

CITY OF FORT WORTH

STOREFRONT/FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

DESIGN GUIDELINES



Housing and Economic
Development Department

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BACKGROUND

This document is to be used by the Façade Improvement Program's Design Review Committee as a guide to help discern which applications to accept or reject. If the proposed improvements in an application are accepted, and all other necessary criteria are met, then funds shall be set aside for the reimbursement of the eligible improvements proposed by the applicant. If the proposed improvements in an application are rejected, then the applicant will have the opportunity to appeal the denial of his or her application to the Community Development Council (CDC). The CDC will also use these guidelines to help them discern whether or not to accept or reject the proposed improvements in an application.

A set of general guidelines is provided, in addition to similar guidelines for each of the 11 eligible types of improvements. If the proposed improvements do not meet all of the general or specific guidelines, there is justification for denial of the application.



GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Proposed improvements shall be in compliance with all City codes and ordinances.
2. Proposed improvements shall first attempt to repair visibly broken or deteriorated parts of the façade.
 - For example, the City will not approve an application requesting reimbursement for painting of the façade, if visibly broken windows, doors, etc. are not repaired.
3. Proposed improvements shall be in harmony with the character and development patterns of the neighborhood.
4. Proposed improvements shall preserve distinguishing architectural features, character, and qualities of the building.
5. Proposed improvements shall not contain any explicit materials.
6. Proposed improvements shall improve the look of the building and the surrounding area.

TYPES OF COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES

Many commercial structures have been rehabilitated, meaning that they have been given a new use. For example houses and gas stations have been converted to restaurants or schools , etc. Alterations and façade improvements should be in keeping with the original type of structure.



TRADITIONAL RETAIL/ OFFICE SPACE: *Can be multiple stories with storefront on the ground floor and residential or office space above.*

INSTITUTIONAL: *These buildings provide public services. Typically they are schools, churches, banks and government buildings.*



CONVERTED SPACE: *These structures originally had different uses and are designed for the original use. Converted spaces will be similar to traditional commercial structures in terms of signage, lighting and building code.*

COMPONENTS OF A STOREFRONT

TOP OR CORNICE:
A decorative feature, typically projecting, that provides a visual cap to the building.

MIDDLE OR UPPER FLOORS:
Usually non-retail space above the ground floor. Can be multiple stories. This section will have operable windows. The windows do not have to align with the storefront.

BOTTOM OR STOREFRONT:
This is typically commercial space with large spans of glass. Comprised of an entrance, typically recessed, and display windows capped by transoms and a cornice.



SIGN GUIDELINES

1. Proposed improvements to signage shall be in compliance with all City codes and ordinances.
2. Proposed improvements to signage shall be in harmony with the character and development patterns of the neighborhood.
3. Proposed improvements to signage shall preserve distinguishing architectural features, character, and qualities of the building.
4. Proposed improvements to signage shall not contain any explicit materials.
5. Signs shall use materials that are consistent with the character of the building.
6. Signage shall complement the style of the building and shall be appropriately scaled/ sized for its location.
7. Internally illuminated cabinet/ box signs and pole signs are discouraged.
8. Exposed wiring, conduit, junction boxes and raceways for channel letters or sign lighting is discouraged.

VISUAL GUIDANCE FOR FAÇADE SIGNAGE



Creative signs and signs painted on the building are typical for the Stockyards area.



Above, is a blade sign with neon lettering.



The sign to the left is in keeping with Mid-Century Modern Architecture. Signage should be in keeping with the architectural style of the building.



Internally illuminated box cabinet signs are discouraged.



Window Decals are a great way to advertise and decorate your storefront.



Signs can also be logos only.



Raceways are discouraged; however when they are necessary they should be painted to match the background. In the above picture the raceway has been painted to match the sign background.



Channel letters can be attached the top of awnings.

VISUAL GUIDANCE FOR BUILDING MATERIALS



Repointing and cleaning brick facades can improve the look of a structure as well as extend the lifetime of the brick. Be sure to ask City Staff about proper techniques.



Above, the old metal barn-like building has been rehabilitated into a Fuzzy's Taco Shop. This is an example of guideline 3, preserving distinguishing architectural features, character, and qualities of the building. The differing of types of brick, stone, and masonry on the structure pictured to right meets guideline 3. Mid Century Modern architecture typically included angled storefronts, slipped covered upper stories and the use of natural materials.



Above, the wooden siding by patio is used to aesthetically enhance the structure and is an example of guidelines number 4.

BUILDING MATERIAL GUIDELINES

1. Proposed cladding improvements shall be in compliance with all City codes and ordinances.
2. Proposed cladding improvements shall be in harmony with the character and development patterns of the neighborhood.
3. Proposed cladding improvement shall preserve distinguishing architectural features, character, and qualities of the building. Wood storefronts including bulkhead shall be repaired.
4. The use of vinyl, plastic, and E.I.F.S (exterior insulation finishing system) is prohibited.





