Brownsville Borough
Commercial Historic District
Design Guidelines

Fayette County, Pennsylvania

July 2012

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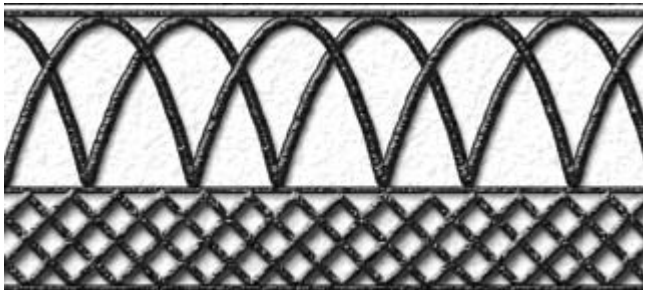


Sponsored by:

National Road Heritage Corridor
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
Redevelopment Authority of the County of Fayette

Prepared by:

T&B Planning, Inc.

In association with:

Landmark Design Associates Architects
Skelly and Loy
Fourth Economy Consulting

Foreword

This document was prepared as part of a comprehensive study of the Brownsville Commercial Historic District. The study was led by the National Road Heritage Corridor, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC), and the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Fayette (RACF). The consulting firm T&B Planning, Inc. was retained to prepare these design guidelines.

The comprehensive study includes four components: 1) a structural analysis and cost estimates for the stabilization and rehabilitation of 14 structures owned by the RACF (as of May 2012); 2) an economic market analysis that addresses influencing socio-economic conditions and identifies market sectors that may be suited to occupy structures in the Historic District; 3) a resurvey of the District to assess changed conditions since it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1993; and 4) these design guidelines.

The project is supported jointly by a grant from the PHMC, as well as the RACF, The Community Foundation of Fayette County Growth Fund, and Blueprint Communities Initiative of the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLBank) of Pittsburgh.

Table of Contents

Part 1: Introduction

Purpose of Design Guidelines

Design guidelines are a helpful tool to property owners, investors, architects, engineers, public officials, and other people involved in making decisions about physical changes to buildings and properties. These guidelines give advice about how to treat defining features in the Brownsville Commercial Historic District so that its overall "look and feel" remains an asset to the greater community. Places with distinct characters and unique opportunities are known to attract new owners, visitors, creative economic investment, and compounded improvements. Nationwide, historic communities are enjoying renewed interest and revitalization. The commercial core of Brownsville has many significant features that poise it to follow suit.

The following pages contain recommendations about how to maintain the historic authenticity of the Brownsville Commercial Historic District, while attracting new uses that can succeed in the 21st century economy. Guidelines are provided in this document for building rehabilitation, demolition, and new construction. General direction also is included for signage and building maintenance.

The use of this document is voluntary. However, by following the suggestions given herein, the Historic District will have a better chance to experience revitalization in ways that maintain its authentic qualities. Additionally, these guidelines align with the standards for building rehabilitation published by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. When the federal standards are followed, owners of contributing properties undertaking rehabilitations in the Historic District can apply for income tax credits. As of 2012, up to 20% of certain building rehabilitation costs invested in income-producing properties qualify under the federal rehabilitation investment tax credit (RITC) program and up to 25% qualify under the state tax credit program.

Design Guidelines are:

Voluntary
Easy to Follow
Attractive to Investors
Popular in Historic Districts
Address Character-Defining Features

Design Guidelines are not:

Regulation
Requirements
Expensive to Implement

Zoning regulations and building codes MUST also be followed. These design guidelines serve as a companion to those requirements and do not replace them. Contact the Fayette County Planning, Zoning & Community Development Office for more information.

Contact the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) for more information about tax credit programs.

Why Brownsville?

One of Brownsville's most notable physical features is the 19th and early 20th century architecture found in the Brownsville Commercial Historic District. Although improvements are needed to make some of the buildings safe for occupancy, most of the principal structural components are sound and built with a degree of craftsmanship that would be nearly impossible to replicate in new construction. Investors find value in original, historic building materials and in the workmanship that makes historic buildings interesting and attractive.

Each individual structure in the Brownsville Commercial Historic District is valuable, but even more so because of the contribution it makes to the character of the entire District. How the buildings relate to each other, form a "neck" along the National Road (Market Street), tell a story of local traditions and heritage, and afford views to the Monongahela River, make them even more irreplaceable as a collection. When one building is improved, so is the entire District. The opposite is also true; when one building falls into serious disrepair, it affects more than just itself. The use of design guidelines is a good way to keep the collective character of the Historic District intact.

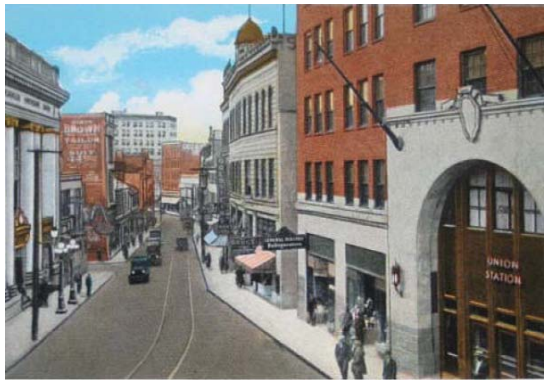
While many buildings in the Historic District are currently vacant, their listing on the National Register of Historic Places provides a substantial incentive for attracting economic development. Travelers using the National Road pass through the Historic District every day. Furthermore, outdoor recreation and tourism is increasing along this stretch of the Monongahela River. As of 2012, the River Town Program is exploring improved riverfront access in Brownsville and other nearby towns. This will position the Historic District to capture economic opportunities and other advantages brought by increased awareness of Brownsville's assets.

Most of the Historic District's buildings offer street-level storefronts with exceptional opportunities for reuse as commercial enterprises, offices, professional service industries, and visitor destinations. Upper floors are adaptable for offices, storage, rental apartments, and much more. There is unmet demand for these uses, as demonstrated by an economic market study that accompanies these design guidelines. Promoting historic buildings to potential new owners, investors, and entrepreneurs offers substantial promise for Brownsville.

From Decline to Vibrancy

Similar to other communities in southwestern Pennsylvania, Brownsville experienced job loss and general disinvestment after World War II. Today, vacant and blighted properties are present in the historic downtown. Even though the Brownsville Commercial Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, local stakeholders debate the best course of action – to demolish historic buildings in disrepair or to take steps to attract new owners and investors.

Brownsville's vision is a future with few or no vacant buildings – not because they will all be razed, but because existing structures will be filled with new life and ideas, and new tenants and owners bringing with them a renewed sense of vibrancy.



