



Plan by Design  
8 Peter Street S  
Suite 202  
Orillia, ON  
L3V 5A9  
705.325.0068  
info@plandesign.ca

# FAÇADE DESIGN GUIDELINES

## SUNDERLAND, ONTARIO

### TOWNSHIP OF BROCK

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### introduction

Brock Township has prepared Façade Design Guidelines for the downtown Sunderland area to assist business and property owners planning commercial and retail improvements. These guidelines address issues and support the development of a healthy commercial area through the rehabilitation and maintenance of the storefronts and buildings within the defined Community Improvement Area.

The Township has developed these guidelines to encourage several key objectives including:

- Improve the overall quality of physical improvements to the commercial corridor.
- Augment the user experience within the Community Improvement Area (CIA).
- Encourage economic investment within the CIA.
- Protect and preserve the historical value of existing buildings.

- Promote and encourage initiatives of the business and property owner to maintain and preserve the building.
- Provide guidelines to maintain a uniform and cohesive CIA while encouraging creativity and flexibility for the business and property owner.

The following guidelines will help ensure building façade upgrades and improvements are done in a cohesive manner that will help promote the revitalization of the downtown in their entirety. These improvements are to be completed in a manner that reflects the overall approach and heritage value of the Sunderland downtown area.

Using the guidelines will encourage building design improvements and redevelopment of vacant areas that preserves the overall historic value of Sunderland. This will lead to an improved user experience which may attract local and tourist patrons to the downtown businesses. Building owners and merchants are encouraged to invest in building façade upgrades and renovations understanding that with commitment and patience comes long-term success.

Façade Improvement Demonstration Plans for each business located within the Community Improvement Area have been included in these guidelines. The demonstration drawings can be used for inspiration and to provide detailed suggestions for improvements to identified buildings.

The Façade Design Guidelines provide examples of how businesses and property owners can use current façade improvement funding to aid in building and business transformation. For more information regarding Brock Township façade grants please refer to the Community Improvement Plan (CIP).

### the history of Sunderland

Sunderland was built on land granted in the early 1820`s to the United Empire Loyalists. The community grew around the Brock Hotel which was considered a popular overnight stop for travelers.

Originally known as Jones Corners, named after the Brock Hotel owner, the town rapidly grew with the construction of the Nipissing Railway.

The name Sunderland came from Charles Spencer, the Third Earl of Sunderland England.

In the late 1950`s the town was impacted by two significant storms which destroyed the skating arena and significant tree canopy.

The railway ceased operation in the 1980`s. To date the community continues to provide retail opportunities to the various agricultural businesses that surround the community. The area continues to showcase its historic roots with several heritage buildings, including the Brock Hotel found within the Community Improvement Area.

### building history

From its original settlement to date, over one hundred and ninety five years have passed. This has led to an overall variation in the building façades. For the analysis process we have grouped the buildings into categories based upon heritage and period styles rather than the redevelopment and redesign of the downtown core. This analysis was completed for a visual education to entice both property and business owners in the pursuit of façade improvements and the overall improvement of the downtown core.

#### categories:

##### historic

Buildings that were built prior to 1950 that have been minimally altered. The overall character and detailing of the buildings are in good order and are still clearly evident.