This restaurant used flush mounted or tongue and groove wood siding as an exterior building material.



This warehouse space transitions from corrugated metal paneling to stucco.



Above, are examples of appropriate stone accents.



Above, the tile mosaic mural brings life, vitality, and character to the otherwise bland façade.

WINDOWS AND DOORS

GUIDELINES

1. Proposed windows and doors improvements shall be in compliance with all City codes and ordinances.
2. Proposed windows and doors improvements shall be in harmony with the character and development patterns of the neighborhood.
3. Proposed windows and doors improvements shall preserve distinguishing architectural features, character, and qualities of the building.
4. Recessed entries shall be maintained.
5. Upper story windows shall be maintained and repaired.
6. New openings shall be typical of the size, location, material, profile, exposure, detail, relief and dimension of the style and period of the structure.

VISUAL GUIDANCE FOR WINDOWS AND DOORS



Repairing broken windows (above, left) can significantly improve the look of a building and also the surrounding neighborhood. Glass blocks (above, right) can be used to create more private openings.



The use of plate glass and glass doors creates an open and inviting aesthetic.



Above, a new glass tower entry and glass garage doors were added and windows were altered. The alteration are in keeping with Mid-Century modern architecture as various types of glass were used. In addition, the glass tower can easily be removed revealing the original entrance.



Above, Fireside Pies uses wood louvers over the windows to complement the surrounding masonry look. Wood louvers can also be used to control light infiltration and air circulation.



Doors should be in keeping with the architecture or theme of the structure. The swing saloon doors are appropriate for the Stockyards. The use of the Art Deco doors (left) is in keeping with the Art Deco awning and lights.

AWNING GUIDELINES

1. Proposed awning improvements shall be in compliance with all City codes and ordinances.
2. Proposed awning improvements shall be in harmony with the character and development patterns of the neighborhood.
3. Proposed awning improvements shall preserve distinguishing architectural features, character, and qualities of the building.
4. Awnings for primary entrances are encouraged with the following exceptions:
 - On buildings that incorporate an arcade into the architecture.
 - On buildings that provide a recessed entrance.
 - Where the awning or cover may interfere with vehicular and loading entrances for the building.
 - When the health and safety of the public is jeopardized.
 - Where it may interfere with architectural style and integrity of the structure or obscure architectural details on the façade.
5. Awning shape shall relate to the window or door opening. Barrel shaped awnings should be used to complement arched windows while rectangular awnings should be used on rectangular windows.
6. The color of an awning sign should complement the color and material of the building to which it is attached.
7. Lettering and logos shall be limited to the valances of awnings.
8. The primary material of shall be metal and canvas. Vinyl, plastic and internally illuminated awnings are discouraged.

For nearly two centuries awnings have helped to define the American streetscape. They allow for more flexibility in the shading of shops and residences. Historically, their primary use has always been to regulate light infiltration.

The US. Department of Energy states that awnings can reduce heat gain by up to 65% in south facing windows and up to 77% in east facing windows. They reduce the stress on air conditioning units and can lower the cost of cooling a building by up to 25%. They reduce glare and heat gain as efficiently as tinted windows and window film. During serve weather they provide protection to the structure while allowing the window or door to remain open, circulating air.

Awnings are typically triangular in shape with a simple metal frame to which canvas is attached. Slate, tan and green are the most popular colors. Stripes are appropriate and typically corresponds to the color of the structure.

VISUAL GUIDANCE FOR AWNINGS



Using awnings and canopies in ways that reinforce the design characteristics of structures can improve the image of individual buildings and the businesses and the entire streetscape.



Above, the awnings provide shade for the sidewalk café. Sidewalk dining creates a more lively street atmosphere.



The slate color fabric awnings provide protection as well as space for advertising.



This metal decorative awning protects patrons from the elements.

VISUAL GUIDANCE FOR PAINTING

PAINTING GUIDELINES

1. Proposed painting improvements shall be in compliance with all City codes and ordinances.
2. Proposed painting improvements shall be in harmony with the character and development patterns of the neighborhood.
3. Proposed painting improvements shall preserve distinguishing architectural features, character, and qualities of the building.
4. Proposed painting improvements shall not contain any explicit materials.
5. Historically unpainted brick or masonry should not be painted.



Painting your façade can add life, vitality and character creating an inviting storefront.



This mural represents an appropriate addition to this structure.