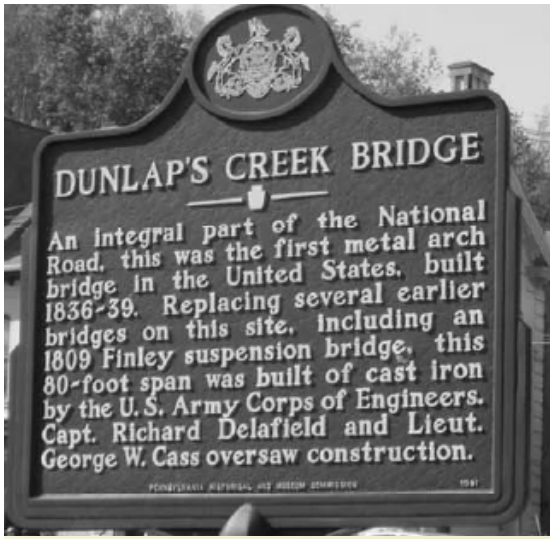
Brownsville Postcard, circa 1930s.

Overview of the Brownsville Commercial Historic District

The Brownsville Commercial Historic District is located in and near a portion of Brownsville called "the Neck," a low lying area parallel to the Monongahela River. Portions of Market Street, Brown Street, Brownsville Avenue, Seneca Street, Bank Street, High Street, and Water Street fall within the boundary, outlined in blue on the map below. As of 2012, a total of 51 buildings contribute to the historic integrity of the District.

The Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in June 1993. Listing on the National Register does not guarantee a property's protection from demolition or prevent it from falling into disrepair. Listing does, however, elevate the importance of the Historic District on a national level and gives owners of income-producing properties the opportunity to apply for federal and state tax credits if their structure undergoes rehabilitation according to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. These design guidelines are compatible with those standards, which are available from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, and the PHMC. Refer to Appendix B and Appendix C of this document for more information.

Unique Feature in the Historic District: Dunlap's Creek Bridge



Historic image of Dunlap's Creek Bridge from *Hart's History and Directory of the Three Towns,* 1904

A Brief History of Brownsville

Brownsville's historic significance results from its position at the key intersection of the National Road, the Monongahela River, Dunlap's Creek, and the Monongahela Railway.

The National Road was constructed through Brownsville in 1817. The town served as the main transfer point for travelers and goods on the roadway to boats on the Monongahela River. Boat yards were located along the riverbanks, and when canal boats gave way to the steamboat in the early 19th century, Brownsville took advantage of the change. The first steamboat to make the round trip down and back up the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, called the Enterprise, was built just west of Dunlap's Creek. After the Snowdon Iron Works was established in Brownsville circa 1820, the townspeople were able to outfit steamboats (the only other place to do so in the region was Pittsburgh). The Snowdon Works also cast the nation's first metal arch iron bridge, which was erected over Dunlap's Creek in 1839. The bridge remains although its visibility is currently limited.

In 1903, the Monongahela Railway constructed a rail line to connect Brownsville with coal mining towns along Redstone and Dunlap's Creeks. Brownsville was soon at the center of the Railway's hauling and repair operations.

Brownsville, circa 1883

In 1928, the Railway constructed the Union Station Building at 49-53 Market Street for its administrative headquarters. The Brownsville Commercial Historic District quickly became the mercantile depot for the region's growing population. It was home to coal and coke companies, banks, insurance and real estate offices, and doctor's, lawyer's, and other professional offices. By 1925, more than 200 businesses were located in today's Historic District, twice the number operating there in 1903 when the railroad first arrived.

The economic boom following the arrival of the railroad resulted in the removal of most of the Historic District's original structures, which were replaced with taller, larger buildings built with finer and more decorative materials. Also, the plains along Dunlap's Creek were filled in and residents built structures over the creek and along High Street and newly laid Brownsville Avenue, Charles Street, and Seneca Street. The high point of commercial construction in the Historic District occurred during the 1920s, when nearly half of the Historic District's current buildings were erected. It is not unusual for adjacent buildings to be nearly identical in terms of design and materials; some even share integrated façades.

Monongahela Bank Building Façades

In 1902, the Monongahela National Bank (led by Charles L. Snowdon, bank president from 1893-1931) was constructed at 41 Market Street. Its brick, Italian Renaissance façade was elaborated in terra cotta with columns, pilasters, and a second-story Palladian window *(top)*.

In 1925, the Monongahela National Bank converted the Monongahela Hotel across the street at 46 Market Street into its second home, with a massive temple front *(middle)*.

The first-floor façade of 41 Market Street (*top*) was moved to Seneca Street where it became the façade for the public library *(bottom)*. It has a large bay window on an elaborately carved stone base flanked by paired Corinthian columns.

19th-Century Buildings

The Flatiron Building is the oldest structure in the Historic District, erected circa 1835 by Robert Clark. The triangular-shaped, Flemish-bond brick structure on a fieldstone foundation has a curved corner which gives it its name (*top left*).

At 108 Bank Street is a circa 1880 Italianate two-story house adorned with brick quoins, elongated windows, bracketed eaves, and an elaborate frontispiece. The building was converted to commercial use early in the 20th century (*bottom left*).

The International Order of Odd Fellows Building at 31 Market Street, circa 1876, was built as a three-story Italianate building to house meeting and social rooms and small retail establishments *(top right)*.

The former Cumberland Presbyterian Church at 135 High Street, now the Masonic Lodge, was constructed in 1878 with a 1907 addition (*bottom right*).

Part 2: Design Guidelines

These design guidelines are for use by stakeholders of the Brownsville Commercial Historic District who are making small or large improvements to properties, are planning to renovate or rehabilitate existing buildings, are considering new construction or demolition, or are reviewing plans for approval. By making incremental changes over time to achieve a common goal and vision, the Historic District can once again become an enjoyable place to shop, work, live, access the riverfront, and spend time in a vibrant setting.

The use of these design guidelines is voluntary. This document carries no legal weight or regulatory authority and does not replace the Fayette County Zoning Ordinance or applicable building codes and regulations which remain in full force and effect.

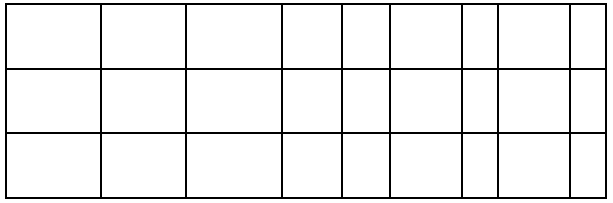
Streetscape and Architectural Pattern

The design character of the Brownsville Commercial Historic District is defined by the size and location of buildings positioned along the streets, in addition to the pattern formed by building façades, window and door locations, and decorative architectural details. One major alteration to a building in the Historic District, or small changes made to several buildings, can dramatically affect the overall, authentic historic pattern – for better or for worse. Therefore, it is important to consider how every modification made to a property or building can affect others, especially those immediately adjacent and on the same street.

