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Wellington North Façade Improvement Guideline



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Overview

Generally, in most rural communities, development can be traced over “periods.” Many structures and buildings will have retained their original detailing, some may have been altered for various reasons, and infill may have added newer styles to the building fabric of the community. In many cases, “styles” work at cross-purposes to the feel of the streets in which they are situated and may influence an ill-character for the commercial district. More often than not, this is a result of a lack of clear identity and information regarding the direction the community would like to go concerning its “look”. After all, most building owners’ skills lie in operating a business and not necessarily how to create, improve, or maintain the façade of a building – this is where the greatest challenge lies.

The forward thinking of the Township of Wellington North to engage a Façade Improvement Guideline for the ‘Community Improvement Project Areas (CIPA)’ for Arthur and Mount Forest is a great initiative. Many communities and Township’s are now seeing the value of incorporating façade improvements into their overall revitalization strategy for their streets and cores. These projects can improve the overall look and feel of a communities main street or commercial areas helping them become more desirable as a destination.

Façade improvement guidelines for buildings located within the Wellington North CIPA were employed to aid building and business owners in transforming their building façades. Typically, under the elements proponent of this document, guidelines suggest ways in which a building façade can be improved to suit a desired theme or heritage. The guideline doesn’t attempt to “redesign” the façade of every building within the “CIPA”; rather it attempts to define period styles that may have occurred in Mount Forest and Arthur and possibly group

its buildings into these categories; providing an understanding, appreciation and ultimately, a guideline or demonstration of what these buildings could be like if a façade improvement is undertaken. Generally, it is a visual education – an education that may entice building owners towards improving their façade within the downtown district area.

Façade Improvement Guideline

The Façade Improvement Guideline for Wellington North is essentially a façade improvement “information tool” addressing topics typically related to context, building envelopes, building/street relationships, climate, entrances, safety, adaptability, expression, scale, exterior materials, performance, etc.

This guideline is intended to illustrate, in a broad sense, how façades can be altered to satisfy the communities initiative to maintain the character of the traditional mixed-use downtown district and bear a positive relationship to the street and adjacent structures.

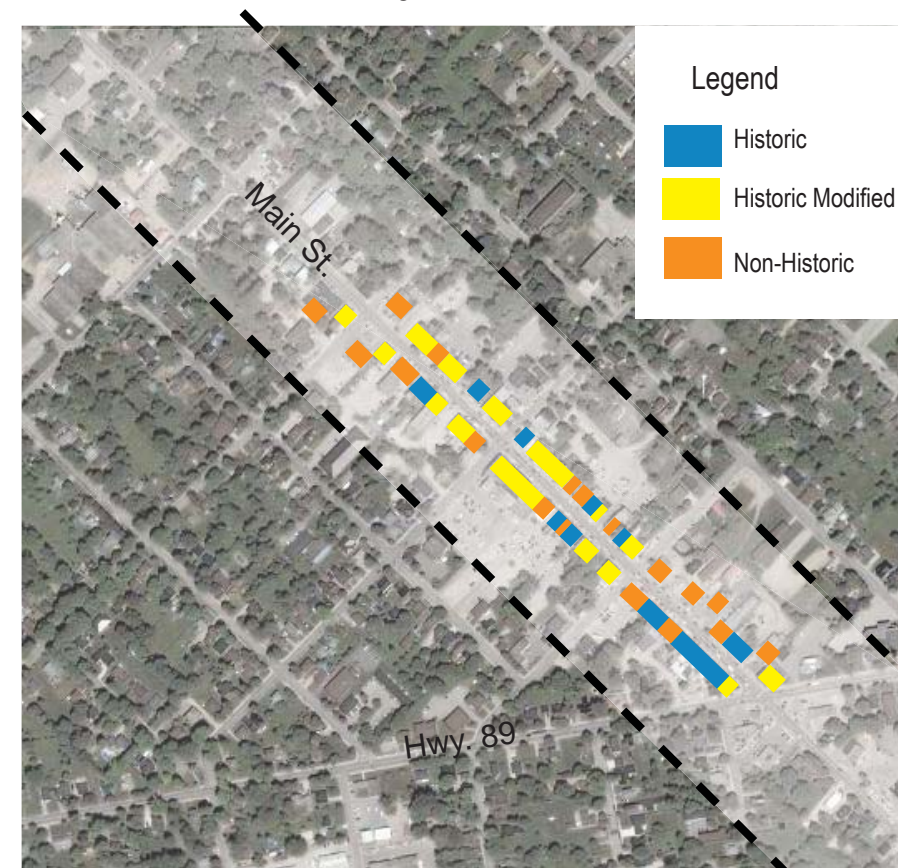
A significant percentage of the buildings in the Arthur and Mount Forest were built during the Victorian period (1850-1900) and are considered the traditional commercial centre of the communities. These areas features several blocks of higher-density mixed-use commercial buildings that have minimal setbacks. Many buildings have been retained their original detailing, some have been altered for various reasons along with many contemporary infill building additions. The goal of this design guideline is to respect history and successful previous developments while expressing a communal image and imagination.

Three classification types have been used to characterize the existing facades within the CIPAs for Arthur and Mount Forest, they include; historic, historic modified, and non-historic. In the absence of a municipal standard or evaluation system to assist in the examination and classification of buildings considered to be of cultural value, architectural and/or historical value SKA used on-site observation, available literature, and programs such as local ‘walking tour’ destinations to suggest those buildings (and spaces) having seemingly historic character, or historic character with obvious modification, or obvious no-historic value; all having value to the community.

Section 2, is essentially a ‘how to’ step-by-step process for building owners (and/or tenants) in understanding their building’s facades, its context, condition and opportunities. It includes an application form as well as information supporting facade improvements for those considering new construction. In Section 3, the Façade Improvement Checklist, there are guidelines to follow to ensure that

your improvement is in keeping with the vision of the Township of Wellington North. Our guideline, with the help of appropriate examples help inform business owners on how to approach giving their building a ‘face lift.’ In Section 4, ‘The Elements,’ we have suggested ways in which a building façade can be improved to suit a predominant theme- traditional heritage. We have chosen three building examples from Arthur and Mount Forest respectively - Section 5) and have applied a few of the guidelines to illustrate how an existing building could be improved.

Façade Characterization by Period



--- **Mount Forest**
Community Improvement Area
(partial, refer to CIP page 15 for limits in entirety)



--- **Arthur**
Community Improvement Area
(partial, refer to CIP page 16 for limits in entirety)

The following sections are intended to help create an identity for CIPA facades while respecting the needs of the commercial corridor. These recommendations are not meant to limit creativity but to encourage and channel it so that participants have the best possible result from their efforts.

Traditional Components of a Façade

Traditionally, a commercial façade is divided into three sections: the street level storefront, middle façade, and upper façade. The middle and upper facades frequently have architectural elements that align with abutting buildings, so the rhythm of the architecture, window openings, banding, and other elements continue along the streetscape. There are also stand-alone buildings that often have some special purpose. By the mid 19th to early 20th century, most streetscapes were composed of blocks of brick buildings, each with multiple storefronts and interiors subdivided by firewalls. No one building was strikingly out of character, yet each storefront was distinct.