EXTERIOR LIGHTING GUIDELINES

1. Proposed lighting improvements shall be in compliance with all City codes and ordinances.
2. Proposed lighting improvements shall be in harmony with the character and development patterns of the neighborhood.
3. Placement of outdoor security lights and their mounting shall not damage, detract from, or conceal character defining features of the structure. Flood/ security lights are discouraged primary street elevations.
4. Lighting shall be compatible in age, style and scale to the building or unobtrusive and not suggestive of a style or age.
5. Lighting shall be designed in a manner to avoid disturbances and glare onto adjacent properties.

VISUAL GUIDANCE FOR LIGHTING



Both structures use non-decorative down lighting fixtures. These fixtures do not suggest a period or time and are appropriate. Lighting should be moderate in placement (below). Excessive lighting creates light pollution (left).



Building-mounted lighting on facades, or other accent lighting on architectural features are encouraged. They provide additional illumination within the environment and have potential for creating design effects. Building-mounted lighting shall not give off an obtrusive glare to the pedestrian and the motorist.

STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS VISUAL GUIDANCE

Removal of the non original balcony exemplifies a structural improvement that leads to a more inviting façade. In addition, the removal allows for a more spacious walk and room for pedestrian lights and street trees. These streetscape components create a safe and friendly pedestrian experience.



STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS GUIDELINES

1. Proposed structural improvements shall be in compliance with all City codes and ordinances.
2. Proposed structural improvements shall be in harmony with the character and development patterns of the neighborhood.
3. Proposed structural improvements shall preserve distinguishing architectural features, character, and qualities of the building.

TRIM AND DECORATIVE DETAIL VISUAL GUIDANCE



Trim and decorative elements often have a strong visual impact and aesthetic value which functionally serves as a transition between building elements and often acts as a sealant, providing protection from water intrusion. Left, the building cornice provides a visual cap for the structure. To the right the storefront cornice (above the awning) provides a delineation between the first and second floor. It also traditionally signifies a change of use.



TRIM AND DECORATIVE DETAIL

GUIDELINES

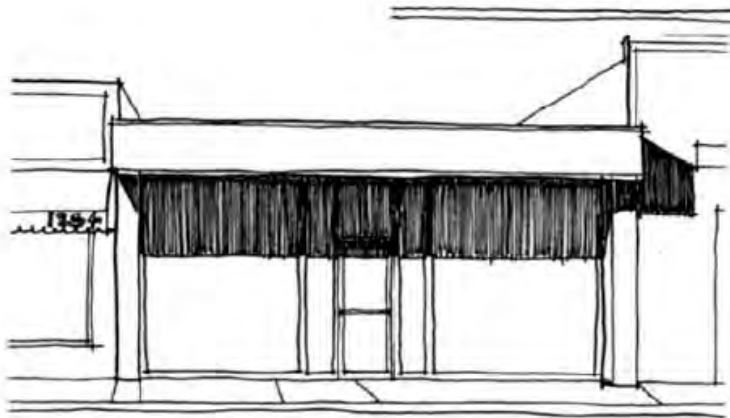
1. Proposed trim and decorative detail shall be in compliance with all City codes and ordinances.
2. Proposed trim and decorative detail shall be in harmony with the character and development patterns of the neighborhood.
3. Proposed trim and decorative detail improvements shall preserve distinguishing architectural features, character, and qualities of the building.



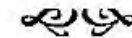
Above, the brick sill and wood brick mold help to drain water away the windows. deterring water infiltration at this point can prevent not only the windows from rotting, but will also prevent water from draining into the wall which could potentially cause mold, rot and interior damage.

TIPS AND IDEAS

...If you are looking to renovate the entire façade of your business, look below for ideas...



Before...



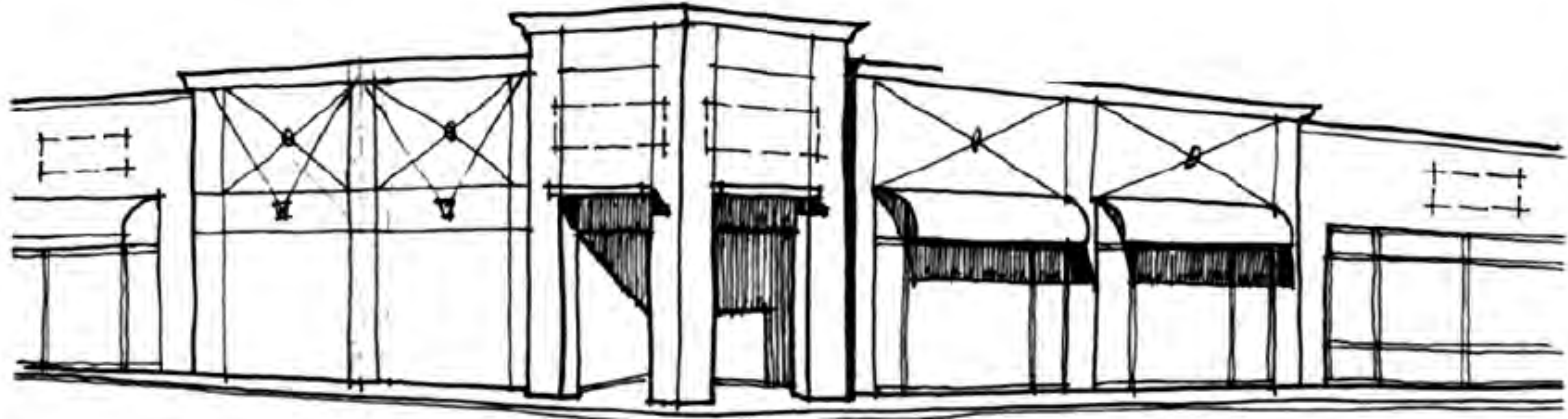
**Renovate your building by
integrating it with surrounding
shops; use textured materials; add
landscaping and new paint...**



