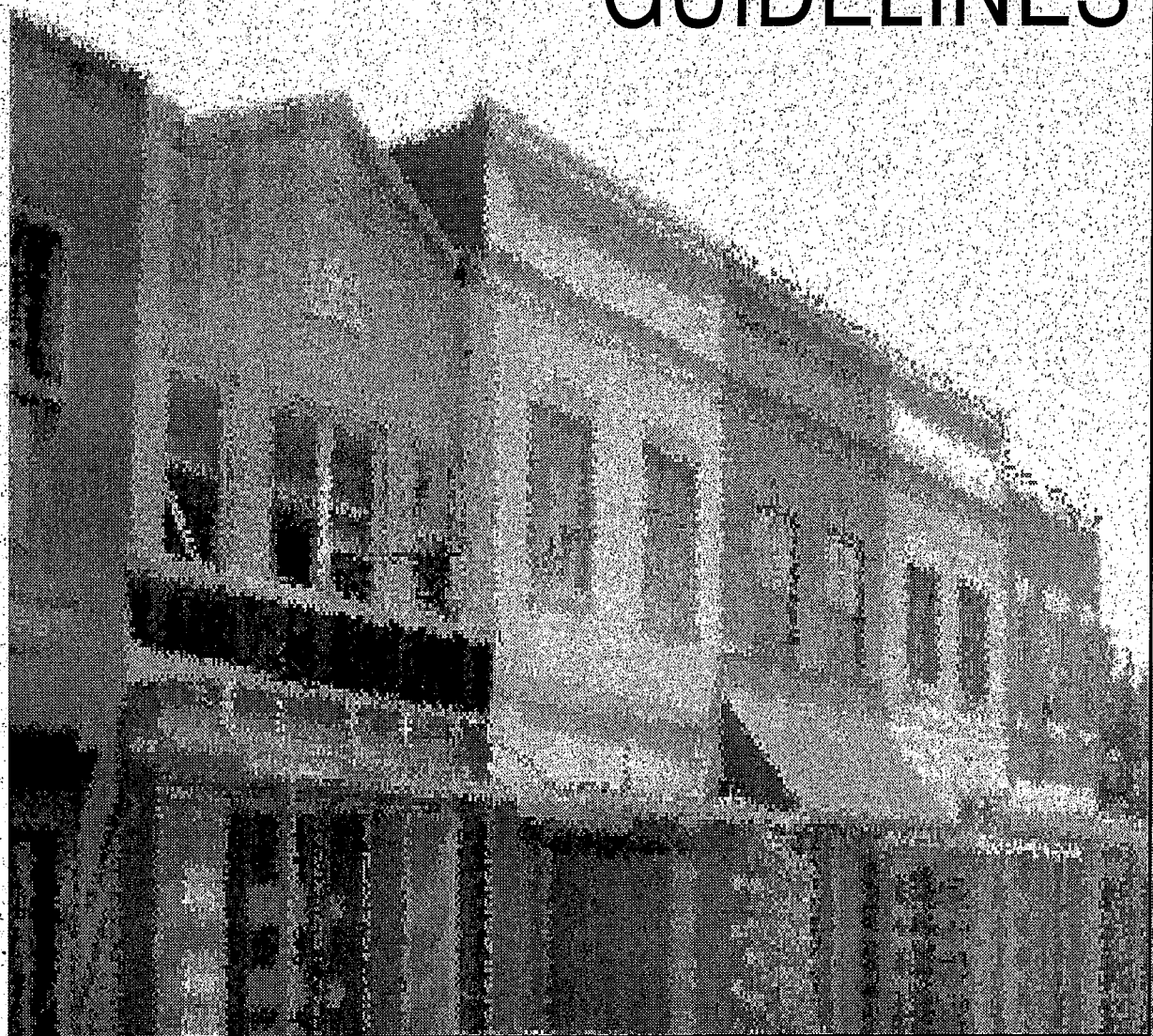




Downtown Design

GUIDELINES



Louisiana Main Street Downtown Design Guidelines



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Louisiana Main Street
Division of Historic Preservation

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INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

Preface

The Louisiana Main Street Downtown Design Guidelines is a publication compiled by the Louisiana Main Street staff from information gleaned from other design guidelines (*Oklahoma Design Guidelines*, *Americus Design Guidelines*, and the National Main Street Center's publication *Keeping Up Appearances*), graphic illustrations using commercial structures from our twenty-six Main Street communities, and input from the program managers regarding content.

Interest in the Louisiana Main Street program has spurred a dramatic increase in the number of historic tax credit projects throughout the state, as well as raised the awareness toward sensitive restoration and maintenance procedures. Since 1994, we have doubled the number of designated Main Street communities and currently have thirty-eight communities that have active Certified Local Government programs.

Over the past 15 years, our twenty-six Main Street communities have generated more than \$126 million in building renovations, public improvements, new construction, and property sales in their downtowns. In turn, this activity has stimulated renovations in historic residential neighborhoods adjacent to downtown historic commercial business districts.

It is the intent of the Division of Historic Preservation and the Louisiana Main Street Program that the *Downtown Design Guidelines* be an educational tool that promotes historic preservation and quality design in communities throughout Louisiana.

Louisiana Main Street Staff



USING

THESE GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Why use design guidelines?

The Main Street Program is based on the Four-Point Approach™ as outlined by the National Trust Main Street Center: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. The design element involves capitalizing on downtown's best assets. Historic buildings are one of these assets. Design guidelines identify the characteristic features of historic commercial areas and seek to ensure that changes enhance that character. Guidelines serve to protect the existing features and promote compatible new growth and development. By accomplishing these goals, property values increase, community identity is preserved or reestablished, and downtowns become destinations for both locals and visitors.

Who uses design guidelines?

The **Louisiana Main Street Design Guidelines** were written to be used by anyone involved in planning exterior changes to a downtown's built environment. The changes may include simple repairs, full rehabilitation projects, or new construction. The guidelines should be helpful to building and business owners, Main Street program managers, design committee members, contractors, and architects.

Communities participating in the Louisiana Main Street Program are all Certified Local Governments, meaning they have enacted local historic district ordinances and conduct design review. Whether their review is advisory or regulatory, historic district commissions strive to treat each project equally and fairly. While the **Louisiana Main Street Guidelines** are good general advice, communities are encouraged to create their own design guidelines tailored to their historic district's unique needs.

How are the guidelines organized?

The Louisiana Main Street Design Guidelines include three sections: an introduction, guidelines for rehabilitation, and guidelines for new construction. Each section contains information to aid users in making sound design decisions during the planning process of downtown projects.

The introduction contains background information important in making appropriate decisions about significant changes in a commercial historic district. Included are preservation philosophy, descriptions of architectural styles, and a glossary of terms. By understanding the history and nature of how downtowns developed, appropriate decisions can be made.

The rehabilitation and new construction sections contain individual guidelines arranged in a two-page format. (The example below is the guideline on storefronts from the rehabilitation section.) The left side contains a narrative discussion of the guideline, while the right side presents the main points in list form. Design issues are covered in both sections. The rehabilitation section also contains helpful information on sensitive rehabilitation and repair.

The guideline title appears on the left-hand page in the upper corner.

STOREFRONTS

Though the original intent of storefronts, to attract customers into the store, has not changed, advances in building technology and changing architectural tastes created an evolution of forms through the years. Residentially related doors and windows predominated until the early nineteenth century when



cast iron and mass produced plate glass created the more open storefront. These storefronts often use recessed entrances to provide customers protection from the weather as well as increased display space. Early twentieth century storefronts often used materials and window shapes to achieve a certain style such as Streamline, or early twentieth century when

Design Issues

While early buildings may exhibit smaller scale display windows and entry doors, a majority of buildings in Louisiana downtowns have late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial storefront designs. The first floor display area contains pilasters or column supports between large display windows, pediment above the windows, and often a recessed entrance.

Original storefronts should be preserved. Display windows and entrances should not be enclosed, replaced with a different window type, or covered with a false front. Repair deteriorated elements using material similar to the original rather than replacing the entire storefront. Storefront updates which occurred prior to 1945 may have acquired a significance of their own and generally should not be removed to recreate an earlier storefront.

If the original storefront is too deteriorated to save the replacement should accurately replace the original. Restoration of storefronts in cases where the original no longer exists should be based on historical research and physical evidence. Where no historical evidence exists, a new front should be designed which is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the building. "Theme" storefronts are inappropriate and should not be applied to historic buildings.

Sensitive Rehabilitation

If the original storefront is present, retain existing thoroughly. Where moderate damage is found, replace deteriorated or missing elements with elements of the same material and design. Consider the possibility of moving original elements from non-conspicuous areas to more visible areas and use replacement in the less conspicuous areas. Always retain as much viable material as possible.

When removing a non-historic storefront, begin by removing material carefully from an inconspicuous area, often much of the original storefront exists underneath. If the base of the original storefront exists many cases often remain such as an outline in the foundation, the extent of an original ceiling hidden beneath a dropped ceiling, or the joint pockets for a cornice. Use these clues to guide replication of the original storefront or in designing a contemporary one.

The far column of the left-hand page relates the historic pattern usually followed by the feature in question. The main body of the page reviews what actions should be taken or avoided in order to maintain these features. The discussion includes both design issues and sensitive treatment of materials.

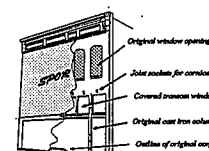
The section title appears on the right-hand page in the upper corner.

REHABILITATION

Original storefront configuration should be preserved, not replaced with inappropriate window and door.



- Original storefront configuration and materials should be maintained and preserved.
- Storefronts should not be covered or enclosed.
- Replacement storefronts should follow traditional patterns.
- "Theme" storefronts are not appropriate.



"Theme" storefronts, such as New England Colonial, are not appropriate and should not be used.

During rehabilitation, carefully remove the non-historic part or cover. Many original elements may remain as well as physical evidence of existing storefront.

Rehabilitation/Repair Checklist

- Perform routine maintenance such as cleaning, sealing, and painting.
- Retain viable materials, consolidate or repair damaged elements, replace missing or "too far gone" elements with similar material.
- Retain linear storefronts representing a significant architectural style.
- If a new, incompatible storefront exists, either try to improve it or remove the new storefront and replace with a recreation of the original or a contemporary one.

In the upper corner of the right-hand page is a list summarizing the main points covered in the design issues section. A repair checklist is located at the bottom of this page. Illustrations which visually clarify the points of the guideline fill the remainder of the page.

PERIOD OF DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Historic districts have what is known as a "period of development." This is the period of time during which an area attained the characteristics that qualify it as a historic district. This may be a long time, spanning from the beginning of the town until recent times due to slow, steady growth, or it may be a short time dating to the boom of a local industry. A downtown may have multiple periods. A disaster, such as a fire or flood, could cause one portion of the district to have a different period of development than the rest of the district.

Identifying a downtown's period of development, and the causes of that development helps us to understand and protect the character of the area. Elements, such as the layout of the downtown, the types of businesses located there, the construction materials used, and the size of the buildings, are affected by the development period or periods of a place. Louisiana has a long and varied history of creating equally varied historic communities.

Town plans are influenced by time and the people who create them. Louisiana's history of shifting political boundaries and attracting immigrants from varied locations are two sources for differences in town plans. A few early town plans follow what has been referred to as a Latin version of a classical town plan – a central square surrounded by principal public buildings and residences. As American influence increased, classical town plans followed a British model of a courthouse placed in the square surrounded by commercial buildings.

Towns which were not the seat of government more often than not used a commercial grid focused on the main transportation avenue. However, the primary mode of transportation continued to change with advances in technology. Early settlements focused nearly exclusively on waterways. By the late nineteenth century, towns grew along the railroad lines spreading across the state. Finally, the development of the automobile and the highway system changed the ways towns developed.

Transportation also affected how buildings were built. When railroads increased access, smaller towns were able to purchase building materials previously unavailable or too expensive due to shipping cost. Cast iron storefronts and brick became the pervasive building materials downtown. Although the transportation network did provide increased access, the use of brick as a building material was primarily a safety factor – controlling fires. As the automobile became more dominant, gas stations and automobile dealerships appeared downtown, and fewer downtown buildings contained upper story living accommodations.

Finally, the architectural styles popular at the time of a downtown's development affect its character. Architectural styles help determine the materials used, ornamentation, and the scale of buildings.

STYLES OF ARCHITECTURE

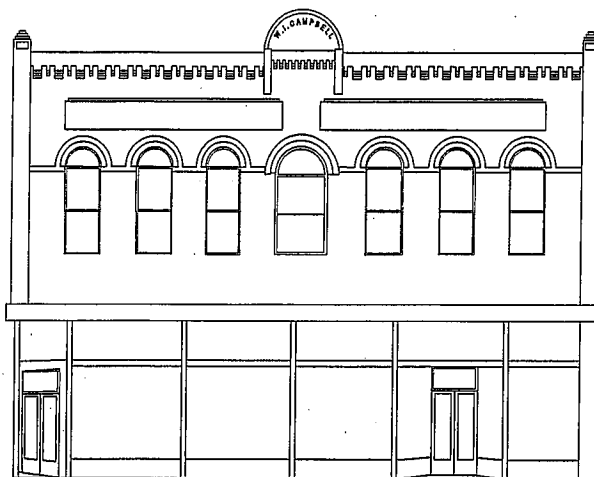
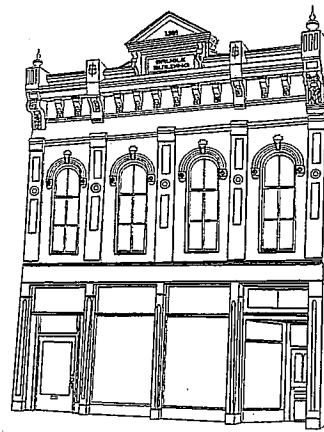
Architectural styles reflect the tastes and values of society during the time of their popularity. Buildings reflect architectural style in their floor plans, rooflines, construction materials, ornamentation, and window and door treatments. When all the defining aspects of a particular style are present, a building may be labeled as a high style example. If only a few stylistic details are present, the building is referred to as having elements of a style. Sometimes buildings contain elements of more than one style, especially when the construction dates to a period of transformation in society's tastes. And in many instances downtown buildings are in no recognizable style.

Knowing a building's predominant architectural style helps us date a building when the year of construction is unknown. It also helps owners to deal sensitively with buildings when undertaking repair and rehabilitation projects. An understanding of a structure's defining features provides a firm basis for appropriate actions when working on a historic building. Projects involving new construction can find design guidance by referencing the stylistic elements of surrounding historic buildings.

On the following pages are brief descriptions of a few of the more popular styles found in Louisiana's downtowns. This is not a complete list of styles, nor does it list every possible feature of each style. It is, however, a starting point for understanding the major styles in Louisiana's downtowns.

