1. INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of the Design Guidelines and How They Apply

The residents of Denver seek to preserve and protect their historic landmarks and districts for future generations. This document provides property owners, design professionals, contractors, neighborhoods, and the Denver Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) with information and resources to guide future decision-making and promote good stewardship of our city’s architectural and cultural heritage.

The design guidelines strive to accommodate the need of property owners to make modern improvements, while protecting the character-defining features of Denver’s historic landmarks and districts. They inform and assist property owners planning exterior alterations, new construction, or routine work to keep a historic structure in good repair.

Note that these guidelines supersede a number of previous policy and guidelines documents as summarized in “Previous Guidelines & Policies” on page 5.

PURPOSE

This document is provided to:

- **Assist in retaining Denver’s historically, culturally, and architecturally significant buildings.**
- **Maintain neighborhood character and stabilize property values.** See “Benefits of Preservation” on page 3 for more information.
- **Assist property owners and their design professionals.** The design guidelines provide educational materials to ensure that valued properties are well maintained for use by future generations.
- **Guide design review.** The guidelines outline the required design review process for applicants and serve as the basis for decisions by the Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC).
**HISTORIC BACKGROUND**

The City of Denver was established in 1858 and quickly emerged as the major metropolitan city of the Rocky Mountain region capitalizing on the mineral wealth of the nearby mountains and wide-spread railroad connections to process and distribute a variety of products throughout the country. Denver is distinct in the Rocky Mountain West for several qualities:

- Brick and masonry construction of commercial and residential structures
- Streets lined with trees between the curb and sidewalk (tree lawn)
- Streetcar commercial pockets, such as those found on South Pearl Street, South Gaylord Street and Tennyson Street (north of 38th Ave).
- Parks, parkways, and civic architecture dating from the City Beautiful Movement of the early 20th Century
- Architecturally eclectic and culturally significant neighborhoods
- Concentrations of structures representing specific eras resulting from the City's boom and bust cycles, including:
  - Late 19th Century (1858-1899) Lower Downtown, Larimer Square, Capitol Hill, Curtis Park, 9th Street, Baker, Whittier, Highland, West Highland & residential streetcar suburbs
  - Early 20th Century (1900-1930) Civic Center, Downtown, Country Club, 7th Avenue, warehouses in Ballpark area, Park Hill, Berkeley & Congress Park
  - Mid-Century (1945-1960) neighborhoods to the east and south of downtown such as Harvey Park, Hilltop, Wellshire, and Virginia Village

Sidebars throughout this document provide additional background on the historic context of Denver.

**POLICY AND REGULATORY FOUNDATION**

The design guidelines are intended to implement adopted City policies and work within established regulations.

Key policy and regulatory documents are summarized below. All documents are available for download at [www.denvergov.org](http://www.denvergov.org).

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2040**

Comprehensive Plan 2040 establishes a 20-year vision for Denver as a city that is livable for its people, now and in the future. The design guidelines in this document help implement a number of specific plan policies, including:

- “Preserve the authenticity of Denver’s neighborhoods and celebrate our history, architecture, and culture” (Goal 2.3).
- “Enhance Denver’s neighborhoods through high-quality urban design (Goal 2.2).
- “Reduce the disposal of solid waste and conserve raw materials” (Goal 5.7).

**BLUEPRINT DENVER**

The 2019 Blueprint Denver plan supplements Comprehensive Plan 2040 with more specific land use and transportation policies. The design guidelines in this document support Blueprint Denver policies by helping shape growth and change while protecting Denver’s valued attributes and existing development patterns.

**BUILDING CODE**

Denver’s **Building Regulations ordinance** (Chapter 10 of the Revised Municipal Code) provide minimum construction, electrical, fire, maintenance and other standards. All construction projects must meet the building code, although special exceptions may be available for historic properties.
DENVER ZONING CODE

The Denver Zoning Code provides the fundamental siting, structure form, use, and parking requirements that apply to all properties throughout the city. Projects subject to design review with these guidelines must also meet base standards for the applicable zoning district and building form, such as minimum setbacks and maximum height.

If conformance with zoning regulations would have an adverse impact on the historic character of a property, owners may apply for an administrative zoning adjustment or Board of Adjustment variance as delineated in Chapter 12 of the Denver Zoning Code.