##### historic modified with minimal modification

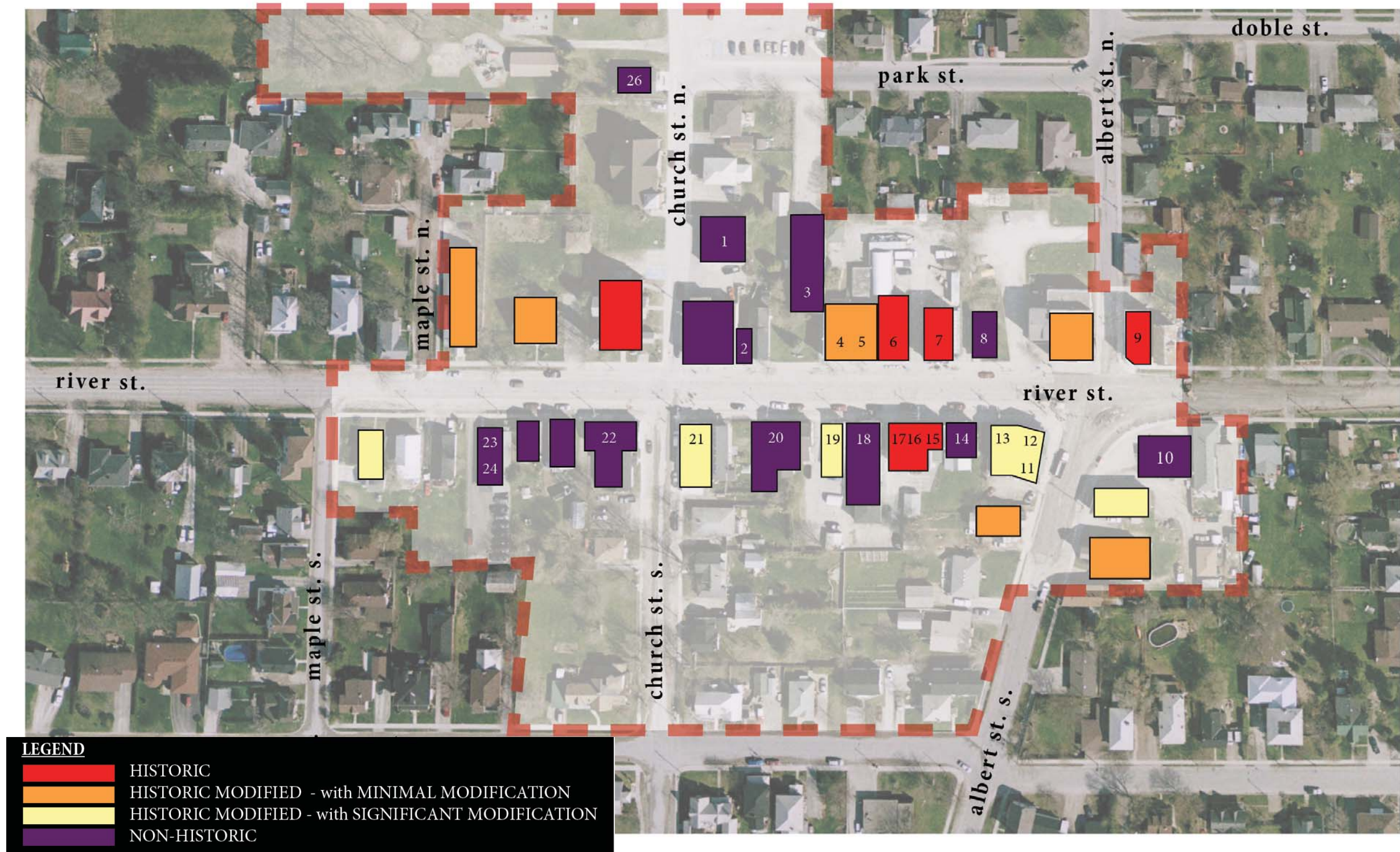
Buildings that were built prior to 1950 where the façade has been minimally altered. The historic detailing may still be visible. Building modifications may be the result of deterioration or a lack of regular maintenance.

##### historic modified with significant modification

Buildings that were built prior to 1950 where the façade has been significantly altered and the majority of the historic features are no longer visible. Building modifications may be the result of deterioration or a lack of regular maintenance.

##### non historic

Buildings that were built after 1950 and have no significant historic value.





# community improvement area

Façade Design Guideline - Sunderland, Ontario

## Sunderland Community Improvement Area Businesses

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. DARK HORSE STUDIO                  | 14. BLUE WILLOW FLOWER SHOP                 |
| 2. JUST-A-TRIM                        | 15. COUNTRY CUT HAIRSTYLING                 |
| 3. ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION              | 16. PAWSITIVE STYLE                         |
| 4. THE MAGIC DOOR GALLERY             | 17. KATIE'S CAFÉ                            |
| 5. THORNE FUNERAL HOME                | 18. FRESHMART                               |
| 6. HOME FURNITURE                     | 19. COUNTRY LOONIES                         |
| 7. HOME HARDWARE                      | 20. THE GUARDIAN PHARMACY & GIFTWARE        |
| 8. TWO BROTHERS PIZZA                 | 21. STOP 4 VARIETY                          |
| 9. CIBC BANKING CENTRE                | 22. COIN WASH                               |
| 10. FOX FIRES BAR & GRILL             | 23. BROWN & BRETHOUR INSURANCE BROKERS      |
| 11. TRACY'S HAIR DESIGN & BARBER SHOP | 24. BRETHOUR FINANCIAL                      |
| 12. VACANT                            | 25. SUNDERLAND & DISTRICT HISTORICAL MUSEUM |
| 13. ROADSIDE COUNTRY DINER            |   |

### **step one: examine the appearance of your building**

For any renovation/rehabilitation it is important to first review the existing character and heritage of your building. Consider window and door locations, are they proportionate to the building?

