

# Exhibit D-Historic Preservation Commission

## Recommendation Resolution



### RECOMMENDATION RESOLUTION

#### Historic Preservation Commission

**Recommendation Number: (2019-02RR):** Management of the painting of historic buildings, including the prohibition against painting of historic masonry in certain circumstances.

WHEREAS, the City's Comprehensive Plan, "Vision San Marcos: A River Runs Through Us," recognizes that the citizens of San Marcos "are conscious of preserving our rich historical past and will pursue future cultural enrichment"; and

WHEREAS, toward that end, the City boasts seven locally designated historic districts and eight locally designated landmarks while other structures and sites have been recognized at the national and state levels for their historical or cultural significance; and

WHEREAS, to uphold the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, City Council's Strategic Initiative concerning Downtown Vitality, and to preserve the City's historical and cultural resources for future generations, the Historic Preservation Commission has explored policies for possible management of the painting of historic buildings, including the prohibition against painting of historic masonry in certain circumstances; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission recommends that the San Marcos City Council consider the management of painting historic commercial buildings and masonry in the City. The Historic Preservation Commission further recommends that, if the City Council concurs that management of paint for historic commercial buildings and masonry should be explored, the City Council refer the matter of possible paint management back to the Historic Preservation Commission for the development of more specific recommendations for the adoption of ordinances, resolutions or programs. Upon the transmittal of the final recommendations of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding paint management in relation to historic commercial buildings and masonry to the City Council, the Historic Preservation Commission respectfully requests that the City Council consider implementation of the recommendations.

Date of Approval: March 14, 2019

Record of the vote: Unanimous on a 4-0 vote

Attest: Shay Spal



## BACKGROUND

When the City of San Marcos first adopted a historic preservation ordinance in 1984, it was a requirement that exterior changes in color required a Certificate of Appropriateness for structures within a local historic district or landmark. Through the 1990s and until the Land Development Code was adopted in 2004 this remained a requirement. In 2004, changes in color to a structure's exterior no longer required an approved Certificate of Appropriateness. This requirement was carried over in Section 2.5.5.1(C)(1) of the newly adopted San Marcos Development Code in 2018. In recent years, concerns have been raised about the painting of a few properties within the City's Historic Districts. Of specific concern was the painting of masonry.

The Historic Preservation Commission has held discussions regarding adoption of a color palette along with discussions of the painting of brick and masonry during regular meetings as well as at the annual visioning workshop. To facilitate discussion among the Historic Preservation Commission, Staff has outlined how other Texas cities regulate painting of historic structures and has included best management practices for preserving the exterior masonry of historic buildings.

## PAIN MANAGEMENT OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES

Generally, cities choose one of the following processes:

1. Exterior paint color changes are not reviewed by Historic Preservation Officer or Historic Preservation Commission.
2. Exterior paint color changes are administratively reviewed and approved by Historic Preservation Officer using design guidelines.
3. Exterior paint color changes are reviewed and approved by Historic Preservation Commission using design guidelines.

## FEBRUARY 7, 2019 HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Staff presented the Historic Preservation Commission with three different cities where exterior paint color is managed through a Certificate of Appropriateness.

### **1. Galveston**

- Administrative approval of Certificate of Appropriateness using an approved palette ("Victorian" palette by Sherwin-Williams or paint from other paint companies that the color is matched to the approved palette)
  - If using a different palette, must receive approval from Historic Landmark Commission
- Only commercial properties within the Strand/Mechanic Historic District (approximately 13 blocks) are reviewed
- Design standards are specific to historic paint and the exterior color of a building ("EXHIBIT A")



## 2. **Grapevine:**

- Administrative approval of Certificate of Appropriateness for a request to change the color or placement of colors
  - If painting the same color, no Certificate of Appropriateness is required
- Historic paint color cards from all major paint manufacturers are allowed
- Both residential and commercial structures are reviewed
- Paint Guidelines are used to guide applicant with appropriate paint combinations ("EXHIBIT B")

## 3. **Georgetown:**

- Administrative approval of Certificate of Appropriateness
- Both residential and commercial structures are reviewed
- No paint palette has been approved but staff reviews for historic appropriate colors
- Chapter 11 of Georgetown's Design Guidelines are specific to historic color schemes, accent colors, and when to paint ("EXHIBIT C")

## PRESERVING HISTORIC MASONRY

Sealing or painting historically unpainted brick creates performance issues with the material. The paint traps moisture in the brick, which compromises the face and structural integrity of the brick, which leads to failure of the wall. The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties* state that applying paint or other coatings to masonry that has been historically unpainted or uncoated is not recommended ("EXHIBIT D").

