

# HINTS AND RESOURCES

**Paint and color.** Three-color paint schemes add extra polish to a storefront, but making the right color selection can be confusing. Applying color to a building is an art form. There are many factors that impact paint choices, such as reflections off of neighboring buildings, surface material, angle of sun exposure, and window structure. It is worth hiring a professional consultant to assist you with color selection and paint product.

**Architecture and design.** For complex designs or structural changes, you will likely want to hire an architect. The American Institute of Architects is a professional architecture association. Their website has a wealth of information, including what to look for when contracting with an architect, questions to ask, and the design process: [www.aia.org/value](http://www.aia.org/value)

**Permitting and zoning.** Many, but not all, exterior improvements require building permits to ensure the safety and structural integrity of your investment. Visit the City's permitting department to discuss improvements you're planning to make. They will point you in the right direction and let you know about special design guidelines, permit requirements, and timelines for approvals.

**Business associations.** Successful districts are places where multiple businesses are working together toward a common objective. Your business or downtown association and area Chamber

of Commerce work hand-in-hand with City staff to coordinate and continue revitalization of the district. Attend a meeting to connect with neighbors, other businesses like yours, and learn about funding and technical resources.

**Guide to Storefront Design.** The City of Portland and Portland Development Commission recently published the "Portland Main Street Design Handbook" (prepared by Emerick Architects). The guide contains a wealth of ideas for storefront improvements and commercial district revitalization, applicable to many areas outside of Portland. The handbook can be downloaded on PDC's website at [www.pdc.us/for-businesses/business-district-programs-support/portland-main-street.aspx](http://www.pdc.us/for-businesses/business-district-programs-support/portland-main-street.aspx)

**Historic resources.** If you're in a historic district or just looking for ideas on how your older building can contribute to the area's cultural heritage, there are many places to find help. For historic district resources and requirements, contact the City's planning department. Information on energy efficient improvements to older buildings and product resources can be found through the State Historic Preservation Organization, [www.oregon.gov/OPRD/HCD/SHPO](http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/HCD/SHPO), the National Trust for Historic Preservation, [www.preservationnation.org](http://www.preservationnation.org), the Trust's Main Street Program, [www.mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org), and the Architectural Heritage Center, [www.visitahc.org](http://www.visitahc.org)

Coming up in July

## Boost visibility with sidewalk appeal

visit [www.oregonmetro.gov/getstreetsmart](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/getstreetsmart)



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# Low-cost high-impact storefronts

PRESENTED BY

City of Gresham  
City of Hillsboro  
City of Lake Oswego  
Hillsboro Downtown Association  
Main Street Oregon City  
Metro



Seanette Corkill, FrontdoorBack  
Brian Emerick, AIA, Emerick Architects

# HIGHLIGHTS

## STOREFRONT BASICS

### Clean

- Clean and safe: a maintained storefront represents your business well and adds to the safety and attractiveness of the district
- Adopt the appearance of your entire storefront: curbs, sidewalks and planters, too

### Uncover / Subtract

- Let the customer see in: remove paint, signs, or other obstructions to allow views
- Assess your awning: clean, remove or replace. Consider how awnings affect the visibility of window displays, entry doors, signs, and the overall building façade

## STOREFRONT RENOVATIONS

- Some buildings need more than a paint job: windows and doors may need replacing to fit the character of your business, building or commercial district
- Has your building been remuddled? The original character of historic buildings can be restored using period-appropriate designs and materials
- If your building is not historic, there are many approaches to upgrade a storefront appearance to better complement your business

### Paint

- Storefront color can make a district feel distinctive, vibrant, and successful
- Color communicates your business to potential customers: upscale/discount, trendy/conservative, masculine/feminine

### Light

- Building lights add atmosphere to commercial districts, lend interest to storefronts at night, and help advertise your business 24/7
- Use accent lighting to highlight architectural features, signs and window displays

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Start small
- Avoid themes
- Create compatibility, stress continuity
- Build quality
- Consider the entire building
- Authenticity is 'the brand'
- Be realistic

### Seanette Corkill, FrontdoorBack

With a BS in Marketing from the University of Colorado, LEEDS School of Business and a successful career in sales, Seanette brings a business-minded approach to the retail design arena. Her 25 years of professional training and design experience have intermingled to give her creative voice an artful yet practical tone. Seanette started FrontdoorBack to bring the benefits of design and merchandising to businesses of all persuasions. Seanette consults and presents for both Oregon and Washington Main Street programs, and has been featured on multiple occasions in Entrepreneur.com's retail segments-

### Brian Emerick, AIA, Emerick Architects

A seventh generation Oregonian whose family came over the Oregon Trail, Brian earned his architectural degree from the University of Oregon. In 1999, he co-founded Emerick Architects P.C. with his wife, Melody Emerick. Their firm has forged a reputation for timeless architecture created from regional materials and the heritage of the Pacific Northwest. Brian is currently Vice-Chair of Portland's Historic District Landmarks Commission and also serves as the Main Street Architect for the Portland Development Commission in partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

# GETTING STARTED

**Travel at home.** Summer is the perfect time to grab your camera and visit your own main street with a tourist's perspective. Take photos of your shop and those around you. How do all the buildings fit together? What makes your district attractive to customers? What changes can you make to boost the street's vitality? Have a little extra time? Visit other commercial districts in the region for more fresh ideas.

**Read your lease.** If you rent space for your business, read through your lease to find out what types of improvements you can make to the exterior

of the building or determine your obligations. Set a meeting with your landlord to review your lease and discuss options for modifications.

**Explore potential resources.** Many cities have assistance programs to support thriving districts. Look online or contact the City to determine if technical assistance, loans, matching grants, or fee waivers are available for the types of changes you're considering.



## ANATOMY OF A TRADITIONAL STOREFRONT

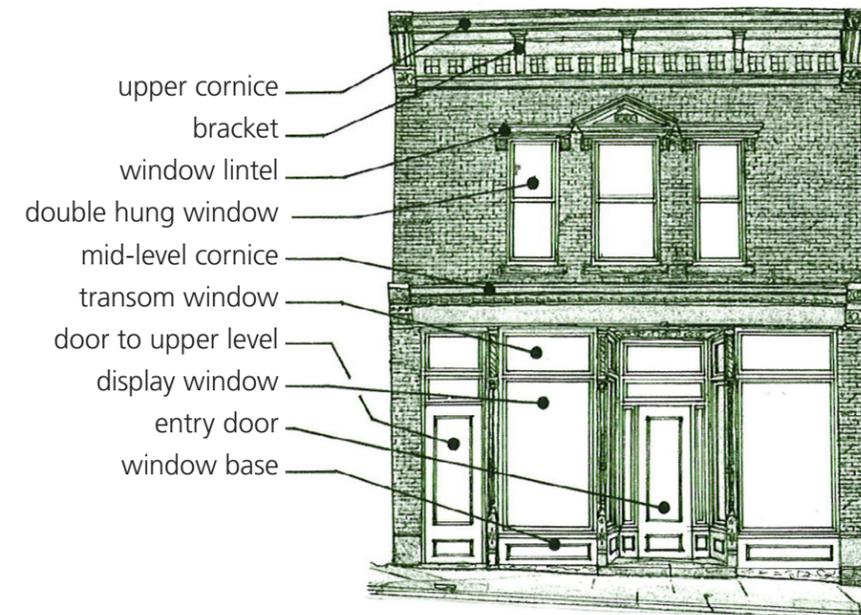


Diagram courtesy of Emerick Architects