

Pioneering the Good Life

PLATTEVILLETM

W I S C O N S I N

**Historic Preservation
Commission & Platteville
Main Street Program**

**Design Guidelines for the Commercial
Historic District**

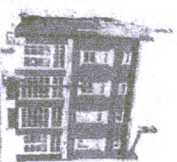


Introduction

The purpose of these guidelines is to foster the creation of a cohesive business environment in the downtown area.

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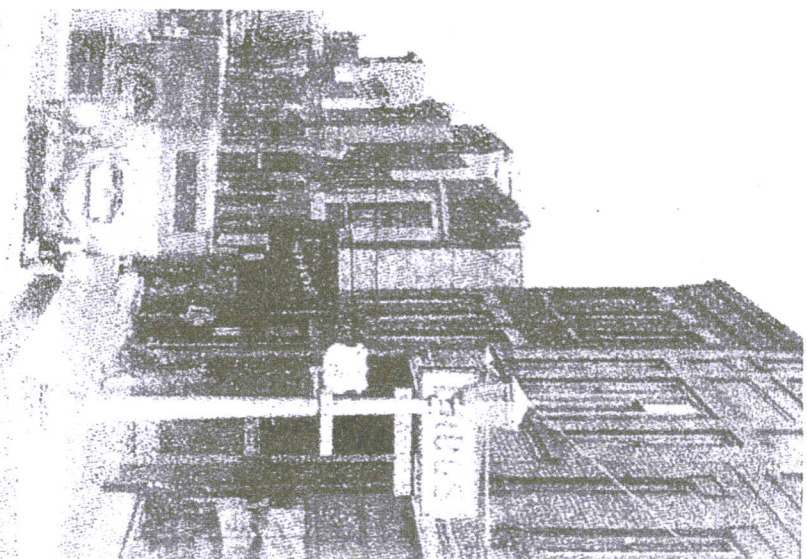
website: www.plattevillemainstreet.com

Historic Preservation

1. Historic Preservation Commission

The City of Platteville has established a Historic Preservation Ordinance, Commission and Historic Commercial District to preserve historically and architecturally significant buildings and sites in the downtown district. These were adopted by the Common Council, under state statute 62.23 City Planning, (7) Zoning of Wisconsin state statues which states: "A city.....shall regulate all historic or archeological landmarks and all property within each historic district to preserve the historic landmarks and property within the district and the character of the district." The majority of the Platteville Main Street Program's district lies within the designated Historic Commercial District. Prior to any exterior changes, which include renovation, rehabilitation or painting of any building within the historic district, the owner of the building (or a representative) must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission. The completed certificate must be presented to the building inspector before a building permit can be issued.

To obtain this certificate, a presentation—complete with drawings and/ or pictures—must be made to the commission explaining construction or changes planned for the exterior of the structure. Upon approval of the planned work, the commission will issue a Certificate of Appropriateness. Any building owner within the Main Street district can obtain assistance in procuring their certificate from the Main Street Manager.



2. Application Process

1. Pick up application for Certificate of Appropriateness from Community Planning and Development office, 2nd Floor City Hall.

2. Checklist:

Required Information

Date Provided

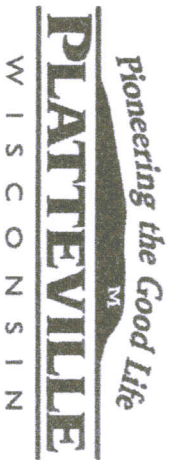
- a. Provide a photograph of the building elevation to be affected _____
- b. List materials to be used in construction or reconstruction _____
- c. Provide a drawing of elevations of the structure affected as it will appear when the proposed work is completed _____
- d. Provide color swatches _____
- e. Give reason(s) for the proposed work _____
- f. Provide an accurate estimate of cost _____
- g. Submit the Certificate of Appropriateness application 4 days prior to an official meeting date of the Historic Preservation Commission _____
- 3. Attend the HPC meeting to present information and answer questions (or send a representative)
- 4. Apply for a building permit through the office of Community Planning and Development
- 5. Obtain the approved section of the Secretary of Interior Standards handout from Community Planning and Development

