



CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS

**HISTORIC
URBAN
DESIGN
GUIDELINES**

Adopted by Laredo City Council,
March 3, 1997

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Introduction

INTRODUCTION

These design guidelines are intended to provide guidance for the historic preservation and development in Laredo's historic districts. These guidelines have been developed for the San Agustín, the Old Mercado and the proposed Jarvis Plaza historic districts.

What are design guidelines?

Design guidelines are community policy about design. They provide a common basis for making decisions about design which may affect individual properties or the overall character of a district. However, they only guide the approach to certain design solutions and do not dictate solutions. They should define a range of appropriate responses to a variety of specific design issues. For example, the guidelines suggest that a new building should have "a cap" at the top, similar to the cornices used traditionally, but they do not dictate the design or style of this feature. Guidelines also identify some design approaches that are inappropriate in this context. For example, the guidelines state that sandblasting masonry is prohibited because it will damage the historic protective finish of the material.

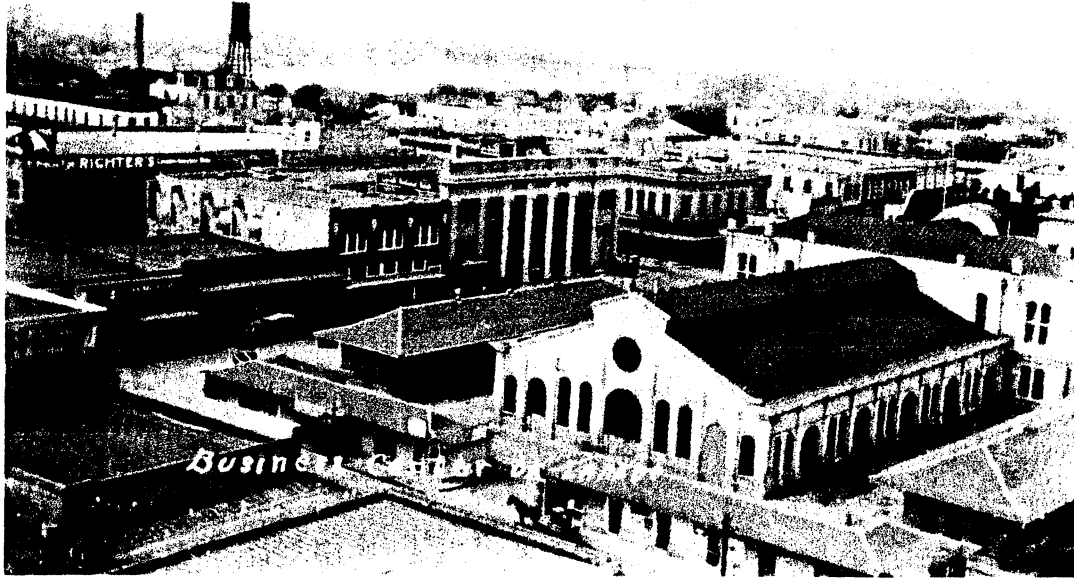
Why have design guidelines?

The purpose for these guidelines is to inform the community about the design policies the city holds for the districts. They indicate an approach to design that will help sustain the character of the districts. Therefore, the intent is to provide information that property owners may use in making decisions about their buildings.

"Too much of the architectural heritage has been lost and is still being lost through time, development, and sheer neglect. Frontiers tend to be forward, not backward looking places. Only recently have we begun to understand the priceless artifacts bequeathed to us, and to realize that the past, as well as the future, holds keys to economic benefit. From ancient church ruins to fine old houses, from store buildings to ravaged battle sites, all these places hold vast meaning to us. They will help tell us what we were, and thus, what we are and hope to be."

*T.R. Fehrenbach,
from the Foreword of A Shared Experience*

Introduction



Laredo's Business Center, early 1930's

The guidelines also provide the city, through the Historic District/Landmark Board a basis for making informed, consistent decisions about design.

The scope of guidelines

The guidelines address all projects in the districts requiring Board action. The guidelines are intended to aid in preservation of historic buildings within the districts, and to assure that new construction is compatible with the character of the community. They apply to all projects, both those requiring city review and those that do not.

Note that the guidelines take effect only when a project is initiated by a property owner or tenant, either to alter an existing structure or to construct a new one. The guidelines do not require owners or tenants to initiate repairs, and there is no deadline by which properties must come into "compliance", as the case in some regulations. However, incentives should be developed by the city to encourage property owners to make improvements.

Note that regulations also may affect design in the Historic districts, including the following:

- The Laredo Land Development Code, including sign regulations.
- The Uniform Building Code.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Federal income tax credits for certified rehabilitation of historic buildings.
- Recorded Texas Historic Landmark reviews.

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Goals for design review in San Agustín and Old Market Square Historic Districts

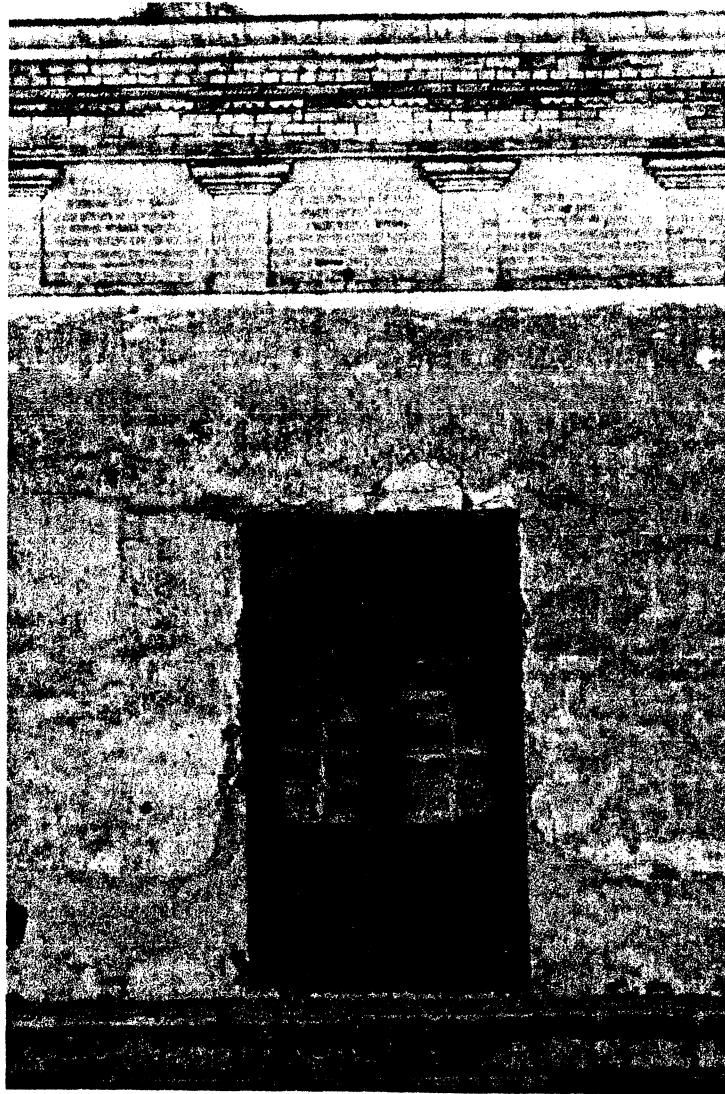
In general, the intended result of design review is to preserve the historic resources for the districts and to ensure that new construction is in character with the important historic fabric in both scale and appearance. Therefore the City endorses the following design goals for the districts:

Goals for the treatment of historic properties:

- To preserve the integrity of each individual historic structure, by preserving its character defining features and by avoiding alterations that would remove or obscure its historic character.
- To enhance the perception of the historic character of the historic structures, by restoring damaged historic features and reconstructing missing ones (where adequate documentation exists of what was there historically) and by removing non-contributing alterations.
- To preserve and enhance one's ability to perceive a sense of time and place in the district during its period of significance.

Goals for design of buildings and alterations of non-contributing structures:

It is not the intent to freeze the districts in time, to make everything new appear as though it comes from the period of historic significance. The districts have seen change already, and can continue to change, if that change does not impede one's ability to interpret the historic character of the districts.



Herrera-Benavides Residence

Introduction

- The goal is to accommodate change, in a manner that is compatible with the historic character of the districts during their period of significance, without imitating it.

Change should be reflected in subtle ways, with differences in detail, such as scale and materials, rather than in broad-scale features. New construction should be similar to that seen historically in overall mass, scale, materials, and treatment of openings.

General goals for the districts:

- To protect the integrity of the historic districts.
- To protect the sense of time and place once conveyed by the historic buildings as a collection.
- To protect a sense of identity for the districts.
- To protect property values and investments.
- To minimize negative impacts on adjacent properties from inappropriate development.
- To encourage pedestrian activity.
- To convey a sense of human scale.

The Historic District/Landmark Board will consider how each design proposal helps to meet these goals.

How the guidelines are organized:

The design guidelines are organized in six chapters:

Chapter 1: Chapter One is an overview.

Chapter 2: The guidelines that apply to all projects, including rehabilitation and new construction. This provides a basis for

Introduction

many of the guidelines that follow, and should be read by all users.

Chapter 3: Chapter Three presents design guidelines that apply to all historic properties in the districts.

Chapter 4: Chapter Four provides design guidelines for all new construction in the districts.

Chapter 5: Chapter 5 includes guidelines for all new signs and alterations to existing signs in the districts.

Chapter 6: Recommendations.

The format for the guidelines

The design guidelines in this document typically have four components:

- The first element is a policy statement, which describes a desired state or condition of the design element being discussed.
- This is followed by the design guideline statement itself, which is typically performance oriented, describing a desired design treatment.
- The guideline statement is followed by supplementary information, which may include additional requirements, or may provide an expanded explanation.
- Finally, an illustration may be provided, to clarify the intent of the guideline.

It is important that all elements of the design guidelines constitute the material upon which the Board will make its determination of the appropriateness of a proposed project.

Introduction

PROPOSED WORK	USE THESE CHAPTERS						Recommendations
	Introduction	Historic Overview	Design Guidelines for All Projects	Design Guidelines for Historic Properties	Design Guidelines for New Construction	Design Guidelines for Signs	
Renovate or alter a historic property	×	×	×	×			×
Renovate or alter a non-historic property	×	×	×	×			×
Add onto a historic property	×	×	×	×			×
Add onto a non-historic property	×	×	×		×		
Construct new building	×	×	×		×		
Alter an existing or install a new sign	×	×				×	
Site improvement	×	×	×				×

**Which design guidelines apply to your project?
Use the chart above to identify the section you should use.**

How to use the guidelines

Property owners, real estate agents, tenants and architects should use the guideline when beginning projects in the districts. This will help establish an appropriate direction for the design. For projects subject to review, applicants should refer to the guidelines at the outset, to avoid planning efforts that may prove inappropriate.

Applicants also are encouraged to apply the guidelines to projects not subject to review. These recommendations will result in designs that are cost effective and yield a positive image for the property.

The guidelines will be used in two formal ways.

- First the City Staff will use the guidelines when advising property owners and in administrative review.
- Second the Historic District/Landmark Board will use the guidelines when considering the issuance of an Order of the Board or when reviewing a project for comment.

The document will "guide" their decision, but not dictate it. In general, they will seek to determine if an adequate number of the relevant guidelines have been reasonably met. However, there is no set number of guidelines that must be met to gain approval. Because each project has special circumstances that require even consideration, the Board makes its determination on a case-by-case basis. In making its determination, the Board's overall concern is that the integrity of individual historic structures be preserved and that the overall character of the district be protected.

Introduction

Recommended submittal documents

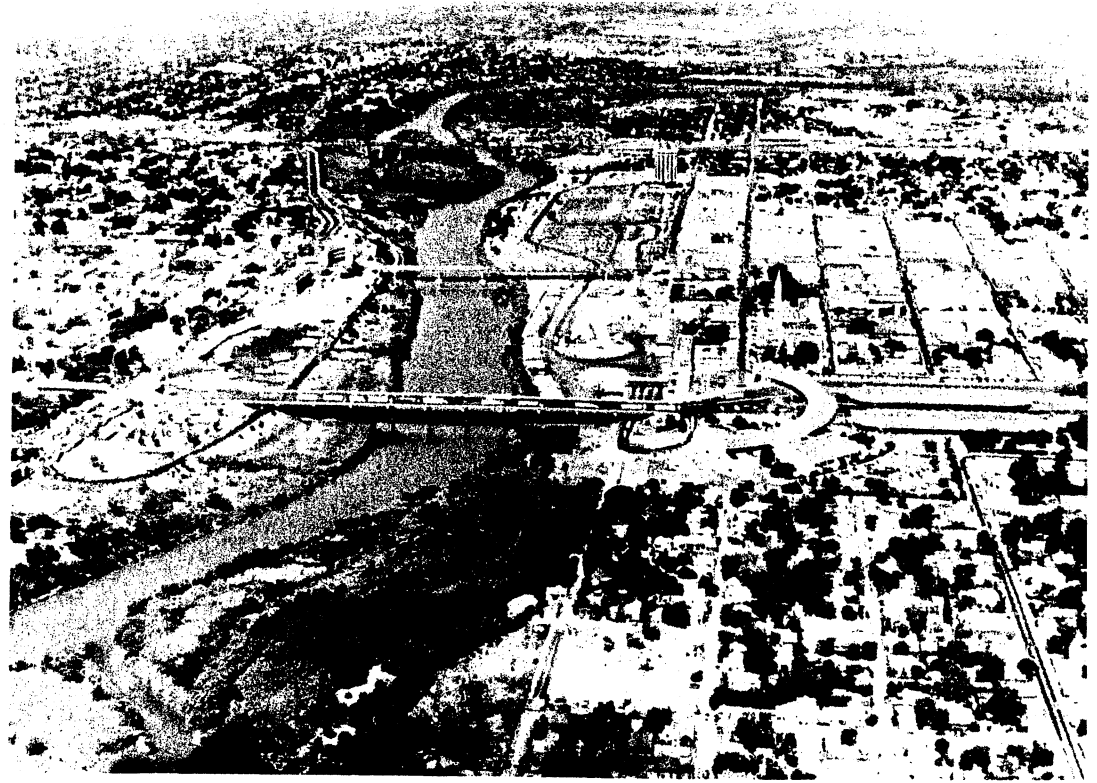
Adequate documentation is essential to provide a complete understanding of the work proposed. Applicants are encouraged, and may be required, to submit the following documentation:

- Photographs of the existing conditions (existing and historic, if applicable).
- Elevations.
- Site plan.
- Roof plan.
- Material samples.
- Color samples.
- Statement of how the project meets the guidelines.

PURPOSE

The City of Laredo is internationally known for its beauty, friendliness, historical significance and international border setting. It is a noteworthy example of the confluence of diverse cultures in the New World. Laredo's unique qualities have proven increasingly attractive to residents, business interests and tourists.

As a matter of public policy the City aims to preserve, enhance, and perpetuate those aspects of the city and the Rio Grande having historical, cultural, architectural and archaeological merit. Such preservation promotes and protects the health, safety, prosperity, education, comfort, and general welfare of the people living in and visiting Laredo. Preservation of the city's past provides continuity of the city's heritage.



Los Dos Laredos

Introduction

More specifically, these historic preservation guidelines have been designed to achieve the following goals:

1. To preserve, protect and enhance historically, architecturally, archaeologically significant sites and structures which impart a distinct aspect to the city and serve as visible reminders of the city's culture and heritage.
2. To promote the economic prosperity and welfare of the community by conserving the value of landmark buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of such property within the historic districts of the city.
3. To recognize and protect the unique character and qualities of the Rio Grande its integral relationship to the City's downtown core.
4. To strengthen civic pride through historic district preservation and neighborhood conservation.
5. To provide a review process for the appropriate preservation and development of important cultural, architectural and historical resources.
6. To ensure the harmonious, orderly, and efficient growth and development of the city.
7. To maintain a generally harmonious outward appearance of both historic and modern structures through complementary scale, form, color, proportion, texture, material.

**Chapter 1:
Historic Overview**

Chapter 1:

Historic Overview

A BRIEF HISTORY OF LAREDO

Spanish Colonization

1690 to 1810

- 1745 Jacinto de León discovered highway which passed near the future site of Laredo. It came to be known as *El Paso de Jacinto* also known as *El Paso de los Indios*.
- 1755 Laredo founded by Captain Tomás Sánchez who, with three families, received permission to settle on 15 leagues of land which were in close proximity to an Indian settlement.
- 1757 A Spanish inspection described El Paso de Jacinto as the crossing point. Two additional roads were identified, one the *Camino Real* to San Antonio de Bexar, the other *Camino Real* to Santiago de la Monclova, the capital of Coahuila.
- 1767 The settlement designated as Villa de San Agustín de Laredo. "*Plaza Mayor*" was laid out. Land concessions adjacent to the river were granted based on merit. The land adjoining the main plaza on the east and west sides were designated for a church, the captain's house and the jailhouse. Town lots were assigned for public and private buildings.
- 1789 First census reported a church built of stone recently constructed and a total of 85 dwellings not counting those of the soldiers.

The Texas Republic and the Republic of the Rio Grande

1836 to 1845

- 1836 Republic of Texas won its independence from Mexico.
- 1840 Creation of the Republic of the Rio Grande.
- 1845 Texas annexed by the United States.



1885 Sanborn Map

Chapter 1: Historic Overview



1900 Sanborn Map

- 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo officially established the Rio Grande River as the border between the United States and Mexico. Laredo became part of the United States. People who wanted to retain their Mexican citizenship crossed the river and established their residences on Mexican territory. The area on the south side of the river that used to be a part of Laredo became known as Nuevo Laredo.
- 1849 The United States Army established the military Fort McIntosh.
- 1850 The city boundaries were changed from one square mile set in 1848 to the original Spanish boundaries of four square leagues.
- 1853 Map indicates the city plan consisted of 20 blocks. City of Laredo map revealed 3 roads leading from Laredo.
- 1860's San Agustín Plaza was laid out. The State Legislature authorized the city to sell vacant *porciones* granted by the Royal Charter of 1767 by "fee simple". Shortly after the American Civil War the original street names (Calle Real, Calle San Francisco, Calle San José, Calle del García, and Calle Barrilero) were changed by Mayor Samuel Jarvis using names of Mexican and American heroes.
- 1865 Fort McIntosh reoccupied after the Civil War.

From Town to City

1881 to 1900

- 1881 A railroad from San Antonio to Laredo was built. Population tripled as immigrants from Germany, France, Ireland, Italy, Scandinavia and all parts of the U.S. moved to Laredo seeking business opportunities.
- 1882 First courthouse completed.

Chapter 1: Historic Overview

- 1883-84 The City Hall incorporating a market house and performing arts theater was constructed.
- 1885 The Plaza bounded by Salinas Avenue, Juárez Avenue, Matamoros Street and Farragut Street, was developed sometime between 1890 and 1930. The plaza became known as Jarvis Plaza in circa 1890. Market Plaza Public Square was developed.
- 1888 An ordinance dedicated certain blocks for public cemeteries, parks and plaza, and school purposes.
- 1889 First electric street car west of the Mississippi and a steel bridge connection Laredo to Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. The First International Bridge was built.
- 1890 The city map of Laredo showed a town plan with 23 plazas. The map designated approximately 60 acres as a park which was never developed as a park, but became the site of Martin High School.
- late 1800's San Agustín Plaza developed into a garden plaza, including trees, landscaping, walks, benches and kiosk in a French Renaissance Style. The streets were paved with compacted stone.
- 1902 The original Church Plaza's name changed to Martin Plaza.
- 1909 A second courthouse built after the first courthouse was destroyed by a fire.

Economic Boom

1900 to 1929

1910-1920 The Mexican Revolution brought a large influx of immigrants into Laredo. Many of these immigrants found jobs in the booming industries of coal mining, onion agriculture and later in the gas and oil industry. This led to an economic boom in the early 1920's which



1925 Sanborn Map

Chapter 1: Historic Overview



1931 Sanborn Map

resulted in new development in the downtown districts.

- 1921 The railroad bridge was destroyed by fire.
- 1922 A reinforced concrete railroad bridge was erected.
- 1929 The Courthouse moved across the street into the remodeled Courthouse Annex.

Great Depression, War and Recovery

1930 to 1945

- 1931 Public Square's name changed to Bruni Plaza. Shortly thereafter, the Spanish Colonial Revival style arches, a ceramic tile fountain and hemisphere were added.
- 1931 The School Plaza bounded by Farragut and Matamoros, Santa Ursula and San Darío Avenues was developed. The name changed to Central School Plaza.
- 1934 Classical Revival Style bandstand and benches installed in San Agustín Plaza.

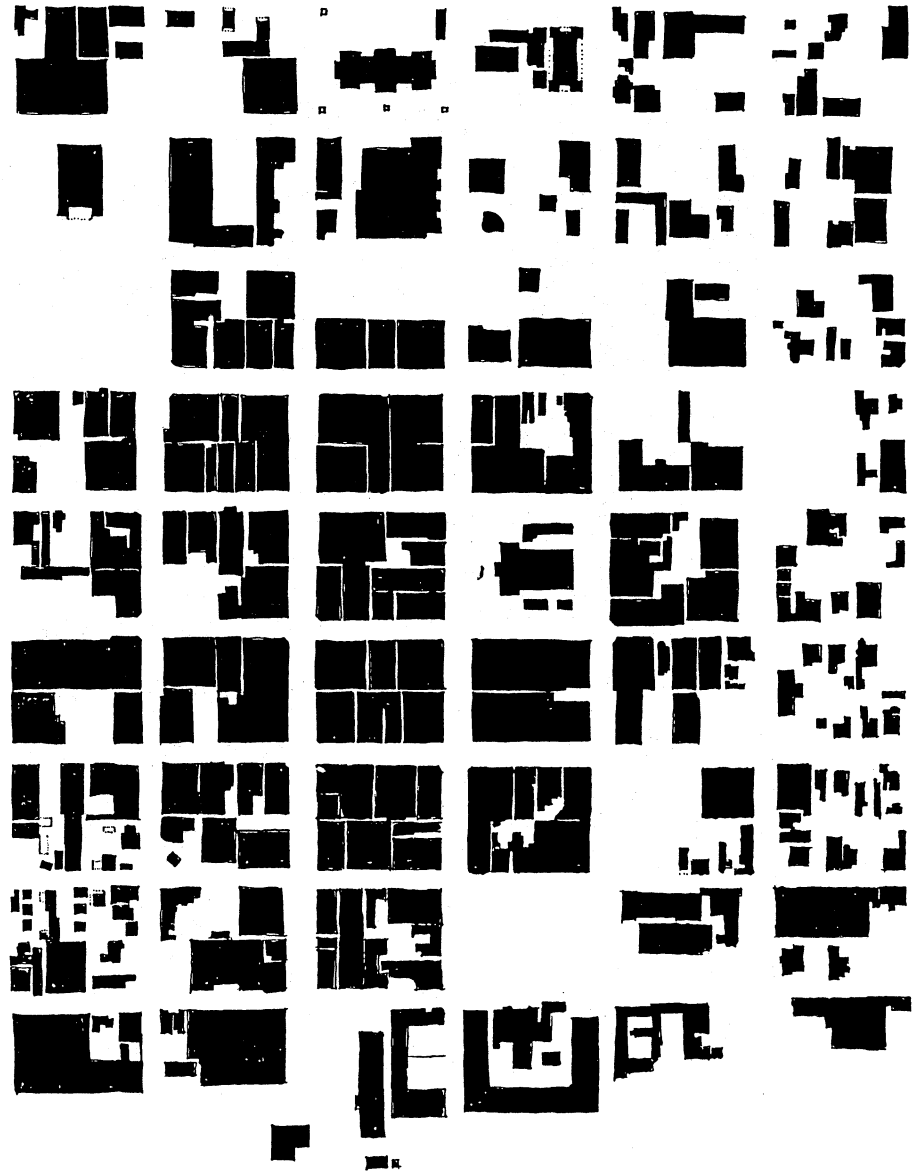
Modern Day Laredo

1954-Present

- 1954 A devastating flood swept away the railroad bridge and the international bridge.
- 1955 The Laredo Historical Society was founded to promote the preservation of Laredo's history. The Republic of the Rio Grande Museum was established.
- 1973 Villa de San Agustín designated a National Register District.
- 1974 City designated the local historic district of "Villa de San Agustín".
- 1975 Fort McIntosh designated a National Register District.
- 1979 Webb County Historical Commission established.
- 1980 The Laredo Historical Society became the Webb County

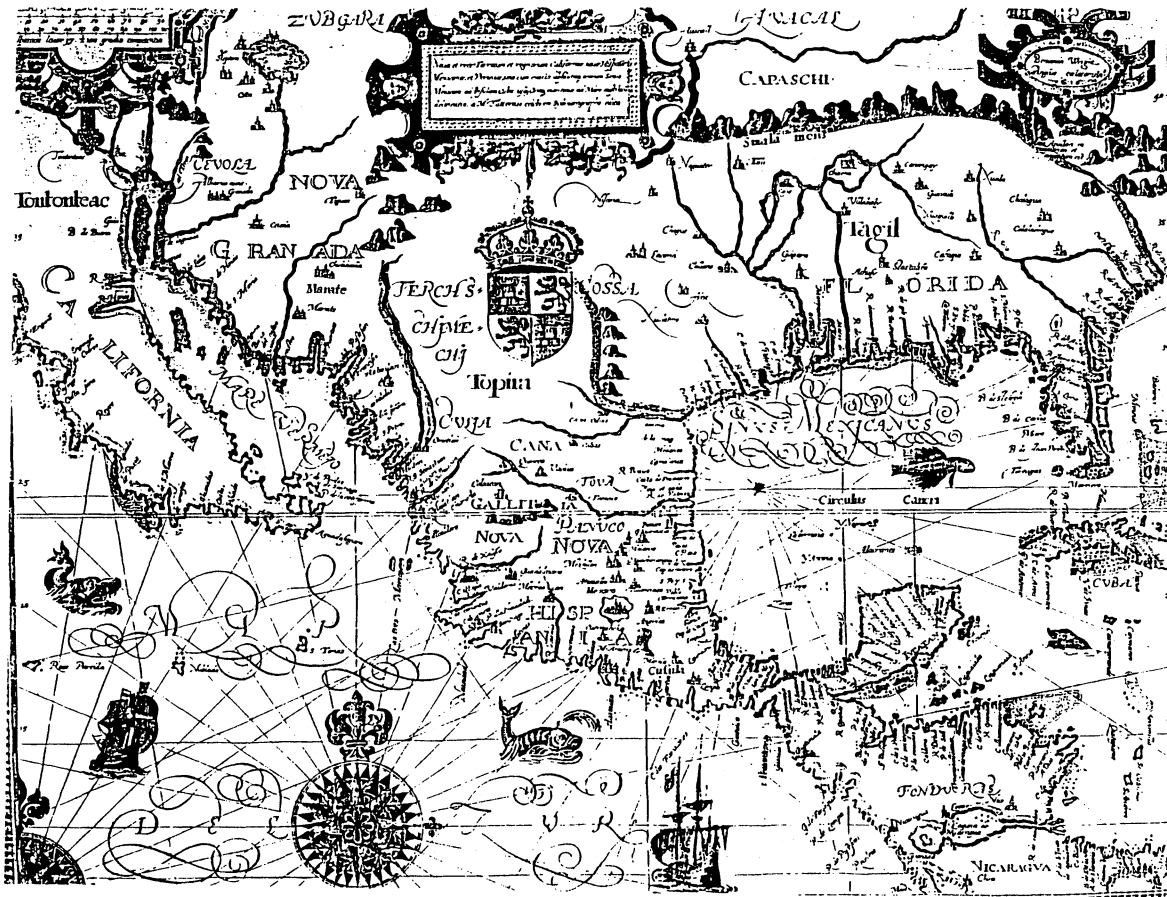
Chapter 1: Historic Overview

- Heritage Foundation
- 1982 Azteca Economic Development and Historic Preservation Corporation was founded to foster neighborhood revitalization.
- 1985 The Mercado and St. Peter's areas were designated as local historic districts.
- 1990 Martin Plaza's name was changed to its original name, San Agustín Plaza.
- 1990 Los Caminos Del Rio Heritage Project was established to promote the development of the international river corridor between Brownsville/Matamoros and Laredo/Nuevo Laredo.
- 1991 The Comprehensive Plan of Laredo adopted.
- 1994 The Webb County Heritage Foundation restored the Republic of the Rio Grande Museum building.
- 1995 The Webb County Archaeological Society was formed to support the scientific investigation of archaeological resources.
- 1996 City of Laredo adopted a Historic Preservation Plan.



1980's

Chapter 1: Historic Overview



1616 Map

LAREDO'S SIGNIFICANCE

Laredo's historic downtown core with the various historic districts is a unique and important asset which could be a catalyst to expand and develop a viable international visitor and convention tourism industry.

- Laredo has enough historic resources intact in the downtown core to create a real city ambiance capable of attracting major conventions as well as supporting a strong tourist and commercial shopping business. Laredo's downtown core across the river from Nuevo Laredo's downtown core adds the potential of attracting a multi-national convention experience unique among American cities.
- The Mexican and United States cultural resources create a synergetic cultural experience in essentially a single metropolitan area unlike any other in the United States borders. We are convinced the reason this occurs here is that both cities have equally dynamic and stable historic downtown cores.
- These qualities must be enhanced and preserved. The "Streets of Laredo" are legendary in terms of history and as symbols of a rich cultural past. These streets should be preserved and enhanced by carefully restoring and rehabilitating the rich mixture of architectural and cultural resources.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS

The downtown core's Historic Districts are situated adjacent to each other and have different and unique qualities which make them accessible and friendly to pedestrians and are easily linked. There are other potential historic districts which should also be

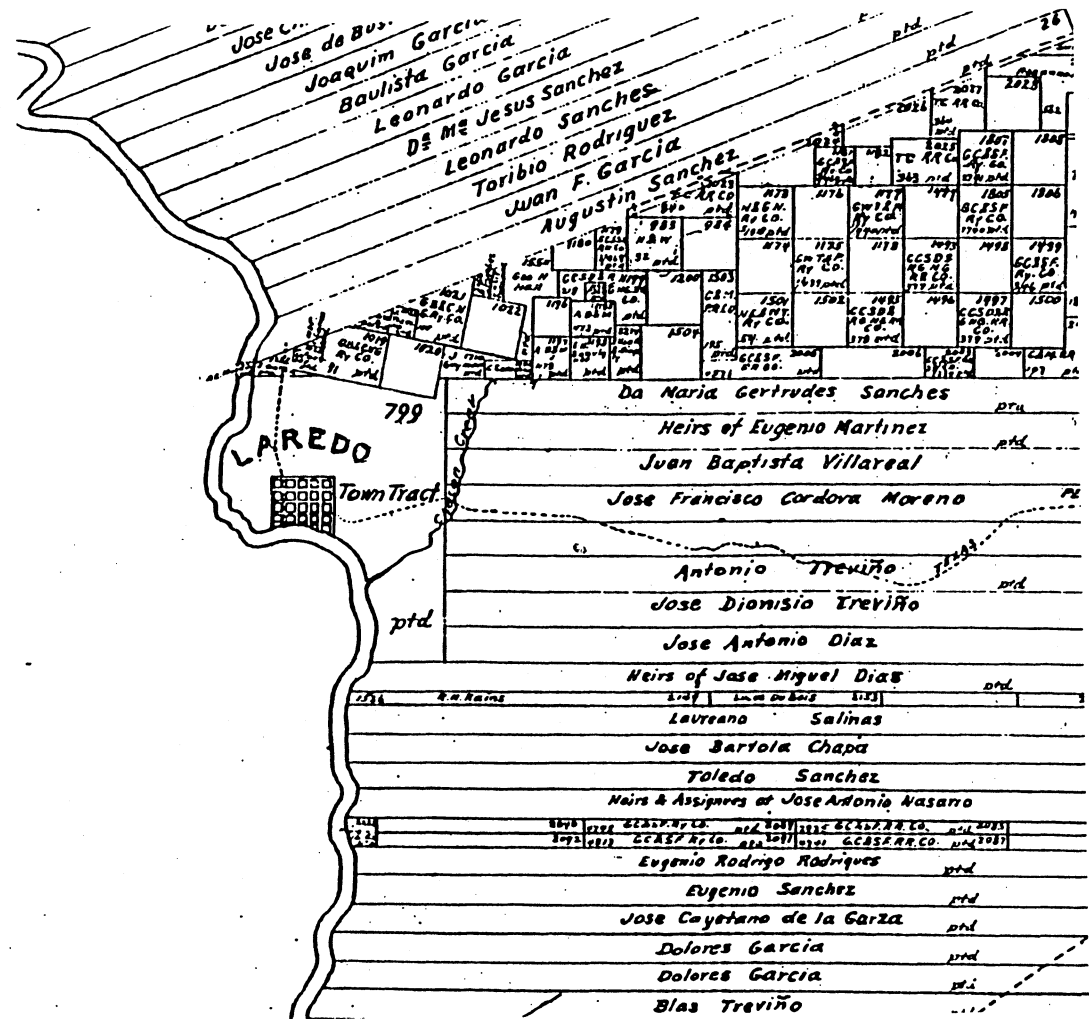
Chapter 1: Historic Overview

considered in these guidelines. These guidelines should also be applicable to those districts.

