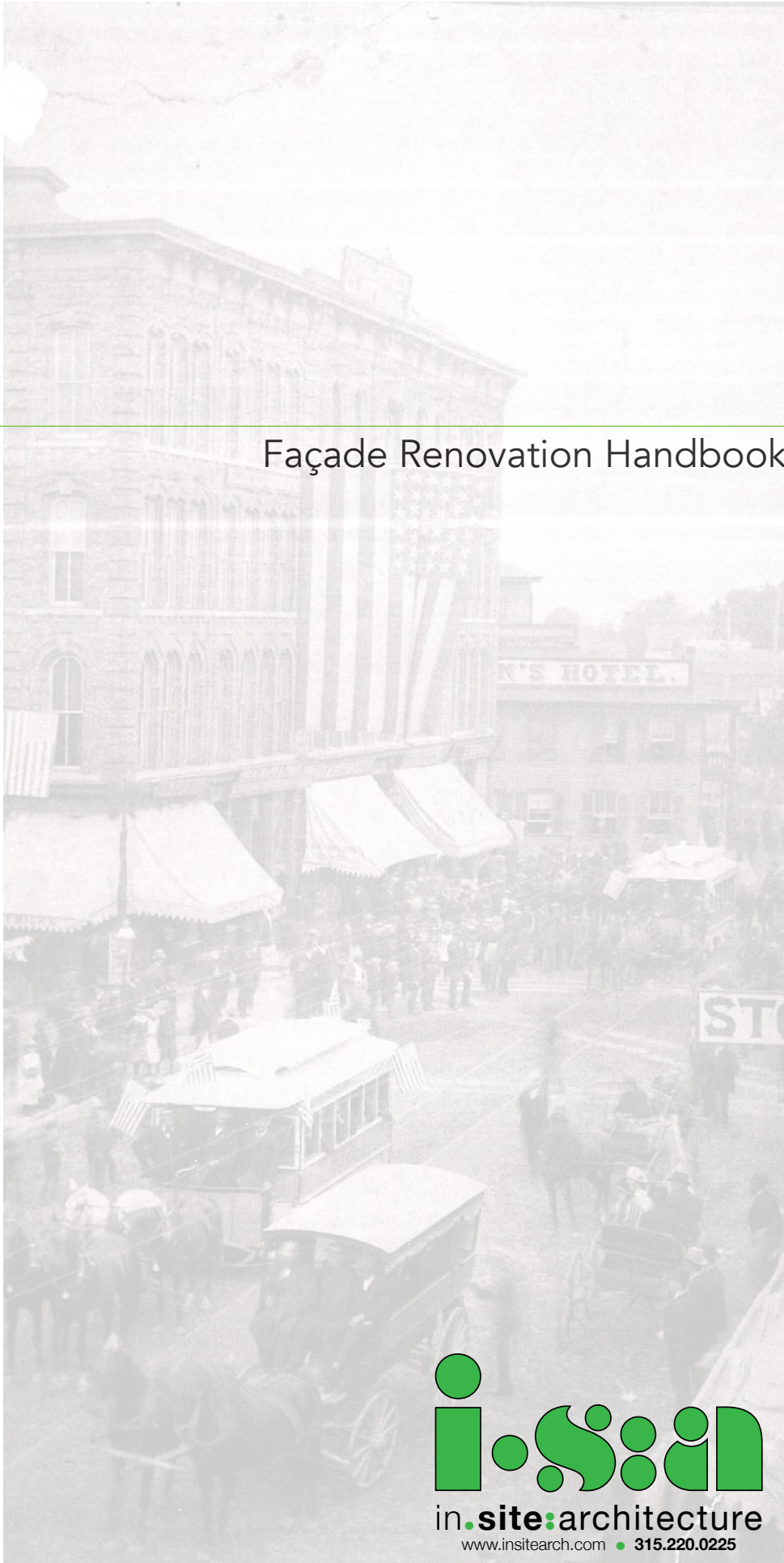


ONEIDA, NY

Façade Renovation Handbook



OVERVIEW

This overview represents the broader aims of the program. Specific design aids follow in the next section. This Façade Handbook is intended to aid owners of buildings undergoing façade renovations with design proposals that contribute to the development of a vibrant and pedestrian-friendly downtown. Façade elements such as signs, colors, lighting, awnings, windows and doors, siding materials, and detailing all have a significant impact on the character and identity of the street. Not only can this handbook help building owners with design decisions, they can also be used to highlight and enhance existing characteristics of Oneida's Downtown.

ORIGINAL CHARACTER

Small cities often lose the historic face of their downtown streetscapes to years of facade alterations and/or disrepair. Facade renovations sometimes occur without consideration for the public realm or a building's particular character or history. Many of Oneida's buildings retain original materials and details. Many wonderful window lintel and parapet designs and details remain in place even if some require repair or maintenance. When pursuing a facade renovation, designs should reference historic photos whenever possible, both to understand the original structure and design intent, but also for restoring unique details.

- ▶ **Cast Iron Columns**
- ▶ **Door & Window Lintels**
- ▶ **Cornice Lines**
- ▶ **Dentils & Corbels**
- ▶ **Detailed Masonry Pilasters**
- ▶ **Panel & Trim**
- ▶ **Exterior Ceiling Finishes**
- ▶ **Parapets, Brackets & Finials**



