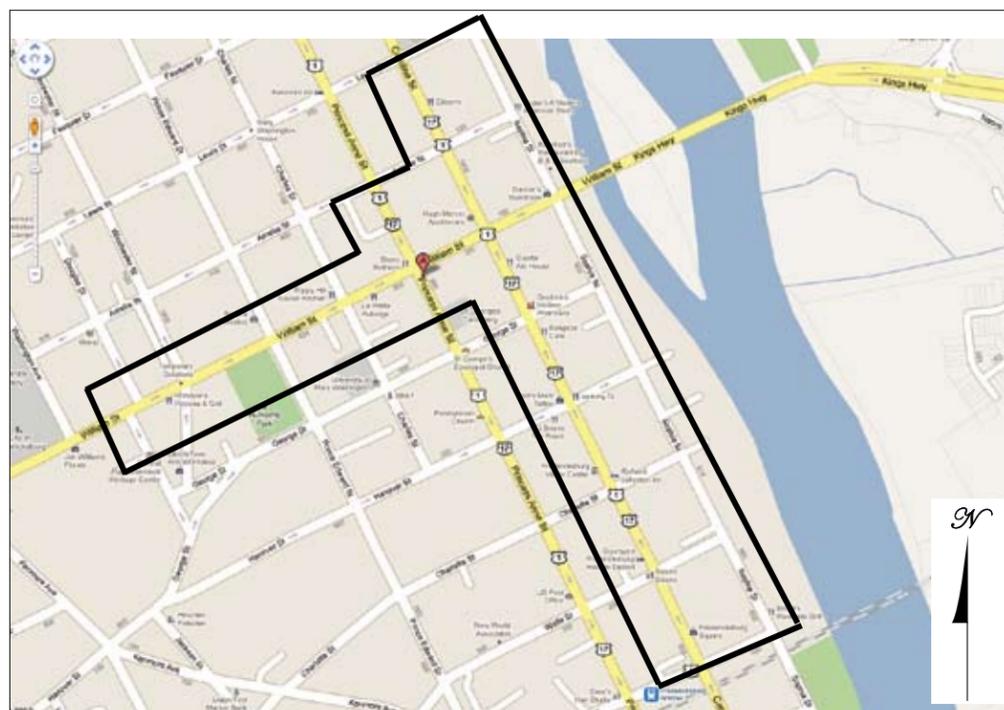
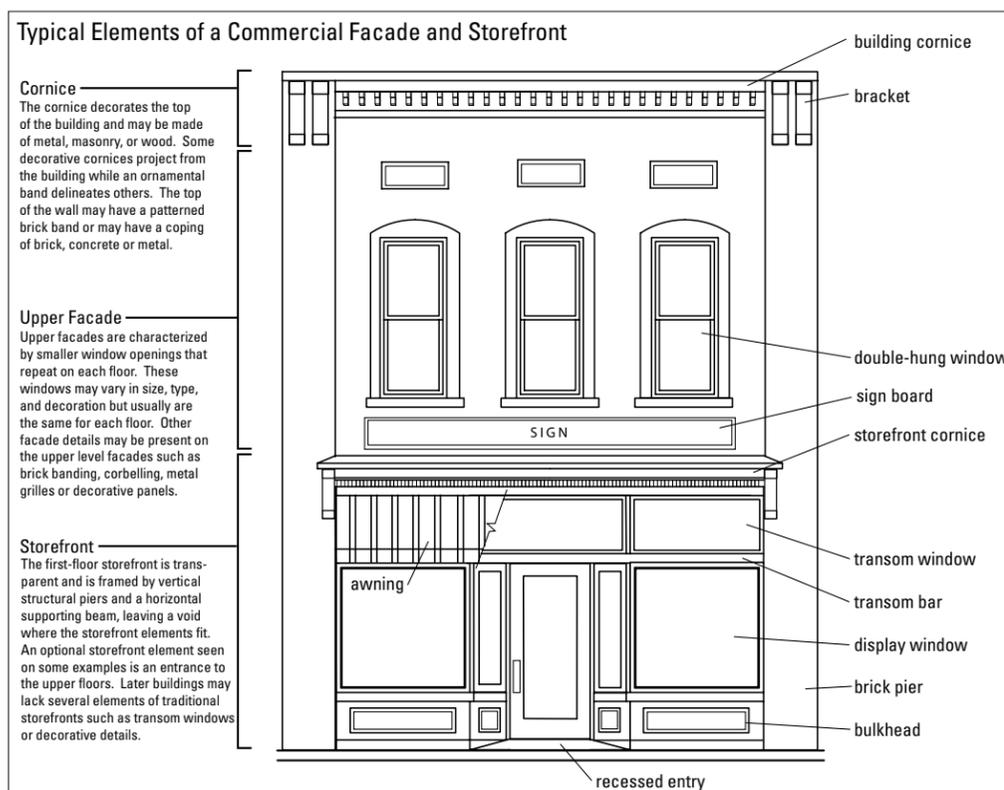