The following are a couple of best practices for historic masonry:

- **Preserve and maintain original brick, stone, terra cotta, cast concrete, mortar and other masonry original to the building.** Masonry exterior is a character-defining feature, and its different textures, finishes and patterns contribute to the building's appearance. Preserve the building's masonry to retain your building's historic character. Do not cover or conceal original masonry surfaces with non-historic materials such as metal, exterior insulated finishing systems or vinyl.
- **Keep the historic masonry visible and unpainted.** Do not paint or seal the masonry building if it has never been painted or sealed. The brick's color and texture is an important part of its appearance. Any paint applied to the brick will require regular maintenance and periodic repainting. If the building is painted or sealed, it may trap the moisture in the wall and cause the bricks to fail. It may also cause moisture-related issues on the interior, such as mold. Silicone-based sealants do not allow bricks to "breathe" and can trap moisture within walls. If water is penetrating the historic masonry building, use one of the highly effective non-paint related treatments available to strengthen the damaged or sandblasted masonry and make it more water repellent and resistant to the elements.

Many cities have written into their design guidelines that painting of historically unpainted brick is prohibited; all three cities above have guidelines prohibiting painting of unpainted masonry. However, if the building has already been painted, the Texas Historical Commission Main Street Program provides guidance on removing paint where feasible or selecting appropriate paint colors ("EXHIBIT E").

### RECOMMENDATION

In the majority of cases, regulation of paint is kept to commercial buildings using design guidelines and administrative Certificates of Appropriateness and in all the cases researched, unpainted masonry is prohibited from being painted.

To keep with this standard, Staff recommends the following, which was supported by the Historic Preservation Commission at their February 7 Regular Meeting:

1. Amend the San Marcos Development Code to prohibit painting of previously unpainted masonry;
2. Adopt the color palette from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Historic Design Guidelines, while allowing historic palettes from all major paint manufacturers, and require an administrative Certificate of Appropriateness for the current Downtown Historic District and potential future commercial historic districts; and
3. Include educational guidance and information for residential properties within guidelines and on website.
4. Strengthen the definition of primary materials in the San Marcos Development Code to include the Secretary of the Interior Standard's definition of masonry

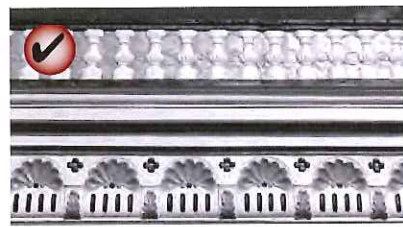
### EXHIBITS

- A. City of Galveston *Design Standards for All Historic Preservation Projects & Commercial Properties* and *Appendix V. Approved Paint Palettes*
- B. City of Grapevine *Paint Guidelines*
- C. City of Georgetown *Design Guidelines for Colors in the Overlay Districts*
- D. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties – Recommendations for Preservation of Masonry
- E. Texas Main Street Program Design Guide – Color Palette & Paint Guidelines





Maintain protective coatings, such as paint, on exposed metals.



Preserve significant architectural metal features.

## HISTORIC METAL

Metals were used for a variety of applications including columns, roofs, fences and decorative features. They include cast iron, steel and copper. Traditional metals should be preserved.

### 2.10 Preserve significant architectural metal features.

#### *Appropriate*

- Provide proper drainage on metal surfaces to minimize water retention.
- Maintain protective coatings, such as paint, on exposed metals.

### 2.11 Repair metal features by patching, splicing or otherwise reinforcing the original metal whenever possible.

#### *Appropriate*

- When replacement is necessary the new metal shall be compatible with the original.

## \*HISTORIC PAINT\*

Historically, most wood surfaces on the exterior of a building were painted to protect them from weathering. Concrete and stucco structures were also sometimes painted.

Note that all projects must meet lead-based paint requirements.

### 2.12 Plan repainting carefully.

#### *Appropriate*

- Always prepare a good substrate. Prior to painting, remove damaged or deteriorated paint only to the next intact layer, using the gentlest means possible.
- Use compatible paints. Some latex paints will not bond well to earlier oil-based paints without a primer coat.