Italianate

Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, some architects reacted against the formal, classical architecture of the time and advocated more natural, picturesque styles. One of these styles was the Italianate. Inspiration for the Italianate style came from a variety of sources including country Italian villas and various urban Italian palaces. The style had little influence in Louisiana outside the New Orleans area with one exception: late nineteenth-century commercial buildings. While the Italianate style was passing out of fashion by 1880, commercial buildings using elements of the style continued to be constructed into the twentieth century. Mass-produced cornices, window hoods, and cast iron storefronts allowed merchants to ennoble plain buildings at an economical price.



Common features:

- ▶ round or segmental-headed window and door openings with hood moldings
- ▶ windows often in pairs
- ▶ bracketed eaves
- ▶ deeply projecting cornice
- ▶ often a central pediment at roofline bearing name and date of building
- ▶ ornamented with panels, quoins, finials, and pilasters
- ▶ typical exterior materials: brick, cast iron, pressed metal, wood

STYLES OF ARCHITECTURE

Romanesque

Romanesque Revival buildings patterned themselves after the early Romanesque buildings of Europe. Brick and stone are used extensively. Round arches are used at both window and door openings as well as decorative elements. At the end of the nineteenth century, H. H. Richardson interpreted the Romanesque so uniquely as to create a subset of the style, Richardsonian Romanesque. These buildings use rock-faced stone and heavy arches to create an overall feeling of heavy mass and scale. Romanesque remained a popular style for building, especially for churches, until the turn of the twentieth century.

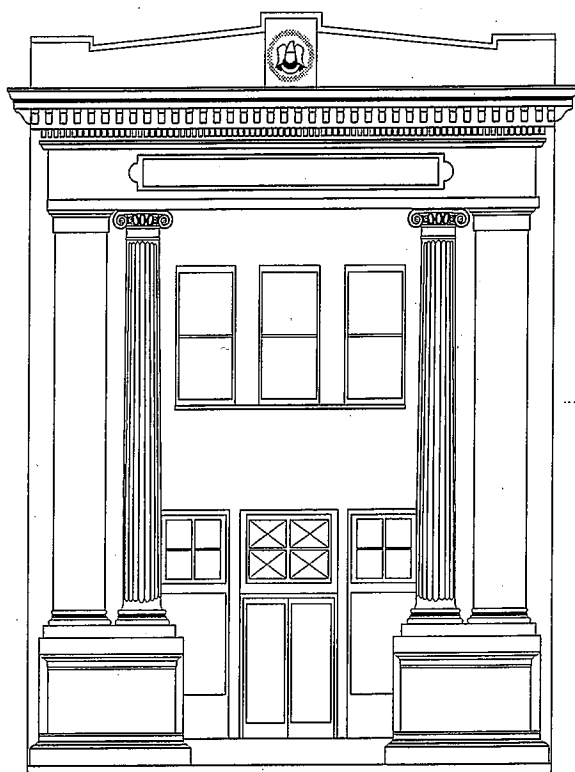


Common features:

- ▶ heavy massing
- ▶ round-arched windows and doors
- ▶ arches and lintels of rock-faced stone of contrasting color from wall material
- ▶ corbel table at eaves
- ▶ typical exterior materials: brick and stone

Neoclassical Revival

Along with the Beaux Arts style, Neoclassical was largely influenced by several expositions held around the turn of the century, especially the World Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893. Neoclassical Revival is based primarily on the Greek and, to a lesser extent, the Roman architectural orders. This style was extremely popular for bank buildings, and remained popular through the 1920s.



Common features:

- ▶ symmetrical facade
- ▶ cornice with dentils, modillions, and wide frieze band below
- ▶ pedimented porticos
- ▶ large classical columns rising two or more stories at entrances
- ▶ pilasters
- ▶ typical exterior materials: brick and stone

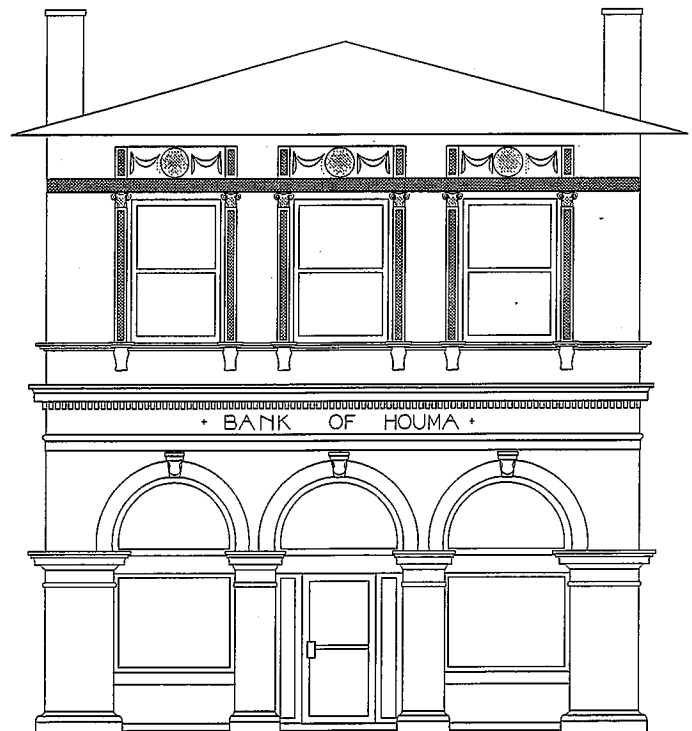
STYLES OF ARCHITECTURE

Italian Renaissance

Appearing at the same time as the Beaux Arts and Neoclassical Revival, this style also was a reaction to the elaborate Victorian period. However, the Italian Renaissance more truly followed the rectangular form of Renaissance palazzos. As with the Beaux Arts and Neoclassical styles, the Italian Renaissance style's use of classical architectural features made it popular for banks and public buildings.

Common features:

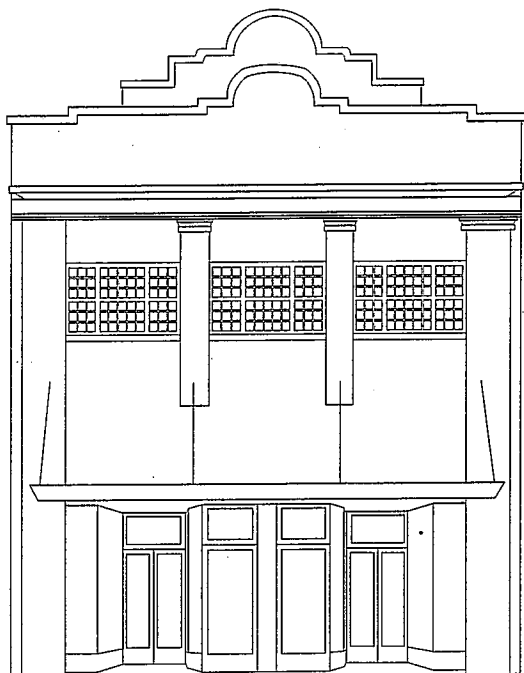
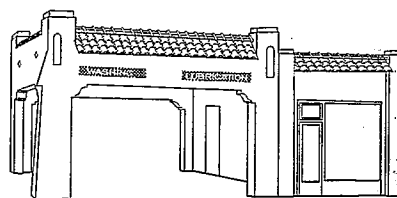
- ▶ each floor articulated
- ▶ rusticated first floor
- ▶ arcaded entrances and windows
- ▶ bold rectangular windows surrounded by detailed moldings
- ▶ typical exterior materials: brick and stone



Mission and Spanish Revival

Mission and Spanish Revival styles have been referred to as the California counterpart of the Colonial Revival in the Northeast. Spanish or Mediterranean Revival buildings draw inspiration from the entire history of Spanish architecture. Inspired by the themes of various World's Fairs held prior to World War I, especially the Panama-California Exposition of 1915, the style more precisely imitated Spanish prototypes. Also influential was the rise of Hollywood as the movie capital of the world during this time. Mission and Spanish Revival architecture is frequently found on movie theaters, early gas stations, and other commercial buildings.

The Mission Style was loosely based on the early California missions, especially in the use of shaped parapets and arcades. Some Mission buildings also borrowed elements from the contemporary Craftsman and Prairie movements.



Common features:

- ▶ clay tile roofing
- ▶ curvilinear parapets
- ▶ plain string course outlining arches and parapets
- ▶ glazed tile surface ornamentation
- ▶ typical exterior materials: stucco and red clay tiles.

STYLES OF ARCHITECTURE

Arts and Crafts

The Arts and Crafts movement sought to eliminate the use of fake ornamentation of the Machine Age and return the use of elements of true craftsmanship. Durable natural materials with natural finishes were emphasized. On commercial buildings, this often meant brick frames around doors and windows, panels of geometric brick patterns, and the use of colored glazed tile. This style's simplicity and low cost made it popular from the turn of the century through the 1940s.

Common features:

- ▶ brick form frames at openings and sign boards
- ▶ geometric patterns
- ▶ multi-light transoms
- ▶ double-hung or casement windows
- ▶ typical exterior materials: brick and glazed tile



Art Deco and Art Moderne

The Art Deco and Art Moderne styles were a result of early twentieth century designers' wish to break from the past and express the fast-paced technological excitement of their own times. The ornamentation and forms used for these styles are visually linked to the Machine Age. Buildings in the Art Deco style are characterized by a linear, hard edge or angular composition often with a vertical emphasis and highlighted with stylized decoration. Art Moderne buildings emphasize horizontality and streamlining to portray a sense of movement and speed. Art Deco and Art Moderne are frequently found on certain types of commercial buildings such as gas stations, movie theaters, cafes, and drugstores – the later two often receiving a “modern” update from an earlier style. New government buildings of this era were often built in these new styles as well. Art Deco was popular in Louisiana from the late 1920s through the 1930s. Art Moderne buildings are typically from the 1930s and 1940s.



Art Moderne

Common features:

Deco

- ▶ vertical appearance
- ▶ low relief geometrical designs and stylized floral motifs
- ▶ typical exterior materials: structural pigmented glass, terra cotta, steel, concrete, stucco

Moderne

- ▶ horizontal appearance
- ▶ curving walls, windows, and canopies
- ▶ decorative horizontal bands
- ▶ typical exterior materials: structural pigmented glass, glass block, porcelain-enameled steel, concrete



Art Deco

COMPONENTS

OF A DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL BUILDING

A downtown commercial district gains its distinct character from the similarity of the buildings located there. Commercial facades of differing styles, ages, and sizes use certain basic components in a coordinated manner to achieve a cohesive appearance. These basic components are: the building cornice, the upper facade, and the storefront.

The building cornice serves to visually cap the building. This is usually accomplished through the use of decorative brick, wood, metal, or terra cotta. The cornice punctuates the height of the building and draws together the building's vertical bays. A pediment may serve to distinguish the building from others in a block by disrupting the established pattern.

The upper facade is usually somewhat solid in appearance, pierced by windows at regularly spaced intervals. Ornamentation may surround the windows or divide the bays vertically.

The storefront is much more open in character compared to the more solid upper facade. This division between the ground floor and the upper stories scales the streetscape to a pedestrian level. The continuous line of display windows mirrored in the buildings across the street creates the feeling of an outdoor room.

Building Cornice

pediment

name plate

cornice

Upper facade

pilaster

window hood

regularly spaced windows

Storefront

*storefront cornice
(may contain signboard)*

transom window

*store entrance
(may be centered
and/or recessed)*

display window

bulkhead

*entrance for upper stories
(may not be present)*



GLOSSARY

Addition. New construction added to an existing building or structure.

Alteration. Work which impact any architectural features.

Arch. A curved construction which spans an opening and supports the weight above it.

Architrave. Moulded feature used in classical architecture.

Ashlar. Finished rectangular building stone.

Awning. A sloped projection supported by a frame attached to the building facade or by posts anchored to the sidewalk.

Baluster. An upright member which, in series, supports a stair handrail or porch railing.

Balustrade. A series of balusters with a top and bottom rail.

Bay. The horizontal divisions of a building, defined by windows, columns, pilasters, etc.

Bay window. A window projecting from the body of a building; usually extends to ground level.

Belt course. A continuous horizontal band on an exterior wall, often of a contrasting material. Also called a string course.

Bond. A term used to describe the various patterns in which brick is laid.

Bracket. A decorative feature located under eaves or overhangs.

Bulkhead. The panel between framing members and beneath the display windows in a storefront. Also known as a kick-panel.

Canopy. A flat projection from the building facade for protecting the storefront and pedestrian traffic from the elements.

Capital. Topmost member of a column or pilaster.

Casement window. A window with sashes hinged at the sides which usually opens out from a building.

Cast iron. Iron formed in a mold.

Cast iron front. A storefront made of glass and pieces of utilitarian and decorative iron cast in easily assembled parts.

Column. A vertical, cylindrical or square supporting member, usually with a classical capital.

Coping. The capping member of a wall or parapet.

Corbeling. A series of stepped or overlapped pieces of brick or stone forming a projection from the wall surface.

Cornice. Decorative moulding set atop a window, door, wall or entire facade.

Course. A horizontal layer or row of stones or bricks in a wall.

Dentil. One of a series of small, square, tooth- or block-like projections forming a moulding.

Double hung window. A window having two sashes, one sliding vertically over the other.

Eave. The edge of a roof that projects beyond a wall.

Entablature. The horizontal group of members supported by the columns. Divided into three major parts, it consists of architrave, frieze, and cornice.

Facade. The front elevation or "face" of a building.

Fanlight. A semicircular or semi-elliptical window with radiating muntins suggesting a fan.

Fenestration. The arrangement of windows in a building.

Finial. A projecting decorative element at the top of a roof turret or gable.

Flat arch. An arch with wedge-shaped stones or bricks set in a straight line. Also known as a Jack arch.

Flashing. Thin metal sheets used to make the intersections of roof planes and roof/wall junctures watertight.

Footprint. The outline of a building's ground plan from a top view.

Frame construction. A method of construction in which the major parts consist of wood.

French door. A door made of many glass panes, usually used in pairs and attached by

hinges to the sides of the opening in which it stands.

Frieze. Flat, sometimes sculpted feature used in classical architecture.

Gable. The triangular upper portion of a wall which supports a roof with two sloping sides.

Gable roof. A pitched roof with one downward slope on either side of a central, horizontal ridge.

Hip roof. A roof with four sloping sides.

Header. A brick laid with the short side exposed, as opposed to a stretcher.

Infill. New construction where there had been an opening before. Applies to new structures such as a new building between two older structures or new material such as block infill in an original window opening.

Jack arch. See Flat arch.

Jamb. The vertical side of a doorway or window.

Jalousie. A type of window comprised of a series of horizontal slats connected to a mechanical device operated by a crank.