LINKAGES

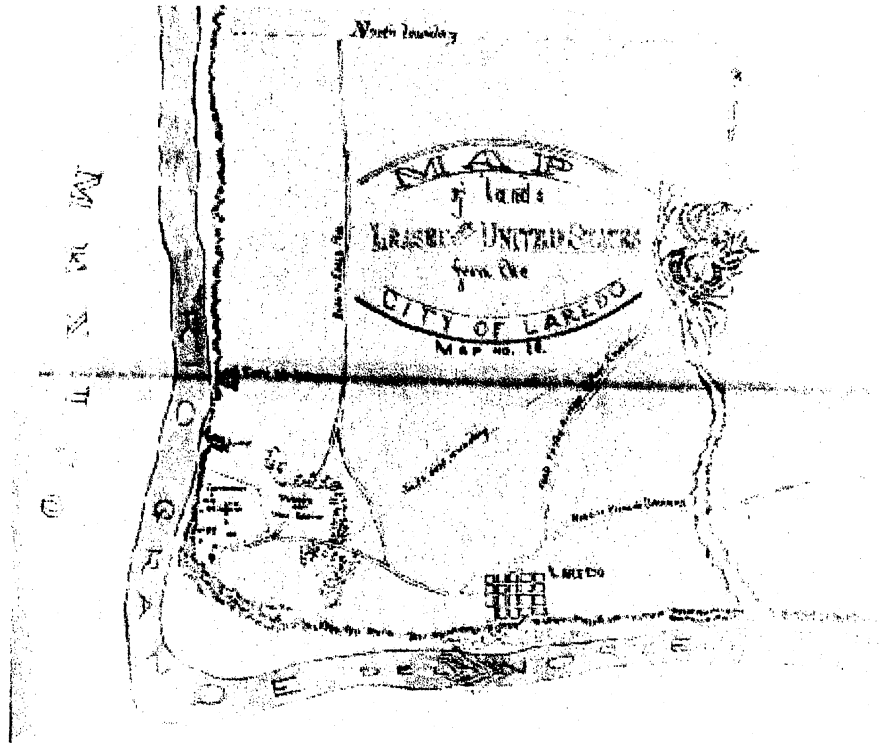
Laredo the Place

The layout of Laredo is similar to the town plots of other villas in the border region. In Laredo the site for the public square or plaza was selected and two streets were laid out from the corners of the plaza in each direction. This plan basically conformed to the "Leyes de las Indias" which, by the time Laredo was laid out was so well recognized as the method for laying out a town, that it was easily adhered to in the surveying and plotting of a new villa. The small population of the villa dictated a scaled down villa plan. The plaza was laid out 100 varas x 80 varas in size and the streets were 10 varas wide. Buildings were built to the street property line. The narrow street grid and geometry created the enduring scale apparent in the historic districts today. Although Laredo's urban ambiance developed from the fortified Moorish influenced type house with narrow sidewalks, it was and continues to be a pedestrian city. The town grid, scale of the streets, narrow sidewalks, topography, style of buildings, materials, landscape, and color of the buildings create a cultural landscape uniquely Laredo. These perceptual linkages reinforce the physical paths which weave through the historic districts. Streets connect the historic fabric of the city in a variety of meaningful ways. This man made cityscape links over two hundred years of architectural and cultural response to this natural place on the river bend. Just as the Spanish "Royal Commission to the Colonies of Nuevo Santander" was impressed with the selection of the site for the Villa de Laredo, the site of the historic districts continues to be the fabric which binds the



1900's Webb County Map showing porciones

Chapter 1: Historic Overview



Early 19th Century map of lands leased to the United States

"place". The right angle bend of the river, Zacate Creek and the 45 degree bend in the river to the southeast make the "natural place" and the "man made place" come together into Laredo.

The Existing Condition

Late nineteenth century and twentieth century man-made interventions have eroded the visual and physical linkages that originally unified the place on the river. The railroad and I.H.35 have divided the historic urban place into three separate areas. The river has been isolated from the city. These linkages made Laredo unique.

The River's Edge

Except for Los Dos Laredos Park, the City has not developed the banks of the Rio Grande River (Rio Bravo del Norte) to its full potential. It is one of the most important historic natural resources of the city and should be preserved, nurtured and enhanced. Currently, The Comprehensive Plan of Laredo proposes a green belt of parks on both sides of the river. This Plan should be supported at all levels of government on both sides of the border.

The Rio Grande

The Rio Grande is a major North American river that originates in the Rockies and transverses New Mexico and the border between Mexico and the United States before emptying into the Gulf of Mexico. It is a river that must be respected for its potential natural power simply because of the water shed involved. It is also a river of many cultural meanings. The river served as an important mode of transportation in the early economy of Laredo. Originally, a ferry transported passengers and packages across the river for a small fee. River boat

Chapter 1: Historic Overview

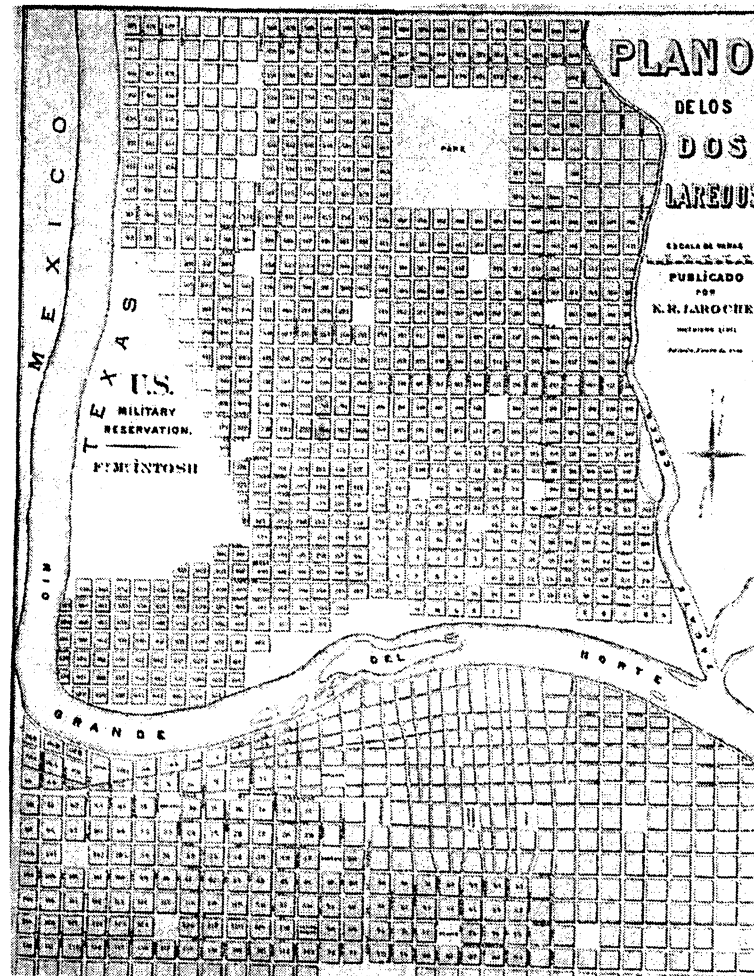
transportation played an important role in the development of the original layout of the villa and town of Laredo.

The Railroad

The existing railroad line that separates "El Cuatro" and the St. Peter's Historic District could serve as a link between The Two Laredos and an east west linkage on the north side of the river.

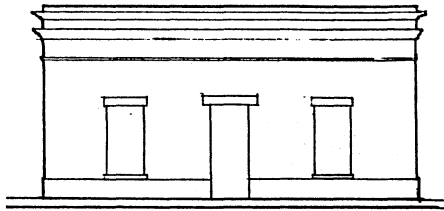
IH 35 Parkway

The parkway between the north and south bound lanes of IH 35 north of the border crossing station, Bridge No. 2 currently serves as a barrier between the San Agustín Plaza Historic District and the proposed Azteca Historic District. At one time these two areas were contiguous and complemented each other. The parkway should serve as a place that connects the two historic districts.

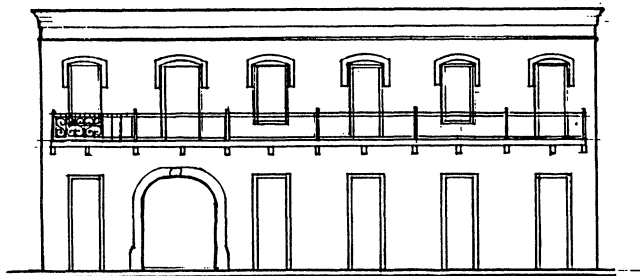
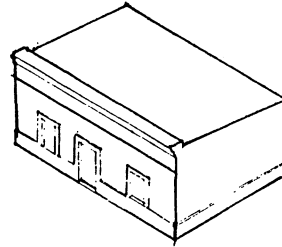


E. R Laroche Map of Los Dos Laredos

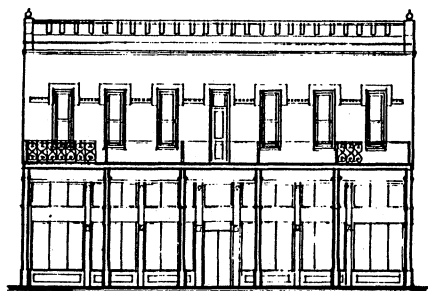
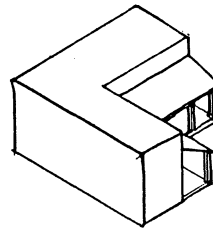
Chapter 1: Historic Overview



BORDER VERNACULAR



BORDER/MEXICAN COLONIAL HOUSE



LATE VICTORIAN COMMERCIAL

BUILDING TYPES & STYLES

A general synopsis of the building types and styles prevalent in the historic districts are outlined below. A more specific definitions and other styles present in the historic districts are in the Historic Urban Design Guidelines- Assessment Report.

Border Vernacular

The border vernacular is a response to the regional climate of the hot sun and floods. Typical characteristics include:

- The roof is usually a flat roof with a parapet at the facade.
- A rectangular shaped floor plan with a courtyard.
- The openings are usually small and recessed.
- The buildings usually have a base, sills, lintels cornices and friezes.

Border/Mexican Colonial House

The Mexican vernacular is similar to the border vernacular with the exception that it is more classical and ornamental. Other typical characteristics are the following:

- Base, Field and Top are architectural elements to divide the building.
- Ornamental balconies, and other ornamental details over the windows, doors and similar openings.
- Roof is usually flat with a parapet wall on the front facade.
- The building defines a rear courtyard with a loggia.

Late Victorian Commercial

This style is similar to the early Twentieth Century Commercial buildings but has Classical revival and Italianate details. Italianate elements included:

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- Usually a two-story building; symmetrical facade.
- Stamped metal cornices and articulated columns and pilasters.
- The street level has a storefront with large window openings.

Neo-Classical Revival/ Beaux Arts Classicism

Neo-Classical style structures include the ancient Greek and Roman elements. Typical architectural elements includes the following:

- Classical columns, pediments, porticos.
- This style is found on monumental buildings and institutions.
- The building is divided into the base, field and top.

Art Moderne

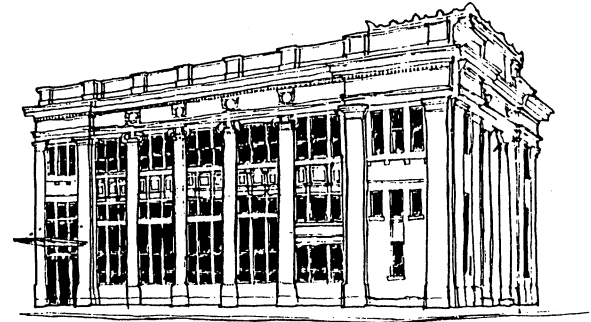
The style is similar to the Art Deco and appear approximately during the same period (1930-1945). The buildings have the following characteristics:

- A streamline appearance with flowing lines.
- Rounded windows similar to trains, airplanes and ships.
- Decorative panels are applied to the facade and not an integral part of it.

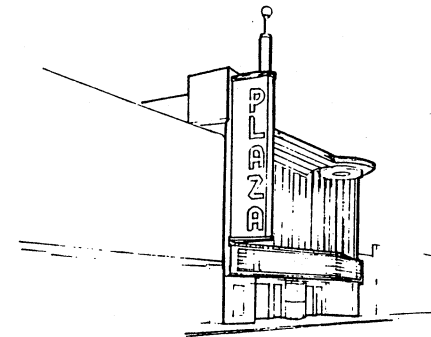
Early Twentieth Century Commercial

Many buildings in downtown Laredo were designed for retail-related functions on the ground level. Typical characteristics include:

- Large openings were used on the first floor to maximize visibility and access to goods and services.
- Most buildings are one or two stories high.
- The front walk defines the sidewalk edge.
- The upper story have smaller openings and appear more solid than the first floor.



NEO-CLASSICAL/BEAUX ARTS CLASSICISM



ART MODERNE



EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY COMMERCIAL

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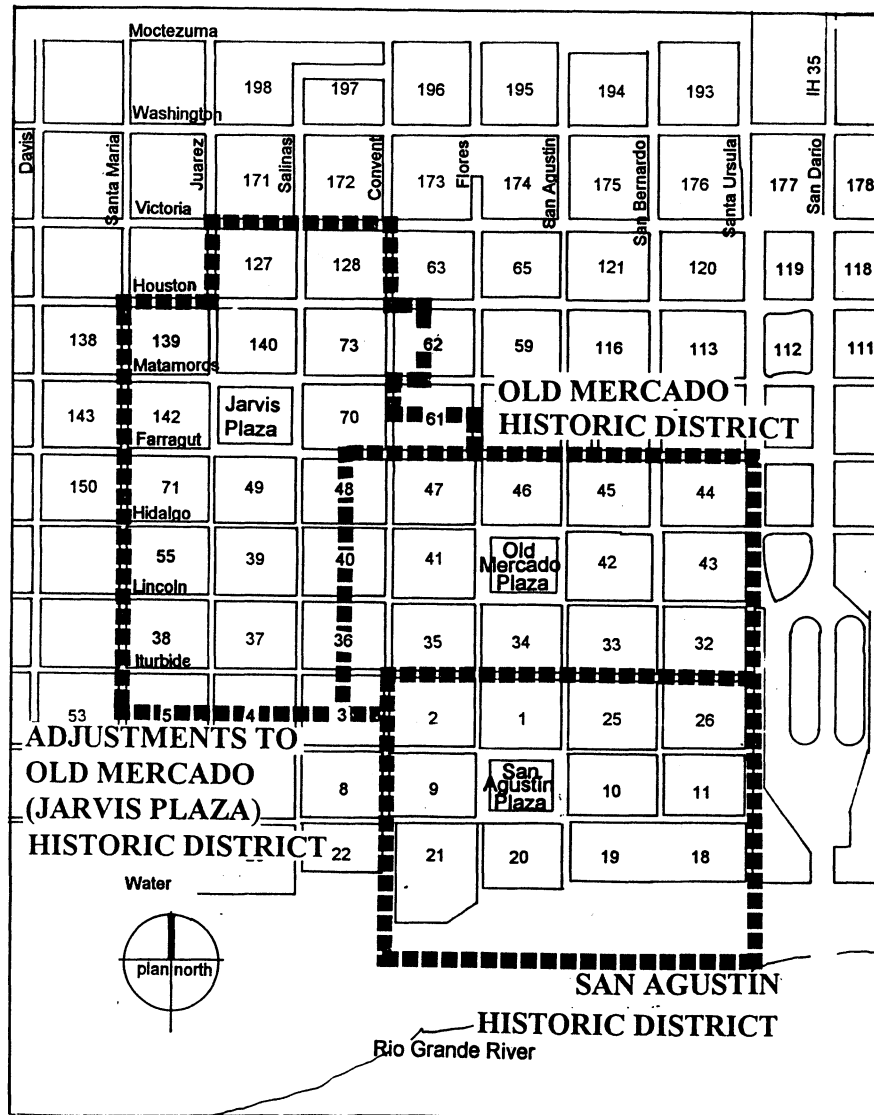
CHARACTER OF HISTORIC DISTRICTS

San Agustín Historic District

The San Agustín Historic District is defined by Convent and Santa Ursula Avenues as its east and west boundaries and Iturbide Street and the Rio Grande River as its north and south boundaries.

Layout: San Agustín Plaza was originally called "Church Plaza". Its limits were established in 1767: It was rectangular in shape, 100 varas in length, 80 varas in width (one *vara* equals 33.33 inches). The typical width of the streets was 10 varas wide to facilitate the ease of travelling on horseback without danger. The Plaza, today, is bounded by Flores and San Agustín avenues, and Zaragoza and Grant streets. Several documents seem to suggest that the original location of the plaza was southeast of what we know today as San Agustín Plaza. Around 1860, a new location for San Agustín Plaza was laid out. Shortly after the American Civil War the original street names (Calle Real, Calle San Francisco, Calle San José, Calle del García, and Calle Barrilero) were changed by Mayor Samuel Jarvis using names of Mexican and American heroes.

The plaza during the mid to late nineteenth century was considered the center of the city. Many stone houses built by the original owners still remain in this area. Initially, San Agustín plaza was bare and without any greenery. It was not until the turn of the century that the plaza was reported to be landscaped in the tradition of the French Renaissance. The plaza was initially used to round-up cattle for branding and to hold public assemblies. In the 1800's, the plaza was used to hold "*ferias*", patriotic ceremonies and musical ensembles".



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Four town lots measuring 20 x 40 varas were located around the plaza. The depth of the town lots was determined so that owners might build their enclosures and patios in which to keep their cattle and horses.

In 1902 plaza was renamed "Martin Plaza", but in 1990, it was given back its original name. In 1934 a Classic Revival bandstand was installed along with concrete benches.

Buildings: The San Agustín Historic district is one of the oldest districts in the city. The prevalent architectural style is the Border Mexican Vernacular and the Border Vernacular. San Agustín Church and the adjacent parochial school are made present in the Gothic Revival Ecclesiastical style. Other architectural styles, such as the Victorian and Italianate are also made present. Most of the buildings in this district are either one or two story masonry structures usually of brick or stucco. Most of these buildings are right on the front property line or have a very shallow setback.

Old Mercado Historic District

The Old Mercado Historic District is mostly defined by Farragut and Iturbide Streets at its north and south and by Santa Ursula on the east and midblock between Salinas and Convent to the west.

Layout: During the 1880's Laredo began expanding to the north of Plaza San Agustín, making Flores Avenue the main business/commercial artery. A new city hall brought development of hotels and businesses to the north of church plaza as well. This City Hall area became known as El Mercado because the rear of the city Hall housed stalls where vendors offered many kinds of produce and products. Market Plaza is bounded by Flores and San Agustín Avenues, Lincoln and Hidalgo Streets.

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Buildings: The Mercado District has a "two-part commercial block pattern" which was common of 19th Century commercial districts. The structures were limited to two to four story buildings. There was a horizontal segregation of uses, where the street level was used as public space for such things as retail and commerce. The upper levels suggested more private uses such as private offices, hotel rooms, or meeting halls. Most of the buildings are either stucco or brick masonry structures. The buildings in this district encompass a wide variety of architectural styles: Victorian, late 19th Century Commercial, Beaux Arts Classicism, Art Moderne, Art Deco, and Border Vernacular.

The City Hall building was originally built of brick masonry and later stucco it housed three functions: The City Hall, the market hall, and a performing arts theater. City Hall is an eclectic building which encompasses many traditional architectural styles. The Plaza Theater located on the north block of Market Square is an example of the Art Moderne style. It is the only theater in Laredo which maintains its historical integrity. To the south of the City Hall building is the old Laredo National Bank building which was built in the Beaux Arts Classicism style. Some other prominent buildings in this district are the Hachar's building (Art Moderne), Woolworth and the Fernandez building (20th century commercial), the Sanborns building (Late Victorian commercial) and Kress building (Art Deco).

Many buildings have come and gone, one prime example is the Strand Theater that was located on Flores Street facing the City Hall. This was a theater done in the Classic Style with a grand barrel vault entrance. Another example is the belfry tower that was originally part of the City Hall and was destroyed by a tornado in 1905.

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Proposed Jarvis Plaza (Adjustments to Old Mercado) Historic District (1885; Juarez Plaza, circa 1900; Jarvis Plaza, circa 1931).

The proposed Jarvis Plaza Historic District is located west and northwest of the Mercado Historic District. This area is mostly defined by Santa Maria Avenue on the west, Convent and Flores on the east, midblock of Iturbide and Grant to the south, and Houston and Victoria to the north. (See map on page Intro-10.)

Layout: Jarvis Plaza was named after Samuel Jarvis, mayor of Laredo from 1868-1872, who according to family history donated the land for the plaza. The plaza is bounded by Salinas and Juarez Avenues, and Matamoros and Farragut Streets. It was not until the turn of the century that Jarvis plaza was landscaped with a French Renaissance influence. A late Victorian bandstand still remains on the plaza.

Buildings: Many significant historic buildings are found around the perimeters of the plaza. To its north side is the Post Office building which was built in 1907 in the style of the Classic Revival. The Bender Hotel and the St. Anthony Hotel were built in c. 1910 within the Jarvis Plaza vicinity. On the northeast corner is the 12 story Hamilton Hotel which was constructed in 1923, additions were made in 1926-1928. Its architectural style is Art Deco with Spanish Revival Influence and is designated a National Register Landmark. Other architectural styles present in this district are 20th Century Commercial, the Italianate, and the Beaux Arts Classicism, the Milmo Bank is a prime example. The buildings in this area are of stucco and brick masonry.

**Chapter 2:
Design Guidelines for All Projects**

Chapter 2: Design Guidelines for All Projects

The following guidelines apply to all projects including historic buildings and new construction. These are general principles that may affect the character of all properties, including new and historic buildings.

ACCESSIBILITY:

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates that places of public accommodation be accessible to all users. Generally, the intent of the law is to provide Americans with disabilities the same experience accessing a building as non-disabled persons.

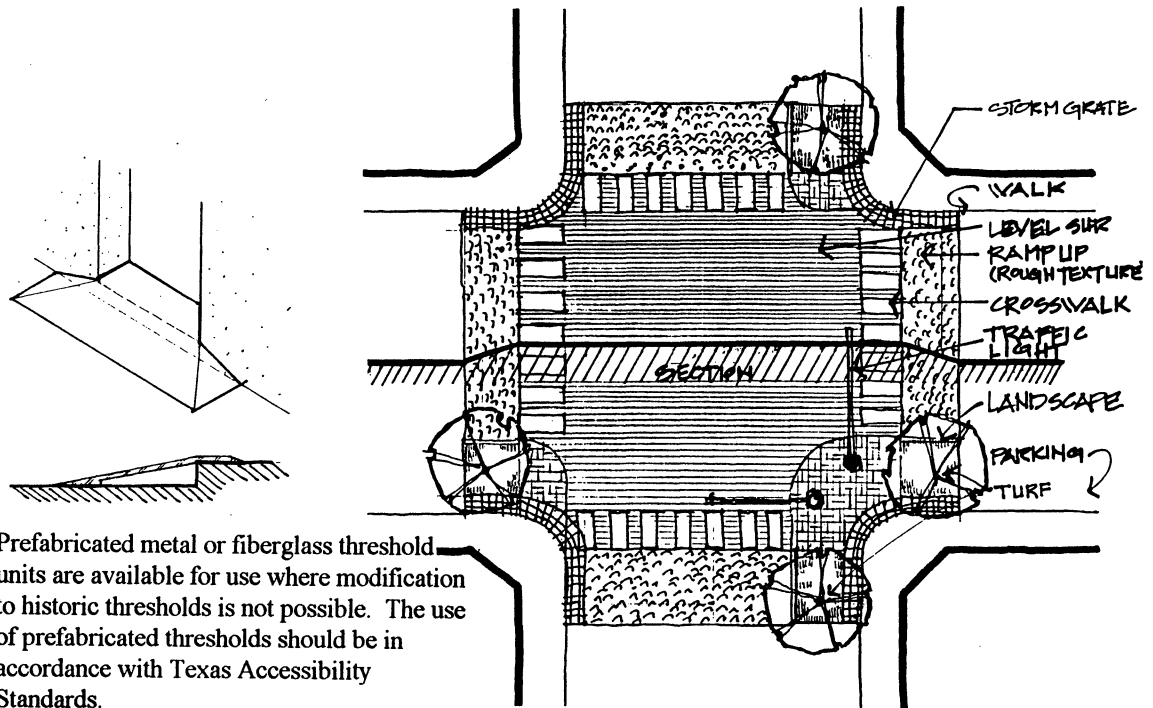
The guidelines are not intended to prevent or inhibit compliance with accessibility laws.

- All new construction should comply with ADA.
- Owners of historic properties also should comply to the fullest extent, while also preserving the integrity of the character defining features of their buildings. For example, historic door thresholds, often made of stone or cast metal should be preserved when feasible. Original archways widths should also be preserved, where feasible.
- Special provisions for historic buildings exist in the law that allow some alternative solutions in meeting the ADA Standards.

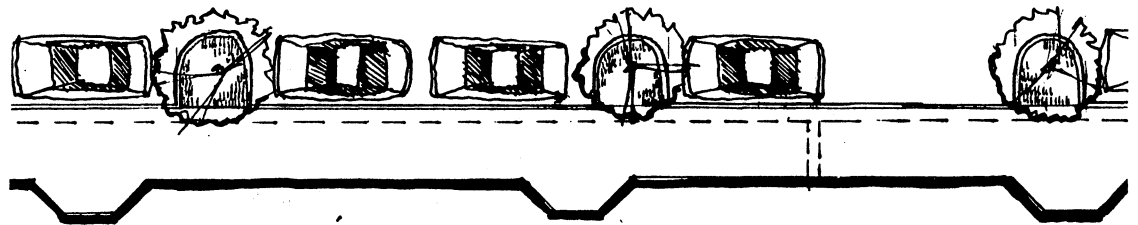
ACOUSTICS:

Minimize the emission/transmission of noise and amplified music.

- Use techniques that will not damage the historic building fabric.



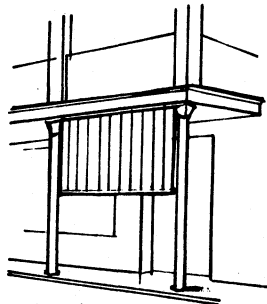
At this typical street intersection, the street ramps up to sidewalk level. Pavers are used at the level surface and a rougher material is used at the ramp. This places the vehicle within the pedestrian domain, forcing it to reduce speed while promoting safety for pedestrians.



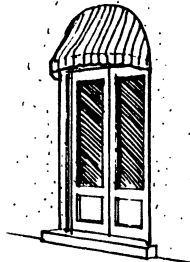
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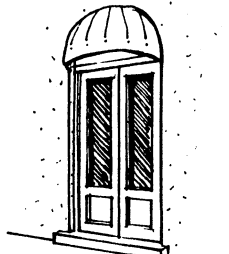
Awning-California Type



Awning-Drop

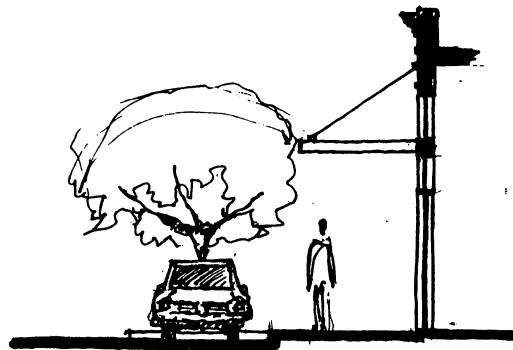


Awning-Circle

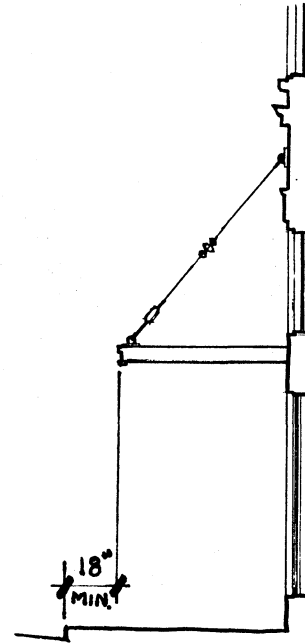


Awning -Quarter Round

Fabric awnings are appropriate for historic buildings and new construction.



Trees should be planted on the street, on landscape islands, so that they do not cause any damage to the canopies.



The edge of a canopy should be at a minimum of 18 inches from the edge of the curb.



Appropriate supporting mechanisms for canopies are wall mounted brackets, chains, rods, and posts.

- Preserve historic windows in the process. Install new windows behind existing ones, to create an air space that will dampen sound transmission.
- Isolate upper floor framing from lower floors to minimize transmission of sound.

AWNINGS & CANOPIES:

Horizontal, fixed canopies are encouraged where historic evidence demonstrates that a canopy once existed.

- Appropriate supporting mechanisms are wall-mounted brackets, chains, rods and posts.
- Wall-supported canopies also may be considered for new construction.

Fabric awnings are appropriate and encouraged for historic buildings and new construction.

- Operable awnings are encouraged.
- Rigid frame awnings may also be considered.
- Internal illumination is inappropriate.
- Lettering or logos on awnings are considered inappropriate.
- Use colors that are compatible with the overall color scheme of the facade. Solid colors of simple stripe patterns are appropriate.
- Simple shed shapes are appropriate for rectangular openings.
- Semi-circular shapes are appropriate for arched windows.
- Odd shapes, bull-nose awnings are inappropriate.
- Awnings that cover the lintel of an opening are considered inappropriate.
- Awnings at each window opening that fit within the opening are appropriate.

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Internal lighting of awnings is inappropriate.

- Rigid canopies are encouraged to provide recessed lights and illuminate sidewalks.

Awnings and canopies should be mounted to accentuate character-defining features.

- They should be mounted to highlight moldings that may be found above the store front.
- Their mounting should not damage or conceal significant features and historic details.
- Fixed canopies that conceal existing windows or that interrupt horizontal lines of adjacent buildings are inappropriate.

Awnings and canopies are not always appropriate. This is especially true on Mexican Border Vernacular buildings with deep recessed openings.

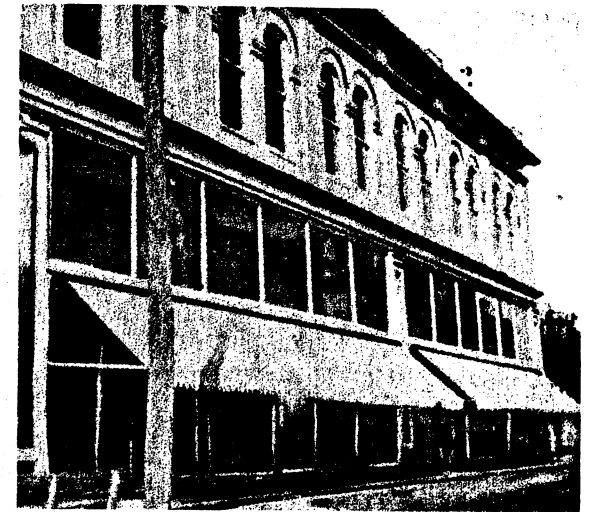
COLOR:

The Historic District/Landmark Board will consider the selection of colors and how color is applied in color schemes. In general, it will consider color on a case-by-case basis. However, if applicants wish they may select from a chart of colors already approved by the Board for the type and style building. For this purpose the Board will maintain a chart of appropriate and inappropriate colors.

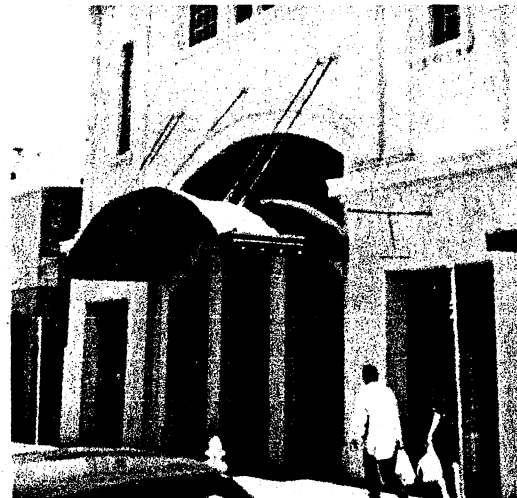
Historically, natural colors were used in border vernacular buildings. The colors were derived from the native materials and flora available in the area, these colors had meanings associated with their use. Reds and yellow ochre were used on the base and



Awnings that conceal architectural features are inappropriate.



Fabric awnings have been used historically in Laredo.

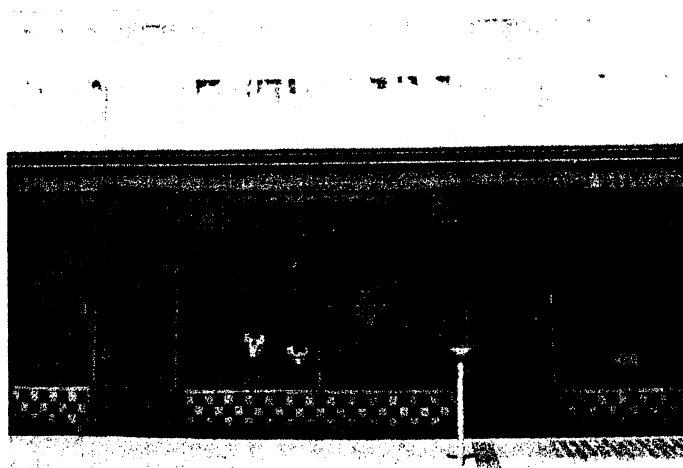


Awnings and canopies should be mounted to accentuate character defining features.

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Use the natural colors of the building materials.



Colorful glazed tile is common material used as a base for storefront windows.

body of buildings. Blue was used on the frieze or upper parts of buildings. The red and yellow ochre were associated with the earth, the blue with the heavens and the *Virgen de Guadalupe*. The use of color varies according to architectural style. Victorian style buildings, generally, were more colorful.

Use colors to create a coordinated color scheme for the building.

- The facade should read as a single composition.

Use the natural colors of the building materials.

- Use the natural colors of the building materials, such as the buff color of limestone, as the base for developing the overall color scheme.
- Matte finishes are preferred to glossy ones.

Reserve the use of bright colors for accents only.

- Generally, bright colors may be used to highlight entries.
- Depending on the architectural style of existing buildings bright colors may be reserved to accent only.

Using the historic color scheme of the building is preferred.

- When historic colors are to be used, provide evidence of their historic application.
- Brickwork was usually unpainted.
- Stucco was usually painted an off-white or earth tone color with some accent color.
- Owners are encouraged to seek professional lab tests when researching historic color schemes.
- Simple paint scraping exposing each layer of paint may give a history of color schemes of a building. Whenever possible seek professional lab tests on each layer.

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ENERGY CONSERVATION:

The use of energy conservation methods in building design is encouraged.

- Use of energy conservation, natural systems of ventilation are encouraged.
- Appropriate use of shading devices and overhangs are encouraged.

Energy conservation techniques must be compatible with the historic district.

- Solar collection devices should not alter simple roof lines.
- Original window sashes and glass should not be removed.

