

*Final Report of the
Downtown Historic District Study Committee*



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Final Report of the Downtown Historic District Study Committee

Part I. The Downtown Historic District Study Committee: Origin, Assignment, and Procedure.

The Downtown Historic District Study Committee was created by City Council on September 4, 1979. When a city council considers an area to have historic value worthy of protection, under Michigan law they may appoint a study committee. The job of that committee is to identify what is historic and valuable enough for inclusion in a "historic district". The committee then brings its recommendation to the community and the Council for their approval.

After a historic district is adopted, the local Historic District Commission has a role in the approval process for building permits in the area. In Ann Arbor's downtown this would mean that plans for construction, alteration, or demolition affecting the exterior of buildings in designated areas would be submitted to the Historic District Commission for their approval. Clear and consistent guidelines would be followed in their review.

While the membership of the Study Committee has evolved through nine years of service, it has always included the currently appointed Historic District Commissioners plus downtown property owners, downtown residents, business people, and other citizens concerned about the way our downtown looks and feels and functions. The current members, whose names follow, are glad to present the results of the committee's long study at this time when widespread interest is focused on planning for the future of the downtown. Members of the committee are:

Peter Allen	David Evans
Patricia Austin	Mary Jo Gord
Johanna Aztalos	Mary Hathaway, Chair
Cappy Bilakos	Jane Jensen
Rosemarion Blake	Alan Jones, Vice-chair
Peggy Ann Charpar	Barbara Nalli
David Copi	Richard Pasley
James D'Amour	Norman Tyler
George Dodd	Susan Wineberg

Recent years have been marked by unprecedented grass-roots attention to the choices before our town. In addition to this study committee, several other groups have been addressing similar questions from quite different perspectives. "What do we like about our downtown? How can we preserve its special character? How can we make it even better?" The various groups have been remarkably united in their conclusions. The Chamber of Commerce survey and report, the A3-2000 future process, and the Downtown Plan Steering Committee all have agreed that the attractiveness of Ann Arbor's downtown is most evident in those streets which are human-scaled and inviting to pedestrians: streets filled with interesting displays of goods, varied entertainments, services, and of course good places to eat and drink.

These "pedestrian streets" are also the streets where the older buildings are most intact, where the eye can enjoy a variety of architectural styles going back sixty, eighty, a hundred years and more. These are buildings that furnish the human scale, the enticing shop windows, the unique performance areas, the "character" that people identify with Ann Arbor.

The Downtown Plan recently approved by City Council explicitly recognizes the importance of these buildings. Discussing the pedestrian environment, the plan declares:

*What do we
like about
our downtown?*

“Image and Identity: The preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings will be encouraged to establish a positive image and marketable identity for downtown.”

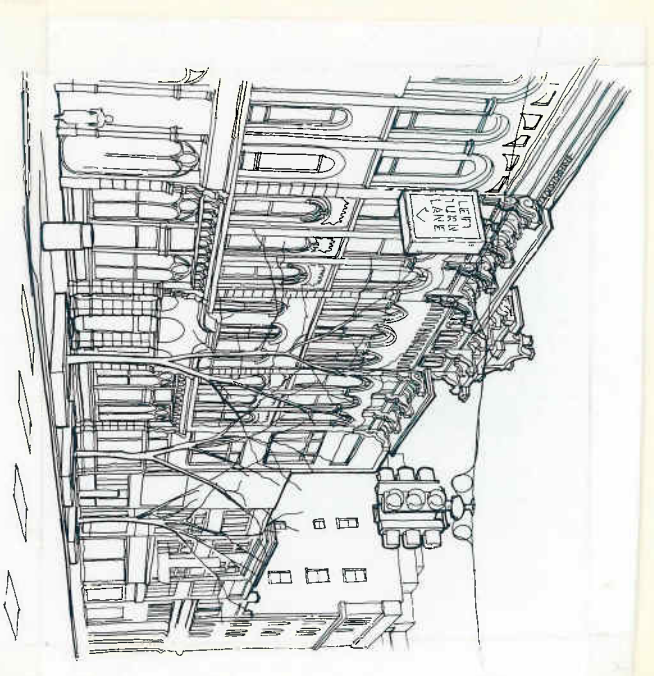
Again, under “Development Character”:

“Objective #3: Designate historic buildings, especially in Downtown’s retail areas, to encourage their preservation: encourage new development which reinforces these buildings’ contribution to downtown’s identity and pedestrian orientation.”

Our Council’s approval of this Downtown Plan has come at a time when cities throughout America are placing a new value on the historic qualities of their commercial centers. Time magazine in November, 1987, affirmed the growing appreciation of historic downtowns:

“...The nation has had a great change of heart. The change has been so complete that it is difficult today to remember how recently people were blithely ripping out and throwing away the warp and woof of America’s cities...”

“Walking along an old street among old buildings, the implicit history and sense of continuity are both reassuring and invigorating. The graceful proportions of facades are not arbitrary but the result of craft wisdom worked out over generations of trial and error. The scale of buildings and streets, based on human size and pedestrian stride, makes intuitive sense. Indeed, old sections of cities embody all sorts of folk and classical principles concerning residential density and building size and materials and zoning. In the very arrangements of alleys and building setbacks is a time-tested plan, a kind of urban genetic code.”



The Downtown Historic District Study Committee is fortunate to be completing its assignment at a time when Council, the public, and the nation at large are attentive and sympathetic to the value of historic streets and buildings.

The assignment received from Council in 1979 was to study the downtown and determine:

1. whether or not there should be a downtown historic district,
2. what boundaries such a district should have,
3. the significance of buildings to be included,
4. how that significance should be protected.

The committee chose for their study an area which falls entirely within the boundaries of the Downtown Development Authority west of the University of Michigan campus. The boundaries of the study area were:

on the east, Thayer Street;
on the south, William Street (both sides);
on the west, the Ann Arbor Railroad;
on the north, Kingsley Street.

Within this area the committee surveyed every structure in order to determine which buildings and blockscapes are the most significant in historic terms.

A number of the buildings in the study area are already listed on the Ann Arbor Register of Historic Places, either as individual structures or as part of historic districts (the Division Street, Liberty Street, Old West Side, and Old Fourth Ward Historic Districts). Some of these buildings will be mentioned in the following report because they are located within the boundaries of the new districts to be recommended. Others will not be mentioned, but this should not be construed as a reflection on their value as historic buildings. The proposed ordinance reaffirms and complements existing preservation ordinances in the downtown.

Part 2. Findings of the Study.

The historic commercial buildings of Ann Arbor's downtown are now clustered in three distinct areas. A significant remnant of the original residential matrix survives between and around these commercial areas.

For generations, the downtown commercial areas were two, centered respectively on Main Street and State Street. They developed at different times and in different ways. Their separate identities have been recognized by business proprietors, shoppers, and local planners. A city planning study done in 1975 identified them as "Conservation Areas" (along with the Kerrytown area whose commercial identity evolved more

recently) and this concept has endured. The Downtown Plan Steering Committee in its report published in April, 1987, recommended "encouraging preservation and rehabilitation of existing buildings and promoting compatible infill development in 'conservation' areas."

The Downtown Historic District Study Committee's examination of buildings and blockscapes confirms the existing trend in our city's planning policy. The committee found that the Main Street and State Street commercial areas are distinct not only physically but also historically, and their different histories have given each of them a special character. Furthermore, because they "bloomed" at different times, each presents a different architectural palette.

Due to extensive redevelopment of the courthouse area in the 1950's and 1960's, the historic Main Street commercial district now exists in two pieces, one on either side of Huron Street. Their physical separation is reinforced by the lack of a strong pedestrian link between them. The result is that they are now perceived as distinct commercial areas.

The committee concluded that its assignment—to identify the significant historical area of the downtown—requires the designation not of one, or even two, but of three separate commercial districts.

The committee further recognized that the surviving residential-style buildings in the downtown have their own historic significance. Some of them are architecturally unique in the city. Because they are the original setting for the commercial districts, their preservation in certain highly visible locations is essential for interpreting the historic development of the downtown.

Historically

*distinct
commercial
areas*



Part 3. A General History of the Downtown.

The first businesses in Ann Arbor were established in the 1820's, soon after the townsite was established by John Allen and Elisha Walker Rumsey. The central business district began to develop along Main Street and around the county courthouse square. By 1838 Ann Arbor could boast, "...a court-house, a jail, a bank, two banking associations, four churches, one each of Presbyterian, Baptist, Episcopal and Universalist, two printing presses which issue two weekly newspapers, a bookstore, two druggists, a flouring mill with six run of stone, a sawmill, woolen factory, carding machine, iron foundry, and extensive plow manufactory, two tanneries, seventeen dry-goods stores, eleven lawyers and nine physicians..." Historic photographic views show that most of the early retail businesses occupied wood frame structures.

A post-Civil War building boom propelled a transformation of the downtown from a collection of insubstantial buildings into a stately array of "commercial palaces," a mode popular for retail business buildings since its introduction in New York in the 1840's (A.T. Stewart Store). Two- and three-story masonry structures with richly ornamented facades offered patrons an elegant atmosphere in which to browse—an atmosphere calculated to stimulate the acquisitive instinct. By 1878, when a railroad link with Toledo was finally established, Ann Arbor had become one of the most thriving business centers west of Detroit.

In 1886 the Business Men's Association of the City of Ann Arbor was founded to advance the interests of Ann Arbor's business community in a formal way. This organization was succeeded in 1907 by the Chamber of Commerce which in turn was succeeded by the Ann Arbor Civic Improvement Association in 1913. The Civic Improvement Association described the advantages offered by Ann Arbor to the person engaged in business in a little publication entitled, *Ann Arbor, A Quiet Spot in Touch with the World*.

Accordingly, the committee recommends the designation of two districts comprised of residential structures which are significant for their age and architecture and for their contribution to the historic context of the downtown.

- Five
historic
districts
- The five recommended historic districts will be referred to as follows:
- Main Street Historic District
 - Fourth Avenue/Ann Street Historic District
 - State Street Historic District
 - East William Street Historic District
 - East Liberty Historic Block

Changes to the exteriors of buildings within these districts would require the prior review and approval of the Historic District Commission.