## \*Exterior Painting and Colors\*

The Landmark Commission does not review exterior paint colors in residential historic districts but does review them in commercial historic districts as described on page 114.

When selecting colors, it may be helpful to consider historic color schemes on your street and block. Generally, a simple color scheme that does not include very dark colors or stained surfaces is preferable. White with green shutters or soft earth tones with white trim and dark shutters are often compatible color combinations.

Studies on paint colors used in 19th and early 20th Century Galveston are available from the Galveston Historical Foundation.

## Appropriate Color Combinations

Three colors are generally sufficient to highlight a building façade.

**Base Color.** This appears on the upper wall and frames the storefront. The major expanses of space on a storefront will be painted this color.

**Major Trim.** This defines the decorative elements of the building and ties the upper façade trim with the storefront. The major trim color must complement the base or body color. Elements include:

- Building and storefront cornice
- Window frames, sills and hoods
- Storefront frames, columns, bulk-heads and canopies.

**Minor Trim.** This is intended to enhance the color scheme established by the base and major trim colors and may be used for window sashes, doors and selective details. It is typically a darker shade of the major trim color.

## Approval of Paint Colors

Several paint colors have been pre-approved by the Landmark Commission for use in locally-designated commercial historic districts. Painting projects using these colors, or the original building colors may be administratively approved by the Historic Preservation Officer without design review by the Commission.

Painting projects that do not use pre-approved colors must be approved by the Commission on a case-by-case basis using the standards at left.

## EXTERIOR COLOR

The Landmark Commission reviews exterior color for projects in locally-designated commercial historic districts.

Choosing the right combination of colors for a historic rehabilitation or new construction project can unify building elements with the façade and highlight important architectural detailing. Paint color selection should be appropriate to the architectural style and complement the building and its surroundings.

### 4.30 Use a façade color scheme that reads as a single composition.

#### *Appropriate*

- Use color schemes that are simple in character.
- Use one base color for the building walls and another for the roof.
- Use one to three accent colors for trim elements.
- Return the building to its historic paint colors if adequate archival information is available.

### 4.31 Use muted base or background colors.

#### *Appropriate*

- Use muted colors for building features.
- Use harmonizing or contrasting colors for trim accents.
- Use matte or low luster finishes instead of glossy ones.
- Use non-reflective, muted finishes on all features if possible.

#### *Inappropriate*

- Do not use accent colors that contrast so strongly as to not read as part of the composition.
- Do not paint unpainted stone, brickwork or terra-cotta.
- Do not use sandblasting to clean historic surfaces and/or to remove old paint. (See Treatment of Historic Materials and Finishes in Chapter 2.)



## **Appendix V. Approved Paint Palettes**

The following paint palettes have been approved for use in the historic districts:

Strand/Mechanic Historic District: "Victorian" palette by Sherwin-Williams. Please see the Exterior Color section on page 114 for more information on exterior painting projects.

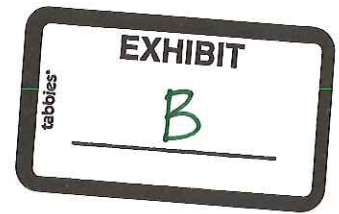
All Historic Districts: The following colors are the approved palette for items in the right-of-way such as cell nodes and associated ground equipment:

- Rookwood Dark Brown, SW 2808;
- Rookwood Medium Brown, SW 2807;
- Rookwood Shutter Green, SW 2809; and
- Black.

All paint shall be a satin or flat finish.

The paint palettes do not apply to structures located within the residential historic districts.

Please note that use of Sherwin-Williams paint is not required. Any paint company may be used provided the color is matched to the approved palette.



## PAINT GUIDELINES

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### Adding Character

The exterior surfaces of historic buildings are painted for two primary reasons – to protect and preserve the exterior materials and to create color schemes appropriate for the building's architectural style. An appropriate paint scheme on an historic building will accentuate its architectural details and add to the character of the historic district.

The paint colors selected for a historic building will greatly contribute to the historic character of the building and surrounding historic district, and as such should reflect the historical age, period and style of a building, accentuate the architectural features of the design, and represent the current owner's taste.

The articulation and details of exterior walls, window and door openings, trim, scale, and texture of exterior materials can be enhanced or obscured by appropriate and inappropriate paint colors selected for a building.

Select and locate paint colors that are appropriate to the style, period, and type of building and its district or area. Selection and location of paint colors based on research of historic finishes is encouraged. Paint colors should be



complementary to each other and used to accentuate a building's significant features.

