



Olympic Avenue Design Guidelines

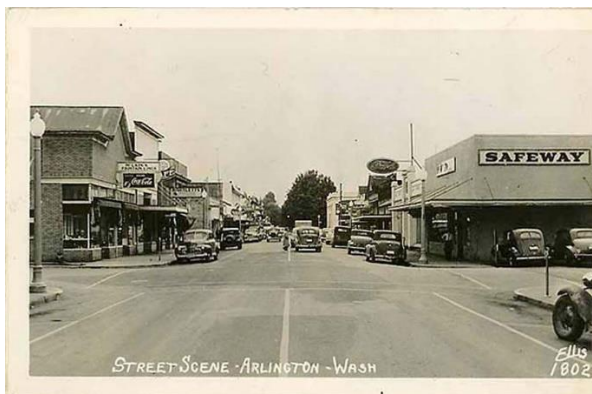


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1.0 Introduction

Vision Statement

The City of Arlington is a community of vibrant businesses and a home for families that combines the best of sustainable development with the highest quality of life in the region. It is a place where the natural world is honored and respected while high value jobs and businesses are encouraged to prosper. The City is recognized throughout the State as the best example of how to preserve the past in concert with preparing for the change inherent in the future. As the vision evolves, the Arlington brand, or identity, becomes recognized for its unique ability to set the City apart as a model of civility and community harmony.

– City of Arlington Vision Statement

1.1 Background

The City of Arlington is embarking on a major capital improvement project to upgrade the roadways, sidewalks, and amenities along Olympic Avenue. These improvements will be the catalyst to enhance the historic main street along Olympic Avenue and the surrounding Old Town Area. As a part of this project, the City hired a team of urban design and planning students from the University of Washington's (UW) Northwest Center for Livable Communities to meet with business owners and City leaders, to document existing buildings, and to design solutions to improve business facades and storefronts. The purpose of the UW project is to educate and inspire business and building owners to upgrade the appearance of existing buildings in Old Town. This document, which compiles those results, will serve as a reference book for City staff, the Planning Commission, and Design Review Board in evaluating proposed infill and changes to existing buildings within the Old Town area.

1.2 Goals

While the City of Arlington has grown substantially in recent years, Old Town Arlington, along North Olympic Avenue remains the historic heart of the city. The City's goals in investing in infrastructure improvements and in supporting student project are to renew the heart of the City, foster community pride, and support economic development in Old Town Arlington.



Arlington City Hall



Courtesy of the City of Arlington

Rendering of North Olympic Avenue after construction.



Courtesy of the City of Arlington

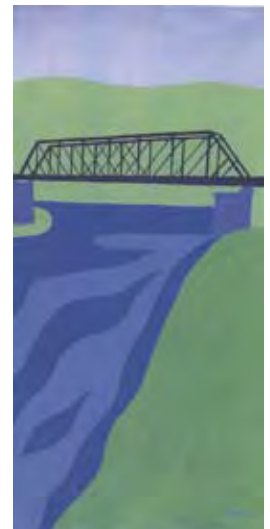
New Gazebo at Legion Park
Artwork by Keith Yarter

1.3 North Olympic Reconstruction

The City of Arlington has embarked on a two year project to reconstruct Olympic Avenue. The North Olympic Avenue project will be completed in two phases. Phase I of the project was completed in 2006 which included the removal of underground storage tanks located in the reconstruction footprint. Phase II will begin April 23, 2007 and be completed in October 2007 for a total construction cost of \$4.1 million. This final stage consists of the replacement of the water, wastewater, and storm water lines under Olympic Avenue; construction of a new road surface from Maple Street to Division Street; new curbs, gutters, and sidewalks for the length of the project; and new street trees, lighting and trash receptacles.

The City has taken steps to ensure public access to businesses throughout construction. To facilitate this, reconstruction has been divided into three two-block sections, so that most of Olympic Avenue will remain open during the process. In addition, temporary crosswalks will be located within the construction site to allow for pedestrian movement, as pedestrian access will be maintained.

The city intends that the effects of the reconstructed Olympic Avenue will enhance the beauty of Old Town and set the stage for revitalizing the downtown core. In addition to the amenities mentioned above, artistic banners will be placed along Olympic Avenue to create a pedestrian-friendly streetscape and a new gazebo will be installed at Legion Park. The City anticipates that this is just the beginning of a prosperous new era in Arlington's diverse and rich history.



Source: City of Arlington

Selection of artistic banners to be installed along Olympic Avenue.

2.0 Importance of Olympic Avenue to Arlington

North Olympic Avenue serves as the historic “main street” for the City of Arlington. The history of the community and the role of main streets in general are explored in this section.

2.1 Arlington History

Arlington sits at the confluence of the north and south forks of the Stillaguamish River. The area was once occupied by the Stillaguamish Indians who depended on the river for all of their needs, enabling the tribe to settle in villages made of cedar planked longhouses. The first white settlers to the area were loggers who established logging camps, shingle mills, and sawmills. It is said that the Stillaguamish River may have carried more cedar shingle bolts than any other stream in Western Washington. This gave Arlington the name “Shingle Capital of the World”. Another early important economic activity was dairy farming, which became an integral part of Arlington’s economy with the first Pioneer Creamery in 1901 and the Arlington Condensery in 1920.

The present town of Arlington was once called Haller City. The town was platted on April 24, 1890 in memory of G. Morris Haller, a wealthy real estate speculator. Haller City grew quickly with two saloons, the Walker House Hotel, the Lincoln School, Haller City Store, Teagar’s Drugstore and Post Office, and the Arlington Times. On January 25, 1890 the town of Arlington was platted by J.W. McLeod and named after Lord Henry Arlington. On September 14, 1891 the Twin Cities of Arlington and Haller City were merged to form the present-day town of Arlington. Arlington was incorporated as a city in 1903 and over 100 years later it continues to thrive and stay true to its past. (Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical Society, 2-19)

Arlington has been referred to as “the little town with the great big beautiful airport.” Arlington Municipal Airport was established in 1934 with the provision of federal funds to build airstrips for defense. The Airport’s early uses were for military training and to provide access for crews fighting forest fires in the area. Today, the Airport has over 135,000 landings and takeoffs yearly (Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical Society, 72).

Both the population and geographic size of Arlington are growing significantly. In 1999 the population was 6,000 before the annexation of Smokey Point, as well as several planned unit developments (Gleneagle, High Clover Park, and Crown Ridge). The current population is approximately 16,800 and by 2025 the population is expected to reach



Courtesy of the Stillaguamish Valley Pioneer Museum

Early 4th of July Parade 1894



Courtesy of the Stillaguamish Valley Pioneer Museum

Olympic Avenue early 1900's



Courtesy of University of Washington Libraries

Auburn Washington Main Street circa 1930.



Courtesy of University of Washington Libraries

Sumner, Washington Main Street circa 1922.

30,000 (City of Arlington). With the growth of the city outward and the additional new residents, it is particularly important to reinforce Old Town as the heart of Arlington.

Throughout Arlington's history, Olympic Avenue has been the commercial and civic heart of the town. The city's firstth of July celebration was held in 1894 in Olympic Avenue. Over 100 years later, the 4th of July Parade and numerous events take place regularly along Olympic Avenue. Residents have fond memories of Olympic Avenue as the place to meet friends and chat with the shop-keepers of the drugstores, beauty salons, dime-stores, and clothing retailers that served their every need. This history is visually reinforced by the large number of historic buildings that still line the street.

2.2 Role of "Main Street"

Historically, each town's main street was the commercial and social heart of the American small town and the concept of Main Street has become an integral part of American culture. Main Street has served many purposes such as: hub for retail and services; place of city government and historic landmarks; site of community parades, civic events, and entertainment; and location of transportation facilities. For some, Main Street symbolizes the past and a feeling of slower times and security. For many, Main Street has become one of American's most romanticized and cherished images (Francaviglia, xviii). In fact, Walt Disney helped bring the idea of Main Street into the public consciousness when in 1955 he chose Main Street USA as the main entrance to his new theme park, Disneyland (Francaviglia, 146). All of these aspects have helped to strengthen Main Streets across the country and maintain their important role in communities.

Over the last 40 years America's downtowns and main streets have changed significantly. The creation of the interstate highway system and the growth of the suburbs have changed the way we live, work, and spend our leisure time. The creation of shopping strips and regional malls encouraged people to drive out of town for shopping and entertainment. Throughout many towns in America, fewer shoppers came to Main Street resulting in closure of downtown shops and decreases in property values and tax revenues. In some downtowns, this resulted in vacant buildings, boarded-up storefronts, and a general aesthetic decline.

This has caused some people to forget the importance of downtowns,

their unique history, and historic buildings. However, there has been a growing movement since the 1970s to revitalize downtowns and Main Streets. The National Main Street Program began in 1977 to assist merchants and leaders to revitalize their historic downtowns. The need to improve downtowns is clear today and healthy downtowns can provide many vital functions (Revitalizing Downtown, 2-3). The list to the right portrays the importance a Main Street can have in a community and the assets it provides.

2.3 Role of Olympic Avenue Today

Although Arlington now boasts a wide variety of retail and business centers throughout the town, Olympic Avenue still serves as the heart of the city. Some of the many public events that occur along Olympic Avenue provide a testament to its importance:

- **April** Arbor Day Celebration
- **May** Loyalty Day Parade
 Memorial Day Parade
- **June** Show and Shine
 Carnival
- **July** Kiddies Parade
 4th of July Parade
 Street Fair
- **September** Motorcycle Show
- **October** Hometown Halloween
- **November** Veterans Day Parade
- **December** Santa Parade

Role of Main Street

- Important economic center
- Economic vitality and tax base
- Supporting locally-owned businesses
- Historic core of the community
- Diversity of goods and services
- Community pride
- Tourist attraction
- Events & gatherings
- Civic center
- Walkability and convenience
- Reduces sprawl
- Connections with neighbors
- Reflection of community pride
- Defining community character
- Protect surrounding property value

3.0 Historic Buildings in Old Town Arlington

Criterion A: Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;

Criterion B: Properties that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past

Criterion C: Properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

Criterion D: Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Old Town Arlington offers a wealth of historic buildings, reflecting every era in the City's development. Out of the 62 buildings existing within the 6 block area of Old Town, there are 51 buildings built before 1957. In fact, 18 of these date back to 1915 or earlier, the founding years of the community. Table 1 shows each building in the 6-block area, listed by address and date of construction.

Many of these buildings, particularly the earliest ones, may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and recognized for their significance to the town. The National Register of Historic Places was established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The National Register is the official listing of those properties in the nation that are considered to be of historic significance. Properties that qualify for the National Register include buildings, districts, structures, sites, and objects. To qualify for listing on the National Register, a building must be at least 50 years old; possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association; and meet one or more of the following criteria listed at left.

