Northfield Downtown Guidebook
Heritage Preservation in the Historic District
Northfield Downtown Guidebook

Published by the Heritage Preservation Commission for the City Council of Northfield, Minnesota

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Content is as developed by the Heritage Preservation Commission. Ordinances and guidelines are as approved by the City of Northfield. The content of this guidebook in no way represents specific endorsement by the State Historical Society.

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The building histories are compilations of material in the city file and public library, much of which is not complete. Hopefully their publication here may both help conservation measures and also prompt those who know more of their histories to come forth.

These histories were developed first by Intern Brian Oshwald in setting up the historic district, and added to through the efforts of Leotta Stewart, John Bjork, Dale Ness and HPC members. Additional historical material was gathered by John Zeck for the Historic Preservation Commissions walking audio tour. Much of the history is based on the files and extraordinary memory of Marston Headley, who helped review the text for accuracy of dates and persons.

Building histories were edited by Jeanne Narum.

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## How to use this Guidebook

This book is arranged for use according to a number of interests. For those curious about life in the downtown years ago there are summary histories: see Section II “Building Stories.” These histories are located throughout the book and accompanying the building restoration and design examples.

The historic photographs of buildings and the downtown streetscape are for those interested in the physical appearance and evolution of the downtown. More than one view of the same area may be present to illustrate the everpresent constancies and changes.

For planning work on buildings there are recent examples in Section III “Restoration Examples,” and in Section IV “Storefront Design.” Information on how to deal with building conditions and materials is summarized in Section IV, including information on brickwork, woodwork, doors, windows, display areas, paint colors and signs.

The Heritage Preservation Commission has more detailed technical information in its library, and the HPC can help direct questions to qualified sources, suppliers and architects. This Guidebook is just that, a guide to the key factors to consider in heritage preservation, and it aims to explain why significant architectural details should not be removed, destroyed or disregarded because of lack of understanding of their esthetic value or of how to successfully repair, preserve or restore these materials.

What is to be preserved? This is the hard question. What is to be preserved on a particular building is looked at specifically for that building — its historic condition and present needs, and also its contribution to the townscape as a whole. The town’s face is the result of many small decisions on each individual storefront, which may in themselves seem relatively unimportant to the whole downtown setting. In even a year’s time however, the results of these individual choices have a large impact on the public esthetics of the town.

Some of the esthetic components of the downtown which should not be allowed to disappear are described in this Guidebook. By knowing the importance of these details to the general character of the downtown district, it is hoped that in repairing and restoring each storefront we will be maintaining the downtown’s physical heritage.
The Historic District
Northfield’s Historic Downtown

The Historic District in the City of Northfield comprises some sixty-five (65) buildings in the commercial center of the City. The District was created by action of the City Council in 1978 and received final approval from the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a designated district in 1979. This action confirmed that the proposed area in Northfield met the established criteria for an Historic District, which are:

"those districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and
1) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
2) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; and
3) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master builder, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction."

The City of Northfield, by Ordinance #329, states that it is a "matter of public policy that the preservation, protection, perpetuation and use of areas, places, buildings, structures, and other objects having special historical interest or value is a public necessity, and is required in the interest of the health, safety, welfare and prosperity of the people."

The purpose of this ordinance is to:
(A) Safeguard the heritage of the City of Northfield by preserving sites and structures which reflect elements of the City's cultural, social economic, political, visual or architectural history.

(B) Protect and enhance the City of Northfield's appeal to residents, visitors and tourists, and serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry.

(C) Foster civic pride in the beauty and notable accomplishments of the past; and

(D) Promote the preservation and continued use of historic sites and structures for the education and general welfare of the people of the City of Northfield.

The Historic District

The downtown Historic District is shown here as designated on the National Register of Historic Places. Northfield's heritage preservation ordinance governs physical changes and signage for all properties within and abutting the designated district. The Heritage Preservation Commission is an advisory board set up to provide information and to review applications for building changes.

The evolution of the downtown buildings has been recorded on a composite of early Sanborn insurance maps, which are on display in the Public Library.
From a 'Bird's-Eye' drawing of Northfield in 1888
Published by the Northfield Historical Society
A number of forces influenced the physical "shape" of the downtown. The original town grid meeting the river, and the requirement for bridges across it at key streets are the basic pattern. Most significant to Northfield's good fortune, is that the evolution of railroads and highways has been at the edge of downtown but not through it — close enough to maintain downtown development without disrupting the original fabric of Northfield's heritage.

The Town Center is itself part of the heritage of Northfield and its continual presence and evolution is the concern of the Heritage Preservation Commission. Rather than freeze the town center architecture at one historical era, the goal of heritage preservation is to accent the best features of the buildings from many eras, and to keep their evolution in character with their design features.

The Town Center is a registered historic district and the guidelines contained in this guidebook outline the goals for helping decisions as they are made one at a time, building per building so there is continuity as new features are added. And to maintain the architectural character of its buildings, which can easily be lost.

THE GOOD FORTUNE OF NORTHFIELD'S LOCATION

The Town Center is a symbolic center that defines Northfield as a town. Imagine the town without a center. This historic downtown center is its evolving future as well as evidence of its past character.

As a meaningful town center, it already has a head start in terms of being a place with a diversity of functions and business businesses. Northfield possesses a sense of continuity and vitality which is a heritage inherently more interesting and potentially more durable than many new commercial creations.

Today this is unique. Commercial enterprises spend fortunes trying to recreate the ambiance, convenience and charm of smalltown America. Mainstreet in Disney World, and the indoor shopping streets of galleries and malls are both imitations of our downtown heritage.

Stereoptican card shows early band concert on Division Street at Bridge Square in front of the Dampier House previously known as the American House.
BRIDGE SQUARE
This is where Northfield really began. John W. North, a Minneapolis lawyer and land speculator, chose this site for a town in early 1855. By the end of 1856 he had built a dam, a sawmill, and a grist mill here. The first store in town was located just a few yards away. The two mills were vitally important: one provided lumber for construction, the other brought farmers into town to have their grain processed into flour. The river was viewed as a source of power and a sewer rather than as a thing of beauty. The AMES MILL on the west side of the river, dates back to 1869; it pioneered in new milling processes which led to Northfield flour being given the highest rating at the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. The

POST OFFICE was built in 1936 as a WPA project under the New Deal. BRIDGE SQUARE itself, formerly known as Mill Square and then Horsecollar Park, was for many years a large empty space. In 1927 the Civil War monument was dedicated. With automobiles, the Square posed difficult problems in traffic management. The present arrangement of streets and pedestrian areas was completed in 1978-79.

Bridge Square panoramic photographs show the extensive use of storefront awnings with signs on them. Like the wood canopies which were on the earlier wood buildings they gave pedestrians protection from sun and rain and were a festive complement to the downtown.
What is Downtown Heritage?

The Historic District in Northfield was designated because the importance of the buildings located there. Not all the individual buildings have special historic value or unique architectural sensitivity. The value is that each continues the streetscape, by filling in the street to maintain a viable pedestrian commercial district. This downtown District is characterized by five basic physical features which give it order and flexibility.

1. A continuity of two- and three-story or taller buildings without large interruptions of open space in between them. These tall fronts not only define the location of intense commercial activity, they also express a kind of marketplace exuberance aimed at attracting pedestrian shoppers.

2. Streets and squares which are easily accessible by cars, bicycles and pedestrians. The downtown is integral with residential and other commercial areas. It is not separated by highways or parking lots from where people live.

3. Buildings with a tall first floor very open to the street by use of large glass areas. The upper floors with much smaller windows and more solid walls are appropriate for the supporting businesses or apartments above. Modern term: mixed-use development that brings more people downtown.

4. Similarities of materials, of scale of openings and story heights, of colors and architectural detail. These give the downtown buildings an overall unity, while providing a sense of great variety.

5. Historical associations. Events which have occurred at a particular building or site can strengthen the sense of the place by the physical presence of the architecture and by the wear and patina acquired by use.

These features of our building heritage are further amplified throughout this guidebook. This heritage can best be preserved by understanding how well it serves the community and business, today and tomorrow, by allowing new adaptations and energy to be applied creatively within an overall order.

What is to be Preserved?

The basic concept of preservation is, that as changes are made to help the natural processes of replacement, of growth and change, each building be evaluated to determine that changes be made in character with its architecture and use. A process and technical information to aid this assessment follow in the next chapter.

Examples of preservation are evident in some excellent adaptive reuses, remodelings and restorations that follow. However, take a minute to recall some of the characteristics in our downtown which might also be a guide. Look at materials and architectural details of the upper stories. The primary features include:

A. Red and buff brick work or stone walls.

B. Stone used with brick for contrast, both as window sills, window arch keystones or as horizontal "belt" courses.

C. Brick arched windows often with stone or brick "eyebrows."

D. Tall storefront openings. Cast iron columns within completely metal, glass storefronts with wood trim – usually dark in color.

E. Second-story windows with Gothic-like arches or with decorative wood trim under hooded arches.

F. Elaborate cornices with brackets, or peaked "gable" cornices with names, dates and skyline decorations.

To assure eligibility for grants or special tax incentives, the HPC encourages building owners to contact them during the planning process.
Bridge Square Buildings

NORTHWEST MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE
11 Bridge Square
THE SHATTO BUILDING, built in 1878 by Fred Shatto for $3,000. Original purpose: Steenerson and Company's retail clothing store. In 1939, when Boyum's Groceries and the Spot Restaurant opened for business here, a new store front was added and the building brought up flush to the street. The present stucco front was constructed when James Herreid purchased the building in 1967. On the west side of the building is an access to the river front, with some attractive landscaping, one of the first efforts at river beautification in our city.

BIAGIO'S
13 Bridge Square
CROSBY BUILDING, built by a Mr. Crosby in 1894, for the sum of $3,300. Occupants have ranged from a steam laundry, pool hall, cigar factory and a restaurant (which was at least once raided by the police to confiscate dice and money.) Although not possessing great architectural merit, the building has its own unique charm and seems particularly fitting for a deli... even one flaunting the colors of the Italian flag.

BRIDGE SQUARE BARBERS
15 Bridge Street
The SECOND DICKSON BUILDING built around 1900 in a narrow space which was formerly a passageway. Hence it is one of the narrowest storefronts in town. It is a simple one-story structure which has served continuously since its construction as a barber shop.

MICHAELS
Bridge Square (See Page 38)

NORTHFIELD INSURANCE
19 Bridge Square
THE ALDSWORTH BUILDING, built by William Aldsworth in 1893 for $2,800. Original use: A harness shop. Two-story brick building, with upper story still relatively intact, though partially painted. The storefront was modernized in a different esthetic entirely.

