

# DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ARCHITECTURAL METALS

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## Policy:

**The use of high quality architectural metals is a tradition in Oklahoma City and their application in new, creative designs is encouraged. They should be of high quality and contribute to the pedestrian-friendly character of downtown.**

## Background:

Architectural metals may be used in new, creative designs within the downtown and river corridor areas, and their use is encouraged where they contribute to a sense of scale and convey a commitment to buildings that will endure and serve as productive assets in a lively mixed use environment. Architectural metals are those that are incorporated in creative building designs to express an understanding of the high technologies of material composition, finish and assembly.

The use of metals in the exterior designs of buildings in Oklahoma City has a long-standing tradition. Early designs incorporated metals in ornamental details, spandrels and cornices, as well as in the trim around windows and doors. These were typically of types intended for long-term application, including aluminum and steel, bronze and copper. They had refined finishes, either polished, painted or anodized.

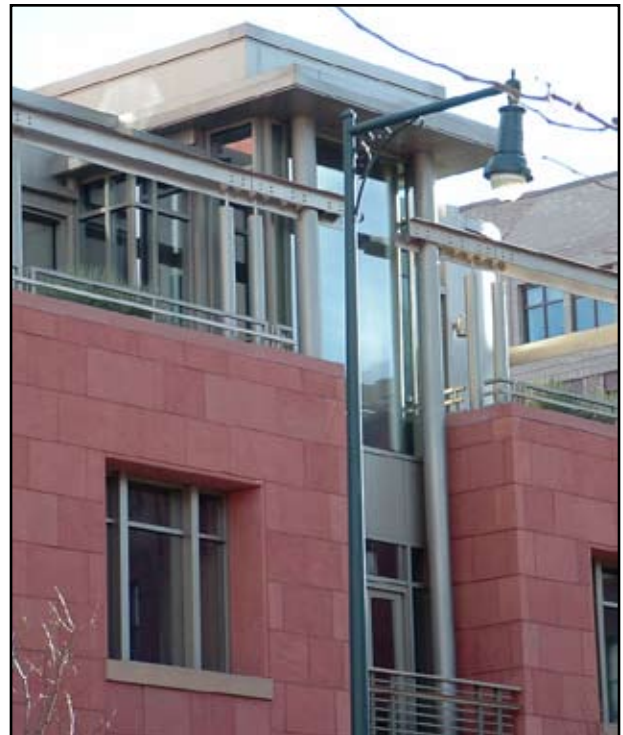
Today, many of these same metals may be applied in new ways, in addition to the more traditional methods. It is key that when they are used, they be of high quality and contribute to a sense of a downtown that is enduring, as well as being pedestrian-friendly. For that reason, metals should help to convey a scale and texture that provides visual interest.

## Guideline 1:

**Architectural metal should have these durability performance characteristics:**

The material has proven durability in the local climate.

- It will maintain an intended finish over the years. This may be the finish as originally installed, if it is highly durable, or it may achieve a patina over time, but which is understood to be an outcome of normal interaction with the elements.



*Metal used to distinguish upper floor and for accent elements (Denver, CO)*



*Metal for fenestration and accent elements (Boulder, CO)*

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*Heavy duty metal used as accent to a masonry building*



*Heavy gauge steel used as a cornice and balcony  
(Boulder, CO)*

The material will withstand on-going contact with the public.

- It will sustain impacts without exhibiting substantial change in surface appearance; or, it will be installed in a location where it is not be subject to frequent contact by people.

The material is attached in a manner that will maintain secure connections and closure along its surfaces.

- The method of attachment should also be a consideration of the overall design approach. That is, connections may be well-concealed, or instead they may be intentionally used as a design element. Installing fasteners that are positioned to express a rhythm or pattern along the surface of the material is an example.

Guideline 2:

**Architectural metal shall convey a sense of scale and provide visual interest, with these characteristics:**

The material is detailed to convey a sense of scale.

- It is applied in modules that are identifiable in regular patterns which convey interest and help one interpret the scale of the building.
- It is used to distinguish subordinate building elements, such as a corner module, or an upper level, and therefore that helps to convey scale.

It is used as detailing that provides visual interest.

- Application as trim for moldings, openings and other accent applications is encouraged.

If used as a primary building material, it also is designed to convey a sense of scale.

- When applied as a large surface, changes in finish, color and texture should help to convey a sense of scale.

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*Above and below: Metal used as a primary building material; detailed to provide visual interest and convey a sense of scale. (Minneapolis, MN)*



*Corrugated metal used as a primary building material. Heavy steel framing used for accent. (Olympia, WA)*



*Metal used to accentuate a building entry (Montrose, CO)*

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The texture and finish will encourage pedestrian activity.

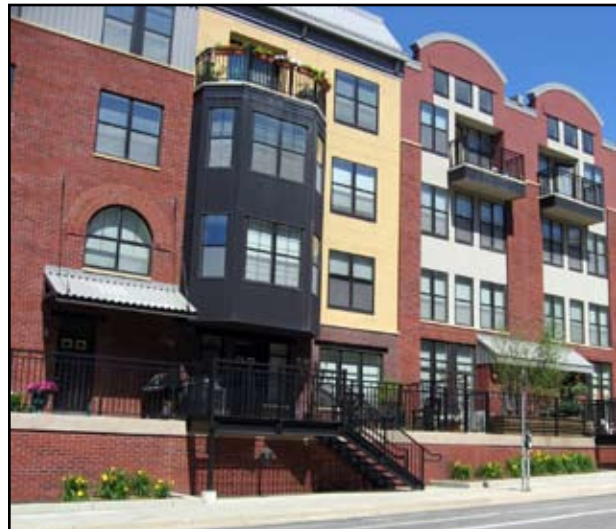
- The finish does not generate glare that will discourage walking in the area. A matte finish is generally preferred. Reflective finishes should be applied such that they do not generate glare for motorists, pedestrians, and nearby properties.



*Above and below: Architectural metal as skin framework. (New York, NY)*



*Above and below: Metal used to articulate upper building floors. (Minneapolis, MN)*



*Corrugated metal used on subordinate building forms, including bays, canopies and balconies.*