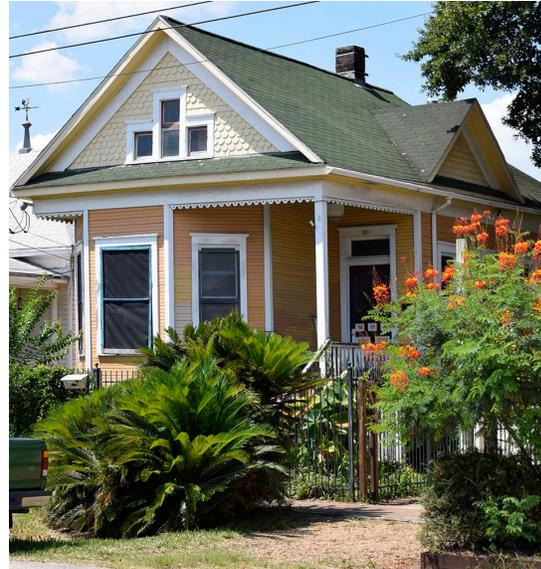


# DESIGN GUIDELINES for OLD SIXTH WARD PROTECTED HISTORIC DISTRICT



**City of Houston, Texas**  
Draft: August 23, 2024

**PLEASE NOTE:**

Portions of other regulatory and guideline documents have been incorporated in this document for convenience and reference. These include primarily:

**Chapter 33, The City of Houston Code of Ordinances**

**ADDITIONAL CREDITS:**

This document includes some text and illustrations that first appeared in "Design Guidelines for Old Sixth Ward Protected Historic District", and prepared by Civic Design Associates July, 23, 2007.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The **Old Sixth Ward Neighborhood Association** has provided valuable input into the design guidelines update. This document was prepared by Winter & Company.

#### NOTE

These design guidelines were prepared pursuant to the direction given by the City Council of the City of Houston by Ordinance No. 2016-848, and have been prepared in accordance with the authority granted to the City of Houston under the Constitution and laws of the State of Texas, to protect and promote the health, safety, and welfare of the public.



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# SECTION I: INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

This section explains the relationship of the design guidelines to Houston's preservation ordinance. It includes a description of the review process that is required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and the criteria in the ordinance which provide the basis for the design guidelines that are applied. It also identifies some types of work that are exempt from the COA process and others that receive automatic approval if specific conditions are met. This section will help users in determining the basics of the review process. In Section 2, which follows, more specific information is provided about which guidelines will apply to those projects that are subject to design review.

## A. PURPOSE AND GOALS

Old Sixth Ward represents one of the greatest concentration of historic homes in the City of Houston. Its proximity to downtown, along with the increasing interest in redeveloping inner city areas, has resulted in a surge of development activity around and within the District. These design guidelines have been developed and adopted by the City of Houston in order to promote the following goals and objectives:

- To preserve the existing building stock and general neighborhood character of Old Sixth Ward.
- To allow for appropriate and compatible alteration of existing historic properties in the District in a manner that preserves and enhances the building or structure.
- To provide guidance for new infill development and additions that are compatible with the surrounding historic structures.
- To provide for a range of options that integrate contemporary desires and expectations with the historic fabric in a mutually beneficial manner that does not stifle development in the district.

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**NOTE:**

Nothing in these guidelines or in other applicable regulations shall be construed to require a specific architectural style in the District.

**Work requiring a COA**

If you are not sure whether or not you need a Certificate of Appropriateness, or if you have any questions about the design review process, please contact the Planning staff in the Historic Preservation Office at 832-393-6556 or via email at [historicpreservation@houstontx.gov](mailto:historicpreservation@houstontx.gov).

**NOTE:**

Existing conditions on a property that do not comply with these design guidelines may continue as is; only when work is planned that would alter these conditions is compliance required.

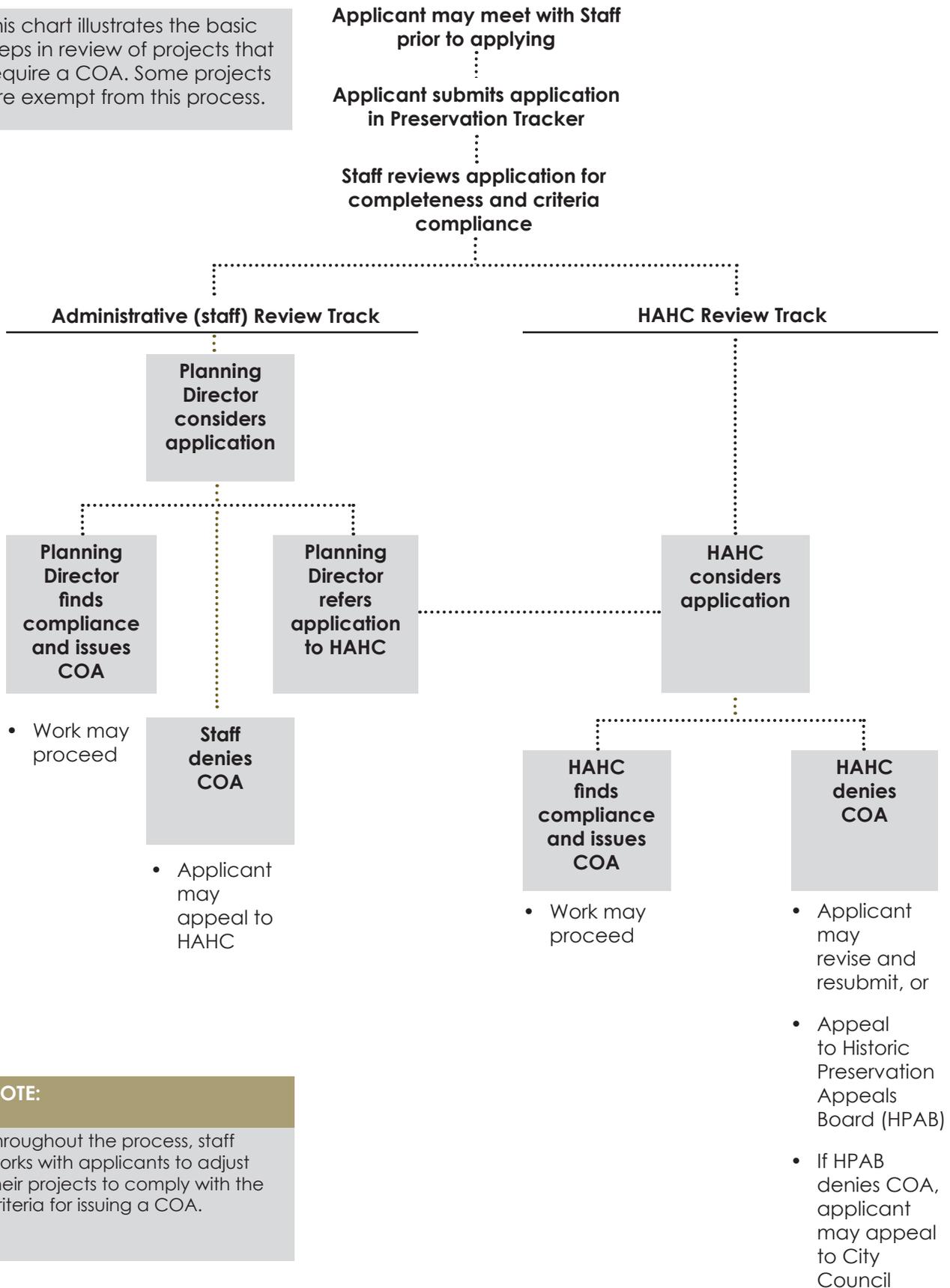
The purpose of these design guidelines is to describe and define, the type of treatments that are considered appropriate for the District. Careful attention to the intent and content of these guidelines, with appropriate consultation and review by city staff and the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC), will assist in the granting of a Certificate of Appropriateness, and more importantly, in the preservation and enhancement of the Old Sixth Ward.

## **B. HOUSTON'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE**

1. Administration. The City designates historic districts, and manages changes to properties within those districts, through its historic preservation ordinance (Article 7 of the City of Houston Code of Ordinances). This ordinance is a local law that establishes the City's authority and responsibilities regarding historic landmarks and districts. It also establishes the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC), a group of knowledgeable citizens and qualified professionals who are appointed by City Council, to interpret and administer the historic preservation ordinance.
2. Inventory. An inventory of buildings within each historic district was prepared when the district was designated. That inventory classifies each building as *contributing* to the historic character of the historic district or *noncontributing*.
3. Ordinance. The ordinance requires property owners to receive approval from the City before making certain changes to buildings in a historic district. To get the City's approval to make any of these changes, a property owner must apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). The Planning staff in the Historic Preservation Office can help property owners with their application, which is processed through that office. **A property owner must obtain a COA before beginning any work that is regulated under the historic preservation ordinance.** Other City building permits also may be required.
4. Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). Some changes, as well as ordinary maintenance and repair, are exempt from this requirement and do not require a COA. See section D pages 1-6 & 1-7 on Exemptions . Other changes require a COA application but can be approved administratively by the Planning Director, without going before the HAHC. See section E pages 1-7 & 1-8 on Administrative Approvals. All other changes require a COA application to be considered in a public hearing, before the HAHC; this includes most alterations to the exterior of a building, additions, new construction,

# CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS (COA) PROCESS

This chart illustrates the basic steps in review of projects that require a COA. Some projects are exempt from this process.



## NOTE:

Throughout the process, staff works with applicants to adjust their projects to comply with the criteria for issuing a COA.

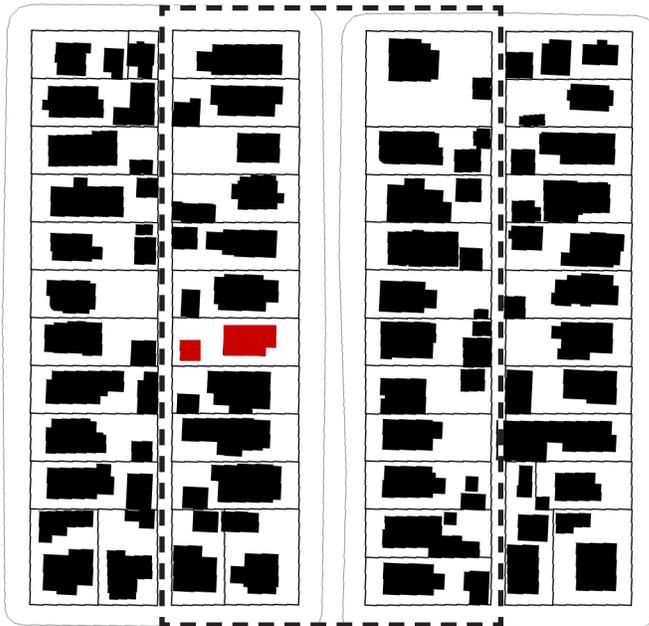
relocation of a building into or out of a historic district, and demolition.

5. Applicable Regulations. These guidelines are a supplement to the provisions of Article VI, Historic Preservation, of Chapter 33 of the City of Houston Code of Ordinances.
6. Phasing. The entire planned project should be presented in the Certificate of Appropriateness application. **Please Note:**  
\* Applicants who hold back “future phases” of a project in order to gain approval for initial work may find that subsequent proposals will not be approved, if the cumulative effect of all of the changes is too great and, collectively, diminishes the integrity of the building.\*
7. **Some Key Terms can be found in the Glossary. See Appendix C on page <?>.**

## C. CONTEXT AREA

Compatibility. When a property owner applies for a Certificate of Appropriateness, members of the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC), with help from Planning staff in the Houston Office of Preservation, must decide if the proposed changes are compatible with the surrounding historic district. Rather than compare the project to the entire district, the City of Houston's historic preservation ordinance establishes a smaller area, called the *context area*, for comparison purposes.

Context Area. The ordinance defines the context area as the blockface on which the proposed project is located and opposing blockface, as shown in the diagram below. The context area may be defined differently, if the HAHC and staff find that unusual and compelling circumstances exist or if it is described differently in design guidelines. The HAHC may decide to expand the context area for a particular project, if not many buildings within the context area are contributing structures, or if the proposed project is unusual for the area. For example, a commercial building could be compared to existing contributing commercial buildings, rather than to residential buildings in the same block. Because the Old Sixth Ward is not especially large, a larger area may be appropriate for many projects.



Context area for a subject property (shown in red)

### CONTEXT

**Context** is often defined by similar site features, building age, and design characteristics within an area. These include:

- Building age
- Building alignment along the street (setback)
- The amount of open space on the property
- Building size and height
- Building massing
- Building materials
- Solid-to-void ratio (the number of window openings to wall area)
- Alignment of building features such as: porches, windows eaves, and foundation, for example

### NOTE:

Property owners may present additional information to supplement their COA application or to make a case for considering a different context area. HAHC will consider, but is not required to agree with or apply, such information.

## D. EXEMPTIONS (NO COA REQUIRED)

The following types of work do not require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

1. Ordinary maintenance, and repairs (see note). This generally means the least amount of work necessary to preserve the historic materials and features of a building, and in-kind repairs. In other words, the property's historic materials and features are intact and do NOT require extensive repair and replacement. In-kind means using the same material type, design, dimensions, texture, detailing, and exterior appearance.

Note: Replacement of historic materials (even in-kind) is an alteration and requires a COA. Please contact staff if you are unsure whether you need a COA for your project.

2. Re-roofing with in-kind materials (see above) with no change to the structure, shape, or pitch of the roof.
3. An alteration that cannot be seen from the street because the view is blocked by the original structure. (The view cannot merely be blocked by fencing, landscaping, non-historic additions, etc.)
4. Installation or removal of:
  - a. Gutters and downspouts
  - b. Storm windows and storm doors
  - c. Window screens and screen doors
  - d. Temporary emergency weather protection, such as plywood coverings over windows
  - e. Porch ceiling fans
  - f. Light fixtures
  - g. HVAC units
5. Landscaping
6. Fences
7. Removal of non-historic (aluminum, vinyl) siding to reveal historic siding underneath. If no historic siding is present under non-historic siding, new replacement siding requires a COA but may be approved administratively; see next page.
8. Removal of burglar bars
9. Removal of accessibility ramps or lifts
10. Removal of solar panels
11. Removal of satellite dishes or antennae
12. Installation of solar panels, satellite dishes, antennae, low-profile skylights, or other roof equipment on the rear half of the

*Note: The information on this page is taken directly from the City's historic preservation ordinance and was accurate at the time of publication. Please check with the Houston Office of Preservation staff to ensure that you are using the most current ordinance criteria.*

roof

13. Installation or removal of free-standing signs. Painting non-masonry surfaces on a contributing building
14. Repainting previously painted masonry surfaces
15. Reconstructing a contributing or noncontributing structure that was completely or partially destroyed by a fire, natural disaster, or other damage not intentionally caused by the owner of the structure. **This only applies** if the reconstruction is built within the same footprint and has the same exterior features as the damaged or destroyed contributing structure.
16. Demolition of a noncontributing structure

## E. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

The following types of work **require a Certificate of Appropriateness**, which may be approved by the Planning Director. [ per Sec.33-241.1(c)(d), and as affected by design guidelines].:

Removal of:

1. A window or door that was **not original** to the contributing structure and replacing it with a window or door that **meets all of the following conditions**:
  - a. It is appropriate to the historic significance of the structure.
  - b. It does not change the size, shape, or location of the opening from which the window or door elements are to be removed.
  - c. It does not change the trim, molding, or other features associated with the opening.
2. Exterior wall cladding that was **not** an original feature or characteristic of the structure and replacing it with appropriate cladding.
3. Attached garages or carports
4. Non-historic decorative elements, such as shutters or eave brackets
5. Non-historic, low-profile skylights
6. Canopies or awnings
7. Signs attached to the building

Replacement of:

1. Historic materials that are damaged beyond repair with materials of the same size, shape, material, and pattern.

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Installation of:

1. Burglar bars
2. Accessibility ramps or lifts
3. Low-profile skylights, antennae, satellite dishes, or other roof equipment **on the front half of the roof**
4. Shutters
5. Awnings or canopies
6. Architectural details (including porch elements) that have been partially lost or removed, if you can provide proof that they used to exist, either through existing elements that are still in place or by historical documentation, such as architectural plans or photographs
7. Signs attached to the exterior of the building that meet all of the following conditions:
  - a. It does not compromise historic exterior features on the structure, such as siding or trim, porch elements, etc.
  - b. It is 25 square feet or less in total area.
  - c. It is installed without damage to significant historic material.

Construction of:

1. Free-standing (detached) garages and garage apartments, free-standing carports, and other secondary structures, as long as they have a footprint of 400 square feet or less, are one story, are located at the rear of the lot, and have a ridge height of 16 feet or less
2. A rear porch that is not taller than the existing structure and does not extend beyond the existing side walls of the structure

Repair or reconstruction of internal structural elements (such as interior shiplap) that are essential to support the building envelope to which they are attached. The following conditions must be met:

1. You must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Planning Director that the structural repair or reconstruction can be accomplished without harming those exterior features of the structure that are visible from the right-of-way.
2. You must provide a written statement from a structural engineer, licensed by the State of Texas, that the proposed repair or reconstruction can be accomplished without harming those exterior features of the structure that are visible from the right-of-way.

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## F. MANDATORY APPROVALS FOR ADDITIONS TO CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

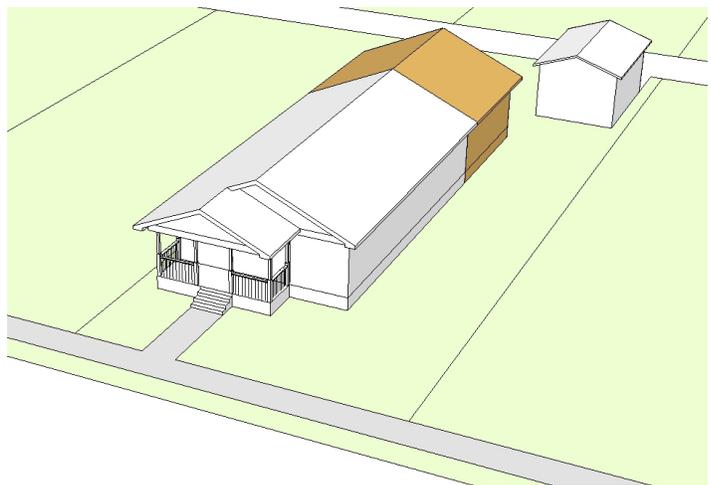
The City of Houston's historic preservation ordinance provides that and individual historic district "may provide that administrative approvals under this section must instead be approved by the HAHC using the criteria of this section, or of this article, as appropriate."

There will be NO mandatory approvals known as 'shall approves' for rear additions, side additions, and partial second-story additions in the Old Sixth Ward Design Guidelines.

### Rear Addition

#### A rear addition that:

- a. Is not taller than the existing structure;
- b. Is set back from the side property lines at least as much as the structural walls of the existing structure;
- c. Is not wider than the wall to which it is attached;
- d. Does not require the demolition of any portion of the existing structure except for the rear wall to which the addition will be attached;
- e. Has a roof pitch that is less than or equal to the existing structure; and
- f. Is not constructed on a building that has already had an addition approved with a Certificate of Appropriateness.



Note: The width of the addition may not exceed the width of the structural rear wall to which the addition is attached.

- If the existing house features a small open or screened-in side porch, that porch is not used to determine width.
- If the proposed addition includes a side porch, the porch is included in the width of the rear addition.
- If a porch is desired, consider instead incorporating one which is inset, with the front of the porch in line with the side wall of the addition.

*Note: The information on this page is taken directly from the City's historic preservation ordinance and was accurate at the time of publication. Please check with the Houston Office of Preservation staff to ensure that you are using the most current ordinance criteria.*

### Partial Second-Story Addition “Shall Approve”

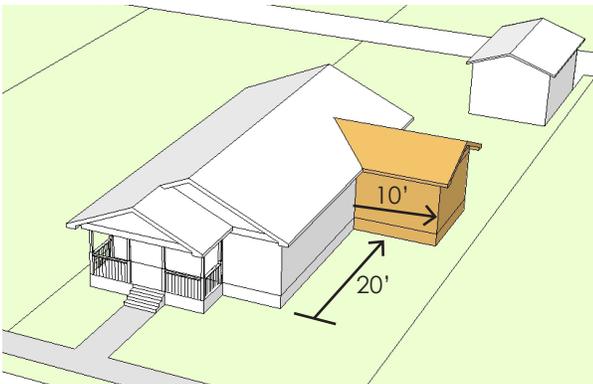


Note: The front wall of the porch is NOT considered to be the front wall of the house.

#### A partial second-story addition that:

- Is constructed on top of a one-story structure;
- Does not extend outside of the footprint of the existing structure;
- Is set back from the front wall of the existing structure by at least half the distance between the front wall of the existing structure and the farthest point of the rear of the existing structure;
- Has a plate height that does not exceed the plate height of the story beneath the proposed addition;
- Has a roof pitch that is less than or equal to the existing structure;
- Is constructed without the removal of any existing exterior walls; and
- Is not constructed on a structure that has already had an addition approved with a Certificate of Appropriateness.

### Side Addition “Shall Approve”



Example: This addition is set back 20 feet from the front of the side wall, so the addition may not be more than 10 feet wide.

