1. INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of the Design Guidelines and How They Apply

The citizens 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 community’s heritage.

The design guidelines strive to accommodate the need of property owners to make modern improvements, while protecting the distinguishing 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 and architecturally significant building fabric.**
- **Maintain neighborhood character and 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).
- **Guide tax credit review.** The guidelines are used to determine eligibility for State of Colorado income tax incentives for historic preservation projects. See “Financial Incentives for Historic Preservation” on page 12 for more information.
HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Denver was founded in 1858 and quickly emerged as the major metropolitan city of the Rocky Mountain Region based on the mineral wealth of the nearby mountains, railroad connections, and processing and distribution of a wide variety of products. 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 neighborhoods
» Concentrations of structures from 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) Lowry, Sherman-Grant Street Apartments, neighborhoods to the south of downtown such as Harvey Park

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

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2000

Comprehensive Plan 2000 establishes a 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:

- “Promote standards and incentives for design that enhance the quality and character of the city, including the preservation of significant historic structures and features” (Strategy 1-B).
- “Preserve Denver’s architectural and design legacies while allowing new ones to evolve” (Strategy 1-C).
- “Leverage City resources to protect Denver’s landmarks and eligible historic structures and to avoid their demolition” (Strategy 6-D).

BLUEPRINT DENVER

The 2002 Blueprint Denver plan supplements Comprehensive Plan 2000 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.

GREENPRINT DENVER

The 2006 Greenprint Denver plan sets ambitious goals for Denver’s economic, environmental and social sustainability. As described in “Benefits of Preservation” on page 3, the design guidelines in this document support Greenprint Denver’s sustainability goals.

Visit www.greenprintdenver.org for more information about ongoing sustainability programs.
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 Articles 12.4.5 and 12.4.7 of the Denver Zoning Code.

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

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 code, although special exceptions may be available for historic properties.

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 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 resources - See page 5 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, and even enhance, 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, see the Green Building Council’s manual on LEED certification for Neighborhood Development at: www.usgbc.org/neighborhoods

- 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 DENVER ZONING CODE & NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

The Denver Zoning Code is organized around a series of neighborhood contexts such as “Suburban”, “Urban Edge” and “Urban Center” that relate to the existing and desired characteristics of Denver’s neighborhoods. This system informs code regulations that acknowledge the different physical and functional characteristics of Denver’s neighborhoods.
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. Projects subject to design review using the guidelines include:

- Exterior alterations or additions to individually-designated Denver landmark structures and all properties in historic districts that require zoning or building permits (including new or reconstructed windows and doors)
- Lot splits and combinations involving individually-designated Denver landmark structures and properties in historic districts
- Site and landscape changes involving individually-designated Denver landmark structures and properties in historic districts
- Demolition of individually-designated Denver landmark structures and structures in historic districts (see “Demolition Review Process” on page 14 for more information)

- New construction or signage in individually designated Denver landmarks and historic districts
- Projects using state tax credits (see “Financial Incentives for Historic Preservation” on page 12 for more information)

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 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 (see “Financial Incentives for Historic Preservation” on page 12 for more information). Please consult with Landmark Preservation staff if you are unsure whether the design review process using these guidelines applies to your project.

See “Design Review Process” on page 11 for a summary of the complete review process.

PREVIOUS GUIDELINES & POLICIES

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

- Contemporary Guidelines for Landmark Structures and Districts (2006)

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.
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 10). "Chapter Application Chart" on page 7 provides information on the chapters that will apply depending on the type of proposed project.

1. INTRODUCTION

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.

2. GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

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.

3. GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS

This chapter provides design guidelines to promote compatible additions to landmark structures and contributing structures in historic districts. It focuses on compatible location and massing characteristics.

4. GUIDELINES FOR NEW BUILDINGS & NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

This chapter provides design guidelines to promote compatible new construction in historic districts throughout Denver. It focuses on designs that can be recognized as current construction while remaining compatible with the surrounding context.

5. GUIDELINES FOR SITE & LANDSCAPE DESIGN

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.

6. GUIDELINES FOR SIGNS

This chapter provides guidance for signage on individually-designated Denver landmark structures and historic districts.

APPENDICES

The appendices include information on character-defining features of Denver’s historic districts, the key features of historic architectural styles, and a glossary of terms.

See page 16 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. Historic Structure
   » Individually-designated Denver landmark
   » Contributing structure in a historic district

2. Non-Contributing Structure or Vacant Lot
   Structures or lots that are considered non-contributing to a district

3. All Properties
   Includes all properties within the boundary of a locally-designated landmark or historic district.

4. Preservation/Alteration
   Chapter 2: Guidelines for Preserving Historic Buildings
   See page 19.

5. Addition
   Chapter 3: Guidelines for Additions to Historic Buildings
   See page 61. For additions to a secondary structure, see page 47.

