



DRAFT

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

FOR THE CONSERVATION OF TRADITIONAL DESIGN IN OLDE TOWNE, ST HELENS

SUMMER 2011 | PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY | FORMWORKS PLANNING GROUP



Front cover photograph showing ships in port in what is now Olde Towne; from City of St Helens collection

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A Portland State University and City of St Helens collaboration

First Edition — Summer 2011

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Photos and Graphics

City of St Helens Collection

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I. APPROACH & BACKGROUND

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HISTORY OF OLDE TOWNE

The historic roots of Olde Towne St Helens are closely tied to the Columbia River, waterfront commerce, and an enduring connection to river navigation in the Northwest. In 1846, Captain Henry M. Knighton established the town of Plymouth (now St Helens) along the bank of the Columbia River, just north of Sauvie Island. He laid out his vision for a city with a thriving deep-water port facility and built upon a foundation of natural resources harvesting, manufacturing and trade.

As the seat of Columbia County since 1854, the City of Plymouth, whose name was changed to St Helens in the early 1850's, worked hard to support the logging, milling, shipbuilding, and commercial fishing industries that emerged in response to the deep-water port and improved access to domestic and foreign markets. The resulting development was Olde Towne, a small commercial area revolving around port activities and the County Courthouse, which anchored the northeast corner of "The Strand."

Today, Olde Towne St Helens serves as a culturally significant reminder of St Helens' "heyday", a time when the City served as a vibrant hub of commercial, political and civic activity.



CITY OF ST HELENS COLLECTION

The compact commercial area stretching nearly 10 blocks is located primarily along Strand and 1st Streets. While historic structures in Olde Towne once largely supported waterfront commercial activities, the current climate is much different, as the community has evolved to meet contemporary needs. Olde Towne St Helens is rich with buildings and details that are proud symbols of its working past, from the basalt courthouse, to the Masonic temple and Muckle Building, Olde Towne has a valuable legacy worthy of preservation.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The boundary of Olde Towne identified by the City of St Helens has been reviewed by Formworks Planning. In some cases, the boundary might be expanded in the future to include historic resources, and in other cases drawn tighter to exclude non-compatible development. Per the Waterfront Development Plan, new construction adjacent to Olde Towne will be guided by the provisions of the Design Guidelines for Olde Towne.

Geographical Information Systems (GIS) maps were prepared using tax assessor and City of St Helens data. Using tax lot information each parcel was assigned a period of development. The periods were developed by the State Historic Preservation Office, as outlined by the National Trust for Historic Preservation:

1866-1883: Railroad and Industrial Growth

1884-1913: Progressive Era

1914-1940: The Motor Age

1941-1967: War and Post-War Era

The character of Olde Towne is greatly influenced by buildings from the Railroad and Industrial Growth and Progressive Eras. There are no War or Post-War buildings that currently fall within the Olde Towne overlay zone which meet a historic standard.

GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT

These guidelines were developed following research of existing historic housing and commercial structures within Olde Towne, and based on community desires expressed in the city-wide visioning process that formed the 2020 Vision for St Helens, to see the Olde Towne area “revitalized with historic building restorations and construction of new buildings in a manner consistent with the area’s historic character.”

Existing guidelines from other communities were evaluated to inform the process. To establish locally-held values regarding heritage conservation in Olde Towne, a public outreach process that included administration of a telephone and online survey, in-person intercept surveys, outreach to business owners, public input through community workshops and open houses, and with the feedback of the Planning and Historic Landmarks Commissions and City Council. Following submission of this document in June 2011, it is anticipated that the City Council and Historic Landmarks Commission might refine and clarify these Guidelines.

FORMWORKS PROJECT PROCESS



HERITAGE CONSERVATION IN OLDE TOWNE

Heritage conservation is defined as the protection of cultural values and artifacts of historic or aesthetic value for future generations. Existing St Helens municipal code provides a legacy showing feelings of public responsibility and desire to protect such resources. By way of conservation, the St Helens Historic Landmarks Commission, appointed by the Mayor and City Council, is responsible for Design Review in the Olde Towne overlay zone to maintain and preserve the historic character of the area.

Honoring community desire, it is the purpose of these guidelines to protect, enhance, and perpetuate buildings, sites, and areas in Olde Towne reminiscent of past eras. It is likewise important to preserve or rehabilitate buildings that provide significant examples of architectural styles of St Helens past. In addition to offering guidance on existing buildings, this document will provide guidelines for new development and construction within the area (infill or replacement) as well as areas adjacent to the Olde Towne overlay zone. Ensuring complementary new development can enhance property values, stabilize the neighborhood, promote tourist trade and interest, and foster knowledge of the City's living heritage. These guidelines will provide the Historic Landmarks Commission with

a framework for Design Review in considering alteration or addition of non-landmark buildings:

Primary/Secondary Significance Buildings

Individually significant buildings are those buildings that are considered individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or for local landmark designation. They have a special character, historical, architectural, or aesthetic interest of value in St Helen's local history. These buildings are typically fifty years of age or older, unless the building is an exceptional example of a more recent architectural style or period. Care also must be taken in preserving and restoring them, as well as designing additions to these buildings.

Contributing Buildings

Contributing buildings are those buildings, built during the district's period of significance, that exist in comparatively "original condition", or that have been appropriately restored, and that clearly contribute to the historic significance or quality of the district. Such buildings may have additions that are compatible with the historic character of the original building. Renovations and additions should be sensitive and appropriate to the original structure.

Contributing-Restorable Buildings

Contributing-restorable buildings are those built during the district's period of significance that have original material that has been covered, or buildings that have experienced some alternation, but still convey a sense of St Helens' history. Restoration of these building would ensure their contribution to the historic quality of the area even though earlier additions may have not been particularly compatible with the original buildings. Renovations and additions should be sensitive and work to restore or recreate the original structure.

Non-Contributing Buildings

There are two types of non-contributing buildings in the historic area: 1) buildings built during the district's period of significance that have been altered to such an extent that historic information is not interpretable and restoration is not possible. Such buildings should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine if saving and restoring them is feasible or desirable; and 2) buildings erected after Olde Towne's period of significance which are not individually significant. For renovations of these buildings, guidelines for new construction apply.

Significant Newer Buildings

Olde Towne St Helens, an historic, riverfront center of commerce, has a diversity of buildings constructed in the Commercial Vernacular. An inventory of each building subject to design review as part of the Olde Towne area can be seen in the Appendix. A map of the area is also included in the Appendix.

Goals for Conservation in Olde Towne

Preserve the integrity of each individual, historic structure by preserving its character defining features and by avoiding alterations that would obstruct or obscure its historic character.