For this step you should take the whole façade into account which includes the storefront, upper/middle façade and the roof and cornice. The overall goal for façade improvements is to take the building and its surroundings into account - this will lead to the development of façade improvements that not only showcase the business but also provide a consistent experience for the user.

### **step two: a little can go far**

For any building owner, maintenance and upkeep is key to the overall appeal of the structure. Simply put, this entails the cleaning of the existing structure and surrounding area prior to investing any significant amount into the rehabilitation /renovation of the building structure. Sidewalks should be kept tidy; garbage and debris free. If everyone within the

downtown core does their part a little can go far. For any business, debris and waste generated is always an issue, how will it be dealt with and stored? The easiest solution is to store the waste to the rear of the building in a contained area. It is recommended that a garbage enclosure be built to minimize visual disturbance from waste and restrict pest access.

### **step three: repairs**

Prior to the commencement of any façade improvement it is recommended that the existing face be evaluated and reinstated. This may include re-facing, re-pointing or sandblasting. Along with any repairs comes the overall maintenance. Key preventative maintenance steps should be performed regularly to ensure that the façade improvements are successful for years to come. These improvements may include:

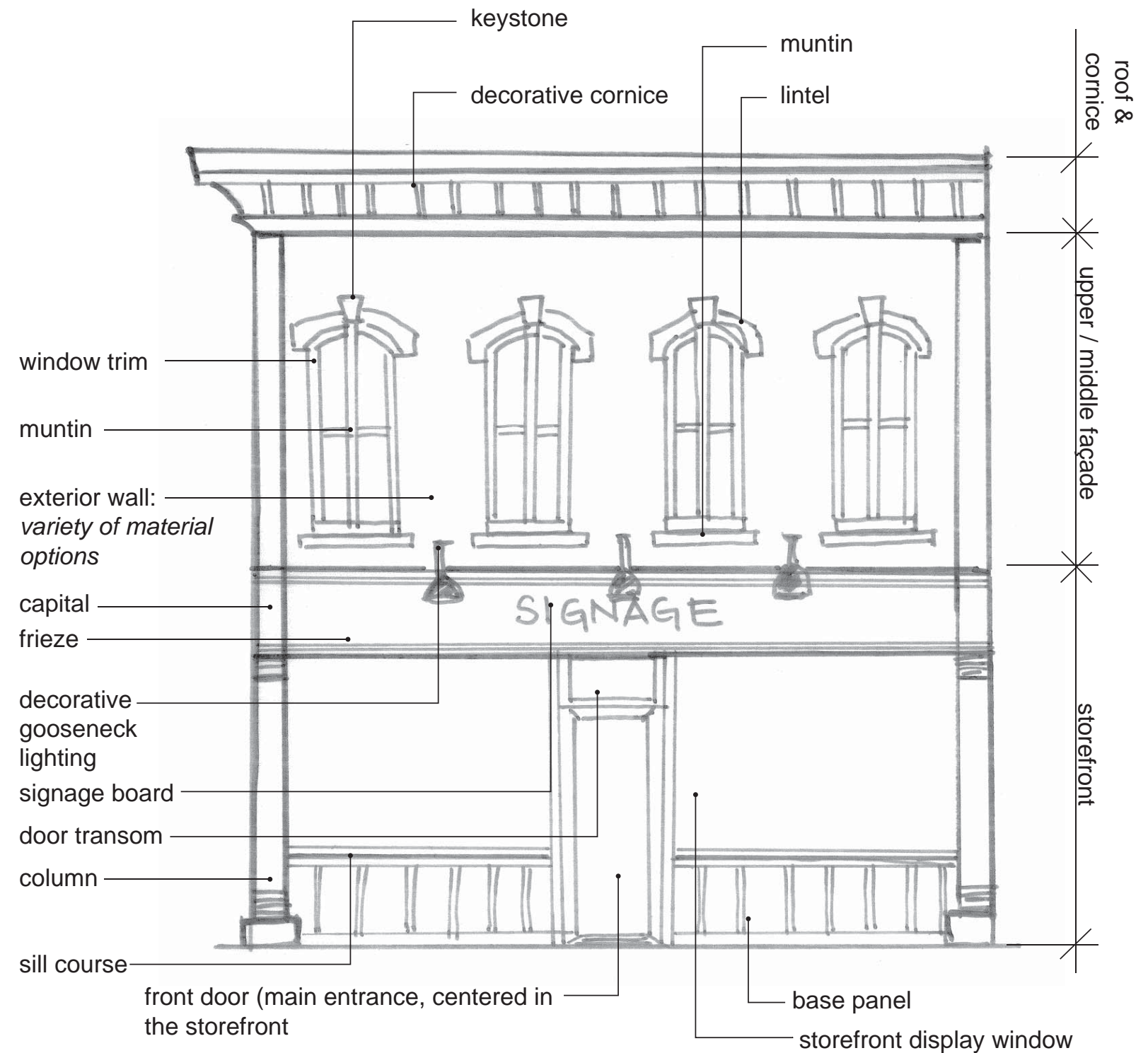
- Reinstatement of paint and exterior finishes;
- Cleaning of windows and doors;
- Removal of clutter within window display areas;

