2. GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Alterations to Landmark Structures and Contributing Structures in Historic Districts

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ILLUSTRATIONS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

The design guidelines include many photographs and diagrams to illustrate acceptable or unacceptable approaches. The illustrations are provided as examples and are not intended to indicate the only options.

If there appears to be a conflict between the text of the design guidelines and a related illustration, the text shall prevail.

KEY TO ILLUSTRATION SYMBOLS

- A checkmark on an illustration indicates an approach that is generally appropriate.
- An asterisk on an illustration indicates an approach that may be acceptable in some contexts or situations.
- An X mark on an illustration indicates an approach that is generally inappropriate.
INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides guidelines for the treatment of historic structures, including individually-designated Denver landmarks and contributing structures in historic districts. The following core preservation values provide the basis for the guidelines:

- **Protection.** Keeping historic landmarks and districts in use and protecting them from deterioration
- **Rehabilitation.** Updating historic structures to accommodate modern living and repair deteriorated features
- **Authenticity.** Retaining historic character, features and materials
- **Sustainability.** Reuse of historic buildings and materials
- **Continuity.** Keeping significant places that convey the community’s history over time
- **Vitality.** Activating historic buildings, places and neighborhoods
- **Community Identity.** Providing Denver with a unique sense of place
- **Stewardship.** Caring for distinguished historic structures and passing them on to future generations

Preservation practice is based on making the least invasive repairs, modifications and other changes necessary for preservation and reuse of a historic structure and its character-defining features. Introductory charts and diagrams on the following pages summarize key preservation topics, including:

- Character-defining features typically seen on different types of historic structure (page 21)
- Preferred overall treatment options for character-defining features (page 22)
- Considerations for replacing character-defining features (page 23) or making alterations on a façade that is not visible (page 16)

The introductory charts and diagrams are followed by specific design guidelines for the treatment of historic structures.

Note that guidelines throughout this document that refer to “commercial” buildings will also be applied to civic and institutional buildings. Guidelines for site design, landscaping and lighting are provided in Chapter 5.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

When planning a preservation project, it is important to be aware of the character-defining features of the historic structure and district, if the structure is in a district.

“Appendix A: The Character-defining Features of Denver’s Historic Districts” provides summaries for many historic districts. If no district summary is available in Appendix A, or the property is an individually-designated Denver landmark structure, refer to the designation application and to Landmark Preservation staff for more information.

Typical character-defining features of a historic structure are illustrated on the next page.
The typical character-defining features of a historic residential, commercial and civic/institutional building are illustrated below. Where applicable, page number references are provided to guidelines that address the particular feature (note that guidelines on other pages may also apply).

**HISTORIC HOUSE OR SMALL-SCALE RESIDENTIAL BUILDING (TWO-UNIT DWELLING, TOWNHOUSE, ETC.)**

- **Roof** - See page 37.
- **Historic Architectural Feature** - See page 27.
- **Garage / Secondary Structure** - See page 49.
- **Windows** - See page 29.
- **Historic Materials** - See page 24.
- **Porch** - See page 46.
- **Door** - See page 34.
- **Foundation** - See page 40.

**HISTORIC COMMERCIAL BUILDING**

- **Roof** - See page 37.
- **Historic Materials** - See page 24.
- **Cornice** - See pages 23 & 51.
- **Windows** - See page 29.
- **Storefront Features** - See page 51.
- **Awning** - See page 56.
- **Transom** - See page 51.
- **Display Window** - See page 51.
- **Recessed Entry** - See page 51.
- **Bulkhead / Kickplate** - See page 51.
- **Foundation** - See page 40.

**HISTORIC CIVIC OR INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING**

- **Iconic Rooftop Features** - See page 57.
- **Roof** - See pages 37 & 57.
- **Historic Materials** - See pages 24 & 57.
- **Decorative Windows** - See pages 29 & 57.
- **Low Window to Wall Ratio** - See page 57.
- **Grand Entry Feature** - See pages 34 & 57.
The design guidelines in this chapter follow the preferred sequence of improvements in the *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. When selecting a treatment for the character-defining features of a historic structure, the option that requires the least intervention is always preferred to best maintain integrity. (Refer to page 15 for more information.) The treatment options below are listed in order of preference, followed by information on treatments that are not generally appropriate for historic structures.

Note that greater flexibility may be available for the treatment of features in a location that is not visible as described on page 16.

1. **PRESERVE**

   If a historic feature is intact and in good condition, preserve it with regular maintenance to sustain the integrity of the structure.

2. **REPAIR**

   If a historic feature is deteriorated or damaged, repair it to its original condition.

3. **REPLACE**

   If it is not feasible to repair a historic feature, then replace it in kind (i.e., materials, detail and finish). Replace only that portion which is beyond repair.

4. **RECONSTRUCT**

   If all or part of a historic feature is missing, reconstruct it from appropriate evidence, such as historical photographs, or features on similar adjacent properties. See “Reconstruction & Replacement of Character-defining Features” on page 23 for more information.

5. **ADD COMPATIBLE FEATURES**

   If a new feature (one that did not exist previously) or an addition is necessary, its design should minimize the impact on a historic structure. It is also important to distinguish new features on a historic structure from original historic elements, and avoid adding features to primary building façades (see page 27).

**TREATMENTS THAT ARE NOT GENERALLY APPROPRIATE**

The following treatment approaches are generally inappropriate for historic structures:

- **Exterior Remodeling** is the process of changing the historic design of a building. The appearance is altered by removing original details or adding new features that are out of character with the original, or were not originally present.

- **Deconstruction** is the process of dismantling a building such that the individual material components and architectural details remain intact for reuse or relocation. Although it is more environmentally-friendly than demolition, it is usually inappropriate for a historic property.

- **Demolition** is any act or process that destroys all or part of a historic structure. See “Demolition Review Process” on page 14 for more information.

Figure 10: Preferred Sequence of Treatment Options for Character-defining Features

5. Preserve the character-defining features of a historic building, such as the moldings around this door and sidelight assembly.

6. If a feature is deteriorated or damaged, repair it to its original condition.

7. If it is not feasible to repair a historic feature (top window sill), replace it in kind (bottom).
Reconstruction & Replacement of Character-defining Features

When a window, door, storefront or other character-defining feature has been significantly altered or is missing, a range of reconstruction and replacement treatments may be appropriate. The illustration below depicts a historic commercial façade with altered and missing features, followed by a range of potential treatments. Accurate reconstruction is the most appropriate approach.

Researching archival materials such as historic photos and building plans can provide insight into the location and design of original character-defining features.

The cornice and storefront illustrated above have been accurately reconstructed. This is the most appropriate treatment when good historical information is available about the design. It is especially important to use this treatment when the structure is highly significant or the context has many intact historic structures.

The cornice and storefront illustrated above have been reconstructed using a simplified historic interpretation because not enough historic information and/or skilled craft persons were available for accurate reconstruction. This approach may also be appropriate if accurate reconstruction is planned as a later phase of the project.

The cornice and storefront illustrated above have been reconstructed using a contemporary interpretation because not enough historic information and/or skilled craft persons were available for accurate reconstruction and the structure sits in a context with a high level of variety. This treatment may also be appropriate where substantial alterations or a lack of information about the historic design make other options difficult.

Figure 11: Reconstruction & Replacement of Character-defining Features
Treatment of Historic Materials

**INTENT STATEMENTS**

2a To convey the character of Denver’s landmarks and historic districts by preserving, maintaining and uncovering historic building materials

2b To keep the integrity of historic buildings by retaining historic building materials

2c To reduce the environmental impacts of new material production by replacing only those materials that are deteriorated beyond repair

**SEEK PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR SEVERE DETERIORATION**

Buildings with evidence of more severe deterioration may require assistance from professionals experienced in historic preservation. For example, evidence of structural issues such as cracked masonry may require a structural engineer or eroded stone may require a masonry specialist.

**GUIDELINES FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC MATERIALS**

2.1 Preserve original building materials.
   a. Protect original building materials from deterioration.
   b. Don’t remove original materials in good condition or which can be repaired.

2.2 Use gentle methods when cleaning and refinishing historic materials.
   a. Use a low pressure water wash if cleaning is necessary.
   b. Perform a test patch before cleaning and refinishing to ensure that the procedure will not have an unanticipated negative effect on the material.
   c. Avoid using harsh cleaning methods, such as sandblasting, which can damage historic materials and cause future deterioration.

