

# Design Guidelines for D&L Corridor Market Towns

White Haven



Lansford

Jim Thorpe



Lehighton

Palmerton



Slatington

# Corridor Market Towns Initiative – A Summary

## **What is the “Corridor Market Towns Initiative”?**

The Corridor Market Towns Initiative (CMT) is a cooperative, demonstration project of the PA Downtown Center (PDC) and the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (D&L). CMT is a recipient of partial matching funds through the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) New Communities Program. The Initiative was announced in June 2001. A full-time Manager was hired in January 2002. The Initiative is designed to help breathe new economic life, while enhancing heritage tourism opportunities, in small communities located along the D&L's historic transportation Corridor.

## **Where are the Corridor Market Towns?**

The primary Corridor Market Towns are White Haven, Lansford, Jim Thorpe, Lehigh, Palmerton, and Slatington. As requested, services are also available to Weatherly, Nesquehoning, East Side, Summit Hill, Parryville, Coaldale and Walnutport.

## **How does the Corridor Market Towns Initiative work?**

The Market Towns Manager and the D&L's Heritage Development Specialist help community-based groups develop and implement revitalization strategies while addressing local heritage development needs in small (about 5000 pop.) rural communities.

## **Why is the Market Towns Initiative different than other revitalization efforts?**

This innovative pilot combines the 4 point “Main Street” revitalization approach, the PA State Heritage Park program and technical assistance available exclusively to National Heritage Areas. A wide variety of resources are shared among the towns that would otherwise be inaccessible. A strong emphasis is placed on sustainability. This is the first regional revitalization effort of DCED's New Communities program.

## **Why will the Corridor Market Towns Initiative work?**

The time is right for a broad-based regional approach to heritage tourism and downtown revitalization. The D&L is in the construction design phase of a major portion of the D&L Trail in the Market Towns region. The tourist promotion agencies are working to effectively market the region's heritage resources. Staff includes experienced individuals familiar with business in the region, interpreting local history, developing attractions, trail construction and revitalization management.

## **How can I learn more about the Corridor Market Towns Initiative?**

Please contact Dale Freudenberger, Market Towns Manager at [dltowns2@ptd.net](mailto:dltowns2@ptd.net) or Elissa Marsden, D&L Heritage Development Specialist at [dltowns@ptd.net](mailto:dltowns@ptd.net). Telephone: 610-760-1624 Fax: 610-760-1625 125 S. Walnut St., Suite 230, Slatington, PA 18080



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The Design Guidelines for D&L Corridor Market Towns is the result of a collaborative effort of Heritage Conservancy and the D&L Corridor Market Towns Initiative.

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# Introduction

The purpose of establishing design guidelines is to help revitalize our main streets and downtown areas. In communities across the nation, maintaining, preserving and enhancing our architectural heritage has fostered community pride and helped establish healthy business environments. Fortunately, one of the strongest assets of Corridor Market Towns, such as White Haven, Lansford, Palmerton, Lehigh, Slatington and Jim Thorpe, is their historic architecture. Working to restore and improve these buildings in a sensitive manner will be key to future community revitalization.

These design guidelines have been developed to respect the original features of historic buildings and their streetscapes and at the same time encourage creativity. The guidelines should be used to assist in the design of high quality and creative rehabilitations. Design solutions should also be affordable and flexible so that business and property owners benefit from the revitalization process.

In time, all business and property owners will come to learn that good design makes economic sense. Not only do sensitive rehabilitations improve property values and the aesthetic quality of the community, they also build community

pride and spur revitalization projects involving nearby buildings. Also, tax credits for rehabilitation can offset the cost of many projects and ensure high-quality design.

The establishment of these guidelines is an integral part of the Corridor Market Towns Initiative, a pilot regional revitalization effort of the Pennsylvania Downtown Center and the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Commission. One component of the initiative makes available financial incentives for commercial properties in six primary communities – White Haven, Lansford, Jim Thorpe, Lehigh, Palmerton and Slatington. Additional communities may be eligible for financial incentives in the future. Services, matching grants for building design and improvements to business signage, storefronts and commercial building facades will be made available. The Corridor Market Towns office can also provide referrals for low-interest loan opportunities for property owners.

In order to qualify for the grant and loan assistance listed above, applicants will be required to comply with the guidelines set forth in the application and this publication.

Depending on a building's design and condition, there are three basic approaches to consider prior to undertaking work on historic resources in the downtown areas:

**Restoration** is the exact duplication of the original exterior appearance, including architectural details. Original color scheme and sign placement should also be duplicated. Restoration is ideal if a building has undergone only minor changes. In such cases restoration is relatively inexpensive.

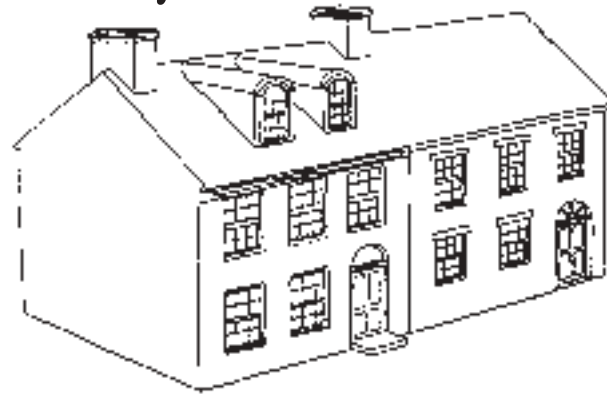
**Renovation** involves retaining existing historic features whenever possible and constructing new features using materials that are appropriate to the building. Renovation is employed when inappropriate alterations have destroyed original elements or duplication of details is cost-prohibitive or based solely on conjecture.