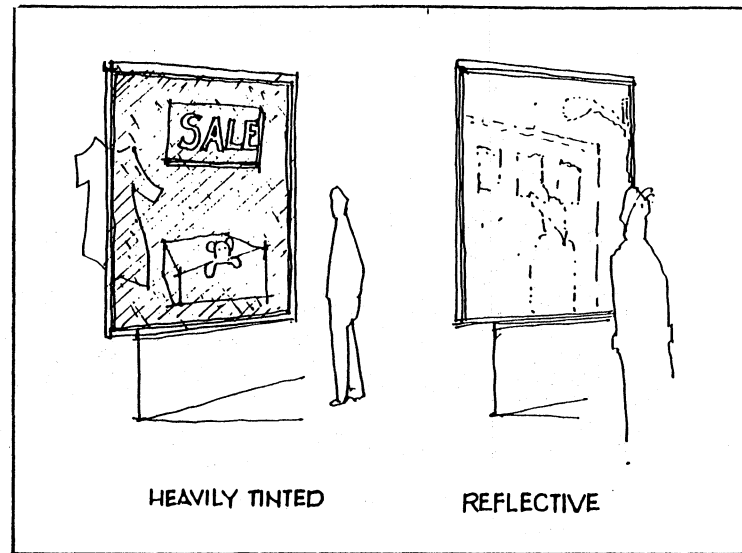
Glass used in windows shall appear similar to that used historically.

- Transparent, clear glass is appropriate.
- Opaque, tinted and mirror glass are inappropriate.
- Retaining extant historic glass is important and should be encouraged in all cases except where safety glass or wire glass is required by code. The use of reproduction historic glass is encouraged on historic buildings.

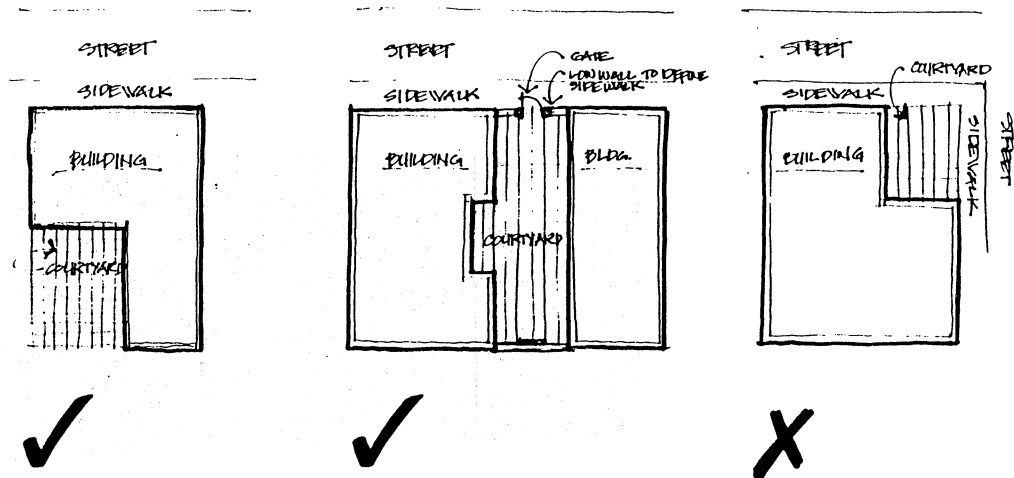
LANDSCAPING:

Landscaping will enhance the pedestrian experience and is therefore encouraged.

- Historical courtyards and the "patios" were lush with plants.
- Limited opportunities exist for landscaping, but these should be explored whenever feasible.
- These opportunities may occur in a rear or side courtyard or between existing buildings.
- Storefronts should continue to define the sidewalk edge.

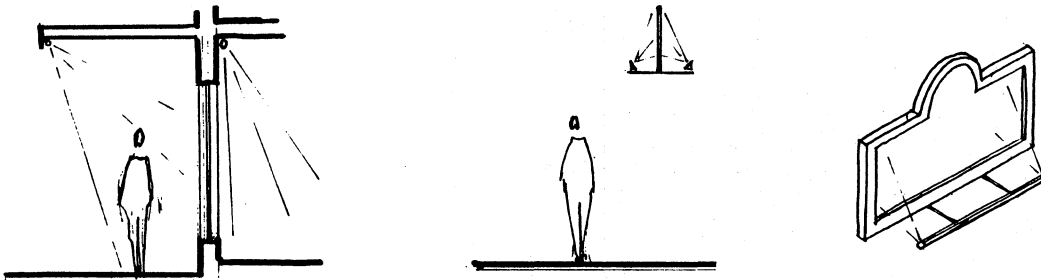


Opaque, tinted and mirror glass are inappropriate.

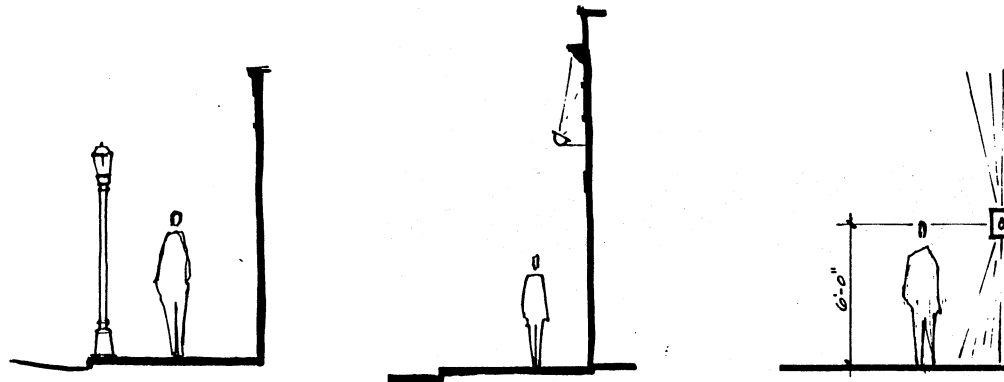


The development of patios and courtyards is encouraged. The sidewalk edge should be defined with building mass of landscape elements, not open space.

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Lighting should be used to illuminate signs and displays while preventing direct glare to the pedestrian.



Lighting designs should enhance one's ability to interpret the historic character of the street. Indirect lighting should be used on buildings to enhance architectural features.

- Trees may be used to continue to define the building line in between buildings or at building sideyards.
- Historic site elements such as walls, fences, and cisterns should be preserved.

The development of patios and courtyards in the rear of buildings is encouraged.

- Locating an open patio along the street edge is discouraged because the sidewalk edge should be defined with building mass or landscape elements, not open space.

Open space on a site should be defined with landscape elements.

LIGHTING:

Lighting designs should enhance one's ability to interpret the historic character of the street as seen at night. It should not overwhelming.

Use lighting for the following.

- To accent architectural details.
- To accent building entries.
- To accent signs.
- To illuminate sidewalks.

Use lighting as it was used historically in the district.

- All light sources shall be shielded to prevent direct glare.
- Lighting should not dominate the facade or the street.
- Washing the entire facade should be reserved for important and dominant buildings.
- Lighting should not be animated. Chase lights, for example, are prohibited.

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MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT AND UTILITIES:

Minimize the visual impact of mechanical equipment.

- Screen equipment from view.
- Do not locate window air conditioning units on the building facade.
- Use low-profile mechanical units on roof-tops that are not visible from the street or alley.
- Minimize the visual impacts of utility connections and service boxes.
- Satellite dishes should be the small low-profile type, and should be mounted so they are not visible from street.

Locate standpipes and other service equipment such that they will not damage historic facade materials.

- Cutting channels into historic facade materials damage the historic building fabric, is inappropriate and is discouraged.
- Avoid locating such equipment on the front facade.

Minimize the visibility of fire sprinklers inside, as seen from the public way.

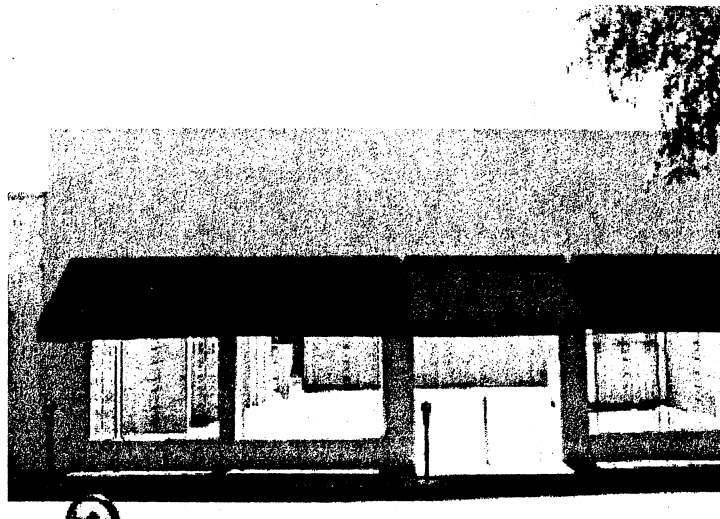
PARKING:

Automobiles were introduced after the character of the street was established, and even in their earlier days they were a secondary feature in the street scene. Today, their visual impact should be minimized to enable one to perceive the historic character of the street.

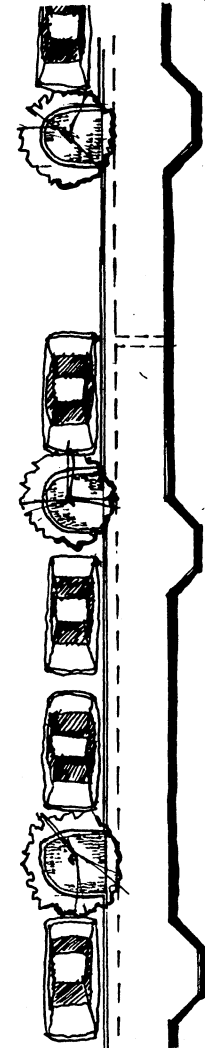
Off-site parking is preferred.



Minimize the visual impacts of utility connections and service boxes.

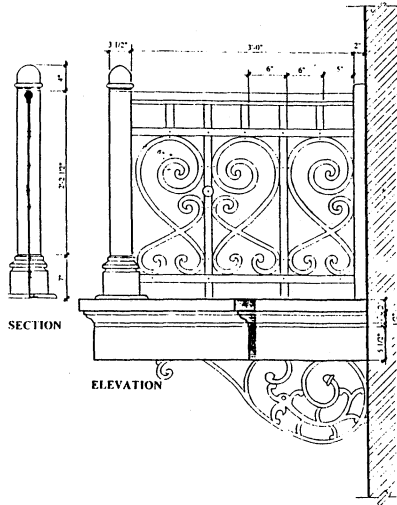


Minimize the visual impacts of utility connections and service boxes.

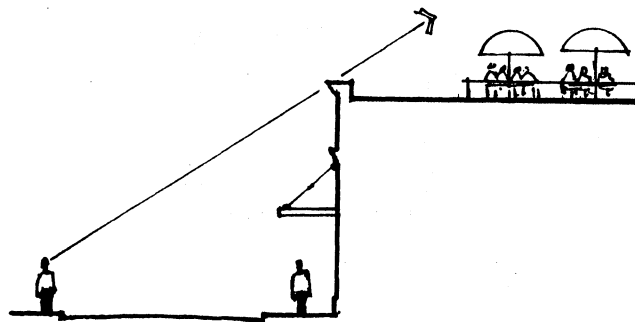


Trees should be planted on the street on landscape islands to enhance the streetscape and provide on-street parallel parking.

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Balconies may be considered for new construction and must be compatible with the context.



Set back activities such that they are not visible from the sidewalk below.

- The City's zoning ordinance provides limitations on parking in the district.

Minimize visual impacts of off-street parking, as seen from the public way.

- Screen the edges of parking lots with landscaping.
- Locate parking in the rear of buildings if possible, to preserve the definition and scale to the street.
- Curb cuts should be limited in use.
- Landscaping the interior of parking lots is encouraged.

PORCHES AND BALCONIES

Porches and balconies that overhang the sidewalk are appropriate where evidence demonstrates that such elements once existed.

- Using a design that matches the original, including the method of support, is preferred.

Porches and balconies also may be considered for new construction projects.

- These must be supported from the building.
- They also must be compatible with the context of the surrounding buildings on the street.

ROOFTOP USES

Minimize the visual impact of rooftop uses as seen from the street.

Set activities back such that they are not visible from the sidewalk below.

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- At a minimum, they should be set back to the height of a one-story building.
- These include trees, umbrellas and tables.

SECURITY DEVICES

Minimize the visual impact of security devices.

- Historic precedent exists for using metal bars on openings. These were simple and yet decorative in design.
- New bar designs should be simple in design as well.
- Exterior bars are not recommended for windows with distinctive designs.
- Exterior bars are not recommended for upper story windows.
- Solid roll-down metal screens are discouraged, because they obscure products on display, thereby weakening the interest of the street to pedestrians when in a closed position. Roll down metal grille screens behind glass storefronts is preferred.
- Shutters may be appropriate for upper story windows and for rear windows if appropriate to that particular building style, as documented in historic photos.
- Alarm devices should be hidden from view.

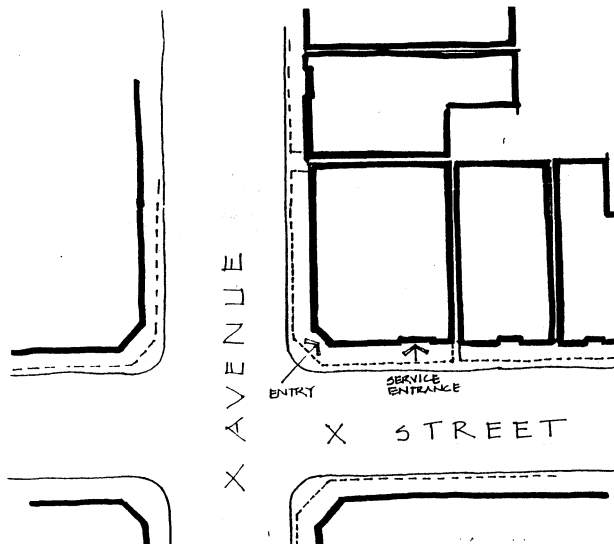
SERVICE AREAS

Minimize the visual impact of trash storage and service areas.

- Screen dumpsters from view where feasible.
- Locate service areas away from major pedestrian routes, in the rear, if possible.

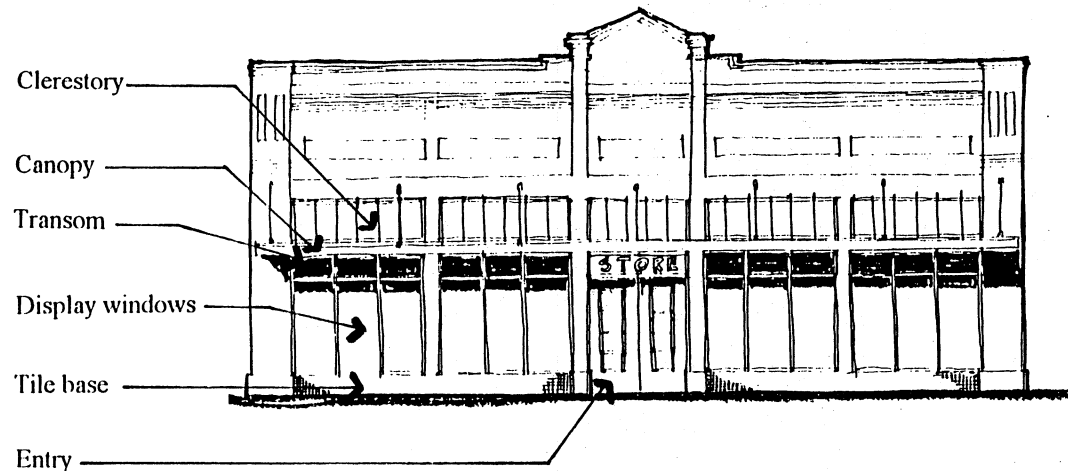


Historic precedents exist for using metal bars on openings.



On corner buildings, locate the service entrance away from the corner on the secondary street front.

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Storefronts should include the traditional character defining elements.

STOREFRONTS

Most commercial businesses have storefront facades at the street level. These storefronts have common standard components which create a visual unity that should be pursued and preserved.

All work should include the traditional character defining elements. These elements are described in Chapter 3.

Contemporary interpretations of traditional storefronts may be considered but should continue to convey the character of the typical storefront

STREET FURNITURE

Historically street furnishings, such as benches and waste receptacles were sparse, as they were infrequently provided by private property owners. Today, many street furnishings provide amenities that enhance the street as a pedestrian environment and should be encouraged. However, these elements should not overwhelm what historically was a simple streetscape, therefore street furniture should be simple in character and limited in number.

Sidewalks in Laredo are narrow. Furnishings, signs, newspaper racks and other vending machines should be avoided on narrow walks.

Newspaper racks

Newspaper racks, when clustered at a corner, can impede pedestrian activity and obscure the storefronts behind them. Their visual impact therefore should be minimized.

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A newspaper rack should be painted a muted color.

Racks should be organized in groups.

- These groupings however, should not impede to cross-walks or on-street parking.
- Due to the narrow widths of sidewalks, it is recommended that newspaper racks not be located at corners, or on crowded pedestrian ways.

Public telephones

Avoid historic designs of public phone structures that are inaccurate.

- Avoid locating telephone booths where they will obscure significant building features.
- All phones must be licensed, and the approval of the Board must be obtained for placement of telephones on structures.

Sidewalk seating

Sidewalk seating should be compatible with the historic character of the street.

- No structure or attachments should damage, alter, or obscure historic facade materials.

Vending machines

Cold drink vending machines should be prohibited on sidewalks, or building alcoves where the vending machines are visible from the street.

Vending machines should be grouped in clusters.



Street furniture clustered at a corner can impede pedestrian activity and obscure the storefronts behind them.

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Locate vending machines in without impeding pedestrian movement.



Locate vending machines facing away from the street.

- Units should be durable, attractive and of non-porous, rust and scratch resistant materials such as metal and/or plastics.
- Cluster the units together, whenever feasible.
- Consideration should be given to designing shells for containing clustered units in a consistent framework.

Locate units for maximum use without impeding pedestrian movement.

- Locate vending machines facing away from the street.
- Vending machines with internal lighting are billboards and are inappropriate.
- Anchor the vending machines directly to the ground. Do not chain or secure the units to other streetscape elements.
- Units will be maintained by respective property owners, including removal of debris and graffiti.

Drinking Fountains

Provide easily maintained and accessible drinking fountains.

- Locate drinking fountains within general areas of pedestrian congregation without impeding pedestrian movement.
- Locate units visible and not in obscured places.
- The units shall comply with the handicapped requirements and be placed on accessible surfaces.
- Units will be designed in a manner which provides general hygienic conditions and promotes use.

Drinking fountains should be compatible with the historic character of the districts.

- If fountains are designed to stand alone, they should have a form which is aesthetically attractive.

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- Non-porous materials including iron, stainless steel, stone and precast concrete are acceptable.

Signage

Provide an efficient, orderly, flexible and expandable system of graphic information which can be deployed throughout the districts.

Provide signage that recognizes the historic character of the different districts.

Signage should be combined with other streetscape elements to minimize the total number of freestanding signage elements.

Signage should enhance the daytime, nighttime and seasonal experiences.

Provide signage which accommodates two languages (Spanish and English).



Provide signage that recognizes the historic character of the different districts.

Chapter 3:
Design Guidelines for Historic Properties

Chapter 3:

Design Guidelines for Historic Properties

These design guidelines apply to all properties that are considered historically significant in the historic district. Historically significant properties include those that date from the period of historic significance, as well as other more recent structures of merit that are individually significant. In general, properties must be at least fifty years old to be considered for potential historic significance. The Board will determine on a case-by-case basis which properties are historically significant. Note that some flexibility in the application of building and other code is available to historic buildings.

BASIC PRESERVATION THEORY

The Concept of Historic Significance

Those buildings that date from the early historical development of Laredo are considered to have historic significance. Of these, those that retain their integrity merit preservation. Those whose integrity has been compromised with unsympathetic alterations, should be preserved for a possible future preservation effort.

The Concept of Integrity

The integrity of a building is measured by the amount and condition of the historic structural components and character-defining features remaining of a property. This can be determined by assessing the alterations that have impacted the building, as well as the structural condition of the building itself. Historic buildings should retain a high degree of their integrity.

Concern for Preservation of Character Defining Features.

Because the area has a wealth of architecture remaining from the period of significance, the area is filled with character-defining features which, collectively, establish a sense of place, a sense of



View of Hidalgo Street in historic downtown Laredo.

Chapter 3: Design Guidelines for Historic Properties

human scale and add rich detail to the buildings. These features draw pedestrian activity to the street, making it lively and economically viable. Because of these attributes, it is crucial that character-defining features be preserved.

Typical features include non-existent or shallow setbacks, a dado base, storefront, canopy, clerestory/transom windows, recessed windows, and a decorative frieze/cornice.

TREATMENT OF CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

Preserve all character-defining features that are intact.

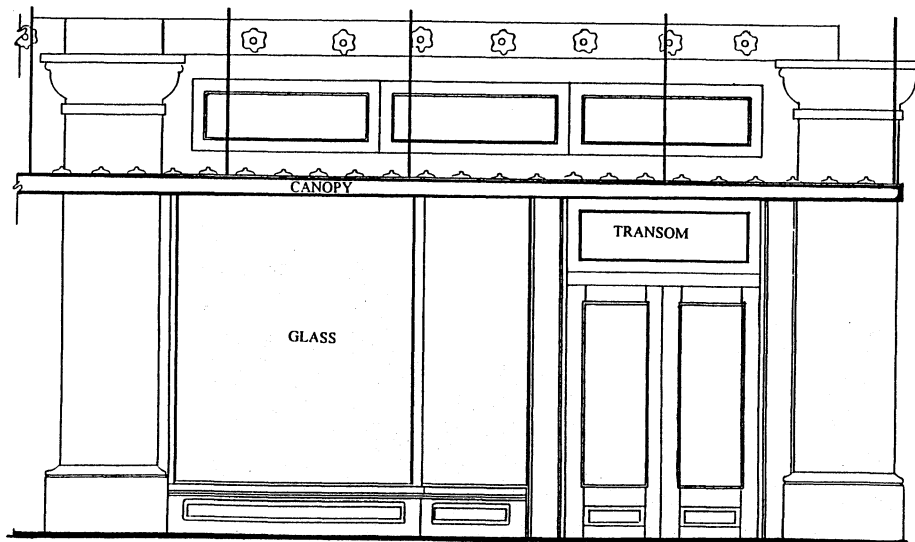
- Typical character-defining features are illustrated in the Appendix.
- Preserving a feature intact is always preferred to repairing or replacing it.
- The historic facade material, for example the trim around openings and cornices, are among the character-defining features to preserve.
- Do not remove or damage character-defining features.
- Preserve intact features with appropriate maintenance features.
- Do not obscure features with coverings or sign panels.

Preserve those features that are damaged.

- Use methods that will not harm the historic materials.
- Repair is preferred over replacement.

Replace features that are missing or beyond repair.

- For example, a molding that is so badly eroded that it is impossible to perceive its historic character may merit



ELEVATION
FORMER SOUTHERN HOTEL
1208 MATAMOROS STREET

Preserve all character defining features.

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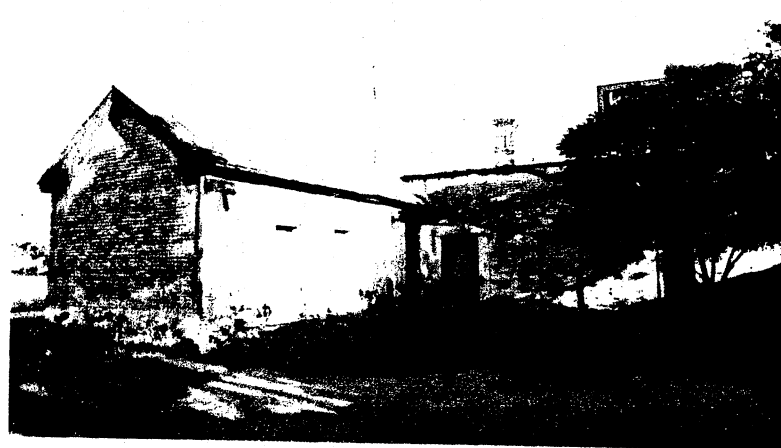
replacement. Similarly, when wood trim is too rotted to seal and repaint, it may merit replacement.

- Reconstruct the original element based on adequate evidence, if possible. This is the strongly preferred option.
- If evidence is missing, a simplified interpretation of similar elements may be considered.
- Reconstruct only those portions that are damaged beyond repair.

ALTERATION, RESTORATION, AND REHABILITATION

In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of an application for a permit to alter, restore, rehabilitate, or add to a building, object, site or structure designated as an historic landmark or located in an historic district, the Historic District/Landmark Board shall be guided by the following general standards in addition to the design guidelines shown herein.

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to adapt the property in a manner which requires a minimal alteration of the building, structure, object or site and its environment.
2. The distinguishing or original qualities or character of a building, structure, object, or site and its environment, shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
3. All buildings, structures, objects, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that

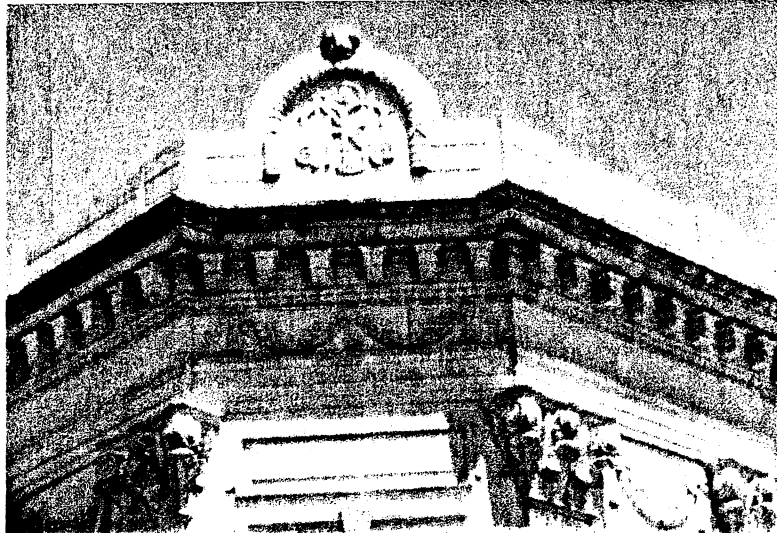


Reconstruct the original element based on adequate evidence.

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Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features substantiated by historical, physical, and pictorial evidence.



Distinctive stylistic feature or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building shall be kept where possible.

have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.

4. Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building structure, object, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
5. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure, object, or site shall be kept where possible.
6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event that replacement is necessary, the new material should reflect the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplication of features, substantiated by historical, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.
7. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.
8. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archaeological resources affected by, or adjacent to the project.

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9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.

10. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to buildings, structures, objects, or sites shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the building, structure, object, or site would be unimpaired.

DESIGN OF ALTERATIONS

Alteration may be considered for historic buildings. These alterations should occur in a manner that will not affect the historic integrity of the property.

Design any alterations to be compatible with the historic character of the property.

- Avoid alterations that would hinder the ability to interpret the design character of the original building.
- Alterations that seek to imply an earlier period than that of the building, or convey a different style, are inappropriate.

Avoid alterations that would damage historic features.

- For example, mounting a sign panel in a manner that causes decorative moldings and other ornamentation to be chipped, penetrated, damaged or removed would be inappropriate.

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ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Because most lots already have structures on them, any additions are likely to occur as roof-top additions. Some however, will occur on the side or the rear of the existing structure. All additions should meet guidelines:

An addition should be compatible in scale, materials and character with the main building.

- Using a similar material is appropriate. In some cases, a simpler, less noticeable material also may be appropriate.
- They should be in proportion to the historic building.

It should be set back from the primary, character-defining facade.

- A roof-top addition should be set back substantially, to preserve the perception of the historic scale of the building.
- If a roof-top addition is appropriate, a minimum set-back of 25 feet is recommended.
- A roof addition to a one-story building should be set back a greater distance than that of a two-story structure, to minimize its visual impact.

The addition should be subtly distinguishable in its design from the historic portion.

It should be designed to remain subordinate to the main structure.

- Its materials, finish and details should not call attention to the addition.

Chapter 3: Design Guidelines for Historic Properties

- The addition should not alter, damage or obscure character-defining features. In general, an addition to an historic building front is inappropriate.

PRINCIPLES OF ADAPTIVE RE-USE

A change in use should not alter the historic character of a building.

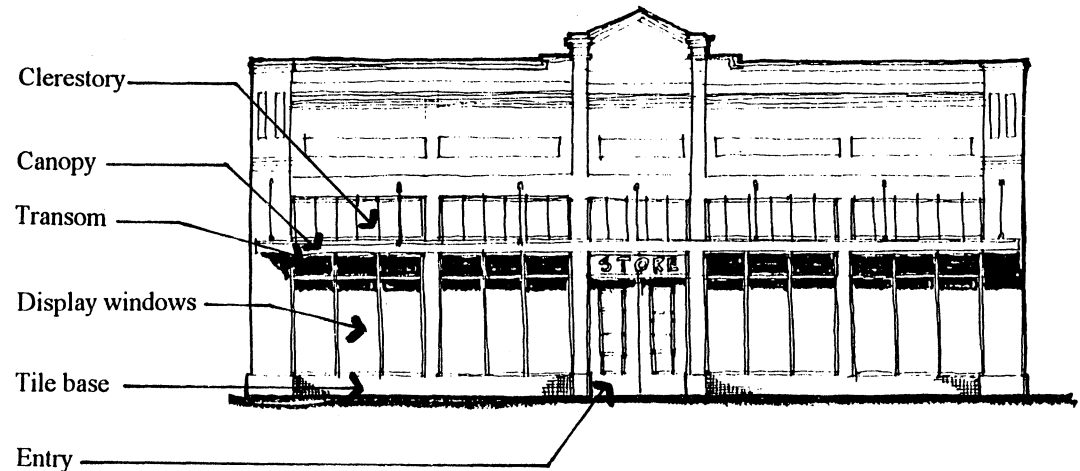
- Building uses that are closely related to the original use are preferred.
- A compatible use that requires minimal alteration to the original character of the building.
- For example, connecting a commercial storefront to an office should not require alteration of character-defining features of the historic building.

STOREFRONTS

Many storefronts have components traditionally seen on commercial buildings. The repetition of these standard elements creates a visual unity on the street that should be preserved.

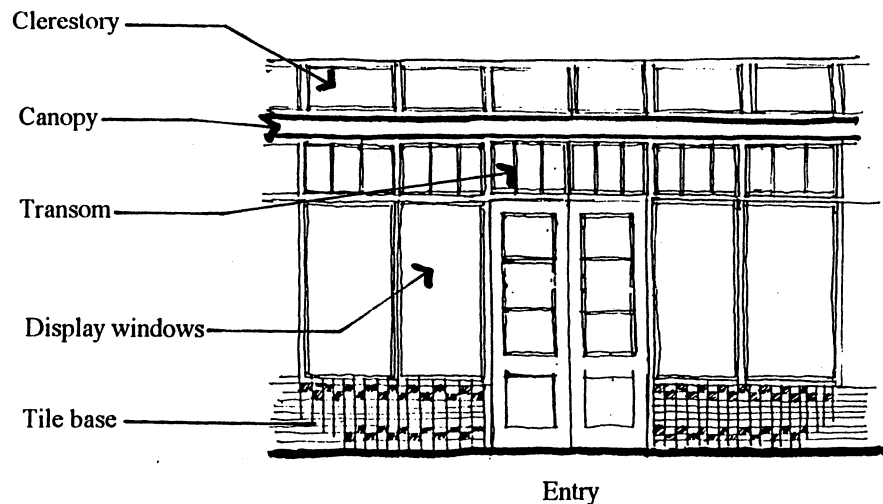
All renovations should preserve these character-defining elements:

- **Display windows:** The main portion on the storefront (on traditional storefronts).
- **Canopy:** Usually found above the display area and below the clerestory windows. Usually supported by cables, rods, or posts.
- **Clerestory, or transom:** The upper portion of the display, separated from the main display window by a frame.

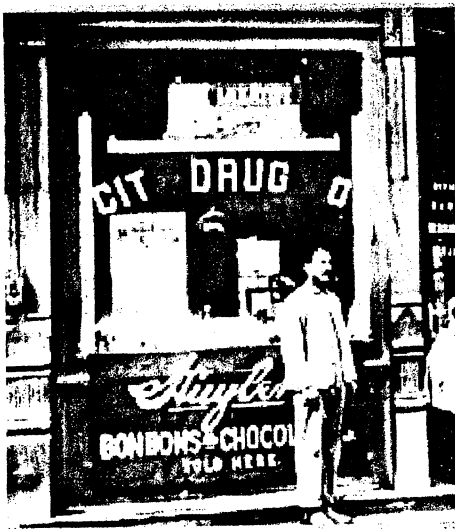


All renovations should preserve the character defining elements.

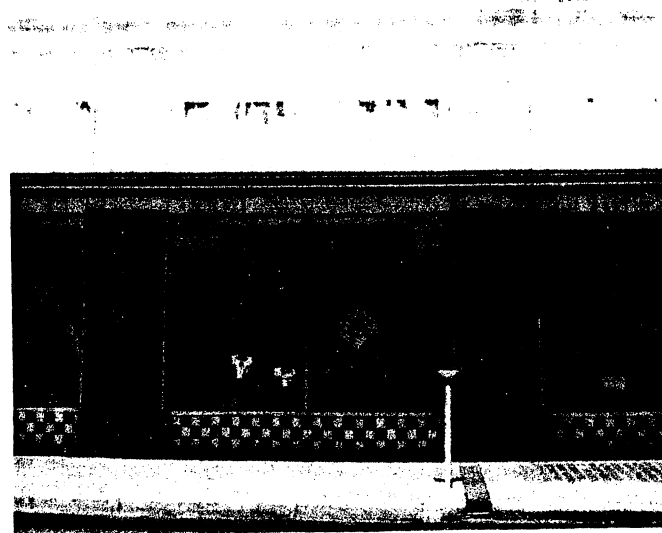
Chapter 3: Design Guidelines for Historic Properties



The character defining elements of the storefront in Laredo.



Preserve the historic character of the storefront when it is intact.



- **Tile base or kickplate:** In many instances, a colorful tile base is found beneath the display window. In Victorian Commercial type buildings, a kickplate, sometimes called a bulk-head panel, is used as a base.
- **Entry:** Usually set back from the sidewalk in a protected recess.

Preserve the historic character of the storefront, when it is intact.

- This will maintain the interest of the street to the pedestrians, by providing goods and activities through the first floor windows.
- If the storefront glass is intact, it should be preserved. If it is a rectangular plate glass opening, then this should be preserved.
- The storefront should not be altered or obscured.