FIRST BANK
25 Bridge Square
This single-story bank constructed in 1966 and designed by SMM architects in Northfield represents a modern neoclassical and composition; the exterior concrete columns support a heavy roof band, the walls of large tinted plate glass windows are recessed back from the sidewalk. It is well sited right on the corner. The buildings it replaced were interesting ornate examples of large street-corner buildings, which echoed in height and proportion the Nutting and Central Block buildings across the street.
Bridge Square

THE CENTRAL BLOCK
401-405 Division Street
Built by Louis Tschann and Frank DeGross in 1893. Working with contractor Cook was the architect P. W. Delancy. Costing $27,000 when it was built, the three-story structure is little changed, except for the redesign of the ground floor storefronts.

The most impressive building downtown; its unique turret is a landmark of the Northfield skyline. This building combines several of the stylistic theories of the day into a Queen Anne style, Romanesque building. It is divided into three layers typical of commercial architecture: 1) the ground floor store area set off by large windows; 2) the middle floor, designed to contain offices, given visual unity by the exterior flattened columns; and 3) the top story for meetings and storage.

This building can be compared favorably with Louis Sullivan's Wainwright building in St. Louis, now considered a classic. Both buildings were designed to make the exterior reflect the interior functions.

Distinguishing details include the prominent name plaque, the delicate terra cotta designs on the columns, capitals, and bases and the ornate metal cornice work with its special tin designed relief on the corner turret.

For many years, the third story was leased by the Odd Fellows Lodge. Originally accessible only by an outside iron stairway, the interior access was installed in 1928 and is still present.

Now owned by James Herreid, The Central Block continues to be a very pivotal building in the downtown Historic District.

BOB'S SHOES
16 Bridge Square

THE SCHMIDT BUILDING, a two-story building constructed c. 1880, a fire in 1944 or 45 badly damaged the building; the facade was then rebuilt with new bricks and glass block.

U.S. POST OFFICE
18 Bridge Square

An example of WPA days New Deal architecture built in 1936, of brick and cut stone with neo-gothic details. The building turns the corner of the Square to enfront both Square and river.
NORTHFIELD TRAVEL
300 South Water Street
PLUMMER CORNER, this, the second building on the site, was built in 1903 after the older building was condemned for its poor condition. Constructed by the Minneapolis Brewing Company for $10,000. (Compare that to the price of the Scriver Building built over forty years earlier!) The north part of the building was a grocery store from 1907 to 1947.

EAGLES
304 South Water Street
THE LAW BUILDING, the present building was constructed in 1899 on the site of the demolished Law building, a structure which had served the community for 42 years and was once considered the finest in the city. The new brick building, with two storefronts, then boasted the largest glass window in the city.

JASNOCH INC., QUALITY APPLIANCE
303-309 South Water Street
THE EBEL BLOCK, built by William Ebel in 1894 for use as a mercantile business. Primarily of soft yellow brick, with two separate storefronts, the facade shows but few alternations to the original building. With a sloped parapet roof, a light bracketed cornice line and vertical columns dividing the building into balanced sections, this is a structure with great potential now being realized by the current owners, Gene and Jeff Jasnoch.

HVISTENDAHL and MOERSCH
ATTORNEYS
State Bank Building
317 South Water Street (see page 23)

MALT-O-MEAL
Ames Mill Building
319 South Water Street (see page 40)
West side on Water Street showing original front of Dino's and Bill's Pizza Palace

Fire Hall, now Three Acres Antiques
The West Side of Division Street

STUART HOTEL
212 Division Street (see page 27)

NUTTING MALL
220 Division Street (see page 26)

HARMON'S PHOTOGRAPHY
300 Division Street (see page 30)

THREE ACRES ANTIQUES
302 Division Street

The original CITY HALL constructed in 1876 of yellow brick displays on its two-story front, brick relief beneath its windows, a corbeled brick upper pattern and a bracketed cornice still intact. At street level arched doorways for the fire wagons were replaced by one large opening as fire equipment became larger, and this opening was enclosed with an 'early American' multi-paned shop window of complementary character. The colors used retain its historic appearance. A rooftop cupola now missing can be seen in the early photographs.

NORTHFIELD ARTS GUILD
304 Division Street (see page 24)

THE DAHL HOUSE
306 Division Street


Clean lines and simple ornamentation grace the second story. The symmetry of the original structure continued on street level with paired semi-circular arched windows and door openings. It is visually appealing and successful as a retail front, although few historical details remain.

PERMAN'S
314 Division Street

THE BUSHNELL, TOSNEY AND MCKAY BUILDINGS, built by Dwight Bushnell (1897), John Tosney (1882) and Alex McKay, Sr., (1925).

Little of the historical architectural fabric of these buildings remains visible. Combined into one store in 1972 by Perman's, who had occupied the southern-most structure from 1935.

Although undistinguished architecturally, these buildings have always been the scene of much commercial activity in the Northfield community. The Bushnell Building (to the north), was originally an implement company. It also housed the Mohn Printing Company, the Northfield Independent, the College City Press, and Dittmann Travel. The middle structure, the Tosney Building, has seen a liquor and cigar store, a bowling alley, the Telephone Company and a travel agency. For most of its years a clothing store, the McKay building to the south has also been the Post Office and housed an osteopathic office.
The East Side of Division Street

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY
105 East Third Street
Built on the site of the first building which housed Carleton College, THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY was designed in 1910 by Bell, Tyrie and Chapman of Minneapolis. Like many such libraries it is built with classical symmetry and details, mostly identified with the Georgian Revival style, but also showing evidence of American 'cottage' roof lines. It's sited with ample space around the building giving it special status among the buildings of downtown.

NORTHFIELD REALTY
303 Division Street
THE STORLIE BUILDING, constructed in 1980 by Northfield Partners, after the demolition of the Grant Building. A two-story brick structure with bay windows and other details and size compatible to the character of the downtown.

BENSON BARBERS
305 Division Street
Now interconnected with the Storlie building to the north. The THOMPSON BUILDING was constructed in the 1950's replacing an earlier small building. This section of Division Street has small buildings in part because of the difficulty of excavating into the solid rock hillside.

INLOW JEWELRY
307 Division Street
The F. O. Rice building built in 1889 is doubtless one of the few remaining small wood frame stores which were eventually replaced by the larger brick buildings downtown. The front has been remodeled numerous times resulting in no clear visible indication of its original design.

V.I.P. TRAVEL
309 Division Street
THE ARCADE BUILDING, built by Magnus Wickman in 1895. The name taken is from the original front of this structure, which had an arch of "old crushed brick" extending across the building above the first story.
Present facade created in 1967 by owners Dave, Winnie and Les Drentlaw, continues use of the arch motif.
For a partial glimpse of the original front, see the Northfield News Building photo, page 28.
THE MULBERRY BUSH and THE GOLDSMITH SHOP
311 Division Street

THE NORTHFIELD NEWS BUILDING, built about 1883-84 by John Carls. Original use: Implement store.

A remodeled front, which replaced the original storefront lost in a bad fire in 1965 covers the original lower half of the building. The second-story red brick detail is intact. Of interest is the cornice work, similar in design to the Greek key, and the rhythmic pattern established by the eight long, narrow windows marching across the upper front.

WILLIE’S SHOE REPAIR
315 Division Street

THE LOCKREM-SUMNER BUILDING, built by Sumner to house a photography studio and millinery shop. One of the few buildings in town nearly intact historically. The facade has not changed appreciably except for display window changes and removal of the stationary canopy.

The building reflects a design characteristic of buildings of that time, with three arched windows across the second story, topped by wood arches above the windows and a cornice of large wood brackets.

Built together in 1872 with the French Building, its “twin” to the south with which it shares a wall, each structure cost $1,500.

THE IDEAL CAFE
317 Division Street

THE FRENCH BUILDING, built in 1872 by H. S. French and Rose.

Nearly identical to the Lockrem-Summer building to the north. Remodeled in 1894 by French. It has been in continual use as a confectionary or a restaurant and Northfield gathering place.

GRUNDHOEFER, NEUVILLE AND DITMANSON LAW OFFICES
319 Division Street

THE CLARK BUILDING, built in 1889, Clark and Lockrem Insurance and William Budt, horse trainer, first occupied the building. The ‘modern’ front gives no hint of the original age of character of the structure.

TINY'S SMOKE SHOP
321 Division Street

THE FIRST MERGEN BUILDING, built by Mergen in 1882 as a liquor store and for his family’s living quarters. This two-story building has been thoroughly remodeled with a stucco front and tinted windows.

NORTHFIELD VARIETY STORE
323-325 Division Street

(see page 35)

FIRST NATIONAL BANK
327 Division Street


A handsome three-story building of red brick and cut stone. The brick with stone bands and lintels set off the windows of each story. The original intact cornice at the building roof line exhibit Eastlake style details, and gives considerable elegance to this corner building. The patterns and shadows formed by the brick are especially evident as the sunrise hits the building. This is one of the anchor buildings which gives strength and centrality to the heart of the downtown, and who with its tall neighbors provide definition to Bridge Square.

The Nutting (Bank) building was the first to display weather signals in the town of Northfield. The first indicator flag was hoisted a few days before Christmas in 1886. The weather predictions were telegraphed from Washington to a central station daily at one o’clock and were then transmitted to several substations before seven a.m. In addition to being a welcome new service to townspeople, it was a unique and innovative promotional idea at the time which appears to have lasted. Cards explaining the meaning of the different signals were available at stores in the Nutting Building.

The First National Bank complex now encompasses three buildings, which have been brought together in one unit, showing how sensitive changes can be undertaken to respect the heritage of a structure while adapting it to the needs of today. Robert Warn, the architect for the remodeling and addition of the corner portion in 1966, was among the first to work in Northfield to actively explore the heritage of this community. The 1982 remodeling of the storefronts to the east on Fourth Street are a contemporary interpretation of late 19th century storefronts — large windows with wooden panels above and below, vertical posts, and a recessed door. The colors compliment the unusual red tinted brick mortar.

FIRST NATIONAL INSURANCE
105-107 East Fourth Street

The NUTTING ADDITION replaced the old Trussel building in 1903. In this elegant three-story brown brick building with especially colorful mortar, William Rebstock opened his restaurant and bakery on the main floor and Dr. E. G. Ridell, a dentist, moved in from the Central Block. After 1904, a millinery store under numerous owners operated into the 1930’s. The well-proportioned building has been a cabinet shop in 1904, Northfield Hat Shop in the 1930's, several beauty shops, and Irwin's Flowers from 1960 until 1972. The east store was most recently the D & B Western Shop. The storefronts were remodeled in 1982 by First National Bank.
LE BISTRO'S
107 East Fourth Street
CARPENTER BUILDING, constructed in 1899 by C. P. Carpenter, publisher and lawyer, to house the presses of the Northfield Independent and other professional offices. A two-story brick building which features a second-story bay window, this structure was thoroughly renovated inside and out in 1977. The main floor facade now has a large multi-paned window and a recessed entrance off to the side, again a contemporary interpretation of an historical theme that is very compatible to the spirit of the District. The new owners, the Maltby's, have restored the upstairs bay window to complete the facade restoration.

