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THE COLUMBIA STREET  
H.A.R.P. GUIDELINES

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for the  
City of New Westminster

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# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION: THE COLUMBIA STREET H.A.R.P. GUIDELINES

In 1990 the City of New Westminster, assisted by the B.C. Heritage Trust, initiated a Heritage Area Revitalization Program (HARP) for the 400 to 700 blocks of Columbia Street, the historic commercial core of the City. The HARP program is a voluntary cost-sharing program that will benefit the owners, tenants and retail merchants of 27 prioritized historic buildings in this area; HARP funding will cover up to 50% of the cost of sympathetic facade upgrading. The program will run for three years, and funds will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

These guidelines have been prepared as an initial step in implementing the HARP program and as a working tool for the City of New Westminster, the HARP Coordinators and Steering Committee, property owners, tenants and designers. The sections are arranged to follow the design process; starting with the overall concerns of form and scale, then focussing on more specific details relating to project completion. There is latitude for individual expression and diversity to provide inspiration for vibrant, individual projects, yet at the same time contribute to an overall unified image for the historic buildings of Columbia Street.

## 1.1 HISTORIC COLUMBIA STREET

The City of New Westminster has played a dominant role in the early development of British Columbia and the lower Fraser Valley. From 1859 to 1868 the City was the capital of the Crown Colony of British Columbia and became, for a time, the most important commercial centre on the mainland. The city was incorporated in 1860, and the downtown area along Columbia Street developed as the commercial focus of the region as well as the gateway to the Fraser Valley.

During the 1880's boom, much of the downtown was rebuilt with masonry structures comparable to those being built in Victoria. Steamship travel along the Fraser River, centred on New Westminster's waterfront, was pivotal in the settlement of the Valley. The depression of 1893 delayed business activity for about five years, but just as rebuilding neared completion, one-third of the city was ravaged by the great fire of 1898; only two buildings in the downtown core survived. However, recovery was remarkable, and over the next few years there was renewed optimism, generated in part by the the imminent opening of the Panama Canal.

The financial collapse of 1913 ended the downtown building boom, and today many of the buildings on Columbia Street remain much as they were at that time. Two distinct building types remain from the period between 1899 and 1913; first, the Late Victorian structures built the year after the fire; and second, the buildings typical of the Edwardian boom period, which ended with the depression of 1913. They exemplify the development of the City in an earlier era and reflect the harmony and consistency that Columbia Street retains. This is the historic heart and core of New Westminster.

The historic buildings of Columbia Street are a valuable community heritage resource, and play an important role as the focus of the commercial district. The 400 to 700 blocks of Columbia Street offer a unique concentration of heritage buildings that could be renovated and restored in a sympathetic and compatible manner. This area has few intrusive modern structures, and it is possible to recapture the ambience of an earlier era. An important consideration is that the area is adjacent to the new waterfront developments and other large-scale residential projects, providing an expanding population base which will help ensure the long-range commercial viability of the area.

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDELINES

The COLUMBIA STREET HARP GUIDELINES are based on an examination of the existing conditions of the area and an analysis of the potential revitalization treatment of each building. The underlying principles of the guidelines are based on the integrity of individual buildings, and respect for the original design concept for each structure.

The primary goal is the overall economic viability of Columbia Street as a revitalized historic commercial area, augmented by the existing street revitalization. To this end the guidelines promote a more attractive, appealing and historically appropriate appearance, and will act to create a vibrant and rejuvenated commercial area.

The guidelines are based on the preservation and enhancement of the individual historic character of each building. Therefore it is strongly recommended that original materials be retained or uncovered, that lost details be replaced, and that historically inappropriate elements should not be added.

The objectives of the guidelines are:

1. To inform the building owners, tenants, retail merchants and the public of the intent to enhance the character of historic Columbia Street.
2. To promote economically viable commercial projects.
3. To encourage the retention and rejuvenation of individual historic buildings.
4. To provide guidance for construction funded under the HARP program.

## 1.3 APPLICATION OF THE GUIDELINES

The Columbia Street HARP Guidelines will be of interest to all those involved in the revitalization of this historic commercial area.

The guidelines should be consulted when planning any construction funded under the HARP Program, and should be used in conjunction with the appropriate zoning and sign by-laws of the City of New Westminster. The individual schematic designs in Section 11 should be the starting point for each project. Professionals should always be consulted when preparing the final plan for each building; their fees are included in the overall cost, and are therefore eligible for proportionate funding.

Other buildings in the 400–700 blocks of Columbia Street would be considered for funding, providing that the prioritized buildings have had an adequate chance to respond, and the owners or tenants are willing to undertake compatible and sympathetic renovations that conform to the HARP guidelines.

The HARP Coordinators will assist property owners and tenants in the interpretation of these guidelines. Each HARP application, including cost estimates, must be approved in principle by the HARP Steering Committee.

In general, HARP funding should be used to restore rather than renovate, and repair rather than replace, early building elements. Funding is limited to facade elements only.

HARP funding will cover the following items:

1. Structural stabilization of facade elements: includes repointing, repair of lintels, new flashings, etc.
2. Cleaning and repair of surface elements.
3. Painting.
4. Rehabilitation/replacement of storefront windows and doors.
5. Awnings and canopies, signs and lighting.

HARP funding will not cover the following items:

1. Any abrasive cleaning of masonry (sandblasting).
2. Removal/replacement of original window sash unless it is completely beyond repair.
3. Inappropriate new facing materials, such as plywood, concrete block, etc.
4. Backlit fluorescent or plastic signs.
5. Backlit or translucent fabric awnings.

More specific information on each of these points is covered in the main body of this document.

## SECTION 2: FORM AND SCALE

These guidelines are designed to protect the fragile and special character of Columbia Street, while enhancing and broadening its economic viability. This section provides guidance for renovating and restoring existing buildings in the HARP area. The character of these buildings originates from the use of traditional materials and forms; these qualities should be enhanced whenever possible.

Each individual renovation or restoration project should adhere to a proper system of proportioning; this includes the relationship between the height and width of the elevation of a building and its facade elements. Alterations to existing buildings should respect their original design intent as well as the proportions of neighbouring buildings.

