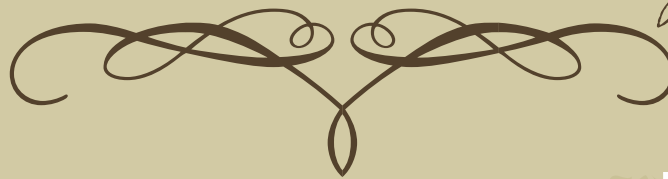




Plattsmouth Downtown Historic Guidelines



Submitted by RDG Planning and Design, July 2008

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Acknowledgements

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Downtown holds special places in the hearts of many communities. This is especially true for downtown Plattsmouth. Not only is the district unique in the city, it is a unique regional attraction. This document is an effort to preserve and enhance the best qualities of the downtown. Plattsmouth residents and building owners take great pride in the downtown and the concentration of historic and architecturally interesting buildings. This document provides a guide for preserving and rehabilitating the historic buildings of the district.

To encourage the preservation of historic places, the Plattsmouth City Council established by ordinance the Historic Preservation Board in 2004. The Plattsmouth preservation program has since received designation as a federally certified local historic preservation program. The Board was charged with adopting design guidelines that would encourage and achieve historic preservation goals. They will then use these guidelines to

issue a Certificate of Approval. Under city ordinance "any alteration, new or infill construction, restoration, remodeling, or other changes shall be deemed to require a certificate of approval where such work affects any of the characteristics of the landmark or historical district ..."

Retaining the historic quality of a district is important for the sake of historic preservation but there are also other important benefits to a community. By utilizing the guidelines in this document the Plattsmouth Historic Preservation Board also looks to:

- *Enhance the environmental quality.* Improving and maintaining individual buildings cumulatively enhances the overall quality of the downtown environment. The quality of the individual stores in a downtown is very important but the overall environment should attract people to the district. The downtown should be perceived as a district that people want to spend time in both shopping and exploring.

Introduction

- *Improve the economic potential.* Heritage tourism and the attraction of unique commercial districts are becoming more and more attractive to local and regional markets. Establishing a quality environment will attract both visitors and new businesses. Downtown Plattsmouth's proximity to the Omaha and even Lincoln markets offers great opportunities. Visitors, looking for single-day outings to interesting destinations are an important economic opportunity for downtown Plattsmouth.
- *Strengthen property values.* The stabilization and improvement of property values benefits everyone in the city. The buildings in the downtown district account for a significant portion of the city's overall property valuation. Stabilizing the property values in this district is a benefit to building owners, but also the entire city's tax base.



Plattsmouth Main Street Historic District

Plattsmouth was founded in 1854. By the 1860s Plattsmouth was booming with river boats and settlers moving west. In 1869 the Burlington and Missouri Railroad reached Plattsmouth and established shops and its headquarters. Plattsmouth continued to grow and prosper reaching a population of 5,800 by 1880. Concurrently, the downtown grew providing the necessary services for the community and region.

Early buildings in the district were mostly frame construction, but by the 1870s brick became the predominate construction material. Most of the district's existing building stock was built between 1870 and 1900 and is primarily two-story masonry commercial buildings. There are a few one- and three-story commercial buildings along with significant civic structures. First floor uses tended to be commercial with upper floors being occupied as offices or

residential. Most of the buildings were built in the Italianate style, with more Neo-Classical Revival influence in those structures built after 1900. Typically, the architecture common to downtown Plattsmouth features large decorative brackets; tall, narrow windows with decorative brick hoods and sills; name and date stated in the frieze in relief; and buildings built to the property line with shared side walls.

The Plattsmouth Main Street Historic District is located mostly along the Main Street corridor from 3rd to 7th streets and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. The surrounding areas shown in Map 1 are not within the National Register district but are comprised of commercial and residential buildings that contribute to the larger district. These include the former Plattsmouth Public Library, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, the housing along the north side of A Avenue, and a former

Standard Oil gas station. Although this area is not within the historic district it is important to the character of the downtown.

Due to its local historic designation, the Plattsmouth Historic Preservation Board is responsible for monitoring changes to properties in the district and provides advice and guidance on projects in the surrounding area. Modifications to structures should remain true to their period of construction, and infill structures within the downtown will follow the guidelines outlined later in this document, and as adopted by the Plattsmouth City Council.

