Caruthersville, Missouri

DOWNTOWN
REVITALIZATION &
ECONOMIC
ASSISTANCE FOR
MISSOURI

BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

OCTOBER 2009

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR MISSOURI
D·R·E·A·M
INITIATIVE

PGAVURBANCONSULTING

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Caruthersville EST. 1857

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 History and Heritage of Caruthersville

Caruthersville is the county seat of Pemiscot County and is located in southeast Missouri along the west bank of the Mississippi River across from Tennessee and approximately 15 miles north of Arkansas. Caruthersville has a current population of approximately 6,300 people.

The town was laid out in 1857 and named in honor of Sam Caruthers, the area's first Congressman. The City was incorporated on May 18, 1874. In 1898, Gayoso, the first Pemiscot County Seat, was being threatened by the mass wasting of the river banks. Caruthersville was voted the new County Seat in 1899. Caruthersville has many ties with the Mississippi River. Sterling Price Reynolds, a citizen of Caruthersville, worked on the draining of the swamps in the Saint Francis Levee District and the establishment of the Little River Drainage District. Reynold's work is commemorated with a riverfront park. In 1976, the areas only bridge across the Mississippi into Tennessee was completed. Today Caruthersville remains anchored by river-related businesses. From the nearby Pemiscot County Port District's numerous agricultural providers to the Lady Luck Casino in the south portion of Downtown.

Downtown Caruthersville is the center of government. City Hall, the Pemiscot County Courthouse, and other local government offices are located Downtown. The historic Pemiscot County Courthouse is located on Ward Avenue, West of the main Downtown intersection. Downtown has some retail, office, and service uses, but is predominantly surrounded by deteriorating residential buildings. Most of the buildings in Downtown are multi-story brick construction, but the commercial area is not large. Some infill development has occurred and much of the upper floor space is occupied. Large vacant lots and areas with low-quality agricultural structures are also common.

Pemiscot County Courthouse

1.2 Background

After World War II there was a movement in America to remove all things that were considered old and replace them with something new and modern. In the intervening years, subtle, and not so subtle, changes took place that had a cumulative effect on the entire architectural environment. Original glass storefronts were replaced with smaller, economical windows and entrances. Upper facade windows were removed or completely covered. Building cornices and ornaments were eliminated in an attempt to "clean-up" the old looking façade. Historic character and qualities were replaced with new and featureless materials and design. In some cases, entire buildings have been demolished and replaced with new buildings that fail to account for the rhythm and scale of the surrounding buildings and street. The public elements of the streetscape were not spared either. Historic light poles and fixtures were replaced with out-of-scale "cobra-head" fixtures and poles. These changes have accumulated over the years and the sense of the main street community space was lost.

Often a central feature found in many downtowns, the county courthouse serves as a hub of activity. In Caruthersville, the Pemiscot County Courthouse is located on Ward Avenue, west of the main Downtown intersection which is located at the intersection of Ward Avenue and 3rd Street. Caruthersville has other activity generators in, or near Downtown such as the Lady Luck Casino, General John Riggs Veteran's Memorial Park, Reynold's Park, U.S. Post Office, several churches, and apartment buildings. Ward Avenue and 3rd Street serve as the area's commercial corridors, with a larger cluster around the Wal-Mart located just north of the DREAM Study Area.

The most significant event in recent Caruthersville history was the 2006 tornado that damaged many of the Downtown commercial and residential buildings. Much of this damage is still evident today. Some infill development has occurred, however, not always with a positive impact. It is also obvious that years of deferred building maintenance existed before the 2006 storm and remains a critical issue for Downtown.

Caruthersville Park Monuments

1.3 Purpose of this Document

This document represents conceptual planning recommendations for the City of Caruthersville to consider regarding future policy and procedural decisions. This document will help to recapture the characteristics of existing buildings and guide new development. The concepts expressed are focused primarily on commercial buildings in the DREAM Study Area, although residential considerations are discussed due to the large amount of nearby structures used as housing.

Section 2.0 describes, generally, design guidelines for Downtown commercial buildings and includes examples of both good and poor building treatments.

Section 3.0 provides specific Caruthersville building design illustrations along with notations of building improvements. The blocks noted in this section were chosen by Caruthersville leaders after several meetings that included elected officials, City staff, Downtown businesses and property owners, residents, and the general public. The buildings are on the west side of Ward Avenue between East 2nd & 5th Streets.

Section 4.0 describes general steps and implementation recommendations that the City can follow to establish building design guidelines.

Section 5.0 notes other Downtown design elements. The Caruthersville DREAM scope of services did not include a complete streetscape design task as the existing streetscape design has already been chosen by the community. This design was installed when the Casino located Downtown and is in the process of being expanded and improved. The purpose of this section is to provide Downtown leadership general guidance for future streetscape construction.

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2.0 BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

2.1 Background and Intent of Guidelines

Caruthersville has some attributes upon which to build. Beginning with the original architecture on Downtown storefronts, and with the introduction of new buildings and structures into the fabric of Downtown, all elements should have a similar look and feel, establishing a composition or "theme" for the design of Downtown. Vacant property is available for significant infill development and the City will need to ensure such development is complementary to existing structures.

As property owners seek to invest in their buildings, they should be encouraged to seek professional guidance for rehabilitation or construction activities. Historic building rehabilitations should adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The Standards and various Preservation Briefs can be found at the National Park Service website; www.nps.gov

Encouragement for compliance can come in the form of incentive programs, including state and federal historic tax credits. Property owners interested in applying for historic tax credits should contact the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office; www.dnr.mo.gov/shpo/

The recommendations in this report include establishing some form of Design Guidelines that will provide a basis for Caruthersville Officials and staff to make policy decisions that advance good design in the DREAM Study Area. The vitality of Downtown rests with a respect of the context and character of the architecture. This character possessed a rhythm in the materials, massing, and presence along Downtown streets. The architectural character helped to define Downtown prior to its deterioration. The intent is not to create an exact copy of the historic past, but to work within the existing fabric of Downtown buildings to provide complementary rehabilitations. The City must develop a sensible

approach to the renewal of buildings including; the removal of undesired materials, adherence to the design guidelines, and firm and fair enforcement of the City building and maintenance codes.

The conceptual guidelines indicated herein are intended to be a base upon which the City government will launch an effort to establish specific guidelines throughout the DREAM boundary through Planning and Zoning. These concepts are recommended to allow flexibility for property owners while moving their rehabilitation efforts in a more consistent direction with good design principles.

Design guidelines have a positive economic effect on Downtown by enhancing and protecting property values, promoting heritage tourism, and reinforcing the City's identity and marketability. Investment in historic neighborhoods and commercial areas has increased significantly in recent decades resulting in the stabilization and enhancement of property values.

Building façades, along with public sidewalks and streets, make up the outdoor living room of Downtown Caruthersville. This space is at the center of the community and should be alive with activities and events. As such, the responsibility of proper redevelopment falls not just on the individual property owners and the City, but the community of Caruthersville residents. Individual building façades are owned and maintained by property owners. Street improvements, utilities and sidewalks are the responsibility of the City. But the residents will bring the area to life and need encouragement to view Downtown as a place where they want to shop, eat, visit, and meet.

