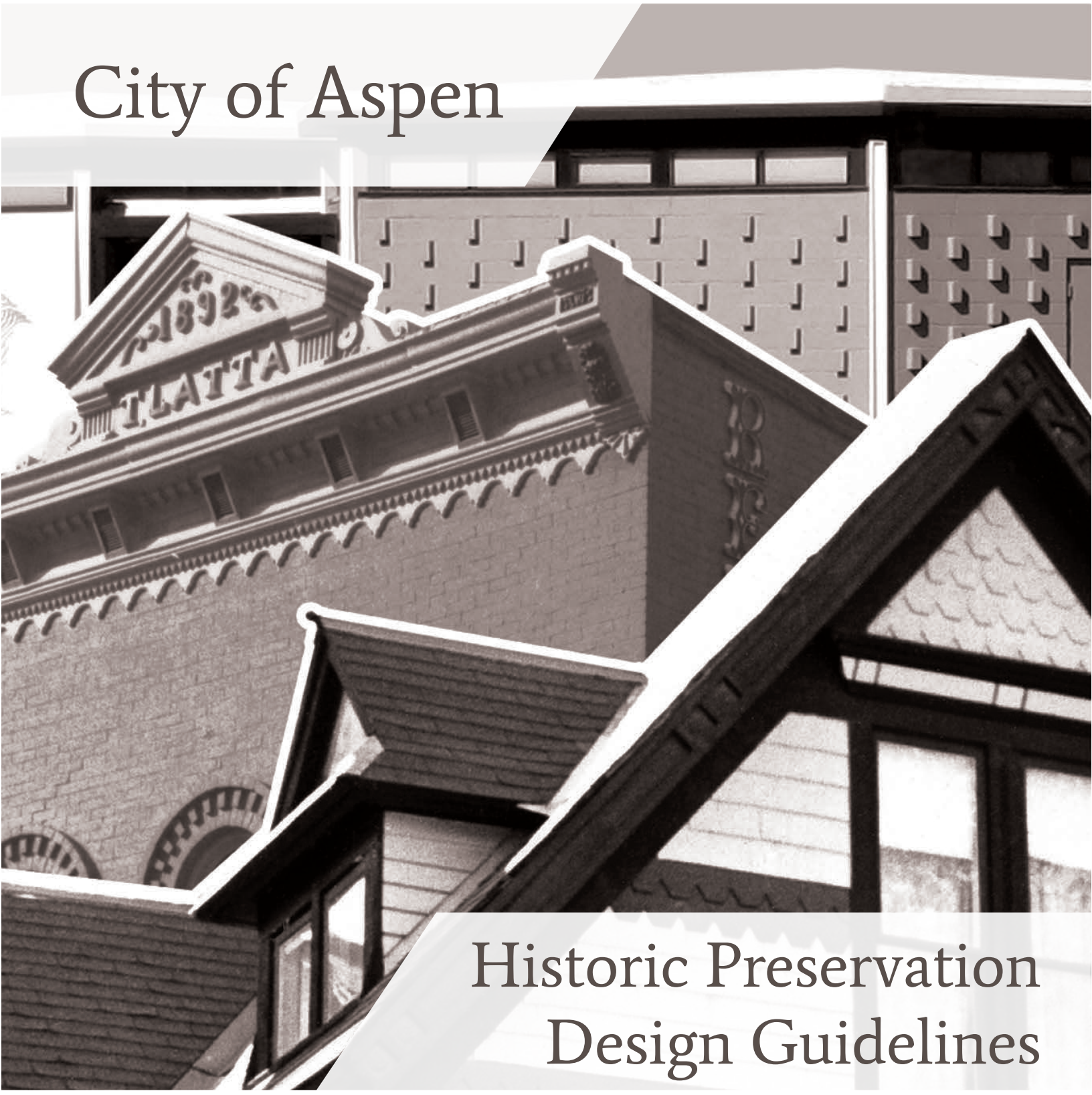
City of Aspen



Historic Preservation Design Guidelines

THE CITY OF ASPEN

THE CITY OF ASPEN

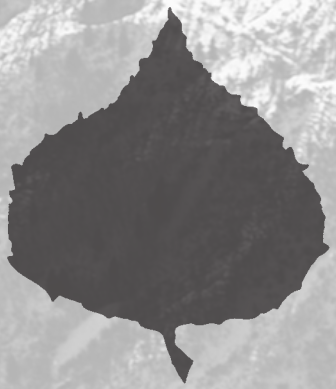
Historic Preservation Design Guidelines

Revised 05/2024

THE CITY OF ASPEN

table of contents

Introduction



INTRODUCTION

Aspen is a unique community, rich with history, dramatic landscapes, a vibrant economy, and vital cultural scene. Each of these elements contributes to the appeal of the City and enhances its livability. Within this context, the preservation of historic resources is a high priority. This policy is articulated in the Aspen Area Community Plan and in ordinances that address protection of landmarked properties and historic districts.

This document provides background on the City's preservation program and local history and then presents design guidelines that articulate policies for the treatment of locally-designated historic properties and districts.

Note: Not every guidelines will apply to each project, and some balancing of the guidelines must occur on a case-by-case basis. The Aspen Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) must determine that a sufficient number of the relevant guidelines have been adequately met in order to approve a project proposal. It must be emphasized that these are only guidelines and they are not applicable in all cases, and need to be weighed with the practicality of the measure.

Why Preserve Historic Resources

Across the nation, thousands of communities promote historic preservation because doing so contributes to neighborhood livability, variety, and quality of life, minimizes negative impacts on the environment and yields economic rewards. These same reasons apply in Aspen. Preservation of the built environment in Aspen provides a fundamental link to the past. Many of the buildings tell the story of Aspen's unique historical development. Preserving these resources creates a sense of place for those who live here and provides visitors a connection with this unique heritage.

Construction Quality

Many of the historic structures in the City are of high quality construction. Other buildings are more modest, but even so may have used lumber from mature trees that were properly seasoned and typically milled to full dimension, which often yields stronger framing. Historic masonry walls were carefully laid, resulting in buildings with considerable stability.

Many older structures were thoughtfully detailed and the finishes of materials, including fixtures, wood floors and trim, were of high quality and exemplify hand craftsmanship that is more unusual today. Some AspenModern structures represent early use of building technologies that continue to be favored.

Adaptability

Owners frequently find that the floor plans of historic buildings easily accommodate modern lifestyles and support a diversity of populations. Many rooms are large, permitting a variety of uses while retaining the overall historic character of the structure. Even historic buildings that are smaller in scale often have lots that can accommodate additions, if needed.

Livability and Quality of Life

When groups of older buildings occur as a historic district, such as along Main Street or the Commercial Core in Aspen, they create a street scene that is pedestrian friendly, and encourages walking and neighborly interaction. Mature trees and decorative architectural features also contribute to a sense of identity that is unique for each historic neighborhood—an attribute that is rare and difficult to achieve in newer areas of a city. These therefore are desirable places to live and work.