The historic character of these buildings is dependent on a variety of architectural details; in some cases these features have been lost or obscured by many years of weathering, inappropriate renovation or lack of maintenance. Not every detail of every building may be feasibly restored, but surviving features should be retained and repaired. Inappropriate later additions should be removed or replaced. In many cases original details may be exposed by removing later applied sidings; inappropriate new architectural details or ersatz decorations should not be added.

These considerations of form and scale are crucial if the historic character of Columbia Street is to be retained and augmented.

### 2.1 GENERAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The harmonious character of Columbia Street depends on all of its built form, including the buildings and street furnishings, working together as a cohesive and visually appealing streetscape.

To achieve this goal, the following must be considered for each individual project:

1. Gimmicky or applied styles should not be used; they do not relate to the integrity of either the individual buildings or the area in general. Ersatz decoration or building styles (ie. Tudor Revival) should not be used.
2. Buildings should be renovated and restored appropriately in their individual period and style. Forms that never existed should not be added. Examples of what not to add would be tacked-on mansard roofs or fake Victorian gingerbread. Building details should be congruent with the date the building was constructed.
3. Any new construction or additions should not be designed with gimmicky or applied styles, or be decorated with inappropriate applied ornamentation. These projects should show respect for historic construction methods, forms and detailing in an honest modern idiom, and should be sympathetic to the existing streetscape and surrounding buildings. Attention to materials helps new blend with old without adding fake details.
4. Any replication and/or reconstruction should be distinguishable from original material.

Many other revitalization projects demonstrate that this is the best approach to long-term viability for the commercial area. Other measures would appear out of place, and would date quickly, requiring future rebuilding.

The following area of each building should be examined to determine what original architectural details remain and may be rehabilitated:

**Facade Treatment** \_\_\_\_\_

Original surface treatments should be exposed when intact, if this is technically and economically feasible. Any trim materials that have been removed should be replaced with suitably designed substitutes. If original material is to be disturbed for any reason, proposed changes should be thoroughly documented.

**Cornice** \_\_\_\_\_

Original cornices were generally built with brick or pressed metal, and are vital in defining the character of these buildings. They should be retained, unless repair is totally impractical, in which case a suitable replica may be installed. If the original cornice is missing, reconstruction is advised to visually cap the facade and complete the original design intention; evidence for reconstruction often exists in archival photographs or can be determined by what remains on the building.

**Later Sidings** \_\_\_\_\_

Later sidings are often added over original materials; these include stucco, vinyl and wood. These should be removed where feasible; test samples should first be removed to determine whether or not this possible.

**Storefronts** \_\_\_\_\_

The ground floors of commercial buildings are altered most frequently. In many cases entire storefronts have been inappropriately replaced. The ground floor should be examined to determine how the existing storefront serves both functional and aesthetic requirements. Where possible, original storefront configurations and materials should be recovered or reconstructed.

**Windows** \_\_\_\_\_

The HARP area has a great variety of fenestration, but most of the existing buildings had double-hung wooden sash windows. Where possible, these should be retained, or replicated if they have been changed.

The HARP area should ultimately present a consistent, upgraded image, complementing a successful mix of activities and a healthy respect for the past. This should foster a viable commercial climate for the on-going revitalization of the Columbia Street historic core.

## 2.2 ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS

In addition to these considerations, the following issues should be examined for all additions and alterations. These are crucial in maintaining the heritage character of the area; obtrusive modern interventions could completely overwhelm the existing heritage structures.

All new construction in the HARP area must conform to the by-law for C-4 (Central Business Districts) zoning, and requires a Special Development Permit. No setbacks are required, and any setback from the street frontage is discouraged. By-law #5892 regulates the height and form of new developments in the Columbia Street corridor, and design guidelines are currently being prepared for new developments in the downtown area.

Additions should conform to the type of massing suggested by existing models, including storefront retail use, and evenly spaced window openings on the upper floors. Upper stories should exhibit a solid to void relationship that echoes a traditional punctured wall treatment; wall area to window area should be approximately a 2:1 ratio. Windows should be inset in a traditional manner, not be flush with the facing material. Odd-shaped windows or random placement are discouraged; wooden-sash windows with a historic look are encouraged. Projecting box canopies or flat fixed canopies should not be permitted.

All facing materials used in additions or alterations should conform to those listed as appropriate in Section 3.4. Due to the nature of traditional construction methods, it is crucial that any new construction blend sensitively where it joins with an older building. The appropriateness of trim and detail is not determined by these basic criteria alone. Sensitive integration with the older buildings in the HARP area is the key determinant for a successful design.

The following treatments and structural systems should not be used:

1. Glass curtain walls or ribbon windows
2. Expanses of plate glass
3. Expanses of stucco
4. Expanses of concrete
5. Large scale masonry units
6. Long-span structural openings

Other elements of design may be of equal importance and must be weighed to determine the ultimate appearance of the final project; these criteria may not be exhaustive of all considerations relevant to specific applications. Each project should be assessed on its own merits.

## SECTION 3: MATERIALS

This section deals with the appropriate treatment of materials in the renovation, restoration, addition to, or alteration of existing buildings in the HARP area.

The character of these buildings is derived from an honest use of materials and a simple and logical deployment of their forms and proportions. Whenever possible, original materials should be left in place or exposed if covered; new materials should be sympathetic and compatible. If original materials have deteriorated and require replacement, their appearance should be duplicated.

### 3.1 MASONRY

Most of the buildings on Columbia Street are built with masonry facades and side walls. The following considerations apply for each type of masonry:

#### 3.1.1 Brick

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The most important consideration is to ensure the integrity of the brick facing against water infiltration. Proper flashing, weathertight structural openings, and properly struck mortar joints are critical considerations.

If replacing bricks, match the size and hardness of the original, and if exposed, match the colour and surface texture. Underfired, deteriorated bricks (“salmons”) may need to be chipped out and replaced in situ. In some cases matching bricks may be obtained by removing some from an inconspicuous part of the building.

If brick is to be added to an existing building, it should match the colour, size and texture of the existing brick. Brick should be common face brick, smooth in texture (not wire cut), of traditional size, and red, yellow or buff in colour. Giant bricks, cement blocks, and new “antique” bricks should not be used.