2.2 Downtown Fabric of Buildings

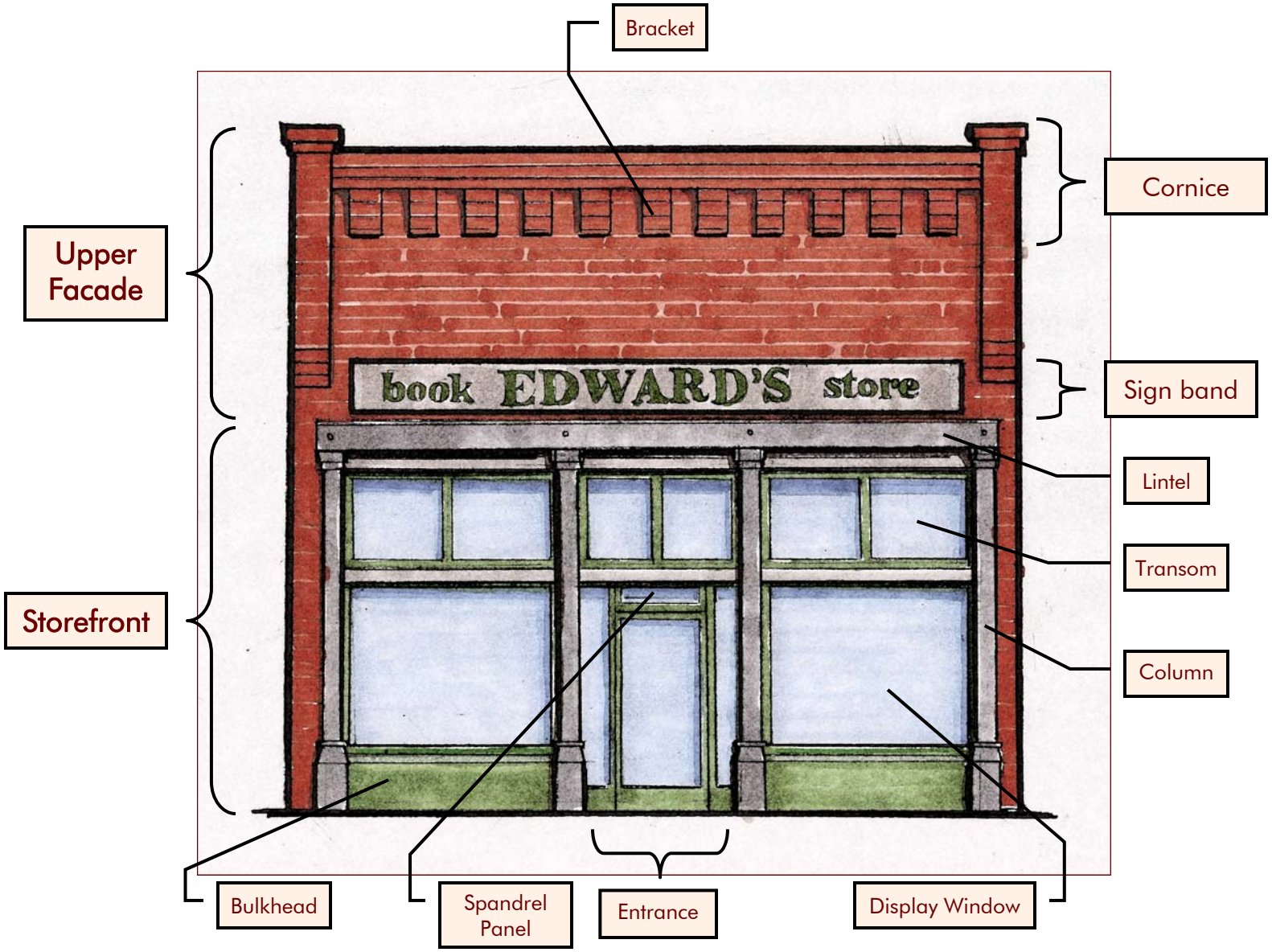
While these conceptual guidelines are written for Downtown Caruthersville, the recommendations are sound advice that might be applicable elsewhere in the community. These guidelines are written for commercial areas, although some residential considerations are discussed in **section 2.6**. The principles to be addressed, in many cases, can be altered and adapted to apply to the entire City or a specific neighborhood, but care should be taken that Downtown remains unique in character.

To successfully support the revitalization of Downtown Caruthersville, Downtown property owners, City staff, elected officials, and other community organizations will need to make a long-term commitment to an overall unifying theme, feel, and sense of atmosphere. This process takes time. This will be an ongoing effort that will evolve, pick-up speed, slow down, be applauded, and be criticized. The one constant should be the desire to adjust Downtown to an atmosphere that is attractive to Caruthersville residents and its visitors.

In the overall "fabric of Downtown" there will be 3 types of structures; those that contribute, those that detract, and those that do neither. The objective of these design guidelines is to maximize contributing elements and minimize detracting elements.

2.2.1 Building Zones

Improvements to buildings will be discussed in the context of three distinct 'zones'; the **Storefront**, the **Upper Façade**, and the **Rear Façade**. The elements of the front façade zones are depicted in the diagram on the following page.


Bracket
Cornice
Upper Facade
Sign band
book EDWARD'S store
Lintel
Transom
Storefront
Column
Bulkhead
Spandrel Panel
Entrance
Display Window

2.2.2 Façade Elements

The various elements of a façade must be balanced. Massing, building and floor heights, proportions, roof lines, materials, and setbacks are some critical considerations in new construction. Any future development should be encouraged to implement a design that contributes to the fabric of Downtown.

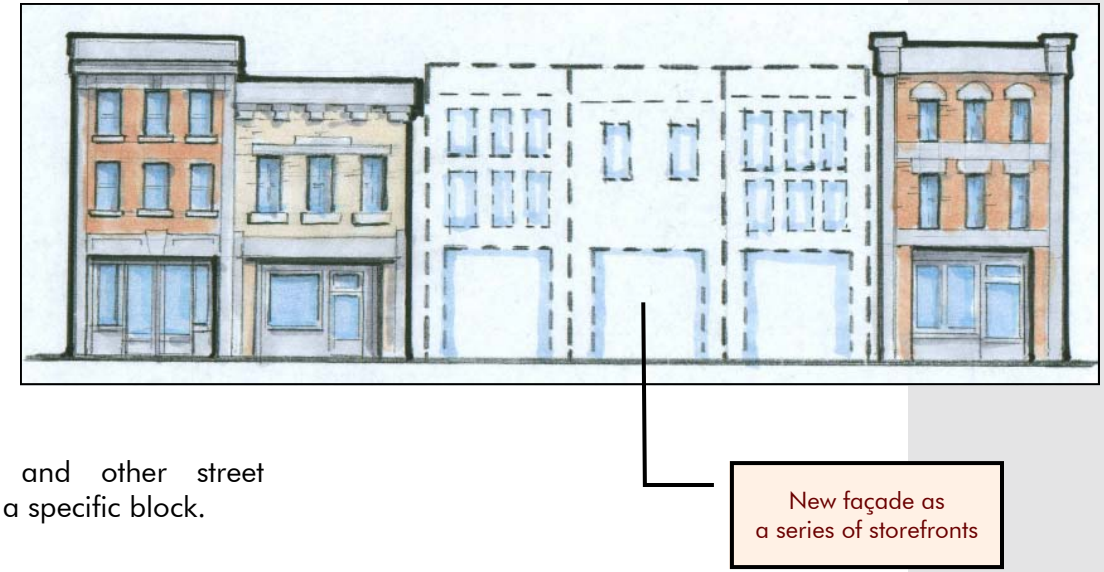
Other features such as architectural details, colors, and cornices are more important to the restoration of historic buildings, but can be used effectively in new construction as well. Developing a balance between all elements can allow a building to be individual in character, but also be part of a complementary thread that is woven into the overall fabric and feel of Downtown.

2.2.3 Rhythm

The defined rhythm of Downtown Caruthersville buildings should be maintained along the street frontage by adhering to uniform lot widths, building widths, and window spacing.

- New infill buildings and structures should maintain the rhythm through proper repetition of details and orientation to the street.

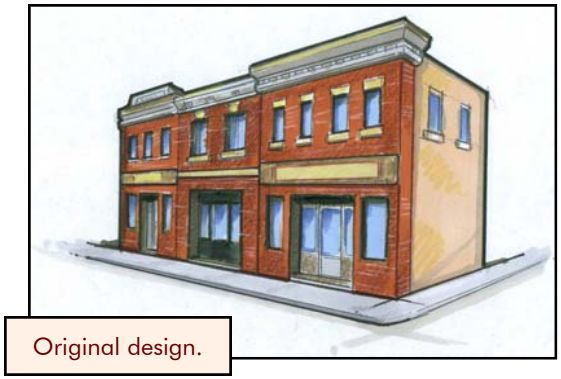
- Vertical elements, entrances, lighting, and other street furnishings can also develop the rhythm of a specific block.