MAINTAIN & ENHANCE ORIGINAL CHARACTER



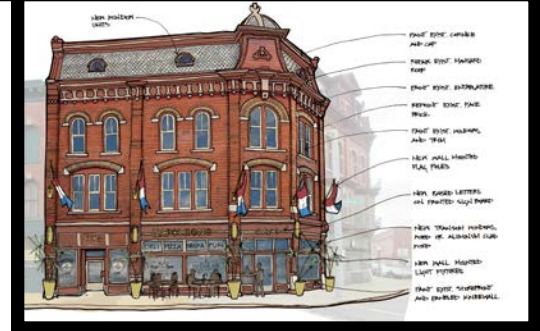
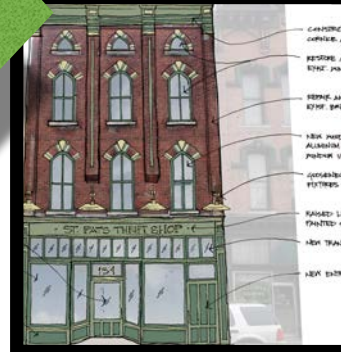
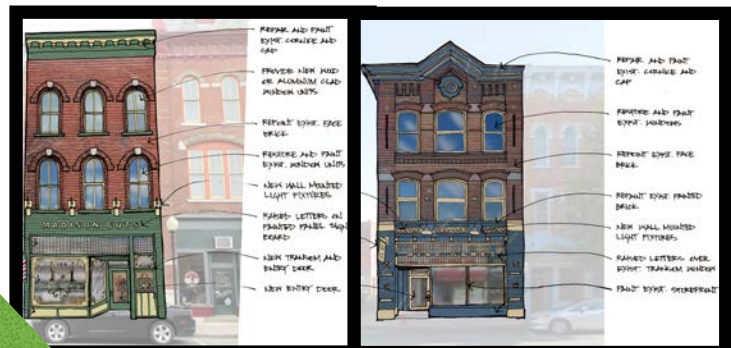
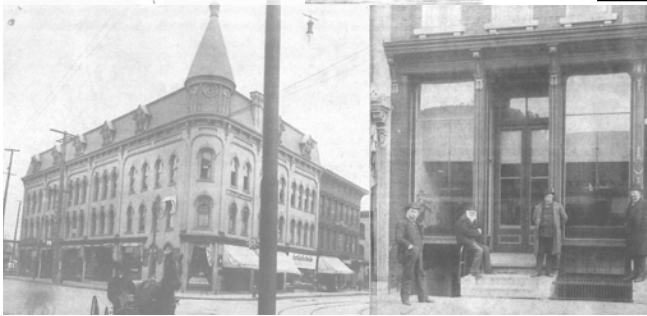








REFERENCE HISTORIC DOCUMENTS TO INFORM DESIGN PROPOSALS

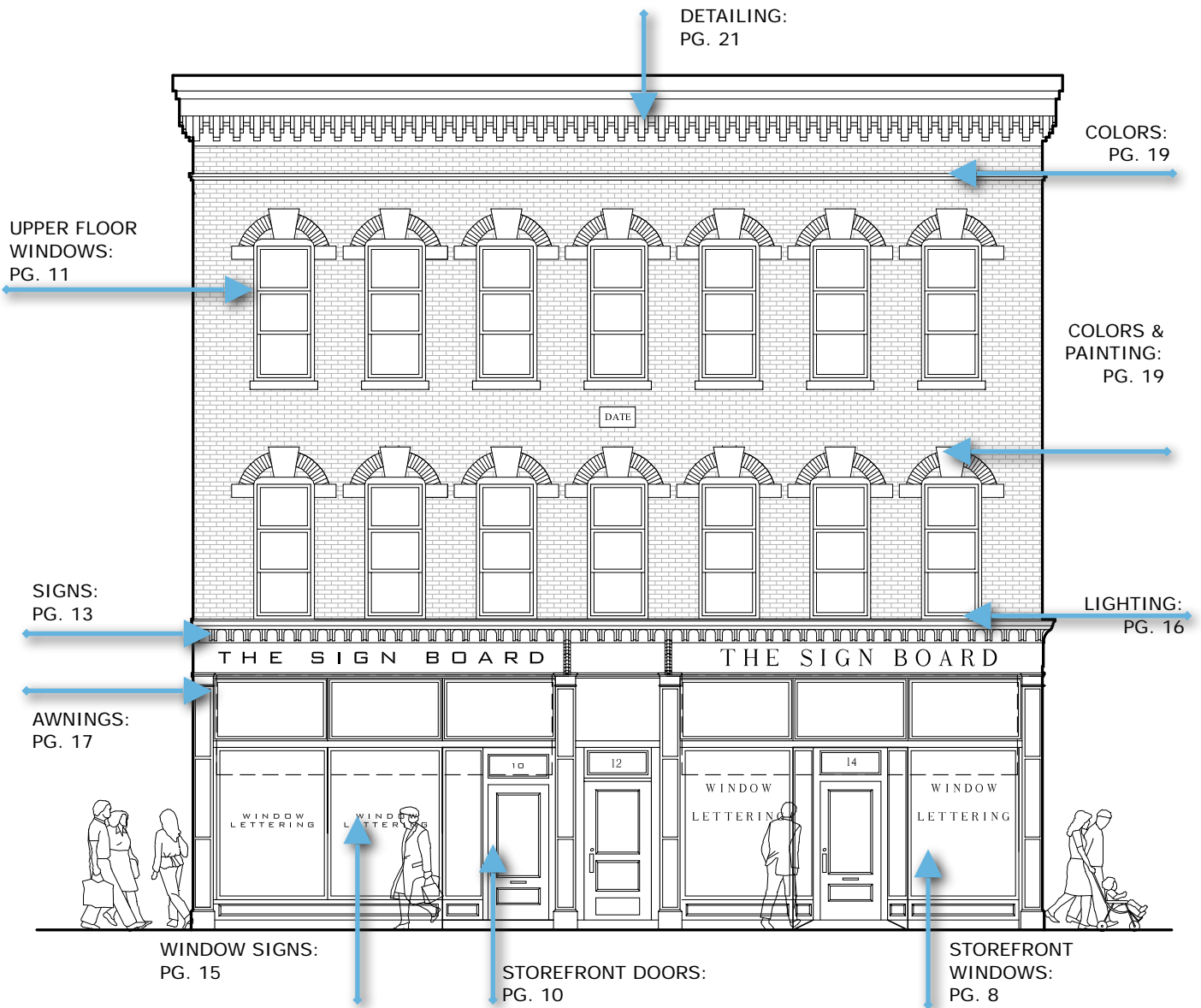


FACADE PROPOSALS

When developing a design proposal, study your existing facade and try to identify original design elements such as original window and door heights, brackets, dentils & corbels, lintels, pilasters and columns, and other features that give your building character. After identifying the different parts, consider the condition of each - "poor" - "fair" - "good" - to begin to formulate the scope of work for the design. On a number of buildings in City Center, decorative, upper floor window lintels still remain intact but the window fenestrations themselves have been infilled or partially filled. This would be an opportunity to properly restore upper floor fenestrations.

