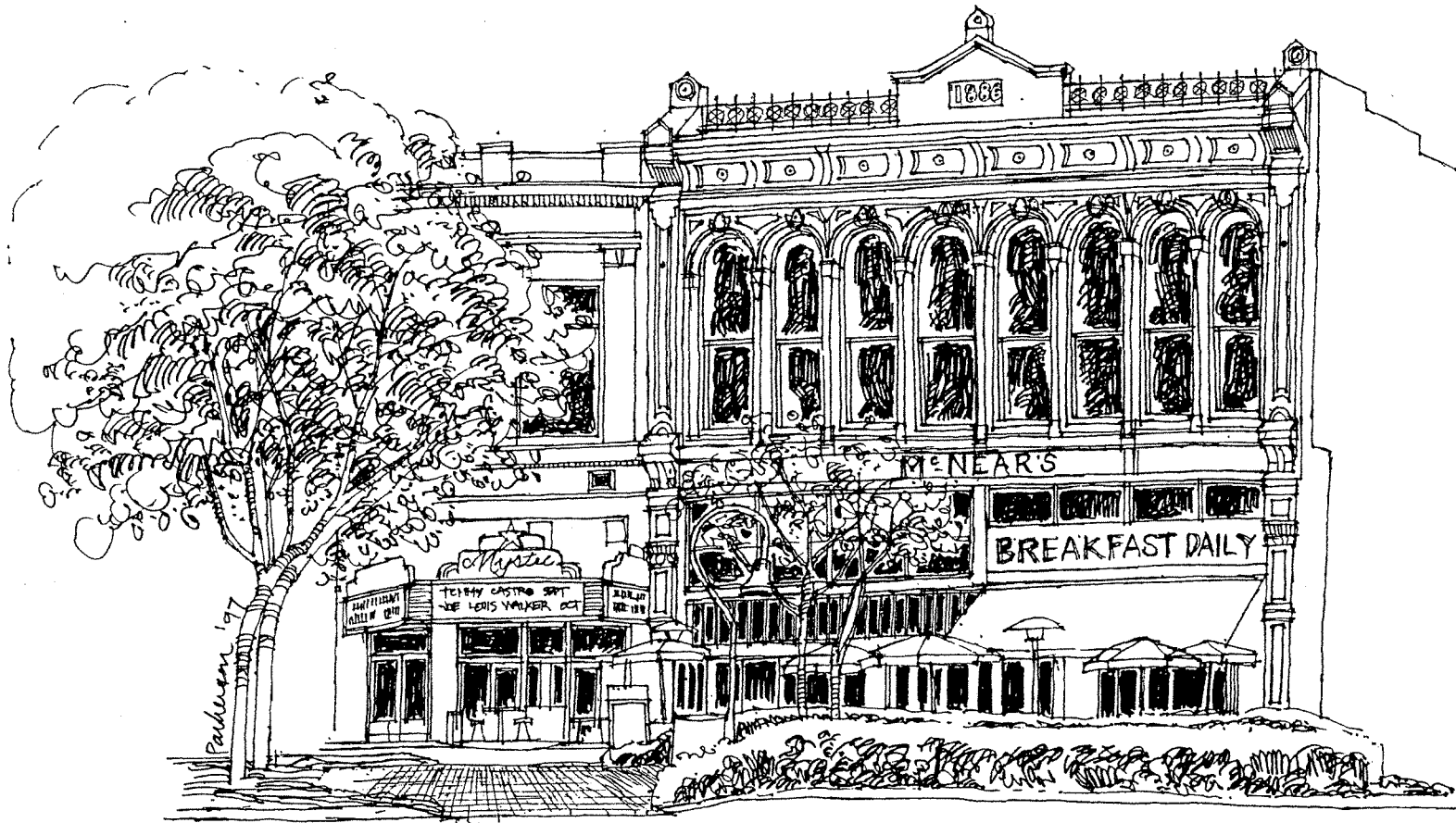


**PETALUMA HISTORIC
COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**City of Petaluma, California
Planning Department**

**Adopted by the Petaluma City Council on August 16, 1999
by Resolution No. 99-168-A N.C. S.**



McNear Building

Parkerson '97

TABLE OF CONTENTS

.....

	page
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Historic Perspective.....	2
2.0 PURPOSE OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES.....	6
3.0 PETALUMA’S DOWNTOWN AS A NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	9
3.1 National Register of Historic Places	9
3.2 Preservation and Enhancement Philosophy.....	9
3.3 Contributing Buildings and Non-Contributing Buildings	10
4.0 DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION.....	12
4.1 Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.....	15
4.2 Architectural Style.....	15
4.3 Building Character	15
4.4 Storefronts	16
4.4-1 Metal Storefronts.....	17
4.4-2 Wood Storefronts	18
4.4-3 Masonry Storefronts	19
4.5 Awnings and Canopies.....	19
4.5-1 Standards for Awnings.....	19
4.5-2 Canopies	21
4.6 Paint Color.....	22
4.6-1 Color Selection	22

4.0 DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION (continued)

4.7 Rear Entrances..... 23

4.8 Mechanical Equipment..... 24

4.9 Major Rehabilitation..... 24

5.0 SIGNS..... 25

5.1 Sign Definitions..... 25

5.2 Standards for Permitted Signs..... 26

5.3 Sign Design..... 29

5.4 Prohibited Signs..... 31

5.5 Exemptions..... 32

6.0 GUIDELINES FOR STREETSCAPES..... 33

6.1 Introduction..... 33

6.2 Image and Identity..... 33

6.3 Streetscape Elements..... 35

6.4 Outdoor Use Areas..... 37

6.5 Tree Placement Guidelines..... 37

7.0 GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION..... 38

7.1 Proportions of the Facade..... 38

7.2 Composition..... 38

7.3 Detailing..... 39

7.4 Materials..... 39

7.5 Colors..... 39

7.6 Building Setback..... 39

8.0 ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES OF BEING ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER..... 40

8.1 Rehabilitation Tax Credit..... 40

8.2 State Historic Building Code..... 41

8.3 Seismic Retrofitting..... 41

9.0	DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION PROCESS.....	42
9.1	First Steps	42
9.2	Who Conducts Design Review.....	42
9.3	What are the Stages of Design Review.....	42
9.4	What is the Design Review Committee.....	42

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	43
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FIGURES

Figure 1 – Location Map	7
Figure 2 – Petaluma National Register District - Contributing Buildings and Non-Contributing Buildings	11

APPENDICES (separate document)

Appendix 1	Nomination Form
Appendix 2	Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings
Appendix 3	A Guide to Tax-Advantaged Rehabilitation
Appendix 4	Streetscape Elements
Appendix 5	Downtown Area Tree Planting Guidelines
Appendix 6	List of Approved Street Trees
Appendix 7	List of City Contacts for Tree Related Inquiries

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The historic buildings and streetscapes in Petaluma's Historic Downtown are essential to defining the City's character and maintaining its ties to its past. Much of the downtown area is also a National Register District with historically significant buildings dating to the mid-1800's. When the architecture of historic buildings is altered in a manner that is incompatible with surrounding structures, the entire streetscape, along with its historical theme or setting, can be disrupted. The result can be jarring and the inconsistent structure detracts from the overall character of the area.

Recognizing the need to provide direction to property owners before the remodeling or alteration process begins, the Petaluma Historic Commercial District Design Guidelines are intended to encourage the maintenance of historic structures in their original form, and the rehabilitation of previously remodeled structures to return them to their former historic appearance.

The terms "Downtown Historic District," "Historic District," and "Historic Commercial District" are used throughout this document and are intended to be interchangeable.

This document is organized to flow in a logical manner to aid the property owner in determining what types of projects are subject to the Guidelines and the applicable standards. To this end, the following information is included:

- historical overview of the downtown area;
- identification of the downtown area where the Guidelines apply;
- standards for rehabilitating and remodeling buildings;
- standards for signs and projects affecting the streetscape;
- standards for new construction;
- economic advantages to having property listed on the National Register;
- summary of the design review process;
- appendices which provide additional detailed information on certain elements of the Design Guidelines.

1.1 HISTORIC PERSPECTIVE

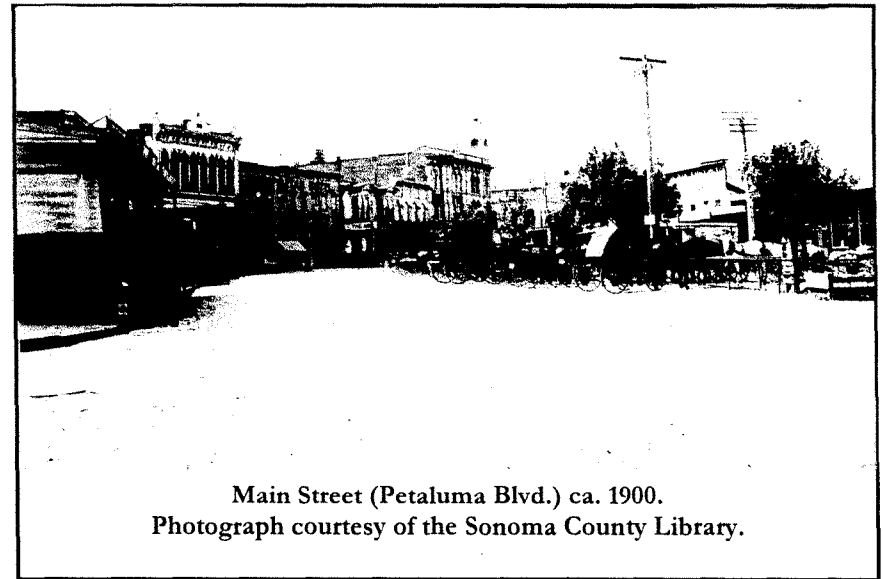
Petaluma's historic downtown reflects the growth and prosperity achieved during its economic heyday. In the 1850's, the westward movement of settlers, spurred by the Gold Rush, capitalized on this natural "hub." The town was incorporated in 1858 amidst fertile lands serviced by an easily navigated river, and quickly became an active shipping center. Warehouses were built near the river to store potatoes and hay awaiting shipment down river. Products and passengers came and went from the docks on a regular schedule. Potatoes, hay, fruit, grain, and dairy products were shipped to San Francisco and points beyond, while packets, schooners, and later steamers, brought lumber and merchandise to



Unloading feed at the McNear Warehouse ca 1897.
Photograph courtesy of the Sonoma County Library.

Petaluma's commercial and industrial center was laid out near the waiting mills and merchants. The hay and grain business became one of Petaluma's most prosperous industries and continues today.

Petaluma River, called the Petaluma Creek in early days, and is the present-day downtown. Approximately four blocks wide and six blocks long, the business section still reflects the prosperity brought to Petaluma by rail and trolley transportation and by agriculture.



Main Street (Petaluma Blvd.) ca. 1900.
Photograph courtesy of the Sonoma County Library.

In 1871, the San Francisco and Northern Pacific Railroad connected Petaluma with Santa Rosa and Tiburon. With both the railroad and the river to serve the community, shipping became more efficient, contributing to the town's growth and prosperity. The town enjoyed a diversified economy including a silk mill,

PETALUMA, 1871



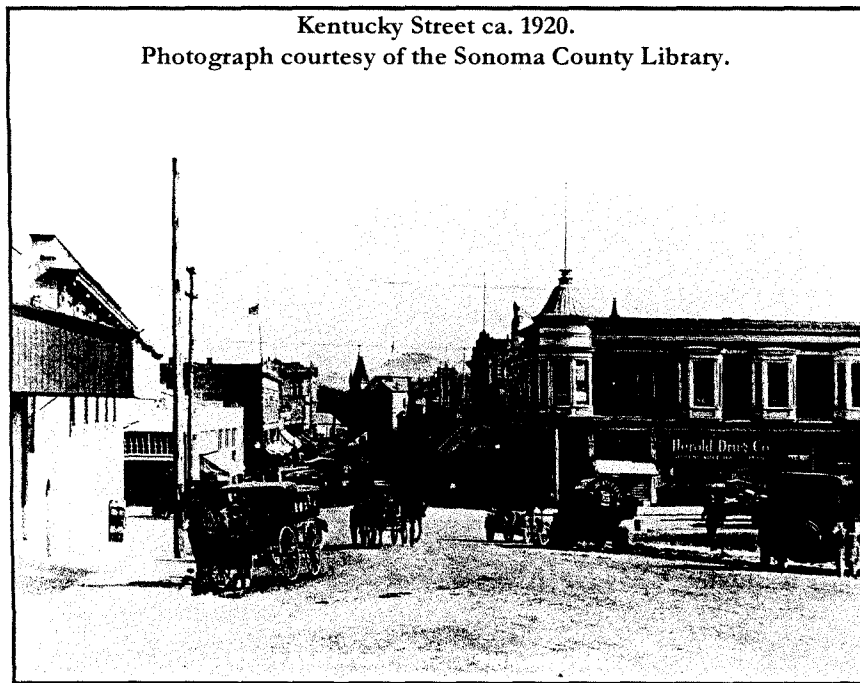
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A PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF THE
CITY OF
PETALUMA
SONOMA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
1871

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tanneries, winery, milling company, and blacksmiths, as well as wagon and carriage makers. In 1879, Lyman C. Byce invented the first practical and extremely reliable incubator, which revolutionized the egg industry. Egg production gained Petaluma worldwide recognition as "The World's Egg Basket."

Beginning as a river town and later thriving as a result of its manufacturing base, Petaluma became famous in the early part of the century as a chicken and egg town. The flourishing poultry industry spurred a building boom, resulting in many of Petaluma's landmark buildings. Many of these magnificent buildings have



been destroyed, yet many more fine examples remain. The survivors withstood the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, a freeway bypass, urban renewal, and modernization of the 1950's and 1960's. Several of these historic buildings still bear the names of the founding families of Petaluma, including McNear, Maclay, Gwinn, Prince, and Wickersham.