2.2.4 Alterations

City leaders should encourage removal of alterations or additions that disrupt the fabric of the Storefront Zone. It is possible that non-historic and new construction can complement the building fabric that has developed, therefore some alterations may not need be removed. Decks, structures providing access for people with disabilities, and other "detachable" alterations can be utilized, but should be as unobtrusive as possible and located on the rear or sides of the building.

As a rule, any and all alterations or additions to the Upper Facade Zone should be removed. Alterations in this zone can significantly change the appearance of the face of the building. This includes any and all signs and lighting as these should be restricted to the Storefront Zone. Avoid removing or altering any historic material or significant architectural features. Care should be taken during the removal process to avoid damage to original elements hidden behind the alterations.



Original design.

Minor alterations.

Storefront is lost.

Significant alterations.

2.2.5 Masonry

Masonry is typically the preferred façade material for Downtown. Most existing construction will utilize some masonry. In most instances metal and wood siding is not a suitable choice for Downtown building fabric. These types of siding provide harsh lines, stark contrast, and no relief or warmth to the buildings. If wood was the historic material, it may be restored. Listed below are effective recommendations related to the treatment of masonry façades.

- Masonry restoration, particularly on historic structures, should be done by professionals.
- If the masonry has been painted or stained a minimally intrusive removal process should be used.
- Never resort to sand blasting as this will permanently damage the brick.
- Unpainted masonry should remain natural, not painted or sealed.
- Damaged masonry should be repaired or replaced with similar color, texture, and style masonry products.
- Re-pointing, of brick or stone, should be done with a replacement mortar material that will provide a consistent color and texture.
- Masonry replacement and/or repair should be done with elements that maintain the character of the original construction.
- Portland cement as a patch for masonry is unacceptable.

Poor examples of a material choice to repair brickwork

- If a historic façade has been covered with metal or wood siding it should be removed. Exposing the underlying brick masonry will help re-establish the character of the building and contribute to the visual continuity of the block. Metal cladding often is easy to remove, and only small areas of the underlying material will have been damaged.

- Siding and cladding may also hide interesting details that can enhance a building's identity. If, after removing the covering material, portions of the original must be replaced, use a material that is similar to the original in color and texture.

- Regular maintenance of stone foundations should occur to prevent structural and water damage.

- Water-proofing of foundations should be applied beneath the finished grade or inside the structure.

2.2.6 Awnings and Canopies

Awnings and canopies used in the Storefront Zone provide shade for merchandise, shelter for pedestrians, and can bring a colorful accent to the building front that can be changed without great expense. With numerous metal awnings, the following suggestions can dramatically improve Downtown Caruthersville:

- Mount the top edge to align with the top of the transom, or to align with the framing that separates the transom from the main display window. This will help strengthen the visual continuity of store fronts.

- Roll-up awnings were a common site on historic storefronts and can be used following a similar approach to the original application. If a roll-up awning is not operable, the awning should at least follow the shape of an operable awning.

Existing conditions of awnings and canopies in Downtown Caruthersville

- Like the storefront, awnings should be confined to the extent of the original storefront opening.
- Awning colors should coordinate with the color scheme for the entire building.
- Awning signage or lettering should be limited to the hanging vertical flap of the awning and be complementary in color to the building.
- Awning signage or lettering should not be allowed where another flush faced sign exists.
- Signboards under the awning intended to assist pedestrians should be a limited, uniform size and complement the awning and building.
- Awnings and canopies will wear and this aspect should be acknowledged as an operating cost of doing business. Awnings and canopies can be changed every few years for a fresh look.
- Aluminum, steel, and wood shingle awnings and structures are not original building elements and detract from the overall appeal of Downtown façades. These awnings should be removed and the points of attachment repaired.

Existing conditions of awnings and canopies in Downtown Caruthersville

2.2.7 Business Signage

For a successful Downtown Caruthersville, each business must have its own identity while at the same time maintaining high standards of quality for such building accents as business signage. Effective signage identifies the business without detracting from the architecture of the building and the fabric of Downtown. Sign types and their locations should be kept simple and consistent for ease of public awareness. Signage should be restricted to the Storefront or Rear Façade Zones.

The following concepts describe improvements that will help Caruthersville manage business signage:

- The size of the sign should be of a balanced scale in relation to the building and street. Large signs are not needed as the signage in Downtown is oriented to the pedestrian, not the motorist.
- Rooftop, blade, pole, neon, electronic message boards, and billboard signage should not be allowed or severely restricted.
- Abandoned signs should be removed.
- Position flush-mounted signs within architectural features if possible. This type of signage will help reinforce horizontal lines along the street.
- Coordinate color schemes with the building's front façade.
- Locate flush signs so they do not extend beyond the outer edges of the building front.

The business signage shown at right is installed poorly and dangerously as shown in the detail at left

Existing Business Signage in Downtown Caruthersville

- Use existing decorative moldings to define a sign band area for flush-mounted signs.
- Locate projecting signs along the first floor level of the façade, not above.

- Place signs near the business entrance, to guide a customer's eyes to the door.

- Use symbols in projecting signs; these are easily identified and remembered and will add interest to the building.

- Where several businesses share a building, coordinate the signs by aligning smaller signs or grouping them onto 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.

- Mount signs so they do not cover architectural details.

- Sign materials should be compatible with façade materials.

- Good craftsmanship will pay off in less maintenance and convey a stronger image to the public. Select high quality materials: Signs are exposed to extreme weather conditions, and a deteriorating sign presents a poor image.

- Encourage the use of custom designs that portray a business as being unique. Mass-produced signs, especially plastic panel, internally lit boxes, do not make a lasting impression.

Existing Business Signage
in Downtown Caruthersville

- Illuminate signs in such a way as to enhance the overall composition of the building's façade.

- External lighting cast from period style, non-intrusive fixtures is preferable to internal sign lighting.
- Awning signage or lettering should be limited to the hanging vertical flap of the awning and be complementary in color to the building front façade.

- Awning signage or lettering should not be allowed where another flush faced sign exists.

- Signboards under the awning intended to assist pedestrians should be limited.

- Signboards, if allowed, should have uniform size and complement the awning and building.

- Painting signage on buildings should not be allowed.

Good example of an attractive flush-mounted sign with external lighting in Washington, Missouri

Signboards on the sidewalk in Hannibal, Missouri

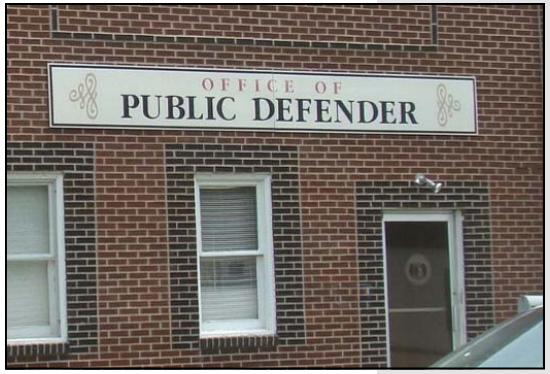
Good example of a projecting sign in Galena, Illinois

2.2.8 Building Lighting

Buildings should be interesting to pedestrians and motorists at night, as well as by day. A well-lit storefront or rear façade creates a welcome and safe feeling about the business and Downtown.

Downtown Caruthersville has a lack of interesting building lighting and could benefit greatly from a lighting plan to enhance the attractiveness and safety of Downtown. Many public buildings have inadequate and uninspiring lighting. Also, many buildings are obscured by low tree branches, further adding to dark areas and promoting an unsafe feeling. This plan addresses the following elements of commercial lighting:

- Use lighting as a design element to highlight the building, not just the sign.
- Any lighting at the storefront should be used to accent the entrance, signage, or architectural elements as well as provide light for safety and security.
- Light fixtures should be of a simple, non-intrusive design in a style that matches the period of the building.
- Sign lighting should be balanced in color and intensity with light in display windows.
- Warm-colored light is preferred for all exterior lighting, since this is more pleasing to the eye, and will more easily draw attention to window displays.
- Neon lights and cool fluorescent lights should not be used.



Existing conditions of building lighting in Downtown Caruthersville

- Lighting on Rear Facades should provide illumination at the entry door as well as along the pedestrian path from the parking area. This lighting should be similar in style to the lighting in the front.

