



# Downtown Beatrice Façade Design Guidelines

Prepared for the City of Beatrice by:



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## A. Introduction & Map of Downtown

These design guidelines will help building owners, merchants, developers, and public officials care for and protect the integrity of the historic buildings and the architectural character of the downtown business district in downtown Beatrice. They promote responsible preservation practices that protect the irreplaceable historic downtown buildings important to the community. The guidelines provide direction for building improvement projects so that the proposed improvements are consistent with the community's goals of creating safe buildings, maintaining the architectural character and enhancing the aesthetic appeal of Beatrice's downtown business district. The guidelines outline recognized preservation principles that minimize the bias on individual tastes and preferences and focus on preserving the character and integrity of the architecture. Each individual building presents a different issue, situation, and opportunity. The guidelines provide information for informed decisions and establish a clear set of rules for everyone. Often the cost of repair is much less than replacement. This saves unnecessary costs. Before beginning a project, it is important to contact the City of Beatrice or Main Street Beatrice. These organizations can provide information and guidance on conceptual design ideas, programs and/or project financing that may be available. It is important to use the assistance of a qualified architecture or design professional(s) during the planning stage of each project as required by Nebraska state law. Seek guidance from the Nebraska State Historical Society's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) during the planning stage of complex projects or those projects seeking tax incentive or grant programs. Additional things building, property and business owners need to keep in mind:

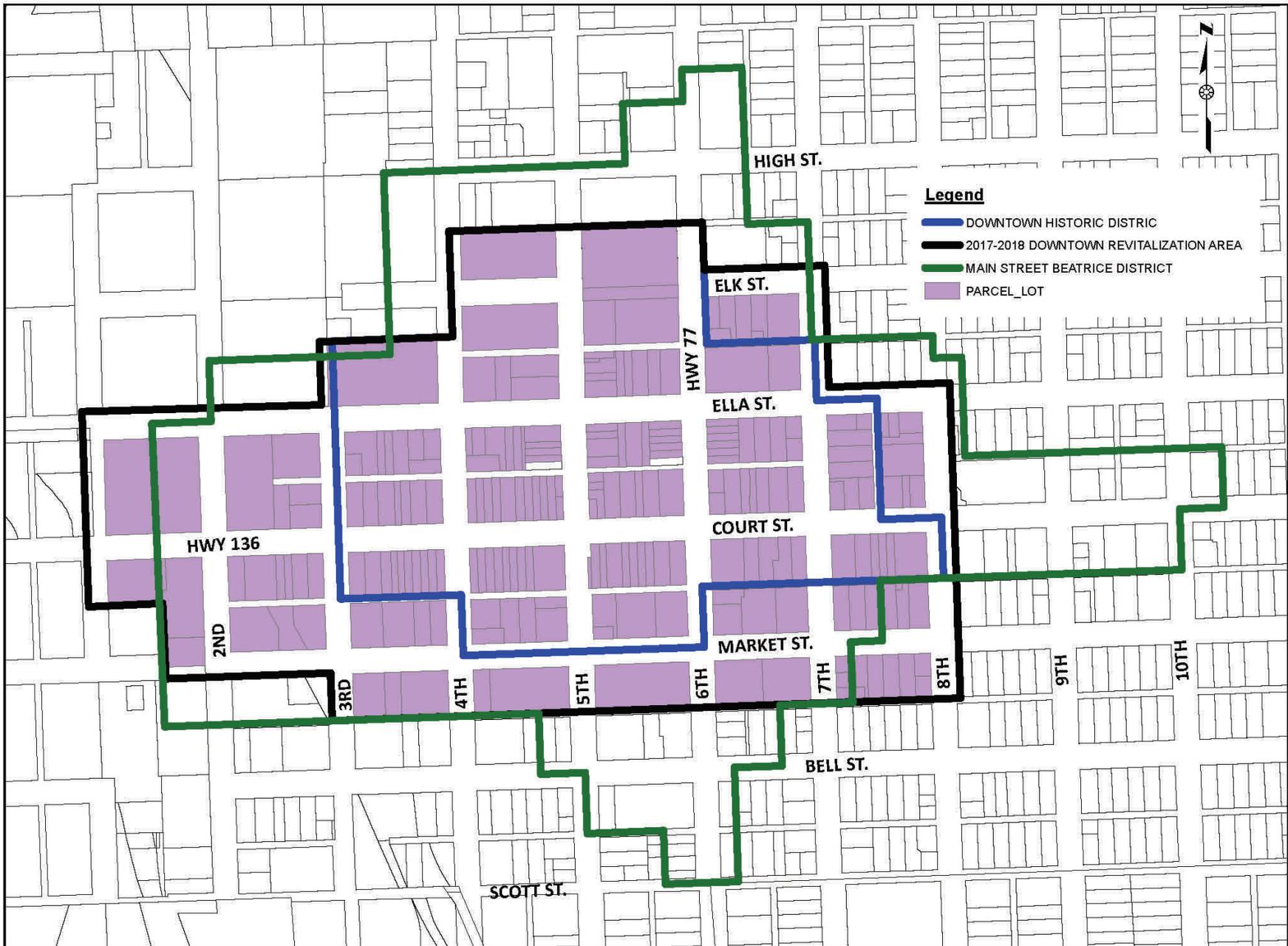
- Improvements must meet all applicable local zoning codes.
- Building, property and business owners are responsible for all building permit requirements.
- Improvements must meet all state and local regulatory codes and restrictions.
- Improvements should be made using high quality materials, construction methods and contractors. Cheap materials and poor workmanship do not last and in the end cost more to fix or replace.

The best outcomes are those that meet the needs of the property owner, follow basic design principles while preserving the elements that give a building historic character. Because the historic buildings in downtown Beatrice are key features that attract businesses, residents, and visitors to downtown, it is important to retain the historic character of these buildings by following these design guidelines.

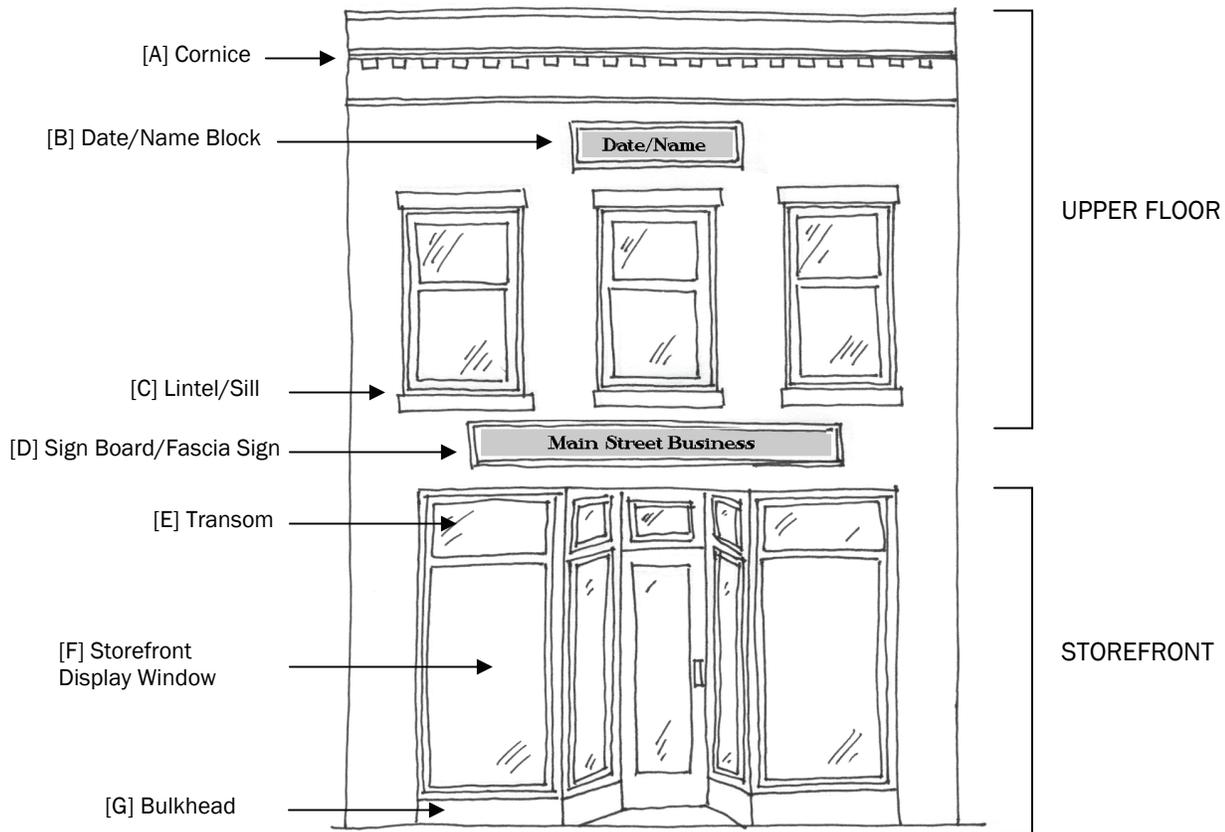
### **Downtown Beatrice Business District History**