Table 1: Olympic Avenue Buildings and Construction Dates

Business	Year Built	Address
Co-Op Supply Inc.	1922	101 S Olympic Avenue
Co-Op Supply Inc. Storage	1967	103 S Olympic Avenue
B & T Automobile	1927	101 N Olympic Avenue
United Auto Glass/Glass Doctor	1924	105 N Olympic Avenue
Olympic Theater	1915	107 N Olympic Avenue
Arlington Steak House, INC.	1909	111 N Olympic Avenue
American Legion Post #76	1905	115 N Olympic Avenue
	1945	119 N Olympic Avenue
Electric Beach Tanning	1945	127 N Olympic Avenue
Grandview Inc.	2000	129 N Olympic Avenue
Arlington Antiques and More	1903	137 N Olympic Avenue
Arlington Hardware and Lumber Inc.	1903/1926/1950	215 N Olympic Avenue
Brooster's	1964	223 N Olympic Avenue
Quick Stop	1901	225 N Olympic Avenue
Two Bits and More	1901	229 N Olympic Avenue
Bistro San Martin	1946	231 N Olympic Avenue
City Hall	1924	238 N Olympic Avenue
Thee Suite Inc.	1901	239 N Olympic Avenue
Hong Kong Restaurant	1926	300 N Olympic Avenue
Arlington Unique Interiors	1926	301 N Olympic Avenue
Whitehorse Tavern	1946	304 N Olympic Avenue

Metron and Associates	1926	307 N Olympic Avenue
Bluebird Café	1946	308 N Olympic Avenue
Light of the World Galleries	1939	310 N Olympic Avenue
New Beginnings Thrift Store	1938	311 N Olympic Avenue
Favorite Pastime	1930s	313 N Olympic Avenue
Arlington Bookstore	1890	314 N Olympic Avenue
The Quiltmakers Shoppe	1935	315 N Olympic Avenue
Arlington Health Foods Inc.	1948	317 N Olympic Avenue
Little Italy Market and Deli	1963	318 N Olympic Avenue
Crosswalk Tavern	1907	322 N Olympic Avenue
	1924	326 N Olympic Avenue
	1926	329 N Olympic Avenue
Ken's TV and Satellite	1921	330 N Olympic Avenue
Jafty's Cycle Works	1921	332 N Olympic Avenue
Flowers By George	1904	335 N Olympic Avenue
Benchmark Jewelry/Oui's Thai Food	1904	339 N Olympic Avenue
Evonne's	1937	340 N Olympic Avenue
Arlington Shell Station	1948	404 N Olympic Avenue
Masonic Lodge	1913	405 N Olympic Avenue
Cornerstone Staffing Resource	1901	410 N Olympic Avenue
Julie's Barbering and Styling	1981	413 N Olympic Avenue
Peterson Family Chiropractic	1981	415 N Olympic Avenue
Jennifer's Pet Grooming	1946	419 N Olympic Avenue
Melady Lanes	1955	420 N Olympic Avenue
Debi's Hair and Tan	1904	421 N Olympic Avenue
The Organ Ladies	1951	425 N Olympic Avenue
The Wellness Clinic	1901	426 N Olympic Avenue
Olympic Escrow Inc	1951	427 N Olympic Avenue
Action Sports	1924	430 N Olympic Avenue
Olympic Tavern	1904	431 N Olympic Avenue
The Local Scoop	1966	432 N Olympic Avenue
Arlington Travel	1909	437 N Olympic Avenue
Edward Jones	1909	437 N Olympic Avenue
Bank of America	1971	501 N Olympic Avenue
Washington Mutual Savings and Loan	1970	504 N Olympic Avenue
Transwestern Real Estate	1989	516 N Olympic Avenue
James Muckleston Esq./Attorney at Law	1947	515 N Olympic Avenue
Pazazz Hair Design	1968	517 N Olympic Avenue
C. Don Flier Insurance Agency	1949	518 N Olympic Avenue
United States Post Office	1962	524 N Olympic Avenue
Frontier Bank	1915	525 N Olympic Avenue
Key Bank	1982	535 N Olympic Avenue

3.1 Architectural Periods in Arlington

Defining architectural style involves many elements. Architectural style encompasses all aspects of the building: overall shape of the building (also called “massing”), interior plan, roof and wall surfaces, how openings for doors and windows are handled (also called “fenestration”) and how materials are used. Architectural styles reflect the materials available for construction, the state of construction technology, and local regulations, as well as the style popular at the time. Architectural styles tended to be introduced in major urban areas and modified gradually as they spread to smaller towns. Buildings often reflect the owner’s or architect’s concept of blending popular architectural styles to suit their own tastes or the needs of the business.

In a business district revitalization program, understanding architectural styles is important for communication between project managers, design committee members, architects, property owners, and city staff involved in the program. The styles allow people to visualize the building under discussion and to understand the architectural features, materials and history that are important to retain, as well as those features that should be removed or altered for a quality rehabilitation.

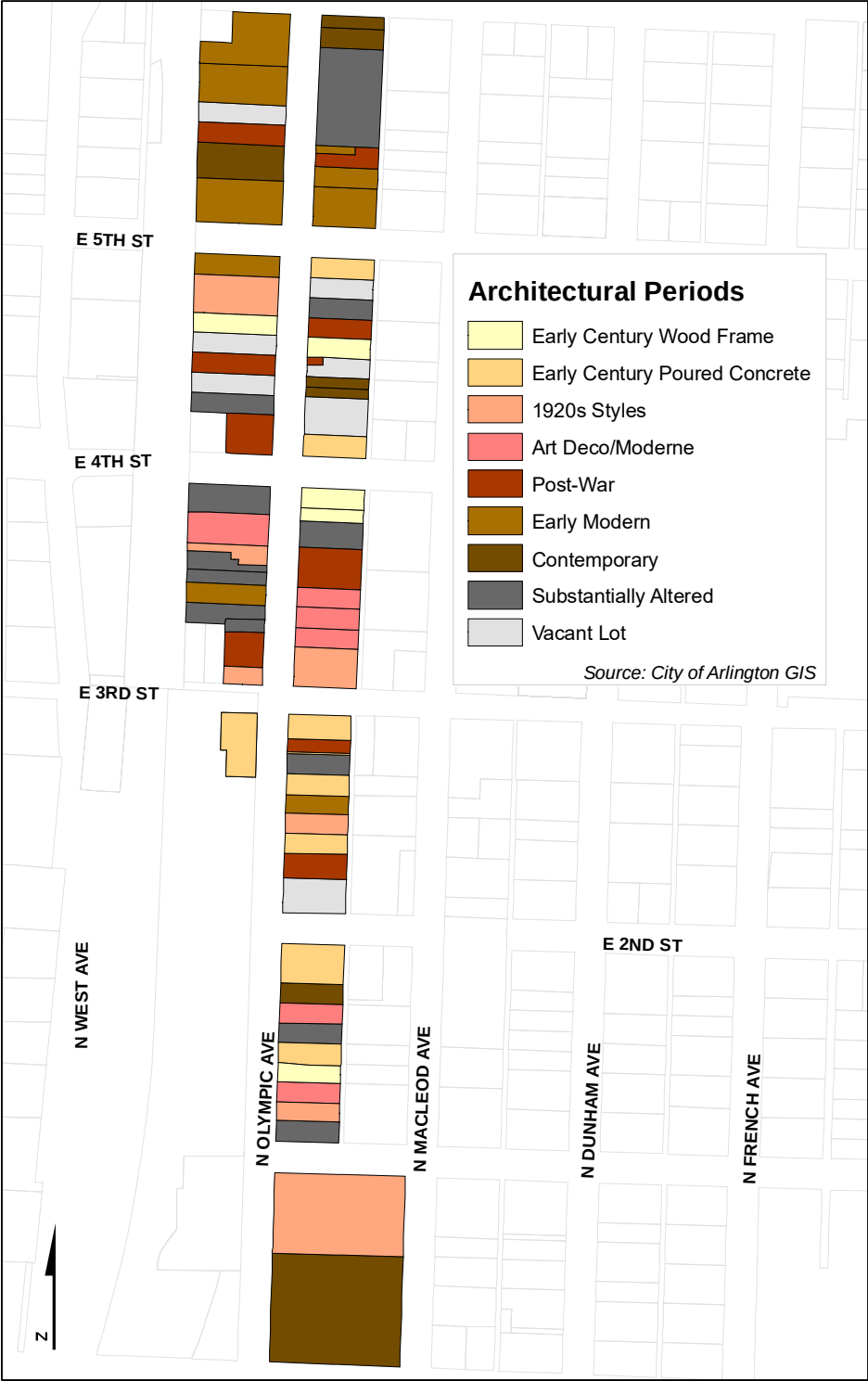
For Arlington, most buildings could be categorized as “commercial vernacular”, meaning they reflect common designs for commercial buildings and are not heavily influenced by distinct architectural styles. The differences between buildings have more to do with construction materials and the time period in which they were built. For those reasons, the architectural periods defined for Arlington’s Old Town are based on periods of time and, to some extent, the materials used.

The architectural periods identified for Old Town include:

- Early Century Wood Frame, 1890-1919
- Early Century Poured Concrete, 1900-1919
- 1920s Styles 1920-1929
- Art Deco/Moderne, 1930-early 1940s
- Post War, mid 1940s-1959
- Early Modern, 1960-1979
- Contemporary, 1980-2007

These periods are described and illustrated in the following pages.

Map 1: Old Town Architectural Periods



Early Century Wood Frame, 1890-1919



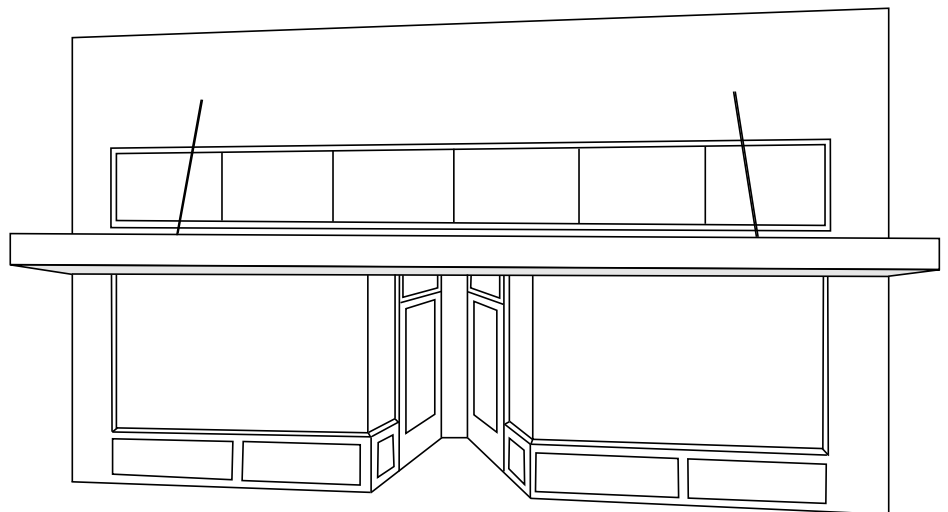
426 North Olympic Avenue



335 North Olympic Avenue

This category includes the earliest buildings constructed in Arlington that still remain. Although substantially altered, the building at 314 N. Olympic (recently the Arlington Bookstore) dates back to 1890, according to County Assessor records. A prime example of this early period is located at 426 N. Olympic and now houses the Wellness Clinic. When it was constructed in 1901, this building housed the Arlington Times. The one story building at 335 N. Olympic (Flowers by George) also reflects this period and is a good example of the Western False Front, a tall façade used to make the building appear larger.

These buildings are one or two-stories in height with wood framing and wood siding for the exterior surface materials. Often the one-story buildings have a tall façade extending to the height of a second story to make the building appear more imposing. The first floor of these buildings have wood framed, plate glass windows for displays and a recessed doorway, generally centered. Where there is a second story, windows are wood framed, double-hung and often grouped in pairs. The wood siding may be narrow car-siding, as used on the building at 421 or board-and-batten, as used on the building at 426. The wider boards of the wood siding used on the building at 421 may not be original to the building, but are generally in keeping with the style.



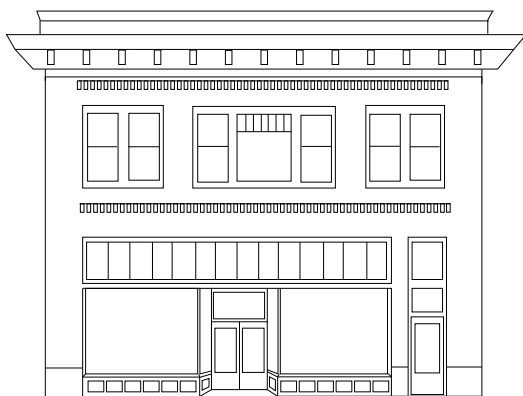
314 North Olympic Avenue

Early Century Poured Concrete, 1900-1925

For the small size of the town, Arlington has an unusually large collection of substantial two story buildings constructed of poured-in-place concrete. Eight buildings constructed of this material and before 1924 still remain in Old Town. The most distinctive of these is the building at 239 N. Olympic (360 Home Realty building) with its elaborate detailing of embedded columns on the second story and the large-scale dentil work along the cornice line. The brick work and multi-light windows on the first floor are alterations from the original design. The buildings at 115 N. Olympic (American Legion) and at 215 N. Olympic (Arlington Hardware) are also good examples of this period, although these have also been altered on the ground floor. The building at 215 shows the original wood double-hung windows on the upper floor and both brackets and distinctive corner detailing at the cornice line.

Poured concrete buildings are two or three stories in height with a strong tripartite (3 part) division of the façade: 1) first floor with the display windows and entry door, 2) the upper floors, and 3) the cornice. The use of poured-in-place concrete is evidenced by the striations in the concrete left from the wooden forms used in pouring that are visible on the sides and back of the building. Both the storefront level and the upper floors are generally symmetrically designed, with windows and doors wood framed. The cornice is heavily decorated with brackets, dentil work or other detailing to create a strong finish element to the building.