If the storefront already is altered, restoring it to the original design is preferred.

- If evidence of the original design is missing, use a simplified interpretation of similar storefronts.
- The storefront still should be designed to provide interest to pedestrians.

Alternative designs that are contemporary interpretations of traditional storefronts may be considered in limited cases.

- Where the original is missing and no evidence of its character exists, a new design that uses the traditional elements may be considered.
- However, it must continue to convey the character of typical storefronts, including the transparent character of the display window.

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- Altering the size of the historic window opening or blocking it with opaque materials is inappropriate.
- Note that in some cases, an original storefront may have been altered early in the history of the building, and may itself have taken on significance. Such alterations should be preserved.
- Greater flexibility in the treatment of rear facades is appropriate. However, care should be taken to preserve storefronts on those buildings which have a traditional commercial storefront on more than one facade.

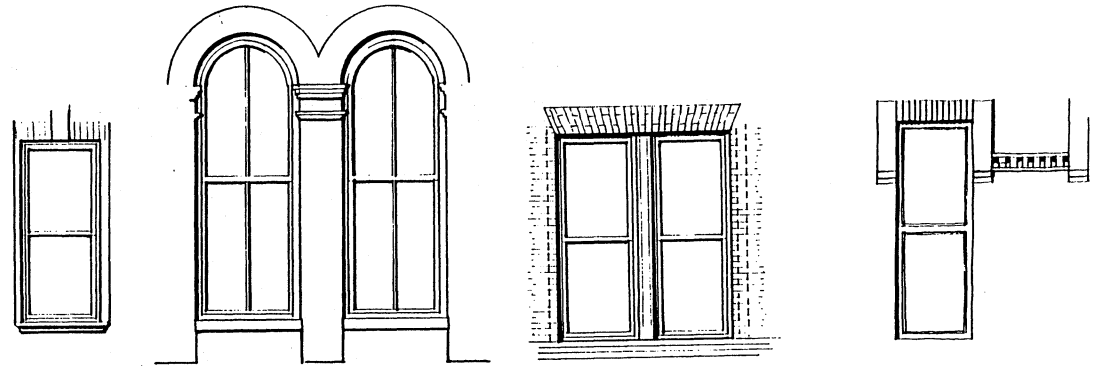
WINDOWS AND DOORS

Maintain historically significant storefront openings.

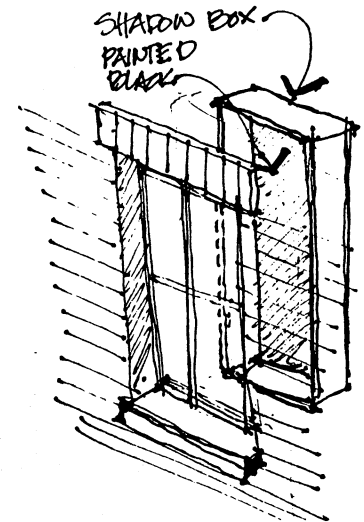
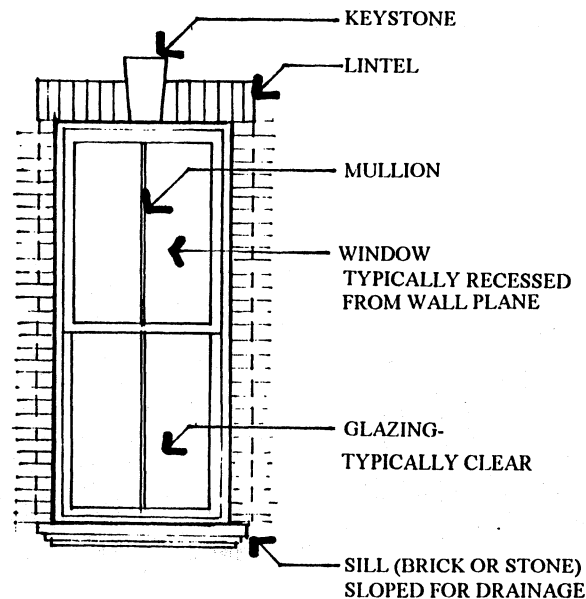
- The size and shape of original windows and doors are important characteristics that contribute to the integrity of historic commercial buildings.
- Avoid altering the shape of these features.
- If these elements have already been altered, consider restoring them if their original condition can be determined.

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

- The upper glass band of traditional storefronts introduced light into the depths of the building, saving on lighting costs. These bands are found on many historic storefronts, and they often align at the same height.
- The shape of the transom is important to the proportion of the storefront, and it should be preserved in its historic configuration.
- If the original glass is missing, installing new glass is preferred. However, if the transom must be blocked out, use



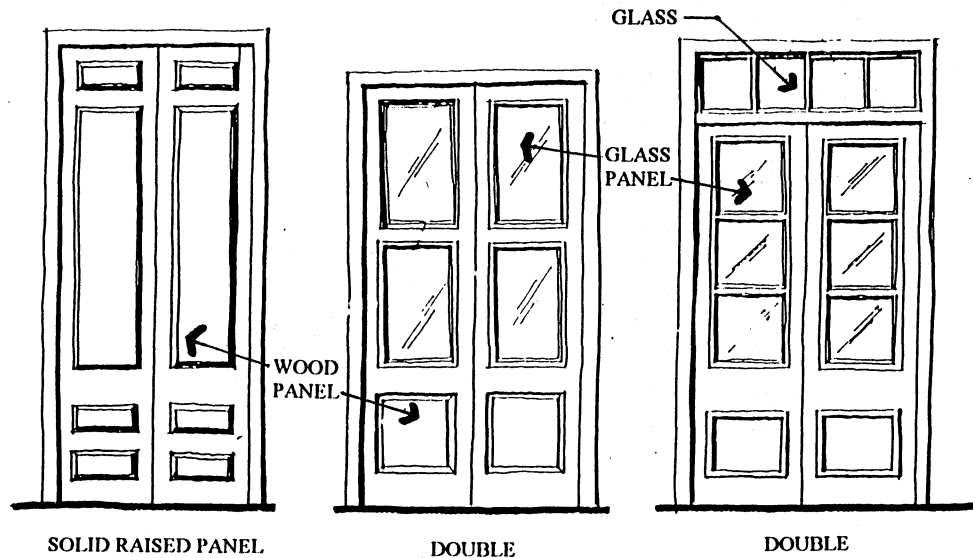
The proportions of the windows contribute to the character of each building facade.



The windows on historic buildings have common elements and characteristics which should be preserved and maintained because they enrich the architectural character of the area.

Where a window opening is not feasible, provide a window box.

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Use door styles that are found on traditional historic storefronts.



Upper story windows have a vertical emphasis.



The original doorway should be preserved on all historic buildings.

it as a sign panel or a decorative band, but retain the original proportions.

Preserve historic upper story windows.

- Historically, upper story windows had a vertical emphasis. The proportions of these windows contribute to the character of each commercial storefront.
- Do not block them up or alter their size.
- Consider re-opening windows that are currently blocked. Replace missing glass.
- Where a window opening is not feasible, provide a window frame and glass with a shadow box.
- Maintain the historic sash as well. Repair sash rather than replace when feasible.
- See also the guidelines for energy conservation.

Use door styles that are found on traditional storefronts.

- The original doorway should be preserved on all historic buildings.
- Some may be double-leaf, panel doors. Double leaf doors are appropriate replacements in these applications, where the original is missing.
- Wood panel doors are appropriate on most buildings.
- Doors with metal frames and large areas of glass are particularly appropriate on Art Deco and Art Moderne style buildings.

ENTRIES

Maintain existing recessed entries.

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- The repetition of recessed entries provides a rhythm of shadows along the street, which helps establish a sense of scale.
- These recessed entries were designed to provide a protection from the weather, and the repeated rhythm of these shaded areas along the street helps to identify business entrances.
- Restore the historic recessed entry if it has been altered.

Where an historic entry is not recessed, maintain it in its original position where feasible.

- However, one may also need to comply with other code requirements, pertaining to door width, swing, and construction.
- Entrances must comply with accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Special provisions are made for historic properties.

TILE BASE AND KICKPLATES

Preserve the tile base.

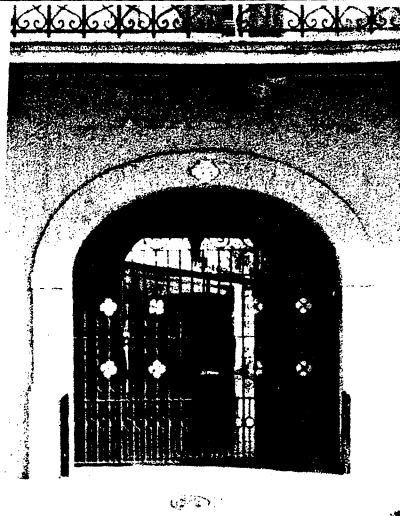
- The tile base adds interesting pattern and color and is a typical feature of the Laredo streetscape.

Retain the kickplate as a decorative panel.

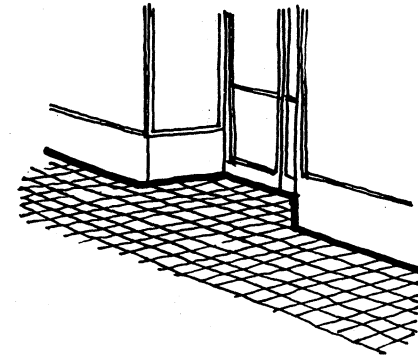
- The kickplate adds interesting detail to the streetscape and should be preserved.

If the original kickplate is missing, develop a compatible replacement design.

- Wood and masonry are appropriate materials for replacements.



The original doorway should be preserved on all historic buildings.



The recessed entries were designed to provide a protection from the weather and help identify business entrances.

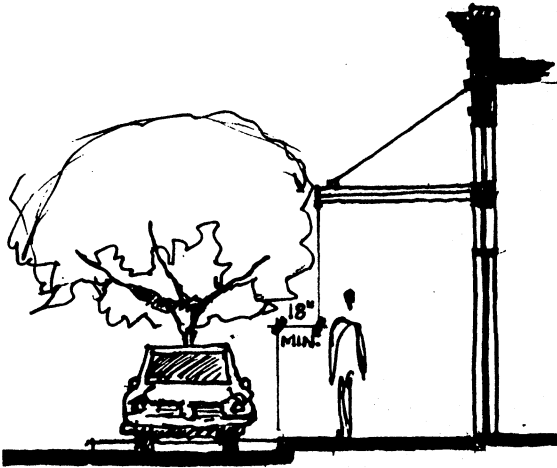


The kickplate adds interesting detail to the streetscape and should be preserved.



The tile base adds interesting pattern and color to the streetscape.

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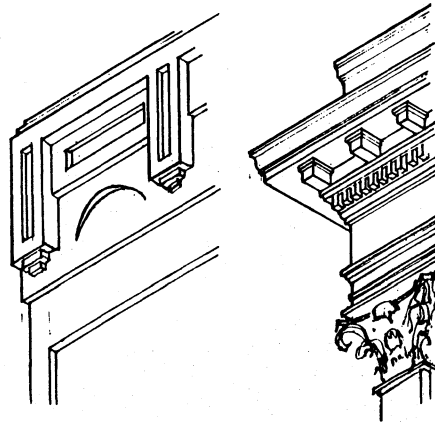
Retain the canopy/awning as a functional element that provides protection against the weather and climate.



Awnings were used profusely in historical Laredo.



Preserve the character of the cornice line.



Reconstruct a missing cornice when its historic evidence of its character is available.

- Coordinate the color of the kickplate with the other trim elements on the building.

CANOPIES AND AWNINGS

Retain the canopy/awning as a functional element that provides protection against the weather and climate.

- See also Chapter 3 for the Design Guidelines for all Projects.

Preserve the character of the canopy.

- The fascia of canopies should maintain a continuous profile.
- Canopies are usually of metal with a coffered or decorative underside. Lighting is usually placed on the underside.
- Canopies are most commonly suspended by metal cables.
- Sidewalks should be designed so that power poles, trees, and street lights do not penetrate the canopies.
- A simplified or more contemporary interpretation is appropriate if evidence of the original is missing.

The mounting of the canopy/awning should in no way conceal or damage any architectural features on the facade.

CORNICES

Preserve the character of the cornice line.

- Most historic commercial buildings have cornices to cap their facades. Their repetition along the street contributes to the visual continuity on the block.
- Cornices that are in intact should be preserved.

Reconstruct a missing cornice when historic evidence of its character is available.

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- Use historic photographs to determine design details of the original cornice.
- The substitution of a similar old cornice for the original may be considered, provided that the substitute is similar to the original.

A simplified interpretation also is appropriate if evidence of the original is missing.

- Appropriate materials include fiber-glass, stone, brick and stamped metal.

ROOFS

Preserve the historic character of the roof line.

- Altering an existing historic parapet line is inappropriate.

Set a new roof terrace back from the building front.

- This will allow one to continue to perceive the historic character of the cornice line. (See also the Design Guidelines for All Projects.)
- Roof terrace railings and furniture should be placed well behind the parapet.

Avoid clutter on roofs that will be visible from the public way.

- Locate mechanical equipment away from view.
- Trees should be set back too.

SECURITY DEVICES

Minimize the visual impacts of security devices, as they substantially affect the character of historic facades.



Preserve the character of the roof line.



The use of metal bars on openings has historic precedent in Laredo.

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Preserve original facade materials.



Do not cover or obscure original facade materials.

- See also The Design Guidelines for All Projects.

FACADE MATERIALS

Preserve original facade materials.

- Historically, brick and limestone have been the dominant building materials.
- Historic building materials and the craftsmanship they exhibit add textural qualities, as well as visual continuity and character to the streetscape.

Do not cover or obscure original facade materials.

- Covering of an original facade not only conceals interesting detail, but also interrupts the visual continuity along the street.
- If the original material has been covered, uncover it, if feasible.

When replacement of a facade material is needed, replace it in kind.

- The replacement material should match the original in scale, color, texture and finish.

Protect historic material surfaces.

- Do not use harsh cleaning methods that could damage the finish of historic materials.
- Sandblasting, for example, is prohibited.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS

Applicants requesting permits for ordinary repair and maintenance of a landmark or property located in an historic

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district shall submit their requests to the Historic Preservation Officer. Such applications may be approved by the Director of Building Inspections upon recommendation from the Historic Preservation officer and the Chairman of the Historic District and Landmark Board.

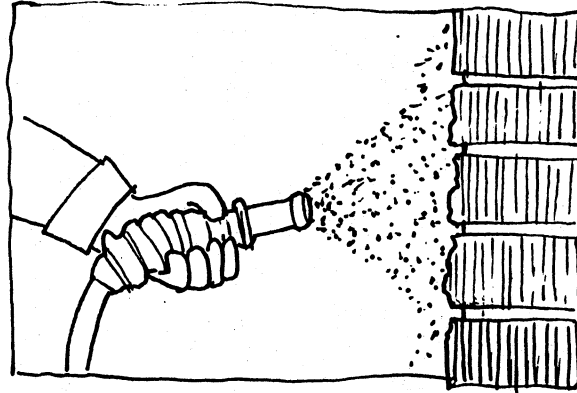
Many historic building elements survive that should be maintained in a manner that will preserve their integrity as character-defining features.

Use the gentlest possible procedures for cleaning and refinishing historic materials.

- Abrasive methods such as sandblasting are prohibited, as they permanently erode building materials and finishes and accelerate deterioration.
- For cleaning of masonry, use procedures such as low pressure water and detergents. Do not apply acid cleaners to materials such as limestone and marble. Conduct surface cleaning tests before beginning cleaning procedure.
- It is recommended that a firm experienced in the cleaning of historic buildings be hired to advise on the best low impact method of cleaning appropriate to the project.
- Property owners also should note that early paint layers may be lead-based, in which case special procedures are required for its treatment.

Maintenance of Roofs

- The use of sprayed-on polyurethane is discouraged.
- Clean debris from gutters and downspouts to prevent the backing up of water.
- Patch leaks in the roof. This should be a high priority for building maintenance.



Abrasive methods such as sandblasting are prohibited as they erode building materials and finishes and accelerate deterioration.

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- Replace deteriorated flashing.
- Re-point eroded mortar in the parapet wall, using an appropriate mortar mix.
- Re-solder downspout connections to prevent water from leaking into the walls.
- Connect downspouts to underground sewers. Do not allow water to disperse at the foundation of a building, this water may cause damage to the foundation.

Maintenance of Awnings and Canopies

- Repair leaking downspouts from metal canopies.
- Replace worn fabric awnings.
- Re-secure loose awning hardware
- Wash fabric awnings regularly. This will help extend the life of the fabric. Spray with water from the underside first, to lift dirt particles, then rinse them off.

Maintenance of Signs

- Re-secure sign mounts to the building front.
- Repaint faded graphics.
- Repair worn rings.
- Replace burned out bulbs.
- Remove obsolete signs.
- Preserve historic painted sign in place as decorative features.

Energy Conservation

- It is not necessary to remove existing glass to install thermo-pane to realize energy savings. Generally, the problem is that older glass has dried and the glazing has shrunk, which allows air to leak around the glass.
- The best strategy is to reglaze the existing glass and add weather-stripping. For upstairs windows you may consider

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installing storm windows to achieve the effect of thermal glazing. Be certain that the frame styles of the storm windows match those of the original windows.

Other energy conservation tips include:

- Re-glaze all loose glass.
- Weather-strip doors and windows.
- Install destratification fans to circulate air.
- Install insulation in the attic.
- Consider installing insulation in the crawl space or basement.
- Existing windows, if properly caulked and weather-stripped, will provide adequate insulation.
- Most energy loss is through infiltration, which can be treated in the existing window.
- If a greater degree of insulation is desired, install a storm window. This will provide a greater air space, which will also reduce sound transmission.
- You may also consider using insulated shutters on upper story windows in winter time. This is especially effective where the space is now used for storage. The shutter surface also provides a space for additional color accent.

Plan repainting carefully.

- If masonry has been painted, it may be preferable to continue to repaint it, because paint removal methods may cause damage to the building materials and finish.
- Note that frequent repainting of trim materials may cause a build up of paint layers that obscures architectural details. When this occurs, consider stripping paint layers to retrieve details. However, if stripping is necessary, use the gentlest means possible, being careful not to damage architectural details and finishes.

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- Remember good preparation is key to successful re-painting but also the build-up of old paint is an important historic record of the building. The removal of old paint, by the gentlest method possible, should be undertaken only if necessary to the success of the re-painting. Remember that old paint is of very good quality enviable in today's painting world.
- Old paint may contain lead. Precautions are required by the Texas Air Quality Control Board when sanding or scraping is necessary.

Chapter 4:
Design Guidelines for New Construction

Chapter 4: Design Guidelines for New Construction

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

These design principles apply to all new construction projects in the Historic Districts. A basic principle is that new buildings should not imitate historic buildings, but should be compatible with them. Creativity in new design is especially encouraged when it also is compatible with the design goals of the district. Note, however, that designs that are incompatible with the district may be more appropriately located elsewhere.

Few opportunities exist for "infill" in the districts. However, even one large, inappropriate building could strongly affect the character of the district and affect one's ability to interpret its historic character. Therefore, the design of new construction is very important and should be carefully considered. Remember that all new construction must comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act as well.

In reviewing an application for any Historic District/Landmark Building, the Board shall be aware of the importance of finding a way to meet the current needs of the property owner. The Board shall also recognize the importance of recommending approval of plans that will be reasonable for the property owner to carry out.

In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of an application for a permit for new construction in a historic district and historic landmark site, the Board shall be guided by standards of the Secretary of the Interior.

Chapter 4: Design Guidelines for New Construction

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

The Literal imitation of older historic styles is discouraged.

- Contemporary interpretations of traditional buildings, which are similar in scale and overall character to those historically, are strongly encouraged.
- In essence, infill should be a balance of new and old in design.

If a developer intends to utilize an historic resource as any part of a development, he should consider the context of the resource's original site and the importance of the setting in the new development.

SITE PLAN GUIDELINES

The site should take into account the compatibility of landscaping, parking facilities, utility and service areas, walkways and appurtenances.

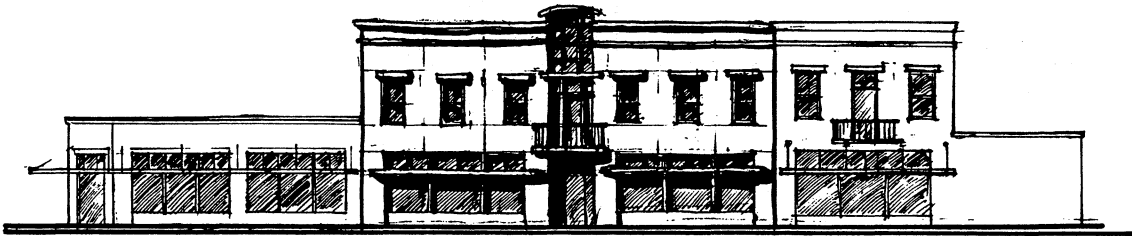
- These should be designed with the overall environment in mind and should be in visual keeping with related buildings, structures and places.

Retain the town grid in new construction.

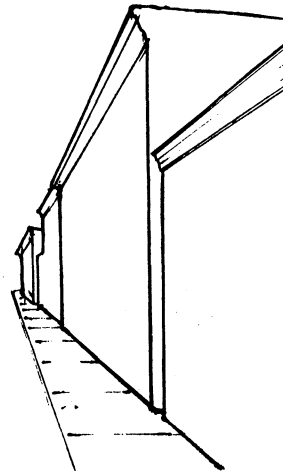
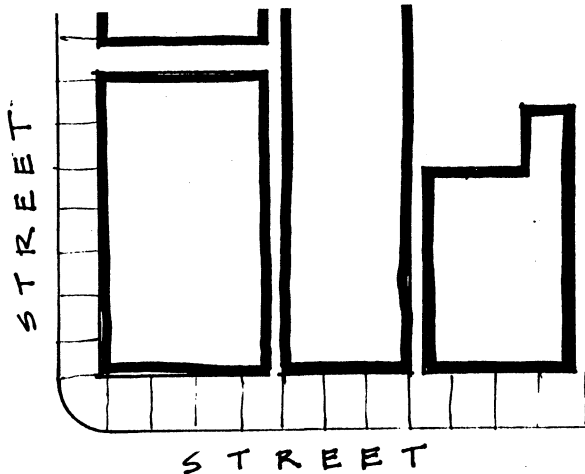
- Orient a new building parallel to its lot lines, in a manner similar to historic building orientation, not an angle.
- Corner buildings should be canted at the corner with the primary facade facing the avenues (streets that run north-south). Locate the service entrance on the secondary facade.

Maintain the alignment of uniformly setback facades.

- Appurtenances of a building or structure such as walls,



Contemporary interpretations of traditional buildings which are similar in scale and overall character are strongly encouraged.



Maintain the alignment of facade setbacks. Align the building front at the property line.

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fences, and landscape masses should form cohesive walls of enclosure along a street, to insure visual compatibility with the buildings, structures, public ways, and places to which such elements are visually related.

- Align the building front at the property line.
- When considering courtyards, minimize the amount of frontage on the street.
- Courtyards should not extend across the entire front of the property line.

MASS AND SCALE GUIDELINES

New construction should appear similar in mass and scale to historic structures found traditionally in the area.

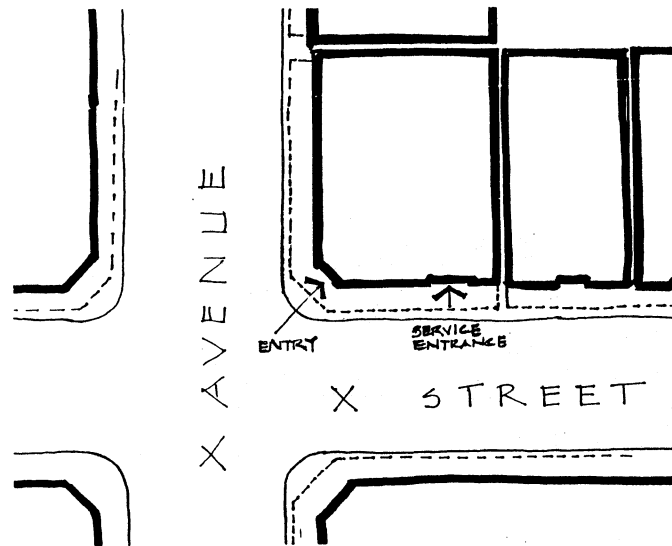
- The size and mass of buildings and structures in relation to open spaces, windows, door openings, porches, and balconies should be visually compatible with the buildings, structures, public ways and places of the urban environment.

Buildings should appear similar in width to those seen historically.

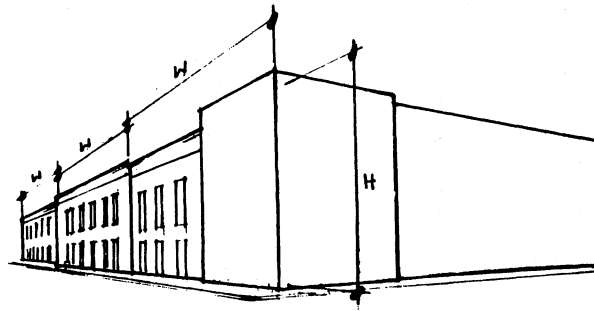
- Historically, many buildings were built in standard widths. New buildings should reflect this pattern.

Buildings should appear similar in height to those seen historically.

- Height at street level should be visually compatible with adjacent buildings.
- Historically, most buildings were one and two stories in height. New buildings, therefore, should include portions that are one and two stories in height.
- Large projects that occupy several lots should provide variety

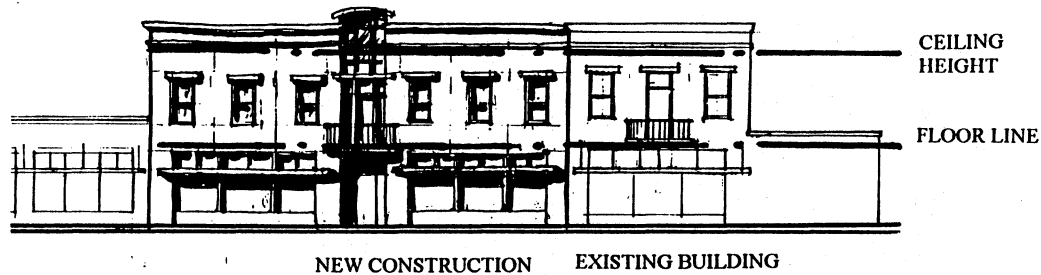


Corner buildings should be canted at the corner with the primary facade facing the primary street. Locate the service entrance on the secondary street.

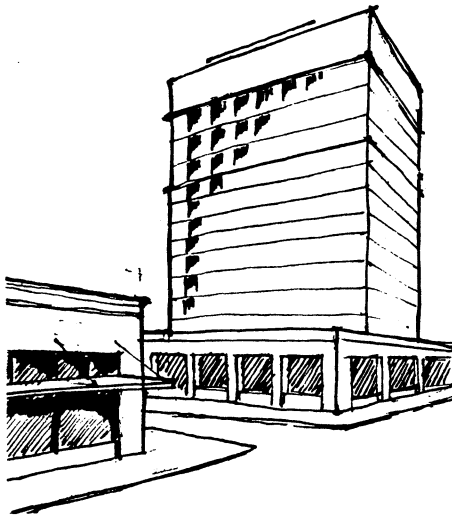


Buildings should appear similar in height and width to those seen historically.

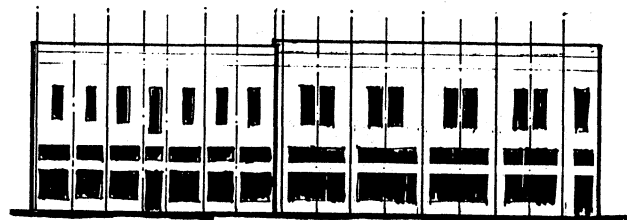
Chapter 4: Design Guidelines for New Construction



Floor-to-floor heights should appear to be similar to those seen historically



Divide larger buildings into "modules" that appear similar in scale to buildings seen traditionally.



Rhythm of solids to voids in front facades should be consistent.

- in building heights, including one and two story portions.
- Use of setbacks at upper levels may be used.
- The height limit is established in the zoning ordinance.

Floor-to-floor heights should appear to be similar to those seen historically.

- In particular, the first floor windows should appear similar in height to those seen traditionally.
- The width and height of windows, doors, and entries should be visually compatible with buildings, structures, public ways, and places in the surrounding area.

Divide larger buildings into "modules" that appear similar in scale to buildings seen traditionally.

- A long unbroken facade in a setting of existing narrow structures can be divided into smaller bays which will compliment the visual setting and the streetscape.
- If a larger building is divided into multiple "modules", these should be expressed three-dimensional, throughout the entire building, including the roof.

RHYTHM

Rhythm of entrance porch and other projections should be consistent to that seen traditionally.

- The relationship of entrances and other projections to sidewalks should be designed with the street scene provided by the existing buildings, structures, public ways, and places to which the new structure is visually related.

Rhythm of solids to voids in front facades should be consistent.

Chapter 4: Design Guidelines for New Construction

- The relationship of solids spaces (i.e., walls) to voids (i.e., windows/doors) in the front facade of a building or structure should be visually compatible with buildings, structures, public ways in the surrounding urban environment.

Rhythm of spacing and buildings/ structures on street should be kept consistent with that of the existing environment.

- The relationship of a building or structure to the open space between it and adjoining buildings or structures should respect the surrounding environment.

SOLID-TO-VOID RATIO

The ratio of window-to-wall should be similar to that seen traditionally on commercial storefront buildings in the district.

- First floors should be more transparent (i.e., they should have more glass) than upper floors.
- Upper floors should appear more solid than first floors.
- Avoid deviating from this ratio in new construction.

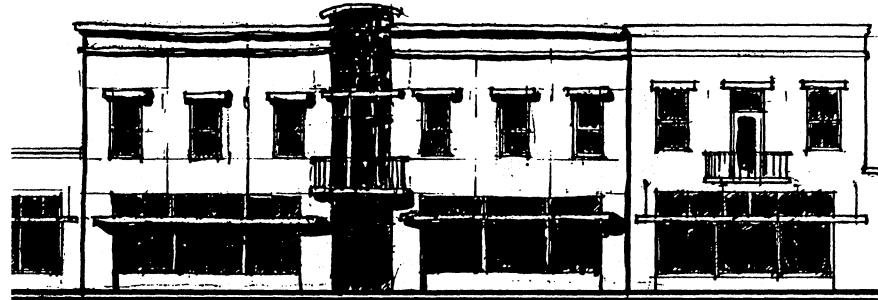
MATERIALS GUIDELINES

Simple material finishes are encouraged.

- Matte finishes are preferred.
- Polished stone, for example, is inappropriate as a primary material.

Materials should appear similar to those used historically.

- Traditional materials are preferred, primarily stone and/or brick.
- New materials may be considered, but they should appear



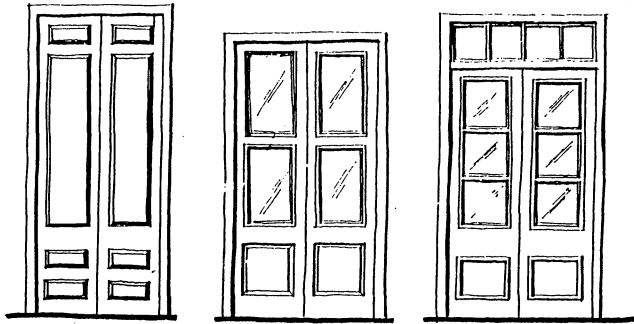
NEW CONSTRUCTION EXISTING

Ratio of window to wall should be consistent to that seen traditionally. First floors should be more transparent than upper floors.

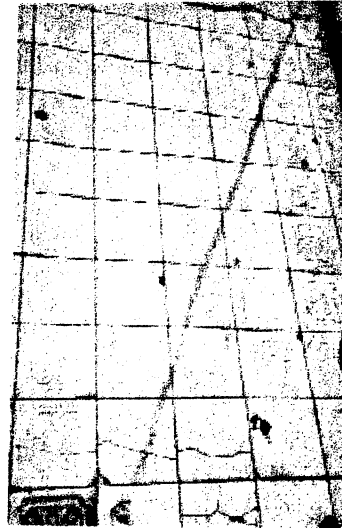


Materials should appear similar to those used historically.

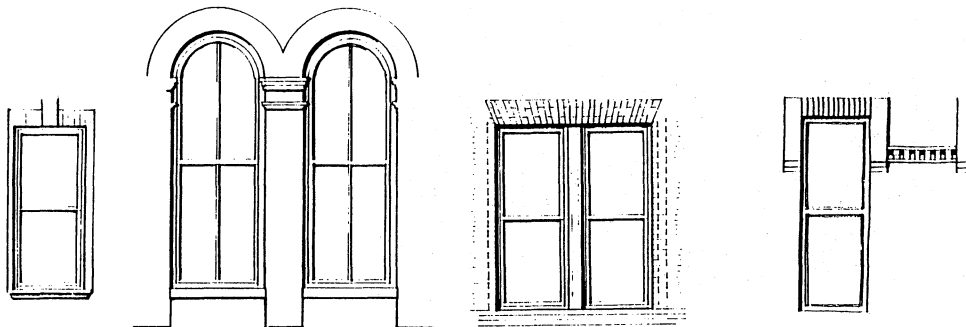
Chapter 4: Design Guidelines for New Construction



Doors should follow the styles, types, and proportions that are used traditionally.



Paving materials and scale should be similar to those used historically.



Windows should follow the styles, types and proportions that are used traditionally within the district.

similar in character to those used traditionally in the district. For instance, brick should be similar in size to that used historically.

- New materials must have a demonstrated durability in this setting.
- Materials should be used in a manner similar to that used traditionally.

Paving materials and scale should be similar to those used historically.

- Acceptable paving materials include flagstone, small size clay tile/ brick pavers, or other smaller scaled pavers.

WINDOWS AND DOORS

Upper story windows with a vertical emphasis are encouraged.

Windows and doors should be trimmed with painted wood or metal; this trim should have a dimension similar to that used historically.

First floor windows may be arched, or they may have a flat, plate glass appearance.

ROOFS

Roof forms should be similar to those used historically.

- The roof shape of a building or structure is a major distinguishing visual element. In most cases, a simple roof form similar in form and type as those in the adjacent urban environment is appropriate.

