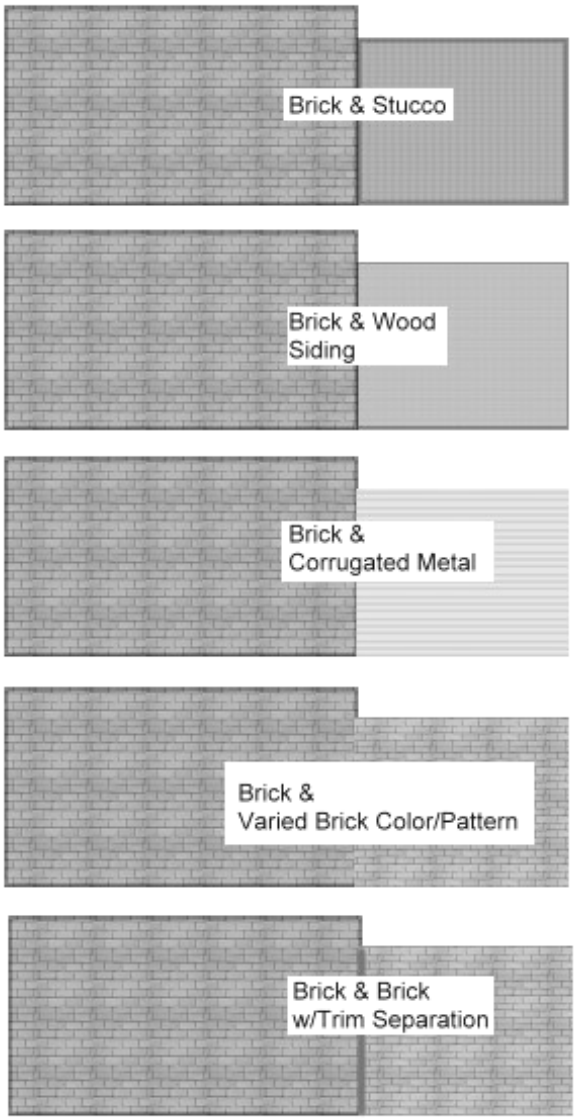


Figure 43: Several ways to differentiate an addition (right) from the original volume (left)

e. Materials:

Modified materials between new and old portions of a project can also serve to compatibly differentiate work (Figure 43). In general, new work should be of simpler materials than the historic structure to retain the primacy of the original volume. When the same material is used, modest alteration in color, coursing pattern, or even a transitional element provides a visual separation that marks the difference.