

# Chapter 4: Design Standards for Individual Building Elements

The preservation of individual building elements (including commercial facades, windows and entries) is important in order to maintain the character of historic buildings in Pagosa Springs. Individual elements of historic buildings each have design, configuration and material traditions that shall be respected.

## Commercial Facades

Ornamental details are key features of historic buildings that should be preserved. Often individual facade elements combine to give historic buildings an overall sense of proportion, interest and a pleasant scale for passing pedestrians.

### 4.1 Individual facade elements on commercial buildings should be maintained.

- Preserve cornice moldings and belt courses.
- Preserve pediments and parapets to maintain the historic proportions of a building.

### 4.2 If historic facade elements are missing, use a simplified interpretation of similar nearby historic facades.

- Do not replace facade elements with new interpretations unless evidence of the original is missing.
- New designs should continue the character of the original.

## Windows and Doors

Windows, entries and doors are among the most important character-defining features of historic structures. Properly maintained and restored windows, entries and doors help identify an individual structure's historic style and era and should be preserved.

### 4.3 Preserve the position, number, size and arrangement of historic windows and doors in a building wall.

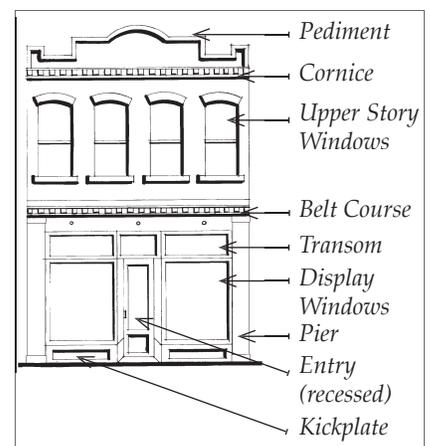
- Do not enclose a historic opening.
- Do not add new openings on key historic facades. There is some flexibility for new openings on side or rear facades that do not contribute to the street character.
- Do not close down an original opening to accommodate a smaller window or door.

### 4.4 Preserve the character-defining features of historic windows.

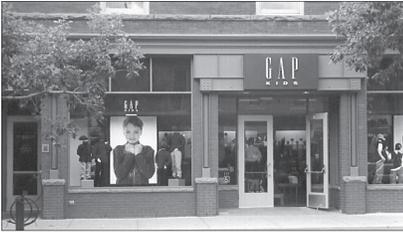
- Maintain the traditional vertical emphasis of historic second story windows.
- Use appropriate clear glass, glazing, frame, sash, muntins, mullions, sills, heads, jambs and molding for historic windows.



*Preservation of the central elements of commercial storefronts such as display windows, transom windows and kickplates is important to maintain and enhance the historic character of Downtown Pagosa Springs. (Pagosa Springs, CO)*



*Individual elements of historic commercial storefront buildings have design, configuration and material traditions that shall be respected.*



Where evidence of an original storefront design is missing, a simplified interpretation may be appropriate. Storefront designs should continue to provide pedestrian interest. (Boulder, CO)



Recessed entries and kickplates are features of most historic storefronts. (Georgetown, TX)

#### 4.5 Retain the original shape of the transom glass in historic storefronts.

- Do not remove or enclose transom glass as it brings natural light into the depths of a building.
- Preserve the shape of the transom in its original configuration to maintain the historic proportions of a commercial storefront building.
- If a transom must be blocked, be certain to retain the original proportions while using it as a sign panel or decorative band.

#### 4.6 Preserve kickplates beneath historic storefront windows.

- If the original kickplate is covered by another material, consider exposing it.
- If the historic kickplate is missing or damaged beyond repair, use replacement materials such as wood, ceramic tile or masonry that are appropriate to the historic style of the building.
- Contemporary kickplate designs that are similar in proportion may also be appropriate.

#### 4.7 Maintain recessed entries where they are found.

- Restore historic recessed entries that have been altered. Recessed entries are typically set back between three (3) and twelve (12) feet.
- Do not design entries with doors flush to the sidewalk. Recessed entries provide protection from the weather and help identify business entrances.



The rhythm of shaded, recessed entries along the street helps to identify business entrances. (Pagosa Springs, CO)

## Roofs, Gutters and Downspouts

Together with attached gutters and downspouts, roofs protect a structure from the elements while contributing to the historic character of a structure. Roof materials include shingles, composition shingles and corrugated metal in muted colors.

### 4.8 Preserve the original roof form of a historic structure.

- Avoid altering the angle of a historic roof.
- Retain and repair roof detailing.
- Wood shingles may be replaced with visually similar materials.

### 4.9 Perform regular maintenance on historic roofs.

- Whenever possible, repair rather than replace historic roofs.
- Inspect roofs for breaks or holes in the surface.
- Check roof flashing for open seams.

### 4.10 Consider the following when choosing roofing material:

- Shingles, composition shingles, corrugated metal, standing seam metal and steel are appropriate roofing materials.
- A roof should be neutral in color.

### 4.11 Locate downspouts to minimize impacts on historic canopies and other facade details.

- Ensure that water from downspouts drains away from important architectural details.

### 4.12 Ensure that downspouts direct water away from historic structures.

- Incorporate underground drainpipes connected to the storm water system where possible, and metal and concrete splash-blocks that slope downward and away from the structure where underground pipes are not possible.
- Re-solder downspout connections to prevent water from leaking into walls.
- Downspouts and other stormwater elements may be considered an appropriate opportunity for public art.



*Porches provide a sense of scale and accessibility to historic residential structures. (Pagosa Springs, CO)*

## Porches

Porches were popular features in historic residential designs. While protecting the entrance from snow and rain and providing shade in the summer, porches also provide a sense of scale and connection with the neighborhood.

### 4.13 Maintain a historic porch and its detailing.

- Maintain the existing location and shape of a historic porch.
- Do not remove existing columns, balustrade or decorative brackets.
- Do not use wrought iron porch posts and columns unless they were used historically.



*If a porch must be enclosed or screened, use transparent materials placed behind the porch columns.  
(San Jose, CA)*

#### 4.14 Avoid enclosing a historic porch.

- If a porch must be enclosed or screened, use transparent material (glass) placed behind the porch columns.

### Architectural Lighting

#### 4.15 Minimize the visual impacts of architectural lighting.

- All exterior light sources should have a low level of luminescence.
- Wall-mounted floodlamps shall be shielded so that the light source is not visible off site. Spotlights without shielding devices are not allowed.
- A lamp that conveys the color spectrum similar to daylight is preferred. For example, metal halide and color-corrected sodium are appropriate.
- Lighting fixtures should be appropriate to the building and its surroundings in terms of style, scale and intensity of illumination.
- Wall-mounted light fixtures should not extend above the height of the wall to which they are mounted.

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#### For additional information:

Jandl, Ward H., Preservation Briefs 11: Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts. Washington, DC: Technical Preservation Services Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1982.

Myers, John H., Preservation Briefs 9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows. Washington, DC: Technical Preservation Services Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1981.

Sweetser, Sarah M., Preservation Briefs 4: Roofing for Historic Buildings. Washington, DC: Technical Preservation Services Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1978.