The street level storefront has always been the single most important feature of a commercial building. It makes a statement about the personality of the owner or occupant and is an advertisement for their wares or trade. The street level may be the only feature customized by the storekeeper.

The following provides a summary of many of the typical storefront components as well as an illustration to assist the applicant with common terminology. ;

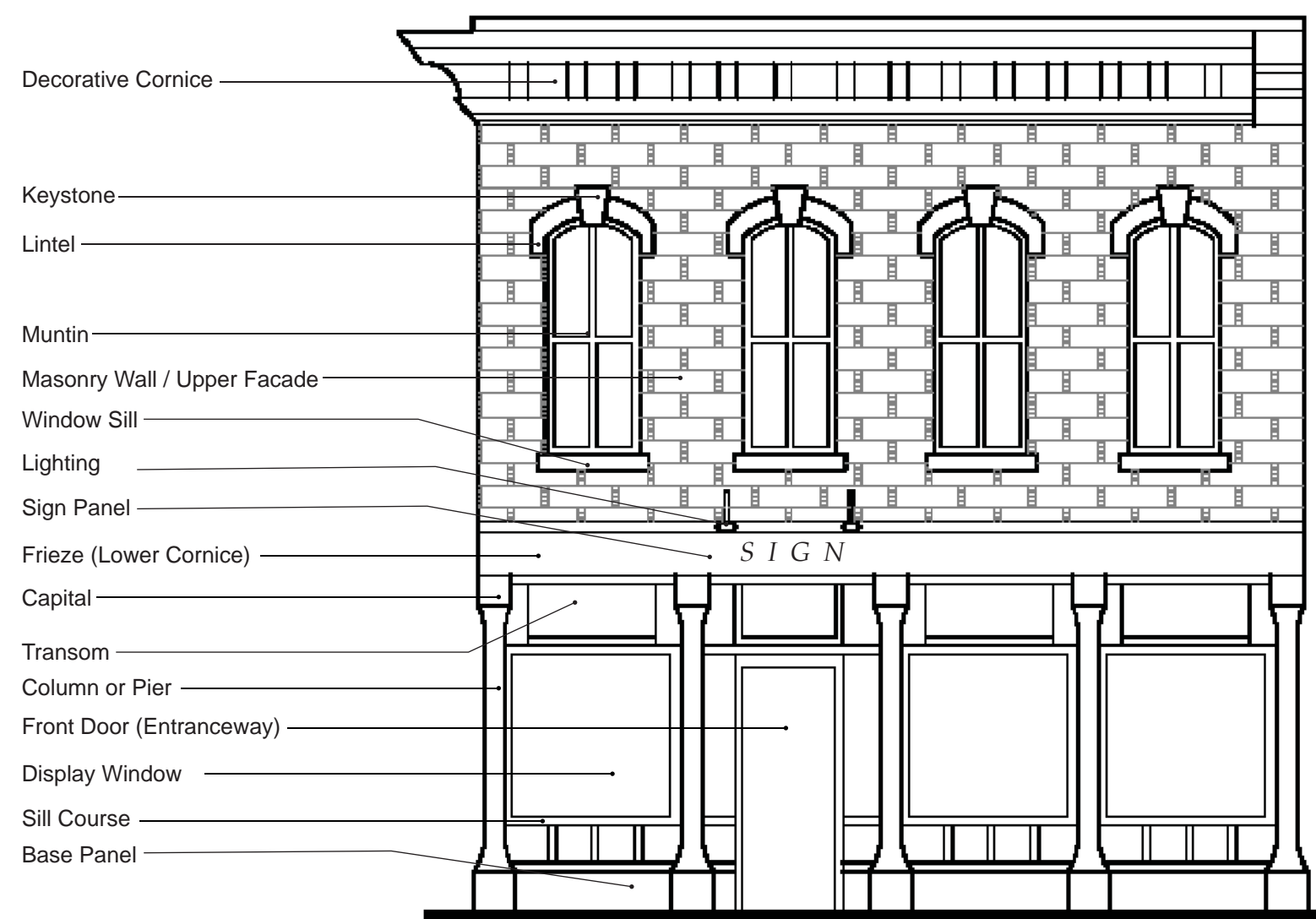
Base Panel

A base panel is where the building meets the ground. It is the anchor to the storefront and base for the display window. As this area acts as a kick plate and takes abuse from snow clearing and pedestrian traffic, frequent inspection and maintenance are advised.

Display Windows

Display windows allow customers to view merchandise and the interior of the store. Designed to advertise and entice shoppers inside, they are the most important part of the storefront and the one most commonly

Elements of a Façade





changed. Blocking off or reducing the size of a display window is not recommended. Window frames and sashes can be repaired or replaced using the original pattern. There are techniques to improve energy efficiency without destroying the design. Sill courses are typical to heritage windows.

Entranceways

The entranceway is traditionally in the centre and recessed back from the display window area. In this way, it directs the attention of the customer toward the display windows and draws them into the shop. Recessed entrances contribute qualities of depth and shade that create one of the characteristic rhythms in a traditional commercial area. The floor surface within the recessed entry is the welcome mat to the customer. Concrete, terrazzo, stone, brick, and tile are the most common and wear resistant entry floors. Columns, pier, pilasters and transoms are typical to entranceways.

Doors

As the door is the first contact the customer has with the business, its feel, weight, smooth operation, and hardware should impress. Doors can also reinforce the character of the overall design and appearance of the building. Original doors usually were carefully chosen and should not be replaced. Replacement doors should complement the existing facade.

Cornice

The traditional storefront cornice is a horizontal band that caps the storefront and separates it from the middle facade. Collectively, these form the strongest and most continuous line on the street. They can unite a row of buildings regardless of variations in building height, width, or design. The cornice is also prone to deterioration that leads to it being altered, removed, or covered. The result is a flat area that disrupts the visual proportion of the building and the alignment of the overall streetscape.

Middle Façade

The middle facade of a commercial building is above the storefront and characterized by a flat wall with regularly spaced window openings also

referred to as a 'frieze.' It usually has brick banding and other decorative features that align with and match the upper façade and sometimes the abutting buildings.

Upper Façade

The upper façade also contains window openings and decorative features. These usually are aligned with those on the middle façade and sometimes with the abutting structures.

Roof Cornice

Usually a decorative cornice crowns the roofline of a commercial facade. Cornices make the building look finished and are traditionally made of brick, stone, wood, pressed metal, and terracotta or ceramic tiles. Some are topped with projections such as finials or crests. As they are difficult to reach, cornices suffer from a lack of maintenance. Deteriorated caulking and failing flashings, aggravated by inadequate roof drainage, are common ailments. If the existing cornice is in poor condition, repair is generally cheaper and preferable to replacement.