HEIBERG DENTIST OFFICE
109 East Fourth Street
THE LYCEUM BUILDING, built in 1857 on land donated by John North, is the oldest building in Northfield. This humble structure stands as testimony to the strong commitment North and the other leaders of the community had for education and self-improvement. The original building, 18 by 28, was built for $580, probably less than it cost to paint it today. The Lyceum saw many lively debates on such timely topics as abolition of slavery (before the Civil War), temperance, the immortality of war, the women's suffrage. The affirmative won on the suffrage question, but only with the ladies voting. In 1884, the building was rotated 90 degrees to face the newly created Fourth Street. Recent repairs to the building include a new stone wall, steps and siding. Regular new coats of paint, currently a classy cream and blue combination, give the building a youth and vigor that belies her years.

FAMILY COMPUTING
111 East Fourth Street
SITZE BUILDING, built by Mrs. Sitze in 1894 and leased to D. W. Market who operated a bakery and restaurant. With apartments on the second floor and offices on the first, the front has been completely altered, now behind undistinguished brick, with new doors and windows of aluminum.

THE GRAND THEATER
316 Washington Street
WARE AUDITORIUM, built in 1899 by A. K. Ware and designed by Minneapolis architect Harry Carter. Planned to accommodate 1,000 people, the final cost was two and one-half times the original estimate of $8,000. Designed in the Federal Revival style and built of Northfield red brick, the original front facade of the building faced east, with six sets of second- and third-story windows, a large central Palladian window, pilasters, balconies and a dramatic canopied entry. The building was surrounded by a classical bracketed overhanging cary. Now many of those features have been removed and the building has lost much of its original character. The interior, however, despite a fire and two subsequent remodelings, still retains much flavor of earlier years. The present owner, Tom Doughty, has plans to open up the east facade in a manner similar to the original, and with new canopies and other treatment, making the entrances to the theater more welcoming and a more colorful part of life in Northfield.
East Side of Division Street

MITCHELL’S
407 Division Street

THE GRESS BUILDING, built in 1893 as a shoe store for owner C. W. Gress; a two-story brick building which cost $6,250, in the “Gothic” style, one of the five revival styles popular after 1865. A photograph from 1910 shows a single window and a recessed door with pillars. The second story has long arched windows, topped by what is one of the most charming rooflines in the city, a small parapet roof which has been described as “an interesting visual tie with the turret of the Central Block to the north.” Originally built for use as a clothing store, and after many years with a variety of other business, it again became a clothing store in 1960. The ‘art deco’ awning added in 1981 by the present owners, Gene and Winnie Drentlaw, is now one of the few on the east side of Division, which in earlier years sported an awning on every store.

STEVENSON’S
409 Division Street

THE WHEELER BUILDING, a two-story brick building constructed in 1875 and first occupied by Wheeler and Blackman. The IOOF used the second floor until 1899 when undertakers Ferguson and Mitchell moved in. It is not known if they were still there when Dr. R. Phillips became “located on the second floor.” Although the first floor facade has been remodeled, the structure still has its original wood bracketed cornice and engraved arches over the four closely-spaced second-story windows. We can learn from the Wheeler Building the attention given to the second stories in earlier days, both in design and to provide good daylight into the interior.

GROH’S MUSIC and THE HUB
411-413 Division Street

THE HAMRE BUILDING, since its opening in 1886, as a two-story typical commercial building of the period, has always housed two businesses at the street level, with additional occupants on the second floor. There have been few changes to the upper windows, bracketed cornices and pediment.

COAST-TO-COAST
415-417 Division Street

THE SKINNER BLOCK, the two buildings behind the modern brick front may well be the earliest three-story buildings, and the oldest commercial buildings still in use in the Historic District. Built in the late 1860’s, the northern building housed a succession of furniture stores until the National Tea Grocery moved in.

Still visible in this building are the original cast iron columns, with foundry marks, imbedded in the storefront.
JACOBSEN'S
419 Division Street
THE LOCKWOOD OPERA HOUSE, built in 1872 by Ephraim Lockwood to house his dry goods and grocery business at the street level and an opera house on the second floor. Here again we discover the variety of activities which took place in the downtown buildings in the earlier years. The Lockwood Opera House was the main meeting and entertainment hall of the community until the Ware Auditorium was built. There supposedly was a group rehearsing a play there in September, 1876, when the James-Younger gang tried to rob the bank. In 1887, according to an early account, "the sensation of the season was the visit of General Tom Thumb, his wife and Commodore Nutt and Minnie Warren, the midgets." The doorway to the Opera House is still visible at the street level and the glass-covered bulletin board is still in use to announce what is taking place in the structure, now entirely used for commercial activity.

421 Division Street
MELWIN BUILDING, built in 1899, now has colors and a common panel announcing the store name to unite this building with its neighbor to the north. Owned by Jacobson's since 1947, the space has also contained a meat market and an ice cream factory. The building before it was set back from the street with the stairs to the opera house out in the open. Stairs to the opera house were built in the Melwin Building.

THE McClaughry Block
425-429 Division Street
THE McClaughry Block building, erected in 1882 of brick and stone, at a cost of $23,000, was by far the most expensive and imposing building in Northfield at the time. This, one of the several larger, distinguished buildings at major corners in the District, uses wide strips of red brick alternating with white or cream-colored stone: a common design feature in late 19th century commercial buildings, and one repeated in other buildings in this community. By its detractors this style became known as the "lean bacon" style, for obvious reasons. On the south side is a wooden staircase, a functional and safety feature in buildings which made good use of every bit of floor space on all floors. It was conceived in three layers, with stores on the street level, professional offices on the second and apartments on top. This concept of building planning is again widely used today. As happened with several other builders of the day, McClaughry went bankrupt shortly after construction of the building, for reasons not completely clear. An important tenant since its earliest years has been the Masonic Lodge, which used the third floor as a lodge meeting room.

A fire in 1946 caused $50,000 damage. The front facade lost much of its splendor as the iron railing, balcony, cornice and the pediment that bore the name and construction date all disappeared as the building was repaired after the fire. The original elegance of the building is evident from the historic photographs and, to some extent, from the southern exposure where the bracketed cornice is still intact. The rhythm of the windows in the upper stories, with their beige stone sills and keystone arches and the proportions of the building, all make an important contribution to the architectural character of downtown.
THE QUALITY BAKERY
410 Division Street
REBSTOCK BAKERY, constructed in 1885, when the original frame structure owned by Theo Miller, undertaker and cabinet maker, was torn down. A bakery since 1903, this building has been the source of much pleasure — food for the body — for the citizens of Northfield. The building too gives pleasure with an unexpected delight at the roof line. The recently added canvas awning is an improvement over the aluminum one.

THE ART STORE
412 Division Street
THE FERSTLER BUILDING, built in 1921. A relative newcomer to the downtown, this building shows how the fashions in building styles had changed since the mid- and late 19th century. Buildings now were more functional, with little attention given to architectural detail. It replaced its smaller wood-frame predecessor which can be seen in early streetscape photographs.

W. T. NELSON AGENCY
414 Division Street
THE KINGMAN BUILDING, built in 1873; this two-story light tan brick building still features a well-preserved cornice and detailed brick work. The overhanging aluminum cornice and corrugated aluminum backing extending to the base of the second-story windows shows the “modernization” which was done to many buildings in the last 20 years, before the original qualities of the buildings were rediscovered.

TOWN AND COUNTRY
416 Division Street
THE LAWLER BUILDING, constructed around 1872 by A. Thorson. When the rear addition was added a few years later, this was the largest building in the country. Now the light stucco, the corrugated aluminum siding, and the modern display windows replace the original storefront.

RAGSTOCK and SCHULTZ IE'S
420 Division Street
THE MORRIS BUILDING, built in 1879 by A. P. Morris to house his notions store, the present facade of stucco, and aluminum awning and high display windows, retains little of the original front. One can look across to Jacobsen’s and compare storefronts old and new and see how fashions in merchandizing become a significant concern for those who remodeled these commercial buildings. It was for awhile very important for things to look new.

BIERMAN'S
422-424 S. Division Street
THE BJORKER BUILDING, built sometime around 1870, is one of the few in the District constructed with native Minnesota limestone. The Bjorker Brothers General Store occupied the space from 1875 to 1884; and a brother of H. Thorson had a saloon in the basement. In a style called the three-bay building, it was designed originally to accommodate two stores. It has undergone few changes over the years except the metal canopy. At the street level, the shop windows and entrances are separated by large simple square white columns. A one-story limestone addition, sympathetic to the older building, was constructed in 1941 at the rear with an arched doorway and a large Palladian window. The building has been in the Bjorker family since 1934.

GRUNDY'S CORNER BAR
Fifth and Division Street
THE SCOFIELD BUILDING, built in 1868 by Dr. J. L. Scofield, of yellow brick and stone, occupies a significant location in the downtown. Built on the site of Northfield's first hotel, Jenkins Tavern, which like so many wood frame buildings, met its end in a fire. Jenkins Tavern was built in 1856, one year after North founded the town. It was probably the center of activity in the young city. With a stable behind the McClaughry building across the street and the post office nearby, the stage coach stopped here. In the mid-1860's most of downtown Northfield was a bit further south than it is today because the land to the north was very rocky and hilly, presenting many difficulties in construction for the early inhabitants.

The well-preserved, bracketed cornice with a prominent metal classical pediment was added in 1878 after a fire. This building is a good example of what the mass-production machine industry could do for construction. The columns at the base, with their Corinthian capitals are all made of cast iron; they were ordered by the builder right out of a catalog and then matched with other elements in the design. In addition to being attractive and very durable, these cast iron parts could be taken apart and reassembled with comparative ease if, for some reason, the building was to be moved. (The portability became a disadvantage in one instance when, in the process of being disassembled, some ambitious thief stole an entire building!) Now owned by Joe Grundhoefer, new paint scheme enhances the largely intact storefront and adds new life to this venerable building.
LAMPE, FOSSUM, JACOBSON AND BORENE
105 East Fifth Street

The McLAUGHRY TENEMENT built in 1898, this large two-story brick building with a pitched roof sports a two-story bay window on the front, flanked by arched windows. The facade received a covering of beige stucco and all the windows are replaced. Color has been used well to complement the other historic district buildings.

THE RUEB-N-STEIN
503 Division Street

THE KELLY BUILDING, a two-story brick building erected in 1907. It was renovated in the 1960's, one of the town's first efforts to make use of historic detail in remodeling. The entrance though with few windows, is not far from its original character. The decorative corbels and half-arches windows on the second story are original.

LAUNDROMAT
514 Division Street

The SILK BUILDING, constructed by Mr. R. Silk in 1898. A simply detailed building of brick with its storefront remodeled and cornice missing. It has served as a food store, meat market, lunch bar, restaurant and bakery.

THE MANDARIN GARDEN RESTAURANT
507-509 Division Street

THE NELSON BUILDING, two of the new buildings in the District, both built in 1922. The northern building has always been a restaurant, the best known of which were Gates Cafe and the Village Pump, both familiar to generations of college students. The new brick front was added to the south building in 1945 and the buildings were joined for use in 1975.

