



Waterville Main Street Design Guidelines

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∞ INTRODUCTION

The Mission & Vision of Waterville Main Street

Mission Statement:

Waterville Main Street will advance efforts to develop the Downtown area into a thriving, energetic, commercial, social, cultural and entertainment destination.

Vision Statement:

Waterville Main Street will support economic restructuring, historic preservation, and good design to revitalize our downtown and community spirit, resulting in an attractive choice for people to visit, shop, live, and do business.

Downtown Waterville

Waterville's Downtown occupies an area roughly bounded by Elm Street, Spring Street, Union Street, and the Kennebec River. The Old Post Office marks an important entry to the Downtown at the intersection of Elm, College, and Main Streets. Storefronts concentrate in The Concourse and on Main Street, Appleton, Temple, and Silver Streets branching off Main. Major parking areas are provided within the Concourse and off Front Street adjacent to the River. Marden's Surplus anchors the southerly end of the Downtown at the intersection of Spring, Front, and Main Streets.

Between the southern and northern ends, Downtown is a compact, commercial district of classic scale. The two, three, and four-story blocks of buildings pulled tightly to the sidewalks have an array of retail stores, services, and offices. Almost all downtown buildings were built in the late 1800's and early 1900's and feature brick or masonry construction, granite embellishments, keystones above windows, and Queen Anne style decorative treatments.



At the current time, Waterville's downtown does not encompass a historic district. Most of the buildings along downtown Main Street and the adjoining streets were built around the turn of the twentieth century. Five structures within downtown Waterville are listed individually on the

National Register of Historic Places. Those five structures are: First Baptist Church (corner of Park and Elm Street, 1826); City Hall/Opera House (1 Common Street, 1902); Two-Cent Bridge (off Front Street across from Temple Street, 1903); Old Post Office (1 Post Office Square, 1911); and the Cyr Block (179 Main Street, 1923).

Historic Photos of Downtown Waterville:



Common and Main, c. 1850



c. 1898



c. 1906



c. 1981

The Purpose of WMSt's Design Guidelines

These Design Guidelines for Waterville's downtown area have been established to preserve and enhance a very important part of our City's history. All generations will be able to stroll downtown as their ancestors did and look around and appreciate the magnificent creativity and skill showcased in the design of our beautiful buildings. By making small changes over time we can restore the buildings to their original grandeur.

The Design guidelines are intended to be used as a tool to:

- ☞ Accomplish the overall desired effect of an inviting downtown.
- ☞ Improve the quality and value of property owners' buildings.

- ☞ Assist property owners in judging the acceptability of any proposed changes to the designs of their buildings.
- ☞ Assist builders and designers in preserving the unique characteristics of downtown buildings.