#### A side addition that:

- Is not taller than the existing structure;
- Is attached only to one exterior wall of the existing structure and does not extend past the existing rear wall of the side to which it is attached;
- Is set back from the front of the wall to which it is attached by at least 30% of the distance between the front of the wall to which it is attached and the rear of the wall to which it is attached;
- Is not wider than half the distance that the addition is set back from the front of the wall to which it is attached;
- Does not require the demolition of any portion of the existing building except for the exterior wall to which the addition is attached;
- Does not deviate from the roof pitch of the existing structure, except for cross-gabled or hipped roofs; and
- Is not constructed on a building that has already had an addition approved with a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Note: The information on this page is taken directly from the City's historic preservation ordinance and was accurate at the time of publication. Please check with the Houston Office of Preservation staff to ensure that you are using the most current ordinance criteria.

## G. OTHER ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS TO CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

All other activities, including additions, require a **Certificate of Appropriateness** and must meet the criteria for exterior alterations as established in the historic preservation ordinance (Sec. 33-241):

1. The proposed activity must retain and preserve the historical character of the property.
2. The proposed activity must contribute to the continued availability of the property for a contemporary use.
3. The proposed activity must recognize the building, structure, object or site as a product of its own time and avoid alterations that seek to create an earlier or later appearance.
4. The proposed activity must preserve the distinguishing qualities or character of the building, structure, object or site and its environment.
5. The proposed activity must maintain or replicate distinctive stylistic exterior features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize the building, structure, object or site.
6. New materials to be used for any exterior feature (excluding what is visible from public alleys) must be visually compatible with, but not necessarily the same as, the materials being replaced in form, design, texture, dimension and scale.
7. The proposed replacement of exterior features, if any, should be based on accurate duplication of features, substantiated by available historical, physical, or pictorial evidence, where that evidence is available, rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other structures.
8. Proposed additions or alterations must be done in a manner that, if removed in the future, would leave unimpaired the essential form and integrity of the building, structure, object or site.
9. The proposed design for any exterior alteration or addition must not destroy significant historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural material, including (but not limited to) siding, windows, doors, and porch elements.
10. The proposed alteration or addition must be compatible with the massing, size, scale, material, and character of the property and the context area.
11. The distance from the property line to the front and side walls, porches, and exterior features of any proposed addition or alteration must be compatible with the distance to the property line of similar elements of existing contributing structures in the context area.

*Note: The information on this page is taken directly from the City's historic preservation ordinance and was accurate at the time of publication. Please check with the Houston Office of Preservation staff to ensure that you are using the most current ordinance criteria.*

**NOTE:**

The design guidelines for new construction will be used in considering the appropriateness of changes to noncontributing structures to assure compatibility with the context area.

## H. CHANGES TO NONCONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

A structure may be classified as *noncontributing* because it was less than 50 years old when the district was designated, or because it has been altered in a way that removes or conceals character-defining features or otherwise does not share the characteristics that make the historic district, as a whole, significant. Since noncontributing buildings already do not support the historic qualities of the district, the criteria for making changes to them are less strict than those for contributing structures. **However, the visual qualities of noncontributing structures still impact the character of the historic district, so many changes to them must be managed.**

A building that is classified as noncontributing due to previous inappropriate alterations may have the potential to be restored. **Neither the historic preservation ordinance nor these design guidelines require any property owner to restore a building.** However, it is important to recognize whether a building has the potential to contribute to the significance of the historic district, and avoid destroying that potential with additional changes, if possible.

Most changes to noncontributing structures within a historic district require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA).

### Alterations, Rehabilitation, or Restoration

The HAHC is required to review any application for a Certificate of Appropriateness that proposes the alteration, rehabilitation, or restoration of a noncontributing structure if the proposed change requires the removal or replacement of the structural elements (not including the foundation) within **67% or more** of the structure. In other words, that level of "alteration" qualifies as new construction and, therefore, must be reviewed by HAHC if the result conforms to the criteria for new construction.

An addition, alteration, rehabilitation, or restoration of a noncontributing structure that *does not require* the removal or replacement of the structural elements (not including the foundation) within 67% or more of the structure, can be approved administratively by the Planning Director, **if it meets both of the following conditions:**

- The proposed activity must recognize the building, structure, object, or site as a product of its own time and avoid alterations that seek to create an earlier or later appearance; and
- The proposed activity must match the architectural features, materials, and character of either the existing noncontributing structure or the contributing structures within the context area.

*Note: The information on this page is taken directly from the City's historic preservation ordinance and was accurate at the time of publication. Please check with the Houston Office of Preservation staff to ensure that you are using the most current ordinance criteria.*

### Additions Must Also Meet These Criteria

Proposed additions to a noncontributing structure are eligible for administrative review, as long as they meet the following conditions:

- The front and side setbacks (the distance from the property line to the front and side walls, porches, and exterior features)

of any proposed addition or alteration must be compatible with the front and side setbacks of existing contributing structures in the context area.

- The noncontributing structure with the constructed addition is compatible with the typical proportions and scale of existing contributing structures in the context area.

Regardless of style and features, additions to a noncontributing building must be compatible with the contributing buildings in the context area in terms of mass, scale, and proportion. If your building is already larger than the contributing buildings in the context area, an additional expansion may not be appropriate.

If the Houston Office of Preservation staff find that a proposed alteration or addition to a noncontributing building is appropriate, the Planning Director can approve it administratively. If staff find that the proposed project is inappropriate, or if they are unable to make a determination, the Planning Director can send the COA to HAHC for review.

*Note: The information on this page is taken directly from the City's historic preservation ordinance and was accurate at the time of publication. Please check with the Houston Office of Preservation staff to ensure that you are using the most current ordinance criteria.*

**NOTE:**

In general, these criteria require that alterations to historic properties preserve the distinguishing qualities, and that new construction be compatible with historic structures on the blockface and facing blockface(s) in terms of setbacks, exterior features, and proportions.

## **I. NEW CONSTRUCTION**

Historic districts can change over time and still retain the qualities that make the area historically, culturally, and architecturally significant. For the purposes of this document, “new construction” means an entirely new building or structure, rather than an addition. The construction of any new building or structure within a historic district requires a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The City of Houston's historic preservation ordinance establishes clear requirements for new construction within a historic district. These standards seek to differentiate old from new, while ensuring that all buildings within the district are compatible with one another.

### **Accommodating Contemporary Design in Historic Districts**

Many changes can take place within a historic district and can affect the character of a historic district. The Planning staff and members of the HAHC are charged with determining whether those changes are *compatible* with the district — in other words, whether the proposed change preserves the character of the district.

Compatibility does not require new buildings to mimic historic properties. In fact, the City encourages contemporary design within its historic districts. When a new building is constructed, its design should relate to historic buildings in the area through mass, form, scale, proportion, siting, and materials, but a new building may appear to be “of its own time.”

#### **New buildings can relate to historic buildings in the context area by being similar to:**

- The way contributing buildings (and their front doors) are oriented to the street (setbacks)
- The basic forms and materials of contributing buildings (scale or massing)
- The height of contributing buildings' foundations, porches, eaves, and walls
- The arrangement of windows and doors on the front of contributing buildings (fenestration)

These basic design elements are more important than the details of individual architectural styles. As a result, new buildings can be compatible with the historic district even when they are clearly of contemporary design and construction.

*Note: The information on this page is taken directly from the City's historic preservation ordinance and was accurate at the time of publication. Please check with the Houston Office of Preservation staff to ensure that you are using the most current ordinance criteria.*

The construction of any new building or structure within a historic district requires a Certificate of Appropriateness, that must meet the following criteria:

1. The distance from the property line of the front and side walls, porches, and exterior features of any proposed new construction must be compatible with the distance from the property line of similar elements of existing contributing structures in the context area;
2. The exterior features of the new construction must be compatible with the exterior features of existing contributing structures in the context area;
3. The scale and proportions of the new construction, including the relationship of the width, overall height, eave height, foundation height, porch height, roof shape, and roof pitch, and other dimensions to each other, must be compatible with the typical scale and proportions of existing contributing structures in the context area unless special circumstances, such as an atypical use, location, or lot size, warrant an atypical scale and proportions;
4. The height of the new construction must not be taller than the typical height of existing contributing structures in the context area unless special circumstances, such as an atypical use, location, or lot size, warrant an atypical height, except that:
  - a. Design guidelines for an individual historic district may provide that a new construction with two stories may be constructed in a context area with only one-story contributing structures as long as the first story of the new construction has proportions compatible with the contributing structures in the context area, and the second story has similar proportions to the first story; and
  - b. A new construction shall not be constructed with more than one story in a historic district that is comprised entirely of one-story contributing structures, except as provided for in design guidelines for an individual historic district.

Nothing in the foregoing shall be construed to require or impose a single architectural style in the historic district.

*Note: The information on this page is taken directly from the City's historic preservation ordinance and was accurate at the time of publication. Please check with the Houston Office of Preservation staff to ensure that you are using the most current ordinance criteria.*



These houses were relocated from various locations within the City of Houston.

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## J. RELOCATION OF CONTRIBUTING AND NONCONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

Relocation, for the purposes of the City of Houston's historic preservation ordinance, includes the following activities:

- Moving a structure into a historic district
- Moving a structure out of a historic district
- Moving a structure to a different location on the same lot or to a different lot within the same historic district

Relocation may be used as a tool to protect a contributing structure from demolition resulting from a public improvement project, or as an alternative to demolition, following an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition.

Relocation of historic buildings from similar areas of the City into Old Sixth Ward Historic District is an acceptable strategy for infill. Buildings being relocated into the districts should be appropriately sized to be compatible with the existing neighborhood. Infill on vacant lots is encouraged.

The ordinance lists different requirements for these activities, depending on where the structure is being moved and whether it is classified as contributing or noncontributing.

In order to move a **contributing structure within the same historic district**, the applicant must meet all of the following criteria:

- The structure can be relocated without significantly diminishing the integrity of the historic district in which it is located.
- The structure can be moved without significant damage to its physical integrity.
- Note: It may be necessary to install structural supports within the building during the move. Consult a qualified structural mover, who can assess the condition of the structure and take the appropriate steps to stabilize it before, during, and after relocation. Secure the building to prevent unauthorized entry while it is unoccupied.
- The structure will be located to an area that is compatible with and retains the distinguishing qualities and historical and architectural character of the contributing structure.
- There are compelling circumstances justifying the relocation of the structure.
- The front and side setbacks of the structure in its new location will be compatible with the front and side setbacks of existing contributing structures in the new context area.

These criteria apply to either moving the structure to a different location on the same lot or moving it to a different lot within the same historic district. **Note: the original primary building on a lot should not be relocated behind a new main house.**

**Moving a contributing structure out of a historic district** is equivalent to demolishing that building. The applicant must comply with all of the criteria listed on the previous page. They also must establish that relocation is necessary to prevent an unreasonable economic hardship by meeting **all of the following criteria (the same criteria that are required for demolition)**. The applicant must prove that:

1. The property is incapable of earning a reasonable return, regardless of whether the return is the most profitable return, including without limitation, regardless of whether the costs of maintenance or improvement of the property exceed its fair market value;
2. That the owner has demonstrated that the property cannot be adapted for any other use, whether by the current owner, by a purchaser, or by a lessee, which would result in a reasonable return;
3. That the owner has demonstrated reasonable efforts to find a purchaser or lessee interested in acquiring the property and preserving it, and that those efforts have failed; and
4. If the applicant is a nonprofit organization, determination of an unreasonable economic hardship shall instead be based upon whether the denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness financially prevents or seriously interferes with carrying out the mission, purpose, or function of the nonprofit corporation.

This applies even if the structure is proposed to be moved into another historic district.

In order for a **noncontributing structure** to be **moved within or into** a historic district, it must meet the criteria for new construction. This applies to structures that come from non-historic district areas, as well as buildings that were classified as contributing or noncontributing within another historic district. A contributing classification in another historic district does not automatically transfer.

A **noncontributing structure** can be **moved out of a historic district** without a Certificate of Appropriateness.

**In order to move any structure into a historic district**, it must meet the criteria for new construction, as established in the historic preservation ordinance. This applies to structures that come from non-historic district areas, as well as those that were classified as contributing or noncontributing within their own historic district; a previous contributing classification does not automatically transfer.

### Archaeological Sites

Please refer to the historic preservation ordinance (Sections 33-246 and 33-247) if the proposed project would relocate a building, structure, or object into or out of an archeological site.

*Note: The information on this page is taken directly from the City's historic preservation ordinance and was accurate at the time of publication. Please check with the Houston Office of Preservation staff to ensure that you are using the most current ordinance criteria.*



Examples of demolition

## K. DEMOLITION

Demolition should be a measure of last resort. A historic district is created in order to protect an area that has historic and architectural significance, and designating an historic district in the City of Houston requires the support of 67% of property owners. All of the properties in an historic district, together, establish the character of the neighborhood. The removal of a contributing house or building is damaging to the neighborhood as a whole.

**Demolition of a contributing resource is not allowed**, except when:

1. The building, structure, or object has seriously deteriorated to an unusable state and is beyond reasonable repair; and
2. The HAHC finds, based on the preponderance of credible evidence presented by the applicant, the existence of an unreasonable economic hardship, per criteria established in the historic preservation ordinance, Sec. 33-247(c), or the establishment of an unusual and compelling circumstance, Sec. 33-247(c).

Substantial documentation and evidence is required to establish these claims, and the burden of proof rests on the applicant. An application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition **requires all of the following information:**

1. Photographs and other documented evidence detailing the deteriorated state of the property and the inability to reasonably repair the property;
2. A certified appraisal of the value of the property conducted by a certified real estate appraiser that takes into account that the property is a landmark, protected landmark, or contributing structure in a historic district, as well as the two most recent assessments of the value of the property, unless the property is exempt from local property taxes;
3. All appraisals obtained by the owner in connection with the acquisition, purchase, donation, or financing of the property, or during the ownership of the property;
4. All listings for the sale or lease of the property by the owner within the last year, and a statement by the owner of any bids and offers received and counteroffers given on the property;
5. Evidence of any consideration by the owner of uses and adaptive reuses of the property;
6. Itemized and detailed rehabilitation cost estimates for the identified uses of the property;
7. Any financial statements showing revenue and expenses incurred for the property;
8. Complete architectural plans and drawings of the intended future use of the property, including new construction, if applicable; and

*Note: The information on this page is taken directly from the City's historic preservation ordinance and was accurate at the time of publication. Please check with the Houston Office of Preservation staff to ensure that you are using the most current ordinance criteria.*

9. Plans to salvage, recycle, or reuse building materials, if a Certificate of Appropriateness is granted.
10. An applicant that is a nonprofit organization shall provide the following additional information:
  - a. A comparison of the cost of performance of the mission or function of the nonprofit organization in the existing building and in a new building;
  - b. The impact of the reuse of the existing building on the organization's program, function, or mission;
  - c. The additional cost, if any, attributable to the building of performing the nonprofit organization's function within the context of costs incurred by comparable organizations, particularly in the Houston area;
  - d. Grants received, applied for, and/or available to maintain or improve the property;
  - e. The nonprofit organization's budget for the current and immediately past fiscal year.
11. In addition, an applicant may be required to provide any additional information the Planning Director determines is reasonably necessary to the review of the application.

**Demolition of noncontributing structures** does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness. However, historic garages that are visible from the public right-of-way should be maintained and preserved when possible.



*Key, character-defining features include the porch columns, spindles and jigsaw trim, double-hung window and casing, and wood cladding.*



*Contributing structure*

# SECTION II: HOW TO USE THESE DESIGN GUIDELINES

These Design Guidelines apply to those projects within the Old Sixth Ward Protected Historic District which require a Certificate of Appropriateness. (Note that some projects are not subject to the COA process, or qualify for automatic approval. See Section I for more information about those project types.) For those that are subject to the COA process, it is important to first confirm that the property is within the historic district, and then determine if the work affects a property that is officially listed as having historic significance, because different guidelines apply to those properties versus those that do not have historic significance. To aid in making that determination, each property is classified as to whether it has a contributing structure or a non-contributing structure. Understanding how the property is classified and then considering the type of work that is planned then can be used to determine which design guidelines should be applied.

**Follow these steps:**

**1. Confirm that the property is within the historic district.**

See the map of the district included in this section which define the boundaries of the district.

**2. Determine how the property is classified.**

Also see that same map in this section, which categorizes each property as either contributing or non-contributing. A list of properties in the Appendix also includes this information.

**3. Determine which sections of the design guidelines apply to your project.**

A chart in this section identifies which chapters to use, based on the type of project that is planned. For example, one section addresses work on contributing structures whereas another provides guidelines for new construction. Other sections address site design and signs. Some sections provide information that is useful for any project. For example, one section describes some of the characteristics of the district that are important to respect in any project.

With this information in mind, you can be certain to address all of the relevant design guidelines that appear in the following sections.

**IN THIS SECTION**

- A. Is Your Property Located Inside The Old Sixth Ward Protected Historic District? ..... II-2**
- B. Which Sections Apply To My Project? ..... II-2**
- C. Design Guidelines Language Conventions ..... II-4**

# A. IS YOUR PROPERTY LOCATED INSIDE THE OLD SIXTH WARD PROTECTED HISTORIC DISTRICT?

All property within the Old Sixth Ward Historic District is subject to these design guidelines (see the map on the following page for the boundaries of the district.) Note that all property within the District has been classified as follows: contributing or non-contributing.

# B. WHICH SECTIONS APPLY TO MY PROJECT?

The table below identifies which Sections apply to the property classification (e.g., contributing; noncontributing; new construction, etc.) and general type of construction (e.g., restoration; rehabilitation, etc.), and other related to the work.

	Section I: Introduction and General Information	Section II: How to Use these Design Guidelines	Section III: Old Sixth Ward Characteristics	Section IV: Guidelines for Site Design	Section V: Guidelines for Historic Properties	Section VI: Guidelines for New Construction	Section VII: Appendices
Contributing Structure: Restoration and Rehabilitation	4	4	4	4	4		4
Contributing Structure: Relocation	4	4	4	4			4
Noncontributing Structure: Relocation	4	4	4	4			
Noncontributing Structure: Alteration, Rehabilitation or Restoration	4	4	4	4		4	
New Construction	4	4	4	4		4	4
Site Design (this section includes new building placement, signs, driveways, service and utilities fences and screen walls)	4	4		4			

4 = Information in Section VII: Appendices may be useful to consider for these types of projects.



**Old Sixth Ward  
Historic District**

Historic District Boundary  
- - - - -

**Building Classification**  
 Contributing  
 Non-Contributing

Established: August 1, 2007  
 Source: GIS Services Division  
 Date: May 1, 2013  
 Reference: pj17025\_OSW



This map is made available for reference purposes only and should not be substituted for a survey product. The City of Houston will not accept liability of any kind in conjunction with its use.



**PLANNING &  
DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT**

Property Classification Map of the Old Sixth Ward Protected Historic District.

## C. DESIGN GUIDELINES LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

A number of specific terms are used with the design guidelines to determine how rigorously they will be applied to an individual project. These are noted below:

1. Provisions activated by certain auxiliary verbs are to be read as follows:
  - a. Shall indicates a mandatory provision.
  - b. Should indicates a recommended provision or intent.
  - c. May indicates an optional provision



*Contributing structure*

# SECTION III: OLD SIXTH WARD CHARACTERISTICS

## A. HISTORIC DISTRICT CHARACTERISTICS

Old Sixth Ward owes its character to several factors:

- A traditional grid of streets that defines a series of regular, rectangular blocks: This approach actually yields a great deal of variety and interest, since the grid allows for a variety of lot sizes and orientations. Also, uses are mixed, with commercial establishments and churches interspersed among the residential uses.
- A building stock that, to this day, represents a historical period reflective of Houston's formative years: Many of the buildings standing today were built between 1870 and 1900. While there is great variety in typology and detail, these historic structures are generally based on a vernacular tradition of wood frame construction using local techniques and materials that developed in response to the climate, land conditions, and culture of the region.



### IN THIS SECTION

<b>A. Historic District Characteristics</b> .....	III-1
<b>B. Building Types In The District</b> .....	III-5
1. Bungalow .....	III-6
2. Central Hall.....	III-7
3. Commercial Retail .....	III-8
4. Queen Anne Folk Victorian.....	III-9
5. Multifamily .....	III-10
7. Extended Shotgun.....	III-11
8. Garage Apartment .....	III-12
9. I-House .....	III-13
10. Gable Wing, Gable on Wing, or Gable Ell .....	III-14
11. Raised Cottage .....	III-15
12. Side Hall .....	III-16
13. Shotgun .....	III-17
14. Three-Bay.....	III-18





- Homes and commercial establishments that promote an active relationship to the street: Stores and other commercial buildings were generally located on corner lots, where they could maximize their street exposure, and are typically located directly on the street right-of-way line. Homes were typically set back only a minimal distance, generally in the range of 10 feet or less. Front porches and front doors facing the street are a nearly universal feature. The rear portion of the lot was devoted to yard but often had smaller outbuildings or accessory buildings located near the rear lot line.

These characteristics are clearly indicated by maps of the time. Some of the old Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps dating from the 1890s and 1900s are still available; Figure 1.1 shows a portion of one of these maps from an area within the current Old Sixth Ward Protected Historic District boundary.