When looking at the overall pattern of building design and placement in the Historic District, there is a very strong vertical and horizontal rhythm formed by the buildings themselves and the placement of windows, doors, and architectural features.

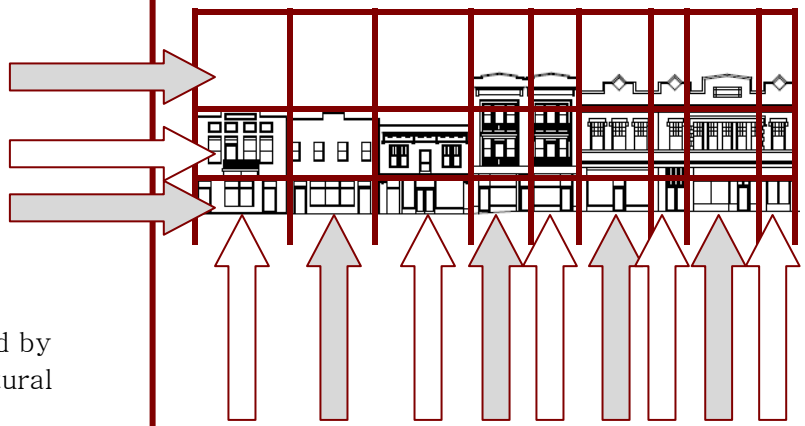
Streetscape Pattern

Basic Grid Pattern



Streetscape Pattern–Brownsville Avenue Example

The streetscape pattern in the Historic District follows a very strong rhythmic vertical and horizontal pattern.



Architectural Patterns

When viewed as a collection, it is easy to see how architectural styles and patterns are a significant contributor to the character of the Historic District.

Market Street

Brownsville Avenue

Market Street

Key Characteristics of the Brownsville Commercial Historic District

Tight ensemble of commercial structures built in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Buildings constructed primarily of various shades of light and dark brick with cut stone and terra cotta decorative elements.

Structure heights ranging from 1 to 6 stories, the majority of which are 3 to 4 stories tall with flat roofs.

Buildings in “the Neck” “hug” the street with shallow setbacks and narrow sidewalks.

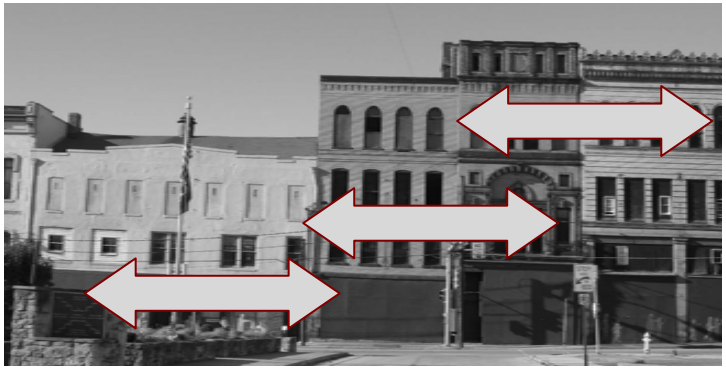
Most buildings have a Vernacular design, although several façades are elaborated with Italianate, Neoclassical, Art Deco, and Art Moderne elements.

Presence of Dunlap’s Creek Bridge, the first metal arch cast iron bridge in America.

Dunlap’s Creek Bridge

Streetscape Pattern Guidelines

1. Maintain the vertical and horizontal patterns formed by a series of adjacent buildings on a streetscape. Do not introduce new patterns or forms that break or change the existing pattern. See the sidebar "Elements that Form a Pattern."



2. Window and door patterns should relate to and be compatible with the pattern formed on adjacent building façades. The majority of existing buildings in the Historic District have a high proportion of openings (windows and doors) to wall area on the front façade. Maintain that proportion, particularly in regard to the storefront at street level. Do not close in openings. If openings must be closed, simulate an opening through architectural design.

Elements that Form a Pattern in the Brownsville Commercial Historic District

Building Shape
(*boxy and rectangular*)

Setback from Sidewalk
(*shallow*)

Setback from Adjacent Buildings
(*none or narrow*)

Window Placement
(*linear and symmetrical*)

Front Door Placement
(*center or symmetrical*)

Decorative Architectural Features
(*horizontal and symmetrical*)

Storefront Design
(*entire width of the building*)

Roofline
(*flat*)

Architecture

The overall architectural character of each building is important to maintain the integrity of the Historic District. No one-story buildings are present in the Historic District other than a structure on Market Street that is considered a non-contributing structure. As such, every significant building in the District has an upper façade and a lower façade. Some buildings also have a cornice, which is a projecting architectural feature at the top of the structure. Because most of the buildings were constructed as commercial enterprises, the lower façade is also usually called the "storefront." (Refer to the next section for guidelines on the treatment of storefronts.)

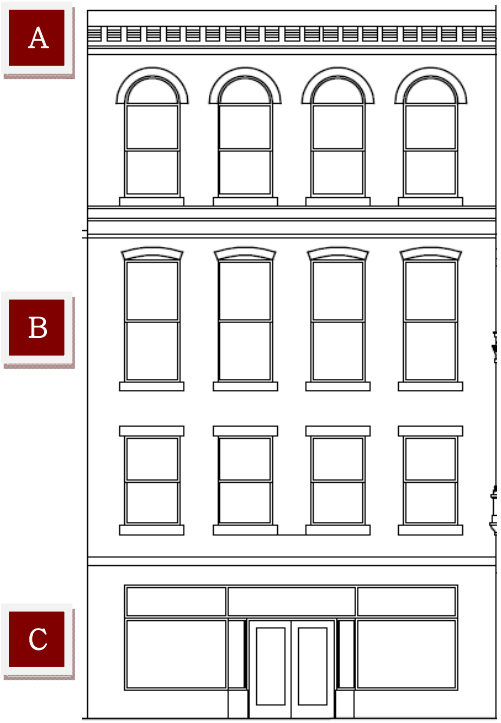
A **Cornice** – An architectural element at the top of the exterior wall. Some buildings in the Historic District also feature a Pediment, which is a projecting architectural feature at the top of the building, above the cornice.