Environmental Benefits

Preserving a historic structure is sound environmental conservation policy because "recycling" saves energy and reduces the need for producing new construction materials. Three types of energy savings occur:

- First, energy is not consumed to demolish the existing building and dispose of the resulting debris.
- Second, energy is not used to create new building materials, transport them and assemble them on site.
- Finally, the embodied energy which was used to create the original building and its components, is preserved.

By reusing older buildings, pressure is reduced to harvest new lumber and other materials that may have negative effects on the environment of other locales where these materials are produced.

Economic Benefits

Historic resources are finite and cannot be replaced, making them precious commodities that many buyers seek. Preservation adds value to private property. Many studies across the nation document that, where local historic districts are established, property values typically rise, or at least are stabilized. In this sense, designation of a historic district appears to protect investment. Property owners within the district know that the time and money they spend on improving their properties will be matched with similar efforts on surrounding lots. Arguably, this applies to Aspen as well.

Nationwide studies prove that preservation projects also contribute more to the local economy than do new building programs because each dollar spent on a preservation project has a higher percentage devoted to labor and to the purchase of materials available locally. By contrast, new construction typically has a higher percentage of each dollar spent devoted to materials that are produced outside of the local economy and to special construction skills that may be imported. When money is spent on rehabilitating a building, it has a higher "multiplier effect," keeping more money circulating in the community. Rehabilitation therefore, provides more jobs for Aspen area residents.

Heritage Tourism

Preservation minded communities are among the leading tourist destinations. Aspen has an authenticity that visitors appreciate. There are many opportunities to connect with the history of Aspen as a tourist and this contributes to longer stays and repeat visits.

Incentives for Preservation

While the economic benefits are substantial, special incentives also exist to help offset potential added costs of appropriate rehabilitation procedures. Income tax credits are offered at the state and federal levels for appropriate rehabilitation. Eligible projects also can qualify for the Colorado Historical Society's State Historical Fund, a substantial opportunity for owners of commercial and significant residential properties.

The City also offers financial bonuses which are available for historic landmarks. The Aspen Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has the ability to award zoning bonuses to historic landmarks.

Responsibility of Ownership

Ownership of a historic property carries both the benefits described above and a responsibility to respect the historic character of the resource and its setting. While this responsibility does exist, it does not automatically translate into higher construction or maintenance costs. Ultimately, residents and property owners should recognize that historic preservation is a long-range community policy that promotes economic wellbeing and overall viability of the City at large and that they play a vital role in helping to implement that policy through careful stewardship of the area's historic resources.

Levels of Historic Designation in Aspen

Local Landmark

The City has identified approximately 300 historic resources, including buildings, structures, parks, cemeteries, and bridges as historic landmarks. Because there was a long period of economic depression at the turn of the 20th century, historic development in Aspen generally occurred either in the silver mining era (these resources are termed Aspen Victorian) or around World War II (these resources are termed AspenModern).

The local register designation process is established through the police powers of Aspen's zoning ordinance. Criteria for designation are set forth in city codes and designated properties are subject to protections outlined in the ordinance, including demolition and design review. In general, any exterior alteration to an inventoried property must be reviewed and approved before work can begin.

District Designation

Currently, the City of Aspen has two locally designated historic districts, the Main Street Historic District, and the Commercial Core Historic District. The districts were created to preserve the character of entire

neighborhoods. In general, any demolition, exterior alteration, or construction on a property within a historic district must be reviewed and approved before work can begin.

National Register Listing

The National Register of Historic Places is a list of sites and properties of historic significance that is maintained by the Secretary of the Interior. Properties so listed may have national significance, but they may also be listed if they are determined to have significance at a state or local level. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service and nominations are submitted through the State Historic Preservation Officer in Denver, using criteria adopted by the Secretary of the Interior. Properties listed in the National Register may be eligible for federal income tax credit incentives. Designated properties are also protected from federally-funded projects which might harm or alter the historic character. Such federal projects must be reviewed for their potential negative impact. In these cases, alterations are reviewed by the National Park Service. Otherwise, only the standard process for all Aspen landmarks applies. The History Colorado website lists National Register properties by county: ***historycolorado.org/oahp/pitkin-county***.

Purpose of the Design Guidelines

These design guidelines are specifically for properties listed on the "Inventory of Historic Sites and Structures," inside and outside of the historic districts. Additional guidelines for the Main Street and Commercial Core Historic Districts are found in the "*Commercial, Lodging, and Historic District Design Objective and Guidelines*", a separate document available on ***aspenpitkin.com***.

The design guidelines serve to reinforce the purpose of the Historic Preservation Chapter in the Aspen Land Use Code:

- Recognize, protect, and promote the retention and continued utility of the historic buildings and districts in the City.
- Promote awareness and appreciation of Aspen's unique heritage.
- Ensure the preservation of Aspen's character as an historic mining town, early ski resort and cultural center.
- Retain the historic, architectural and cultural resource attractions that support tourism and the economic welfare of the community.
- Encourage sustainable reuse of historic structures.
- Encourage voluntary efforts to increase public information, interaction or access to historic building interiors.

The design guidelines provide a basis for making decisions about the appropriate treatment of historic resources and compatible new construction. They also serve as an educational and planning tool for property owners and their design professionals who seek to make improvements that may affect historic resources.

How to Use the Guidelines

While the design guidelines are written such that they can be used by the layman to plan improvements, property owners are strongly encouraged to enlist the assistance of qualified design and planning professionals, including architects, landscape architects, structural engineers, preservation contractors, and preservation consultants to assure that the work contemplated will help preserve the historic character of the City.

Any affected property owner who plans to make changes to the exterior of a building must obtain a Certificate of No Negative Effect or a Certificate of Appropriateness. In order to review each project in a consistent manner, City Preservation Staff and the HPC will use these guidelines as a basis for determining the appropriateness of the work proposed.

How Many Guidelines Must Be Met?

Note that not every guideline will apply to each project, and that some balancing of the guidelines must occur on a case-by-case basis. City Staff or the HPC will determine that a sufficient number of the relevant guidelines have been adequately met in order to approve a project proposal.

What is the Format of a Guideline?

The chapters containing design guidelines are organized in a format that provides background information as well as specific regulatory language. Each of these chapters contains the following components:

Policy Statement

A broad statement explaining the City's basic approach for the treatment of the design feature being discussed. This statement provides the basis for the

more detailed background information and design guidelines that follow. In a case in which special conditions in a specific project are such that the detailed design guidelines do not appear to address the situation, then this broad policy statement serves as the basis for determining the appropriateness of the proposed work.

