

Included In This Section

Façade guidelines are created to help create a unified vision for the look, feel and construction of downtown or community core store frontage. All façade guidelines elements should focus around providing the community with a singular look and feel for the downtown core area, creating a unique place, as was referenced in the architectural standards section.

FACADE GUIDELINES



BACKGROUND DATA

Façade guidelines are created to help create a unified vision for the look, feel and construction of downtown or community core store frontage. All façade guidelines elements should focus around providing the community with a singular look and feel for the downtown core area, creating a unique place, as was references in the architectural standards section.



Facade Guidelines

DEFINITION OF RENOVATION

Renovations of a building's exterior (facade) includes multiple components, primary of which are focused around architectural unification and preservation, specifically outlined below are several samples:

- Sanitize, repair and replace exterior surfaces (wood, stone, masonry, etc.) in a manner that will preserve and maintain.
- Upgrade exterior components to current code, creating a safe environment for public enjoyment.
- Preserve architectural characters of each individual building, personifying their integration in the community fabric.
- Prioritize necessary projects in order of importance, i.e. structural, code, aesthetic.

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

In order to preserve the architectural character of Mars, understanding the current historical properties and community fabric is of utmost importance. Historically significant properties within the Borough include various types and construction era of architecture, each significant for their own contributions to the overall community character. Currently within the community there are present one (1) to three (3) story buildings, with multiple roadway setbacks and zoning designations (residential/commercial). While most of the buildings were constructed within the 19th and 20th centuries, there are several newer buildings throughout the project area that add variety to the overall character.

It is the intention of this program, and the Borough of Mars, to accommodate all manners of business, allowed by Borough Code and Zoning, within the project area and facilitate necessary changes to the buildings/facades, while retaining the individual architectural elements of each building. This goal will be achieved through careful planning and restoration of the unique architectural characteristics of each building and creating an overall theme for the community to tie together the architectural feel of the community.

Outlined below are several sample images of historic architectural elements that are on significant buildings within the Borough of Mars:



Building Cornices



Recessed Entrance



Display Windows



Awnings



Signage

STOREFRONT TYPES

Within the Borough of Mars, there are multiple building façade types present. This mixture of building types, and uses, provides the Borough with a diverse and eclectic community feel, attractive to residents and regional visitors. Over the years since initial construction, buildings within the project area have undergone multiple renovations, some of which have altered the exterior presence of the building. Due to these historically accurate and non-historically accurate renovations, the community has buildings that fit into the below outlined four (4) categories:

- Historically Accurate Storefront (HAS) – Building with largely intact façade, highlighting architectural elements that are period accurate
- Altered Historically Accurate Storefront (AHAS) – Buildings that have undergone a full/partial renovation to alter the exterior of the building, including updates and enhancements that have altered the architectural elements for the building era
- Non-Historic Storefront (NHS) – Buildings that have been updated and no longer represent original architectural or architectural elements from the building era
- No Storefront Building (NSB) – Buildings that have an altered setback, no storefronts (building rears/sides) or do not have any specific architectural era represented

These building types each require unique and varied renovation guidelines. It is important to understand that the information outlined below in the guidelines is a suggestion for facade renovation and not a mandatory requirement.

Final say for proposed façade enhancement approvals is up to the Borough of Mars Planning Department and Borough Council.



DIVERSITY IN BUILDING TYPES

The most attractive communities have a strong mixture of complementary architectural styles, each offering their unique attributes and architectural features

Historically Accurate Storefront (HAS)

- Repair/Renovate functional and decorative components of the façade
- Restore, where possible, historical elements of the building back to the era of building construction
- Renovate the structure, being historically sensitive, to meet current code and accessibility standards
- If capable and desired, coordinate architectural elements and colors with the Department of Interior Historic Preservation Standards
- Work with historic society and committees to complete adequate research about historic characters from the building



Altered Historically Accurate Storefront (AHAS)

- To the extents possible, construction or repair the original storefront
- Construct a historically accurate representation of the building façade, including
 - Doors
 - Windows
 - Transoms
 - Signage
- Add minimal features to the current storefront, creating an overall continuity of architectural components with the surrounding area, only if the updated storefront is historically significant within the community
- If capable and desired, coordinate architectural elements and colors with the Department of Interior Historic Preservation Standards