For more information, contact:

Members of the City of
Platteville Historic Preservation
Commission
Names available at City Hall
608-348-9741

Platteville Main Street Program
Program Manager
608-348-4505

City of Platteville Community
Development Director
75 N Bonson
608-348-9741



3. Historic Preservation:

Does

- Offer restoration and rehabilitation information to interested individuals and property owners, including income tax credits in recognition of approved preservation work
- Require review of proposed exterior alterations, new construction and demolitions within the boundaries of the city's Historic Commercial District
- Assist in the preservation of important buildings throughout the community
- Improve the economy of the city by promoting tourism and interest in the city's history
- Foster civic pride
- Encourage additional historic research and distribution of information about historic buildings and districts
- Improve property values

Does Not

- Affect interior changes in a building
- Usurp individual property rights
- Force businesses to change existing signage
- Require improvements or restoration of a building
- Require that a building be open to the public

Benefits of Preservation

A variety of benefits accrue to communities that are serious about protecting and preserving their irreplaceable historic resources. The esthetic and cultural rewards of a preservation program have become very obvious, even to casual observers. And more recently, the economic benefits have also become apparent.

- Historic preservation can:
- foster civic pride in the architectural and historical character of the community
 - stabilize and improve property values and property tax revenues
 - encourage investment and revitalization in downtown and neighborhoods
 - attract and stimulate business and industries, creating new jobs
 - enhance attractions for visitors and tourists
 - strengthen the local economy
 - protect the community's cultural heritage
 - maintain and improve the quality of life

Common Design Problems

During the past several decades, many downtown buildings have suffered from deferred maintenance or attempts to disguise or alter the original architectural characteristics. Fortunately, many of these changes can be reversed.

The most common problems include:

False Historical Themes. People often confuse historic preservation (the management of existing historic resources) with the creation of historic images.

Authenticity is more likely to survive than passing fads.

Slipcovers. In an effort to compete with malls in the 1960s and 70s, building owners covered their buildings with metal siding, hoping to achieve the appearance of a mall. Fortunately, these slipcovers are usually easily removable. In many cases, the building's original features are still in place, although there may be some damage due to anchoring.

Filling in Windows, Transom Windows and Doors. Often, transom windows were covered when suspended ceilings were installed. Or, upper floor windows were sealed or downsized.

Sometimes, two storefront spaces were combined when a business expanded, with one storefront opening (windows & doors) filled in completely. Fill-ins disrupt the rhythm of the streetscape and should be removed.

Using Inappropriate Materials.

Cedar shakes, molded stone, rough-cut logs rarely have precedents in a traditional downtown and should not be used.

4. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

The following Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

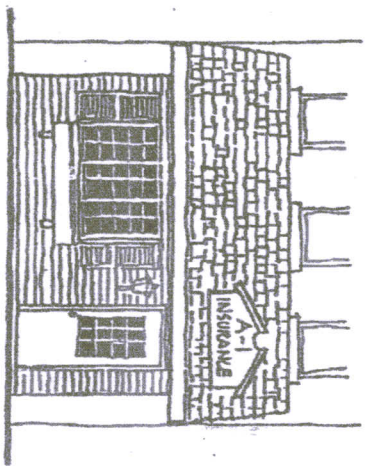
1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Main Street's Physical Appearance

is an important element of its success. Appearance alone, however, cannot guarantee the prosperity of a traditional commercial district. Design improvements must be supported by strong organization, economic development activity and a vigorous promotional program. While successful revitalization requires a comprehensive effort, sensitive rehabilitation and maintenance of downtown buildings can help create a positive image for the business district. Using awnings in ways that reinforce the design characteristics of traditional commercial architecture can improve the image of individual buildings, the businesses within and the entire streetscape.