2.3 Repair original building materials, when needed.
   a. Repair deteriorated building materials by patching, piecing-in, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the material.
   b. If disassembly of an original element is necessary for its repair or restoration, replace the disassembled components in their original configuration.

2.4 Replace original building materials in kind, if repair is not feasible.
   a. Replace only those materials necessary to facilitate a necessary repair.
   b. Use original materials, historic sizes, and original installation method to replace damaged building materials on a primary façade whenever possible.
   c. If use of original materials is not feasible, use only replacement materials that have proven durability and are similar in scale, finish and character to the original material.
   d. Use of alternative materials may sometimes be acceptable for replacement of damaged building materials for rear façades.
   e. Avoid covering historic materials with new ones or using veneers.

2.5 Remove later covering materials that have not achieved historic significance.
   a. Repair original materials after they are uncovered.
   b. Test the removal of covering materials such as stucco or permastone to assure that the original underlying material will not be damaged.

8. Remove later covering materials that have not achieved historic significance. The covering illustrated at left was removed to reveal the underlying historic materials (right).
2.6 Maintain original protective layers on masonry.
   a. Maintain the natural water-protective layer, or patina, to protect masonry from the elements.
   b. Consider removing paint if the procedure will not damage the original finish.
   c. Do not paint or stucco masonry walls that were not coated historically (this can seal in moisture, which may cause extensive damage over time).

2.7 Re-point deteriorated masonry mortar joints.
   a. Duplicate original mortar in strength, composition, color and texture.
   b. Duplicate the mortar joints in width and profile.
   c. Avoid using caulk, silicone sealant, or mortar with a high Portland cement content, which will be substantially harder than the original.

2.8 Protect wood features from deterioration.
   a. Maintain paint on wood surfaces. Original wood features have a long lifespan when properly maintained.
   b. Provide proper drainage and ventilation to minimize decay.
   c. Maintain protective coatings to retard deterioration and ultraviolet damage.
   d. Use wood consolidants to preserve as many original materials as possible.
   e. Repair wood siding and features, replacing elements beyond repair in-kind.
   f. Avoid covering wood with stucco or similar finishes.

2.9 Preserve and repair significant architectural metal features.
   a. Preserve historic cast iron, steel, copper and other original materials used in columns, roofs, fences and decorative features.
   b. Provide proper drainage on metal surfaces to minimize water retention.
   c. Maintain protective coatings, such as paint, on exposed metals.
   d. Repair metal features by patching, splicing or otherwise reinforcing the original metal whenever possible.
Masonry in Denver

Denver is notable for its high prevalence of historic masonry building materials, including brick, stone and terra cotta. Although many of Denver’s earliest buildings were built from wood, they were mostly rebuilt in masonry after a fire started at 15th and Blake in 1863.1 The difficulty of obtaining lumber for wood construction, new fire codes, and cold winters, made masonry an ideal material for the city’s construction. In addition to building façades, architects and craftsmen used masonry to construct a variety of building details, including sandstone parapets, window sills and architectural details.2

It is important to preserve and repair brick, stone, terra cotta, stucco, concrete and other masonry materials used in building walls, site walls, steps, and walkways. Additional information regarding the proper treatment of historic masonry materials in Denver is provided below.

BRICK

Rich local clay deposits and fireproof construction requirements favored brick as the most common historic masonry material in Denver. It was used to build most of the city’s historic houses, as well as barns, garages, streets and sewers. Brickyards offered a variety of products, and the prevalence of brick in Denver ensured the availability of expert bricklayers and craftsmen.2

STONE

Five main rocks were quarried locally—granite, sandstone, marble, travertine and rhyolite tuff. These rock types were used alone or in combination in downtown commercial buildings and Capitol Hill mansions.3

TERRA COTTA

Terra cotta became a popular building material after 1900 when technological improvements to production allowed a greater range of colors and glazes. It was primarily used for commercial buildings and for some foundations. The Denver Terra Cotta Company was one of the largest producers in the country.4

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The National Park Service provides several preservation briefs related to historic masonry materials, including:

» Preservation Brief #1: Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings
» Preservation Brief #2: Re-pointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings
» Preservation Brief #7: The Preservation of Historic Glazed Terra-cotta
» Preservation Brief #38: Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry

Figure 12: Masonry in Denver

4 Noel and Norgren, The City Beautiful.
Treatment of Historic Architectural Features

10. Retain and treat exterior stylistic features and examples of skilled craftwork, such as these terracotta columns and art deco medallions, with sensitivity.

11. Preserve significant stylistic and architectural features, such as bay windows and masonry detailing.

12. Preserve significant stylistic and architectural features, such as lap siding, wood shingles, pendant ornament, trim and moldings.

INTENT STATEMENTS

2d To maintain historic architectural details that convey the character and significance of historic properties.

2e To limit damage to historic features by using the method of preservation that requires the least intervention.

2f To respect historic design character and style of a historic building.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Similar nearby structures and historic photographs may provide clues to the original appearance of historic materials and architectural features. The Western History Department of the Denver Public Library and History Colorado have repositories of historic photographs.

GUIDELINES FOR ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

2.10 Preserve significant stylistic and architectural features.
   a. Retain and treat exterior stylistic features and examples of skilled craftwork with sensitivity.
   b. Employ preventative maintenance measures such as rust removal, caulking, and repainting.
   c. Do not add architectural details that were not part of the original structure. For example, decorative millwork should not be added to a structure if it was not an original feature as doing so would convey a false history.
   d. Do not remove/add features that would change the architectural style of the building.

2.11 Carefully clean historic architectural features to maintain the original finish.
   a. Use the gentlest cleaning method possible that will achieve the desired results.
   b. Employ treatments such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint or stain where appropriate.

2.12 Replace architectural features that cannot be repaired.
   a. Replace only those portions that are beyond repair.
   b. Use a design that is substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence to avoid creating a misrepresentation of the structure’s history. The replacement must match the original in material, composition, design, color, texture and other visual qualities.
   c. Use the same kind of material as the original detail when feasible.
   d. An alternative material may be acceptable if the size, shape, texture and finish conveys the visual appearance of the original.

2.13 Develop a new design that is a simplified interpretation of a similar feature when the original is missing and cannot be documented.
   a. The new element should relate to comparable features in general size, shape, scale and finish.
   b. Use materials similar to those employed historically, where feasible.
Treatment of Windows & Doors

INTENT STATEMENTS

2g To maintain the pattern and location of original window and door openings to preserve the appearance of the historic facade and functional relationship of the building to the street.

2h To preserve original windows and doors, and their materials because they relate to the significance of a historic structure.

2i To enhance the energy efficiency of original windows and doors, which is often more energy efficient and less expensive than replacement.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL WINDOWS & DOORS

2.14 Maintain the pattern and proportion of historic window and door openings.

a. Preserve the position, number and arrangement of historic windows and doors in a building wall. Modifying a window or door on the rear of a contributing structure may be considered on a façade that is not visible. See page 16 for more information.

b. Maintain the original size and shape of window and door openings on primary façades.

c. Repair and maintain windows and doors regularly, including wood trim, glazing putty and glass panes.

d. Restore altered window or door openings on primary façades to their original configuration, when feasible.

e. Avoid enclosing a historic window or door opening or adding a new opening.

f. Do not reduce an original opening to accommodate a smaller window or door, or increase it to accommodate a larger one. More flexibility may be appropriate on a façade that is not visible. See page 16 for more information.

2.15 Preserve historic doors.

a. The character-defining features of historic doors should be repaired and preserved whenever possible.

b. Restore altered windows and doors, if feasible.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The National Park Service preservation briefs related to historic windows, including:

- Preservation Brief #9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows
- Preservation Brief #13: The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows
2. Guidelines for Preserving Historic Buildings

2.16 Preserve historic window materials.
   a. Preserve historic window features including the frame, sash, muntins, mullions, glazing, sills, heads, jambs, moldings, operation and groupings of windows.
   b. Use special care to preserve and protect stained and leaded glass.
   c. Repair original windows by re-glazing and patching and splicing elements such as muntins, the frame, sill and casing.

