



Historic photos courtesy of Rockpile Museum

FACADE MANUAL

URBAN DESIGN PLAN

GILLETTE, WYOMING
APRIL 2013

PURPOSE OF THE MANUAL

Downtown holds a special place in the hearts of many communities. This is especially true for downtown Gillette. Not only is the district unique in the city, it is a unique regional attraction. This document is an effort to preserve and enhance the best qualities of the downtown. Gillette residents and building owners take great pride in the downtown and the concentration of historic and architecturally interesting buildings. This document provides a guide for preserving and rehabilitating the historic buildings of the district.

Retaining the historic quality of a district is important for the sake of historic preservation but there are also other important benefits to a community, including:

- ▶ **Enhance the environmental quality.** Improving and maintaining individual buildings cumulatively enhances the overall quality of the downtown environment. The quality of the individual stores in a downtown is very important but the overall environment should attract people to the district. The downtown should be perceived as a district that people want to spend time in both shopping and exploring.
- ▶ **Improve the economic potential.** Heritage tourism and the attraction of unique commercial districts are becoming more and more attractive to local and regional markets. Establishing a quality environment will attract both visitors and new businesses. Downtown Gillette's proximity to Interstate 90 offers great opportunities. Visitors, looking for single-day stops to other interesting destinations in the State are an important economic opportunity for downtown Gillette.
- ▶ **Strengthen property values.** The stabilization and improvement of property values benefits everyone in the city. The buildings in the downtown district account for a significant portion of the city's office space supply. Stabilizing the property values in this district is a benefit to building owners, but also the entire city's tax base.
- ▶ **Tourism.** Each Wyoming household would pay \$540 more in taxes without the tax revenue generated by tourism industry in Wyoming (Office of Tourism). Heritage tourism plays a significant role in drawing visitors. Tourists to popular destinations frequently comment on the "sense of place" created when a district is

properly programmed. These kinds of environments can create new opportunities for specialty retail and dining targeted at local residents and visitors alike.

- ▶ **Economic Sustainability.** Older buildings are perceived as being energy-inefficient. Frequently, the cost of upgrading insulation and mechanical systems in historic buildings is only marginally greater than the same improvements in a contemporary structure. With these improvements, a historic building's energy performance can rival or even exceed contemporary construction, helping the owner save significantly on utility bills. Additionally, replacing a historic building with a new one requires the demolition and removal of the historic structure, incurring the cost of demolition and disposal of a large volume of building materials.

THE MANUAL DOESN'T DO

The purpose of manual is to protect, promote, and accentuate the visual qualities that distinguish Gillette's downtown architecture, while respecting the property rights of the building's owner. The items identified are advisory only. The district would benefit from a formalized incentive program that would allow owners to apply for funding assistance. Regardless, the manual and possible incentive programs do not do the following:

- ▶ **Interior Modifications:** The manual refers to the facades of Gillette's commercial buildings. They do not have any bearing on the use or design of the interior of a building.
- ▶ **No Required Modifications:** The manual is a guide for building owners and can be useful when a construction permit is sought on a building. They will not require changes to a building as it exists now, outside of the permitting process.
- ▶ **Paint.** The guidelines do not establish paint colors that 'can' and 'cannot' be used. Instead, a set of recommendations are developed to help guide property owners toward a paint scheme that best highlights the character of their building.
- ▶ **Maintenance.** Routine maintenance to the exterior of a building that does not require a building permit is not subject to approval.

GETTING STARTED

When building owners decide to work on their historic commercial building several challenging questions face them.

- ▶ If the façade is fairly intact but deteriorated, what repairs should be done first?
- ▶ If significant alternations have been made, should they be kept, should the building be restored to its original appearance, or should another approach be taken?
- ▶ If the building is no longer in commercial use, can the new use be accommodated while retaining the commercial appearance of the building?
- ▶ What is an appropriate and acceptable budget for the building owner?

One of the biggest questions for building owners when considering work on their building is "where to begin?" This section is designed to provide some general assistance in the process of working on a historic structure.

Building Assessment

Before beginning a project, an assessment, or "physical exam", of the building should be completed. This document includes a cursory evaluation of existing street side facades. This is a good starting point for any new project. A more detailed exam of an individual building should provide a historical summary of the building but more importantly it should lay the ground work for the project approach. In addition to providing base information on the historical context of the building, the report should:

- ▶ **Evaluate Existing Conditions.** The report should inventory the existing condition of the building and relate it back to treatment types. Most importantly it should answer the questions "what needs attention and why".
- ▶ **Work Description.** A description of what work would be needed to stabilize the building, meet specific treatment types, and most importantly what will be needed to accomplish the owner's goals.
- ▶ **Prioritizing Projects.** Often a building has more projects than an owner can finance. Understanding the priority of projects can put the investment to best use. Critical projects should be done first with more cosmetic projects waiting until last.



Set a Budget

Once the building owner decides what projects have to be completed first, a budget should be established. The building assessment and budget could drive the treatment type selected by the owner. Treatment type is very important and should be considered throughout the assessment and budgeting process.

Apply the Design Guidelines

The guidelines outlined in this document are established to assist building owners. In addition, the City can provide important guidance to projects. By applying the guidelines in this document, the district and City can strive to promote and preserve the character of downtown Gillette.

NEXT STEPS

Establishing a formal incentive program will stimulate private investment. Also, establishing a board to review projects and funding applications will provide support to city leaders.

Appoint Downtown Review Board

The board provides advisory recommendations to the City for awarding grants and modifications to proposed projects.

- ▶ Members be composed of not less than five (5) voting members and no more than (X) members, all of whom must have a demonstrated interest or expertise in

historic preservation or downtown.

- ▶ A majority shall be professionals in the fields of archeology, historic archeology, architectural history, architecture, and history. All such appointments are to the extent that these professionals are available in the City. Property owners, business operators, and professionals in downtown should receive preference.
- ▶ Members be appointed by the Mayor subject to approval by the City Council.
- ▶ Members shall serve without compensation.
- ▶ A simple majority of the total number of appointed members shall constitute a quorum.
- ▶ Board will provide advisory recommendations to the City for awarding grants.

Establish Incentives

Some communities provide matching grants to building owners to assist in the stabilization and rehabilitation of their traditional downtown. Many states provide funding mechanisms to communities to encourage private investment.