The facades of traditional commercial buildings are composed of many elements—storefront, upper facade, windows, cornice and architectural details—which together give each building a unique appearance. The relationships between these elements—their color, size, scale and material—are central to the composition of an attractive facade.

When conceived and executed as part of a comprehensive revitalization program, public improvements such as the creation of handsome street environments, and private improvements can benefit not only downtown businesses, but also the entire community. A pleasant public environment increases community pride, demonstrates public and private concern for customers, residents and investors and helps create a positive image for the commercial district. This image can serve as an effective advertising tool, both to promote existing businesses and to recruit new ones. As new businesses move in, the demand for additional space often increases, thus causing real estate sales and rental values to rise throughout the district. Local government can benefit from the business district's improved economy through increased revenues from business licenses and property and sales tax.



Inappropriate Historical Theme

Common Storefront Materials

- Cornice**
Cast Iron, Wood, Sheet Metal, Brick, Stone or Terra Cotta
- Transom Windows**
Clear, Tinted, Stained or Etched Piers
- Masonry to Match Upper Facade**
- Display Windows**
Clear Glass
- Storefront Frame**
Wood, Cast Iron, Steel
- Bulkhead**
Wood Panels, Polished Stone, Glass, Tile or Aluminum

Design Review

If you are considering doing a facade improvement project, review the following:

Where to Start

1. Determine the features that are significant to the character of your building. If the facade has been significantly altered over the years, try to find copies of historic photographs to help determine how the building appeared originally. These photos will help visualize the building and assets that might be salvaged. Photos can be found at the Wisconsin Room, Karrmann Library, UW-Platteville; Grant County Historical Society; or the Platteville Journal.
2. Determine the functional improvements you wish to make to the building.
3. Determine the aesthetic improvements you wish to make to the building.
4. Identify maintenance and repair work that needs to be done.
5. Establish a budget for the project.

Free Design Assistance is available to any individual business or property owner in the Main Street District who is interested in doing exterior rehabilitation and renovation projects.

This program can provide schematic architectural drawings for paint colors, signs, facade improvements, windows, stairwell and awnings. In addition, some assistance may be available for interior designs. The Main Street Program Manager is available to arrange for site visits, send photos and act as a liaison in order to facilitate this service.

Southwest Wisconsin Room University of Wisconsin-Platteville 11University Plaza Platteville, Wisconsin 53818-3099

Web Address:

<http://www.uwplatt.edu/~swwis/>

email: swwis@uwplatt.edu

Telephone: 608-342-1719

Building Research: Building research involves using both local history and genealogy materials. The local history sources, such as maps and tax rolls, enable a researcher to pinpoint where and when a building may have been constructed. Genealogical materials, such as censuses and biographies, enable a researcher to see what a building was used for and who owned it. Some of the Southwest Wisconsin Room's building research sources for Platteville are as follows:

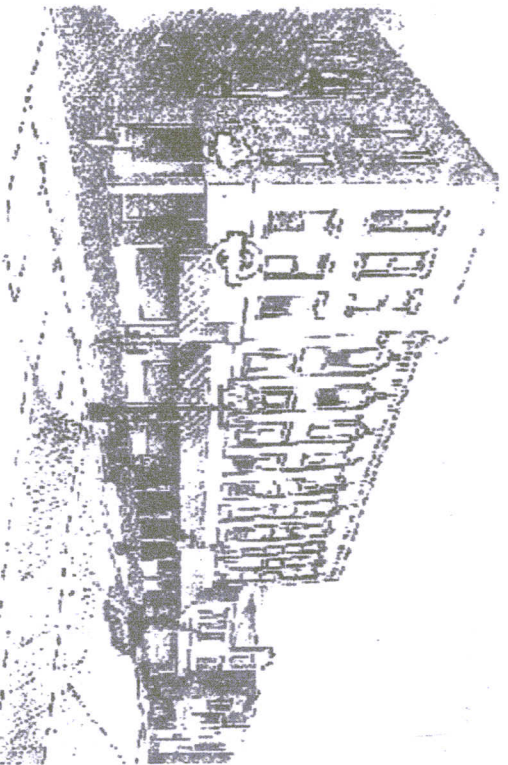
- BirdsEye Views of Platteville (1875 & 1896).
- Plat Maps of Grant County and Platteville (1868, 1877, 1895, 1918).
- Sanborn Insurance Maps: Indicates subdivision, block & lot (1884, 1892, 1900, 1908, 1915, 1929).
- Tax Rolls: These rolls allow a researcher to compare property values over time and, depending on increases in the value, arrive at a construction date of the building (1839 - 1980s).
- County Histories and Biographies (1881, 1900, 1901 & 1976).
- Birth, Marriage & Death Records
- Census Records
- Grant County Deeds
- Platteville Newspapers
- Probate Records