The companion document, Plattsmouth Façade Condition Survey provides a list of all the structures in the district.

Downtown Map



PLATTSMOUTH MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Plattsmouth Historic Design Guidelines
Plattsmouth, Nebraska





Standards for Rehabilitation

The guidelines established in this document follow the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation." The standards are intended to be a guide to building owners, contractors and project reviewers prior to work being initiated.

The "Standards" define rehabilitation as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

The "Standards for Rehabilitation" are:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.



Planning for Your Project

When building owners decide to work on their historic commercial building several challenging questions face them.

- If the façade is fairly intact but deteriorated, what repairs should be done first?
- If significant alternations have been made, should they be kept, should the building be restored to its original appearance, or should another approach be taken?
- If the building is no longer in commercial use, can the new use be accommodated while retaining the commercial appearance of the building?
- What is an appropriate and acceptable budget for the building owner?

One of the biggest questions for building owners when considering work on their building is “where to begin?” This section is designed to provide some general assistance in the process of working on a historic structure.

Building Assessment

Before beginning a project, an assessment, or

“physical exam”, of the building should be completed. The 2008 Facade Conditions Survey provides a cursory evaluation of existing street side facades. This document is a good starting point for any new project. A more detailed exam of an individual building should provide a historical summary of the building but more importantly it should lay the ground work for the project approach. In addition to providing base information on the historical context of the building, the report should:

- *Evaluate Existing Conditions.* The report should inventory the existing condition of the building and relate it back to treatment types. Most importantly it should answer the questions “what needs attention and why”.
- *Work Description.* A description of what work would be needed to stabilize the building, meet specific treatment types, and most importantly what will be needed to accomplish the owner’s goals.
- *Prioritizing Projects.* Often a building has more projects than an owner can finance.

Understanding the priority of projects can put the investment to best use. Critical projects should be done first with more cosmetic projects waiting until last.

Set a Budget

Once the building owner decides what projects have to be completed first, a budget should be established. The building assessment and budget could drive the treatment type selected by the owner. Treatment type is very important and should be considered throughout the assessment and budgeting process.

Apply the Design Guidelines

The design guidelines outlined in this document are established to assist building owners who bring projects before the Plattsmouth Historic Preservation Board. In addition, the Board can provide important guidance to projects that do not require a Certificate of Approval. By applying the guidelines in this document, the Board and City strive to promote and preserve the historic character of downtown Plattsmouth.

Elements of a Streetscape

Downtown Plattsmouth's Elements

The commercial buildings in downtown Plattsmouth are mostly two-story masonry facades in the Commercial Italianate style. The buildings and elements of the streetscape create the character of any downtown district.

The zero lot lines in the downtown means that the relationship of buildings to each other and to the streetscape is very important to the appearance of the downtown.

A prominent building is usually at the corner of the block

Zero lot lines mean common walls and few free standing buildings

Decorative cornices provide continuity between buildings.



At street level, storefronts are mostly glass, lighting the interior and offering interaction with the pedestrian on the sidewalk.

Regularly placed upper story windows creates an appealing visual rhythm

Elements of a Commercial Building

Main Street buildings in Plattsburgh range from the three-story Fitzgerald Building at 6th and Main Streets to one-story structures like the Farmers State Bank at 506 Main Street. Most of

the buildings are two-story structures that can be visually separated into three horizontal sections:

- The mostly glass street level storefront
- The upper stories, which are distinguished by the window style.
- The cornice or parapet that crowns the building.



*Stadelman Building
Common Plattsburgh Details*

Pediment
Date/Name block
Cornice

Window Lintel

Storefront Lintel

Transom Windows

Column

Display window

Recessed doors

Bulkhead



Typical Building Details

Design Guidelines and Building Maintenance

Storefronts

General Considerations

The Standards lay out guidelines for rehabilitating existing historic storefronts. The guidelines are not intended to limit the use of a structure, rather, to establish minimum standards for maintaining the historic character of the facade.