Windows

Window openings and sashes/muntin are probably the most conspicuous building feature on a facade. The "fenestration" or arrangement and shapes of window openings can define the style and character of a building. The size, proportion of glass to masonry, spacing, and decoration contribute to the unity of the street as well as the attraction of the individual facade.

Window openings and sashes should be maintained, not boarded up, reduced in size or shape, or re-divided by incorrect placement of the muntin bars that hold the panes of glass. They require periodic inspection, particularly at the sills where water may collect. Caulking, painting, and proper drainage will result in long-term service. Well-fitted and maintained storm systems can provide an acceptable performance level even when compared to modern products. If a window cannot be repaired, replace it with one that matches the original. If there is evidence of original shutters, make sure they are the correct size and proportion to the window opening.

Corner Quoins

Quoins are contrasting or projecting bricks, stones, or paint schemes that define the vertical edges of a façade, separating it visually from the abutting structures. Painting or cladding over the quoins will remove the visual separation of one building from the next. Where possible, original quoins should be maintained or recreated.

Pilasters

A pilaster is a vertical element of a wall. It could be a protruding brick section or an applied piece such as a half column. Often used in pairs, the purpose is to frame an entranceway or divide a large facade into units. Pilasters are often covered or obscured by layers of new cladding. Their bases or plinths can become buried by rising sidewalk levels or hidden behind new base panels. Pilasters are important to defining a storefront and should be uncovered, repaired, or recreated where possible.



Material Considerations

The following specific materials considerations apply to legitimate heritage-value buildings only and should be addressed:

Wood Cladding

Due to the risk of fire, by the mid to late 19th century most Ontario communities had abandoned wood in favour of brick construction. A modern practice of creating a “historic” cladding in wood, such as board and batten, may not be authentic. Using new materials such as aluminum or vinyl over the original also should be avoided. These may trap moisture, causing the underlying original materials to mould and deteriorate. The fasteners required could allow water penetration and cause damage that is expensive to repair if the new cladding is removed in the future. The thickness of the new layer will recess existing openings and likely require the removal or partial covering of decorative features.

Masonry

There is an endless variety of decorative brickwork patterns. A skilled mason can create depth and dimension even using a single colour and type of brick. Most historic masonry was unpainted and performs best in this condition as the brick and mortar can exhaust seasonal moisture and salts. Elaborate patterns can be achieved with a base colour (usually red-orange) brick, accented with a buff colour brick. Some buff, red, and black pigments were used historically to even out brick colour variations and add accent bands and surrounds. A careful examination of the building should reveal the original treatment.

If the masonry has been painted, or there is excessive damage caused by inappropriate cleaning, applying another layer of paint may be the only option. The greatest danger to masonry buildings is from repairs using hard mortar with high cement content. Almost every pre-1920 building used soft mortar with a high lime content and small amount of cement. Soft mortar allows brick and stone walls of varying hardness to absorb stresses and thermal movements. Hard mortar transmits rather than absorbs stresses, resulting in cracking and crushing. Keep a masonry wall in good repair by eliminating any causes of brick or stone damage, repair vertical cracks, and repoint where necessary using a mortar mix no stronger than the historic mortar. Try to match the type of tooling used on the original mortar. A qualified mason will be able to determine the correct mortar mix.

Exterior Woodwork

Exterior woodwork on a heritage building was often designed and placed in such a way that it was protected. When cornices, signbands, or other protective overhangs are removed, the woodwork is exposed to the elements. Carved, sawn, and turned decorations are more vulnerable to decay when fastenings break, allowing water to penetrate behind. Ensure that all fastenings are secure and repair with compatible, durable materials. Wood replacement is normally only necessary if no longer sound or unable to hold paint. Reproductions that are sympathetic in scale, thickness, and choice of material will be the most successful. Paint was the standard finish for exterior woodwork as it gave added protection from the elements and the chance for artistic expression through colour combinations, faux treatments, pinstriping, and other techniques.

When paint blisters, cracks, peels, or deteriorates in any way, it is usually a symptom of an underlying problem such as water penetration, too many layers of paint, ultraviolet exposure, poor surface preparation, or the presence of contaminants. As each paint or wood problem is identified, an appropriate strategy for correcting the underlying cause and preparing the surface for repainting can be chosen. Do not strip paint to the base wood and then recoat with clear varnish or sealant. The unpainted look is not historically authentic and can allow ultraviolet light and atmospheric degradation of the wood. Some early paints are lead-based. When sanding or removing early paint, wear protective clothing, work in a well-ventilated area, and dispose of all paint chips and dust.

Stucco

If the stucco is original and to be retained, loose patches should be removed and repaired to match the existing texture. After removal of loose patches, the areas to be replaced should be cleaned of loose particles. If the stucco is not original and is to be removed there are specific considerations that must be addressed by an experienced trades person. New stucco should be of an acrylic stucco composition.

Concrete or Stone

Deterioration of these materials are typically associated with drainage problems behind the surface wall. Once deterioration has halted, patching to match the original may proceed. Use patch materials that are verified to have same colour and texture; final patch should be as invisible as possible. Concrete and stone can also be readily cleaned.

Terra Cotta

This material should be maintained in place if at all possible.

Metal

If ferrous metal trim is exposed, it should be primed with an appropriate primer and paint. Non-ferrous trim, such as galvanized metal, should be coated with an appropriate chromate primer and paint. Metal that had corroded or decayed to the point where it must be replaced should be cut away and accurately reproduced if possible. In some cases, molds may be taken and cast in fiberglass, thereby reproducing the original in a lighter and more stable form. This is especially useful in reproducing trim elements. With deteriorated cornices, it is sometimes possible to replace single elements this way.

In some cases, original materials may be so deteriorated as to require replacement. In this case, every attempt should be made to duplicate the visual appearance of the original.



The Process

Step One: Evaluating Your Building's Appearance

It is important to take a good look at a building before proposing alterations to its exterior. Consider the windows, doors and detailing. Note the entire façade, including the upper stories as well as the storefront. A successful improvement strategy is one that treats the building as a whole and does not neglect the upper floors. The goal is to achieve visually distinct façades that relate to their surroundings while providing a sense of cohesiveness in the commercial corridor without strict uniformity.

Step Two: Evaluate Your Building's Surroundings

A high level of upkeep always strengthens the image of a commercial corridor. Trash generated by the store should be kept in enclosed areas at the rear of the building and must be easily serviced by trash collection trucks.

Step Three: Make Needed Repairs; Establish A Maintenance Schedule

Preserve the value of façade improvements by repairing any damage before façade work begins. In order to prevent major building repair in the future, a regular maintenance schedule should be established for façade cleaning and repair. The following are recommended preventive maintenance steps;

- Checking roof to ensure that it is watertight
- Scraping chipped and peeling paint and repainting
- Repointing and patching deteriorated masonry or stonework joints
- Replacing deteriorated building surfaces
- Repairing and painting window frames and sills
- Repairing or replacing weatherproofing agents

Step Four: The Game Plan

- **Prepare a Plan or Sketch**
With the help of the guidelines and perhaps the assistance of a designer, prepare a sketch of your building façade that outlines your proposal for a renovation. Indicate repairs and upgrades, materials, and colours. This can also be readily accomplished through the use of descriptive notes/labels added to a photocopy of photograph (of the facade).

