
**South Allison Hill
BUSINESS FACADE
DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Using These Guidelines:

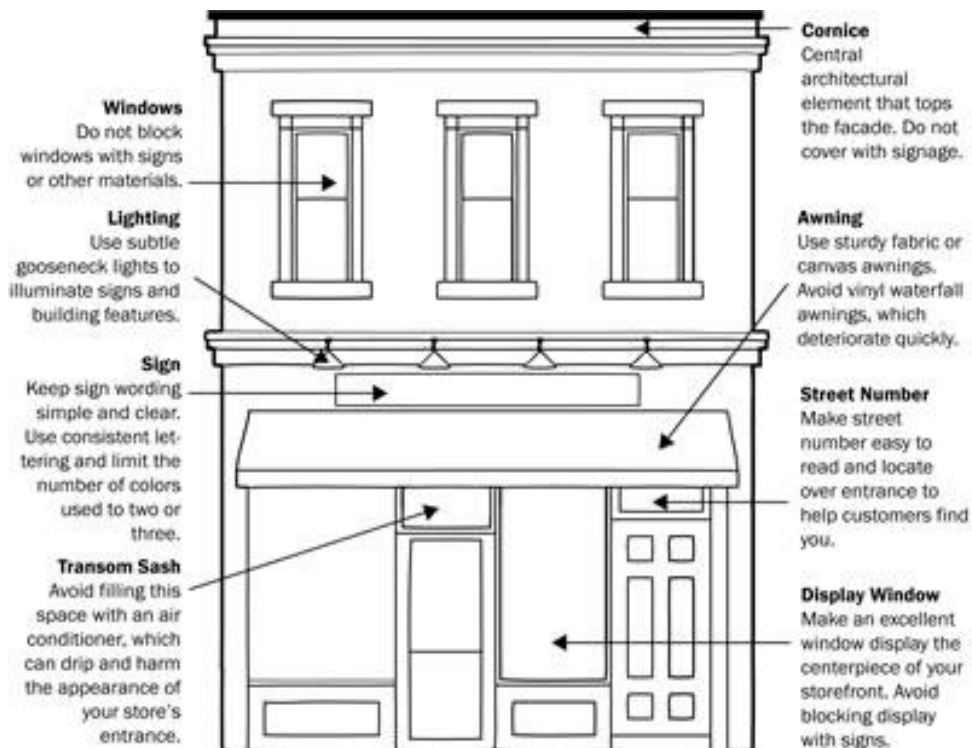
These Design Guidelines are intended to be used as a tool to:

- Help business and property owners identify key historical elements on their buildings;
- Assist owners in judging the acceptability of any proposed changes to the designs of their buildings;
- Enhance the quality of the pedestrian experience along a commercial corridor by providing a pleasant shopping experience for business patrons;
- Enable builders and designers to preserve the unique characteristics of South Allison Hill buildings;
- Improve the quality and value of property owners' buildings; and
- Have the overall effect of creating an inviting historic commercial corridor.

What is a façade?

The façade is the face of a building, especially that which looks onto a street or open space. The physical design of a neighborhood commercial district contributes greatly to the overall image of the community and its unique character to attract residents, customers and visitors. Thoughtful façade design improvements reinforce the positive identity of a community's retail core and create a "sense of place" that is distinct to the neighborhood.

Façade and Storefront Elements



Identify, Retain, and Preserve Historic Materials and Features

Architectural style, character, and details are core components of how your building and business appears visually. Special architectural details, such as a classic stone cornice or historical decorative flourish, provide visual interest and mark your building as distinctive. Architectural details add to the character of your building and indicate to customers that you value your building and their experience of it.

Appropriate Approaches to Façade Improvement

1. **Restoration-** is the treatment for building façade improvement that results in the return of the façade to its original appearance through the use of authentic materials and the faithful replication of missing and deteriorated components. This approach will be more applicable to historic structures in which there has been little change to the appearance of the building over time.
2. **Rehabilitation-** will result in façade improvements that do not attempt to return the building to its original appearance, but which respect what original character remains by making improvements that are sensitive to historic detail and materials. Typically, historic features will be preserved and inappropriate later remodeling removed, after which a more sensitive façade treatment will be undertaken. This approach may be applied to any structure. The objective of this approach to façade improvement shall be a return in the appearance to the appropriate period architecture of the building.