The downtown business district encompasses the heart of Beatrice's independent business community and roughly includes an area between High Street to the north and Bell Street to the south. 1st Street to the west and 10th Street to the east. Within this larger business district there is a Downtown Revitalization Study area that focuses on the area roughly within the boundary of 1st Street on the west and 8th Street on the east. High Street to the north and the alley south of Market Street to the south. The Beatrice Downtown Historic District encompasses an area roughly between 3rd and 8th Streets to 8th and Court Streets, approximately 10 square blocks. Downtown Beatrice comprises mainly one to three story brick, wood and stone commercial buildings. Most of these buildings are built lot line to lot line with no setbacks or landscaping. The buildings follow the standard form of most commercial properties with rectangular footprints, flat roofs, storefront displays, recessed entryways, second story windows and projecting parapets both ornamented and plain. Architectural styles in the district consist mainly of late 1880s and early 20th century commercial styles, period revival styles of the mid-20th century, and modern movement styles. The district retains not only the heart of the commercial core of the city, but educational buildings, movie theatres, and service stations. The buildings within the district are almost all originally constructed of brick with ornamental details applied in terra cotta, stone, and concrete. The late 1800s commercial buildings along Court Street and 5th Street represent some of the earliest styles with many projecting pediments ornamented with a variety of details reflecting early commercial styles such as Sullivanesque terra cotta, elaborate Beaux Arts applications, Victorian cartouches and brackets, and eclectic applications including Italianate, Romanesque, Neo-Gothic, Neo-Classical Revival, and Spanish Colonial Revival. After World War II growth in the downtown district occurred at the perimeters since the majority of downtown lots were occupied by that time. Construction in the district between 1945 and 1966 grew at a similar rate as the early building boom in the 1880s. However, this construction took on more of a minimalist style and included more rehabilitations new construction. Many elaborately ornamented buildings from the 1880s and 1890s were altered to feature sheltered storefronts with awnings, were covered with cement board panels or metal slipcovers to convey a more simple and non-ornamented style at the time, and had extensive interior renovations. Several new buildings were also constructed in the district at the time including the Security First Bank at 120 N. 6th Street, an excellent example of simple modern architecture. (Excerpted from the National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Beatrice Downtown Historic District, Beatrice, Gage County, Nebraska, National Register # 16000481 <https://www.nps.gov/nr/feature/places/16000481.htm>)

# PROJECT AREA



## B. Main Street Building Features & Definitions



**Awning:** A framework covered with fabric or metal projecting from the facade of a building at the storefront level or above window openings. The primary purpose is to shade the interior of the building and provide protection to pedestrians.

**[G] Bulkhead:** Located between the sidewalk and storefront window, the bulkhead raises the display area for the storefront windows. Bulkheads were often constructed of wood. Because bulkheads are very vulnerable to weather and damage, many have been replaced with more durable materials like tile, stone and brick.

**Canopy:** A flat metal structure used to shelter pedestrians on the sidewalk projecting out from a storefront and usually suspended with chains or rods.

**[A] Cornice:** The cornice tops the main façade of a building. It is typically made of formed metal or patterns of brick, terra cotta or stone.

**[B] Date/Name Block:** The date block and sometimes a name block can be found within the design of the cornice or below the cornice on the upper part of the façade. It contains the date that the building was built and/or the name of the original building owner(s).

**Façade:** The main, or front, exterior face(s) of a building.

**Flashing:** Strip of metal bent to cover joints and angles on roof surfaces.

**[C] Lintel/Sill:** Horizontal structural element located at the bottom of a window, door, or other opening.

**Parapet:** The portion of the wall of a facade that extends above the roof line.

**Pier:** A structurally supporting column serving a decorative and/or functional purpose.

**Pressed Tin Ceiling:** Interior design element used as an affordable alternative to decorative plaster. Each panel has an intricate pattern pressed into the tin.

**Quoins:** Corner stones that anchor the edge of the building wall.

**Rehabilitation:** Improving a property through repair or alteration which makes possible for a contemporary use while preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural values.

**Re-point:** Repairing existing masonry joints by removing defective mortar and installing new mortar.

**Restoration:** Accurately bringing a property back to its original condition or to its condition at a particular time in its history and use by using original materials and fixtures where possible.

**Sash:** A frame designed to hold the glass in a window.

**[D] Sign Board/Facia Sign:** Located above the storefront or immediately below the cornice, this area or space for signage was traditionally defined with a brick frame or a horizontal panel either of wood or an inset brick wall. It continues to be an ideal location to place a sign.

## C. Basic Historic Preservation Principles

While these guidelines provide direction for specific design issues, basic historic preservation principles provide the foundation.

- **Respect the historic design character of the building.** Do not try and change a building's architectural style or make it look older than it really is.
- **Protect and maintain significant architectural features and stylistic elements on the building.** Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship should be treated with sensitivity. The best preservation procedure is to maintain historic features through proper maintenance from the outset so that intervention is not required.
- **Preserve key character-defining features of the building.** Key features are those that help convey the character of the resource as it appeared during its period of historic significance. These may include the basic structural system and building materials, as well as windows, doors, and ornamentation. Typically, those features that are on the front of a building or that are highly visible from a public way will be most important.
- **Repair deteriorated historic features, and replace only those elements that cannot be repaired.** Maintain the existing material using recognized preservation methods when possible.

### Secretary of Interior's Standards

These are standards set forth by the National Parks Service for use to evaluate all Federal involvement whether through grant programs or Historic Tax Credits.

Rehabilitation is the act or process of making possible a compatible use, for property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Preservation and rehabilitation standards focus attention on the preservation of the materials, features, finishes, spaces, and spatial relationships that, together, give a building its historic character. Preservation places emphasis on the retention of historic features and materials through conservation, maintenance and repair and respects the life of a building through successive occupancies, and the physical changes and alterations that are made over time. These changes and alterations are sometimes historic and can be worthy of preservation.

When planning a commercial building rehab, it is important to respect the original style and period when the building was built. Restoration of the original façade or storefront is not necessary but encouraged whenever possible. Repair and renovation of the façade or storefront should be based on original drawings or photos.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. 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.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, U.S. Department of the Interior—National Park Service Preservation Assistance Division Technical Preservation Services, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehabilitation-guidelines.pdf>

## D. Building Safety & Building Code Considerations

When planning for a building rehabilitation project, it is necessary to consider the impact that current building health and safety codes will have on the building. Though not directly related to historic preservation, it is important that any proposed projects do not interfere with the building's historic character. Some historic building materials contain toxic substances (primary concerns include lead based paint and asbestos) that are potentially hazardous to building occupants. Investigation and analysis of the materials and the potential abatement should be done by experienced professionals.