6. Alteration/Addition
   Chapter 4: Guidelines for New Buildings
   See page 71.

7. New Construction
   Chapter 5: Guidelines for Site and Landscape Design
   See page 91.

8. Landscape Design
   Chapter 6: Guidelines for Signs
   See page 105.

9. Signs
   Demolition
   See page 14.

1See page 16 for information on contributing and non-contributing structures.

2An approved plan for compatible new construction may be required.
Additional Design Guidelines that May Apply

The guidelines in this document apply to all individually-designated Denver landmark structures and historic districts with the exception of the Lower Downtown Historic District, which has separate design guidelines and a separate design review process. In some cases, however, additional design guidelines, in a separate document, will also apply to specific individually-designated Denver landmark structures (such as Union Station) or in specific historic districts.

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. For example, some properties in the Curtis Park Historic District are also subject to the Arapahoe Square Design Standards and Guidelines.

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</th>
<th>THIS DOCUMENT APPLIES</th>
<th>THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT APPLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All guidelines for the district are provided in this document</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional guidelines apply to new construction in some areas (in addition to these guidelines)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional guidelines inform local review and recommendation to LPC (in addition to these guidelines)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate guidelines used to inform LPC review</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other guidelines inform all design review (these guidelines do not apply)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 New construction in some parts of the district are reviewed using the Arapahoe Square Design Standards and Guidelines.
2 The Design Guidelines for the Country Club Historic District apply in addition to the guidelines in this document, and are used to inform neighborhood recommendations to the LPC.
3 The guidelines in this document do not apply. Design review is conducted by the Lower Downtown Design Review Board using district-specific design guidelines.
4 Denver’s City Beautiful Movement Parkways Historic District includes 13 early parkways. In addition, 8 other early parkways are located within other designated historic landmark districts. The LPC uses Design Guidelines: Denver’s Designated Parkways and Boulevards in combination with the guidelines in this document when making recommendations to Denver Parks and Recreation and Denver Public Works on changes to the 21 parkways with historic designation. For more information on regulatory and design review requirements for improvements adjacent to historically designated parkways, please refer to the sidebar in Chapter 5 on p. 92.

Figure 4: Additional Design Guidelines that May Apply
USING THE GUIDELINES

The Design Guidelines are intended for use by anyone planning a preservation project or seeking to learn more about historic preservation in Denver. Specific design guidelines users are listed below:

The Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) uses the Design Guidelines for Landmark Structures and Districts to review and regulate the rehabilitation, restoration, expansion, alteration or demolition of individually-designated Denver landmark structures and properties in locally-designated historic districts. The LPC also reviews and regulates new construction in local historic districts.

See “Design Review Process” on page 11 for more information on the types of projects subject to LPC review and approval.

Landmark Preservation staff use the guidelines to provide the LPC with recommendations regarding approval of projects. Landmark Preservation staff may also administratively approve some projects. See “Design Review Process” on page 11 for more information.

Property Owners use the design guidelines to plan projects and learn about appropriate treatments for historic structures. For larger projects, property owners are strongly encouraged to enlist the assistance of qualified design and planning professionals, including architects and preservation consultants.

Architects and Contractors use the design guidelines to ensure that their projects are compatible with Denver’s historic context.

Neighborhood Organizations may use the design guidelines to informally review projects, inform neighbors and make recommendations to the LPC. Property owners are encouraged to coordinate with registered neighborhood organizations (RNOs) in advance of an LPC meeting or hearing for their project.

Other Design Guidelines Users include community members, businesses or residents who seek to acquire or use historic structures and would like to better understand appropriate rehabilitation strategies and the City’s expectations for treatment of its historic resources.
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

1. To preserve the form, pitch, materials, size and orientation of an original roof because it contributes to the character of a historic building
2. To maintain the visual continuity created by a pattern of similar roof forms along a block.

**C** DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ROOFS

2.24 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 and turrets.
   d. Avoid altering the angle of a historic roof.
   e. Do not cut back exposed roof rafters and soffits.

**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)

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.

Figure 5: Sample Design Guidelines Format
The design review process applies to the projects listed on page 5 and includes the formal steps summarized in the chart on page 13. Once an approval is granted, the Landmark Preservation staff issues a Certificate of Appropriateness. Landmark Preservation staff and the LPC also administer the process of demolition review as summarized on pages 14 and 15.

The design review process will consider the historic character and significance of properties as described in “Considering Historic Significance” on page 16.

