

Design Guidelines for Tonganoxie's Central Business District

*To Assist in the Rehabilitation and New Construction of
Buildings in Downtown Tonganoxie*



Prepared by:
Historic Preservation Services, LLC
for
The City of Tonganoxie



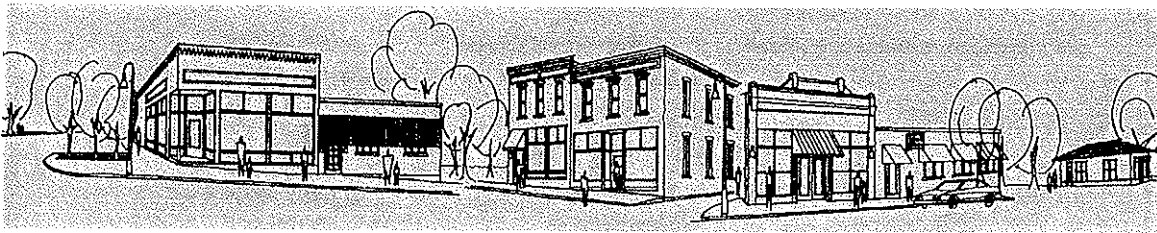
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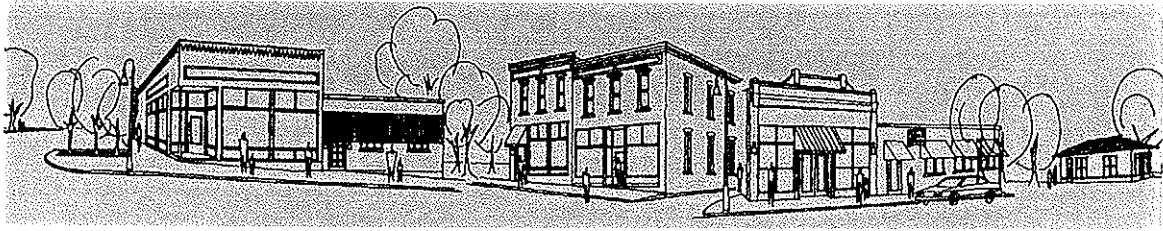
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INTRODUCTION



Downtown Tonganoxie is composed of buildings and streetscapes that developed over a period of time. Although many of the older buildings have their own distinct character and identity, their design patterns also contribute to the overall appearance of the downtown. These patterns and their relationships to each other give Tonganoxie's central business district its unique form and identity.

As in many communities nationwide, new residential and commercial growth presents unique challenges for older commercial centers and residential neighborhoods. While new businesses may be interested in locating in the Tonganoxie Central Business District, some downtown services and businesses will relocate to new areas. If Tonganoxie's business district is to remain viable, it must compete with other local and regional commercial centers. Experience demonstrates that whether old or new, commercial areas that create or retain a unique visual character – “a sense of place” – are the most successful.

The City of Tonganoxie initiated a strategy to enhance the appearance of its business district by using federal funds to install new sidewalks and streetlights and to establish a revolving fund to assist commercial property owners in rehabilitating their properties. The city also initiated the development of design guidelines to be used as a standard for the revolving fund projects and, on an advisory basis,

for renovation projects and new construction. The goal of the design guidelines is to provide direction to property owners to ensure that changes to properties utilizing public incentives enhance and compliment the unique character of Tonganoxie's commercial center.

Similar approaches taken in cities like Tonganoxie proved to be successful in revitalizing and maintaining the economic health of those communities. By identifying the important physical features that define and distinguish the unique character of a specific place, design guidelines help owners rehabilitate, maintain and construct buildings that enhance those qualities.

The following guidelines incorporate the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* (see page 4). When applied in a consistent manner in a defined area, these guidelines have proven to stabilize and increase

property values. During a series of public workshops, participants identified issues particular to Tonganoxie's downtown and adapted the Secretary's Standards to local conditions. The resulting guidelines do not advocate a theme approach. Nor is the intent to reproduce a historical period. The goal of the design guidelines is to identify and reinforce common patterns that will contribute to downtown Tonganoxie's sense of place, retain and enhance its historic visual character and aid property owners in preparing appropriate plans for rehabilitation or new construction.