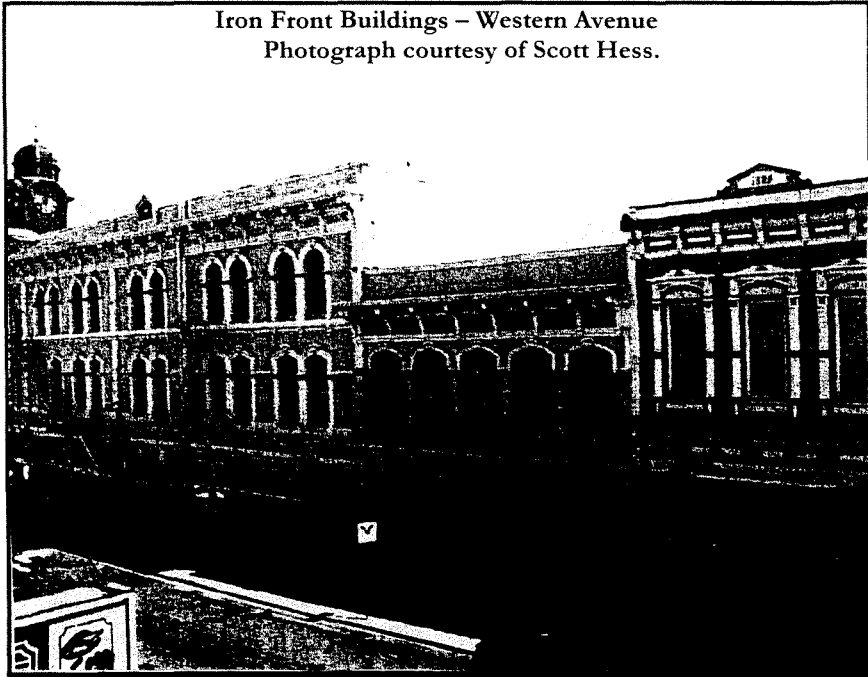
As a result of the historic development patterns from the river, railroad, highway, and present-day traffic patterns, the Downtown District remains a major commercial, retail, and financial center.

The downtown commercial buildings represent a remarkable architectural tapestry. Characterized by two- and three-story commercial buildings, the downtown area has a rare sampling of commercial architecture representing different styles from the 1870's to the 1950's.

The most striking of these are the outstanding collection of late 19th Century cast iron storefront buildings. The iron fronts of these buildings were cast in elaborate pieces by San Francisco foundries, laid out and numbered at the factory, then shipped up the river to be assembled at the building site by local builders. The pieces were placed over masonry structures to embellish what would otherwise have been fairly conventional facades.

One block of iron fronts is located on Western Avenue between Petaluma Boulevard and Kentucky Street. Other individual iron fronts are located on Kentucky and Petaluma Boulevard. These iron fronts, built between 1882 and 1885, are a rare historic treasure.

Iron Front Buildings – Western Avenue
Photograph courtesy of Scott Hess.



2.0 PURPOSE OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

The downtown area subject to these Guidelines encompasses approximately 31 acres. The area generally is bounded by Prospect Street to the north, “D” Street to the south, the Petaluma River to the east, and Kentucky and Fourth Streets to the west. An historic overlay district also applies to this area, indicating that additional standards beyond those of the underlying zoning district are also in place. Most of the downtown area is also within the boundaries of the National Historic District. The formation of this district recognizes the many notable and historically significant buildings in the area, and as such, the district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (see Figure 1, Location Map). The significance of the National Register is discussed further in Chapter 3 of this document.

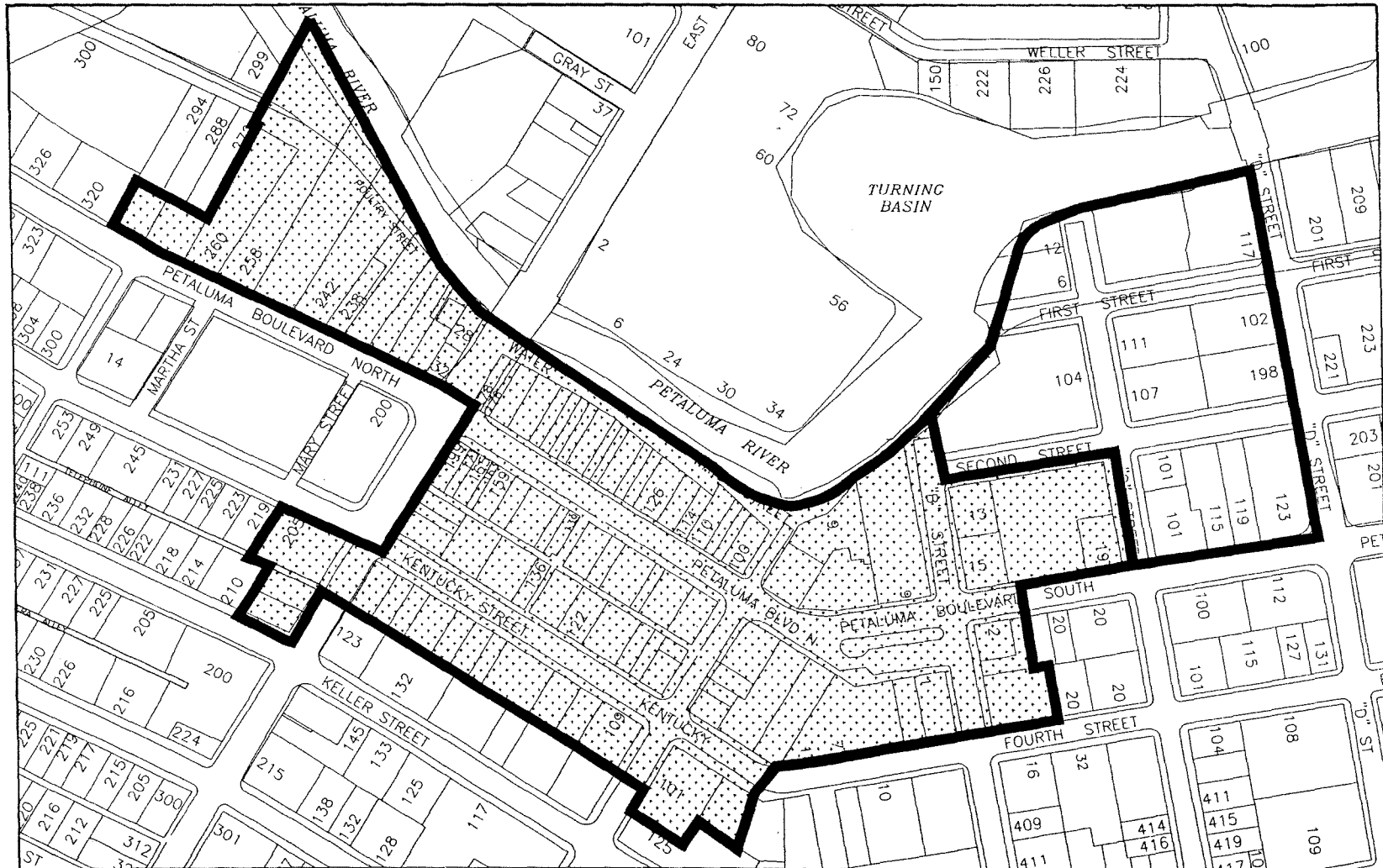
The purpose of these Guidelines is to aid property owners in making decisions concerning the alteration of a building located within the historic downtown. Alternatives that would obscure or destroy significant architectural features can be avoided with a far-sighted approach which considers both the economic value of the property and contributes to the historic character of the Downtown area. These Guidelines are intended to provide direction and encourage the preservation, adaptive use, and enhancement of buildings and streetscapes within the Downtown. These Guidelines are intended to meet the needs of many users: property owners, merchants, real estate interests, architects, designers, building contractors, members of Heritage Homes of Petaluma, the Petaluma Downtown Association, and other

interested organizations and persons in the community. Each of these interests has a vital role to play in the continued efforts towards the preservation and revitalization of Petaluma’s downtown.

These Guidelines apply to the following types of projects and require some level of design review:

- Rehabilitation, remodel, or any alteration affecting the exterior appearance of a building, including, but not limited to:
 - a change in exterior materials;
 - a change in paint colors;
 - cleaning, repair, or replacement of masonry;
 - window replacement, including transom windows;
 - replacing or removing design features such as molding and cornices;
 - replacing or removing threshold features such as marble, tile, and stairs;
 - awnings and canopies;
 - rear entrances;
 - all mechanical equipment;
 - placement of security gates or grills;
 - repair or replacement of damaged or worn materials.
- Signs, including the removal, repair, or repainting of historic signs;
- Placement and selection of street furniture.

FIGURE 1, LOCATION MAP



CITY OF PETALUMA, CALIFORNIA, HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

 **DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

 **NATIONAL HISTORIC REGISTER DISTRICT**

MAY 5, 1999
DRAWN BY MARGY HENRY
H:\MSTCOMM2.DWG



The following types of projects shall require administrative, or staff level, design review. City staff should be consulted before any work is undertaken:

- minor routine maintenance which does not alter the appearance of the facade and/or which does not affect the integrity of the existing building materials;
- replacement of materials with materials that are the same.

These Guidelines are organized to provide suggestions on how to best address historic architecture and includes regulations on the types of alterations that are permitted and the types that are prohibited. The suggestive statements use the term “should” and the regulatory statements use the term “shall.”

The Design Guidelines are intended to be used in conjunction with the provisions of the following regulations:

- Article 17, Preservation of the Cultural and Historic Environment;
- Sections 21-204 and 26-900, regarding signs, of the Zoning Ordinance;
- Site Plan and Architectural Review Procedures and Guidelines.

Where a conflict exists between the provisions of the underlying zoning district and the provisions of the overlay district, the standards of the overlay district (i.e., Article 17) shall apply. In addition, the standards of these Guidelines shall, if applicable, supersede the standards of the Zoning Ordinance.

Lastly, the project areas covered by other City documents may also overlap into the Downtown Historic District, and should also be consulted for a comprehensive understanding of applicable standards. These documents include the Petaluma Central Business District (CBD) Redevelopment Plan, the Petaluma Community Development Plan (PCDP), and the Central Petaluma Specific Plan. In addition, all projects are subject to review under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).



McNear Building, 1886
Kentucky Street

3.0 PETALUMA'S DOWNTOWN AS A NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT

The community has long recognized the impressive stock of historic buildings within Petaluma's Historic Commercial District as an important resource to the City from both an aesthetic and economic standpoint. On March 31, 1995, the Downtown Commercial District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places and established as a National Register District (see nomination form attached as Appendix 1).

3.1 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

For a building to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as part of a district, means it must be determined to be historically significant for its association either with an important event, person, and/or architectural style. For a property to qualify for the National Register it must meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation by:

- being associated with an important historic context; and
- retaining the historic integrity of those features necessary to convey its significance.

Petaluma's Historic Commercial District represents the development of commerce in the City from the mid-nineteenth century to the end of World War II. It also provides a diverse and well designed collection of commercial buildings, the architecture of which is unmatched in Sonoma County. Although the district has changed its appearance somewhat since 1945, it retains a high degree of architectural integrity, and building improvements have maintained an association to the historic period.

3.2 PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT PHILOSOPHY

The intent of the Design Guidelines is to ensure that the characteristics, which justified designating the Petaluma Historic Commercial District a National Register District, are maintained and, where necessary, revitalized. Thus, it is crucial that the existing harmony of proportions and materials be enhanced rather than interrupted by new construction, reconstruction, alterations, or additions. The characteristics of each individual structure must remain within the vocabulary of details consistent with its particular style. Construction, reconstruction, or rehabilitation of any building within the district must be accomplished within the parameters of scale, materials, and detailing typical of pre-1945 structures, and must be of a design that is consistent or compatible with an architectural style authentic to the District.

3.3 CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS AND NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

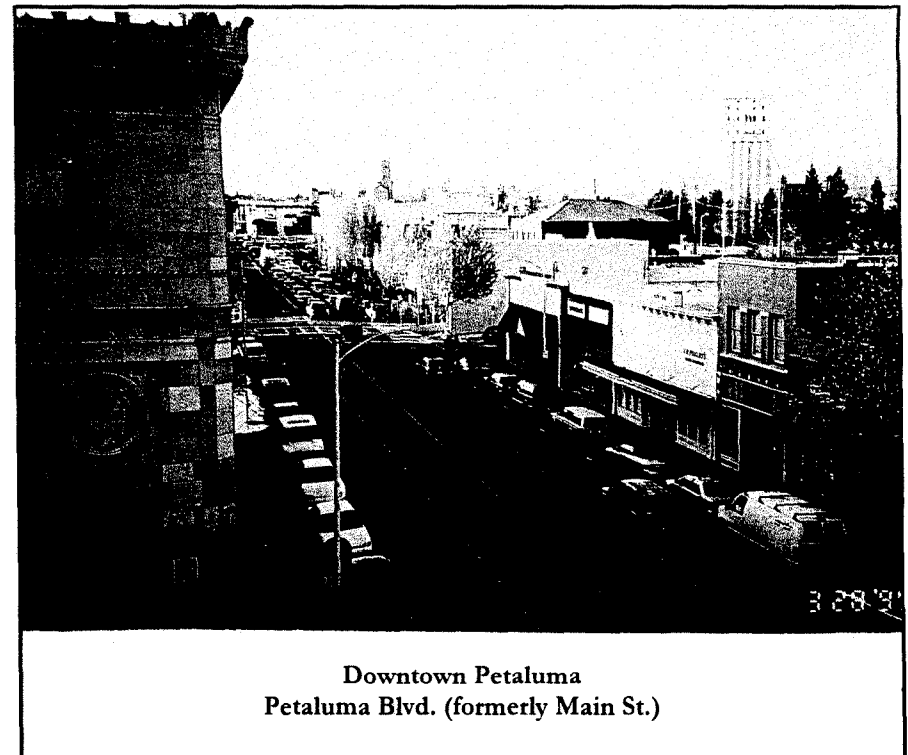
Buildings are either contributing or non-contributing buildings to the Historic Commercial District. Both contributing and non-contributing buildings are subject to the provisions of these Guidelines. The Guidelines generally are intended to preserve the architectural styles of the period of origin of contributing buildings, and to encourage the restoration of non-contributing buildings to their original historical design.