DeGROOD'S APPLIANCE
500 Division Street

THE HOLLAND BLOCK, built in 1884, a few years earlier than the two similar buildings to the south. Its visual interest comes in part from the large paired windows with decorative wood under the brick arch. These tell us something about construction in the earlier days, when it was customary to purchase only the sash and decorative trim for the window in advance, with the rest of the window built on the job. In 1895, owner E. Holland made improvements of water and sewer hookups, adding indoor restrooms, making the building "ideal as a good hotel, with an opera in the basement." In 1899, J. B. McMackin started work on a saloon and restaurant here. He had to stop when he was refused a liquor license since citizens feared the establishment would become a house of ill repute. In use since 1982 as an appliance store, the building always had the large front windows, an important consideration in getting light into the back of the building in days before electricity. The original front was similar to the intact storefront on the Fifth Street side with cast iron columns.

HOFFMAN'S and THORPE REALTY
504 and 506 Division Street

THE OLSON and THE ONSTAD BUILDINGS, built in 1890 and 1887 respectively, were part of the earliest shopping and hotel complex in Northfield, connected with interior openings between the three buildings. Each building has the original double windows with Italianate hooded window arches with contrasting keystones on the upper floors. Significantly altered in recent years, the storefronts are attractive additions to the downtown as they repeat the arch forms so typical in early Northfield and reinterpret them in contemporary form.

IRWIN'S FLOWERS
508 Division Street

THE ONSTAD BUILDING, constructed before 1910 by the Onstad Brothers, was part of a three-building complex formed with the two buildings to the north. The two-story red brick building has four tall, arched window openings with limestone sills and corner pins topped with pyramid shaped capitals; the wood and tin cornice still in tact. The entire front has undergone considerable remodeling but much of the original architectural detail is recoverable.

GARLIE VETERINARY
510-512 Division Street (see page 32)
The Scriver Building has undergone many remodeling evolutions as illustrated by the photos taken at various eras. The last major remodeling to stucco the exterior was stopped when folks realized at last that the building was losing its character. The drawing illustrates how it will eventually be restored by the Northfield Historical Society, which has most recently completed the Bank Museum front.
**SCRIVER BUILDING**  
**Bridge Square**

SCRIVER BUILDING, built in 1868 for $15,000 (surely a significant sum for those days) by Hiram Scriver, the City's first mayor and a leading merchant. Scriver operated his dry goods, clothing, grocery and general merchandise store in this building, which is perhaps the most photographed and easily recognized building in Northfield. The fame of the building comes from the ill-fated raid in 1876 by the Jesse James — Frank Younger gang, who attempted to rob the First National Bank. Perhaps some small measure of thanks should be given to those villains who gave to the City an occasion to look with some pride at our past and a reason for annual celebrations today.

The building is now owned by the Northfield Historical Society and under their sponsorship, an extensive renovation project is underway. The goal is to restore the building to how it looked at the time of the bank raid. The portion that is now completed shows the use of tooled and rough limestone and Romanesque Revival arches. The Society is being advised on the project by Foster Dunwiddie, well-known historical architect in Minnesota.

From Bridge Square one can again see how the arch motif was carried out on both floors (and also how various remodelings through the years have greatly changed the character of the building). The upstairs was converted into apartments in 1929; a new storefront of 1951 for Bridge Square housing The Yarn Bin. The Chamber of Commerce occupies the corner spot of the old dry goods store.

Be that as it may, the Scriver Building still reminds us of the vision of the early builders and community leaders in Northfield, who had the conviction (and maybe even the daring) to build buildings of size and significance in the still very young frontier town, giving from the very first, a sense of permanence to the entire community.

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**HVISTENDAHL AND MOERSCH, ATTORNEYS**  
**317 South Water Street**

THE STATE BANK BUILDING, built in 1910, designed by Harry W. Jones, a prominent Minneapolis architect of the day who specialized in designing churches. Built in the "Egyptian" style, which was to give the effect of an institution that had solid ties with the past, the building was constructed of hollow-tile brick and covered with cement. The massive pylons that constitute the door frame were thought to symbolize strength and endurance, appropriate for a bank. The stained-glass dome lends distinction both to exterior and to the interior of the building — it was once said that this was the best lighted structure in the city. Unique in its placement on the curve of the street by the river, the State Bank Building adds a touch of the exotic to the architectural fabric of this community. The building was given a new lease on life in 1981, when it was purchased by lawyers Hvistendahl and Moersch, who have undertaken extensive interior and exterior remodeling and repair.
NORTHFIELD ARTS GUILD
304 Division Street

THE YMCA BUILDING, built in 1885, to house the Northfield YMCA, the first such chapter in outstate Minnesota, contained a gymnasium, a library with several hundred volumes and a reading room on the main floor, and an assembly room with seating for 400 persons on the top floor.

A two-story bay window, the most prominent feature of the facade, echos symbolically the word "Welcome" carved in stone above the door. The building has undergone some remodeling through the years, always with the intent that it be used for the public purpose.

Certainly one of the most elegant in the District, this building symbolizes the commitment of the citizens of Northfield, past and present, to betterment and to culture. The basement gymnasium and the main floor library were intended to offer "wholesome opportunities" for youth of the City; that aim still continues today. It is said that Mark Twain was among the guests of the "Y" in its early days. The building was "modernized" and became the City Hall after World War I. With the expansion of city government in the 1970's, the City decided to move its offices in 1979. Because of a commitment to preserve the downtown business district as the central core of this community and to honor the building's "public use" restriction, a lease agreement was completed with the Northfield Arts Guild.

In 1981, the Guild undertook an extensive repair and restoration project, returning the facade to its former splendor, with colored glass and the use of paint to highlight the architectural details of the building. The facade restoration represents the front door arrangement and window pattern of about 1912 as recorded by early photographs.

The bay window was partially rebuilt from the outside retaining the windows which were still sound. Interior storm windows help retain the exterior esthetics. The lighter colors of its earlier years were used, replacing the dark red and black which for the last generation covered the cracks and weathered wood. The Arts Guild facade restoration was made possible through a grant from the Minnesota State Historical Society. Architects were Sovik Mathre Sathrum Quanbeck, Architects of Northfield.
THE NUTTING MALL
220 Division Street

THE NUTTING BLOCK BUILDING, built by John C. Nutting in 1893.

Original Purpose: Northfield Knitting Factory. Also housed the A. D. Malin & Co. Steam Laundry in the basement and Hyde Hardware on the first floor. A three-story, red brick building of Romanesque Revival style. A thirty-foot rear extension was built in 1914. The storefront was altered by construction of one door in the center in place of the two at each side.

The style of this building, which is one of the most important in the Historic District, is Richardson Romanesque, a style which emphasizes stability and permanence through arches and by combining stone and brick surfaces. This style was often used for business structures. The flattened columns on the upper floors, which culminate in the strong arches above the windows, are typical of the style. The prominent framed name plaque was a common feature on large buildings of that day.

The Nutting Block was constructed with wood floors filled with concrete and with large interior spaces to house an industrial knitting operation on the upper floor. In its heyday (1903), the Northfield Knitting Factory had eight traveling salesmen taking orders in six states, in addition to the forty people employed on site.

In December, 1889, Alex Marshall moved his dry goods store into the first floor and basement and remained there until he built his own building next door in 1932.

Other uses for this structure have been A. H. Kaupp’s Furniture business, five apartments of WWII veterans and their families, the Nelson Furniture Store, and Dittmann Tours.

Dallas Haas is the present owner of the Nutting Mall. His extensive renovation in 1981 made space for over 20 offices and retail establishments in the basement and three upper floors. This was the first major renovation project taken on by a private owner after the creation of the Historic District. Much credit goes to Dallas Haas and his architect, William Brodersen, for making much use of the original materials still present in the building, including the handsome blue glass which had been hidden behind panels erected for store names. This renovation project set the tone for much of what follows in the District, showing one can take the best from the past and combine it with the best of today to make a building that lives.

Special note should be made of the work done on the rear of the building to take advantage of the river site. Another special attraction of the building is that it now houses the only elevator in the District.
THE STUART HOTEL
212 Division Street

The ARCHER HOUSE, built by James D. Archer in 1877. Original purpose: Hotel, 50 guest rooms. Built in the French Second Empire Style with a mansard roof containing arched dormer windows, and a large portico. The north wing, added in 1895, included more hotel rooms and a dining room; architectural details of the addition were treated in the same manner as the original building.

The Archer House was made of essentially two structural materials, part is masonry wall, part is wood frame with brick veneer.

In the late 1870's, the architectural style known as the French Second Empire became fashionable in Northfield. Based on the precedent established in Paris under Baron Haussman, this style was characterized by mansard roofs and projecting central pavilions. Other buildings with elements of this style in the community are Old Main at St. Olaf College and Willis Hall at Carleton College.

When it was completed in August of 1877, the Archer House greatly added to the prestige of the Northfield community. At the grand opening on August 23, a reporter for the Rice County Journal gave a very enthusiastic description:

“There is the unequivocal indication of taste in every room, and those who wish to spend an easy hour, to tarry for a season amid genial surroundings, not in idleness, but in wholesome reflections; will find on the first floor a library of solid volumes, any of which, opened for a purpose, will raise the plane of thought and feeling, while the body can be made most comfortable around there anywhere ... in the parlor, for instance." We especially liked the ladies parlour, whose furniture, while "not extravagant" was "sufficiently expensive."

In its early years, from 1889 to 1900, this hotel was operated by members of the Kahler family of Rochester, who went on to establish extensive chains of hotels. The Hotel has had several names: The Manawa (an Indian word meaning hospitality), The Hotel Ball and finally in 1912, The Stuart Hotel after its owner.

Even though the Hotel underwent extensive refurbishing in 1928-29, in the 1930's, it lost its glamour as a place where "there was taste in every room ..." The Hotel, which was then operating under the American plan, switched to the European style. The structure since that time served as a boarding house, a bus depot and has provided retail space since 1949.

The present owner of the building, Dallas Haas, is in the first stages of his plan to restore the Archer House to its former position of importance in the life of Northfield. Plans include the restoration of the central portico and the south porch and the construction of a porch and veranda on the north third of the building.
The early storefronts on these pages illustrate well how much glass was commonly used in stores to provide daylighting and ample display area. Note the tall recessed entries with nicely proportioned doors.

Marshall's Department Store filled the Nutting Block's original windows with displays.
Deciding what to do with a storefront requires detective work about its history and original construction, and it also requires an action plan. That plan will need to be based on the ‘particulars’ of each building: assessing its original and present condition, and determining what combination of maintenance, preservation or restorative work is in order for that unique building. Before such a plan is made, a little background about the design characteristics of storefronts will help keep the preservation techniques discussed in perspective.

Earlier in talking about the physical character of downtown, a key factor noted was that these buildings are lined up one against the next to create a continuous streetscape. Downtown buildings have striking similarities in the way they are organized, but they exhibit diversity and variety in detail.