Enhance the perception of the original historic character of structures, by restoring damaged features and reconstructing missing ones (when adequate historic documentation exists), and by removing non-historic additions or alterations.

Preserve and enhance one's ability to perceive a sense of time and place in the district in accordance with the period of significance for Olde Towne.

Architectural Styles

Staff from Formworks conducted a visual survey of each parcel. The prevailing building style in the area is best defined as Commercial Vernacular. However, the Olde Towne district also includes other styles, including Gregorian Revival, Simplified Classical Revival, and Neoclassical Revival.

Olde Towne St Helens buildings resemble residential and commercial buildings of the Railroad and Industrial era found in many cities. Following the devastating fire in the early 1900's, buildings were rebuilt in the Progressive Era utilizing stone, brick, and poured in-place concrete. Ground floor spaces were built for retail business function, providing large window openings for maximum visibility. Most commercial buildings were 1-3 stories with the upper stories devoted to office, residential or other supporting activities.

These design guidelines for Olde Towne St Helens aim to preserve the character-defining features of the area. The identified character defining features include, but are not limited to:

- Façade materials and entryways
- Proportion and building massing
- Vertically aligned upper story windows
- Large first-floor storefront windows

- Awnings
- Storefront alignment and orientation
- Similar building size and width

While it is not the intent to recreate or mimic a historic structure in new construction or building additions, these design guidelines encourage restoration of original and historically significant building designs and features of the existing building stock. The guidelines provide recommendations for compatible and complementary new building design and will guide the deliberations of the Design Review process.

Public Amenities

Additional public amenities including street and landscape features were evaluated, however are not part of these Architectural Design Guidelines. Recommendations and findings have been provided to the City for future consideration.



Buildings in Olde Towne are predominantly Commercial Vernacular style, with the features illustrated here. Ground floor spaces were built to serve a retail business function and were outfitted with large display windows and prominent entryways for maximum visibility. Most of these commercial buildings are 1-3 stories. Traditionally, upper stories were used as office space, residential units, or other supporting activities. Note the symmetry in design, window to wall ratio, and prominent mid-belt.

CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

The construction, operation, and demolition of buildings accounts for well over 40 percent of the United States carbon emissions. By properly preserving historic and significant existing buildings in Olde Towne, St Helens can help to reduce the impact of buildings on our environment. Adaptive reuse and well-planned retrofits help to ensure existing buildings remain in use over time, providing services to the community and mitigating the economic cost and environmental damage that can occur with demolition and reconstruction. Historic conservation embodies principals of environmental sustainability, cultural/social sustainability as well as economic sustainability. These components are widely recognized as the three-legged stool of sustainability:

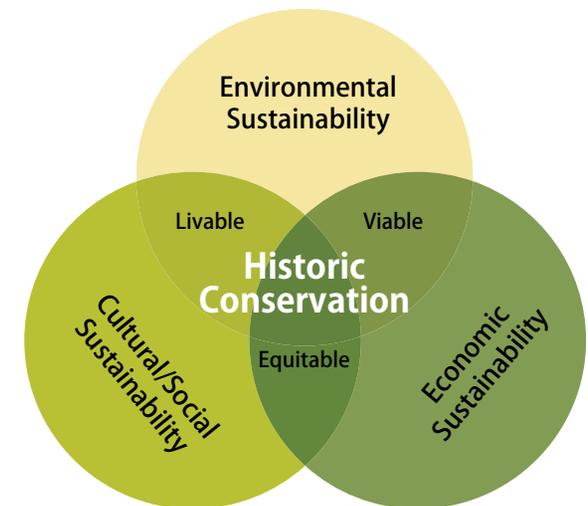
Environmental Sustainability: Avoiding negative environmental impacts of new construction by making the best use of existing buildings and lands and optimizing the life cycle of existing building materials. Energy use reduction and savings is also a critical component of environment stewardship and can help reduce demand on utilities and minimize operating costs. Using built-in energy-saving features and combining these with new technologies should be prioritized.

Cultural/Social Sustainability: Preserving historic commercial districts helps maintain a connection to the town's heritage and helps retain the social fabric of a place. Compact older neighborhoods such as Olde Towne, are pedestrian friendly, promote healthy (walkable) living, and support a system of "eyes on the street."

Economic Sustainability: Economic benefits of historic districts are well documented. Higher property values, job creation in rehabilitation industries and increased heritage tourism all contribute to the economic sustainability of historic commercial districts.



Throughout the Olde Towne St Helens Design Guideline document sustainable methods and practices are encouraged as a goal for implementation. The guidelines will call out where specific environmental, cultural/social or economic sustainability benefits and best practices apply by utilizing a graphic indicator.



DISTRICT MAP



- The thick grey line shows the limits of the downtown National Historic District.
- Tan buildings are those within the downtown National Historic District.
- Red buildings are those within the Olde Towne overlay zone; **only these buildings and parcels are affected by the design guidelines.**
- Structures with blue dots represent buildings that are listed as Local Landmarks with the City. These buildings are subject to further design review because they are listed under a National Registry of historic places.
- The dashed grey line indicates the boundary of the Boise Cascade waterfront parcel, which is within the overlay zone. Future development in this area will be affected by the design guidelines.

St Helens Olde Towne Historic District

-  Downtown Historic District Boundary
-  Waterfront - Boise Cascade Parcel Boundary
-  Old Towne Historic District Building
-  Downtown Historic District Building
-  District Landmark

PURPOSE

Design guidelines for Historic Districts are intended to provide clear and objective advisory guidance in a manner that is consistent with community values and visions for future growth. Adopting cohesive, aesthetically pleasing guidelines for design unifies a district or neighborhood, adding a unique quality and texture to what might otherwise be a typical or in some cases, neglected, place. Design guidelines can create Historic Districts that are meaningful—a place where people want to spend time shopping, strolling, playing, dining, and engaging in conversations with friends and neighbors. Combined with a strong community vision and political will, design guidelines can help develop districts into destinations.

What Design Guidelines Do

- Determine the qualities and characteristics valued in the district and protect their visual aspects;
- Encourage building height and street orientation to be similar to existing structures;
- Provide clear guidance on façade and other exterior building improvements; and
- Encourage new development in the district to mimic existing historical structures through the use of similar materials, colors, and architectural features and styles.

What Design Guidelines Cannot Do

- Regulate where growth can occur;
- Determine how the interior space of a building may be used;
- Guarantee quality craftsmanship of building structures and improvements; or
- Guarantee economic development.