Like many communities, not all of the buildings within City Center are historic, or lack a signifying character that can be targeted for facade proposals. In those cases designs should still be sensitive to the interaction between the public, pedestrian realm and the business inside. The last section of the handbook helps guide design decisions for these types of buildings.

Graphic Table of Contents



NOTE: This Handbook does not fully address portions of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* - Please consult a design professional for customized guidance.

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1. Materials

- a) Whenever possible, repair original materials before replacing them with new materials. In some cases, old brick buildings will require repairs to the brick and mortar.

Brick restoration requires special attention. Power-washing can damage the surface of the brick. After the surface has been cleaned of debris or old paint, bricks may need replacing and mortar joints repaired. Brick sealer can be applied to protect the restored brick. Always consult a professional before performing any masonry and brick work or reference the National Parks Service, Technical Preservation Services - preservation briefs for more information on brick, mortar types, and restoration practices. (<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>)

PLEASE NOTE: Some brick types are required to be sealed or painted.

Buildings may already have painted brick. In these instances it would be appropriate to repaint the existing brick.

- b) Do not use thin veneer/fake brick or stone applications when they do not accurately represent the building or the material. Do not use vinyl or metal siding. Many of these materials have unnatural trim, lintel and edge conditions that cause the facade to look too uniform and massive. Façade design proposals should never include covering original materials or column, cornice, sill, lintel, window, or panel detailing.



✓
DO repair and restore original materials whenever possible



✗
DO NOT use vinyl or metal siding to cover original facades



✗
DO NOT use fake or thin veneer brick or stone

b) If materials are beyond repair - Use materials that don't require replacement as the only option for maintenance. Products such as brick or wood can be painted and are easily maintained – colors for painted surfaces can be changed as required. Smooth fiber-cement clapboard would be an acceptable wood substitute because it can be painted, it can be used where wood is used, and it's very durable when installed per manufacturer's specifications.

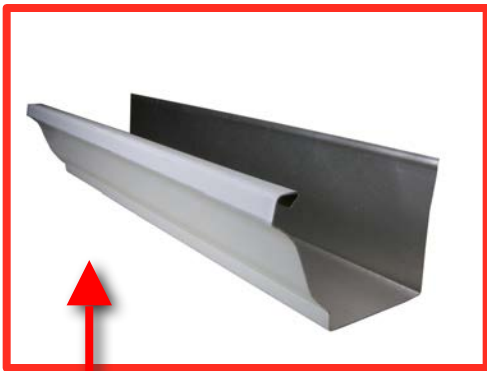
Some buildings may require gutters and downspouts on their street sides. For these buildings, all gutters and downspouts should be galvanized steel, aluminum, copper or an approved substitute with a period and style-correct shape, such as "half-round." Residential "K-style gutters" create unwanted horizontal lines that may detract from the building trim and detailing, and should not be used. Ensure that gutters and downspouts are of adequate size to manage the volume of water that flows from the roof that it serves.



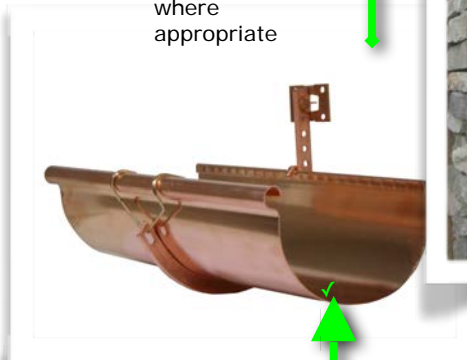
✓ **DO** use wood or fiber-cement clapboard siding and trim



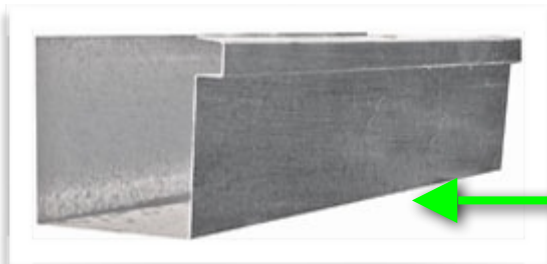
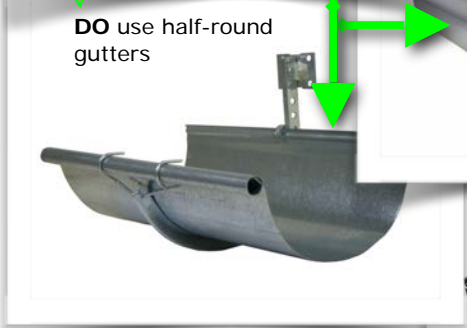
✓ **DO** use copper gutters and downspouts where appropriate



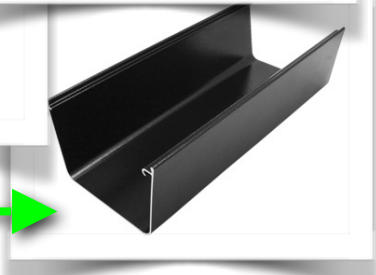
✗ **DO NOT USE** residential, K-style gutters



✓ **DO** use half-round gutters



✓ **DO** use box gutters



- d) Special consideration should be given to roofing materials that are visible from the street. Whenever possible, it is preferred that period-correct materials are used, such as real cedar, slate, or standing-seam metal. Standing-seam metal roofing has a long life span when properly installed and will help maintain cooler roof temperatures, helping to reduce mechanical cooling costs.

Asphalt shingles are less durable, will produce more heat and are not historically accurate.



✓ **DO** take cues from historic precedent and use standing seam metal roofing or cedar shingles

✗ **DO NOT USE** asphalt shingles.



✓ **DO** use standing seam metal roofing



2. Storefront Windows and Doors Windows:

- a) Windows allow for pedestrian safety and flow in addition to easy viewing of merchandise for mercantile businesses. Original openings should be maintained. Design proposals should not reduce the glazed area of the storefront unless it is historically accurate. Window openings that were previously reduced or enlarged should be restored - 60%-80% of the storefront "pedestrian zone" (2'-8" above the sidewalk) should be clear glass, window area. This may vary depending on what is historically accurate for each specific building.