The Arlington City Hall (300 N. Olympic) is also poured concrete, but differs from the commercial buildings in several ways. The symmetrically placed windows are incised into the façade in strong vertical bands, with the two floors separated by decorative panels. A stepped parapet above the cornice line adds massing to the façade and signifies the centered recessed doorway. The poured concrete is less obvious on City Hall, as it was resurfaced with a material using stucco.



215 North Olympic Avenue



239 North Olympic Avenue



115 North Olympic Avenue



300 North Olympic Avenue

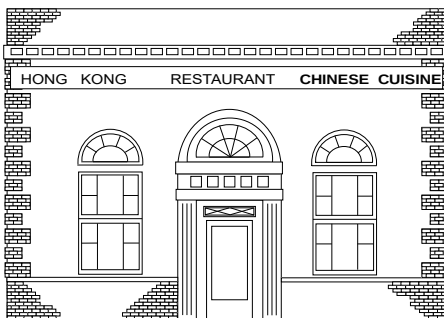
1920s Styles, 1920-1929



326 North Olympic Avenue



430 North Olympic Avenue



300 North Olympic Avenue

Wood frame buildings of the 1920s in Arlington differed markedly from their earlier counterparts, in that many were brick-veneered. This trend mirrored development in other parts of the state, as the earlier wood-clad buildings were susceptible to fire hazards and many cities enacted building codes requiring fire-resistant materials for the exteriors of commercial buildings. Prime examples in Arlington from this period include the building at 326 N. Olympic and 300 N. Olympic.

These buildings are one or two stories in height, with a flat roof. Windows and doors are wood framed. The brick veneered buildings show fine brick detailing, such as an end course or soldier course in the upper façade, often around the area for a flush-mounted sign. These buildings have flat roofs with a shallow projection of the roof at the cornice line, and little or no detailing at the cornice.

The stucco buildings of the 1920s have similarities to the poured-in-place concrete of the previous period, but also some major differences. Some have a Spanish Colonial influence, as seen on the building at 307 N. Olympic with a tile roof and the corner raised parapets. Similar to the earlier period, the windows on the upper floor are wood-framed, double hung and symmetrically arranged, but are not as tightly grouped as in the earlier buildings.

By the 1920s, architectural styles began to reflect various European styles or revivals of earlier local styles. Common characteristics of the Spanish Colonial style include:

- Low-pitched tile roofs
- Window or door openings cleanly cut into walls without elaborate ornamental surrounds
- Wrought iron or wood balconies, columns or pilasters



307 North Olympic Avenue

Art Deco/Moderne, 1930-Early 1940s

Arlington has several buildings in Old Town that are characteristic of the distinctive Art Deco and Art Moderne styles prevalent in the 1930s. The building at 330 N. Olympic is particularly notable for its stylized zig-zag motif, characteristic of the Art Deco period. Although County Assessor dates for this building show an earlier construction date, it may have been remodeled as the design clearly reflects this period. The Olympic Theatre at 107 N. Olympic is characteristic of the Art Moderne period, with its streamlined surfaces and round “porthole” window indicative of the steamships of that era. Records of the Olympic Theatre suggest that it was originally constructed as early as 1915, but was remodeled in 1939 to reflect the style prevalent in the heyday of the major motion pictures. The building at 127 N. Olympic also reflected the Art Moderne style of the 1930s before being remodeled, as shown in the historic photo below.

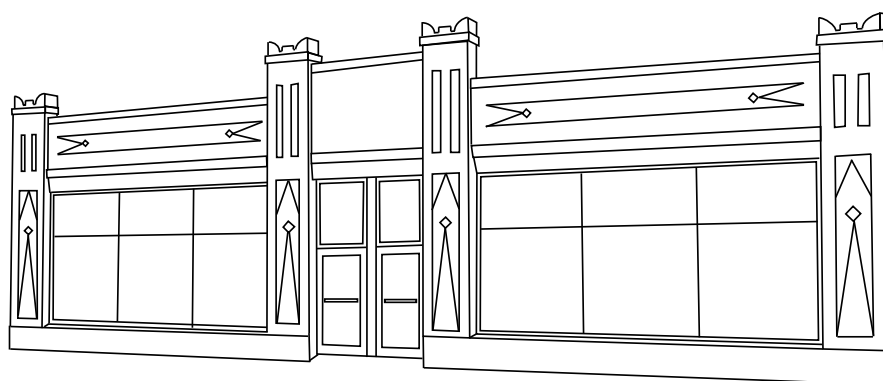
More modest commercial buildings of this period (at 311, 313 and 315 N. Olympic) are fairly similar to the modest commercial buildings of the earlier periods. These are wood-framed with wood or brick on the exterior, and little ornamentation. Originally, they would have had wood-framed windows and wooden entry doors, as found on the building at 315.



107 North Olympic Avenue



315 North Olympic Avenue



330 North Olympic Avenue

Post-War, Mid 1940s-1959



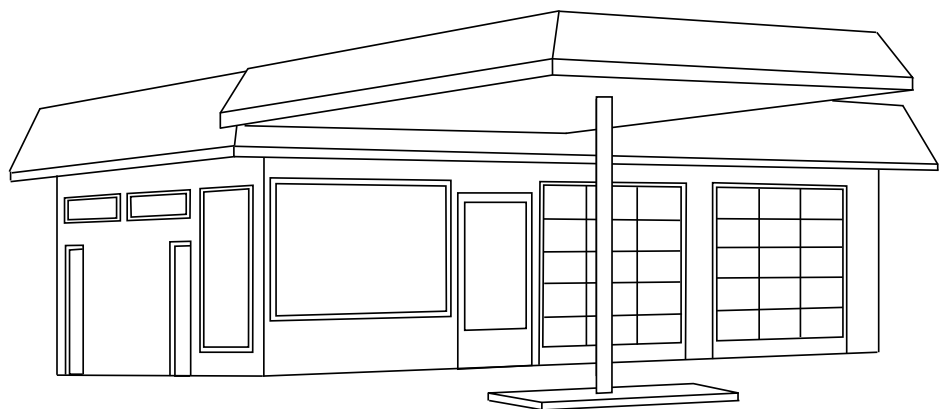
515 North Olympic Avenue



419 North Olympic Avenue

Following World War II, increasing American affluence and government support for federal highways resulted in an ever-increasing focus on the private automobile as the major mode of transportation. Commercial development responded with larger signs and display windows to attract the interest of the passing motorists. Mass production of building materials made aluminum less expensive and it became the preferred material for window frames. With less focus on pedestrians, the sheltering cable-hung canopies and recessed entries were eliminated in favor of more floor space for goods and more visibility to motorists. In Arlington, buildings such as those at 317, 425, 515 and 420 reflect these construction techniques, although many also show various alterations. Most of these buildings are still constructed within retail blocks, connected to adjacent buildings on either side. One exception to the retail block design is the Shell Station building at 404 N. Olympic (constructed in 1948), which reflects the nation's new interest in motoring in that era.

Some buildings, such as the Bistro at 231 still reflect the earlier eras with dentil trim at the upper edge and the wooden front door. County records show that this building was constructed in 1946, although some of these style elements suggest that it may be earlier.



404 North Olympic Avenue (Shell Station)

Early Modern, 1960-1979

By the 1960s and 1970s, the trends seen in the post-war years had accelerated. Buildings were frequently built as simple boxes with little ornamentation. Windows and doors were typically aluminum-framed with no recesses. Windows were often massed and occupied much of the building facade. Buildings tended to be constructed as stand-alone larger buildings on large lots to accommodate needed parking and larger floor areas. A typical example of these is the “old Safeway” building located at 103 S. Olympic, now used for storage for the adjacent Co-Op Supply building. The post office (524 N. Olympic) also reflects the international style of the 1960s with smooth, flat walls, flat roofs, and windows running in continuous bands or wrapping around corners. Some buildings of this era, such as the Washington Mutual building at 504, used warmer materials, such as brick. But these were typically used with less detailing than the earlier brick buildings, such as those of the 1920s.



103 South Olympic Avenue



524 North Olympic Avenue



501 North Olympic Avenue



504 North Olympic Avenue

Contemporary, 1980-2007

Contemporary Designs Suited to Old Town



516 North Olympic Avenue

Contemporary Designs Not Suited to Old Town



535 North Olympic Avenue



415 North Olympic Avenue

In Arlington, buildings in the last 20 to 30 years show a remarkable variety of style and character. The building at 516 N. Olympic references some of the earlier historic styles with the brackets and the cornice line and brick detailing around the arched windows. The one story brick building at 129 also references earlier periods, with the brick detailing in the upper façade and transom over the front door. Both of these are distinctly contemporary buildings, but they blend well with their historic surroundings. Other buildings, such as the one at 415 or the one at 535 are less well suited. The building at 415 does reflect an historic style with its large roof and mock-tudor siding, but it is not a style typical of Arlington. The Key Bank building at 535 has a gabled roof more typical of residential construction and does not blend well with the other commercial buildings of Old Town. These buildings add variety and interest to Old Town, but are not models to be replicated as too many of these buildings would overwhelm the historic character of Olympic Avenue.



129 North Olympic Avenue

Substantially Altered, All Periods

While Arlington has many buildings that reflect the styles and periods of the past, there are also buildings from each era that have been substantially altered. When the owner is interested and where the building is located near other historic buildings that have maintained their style, it could benefit the character of Old Town to provide a storefront that reflects the building's original design. The Stillaguamish Valley Pioneer Museum contains a wealth of photos of Old Town Arlington that can be very useful in determining the building's original appearance. Not all of these altered buildings can or should be restored, but it is important that new designs be compatible in scale, character, and materials to the older buildings that surround it. For modest one-story buildings constructed prior to 1940, this generic façade provides ideas for recreating the typical historic design.



Generic Storefront

3.2 Old Town Historic Preservation

Historic preservation is a term that encompasses various ways to respect the history of our communities built environment. Historic preservation recognizes good design from the past, maintains the unique characteristics of the built environment, and encourages good design either in new buildings or remodeling projects.

While historic buildings are important to the character and history of Arlington, these buildings do not necessarily have to be preserved exactly as they were when constructed. Instead, preservation in Arlington Old Town means recognizing the underlying positive characteristics of a building and weighing each building's strengths and weaknesses within specific physical and economic contexts. A building's structure may not have changed, despite being covered with new materials over time. While there are a number of buildings on Olympic Avenue that are not considered historic, these non-historic buildings should be treated with the same respect for individual character.

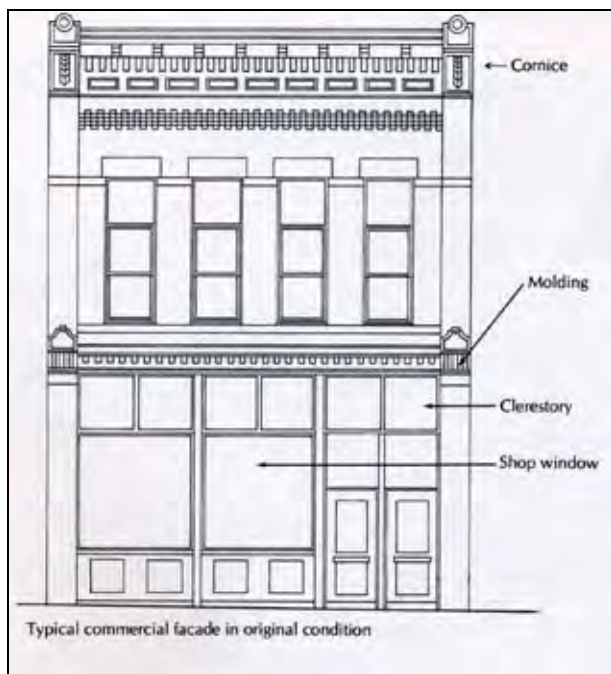
A positive aspect of Arlington's Old Town is the diversity of buildings. The age and diversity are as broad as the interests and occupations of people who built and used them. Each one has some significance in the development of the town. Building materials reveal something about the natural setting. Recurring building materials create a visual harmony along Olympic Avenue. Materials used in public spaces also contribute to a community's image. The natural features and man-made elements are the building blocks which create each town's character. Most importantly, the exact same combination never occurs twice due to local variations, history, culture, and personal choice. (Revitalizing Downtown, 60) Arlington's Old Town reflects its history in logging and dairy production and its buildings reflect the character of its early businesses.