Contact:
Design Coordinator
Bureau of Downtown Development
Department of Commerce
201 West Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 7970
Madison, WI 53707-7970

Economic Advantages of Facade Improvement

- *Increase the value of the tax base*
- *Serve as a visible sign of change and activity*
- *Create a renewed interest in the central business district*
- *Increase sense of safety*
- *Improve image of the area*
- *Encourage additional business development and aid in the recruitment of targeted businesses*

Platteville Downtown Streetscape



Definitions:

Cornice—a projecting horizontal feature that crowns an architectural facade.

Dentil—a small block used in rows, resembling a row of teeth

Facade—the face or principal front of a building

Glazing—translucent glass material

Lintel—a horizontal architectural member spanning and usually carrying the load above an opening

Pilaster—a flat column against the face of a wall

Setback—distance at which the building is placed from the street curb or property line

Sheathing—any durable material covering the original facade of the building

Sill—a horizontal piece that forms one of the lowest members of a framework or supporting structure; for example: the horizontal member at the base of a window

Spandrel Glass—colored or reflective opaque glass material

Vision Glass—translucent glass material

Awnings

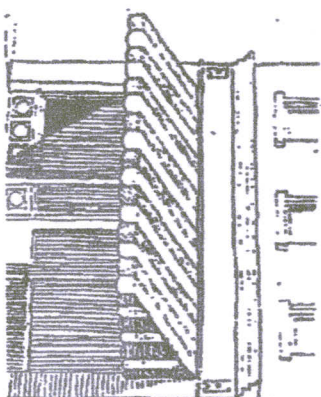
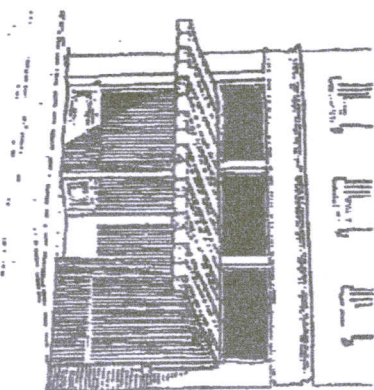
While their appearance is important, awnings also serve several practical functions. First, they shelter people on the sidewalk from rain and harsh sun. They also protect storefront windows from moisture penetration and prevent excessive light and heat buildup inside the building. By blocking out the sun, awnings keep merchandise in display windows from fading and prevent other damage caused by heat and sunlight. The awning can also be used as a location for building signage.

The canvas awning was an important design element in the traditional storefront. It provided shelter for pedestrians from sun and rain, added color and acted as a transition between the storefront and upper facade. Awnings are available in several materials and colors of varying cost and durability. They are also available in a variety of profiles. However, the traditional commercial awning material is canvas and its profile is the watershed design. Other profiles tend to be too contemporary when placed on a traditional facade. Awning color should be selected to insure compatibility with the building and the color of adjacent buildings.

If the building faces north, it probably won't need an awning. If an awning is to be used, its shape should reinforce the frame of the store front opening. It should be attached below the storefront cornice or sign panel and should not cover the piers on either side of the storefront. The standard street-level awning should be mounted such that its valance is seven feet above the sidewalk and it projects out half the sidewalk width. An additional consideration is whether to use a fixed awning or one that is operable. Although more expensive to install, the additional cost of an operable awning can usually be recouped in energy savings.