Alternatively, some communities establish their own funding mechanism to encourage rehabilitation. Models for Gillette to consider include:

- ▶ **City of Ottumwa, Iowa.** The City's Downtown Interest Buy-Down Rehabilitation Loan and Downtown Facade Im-

provement Program program provides financial incentives to improve storefronts and to rehabilitate existing buildings in downtown. Loan program maximum to apply for is \$50,000 over a five (5) year period at 0% interest; funds may be used for structural repair and improvements for the interior or facades of existing buildings. Facade program maximum amount can apply for is \$5,000 per facade, \$10,000 per owner; reimbursement of 25% of facade improvements with the aforementioned dollar maximums.

- ▶ **City of Mason City, Iowa.** Main Street Mason City manages a \$150,000 revolving loan fund for facade improvements downtown. The grant requires a city investment of \$150,000 for a revolving loan program. Assuming that all money is lent out, annual repayments should generate \$17,000 annually for additional lending.

- ▶ **City of Larimie, Wyoming.** Larimie Main Street Alliance, with financial support from the Guthrie Family Foundation and Duane Toro Real Estate, provide technical assistance and grant funds to any businesses or property owner in the historic district looking to make improvements to their building.

Property owners are asked to use Design Guidelines as a tool to remodel, restore or expand their building. A Design Committee is available to assist in the process as well as professional architects.

This section provides advisory recommendations that will be valuable to property owners as they consider improvements. These ideas can help ensure that projects that improve individual properties also enhance the character of the entire downtown.

This discussion is concerned entirely with exterior improvements, although building codes and other city ordinances may establish specific requirements for interior improvements, and internal plumbing, mechanical, and electrical work. The guidelines for rehabilitating existing storefronts are not intended to limit the use of a structure, rather, to establish minimum standards for maintaining the historic character of the facade.

1. Become familiar with the style of a building and the role of the storefront in the overall design.
2. Preserve the storefront's character even though there is a new use on the interior. If less exposed window area is desirable, consider other options such as blinds instead of altering the existing storefront elements. Design solutions should preserve the integrity and appearance of an individual structure.
3. Avoid use of materials that were unavailable when the storefront was constructed. For Gillette this includes:
 - › vinyl and aluminum siding
 - › anodized aluminum
 - › mirrored or tinted glasses
 - › artificial stone
 - › brick veneer
4. Choose paint colors based on the building's historical appearance. In general:
 - › Do not paint surfaces that have never been painted
 - › When contrasting colors are appropriate, avoid too many colors on a single facade.
5. Rehabilitation work should retain distinguishing qualities and architectural features. Details shall be restored or duplicated based on the existing or original appearance. The repair of existing details with inappropriate materials, such as aluminum jamb casings, aluminum siding and tin covering detailed brackets is not appropriate.

STOREFRONTS - THE BASICS

Recommended

Traditional storefronts used as much glass as possible, making the business transparent and goods visible to the pedestrian. Work on a storefront will identify, retain, preserve, or restore features such as:

- ▶ Doors, especially entrance locations.
- ▶ Transom windows, size and location.
- ▶ Bulkhead or base panel, style and material
- ▶ Corner posts, style and material
- ▶ Window system size, configuration, and material.
- ▶ Sign locations.

Not Recommended

- ▶ Removing or altering the storefront from its historic character
- ▶ Moving the entrance
- ▶ Removing historic materials from the storefront
- ▶ Oversized and/or lighted signage
- ▶ Adding details that do not fit the original time period of the building
- ▶ For Gillette this would include:
 - › wood shakes
 - › mansard designs
 - › small paned windows
 - › shutters
 - › filled windows
 - › removed or covered cornices, panels, or columns
 - › Using replacement or substitute materials that do not convey the same appearance as other, original aspects of the building

WINDOWS

Recommended

The type, shape, number of panes, and decorative features including the lintel, sill, and fenestration (arrangement) are important defining characteristics of a historic building.

- ▶ Re-establish windows that have been covered by paneling or boards.
- ▶ Preserve glass, sash, hardware, and window surrounds (lintel or decorative window hoods)
- ▶ When second story is not in use, curtains or blinds should be used instead of enclosing windows
- ▶ When necessary, replacement windows should match the historic window in size, style, material, dimension, sight line, number of panes and should fill the historic opening
- ▶ Previously altered windows should be restored to their original size, material, and design

Not Recommended

These apply to front facades and visible side walls.

- ▶ Boarding up or bricking in windows
- ▶ Glazing and replacement sashes that are not compatible with the historic window
- ▶ Reflective and/or dark, tinted glass.
- ▶ Additional/new window openings should not be visible from the street .
- ▶ Partially enclosing an original window opening.
- ▶ Removing historic materials such as wood, cast iron, and bronze.



ENTRIES

Entries should welcome visitors to a business. The entrance is an important point of welcome and the transition point between the public realm of the street and the more private realm of the building.

Recommended

- ▶ Maintain original entrance locations
- ▶ Maintain or restore the original openings
- ▶ Multiple storefront entries should look alike
- ▶ Identify, preserve, and retain entrance features including doors, sidelights, and pilasters
- ▶ Features should be historically accurate.

Not Recommended

- ▶ Removing or altering entrances in a way that diminishes the historic character of the building
- ▶ Cutting new entrances.
- ▶ Replacement material that does not match surviving details or appropriate style
- ▶ Not properly maintaining materials.

AWNINGS

Awnings were used to shelter customers from the sun and rain and merchandise from the deteriorating effects of the sun. Retractable cloth awnings also provided climate control for the business owner.

Over the years many downtowns added metal and wood canopies. These are not compatible with the original design of the buildings but may have gained significance in their own right.

Recommended

- ▶ Cloth awnings that match the shape and size of the window
- ▶ Retractable awnings for storefronts
- ▶ Style, color, and height similar to other appropriate awnings in the district
- ▶ Can be used to conceal inappropriate alterations to a storefront
- ▶ Mounted to the building.

Not Recommended

- ▶ Do not match the shape of the opening.
- ▶ Awnings that simulate mansard roofs and umbrellas.
- ▶ Canopies that enclose the walkway.
- ▶ Backlit awnings
- ▶ Large awnings that dominate the storefront and hide distinguishing features.
- ▶ Conceal architectural details
- ▶ Metal stock awnings.