- Building lighting, in particular up-lighting, should be coordinated with regulations set forth by Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) guidelines. These guidelines have been established by the United States Green Building Council to encourage environmentally sustainable construction.

- Lighting technologies are advancing quickly. The City should be prepared to allow innovative concepts with an emphasis on sustainability, attractiveness, and efficiency.

- Lighting can be effectively and attractively combined with other façade elements to be functional and make the building more interesting in the daytime as well.

- Care must be taken so that the lighting does not overwhelm the nature of the street and become garish or "too much" in relation to nearby buildings.

Poor examples of lighting style and intensity in Columbia, Illinois.

Good examples of how lighting can be used to illuminate doorway and entrance signage in St. Charles, Missouri.

2.2.9 Franchise Architecture

To maintain the unique atmosphere in Downtown Caruthersville, branding buildings in the style of a company should not be allowed. Large franchises and national chains typically have a "downtown-style" in addition to their trademarked brand. These styles are more fitting to Downtown as opposed to a highway corridor.

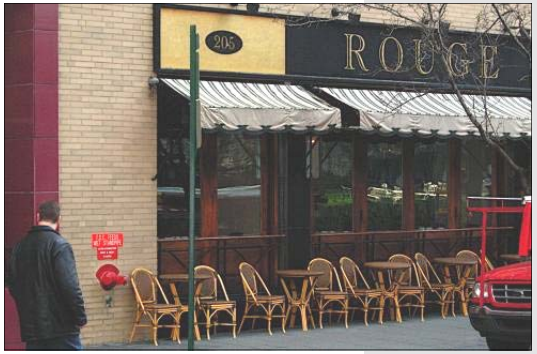
This is particularly important if a franchise store is to locate in an attached Downtown building of historical nature. In all likelihood, should Caruthersville attract a franchise retailer, they will be interested in locating on vacant land as a stand alone store. Such a facility can still be more fitting to the Downtown atmosphere by requiring less parking, pedestrian oriented signage, smaller building setbacks, and building lighting. Store owners should be able to adapt their brand to create a complementary Downtown building.

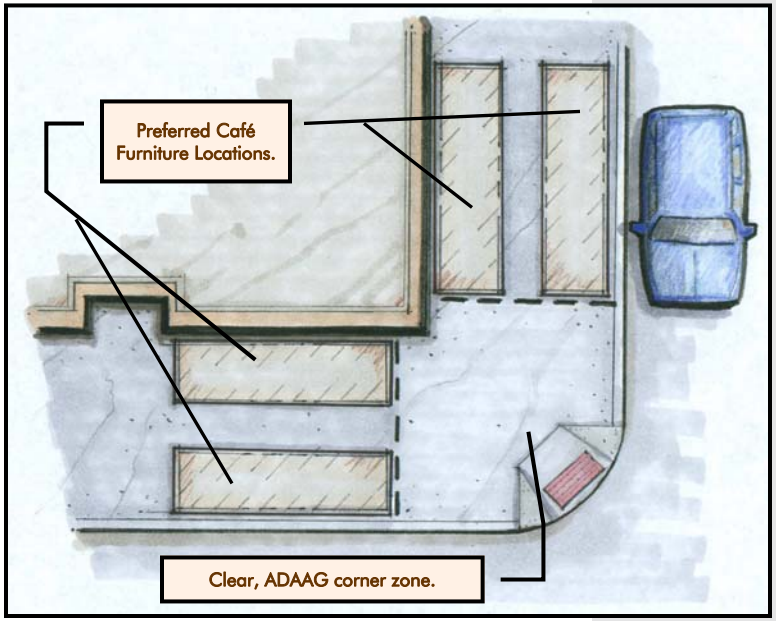
Good Example of stand alone franchise architecture in Downtown Maryville, Missouri

2.2.10 Outdoor Café Seating

Outdoor Café or sidewalk seating is a common element of a vibrant Downtown. Such seating areas can be accommodated but require special attention. A proper arrangement will:

- Be located in the sidewalk area fronting the restaurant.
- Allow a clear and unencumbered path along the sidewalk for pedestrian traffic. The sidewalk must maintain compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). The restaurant owner is responsible for keeping the sidewalk and this pathway clear at all times.
- Not block entrances or exits to the building and provide a clearly defined area connected with the restaurant. Areas adjacent to the buildings should be ideal.
- Use umbrellas or other patron coverings in a complementary color and style and with only the restaurant name. Any other wording or message should not be allowed to avoid a cluttering effect.
- Be properly maintained. Furnishings should be durable, weatherproof, and sturdy to prevent movement by wind. For these reasons, plastic furnishings should not be used.
- Be stored inside or off-site during the winter months.
- Provide sturdy trash receptacles. The restaurant owner must maintain the area free of trash.





Examples of good outdoor seating arrangements

2.2.11 Other Considerations

Items such as bicycle racks, flower plantings, benches, and banners are typically streetscape improvements installed by the City in the public right-of-way. These amenities should be coordinated in terms of design, material, and colors to accent Downtown's environment.

Privately-maintained landscaping can be very effective in screening utility units. This landscaping must be maintained by the property owner.

Additionally, the City may desire to regulate building aspects such as color, paint condition, and temporary product displays. Attention to these details should move beyond the realm of public safety and be reviewed for their overall aesthetic impact.

There is currently much vacant or underutilized land in the DREAM Study area. Infill development will occur and the City should be ready to sensibly guide that development and ensure it complements the existing buildings. The City has an opportunity to recreate itself and should carefully consider the uses for this vacant land. In the current economic climate, it will be tempting for the City to incentivize any project that comes along. However, a well-planned Downtown will be more sustainable in the long-term.

2.2.12 Maintenance of Facades

Façades, particularly historical restorations, may require extra care and maintenance. The City of Caruthersville should encourage proper maintenance of all elements of a building through firm and fair code enforcement.

In addition, if the City implements a Downtown incentive program for façade work, a requirement for the property owner to maintain the building according to City standards is in order. An example would be the ability to utilize a revolving loan for façade restoration having a provision to call the loan should the façade fall into disrepair.

Façade coverings, in addition to hiding the character of the building as noted earlier, can also conceal a poorly maintained and dangerous structure.

Rear façades and lot maintenance tend to be neglected, but are no less important to the overall structure of the building and the aesthetics of Downtown.

Examples of poor building conditions in Caruthersville

Examples of poor building conditions in Downtown Caruthersville

A metal covering concealed the true condition of this building until it collapsed in Sedalia, Missouri

2.3 Historic Buildings

2.3.1 Original Elements

Any original element or material that still exists, particularly on the front elevation of the building, should be retained if possible. Original elements provide a historic value that are costly to replace. Prism glass in transom windows or a decorative wooden door with beveled glass are examples of original materials.

Replacement of missing architectural elements should be based on accurate duplications of original features. When an entire detail must be reconstructed the new material should match the original in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Where reconstruction of an element is impossible because of a lack of historical evidence, then a new design that relates to the building in general size, scale and material may be considered. Use design elements that reflect the building's style. A simplified interpretation of similar features on comparable buildings may be acceptable.

Downtown Caruthersville has several historic buildings, primarily located along Ward Avenue. Infill development and numerous vacant lots lessen the presence of the historic structures. The City must seek to rehabilitate the historic buildings that remain.

2.3.2 Storefront (see page 8 for components)

The following are suggested methods for treating various storefront elements of Downtown building façades.

