

# Design Guidelines

The Royersford Borough Façade Grant Program is designed to foster the revitalization of Royersford's Main Street. This program provides financial assistance for façade improvements along Main Street. Eligible properties fronting Main Street are divided into a Primary Target Area and a Secondary Target Area (see attached map). The purpose of the Façade Grant Program is to provide assistance with enhancing facades along Main Street, especially in the core business district.

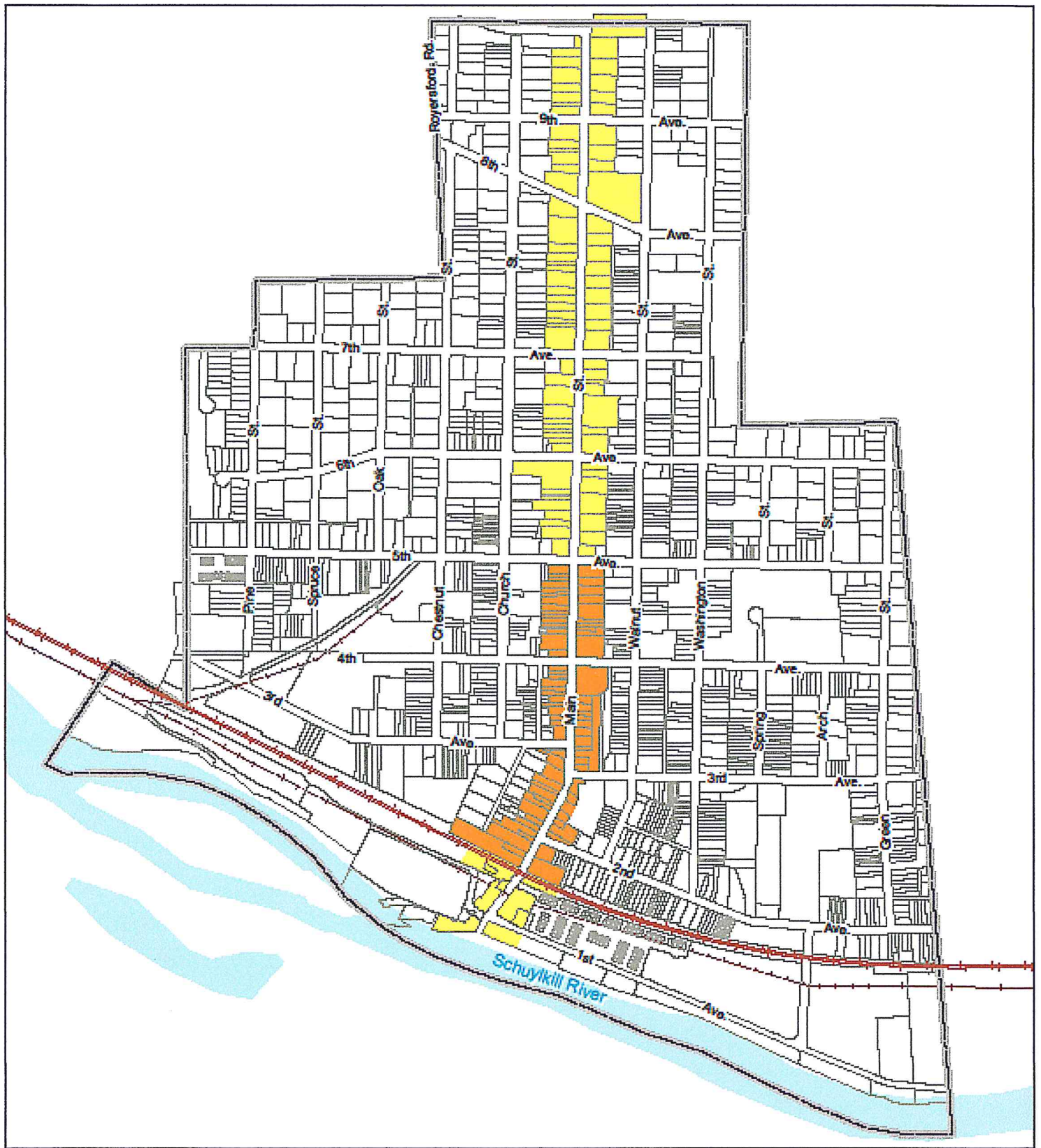
The following design guidelines will help guide applicants to determine the eligibility of proposed façade improvements and ensure continuity within the district. These best practices are vital to the protection and enhancement of our Main Street.

## **Eligible improvements include:**

- Canvas-style awnings
- Paint removal from brick surfaces by gentle methods
- Repointing masonry
- Repairing cornices
- Repair or replacement of windows and doors
- Removing false facades
- Commercial signs
- Exterior lighting
- Lighting of architectural details and signs
- Conversion of 1<sup>st</sup> floor storefronts to retail space

## **Ineligible improvements include**

- Internal, electrical, HVAC or roof repairs
- Property acquisition
- Working capital
- Regular maintenance
- Repairs or improvements completed or in progress prior to notification of approval
- Internal lighting of signs



### Borough of Royersford

SOURCE:  
Base information provided by  
Montgomery County.