Background Information

A discussion of the issues typically associated with the specific design topic is presented next. This may include technical information, such as factors associated with the preservation of a historic building material, as well as general preservation theory that is relevant to the topic at hand.

Pertinent Sub-Topics

The sections that follow the background information are divided into sub-topics. For example, in the chapter addressing Building Materials, the sub-topics include: treatment, repair and replacement. This organization allows the user to quickly select the specific design topics within a section that are relevant.

Design Guidelines

The specific design guidelines are presented as **bold** face statements under each sub-topic. These are also numbered to indicate their relative position within the chapter and to aid in specific reference in the review process. Also provided with the design guidelines are supplementary requirements, which are bulleted (•) statements. These supplementary statements clarify the primary design guideline statement and may suggest specific methods for complying with it.

How Were the Design Guidelines Developed?

The City's first preservation guidelines were adopted in 1972. The guidelines have been revised and improved multiple times taking community input and the experience of the Historic Preservation Commission into account. The design guidelines incorporate concepts set forth in ***The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*** (listed in the Appendix)—a nationally accepted set of basic preservation design principles. This document is compatible with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*, while expanding on how these basic preservation principles apply in Aspen.

The Concept of Historic Significance

What makes a property historically significant? It is generally recognized that a certain amount of time must pass before the historical significance of a property can be evaluated. The National Register, for example, requires that a property be at least 50 years old or have extraordinary importance before it may be considered. Aspen does not have a minimum age for designation.

A property may be significant for one or more of the following reasons:

- Antiquity
- Association with events patterns, trends, or people that have contributed to local, state, regional, or national history.
- Physical design associated with distinctive characteristics of a building type, period, or construction method.
- An example of an architect or master craftsman or an expression of particularly high artistic values.
- Singular significance to the City.
- Integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Period of Significance

Every historic building or district has a period of significance—or the time span during which it gained architectural, historical or geographical importance. In most cases, a property is significant because it represents or is associated with a particular period in history. Frequently, this begins with its construction date and continues through the peak of early occupation. Building fabric and features that date from the period of significance typically contribute to the character of the structure or district.

Concept of "Integrity"

In addition to being historically significant, a property also must have integrity—a sufficient percentage of the structure must date from the period of significance. The majority of the building's structural system and its materials should date from that time and its key character defining features also should remain intact. These may include architectural details as well as the overall mass and form of the building. It is these elements that allow a building or district to be recognized as a product of its time.

Preservation Principles

While the guidelines in this document provide direction for specific design issues, some basic principles form the foundation for them. The following preservation principles apply to all historic properties in Aspen.

Respect the historic design character of the building.
Don't try to change a building's style or make it look older than it really is. Confusing the character by mixing elements of different styles is not appropriate.

Seek uses that are compatible with the historic character of the building.
Uses that closely relate to the building's original use are preferred. Every reasonable effort should be made to provide a compatible use for the building that will require minimal alteration to the building and its site.

Protect and maintain significant features and stylistic elements.
Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship should be treated with sensitivity. The best preservation procedure is to maintain historic features from the outset so that intervention is not required.

Repair deteriorated historic features, and replace only those elements that cannot be repaired.
Maintain the existing material, using recognized preservation methods whenever possible. If disassembly is necessary for repair or restoration, use methods that minimize damage to original materials and re-install in the existing configuration.

Selecting a Preservation Approach

Each preservation project is unique. A project may include a variety of treatment techniques, including the repair and replacement of features and maintenance of those already in good condition. Some of the basic preservation treatments are described in the section that follows. In each case, it is important to develop an overall strategy for treatment that is based on an analysis of the building and its setting.

Analysis should begin with an investigation of the history of the property. This may identify design alterations that have occurred and may help in developing an understanding of the significance of the building as a whole, as well as its individual components. Sources for historic information include the ***City of Aspen Community Development Department, the Aspen Historical Society, and two City websites; aspenvictorian.com and aspenmod.com. Denver Public Library Western History Collection (digital.denverlibrary.org)*** and on-line fire insurance maps from the turn of the century, ***Sanborn Maps, (cudl.colorado.edu)*** are also helpful.

Historical research should be combined with an on-site assessment of existing conditions. In this inspection, identify those elements that are original and those that have been altered. Also determine the condition of individual building components.

Finally, list the requirements for continued use of the property. Is additional space needed? Or should the work focus on preserving and maintaining the existing configuration?

In addition to the historical background, research should also be done which identifies the preservation incentives offered by the HPC. The preservation incentives are a way for the property owner to improve a project and make it more sympathetic to the historic resource.

By combining an understanding of the history of the building, its present condition, and the need for action, one can then develop a preservation approach. When doing so, consider the following terms:

Maintenance

Work that often focuses on keeping the property in good condition by repairing features as deterioration becomes apparent, using procedures that retain the original character and finish of the features. In some cases, preventive maintenance is executed prior to noticeable deterioration. No alteration or reconstruction is involved. Property owners are strongly encouraged to maintain their property in good condition so that more aggressive measures of rehabilitation, restoration or reconstruction are not needed.

Preservation

Preservation is keeping an existing building in good condition by a careful program of maintenance and repair. It will often include repair and stabilization of materials and features in addition to regularly scheduled maintenance.

Restoration

To restore, one reproduces the appearance of a building exactly as it looked at a particular moment in time; to reproduce a pure style—either interior or exterior. This process may include the removal of later work or the replacement of missing historic features. A restoration approach is used on missing details or features of a historic building when the features are determined to be particularly significant to the character of the structure and when the original

configuration is accurately documented.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is the process of returning a property to a state which makes a contemporary use possible while still preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural and cultural values. Rehabilitation may include the adaptive reuse of the building and constructing additions. Most good preservation projects in Aspen may be considered rehabilitation projects.

Adaptive Use

Converting a building to a new use that is different from its original purpose is considered to be adaptive use. For example, converting a residential structure to offices is adaptive use. A good adaptive use project retains the historic character of the building while accommodating new functions.

While adaptive use allows the building owner to convert the building to a purpose other than that for which it was designed, it should be done with respect to the original building form. For example, it would be inappropriate to turn the living room of a historic building into a bathroom. The reason for this is that when the programmatic uses of a building are drastically altered, this often results in a major change to the original floor plan as well as to the exterior appearance of the building. When adaptive use is the preferred preservation alternative, the proposed design should honor the original building function as closely as possible.

Combining Preservation Strategies

Many successful projects that involve historic structures in Aspen may include a combination of preservation, restoration, and other appropriate treatments. For example, a house may be adapted to use as a restaurant, and in the process, missing porch brackets may be replicated in order to restore the original appearance, while existing original dormers may be preserved.

