

TO: HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

THROUGH: Lisa Anderson-Ogilvie, AICP, Deputy Community Development Director and Planning Administrator

FROM: Jake Morris, Preservation Planner

SUBJECT: Design Standards for Security Gates and Fencing- Downtown Historic District

ISSUE:

Development of Historic Design Standards for Security Gates and Fencing- Downtown Historic District

RECOMMENDATION:

Information only.

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND:

In 2023 the HLC reviewed two separate proposals for security gates/fencing within Salem's Downtown Historic District. One case (HIS23-05) was approved, allowing installation of two roll-down (retractable) security gate(s) located at the front entries of the recessed alcoves (466 Court St. NE); The second case (HIS23-22) was denied, requiring removal of a previously installed security fence and gate located at 170 Liberty Street NE. Following this last case, the HLC identified the need to establish clearer criteria for security gates and fencing within Salem's Downtown Historic District.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

1. Historic Preservation Plan Goal.

Streamline Historic Code: Criteria, Process and Enforcement is identified as Goal 2 in the 2020-2030 Historic Preservation Plan. Action item #6 *Improve and clarify code and education about design review process and criteria* is identified as *Strategy Two* in the HLC's 2023 Work Plan. This action directs the HLC and historic preservation staff to work on improving and clarifying the historic code (SRC 230) as well as to develop educational materials to teach historic property owners and tenants about the historic design review process.

2. Existing Criteria:

Design standards for storefronts within Salem's Downtown Historic District currently exist in *SRC 230.040 Standards for historic contributing buildings in commercial historic districts(d) Storefronts* and *SRC 230.045 Standards for non-contributing buildings/structures in commercial historic districts (d)Storefronts*. The criteria include standards for materials and design, but do not currently include any criteria related to security gates or fencing (Attachment A).

3. Research.

Staff posted a question on both the Oregon State CLG Listserv as well as the NAPC (National Alliance of Preservation Commissions) Listserv, asking for examples of design standards for commercial security gates/fencing within Downtown Historic Districts. Limited responses were received from the City of Portland and the City of Minneapolis (Attachment B).

4. At their December 16, 2023 HLC meeting, Commissioners reviewed examples of design standards and criteria from other jurisdictions and discussed proposed new criteria, then directed staff to return with updated draft design criterion and associated proposed educational material.

HLC ALTERNATIVES:

The HLC has the following alternatives:

1. **Proposed Security Gate Criteria:** Staff has completed initial public outreach to the Downtown Advisory Board, and the CANDO neighborhood association and generally received positive feedback about the proposed criteria. Should the HLC determine that the proposed Security Gate Criteria are acceptable, the HLC can direct staff to move forward with initiating the code amendment process. Alternatively, if the HLC has additional feedback or corrections to the proposed criteria, the HLC can direct staff to make any recommended changes and return with an updated draft in March.
2. **Proposed Educational Material:**
Staff has completed an initial draft of the proposed educational material for Security Gate/Fence design in the downtown Historic District. Should the HLC determine that the proposed educational material is acceptable, the HLC can direct staff to move forward with distributing to the public. Alternatively, if the HLC has additional feedback or corrections to the educational material, the HLC can direct staff to make any recommended changes and return to the HLC with an updated draft in March.

Attachments: (A) SRC 230.040 (b), SRC 230.045(b), and informational material drafts

STANDARDS FOR HISTORIC CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

230.040(d) Storefronts. *Replacement of storefronts or components of storefronts in historic contributing buildings shall be allowed only where the owner has attempted repair, but repair was determined to be unfeasible due to poor condition of the materials. If the storefront is not original then every effort shall be made to replicate the original feature; the effort shall be substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence. If the feature cannot be replicated then it should be of a compatible design and material.*

(1) Materials.

(A) *Original material shall, if possible, be retained or repaired.*

(B) *Replacement materials shall be, to the greatest extent practicable, of the same type, quality, design, size, finish, proportions, and configuration of the original materials in the storefront.*

(C) New Security Fencing/Gates materials must:

- i. Be compatible with the character of the building's period and style and the surrounding historic district; and
- ii. Be metal or another traditional material available during the period of significance for the historic district.

(2) Design.