B **Upper Façade** – All levels above the ground floor. Multi-story buildings in the Historic District reach up to six stories, but the majority are three to four stories with flat roofs.

C **Lower Façade** – The street-level component of the building that faces the sidewalk and invites visitors to enter the structure.

Brick is by far the most common exterior building material used in Brownsville, but some buildings display other types of masonry or stone. For example, the National Deposit Bank Building at the corner of High and Bank Streets has a brick upper façade while the first floor/mezzanine façade is faced with limestone. The front façade of the Monongahela National Bank building (former Monongahela Hotel) on Market Street features Indiana granite. The façade of the library at 100 Seneca Street (former façade of the first Monongahela National Bank Building) has an elaborately carved stone base. The Union Station building at 49-53 Market Street features granite and marble along the lower façade. Many of the buildings in the Historic District have elaborate detailing and display the work of skilled craftsmen of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Even the brickwork in many of the upper façades are set in patterns that produce decorative surface textures and effects.

Typical Architectural Building Form in the Brownsville Commercial Historic District



3. Maintain, repair, and/or restore the original brickwork and stonework that is characteristic of the Historic District. Do not cover original building façades with modern materials like siding or metal sheeting.

4. When renovating an existing building, retain and/or restore as many original architectural features as possible, particularly the exterior building materials, windows, decorative details, and cornice.

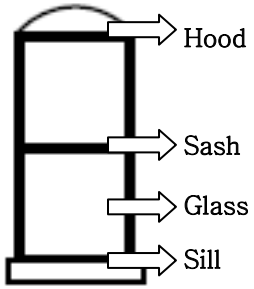
5. Retain historically significant interior features, particularly those that display the work of skilled craftsmen.

6. If an original architectural detail is missing or partially missing from the exterior building façade, replace it using like-kind materials. For example, it is not appropriate to replace an original decorative element made of masonry with one fabricated from plastic.

7. If original architectural details or ornamentation on the upper or lower façade are currently covered, they should be uncovered, exposed, and repaired during the course of building renovation.

8. Do not paint over brick and stone on the upper or lower building façade. If paint is currently applied, maintain the existing color or use a color that complements the character of the Historic District.

9. Retain and preserve original windows whenever feasible, including the openings and details, such as the sill, sash, glass, lintel, hood, and hardware. If original openings are already closed in or were replaced by smaller windows, restore the original design.



Rehabilitating an Exterior Façade

Retain and restore original materials.

Retain and restore decorative architectural elements like columns, posts, and cornices.

Clean the façade using the gentlest means possible (avoid harsh chemicals and sandblasting).

Maintain the size and shape of original window and door openings.

If feasible, repair windows rather than replacing them.

Remove applied materials that cover original features.

Match original materials and colors to the greatest extent possible.

Storefronts

Most of the existing buildings in the Historic District were constructed to serve commercial purposes at the street level. A majority of the buildings are designed with a traditional storefront, which contributes to a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere along the sidewalks.

Streetscape Pattern Guidelines

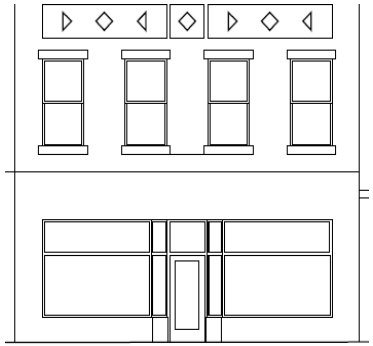
10. If an original storefront feature must be replaced, replace only the deteriorated element to match the original as much as possible (size, scale, proportion, material, texture, and detail).

11. Do not cover storefronts façades with metal, plastic, siding, or other materials that substantially deviate from original construction materials. (Exception – temporary for safety /stabilization purposes.)

12. If traditional storefronts have been covered or modified, restore traditional features during building rehabilitation projects.

Restoring a Storefront

Assess the existing condition. Determine how the traditional storefront was modified and if original materials remain. Look at historical photos if necessary.

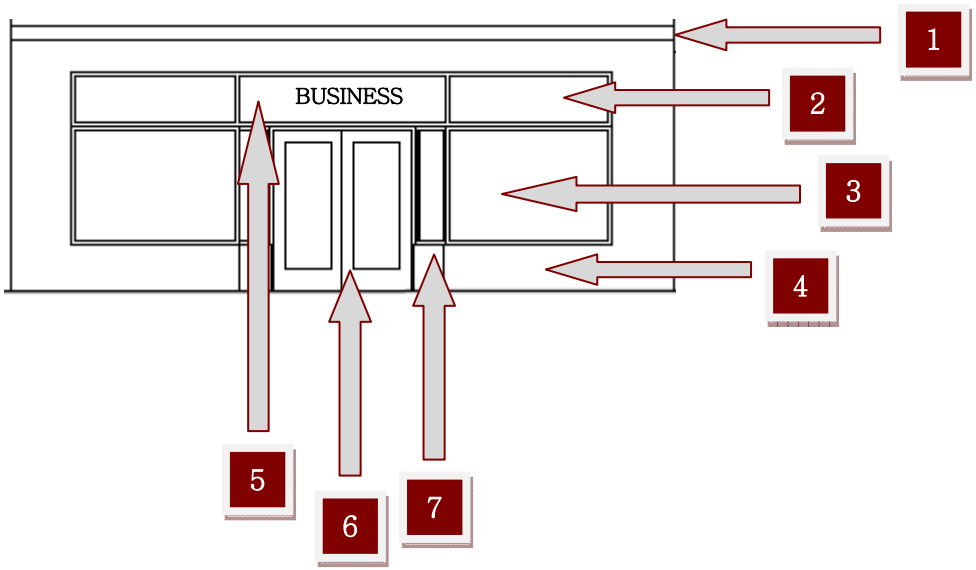


Determine the improvements that need to be made to recapture the look of the traditional storefront. Sketch out a plan.

If original materials are present, restore them to the extent possible, rather than replace. Remove any applied materials that may cover the original façade. Match original materials as feasible.

Traditional Storefront Features

The diagram below (with definitions in the sidebar) shows the traditional features most frequently found in a storefront in the Brownsville Commercial Historic District.



13. Retain traditional storefront designs, including features such as recessed entryways, transparent doors and display windows, transoms, bulkheads, columns, brick and stonework, etc. As much as possible, base the design on historical photographs of the building. Maintain the storefront's original proportions, dimensions, and architectural elements, which are contributing features to the Historic District's character.

Storefront Feature Definitions

1 **Lintel** – Structural element above the storefront that supports the parapet or upper wall. If awnings are installed, they generally are anchored just above or below the lintel.