When you have a sketch that satisfies your own requirements and follows guidelines set out in this guide, you will need to “tender” the work which means to ask builders to give you a fixed price bid to undertake the work shown in the sketches/demonstrations. Be wary of “estimates” that permit flexibility in the final billing. Some professional advice may make this part easier for you. You may ask to have certain items as separate prices if, for example, you may have to defer some of the work to another year for budget reasons.

- **“Do It Right”**
For any renovation, it is essential that one person or company takes responsibility for all aspects of the work such as a general contractor. If the work involves only window replacement, be certain that the contractor is well experienced with window replacement and that you have discussed the extent of finishing that is expected. Before signing a contract be sure to have all incidentals itemized and accounted for to avoid any additional costs. Additional costs such as clean up, disposal of removed and/or remaining materials or drywall/plaster repair and painting are often overlooked.

For work involving masonry repair, great skill and extensive knowledge and experience is required. Talk with the contractor and ask about the specific skills required to protect historic masonry from deterioration. Competent and knowledgeable tradespeople are proud to give recent references. It is also recommended that you ask the contractor for multiple references.

Randomly select individuals as referred by local building supply stores and call them. Background work can save time and money up front.

- **The Cost**
Renovations are frequently the cause of cost surprises, often in inverse relationship to the actual size of the project. Prepare for the unexpected in a combination of three ways:
 - Pay up front for some professional advice from a consultant familiar with the type of work anticipated;
 - Make exploratory openings in locations that can be temporarily reclosed. This takes away any hidden surprises and is a far better indicator of concealed elements prior to the contractor's discovery;
 - Be prepared during the work to be flexible either in the amount of work that is completed in each phase, or the amount of money expended. If the complete package of work is fully explored and described in advance of the Contractor's involvement, few surprises will be revealed during construction.

Considering New Building & Redevelopment

New buildings can add greatly to a community; the following recommendations should be taken into consideration when building a new building or redeveloping an existing building within the Community Improvement Project Area's (CIPA) of Arthur and Mount Forest. Buildings should be:

- Scaled in a way that supports and maintains the historical pattern of building development along the corridor;
 - New buildings should be of a similar width to that of existing buildings in the area; where significantly greater width is proposed, the building should use materials and slight variations along the building face to reflect the proportions of existing buildings in the district;
 - Where a building houses multiple uses or units, the outside of the building should reflect the division of space;
 - Buildings should be spaced in relation to surrounding buildings to contribute to rhythm of the corridor. Larger buildings and buildings with significantly different height than those around them require larger spacing. In the downtown; smaller, more detailed, and more consistently sized buildings should be located closer together.
- Situated to create a sense of enclosure, safety, and comfort by ensuring the interaction with the street is appropriate;
 - Developments should strive to create an inviting entrance. Main entrances should be located on the public street side of the building, though a secondary entrance may be necessary where parking is provided;
 - Development on corner lots should use buildings to define the corner and realize the landmark potential of these highly-visible locations. Buildings at corner locations should address both street frontages;
 - Buildings adjacent to public spaces should be sited and designed to define and enhance the public space.
- Similar in height to neighbouring buildings;
 - Buildings in the downtown district should be at least two stories in height;
 - A one-storey height difference is appropriate between adjacent buildings or additions. Changes greater than one storey may be accommodated by using a porch or colonnade, belt course of bricks, "stepped" increase, and/or roof details;
 - Where buildings exceed three storeys in height, additional consideration should be given to details that maintain pedestrian scale.
- Set back from the street similar to neighbouring structures to create a consistent streetscape;
 - Buildings in the downtown district should be close to the street, to make things feel more like an outdoor room;
 - Generally buildings should be located at the minimum front setback line or the established building line, whichever is less, in order to reinforce the street edge. Small variations in setbacks may be permitted to enable dooryard/courtyard seating and patio areas;
 - Side and rear setbacks should be established which will not negatively impact neighbouring buildings and open spaces with respect to sun/shadow and sight liens. Buildings should be at least two storeys in height;





Façade Project Design Checklist

Façade projects within the Township of Wellington North's CIPA's should respond to the following 'best practices' to help with its efforts to create a relevant and quality improvement for both the building and the street.

Further, the elements section of this guideline provides added description to support these practices. During the design of new and renovated façades and/or buildings, a project team – building users, administrators, managers/staff, and façade designers – will have two broad areas of responsibility: the first towards particular project needs (how the façade serves the business), the second towards communal needs (how the façade serves the character of the street), which includes façades facing streets and spaces in the commercial core. The following are 'best practices' in facade improvements:

1. Responding to Core Context

Façades should be designed to enhance the larger compositions created by groups of buildings and landscapes.

Façade improvements should be considered as opportunities to "repair" holes and discontinuities along the street.

2. Building Envelopes in the Downtown Core

Façades should in general align or work with existing façades to reinforce the clarity of the public network and the cohesion of building groups.

3. Beneficial Building / Street Relationships

Building façades and street spaces should establish a mutually supportive relationship in which indoor and outdoor spaces animate and are connected to each other.

Façades should define buildings as distinct spaces with a strong

sense of identity and place.

Façades should enhance the clarity, safety and efficiency of streets and pedestrian routes.

Building faces adjacent to public open spaces and thoroughfares should be treated as fronts and should activate the public street environment.

4. Response to Climate

Important public spaces, both indoor and outdoor, should benefit from the sun.

Rain and snow shelter should be provided in high use areas around entrances, and where heavily travelled pedestrian routes run parallel to building façades.

5. Identifiable Building Entrances

Façade projects should help building entrances become easily identifiable, and should address the "Main Streets" in given community.

All improved building entrances should satisfies the standards for accessibility stated in the Ontario with Disability Act (ODA).

With façade treatments, building entrances should be ordered with the most important entry addressing the main avenue of approach.

All building faces adjacent to major public open spaces and thoroughfares should have entrances that are clearly identified.

Façade treatments should promote building entrances that are open and prominent, provide a sense of transition from outside to

inside and encourage people to approach and enter.

6. Long Life/Loose Fit

Façade treatments should be capable of being adapted to new building uses and expansion as the needs and the priorities of the owners change.

7. Safety

New façade projects and renovations should be designed to provide actual personal safety as well as impart a sense of comfort and well-being in Wellington North's Community Improvement Project Areas.

Personal safety is a broad-spectrum requirement that goes beyond basic façade treatments and is basic to all aspects of the environment, including spatial clarity and legibility, signage and orientation, lighting and visibility, planting, paving materials, and winter walkability-mobility, as well as ramp gradients, traffic controls, and safety alert devices.

