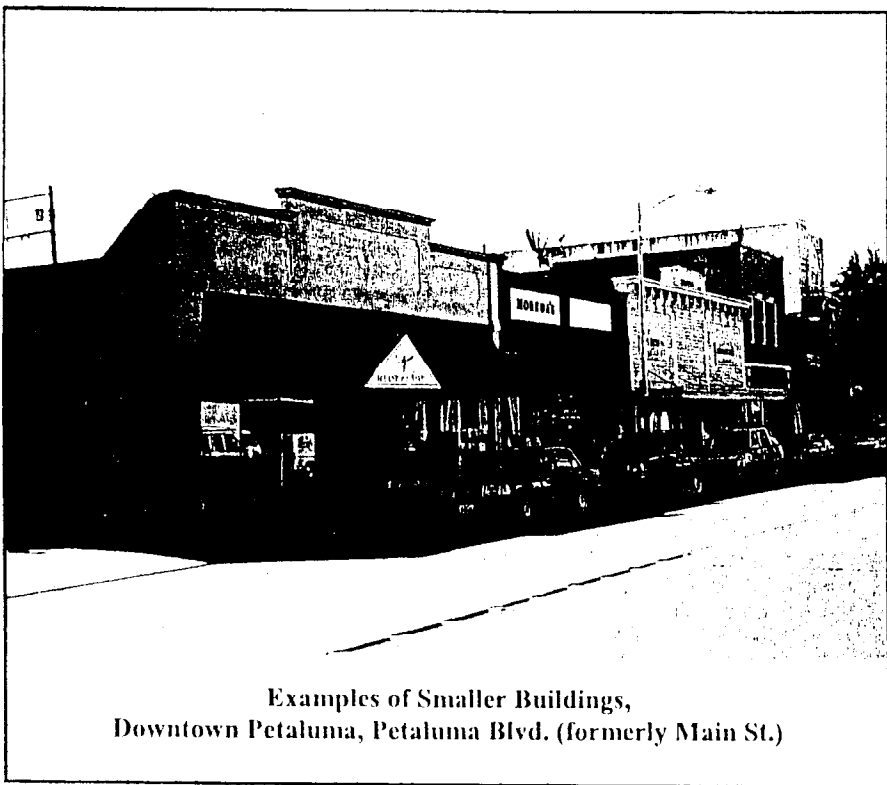


**PETALUMA HISTORIC
COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**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.**

