

Dinkytown Commercial Historic District Design Guidelines



325-331 14th Ave SE, circa 1907. Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society

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Draft



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Introduction

How to Use this Document

The Dinkytown Commercial Historic District Design Guidelines provide a framework for evaluating proposed alterations to existing buildings and new construction. The guidelines should be consulted before planning exterior maintenance tasks such as cleaning and roofing, as well as major rehabilitation, reuse, and new construction projects. All projects are also evaluated using *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (specifically the Standards for Rehabilitation, see pages 3-4), which apply only to the exteriors of buildings, including the windows, doors, and signs. Signage is solely evaluated under the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission's *Design Guidelines for On-Premises Signs and Awnings* and is not addressed in these design guidelines.

The Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) and Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) Department staff review project plans for all exterior alterations, new construction, and demolition. Each project requires a preservation application and is evaluated for consistency with the applicable design guidelines.

Certificate of No Change (Administrative Review)

This type of review is typically for small projects, such as window, storefront, and door repairs and/or in-kind replacement of non-historic materials, exterior mechanical equipment, masonry and siding repairs, and/or in-kind replacement of non-historic roofing materials. No fee is charged.

Certificate of Appropriateness (Public Hearing Review)

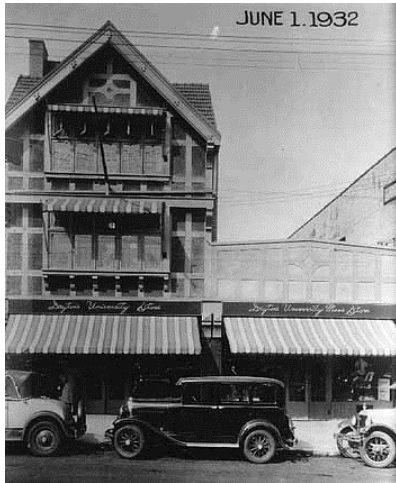
This type of review involves a public hearing before the HPC. It typically includes major projects, such as large additions, new construction, major changes to a property, storefront replacements, replacement of historic roof features, and projects that don't meet these historic design guidelines. A fee is charged based on lot area.



A streetcar approaches the intersection of 4th St SE and 14th Ave SE, looking northwest, c. 1945. Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society

History of the Dinkytown Commercial Historic District

In the early decades of the 20th century, a commercial district developed at the intersection of 4th St SE and 14th Ave SE due to the development of the streetcars which had a station and stop at the intersection. This was one of many such streetcar commercial areas within the City of Minneapolis and across the country. The district serves as a physical reminder of this period when urban populations were given the opportunity through new transportation options to move farther out of the city center and form residential neighborhoods around central commercial nodes.



321 14th Ave SE was built in 1910 for E.C. Gale and designed by Ernest Kennedy. Howes & Norton, a tobacco shop, occupied the storefront. Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society

New technologies were brought to the general populace with mechanized vehicles which allowed the worker to travel safely and efficiently from their home neighborhood into the city center for work. The retail that grew at streetcar stops allowed those at home to walk to markets now remote from the industrial centers of the city. Together with the district, the University of Minnesota also experienced growth during this time period. Businesses emerged to serve the University community.

Period of Significance: 1899-1929

A local designation study for the Dinkytown Commercial Historic District was completed in May 2015. It recommended two boundaries with two different periods of significance, one for the Streetcar Era from 1899-1929, and one inclusive of the Streetcar Era and the Post-War Era from 1899-1972. The designation resolution, as adopted by the Minneapolis City Council in July 2015, included only the district boundary and the period of significance for the Streetcar Era from 1899-1929. Research by CPED staff in 2023 resulted in a minor revision to the list of contributing and non-contributing resources. Please see the attached map and list (on pages 5-6) of contributing and non-contributing resources for the period of significance from 1899-1929.

Key Definitions

Historic features and materials were installed during the period of significance, while **non-historic** features and materials were installed outside of this time period.

Contributing resources were built during the historic district's period of significance (1899-1929) and have not been substantially altered.

Non-contributing resources were either built outside of the historic district's period of significance (1899-1929) or substantially altered after that time period.

Primary elevations face public streets while **non-primary elevations** do not.

Projects will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. These guidelines do not differentiate between contributing and non-contributing resources. Greater emphasis will be placed on historic vs. non-historic features and materials.



411-413 14th Ave SE, built in 1904, is a contributing resource.