Planning a Preservation Project

Once the basic approach to a project has been defined, it is important to assess the property and to identify any significant character-defining features and materials. Retaining these elements, and then using the guidelines to select an appropriate treatment mechanism will greatly enhance the overall quality of the preservation project. In making the selection follow this sequence:

1. If a feature is intact and in good condition, maintain it as such.
2. If the feature is deteriorated or damaged, repair it to its original condition.
3. If it is not feasible to repair the feature, then replace it with one that is the same or similar in character (materials, detail, finish) to the original one. Replace only that portion which is beyond repair.
4. If the feature is missing entirely, reconstruct it from appropriate evidence.
5. If a new feature or addition is necessary, design it in such a way as to minimize the impact on original features.

Design Review Process

The Aspen Historic Preservation Commission

The City Council appoints volunteers to the Aspen Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). The HPC is comprised of members who are city residents, have an expressed interest and expertise in historic preservation, and are knowledgeable about the heritage of the City.

Some work is exempt from historic preservation review and other work may qualify for an Administrative Review by the Community Development Department. Approval is generally not required for a change in paint color or interior alterations. A Community Development Department review includes work such as signs, fences, roofs and repairs. More substantial projects are reviewed by HPC.

Applicants are encouraged to participate in a pre-application conference with the Historic Preservation Officer (HPO), available in the Community Development Department. At this conference, the HPO will identify any necessary review process, discuss approvals that may be needed from other city boards, provide application forms, and suggest any modifications which may make the application more consistent with the standards and guidelines.

Importance of Acquiring a Permit

Once approvals are granted, a property owner may

Any contractor, superintendent, or owner/builder wishing to receive a building permit to work on a historic structure will be required to complete the "Aspen/Pitkin County Preservation Awareness Program" and receive a specialty license in historic preservation.

apply for a building permit. Obtaining a building permit is a crucial step in any construction process. If a city building or zoning inspector finds that work is occurring without a permit, the work is stopped, or "red tagged." In the simplest situation, construction is delayed; in more contentious cases, the work has to be reversed or rebuilt, resulting in long delays, additional fees and fines, and occasionally court appearances. Undertaking an act of demolition on a landmarked structure without HPC approval may result in a long term suspension of building permits for the property.

Building permits are not only a way for the City to keep track of applications, but they also serve as protection for the owner. Obtaining a building permit means that the work will be inspected to determine that it has been executed correctly.

The HPC is deeply committed to its responsibilty in protecting the visual memory of the community and ensuring that historic resources are respected within the evolution of the City.

There are many possible directions to take when approaching a preservation project. The Commission appreciates a clear explanation of context, how the proposal contributes to a sense of place in the community, and site analysis. An applicant should explain their intent and approach and provide models, story poles, material samples and other information to assist the review process.

Historic Overview

Aspen Historic Overview

Aspen has experienced several cycles of development in its history, beginning with the mining industry of the 1880s, the creation of the skiing industry in the 1930s and the City's transformation into a center for arts and culture in the 1940s, all of which have led to the contemporary attraction it holds for intellectuals, outdoor enthusiasts and life-style connoisseurs.

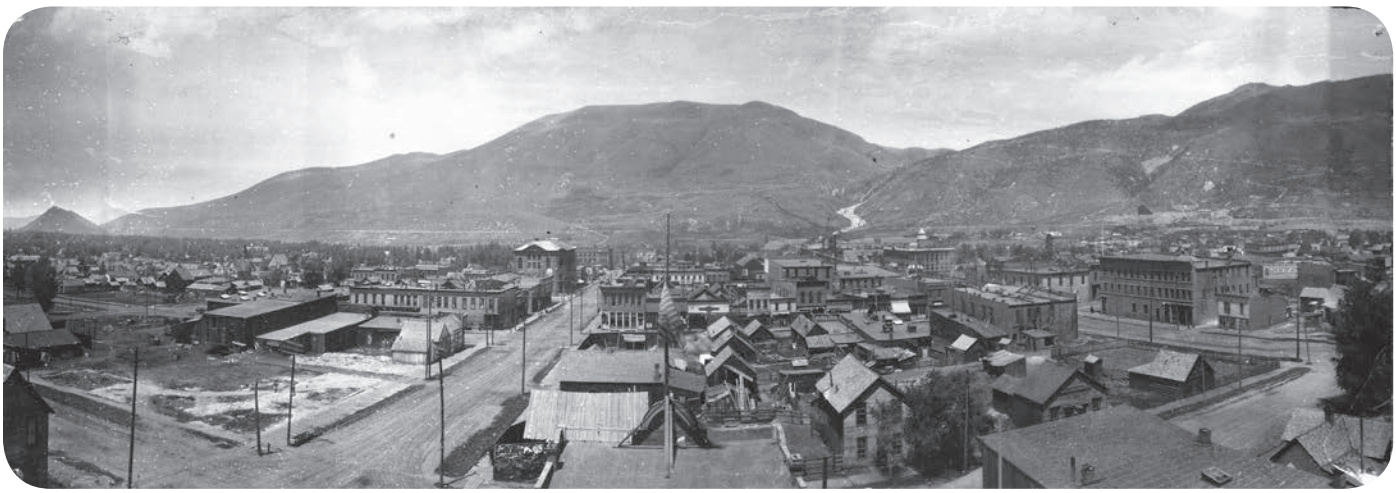
The Early Years - Mining

Aspen is located in the Upper Roaring Fork Valley, where people have lived for at least 5,000 years. The Ute Indians arrived in the area around 1400 A.D. and controlled the region until the 1870s, preventing access to most of the valley under the 1868 Ute Reservation Settlement Act. However, they did allow the Hayden Survey to be completed in 1873, which was ultimately responsible for determining the evidence of gold and silver in the surrounding mountains.

Following the reports from the Hayden Survey, in the summer of 1879, four prospectors from Leadville arrived in the valley to explore the mining potential. Quickly, they sank shafts to indicate they had mined the land and filed claims upon their return to Leadville. By the end of 1879 at least 35 prospectors camped at the base of Aspen Mountain, enduring the winter so as not to lose potential fortunes. The resulting pressure to mine and allow settlement of the area led to the removal of the Ute people to Utah.

Henry B. Gillespie and B. Clark Wheeler, two ambitious men who would come to direct the growth of the region, arrived in the mining camp in the spring of 1880. Although it was Gillespie who initiated the efforts to create a town (which was to be called Ute City), Wheeler was first to complete a survey, and he gave Aspen its name. In March of 1880, B. Clark Wheeler incorporated the Aspen Town and Land Company with the financing of eastern capitalists.

Initially, Aspen was a typical mining camp, with tents and crude log structures for businesses and homes. Transportation into the area was only by way of Taylor Pass, through Ashcroft until 1881, when the Independence Pass Toll Road was completed. Between 1883 and 1885, the population increased from 500 to 3,500 people, and the town had municipal water service, a telegraph, telephones and electricity, thanks to what was reportedly the first commercially operated hydroelectric plant in the United States.