- Primary Target Area
- Secondary Target Area

**FACADE PROGRAM  
TARGET AREA**

**Urban Research & Development Corporation**  
23 West Broad St • Lebanon, PA 17048 • 717-665-0761

Feet  
0 800



# Storefront Features

The storefront is the most important architectural feature of many commercial buildings. It also plays a crucial role in a store's advertising and merchandising strategy to draw customers and increase business. Not surprisingly, then, the storefront has become the feature most commonly altered in a commercial building. In the process, these alterations may have completely changed or destroyed a building's distinguishing architectural features or undermined its' structural integrity.



Whereas the façade on the right has been obscured by an aluminum covering, the façade on the left retains desirable elements including cornices and windows.

# Awnings

Awnings not only add to the character of a storefront but also serve the practical purpose of regulating light and heat by providing shade. Façade program funds can be used for the addition of a new awning or the maintenance or replacement of an existing awning.

Care should be taken to ensure that the awnings colors and materials are compatible with the massing and design of the building's existing façade. The size of the awning should match the size of window or door it is covering. Any lighting should be provided via overhead lighting, not through internal illumination.

## Guidelines for Designing Replacement Storefronts

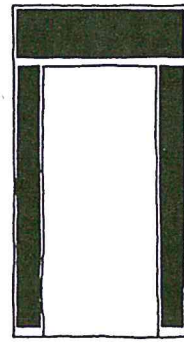
- ❑ **Scale:** Respect the scale and proportion of the existing building in the new storefront design.
- ❑ **Materials:** Select construction materials that are appropriate to the storefronts; wood, cast iron, and glass are usually more appropriate replacement materials than masonry which tends to give a massive appearance.
- ❑ **Cornice:** Respect the horizontal separation between the storefront and the upper stories. A cornice or fascia board traditionally helped contain the store's sign.
- ❑ **Frame:** Maintain the relationship of the storefront to the facade of the building and the streetscape (if appropriate). Most storefront frames are generally composed of horizontal and vertical elements.
- ❑ **Entrances:** Differentiate the primary retail entrance from the secondary access to upper floors. In order to meet current code requirements, out-swinging doors generally must be recessed.
- ❑ **Windows:** The storefront generally should be as transparent as possible. Use of glass in doors, transoms, and display areas allows for visibility into and out of the store.
- ❑ **Secondary Design Elements:** Keep the treatment of secondary design elements such as graphics and awnings as simple as possible in order to avoid visual clutter to the building and its streetscape.



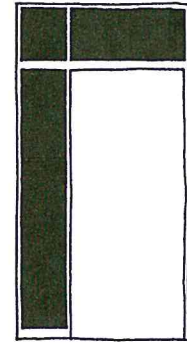


# Doors

Doors help to regulate the passage of air and light into a building, but they also allow the passage of people, and help define a building's style or use. Door sizes and styles may vary between residential and commercial buildings. Replacement doors should retain the massing of any original door openings, as should door openings. In addition, transoms over entry doors should not be blocked, covered or removed.



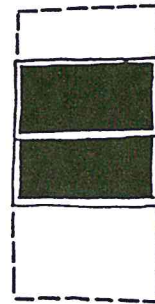
YES



NO

# Windows

Care should be taken to ensure that replacement windows, like doors, maintain original massing and proportion. In addition, openings should not be created for new windows and current window openings should not be blocked, covered or removed.

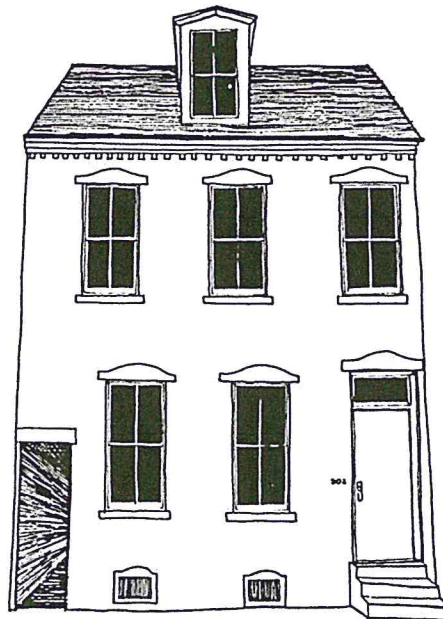


*inappropriate*

To retain massing, window sizes and openings should not be changed.