Maintain a three feet (3') minimum visual access into storefronts from the pedestrian zone and avoid using displays and signs that prohibit views in and out, including large shelving units with their backs facing the window. Proposals should not use vertical blinds or other elements that will block views into storefront windows. In some cases, storefronts may contain professional offices. For these storefronts, alternate privacy and shading elements may be appropriate. Use storefront awnings for shade control. Do not use opaque or tinted glass on commercial storefronts.



DO NOT reduce storefront window openings or have less than 60% clear glass

DO restore window openings and create visual access into businesses

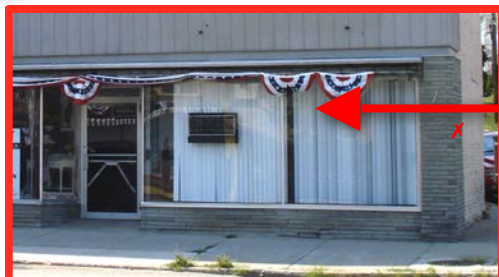


DO create and maintain large, glass, street level storefronts – 60%-80% clear glass

DO create large storefront windows to allow 3' minimum visual access into storefronts



Storefront displays should be lit at night



DO NOT block view into storefronts with window shades or oversized window signs



- b) Frame and sash profiles should be large enough to complement trim elements. For traditional façades, trim elements should be wood or approximately the same dimensionality and character of the original design.

The windows should be sized to fit with existing vertical and horizontal elements when available. Large areas should be broken up to address human scale as shown.

Using transom windows adds visual interest by creating a horizontal line to break up the storefront and address door heights relative to overall height of the storefront. Transom windows should be restored if they were previously removed or hidden. Existing transom windows should be maintained. Maintain the window and door proportions across the entire façade.

For commercial storefronts, use of wood or aluminum-clad wood windows is preferred. In special cases, using dark, anodized-aluminum windows with appropriately dimensioned frame and sash profiles would be considered.

Vinyl windows are prohibited. In general, color options for vinyl windows are limited and vinyl is a less dimensionally stable product.



✓ **DO** break up storefronts with horizontal and vertical elements

✓ **DO** establish a rhythmic pattern to break up large areas



✓ **DO** use transoms to add horizontal lines that break up the height



DO use wood or aluminum-clad wood windows for storefronts

Doors:

- c) Uninterrupted full-glass and half-glass doors allow for visibility in and out.

Exterior doors that lead to residential second floors may be stile-and-rail doors without glass. The goal is that half-glass doors, and doors without glass should appear as "secondary" doors to pedestrians as compared to the full glass doors that lead to first floor businesses.

Transoms above doors to second floors should be restored to allow for light to enter into the stairway.

For standard commercial storefronts, doors should be wood or approximate wood in profile and character. Vinyl is not an acceptable alternative. Steel doors should be used only when historically appropriate.



✓
DO use full glass entry doors for storefronts



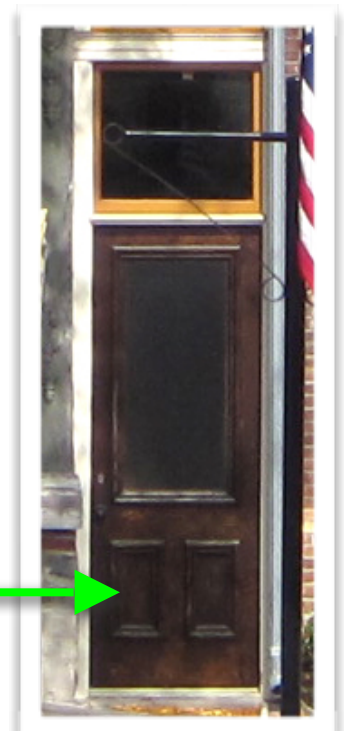
✓
DO use stile-and-rail type doors for second floor access doors and restore transoms above doors



✗
DO NOT use aluminum storefront doors



✗
DO NOT use residential type doors for commercial storefronts



✓
DO use half-glass doors for second floor access entry doors and restore transoms above

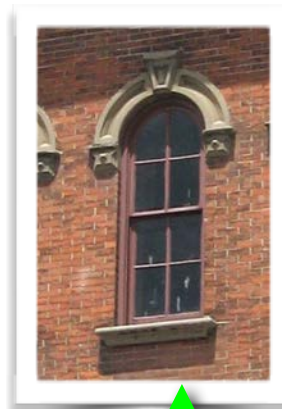
3. Upper Floor Windows

- a) Restore original openings. Use wood or aluminum-clad wood windows, depending on the degree of historic character that has been maintained or is desired. Original window frames, sashes, transoms and arch tops should be restored.

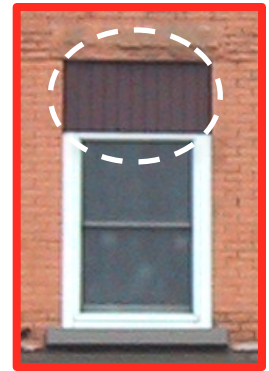
Interior, removable storm windows can be used to increase the energy efficiency of existing single-pane windows.

Dark, anodized aluminum windows with historic frame and sash profiles may be considered. Vinyl windows are prohibited.

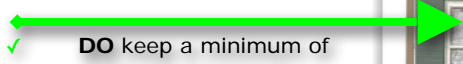
A minimum of 25% of the façade for the upper floor should incorporate transparent glass openings.



✓ **DO** maintain or restore original window openings



✗ **DO NOT** reduce window openings



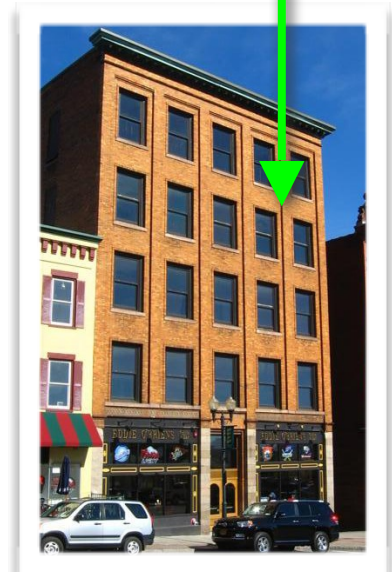
✓ **DO** keep a minimum of 25% of upper level façade area for window openings



✓ **DO** restore window openings



✗ **DO NOT** cover window openings



For upper level windows that have been blocked and cannot be opened up, spandrel glass should be used to maintain window openings. In special situations openings may be filled in to match the exterior finish with brick or permanent panelling designed to represent closed shutters.