### **DO !**

- Identify the building's character-defining spaces, features, and finishes so that code-required work will not result in their damage or loss.
- Comply with health and safety codes so that character-defining spaces, features, and finishes are preserved.
- Preserve historic stairways and elevators so that they meet health and safety codes and are not damaged or obscured. Add new stairways or elevators in a manner that does not detract from interior architectural features.
- Remove toxic building materials only after thorough testing has been conducted and only after less invasive abatement methods have been shown to be inadequate.
- Work with local code officials to find equivalent materials, equipment, or finishes that can be used to meet code so that unnecessary or character damaging alterations can be avoided.
- Ensure that workers are certified to abate hazardous materials and provide workers with appropriate personal protective equipment for hazards found in the building.
- Install sensitively designed fire suppression systems so that they do not damage or obscure historic interior features and finishes.
- Use architecturally inconspicuous exterior building additions when required to build a code-required stairway or elevator that cannot be accommodated within the historic building.
- Make sure your building is secure before and during construction. Do not allow entry into the building through unsecured or broken windows and doors so that interior features and finishes are damaged by exposure to weather or vandalism.

### **DO NOT !**

- Make code-required alterations to a building or site before identifying the character-defining spaces, features, or finishes that should be preserved.
- Alter, damage, or destroy character-defining spaces, features, and finishes when modifying a building or site to comply with safety codes.
- Radically change, damage, or destroy character-defining spaces, features, or finishes when adding a new code-required stairway or elevator.
- Destroy historic interior features and finishes without careful testing and without consideration to less invasive abatement methods.
- Remove or abate unhealthy or unsafe building materials or finishes without taking personal and environmental safety precautions.
- Make changes to historic buildings without first exploring equivalent materials, equipment, or finishes that can be used to meet code so that unnecessary or character damaging alterations can be avoided.
- Damage, obscure or alter historic stairways and elevators or the adjacent spaces when trying to meet code requirements.
- Use fire-retardant coatings or sheathing if it damages or obscures character-defining features.
- Construct a new addition to accommodate code-required stairs and elevators on character-defining elevations highly visible from the street or where it obscures, damages, or destroys character-defining features.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES**

*Appropriate Methods for Reducing Lead-Paint Hazards in Historic Housing*  
<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/37-lead-paint-hazards.htm>

# 1. Exterior Repair, Maintenance & Cleaning

Repairing and maintaining the exterior of a building is essential to keeping it in good condition. Always consult with a historic preservation professional who can help you inspect the exterior of the building and determine the appropriate course of repair or maintenance. All buildings require periodic maintenance to ensure their longevity. Every aspect of a downtown commercial building should be examined periodically for maintenance needs. Frequent maintenance includes washing of windows, sweeping sidewalks, and eliminating weeds and litter. More complex maintenance includes keeping the building repaired and painted.

Cleaning and maintaining the exterior of a building is one way to freshen it up and to keep it in good condition. Always consult with a historic preservation professional who can help you inspect the surface and determine the safest, most efficient method of cleaning. **DO NOT EVER** sandblast, soda blast, shell blast, bead blast, pellet blast or use water under pressure on painted wood or brick surfaces. It will cause irreparable damage to the stone, brick, metal, or wood.

It is most important to understand how building materials will interact, physically and chemically with the cleaner. Evaluate the effectiveness and safety of the cleaning method by allowing a test patch to weather for several months. Problems with that type of cleaning method will show during this period. After the test patch has been completed, examine the masonry. Note whether there are pock marks, whether edges are too rounded or whether the face of the masonry rubs off when you touch it. Some masonry may be too soft to clean. Cleaning with soap, water, and a soft bristle brush sounds easy, and it can be the most economical way to clean a dirty building. But do watch for potential problems. Ask about the mineral composition of Beatrice's water supply. Some minerals could leave stains on your building. Consider the time of year and the weather when you decide to clean your building. Avoid wet cleaning operations when a danger of frost may exist. Pay attention to Nebraska's freeze dates, typically October through May.

Make sure that all entrances, windows and window wells are adequately protected against water and chemical seepage during cleaning. If you are doing more than one maintenance task on the exterior of the building, plan a work schedule. Some work should be done before cleaning; other work is best done afterward. For example, it is usually best to caulk around windows before the cleaning process (to keep water out of the joints), but to paint them after (to ensure that the paint is not disturbed during the cleaning). The facade may only need to be cleaned and painted; or, if constructed of masonry, it may have mortar joints that need to be re-pointed. In some cases, holes left by the removal of signs or other objects may need to be filled.

## **DO !**

- Use recognized preservation methods when working with historic building materials.
- Stabilize deteriorated or damaged features and surfaces prior to undertaking work.
- Clean masonry only when necessary with the gentlest method possible.
- Clean architectural metals, to remove corrosion prior to repainting or applying protective coatings.
- Regularly inspect painted masonry, wood surfaces and other architectural features to determine whether repainting is necessary or if cleaning and/or maintenance is all that is required.
- Remove damaged or deteriorated paint no further than the next sound layer using the gentlest method possible.
- Retain paint and coatings that help protect wood features from moisture and ultraviolet light.
- Only use chemical strippers to supplement other methods such as hand scraping and hand sanding.
- Repaint with colors that are appropriate to character of the building and district.
- Follow manufacturers' product and application instructions when painting exterior masonry, woodwork or metal features.
- Apply appropriate paint or other coating systems after cleaning in order to decrease the corrosion rate of metals or alloys.
- Use the gentlest cleaning methods for cast iron, wrought iron, and steel when removing paint build up and corrosion.
- Identify the type of metal prior to cleaning, and test to assure the gentlest cleaning method is selected or determine that cleaning is inappropriate for that metal.
- Use appropriate cleaning techniques for soft metals such as lead, tin, copper, terneplate, and zinc with because their finishes can be easily damaged by inappropriate treatments.

*These are meant to be used as guidelines. It is possible that certain buildings or projects may be able to gain exemptions based on the buildings historic context or other reasons unforeseen in these guidelines.*

## **DO NOT !**

- Use cleaning methods which alter or damage the historic color, texture, and finish of the material.
- Use untested techniques, chemicals, or untrained personnel.
- Paint new or existing unpainted bare brick; if the brick has been painted in the past, do not remove the paint—maintain it as a painted surface.
- Remove paint that is firmly adhering to, and thus protecting surfaces.
- Use metal brushes to clean with as they can damage mortar and masonry.
- Use chemical products or caustic solutions that will damage material surfaces, such as using acid on limestone or marble, or that leave a chemical residue.
- Do full scale surface cleaning until after testing whether or not the cleaning method is appropriate. Tests should be observed over a sufficient period of time so both the immediate and the long range effects are known.
- Strip paint or other coatings to reveal bare wood, thus exposing historically coated surfaces to the effects of accelerated weathering.
- Use paint removal methods like propane or butane torches on wood; using thermal devices improperly will scorch the wood.
- Use high pressure water cleaning, blasting with dry or wet grit, sand, or other abrasives because it destroys the hard fired finish on brick and damages mortar, stone and other masonry; these methods of cleaning permanently erode the surface and accelerate deterioration of the material.
- Repaint with colors that are not historically appropriate to the building and district.
- Apply water-repellent coatings to masonry.
- Use a cleaning method that involves water or liquid chemical solutions when there is any possibility of freezing temperatures. Avoid cleaning and paint removal when frost is expected. The best time of the year to undertake projects such as this is in the late spring through summer.
- Forget to neutralize the wood thoroughly after using chemicals so that new paint can adhere.
- Use sandblasting or water blasting to remove paint from wood as it will damage wood.
- Allow detachable wood features to soak too long in a caustic solution causing the wood grain to become raised and the surface roughened.
- Expose metal surfaces that were intended to be protected from the environment.
- Apply paint or other coatings to metals such as copper, bronze, or stainless steel that were meant to be exposed.
- Remove the patina of historic metal because it is a protective coating on some metals, such as bronze or copper, and is a significant historic exterior finish.
- Clean soft metals such as lead, tin, copper, terneplate, and zinc with high pressure water cleaning or blasting with dry or wet grit, sand, or other abrasives which will wear away the surface of the metal.
- Use high pressure water cleaning or blasting with dry or wet grit, sand, or other abrasive methods to clean cast iron, wrought iron or steel.
- Let cleaning solution runoff enter the storm drain or soak into the ground.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*Building Improvement File*, Revised edition by Richard Wagner AIA, 1995.