This method of selecting colors and locations of colors does not mean that every house or building in a historic district or of a particular period or style should be painted the same color. There is a wide range of attractive colors, which may be combined in hundreds of ways to provide for individuality with overall continuity.

While Grapevine did not have as great a selection of historic paint colors (most houses in town were painted white, both body and trim, while window screens or shutters were painted dark green or black), the selected colors are based on paint companies' available color palettes for the period when Grapevine's historic buildings were being constructed.

## **Note**

Original stone or masonry surfaces should be maintained and not be painted, unless severe deterioration of the brick or stone can be shown to require painting and other consolidation or stabilization methods cannot be shown to be appropriate. If masonry was previously painted, it is often not appropriate or possible to remove paint and appropriate repainting should be considered.

## **Paint Color Location**

Having selected a base or body color that is appropriate to the period and style of your historic building, the next decision is for a trim color to contrast and compliment that of the body color.

## **Trim**

Nearly all houses and some commercial buildings built in Grapevine prior to WWII were defined by trim colors. Trim color, for houses, was used to define wood elements such as porch features, corner boards, window, and door trim and fascia boards. All of these elements were usually painted the trim color to provide a contrast or to define the main body (or base) color of the house.

Porches were also painted a trim color to provide an outline or contrast of color to the main body color.

Commercial buildings typically had their body color defined by the material the building was constructed of (i.e. brick and stone) while a trim color was utilized for defining windows, doors and other architectural elements such as cast iron. Body and trim colors should not be similar in hue or tone intensity (i.e. two shades of colors that are closely related like green and red or two dark or light shades of color that are similar in darkness or lightness).

## **Accent**

A third color, commonly called an accent color, was quite often utilized to accentuate or highlight a particular feature of a house or building. On houses, the accent color typically was painted on doors, window sashes or special decorative wood trim. It was also common to see the front doors stained a natural color so as to accentuate the natural grain of the wood on the door. On commercial buildings, the accent color was also used to highlight particular architectural features of the building façade.

## **Color Palettes**

The Grapevine Historic Preservation Commission has approved the following paint manufacturer's preservation color palettes for Historic Landmarks and buildings within Historic Districts:

- Sherwin Williams - Preservation Palette
- Pittsburgh Paints - Historic Paints
- Do It Best Paints - American Historical Restoration Colors (Exteriors only)

- Valspar - American Tradition Historic Colors (Lights only)

A good rule of thumb to follow is the simpler the design of the building or house, the fewer colors used.

## Certificate of Appropriateness

Any exterior modifications, including new paint colors, to buildings and properties that are designated Historic Landmarks or within Grapevine's Historic Districts require a Certificate of Appropriateness (CA) be approved before modifications may begin.

Many modifications are simple and routine and can be approved by City of Grapevine Staff within a few days after the CA application is submitted. More significant projects require review and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission, which meets monthly. The Commission has approved various preservation color palettes to assist the building owner with appropriate colors for their historic buildings.

For further information on approved color palettes or Grapevine's Historic Preservation Programs, or to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness application package, please contact the Historic Preservation Office at 817.410.3197.

## Contact Us

### David Klempin

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### Hours

Monday - Friday

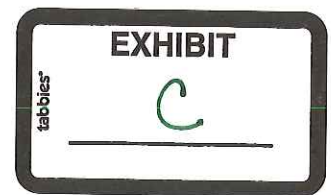
8am – 5pm

## FAQs

- [What are the advantages of owning property in a historic district or an individual landmark?](#)
- [How do I know if I own property in a designated historic district or landmark?](#)
- [Is being designated a City of Grapevine Historic District or Landmark different from being listed on the National Register of Historic Places?](#)

[View All](#)





# DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR COLORS IN THE OVERLAY DISTRICTS

This chapter presents design policies and guidelines that apply to paint colors. The City of Georgetown does not have a specific color palette. Paint color changes to single-family and two-family residential properties in the Old Town Overlay District do not require design review.

## In This Chapter:

Color schemes	118
Accent colors	119
When to paint	120

## Historic Color Schemes

When renovating an historic building, first consider returning to the original color scheme, which can be discovered by carefully cutting back paint layers. Accurately determining the original color scheme requires professional help, but one may get a general idea of the colors that were used by scraping back paint layers with a penknife. Since the paint will be faded, moisten it slightly to get a better idea of the original hue. It is not necessary, however, to use the original color schemes of the building. An alternative is to use colors in ways that were typical of the period or architectural style, and with them create a new color scheme.