**Rehabilitation** of historic buildings usually requires basic maintenance, the removal of any extraneous materials, and the completion of simple improvements. Cosmetic treatment, such as an appropriate paint scheme or the addition of new signage, is often all that is needed to make a building compatible with its historic streetscape.



# Architectural Styles and Vocabulary

The commercial centers of the Market Towns in eastern Pennsylvania developed for the most part in the second half of the 19th century. A variety of architectural styles are evident, including local examples of Federal, Greek Revival, Second Empire, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival. These buildings are constructed of brick, stone and clapboard and have a variety of decorative elements that create visual interest and make each building unique.



## 1780-1820 – Federal Style

Federal style buildings in the Market Towns are everyday or vernacular examples of more high styled structures. Entryways are often decorated with fanlights or side-lights and paneled doors. Windows have double hung sash with six-over-six lights. Gable roofs hold large internal end chimneys and may have dormer windows.



## 1820-1860 – Greek Revival

Greek Revival buildings have rectangular transoms above the main doors, often with classically inspired elements such as pilasters or columns. Windows are elongated on the first floor, and eyebrow or short windows are found in the attic or third floors.



## 1850-1870 – Early Victorian Era

Early Victorian buildings in the Market Towns include elements from a number of popular architectural styles, most notably the Italianate and Gothic Revival modes. These buildings often have bracketed cornices, low pitched roofs, pointed-arched or round-arched attic windows and main floor windows with double hung sash and two-over-two lights.



## 1865-1910 – Late Victorian Era

Late Victorian buildings employ a range of architectural elements from various styles. French Second Empire buildings are identified by their Mansard roofs with dormers. Queen Anne buildings have irregular plans with towers, bay windows and porches. Colonial Revival buildings, common by the 1890-1910 period, employ traditional elements such as multi-paned windows and classical details, including molded cornices and doorways and porches with columns inspired by earlier buildings.

# Storefront Design

When main streets became important commercial centers in the 19th century, buildings often shared a consistency of design that created a strong visual image. The vitality of the street and the architecture were closely linked. Changes and new additions to main streets' buildings during the late 19th and early 20th centuries honored the original architecture. Although these changes often altered the original shops, they were consistent in scale and proportion. In recent years, late 19th and early 20th century additions have come into their own right and are considered important elements of earlier buildings.

With new merchandising techniques and changing traditions in main street importance in the mid to late 20th century, many alterations to shop fronts did not take into account original design concepts. Some changes were inappropriate because they tried to copy architectural features found at new competing strip malls or created false historical references. Often, upper floors and signage were covered to hide the architectural character of the original design or to require little or no ongoing maintenance.

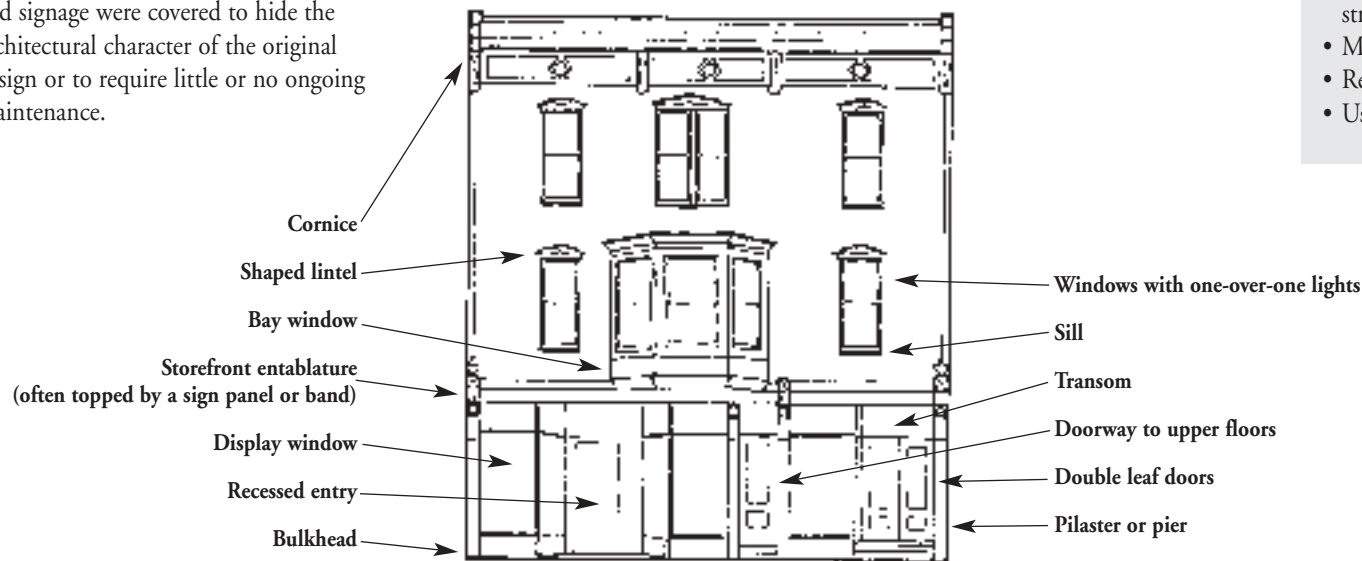
When restoring, renovating or rehabilitating your storefront the following guidelines should be considered:

1. Maintain original openings and fabric, including early 20th century architectural elements.
2. Remove inappropriate, non-historic materials.
3. Replace inappropriate storefronts. Keep your design simple. The new design should reflect traditional character and add to the rhythm of the streetscape and building. New design should be in keeping with the building's overall character. Storefronts should be clearly defined by architectural elements, such as pillars, piers and glass. When removing inappropriate storefronts, be prepared for finding evidence of the original design. In such cases, all effort to restore any discovered original/old materials should be made.