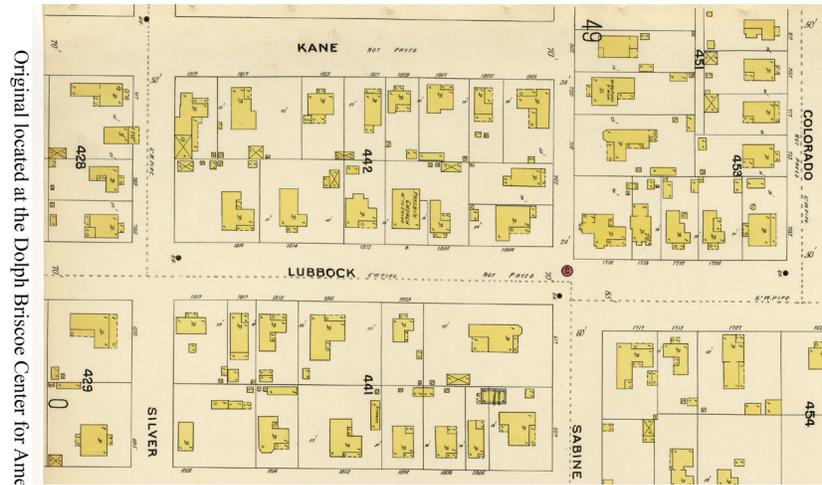


Figure 1-1. A portion of the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1896 showing a portion of Old Sixth Ward.

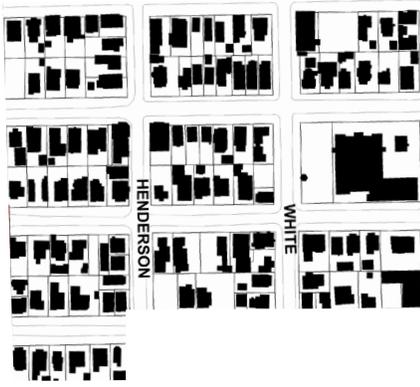
The historic character of the District derives from a building tradition that was based on wood framing and carpentry. Brick construction is uncommon, although it does occur. When found, it is typically limited to commercial or civic buildings or the larger, more elaborate houses. The typical wood-framed examples are characterized by:

- Raised pier and beam foundations.
- Front porches, which often run along the entire front of the building.
- Relatively slender porch columns, which may range from simple square posts to turned columns.
- Narrow, double-hung, wood, vertically proportioned windows, with horizontal lintels. (Arched openings are generally not used, unless constructed of brick.)
- Common exterior cladding includes horizontal wood lap or clapboard siding in a variety of profiles.
- Pitched roofs, usually with end gables. Exposed rafter tails are fairly common.

With few exceptions, the historic structures in the District do not represent an established or defined style such as Queen Anne. Details may have been copied from other buildings or from publications, without regard to a strict adherence to style. These guidelines are not intended to impose any particular style, only to clarify what qualifies as compatible construction.

It is more useful to think of the construction techniques in the District as ranging between the vernacular and the refined. The vernacular is typically done in the most simple, straightforward manner, using widely available materials, common techniques, and relatively little ornament. Refined detailing techniques provide an additional level of applied ornament. This could involve such enhancements as turned posts instead of square posts, more elaborate balusters and trim work, and decorative fretwork.





*A figure-ground study map of a portion of the district in 2017 includes footprints of a mix of contributing and non-contributing structures.*

### **Distinguishing Neighborhood Features:**

- Rectilinear street grid
- Moderate street widths
- Narrow, rectangular-shaped lots
- No alleys
- Mix of curb and gutter and no curb and gutter
- Tree lawn between street and sidewalk

### **Distinguishing Site Features:**

- Lot orientation: north & south
- Typical lot depth & width: 100' x 50'
- Lot size: 5,000 s.f. - 6,000 s.f.
- Historic lot coverage: 30% - 50%
- Typical setbacks: 10 ft. - 15 ft., although some are less.
- Front yards are landscaped, some with fences.
- Parking: Primarily on street; others have side drives to garage in rear.

### **Distinguishing Building Features:**

- Both 1 & 2-story houses are common.
- Most contributing buildings date from the period of historic significance, many between 1870 and 1900; also early 20th Century bungalows.
- Historic homes are modest in scale. Most range from 1,000 sf to 1,500 sf.
- Primary entrances face the street.
- Roof form: Primarily gable and hip
- Porch/Entry: 1 & 2-story porches connecting to sidewalk

## B. BUILDING TYPES IN THE DISTRICT

A key principle of historic preservation is that the “key, character-defining features” of a building should be preserved. There are many building types found within the Old Sixth Ward Protected Historic District, each with their own set of key features. This section highlights some of those features by building type. This information is presented as a resource to assist in the accurate and appropriate restoration or rehabilitation of a similar building in the District.

The following pages document the principal building types found in Old Sixth Ward, along with a list of architectural features and some representative examples of each. The following types are described:

1. Bungalow
2. Central Hall
3. Commercial Types
4. Cross Gable
5. Double Tenant Cottage
6. Duplex
7. Extended Shotgun
8. Garage Apartment
9. I-Cottage
10. L-Cottage
11. Raised Cottage
12. Side Hall
13. Shotgun
14. Three Bay





*Typical one-story Bungalow.*



*Airplane Bungalow.*

# 1. Bungalow

Built within the District: 1905-1945

Distinctive features:

- A deep porch across the entire façade or a partial width porch; porch can be inset under main roof or applied to front, and features its own gable roof.
- Low-pitched roof with rafters often exposed.
- Decorative beams or brackets under gable eaves.
- Porch roof typically supported by tapered square columns.
- Often a large front-facing gable spanning entire porch width.
- Generally one-story; however, an Airplane Bungalow features a single room on second level (two-story).
- Windows of wood and 1 over 1 type, sometimes with decorative upper sashes or screens.
- Horizontal, wood lap or teardrop (#117) siding (although there are a few brick examples).
- Typically irregular in their interior room organization

The bungalow represents part of a general movement toward simplification following the excesses of the Victorian period. The typical bungalow floor plan is more informal than earlier plans. One generally enters directly into the main living area of the home. Houses of this type often emphasize the hearth, and a fireplace is generally visible upon entry.



*Typical one-story Bungalow with an altered front porch.*

## 2. Central Hall

Built within the District: 1850-1890

Distinctive features:

- Often a deep porch across front. This porch can be inset as in a Gulf Coast Colonial or applied to the front. Later porches highly ornamented. Earlier porches were less ornamental.
- High-pitched roof with side gables and enclosed eaves. Gulf Coast Colonials had no eave or gable overhanging.
- Gulf Coast Colonials usually had Greek Revival doorways with fanlight and sidelights.
- Porch typically supported by square chamfered or turned posts. Later examples with decorative bracket and frieze work
- Never with hipped roof or front gable.
- Generally one or 1 ½ story.
- Windows of wood and any of the following types: usually 4 over 4, 2 over 2, and even 1 over 1.
- Shutters or wood-framed screens.
- Wood, horizontal siding.



*Typical one-story Central Hall.*



*Typical one-story Central Hall.*

### 3. Commercial Retail

Built within the District: 1850-1950

Distinctive features:

- Retail ground floor.
- Often with housing attached for owners of shop. Housing would be on the side or on the upper level.
- Constructed of brick or wood.
- Large shop windows along front or main Façade.
- One or two stories.
- Windows of wood and any of the following types: 2 over 2, or 1 over 1.
- Plate glass with divisions and transom windows above storefront windows on first floor.

A few commercial buildings remain in the District. These structures served the local community prior to the prevalence of the automobile. A few businesses were located within the district, but most of them occurred along Washington Avenue outside of the district and included: grocery stores, drug stores, hardware stores, and one candy store.



*Image of 1718 Lubbock St. from United States Department of Interior National Park Service - National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form; Old Sixth Ward Historic District.*

## 4. Queen Anne Folk Victorian

Built within the District: 1890-1920

Distinctive features:

- Usually with a wrap-around porch connecting the two cross gable roofs.
- High-pitched roof with side gables and enclosed eaves. One prominent front facing gable.
- Decorative trim under eave overhang with small windows in gables. Sometimes stained glass.
- Porch typically supported by square chamfered or turned posts. Often with decorative bracket and frieze work. Later porches highly ornamented. Earlier porches were more simple. Examples built after 1900 usually had round Doric porch columns.
- Often with hipped roof with intersecting gable roof(s).
- Generally one or two stories.
- Windows of wood and any of the following types: 2 over 2 or 1 over 1.
- Shutters or wood-framed screens.
- Horizontal wood siding. Sometimes decorative shingle-work in gable fronts.



*Typical one-story Queen Anne Folk Victorian.*



*Typical two-story Queen Anne Folk Victorian.*



*Typical one-story Queen Anne Folk Victorian.*

## 5. Multifamily

Built within the District: 1860-1940

Distinctive features:

- Often a deep porch across front, usually inset as in a Gulf Coast Colonial; sometimes two separate porches
- High-pitched roof with side gables and enclosed eaves. Gulf Coast Colonials had no eave overhanging.
- Small window or vent in gable front.
- Decorative trim under eave overhang with small windows in gables.
- Twin front doors on front façade.
- Porch typically supported by square chamfered or turned posts. Rarely with decorative bracket and frieze work. Later porches highly ornamented. Earlier porches are less ornamented.
- Never with hipped roof.
- Generally one or 1 ½ story.
- Windows of wood and any of the following types: 1 over 1, 2 over 2, 4 over 4, and 6 over 6.
- Shutters or wood-framed screens.
- Horizontal wood siding.



*Image of 1909 Decatur from United States Department of Interior National Park Service - National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form; Old Sixth Ward Historic District.*

## 7. Extended Shotgun

Built within the District: 1880-1920

Distinctive features:

- Front porch can extend full width of house or half width of the house and porch is inset under main roof.
- High-pitched roof with gables and enclosed eaves. One prominent front facing gable.
- Decorative trim under eave overhang with small windows in gables. Sometimes stained glass.
- Porch typically supported by square chamfered or turned posts. Often with decorative bracket and frieze work. Later porches highly ornamented. Earlier porches were less ornamented.
- Never with hipped roof.
- Generally one or 1 ½ story .
- Windows of wood and any of the following types: 4 over 4, 2 over 2.
- Shutters or wood-framed screens.
- Horizontal wood siding. Often with decorative shingles in gables.



*Typical one-story Extended Shotgun.*



*Image of 1817 Lubbock from United States Department of Interior National Park Service - National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form; Old Sixth Ward Historic District.*



*Typical one-story Extended Shotgun.*



*Typical Garage Apartment.*

## 8. Garage Apartment

Built within the District: 1920-1950

Distinctive features:

- Often a small bracketed porch or pediment over entry door
- Both high or low-pitched roof with side gables. Sometimes eaves have exposed rafters. Sometimes features a hipped roof.
- Generally two stories.
- Wooden garage doors on lower level.
- Sometimes built with exterior staircase to second level.
- Windows of wood and any of the following types: 4 over 4, 2 over 2, but mostly 1 over 1.
- Shutters or wood-framed screens.
- Horizontal wood siding or board and batten siding.

## 9. I-House

Built within the District:1870-1890

Distinctive features:

- Often with a deep double-galleried porch across the entire front façade but sometimes a partial width porch which is centered.
- High-pitched roof with gables and enclosed eaves. Sometimes with hipped roof.
- Sometimes with decorative trim under eave overhang with small windows in gables. Rarely with stained glass.
- I-houses are one room deep and two rooms wide.
- Porch typically supported by square chamfered or turned posts. Often with decorative bracket and frieze work. Later porches highly ornamented. Earlier porches were less ornamented.
- Generally two stories.
- Windows of wood and any of the following types: 4 over 4, 2 over 2
- Shutters or wood-framed screens.
- Horizontal wood siding.



*Typical two-story I-House.*



*Typical one-story Gable Wing.*



*Typical two-story Gable Wing.*

## 10. Gable Wing, Gable on Wing, or Gable Ell

Built within the District: 1880-1890

Distinctive features:

- Often a deep porch in front, adjoining front gable ell. This porch is usually applied to the front. Porch typically supported by square chamfered or turned posts. Often with decorative bracket and frieze work. Later porches highly ornamented. Earlier porches were less ornamented. Examples built after 1900 usually had round Doric porch columns.
- High-pitched roof with gables and enclosed eaves. One prominent front facing gable.
- Decorative trim under eave overhang with small windows in gables. Sometimes stained glass.
- Porch typically supported by square chamfered or turned posts. Often with decorative bracket and frieze work. Later porches highly ornamented. Earlier porches were less ornamented. Examples built after 1900 usually had round Doric porch columns.
- Never with hipped roof.
- Floor plan resembles an “L”, hence the style name.
- Generally one or 1 ½ story .
- Windows of wood and any of the following types: 4 over 4, 2 over 2, rarely 1 over 1
- Shutters or wood-framed screens.
- Horizontal wood siding. Often with decorative shingles in gable fronts.



*Typical one-story Gable Wing.*

## 11. Raised Cottage

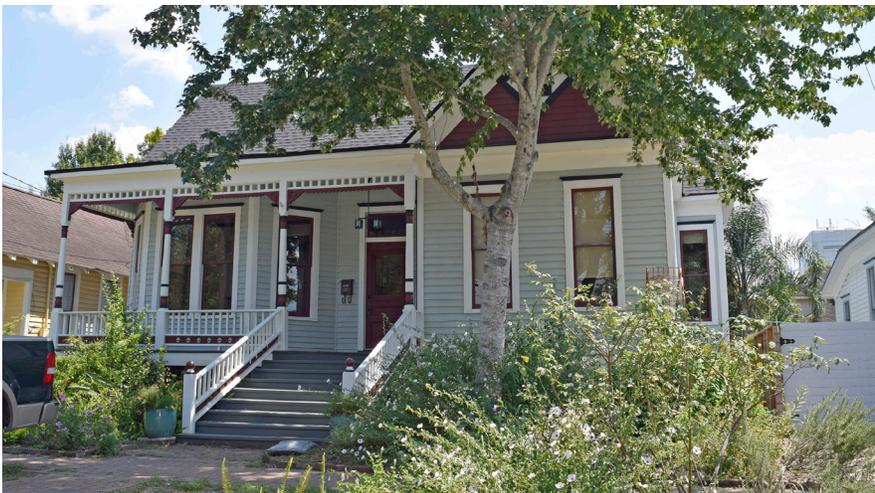
Built within the District: 1880-1910

Distinctive features:

- Often a deep porch across front or adjoining front gable ell. This porch can be inset under main roof or applied to the front. Porch typically supported by square chamfered or turned posts. Often with decorative bracket and frieze work. Later porches highly ornamented. Earlier porches were less ornamented. Examples built after 1900 usually had round Doric porch columns.
- Pitched roof with hip, gables and enclosed eaves. Usually with prominent front facing gable.
- Sometimes with decorative trim under eave overhang with small windows in gables. Sometimes stained glass.
- Generally one or 1 ½ story .
- Windows of wood and any of the following types: 4 over 4, 2 over 2, and 1 over 1.
- Shutters or wood-framed screens.
- Horizontal wood siding. Sometimes with decorative shingles in gable fronts



*Typical one-story Raised Cottage.*



*Typical one-story Raised Cottage.*



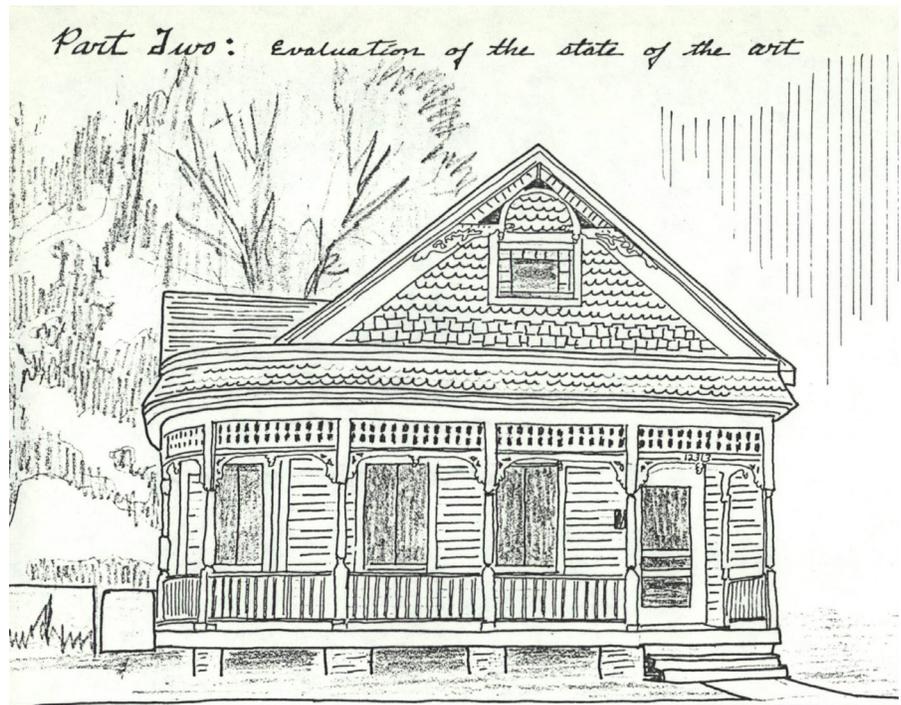
Typical one-story Side Hall. (Note entry door is to the right side.)

## 12. Side Hall

Built within the District: 1880-1900

Distinctive features:

- Primary entrance and hall located to the side.
- Often a deep porch across front. This is usually applied to the front and may wrap around the corner. Sometimes double-galleried.
- High-pitched roof with gables and enclosed eaves. One front prominent facing gable.
- Often with decorative trim under eave overhang with small windows in gables. Often with stained glass.
- Porch typically supported by square chamfered or turned posts. Often with decorative bracket and frieze work. Later porches highly ornamented. Earlier porches were less ornamented.
- Rarely with hipped roof.
- Generally one or two stories.
- Windows of wood and any of the following types: 4 over 4, 2 over 2
- Shutters or wood-framed screens.
- Horizontal wood siding. Often with decorative shingles in gable fronts



Sketch from United States Department of Interior National Park Service - National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form; Old Sixth Ward Historic District.

### 13. Shotgun

Built within the District:1870-1910

Distinctive features:

- Often a porch across front. This porch can be inset under the main roof or applied to the front.
- High-pitched roof with gables and enclosed eaves. One prominent front facing gable.
- Decorative trim under eave overhang with small windows in gables. Sometimes stained glass.
- Porch typically supported by square chamfered or turned posts. Often with decorative bracket and frieze work. Later porches highly ornamented. Earlier porches were less ornamented.
- Generally one-story.
- Windows of wood and any of the following types: 6 over 6, 4 over 4, 2 over 2; rarely 1 over 1.
- Shutters or wood-framed screens.
- Horizontal wood siding. Sometimes with decorative shingle-work in gables.



*Typical one-story Shotgun.*



*Typical one-story Three-Bay.*

## 14. Three-Bay

Built within the District: 1860-1880

Distinctive features:

- Often a deep porch across entire façade of house or a partial width porch which is centered. This porch can be inset in Gulf Coast Colonial examples or applied to the front.
- High-pitched roof with gables and enclosed eaves. One front facing gable. Gulf Coast Colonials had no gable overhangs.
- Rarely with decorative trim under eave overhang with small windows in gables
- Porch typically supported by square chamfered or turned posts. Often with decorative bracket and frieze work. Later porches highly ornamented. Earlier porches were less ornamented.
- Sometimes with a hipped roof and small dormer on front slope of roof.
- Generally one or 1 ½ story .
- Windows of wood and any of the following types: 6 over 6, 4 over 4, or 2 over 2
- Shutters or wood-framed screens.
- Horizontal wood siding, rear wings sometimes had board and batten siding.

# SECTION IV: GUIDELINES FOR SITE DESIGN

Site design refers to the arrangement, placement and orientation of buildings and site features on a parcel. It also includes the relationship between buildings and site features on one parcel to neighboring properties and the public realm. Site design considers street frontage, building setbacks, parking, signage, service and utilities, fencing and screen walls.

This Section is divided into two categories: **Required Guidelines** and **Recommended Guidelines**. Guidelines in the "Required" category are subject to review for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Those in the "Recommended" category are exempt from requiring a COA, per the exemptions listed in the ordinance and repeated in Section 1 of this document. They are provided here as helpful information.



*Site design considers street frontage, building setbacks, parking, signage, service and utilities, fencing and screen walls. Shallow front yards, continuous planting strip, and fences are site features noted in this image.*

**NOTE:**  
Reference the explanation of Context Area in Section I when applying the guidelines for Site Design.

## IN THIS SECTION

- A. Street Frontage ..... IV-2
- B. Building Setbacks ..... IV-3
- C. Parking And Driveways ..... IV-4
- D. Signage ..... IV-5
- E. Service And Utilities ..... IV-13
- F. Fencing And Screen Walls ..... IV-13

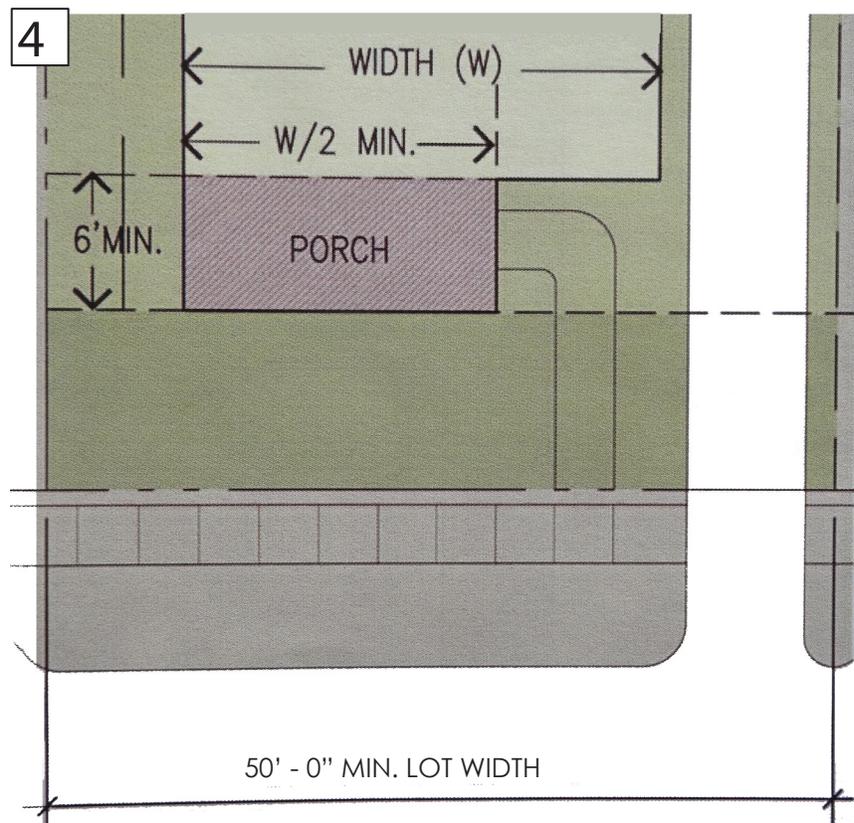
# REQUIRED GUIDELINES



## A. STREET FRONTAGE

**Intent:** Street Frontage refers to the character and orientation of a building with respect to the way it relates to the street. All construction should be compatible and primary façades should face the street as do the existing contributing historic buildings. Primary entrances should be oriented to the street.