LIGHTING

Recommended

- ▶ Should have detailing and materials compatible with character and style of the building.
- ▶ Incandescent and vapor lighting
- ▶ Concealed light fixtures or fixtures appropriate to the building's period.
- ▶ Lighting fixtures should be low profile and have minimal projection from building face.
- ▶ Light fixture hardware should be anchored into mortar, not masonry.
- ▶ Lighting should reflect down, minimizing ambient light to upper-story uses and preserving dark skies.
- ▶ If accent or facade lighting is desired, a comprehensive lighting design for the building should be done by a professional lighting designer
- ▶ Wiring and power lines should be concealed and not be visible

Not Recommended

- ▶ Florescent lighting
- ▶ Lighting that conceals any architectural feature
- ▶ Flood lighting of building facade
- ▶

SIGN GUIDELINES

Signage should complement and not compete with the character of the building and the downtown in general. Signage should be evaluated based on design, location, type, material, lighting and size.

Recommended Location

- ▶ Storefront lintel or transom area
- ▶ If lintel is not applicable then signage should be on a flat unadorned part of the facade
- ▶ Painted directly on the glass of the storefront
- ▶ On awnings
- ▶ Signage should be in scale with the building, proportioned to a building's horizontal and vertical elements
- ▶ Projecting signs must meet the height and projection regulations of the Gillette Zoning ordinance
- ▶ New murals and other artwork of a non-commercial nature shall be sympathetic to the districts character.

Not Recommended

- ▶ Signage that obscures architectural details.
- ▶ New roof signage
- ▶ Lettering should not exceed 18 inches
- ▶ Back-lit signs
- ▶ Hardware of hanging signs should not damage wall surfaces and should be mounted into the mortar, not brick.
- ▶ Moveable or portable signs other than sandwich boards
- ▶ Neon signs, unless it is existing sign that is historically significant in its own right
- ▶ Internally illuminated signage
- ▶ Signs with mirrors or other highly reflective surfaces
- ▶ Flashing and movable signs

MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

Many of Gillette's older buildings have outstanding existing details that only need maintenance. Providing proper maintenance to these features can prevent future damage and ensure the long life of these features.

Recommended

- ▶ Cleaning masonry should only be done to halt deterioration or remove heavy soiling.
- ▶ Masonry surface cleaning tests should be done before any cleaning is done to determine the gentlest method possible.
- ▶ Any cleaning of masonry should be done with the gentlest techniques as possible, such as low pressure water and detergents, using natural bristle brushes.
- ▶ Removing damaged or deteriorated paint to the next sound layer and doing this through the gentlest means possible, which is usually hand scraping.
- ▶ Masonry mortar joints should be repaired when there is evidence of disintegrating mortar, cracks in joints, loose bricks, damp walls, or damaged plasterwork
- ▶ Deteriorated mortar should be removed by hand-raking, thus avoiding damage to the masonry.
- ▶ New mortar should match the old mortar in strength, composition, color, texture, and joint width and profile.
- ▶ Repaired masonry should be as inconspicuous and compatible as possible.
- ▶ Ensure proper drainage so that water does not stand on flat, horizontal surfaces or accumulate in curved decorative features.

Not Recommended

- ▶ Sandblasting brick or stone surfaces using dry or wet grit or other abrasives.
- ▶ Using water or liquid chemical solutions for cleaning when there is a possibility of freezing temperatures.
- ▶ Cleaning or leaving chemicals on masonry surfaces that will damage the masonry.
- ▶ High pressure water cleaning
- ▶ Removing paint that firmly adhered to masonry.
- ▶ Not taking adequate measures to protect masonry and wood features.
- ▶ Removing non-deteriorated mortar and replacing with all new to obtain a uniform look.
- ▶ Repainting with synthetic caulking compound.
- ▶ Making repairs or replacements without addressing the cause of any damage or deterioration
- ▶ Using high strength portland cement for mortar. This material is not compatible with most historic brick and can cause additional damage to the masonry.
- ▶ Using waterproof, water repellent, or applying stucco to masonry rather than repainting or doing other repairs.
- ▶ Covering masonry material and previous installations should be removed and repairs completed.



COLOR

Paint color can greatly enhance the historic feel of a building. The use of multiple, appropriate colors can provide additional character and appeal throughout a district. A paint color or pattern should have continuity with the district and not create a visual distraction. Brick and stone elements like headers and sills should be kept unpainted and cleaned.

Recommended

- ▶ A paint analysis to determine the historic paint colors
- ▶ Colors that are historically appropriate and compatible with the building and surrounding structures
- ▶ Contrasting colors a shade lighter or darker on the doors, windows frames, molding, and cornices when appropriate
- ▶ Colors should emphasize details so avoid dark colors that obscure them and use gloss or semi-gloss paint for easy cleaning

Not Recommended

- ▶ Painting brick that has never been painted.
- ▶ Using more than two to three tones.
- ▶ Primary colors should not be used on the entire building or storefront.
- ▶ Avoid bright hues, use more natural tones.



100 BLOCK

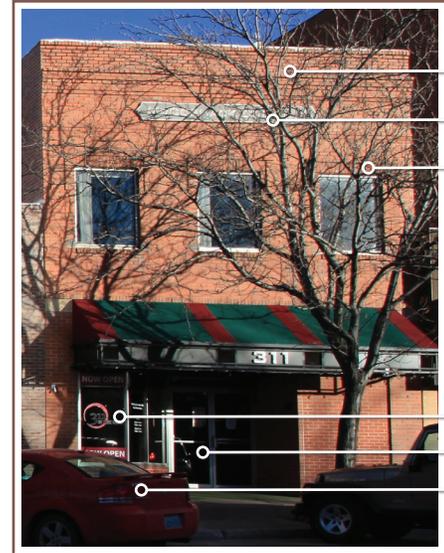
Buildings along Gillette Avenue range from one-story structures to some of the taller building in the City, such as First Interstate Bank. Structures were built throughout the decades, yet elements that appear throughout the district include:

- ▶ Setback of the building is to the property line.
- ▶ Mostly glass street level storefront, with exception to newer buildings.
- ▶ The cornice that crowns the building.
- ▶ The use of brick in storefronts.
- ▶ Entries to buildings at about 25 foot intervals.