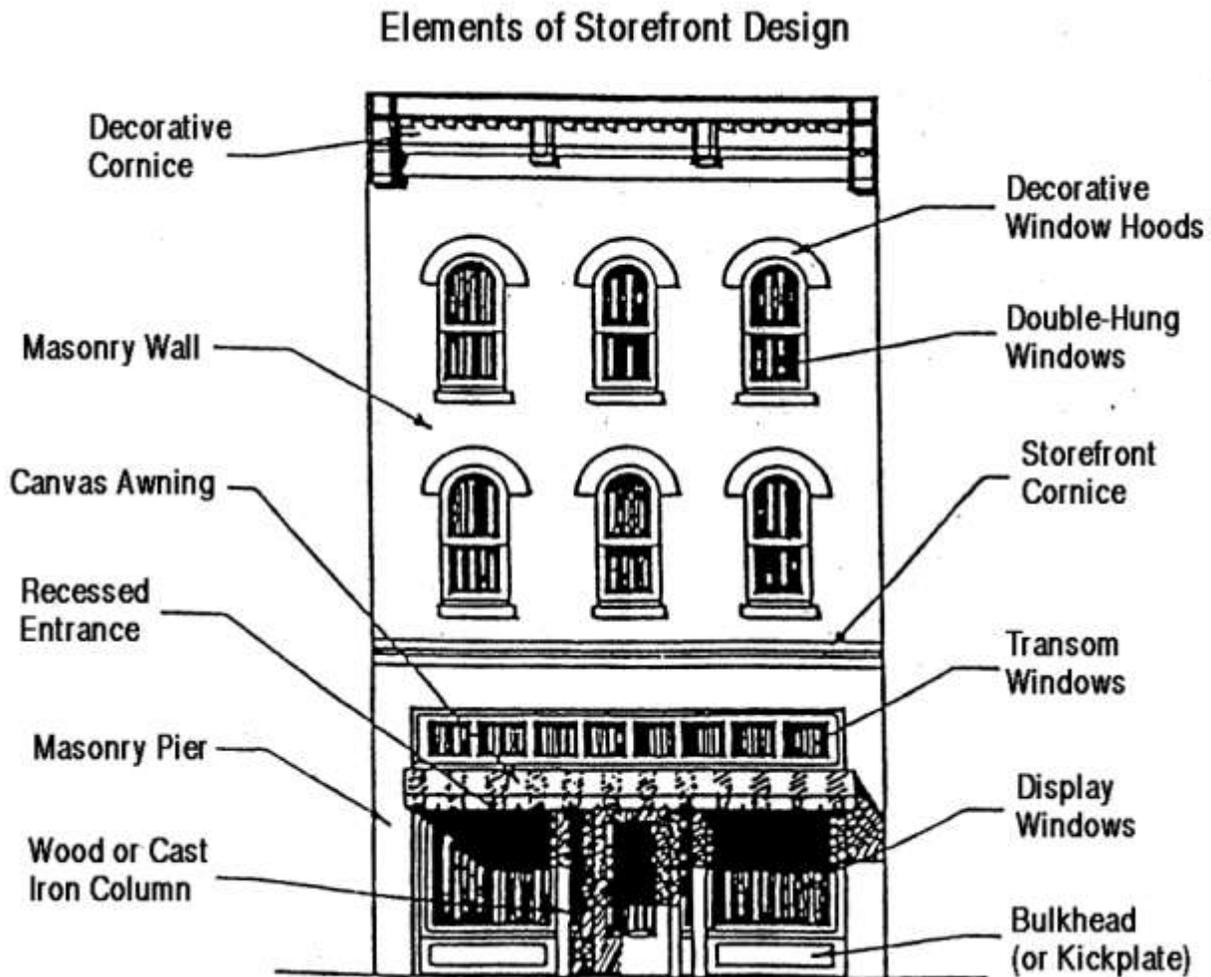
These Design Guidelines are not meant to stifle creativity or individuality. WMSt does not want every building in downtown to be painted the same color or be adorned with the exact same signage. Individual business and property owners are encouraged to be creative in thinking about the image that their renovated and improved buildings will portray as part of the entire downtown community. Find ways to enhance your building while complimenting your neighbor's building.

When in doubt, do not hesitate to call the WMSt office at 680-2055. WMSt has a variety of photos, reference materials, sample paint palettes and sample awning materials and colors that all downtown business and property owners are welcome to consult.

ELEMENTS OF MAIN STREET DESIGN

Storefronts

All commercial architectural styles break down into the same basic components: the bulkhead or kickplate area, display windows and entrance (sometimes includes transoms), the storefront cornice, upper façade, and decorative cornice. Proper design must address all of these components in planning for a successful renovation or rehabilitation.



Kickplate or Bulkhead

☞ The original kickplate material should be retained, maintained or uncovered. It usually consisted of wood panels, marble or tile.