“Ann Arbor is located, as we have seen, in a beautiful, healthful region accessible to the large centers of life, and to the resort country about the Great Lakes; it has become one of the great educational centers of the west, offering opportunities for culture not only to the student but to the man or woman engaged in active business or devoted to leisure, and besides its educational and religious opportunities, it is a recreation center of a sane and wholesome sort. But this is not all. The very conditions already discussed make it not only possible but inevitable that there should be here as a solid basis for living, a steady, substantial business which not only provides for the needs of such a community but takes advantage of the stimulus afforded by the presence of the student body. Reckoned even in dollars and cents, the University means much to Ann Arbor. The housing and feeding of six thousand students as well as the provision for their other needs means a decided stimulus to the business of the town. The thousands of visitors who come to the commencements and reunions and May festivals are all added gain. It has been estimated that not less than \$5,000,000 is spent in Ann Arbor every year by the students and their visitors and by the University.”

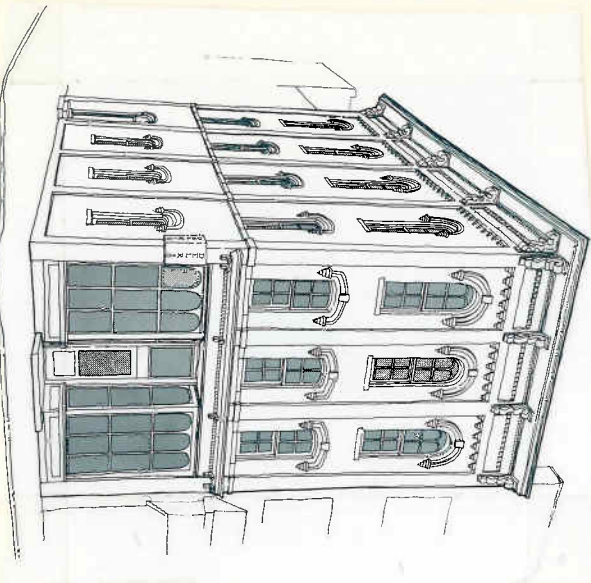
This recognition of the importance of the University to the business life of Ann Arbor was evidenced in an acceleration of business development along State Street during the second decade of the century. In August of 1916 the *Daily Times News* reported numerous changes along State Street, so many, in fact, that the reporter doubted that returning students would recognize the area. One particularly impressive addition was the Nickel's Arcade, a unique type of commercial development in Ann Arbor.

Accompanying business development in the State Street area

was an effort to create a commercial corridor along Liberty Street that would function as a link between Main and State streets. While the residential character of the neighborhood lying between the two districts was never entirely erased, significant commercial developments did occur along East Liberty in the 'teens and 1920's and 1930's. The Zwerdling Block, the Darling Block and the Michigan Theater evidence this era of development in the city's business history.

Part 4. Architectural Styles in the Downtown.

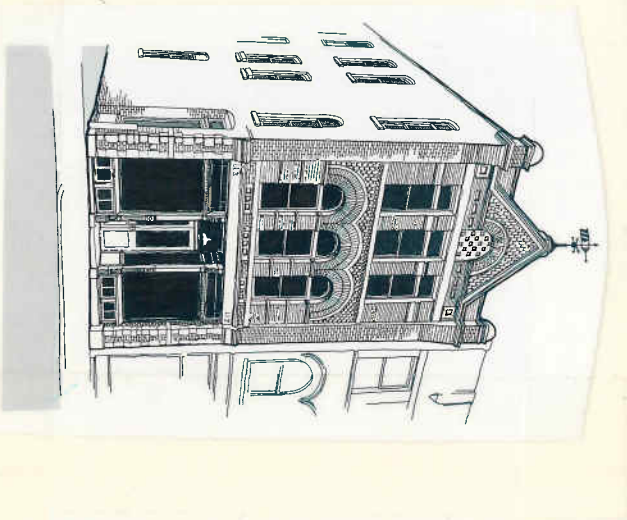
Ann Arbor's downtown contains commercial buildings ranging in stylistic character from Italianate designs of the 1860's -1890's, to late nineteenth/ early twentieth-century Queen Anne and Romanesque revival designs, early twentieth-century classical revival and brick commercial designs and 1920's and 1930's applications of Art Deco, Art Moderne and historic modes.



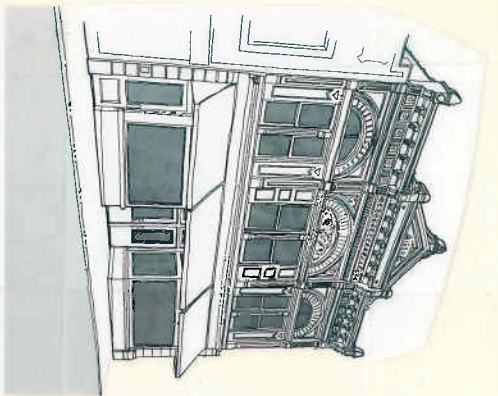
Wagner/Schneider
Building
1869

The **Italianate** style calls into play rich ornamental treatments for regular, multi-story commercial structures. The most popular type used Italian Renaissance-inspired detailing, either Tuscan (wall and decorated windows) or north Italian (multi-story arches). Examples of Italianate buildings in the Downtown Historic Districts include 112-122 West Liberty (Schaeberle Block), 122 West Washington (Wagner/Schneider Building, currently the Del Rio), 208-212 South Main, and 109-119 East Ann.

In the later nineteenth century, **Romanesque Revival** and **Queen Anne** detailing began to supplant Italianate among commercial structures. The Romanesque appears at 113 West Liberty (the Haarer Building) and 219-223 North Main (the Pardon Block). An example of the Queen Anne style is the turreted building at 201 East Washington. Another fine example is the Weimann Block (221 E. Washington), with its unusual and richly detailed pressed metal facade.



Haarer Building
1888



Weimann Block
1892

Characteristics of each of these modes also became the basis for early twentieth-century commercial designs. Romanesque arches (or straight-headed window units with wide lintels) began to be used to organize commercial facades into a series of broad window bays using a minimum of extraneous ornament (e.g., 205-211 E. Washington, and 120 E. Liberty, the former Pretzel Bell). Queen Anne patterned and panelled brickwork, segmental arches and classicizing features were used to create commercial facades with crisp, but simple, detailing. Combinations of these features became the characteristic early twentieth-century commercial brick mode, especially for buildings of small scale (e.g., 213 S. Main).

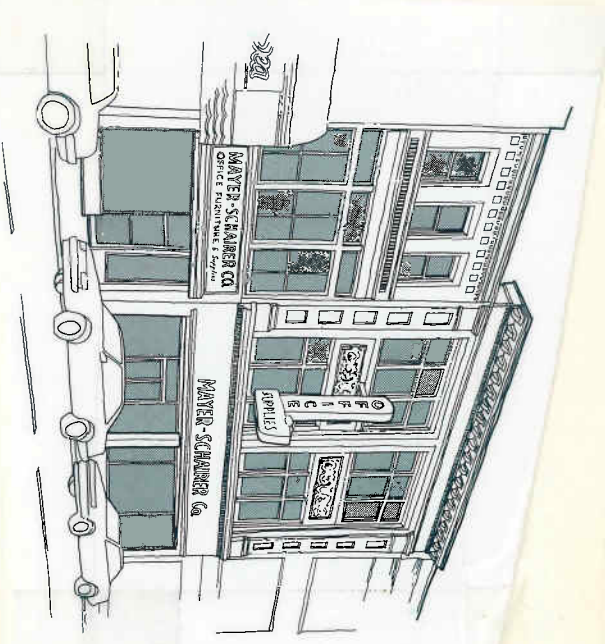
The late nineteenth/early twentieth century witnessed another significant change in fashion for commercial architecture. **Classical Revival** designs began to appear in Ann Arbor, probably in response to the grand image of a “White City” promoted by the Chicago World’s Fair of 1893 and subsequent fairs in St. Louis and San Francisco. The classical revival mode not only provided a rich design vocabulary, but also was perceived to carry a civic connotation. This was particularly true of the ornamented classical-revival form known as “Beaux Arts.” Thus, the YMCA at 110 N. Fourth Avenue and, later,

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the United States Post Office building at 220 N. Main, could be expected to use the Beaux Arts mode because they both served civic functions. By adopting this mode for commercial structures, as at the Glazier building (100 S. Main) and the Nickel's Arcade (326-330 S. State), a similar image of public service was projected.

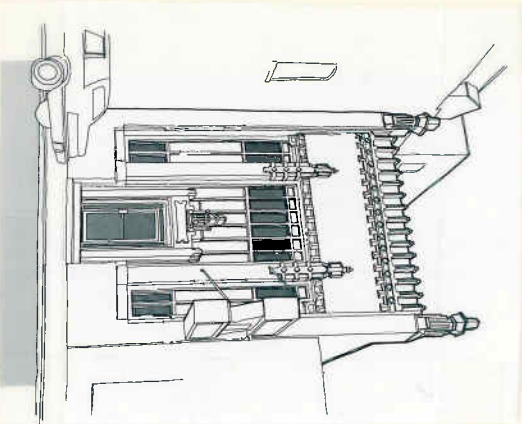
As a result of commercial work done in Boston and Chicago by H.H. Richardson, the **Romanesque Revival** idiom became recognized as one possessing considerable design flexibility. As the work of Chicago School architects stimulated a taste for broader forms and less ornamented surfaces, the legacy of **Queen Anne** brickwork and bold, plain effect of Romanesque designs began to supply designers with a mine of ideas for a new **Twentieth-century commercial** mode. For example, the Schwaben Verein building at 215 South Ashley exhibits the combination of ribbon windows taken from the modern Chicago School, with the brick style inherited from Queen Anne. Details from the Classical Revival style also found their way into the emerging new mode. For example, the Mayer Schairer Building (112 S. Main) combines ribbon windows from the Chicago School with an Italianate cornice and a touch of Classical frieze.

In the 1920's and 1930's the futuristic vision that was being nurtured by the new age of automobiles helped to shape new construction in Ann Arbor's business center. Most of the "modernistic" work of this period in Ann Arbor, however, acknowledged the traditions of the past even as new visual effects were sought. The First National Bank building at 201-205 S. Main evidenced the growing interest in large-scale development of this period, as did the Ypsi-Ann building at 202 East Washington (now Washington Square). In both of these buildings historicism enjoyed a great influence on the Art Deco design, but in a manner considered legitimately "modern" at the time. The former Tribune building at 206 E.



