

DOWNTOWN O'FALLON DESIGN GUIDELINES





CREATED BY CITY STAFF & M2 ARCHITECTURE

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INTRODUCTION

This document is designed to help individual property owners formulate plans for the preservation, rehabilitation and continued use of buildings in the downtown area. The guidelines pertain to buildings of all occupancy and construction types. They apply to permanent and temporary construction on the exterior of buildings as well as to new construction in the district.

It is important to keep in mind that the intent of this document is to encourage a degree of planning and mindfulness before beginning facade improvements or renovations. The material contained in this document is intended to encourage historical sensitivity and thoughtful creativity, with the overall goal of enhancing the experience of moving through downtown O'Fallon.

Before beginning any construction project, occupying an existing space, or adding new uses to a structure, please call City Hall at 618-624-4500 x4 to set up a meeting with members of the Community Development Department staff. We can help connect you with valuable resources, explain the permitting and inspection process, discuss possible financial incentives, and evaluate the need for an architect. Please note that exterior changes to properties designated as local historic landmarks will need to be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission.



GENERAL GUIDELINES



- The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building facade or structure should not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any original materials or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
- Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building or structure should be considered when planning facade renovations.
- Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should either match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities, or contribute to the overall facade in an appealing and complementary manner.
- New design elements are to be congruous with the original styling of the building. All of the features, new and old, should be harmonious in scale, material, color, and overall character. Alterations attempting to change or disguise the architectural style of the building should be avoided.
- Original window openings located on the main facade should not be altered. Changing or eliminating the openings can negatively impact the appearance of a building.
- Precaution should be taken when cleaning the exterior of a building. Abrasive methods such as sandblasting will damage the building materials leading to further decay.
- Consult historic photos for renovation ideas. Contact the Community Development Department at 618-624-4500 x 4 for assistance.
- Work with an architect and reputable contractor who have experience with historic buildings.

STOREFRONTS

ENCOURAGED

- Retaining existing storefronts including window trim, glass, lintels, sills, architraves, shutters, doors, pediments, hoods, steps, and all hardware.
- Repairing window and door elements by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the existing materials; or introducing new materials that complement the existing.
- Replacing in kind an entire window or door that is too deteriorated to repair.
- Designing and constructing a new shopfront when the feature is completely missing.



DISCOURAGED

- Removing, altering, or covering windows and doors that are important in defining the character of the building. This includes the transom windows of a storefront system.
- Replacing a character-defining window or door with a new version that does not convey a complementary appearance or the same appearance as the existing.
- Using residential-style or solid non-commercial doors in storefronts or other commercial spaces.
- Replacing shopfront elements when repair and limited replacement of the deteriorated or missing parts are appropriate.
- Introducing a storefront that is incompatible in size, scale, color, and/or material.
- Altering the commercial character of the shopfront by substantially reducing the area of glass in the shopfront.



UPPER LEVELS

ENCOURAGED

- Maintaining and repairing the original materials and features of upper facades.
- Replacing in kind ornamental features such as but not limited to cornices, building caps, brackets, lintels, and sills.
- The upper facade should follow the rhythm and lines of the building's original design, lower level, and maintain a compatible relationship to adjacent buildings.
- Upper window openings are significant in defining the character of a multistory building and therefore consideration should be taken before making alterations.
- The use of interior window coverings such as curtains or shades when a window is no longer needed for day lighting or ventilation.



DISCOURAGED

- Altering the size of original window openings in any way.
- Covering up windows.
- Reflective, frosted, or tinted glass is strongly discouraged. There is a variety of glass products and thermal glazes that minimize heat gain and loss without affecting the appearance.
- Replacing ornamental features with new features that do not compliment the original character of the building.



SIGNAGE

ENCOURAGED

- Projecting/blade signs are highly encouraged and can be paired with wall signs.
- Window signs applied directly to the glass are welcomed and can cover 20% of the window—no permit needed.
- Using exterior light fixtures to illuminate signs.
- Utilizing signage on up to three sides of the building as authorized by code.
- Simple lettering on the valance of awnings is encouraged and can be paired with wall signs and/or projecting/blade signs.
- Designing signage that attaches to existing materials in a manner that causes no irreversible damage to that material.
- Employing signage that does not obscure architectural features or that does not compete visually with the character of the building.