317-319 14th Ave SE, built in 1984, is a non-contributing resource.

ADA Accessibility

For existing buildings and new construction, applicants should work with CPED staff to discuss ADA accessibility considerations.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.



1316-1320 4th St SE in 1935 (above, courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society) and 2023 (below)



4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

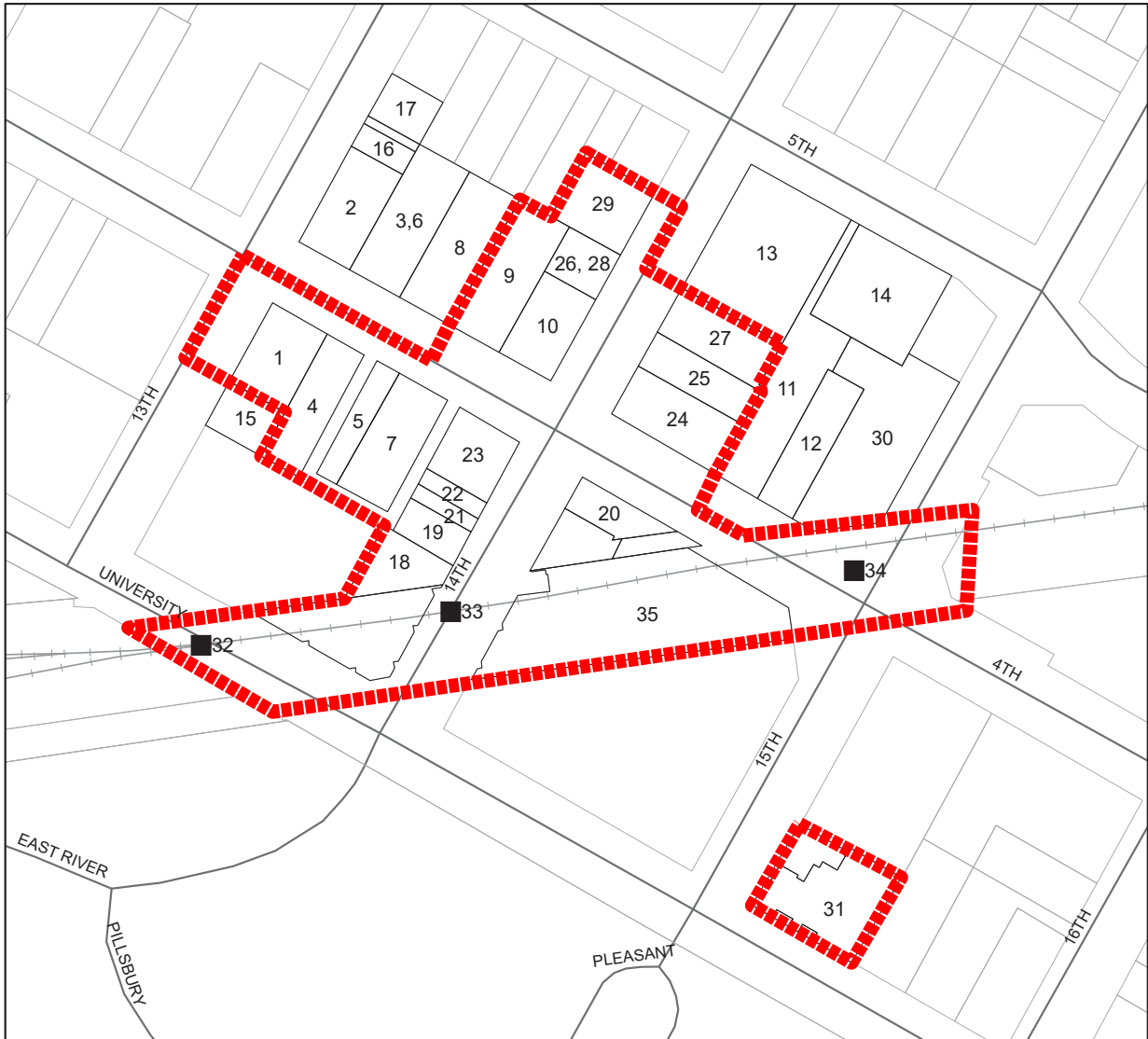
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.



10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Dinkytown Commercial Historic District

Approved at City Council - July 10, 2015



Legend

-  Dinkytown Bridges
-  District Boundary

0.00 0.015 0.03 0.045 0.06 0.075 Miles

Numbers refer to properties in the Dinkytown Designation Study.