*Guiding Design on Main Street: The Professional's Manual for Managing Design* by Richard Wagner, AIA, 2000.

*Good for Business: A Guide to Rehabilitating the Exteriors of Older Commercial Buildings* by Paul Jabukovich and Les Vollmert, 1995.

*Historic Building Facades: The Manual for Maintenance and Rehabilitation*, New York Landmarks Conservancy, 1997.

*Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines*, by Clark Schoettle, 1983.

*Maintaining and Repairing Old and Historic Buildings*, John J. Cullinane, AIA. 2012.

*Saving Face: How Corporate Franchise Design Can Respect Community Character* (APA Planning Advisory Service Report Number 503/504) by Ronald Lee Fleming, 2002.

*Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/1-cleaning-water-repellent.htm>

*Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/10-paint-problems.htm>

*Maintaining the Exterior of Small and Medium Size Historic Buildings*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/47-maintaining-exterior.htm>

## 2. Building Materials

There are four primary types of traditional materials used to construct commercial buildings: masonry, metal, wood, and glass. Identifying, retaining, and preserving these materials are important in defining the overall historic character of the building. Things such as brackets, cornices, pressed tin ceilings, door pediments, steps, columns, cast iron facades, enameled metal panels, glass block, storefronts, doors, window sashes, hardware, capitals, window hoods, and stairways as well as details such as tooling, patterns, coatings, finishes and color are constructed of these materials.

The following building materials should never be used on the exterior of historic commercial buildings (**unless they are documented as part of a mid-20th century renovation**)—cedar planks or cedar shake shingles, standing seam metal or asphalt shingled awnings, molded stone, rough cut logs, aluminum slipcovers, vinyl or aluminum siding, enamel coated masonite panels, applied false brick veneer, or decorative concrete block.

The above mentioned finishes should not be used on buildings that still retain their original 19th or early 20th century architecture and finishes to avoid damaging the historic character that Beatrice is trying to protect. With buildings that experienced significant change and use of these materials in the mid-20th century (1950's-1960's), these materials can have a place and may be historic in their own right. The use of other materials made to either imitate exterior finish materials or used to cover over original architectural features is also discouraged. \* Some exceptions may be granted when proper documentation exists for a material's historic use (typically limited to specific documentation for the building in question).

### DO !

- Properly document all work, repairs and changes to buildings and unobtrusively date the work to guide future research and work.
- Retain historic materials and features as much as possible and undertake adequate measures to assure the protection of those materials and features.
- Stabilize deteriorated or damaged features and surfaces prior to undertaking work so further damage cannot occur.
- Use recognized preservation methods when working with historic building materials.
- Repair damaged features. Only replace extensively deteriorated or missing features when there are limited replacement choices. The new work should match the old in material, design, color, and texture.
- Match brick as closely as possible to the original when replacing missing pieces or when constructing new; brick should be compatible in texture, scale, and color to the original.
- Evaluate the existing condition of the feature or surface to determine whether more than protection and maintenance are required or if repairs are necessary.
- Protect and maintain exterior building features and surfaces by providing proper drainage so that water does not stand on flat, horizontal surfaces or accumulate in curved decorative elements.

### DO NOT !

- Remove architectural features that can be stabilized and preserved.
- Use replacement material that does not match the historic features.
- Alter features or surfaces that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/16-substitute-materials.htm>

*Architectural Character—Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving their Character*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/17-architectural-character.htm>

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### 3. Windows

Windows are important in defining the historic character of a building. It is important to identify and retain windows and their functional and decorative features when undertaking a project. Moving the location, covering-up, or changing the dimensions of an original window opening is never appropriate because it alters the character of the existing window. In a block of commercial buildings, window patterns contribute to the visual appearance of the entire block. Thus, retaining the location of windows contributes to maintaining important character-defining features.

We encourage building owners to uncover and repair the windows hidden behind the coverings. If openings are uncovered and no windows are there, we encourage installation of windows that match the opening and fit the architecture of the building. Refer to historic photos of the building for guidance.

Insulating storm windows can help conserve heat and energy, but often look inappropriate on an older façade. For this reason, consider installing them on the inside of the window where they will be less visible. Make sure that interior storm windows are properly vented so that moisture does not build up between the windows. If storm windows are installed on the outside, their design should match the existing window in shape, profile, sightlines, number and size of panes and color. In some cases replacing existing glass panes with insulated glass can be permissible (please refer to the Energy efficiency section for more information).

**DO !**

- Remove boards and other inappropriate materials covering windows and fix broken windows immediately since broken or boarded up windows negatively impact the business district.
- Restore window openings to their original configuration and detail if they have been altered.
- Repair windows before considering replacing them. When replacement windows are necessary, use windows that match the original in size, material, profile, sightlines, configuration, and overall appearance.
- Use storm windows on the exterior that match relevant and historically significant window configurations.
- Retain upper story windows even when vacant. Use curtains or open blinds to conceal vacant spaces that can be seen from the ground level.
- Use a recessed setback if a new interior ceiling must be dropped below the height of the existing window opening, so that the full window opening can be retained without altering the exterior appearance.
- Re-use window hardware including sash lifts and locks. Replace deteriorated or missing parts of windows with new parts that match the old in material, design, color, and texture.
- Stabilize a deteriorated or damaged window until additional work is undertaken, so no further damage can occur to the building.



appropriate window replacements



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- Protect and maintain the materials that make up the window frame, sash, muntins, and surrounds through appropriate surface treatments such as cleaning, rust removal, limited paint removal, and re-application of protective coatings.
- Protect the historic glazing when repairing windows. Re-glaze loose or broken window panes, and repair all window parts to working order.
- Make windows weather tight and thermally efficient by re-caulking and replacing or installing weather stripping.

#### **DO NOT !**

- Change the size or shape of window openings.
- Remove material that could be repaired or use improper repair techniques.
- Remove or alter windows or window features that define the character of the building.
- Use “fake” historic windows or a modern window design that is incompatible with the historic character or style of the building.
- Use opaque panels, metal, wood, plexi-glass, mirrored, tinted, shaded and/or other materials to replace clear glass windows.
- Use reflective film or dark tinted glass.
- Add shutters to windows.
- Allow window heating/air conditioning units in windows on the main façade(s).
- Remove a character-defining window that is un-repairable and replace it with a new window that does not convey the same visual appearance.
- Replace windows because the paint is peeling, there is broken glass, a stuck sash, or high air infiltration as these conditions are not indications that windows are beyond repair.
- Change the appearance of windows by replacing them with inappropriate materials, finishes, or colors which noticeably change the sash, depth of reveal, and muntin configuration, the reflectivity and color of the glazing (glass), or the appearance of the frame.
- Change the number, location, size or glazing pattern of windows.
- Cut new openings or block windows.
- Install a replacement sash that does not fit the window opening or alter the openings to fit new windows.
- Use incompatible substitute material for replacement parts.
- Use replacement materials that do not match the historic window.
- Replace windows without sufficient historical, pictorial, and physical documentation.
- Install new windows that are incompatible with the building's historic appearance or obscure, damage, or destroy character-defining features.
- Insert new floors or furred-down ceilings on the interior which cut across the glazed areas of windows so that the exterior form and appearance of the windows are changed.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines*, by Clark Schoettle, 1983.

*The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/9-wooden-windows.htm>

*The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/13-steel-windows.htm>

*The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stained and Leaded Glass*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/33-stained-leaded-glass.htm>

## 4. Architectural Details

Deteriorated building details and ornamentation should be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. If a replacement is necessary, the new material should match the original material in composition, design, color, and texture. Replacement of missing details and ornamentation should be accurate duplications based upon remaining details and ornamentation or through historic photographs.

### DO !

- Uncover hidden details and ornamentation.
- Remove paint from past work that obscures details and ornamentation before repainting.
- Use appropriate paint removal techniques (NEVER sandblast, pellet blast, etc.).
- Repair, fill, caulk, prime and repaint soft, dry, or split areas in wood surfaces.
- Replace broken or missing details and/or ornamentation with quality materials that will last over time and that match the original material in composition, design, color, and texture.