DISCOURAGED

- Back lit cabinet/panel signs.
- Digital/changeable copy signs.
- Signs that appear too large for the available space.
- Signage on the angled surface of awnings.
- Signage whose attachment to the building requires irreversible anchorage into historic materials.
- Incorporating signage that obscures architectural detail or visually competes with the architectural character of the building.



AWNINGS

ENCOURAGED

- Awnings made of canvas, canvas-like, or metal materials.
- Fabric awnings at an approximately 45 degree angle that feature a valance.
- Simple lettering on the valance of awnings.
- Retractable awnings.
- Awnings whose attachments cause no irreversible damage to existing materials.





DISCOURAGED

- Awnings that do not respect the scale of the entire building facade.
- Backlit awnings.
- Shingled awnings.
- Signage on the angled surface of awnings.



LIGHTING

ENCOURAGED

- Lighting fixtures that are period-appropriate and scale appropriate for the facade.
- Lighting that enhances the presence of the building in its context.
- Leaving storefront lit well into the evening, even if the business itself is closed. This can be accomplished by placing the lights on a timer. The goal is to create a bright and safe streetscape that makes people want to return.



DISCOURAGED

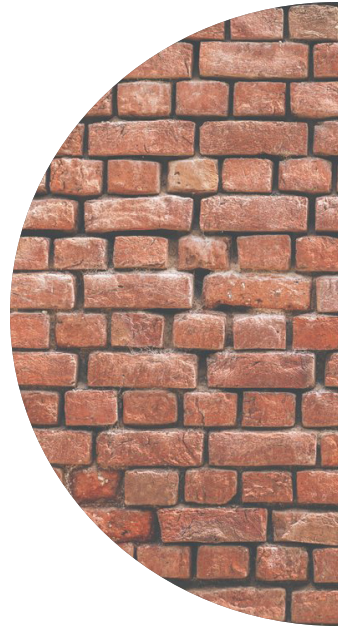
- Lighting/light fixtures that do not respect the scale of the entire building facade.
- Any type of fixture casting an unfavorable or overabundance of light such that the nighttime character of the street is not enhanced.



MASONRY

ENCOURAGED

- Retaining and preserving masonry features that are important in defining the overall character of the building such as walls, brackets, railings, cornices, window architraves, door pediments, steps and columns; joint and unit size, tooling and bonding patterns, coatings and colors also should be preserved.
- Designing and installing a new masonry features such as cornice or door surround when the existing feature is completely missing. New features should contribute to the overall enhancement of the facade.
- Repairing existing masonry features using recognized preservation methods such as cleaning and tuckpointing:
- Tuckpointing repairs should match existing mortar profile and color. Consideration should be given to brick size/color as well as consistency of mortar and masonry joints. Ornaments should be “like for like.”
- Masonry should be cleaned only with the gentlest means possible. Water cleaning methods are generally the gentlest. Chemical methods such as acid washes may be performed only on non-acid sensitive masonry like unglazed brick, cast stone, and concrete. Test the method on an inconspicuous part of the building to ensure there will be no damage to the principal facade. The correct way to clean is to work from the bottom up. This prevents rundown from soaking in and creating stains.





DISCOURAGED

- Removing or radically changing masonry features which are important in defining the overall character of the building such that its character is not enhanced.
- Using substitute materials for masonry that do not convey the visual appearance of the surviving parts of the masonry features.
- Do not sandblast to clean the exterior of a building or remove paint. Less damaging methods as described in the previous section should be explored.
- Covering of brick with other materials like stucco or faux stone in an effort to avoid proper repair.



WOOD

ENCOURAGED

- Identifying, retaining and preserving wood features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building such as cornices, brackets, window and doorway trim.
- Repairing wood features using recognized preservation methods such as cleaning, the addition of chemical preservatives, refinishing, repainting, or the application of other appropriate protective coatings.
- Replace in kind an entire wood feature that is too deteriorated to repair. When replacement is required, it is suitable to use modern materials such as vinyl or cement board siding if they are visually indistinguishable from the original.
- Designing and installing a new wood feature such as cornice or doorway that complements the overall design of the facade.