4. Emphasize display windows. The area of glass should be much greater than wall space in storefront design. Shop fronts should be composed almost entirely of glass. Maintain original window proportions if known.
5. Maintain original entries. If original doorways are gone, new doors should be designed and placed – keeping in mind the building's overall facade and symmetry. Never shorten openings.
6. Restore, renovate or reintroduce storefront bulkheads.
7. Reopen or reintroduce transoms into your storefronts.

## Remember to:

- Keep your design simple.
- Whenever possible, do not introduce new materials that would not have been originally used.
- Keep the design consistent with the street's historic structures.
- Maintain existing materials whenever possible.
- Repair rather than replace.
- Use physical evidence as a model for new design.



*The majority of commercial buildings in the Market Towns are made up of similar parts. These include a storefront on the first floor with store entry and possibly another entry for the upper floors, the body of the building consisting of the upper floors with windows, and top with cornice and roof structure. Some key terms are identified at left.*

## Storefront Display

Appropriate storefront display can help attract customers to your business. Here are a few tips to ensure quality control:

- Never obscure the window with display cases that prevent pedestrians from seeing inside.
- Although large glass windows may not be appropriate for some businesses, they should be maintained. In such instances a permanent display is recommended. Blinds or other removable fixture can also be installed.
- Storefront windows should be used to display products and/or services. Other information that is appropriate includes: store hours, business logos, public service messages, and seasonal displays.
- Installation of security grates is discouraged. If security guards are deemed necessary, open mesh grates, preferably installed in the interior, should be used.
- Avoid handwritten temporary signs.



*This storefront retains its 19th and early 20th century features including display windows, recessed doorway, bulkhead, cornice, piers, signage, awning and terrazzo tiled entry.*

## Storefront Materials:

Various materials were employed in local storefronts. Frames for doorways, windows and shops were typically wood, cast iron or aluminum, framing clear glass display windows. Entrances were typically wood or aluminum. The windows themselves had large glass panels often topped by clear, frosted or stained glass transoms. The storefront bulkheads were typically wood, cast iron, glass tile or aluminum.



*Proper display can attract customers to your business.*



# Awning, Signs and Lighting

Historically, commercial storefronts had signs and awnings. Awnings and signs served vital functions. They not only provided shelter and helped advertise local businesses, but also served to separate the buildings uses – the first floor shop front from the upper level's offices/residential units. Awnings were often employed as energy savers. They provided protection from the sun and glare and from harsh weather conditions such as wind, rain and snow. Today, awnings and signs can also provide color and interest to the streetscape.



*The former J.C. Bright Company Building retains its original decorative canopy held by iron rods.*

## Awnings

For the most part, awnings should follow historical patterns. They should be placed above the storefront, but below the sign panel. The awning should be designed and placed so that it does not cover architectural details. Piers on either side of the shop front should remain exposed. Awnings should project only a few feet from the building within the adjoining sidewalk area.

In general, standard street awnings should be about nine feet from grade level to allow adequate head room. Not all buildings should employ awnings, particularly buildings with front porches.

1. Awnings should be constructed of canvas and fire retardant acrylic or other cloth material. Vinyl, plastic or metal awnings are discouraged and should be removed and replaced.
2. Awnings can be used to disguise poorly designed alterations. Adding awnings can be a cost effective way to improve a building's appearance and incorporate it into the historic streetscape.
3. Awnings can be used to help advertise your business. Signs on awnings should be located on the valance flap only and have clear, simple lettering.
4. Awnings should be operable in order to maximize energy conservation.
5. Awning fixtures and canopies that originate from the building's earlier historic periods should be maintained. If replacement is necessary, the new awnings should be based on the historic design. Maintain placement, proportion and color.
6. Awnings generally should be of one single color or two colored stripes.
7. Awning shape should relate to the building's architectural elements. Barrel awnings should be used only if they complement arched windows or doorways.
8. Awnings for multiple-storefront buildings should be consistent in color, size and material. Only signage for individual storefronts should differ.
9. Awnings should be well maintained. They should be washed regularly and replaced when damaged or worn.



*Appropriate awning, Jim Thorpe.*

## Signage

Signage along commercial centers historically was located on storefront awnings, glass windows, or projected from the building's sign bands. In some instances, painted wall signs and large billboard signs were also used. In general these historic signs should be preserved but new signage should be located along the sign band, on storefront glass or on small signs projecting from the building.



*Painted wall sign, Slatington.*



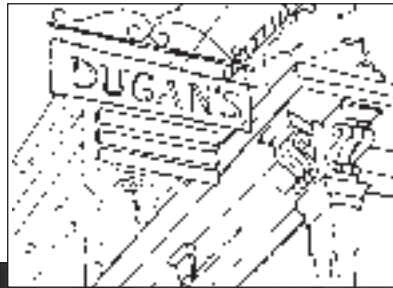
## Signage (cont.)

Keep new signage simple. Effective signage provides just enough information. Signs should be clear, concise and readable and at the same time attractive.

1. Signs should enhance the building, adjoining buildings and streetscape.
2. Period signs should be maintained. Historic signs are often integral to the design of the facade.
3. Sign size should be proportional to the scale of the building. Pedestrian-oriented signs should be small, while those for roadway visibility can be larger; however, the scale should not overwhelm the storefront.
4. Signs should be simple. Secondary information should be placed on windows, doors or awnings.
5. Signs should be easy to read. Simple lettering and limited color is key.
6. Sign design should promote the business clearly and attractively. Reduce visual clutter.
7. Signs should be of a size, location and design that do not obscure a building's architectural elements.
8. Signs painted on windows should not overwhelm the glass area. In most instances, signs should not take up more than 15 to 25 % of glass area.
9. Signs that are temporary, such as banners in windows and holiday décor, should be removed in a timely manner.