### DO NOT !

- Cover exposed details and ornamentation with awnings, slipcovers, or other features.
- Use fake historic details and/or decoration.
- Use plastic, vinyl, or other synthetic materials.
- Replace broken details and/or ornamentation with cheap or inferior materials that will not last over time.
- Fail to document work.



Examples of architectural details (L-R): cast iron storefront detail; brick & stone detail around a door; terra cotta details; window hoods

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines*, by Clark Schoettle, 1983.

*Architectural Character—Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving their Character*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/17-architectural-character.htm>

*These are meant to be used as guidelines. It is possible that certain buildings or projects may be able to gain exemptions based on the buildings historic context or other reasons unforeseen in these guidelines.*

## 5. Cornices

Building cornices are constructed of different materials including sheet metal applied over a wood frame, decorative wood molding, brick, or stone.

The cornice should be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. If a replacement is necessary, the new material should match the original material in composition, design, color, and texture. It is possible to repair or replace a cornice if it has been damaged or is no longer there. The original can be duplicated or a replacement similar to the original can be ordered. The new or replacement cornice and missing details and ornamentation should be based upon historic photographs or existing pieces of the cornice.

### DO !

- Repair or replace a cornice that has been damaged or is no longer there.
- Paint sheet metal cornices regularly to prevent rust.
- Check the wood support structure for rot or insect damage and, if found, replace the deteriorated portions.
- Paint decorative molded wood cornices regularly to help protect it from deterioration.
- Duplicate the original cornice or find a replacement that is similar to the original using historic photographs and or existing pieces of the cornice that can be used to mold a new one.
- Use quality materials that will last over time and that match the original material in composition, design, color, and texture.

### DO NOT !

- Replace a cornice or broken and missing details and/or ornamentation with cheap or inferior materials that will not last over time.
- EVER sandblast, soda blast, shell blast, bead blast or pellet blast painted wood or brick surfaces. It will cause irreparable damage to the stone, brick, metal, or wood.
- Restore without historic or physical documentation.
- Fail to document the current work done to the building.



### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines*, by Clark Schoettle, 1983.

*These are meant to be used as guidelines. It is possible that certain buildings or projects may be able to gain exemptions based on the buildings historic context or other reasons unforeseen in these guidelines.*

## 6. Transom Windows

Transom windows are the smaller windows above the storefront display windows. They were designed to let in light and to improve ventilation. Often transom windows still exist but are covered with building materials on the outside and are hidden above dropped ceilings on the inside.

Transom windows should be retained and repaired in the process of rehabilitation. Consult with a local and knowledgeable stained glass professional for assistance and suggestions for repair, replacement, removal, and re-installation.

Sometimes air conditioning units are installed in transom windows. If possible, air conditioners should be removed and the transom window replaced. If air conditioning units cannot be removed, their exterior grills should be painted to blend in with the storefront and a drip tube installed so that condensation does not drip on pedestrians or cause water damage to the building facade.



Examples of transom windows: storefront door and upper floor window transoms (top left); clear glass transom (bottom left); glass block transom (top right); stained glass transom (middle right); prism glass transom (bottom right)

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines*, by Clark Schoettle, 1983.

*These are meant to be used as guidelines. It is possible that certain buildings or projects may be able to gain exemptions based on the buildings historic context or other reasons unforeseen in these guidelines.*

## 7. Bulkheads

The storefront bulkhead is located between the sidewalk and the large storefront window. Where the bulkhead has been replaced with an inappropriate material, like wood shingles, fake stone, or fake brick, it should be redesigned to fit the building. Where the bulkhead has been removed, it should be reconstructed to maintain proper storefront proportions.



### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines*, by Clark Schoettle, 1983.

*These are meant to be used as guidelines. It is possible that certain buildings or projects may be able to gain exemptions based on the buildings historic context or other reasons unforeseen in these guidelines.*

## 8. Lighting

Lighting in the downtown serves several purposes including security, facilitating vehicular and pedestrian traffic, illumination of signage and façades, highlighting interior merchandise displays and accentuating architectural details of buildings.

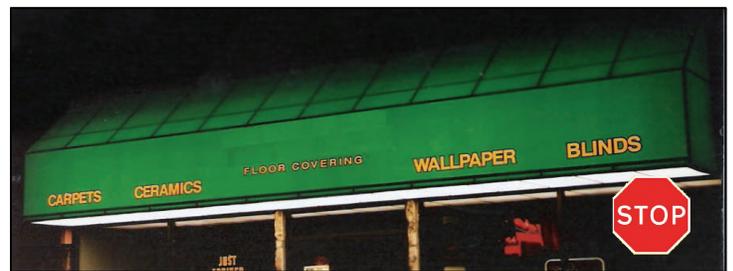
Compatibility of exterior lighting and lighting fixtures is assessed in terms of design, material, use, size, scale, color, and brightness. When using lighting fixtures in downtown, it is important to consider the level of lighting as well as the scale and overall design of the fixture itself. Exterior lighting should highlight building elements, signs, or other distinctive features rather than attract attention to the light fixture itself. Lighting should provide an even illumination level. Exterior lighting fixtures should be appropriate to the building’s architectural style. Keep in mind that not every building may need exterior lighting, for some buildings even the use of historic lighting styles may be an inappropriate addition.

### DO !

- Use lighting fixtures that are appropriate and compatible with the building’s period, architectural style, the property, and the district.
- Use lighting that highlights building elements, signs, or other distinctive features at an even illumination level.
- Repair existing fixtures before considering replacement. If replacing fixtures, use the same style and design or appropriate architectural period.

### DO NOT !

- Use obtrusive lighting fixtures or lighting levels that detract from or overly emphasize the building.
- Damage or conceal any historic architectural features when installing lighting fixtures on a building.
- Use fixtures that replicate an inappropriate architectural period.



(Left) Example of an appropriate light fixture. (Right) Example of an inappropriate light fixture. (Top Right) Example of the appropriate use of light fixtures to illuminate a sign and awning. (Bottom Right) Example of improper lighting, internally lit awning

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines*, by Clark Schoettle, 1983.

*These are meant to be used as guidelines. It is possible that certain buildings or projects may be able to gain exemptions based on the buildings historic context or other reasons unforeseen in these guidelines.*

## 9. Storefronts

Commercial storefronts are important to the overall character of a Main Street historic district. The storefront is comprised of large display windows and the building entrance. It is the most prominent feature of a historic commercial building serving as the venue for a store's advertising and merchandising strategy. Typically, a storefront does not extend beyond the first story, but the rest of the building is often related to it visually through a unity of form and detail. Window patterns on the upper floors, cornice elements, and other decorative features should be carefully retained, in addition to the storefront itself. Identifying, retaining, and preserving storefronts and their functional and decorative elements is important to the overall historic character of a commercial building. Such elements include the display windows, signs, doors, transoms, kick plates, and corner posts. Altering these features will most definitely destroy or diminish the overall character of the building.

Some storefronts in historic business districts are original, while others have been replaced or altered over time when new materials or styles became available. **Some of these altered storefronts may have gained historical significance through these changes and should be retained.** For buildings where the original storefront has been changed, it is recommended that improvements be made to the existing storefront that respects the historic character of the building which may include replacing the entire storefront with a more appropriate one.

In some cases, the storefront has been covered up with inappropriate materials. Before removing inappropriate coverings, careful research needs to be done to make sure that original materials behind that covering can be saved. If original materials behind the covering cannot be saved, it is best to hire a professional to design a compatible new storefront before any covering is removed or demolition done.

New or replacement storefronts should be compatible with the front façade, keeping in mind the scale, proportions, materials, and color of the rest of the façade. The new storefront should be designed to fit in the existing opening, no longer, no smaller, no taller, and have the same or similar look to the original. If the storefront is one of a series of storefronts in the same building, it should relate to the others in scale, proportion, materials, and color.

