

AGENDA ITEM
HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW COMMISSION
MEETING DATE – MAY 24, 2018
BUSINESS ITEMS

TO : Historic Preservation Review Commission

SUBJECT : **DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN**
GUIDELINES: DISCUSSION TOPICS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City is updating the Design Guidelines within the Downtown Historic Conservation Plan (DHCP) to provide user-friendly guidelines for the treatment of historic properties, alterations to non-historic buildings, and the design of new infill structures within the historic district, as well as to update design review procedures. A public review draft of the guidelines was released in April, 2018 and is currently being revised based upon public comment and commissioner comments.

The discussion topics provided for this meeting are a continuation of the April 24, 2018 presentation of draft design guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss the topics of balconies; awnings, galleries and canopies; vinyl windows and residential additions.

BACKGROUND:

The design guidelines for the Downtown Historic District were established in 1990 with the adoption of the DHCP. Opportunities to improve the downtown design guidelines have been identified by staff, the HPRC, and community members. The updated design guidelines will ensure consistency in the design review process, reinforce the character of the historic district, and provide the basis for clear and fair decision-making in the district.

In April, 2018 the City released the public review draft of the guideline; the City also sent postcards to property owners and residents of the Downtown Historic District, issued a press release, advertised on social media and shared the news through the City Manager's memorandum. An open house was held on April 25, 2018 to share the guidelines and obtain feedback.

The draft guidelines are currently being revised in preparation for a public hearing in June. Information relating to the Downtown Historic District Design Guidelines is available to the public on the project webpage, www.ci.benicia.ca.us/downtowndesign.

GENERAL PLAN:

Goal 3.1: Maintain and enhance Benicia's historic character

- Policy 3.1.4 Promote the preservation and enhancement of historic neighborhoods, commercial areas and governmental districts.
- Policy 3.1.5 Permit new development, remodeling and building renovation in historic districts when consistent with the policies of the applicable Historic Conservation Plan.

INFORMATION

The HPRC heard a presentation from the City's consultant, Winter & Co., at its April 24, 2018 meeting. Following the presentation, commissioners provided feedback and initiated a discussion of specific topics within the guidelines.

The consultant had prepared discussion topics in the interested of gauging public and HPRC preferences. However, due to the length of the meeting, the discussion topics were postponed to the May 24, 2018 meeting.

The discussion topics include:

- Balconies
- Awnings, Galleries and Canopies
- Vinyl Windows
- Residential Additions

Feedback from the HPRC's continued discussion of the topic areas outlined above will be reviewed and incorporated into the final draft of the design guidelines.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Discussion questions

For more information contact: Suzanne Thorsen, Principal Planner

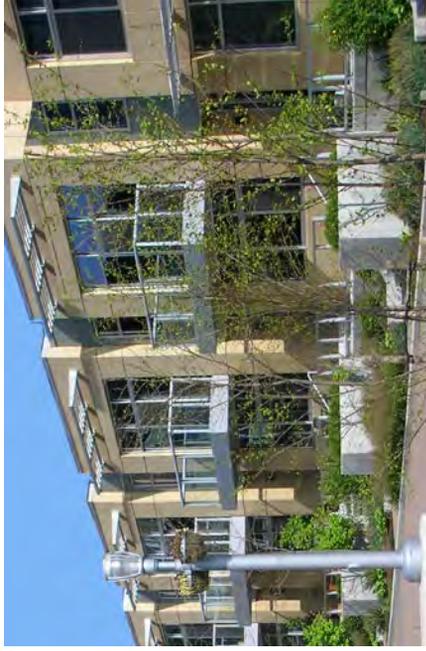
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Discussion Questions

Balconies



Minimize the appearance of a balcony on a new building.

- A small balcony is appropriate on the front of a new building if it is modest in size.
- To protect privacy, balconies are inappropriate on the side and rear building face.

Awnings, Galleries and Canopies

AWNINGS, GALLERIES AND CANOPIES

Traditionally, awnings and galleries were noteworthy features on commercial buildings, and their continued use is encouraged. Galleries were the most prominent feature along First Street at the turn-of-the-century. Operable awnings also occurred. These features helped regulate internal climatic conditions and to keep the walkway clear. Today, these features provide a similar function and are typically simple in detail, color and design. Canopies didn't appear in early Benicia, but they are appropriate today since the roof feature is a close cousin to the traditional arcade. The exception is the support system. The design guidelines that follow provide information about awnings, galleries and canopies themselves; information about signs on awnings and canopies is provided in Chapter 6.