- Regularly cleaning sidewalk environment;
- Reviewing building surface material and repairing as required;
- Reviewing roof and repairing as required;
- Sealing all windows and door trim with caulking and monitoring;
- Replace broken windows and doors maintaining existing building proportions.

## façade elements

Buildings within the study generally consist of three major components:

- storefront
- upper / middle façade
- roof and cornice



## façades as a whole

Historically, within the downtown core of any community the storefronts would demonstrate a strong rhythm of repeated architectural elements. A consistent repetition of these elements is key to a strong downtown environment and provides the experience of defining where the commercial core begins and ends.

One of the essential features within any downtown core is how the storefront relates to the pedestrian / sidewalk realm. By having buildings recessed and allocated parking spaces in front, pedestrians and motorists are cued that the commercial district is ending. By maintaining the historic zero lot line setback, property owners can continue building in a location similar to buildings with historical value.

Another key element is the identifier for each storefront. The repetition of a consistent signage identifier location from building to building creates a uniform appeal for the community. The other prominent elements are the roof lines, the repetition of the upper and lower floor windows, and the unification of lighting.

## general guidelines

1. Downtown buildings should share elements that link them, such as awnings, storefront signs, lighting, decorative cornice detailing, storefront door locations, and window positions and detailing.
2. Remove signs, paint, and other structures over brick and brick banding.
3. Use similar awning shapes and placement to coordinate different building façades.
4. Do not modify or cover storefront or upper/middle façade windows. If windows have been boarded, reinstate windows to original character.
5. Storefront area should predominately be display windows.
6. Architectural proportions to be maintained for both storefront façade and middle storey façade.
7. For historic buildings refer to photographs and other documentary evidence and reinstate original architectural detailing and character.
8. Building materials selected to follow historical materials and be compatible with existing traditional stone, brick and wood siding.
9. Replace all missing, deteriorated, or damaged architectural details, as feasible using material and detailing that is similar to the original appearance and materials.

## 10. signage

The quality and character of signage contributes significantly to the pedestrian environment and streetscape. Signage design should reflect the architectural style of the building and should be easy to read. Businesses should consider installing both storefront signs and pedestrian signs. Storefront signs are located on the building façade and are directed at passing vehicles whereas pedestrian signage is perpendicular to the building and directed to pedestrian users on the sidewalk. The following should be taken into consideration when selecting signage location, materials and appearance:

- Business signage and branding should be located within the traditional signage board of the building, or block lettering should be attached directly to the building face.
- Storefront signage should not be backlit.
- Pedestrian signage should project over the sidewalk no more than 1.5 meters (5 feet) and shall be no closer

to the sidewalk than 2.4 meters (8 feet) from the bottom of the sign.

- Pedestrian signage should not be backlit.
- Unique branding is encouraged to showcase business character and individuality.



## doors & entrance ways

Entrances are key to any attractive storefront. They should represent the image of the building and the business. The following should be taken into consideration when determining door and entrance way location and detailing:

- The entrance should be located at ground level and be fully accessible.
- Glass doors with or without the business name etched into the glass are a good choice for main entrances.
- Entrance ways should be proportionately located in the middle of the storefront.
- Solid doors with raised panels and glass vision panel are the appropriate choice for an entrance way.
- Door trim should be wood and painted a complimentary colour to the building and be consistent with the window trim.
- Doors to be framed with trim that is matched for the entirety of the

building. This includes the upper/middle façade.