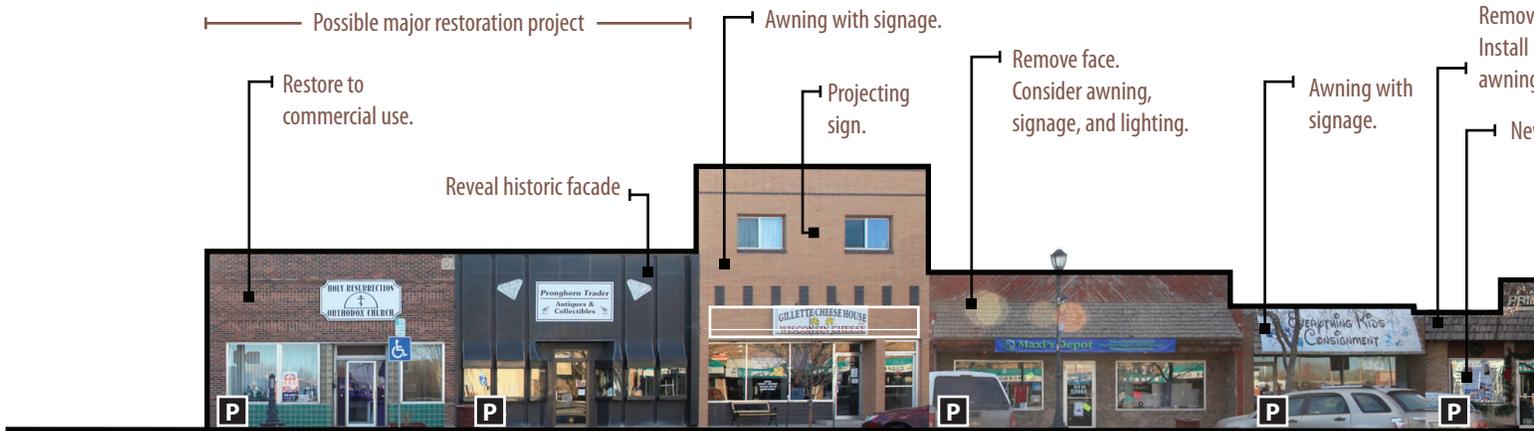
Facades identified as priority candidates for rehabilitation are marked with a **P**.

Rehabilitation of these buildings would significantly influence the perception of the block and reinforce the character of the downtown business community. These structures should receive priority over other building owners applying for possible grant assistance for rehabilitation.

Typical Building Details



Date
Win
Stor
Trans
Disp
Rec
B



Boston, MA



Boston, MA

Permanent Awnings

Permanent awnings offer an opportunity to provide space for signage. Signage can be placed on the valance or cover. Alternatively, the color could be solid or exhibit a pattern with signage above or on the windows



Stromsburg, NE

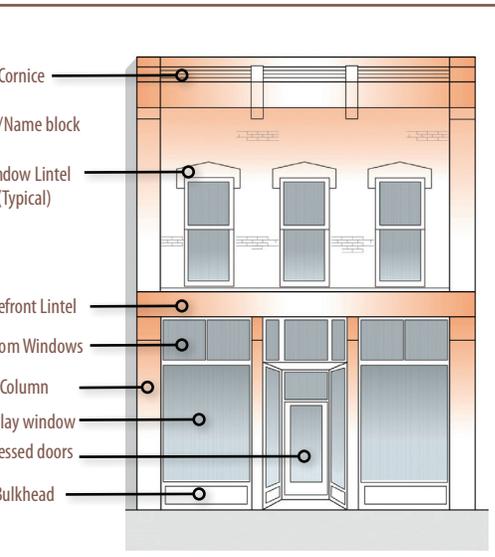


Keokuk, IA



Plattsmouth, NE

P Priority Candidate



Retractable Awnings

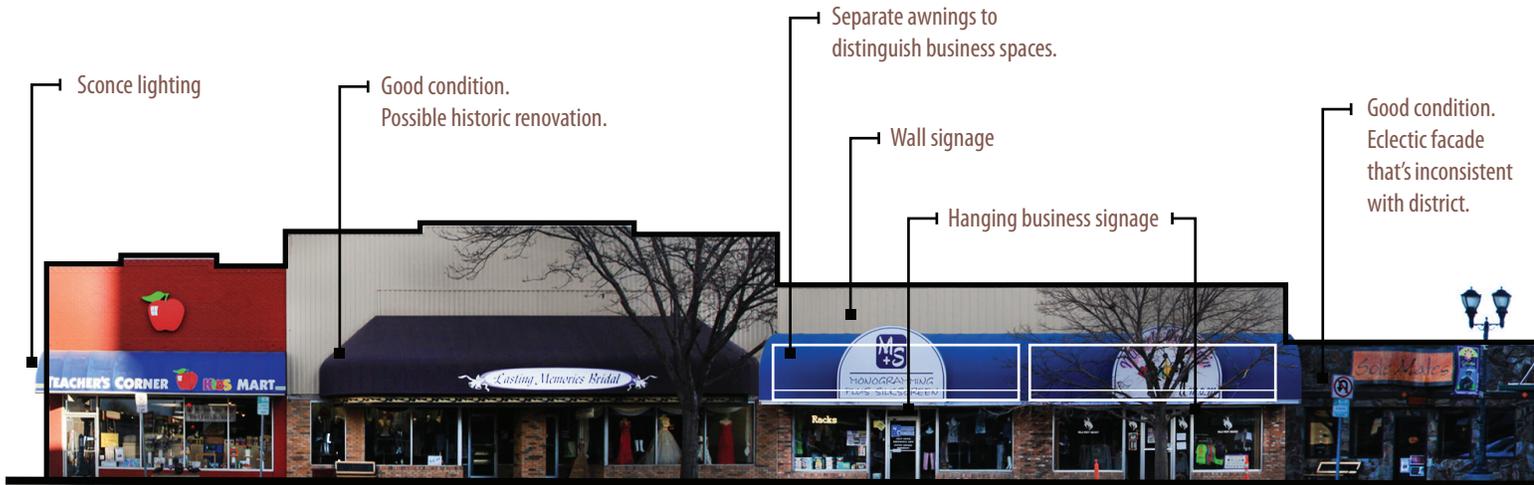
Retractable awnings can be extended to provide shade or retracted to allow for the light to enter the interior space. Also, retracting the awning allows for the sun to melt snow off of the sidewalk and extend the life of the canvas during windy days.