Do not place window unit air conditioners or satellite dishes on street side façades, as they are unsightly and present a danger to pedestrians.

Original shutters should be restored. If not present, shutters are discouraged. However, if new shutters are proposed they should be made of wood, composite wood or a dimensionally similar or paintable alternative. Do not use vinyl. Shutters should be located and sized to fit the window they serve - Though shutters may be fixed, the shutters should be large enough to fully cover the window if they were to be closed.



✓ **DO** properly infill upper floor windows when necessary, coordinate with zoning restrictions.



✗ **DO NOT** use vinyl, undersized, or monotone shutters



✓ **DO** restore original shutters



✗ **DO NOT** block any window openings with air conditioners and do not mount satellite dishes to the facade



4. Signage

- a) A variety of signs and fonts around Main Street is acceptable. Signs will identify and define individual businesses. Each business is allowed maximum square footage of sign space which can be made up of wall signs, perpendicular signs, awning lettering, and window lettering.

Sign boards:

The scale and placement of the lettering and sign boards is important. Sign boards above storefront windows or awnings should not cover second floor windows and should be in proportion with the overall height of the building.

Sign board height for multiple-story buildings should be within 5%-7% of the overall building height. For single-story facades, sign boards should be 15-25% of overall building height. The business name should fit within the allotted sign board space; additional words and descriptions can appear as lettering on canvas awnings, window lettering and perpendicular signs.

Do not place lettering or sign boards at the second floor portion of the façade and do not use lettering or signage that is over-sized for the particular façade.

Sign boards should be wood or fiber-cement board panels for mounting raised letters or signs.

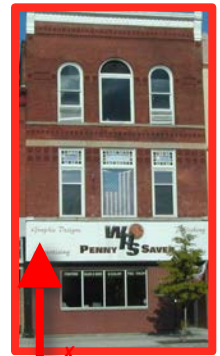
Do not use internally lit signs.



DO make sign board size proportionate to building height



DO NOT cover second floor windows with sign boards



DO NOT oversize sign boards relative to building height



DO use raised lettering or carved signs on sign boards



b) **As of the time of writing, the City of Oneida zoning laws regarding signage are being revised.** Applicants should coordinate with the building department.

When proposing perpendicular signs, carved, dimensional signs are preferred. Sign board lettering should have a minimum depth of 1/2".

Perpendicular signs should not project more than four feet (4') from the building façade. There should be a minimum of eight feet (8') from the sidewalk to the bottom of the sign and the top of the sign should not be higher than twelve feet (12') above the sidewalk. Perpendicular signs should not exceed a surface area of eight square feet (8 ft²) per side, but may take on various shapes. Perpendicular signs should have dimensionality; carved signs are preferred.

Perpendicular signs can be externally lit. Do not use internally lit perpendicular signs.

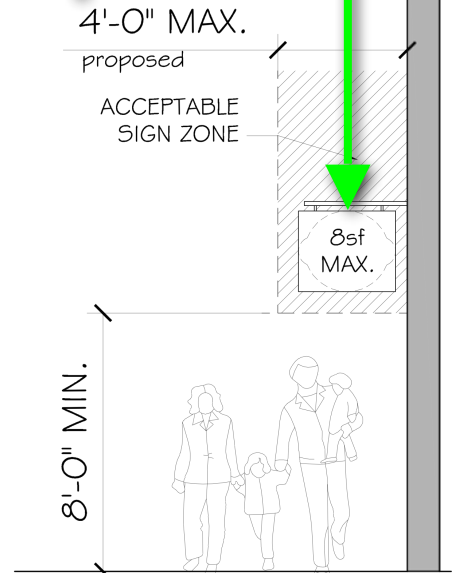
Signs should be suspended from horizontal standards or brackets mounted to the building. The actual sign board should not touch the building face.

If both an awning and sign are used they should be placed so as to not interfere with visibility to the sign.



✓ **DO** use properly sized perpendicular signs in various shapes

DO correctly size and locate perpendicular signs



✓ **DO** locate perpendicular signs above or below awnings when presenting



✗ **DO NOT** use oversized, backlit, or plastic perpendicular signs



- c) Window lettering should be carefully organized and applied so as to not clutter or prohibit viewing into the business, and should relate to the color scheme and other fonts for the business. Window signs should not be more than 25% of each window area and if solid, no more than four square feet of area per window.

Neon "open" signs are discouraged. In special cases, vintage neon signs would be deemed acceptable. Any new and creative use of neon signs could be considered on a case by case basis to ensure that the spirit of the district is met.



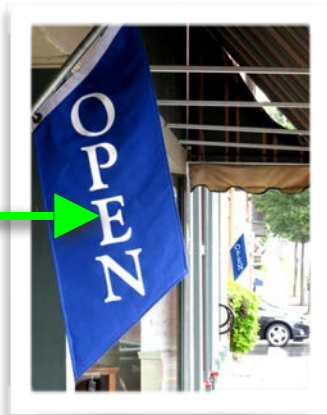
✓ **DO** use window lettering without cluttering the view in and out – cumulative lettering area should be less than 25% of the glass area



✓ **DO** use window lettering without blocking view



✓ **DO** use window lettering without blocking view



✓ **DO** use flags as an alternative to window signs



✗ **DO NOT** prohibit views in and out by blocking more than 25% of glass area with window signs or with solid signs larger than 4 square feet.

5. Lighting

- a) Sign boards can be lit with either linear or goose neck lights. Lamp types may vary but color rendering should be in the traditional incandescent range of warm, consistent colors (2,000K-3,500K).

Do not use internally lit signs. Perpendicular signs should be lit from both sides.