- Secondary access doors should be painted in base / building face colour to diminish importance.

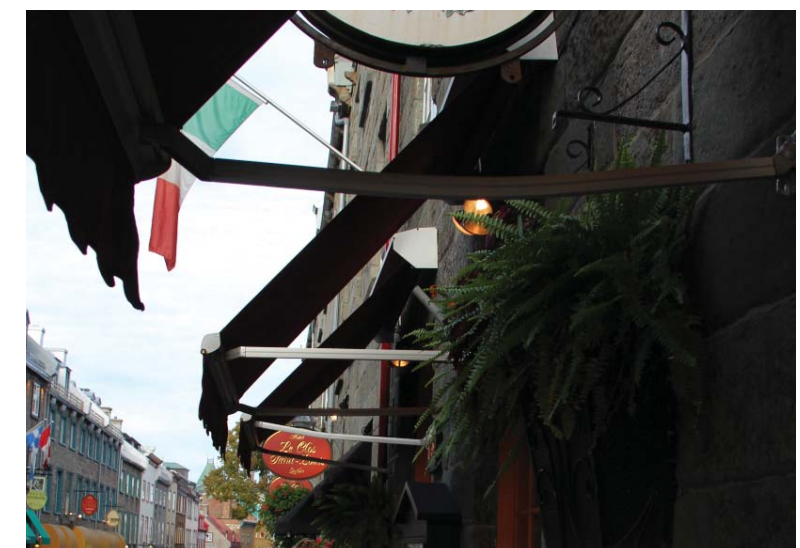


## awnings

Awnings provide pedestrian protection from the weather and can be used consistently to create unity and visual coherence. Awnings are also considered a very cost effective improvement based on value for money spent. Branding and signage may be installed on the awning to provide additional identifiers or when space is limited for additional signage. The following should be taken into consideration when selecting an awning for a façade improvement:

- Align awnings on a building, particularly the bottom edge of the awning.
- Fit the awnings to the dimensions of the storefront openings to emphasize these proportions.
- Ensure awnings do not obscure important architectural details.
- Provide a minimum 2.4 meters (8 feet) clearance from the sidewalk to the awning
- Typically the awning is in the accent colour.

- Awning materials should be selected to ensure durability and preservation of colour.
- Coordinate the colour of the awning with the colour scheme for the building.
- Signage and branding may be installed on an awning, especially when there is limited space for additional signage.



## lighting

Coordinate exterior lighting with adjacent businesses to develop a consistent approach to the lighting including location and illumination level. The following are considerations that should be taken into account when selecting lighting for a façade improvement:

- Use exterior lighting that complements the overall façade's character and style.
- Light storefront signage with down lighting or 'gooseneck' lights.
- Do not light signage internally.
- Do not use any flashing, neon, or animated lighting for the storefront.
- Incandescent (non-fluorescent) is a good lighting choice for building façades in the downtown area.
- Architectural detailing of the building may be highlighted to provide additional emphasis.

- Front entrance way to be lit to provide safety and security.