Numbered properties outside the boundary were evaluated in the designation study but not included in the approved district. See designation study for more details on properties.

August 2015 - Community Planning and Economic Development

Dinkytown Commercial Historic District Properties

Map ID#	Address	Date of Construction	Status	Resource Type
1	1300-1304 4th St SE	1921 (1300-1302 4th St SE); 1922 (1302½ 4th St SE); ca. 1887, moved on lot in 1915 (1304 4th St SE)	Contributing	Building
4	1308 4th St SE	1915 (original); 1938-1939 (major façade remodel)	Non-contributing	Building
5	1310-1312 4th St SE	1904	Contributing	Building
7	1314-1320 4th St SE	1902	Contributing	Building
9	1319-1325 4th St SE	1921-1922	Contributing	Building
10	1327 4th St SE, 401-409 14th Ave SE	1884-1885 (demolished down to one story after 1929)	Non-contributing	Building
18	313-315 14th Ave SE	1899	Contributing	Building
19	317-319 14th Ave SE	1984	Non-contributing	Building
20	318-328 14th Ave SE, 1400-1410 4th St SE	1925 (326-328 14th Ave SE); 1928 (322-324 14th Ave SE); 1930 (320 14th Ave SE)	Contributing	Building
21	321 14th Ave SE	1910	Contributing	Building
22	323 14th Ave SE	1921	Contributing	Building
23	325-331 14th Ave SE	1902 (329-331 14th Ave SE); 1923 (325 14th Ave SE)	Contributing	Building
24	400-404.5 14th Ave SE, 1401-1411 4th St SE	1902 (400-402 14th Ave SE); 1905 (404 14th Ave SE)	Contributing	Building
25	406 14th Ave SE	1921	Contributing	Building
26, 28	411-413 14th Ave SE	1904 (411 14th Ave SE); ca. 1940 (413 14th Ave SE)	Contributing	Building
27	412 14th Ave SE	1929	Non-contributing	Building
29	417-423 14th Ave SE	1898 (original); 1905 addition	Contributing	Building
31	1501 University Ave SE	1915	Contributing	Building
32	University Ave SE bridge over rail trench	1996	Non-contributing	Structure
33	14th Ave SE bridge over rail trench	1996	Non-contributing	Structure
34	15th Ave SE/4th St SE bridge over rail trench	1996	Non-contributing	Structure
35	Rail trench	N/A	Non-contributing	Site

1. Guidelines for Existing Buildings

Roofs

- 1.1 Historic roof features, such as clay tile parapet caps, clay tile shingles, and decorative cornices, shall be preserved and repaired with in-kind materials. Replacement materials will be considered if they are compatible with the existing historic materials.
- 1.2 On pitched roofs, roofing materials shall be replaced in kind.
- 1.3 On flat roofs, contemporary roofing materials, such as rolled rubber, are allowed when repairing or replacing non-historic roof materials, provided they are not visible from the street.
- 1.4 Green roofs are permitted on flat roof buildings when comprised of vegetation whose mature heights never exceed parapet cap heights.
- 1.5 Historic masonry chimneys may be removed if severely deteriorated and structurally unsound, but documentation by a licensed engineer must be provided.
- 1.6 Contemporary roof features, such as decks, railings, and planters, that project above the roofline of flat-roofed buildings shall be set back from all building walls by at least as far as they are high. Locations closer to side or rear walls will be considered if visibility studies demonstrate the features cannot be seen from streets and sidewalks.

Walls

General Treatment

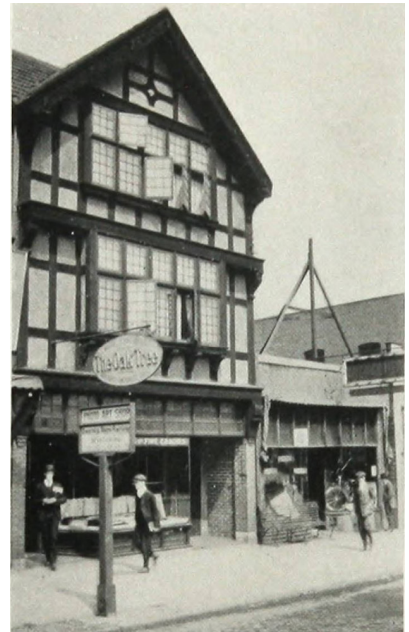
- 1.7 When non-historic materials need to be replaced, restoration of historic wall cladding is encouraged. When this is not feasible, wall materials should be replaced in kind.