1. Become familiar with the style of a building and the role of the storefront in the overall design.

- Do not “early up” a front, using detailing from an earlier period than which the building was constructed. Alterations to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged. Designs for additions and replacements shall be compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the existing building and neighborhood.
- Avoid stock “lumberyard colonial” detailing (coach lanterns, mansard overhangings, wood shakes, etc.) (Image 1)

2. Preserve the storefront’s character even though there is a new use on the interior. If less exposed window area is desirable, consider other options such as blinds instead of altering the existing storefront elements. Design solutions shall preserve the integrity and appear-

ance of an individual structure in relation to its immediate neighbors and in the context of the Historic District. (Image 2 and 3)

3. Avoid use of materials that were unavailable when the storefront was constructed. For Plattsmouth this includes:

- vinyl and aluminum siding
- anodized aluminum
- mirrored or tinted glasses
- artificial stone
- brick veneer

(Image 1, 3 and 4)

4. Choose paint colors based on the building’s historical appearance. In general:

- Do not paint surfaces that have never been painted
- When contrasting colors are appropriate, avoid too many colors on a single facade.

5. Rehabilitation work should retain distinguishing qualities and architectural features. Details shall be restored or duplicated based on the existing or original appearance. The repair of existing details with inappropriate materials, such as aluminum jamb casings, aluminum siding and tin covering detailed brackets is not appropriate.

Inappropriate Building Alterations



Image 1



Image 2



Image 3



Image 4



Storefronts - Elements of Style

Recommended

Traditional storefronts used as much glass as possible, making the business transparent and goods visible to the pedestrian. Work on a storefront will identify, retain, preserve, or restore features such as:

- doors, especially entrance locations
- transom windows, size and location
- bulkhead or base panel, style and material
- corner posts, style and material
- window system size, configuration, and material
- sign locations
- castiron columns
- other castiron elements



Display Windows

Transoms

Base Panel/Bulkhead

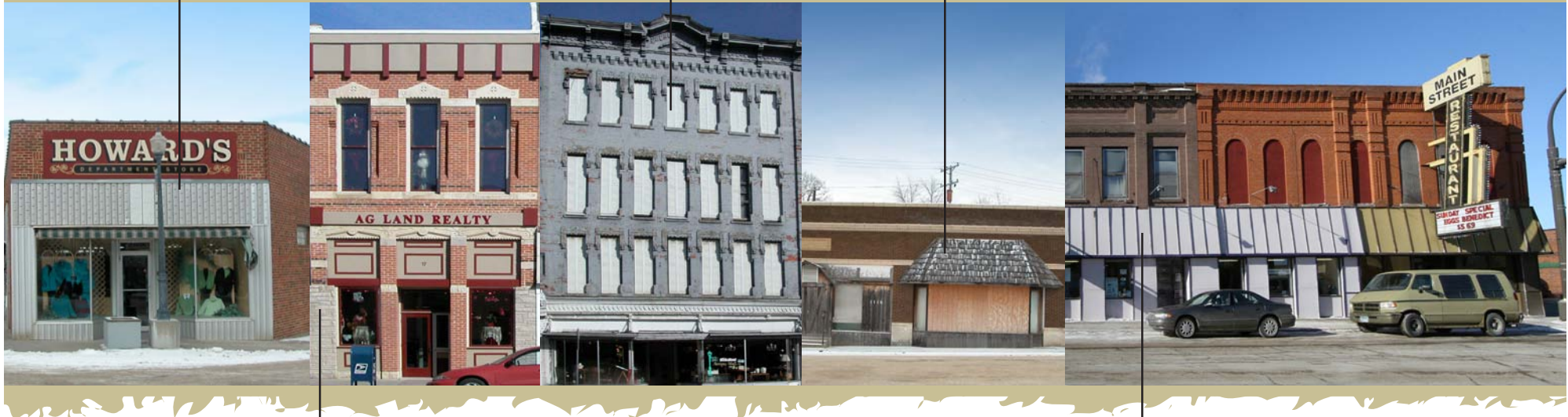
Door location

Sign Location

Column/Corner Posts

Material not compatible with
Plattsmouth structures

Inappropriate shingles, shutters, and infill



Inappropriate replacement material

Radically altered storefronts

Storefronts - Elements of Style

Not Recommended

- Removing or altering the storefront from its historic character
 - Moving the entrance
 - Removing historic materials from the storefront
 - Oversized and/or lighted signage
 - Adding details that do not fit the original time period of the building
- For Plattsburgh this would include:
 - › wood shakes
 - › mansard designs
 - › small paned windows
 - › shutters
 - › filled windows
 - › removed or covered cornices, panels, or columns
- Using replacement or substitute materials that do not convey the same appearance as other, original aspects of the building

Cornices

General Considerations

When you look to the top of many downtown Plattsburgh buildings you will see their decorative cornices. These ornamental features are what make the buildings distinctive and should be preserved or restored. By the late 1800s decorative cornices were easily available in pressed metal or wood. As seen in many Plattsburgh buildings the Italianate brackets were a popular feature.