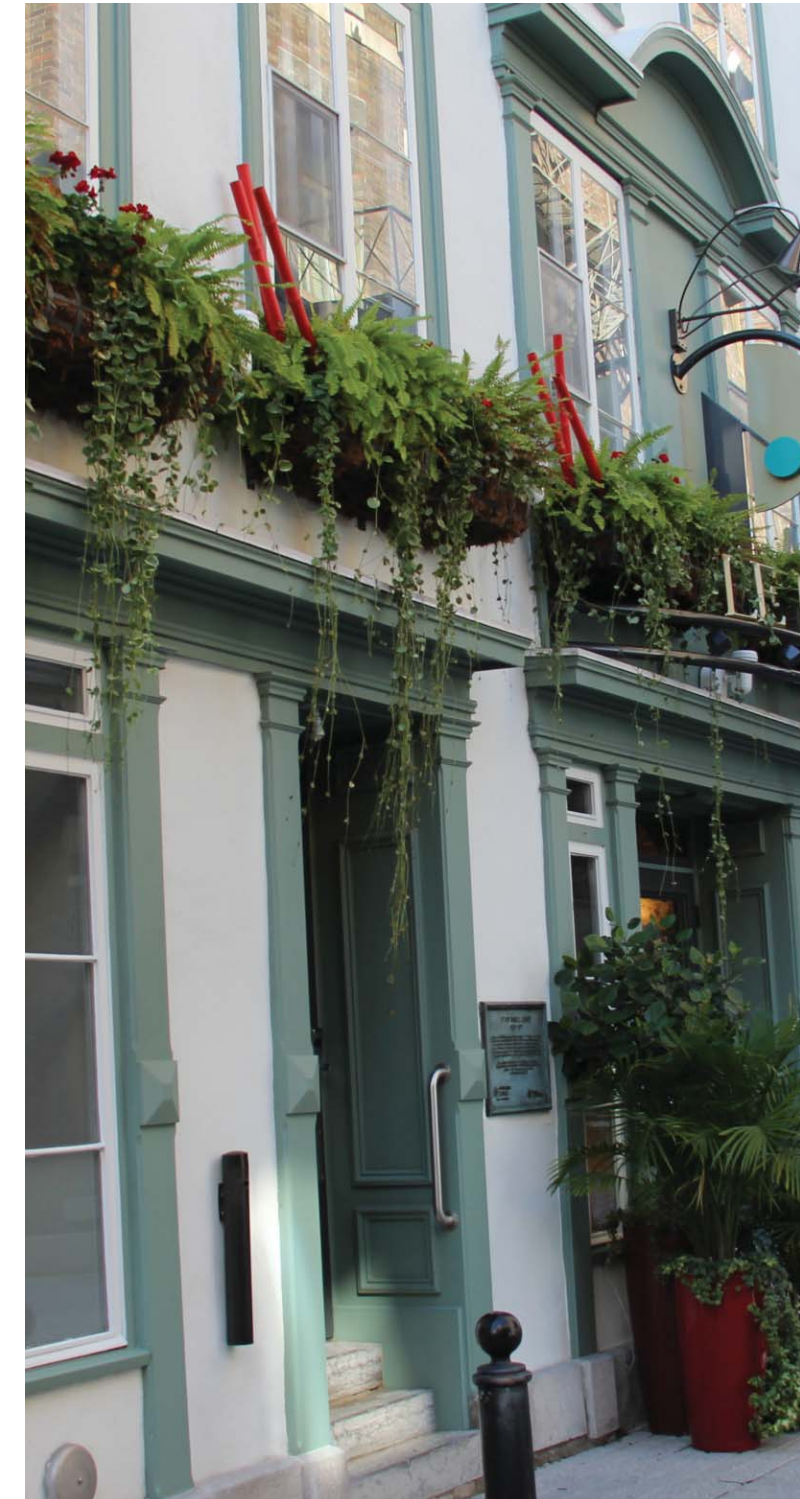


## colour

The use of colour is an important consideration for façade improvements. Colour needs to provide uniformity to the overall building façade, creating an overall cohesive appearance. The colour palette for the façade design guidelines should follow a historic colour palette. Historic colour options are available at any paint store. The following should be taken into consideration when selecting colour for a façade improvement:

- Use a limited number of colours, three to four.
- Masonry surfaces that have been painted should be reinstated to their natural brick or stone colour.
- Heritage buildings surface should be left in their original state and re-pointed if required.
- Highlight door frames and window frames with a single trim colour.
- Highlight awnings, signage boards and front storefront doors in accent colour.

