

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

FOR
BUSINESS INVESTMENT FUND



Prepared by

EAST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, INC.

The genesis of the Business Improvement Fund was to invest in commercial building improvements in the Payne-Arcade Commercial District that will positively impact the neighborhood, stimulate local economy, improve energy efficiency and address health, safety and other codes related to commercial occupancy.

Elements for Architectural Standards derive from the historic building context of the late 19th century commercial buildings, particularly with in the area of Payne Avenue from Whitall Street to Lawson Avenue. The architecture of any Main Street distinguishes it from any other area.

In an effort to provide direction to owners of significant buildings on Payne and Arcade Avenues, we have assembled a set of guidelines devoted to exterior façade elements. It is critical to preserve and, where possible, return buildings to their original construction character.

The guide is a companion piece to the Application Form for the ESNDC Business Investment Fund. Adherence to these guidelines will be taken into consideration in the distribution of funds. As such, it focuses on basic façade elements that are eligible for funding through the program.

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Items to consider when planning a storefront façade remodel



Evaluate the Building

- Unique features
- Block character
- Adjacent buildings
- Enhance to fit your business

Maintenance

- List the maintenance items to be addressed
- Develop a maintenance schedule

Retaining the Character

- Keep in mind the history of the building
- Identify those elements to repair/replace from prior remodels
- Restore façade elements to reflect the intent of the original façade design

Contact the City about Permitting

- Permits are required for most construction projects
- There are zoning requirements for signs
- There are building code requirements for accessible entries



Façade elements and highlighting details of the façade:

Storefronts

Although storefronts are contained in the larger framework of the overall structure, they define the character of the pedestrian experience and offer the opportunity to visually express the business within.



Facade Elements

Building façades are composed of a number of particular items that define the front of a building and present a certain character or “feel”. The building entry, storefront windows, sign panel, transom windows, awnings, upper story windows and ornamental trim all contribute to the identity of the building.

Decorative Details

Ornamental trim and decorative details are the fine grain facade elements that speak to the craftsmanship of the building. Replacing, repairing, and preserving these elements is crucial in preserving the historical character of the building.

Entry doors and storefront windows are a businesses introduction to the buying public. An attractive and inviting storefront “presence” is the first step in getting a potential customer into the store.

Windows create interest and should be opened up for views onto the avenue. This also increases surveillance onto the street and sidewalk.

Large open views into the commercial space, enhances the pedestrian experience by providing a visual connection to the use inside the building. This increase in daylighting may decrease the need for artificial lighting within the business.

On upper levels, windows should provide privacy while aesthetically and functionally serving the building.

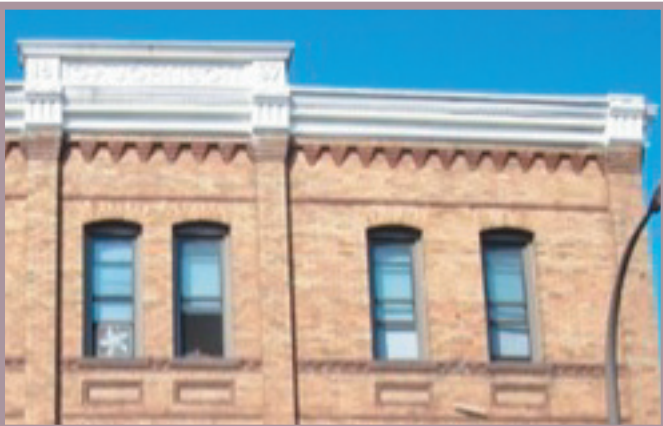
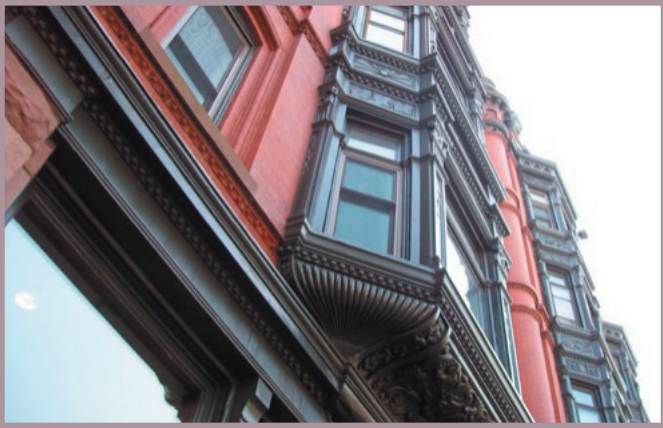


Encouraged

- Dividing the large spans of glass with painted wood/metal mullions adds both interest and the perception of a larger window with less actual glass.
- Where windows have been blocked in or covered up, those windows need to be reopened.
- Where original entries exist, they should be reconstructed and restored to preserve historic character.
- Remove boards or other obstacles from upper floor windows.
- Energy efficient window replacement that is indicative of the original size and style.
- Transom Windows (smaller windows above the display windows) should be retained whenever possible.