To prevent moisture absorption it is recommended that a breathable sealant be applied to brick, especially after cleaning. Non-breathable silicone sealants may trap moisture and are therefore not recommended. Professional advice should be sought in the specification of these products.

#### 3.1.2 Stone

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The use of stone as a finish material is acceptable, with limitations, especially at storefront level. The size of the masonry units should be scaled to the size of the building, and jagged, rough-cut random ashlar stones, or highly polished stone surfaces (such as granite tiles) should not be used.

#### 3.1.3 Terra Cotta

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Terra cotta is used as both a cladding and a trim material in the HARP area. Careful examination should be made to ensure that the terra cotta units have not deteriorated, and remain securely anchored to the wall. Remedial measures may range from patching and caulking, to the replacement of damaged units. Careful examination is required to determine condition and best methods of conservation. If replication of damaged or missing units is required, the following materials may be considered:

1. Replacement terra cotta units
2. Fibreglass replacements
3. Composite concrete systems

### 3.1.4 Concrete

Where concrete is original, it should be checked for watertightness, drainage defects should be corrected, and the facing properly flashed. If patching, match the original in appearance; damaged or loosened pieces should be removed, and tests made with patching materials. With re-inforced concrete, clean and seal any exposed reinforcing bars to prevent further deterioration.

The use of concrete as a facing material for additions and alterations is discouraged unless it is appropriately detailed into smaller areas, or covered with another siding material. Concrete blocks are unacceptable as a facing material.

### 3.1.5 Stucco

If the stucco is original, and needs repairs, remove loose patches and particles, then patch with new stucco that duplicates the original in strength, composition, texture and colour.

Before the 1920's, stucco was rarely used as a primary facing. Stucco facings were often added to "modernize" earlier buildings, or in an attempt to correct a moisture problem. Often the stucco is an inappropriate texture, and obscures original details. Later stucco sidings should be removed where feasible; this could reveal the long-lost beauty of an early facade. Each stucco removal project has specialized concerns, and must be reviewed separately as to procedure and phasing.

For alterations and additions, stucco should only be used as a panel material, in small areas and bordered with wood trim. The surface should be plain, even and flat; textured, swirled or heavily stippled stucco should not be used. Stucco should not be used in conjunction with metal trim, which gives a cold, modern appearance. Wood trim and windows help alleviate the blank appearance of stucco; windows should be recessed with an adequate reveal.

### 3.1.6 Mortar

Where mortar is found to be deteriorated, it may require full or partial repointing. Deteriorated mortar joints should be carefully hand-raked and repointed. Traditional methods and materials should be used, and the tooling and size of joints, the mortar colour and surface texture should be closely matched to the original. Synthetic caulking compounds and 'scrub' repointing are inappropriate. Care should be taken not to damage the brick during this work. Mortar strength should not be greater than the original or it may cause stresses to build up within the wall, causing failure of the facing.

### 3.1.7 Tile

Tile is sometimes found on the storefronts of commercial buildings. The use of decorative tilework is encouraged, but tiles should be small, 15cm (6 inches) square or less, and should conform to the overall colour scheme chosen for the building. Tiles should be solid colour (patterns are unacceptable) but may be used to form a fretwork, geometric pattern or sign. They provide an appropriate solution for the finishing of a stucco wall, which should not touch ground level or a sidewalk.

### 3.1.8 Cleaning of Masonry

Masonry should be cleaned of grime and soot, and inappropriate paint layers removed; these are specialized processes and should be undertaken in conjunction with skilled professionals. Although masonry is a durable building material, it is susceptible to damage when improperly cleaned. Any existing damage should be rectified, then the gentlest possible cleaning methods should be used. Surface tests should be undertaken before the final cleaning proceeds.

The following considerations apply to the cleaning of masonry:

1. Never sandblast or use an abrasive cleaner, as it will destroy the masonry surface. Once damaged, the surface is more vulnerable to weathering, and cannot be restored to its original appearance.
2. The best method to restore masonry is a combination of chemical cleaners and strippers, used in conjunction with low pressure water treatments. These caustic chemicals must be handled carefully during application; they may etch glass and other surfaces. If water pressure is too high it may wash out mortar from the joints and soak the wall. The effluent run-off, which may include lead if paint has been stripped, must be contained and disposed of safely.
3. In any cleaning or stripping operation, the primary and surrounding materials must be adequately tested. A minimum test patch of 1.85 square metres (20 square feet) is recommended, followed after an adequate dwell time by proper washing.
4. After any cleaning and stripping operation, repointing may be required.

### 3.2 WOOD

Wood, readily available and easily shaped, was commonly used on the early buildings in the area. For all HARP projects, the use of wooden windows, doors, and storefront elements is encouraged.

Original wooden elements should be repaired, painted and maintained to an acceptable standard. If these elements have decayed to the point where replacement is necessary, the original configuration, assembly and appearance should be duplicated; pieces to be replaced should be carefully measured, removed with minimal disruption to the surrounding materials, then replicated and replaced. Wooden sash windows are further discussed in Section 4.2.

Unfinished cedar and plywood should not be used as primary facing materials.

### 3.3 METAL

Generally, metal is found as a trim, cornice or storefront element. Original sheet or cast metal elements should be examined for deterioration, then repaired and repainted as necessary; they should be repaired in situ, but with proper precautions may be removed for shop repair. The type and placement of anchoring system should be thoroughly examined as to adequacy and stability, and reinforced as required.

The first step in repairing metal trim is to examine it for signs of decay, and halt the causes of deterioration. This should occur before repairs commence or the trim may be further damaged.

Galvanized or ferrous metals should be painted. Any corrosion should be removed prior to repainting; the gentlest possible methods should be considered. The following considerations apply for these types of metal:

#### *Galvanized Metals*

These are metals in which zinc has been used as a protective coating. They must always be painted with an appropriate chromate primer, otherwise the paint surface may fail and peel off. This primer should be top-coated with two coats of oil-based paint. Any flashings should be examined as to their integrity and watertightness.