A contributing building is a structure generally constructed before 1945 which retains its original architecture, scale, mass, and other features to the degree that it contributes to the historical sense of time and place of the district. The building may have its own individual significance or may have strong historical ties to activities, events, or individuals important to the development of the City.

A non-contributing building is a structure that was either constructed after the defined period of significance, in this case 1945 or later, or is a historic building which no longer conveys its significance due to inappropriate additions or alterations. A non-contributing building may become contributing through rehabilitation and the application of the design criteria. Therefore, non-contributing buildings may also have historic relevance of their own associated with their period of construction, and are also subject to the provisions of these Guidelines.

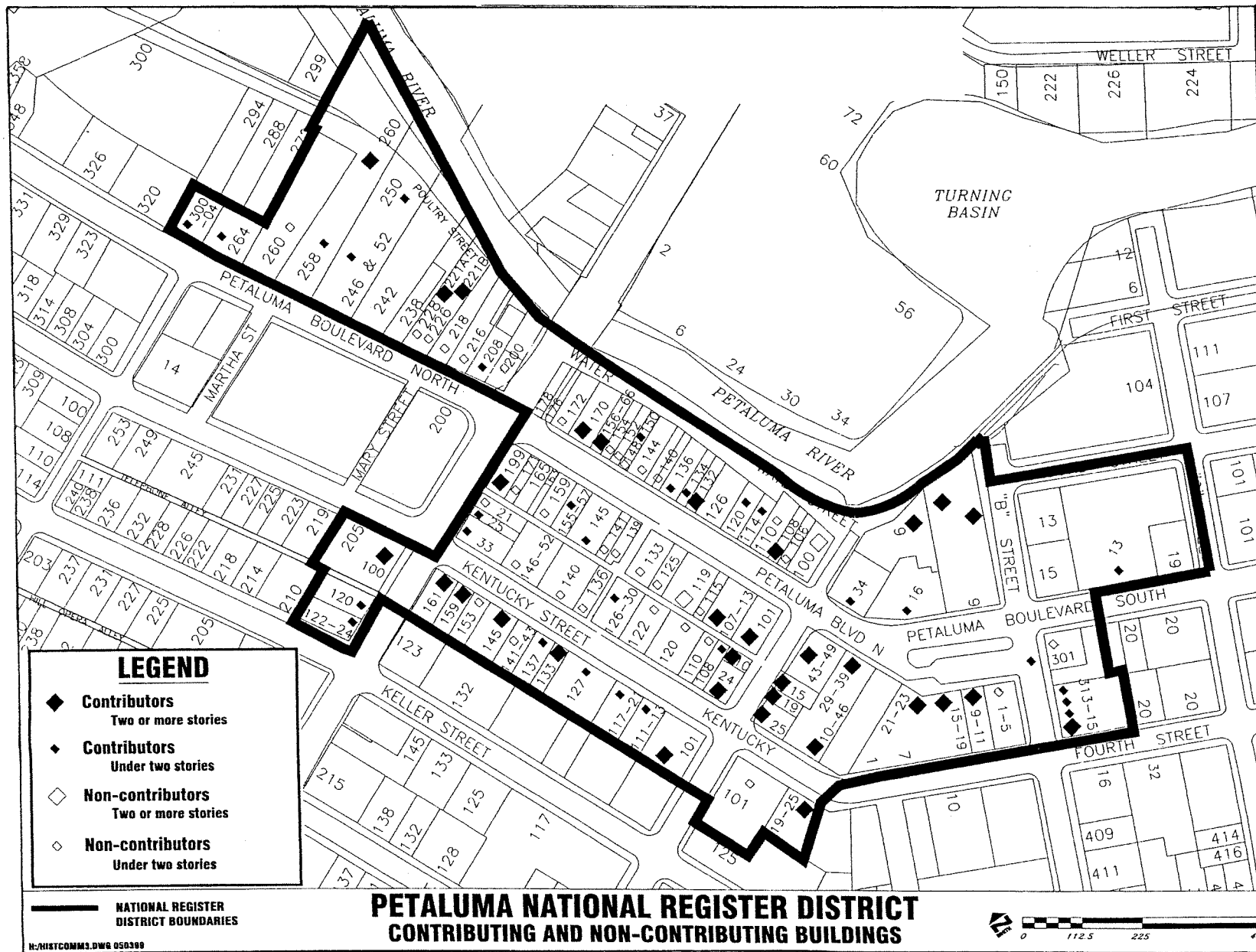
Certain economic incentives exist to encourage rehabilitation and enhance the integrity of the Historic District. These incentives are discussed further in Section 8 of these Guidelines.

A building survey conducted in 1994 of the downtown area, which served as the basis for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, identified 63 contributing buildings and 33 non-contributing buildings (see Figure 2, Contributing and Non-Contributing Buildings in the Downtown Commercial District). The National Register District Nomination Form, included in Appendix 1 of this document, provides a detailed description of these resources.



Downtown Petaluma
Petaluma Blvd. (formerly Main St.)

FIGURE 2



4.0 DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible the compatible use of a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Historically, building modifications were made as the needs of the use changed. Many of these alterations were sympathetic to the original character of the structure and may have taken on historic significance themselves. Other alterations, undertaken to “modernize” the building, were unsympathetic changes that eroded the historic integrity of the facade.

The Guidelines recognize that changes to buildings will, and need to occur over time. To this end, the focus of this document is to ensure that future changes do not damage the original or existing historic building fabric and that the results of building rehabilitation enhance the overall design integrity of the building. This can be accomplished by using existing Federal standards which address historic building and rehabilitation. These standards emphasize that the architectural style (Italianate, Queen Anne, etc.) of the building be reviewed in relation to its surroundings and the building’s visual character (i.e., distinguishing features, setting, or other aspects of the building).

The following sketch and photos illustrate the various architectural styles of buildings in the downtown.





**The Odd Fellows Building, 109-113 Petaluma Blvd. North
Second Empire Style Building, Constructed in 1871, 1909 & 1926**

(Note: the "sale" sign would not be an approved sign; will use an alternate photo of the building without the sign for the final printing of the Guidelines.)

**The Herold Building, 161 Kentucky Street
Queen Anne Style, Constructed in 1899**



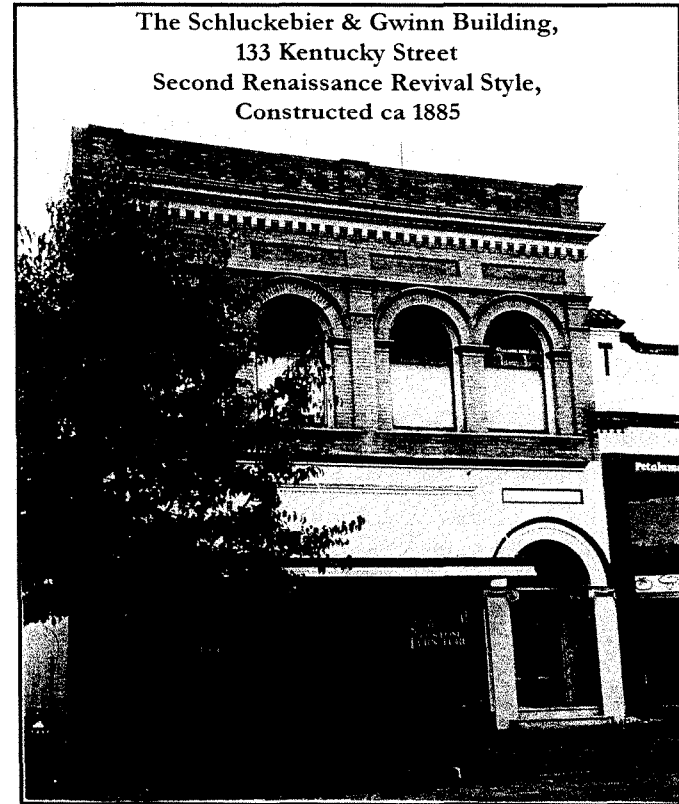
**LanMart Building, 29-39 Petaluma Blvd. North
Mission Revival Style, Constructed in 1911
(Note: the sandwich board sign would not be an approved sign)**



**Hotel Petaluma, 100 Washington Street
Mediterranean Revival Style, Constructed in 1923**



**The Schluckebier & Gwinn Building,
133 Kentucky Street
Second Renaissance Revival Style,
Constructed ca 1885**



**Couches, Etc., 101 Kentucky Street
Streamline Moderne Style, Constructed in 1938**



4.1 SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION AND GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

All proposed rehabilitation of buildings within the Petaluma's Historic Downtown Commercial District shall be done in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Appendix 2). These standards include recommendations on the materials which should be used and the methods to follow when rehabilitating historic buildings. The Interior Secretary's standards emphasize identifying, retaining, and preserving historic resources. In general, the removal of historic materials and the alteration of character-defining features and spaces should be avoided. In addition, repair of these features is emphasized over replacement.

The standards are general in nature and not specific to particular projects. Therefore, additional input from City staff in interpreting the standards and the City's Design Guidelines, as well as input from architects and other historic preservation specialists, is also strongly recommended.

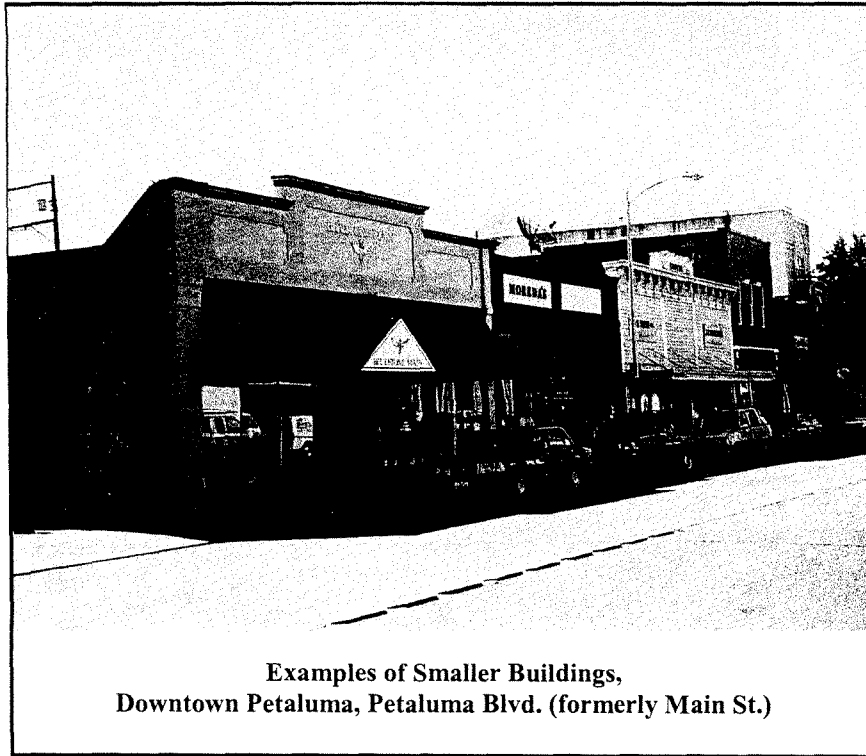
The City's Design Guidelines were developed to specifically address Petaluma's unique architectural character. The City's Guidelines must be used in conjunction with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

4.2 ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

Petaluma's Downtown has an outstanding sampling of commercial buildings of various architectural styles built during the last quarter of the 19th Century and up to 1950. The most distinctive of these are the iron front buildings located on Western Avenue between Petaluma Boulevard and Kentucky Street; Kentucky Street, between Western Avenue and Washington Boulevard; and Petaluma Boulevard between "B" Street and Washington Streets. The iron fronts fall within three different architectural styles: Italianate (1840-1885), Second Empire (1855-1885), and Queen Anne (1880-1910). Other architectural styles represented in Petaluma's Downtown include: Mission Revival (1890-1920), Mediterranean Revival (1915-1940), and Streamline Moderne (1920-1940).

4.3 BUILDING CHARACTER

Historic buildings, whether they represent a specific architectural style or not, possess visual character. Identifying the overall visual character of a building is nothing more than looking at its distinguishing physical aspects without focusing on its details. The major contributors to a building's overall character are embodied in the general aspects of its setting; the shape of the building, its roof and roof features such as dormers or cupolas; the various projections on the building including awnings and signs; the recesses or voids in a building, such as open galleries, or recessed balconies; the openings for windows and doorways; and finally the exterior materials.

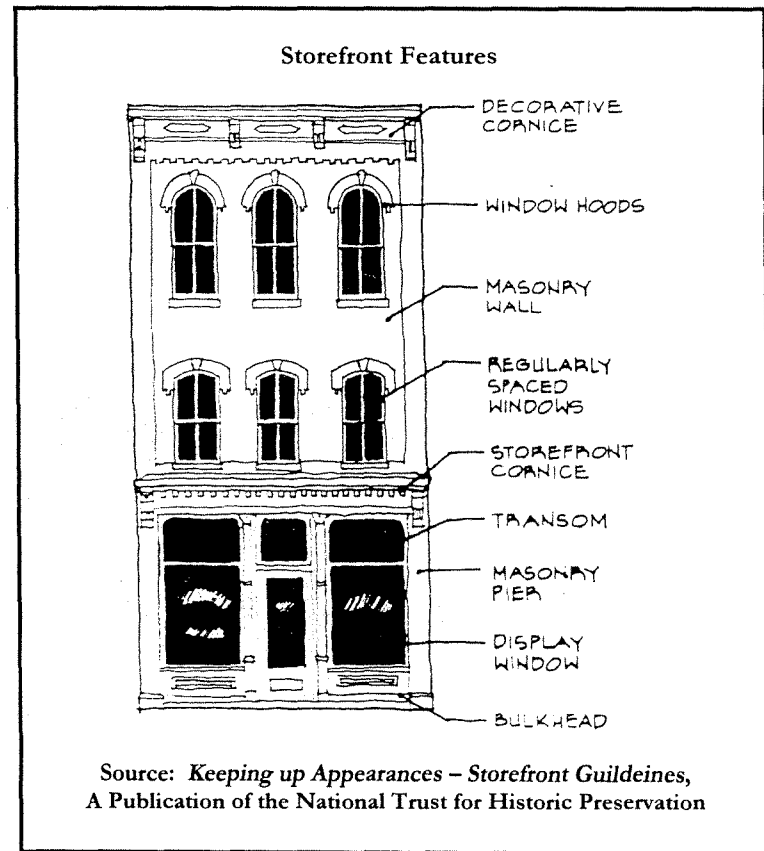


Examples of Smaller Buildings,
Downtown Petaluma, Petaluma Blvd. (formerly Main St.)