Before...



Modernize the look of your building into 'one' design; remove excess signs; recess entry and add accent lighting and landscaping...

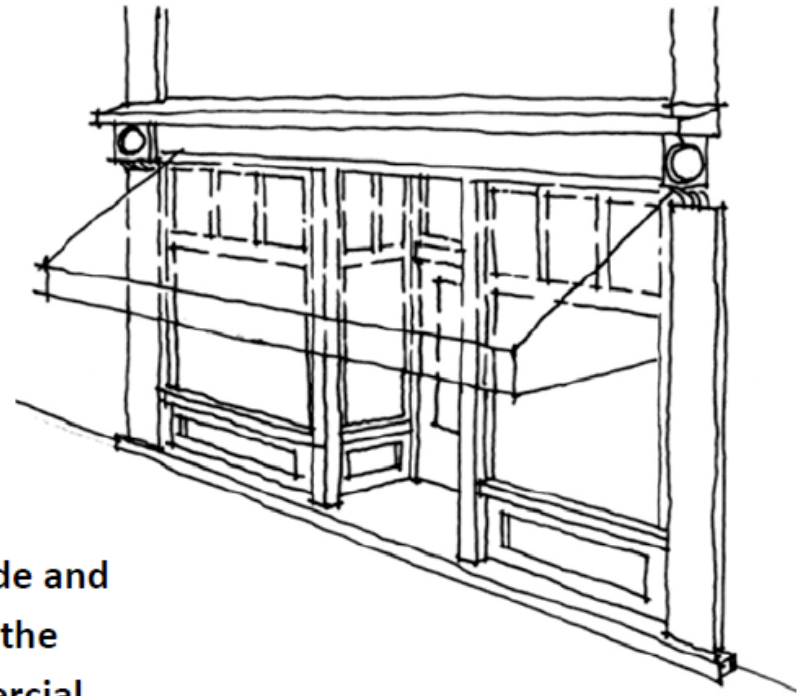


Before...

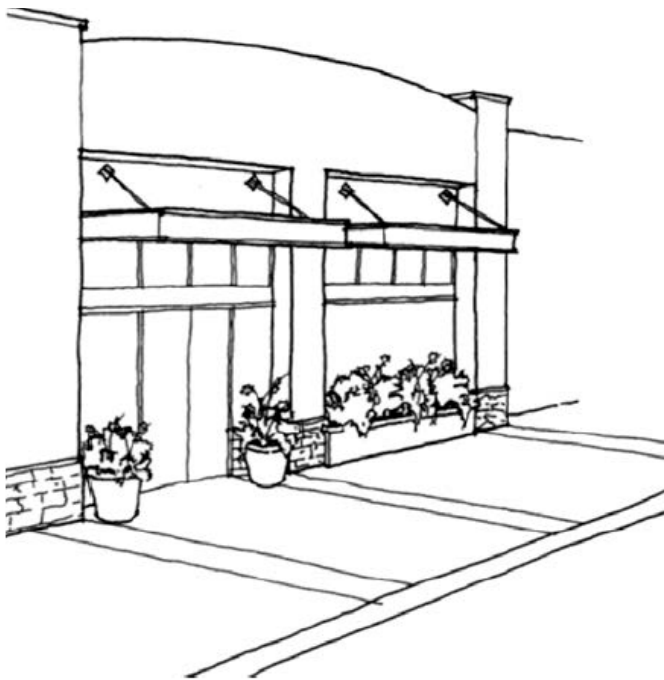
☺☺
If your building is on a
corner, create a focal
point with your entry;
add awnings and accent
lighting...



By improving the existing façade and window elements, you add the overall attraction of a commercial district...



Simply add awnings or canopy elements to your storefront entry...



Place potted plants around your storefront or just 'replenish' your existing planters...