### *Ferrous Metals*

This includes iron and steel, which should be primed as necessary and painted with two coats of oil-based paint. Surfaces exposed by cleaning, repair or the removal of paint should be primed immediately. For final painting to proceed, the surface must be absolutely dry; the temperature should be above 10 degrees C. (50 degrees F.) and the humidity should be below 80%.

The best long-term protection for metal elements is adequate caulking at joints, and proper painting to protect the surface from corrosive pollutants.

Missing metal features should be replaced when they can be documented through plans, archival photographs, or evidence found on the building.

Corrugated metal sidings should not be considered appropriate under any circumstances.

## 3.4 SUMMARY OF MATERIALS

The following materials are appropriate:

1. Common Smooth Face Brick; in red, yellow or buff
2. Terra Cotta; block cladding or trim
3. Stucco; used as a panel treatment, bordered with wood; should only be finished with a flat('sand float') texture
4. Concrete; only when detailed into smaller surface areas, or covered with a facing material
5. Stone; when used in an appropriate historical fashion
6. Wood; for windows, doors and storefront elements
7. Metals; as a secondary material or trim only
8. Tile; as a decorative element
9. Fibreglass; for replication of missing historic elements

The following materials are inappropriate:

1. New "antique" style or wire-cut brick
2. Out-of-scale masonry units, ie. giant bricks
3. Textured, swirled or heavily stippled stucco
4. Aluminum, vinyl or plastic sidings
5. Corrugated or sheet metal sidings
6. Vertical or diagonal wooden sidings
7. Split cedar shakes
8. Unfinished cedar siding
9. Wide profile or lapped wooden siding
10. Plywood as a primary material
11. Jagged, rough-cut, random ashlar or highly polished stonework
12. Sprayed stone chip or stone chip panels
13. Mirrored or reflective glass

The proper use of materials is an important step in recapturing the appearance and heritage character of individual historic buildings, as well as promoting a revitalized image for Columbia Street.

# SECTION 4: STOREFRONTS, DOORS AND FENESTRATION

## 4.1 STOREFRONTS, DOORS AND ENTRIES

**I**t is the ground level of commercial buildings which tend to be most altered from the original. The ground level is the face by which a business presents itself to the street; it is therefore critical to consider fully the functional and aesthetic aspects of storefront design in any revitalization treatment. Attractive storefront design is one of the keys to economic viability.

Original plans or photographs will indicate the original storefront configuration. Additional evidence may be in the original features, often hidden under later sidings; this may be discovered with careful probing and investigation. The effort of rebuilding a storefront is well worth undertaking when the long-term economic benefits of increased business are analysed.

For each storefront design, consider the following:

**Function** \_\_\_\_\_

What was the original function? What is the intended function? What type of window display space and visibility is required?

**Circulation** \_\_\_\_\_

Is the entry location the original? If altered, can the entry be returned to its original location?

**Materials** \_\_\_\_\_

Can original materials be restored? Which new materials are most appropriate, attractive, durable, and similar in colour, texture and detailing to the original?

**Proportions** \_\_\_\_\_

In multi-storey buildings, there should be a clear relationship between the ground floor and the upper floors. Many storefront windows, originally tall to permit natural light penetration, have been shortened over the years. What is the appropriate window height?

**Integrity** \_\_\_\_\_

Original building elements should not be disturbed. Irreversible changes to historic materials should not be made. The storefront should serve the past as well as the present.

**Character** \_\_\_\_\_

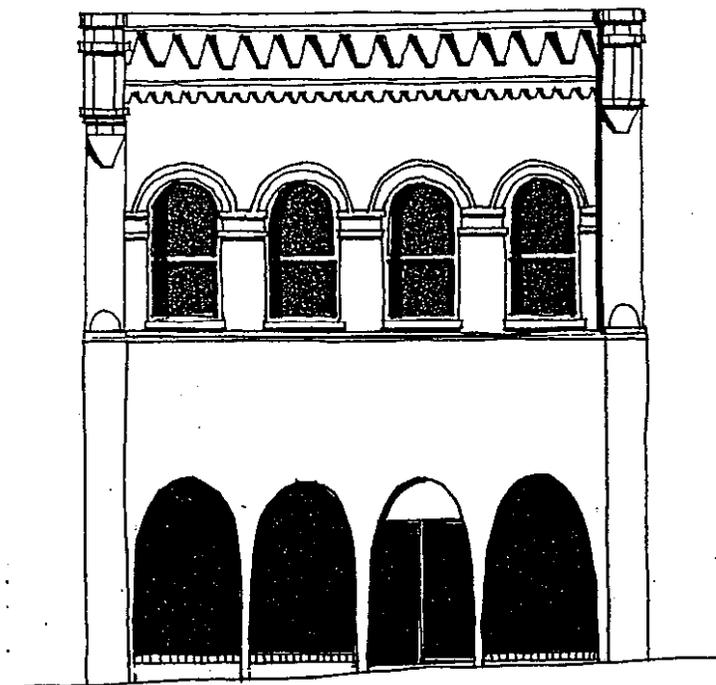
A look appropriate to the original building is essential. Applied styles, such as mock Tudor, are discouraged, as they visually isolate the storefront from the rest of the building and create a jumbled and chaotic effect. The character of the building should be respected and enhanced with proper storefront design.

**Display Windows** \_\_\_\_\_

Glass was historically more available in small sizes, and storefront were sometimes divided into smaller panes. Modern adaptations should follow this patterning; avoid large expanses of plate glass unless shown to be historically appropriate.