2 **Transom** – Upper windows in a storefront that can be fixed or operable for opening and closing. Materials are either clear, colored, patterned, or stained glass.

3 **Display Window** – Large area of clear glass used to display products or through which interior functions can be seen.

4 **Bulkhead** – The area directly below the display windows. Materials are typically wood, metal, or masonry.

5 **Sign** – Letters, symbols, or a combination thereof that identify the ground floor building occupant.

6 **Entry** – Primary entrance to the ground floor of the structure, through either a single or double door. In the Brownsville Commercial Historic District, the door is usually set back from the front plane of the building façade in a recessed fashion. The threshold (recessed floor of the entry) can be distinct from the concrete sidewalk by using decorative tile or masonry.

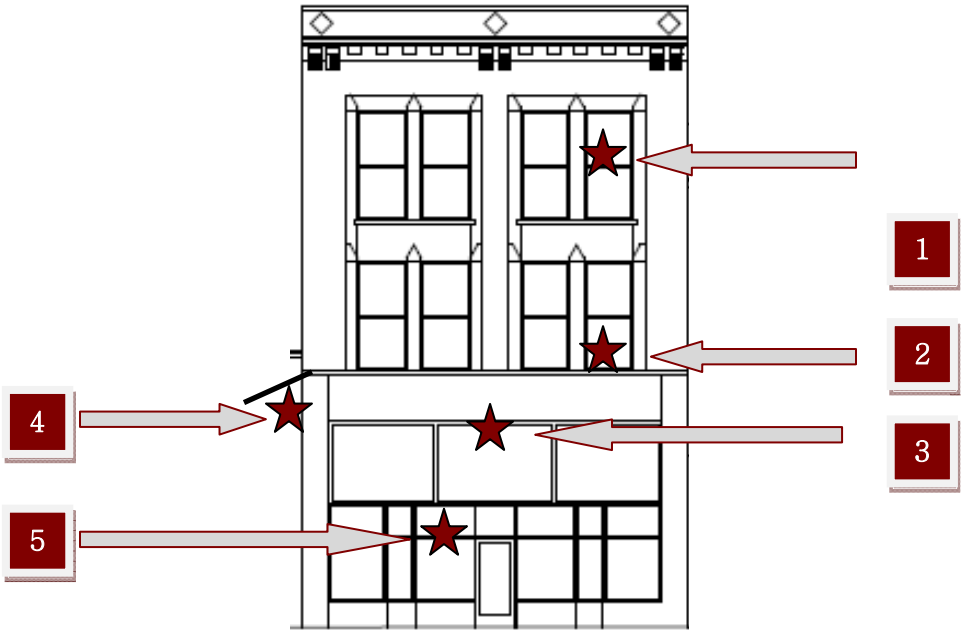
7 **Column or Post** – A vertical decorative element. Depending on the architectural style of the building, some entries are flanked by decorative columns or posts.

Signs

Given that most buildings in the Historic District directly adjoin the public streets and sidewalks, there are few front and side yards where freestanding signs can be placed. Most signs (other than street signs) in the Historic District are attached to buildings.

Sign Guidelines

14. The below diagram shows typical locations on the front façade that are appropriate to place signage. Do not cover or obstruct distinct architectural features and details of the building with signs.



Sign Types

1 **Upper Floor Window Sign** – Sign is placed on or inside the window and is not attached to the exterior of the building.

2 **Transom Sign** – Sign is placed on or designed into the transom.

3 **Awning Sign** – Sign is placed on the awning or is stitched into a fabric awning.

4 **Hanging Sign** – Sign is hung from a pole projecting from the building façade.

5 **Lower Display Window Sign** – Sign is located inside the display window or is painted onto the surface of the window.

Zoning regulations pertaining to signage and lighting MUST also be followed. Refer to the Fayette County Zoning Ordinance, Article III §1000-305 to -320 for more information about sign requirements and to Article II §1000-303 and 508 for more information about lighting.

15. Do not paint signs directly onto a building's masonry (exception: decorative murals interpreting Brownsville's history located on side and rear façades, which are appropriate in select locations).

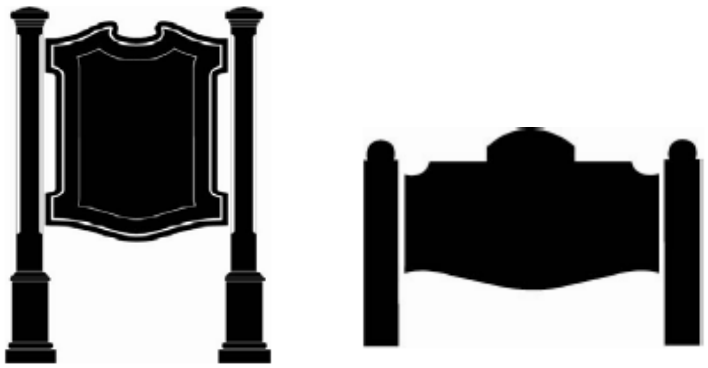
16. Use a design and color scheme that complements the architectural features of the building.

17. Design signs to be readable from the adjoining public sidewalk and street. Block letters increase legibility.

18. If awnings are installed, select awnings made of cloth or other woven fabric such as canvas. Metal, vinyl, and plastic awnings are discouraged.

19. If awnings are installed, coordinate awning fabric colors with the building's overall color scheme and awnings that may be installed on adjacent buildings or on the same street. If multiple awnings are installed on the same building, they should be identical in color and design. Solid colors, wide stripes, and narrow stripes are appropriate. Do not install awnings with complex patterns.

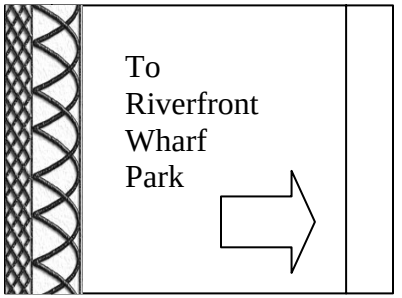
20. Design all large freestanding signs with double posts and a traditional sign shape. The following diagram shows examples.



<u>Customized Interpretive and Directional Signs</u>

There may be a need to place directional and interpretive signage in the Historic District. For example, directional signs may be added that give walking directions to the Monongahela riverfront or to the Riverfront Wharf Park. These design guidelines strongly recommend that a customized sign design be established and used throughout the Historic District for all signs intended to give direction or interpret Brownsville's history.

Dunlap's Creek Bridge is a defining feature of the Historic District. The pattern of the bridge's iron work is an excellent choice for a customized sign design.



