

Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Storefronts

Recommended

- Identifying, retaining, and preserving storefronts—and their functional and decorative features—that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building. Examples include display windows, signs, doors, transoms, kick plates, corner posts, and entablatures.

- Protecting and maintaining masonry, wood, and architectural metals which comprise storefronts through appropriate treatments such as cleaning, rust removal, limited paint removal, and reapplication of protective coating systems.

- Replacing in kind extensively deteriorated or missing parts of storefronts where there are surviving prototypes such as transoms, kick plates, pilasters, or signs. *The new work should match the old in materials, design, color, and texture; and be unobtrusively dated to guide future research and treatment.*

- Removing or altering storefronts and their features from other historic periods such as inappropriate cladding or signage.

- Re-creating a missing storefront or storefront feature that existed during the restoration period based on physical or documentary evidence; for example, duplicating a display window or transom.

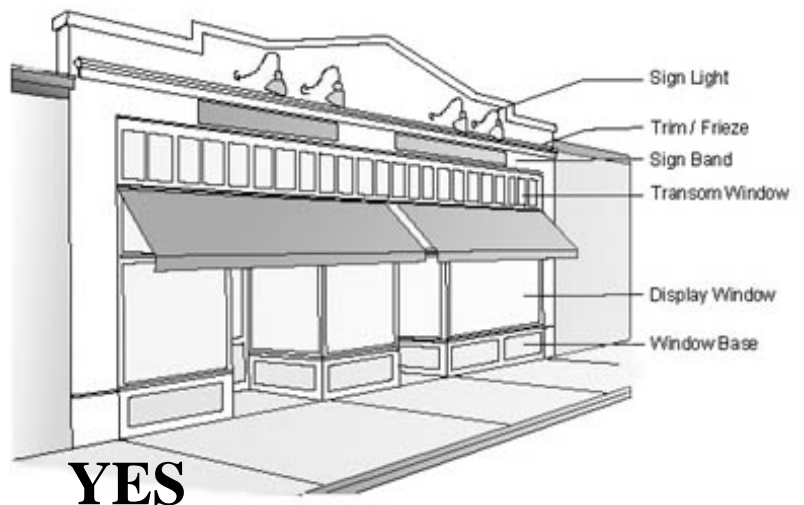
- Repairing masonry walls and other masonry features by repointing the mortar joints where there is evidence of deterioration such as disintegrating mortar, cracks in mortar joints, loose bricks, damp walls, or damaged plasterwork.



An example of using a historical photo to guide a restoration project (Photo: Library of Congress)



Late 19th century granite that has been repointed with the original joint profile and mortar color. (Photo: NPS files)



Identify and preserve original features of storefronts and encourage appropriate lighting and awnings

Recommended

- Protecting and maintaining original storefront features
- Protecting and retaining window patterns, cornice details, and other decorative features on the upper floors of building facades, in addition to protecting the actual storefront.



An example of a 1920s storefront retained through preservation. (Photo: David W. Look, AIA.)



Removing a metal grid installed over an original facade. (Photo: Bob Dunn, NPS)



Impact of inappropriate alterations on historic storefronts (the storefront on the right has been totally obscured by a "modern" front added in the 1950s. Photo: NPS files)



Abrasive cleaning methods, in this case sandblasting, can permanently damage building surfaces. (Photo: NPS files)

Not Recommended

- Stripping storefronts of historic material from the restoration period such as wood, cast iron, terra cotta, carrara glass, and brick.
- Using substitute material for the replacement part that does not convey the same visual appearance as the surviving parts of the storefront or that is physically or chemically incompatible
- Removing a storefront that is unrepairable and not replacing it; or replacing it with a new storefront that does not convey the same visual appearance.
- Constructing a storefront feature that was part of the original design for the building but was never actually built; or constructing a feature which was thought to have existed during the restoration period, but for which there is insufficient documentation.
- Introducing a new design that is incompatible in size, scale, material, and color.
- Using inappropriately scaled signs and logos or other types of signs that obscure, damage, or destroy remaining character-defining features of the historic building.

For more information please see the National Park Service and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Property