GLOSSARY

Joist. Horizontal timbers supporting a floor.

Keystone. The center member of an arch.

Light. A single pane of glass.

Lintel. A horizontal beam over a door or window which carries the weight of the wall above; usually made of stone or wood.

Masonry. Brick, block, or stone which is secured with mortar.

Massing. A term used to define the overall volume or size of a building.

Mortar. A mixture of sand, lime, cement, and water used as a binding agent in masonry construction.

Mullion. A heavy vertical divider between windows or doors.

Muntin. A secondary framing member to divide and hold the panes of glass in a window.

National Register of Historic Places. The nation's official list of buildings, sites, and districts which are important in our history or culture. Created by Congress in 1966 and administered by the states.

Oriel window. A bay window which emerges above the ground floor level.

Parapet. A low protective wall located at the edge of a roof.

Pilaster. A pier or pillar attached to a wall, often with capital and base.

Pitch. A term which refers to the steepness of roof slope.

Portland cement. A strong, inflexible (too much so for historic buildings) hydraulic cement used to bind mortar.

Preservation. The act of maintaining the form and character of a building as it presently exists.

Quoins. Decorative blocks of stone or wood used on the corners of buildings.

Rafter. A wooden member of a roof frame which slopes downward from the ridge line.

Recessed panel. A decorative element that often functions as an area for signage.

Reconstruction. The accurate recreation of a vanished or irreplaceably damaged structure, or part thereof.

Rehabilitation. The process of returning a building to a state of usefulness through repair or alteration which preserves those features that are historically or architecturally significant.

Relocation. Any change in the location of a building from its present setting to another setting.

Restoration. The process of accurately recovering the form and details of a building as it appeared at an earlier time.

Ridge. The highest part of a roof.

Rustication. Roughening of stonework, brick, or concrete block to give greater articulation to each block.

Sash. The portion of a window that holds the glass and which moves.

Scale. A term used to define the proportions of a building in relation to its surroundings.

Setback. A term used to define the distance a building is located from a street or sidewalk.

Sidelight. A glass window pane located at the side of a main entranceway.

Sill. The horizontal member located at the top of a foundation supporting the structure above. Also, the horizontal member at the bottom of a window or door.

Stabilization. The essential maintenance of a deteriorated building to weatherproof the structure and establish structural stability.

Storefront. The street-level facade of a commercial building, usually having display windows.

Stretcher. A brick laid with the long side exposed, as opposed to a header.

Streetscape. The combination of building facades, sidewalks, street furniture, etc. that defines the street.

String course. See Belt course.

Stucco. Any kind of plasterwork, but usually an outside covering of portland cement, lime, and sand mixed with water.

Surround. An encircling border or decorative frame, usually around a window or door.

Transom. A small operable or fixed window located above a window or door.

Water table. A belt course projecting above a foundation to direct water away from it.

Wrought iron. Decorative iron that is hammered or forged into shape by hand.

REHABILITATION



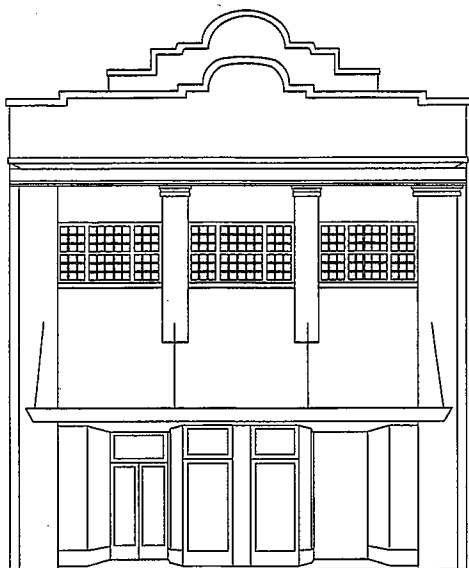
REHABILITATION

The preservation and rehabilitation of historic commercial buildings allows continued contribution to the social and economic vitality of the community. A sensitive approach to historic design and choice of materials permits contemporary use and preserves the elements of the building that are significant to its historic character. Often dictated by architectural style or building type, these elements are an integral part of the visual character of each building and its surrounding area. Those elements that should be preserved and maintained during repair and rehabilitation include roofs, entrances, windows and their features, storefronts, awnings, exterior materials, ornamentation, and signs.

Non-historic buildings can increase their compatibility by following the guidelines for **New Construction** during repair and rehabilitation projects.

ROOFS

Commercial structures use architectural forms and elements to promote a feeling of stability and permanence. Early buildings use hip or gable roofs common to residential forms. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, a solid, block-like quality was emphasized by using a nearly flat roof combined with a parapet. Other features of commercial roofs, such as chimneys and skylights, were more utilitarian in nature.



Design Issues

Roofs of downtown buildings are almost always hidden behind parapets which make the roof appear flat. Parapets are the distinguishing feature of roof lines in downtown areas. However, a few examples do not follow this general rule. Buildings of certain architectural styles such as the Italian Renaissance Style may have hip roofs. Turrets are a common feature of Victorian-era buildings. Chimneys are often incorporated as an architectural embellishment. A few buildings have finials.

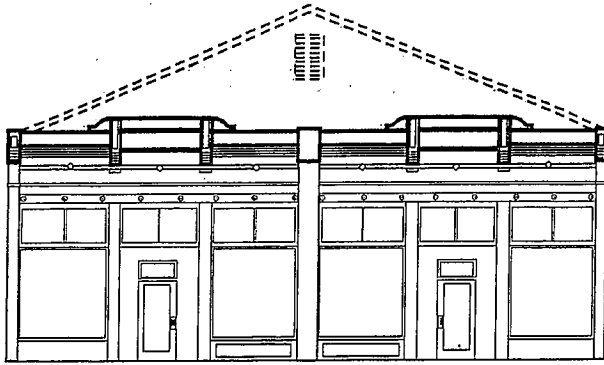
Important design elements of a roof, such as pitch, shape, symmetry, and complexity, should be maintained. Flat roofs and parapets are distinctive features of many commercial buildings and should be preserved and maintained. Distinctive roofing materials, such as clay tiles and slate, should be preserved when possible and replaced in-kind when necessary. Chimneys, often used as decorative features, should be kept in good repair and not be removed even when no longer in use. Skylights should be maintained whenever possible.

Sensitive Rehabilitation

Solving roofing problems requires a complete understanding of the roof systems and materials. A professional should determine whether the roof can effectively be patched. Repeated repairs can soon equal the cost of a new roof.

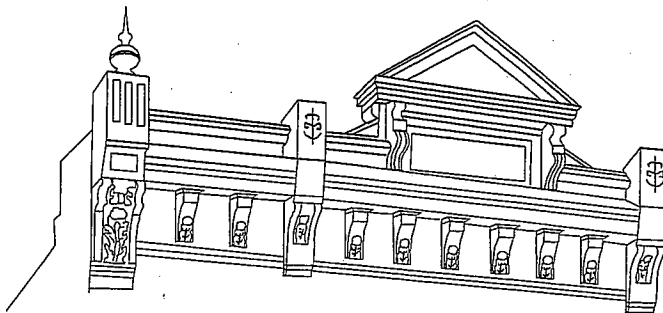
Should the roof structure of a building require replacement, the substructure should be examined for damage and weakness. In cases where the roof is hidden by a parapet, the roof shape and materials may be altered for improved drainage provided the new roof does not rise above the parapet. Architecturally distinctive roofing materials should be carefully removed and reused when possible.

Flashing, gutters, and downspouts should be examined and repaired during roof repair. While many chimneys are significant to the overall design of the building, many roofs contain obsolete pipes and vents which can be removed when a roof is replaced.



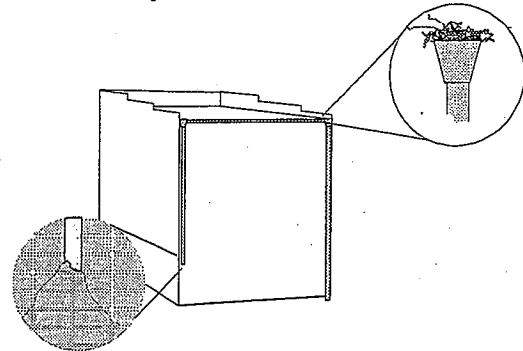
Adding a visible gable roof disrupts the traditional roofline of commercial buildings.

- * Roof shape and design should be maintained and preserved.
- * During roof repair and replacement, new materials should match original materials.
- * Secondary features and distinctive materials which contribute to design should be retained.
- * Chimneys should be maintained and preserved, never removed.
- * Preserving skylights is recommended.



Roof features such as parapets, pediments, cornices, and finials should be maintained and preserved.

Clogged downspouts and gutters can cause damage to both roofs and exterior walls.



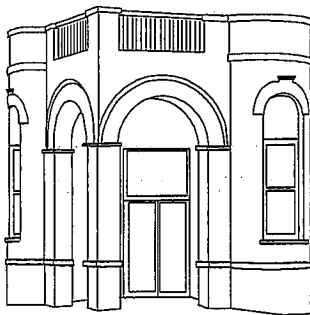
Improper water drainage can cause brick damage, mortar failure, and uneven settling of the foundation.

Rehabilitation/Repair Checklist

- ▶ Examine roofing material for condition and quality. Determine if repair is possible.
- ▶ Inspect chimney covers, parapet caps, and flashing. Repair or replace as needed.
- ▶ Examine gutters and downspouts for clogs and failure. Replace as needed. Be sure water is draining away from the building's foundation.
- ▶ Carefully remove and repair historic roofing materials such as clay tiles, slate, and pressed metal shingles.

ENTRANCES

Entrances for commercial buildings reflect their original function or use. The size and placement of entrances facilitated the movement of people and goods. For example, many buildings include a central



recessed entrance for first floor retail space and a side entrance for the upper floors. Businesses such as early garages and car dealerships, which were once located downtown, had garage doors designed to accent the building. Features such as transoms provided light and ventilation to the workplace prior to the introduction of electricity.

Design Issues

Building entrances in downtown areas are often recessed and may use double doors. Corner buildings frequently have recessed corner entrances. Doors tend to have a large amount of glass to allow a view into the store. While door designs are generally simple, the hardware may be elaborately decorated. The use of transoms is very common. The floors of recessed entrances are frequently tiled with a decorative design or name of the original business.

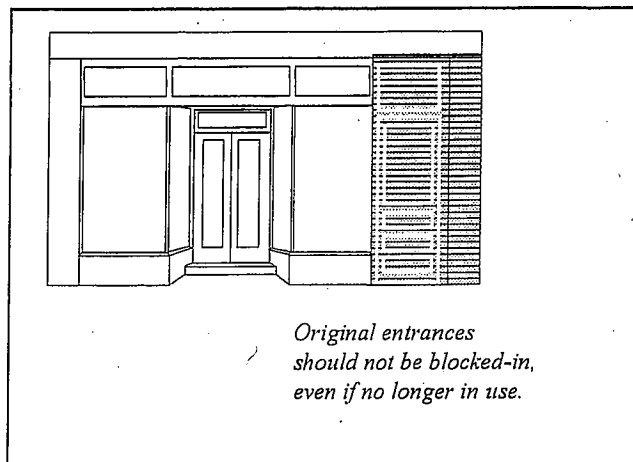
Entrances and their doors are evidence of the original use and design of a building. As such, original doors, surrounds, and hardware should be maintained. Moldings, windows, transoms, and other decorative features of entrances should not be removed or covered. Adding decorative doors or surrounds to simple front entrances or service entrances diminishes the historic integrity of a building. Entrances should not be moved or closed over. Additional entrances should not be added to the front facade.

If the replacement of a door becomes necessary, the replacement should match the historic door in size, shape, material, and panel patterns. If the original door is no longer in place, a new wooden door in a more contemporary style may be acceptable. Unfinished aluminum doors should not be installed on storefronts. Residential type doors should not be used. The best doors, whether duplicates of original ones or contemporary ones, relate in scale to the rest of the facade.

See the section on Storefronts (p. 40) for further information.

Sensitive Rehabilitation

Historic doors are constructed of several components such as panels, rails, and stiles. Damaged doors should be repaired by replacing the affected components and restoring the functional components.



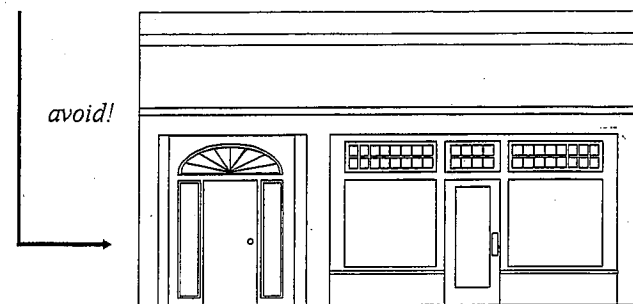
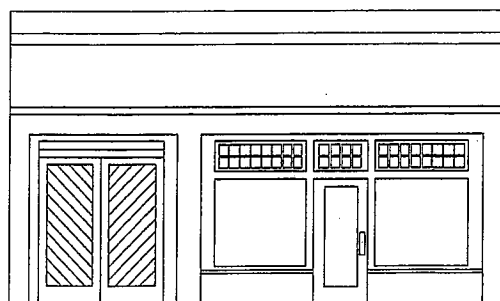
* Existing entrances should be maintained and preserved.

* Entrances should not be relocated or infilled.

* New entrances should not be added to the primary elevation.

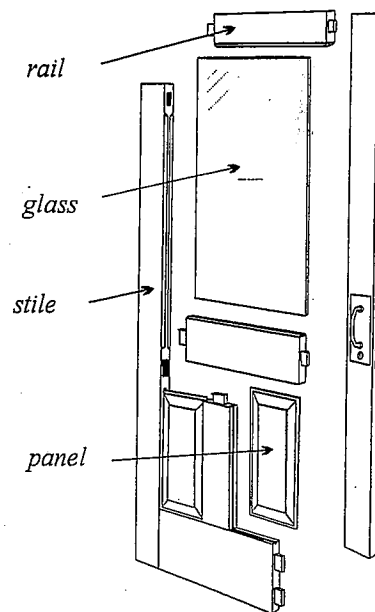
* Replacement doors should match the historic door in size, shape, material, and panel and glass patterns.

* Non-historic decorative doors and surrounding elements should not be added to entrances.



Utilitarian or service entrances should not be altered to appear as a formal entrance by adding paneled doors, fanlights, transoms, or sidelights.

Replace only deteriorated sections rather than the entire door.



Rehabilitation/Repair Checklist

- ▶ Repair existing doors by replacing only the deteriorated sections.
- ▶ Mill new doors to match original doors.
- ▶ Refurbish historic hardware. When necessary, replace with quality brass hardware.
- ▶ Mount doors to swing outward. Weather-strip sides, top, and bottom.
- ▶ Glazing should be safety glass as required by code.