8. Community Expression

Improved façades within the Township's CIPA must reconcile many diverse and often contradictory issues in terms of their expression – the "messages" they give about their role in or the quality of the street.

Façades should express a sense of permanence and durability, a sense of the areas traditional roots and its historical continuity, and a sense of its connectedness to these.

Further, façades should express Wellington North's commitment to serving the community and its visitors, and its responsibility to treat commercial activity as a public resource. To express this, façades should be interpreted as open, safe, accessible, welcoming, and familiar.



9. Appropriate Scale

The scale of the façades should relate to the scale and size of the building as well as the human body, to make viewing, approaching and use of the street-front space and building a comfortable experience.

The scale of elements and massing should correspond to the various distances from which it is viewed.

Design should balance the building mass, and maintain the general pattern for windows, doors, and details along the street.

10. Exterior Materials for Façades

Façade materials should reinforce the cohesion of related groups of buildings.

Façade materials should reflect the building’s role as a landmark or a fabric building.

Exterior building materials should be durable and of high aesthetic quality. The use of distinctively local materials including wood, brick, and stone are encouraged; the use of none acrylic stuccos and vinyl siding is discouraged.

Large expanses of blank, street-fronting walls at grade should be avoided.

Architectural detailing should extend around the building; no visible building face may be unimproved.

11. Technical Performance

Façade projects should be subjected to life-cycle costing to determine the best fit between capital costs, operating costs and ongoing maintenance costs. Façade projects should be designed

to reduce maintenance costs.

12. Accessibility

Façade projects should provide equal means of access to all users regardless of abilities. This includes; entrances, exits and access to all levels of building.

13. Heritage Value Buildings

While a Façade Project Design Checklist will address many pertinent aspects of typical façade renewal further consideration to “historic” facades should be considered and include: scale considerations for new construction to a historic façade (proportioning, rehabilitation of lost or distorted form); appropriate surface materials and restoration considerations (inappropriate modern materials); and, storefront, door, and fenestration considerations;

- That any new construction should respect the historic patterns and relationship of solids and voids in wall openings. Height to width proportions of existing buildings should be respected.
- That any original material that can be preserved should be left in place.
- Generally, setbacks on the main façade are to be completely discouraged. Cornice levels of adjacent buildings should be respected whenever possible to promote continuity of the horizontal lines of the streetscape.
- The following materials are seen as being appropriate materials for façade treatments to heritage-value buildings: brick, wood, stone, concrete, stucco (as a panel material), terra cotta and metal.

Facade Project Design Checklist

By Completing this checklist , an applicant can determine the degree in meeting 'best practices' for facade improvements.

Façade Project Design Checklist				
Criteria/Description	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1. Responding to Core Context				
i) Does the façade design enhance its context and adjacent buildings?				
2. Building Envelopes in the CIPA				
i) Does the façade work/align with existing facades and reinforce the clarity of the public network and the cohesion of building groups?				
3. Beneficial Building / Street Relationships				
i) Does the building façade and street establish a supportive relationship, in which indoor and outdoor spaces animate and are connected to each other?				
ii) Does the façade define the building as a distinct space with a strong sense of identity and place?				
4. Response to Climate				
i) Does the façade design respond to the climate of area, taking into account all seasons?				
5. Identifiable Building Entrances				
i) Does the façade project help to make the buildings entrance more identifiable?				
6. Long Life / Loose Fit				
i) Is the façade treatment capable of being adapted to new / future building uses?				
7. Safety Within CIPA				
i) Does the façade design provide personal safety and impart a sense of comfort to all users?				
8. Community Expression				
i) Does the façade design express a sense of permanence and durability?				
ii) Does the façade promote traditional roots and express historical continuity?				
9. Appropriate Scale				
i) Does the scale of the proposed façade relate to the scale and size of the building as well as the human body, making space comfortable for users?				
10. Exterior Materials for Facades				
i) Does the proposed façade materials reinforce the cohesion of related groups of buildings?				
ii) Are proposed exterior building materials durable and of high aesthetic quality?				
11. Technical Performance				
i) Does the proposed façade determine a balance capital costs, operating costs and maintenance costs?				
12. Accessibility				
i) Does the façade design provide equal means of access to all users regardless of ability?				

The Elements

Traditional stores were constructed with plain walls along three sides and much more elaborate details on the street façade. The design effort and construction skill that is displayed on the street façade is generally beyond the expertise and expenses that most owners and builders are able to incorporate into recently constructed buildings. Quality construction from any period should be recognized as an asset and displayed prominently and not concealed by poor quality construction or poor quality signs.

Respecting Architectural Value & Merit

The traditional heritage value is evident throughout the Community Improvement Project Area's of Wellington North, continuous storefronts not only provide a wall of retail, but are also a form of containment for the street. Traditional storefront materials, such as brick and stone, are evident.

Some buildings do not have significant architectural qualities, and in some cases these buildings may in fact represent poor architectural design. In these instances, a renovation or façade improvement project can provide the architectural and human-scale qualities that are missing. The following design considerations highlight key elements that will assist in restoring architectural value to buildings whether they are historic in nature or lack architectural value.

Design Considerations:

- Most façades consist of an architectural framework designed to identify individual storefronts. Each storefront should respect this architectural framework and not extend beyond it.
- Individuality within a standardized or unified appearance is encouraged for single buildings containing multiple storefronts. Separate buildings even in cases where several adjacent to each other are occupied by a single tenant or owner -- should remain visually distinct.

- Façades should present a visually balanced composition according to the original architectural intent.
- In the case where original building elements have been removed or substantially altered, contemporary treatments respecting the original and historic details are suitable. However, they should not appear to be of poor quality, of temporary nature, or ill-suited for the area (e.g. vinyl or aluminium siding)
- If a building has historic or architectural merit, improvements should be designed to reveal the building's original style, form, and materials, whenever possible.



Continuous storefronts along the Main Street in Mount Forest act as a 'wall of retail.' Facades are composed primarily of traditional materials such as stone and brick. Excellent opportunity to improve the visual balance and unity of storefronts, while accentuating historic architecture of buildings.



Visually balanced composition with distinct entrances.



Two storefronts within one architectural framework. Lack of unified appearance.

Façade Composition

The creation of satisfying and successful downtown core areas transcends the issue of specific architectural styles. Great places may be of any style, or many styles. However, the arrangement of architectural elements such as doors, windows, signage on the walls of buildings which face public streets and plazas is an important part of good community design. Façade composition drives the safety, convenience, and comfort of our sidewalks by establishing where people enter and leave buildings, how people in the buildings can see out onto public spaces, and how pedestrians “read” the buildings.