View of Aspen in 1900.

A view of Cooper Avenue in 1900.

Aspen was in the thrust of a building boom, including construction of over twenty business buildings, and in 1884, well over one hundred homes to meet a housing shortage. Civic improvements were made and the City Council added street signs and house numbers. The town was platted into 30'x100' lots and the city was divided east-west by Center Street (now Garmisch Street,) and north-south by Main Street. These two thoroughfares were both 100-feet-wide, while other streets were 75-feet. The residential districts were generally within proximity to the trails leading to the mines. The commercial district, originally four blocks in size, was located at the base of Aspen Mountain. The industry associated with the mining process such as the mills were located on the perimeter of the town. According to the Time's editor, reflecting on the character of the town, "the pretty cottages, the palatial stores and the neat churches and public buildings, attest to their energy, prosperity and cultivation."

Many of Aspen's achievements in the mid-1880s can be attributed to an eastern capitalist, Jerome B. Wheeler, no relationship to B. Clark Wheeler. Among other investments, Wheeler facilitated the development of two major sources of mining infrastructure—a smelter to process the ore locally for greater economic return and a railroad to connect the town to outlying regions.

By 1886, two railroad companies were in competition to reach Aspen first; the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad and the Colorado Midland Railroad, which was partially bankrolled by Jerome Wheeler. The first train on the Rio Grande line pulled into Aspen in November of 1887. The Colorado Midland was hindered by bridge construction over Maroon and Castle Creeks, but ultimately arrived in town in December 1887. The railroad cars carried three to four thousand tons of ore each week to be processed; the returning cars brought valuable merchandise, including commodities and luxury items.

As Aspen prospered, around 1888, more substantial, brick and stone, high style buildings began to be built. It was the custom of the day for successful businessmen to build a city block in a unified architectural style, using the best location for his own business and renting out to others. The business blocks (for example the Aspen Block, on the southwest corner of Hyman and Galena) were symbols of the prosperity of the town, and the individuals for whom they were named, as well as a growing civic pride. Two of the most important structures built during this period were financed by Jerome B. Wheeler—the Wheeler Opera House and the Hotel Jerome. Most of the houses built during this time were from designs found in pattern books, volumes of building plans that were widely available. The majority of the homes were wood frame, although some larger and more elaborate houses were constructed of brick. The miner's cottages generally measured twenty-eight feet by thirty feet and were divided into five main spaces: a parlor (with bay window), sitting room, kitchen, sleeping area and a porch. An outhouse and sheds for livestock also would have been located on the lot. Exterior detailing on the cottages was relatively minimal, mostly focusing on the porch and the most prominent window. Produced at a rate of four per day, this family house, painted, plastered and ready for occupancy, cost $1,000.00 to build. The 300 block of

A view of houses on Lake Avenue in 1910.

E. Main Street contains examples of the pattern-style, vernacular miner's cottage.

Residential landscapes at this time were often utilitarian in design, with small vegetable gardens and few ornamental plantings. Fences were low and transparent in nature to provide some definition between private yards and the public right-of-way. The planting of cottonwood rows was the dominant landscaping feature in the residential and commercial districts. Small irrigation ditches to promote growth linked the tree-plantings.

In spite of fast-paced construction, by 1889 the housing shortage continued in Aspen, especially for miners' families. In response, in September of 1889, the city council chartered a company to create a horse-drawn streetcar line. The completed system stretched two miles, crisscrossing the town and changing the face of Aspen by expanding its limits beyond the walking capacity of pedestrians.

The Silver Crash - Aspen's Quiet Years

By 1892 Aspen was the third largest city in Colorado with 12,000 residents—only surpassed by Denver and Leadville. Aspen did outpace Leadville as Colorado's leading silver producer, and housed the largest opera house in the state and finest luxury hotel on the Western Slope. In the spring of 1893, the financial success of Aspen crashed when Congress repealed the Sherman Silver Purchase Act. The "Silver Queen" of the Rockies came to a grinding halt, as did almost all of Colorado's silver mines. By the end of 1893, the mining workforce had dropped from 2,250 to 150 men. By 1900, Aspen's total population had dropped to 3,300 people and by 1930 had reached a low of 700 people. The events of 1893 initiated a period commonly referred to as the "Quiet Years', which lasted until the 1930s. Homes were vacant, stores empty and the grand architecture of the commercial and residential blocks entered a long stage of deterioration and neglect. Entire blocks were barren without a single occupied house and buildings stood as bare skeletons, the victims of salvaging for materials, fire and vandalism.

The Marolt Ranch in 1920, with the defunct Holden Lixiviation Plant (a silver processor) in the background.

During the "Quiet Years," most people survived on modest resources. Residents raised much of their own food, merchants extended credit when possible and neighbors shared with neighbors. Throughout this extended depression numerous records indicate an enduring pulse of optimism amongst Aspenites. The theme of unfailing pride dominated during the "Quiet Years."

The major transportation services, the Midland Railroad and the Rio Grande Railroad were also affected by the financial crisis. The Midland line was purchased by the Santa Fe Railroad, but the route was abandoned by 1900 and the track was removed by 1921. The Rio Grande was more fortunate and endured the silver crash by hauling cattle and sheep rather than silver. By the 1930s and 1940s it once again met market demands by hauling the building materials and eventually passengers for the development of Aspen as a ski resort.

Aspen's Second Cycle-Ski Town

Snow and spectacular mountains would provide the resources in the 1930s for Aspen to begin development as an international ski resort. While miners had previously used old barrel staves to slide down the mountain after work, they never guessed that this transportation method would be the next boom for their remote mining town.

It was the chance meeting of a miner's son, Tom Flynn, with Olympic bobsled champion, Billy Fiske in California that initiated speculation for the ski-industry in Aspen. Fiske soon hired Andre Roch, a celebrated mountaineer, avalanche expert and engineer, to survey the area. Roch spent the next six months identifying the recreational advantages of the region. Following the survey, Fiske and capitalist Theodore Ryan personally cleared brush off the hillside, creating the first alpine slope near Aspen.

Lift One, 1950.