The storefront area of most historic commercial buildings have large panes of fixed glass, called display windows, with smaller transom windows located above entry doors and display windows. Display windows may be framed in wood, copper, bronze, aluminum, or other metal and consist of a single or multiple panes of glass.

Storefront transom windows may be fixed or operable and usually consist of a single sheet of glass or are subdivided into multiple panes of clear, colored, stained, prism, or other types of specialty glass.

Do not replace storefront glass with dark tinted or mirrored glass because it gives the storefront a “vacant” look and does not allow customers to view merchandise and displays.



Examples of storefronts (L-R): traditional storefront with recessed entrance; appropriate replacement storefront; inappropriate storefront improvement design and materials

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When restoring a storefront to the original look or similar, look at historic photos and plans. Original materials and details should be preserved if at all possible, or substitutions used that resemble original materials and details.

When the use of a ground-floor space changes, sometimes the storefront and display windows no longer have a functional purpose. Even if the storefront or display windows no longer have a functional purpose, they should not be removed or covered-up. The storefront and display windows are still character-defining elements of the building facade and should be retained. Blinds, shades, window painting, or gilding could be applied to provide the desired “small windows,” or display boxes could be constructed inside the existing windows to focus attention on small, valuable objects.

#### **DO !**

- Retain and repair the storefront rather than replace or alter it.
- Use the same materials and method of construction if a replacement storefront is necessary.
- Identify, retain, and preserve storefronts and their functional and decorative features such as display windows, signs, doors, transoms, kick plates, and corner posts.
- Protect and maintain masonry, wood, and architectural metals using appropriate treatments such as cleaning, rust removal, limited paint removal, and reapplication of protective coating systems.
- Protect storefronts against arson and vandalism before work begins. Board up openings, install locks and alarm systems.
- Evaluate the existing condition of storefront materials to determine whether maintenance or repair is required.
- Remove inappropriate, non-historic cladding, false pent roofs, and other alterations that obscure the storefront.
- Replace in kind deteriorated or missing parts of storefronts where there are surviving prototypes such as transoms, kick plates, pilasters, or signs. The new work should match the old in materials, design, color, and texture; and be unobtrusively dated to guide future research and treatment. Use pictorial documentation and/or physical evidence to re-create the historic feature.

#### **DO NOT !**

- Change the storefront so that it appears residential in character.
- Use coach lanterns, pent awnings, wood shakes, inoperable shutters, and small-paned windows on the storefront.
- Remove historic material such as wood, cast iron, terra cotta, carrara glass, and brick.
- Change the location of a storefront’s entrance.
- Replace an existing storefront without considering if it contributes to the character of the building and whether the materials, the scale, proportion, color, details, and ornamentation are compatible with those of the rest of the façade.
- Create a false historical appearance or use historically incorrect storefront replacements due to insufficient historical, pictorial, and physical documentation—take your cues from the existing architecture of the building.
- Replace a deteriorated storefront with a new storefront that does not convey the same visual appearance of the existing storefront or is incompatible in size, scale, material, and color.
- Use opaque panels, metal, wood, plexi-glass, mirrored, tinted, shaded and/or other materials to replace clear glass storefront display windows.
- Remove material that can be repaired or use improper repair techniques.
- Ignore ongoing maintenance of the storefront which will ensure longevity of materials and structure.
- Allow entry into the building through unsecured or broken windows and doors so that interior features and finishes are damaged by exposure to weather or vandalism.
- Use replacement material that does not match the historic storefront feature or use a substitute material for the
- Replacement parts that does not convey the same visual appearance as the surviving parts of the storefront or that is physically or chemically incompatible.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES**

*Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines*, by Clark Schoettle, 1983.

*Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/11-storefronts.htm>

## 10. Doors & Entryways

The location and appearance of doors are important character-defining features of historic buildings. Main entry doors, usually located on front facades, often employ richer materials and more elaborate designs than side, rear, or service doors. Retail storefronts often have recessed entries to provide shelter from the weather, additional display window space and sometimes include the name of the business or address in the floor in tile or terrazzo. Recessed storefronts also emphasize the building entrance. In renovation, building owners are encouraged to retain these entries. If the recessed area has been changed in an earlier remodeling, owners are encouraged to restore the recessed area unless the change has added historic significance to the building.

Primary entrance doors should resemble what was originally (or within period of historical significance) in place. Solid or residential style doors with small areas of glass are not appropriate for commercial/retail buildings. The typical historic commercial building often had an additional or secondary door on the front or the side to permit access to the upper floors. Compared to the storefront entrance, this second door was slightly more modest in design and usually not recessed as deeply. Secondary doors should also fit into the overall façade without drawing unnecessary attention.

### DO !

- Retain original doors and hardware.
- Match the original door in materials and scale to the rest of the façade when replacing.
- Use doors that are compatible with the storefront.

### DO NOT !

- Move or cover up existing door openings.
- Add new doors to the building where there weren't doors or openings before.
- Use standard sized residential type or fake "historic" looking doors decorated with designs, moldings, or window grilles.
- Install secondary doors that are more prominent than the storefront door.



Examples of storefront and secondary entrance doors in downtown (L-R): wooden storefront door; aluminum door; inappropriate residential style door

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines*, by Clark Schoettle, 1983.

*These are meant to be used as guidelines. It is possible that certain buildings or projects may be able to gain exemptions based on the buildings historic context or other reasons unforeseen in these guidelines.*

## 11. Paint, Color & Paint Removal

Painting can be one of the most simple but dramatic improvements that can be made to a building but it must be done with great care. Paint was originally used to highlight the architectural details of a building including the details in the cornice, the storefront, and the upper story window frames. Paint was also used on early buildings to protect the soft-fired brick surface.

Brick wall surfaces that have never been painted should be left unpainted. Brick wall surfaces that have been painted, can be maintained and repainted. **DO NOT EVER sandblast, soda blast, shell blast, bead blast, pellet blast or use water under pressure on painted wood, brick, or stone surfaces. It will cause irreparable damage to the wood, brick or metal.**

Paint colors should be chosen to be compatible with the architectural color and characteristics of the building as well as adjoining buildings and others on the block. Inappropriate color selection makes a building stand out rather than blend in with the neighboring buildings.

Location and size of buildings should also be taken into consideration when selecting colors. Large, plain buildings should use more subtle colors than smaller, more ornate buildings. Also, colors on the south and west sides of a building appear “warmer” than if placed on the north or east sides of a building.

Attention should be given to the preparation of surfaces (brick, wood, metal), choice of paint type (oil or latex), and finish (gloss, semi-gloss, or matte). Consult with paint professionals to ensure the appropriateness of your color preferences, surface to be painted and type of paint.

### DO !

- Leave unpainted brick wall surfaces, unpainted.
- Select paint colors that are compatible with the architectural color and characteristics of the building as well as
- Adjoining buildings and others on the block.
- Catalog all of the building pieces that are to be painted. Since each piece may be of different material, it may require a different type of paint and painting technique.
- Pay attention to what the building looks like on sunny and cloudy days and use colors that enhance the look of the building on either day.
- Make repairs to surfaces before starting any work. Replace rotted wood, remove peeling and loose paint, repair
- Masonry mortar joints, clean and repair windows, remove rust from metal, etc.
- Carefully prepare surfaces and apply paint according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Paint brick wall surfaces that have been painted before unless they were historically unpainted.
- Develop a painting schedule. Some times of the year are better than others for painting. Good weather usually ensures a better paint job.



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**DO NOT !**

- NEVER sandblast, soda blast, shell blast, bead blast, pellet blast or use water under pressure on painted wood, stone, or brick surfaces. It will cause irreparable damage to the stone, brick, metal, or wood.
- Paint brick wall surfaces that have never been painted.
- Select paint colors that are inappropriate for the building making it stand out rather than blend in with the neighboring buildings.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES**

*Building Improvement File*, Revised edition by Richard Wagner AIA, 1995.

Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/1-cleaning-water-repellent.htm>

## 12. Awnings & Canopies

Awnings and canopies can provide a secondary location for signage and add color and interest to the façade of a building. They can also be used to emphasize storefront windows and entrances. They also serve as protection for pedestrians and display windows from the sun and rain. Awnings and canopies don't have to be used on every building and are not appropriate for every building. Consult historical photographic evidence and seek professional design advice before installing awnings.