10. The use of wood and metal signs should be encouraged.
11. Internally illuminated signs should be avoided. If necessary, internally illuminated signs should be designed to mock wood/metal signage with the use of simple lettering and dark background and borders.
12. Signs painted on walls should be encouraged to help establish facade rhythm, scale and proportion where facade rhythm does not exist. Historic wall signs should be retained as "art" whenever possible.
13. Signs of odd shapes should be avoided unless historic evidence exists.

*Sign design and placement can enhance the building and streetscape.*



*Original sign in terrazzo tiles, Lansford.*

## Lighting

In general, exterior lights should illuminate signs or features of architectural interest rather than attract attention to the fixture itself.

1. Lighting should provide even illumination.
2. Lighting should be appropriate to the building's architectural style.
3. Lighting that is glaring, flashing and pulsating should be avoided.
4. Lighting with neon can be used on appropriate period storefronts. However, neon lighting that advertises a product should be minimized.
5. Lighting in the historic areas should be indirect whenever possible.



*Historically appropriate lighting fixture, Slatington.*

# Windows and Doors

Windows and doors are important elements of the facade. They can open historic buildings with light and help provide a continuity of proportion between the floors. Remember, the repair and the installation of weatherizing materials for wood windows and doors is more practical and economical than replacement and, in the long run, will help maintain your property value and historic character.

1. Retain and preserve original windows and doors, their openings, trim and frames.
2. Replace missing original windows/doors or badly deteriorated windows/doors in kind. Use the overall form and any remaining detailing as a guide for necessary replacement. Try not to replace the entire window when minor repair/replacement of parts can be completed.
3. Do not replace old or original windows and doors with stock windows/doors that call for alteration of openings or size of window panes, door, and changes in scale or introduce new materials. Windows without true divided lights should be avoided.



*Original double-leaf doors should be retained.*

4. Replace inappropriate doors with those that historically existed. Traditionally, the shop entry door was made of wood and had a large glass panel. Double-leaf doors were also evident. Early 20th century doorways were often recessed within the storefront. All effort should be made to duplicate the original. Avoid doors that are residential in character or that are decorated with that features such as moldings, crossbucks or window grills unless historic evidence exists for these features.
5. Install storm windows and doors that do not conflict with the original design. Never block glass openings with storm elements. Exterior wood storms or interior storms are good alternatives to exterior metal storms.



*Original windows have been shortened on the second floor. Third floor windows retain original fanlights (left). Inappropriate window replacement alter the appearance on the left side of this building (right).*



Paintable metal storms, however, that do not protrude into window glass can be an economical solution and have the extra benefit of protecting historic window fabric.

6. Install weather stripping for energy conservation.
7. Retain original colored glass and stained glass. Victorian-era buildings often contained upper panes above doorways or surrounding windows with colored glass. Introduction of colored glass and tinted glass without historic evidence should be discouraged.



*An inappropriate door renovation detracting from the building's historic appearance.*

# Exterior Walls and Materials

Most historic buildings in the region are of masonry construction, with brick or stone exteriors. Frame buildings in the Market Towns originally employed clapboard or shingle walls. Paint colors and other materials, such as wood trim and detailing, terrazzo tiles, glass and steel, provide accents and variety that give each building character. Maintaining these historic materials and complementing them with appropriate paint colors is essential to maintaining their historic integrity.

## Key points to maintaining masonry buildings:

- Retain original brick and stone and mortar whenever possible.
- Repair or replace deteriorated material only if necessary. If replacement is deemed necessary, make sure the new materials duplicate the old as nearly as possible.
- Clean masonry walls with the gentlest method possible. Low-pressure washing and or brush scrubbing will usually clean the surface adequately. Avoid chemical washes unless deemed necessary by an expert. Never sandblast.
- Never apply waterproofing or repellent washes unless determined necessary to solve a technical problem.
- Never remove paint from masonry surfaces. Often paint was applied to solve water problems. Removal of paint can cause damage to the masonry surface. Consult an expert if paint removal is necessary.



*A variety of exterior materials are found in the Market Towns. Frame buildings, such as the one at the right, are now covered with synthetic siding. However, brick and stone buildings predominate the streetscapes.*

- Retain original and/or old historic color scheme.
- Moisture is the main culprit for the deterioration of masonry surfaces. Solving drainage problems along gutters, downspouts and foundations will correct most moisture problems.
- Minor cracks in mortar can be easily repaired. Match mortar, color and joint size. An analysis of the mortar composition should be completed to ensure adequate moisture barrier and to ensure that the masonry surface does not fail. Never use strong cement mortar for repairs. Inappropriate mortar can damage the masonry and/or allow water penetration.

- Avoid unnecessary repointing. Only repoint joints that are deteriorated.
- Determine cause of cracks prior to repair. Cracks that run through masonry may be a sign of structural problems. Consider consulting an engineer to find the source of the problem.

## For wood frame buildings:

- Retain and preserve original or old clapboard or shingles. Replace sections and/or deteriorated portions rather than entire siding/shingles.
- Replace materials that match the original or old in size, shape and texture.
- Covering wood frame buildings with new surfaces should be avoided. Aluminum, vinyl, brick- and stone-like veneers, asphalt and asbestos should not be introduced.
- Paint existing asbestos shingles as an economical way to improve the exterior appearance.
- Resurfacing of clapboard/shingle can trap moisture and cause deterioration and future structural problems that are not detectable behind the modern material.