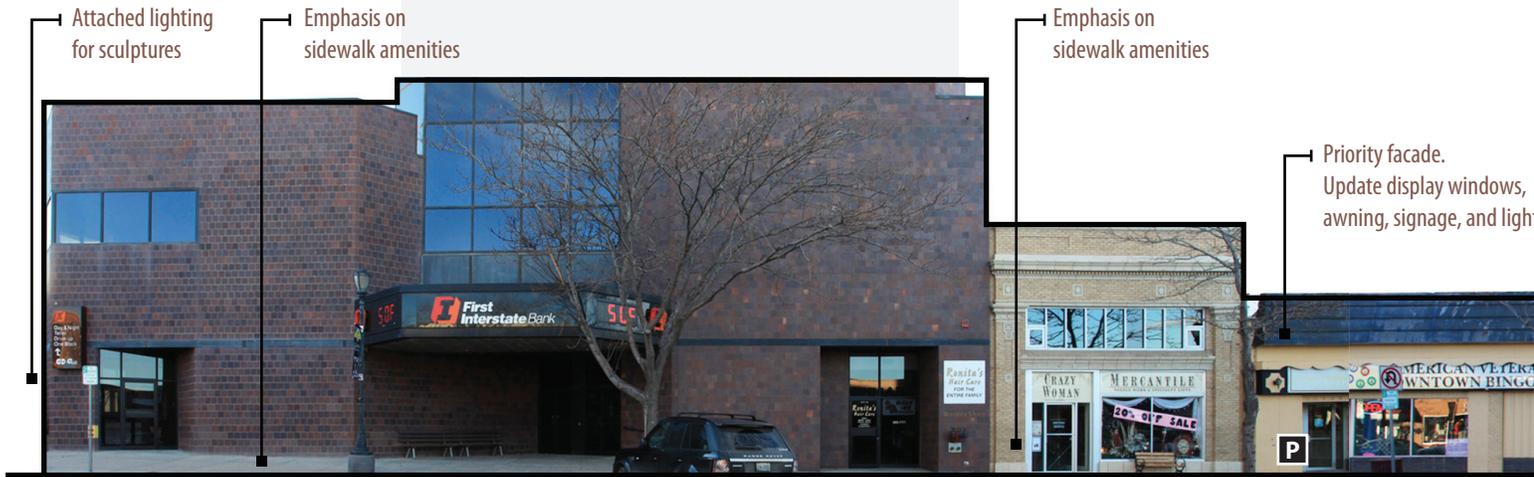
The Costs

Awnings cost between \$80 to \$140 a linear foot. Cost is dependent on the material of the cover, structure (permanent or retractable), length, and projection. Placing graphics on the material influences the cost, as well.

200 BLOCK



← north - east side

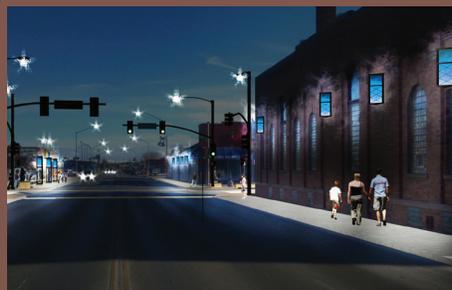


north - west side →



Lighting

Goose neck lighting to identify building storefronts and signage. Casting light downwards will limit glare into upper stories and preserve dark skies. Examples are provided for historic districts.

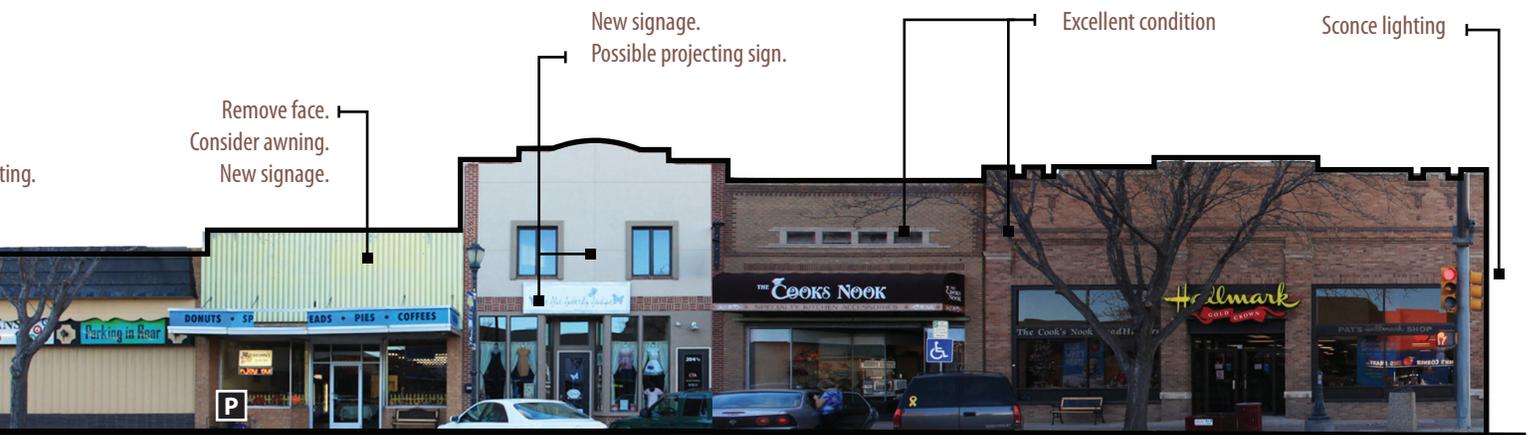
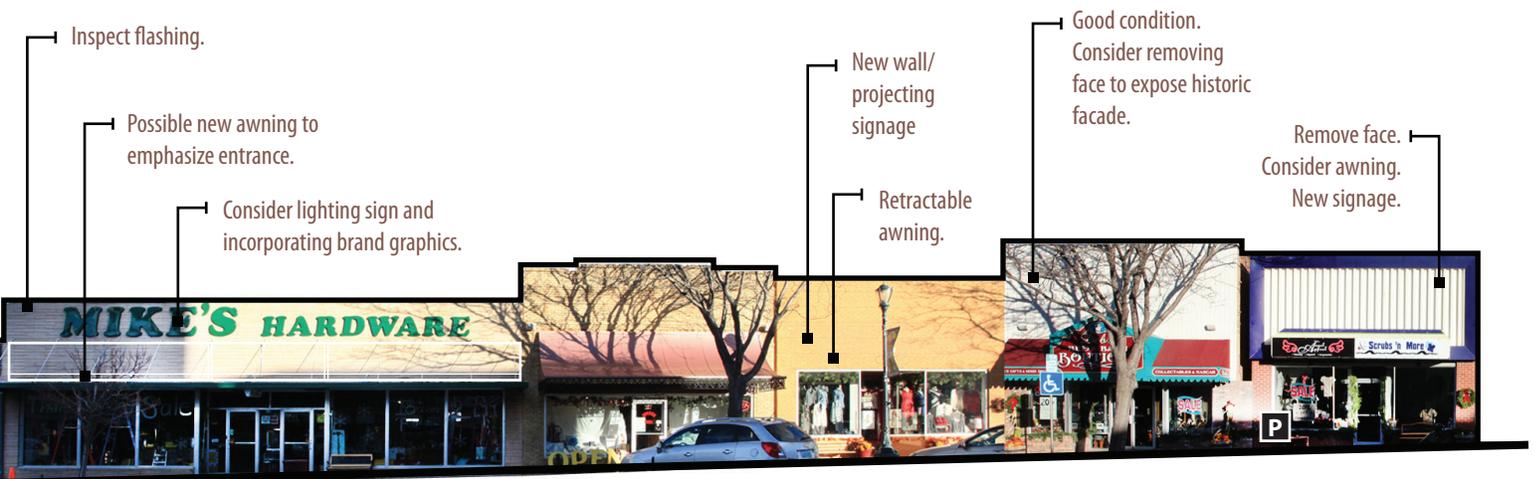