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The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

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

REHABILITATION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS

Commercial buildings and the streetscape they create in downtown Tonganoxie define both the functional and visual character of the city's central business district. Their appearance and physical condition play a significant role in the future of this commercial district.

Most of Tonganoxie's commercial buildings are simple structures of one or two stories. Dating from the late 19th century, they include examples from almost every decade up to the present. Unfortunately many of the facades have been altered and have inappropriate siding, peeling paint, out-of-character signs, and unsuitable color schemes. Several modern buildings introduced a different scale, new materials and open spaces that impact the cohesiveness of the business district as a whole. The first step in creating an attractive, congruous sense of place is to take advantage of the existing character defining elements in the commercial streetscape and to enhance them through rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation begins by recognizing the style and

character of an existing building. The goal of rehabilitation is to preserve or recapture the original character of the building by adapting proposed changes to the building's basic features.

The first step in creating an attractive, cohesive sense of place is to take advantage of the existing character defining elements in the commercial streetscape and to enhance them through rehabilitation.

The design guidelines for Tonganoxie respect the fact that the designs of all buildings, whether historic or contemporary, have value as products of their own time period. In Tonganoxie's business district, many buildings retain original design elements while others have treatments, alterations and additions that are inconsistent with their date of construction. The following guidelines provide direction to preserve and recapture their original integrity.

The traditional building materials found in downtown Tonganoxie are brick, stone and stucco. Paint, stucco and synthetic materials cover some of the early brick buildings. A few of the most recent buildings are stone and metal.

North side of Fourth Street - Typical streetscape in downtown Tonganoxie showing the architectural integrity of Tonganoxie's historic storefront structures.



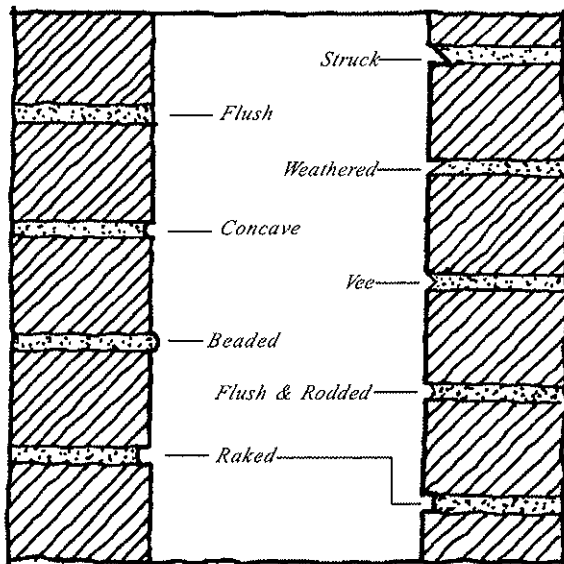
EXPOSED BRICK AND STONE MASONRY

Recommended:

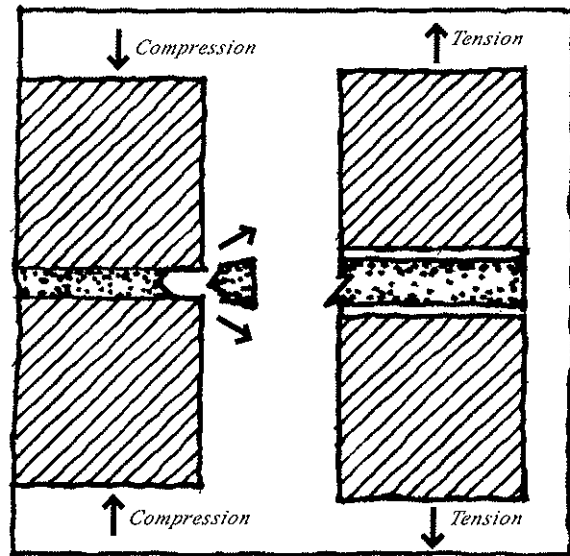
1. Retaining and preserving masonry features that are important in defining the overall character of a building such as walls, brackets, cornices, window surrounds, door surrounds, steps, columns and details.
2. Providing proper drainage so that water does not stand or accumulate on masonry surfaces.
3. Cleaning only when necessary to halt deterioration or to remove graffiti or bad stains with the gentlest method possible, such as using low-pressure water (<400 psi), mild detergents and natural bristle brushes. Conducting masonry surface cleaning tests when cleaning is necessary. Tests should be observed over a sufficient period of time so that both immediate and long-term effects are known to enable selection of the gentlest method possible.