WINDOWS

Design Issues

Historic commercial buildings utilized windows to meet their specialized needs. Buildings in the downtown area sought to attract customers through large display windows at street level. Transoms



above the display windows provided additional light and more importantly in the days before air conditioning, ventilation. The upper floors of downtown buildings used more traditional windows to provide light and ventilation for offices or living space.

Downtown buildings use traditional commercial design. The first floor contains storefronts with large windows for the display of goods. The more traditional, regularly spaced windows of upper floors add stylistic detail to the building through shape, type, and number.

Historic windows should be preserved and maintained. Display windows, transoms, and upper windows should not be enclosed, replaced with a different window type, or covered with a false front. Though in their original state historic windows do not equal today's standards of energy efficiency, they should not be replaced. Efforts to increase energy efficiency of windows should keep the historic elements intact. Window glass should not be tinted or coated with a reflective material.

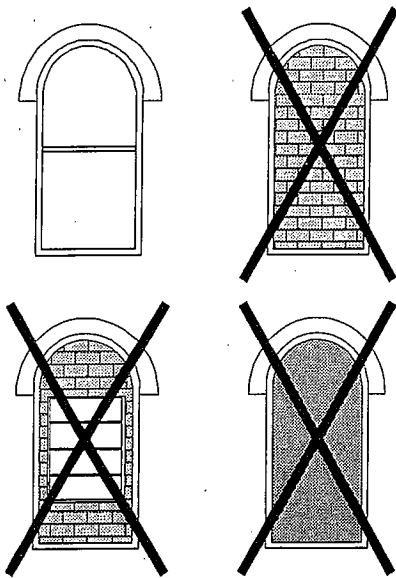
Should replacement become necessary, the new window should closely match the original in size, shape, design, and material. Traditional materials are preferred for replacement windows. Raw or unpainted aluminum windows should not be installed. Replacement panes should be clear, not tinted. The number of panes should be the same as the historic window, and the frame, mullions, and muntins should be the same dimensions. Flat muntins inserted onto the panes ("snap-ins") are not appropriate. Additional windows should never be added to the front of a building.

See the section on Storefronts (p. 40) for further information.

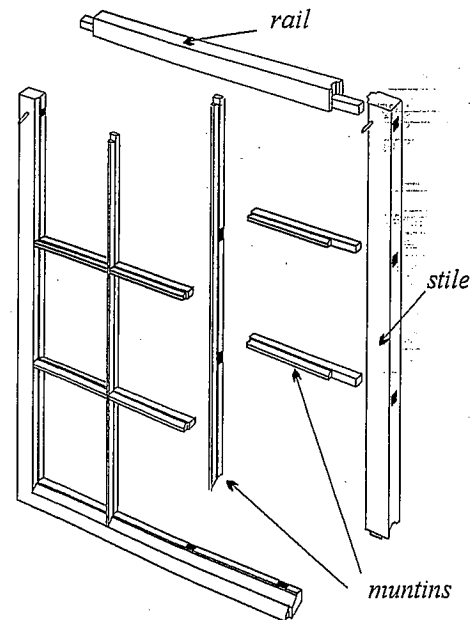
Sensitive Rehabilitation

A well-maintained window will continue to serve for many decades. Even when neglected, windows tend to fail only where exposure to the elements is the greatest, such as the sill. Historic windows are constructed of several components, including rails, stiles, sills, and sashes. Damaged windows should be repaired by replacing the affected components and restoring the functional elements. Replaced sections should be of the same material and dimensions as the original. The original wavy plate glass is important to the character of the window as well and should be replaced only if broken. Replacement glass should be clear, not tinted.

- * Windows should be maintained and preserved.
- * Windows should be repaired rather than replaced.
- * Original decorative elements should be retained.
- * Decorative windows should not be added to buildings which did not historically have them.



Original upper story window design should be preserved or restored. Do not brick-in, reduce in size, or replace with fixed or tinted glass.



Replace only deteriorated sections rather than the entire window.

Rehabilitation/Repair Checklist

- ▶ Sand, prime, and paint wooden window frames and sashes.
- ▶ Caulk and reglaze as needed. Replace any cracked, broken, or missing glass.
- ▶ Repair existing sashes and frames or replace with new milled components to match originals.
- ▶ Remove inappropriate replacement windows and replace with new windows appropriate to the design of the building.
- ▶ Reopen closed-in openings and replace with windows of appropriate design.

WINDOW FEATURES

Design Issues

Shutters were used to provide shade, security, and decoration for commercial buildings. Shutters on the upper stories of buildings provided some privacy and protection from the weather though many were purely decorative.

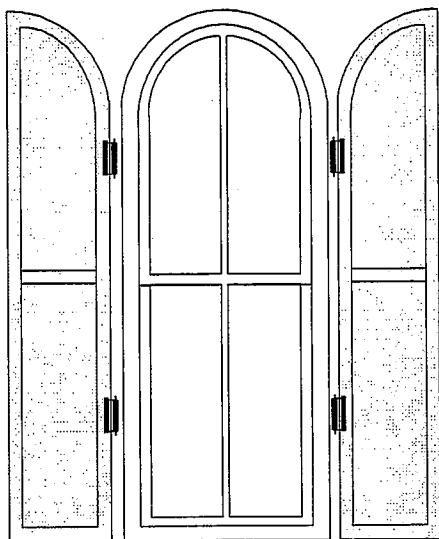
Shutters at the rear of buildings were used for security and for "fire proofing." While window screens are a traditional feature, storm windows are a more recent development.

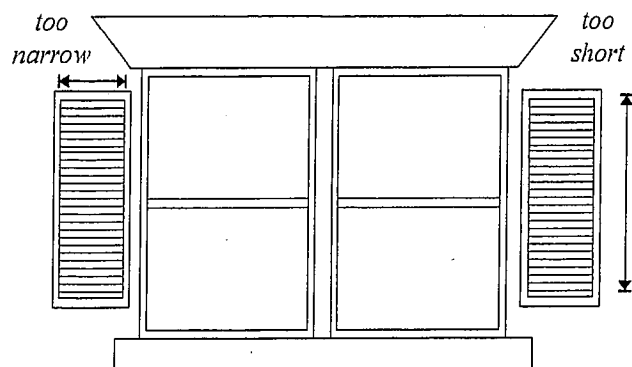
On many buildings shutters were an integral part of the architectural character of the building and therefore should be preserved and maintained. Replacement shutters should be of the same material and design as the original. Where shutters have been removed, historic photographs and remaining hardware may provide clues to the design of the original. Decorative plastic or vinyl shutters permanently affixed to the wall of a building are not considered appropriate replacements. Industrial type shutters on secondary elevations should not be replaced by decorative shutters. Windows which never had shutters should be left in this condition.

Visual impact of storm windows should be kept to a minimum. The use of interior storm windows rather than exterior storm windows is encouraged. Exterior storm windows should not obscure the window's pane arrangement. Storm windows should be of wood or aluminum painted to match the original window frame. The glass should be clear, not tinted. Security grills with extensive metalwork should be avoided and are best installed on the interior of the window.

Sensitive Rehabilitation

Like shutters and doors, historic shutters are constructed of several sections and can be disassembled for repair. Repair should include sanding, painting, and replacing deteriorated parts. Industrial shutters can be refurbished as well. Some are completely forged of iron while others are wood covered with sheet metal. or buildings fortunate enough to have retained their historic window screens, one should employ the same repair methods used for windows.





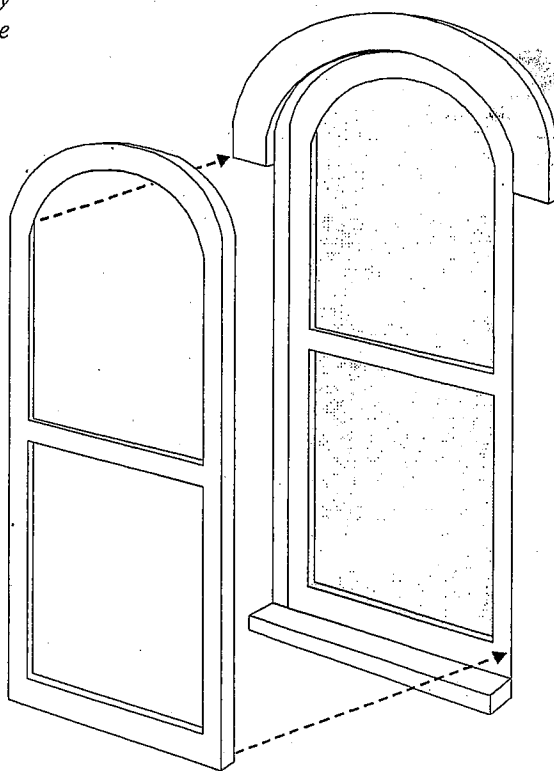
Shutters should fit the window and either be operable or appear to be so. Some buildings, such as early twentieth century buildings with paired windows, were never intended to have shutters. Adding shutters would be inappropriate.

* Historic shutters should be maintained and preserved.

* Shutters should not be added to buildings which did not historically have them.

* Storm windows and security windows should not obscure historic windows or their features.

Storm windows and screens should match the shape and design of the window. Interior storm windows are an even better solution.

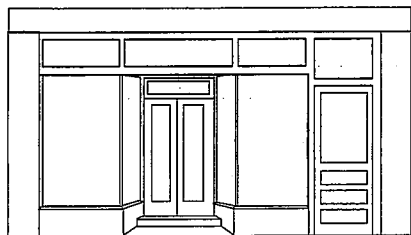


Rehabilitation/Repair Checklist

- ▶ Sand, prime, and paint wooden shutters and window screen frames.
- ▶ Repair existing shutters and screen frames or replace with new milled components to match originals.
- ▶ Remove inappropriate shutters, storm windows, and security grills and replace with those of a more appropriate design. Where shutters were not an original feature of the building, do not replace or add them.

STOREFRONTS

Though the original intent of storefronts (to attract customers into the store) has not changed, advances in building technology and changing architectural tastes have created an evolution of forms through the years. Residentially-scaled doors and windows predominated until the mid nineteenth century



when cast iron and mass produced plate glass began to create more open storefronts. These storefronts often use recessed entrances to provide customers with protection from the weather as well as increase display space. Early twentieth century storefronts often used materials and window shapes to achieve a certain style such as Art Moderne.

Design Issues

While early buildings may exhibit smaller scale display windows and entry doors, almost all buildings in Louisiana's downtowns have late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial storefront designs. The first floor display area contains pier or column supports between large display windows, panels known as kick-panels beneath the windows, transoms above the windows, and often a recessed entrance.

Original storefronts should be preserved. Display windows and transoms should not be enclosed, replaced with a different window type, or covered with a false front. Repair deteriorated elements using material similar to the original rather than replacing the entire storefront. Storefront updates which occurred prior to 1945 may have acquired a significance of their own and generally should not be removed to recreate an earlier storefront.

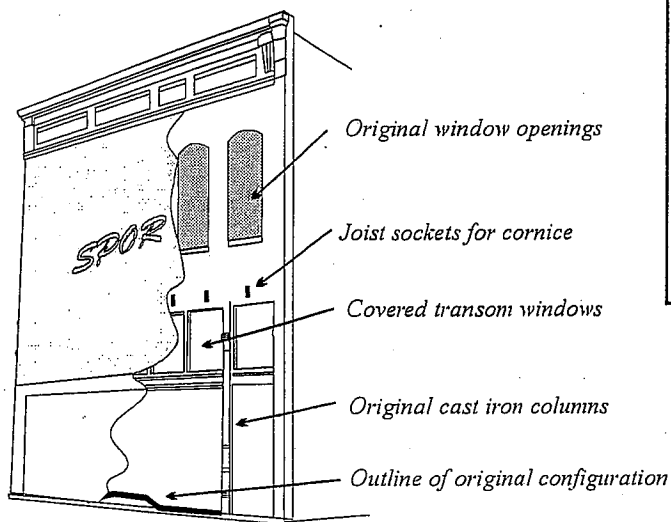
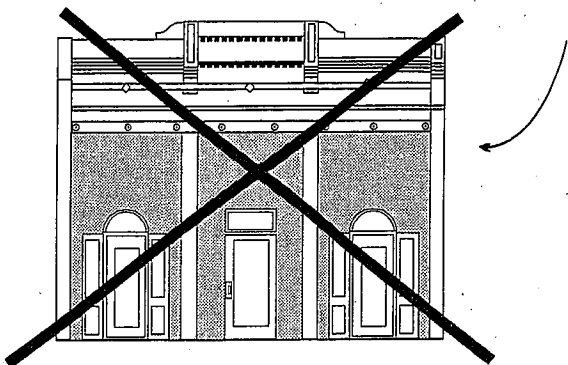
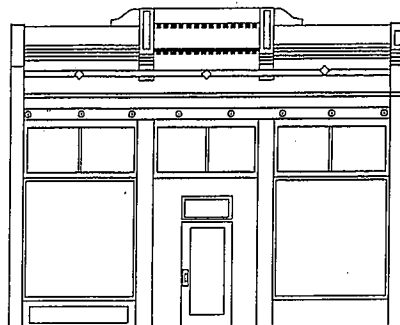
If the original storefront is too deteriorated to save, the replacement should accurately replace the original. Restoration of storefronts in cases where the original no longer exists should be based on historical research and physical evidence. Where no historical evidence exists, a new front should be designed which is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the building. "Theme" storefronts are inappropriate and should not be applied to historic buildings.

Sensitive Rehabilitation

Examine the condition of existing original storefronts thoroughly. Where moderate damage is found, replace deteriorated or missing elements with elements of the same material and design. Consider the possibility of moving original elements from in-conspicuous areas to more visible areas and use replacements in the less conspicuous areas. Always retain as much viable material as possible.

When removing a non-historic storefront, begin by removing material carefully from an inconspicuous area. Often, much of the original storefront exists underneath. If none of the original storefront exists, many clues often remain such as an outline in the foundation, the end of an original ceiling hidden beneath a dropped ceiling, or the joist sockets for a cornice. Use these clues to guide replication of the original storefront or in designing a contemporary one.

Original storefront configurations should be preserved, not infilled and replaced with inappropriate windows and doors.