1. Front porches shall be provided on any new residential construction. They are essential defining features of historic houses in the District.
  - a. Minimum porch width: 50% of total width of building.
  - b. Minimum porch depth: 6 feet.



Minimum porch width requirement.

# REQUIRED GUIDELINES

## B. BUILDING SETBACKS

**Intent:** The general approach for compatible building setbacks is to match the most frequently occurring setback of historic buildings on the blockface or facing blockface(s).

1. Whereas all building setbacks (i.e., front, rear, and sides) are important, matching the front building setback condition, including a porch where applicable, is considered of primary importance.



Match the most frequently occurring range of historic building setbacks on the blockface. This includes the front porch. The front building alignment of the building footprint to the right is inappropriate. Prevailing building setbacks tend to be 10' on East and West streets and 5' on North and South streets.

## C. PARKING AND DRIVEWAYS

**Intent:** Parking should be located to the rear of the lot to ensure that the proposed project is compatible with contributing buildings along the block face. Driveways should also be minimized and should reflect traditional access patterns.

1. New construction shall provide off-street parking as required in the Houston Code.
2. Driveway access to the garage on interior lots is limited to a single driveway with a maximum width of 10 feet at any point within the front half of the lot. Driveways must be placed to the side of the dwelling for interior lots.
3. On corner lots, garage access shall be from the side street.
4. Exception: On lots of insufficient width (generally 25 feet wide), a porous parking pad in compliance with City codes may be placed in front of the building for off-street parking. Variances may be granted for special circumstances.
5. Driveway material must be concrete, stone, brick pavers, or gravel.



*Appropriate configurations for garages and driveway access.*

# REQUIRED GUIDELINES

## D. SIGNAGE

**Intent:** While Old Sixth Ward is predominantly residential in character, there are a few small scale commercial buildings in the District which typically will have signs. There are also instances of residential structures that have been converted to a small office or other commercial uses. Signage within the District should be designed and painted in a manner to respect the historic character of the buildings and the neighborhood. The following guidelines identify general design requirements. Note that these guidelines do not regulate sign content.

1. **A SIGN SHOULD BE:**
  - a. Appropriate in size and scale.
  - b. Constructed of high quality materials and craftsmanship.
  - c. Located in a logical place on the building or in the front yard, and should not obstruct key elements or details of the building.
  - d. (If lighted) Illuminated indirectly and using an external light source.
2. **ADDRESS NUMBERS.** All residential and commercial buildings are required by the Houston Code to identify their street address numerals. Address numerals should conform to the following guidelines:
  - a. Numerals should be displayed near the main entry and clearly visible from the street fronting the building.
  - b. Numerals may consist of individual characters or a decorative panel.
  - c. Numerals should be no more than 6 inches in height. Panels should be no more than 1 square foot in area.

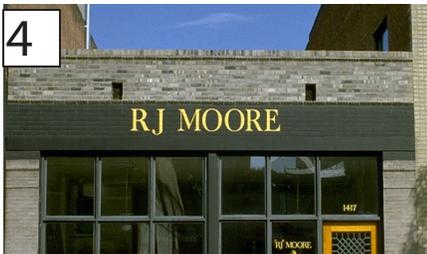
# REQUIRED GUIDELINES

4



3. **COMMERCIAL SIGNAGE.** These guidelines apply to on-premises signage. Signs are classified into the following types:

- Building Signage
- Sign Band
- Bracket Signs
- Window Signs
- Monument and Pole Signs
- Post Signs



*Appropriate Upper Level Sign.*

Recommendations for specific sign types are as follows:

a. **Upper Level Sign:** An upper level sign is one that is located near the cornice line of a façade. It is often used to identify a building's name or business, as examples, but with no intent to limit content.

1) Placement:

An Upper Level Sign should:

- (a) Be placed near the top of the building
- (b) Be placed above upper floor windows
- (c) Be mounted directly on the wall surface
- (d) Face a public street
- (e) Be placed on a maximum of two building sides
- (f) Signs may be cut or carved.
- (g) Roof signs are inappropriate.

2) Dimensions:

- (a) A maximum of 20 square feet for each sign is appropriate.
- (b) Sign letters height are 16" maximum.
- (c) All parts of a sign, including text and graphics, are counted toward total square feet of the sign area.

3) Letter materials:

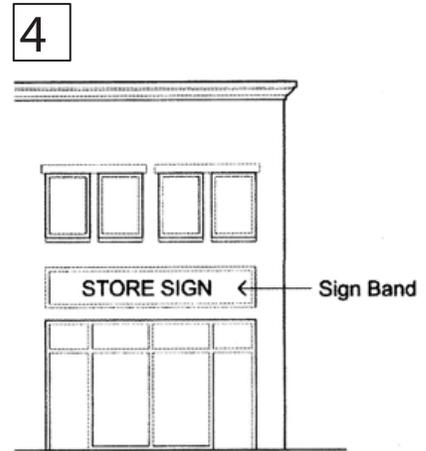
- (a) Sign may be metal, stone, wood, paint, carved, or plaster. Plastic letters are inappropriate.

## REQUIRED GUIDELINES

- 4) Lighting of Upper Level Signs:
  - (a) Front-lit signs (illuminated by an external light source) are acceptable. **Backlit or channel cut lighting is inappropriate.**
- 5) Other provisions:
  - (a) Neon signs are inappropriate.
  - (b) Signs shall be static; no rotating, electronic, or digital signs are appropriate.

b. **Sign Band:** This type of wall sign is primarily for uses at the street level.

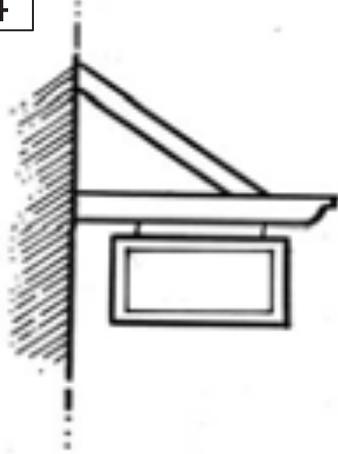
- 1) Placement:
  - (a) Sign shall be mounted on the building face between the first and second floor window openings.
  - (b) Sign shall be integrated with the composition of the façade.
  - (c) Background may be the building wall or “backboard”.
  - (d) Profile of the sign shall be essentially flush.
  - (e) Bottom edge of sign shall be located a minimum of 10’ above sidewalk.
- 2) Dimensions:
  - (a) Backboard and overall band width is limited to 60% of bay width.
  - (b) Backboard may have a maximum height of 24”.
  - (c) Letter heights are 18” maximum.
- 3) Letter or backboard materials:
  - (a) Sign may be metal, stone, wood, paint, carved, plaster, or plastic; cabinet signs are not permitted.
- 4) Lighting:
  - (a) Front-lit signs (illuminated by an external light source) are acceptable.
- 5) Other provisions:
  - (a) No neon signs are permitted.
  - (b) Consistency of the sign bands in a single building is recommended.



*Appropriate signs within the sign band.*

## REQUIRED GUIDELINES

4



4



4



Appropriate bracket signs.

c. **Bracket (Projecting) Signs:** These may be used in place of a sign band, or in addition to a sign band if located in an arcade or if the bracket sign is not in conflict with the sign band. Bracket signs may include symbols such as barber poles.

1) Placement:

- (a) Sign must be perpendicular to the principal building façade.
- (b) Sign may be held by brackets, cantilevered, or suspended under a canopy.
- (c) Sign placement must allow a minimum sidewalk height clearance of 8'.
- (d) For residential buildings converted to commercial use, a sign panel hanging from the porch beam is acceptable.

2) Dimensions:

- (a) Sign may be a maximum of 6 square feet.
- (b) Bracketed signs may project a maximum of 48" from the building face but may not project over a public right-of-way.
- (c) Double-sided signs are permitted.
- (d) Letters may have a maximum height of 10".
- (e) Logos or artwork may be a maximum of 18" in any dimension.

3) Materials:

- (a) Sign may be metal and/or wood.

4) Lighting:

- (a) Externally projected lighting is permitted.

5) Design:

- (a) A logo may be included on the face of the sign.

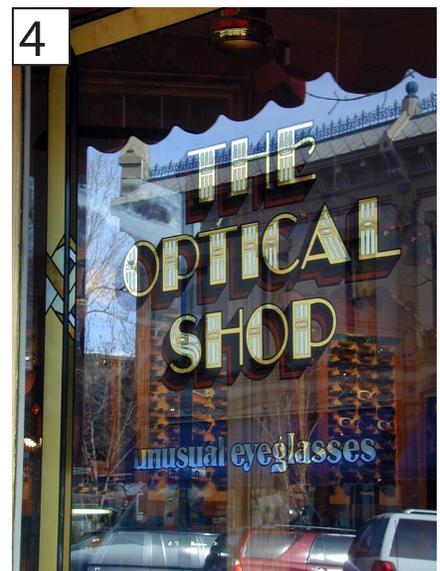
6) Other provisions:

- (a) No neon signs are permitted.
- (b) Any signage that is approved as appropriate but encroaches over a public right-of-way must obtain a license agreement from the Finance & Administration department.

## REQUIRED GUIDELINES

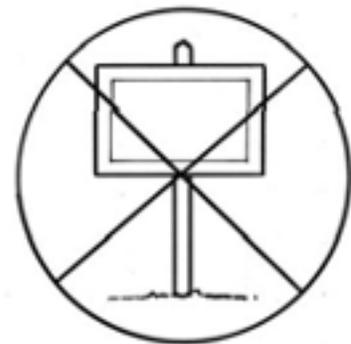
d. **Window Signs.** These signs are intended for the pedestrian. They include applied graphics such as name, hours of operation, telephone numbers, and street numbers. "Open/closed" hanging signs are acceptable.

- 1) Placement:
  - (a) Signs may be placed on storefront windows and doors.
  - (b) Signs may be applied to the interior surface of glass only.
  - (c) Signs may not substantially obscure visibility through the window; signage should be located in the upper third of the window.
- 2) Dimensions:
  - (a) Window graphics are limited to 5% of total glass area of the storefront.
  - (b) Lettering size may be a maximum of 6".
- 3) Letter Materials:
  - (a) Signs may be vinyl, gold leaf, painted, or stick-on plastic.
- 4) Lighting:
  - (a) Lighting of window signs is not permitted.



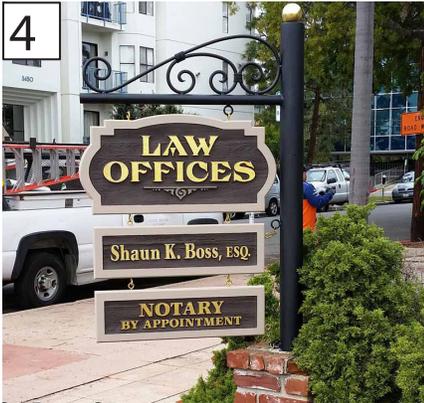
e. **Post Signs.** These signs are appropriate for residential structures that have been converted to commercial use. These are typically small and understated signs meant to be relatively unobtrusive in a neighborhood setting.

- 1) Placement:
  - (a) Sign should be perpendicular to the ground, near the entrance to the property.
  - (b) Sign may be parallel or perpendicular to the front façade.
  - (c) Sign must be on the property and may not encroach into the right-of-way.



*Inappropriate post sign (with single centered post).*

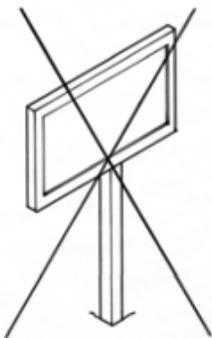
# REQUIRED GUIDELINES



Appropriate offset single post sign.



Appropriate double post sign.



Single, centered post sign is not recommended

- 2) Configuration of Post Signs:
  - (a) Sign may be a double post with framed panel or an offset single post with bracketed or suspended panel.
  - (b) Double-sided signs are acceptable.
  - (c) A single post with centered panel is not recommended.
  - (d) Signs must be essentially two-dimensional. Small structures or kiosk-type designs are not appropriate.
- 3) Dimensions:
  - (a) Sign panel should be a maximum of 6 square feet;
  - (b) Overall sign should be a maximum height of 4 feet above grade.
- 4) Materials:
  - (a) Sign may be metal and/or wood.
- 5) Lighting:
  - (a) Post signs should not be illuminated.

f. **Other inappropriate** sign types include:

- 1) Monument and Pole Signs (ones with centered, single post). These types of signs are not appropriate for use within the District.
- 2) Large or illuminated signs behind the glass storefront that advertise on a permanent basis.
- 3) Applied window signs, such as cardboard panels.
- 4) Trailer signs (moveable signs with wheels).

## REQUIRED GUIDELINES

4. **TEMPORARY SIGNAGE.** Temporary signs are used to provide information related to activities or events that typically have a limited time for their use. Examples of temporary signage types (without limiting the content) include: Seasonal signs

- Seasonal signs
- Promotional and sale signs
- Announcement signs
- Event signs
- Real estate signs
- Political campaign signs
- Future or ongoing construction

a. **Time limit for display of a temporary sign:**

A temporary sign should be removed once it is no longer in use. A temporary signs should be removed within seven (7) days after the end of the period of its intended use.

b. **Appropriate temporary sign types:**

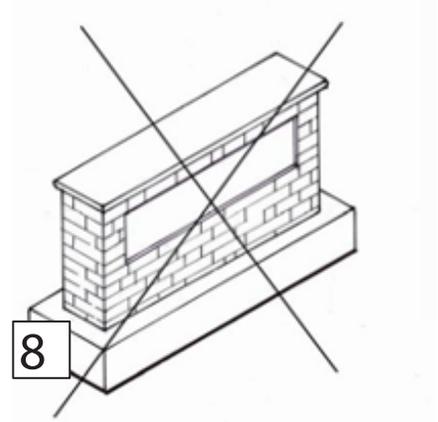
Appropriate temporary signs are:

- A window sign, located on the inside of the glass
- A free-standing post sign
- A panel (such as wood or metal) on a wire or metal frame
- A panel mounted on a fence

c. **Inappropriate temporary sign types:**

Appropriate temporary signs are:

- Pennants
- Banners



*Monument signs are not recommended.*

## REQUIRED GUIDELINES

8



*Pennant and banner signs are inappropriate.*

### d. **Size limit for Temporary Signs:**

A temporary sign should not exceed these size limits by sign type (without limiting sign content):

- Window sign: 2 and 1/2 square feet in area
- Free-standing post sign: 3 square feet in area (for each face)
- A free-standing sandwich board: 3 square feet in area (for each face)
- A panel on a wire or metal frame: 3 square feet in area (for each face)
- A panel mounted on a fence: 6 square feet in area

# RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

(This information is for owner consideration. No COA is required for these topics.)

## E. SERVICE AND UTILITIES

**Intent:** Service elements should be visually subordinate and located at the rear of the building. Service elements should not be located within any street-fronting yard setback. Service elements visible from a public street shall be screened by an opaque wall or fence of sufficient height to completely obscure the equipment. A landscape screen, such as a hedge, may be used, provided that it is opaque and maintained at the appropriate height.

Recommendations for Specific Elements:

### 1. Mechanical Equipment:

- a. Certain mechanical equipment items may be located on the roof, provided that they are screened from view by an opaque screen compatible with the architecture of the building. The screen should be of sufficient height to completely obscure the equipment when viewed from any point in a public right-of-way.
- b. Plumbing vents, roof attic vents, electrical, cable/telephone service lines, and satellite dishes should not be located on any roof plane facing the street frontage.

## F. FENCING AND SCREEN WALLS

**Intent:** There are front and rear yard types of fence. The front yard fence is a low, open fence that is intended to define the front yard area, rather than to provide a visual screen or security. A front yard fence should complement the historic building style. A rear yard fence can define the rear yard and also provide privacy. It too should complement the historic building style if it is visible from the street. Fences are not required.

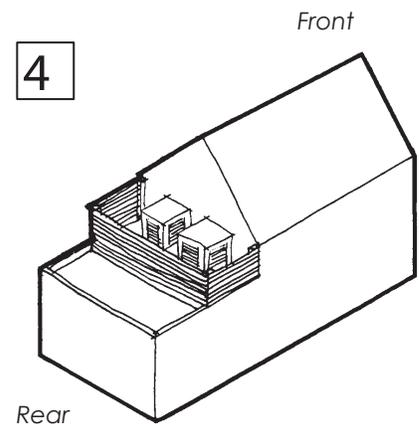
### 1. Front yard fencing (applies also to side streets on corner lots):

#### a. Type:

- 1) This low, mostly open fencing is intended primarily to define the front yard area, rather than to provide any visual screen or security.
- 2) Wood picket fencing, and ornamental steel rail and picket fencing are recommended fence types.

#### b. Height:

- 1) The body (pickets) of the fence may be a maximum of 60 inches high. Posts, which may include decorative finials, may be a maximum of 66 inches high.



*Certain mechanical equipment items may be located on the roof, provided that they are screened from view by an opaque screen compatible with the architecture of the building.*



*Wood picket fencing, and ornamental steel rail and picket fencing are recommended fence types.*

# RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

4



4



Examples of front yard fencing that meet the guidelines.

4



Appropriate rear/side yard privacy fence.

## c. Placement of Front Yard Fencing:

- 1) Fencing may be placed along any street frontage and may return to the building face or to intersect with privacy fencing at appropriate locations.

## 2. Rear yard and privacy fencing.

### a. Type:

- 1) This mostly opaque fencing is intended to provide a visual screen or barrier.

### b. Height:

- 1) Fence may be a maximum of 6 feet high.

### c. Placement:

- 1) Fencing may be used to enclose rear yards and to screen unsightly elements, such as mechanical equipment, dumpsters, etc.
- 2) Privacy fences may enclose side yards, provided that they are set back a minimum of 10 feet from the front building façade.

## 3. Materials

### a. The following materials not recommended for fencing or screen walls include:

- 1) Chain link, with or without inserts
- 2) Corrugated or formed metal panels
- 3) Plain concrete masonry
- 4) Concrete or pre-cast concrete
- 5) Barbed wire or razor wire

# SECTION V: GUIDELINES FOR HISTORIC PROPERTIES

This Section addresses historic restoration and rehabilitation to existing contributing structures. Such changes are permitted subject to the requirements of this section, which are intended to define the extent of modifications permitted while maintaining the integrity and character of the existing building or structure.

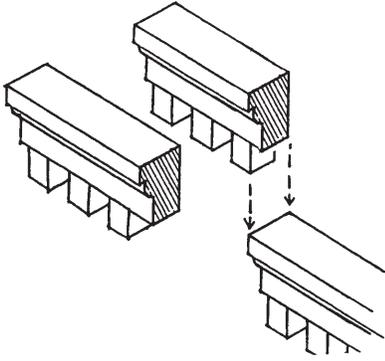


**NOTE:**

A key principle underlying the design guidelines in this section is that key, character-defining features should be preserved. See the description of those features of individual building types described in Section III when applying the design guidelines in this section.

**IN THIS SECTION**

- A. Historic Restoration And Rehabilitation ..... V-2**
- B. Additions To Historic Buildings..... V-4**
- C. Differentiation..... V-9**
- D. Elevated Foundations ..... V-10**
- E. Porches ..... V-12**
  - For Existing Porches ..... V-12
- F. Doors ..... V-15**
- G. Windows ..... V-15**



Replacement of historic materials (even in-kind) is an alteration and requires a COA.



Repair deteriorated historic features and replace only those elements that cannot be repaired in-kind. Use recognized preservation methods whenever possible. If disassembly is necessary for repair or restoration, use methods that minimize damage to original materials and facilitate reassembly.