Accent Lighting on Buildings

Omaha, NE. String of pearls along the rooftops of the Old Market.

Gillette Urban Design Plan. Sconce lighting mounted to the side of buildings along 2nd Avenue.

P Priority Candidate



Buffalo, WY



Nebraska City, NE

Projecting Signs

Projecting signs are effective for pedestrian-oriented business environments, such as Gillette Avenue. Placement should be near entrances, similar to sign for CTA's office space.



Belle Plaine, IA

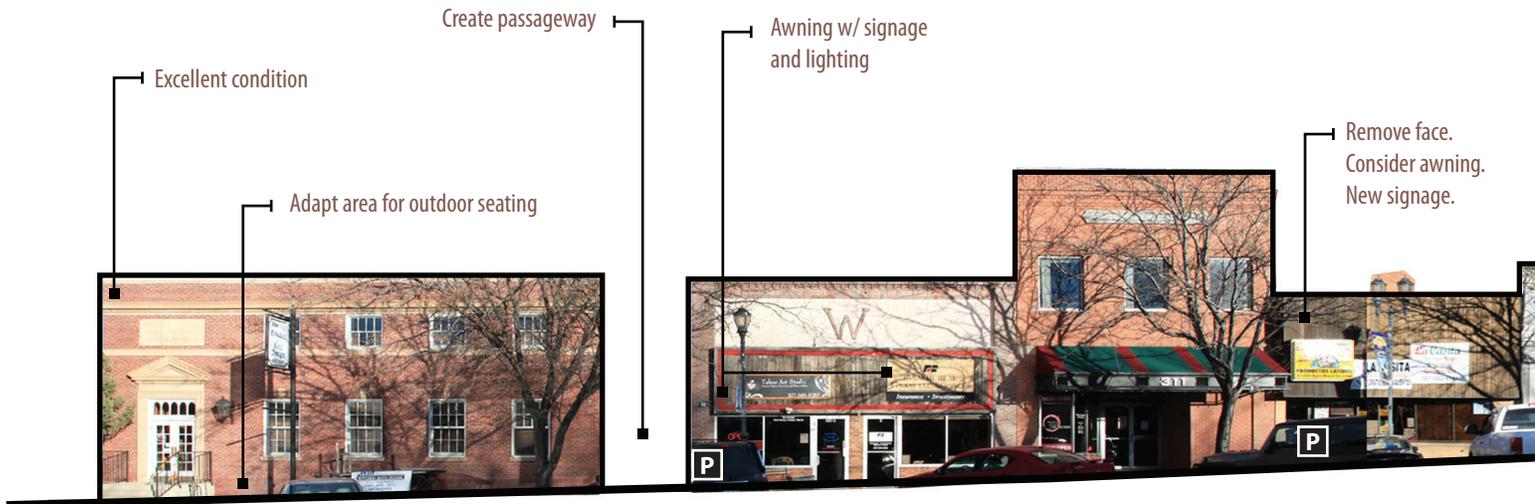


Columbus, NE

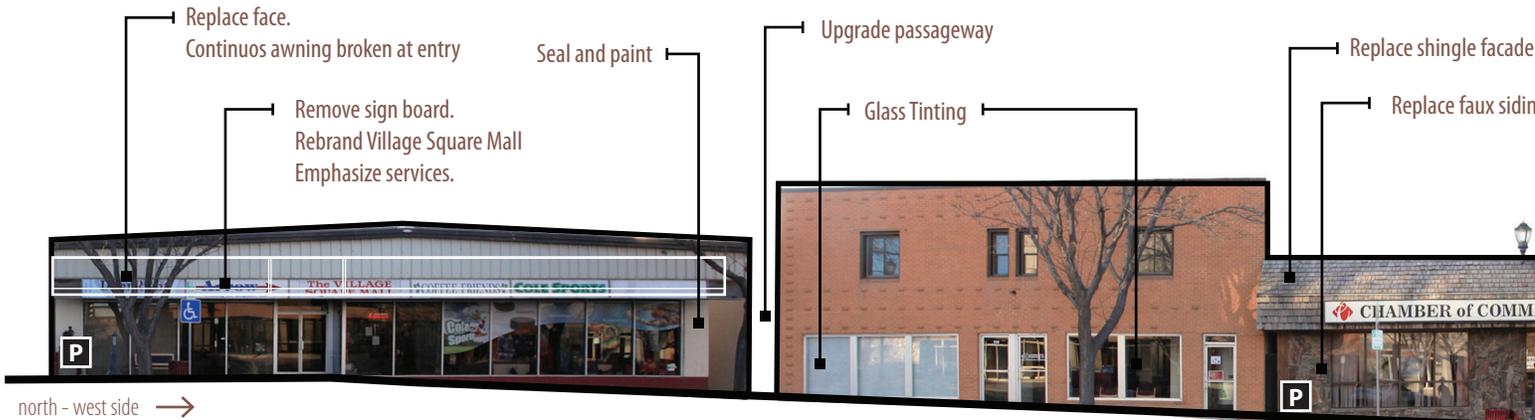
Wall Signs

Wall signs are typically attached to the face of the building. Attachments should be anchored and sealed in the mortar rather than secured into the brick.

300 BLOCK



← north - east side



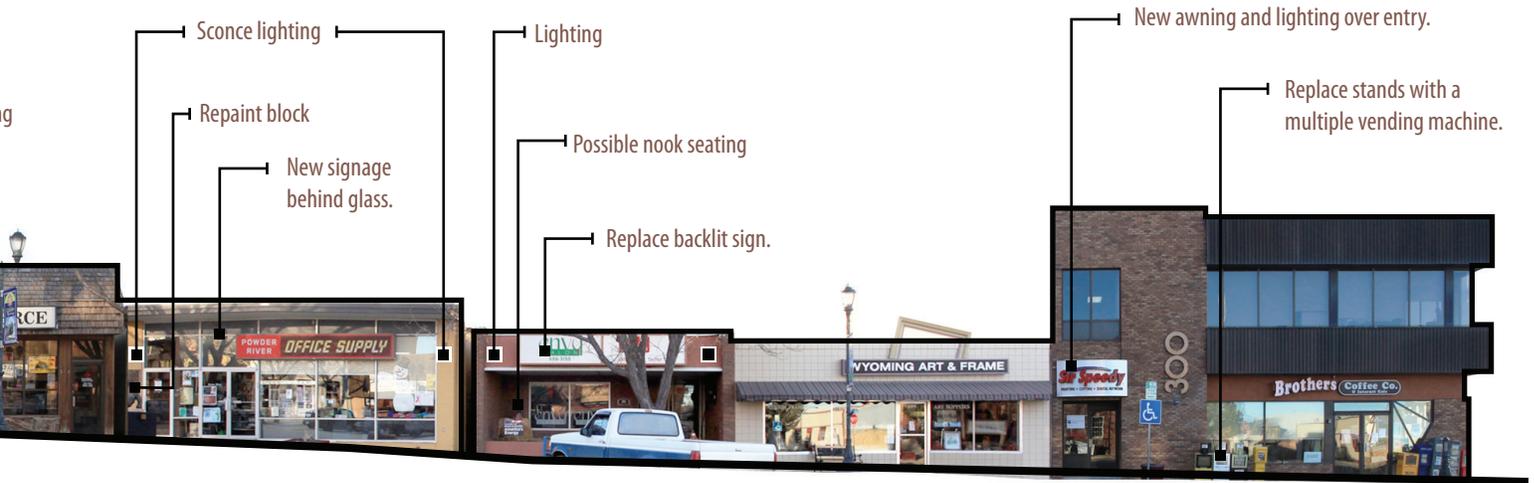
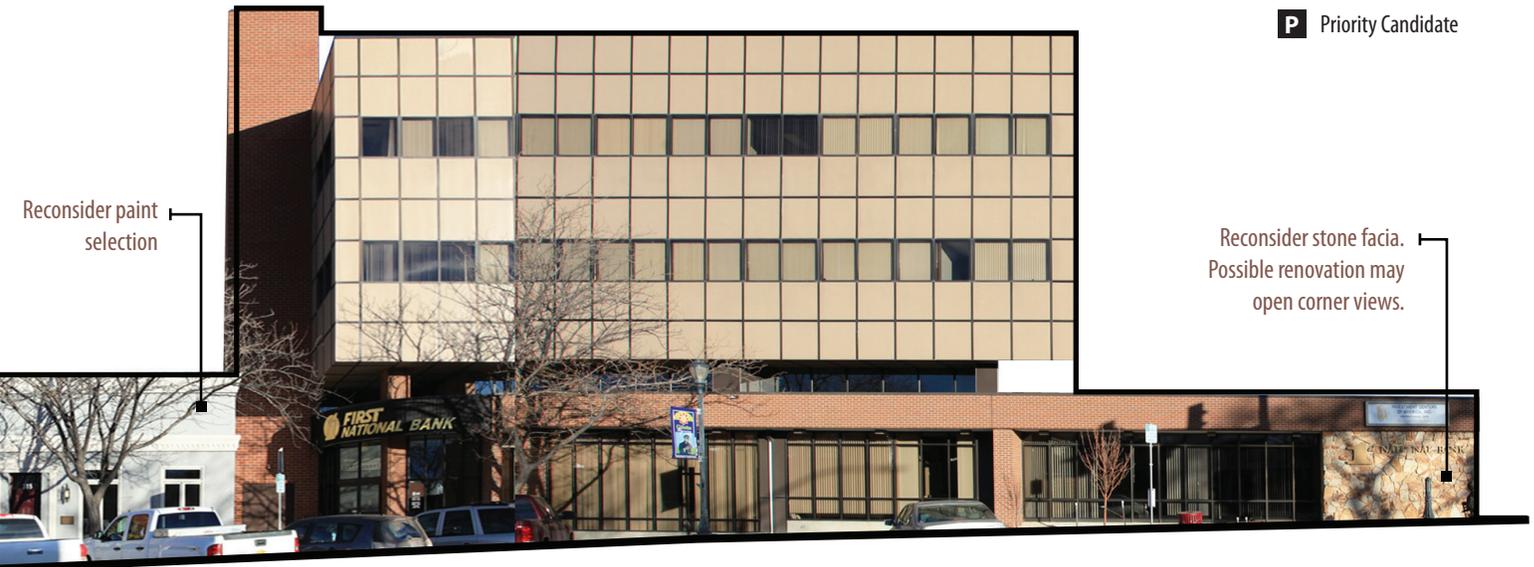
north - west side →