Features such as awnings and canopies are visual elements that can add or detract from the character and interest of a building. They can be dominant design features on the façade of a building, so it is important to make sure there is a good relationship between the awning or canopy and the façade.

Certain buildings may lend themselves to a particular style of canopy or awning or none at all. If a new canopy or awning is to be added to a historic building where one did not previously exist, it should be designed to be compatible in scale, color, proportion, and material with the building's façade. The use of awnings and canopies should be looked at on a case-by-case basis.

Several buildings in Beatrice feature aluminum canopies. These canopies can be original, or are later additions that have gained historical significance with the building.

Awnings and canopies serve both a decorative and functional purpose. Canopies are fixed to the building whereas an awning can be opened and closed or can remain permanently extended. Operable awnings let sunlight into your building on cold days, helping to heat the interior. It shades your window when it is sunny outside. Although it is more expensive to install an operable awning than a fixed one, you will recoup the extra cost through less energy consumption.

Canopies should always be securely fastened to the façade. Steel rods are often used to anchor canopies. It is important to position the rods so that they blend into the design of the façade.

Before determining the appropriate color and/or pattern for an awning, look at the entire building. If it has minimal architectural detailing, it can be enhanced with a bright accent color or pattern. A more decorated facade should be complemented with a subtle solid color. Select a color that enhances the existing building features. If incorporating signage on the awning itself, keep the message simple and direct. Signs are best located on the returns (sides) and valances (flaps) and should be attached to the fascia of canopies.

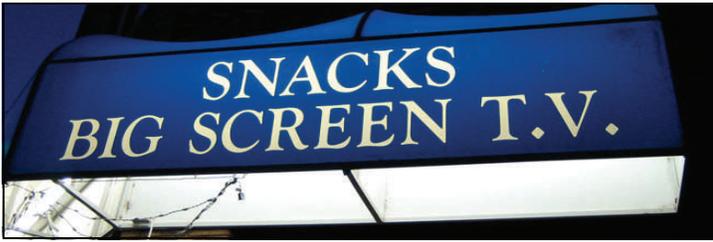
Before proceeding, ensure that any awning or canopy project is in compliance with Nebraska Department of Transportation rules and Nebraska State Statute. In some cases a special use permit may be required for awnings and canopies near the highways.

### DO !

- Repair rather than remove metal canopies if possible.
- Utilize existing awning hardware and fixtures. Repair before considering replacement.
- Consider how the awning or canopy will affect existing architectural features and how it will appear in relation to the scale of the building.
- Consider the character of the building's façade when choosing a solid or patterned awning fabric.



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Examples of inappropriate awnings: vinyl or plastic back lit or under lit awning (top left); standing seam metal awning (bottom left); shake shingle awning (top right); asphalt shingle awning (bottom right)

- Use a canvas color or pattern that enhances, not detracts from the building's façade.
- Use bold solid colored or patterned awnings for architecturally simple buildings.
- Use subtle colored or subtle patterned awnings for architecturally detailed buildings.
- Use awnings or canopies that are compatible in scale, proportion, color, and material with the building's façade and are appropriate historically to the building.
- Consider the impact on neighboring buildings when choosing to install an awning or canopy.
- Use professionally manufactured canvas awnings that are colorfast, carry a warranty, and are treated with weather resistant chemicals.
- Use awning shapes that relate to the shape of windows, doors, and other openings.
- Check with the City/NDOT to ensure the awning is in compliance with State Law.

**DO NOT !**

- Use metal stock or structured standing seam awnings.
- Use plastic or vinyl formed awnings (with or without plastic grids/baffles, and under-lighting).
- Use plastic grids/baffles and under-lighting with canvas awnings.
- Hide important architectural details behind awnings, canopies, or marquees.
- Overpower the proportions of the windows or façade with awnings.
- Use patterned or bold colored awnings on buildings with strong architectural character and detail.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES**

*Building Improvement File*, Revised edition by Richard Wagner AIA, 1995.

*Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines*, by Clark Schoettle, 1983.

*Main Street Guidelines: Awnings and Canopies on Main Street*, by Dick Ryan, Joseph V. DeSousa, Ian Lawson, and Raymundo Vela, 1987.

*Saving Face: How Corporate Franchise Design Can Respect Community Character* (APA Planning Advisory Service Report Number 503/504) by Ronald Lee Fleming, 2002.

*The Use of Awnings on Historic Buildings, Repair, Replacement and New Design*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/44-awnings.htm>

## 13. Brick Repair & Maintenance

**DO NOT EVER sandblast, soda blast, shell blast, bead blast, pellet blast or use water under pressure on painted wood or brick surfaces. It will cause irreparable damage to the stone, brick, metal, or wood.**

Re-pointing is the means of replacing the mortar between the bricks of a building. It is important to replace deteriorated mortar between bricks using the appropriate technique for historic brick and other building materials. New mortar should match the existing mortar in composition, hardness, and profile. It is best to consult a professional brick mason when approaching this type of maintenance on your building. Inappropriate re-pointing can destroy the exterior structure of the building.

### DO !

- Use recognized preservation methods when working with historic building materials.
- Stabilize deteriorated or damaged features and surfaces prior to undertaking work.
- Evaluate architectural features to determine whether maintenance or repairs are necessary.
- Evaluate and treat the causes of mortar joint deterioration such as leaking roofs or gutters, differential settlement of the building, capillary action, or extreme weather exposure.
- Repair masonry walls and other features by re-pointing the mortar joints where there is evidence of disintegrating mortar, cracks in mortar joints, loose bricks, damp walls, or damaged plasterwork.
- Duplicate old mortar in strength, composition, color, texture, width and in joint profile.
- Remove deteriorated mortar by carefully hand-raking the joints to avoid damaging the masonry Use only hand tools to remove deteriorated mortar from joints prior to re-pointing.
- Repair stucco by removing the damaged material and patching with new stucco that duplicates the old in strength, composition, color, and texture.
- Only apply surface treatments such as water-repellent coatings to masonry after re-pointing and only if masonry repairs have failed to stop water penetration problems.
- Identify, evaluate, and treat the causes of building material deterioration, including faulty flashing, leaking gutters, cracks and holes in siding, deteriorated caulking in joints and seams, plant material growing too close to wood surfaces, or insect or fungus infestation.
- Pay attention to pedestrian use or new access patterns so that architectural metal features are not subject to damage by use or inappropriate maintenance such as salting adjacent sidewalks.

### DO NOT !

- Alter masonry features which are important in defining the overall architectural or historic character of the building.
- Apply waterproof, water repellent, or non-historic coatings to brick as a substitute for re-pointing and masonry repairs because it will change the appearance of historic masonry and accelerate its deterioration.
- Use replacement material that does not match the historic masonry feature.
- Alter features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building.



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- Place incompatible metals together without providing a reliable separation material; such incompatibility can result in galvanic corrosion of the less noble metal (ie. copper will corrode cast iron, steel, tin, and aluminum).
- Use electric saws or hammers to remove deteriorated mortar from joints.
- Re-point joints with mortar of high Portland cement content because it creates a bond that is stronger than the historic material and can cause damage as a result of the differing coefficient of expansion and the differing porosity of the material and the mortar.
- Re-point with a synthetic caulking compound.
- Use a "scrub" coating technique to re-point mortar joints.
- Remove sound stucco or repair with new stucco that is stronger than the historic material or does not convey the same visual appearance.



#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*Building Improvement File*, Revised edition by Richard Wagner AIA, 1995.

*Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/2-repoint-mortar-joints.htm>

## 14. Signs

All signs should be in conformity with Article X of the Beatrice zoning ordinance.

Signs contribute to the overall image of downtown Beatrice and give identity clues for customers relating to each individual business and building in the district. All signs in the downtown district need to fit the architectural character of downtown Beatrice while creating a positive identity for individual businesses.