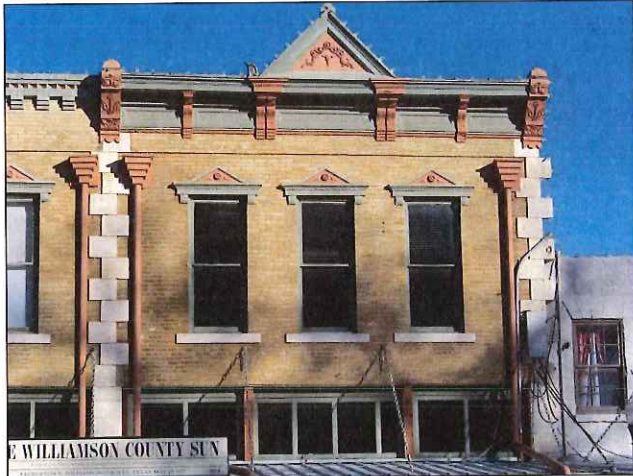
With respect to the treatment of color on individual historic buildings, colors that represent the appropriate period of history are preferred, but not necessarily required. Color does not damage the historic materials or alter significant details and can always be changed in the future and thus its application is not as critical as some other design options.

Inappropriate applications of color, however, may hinder one's ability to perceive the character of the building's architecture. For example, if a building with jig-saw brackets and moldings is painted solid black, with no contrast between the background and the details, and little opportunity for expression of shadows, the perception of the character of the building may be diminished.

This concern for perception of character is more relevant in the context of the Downtown Overlay District, where assemblage of buildings on the street is important to one's perception of the character of the streetscape. In this sense, one building that stands out from the rest with an inappropriate color scheme will impede one's perception of the continuity in the district. For this reason, the city reviews the use of color as part of its consideration of design issues. In general, HARC will consider color on a case-by-case basis, and in context with the building's location.



**Policy:** In general, bright colors used on large surfaces are discouraged. In all cases, the following standards for use of color shall apply.



*Develop a color scheme for the entire building that coordinates all the façade elements.*

**11.1 Develop a color scheme for the entire building that coordinates all the façade elements.**

- Using the historic color scheme is encouraged.
- Choose a base color that will link elements of the entire building face together. It can tie signs, ornamentation, awnings, and entrances together. It can also help the building better relate to others on the block.
- A single color scheme should be used for the entire exterior so upper and lower floors and subordinate wings of buildings are seen as components of a single structure.
- For a newer building in the Overlay Districts, a color scheme that complements the historic character of this district should be used.



*Choose colors for trim, accents, and architectural details that complement the main color on the body of the structure.*

**11.2 Paint colors should enhance individual building elements while creating a unified, coordinated appearance for the entire structure.**

- Paint colors and placement should create a cohesive look for the structure. There should be one main color on the body of the building to unify the façade.
- Choose colors for trim, accents, and architectural details that complement the main color on the body of the structure.
- Consider the palette of surrounding structures to create a harmonized appearance along the block face.
- Background and accent colors should be consistent within separate buildings, where a number of buildings are attached or where unity in theme is desired.



**11.3 A muted color is preferred for the base color of most buildings.**

- Use muted colors to minimize the apparent scale of buildings and blend them with the natural colors of area.
- Matte finishes are preferred to glossy ones.

**11.4 Roof colors must complement the style and overall color scheme of the structure.**

**Policy: Focus attention to a building's decorative details and entrances.**

**11.5 In general, use bright colors for accents only.**

- Colors of a vivid saturation are not appropriate for the body of commercial buildings.
- Overly strong or bold colors are not appropriate for the main body of a structure. Reserve the use of strong, bright colors for accents when you want to draw the customer's eye, such as to the sign, the building's ornamentation or entrance.
- In most cases only one or two accent colors should be used in addition to the base color.
- Doors may be painted a bright accent color or they may be left a natural wood finish. Historically, many of the doors would have simply had a stain applied.
- Window sashes, casings, and trims are also an excellent opportunity for accent color.
- Brilliant luminescent or day-glow colors are not appropriate.
- Minimize the metallic shine of aluminum and door frames.

**11.6 Paint colors should highlight architectural details.**

- Plan painting to use more than one color. It is inappropriate to allow architectural details to be camouflaged by painting them the same color as the background of the structure.
- Strong or bold colors can be appropriate for trim, accents, and architectural details.