Benefits of Design Guidelines

- Help to maintain property values by making sure the qualities and characteristics that make the District desirable are not reduced;
- Enable the community to retain significant and invaluable historical assets and structures that would be prohibitively expensive to rebuild or replace should they deteriorate and be lost;
- Ensure Design Review decisions regarding new and existing structures are fair, informed by historical precedent and community interests, and not based on personal taste or preference; and
- Encourage and assist with economic revitalization and redevelopment in concert with other efforts in cities throughout the US (upwards of 2,300 US towns and cities have locally designated historic districts).

LOCAL SUCCESS

Design Guidelines have been important for the redevelopment and revitalization of many Oregon communities, including:



Oregon City



Dayton



Redmond



McMinnville



Corvallis



Bend

Intent and Integration

The City of St Helens can use the adoption of design guidelines for its Historic Olde Towne to assist in meeting the following goals:

- Compliance with St Helens' Comprehensive Plan;
- Sustainable growth and development;
- Increase the number of jobs within the district;
- Increase consumption of local goods and services;
- Aid in business expansion and retention;
- Identify and develop tourist attractions;
- Maximize the benefits of commercial opportunities;
- Increase property values;
- Enhance overall community appearance and livability; and
- Integrate energy savings and design techniques or methods with environmental benefits.



HERITAGE CONSERVATION APPROACH

Practitioners of heritage conservation operate in what is called a ‘values-based context’, using a system that identifies and manages historic districts and buildings according to values attributed during an initial inventory process. These values are known as the “character-defining features” of a building or district, or both. Character-defining features are defined as the materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings that contribute to the heritage value of an historic place, which must be retained to reserve its heritage value. These features are often wide-ranging and refer to the architecture or development pattern of an entire district. They also are singular, referring to intricate and detailed elements of certain building designs, styles, uses, etc.

In Olde Towne, character-defining features are the basis for this document. The design guidelines herein seeks to define, highlight and conserve the character-defining features:

- Encourage buildings to reintroduce character-defining features where they have been covered or removed.
- Encourage strategic, practical, and appropriate rehabilitation of character-defining features when they have been damaged or significantly altered.
- Encourage new construction to interpret traditional character-defining feature into their design.
- Encourage new construction to highlight and complement the overall character-defining features of the district.

These actions are aimed at safeguarding the most basic defining features, such as ground floor

retail spaces, to more intricate elements, such as vertical windows. This can be done by preserving, rehabilitating, restoring or reconstructing individual existing buildings. Consideration should be given to each approach prior to moving forward with a project:

For Existing Buildings:

Preservation, places a high premium on the retention of all heritage buildings and landmarks through conservation, maintenance and repair. It reflects a building’s continuum over time, through successive occupancies, and the respectful changes and alterations that have been made.

Rehabilitation, emphasizes retention and repair of historic materials, but more latitude is provided for replacement because it is assumed the property is



deteriorated prior to work. (Both Preservation and Rehabilitation standards focus attention on the preservation of materials, features, finishes, spaces, and spatial relationships that, together, give a property its historic character.)

Restoration, focuses on retention of materials from the most significant time in a property’s history, while permitting the removal of materials from other periods.

Reconstruction, establishes limited opportunities to re-create a non-surviving site, building, structure, or object in all new materials.

DESIGN REVIEW

Design review pertains only to work on building exteriors visible from the public right-of-way. Interior work will not be reviewed. Principle façade improvements or changes – those that face the street – will be reviewed most carefully.

Thresholds for Design Review

In most of Olde Towne, tax assessment has been dropping in the recent years. It is important that Design Review is not an impediment to development or maintenance. Thresholds for these Design Review guidelines have been set at reasonable levels to reflect this, including two levels of Review as follows:

Type I Administrative Review:

- For minor exterior modifications to a façade, primarily the painting of buildings oriented to the street. This does not include painting previously unpainted masonry or stone.
- For ordinary maintenance not requiring a building permit, such as the replacement of window panes or reroofing.

Type II Design Review:

- For all exterior modifications requiring a building permit Design Review is required.
- For all building additions Design Review is required.
- For major façade renovations or changes not requiring a building permit, but that change the architectural appearance of the building, including painting previously unpainted masonry or stone, Design Review is required.
- For any combination (interior or exterior) of building alterations exceeding 30 percent of the building value Design Review is required.
- All new construction is required to undergo a Design Review.

These thresholds have been set to create a holding pattern for incompatible development. In most historic districts experiencing infill development, these new structures have been the most damaging to the historic character of the district. If new development and large expansions conform to design guidelines it will reduce the eroding impact of incompatible new development.

REVIEW PROCESS

Application Process

- The applicant prepares an application including a written statement addressing relevant approval criteria, identifies which guideline is being addressed, and how their proposed work supports the guideline. Multiple guidelines can be addressed at the same time, all relevant guidelines should be addressed. Statement should be written so anyone reading the application can easily identify where each guideline has been addressed.
- If the applicant seeks an incompatible design, the following criteria must be addressed:
 - Better meets design guidelines - The resulting design will meet or exceed the applicable design guidelines; and
 - Spirit and intent of the guideline - On balance, the proposal will be mindfully consistent with the purpose of the guideline for which a modification is requested.

Completeness Review

- The guidelines specify the information necessary for the application and allow the City to determine if additional information is needed.
- The City has 28 days from the date it receives the application to determine whether or not the application is complete.
- A determination of completeness does NOT preclude the City from requesting additional information.

Creation of Public Record

- The City staff will create an official file that contains application material, written comments, the written decision itself, and any other relevant information.
- The file will be placed on public record and available for inspection and copying during regular business hours.

Public Notice

- Within 14 days of the issuance of the letter of completeness on the proposal public notice is issued. The public notice contains:
 - Name
 - Address
 - Requested decision
 - A brief description of the proposed project
 - Information on the availability of the public file
 - A statement of the right of any person to submit written comments
 - A statement clarifying that only those who have submitted written comments may appeal the decision
 - The identification of appropriate environmental documents (e.g. FEMA Flood Plain documentation)
- Public Notice must be published in the daily/weekly newspaper, posted on the subject property and in libraries, as well as mailed to the persons receiving property tax statements for all property within 300 feet of the subject property.
- The project developer or applicant bears the responsibility or burden of proof of convincing The City that the project complies with the city guidelines and criteria.