Property owners are strongly encouraged to coordinate with zoning staff early in the design process to ensure that projects meet all zoning standards prior to review by the LPC. See pages 11-13 for more information on the design review and approval process.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

Adopted in 1967, the Landmark Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 30 of the Revised Municipal Code) provides the overall framework for historic preservation in Denver. The ordinance:

- Establishes the powers and responsibilities of the Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC)
- Establishes the criteria and process for designating historic structures and districts
- Requires LPC (or Landmark Preservation staff, as delegated by the LPC) review of specific projects involving historic properties - See page 10 for more information
- Grants the LPC power to adopt design guidelines
- Incorporates the Secretary of the Interior's Standards - See page 4 for more information

BENEFITS OF PRESERVATION

By preserving existing structures and guiding compatible redevelopment, the guidelines in this document promote the three key elements of community sustainability:

» Economic Sustainability. Historic preservation favors local jobs and workmanship while promoting heritage tourism. Studies around the nation have demonstrated that historic district protections help stabilize property values.

» Environmental Sustainability. Keeping historic structures and material in good repair conserves the energy that went into making them and reduces the amount of material that is sent to landfills. Preservation also promotes maintenance of walkable neighborhoods. For additional information on existing structures and environmental sustainability, visit the National Trust for Historic Preservation's website on sustainability.

» Cultural/Social Sustainability. Preserving historic places promotes cultural and social sustainability by supporting everyday connections between residents and the cultural heritage of the community. It also makes Denver a more livable place.
The City of Denver’s Historic Preservation Ordinance directs the LPC to adopt The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, while expanding on the basic rehabilitation principles as they apply in Denver. The Secretary’s Standards for Rehabilitation are summarized below. For additional information, visit the National Park Service’s Technical Preservation Services page.

1. A property shall be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property shall be avoided.

3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, shall not be undertaken.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Figure 1: Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties
APPLICATION OF THE GUIDELINES

The design guidelines help to preserve what is most important about Denver’s historic structures and districts while allowing sympathetic alterations. Projects at individual landmark sites and all properties in historic districts that are subject to design review using the guidelines include:

- Exterior alterations or additions that require zoning or building permits (including new or reconstructed windows and doors)
- Lot splits and combinations
- Site and hardscape changes
- Demolition of individually-designated Denver landmark structures and structures in historic districts (see “Demolition Review Process” on pages 17-18 for more information)
- New construction or signage
- Projects using state historic preservation tax credits

The guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive. They are applied on a case-by-case basis to allow for flexible, context-sensitive solutions.

Repairs not requiring building or zoning permits and interior remodeling are not subject to design review, although the LPC and Landmark Preservation staff review some interior work if it is part of a tax credit project. Please consult with Landmark Preservation staff if you are unsure whether the design review process using these guidelines applies to your project.


PREVIOUS GUIDELINES & POLICIES

This document supersedes the following guidelines and policies previously adopted by the LPC:

» Design Guidelines for Landmark Lighting (1997)
» Contemporary Guidelines for Landmark Structures and Districts (2006)
» Design Guidelines for Landmark Structures and Districts (2014, revised 2016)

NATIONAL, STATE AND LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION

A property or district may be designated as historic through national, state or local programs. The design guidelines in this document apply only to those properties and districts designated through the City of Denver’s local preservation program.
## Design Guidelines Chapters

This document is organized into six primary chapters with a set of attached appendices as summarized below. The first chapter provides a general introduction while chapters 2-6 provide specific design guidelines (the standard format for these guidelines is summarized on page 9). “Chapter Application Chart” on page 7 provides information on the chapters that will apply depending on the type of proposed project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>This chapter defines the purpose and role of design guidelines, how they are used, their policy foundation and the design review process. It also describes how to plan, undertake and review a historic preservation project, including making a determination of historic significance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING HISTORIC BUILDINGS</td>
<td>This chapter provides the design guidelines that apply to individually-designated Denver landmark structures and contributing structures in historic districts. It focuses on maintenance and alteration of historic structures, including historically-significant building additions. Particular emphasis is placed on sustainability, including maintenance of the inherent energy efficient features of a historic structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS</td>
<td>This chapter provides design guidelines to promote compatible additions to landmark structures and contributing structures in historic districts. It focuses on compatible location, massing characteristics, and materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. GUIDELINES FOR NEW BUILDINGS &amp; NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS</td>
<td>This chapter provides design guidelines to promote compatible new construction in historic districts throughout Denver, and alterations to non-contributing structures that are compatible with the historic context. It focuses on designs that can be recognized as new construction while remaining compatible with the surrounding context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. GUIDELINES FOR SITE &amp; LANDSCAPE DESIGN</td>
<td>This chapter provides design guidance for the design of sites, as well as the treatment of historic landscape features relating to individually-designated Denver landmark structures and properties in historic districts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. GUIDELINES FOR SIGNS</td>
<td>This chapter provides guidance for signage on individually-designated Denver landmark structures and historic districts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### APPENDICES

The appendices include information on character-defining features of Denver’s historic districts, unique guidelines for the La Alma Lincoln Park Historic Cultural District, and a glossary of terms.