2.17 Enhance the energy efficiency of an original historic window rather than replacing the window.
   a. Install or replace compatible storm windows on the inside or outside of windows.
   b. Match the sash of the original window, if storm windows are installed on the outside.
   c. Maintain original windows in operable condition to enhance energy efficiency.
   d. If using metal storm windows, match the proportions and profile of the original windows and ensure that frames are anodized or painted so raw metal or highly reflective aluminum is not visible.
   e. Use cost-effective weather-stripping and insulation to improve energy efficiency in a historically sensitive manner.
   f. Retain early glass, taking special care in putty replacement.
   g. Use clear UV films, awnings, and insulated blinds.

APPLICATION OF WINDOW GUIDELINES

The guidelines in this chapter apply to the treatment of windows on an individually-designated Denver landmark or contributing structure in a historic district. Additional flexibility is available for non-contributing structures in a historic district. See Chapter 4 for more information.

For additional guidance related to windows on a historic commercial structure, see page 55.
Historic Window Considerations

Original windows are among the most important features of a historic structure. In most cases, they are designed to last much longer than a new window, and can be repaired or treated to offer additional energy efficiency. The key elements of a typical historic window are illustrated below, along with information on window ventilation, egress windows and the review and approval process for new or altered windows.

**TYPICAL HISTORIC WINDOW COMPONENTS**

**DOUBLE-HUNG Window**

- Flashing
- Trim
- Sash
- Glazing
- Muntin
- Sash
- Mullion Between Windows
- Sash
- Sill
- Apron/Trim

**STOREFRONT WINDOW**

- Frame
- Transom Window
- Frame
- Display Window
- Sill
- Apron/Trim

**DOUBLE-HUNG WINDOW VENTILATION**

Double-hung windows allow for two-way ventilation with cool air flowing in and warm air flowing out.

**REVIEW & APPROVAL PROCESS FOR WINDOWS**

The Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) adopted a Window Replacement Policy in 2012 which strongly encourages the repair and reuse of historic windows. This policy is available on the Denver Landmark Preservation web site.

Replacement of an original window on an individually-designated Denver landmark or contributing structure in a historic district requires LPC approval. Before approving window replacement, the LPC will require a professional third-party assessment to determine that windows are un-repairable. The LPC will also require a replacement design that meets guideline 2.19 on page 32.

Note that existing non-original alternative material windows may be replaced with appropriate windows. The LPC may also provide more flexibility for the replacement of an original window on a façade that is not visible from the street or sidewalk. See “Potential Flexibility on a Façade that is Not Visible” on page 16 for more information. The LPC has a separate application process and checklist for window replacements.

**EGRESS WINDOWS**

In some cases, the owner of a historic structure may seek to install a replacement window that provides code-compliant emergency egress from basements or other floors. Such egress windows should be placed so as not to be visible from the sidewalk and street, whenever possible. See page 16 for information regarding less-visible façade areas where flexibility may be appropriate.

It is important to consult City of Denver Landmark Preservation staff and the building code when considering a new basement egress window to review window size, window well and setback standards. Note that exceptions to building code requirements are often available for historic structures.

It is also important to consult a structural engineer if installing an egress window will require a substantial increase to an existing window opening.

Figure 13: Historic Window Considerations
2.18 Locate and design a new egress window, defined by current zoning and building code, to be as inconspicuous as possible.

a. Place an egress window on a secondary, non-street fronting facade, if possible. See “Egress windows” on page 30 for more information.

b. Align a new basement egress window or expansion of an existing egress window with other egress windows and features on the façade.

c. Match a new basement egress window to a historic basement window type or use a single-light casement window.

d. Do not place a basement egress window on a primary façade unless lowering the sill of an existing window while maintaining the width and header height of the existing opening, when possible.

e. Use wood, aluminum-clad wood, aluminum, composite fiberglass or Fibrex windows in a basement egress window. For windows above basement level, use wood or aluminum-clad wood to replace windows that were historically wood, or use steel or aluminum windows to replace windows that were historically steel.

f. Where visible from the street, construct egress window wells of masonry, concrete, wood, or matte-finished metal.

g. Visible window wells should not protrude more than 6" in height above grade.
GUIDELINES FOR WINDOWS

2.19 When replacement of an historic window is necessary, match the replacement design to the historic window design (see “Review & Approval Process for Windows” on page 30 for more information).

a. Only replace an historic window if it is damaged beyond repair.

b. Match the historic window size.

c. Match the historic window type and operation. For example, if the historic window is a double-hung window, the new window should be double-hung window. New windows may be double or triple glazed.

d. Set a replacement window in the wall at the same depth as the window being replaced.

e. Replace a historic wood window with a wood or aluminum-clad wood window. Replace a historic steel window with a steel or aluminum window that replicates the historic steel. Match the original outward facing width and depth of perimeter framing material.

f. Repair a leaded-glass or stained-glass window whenever possible or replace with a similar window if it is in such irreparable condition that replacement is warranted.

g. Use clear, or nearly clear low-e glass. A window and door on secondary elevations may have frosted glazing.

h. Closely match the historic window profile.

i. Match the historic divided-light type and pattern.

j. For replacements of a divided-light window, use true divided lights or simulated divided lights with a spacer bar (interstitial spacer between the double-glazed panes of glass). A window with only muntins between the panes of glass shall not be allowed.

k. Do not use perimeter infill framing to create a smaller window within historic opening on primary facades. Perimeter infill framing may be used to minimally reduce original openings on secondary elevations where they are not readily visible from the public vantage points when the original opening proportions, headers or sills remain expressed.

20. If windows are missing, use a replacement design that matches the style, size, and material of the original windows.

21. When replacement of an original window is necessary, match the replacement design to the original.
Treatment of Windows, Doors & Entries

Windows

GUIDELINES FOR WINDOWS

2.20 When replacing missing or non-historic windows, match replacement design to the historic window design if possible.

a. Match the historic window size. Do not use perimeter infill framing to create a smaller window within historic opening on primary facades. Perimeter infill framing may be used to minimally reduce original openings on secondary elevations where they are not readily visible from the public vantage points when the original opening proportions, headers or sills remain expressed.

b. Set a replacement window in the wall at the same depth as a similar historic window or at least 2-inches. For a double- or single-hung window, the inset may be measured from the lower sash.

c. Use a design and window operation that is similar to other historic windows in similar locations on the building.

d. If all windows have been replaced, use photographs or evidence from other similar properties to provide windows that match or are similar to the historic windows in appearance and operation.

e. When replacing a non-historic window, use traditional materials. If historic windows on similar properties were wood, replacement windows should be wood or aluminum-clad wood. If historic windows on similar properties were steel, windows should be replaced with steel or aluminum replicating historic steel.

f. Only use a divided-light design if there are historic divided-light windows or evidence of historic divided-light windows used on the historic building or similar historic buildings. Use true divided lights or simulated divided lights with a spacer bar (interstitial spacer between the double-glazed panes of glass). Windows with only muntins between the panes of glass shall not be allowed.

g. Use clear, or nearly clear low-e glass. Windows on secondary elevations at bathrooms may have frosted glazing.

22. When replacement of an original window is necessary, match the replacement design as closely as possible.
2. Guidelines for Preserving Historic Buildings

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR LANDMARK STRUCTURES & DISTRICTS

**GUIDELINES FOR DOORS**

2.21 Preserve and repair functional and decorative features of an original door.

a. Preserve features including door frames, sills, heads, jambs, moldings, detailing, transoms, stained glass, hardware and flanking sidelights.

b. Repair locks and other hardware, if feasible.

c. Limit replacement parts and materials to only those parts of the door that are deteriorated beyond repair.

d. Do not apply faux or stained glass window film to a historic door.

e. Do not alter the original size and shape of a historic door opening.

f. Do not change the historic position of doors on primary façades.

g. Do not add a new door opening on a primary façade.

h. Do not enclose transoms or sidelights.