The original design character can be preserved, restored, (or even recreated using new materials), if we understand the visual aspects of the building — its architectural features. Here we have a checklist of general features typical of commercial street architecture:

- Similar heights for the majority of the buildings.
- Tall first stories, almost completely transparent with large areas of glass.
- Upper stories of generally smaller vertical windows.
- The tall fronts finished-off with elaborate overhanging cornices and pointed gables.

Throughout the downtown these fronts are designed with brick, stone, wood and metal with a certain common vocabulary. It is worth recalling those detail features noted at the beginning of the guidebook:

- Almost universal use of brick, with frequent use of arched windows and doors.
- Contrasting cut-stone band courses, window sills, arched window lintels and keystones in brick arches.
- Cast-iron columns as part of storefronts.
- Numerous rounded-top windows.
- Bay windows and corner turrets.
- Bracketed cornices of wood and stamped metal, usually over-hanging the building front.

When you discover these details on a storefront it’s a reminder that perhaps they should be kept intact or otherwise enhanced because as part of the downtown vocabulary they will be noticed. And they are the locations where each building expressed its unique design.

The storefront itself at first story level needs to be almost entirely transparent. This is the main source of lighting to the interior, and the principle appeal by the business to shoppers. The enticement of what may be inside, is of course not the only purpose of the windows, but an important one. Therefore, the glass area should be tall, right up to the interior ceiling, and close to the ground — knee height or below was common on many original fronts. The bulkheads below windows were paneling or even windows for lighting the basement.

The proportions of openings and trim once used (and often forgotten) can be seen in the old photos in this book. The door posts and columns had a vertical thrust to them, expressing the lift of the building upward. This is no place for horizontal windows. Perhaps most important is to study the grand size of the entrance, where the tall and wide recess in the front was an invitation to enter. The doors were smaller than the entries suggest, yet quite tall to complement the vertical lines of the front. For these fronts, tall doors, eight feet or more are a necessity, unless the door and glass transom above do the same job.

A checklist for taking inventory of storefront conditions

A. Storefront Entry and Door
   - Original width and height?
   - Original material or remodeled?
   - Design is consistent with front?
   - Any light aluminum evident?

B. Storefront Display Windows
   - Original width and height?
   - Original pattern or remodeled?
   - Low Bulkhead panels below windows?

C. Awnings and Signs
   - Was or is front suitable for awning(s)?
   - Is signboard covering original design?

D. Upper Wall Material
   - Original or remodeled front?
   - Original details covered or destroyed?

E. Upper Windows and Frames
   - Original opening height and width?
   - Original or replaced windows?
   - Do bright aluminum frames show?
   - Any special carving or wood trim?

F. Cornice or Parapet at Roofline
   - Original, replaced or missing?
   - Does existing one complement front?
   - Is cornice work in need of repair?
HARMON'S PHOTOGRAPHY
300 Division Street

The SITZE BUILDING, built by Jacob Sitze in 1886. Original Purpose: Sitze Plumbing Shop in the basement, Mrs. Sitze's Candy Kitchen on the main floor.

A two-story brick building with decorative corbels and three second-story windows with arches in relief above. Historic photos show dark brick bands across the cornice, corbels and arches and a peaked cornice. It was remodeled at the street level in the 1950's with glass blocks, aluminum framed windows and brick "bulkheads" under the windows.

This building has seen many uses, including a confectionary store owned in 1900 by a L. Hauck, who had a fireworks accident in the shop which caused considerable damage to the interior. Later that year, Mrs. J. L. Johnson moved her dressmaking business into the second floor and G. H. Ordway moved in with his poultry business (surely incompatible housemates!)

Other occupants were: N. Fredurg's Drug Store (early 1900's), Mathewson's Dry Cleaning Pantoreum (1910), a jewelry and watch repair shop (1911), Mabon Land Company (1912), Bon Marche's Laundry (1919-56), Harmon's Photography (1956 to the present)

- Reconstruct parapet with historic sign board
- Restore contrasting brick colors showing banding
- Restore central doorway with guard railing
- Install historic railing onto existing canopy
- Add fabric awning edge onto aluminum canopy
- Paint aluminum trim dark trim color...
- Future work might regain lower display windows
Making a Plan

This section recommends the typical way to develop a preservation plan. It begins with a little research into the building's past life and appearance, and then taking stock of its current condition and the technical remedies that might be helpful, and combining this information and aesthetic design goals into a documented design plan. An orderly process such as the one described will save time and frustration, prevent foolish design mistakes and will likely make better use of the budget.

Make a quick visual inventory of the storefront to see where more investigation is needed. What is the condition of that old wood? Does it just need scraping and new paint, or repair work or replacement? Material conditions may not be what they seem at first. We are so accustomed to thinking in terms of new materials that these old ones may not be as bad as they look. For this reason, we recommend a suspension of judgements, conclusions or decisions until more detective work is completed.

The following guide for developing a design plan will also provide you the documentation needed for review by the city's Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) before obtaining building or sign permits.

STEP 1: Study old photographs and the building history.

Documentation of the original appearance of the building is the single most important starting point. Even photos taken from a distance, such as views from down the street or "bird's eye" etchings, tell much about what the building looked like. Photos from different eras may reveal the authenticity of additions and replacements which may be valuable representative designs from the time they were added. Old photos, newspaper articles and histories will help explain why the building has evolved to its present condition.

The building histories in this guidebook summarize changes in use and notable events in the past, and also briefly identify physical characteristics. The Heritage Preservation Commission maintains a file on each downtown building with historical chronologies, copies of old photographs recent photographs and a scale drawing. Many of the buildings have had extensive histories written about them.

The Public Library has many photographs and keeps a record of when each building has been mentioned in old newspaper articles. Early Sanborn insurance maps on display in the library show the buildings and occupants about once every decade each side of the turn of the century. Another excellent resource is the downtown walking tour audio cassette available at the Historical Museum in the Scriven Building, which contains useful historical and architectural information about downtown buildings.

STEP 2: Compare the storefront with the original design.

Examine the building from head to toe looking for what's visible of the early design. It may possibly be covered over by additions. Old columns may yet be imbedded within a 'modernized' front. A short checklist:

- Storefront windows: Original or replaced? Condition?
- Entrance door: Does it belong with the front?
- Signage: What's behind it?
- Upper windows: Original size and pattern?
- Roof edge: Remodeled or missing?

The expanded checklist in the previous storefront section will help you to record all the existing conditions to help assess both its design character and physical condition. Evaluate what architectural details should be conserved by repair or other preservation techniques, and evaluate which details are foreign to the basic design character of the building.

Two important guidelines for making these judgments are included in the Appendix, and are the basis by which the HPC reviews and evaluates building changes:

- The Northfield HPC Guidelines for building changes — in Appendix C, and
- The Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Buildings and Historic Districts — in Appendix D.

Make a goal of what you'd like to do to protect and preserve and improve the storefront. Compare your ideas to the guidelines mentioned, and compare them to the principles of good storefront design in this Guidebook. And keep this goal in mind.

STEP 3: Assess condition and corrective techniques.

The actual condition of the wood or brick or windows might be a real uncertainty. Facts are clearly needed, and without good experienced judgment, fear of these unknowns can stop the process at the dream stage. Look through the following pages of this manual on restoration techniques, and make use of the many resources in town. Too frequently, damage is done to brick or wood or to authentic design details from lack of information: not knowing that a weathered detail is of great value and many just need a little attention and protection.

If further help is needed for assessing your building conditions, ask the HPC, or an experienced architect for help. The city planning office has a library of restoration and preservation information maintained by the HPC for public use.

STEP 4: Describe planned building changes.

Note what specific work would be done, and why the changes are appropriate for the design of the building. Make use of the city's photographs (8" by 10" size) on file for each storefront in the Historic District. On a photocopy of the photograph, or on a scale drawing, note intended work to or for:

1. Existing materials
2. New work planned
3. Problems, unknowns

Building owners and operators are encouraged to present preliminary ideas to the HPC at this stage. Many local architects are available to provide consultation in the development of your preservation or restoration plans.

Plan Review — The presentation of plans for HPC consultation and review, should include the following descriptions as noted in the review guidelines in Appendix C:

1. A sketch or scale drawing showing all intended changes and materials to be used;
2. An explanation of how the changes are appropriate given the original building design;
3. Material and paint colors.

Examples — This Guidebook contains selected illustrations of successful projects completed downtown, and of storefront designwork considered at Northfield Storefront Design Workshops. The photographs of town in earlier years also illustrate well indeed the way the early storefronts combined aesthetics and functions in very attractive ways.
GARLIE VETERINARY
510-512 Division Street
Called the NORTHSTAR HOTEL BUILDING as it was purchased by the hotel in 1903. This two-story brick building from before 1900 was built to look like two buildings. Subsequent to being the Northstar it was the Lennox Hotel and the Hotel Cleveland, followed by Mrs. Scholl’s boarding house, Schultz’s Harness shop, and the American Express Railroad office occupied it by 1917. During the 1940’s it was a second hand store followed by Berg and Son Upholstery for 20 years and then Bromley Upholstery occupied the north half until 1981 when it was included into the veterinary office.

An exterior stair on the south side remains from its years as a hotel. The whole building is in the process of being restored. Design workshop suggestions have been developed into a remodeling scheme by architect William Brodersen to regain some of the original window pattern on the upper floor, and to restore the tall storefront.

Leave sand blasted brick natural color; paint north side to match light color

Regain arched window motif

Replace windows with full-size double hung units

Restore storefront with vertical lines
The dominant building material visible in downtown is brick. There is also stone masonry and stone used as part of the brick walls. This masonry is the downtown's great resource. The way it is maintained, preserved or restored affects both the building life and esthetics.

Determining what work, if any, is required — First, what is really the problem? Dirt, paint or stain removal, stains, poor mortar joints? Or perhaps there isn't much of a problem — the masonry is just old. Brick and mortar are very durable materials. Beware some urgent need to ‘spruce up’ the old place by hasty work on the brick or stone. That old brick is a valuable asset which can easily be ruined for life. Above all, DON'T EVER SANDBLAST IT. Consider first the masonry condition before deciding on a treatment.

- is the brick in sound or falling apart?
- are the mortar joints solid and watertight?
- do the walls leak water?
- should the brick be cleaned?
- is the brick painted?
- was it once sandblasted?

Prepare a Preservation Plan — A masonry preservation or conservation plan could entail one or more of the following types of work:
1. Repointing mortar joints;
2. Cleaning brick and mortar;
3. Painting brick.

REPOINTING MORTAR JOINTS
Popularly called ‘tuckpointing,’ repointing is the process of cleaning and restoring the structural quality of the mortar joints. If repointing is needed then the mortar type, color and tooling pattern must be closely matched to what exists.