Chapter 4: Design Guidelines for New Construction

- Flat or gable roofs, concealed by a parapet, are appropriate.
- "Exotic" roof forms, including mansards, are inappropriate.
- Decorative parapets are appropriate.

ALIGNMENT OF FACADE ELEMENTS

Maintain the alignment of horizontal elements along the block, including building cornices.

- This alignment occurs because many of the building are similar in height.
- Window sills, moldings and cornices are among those elements that may be seen to align.

ENTRANCES

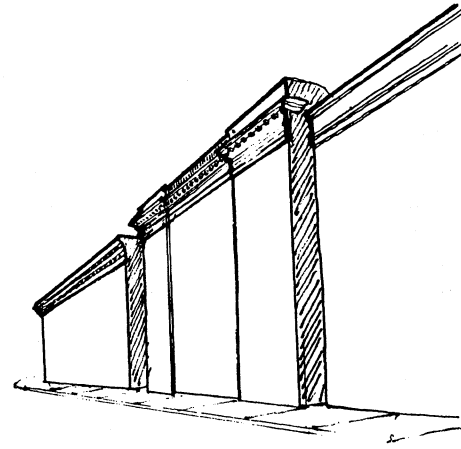
The building entrance should appear similar to those used historically.

- Locate the primary entrance facing the street.
- Clearly define the primary entrance.

The primary building entrance should be recessed.

- Entrance designs also must comply with requirements of the Uniform Building Code.

The primary building entrance should be in scale with those seen traditionally.



Roof forms should be similar to those used historically.



The primary building entrance should appear similar to those seen historically.

**Chapter 5:
Design Guidelines for Signs**

Chapter 5: Design Guidelines for Signs

The design guidelines should be used with the City of Laredo's Sign and Outdoor Advertising Ordinance. The more restrictive guidelines shall apply. Signs permanently hung on windows inside of the building that are intended to be viewed from the street are also subject to these guidelines.

Signs reflect the character of the districts, the City as well as the social and business activities in the area. They identify, direct, decorate, promote, inform and advertise. They serve as a form of communication from the owner to the reader.

Pre-Nineteenth Century Signs

The earliest commercial signs were painted on buildings or mounted on poles, suspended from buildings or painted on hanging wooden boards. Symbols were included to depict the merchant's goods or tradesman's craft. Flat signs with lettering mounted flush against the building replaced the hanging signs for safety reasons. There are no existing hanging signs today in Laredo.

Nineteenth Century Signs

Fascia sign, or the horizontal band between the storefront and the second floor, were common. Similarly, signs were placed between the levels of windows across the upper facades, either mounted horizontally on boards or painted on the buildings. This type of signs had the name of the business and short description or message. Other painted signs included figures, projects or scenes.

Other form of signs included plaques, hanging or projecting signs. The plaques had the advantage of easily being replaced by new tenants. The projecting signs at the corner of the buildings



Early Nineteenth Century Laredo



View of Flores Ave. in early Twentieth Century Laredo

Chapter 5: Design Guidelines for Signs



View of Hidalgo St. in early Twentieth Century Laredo

were often at a 45 degree angle for better visibility. Goldleaf signs were painted or etched on the glass in windows, doors and transoms.

Twentieth Century Signs

With the arrival of electricity, signs were given light and movement. Neon signs offered sign-makers an opportunity to mold light into a variety of shapes, colors and images.

Plastic signs offer advantages over the others. They can take on any shape and color, it can be translucent, it is durable and inexpensive. It became a dominant sign feature.

Technological breakthroughs with the rise of chain stores and franchises replaced local business signs. Mass production gave rise to standardization and eliminated the regional differences and local character.

Chapter 5: Design Guidelines for Signs

SIGN CONTEXT

A sign typically serves two functions: First, to attract attention, second to convey information. If the building front is well designed, it alone can serve the attention-getting function, allowing the sign to be focused on conveying information in a well conceived manner. All new signs should be developed with the overall context of the building and the district in mind.

Consider the building front as part of an overall sign program.

- The overall facade composition, including ornamental details and signs, should be coordinated.
- Signs also should be in proportion to the building, such that they do not dominate the appearance.
- A master sign plan for the entire building front should be developed initially and approved by the Board. This plan should be used to guide individual sign design decisions.

A sign should be subordinate to the overall building composition.

- A sign should appear to be in scale with the facade.
- Locate a sign on a building such that it will emphasize design elements of the facade itself. In no case should a sign obscure architectural details or features.
- Mount signs to fit within existing architectural features. Signs should help reinforce the horizontal lines of moldings and transoms seen along the street.
- The total area of all sign faces on a facade module may not exceed seventy-five square feet.

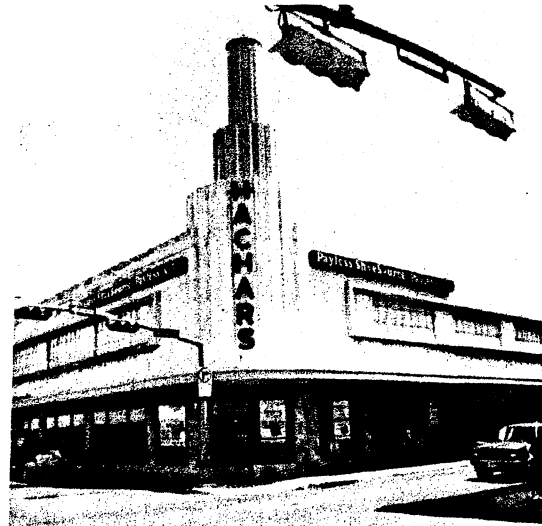


Consider the building front as part of an overall sign program.



A sign that predominates in the overall building composition is inappropriate.

Chapter 5: Design Guidelines for Signs



Consider the building front as part of an overall sign program



Any sign that visually over-powers the building or obscures significant features is inappropriate.

Laredo streets are narrow. Signs should be sized to be viewed within the context of the distance they are to be viewed.

A sign should be in character with the material, color and detail of the building.

- Simple letter styles and graphic designs are more appropriate on many of the restrained, vernacular structures found.

PERMITTED TYPES OF SIGNS

Flush-mounted wall signs may be considered.

- A flush-mounted wall sign is one that is mounted flat to the wall; in most cases, a flush-mounted wall sign should be positioned just above the display window. It should not be located above second floor windows.
- When feasible, place a wall sign such that it aligns with others in the block.
- When planning a wall sign, determine if decorative moldings exist that could define a "sign panel." If so, locate flush-mounted signs such that they fit within the panels on the facade. In no case should a sign obscure significant facade features.
- As a general rule of thumb, wall sign area on a building should not exceed 7% of the overall facade area.
- The recommended height of an individual flush-mounted sign is three feet.
- Only one flush-mounted sign shall be allowed for each distinct facade module.

Projecting signs may be considered.

Chapter 5: Design Guidelines for Signs

- A projecting sign should be located near the business entrance, just above the door or to the side of it. The bottom of the projecting sign should be visible by pedestrians and shall have a minimum of nine feet above the sidewalk.
- The maximum size of an individual projecting sign (one face) shall be six square feet. It may not extend from the building facade for a greater distance than three feet.
- In general, only one projecting sign per building facade is allowed. However, where the Board determines that the result would be compatible within the districts, one projecting sign shall be allowed for each distinct facade module of a building.
- Note that other approvals may be required to allow a sign to overhang the public right-of-way.

A window sign may be considered.

- A window sign may be painted on or hung just inside the window.
- The recommended maximum area of a window sign shall not exceed 20% of the window or eight square feet, whichever is the lesser amount.

An awning sign may be considered.

- An awning sign may be woven, sewn or painted onto the fabric of an awning. A panel sign painted on the edge of a rigid canopy also shall be considered an awning sign.
- It is recommended that the maximum area of an awning sign shall not exceed 20% of the awning panel or eight square feet, whichever is the greater amount.

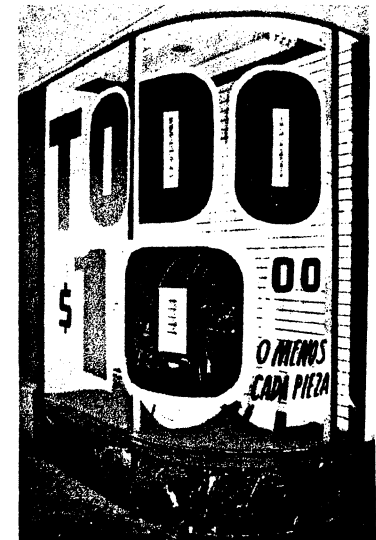
A directory sign may be considered.



A projecting sign that is greater than 6 sq. ft. and extends from the building facade for a distance greater than 3 ft. is inappropriate.



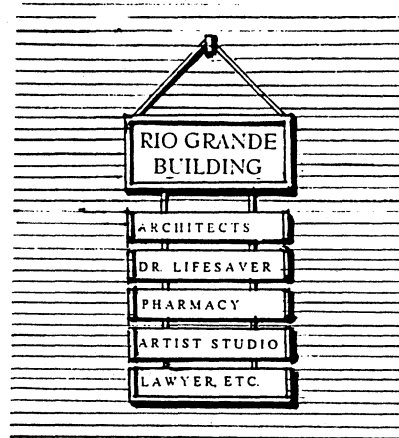
A window sign is inappropriate if it exceeds 20% of the window area or 8 sq.ft., whichever is the lesser amount.



Chapter 5: Design Guidelines for Signs



Awning sign



Directory sign

- Where several businesses share a building, coordinate the signs. Align several smaller signs, or group them into a single panel as a directory to make them easier to locate.
- Use similar forms or backgrounds for the signs to tie them together visually and make them easier to read.
- The maximum area of a directory sign shall not exceed eight square feet.

INAPPROPRIATE SIGN TYPES

Signs that are out of character with those seen historically, and that would alter the historic character of the street, are inappropriate. Allowable incidental signs including signs designating business hours, display menus, and street numbers, shall conform to standards outlined in these guidelines. Billboards, junior billboards, portable signs, and advertising benches shall not be permitted within the historic districts or on historic district landmarks. Other signs which shall not be permitted within these historic districts include:

- Any sign placed on a building, object, site or structure in any manner so as to disfigure, damage, or conceal any window opening, door, or significant architectural feature or detail of any building.
- Any sign which advertises off-premises businesses, products, activities, services or events.
- Any signs which does not, or no longer identifies a business or service within the historic district or historic landmark; (exception, ghost signs painted on a building, which identify original use or are considered of historic value).



A sign placed on a building is considered inappropriate if it disfigures, damages, or conceals any opening or significant architectural feature or detail.

Chapter 5: Design Guidelines for Signs

- Any sign which is abandoned or damaged, including parts of old or unused signs. All remnants such as supports, brackets and braces must be also removed.
- Any sign, poster, decal or advertisement which is tacked, nailed, pasted, taped or placed in an otherwise non-conforming manner.
- V-type signs, including sandwich board signs, unless deemed by the Board as appropriate to the character of the district or landmark.
- Roof-mounted signs, except in the cases of landmark signs or unless deemed by the Board as appropriate to the character of the district or landmark.
- Free-standing signs, either pole-mounted or monument types are inappropriate but may be considered in special cases such as parking lots and cannot exceed eight feet in height.
- Animated signs prohibited.
- Sandwich (or menu) boards that stand on the sidewalk are not allowed because sidewalks are narrow.
- Any sign that visually over-powers the building or obscures significant architectural features is inappropriate.
- Lighted vending machines are considered signs and are inappropriate.
- See also the City's Sign Ordinance for other prohibited signs.



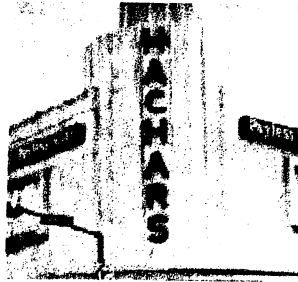
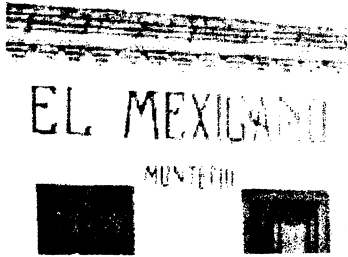
Roof mounted signs are considered inappropriate.

SIGN MATERIALS

Sign materials shall be compatible with that of the building facade.

- Painted wood and metal are appropriate materials for signs and their use is encouraged. Unfinished materials, including unpainted wood, are discouraged because they are out of character with the historic context.

Chapter 5: Design Guidelines for Signs



- The use of plastic on signs should be discouraged. Plastic may not be the predominant material on any sign.
- Highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read are inappropriate.
- Chase lights on signs are inappropriate.

SIGN CONTENT

Symbol signs are encouraged.

- Symbols add interest to the street, are quickly read, and are remembered better than written words.
- Corporate logo signs may be used but should be sized to appropriate viewing distance.

Use colors for the sign that are compatible with those of the building front.

Simple sign designs are preferred.

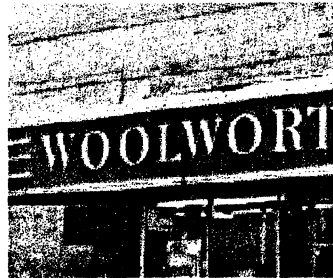
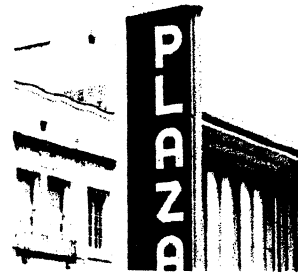
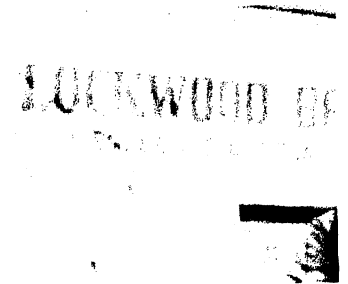
- Typefaces that are in keeping with those seen in the area historically are encouraged.
- Also limit the number of colors used on a sign. In general, no more than three colors should be used.

TEMPORARY SIGNS

All freestanding temporary signs, including real estate and construction signs shall be removed when the work is complete.

Construction and real estate signs shall be sized as to convey the appropriate information but not overwhelm the structures.

Small temporary signs advertising special events or promotions may be placed only on the inside of windows; such signs shall be



Typefaces that are in keeping with those seen in the area historically are encouraged.

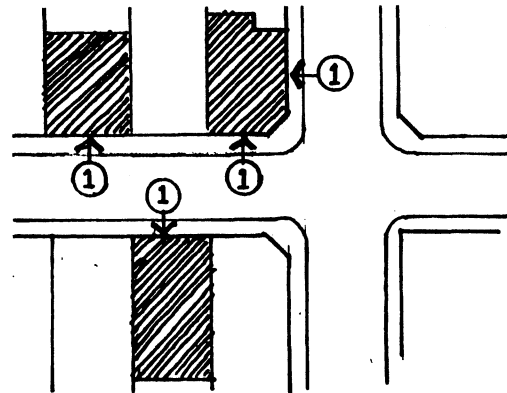
Chapter 5: Design Guidelines for Signs

removed promptly after an event is over. No off-premises events may be advertised in this manner; all off-premises advertising must be displayed in the interior where it is not visible for the public right of way.

Banners, pennants, and flags are considered temporary signs under the provisions of these guidelines and are appropriate for advertising and decoration only during special events or celebrations. No permanent advertising may be handled this way, and no permanent features such as flag poles or brackets may be erected unless part of the overall design of the street lighting or urban design. All temporary signs are subject to all provisions of these guidelines and all other city codes and ordinances.

STANDARDS FOR SIGN DESIGN AND PLACEMENT

- Primary design considerations shall be identification and legibility. Size, scale, height, color and location of signs shall be harmonious with, and properly related to the overall adjacent land use and historic characteristics of the district.
- Signs, visual displays or graphics shall relate to the historic district and shall advertise a bona fide business conducted in or on the premises.
- The unsightly clutter and confusion created by the number of signs on each building shall be avoided. Business signs on buildings shall be limited to one sign per premise for interior lots, and two signs for corner lots. All signs, excluding incidental and temporary signs, shall be included in the total allowable signage per facade per structure.



Business signs on buildings shall be limited to one sign per premise for interior lots, and two signs for corner lots.

**Chapter 6:
Recommendations**

Chapter 6: Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CITY OF LAREDO

These recommendations are intended to reinforce the goals and objectives of the guidelines and to provide guidance on future policy which can supplement these guidelines.

Rio Grande (Rio Bravo del Norte)

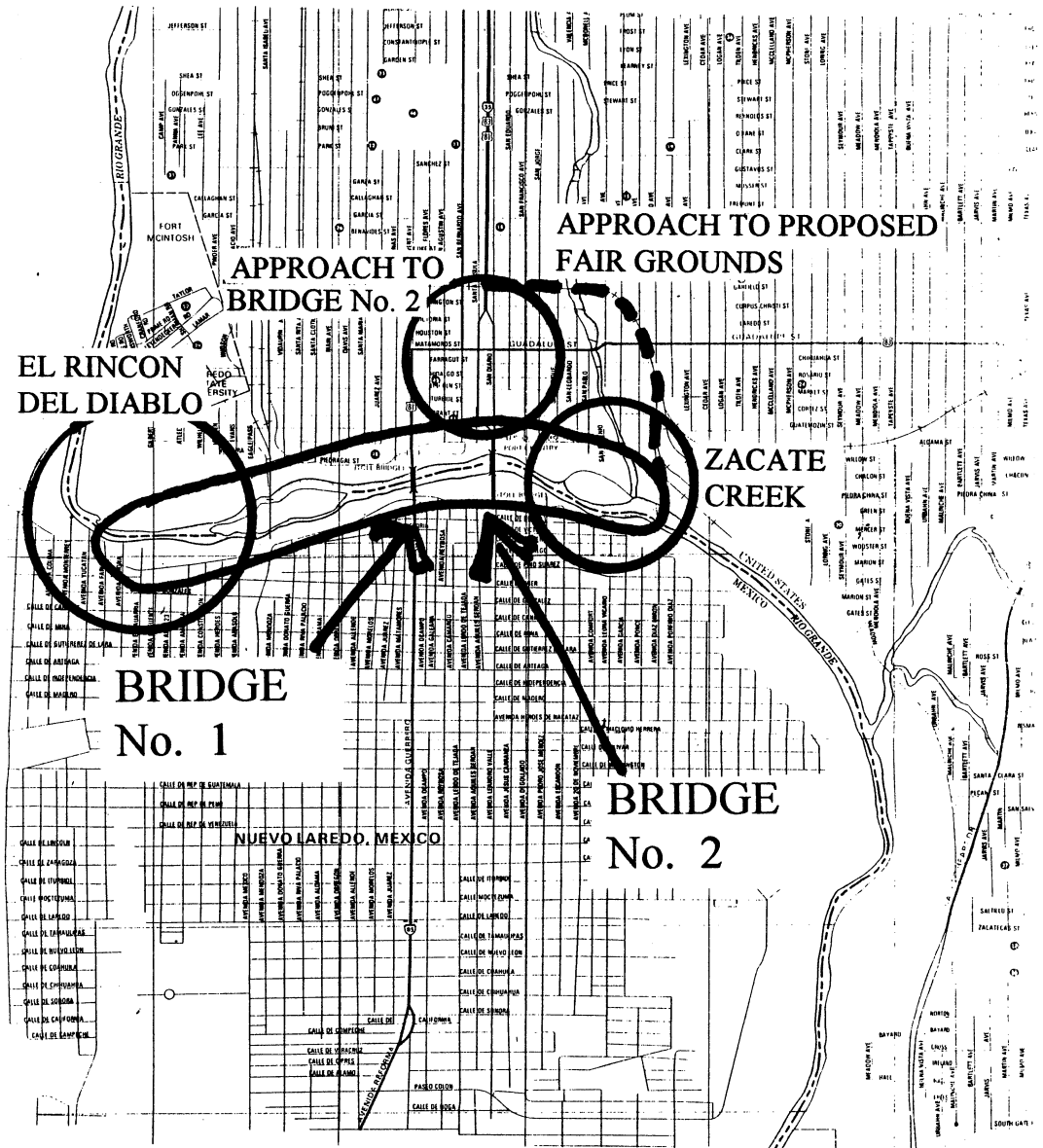
The Rio Grande is a river that must be respected for its potential natural power simply because of the water shed involved. River boat transportation played an important role in the development of the original layout of the villa and town of Laredo. As a linkage between the two Laredos, a river boat could be an alternative mode of crossing and an asset to the development of the river front.

Recommend the north bank of the Rio Grande from Fort McIntosh to Zacate Creek be developed as a linear park connecting the various existing and proposed historic districts.

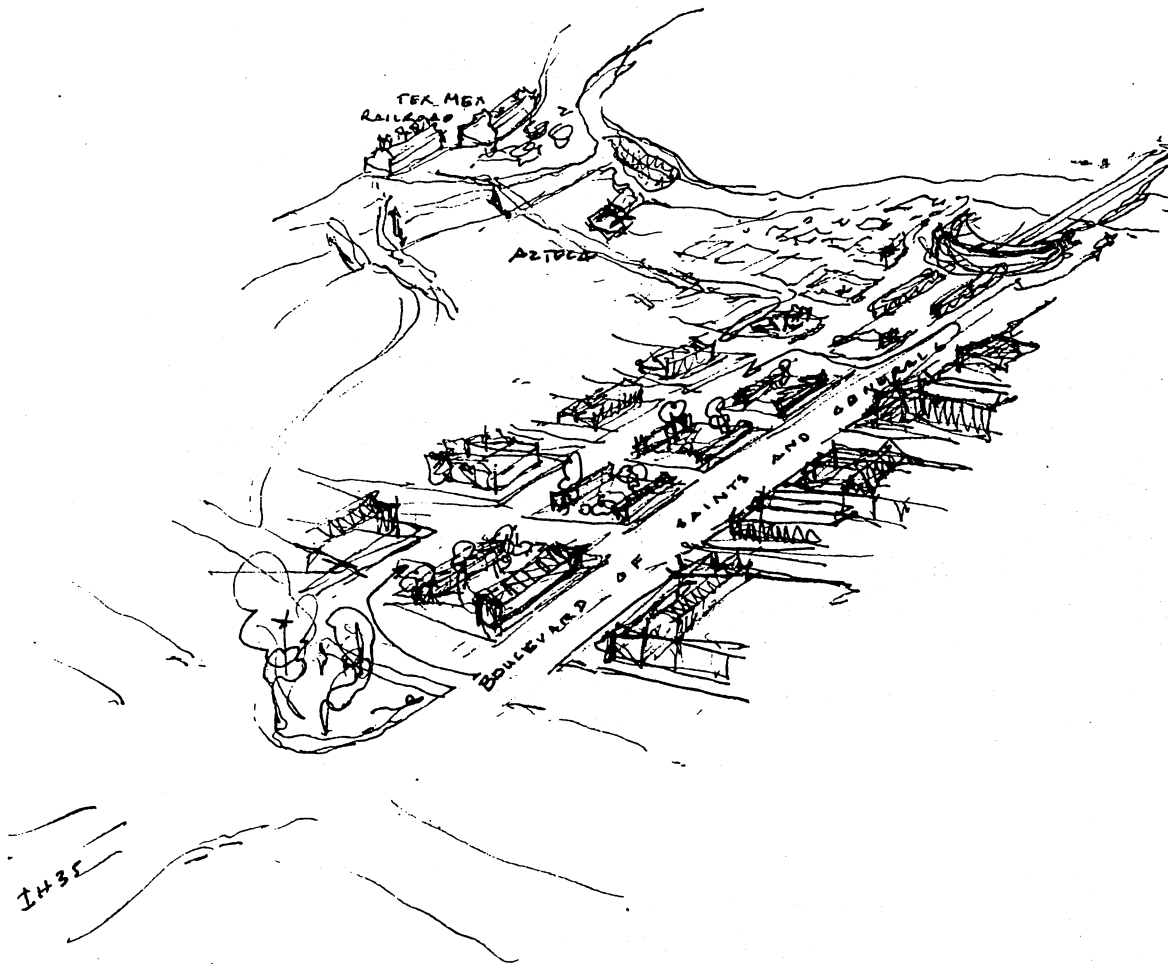
Land between San Agustín Historic District and the River

The river crossing and the banks of the river are the reason Laredo exists today. The area between the San Agustín Historic District and the river historically was the site of early crossings of the river, first by fording, then by ferry and later by the bridges built across the river. Since the late 19th century, with the exception of Los Dos Laredos Park, development on the river has been limited, primarily because the river has been hostile at times of flooding.

Recommend this area of the river front receive special attention within the linear park and be marked as a historic crossings site.



Chapter 6: Recommendations



Retail, cafe, bars, play areas, seating integrated into green spaces as an infill projects to reconnect severed historic areas and reclaim green spaces as a pedestrian amenity and tourist area.

Bridge No. 1

Recommend Bridge No. 1 be used primarily as a pedestrian bridge with light vehicular traffic or trolley.

Bridge No. 2

Recommend Bridge No. 2 be used primarily for automobile traffic. The large truck traffic should be rerouted to the newer bridges at the city's edge.

Parkway between north and south bound lanes at approach to Bridge No.2

Recommend the approach to the bridge be developed as an esplanade or "rambla" with landscaped walkways, fountains, benches and vending carts to make the parkway space inviting to serve as an east/west linkage from the San Agustín Historic District to the proposed Azteca Historic District. (See sketch).

Railroad Line between Fort McIntosh and St. Peter's Historic District

Recommend this railroad line be developed as a light rail commuter line between Laredo and Nuevo Laredo. This railroad line should be enhanced to link between Fort McIntosh and the St. Peter's Historic District.

Land between Bridge No. 2 and Zacate Creek

Recommend this area and the river bank be made a historic park. Leave existing trees and major foliage in natural state, selectively removing undesired foliage which compromises security.

Chapter 6: Recommendations

Texas/Mexico Railroad Switch Yard

Recommend that this area east of Zacate Creek be developed as permanent fair grounds.

Recommend to use the railroad tracks from I.H.-35 to the switchyard as the approach and entry to the fairgrounds.

Zacate Creek Sewer Treatment Plant

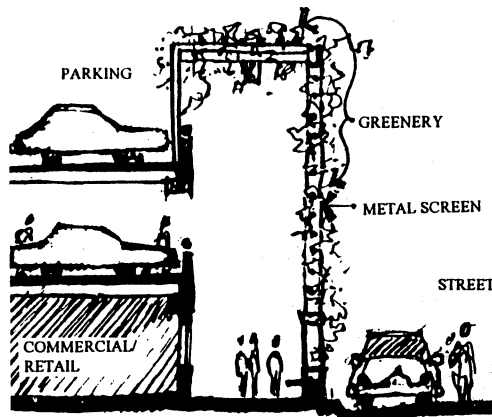
Recommend the sewer treatment plant be upgraded to a water treatment plant capable of treating the water for re-use and removing offensive odors.

Parking facilities in the historic downtown areas.

Recommend that multilevel parking structures be provided in order to alleviate the demand for parking. Currently, there are two sites on which such parking facilities are feasible. One site is located on Matamoros St. between Convent and Flores avenues, the second site is on San Agustin Ave. between Grant and Iturbide streets. The parking structures should provide 200+ parking spaces with shops at street level and pedestrian protection from the sun and the natural elements. The design of these structures should be responsive to the surrounding urban and architectural context as explained in Chapter 4: Guidelines for new Construction.

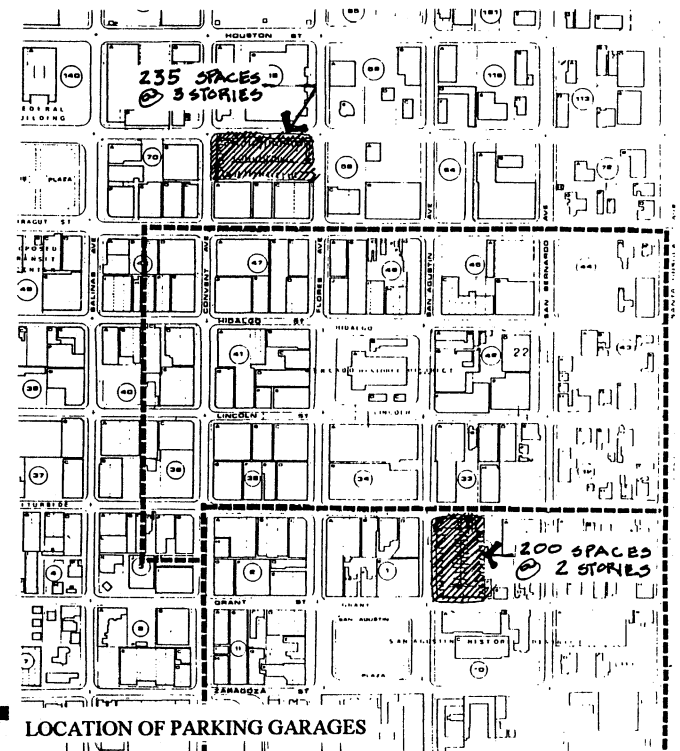
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUILDING REHABILITATION

The ten buildings selected for rehabilitation represent a variety of styles throughout the historic districts. The selection was based on buildings that represent various architectural styles common to the historic districts. The buildings selected are located near



SECTION

Section through parking garage colonnade and shops at street level.



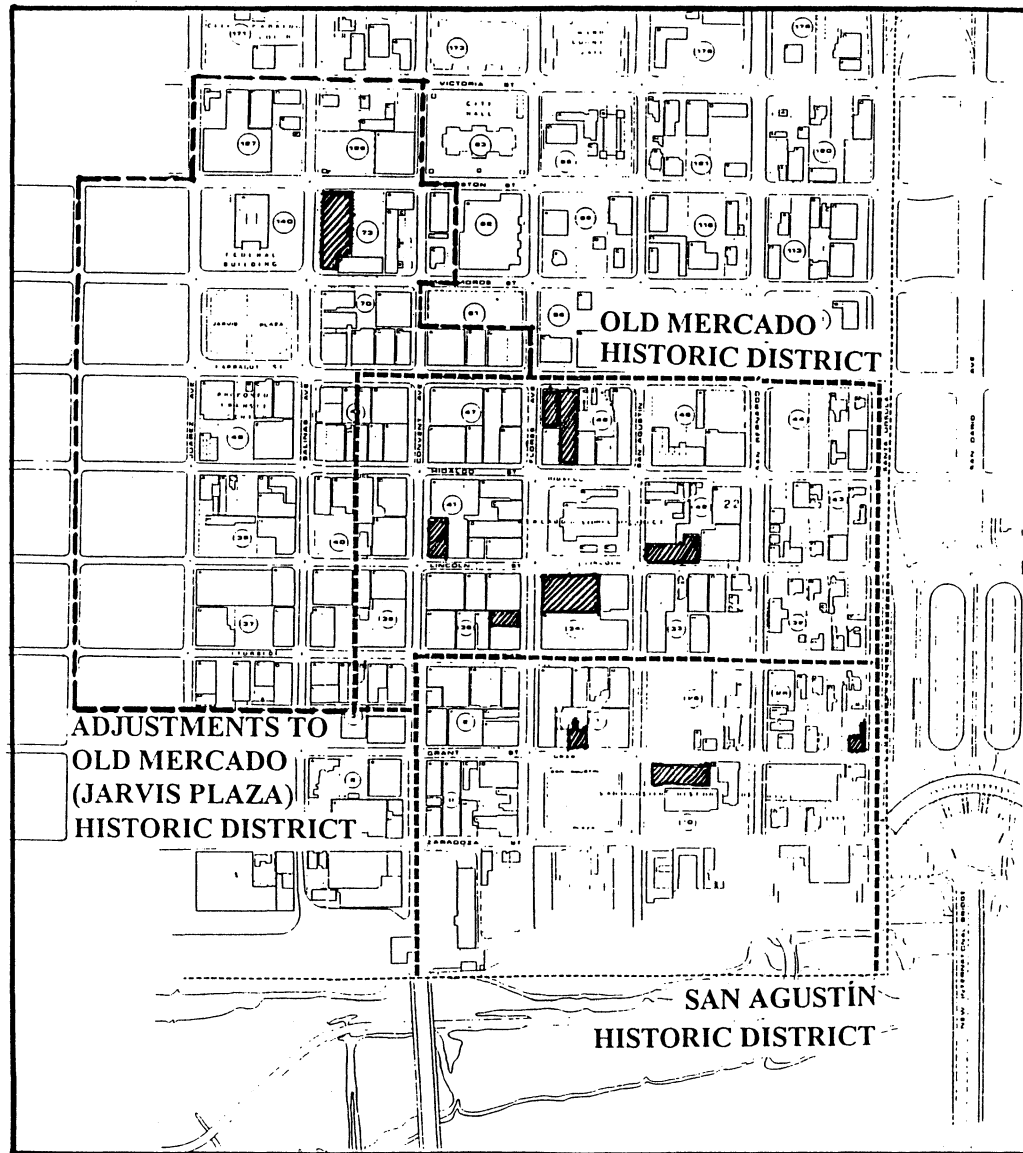
Possible locations for multistory parking structures.



SECTION

Typical section through proposed parking garage.

Chapter 6: Recommendations



Location of the ten buildings selected for rehabilitation.

the plazas and along the edges to encourage rehabilitation efforts. For the most part, the buildings are accessible by the public or are located in high visibility areas to generate interest for rehabilitation.

Recommendations of Buildings to be Rehabilitated are:

- Hamilton Hotel, 815 Salinas Ave.
- Former Laredo National Bank, 419 Flores Ave.
- Former Ugarte Building (current Samson Store), 501 Convent Ave.
- San Agustín Parochial School, Grant and San Agustín.
- Former Werner Building (current Sports Americana), 508 Flores Ave.
- Plaza Theater, 1018 Hidalgo St.
- Former José María Rodríguez residence (now Mrs. Baird Bakery Thrift Store), 1012 Grant St.
- Former Union Bank, corner of Farragut and Flores streets
- Former Treviño Wholesale Grocery, NE corner of Lincoln & San Agustín streets.
- Former Benavides/ Herrera Residence, 802 Grant St.