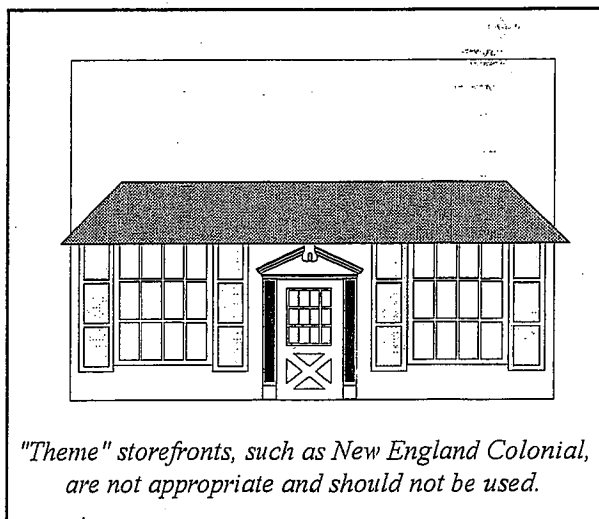


* Original storefront configuration and materials should be maintained and preserved.

* Storefronts should not be covered or enclosed.

* Replacement storefronts should follow traditional patterns.

* "Theme" storefronts are not appropriate.



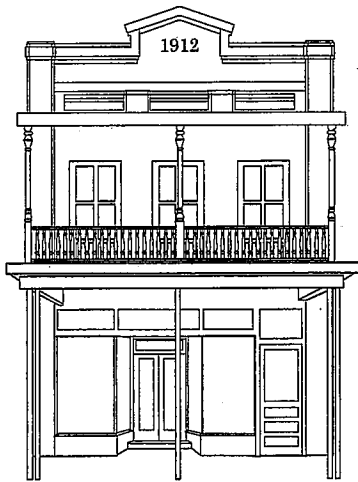
During rehabilitation, carefully remove the non-historic infill or cover. Many original elements may remain as well as physical evidence of missing elements.

Rehabilitation/Repair Checklist

- ▶ Perform routine maintenance such as cleaning, caulking, and painting.
- ▶ Retain viable materials, consolidate or repair damaged elements, replace missing or "too far gone" elements with similar material.
- ▶ Retain later storefronts representing a significant architectural style.
- ▶ If a new, incompatible storefront exists, either try to improve it or
- ▶ Remove the new storefront and replace with a restoration of the original or a contemporary storefront sensitive to the architecture of the building.

AWNINGS

Throughout the years downtown merchants have found a variety of ways to shelter the walks in front of their businesses. This created a haven from the weather for potential customers, encouraging



them to view merchandise displayed in shop windows. Awnings, canopies, and porches also served to ornament buildings and shade the interior of the store.

Design Issues

Louisiana's climate has encouraged the use of awnings, canopies, and porches throughout the state. Buildings which currently have these historic features should preserve and retain them. Inappropriate canopies and awnings which have been added in more recent times are best removed or incorporated into a more appropriate design.

The design of new awnings, canopies, or porches should be based on the architectural character of the building. Porches and balconies should not be added to buildings which historically had none. Likewise, many buildings of the early twentieth century were designed with canopies to emphasize their horizontal lines. Historic photos of downtown will give clues to the most appropriate awnings or canopies.

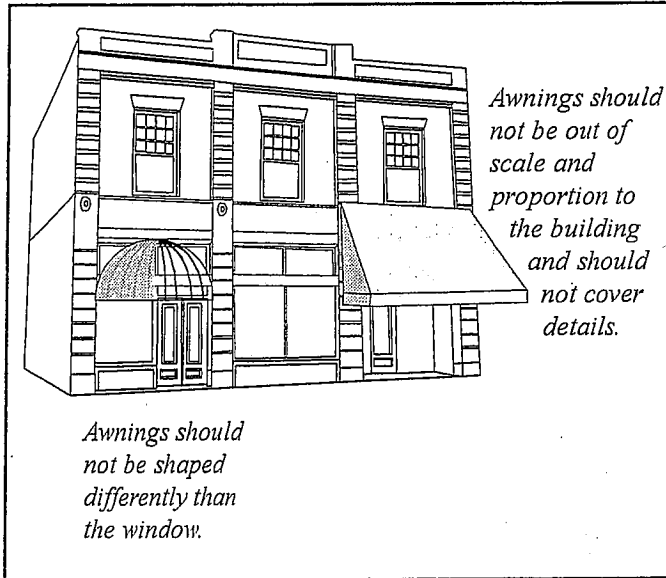
Where awnings are used, they should fit the shape of the window, e.g., circular awnings should not be used on rectangular windows. Awnings should fit within the architectural details of the window and not cover hoods or cast-iron columns. On storefronts, awnings should extend from just above or just below the transoms.

Awnings and canopies should not span several buildings. Internally lit awnings are generally inappropriate in historic downtowns and should be avoided. Historic porches, especially those located on primary elevations, should generally not be enclosed.

Sensitive Rehabilitation

Existing porches, canopies, and awnings should be examined first for their historic significance. If the element contributes to the historic character of the building, every effort should be made to maintain and preserve it. This may include canopies and awnings that are not original but have gained their own significance over time. Portions which are too deteriorated to save should be replaced with similar material of the same design.

CANOPIES and PORCHES

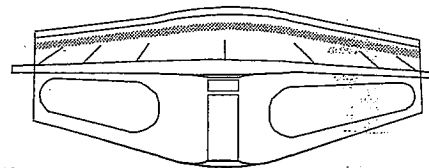


* Historic porches, canopies, and awnings should be preserved.

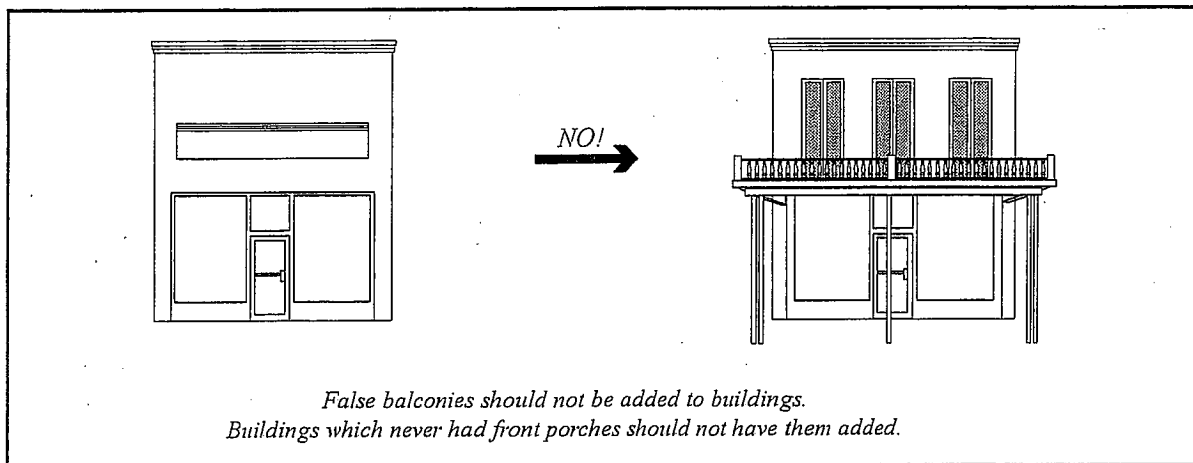
* The design of porches, canopies, and awnings should be appropriate to the architectural character of the building.

* Awnings should fit the shape of the window.

* Awnings should fit within the frame of the window and not obscure decorative detail.



Some early twentieth-century buildings were designed with canopies as an accent to their horizontal lines. Replacing these canopies with awnings is inappropriate.



Rehabilitation/Repair Checklist

- ▶ Examine existing porches, awnings, and canopies for historic significance. Post-1945 elements of inappropriate design are best removed.
- ▶ Historic elements should be repaired using durable materials similar to the original.
- ▶ Replace missing or inappropriate elements with canopy, awning, or porch appropriate in scale, proportion, form, and materials.
- ▶ Consult local building codes concerning the minimum clearance, maximum overhang, and the use of post supports in front of the building.

EXTERIOR MATERIALS & ORNAMENT

The choice of building materials in the construction of historic commercial buildings was guided by the needs and tastes of the owners. Though the earliest buildings were constructed of wood, most were later replaced with structures of a



more permanent nature. The need for security against theft and fire led to masonry construction for downtown buildings. Ornamentation is used on nearly all commercial buildings in varying degrees. Ornamentation was important for creating the desired perception for a building and its occupants: quality, service, or trust.

Design Issues

Cleaning should use the gentlest means possible. Repair of exterior materials should remove only the damaged material, replacing it with the same material. Trim, shingles, brackets, braces, moldings, and other ornamentation should not be covered or otherwise obscured. Decorative elements should never be removed.

Existing exterior materials should not be covered by a modern replacement. Synthetic siding (vinyl, aluminum, etc.) or synthetic stucco (E.I.F.S.) should not be added to buildings. Do not add non-historic or inappropriate ornamental features to a building.

Metals

Maintenance

- ▶ Monitor metal for cracks and signs of deterioration or corrosion.
- ▶ Maintain a sound paint film or other coating on metals that corrode. Always prime raw metal.
- ▶ Clean metal when necessary to remove corrosion before repainting or coating.
- ▶ Use the gentlest means possible to clean historic architectural metals, including appropriate chemical solutions for soft metals and wire brushing or hand-scraping for hard metals. Soft metals, such as lead, tin, copper, zinc, and tinplate may be damaged by wire brushing and sandblasting. Where wire brushing and hand-scraping prove ineffective in cleaning hard metals, such as steel, cast iron, and wrought iron, use low-pressure (80-100 psi) dry-grit blasting. Protect surrounding wooden and masonry elements from the over-blast.

Repair

- ▶ Repair original architectural metal elements and details by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing deteriorated sections.
- ▶ If replacement of an architectural metal element or detail is necessary, replace only the deteriorated element to match the original in size, scale, proportion, material, and detail.

Wood

Maintenance

- ▶ Inspect regularly for signs of damage from moisture, insects, fungi, or mildew.
- ▶ Seal joints against water penetration.
- ▶ Maintain a slope on horizontal surfaces, such as window sills, to ensure that water runs off.
- ▶ Prime all exposed wood surfaces before painting. Maintain a sound paint film or other coating on wood to prevent damage from ultraviolet light and moisture.
- ▶ **Do not sandblast.**
- ▶ **Do not high pressure water blast.**

Repair

- ▶ Repair original wooden elements and details by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing deteriorated sections.
- ▶ If replacement of a wooden element or detail is necessary, replace only the deteriorated element to match the original in size, scale, proportion, material, and detail.

* Exterior materials should be maintained and preserved.

* Repairs should be limited to affected areas, be sensitive to historic materials, and utilize matching materials.

* Architectural elements should be retained, never covered or removed.

* Replacements should match the original elements in size, shape, and other visual characteristics.

* Synthetic siding and synthetic stucco (E.I.F.S.) are inappropriate to historic buildings.

* Never sandblast or high-pressure water blast to clean or remove paint from wooden and masonry elements.

Masonry

Cleaning

- ▶ Clean masonry only if necessary to remove heavy soiling or prevent deterioration.
- ▶ **Do not sandblast.**
- ▶ Use the gentlest means possible to clean historic masonry. Clean with a low-pressure (under 120 psi) water wash, using detergent and natural bristle brushes.
- ▶ Test any proposed cleaning method on an inconspicuous sample area first.

Repointing

- ▶ Carefully remove deteriorated mortar by hand-raking the joints. Using electric saws or hammers can damage the masonry.
- ▶ Duplicate the strength, composition, texture, and color of the original mortar. A mortar analysis is recommended. Replacing a softer mortar with one high in Portland-cement content can cause serious damage to existing masonry.
- ▶ Duplicate the width and joint profile of the original mortar joints.

Painting/Waterproofing

- ▶ Painting unpainted masonry elements that were not coated historically is inappropriate.
- ▶ Do not use masonry coatings such as waterproofing and water repellents as a substitute for repainting or repair. Use such coatings only if masonry repairs have failed to eliminate water-penetration problems and a knowledgeable architect has been consulted.
- ▶ Removal of paint from masonry surfaces is not recommended unless the brick is of high quality and was intended to be exposed. Undertake removal only with a chemical paint remover specifically formulated for masonry. Always test the remover on an inconspicuous area or a test panel first. **Do not sandblast.**

SIGNS

Signs are a traditional and distinctive feature in Louisiana's downtowns. Buildings often bear permanent markers or "signs," such as cornerstone inscriptions



or lettering upon the surface of the building. Traditional sign placement also includes: a signboard area above the storefront hanging perpendicular to the facade, in display windows, on the building's side walls, or

Design Issues

Historically, signs have changed because of business relocation and advances in technology. Nonetheless, signs on historic buildings downtown have been generally placed in certain traditional locations. These locations complement the architecture of the building and relate buildings to one another. Contemporary signs should be placed in a similar manner. Signs should not destroy or otherwise alter historic materials and ornamentations.

Generally, signs should be no larger than what is necessary for identification. Hanging signs should also be of a height which helps reinforce the pedestrian character of the area. Lighting for signs should be sufficient to allow for the identification of the sign and should not detract from the surrounding historic area.

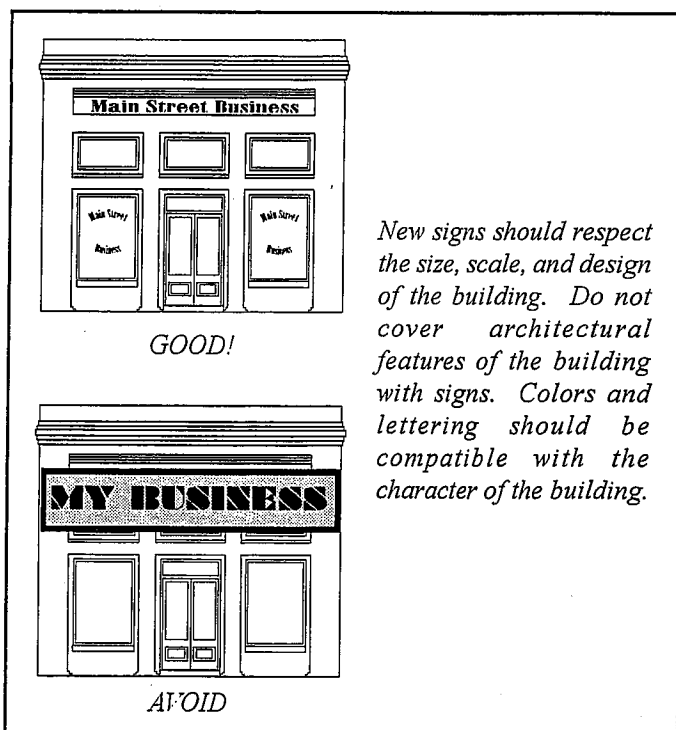
Design proposals for signs should also consider shape, materials, and scale. A sign may reference the visual characteristics and materials used within the area but should avoid creating a false historic appearance. Sign materials should generally be limited to painted wood or metal. Internally lit plastic signs are inappropriate.