Avoid:

1. Removing or radically changing important masonry features. Applying paint or other coatings for purely cosmetic purposes, such as stucco to masonry that was originally unpainted or uncoated.
2. Failing to treat causes of mortar joint deterioration such as leaking roofs or gutters, settling of the building, capillary action or extreme weather exposure.
3. Cleaning masonry surfaces when they are not heavily soiled to create a new appearance and needlessly introducing chemicals or moisture into original materials. Abrasive or mechanical cleaning, such as sandblasting, destroys the masonry. This allows water to penetrate the masonry and can result in severe damage to the brick or stone. Masonry damaged in this manner will deteriorate faster in the future. Do not clean masonry surfaces without testing or allowing sufficient time for the testing results to be evaluated.



New mortar should be applied so that the new joints match the original in width and profile. It is important to look at both the horizontal and vertical joints as they may be tooled using different styles. Furthermore, primary facades may receive more elaborate tooling than secondary facades.



Under compression, mortar with a high content of portland cement will spall, or break off. Under tension, the mortar will crack and allow water penetration. Therefore, it is imperative that new mortar match the original, not only in color, width and tooling profile, but in composition as well.

EXPOSED BRICK AND STONE MASONRY CONTINUED

Recommended:

4. Repairing cracks or missing bricks to prevent water infiltration and further damage. The mortar should be repaired or replaced without causing further damage to the masonry or remaining mortar: (1) Remove only deteriorated portions. This should be done by hand since mechanical methods will destroy adjacent masonry; (2) New mortar should have the same strength, color and texture as the original mortar. The mortar should be tested to determine its original composition; and (3) Apply new mortar so that the joints match the original joints in width and profile.
5. Applying surface treatments such as "breathable" water-repellent coatings to masonry only after re-pointing and only if masonry repairs have failed to arrest water penetration problems.
6. Repairing masonry by patching or piecing in. Replacing original material with the same material or compatible substitute material.

Avoid:

4. Removing mortar from sound joints, then repointing the entire building to achieve a uniform appearance. Avoid using ready-mix mortars that have a high portland cement content that is stronger than old brick and will cause shifting and cracks.
5. Applying waterproof or water repellent treatments as a substitute for masonry pointing and repairs, or covering brick or stone with stucco or non-porous coatings. Brick and stone are porous and "breath." Coatings are frequently unnecessary and expensive. They act as sealants that block the transfer of water and will eventually cause problems.
6. Replacing an entire masonry feature when limited replacement of deteriorated or missing parts is appropriate. Do not use a substitute replacement material that does not match the original.

PAINTED MASONRY

Recommended:

1. Inspecting painted masonry surfaces to evaluate the overall condition of the masonry and to determine whether repainting or masonry repair is necessary.
2. Removing loose or deteriorated paint only to the next sound layer using the gentlest method possible (handscraping) prior to repainting.
3. Applying a compatible paint coating following proper surface preparation. Repainting with colors that are appropriate to the building and surrounding buildings.

Avoid:

1. Removing paint from painted masonry. Some older masonry buildings have been painted to halt deterioration. For example, if the "skin" of a brick was previously lost exposing the softer inner brick, painting may have been the only method to halt deterioration.
2. Removing paint that firmly adheres to, and thus protects, masonry surfaces. Many methods of paint removal harm the masonry (i.e., sandblasting, application of caustic solutions and high pressure water-blasting).
3. Radically changing the type of paint or coating or its color. Failing to follow manufacture's product and application instructions. Using new paint colors that are inappropriate to the building or surrounding buildings.