2.22 Enhance the energy efficiency of original doors.

a. Weather-strip original framework on doors.

b. Retain early glass, taking special care in putty replacement.
2.23 When replacement of an historic door is necessary, match replacement design to the historic.

   a. Only replace an historic door if it is damaged beyond repair.

   b. Use traditional materials that match or appear similar to that of the historic door. On the primary façade, an historic wood door should be replaced with a wood or aluminum-clad wood door. On a secondary elevation, wood, aluminum-clad wood, or composite fiberglass doors may be used.

   c. When replacing an historic door on a primary façade, use a design that matches or appears similar to the historic door and complements the building's style.

   d. When replacing an historic door on a secondary elevation, use a design that is similar to the historic door or a door that matches the architectural character of the building.

   e. Do not use perimeter infill framing to create a smaller doorway within a historic opening on a primary façade. Perimeter infill framing may be used to minimally reduce original openings on secondary elevations where they are not readily visible from public vantage points when the original opening proportions remain expressed.

   f. Use clear, or nearly clear low-e glass for door glazing. Doors on secondary elevations may have frosted glazing.

   g. Only use a divided-light design when the historic door has divided lights. Use true divided lights or simulated divided lights with a spacer bar (interstitial spacer between the double-glazed panes of glass). Glazing with only muntins between the panes of glass shall not be allowed.

   h. Do not use a featureless, flush face door where it is not in character with the historic building.

   i. Only use an exterior-rated door made to withstand the elements.
GUIDELINES FOR DOORS

2.24 When replacing missing or non-historic doors, match replacement design to similar historic doors if possible.

a. Match the historic doorway size. Do not use perimeter infill framing to create a smaller doorway within a historic opening on a primary façade. Perimeter infill framing may be used to minimally reduce original openings on secondary elevations where they are not readily visible from public vantage points when the original opening proportions remain expressed.

b. Use a design that is similar to other historic doors in similar locations on the building.

c. When replacing a door that is not readily visible from public vantage points, additional flexibility in the design may be considered.

d. If all doors have been replaced, use photographs or evidence from other similar properties to provide doors that match or are similar to the historic doors in appearance and operation, or use a door that is simple in design.

e. Use a wood, aluminum-clad wood, or composite fiberglass door.

f. When using glazing, use clear, or nearly clear low-e glass. Doors on secondary elevations may have frosted glazing.

g. Only use a divided-light design when similar historic doors have divided lights. Use true divided lights or simulated divided lights with a spacer bar (interstitial spacer between the double-glazed panes of glass). Glazing with only muntins between the panes of glass shall not be allowed.

h. Do not use a featureless, flush face door where it is not in character with the historic building.

i. Only use an exterior-rated door made to withstand the elements.
INTENT STATEMENTS

2j To preserve the form, pitch, materials, size and orientation of an original roof because it contributes to the character of a historic building

2k To maintain the visual continuity created by a pattern of similar roof forms along a block

HISTORIC ROOFS

Typical roof shapes for historic buildings in Denver include:

» Gabled
» Hipped & Pyramid Hipped
» Gambrel
» Flat
» Mansard

In some cases, roofs are complex and may include several of these roof types plus dormers. Most historic roofs broadly overhang, creating deep shadows. These broad eaves are also a location of important detailing such as brackets, cornices, and bargeboards.

GUIDELINES FOR ROOFS

2.25 Preserve the form, materials and features of an original historic roof.

a. Maintain the perceived line and orientation of the roof as seen from the street.

b. Maintain roof overhangs because they contribute to the perception of the building’s historic scale.

c. Preserve functional and decorative roof features, including original dormers, parapets, chimneys, towers, turrets, finials and crests, especially when they are character-defining features of the structure.

d. Avoid altering the angle of a historic roof.

e. Avoid removing or covering original roof materials and features that are in good condition, or that can be repaired.

f. Do not cut back exposed roof rafters and soffits.

2.26 Repair historic roofing materials and features and replace only when necessary.

a. Retain and repair roofing details, including ornate gutters and downspouts. Replacement decorative gutters should match the historic gutters in material, profile, and location.

b. When replacing roofing materials, match the replacement materials to those that would have been used historically on the structure. For example, use clay tile matching the historic roofing in profile and color to replace clay-tile roofing. The use of historic materials is particularly critical for individual landmark structures and structures where the historic material is a character-defining feature.

c. When the use of historic roofing materials is not feasible, use alternative materials that match the profile and texture of the historic roofing materials or have a closely matching appearance. For example, wood shingle roofing may be replaced with a low-profile asphalt shingles in a traditional or neutral color palette, or engineered/synthetic roofing products that match the historic appearance of wood shingles. For slate and tile roofing, engineered/synthetic roofing products matching the historic material’s appearance may be appropriate for structures taller than one story when the roof is not steeply pitched or otherwise highly visible from public view.
2.27 When replacing missing or non-historic roofing material, match replacement materials to the historic roofing material if possible.

a. If the original roofing material has been replaced, use photographs, records, or evidence from other similar properties to provide roofing that matches or appears similar to the historic roofing in appearance. For example, use clay-tile roofing when records show the roofing was originally clay tile. The use of historic roofing materials is particularly critical for individual landmark structures and structures where the historic roofing material is a character-defining feature.

b. When using alternative roofing materials, use materials that match the profile and texture of the historic roofing materials or have a closely matching appearance. For example, wood shingle roofing may be replaced with a low-profile asphalt shingles in a traditional or neutral color palette, or engineered/synthetic roofing products that match the historic appearance of wood shingles. For slate and tile roofing, engineered/synthetic roofing products matching the historic material’s appearance may be appropriate for structures taller than one story when the roof is not steeply pitched or otherwise readily visible from public view.

c. Use roofing materials that were used historically on the building, or alternative products that imitate those historic roofing materials. For example, wood shingle roofing should not be replaced with metal roofing, and clay tile should not be replaced with slate.
2. Guidelines for Preserving Historic Buildings

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DORMER LOCATION

The roof form of the historic house illustrated above has not been altered.

1. As illustrated above, new dormer(s) have been added to a rear-facing roof plane to be less visible from the street and sidewalk. A rear dormer or dormers may provide an opportunity for a small building addition as illustrated on page 66.

2. The new dormers illustrated above on the front-facing roof plane are inappropriate because they have shed roof style that is not seen in the surrounding historic context and visually overwhelm the original roof. See “4. Side Dormer Addition” on page 74 for additional dormer illustrations.

GUIDELINES FOR ROOFTOP ALTERATIONS

2.28 Minimize the visual impacts of skylights, dormers and other rooftop alterations.

a. Locate a new dormer or skylight below the ridgeline of the roof.

b. Locate a new dormer or skylight on a rear (preferred) or side-facing roof slope, when possible.

c. Set back a side-facing gable from the front façade to minimize its visibility from the street and sidewalk.

d. Set dormers back behind the roof eave and the building wall plane below to ensure that the building’s original roof lines and building form are predominant. A setback of at least one foot from the adjacent wall plane is strongly recommended.

e. Design a dormer to be subordinate to the overall roof mass and in scale with those on similar historic structures.

f. Install a new skylight to have a low profile.

g. Do not remove or alter sizes of historic dormers on street-facing elevations.

h. Do not add a shed dormer in a visible location if shed dormers are not seen in the surrounding historic context.

i. Do not install a bubble skylight, or other form that is not flat.

j. Do not install a dormer or skylight on a front-facing roof plane.

k. Do not visually overwhelm the original roof, particularly street-facing elevations, with dormers, skylights and other features.

See page 61 for information on the placement of communications, utility and mechanical equipment.
INTENT STATEMENTS

2l To preserve an original foundation and avoid alteration because it helps define the character of a historic building.

GUIDELINES FOR HISTORIC FOUNDATIONS

2.29 Maintain and repair an original foundation.
   a. Re-point original masonry foundations to retain the original design. Note, an analysis of appropriate mortar type is necessary since incompatible mortar can damage masonry structures.
   b. Keep stone foundations in good repair.
   c. Patch a deteriorated foundation using a restoration patching material that closely matches the appearance and texture of the original material.
   d. Avoid applying a coating or stucco over an existing foundation to create a uniform appearance, or to hide the original material due to its deteriorated condition.
   e. Do not cover an original foundation with newer siding material.
   f. Do not allow an original foundation to fall into disrepair.
   g. Do not install windows and window wells on the street-facing façades of an original foundation. (New windows and window wells may sometimes be appropriate on non-primary façades.)

2.30 Only replace foundation materials that are beyond repair.
   a. If the foundation material cannot be repaired or patched, only replace the minimum amount of material needed to make the repair.
   b. When replacing foundation materials, use original materials and details whenever possible.
   c. If original materials are not available for the foundation replacement, choose new materials that convey the scale, texture and appearance of the original.
   d. Do not increase the height of the structure when replacing a foundation wall as it will alter the proportions of the structure.