Design Considerations:

- Storefront windows should be consistent in height and design with storefront doors to create a cohesive appearance. Window coverings should also be kept to a minimum .
- Façade design should be complementary to a building’s original materials as wells to those of adjacent buildings.
- Signs with too much information can be confusing. Secondary information can be put on windows, doors or awnings. Window signage should be limited to covering no more than 15 percent of available window space.
- When a building contains multiple storefronts housing different businesses, the signs should relate well to each other in terms of height, proportion, colour and background value. Maintaining uniformity among these characteristics reinforced the building’s façade composition while still retaining each business’s identity.
- Awnings on a multiple-storefront building should be consistent in character, scale and location, but need not be identical.
- Renovated façades should emphasize building and structural elements such as columns and bays, consistent with design guidelines for new construction. Where existing buildings have long, visually uninteresting façades and rooflines, façade improvements should make it easier to identify individual businesses from the street.



Windows consistent heights complemented with awning and signage. Historic brick detailing accentuates second and third storey windows.



Awnings, signage, windows at consistent height provide a unified appearance



Outdoor seating environment along streetscape, similar height umbrellas and planters provide consistency.

Accessibility

Accessible buildings are good for business and the community. With the goal of making the community a barrier free municipality, the Province of Ontario is developing guidelines to prevent and remove all barriers to provide equal opportunity for residents and visitors with disabilities.

All efforts should be made to ensure that all aspects of buildings are fully accessible; however, facade improvements may only accommodate in a limited manner.

Design Considerations:

- The primary goal is to provide equal means of access to all users regardless of abilities.
- Making entrances and exists barrier-free;
- Inside the building, consider how the layouts of aisles, seating areas, counters, washrooms, and fixtures are welcome to disabled people.
- Provide barrier free access to all levels/floors.



Concrete ramp with guardrail provides access to historic building.



Building entrance flush with sidewalk - barrier-free



New construction that provides barrier-free entrance opportunity to its customers.



Historic Building with barrier-free access

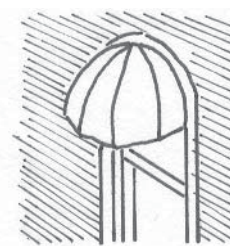
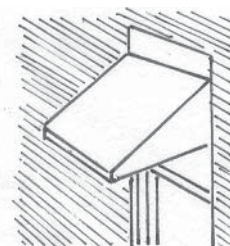
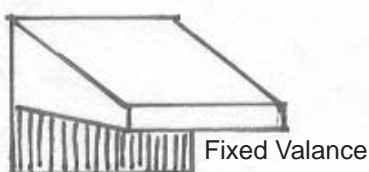
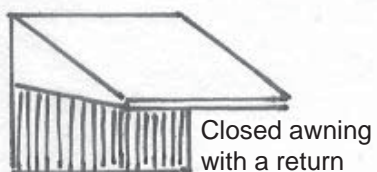
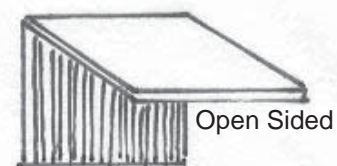
Awnings

The use of awnings for a storefront not only provide practical benefits for a building façade, but can also dramatically animate the streetscape itself. An awning is a clever way to extend a building façade into the street, claiming that part of the sidewalk that it covers as it's own, demanding attention from the passing customer. Awnings provide shade for both the interior of the building, as well as to passing pedestrians. They also provide shelter from the rain and snow for the visitor entering the building. In some instances, they can provide an alternative 'canvas' for signage.

Design Considerations:

- Choose an appropriate form of awning to suite the window and door arrangement. Awnings can accentuate the entrance door, or can span a full building façade.
- Traditional canvas awnings are retractable, can span over a sidewalk, and are available in a variety of historical colours and patterns. Remote control devices are available to ease extension and retraction.
- Fixed canvas awnings are usually steep to shed snow, and therefore do not extend far over the sidewalk environment. However, the height of this type of awning can further enhance an otherwise bare building face.
- In all instances, consider the durability of the fabric in regards to weathering. Fading and mould resistant fabrics are preferred.
- Choose a colour(s) in keeping with the colour scheme for the building, and in keeping with the historical theme of the town in general.
- Retractable awnings also present an opportunity for an alternative option for signage.
- An awning should not cover important architectural detailing.
- Awnings should respond to the overall configuration of the building façade.

Awning Types



Fixed awning with signage



Traditional Roll Out Awnings - multi-coloured, above display windows; creates inviting atmosphere and accentuates entrance.



A corner flower store highlights windows and doors with permanent awnings. Note decorative cornice/frieze, lower window boxes and simple yet effective sign band (wave valance) on awnings.



Simplistic awnings with signage and lighting provide uniform storefront appearance. Larger awning emphasis store entrance.

Signage

Traditionally, signs were smaller, mounted on a decorative arm perpendicular to the storefront and oriented to the pedestrian. Signs have become bigger, bolder, and louder with the advancement of the passing vehicle. Now signs fabricated from Plexiglas, are back lit, not integrated into the architecture of the building and have little appeal to a consistent theme. Advertising is not limited to just a sign - specials are painted or taped on windows, and removable sandwich board signs are displayed on the sidewalk in front of stores encumbering pedestrian movement. Not only do these displays contribute to a cluttered and confusing storefront, they obstruct views into and out of a store and compromise personal and store safety.

Design Considerations:

- Historically, store signs were painted on a wood base, or made of raised wood or ceramic letters mounted on a wood base. Keep the type face clear and easy to read.
- Painted plastic letters and moulded polyurethane signs are currently available, which keep historical themes relevant, while lessening maintenance issues.
- The colour scheme of the sign could support the overall colour scheme of the building, or vice versa. By doing this, the building itself extends the advertising efforts of the sign itself.
- Studies show that a passerby can effectively read seven words on a sign and do so in under 4 seconds. Primary signs should advertise the name of the business and the primary goods or services offered. Target a specific audience
- In general, the number of signs should be kept to a minimum. Too many signs can detract from the original message.
- Signs should be integrated into the fabric of the building façade design.
- All signs must comply with the Township's Signage By-Law.



Extruded letters painted gold. Note retracted awning and decorative store cornice.



Custom decorative metal arm with hanging sign easily read by pedestrians. Note continuity down street.



Signage directly on a fixed awning.



Sign board with profile accent and stainless steel block lettering provides contemporary sign option.



Hanging sign easily read by pedestrians while the sign board on the building addresses vehicular traffic.

Shutters

Shutters, although no longer used for their original use of protecting widows, can add visual interest to a building façade. If painted in a contrasting colour to match other trim, shutters can animate a façade that might otherwise be considered stark, boring, and uninteresting. Typical styles include, Louver, Panel, Board & Batten and Combination Shutters.

Traditional wood shutters demand a higher level of maintenance, and should be painted with a high quality paint to ensure less frequent touch ups. PVC or plastic shutters, while less costly and easier to maintain, have limited colour options, and are often available in standard sizes only. However they can be painted with the appropriate paint.