Existing conditions of some architectural details found in Caruthersville

Entrance

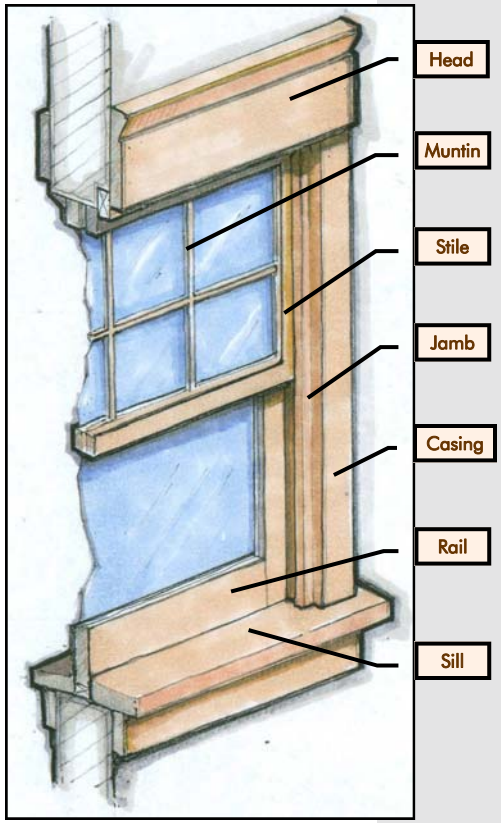
- The entrance door should be recessed to emphasize the entry, provide a bit of shelter, and remove the open door from the path of pedestrians on the sidewalk. These areas also repeat

a pattern of shaded areas along the street that helps to identify entrances.

- If the original recessed entry has been removed, consider establishing a new one.
- The recessed entrance door should also be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines.
- The door should provide a view into the building as well as a sense of openness. Solid doors should be avoided.
- Consider using an accent color on the door.

Windows

- Preserve any of the large panes of glass that make-up the original store front if they still exist. These transparent surfaces allow pedestrians to see goods and activities inside.
- New or replacement storefronts should be of similar materials compatible with the original façade design and craftsmanship.
- Wood framing similar to the original is preferred but metal framing with the historic profile that matches the building period is acceptable.
- Clear insulated glass with low 'E' coating is a good choice for replacement storefronts.
- Tinted or reflective glass and interior reflective films should not be used on the storefront.
- Window AC units should never be allowed in front façades. Many façades in Caruthersville include window AC units.



Typical window elements

Spandrel Panels

- Maintaining these original panels over doorways, if existing, is preferable but if the panel is missing, reconstruction using old photographs as a guide is acceptable.
- Coordinate the color scheme of the spandrel panel with other façade elements.
- If original design information is not available, a simplified panel using original materials is acceptable.

Transoms

- These bands of glass are found on many buildings and they often align at the same height in a block. Maintaining this line will help to reinforce a sense of visual continuity for the street.
- When transoms are covered and original moldings and window frame proportions are concealed, the impact of the store front is weakened. If the interior ceiling is now lower than this glass line, move the dropped ceiling back from the window. The restoration of this one feature in Downtown Caruthersville will make a dramatic change.
- Some transoms have hinged panels to allow natural ventilation. Restore these to working order where feasible. Used in combination with ceiling fans these operable transoms can be very effective in improving comfort levels when full air-conditioning is not necessary.

Most buildings in Downtown Caruthersville have covered transoms

2.3.3 Upper Facade (see page 8 for components)

The Upper Façade is often neglected as property owners tend to focus on the ground floor, business space. This is a mistake, as the impression of a building and a business is formed by the overall image of the property. Customers notice the condition of the upper floors though they may never set foot in them.

Many Caruthersville buildings have had windows covered with plywood or a covering such as metal or stucco applied to the entire floor. Likely this is a symptom of high winds and no street trees. Additionally, if upper floors are to be used for residential purposes, features such as windows will need to be restored and functional. The use of incentives can encourage property owners to restore the entire front façade to a condition that showcases the buildings character.

Intricate upper façade with ornamental cornice in Neosho, Missouri

Standards of care for upper façade elements include:

Windows

- Typical upper windows are vertically oriented and uniformly spaced across the building front. This rhythm of upper story windows is an important unifying feature of Downtown, because it is repeated on most buildings.
- Any windows covered by masonry infill, wood panels, or mismatched windows should be removed. Boarded-up windows or large expanses of brick give the Downtown an unsafe and vacant feeling. Downtown Caruthersville has many buildings with covered windows.
- If the original window still exists, it should be restored to serviceable condition when possible.
- Replace only missing portions of original elements where

What could be a very nice Downtown Caruthersville façade is losing its windows

feasible. Sometimes trim elements and other materials must be removed in order to repair or refinish them. Always devise methods of replacing the disassembled materials in their original configuration. Code trim pieces, for example, so you can replace them accurately.

- Installation of interior storm windows should be considered.
- Window AC units should not be allowed on front façades. Upper floors can be cooled by other methods or by rear mounted window AC units.
- If the existing window is beyond repair a replacement window of historic size and profile should be installed.
- Use design elements that reflect the building's style. A simplified interpretation of similar features on comparable buildings may be considered.
- Window shades or curtains in colors that coordinate with accent trim should be encouraged.
- If the ceiling is lower than the window head, pull the ceiling back from the window to maintain the height at the window.

Covered windows and front AC units as shown here in Caruthersville should be avoided

Cornice and Architectural Details

- Replacement of missing cornices or architectural elements should be based on accurate duplications of original features. In some cases, an entire detail must be reconstructed. In the event replacement is necessary, new material should match the original in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Photographic evidence is a good source for research.
- If the cornice is missing, a similar cornice of like size and scale

This Downtown Caruthersville building has second floor living potential, but the upper story windows need to be uncovered and restored

should be reconstructed from photographic evidence.

- If no evidence exists as to form and detail, the reconstructed cornice should be as simple and non-intrusive as possible.
- An intact cornice should be repaired and maintained.
- Where architectural details have been removed, look at photos for details to use as patterns for new designs.
- Where exact reconstruction of details is not feasible, consider developing a simplified interpretation of the original, in which its major form and line is retained.

Some of the decorative cornices found in Caruthersville

2.3.4 Rear Façade (see page 8 for components)

The rear façade typically faces an alley and provides access for deliveries and pick-up. In some cases customer parking is provided behind a building and entry to the business through the rear elevation is desirable. Attention to the appearance of the rear elevation can be extremely important to the quality of the customers' shopping experience. The building and business image can likely be improved here while accommodating service functions. Suggested methods of caring for rear façade elements follow.

Entry Door

- The rear door will no longer be just for service but should project a sense of openness and welcome.
- Customers might also feel a loyalty or sense of "special access"' by using this door and the business can build on this loyalty by catering to that customer and improving that experience.
- A new door and hardware with a large area of glass may be considered.
- A small canopy or awning may provide some shelter and helps to identify the entrance.

Upper Rear Façade

- The upper rear facade elements should be treated similar to the front. Often these elements are allowed to deteriorate.
- Windows should be restored or replaced.

Existing conditions of rear façades in Caruthersville

- Gutters and downspouts should be in good repair and painted.
- Use materials and colors that coordinate with the front façade so customers will learn to recognize that both entrances are related to the same business.
- Use a smaller version of the front façade signage to identify the rear entrance.
- New exit stairs and balconies can enhance the marketability of second story space, especially when these lead out onto parking lots located on the back side of the building. Encourage installing new stairs that comply with current building codes.

Good example of a well maintained rear façade in St. Charles, Missouri

Fences

- Fences should be designed to harmonize with the surrounding structures in both scale and color.
- Some materials which may be appropriate include masonry, wood, wrought-iron, and ornamental aluminum.
- Chain-link should not be a permitted material for fencing in Downtown.

Trash, Ancillary Structures, & Utilities

- Sensible, yet firm enforcement of the City's building and nuisance codes will be required and should be a priority throughout Downtown Caruthersville.
- Trash containers should be placed in an enclosure or behind a screen.

Good example of screened trash containers in Hannibal, Missouri

- Enclosures and screens should harmonize with the surrounding buildings in scale and color.
- Landscaping can also be used to screen air-conditioning condensers and utility transformers.
- Use solid wood or masonry partitions, lattice screens, or hedges to screen trash areas.
- Any ancillary structures should match the surrounding buildings style and scale. These structures must be maintained well.
- Keep electrical service boxes and conduits in good repair and painted.
- Encourage using a color scheme on these screens that matches that of the rest of the building.

An inviting example of a well landscaped rear façade in St. Charles, Missouri

2.4 Existing Buildings and New Construction

Some buildings in Downtown do not have historic features or ornamentation. Many were built with simple fronts. In addition there are vacant lots in Downtown Caruthersville where new buildings might be constructed in the future. Also some infill construction has occurred that does not mesh well with the existing buildings.