(A) *To the extent practicable, original storefront components such as windows, door configuration, transoms, signage, and decorative features shall be preserved.*

(B) *Where the original storefront is too deteriorated to save, the commercial character of the building shall be retained through:*

- (i) *A restoration of the storefront based on historical research and physical evidence; OR*
- (ii) *Contemporary design that is compatible with the scale, design, materials, color and texture of historic compatible buildings in the district.*

(C) *For buildings that provide a separate upper-story entrance on the exterior facade, the street-level entrance should be the primary focus of the building facade.*

(D) New Security Fencing/Gates must be designed to minimize any visual impact to the character defining features of the historic storefront by incorporating design features which minimize the overall visual impact of this security feature on the historic storefront. Security Fencing/Gates must:

- i. Be fully retractable/moveable; and

- ii. Must not inhibit access to storefront alcoves during normal business operating hours; and
- iii. Not be sight obscuring; and
- iv. Be attached to the historic storefront without adversely impacting or obscuring character defining features of the resource.
- v. Be compatible with the building's period and style and the surrounding historic district.

STANDARDS FOR HISTORIC NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

230.045(d) Storefronts. *Replacement of storefronts or components of storefronts in non-contributing buildings is allowed.*

(1)Materials.

(A) *Materials dating from the period of significance shall, if possible, be retained and repaired or restored.*

(B) *Replacement materials shall be, to the greatest degree possible, of the same type, quality, design, size, finish, proportions and configuration of the storefronts commonly found in the district.*

(C) New Security Fencing/Gates materials must:

- vi. Be compatible with the period and style and the surrounding historic district; and
- vii. Be metal or another traditional material available during the period of significance for the historic district.

(2)Design.

(A) *To the extent practicable, original storefront components such as windows, door configuration, transoms, signage and decorative features dating from the period of significance shall be preserved.*

(B) *Restoration of the appearance of the storefront during the period of significance, based on historical research and physical evidence, is preferred.*

(C) *Replacement that is contemporary in design shall be compatible with the scale, proportions, massing, height, rhythm, materials, color and texture of historic contributing buildings in the district.*

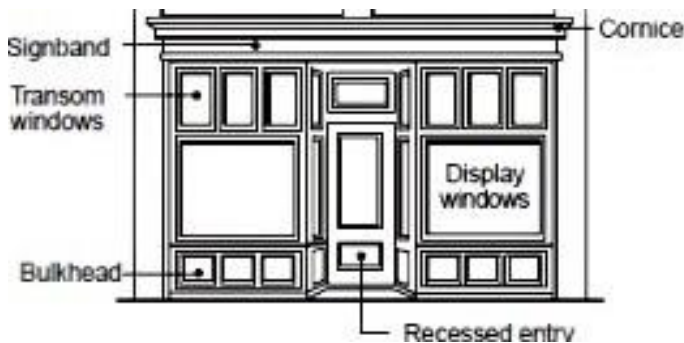
(D) New Security Fencing/Gates must be designed to minimize any visual impact to the character defining features of the storefront by incorporating design features which minimize the overall visual impact of this security feature on the storefront. Security Fencing/Gates must:

- i. Be fully retractable/moveable; and
- ii. Must not inhibit access to storefront alcoves during normal business operating hours; and
- iii. Not be sight obscuring; and
- iv. Be attached to the storefront without adversely impacting or obscuring character defining features of the resource.
- v. Be compatible with the surrounding historic district.

Guide to Commercial Storefront Security Gates

Historic Design Review within Salem's Downtown Historic District

Character-defining elements of historic commercial storefronts typically include two fundamental features that combine to allow visual and physical access, illumination, and showcase merchandise:



-Display window assembly- divided into three major parts from top to bottom: transom, large display window, and bulkhead. Connected and supported by a surround that often features ornamental detailing, and wooden or metal materials.

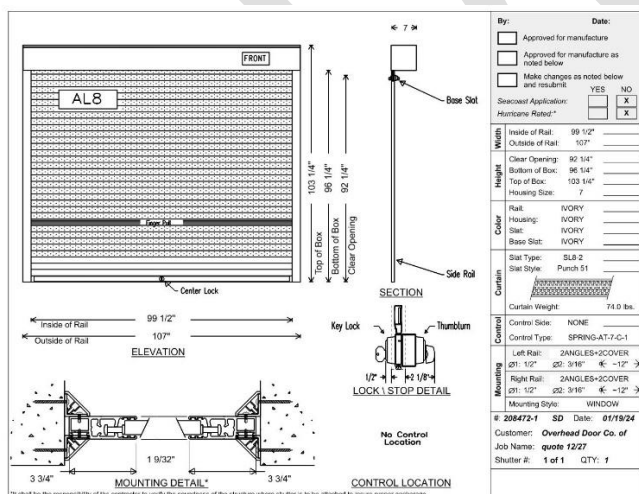
-Entryway- Often recessed, the entry can contain a single or double doors. Door and transom treatments usually match proportions found on the rest of the storefront.