## A. HISTORIC RESTORATION AND REHABILITATION

**Intent:** Preserve the historic integrity of the structure. The following information identifies appropriate treatments for historic properties and general restoration and rehabilitation principles. The following principles apply to these project types:

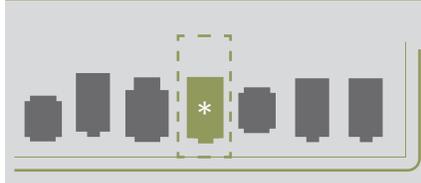
- Respect the historic design character of a building. Identify and keep original elements and character-defining features; remove later modifications that are not in character.
- Some alterations that date from before World War II may have acquired historic significance in their own right and should be retained. More recent alterations that are not historically significant should be removed (within the last 50 years.)
- Repair deteriorated historic features and replace only those elements that cannot be repaired in-kind. Use recognized preservation methods whenever possible. If disassembly is necessary for repair, or restoration use methods that minimize damage to original materials and facilitate reassembly.
- If new features are added or additions are constructed, they should have minimal effect on the original features. The new work should be differentiated from the original and should be compatible in terms of size, scale, proportions, and massing. For example, where the walls of an addition join the historic building, the new construction should be stepped-in at the corners (the location of the original, vertical cornerboard trim) to delineate the old from the new construction. The wall cladding for the addition should be different than the historic building cladding to delineate the addition. This can be accomplished by using a different type of lap siding or vertical board and batten siding (wood or HardiPlank).
- The general principles outlined above are derived from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties; <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>. Also, see page **I-12** of this document.

Please note that The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties are only regulatory for projects receiving federal grant funds; otherwise, they are intended only as general guidance for work on any historic building. Mandatory observance of these guidelines may also be linked to certain local grant and incentive programs.

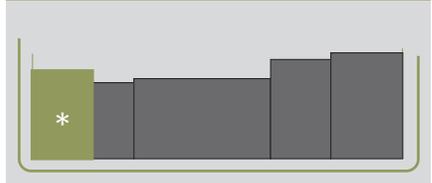
## PRIORITIZING CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES BY LOCATION

The relative importance of character-defining features and their priorities for preservation depends on their location. Those features that are located on or toward the front of the building tend to be more important than those located toward the rear of the building, although that is not always the case. For example, when a building is located on a corner lot, features on the entire side that faces the street, as well as portions of the rear wall that are visible, may be significant. The scale of the alteration also is a factor.

### Residential Building

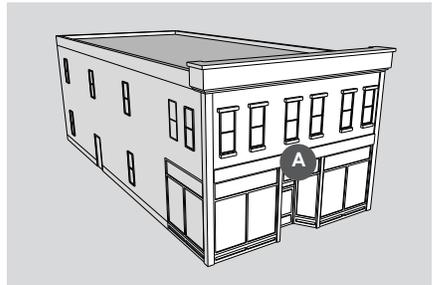
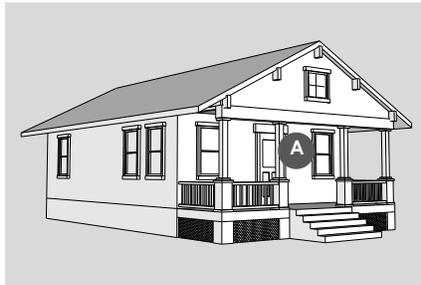


### Commercial Building



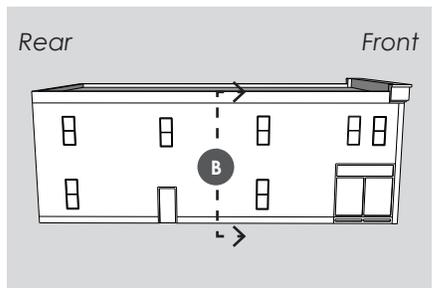
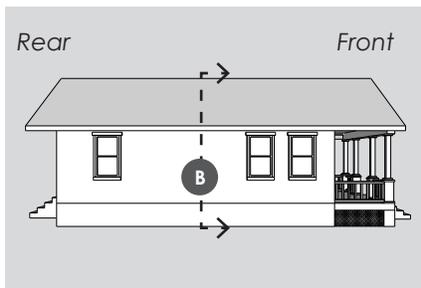
#### LOCATION A: Primary Façade

For most historic buildings, the façade is the most important to preserve intact. Alterations should be avoided.



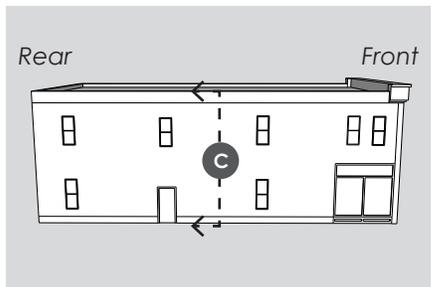
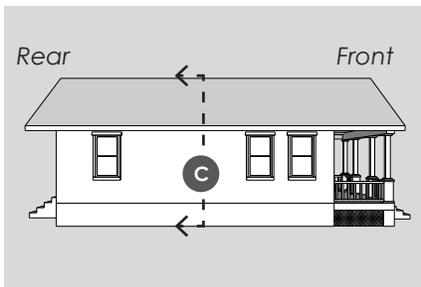
#### LOCATION B: Highly Visible Secondary Wall

Side walls are important to preserve where they are highly visible from the street. Location B is the approximate front half of the historic side wall length.



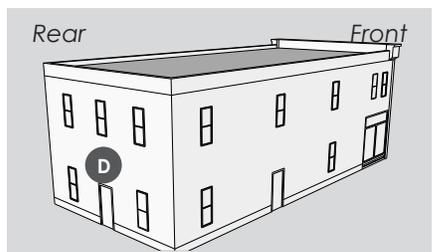
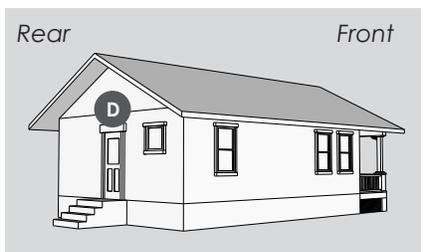
#### LOCATION C: Less Visible Secondary Wall

Portions of a side wall that are not as visible have more flexibility. Location C is the rear half of the historic side wall length.



#### LOCATION D: Not Visible Rear Wall

The rear wall is usually the least sensitive location. Alterations to the rear that are not visible from the street do not require a Certificate of Appropriateness.



This chart illustrates the relative position of the most sensitive parts of a contributing structure to maintain its integrity. While each building is considered on a case-by-case basis, this type of analysis will be used to determine where a change may occur. As an example, a new window might be installed in Location C without a negative effect to the historic character of a building. On the other hand, locating a new window opening in Location A would have a negative effect.

## B. ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS

**Intent:** Historic buildings change over time, sometimes with the addition of an extra room or rooms to add space or functionality. An addition to a contributing structure must be compatible with that structure and with other contributing buildings in the context area. It also must preserve the integrity of the existing structure.

Because contributing buildings are the most important buildings in the historic district, they must remain prominent. That means that an addition should be visually subordinate, or secondary, to the original contributing building. This can be achieved by limiting the addition's size and the complexity of its design.

1. Additions should generally be confined to the rear portion of an existing building and should leave the existing street frontage essentially unchanged.
2. Vertical additions - adding a second-story or a partial second-story to an existing one-story - are inappropriate. Adding a third story to any residential historic building is inappropriate.
3. An addition to a historic building should:
  - a. minimize the removal of historic building materials
  - b. not remove or cover character-defining features
  - c. not alter the basic form of the building
  - d. maintain the ridge and eaves of the historic building, if it is a second story addition
  - e. keep the addition visually subordinate to the historic building
  - f. retain the four corners of the historic building by inseting 18" with a minimum length of 3' of the inset section. After minimum length of 3', the rear addition's side walls may extend out.

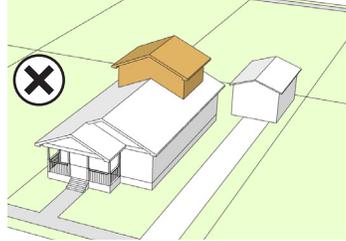
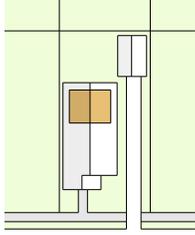


## APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE ROOF ADDITION ALTERNATIVES

The following three roof addition alternatives are inappropriate:

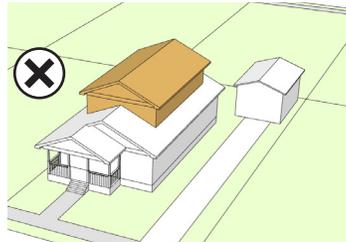
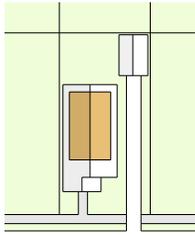
### 1. Addition Set Back Substantially with Tall Walls Inset from Historic Walls

- Proportionally the length of the addition is subordinate to the length of the side wall
- Roof pitch matches historic building
- Eave line is maintained
- Maintains all corners of historic structure



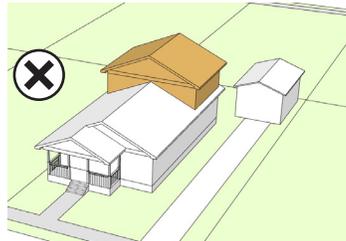
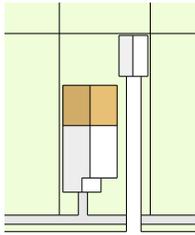
### 2. Addition Set Back Minimally with Tall Walls Inset from Historic Walls

- Proportionally the length of the addition dominates the historic building.
- A substantial portion of the historic roof material is removed.



### 3. Addition Set Back Substantially with Tall Walls Aligned with Historic Walls\*\*

- Proportionally the height of the addition at the eave is too tall and dominates the historic building.
- Eave line is somewhat maintained

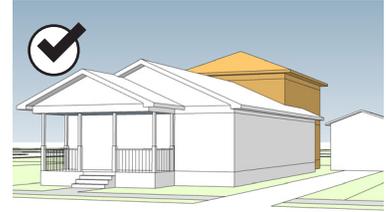
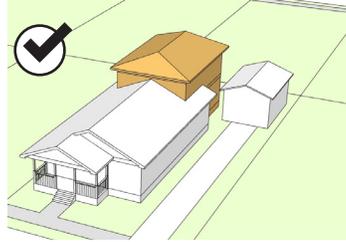
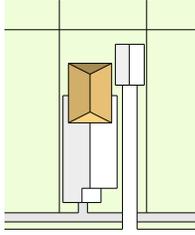


## APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE ADDITIONS ALTERNATIVES

These images illustrate how the guidelines for additions would apply to a series of design alternatives with combinations to the rear, side, and rooftop. Note: Alternatives 2. and 3. are inappropriate.

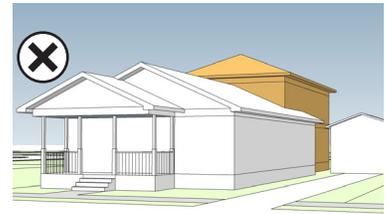
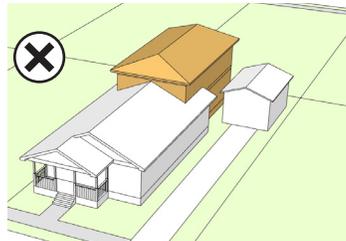
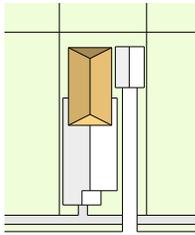
### 1. Combination of Rooftop Addition and Moderate Two-Story Rear Addition

- Proportionally the wall length of the combined rooftop and two-story addition is subordinate to the historic building
- Maintains all corners of historic structure
- Addition has minimal impact on rear yard open space



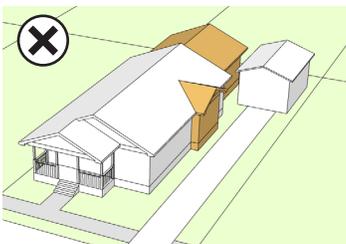
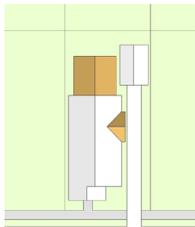
### 2. Combination of Rooftop Addition and Long Two-Story Rear Addition

- Proportionally the wall length of the combined rooftop and two-story addition dominates the historic building,
- Addition substantially impacts the rear yard open space.



### 3. Combination of One-Story Side Addition and Moderate One-Story Rear Addition

- Proportionally the wall length of the combined one-story rear and side addition is subordinate to the historic building.
- Side addition is substantially set back from the front wall plane
- Rear addition has moderate impact on rear yard open space
- Maintains all corners of historic structure

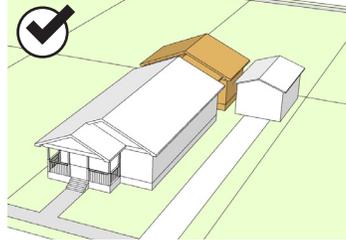
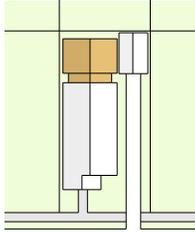


## APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE REAR ADDITION ALTERNATIVES

These images illustrate how the guidelines for rear additions would apply to a series of design alternatives. Inset 18" with a minimum length of 3' of the inset section. After minimum length of 3', the rear addition's side walls may extend out but must not extend beyond the original structure's side walls.

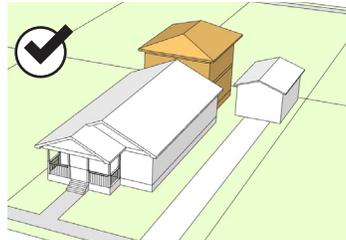
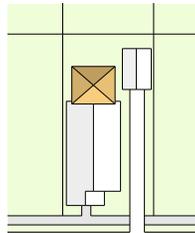
### 1. One-Story Addition with Hyphen and Walls Aligned with Historic Walls

- Proportionally the wall length of the addition is subordinate to the historic building
- Roof pitch matches historic building
- Maintains all corners of historic structure



### 2. Two-Story Addition Inset from Historic Walls

- Proportionally the wall length of the addition is subordinate to the historic building
- Maintains all corners of historic structure
- Addition has minimal impact on rear yard open space

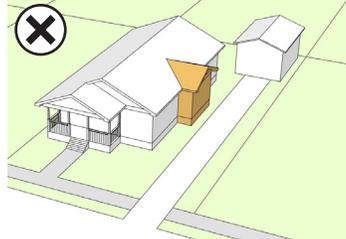
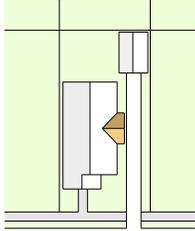


## INAPPROPRIATE SIDE ADDITIONS

These images illustrate how the guidelines for adding a side addition would apply to a series of alternatives.

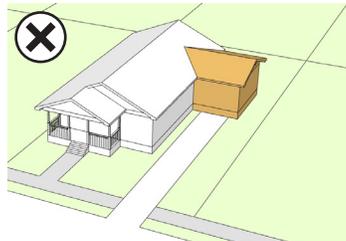
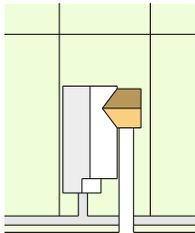
### 1. One-Story, Moderate Size Addition at Middle of Side Wall

- Addition is set back somewhat from the front wall plane
- Proportionally the front wall and side wall of the addition is subordinate to the historic building.
- Eave line aligns



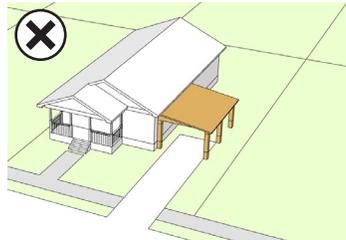
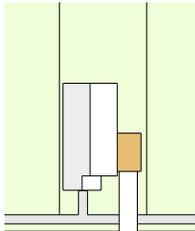
### 2. One-Story, Large Size Garage Addition at Rear of Side Wall

- Addition is set back substantially from the front wall plane
- Proportionally the front wall and side wall of the addition is somewhat subordinate to the historic building.
- Eave line aligns.



### 3. Attached Carport Addition at Front of Side Wall

- Addition is too close to the front wall plane
- Addition extends too far into the side yard



## C. DIFFERENTIATION

**Intent:** Additions should be differentiated from the existing building; in other words, a person looking at the property must be able to tell where the historic building starts and the addition begins.

1. Differentiate an addition from the contributing building.
  - a. Some options for achieving appropriate differentiation are provided below; this is not an exhaustive list. Which of these might be appropriate, as well as how many might be required to be used, will depend on the scope of the specific project. These apply to both residential and commercial/institutional properties.
    - 1) The size, profile, type, color, or orientation of materials may be different. For example, a building which is clad in wood siding may have an addition clad in cementitious fiber siding.
    - 2) Roof shape may be different; for example, consider a hipped roof on the addition to a house with a gabled roof.
    - 3) Roof height or pitch may be lower than the existing building.
    - 4) Eave height of the addition may be slightly higher or lower than the existing building.
    - 5) Eave style may be different; for example, consider using boxed eaves on an addition to a house with open rafter tails; the eave depth (overhang) may be different.
    - 6) Windows in an addition may have a simpler lite pattern than the windows in the existing building.
    - 7) Trim boards are insufficient for differentiating between an addition and existing building.
    - 8) An 18" inset to preserve original corners with a minimum 3' length of the inset section.
    - 9) A one story rear addition must have its ridge height a minimum of 1' below the original building's ridge height.



*This rear addition is compatible. It is set behind the primary contributing buildings, is separated by an inset, and is subordinate in height, mass and scale. It is also a successful contemporary addition.*



*This is a compatible rear addition even though it is slightly taller than the historic building. It is compatible because it is offset, separated by a hyphen and uses compatible materials.*

4



Preserve an original porch, including its form, materials, and details.

### Repairing Porch Railings

Avoid removing original materials that are in good condition or that can be repaired in place.



Before: A deteriorated handrail



After: Handrail repaired and the post replaced in kind

This original porch has been repaired in an appropriate manner.

## D. ELEVATED FOUNDATIONS

**Intent:** In some cases, it may be necessary or desirable to elevate the foundation of an existing structure to provide greater flood protection. Elevated residential foundations should be compatible with the surrounding historic context. In most cases, elevating a residential foundation will require porch stairs to be raised and/or extended. Extended porch stairs should be designed to be compatible with the design of the front porch and entry. **Elevated foundations only on pier and beam. This is compatible with the historic character of Old Sixth Ward. No slab foundations. Slab foundations are incompatible and inappropriate.**

The HAHC will consider requests to raise a structure to meet flood elevation requirements and related Building Codes if the overall change in height is compatible with the building type and context. The City of Houston's ordinance recognizes that sufficient clearance to grade is necessary for maintenance and preserving the foundation.

Note: To request approval to increase finished-floor height based on increased risk of flooding, please provide documentation, such as photographs showing previous flooding of your property, proof of prior flooding into or close to existing structures, etc., as well as current finished-floor height measurements of all structures on the property. Also, if conditions on a specific lot would require a different finished floor height in order to meet requirements of the Building Code, please provide that information in the Certificate of Appropriateness application.

1. Locate the foundation height of a structure to be compatible with the building type and surrounding historic context.
  - a. Ensure that the foundation height of an elevated structure is in scale with historic structures on the block face.
  - b. Ensure that the foundation height is compatible with the character of the elevated structure.
  - c. Do not raise a structure to install a street-facing garage door beneath the first floor.
2. Extend stairs to be compatible with the design of the front entry and porch.
  - a. Extending front-facing porch stairs towards the street where space allows.
  - b. Extending front-facing stairs with a 90-degree dog-leg extension to access an asymmetrical front porch.
3. Enclose the space between the elevated foundation piers of a raised residential structure with framed lattice. Lattice work or brick exterior with ventilation and access panels (a.k.a. vented brick skirting) are appropriate.

## APPROPRIATE ENCLOSURE AND PORCH STAIR EXTENSION FOR AN ELEVATED RESIDENTIAL FOUNDATION

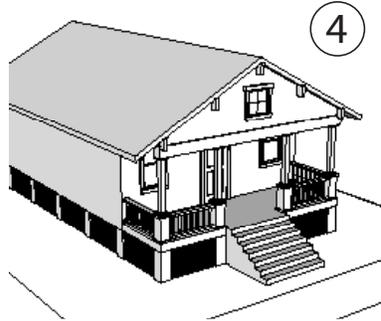
Appropriate foundation enclosure and porch stair extension designs depend on the height of the elevated foundation and the configuration of the porch (whether the porch stairs extend from the middle of the porch in a symmetrical design or from the side in an asymmetrical design). Appropriate porch stair extension strategies are shown below.

### Symmetrical Porch Design

### Asymmetrical Porch Design

#### Moderately Elevated Foundations

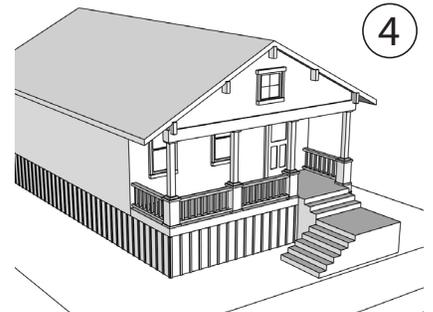
Front-facing porch stairs should generally be extended further forward if space permits.



Original central stairs are extended forward, where space exists to do so.



Original offset stairs are extended forward where space exists to do so.



An offset stair is turned where space does not exist to extend it straight forward.

## E. PORCHES

**Intent:** Porches are some of the most important character-defining features for houses in the district and should be preserved. Front porches frame and shelter primary entrances, and they often include distinctive decorative details which help to define an architectural style.

Porches typically consist of the following parts: a hipped, gabled, or shed roof, which is supported by posts or columns and finished with a ceiling; a balustrade between the posts, which includes top and bottom rails, with balusters in between; a floor deck; and steps from the ground to the porch, which may be flanked on either side by posts or piers and sometimes handrails.