It is the storefront, which includes many of these elements, that is often considered the most important architectural feature of a commercial building. The storefront also plays a crucial role in a store's advertising and merchandising strategy to draw customers and increase business. Not surprisingly, then, the storefront has become the feature most commonly altered in a historic commercial building.

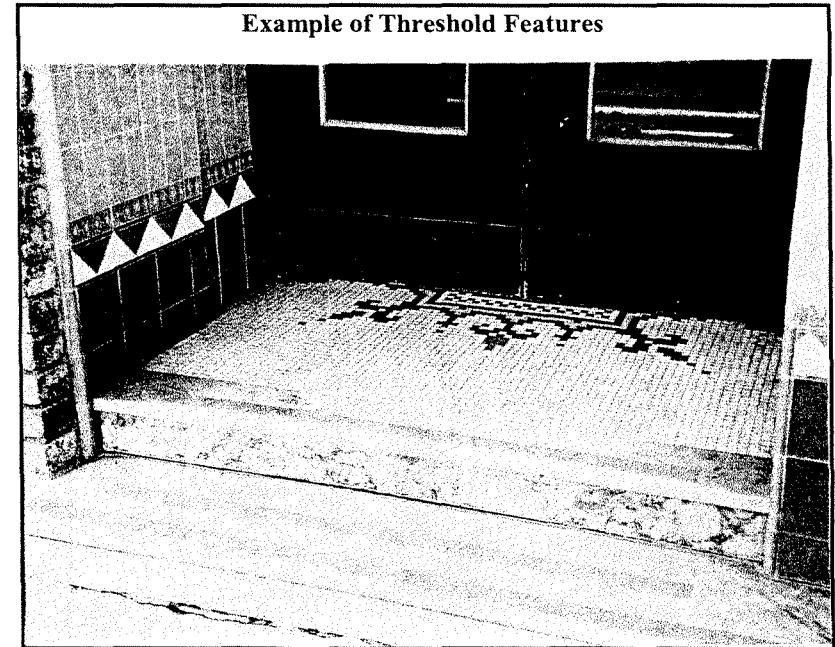
4.4 STOREFRONTS

The important key to a successful rehabilitation of a historic commercial building is planning and selecting treatments that are sensitive to the architectural character of the storefront. As a first step, it is therefore essential to identify and evaluate the existing



storefront's construction materials, architectural features, and the relationship of those features to the upper stories. This evaluation will permit a better understanding of the storefront's role in, and significance to, the overall design of the building.

A second and equally important step in planning the rehabilitation work is a careful examination of the storefront's physical condition to determine the extent and nature of work needed. In most cases, this examination is best undertaken by a qualified professional. The following sections address construction materials and storefront features most commonly replaced or altered.

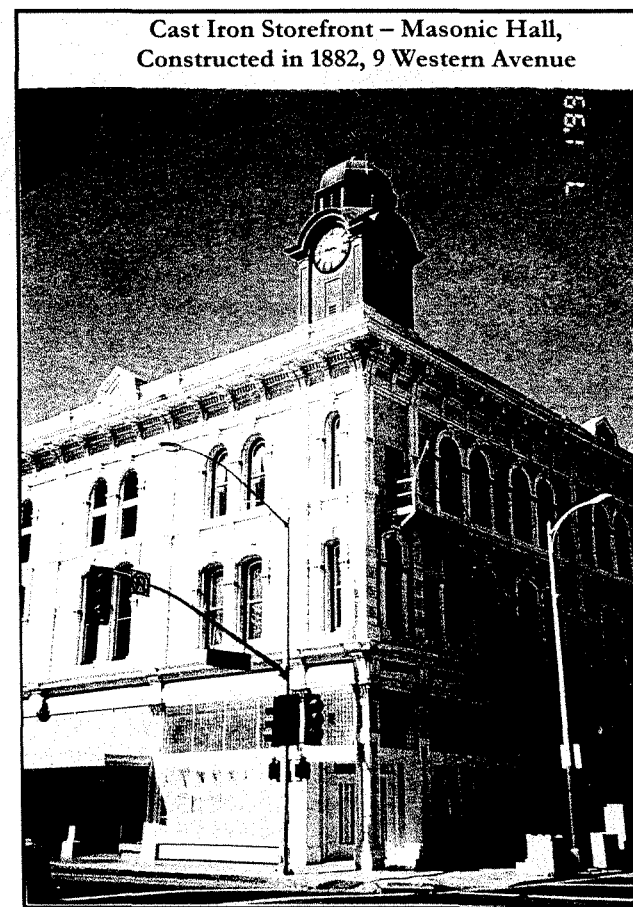
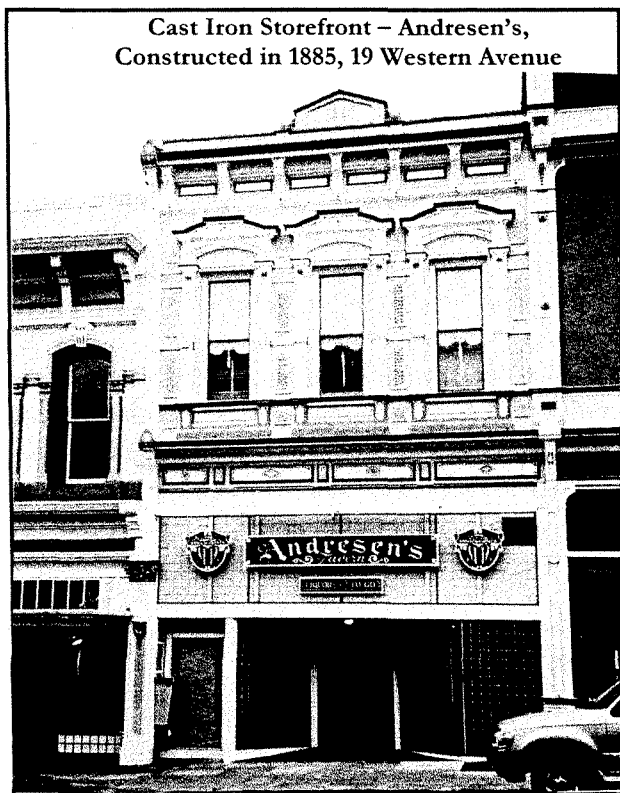


4.4-1 Metal Storefronts

Rehabilitating metal storefronts can be a complex and time consuming task. Before steps are taken to analyze or treat deteriorated storefronts, it is necessary to know the type of metal involved because each has unique properties and distinct preservation treatments. Storefronts were fabricated using a variety of metals, including cast iron, bronze, copper, tin, galvanized sheet iron, cast zinc, and stainless steel. Cast iron is shaped by molds and can withstand great compressive loads and is the most commonly used metal storefront material in Petaluma's Downtown.

Petaluma's cast iron storefronts are an essential contributor to the architectural significance of the downtown, and as such, must be preserved. In addition, the restoration of non-contributing buildings to their original cast iron front facades is strongly encouraged.

The proper cleaning of metal storefronts should not be considered a "do-it-yourself" project. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards (Appendix 2) for more information on the appropriate treatment of cast iron storefronts.



4.4-2 Wood Storefronts

The key to the successful rehabilitation of wooden storefronts is a careful evaluation of existing physical conditions. Moisture, vandalism, insect attack, and lack of maintenance can all contribute

to the deterioration of wooden storefronts. Paint failure should not be mistakenly interpreted as a sign that the wood is in poor condition and is therefore irreparable.

Wooden storefronts were historically painted to deter the harmful effects of weathering, as well as to define and accent architectural features. Repainting exterior woodwork is thus an inexpensive way to provide continued protection from weathering and to give the storefront a fresh appearance. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards (Appendix 2) for more information on the appropriate treatment of wood exteriors.

4.4-3 Masonry Storefronts

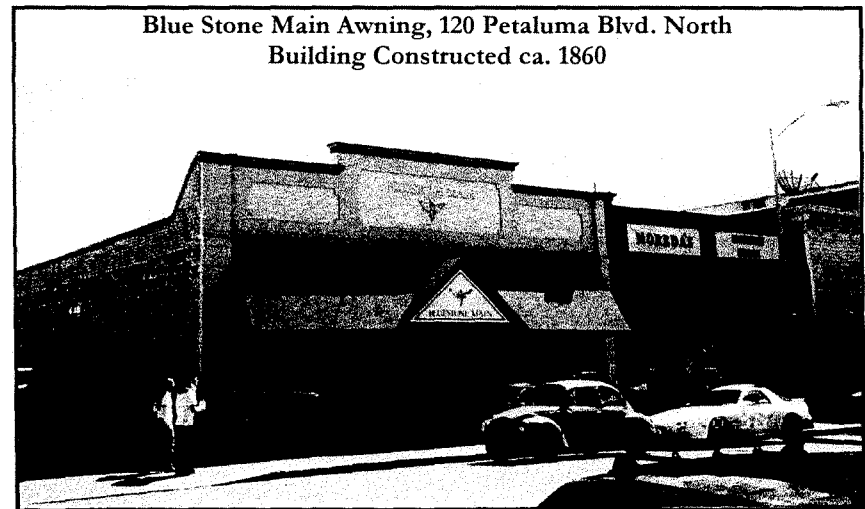
Some storefronts are constructed of brick or stone, and, like their metal and wooden counterparts, also may have been subjected to physical damage or alterations over time. Although mortar may have disintegrated, inappropriate surface coatings applied, and openings reduced or closed, careful rehabilitation will help restore the visual and physical integrity of the masonry storefront. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards (Appendix 2) for more information on the appropriate techniques for repairing, replacing, and cleaning masonry.

4.5 AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

4.5-1 Standards for Awnings

Awnings can become an important element of storefront design. The use of awnings is an effective means of creating an inviting space in front of a store where people may step away from the flow of traffic and find a shady, protected area.

An awning should not dominate the storefront; instead, it should be an effective element coordinated with the overall building or storefront image. The valance of an awning can be used as an integral and creative location for signs, perhaps serving as the primary message area.



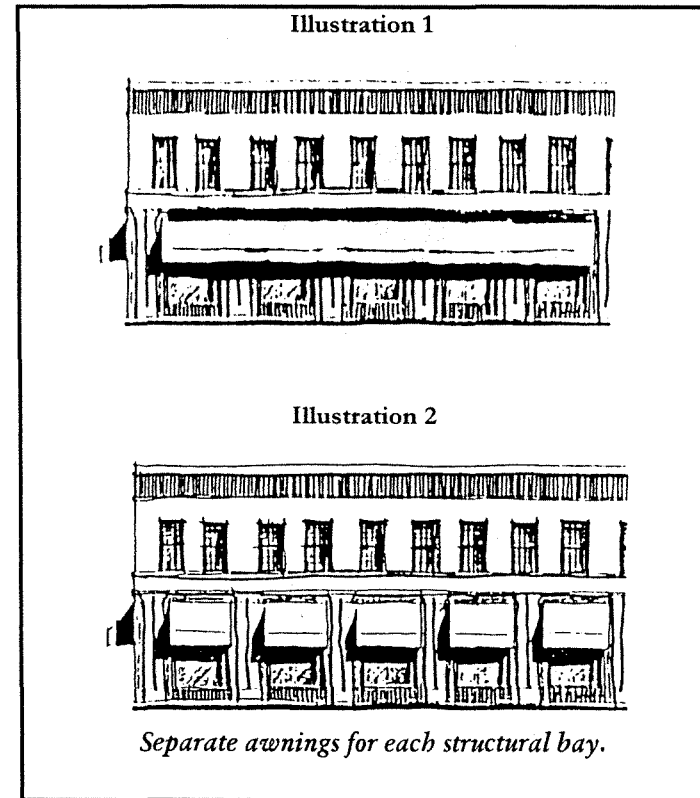
The canvas awning was an important design element in the traditional storefront. It provided cover, added color, and served as a transition between the storefront and the upper facade. Most buildings that face the sun had awnings. (The Petaluma Library and the Petaluma Historical Museum have extensive historic photograph collections, and is are invaluable resources in locating photos depicting the use of traditional awnings on original storefronts.)

An awning can be attached above the display windows and below the cornice or sign panel. It may be mounted between the transom and the display window, which allows light into the store while shading the merchandise and pedestrians from the sun.

An awning should reinforce the frame of the storefront and should not cover the piers or the space between the second-story window sills and the storefront cornice.

Awnings, like signs, can be used to excess on building facades. Care must be taken not to overpower a building with awnings, and not to cover up or destroy the architectural quality of a building.

Illustration #1 is an example of how NOT to improve your building with awnings. Instead, a more appropriate solution would have been to install individual awnings at each window. Some buildings, because of their design, will not adapt to awnings successfully, as shown in Illustration #2.



Awnings used in alleyways can be an effective means of adding color and texture to the flat brick walls, emphasizing rear or side entrance locations and integrating front, side and rear facades. The sides and rears of buildings, which do not face alleys can be integrated with the storefront through the use of awnings; however, care should be taken to provide proper clearance for delivery vehicles.