Historic signs which have survived often provide the only visual record of the original use of the building and should be preserved wherever possible. Examples include incised lettering in the walls of buildings, structural glass panels, or mosaic tile lettering in the entry-way floor. "Ghosts" of painted signs on building sides are important reflections of times past. Signs characteristic of a specific historic period such as gold leaf on glass or neon should be preserved as well.

Sensitive Rehabilitation

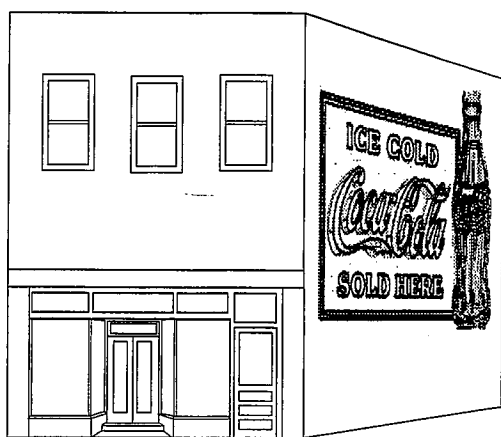
Historic signs often require special care during restoration. Neon repair, for example, is best left to a professional. Some signs are best left as they are rather than restored. The faded paint of a "ghost" sign more accurately conveys a sense of the past than if the sign were repainted.

When attaching new signs to a building, take care to prevent damage to the historic fabric and ensure the safety of customers. Fittings should penetrate mortar joints rather than bricks. Signloads should be calculated and the weight properly distributed.



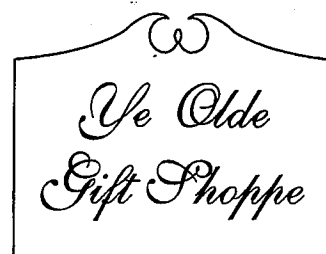
New signs should respect the size, scale, and design of the building. Do not cover architectural features of the building with signs. Colors and lettering should be compatible with the character of the building.

- * Historic signs should be preserved and maintained.
- * Contemporary signs should be placed in traditional sign locations.
- * Contemporary signs should not destroy or alter historic materials and ornamentation.
- * Size and lighting should be limited to that which is necessary for identification purposes. Internally lit plastic signs are inappropriate.
- * Signs should be of a compatible design and avoid a false historic appearance.



"Ghost" signs - fading painted signs - should be retained.

"Phony-Colonie" signs, those with a New England Colonial motif, are generally inappropriate for Louisiana's downtowns.



Rehabilitation/Repair Checklist

- ▶ Evaluate existing signs for historic significance. Is the sign: 1) associated with historic figures, events, or places? 2) significant as evidence of the history of a product, business, or service? 3) reflective of the history of the building or district? 4) characteristic of a certain period or an example of sign making craftsmanship? 5) an integral part of the building?
- ▶ Be sure that new signs conform to building codes or sign ordinances.
- ▶ Attach new signs in a manner that is safe and that does not damage the facade materials of the building.

NEW CONSTRUCTION



NEW CONSTRUCTION

NEW CONSTRUCTION

Historic downtowns are dynamic centers of commerce which continue to meet the needs of the community. Meeting these needs at times may involve new construction. When constructing a new building within a historic area or constructing an addition to a historic property, it is important to respect the elements which contribute to the visual character of the area. Compatible new construction should be designed so that it utilizes these elements, but also that it may be differentiated from historic examples. Additions to historic properties should be designed so that if removed in the future, the integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired. The factors which should be considered during new construction include placement, orientation, scale, form, facade elements, and materials.

PLACEMENT

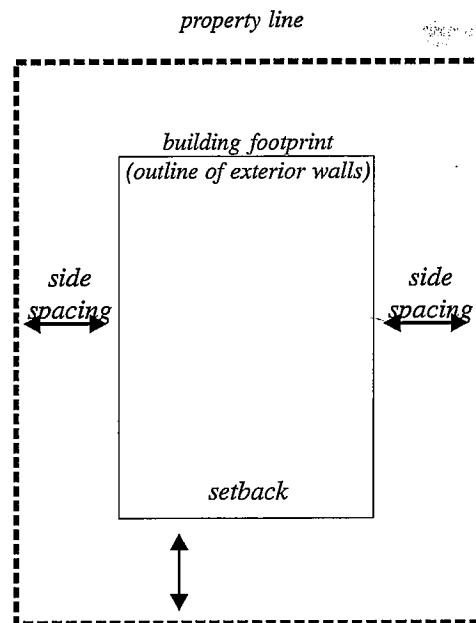
Design Issues

Placement refers to where a building is to be situated on a lot. This includes setback (how far the building is from the front of the lot) and spacing (the distance between buildings). The placement of buildings on their lots often reveals much about the era in which they were built. Early buildings in historic downtowns were often set apart from each other to reduce the spread of fire. As masonry became the primary building material, buildings began to share side walls, or party walls. The front wall was generally placed at the sidewalk line. This placement maximizes the use of expensive real estate and creates

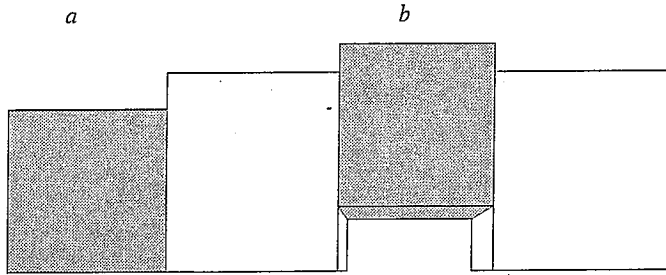
In order to draw customers to their displays and into their businesses, merchants in downtowns usually placed their buildings at the sidewalk line. The high cost of property usually encouraged the placement of buildings "shoulder-to-shoulder" so that they shared side walls.

New buildings in historic districts should be placed on their lot so that the setback and side spacing approximate those of historic buildings on the block. In most historic commercial areas, this setback is generally at the lot line or sidewalk line. A new building should not be placed forward or behind the traditional facade line, a visual line created by the repetition of similar setbacks by historic buildings. Usually commercial buildings are attached and share side walls. New buildings should conform to this historic spacing pattern.

New additions to historic commercial buildings should not be placed on the front of the building. The most appropriate place for a new addition is on the rear of the existing structure.



* Similarity of placement, an important visual characteristic of historic areas, should be preserved.

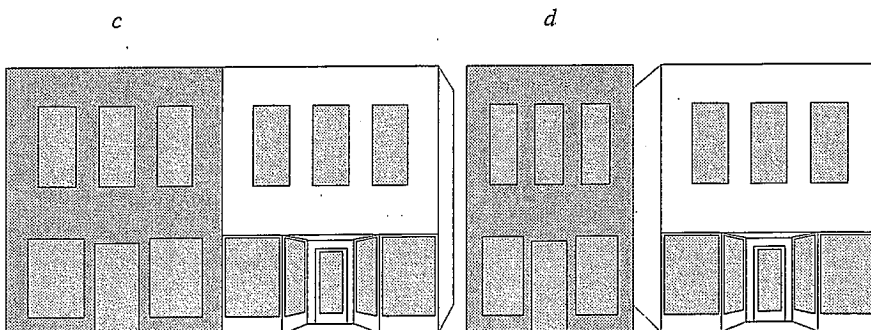
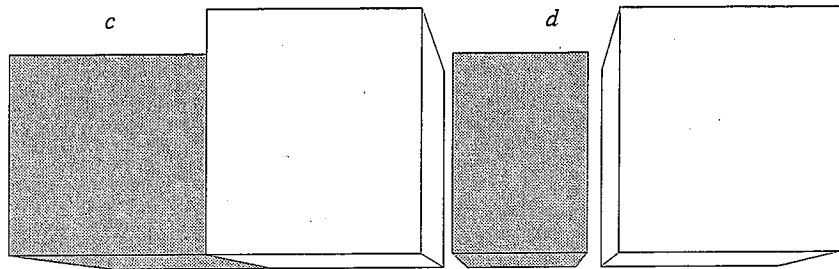
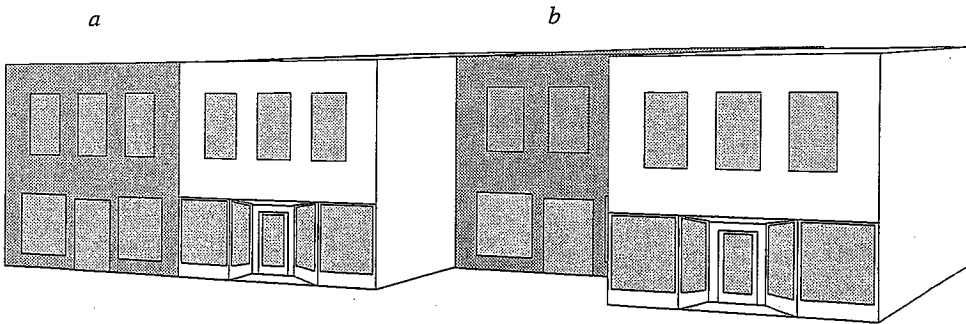


* New buildings should have setbacks which are equal to nearby historic buildings:

* New buildings should conform to historic spacing patterns.

* New additions should be placed to the rear of the existing building.

New building (a) follows the traditional setback of its historic neighbors while new building (b) disrupts the pattern by recessing its facade wall from the sidewalk line.



New building (c) shares its side wall with the neighboring building, the traditional pattern in historic commercial areas. New building (d) disrupts this pattern by setting itself apart from the neighboring buildings.

ORIENTATION

Design Issues

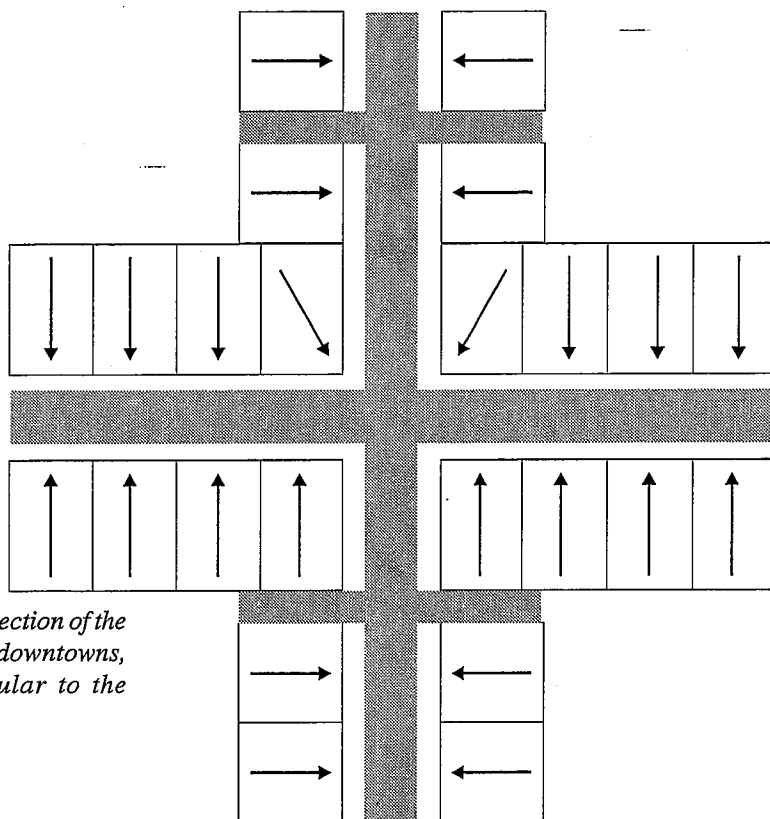
The orientation of a building generally refers to the direction that the primary entrance faces.

Historic central business districts generally have buildings which face toward the street. In some areas orientation is affected by geography and infrastructure such as rivers and railroads. Nonetheless, nearly all buildings in historic downtowns share the same orientation. The orientation of buildings along a street is part of the pattern of historic commercial areas which creates a sense of order and cohesion.

Downtown buildings historically depended on presenting their image to pedestrians. Therefore, all buildings on a block often have the same orientation. Corner buildings usually either face the more important of the two streets or may feature a corner entrance.

New buildings should repeat the orientation of the historic buildings on a street and generally this means facing the street. Corner buildings should be oriented to the major street and, especially at the intersection of two major streets, may use a corner entrance. Decisions on the orientation of corner buildings should follow the precedent of the adjacent corner properties and other corner properties in the district.

New additions should not alter the orientation of historic buildings by shifting the primary entrance.

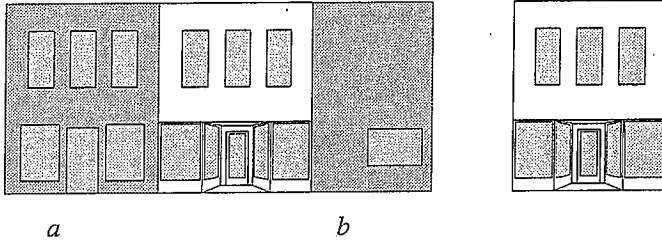


Orientation refers to the direction of the primary facades. In most downtowns, buildings are perpendicular to the street.

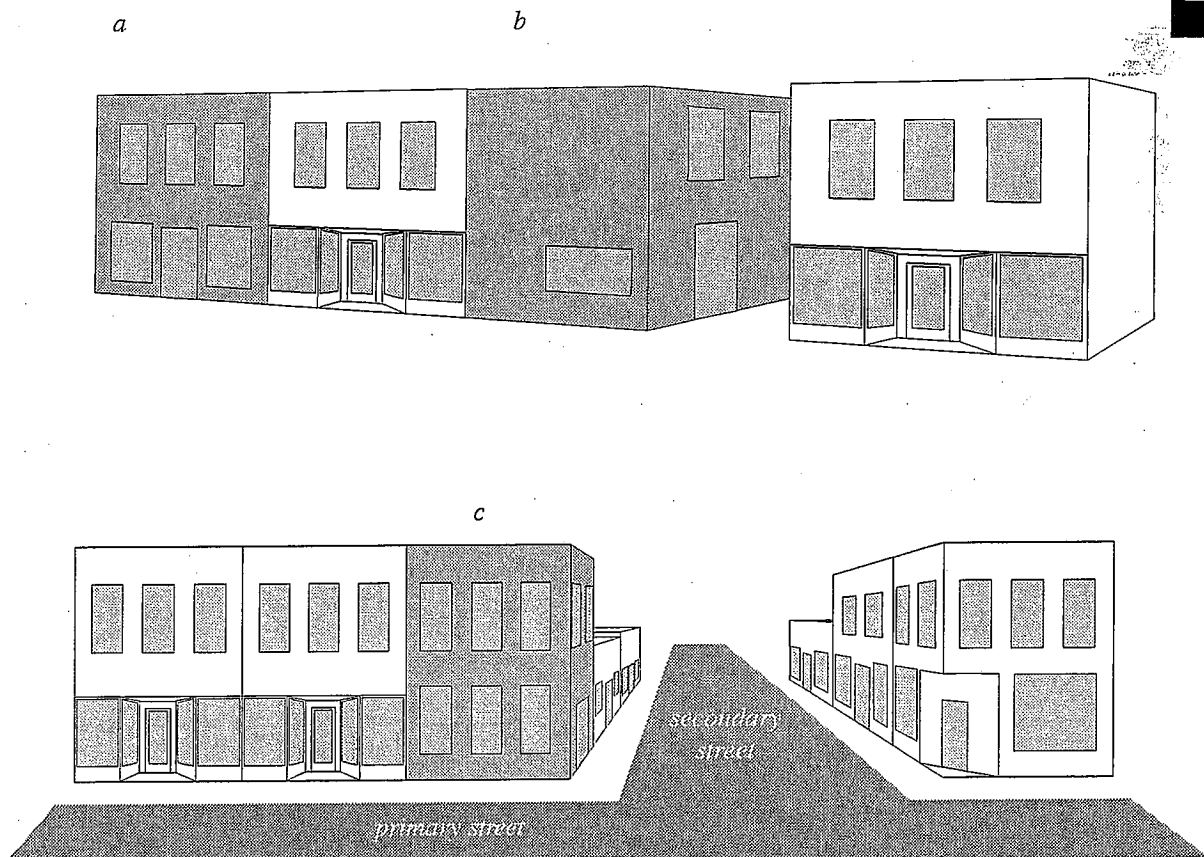
* Similarity of orientation, an important visual characteristic of historic commercial areas, should be preserved.