Demolition and New Construction

Preservation of the Brownsville Commercial Historic District's historic character may not necessarily mean that every structure is saved or that new construction never occurs. However, keep in mind that the current collection of historic buildings gives the Historic District its appeal. Too many demolitions and/or new development that does not fit in with the existing character can destroy the historic integrity of the District. For this reason, it is very important for stakeholders to carefully consider the short- and long-term effects of demolitions and new construction.

Demolition Guidelines

21. If a building is targeted for demolition, identify the use of the vacant parcel following demolition. All parcels should have an intended use and vacant lots must have a plan for maintenance.

22. Demolitions are less damaging to historic integrity if they occur at the end of a building row. If a demolition occurs in the middle of a row, develop a plan for short- and long-term use of the parcel. All vacant lots in the middle of a building row should have an active use (new building construction, use as a park, an urban garden, or other useful space).

23. If a historic building with a unique front façade is being considered for demolition to accommodate new construction, determine if the front façade can be stabilized and incorporated into the new construction project.

24. Before a historic building is demolished, salvage all materials that could be reused.

25. If ground-disturbing activities will occur, monitor those activities for the potential discovery of buried archaeological resources. If resources are found, notify the PHMC and the Brownsville Historical Society.

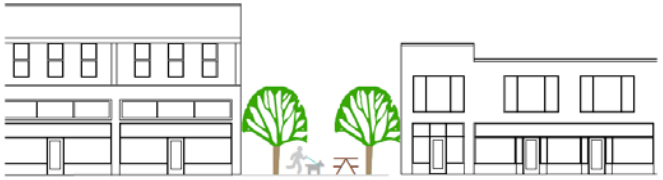
26. If demolition activity exposes the side wall of an adjacent structure, repair that wall to acceptable standards.

Dealing with a Mid-Block Demolition

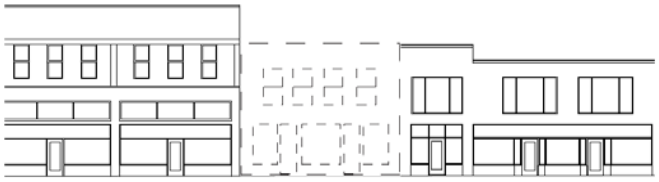
If a building is considered for demolition, determine advantages and disadvantages, and identify how the parcel will be used after the building is gone.

For example, a strategically selected demolition along Market Street would offer various opportunities.

The vacant lot could be used as a small passive park, providing a place for people to socialize on Market Street with a river view.



Or, the vacant lot could offer opportunities for new infill construction that is compatible with the streetscape and architectural pattern along the street.



New Construction Guidelines (also applies to additions to existing buildings)

27. Design new buildings to be compatible with the character of the Historic District in terms of building height, proportion, roof shape, materials, texture, scale, details, color, etc. Design new buildings to appear new. Do not construct a new building in a way that would make it falsely appear historic.

28. When new construction is planned, design the architectural pattern and form to be compatible with existing structures in the Brownsville Commercial Historic District, especially those on adjacent parcels. Consider the setback from the street, size and spacing of windows or other openings and fenestrations, proportion, scale, and detailing.

29. Include a storefront design on the ground level of the front façade of all new buildings. (Refer to above guidelines about storefronts.)

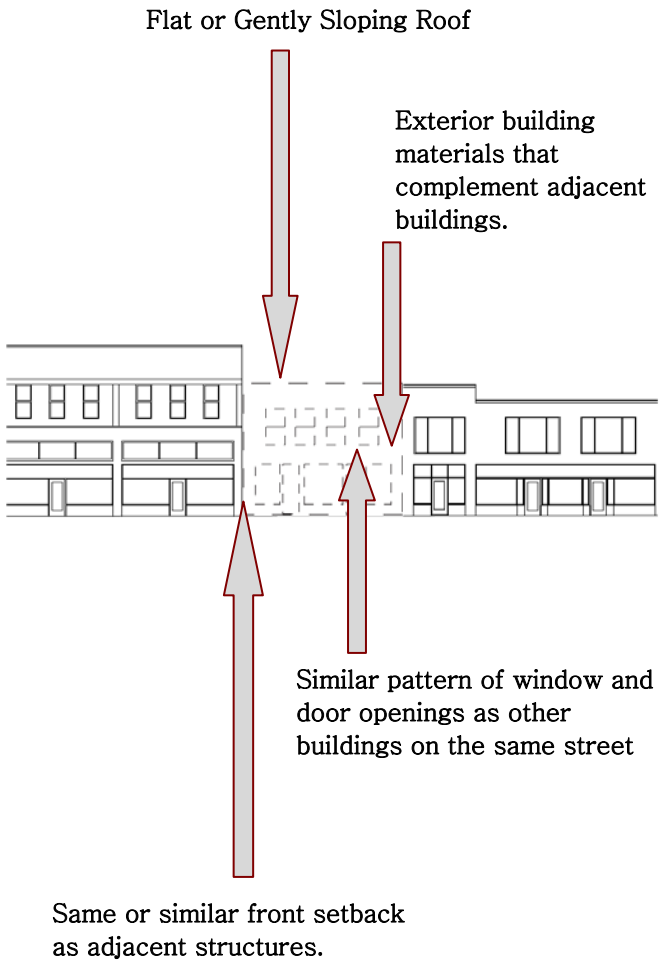
30. All new buildings should have a flat roof or a very gently sloping roof. Steeply sloped roofs are incompatible with the character of the Historic District.

31. One-story buildings are strongly discouraged in the Historic District. Construct new buildings to a height of at least two stories and complement the height and scale of immediately adjacent buildings and other buildings on the same street.

32. If salvaged materials are available, make use of building materials salvaged from a demolition in the Historic District or the nearby vicinity.

33. Use exterior building materials that are compatible with the materials found on other buildings in the Historic District. Brick and stone are the only primary exterior building materials currently used, and this trend should continue. Do not use aluminum, wooden, or artificial siding or shingles, or wood / logs as the main façade material for new construction.

<u>New Construction in the Brownsville Commercial Historic District</u>



Building Maintenance

Whether a building is rehabilitated, is in a state of disrepair, or is somewhere in between, one of the best ways to keep the Historic District attractive is to conduct maintenance activities on existing buildings. Many structures in the Brownsville Commercial Historic District need major repair to ensure their continued stability. Others simply need minor maintenance. (For more information about stabilization recommendations for structures owned by the RACF as of May 2012, refer to the Brownsville Structures Study that accompanies these design guidelines.) Provided below are guidelines that address the care and maintenance of historic structures.