A property owner who wishes to restore a porch should refer to historic photographs of the property and consult with Houston Office of Preservation staff, who can provide helpful guidance. *Note: Please refer to the Houston Building Code for additional requirements for balustrades and handrails.*

### For Existing Porches

1. Preserve an original porch, including its form, materials, and details.
  - a. Keep wooden porch elements painted.
  - b. Maintain the height and pitch of a porch roof.
  - c. Do not enclose a front porch in a way that alters its open character.

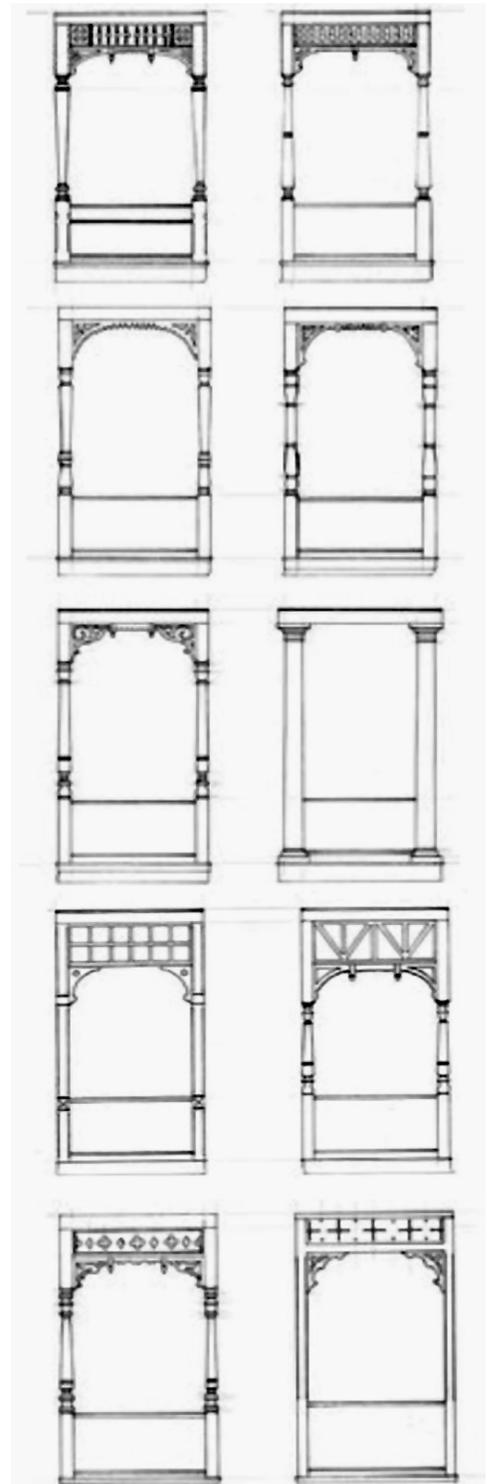


Replacement porch elements (unpainted) match the original components.

3. If repair is not possible, replace only those elements of the porch which are not repairable.
  - a. Replace a historic porch element to match the original.
  - b. Use materials that match the style, texture, finish,

### Historic columns and decorative features

The sketches below show character-defining features associated with Victorian porches. This includes spindlework, and jigsaw detailing as well as turned columns. The balustrade and railings are not detailed in these sketches.

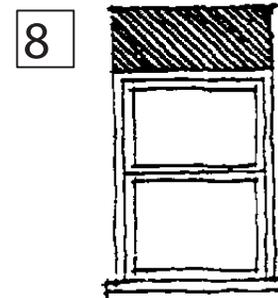
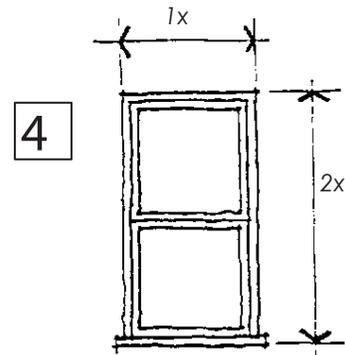


composition, and proportion of the original in-kind.

- c. Match the balustrade of a historic porch in scale,
  - d. Replace wooden porch steps with the same size material and profile. Substitute materials, such as composites, may be appropriate if their appearance matches that of the original material.
4. If replacement is required, design it to reflect the time period of the historic structure.
- a. Replace a historic porch element to match the original.
  - b. Use replacement materials and elements that are appropriate to the style, texture, finish, composition and proportion of the historic structure.
  - c. Where an original porch is missing entirely, base a replacement porch on physical or photographic evidence. If no evidence exists, draw from similar styled structures in the district.
  - d. Do not completely replace an entire porch or element unless absolutely necessary. Only replace the element or portion of an element that requires replacement.

**Please Note:**

The National Park Service publishes Preservation Brief No. 9: *The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows*, which is available free of charge online at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/9-wooden-windows.htm>.



Choose a window that fits the opening; don't use a smaller window and fill in above it.

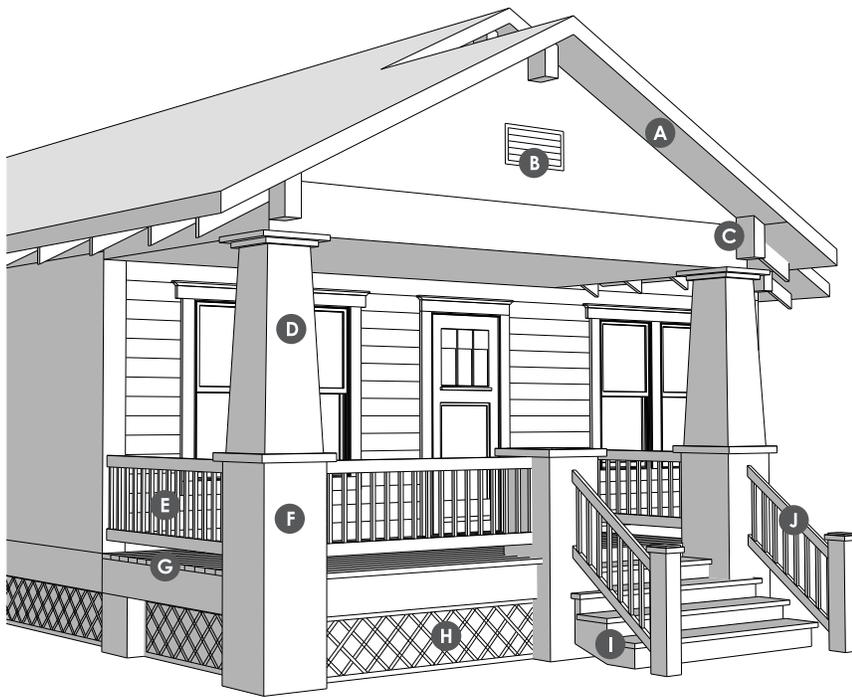


Repair, rather than replace, frames, sashes, and other features.

**Please Note:**

See the preceding chart on page **V-3** "Prioritizing Character-defining Features by Location" when applying these guidelines.

## Typical Porch Features

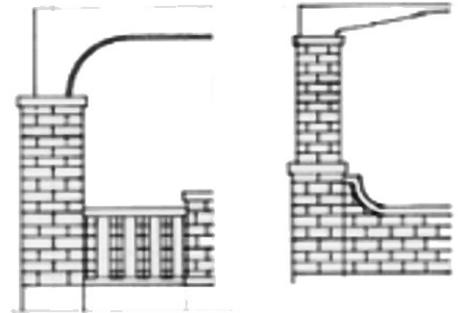


### KEY:

A	Porch Eave
B	Gable Vent
C	Decorative Roof Beam/ Triangular Knee Brace
D	Column
E	Balustrade
F	Raised Pier
G	Porch Deck
H	Skirting/Screening
I	Stringer
J	Handrail

### Historic columns and decorative features

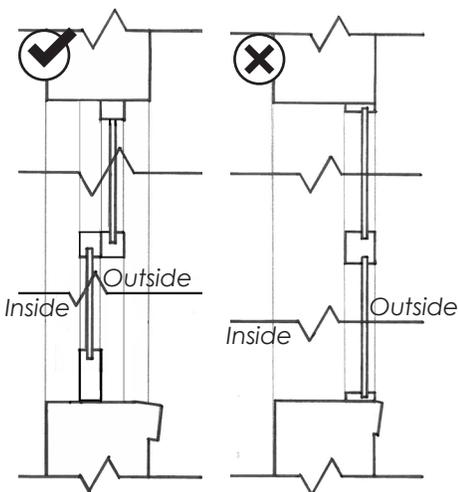
The sketches below show character-defining features associated with Craftsman porches.



## Wood Windows

Historic wood windows that were built before 1940 are likely to have been constructed with old-growth timber, which grew slowly and naturally, resulting in strong wood with a tight grain. Lumber available today is grown quickly, resulting in a product that is not as hard, strong, or stable. The quality of historic wood windows is usually far superior to a new wood window, and historic windows should be preserved and repaired, not replaced. In many cases, a historic window that is damaged or deteriorated can be repaired by re-glazing, patching, and splicing wood elements. A homeowner with a few hand tools can complete most window repairs, with no special skills needed.

Note: Studies have shown that 90% of energy loss from a building is through attics, doors, and floors, not the historic windows. Repair and weatherization of historic wood windows is usually less expensive than replacement. If an original window has been so damaged that it cannot be repaired, its replacement should be in character with the historic building.



If a window must be replaced, match the original material, sash configuration and profile. The window sections above identify a simplified appropriate and inappropriate double-hung replacement window profile.

## F. DOORS

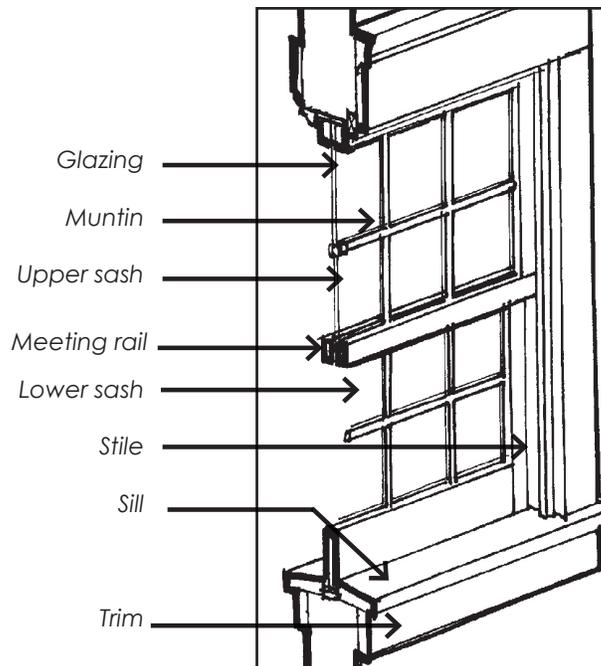
**Intent:** Many types and styles of historic front doors can be found on buildings in the district. Some are solid wood with decorative panels, while others are wood with glass lites; some have sidelights and transoms. The door is one of the primary character-defining features of a historic building and these should be preserved. A door's character is based on its design, materials, and location. When a new door is needed, it should be in character with the building.

1. Preserve the proportions of a historic door and its opening.
2. Repair, rather than replace, a historic door.
3. If a door cannot be repaired, match its replacement to the original.

## G. WINDOWS

**Intent:** Most windows are character-defining features and should be preserved. Even those openings which provide ventilation for attic spaces contribute to the character of the building.

The proportion, profile, lite pattern, material, and location of windows all contribute to the character of a window, and help to define the architectural style. Windows in historic buildings were historically made of wood. Metal framed windows are also found in historic buildings.



1. Preserve the proportions of historic window openings.
  - a. Preserve the original size, shape, and arrangements of

**NOTE:**

Reference the discussion of Context Area in Section I when considering compatibility of foundation heights.

# SECTION VI: GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

This section is meant to define and illustrate compatible new construction within the Old Sixth Ward Historic District. Similar to additions, new construction must adhere to specific guidelines to ensure it fits within the existing historic character of the neighborhood (see Section 1, page I-14.) These guidelines also apply to non-contributing structures. Any change to a non-contributor should be compatible with the context area.

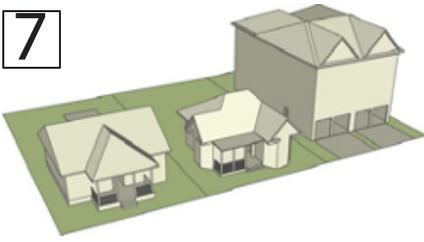
## IN THIS SECTION

- A. Building Forms** ..... VI-2
- B. Roof Forms**..... VI-3
- C. Height**..... VI-4
- D. Foundations** ..... VI-5
  - Elevated Foundations .....VI-5
- F. Porches** ..... VI-7
- G. Windows & Shutters**..... VI-8
- H. Doors** ..... VI-9
- I. Decorative Finishes & Materials** ..... VI-9
  - Trim ..... VI-9
  - Materials And Finishes ..... VI-9
- J. Dormers**..... VI-10
- K. Garages And Accessory Buildings**..... VI-10



Most contributing buildings along the blockface are fairly simple in design. A new building should similarly be fairly modest.

7

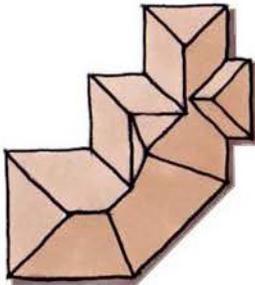


An example of inappropriate massing (far right) that is out of scale with the context.

In defining how new development can be introduced into this existing fabric in an appropriate and compatible manner, it may be helpful to begin by considering an example that would be clearly inappropriate. The illustration to the left depicts several lots along a typical street within the District. The two lots on the left represent historic cottages of types commonly seen in the District; the lot on the right illustrates a new construction. The new construction shown here are two townhomes occupying a single lot. The front of the units is dominated by garage doors and driveways. In order to maximize living space, the living areas are usually located one level above grade, with bedrooms occupying a third level. This image illustrates several factors that contribute to the incompatibility of this development:

- Disparity in scale and massing resulting in disruption of the cohesive rhythm along the block. The new construction is considerably taller than the adjacent buildings and occupies a much greater portion of the site.
- The disposition of parking and garages makes them the most dominant feature of the street frontage.

7



Street

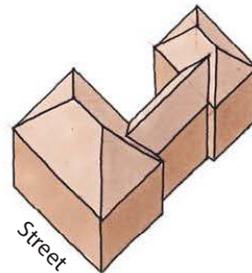
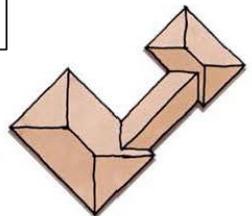
Inappropriate massing: complex volumes and a lack of articulation that reflects historical forms

## A. BUILDING FORMS

**Intent:** Most contributing buildings along the blockface are fairly simple in design; the new building should similarly be fairly modest.

1. A building shall be composed of a simple rectilinear volume, or a combination of simple volumes when the resulting footprint serves a meaningful purpose, such as defining an exterior courtyard or a focal element on a front façade. When combining multiple volumes to create a more complex envelope, each volume should be clearly articulated. In addition, a primary building volume should remain that is oriented to the street.
2. The use of angles other than right angles should be limited to subordinate accent elements such as bay windows.

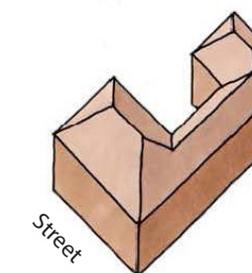
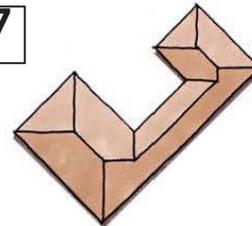
4



Street

Appropriate massing: combines simple articulated forms that reflect historical mass and scale

7



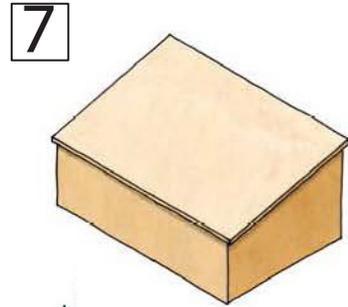
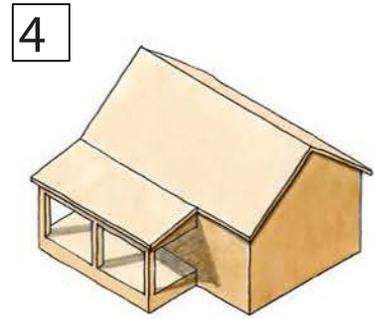
Street

Inappropriate massing: separate volumes are not articulated

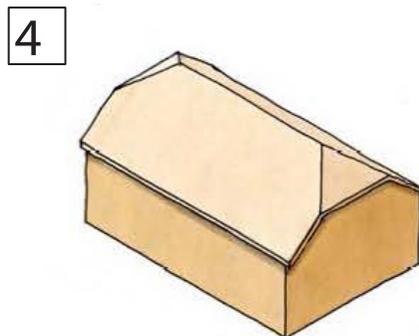
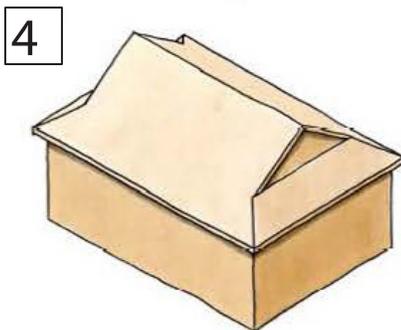
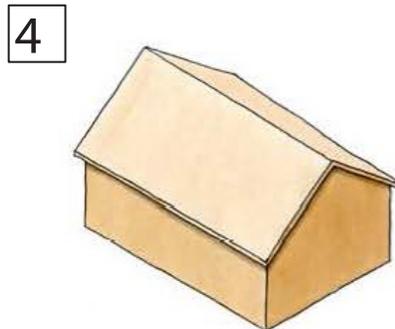
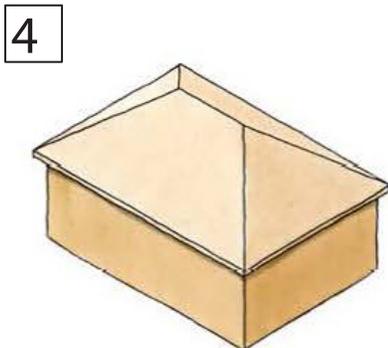
## B. ROOF FORMS

**Intent:** New residential buildings should have pitched roofs of simple profiles with extended eaves.

1. The following types of roofs are appropriate:
  - a. gable
  - b. hip
  - c. simple combination of gable and hip
  - d. hybrid designs such as a gable-on-hip, cross gable, or truncated gable
2. Monopitch roofs should be avoided but are permissible when part of a subordinate element or framing into a vertical element.
3. Roof pitches should be in the range of 6-on-12 to 12-on-12.
4. Flat roofs are permissible only on commercial buildings in the commercial context area. Flat roofs shall be defined by a parapet along any street-facing elevation.
5. Roof overhangs (eaves) are recommended. A vernacular treatment seen widely in the District is to simply leave the roof rafters exposed beyond the wall line. This can be done with a straight cut, a plumb cut, or a decorative shape.
6. If a flat soffit is desired, the eave should have a horizontal return at all gable ends.



Monopitch or shed roofs should be avoided unless part of a subordinate element, such as on the porch in the upper example.



Appropriate roof forms, clockwise from top left, include hip, gable, clipped gable or jerkin head, and gable-on-hip.



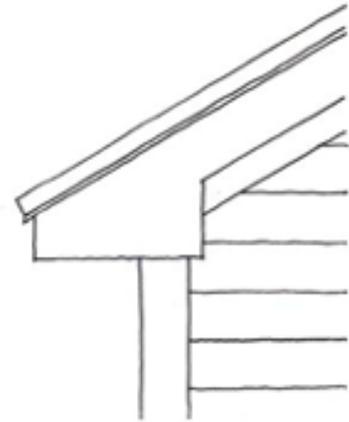
4

Vernacular treatment simply extends the fascia beyond the wall.



4

If a flat soffit is desired, the gable end should be finished with a horizontal return.



7

This soffit is not finished with a horizontal return.

## C. HEIGHT

**Intent: A new building's height should be compatible with the contributing building heights in the context area.** An appropriate building height, as with many other characteristics in the District, is determined by the condition existing on the blockface or facing blockface(s). While the specific conditions may vary, the following provisions may be used as a general guideline.

1. Building height in the District should generally not exceed 2 stories (approximately 27 feet) at the top of the eave board at the side and rear building lines. The height may be increased by one foot for every foot of distance inside of the building line.
2. Occupied space is permitted within the roof structure, provided that the overall building form fits within the recommended envelope defined above.

## D. NEW CONSTRUCTION FOUNDATIONS

**Intent:** A new foundation should be compatible with the height and character of contributing building foundations in the context area. The traditional method, used widely throughout the District, is a raised pier and beam foundation.

1. All new construction and additions must be on pier and beam.
2. Foundations should be designed so that the finished floor surface is at least 18 inches above prevailing and existing grade.

### Elevated Foundations

**Intent:** In some cases, it may be necessary or desirable to provide an elevated foundation for a new structure to provide greater flood protection. Elevated residential foundations should be compatible with the surrounding contributing buildings. Porch stairs should be designed to be compatible with the design of the front porch and entry.