Non-Historic Storefront (NHS)

- Repair and renovate the existing storefront, if meets current community standards and/or guidelines
- Remove existing storefront and construct new (historically accurate) storefront, according to façade design guidelines and building construction era
- Work with historic society and committees to complete adequate research for sample storefront components that should be constructed on the building

No Storefront Building (NSB)

- If possible, construct an accurate storefront to match the building construction era and corridor continuity
- If building is historically significant or has meaning within the community, renovate the building exterior, retaining the desired traits
- If no storefront is present and the building is set back, create architectural elements along the corridor to match existing storefronts. These elements shall be designed to code and create a sense of place similar to neighboring buildings. Samples of elements include:
 - Low walls, built of similar materials as found within the corridor, creating space and delineating a corridor
 - Creation of vertical architectural elements to provide the space a sense of enclosure, similar in scale to the surrounding buildings within the corridor
 - Use vegetation to soften impervious spaces between the recessed building face and corridor storefront areas



FACADE ELEMENT GUIDELINES

Key to preserving and/or creating a historically significant façade is utilizing a set of guidelines for all work to be completed. Outlined below are several of the more significant or important guidelines:

- Where possible, retain original materials for re-use, including but not limited to, the below materials:
- Doors
- Door handles
- Window glass
- Transom window
- Cornice components
- Architectural details
- Decorative woodwork
- Replace and install historically accurate architectural components to recreate or mimic the original design
- Conduct all necessary code or accessibility upgrades in a manner that will cause as little structural or visual impact to the building

For additional guidelines, consult the Department of Interior's renovation standards. The Department of Interior Standards are more extensive and will provide additional information. While not all the guidelines listed on their process will be required or relevant for each property, they can assist the property/business owners in understanding appropriate methods for the important work. Highlights from the Department of Interior's guidelines are as follows:

- To the extents possible, a property shall be utilized for its historic purpose or be placed with a new use that will cause minimal change
- Historic and Architectural character of a property shall be retained
- If renovations to the original property have been made, and the renovations are historically significant, the property/business owners shall determine to which significant era to restore the property
- All distinctive features (finishes, colors, techniques, etc.) shall be preserved
- Physical treatments, including chemical cleaning and sand blasting, which will cause damage to the property shall be kept to a minimum
- New additions or renovations shall be constructed in a manner that will not destroy or alter the appearance of the historical elements
- Each property shall be recognized as a "place in time", meaning that all property changes and renovations shall be period and architectural type specific.