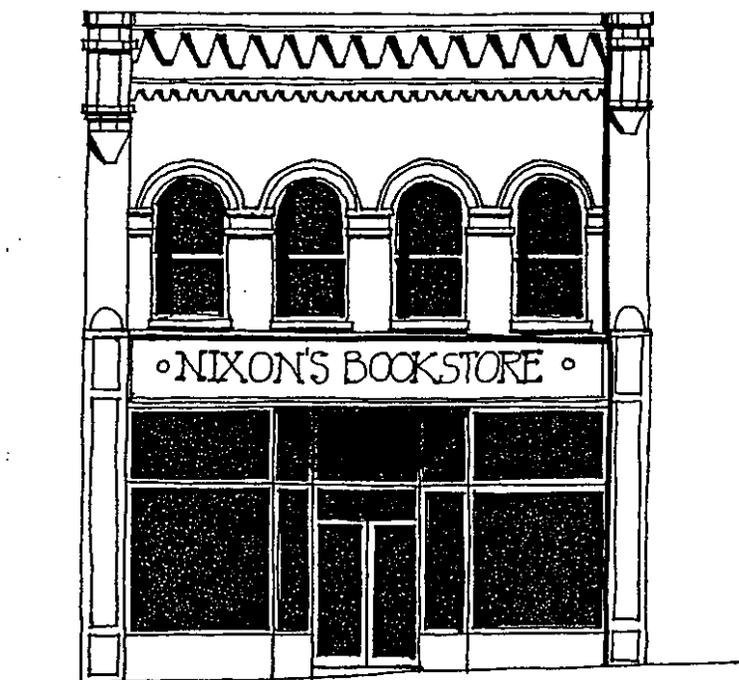
**Signs** \_\_\_\_\_

There should be clear and logical opportunities for the placement of signs. For further information see Section 5: Signs.



*Inappropriate storefront renovation*

*Appropriate storefront restoration*



### *Awnings and Canopies*

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These are often the final touch in a successful storefront renovation. They provide shelter for browsing pedestrians, and also protect merchandise from direct sunlight. For further information see Section 7: Awnings and Canopies.

Early commercial buildings in the HARP area had wooden doors, with carved or molded detail, often with inset glass panels and cast brass hardware. Retain and restore old and original doors wherever possible; doors should conform to egress requirements as outlined in the building code. New or replacement doors should be detailed in accordance with the nature of the building. Doors leading to retail and commercial space should have inset glass panels for additional visibility.

## 4.2 WINDOWS

Window shapes and sizes vary with the architectural style of a building. In older buildings window openings are generally a punctured void in a solid wall, with a proper reveal, sill and trim.

Windows which are wholly or partially blocked should be reopened and properly reglazed. Altered window openings should be returned to their original dimensions and an appropriate window sash reconstructed. If original windows have been removed, consult archival photographs to determine their original configuration.

Original windows should be retained; later window sash should be replaced with replicas of the original. Most wooden windows can be adequately repaired, and should not be replaced with plastic or metal-frame windows. Original windows should only be replaced when extremely deteriorated, in which case only exact replicas should be used.

## SECTION 5: SIGNS

Signs are one of the most important visual elements of a commercial district. Signs should be colourful, visible, decorative, and legible. Their individuality should delight the viewer and promote a sophisticated image for businesses in the area. At night, their illumination should reflect the liveliness of the streetscape.

While the varied needs of advertisers must be respected, there should be a unified visual style to suit the overall streetscape. Stringent regulation reduces the competition over signs. Building owners and tenants should hire professionals to design and execute signs, making sure they conform to a more traditional style and appearance. In addition, signs must conform to the Sign By-law (#5750) of the City of New Westminster.

### 5.1 SIGN MATERIALS

Materials should be durable enough to last for years of continuous use. The materials should be well-crafted and appropriately designed in order to convey a good business image.

The following materials are acceptable:

1. Wood: either flat panels, preferably with a wooden border; carved or sandblasted panels; or three dimensional wooden letters.
2. Paint: either used on a sign board, or used directly on a building facade or glass.
3. Tile: either mosaic signs or cut and routed tile.
4. Metal: used for sign hangers, or as three dimensional cast letters.
5. Baked Enamel on Metal: used for flat fixed or projecting signs.
6. Neon: cold cathode tubing (not fluorescent tubing); most appropriate for window signs, but may be used for outdoor signs. Acceptable as lettering or outlining.
7. Incandescent Lighting: may be used for direct illumination, for outlining, or directly in signs.
8. Stone: appropriate for fascia signs, with etched or raised letters.

The following materials are unacceptable:

1. Plastic: any type, either flat, painted or vacuum-formed.
2. Fluorescent Backlit Panels: not acceptable in any application.
3. Exposed Fluorescent Tubing: should never be seen on the face of a building, unless it is an integral part of an early lighting scheme, such as theatre marquees.
4. Backlit Translucent Awnings: should always be opaque, with signs painted on the front and illuminated from above.

These restrictions apply to all types of signs. Signs should always be opaque and directly lit rather than translucent and backlit. This rule should be strenuously followed.

## 5.2 TYPES AND SIZES OF SIGNS

Signs should be directly related to the building or the businesses within. The following types and sizes of signs are acceptable:

1. **Fascia Signs:** are affixed or painted parallel to the face of the building. The most common location is in the area between the first and second floors, but they may be erected in other locations, such as on storefront bulkheads. Fascia signs should be wooden, or should be painted directly on the building surface. The ends of a wooden fascia sign may be either blunt cut or have decorative ends. They should be mounted flush to the surface, and not interfere with moldings, glass or building ornamentation. Lettering may be routed, incised, applied flat (painted), cut-out or carved. Fascia signs should not exceed 0.6 metres (2.0 feet) in height, or exceed in length 90% of the width of the building. They should not exceed the ratio of 1.0 square meter (10.8 square feet) to 1.0 metre of (3.3 feet) of lineal building wall to which the sign is affixed, up to a maximum sign area of 14.0 square metres (150.7 square feet).
2. **Projecting Signs:** are fixed at ninety degrees to the face of the building. They must not extend above the roofline, and should be appropriately lined up with architectural features. They should not be located at the end of the building or interfere with the adjacent buildings. The recommended material is wood, either painted, or carved and painted, hung from a wrought iron or decorative sign standard. These signs should not be hung lower than 2.7 metres (9.0 feet); a clearance of 3.0 metres (9 feet 10 inches) is preferred. These signs should not be mounted more than 0.3 metres (1.0 foot) from the exterior face of the building. The maximum projection of the sign from the exterior wall should not exceed 3.0 metres (10 feet), and should not extend beyond a point 0.6 metres (2.0 feet) inside the curb line. The area of the sign should not exceed 2.8 square metres (30.1 square feet)
3. **Under-Awning and Under-Canopy Signs:** should be no less than 2.7 metres (9 feet 0 inches) above grade, and not exceed 1.0 square metres (10.8 square feet) in area. They should have a maximum vertical dimension of 0.5 metres (1.6 feet), and not exceed the width of the awning or canopy under which they are hung. In addition, they should be securely attached with an appropriate metal hanger.
4. **Window Signs:** are painted, gold-leafed, or otherwise affixed to a window or door, and identify the business within. Fineline borders on glass areas are encouraged. Lettering should have a drop shadow or a shadow outline, or be painted in more than one colour to provide an illusion of depth. Window signs should occupy no more than 20% of the glazed area. They should be simple, traditional, and centred.
5. **Painted Awning Signs:** restricted to painted signs on opaque fabric awnings. Painted lettering would be permitted on the front or side valance. No lettering should be allowed on the slope of the awning, although a logo or identifying symbol may be used, providing that it is carefully drawn and painted. The valance should be no more than 30 cm (12 inches) high; lettering should be no more than 25 cm (10 inches) high. Total painted awning signs, including any logo, should not exceed 10% of the total awning area.
6. **Painted Wall Signs:** can be effective and decorative elements on blank side walls. Ample historic precedents exist for the appearance of these signs. If using lettering alone, use drop