The HAHC will consider requests to provide an elevated foundation to meet flood elevation requirements if the overall height is compatible with the context. To request approval for a greater foundation height based on increased risk of flooding, please provide documentation, such as photographs showing previous flooding of the property, proof of prior flooding into or close to property, etc., as well as current finished-floor height measurements of all structures adjacent to the property. Also, if conditions on a specific lot would require a different finished floor height in order to meet requirements of the Building Code, please provide that information in the Certificate of Appropriateness application.

1. Locate the foundation height of a structure to be compatible with the surrounding historic context.
  - a. Ensure that the foundation height of an elevated structure is in scale with historic structures on the block face.
  - b. Do not raise a structure to accommodate a street-facing garage door beneath the first floor.
2. Design stairs to be compatible with the design of the front entry and porch.
  - a. Orient front-facing porch stairs towards the street where space allows.
  - b. Extending front-facing stairs with a 90-degree dog-leg extension to access an asymmetrical front porch.
3. Enclose the space between the elevated foundation piers of a raised residential structure with framed lattice.

## APPROPRIATE ENCLOSURE AND PORCH STAIR EXTENSION FOR AN ELEVATED RESIDENTIAL FOUNDATION

Appropriate foundation enclosure and porch stair designs depend on the height of the elevated foundation and the configuration of the porch (whether the porch stairs extend from the middle of the porch in a symmetrical design or from the side in an asymmetrical design). Appropriate strategies are shown below.

### Symmetrical Porch Design

### Asymmetrical Porch Design

#### Moderately Elevated Foundations

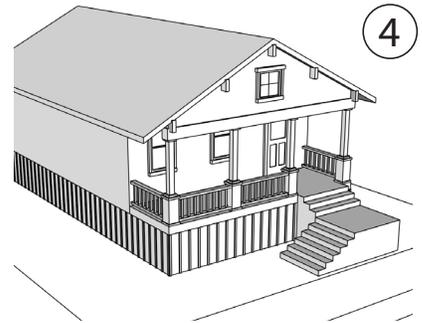
Front-facing porch stairs should generally be extended further forward if space permits.



Central stairs extend forward, where space exists to do so.



Offset stairs extend forward where space exists to do so.

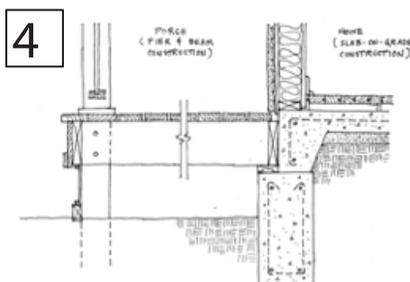


An offset stair is turned where space does not exist to extend it straight forward.

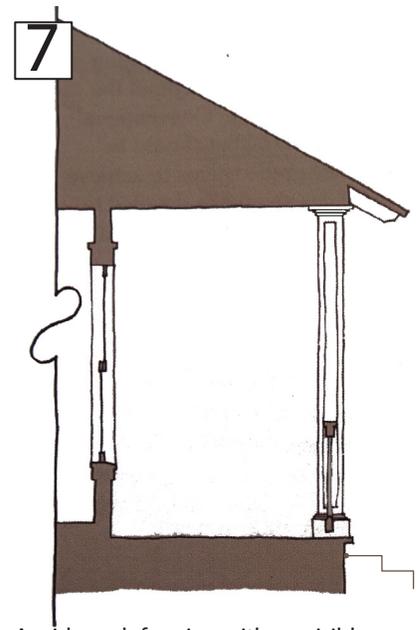
## F. PORCHES

**Intent:** Front porches are essential characteristics of the Old Sixth Ward house and are highly recommended for compatible new construction. They should be designed to be compatible with the contributing buildings in the context. New interpretations are encouraged, but they should be constructed with typical porch features such as: roof, overhanging eaves, columns, and balusters, etc.

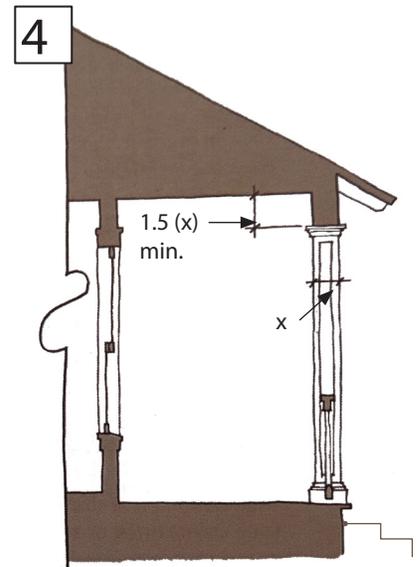
1. Provide a front porch. They should extend a recommended minimum of 50% of the overall width of the structure, and should be at least 6 feet deep with 8 feet of headroom.
2. Porch foundations should appear as pier and beam foundations.
  - a. A combination system with a concrete slab for the main structure, and a pier and beam foundation for the porch structure can be readily achieved.
  - b. Foundation piers shall be faced with monochromatic (one color) brick or stucco.
3. Porches should be defined by a series of similar columns spaced in a regular manner. In cases where there is an unusually long colonnade (a row of columns), the corner columns may be differentiated. This can be achieved by providing two, or even three columns of the same size at the corners, for example.
4. A porch beam should be provided. The porch beam is the horizontal element spanning across the tops of the columns. It should be a clearly expressed element dropping below and distinct from any soffit or eave. The porch beam should be at least as deep as the width of a typical column, and preferably about 1.5 to 2 times the column width.
5. Balustrades (railings) shall consist of a series of repetitive vertical balusters spanning between a lower rail and upper rail. They should be fairly open. Avoid solid panels or "pony walls."
  - a. Baluster designs may vary greatly, ranging from simple 2x2 square pickets to contemporary turned posts.
  - b. Baluster flat boards cut into a decorative, repetitive pattern are also acceptable.



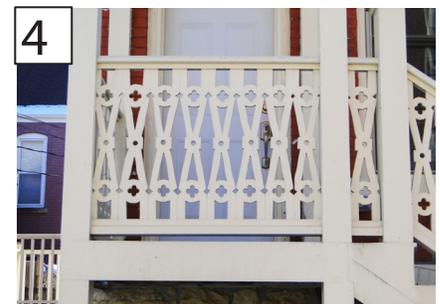
A combination foundation with a porch on pier and beam and the main structure on slab.



Avoid porch framing with no visible beam dropped below the roof/soffit line.



A well proportioned porch should have a substantial beam spanning over the tops of columns, separate and distinct from the roof eave.



Baluster flat boards cut into a decorative, repetitive pattern are appropriate



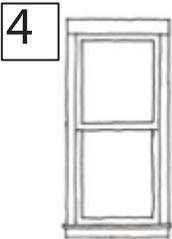
Shutters should be real, operable units and should be correctly proportioned to the window opening.

## G. WINDOWS & SHUTTERS

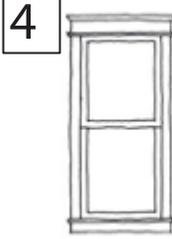
**Intent:** Select windows for new buildings that are compatible with contributing buildings in the context area.

1. Any single window should be square or vertically proportioned (i.e., taller than it is wide). Several windows may be grouped together for wider arrangements.
2. Window materials should be of wood or clad wood profiles. Vinyl and fiberglass profiles that resemble wood may also be used. Residential aluminum windows should be avoided. Operable windows should be double hung, single hung, or casement types.
3. Divided lights, if used, should be true divided lights with mullions (strips of wood that separate and hold the panes of glass) rather than snap-in false mullions.
4. Specialty windows include such shapes as round, oval, or fan. They shall be used sparingly and generally only for accent purposes. They shall be of similar materials and construction as the other windows and compatible with the architectural style of the house.

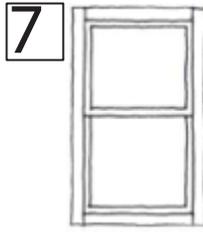
Shutters should be real, operable units and should be correctly proportioned to the window opening (i.e., with a width equal to one half the opening width). Shutters should not be used on double or triple openings. Rolling shutters are not recommended.



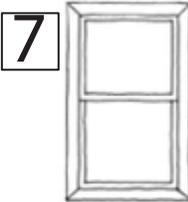
Window trim should articulate a sill element, as well as a header that is deeper than the side casing.



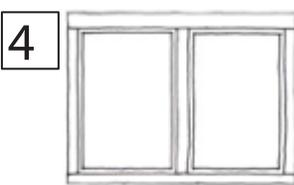
This same principle can be rendered with more ornate moldings in a more decorative or more formal style.



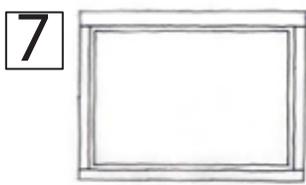
The horizontal trim elements should dominate at corners, so that the side casing appears to rest on the sill, and the header appears to rest on the side casing.



Do not use mitered boards of the same width to trim an opening.



Expansive views and greater amounts of glazing may be achieved by mulling together several vertical windows.



Windows shall be vertically proportioned, that is, taller than they are wide.

## H. DOORS

**Intent:** Select entry doors for new buildings that are compatible with contributing buildings in the district.

1. Entry doors facing the street may feature a transom window above the door.

## I. DECORATIVE FINISHES & MATERIALS

### Trim

**Intent:** The trim for new buildings should be compatible with the primary construction material used on the contributing buildings in the context area.

1. Wood or cementitious trim should be used with wood siding. Stucco may have relief trim of a like material or may be treated with simple, unarticulated transitions.
2. Particular attention should be paid to trim work around window and door openings. Properly detailed trim around openings should mimic a structure: for example, the side casing should appear to rest on the sill and to support the head and top casing. Avoid mitered corners.

### Materials And Finishes

**Intent:** Select materials and finishes for new buildings that are compatible with contributing buildings in the context area.

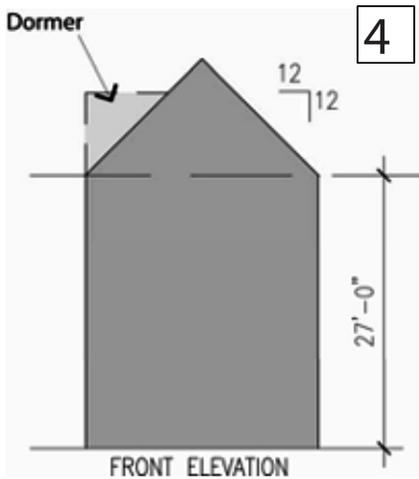
1. Exterior walls may be finished in any of the following:
  - a. Wood or cementitious siding.
  - b. Modular brick.
2. King size, jumbo, and other non-standard brick sizes should be avoided.
3. Roofs may be constructed of any of the following materials:
  - a. Dimensional composition shingles, which may feature a ridge vent for ventilation purposes.
  - b. Galvanized metal and pre-finished metal panels, in standing seam, batten seam, or 5-V crimp pattern. Colors should be muted neutral or gray tones.
  - c. Flat roofs, where appropriate, may be of any built-up or membrane roofing system.



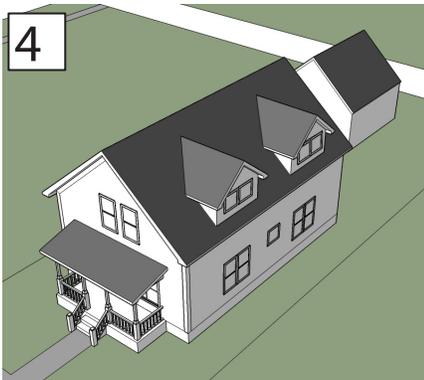
Select entry doors for new buildings that are compatible with contributing buildings in the district.



The trim for new buildings should be compatible with the primary construction material used on the contributing buildings in the context area.



Permissible building envelope for a dormer on a two-story building.



Dormers should be subordinate in scale to the primary roof, complement the roof form, and set below the ridge line of the primary roof.



Garages and accessory buildings should be located to the rear of the lot to ensure that the proposed project is compatible with contributing buildings along the block face.

## J. DORMERS

**Intent:** Dormers should be subordinate in scale to the primary roof and complement the roof form. They should also be compatible with contributing buildings in the context area. A dormer should be considered as part of the roof rather than trying to mimic the wall below. Dormers are generally used to provide windows for an upper story that is built within the roof form; the window is the principal reason for the dormer.

1. Traditionally, a dormer is often expressed as framing around a window, and not a short piece of wall with a window opening. The key detail is the jamb, which is often expressed as a single piece of trim, with no siding showing. Similar detailing may be considered for new buildings.
2. A dormer should be proportioned similarly to a window; that is, substantially taller than it is wide.
3. Half dormers (sometimes called wall dormers) are generally used only in masonry or stucco construction and are a way of introducing a heavy wall material as a dormer finish that would otherwise look awkward and unnatural when supported by a roof. The wall element should form a parapet, so that the roof and the wall are clearly expressed as distinct elements.
4. Dormers comprising less than 10% of the building's footprint area may project above the recommended building height of 27 feet on a two-story building. A dormer should be set below the ridge line of the primary roof.

## K. GARAGES AND ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

**Intent:** Garages, accessory buildings, and covered carports provide important structures for many properties. They should be subordinate to the primary structure in design and visibility. They should also complement the primary structure in design. Finally, these structures should also minimize impacts on neighboring properties.

1. Garages and accessory buildings shall be located to the rear half of the lot.
2. Garages and accessory buildings shall be architecturally compatible with and subordinate to the principal building on the lot. They should:
  - a. Use similar materials and color
  - b. Roof pitches and roof forms as illustrated in Section VI: Roof Forms (VI-3)
  - c. Be smaller in size than the primary structure
  - d. Have 36" maximum finished floor height
  - e. 10' maximum first floor plate height
  - f. Have 9' maximum second floor plate height
  - g. Have 16' maximum 1-story garage or accessory building ridge height
  - h. 26' maximum 2-story garage/garage apartment or accessory building ridge height.

# SECTION VII: APPENDICES

**IN THIS SECTION**

**Appendix A: Resource Materials ..... A-2**  
**Appendix B: A Village In The City ..... A-3**  
**Appendix C: Illustrated Glossary ..... A-5**

## FOR ASSISTANCE:

Property owners should always consult with planners in the Houston Office of Preservation for assistance before beginning design work, as well as during the planning and design of a project.

To reach the Planner of the Day, call the Historic Hotline at 832-393-6556 or send email to [historicpreservation@houstontx.gov](mailto:historicpreservation@houstontx.gov).

You can also visit in person (with an appointment):  
Houston Office of Preservation  
Planning & Development  
Department  
611 Walker Street, 6th Floor  
Houston, Texas 77002

You can also contact the Old Sixth Ward Neighborhood Association. Their contact information is online at <https://www.old6ward.org>

# APPENDIX A: RESOURCE MATERIALS

A wide variety of resources are available to assist property owners and design professionals as they plan building projects in historic districts. The following is not an exhaustive list but the resources provided in this section are a good place to start. The Houston Office of Preservation can assist you in finding additional information.

## City of Houston

Complete information about the City of Houston's historic preservation programs and design review process are available online at [www.houstontx.gov/planning/HistoricPres/](http://www.houstontx.gov/planning/HistoricPres/).

## Texas Historical Commission

State-specific information about the National Register of Historic Places and preservation programs, including the Texas Historic Preservation Tax Credit program, is available at [www.thc.texas.gov](http://www.thc.texas.gov).

## National Park Service

Publications from the National Park Service include Preservation Briefs, which include technical information about the repair and maintenance of historic building materials and systems. Hard copies are available to order; electronic versions can be accessed online at [www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm).

NPS also publishes The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, available online at [www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm).

## APPENDIX B: A VILLAGE IN THE CITY

Home to approximately 2,000 Houstonians, the area now called the Old Sixth Ward was originally part of a two-league Mexican land grant made in 1824 to John Austin. On July 6, 1838, two years after John K., Augustus C., and Charlotte B. Allen founded the town of Houston, S.P. Hollingsworth filed a survey of the area in which he divided the land into large, narrow tracts that ran northward from Buffalo Bayou. By January 1839, portions of the Hollingsworth survey located in the future Old Sixth Ward had been conveyed to several prominent Houstonians, including W. R. Baker, James S. Holman, Nathan Kempton, and Henry Allen. By 1858, W. R. Baker and his friends owned or held mortgages on most of the land in this area. Baker engaged the County Surveyor, Samuel West, to restructure his holdings by converting the whole area into a lot and block system. The new survey was laid out to true north, varying from downtown, which was platted at a 45-degree angle to true north. The first sale after the re-platting took place on January 31, 1859, when Baker transferred several blocks to W. W. Leeland. Subsequent lot and block sales followed Baker's plat, which remains in use today.

For many years, W. R. Baker served as President of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad. Its route approached Houston from the northwest, and the railroad's success greatly influenced the growth of the neighborhood, which attracted immigrants seeking employment. Long noted for its ethnic and economic diversity, the neighborhood has at various times been home to Swedish, German, English, Irish, French, Swiss, Italian, Polish, Eastern European, Jewish, African, Chinese, Vietnamese, Mexican, Latin American, and Scottish immigrants. The 1870 census indicates that everyone who lived in this area worked either for the railroad or in a related enterprise, such as construction or retail services.

In 1871, Glenwood Cemetery opened at the western edge of the area. In 1872, Washington Avenue was graded and the number of businesses located there increased. By 1878, the Houston Street Railway (trolley) extended to Washington Avenue, where the business district was known as "Uptown," in contrast to the Market Square area, which was known as "Downtown." A bird's-eye view of the area drawn in the early 1890s shows the neighborhood to have been fully developed with a structure on almost every lot. By the early 1900s, the Sixth Ward was a fully developed community complete with a fire station, a public school, stores, saloons, churches, and industrial establishments.

The Houston Chronicle newspaper lauded “Fourth Ward North,” as Sixth Ward was originally called, as one of the finest and “healthful” places to live in Houston. The area enjoyed the highest elevation in Houston as well as abundant artesian water, fed by the Beauchamp Springs. Its residents enjoyed the neighborhoods proximity to downtown and other attractions such as the popular Highland Park resort at the corner of Houston Avenue and White Oak Drive, which had excellent swimming and boating facilities. Fourth Ward North was so popular that the Chronicle ran a weekly section on it for several years.

The majority of the houses standing today were built in the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s as modest, one-story frame cottages occupied by single families. During the 1880s, the majority of the families living in the neighborhood were of German descent. Many of those families lived on farms in the country in northwest Houston where the Spring Branch, Rosslyn, Timbergrove, and Oak Forest subdivisions now stand. In keeping with German tradition, they built houses in Sixth Ward as “town homes.” They would use these houses while selling their farm produce at the city market downtown, doing their annual shopping, socializing, or attending theatres or opera houses downtown. They used timber from their farms to build these houses.

During the late 19th century, more than half of the houses were owner-occupied. The vernacular character of these dwellings was enhanced by decorative millwork, usually applied to the front porches. As the 20th century progressed, new housing reflected changes in architectural styles. Craftsman Bungalows were built among the cottages, but the essential character of the neighborhood did not change. During World War II, many of the original owners had passed on and their houses were converted from single to multi-family tenant dwellings, often owned by absentee landlords. Since achieving recognition as both a nationally and a locally designated historic district, the Old Sixth Ward has witnessed the restoration of many homes to single-family occupancy.

Today's Old Sixth Ward is often described by visiting historians as a small village in the shadow of downtown Houston. The Old Sixth Ward is a complete community with historic churches, corner stores, and even a school and cemetery. It is with the intent to preserve this valuable cultural resource that the design guidelines and historic district were created.

## APPENDIX C: ILLUSTRATED GLOSSARY

This glossary includes terms used in the design guidelines. The City of Houston's historic preservation ordinance also includes a list of terms and definitions, and some of those are provided here for your convenience. Terms and definitions which appear in both places are marked with an asterisk (\*). This glossary is intended to supplement, not replace, the definitions provided in the ordinance.

*Alteration:* "any change to the exterior of a building, structure, object or site. Alteration shall include, but is not limited to, replacing historic material; changing to a different kind, type or size of roofing or siding materials or foundation; changing, eliminating, or adding exterior doors, door frames, windows, window frames, shutters, railings, columns, beams, walls, porches, steps, porte-cocheres, balconies, signs attached to the exterior of a building, or ornamentation; or the dismantling, moving or removing of any exterior feature. Alteration includes expanding an existing structure or the construction of an addition to an existing structure. Alteration includes the painting of unpainted masonry surfaces. Alteration does not include ordinary maintenance and repair, or the addition or replacement of fences that are not otherwise regulated by this article."\*

*Archaeology:* relating to the study of past human behavior through use of material remains of historic and prehistoric origin.

*Archaeological site:* a property or location designated by the city council on which there exists material remains of past life or past life activities that occurred on the property or at the location.

*Baluster:* a vertical shaft or post, the form of which may be square, lathe-turned, or molded; used to support the handrail of a porch or staircase. Also known as a spindle.

*Balustrade:* a railing or low wall consisting of a handrail on balusters (small supporting posts) and a base rail.

*Bead Board:* a traditional paneling comprised of individual tongue-and-groove boards with a half round bead along one edge, frequently used as a finish material for ceilings, porch soffit, and wainscoting.

*Block:* one or more lots, tracts, or parcels of land bounded by streets, easements, rights-of-way, or other physical features or a combination thereof.

*Blockface:* the portion of a block that abuts a street.

*Bracket:* a building element (often a piece of wood) used to support or strengthen an overhanging element, such as the eave of a roof; also, a decorative element that appears to be, but does not function as, a structurally supporting member.

*Building:* any structure used or intended for supporting or sheltering any use or occupancy.