* New buildings should have the same orientation as nearby historic examples.

* New additions should not alter the orientation of historic buildings.



New building (a) follows the traditional orientation of the streetscape while new building (b) disrupts the pattern by using a non-traditional orientation.



In this case the new building (c) awkwardly faces the secondary street rather than the primary street of the area like the historic buildings. Many corner buildings have corner entrances, which is a good example for new buildings to follow.

SCALE

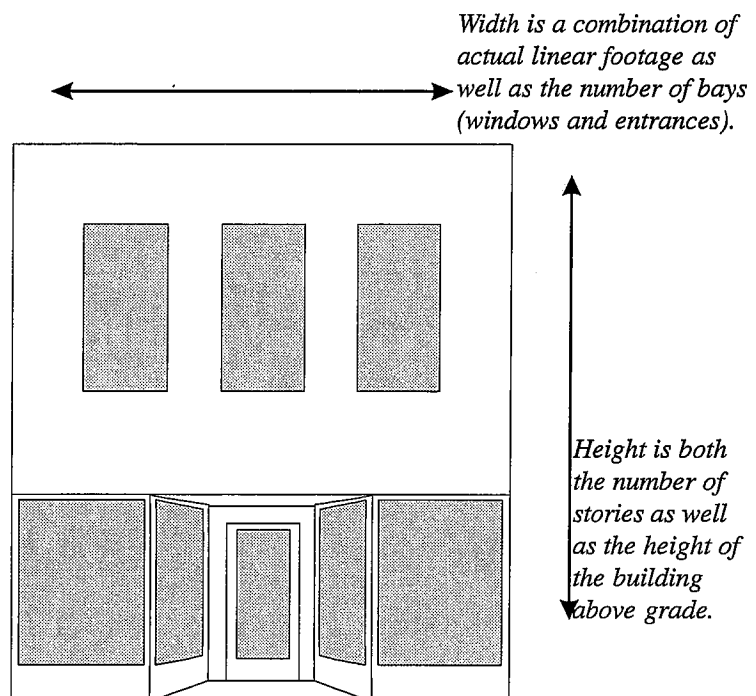
The scale of a building is determined by the height, width, and depth of the structure. Except for corner properties, height and width are the two elements of most concern. The size of buildings was determined by such things as needs, construction technology, and the local economy. Older stores often had a second floor with living space for the merchant and his family. Not until steel framing was available did buildings of greater height begin to appear. However, few towns had economies large enough to generate a need for these early "skyscrapers." Later, as housing patterns changed and merchants began to live outside the downtown area, new stores were built only one story tall.

Design Issues

The scale, or size, of buildings communicates information about the practical needs and tastes of the businesses which formed the downtown areas. New construction should fit the context of the area by matching the established scale.

New buildings should approximate the height and width of adjacent and nearby historic buildings. If a building is to occupy several empty lots, the facade should be segmented with vertical divisions to approximate the widths of the area's historic examples.

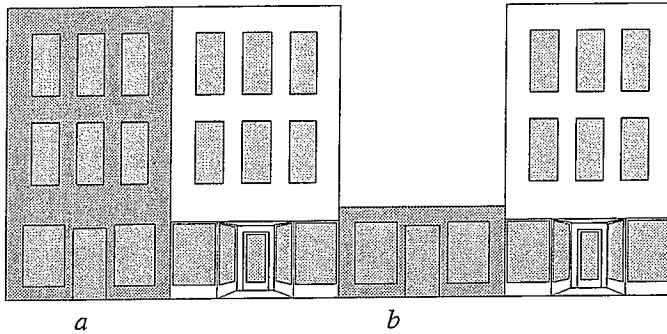
New additions should not overwhelm the original structure. An addition should have a perceivable juncture where it meets the original building. This can be achieved by using a slightly lower roof line, setting the wall back from - rather than flush with - the original wall, or using a separating element.



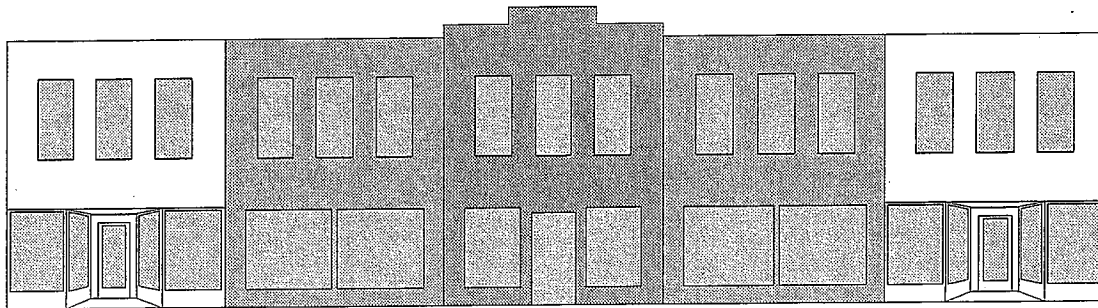
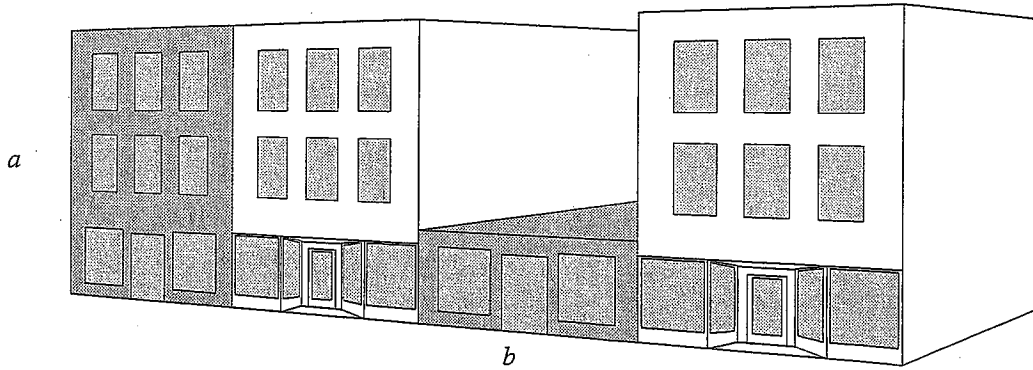
* Similarity of scale, an important visual characteristic of historic areas, should be preserved.

* New buildings should reflect the scale of historic buildings.

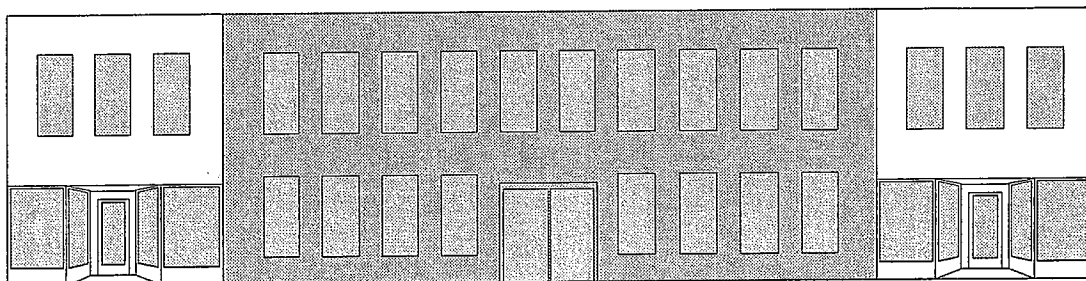
* New additions should be in proportion to and discernible from the existing structure.



New building (a) conforms to the established height of the block while new building (b) disrupts the pattern.



A new building occupying several lots can respect the rhythm of facade widths with vertical divisions using architectural details, materials, colors, etc. such as in the example above. The example below disrupts the traditional scale of the block because of its uncharacteristic width.



FORM

Design Issues

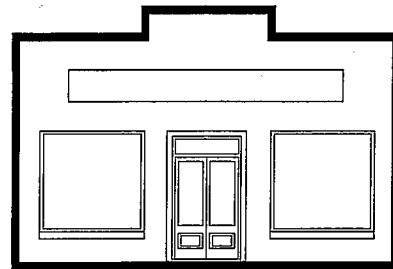
Form is comprised of several elements that together give a building its particular silhouette and footprint. A dominant component of form is the roof and its shape, pitch, and complexity. Other ingredients are the height of the foundation, story heights, and whether a building is composed of a single block or several smaller blocks. Traditionally, commercial buildings achieve a sense of stability as well as utility through the use of form. In most cases this form is a rectangular block achieved through the use of a roof parapet.

Similarity of form ties buildings in downtowns together and sets them apart from neighboring residential areas. While individual buildings may distinguish themselves from their neighbors by using differing parapet shapes or cornice treatments, all usually follow a similar overall pattern.

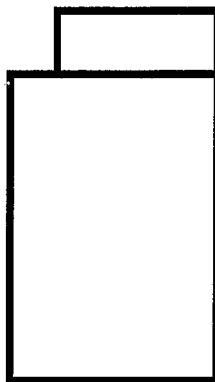
The pitch, shape, and complexity of the roof of a new building should closely match those of the surrounding historic buildings. Likewise, a new building should be set on a foundation which is the same height as adjacent and nearby historic buildings. The composition of new buildings, that is whether constructed of one or several blocks, should follow the example of the historic buildings in the same area.

Visible roofs of new additions should have the same form and pitch as those of the original structure. The foundation height of the addition should exactly match that of the original portion of the building. The addition of a new wing should not alter the footprint of the building so drastically as to completely obscure the original form.

From the front, each building creates a silhouette. On a blueprint, this is known as an "elevation." This is a front elevation.



Each building has a "footprint" created by the exterior walls. On blueprints, this is called the "plan" or "floor plan."



* Similarity of form, an important visual characteristic of historic areas, should be preserved.

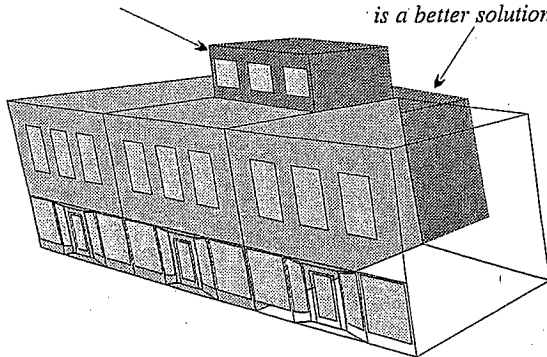
* New buildings should reference the size, shape, and composition of features used on historic buildings.

* New additions should duplicate the roof shape, roof pitch, and foundation height of historic buildings.

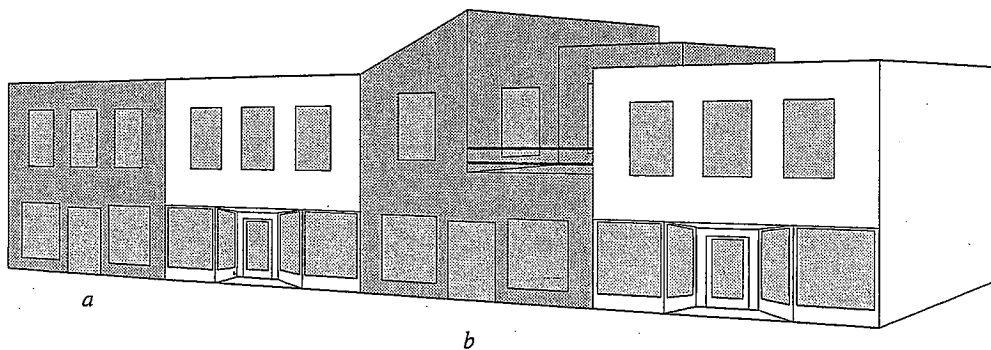
* New additions should be located at the rear and should not obscure the original form of historic buildings.

Rooftop additions set back from the facade may be acceptable, though not the best solution.

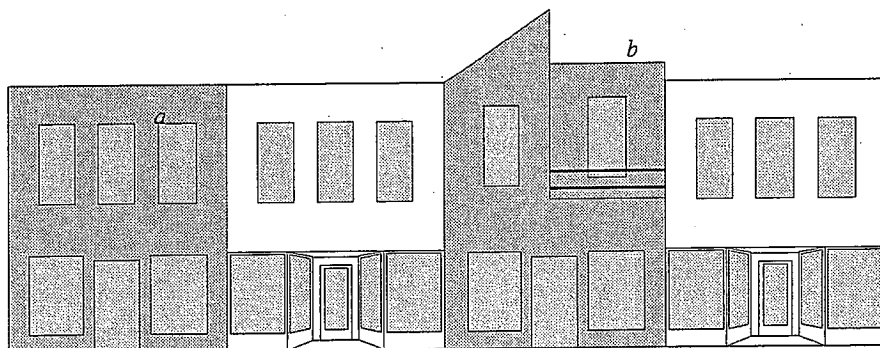
A rear extension with a lower roofline is a better solution.



Additions should not be visible from the front of the building.



New building (a) uses the traditional building form of its neighbors while new building (b) disrupts the pattern by using a non-traditional form.



