DISTRICT DESCRIPTION

This is a historically middle-class neighborhood in the South Side, an area annexed by Denver in 1883, consisting of more than 20 tightly interwoven residential subdivisions. The earliest development dates from the 1870s, and includes a few wood-frame worker houses on the south end of the district. Late 1880s streetcar service stimulated growth until the Silver Crash of 1893. This era is represented by many Queen Anne style homes and Victorian eclectic variations. After the economy recovered, less elaborate styles became the norm. Baker includes several residences designed by notable Denver architects William Lang and Marshall Pugh. The District is very intact and includes churches, schools and commercial buildings.

ORDINANCE

Ordinance #896, adopted 2000.

No special provisions.

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

1873-1937.


Contributing structures are not included in the ordinance.

LISTING CRITERIA

- History
- Architecture
- Geography

History: Associated with the historical development of Denver from 1873 to 1937, providing worker and middle-class housing during eras of rapid population growth. Baker was the home of prominent Denver residents, including William Byers, John Dailey, Sadie Likens, and Alice Polk Hill.

Architecture: Represents a mix of popular late 19th and early 20th century styles, including Queen Anne, Victorian eclectic, Classic Cottages, Shingle style, Denver Squares with Classical Revival elements, and Bungalows. A few instances of Colonial Revival and Gothic Revival are present, as well as a few other styles. Many of the structures within the district were designed by notable Denver architects, master builders and craftsmen.
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DISTRICT LAYOUT & COMPOSITION

Streets & Streetscape
Principal streets are on a north-south east-west grid. Orientation of alleyways varies from block to block; some blocks lack alleys, resulting in a unique layout. Asphalt streets are common, with a variety of street widths. Some streets, such as Bannock, are very wide while other streets are a more traditional width. Curb cuts are very uncommon unless they are associated with older carriage houses that face onto primary streets.

Sidewalks
Wide historic sandstone sidewalks separated from the street with a large tree lawn, 5’ to 10’ in width. Mature trees often in the tree lawn.

Land Uses
Residential uses predominate in the district. Commercial and institutional buildings are also present, typically on corners and larger lots. These include two schools, the Mission Revival Byers-Alameda School (1902), 108 W. Byers Place, and the Collegiate Gothic Fairmont Elementary School (1924), 520 W. 3rd Ave. Also present are five late 19th and early 20th century masonry churches of various styles including the unusual stone 1891 St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, 126 W. 2nd Ave., with Medieval and English Cottage influences. Two-story commercial brick buildings are found on several corners internal to the neighborhood. Baker’s unique layout allowed for a number of secondary structures to front onto primary streets. These structures often had commercial uses.

Lot Sizes & Shapes
Rectangular shaped lots in varying sizes due to the assortment of subdivisions, land uses and various orientations of lots within the neighborhood; generally speaking, lots are narrow on the street with greater depth to the rear.

Building Placement
Buildings are oriented both north-south and east-west, varying from block to block. Buildings on north-south streets tend to be oriented to the north of the lot, while buildings on east-west streets tend to be centrally located or to one side of the lot.

Setbacks
Uniform front yard setbacks, varying from block to block, creating a consistent street wall. Front yards are shallow, historically open and at-grade. Narrow side yards result from the narrow lot configuration. The rear yards are larger to accommodate garden space and secondary structures.

Character-defining Features

1. Street view of Queen Anne style homes within the district. Note the forward facing gables, one story porches with shed and gable roofs, the large windows, asymmetrical appearance of the front façade and overall architectural harmony of this block. Middle porch is original; two flanking porches are early 20th century additions – historic but not original.

2. Street view of several styles that occur in Baker. In the foreground Classical Revival Denver Squares followed by two-story Queen Anne with gambrel roof and a smaller one-story Queen Anne in the distance. Note the uniformity of this block created by a uniform setback, the sandstone sidewalk and the overall harmony of classical ornamentation on these structures.
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Character-defining Features

3. Queen Anne style structures transitioning into the Shingle style. Note how these structures have more symmetry than traditional Queen Anne styles, the continuous wood shingle surface and simpler porches.

4. Historic commercial development within Baker. Note the two story massing, the recessed central entry with offset side entry, the storefront windows with transoms above and the decorative cornice.

5. One-story Italianate rowhouse with two separate entries. Note the decorative cornice, low hipped porch roofs, stone sills, and absent front yard.

PRIMARY BUILDINGS

Mass & Form

Building Height: Predominantly one- to two-story structures.

Building Shapes: Single family residences and smaller duplex and multi-family housing. Rectangular forms are very common, although churches and a few Queen Anne homes have asymmetrical forms. Many homes have identical rectangular shapes with nested front gables or other architectural details applied to street sides.

Materials

Brick construction typical with wood ornamentation. Foundations are typically brick or stone.