20th Century architectural styles
Mayer Schairer Building
c. 1907

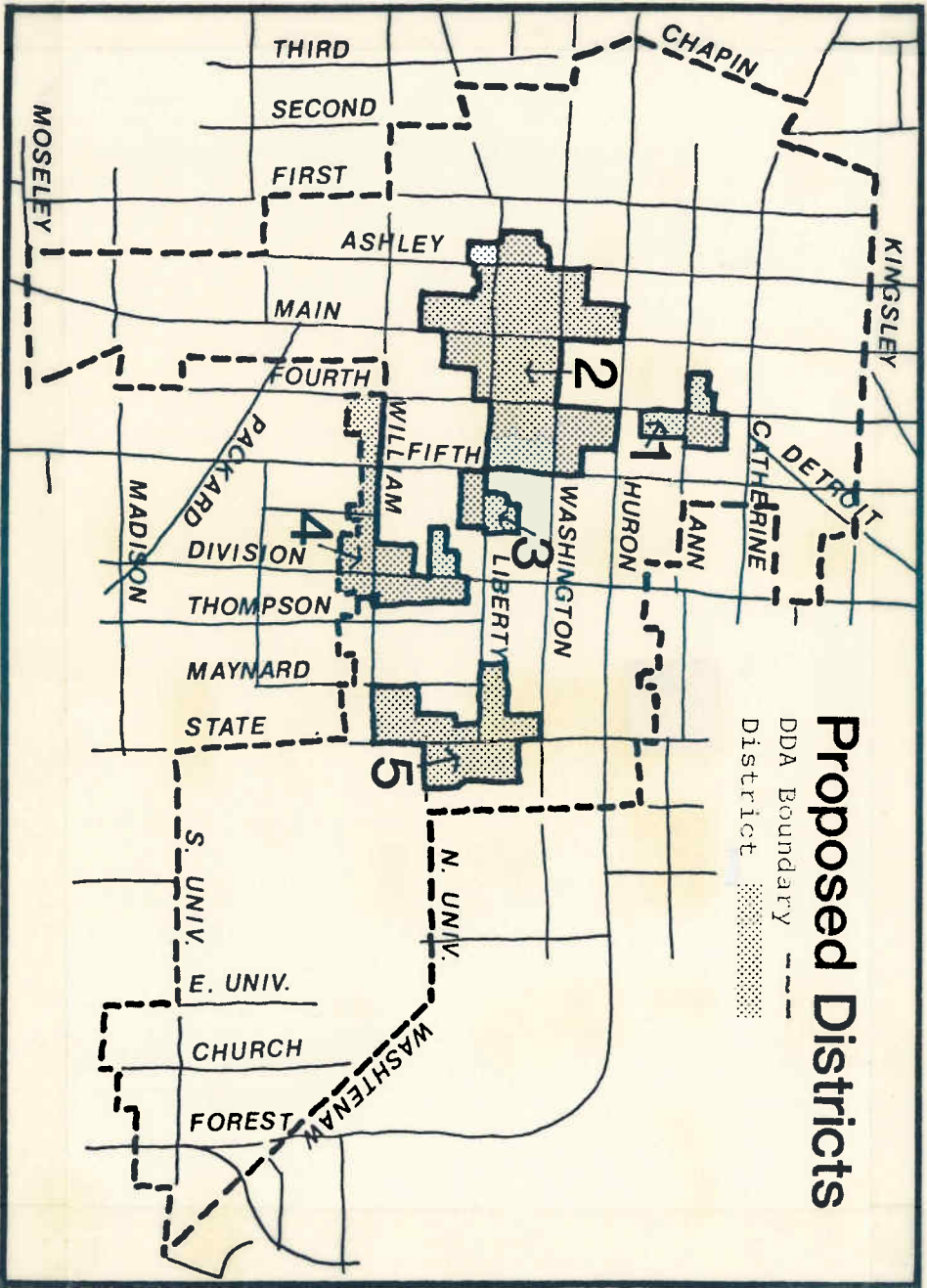
Huron, and the former Kresge's at 317 S. State, are more boldly contemporary in the Art Deco style. The facade of the Land Title Building (106 N. Fourth Ave.) represents the overscaled, stylized decorative elements typical of the style.



Land Title Building
Facade, 1927

All of these styles of commercial architecture had their counterparts in domestic architecture. The older styles are represented by houses in the areas recommended for historic designation. Elements of the Italianate will be recognized in the Joseph T. Jacobs House which now is the Muehlig Funeral Home. Across the street at 402 S. Fourth Avenue is the Ottmar Ebertsch house, an outstanding example of Queen Anne style in domestic architecture. This style remained popular for many decades and was adapted for more modest homes, examples of which can be seen along William Street, Division Street, and East Liberty in the proposed historic districts. The house which now is home to the Raja Rani is an example of the French Empire style, rare in Ann Arbor.

An Appendix to this report contains photographs of all buildings proposed for historic designation, with historic and architectural notes.



Map of
 5 Historic
 Districts
 within DDA
 boundaries

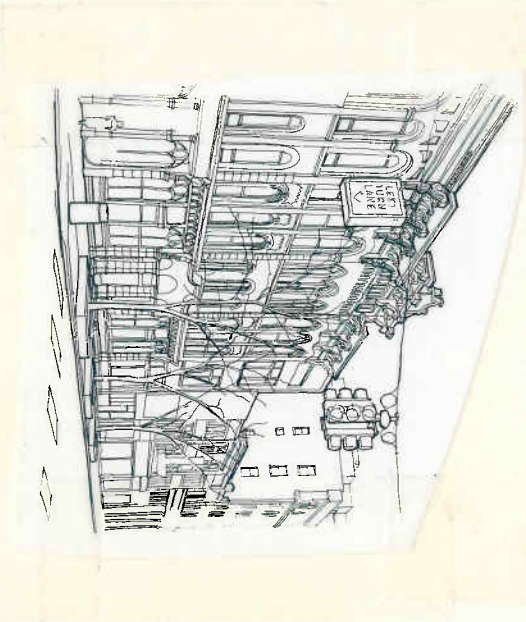
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Part 5. The Downtown Historic Districts.

Following is a brief historical and architectural introduction to each of the proposed Downtown Historic Districts.

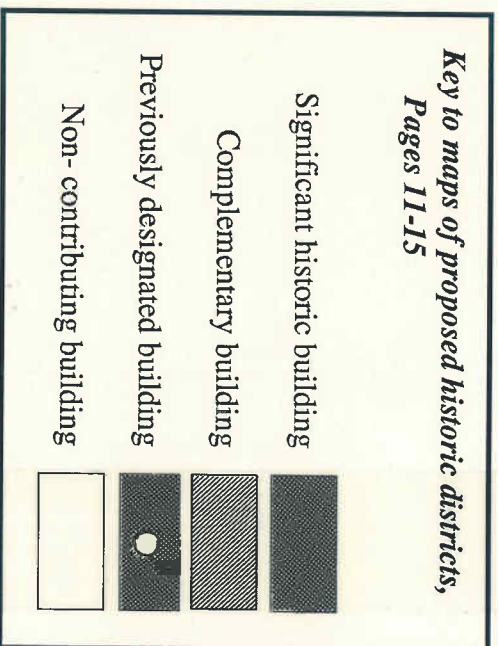
Main Street Historic District

Like Main Streets throughout America, Ann Arbor's Main Street experienced a construction boom in the post-Civil-War years (1864-1874) and again, after a nationwide recession, in the 1880's. Buildings from both these eras give the Main Street Historic District an architectural character distinct from that of commercial centers whose development began later. Some of the best examples—already protected by the Ann Arbor Register of historic places—serve as prime supports of the proposed district: the Goodyear and Muehlig buildings (1860's), the Del Rio (1869), the Germania Hotel (1885), and the cluster of buildings on West Liberty including the Art Association (1870's to 1893).