Recommendations:

- Brick, stone, or metal cornices should not be altered or removed
- Should be based on documentation of the original cornice
- When exact reconstruction is not possible, develop a similar interpretation of the original
- Missing sections or parts should replicate the existing material and design
- Original material should be utilized or a suitable replacement material with matching profiles should be utilized

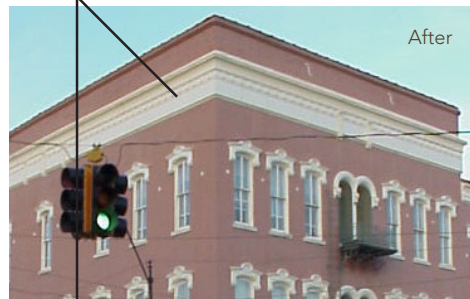
Appropriate maintenance



Inappropriate removal



Appropriate reconstruction



Inappropriate removal of cornice and facade





Windows

General Considerations

The upper story windows of a front facade have been described as the “eyes” of the building. The type, shape, number of panes, and decorative features including the lintel, sill, and fenestration (arrangement) are important defining characteristics of a historic building.

Recommended

- Preserve glass, sash, hardware, and window surrounds (lintel or decorative window hoods)
- When second story is not in use, curtains or blinds should be used instead of enclosing windows

- Re-establish closed windows
- When necessary, replacement windows should match the historic window in size, style, material, dimension, sight line, number of panes and should fill the historic opening
- Previously altered windows should be restored to their original size, material, and design



Windows

Not Recommended

These apply to front facades and visible side walls.

- Boarding up or bricking in windows
- Glazing and replacement sashes that are not compatible with the historic window
- Adding shutters, which are not appropriate to downtown Plattsburgh
- Reflective and/or dark, tinted glass
- Additional/new window openings should not be visible from the street
- Partially enclosing an original window opening
- Removing historic materials such as wood, cast iron, and bronze



Replacement windows should fit original opening and match the appropriate historic style

Bricking or infilling windows is inappropriate

Do not use reflective or tinted glass

Avoid the appearance of second floor vacancy

Do not board up windows



Maintenance of original Pilasters



Rehabilitation of original entrances

Entries

General Considerations

Entries should welcome visitors to a business and to the downtown. The entrance is an important point of welcome and the transition point between the public realm of the street and the more private realm of the building.

Recommended

- Maintain original entrance locations
- Maintain or restore the original openings
- Multiple storefront entries should look alike
- Identify, preserve, and retain entrance features including doors, sidelights, and pilasters
- Second floor entries should be to the side
- Features should be historically accurate, utilizing historic photos and other appropriate resources



Continuity between multiple entrances.

Entries

Not Recommended

- Removing or altering entrances in a way that diminishes the historic character of the building
- Cutting new entrances in the primary elevation
- Replacement material that does not match surviving details or appropriate style
- Not properly maintaining materials
- Use of storm doors should be limited and when used should not limit the transparency of the facade and should match the historic style of the entrance
- Additional/new door openings should not be visible from the street



Inappropriate style compared to historic features



Inappropriately removed and added entrances



An entrance that was likely moved from its original location



Entrance and storefront style that do not match the original features of building

Awnings

General Considerations

Awnings historically were used to shelter customers from the sun and rain and merchandise from the deteriorating effects of the sun. Retractable cloth awnings also provided climate control for the business owner.

Over the years many downtowns added metal and wood canopies. These were not compatible with the original design of the buildings but may have gained significance in their own right.