Roofs

Forward facing gable(s), and combined gable and hipped roof types are common on Queen Anne, Victorian eclectic and Bungalow homes. Roofs on Italianate examples are typically flat with decorative raised parapets, while a few Dutch Colonial influenced homes feature gambrel roofs, and roofs on Denver Squares are typically hipped with broad overhanging eaves.

Most roofs have boxed eaves; many Queen Anne and Victorian eclectic examples feature decorative barge boards. Front and side hipped dormers are common on Classic Cottages and Denver Squares; some front gabled homes have gabled side dormers. Composite roofing material is common as a replacement to wood shingles.

Entries & Doors

Offset forward facing single entries, some with transoms. Doors are typically solid wood or with a single glass pane above with paneling below. Wood doors with transoms common. A small number of entries have side lights.

Windows

Double hung one-over-one wood windows are common. Historic bay windows on a number of structures. Windows are typically tall and narrow, often grouped or paired. Arched windows and diamond pane windows in dormers are common. Framed windows are often in the upper gable. Stone headers and lintels are common. Historically, windows were recessed in the wall (not flush).
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Character-defining Features

6. Typical Queen Anne development within the district. Note the forward facing gable with fish-scale shingles and decorative sunburst and barge board, the projecting front porch with cross gable roof with a matching fish scale shingles and sunburst motif, and the arched ground-floor window.

PRIMARY BUILDINGS (continued)

**Porches**

| Width: | Partial and half width porches are typical on Queen Anne, Classic Cottages, Italianate and Victorian eclectic buildings; however, a few examples of these styles feature full width or wrap-around porches. Full width porches are more common on early 20th-century homes, such as Bungalows and Denver Squares. |
| Height: | One story typical. Narrow two story porches are only on the Queen Anne and Victorian eclectic homes. |
| Projecting: | The majority of porches within this district are projecting. A small number of the Queen Anne homes have engaged second story porches. Stoops are common, particularly on the Italianate style structures with flat roofs and raised parapets. |
| Shapes: | Raised square or rectangular shaped with gable, shed, and hipped roofs; some shed and hipped roofs have decorative front gables. Gable roofs are typical on Queen Anne and Victorian eclectic examples, and also on Bungalows. Hipped and shed roofs are common on most other styles. A number of 19th-century Victorian-era homes feature Bungalow front-gabled porches added in the early 1900s. |

**Building Ornamentation**

Fish-scale shingles are common in forward facing gables. Half-timbering is common in gables in simpler Queen Anne style homes. A transition from highly ornate Queen Anne to the Shingle style, with shingle surfaces and simpler ornamentation defines the transition in styles post Silver Crash. Corner quoins and decorative parapets are found on the Italianate homes.

**Porch (continued)**

| Materials: | Masonry foundations with wooden columns and railings are common. Brick piers and raised porch wall with stone caps are common on Bungalow porches. |
| Porch Ornamentation: | Turned, and simple square and round porch columns, some with Doric capitals, are common. Queen Anne and Victorian eclectic homes often have wooden spindle work, decorative brackets, and other ornamentation. Bungalows typically have exposed gable trusses. |
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ACCESSORY STRUCTURES & SITE FEATURES

Outbuildings
- **Detached:** Yes.
- **Access:** On the alleyways. However, because of Baker’s unique street layout a number of larger carriage houses face onto principal streets. Many of these larger secondary structures have been converted into residential units.
- **Height:** One- to two-story garages/historic carriage houses.
- **Size:** Smaller garages and carriage houses associated with the interior lots. Larger carriage houses on corner properties.
- **Shape:** Boxy masses with flat roofs and raised parapets and forward facing gables are common; a small number of hipped roofs.
- **Materials:** Brick and masonry construction.

Walkways
- Historic sandstone and modern concrete walkways 3 to 4 feet in width are common, leading in a straight path to the front door. At grade walkways are typical. Walkways with 2 to 3 steps to accommodate small front yard slopes are less common in northern part of the district.

Walls & Fences
- **Front Yards:** A small number of properties have low historic wrought iron fencing; later low chain link and other open-style fencing is found but not common.
- **Side & Rear Yards:** Wood and iron fencing enclosing side and rear yards.
- **Retaining Walls:** Not common. Some very low stone retaining walls in north end of the district.

DESIGN REVIEW

All properties within a historic district are subject to design review. When planning a preservation or construction project, it is important to consider the character-defining features of the district.

When reviewing proposed changes to a property, the Denver Landmark Preservation Commission uses the Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures & Districts in combination with the character-defining features of the historic district to evaluate the project’s compatibility with the property and historic district.

The character-defining features document for each district generally captures the most prevailing architectural and site features found within the district. In some instances, a structure and site within a district may be the exception to the character-defining features.