## Paint

- Maintain exterior wood elements with primer and preferably oil-based paint for maximum protection and longevity.
- Never apply paint over deteriorated wood. Paint failure is usually due to insufficient surface preparation. Painting over poorly repaired surfaces can accelerate damage to rotted wood.
- Wall surfaces that have not been painted should remain untouched unless paint is necessary to seal a porous surface. Generally, brick, stone, concrete or other non-wood surfaces should not be painted.
- Repaint using original colors if known. Consider undertaking a paint analysis to determine original color scheme.
- Avoid using inappropriate color schemes or colors inappropriate to the historic character of the building or neighborhood. Color schemes should complement adjoining buildings and add to the streetscape. Color should never be used as an advertising element and/or to attract attention to the building.
- Paint colors should tie the architectural elements together. In general, paint schemes should consist of no more than three colors. A base or body color for walls is the main color and should be found on all levels. The body color is often neutral and complements adjoining stone or brick buildings. A trim color should be used on doors, windows and cornice and/or to trim the facade. A third accent color can be introduced but should be limited – applied to small details or used on shutters. Too many colors on the wrong elements will usually detract from the building and streetscape.

## Other Common Building Materials

A number of other materials are found in the Corridor Market Towns that should be retained and restored. These elements are found on commercial buildings and include:

**Terrazzo flooring:** Traditional terrazzo flooring is composed of stone chips in cement base often trimmed with brass strips. This flooring is usually found in the recessed entryways of storefronts dating to the first half of the 20th century. The name of the store or street number are often included in tile work and should be retained. Modern terrazzo floors are made in a new way, so historic flooring should be preserved rather than replaced. Small repairs should be made by a tradesman familiar with terrazzo tile.

**Cast Iron:** Decorative elements made of cast iron, such as pilasters or panels and in some instances whole facades, are found on the main streets. These elements, dating to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, should be retained and maintained. Often portions are rusted or deteriorated. The iron should be scraped and repaired where necessary and primed and repainted.

**Structural Glass Panels:** Also known as carrera glass or vitrolite, structural glass panels were popular in the 1910-1950 period and were often added to earlier storefronts. The panels were not really structural, but decorative, and found in a wide range of colors. Structural tiles are attached with an asphalt adhesive and supported by small angled shelves. The panels should be retained. Broken panels can often be found at architectural salvage yards. If replacement panels are not found, it is possible to replace broken panels in a prominent place with undamaged glass from an inconspicuous place. A professional who has worked with structural glass panels should be consulted to complete this work.



*Structural glass panels are found on the Ridge Centre Building, Lansford.*

**Aluminum/steel/copper:** Metal storefront elements should be retained and cleaned to bring back their original appearance. They should never be painted. Aluminum can be cleaned with a mild abrasive cleaner. A mild soap can restore steel elements. Copper can be polished or left to form a green patina.

**Stucco:** Original stucco should be retained. In the 19th century stone buildings were often faced with stucco at the time they were constructed. Stucco was also important as a means to waterproof older masonry buildings. The finish, therefore, is important and should be maintained whenever possible. Stucco can be patched, but the use of Portland Cement should be avoided in the repair process.

# Cornice and Roofs

The care and maintenance of a building's roof is the most important maintenance issue facing owners of historic properties. A variety of roof types are found in the Market Towns. The majority of buildings have flat or sloping roofs. However, gable, hip and mansard roofs, as well as parapets and conical towers, are also prevalent. The roof shape, materials and other elements such as chimneys, dormers and cornices are essential for the retention of a building's architectural integrity. Fortunately in most instances the roof and associated elements on historic buildings have remained unchanged. Most alterations have been completed on facades and storefronts. Many roofs, however, are threatened by deterioration.



*A variety of roof shapes are found in the region.*



## Basic Roof Guidelines

- Retain historic roof shapes and associated elements including: dormer windows, cupolas, parapets, cornices, chimneys, cresting, weathervanes, lightning rods and drainage systems.
- Maintain original roofing materials, such as slate and copper flashing, whenever possible. Replacement should be done in kind if feasible. Expensive roofing materials, such as slate, can usually be repaired. It is rare for an entire slate roof to fail. Improper ventilation and/or corrosion of fasteners cause most problems.
- Avoid the introduction of new materials. Select a historic roofing material appropriate for the period of your building.
- Conceal roof top mechanical systems. Place large equipment so it is not visible from the street or sidewalks.



*This mansard roof has been insensitively covered with siding (above). Maintaining architectural elements is critical. Covering or removing damaged architectural detail such as the cornice at left should be avoided.*

## Roof Maintenance

Failure to maintain your roof and its drainage system can lead to major building problems. Rot to roof structure, cornice and walls is usually due to improper roof maintenance. Water damage is the major cause of roof failure. Routine maintenance will ensure the proper care of the roof system.

- Drainage system must divert water away from the building. Gutters and downspouts should be in good working order. Check for cracks, rusting, broken seams and sagging.
- Gutters and downspouts should be cleaned each year. All debris should be removed to prevent backups and freeze damage.
- Roof valleys, ridgelines and areas around chimneys and dormers should be inspected periodically. Check flashing for damage and water infiltration.
- Selectively trim trees to help reduce shade on roof for maximum drying and prevention of biological growth. Check to see if your community has a tree ordinance that may limit tree removal or trimming.
- Replace worn or deteriorated material rather than entire roofing material.
- Check and replace missing snow guards.
- Galvanized metal and tin roofs should be scraped, primed and painted when necessary.
- Repair roofing material immediately to ensure that rot and deterioration is eliminated.