The late 19th century downtown buildings are made with a high lime mortar, which is light in color, very durable and elastic. One of its best properties is that when wetted it swells tight against the brick. Use this high lime mortar to match the existing mortar color, even for small patch work. Lime mortars are not as used today except in restoration work.

CLEANING BRICK
First a warning — never 'sandblast' exterior brick. Sandblasting removes the hard surface of the brick and exposes its softer interior to moisture and deterioration. There are ways to clean brick without damaging it. Even cleaning by the gentlest means possible should only be attempted after an overall preservation or restoration plan is thought-out, as:
- some cleaning methods will damage brick for life;
- the ‘dirt’ or brick may not react as expected;
- the cleaning process is messy and can harm other building materials;

Investigate the reasons why the brick needs cleaning. A different technique may be needed for each reason, namely: 1) accumulation of dirt and pollution; 2) stains from water where metals or wood are in contact with brick, and 3) the need to paint or remove paint. The unwanted paint or dirt may be the original color of the brick with a ‘patina’ of age. This old-brick look is highly valued and gives the building character. However, unwanted paint or dirt which masks the aged brick color can be removed by washing techniques, each of which has advantages and cautions.

Water Washing — Water will dissolve and wash off the accumulation of soot and dirt. Water is the preferred cleaner because it is relatively easy to accomplish and does the least problems to the wall. However, brick and mortar can absorb large amounts of water which can expand the clays, or release soluble salts present in the masonry, or even freeze during cold periods. Water washing methods include the following techniques:

Slow water washing — Water is run constantly down brick surfaces to absorb and rinse off dirt and pollution. It is done for days or weeks depending on the chemistry of the masonry and the water. Brick needing extra attention is gently scrubbed with fiber brushes to not scratch the brick. No wire brushes.

Low pressure washing — For most cleaning that is superficial, sprayed water will remove surface dirt and soiling. Water run through a fiber scrub brush for some mechanical removal of dirt is the most practical way for most small cleaning projects. Do not use high pressure water jets or spray, as the pressure can damage the brick and force water into the mortar joints.

Detergent washing — Either of the above washing methods can also make use of detergents. The purpose is to help breakdown the oily deposits so these may be carried away by the water. Rinse with clear water.

Steam cleaning — Steam accelerates the action of the water by the extreme heat and because the water vapor can penetrate films and paint. It is considered only if gentler means are not suitable, as steam can be dangerous to other materials as well as to the brick and mortar.

Chemical Cleaning — The last resort in cleaning and the alternative to sandblasting of masonry for paint removal, is to use very diluted chemical solutions in a water washing method or with a different solvent. The 'chemistry' used depends on the type of brick and mortar present, and on the type(s) of paint present. This requires the professional help of an experienced masonry restoration contractor or an experienced architect.

Mechanical or Abrasive Cleaning — Do not let anyone suggest sandblasting or other abrasive or wire brush cleaning methods on your valued exterior brick. Instead review the washing techniques listed above and determine what really is at stake and what can reasonably be accomplished. Abrasive cleaning will harm the tough exterior of the brick, and it will erode the crisp edges of brick patterns and cut stonework detail.

PAINTING BRICK
You may be surprised to see how much painted brick exists in the downtown. Soft brick is best preserved this way. Painted brick has good historical precedent, and it is a necessity for the protection of soft brick or where the brick has been already painted and its removal would hurt the brick. Unfortunately once painting is begun, it will have to be continually repainted.

When brick is painted the first time, special cleaning and surface preparation is needed to develop a bond between the masonry and the paint. Expert advice is called for. The color selected should be part of a planned storefront color scheme as noted in the section Color, Awnings and Signs.
Remove aluminum skin to reveal historic front, and;
1. Add central column and new awnings;
2. Restore storefront as shown to echo vertical lines of upper windows;
3. Restore cornice
4. Add stained glass to lower windows similar to existing stained glass.
Details of wood and metal are found extensively on building storefronts — frequently together, one supporting the other. You’ll notice cornice details of stamped metal applied over wood which look like wood brackets or expensive cut stone. Turn of the century buildings are notorious for materials attempting to look like other materials. Wood and metal will likely be the materials that make up the entrance and storefronts, which are so frequently effected by building changes and remodeling.

**WOODWORK**

The bulkheads below windows, the window or door frames and trim, sign panels and the roof eave or cornice are usually constructed of wood. The visible results of water and weathering may look worse than it is below the surface, so all wood will need to be checked. A good preservation plan requires specific decisions about which wood elements need repair work, replacement or total removal. Replacement wood should match the existing detailing, or be consistent with the overall design of the storefront.

**Checking the wood** — Use a small knife or an ice pick. Soft or powdery wood is deteriorated and needs to be cut back past the soft area and replaced. Where conditions are uncertain, have an experienced person assess them. Remove surface pieces to examine the wood construction underneath. Examine door and window wood in the same manner to see if the wood is soft or deteriorated. See the section on Doors, Windows and Displays.

**Protecting the wood** — Wood should not be exposed to water or weather during repairs. Retained or repaired wood should be scraped clean with checks and cracks filled before priming. Apply a primer coat to all sides of replacement pieces to seal the wood. The primer used should be compatible both with the existing paint present and with the new paint. Consider at this stage the final paint color to make covering the primer easier. See the section on Color, Awnings and Signs.

Wood in contact with masonry will decay rapidly as it will continually absorb moisture from the porous masonry. In these locations use pressure preservative treated wood — there are a number of trade names for this process. Redwood or cedar are a second choice as their natural oils resist decay better than untreated woods. These species are more readily available in trim piece sizes, whereas the larger dimensioned lumber is more readily available pressure treated. Special moulding work can be protected by dipping into a ‘penta’ solution — a dangerous procedure best left to those with the right equipment.

**Wood design check** — Once conditions are surveyed, consider again how the design can be carried out. Perhaps the wood will just need cleaning and have trim put back that is missing.

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**NORTHFIELD VARIETY STORE**

**323-325 Division Street**

THE SECOND MERGEN BUILDING, built in two sections, the south half in 1883 and in 1886, the north section for Barney Mergen as a dry goods store. Presently owned by Sid Freeman.

The two sections are now used as one building. Currently covered by a corrugated aluminum front (which itself speaks about the evolution of storefront design), the original facade of the building as seen in historic photos is one of the more attractive in the city, showing the care and attention to detail which went into the buildings of the day.

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**Wood and Metals**

The key to making wood last is giving extra consideration to the action of water and weathering. Use metal flashing and caulking where water could penetrate between wood pieces. Above all, maintain all painted surfaces.

**METALWORK**

Metal details on storefront may be the prized historical material on the building. Compare the downtown buildings which have lost their cornices with those which have not, to see how valuable these details are. Notice also the lost railings.

**Stamped metal cornicework** — Look up and you’ll see hundreds of feet of stamped designs hung on the storefront parapets. This ‘tinwork’ often is lost when the wood supports behind succumb to weathering, or when there has been a roof fire. A number of new suppliers have retrieved the old dies used for stamping the metal and advertise nationally. Alternatively, the cornicework can be replicated in wood, and using today’s preservative methods the wood should last a long time.

**Cast-iron columns** — Many storefronts have retained the original cast-iron columns. They may be obscured in recent remodeling attempts, but doubtless because they support the upper story, they were fortunately left and frequently are visible. Its interesting to read the foundry names cast on columns (on one store the columns are upside down you’ll notice). There structural columns are likely in good shape so long as they are protected with paint, but check for rust or settlement. The columns were a major part of the storefront design, so it is advisable to reconstruct that esthetic to achieve the design results needed if the columns have been removed.

**Metal ceiling panels** — The downtown is blessed with many intact stamped metal ceilings. They of course resemble expensive plaster work that storeowners could not afford. Often called ‘tin’ ceilings, some are yet hidden above lowered ceilings. Preservation of metal ceilings requires an extra measure of creativity because other remodeling needs are often thought to conflict with their preservation. First, fire protection of the upper floor structure is usually a code requirement when remodeling. Layers of gypsum wallboard or a spray-on ‘fire proofing’ material, may be required. The metal panels can be taken down and then be reinstalled directly on, or suspended below the new fire-proofing.

The need to hide ducts, pipes and electrical conduits can be a strong case for lowering ceilings. Preserve these metal ceilings by running ducts along the sides or under the floor. The ‘tin’ ceiling can also be suspended to hide the ducts and conduits installed above. It has to be thought our for each store, how the ceiling and storefront windows will meet to keep maximum window height.

**Ornamental ironwork** — Railings and ornamental roof decorations often disappeared before other architectural details because they are vulnerable to loosening by use and to deterioration by the weather. Our local blacksmiths can recreate many of these designs using either wrought iron or welded steel. Metalwork and ornamental iron provided the finish touch to stairs, upper windows and rooflines.

**Painting metalwork** — Paint is best removed with solvents as abrasive methods such as sanding, grinding or sandblasting will harm the details or even chip or break fragile pieces. Small pieces can be dipped by a furniture stripping operator. Larger pieces will need to be done by hand. Steel pieces are best preserved by a galvanized coating, usually by a hot-dip process before painting. This coating, however, will fill-in fine detail, which are better retained by using rust-inhibiting systems made for this purpose.
FINE PRINT
320 Division Street
THE THIRD MERGEN BUILDING, built by the Mergen estate in 1901.
This one-story building was built with a tall storefront facade on the street. The remodeled storefront now sports shiny black glass tiles typical of the art deco period. This is Northfield's best example of typical American commercial storefront design of the 1930's and 1940's.

Restorative measures
- Extend black glass panels to top of wall
- Replace awning with a festive one
- Add modern sign perhaps in neon
- Replace front door screen
- Eventually lower window sill height with larger display windows
Most storefronts are a combination of entrance and surrounding window display area. A chief design goal is for the whole storefront to function well, and also to be consistent in design with the whole building. The entrance and windows which make up the front are the insignia and chief signage of the enterprise inside. Their design should not be left to chance.

The Entrance — A front door has heavy demands put on it: demands for security, for keeping the heat in and wind out, for easy operation and also for making a good first impression with the customer. To be sure the door's design is consistent with the building front and its historic details, consider the following:

- Keep the height of the entry and door as originally proportioned in old photos.
- Recess the doorway from the edge of the building to keep outswinging doors within the building front.
- Double doors were typical and worth restoration where there is enough width.
- Or use a single door with side lights in a wide opening.
- Use glass in the door, but no closer to the ground than the height of the window sills.
- Door handles and pulls and other visible hardware should reflect the building character.

Entrance doors — Use solid hardwood doors with their interesting panels. There are many yet in storage downtown, and custom-made doors are available locally. Painted wood will hold up fine. If extra heavy use and maintenance demand something tougher, then use an insulated steel door rather than the ubiquitous aluminum type. Many design options are available, and it will be strong enough to be eight or more feet tall as may be fitting for the storefront design.

The standard issue aluminum and glass entrances seen everywhere are usually in discord with the old fronts in terms of material, color, size and design. If an aluminum entrance door and frame are unavoidable then be sure they fit with the color scheme by using an anodized color finish or special aluminum paint in a dark color.