DISCOURAGED

- Removing or radically changing wood features which are important in defining the overall character of the building such that its character is not enhanced.
- Removing an entire wood feature that is unrepairable and not replacing it, or replacing it with a new feature that is not compatible with the overall facade.



METAL

ENCOURAGED

- Identifying, retaining, and preserving metal features that are important in defining the overall character of the building such as columns, capitals, or window hoods.
- Repairing metal features using recognized preservation methods; for example cleaning, patching, splicing, reinforcing, or application of protective coating.
- Replacing in kind an entire metal feature that is too deteriorated to repair.
- Designing and installing a new metal feature such as a sheet metal cornice or cast iron capital that complements the existing facade or the design intent of the new facade design.



DISCOURAGED

- Removing or radically changing metal features which are important in designing the overall character of the building such that its character is not enhanced.
- Removing an entire metal feature that is unrepairable and not replacing it; or replacing it with a new feature that is incompatible or not complementary to the existing facade.
- Poorly maintained, rusty metal features.



COLOR & EXTERIOR FINISHES

ENCOURAGED

- Paint schemes that enhance the architectural features of the building
- Repainting with colors that are appropriate to the period of historic significance of the building, or selecting a color palette that unifies the entire facade.
- Taking entire facade into consideration when selecting colors/color schemes.
- Inspection of painted masonry surfaces to determine the best course of action. The facade may need to be repainted or have the paint removed entirely. Consult a professional for masonry preservation services when considering painted masonry.
- Removing paint from masonry should be performed using the gentlest means possible. This usually involves gentle hand scraping. Do not increase pressure if paint is not coming off in order to avoid chipping away pieces of the brick itself. Sometimes a paint removing gel may be needed.
- When repainting is necessary, be sure to properly prepare the surface and use a paint/coating suitable for masonry application. Due to freeze/thaw cycles it is best to avoid completely waterproof coatings in order to protect but also let the brick “breathe.”





DISCOURAGED

- Single-color paint schemes that do not enhance architectural details.
- Painting only a portion of the building facade, unless the paint is finishing a repair to the facade, or warranted/defensible in a new facade design.
- Painting brick that has not been previously been painted.
- Using harsh methods of removing paint that are destructive to the original material.
- Removing paint that is firmly adhering to, and thus protecting masonry surfaces.
- Using paint colors that are inappropriate for the character of the building.
- Failing to follow the paint/coating manufacturer's application instructions.
- Poorly maintained, peeling paint.



ARCHITECTURAL TERMS

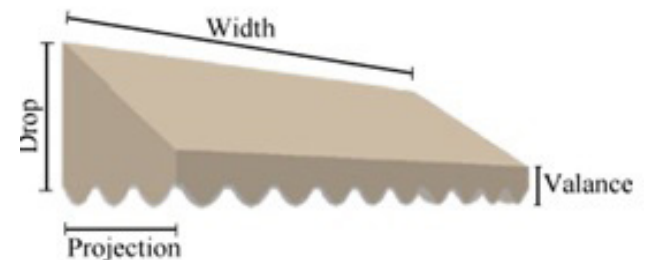
- Architrave-the main beam resting across the tops of columns, specifically the lower third entablature
- Bracket-a device projecting from a wall that can be made of wood, stone, plaster, metal, or other mediums. They can serve a structural purpose but are sometimes purely ornamental. Corbels and consoles are types of brackets.
- Cornice-the uppermost horizontal area that protrudes or sticks out, like moldings along the top of a wall or just below a roof line
- Hood-an external molded projection from a wall over an opening to throw off rainwater
- Lintel-a horizontal structural member which is placed across an opening
- Ornament-a decoration used to embellish parts of a building
- Parapet-a low protective wall along the edge of a roof or balcony
- Pediment-the triangular gable forming at the end of a roof slope
- Sash-the part of a window frame that holds the glazing, can be movable or fixed
- Transom-window which rest on the horizontal beam above a door frame or storefront windows
- Valance-a short piece of drapery that is hung from the edge of an awning to give a decorative skirt; simple signage can be placed on the valance