MAINTENANCE TIPS

» Design landscaping and other site features to keep water from collecting near the foundation.
» Avoid planting near the foundation.
» Ensure that gutters and drains are functioning and move water away from foundation walls.
Existing Additions

**INTENT STATEMENTS**

2m To preserve existing additions that are historically significant

2n To restore a building by removing a non-historic addition that detracts from its appearance

**COMPATIBLE NEW ADDITIONS**

The design guidelines in this Chapter apply to existing additions that have achieved historic significance. See Chapter 3 for information on designing a compatible addition to an individually-designated Denver landmark or contributing structure in a historic district. See Chapter 4 for information on designing a compatible addition to any other structure, or for designing a new garage or accessory structure.

**GUIDELINES FOR HISTORIC ADDITIONS**

2.31 Preserve a historic addition that has achieved significance in its own right.
   a. Respect character-defining building components of a historically-significant addition or accessory structure added during the period of significance.
   b. Avoid the demolition of a historically-significant addition or secondary structure added during the period of significance. For example, an 1890 kitchen wing added to an 1882 house would be important both for its age and its link with the house’s long history. Such an addition is usually similar in character to the original structure in terms of materials, finishes and design.

2.32 Remove a non-historic addition, if possible (enclosed front porches, covered storefronts, etc.)
   a. Ensure that the historic fabric of the primary structure is not damaged when removing a non-historic addition.
   b. When restoring an enclosed front porch, retain original porch fabric such as columns, porch floor and steps, when feasible.
INTENT STATEMENTS

2o To maintain the inherent energy-saving features of historic structures

2p To facilitate energy efficiency improvements to historic structures while ensuring that they are compatible with the building and surrounding historic context

GUIDELINES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

2.33 Maintain and enhance the energy-saving features of the original structure.
   a. Retain original operable windows, shutters, awnings, canopies, transoms and porches. Such features allow for natural climate control.
   b. Install weatherization strategies in a way that avoids altering or damaging significant materials and their finishes.
   c. Use materials which are environmentally friendly and that will not interact negatively with historic building materials when installing weatherization.

2.34 Install compatible energy-efficiency improvements that enhance the energy-saving features of the original structure.
   a. Consider a professional energy audit to identify energy efficiency improvements that will not compromise the historic character of the structure.
   b. Install operable systems such as storm windows and doors, insulated coverings, curtains and awnings to enhance performance of original windows and doors, whenever possible.
   c. When adding storm windows, match the proportions, profile and configuration (muntin pattern) of the original windows, and avoid an anodized or mill finish aluminum storm window, particularly on the exterior.
   d. Install draft stoppers in a chimney, if possible. Open chimney dampeners can increase energy costs by up to 30%.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY & HISTORIC STRUCTURES

Rehabilitation of historic structures supports environmental sustainability by maintaining the inherent energy-saving features of a historic structure (such as porches and operable windows), conserving the energy that is embodied in the materials of existing structures and reducing landfill impacts from demolitions. The guidelines in this Chapter address maintenance of energy efficiency in an individually-designated landmark or contributing structure in a historic district, as well as methods for approaching energy conservation and generation technologies.

See “Treatment of Windows & Doors” on page 29 and “Historic Roofs” on page 37 for more information.
2.35 Install solar panels in a location that minimizes visibility based on the structure’s roof form.

a. Avoid installing solar panels on the front-facing roof plane of a primary structure. When the front-facing roof plane of a primary structure is oriented to the south and when the main solar access for the structure is on the front-facing roof plane, the Landmark Preservation Commission will review proposals for solar panels on the front to ensure the panels do not negatively impact the structure’s character-defining features.

b. For primary structures with flat roofs, solar panels may be installed in any configuration and set on an angle as long as the panels are entirely below the top of the parapet.

c. For primary structures with pitched roofs, minimize visual impacts to the structure’s character-defining features.

d. Set panels back from the horizontal roof ridge, and the front eave or vertical ridge of a sloped roof to minimize visual impacts. (Note: the location of solar panels must comply with current building code requirements.)

i. For a front-gable or front-facing gambrel roof, solar panels shall be set back at least three feet from the front eave.

ii. For a hipped roof, solar panels shall be set back at least three feet from the diagonal ridge.

iii. For a mansard roof, solar panels should not be installed on the lower slope at the front façade or visible side elevation.

e. For primary structures with two street frontages, solar panels may be installed on the roof surface facing the side street, but the panels must comply with the setback requirements noted above.

f. Solar panels may be installed anywhere on the roof of an accessory structure.
Environmental Sustainability & Historic Properties

2.36 When installing solar panels, minimize potential adverse effects on the historic character of a property.

a. Locate solar panels to avoid obscuring distinctive roof features, such as dormers or chimneys, and adversely affecting the character-defining features of the property.

b. Mount solar panels flush to the surface of a pitched roof or mount panels no more than 8” off the roof surface.

c. Use the least invasive method feasible to attach solar panels to a historic roof.

d. Install solar panels so they may be removed and the original character of the roof may be easily restored. For clay or concrete tile roofs, carefully remove selective roofing tiles, if necessary. (Note: salvage of historic tiles is highly encouraged for future reinstallation or repairs).

e. Install electrical equipment associated with solar panels on the rear façade of a primary structure, on an accessory structure, or in another inconspicuous location.

f. Use a matte finished electrical conduit located to minimize visibility.

g. Integrated solar roof tiles may be used on accessory structures or to replace non-historic roofing materials, including asphalt shingles, and on primary structures in historic districts if the solar tiles match the profile and texture of the existing roofing material or have a closely matching appearance. For example, solar tiles may replace asphalt shingles or a synthetic wood shingle if the solar tiles have a flat profile and are a neutral color.
Installing Solar Collectors on a Historic Property

When installing solar collectors on a historic property, it is important to minimize visibility from the street and potential impacts on the historic character of the property. Below are examples of appropriate locations for solar panels on various roof forms.

**SOLAR INSTALLATION ON A FLAT ROOF**
Install solar panels in any configuration as long as the panels are entirely below the top of the parapet.

**SOLAR INSTALLATION ON A HIPPED ROOF**
Install solar panels on side or rear slopes of roof and at least three feet back from the diagonal ridge at the front of the building.

**SOLAR INSTALLATION ON A FRONT GABLE ROOF**
Install solar panels on rear slope of roof and at least three feet back from the front eave of the building.

**SOLAR INSTALLATION ON A SIDE GABLE ROOF**
Install solar panels on rear slope of roof.

**SOLAR INSTALLATION ON A MANSARD ROOF**
Install solar panels on side or rear slopes of roof. Solar panels may be installed on the low-slope at the front of the building (shown in gray hatch above) depending on visibility from the street.

**SOLAR INSTALLATION ON A GAMBREL ROOF**
Install solar panels on side slopes of roof and at least three feet back from the front eave of the building.

Figure 14: Solar Panel Installation
INTENT STATEMENTS

2q  To preserve the historic structures that define residential historic districts

2r  To preserve historic residential building and site features such as porches and garages because they define the scale of the district and help interpret how the site and buildings were used historically

HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL AREAS IN DENVER

Most of Denver’s historic districts and buildings are predominantly single-family residential in character. Commercial and multifamily residential buildings are concentrated downtown and in surrounding areas, such as the Ballpark neighborhood. Some historic residential neighborhoods also include small commercial buildings, often at the locations of former streetcar stops.

This section provides Guidelines for features that are specific to historic residential buildings. It is followed by a section with guidelines for commercial, civic and institutional building features.

Consult the Denver Zoning Code for base residential and commercial development standards.

GUIDELINES FOR PORCHES, DECKS & BALCONIES

2.37 Preserve an original porch or stoop.
   a. Maintain the historic location and form of a porch or stoop.
   b. Maintain and repair historic porch and stoop components, finishes and details.
   c. Retain the historic location, orientation and size of front porch steps.
   d. Avoid enclosing a historic porch, particularly on a highly-visible façade.
   e. Do not remove an original porch or stoop.

2.38 If necessary, repair or replace damaged porch elements.
   a. Replace missing or deteriorated components and decorative features to match existing components and features.
   b. Use historical documentation to guide the design of a replacement component or decorative feature, or design simplified versions of similar components seen on nearby historic properties, if no documentation is available (See “A New or Replacement Porch” on page 47 for more information).
   c. Maintain the overall composition when replacing components and decorative features (i.e., when replacing balusters, match the original proportions and spacing).
   d. Restore altered or non-original components and decorative features to their original condition, whenever possible (i.e., if original wood porch steps have been replaced with concrete, consider restoring them to their original, wood condition).
   e. Do not replace wood porch decking and steps with concrete or synthetic materials.
Porches on Historic Residential Buildings

Porches are a key feature of most of Denver’s historic residential buildings. They help create a low, pedestrian-oriented scale along the street and define building entrances. The most typical elements of a historic residential porch are illustrated below, along with information on alternative porch designs.