Discouraged

- Mirrored or heavily tinted glass should not be used as it detracts from the building character and decreases the safety inside.
- No bars of any type should be placed in windows.
- Display shelves should only be utilized for window dressing. Shelves must not block view from the outside into the business.
- Solid or residential-type doors with small areas of glass should be avoided.
- Product advertising, excessive flyers, posters, ads painted on window and handmade paper ads must not block views.



Enhancing the historic character and highlighting classic architectural details of the existing commercial buildings are important on Payne Avenue.

The basic building materials on the avenue are comprised of brick and stone with the interior structure being steel or heavy timber.

The clarity of use of these materials is a highly valued asset for the commercial district and exterior remodels should aim to return these façades to their earlier simplicity.

Encouraged

- Building materials should be consistent with original building palette including brick, stone veneer, wood trim, and stucco.
- Non-original cladding should be removed from buildings. Buildings with wood, aluminum or vinyl siding or “cladding” attached after original construction need to be assessed by an architect or qualified builder to determine if the underlying original brick/stone can be re-exposed.
- Existing exposed brick should be cleaned, inspected and left exposed to display the original building character
- Other building elements such as exterior trim, pillars, shutters, metals and chimneys should all be preserved and restored when possible.

Discouraged

- The use of materials that attempt to mimic traditional materials is unacceptable. An example would be fiberglass panels that are molded to look like real brick, or vinyl molded to look like wood horizontal lap siding.
- Painting brick or stone that has not been previously painted.

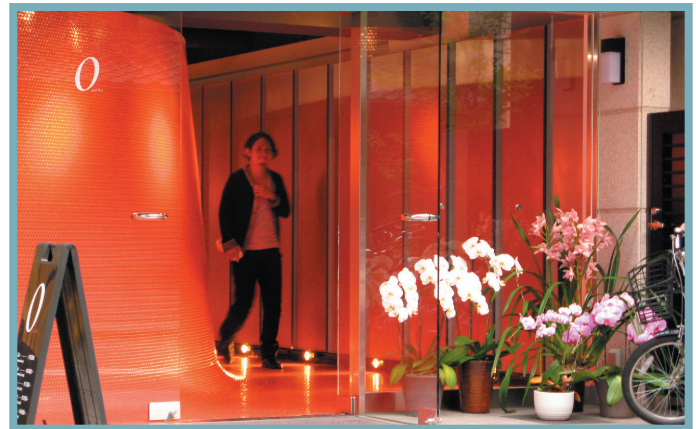
Within the framework of these wonderful façades is the opportunity to use color as an accent to express the diverse cultures of the businesses.

Elements for storefront accent color are; window mullions, entry doors, awnings, and signage. Storefront displays are another opportunity to enliven the pedestrian experience.

Interior and exterior lighting are also opportunities to illuminate colors that reflect the nature of the business.

If it is necessary to paint a previously painted building use the Sherwin Williams Exterior Preservation Palette for base color samples.

Color renderings will need to be submitted to the committee for color choice approval.



Encouraged

- Emphasize unique features by painting window frames and architectural elements a different, yet complementary color to make the building more visually appealing.
- The color of brick or other natural building materials should dictate the color family choice.

Discouraged

- Neon or pastel colors should be avoided. Colors should complement other buildings.
- Avoid colors which visually overpower or strongly contrast with adjacent building colors.
- Painting of buildings that have not been previously painted.



Lighting is the perfect accent to any building and creates a positive atmosphere. A well-lit building is a safer building to patronize.

Lighting is necessary for many reasons including building safety, sign visibility at night, crime prevention, and to accentuate building details.

Lights on the front of the building should be mounted above the sign, but below the first row of windows (for multiple story buildings). Light style depends on the building materials and size of the store front. Goose neck or spot downcast lighting is preferred.