Maintenance Guidelines

34. Maintain historic masonry (brick and stone) as follows:

    a. Regularly monitor masonry for cracks and signs of moisture damage. Also, check around the masonry foundation to ensure that water is not collecting. Address water intrusion as quickly as possible.

    b. Do not clean masonry unless there is heavy soiling. When cleaning, use the gentlest means possible. High pressure washing and scrubbing with a natural bristle brush with mild detergent is recommended. Do not use harsh chemicals and do not sandblast. If pressure washing, test a small section to make sure the water pressure is not damaging to the mortar or masonry.

    c. Remove climbing vines or other vegetation that attaches to masonry or that blocks vents and other openings.

35. Monitor roofs for damage and leaks. Repair roofs as quickly as possible.

36. If a window is broken, attempt to repair it before replacing. If replaced, match the original size and appearance as feasible.

37. Maintain windows and doors by applying caulking, installing weather-stripping, applying a paint film to wood trims, and checking sills and thresholds to be sure that water does not collect.

National Park Service Preservation Briefs

http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm

The National Park Service's "Preservation Briefs" help historic building owners recognize and resolve common problems associated with repairs and maintenance.

The Briefs particularly applicable to the Brownsville Commercial Historic District are:

1 Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings

2 Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings

3 Improving Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings

4 Roofing for Historic Buildings

11 Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts

18 Rehabilitating Interiors in Historic Buildings

27 The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron

31 Mothballing Historic Buildings

32 Making Historic Properties Accessible

33 The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stained and Leaded Glass

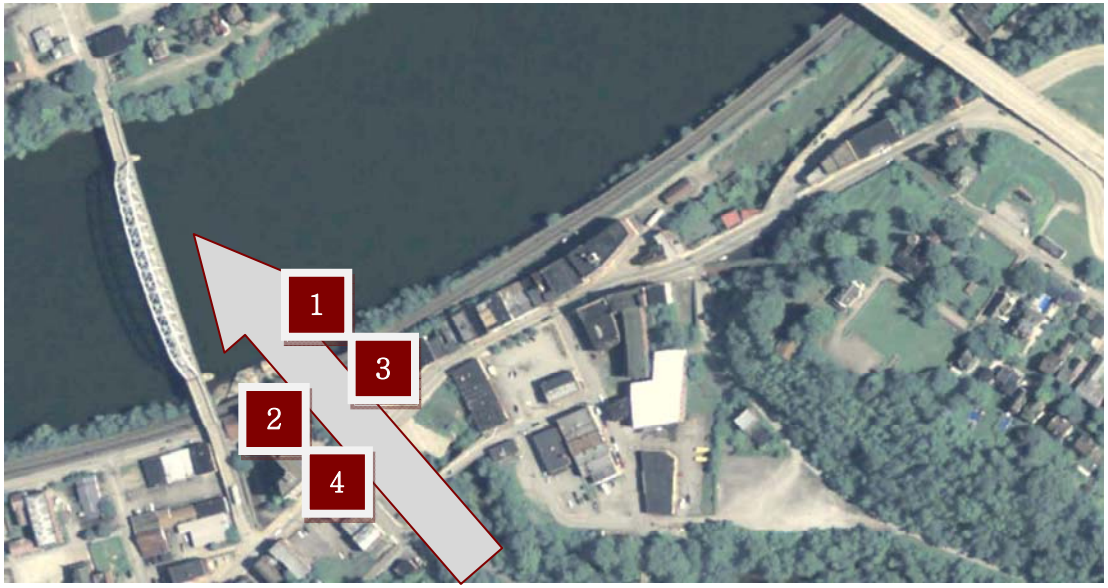
39 Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings

44 The Use of Awnings on Historic Buildings: Repair, Replacement and New Design

Refer to Appendix C for a list of all Briefs

Special Treatment Area – Dunlap's Creek

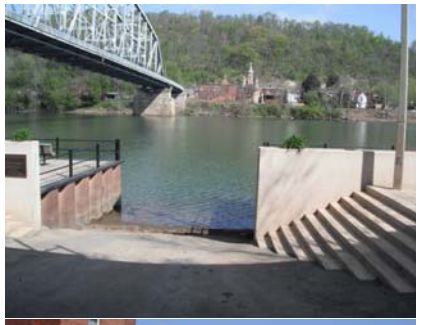
One area of the Historic District that deserves special treatment is the area around Dunlap's Creek.



Before the 1920s, this area contained a creek with flanking plains that flowed into the Monongahela River. America's first metal arch cast iron bridge was manufactured in Brownsville and erected over Dunlap's Creek. During Brownsville's economic boom of the early 20th century, the townspeople prioritized new buildings over protection of the natural landscape. They filled in the creek's plains and built structures over the natural creekbed. Dunlap's Creek Bridge remains a unique feature of the Historic District, although visibility of the bridge is limited and the foundations of several structures limit its distinguishability.

There is substantial opportunity to enhance the area around Dunlap's Creek. This area has the potential to attract visitors and serve as a gathering area for outdoor activity. Structural foundations built over the creek can be removed to increase visibility of the cast iron bridge. Furthermore, the existing passive public park and pedestrian access to Brownsville's riverfront Wharf are good prospects for enhancement.

Enhancement Opportunities



Riverside Wharf Park

1

Pedestrian Access to the Wharf

2

Central Park

3

Properties Around Dunlap's Creek

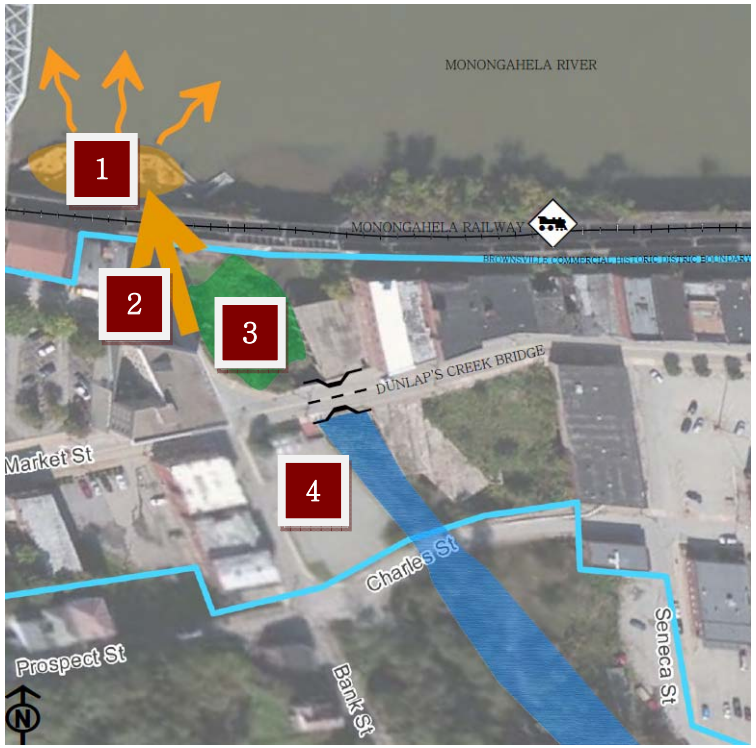
4

38. Continue to maintain Riverside Wharf Park as an attractive and safe place for outdoor gatherings. Add interpretive elements (signs, markers, public art, etc.) that give information about the history of Brownsville.