# Rear Elevations

In several Market Towns the rear elevations of the buildings are often the first or the most public face of a business. In high visibility areas, the rear elevation and its design are integral to the historic appearance of the building and neighborhood. Poorly planned or unattractive rear elevations, therefore, can discourage customers and drain money away from local businesses. A rear elevation, if attractively presented, can be a major asset. Rear elevations can provide a second entry and easy accessibility. In short, good rear elevation design can give the business more exposure.

- Rear elevations should reflect the building's historic architecture and that of the adjoining buildings. Basic guidelines for the facade also apply to the rear elevation.
- Rear elevation entries should not overshadow or replace the main facade. While convenient, rear elevations should always be considered secondary. Reorientation of public view and access can often result in complex design issues. Be careful not to create a false historic appearance. Careful planning is important.

Consider the following solutions for rear elevations:

- Signage should be kept to a minimum for a simple clean look.
- Trash containers should be hidden from view.
- Rear elevations are an excellent place for awnings. Using awnings at the entry and/or windows helps to break up large voids often found on rear elevations.
- Rear elevations should be kept clean of trash and debris. Clean the building, including walls, doors and windows, as part of routine maintenance.
- Unify the rear elevation additions and elements with an appropriate paint scheme.
- Consider using planters at entrance or, if possible, landscape the rear yard or parking area.
- Light area for security using appropriate indirect lighting.
- If parking is possible, it should be well defined.



*Rear elevations are often neglected and tend to be avoided.*



# Infill Design and Building Additions

Appropriate new construction along the main streets should be encouraged. New construction can add to the variety and energy of a vital market community and should take into account the rich architectural heritage of Corridor Market Towns. A successful new design should not stand out but work with other structures along the streetscape. Generic building design should never be considered.

Appropriate design is also important for secondary structures such as garages and outbuildings. New construction should take into account the scale, shape, proportions and materials of existing outbuildings, as well as their placement and orientation on the site.

Planning and zoning can help Corridor Market Towns in regulating infill and building additions in the central business districts. Small town character ordinances that encourage good design should be introduced.

## Good Infill Design

- is compatible with existing historic buildings,
- does not copy historic fabric but uses elements of historic buildings to fit into the streetscape,
- pays attention of the scale, size, design, materials, color and texture of surrounding buildings,
- employs similar setbacks, roof shapes, building footprints and architectural features, such as porches, found along the streetscape,
- pays attention to the fenestration of adjoining historic buildings, the ratio of window openings to wall space, the proportion of shop fronts, the size of doors, windows and the level of cornice lines, and
- does not introduce new design or materials that are foreign to the historic area.



*This vacant lot on White Haven's Main Street is ideal for new construction.*



# Landscape Features and Accessories

A wide variety of landscape features and accessories are found in the commercial cores. These can include street furniture such as streetlights, benches, trash receptacles and bike racks; plantings, including trees and plant containers; flags and banners; screening and fencing; and an array of smaller items such as mailboxes and sandwich boards. It is important that these items reflect the character of the streetscape. Their design and placement should be carefully planned. In general, all items should complement the overall street design.

- Landscape features should reflect the local character. Consider trees that historically were found in the area, or trees that adapt to urban-like environments.
- Simply designed, easy to maintain street furniture should be found throughout the area. Local merchants or government should coordinate design efforts. Consider using metal or natural materials. Do not introduce new materials inappropriate to the historic area.
- Banners and flags on individual buildings should be placed at a safe height and located so that they do not cover signs or important architectural details. An alternative to individual building banners could be a community banner program that helps to unify the commercial area.

- Screening and fencing should be discouraged along the facades of commercial areas unless historic precedent exists. Iron or metal fencing may be suited in some cases, especially where buildings are setback from the streetscape. Fencing and/or screening in rear areas should be discreet. Paintable vertical board fencing should be considered to hide trash bins etc. All effort should be made to have fencing blend into landscape.
- Other items, such as flower boxes and mail boxes, should be designed to blend into the building. Paintable surfaces, preferably wood, should be used and matched to trim color. Placement of these items should not distract from architectural detailing.
- The use of art, such as murals on blank walls, should be encouraged. Art work should not be placed to distract attention or interfere with the architectural character of the facades. Art subjects should always reflect local interpretive goals.

- Billboards and other advertising signs should be discouraged unless old commercial advertisements exist. These early signs should be maintained whenever possible. Sandwich boards along sidewalks should be limited to no more than one per building. It is important that these signs be based on permanent business/ building signage.
- Vending machines should be discouraged along main street. Placement of these items should be carefully controlled. They should not compete with the facades and store windows.

The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Commission has a complete set of graphics guidelines for the visual environment of the Corridor. Known as “Visually Speaking,” these standards address entrance signage, directional, way-finding signs and interpretive waysides. Communities and heritage attractions may be eligible for matching grants.





# Community-Specific Recommendations

## White Haven

The majority of historic structures in White Haven's commercial center are located along a six-block stretch of Main Street. Many of the early frame buildings have been lost due to fire or have been demolished. Residential buildings are found along Towanda Street, closely linked to the main street.

New construction appropriate to the existing buildings along Main Street and adjoining residential areas should be encouraged. Coordinating street improvements along with new infill design is critical to preserving White Haven's historic character.

New construction along Main Street should be of frame or masonry construction. The facade of new buildings should be oriented towards the street and abut the sidewalk or echo the setbacks of existing buildings. A variety of roof shapes are appropriate. Most historic buildings along the street had or have gable roofs or flat, rear-sloping roofs with front parapets. One- to two-story buildings are appropriate.



Main Street, White Haven, early 20th century.