Awnings

Awnings mounted between the transom and display windows



Awnings should reinforce the storefront openings

Facade

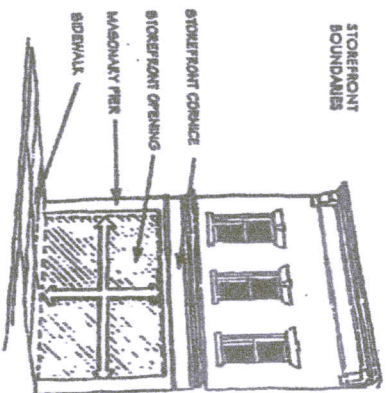
In considering improvements to the storefront, it is important that the original opening be recognized and maintained. The remodeled storefront should be designed to fit inside the original opening and not extend beyond or in front of it.

The basic storefront design would include large windows with thin framing members, recessed entrance with overhead transom, a storefront cornice, exposed structural element or a horizontal sign panel at the top of the storefront to separate it from the upper facade, and low bulkheads at the base to protect the windows and act as a platform for window displays.

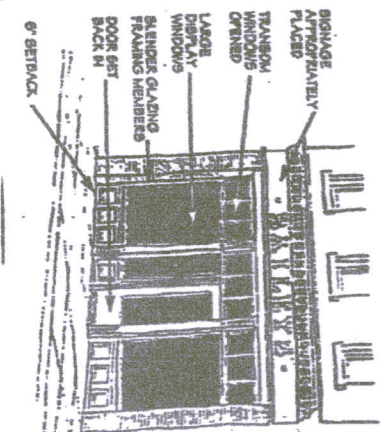
Key features to consider:

- The storefront should be composed almost entirely of glass. If glass is not appropriate for the business, consider the use of window treatments as a solution
- The entry should be maintained and restored to its original location and configuration, if at all possible.
- Storefront bulkheads should be restored or renovated.
- Original elements, such as cast iron columns, storefront cornices, entry doors and lighting fixtures should be restored.
- Awnings, lighting and signage should be incorporated into the storefront design.

Storefronts



TRADITIONAL STOREFRONT DESIGN



Paint Color

The color you paint your building, its window and doors is, to some extent, a personal decision. However there are some other considerations:

1. Be a good neighbor and look at your building in the context of other downtown buildings. The color of your building can affect the overall character of Main Street.
2. Color schemes for commercial buildings differ by region and period of construction. Carefully scraping a small area can reveal layers of paint used over time. In general, mid 1800's used soft, neutral tints, late 1800's darker, richer shades and early 1900's lighter, calmer colors. White paint was not used during the Victorian period. In general, it is glaring and does not blend well with most downtown environments.
3. Paint color should be used to tie together all building elements—including the cornice, upper facade, windows, storefront and doors. In most cases, no more than three complementary colors should be selected. (color charts available at the Platteville Public Library)

Signage

Signs are important to a store for reasons of advertising, identity and image. As they are an extremely visible element of the storefront, signs must be used carefully so they do not detract from the building's facade. Signage can also embrace other store owner's needs and the downtown image. A new sign can help identify your business and its unique qualities. The difference that a positive image makes translates into dollars and cents at every business's cash register. In addition, signs play an important role in the appearance of a downtown. The prominent locations and design characteristics of signs strongly influence people's perceptions of the district and its individual businesses. Well designed and properly maintained signs enhance the unique image of the downtown area.

Note: refer to the city's sign ordinance for correct application of signage in the Historic Commercial District. This is available at the Community Planning & Development office, second floor of City Hall.