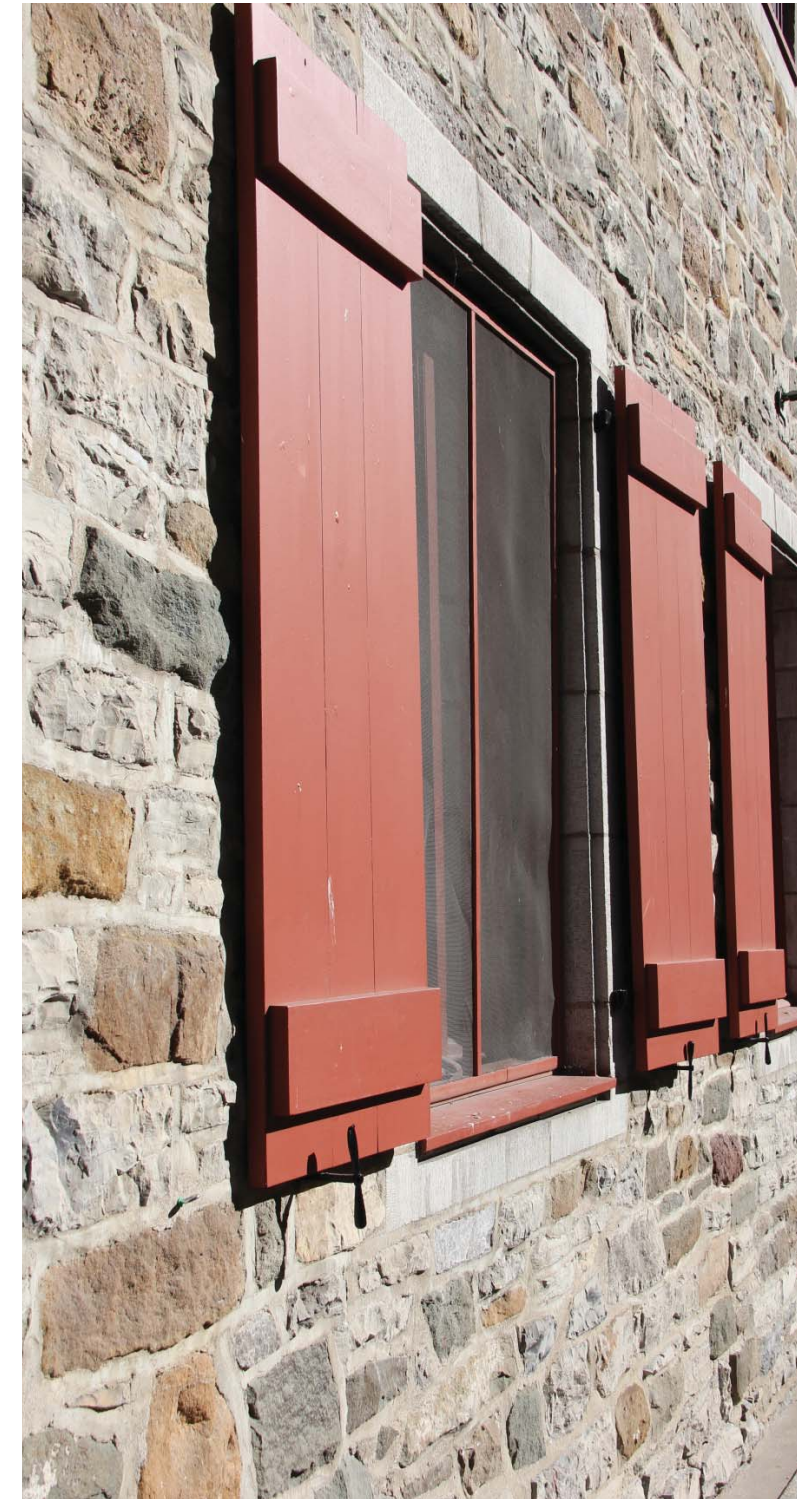
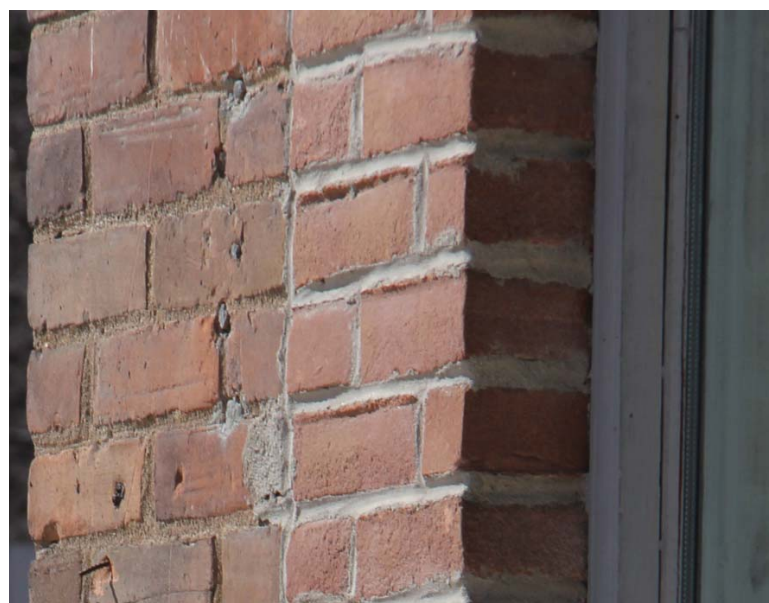
- Use a historic colour palette.
- The existing brick colour, or the colour of the main façade material, should be used to select complimentary colours.