The following specific standards shall apply to the use of awnings:

- Awnings shall reflect the character of the building, particularly in the use of materials and the selection of colors;
- The highest point of an awning shall not be higher than the midpoint of the space between the second story window sills and the top of the first floor storefront window or transom. The purpose of this requirement is to leave a proportionate space between the top of the awning and the windows, trim and other architectural elements. The attachment location shall be in proportion with the awning and architectural elements, which comprise the building. Awning shape shall relate to the window/door opening as well.
- The minimum height of an awning, or a sign hung from an awning, shall be 8 feet from the lowest point to the sidewalk. The awning may project no further than 7 feet from the building and at no time shall the awning project further than the edge of the sidewalk;
- The shape of the awning should be compatible with the architecture and scale of the building. Awnings that are barrelshaped, segmented arches, or round-ended create very distinctive images, but should not be used on buildings where such shapes would conflict with the building's key architectural elements. Flat, aluminum awnings also are strong discouraged.

4.5-2 Canopies

With a few exceptions, such as the canopy noted in Photo 20 below, flat, continuous canopies generally detract from the historic character of a building and are strongly discouraged. If a new canopy is proposed, it shall follow the regulations for new awnings. If a flat canopy exists, it may be improved with a 12 inch awning-type valance.



4.6 PAINT COLOR

Painting can be one of the most dramatic improvements made to a building. Choosing the right combination of colors can unify the building elements within the facade as well as relate the building to others on the street.

Paint analysis can reveal the storefront's historic paint colors and may be worth undertaking if a careful restoration is desired. At a minimum, the paint color should be appropriate to the style and setting of the building. The color selection should also complement the building in question as well as other buildings on the block. In general, color schemes for wall and major decorative trim or details should be kept simple. In most cases the color or colors chosen for a storefront should be used on other painted exterior detailing (windows, shutters, cornices, etc.) to unify upper and lower portions of the facade.

Three rules apply with regard to painting historic buildings:

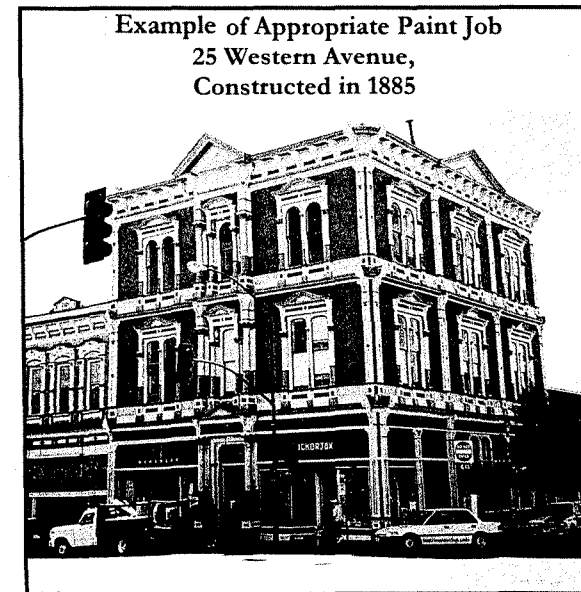
- Unpainted brick or stone buildings shall not to be painted;
- Iron cast storefronts shall be preserved and not altered with abrasive cleaning;
- As a general rule, removing paint from historic exterior woodwork should be avoided unless absolutely necessary.

Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards (Appendix 2) for further information on painting, paint removal, and exterior building materials.

4.6-1 Color Selection

The base color appears on the upper wall and piers flanking the storefront. A color should be selected that relates to the surrounding buildings and the architectural details of the building itself.

The major trim color defines the decorative elements of the building, tying together the upper facade trim and the storefront. The trim color should compliment the base color. If there is a natural stone or terra-cotta trim on the facade, it should serve as a trim color. Major trim elements include the building cornice, storefront cornice, window frames, sills and hoods, and storefront frame, columns, and bulkheads (including aluminum framing).



The minor trim color should enhance the color scheme established by the base and major trim. Often a darker shade of the major trim can be used to highlight the window sashes, doors, and selective cornice and bulkhead details. Care should be taken not to over-decorate the facade.

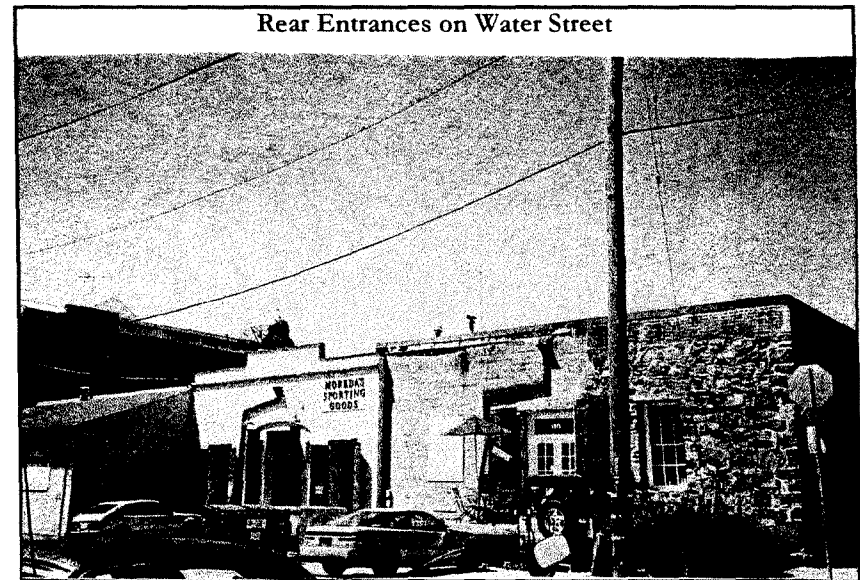
Color can also be used to minimize facade problems visually. An upper cornice can be recreated with a one dimensional paint scheme, and inappropriate materials can be made more compatible through the use of appropriate paint colors.

4.7 REAR ENTRANCES

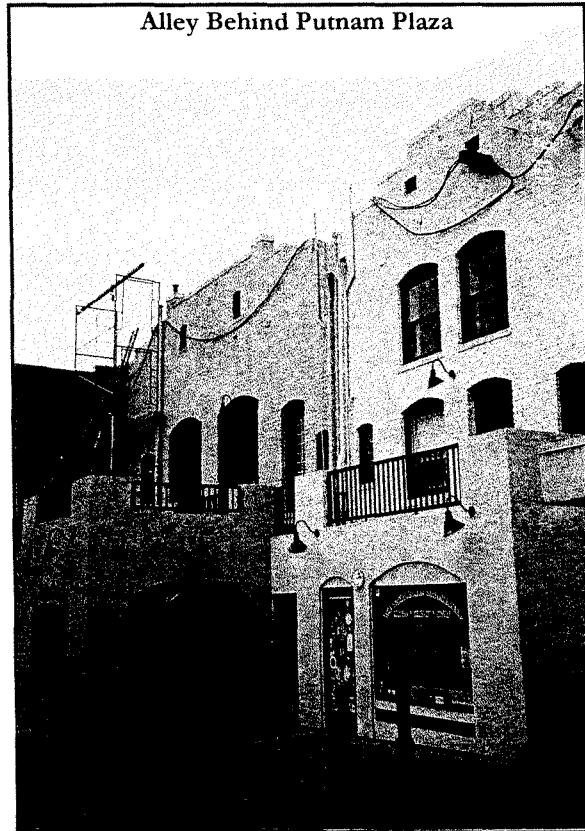
As parking areas are developed behind stores, the backs of buildings are becoming more visually important, particularly where the rear of buildings face the Petaluma River, such as Water Street, or a public accessway, such as Putnam Plaza. By improving the appearance and developing rear entrances, this back facade can serve for more than just deliveries. A rear entrance can provide direct customer access to businesses from parking areas as well as improve circulation between the parking lots and the street.

A rear entrance may be the primary access point for customers parking in lots behind the building. Therefore, when planning to use a rear entrance, business owners should consider the following:

- Display areas should also be prominently located in the rear of the business. Back windows can also serve as secondary display windows;
- Awnings can be used to provide quick visual identification;



- Rear business areas should be accessible and clear of clutter; storage areas should be out of sight;
- The rear facade and surrounding area should be clean and well maintained, offering an inviting atmosphere that welcomes customers;
- A small compatible sign at the rear door should identify the business;
- Use of planter boxes in sunny locations can noticeably brighten up a rear entrance;
- Refuse containers should be hidden behind a fence or simple enclosure.



4.8 MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT

Mechanical equipment, including, but not limited to, utility equipment, antennas, and roof mounted equipment, shall be screened. The method of screening shall be architecturally integrated with the structure in terms of materials, color, shape, and size. Equipment shall be screened by solid building elements (i.e., parapet walls) instead of after-the-fact add-on screening, such as wood or metal slats. Telecommunication equipment shall comply with the provisions of Chapter 14.44, Telecommunications Facility and Antenna Criteria, of the Municipal Code.

4.4-34.9 MAJOR REHABILITATION

A non-contributing building can be restored to become a contributor to the district. The first step is to locate photographs to identify what the building looked like during its period of significance. The Petaluma Library and the Petaluma Historical Museum both have large collections of historic photographs of the downtown area.

Once the building's character defining features are identified for the district's period of historic significance, a rehabilitation program can be prepared and implemented. The rehabilitation should follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, in addition to the standards outlined in these Guidelines.

5.0 SIGNS

In most cases, the architectural design of a building determines the location, size, and shape of the primary wall sign. Wall signs, either painted directly onto the wall or pre-manufactured and affixed to the building, should fit within the specified sign panel component of the building and not cover important architectural elements such as transom windows or vertical piers. The primary sign should be treated as an architectural element consistent with the building's architectural style and character.

A successful sign can reinforce the image of the Downtown as well as serve the needs of the business. Signs make a significant contribution to the general image and attractiveness of the commercial area. Well-designed signs contribute to the character of a storefront, while expressing something about the visual and economic vitality along a streetscape. Signs serve as symbols for a business, not only identifying the name of the establishment but also communicating the "quality" of the business, and expressing the business owner's commitment to maintaining an attractive storefront that is compatible with the streetscape.

5.1 SIGN DEFINITIONS

The following terms shall be defined as follows:

Awnings signs are lettering or simple graphics sewn or otherwise affixed to the awning valance.

External illumination is when the light source is an external part of the sign.

Flush mounted signs are signboards or individual die-cut letters placed on the face of the building. Usually there is a recessed or horizontal molded band on buildings that were designed to accommodate this type of sign.

Hanging signs are hung from sidewalk coverings (i.e., awnings or canopies) or are mounted on the building perpendicular to the sidewalk. Since they are also typically placed near eye level, they can be very effective in attracting the attention of pedestrians.

Icon or graphic signs are the oldest type of commercial sign. These signs illustrate, by their particular shape, the nature of the business within. They are the easiest to read and identify and are therefore well suited to vehicular as well as pedestrian traffic.

Internal illumination is when the light source is an internal component of the sign. These types of signs can be, but are not necessarily limited to, internally illuminated individual letters and "back-lit" or "halo" signs where the solid opaque letters are raised from the building face and the light source is projected onto the wall from behind the letters. Internal illumination does not preclude exposed neon.

Projecting signs are placed on the second story facade and "project" out from the building.

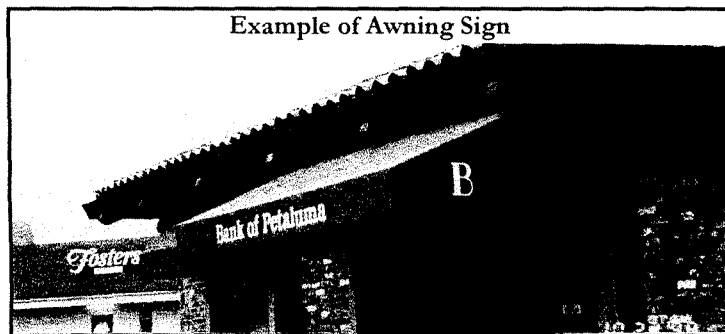
Sign panel is that portion of the building above the storefront display windows and below the second-story window sills.

Window signs are also pedestrian oriented. They are common, and when properly placed, leave the majority of display area open for pedestrian window shopping.

5.2 STANDARDS FOR PERMITTED SIGNS

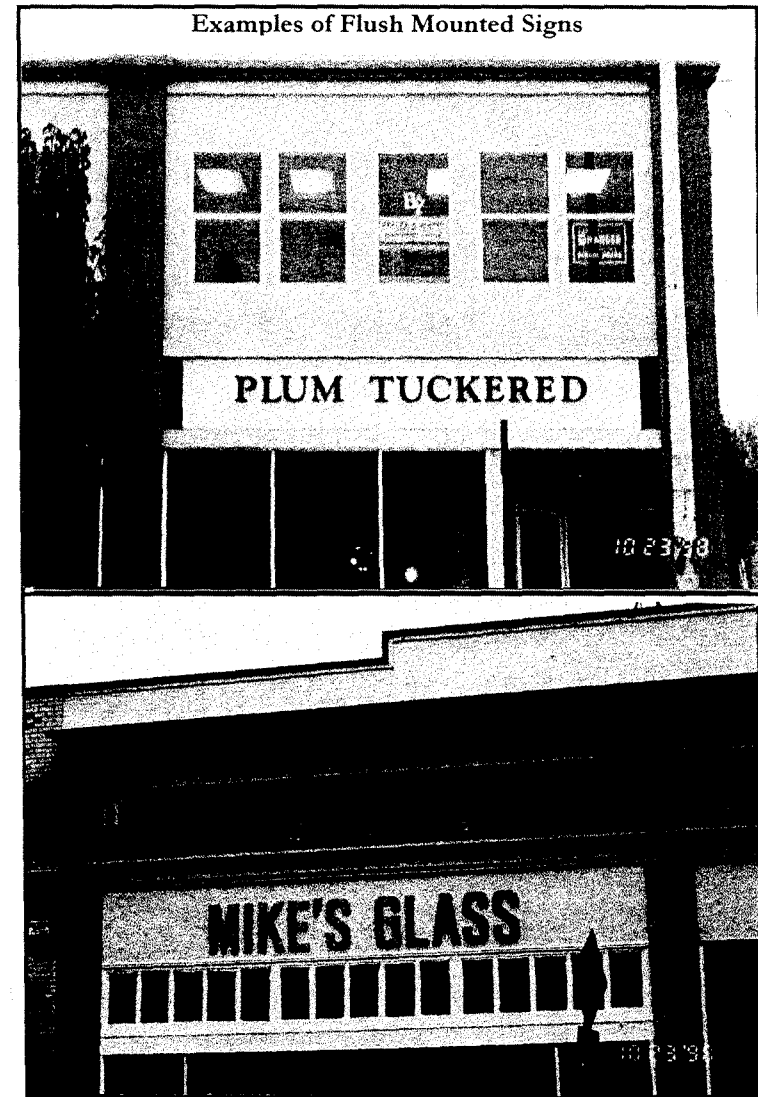
The following standards shall apply to signs permitted by the Design Guidelines and/or by the provisions of Sections 21-204 and 26-900, regarding signs, of the Zoning Ordinance.