Although two- to three-bay-wide structures prevail, larger commercial buildings could be constructed. Their facades should be divided into smaller sections representing the typical two- to three-bay buildings. New buildings should be freestanding with side passages or alleyways or share party walls with adjacent buildings. New design should be in keeping with local setback ordinances.

Parking lots along Main Street should be discouraged. Rear parking should be encouraged if additional parking is deemed necessary.



Although windows have been shortened, this White Haven landmark retains most of its original storefront features.

New designs could include second floor porches or balconies. These features were employed on many early White Haven structures. It is strongly recommended that new buildings have long first-floor windows, not found on existing new construction.

Any new construction along the side roads should also consider employing open front porches across the facade.



New design such as S & J Subs is appropriate in size and use of materials.

Many existing building designs can be improved by installing awnings. Awnings will hide inappropriate storefront openings and will follow the original play of porches and balconies in White Haven. Placement of appropriate signage above the awning level is also encouraged.



Awnings and appropriate street furniture and landscaping should be considered to visually link the central business district.

A major challenge will be tying the parking lot and strip shopping center into a cohesive design. Renovation of the facade with appropriate signage, possibly awnings and the breaking up of the large macadam parking area with landscaping, should be future considerations.



Landscape features and appropriate signage would enhance existing businesses.

The use of common street improvements will go a long way in tying new and existing architecture together. Consider using historic materials such as brick and slate. Cobblestone and slate curbing are already apparent along Main Street.

## Lansford

Lansford is fortunate to retain the majority of its 19th and early 20th century buildings along Ridge Street. A rich variety of architectural elements are found, and many buildings retain original or old storefronts. Over the past 40 years, some storefronts and upper floors have been covered. Inappropriate renovations and poor maintenance threaten other buildings.

A major challenge to Ridge Street businesses is the current traffic pattern that has reduced the street to a secondary roadway. Most traffic uses Patterson Street/Route 209 as the major thoroughfare. Rear elevations along Patterson Street have therefore become the most public portions of buildings along the north side of Ridge Street. These elevations lack the architectural character, unity and vibrancy that make the Ridge Street facades distinct.

Cost-effective solutions to improving storefronts could make an impact on Ridge Street's streetscape. Among the easiest solution is proper storefront display. Many businesses suffer from poor window display and lighting. Simple, clean and attractive design could greatly enhance the streetscape.



*Lansford retains a majority of its historic architecture.*

Routine maintenance, including painting and cleaning of storefront materials, should be completed on a regular schedule. Small repairs to damaged historic fabric, such as wood, cast iron and structural glass, should be made.

Proper storefront design should be encouraged throughout the central business district. The use of canvas awnings to disguise inappropriate windows could be a cost-effective solution to improve storefronts until rehabilitation work is begun. Appropriate signs and sign placement above awnings could also solve a number of problems to current storefront designs.

Blocked window openings and upper floor sheathing could be easily removed bringing about a significant change to the streetscape. Sheathing of architectural details is not an appropriate design solution and should always be avoided. Keep in mind that when removing sheathing, repairs of architectural features may be necessary. Repair of original elements rather than replacement is encouraged.



*Rear elevations along Route 209 lack the architectural interest of the facades along Ridge Street.*

Rear elevation guidelines should be applied to businesses along the north side of Ridge Street. Appropriate signage, removal of inappropriate materials and landscape elements such as chain link fencing, as well as cleaning and painting, should be encouraged. A street beautification project might be considered to bring appropriate landscape features to the Patterson Street/Route 209 corridor.



*Many storefronts could be improved with awnings.*



*Many upper facades and windows along Ridge Street have been covered or enclosed. Reopening them or applying a creative paint scheme would help to add vitality to the streetscape.*

## Jim Thorpe

Jim Thorpe has a rich architectural heritage. Today its thriving commercial district and visitor center have substantially contributed to its economic success. Residential owners and the business community have embraced Jim Thorpe's history and architecture for the most part. Rehabilitations have respected the architectural character of the town by employing good preservation practices. However, regulations that govern appropriate renovation or protect buildings from demolition have not been adopted. The destruction of architectural character by insensitive rehabilitation or the construction of new buildings could have a negative effect on the community.

Rather than wait until a pivotal building is altered or demolished or incompatible buildings or elements are introduced to Jim Thorpe, steps to protect the character of the streetscape should be implemented now. These regulations should include a sign ordinance. Signage that is appropriate both in scale and use of materials should be encouraged. The placement of signs along sign bands and on awnings should be emphasized.

Establishing a historic architectural review board to approve alterations to existing buildings in the historic district and

review new construction plans will be key to maintaining the community's architectural heritage and economic success. New design should be encouraged to enhance the streetscape by respecting the scale, materials and setbacks found on historic streetscapes. Regulation of new construction is critical due to the economic success of the central business district. National retailers, who may not consider the town's architectural heritage in their design, remain a major threat unless regulation is in place. Any control of new design should also take into consideration the viewsheds and the vertical orientation of pivotal buildings, such as church towers, that could be overwhelmed by new construction. Large, low-scale buildings, such as box stores, should also be considered in zoning regulations. In general, new regulations should be appropriate for the historic district and be aimed at preserving the small town character.



*Appropriate period lighting fixture.*



*19th century view of Broadway.*



*Broadway today.*

# Lehigh



*Historic Lehigh.*

Traffic patterns in Lehigh have reduced First Street to a secondary thoroughfare. The Route 209 bypass has placed the town's back to most vehicular traffic and in turn has reduced business activity along First Street. Lehigh's commercial core, however, retains the majority of its 19th and early 20th century buildings. Today, the focal point of the central business district is a small park, amphitheater and facing buildings, including an imposing early 20th century school. This area and the adjacent two blocks along First Street would be greatly enhanced if original facades in the area were rehabilitated.