Stucco

- 1.8 Historic stucco shall be preserved and repaired. It may be replaced when the historic stucco is missing or too deteriorated to repair. New stucco shall match the existing stucco in color and dash.



Look at the details on 321 14th Ave SE, built in 1910. The primary elevation has half-timbering and wood brackets under the eaves. The roof is covered with terracotta tiles. The side elevation has a ghost sign for a previous tenant and a colorful mural.



A 1917 photograph of 321-323 14th Ave SE from The Daily Gopher



Masonry is a common wall material throughout the district. Notice the different bond patterns. This wall has stretcher bond, soldier courses, header courses, and stacked bond.

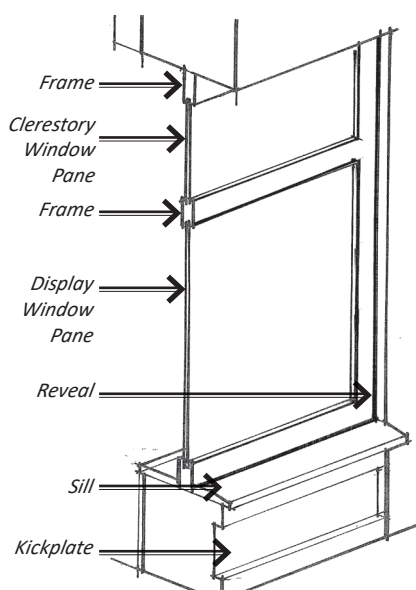
Masonry

- 1.9 Historic masonry shall be preserved and repaired. It may be replaced when the historic masonry units are cracked, spalling, or exhibit severe deterioration. New masonry shall match the historic masonry in terms of color, texture, and size.
- 1.10 Historic mortar joints shall be preserved. When severely deteriorated, replacement mortar shall match in strength, color, width and profile. Vertical mortar joints should be cleared with hand tools to prevent damage to historic masonry. One hundred percent repointing is not allowed unless the mortar is shown to be severely deteriorated.
- 1.11 Water proofing and water repellent coatings shall not be used on masonry.
- 1.12 Painting of currently painted masonry elevations is allowed but painting of unpainted masonry elevations shall not be allowed.
- 1.13 Cleaning shall be conducted using the gentlest means possible, as proven by test panels. Sandblasting and other abrasive methods are strictly prohibited.

Ghost Signs

- 1.14 Ghost signs are encouraged to be preserved. Changes to painted wall signs will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Commercial Storefront
Window Diagram



Fenestration

Glazed Storefront Systems

- 1.15 Historic storefront window components shall be preserved and repaired. Replacement in kind is appropriate when the historic materials are deteriorated beyond repair.
- 1.16 Where the historic storefront design is not present, storefronts shall be painted wood or finished metal. When considering alterations, available evidence through historic plans or photos should be used as a reference for compatible materials, scale, size of members and proportion, where possible.
- 1.17 Storefronts shall possess bulkheads below windows and wall area or transom windows above lintels. Floor-to-ceiling windows are prohibited.
- 1.18 Only clear glass and non-reflective low emission glass or coatings shall be used.

Windows

1.19 General Treatment

- a. Historic windows shall be preserved and repaired. Replacement windows are appropriate when the historic windows are demonstrated to be severely deteriorated. The new windows shall match the historic windows.
- b. Only clear glass and non-reflective low emission glass or coatings shall be used.

1.20 Window Openings

- a. Window openings on primary elevations shall not be infilled, nor removed or blocked to install air conditioning, mechanical equipment, louvers, or for any other reason. Such treatment may be considered for window openings not visible from streets and sidewalks.
- b. New, expanded, or reduced window openings on primary elevations are not allowed, unless it is to restore a historic window opening, and historic evidence is provided.
- c. New window openings on non-primary elevations may be considered.
- d. The size and proportion of historic window openings shall be preserved.
- e. All decorative features around windows, including lintels, pediments, moldings or hoods, shall be preserved and repaired. If such elements are too deteriorated to repair, the original profile shall be replaced in kind.