**HISTORIC PORCH ELEMENTS**

- Balustrade
- Bottom Rail
- Pilaster
- Post/Column
- Riser/Tread
- Skirting
- Top Rail
- Newel Post
- Decking
- Brackets

**UNCOVERING A PORCH**

Where an original porch has been enclosed or filled-in, it may be possible to restore the porch to its original condition. The porch illustrated above was not originally enclosed, and could be uncovered to reveal its original historic character.

**A NEW OR REPLACEMENT PORCH**

A front porch should be added to a historic residential structure only when there is evidence that a porch was historically present, or an original porch is present on a very similar adjacent structure (sometimes called a “sister house”).

If it is not possible to match original components or replace a missing porch with one that appears similar in character, alternatives may be considered in the following locations:

- On a non-primary façade, accessory building or addition
- On a primary façade, if historic documentation indicates that a porch was historically present

The design of a new or replacement porch should:

- Match the overall location, proportions and appearance of the original porch (if documentation is available)
- Be a simplified version of a comparable porch on a similar, adjacent structure (if documentation is not available). A more decorative porch design may be appropriate if decorative porches appear on comparable structures in the surrounding historic context (will be considered on a case-by-case basis).

In the porch replacement illustrated above, the foundation was repaired, stairs and decking were replaced, roof and posts were preserved and balustrades were replaced in-kind.

*Figure 15: Porches on Historic Residential Buildings*
2.39 Use historic evidence to inform replacement of a missing front porch or stoop.

a. Add a new front porch or stoop to a historic residential structure only when there is evidence that one was historically present, or an original porch or stoop is present on a very similar adjacent structure (sometimes called a “sister house”).

b. Reconstruct a porch or stoop based on historic documentation of its location, appearance and materials. If good documentation does not exist, a replacement design may be based on contextual analysis.

c. If there is evidence that a porch or stoop once existed, but no historical documentation is available, design a new porch or stoop as a simplified version of a comparable feature on a similar structure in the surrounding historic context (preferred). A more decorative porch or design may be appropriate if decorative porches appear on comparable structures in the surrounding historic context (will be considered on a case-by-case basis).

d. Design a replacement porch or stoop to be appropriate to the architectural style and relate to the overall scale of the primary structure.

e. When there is no evidence that a front porch or stoop existed, consider adding a sensitive and appropriately scaled patio as an outdoor seating area.

2.40 Ensure that decks are compatible with the surrounding historic context.

a. Locate decks to minimize visual impacts on the street when they are not a part of the historic context.

b. Do not incorporate a roof deck on a historic residential structure.
2.41 Preserve original detached garages and secondary structures where feasible.
   a. Keep historic garages and outbuildings in good repair, similar to the main house.
   b. Respect character-defining building components of a historically-significant garage or secondary structure.
   c. Do not demolish a historically-significant garage or secondary structure. See “Demolition” on page 59 for more information.
   d. When additional space is needed, consider constructing an addition, or adding another secondary building, rather than demolishing the historic one. See “Additions to a Historic Secondary Structure” on page 50 for more information.
   e. Do not move a historically-significant garage or secondary structure from its original location whenever possible.
   f. Preserve and repair historic wooden garage doors if at all possible since they are rare in Denver.
   g. Preserve historic windows and doors on a garage or secondary structure, if possible.

2.42 Preserve other original secondary structures features such as a porte cochere.
   a. Respect character-defining building components of a porte cochere.
   b. Avoid the demolition of a historic porte cochere structure.

DENVER’S ALLEYS
Most of Denver’s historic residential neighborhoods and commercial areas have alleys that provide automobile and service access to properties. As a result, most historic garages are located to the rear of the property, along the alley.
Additions to a Historic Secondary Structure

The diagrams below illustrate potential approaches for adding an addition to a historic secondary structure to add additional space and avoid demolition. Note that general guidelines for additions are provided in Chapter 3, and guidelines for new construction (including new secondary structures) are provided in Chapter 4.

**ORIGINAL GARAGE**
An existing garage located to the rear of a property with alley access.

**SMALL SIDE ADDITION**
Set back from façade and located below the roof ridge.

**ONE-CAR ADDITION**
Set back and in character with the existing garage.

**TWO-CAR ADDITION**
This garage addition may be appropriate if the original structure is not individually-significant or visible from the street.

Figure 16: Additions to a Historic Secondary Structure
**INTENT STATEMENTS**

2s  To preserve the original character-defining features of a historic commercial, mixed-use or civic building because they assist with interpretation of the building’s history and significance

2t  To maintain a comfortable pedestrian environment in historic commercial areas

**HISTORIC COMMERCIAL, MIXED-USE & CIVIC BUILDINGS**

This section provides guidelines for specific features seen on commercial, mixed-use and civic buildings. Such buildings include:

» Retail/shopfront buildings - See “Historic Commercial Storefront Features” on page 52 for additional information.

» Office buildings

» Mixed-use buildings that contain two or more uses, such as retail with office or residential above

» Industrial/warehouse buildings

» Civic or institutional buildings - See “Civic & Institutional Building Features” on page 52 for additional information.

**GUIDELINES FOR HISTORIC COMMERCIAL FAÇADES**

2.43  Preserve the character-defining elements of a historic storefront.

a.  Maintain the interest of pedestrians through an active street level storefront.

b.  Preserve the storefront glass if it is intact.

c.  Repair storefront elements by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the historic materials.

d.  Avoid altering the size and shape of a storefront opening.

e.  Do not use reflective, opaque or tinted glass except in the transom, if necessary.

f.  Do not remove or enclose a transom.

g.  Do not insert a garage door into a historic storefront.

2.44  Restore an altered storefront to its original design.

a.  Restore and reconstruct missing features based on historical documentation and physical evidence.

b.  Reconstruct a missing lintel or cornice to help define the storefront.

c.  Replace missing pilaster elements.

d.  Reopen an enclosed or covered transom.

e.  If the original transom glass is missing, use new glass, or a sign panel/decorative band if the transom must be blocked out.

f.  Use wood and glass, or metal and glass doors, as appropriate to the building.

h.  Do not install mill-finish metal doors or decorative historic-looking doors not original to the building.
Historic Commercial Storefront Features

Some historic commercial buildings in Denver feature retail storefronts with display windows and a prominent entry. Such storefronts are most often seen on buildings that are located near former streetcar stops or in historic retail areas such as Larimer Square. They typically feature a tall ground floor and upper stories with shorter floor-to-floor heights. The key elements of a typical historic storefront are illustrated below, along with information on storefront maintenance. See “Typical Character-defining Features” on page 21 for additional illustrations.

**TYPICAL HISTORIC COMMERCIAL STOREFRONT**

- Cornice or lintel
- Transom
- Display window
- Bulkhead/kickplate
- Recessed entry

**STOREFRONT MAINTENANCE**

Storefronts communicate the nature of the business inside and help establish an image. It is important to keep storefronts neat and clean, establish attractive window display and provide adequate lighting.

![Figure 17: Historic Commercial Storefront Features](image)

Civic & Institutional Building Features

Civic and institutional buildings include those with government, religious, educational or other public purposes. Typical civic and institutional building features are described below. See “Typical Character-defining Features” on page 21 for additional illustrations.

**TYPICAL CIVIC & INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING FEATURES**

**Site features often include:**
- Landscaped front, side and rear setbacks
- Parking in rear or off-site

**Building features often include:**
- Grand entry feature such as broad stairway with additional side entrances
- Building division into “base, middle and cap”
- Rooftop features such as steeplets, towers, domes and cupolas
- Sense of mass with low window to wall ratio
- Decorative ornamentation, such as leaded glass and stained glass windows, elaborate detailing, etc.