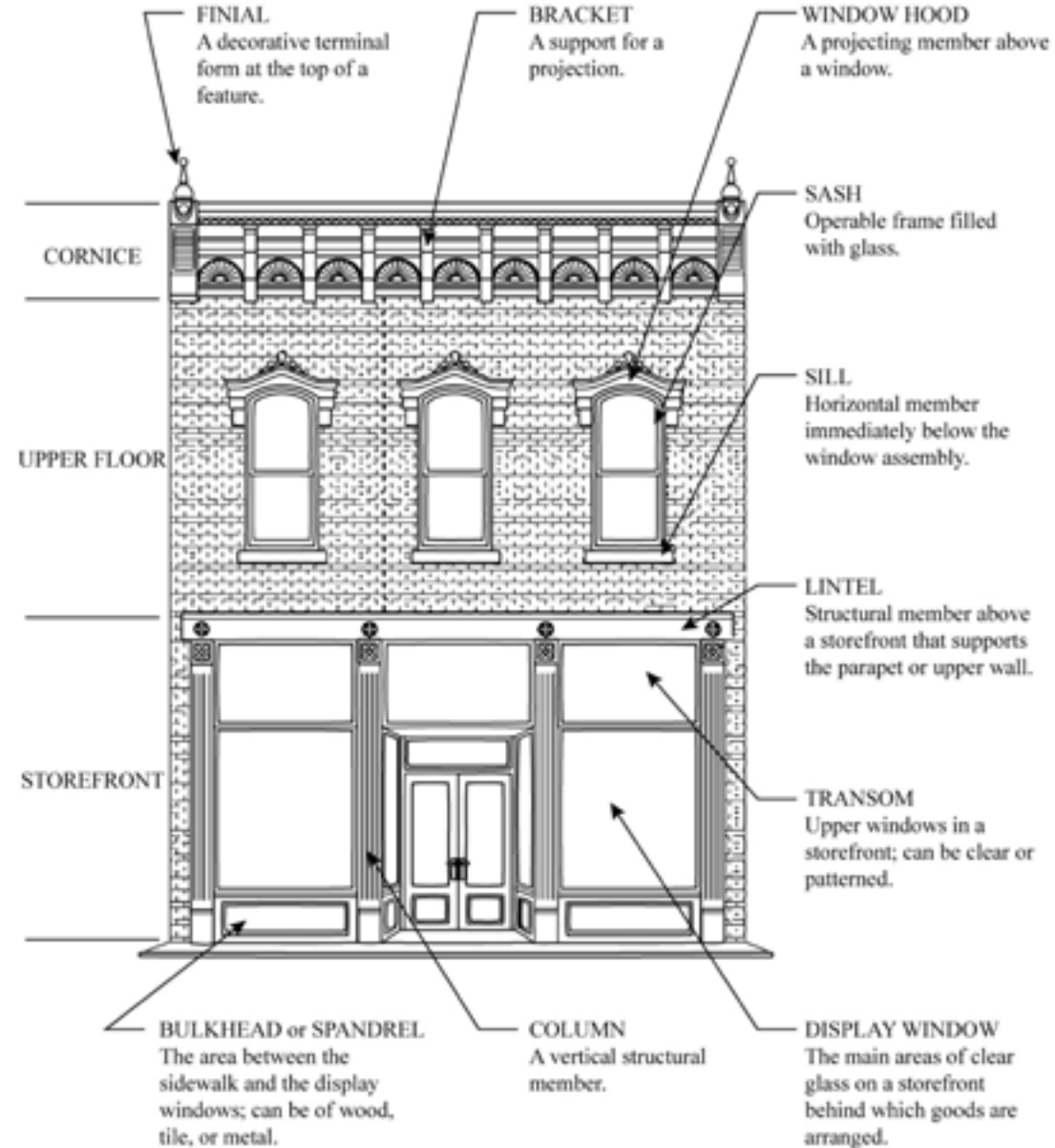
FACADE COMPONENTS

While facade elements are unique for each property, each property has several common structural and non-structural elements that shall be addressed during a renovation or update. These elements will vary by property, but outlined below are guidelines for the most prevalent elements within the Mars façade program project area:

- Setbacks
- Doors
- Recessed Entrances
- Rear Entrances
- Windows
- Cornice
- Signage
- Transom Windows
- Awnings
- Siding