Minimum Facade Rehabilitation Efforts are required on the following Buildings:

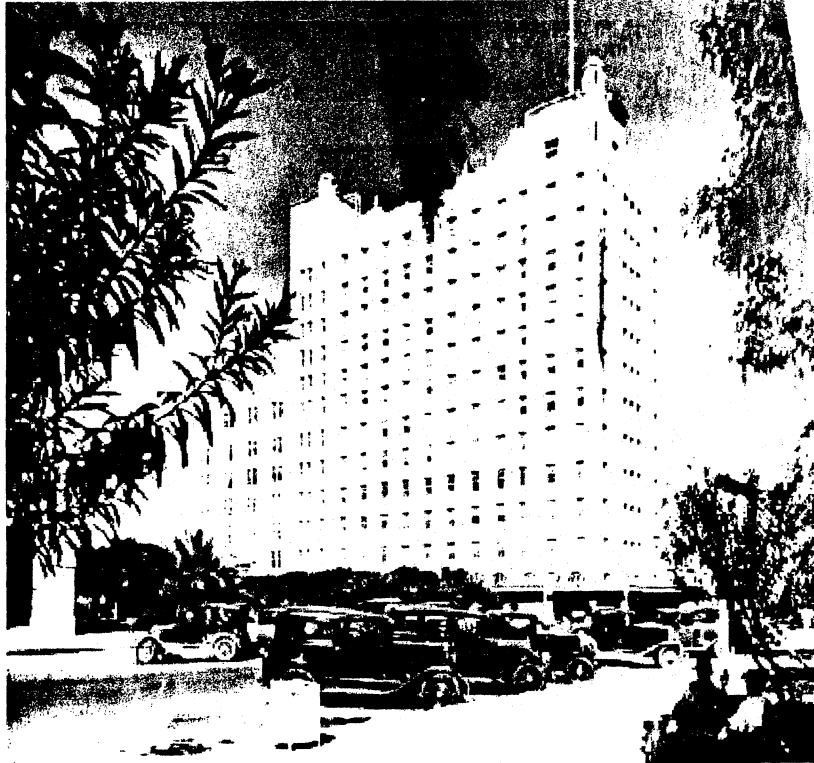
- Kress Building, 1202 Hidalgo Street
- Former Milmo National Bank, 1300 Lincoln Street
- Former John Valls Building, 1102 Hidalgo Street
- Bender Hotel, 1416 Matamoros Street
- Former Bridget Farrell Building (currently I. Alexander), 406 Flores Ave.
- Former Stower's Building (current Sanborn Building), 1101 Farragut

Chapter 6: Recommendations

General Recommendations for all the historic districts include:

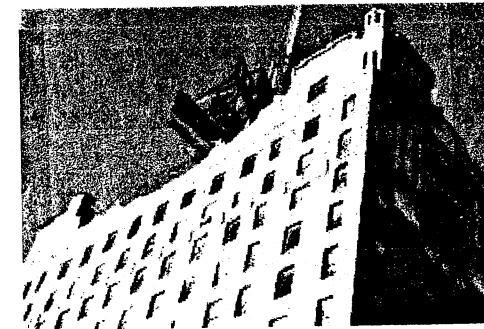
- Restore historic scale pavers in the plazas and sidewalks. Historic pavers include thick flagstone pavers, small size clay tile/ clay brick (8 x 8 or 4 x 8 inches).
- Relocate the overhead utility lines underground to provide a cohesive aesthetic appearance to the historic districts.
- Provide site lighting fixtures that are historic in scale and thematic to the historic districts.
- Provide ample general lighting throughout the districts.
- Consolidate the traffic light signals and other signage, including street furniture.
- Reduce arms on traffic lights to appropriate length.
- Hire a City Building Inspector that is knowledgeable about historic preservation to review and police violations of Historic District Ordinances.
- Schedule periodic training sessions for all plan checkers and building inspectors.
- Schedule training sessions for all new Historic District/Landmark Board members.
- Develop incentives to convert existing buildings in Historic Districts and adjacent areas into housing.
- Develop a one time rebate program for historic restoration of historic structures within Historic Districts. This could be funded through Hotel/Motel Tax.

Chapter 6: Recommendations



The Hamilton Hotel was designed in the Art Deco Style and at one time was a symbol of prosperity for Laredo.

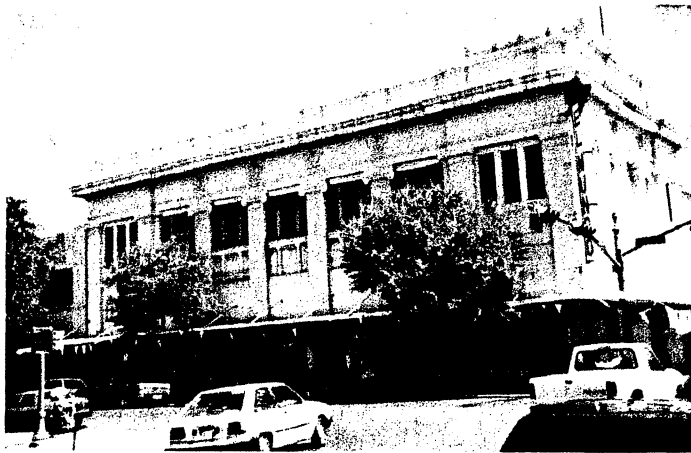
- Restore the storefront windows at the lower level. .
- Re-point and clean the masonry.
- Relocate the air handling units above the canopy and replace the window air condition units with an HVAC system that is not visible from street level.
- Restore the transom clerestory windows above the canopy.
- Replace the missing ceramic tiles to match color, texture and pattern.



Hamilton Hotel, 815 Salinas Ave.

The Hamilton Hotel, built in two phases, 1923 and 1928 by Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres in a combination of Spanish Renaissance/ Art Deco Style. The building's facade is brick masonry and is divided into lower, middle, and upper levels. The lower level is decorated with ceramic tile of various colors and patterns. The openings at the lower level have arched openings, and the clerestory windows above the canopy have been sealed. The wall at street level has a ceramic tile wainscot. Decorative tile patterns and color occur above the canopy. A continuous metal canopy shades the sidewalk and is suspended from the building by metal rods. At the body of the building, ceramic tile patterns occur at the intermediate floors between the windows. The top of the building facing Matamoros Street is decorated with various ceramic tile colors and patterns. The roof is accented with red clay tile.

Chapter 6: Recommendations



Former Laredo National Bank, 419 Flores Ave.

This building is a three story brick masonry building constructed approximately in 1915 by San Antonio architects Adams & Adams. The building belongs to the Beaux Arts Classicism style. The brick was originally exposed and was later given a stucco finish. The building has a tri-partite composition. The corners of the building are depicted as more massive pieces flanked by heavy pilasters. The central portion is composed of fluted Ionic pilasters that extend from the top to the ground. The windows are in sets of three and at one time were operable double hung units. The window units at the first level extend well into the second level. The lobby on the first level is a two-story high space. The entablature carried by the pilasters is blank except for a series of medallions at the central portion. The elaborate cornice consists of various classical elements. The main portion of the building has wing extensions on either side.



The Laredo National Bank is an example of a Beaux-Arts Classicism Style.

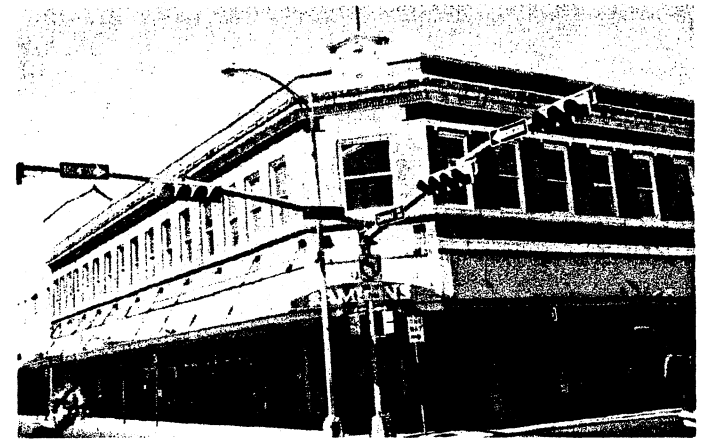
- Restore the decorative panels under the second floor windows.
- Replace the clerestory windows located above the existing canopies..
- Remove the existing canopy and restore the windows.
- Restore the entrance canopy.

Chapter 6: Recommendations



The building is occupied by Samsons Store. It is an example of a Twentieth Century Commercial Building.

- Restore the windows on the second floor and clerestory windows.
- Restore the base under the windows with ceramic tile.
- Provide lighting under the canopy and restore the metal soffit.
- Restore the cornice and canopy, including the ornamental cables.
- Restore the storefront openings.



Former Ugarte Building, 501 Convent Ave.

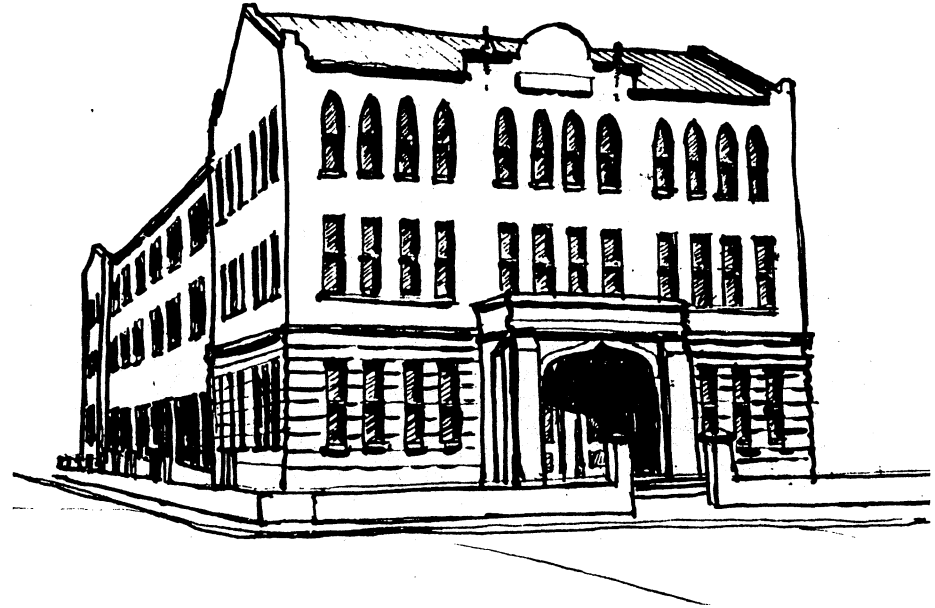
This is a 20th Century Commercial type building. It is a two story brick masonry structure. There are storefront windows at street level. The building is angled at 45 degrees so that it addresses the corner and provides an entrance. There is a band of clerestory windows above the suspended canopy. At the second level there are equally spaced recessed windows which have a continuous sill and lintel band that is done in stone. The wall at the corner piece has an emblem which crowns the parapet, below the cornice the name of the building is engraved on a stone plate.

Chapter 6: Recommendations



Saint Augustine Parochial School, 215 San Agustín Ave.

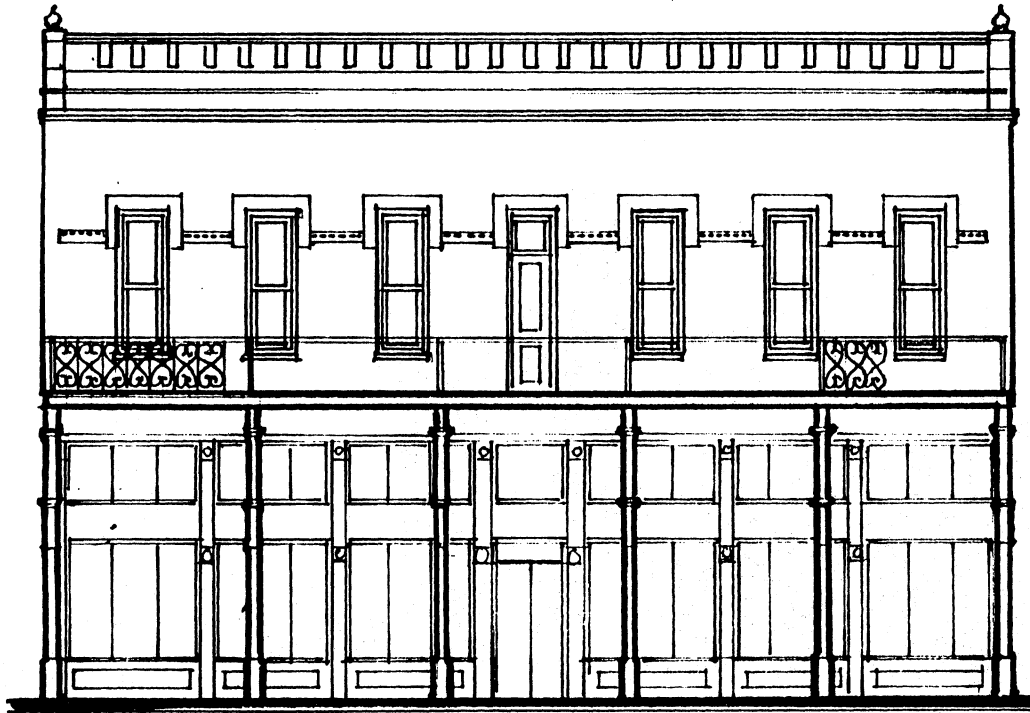
The building consists of a three story, gable roof, brick masonry structure. It was done in a Gothic Revival tradition in Circa 1927. The front of the building was an addition that was made later. The base of the building was executed in a more rusticated manner utilizing a darker brick. The field brick color is in a light brown or tan color. A rhythm and pattern is achieved by the use of tall, narrow windows which is repeated on all three levels. Only the top windows have a pointed arch transom.



Rehabilitation efforts for the school are not extensive. The school is an example of Gothic Revival Style.

- Restore the windows to the original appearance.
- Replace concrete walk with historic scale pavers.
- Re-point the masonry to resist water penetration.
- Relocate the existing utility lines from the side facade to restore the historic facade.
- Provide site lighting fixtures in a historic scale and highlight the building's historic character.

Chapter 6: Recommendations



The building is currently occupied by Sports Americana. It is an example of Italianate Style.

- Restore the porch columns, storefront, architectural details and access to the balcony, provided it is structurally feasible.
- Provide awnings of historical character between the columns to shelter passers-by.
- Relocate the building sign to accentuate the architectural details.
- Replace and restore the window with slightly recessed windows.
- Restore the original color scheme.



Former Werner Building, 508 Flores Ave.

This is a brick and stucco masonry, two-story building. It has storefront and clerestory windows at the lower level. There is cast iron ornamentation on the columns. There is a loggia with tall columns that support a balcony above. These columns used to be detailed in cast iron as well. The window openings above were recessed and were equally spaced. The lintel above the windows is defined in a raised brick pattern. There is an ornamental band across the facade that comes down approximately one third from the window top. The cornice is composed of Classic elements and details.

Chapter 6: Recommendations



Plaza Theater, 1018 Hidalgo St.

The Plaza Theater was constructed in 1947 by the H.B. Zachary Construction Co. of Laredo. This building belongs to the Art Moderne architectural style. The facade is a composition of horizontal and vertical, convex and concave elements. At the ground level is a concave entrance space with the entrance doors and the protruding octagonal ticket booth. Above the entrance area is the marquee, a bold horizontal element that hovers over the entrance. Above the marquee is a large concave space that holds a series of tall and thin vertical metal panels. This area is capped by a cantilevered flat roof and circular element. There are two vertical elements that give coherence to the building: a large concave cylinder on the east side, and at the west side, a tall, solid, vertical, extruded element that carries large letters that spell out " P L A Z A ". On top of this element is a tall cylindrical spire topped with a small sphere. These two vertical elements are tied together by the horizontal marquee. Green tile is the predominant material that is used on the facade.



The Plaza Theater faces the Old Mercado Plaza. Rehabilitation efforts to the exterior are minimal. It is an important structure for rehabilitation and is an example of an Art Moderne Style.

- Restore the neon sign and marquee.
- Re-grout and re-point the existing ceramic tile and other similar repair work.
- Repair the crack on the concrete element utilizing the proper materials and methods.
- Restore interior of theater or performance space.

Chapter 6: Recommendations



Option #1



Option #2

The building is an example of an Old Style Border/ Mexican Vernacular. The location is of high visibility.

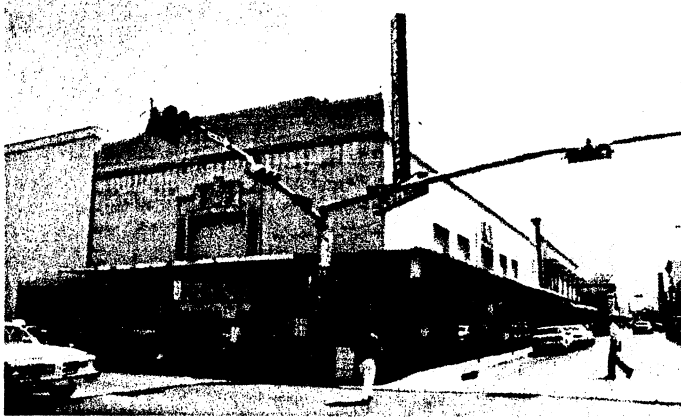
- Restore the original openings for the windows and doors.
- Replace the windows with those similar to the historic character of the building.
- Restore the architectural details, such as the cornice, lintels, etc.
- Paint the exterior with colors that are compatible to the historic character.



Former José María Rodríguez Residence, 1012 Grant St.

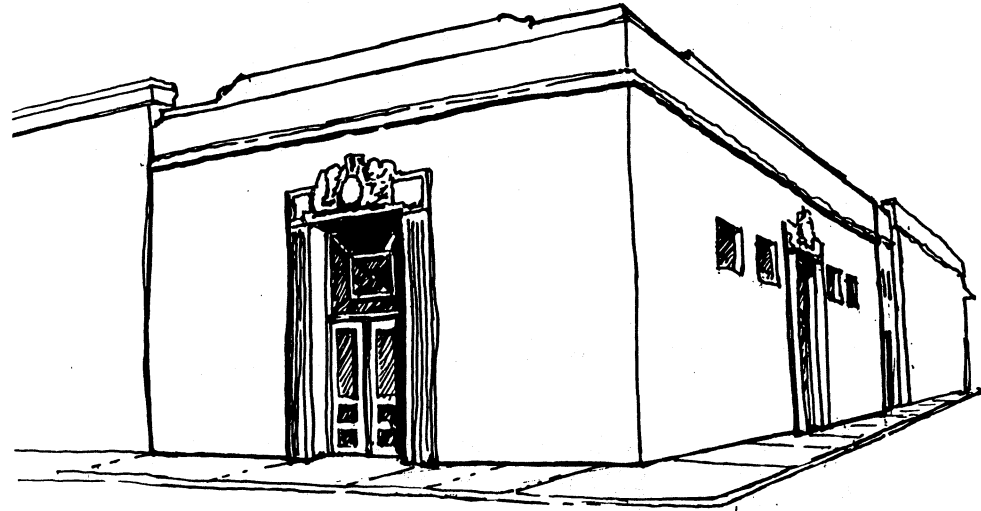
This house is of stone or brick masonry construction and finished with a lime plaster which was later scored to give an ashlar stone construction appearance. The building comes to the edge of the sidewalk. It was done in the Border/Mexican Vernacular style. The openings are heavily recessed and extend all the way to the ground. The lintels over these openings are heavy. The cornice is very simple and light.

Chapter 6: Recommendations



Former Union Bank, SE corner of Farragut and Flores

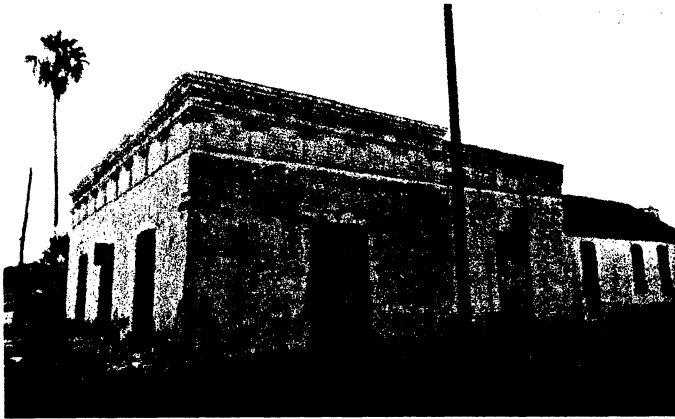
This is a one story masonry building. It is a commercial building that has a strong Art Deco influence. The building shows an ambiguity of materials. The area below the canopy, the building is of a red brick. Above the canopy, the building is of a smooth, light colored stone. On each facade there is a decorative coat of arms integrated into a lintel. The lintel is carried by a stone frame of what was the door and a main entrance. This is the only decorative element in the field of the building. The frieze is only by a projecting band in a spiral pattern. Above this band is the cornice which recedes and steps back instead of becoming a protruding element.



The building is currently unoccupied. It is an example of Art Deco Style.

- Restore the storefront level for commercial use. The original door openings under canopy have been altered.
- Restore and clean the architectural details and ornaments.
- Remove the existing canopy. The original building did not have a canopy element.
- Remove brick veneer and restore facade to its original veneer material.
- Remove the existing projecting sign. Provide new signage that is compatible with and does not obstruct the architectural details.

Chapter 6: Recommendations



Former Benavides/ Herrera Residence, 802 Grant Street

One story brick masonry house with a flat roof. This house falls under the Old Style Spanish/Mexican Vernacular Stone House (circa 1879). The openings on the main building are all double door openings with a wood lintel. The house has a very nicely detailed Classical cornice constructed of brick which was added on later. A later addition was done that was constructed of brick but in a different style. This later addition has a gable roof construction and has tall windows and a narrower door way with a flattened arch top.



The residence is currently unoccupied and is at high risk of deterioration. It is one example of the Old Style Mexican Vernacular Stone House. Its location is of highly visible along the international route.

- Patch, repair, re-point and clean the masonry and architectural details..
- Restore the historical doors and openings.
- Remove the concrete block and restore the original openings with the appropriate window material.
- Replace roof.

Glossary

Definitions which appear below relate to Historic Preservation Guidelines:

Adobe: Unbaked mud brick dried in the sun.

Accessibility: The American with Disabilities Act mandates that places of public accommodation be accessible to all users

Adaptive Reuse: The act of changing the use of a structure or site to a different use or function.

Alteration: Any construction that changes the exterior of a building, object, site, or structure, or of an interior space designated as a landmark. For buildings, objects, sites or structures, alteration shall include but is not limited to, the changing of roofing or siding materials; changing, eliminating, or adding doors, door frames, windows, windows frames, shutters, fences, railings, porches, balconies, signs, or other ornamentation; the changing of paint color; regrading; fill; imploding or other use of dynamite. Alteration shall not include ordinary repair and maintenance.

Anglo-American House-scape: A combination of patterns and features in and around a dwelling that together read as a dominant Anglo-American cultural tradition. Such forms include: a raised, single-family detached house set back from the street and sited in the open, often in the center of a plot of land; public front porches; gabled roofs; double hung sash windows; internal floor plan composed of a center or side passage with rooms directly accessing the interior hall.

Appurtenance: Any accessory or subordinate building, object or structure, fence, street furniture, fixture, vending machine, fountain, public art work, or bicycle rack located on the grounds of a historic landmark or in a historic district.

Arch: A structure built to support the weight above an opening. A true arch is curved. It consists of wedge-shaped stones or bricks called

Glossary

voussoirs (voussoirs), put together to make a curved bridge which spans the opening.

Archaeological: The science or study of the material remains of past life or activities and the physical site, location, or context in which they are found, as delineated in the Department of Interior's Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979.

Art Deco: A style of decorative arts and architecture popular in the 1920's and 1930's. Notable for its use of geometricized forms, ziggurats, fountains, animals or floral motifs in colorful glazed terra cotta, black glass, bronze or natural aluminum.

Ashlar: When the stone showing on the outside face of the wall is squared and smoothed, the work is designated as ashlar.

Awning: A roof-like covering of canvas, metal, or other material, often adjustable, over a window, door, etc., to provide protection against the sun, rain, and wind.

"Balcón Corrido": A running, continuous balcony.

Balcony: A platform projecting from the upper story, enclosed by a railing or balustrade, with an entrance from the building and supported by brackets, columns or cantilevered out.

Baluster: A short upright column or urn-shaped support of a railing.

Balustrade: A row of balusters connected by a railing. Used as a stair rail and also above the cornice on the outside of a building.

Base: The lower visible part of a building which at times is treated distinctively.

Bearing Wall: A wall which supports the floors or roofs of windows.

Glossary

Belt: A course of stones or brick projecting from a brick or stone wall, generally placed in a line with the sills of the windows.

Bevel: An angular cut that does away with a ninety degree sharp edge.

Blocking or Blocking Course: In masonry construction, a course of stones placed on top of a cornice crowning the walls.

Bracket: A supporting member made of wood or stone that carries a projecting weight such as a balcony, or the wide eaves of a roof.

Building: A building is a structure that is used as a shelter by people or things, such as a house, barn, church, hotel, warehouse, or similar structure. A building may refer to a historically related complex, such as a courthouse and jail or a house and barn.

Bungalow: A detached, single-story house placed in its own lot of land. The word is an 18th century term and is an anglicization of the Indian word "bangla" which was first given to lightly constructed houses with verandas built for British officers in 19th century India. It evolved into a popular house type in Great Britain and the United States from Circa 1905-1930's.

Canopy: A roofed structure constructed of metal, wood or other material placed so as to extend outward from a building providing a protective shield for doors, windows and other openings. The canopy may be supported by columns, suspended by cables, or may be cantilevered.

Canted corner: A corner which has been cut away at an angle.

Cantilever: A structural member which projects beyond its supporting wall or column.

Cap: The top member of a column or a pilaster.

Glossary

Cartouche: An ornament which like an escutcheon, a shield, an oval or oblong panel, has the central part plain, and usually slightly convex, to receive an inscription.

"Casa": A house or dwelling for human habitation.

"Casa Baja": A simple, one story Hispanic house.

"Casa de Ladrillo": A house constructed of brick.

"Casa de Piedra": A house constructed of stone.

"Casa Grande": A large Hispanic house usually of two or more stories. Constructed of stone or brick, it characteristically has internal courtyards.

Cemetery: Any site which contains at least one burial, marked or previously marked, dedicated to and used or intended to be used for the permanent interment of the human dead, to include perpetual care and non-perpetual care cemeteries, as defined under Texas Statutes, even though suffering neglect or abuse.

Chamfer: When the edge of any work is cut away, usually at an angle of forty-five degrees, it is said to be a chamfer.

"Chipichil": A mixture of lime, sand, and gravel used for floors and roofs of early South Texas buildings.

Clerestory Windows: Windows located relatively high up in a wall that often tend to form a continuous band. Windows above the canopy at storefronts.

Classicism: Architectural principles which emphasize the correct use of Roman, Greek, and Italian Renaissance elements.

Glossary

Climatic response: In architecture, this refers to the manner in which a building/shelter is shaped and molded by man in a way that takes most advantage of and provides most protection from the climactic conditions of the region.

Cluster: A group of compatible buildings, objects, or structures relating to and reinforcing one another.

Coffering: Decorative pattern on the underside of a ceiling, dome or vault, consisting of sunken square or polygonal (many angles) panels.

Column: A vertical structural member such as a post or a pillar that supports, or appears to support, a load.

Compatible Property: A resource in a historic district or cluster distinguished by its scale, material, compositional treatment and other features that provide the setting for more important resources and add to the character of the scene.

Composition: The putting together of elements in a specific arrangement for a specific purpose. The purpose of composition is to lead the eye of the observer through a series of patterns, sequences and effects and to ultimately bring it to a climax. The eye is not allowed to roam freely, but it is controlled by the will of the designer.

Construction: The act of adding new construction to an existing building or structure; or the erection of a new principal or accessory building or structure on a lot or property.

Contemporary: Architecture of recent times. Not necessarily the "modern style".

Context: The surrounding environment of a building or site, including other structures, site features, landscape and streets.

Glossary

Contributing Property: A resource in a historic district or cluster that contributes to the district's or cluster's historical significance through location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Contributing properties shall be afforded the same considerations as landmarks.

Coping: A protective cap of a wall or parapet; often of stone, terracotta, concrete, metal, or wood.

Corbel: A bracket of stone, wood, or metal projecting from the side of a wall and serving to support a cornice, the spring of an arch, a balustrade or other element.

Cornice: An ornamental molding usually made of wood or plaster that crowns the part of the building to which it is affixed.

Corporate Logo Sign: A sign which incorporates a corporate symbol or icon as in a trademark.

"Corredor": A hallway or loggia.

Cupola: A small room, either circular or polygonal, standing on top of a dome. By some it is called a lantern.

Cyma: Name of a molding that is frequently used. It is a simple waved line, concave at one end and convex at the other.

Dado: The finish of the lower part of a wall from floor to waist height.

Demolition: Any act or process that destroys or razes in whole or in part a landmark, wherever located, or a building, object, site, or structure within a historic district, or permanently impairs its structural integrity.

Dentil: one of a series of small projecting rectangular blocks usually located under the cornice.

Glossary

Design Guidelines: Standards set forth in this report, or which are subsequently adopted by the City of Laredo, which preserve the historic, cultural and architectural character of an area or of a building, object, site, or structure.

District: A geographically definable area, urban or rural, possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A district may also comprise individual elements separated geographically but linked by association or history.

Domestic Architecture: That branch which relates to private buildings.

Dormer: A structure containing a vertical window (or windows) that projects through a pitched roof. The term can also be used to describe the window or windows.

École des Beaux-Arts: The renown Paris-based school which favored the very rich classical style of 19th century France. It was often imitated abroad, especially in the United States, where many leading late 19th century architects had been trained at the École.

Economic Return: A change in the quality of the historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural significance of a resource, or in the characteristics that qualify the resource as historically important.

Effect: A change in the quality of the historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural significance of a resource, or in the characteristics that qualify the resource as historically important.

Effect, Adverse: A negative change in the quality of the historical, architectural, archeological, or cultural significance of a resource, or in the characteristics that qualify the resource as historically important.

Elevation: The facade of a structure; a geometrical drawing of the external upright parts of a building.

Glossary

Embattlement: An indented parapet; battlement.

Engaged Columns: Those attached to or built into walls or piers, a portion being concealed.

Entablature: The upper part of a Classical building, composed of architrave, frieze and cornice.

Euro-American Modernism: A 20th century architectural style that was born in Europe in reaction against historically based styles. It favored the use of the new materials and technology that became available. It was accepted first in central Europe in the 1920's and then in other European countries and in America from the late 1920's onwards.

Facade: The exterior face of a building.

False Front: A front wall which extends beyond the sidewalls of a building to create a more imposing facade.

Fascia: A flat board with a vertical face that forms the trim along the edge of a flat roof, or along the horizontal, or "eaves," sides of pitched roof. The rain gutter is often mounted on it.

Fenestration: Any window or similar opening on a building.

"Ferias": An Hispanic town festival usually held on the main plaza where the town makes show of their culture and heritage through dance, games, music, and food.

Footings: The spread course at the base or foundation of a wall. When a layer of different material from that of the wall (as a bed of concrete) is used, it is called a footing.

Frieze: A richly ornamented decorative band on a building usually located beneath the cornice.

Glossary

Functionalism: In architecture it refers to the concept that the building should take the form suitable to the function which it is meant to perform.

Gable: The portion, above the eaves level, of an end wall of a building with a pitched or gambrel roof. In case of a pitched roof this takes the form of a triangle. The term is also used sometimes to refer to the whole end wall.

"Galería": A loggia, or arcaded structure with one or more open sides.

Gallery: A long, covered area acting as a corridor inside or on the exterior of a building.

Gothic Revival style: The 18th and 19th century movement to revive the medieval Gothic style. For churches, Gothic continued to be the favored style well into the 20th century. It includes such architectural elements as the pointed arch, vaults, and buttresses.

Greater Value: That which benefits the citizenry economically and improves the overall quality of city life.

Grille: Wrought iron work, used extensively for protecting lower windows, also the glass opening in outside doors.

Hanging Sign: A sign hanging from a brace perpendicular to the wall.

Hip-Roof: Rises by equally inclined planes from all four sides of the buildings.

Historic District: An area designated as an "historic district" by the City, State, Federal authority and which may contain within definable geographic boundaries other buildings or structures, that, while not of such historical, cultural, architectural or archeological significance as to be designated landmarks, nevertheless contribute to the overall visual

Glossary

characteristics of the landmark or landmarks located within the district. Included are natural resources which have historical, cultural, and archaeological significance.

Hood Molding: A projecting molding around the top of a doorway or window to throw off the rain.

Hybrid Architecture: An architectural style produced by the blending of two distinct architectural styles or influences.

Indirect Lighting: Lighting from a lighting unit that emits most of its light upward so that illumination is provided primarily by reflected light; light only from a concealed light source outside the sign face which reflects from the sign face.

Internal Illumination: A light source concealed or contained within the sign, and which becomes visible through a translucent surface.

Intrusion: A building, object, site or structure which detracts from a district's or cluster's historical significance because of its incompatibility with the district's or cluster's sense of time and place and historical development, or whose physical deterioration or damage makes it infeasible to rehabilitate.

Inventory: A systematic listing of cultural, historical, architectural, or archaeological resources prepared by a city, state, or federal government or a recognized local historic authority, following standards set forth by federal, state and city regulations for evaluation of cultural properties.

"Jacal": Refers to a hut constructed of vertically placed poles plastered with mud or adobe which support a sheltering cover of thatch. This form of construction was intended to meet the most barest and most immediate necessities for shelter.

"Jacal de Leña": A hut constructed of logs.

Glossary

Joist: One of the horizontal wood beams that support the floors or ceilings of a house. They are set parallel to one another-usually form 1'-0" to 2'-0" apart-and span between supporting walls or larger wood beams.

"Laws of the Indies" ("Leyes de las Indias"): Laws of systemized standards and planning precepts issued by King Philip II of Spain in 1573 for application to all new towns to be established in the Spanish Colonies. Virtually all the Spanish settlements established between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in South, Central, and North America conform to these laws.

Light: A division or space in a sash for a single pane of glass. Also a pane of glass.

Lime Wash: A term that is loosely used to describe various types of fine plaster applied externally as a protective coating and for architectural features.

Lintel: A horizontal structural member which carries the weight over an opening.

Loggia: An arcaded or colonnaded structure that is open on one or more sides.

Mexican-American House-scape: A combination of patterns and features in and around a dwelling that together read as a dominant Mexican-American cultural tradition. Such forms include: a detached, single-family dwelling; property enclosures such as fences/walls; brilliant colors on house exteriors, religious shrines in the front yard, a profusion of potted plants placed on porches and walkways.