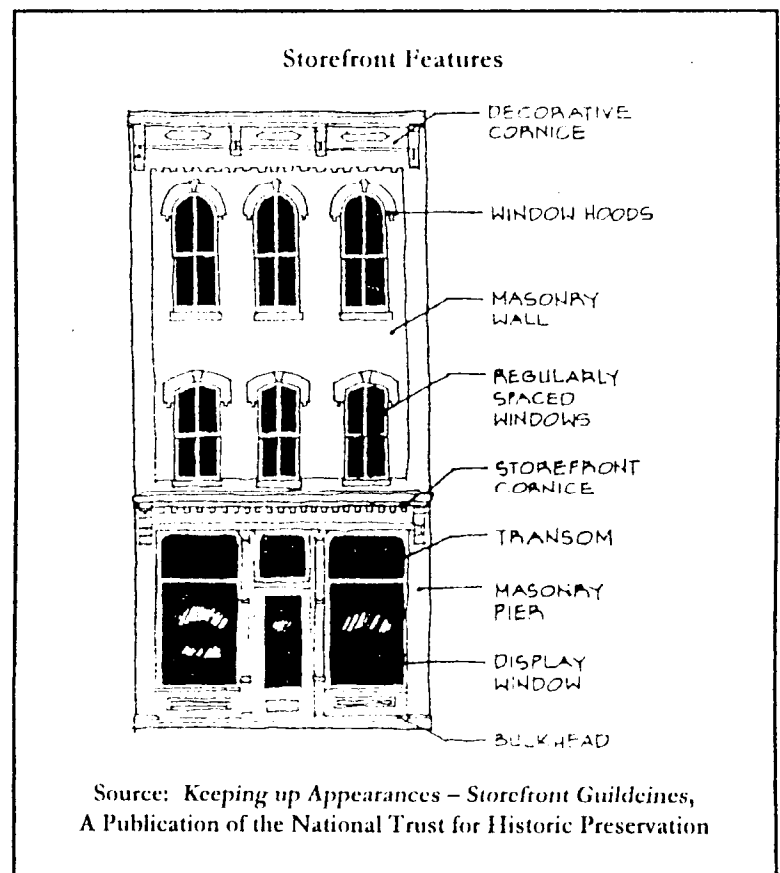


Examples of Smaller Buildings,
Downtown Petaluma, Petaluma Blvd. (formerly Main St.)

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.

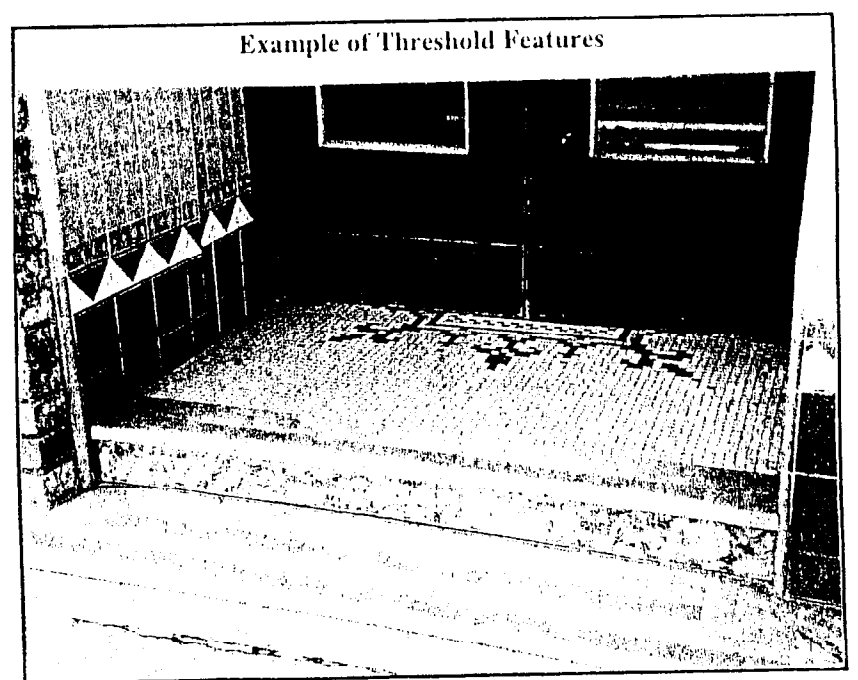
4.4 STOREFRONTS

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.