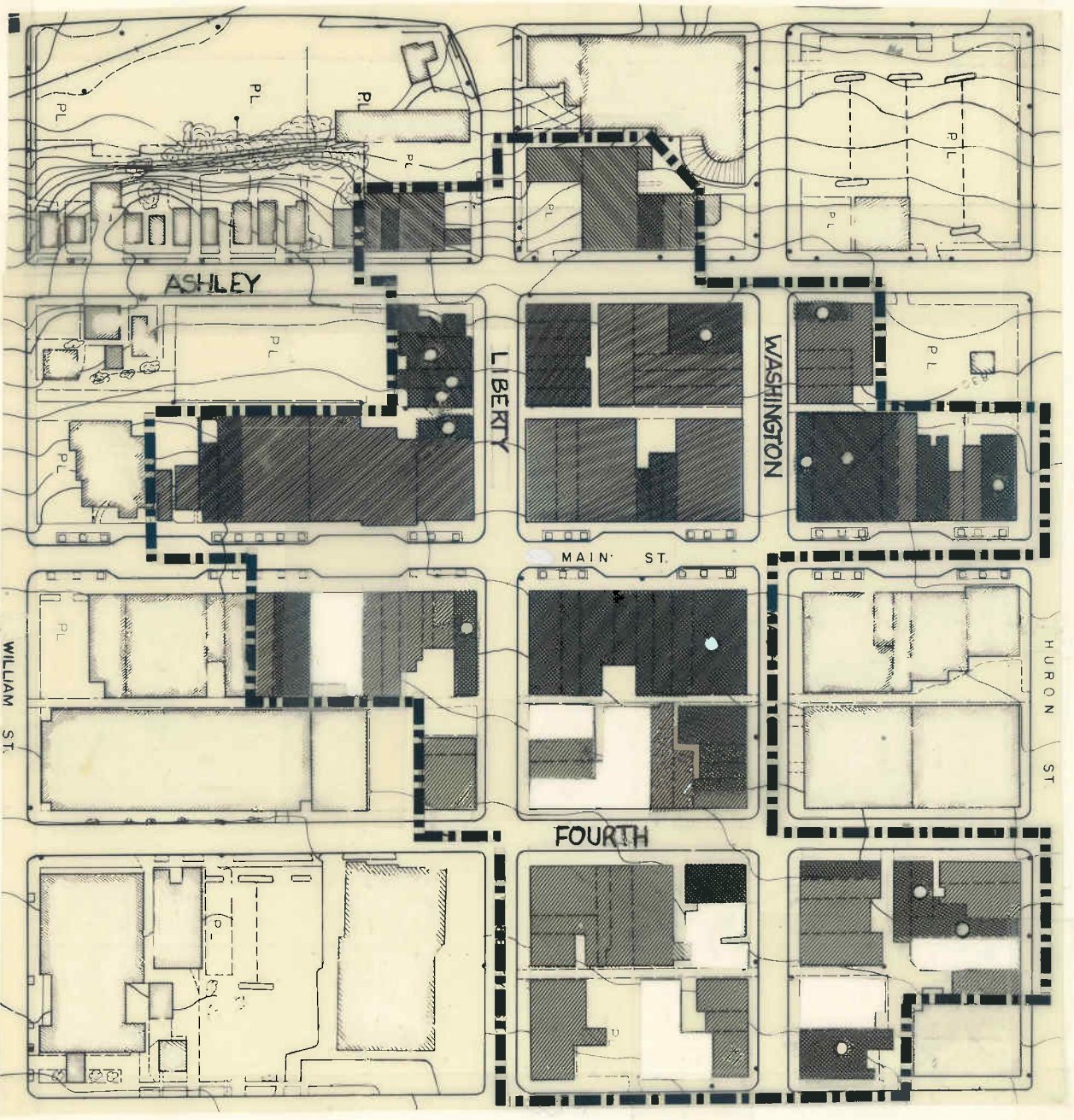


The district does include many examples of later architectural styles: simple brick facades with bigger, wider rectangular windows, which became popular at the turn of the century, and distinguished examples of tapestry brick and terra cotta ornamentation which flourished later. Again, outstanding examples have already been protected by the Register and contribute a special dignity to the proposed district: these are the classic revival—or Beaux Arts—Glazier Building (1908), and the Art Deco First National Building (1929). Other Art Deco buildings in this district include the Ypsi-Ann Building (1928—now Washington Square), the former Tribune building on Huron Street (1931) and the former Cunningham's at Main and Liberty (1939). There is also one diner (1948). However, the Main Street District's identifying and dominant style is set by the Italianate commercial buildings of 1864-1890: these are characterized by ground-level storefronts with glass enclosed displays, two upper stories with narrow windows, a cornice on top.

Key to maps of proposed historic districts, Pages 11-15



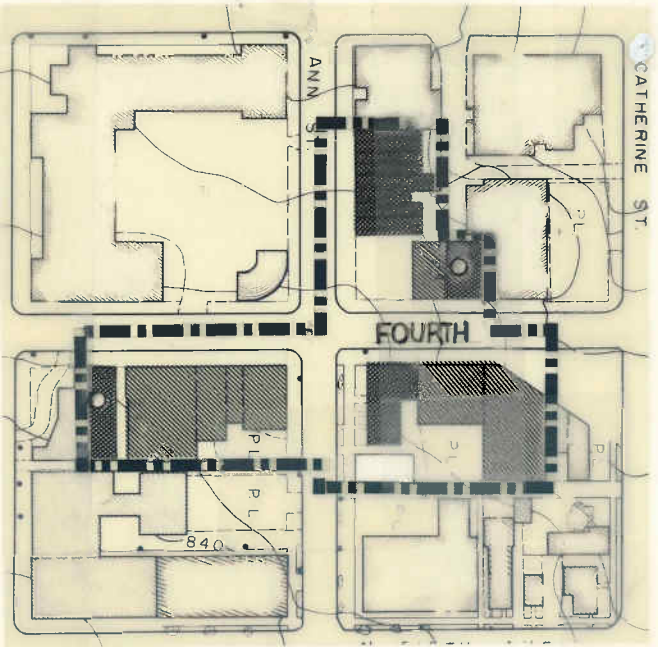
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Main Street
Historic
District

14

Fourth/Ann Historic District



Like the Main Street District with which it was once connected, this district includes fine examples (at 109-119 East Ann Street) of Italianate commercial buildings. In the 1870's and 1880's such buildings faced the old courthouse from three sides; these are the only ones that survive.

A much older and very significant building in the Fourth/Ann District is the 1836 Chapin house (201 E. Ann). This structure originally housed the first bank in Ann Arbor, called the Bank of Washtenaw. It next became the residence of Volney Chapin, a spectacularly successful pioneer capitalist whose foundry (near Chapin Street) supplied plows and mill machinery to all of Michigan; he was also a leader in local government, in the University, and in St. Andrew's Church. His home on Ann Street was later expanded to harbor Joe Parker's saloon,

immortalized in the song, "I Want to Go Back To Michigan." Still later, this structure became Peter's Hotel.

Also noteworthy is the Black community's historic link to this district. Black Ann Arborites have very significant memories invested in the Kayser Block (209-211 N. Fourth), one of the earliest Black-owned commercial buildings, which was the first location of the Dunbar Center and in many ways served as a center of community life. The Kayser Block has already been protected by the Ann Arbor Register of Historic Places.

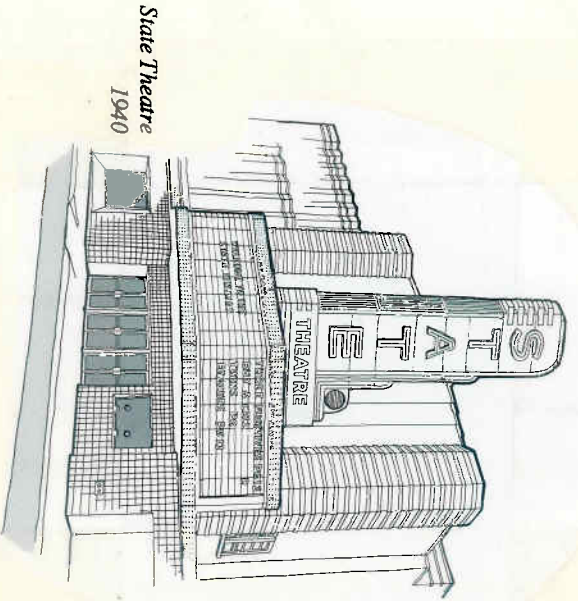
State Street Historic District

The State Street Historic District, by contrast, has only three or four surviving structures built before 1888: the Deke Shant on William Street, the Foster House of Art at 217 S. State (now enclosed in a newer commercial shell) and possibly the three-story buildings at 324 and 334-336 S. State. Not only is this a younger district than Main Street, the two sides of State Street also contrast nicely with each other: on the west are very late nineteenth-century buildings; facing them on the east, good twentieth-century buildings.

Ground level shop-fronts topped by one upper story are the rule, but apart from that the buildings are remarkably diverse. The modest scale and "anything goes" attitude set a very appropriate character for this student commercial and entertainment center.

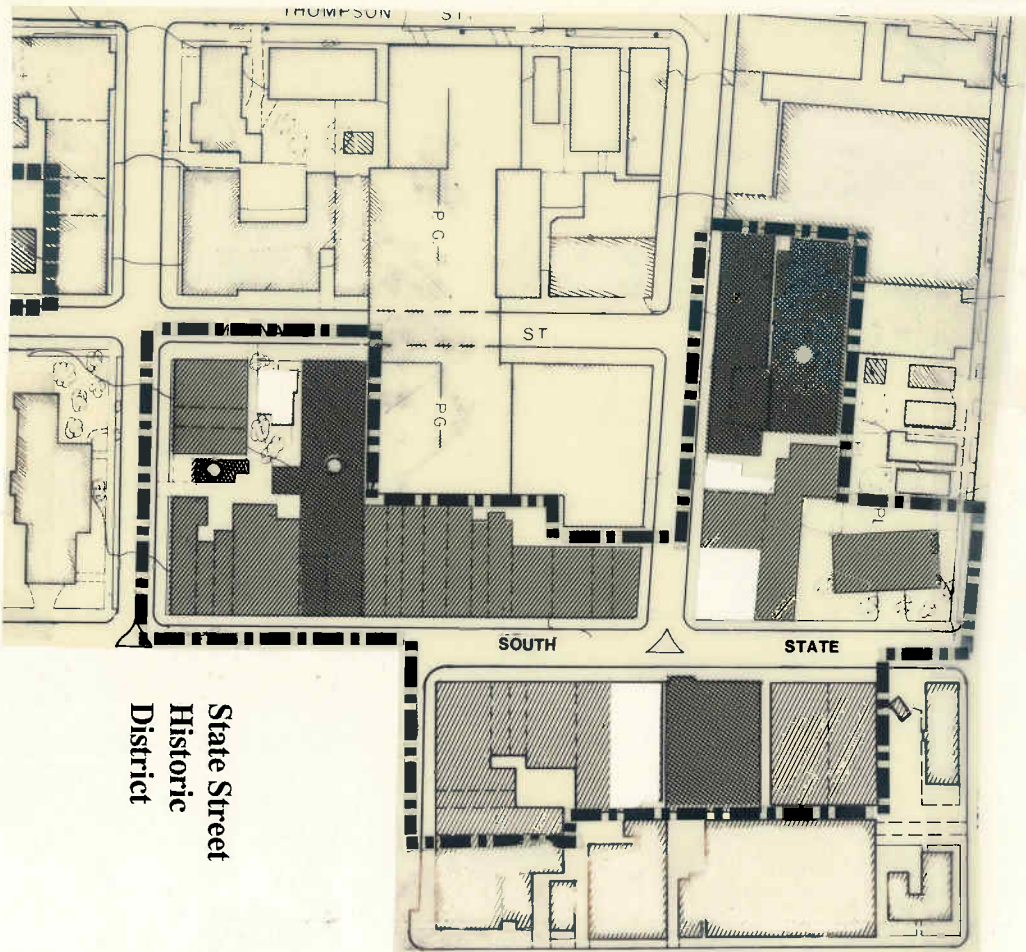
The district does have its complement of grand structures, however. As in the Main Street District, certain outstanding buildings have already been designated for preservation; these are the Nickels Arcade, the Michigan Theater, and the Deke Shant. They suggest the astonishing diversity and the unexpected surprises that characterize this district. Another special structure within the borders of this district is the art-deco State Theater.

15-15



State Theatre
1940

The State Street Historic District is remarkable for the fact that its historic fabric has survived almost whole. The roof lines and facades visible from the University campus are those which students have remembered for generations. Except for storefront alterations in the 1950's (reversible in most cases), many of these facades look very much as they did when they were built. Throughout its evolution, the State Street commercial area has retained a human scale which is especially worth preserving as foil to the much taller new buildings appearing on its perimeters.