Recommended

- Cloth awnings that match the shape and size of the window
- Retractable awnings for storefronts
- Style, color, and height similar to other appropriate awnings in the district
- Instances where they can be utilized to conceal inappropriate alterations to a storefront
- Awnings should be mounted to the building and not freestanding



Popular retractable awning is seen to the left, in this historic photo of downtown Plattsburgh. Cass County Historical Society Collection



Separated canopies avoids overwhelming the facade and concealing features.



Awning that provides an interesting feature and the appearance of being retractable.



Appropriate retractable awning compared to historic features

Metal canopies should not be added to buildings in downtown Plattsburgh

Wood canopies that enclose the sidewalk are inappropriate for downtown Plattsburgh



An inappropriate round awning on a square window



Inappropriate awning styles and colors for Plattsburgh

Awnings and Canopies

Not Recommended

- Awnings that do not match the shape of the opening.
- Awnings that simulate mansard roofs and umbrellas.
- Canopies that enclose the walkway.
- Backlit awnings
- Large awnings that dominate the store front and hide distinguishing features.
- Awnings that conceal architectural details such as decorative lintels.
- Metal stock awnings.

Color

General Considerations

Paint color can greatly enhance the historic feel of a building. The use of multiple, appropriate colors can provide additional character and appeal through out a district. A paint color or pattern should have continuity with the district and not create a visual distraction. Brick and stone elements like headers and sills should be kept unpainted and cleaned.

Recommended

- A paint analysis to determine the historic paint colors
- Colors that are historically appropriate and compatible with the building and surrounding structures
- Contrasting colors a shade lighter or darker on the doors, windows frames, molding, and cornices when appropriate
- Colors should emphasize details so avoid dark colors that obscure them and use gloss or semi-gloss paint for easy cleaning



Appropriate neutral hues



Appropriate neutral hues



Appropriate color combinations

Colors

Not Recommended

- Painting brick that has never been painted.
- Using more than two to three tones.
- Primary colors should not be used on the entire building or storefront.
- Avoid bright hues, use more natural tones.



Avoid painting originally unpainted brick and maintain continuity between lower and upper floors



Bright, bold colors are inappropriate for traditional commercial buildings within the Plattsburgh Historic District