Flood lighting should be used only in the rear of the building.

Encouraged

- Cut-off lighting fixtures that light entrances and walkways without excessive glare
- Lighting surfaces such as facades and walkways, rather than space
- Minimal use of security flood lighting along public ways
- Lighting of signs from the front
- Lighting on sensors at building recesses, such as doorways
- Lighting designed and installed by professionals
- Energy efficient light fixtures and bulbs

Discouraged

- Lights directed toward adjacent properties or the public way
- Lighting that is too bright
- Backlit awnings

Awnings and canopies work well in this commercial district as they were an integral storefront element from the past.

Awnings and canopies can provide color interest, solar relief for display windows, weather protection for pedestrians, and a sign panel for businesses.

They help define the building façade and can bring a large building down to pedestrian scale, making the business more inviting.

Awnings can also cool interiors and save energy and are an important historic amenity to any building.



Encouraged

- Attaching awnings to the building at or below the top of the storefront opening
- Match the awning dimensions with the window and door openings
- Awnings of canvas and waterproof cloth that are designed to resist fading and tearing
- Coordinate colors with the building and area
- Retractable awnings allow flexibility in response to changing weather
- Awnings that are in proportion to the building
- Illuminate the sidewalk and storefront with under-awning lights

Discouraged

- Hiding architectural details of the façade or too much of the window
- A single awning spanning two buildings for one business
- Backlit awnings
- Awnings that are disproportionately large



Signs are an immediate indicator of the character and quality of a business. Clear communication of the business name and identity is essential.

Signs constructed of natural materials such as metal or MDO (multiple density overlay) treated plywood are preferred. Neon signs are permitted on the exterior of the building and in display windows, if not covering more than one-third of the window surface area.

Banners should not be utilized as permanent signage and must comply with all City ordinances.

The City of Saint Paul does have a sign ordinance, and this should be consulted prior to commencing any work.

Encouraged

- Opaque signs in colors contrasting with the building's wall
- Lettering of a legible size and easily readable font
- Contrasting colors that increase readability
- Iconic or graphic signs that illustrate the nature of the business
- Unique signs or murals created in collaboration with artists
- Neon signs advertising the name of the business
- Signs mounted less than one story above the sidewalk

Discouraged

- Internally illuminated signs (except for neon) are prohibited
- Pylon and monument signage is prohibited
- The combination of all signage should not exceed a total of one-third of the window surface area.

New Applicants - Target Project Area(s)

Preference will be given to projects in the designated Invest St. Paul Area along Payne (from Whitall to Lawson); however, all applicants on Payne Avenue and Arcade Street will receive consideration. Priority will be given to projects that propose: (1) a significant visual impact in the neighborhood, (2) Address issues of health, safety, accessibility, energy efficiency, building infrastructure and community use.

Application Process - Documents Required

Applications are due on the second Thursday of the month in order to be considered during the same month. All documents can be secured through the ESNDC office.

Documents required to be submitted to ESNDC (to Anne?) at the time of the application include:

- (1) Completed Application
- (2) \$85 application fee (\$25 for PABA members)
- (3) Definition of the scope of work to be done
- (4) Written construction estimate of the work to be done
- (4) Company business plan – must include marketing and operational plans and three (3) years of financial projections
- (5) Completed Personal Financial Statement
- (6) Sketch or computer generated visual depiction of the proposed improvements. CDAC reserves the right to ask for architectural drawings for projects utilizing more than \$10K in BIF.

Applications will be accepted on a first-come basis.

Cost to Applicant:

The application fee is \$85 (\$25 for PABA Members). The purpose of the fee is to defray project administration costs and ensure applicant's commitment to the project. Once an applicant is approved for financing, he/she will be responsible for the costs of filing a mortgage, credit check, or other costs typically associated with a loan transaction.

Project Selection:

ESNDC's Commercial Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) will make the final selection on forgivable loan recipients. CDAC is comprised of ESNDC and PABA board members, neighborhood residents, business and property owners, bankers, city economic development staff and practitioners in community development. Selections will be based on the criteria set forth in these guidelines.

For further detail on the application, project guidelines and fee schedules, please contact Anne Briseno at 651-288-8744 or email abriseno@esndc.org

Sponsored by
Commercial Development Action Committee
of
Payne Arcade Business Association

Consultants:
Glenhurst Design Group
Lunning Wende Associates, Inc.