Awning Signs. Lettering and simple graphics shall be limited to a maximum of 10 inches and shall be permitted only on the awning valance. Graphics and/or text on the angled or curved face of an awning are not permitted.



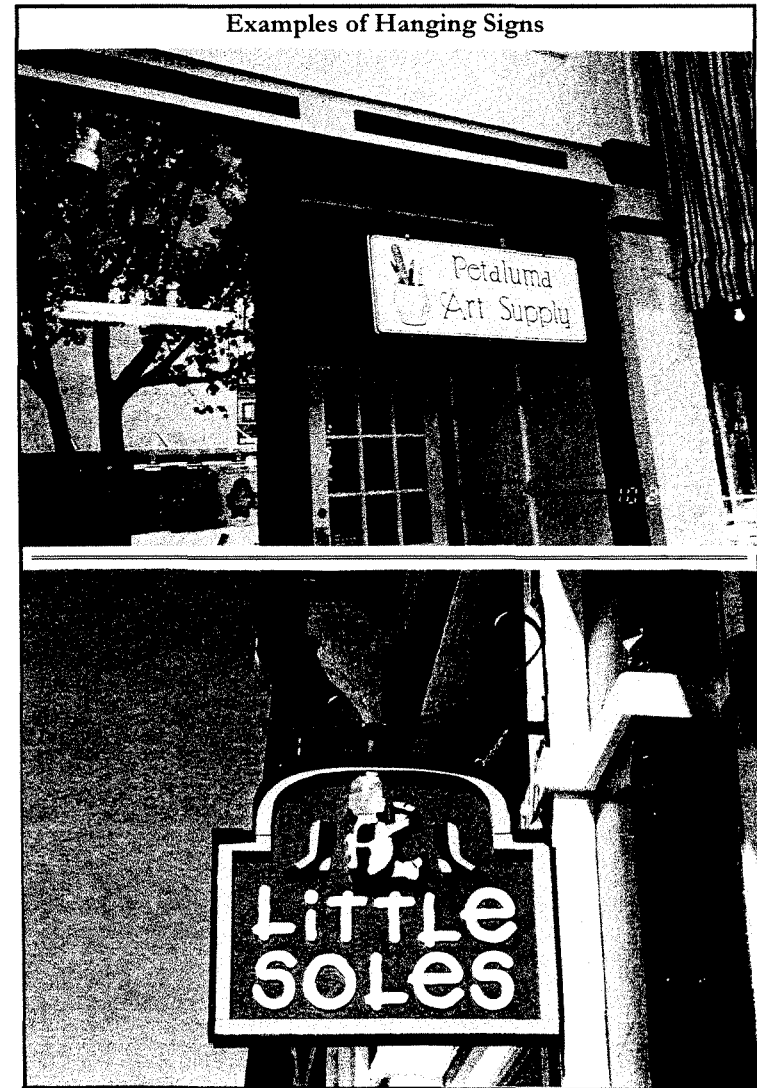
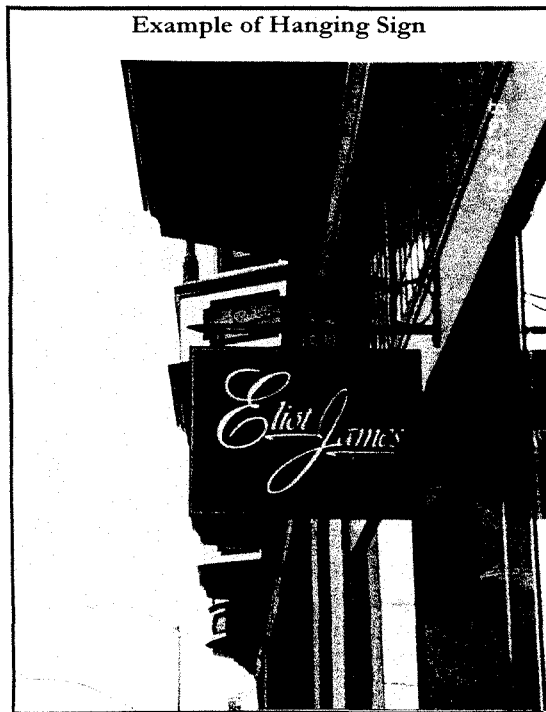
Flush Mounted/Wall Signs. These signs may extend the width of the storefront within the sign panels. The maximum overall sign height shall be limited to 24 inches; the maximum letter height shall be limited to 18 inches. The overall sign size shall be limited to a maximum coverage of one square foot per linear foot of frontage of the business establishment and shall be located no higher than whichever of the following is the lowest point:

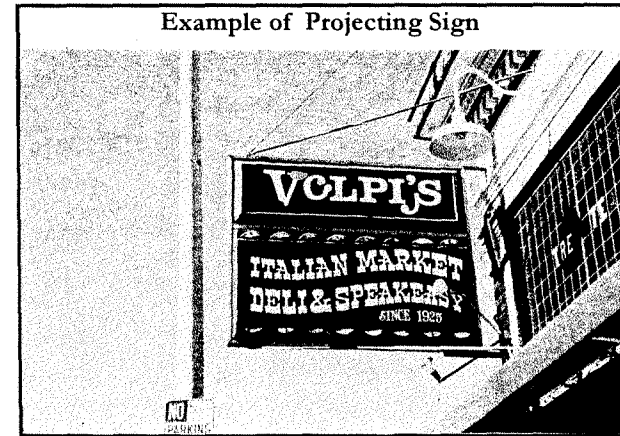
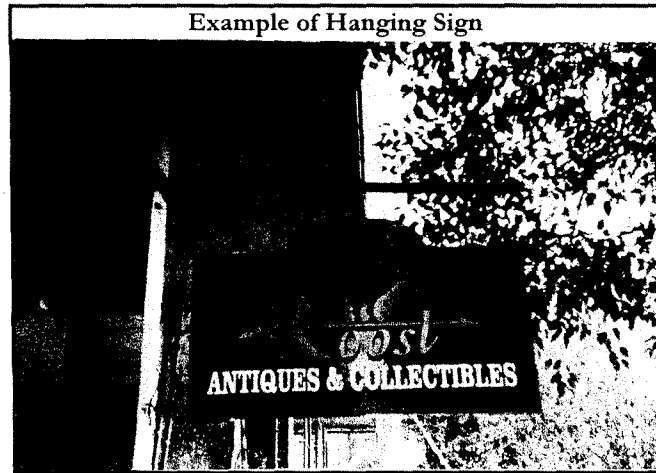
- 25 feet above grade;
- Below the sill line of the second floor windows; or
- Below the cornice line of the building.



Hanging Signs. Hanging signs shall be limited to a maximum of 5 square feet per business establishment. The lowest part of the sign shall be no less than 8 feet above the pedestrian walkway or sidewalk and project a maximum of 5 feet from the building wall. This sign type shall be located no higher than 15 feet above grade.

The size and placement of the hanging sign shall be selected so that it does not interfere with neighboring signs. No hanging sign shall be located less than 5 feet from any common wall or other point common to two separate establishments on the same property.



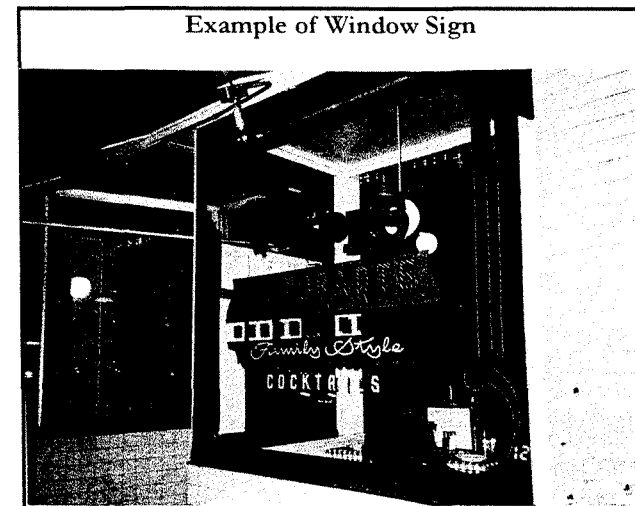


Projecting Signs. Projecting signs shall not exceed 10 square feet in area and not project over four feet, including the bracket, from the building wall surface. Projections may be greater than four feet if there are special circumstances that warrant a larger sign (i.e., building setback, etc.). No projecting sign shall be located less than 15 feet from any other projecting sign, regardless of whether other similar sign types are located on the same property.



Window Signs (both permanent and temporary). On the ground level, coverage shall not exceed 20 percent of the total window and door area visible from the exterior of the building. On the second level, coverage shall not exceed 30 percent per window. No window signs shall be permitted above the second level. Window signs shall be displayed so as not to obscure the display area.

Temporary window signs identifying sales or special events shall be calculated as a part of the total permitted coverage and limited to a total of two 30 day periods per calendar year.

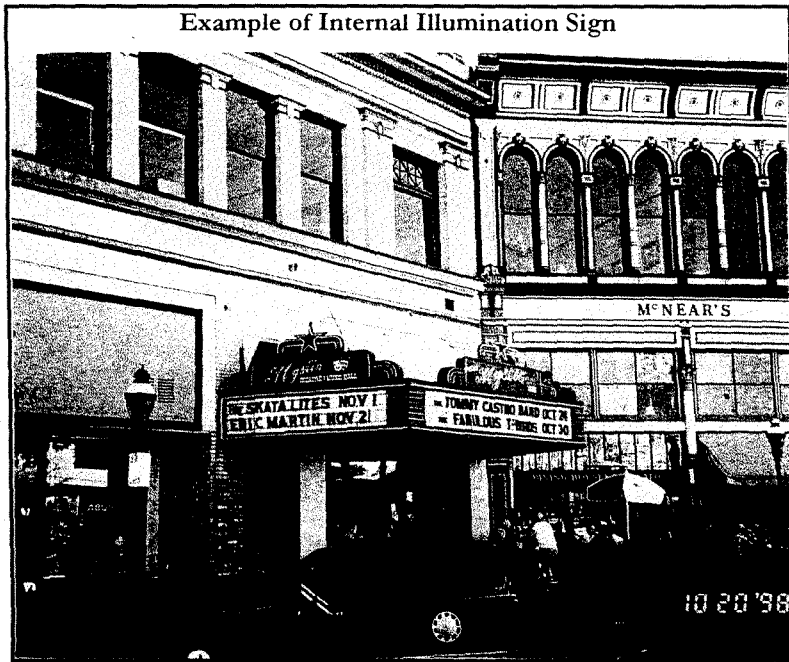


5.3 SIGN DESIGN

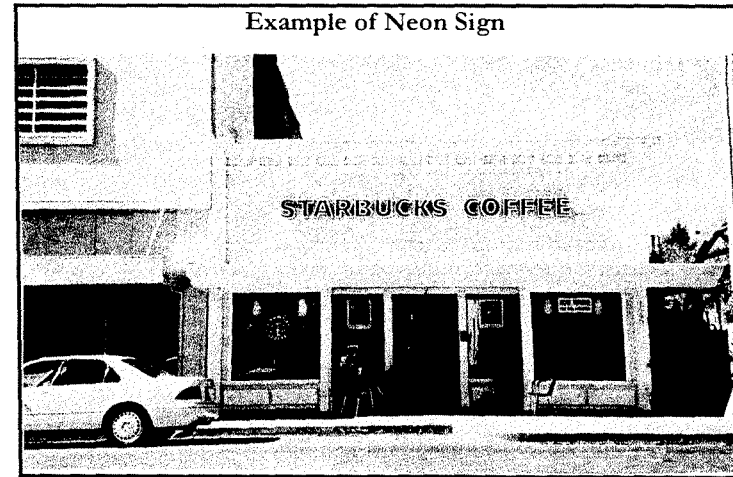
Content. A sign should express an easy to read, direct message. The fewer the words used to communicate a message, the more effective the sign. Too much information will make the message confusing or difficult to comprehend from a passing vehicle. If additional information is necessary, it shall be contained on a smaller sign placed in a secondary location such as the front door, display window, or adjacent piers.

A storefront shall be limited to no more than two signs: one primary and one secondary. The name of the business should be the only message on the primary sign. Secondary signs may inform the customer of products sold or services rendered.

Illumination. External illumination or “back-lit/halo” illumination of signs is strongly encouraged for the Historic District. This approach to illuminating signs is more sensitive to the historic buildings in the District, is less intrusive to the District’s streetscape, and is more in keeping with the historic approach to signing a building. Light for externally illuminated signs should be contained within the sign frame and not spill over to other portions of the building.