Architectural Elements - Commercial Building

Basic features of a mixed-use building within a traditional main street area



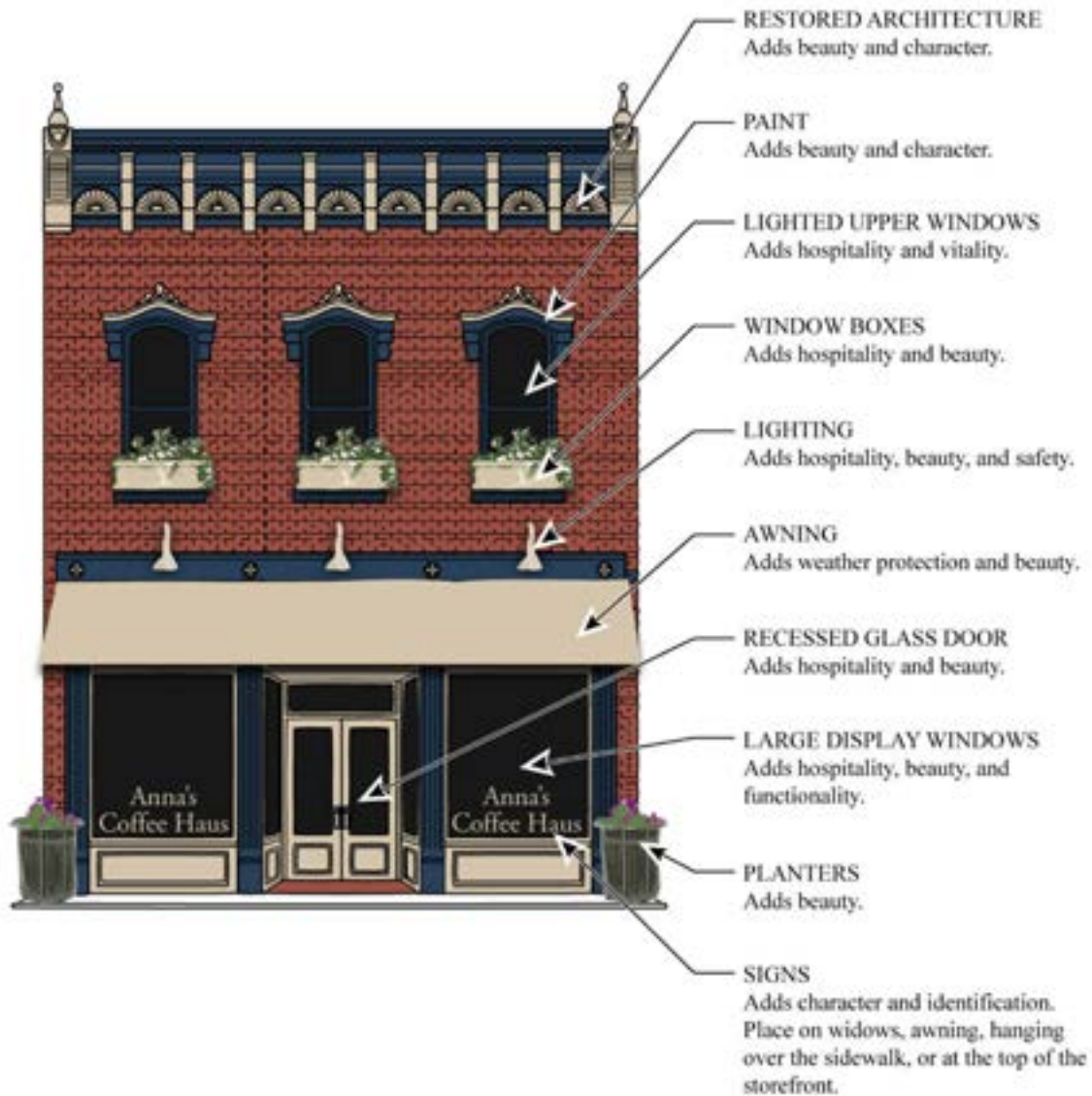
Source: Zelenople and Harmony Joint Comprehensive Plan, June 2010

FACADE ELEMENTS

Building facades illustrate the architectural character and integrity of a community. While building construction and facades can come from any construction period, similar characteristics are prevalent. These similar facade elements are outlined on the below pages.

Facade Improvements - Quick Solution Guide

Simple, low cost improvements that help make a business more attractive



Source: Zelenople and Harmony Joint Comprehensive Plan, June 2010

FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

While most properties' facade improvements are similar, each property has specific characteristics that are attempting to be preserved and restored accurately for the buildings' construction timeperiod. Sample facade improvements, typical for most buildings, are outlined above.

SAMPLE FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

Setbacks

Buildings within the business district and/or residential areas shall have a uniform setback, congruent with the historical setbacks. Buildings may deviate from the typical setback line, plus or minus, with minimal changes, allowing that no large recessed areas are created.

Doors

Entry doors to the building (commercial and retail) shall be period accurate in design and constructed of a material typical for the building's construction era. While doors shall be accurate to the period/era, it is important to incorporate new safety and security into the door. Updated safety features include; safety glass, upgraded locking mechanisms (deadbolts) maintenance free hinges and frames, etc.



Recessed Entrances

Where appropriate, storefronts and retail buildings shall utilize a recessed entrance of no less than three (3) feet. This entrance will allow for space utilization, additional arising and allow for increased gathering areas off the sidewalk. All recessed entrances shall be constructed of period accurate materials and designed to represent the community's architectural character/history.

Rear Entrances

Where applicable, rear entrances shall be made to fit the scale and detail of the building. Awnings and signage shall be placed, similar to store front, on a smaller scale unless the rear entrance is primary for the structure. Structures and appurtenances of the building shall be similar to the front, including window, door and brick/cladding types.