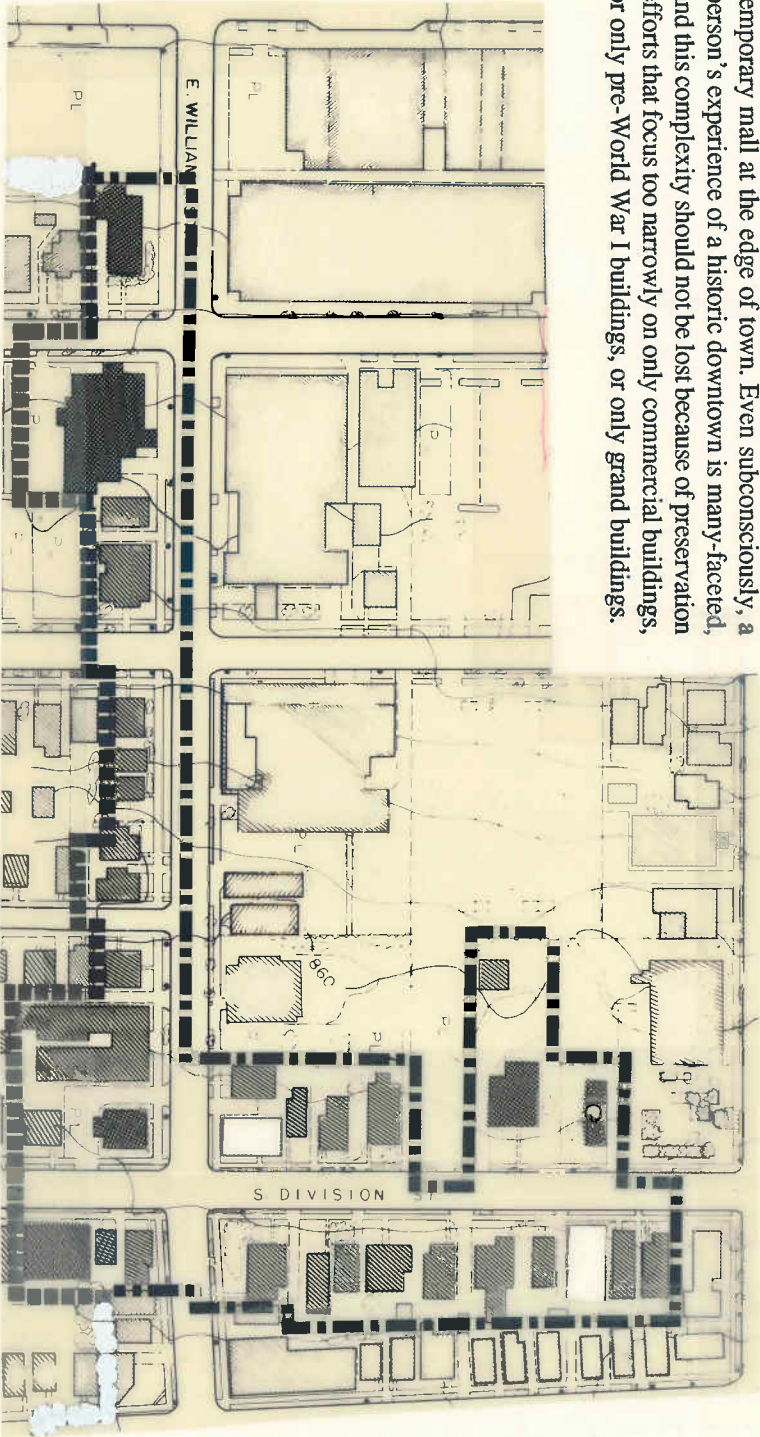


State Street
Historic
District

East William Street Historic District

The East William Street Historic District is comprised of houses both grand and modest built between roughly 1850 and 1914. It also contains a church of unusual distinction. Located on much-traveled routes (William St. and Division), these buildings are key visual reminders that one is in a town with a history. They provide a small but important remnant of the original context in which the historic commercial districts grew up, and thus help the observer to interpret the layers of subsequent development, both historic and modern. It will be noted that this experience is quite different from visiting a contemporary mall at the edge of town. Even subconsciously, a person's experience of a historic downtown is many-faceted, and this complexity should not be lost because of preservation efforts that focus too narrowly on only commercial buildings, or only pre-World War I buildings, or only grand buildings.

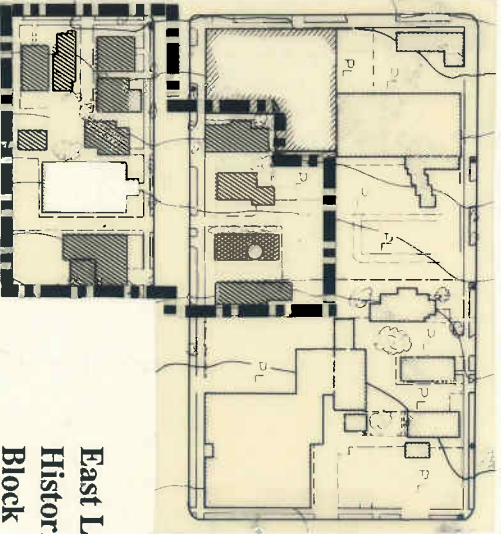
In the proposed East William Street Historic District, several of the houses are outstanding examples of Ann Arbor's historic architecture. The Kempf House (1856) has, of course, long been recognized as one of our crown jewels. It will be joined by, among others, the Ottmar Eberbach house (1875), the Joseph T. Jacobs House (1875), now the Muehlig Funeral Home, the A.L. Noble House (1883), and the home of architect and early pioneer Peleg Marshall (c. 1860), now the location of the Raja Rani restaurant. The 1913 Church of Christ Scientist (409 S. Division) was designed by well-known Chicago architect Spencer S. Beman.



East Liberty Historic Block

This cluster of houses, now a thriving center of commercial activity, has a special identity and serves a special purpose in the downtown. During the course of preparing this report, the Study Committee discovered that many Ann Arborites view this block as an attractive way-stop between State Street and Main. They prize its "human scale," its homey quality (most buildings have residents as well as shops), the diversity of roof-lines, the trees and small grass plots.

The committee came to recognize this block as a valuable link between the larger commercial historic districts. It draws pedestrians and affords to everyone (pedestrian or driver) a visual historic connection between the districts. Paradoxically, it also dramatizes the separation of the old commercial districts. It will interpret for future generations and future visitors a historic fact well known to our older citizens but now fading: that Ann Arbor once had a clear division between

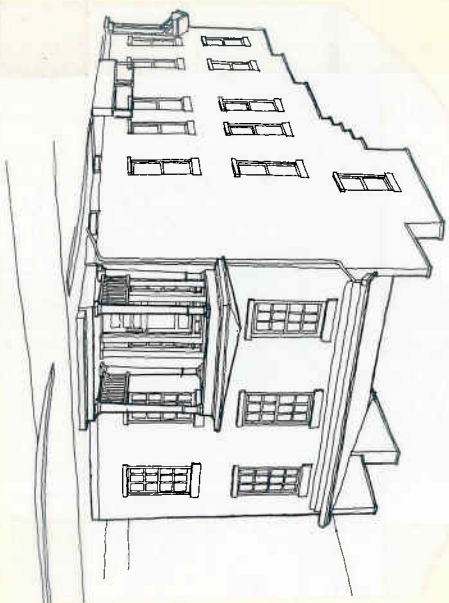


East Liberty
Historic
Block

"town" and "gown"—two almost self-contained communities on either side of Division Street, each with its own shopping area, neighborhoods, and aspirations. Twenty or fifty years from now, when the two old commercial districts have grown together, these houses will be an even more eloquent reminder of the past than they are today.

Valuable Historic Link

Two of the houses are very old: the Enoch James house (1847), and the Emmanuel Luick house (c. 1845). Around the corner on Fifth Avenue is the Jacob Schuh house built in 1866. The other houses date from either the later nineteenth century or the early twentieth century. They offer an interesting variety of gables and roof-lines, but their chief value is that they stand where they were built, furnishing a sense of age and historic identity in the midst of the newer and larger buildings springing up around them.



Enoch James
House
1847

Part 6. Categories of Buildings.

Within each district, buildings will be categorized according to historical and architectural importance.

Significant Historic Buildings.

These buildings contribute uniquely to the character of the district. In most cases, they retain a basic integrity of architectural design, materials, and workmanship. They include buildings of individual prominence, such as the State Theater, and also buildings whose great value is their membership in a block of similar age and style, such as the 200 block on the east side of Main Street. Some have a special value because of the people and events associated with them: the former Dunbar Center, for example. Some are so old that even their later additions—such as Joe Parker's Saloon—have earned a place in our heritage.

Complementary Buildings.

These buildings contribute to the overall historic character of the district by providing the essential, appropriate setting for the "significant" structures. While individually they are less outstanding than the higher level, they are consistent and harmonious in terms of age, materials, scale, mass, and the repetition of architectural details. In some cases the original facade has been obscured by a contemporary sheath but can be expected to contribute again to the historic texture of the district at some future time.

Non-contributing Buildings.

These buildings do not add to the historic character of the district. Some of them are admirable buildings but simply too new to have claimed a place in history. Some are old buildings whose historic qualities have been completely lost through alterations. Some are neither new nor very old; however, they

have been inserted into an older streetscape without care for the existing pattern, scale or mass. "Non-contributing" means simply that a building does not add historic values to the district, however useful the structure may be in other ways. In some locations the Committee felt that a contemporary replacement, if designed carefully to be compatible with its historic neighbors, could contribute more positively to the district.

Part 7. Standards and Guidelines for changes to buildings in the downtown historic districts.

The preservation of existing original historic components is strongly encouraged on all historic buildings, both significant and complementary, in the downtown historic districts. Historic architectural details help to define the city's identity, its own unique character.

Changes made to historic buildings should respect their original design and materials. New components should be compatible with remaining historic components as well as with neighboring historic structures.

Application of Guidelines to Significant and Complementary Historic Structures

While all historic buildings in the proposed downtown historic districts fall under the same provisions of the Historic District Ordinance, a presumption is made that there will be more allowance for changes proposed to buildings designated as Complementary than to those designated as Significant historic structures.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines

When a rehabilitation project is proposed for a historic building in one of the districts, proposed changes will be reviewed by the Historic District Commission, with their determination based on the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards/Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (Revised 1983). These standards have been developed as the "state of the art" guidelines for good preservation and rehabilitation. The Standards for Rehabilitation are as follows:

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.
2. The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
3. All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
4. Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
5. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.
6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.
7. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.
8. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by, or adjacent to any project.
9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.
10. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

Federal Guidelines

Note: Owners of historic buildings who plan to apply for federal tax credits for rehabilitation work will be subject to additional review at the state and federal levels, and are advised to contact the Bureau of History in Lansing before beginning work.