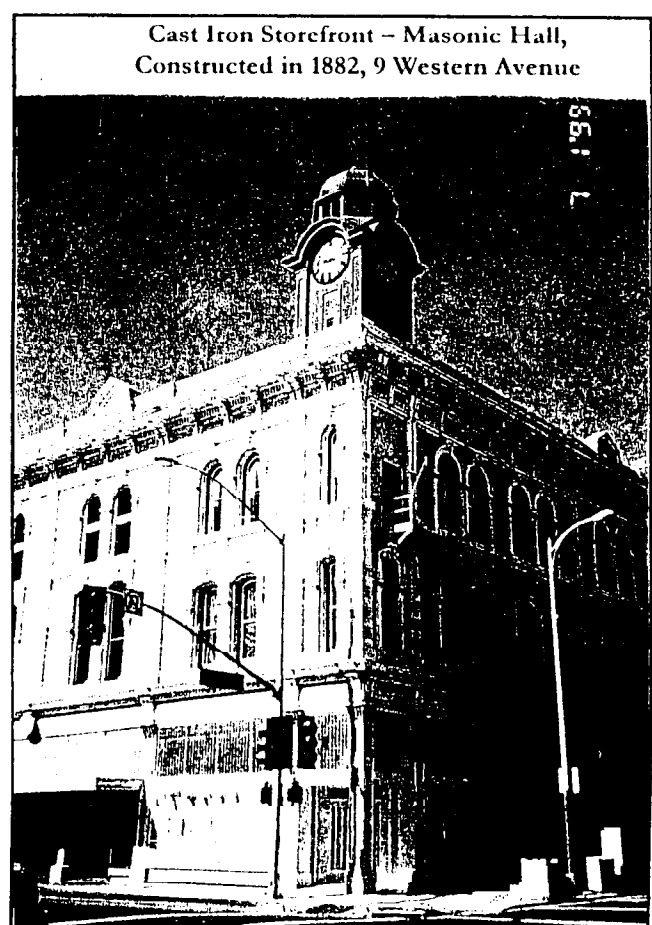
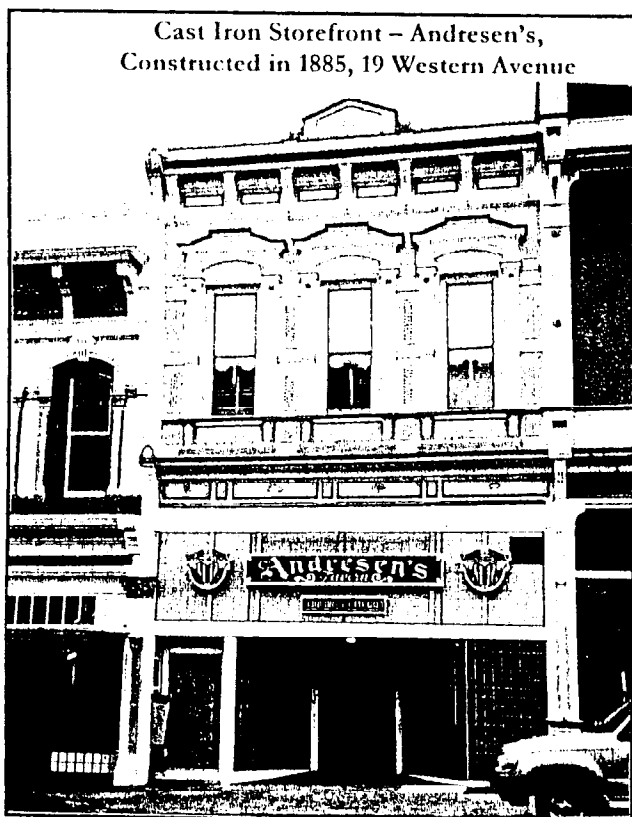


4.4-1 Metal Storefronts

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

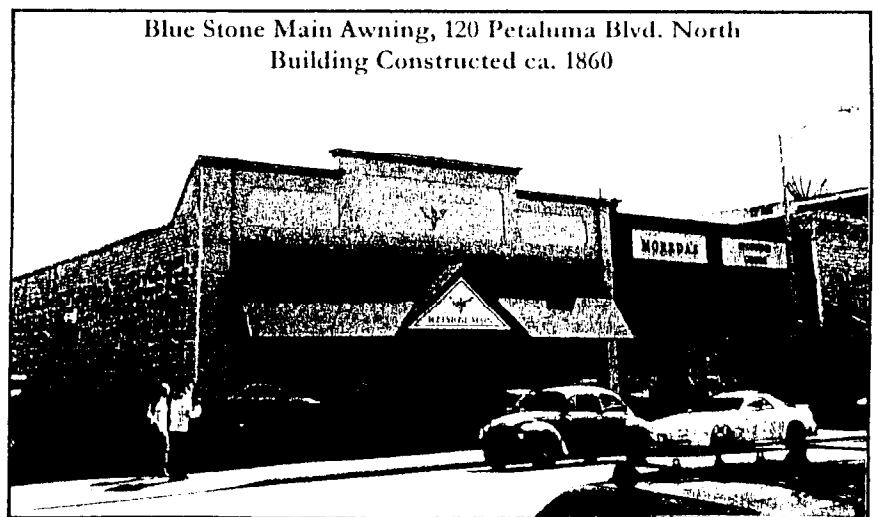
Some storefronts are constructed of brick or stone, and, like their metal and wooden counterparts, also may have been subjected to physical damage or alterations over time. Although mortar may have disintegrated, inappropriate surface coatings applied, and openings reduced or closed, careful rehabilitation 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.