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1 See pages 14-15 for information on contributing and non-contributing structures.
Chapter Application Chart

The chart below indicates the design guidelines chapters that apply to different types of proposed improvement projects. Some projects may include more than one action (i.e., new construction, landscape design and signage). In these cases, more than one chapter will apply.

1. Individually-designated Denver landmark
2. Contributing structure in a historic district
3. Structures or lots that are considered non-contributing to a district
4. Includes all properties within the boundary of a locally-designated landmark or historic district.
5. An approved plan for compatible new construction may be required.

See pages 14-15 for information on contributing and non-contributing structures.

See page 17.

Figure 3: Chapter Application Chart
The guidelines in this document apply to all individually-designated Denver landmark structures and historic districts. In some cases, additional design guidelines in a separate document, will also apply to specific historic districts or individually-designated Denver landmark structures (such as Union Station).

The chart below summarizes additional design guidelines that apply in some historic districts with distinct characteristics. The design guidelines in this document provide general guidance regarding the treatment of historic structures in these districts and the additional area-specific guidelines provide further detail regarding unique character-defining features within the district. In some cases, properties in all or part of a historic district may also be subject to additional design guidelines that primarily address the character of new construction.

Applicants are encouraged to consult Landmark Preservation staff to determine if additional design guidelines apply to individually-designated Denver landmark structures or properties in a historic district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Historic Districts or Individual Landmarks</th>
<th>THIS DOCUMENT APPLIES</th>
<th>THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT APPLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civic Center</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Club</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Club Gardens</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Griffith Opportunity School</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Points</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Downtown (LoDo)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speer Boulevard</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Beautiful Parkways</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver Union Station</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Landmarks or Districts</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2The design guidelines for historic parkways were not adopted by the Landmark Preservation Commission, but are used by the Department of Parks and Recreation to inform review of work in historic parkways.

Figure 4: Additional Design Guidelines That May Apply
Sample Design Guidelines Format

To increase clarity and ease-of-use, the individual design guidelines in chapters 2-6 use a standard format as summarized below. The standard format includes topic headings, intent statements related to the topic, numbered design guidelines, additional information about appropriate strategies and illustrations or diagrams. The illustration below uses a sample design guideline page from chapter 2 to indicate each key element.

**A** Historic Roofs

**B** 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.

**C** Design 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 and crests, especially when they are character-defining features of a structure.

d. Avoid altering the angle of a historic roof...

**D** Additional Information

24. Preserve functional and decorative roof features. These include original parapets, chimneys, towers and turrets (top), as well as decorative finials (left).

25. Avoid removing or covering original roof materials and features that are in good condition. The original brick parapet on the building illustrated above is covered with a stucco and wood replacement that does not match the original.

26. Retain and repair roof detailing, including gutters and downspouts.

**E** Illustrations(s), including photographs and diagrams, are provided to support the design guidelines. They are numbered for cross-reference.

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.

**KEY TO THE SAMPLE DESIGN GUIDELINE ABOVE**

**A** The Design Topic is indicated with a heading at the top of each page. In some cases, a subtopic is included in black text at the right side of the header.

**B** Intent Statement(s) establish the goals to be achieved through applying the guidelines for each topic and may also be used to determine the appropriateness of alternative or innovative approaches. They are numbered by chapter for cross-reference.

**C** Design Guidelines describe a desired outcome related to the intent statement(s). They are numbered by chapter for easy reference.

**D** Additional Information is provided as a lettered list beneath each guideline to describe specific approaches and strategies related to the guideline.

**E** Illustrations(s), including photographs and diagrams, are provided to support the design guidelines. They are numbered for cross-reference.
DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

The design review process applies to the projects listed on page 5 and includes the formal steps summarized in the chart on page 12. Once an approval is granted, the Landmark Preservation staff issues a Certificate of Appropriateness and stamps the approved drawings. Landmark Preservation staff and the LPC also administer the process of demolition review as summarized on pages 17 and 18.

The design review process will consider the historic character and significance of properties as described in “Considering Historic Significance” on page 13.