shadows or shadow outlines to give the letters depth. Another way to delineate letters is to paint a darker colour over the body colour of the facade, leaving the letters unpainted, so as to throw the sign into negative relief. Lettering can also be painted on a background swag or ribbon. These signs should conform to the sizes listed above for fascia signs.

7. **Name Signs:** a building name or date used for overall identification. These features contribute a sense of history and add to the overall character of the streetscape. These are particularly appropriate on cornices, and three dimensional letters may be used. The typeface should match the period and style of the building.

The following types of signs are unacceptable:

1. Awning Signs (attached to or on the face of a awning, except for painted or under-awning signs)
2. Flashing Signs
3. Animated Signs
4. Rotating Signs
5. Signs on Satellite Dishes
6. Roof Signs

Banner signs are not allowed under the current sign by-law, but are often used in revitalized historic districts. Their use here will require an amendment to the C-4 zoning schedule, which may be undertaken in the near future.

### 5.3 SHAPES OF SIGNS

Sign shapes should be derived from and complement each individual building. There are logical areas to place signs, such as fascias, that help determine the appropriate shape. The most pleasing shapes are rectangular, circular and oval. Board signs should have a painted decorative border, or wood trim border, to avoid the look of cut-out plywood.

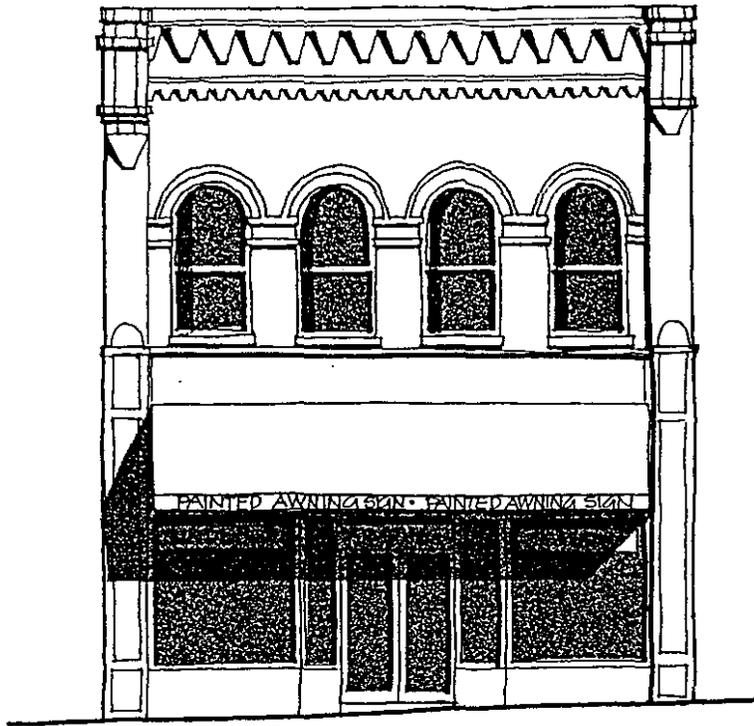
Projecting or fascia signs may be in a shield or plaque shape, or may take the form of a sculptural cut-out for business identification, known as an effigy sign; an example would be a boot effigy representing a shoe store.

Merchants are encouraged to display imaginative signs, and are directed to historical precedent for inspiration.

### 5.4 TYPEFACE AND COLOUR

Sign typefaces should be of a serif type of traditional appearance. A drop shadow or a shadow outline should be added to lettering to increase visual depth. Letters should appear to be equally spaced. Any sign should have a maximum of three typefaces, all from related type families, or use only one typeface, which may be varied in line weight, size or mixed upper and lower case. Letters on wooden signs may be either applied flat (painted), raised or incised.

Colour should highlight the sign, and blend in with the overall colour scheme of the building. Signs should have no more than three colours, with one being black, gold or antique white; fluorescent colours should not be used.



Types and placement of appropriate signs



## 5.5 METHOD OF ATTACHMENT

The condition of the structure should be investigated prior to erecting a sign, to avoid physical damage to the building. Original materials on historic buildings should not be damaged by sign attachments. Expansion bolts should be anchored into mortar so as not to harm brick, stone or terra cotta.

Sign fastenings should be inconspicuous unless they form an integral part of the sign design.

## 5.6 ILLUMINATION OF SIGNS

Historically, signs were illuminated by incandescent lights shining on the sign face; this is a pleasing and functional lighting solution. The following lighting types are acceptable:

1. **Spotlighting:** is the easiest lighting solution for outside signs. Strong focus lights may be used to illuminate from above, below or to the side, or a row of concealed lights may be used to wash a sign with light. Lights used to illuminate a sign should be shielded from the viewer's eyes to avoid glare. The light source should be white, not coloured.
2. **Neon Tubing:** not to be confused with fluorescent tubing, this may be used for lettering or outlining.

Fluorescent lights should not be used in sign or awning illumination; the only exception should be when it was an integral part of an historic application, such as early theatre marquees.