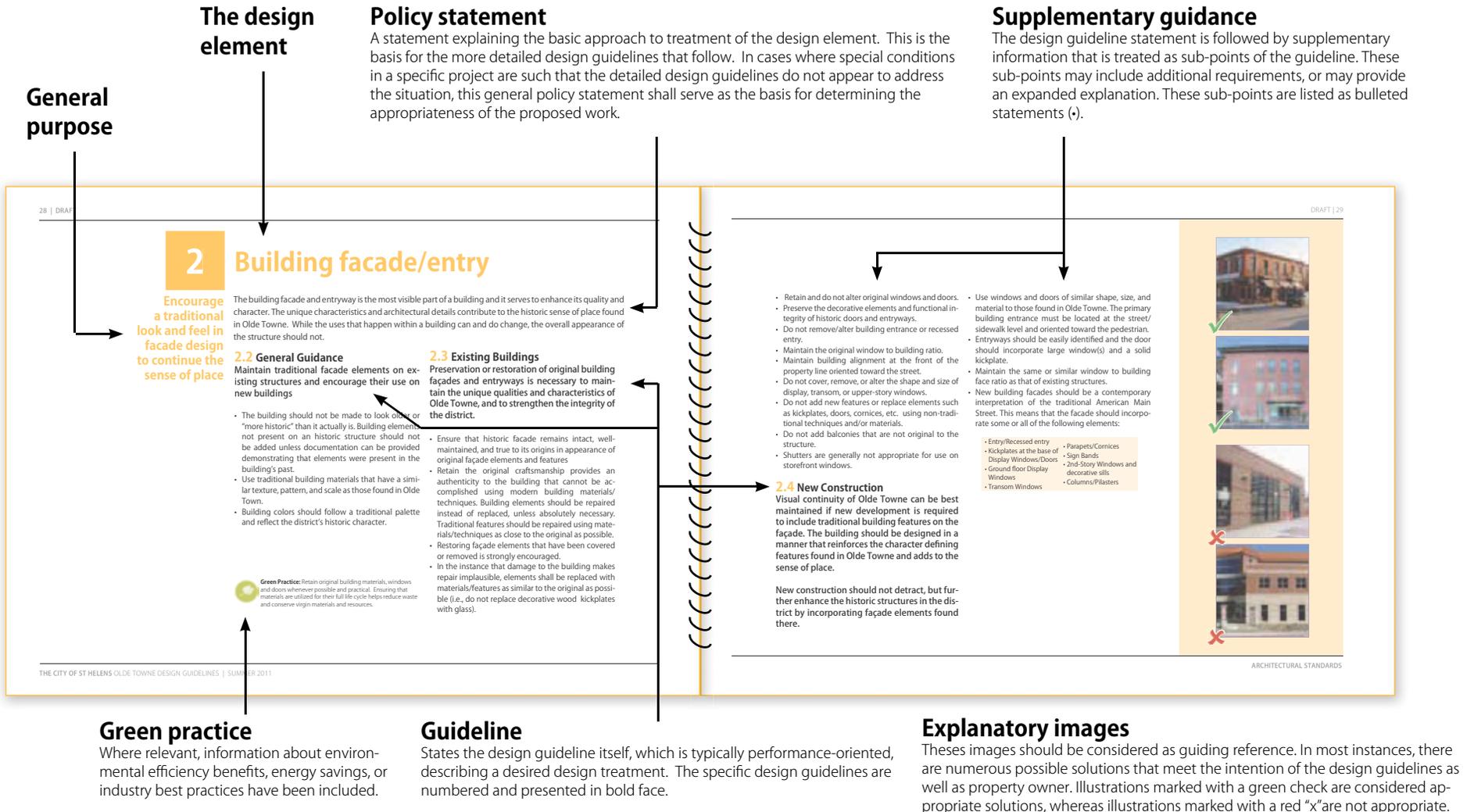
▶ Design Review Hearing, Decision Making

- In addition to drawings and other materials provided by the applicant, the City will consider all written comments submitted before the deadline for making the decision.
- The City applies a number of general criteria in making the decision: The project must be consistent with the comprehensive plan; All applicable provisions of the city's development regulations, the public health, safety and welfare, site design standards, and any supplemental guidelines the City has adopted for the area.
- The City must find that: Streets and utilities in the area of the subject property are adequate to serve the anticipated demand; Proposed access to subject property is at the optimal location and development; It embodies good design principles that result in quality design.
- The review may evaluate the architectural style; structure placement, dimensions, height, and bulk; lot coverage by structures; and exterior alterations of the proposal, including building materials, color, windows, entryways, signage, building lighting, and other design elements relevant to proposed work.
- Following City review, the decision is distributed to the applicant, to each person who submitted written comments, to anyone who has requested it, and to the county assessor.

▶ Approval

- After receiving approval for a project the applicant has one year after the final decision to submit a complete building permit application.
- Applicant must complete construction within five years after the final decision.
- City may require a bond to ensure compliance with any aspect of a permit or approval.
- Applicant must comply with all aspects of an approval, including conditions and restrictions.

HOW THE GUIDELINES ARE ORGANIZED





II. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

DRAFT

COMPLIANCE

Which guidelines apply to my project?

Depending on the type of project being pursued, owners and developers will need to refer to different design guidelines within this document. Use the following chart to determine which section of the guidelines will apply to your project.

Proposed work	Applicable guidelines									
	Introduction	Heritage Preservation in Old Towne	Heritage Preservation Approaches	Heritage Preservation	The Review Process	Architectural Design Guidelines	General Guidance	Existing Buildings	New Construction	Non-Architectural Design Guidelines
Construct a new structure	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Add-on to an existing structure	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Renovate or alter a structure	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Site Improvements	•	•	•	•						•

Note: A blank box indicates that these design guidelines do not apply.

II. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

1

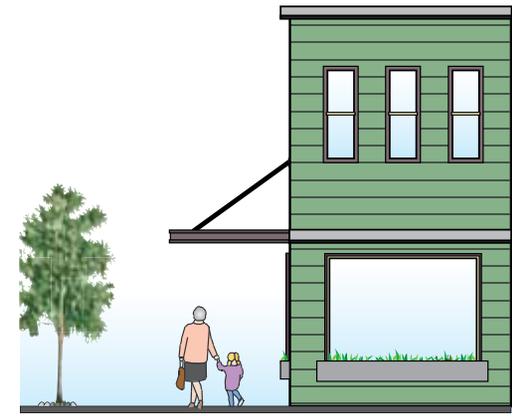
Awnings and canopies

Encourage the continued use of historically appropriate awnings and canopies

Awnings and canopies have historically been located on many buildings in Olde Towne, and their continued use and reintroduction is important in creating a pedestrian friendly environment. Awnings and canopies provide shade in the summer, encouraging outdoor dining and window-shopping. In the cooler months, awnings provide pedestrians with a protected area in which to move about the district. They are an important character-defining feature of Olde Towne.



Awnings help moderate temperatures inside buildings by providing shade during summer months. During winter months it is best to remove or retract awnings to provide solar heat gain and daylighting. Operable awnings and canopies are encouraged to allow for response to changing climate conditions.



