

Motor City Re-Store

Design Guidelines



DESIGN GUIDELINES

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. General
3. Signage
4. Awning and Canopies
5. Colors and Materials
6. Doors and Windows
7. Storefront Security
8. Exterior Lighting
9. Off-street Parking Lots

Motor City Re-Store

Design Guidelines

Introduction

The central purpose of these *Guidelines* is to encourage high quality building design in order to create an exciting, growing, and aesthetically pleasing commercial district that will attract shoppers, visitors, and those who may want to make future investments in properties and businesses in the community.

Building or business owners receiving support must follow these guidelines when designing storefront improvements. Others are encouraged to follow these guidelines on a voluntary basis.

All projects are subject to applicable building and zoning codes and regulations. The program will not fund any projects in violation of City codes.

General

In general, façade improvements have the greatest impact when they are part of a holistic storefront design. All façade elements (signage, awnings, color scheme, architectural features, etc.) should be coordinated to produce a strong, unified, high quality image.

- When multiple tenants occupy a single building, all tenant signage and storefront designs should be coordinated to create a harmonious and consistent design
- Façade improvements should preserve or restore historic building features when present. Projects should not cover or remove historically significant elements like ornate brickwork. Where buildings are either historically designated or eligible for designation, all renovations shall be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Signage

Signs provide businesses with advertising, image, and identity. Overall, signs that are properly designed as to scale, placement, and appearance can meet the business owner's needs while also enhancing the image of the commercial district.

- New signs must conform to applicable City of Detroit codes and sign ordinances.
- All signs must be professionally designed and fabricated and made of quality materials.
- Sign colors and materials should be coordinated with the overall design of the storefront.
- Dimensional letters, when used, should be made of metal such as copper, bronze, stainless steel, cast aluminum or durable non-glare acrylic.
- Internal illumination of signage is prohibited. Retail storefront signage should be illuminated by external lighting.

Motor City Re-Store

Design Guidelines

- The primary business sign should be placed on the building façade above the storefront but below the first upper story windows. Signage should not conceal architectural details and features.
- Secondary signs could include window lettering in the storefront. However, signs placed on the glass should be limited in size and not obscure views into the business. Colors should be complementary to the façade colors.
- Along a main corridor, a minimum of 80% of the display window at the street level façade must be unobstructed by signs and advertisements. Where facing a parking lot or side street, a minimum of 60 % of the display window at the street level must be unobstructed by signs and advertisements.
- Pole-mounted signs, temporary signs, either free-standing or hung from the building façade, are prohibited.
- Professional hand-painted signs applied to the masonry side walls (non-storefront walls) are permissible only if the masonry is a non-decorative type of masonry (i.e. cinder block, non-decorative brick, etc.) and has been previously painted.
- Hand-painted signs on the side of the building should be limited to the business name, logo and a business slogan. Art murals and graphics are allowed.
- Neon used as signage or as an accent to an architectural feature, flashing lights, strobe lights, and neon used as a window border or to outline architectural features are not allowed.
- Obsolete and unused signs, sign frames, and brackets must be removed.

Awnings and Canopies

Awning and canopy design should be integrated with the overall design of the façade. Awnings should complement and enhance building features rather than cover major portions of the facades. Generally, awnings should fit the storefront opening that they are protecting and not be out of scale in relation to the rest of the building.

- Awnings should be made of fabric, metal or glass materials. Vinyl and plastic materials are prohibited.
- All awnings and marquees shall be supported entirely on the building on which they are erected, and there shall be no posts, brackets or other obstacles located on public right of way.

Motor City Re-Store

Design Guidelines

- In general, the bottom of any awning or canopy should be just above the top of the main entry door, but in no case higher than 8 feet, 6 inches. The top of the awning or canopy shall not exceed 12 feet above grade.
- The projection of the awning shall extend outward from the building no more than half the width of the sidewalk, or 4 feet, whichever is less.
- Wherever possible, the bottom and top edges of awnings should line up with adjacent awnings. Use similar shaped awnings and colors when facades abut one another.
- Awning colors should coordinate with the color scheme of the façade. Colorful awnings are appropriate but extreme, brilliant, or harsh colors should be avoided.
- Signage on awnings and canopies shall not exceed forty percent (40%) of the surface area.
- Signage on awnings and canopies is limited to the business name, address, logo or business slogan and shall not include any specific product advertising.
- Continuous awnings along blank walls are prohibited.

Colors & Materials

The color of individual façade elements (signs, awnings, trim, windows, etc.) should be part of a coordinated color scheme for the building. Colors should be selected to enhance the business image and convey a sense of quality.

- Colors selected should be harmonious with the color of existing building materials, including brick, limestone or porcelain enamel panels.
- In general, subdued color schemes are encouraged. A vibrant color palette may sometimes be appropriate, but harsh or garish colors must be avoided.
- Materials such as brick or limestone that have not been previously painted should remain unpainted.
- A minimum of 80% of any building façade which faces a public street, excluding window and door openings, shall consist of the following building materials: Masonry, stone or porcelain.
- Painted or unfinished concrete block, rough-textured concrete block, and split-face block are prohibited as new building materials on any façade abutting a public street.

Doors & Windows

Motor City Re-Store

Design Guidelines

- Original door and window openings and patterns should be preserved, especially on historically or architecturally significant buildings.
- A minimum of 60% of the street level façade shall consist of openings for doors and windows. The use of glass block shall not be considered as providing a window.
- Display windows shall be set at a maximum of thirty-two (32) inches above the finished grade and within 12 inches from the finished ceiling, not including window frames.
- Reflective, dart-tinted or mirrored glass is prohibited.
- Window frames, including display windows, shall be set back a minimum of two (2) inches from the typical wall plane in the window opening.
- Storefront doors should be compatible in design with the rest of the storefront. In general, the primary storefront door should be made largely of glass or contain a glass panel that can be seen through.

Storefront Security

Businesses need to be safe in order to be successful. However, heavily fortified stores detract from the attractiveness, popularity, and prosperity of commercial areas. Security features should be designed to be as invisible as possible.

- When security gates are desired, an open-mesh type with a minimum of 30% open area must be used. Whenever possible, gates should be installed on the interior of storefront windows. Solid garage door style roll-down gates are prohibited.
- When installing a gate on the inside of the window is not feasible, a gate may be installed on the exterior of the building. However, the grille box must be as inconspicuous as possible. The exterior box shall be painted to match the building's color scheme and the entire box should be concealed by an awning or other enclosure.
- Fixed window bars placed on the outside or inside of windows are prohibited.
- Businesses are encouraged to install monitored alarm systems. Burglar alarm sirens should not be mounted on the walls that are visible from the street. These can be concealed under awnings.
- Barbed wire on fences or any portion of the building or property is prohibited.

Exterior Lighting

- Exterior lighting should be integral to the overall storefront design, and should be used to enhance building and site features.

Motor City Re-Store

Design Guidelines

- Lighting fixtures shall be located, aimed, and shielded so as to avoid creating light spill into the night sky, distracting reflections, or glare into residential areas and adjacent properties.
- Flashing or moving lights are prohibited.

Off-Street Parking Lots

- The visual impact of existing parking facilities can be softened and screened with three-foot, semi-transparent screen walls and complimentary landscaping.
- Landscaping for off-street lots is recommended, including islands defined by curbs and planted with shade trees, plus the addition of decorative style parking lot light fixtures.