Molding: A decorative band or strip of material with a constant profile or section designed to cast interesting shadows. It is generally used in cornices and as trim around window or door openings.

Glossary

Multiple Resource Historic District: An area designated by the City, State or Federal authority within a defined geographical area which identifies specific cultural resources having historic, architectural, cultural, or archaeological significance.

Neo-Classicism: A movement and style which was first popular in Europe in the late 18th century and soon spread to America. It was deliberate imitation of antique Classic architecture.

Non-contributing: A building, object, site or structure which neither adds to nor detracts from a district's or cluster's sense of time and place and historical development.

Object: An object is a material thing of functional, aesthetic, cultural, historical, archeological, or scientific value that may be, nature or design, movable yet related to a specific setting or environment.

Ordinary Repair and Maintenance: Any work, the purpose and effect of which is to correct any deterioration or decay of or damage to a building, object or structure or any part thereof, as nearly as may be practicable, to its condition prior to such deterioration, decay or damage.

Oriel Window: A projecting bay with windows, which emerges from the building at a point above ground level. It is often confused with a bay window which ordinarily begins at ground level.

Palladian Style: A style derived from the buildings and published works of Andrea Palladio (1508-1580), the most influential of all Italian architects.

Parapet: In an exterior wall, fire, or party wall, the part entirely above the roof.

"Patio": An inner courtyard open to the sky.

Glossary

Pediment: The triangular gable end of a roof above the horizontal cornice in classic architecture.

Pilasters: Flat square columns attached to a wall, behind a column, or along the side of a building, projecting from the wall about a fourth or a size part of their breadth.

Pitch: The angle of slope of a roof, i.e., 30 degree pitched roof, a low-pitched roof, a high-pitched roof, and so forth. Typically expressed as a ration of units of vertical distance to 12 units of horizontal distance, i.e. 8/12.

Plan: A drawing representing a downward view of an object, or more commonly, a horizontal section of it. In the case of a floor of a house, it will show the arrangements of the walls, partitions, rooms, doors, windows.

"Plaza Mayor": Main plaza.

Pointing: The outer, and visible, finish of the mortar between the bricks or stone of a masonry.

Porch: A covered walk consisting of a roof supported by columns.

"Porción": A lot of land.

Post and lintel construction: The simplest form of construction composed of vertical members (columns or posts) which support horizontal members (beams or lintels).

Profile: The outline or contour of a part.

Portico: A covered colonnade in classical architecture usually located at the front of the building.

Glossary

Preservation: The act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a building or structure, and the existing form and vegetative cover of a site. It may include initial stabilization work, where necessary, as well as ongoing maintenance of the historic building materials.

Proportion: Size and shape relationships between elements, for example as that between a door and a window, a window and another, or between a group of elements and another.

Protection: The act or process of applying measures designed to affect the physical condition of a property by defending or guarding it from deterioration, loss or attack, or to cover or shield the proposed structures, such treatment is generally of a temporary nature and anticipates future historic preservation treatment; in the case of archaeological sites, the protective measure may be temporary or permanent.

Quoin (koin): Dressed stones or bricks at the corners of the buildings, laid so that their faces are alternately large and small. Originally used to add strength to the masonry wall, later used decoratively.

"Rambla": A tree-lined, grand-scaled European boulevard with landscaped walkways.

Random Work: A term used by stone masons for stones fitted together at random without any attempt to lay them on courses.

Reconstruction: The act or process of reassembling, reproducing, or replacing by new construction, the form, detail, and appearance of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of later work, or by the replacement of missing earlier work, or by reuse of original materials.

Rehabilitation: The act or process of returning a building, object, site, or structure to a state of utility through repair, remodeling, or alteration

Glossary

that makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions or features of the building, object, site, or structure that are significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural values.

Relocation: Any change of the location of a building, object or structure in its present setting or to another setting.

Resource: A source of collection of buildings, objects, sites, structures, or areas that exemplify the cultural, social, economic, political, archeological, or architectural history of the nation, state, or city.

Restoration: The act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of a building, object, site or structure and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of later work or by the replacement of missing earlier work.

Renovation: The act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural value.

Reveal: The two vertical sides of an aperture, between the front wall and the window or door frame.

Rhythm: Repetition of elements with variants of size or pattern which evoke a sense of augmentation or diminution.

Ridge: The horizontal line at the junction of the upper edges of two sloping roof surfaces.

Rise: The distance through which anything rises, as the rise of a stair.

Roof: The top covering of a building. Following are some types:

-**Gable roof** has a pitched roof with ridge and vertical ends.

-**Hip roof** has sloped ends instead of vertical ends.

Glossary

-*Shed roof* (lean-to) has one slope only and is built against a higher wall.

-*Jerkin-head* (clipped gable or hipped gable) is similar to gable but with the end clipped back.

-*Gambrel roof* is a variation of a gable roof, each side of which has a shallower slope above a steeper one.

Rubble Work: Masonry or rough undressed stones. When only the roughest irregularities are knocked off, it is called scabbled rubble.

Rusticated masonry: Masonry which is cut in massive blocks and with deep joints; courses of stone that are jagged or picked so as to present a rough surface. It is used to give a rich and bold texture to an exterior wall. Sometimes it is simulated in stucco or other materials.

Scale: A perception of size with a comprehension of distance. A given building or object has no inherent scale quality of its own but is relative to its scale and its relationship to that of the surrounding objects or architectural work.

Shotgun House: Usually on a narrow lot, being not more than one story, with one room in width and several rooms in depth.

Sill: The horizontal member at the base of a window.

"Sillar": A cut stone.

Site: The location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building, structure, or cluster, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself maintains historical or archaeological value regardless of the value of any existing structure.

Spanish/Mexican House-scape: A combination of patterns and features in and around a dwelling that together read as a dominant Spanish -Mexican cultural tradition. Such forms include: a stone brick,

Glossary

lime-washed house built to the edge of the sidewalk and at sidewalk level; usually a party-wall construction to the adjacent houses to form a continuous wall facing the street; few recessed openings; French doors; small windows secured by wood/wrought iron bars or grilles and interior shutters; no front porches but often with a *balcón corrido*; low-pitched or flat roofs concealed by a parapet; internal floor plan is without interior halls and the rooms have direct access to the exterior; often with a *zaguán*; always with an internal or rear courtyard called a *patio* where the external staircase may be found. Very private.

Splay: A sloped surface that makes an oblique angle with another; especially at the sides of a door, window, or other opening; so that the opening is larger on one side than the other.

Stabilization: The act or process of applying measures designed to reestablish a weather resistant enclosure and the structural stability of an unsafe or deteriorated property while maintaining the essential form as it exists at present.

Stoop: A seat before the door; often a porch with a balustrade and seats on the side.

Storefront: The street level facade of a commercial building, usually having display windows.

Stucco: An exterior finish composed of portland cement, lime, and sand, which are mixed with water.

String Course: A narrow vertically faced and slightly projecting course in an elevation. If window sills are made continuous, they form a string course; but if this course is made thicker and deeper than ordinary window sills or covers a set wall, it becomes a *blocking course*.

Structure: A structure is a work made up of interdependent and interrelated parts in a definite pattern of organization.

Glossary

Style: A distinctive trait of material culture characteristic of a particular group or period.

Terra-cotta: Fired, unglazed clay used predominantly for wall decoration.

Thematic Group: A finite group of resources related to one another: (1) in a clearly distinguishable way, (2) by association with a single historic person, event or development force, (3) as one building type or use, (4) as designed by a single architect, (5) as a single archaeological site form, or (6) as a particular set of archaeological research.

Transoms: A window above a door or a window.

Turret: A small tower, especially at the angles of larger buildings sometimes overhanging and built on corbels sometimes rising from the ground.

Varas: An Spanish unit of measurement. One vara equals 33.33 inches.

Vernacular: Indigenous buildings constructed from local materials and responsive to the climactic and social conditions of the region.

"Viga": A structural horizontal member or beam.

"Villa": A recognized Spanish settlement in the New Spain. An official township recognized by the government.

Vista: A view through or along an avenue or opening which, as a view corridor, frames, highlights or accentuates a prominent building, object, site, structure, scene, or panorama, or patterns or rhythms of buildings, objects, sites, or structures. A vista may also be a view of an area at a distance, such as a remote view of the downtown.

Glossary

Wainscot: The first three or four feet of wall finish when it is finished differently from the remainder of the wall.

Wall Sign: A sign attached parallel to and extending not more than 18 inches from a building wall.

Water Table: The horizontal part of the wall that is exposed when the wall above it is reduced in thickness. It is often sloped with a projecting drip mold on the lower edge in order to protect the wall from water penetration.

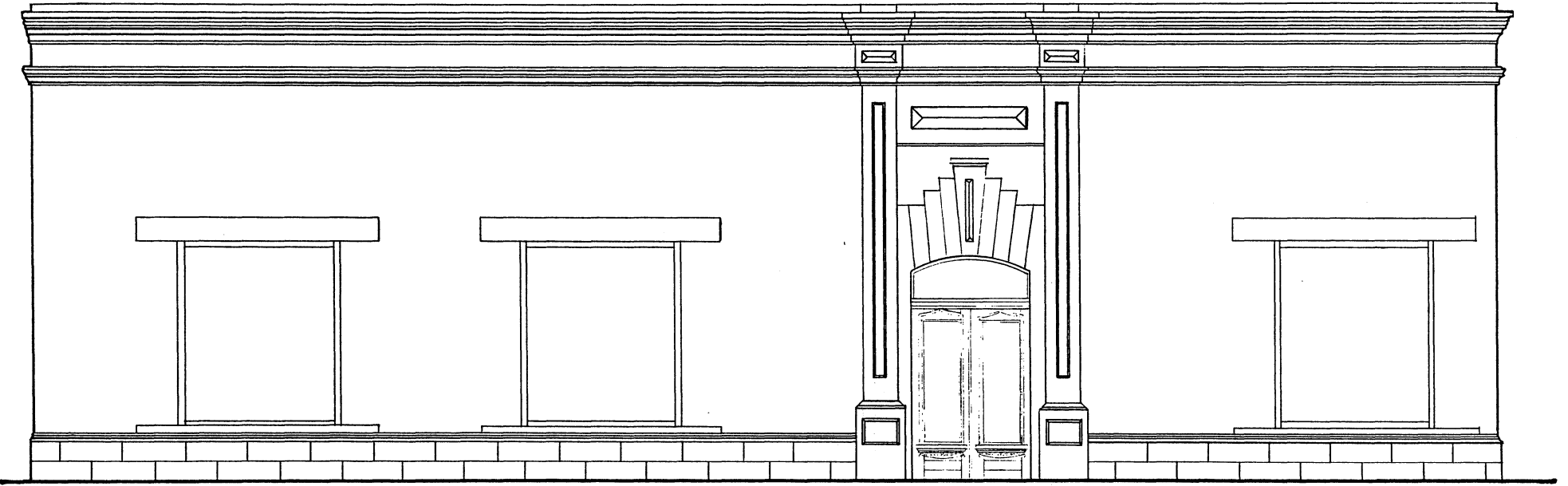
Window Parts: The moving units of a window are known as sashes and move within the fixed frame. The sash may consist of one large pane of glass or may be subdivided into smaller panes by thin members called muntins or glazing bars. Sometimes in nineteenth-century houses windows are arranged side by side and divided by heavy vertical wood members called mullions.

Window Sign: A sign installed on, inside or behind a window and intended to be viewed from the outside.

Xeriscape: A landscaping technique that utilizes native plants and shrubs and that requires minimal maintenance.

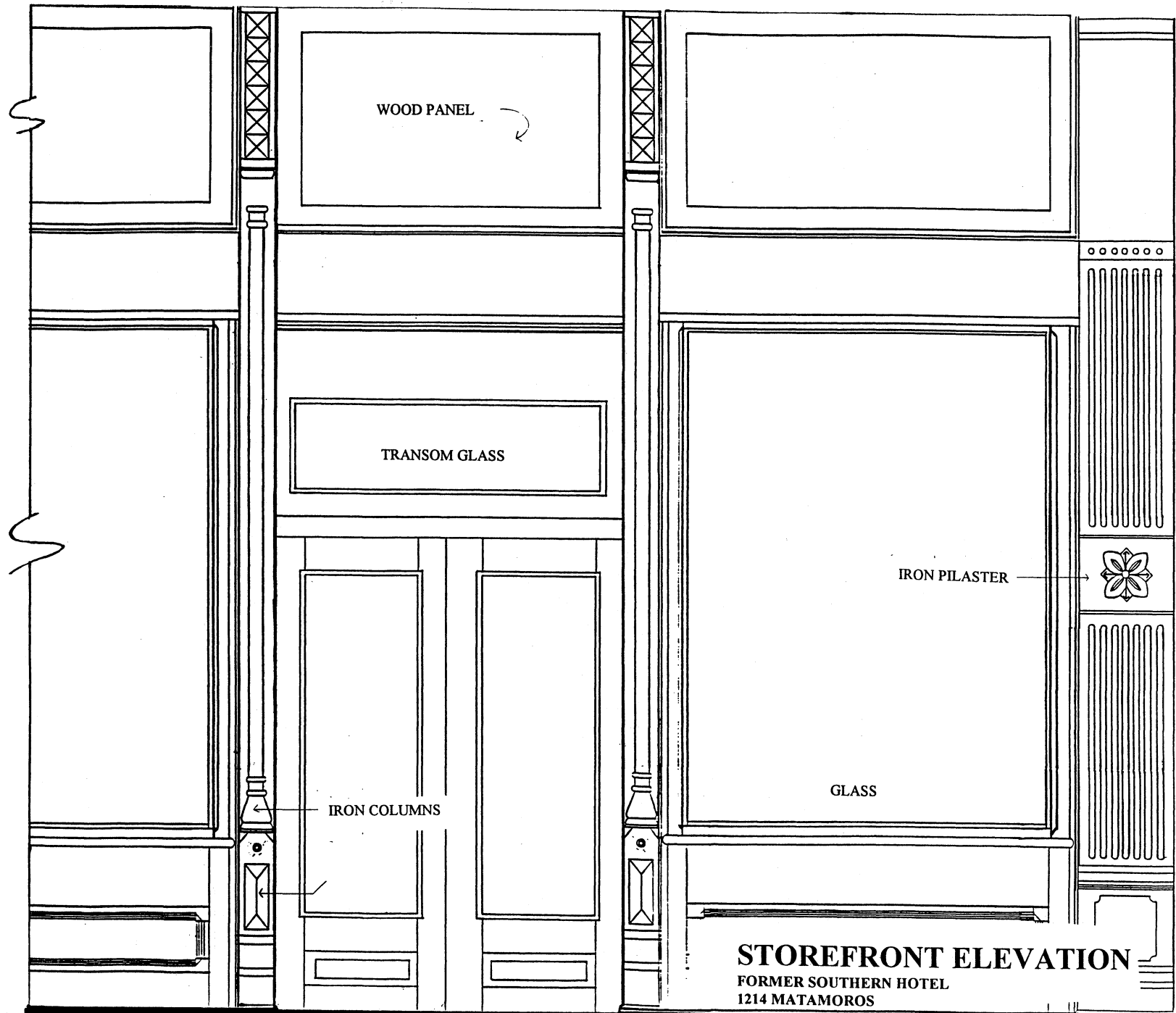
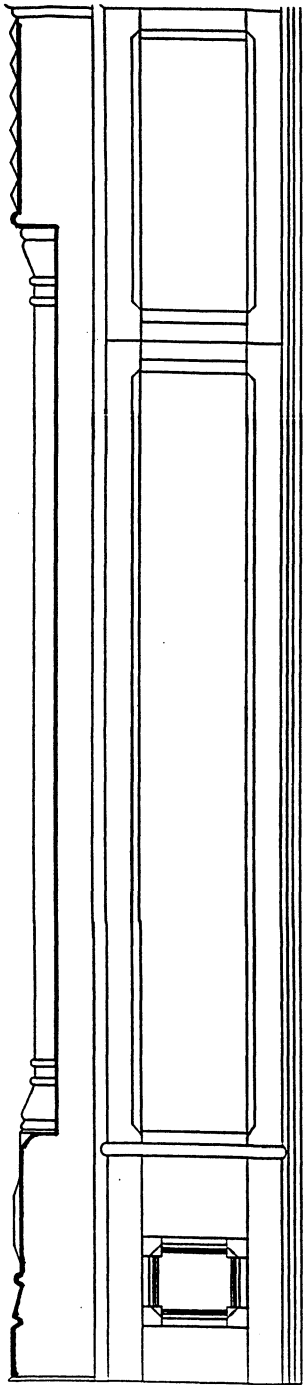
Zaguán: A portico or entry vestibule into a dwelling.

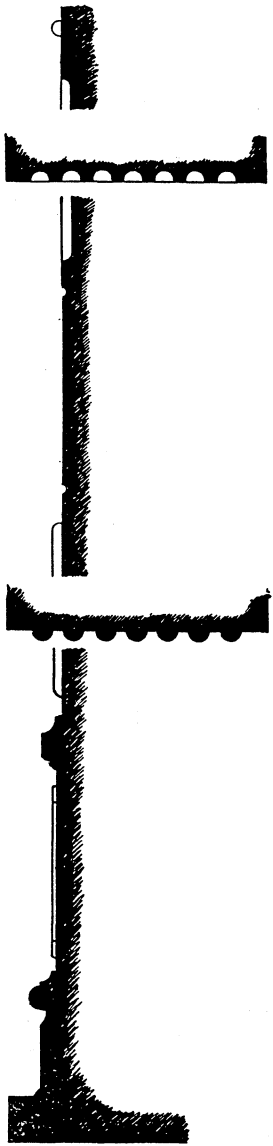
Appendix



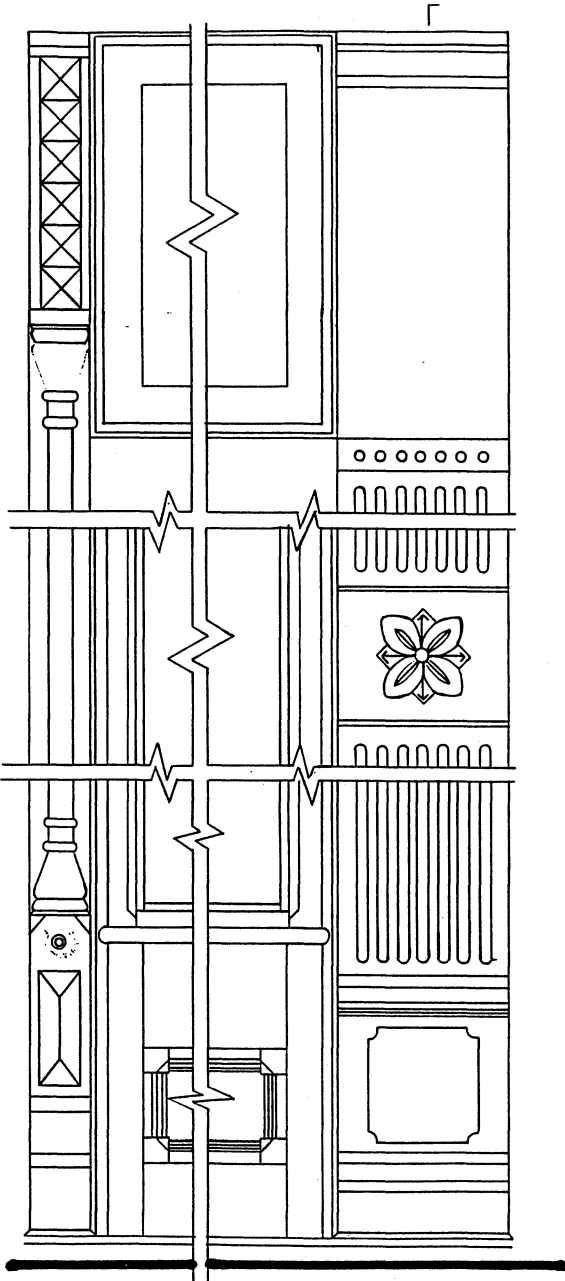
BUILDING ELEVATION

**THE VIDAURRI GALLERY
202 FLORES AVENUE**

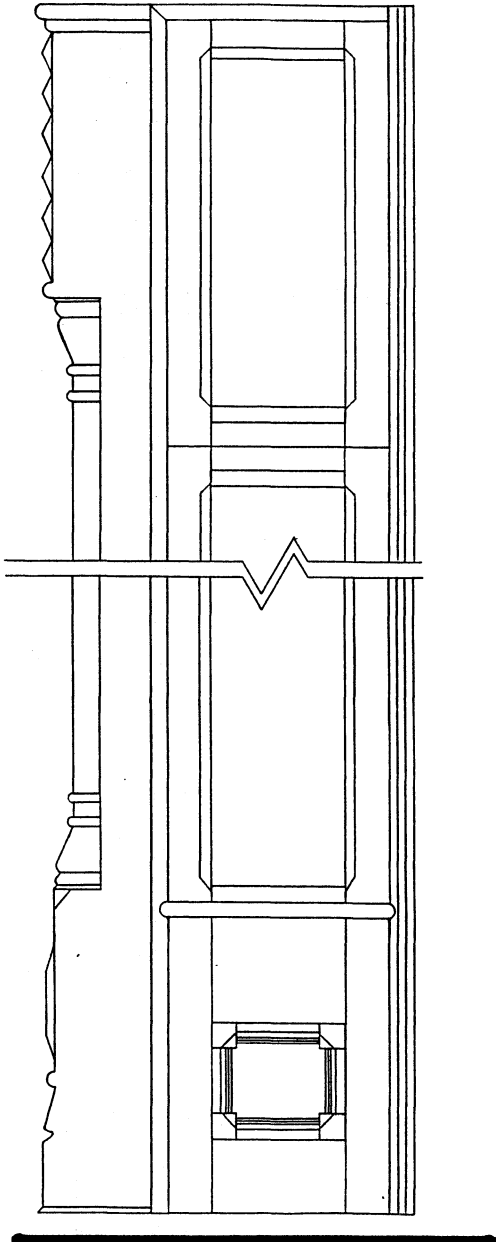




PILASTER PROFILE

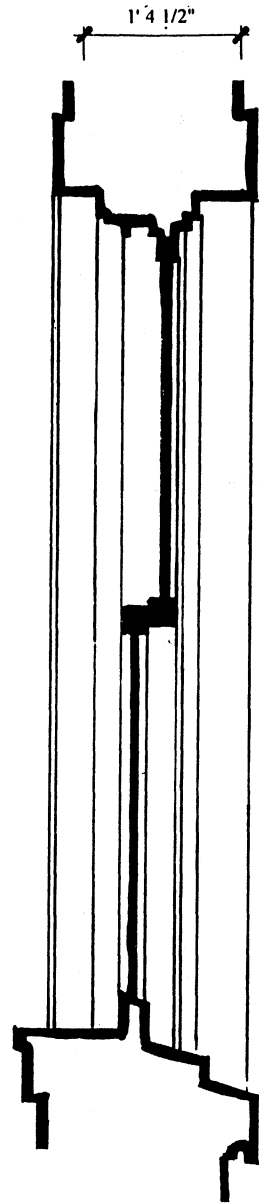


PARTIAL ELEVATION

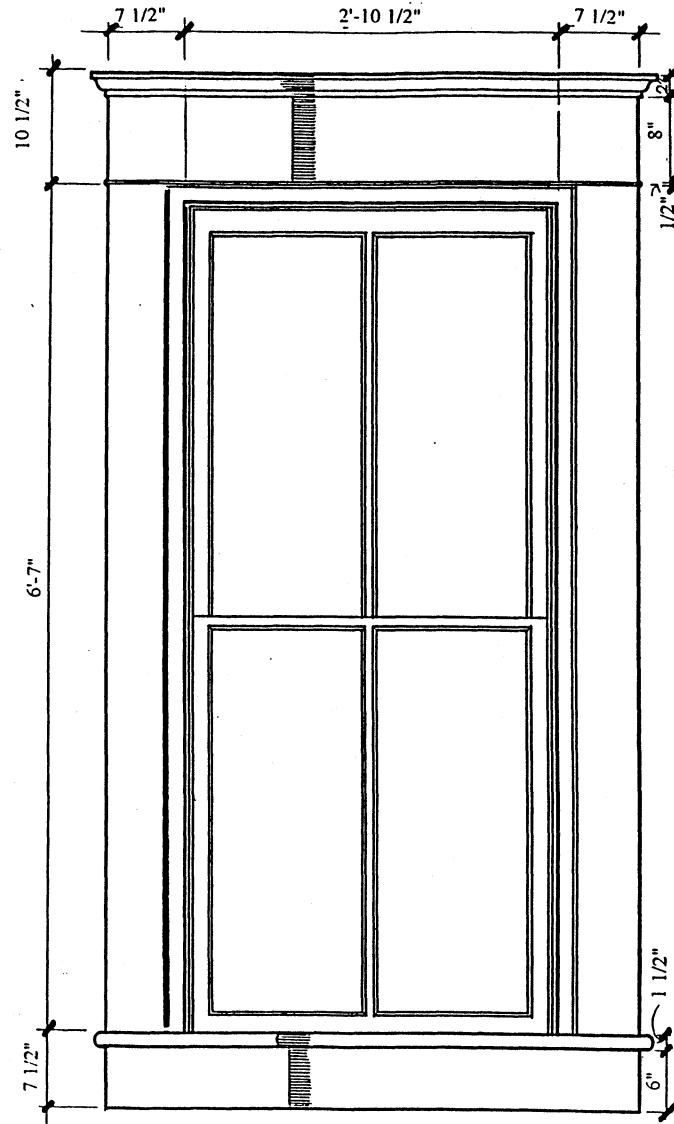


SIDE ELEVATION

DOOR DETAILS
1214 MATAMOROS



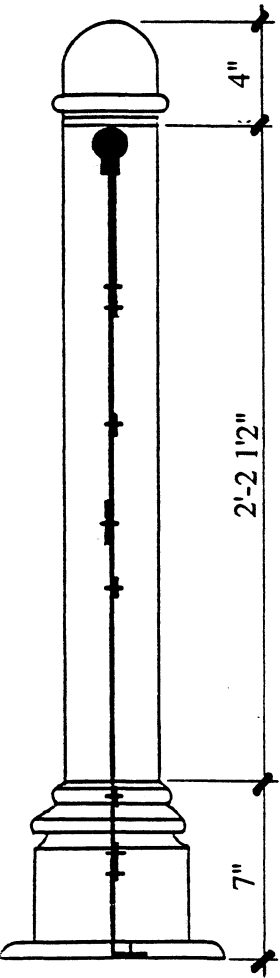
ELEVATION



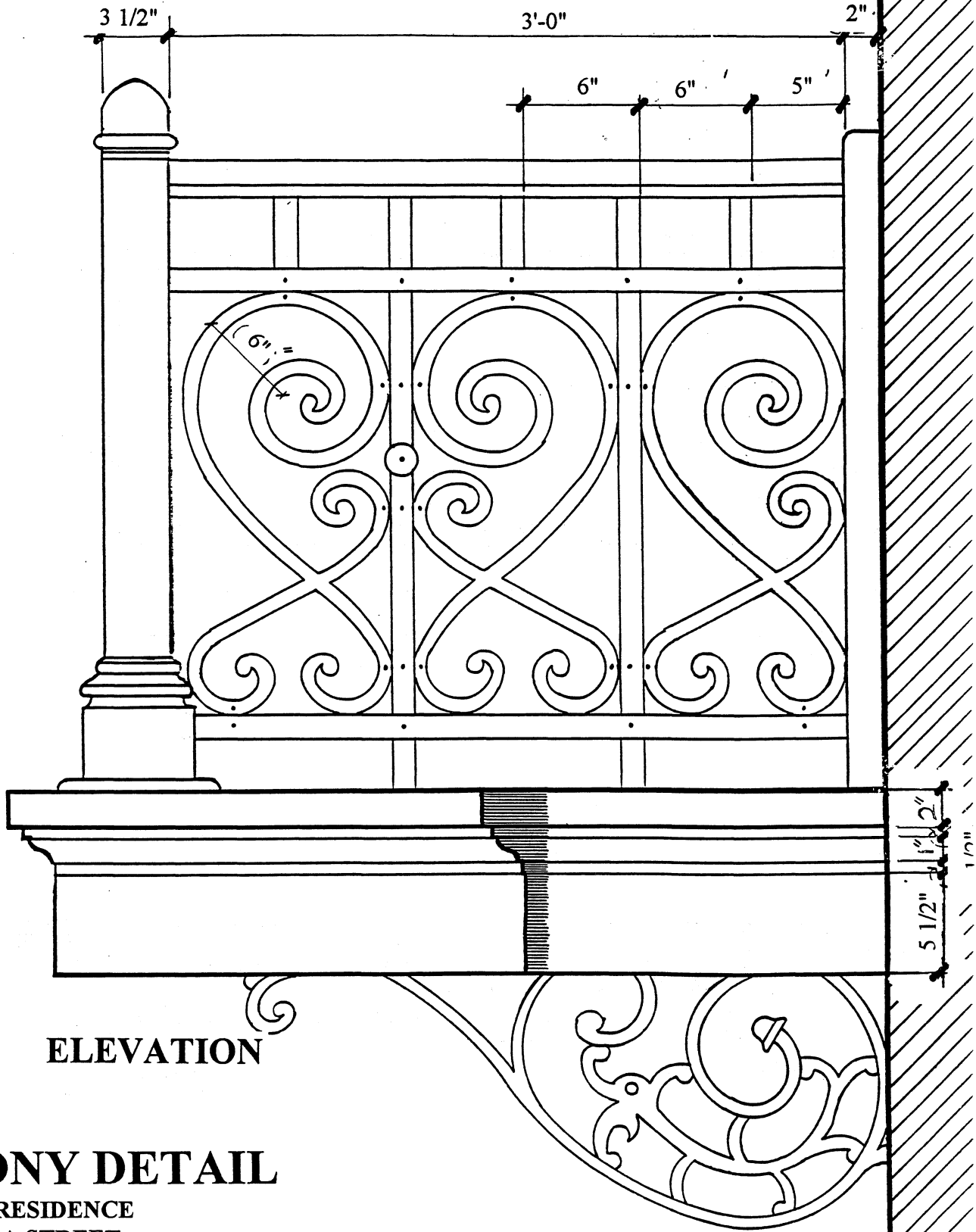
SECTION

WINDOW DETAILS

CASA ORTIZ RESIDENCE
 915 ZARAGOZA STREET



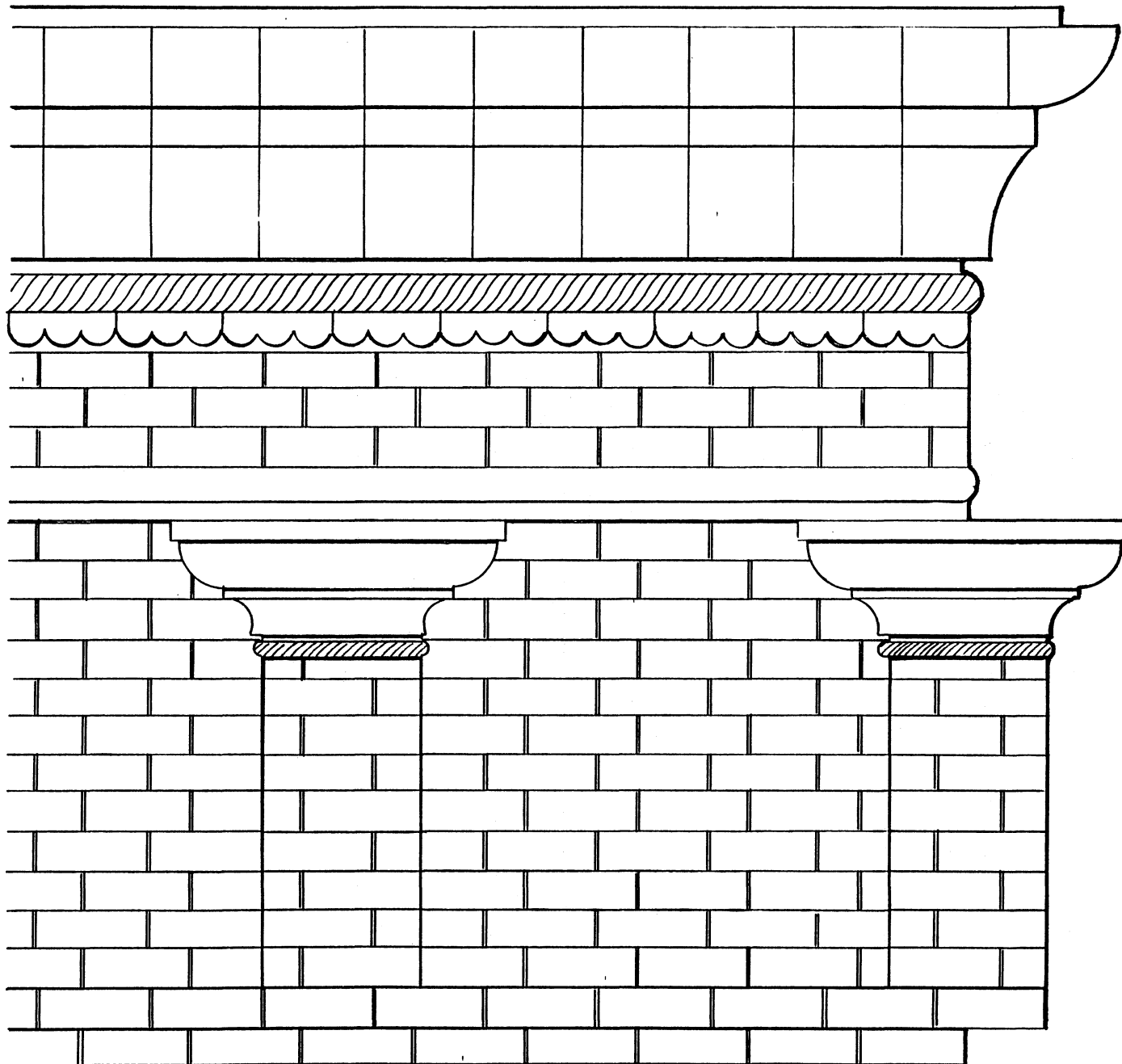
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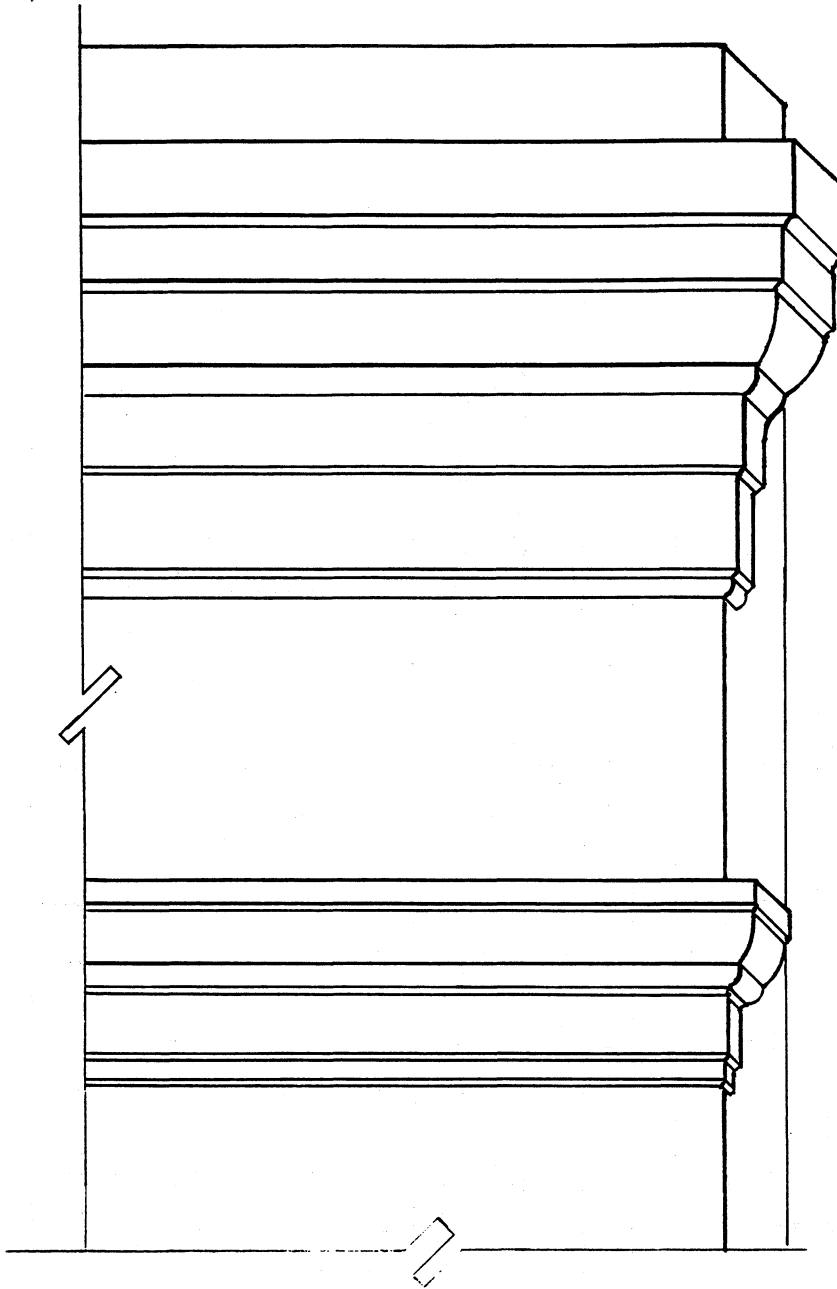
ELEVATION