## building material

A limited range of building materials are typically found within a historical downtown area. The first essential step would be to maintain the original predominant building materials when planning improvements. The following are considerations that should be taken into account when dealing with building material selection/reinstatement for a façade improvement:

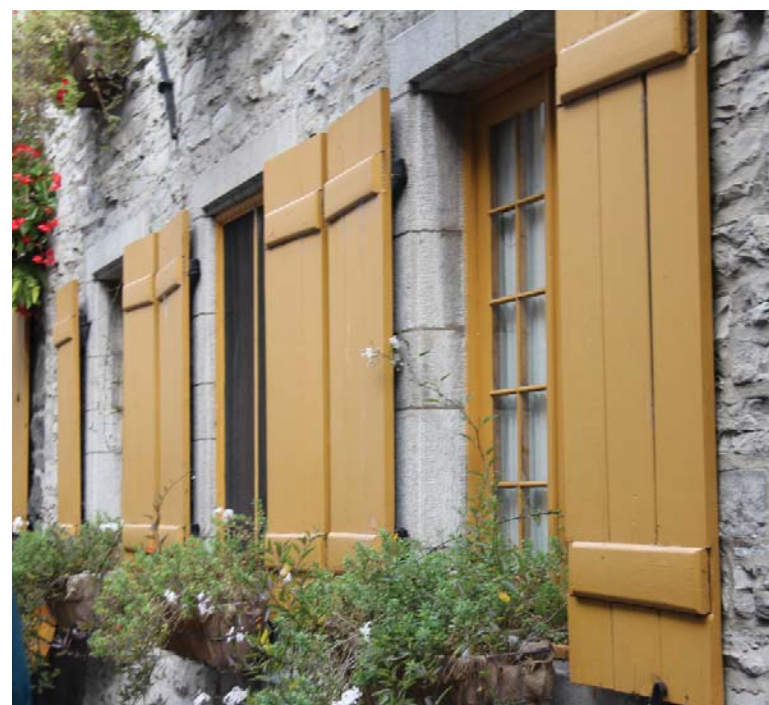
- Use original brick, stone, wood siding, aluminum, copper, or composite panel building material where possible.
- Materials such as vinyl siding, corrugated metal panels and reflective glass are strongly discouraged.
- Materials selected should complement existing historical buildings within the surrounding environment.
- Building material should be installed in accordance with the existing historical buildings in the surrounding environment.



## seasonal interest

Seasonal interest, including decorative planters, fixed window boxes, and hanging baskets demonstrate effective means of providing visual interest at minimal cost. These planters can be updated to allow for evolution of the façade's interest. The following are considerations that should be taken into account for the installation of seasonal interest material:

- When selecting decorative material whether it be floral displays or other materials, longevity, creativity and safety should all be considered.
- Planters should be placed to highlight main entrance and storefront windows.
- Theft and vandalism can be minimized with decorations that are secured properly or are too heavy to carry.
- Hanging baskets should be located so that they do not compete with the sidewalk realm.
- Plant material should be selected for intended location based upon site characteristics.



## building maintenance & repair

To prevent original building materials from deterioration typical maintenance that is required includes re-painting, re-pointing, flashing and/or the repair of broken features such as windows. All types of building materials require maintenance and the life expectancy of the materials will increase significantly when kept in a good state of repair.

In some cases custom contractors or builders who specialize in historic building restoration may be required during the planning phase of the project. Where restoration of all or part of a building façade is completed, maintenance of the building materials will prevent future damage and save money in the long-run.



## façade demonstration plans

Façade Improvement Demonstration Plans for the identified buildings within the Community Improvement Area, follow the general design guidelines.

These demonstration plans should be used for design inspiration and provide detailed suggestions for improvements to the identified building. The demonstration plans are not intended for construction but will provide overall design inspiration for property and business owners who are considering façade improvements.

- DARK HORSE STUDIO
- JUST-A-TRIM
- ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION
- THE MAGIC DOOR GALLERY
- THORNE FUNERAL HOME
- HOME FURNITURE
- HOME HARDWARE
- TWO BROTHERS PIZZA
- CIBC BANKING CENTRE
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