**Materials often include:**
- High quality masonry materials
- Clearly articulated stone base
- Tile, slate or metal for roofs

![Figure 18: Civic & Institutional Building Features](image)
Commercial, Mixed-use & Civic Buildings

Historic Warehouses

2. Guidelines for Preserving Historic Buildings

51. Preserve the character-defining elements of a historic warehouse building.

GUIDELINES FOR HISTORIC WAREHOUSES

2.45 Preserve the character-defining elements of a historic warehouse building. These can include:
   a. Man-door: A small door for use by people entering the building. These can be similar in character to a storefront on a retail building. They often include a transom.
   b. Ground floor windows: Windows located at the street level. These often are larger and display a similar pattern to the upper story windows. Guidelines related to new windows are provided on page 55.
   c. Upper-story windows: Windows located above the street level. These usually have a vertical orientation.
   d. Cornice molding: A decorative band at the top of the building.
   e. Loading dock: A raised landing for handling goods; some project from the façade while others are inset behind the building plane.
   f. Loading bay doorway: A large opening at the landing dock. Typically these are rectangular, although sometimes arched. Rolling overhead or horizontal sliding doors were used in these openings. Singular and multiple openings were found on façades.
   g. Canopy: A metal structure usually sheltering the loading dock. Some were horizontal and others were sloped. They were supported on metal and heavy timber supports that were wall mounted.

2.46 Preserve a historic warehouse façade when considering alterations and new openings.
   a. Install new openings for windows and doors only on a façade that is not visible from the street or sidewalk. See page 16 for more information.
   b. Insert a garage door for sidewalk or patio access only where there is an existing industrial opening of sufficient size.
GUIDELINES FOR PATIOS & LOADING DOCKS ON A HISTORIC BUILDING

2.47 If locating a rooftop patio on a historic building, minimize visual impacts on the original building and historic streetscape.
   a. Set the rooftop patio back at least ten feet from the street-facing façade of the historic building and from readily visible façades. Small exceptions to this setback may be appropriate if the patio is not readily visible from public vantage points due to a raised roof parapet or other similar reasons.
   b. Use simple, open railings to minimize visibility of the rooftop patio from the street.
   c. Integrate permanent shade devices into the design of rooftop patios and deck.
   d. Do not use temporary materials such as plywood and drapery to provide shade for a rooftop deck or patio in lieu of more permanent and integrated shading designs.
   e. Locate any necessary elevator or stairwell enclosures at the rear of the rooftop patio, away from the historic façade.
   f. Do not affix umbrella holders or planters to rooftop patio railings.

2.48 Preserve historic loading docks.
   a. Maintain the historic location and form of a loading dock, since this influences the perceived scale of the structure.
   b. Maintain and repair loading dock components and details, such as a canopy or railing.
   c. Avoid altering, enclosing or removing a historic loading dock.

2.49 Design a new loading dock to be as inconspicuous as possible.
   a. Locate in a secondary location when feasible.
   b. If it must be located on the primary façade, design a new loading dock to be subordinate in character.
   c. Screen a new loading dock so that it is unobtrusive when viewed from sidewalks, streets and nearby buildings or houses.
   d. Do not adversely affect the character of the historic commercial structure when adding a new loading dock.
GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL WINDOWS

2.50 Preserve the overall rhythm and arrangement of windows on a historic commercial building façade.
   a. Maintain existing asymmetrical window arrangements on historic warehouse façades.
   b. If necessary, replace windows with thermal pane glass, similar in appearance to the original, on a historic storefront.
   c. If replacing windows, replicate the original materials, type, pattern, operability and appearance.
   d. Avoid adding new windows on a façade that is visible from the street.
   e. Restore altered, or closed-in windows whenever possible.
   f. Do not alter the size and shape of an existing window opening.

2.51 Add new windows only if they do not impact the historic character of the commercial façade.
   a. Retain existing window openings and repair historic windows to the extent feasible.
   b. Use an existing opening, such as an overhead door, for new windows.
   c. Explore adding skylights as a window alternative if no existing openings are suitable for new windows.
   d. Add new windows to a rear or alley facing façade if existing openings or skylights are not sufficient.
   e. Maintain existing masonry columns when adding a new window in a compatible location.
   f. Design a new window in a compatible location to reflect the floor levels and architectural bays that are present in the building.
   g. Minimize the addition of new windows on a commercial building. This is especially important for a warehouse building.
   h. Design a new window in a compatible location to be a simplified version of existing historic windows, matching historic window proportions.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE ON HISTORIC WINDOWS

The design guidelines on this page address specific concerns related to windows on a historic commercial building. The primary guidance for the treatment of all historic windows is provided on page 29.
Commercial, Mixed-use & Civic Buildings

Awnings & Canopies

PROMOTING PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY WITH AWNINGS & CANOPIES

Historically, awnings were used throughout the commercial areas of Denver to provide a continuous, covered walkway that protected pedestrians from the elements. The continued use of awnings and canopies promotes a comfortable pedestrian environment by providing shade and creating a connection between the sidewalk and interior spaces.

GUIDELINES FOR AWNINGS & CANOPIES

2.52 Preserve original canopies and awnings, when possible.

2.53 Use historic evidence to inform replacement of a missing canopy.
   a. Add a new permanent metal canopy to a commercial, mixed-use or civic building only when there is evidence that a canopy was historically present.
   b. Reconstruct a canopy based on historic documentation of its location, appearance and materials. If good documentation does not exist, a replacement design may be based on contextual analysis.
   c. If there is evidence that a canopy existed, but no historical documentation on design is available, design a new canopy as a simplified version of a comparable canopy on a similar structure in the surrounding historic context.
   d. Position a replacement canopy to be consistent with historically-established canopy heights. When the original height is not known, use a height level with the second floor or that of other canopies on the block.
   e. Design a replacement canopy to be appropriate to the architectural style and relate to the overall scale of the primary structure.
   f. Do not add a permanent metal canopy where one did not exist historically.
   g. Do not use architecturally-salvaged canopy poles unless adequate documentation and historical research support their use.

2.54 Ensure that new awning locations and designs are in character with the original building and surrounding historic context.
   a. Design an awning to be a subordinate feature that accentuates the character-defining features of the historic building.
   b. Fit the awning within the opening of the building.
   c. Consider using a traditional triangular-shaped awning to frame a storefront window or door.
   d. Use a solid color or other scheme that is compatible with the overall façade.
   e. Do not cover historic features, such as decorative banding or a transom with an awning.
   f. Do not use arched, bubble-shaped or bull nose awnings.
   g. Do not use plastic, plastic-like, or shiny awning materials.
2.55 Preserve the character-defining elements of a civic or institutional building. These can include:
   a. Site features such as landscaped front, side and rear setbacks and parking in rear or off-site
   b. High quality materials such as brick and stone, clearly articulated stone base, and tile, slate or metal roofs
   c. Four-sided architecture
   d. Building features such as a:
      » Grand entry with a broad stairway and additional side entrances
      » Building division into base, middle and top
      » Steeples, towers, domes, cupolas and other iconic rooftop features
      » Sense of mass with a low window to wall ratio (less transparency at the ground level especially)
      » Elaborate window openings

2.56 Retain civic and institutional building entry features in their original condition. These can include:
   a. Elaborate doors and doorways
   b. Porticos
   c. Stairways

OTHER GUIDELINES THAT APPLY TO CIVIC BUILDINGS

A number of other guidelines in this chapter apply to the treatment of civic buildings, including those for “Treatment of Historic Materials” on page 24, “Treatment of Historic Architectural Features” on page 27 and “Treatment of Windows & Doors” on page 28.
INTENT STATEMENT

2u To stabilize unoccupied historic buildings using methods that maintain their integrity

STABILIZING A HISTORIC BUILDING

When a building is to be unoccupied for an extended period of time, it may be secured in a way in which to preserve historically significant features and prevent deterioration from weathering or vandalism. Often termed “mothballing,” such procedures are particularly relevant to properties that have been vacant for a long time.

Buildings in need of substantial repair may benefit from a Historic Structure Assessment which documents character-defining features, their condition, appropriated preservation treatments and future maintenance.

Consult a structural engineer with historic building experience if a building shows evidence of structural issues, such as cracks in brick, building movement, etc.

For suggestions on specific procedures, see National Park Service Preservation Brief #31: Mothballing Historic Buildings.