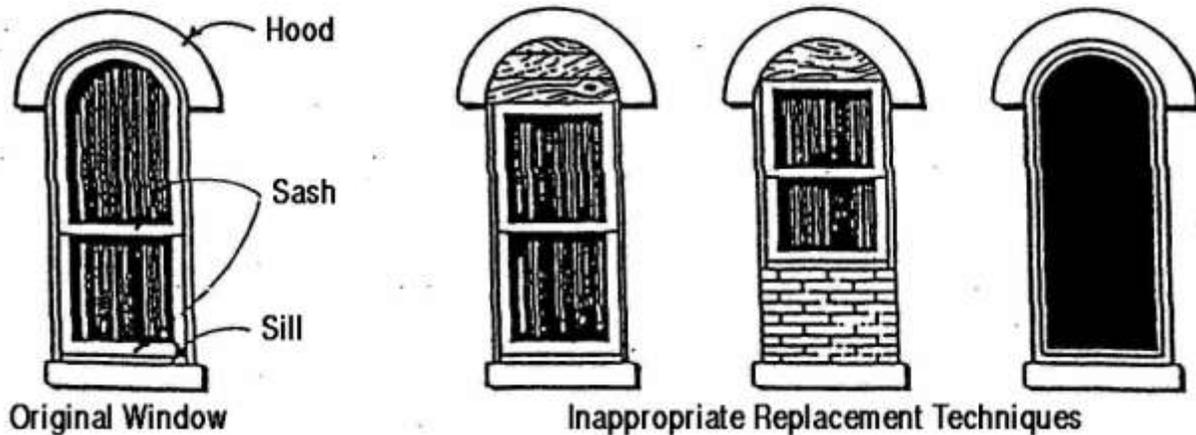
Transom Windows

- ☞ Transom windows were smaller windows above the display windows that functioned as early energy savers, allowing daylight to enter deep into the interior space. Transom windows should be preserved and restored whenever possible.

Windows and Doorways

- ☞ The size, spacing and shape of window openings should be similar among neighboring buildings. See Form, Proportion, Rhythm and Setback section below.
- ☞ The ideal storefront configuration should include storefront display window areas at ground level with an entryway recessed from the sidewalk. The recessed entrance not only provides shelter and additional display space, but also emphasizes the entrance.
- ☞ The display window should rest on some form of a bulkhead.
- ☞ The ground level display windows should be 75-80% of the front of the first floor's face.
- ☞ Upper story windows should be of the double-hung variety.
- ☞ Entryway doors should incorporate glass.
- ☞ Windows and doors should be recessed into walls and not flush mounted.
- ☞ Windows should always be replaced in accordance with the original size, shape and design. See the figure below for examples of inappropriate window replacement.

Examples of Inappropriate Window Replacement



Rear Entrances and Views

The rear entrances of buildings are often times as important as the front entrances. Many buildings in downtown Waterville are accessed from the rear.

- ☞ The rear façade should be clean and well maintained and present a welcoming appearance.
- ☞ Rear entrances should be designed and maintained with the same sensitivity as front entrances.
- ☞ A small sign, display window, and planter boxes can significantly improve the appearance of rear entrances.

Roof Forms

Unlike residential buildings, the roof styles along Downtown Waterville are flat, hidden by extensions of the front wall. If the extension is low it is called a “parapet” or if it is high above the roof plane it is known as a false front.

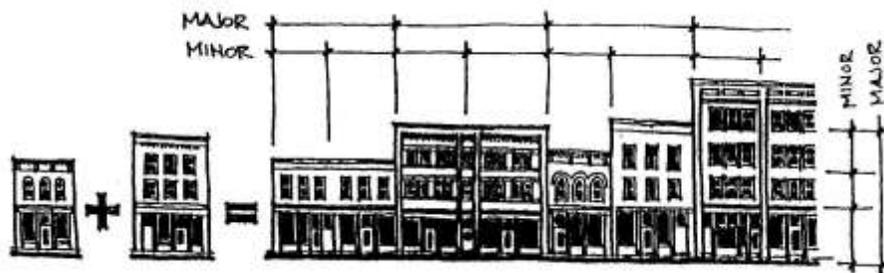


The tops of these walls were often decorated with cornices or decorative details as seen in the picture above.

- ☞ Avoid sloped or residential-type roofs.
- ☞ Bring back the front wall hiding the roof plane and use decorative details that are sensitive to the historic architecture of the building.