3.3 Guidelines for Protecting Historic Buildings

Guiding Principles

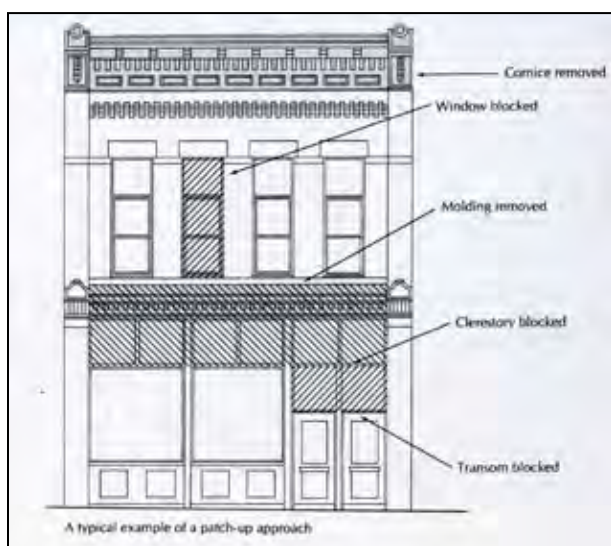
1. Save as much of a building's original fabric as possible – the historic materials give authenticity and character to the building that are often lacking in replacements
2. If the building has been altered, evaluate how much of the original building can be retained or restored to meet the current use.

Typical commercial facade in original condition



Courtesy of "Facade Stories"

Typical commercial facade with alterations



Courtesy of "Facade Stories"



Courtesy of "Facade Stories"

Two storefronts with traditional components of commercial facades

Often, working with an architect at this stage can be very helpful. Professional designers and architects have the design expertise and the experience to help blend the old and new elements of a building in ways that best convey the character of the building and still meet current functional needs.

3. Renovation or rehabilitation of older or historic buildings should be designed to reflect the remaining historic elements of the building, especially
 - a) The overall massing – renovations of building facades and rooflines should convey the original design of the building in size and scale
 - b) Composition - the way elements and details (doors, windows, columns, cornices) are arranged and repeated across the facade
 - c) Materials - use historical building materials or materials that are similar in scale, texture and detail to those of the original building
 - d) Character – use materials and compositions that are compatible with neighboring historic buildings
4. Access for the handicapped – All public areas in downtowns should be accessible to handicapped people. The U.S. Congress enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990 that mandates that buildings open to the public be accessible to persons with disabilities. While this can be challenging for some historic buildings, others can be adapted easily. In general, ADA affects historic buildings exteriors in terms of entrance door widths and stairs or ramps. Qualified architects are familiar with ADA requirements and can assist building owners in developing designs that meet accessibility requirements.
5. In some instances, buildings in Old Town have been so substantially altered that renovation is not feasible. In other instances, newer buildings are being replaced or vacant lots are being filled. When new buildings or additions are constructed, these should respect
 - a) Height of neighboring buildings
 - b) Setback of existing buildings
 - c) Massing of neighboring buildings
 - d) General design character of the Old Town area

Further descriptions of these principles can be found in *Guiding Design on Main Street*, a publication of the National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2000, 30-37.

Common Storefront Design Problems

The reality is that buildings in historic downtowns have been altered over time – often in an attempt to “modernize” the building’s ground floor level to reflect current tastes in design. The following common architectural design problems are ones that should be reversed when renovation or rehabilitation is planned for buildings in Arlington’s Old Town.

1. **False Historical Themes:** Historic preservation is often confused with the creation of historic images or themes, such as fake colonial or Swiss chalet.
2. **Slipcovers:** There was an effort in the 1960s-1970s to compete with shopping malls by covering buildings to make the downtown look like one unified building. Typically metal panels were anchored to historic buildings, which can often be easily removed.
3. **Separating The Ground Floor From The Upper Façade:** This involves “modernizing” the ground floor only with the result that it no longer relates to the upper façade elements.
4. **Adding Large Signs:** Oversized, brightly lit, or flashy signs destroy the balance between the storefront and upper part of the building.
5. **Filling In Windows, Transoms, and Doors:** Covering over these spaces disrupts the relationship of façade elements.
6. **Using a Single Color:** Use of one color for the building façade and architectural trim results in losing the detail of building. Section 5.2 of this document provides recommended color combinations for buildings in Old Town.
7. **Using Bold “Stand-out” Colors:** When colors are used which “stand-out” or clash with surrounding buildings, the harmony of Old Town is disrupted. Visitors may notice the “stand out” building, but cannot appreciate the whole of the downtown. The synergy of many businesses supporting one another is lost. Section 5.2 of this document provides a range of complementary color options for buildings in Old Town.
8. **Using Inappropriate Materials:** Materials should be compatible in texture and scale with existing main street buildings. Materials to avoid are cedar shakes, molded stone, rough-cut logs and stained wood.



Courtesy of "Facade Stories"

Storefront with typical alterations made

4.0 Sign Guidelines

Historic main streets such as Arlington's Old Town were originally intended to be experienced by pedestrians. When Arlington was first incorporated in 1903, automobiles were uncommon, and shoppers moved around the heart of Arlington mainly by foot. Although this has changed in modern times, the pedestrian experience is still the most memorable and enjoyable way to experience a place such as Old Town. In addition, pedestrian friendly areas create a community space, where residents and visitors are likely to congregate. By moving at a slow pace, casual shoppers are able to look in every window and are far more likely to make an unplanned stop in an interesting store.

Signage in Old Town has also evolved over the years to become more automobile-oriented. While auto-oriented signs are still important aspects of the signage scheme of a building, it is important to consider the pedestrian's important role in Old Town commerce. By creating more pedestrian-oriented signage, Arlington's Old Town can draw on its historic roots and show its overall friendliness towards people rather than cars, in line with other city street improvements. Businesses can thereby create a truly friendly and unique shopping space that people will travel to Arlington to experience.

In order to achieve this goal of a walkable historic city center, recommendations for sign designs are outlined below. Some of the recommendations align with zoning requirements, while others ask for a small amount more, be it thought, creativity, or attention to the building instead of simple advertising that clashes with the Old Town feel. If every business eventually adopts these guidelines, the streetscape as a whole will benefit and Arlington will become a more desirable shopping location.

4.1 Guidelines for Signs

1. Signage should be at a human scale, neither overwhelming the building's characteristics nor the people viewing the sign. A sign that is human-scaled creates a more comfortable and accessible atmosphere and shoppers will be more likely to enter the store. Large, competitive signage is typically garish and detracts from the aesthetic quality of the streetscape as a whole.
2. Pedestrian-oriented signs are strongly encouraged to maintain a pedestrian shopper friendly main street.
3. All signage should complement the historic design style and characteristics of the building to which it is attached.

4. Signs should be consistent with the specific features of the building façade, meaning that a sign should not cover architectural details or overwhelm the scale of the building. If a building has an area that traditionally or historically displayed a sign, the sign should be placed in that location.
5. Logos, symbols and other creative details are encouraged on a sign to maintain the individuality of Old Town businesses and enhance browsing appeal.
6. Signs should reflect the nature of the business, meaning those reading the sign should gain some idea of what the business sells. This can be accomplished through the use of materials, fonts, symbols, sign shape, and other creative means. Using historic signage symbols (such as a barber pole) are encouraged.
7. Giving a clear, concise description of the business within the sign is also recommended for stores where the name does not immediately convey the nature of the business within to a passerby. For example, “Kat Nap: Pet Groomers”, or “A Dime a Dozen: Secondhand Store”.
8. Sign color should complement the colors on the building. It is also important to choose contrasting colors for the background of the sign and the font color so it is easily readable. For example, dark fonts on a light background or white fonts on a dark background are the easiest to read.
9. Lettering on a pedestrian-oriented sign should not exceed 8 inches in height. (Larger lettering is unnecessary and clutters the façade. Because pedestrians are closer to the building and move at a slower speed, lettering can be much smaller than on an auto-oriented sign and remain perfectly legible.)
10. Lettering on an automobile-oriented sign should not exceed 18 inches in height. Letters that are too tall detract from the overall character of the building.
11. Lettering should cover no more than 60% of the sign surface area. This allows for easier reading by a passerby and, once again, more attention for the building.

Window Lettering



12. The size of a pedestrian-oriented sign should be no larger than 6 square feet, measured as prescribed in the city zoning code.
13. The size of an automobile-oriented sign is recommended to be no more than 26 square feet, and may not be larger than 20% of the signage usable storefront façade area, according to Arlington zoning code 20.68.330. This signage size allotment may be divided between more than one sign as allowed per zoning requirements.
14. Interesting sign shapes and features are encouraged, as long as they complement the architectural features of the building.
15. At the most, a sign may have 10 words. Six words or fewer are encouraged because people can most easily process 6 words or less on a sign. This is true for both pedestrian and automobile oriented signs.
16. To encourage pedestrian-oriented signage consistent with the historical context of Olympic Avenue, the City will exempt a single projecting sign or a single sign hung under the awning of a building fronting Olympic Avenue from the requirement of obtaining a sign permit per AMC Title 20 Land Use Code, Section 20.68.020(13).

4.2 Sign Types

Window lettering: A sign that consists of lettering and possibly a logo or symbol representing the business painted on the inside of a window. This style is highly recommended for pedestrian oriented signage. If this style of sign is chosen, the lettering should be the main focus rather than images. Make sure that there are few words and that they are appropriately placed to allow vision into the interior of the store. The sign should occupy no more than 20% of the window area, and less is generally preferable.

This type of signage should be hand lettered on the inside of the window. This style is historically correct when gold lettering is used, as show on right. If this style of sign is used, it is recommended that no temporary signage is placed on the interior of the window, as described in 20.68.025 3 of the zoning code, as it becomes more difficult to see the shop's interior.

Sign hung in window: A pedestrian-oriented sign hung behind the window glass. This works well in buildings that change owners fairly often or buildings with such a complicated façade that a sign clashes with design almost anywhere else. It also works well for constantly changing sign design because it can be so easy to change out. It protects the sign from damage. Store owners are cautioned to ensure that the sign is relatively small and does not block too large a portion of the store's interior from street passerby.



Projecting: A projecting sign projects perpendicularly from a building. The bottom edge of these signs must be at least 8 feet above the sidewalk, and should project no further than 4 feet from the building. Make sure that a projecting sign is placed where it does not interfere with architectural elements or severely interrupt the façade. Creative design is most plausible here; however, excessive amounts of large projecting signs along a block should be avoided because it can become visually blocked and unappealing. Because of this, it is recommended that store owners consider surrounding streetscapes before using this sign type. Pedestrian oriented signs that are less than 3 square feet may be adopted by any store along the street.

Signs can be supported by either wooden or metal supports. Iron (or similar metal) is preferred for most buildings because the supporting members can be thinner than wood members and thus are less likely to interfere with the building's façade. The mounting bracket is yet another opportunity to be creative, allowing opportunity for graceful or simple design.



Window Sign



Projecting



Flush to Wall



Flush to wall: A sign that is mounted directly onto the wall of a building. This has several sub-categories, including design on a sign surface, mounted letters, painted letters, and more. Some buildings have areas where this style of signage would work very well, and others do not have a façade that complements this design.

Flush mounted wall signs should be carefully designed to complement the building's character. Design experts—such as a local architect or interior designer can help. Some sign fabricators also provide design services.



Signs on Awnings



Along awning: This sign creates a double use for an awning, allowing simple display of text along the bottom hanging edge of an awning. Avoid large awnings where the face of the awning (rather than the hanging edge) is used for signage, as this tends to be out of scale and to detract from the character of the building. An awning that serves a dual purpose as signage should be extremely well maintained, as it is a double focus for passerby and representative of the business beneath it.

This style works best with very simple font, and few graphics or none. Tastefully small logos may work alongside the wording; however, avoid large graphics along the surface of the awning. Such design detracts from the building itself, making it typically less welcoming.



4.3 Styles

The City is encouraging a single design style for all new signs in Old Town, called the Historic Style. This is intended to unify the Old Town shopping district and give it a more organized face towards shoppers.

Historic Style:

These signs are typically constructed of wood and hand-painted. Fonts are old-fashioned and create a comfortable and welcoming ambiance. Shapes are simple, typically rectangular with few curves. Shapes are usually reflected along the interior with a painted line or wooden frame. Some examples of historical signage style signs are shown the following page.