**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, whichever is less
2. Projects that are readily visible from public vantage points, other than fencing and minor site work that meets the design guidelines
3. All roof-top additions that are visible from public vantage points, including enclosed and open space
4. All new construction. Exception: one-story garages and other new construction that clearly meets design guidelines and are not readily visible from public vantage points
5. Major changes to readily visible or character-defining doors, windows, porches and other historic features
6. Major changes to historic materials
7. Comprehensive sign plans, projecting shaped signs and other signs that are not subject to administrative review as summarized on page 110 in Chapter 6
8. Demolition work that does not trigger the demolition review process depicted on p. 14. This includes demolition of non-contributing additions to landmark and contributing properties. Note: Administrative (rather than LPC) review can apply to minor demolition work that meets these design guidelines
9. Zone lot amendments
10. Improvements to publicly owned landmarks or properties in historic districts
11. Tax credit projects
12. Projects determined by Landmark Preservation staff to not meet the design guidelines

**DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION INFORMATION & FORMS**

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

**ZONING ADJUSTMENT**

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 (BOA) variance as delineated in Articles 12.4.5 and 12.4.7 of the Denver Zoning Code.

The BOA may grant a zoning variance where development conforming to the zoning code would have an adverse impact on the historic character of a designated property. The LPC makes recommendations to the BOA regarding variances.

**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.
1. Introduction

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR LANDMARK STRUCTURES & DISTRICTS

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW BY LANDMARK PRESERVATION STAFF

Some small projects that clearly meet the design guidelines may be administratively approved by Landmark Preservation staff, including some alterations that are not visible, as described on page 24.

PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCE

A pre-application conference with Landmark Preservation staff is important to help evaluate concepts and identify issues. See the chart on page 13 for more information. For some project types, pre-application meetings are required. Please contact Landmark Preservation staff or the Denver Landmark Preservation website for more information.

TWO-STEP DESIGN REVIEW

A two-step design review process applies to infill construction. 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. For more information, contact Denver Landmark Preservation staff.

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.

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The LPC and Landmark Preservation staff use these design guidelines to review and approve property tax rebates and tax credit projects.

State Tax Credits: Qualifying restoration and rehabilitation work on historic structures may be eligible for a State of Colorado income tax incentive. To qualify for a tax credit, structures must be designated as a Denver Landmark by the City and County of Denver or listed in the Colorado State Register of Historic Places. Where interior work qualifies for tax credits, the LPC and Landmark Preservation staff use the Secretary of the Interior’s Rehabilitation Standards as summarized on page 4.

Downtown Denver Property Tax Rebate: Contributing structures in the Downtown Denver Historic District may qualify for a property tax rebate. The building’s street elevations must be in good repair and be substantially original in appearance. Additional criteria apply. The rebate’s availability varies from year to year. For more information, contact Landmark Preservation staff or go to the Financial Incentives page on the Denver Landmark Preservation website.

NEIGHBORHOOD REVIEW

Owners of historic properties should consult with their registered neighborhood organization (list available on the web) prior to and during the design review process to receive input and resolve potential issues. Note that registered neighborhood organization review is required for projects in the Country Club Historic District. (See “Additional Design Guidelines that May Apply” on page 8 for more information). For large-scale projects, an advisory review meeting with a Registered Neighborhood Organization may also be required, depending on the project location. Please consult with Landmark Preservation staff for more information.
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) for a successful design review application. A COA is necessary as part of the building permit process.

**1. Introduction**

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**Design Review and Approval Process Chart**

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) for a successful design review application. A COA is necessary as part of the building permit process.

---

**1. PRE-APPLICATION PROCESS**

**A. SUBMIT PRELIMINARY APPLICATION FORM**

*Available online at the Denver Landmark Preservation website*

**B. PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCE WITH STAFF**

*In certain cases, a project can proceed to step 2 without a pre-application conference.*

---

**2. APPLICATION**

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

---

**3. REVIEW & APPROVAL**

Coordinate with staff and refer to page 11 to determine whether the project is subject to administrative review by Landmark Preservation staff or review by the LPC.

---

**ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TRACK**

Staff reviews application for completeness and conformance with applicable guidelines.

**APPROVAL**

Staff approves unless LPC review is required.

---

**OBTAIN BUILDING PERMIT**

City staff will review final construction drawings to ensure they match Landmark Preservation staff or LPC approval, and issue Certificate of Appropriateness.²

---

**LPC REVIEW TRACK**

Staff reviews for completeness and conformance with applicable guidelines

**LPC MEETING**

LPC meets 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month.¹ The LPC may make a decision or continue review to the next meeting (unclear applications or neighborhood concern).

---

**APPROVED**

Applicant can proceed to construction drawings²

**NOT APPROVED**

Applicant may modify project and resubmit plans

---

¹Applications are due prior to LPC meetings. Consult the Denver Landmark Preservation web site for current requirements. Some projects on the LPC review track require a two-step design review process and/or Registered Neighborhood Organization coordination. Contact the Landmark Preservation website for applicable requirements.