Many Lehigh storefronts are empty and commercial activity has been largely curtailed. A 12-story residential tower, however, is found near the heart of the commercial center, and the town has solid residential areas that could support local business enterprises.

Key to the renovation of Lehigh's business center will be the integration of the rear elevations and open space



*Appropriate signage can help attract customers.*

to First Street. The rear yards along the bypass have been neglected and contain unattractive parking lots and abandoned fields. At least two alleyways connect the lower parking area and First Street but remain largely unused.

A cohesive plan for the rejuvenation of the rear lots is critical to making downtown Lehigh a thriving commercial center. Along with a sensitive parking and landscape plan, rear elevations of main street buildings should be renovated. Businesses should consider secondary entrances and appropriate and simple signage. The alleyways leading to First Street should be highlighted in any plan. Appropriate lighting, paving materials and landscaping will improve these features.

Many of the existing facades along First Street have been covered by inappropriate materials. In many instances, this sheathing appears to have preserved original fabric. Repair of facades, including the removal of sheathing, should be a major priority for improving the character of the streetscape.

Proper storefront design should be encouraged throughout the central business district. The use of canvas awning to disguise inappropriate windows could be a cost-effective solution to improve store-



*Many historic buildings in Lehigh are covered with inappropriate materials.*



*Architectural cornices have been removed from some Lehigh buildings.*

Owners of empty storefronts should be encouraged to create a neat appearance. Often, empty storefronts can be used for a public-oriented exhibition space.

Paint, including murals along vacant walls and faux painting for missing cornice areas, should be encouraged.

Many of the changes undertaken as part of past rehabilitations are inappropriate to the historic fabric and appear to have affected Lehigh's declining business environment. These changes include the shortening or replacement of windows along the storefront and upper levels and the introduction of inappropriate materials such as vinyl siding. In the long term, adding windows of the original shape and dimension and the removal of vinyl and other incompatible materials should be encouraged.



*Alleyways connecting First Street to rear parking areas should be improved.*

fronts until rehabilitation work is begun. Appropriate signs and sign placement above awnings could also solve a number of problems to current storefront designs.

# Palmerton



*Historic Palmerton.*

Palmerton's Delaware Avenue has a grouping of early 20th century commercial buildings and a thriving business community. Due to its 20th century development there has not been a strong preservation ethic and many buildings have been modernized. Palmerton's architecture, along with the scale and cohesiveness of the streetscape, is vital in maintaining this strong business environment. Key buildings, including a bank and library, have been sensitively maintained and/or renovated. Palmerton also has a large early 20th century residential area adjoining the central business district that has experienced sensitive rehabilitation. Today, inappropriate use of materials and the occasional removal of historic elements from the facades continues to threaten the streetscape.

Much of Palmerton's central business district lacks human scale. The width of Delaware Avenue and increased traffic has helped separate the south side of the street from the park and a large portion of the town's residential sections.

It is recommended that street improvements and landscaping be implemented to join the park area and south side of Delaware Avenue. Improvement to calm traffic and improve pedestrian amenities should be encouraged, including the introduction of a pedestrian right-of-way near the



*Landscaping along Delaware Avenue would help to create a more pedestrian friendly streetscape.*



*Where original storefront features have been removed, the use of fabric awnings will improve the visual impact of a property. This is particularly effective for corner buildings. (See historical photo on left.)*

park. Due to its broad avenue, banners and other unifying elements, such as street furniture, should be encouraged.

Proper storefront design should be encouraged throughout the central business district. The use of canvas awning to disguise inappropriate windows could be a cost-effective



*Palmerton has a number of impressive early 20th century buildings.*



solution to improve storefronts until rehabilitation work is begun. Appropriate signs and sign placement above awnings could also solve a number of problems to current storefront designs.

## Slatington

Slatington's commercial main street serves as the area's major transportation route. Main Street is divided into two sections, with the east end holding the majority of commercial buildings. Intact residential areas adjoin the heart of the business district. Today, Slatington has a rich architectural legacy that is very much intact. Unfortunately, inappropriate renovations and deterioration of original elements threatens the architectural integrity of the historic area.

Original storefronts and signage, found scattered along Main Street, should be maintained in good repair. Several buildings hold original painted signs on side walls that should be retained. Upper-floor details on many buildings are neglected. Deterioration of architectural details, including slate roofs, should be routinely monitored. Maintenance programs should be implemented to help protect original elements and make repairs before problems worsen. Upper-floor detail hidden behind inappropriate materials should be unsheathed and restored.



*Original architectural detail has been removed on one-half of this double house.*



*Early 20th Century Streetscape, Slatington.*

Proper storefront design should be encouraged throughout the central business district. The use of canvas awnings to disguise inappropriate windows could be a cost-effective solution to improve storefronts until rehabilitation work is begun. Appropriate signs and sign placement above awnings could also solve a number of problems to current storefront designs. New signage and landscaping should be encouraged on several non-historic buildings to lessen their impact on the streetscape.

Buildings on the adjoining side streets have undergone major renovations over the past 30 years. Often architectural elements were stripped and cornice and window details eliminated. Original open front porches were also enclosed. Remaining front porches should be retained along with their original architectural elements. Paint and wood repair should be encouraged. The use of vinyl and aluminum, predominant in residential areas, should be discouraged. Asbestos-clad buildings can be painted appropriate colors to enhance the streetscape and lessen the impact of this material.



*The Slatington Library is an example of appropriate renovation and reuse.*



*Many upper floors along Main Street retain original architectural elements.*

# Corridor Market Towns Map