BALCONY DETAIL

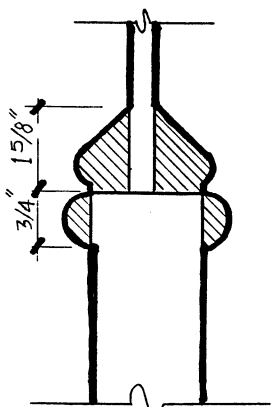
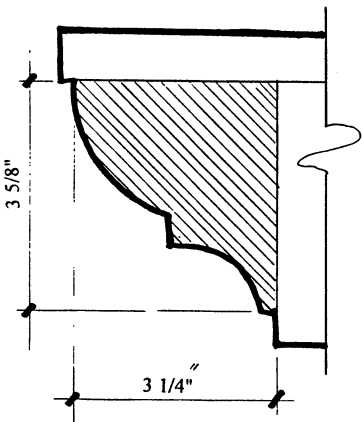
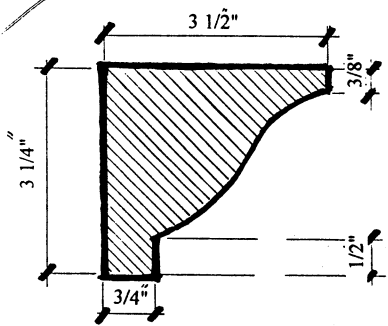
CASA ORTIZ RESIDENCE
 915 ZARAGOZA STREET



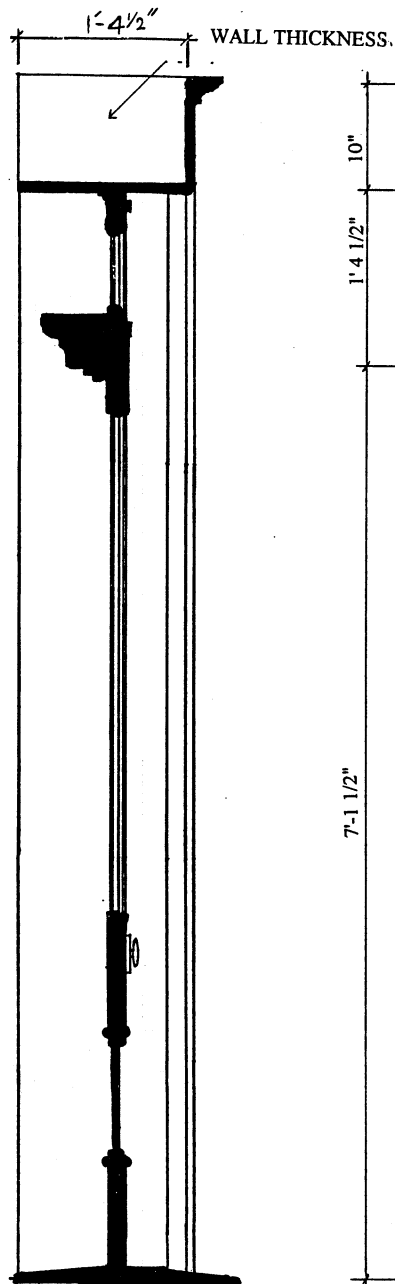
CORNICE DETAIL
BENEVIDES-HERRERA RESIDENCE
802 GRANT STREET



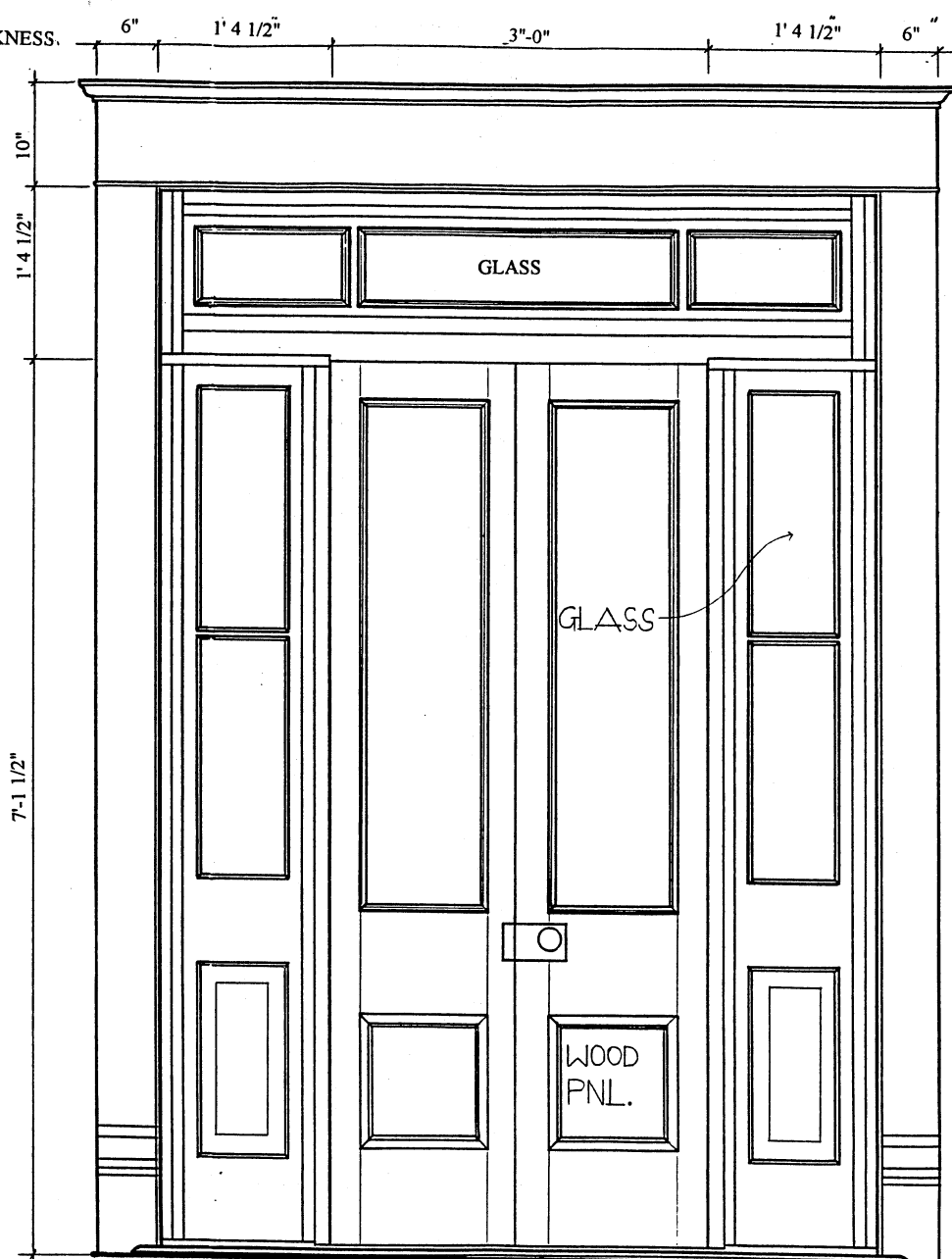
CORNICE DETAIL
THE VIDAURRI GALLERY
102 FLORES STREET



MOLDING DETAIL

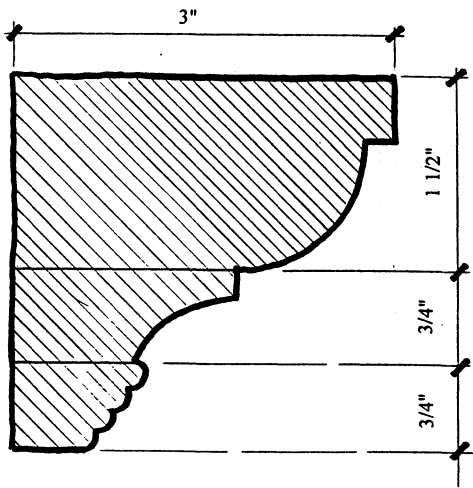
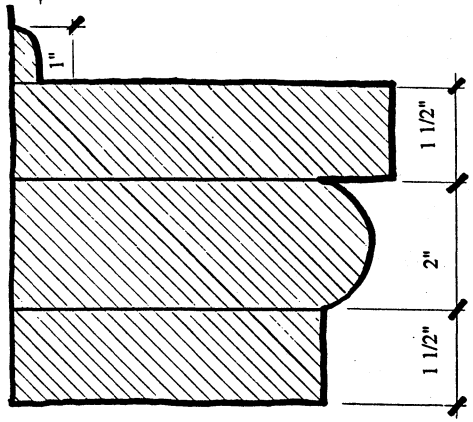


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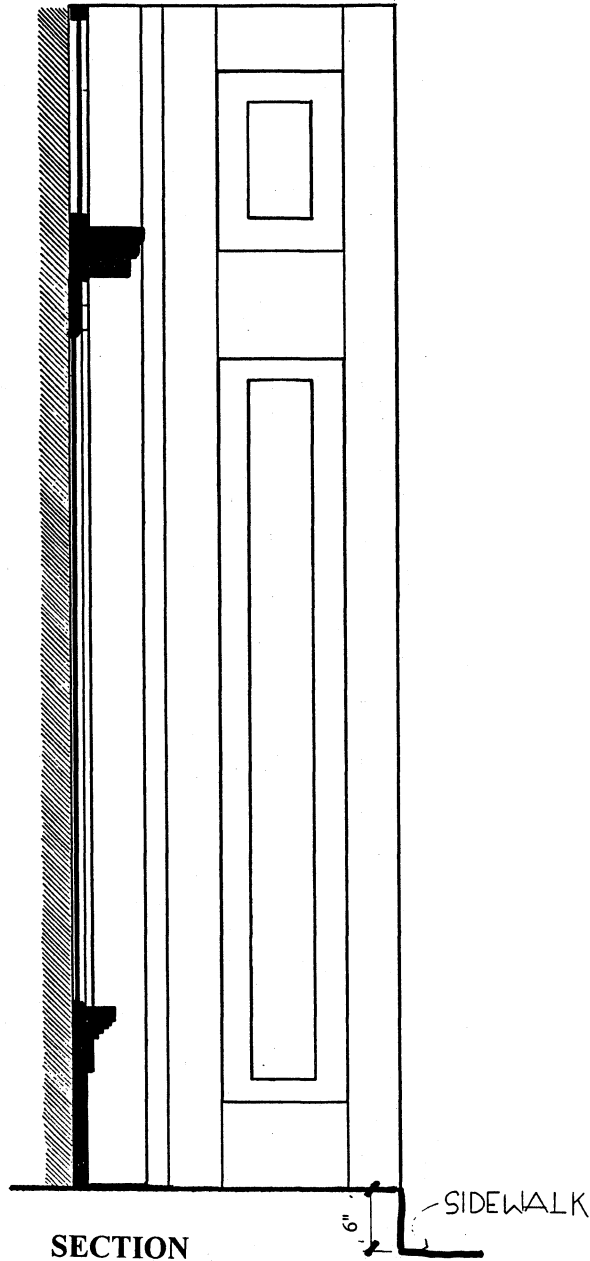


ELEVATION

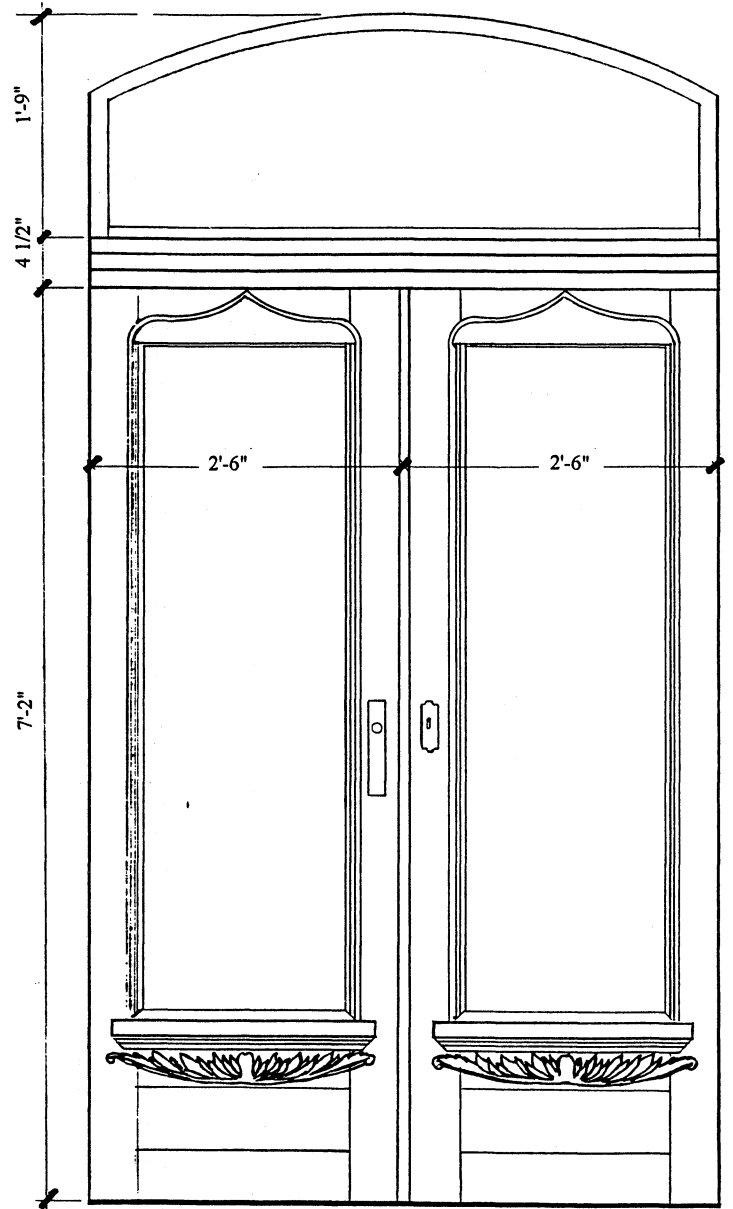
DOOR DETAILS
 CASA ORTIZ RESIDENCE
 915 ZARAGOZA STREET



MOLDING DETAIL



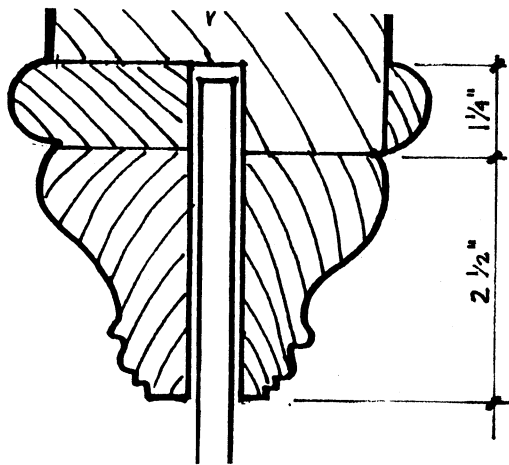
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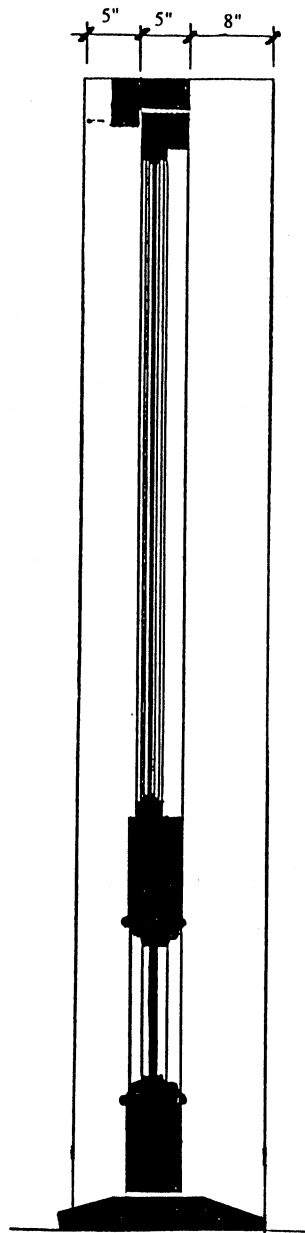
ELEVATION

DOOR DETAILS

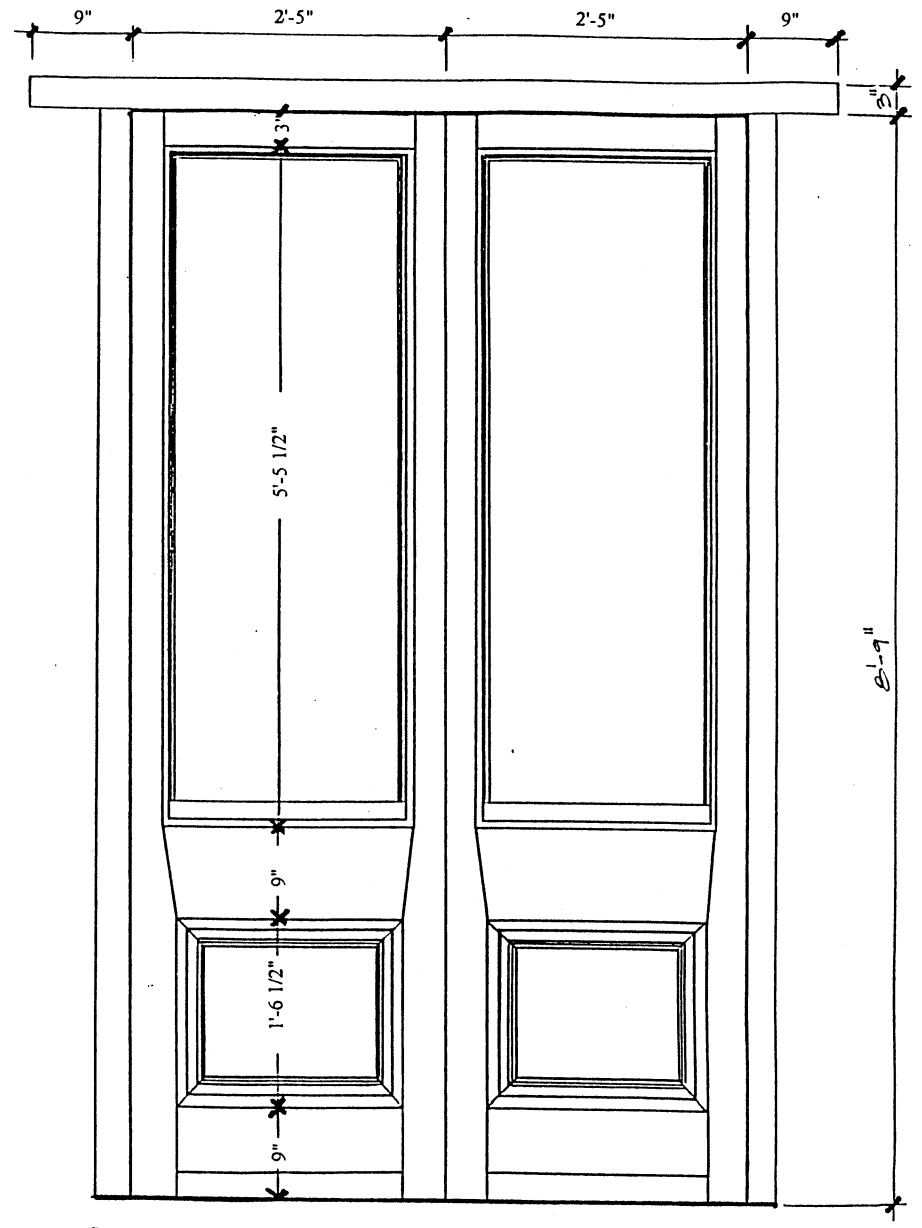
**THE VIDAURRI GALLERY
202 FLORES AVENUE**



MOLDING DETAIL

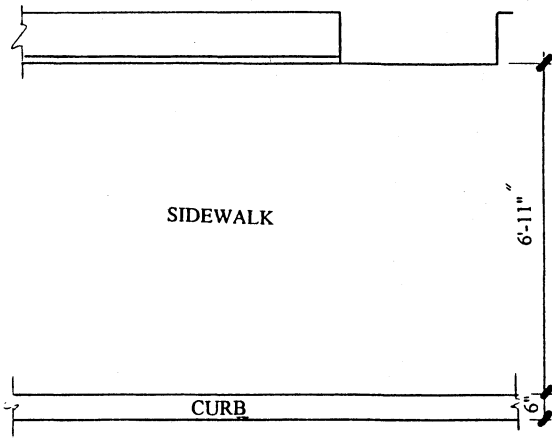


SECTION



ELEVATION

DOOR DETAILS
 BENEVIDES-HERRERA RESIDENCE
 802 GRANT STREET



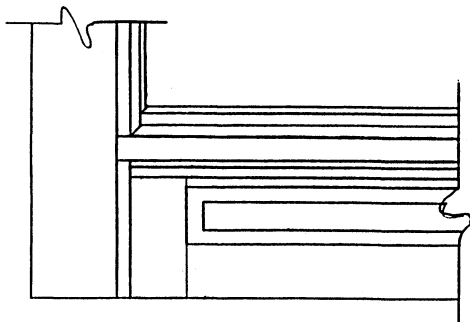
SIDEWALK

6'-11"

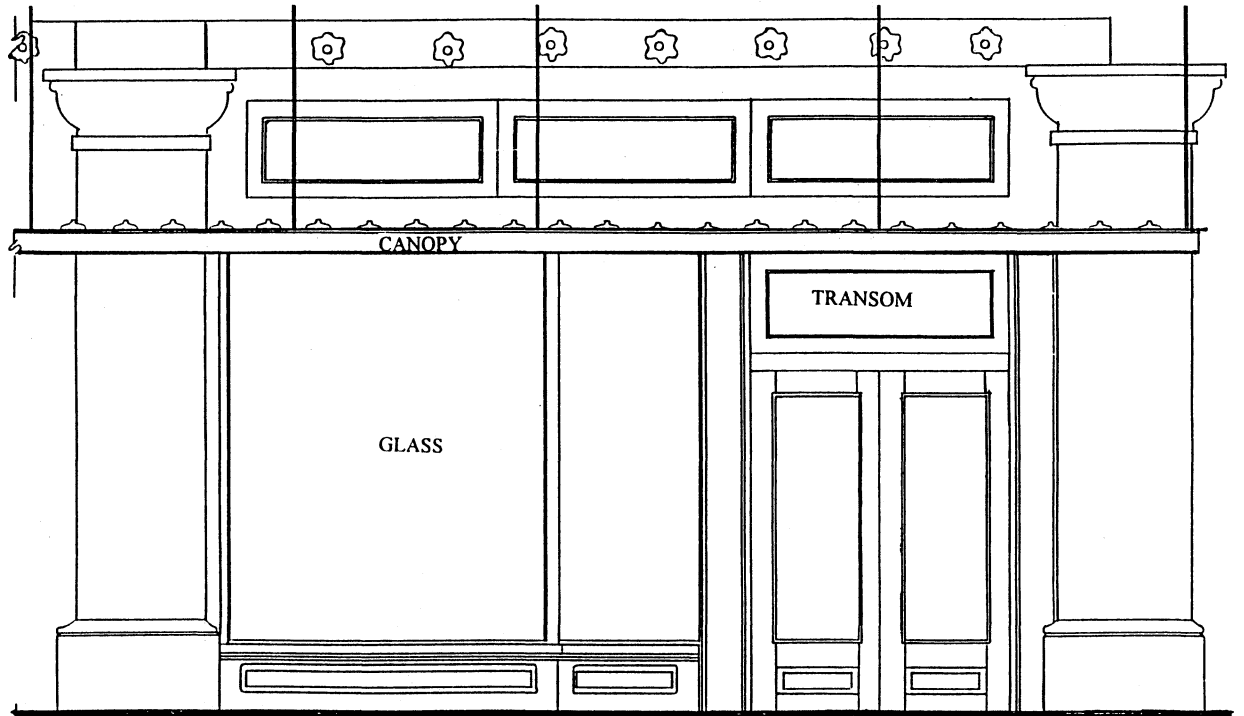
CURB

6"

SIDEWALK PLAN



WINDOW DETAIL



CANOPY

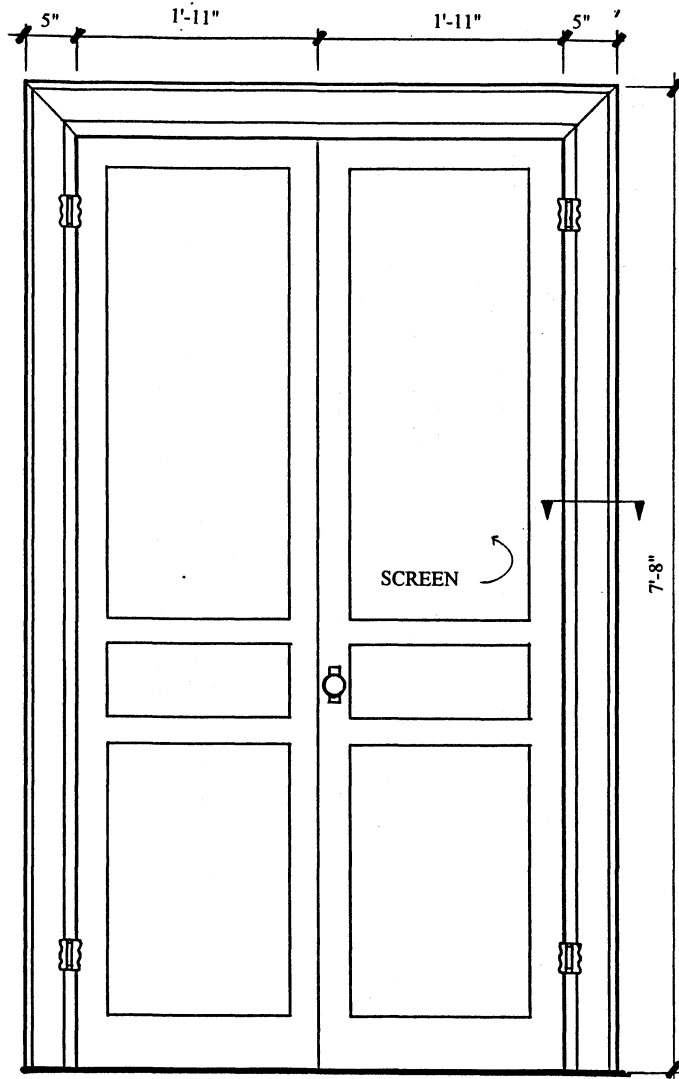
TRANSOM

GLASS

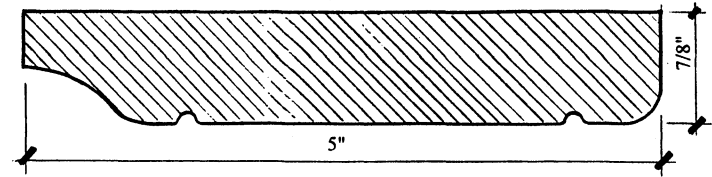
ELEVATION

STOREFRONT ELEVATION

FORMER SOUTHERN HOTEL
1208 MATAMOROS STREET



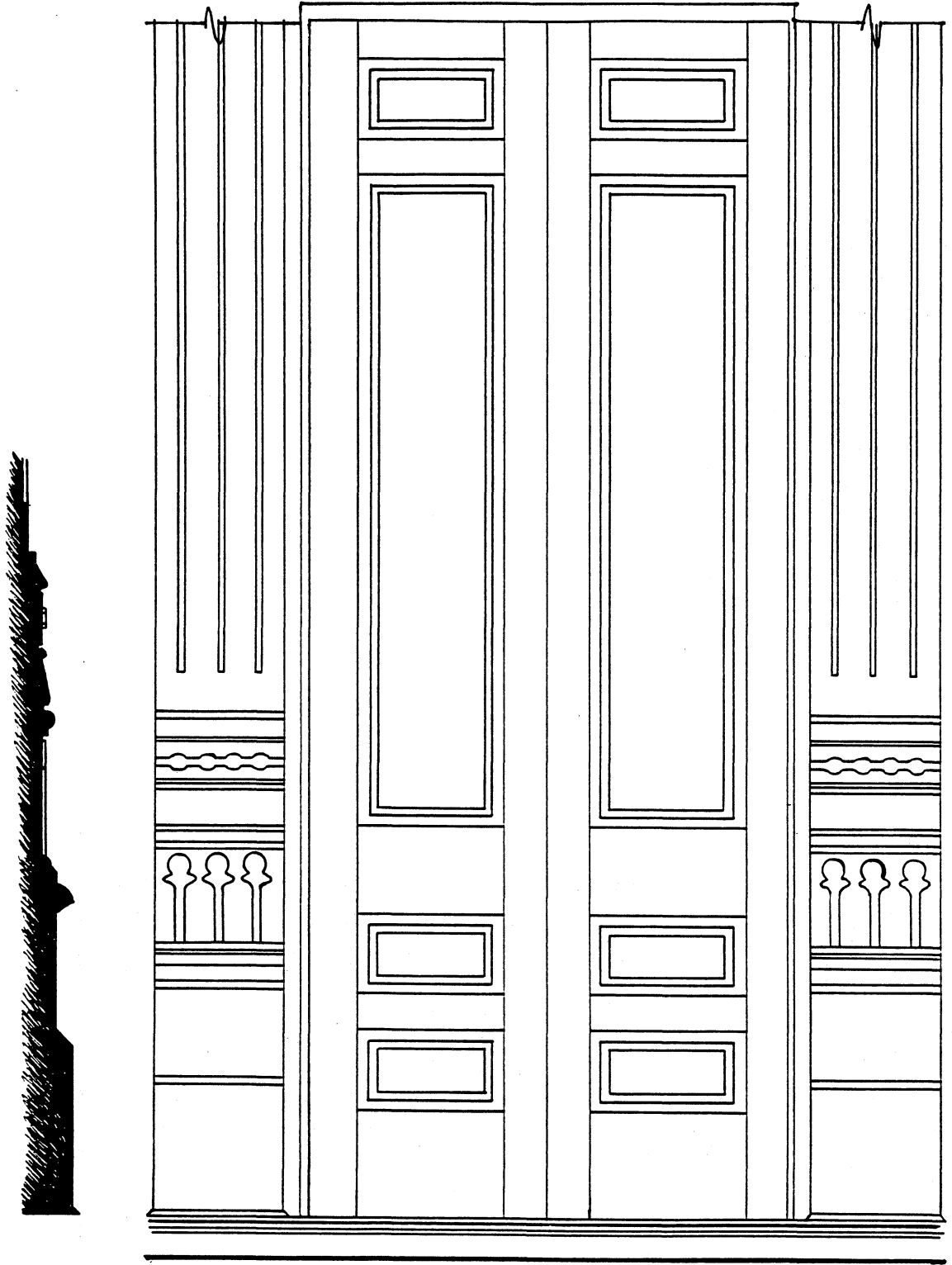
ELEVATION



MOLDING DETAIL

DOOR DETAILS

CASA ORTIZ RESIDENCE
915 ZARAGOZA STREET



DOOR DETAILS

FORMER BRIDGET FARRELL BUILDING
406 FLORES

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