GUIDELINES FOR VACANT BUILDINGS

2.57 If a building is unoccupied, secure it in a way that protects its historic character.
   a. Maintain a weather-tight roof. Temporary roofing may be installed if needed.
   b. Structurally stabilize the building, if needed.
   c. Provide adequate ventilation to the interior of the building.
   d. When closing off or boarding up a window or door opening, paint the boards and panels to match the building color.
   e. When closing off a window or door opening, avoid mounting boards or panels on the exterior, especially if that may damage frames, sashes or other historic components.
   f. Consider performing a Historic Building Assessment to document a building’s condition and identify possible adaptive reuse scenarios. See “Stabilizing a Historic Building” at left for more information.
INTENT STATEMENT

To preserve historic properties including historic form, massing and integrity of historic properties and their context.

DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS

See “Demolition Review Process” on pages 17-18 for more information on requirements and processes related to demolition of a historic structure.

NEGLECTED & DERELICT BUILDINGS

Denver has ordinances requiring all properties within the city to be safe and well-maintained. The Denver Landmark Preservation Ordinance further requires that historically designated structures be kept in good repair, preserved against decay and deterioration, and kept free of structural defects. Properties that are not maintained in accordance with the city’s building safety ordinances and the Landmark Preservation Ordinance can be cited and assessed fines. The city can also order owners to make repairs. Landmark Preservation reviews and approves all proposed remedial plans to repair and stabilize designated historic buildings.

GUIDELINES FOR DEMOLITION

2.58 Do not demolish contributing buildings to a historic district or historic buildings with individual landmark designation.
   a. Take all measures required to repair and retain a contributing or landmark historic structure to protect the community interests in its preservation.
   b. Preserve the essential form and integrity of historic buildings and structures.
   c. Avoid demolitions that change the overall appearance, massing and volume of the historic building as perceived from public vantage points.
   d. Avoid demolition actions that remove historic structural systems or which compromise the structural integrity of a historic building.
   e. Do not demolish character-defining features of a historic property.

2.59 Minimize damage to historic structures when demolishing non-contributing additions or features.
   a. Carefully remove non-historic additions or features (such as a non-original porch) to avoid damage to historic building walls and features.
   b. Evaluate and repair historic building walls that are exposed when non-historic additions or features are removed.
   c. Restore any damaged or missing historic building walls or features when historic exterior walls are re-exposed as a result of a demolition.

2.60 Plan projects to minimize demolition to a historic structure, including its historic additions and accessory structures.

60. Minimize damage to historic structures when demolishing non-contributing additions or features. A non-historic addition was removed from the façade illustrated at left, allowing the original exterior to be repaired. A non-historic porch was carefully removed from the front of the house illustrated at right.
INTENT STATEMENT

2w To keep historic properties in use so they remain integral to the life of the city.

DENVER ZONING CODE LAND USE REGULATIONS

The Denver Zoning Code sets forth the permitted land uses within each of Denver's zone districts. The historic design review process will consider the impact of new uses on the exterior features of a historic building.

GUIDELINES FOR ADAPTIVE REUSE

2.61 Select uses that are compatible with the original historic character of the building.
   a. When a significant change in use is necessary to keep a building in active service, select a use that requires the least alteration to significant elements.
   b. Do not select a use that requires alteration of the structure's character-defining features.
   c. Do not select a use that adversely affects the integrity of the building.

2.62 Maintain a structure’s character when converting to a new use.
   a. Retain the key character-defining features of a residential structure, such as the front yard, front door, moldings, siding etc.
   b. Retain the key character-defining features of commercial, mixed use and multifamily buildings, such as storefronts, entries, windows, loading docks, etc.
   c. Retain the key character-defining features of civic and institutional buildings when converting to a new use, such as iconic rooftop features or grand entry features.
Mechanical, Utility & Security Equipment

**INTENT STATEMENT**

2x To minimize the visual impacts of mechanical, utility and security equipment.
2y To preserve the significant features of sites and buildings when installing utility and security equipment.

**EQUIPMENT & SECURITY DEVICES**

Mechanical and utility equipment includes:
- Conduit
- Telecommunications Devices, antennas & Satellite Dishes
- Junction Boxes & Transformers
- Air Handling Units
- External Fire Connections
- Elevator penthouses
- Security bars, screens & cameras
- Automated teller machines (ATMs)

**SERVICE AREAS**

Design guidelines for ground-mounted mechanical and utility equipment, as well as site service areas, are provided on page 111.

**GUIDELINES FOR MECHANICAL, UTILITY AND SECURITY EQUIPMENT**

2.63 Place mechanical, utility and communications equipment to minimize visual impacts on a historic building.
   a. Install roof-mounted, and other mechanical/HVAC equipment, such as air conditioners and center towers to be inconspicuous when viewed from public streets and public vantage points.
   b. Locate ground-mounted units in an inconspicuous location and sensitively screen if visible from public vantage points.
   c. Install automated teller machines (ATMs) on the inside of a building to avoid impacts to the historic façade.
   d. Incorporate mechanical equipment with matte or non-reflective finishes that blend with building colors if the equipment will be visible from the street or sidewalk.
   e. Group utility lines into one conduit, when feasible.
   f. Install vertical runs of ducts, pipes and cables in closets, service rooms and wall cavities where they will not be visible on the exterior elevations.
   g. Do not use exposed conduit for lighting on the exterior of a building.

2.64 Install communications, utility and mechanical equipment to minimize damage to historic building fabric.
   a. Install mechanical equipment in areas and spaces that require the least amount of alteration to the historic materials and elevations of the building.
   b. Avoid cutting holes in important architectural features, such as cornices, decorative ceilings and paneling.
   c. Avoid cutting into a masonry wall to install conduit.
   d. Do not install mechanical equipment on a primary façade.
2.65 Do not damage the historic character of the original building when installing security devices.
   a. Do not damage or obscure significant architectural features of the original historic building.
   b. The installation should be reversible. Once removed the original building should remain intact and the integrity of historic materials should not be compromised.
   c. Do not run exposed conduit on the exterior of a building.

2.66 Minimize the visual impact of security devices on commercial buildings.
   a. When locating a security camera, use a small size and an inconspicuous location, such as inside the building eaves or inside an awning.
   b. When locating security devices on a retail frontage, install them inside the storefront, whenever possible.
   c. Use operable and transparent security screens on ground floor storefronts, when necessary.
   d. Opaque, roll-down metal screens are discouraged, because these obscure products on display and thereby weaken the interest of the street to pedestrians when in a closed position.
   e. Decorative security devices are appropriate when they complement the architectural style.
   f. Generally security devices are inappropriate above the second floor, unless unique security conditions are indicated.

2.67 Minimize the visual impact of security devices on residential buildings.
   a. Security devices should be small and simple in design.
   b. For residential buildings, locating security devices on the interior is preferred, but the exterior is an acceptable location if it is in keeping with the architectural style. If located on the exterior, ensure there is no exposed conduit on the building or site.
GUIDELINES FOR ACCESSIBILITY

2.68 When adding accessibility features, such as ramps, minimize impacts on historic buildings and the surrounding historic context.
   a. Retain the key features of the historic structure in any design.
   b. Ensure that accessibility improvements are reversible to accommodate future changes in technology or building use.
   c. Add a ramp to the outside of a building or at an entry, wherever possible.
   d. Do not alter a storefront design or location to accommodate a ramp on the inside.

2.69 When adding accessibility features to historic civic/institutional buildings, or other buildings that are located on a landscaped site, ensure compatibility with the historic site.
   a. Integrate ramps with the building’s architecture and landscape setting.
   b. Consider providing access by gently re-sloping a large lawn and eliminating the need for railings, ensuring that the historic character of the building and site are not negatively impacted.
   c. Place ramps behind historic features such as low walls or railings, ensuring that they remain easy to find.
   d. Use materials for ramps that are compatible with the original building materials and design.
   e. Avoid installing pre-manufactured steel ramps or wheelchair lifts on the primary façade(s) of a historic building.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

In 1990, the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandated that all places of public accommodation be accessible to everyone. This includes historic structures that are used for commercial, rental, multi-family and public uses. Note that the law provides that alternative measures may be considered when the integrity of a historic structure may be threatened. In most cases, property owners can comply without compromising the historic structure. In some cases, ramps are allowed in the public right-of-way. Contact the Public Works Department for more information.

The guidelines in this document should not prevent or inhibit compliance with accessibility laws.

66. Add a ramp to the outside of a building or at an entry, wherever possible.

67. When adding accessible access features, such as ramps, minimize impacts on historic buildings and the surrounding historic context.