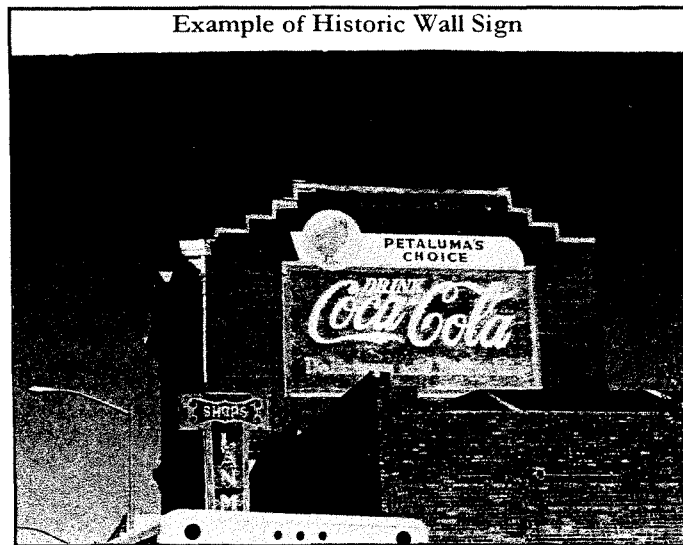
Example of Internal Illumination Sign



Example of Neon Sign

Legibility. The sign should communicate its message quickly and easily. The clearer the typestyle, the more readily it will be understood. Lettering that is difficult to read should be avoided on a primary sign.

Size and Placement. In most cases, the architectural design of a building suggests the location, size, and shape of the primary sign. Signs should relate in placement and size to other building elements and should fit within the specified sign panels. The location and size of the sign shall not cover any architectural elements such as windows, cornices, decorative material, or vertical piers. Individual signs in a single storefront should relate to each other in design, size, color, placement on the building, and lettering style.



5.4 PROHIBITED SIGNS

The following types of signs are prohibited within the Historic Commercial District:

- Animated signs, except time and temperature displays;
- Balloons and other inflatable-type signs;
- Banners, flags, and pennants (except those specifically provided for and exemptions listed below);
- Off premise signs;
- Paper, cloth or plastic streamers and bunting (except holiday decorations);

- Roof signs;
- Rotating, moving, flashing signs, or lights;
- Sandwich board signs;
- Statues used for advertising;
- Traffic sign replicas;
- Vehicle signs, attached to parked vehicles to advertise a nearby business.

No advertising placards, banner, pennants or signs other than those specifically approved (i.e., as window signs, awning signs, temporary signs, etc.), shall be affixed on glass panes (interior or exterior), or on supports of shop windows and doors, on the exterior of the storefront, or within 10 feet of the building line. No signs shall be affixed to the interior of the store such that it faces and is visible from the exterior of the store.

Temporary banners may be allowed as a temporary sign, under the applicable provisions of the Sign Ordinance.

Use of permanent sale signs is prohibited. Temporary sale or special event signs may be located in the storefront window areas only as specifically permitted under the provisions of the Sign Ordinance.

A non-conforming sign which was legal when originally installed but which, due to changes in regulations, no longer conforms to existing standards, shall not be enlarged, extended, or moved to a different portion of the lot or parcel, except that a non-conforming sign may be reconstructed in such a way as to make it conforming.

5.5 EXEMPTIONS

The following shall be exempt from the provisions of this section:

- Murals not advertising a business, except that design review shall still be required;
- Building graphics not advertising a business;
- Building address numbers and historic building names;
- Banners within the City right-of-way advertising City-wide, temporary special events are subject to a separate review and approval process and are exempt from these Design Guidelines.

6.0 GUIDELINES FOR STREETSCAPES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

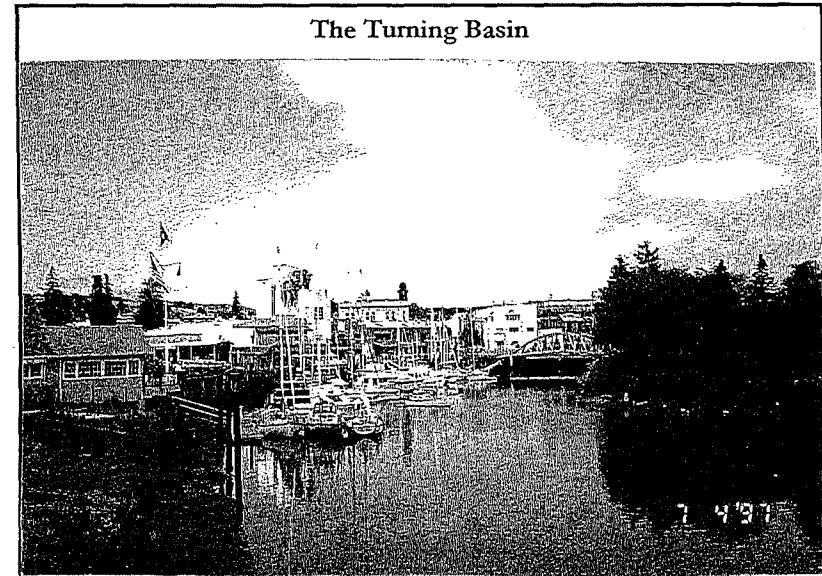
Any rehabilitation project should keep in mind the relationship between historic buildings and the streetscape features within the District (i.e. lamp posts, benches, newsstands, trees, planter boxes, etc.). These features help to define the historic character of the District and therefore should always be a part of rehabilitation plans.

Streetscapes in Petaluma's Historic Commercial District should be improved if a strong retail business environment is to be maintained and expanded. While individual businesses may improve the aesthetic quality of their buildings, shoppers need to be presented with a comprehensive area-wide revitalization scheme. The need for well designed, safe commercial environments to attract customers is well-documented in cities and towns across the country. The streetscape guidelines are a commitment by the City to assist in the continued revitalization within Petaluma's Downtown.

The streetscape design guidelines establish design criteria for improvements within the public right-of-way. These guidelines identify and coordinate the public streetscape design elements such as special paving, street tree plantings, benches, lighting, and other unique design features within the District. The guidelines will be used as a planning tool for public and private projects in conjunction with the development standards of the City's Zoning Ordinance.

6.2 IMAGE AND IDENTITY

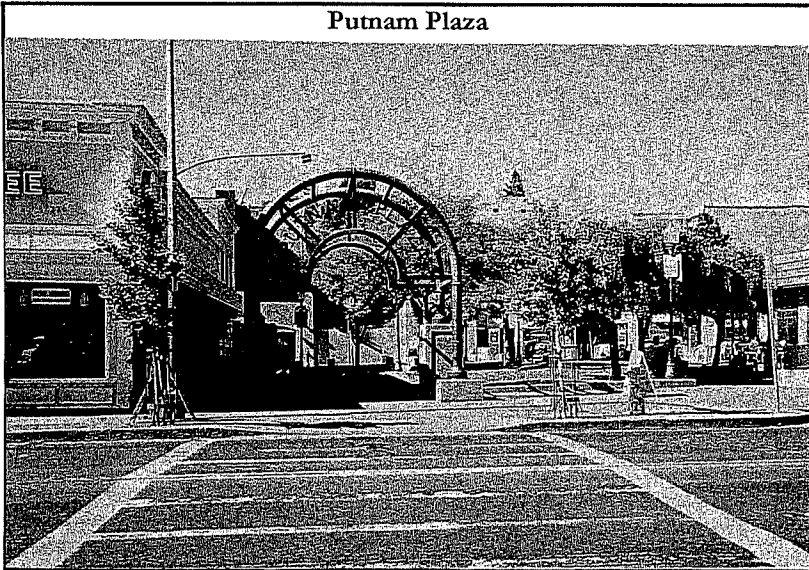
A person's mental image of downtown Petaluma is formed over time through direct experiences and information gained from personal observations and from other people. Opinions vary among individuals, whether they are residents, merchants, or tourists. An area's image is reflected in the ways people patronize businesses, negotiate traffic, visit the area, choose a restaurant, or decide where to stay overnight. Impressions of the area can be measured in objective criteria such as retail sales activity, pedestrian activity, traffic and assessed property valuation. Impressions can also be evaluated in more qualitative or perceptual terms such as clarity, distinctiveness, intensity of activity, openness, accessibility, and attractiveness.



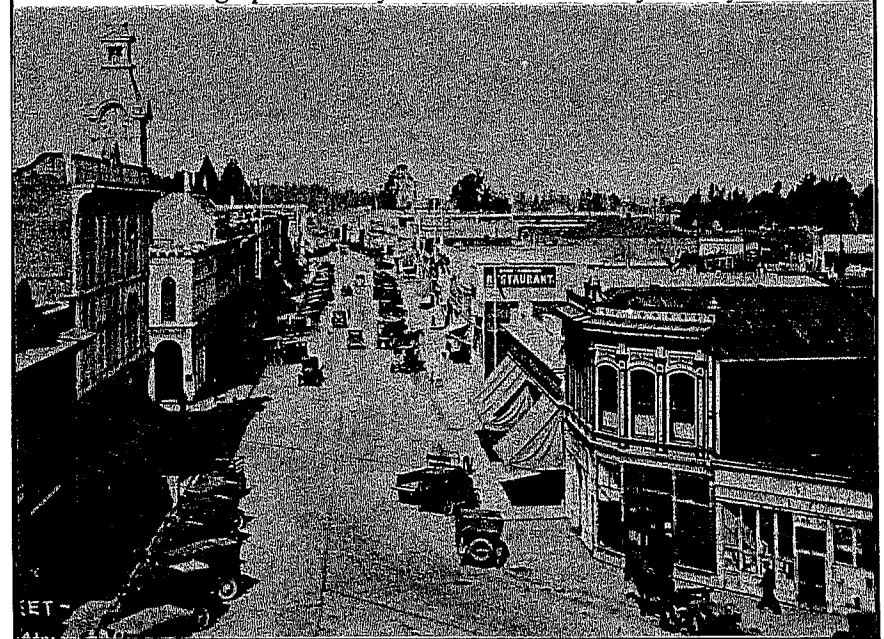
Successful, thriving commercial districts have four basic visual qualities:

- A clear sense of arrival, through a distinct change in landscape, built areas, or special entrances;
- A commercial or cultural “heart” which makes a statement about activities, history, commerce, or natural features which the community values. In some cities, it is a college campus; in others, an old plaza with an ancient tree, a cluster of financial institutions, a shopping street, or a historic district. In Petaluma, it is the area centered around the intersection of Western Avenue and Petaluma Boulevard and the Turning Basin, which served as the original downtown commercial area;

Putnam Plaza



Main Street (Petaluma Blvd.) Looking North
at the Masonic Building – 1922
Photograph Courtesy of the Sonoma County Library



- A clear organization of streets and districts which gives people a sense of direction and orientation and enables them to find their destination easily. The extent of confusion in traffic circulation and the amount of congestion increasingly figure in people’s perceptions of a particular place; and
- A sense of uniqueness. This quality can derive from a single feature, an area-wide design theme, or an event, which is held in a special place each year.

The streetscape design guidelines seek to reinforce these four qualities by focusing on the following items:

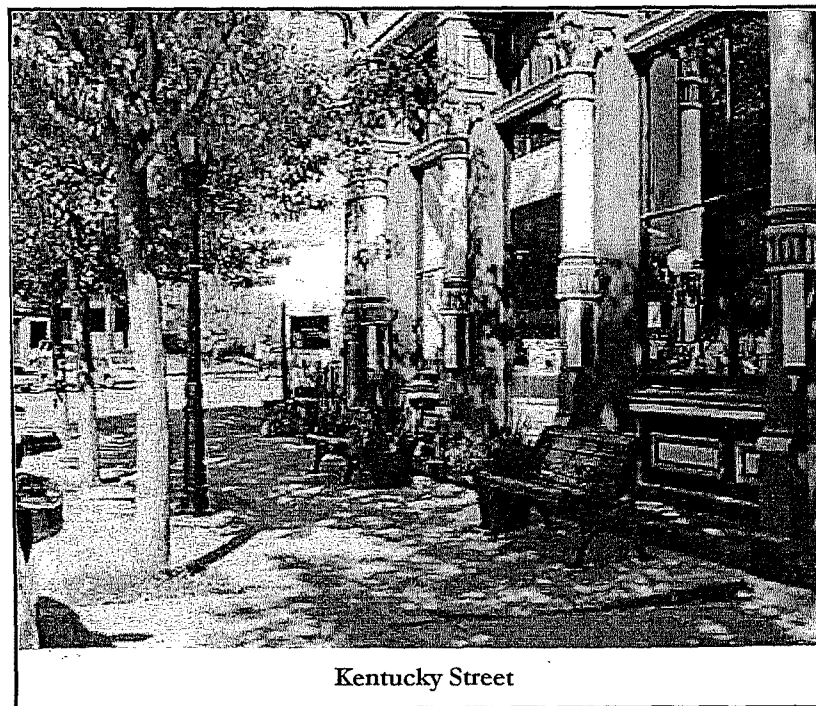
- Physical location/configuration of existing streets, buildings, and open spaces;
- Identification of important vehicular/pedestrian links;
- The need to provide shade and comfort for pedestrians; and
- Logical opportunities for major entry intersections, central area intersections and edge enhancement.