Handicapped access — The public levels of downtown buildings are generally required to be made 'accessible' when remodeled. The chief features of an accessible door are: a sloped walk rather than any step; a space to the side of the door of 12 to 18 inches for a person in a wheel chair to operate the door; and a door and hardware combination that is easily opened, even in the wind.

Vestibules and energy conservation — The best prevention of heat-loss at entrances is a vestibule airlock. Two doors obviously cut down air escaping when the door is opened. For downtown buildings the major heat-loss is from the two sides exposed directly to the cold — the front and the back. These faces are important sources of daylight also, so the requirements for an entrance door, for light and for low heat-loss suggest designing vestibules made largely of glass. Without enough glass the store will be considerably darkened.

When combined with a recessed entrance, vestibules can extend into useable store space, and therefore they are not as common as the obvious benefits in fuel savings and comfort to employees and customers would suggest. However, the spaces to the sides of a vestibule can be made into display areas, and yet be kept open for maximum daylighting of the interior. If the front entrance is to the side of the storefront, then a vestibule is easier to accommodate on the interior, and more store floor space is left near the windows, and better daylighting is likely.

Window displays — Storefront displays are generally of two kinds. First, where the store itself is on display and the pedestrian can easily see into the shop. Daylight penetrates into the shop and shop lighting and activity is evident from the sidewalk. The charm of the store is particularly evident in the evenings. Or second, where the display area is enclosed, and cuts off the store area from the pedestrian. In this case the windows are like showcases, requiring especially interesting and changing displays.

Most stores in Northfield have retained the early storefront scheme of fairly 'transparent' display areas, where items large or small may be on display, but they do not block the view of the interior. Without doubt the view of the interior is very important. And the daylighting and visual contact with the outside seen from within the store is another old town design asset missing from enclosed shopping places.

Window and display lighting — Display lighting as well as storefront lighting should be incandescent spotlighting only. Fluorescent lights are not as appealing in color because they give the storefront and sidewalk area in front of the windows a harsh and cold light. Notice the difference as you shop some evening.

Windows and energy conservation — In second place to the front door, the windows may be a large source of heat or cooling losses to the outside. More insulation is possible by building-in air layers between sheets of glass, either by adding more glass to the inside, or by using insulated glass when remodeling the windows. Operable and transom windows are useful for natural cooling on moderately warm days, but they also need to be insulated glass and weatherstripped to prevent heat or cooling losses.

Window replacement — Display windows should be kept their original size or use lower and upper units to result in the same storefront window height. Even if this requires a high inner ceiling for a distance into the building (to the back of the vestibule, for instance) it will retain the exterior elegance of the storefront and add a lot of light to the interior. Use two layer insulating glass, and check codes regarding where tempered safety glass is now required.

Storm windows — On upper windows consider adding storms to the inside along with repairing and repainting existing windows. Examples of this technique may be seen at the Arts Guild Building, and in the renovation of St. Olaf's Old Main Building. Placing storm panels on the inside avoids covering up the existing window pattern on the outside. There is no need to alter the significant exterior historic appearance of special patterns and carved detail so evident at the upper windows downtown.

Window sash replacement — Upper story windows may only need repair work, scraping, filling and painting to actually serve for many many years. With interior storms the exterior esthetics are retained and costs reduced. If the windows are in bad shape (see the section on Wood), then rebuild the sashes using insulating glass, and remount them with spring suspension hardware and good weatherstripping in the existing frames. This has proven to be less costly than total window replacement and it maintains the exterior window frame details which are costly to recreate today. Replacement window units should completely fill the original openings.

Storefront design — Note the examples in the section on Storefronts, and consider how the designs illustrated in this section have, where possible, retained or restored the original proportions, scale and lines of the front.
Restorative work
- Add to cornice to achieve arches above arched windows
- Replace windows with full-size double-hung gothic windows
- Maintain a new color scheme showing details
- Repair bulkheads below windows removing tacked on blocks
- Use window signage

Problems illustrated
- Windows too small for arched openings
- Bracket blocks show some cornice was removed when remodeled
- Awning should extend full width
  But original storefront is in excellent condition

MICHAELS
17 Bridge Square
BOSTON SHOE STORE, built in 1879 for Charles Anderson. Since 1895, in continuous use as a shoe store. Two stories, of buff brick (painted) with a remodeled cornice adorned with ball and post motif. Second story windows have crested arches which were originally covered by wood arches and tall brackets. The ground floor entry and double display windows, which are historically intact, show the integrity of simple commercial architecture of the late 19th century: large well proportioned windows extending close to the ground, recessed doorway for a very transparent first floor. The center window upstairs originally had two hinged sashes so large objects could be brought upstairs.
Building storefront esthetics and color do help the merchant in attracting customers. The colors used need to be integrated into storefront design thinking at its earliest stages. Awnings and signs are also included because they are a necessary part of color selection, and part of the storefront esthetic.

**BUILDING COLORS**

Turn of the century building commonly used color schemes with three or four colors, which were used to highlight the building component parts and to emphasize and design character of the structure. You might call this an expressive and functional use of color rather than decoration. The colors chosen often related to the nature and practical maintenance of the materials they covered: brick received earthy brick colors; metals, dark shiny ones. It’s a good approach today, both for historical accuracy and for using color as part of the architecture.

The color schemes would frequently be: first, a body color for the exterior wall surfaces; then another color to highlight the structural columns or beams of the storefront. The same or a close color was selected for all the frames and trim that outlined openings and panels. Inset panels might receive yet another color as would details of the cornice or eave. Finally an accent color would ‘pick-out’ special details such as stamped reliefe, rosettes, medallions and perhaps the front door, which might have more than one color for interest.

The colors often, but by no means always, were chosen for the ‘revival’ style of the building, and most downtown buildings have these stylistic details. The revival styles were frequently intermixed and used in creative combinations; there are not many pure stylistic models. The specific color tonal groups identified with revival styles are well illustrated in numerous books on Victorian or late 19th century architecture.

The brick, wood and metal that is to be painted should be checked for its original coloring. Restoration books explain how to sand down test areas to uncover and identify the original colors. This should in all cases be the starting point for understanding the buildings past and in considering a new scheme sensitive to the architectural character of the building.

Painted brick has historical precedence and is a necessity on some of the downtown’s soft brick. Brick buildings which have not been painted really should not be to cover up dirt and grime or repairs. Repainting of brick requires experienced help as correct preparation work is essential as mentioned in the Brick and Masonry section.

**AWNINGS**

Awnings are coming back. Examine the old streetscape photos of the downtown and you’ll notice how well they served a number of purposes which seem just as needed today.

**Sun shading and shelter** – The lowered awnings kept the stores from turning into greenhouses. You’ll notice awnings hanging from high up the walls illustrating the height of the windows. Many of the awnings covered nearly the whole width of the sidewalk and were at head height to shelter customers from the rain. They gave the sidewalk and its travelers their own special identity and status. This amenity for the shopper was surely not an accident. The early awnings were of lightweight, usually with narrow stripes in sun tolerant colors. The light colors kept them from gaining too much heat, and allowed light to filter through to the store. Awnings front and side edges can display the store name, in small but certainly ample size, and ought to be finished with a scalloped edge.

**SIGNS of Many Kinds**

Store recognition is certainly more than a sign on a wall. We know that the whole storefront image is the real ‘sign’ by which the enterprise is recognized. Window displays too are part of this message, and these were treated in the last section. For the applied signs, window signs and pedestrian signs to complement the storefront design, they are best understood and planned in terms of their purpose and function. Most stores have many signs, each serving its particular purpose.

**Historical signs** – Usually high on the front or part of the cornice work, these historic building names are considered part of the architecture and not technically part of its commercial signage. The Heritage Preservation Commission supports the identification and association of downtown buildings by their historic names.

**Business Identification signs** – These are the ‘store signs’ we usually think of, which give the name or contents of the store. The size and type of such signs have changed rapidly in the last 15 or 20 years as businesses and their sign suppliers have become more highway oriented. It is now understood that they do not have to be as large and dominant as highway signs to get the message across. Letters six inches tall are readily understood from hundreds of feet away, and the ugliness of large signage can actually have a negative effect when the general level of signage is well designed and smaller in size.

**Pedestrian signs** – Signs visible to the sidewalk pedestrian approaching the store are the most useful, but most neglected type of sign. They should be small, creative, simple and overhang the sidewalk just enough to be seen on foot. As long as they are small and well designed they will add greatly to the amenities of shopping.

**Window signs** – Permanent window signs painted or hung on the inside of the windows can be especially handsome and also protected from the weather. Local sign painters are developing the skills for applying even old-fashioned script if so desired. There are good neon window signs also.

**Temporary signs** – Window and sidewalk signs of a temporary sort are the life and blood of merchandizing. Their design represents the discretion of the store operator, of course, and where unique creative work would seem to be an additional attraction to the passing shopper.

Northfield’s sign ordinance specifies what size these signs may be in ratio to the amount of storefront on the street. The Heritage Preservation Commission can help at the early stages of developing a storefront signage strategy, and the HPC suggests the following considerations:

- Use individual letters directly on the building;
- Use letters or words with a dimensional thickness;
- Use symbolic, creative signs – remember the interesting pawn shop signs, barber poles, or signs of ornamental metal, or painted wood carvings you have seen in the ‘old country’;
- Hire a local signmaker or artist rather than purchasing a manufactured sign;
- Backlighted plastic signs or flashing light signs are generally not appropriate.

**Sign Lighting** – The best way to light signs is by small incandescent spotlights on metal arms over the sign. Thus lighting is part of the sign’s design and impact, but without calling attention to the lights themselves. Backlighted plastic bubble signs are foreign to the historic district and are an expensive mistake that businesses are likely to regret.
Restorative work
- Remove window hoods when windows restored to original full height
- Add corner trim when shakes removed to reveal clapboard siding
- Add back classical eaves
MALT-O-MEAL PLANT
319 South Water Street

AMES MILL, on the site of the first sawmill built by John North at the west end of the dam in 1855-56. The sawmill, paired with a grist mill at the east end, was razed in 1916. Historic photographs show considerably more activity around the dam, bridge and mill area at that time than takes place today. The sawmill was rebuilt in 1869 as a flour mill, a distinctive and necessary feature in communities of the new west. That structure survives as the center part of the Malt-O-Meal plant today. The traditional name comes from Capt. Jesse Ames, the mill owner who pioneered a new milling process which led Northfield flour to receive the highest rating at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876. In 1879, Ames switched from water power to a 200-horse power Corliss steam engine.

