



MAIN STREET MASTER PLAN

APPENDIX B: DESIGN PRINCIPLES

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Historic Streetscape Design Principles

A summary of preservation approaches across the country and how they may apply in Deadwood

Introduction

Deadwood is considering improvements to its Main Street as a part of a new master plan that is in development. Work being discussed includes repairing and replacing underground utilities and enhancing accessibility and safety. Still other improvements are intended to expand the ability to accommodate the high volumes of pedestrians and vehicles that come downtown. This planning effort raises questions about how improvements can occur while preserving the historic character of the streetscape.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation provide a basis for designing in the context of a historic streetscape. Several State Historic Preservation Officers also have published guidelines for design in the context of historic streetscapes which provide useful information relevant to Deadwood. These publications build upon the principles set forth in the Secretary's Standards and provide specific examples of how those standards can be applied to streets in historic downtowns such as Deadwood. The sources referenced are:

1. *Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts*
 - By Ned Crankshaw, ASLA, May 2002
 - Sponsored by the Kentucky Heritage Council in collaboration with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and the Renaissance Kentucky Alliance.
2. *Oregon Downtown Main Streets, Strategies for Compatible Streetscape Design*
 - Compiled by the Environmental Services department of ODOT, with the Oregon SHPO.
 - Published 2002.
3. *Streetscape Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts*
 - Published by the Texas SHPO in 2011.
4. *Georgia Historic Downtown Streetscape Guidelines*
 - Published by the Georgia SHPO.
 - No publication date, but after 2002, based on references cited.

1.0 GENERAL THEMES AND PRINCIPLES

These themes appear in a variety of ways in the referenced publications for streetscape design:

1.1 Downtowns as Gathering Places

The *Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts* recognizes the diversity of activities that occur in a historic main street:

“Along with parks, downtowns are one of the few places that citizens feel belong to everyone. Farmers’ markets, parades, musical events, and other social gatherings are logical and beneficial uses of downtown districts. Streetscape and public space design should create the flexibility to easily allow these types of events.”

The Texas Historical Commission reiterates the SOI’s Standards for Rehabilitation, and then adds specific interpretation for streetscape projects in *italics*. Their comment on Standard #1 highlights the need to understand how human activity activates the street, which is reflected in the evolution in features that occurs over time in response to changing uses.

Standard 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. *Support the use and preservation of the area’s historic buildings and streetscape features. Allow the historic setting, human activity, individual businesses, and special events to provide the cultural stimulus and revitalization.*

This concept is particularly relevant to Deadwood, where Main Street has hosted special events and celebrations for more than 150 years. It acknowledges that Main Streets accommodate a wide range of uses and adapting them to changing times is historically a part of their nature.

1.2 Evolving Downtowns

The publication, *Oregon Downtown Main Streets, Strategies for Compatible Streetscape Design*, provides this observation about the changing nature of Main Streets:

“Evolution and change are natural processes. Rather than remaining frozen in one year, towns have adapted to new technology and people’s needs. Historic photographs also reveal that changes occurred on the streets and pedestrian walkways of a town’s center.”

The Texas Historical Commission also acknowledges that change is to be expected:

“The THC’s goal in guiding a project is to preserve significant elements and introduce new features that are compatible with the historic character of a community, not to freeze the appearance of a streetscape in time or restore it to a particular period.”

Comment: These statements are particularly relevant to Deadwood’s Main Street, which has experienced a variety of changes throughout its history. In that sense, “change” is a characteristic of the street.

1.3 Key Principles for Preservation and Design

The *Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts* also sets forth two fundamental principles which are expressed in various ways by the other states:

“Two principles for design can work to maintain individuality.

(1) One principle is to remain focused on maintaining historic fabric and authentic design elements.

(2) The other principle is to use high quality contemporary design for new elements.”

“The doctrine of repair rather than replace, replace in kind if necessary, and select new elements compatible but not imitative is well-established. Street environments and other landscapes are subject to the same idea.”

Comment: These concepts, of: (1) being authentic, of preserving historic features and (2) only using replicas when documentation is available, combined with (3) the concept of using compatible, but distinguishable new features are fundamental and are relevant to guidelines for Deadwood’s Main Street design.

2.0 DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC STREETSCAPE TOPICS

Historic photographs of Main Street in Deadwood document its evolution, with changes in street paving, sidewalk design, lighting and furnishings. These provide a basis for identifying those key features that survive as well as information relevant to the design of new elements that may be added to the streetscape. A review of the publications from other states provides more detailed guidance for individual components of the streetscape:

2.1 Sidewalk design

With respect to sidewalk design in general, Oregon provides this guidance:

“The goal of every streetscape project should be to improve the safety and physical accessibility of its streets and pedestrian paths for the entire population... Sidewalks should be **wide enough** to accommodate people walking side by side and past others; people standing, talking or browsing and street accessories such as light poles, hydrants, benches, etc.

“...Additional, more contemporary solutions include increasing the visibility of crosswalks to alert drivers they are approaching a pedestrian area, adding curb extensions, and/or striping bike lanes to visually narrow the appearance of the roadway.”

2.1.1 Widening Sidewalks

The Oregon publication includes a series of illustrations that show a progression of alterations to a historic street. These include adding curb extensions and widening sidewalks. In their examples, the historic curb line is delineated by a change in concrete treatment, such that the new is distinguished from the old. This is termed an appropriate mitigation approach.