## 5.7 SATELLITE DISH ANTENNAS

Satellite dish antennas are inherently obtrusive within an historic area. The following guidelines should be used to minimize their impact on the character of the HARP area:

### *Colour*

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The dish antennas should be painted to match the surrounding environment, or in a neutral, muted colour. No advertising or lettering should appear on the dish. Dishes of polished metal or those with reflective surfaces are unacceptable.

### *Size*

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Dish antennas should not exceed 3.3 metres (11 feet) in diameter.

### *Location*

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Dish antennas should be placed on the least visible part of the property. The antennas, connecting cables and wiring should not be visible from primary street facades. If this is unavoidable, they should be fully screened.

These are general guidelines only, and each satellite dish treatment should be judged on its own merits.

## SECTION 6: BUILDING ILLUMINATION

Lighting draws attention to otherwise unnoticed details, and increases the nighttime visibility of buildings. Facades may be illuminated by strategically placed spotlights shining down from the cornice or fascia. Light sources should be concealed if possible and shielded from the viewer's eye. Specific architectural details, such as cornice brackets or lettering, may also be highlighted with carefully focused spot lighting.

Integrating an incandescent lighting system into a canopy or awning design may provide additional highlighting. Fabric awnings should always be opaque; when lit from above and below, they provide a strong architectural element complementary to the building.

### 6.1 LIGHTING FIXTURES AND INSTALLATION

Exterior lighting may be accomplished in a number of ways:

1. Downlighting from the cornice area
2. Uplighting from the fascia
3. Spotlighting specific areas, such as entries

All exterior lighting should be direct, strong focus lights, positioned to avoid reflections; sodium vapour or fluorescent lighting should not be used. The incandescent fixtures which are appropriate include:

1. Recessed pot lights
2. Turret-mounted spotlights
3. Industrial 'goose-neck' fixtures

Each facade should be examined as to the most appropriate, and least intrusive, way of providing overall illumination.

### 6.2 SHOPFRONT AND DISPLAY LIGHTING

Window display is the merchant's opportunity to present an effective image to the public, and is an important part of retail marketing. It is important that the shopfront design and display match the building's exterior character. Visual clutter should be minimized, and careful attention paid to the appearance of the windows.

Storefronts and display window lighting should be incandescent; movable spotlighting is recommended as the most flexible system. The lighting of entries is an important and highly visible part of the overall design, and should be carefully considered.

Exposed fluorescent light fixtures should not be used in display windows if they are visible from the front of the building.

## SECTION 7: AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

Awnings and canopies can provide the finishing touch to a building. They protect shoppers from the weather, thereby promoting commercial activity, and shield merchandise in store windows from exposure to sunlight. Careful design ensures visual harmony with the rest of the building, and provides a horizontal emphasis to the streetscape.

### 7.1 AWNING AND CANOPY TYPES

The following types are acceptable:

1. Fabric awnings: should always be opaque, should fit the structural opening which they cover, and should not pass in front of vertical structural elements. Open or closed ends may be used. The following standard stationary configurations are acceptable:
  - Three point, without valance
  - Three point, with fixed or drop valance
  - Retractable awnings, of appropriate period design
2. Glass Canopies
3. Theatre Marquees

These are the only types recommended. Arched, barrel, dome, convex, concave or random-shaped awnings are not considered appropriate.

### 7.2 AWNING AND CANOPY MATERIALS

The following materials are acceptable:

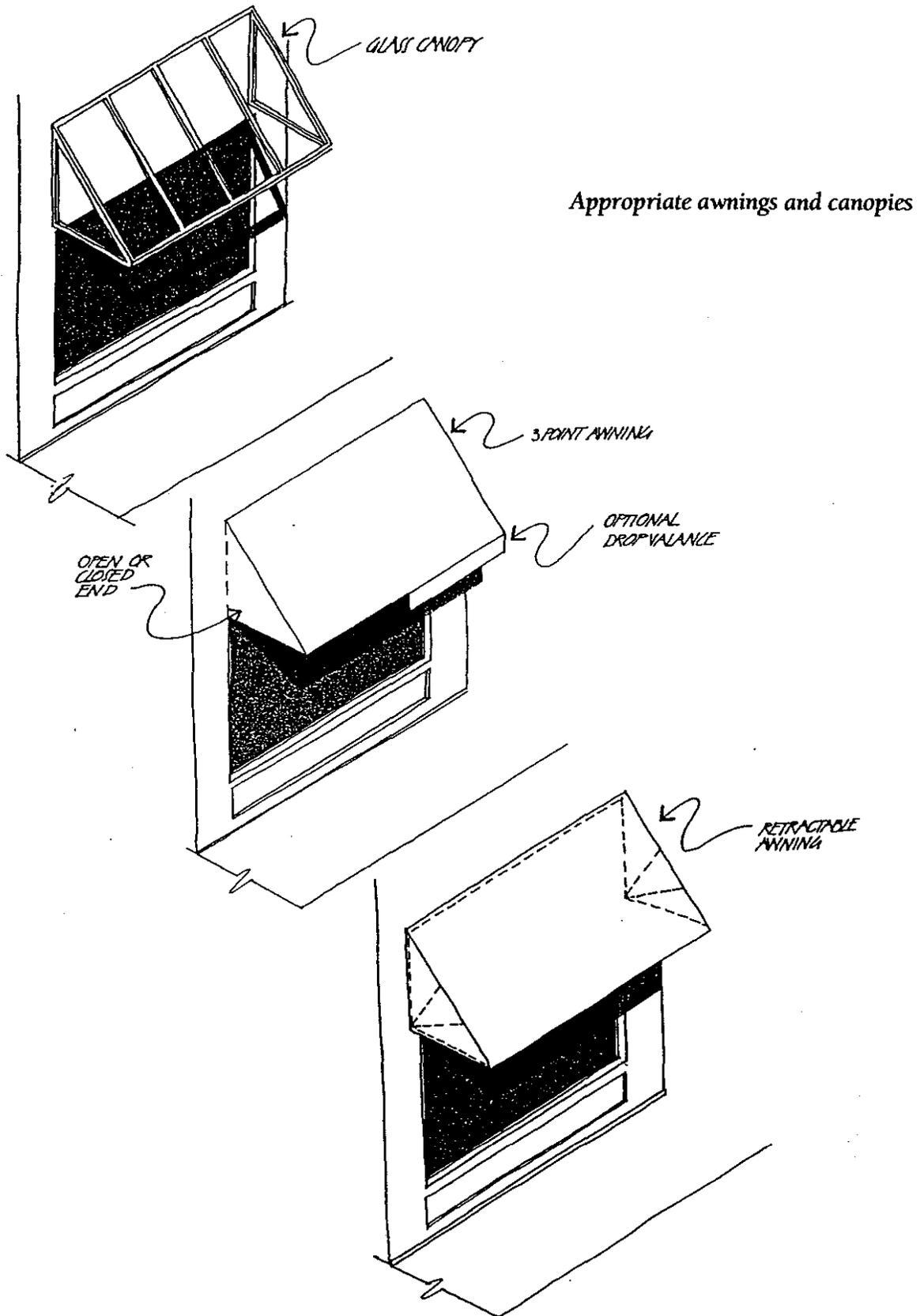
1. Fabric: only non-shiny opaque outdoor awning fabric.
2. Metal: for fabric awnings or glass canopies frame systems, and for theatre marquees.
3. Glass