This style may be adapted to reflect the nature of the business. For example, the Sweet Treats sign has traditional elements, but clearly reflects the nature of the business within in a creative format

While the historic signage style is encouraged, other creative and innovative signage ideas may make wonderful additions to the streetscape, even if they incorporate new materials or shapes that are not specified here. Simple visual elements that communicate the nature of business within the building are highly encouraged.

The shape shown at right is a historic shape that is encouraged for new signs in Old Town Arlington.

Additionally, a rectangular or elliptical shape would also be suitable. Arches work well as the shape for the top of a sign or as a shape that lettering may follow. Perfect squares and circles are too symmetrical to convey an old-fashioned feel.

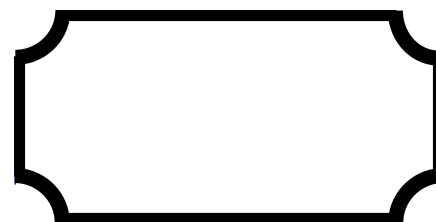
4.4 Materials

Wood is highly recommended in Old Town for most signs as a typical material used historically. Although signs made of wood are less durable and more susceptible to vandalism than metal signs, they are easier and more cost efficient to change and/or replace. Most importantl , these signs fit most closely with the types of signage used in the past

Another possible material is enameled porcelain, which was a common sign material for many of the historical periods of the buildings on Olympic Avenue. These would be much more expensive to purchase and to replace, but would be more durable and could give a slightly more upscale feel to the street.



Signs with traditional elements can also be creative in design



Historic sign shapes are encouraged in Old Town

Table 2: Sign Materials for Old Town

Material	Advantages	Disadvantages	Use in Arlington
Wood	Blends with natural environment Easy to construct Can be individually shaped and carved Can be painted Ages well Appropriate historic material	Easy to vandalize Difficult to carve detailed graphics	Recommended
Porcelain Enamel	Good for detailed graphics Photographs can be reproduced Wide range of colors available Resistant to weathering and vandalism Appropriate historical material	Expensive Susceptible to chipping and subsequent rusting	Recommended
Stone	Good for black and white images Good for detailed line art Resistant to weathering and vandalism Easy to maintain Appropriate historical material	Natural contours may make words difficult to read	May be appropriate
Neon	Historically appropriate for buildings from 1910-1940's Attention grabbing Good for simple designs and short business names Seen as welcoming	May require extensive maintenance Clashes with some architectural styles	May be appropriate
Metal	Resistant to fading and discoloration Good for detailed graphics Can reproduce black & white photos Range of 'earthy' colors available Resistant to weathering and vandalism Appropriate historic material	Expensive to duplicate Reflects bright sunlight	May be appropriate
Fiberglass	Wide range of colors available Good for detailed graphics Can simulate natural features such as rock walls and stone Inexpensive to make duplicates Resistant to weathering and vandalism	Colors fade over time Not used historically	Not recommended
Backlit Plastic	Fairly cheap Easy to replace Ability to reproduce many colors Easy for automobile occupants to read	Not used historically Deteriorates over time Clashes with many building styles	Not recommended

Creative sign materials (such as glass) are recommended if they create a unique sign that accomplishes all of the signage goals and are suited to the building. Materials such as plastic, vinyl and fiber glass are not recommended because they do not weather as well as the other sign materials. The chart on the previous page shows the pros and cons of several potential sign materials, courtesy of <http://www.interpretivesigns.qut.edu.au/guide.html>, as adapted to Arlington Old Town.

4.5 Sign Lighting

Lit signs are difficult to place in the context of Arlington. Many stores close before lighting is needed; stores like this should not consider lit signage. However, stores that do stay open late at night may require some lit signage. Backlit plastics are strongly discouraged. Gooseneck lamps that reach around to light a sign are more suited to the historic character of Old Town. Signs with a concealed light from the bottom, top or sides that gently lights the sign is acceptable.

Fluorescent signs are acceptable in situations when appropriate to the style of the building. Carefully consider the era and style of the building. Fluorescent lighting was used 1910 to the 1940s era. Some styles are not meant to use fluorescent lit signs. These include buildings with a complex and detailed façade, or building with significant elements such as heavily detailed windows, arches or columns.

4.6 Sign Lettering - Font Recommendations

Table 3 includes a variety of lettering styles that would be appropriate for Old Town. Fonts that look similar to those recommended or those present in historic photographs and signs may also fit with the signage scheme.

The city's zoning requirements, section 20.68, contain additional signage requirements and restrictions. More specific rules regarding acceptable signage will be considered by city staff in considering sign permitting. Although this document provides design guidelines regarding signage and recommendations, zoning requirements are in place to reduce space and usage conflicts, promote safety, and ensure fair and adequate advertising space between businesses.

Historic Sign Styles

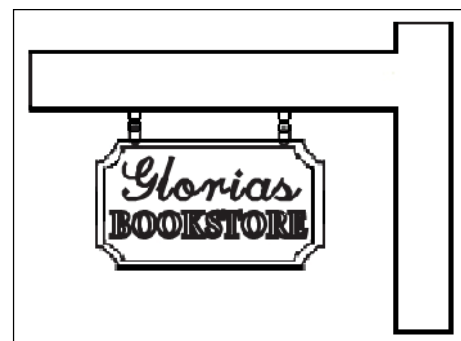
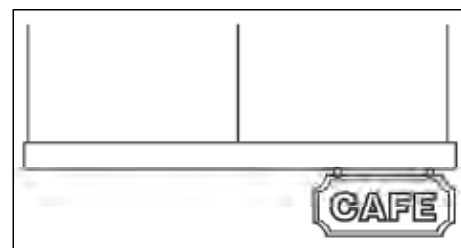


Table 3: Recommended Lettering Styles for Signs in Old Town

	Use This...	Avoid...
Font Style	Serif typefaces, which are types with a tail, like this font. These are much easier for passerby to read.	Sans serif typefaces, which are types without a tail, like this font. This may be acceptable for short signs with few letters.
Spacing	Widely spaced fonts like this, with some breathing room around each letter. These are much easier for passerby to read, and don't overwhelm a reader.	Font that appears squashed together, like this. Such constricted lettering obviously makes a sign more difficult to read.
Fonts	Book Antiqua Expanded	Wäker
	Georgia	T x t
	Viva Std	ROSEWOOD STD
	Minion Std Expanded	Neuropol
	ROSEWOOD STD	ECCENTRIC STD
	<i>Script C</i>	Giddyup Std

4.7 Interior Signage Guidelines

If a store offers multiple goods or services, interior signage may be helpful for directing customers where to go.

- Interior signage should relate to exterior signage by use of color scheme and font
- These signs should be smaller than pedestrian scale exterior signs since people will be viewing them from a stationary position.
- The font should be between 2 ½ and 4" tall.
- The height should be between 6" and 12", while the length should be between 12" and 18". (Signs oriented to be read vertically, rather than horizontally, might have these dimensions switched.)
- Images providing a visual cue are highly encouraged.

In Old Town Arlington, one store in particular had a need for interior signage, because of its many functions. Little Italy is a restaurant, a deli, a winery, and retail, with space for large group meetings and more intimate space for couples or friends. Following is an example of an interior signage scheme developed for Little Italy.



- 7" tall and 18" long rectangle
- Constructed of wood or plastics, if wood is too expensive
- Wood with hand lettered text and hand painted details would give a more genuine look to the restaurant, and is highly recommended here
- The Italian color scheme from the exterior sign is used to relate the interior and exterior
- The top row of text will be Italian, and will be left aligned
- The bottom row of text will be English, and will be right aligned
- Text will be 2 ¼" tall, but resized if needed to fit within the sign area
- There will be an illustration on the left hand side of each side, with an Italian feel to it

Temporary Signs

In some cases, temporary signage may be appropriate, if there are constant temporary announcements that need to be posted. Examples of these would be events, meal specials, sales, or help wanted signs. These signs may be hung in the window or displayed at the counter, wherever is most aesthetically pleasing and practical for the use. Chalk or dry erase boards are recommended for announcements occurring regularly, such as lunch specials, whereas less frequent but still important temporary signs, such as sales announcements or events, might be printed up with a special layout. Examples and guidelines for each style are outlined below.

- Color should be consistent between temporary and permanent signs.
- Images are not as highly recommended here, because for the uses outlined above images are not necessary or always practical.
- Chalkboard announcements can be handwritten, but paper signs should be printed from a computer, with consistent font style and size.

Little Italy also has a high need for temporary signage, as a restaurant with daily specials, sales, and events. Below is an example of a temporary sign created on a basic Office computer program, PowerPoint



5.0 Design Recommendations for Storefronts in Old Town

This section describes design recommendations and guidelines for specific historic buildings in Old Town Arlington along Olympic Avenue. The University of Washington team worked with City staff to identify ten historic buildings in Old Town that were suited for renovation. After meeting with business owners to discuss their business and their interest in improving the building storefront, the students researched the historic character of the building. The students also researched historic signage and building colors. In this section, storefront improvements, paint colors, and signage are provided for each of the ten buildings studied.

5.1 Storefront Improvements

The design recommendations illustrated on the following pages are a combination of both student team research and business owner's desires. Each building is shown in its current condition, then after recommended renovations. A recent photograph depicts the current condition of the building. The 'after' is a line drawing traced over historic photographs of the building, showing historic features as well as the recommended renovations.