*Bright colors can be used to identify a building entrance.*



*Paint colors should highlight architectural details*

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**Policy: It is important to know when to paint buildings and when to leave the material in its natural state or color.**

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*Leave natural masonry finishes unpainted when feasible.*

**11.7 Wooden structures must be painted.**

- Historically wooden structures in Georgetown were painted and would not have been left exposed wood.
- Stained wood is inappropriate for the body of a structure.
- Certain wooden details, such as doors and windows, may remain unpainted. But the wood must not be exposed to the elements, so the materials need to be treated.
- The use and color of stain must be a typical style for the period of the structure.

**11.8 Leave natural masonry finishes unpainted when feasible.**

- Where the natural color of the materials exists, such as with stone or brick, they should be left unpainted.
- Painting an unpainted brick or stone wall may trap moisture inside the walls and will drastically alter its character and appearance.
- For other parts of the building that do require painting, select colors that will complement those of the natural materials.

**11.9 Where brick has been painted historically it should remain painted.**

- If a wall is made of porous brick, which has always been painted, it should remain painted. Removing the paint will expose the brick to weather, accelerating its deterioration.
- If a building was originally plain brick, but was painted sometime in the past, consider applying new paint colors that simulate the original brick color.

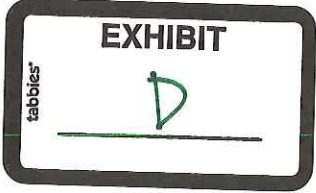


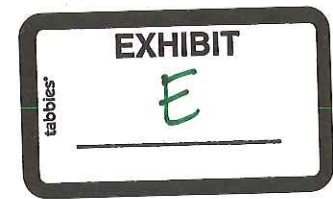
MASONRY: STONE, BRICK, TERRA COTTA, CONCRETE, ADOBE, STUCCO, AND MORTAR

RECOMMENDED		NOT RECOMMENDED	
<b>Identifying, retaining, and preserving</b> masonry features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building (such as walls, brackets, railings, cornices, window and door surrounds, steps, and columns) and decorative ornament and other details, such as tooling and bonding patterns, coatings, and color.		Altering masonry features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished.	
		Replacing historic masonry features instead of repairing or replacing only the deteriorated masonry.	
		Applying paint or other coatings (such as stucco) to masonry that has been historically unpainted or uncoated.	
		Removing paint from historically-painted masonry.	
		Failing to stabilize deteriorated or damaged masonry until additional work is undertaken, thereby allowing further damage to occur to the historic building	
<b>Stabilizing</b> deteriorated or damaged masonry as a preliminary measure, when necessary, prior to undertaking preservation work.		Failing to identify and treat the causes of masonry deterioration, such as leaking roofs and gutters or rising damp.	
<b>Protecting and maintaining</b> masonry by ensuring that historic drainage features and systems that divert rainwater from masonry surfaces (such as roof overhangs, gutters, and downspouts) are intact and functioning properly.		Cleaning masonry surfaces when they are not heavily soiled to create a “like-new” appearance, thereby needlessly introducing chemicals or moisture into historic materials.	
Cleaning masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration or remove heavy soiling.		Cleaning masonry surfaces without testing or without sufficient time for the testing results to be evaluated.	
Carrying out masonry cleaning tests when it has been determined that cleaning is appropriate. Test areas should be examined to ensure that no damage has resulted and, ideally, monitored over a sufficient period of time to allow long-range effects to be predicted.			



[1] A test patch should always be done before using a chemical cleaner to ensure that it will not damage historic masonry, as in this instance, terra cotta.





## TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM DESIGN GUIDE

### **Color Palette + Paint**

When visiting Main Street communities one of the most frequently asked questions by building owners is “What color should I paint my building?” For those brick and stone buildings that have not been painted or have less than 50% painted, the answer is easy. DO NOT PAINT! Remove the paint that is there, then give your entire building a good washing. The results will surprise you when all the years of dirt and smog that have collected are removed. But, if your building is already painted and the paint will not come off without further deteriorating the brick, you now have paint color options for stone, brick, wood and metal trim.

The selection of paint colors is a personal decision, as future changes can be made to the palette without impacting the integrity of the historic building. It’s a common rule of thumb to select 3 colors or less to compose the palette and in these general proportions: body color (60%), major trim (30%), minor trim / accent (10%). To select colors, a handful of factors can guide the decision-making process.