The following materials are unacceptable:

1. Sheet Metal (unless part of a theatre marquee)
2. Wood Panelling, Shakes, Shingles or Siding
3. Plastic or Fibreglass
4. Concrete

### 7.3 AWNING AND CANOPY COLOUR

The colour should be in harmony with the overall scheme chosen for each building, and should conform to Section 8: Colour. Fabric awnings should generally be a solid colour; striped fabrics must be carefully chosen to conform to historical precedent.



## 7.4 AWNING AND CANOPY SIZES AND HEIGHTS

The following sizes and heights apply:

1. Height to bottom: Minimum height—2.75 metres (9 feet)
2. Projection: Preferred range of projection from the building face—1.5 metres (5 feet) to 1.8 metres (6 feet)
3. Height of Awning or Canopy: Preferred range of height—1.5 metres (5 feet) to 1.8 metres (6 feet)
4. Distance From Curb: Minimum—.60 metres (2 feet)
5. Valance: Maximum—.30 metres (1 foot)
6. Angle: preferred slope—45 degrees (This may be shallower if they cannot otherwise fit the structural opening. The important consideration is that there is adequate minimum height clearance).

## SECTION 8: COLOUR

Colour is both an intrinsic quality of exposed material and an applied surface treatment. It is the most easily perceived and one of the most important visual aspects of a building. Colour is the easiest characteristic to change, and is often the most inexpensive way to improve a building's appearance. The choice of colour is critical; it costs no more to pick a handsome colour scheme, but it may make the difference between a successful project or a failure.

The heritage buildings in the HARP area should be returned to their original colour scheme. When this original scheme can be determined, a close match or an updated interpretation should be attempted. The original builders were experienced of what colours would look best on various building elements, and their intentions should be respected. Determining the original colour scheme may require technical assistance; the HARP Coordinators should be contacted for further advice.

Earth tones and natural pigment colours are the most appropriate choice. Fluorescent colours, primary colours and plain white are unacceptable. Certain colours are considered inappropriate, such as bright oranges, reds, blues and greens.

The wide range of appropriate colours are available from paint companies, which now publish guides to heritage colours. In addition, designers, architects or heritage consultants are available for assistance.

### 8.1 COLOUR AS ARCHITECTURAL ENHANCEMENT

Historic buildings often display special opportunities to highlight building details in colour, but overly bright or garish contrasts should be avoided. Areas of the building that should be examined as to their potential for colour enhancement are:

1. Cornices: different elements of a cornice may be picked out in contrasting tones, or treated in hues of the same colour.
2. Door and Window Trim and Surrounds: may be treated in colours complementary or contrasting to the body tones. Mullions should be a dark colour.
3. Storefronts: colour may be used to specifically highlight ground floor elements.
4. Signs: provide an opportunity for a bright and lively use of colour.

### 8.2 FINISH CONSIDERATIONS

A field test is encouraged before final painting occurs. Test swatches should be placed on the building, and the colours observed under daylight conditions. Final colour selection may then be made.

A proper surface must be prepared for painting through adequate scraping, priming and preparation or the paint may fail. Painting should occur under proper conditions of temperature and humidity.

Trim elements should be painted in a gloss oil-base paint. Body colours may be in an acrylic latex or oil-base finish; for older buildings, an overall use of enamel paint would be most historically accurate.

## SECTION 9: MAINTENANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Proper maintenance of buildings is an on-going issue. A three-part maintenance program is recommended to owners and tenants, so that small repairs may be undertaken before they worsen and begin to affect the integrity of each building. This is the best way to keep maintenance costs low, and helps preserve property values.

### *Recognizing Problems* \_\_\_\_\_

The first step of maintenance is a regular building inspection from the top down to follow the path of water. Examine roofing, gutters, downspouts and flashings for any damage and water infiltration. Carefully examine damp spots, peeling paint, and mold growth on interior or exterior walls for indications of moisture retention. Check foundations, crawlspaces, basements and drain tiles for any moisture problems. Periodically check exterior walls for deterioration, such as broken windows or torn awnings; repair minor maintenance problems immediately. Larger problem areas should be identified and assessed for the next stage of repairs.

### *Assessing Problems* \_\_\_\_\_

After identifying the problems, determine the extent of damage and what repairs are required. Start again with the roof and work down. Does the roof cover need replacing, or would patching be effective? Areas of moisture retention should be repaired once the water infiltration has been rectified. Repair or replace deteriorated wood. These repairs should be undertaken after the cause of decay has been pinpointed and eliminated. The first step to any repair is to make the building watertight.

### *Repairs on a Continuing Basis* \_\_\_\_\_

The most effective way to eliminate maintenance problems is to ensure all joints are properly caulked and sealed, and all surfaces that require painting are properly maintained. To best prevent decay, ensure the building is watertight, and free of obvious areas of deterioration. Have the building periodically inspected from top to bottom, paying special attention to problem areas. Under no circumstances should a water infiltration problem be ignored; it will only become worse.

Each property owner should institute an on-going maintenance program to ensure that their building receives the best possible long-term care.