The building has had several additions erected, asbestos siding added and windows changed, with hoods added on those on the east side. In 1982, the north and south portions of the plant were painted a warm gray color, chosen to match the original stone of the foundation. The name "Ames Mill" was also returned to its former position on the north side.
APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF BUILDINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Building Name</th>
<th>Street Address</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Building Name</th>
<th>Street Address</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>Ames Mill</td>
<td></td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Central Block</td>
<td>The Rare Pair, The Sewing</td>
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<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>Lyceum Building</td>
<td>Heiberg Dental Office</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Nutting Block</td>
<td>Nutting Mall</td>
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<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>Scriver Building</td>
<td>Bank Museum, Chamber of Commerce, Yarn Bin</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Aldsworth Building</td>
<td>Northfield Insurance Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>Scofield Building</td>
<td>Grundy's Corner Bar</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Gress Building</td>
<td>Mitchell's</td>
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<td>1870</td>
<td>Bjoraker Building</td>
<td>Bjorman's Furniture</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Ebel Block</td>
<td>Quality TV and Appliance, Jasnouch Company</td>
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<td>Lockwood Opera House</td>
<td>Jacobsen's</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Crosby Building</td>
<td>Blagio's</td>
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<td>1872</td>
<td>French Building</td>
<td>Ideal Cafe</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Second Sitze Building</td>
<td>Family Computing</td>
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<td>Lawler Building</td>
<td>Town and Country Office Supply</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>Arcade Building</td>
<td>V.I.P. Travel</td>
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<td>Lockrem-Sumner Building</td>
<td>Willie's Shoe Repair</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>Bushnell Building</td>
<td>Pernan's</td>
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<td>W.T. Nelson Insurance Agency</td>
<td>ca. 1899</td>
<td>Melwin Building</td>
<td>Jacobsen's</td>
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<td>Coast-to-Coast</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Law Building</td>
<td>Eagles Club</td>
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<td>Stevenson's</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Ware Auditorium</td>
<td>Grand Theater</td>
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<td>City Hall</td>
<td>Three Acres Antiques</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Carpenter Building</td>
<td>Le Bistro's</td>
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<td>Archer House</td>
<td>Stuart Hotel</td>
<td>ca. 1900</td>
<td>Onstad Building</td>
<td>Hoffman's Photography</td>
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<td>1878</td>
<td>Shatto Building</td>
<td>Northwestern Mutual Life</td>
<td>1901</td>
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APPENDIX B Notes

HPC Rank: An indication of current evaluations of architectural and historical merits, based upon federal classification and new analysis:

I. Buildings of prime importance and potentially feasible for excellent restoration work or reconstruction to restore missing original detail.
II. Buildings on which exist a majority of original material and where remodeling work is appropriate for the historic district, or where restoration work could result in a significant contribution. Newer buildings which complement the district.
III. Buildings which contribute to the district streetscape, but are not complementary in design without major reconstruction of fronts.

Note 1. Majority of front is historically intact.
Note 2. Original intact material may be covered up by storefront or metal cover.
Note 3. Building could represent earlier small building style once prevalent.

Federal classification:

(PIV) PIVOTAL: Buildings which form an integral part of the architectural, spatial and visual quality of the district.

(COM) COMPLEMENTARY: Buildings whose massing or siting or general historical character contribute to the Pivotal buildings and the streetscape continuity.

(NON) NON-CONTRIBUTIVE: Buildings which because of design, size, materials or physical conditions do not uphold the Historic District.
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APPENDIX B

BUILDING LISTING

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General guidelines for heritage preservation in the Historic District are defined by city ordinance and are implemented through the Heritage Preservation Commission — an advisory board to the City Council.

This commission (nicknamed the HPC) provides information such as given in this booklet about heritage preservation; it identifies properties or districts most worthy of special designation; and it reviews the plans for any exterior changes, including signage or color on specially designated buildings in the city.

As part of the Ordinance creating the District and establishing the HPC, the City Council has adopted the Standards for Rehabilitation developed by the Department of the Interior. These standards have been used in the Building Review Guidelines mentioned above, and are listed in Appendix D.

APPENDIX C

Guidelines

The HPC and City Council have adopted Building Review Guidelines which outline considerations for the review of exterior changes to buildings in the District. The guidelines outline the philosophy of the Commission to be a resource for persons planning exterior work. They also set acceptable standards to guide changes to prevent material of value from being destroyed which could just as easily be conserved. A condensed version of the Building Review Guidelines follows on the next page.
Building Review Guidelines:

Statement of Charge: The Northfield City Council has charged the Northfield Heritage Preservation Commission with the review of any exterior changes to buildings within or abutting the Historic District.

Scope: The HPC will take into consideration the size, scale, color, material and character of the neighborhood and building when reviewing a modification.

Philosophy: The HPC encourages those anticipating work on the exterior of a building within or abutting a historic district to discuss the plans with the HPC in general terms at a regular meeting. At this informal discussion the HPC can answer questions regarding preservation techniques and building styles and offer advice.

A formal building review would take place at a regularly scheduled meeting after a building permit has been requested and the appropriate items listed below have been submitted:

A. Photograph (also older photographs if available).
B. Scaled elevation drawing of side(s) to be modified, indicating materials to be used.
C. Paint chips of intended colors to be used.
D. Narrative of work to be done and how the work relates to the architectural history of the building.
E. Building material or sign samples if not otherwise clearly described.

The HPC has identified five building scope-of-work classifications and adopted guidelines for consideration of the building permits as follows:

I. Minor Facelift
A minor facelift is defined as work that does not significantly alter the existing exterior appearance of the building. This would include refinishing, repair, painting, and general maintenance. The HPC encourages the use of materials and colors similar to those used in the original construction, wherever possible. Synthetic and non-similar materials will be allowed only when replacement of similar materials is not feasible.

Whenever possible, additions or alterations to the buildings should be supportive of the historic detail intact or done in such a manner that if any new elements were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the original building would be unimpaired. Sandblasting which would damage the building and chemical treatments that would cause deterioration or discoloring will not be allowed. The HPC would not approve the removal of cornices, painting of original masonry, alterations of existing windows and doorways and changes to other significant architectural detail and offers its assistance to find solutions to save the original building fabric.

II. Major Facelift
A major facelift should preserve the distinguishing qualities or character of the property and its environment. The removal or alteration of any historic material or architectural features should be held to a minimum, consistent with the proposed use. All buildings should be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations to create an appearance inconsistent with the actual character of the building should be discouraged.

The guidelines for building modification under minor facelift also apply to this category. Change of a non-contributing building should be encouraged if such design is compatible to the size, scale, color, material and character of the neighborhood or building.

III. Building Restoration
Building restoration is defined as recovering the form and details of a property as it appeared at a particular time in the building's history. It is not necessary to restore the building to its appearance at the time of construction. However, one must remember that once a building is restored, it cannot be changed in the foreseeable future.

Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced, whenever 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 original features, substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural features from other buildings.

General rules for building modification outlines under minor and major facelifts also apply.

IV. Reconstruction and Rehabilitation
Reconstruction is defined as the act or process of reproducing by new construction the exact form and detail of a vanished building, structure or object or a part thereof as it appeared at a specific period of time.

Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural values.

General rules for building modification under the above classifications also apply.

V. New Construction
The HPC encourages new construction with designs which are architecturally significant and durable. Contemporary design for new buildings in old neighborhoods and additions to existing buildings or landscaping will be encouraged if such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the neighborhood and adjacent buildings.
The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Historic Preservation Projects

The following general standards apply to all treatments undertaken on historic properties listed in the National Register:

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property that 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 which 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. Detrimental 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 historical, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural design 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 acquisition, protection, stabilization, preservation, rehabilitation, or reconstruction project.

Specific Standards for Historic Preservation Projects

The following specific standards for each treatment are to be used in conjunction with the eight general standards and, in each case, begin with number 9.

For example, in evaluating acquisition projects, include the eight general standards plus the four specific standards listed under Standards for Acquisition.

9. Careful consideration shall be given to the type and extent of property rights which are required to assure the preservation of the historic resource. The preservation objectives shall determine the exact property rights to be acquired.

10. Properties shall be acquired in fee simple when absolute ownership is required to insure their preservation.

11. The purchase of less-than-fee-simple interests, such as open space or facade easements, shall be undertaken when a limited interest achieves the preservation objective.

12. Every reasonable effort shall be made to acquire sufficient property with the historic resource to protect its historical, archeological, architectural, or cultural significance.

Standards for Protection

9. Before applying protective measures which are generally of a temporary nature and imply future historic preservation work, an analysis of the actual or anticipated threats to the property shall be made.

10. Protection shall safeguard the physical condition or environment of a property or archeological site from further deterioration or damage caused by weather or other natural, animal, or human intrusions.

11. If any historic material or architectural features are removed, they shall be properly recorded and, if possible, stored for future study or reuse.

Standards for Stabilization

9. Stabilization shall reestablish the structural stability of a property through the reinforcement of load-bearing members or by arresting material deterioration leading to structural failure. Stabilization shall also reestablish weather resistant conditions for a property.

10. Stabilization shall be accomplished in such a manner that it detracts as little as possible from the property’s appearance. When reinforcement is required to reestablish structural stability, such work shall be concealed wherever possible so as not to intrude upon or detract from the aesthetic and historical quality of the property, except where concealment would result in the alteration or destruction of historically significant material or spaces.

Standards for Preservation

9. Preservation shall maintain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a building, structure, or site. Substantial reconstruction or restoration of lost features generally are not included in a preservation undertaking.

10. Preservation shall include techniques of arresting or retarding the deterioration of a property through a program of ongoing maintenance.
APPENDIX D

SPECIFIC STANDARDS for Historic Preservation – continued

Standards for Rehabilitation
9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historic, 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.

Standards of Restoration
9. Every reasonable effort shall be made to use a property for its originally intended purpose or to provide a compatible use that will require minimum alteration to the property and its environment.

10. Reinforcement required for structural stability or the installation of protective or code required mechanical systems shall be concealed whenever possible so as not to intrude or detract from the property's aesthetic and historical qualities, except where concealment would result in the alteration or destruction of historically significant materials or spaces.

11. When archeological resources must be disturbed by restoration work, recovery of archeological material shall be undertaken in conformance with current professional practices.

Standards for Reconstruction
9. Reconstruction of a part or all of a property shall be undertaken only when such work is essential to reproduce a significant missing feature in a historic district or scene, and when a contemporary design solution is not acceptable.

10. Reconstruction of all or a part of a historic property shall be appropriate when the reconstruction is essential for understanding and interpreting the value of a historic district, or when no other building, structure, object, or landscape feature with the same associative value has survived and sufficient historical documentation exists to insure an accurate reproduction of the original.

11. The reproduction of missing elements accomplished with new materials shall duplicate the composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities of the missing element. Reconstruction of missing architectural features shall be based upon accurate duplication of original features substantiated by historical, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than upon conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural features from other buildings.

12. Reconstruction of a building or structure on an original site shall be preceded by a thorough archeological investigation to locate and identify all subsurface features and artifacts.

13. Reconstruction shall include measures to preserve any remaining original fabric, including foundations, subsurface, and ancillary elements. The reconstruction of missing elements and features shall be done in such a manner that the essential form and integrity of the original surviving features are unimpaired.