For some storefronts, Neon signs may be appropriate for original character of the business or facade

✓ **DO** use gooseneck fixtures to light signs



✗ **DO NOT** use internally lit signs



✓ **DO** use linear fluorescent fixtures with incandescent color ranges (2,000K-3,500K).

- b) Use interior lighting for display windows and exterior entry lighting for security. Interior lighting at night will also draw attention to your business indicating that it is occupied and operational space on Main Street. Interior lighting should also be used for security



✓ **DO** light storefronts at night for security and marketing



✓ **DO** light storefronts at night: Window displays, entry vestibules, and signs

6. Awnings

- a) Awnings should be fabric and coordinate with the proposed color scheme. Any awnings should be sized relative to the window openings that they are sheltering to maintain vertical separations. Awnings may have a triangular or curved profile and may be fixed or retractable. The shape of the awning should be determined by the style of the building and the area that it is shading. The bottom of awnings should be a minimum of eight feet (8') high from the sidewalk and should not project more than five feet (5') or one-half of the width of the sidewalk, whichever is smaller.

Prefabricated metal awnings are not acceptable. Non-historic, structured overhangs should be removed and hidden details restored.

- ✗ **DO NOT** use metal awnings that simulate fabric awnings on historic buildings.



- ✗ **DO NOT** attach structured overhangs to original facades – remove whenever possible to restore original transoms and signboards.

DO coordinate awnings colors with the proposed building color scheme.



- ✓ **DO** use awnings at upper floors - colors should coordinate with the overall color scheme



- ✓ **DO** match awning size and location to vertical and/or horizontal separations – reference section 2B

- ✓ **DO** coordinate awning colors with the building color scheme.

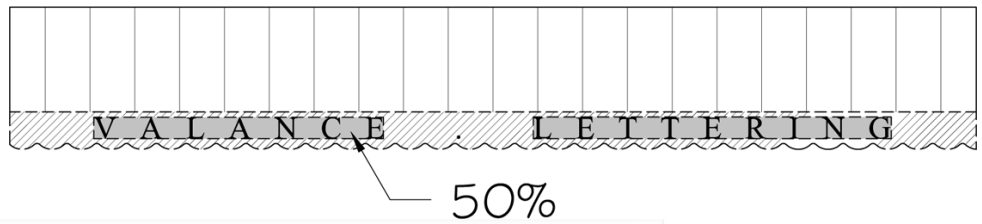
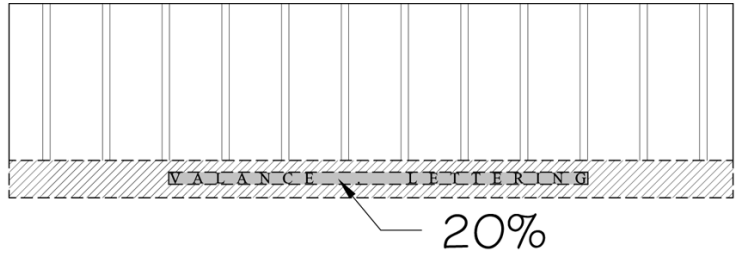


- ✓ **DO** match awning size and location to vertical and/or horizontal separations and coordinate color schemes.



- b) Awnings can provide an opportunity for supplemental sign information. Placing lettering on the awnings allows businesses to share more information without using up other signage locations such as windows and sign boards.
- Lettering area should fit within 20%-50% of the total valance area
 - Letters should not be in a bold face font
 - Letters and words should be evenly spaced across the overall length of the valance to prevent it from appearing cluttered.

DO use fixed or retractable awnings in triangle or curved profiles on non-historic buildings.



✓ **DO** utilize awnings for supplemental lettering location



7. Color

- a) For buildings that have retained substantial historic character, historic color palettes should be used. When choosing a color scheme for a building, ensure that complementary colors are chosen. Maintain consistent tones when assembling colors to prevent awkward contrasts.

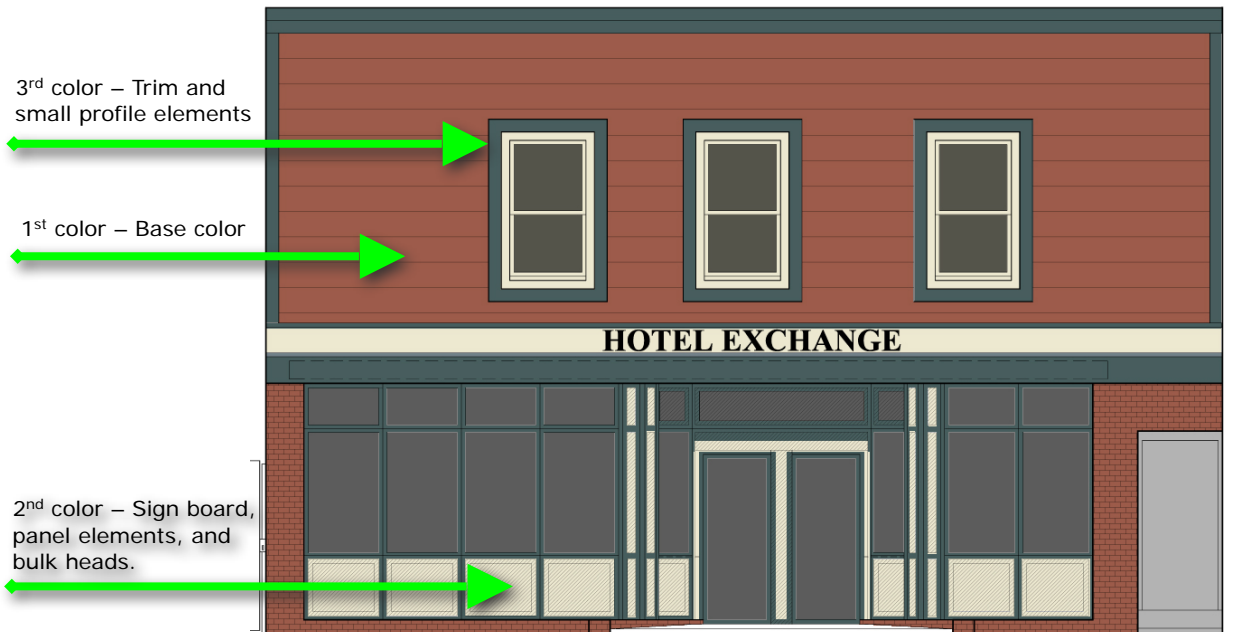
Many paint manufacturers offer a historic preservation color palette (Benjamin Moore, Sherwin Williams, Behr, Valspar, etc...)