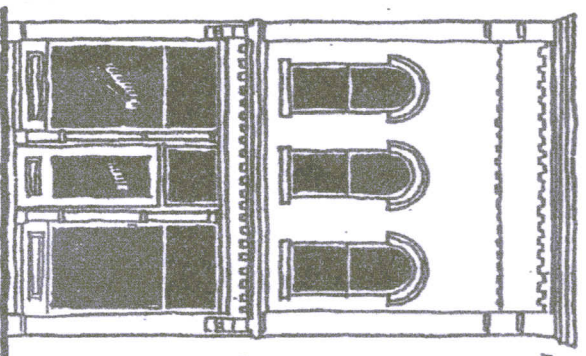
Color Placement

BASE COLOR
*Wall Surfaces
*Storefront Panels
*Cornices—when same material as wall

MAJOR TRIM COLOR
*Cornice
*Window Hoods
*Storefront Cornice
*Storefront Columns
*Storefront & Bulkheads

MINOR TRIM COLOR
*Window Sash
*Doors

ACCENT COLORS
*Small details on window hoods, cornices, pediments & bulkheads



A. Placement

The storefront sign should be located above the storefront display windows, but below the sills of second floor windows. On many examples of turn-of-the-century buildings, a continuous brick ledge or corbeling is used to separate the second floor and above from the storefront below. This space is ideal for sign placement, as it was often created for this purpose.

Another option for sign location is the awning, provided the awning is properly integrated with the buildings. Other types of signage include: projecting signs or window signs. If a projecting sign is planned, placement will be critical to avoid interference with adjacent signs and architecture of the storefront itself. These signs should be located no less than 10 feet above the sidewalk and should project out no further than 2 feet from the curb. Window signs should not obscure the display area and should cover no more than 25 percent of the window area. Awnings signs may occupy up to 5 percent of the awning area and are often an integral part of the awning pattern and style.

B. Size

Big does not necessarily mean better. Storefront signs of proper size can combine with the entire storefront to become more meaningful than just the sign itself.

C. Lettering

Letter styles are numerous and vary tremendously. A store owner should have no difficulty finding a style representing the desired image. Rule of thumb: pedestrian signs require a 3 inch minimum letter size, while signs geared to automobile traffic require a minimum of 9 inches. Choose a color that compliments the building as well as contrasts with the background of the signboard. Light letters on a dark background provide the easiest reading. Consultation with a professional designer to determine lettering style, color and size appropriate to the business is recommended.

illumination *Check with sign ordinance for illumination specs.

Allegro Bt

Arial

AvantGarde Md Bt

BANKGOTHIC Md Bt

BernhardFashion Bt

BernhardMod Bt

Bookman Old Style

CHARLESWORTH

COPPRGOTH Bd Bt

Courier New

Dauphin

Engelk1117Keweenaw BT

FontinalBlack Bt

Garamond

DoudyHandtooled Bt

Impact

Kabel Bk Bt

LITHOGRAPHILLIGHT

Lucinda Console

PosterBodoni Bt

Serifa Th Bt

Staccato 222 Bt

Swiss911 Km Bt

Times New Roman

Typo9Up1g RLB5

Zurich BIKEX Bt

Funding

Low Interest Facade Renovation Loan Program is available through First National Bank and Mound City Bank to businesses within the Main Street District for use in remodeling and repairing store fronts. These loans are available at 2% below prime.

Federal and State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits: Owners of income-producing historic properties can claim a 20% federal investment tax credit and an additional 5% state tax credit for rehabilitation expenses. Work must be compatible with the historical character of the building, follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and be approved by the National Park Service and the Wisconsin Historic Preservation Officer. There is also a 10% federal credit for non-historic income producing buildings. However, such buildings must have been built before 1936 to qualify.

In order to receive these tax credits, it is important to be the owner of a contributing building in the Commercial Historic District, to accurately document all work with before and after pictures, and to apply to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Applications are available at the Platteville Main Street office, 55 South Bonson.

Contact person: **Brian McCormick**
Preservation Architect
Historic Preservation Division
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
816 State Street
Madison, WI 53706-1482
(608) 264-6493