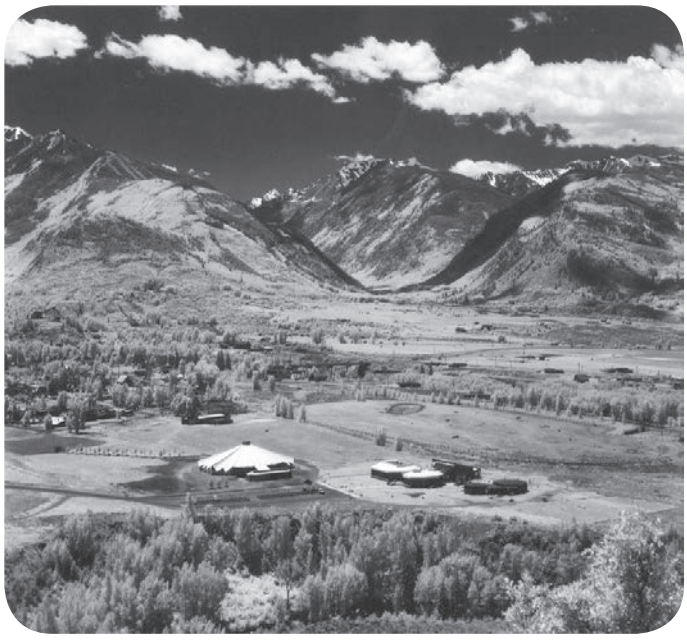
Roch developed a downhill race course. Originally called "Roch Run Trail" or "the Roch", only a section of the original course remains today. Roch believed that by creating a race course, Aspen would receive more publicity, thereby development of the mountain would be accomplished more quickly. It was a great success, attracting not only top skiers, but visionary capitalists.

In 1938, Roch's served as the site for the Rocky Mountain Ski Association Championship and by 1941, the Aspen Ski Club hosted the U.S. World Alpine Championships. World War II interrupted the development of Aspen skiing; but troops in training at the 87th Mountain Infantry and later the 10th Mountain Division would come to test their skills on the weekends. After the war, many of these same people came back to settle in Aspen and continue the momentum of developing its skiing potential. By 1950 Aspen was internationally famous for its terrain, World Cup Ski events and pioneering ski-industry technology. Lift capacity continued to expand at Aspen and new ski areas were developed. In 1957, Aspen Highlands opened, to be followed by Buttermilk a year later. The significant addition of the Snowmass ski area in 1967 firmly established Aspen as an international skiing destination. By 1986, Aspen installed the world's longest, single-stage vertical rise gondola—the Silver Queen. Aspen continues to maintain its position as an international ski resort, attracting the world's top skiing competitors and most celebrated ski events.

Skiing also changed the architectural character of Aspen. Lodges were built in the chalet style familiar to their European owners. To enhance the alpine experience for tourists, landscaping trends attempted to bring the mountain environment into town. Spruce trees and other conifers were planted along streetscapes and throughout the commercial and residential districts.

Aspen's Cultural Renaissance - The Aspen Idea

Investment capital began to flow into Aspen as influential people such as Elizabeth and Walter Paepcke promoted the town. The Paepckes were Chicago industrialists with grand visions. Walter Paepcke dreamed of a community "of peace with opportunities for a man's complete life...where he can earn a living, profit by healthy, physical recreation, with facilities at hand for his enjoyment of art, music and education." He created the Goethe Bicentennial Convocation in 1949, which attracted the world's foremost artists, writers, musicians and celebrated humanitarians. The success of this event led to the creation of the Aspen Institute, Aspen Center for Physics, Aspen Music Festival and School, and numerous other world class conferences and events enjoyed in Aspen today. The International Design Conference, founded in 1950 left an indelible impression upon the architectural characteristics

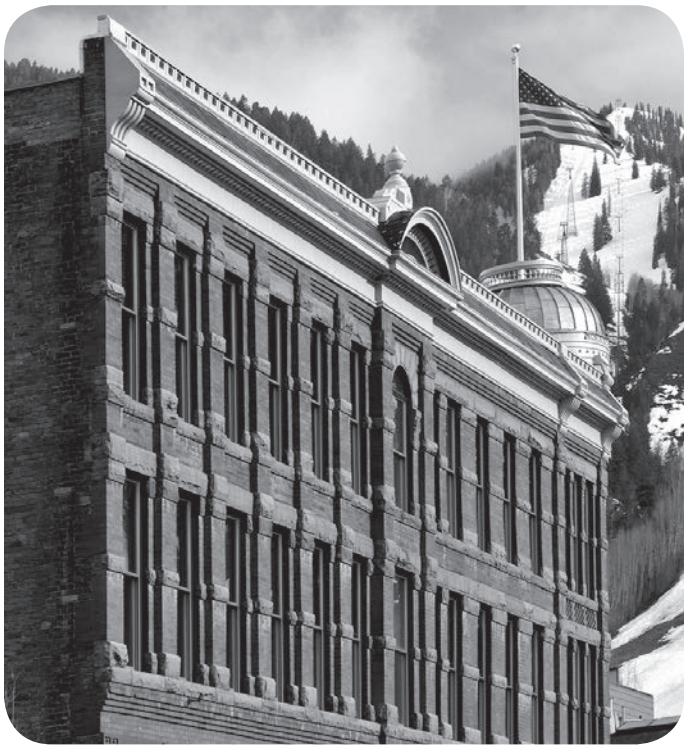


Aspen Institute, 1965.

of Aspen and how the Aspen community promotes innovative design. Examples of private residences and civic structures influenced by the Modernist movement can be found throughout the city.

Present Day Aspen - International Resort for the Mind and Body

Aspen lures people today with world-class accommodations, outdoor recreation opportunities, artistic venues and educational forums. Its setting, unique architecture and sense of history provide a backdrop whereby the Aspen community can provide the best of both worlds— charm and natural beauty with cosmopolitan entertainment and flare.



The Elks Building, 2015.

Architectural Styles in Aspen

The City of Aspen contains a wide variety of building types and architectural styles that reflect its evolution, many of which have historic significance. This rich architectural heritage enhances the City and contributes to its strong "sense of place."

Note: *Dates indicated describe the approximate period covered by a particular building style within Aspen.*

The following is a brief overview of the most frequently recognized styles found in Aspen. This survey of building types and styles reflects changing building technologies, tastes of the times, and the distinct Aspen context.

Pioneer

Circa 1879-1893, Residential

These buildings were generally constructed of round logs, hewn logs, or log slabs considered to be mill-waste, and built as basic shelter for early Aspen settlers. Later examples copied this style. The log members were laid on alternating tiers, implementing a variety of notching techniques for joinery. The details of the log connections and the character of the log cuts themselves are important features. The spaces between the logs were filled with "chinking" consisting of a mixture of animal hair, clay, straw and other natural materials. The roofs were constructed of readily available material, including canvas, wooden shingles, and sheet metal. In Aspen, some of these log structures were later updated and covered with milled wooden siding and details.

A Pioneer house at 205 S. Third, constructed in 1885, or earlier

Characteristics:

- Log construction.
- Hip or gable roof.
- Rough-sawn wood trim.

False-Front Store Front

Circa 1880-1893, Commercial

Relatively few examples of false-front buildings survive. These structures are from the early settlement phase when wood was the primary construction material. The front created a facade that made a building appear larger and taller than it actually was, masking a gabled roofline. Cornice details and kickplate elements below the storefront windows also were created from wood.

False front structure at 310 E. Main, constructed in the 1890s.