Design proposals should also consider the colors of adjacent buildings or buildings shared between multiple tax parcels to ensure that complementary colors are being used across the streetscape. For a building with multiple tax parcels, an alternative is for the owners to agree on the upper level base color. Avoid duplicating the colors of adjacent buildings.

Note: Colors as printed here do not accurately reflect the true paint colors. Please consult paint chips for true representation.



Sample of acceptable combinations. The colors shown are from the Benjamin Moore Historic Preservation Color palette - other manufacturers are acceptable.



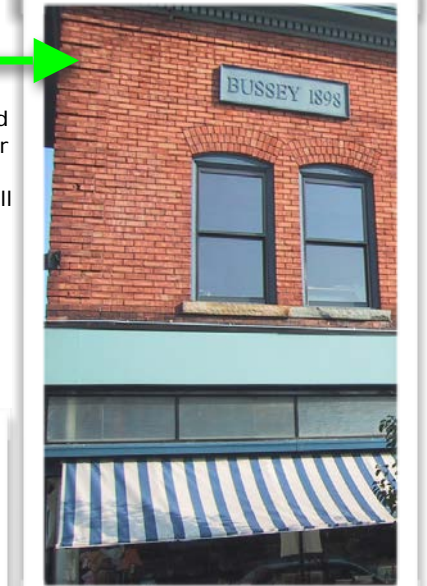
- a) For buildings that are completely painted, choose 2-3 colors for different building elements. One color will act as a base color for the majority of the façade (for painted brick or wood facades). The second color should be used for secondary elements like sign boards or medium sized elements such as columns or bulk head paneling. The third color should be used to pull out cornice and/or column detailing. Do not use uncomplimentary colors, too many, too few, or monotone colors.

Where the brick condition allows, the brick should not be painted on these buildings. The natural color of the brick should be considered in the overall color scheme. Some brick restoration may be required. National Park Service's preservation briefs discuss masonry sealers in greater detail.

Colors and stains for window trim and frames should be considered as part of the proposed color scheme.



✓
DO use 2-3 colors to create a base and highlight details



✓
DO leave exposed brick and consider the natural brick color in the overall color scheme



✓
DO coordinate window trim and frame colors with building color scheme



Base Color (Red)

Windows and trim elements (Orange)

Accent and detailing (Beige)



✗
DO NOT use a single color or colors that blend too closely



✓
DO use multiple colors for highlighting new trim details and panels

8. Detailing

- a) When feasible, a proposal should reference original fragments of the existing facade in order to re-establish its own recognizable, authentic identity. Details should be highlighted through careful color selection. Do not cover or remove column, lintel, or parapet details that provide historic character and address human scale.

✓
DO restore and highlight intricate details with careful color selection



✗
DO NOT paint detailing the same color as the building base color

✗
DO NOT cover original detailing for cornices, lintels or columns

✓
DO restore and highlight cornice, bracket, and column details with careful color selection



✗
DO NOT cover original facades with metal siding.

✓
DO restore and highlight cornice and column details with careful color selection





✓
DO restore and highlight intricate details with careful color selection



✓
DO restore original masonry cornices and pilasters

✓
DO restore and highlight cornice and column details with careful color selection

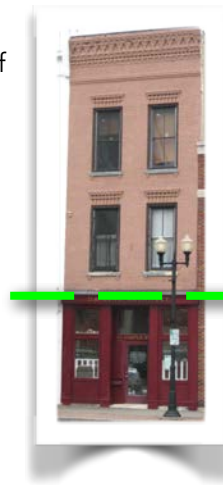


✓
DO use color highlights on trim and panel details



✓
DO restore and highlight cornice lines, corbels, door & window lintels

- b) Provide visual separation between first and second stories. This separation may consist of decorative trim, awnings, or a change of material with added relief to create a shadow line that delineates the top of the first story.