The City should implement the following standards concerning existing buildings and new construction in Downtown:

- New construction should be considerate of traditional storefront elements described in these guidelines or on nearby historic buildings that contributes to the fabric of Downtown.
- Use of a simple design, complementary to other Downtown buildings, with three basic elements; a unified paint and color scheme, an awning, and non -intrusive signage.
- Emphasize horizontal features that can align with other buildings. In-fill construction should match the size and scale of the surrounding buildings.
- Encourage highlighting a simple cornice, a band of color, a sign panel or an awning edge that can line up with similar elements on the street nearby.
- Some infill buildings are set back from the street, with space in front for parking. These buildings are intended to relate to cars more than pedestrians. Landscaping elements that will enhance the rhythm and front position of adjacent buildings should be encouraged.

Example of a block showing in-fill construction between two historic structures. The newer building is adhering to similar basic design guidelines in Washington, North Carolina

2.5 Color Guidelines

Use color to your advantage without being garish or flashy. Some of the most noticeable improvements are achieved with a simple application of fresh paint. The most effective and economical schemes often start with the natural colors of the building materials themselves as a base, such as the native red of many brick buildings.

The following color techniques should be encouraged for Downtown:

- Use only one base color for the majority of the background wall surface, but use a different color for accents. Do not paint a building entirely one color.
- Base colors should be muted earth tones or pastels.
- Look for "built-in" features of the façade that can be highlighted with an accent color.
- Window frames, sills, moldings, and cornices are potential elements to dramatize with a contrasting color.
- Use bright colors only in small amounts. Place them at the first floor level to direct the customer's eyes to the business.
- Consider accent colors for signs, awnings, and entrance doors.
- Earth tones will hold their color well, as will darker pastels. Check for color stability in ultra-violet light; some colors, such as red, tend to be unstable and will shift in hue over time.

Good example of painted areas complementing building material colors in Washington, Missouri

2.6 Residential Considerations

Downtown Caruthersville is surrounding by predominantly single-family housing that is showing signs of great distress and poor maintenance. Although, the damage inflicted by the 2006 tornado on the housing market was significant, the condition of the housing market did not happen from this one event. Years of deferred improvements to many of these properties are to blame. It is also quite likely that this lack of care actually made the damage from the storm worse.

This is a document focused on Downtown commercial building design guidelines, but the existing housing conditions cannot go overlooked. Specific recommendations for housing is discussed in the DREAM Residential Demand Analysis. The primary recommendations that these design guidelines echo, include:

- The City of Caruthersville should more firmly enforce the existing City maintenance and building codes, ensuring that property owners maintain safe structures. This may require concerted effort and expense, but the City will be more protected from liability and encourage new private investment.

- The City should also develop and Implement rental inspections and an occupancy permit ordinance. Again, the City will be ensuring properties are undergoing important structural repairs and not just being covered-up.

Examples of existing conditions of housing in Downtown Caruthersville

Caruthersville has had its share of hardship hit its residential structures. Attention to building conditions will help protect future generations from experiencing the same problems.

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3.0 BUILDING DESIGN EXAMPLES

The subject blocks chosen by the community are located along the east side of Ward Avenue between 2nd and 4th streets. These blocks enjoy fair occupancy, but do not encourage pedestrian traffic. More retail shops and pedestrian amenities are needed. Building conditions vary and many have obvious historic character that can be preserved. The Exchange Building sits at the corner of 3rd Street and Ward Avenue and its side façade was also included.

Concept elevations for these structures are depicted below. The following pages show existing conditions and more detailed illustrations.

Exchange building—225 Ward Avenue

303—311 Ward Avenue

313—323 Ward Avenue

3.1 Exchange Building—225 Ward Avenue

The Exchange Building occupies a prominent spot at the main intersection of 3rd and Ward and provides an interesting structure for visitors heading to the casino or riverfront. This building has intricate details, but is showing masonry issues and evidence of improper alterations. The side façade along 3rd Street has just as much detail as the front and a rear storefront that has been altered. Although currently vacant, the City has plans to utilize the building as a heritage museum.

Existing conditions are shown below and an illustration of improvements is shown on the next page.

Existing conditions

Exchange building—225 Ward Avenue

Exchange building rear facing 3rd Street

The front façade with the awning removed, transoms exposed, and upper floor windows restored.

Restore side façade windows on both floors.

Properly restore and maintain masonry.

Exchange building—225 Ward Avenue

The storefront features are in good shape. Access to upper floor should be restored.

The addition of regularly spaced building lighting will establish rhythm and aesthetic appeal.

Restore rear storefront for a second entrance or window displays.

3.2 303 Ward Avenue

This building has great potential and anchors the corner across 3rd Street from the Exchange Building. A black metal cladding is the current prominent feature and make the building look overpowering, but the architectural detail can be seen on the side façade. The business anchor currently in the building generates significant pedestrian traffic.

Existing conditions are shown below and a concept illustration is depicted on the following page.

Existing conditions

303 Ward Avenue

Appropriate signage in the sign band with no wiring showing.

Remove metal covering to expose original windows and façade features.

303 Ward Avenue

Reconstruct storefront elements, remove awning, and expose transoms to reestablish the building's character.

Bulkhead restoration can expose details. Original materials should be used.

Window lettering can be an effective way to communicate the use of a building.

3.3 307—311 Ward Avenue

This building has recently housed two businesses. The left side transoms have been covered by metal cladding and the right by a metal awning. The upper floor windows are boarded-up, but the masonry details are visible.

Existing conditions are shown below and an illustration of improvements is shown on the next page.

Existing conditions

307—311 Ward Avenue

Cornice should be uncovered or recreated if possible. If no cornice remains, a simple unobtrusive design will complement the building.

Move all signage into the sign band, providing a clean and orderly appearance.

307—311 Ward Avenue

Canvas awnings, not metal.

Elements such as planters can provide a very pleasing touch.

3.4 313—315 Ward Avenue

These two buildings in the middle of the block, just south of the alleyway house a payday loan company and a clothing store. Both of these building façades have been altered extensively leaving no trace of the original architectural character.

Existing conditions are shown below and an illustration of improvements is shown on the next page.

Existing conditions

313—315 Ward Avenue

Canvas awnings can be attractive elements to establish rhythm along the street, but must be maintained.

313—315 Ward Avenue

Restoring windows to their full size will brighten the inside of the building.

Original storefront reconstruction from documented history is vital to recapturing the building's identity and creating a structure that contributes to the Main Street fabric.