Form, Proportion, Rhythm and Setback

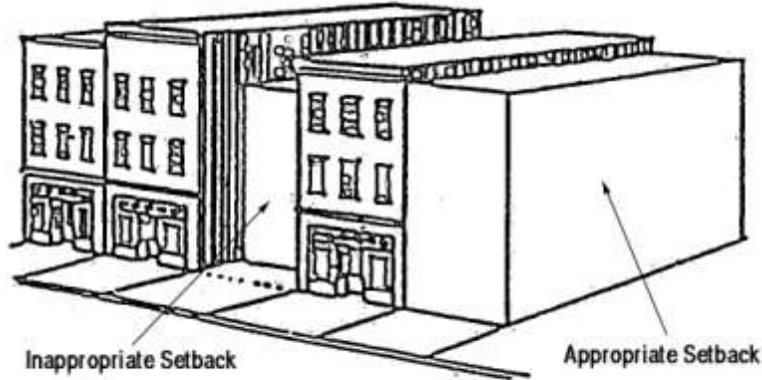
Form, proportion, rhythm, and setback refer to the way that a group of buildings look together. It is important to provide continuity in order to set the tone for the entire streetscape. WMSt encourages you to develop compatibility within the building and with your neighbors without sacrificing the uniqueness of Waterville’s downtown.



The above picture demonstrates major and minor horizontal and vertical rhythms.

Basic Guidelines

- ☞ New and rehabilitation construction projects should conform to the existing buildings and structures.
- ☞ Consider the proportions, width, height, setbacks of adjoining and surrounding buildings and structures.
- ☞ Maintain the alignment of facades along the sidewalk, as well as the rhythm of windows and storefronts.



Proportion of Openings

The figure below demonstrates a series of buildings in which the spacing, size and shape of the windows, both upper and street level openings, are similar from building to building. This rhythm should be observed and maintained among neighboring buildings.



As you can also see from the above figure, storefronts usually have greater openings for pedestrians to have a better view of the merchandise. Maintain this proportion and spacing of openings.

Horizontal Rhythms

A band division can be seen between the storefront and upper facades of the buildings. This may be the awnings, or alignment of windows and window sills. Maintain a clear visual division between the street level and upper floors. WMSt encourages the use of awnings to create a shared streetscape versus a broken affect. See the Awnings section below.



Also note the horizontal sign band that occurs above the storefronts. WMSt strongly encourages business and property owners to respect this horizontal rhythm and locate signage within this band whenever possible. This issue is further discussed in the Building Accents: Signs section of this document.

∞ MATERIALS & COLOR

Property and business owners undertaking new construction and rehabilitation projects in the downtown area should give consideration to the types of materials that would have been used in the late 1800's and early 1900's. The following lists offer suggested uses of materials for specific purposes