DESIGN REVIEW BY THE LPC

Projects meeting any of the following conditions (as determined by Landmark Preservation staff) will be reviewed by the LPC:

1. All additions that add more than 900 sq. ft. or add more than 40% square footage to existing above grade square footage.
2. Projects that are readily visible from public vantage points other than fencing and minor site work that meets the design guidelines, with the exception of readily visible projects at non-contributing buildings.
3. All roof-top additions that are readily visible from public vantage points, including enclosed and open space.
4. All new construction of primary structures, tandem houses, and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).
5. Major changes to readily visible, character-defining doors, windows, porches and other historic features.
6. Major changes to historic materials.
7. Comprehensive sign plans and other signs that are not subject to administrative review as summarized on page 121 in Chapter 6.
8. Demolition work that requires LPC review, as discussed on page 17. This includes demolition of contributing and non-contributing landmark structures and properties in historic districts. Note: Administrative (rather than LPC) review can apply to minor demolition work that meets these design guidelines.
9. Zone lot amendments.
10. Alterations or additions to city-owned landmarks or properties in historic districts, with the exception of work that would otherwise qualify as a Landmark quick review.
11. Major alterations or additions properties owned by Denver Public Schools that are individual landmarks or contributing buildings in historic districts.
12. Tax credit projects.
13. Projects determined by Landmark Preservation staff to not meet the design guideline.

VISIBILITY & PUBLIC VANTAGE POINTS

A project determined to be visible from public vantage points is one that is partially seen by a person of average height from publicly used space (such as a park, campus grounds, etc.) or from a roadway other than a residential alley. A project that is readily visible is of a size or design that is conspicuously seen from public vantage points.

Projects that are not readily visible from public vantage points may have greater flexibility. See page 16 for more information.
1. Introduction

LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMISSION DESIGN REVIEW

Meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of every month. Only completed applications can be scheduled for Commission review. A complete application is due 4 weeks prior to the meeting date. If a project must be reviewed by the Commission, most projects may be reviewed at one meeting; however, new construction of primary structures and tandem houses, and some large additions require a two-step design review process. In the two-step process, the LPC reviews the mass, form and context of the proposed project in one meeting, and then considers design details, including architectural and decorative elements, landscape and hardscape, and materials in a second meeting. The Commission may approve, approve with conditions, deny or continue projects during their meetings. For more information, contact Landmark Preservation staff.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW BY LANDMARK PRESERVATION STAFF

Small projects that clearly meet the design guidelines may be administratively approved by Landmark Preservation staff, including some alterations that are not readily visible, as described on page 16.

NEIGHBORHOOD REVIEW

For large-scale projects (new construction of primary structures and tandem houses, Accessory Dwelling Units, and rooftop additions), an advisory review meeting with a Registered Neighborhood Organization (RNO) may also be required, depending on the project location. Please consult with Landmark Preservation staff for more information.

DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION INFORMATION & FORMS

More information on the design review process and current application forms are available at the Landmark Preservation website.

PRE-APPLICATION MEETING

A pre-application meeting with Landmark Preservation staff is important to help evaluate concepts and identify issues. For some project types, pre-application meetings are required. Please contact Landmark Preservation staff or visit the Denver Landmark Preservation website for more information. See the chart on page 12 for more information.

DESIGN REVIEW PRECEDENT

In the design review process, the LPC and Landmark Preservation staff consider the unique circumstances of each project. Therefore, previous approval of a specific type of project in one setting and set of circumstances does not necessarily set a precedent for approval of future projects that may appear to be similar.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Once an administrative or Landmark Preservation Commission approval is granted, Landmark Preservation staff will issue a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and stamp the Landmark plan set. If a project was approved with conditions by the Commission, it must be resubmitted to Landmark staff showing how the conditions have been met prior to the issuance of the COA.

Once a Landmark application is approved, the applicant or designee may apply for zoning and/or building permits. If the project scope changes after the issuance of a COA, please contact Landmark Preservation staff immediately.
When a project is subject to the design review process, a property owner, architect or contractor submits a design review application. The LPC and Landmark Preservation staff then use the guidelines to inform the subsequent design review process.

The chart below identifies the steps involved in reviewing and approving an application for design review. The chart is intended to assist applicants in preparing application materials at the appropriate level of detail in the course of the project and in establishing a project schedule. Landmark Preservation staff will issue a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and stamped drawings for a successful design review application. A COA is necessary as part of the building and/or zoning permit process.
CONSIDERING HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Design review is intended to protect the historical, architectural, geographical, and cultural attributes that are recognized and valued by a landmark structure or historic district designation.