6.3 STREETScape ELEMENTS

In order to achieve a distinct and memorable streetscape environment in the Petaluma Historic Commercial District, it is important to focus improvement activities in highly visible locations. Therefore, components of the streetscape plan include:

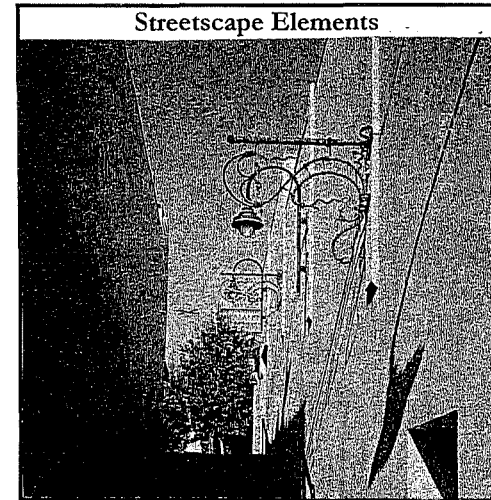
- Street Tree Planting;
- Pedestrian Level Street Lighting;
- Street Furniture:
 - benches
 - bus stop shelters
 - directional signs
 - newsstands/newsracks
 - planters
 - trash receptacles;

- Outdoor Use Areas;
- Mid-Block Crossings;
- Special Intersection Enhancements (such as crosswalk paving, added planting, and banners).



Kentucky Street

Appendix 4 depicts the various streetscape elements recommended for the Petaluma Historic Commercial District.



6.4 OUTDOOR USE AREAS

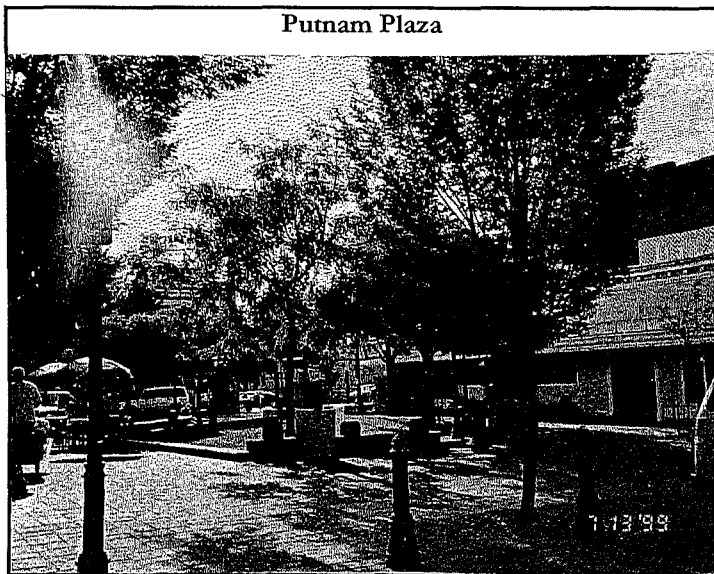
Outdoor use areas, such as café-style dining areas, are encouraged where space is available within the parcel to be developed, and may be allowed within the public right-of-way under certain conditions. These areas shall not obstruct pedestrian circulation or cause a public nuisance.

These areas may include facilities for dining, seating, or small scale performances and gatherings. Proposals shall be subject to design review. All furniture, fixtures, materials, and finishes shall be compatible with the design of the primary use and with the historic character of the downtown.

A City encroachment permit shall be required for outdoor use areas located within the public right-of-way, in addition to design review approval.

6.5 TREE PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

The City's "Downtown Area Tree Planting Guidelines" (Appendix 5), "List of Approved Street Trees" (Appendix 6), and "List of City Contacts for Tree Related Inquiries" (Appendix 7) should be reviewed for requirements applicable to the placement and planting of street trees.



7.0 GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

The construction of new buildings on vacant lots in the Downtown is strongly encouraged. The design of a new infill building, particularly its front facade, is a special challenge. The new facade should be designed to look appropriate and compatible in the midst of the surrounding buildings.

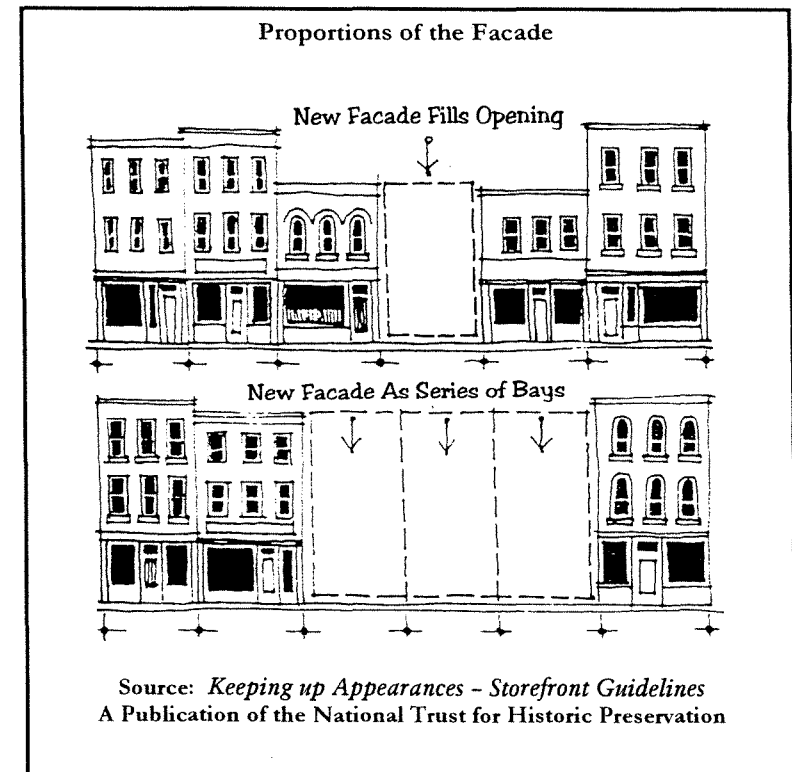
There is no definitive answer as to what constitutes good infill design. Good design will vary according to the surrounding setting. Because an infill building is new, it should look new. However, its appearance must always be sensitive to the character of its neighbors without mimicking them.

The following recommendations (identified in Subsections 7.1 through 7.6) should govern the visual relationship between an infill building and its neighbors.

7.1 PROPORTIONS OF THE FACADE

The average height and width of the surrounding buildings determine a general set of proportions for an infill structure. The infill building should fill the entire space and reflect the characteristic rhythm of facades along the street.

If the site is large, the mass of the facade can be broken into a number of small bays, to maintain a rhythm similar to the surrounding buildings.

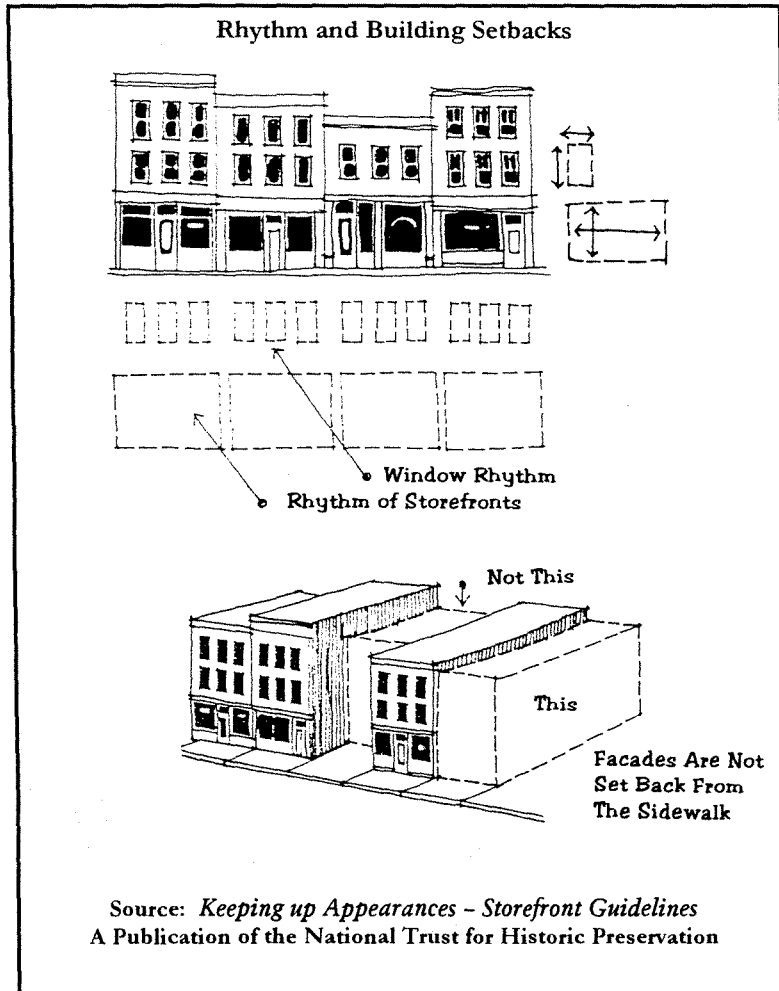


7.2 COMPOSITION

The composition of the infill facade (that is, the organization of its parts) should be similar to that of surrounding facades.

Rhythms that carry throughout the block (such as window spacing) should be incorporated into the new facade.

The size and proportion of window and door openings of an infill building should be similar to those on surrounding facades. The same applies to the ratio of window area to solid wall for the facade as a whole.



7.3 DETAILING

Infill architecture should reflect some of the detailing of surrounding buildings in window shapes, cornice lines, and brickwork.

7.4 MATERIALS

An infill facade should be composed of materials complimentary to the adjacent facades. The new buildings shall not unduly stand out as inappropriate or disconnected from the scheme of the surrounding buildings.

7.5 COLORS

The colors chosen for the face of an infill building shall compliment the colors of neighboring buildings.

7.6 BUILDING SETBACK

The new facade should be flush with its neighbors. If this cannot be achieved, the facade should be located such that it will present a natural break in the rhythm of the buildings along the street.

8.0 ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES OF BEING ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER

There are several economic advantages to property owners of buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A brief description of some of these advantages is listed below.

8.1 REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT

A commercial building that is listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places or is a contributor to a National Register District is eligible for a 20 percent rehabilitation tax credit. This tax credit equals 20 percent of the amount spent in a certified rehabilitation. A certified rehabilitation is one which meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (see Appendix 2) and is approved by the National Park Service as being consistent with the historic character of the property and, where applicable, with the district in which it is located. The National Park Service assumes that some alteration of the historic building will occur to provide for an efficient use. However, the project must not damage, destroy, or cover materials or features, whether interior or exterior, that help define the building's historic character. For a more detailed discussion of how the tax credit program works see "A Guide to Tax-Advantaged Rehabilitation," Appendix 3.



8.2 STATE HISTORIC BUILDING CODE

A commercial or residential building should be reviewed under the requirements of the State Historic Building Code if the building is:

- Listed on the National Register or the California Register of Historic Places;
- A registered California State Landmark;
- A Point of Historic Interest;
- Part of a local historic district or is a local landmark; or,
- Listed on a local inventory of historic structures.

Title 24, Part 8, of the State Historical Building Code, is the only building code in California appropriate to historic structures, districts, and sites. The State Historical Building Code mandates that reasonable alternatives be sought and adopted where historic fabric or historic perceptions would be jeopardized or compromised if subject to the requirements of the Uniform Building Code.

8.3 SEISMIC RETROFITTING

Appendix 3 indicates which buildings within the Petaluma Historic Commercial District are included on the City's list of Unreinforced Masonry (URM) buildings. Historic preservation tax credits may be used to help finance the seismic retrofitting of such a building. In addition, funds are available through the Petaluma Community Development Commission for seismic retrofitting of any building rehabilitation that involves an affordable housing component. Also, owners of historic buildings that are on the City's URM list may have permit and plan check fees waived when applying to do seismic work. Once work is completed, the property owner will be reimbursed up to \$2.00 per square foot of the actual work performed. For more information on this program, please contact the Chief Building Official at the City of Petaluma's Building Division (707-778-4302).

9.0 DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION PROCESS

A business or property owner planning any exterior work on a building in the historic district should contact the Planning Department early in the process. This will avoid potentially costly design revisions should the proposal be determined not to be consistent with these Guidelines.

9.1 FIRST STEPS

The design review process should begin with preliminary discussions with planning staff. Planning staff makes a determination of whether the project requires design review by the Historic and Cultural Preservation Committee, explains the procedures for filing an application (including required plans, fees, public noticing requirements, etc.) and discusses the Design Guidelines.

Projects located in the area between "C" and "D" Streets, Petaluma Boulevard, and the Petaluma River may also require City Council review, subject to the City Council's discretion.

9.2 WHO CONDUCTS DESIGN REVIEW

City staff reviews some applications for design review. Others are forwarded with recommendations from staff to the Historic and Cultural Preservation Committee. Depending upon the nature of the project, some applications require Planning Commission and/or City Council review and approval. Article 17, Preservation of the Cultural and Historic Environment, of the Zoning

Ordinance, outlines in greater detail, the review process and the appropriate approval body.

The Historic and Cultural Preservation Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council meetings are open to the public. Applicants are notified of all Committee meetings and when their application will be reviewed.

9.3 THE STAGES OF DESIGN REVIEW

Normally, design review is a two-stage process. It consists of conceptual design review, followed by final design review. Conceptual review is a schematic, preliminary level of review. Final review focuses on detailed features, such as materials, colors, landscaping, signs, and lighting. For simple projects, an applicant may request a consolidated review, which combines both conceptual and final reviews. One application is used for the entire review procedure.

9.4 WHAT IS THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

The current design review committee consists of the members of the Historic and Cultural Preservation Committee. The Historic and Preservation Committee includes the five members of the Site Plan and Architectural Review Committee (SPARC) plus two members representing historic preservation organizations. One member of the SPARC is a Planning Commissioner while the four other members are appointed by the City Council from the community at large. The two historic preservation members include a representative of the Petaluma Historical Museum and a representative of Heritage Homes of Petaluma.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

These Guidelines were developed with the assistance of representatives of the Petaluma Downtown Association and Heritage Homes of Petaluma. Their interest in a common goal of preserving the historic character of the Downtown, and their support during the preparation of this document will ensure that these Guidelines are successfully implemented. Special thanks also to Ross Parkerson of Petaluma for his time and effort in preparing detailed, precise sketches of historic buildings in the Downtown.

Petaluma Downtown Association

Heritage Homes of Petaluma

Petaluma Regional Library

Petaluma Historical Museum

Petaluma Chamber of Commerce

Ross Parkerson