This paint style would be inappropriate for buildings in downtown Plattsburgh

Additions

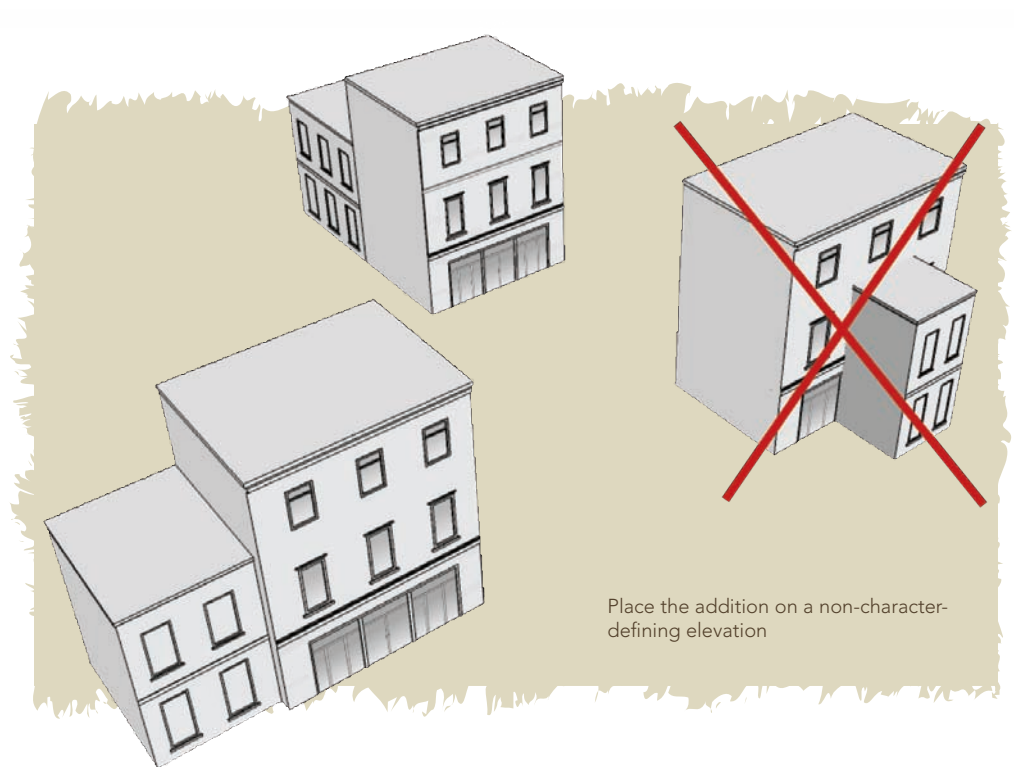
General Considerations

There are times when expansion is necessary to meet current demands and uses of a historic building. An addition should be considered only after it has been determined that the use cannot be met by altering nonsignificant, or secondary, interior spaces. The Cass County Courthouse is an example of this situation in Plattsburgh.

Recommended

- The addition should preserve historical features and character of the original building.
- The addition should be distinguishable from the historic building so as to not confuse it with what is genuinely part of the past.
- The addition should be comparable to the original building in terms of:
 - › Size, scale and proportion. The height and width should not exceed the historic property.
 - › Shape and mass. Roof shapes and pitch should be similar and the addition should not overwhelm the historic building.
 - › Windows and doors. They should have a similar size, shape, scale, and proportion to the original building.
 - › Floor-to-floor height.

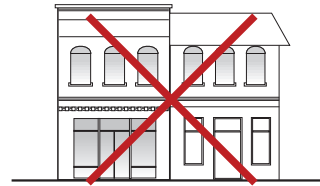
- Traditional and compatible materials should be utilized and should not draw attention away from the historic structure.
- Place the addition on a non-character-defining elevation
- The height and width should not exceed the historic building.



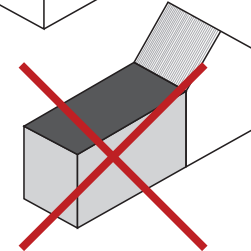
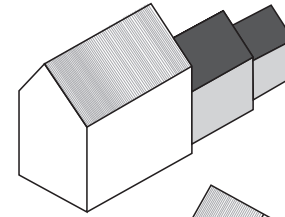
Additions

Not Recommended

- Additions should not conceal, obscure, damage or destroy character defining features.
- Construction of a rooftop addition that radically changes the historic appearance of the original building. Instead they should be set back from the front wall to differentiate them and make the addition less obvious from the street.



Roof shapes and pitches should be similar.



Size, scale, and proportion should be similar.



Floor to floor height should be similar.



Windows and doors should have a similar size, shape, scale, and proportion.



Appropriate infill project



Appropriate infill project

Infill

General Considerations

Currently within Plattsmouth's Downtown Historic District there are no vacant lots. However, new construction has occurred with the demolition and construction of new buildings. There are also several infill opportunities just outside the Historic District's boundary. When new construction does occur the general rule is that new buildings should look new, yet compatible to the rhythm of the streetscape.

Recommended

- Contemporary buildings should be compatible with their neighbors but should not be exact duplicates.
- Reconstruction of a historic structure should follow the guidelines laid out in the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards."
- The proportion of the facade, the average height and width, should be proportionate to adjacent structures and original character of the district.
- The composition of the facade, or the organization of its parts, should be similar to surrounding buildings.
- Rhythms, such as window spacing, that are carried throughout a block should be maintained.
- The proportion, size of windows and trans-

parency of a building should be similar to surrounding structures.

- Solid walls with no openings should not be built facing a street in downtown Plattsmouth
- Detailing from surrounding buildings should be reflected in the new building, including window shapes, cornice lines, and brick work.
- Building material should be similar to the district. For Plattsmouth this would be brick with metal and wood details.
- Entries should be recessed and consistent with the character of the district.



Inappropriate infill project

Site Design Guidelines

The intent of this section is to identify characteristics that contribute to preserving or restoring the historic quality of the district, while including elements that promote a pedestrian friendly environment.

Setback and Spacing

- New commercial buildings shall be located at the front property line.
- New construction should maintain the spacing of buildings when possible. This should support Plattsmouth traditional “wall” of buildings along the street line.