ASSESSMENT SUMMARY



Map of Project Area



Typical Elements of a Commercial Facade used in assessment of facades.

PURPOSE

The Fredericksburg Economic Development Authority contracted with Frazier Associates to conduct an on-site visual assessment of the historic building facades and above-ground infrastructure in the core of historic downtown Fredericksburg (see map). The assessment took place March 28 and 29, 2011. The goal of the facade assessment was to determine the current condition of and needed improvements for downtown facades. The information will be used to shape incentive programs for downtown revitalization efforts. The goal of the infrastructure assessment was to identify any low-cost, maintenance-type improvements that the City could undertake in the short term.

METHODOLOGY FOR FACADE EVALUATION

The evaluation was conducted from two perspectives. The first was from the perspective of a historic architect/Main Street architect. Issues such as general maintenance, originality of historic features and materials, appropriateness of alterations, and overall appearance of the facade were evaluated.

To the extent possible, the second perspective was that of a tourist coming to Fredericksburg for the first time. From this perspective, the first floor of each business was evaluated for attractiveness of entries, window displays, and so on. The ultimate question became: is this business telling its story and do I feel invited to enter? If not, what kinds of improvements might be needed.

Blending these two perspectives, each building was photographed and evaluated on a scale of 0 to 3. Accompanying maps and building elevation photo sheets of each block record the evaluation of each building.

The scale is as follows:

- 0 – No work needed
- 1 – Minor improvements recommended
- 2 – Moderate improvements recommended
- 3 – Major improvements recommended

FINDINGS

Approximately 230 building facades were assessed in the core downtown area. These facades, for the most part, are the primary front elevation of the building. Of the total facades evaluated, fourteen (14) fell into Category 3 for which major improvements are recommended. An equal number (14) fell into Category 2 and moderate improvements are recommended. The remaining 200 facades were either Category 1, only minor improvements recommended, or Category 0 requiring no work. These findings point to the fact that the heart of historic downtown Fredericksburg is attractive and well-maintained. Visually appealing, colorful accents abound in the form of awnings, signs, window displays, flower pots, etc. That said, the majority of businesses could benefit from simple spring cleaning and a little attention to curb appeal such as freshly painted front doors and flower pots.

In addition to assessing the front facades; empty spaces, parking lots, and rear facades were also evaluated within the project area. In general, these spaces and facades were in much poorer condition and were not visually appealing. This finding is not unusual, as the rears of downtown buildings are generally utilitarian and not used for public access. For Fredericksburg, it is unfortunate that the rears of buildings along the east side of Caroline face Sophia Street which is a primary view for visitors arriving via William Street from the east. A more detailed look at this rear view of downtown is suggested.

SUGGESTED SCOPE OF FACADE IMPROVEMENTS AND COSTS

The types of recommended facade improvements, with very general cost categories, are shown on the next page. Costs and scope will vary depending on the size of the building.

NEXT STEPS

Based on this assessment, seven properties were chosen to illustrate the suggested levels of facade improvements. The drawings of these projects are included in this report.

FEATURED BUILDINGS

Drawings were prepared for the following buildings and are included in the Appendix of this report:

Category 1

- 422- 424 William Street
- 720 Caroline Street

Category 2

- 1013 Caroline Street
- 1015 Caroline Street
- 822 Caroline Street

Category 3

- 912 Caroline Street
- 914-916 Caroline Street