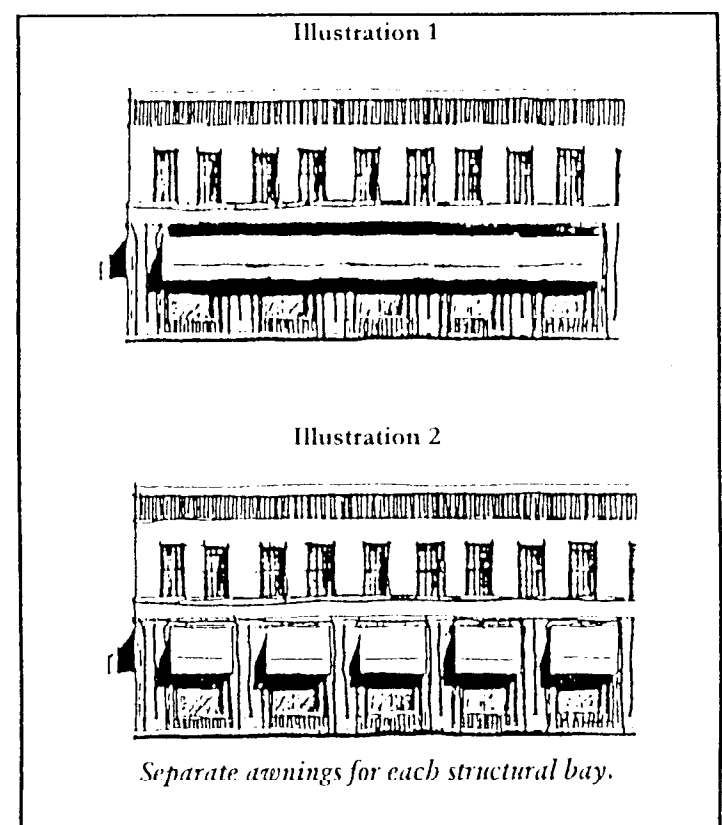
The canvas awning was an important design element in the traditional storefront. It provided cover, added color, and served as a transition between the storefront and the upper facade. Most buildings that face the sun had awnings. (The Petaluma Library and the Petaluma Historical Museum have extensive 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 strongly 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:

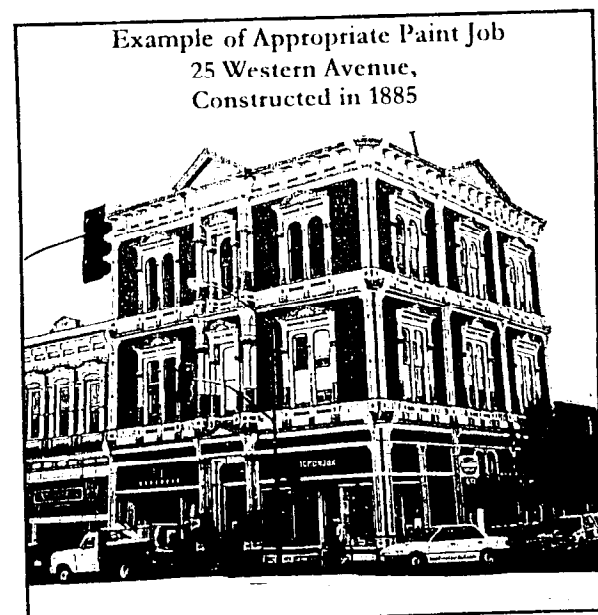
- Unpainted brick or stone buildings shall not be painted;
- Iron cast storefronts shall be preserved and not altered with abrasive cleaning;
- As a general rule, removing paint from historic exterior woodwork should be avoided unless absolutely necessary.

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.