In terms of design, façade projects for buildings that still contain significant historic features shall reflect the original appearance of the building to the maximum extent possible.

3. **Replacement-** If the level of deterioration or damage of materials precludes repair, replacing an entire character-defining feature with new material is possible. If adequate historical, pictorial, and physical documentation exists so that the feature may be accurately reproduced, and if it is desirable to re-establish the feature as part of the building's historical appearance, the designing and constructing a new feature based on such information is appropriate. However, a second acceptable option for the replacement feature is a new design that is similar or compatible with any remaining character-defining features of the historic building. The new design should always take into account the size, scale, and material of the historic building itself.

The preferred option is always replacement of the entire feature in kind, that is, with the same material. Because this approach may not always be technically or economically feasible, provisions are made to consider the use of a compatible substitute material. It is never recommended to remove and replace features that could reasonably be repaired and thus preserved.

A few general standards apply to all types of improvements:

1. Improvements should be in such a way that maintains the architectural appearance of the building and street, and does not detract from the historic character of the neighborhood.
2. No materials may be removed from building facades that are not repaired and/or replaced in some way.
3. Damaged surfaces must be treated and prepared before application of new materials.
4. All work must meet the standards of the 2000 Property Maintenance Code used by the Codes Bureau of the City of Harrisburg (City of Harrisburg Ordinance 20 of 2002).
5. All improvements must comply with Harrisburg City Zoning.

TIPS FOR PAINTING

There are an unlimited number of colors and color combinations, and the appropriateness of any given color or combination for a particular building will depend on a number of factors, including architectural style and details, building material, building size, building context, etc.

In general, exterior colors should be compatible with the surrounding character district and adjacent buildings. Where appropriate, building colors should reflect the basic colors of the architectural style or period of the building. Historic color palettes based on research, old photographs, and historic records is strongly encouraged.

It is best to use no more than three colors on a façade. Use more subtle colors on larger buildings. Use stronger colors only to highlight elaborate detailing.

Stain and flat paints, and matte finishes, are desirable and encouraged, while glossy paints and finishes are strongly discouraged.

Color should not be used to obscure the integrity of natural building materials. Painting unpainted masonry elements that were not coated historically is inappropriate. At the same time, the removal of paint from masonry surfaces is not recommended unless the brick is of high quality and was intended to be exposed. Undertake removal only with a chemical paint remover specifically formulated for masonry. Always test the remover on an inconspicuous area or a test panel first. **Do not sandblast.**

MASONRY

Masonry is a term for historic materials including brick, terra cotta, stucco, tile, mortar, and stone which are key characteristics and materials of most buildings in the South Allison Hill area.

It is encouraged, where masonry was not originally intended to be painted and is in good condition, to remove paint from all masonry materials. In many cases, masonry is in need of repair in order to maintain the building and maintain materials to prevent weather damage. In these cases, brick and stone facades should replace and repair deteriorating mortar. Mortar used in repointing most match the original mortar in strength, composition, color, and texture. Poor maintenance and improper repairs can cause substantial damage to masonry.

SIGNS & AWNINGS

Signs

Signs can go a long way toward enhancing the attractiveness of a commercial corridor. The most common types of signs are flush mounted, hanging, and window signs.



Flush mounted signs are signboards or individual die-cut letters placed on the face of a building.

Hanging signs are hung from sidewalk covering or mounted perpendicular to the sidewalk. These signs are the most visible to both pedestrians and vehicular traffic.



Window signs are also pedestrian-oriented. They are commonly designed so that the majority of the display area is open for pedestrian window-shopping.

General Sign Guidelines:

- Each sign (including the mounting framework) should complement the building on which it is placed in style, color, and materials. Buildings with a recognizable style (such as Victorian) should use signage of the same style.
- The size of the sign and its letters should be in proportion to the building and the neighboring structures and signs.
- Signs should set the tone for what the consumer may expect inside and add to the community image as a whole.
- Signs should provide information simple and legibly, and should be limited to advertising the name of the business and its main goods and services.

Sign Materials:

- All signs should be made from durable materials.
- It is encouraged to use sandblasted, carved, or painted signs of traditional materials, such as wood, metal, stone, or brick. The use of resin or composite materials that give the appearance of traditional materials may also be used as appropriate.
- Plastic, vinyl, and commercially supplied internally lit signs are generally discouraged.
- Signs may be lighted with overhead incandescent lights with simple metal spun lamp shade in color and materials that complement the building.

