

5.3 Special Design Principles for Historic Buildings

5.3.1 Building Style

SPECIAL IDEAS FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS

If your building is designated as contributing to the historic district, you own a special asset that merits additional attention. Preservation of character-defining elements of historic buildings should be a top priority, and alterations and repairs should accurately represent the historic qualities of the buildings. Original documentation should be used for restoration work whenever possible. Look for early photographs that will offer clues about the original design. Where original documentation is not available, interpretations of similar elements that occurred in the area may be considered. To determine if your building is designated as contributing to the historic district, refer to the map on file with the Historic Preservation Commission.

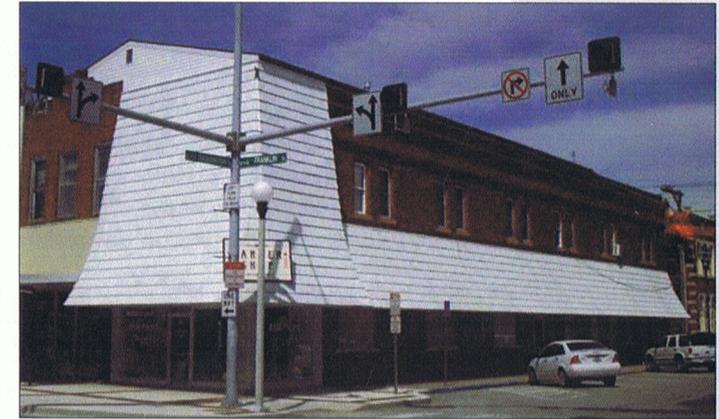
- **Respect the original design character of the buildings**

Analyze the building to determine which elements are essential to its character. Do not attempt to make it appear older (or younger) in style than it really is. The genuine heritage of the district should be expressed. Avoid designs, such as "Swiss Village" or "Old West."

5.3.2 Changes in Use

- **New uses that require the least change to existing structures are encouraged**

Every reasonable effort should be made to provide a compatible use for the building that will require minimal alteration to the building and its site.



Avoid materials that confuse the genuine heritage and use of a building.
(Kirksville, Missouri)



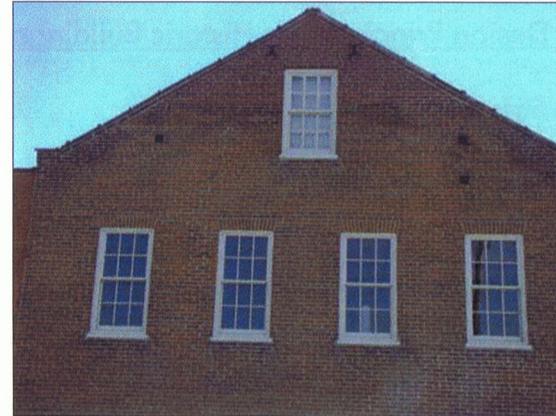
Storefront converted to office space with minimal amount of change to the building.
(Washington, Missouri)

5.3.3 Repairing Original Features

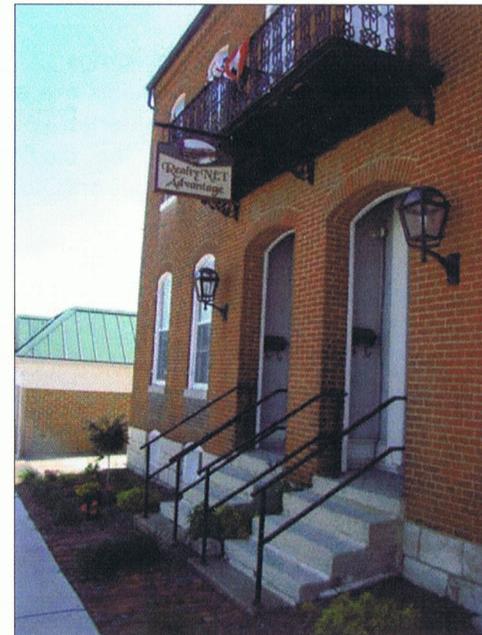
- **Avoid removing or altering any historic material or significant architectural features**

Original materials and details that contribute to the historic significance of the structure should be preserved whenever feasible. Rehabilitation work should not destroy the distinguishing character of the property or its environment. Examples of historically significant architectural features are porches, window trim and chimneys. Other significant elements may be the overall building form, roof shape or material finish.

- **Maintain existing significant stylistic elements**
Protect historic material with maintenance treatments such as rust removal, caulking and repainting.
- **Use the gentlest procedures for cleaning, refinishing, and repairing historic materials**
Sandblasting is especially damaging! See the maintenance guidelines on pages 64-65.
- **Minimize removal of historic elements**
Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. Patch, piece-in, splice, consolidate, or otherwise upgrade the original material when possible.
- **Replace only missing portions of original elements where feasible**
Do not discard an entire window frame, for example, if only the sill is rotted. Match original material when patching with new material. A substitute material is acceptable if the form and design of the substitute conveys the visual appearance of the original. For example, a synthetic material may substitute for a plaster molding.
- **When disassembly of an historic element is necessary for its rehabilitation, use methods that minimize damage to original materials**
Sometimes trim elements and other materials must be removed in order to repair or refinish them. Always devise methods of replacing the disassembled materials in their original configuration. If you are considering applying for Federal income tax credits for the certified rehabilitation of historic buildings, do not attempt removal of any materials until you have consulted with the Historic Preservation Commission and the State Historic Preservation Office.



Building façade with preserved window features.
(Washington, Missouri)



Building which maintains stylistic elements.
(Washington, Missouri)

5.3.4 Replacing Original Features

- **Replacement of missing architectural elements should be based on accurate duplications of original features**
In some cases, an entire detail must be reconstructed. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the original in design, color, texture and other visual qualities. The design should be substantiated by physical and/or pictorial evidence.
- **Where reconstruction of an element is impossible because of lack of historical evidence, a new design that relates to the building in general size, scale and material may be considered**
Use design elements that reflect building style. A simplified interpretation of similar features on comparable buildings may be considered.

5.3.5 Existing Alterations

- **Preserve older alterations that have achieved historic significance**
Some changes to buildings are evidence of the history of the building. These changes may have developed significance in their own right, and this should be recognized. An example of such an alteration could be a 1910 storefront remodeling that was added to an 1890 structure. Although these early alterations did remove original character, most of them were true to the building. This situation may be difficult to judge. Sometimes the original design is so important that removal of a significant change may be merited. Consult with the Historic Preservation Commission for advice on this issue.
- **More recent alterations that are not historically significant may be removed**
This removal may in fact reveal original design features. You may wish to photograph the process to document it for future reference and research of the building history.



Intricate cornice.

Simplified cornice.



Older alteration that has become significant.
(St. Charles, Missouri)