Design Guidelines

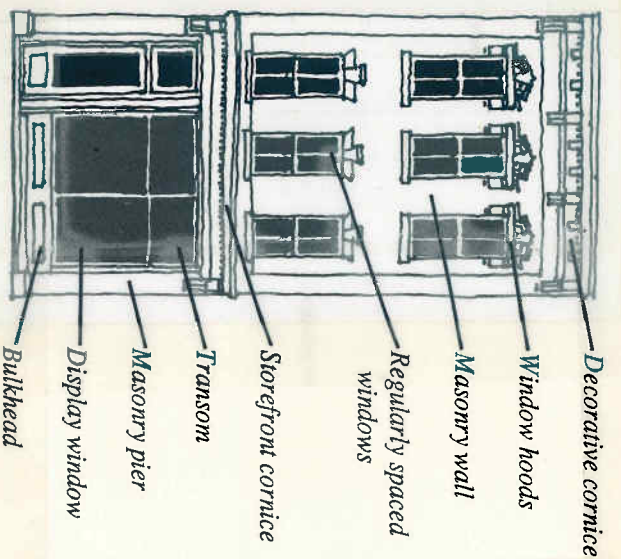
The following design guidelines explain in greater detail the choices which may be made by owners of historic buildings and approved by the Historic District Commission. They are presented in the following order: guidelines for all historic buildings, guidelines for commercial row buildings, guidelines for free-standing residential style buildings, guidelines for other historic building types, guidelines for non-contributing buildings.

All of these guidelines apply only to changes affecting the exterior of buildings as seen from the public street or sidewalk. Changes visible only from an alleyway do not require approval of the Historic District Commission, nor do changes to the interior of buildings.

1. Guidelines applicable to all historic buildings in the downtown historic districts.

A. Where original historic components remain, their preservation is strongly encouraged. Original design components may include:

1. Primary facade materials, such as brick or clapboard.
2. Openings for windows and doors.
3. Roof lines.
4. Original glass, mullions and muntins (dividers between panes)
5. Trim, such as,
 - a. cornices
 - b. window caps
 - c. window frames
 - d. window sash
 - e. door frames
 - f. doors
 - g. storefront columns
 - h. storefront frames
 - i. bulkheads (lower part of storefront)
 - j. porches
 - k. railings
 - l. finials



B. Where original components are worn or rotted beyond repair, replacement materials should be the same or visually indistinguishable from the original. (Note: See Sec. of Int. Standard #6)

C. Where original components have been altered, a return to the original design is encouraged, but harmonious contemporary treatment may also be approved.

D. All signs must conform to the Ann Arbor Sign Ordinance and should not cover or obscure any windows, doors or architectural details.

E. Demolition or moving of a historic building will be approved only as otherwise provided for in the Historic District Code; that is, only if the Commission determines that any of the following conditions clearly applies to the structure:

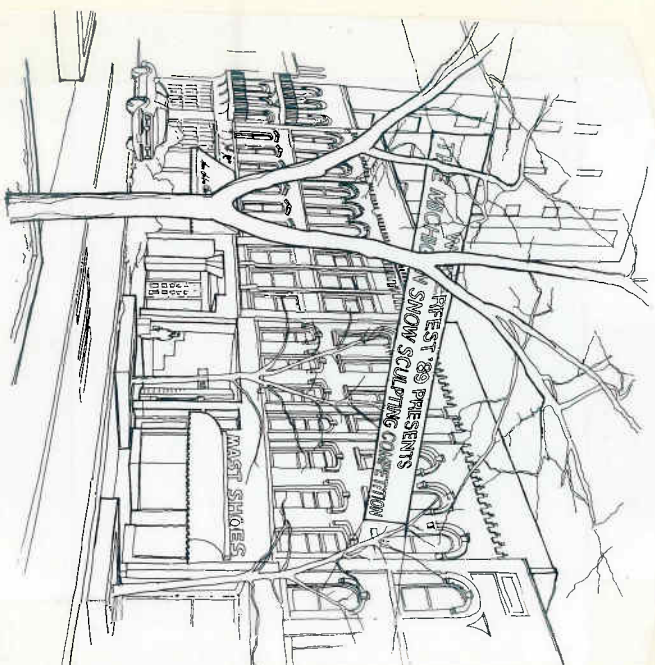
1. It constitutes a safety hazard;
2. It is a deterrent to a major improvement program which will be of substantial benefit to the community and such benefit overrides the interest in historic preservation;
3. Its retention would cause undue financial hardship to the owner and it cannot be otherwise purchased, acquired, moved or maintained with just compensation to the owner;
4. Retention of the structure would not be in the interest of the majority of the community, as determined by the Commission.

2. Additional guidelines for row buildings which were originally designed for commercial use (party walls, no front setback).

“The basic commercial facade consists of three parts: the storefront with an entrance and display windows, the upper facade usually with regularly spaced windows and the cornice that caps the building. These components appear in many shapes, sizes and styles but result in essentially the same facade.

“Because they were composed of similar parts, the blocks have a consistent, organized and coordinated appearance. Any one facade is visually related to its neighbors.”

(From “Keeping Up Appearances—Storefront Guidelines,” prepared by B. Clarkson Shoettle, based on Galesburg Building Improvement File by Preservation Urban Design Incorporated, 1978. “Keeping Up Appearances” was published in Main Street, a publication of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, at an unknown date.)



Commercial facades

The following guidelines apply specifically to commercial row buildings:

A. Guidelines for original primary facade materials.

1. They should not be removed or destroyed in whole or part.
2. They should not be covered.
3. Unpainted brick, stone, or terra cotta should not be painted.
4. If original exterior surface has been sheathed, removal of the sheathing is strongly encouraged.
5. The original facade shall be maintained according to principles of good preservation technology.

Handwritten notes in blue ink at the bottom of the page, including the number '22' and '4'.

B. Guidelines for upper-story windows.

"The visual importance of upper-story windows is evident in their steady march down Main Street. They give buildings an appearance of vitality and use, even if the upper floors are vacant. They create a repeated pattern that helps tie together the facades." (Op. Cit.)

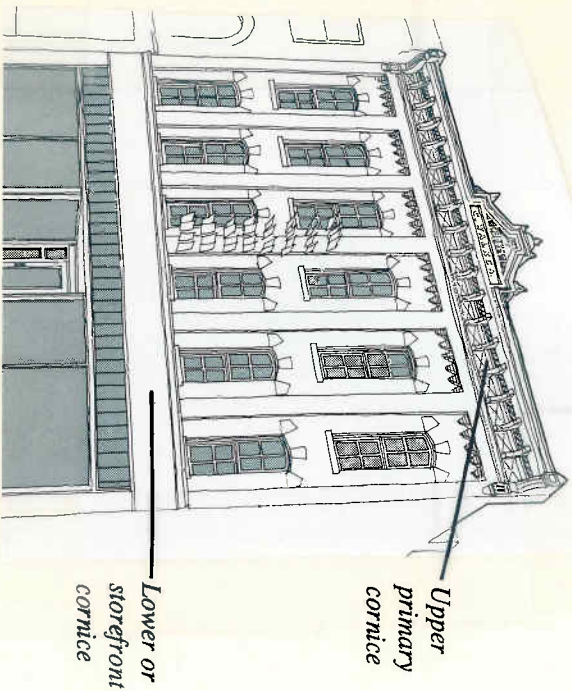
1. Where original openings, trim, and/or sash remain, they should be preserved.
2. Where original elements have deteriorated, the replacement should match the original both in design and material to the extent possible.
3. Where windows have been altered in the past, contemporary treatment may be permitted, on condition that the new work does not destroy existing historic material, the design is compatible with remaining historic features, and the installation is "reversible", allowing historically accurate restoration in the future.

C. Doors and door openings.

1. Where an original opening and/or door exists, preservation is strongly recommended.
2. Where replacement of an existing door is necessary, three options are possible:
 - a. Have a new door built with the same design and proportions as the original.
 - b. Find a manufactured wooden or steel door that matches in design a traditional storefront door.
 - c. Select a contemporary door that is compatible with the historic building and its neighbors.
3. Doors which are residential in character are not recommended.

D. Cornices.

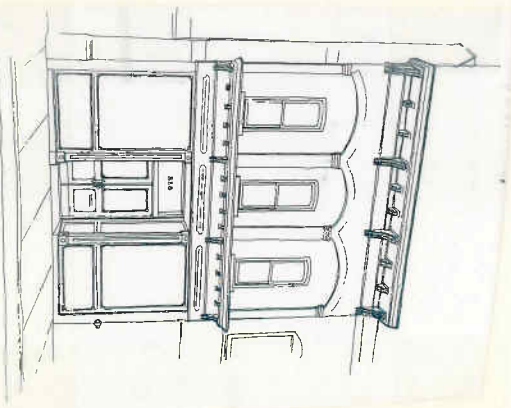
1. Where they remain, they should be preserved.
2. Where they have deteriorated, they should be repaired with materials which are identical to the original materials or which are visually indistinguishable.
3. Where they have been removed, restoration is encouraged but not required.



E. Storefront design.

1. Where the original storefront remains on a historic building, it should be preserved.
2. Where the original storefront has been altered, either restoration or a more contemporary treatment is acceptable. In either case, traditional storefront proportions and materials are encouraged.

3. A new storefront should be designed to fit within the original opening and not extend beyond it.
4. A new storefront should be flush with the rest of the facade or slightly recessed (6 to 12 inches).
5. There should be no basement entry or other aperture created below grade level on the front facade.
6. The storefront should be composed almost entirely of windows, as was traditional throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries.



7. Materials: either traditional or contemporary materials may be used to achieve a traditional storefront design. The following are recommended:
storefront frame: wood, cast iron, or anodized aluminum.
display windows: clear glass.
transom windows: clear, tinted, or stained glass.
door: wood, steel, or aluminum (not bright-finished), with large glass panel.

bulkheads: wood panels, polished stone, glass, or aluminum-clad plywood.

cornice: wood, cast iron, sheet metal.
side piers: same material as upper facade, or succoed and painted to look the same.

The following are inappropriate for a traditional storefront and should not be used:

- rough textured wood siding.
- fake bricks.
- stone and gravel aggregates.
- shingles.
- plastic or porcelain-enameled panels—except in those buildings which originally used these materials.

F. Awnings on commercial row buildings.

“The canvas awning was an important design element in the traditional storefront. It provided cover, added color and served as a transition between the storefront and the upper facade. Most buildings that face the sun had awnings.” (Op. Cit.)