Figure 39. Design an awning, gallery or canopy to be in character and proportion to the building.

- > Plastic, vinyl or metal awnings are discouraged.
- > The support system for a canopy should be simple in design.
- > Select awnings that are complementary to the style and color of adjacent storefronts, particularly on a single building with multiple storefronts.
- > It is inappropriate to add a gallery to an existing historic building where it didn't exist before.
- > A new gallery, canopy or awning should align with similar features along the street.
- > A new gallery should be simple in design.

2.38 Minimize damage to historic materials when mounting canopies and awnings.

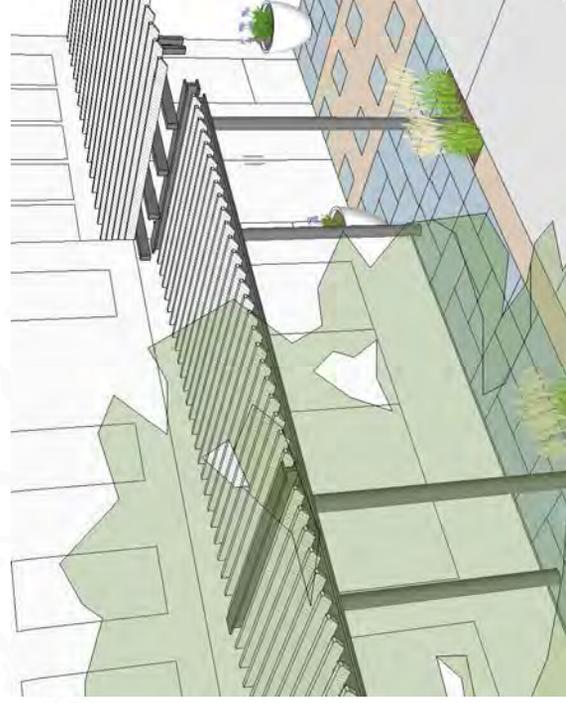
Avoid anchoring directly into architectural details when feasible.



Figure 40. Design an awning or canopy to remain a subordinate feature on the façade.

2.37 Design an awning, gallery or canopy to be in character and proportion to the building.

- > Design an awning or canopy to fit in the opening it covers.
- > Choose colors that are compatible with the façade. Solid colors are encouraged.
- > Awnings and canopies should not hide a building façade, distort its proportions, or cover architectural features.
- > Choose a simple shape. A shed shape is preferred. Avoid shingle, mansard or arch-shaped forms.
- > Design an awning or canopy to remain a subordinate feature on the façade.
- > Do not internally illuminate or backlight an awning.



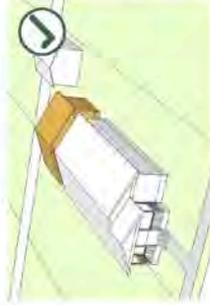
Vinyl Windows



Residential Additions

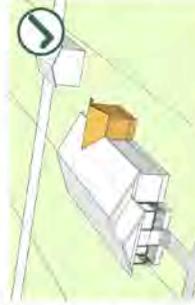
Rear Addition with Connector

- > Addition is placed to the rear of the structure, minimizing its visibility from the street
- > Addition is separated with a connector to distinguish it from the historic structure
- > Roof pitch matches historic building and eave line is maintained



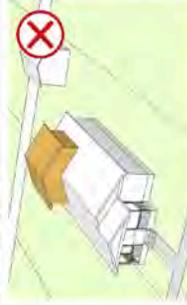
Side Addition Set Back from Front Façade

- > Addition is not taller than the historic building
- > Addition is set back from the front wall of the historic building
- > Addition is attached to only one rear wall and does not require demolition of any portion of the building beyond the location to which it is connected



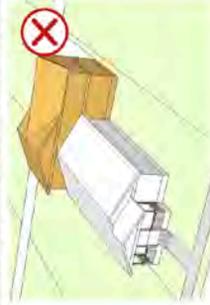
Rooftop Addition Inset from Historic Walls

- > Roof pitch matches that of historic building, but rooftop additions are not appropriate in Benicia



Two-Story Addition Offset from Historic Walls in "L-Form"

- > Height overwhelms historic building
- > Does not maintain corners of historic structure



NEW RESIDENTIAL ADDITIONS

This section provides design guidelines for designing compatible additions to historic buildings. An addition should be compatible with the primary structure and not detract from one's ability to interpret its historic character. Guidelines regarding new construction in Chapter 4 also apply to new additions.