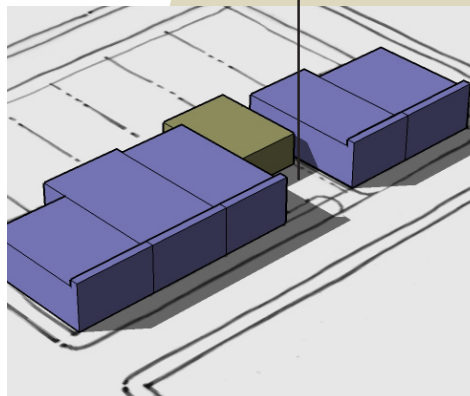
Public Outdoor Spaces

- Improved public outdoor spaces should be encouraged through the creation of eating and seating areas, plazas, and interior courtyard spaces.



Inappropriate Setback

Public space improvements to be encouraged





Appropriate screening for side and rear yards



Window air conditioning units should not be visible from Main Street

Location and Screening of Service Areas

The intent of this section is to retain the historic characteristics of the streetscape but to also limit the amount of visual clutter created by modern mechanical services.

General Considerations

- Building services shall be installed in areas and spaces that require the least possible alteration to the plan, materials, and appearance of the building.
- Electrical and gas meters shall not be placed along Main Street or the front facades of buildings. If it is necessary to place meters along side walls they should be placed in screened vaults.

- The following materials should not be visible from Main Street and should be screened from any side streets:

- › mechanical equipment
- › garbage and recycling containers
- › utilities
- › outside storage associated with a business
- › window and wall air conditioning units

- Service areas should be located away from streets and pedestrians areas, and screened to reduce visual impact.
- New electrical services shall be buried whenever possible.



Appropriate placement of utility and mechanical systems behind a building

Parking

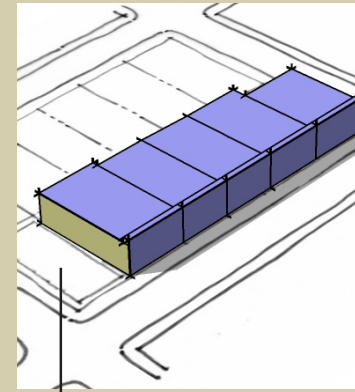
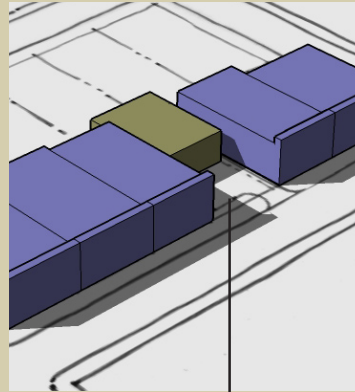
The intent of the following recommendations is to reduce the visual impact of parking and promote design features that support a variety of transportation modes.

Recommended

- Off-street parking shall be located behind or to the side of structures
- Off-street parking shall be screened from adjacent right-of-way.
- When possible shared parking should be encouraged.
- Off-street parking should include interior landscaping.

Not Recommended

- Off-street parking shall not be located in front of buildings or at corner nodes along Main Street.



Inappropriate parking layouts



Appropriate screening of parking

Lighting

Recommended

- Should have detailing and materials compatible with character and style of the building.
- Free standing, period street lighting that aligns with an overall style identified for the district.
- Incandescent and vapor lighting
- Concealed light fixtures or fixtures appropriate to the building's period.
- Lighting fixtures should be low profile and have minimal projection from building face.
- Light fixture hardware should be anchored into mortar, not masonry.
- Lighting should reflect down, minimizing ambient light to upper-story uses and preserving dark skies.
- If accent or facade lighting is desired, a comprehensive lighting design for the building should be done by a professional lighting designer
- Wiring and power lines should be concealed and not be visible

Not Recommended

- Colonial theme lighting fixtures are not appropriate for downtown Plattsburgh
- Florescent lighting
- Lighting that conceals any architectural feature
- Flood lighting of building facade



Wiring and power lines should be concealed when possible



Plattsburgh's selected Street Light

Conflicting lighting style





Avoid wood decks that are visible from Main Street



Fencing is appropriate for rear yard by not front yard



Avoid the use of bright colors

Appropriate dark painted fencing



Fencing and Decks

For most of downtown Plattsburgh, fencing is only appropriate in the rear of buildings.