The following guidelines are offered for awnings on historic buildings:

1. A standard street-level awning should be mounted so that the valance is about 8 feet above the sidewalk and projects out between 4 and 7 feet from the building. A 12-inch valance flap is usually attached at the awning bar and can serve as a sign panel.
2. The awning may be attached either just below the storefront cornice or between the transom and display windows (allowing light into the store while shading merchandise and pedestrians from the sun).
3. The awning should fit within the storefront opening; i.e., should not cover the piers or space above the cornice.
4. Aluminum awnings or canopies generally detract from the historic character and should not be erected.

Traditional storefront awnings

Recommended materials include canvas, vinyl-coated canvas, and acrilan. Metal or fiberglass awnings or curved fixed frame awnings are contemporary in appearance and are not appropriate in a historic context.

G. Additions to commercial row buildings.

When an owner has decided that a historic building is in need of an addition, care should be taken to assure that the addition does not alter the historic character of the original structure. Additions to the street or side facades are usually discouraged as too disruptive.

Additions at the rear of the building or on the top can often be planned so that they are not visible to the passerby on the street. This is most acceptable.

Some commercial buildings are good candidates for added stories that would be visible from the street. This kind of addition is most likely to be acceptable on a building which is shorter than most of the neighboring historic buildings.

Guidelines for commercial building additions are as follows:

1. Preserve historic architectural details and features that contribute to the character of the building.
2. Make the addition compatible in scale, building materials, size, color, and texture with the original building and other buildings in the neighborhood.
3. The addition does not have to match the original building exactly; some experts prefer that it be distinguishable from the older structure. Setbacks from the original facade will help to convey that distinction. Historical details should not be added to the new construction.

Make the addition compatible

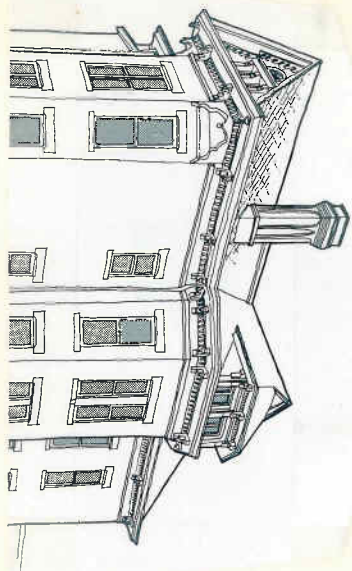
4. Place television antennae and mechanical equipment such as air conditioners in an inconspicuous location. (Note: See Sec. of Int Standards #9 and #10.)

3. Guidelines for free-standing residential style buildings in the downtown districts.

These guidelines apply to free-standing residential style buildings, whether they are used for residential or commercial purposes.

A. Roof.

1. Where they remain, the original building height, roof lines, pitch, dormers, gables, towers and chimneys should not be changed or modified.
2. Dormers and skylights may be added subject to the approval of the HPC. Dormers should be compatible with the building style in design and size. Skylights should be inconspicuous from public right-of-ways.
3. Where the roof has been altered, or where additions to the original structure bear non-historic roofs, these may be changed, if desired, to harmonize better with the original.

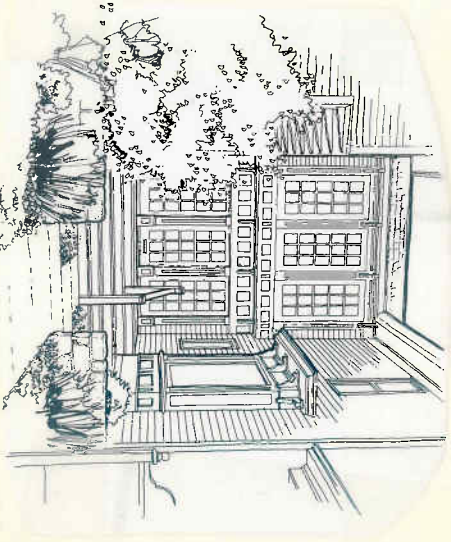


B. Doors and windows.

1. Where they remain, original doors and windows shall be preserved.
2. Where repairs to original doors and windows are necessary, new materials should be identical or visually indistinguishable from the original materials.
3. Where originals have been altered, historically accurate restoration is strongly encouraged. Replacements which are of traditional design may be approved.

C. Additions to free-standing residential-style buildings.

1. Additions to street facades are discouraged.
2. Additions to side facades are also discouraged, because the space between buildings is often part of the historic character of these streetscapes.
3. Additions which begin at the rear of the original structure and do not extend forward toward the street will be allowed in accordance with the following guidelines:
 - a. The addition is distinguishable from the original structure.
 - b. The addition does not overwhelm the original structure or its neighbors.



D. Porches, trim, ornamentation.

Residential buildings in historic districts are often graced with charming porches, trim and other ornamentation. Where the original exists on the street and side facades, preservation is strongly encouraged. Porches or additions reflecting later historic architectural styles are important to the building's integrity and should also be retained.

***Preservation
of porches***

1. Original porch, trim, or ornamentation existing on the street and side facades should be preserved, and shall not be enclosed.
2. Where original porch, trim or ornamentation has been altered or lost and a replacement is desired, the replacement should harmonize with remaining design components and with neighboring historic buildings. An accurate restoration of original features is preferable.

E. Fences, Awnings, Storm Doors and Windows.

- The following changes are strongly discouraged:
1. Chain-link or similar security-type wire fencing on corner lots and within fifty feet of the front lot line for all other properties.
 2. Metal, fiberglass or curved fixed frame awnings.
 3. Unpainted aluminum storm and screen doors and windows.

F. Fire escapes.

No new fire escapes will be permitted on front facades. Fire escapes, where required on side and rear facades, must be so designed and located as to minimize their visual impact and shall be subject to approval of the HDC.

G. Signs.

Exterior signs on residential-style buildings in downtown historic districts should be placed where they do not obscure windows or other features which contribute to the historic character of the building, such as rooflines, porticoes, pillars, brackets, sunbursts, railings, or decorative trim.

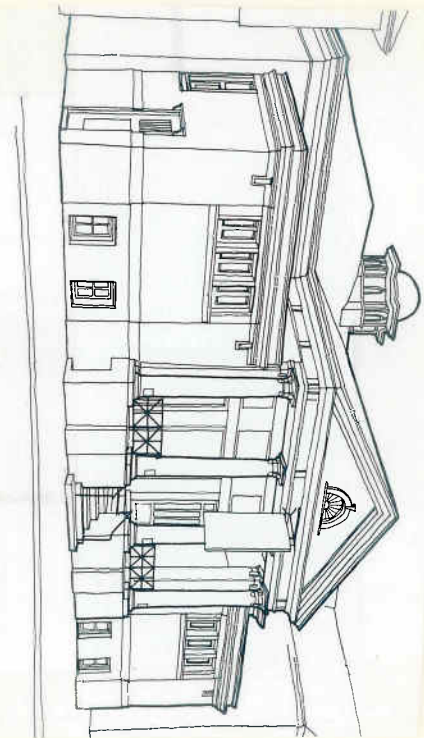
H. Restoration standards to be encouraged:

1. Uncovering of original wooden shingles, clapboard, or other building material.
2. Replacement of concrete steps and metal bannisters with wood where in keeping with the architectural character of the building.
3. Location or relocation of air conditioners, meter boxes, and similar mechanical equipment so as not to be visible from the street.
4. Removal of non-original materials from the front and side facades, especially any plastic, fiberglass, imitation stone, or aluminum.

4. Guidelines for other historic building types.

The proposed downtown historic districts contain several buildings which are neither commercial row buildings nor freestanding residential-style structures. Examples include the State Theater, the former Church of Christ Scientist (409 S. Division), the apartment at 332 E. William and Lane Hall. The guidelines for care of these buildings shall be:

A. Original features and materials shall be preserved as much as possible, while allowing an economically feasible use of the building.



*Church of Christ Scientist
1913*

B. Any change to the exterior shall respect the original design and integrity of the building.

C. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines shall be used for review on a case-by-case basis.

5. Guidelines for Non-contributing Buildings and New Construction.

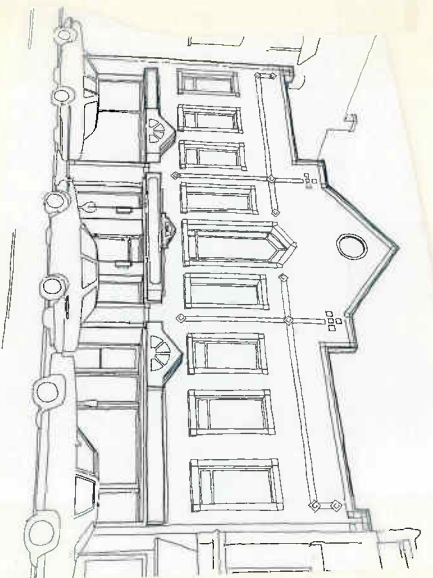
If the owner proposes to alter or expand a non-contributing building, or to demolish and replace it with new construction, or to build on any vacant site in a downtown historic district, approval of the Historic District Commission will be required for the building permit. The purpose is not to make the new addition or new building look historic. Unless it is a deliberate reconstruction of a previous historic building, every building

should reflect its own time. A new building should look new, even though it is in a historic district. However, a new building in a historic district should be designed to look appropriate and compatible with its neighbors.

The following guidelines are intended to foster compatibility with the historic area and to preserve historic relationships, as recommended by the Secretary of the Interior:

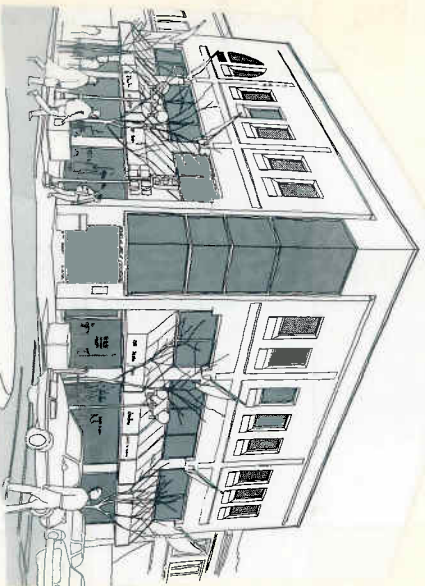
A. If the alteration, addition, or new construction is proposed in a commercial row setting:

1. The new facade should use familiar building materials, such as brick, which assist perception of scale while harmonizing with neighboring historic buildings.
2. Clear glass should be used in windows, doors, and display windows to maintain the traditional pedestrian interest, and the high level of public interaction that is characteristic of historic downtowns.
3. The new facade should be flush to its neighbors, not set back from the sidewalk.
4. The height of new buildings, especially the front facade, should respect the scale of a historic streetscape.
5. A large new building should incorporate the established rhythm of building widths in the historic district.
 - a. It should use design elements or changes in color or material to express this rhythm.
 - b. It should maintain traditional established breaks that occur between buildings, such as alleys.