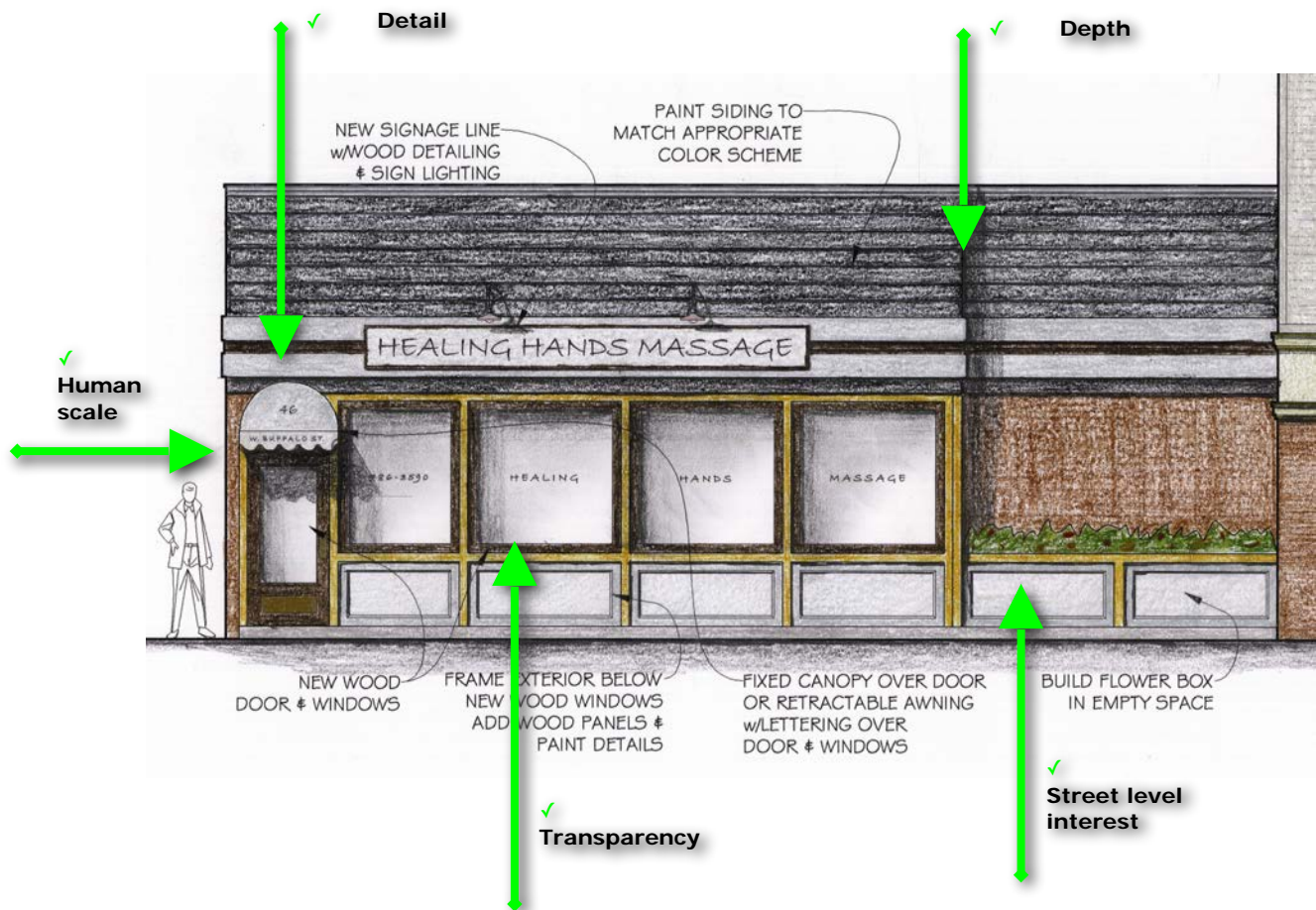


9) Single-Story Facades & Non-historic Facades

There are elements of façade design that are transposable onto different kinds of structures, from venerable 19th century edifices to utilitarian concrete-block warehouses and buildings of various sizes. This sensitivity to creating an inviting, layered, pedestrian-scaled façade represents the starting point for single-story buildings. This sensitivity to creating an inviting, layered, pedestrian-scaled façade represents the starting point for “non-historic” or substantially altered buildings.

Design Elements

- Depth and “layering” of façade elements
- Focusing on human scale
- Street-level interest
- Transparency
- Detail



- a) Traditional proportions for sign boards and their locations on two-story facades may not be appropriate for single-story facades. Signboards should run the full length of the building and the height of signboards should be within 10%-25% of the overall building height. Applied lettering or signs within this zone should be no taller than two feet (2') or 80% of the signboard zone, whichever is smaller.

After appropriate proportions for signboards are established, upper portions of the wall may be left as a uniform material. Using the parapet or cornice detailing to establish rhythm can create visual interest. Considering the heights of adjacent single-story buildings will help City Center's single-story facades create a contiguous block.



DO use parapets to create rhythm and add visual interest while maintaining pedestrian scale windows and signs for storefront proportions



DO use parapets with cornice detailing on single-story facades to add visual



- b) By having an overhanging, 3-dimensional element, the owner can extend the presence of a business onto the sidewalk, making the business more inviting, increasing sales space, seating, etc, and protecting customers from the elements. Single-story buildings create additional dimensional interest at street level. Fabric awnings can help add detail and dimension to facades that lack the cornice, lintel and column detailing that may not be as prevalent.

DO introduce fabric awning variations to engage the pedestrian zone



Non-historic Buildings: Large, empty, windowless facades deter walking, make pedestrians feel small and unwelcome. By making larger window openings and adding depth to a storefront one can make the business more sheltering and welcome for pedestrians. In some cases it may not be viable to increase the number of windows or visually break up the mass of a façade. Consider using different exterior finish materials to break up a large façade or painted murals that speak to characteristics of City Center, or the business occupying the space.

BEFORE



DO NOT create uniform, monolithic facades

✓ **Detail**



✓ **Street level interest**

✓ **Depth**

✓ **Transparency**

✓ **Human scale**

- a) Historically, awnings helped reduce direct sunlight, protect from rain and snow, and attach businesses to the sidewalk and street. By having an overhanging, 3-dimensional element, the owner can extend the presence of a business onto the sidewalk, making the business more inviting, increasing sales space, seating, etc, and protecting customers from the elements.

For non-historic buildings not limited by historic character, custom designed and fabricated awnings are permitted. Work with a designer to create a unique element that can welcome passing pedestrians. Three-dimensional elements may require additional structural support.

DO introduce awning variations and 3-dimensional elements to engage the pedestrian zone



- b) For buildings that lack specific historic identity, owners may not be limited to historic colors, in some cases they may be inappropriate based on the period of the building. The guidelines still recommend working within a range of colors complementary to all participants in the Program.

Rather than simply painting large blank surfaces consider painting murals or other interesting graphics to break up the façade and present specific City Center history or information.

DO use art and murals to create visual interest on large empty facades that can not be broken down and lack historic character – This example re-creates a regional, annual event, to enhance local pride and market the community.



BEFORE



AFTER

Maintenance

To avoid blight conditions in Oneida:

- Ensure that any exterior lighting lamps are not blown out and replace when required
- As paint begins to deteriorate, scrape clean and apply a fresh coat of primer and paint. When painting masonry – repair masonry, allow for the masonry to dry out before applying fresh coats of paint. Multiple applications may be required due to moisture escaping the brick until fully dried out.
- For brick buildings, over time the brick and mortar joints may need repair. By keeping the brick and mortar joints in good condition you will extend the overall life of the building while keeping the building looking clean
- Windows should be kept clean. When windows crack or break they should be replaced. Verify that caulking around windows and other openings is in good condition to extend the life of the windows and adjacent building materials
- Lettering should be replaced if letters are missing or damaged.
- Do not board up damaged windows.
- Do not leave scattered, disorganized, or abandoned utilities attached to buildings.
- Miscellaneous Items: Plantings in flower boxes and planters should be attentively maintained. Seasonal decorations should be placed and removed when appropriate and kept neatly organized while displayed.