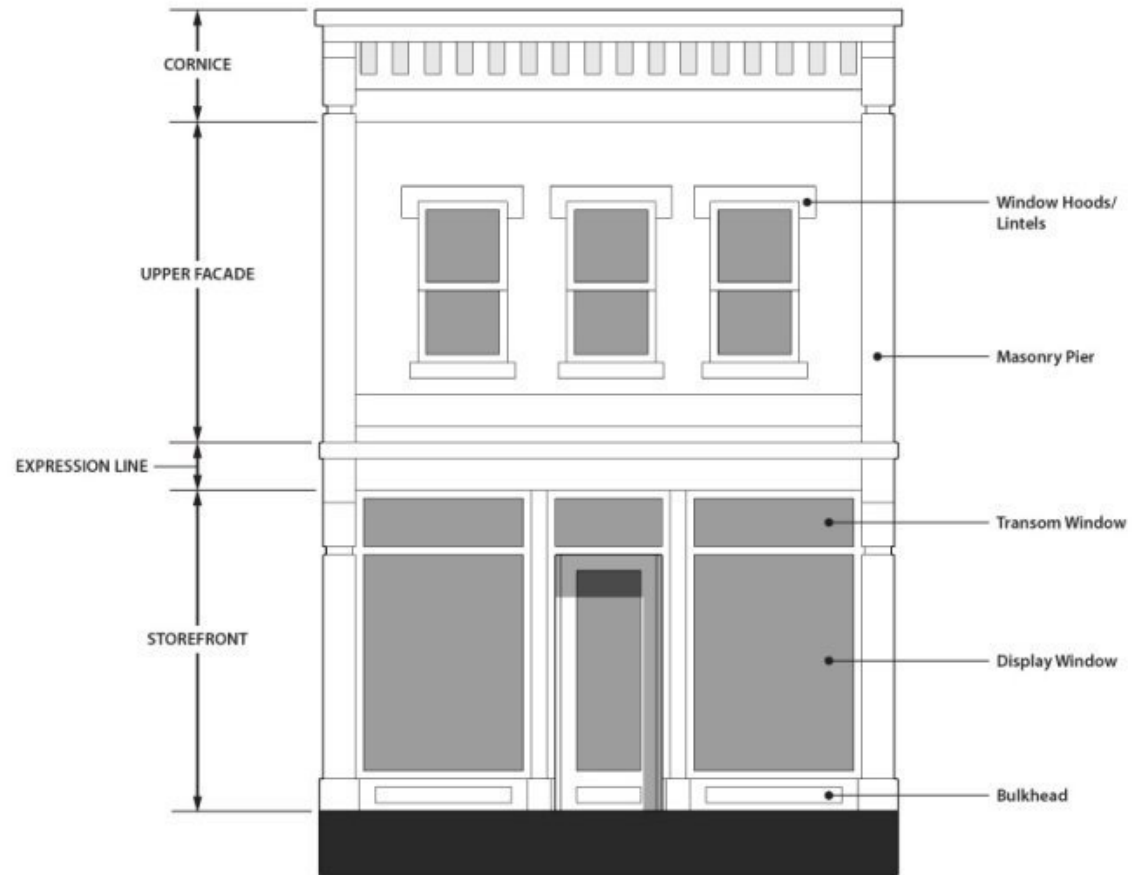
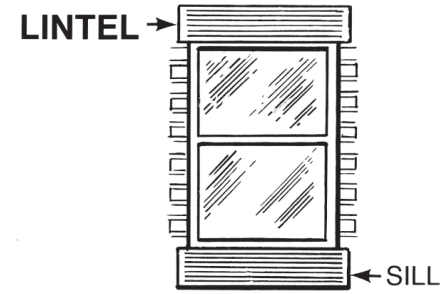
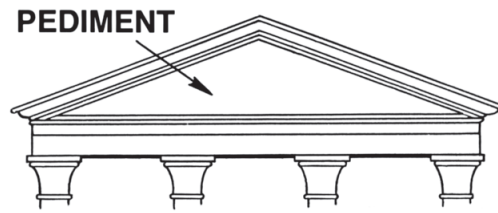
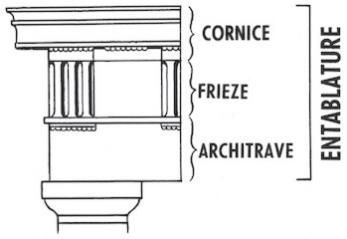
Hood



Bracket



Awning



WEST 1ST STREET SAMPLES





EAST 1ST STREET SAMPLES