Original



Simplified



Inappropriate and Expensive

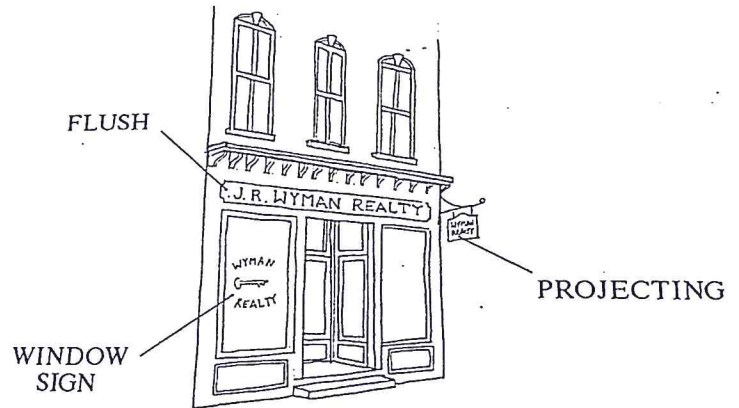


# Signs

Signs have a dramatic impact on the image of a town center. Signs that are simple, properly sized, attractively designed, constructed of appropriate materials and properly located enhance the image of a business and retail atmosphere.



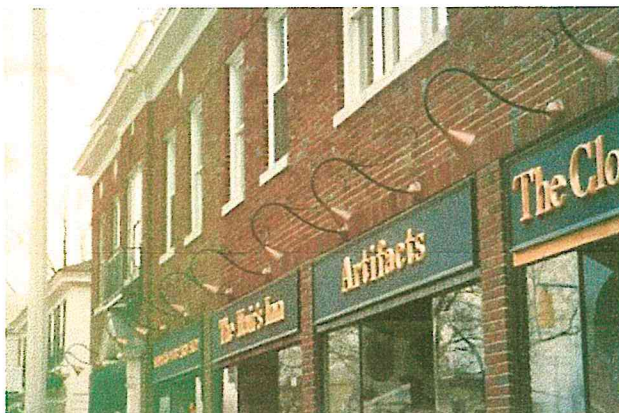
Care should be given to the material, size and location of a sign. Materials can include modern, durable materials that are expressive of a given business' identity, including wood, bronze, brass, steel, or other materials. Signs should be compatible with the massing of its' building, with small signs more appropriate for small buildings or storefronts. A small but well-designed sign can have more of an impact than a large, unattractive one. Signs for first floor businesses should be located below second floor window sills, with no sign extending above the top of a building.



Common types of signs include flush, projecting and window signs.

# Lighting

Lighting of architectural details or signage can provide a further dramatic effect if done correctly. Signs and other details should not be internally illuminated, but instead should be lit using external sources such as wall mounted or goose-neck lighting. Lights should be consistent with the scale of the façade and signage/architectural details and should be low-wattage, aimed directly at the desired object.





# Masonry Repointing

*Repointing* is the process of removing deteriorated mortar from the joints of a masonry wall and replacing it with new mortar. Properly done, repointing restores the visual and physical integrity of the masonry. Improperly done, repointing not only detracts from the appearance of the building but may also cause physical damage to the masonry units themselves.

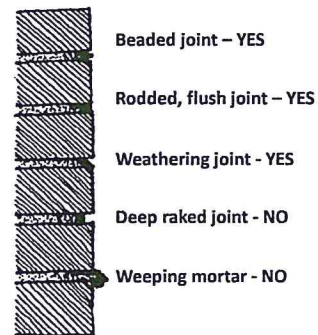
## Mortar

The type and age of the masonry should be considered when determining the appropriate mortar to use. Older, softer types of brick require a softer, lime-based mortar. Portland cement may be appropriate when working with harder varieties of brick.

## Brick Joints

Care should be given to the sort of joint used when repointing brick. Joints that scrape the mortar too deeply or that leave excess mortar in the joint should be avoided.

Types of Brick Joints



# Masonry Cleaning & Paint Removal

Abrasive cleaning methods are responsible for causing a great deal of damage to building materials. There are alternative, less harsh means of cleaning and removing paint and stains. However, careful testing should precede general cleaning to assure that the method selected will not have an adverse effect on the building materials.

## Recommended:

- Chemical washing
- Steam
- Scraping

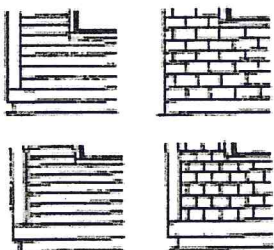
## Not recommended:

- Sandblasting
- Power washing

# Removal of Vinyl or Aluminum Siding

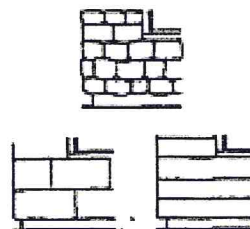
Besides hiding the beauty of original brick, covering is a poor practice because it can cause moisture problems in the wall. Aluminum and vinyl siding keep out moisture, of course, but they can also keep moisture in, with the disastrous effect of rotting the brick. Since the brick is covered, the damage is not seen until it invades the house, sometimes causing plaster to literally fall off the walls.

It is possible to remove any type of covering and to protect the masonry surface with a silicone sealant. Façade program funds cannot be used to cover masonry with vinyl siding, aluminum siding or stucco, but can be used to remove siding, stucco, or other undesirable coverings to reveal a building's original masonry.



## Recommended:

- Clapboard
- Brick
- Vinyl or Aluminum (of proper size and with trim)
- Shingle



## Not Recommended:

- False stone
- Dryvit panels
- Wide vinyl or aluminum without trim