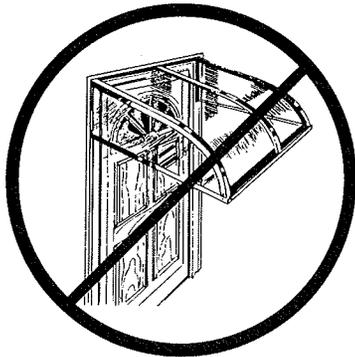


MAIN STREET ST. CHARLES, VIEWED NORTHWEST FROM 2ND AVENUE. CIRCA EARLY 1900s.



Photos courtesy of the St. Charles Heritage Center.



EXAMPLE OF AN INAPPROPRIATE, PLASTIC-STYLE AWNING & RESIDENTIAL-TYPE DOOR.

Awnings & Canopies

The canvas awning was an important design element in the traditional storefront. It provided shelter, added color and served as a transition between the storefront and the upper facade. An awning should reinforce the frame of the storefront window, but should not cover the piers on either side. It should be attached below the sign panel—the space between the second-story window sills and the first-story facade. In some cases, the awning may be mounted between the transom and the display windows, thus allowing light to enter while shading pedestrians and merchandise.

Where possible, retain and repair awning fixtures and canopies that originate from the building's earlier historical periods. Whenever appropriate and possible, new awnings should be complementary in placement, proportion and color to the building's original fixtures and to existing awnings and canopies of adjacent buildings. New awnings should be constructed of cloth material. Vinyl, plastic or metal are inappropriate to historic facades and generally detract from the historic character of the building and those surrounding it. Consider replacing inappropriate awnings and canopies with traditional canvas-type fixtures.

A standard street-level awning should be mounted so the valance is a minimum of 7 feet above grade and projects no closer than 12 inches from the curb. A canopy (any awning with vertical support that reaches the ground) should be mounted so the valance is a minimum of 8 feet above grade and projects no closer than 2 feet from the curb. A 12-inch valance may be attached at the awning bar and can serve as a vertical sign panel with a simple message to identify the storefront business.

Inappropriate storefront alterations can be effectively disguised by mounting an awning over the alterations while maintaining the proportions of the original storefront.