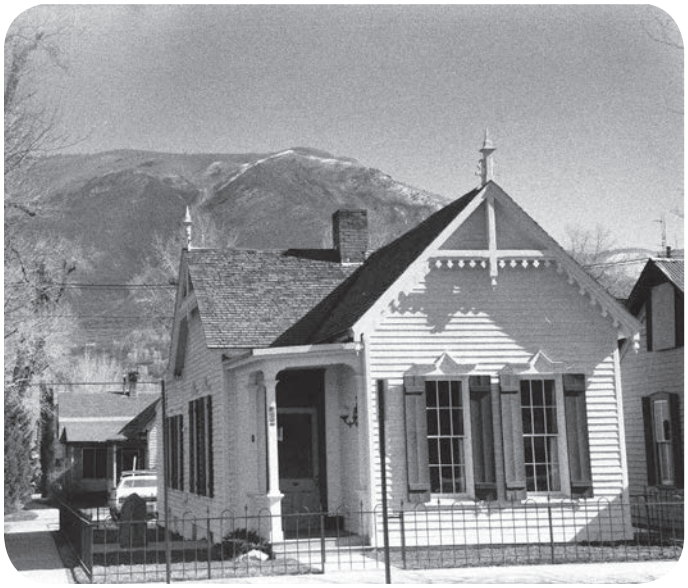
Characteristics:

- Gable roof concealed behind false front.
- Recessed entry.
- Large glass display windows.
- Simple bracketed cornices.
- Painted wood lap siding.
- Kickplate below display window.
- Transom above display window.
- Wood doors and windows.

Carpenter Gothic

Circa 1880-1893, Residential

This style is characterized by wooden interpretations of Gothic masonry structures, with an emphasis upon verticality and picturesque composition. Jig-saw cut trim elements were popular but straight lines and simple geometric forms provided the framework for more ornamental attachments. These ornamental details and the overall vertical form of this style are important features that should be preserved. All-white color schemes were popular, with accent colors only appearing on shutters.



A Carpenter Gothic house at 302 East Hopkins, constructed in 1883.

Characteristics:

- Steeply pitched roof.
- Cross gable roof plan or side gable roof plan with central cross gable over the door.
- Clapboard siding.
- Decorative barge board along eaves of main gables and dormers.
- Two-over-two, double-hung sash windows.
- Bay windows and lancet windows.
- Elaborate porch railings, square posts, cut-out boards.

Vernacular L-Type or "Miner's Cottage"

Circa 1880-1893, Residential

The term "vernacular" refers to building traditions that reflect local taste, customs and materials. The vernacular houses of Aspen are similar to those throughout other Colorado mining towns—these houses were designed for utilitarian purposes with minimal attempts to copy a prescribed style. Typically, decorative elements were applied to cottages with steep roofs, wooden siding, vertical sash windows and front porches. Some homes received more ornament than others, often influenced by Queen Anne or Gothic Revival designs, usually around windows and doors and at porches and gable ends. In plan, these cottages were L-type, gable end, or side gable. Often shed additions were added.

The L-type houses have two wings with intersecting gable roofs that form a letter "L" in plan. Very often an attached porch runs along the street-facing facade. Most of these houses are 1- story, but 1-1/2 and 2-story versions also exist. This is the most common historic resource type remaining in Aspen.

A Vernacular L-type house at 205 S. Spring, constructed in 1887.

Characteristics:

- Overall, simple building forms.
- 1-story, covered porch, usually at the intersection of the two wings.
- Projecting bay windows.
- Wood clapboard siding.
- Shingle roof.
- Two front doors, a social custom.

Side Gable

Circa 1880-1893, Residential

This house style has a ridgeline that runs parallel to the street. Often a porch runs the width of the house. Details are similar to other gable cottage plans.

A side gable house at 117 N. Sixth, constructed in 1885.

Characteristics:

- Full-width, one-story porch.
- Decorative elements focused on the porch area.
- Porch projects forward from the front wall plane.
- Painted wood lap siding.
- Wood trim around windows and doors.

Gable-End

Circa 1880-1893, Residential

This house type has a simple, rectangular shape with a gable roof with the ridge running perpendicular to the street. Most have a porch on the gable-end. Most are wood sided. Most are 1 - 1-1/2 story and a few are 2-story.

An gable end house at 612 W. Main, constructed in 1888.

Characteristics:

- Bay-windows .
- Full width or inset 1-story porch, with hip or gable roof.
- Decorative shingles in gable-end.
- Gable ornaments, including brackets and barge boards.
- Overall, modest character.
- Porch may project forward or be inset into the front wall plane.
- Two front doors, a social custom.

Italianate

Circa 1880-1893, Residential and Commercial

The Italianate style was introduced by Andrew Jackson Downing in his 1850 publication, The Architecture of Country Houses. He extolled the virtues of the Gothic Revival, but also offered the "villa," a version based on Italian country houses that veered more toward classicism and did not have the religious overtones of the Gothic Revival. Cornices with large brackets appeared on porches and bay windows. Flat, ornamental arches capped most windows and doors.

An Italianate house at 201 E. Hyman, constructed in 1883.

Characteristics:

- Rectangular, square, with a side-passage plan, or cross-gable.
- Brick, wood clapboard and stucco.
- Double-hung, narrow windows, often with round arch heads.
- Window panes are either one-over-one or two-over-two.
- Protruding sills.
- Ornate treatment of the eaves, including the use of brackets, modillions and dentil courses.
- Low-pitched, hipped roof.
- Bay windows, often rectangular.
- Quoins, or decorative blocks, at corners.
- Metal cresting along roof ridges.
- Transom over entry, often curved.

The Wheeler Opera House at 320 E. Hyman is an example of an Italianate commercial structure, constructed in 1889.

- Ornate treatment of porch with turned columns, posts and bargeboard ornament.

Dutch Colonial Revival

Circa 1880-1893, Residential

The most distinguishing feature of this style is the gambrel roof. The details, such as the window pattern, porches and materials are closely associated with the Shingle and Queen Anne styles.

Characteristics:

- Gambrel roof; both side-passage and front-facing variations can be found.
- Single gable end.
- One story.
- Prominent front porch, with classically-detailed porch supports and plain balustrades.
- Double-hung sash windows, with either single panes or multiple panes in the upper light.
- Lunette windows in the upper gable.
- Large, single pane windows with a fixed transom on the first story.

A Dutch Colonial Revival house at 611 West Main, constructed in 1886.

Queen Anne

Circa 1880-1893, Residential

In the United States, Queen Anne developed from the desire to establish a national style. This style includes decorative wall surface patterns, framed in strap-work, polychrome color schemes, and steeply pitched rooflines. Typically, the buildings are 1 - 2-stories in height. Preserving the ornamental details and the original materials of this style are high priorities.