Recommended

- Materials such as wrought iron, brick, or dark painted tubular steel.
- Height shall not exceed 6 feet in the rear yard and 36 inches in the front and side yards.
- Front and side yard fences must have opening constituting no less than 75% of the surface area.
- Decks visible from a street should:
 - › Utilize traditional detailing
 - › Be constructed with material compatible with the original character of the structure.

Not Recommended

- Chain link, bamboo, plywood, concrete block, and non-painted or light colored tubular steel fences shall not be used
- Squared log, split rail, or "railroad tie" retaining walls

Sign Guidelines

Signage should complement and not compete with the character of the building and the downtown in general. Signage should be evaluated based on design, location, type, material, lighting and size.

Recommended

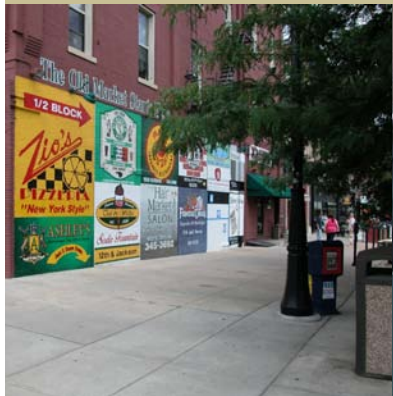
- Location:
 - › Storefront lintel or transom area
 - › If lintel is not applicable then signage should be on a flat unadorned part of the facade
 - › Painted directly on the glass of the storefront
 - › On awnings

- Signage should be in scale with the building, proportioned to a building's horizontal and vertical elements
- Projecting signs must meet the height and projection regulations of the Plattsmouth Zoning ordinance
- New murals and other artwork of a non-commercial nature shall be sympathetic to the districts character.

Not Recommended

- Signage that obscures architectural details.
- New roof signage
- Lettering should not exceed 18 inches
- Back-lit signs

- Hardware of hanging signs should not damage wall surfaces and should be mounted into the mortar, not brick.
- Moveable or portable signs other than sandwich boards
- Neon signs, unless it is existing sign that is historically significant in its own right
- Internally illuminated signage
- Signs with mirrors or other highly reflective surfaces
- Flashing and movable signs



Inappropriate signage



Appropriate signage



Appropriate signage



Inappropriate signage



Inappropriate signage

Maintenance Standards

Many of Plattsmouth's historic buildings have outstanding existing details that only need maintenance. Providing proper maintenance to these features can prevent future damage and ensure the long life of these features.

Recommended

- Cleaning masonry should only be done to halt deterioration or remove heavy soiling.
 - › Masonry surface cleaning tests should be done before any cleaning is done to determine the gentlest method possible.
 - › Any cleaning of masonry should be done with the gentlest techniques as possible, such as low pressure water and detergents, using natural bristle brushes.
- Removing damaged or deteriorated paint to the next sound layer and doing this through the gentlest means possible, which is usually hand scraping.
- Masonry mortar joints should be repaired when there is evidence of disintegrating mortar, cracks in joints, loose bricks, damp walls, or damaged plasterwork
 - › Deteriorated mortar should be removed by hand-raking, thus avoiding damage to the masonry.
 - › New mortar should match the old mortar in strength, composition, color, texture, and joint width and profile.
- Repaired masonry should be as inconspicuous and compatible as possible.
- Ensure proper drainage so that water does not stand on flat, horizontal surfaces or accumulate in curved decorative features.



Masonry matches historic Style but mortar does not





Maintenance Standards

Not Recommended

- Sandblasting brick or stone surfaces using dry or wet grit or other abrasives.
- Using water or liquid chemical solutions for cleaning when there is a possibility of freezing temperatures.
- Cleaning or leaving chemicals on masonry surfaces that will damage the masonry.
- High pressure water cleaning
- Removing paint that firmly adhered to masonry.
- Not taking adequate measures to protect masonry and wood features.
- Removing non-deteriorated mortar and replacing with all new to obtain a uniform look.
- Repainting with synthetic caulking compound.
- Making repairs or replacements without addressing the cause of any damage or deterioration
- Using high strength portland cement for mortar. This material is not compatible with most historic brick and can cause additional damage to the masonry.
- Using waterproof, water repellent, or applying stucco to masonry rather than repainting or doing other repairs.
- Covering masonry material and previous installations should be removed and repairs completed.



Effects of sandblasting



Inappropriate painting