6. The new building should reinforce the established horizontal lines of facades in the block.
 - a. Horizontal lines of display windows, bulkheads, upper-story window sills, cornices, should be consistent with other facades in the block.
 - b. The location of each story should be expressed with horizontal elements on the facade of the building.

**Reinforce
horizontal
lines**



7. The traditional distinction between the ground story and upper stories should be maintained.
 - a. At least 50% of the first floor on the primary facade should be glass.
 - b. Upper-story windows should be proportioned similarly to those in adjacent buildings.

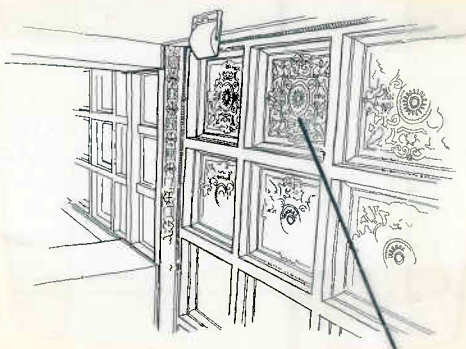
New building should harmonize

8. A new building should harmonize with its neighbors.
 - a. Colors chosen for the facade can relate to the building's neighbors.
 - b. Some of the detailing of surrounding buildings can be repeated in window shapes, cornice lines and brick work.
- B. If the alteration, addition, or new construction is proposed in a district of residential-style buildings:
 1. The new building should use building materials which are similar in texture and scale to those established in downtown Ann Arbor, such as brick, stone, tile, terra cotta, wood in traditional horizontal patterns, glass, and concrete.
 2. The front facade should be set back from the sidewalk a distance equal to the average front setback of the two nearest residential-style buildings.
 3. The side walls should be set back from the property lines a distance equal to the average side setback of residential-style buildings on that block.
 4. The height should be equal to the average height of residential-style buildings on that block, from the front facade to the point marking the average original rear wall of those buildings. Behind the line of original rear walls, greater or lower height may be approved.

5. The new building should harmonize with its neighbors. While it should look new, it can include some design elements such as gables, window proportions, and front porch which will relate it to its neighbors.

Rehab of Interior Spaces.

A handbook entitled *Downtown Design Guidelines* will offer advice facilitating rehab of interior loft spaces. However, changes to interiors of historic buildings are not subject to review by the Historic Preservation Commission unless specifically designated. This proposal will not pertain to interiors. Owners who wish to designate the interiors of their buildings may request consideration by the Study Committee under the "Landmarks Process" of the Historic District Commission Ordinance.



Historic interiors can contribute to the lasting value of a building

Part 8. Administration of Districts.

A. HDC Review of Building Permit Applications.

As provided by State law, the HDC will review all building permit applications affecting the exterior of buildings and all proposals for new construction in the five Downtown Historic Districts, using the Secretary of Interior's Standards and the guidelines outlined above.

B. Time Allowed for Review Process.

After a building permit is requested, the HDC will complete its review within as short a time as possible and recommend either approval or disapproval of the permit. Failure of the Commission to act within 60 days will, by law, constitute approval.

C. Procedure for Appeal.

Decision of the HDC affecting sites within historic districts will be binding, subject to appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

D. HDC Advisory Role Outside of Historic Districts.

Proposals for alteration or construction of buildings outside historic districts but within the DDA boundaries west of Thayer and north of William Street (including both sides of William Street) will be referred to the HDC at the beginning of the planning process for (1) assessment of the effect of the proposed change on historic buildings and districts and (2) suggestions for mitigating such effect where it is judged likely to occur. The report of the HDC will be submitted to the Planning Commission and City Council, to be considered along with other factors in approving or disapproving a project. This procedure has been operating informally for a long time and functions well.

E. HDC Informational and Advisory Services.

The HDC will be available to advise downtown property owners about the guidelines and furnish assistance in the form of historic photographs and publications about techniques for historic preservation, with the purpose of reaching mutually satisfactory agreement on designs for rehab or new construction.

Part 9.

Benefits of Inclusion in Downtown Historic Districts.

It is reasonable to ask what the community can do for the owner who contributes to the common good by maintaining a historic building. Rehabilitation of old buildings can be expensive, and there are special costs associated with their maintenance. Submitting to rules that do not apply to other, non-historic buildings can be a financial burden to owners. Some may feel that they are losing an opportunity to profit by building a different structure on their site.

The Downtown Historic District Study Committee is aware of these concerns and has studied existing and potential rewards for the owners of historic buildings, to whose care the architectural heritage and identity of the community is entrusted. The existing benefits are substantial, and City Council will be asked to support steps to increase them through action at the local, State, and Federal levels.

A. Federal Income Tax Incentives.

Under current law, 20% of the cost of rehab of historic income-producing property may be claimed as a tax credit. In order to qualify, a project must involve a total rehab cost that exceeds the adjusted basis of the building

Preservation Incentives

or \$5000, whichever is greater. Only taxpayers whose incomes are less than \$250,000 are eligible. Interested owners and investors may obtain full details from the Historic District Commission.

Proposed legislation now before Congress is intended to restore the more generous credit which was offered before 1987.

B. Preservation Easements.

An owner whose property is listed on the National Register as contributing to a historic district may donate a "preservation easement," that is, enter into a permanent agreement that the building will not be demolished or unsympathetically altered.

This is considered a charitable donation by the IRS and can be deducted from the owner's Federal Income Tax. The value of each easement must be established by a qualified real-estate appraiser; typically it ranges from 7 to 13% of fair market value of the property. A detailed explanation of preservation easements can be obtained from the Historic District Commission.

C. Property Tax Assessments.

Historic designation commonly increases the value of a property, and this may be reflected in a higher tax assessment. At the same time, in a commercial area where some blocks are designated and some are not, it is reasonable to expect that tax assessments will reflect the difference between them. Nearby redevelopment and speculative land sales should not drive up the assessments on historic properties where such development or valuation would not be permitted.

Put simply, the assessor looking for current sale prices of comparable properties could avoid mixing "apples and oranges" and compare historic properties only to other historic properties. Among experts there is support for the appropriateness of doing this. In effect, the assessor would consider the historic district ordinance along with the other factors normally considered, including zoning, location, deed restrictions and the contribution of any structure to the income flow. The experts agree, however, that State law is not explicit on this point. The legislature will soon be asked to clarify this area of the law.

In the meantime, the owner of a historic property who wishes to ensure that the assessment will reflect its protected status may do so by donating a preservation easement, described above. This has the effect of a deed restriction. The owner will gain not only the one-time Federal income tax deduction but also a stabilization of the local property tax assessment relative to nearby undesignated properties.

D. Potential New State Incentives.

An "Omnibus Bill for Historic Preservation" is currently being prepared for introduction in Lansing. In addition to the clarification mentioned in "C" above it is expected to include State tax credits for rehabilitation, enabling legislation to allow local tax credits or tax deferral and the authorization of alternative building codes for historic buildings to encourage their reuse. Several other states have already adopted such provisions. The Ann Arbor City Council will be asked to support the passage of this bill.

E. Lower On-site Parking Expectation for PUD in Historic District

City Council will be asked to affirm as policy that new planned unit developments in historic districts will not be expected to furnish the amount of on-site parking that would be expected of developments on sites not subject to review for historical compatibility.

F. Pedestrian Improvements.

Consideration will be given to modifying future pedestrian improvements to reflect the historic character of downtown historic districts. Slate sidewalks should be preserved where they remain and perhaps restored where they have been lost. Historic lamp-posts and street signs for historic districts could be selected. The proliferation of signs for parking and traffic could be limited in historic districts.

G. Landscaping.

Where downtown historic districts include residential-style buildings as on E. William and S. Division, the burden of caring for lawns and trees in the extension could be shouldered by the city through a combination of Parks Department and Dean Fund money.

32

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APPENDIX B: DRAFT ORDINANCE

Title X. Main Street Historic District [Adopted by City Council December 18, 1989, Amended June 15, 1992]

10:1. Description of the District. The Main Street Historic District consists of the following parcels of land within the Original Plat of Ann Arbor, described block by block.

- (a) 117 South Ashley, 112-22 West Washington, 100-206 South Main: Lots 1 and 2, the south 22 feet of lot 5, and all of lots 6 through 8; block 1 south, range 3 east.
- (b) 200-16 East Huron, 105-13 South Fourth Avenue, 201-23 East Washington, 120 South Fifth Avenue: The west 46 feet of lot 2, and all of lots 4 through 8; block 1 south, range 5 east.
- (c) 206-18 South Ashley, 208 West Liberty: Lots 5 and 6, the east 80 feet of lot 7 and the south 9.33 feet of the east 80 feet of lot 8; block 2 south, range 2 east.
- (d) 207-17 South Ashley, 112-22 West Liberty, 200-24 South Main, 113-23 West Washington: Block 2 south, range 3 east.
- (e) 201-23 South Main, 113-223 East Liberty, 206-20 South Fourth Avenue, 106-24 East Washington: Block 2 south, range 4 east.
- (f) 201-21 South Fourth Avenue, 201-93 East Liberty, 208-16 South Fifth Avenue, 200-20 East Washington: Block 2 south, range 5 east.

(g) 300-12 South Ashley: The east 66 feet of lots 9 and 10; block 3 south, range 2 east.

(h) 303 South Ashley, 300-334 South Main, 109-119 West Liberty: Lot 1, the north 22 feet of lot 2, the north 55 feet of lot 11 and all of lots 12 through 16; block 3 south, range 3 east.

(i) 301-35 South Main, 106-22 East Liberty: Lots 1 through 3, the north 44.5 feet of lot 4 and all of lot 16; block 3 south, range 4 east.

10:2. Preservation Standards and Guidelines. In its evaluation of changes proposed for the alteration, moving, demolition or new construction of a structure within the district, the Historic District Commission shall use the guidelines approved as regulations of the Commission including the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Structures.

Title XI. Fourth/Ann Historic District [Adopted by City Council December 18, 1989]

11:1. Description of the District. The Fourth/Ann Historic District consists of the following parcels of land within the Original Plat of Ann Arbor, described block by block.

(a) 109-23 East Ann, 201-11 North Fourth Avenue: Lot 1, the south 115.5 feet of lot 2 and the south 90 feet of the east 42 feet of lot 3; block 2 north, range 4 east.