Sign Mounting and Placement:

- Signs should be mounted or erected so they do not obscure the architectural features or openings of a building, and so they take advantage of pre-existing sign boards.
- Signs may not be located in the right-of-way, except for sandwich board signs.
- No sign or portion of a sign shall extend above the cornice line at the top of the building face.

Awnings

Provided that they are selected with care, awnings can create an inviting pedestrian feel to the commercial area. Awnings may be retractable or of fixed design, complementing the features of the building. Internally illuminated fluorescent awning should be avoided.



General Awning Guidelines

- The color of the awning should complement both your own and neighboring buildings and signs in terms of both style and color.
- Awning shapes should relate to the shape of the façade's architectural elements. The use of traditionally shaped awning is encouraged when appropriate.
- Canvas and fire-resistant acrylic are preferred awning materials. Use of metal, plastic, or fiberglass awnings or awnings with "stock" national trademarks is discouraged.
- The impact of the shaded area on window displays may require interior lighting to be adjusted



Vinyl Awning



Inappropriate Awning Scale

LIGHTING

It is highly encouraged to use lighting to draw attention to store signage while increasing safety in the corridor. Lighting should be on a timer to stay lit from dusk until dawn, even after business hours. Use lighting fixtures that complement the architectural style and character of the façade.

WINDOWS AND WINDOW DISPLAYS

Windows should be as large as possible and be restored to original size where possible. Maximum visibility into the store will increase safety as well as attract customers. Windows and display areas should be kept clear of too much signage or paper signs. Keep display windows as clear as possible to keep attractive and uncluttered appearance to potential customers.

If additional overnight security is required do so with security grilles inside of the display glass and make sure they can be completely concealed during regular business hours. Use of open grilles that allow light to be seen at night are encouraged. It is also recommended to use transparent security grilles. Permanent bars on windows and opaque security grates are not recommended and add to the feeling that the corridor is unsafe.

SOUTH ALLISON HILL BUSINESS FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The Program

The South Allison Hill Business Façade Improvement Program will provide a opportunities to property and business owners to assist with the costs to repair, restore, or renovate their facades according to the design guidelines of the area.

Tri County Community Action is pleased to provide full cost for eligible improvements except where a 50% match is required of the applicant (store signage and/or branding; exterior code violations not otherwise eligible) up to a maximum of \$15,000 per building/project to improve commercial/retail or mixed use properties on Derry Street and Market Street from 13th Street to 17th Street. If signage is currently not compliant with the design guidelines, it is required that the property/business owner match 50% of the cost to replace it to meet the guidelines.

Eligible Area

Eligible properties are commercial/retail or mixed use properties on the 1300-1600 blocks of Derry or Market Streets.

Eligible Applicants

- You must be either the property owner or business owner (if the applicant is the business owner, the property owner must approve the application in writing and confirm that all matching improvements are to be paid for by the applicant);
- All property taxes pertaining to the property are fully paid and current;
- There must be a current, valid business license for the property;
- There must be no outstanding building permits, stop work orders, or development permit condition requirements outstanding; and
- Must have no pending code violation citations.

Eligible Façade/Storefront Improvements

- Replacement or installation of new awnings or canopies
- Masonary cleaning
- Basic Cosmetic work, such as painting when in conjunction with other façade work
- Removal of vinyl or aluminum siding
- Brick re-pointing
- Exterior lighting (new but not replacement)
- Renovation of exterior architectural features such as cornices
- Exterior surfaces and details (decorative details, moldings, trim etc.)
- Windows (only if part of larger enhancements, no stand-alone window replacement)
- New siding
- Façade painting

- Entrances and doorways (if part of larger enhancements)
- Awnings
- Signage (affixed to buildings)

Ineligible Façade Improvements

- Routine maintenance
- Structural repairs
- Roofs
- Patios
- Non-permanent fixtures (benches, planters, patios heaters etc.)
- Landscaping
- Paving
- Fencing
- Wheelchair ramps
- Interior improvements
- Any improvements not visible from the public right of way
- Construction of additions, accessory buildings or new buildings
- Any improvements that have been started prior to application approval