A historic structure may be an individually designated Denver landmark structure, or may be located within a historic district. Structures located within a historic district are considered to be contributing or noncontributing to the district as summarized beginning on pages 14-15.

To be designated, a structure or district must meet the designation requirements outlined in Chapter 30-4 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code. The structure or district must retain enough historic character to reflect its time and place in Denver’s history. Additional considerations related to historic significance are summarized below.

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

In most cases, a property is considered significant because it represents, or is associated with, a particular period in history, or an important community. Building materials and features dating from this period of significance typically help define the character of the structure.

Historic districts also have a period of significance established as part of the designation process. This is typically the period when most of the structures were constructed or notable historic events occurred. Structures and additions built within the period of significance for a historic district are generally considered contributing as described on page 14. Structures and additions not built within the period of significance are generally considered to be non-contributing as described on page 15. Over time, each district has undergone many changes, including new structures and additions, which have become part of the district’s story. See “Character defining Features” at right for more information.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

When planning a preservation project in a historic district, it is important to carefully review the district’s character-defining features, such as:

- District layout and composition (streets, land uses, lot sizes, setbacks)
- Primary structures (mass and form, materials, roofs, windows)
- Landscape & streetscape (plantings, outbuildings, sidewalks, walls, fences)

“Appendix A: Character-Defining Features of Denver’s Historic Districts” provides a summary for many of Denver’s 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.
DENVER LANDMARKS

Properties designated as individual landmarks have stand-alone historic significance and protection under the Denver Landmark Preservation ordinance. An individual landmark property can include one or more buildings, sites and/or features that have recognized architectural, historical, geographic, and/or cultural significance.

CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES & ADDITIONS

Structures within a historic district are generally considered contributing if they were constructed during the period of significance and can be recognized as being from that period (meaning they retain historic integrity). Most historic district ordinances or subsequent clarifying ordinances include either a list of contributing structures or a period of significance for that district. If no such list is available, the LPC makes a determination during the design review process using the criteria outlined in the Landmark ordinance (Chapter 30 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code).

Original structures and/or later additions that date within the period of significance are generally considered contributing. Some structures may have experienced alteration from their original appearance but are still considered as contributing because they retain sufficient building features and form to convey their historic character and significance. Other structures may have major alterations that render them as non-contributing, or may have later additions that do not contribute to their historic significance and can be considered for removal or replacement.
NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES & ADDITIONS

The classification of “non-contributing” applies to all vacant lots and structures or properties that are not specifically considered to be contributing to a historic district. Some non-contributing structures are more recent construction that were not built during the period of significance, while others are older but have been so substantially altered that they no longer retain their integrity. In some cases, a contributing structure may have a later addition that is considered to be non-contributing.

Non-contributing structures may be allowed greater flexibility, but they should remain architecturally compatible with the historic context. However, projects involving a non-contributing structure are still subject to the design review process as summarized in “Chapter Application Chart” on page 7 to ensure that changes are compatible with the character of the historic district.

CONCEPT OF INTEGRITY

Underlying these design review policies and guidelines is the concept of integrity. This simply means that a building or district can be recognized as belonging to its particular time and place in Denver’s history. Elements of integrity may include the building’s overall mass, form and materials, architectural details such as porches, brackets, dormers, windows and doors, and the relationship of the building to its surroundings and landscape. Additionally, signs can be important elements for commercial and institutional buildings.

Loss of integrity means that a building no longer reflects its historic time and place because so many changes have been made. In making design review decisions, the Commission carefully evaluates the effect that proposed additions and other major alterations will have to assure that the building’s or district’s integrity is maintained. Approval is given to those projects that retain and enhance the characteristics that give a building its sense of time and place, or integrity.
Potential Flexibility on a Façade that is Not Visible

Historic structures need to accommodate change as owners make adaptations for modern living and new uses. While alterations and additions to any façade must be considered on a project-by-project basis, alterations and additions may sometimes be acceptable on a façade that is not visible from the street or public vantage points. Alterations and additions are most likely to be acceptable when they do not impact the form of the structure and do not involve removal of significant architectural details. Additional details regarding potential flexibility are provided below. See page 11 for more information about administrative and Commission reviews.