Windows

First floor levels of buildings/store fronts shall maintain a minimum of 75% glass. All glass to be replaced or amended shall be safety glass. Windows with a tint or any glass that filters light shall not be utilized unless expressly allowed for the business use. Windows shall be utilized for business uses (marketing, shopping displays etc.) and kept to standards with no cracks or inclusions.

Cornice/Architectural Adornments

Cornices and architectural elements shall be saved and retained for restoration. These elements, structural and non-structural, shall be refurbished when at all possible. Cornices and architectural elements shall be accurate to the period of building construction, where possible. If re-construction is necessary for the elements, replicas shall be created from items removed from the building or historical photos of the property. Restored and renovated elements shall be installed per local building code or international building code.

Transom

Transom windows shall be saved, whenever possible, and utilized as an accent feature of architectural interest. Transom windows may be decorative or opaque glass. Windows shall always remain functional, i.e. open and close. Spaces can be utilized for unique signage and recognition of the businesses, if desired.

Brickwork/Tuckpointing

Tuckpointing and brickwork shall be maintained in a manner that is congruent with applicable codes within Borough of Mars. Where possible, accurate brick and mortar colors shall be used to repair missing or broken bricks. Contractors looking to complete the work shall provide samples of mortar and prepare multiple samples on site for Borough approval. All tuckpointing shall be completed per the Department of Interior tuckpointing guidelines to ensure similar methods of construction and appearances are created.

Awnings/Canopies

Awnings and/or canopies shall be placed along the storefront, accentuating the architectural components of the property. Such structures shall be made of a durable and environmentally friendly material consisting of no more than two (2) colors. Final approval of canopies/awnings shall be completed by the Borough of Mars zoning and code compliance. Wood shingle awnings/canopies shall not be allowed within the Borough of Mars. Text shall be limited on awnings/canopies and occupy no more than 25% of front footage



FACADE CONSTRUCTION/ RENOVATION GUIDELINES

Integral to the success of a storefront or façade renovation is utilizing long lasting and accurate construction methods for all work completed. Outlined below are several guidelines for construction and renovation of typical façade materials. If additional material construction/renovation guidelines are necessary (and not outlined below), please contact the Borough zoning and code officials.

1. Masonry/Tuckpointing

- Masonry shall be repaired and replaced as necessary to ensure a safe, secure and watertight exterior for all floors and exterior surfaces on the building
- Bricks and/or stones used for masonry shall be made of similar size/quality and texture as currently present within the building.
- Masonry surfaces shall be cleaned, per Department of Interior standards, prior to any repair/restoration work
- Re-pointing of masonry shall be done with a mortar of similar color, texture and chemical content
- Sample patches of tuckpointing colors shall be constructed in a conspicuous location for review and approval by Borough zoning/code official prior to use on full building
- No waterproofing materials may be utilized on surface visible to the public
- Masonry surface edges shall be sealed with a “quad 3” (or similar) sealant to ensure no water deteriorated issues
- Masonry surface, if existing, shall remain unpainted



2. Roofing

- Roofing shall meet code compliance for the Borough of Mars
- All visible roofing materials shall be period accurate and not detract from the character of the façade

3. Downspouts/Gutters

- Gutters shall be installed per Borough code to capture roof and awning run-off
- Downspouts shall be installed per Borough code, in locations that will not negatively impact the overall character of the building
- Downspout/gutter materials shall be construction period accurate

4. Wood

- Wood exterior elements shall be repaired and retained, where applicable, and replaced with similar features when necessary
- Historically accurate or original wood siding shall be replaced where necessary
- Wooden trim and ornamental pieces (outlined below) shall be repaired, where possible, or replaced. These pieces shall be an exact replica or as closely matched as possible.
 - Cornice
 - Storefront window/door trims
 - Shutters
 - Brackets
- Wood features shall be stained/sealed to preserve longevity of element. Exact colors or sealants shall be determined by the “paint” section below



5. Stucco/Skim Coat

- Stucco and skim coat walls shall be constructed using period accurate techniques, per Department of Interior standards
- Stucco surfaces shall be colored/tinted to match the accurate colors for the construction period of the building
- Skim coat surfaces shall match other masonry surface colors, such as tuck pointing
- Surfaces shall be sealed (non-visible) to ensure watertight compliance and longevity