3.76 An addition should not result in the extensive removal of historic materials and should not damage or destroy significant original architectural features of the house.

3.77 Place an addition at the rear of a building or set it back from the front to minimize the visual impact on the historic building.

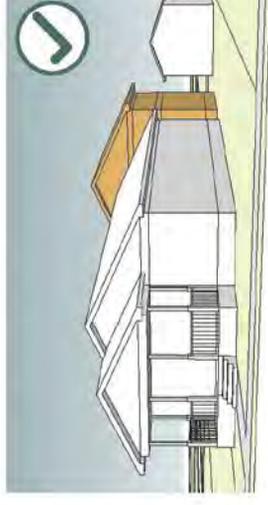
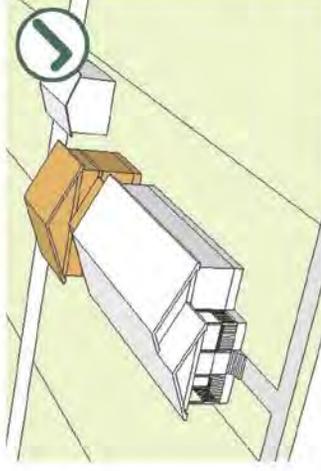
- > If a rear addition is not feasible, an addition on the secondary façade is acceptable when it is designed to complement the original building without overpowering it.
- > Where an addition is to be placed on a secondary façade, set it back from the primary façade a minimum of 15' and design it to be lower in height than the historic building.

Discuss Next Slide ½-story and 2-story Additions to 1-story building

Residential Additions

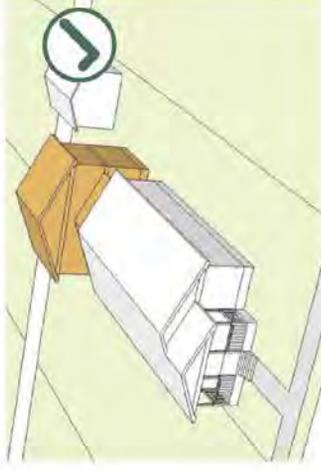
1.5-Story Addition with Connector and Walls Aligned with Historic Walls

- › Roof pitch matches historic building
- › Eave line maintained
- › Width of historic building is maintained
- › Maintains all corners of historic structure



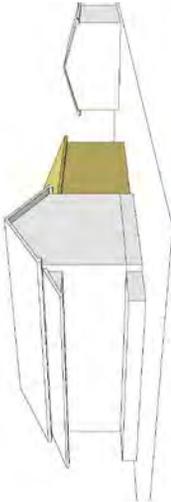
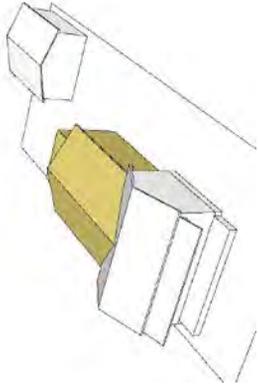
Two-Story Addition with Connector and Walls Aligned with Historic Walls

- › Roof pitch matches historic building
- › Eave line maintained
- › Width of historic building is maintained
- › Maintains all corners of historic structure

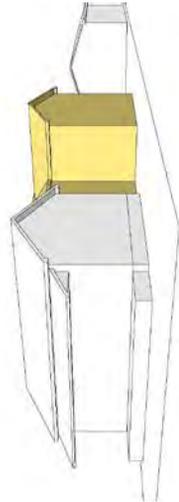
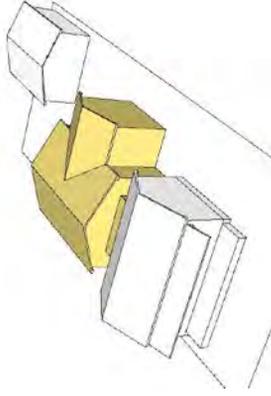


Residential Additions

1-story Addition Without Connector



1.5-story Addition With Small 1-story Connector



1.5-story Addition