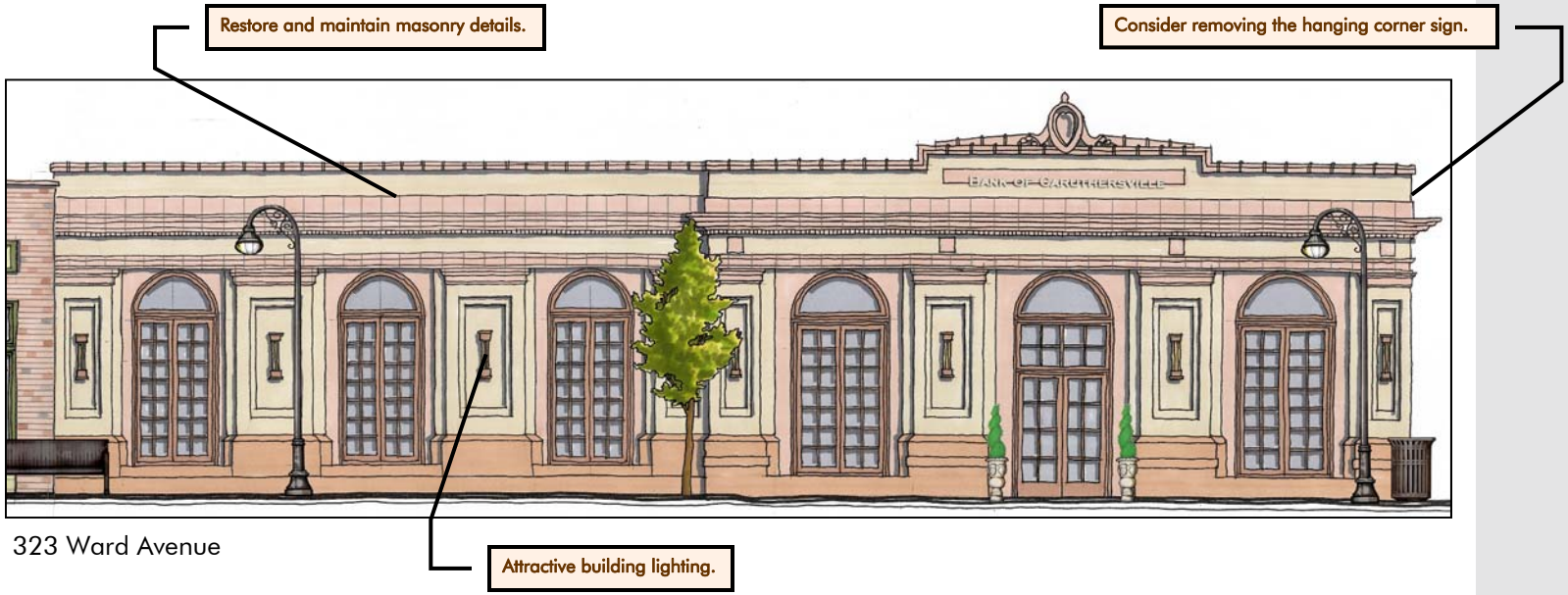
3.5 323 Ward Avenue

At the corner of 4th Street and Ward Avenue, Focus Bank occupies a very handsome building. This structure is very detailed and has been rehabilitated in way that enhance its architectural character. Attractive windows, building lighting, signage, and landscaping all contribute to make this property attractive. Although it is not a typical visitor destination, its condition encourage pedestrians by providing a pleasing setting along the sidewalk.

Existing conditions are shown below and an illustration of improvements is shown on the next page.

Existing conditions

323 Ward Avenue



323 Ward Avenue

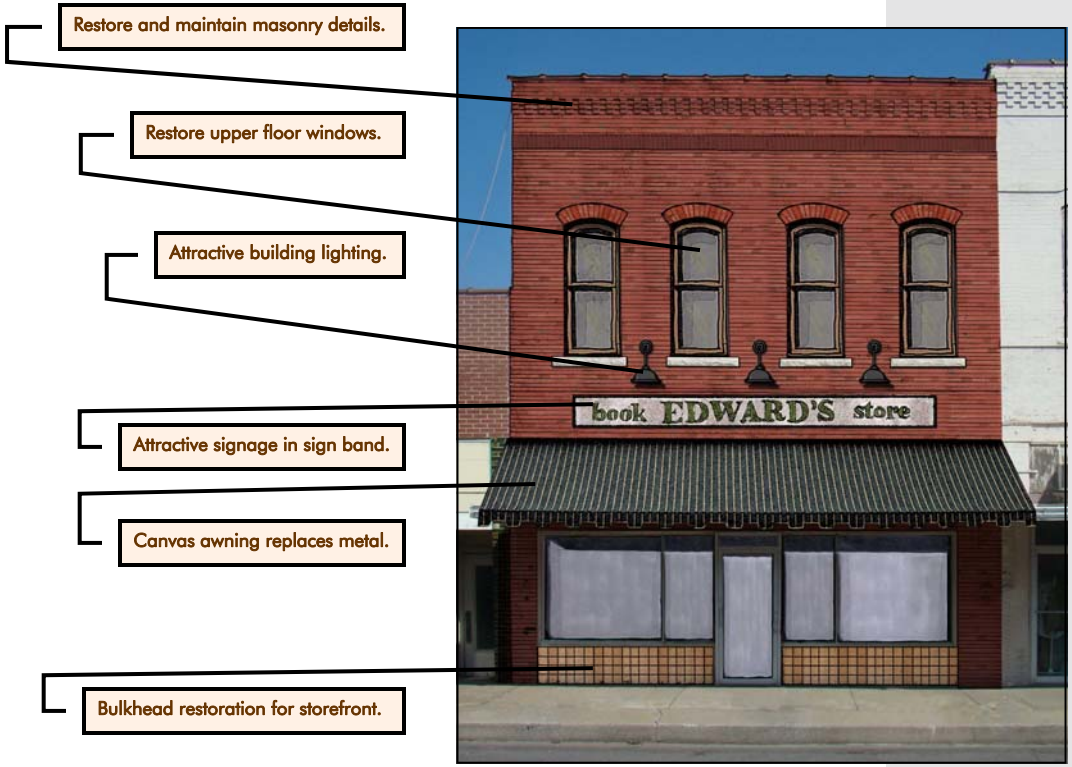
3.6 314 Ward Avenue

In addition to the subject building block, three buildings across Ward Avenue have recently come under single ownership. Downtown Caruthersville leaders asked for an example of one of these buildings to be included in the Design Guidelines. The building chosen at 314 Ward Avenue currently houses a jewelry store and has metal awnings. The structure is detailed, but needs some attention to the upper façade. It has the potential to be a very attractive storefront.

Existing conditions and an illustration of improvements are shown below.

Existing conditions

314 Ward Avenue



4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Recommendations

First steps for implementing Building Design Guidelines are to build public support and buy-in, and communicate the City-wide benefits of adhering to design guidelines. Suggestions for next steps are:

- The City will need to demonstrate clear benefits to property owners that implement Building Design Guidelines. City leadership is very strong and activities such as rehabilitation training, recognition, and a streamlined permitting process will be well received by Downtown owners.

- The City should review its code enforcement practices and ordinances to improve these procedures. It was obvious during field work in Caruthersville that City staff wrestle with enforcement, nuisance, and maintenance procedures. Likely more staffing is needed, but the existing personnel need support from the City Council and clear guidance that firm enforcement is expected. Residential property is prevalent and likely requires a lot of resources as well. The buildings of Caruthersville must not be allowed to continue to deteriorate. This critical situation requires this review of City codes.

- Along with this effort must come regular inspection procedures that include reviews of components beyond structural and safety issues. The City, along with its legal counsel, should review how it can issue violations for items such as peeling paint, broken or missing windows, wood covering in windows, and general disrepair of buildings.

- The City should remain open to future policy practices that will include firm and fair regulations addressing construction

quality, conservation of resources, flexibility to allow innovation in design, and energy efficiency.

- In order to create the resources that will ultimately achieve the goal of a successfully revitalized Downtown, it is important to understand that additional taxes, districts, or legislation may be required. The benefits created for Downtown by these new mechanisms will far outweigh any new costs to the residents, property owners, or consumers. The DREAM Financial Assistance Review task provides information on the various financing mechanisms available to Caruthersville.

- In addition to private Downtown building facades, the following **section 5.0** discusses some public elements. The City of Caruthersville should seek to increase its investment in Downtown in these ways as well. An increase in public investment will lead to greater private investment and can be a powerful catalyst for Downtown revitalization efforts.

5.0 OTHER DOWNTOWN ELEMENTS

5.1 Existing Streetscape

The term Streetscape typically refers to exterior public spaces located between the building facades on one side of the street and the building facades on the other side of the street. When the casino located in Caruthersville, a streetscape design program began that was installed by the City and paid for by the casino. The streetscape design is quite handsome and is being expanded, resulting in a more efficient and user-friendly environment for visitors to Downtown Caruthersville. Geographic priorities for future expansions should be along Ward Avenue, 2nd, and 4th Streets. Additionally the design should begin on 3rd Street at the intersection with Truman Boulevard, although this intersection is beyond the DREAM boundary. Improvements to this entire approach would greatly benefit Downtown.

There is a lack of benches in Downtown Caruthersville that the city needs to address. Benches will require maintenance but will encourage pedestrian traffic and provide gathering spots for potential Downtown business customers.

Also improvements to public parking lots, expanded elements of the Streetscape design, and more aesthetic installations of landscaping can be included as Downtown business improves.

Without exception, all of the physical, public owned elements of Downtown must be maintained. Elements should be reviewed on a regular basis and repairs or replacements made as timely as resources allow.

Public enhancements will lessen the risk of private property owners and demonstrates that the City is an investment partner in the revitalization of Downtown Caruthersville.