Passageways

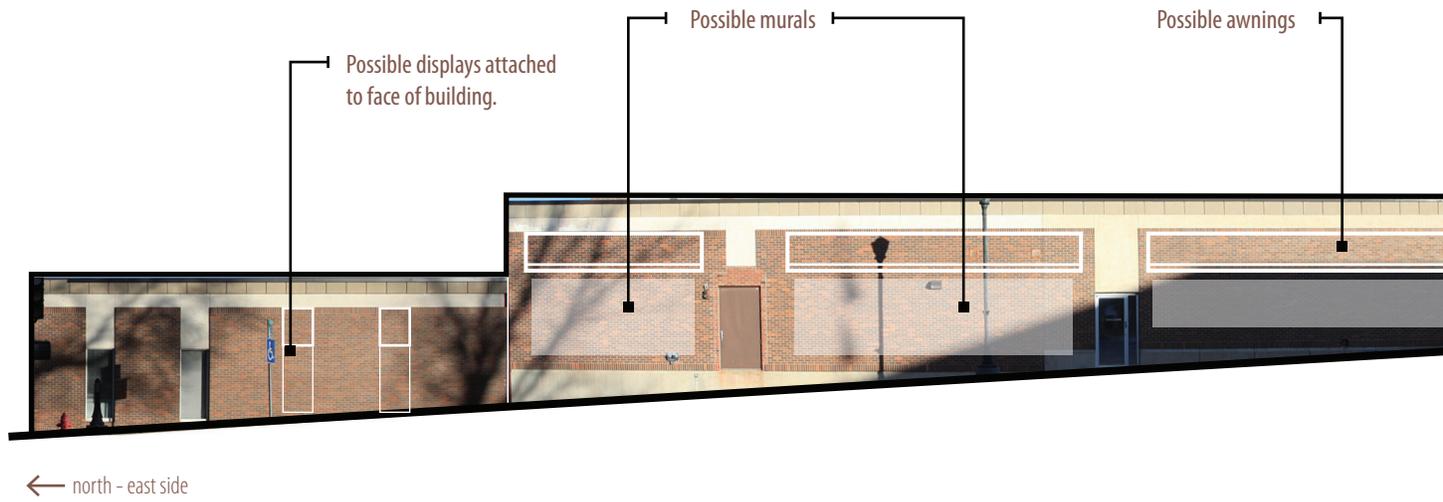
Gaps between buildings present opportunities for small passageways that lead to projects and parking behind Gillette Avenue.



P Priority Candidate



400 BLOCK



north - west side →



Omaha, NE - District Branding



Omaha, NE - Ads for district



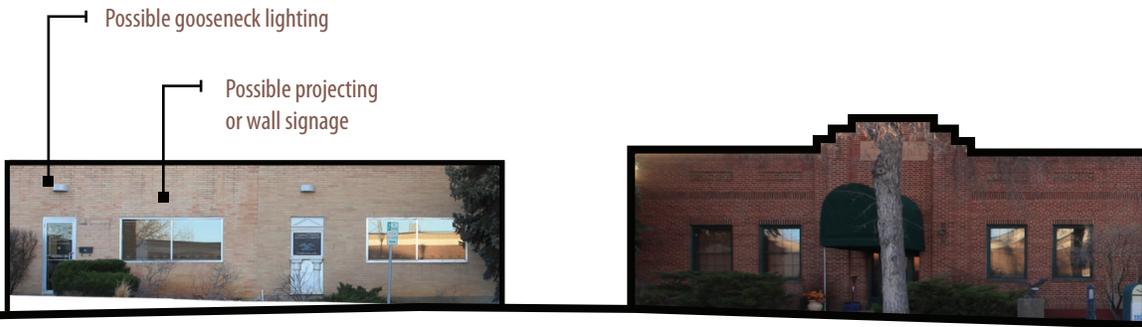
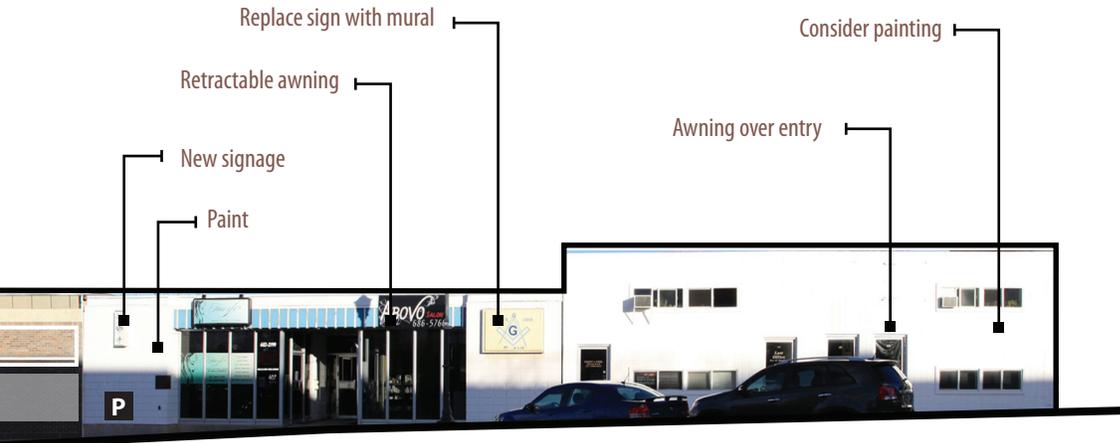
Rawlins, Wyoming - Mounted Mural

Murals

Murals can conceal blank facades and unsightly spaces. Murals can be painted directly on walls (Omaha) or mounted to a side of the building (Rawlins). Great care should be given to the design and selection of art prior to its installation.



Casper, WY - Mounted Art



Gillette Avenue Urban Design Plan

Downtown Gillette’s buildings define the character of the district. The Urban Design Plan intends to complement the built environment and restore the district’s role as the community’s center for activity.

Improving the buildings in tandem with the reconstruction of the street and sidewalks will prime the district to be a destination for all to visit.

The design concept celebrates the history of the community’s foundation to energy through the use of lighting and public art. The buildings should celebrate their history, as well.

PREPARED BY



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