137 North Olympic Avenue

Existing Condition



Recommended Renovation



330 North Olympic Avenue

Existing Condition



Recommended Renovation



Use Consistent Paint Treatment to Unify Facade

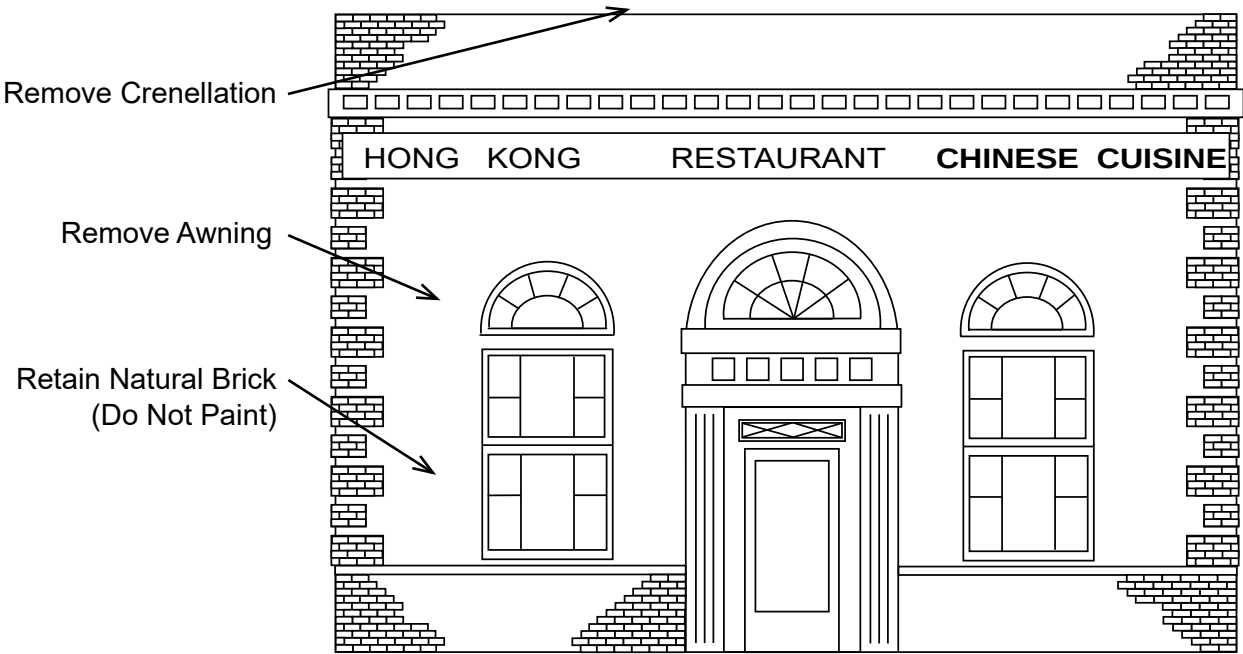
Avoid Use of Projecting Signs

300 North Olympic Avenue

Existing Condition



Recommended Renovation

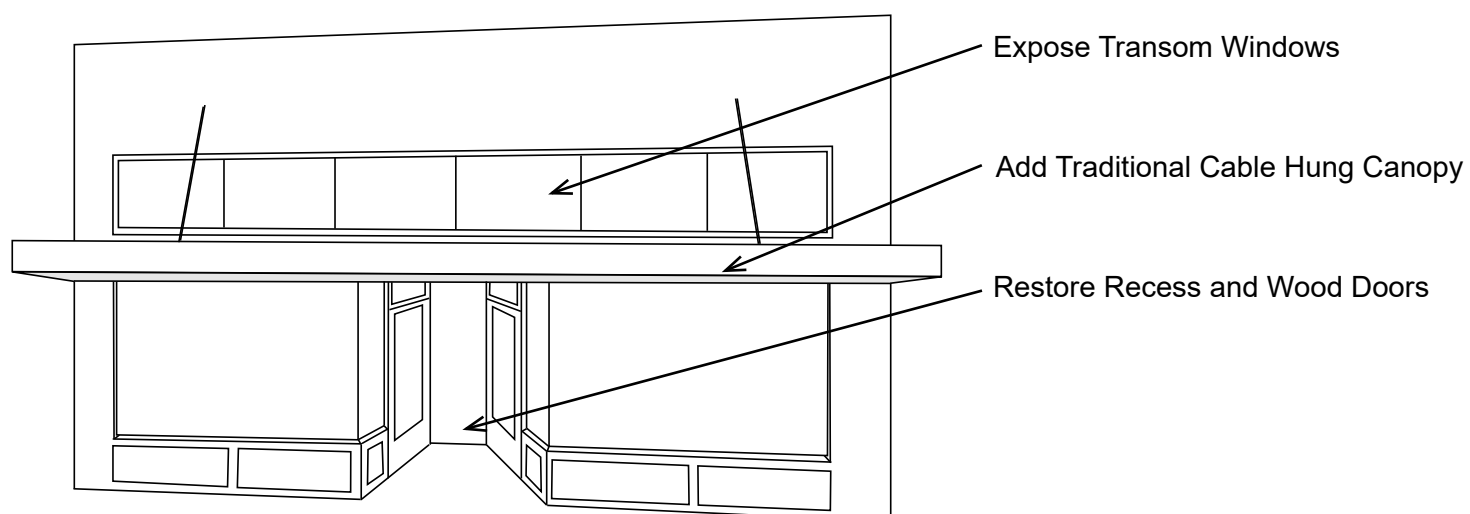


314 North Olympic Avenue

Existing Condition



Recommended Renovation

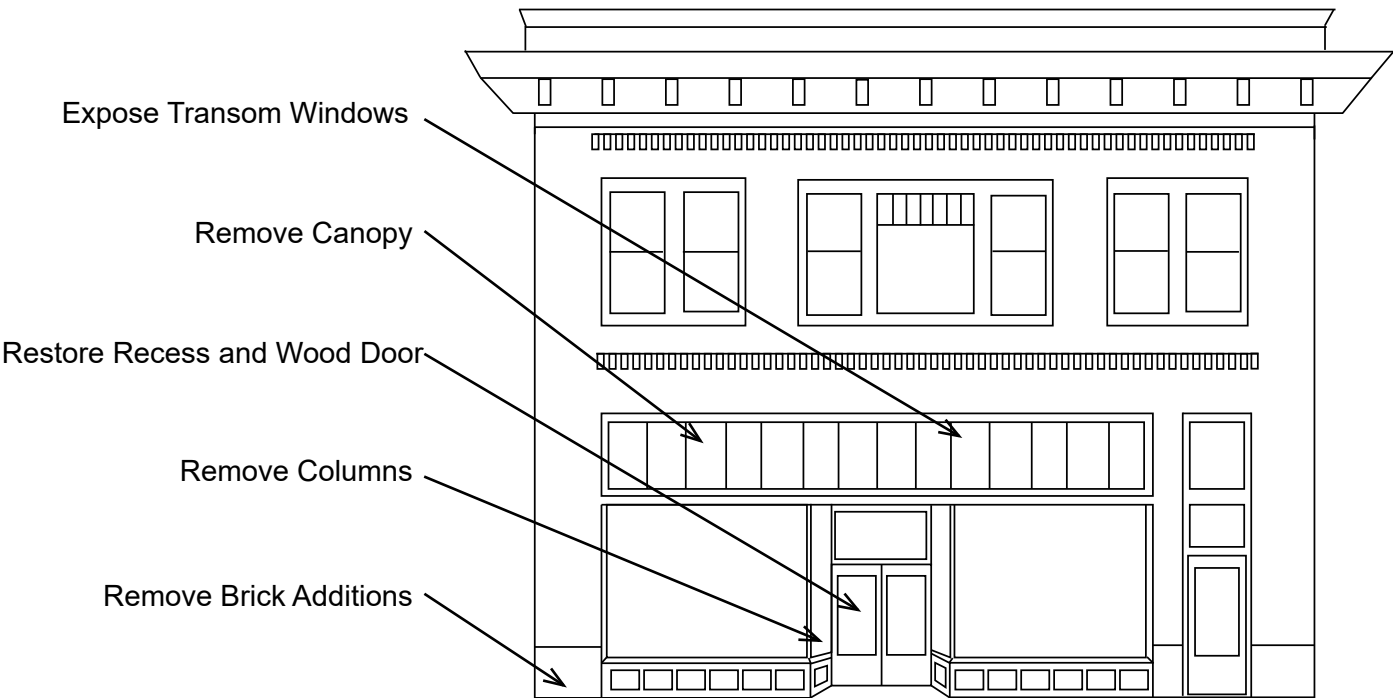


215 North Olympic Avenue

Existing Condition



Recommended Renovation



339 North Olympic Avenue

Existing Condition



Recommended Renovation



107 North Olympic Avenue

Existing Condition



Recommended Renovation

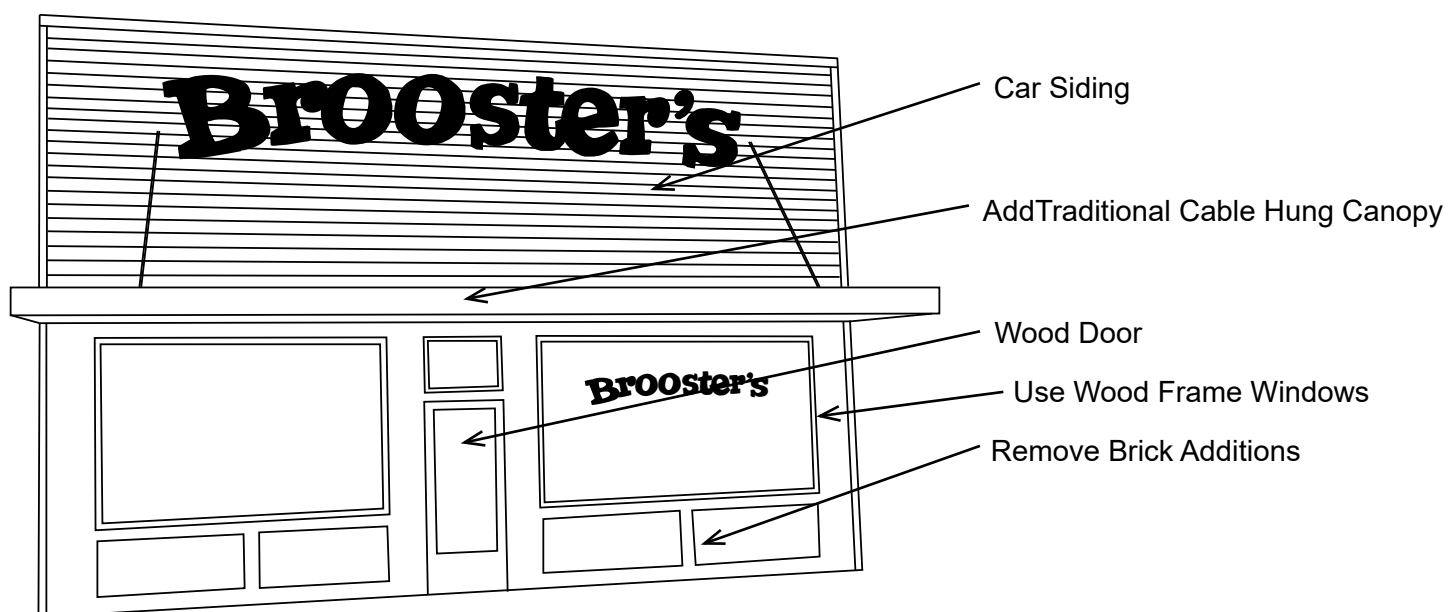


223 North Olympic Avenue

Existing Condition



Recommended Renovation



404 North Olympic Avenue

Existing Condition

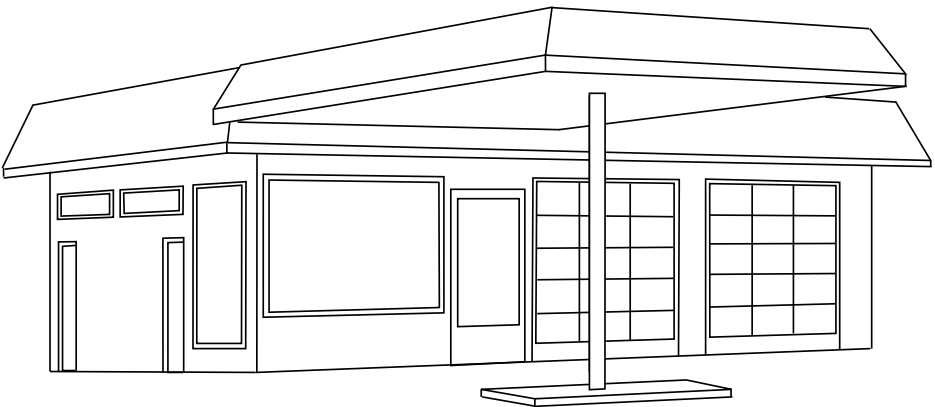


Recommended Renovation

New Paint

Add New Signage

Add Landscaping Appropriate to Building Purpose



315 North Olympic Avenue

Existing Condition



Recommended Renovation



New Paint

Add New Signage

5.2 Paint Palette and Storefront Paint Samples

A paint palette was chosen to represent the natural beauty of Arlington, as well as complement current building façades. Historic color palettes were consulted to create a broad palette of choices. These different options were then displayed at a community open house where attendees voted on their preferences. The selection was then synthesized to give a range of colors that can be used to enhance storefronts.

The following palette represents the outcome of both the community meeting and historic research. Base colors are shown as larger rectangles, while trim and accent colors are shown as smaller ones. Generally, the boldest color is reserved for limited accent areas, such as the front door. Poured-in-place concrete buildings should use a lighter base color (See palettes 1-3). Each of the paint choices are readily available throughout the region, including stores in Arlington.

Palette 1



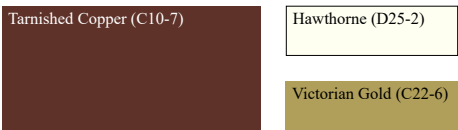
Palette 2



Palette 3



Palette 4



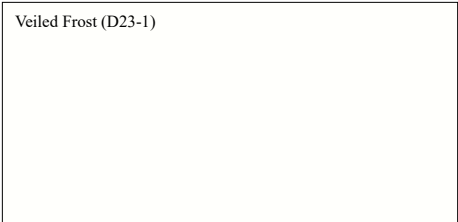
Palette 5



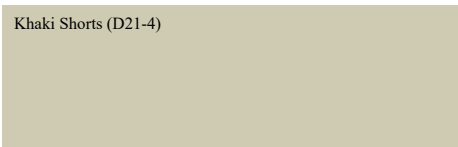
Palette Option 1



Base Color



Trim



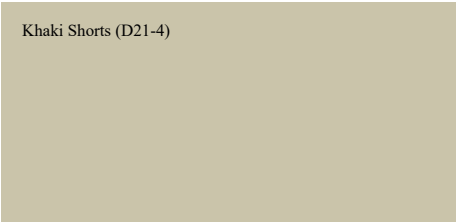
Accent



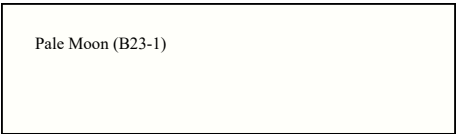
This palette is one of three preferred for poured in place concrete buildings.