Design Considerations:

- The width of the shutter should be in keeping with the width of the window. The total size of both shutters should be the size of the inside of the window frame.
- Shutters should be mounted on the inside edge of the window frame to give the appearance that they can be closed. Use hinges if possible, even if shutters are not meant to be closed.
- Use the right shape. For example, for arched windows use arched shutters.
- Shutters should be traditional/historic in style (in keeping with the style of the building) and made out of wood or vinyl. They should also be coloured in the same colour as other trim.



Coloured wooden shutters matching base colour of building with concrete keystone



Wood shutters with curved top with decorative finishes.



Proportioned shutters on upper and lower windows.



Coloured wooden shutters with concrete keystone



Contrasting black wooden louver style shutters with curved top provide a good fit for the window.



Wood shutters proportionate to the windows maintain historical character of the building

Lighting

Lighting found on storefronts is for safety purposes as well as to highlight signage. Unfortunately, the invention of the backlit Plexiglas sign has undermined many façade improvement projects - lighting, sign and complete design flexibility for graphic work in one easy to install unit is more appealing than having to consider and maintain each component separately. However, public opinion in regard to historic/destination areas show a preference for the more tactile composition of separate signage and lighting on façades.

Design Considerations:

- The primary goal of a light fixture is to be a source for highlighting a specific detail, signage or space on the building façade.
- Lighting should complement a building and should be appropriate to a building's architectural style.
- Lighting of front door areas can be accomplished in two ways. Wall mounted fixtures with a "Traditional Heritage" theme (lantern style) can flank a doorway or storefront. A ceiling mounted fixture for a recessed doorway could take on one of either two forms - a hanging lantern style or a less decorative fixture such as a recessed ceiling fixture.
- Highlighting signage can be accomplished decoratively with attractive 'Gooseneck' lighting. Modern versions of the 'Gooseneck' are available that are less decorative, but maintain the integrity of selective signage and historical theming.
- Simple, unobtrusive spot lights can also highlight signage that might otherwise not be able to be lit.
- Modern light fixtures with traditional styling come with up-to-date technologies that include 'dark sky' compliance and shadow guards.
- Avoid pulsating or flashing lights as well as poorly directed light to the street which will cause distraction for the motorist and inappropriate glare towards neighbouring buildings or pedestrians.



Traditional gooseneck lighting painted to match building colour scheme.



Ornamental arm holds a small subtle light



Traditional lantern flanks doorway.



Small spotlights highlight sign. Note decorative sign board and block metal letters



Traditional 'yard' style light with modern updates such as dark sky compliance rating and light shields



Decorative gooseneck lighting in black



Multiple lights in a row illuminate sign.

Building Material

Brick and stone masonry facades encompass a large majority of the buildings in the Township's core areas. Such facades contain a great deal of historical detailing and are typically comprised of local materials making them iconic components of the downtown. It is necessary to consider building materials in all façade treatments in order to help protect the architectural integrity and history of the communities.

Design Considerations:

- Although brick and stone are exceptionally durable materials they still require maintenance. Typically, regular maintenance is deferred until severe deterioration has occurred.
- A common solution is cladding over masonry with vinyl or aluminium siding. Less expensive cladding materials often do not protect the original substrate from continued deterioration as thought and the installation further damages original masonry. However, this is not to say cladding cannot be done well by qualified contractors.
- When original masonry is beyond the scope of restoration a quality, insulated alternative that will allow original detailing to be preserved or mimicked should be used.
- Alternative materials might include; an acrylic stucco system, which will allow the preservation of much of the original detailing.
- Wood/carpentry design features in combination with desired paint colours provide an inviting addition to many facade compositions. Often many 'frame' buildings can contribute significantly to a downtown even amongst a predominance of brick and masonry facades.
- Tiles, opaque and translucent glass have become more commonly used in the past century. Enamelled metal, stainless steel, titanium, marble, granite and precast concrete have also been used successfully in facade treatments. The integration of new materials must be carefully designed into the traditional storefront to avoid conflict.



Historical architectural style along Main St. Mount Forest. Materials and detailing consistent across many building and important to maintain, protect and enhance when possible.



Wood detailing surrounding windows on ground floor create inviting street presence on historic stone building.



Regular maintenance allows original brick work to remain in good condition.



Deteriorating masonry treated, original architectural detailing remaining. Wood detailing and other facade elements added to enhance.



Cladding used in combination with awnings and other elements can create appealing facade treatment.

Seasonal Adornment

Often overlooked, decorative urns, pots, and hanging baskets provide an extra level of decor to a storefront that attract a potential shopper in a way that conveys hospitality as well as adding to 'street greening' opportunities. This small touch offers a welcoming feeling suggesting that this is a friendly place to shop. Window boxes, hanging planters and floor pots or urns can be planted with seasonal floral displays or support other decorative materials.

Design Considerations:

- Durability, creativity, and security are relevant factors when considering this type of adornment.
- Seasonal adornments need to be secured or be heavy enough to deter theft/vandalism.
- Hanging baskets need to be accessible for watering, but also need to be out of the way of passing pedestrians.
- Pots and planters can also be used during the winter with the creative use of dried plant materials, lights, and other ornamentation.
- Larger pots can be planted with evergreen plants if insulated (spray foam insulation, or cut up pieces of rigid foam insulation lining pots/boxes).
- Appropriate plant material in regards to sun or shade conditions should be considered.
- A business or building colour scheme can be accentuated with appropriate plant choices (flower/foilage colours).



Window box with winter interest



Large heavy decorative urns placed between windows.



Fixed Window Planters



Welcoming appearance of store convey's hospitality



Planters and hanging baskets soften this outdoor patio



Co-ordinated window boxes on upper levels and urns along street



Planters accent store entrance attracting potential clientele.

Sidewalk Retailing

Sidewalk retailing space accompanies space between the existing sidewalk right of way and building face. In some instances space is limited and opportunities are not available for sidewalk retailing. In cases where there is ample space, opportunities exist for sidewalk cafes or patio spaces and additional sidewalk retailing (sales displays).

Design Considerations:

- The existing sidewalk space and pedestrian thoroughfare should not be compromised in any way. In the case of sidewalk patios or food related activities, adequate setbacks should be provided to accommodate staff servicing so as not to spill out onto the public realm.
- Sidewalk retailing should be encouraged as this additional activity enlivens the overall ambiance of the streetscape.
- All private activity along the street should be considered temporary. All items should be removable, especially during the off seasons when snow clearing is an issue. All street fencing should also be removable.
- Any fencing should be kept low (approx. 1m) so that sight lines and security are not an issue.
- Overhead umbrellas should not encompass sidewalk space and should also not obstruct tree canopies. They should also be coordinated in colour and style.



A cafe takes advantage of minimal sidewalk space with a single row of tables.



A cafe on a sidestreet uses space on the streetside of the sidewalk. A low fence further satisfies safety concerns along street.



Low umbrellas



A low fence defines the cafe space and keeps street presence neat and tidy.



A temporary sidewalk bulb out is added to accommodate the restaurant patio space adding interest to the streetscape.



Outdoor display areas show off a stores wares.