39. Improve walking directions to the Wharf by adding pavement markings and signs that direct visitors from Market Street to the Wharf.

40. Maintain the existing handrails located on the railway overpass' retaining walls and, if feasible, scar treads in the pavement to provide better footing for people walking up and down the grade to/from the Wharf.

41. Trim landscaping in Central Park to increase visibility of the river and creek and improve the line of sight to Market Street.



1 Riverside Wharf Park

2 Pedestrian Access to Wharf

3 Central Park

4 Properties Around Dunlap's Creek

42. Maintain the benches, decorative lighting, fencing, and other features found in Central Park.

43. Add a substantial piece of public art in Central Park that interprets Brownsville's role in the outfitting of steamboats.

44. Remove the structural foundations of demolished buildings that adjoin Dunlap's Creek.

45. Investigate opportunities to widen the waterway of Dunlap's Creek by removing artificial fill and adding an access point for the launching of small watercraft toward the Monongahela River.

View of Dunlap's Creek from the end of Brownsville Avenue (outside the Historic District)

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Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS). National Register Nomination Form for Brownsville Commercial Historic District. June 1993.

Appendices

Appendix A – Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits

Appendix B – The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

Appendix C – Listing of National Park Service Preservation Briefs

Appendix A – Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits

Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits (RITCs) are federal and state tax incentives that effectively reduce the costs of rehabilitation to an owner of an income-producing historic property. Certain qualifying expenses incurred in connection with the rehabilitation of a historic building are eligible for a tax credit. Owners of income-producing historic buildings can qualify for up to a 20% federal tax credit along with a 25% state tax credit, and owners of non-historic buildings built before 1936 can qualify for a 10% federal tax credit, based on the following eligibility. For more information, contact the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) / Bureau for Historic Preservation (BHP), which serves as Pennsylvania's State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The website address is www.phmc.state.pa.us.

20% Federal & 25% State Historic Tax Credit Eligibility:

- Income-producing property
- National Register listed (includes all "contributing" buildings in a National Register Historic District)
- Conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards & Guidelines
- Meet the "substantial rehabilitation test" *
- Owned by same owner and operated as an income-producing property for five years after rehabilitation
- Must be approved prior to start of the work, meet certain standards, and prove work was done properly

10% Non-Historic Tax Credit Eligibility:

- Built before 1936
- Not listed on the National Register of Historic Places
- Meet the wall retention requirement (retaining 50% to 75% of the external walls and retain 75% of the internal structural framework)
- Meet the "substantial rehabilitation test"*
- Cannot be used for residential rental properties
- Income-producing property (but not rental residential)
- Claim as an investment credit on federal income tax return with no federal or state review

* This test is where the amount of money to be spent on the rehabilitation is greater than the adjusted basis of the building or at $5,000, whichever is more. Generally, projects must be completed within a 24-month period.

Source: PHMC's RITC Fact Sheet, http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/Portal/forms/RITC/ritc_fact_sheet.pdf

Appendix B – The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The following Standards for Rehabilitation (Department of Interior regulations, 36 CFR 67) "pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior, related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility." These, and more information, can be found online at http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm.

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. Deteriorated 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 shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

8. Significant archeological 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 would be unimpaired.

Appendix C – National Park Service Preservation Briefs

The National Park Service Preservation Briefs "help historic building owners recognize and resolve common problems prior to work. The briefs are especially useful to Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program applicants because they recommend methods and approaches for rehabilitating historic buildings that are consistent with their historic character." For more information and to access the Preservation Briefs, visit: http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm.

Following is a list of the Preservation Briefs that are currently available:

1 Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings

2 Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings

3 Improving Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings

4 Roofing for Historic Buildings

5 The Preservation of Historic Adobe Buildings

6 Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings

7 The Preservation of Historic Glazed Architectural Terra-Cotta

8 Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on Historic Buildings: The Appropriateness of Substitute Materials for Resurfacing Historic Wood Frame Buildings

9 The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows

10 Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork

11 Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts

12 The Preservation of Historic Pigmented Structural Glass (Vitrolite and Carrara Glass)

13 The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows

14 New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns

15 Preservation of Historic Concrete

16 The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors

17 Architectural Character—Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving their Character

18 Rehabilitating Interiors in Historic Buildings — Identifying Character-Defining Elements

19 The Repair and Replacement of Historic Wooden Shingle Roofs

20 The Preservation of Historic Barns

21 Repairing Historic Flat Plaster—Walls and Ceilings

22 The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco

23 Preserving Historic Ornamental Plaster

24 Heating, Ventilating, and Cooling Historic Buildings: Problems and Recommended Approaches

25 The Preservation of Historic Signs

26 The Preservation and Repair of Historic Log Buildings

27 The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron

28 Painting Historic Interiors

29 The Repair, Replacement, and Maintenance of Historic Slate Roofs

30 The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs

31 Mothballing Historic Buildings

32 Making Historic Properties Accessible

33 The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stained and Leaded Glass

34 Applied Decoration for Historic Interiors: Preserving Historic Composition Ornament

35 Understanding Old Buildings: The Process of Architectural Investigation

36 Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes

37 Appropriate Methods of Reducing Lead-Paint Hazards in Historic Housing

38 Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry

39 Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings

40 Preserving Historic Ceramic Tile Floors

41 The Seismic Retrofit of Historic Buildings: Keeping Preservation in the Forefront

42 The Maintenance, Repair and Replacement of Historic Cast Stone

43 The Preparation and Use of Historic Structure Reports

44 The Use of Awnings on Historic Buildings: Repair, Replacement and New Design

45 Preserving Historic Wooden Porches

46 The Preservation and Reuse of Historic Gas Stations

47 Maintaining the Exterior of Small and Medium Size Historic Buildings