1.2 General Guidance

Awnings and canopies should complement neighboring features and reflect the historic use of awnings and canopies within Olde Towne

- Awning height should match that of neighboring historic structures.
- Awnings are appropriate only below the mid-belt cornice.
- Appropriate support mechanisms include wall-mounted brackets, posts and chains.
- Install awnings and canopies in ways that minimize damage to historic building fabric and so they can be removed in the future without negative effects.

1.3 Existing Buildings

Original awnings should be maintained; removed original awnings can be replaced.

- Fixed metal canopies are encouraged where historic evidence demonstrates that a canopy once existed. Canvas awnings should not be used in lieu of metal awnings where metal awnings once existed.
- Replacing awnings on historic structures should be done with care to the character-defining features of the façade. Awnings should accentuate features of the structure, and fit within its overall character. Do not place awnings so that they cover or damage historic details or eliminate windows.

If constructing a new awning on a structure where none existed historically, attempt to match the design, style, material and height of other district awnings (see additional guidelines in New Construction as well).

- New awnings should be mounted to highlight features that may be found above the storefront and should not hide character-defining features.
- A new awning should not be constructed if doing so will disrupt the form and style of the structure.

1.4 New Construction

New commercial buildings may integrate an awning to project over the sidewalk, providing shade and protection for pedestrians.

- Simple hanger-rod suspended metal canopies are preferred; retractable canvas awnings are also acceptable.
- Awnings should be rectangular or straight in shape, not arched.
- Solid colors are preferred; stripped designs are acceptable on canvas awnings.
- Awnings should ideally span the length of the building face. At a minimum, awnings should project over the primary entrance to a structure. ■



2

Building façade/entry

Encourage a traditional look and feel in façade design to continue the sense of place

The building façade and entryway is the most visible part of a building and it serves to enhance a structures quality and character. The unique characteristics and architectural details of a façade contribute to the historic sense of place found in Olde Towne. While the uses that happen within a building can and do change, the overall appearance of the structure should not.

2.2 General Guidance

Maintain traditional façade elements on existing structures and encourage their use on new buildings.

- The building should not be made to look older or “more historic” than it actually is. Building elements not present on an historic structure should not be added unless documentation can be provided demonstrating that elements were present in the building’s past.
- Use traditional building materials that have a similar texture, pattern, and scale as those found in Olde Town.
- Building colors should follow a traditional palette and reflect the district’s historic character.
- Maintain the original window to building ratio found historically.



Retain original building materials, windows and doors whenever possible and practical. Ensuring that materials are utilized for their full life cycle helps reduce waste and conserve virgin materials and resources.

2.3 Existing Buildings

Preservation or restoration of original building façades and entryways is necessary to maintain the unique qualities and characteristics of Olde Towne, and to strengthen the integrity of the district.

- Ensure that the historic façade remains intact, well-maintained, and true to its origins in appearance of original façade elements and features.
- Retaining the original craftsmanship provides an authenticity to the building that cannot be accomplished using modern building materials/techniques. Building elements should be repaired instead of replaced, unless absolutely necessary. Traditional features should be repaired using materials/techniques as close to the original as possible.
- Restoring façade elements that have been covered or removed is strongly encouraged.
- In the instance that damage to the building makes repair implausible, elements shall be replaced with materials/features as similar to the original as possible (i.e., do not replace decorative wood kickplates with glass).

- Retain and do not alter original windows and doors.
 - Preserve the decorative elements and functional integrity of historic doors and entryways.
 - Do not remove/alter building entrance or recessed entry.
 - Maintain building alignment at the front of the property line oriented toward the street.
 - Do not cover, remove, or alter the shape and size of display, transom, or upper-story windows.
 - Do not add new features or replace elements such as kickplates, doors, cornices, etc. using non-traditional techniques and/or materials.
 - Do not add balconies that are not original to the structure.
 - Shutters are generally not appropriate for use on storefront windows.
- Use windows and doors of similar shape, size, and material to those found in Olde Towne. The primary building entrance must be located at the street/sidewalk level and oriented toward the pedestrian.
 - Entryways should be easily identified and the door should incorporate large window(s) and a solid kickplate.
 - New building façades should be a contemporary interpretation of the traditional Commercial Vernacular. This means that the façade should incorporate some or all of the following elements:

- Entry/Recessed entry
- Kickplates at the base of Display Windows/Doors
- Ground floor Display Windows
- Transom Windows
- Parapets/Cornices
- Sign Bands
- 2nd-Story Windows and decorative sills
- Columns/Pilasters ■

2.4 New Construction

Visual continuity of Olde Towne can be best maintained if new development includes traditional building features on the façade. The building should be designed in a manner that reinforces the character-defining features found in Olde Towne and adds to the sense of place.

New construction should not detract, but further enhance the historic structures in the district by incorporating façade elements found there.



3

Building lighting

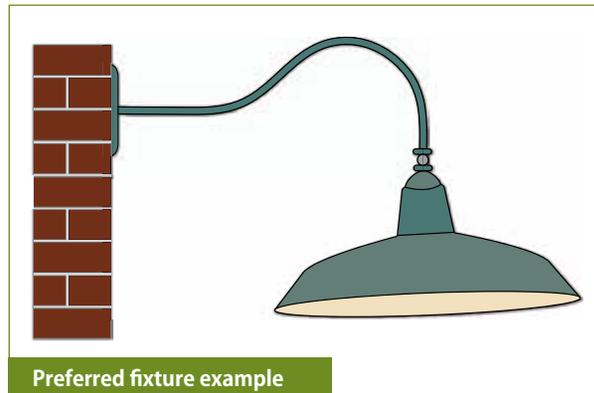
Lighting should be well designed and purposeful

Lighting for commercial storefronts can have a dramatic impact on the appearance of a building at night, and can create a more interesting and inviting environment, encouraging commercial and social activities after business hours. Care should be taken in lighting installation, so as not to overwhelm the façade. New lighting should be subtle and well placed to illuminate entries and signage.

3.2 General Guidance

Incorporate appropriate lighting to improve the pedestrian environment and help foster a comfortable and safe place to shop and stroll.

- Install partially- or fully-shielded light fixtures and only, emitting light downwards (do not emit light upwards or sideways) to mitigate the impacts of exterior light pollution.
- When adding lighting, only add fixtures that are appropriate to the building and complementary of the district.



Preferred fixture example

3.3 Existing Buildings

Where historic building lighting is present, strong measures should be taken to maintain durability of the existing lighting units. Where lighting is added, care should be taken to minimize negative impacts to the building façade.