Palette Option 2

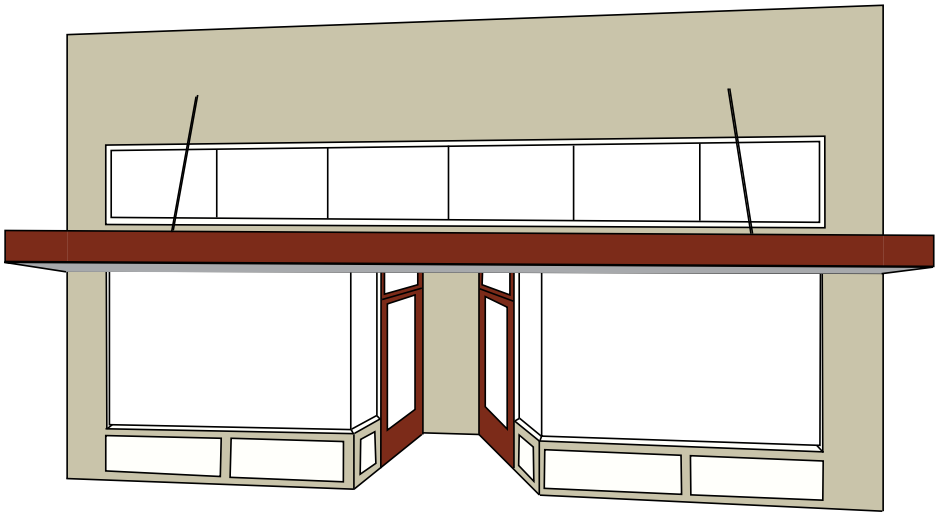
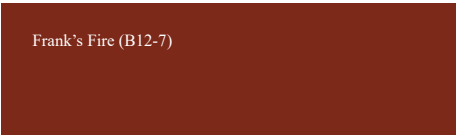
Base Color



Trim



Accent



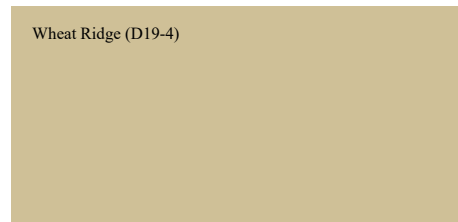
This palette is one of three preferred for poured in place concrete buildings.

Palette Option 3



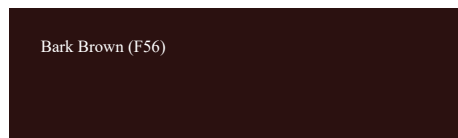
Base Color

Wheat Ridge (D19-4)



Trim

Bark Brown (F56)



Accent

Icon Red (B13-7)



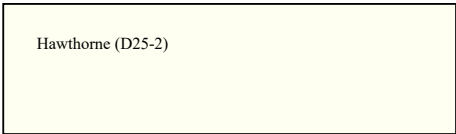
This palette is one of three preferred for poured in place concrete buildings.

Palette Option 4

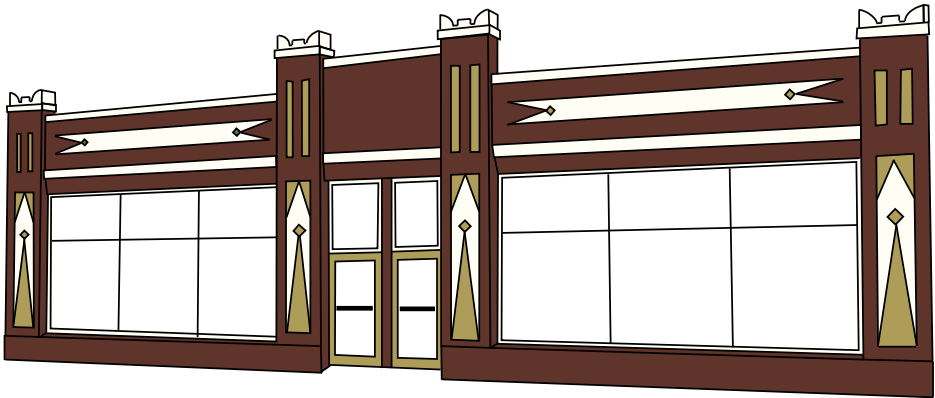
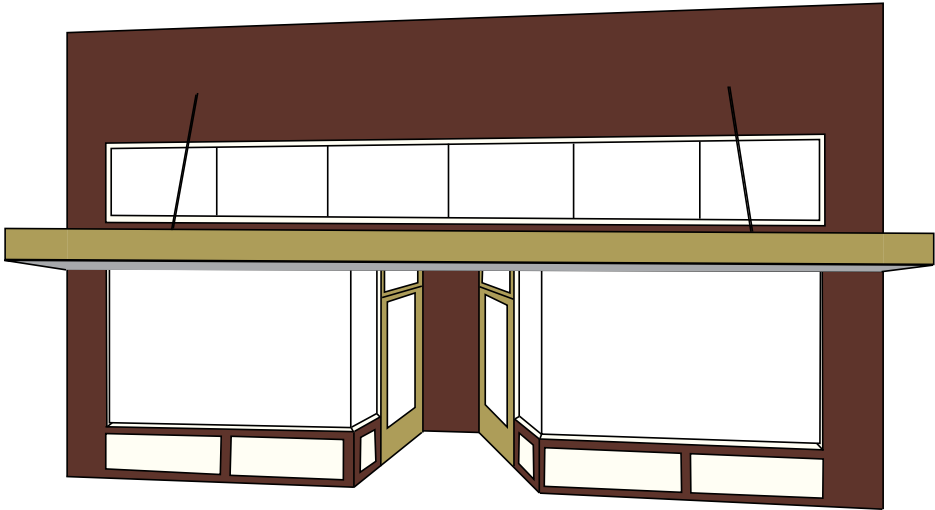
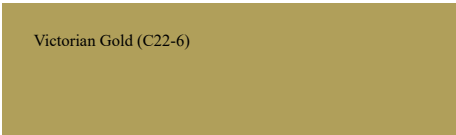
Base Color



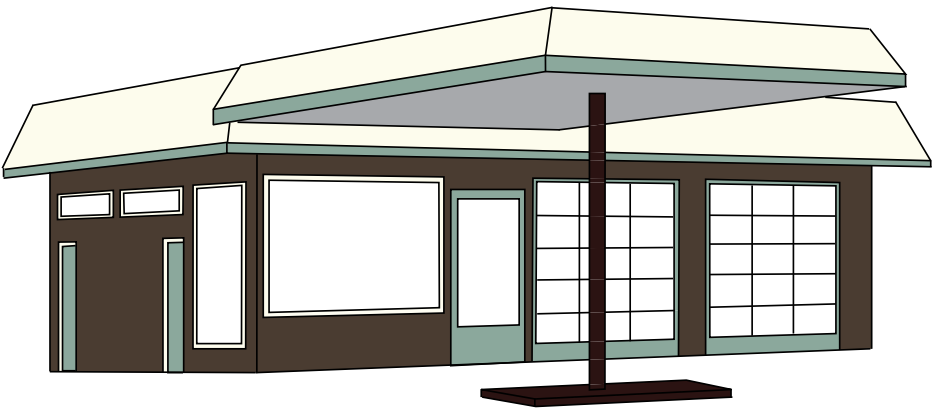
Trim



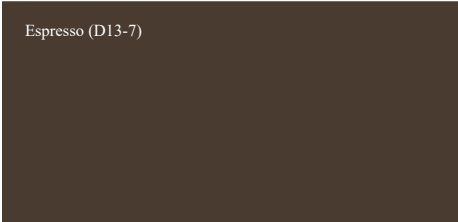
Accent



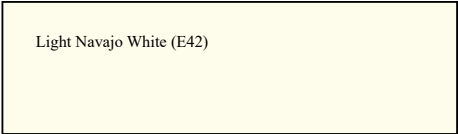
Palette Option 5



Base Color

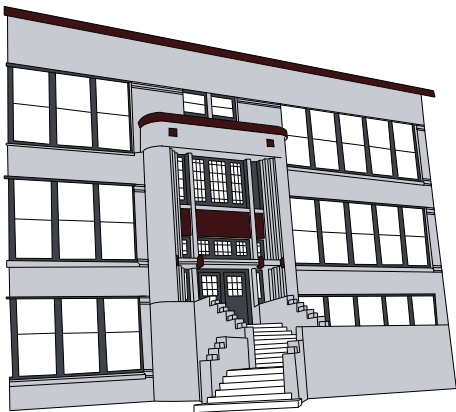


Trim

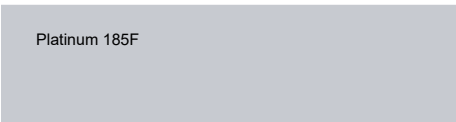


Accent

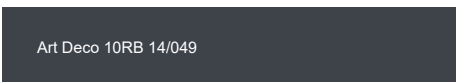




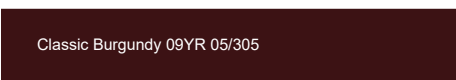
Base Color



Trim



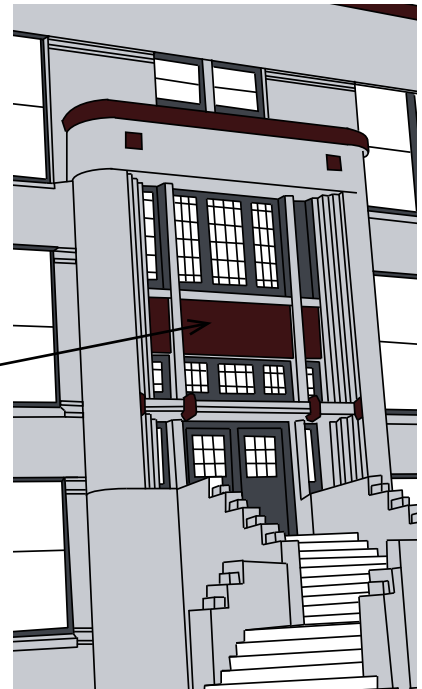
Accent



5.3 Colors for Other Historic Buildings

Arlington has a wealth of historic buildings in the town's core area surrounding Olympic Avenue. Painting these buildings with appropriate paint colors can help to highlight their unique architectural features and emphasize their historic character. Paint colors for these buildings need not follow the five palettes identified for Olympi Avenue, but should be typical of the building's era. Many paint brands now offer historical colors and paint dealers can help building owners choose color appropriate to the period of the building. Arlington's Old High School is an excellent example of a Streamline Moderne building. The gray and maroon colors shown below are typical of that period and very effective in highlighting the building's interesting detail.

Classic Burgundy accent
on decorative panel



5.4 Signage samples

There are a wide variety of building types in Arlington, with several distinct facades and styles. Choosing the correct type of signage for a building is a difficult task, especially for those not experienced in making design and architectural decisions. This section connects the previous guidelines with examples illustrating preferred signs on Arlington businesses. Architects, design professionals, and sign fabricators can provide further design assistance to help business owners achieve a total vision for each business that blends with the historic character of Old Town.

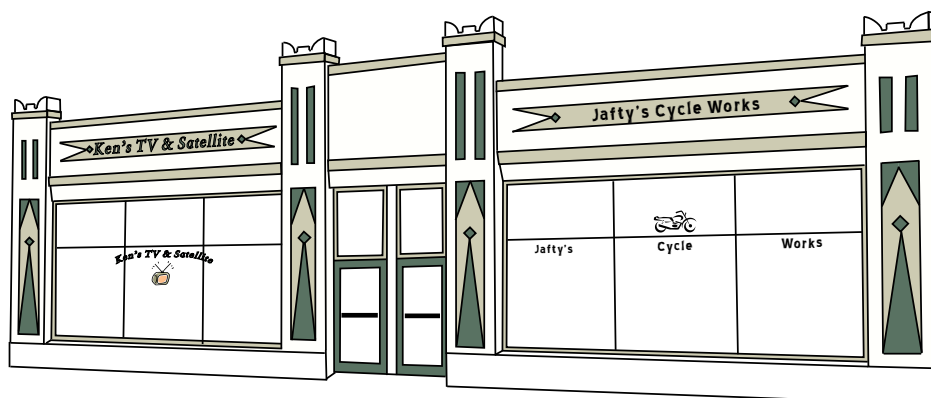
Wall Mounted Signs

The signs shown in this section illustrate the guidelines from Section 4.0 as the UW team has recommended for use on several businesses on Olympic Avenue. Explanations behind choosing specific sign types accompany each example image. Signs are the last step in creating a unified streetscape, but they can also be used to unify a single storefront, making it more memorable and attractive to passersby. Although the examples on the following pages show isolated recommendations, remember that each sign is part of a total sign program working to attract pedestrians and automobile drivers to Old Town.