PROJECT TYPES:

Potential flexibility on a façade that is not visible from the street or public vantage points may be available for a range of alterations, including:

1. Window and door replacements or changes to window and door openings – Refer to pages 28-36.
3. Awnings and canopies – Refer to page 56.
4. Other building attachments and additions, such as a rear dormer – Refer to page 39.
5. Alterations and additions to garages and secondary structures that are not readily visible from public vantage points – Refer to pages 49-50.
6. Site changes, such as rear fences, pergolas, swimming pools, or patios - Refer to Chapter 5 on pages 103-104.

The design guidelines note when a type of project or alteration lends itself to potential flexibility.

PRIMARY FACTORS:

When considering the level of exterior change acceptable for a less visible wall on a historic structure, the primary factors to consider are:

1. Impacts on the character-defining features of a building, property or district.
2. Impacts on the preservation of a structure’s overall form and mass.

For assistance in determining potential areas of flexibility please consult with Landmark Preservation staff.
DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS

The demolition review process applies when demolition is proposed for all or part of a structure which is designated as an individually designated Denver landmark structure or as part of a historic district. The LPC must approve the demolition of all primary structures in historic districts, even if they are non-contributing to the district. See pages 14-15 for information on contributing and non-contributing structures.

Small demolition projects may be reviewed administratively by Landmark Preservation staff. Projects that alter or add square footage to a structure may be reviewed under the Design Review Process described on pages 11-12. Total demolition of individually designated Denver landmark structures and primary structures in historic districts must be reviewed by the LPC. Total demolition is defined as 40% or more demolition of the exterior walls by the Denver Zoning Code.

Demolition approvals are conditional on the approval of a replacement structure or site plan. This ensures that historic district and properties retain their character and integrity and discourages vacant lots.

ADMINISTRATIVE DEMOLITION REVIEW

Landmark Preservation staff can administratively review demolition applications for non-contributing accessory structures, outbuildings, and small non-contributing additions.

DEMOLITION REVIEW BY LPC

The LPC must review demolition of primary contributing and non-contributing structures, contributing or non-contributing additions to a structure or site, and accessory structures or outbuildings that are considered contributing to the historic district or landmark site.

Total demolition of individually designated Denver landmark structures, contributing structures, and historic front façade features on contributing structures is held through a demolition public hearing in which public notice is placed on the property. The LPC may require a public hearing for the proposed demolition of a contributing accessory structure or outbuilding if the LPC finds the structure to have historic, architectural, geographic, or cultural significance of its own, and its removal would affect the integrity of the site. The purpose of these public hearings is to provide adequate notification to the public and close examination of proposed demolition work on the site of a landmark or within a designated historic district.

PROJECTS THAT TRIGGER A PUBLIC HEARING

A contributing structure is subject to a demolition public hearing in addition to design review if demolition is proposed for one or more of the following:

1. Demolition of any portion of a façade or feature (such as a porch, porte cochere, etc.) facing a public street other than a public alley
2. Demolition of 40% or more of the square footage of the structure’s exterior historic wall surfaces
3. Demolition of 40% or more of the historic roof structure area measured in plan view, not including projecting porches
4. A combined demolition of 40% or more of the square footage of the structure’s exterior historic walls surfaces and historic roof structure area measured in plan view.
A demolition application and review process is required when all or part of an individually-designated Denver landmark structure or structure in a historic district is proposed for demolition. The LPC and Landmark Preservation staff will consider the historic significance of the structure. The process is less rigorous for proposed demolition of a non-contributing structure or addition in a historic district or for a non-contributing addition to a designated landmark property. The chart below summarizes the demolition review process.

**Demolition Review Process Chart**

**Pre-Application Process**
1. Submit pre-application form
2. Pre-application meeting with staff.

**Application**
Submit application form and all required submittal materials to Landmark Preservation staff.

**Administrative Review**
- Only available for: Non-contributing additions and non-contributing accessory structures.

**Commission Review**
- Required for: All contributing and non-contributing primary structures, and contributing accessory structures.
  1. Staff reviews application materials for completeness and contacts applicant with recommended revisions, if necessary.
  2. Staff schedules project for public hearing or Commission meeting upon receipt of a complete application.

**Commission Meeting**
LPC meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month. The LPC may approve the demolition with conditions or deny the demolition.

**Approval with Conditions**
If LPC approves the demolition with conditions, the applicant must address those conditions before staff issues the demolition approval.

**Denial**
If LPC denies the project, the applicant may submit a revised application for future review.

**Permitting**
Once Landmark staff issues the demolition approval, and the COA and stamped drawings, applicant may apply for a building and/or zoning permit with Development Services.