In general, signs should not cover windows, cornices, transoms, or other decorative details. They should complement the building's façade as well as those of neighboring buildings in shape, size, color and material.

Quality of workmanship and construction is essential. A simple, well-made sign speaks more highly of a business than an extravagant, but sloppy sign.

Choose a professional sign maker carefully. Ask to see samples of their previous work to make sure their design and craftsmanship is appropriate to meeting these guidelines.

### DO !

- Use signage appropriate to the design of the building façade.
- Use historic photographs to aid in the design of a new sign.
- Ensure signs are designed and installed following the Beatrice sign code (Article X City Zoning).
- Use signs that respect the size and scale of the building and street and do not obscure the building's important architectural details or features.
- Pay attention to how the sign appears in relation to the entire facade. Take cues from the colors of the building for the colors used on the sign.
- Use signs that are attractive in appearance and are pedestrian-oriented in shape and size.
- Use professional sign companies with experience working in historic districts to design and install signage. Use signs that are constructed of quality and durable materials. Workmanship and quality are essential.
- Use incandescent lighting to light signs at night. Use lighting that shines down on the sign rather than up to avoid light pollution.
- Use pedestrian friendly signage that provides information simply and legibly.
- Use professionally designed laser cut and applied window lettering on storefront windows and doorways.
- Remove temporary signs such as banners and paper signs in windows in a timely manner. The use of temporary signs that outlast the advertised sale or promotion is discouraged.
- Work with corporate chain businesses or franchise companies to find a sign design solution that fits within the guidelines.
- Use signs that reflect the individuality of the business.



Examples of signs appropriate for downtown (L-R): storefront fascia sign; projecting blade sign; vinyl window decal

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Examples of inappropriate signs (L-R): vacuum formed back lit sign; hand made sign; neon sign

**DO NOT !**

- Allow signs that obscure significant architectural details or features.
- Allow signs that dominate the façade of the building.
- Use signs with poor craftsmanship or poor quality materials.
- Use handwritten, homemade, or cheaply constructed signs.
- Clutter the front of the building or display windows with signs. Window signage should not cover more than 15% of available window space.
- Use vacuum formed or internally lit plastic signage.
- Use nationally distributed standard signs associated with franchise companies.
- Use standard commercial neon lighted signs that can be purchased from a retail store.
- Use fluorescent colors.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES**

*Building Improvement File*, Revised edition by Richard Wagner AIA, 1995.

*Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines*, by Clark Schoettle, 1983.

*Main Street Guidelines: Signs for Main Street*, Norman Mintz, Richard Wagner, Kennedy Smith and Peter Hawley, 1987.

*Saving Face: How Corporate Franchise Design Can Respect Community Character* (APA Planning Advisory Service Report Number 503/504) by Ronald Lee Fleming, 2002.

*The Preservation of Historic Signs*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/25-signs.htm>

## 15. Accessibility

Modifications to historic buildings are often required so that they will be in compliance with current accessibility code requirements. The American's With Disabilities Act (ADA) is not a building code. The ADA is a civil rights law. Any proposed design modifications need to be assessed for negative impact on a building's historic character and/or character-defining features. The overall goal of any accessibility modification to historic buildings is to provide access with the least impact on the historic resource.

### DO !

- Consider the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions for alternative ways of accessing historic buildings in cases where the proposed work would damage or destroy a building's character-defining spaces or elements.
- Comply with barrier-free access requirements while protecting the character-defining spaces, features, and finishes of the building.
- Include architecturally sensitive accessibility modifications during a storefront rehabilitation.
- Identify the building's character-defining spaces, features, and finishes so that accessibility code-required work will not result in their damage or loss.
- Seeking expert advice from access specialists and historic preservation professionals to determine the most appropriate solution to access problems.
- Design new or additional means of access that are compatible with the historic building and its setting.

### DO NOT !

- Design modifications for accessibility without consideration of the impact on the building.
- Alter, obscure, radically change, damage, or destroy character-defining features of the building while attempting to comply with accessibility requirements.
- Make changes to the building without first seeking expert advice from access specialists and historic preservation professionals to determine appropriate solutions.



### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*Making Historic Properties Accessible*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/32-accessibility.htm>

*These are meant to be used as guidelines. It is possible that certain buildings or projects may be able to gain exemptions based on the buildings historic context or other reasons unforeseen in these guidelines.*

## 16. Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency improvements as well as accessibility, health, and safety requirements are not directly related to historic preservation, but these types of improvements should be assessed for their potential impact on a historic building. It is important that any proposed projects do not interfere with the building's historic character. Some existing features can play an energy-conserving role. Therefore, prior to retrofitting historic buildings for energy efficiency, the first step should always be to identify and evaluate existing historic features to assess their inherent energy-conserving potential.

Traditional commercial buildings have some basic characteristics that help save energy. Relatively little of the building is exposed. Sides are usually covered (and insulated) by adjacent buildings. Above the storefront, the windows tend to be small and widely spaced. Compare this to the typical facade of a new building. In buildings with several floors, the upper stories trap and use heat rising from the lower floors.

Despite some of the characteristics that help save energy in old commercial buildings, they also have some energy problems. Un-insulated flat roofs lose much usable heat during the winter. Openings where pipes and utilities enter buildings allow hot and cold air infiltration. Ill-fitting replacement windows and doors also allow for air infiltration. Old heating and air conditioning systems are often inefficient and outdated. These are the most common areas of heat/cold loss in historic buildings, NOT windows.

In many cases, air infiltration and energy efficiency issues are because old windows and doors have not been maintained or new infill windows do not fit the opening tightly or in the case of vinyl replacement windows, the space has shrunk. Consequently, these situations cause air infiltration and moisture to enter the structure of the window or the opening. Keep windows in good repair. Replace broken glass. Make sure the glazing is in good condition and has not deteriorated. These simple maintenance actions will save money and energy inefficiency issues.

### **DO !**

- Install insulating material in attics and in unheated cellars and crawlspaces to increase the efficiency of the existing mechanical systems. Use materials with a vapor barrier to prevent unwanted moisture.
- Utilize the inherent energy conserving features of a building by maintaining windows and doors. Make sure that they seal as tightly as possible so that when closed, should not leak air or moisture.
- Use insulated glass to reduce the energy inefficiency of a storefront window.
- Install interior storm windows on upper floors with air-tight gaskets, ventilating holes, and/or removable clips to insure proper maintenance and to avoid condensation damage to historic windows use interior shades or blinds.
- Repair all windows and doors so that all their parts fit together tightly.
- Weather-strip and caulk all window and door openings.
- Re-glaze all loose or broken window panes.
- Use awnings or canopies above storefronts to help with energy efficiency. Operable awnings can be extended in the summer to shade the storefront and retracted in winter to allow sunlight into the store.
- Locate heat vents near storefront windows to minimize the discomfort of winter heat loss and help prevent condensation on the glass.
- Conceal metal duct systems or have them designed so that they blend with the building's interior and do not cover the transom windows.

### **DO NOT !**

- Use tinted, shaded, or opaque glass in storefront windows.
- Install insulating material on the inside of masonry walls if there are character-defining interior features such as molding around the windows or other interior architectural detailing.

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- Apply insulating material where there is a high moisture content in wall cavities.
- Install exterior storm windows which damage or obscure the windows and frames.
- Remove historic shading devices. Instead, keep them in an operable condition.
- Replace historic multi-paned sash with a new thermal sash with false muntins.
- Install interior storm windows that allow moisture to accumulate and damage the window.
- Install new exterior storm windows that are inappropriate in size or color.
- Replace windows or transoms with fixed thermal glazing.
- Remove historic interior features that play an energy conserving role.
- Replace existing mechanical systems that could be repaired for continued use.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*Building Improvement File*, Revised edition by Richard Wagner AIA, 1995.

*Energy Efficiency and Historic Preservation: A Planning Guide for Buildings* by the Nebraska Energy Office and available in their online publications <http://www.neo.ne.gov/rebuildbook.pdf>

*Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines*, by Clark Schoettle, 1983.

*Improving Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings*  
<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/3-improve-energy-efficiency.htm>