The mounted sign is placed in an empty space on the facade where such a sign clearly fits

The font is complementary to the character of the building.



The sign is in a facade detail that is properly placed and sized for a wall mounted sign.

The facade is still the main focus of the building.

Window Lettering

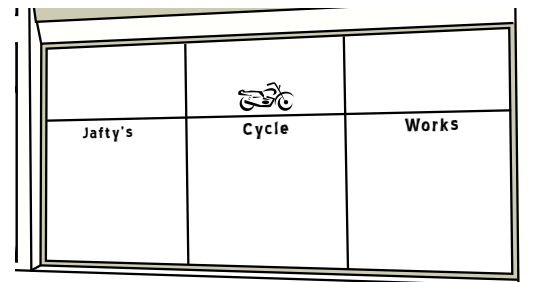
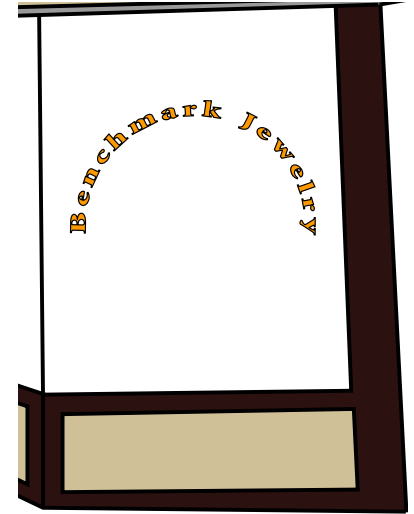
These window signs are on one building. They complement each other while clearly differentiating between the businesses.

The lettering is classic gold lined in black, which is characteristic of historic American towns.

This example uses two different window layouts. The first is centered in the middle window, while the second centers each word within a window pane.

These signs also incorporate simple images to help visually convey the nature of the business.

Some businesses, such as a movie theater, has constantly changing advertising, such as movie posters, in its windows. Such signage should be use only for these types of businesses and on a limited scale.

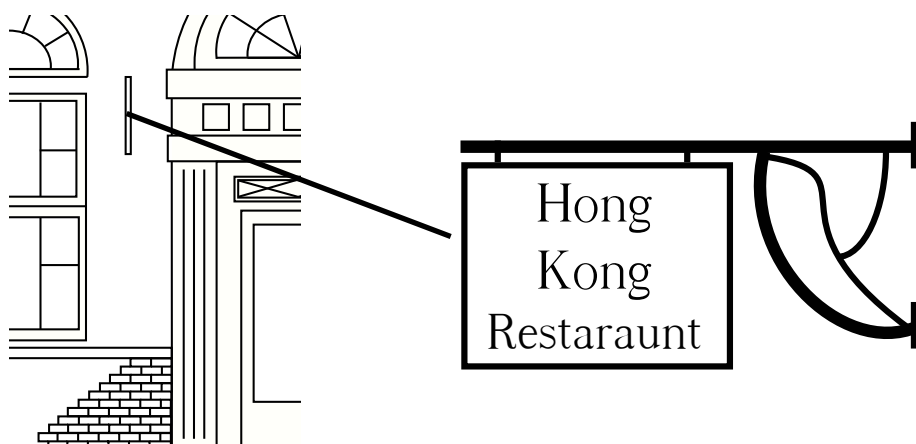


Projecting Signs



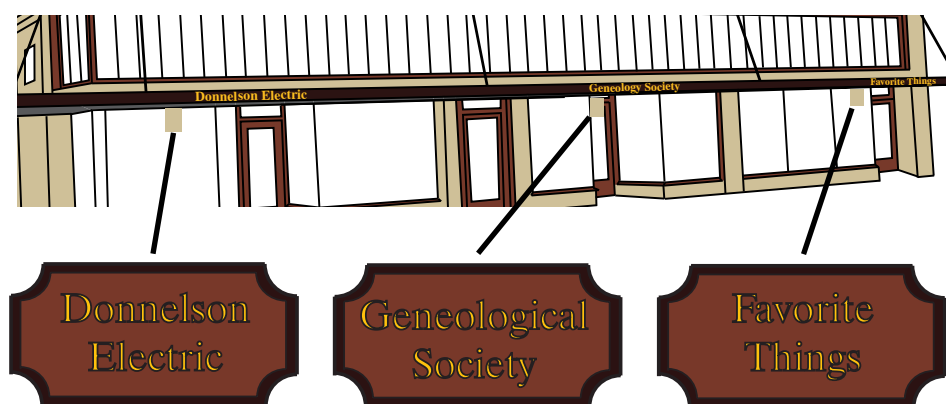
The images to the left show examples of projecting signs present in Arlington. They are interesting, historic, and give the building and business more character.

Neon signs are wonderful additions to a streetscape when existing in a historic context.



This sign, made of iron and wood, complements the brick building it projects from. It works with the beautiful detail around the door and windows to create an elegant atmosphere.

There is a clear spot for the sign to hang that doesn't interfere with the facade or visually block any details on the building.



When there is a canopy and fairly consistent store windows, it may be difficult to find an appropriate area to project a sign from.

In this case, projecting signs hanging from the underside of a canopy would provide pedestrian friendly signage.

Awning Signs

The mounted sign is placed in an empty space on the facade where such a sign clearly fits

The font is complementary to the character of the building.



These signs are simple text along the edge of a functional canopy.



Businesses displaying constantly changing information might do so on a marquee awning, but the business name should be a permanent aspect of the awning sign, not movable type.



6.0 Main Street Programs

Since the 1970s, national and state programs have helped small towns revitalize their historic Main Street districts and bring economic vitality back to downtown. Cities in Washington can make use of this experience through either the national program or the Washington State Main Street program. An overview of these programs is described below along with websites for more information.

6.1 The National Main Street Program

The National Trust Main Street Center maintains an extensive website with information about their program. The following materials provide a brief overview of their services. Additional information can be found at www.mainstreet.org.

The National Trust Main Street Center is a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Housed in the Trust's Department of Community Revitalization, the Center is the nation's leader in preservation-based revitalization, providing assistance, information, and leadership to grassroots-based organizations around the country. In the 1970s, the National Trust created its unique Main Street approach to commercial district revitalization, a methodology that combines historic preservation with economic development. Today, it advocates preservation-based commercial district revitalization as an ethic that all communities can use to revive their traditional commercial areas.

The Main Street Center takes a four-point approach to revitalize a downtown. The strategy is tailored to meet local needs and opportunities, and encompasses work in four distinct areas — Design, Economic Restructuring, Promotion, and Organization — that are combined to address all of the commercial district's needs. Described at right are the four points of the Main Street approach which work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort.

The Main Street Four-Point Approach™ can be applied in Arlington to strengthen the business that are currently there, as well as diversify the downtown. It is important to note that the program is incremental; it is not designed to produce immediate change. In order to succeed, a long-term revitalization effort requires careful attention to every aspect of downtown — a process that takes time and requires leadership and local capacity building.

Design enhances the unique visual qualities of downtown by addressing elements that create an appealing physical environment.

Economic Restructuring strengthens downtown's existing economic assets while finding ways to fully develop its market potential.

Promotion creates excitement. It reinforces and markets a positive image to customers, potential investors, new businesses, local citizens, and visitors based on the unique attributes of a downtown district.

Organization builds consensus and cooperation between the many individuals and groups who have a role in the revitalization process.

The National Trust Main Street Center services include:

- Direct, on-site technical assistance and consulting services to towns, cities, and urban neighborhoods.
- Supporting and coordinating a nationwide network of Main Street organizations.
- Publishing a wide range of books and training materials.
- Offering membership in the National Main Street Network, which includes a subscription to *Main Street News*.
- Coordinating the annual National Main Streets Conference on commercial district revitalization.
- Offering professional training and certification programs through the National Main Street Institute.
- Recognizing revitalization successes with its annual National Main Street Awards.
- Providing information and research on commercial district revitalization.
- Forming strategic partnerships with organizations and agencies to promote preservation-based commercial district revitalization.
- Leading the commercial district revitalization movement nationwide.
- Working within the National Trust to provide comprehensive community revitalization, historic preservation, and strategic services to communities, as well as to assist in legislative initiatives, special projects, and more.

6.2 State of Washington Main Street Program

The Washington Main Street Program maintains an extensive website with information about their program. The following materials provide a brief overview of their services.

For more information, go to www.cted.wa.gov/site/52/default.aspx. In addition, the state has a staff dedicated to this program. For other questions, contact the Office of Community, Trade, and Economic Development.

A healthy, thriving downtown or neighborhood commercial district is an asset to any community that is endeavoring to sustain or grow its local economy and create or retain jobs. The Washington Main Street Program (WMSP) helps communities throughout the state revitalize the economy, appearance, and image of their traditional business districts using a range of services and assistance to meet the needs of communities interested in revitalization.

The WMSP provides access to information, help getting focused, and community support and guidance to individuals and organizations interested in downtown revitalization. It also serves as a general clearinghouse for the latest tools and techniques in downtown development. General information, primary and secondary research, project development assistance information, and audio-visual and resource materials are also available.

The WMSP is a partner, but true revitalization success is built squarely on local commitment, initiative, and follow-through. Recognizing that Washington communities interested in revitalization have a variety of situations and needs, the WMSP offers a tiered approach to participation. The three levels of participation for Washington Main Street communities are described below:

- **The Downtown Affiliate Level** is ideal for communities just beginning to explore downtown revitalization, those that do not wish to become a Start-Up or designated Main Street™ community, or wish to use the Main Street Approach™ in a non-traditional commercial setting. Affiliate communities have access to the Downtown Revitalization Resource Library and information exchange, telephone consultations, limited technical assistance, awards program, and a discount to various training events. Communities of all sizes are eligible to participate as an Affiliate and may join at anytime by completing a brief application.
- **The Start-Up Level** is for communities exploring the possibility of future Main Street designation. Services at this level help communities or neighborhood commercial districts build an appropriate organization and funding base to start a comprehensive downtown program, as well as help prepare them for the Main Street application process. Participation does not guarantee selection as a designated Main Street community, but

it can help strengthen revitalization efforts. Communities with an interest in participating at this level of the tier system should initially send a “Letter of Interest”. Those submitting letters will be invited to apply when resources permit. Intake at this level is on a space available basis using specific eligibility and threshold criteria.

- **The Main Street™ Designation Level** is for communities that have a population of less than 100,000, or for neighborhood commercial districts, with a high degree of commitment and readiness towards using the Main Street Approach in a traditional downtown setting. A full-range of assistance is provided to communities at this level, from intensive services to meet the needs of newly designated communities to services that help mature programs maintain focus and effectiveness. Designated Main Street™ programs work to develop the critical tools needed to undertake comprehensive downtown revitalization. Application rounds are held as resources permit. Communities with an interest in seeking Main Street™ designation are encouraged to participate as a Start-Up community first

7.0 The Future of Arlington's Old Town

The City of Arlington has an opportunity to reclaim their history by enhancing their historic downtown, Old Town. The city has experienced unprecedented growth in the last decade by tripling its population. As the city grows in area and size of population, it will be essential for the downtown to enhance its economic vitality. This will ensure that local residents continue to use Old Town for daily goods and services, which will strengthen downtown businesses.

The renovations along Olympic Avenue will serve as the catalyst to revitalizing the downtown core. New streets, sidewalks, lights, public art and other amenities will drastically change the appearance of this century old street. In concern with these changes, the city wants to encourage business owners to make improvements to their storefront facades. In many cases, minor improvements, such as removing awnings, repainting facades, or new signage can make a major impact.

This document will serve as a reminder of Arlington's rich history of community and commerce. The guidelines outlined will instruct the business owners and city leaders of the possibilities for Olympic Avenue and will foster a vibrant and successful Old Town for the future.

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