Desirable Materials

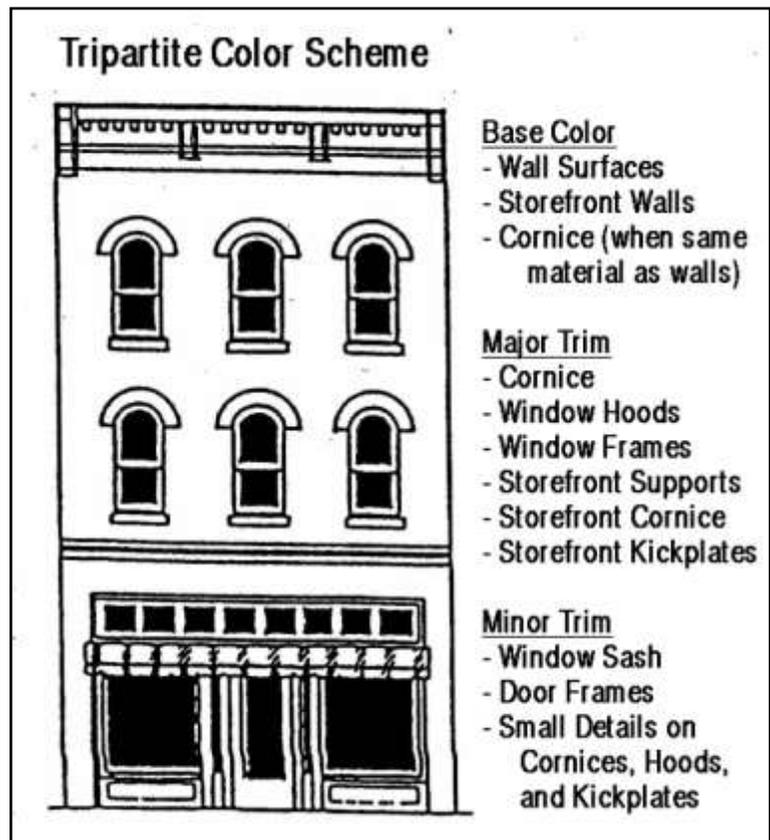
- ∞ Fieldstone or Random Rubble Foundations Appearance Above Grade
- ∞ Brick Masonry (red face) Exterior Walls
- ∞ Cast, Molded or Formed Metal Hardware for Doors and Sign Brackets
- ∞ Weather Resistant Woods for Bulkheads and Framing
- ∞ Fiberglass Replications (Cornices and Lattice Work)
- ∞ Detailed Replications (Bulkheads/kickplates)
- ∞ Structural Glass (for Display Window Rehabilitation)
- ∞ Windows and doorways should be encased with trim, and the use of decorative trim is preferred

Undesirable Materials

- ∞ Vinyl or Aluminum Siding
- ∞ Asphalt, Wood or Fiberglass Bundled Shingles
- ∞ Structural Metal Panels
- ∞ Corrugated Metal Panels
- ∞ Plywood or Plastic Sheathing
- ∞ Reflective or Tinted Glass
- ∞ Detailed Finish Exterior Insulation Systems such as Brick-like Dryvit
- ∞ Vinyl Windows
- ∞ Glass block, heavily tinted or mirrored glass, and manufactured sheathing.

Color Palettes

The colors that you select, whether for walls, trim, signs or awnings, should not clash with neighboring buildings. Many of our local hardware stores



carry samples of historic colors. Avoid the intense hues of a color and avoid using more than one vivid color per building. Contrasting colors which accent architectural details and entrances are encouraged. (See the Tripartite Color Scheme figure above.)

- ☞ Colors of Deep Reds, Browns, Grays and Deep Greens for Walls
- ☞ Colors of Green, White, Creams, and Grays for Trim.

While WMSt encourages the use of the above listed colors, additional color palettes may also be appropriate. Call WMSt at 680-2055 for sample paint palettes.

∞ BUILDING ACCENTS

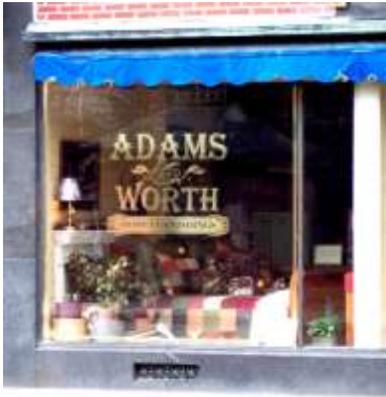
Signs

Signs can go a long way toward enhancing the attractiveness of downtown. The most common types of signs found on downtown establishments are *flush mounted*, *hanging*, and *window signs*.

Flush mounted signs are signboards or individual die-cut letters placed on the face of the building. Many downtown buildings have a recess or horizontal molded band designed to accommodate the sign. Waterville Main Street strongly encourages business and property owners to take advantage of these existing sign bands when mounting new signs.



The L. Tardif Jeweler sign provides an example of individual letters appropriately placed on the existing sign band.



Adams & Worth offers a classic window sign that is not only attractive but also allows for ample display area.