*Building permit:* an official document or certificate issued by the building official authorizing performance of a specified activity, including the alteration, restoration, rehabilitation, construction, relocation or demolition of a building, structure, or object.

*Certificate of Appropriateness:* "current and valid permit issued by the HAHC or the director, as applicable, authorizing the issuance of a building permit for construction, alteration, rehabilitation, restoration, relocation or demolition required by this article." \*

*Character-defining Features:* visible, physical features of a building including the overall shape of the building, the materials with which it was built, evidence of craftsmanship in design and construction, decorative details, and elements of the site.

*Column:* a building element made of a load-bearing base which supports a vertical shaft, topped with a capital. A column may be freestanding, but it is more often used to structurally support a horizontal beam.

*Compatible:* having qualities that preserve the character of a historic district or resource.

*Conservation plan:* an inventory and analysis of historic resources within a geographic area of the city that has been designated or proposed for designation as an historic district pursuant to the provisions of this article, which contains standards for alteration, rehabilitation, restoration, construction, relocation and demolition of buildings, structures, objects or sites in an historic district.

*Construction:* the act of expanding an existing building, structure or object or the erection of a new building, structure or object on a lot, site, or other property.

*Context:* is often defined by similar site features, building age, and design characteristics within a defined area. A context for a historic district context similar site and building design characteristics often include:

- Building age
- Building alignment along the street (setback)
- The amount of open space on the property
- Building size and height
- Building massing
- Building materials
- Solid-to-void ratio (the number of window openings to wall area)
- Alignment of building features such as: porches, windows eaves, and foundation, for example

*Context Area* – “the blockface and opposing blockface within the district where the proposed activity is located. Context area may include a different geographic area if the commission finds that unusual and compelling circumstances exist or if the context area is described differently in design guidelines.” \*

*Contributing Structure* – “a building, structure, object or site that reinforces, or that has conditions, which, if reversed, would reinforce, the cultural, architectural or historical significance of the historic district in which it is located, and that is identified as contributing upon the designation of the historic district in which it is located. The terms also includes any structure that was identified as ‘potentially contributing’ in any historic district.”\*

*Corbel*: a bracket of stone, wood, or metal projecting from the side of a wall and serving to support a cornice, the spring of an arch, a balustrade, or other element.

*Cornice*: the molded projection placed at the edge of the top of wall, entablature, or roof, thereby finishing or crowning the structure.

*Cross gable*: a roof shape that features two sets of gables, one set facing the front and back of the house and the other facing the sides, which cross to form a right angle.

*Demolition*: an act or process that destroys in whole or in part any building, structure, object, or site.

*Director*: Director of the Department of Planning and Development.

*District*: the Old Sixth Ward Protected Historic District.

*Designation*: the formal recognition by the city council of a building, structure, object, site, or district as historically, architecturally, culturally, or archaeologically significant to the city, state, nation, or region.

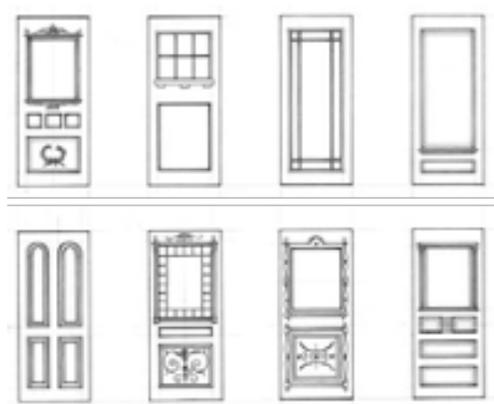
*Door*: Entry to the building. An original front door is a character-defining feature.



This residence on Sabine Street is a contributing structure



The residence at 1904 Kane is a contributing structure



Doors in the District display a range of designs with recessed panels; some of these may contain glass lights.

*Dormer*: a window set upright in a sloping roof; the roofed projection in which this window is set.

*Double-hung window*: a window having two panels (sashes), each of which is framed to hold one or more panes of glass, and both of which can be moved up and down.

*Eave*: the overhanging lower edge of a roof.

*Economic Return*: a profit or capital appreciation from use or ownership of a building, structure, object, or site that accrues from investment or labor.

*Elevation*: one vertical side of a building or structure.

*Excavation*: to expose, uncover, or remove by digging, cutting, or hollowing out.

*Exterior feature*: an architectural element located on the outside of a building.

*Façade*: a face of a building, usually referring to the main entry side of the structure.

*Fascia*: a band of molding or trim board that runs horizontally along the uppermost edge of a wall, just below the eave.

*Free-standing sign*: a detached sign that is supported by one or more columns, uprights, or braces extended from the ground or from an object on the ground; or, a detached sign that is erected on the ground.

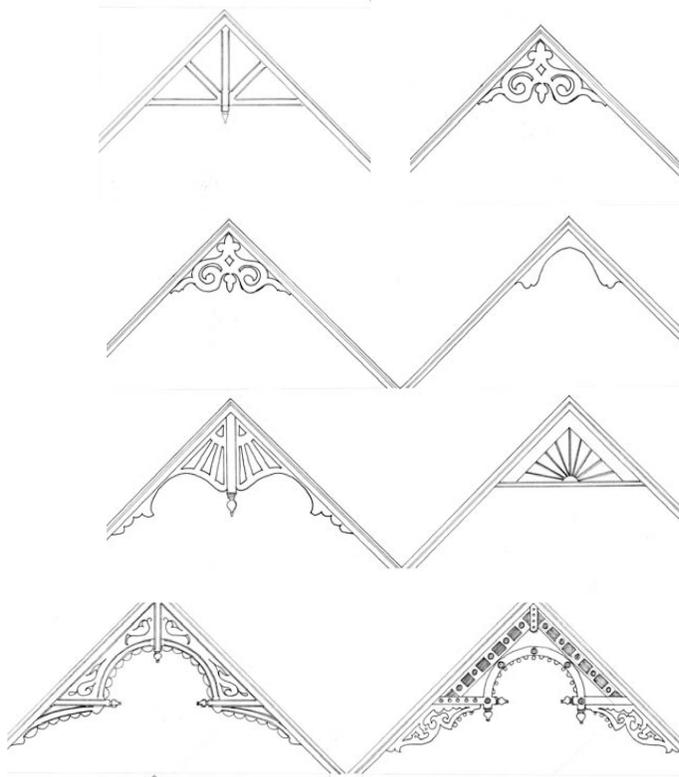
*Foundation*: the base supporting a building or structure, which transfers loads to the ground.

*Fretwork*: a decorative design cut out of a solid piece of material or carved in low relief on a solid background; may be a geometric, grid, lattice, or intertwined pattern.

*Gable*: the generally triangular portion of a wall between the two sloped edges of a roof.

*Gable-on-hip*: a roof structure in which a steeply sloped gable roof rests upon and extends from the top central surface of a hipped roof.

*Gable ornament*: a decorative trim added at the apex of a (usually front facing) gable on structures built in the later part of the 19th century.



*Examples of gable ornaments found within the District.*

*Gable window*: a decorative window located within the gables of a structure.

*Glazing*: a transparent pane which is set into a window sash or a door; often set into a groove within the frame and secured with triangular glazing points, putty, or a molding.

*HAHC*: "the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission." \*

*Handrail/guardrail*: a rail attached to a surface or supporting structure, designed to be grasped for added stability.

*Historic district*: a geographical area designated by the city council that possesses a significant concentration, linkage or continuity of buildings, structures, objects or sites united by historical, cultural, architectural or archaeological significance to the city, state, nation or region.\*

*Historic Property*: a building, structure, object, or site significant in American history, architecture, engineering, archaeology, or culture at the national, state, or local level that is 50 years or older.

*Hood molding*: a projecting molding or trim around the top of a doorway or window to throw off the rain.

*Houston Code*: the City of Houston Code of Ordinances.



The Residence at 1904 Decatur is an incompatible construction.

*Incompatible*: a non-harmonious and inconsistent relation between two or more structures or objects, distinguished by scale, material, compositional treatment, and other features that do not add to the character of the scene.

*In-kind*: of the same type, design, and material.

*Integrity*: is the quality of retaining building characteristics associated with historical, cultural, or architectural significance.

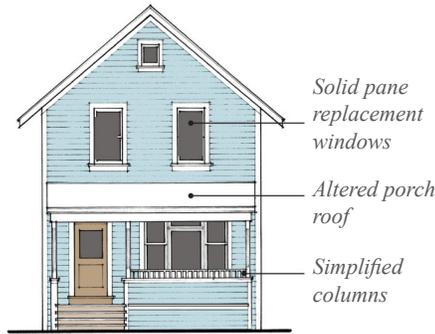
## Building Integrity

**Original design**



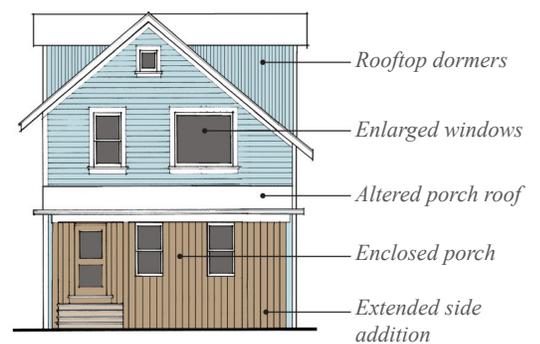
*This building retains its integrity.*

**Partially altered**



*Some alterations:  
This building remains contributing with opportunity for restoration.*

**Substantially altered**



*Major alterations:  
This building does not retain its integrity.*

The illustrations above show how integrity can be lost through alterations. One major alteration can destroy integrity, but a series of multiple smaller changes — can have the same cumulative, negative effect.

*Inventory*: a list of historic resources that have been identified and evaluated as meeting specified criteria of significance.

*Jamb*: a vertical piece or surface that forms the side of an opening, such as a window, door, or vault.

*Joist*: a structural member laid horizontally in a series from wall to wall or beam to beam, to support the weight of a floor, ceiling, or roof.

*Landmark*: "any individual building, structure, object, or site designated by the city council for its historical, cultural, architectural, or archaeological significance in the city, state, nation, or region." \*

*Latticework*: a decorative panel made of thin strips of material in a criss-crossed pattern.

*Lite (or light)*: a piece or section of glass, set within a frame in a window or door. A single window unit may have multiple lites.

*Lintel*: a horizontal beam that carries the load above an opening, such as a window or door.

*Louvers*: horizontal slats or fins, sometimes movable, which are set into an opening at a slant to admit light and air but keep out rain.

*Mandatory repair*: “a repair of a building or structure that is necessary to comply with Chapter 10 of the Houston Code of Ordinances as evidenced by an order of the hearing official or the building and standards commission or by a citation.” \*

*May*: provisions activated by this auxiliary verb indicate an optional provision.

*Mimic*: to copy or imitate closely.

*Molding*: a decorative strip of material placed atop a surface for ornamental or finishing purposes.

*Muntin*: a thin strip of wood or metal used to separate and hold in place the panes of glass within a window sash.

*New (infill) Construction*: “a free-standing building or structure proposed to be constructed within a historic district designated by city council, whether that building or structure is on the location of a vacant lot or a lot with another structure on it.” \*

*Non-contributing*: “a building, structure, object or site that does not reinforce the cultural, architectural, or historical significance of the historic district in which it is located, and is identified as noncontributing upon the designation of the historic district in which it is located.” \*

*Object*: “a material thing of a functional, aesthetic, cultural, historical, or scientific value that may be moveable by nature or design, yet is related to a specific setting or environment.” \*

*Ordinary maintenance and repair*: “any work to correct or prevent deterioration, decay or damage to a building, structure, object or site (or any part thereof), including but not limited to painting or adding or replacing fences, provided that the work does not change the design, character, texture or material of any exterior feature or constitute an ‘alteration’ as defined above.” \*

*Pier*: a vertical structural element, constructed of masonry units, that supports a horizontal structural element (beam) laid across its upper ends.

*Porch*: a raised, usually unenclosed platform attached to one or more sides of a building and used primarily as a sitting area, outdoor living space, or covered access to a doorway.

*Pier-and-beam*: a simple type of construction system, composed of vertical structural members that support a horizontal structural member.

*Plane* – a flat surface.



Example: A non-contributing structure.

*Plate glass:* a flat sheet of glass, such as may be inserted into a window or door.

*Porch:* a raised, usually unenclosed platform attached to one or more sides of a building and used primarily as a sitting area, outdoor living space, or covered access to a doorway.

*Porte-cochère:* a covered structure attached to a building, through which a vehicle can pass, which allows passengers to exit vehicles and enter the building under cover and out of the weather.

*Post:* a wooden vertical structural element that supports a horizontal structural element (beam) laid across its upper ends.

*Potentially contributing structure:* This category has been reassigned as a contributing building established by the City of Houston.

*Preservation:* the act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity, and material of a building or structure and the existing form and vegetation cover of a site. It may include initial stabilization work, where necessary, as well as ongoing maintenance of the historic building materials.

*Public right-of-way:* an area, at grade level, dedicated to the public for the passage of people or goods.

*Pyramidal roof:* a type of hipped roof with a square base and four sides that meet at a central peak.

*Qualified curatorial association:* an organized and permanent non-profit institution, essentially educational or aesthetic in purpose, with professional staff, that owns and utilizes tangible objects, cares for them, and exhibits them to the public on some regular schedule, provided that the institution meets the requirements of the Council of Texas Archaeologists' Guidelines (Curation Standards and Procedures), 1992 edition, as may be amended or updated from time to time.

*Quoins* – blocks, usually masonry or stone, but sometimes of wood, at the corner of a wall; may be structural or simply decorative; often laid so that they appear to wrap around the corner with alternating short and long sides.

*Rafter:* a structural member that rests on the top of a wall or other supporting surface and rises at a slope to the ridge or peak of the roof; a series of rafters supports the roof deck and eaves.

*Rafter tail:* the exposed end of a rafter, which may extend to or beyond the edge of the roof eave.

*Real property records:* the applicable records of a county in which conveyances of real property are recorded.

*Reconstruction*: “the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.” (NPS)

*Rehabilitation*: “the act or process of returning a building, structure, object, or site to a state of utility that makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions or exterior features that are historically, architecturally, and culturally significant.” \*

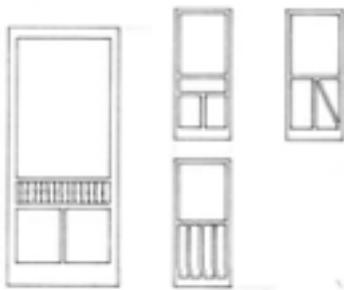
*Relocation*: “any change in the location of a building, structure, or object.” \*

*Restoration*: “the act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of a building, structure, object or site and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of later work, or by the replacement of missing earlier work or both.” \*

*Roof pitch*: “the slope of a roof surface expressed in inches of vertical rise per twelve inches of horizontal distance.” \*

*Scale*: the relationship between two or more objects, such as the size of windows, doors, and porches in relation to people (“human scale”), or the size of a new building as compared to its neighbors.

*Screen door*: located to the front entry door to the building. An original screen door is a character-defining feature.



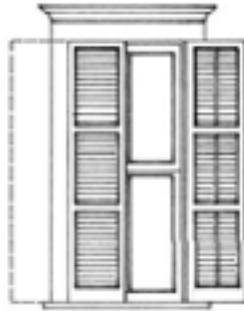
*Shall*: provisions activated by this auxiliary verb indicate a mandatory provision.

*Shingle*: a standardized piece of roofing or wall material, used in overlapping courses to provide a weatherproof covering; may be cut into shapes (e.g., square, fish-scale, octagon, staggered, diamond, cove) to form patterns.

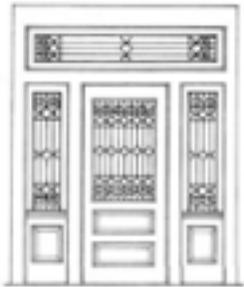
*Shiplap*: Wooden siding rabbeted so that the edge of one board overlaps the one next to it in a flush joint.

*Should*: provisions activated by this auxiliary verb indicate a recommendation or intent.

*Shutters: provide security and protection from weather. Historic shutters were typically constructed with angled, adjustable louvers to allow ventilation while blocking the sun.*

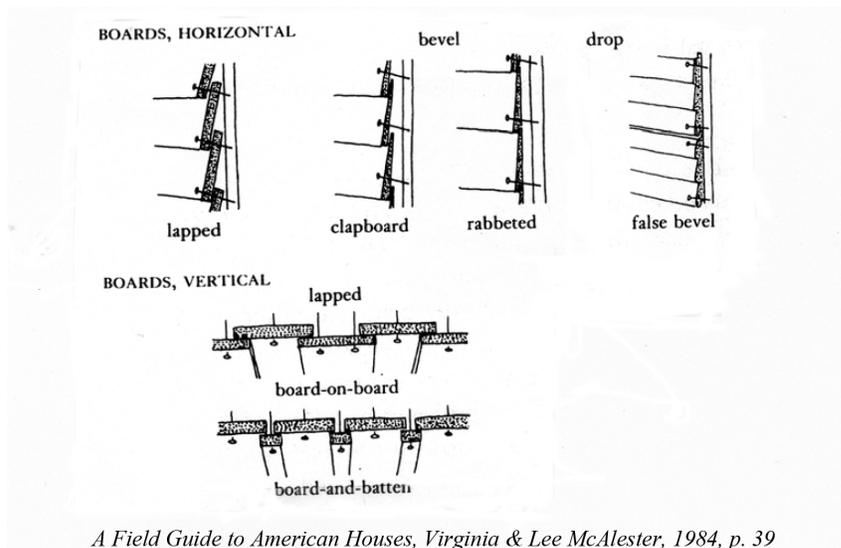


*Sidelight: a vertical window on one or two sides of a central door.*



This door has a sidelight on each side of the door.

*Siding: also, referred to as exterior wall cladding. This is the material that covers the outside of a framed wall. Typically, this is wood lap siding.*



*Significance:* A historic resource — a building, structure, object, site, or district — may be considered important for a variety of reasons. If the resource meets certain criteria established by local, state, or federal laws, it may be considered significant. Usually, these criteria include the architecture, whether the resource is associated with important people or events, or if it might be an important archaeological site.

*Sill:* the horizontal bottom member of a window or door frame.

*Site:* property upon which a significant event occurred, including but not limited to any land, building, or natural resource where prehistoric or historic occupations or activities occurred; or the location of buildings and structures, whether standing, ruined, demolished, or relocated, where the location retains historical, architectural, or archaeological value and integrity.

*Stabilize:* to make resistant to change in condition. A building is usually stabilized to retard deterioration until it can be repaired. A weather resistant closure and a safe structural system are minimum stabilization efforts.

*Stoop:* a small landing or platform, often accessed with steps, which leads to an entrance of a building.

*Structure:* "that which is built or constructed; an edifice or building of any kind, or any piece of work artificially built up or composed of parts joined together in some definite manner." \*

*Stucco:* an exterior wall coating usually made of lime, Portland cement, sand, water, and other materials that add strength and flexibility; applied in a thin layer and frequently applied over a mesh that helps the stucco bond to the wall material.

*Tract:* "a contiguous parcel of land under common ownership." \*

*Transom:* a horizontal window over a door or window; also, a window or group of windows above a storefront display window(s).

*Trim:* material used to decorate or frame a building façade or an opening, such as a door or window.

*Truss:* a structural system made of straight members arranged into triangular units; typically used to support a roof, because a truss can carry heavier loads and span greater distances than a simple beam.

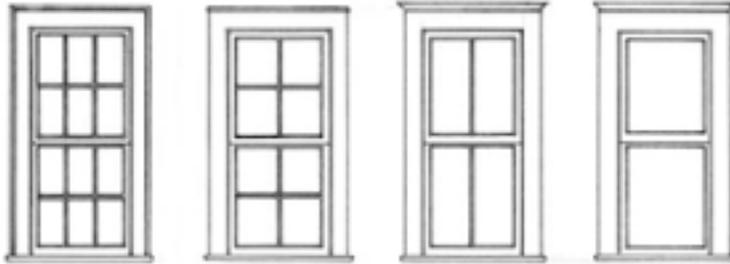
*Vacant Lot:* any property that has no existing building or structure, and is available for new construction.

*Veneer:* a thin slice of material, usually of wood, brick, stone, or other masonry, used to cover a surface.

*Verge board:* an ornamental board attached to the projecting edge of a gable roof; also known as a *barge board*.

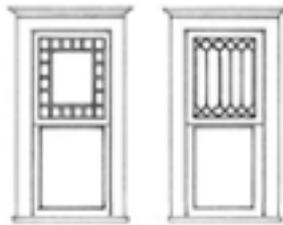
*Weep hole:* an opening built into an exterior masonry wall, which allows water to pass from inside a wall system to the outside.

*Window:* these features provide light and air into the building and are character-defining features. They provide stylistic detailing, and scale to the building facade.

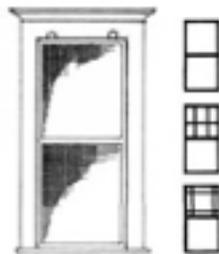


Windows are frequently described by the number of divided lights (panes of glass) in each sash. Shown here from left to right are a 6-over-6, 4-over-4, 2-over-2, and a 1-over-1.

A more decorative upper sash is also fairly common.



*Window screen:* A screen is sometimes provided on the outside of the window to keep the pests out. Screens are typically simple in design and hang on hook and eye hardware at the top rail with a center mullion.



A typical wood-framed screen is shown in the left column, and a row of double-hung windows is shown in the right hand column.