Standards for Security Gates are found in 230.40(d) and 230.045(d) and include design standards relating to the acceptable materials and design of storefront security gates. In general, compatible materials for security gates within storefronts in the Downtown Historic District are metal or wood and compatible security gate designs are those that are designed to fit flush to the exterior storefront wall at the existing recessed storefront entry and do not obscure character defining features.

[Salem's Revised Code can be accessed at <https://www.cityofsalem.net/government/laws-rules/salem-revised-code>]

Submitting your proposal:

Information must be detailed enough to fully demonstrate that the proposal meets the standards:



The specifications show size and design in detail



The image shows how and where installation will occur on the storefront

Appropriate security gates must meet all the following criteria:

- Be fully retractable
- Not be sight obscuring
- Be attached to the storefront without adversely impacting or obscuring character-defining features
- Be compatible with the surrounding historic district

Examples:

This gate adequately exhibits all necessary characteristics.



- ✓ Fully retractable
- ✓ Not sight-obscuring
- ✓ Properly attached
- ✓ Compatible with surrounding district

This gate is not compliant primarily because it is sight-obscuring.



- ✓ Fully retractable
- ✗ Not sight-obscuring
- ✓ Properly attached
- ✗ Compatible with surrounding district

The roll-up housing is attached to the outside instead of hidden. The shutters are mostly not sight obscuring, however, the lower shutter panels are sight obscuring.



- ✓ Fully retractable
- ✗ Not sight-obscuring
- ✗ Properly attached
- ✗ Compatible with surrounding district

**OTHER GUIDES
IN THE SERIES:**

Introduction to Historic Salem

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GUIDE TO

**S T O R E F R O N T
S E C U R I T Y**



≡CITY of SALEM≡

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

≡STOREFRONT SECURITY≡

STOREFRONTS

According to the National Park Service, “the storefront is generally the most prominent and important feature in defining the character of a historic commercial building. The design of a historic storefront varies depending on the period, size and scale of the building, but it is usually composed of large glass display windows with transoms and a bulkhead or kick panels below. The entrance may be flush with the storefront, or recessed; it may consist of a single door or a pair of doors, centered or on one side, or it may have multiple entrances in buildings with more than one retail establishment, or with apartments or offices on the upper floors.”



An early 20th century storefront. Source: Library of Congress

SECURITY STRATEGIES

Since storefronts are designed to be highly visible: an inviting place to showcase goods and attract the public to a business, they can also be susceptible to theft and vandalism. Historically appropriate solutions to security issues must maintain the beneficial role of commercial storefronts as inviting elements crucial to attracting business while also preventing theft and vandalism.

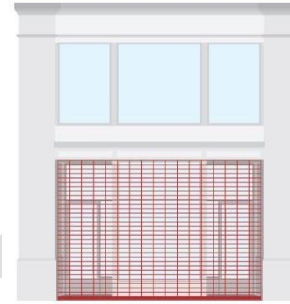
Security strategies that do not involve significant changes to a building lend themselves well to historic buildings. Security staff, surveillance cameras, and alarm systems fall into this category.

Installing barriers such as gates and fences poses greater risk of losing historic character, so they must be carefully designed, installed, and utilized.

SECURITY FENCES AND GATES

A security gate is a movable fixture installed in front of a storefront opening or bay, or inside the display window or door to protect a store from theft or vandalism when the store is closed.

≡STOREFRONT SECURITY≡



A historically appropriate security gate must not obscure the historic entry or storefront from the public right-of-way. When the business is open, the security gate should be as invisible as possible. Since storefronts for businesses that are closed still impact the overall character of a historic district and nearby businesses that might be open, security gates should be as transparent as is feasible and not distract from historic resources.

According to the City of Salem Standards for Commercial Historic Districts, security gates must:

- Be compatible with the character of the building's period and style and the surrounding historic district; and
- Be metal or another traditional material available during the period of significance for the historic district.
- Incorporate design features that minimize any visual impact to the character defining features of the historic storefront.
- Be fully retractable/movable.
- Not inhibit access to storefront alcoves during normal business operating hours.
- Not be sight obscuring.
- Be attached to the historic storefront without adversely impacting or obscuring character defining features of the resource.
- Be compatible with the surrounding historic district.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Preservation Brief #11: *Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts*. Washington D.C.: Technical Preservation Services (TPS), Heritage Preservation Services Division, National Park Service. US Department of the Interior. Rev. 1982. www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/preservation-by-topic.htm