1.21 Replacement Windows

- a. Replacement windows may be constructed of wood, steel, aluminum, fiberglass, or combinations of these materials. Vinyl windows are not permitted.
- b. Replacement of historic windows will be considered where repair is not feasible, if evidence is provided that shows significant and severe deterioration. Photographic evidence and/or conditions reports are required to document their condition and type. Replacement windows shall maintain the profile and operability of the historic windows.
- c. Replacement of non-historic windows will be considered where deterioration is shown. Changing types or operability of windows may be considered if evidence of historic type is provided. If no evidence exists, non-historic windows should be replaced in kind or with a contemporary and compatible alternative.



Note the arched window openings on the second story of 325-331 14th Ave SE. They reflect the building's Renaissance Revival architectural style.



These replacement metal windows at 1401-1411 4th St SE are set within the historic openings. The jack arches above and sills below are original.



Here is a replacement door at 411 14th Ave SE. Metal doors with glazing are appropriate in this historic district.

- d. Replacement metal windows shall be finished with a painted enamel or opaque finish. Unfinished treatments, such as anodized metal (whether colored or not), are not allowed.
- e. True divided lights are required when replacing a divided light window. In other instances, applied muntins on both sides of the glass, with an interstitial spacer, may be considered. Internal muntins alone are not permitted.

Doors

- 1.22 Buildings shall maintain historic street side entrances as the primary entrances to the building.
- 1.23 Historic doors and entrance features, such as door frames, transoms, sidelights, pediments, and awnings, shall be preserved and repaired. Replacement is appropriate when the historic materials are deteriorated beyond repair. New materials shall match the historic materials.
- 1.24 Where historic doors are no longer present on primary elevations, replacement pedestrian doors shall be contemporary and compatible with a simple design with transparent glazing and shall be designed for human scale by being no more than eight feet in height.
- 1.25 On non-primary elevations, various materials will be considered for replacement pedestrian doors.
- 1.26 Doors, transoms, and sidelights with transparent glazing shall not be covered with opaque materials or obstructed by interior, permanent features.
- 1.27 New openings or entryways on primary elevations are not recommended. They will be considered if the design is compatible, a historic entrance was removed and is being reintroduced, or if there is no existing entrance and one is needed for accessibility.

Additions

- 1.28 Additions shall be subordinate in size, scale, and massing, and shall be placed at the rear of the building to minimize visibility.
- 1.29 The design of additions shall utilize brick and stucco in contemporary sizes and dashes to create compatible yet differentiated designs.
- 1.30 Additions shall possess flat roofs with parapet caps high enough to conceal anticipated rooftop equipment.

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- 1.31 Rooftop additions and/or structures are not appropriate on historic buildings under four stories. Exceptions will be made for minimal stairwell and elevator additions designed to activate rooftop spaces.
 - 1.32 Rooftop additions shall be set back a minimum of one structural bay or 15 feet, whichever is greater, from all sides of the building. Locations closer to side or rear walls will be considered if visibility studies demonstrate the roof features cannot be seen from streets and sidewalks.



This mural on the side of the building at 1320 4th St SE celebrates Dinkytown's commercial history. It shows past businesses at 321-325 4th St SE.



Dinkytown Commerical Historic District at 4th St SE and 14th Ave SE, looking northwest. Newer buildings have been constructed outside the district boundary.

2. Guidelines for New Construction

Orientation

- 2.1 New construction shall be oriented such that primary elevations and entrances face public streets.
- 2.2 New construction shall not include surface lots or new driveways.
- 2.3 Parking that is incorporated into new construction shall be accessible via public alleys.

Form, Bulk, and Scale

- 2.4 Primary elevations shall respect the traditional proportions of height to width in the district.
- 2.5 Balconies on primary elevations are prohibited.
- 2.6 New construction shall possess floors of a pedestrian scale (typically 10-12' high floors) evident in the district.
- 2.7 Exterior stairs or elevator towers should be minimally visible and built only when it is not possible to accommodate them on the interior.

Setbacks

- 2.8 Buildings shall be built to the property line on street-facing elevations (zero setback), on the first floor.
- 2.9 Building sides shall align at interior side property lines, except where spacing is required for code compliance related to mandatory openings for dwelling units.
- 2.10 Compatibly designed, portable features, such as seating, tables, sidewalk displays, and moveable vegetation, are appropriate in front of buildings that are built to the front property line. Building setbacks shall not be increased for such amenities.

Roofs

- 2.11 New construction shall have pitched roofs or flat roofs with parapet caps high enough to screen mechanical equipment.
- 2.12 Green roofs are permitted when comprised of vegetation whose mature heights never exceed parapet cap heights.
- 2.13 Roof features, such as decks, railings, and planters, that project above the roofline shall be set back from all building walls by at least as far as it is high, when measured from the roof deck. Locations closer to side or rear walls will be considered if visibility studies demonstrate the roof features cannot be seen from streets and sidewalks.

