



Old Orland Historic District

CANOPIES AND AWNINGS

Awnings traditionally were used for two purposes: at window openings on houses to keep down the interior heat in the summer; and on commercial storefronts to provide both shade and weather protection for the storefront and for people walking along the sidewalk. Upper floor windows on commercial buildings, too, often used awnings for shade. Awnings typically were made of canvas or similar heavy fabric and were mounted on metal pipe frames. Both residential and commercial storefront awnings usually could be rolled up or retracted.

Canopies were attached to buildings to provide similar protection from the sun and weather, but they were permanent and were fixed in place (awnings often were removed entirely during cold weather, especially on houses). Some canopies were original elements, particularly on houses, where they sometimes were used to shelter an open stoop.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For residential or commercial buildings in the Historic District, fabric awnings are an appropriate treatment, but they should have a matte rather than a glossy surface. Avoid fixed, permanent canopies unless it can be shown through research that a building had one in the past and that the canopy design was compatible with the original character of the building and the district.
2. Each window or door should have its own awning, rather than a single full-width awning covering an entire façade.
3. Use a traditional flat, sloping awning. Avoid rounded or “bullnose” awnings, except at round-headed window openings, where the rounded awning shape is appropriate.
4. Awning color is important. Manufacturers can provide durable, long-lasting fabric for awnings in a wide range of colors. Make awning color(s) compatible with historically appropriate colors used on the building, but avoid overly ornate patterns and too many colors. A simple pattern using no more than two colors is usually the most appropriate.