Consider the history of the building and the historic context. Research on the building era will reveal a range of commonly used colors. Historic photographs may indicate the original palette and/or color relationships if the images are black-and-white. On-site investigation, including scraping of a small area to uncover hidden layers, may reveal the original color. Look closely at the natural landscape, street, and block your building is a part of, noticing the larger color palette that your building is a part of. Your final paint selections will impact your neighbors and visual appearance of the area. Identify any local guidance and/or regulations in your community regarding paint colors in the historic district.

With a historical perspective in-hand, consider your priorities and the starting point for your selection process. If exposed building materials, such as brick or stone, or roof materials are a visual component of the façade, these static colors and textures should be considered at the start. For example, the color of a brick façade would automatically be the body color to base the selection of the other colors on. Other starting points from your process might be a business logo or branding scheme and an awning fabric that you’d like to incorporate into the façade.

A strong palette pulls together the visual appearance of the building, connecting façade design with the current use and interior space. The body color, the largest proportion of the façade, is likely a neutral or color similar to the original façade material. This background allows the trim and accent colors to highlight notable elements on the façade or signage to stand out. In general, A lighter body color causes a building to appear visually larger, while a darker color causes a building to appear smaller. The body color also impacts heat gain, as the darker colors will cause heat to be absorbed, rather than reflected by lighter colors. The accent color, the smallest portion of the façade, is commonly the visual pop or color used to highlight smaller elements on the facade. In some cases, an accent color is not used – allowing the body and trim color to compose the palette.

There are many resources available to assist in your color selection. Roger Moss in his book “Paint in America: The Color of Historic Buildings” surveys 250 years of paint history. Many major paint companies have composed historic paint palettes for use by consumers, as well as tools to visualize paint colors on your building’s facades. You may consider hiring a design and historic preservation professional to provide a color consultation for more complex projects.



To test your selections, purchase quart or smaller quantities of paint to cover a portion of the façade. Review the selections over several days in natural light, both in full sun and shade, to determine any differences. Remember, colors can't be seen in isolation. When selecting colors with paint chips, you'll be visually influenced by other colors on the surrounding chips, light conditions, etc. Similarly, the colors and materials around your building will impact the way your building is seen – such as the sky, sidewalk, street, plants, neighboring buildings, etc. You'll likely need to adjust your selections once you've tested the palette in place.

## Painting the Building

Painting can be one of the most impactful improvements you can make to your building. Understanding the proper process is necessary before you begin, to ensure the paint is long lasting and visually appealing. In your planning, consider the time of year and temperature to identify the best times to undertake the project.

To prepare for painting, all needed repairs should be addressed, such as replacing rotten wood, repointing brick mortar, and repairing window putty. On all surfaces to be painted, peeling and loose paint should be removed. A wire brush, scraper, or heat gun can be used carefully and with the appropriate safety precautions. If the building was painted before 1978 years old, the paint may contain lead and should be tested. The Environment Protection Agency's website provides guidance on the appropriate removal of lead-based paint.

Following any paint removal, the surfaces should be washed by hand or with a pressure washer set to less than 200 psi. At a minimum, bare surfaces should be primed before applying the new coats of paint. If possible, all surfaces should be primed increase the likelihood the new paint will properly adhere.

In selecting the paint, consider the advantages and disadvantages of oil and latex paints. Oil paints are more durable and may adhere better, yet they are more difficult to clean up. Latex paints are less durable, easier to apply, and easier to clean up. Problems can arise in switching back and forth between the different types of paint, so it is important to investigate the previous type of paint used. Also, consider the level of shine: gloss, semi-gloss, eggshell, or matte. Follow all manufacturer's instructions when applying.

## Note on Color Interactions:

Color, either found inherently in building materials or applied with paint, can never be viewed in isolation. Our eyes always see color in combination and our perception is affected. It's helpful to have a basic understanding of complementary colors and the way they interact. The basic color wheel sets up three complementary color pairings: red + green, orange + blue, purple + yellow. If a red swatch is placed next to a blue-green swatch - because red and green are complementary - the blue-green will appear more green, as our eye pulls the green out. Also, our eyes prefer to view each of the complementary colors in varying portions. For example, our eyes prefer 5 parts red to 5 parts green, yet only one-part yellow to 9 parts purple. These interactions and proportions explain why we prefer certain color schemes over others.