Hanging signs are hung from sidewalk coverings or mounted perpendicular to the sidewalk. These signs are the most visible to both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Window signs are also pedestrian oriented. They are commonly designed so that the majority of a display area is open for pedestrian window-shopping.

Icon or graphic signs are the oldest type of commercial sign. They are a type of sign that illustrate by their shape the nature of the business within. They are the easiest signs to read and are well suited for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

General Sign Guidelines

- ∞ Each sign (including the mounting framework) should complement the building on which it is placed in style, color, and material. Buildings with a recognizable style, such as Greek Revival, Victorian, Art-deco, et al., should use signage of the same style. This can be done through the use of similar decorative features such as columns or brackets.
- ∞ The size of the sign and its letters should be in proportion to the building and the neighboring structures and signs.
- ∞ Signs should set the tone for what the consumer may expect inside and add to the community image as a whole.
- ∞ Signs should provide information simply and legibly, and should be limited to advertising the name of a business and its main goods and services.

- ☞ All signs must comply with the Waterville City sign ordinance. The relevant section of the ordinance appears at the end of this document. A copy of the complete ordinance can be obtained by calling City Hall at 873-7131.

Sign Materials

- ☞ All signs should be made from durable materials.
- ☞ WMSt encourages downtown businesses and property owners to use sandblasted, carved, or painted signs of traditional materials, such as wood, metal, stone, or brick. The use of resin or composite materials that give the appearance of traditional materials may also be used as appropriate.
- ☞ Plastic, vinyl, digital or electronic, and commercially supplied internally lit signs are generally discouraged.
- ☞ Signs may be lighted with overhead incandescent lights with simple metal spun lampshades in colors and materials that complement the building.

Sign Mounting and Placement

- ☞ WMSt strongly encourages the use of perpendicular signage as it is more likely to catch the attention of both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- ☞ Signs should be mounted or erected so they do not obscure the architectural features or openings of a building.
- ☞ WMSt strongly encourages property/business owners to take advantage of pre-existing sign bands.
- ☞ Signs may not be located in the right-of-way, except for sandwich board signs.
- ☞ No sign or portion of a sign shall extend above the cornice line at the top of the building face. Roof top signs are prohibited.



The Children's Book Cellar sign is a great example of an attractive perpendicular sign that is appropriately scaled and positioned. Note the ornamental metal bracket.

Awnings

Provided that they are selected with care, awnings can create an inviting pedestrian feel to the downtown area. Awnings may be retractable or of fixed design, complimenting the features of the building. Internally illuminated fluorescent awnings should be avoided as they are more appropriate to a large city than downtown Waterville.



Jorgensen's awning creates a friendly pedestrian feel and provides shade on sunny days.

General Awning Guidelines

- ☞ The color of the awning should compliment both your own and neighboring buildings and signs in terms of both style and color.
- ☞ Awning shapes should relate to the shape of the façade's architectural elements. The use of traditionally shaped awnings is encouraged when appropriate.
- ☞ Canvas and fire-resistant acrylic are preferred awning materials. Use of metal, plastic, or fiberglass awnings or awnings with "stock" national trademarks is discouraged.
- ☞ The impact of the shaded area on window displays may require interior lighting to be adjusted.
- ☞ Contact Waterville Main Street at 680-2055 for sample awning materials and colors.

☞ CITY OF WATERVILLE SIGN ORDINANCE

Following is the relevant section of the City of Waterville sign ordinance. For a copy of the complete ordinance, please contact City Hall at 873-7131.

4.3.33.C Requirements in commercial and industrial zones

- 4.3.44.C(1) Free-standing signs advertising goods or services offered on the premises of a conforming business, may be built in, or extend into a required setback. The advertising space of such signs shall not exceed twelve (12) feet in height or twenty-five (25) feet in length. No more than three (3) advertising signs, having a combined area of less than three hundred (300) square feet, may be erected per one hundred (100) feet of lot frontage. Both sides of such signs may be used for advertising.
- 4.3.33.C(2) No more than twenty (20) percent of a wall can be devoted to advertising. Signs attached to wall shall not project above the roof or parapet line or extend beyond wall line.
- 4.3.33.C(3) Total area of roof signs shall not be more than twenty (20) percent of the area of the wall directly in line with the fact [face] of the sign. Diagonal signs on roofs shall be limited to twenty (20) percent of the area of the smaller wall.
- 4.3.33.C(4) Existing nonconforming businesses shall be permitted to have signs with the size and lighting subject to the approval of the board of zoning appeals.