6. Opening Re-Configuration (windows/doors)

- Where a window/door has deteriorated past a usable life, replacement materials should be a match for the current building opening.
- Replacement windows shall always fill the entire window void
- Replacement doors shall be constructed to fill the entire void
- No “block in” or expansion of opening shall take place to meet new equipment measurements

7. Paint

- Buildings should use subdued and/or muted colors, such as natural colors of building materials or bricks, unless originally different.
- Paint color selection should correlate to the overall neighborhood character, utilizing similar colors to existing.
- Primary colors (red, green, blue) shall not be used, with the exception of signage
- Colors should be coordinated to provide relation between multiple architectural elements along the façade, including cornice, shutters, windows, doors, etc. This coordination shall be completed by choosing a “base color” to paint the primary surface areas with a “secondary color” for the trims and accent items. Secondary items shall be of a separate hue with similar characteristic, i.e. several shades lighter or darker.
- Facades may utilize a maximum of three (3) colors, excluding signs.
- All non-translucent materials shall be painted or natural surface. Specifically, the following are not allowable to remain an unpainted surface:
 - Metal doors, windows, frames
 - Shutters, where applicable
 - Roof coping



- Where elected to remain in a “natural appearance” proper maintenance and sealant of the surfaces must be completed to ensure no degradation in appearance
- Colors for each property shall match typical colors utilized during the construction era. Please refer to the Department of Interior standard colors for each era.

8. Exterior Building Accent Colors (including signage, shutters, etc.)

- Exterior building accent colors shall be complimentary to the primary building colors
- Accent colors should stand out from the overall colors, but not cause distractions
- Accent colors shall be within the same color family as the building colors, i.e. accent colors shall be several hue shades lighter or darker
- All appurtenances on buildings (trim, shutters, etc.) shall be painted similar colors to encourage uniformity per building
- Color selection should be utilized to tie together entire building

9. Lighting (non-accent)

- Non-accent lighting shall be installed in a manner that will be discreet and not detract from the architectural character of the building
- Where possible, energy efficient lighting shall be utilized

10. Lighting (accent/signage)

- Accent lighting, including signage lighting, shall be period accurate and accentuate the architectural character of the building
- Accent lighting shall be utilized to highlight specific architectural/signage characteristics
- No accent lighting shall highlight areas other than building and signage
- Accent lighting shall comply with Borough building code
- Lighting wiring shall be colored/hidden from public view, to the extent possible
- All accent lighting shall be on timers and photocell sensors to ensure adequate energy use
- All accent lighting requires permit and approval from the Borough
- Clocks and other elements shall be retained where possible

11. ADA Accessibility

- Building storefronts shall be made ADA accessible, where possible and does not detract from the historical character of the building

12. Architectural Elements/Cornices

- Architectural elements and cornices shall be retained/ repaired where possible and reinstalled on the property
- Where not possible, replicas shall be created, utilizing similar architectural styles and construction methods

13. Non-Allowable Items

- Outlined below are items that are strictly prohibited within the Borough of Mars. These items, at time of renovation, shall be renovated to current standards:
 - Wood awnings
 - Metal Awnings
 - Non-permanent sidewalk signage
 - Window decals/vinyl clings
 - Neon/LED signage



- Stormwater management: New development and reconstruction projects shall utilize rain gardens and rain barrels where possible for water usage. This usage of water collected will reduce the amount of water run-off from each property while providing water for plant and vegetation watering
- Green space: Pervious surfaces, including turf/green space shall be provided for people to utilize. These facilities provide increased water filtration, reduce heat island effect and encourage social interaction
- Street trees and landscaping: Where possible, street trees and plantings shall be provided. These additions will provide needed shade along corridors, while creating an attractive pedestrian scale corridor to encourage increased utilization.



BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Where possible, it is important to utilize best management practices (BMP) for construction, maintenance and sustainability. By utilizing the items outlined below, property/business owners will be provided with cost savings over time. BMP for the Borough of Mars include:

- Energy efficient doors/windows: Windows shall be repaired where possible, but when not possible, it is important to replace with coated energy efficient fixtures that will allow for increased insulation and reflectivity.

EXAMPLE FACADE IMPROVEMENTS





Outlined above are samples of facade enhancements for various properties and property types in the Borough of Mars. The proposed enhancements are not required to be undertaken by the business/property owner, but merely to serve as an example of possible enhancements and transformations from the facade program.