- Original lighting fixtures should be retained and repaired whenever possible.
- When adding lighting only add lighting where appropriate and needed to illuminate building features or signage. Do not over-light. When adding lighting only add fixtures that are appropriate to the building and complementary of the district.



Utilize appropriately hued high efficiency lighting to reduce energy demand. Properly positioned lighting can help eliminate light pollution, reduce energy costs, and provide a safer environment.

3.4 New Construction

New commercial or mixed-use building should incorporate lighting features appropriate to the character of Olde Towne.

- New lighting fixtures should have simple designs that do not draw attention away from the façade, or should draw on period lighting style to compliment façade details. ■



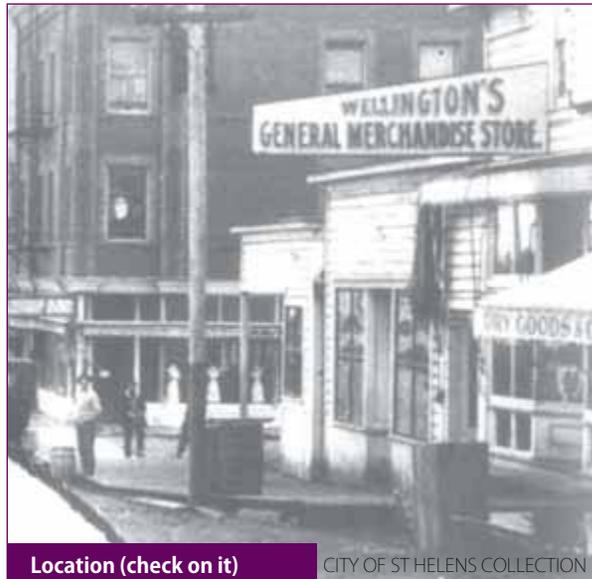
4

Building signage

Signage that creates visual delight is preferred

Commercial signs in Olde Towne should identify businesses, promote merchandise or service within, attract customers, provide direction and information, and in some cases create visual delight and architectural interest. Poor quality commercial signage creates an uninviting image and suggests lack of consideration for the historic character of the retail storefronts. See examples of original Olde Towne signs in the Appendix.

NOTE: The following is meant as a supplement to the city's Sign Code. Sign permits, obtained through the Planning Department, are required.



Location (check on it)

CITY OF ST HELENS COLLECTION



When considering materials for signage, prioritize those that are locally harvested and/or extracted, contain recycled materials, rapidly renewable materials or Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood.

4.2 General Guidance

Signs should complement the historic and cultural significance of the area and be sensitive to existing architectural patterns and features found in Olde Towne.

- Signs should not obscure important architectural details.
- Signs should align with other signs on the block to create a pattern of horizontal and vertical façade features.
- Signs should be positioned to emphasize special shapes or details of the façade, draw attention to the shop entrance, or emphasize a display window.
- Buildings should use signs that are appropriately scaled, durable, and consistent with other signage in Olde Towne. Signs should be good neighbors within a block.
- Wall signs should be well positioned and appropriately sized within architectural features, such as the panels above storefronts on the primary or secondary building front, on the transom, or flanking doorways.

- Projecting signs should be positioned along the first floor level of the façade. Projecting signs may take on their own special shape, or create their own symbol within the overall façade design.
- Awnings may have building or business names or street address on the apron, but may not function as signs, with extensive text areas.

Murals shall not become a predominating visual element of the streetscape and shall be subject to design review

- Murals must create and/or promote a similar character or feel to the Olde Towne district.
- Wall murals and other artwork of noncommercial nature should be sympathetic to historical context.

4.3 Existing Buildings

Signs should be maintained; signs that are historically represented in photographs may be replaced. Murals can be maintained or recreated based on evidence, or created to honor building history.

- Honor historic uses of the structure by investing in mural refurbishment or depicting historically accurate ads, commercial displays, or logos previously displayed on the building.

4.4 New Construction

Sign materials should be durable and easy to maintain.

- Appropriate sign materials include painted or carved wood; carved wooden letters; epoxy letters; galvanized sheet metal; slate, marble, or sandstone; gold leaf; gilt, painted, stained, or sandblasted glass; clear and colored acrylic; neon; or stained glass.
- Lighting external to the sign surface with illumination directed toward the sign is preferred. Internally lit signs are generally discouraged.
- Light level should not overpower the façade or other signs on the street.
- The light source should be shielded from pedestrian view.
- Neon is acceptable, though can be restricted in size, if it does not obscure architectural detail or overly illuminate display windows. Neon lights should have an authentic, period or hand crafted look, and should not flash or otherwise vary in display.
- Lettering styles should be proportioned, simple, and easy to read. In most instances, a simple typeface is preferred over a faddish or overly ornate type style.
- As a general rule, the letterforms should occupy no more than 75% of the total sign panel. ■



5

Maintenance

Protect important character defining features

Modern use of historic structures inherently comes into some measure of conflict with the desire to preserve them. Therefore, everyone involved in the operations and maintenance of historic structures should be aware of a structure's significant and character-defining features, past treatments, and how maintenance can be applied to best preserve the structure. Considerable attention should be given to the exterior appearance and upkeep of commercial storefronts in the Olde Towne District. Maintaining high quality building façades can help attract visitors and promote the area in general.

The repair, maintenance and preservation of historic structures often require specialized sets of skills and knowledge about the proper methods and treatment of materials and details of construction. The availability of individuals who have the expertise is far less today than when the structure was erected. However, it is strongly recommended that the Owner of an historic structure seek out those individuals.

5.2 General Guidance

Prior to beginning an alteration or addition project, evaluate what cleaning or alteration may be necessary to the existing materials.

- Assess the condition of all elements of the structure. Identify areas of deterioration or other problems and prioritize treatments for both corrective and preventive maintenance.

Ongoing maintenance of all exterior components should promote the visual appearance of the district.

- Scrape off old or loose paint and use wood filler where wood is damaged. Replace only places that

are damaged rather than replacing entire wood frames. Prime and paint raw wood and ensure compatible colors.

- When painting, the surface should be gently cleaned and appropriate primer used. Caulking and good outdoor paint should be used.
- Match new mortar with the original mortar in color, composition, profile and depth.
- Replace an entire masonry feature that is too deteriorated to repair. Use the remaining physical evidence to guide the new work, and match new to old.
- When installing new roofing it is advisable to remove previous roof layers. There should be no more than three layers of roofing material to prevent structural damage.

Utilize low impact site and exterior hardscape maintenance techniques whenever possible.