FACADE ELEMENTS

Design Issues

Just as a human face is composed of separate elements, so is the face or facade of a building. The elements which compose a building's facade are such things as windows, doors, and cornices. They not only break up the solid expanse of the front wall by introducing voids, but also create a rhythm which is repeated along the street. The first floor of downtown buildings was historically retail space. Large display windows were used to present merchandise to passing pedestrians. Upper floors were generally used as offices or as living space. Windows were therefore smaller in order to afford a measure of privacy to the occupants. Facade elements horizontally align with the facade elements of adjacent historic buildings.

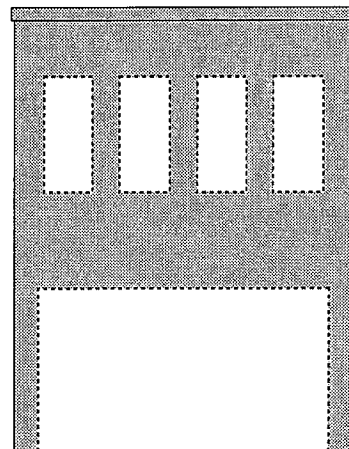
Facade elements such as windows and doors contribute to the visual character of both the individual building and the streetscape. The walls and openings on the front of a building create a solid-to-void ratio that is usually repeated throughout the block.

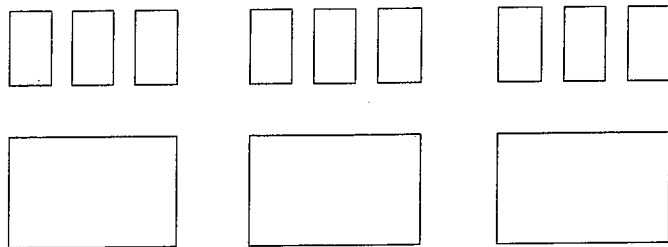
A new building should use facade elements in a manner similar to that of surrounding historic buildings. Openings (windows and entrances) create voids within the solid surface (walls) of a building; the unique balance of these elements is termed as a solid-to-void ratio. New buildings should utilize a solid-to-void ratio equal to that of adjacent and nearby historic buildings. Because the solid-to-void ratio may be different for each level of the building, new construction should use the ratio appropriate for each floor.

Facade elements often create a rhythm which is repeated along the streetscape. This is usually created through the symmetrical placement of openings on the facade wall. Likewise, many elements such as cornices and windows align with adjoining buildings. Both of these factors should be considered in the use of facade elements.

For guidelines on signs and awnings, consult the *Rehabilitation* section.

New additions visible from the street should not disrupt the pattern of facade elements on the original building.





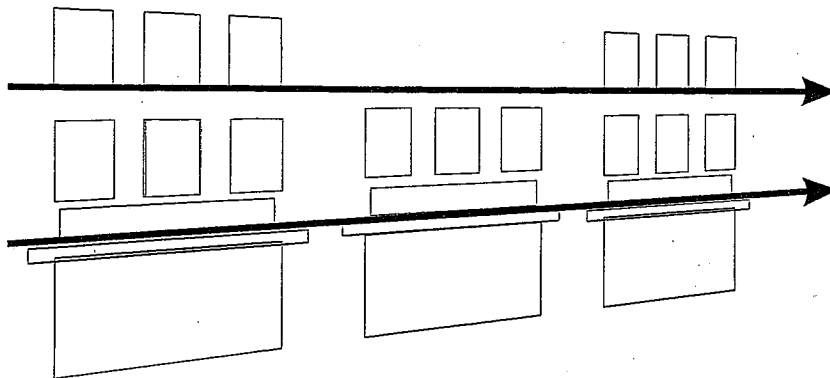
Storefronts and upper story windows create a rhythm along the streetscape.

* Similarity of facade elements, an important visual characteristic of historic areas, should be preserved.

* New buildings should reference the historic use of facade elements.

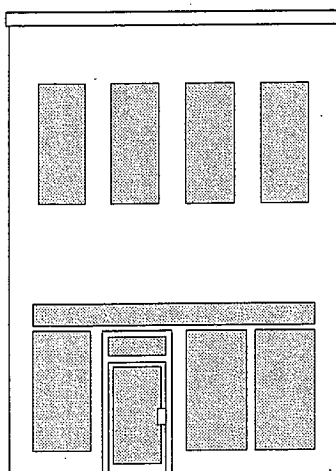
* New buildings should carefully balance solid and void.

* New additions should not disrupt the pattern of facade elements on the original building.

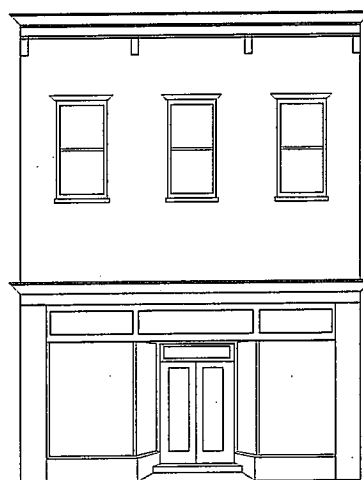


Facade elements, within certain variances, align along a block.

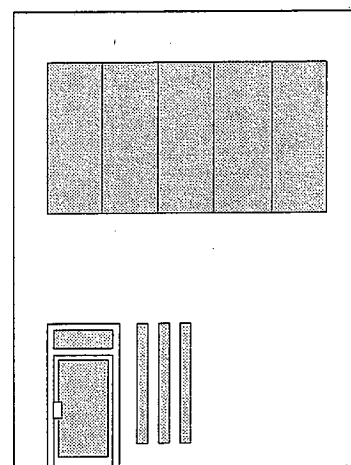
Appropriate use of facade elements



Historic example



Inappropriate use of facade elements.



Elements on the facade of a building, such as windows and doors, should follow the example of surrounding historic buildings.

MATERIALS

Design Issues

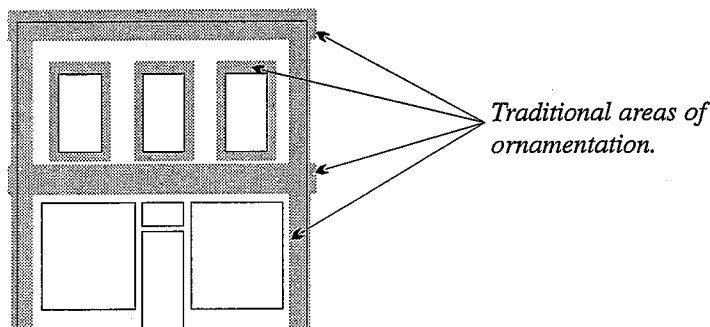
Historically, the choice of materials for commercial buildings in downtowns was based upon several factors: availability, building technology, needs, cost, and taste. Though the earliest buildings favored wood, most buildings in commercial historic districts are of some sort of masonry. This use of similar textures, ornament, and colors is a defining characteristic in most historic commercial areas.

Building sensitively within a historic district requires design which respects the traditions established by earlier builders. However, new buildings should make their own contribution to history and not merely copy historic buildings. The use of materials and ornamentation is an excellent means of achieving this goal. The proper use of materials and ornamentation can allow a new building to become a contributing member of a historic district while maintaining its own identity.

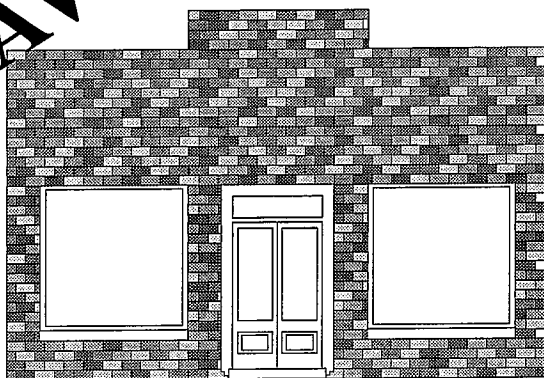
The materials and ornamentation of historic commercial buildings are very rich in texture. Whether using traditional or modern materials, new construction should create the same sense of texture. Brick and stone are frequently used on historic buildings and are good choices for new construction. Nearly all commercial buildings use some type of ornamentation and are therefore encouraged as a model for new construction. The color of materials for new construction should relate to the historic buildings in the district avoiding loud or uncharacteristic colors. Ornamentation should not exceed the degree of ornamentation of surrounding historic buildings.

New additions should use cladding materials closely matching those of the original building. The ornamentation on an addition should either be an abstraction of the original or may be discontinued entirely. This firmly denotes the addition as later

Facade materials are usually rich in texture.



AVOID



Historic commercial buildings use a primary color of brick for the facade and secondary colors for highlights. Using a variety of colors throughout is inappropriate.

- * Similarity of materials and degree of ornamentation, two important visual characteristics of historic neighborhoods, should be preserved.
- * On new buildings, exterior materials - both traditional and modern - should closely resemble surrounding historic examples.
- * Traditional materials, un-common to an area, should not be used.
- * On additions, exterior materials should closely match those of the original building.
- * Ornamentation for new buildings should not exceed the degree of ornamentation found in the area, whereas ornamentation for additions should not exceed the degree of ornamentation found on the original structure.



New buildings constructed with materials inconsistent with the district negatively impact the historic character of the area.

APPENDIX



CONTACTS

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web: <http://www.crt.state.la.us/crt/ocd/hp/ocdhp.htm>

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fax: 225/344-7176

e-mail: lapreserve@mindspring.com

web: <http://www.mindspring.com/~lapreserve/lpa.html>

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fax: 202/588-6050
e-mail: mainst@nthp.org
web: <http://www.mainst.org>

National Trust Southern Regional Office

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Charleston, SC 29403
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fax: 803/342-3207

National Center for Cultural Resources, Stewardship and Partnership Programs

National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW NC330
Washington, DC 20240
ph: 202/343-9583
e-mail: hps-info@nps.gov
web: <http://www.cr.nps.gov>

National Center for Preservation Training and Technology

NSU Box 5682
Natchitoches, LA 71497
ph: 318/357-6464
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National Alliance of Preservation Commissions

P.O. Box 1605
Athens, GA 30603
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- 2: Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Brick Buildings.
- 3: Conserving Energy in Historic Buildings.
- 4: Roofing for Historic Buildings.
- 6: Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings.
- 7: The Preservation of Historic Glazed Architectural Terra-Cotta.
- 8: Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on Historic Buildings: The Appropriateness of Substitute Materials for Resurfacing Historic Wood Frame Buildings.
- 9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows.
- 10: Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork.
- 11: Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts.
- 12: The Preservation of Historic Pigmented Structural Glass (Vitrolite and Carrara Glass).
- 13: The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows.
- 14: Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns.
- 15: Preservation of Historic Concrete: Problems and General Approaches.
- 16: The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors.
- 17: Architectural Character - Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character.
- 22: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco.
- 24: Heating, Ventilating, and Cooling Historic Buildings: Problems and Recommended Approaches.
- 25: The Preservation of Historic Signs.

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- 27: The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron.
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- 30: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs.
- 31: Mothballing Historic Buildings.
- 32: Making Historic Properties Accessible.
- 33: The Preservation and Repair of Stained and Leaded Glass.
- 35: Understanding Old Buildings: The Process of Architectural Investigation.
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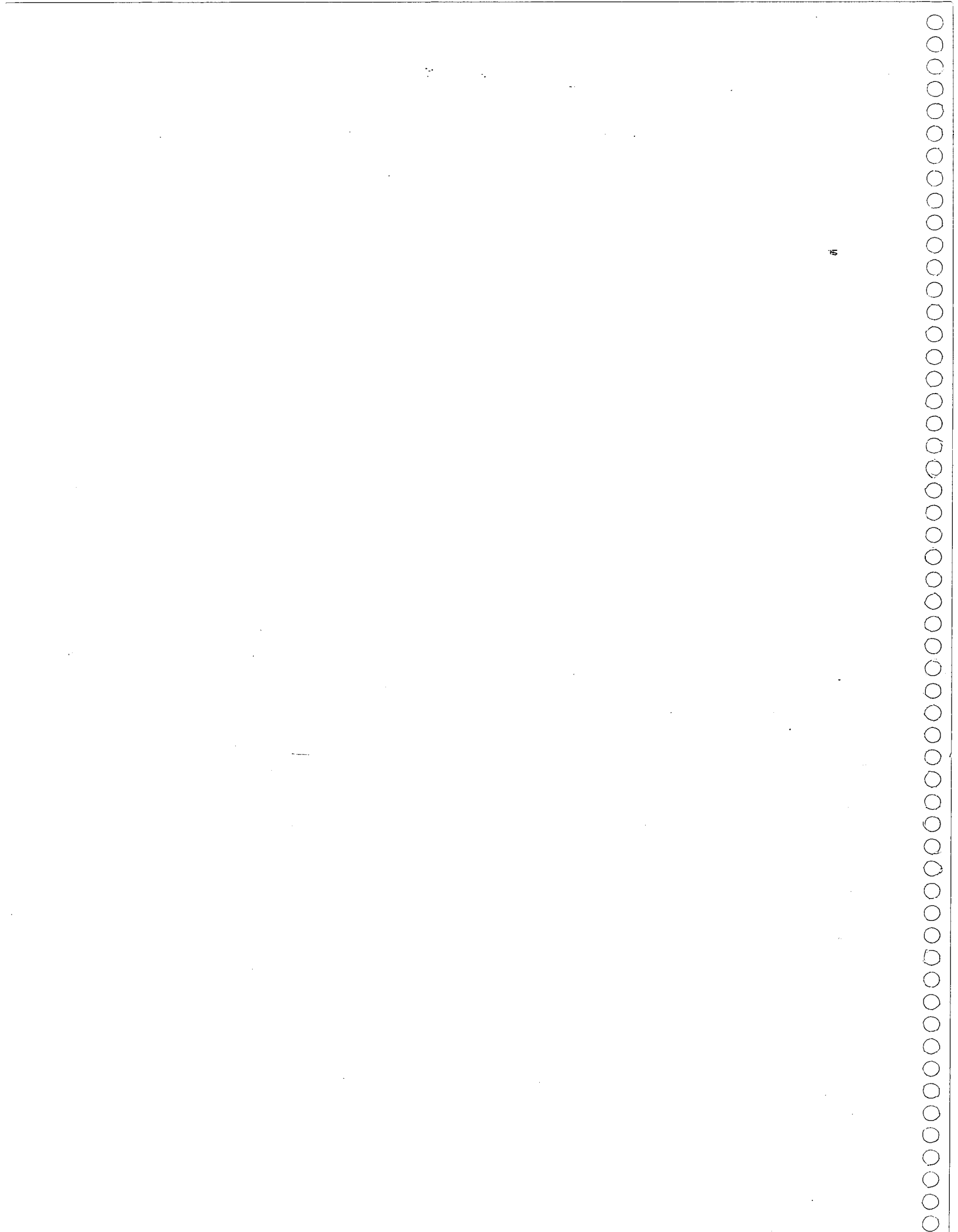
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