Walls

- 2.14 New buildings in the district shall primarily use brick in a contemporary size to ensure compatibility while not creating a false sense of history.
- 2.15 Applied stucco with a contemporary finish shall be permitted. Imitation stucco (E.I.F.S., fiber cement panel, etc.) is not permitted.
- 2.16 Metal panels are prohibited.

Fenestration

Windows

- 2.17 General Treatment
 - a. Windows may be constructed of wood, steel, aluminum, fiberglass, or combinations of these materials. Vinyl windows are not permitted.
 - b. Windows shall possess a painted or opaque finish. Unfinished treatments, such as anodized metal (whether colored or not), are not allowed.
 - c. Continuous horizontal or vertical bands of windows shall not be allowed.
 - d. Windows shall be rectangular.
 - e. All glazing shall be inset from the framing and/or exterior wall of the building by one to three inches.
 - f. Only clear glass and non-reflective low emission glass or coatings shall be used.
 - g. When installing a simulated divided light window, applied muntins on both sides of the glass, with an interstitial spacer, are required. Internal muntins alone are not permitted.
- 2.18 Primary Elevations
 - a. New storefronts shall be framed with wood or painted metal. Existing original storefronts from the district should be used as a reference for scale, size of members and proportion of ground floor wall area.
 - b. Floor-to-ceiling windows are not allowed. Storefronts shall possess bulkheads below windows and wall area or transom windows above lintels.
 - c. Operable windows should appear at regular intervals in a symmetrical pattern in floors above the first story.
 - d. Windows with simple details, such as masonry patterns above lintels and masonry sills, are appropriate and encouraged if they do not copy or replicate historic designs.

2.19 Non-Primary Elevations

- a. Operable windows may appear in symmetrical or asymmetrical patterns.

Doors

- 2.20 Primary entry doors shall exhibit a simple design with transparent glazing and shall be designed for human scale by being no more than eight feet in height.
- 2.21 On non-primary elevations, various materials and designs will be considered.



Dinkytown Commerical Historic District on 14th Ave SE, looking north.

3. Guidelines for Mechanical Equipment and Trash Enclosures

- 3.1 Through-wall mechanical equipment is only permitted on non-primary elevations. For existing buildings, the loss of historic materials shall be minimized by piercing through non-historic building material to the greatest extent feasible and damaging as few historic masonry units as possible.
- 3.2 Ground-mounted mechanical equipment must be located entirely behind buildings and screened from views from streets and sidewalks. Chain link fences are prohibited as screening.
- 3.3 HVAC, wind, or solar power equipment that project above the roofline shall be set back from all building walls by at least as far as it is high, when measured from the roof deck. Locations closer to side or rear walls will be considered if visibility studies demonstrate the roof features cannot be seen from streets and sidewalks.
- 3.4 Trash enclosures shall be located behind buildings and shall be constructed of simple, opaque materials including but not limited to wood pickets or concrete masonry units.



Dinkytown Commerical Historic District at 4th St SE and 14th Ave SE, looking southwest.

4. Guidelines for Public Realm Infrastructure

Per the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances (section 565.170), the public realm is defined as open spaces (public and semi-public), such as streets, sidewalks, bike paths, parks, and plazas, but not including parking lots, where buildings interface with public/semi-public. Public realm infrastructure refers to constructed and/or landscaped features within the public realm.

- 4.1 Bridges should remain in their current locations, but do not have to be preserved. While no bridges within the historic district are historic, they help define Dinkytown's circulation system.
- 4.2 Landscape grass strips, planting beds, and grass boulevards are not recommended within the district. These features will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Artificial turf is not permitted.
- 4.3 Street trees (i.e. trees adjacent to streets) reinforce pedestrian uses, which are key to Dinkytown's character. Street trees shall not be located directly in front of entrances to buildings.
- 4.4 Historic paving materials are encouraged to be exposed and repaired if identified.
- 4.5 In lieu of placement on public realm infrastructure (i.e. light posts or utility poles), small cell and distributed antennae system equipment are recommended to be placed on rooftops and should not be seen from adjacent streets and sidewalks.



Dinkytown Commercial Historic District from the 4th St SE bridge near 15th Ave SE