# DOWNTOWN DESIGN STANDARDS

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# MAINTAINING THE INTEGRITY OF OUR ARTS & HISTORIC DISTRICT

# \*2005-2007\*

# <u>City of Buchanan, Michigan</u> Downtown Business District Building Design Standards

#### Definitions

- A. Appearance. The outward aspect of a building structure or site visible to the public.
- B. *Appropriate*. Sympathetic, or fitting, to the context of the site and the whole community.
- C. Appurtenances. The visible, functional objects accessory to and part of the building.
- D. Architectural concept. The basic aesthetic idea of a building or group of buildings or structures, including the site and landscape development, which produces the architectural character.
- E. Architectural feature. A prominent or significant part or element of a building, structure, or site.
- F. Architectural style. The characteristic form and detail, as of buildings of a particular historic period.
- G. Central Business District. The area designated on the adopted Buchanan Master Plan as the Central Business District.
- H. *Character*. The combination of traits which, when considered together, distinguish specified land and/or development from other specified land and/or development. In assessing character, the following may be considered, along with any other expressly identified factors:
  - i. Percentage of a lot(s) covered by structures and other impervious improvements
  - ii. Type or style of structure(s)
  - iii. Traffic flow and pattern, and the relationship of traffic to pedestrian and vehicular thoroughfares
  - iv. Density of land use
  - v. Intensity of uses
- I. *External design feature*. The general arrangement of any portion of a building, sign, landscaping, or structure and including the kind, color, and texture of the materials of such portion and the types of roof, windows, doors, lights, attached or ground signs, or other fixtures appurtenant to such portions, as will be open to public view from any street, place, or way.
- J. Fenestration. The arrangement of windows and doors in a building.
- K. *Graphic element*. A letter, illustration, symbol, figure, insignia, or other device employed to express and illustrate a message or part thereof.

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### **Design Guidelines**

#### Goals:

- Preserve and protect existing historical structures
- Preserve, protect, and reinforce the context of historic structures and land development patterns within the Downtown District by encouraging design, construction, and maintenance of all new buildings, additions, additions, and alterations to be in harmony with the character of existing historic architecture.
- Encourage new buildings that, while reflecting the traditions and character of historic buildings, are in themselves high quality designs which harmonize without imitating an earlier style or period.
- Protect and enhance historic areas to attract residents and visitors and to serve as a support and stimulus to business and civic pride.
- Insure that when rehabilitating a building, the property is returned to a state of utility through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient use, while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings shall form the basis for review of proposed projects in the Downtown District.
- Assist applicants by providing design guidelines and advice on general historic preservation approaches.

#### **Expectations:**

Façade improvements will generally meet the recommended architectural improvements as outlined in the 1992 Downtown Development Plan (Camiros).

#### Architecture:

- Different architectural styles are encouraged. Any style should be complimentary to its surroundings.
- Architectural styles must be harmonious with existing architecture and respect the period of architecture representing the development of the City of Buchanan.
- Architectural styles preceding establishment of the buildings in Buchanan shall be discouraged.

#### Massing:

- Façade proportions (ratio of width to height) should be similar to those of surrounding buildings.
- Large structures shall be developed using varied masses to create the appearance and character of smaller pedestrian-oriented structures.
- Massing of new or additions to existing structures shall not be disproportional to adjacent structures or the majority of structures on the same block.

#### **Roofs:**

- Various types of roof forms are encouraged. Roof shapes shall be respectful of adjacent structures and not detract from or infringe upon significant features of existing properties.
- Generally visible roof materials should give the appearance of seam metal, slate shingle, tile shingle, architecturally dimensioned fiberglass shingle, or painted corrugated metal.

#### Materials:

- Materials and use of materials should be compatible with those used in adjacent structures as applicable. Integration of individual details and the design as a whole is encouraged.
- Materials should give the appearance of brick, stucco, tile, and various stones if appropriate to the style of the structure.
- Materials that give the appearance of vinyl siding, aluminum siding, plywood, pressboard siding, corrugated metal, and concrete masonry without an applied finish are generally inappropriate for downtown Buchanan.

#### **Doors and Windows:**

- Where appropriate, existing doors and window openings shall be retained. New openings in existing structures shall be proportional to established patterns of fenestration. If closure of existing openings is necessary, such work shall be accomplished without creating a major detraction from the original appearance of the building.
- Height to width ratios of openings should be harmonious with the neighboring structures.
- The pattern established by the relationship of openings and surrounding wall area should respect the neighboring structures. The percentage of glass to wall should approximate that of neighboring structures.
- Replacement windows and doors should fit existing openings and be consistent with existing trim and other features of the structure. Replacements should duplicate the appearance of the original with respect to design, size, proportion, reflective qualities, and profile.
- Windows and doors which have mullions should be of true divided light or equivalent, as opposed to snap-on.
- Glass should be clear or lightly tinted, allowing for two-way visibility.

#### Signs and Awnings:

- Signs and awnings shall comply with the City of Buchanan Sign Ordinance.
- Signage shall not detract from, destroy, or obscure the significance of prominent architectural features of buildings within the district.

#### **Demolition:**

• Approval of projects involving demolition shall give consideration to the contribution of the structure or parts of the structure to its immediate surroundings and to the overall character of the district, the historical importance of the building, and the building's structural condition. Demolition in part or whole shall be permitted if the demolition does not detract from the district, the structure is a hazard to the public health, safety, or welfare and is beyond repair, or the economic feasibility of repair is extreme. Documentation of economic feasibility shall be clearly illustrated in the application for review.

# The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

- 1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
- 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
- 3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
- 4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
- 5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
- 6. Distinctive historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
- 7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials should not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
- 8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
- 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
- 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment be unimpaired.

## ARTICLE XI

### C – 3 CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

#### Section 11.04 – Alteration, Site, and Façade Plan Required

- A. Prior to any exterior aesthetic or cosmetic alteration (siding, paint, windows, or any exterior work that does not require a building permit) on any building located in the C-3 Central Business District, the building owner or occupant must obtain a Zoning Compliance Permit from the Zoning Administrator. The zoning Compliance Permit application shall include a building façade plan pursuant to Article XXII, Section 22.03. The plan must contain schematics and photos or drawn rendering of the proposed alterations with applicable color sample attached. The Design Review Committee will determine if the applicant's plan conforms to the approved Downtown Design Standards. If not, the applicant will be required to amend the plan and resubmit the plan approval by the Design Review Committee. Failure to comply with the Downtown Design Standards will result in rejection of the applicant's plan and any alteration will be prohibited.
- B. Prior to the issuance of a building permit in the C-3 Central Business District for any new construction or for the remodeling of any existing building or structure which will involve the exterior façade or other exterior surface in any way, the Zoning Administrator shall cause the application including a site and a façade plan prepared pursuant to the provision of Article XXII, Section 22.05 to be submitted to the Design Review Committee for review and determination of compliance with the approved Downtown Design Standards for the Central Business District. The Design Review Committee shall notify the applicant concerning any features and colors inconsistent with the approved standards. Any proposed new construction or remodeling of any existing buildings found to be inconsistent with the standards for the district by the Design Review Committee shall be disqualified for any incentive offered by the City or Downtown Development Authority. The applicant's proposal shall be rejected and no building permit issued until the site and façade plan are in conformance with the approved Downtown Design Standards and the plan approved by the Design Review Committee and the Plan Commission.

Approved by Plan Commission 11-13-2007 Approved by City Commission 12-10-2007