Existing streetscape elements in Downtown Caruthersville

5.2 Wayfinding

5.2.1 Wayfinding Principles

Wayfinding is an indispensable tool for directing travelers to destinations while at the same time creating a positive first impression. The term wayfinding was originally coined by Kevin Lynch in his 1960 book *The Image of the City*. Lynch presented the concept that people use a cognitive map to move through their environment to their destination. Wayfinding develops a system to assist travelers in interpreting the map.

In relation to community planning and specifically to Downtown Caruthersville, the goal of a wayfinding system is to make the journey to Downtown as transparent and seamless as possible. Furthermore, by taking a comprehensive approach in developing the wayfinding system it can reinforce the community's unique identity and sense of place.

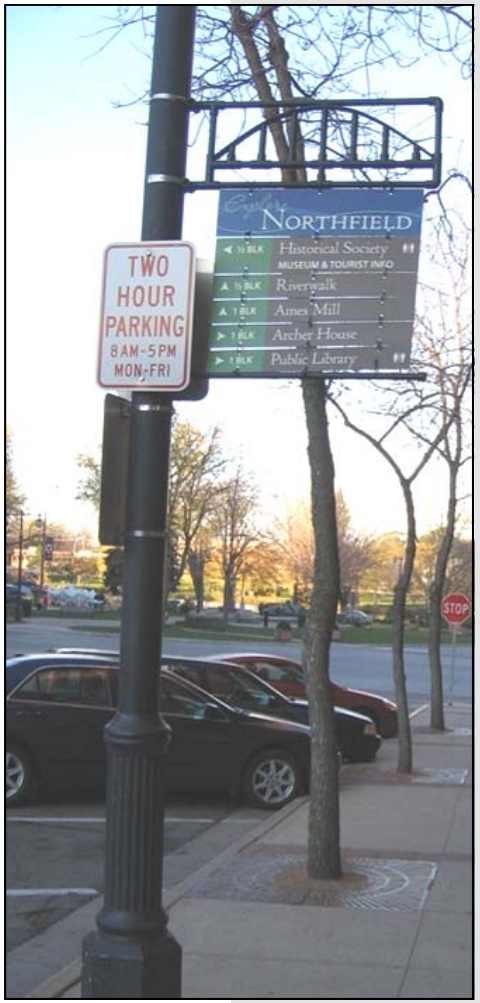
Caruthersville should add wayfinding elements to its existing Downtown streetscape design through design and building codes centered on four primary aspects:

Architecture:

- Visual clues of buildings and other features of a street aid people in knowing their location and the direction of their destination without the use of signage.

- Strong architecture, such as the Pemiscot County Courthouse, Post Office, and floodwall serve as landmarks and orientation points. These points are destinations and starting points.

- Buildings have visual aids that draw our eyes to where we expect an entrance or a shop window to be located.



Examples of good wayfinding solutions. Webster Groves, Missouri at left. Northfield, Minnesota at right.

Sight Lines:

- The motorist will feel most comfortable in maintaining visual contact with his or her destination and will want to make as few direction changes as possible.

- Clean, clear sight lines down streets at key intersections should be maintained. Avoid allowing building fixtures, such as projecting signs, to encroach or block these lines.

- Repetitive landscaping and furnishings can enhance and draw the eye down these streets, but care must be taken that these items do not obstruct important navigational landmarks.

Lighting:

- Lighting can be used to encourage routes and pathways.

- Warmly lit sidewalks and streets draw the customer onward, while similarly lit storefronts and entrances will draw the eye of the customer.

- A repetitive line of lighting can be an effective navigation tool.

- Poor lighting causes missed information and leaves an unsafe impression in a visitors mind.

Signage:

- Uniform signage at important decision points is a critical element of Downtown wayfinding. Kiosks can direct visitors to various attractions, advertise events, and consolidate signage.

- Excessive signage will lessen the effectiveness of individual signs. Fewer, easy to read signs placed at strategic locations are preferred.

Illustration of an easy to spot wayfinding kiosk

5.2.2 Wayfinding Components

Wayfinding systems are made up of components that create an arrival sequence to Downtown. The system consists of common themed signs, of various types that direct travelers to attractions. All too frequently existing wayfinding systems are inadequate. Typical problems with existing wayfinding systems include:

- Lack of accuracy, with arbitrary sign location.
- Visual clutter from too many signs.
- Lack of focus in directing traffic to Downtown.
- Diffuse allocation of signs, across many "entrances".
- Signs that lack charm, or are standard Department of Transportation signage.
- Routes actually direct travelers around Downtown.
- Signs are too small with inconsistent sizes, colors, and types.

Components of successful systems seamlessly integrate the visitors experience with the messages needed to navigate around Downtown. These components include:

- Primary Gateway Sign—Serves as the "Welcome" to a visitor, creating the first impression of the community. The sign should be significant, serving as a landmark.
- Traffic & Directional Signs—As unobtrusive and attractive as possible, while still meeting Department of Transportation guidelines for safety. Additionally, signs for visitor amenities

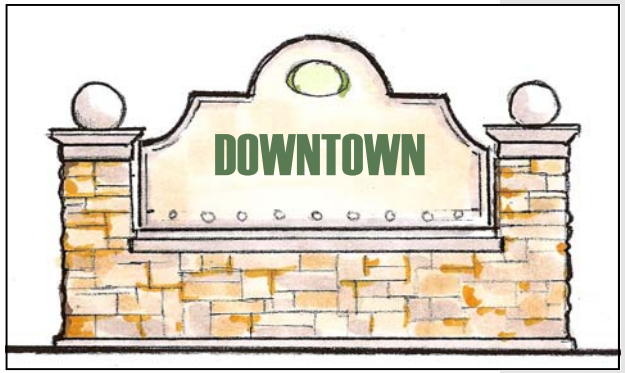


Illustration of a primary gateway sign

like parking and public restrooms can be enhanced and improved.

- Trailblazer Sign—Utilitarian purpose combined with unique branding and design elements. Attractions to consider as destinations on Trailblazer Signs include; Downtown, Historic Districts, museums, event areas, government offices, parking, colleges/universities, and visitor centers. Signs should be located at or near key transportation nodes.

- Proximity Signs—In close proximity of attractions; these signs direct visitors through their final few steps to the destination.

- District Gateway Sign—Creates a boundary for a particular district within Downtown, such as a Historic District. These signs should be used within the district to be defined and should reflect the size, scale and character of the existing architecture of the district.

A successful wayfinding system is made up of elements that can be used in a variety of configurations. Some communities may require only a few of these elements or can gradually add components into a complete system. All components included in the wayfinding system should have a simple and uniform design. Above all, the signs need to be brief and easy to read with large type face, and adequate character spacing. Sign coloring should be attractive, not discordant. The wayfinding system signs should be unique and stand out in their surroundings.

Signs directing the automobile user should be developed using the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices published by the Federal Highway Administration.

Illustration of a trailblazer sign

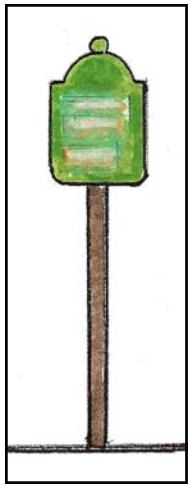


Illustration of a proximity sign

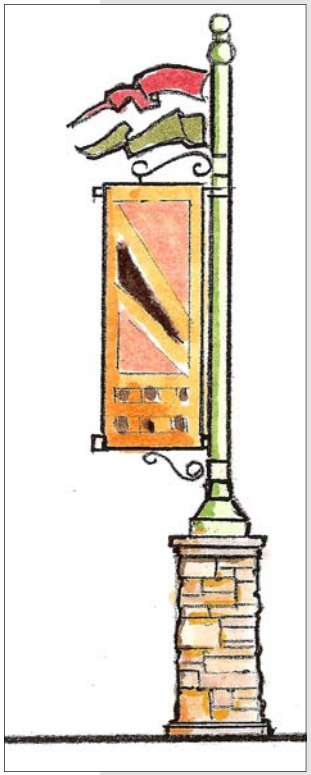


Illustration of a district gateway Sign