²If the LPC approves a project with conditions, the final construction drawings and submittal must reflect those conditions.
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. See the “Demolition Review Process Chart” on page 15 for more information.

Significant demolitions of individually-designated landmark structures and primary structures in historic districts are subject to demolition review as defined in the “Projects That Trigger Demolition Review” sidebar at right. A separate demolition application form and related submittals are required.

Some projects that alter or add square footage to historic properties may involve demolition of small portions of a structure. These projects are reviewed under the Design Review Process described on page 11.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

Projects that propose to demolish non-contributing additions and accessory structures or garages can ordinarily be reviewed by Landmark Preservation staff.

REVIEW BY LPC

The LPC approves all demolitions of primary structures, even if they are non-contributing. See page 16 for information on contributing and non-contributing structures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure Type</th>
<th>Individual Landmark or Contributing to District?</th>
<th>LPC Decision?</th>
<th>Public Hearing Required?</th>
<th>Replacement Plan Required?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Primary structure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary structure</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory structure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Typically Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory structure</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Typically No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The LPC requires a demolition public hearing for projects proposing demolition of primary contributing and individually-designated Denver landmark structures as defined by “Projects that Trigger Demolition Review” in the box above. The LPC can 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 or geographic 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.

Most demolition approvals can only be released once the LPC or Landmark Preservation staff approves a proposed replacement structure or site development. This ensures that historic properties retain their character and integrity and protects the stability of historic districts by discouraging undeveloped or vacant properties.

PROJECTS THAT TRIGGER DEMOLITION REVIEW

A project is subject to the demolition review process (rather than the design review process) if demolition is proposed for one or more of the following:

1. Any portion of a façade or feature (such as a porch, porte cochere) facing a public street other than a public alley
2. 40% or more of the square footage of the structure’s exterior façade wall surfaces
3. 40% or more of the roof structure area measured in plan view
4. 40% or more of the combined square footage of the structure’s exterior walls and roof structure area
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.

**Figure 8: Demolition Review Process Chart**

1. **Pre-Application Process**
   - **A. Submit Preliminary Application**
     Available online at the Denver Landmark Preservation web site
   - **B. Pre-Application Conference with Staff**

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

3. **Review & Approval**

   **Administrative Review Track**
   - Applies to:
     - Non-contributing additions, ancillary structures and outbuildings
   - **Approval**
     Staff reviews and issues demolition approval. Any proposed replacement plan is subject to design review and approval.
   - **Obtain Demolition & Building Permits**
     City staff reviews permit drawings to ensure they match demolition and replacement plan approval.

   **LPC Review Track**
   - Applies to:
     - All contributing and non-contributing primary structures
     - Contributing ancillary structures
   - **LPC Meeting**
     LPC meets 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month. LPC approves demolition or sets public hearing.
   - **LPC Public Hearing**
   - **Conditional Approval**
     Demolition approval is conditional on LPC approval of a replacement plan (subject to design review and approval).
   - **Not Approved**
     Applicant may modify plan to incorporate structure or submit application for an economic hardship hearing.

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1Applications are due prior to LPC Meetings. Consult the Denver Landmark Preservation web site for current requirements. Some projects on the LPC review track require a two-step design review process and/or Registered Neighborhood Organization coordination. Contact the Landmark Preservation website for applicable requirements.

2If a demolition is approved with conditions, such as a replacement plan, Landmark Preservation staff will approve the permit that includes the demolition work only if all conditions are met and permits are filed concurrently.

3If the LPC does not approve a demolition, the property owner may file for an economic hardship hearing per Section 30-618 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code. Contact Landmark Preservation staff for additional information.
CONSIDERING HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Design review is intended to protect the historical, architectural and geographical 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 non-contributing to the district as summarized beginning on page 17.

To be designated, a structure or district must meet criteria for significance in two of three categories: architecture, history and geography. The structure or district must retain enough original 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. Building fabric 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 17. Structures and additions not built within the period of significance are generally considered to be non-contributing as described on page 18.

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 each 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. A landmark property can include one or more buildings, sites and/or objects that have recognized architectural, historical and/or geographic value.

CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES & ADDITIONS

Architecturally, structures within a historic district are considered contributing if they were constructed during the period of significance and can be recognized as being from that period (meaning they retain 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.

Original structures and/or later additions that date within the period of significance are generally registered as contributing. Some structures may have experienced alteration from their original appearance but are still considered as contributing because they retain sufficient building fabric and form to convey their historic character and significance. Other structures may have significant 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.
3. Non-contributing porch infill/enclosure in a historic district

4. Non-contributing house in a historic district

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 was 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.

Because maintaining integrity (see below) is not a specific objective, additional flexibility may be appropriate for projects involving a non-contributing structure. 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 original 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.