- Chemical and cleaning applications can cause environmental damage and pollute natural water sources. Whenever possible, natural, biodegradable cleaning agents should be used.
- Use the gentlest means possible and the gentlest products possible in cleaning historic materials so as not to damage an underlying finish or substrate.
- Test all cleaning products and methods in the least noticeable location. Evaluate the results to see how effective the products and methods are. Visually inspect for adverse effects or damage resulting from the cleaning.
- Never sandblast brick or stone surfaces using dry or wet grit or other abrasives including walnut casings, seashells or glass pellets. These methods of cleaning permanently destroy the surface of the material, may harm the mortar, and speed up deterioration.

When restoration of a building is not feasible and the building is not in use, proper management steps of unoccupied buildings should be taken so that the building can be restored for another use in the future.

Proper “moth-balling” techniques include:

Documentation

1. Document the architectural and historical significance of the building.
2. Prepare a condition assessment of the building.

Stabilization

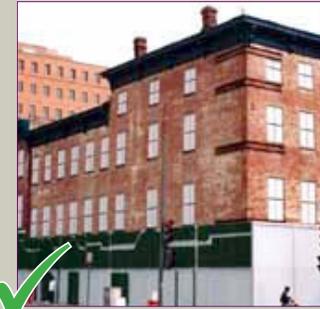
1. Structurally stabilize the building, based on a professional condition assessment.
2. Exterminate or control pests, including termites and rodents.
3. Protect the exterior from moisture penetration.

Mothballing

1. Secure the building and its component features to reduce vandalism or break-ins.
2. Provide adequate ventilation to the interior.
3. Secure or modify utilities and mechanical systems.
4. Develop and implement maintenance and monitoring plan for protection. ■



Cleaning compounds can harm vegetation and contaminate groundwater and the nearby Columbia River, degrading the river ecology. Clean only as often as needed to maintain building and site appearance and safety and use water and cleaning products efficiently to ensure that chemicals do not run into the sewer system. Use biodegradable and low-impact cleaning products whenever possible; look for reputable environmental labels on products, such as Green Seal.



6

Materials and building colors

A traditional palette of colors and materials are preferred

Building materials of new structures and additions or alterations should contribute to the visual continuity of the district. The materials should appear similar to those seen traditionally to establish a sense of visual continuity.



Buildings consume a large portion of Earth's natural resources, including 40% of raw stone, gravel, and sand and 25% of virgin wood. Choosing more sustainable building materials can mitigate negative environmental impacts and conserve virgin materials and resources. Utilize salvaged building materials, look for products with recycled content, containing rapidly renewable materials, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood, and/or locally harvested or extracted components.

6.2 General Guidance

Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the historic district should be preserved.

- Match brick and mortar in color, profile and texture to that of the original building or to another neighboring historic building.
- Where possible, use materials indigenous to the region and/or manufactured or supplied locally.

6.3 Existing Buildings

During rehabilitation of buildings, replace materials with similar material type to maintain original appearance of the structure.

- Brick that has not been painted should not be painted.
- Match stone coursing, finish and joints to original.
- Maintain historical architectural detailing at window heads, cornices, belt course, and corners.
- Generally, the use of plastic, bright-unfinished metal, unpainted wood, and false stone is inappropriate and discouraged.
- Retain and preserve original wall and siding materials when possible and appropriate.

- Avoid removing siding that is in good condition or that can be repaired in place.
- Remove only the siding that is deteriorated and must be replaced.
- To preserve the character defining-features of the historic façade materials do not cover or obscure the original façade.
- If the original material has been covered, uncover it, if feasible.

6.4 New Construction

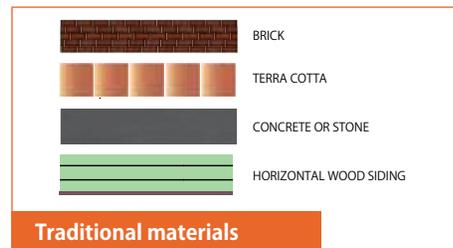
To maintain visual consistency building materials used on the exterior of buildings should be traditional materials that are more durable.

- Alternative materials to the traditional stone or brick should appear similar in scale, proportion, texture and finish to those used traditionally. Durability should be considered when alternative materials are reviewed.
- Do not use bricks that are larger than the standard size.
- Stone should be limited to colors and types similar to those found in Olde Towne buildings (basalt or similar for face stone, rubble stack okay for non-frontage building faces). Use existing stonework as an example.

Use building materials and construction practices that evoke a sense of permanence

and are compatible with St Helens' historic buildings.

- Incorporate one of the following building materials, found on traditional American Main Street commercial storefronts, into the design of the ground floor (street facing) facades:



- T-111 or similar sheet materials
- Stucco clad foam (EFIS)
- Vinyl siding
- Log construction

Prohibited materials

- Generally, the use of plastic, bright-unfinished metal, unpainted wood, and false stone is inappropriate and discouraged.
- Concrete and wood siding should be painted using a palette of earth tone or muted colors. Bright, neon-like colors are strongly discouraged. Paint color choice is the owner's decision, but painting a structure to be a good neighbor on the block is encouraged.

NOTE: Change of paint color is subject to Type I Administrative Review only. ■



7

Roof

Reduce the visual impact of rooftop activities

Reducing the visual impact of mechanical equipment and rooftop activities is a simple way to enhance the District. Doing so ensures that the rhythm and pedestrian scale features of the district are maintained.

7.2 General Guidance

Minimize the visual impact of mechanical systems and equipment by locating these as far away from the façade as possible.

- Locate mechanical penthouses, photovoltaic panels, and other utility service boxes and devices in the rear or sides of the building. If on the rooftop area, locate at the rear or area furthest from the primary public way.
- Attempt to place utility connections away from the façade.
- Mechanical systems that cannot feasibly be placed as far out of view as possible should be screened from view using integrated architectural features, such as parapet walls on the roof or flush mounted service cabinets on the façade or sides of the building.

Rooftop decks and other accessible areas on the roof should be set back from the edges of the roof so they may not be easily seen from the street.

- Rooftop decks and other associated activities on the roof should be designed to be as low profile as possible. ■



The use of non-reflective roofing surfaces contributes to the heat island effect by absorbing the sun's warmth, which then radiates into the surroundings. There are significant negative impacts associated with the resulting increase in ambient temperatures from increased cooling loads to disruption to wildlife. When conducting roof replacement or repair consider roofs with high solar reflectance index (SRI) or a vegetated roof system.