A wide streetscape and street tree planting accommodates patio space by creating usable eddies.

Public Art

Public art is an important element of facade composition that is often overlooked. Banners and murals are the most common examples of public art that are often incorporated into buildings' facades. Obviously cooperation between private and public sectors is necessary (what is allowed and what is not) – the Township should provide guidance.

Design Considerations:

- Banners should be constructed of high quality, double-sided materials that will have a guaranteed longevity of at least 10 years
- Sizes, shapes and colours of banners may vary, however, the banners should be consistent throughout respective communities and reflect being part of the Township, drawing on each communities uniqueness.
- The bottom of the banner should not be installed lower than 2.5 meters from finished grade.
- Maintenance and replacement of faded and/or damaged banners.
- Murals should not be directly painted or applied on the facade of the building, rather the appropriate fastening of 'mural panels' to allow for ease of install and future maintenance is preferred.
- Highly visible yet no intrusion into sightlines.
- Minimize risk of vandalism, highly visible area or at a height from ground.
- Also consider murals beyond the typical 'heritage' theme - expressing an understanding of a communities 'present' and anticipating its 'future' is as important as appreciating its 'past.'



Colour

Traditionally, a palette of two or three contrasting colours were used during the Victorian period. The earth tones (e.g. light brown with dark brown trim) of the earlier period, were complemented with tertiary colours such as olive and terra cotta to enliven the otherwise simple and plain earthy scheme.

Design Considerations:

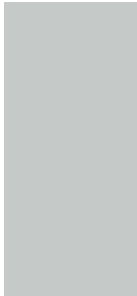






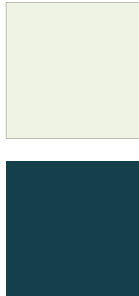
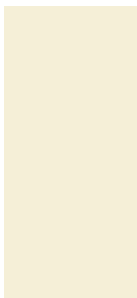

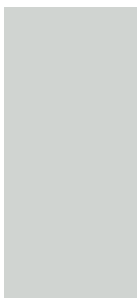
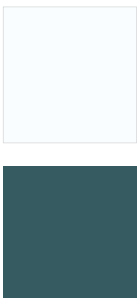






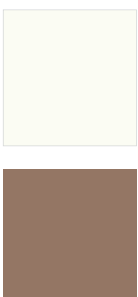


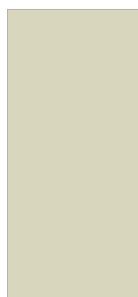
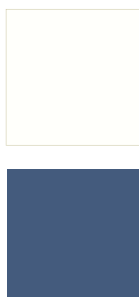

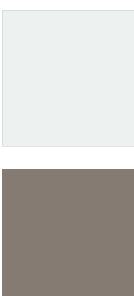

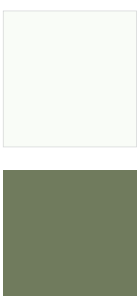
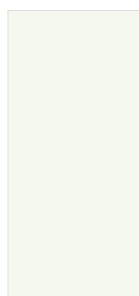

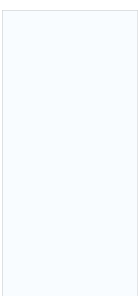

- Window trim, wooden cornice detailing, and moulding should be painted in a contrasting colour to the body of the building.
- Window awnings, shutters and siding colour choices should be coordinated and should be painted in an accent colour.
- A high quality paint should be used for overall durability.
- Signage could compliment building colour choices but need not be limited to them.

Palette Selection:

Wellington North's historical building stock consists mainly of yellow brick with some buildings using 'red' masonry. Colours best suiting the existing brick colours are found in a warm range. Informed by this, we suggest that two colours in warm earthy tones such as beige, cream, tan and brown form a base palette. The first base colour would be for the main painted area of the building. The second base colour would be used for trim work - windows, trim and wooden cornice detailing. A third accent colour would be used for doors or elements requiring highlighting - awnings, shutters, signage. Accent colours are tertiary colours such as olive or sage green, terra cotta, warm blue, gold, maroon etc.

The following colour selection is a suggested base from which to work upon to suit the township as a whole. It is not meant to inhibit or limit colour selection, but rather initiate a process for appropriate colour selection that will be supportive of the towns initiative. This palette is from the CIL Exterior Collection - Historic Colours; ost of these colours can be matched/offered by several other quality paint manufacturers.

• Note: Colour representation may not be exactly as manufactured. Verify with local paint supplier.

		Icon Grey 00NN 31/00 DL51M			Spanish Moss 70YY 06/088 DL47 A			Sunshine Coast 40YY 67/196 SE18 W			China White 45YY 74/073 CP46 W
Veil 00NN 53/000 DL51 W	Classic Burgundy 09YR 05/305 DL07 A		Arcadia House 50YY 43/103 DL47 W	Sea Level 50GY 32/046 DL48 M		Palm Springs Tan 20YY 39/130 SE45 M	Thomas Point Light 30YY 39/225 SE19 M		Night Sky 90BG 25/079 CP49 N	Krirmson Lake 90BG 08/075 CP49 A	
		Manuscript 40YY 60/103 MC45 W			Romance 10BB 83/020 SE50 W			White Pearl 44YY 70/110 MC45 W			Eloquent Ivory 45YY 75/110 SE20 W
Macadamia White 30YY 75/145 MC18 W	Black Sable 90BG 10/067 MC50 A		Fine Silver 30BB 62/004 SE51 W	SE29 A		Camelcoat 20YY 43/200 MC 44 M	Salsa 10YR 14/348 MC07 A		Naturally Calm 10YY 44/215 SE14 M	Whetstone 30GY 27/036 SE49 M	
		Ivory Coast 40YY 64/105 SE19 W			Cuddle 80YR 83/026 MC42 W			Tuscan Hillside 50YY 30/192 SE20 A			Song Porcelain 00NN 83/000 SE44 W
Dusty Countryside 30YY 23/246 SE18 A	Cordovan 50YR 15/243 SE09 A		Council Bluff 90YR 43/101 MC42 W	Sweetwood 90YR 26/147 MC42 M		Autumn Haze 45YY 67/120 SE20 W	Country Store 10YY 26/321 SE15 A		Water Chestnut 30YY 62/127 SE46 W	Soaring Eagle 10BB 15/154 SE32 A	
		Pelican 30YY 72/018 CP47 W			Natural White 50YY 83/029 MC46 W			Drum Beat 00YR 08/409 DL05 A			Fossil Grey 30YY 56/060 DL46 W
Burmese Beige 40YY 51/084 CP46 W	Grey Mountain 40YY 25/074 CP47 M		Distant Mountain 70YY 57/098 MC48 W	Palo Verde 70YY 26/137 MC48 A		Winter Bird 30YY 78/018 DL50 W	Dark Secret 00NN 05/000 DL41 A		Artesian White 20YY 83/025 DL46 W	Cocoa Mousse 48YR 06/091 DL43 A	