Comment: Expanding sidewalk widths on Main Street is being considered in some alternative designs for Deadwood. An approach that retains the existing curb line in the paving design is anticipated.

2.1.2 Paving Materials for Streets and Sidewalks

The Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts provides this guidance:

“Historic paving materials should be documented in downtown before paving choices are made. The historic paving material should be used as a model for contemporary paving, if it is of a material suitable to contemporary construction and accessibility standards. Special existing paving features which may include street numbers, steps, building name inlays, or decorative details should be retained if sidewalks or other pathways are rebuilt.”

2.1.3 Sidewalk Replacement:

Texas provides this guidance:

“If sidewalk replacement is necessary, the preferred option is to use either the same material as currently exists or a material used in the location historically, based on adequate documentation. Unless documentation shows historic brick sidewalks, accepted preservation practice discourages the introduction of brick or modern pavers to sidewalks as it can create a false sense of historical development of the community... pavers may be used to distinguish pedestrian zones in areas where there are multiple curb cuts or no curb separating the sidewalk from the street.”

Comment: The history of the evolution of paving designs in Deadwood has been documented. Where the need to replace paving materials in Deadwood is confirmed, using material similar to that which exists today is anticipated. In the street itself, replacing the existing brick is being considered. (The existing brick paving dates from 1991-1992.) If some sidewalks are replaced, concrete is anticipated.

2.1.5 Sidewalk Railings and Bollards

Texas provides this guidance:

“Railings may be necessary at ramps or along sidewalks to meet current accessibility and safety requirements. Select railings that are simple in design and as unobtrusive as possible so as not to block views or distract from the historic storefronts.”

“Bollards (or railings) should only be used where it is necessary to protect pedestrians or special features from automobiles and to indicate to pedestrians that they should exercise caution.”

Comment: The use of metal railings may be necessary in Deadwood, at some ramp locations as well as to limit pedestrian crossings at inappropriate places along the street. Metal bollards also may be needed in some locations. These may be removeable, to be used when pedestrian traffic volumes are high and for special events. In each case, these railings and bollards should be unobtrusive in design.

2.2 Street Lighting

The *Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts* provides this guidance:

“If historic light fixtures specific to a downtown can be accurately documented and duplicated, the historic fixture should be used in a manner similar to its original purposes, locations, and quantities.

“If no documentation is available, or a historic fixture cannot be duplicated, then a contemporary pedestrian lighting fixture should be used. Contemporary fixtures should be selected that are compatible in scale and color with the existing architectural features, but should not be selected to imitate a period...In

situations such as parking lots, where lighting was not historically present, contemporary fixtures should be selected.”

Oregon provides similar guidance related to street lights:

“Use of historic light fixtures is recommended if they can be accurately documented through old photographs or records. If there is no evidence that the town had decorative light fixtures, contemporary fixtures that are compatible in scale design and color are recommended.”

Texas also provides guidance for street lights:

“Protect and incorporate existing historic lighting into the streetscape design where possible. If historic street lights are no longer extant, choose new fixtures that match the historic as closely as possible.”

Comment: The existing street lights on Main Street in Deadwood are replicas of ones which are well-documented in historic photos. The continued use of this design is likely, but others may also be considered such as a 3-globe fixtures. Off of Main Street itself, if public parking lots are to be developed, a simplified interpretation of the street light will be considered.

2.3 Street Furniture

The *Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts* provides this guidance:

“Extant historic street furniture should be evaluated for its ability to remain serviceable. ... Repair of existing elements should receive a high priority. If duplicates or reproductions of extant or accurately documented historic street furnishings can be produced, they should be considered rather than stock furnishings... When reproductions of historic furnishings are not possible to document or produce, simple contemporary elements should be used.”

Oregon provides similar guidance:

“Existing features such as fountains, clocks, dates and names stamped in concrete, and sidewalk glass block basement vaults should be retained...

“If there is no historic evidence of street furniture, the use of contemporary furnishings that recall historic styles, without imitating them, are recommended. street furnishings should not obstruct pedestrian walkways.”

Texas provides this guidance:

“Identify and protect historic street signs, planters or historic plantings, hitching rings, benches, and other historic street furniture and preserve these elements in their original locations ... Select furniture based on a local historic design, or introduce a simple, modern design that is compatible in scale, style, color, and texture with surrounding significant historic features... Choose muted colors for

modern elements to **avoid distracting attention** from the historic features of the buildings and streetscape.”

Georgia also provides guidance for street furniture:

“The street as a public right-of-way **responds to the needs of the time**. Streets that once accommodated horses and railroad cars were quite different than they are today. Existing features such as fountains, clocks, dates and names stamped in concrete, and sidewalk glass block basement vaults should be retained...

Today, the addition of other street amenities such as benches, trash receptacles, clocks, drinking fountains, and public art **are appropriate**.”

Comment: In Deadwood, historic street furniture elements that survive have been documented and their preservation is planned. Examples are prism glass panels in the sidewalks and storm sewer inlet grates. New furnishing are anticipated to be based on historic precedents but will be reinterpreted in simplified ways to distinguish them as being new. They are to be located out of the historic path of pedestrian travel. These new furnishings may include information kiosks, interpretive panels, benches and waste receptacles.