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8

Setback, orientation and bulk

Create a pedestrian corridor that is visually interesting and inviting

Historic Olde Towne was developed with the pedestrian in mind. Businesses were built to the front of the property line facing the street and large ground floor windows displayed the goods and services that could be found inside. The conspicuous location of these display windows served to draw the would-be customer into the grocery, restaurant, barber, etc., while modern commercial districts are oriented toward the car driver (e.g., the Highway 30 business corridor). Because Olde Towne is focused on facilitating a positive pedestrian experience that encourages visitors to spend time in the district and frequent many destinations, it is important to ensure that buildings continue to be built to the property line.

Buildings at the property line create a corridor of visual interest for the pedestrian that encourages movement along the street. Where this line ends (buildings are setback from the street) or where the building face is blank and unwelcoming, movement ceases.

8.2 Existing Buildings

This guideline does not generally concern rehabilitation of existing buildings, though care should be taken to honor historic uses, entrances, and overall building scale when dealing with existing buildings.

- Always design front façades with a strong sense of entry.
- A traditional building size, form, and street setback oriented toward pedestrian scale should be used.

Buildings should be similar in height, bulk, and scale and should relate to adjacent structures and the street.

8.3 New Construction

Buildings should be oriented toward the street and at the front of the existing property line, though some exceptions may be made (as deemed appropriate by the Historic Landmarks Commission).

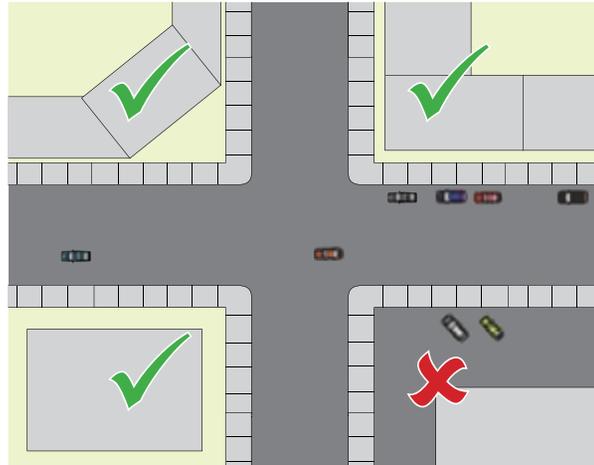
- Orientation of the building and building entrance should be toward the street/sidewalk.
- The primary building entrance should be located at the street/sidewalk level.

- Break up uninteresting boxlike forms into smaller, varied masses like those of most buildings from the historic period.
- New buildings should be designed with a mix of wall areas with door and window elements in the façade like those found on the district's historic buildings. Also consider the width-to-height ratio of bays in the façade. The placement of openings with respect to the façade's overall composition, symmetry, or balanced asymmetry should be carefully imitated.

- Relate the roof forms of the new buildings to those found in the area. Duplication of the existing or traditional roof shapes and materials on new construction is one way of making new structures more visually compatible.
- Avoid new construction that greatly varies from traditional area building heights (too high or too low). ■



Many buildings are historically aligned for efficient sun and wind exposure. Solar-oriented buildings with longer axis on geographic east-west have significant energy savings and increased occupant comfort due to maximized southern solar exposure.



▲ New construction in Olde Towne will achieve maximum compatibility if built with little to no setback from the sidewalk. This illustration shows acceptable building design in Olde Towne. Note that the building with a large setback allowing for a parking lot is not an acceptable design.



◀ The identity of Olde Towne is strengthened by the collective symmetry displayed along the blocks of the district. While each building has an individual identity and interpretive design, each adheres to the bulk and setback traditions of the historic Commercial Vernacular style. This should be continued in all new construction.



9

Windows

Convey a traditional design with large and tall windows

The proportions of window and door openings are important visual characteristics of commercial buildings. Whenever possible, the original size, division and shape, and materials should be retained, restored, or duplicated. Windows are an important element in creating a pedestrian-friendly streetscape, as well as providing adequate daylighting and ventilation to a structure. Additionally, windows are among the most conspicuous element in historic and contributing structures of Olde Towne. They provide both function (daylighting, ventilation, and views), as well as form, which is fundamental to a building's appearance and heritage value.

9.2 General Guidance

The Olde Towne tradition of large storefront windows must be continued by appropriately maintaining existing windows and maximizing the window to wall ratio of ground-floor façades in new construction and/or additions.

- Storefront and ground floor windows should be designed to provide excellent visual connections between the sidewalk and commercial space.
- The use of opaque and false windows is inappropriate.
- Windows and their respective elements should complement the historic styles and colors of the district and neighboring structures.



Consider conducting an energy audit that includes the evaluation of window performance. Whenever possible and practical, make best use of original windows and take careful steps to ensure good condition and adequate repair of original windows to increase performance. Consider systems such as storm windows, weather-stripping, insulated coverings, curtains and awning to increase performance.

- Do not attempt to create a false historical appearance through the selection of windows that may simply appear to have an antiquated style or design.

9.3 Existing Buildings

Original windows are to be maintained; original windows which are covered should be uncovered.

- When replacing or repairing windows, do not use substitute materials that neither conveys the same appearance nor are physically compatible.
- Transom windows should be preserved; if previously covered, they should be restored.
- Do not cover or obscure historical windows, particularly on upper levels. Where structural rehabilitation requires covering of windows, fill the window cut with complimenting building materials.
- Install interior storm windows where original windows are character-defining or when exterior storm windows would obstruct or alter original trim or other character-defining features.

- Introducing or changing the location or size of windows is not appropriate.

Extensively deteriorated or missing windows should be entirely replaced with surviving prototypes.

- If no surviving replacement windows exist to replace missing or damaged windows, an overall window rehabilitation or replacement program should be considered as a strategy to increase energy efficiency and enhance the building's character.
- Archival photographs should be used to match original window styles of the building.
- Testing proposed window replacements should be undertaken. See guidelines for New Construction (below) if window replacement occurs.

9.4 New Construction

Storefront windows and upper-floor windows should incorporate appropriate traditional design that enhances the character-defining features of the district and neighboring historic resources.

- Buildings must incorporate upper story windows which face the street, are transparent, and have a traditional design.
- Upper story windows with a vertical emphasis are preferred; windows which are twice as tall vertically as they are wide represent a more traditional design.

- Upper story windows should be symmetrically placed with one another as well as with the overall building façade.
- Aligning upper-story windows with those of neighboring buildings is preferred.
- Storefront and ground floor windows must be designed to provide excellent visual connections between the sidewalk and commercial space.
- Storefront windows should be symmetrically placed within the overall building face, with a recommended window to wall ratio similar to neighboring and existing district buildings.
- Transom windows should be used in storefront designs; use of etched glass or stained glass is appropriate for these types of windows.
- Historically considerate window kickplates, sash and sill colors and materials should be utilized. ■