U.S. SECRETARY OF INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

While the U.S Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation only apply to buildings listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, they serve as excellent guidelines for rehabilitation of all buildings in our downtown district.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical elements from other buildings shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterized the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

∞ GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Adaptive Re-use – Improvements made to a building that render the structure suitable for a purpose of which it was not originally intended. For example, an old school building redesigned and used for senior housing, or an old mill renovated as a conference center and hotel facility.

Architectural Integrity – Refers to staying true to the original style in which the building was designed. Additions should be complimentary to the architectural style of the original building, but be readily apparent to public view.

Awning – A retractable or permanently affixed device on a storefront or over building entrances or windows in order to provide shelter from light or the elements.

Bulkhead/Kickplate – The wood or metal panel located beneath the display window in a typical storefront.

Canopy – A flat metal and/or wood structure used to shelter pedestrians on the sidewalk that projects out from a storefront at a right angle, and is usually suspended with chains or rods.

Clerestory – A band of windows located at the top of a storefront that allows natural light to enter the store.

Cornice – A projecting molding that crowns the top of a storefront or façade.

Double Hung Windows – A window with two sashes that slide up and down.

Façade – The front face of a building.

Lintel – A horizontal structural element over a window or door opening which supports the wall above.

Parapet – The portion of the wall of a façade that extends above the roof line.

Pediment – A triangular or segmental-curved gable.

Sash – A frame designed to hold the glass in a window.

Sign Board/Fascia – A horizontal panel either of wood or an inset in a brick wall located immediately below the cornice. It is usually an ideal location to place a sign.

Storefront – The first story of a façade of a commercial building, usually having display windows.

Transom Window – A small horizontal window located above a door or display window.

Window Hood – An exterior projecting molding on the top of a window, located in the upper façade.

☞ GENERAL DESIGN RESOURCES

All of the following resources are available in the Waterville Main Street library. Call 680-2055 for more information.

Pregliasco, Janice. Developing Downtown Design Guidelines. Sacramento: California Main Street Program, 1988.

Wagner, Richard. Guiding Design on Main Street: The Professional's Manual for Managing Design. Washington D.C.: National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2000.

Preservation Briefs, published by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington D.C.

- 1) Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings
- 2) Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings
- 4) Roofing for Historic Buildings
- 7) The Preservation of Historic Glazed Architectural Terra Cotta
- 8) Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on Historic Buildings
- 9) The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows
- 10) Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork
- 11) Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts
- 12) The Preservation of Historic Pigmented Structural Glass
- 13) The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows
- 14) New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns
- 15) Preservation of Historic Concrete: Problems and General Approaches
- 18) Rehabilitating Interiors in Historic Buildings
- 21) Repairing Historic Flat Plaster – Walls and Ceilings
- 23) Preserving Historic Ornamental Plaster
- 24) Heating, Ventilating, and Cooling Historic Buildings: Problems and Recommended Approaches
- 27) The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron
- 29) The Repair, Replacement, and Maintenance of Historic Slate Roofs
- 30) The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs
- 34) Applied Decoration for Historic Interiors: Preserving Composition Ornament
- 37) Appropriate Methods for Reducing Lead-Paint Hazards in Historic Housing
- 38) Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry

Preservation Tech Notes, published by U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington D.C.

- ☞ WINDOWS Number 9) Interior Storm Windows: Magnetic Seal
- ☞ EXTERIOR WOODWORK Number 1) Proper Painting and Surface Preparation
- ☞ METALS Number 1) Conserving Outdoor Bronze Sculpture