Characteristics:

- Irregular, asymmetrical massing.
- Forward extension of wall planes; towers and triangular sections.
- Decorative shingles.
- Spindlework porch supports with lace-like brackets.
- Windows with leaded or stained glass.
- Patterned window panes.
- Bay windows.
- Corbelled brick chimneys.

A Queen Anne house at 128 E. Main, constructed circa 1893.

Second Empire

Circa 1880-1893, Residential

The Second Empire refers to the reign of Louis Napoleon, the grand-nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, who ruled France from 1852 to 1870. In both France and America, the Second Empire style coincided with a period of prosperity and materialism, and was associated with urbanity and a cosmopolitan society. The style is characterized by its distinctive mansard roof, often containing windows on the steep lower slope. The complex massing and arrangement of towers is unified through decorative cornices similar to those of the Italianate style.

A Second Empire house at 442 W. Bleeker, constructed in 1885.

Characteristics:

- Steeply pitched, mansard roof.
- Roof can be either straight or concave, and is interrupted by dormers.
- Complex massing forms .
- Brick, stucco or wood clapboard.
- Wrought-iron ornament, such as cresting on roof or heavy, ornate fencing.
- Wide eaves, often with modillions.
- Corbelled chimney.
- Heavily molded cornices and window trim.

Industrial

Circa 1880-1893, Commercial, Public

The Industrial style represents an age when the production of goods was an overriding goal. This style was sometimes employed for utilitarian public buildings, and featured large, open interior spaces, made possible by a heavy wood truss system.

Aspen City Hall, originally an Armory, at 130 South Galena, constructed in 1891.

Characteristics:

- Large rectangular forms.
- Masonry construction.
- Large interior spaces.
- Smaller, vertically proportioned windows.
- Masonry cornice supported on corbels.

Victorian-Era Commercial Building

Circa 1880-1893, Commercial

The commercial storefront of the late 19th and early 20th centuries is the most common type of building found today in most historic commercial districts throughout the country. Usually one to four stories in height, these buildings are divided into two distinct bands. The first floor is more commonly transparent, so goods can be displayed, while the second story has smaller windows and is usually reserved for a residential or office space. The majority of these buildings in Aspen were constructed between 1888 and 1893.

As this type evolved towards the turn-of-the century, so too did the amount of ornamentation and high-style influences. Cornice and midbelt moldings became more prominent, more elaborate window and door openings were used and much of the facade was covered with varying degrees of applied ornamentation. Italianate details were popular. With the introduction of cast-iron, the weight of second and third stories of these Victorian commercial structures was carried over larger expanses of glass on the first floor.

A Victorian era commercial building at 419 E. Hyman, constructed in 1889.

Characteristics:

- Cast-iron supported or wood post storefronts.
- Large display windows on the first-floor usually framed in wood, but sometimes metal.
- Transom lights above display windows.
- Kickplate below display windows.
- Recessed entry.
- Wood double doors.
- Tall second story windows with wood frames.
- Decorative cornice at top.
- Masonry walls.
- Varying degrees of ornamentation.
- Corner entry.

Neo-Classical

Circa 1880-1893, Commercial

The Neoclassical movement is an American phenomenon that began with the 1893 Colombian Exposition in Chicago. Greek Revival precedents were most commonly used, but with more variety in composition and detail. In Aspen, popular neoclassical details were simple Doric columns, triangular pediments and large cornices with rows of dentil moldings. Other classical orders, including Corinthian and Ionic, sometimes are used as well. These appeared on both residential and commercial buildings.

The Collins Block, located at 204 South Mill Street, constructed in 1891-1893.

Characteristics:

- Free-standing columns, usually Doric order.
- Cornice with dentil moldings.
- Triangular pediment, sometimes supported on classical columns.

Romanesque Revival

Circa 1880-1893, Commercial and Public

Promoted by the prominent Boston architect, Henry Hobson Richardson, the Romanesque, or Richardsonian Romanesque style was commonly used for large public buildings during the 1880s—following suit with Richardson's Trinity Church in Boston. Romanesque structures were always of masonry construction. Rounded stone arches were typical details, as were carved stone columns with Corinthian capitals, which feature an acanthus leaf pattern. Attached stone pilasters, or piers also were common.

The Aspen Community Church, an example of the Romanesque Revival style, constructed at 200 E. Bleeker in 1890.

Characteristics:

- Asymmetrical facades.
- Masonry walls, usually with rough-faced, squared stonework.
- Most have towers with conical roofs.
- Round-topped arches over windows, porch supports, or entrance.
- Deeply recessed openings.
- Decorative colonnettes around windows.
- Decorative floral patterns on column capitals and wall surfaces.
- Wood frames for doors and windows.

Rustic Architecture

Circa 1900-present, Residential, Commercial, Public

Popularized by the designs of the National Park Service for its institutional buildings, these structures were designed to blend with the environment and were constructed of native building materials. An emphasis upon simplicity, hand craftsmanship and the natural environment made this a popular style for vacation homes, hunting lodges, dude ranches and tourist facilities. In Aspen, these appear similar to Pioneer Houses, but usually include larger timber elements and emphasize more craftsmanship in details.

Characteristics:

- Hand built out of locally available materials, using limited tools.
- Single story or 1 1/2 story.
- Low pitched gable roof.
- Simple rectangular footprint, with smaller addictive elements.
- Small porch or entry feature.
- True log construction with overlapping log ends, coped and stacked, with chinking to infill irregularities between the logs.
- Rough sawn board and batten siding.
- Stone at the base or in the fireplace and chimney.
- Small window openings, spare and usually horizontally proportioned with wood trim.
- Minimal detail and decoration.

Rustic architecture at 300 W. Main, constructed in 1944.

The Bell Tower, originally built as a WPA project in 1930 and later substantially reconstructed, is located at Paepke Park and is an example of Rustic architecture.

Bauhaus/International Style

Circa 1928-1960, Residential, Commercial, Public

The use of the words "international style" refers to the title of the exhibit promoted by the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 1931 which presented the work of forty architects from fifteen countries. It has become synonymous with modern styles and post-World War II architecture that emphasized simple rectilinear forms that expressed internal functions. New materials and construction techniques also were used. In Aspen, some variations emphasized techniques and materials from elsewhere, while others adapted the International Style to local materials and building methods. Several of the International Style buildings in Aspen were designed by Herbert Bayer, a noted artist and designer from the Bauhaus school who had a significant influence on postwar architectural development in Aspen.

International style residence at 301 Lake, constructed in 1972.

Characteristics:

- Simple geometric forms, both in plan and elevation.
- Flat roofs, usually single story.
- Proportions are long and low, horizontal lines are emphasized.
- Asymmetrical arrangement of elements.
- Windows are treated as slots in the wall surface, either vertically or horizontally, or glazing appears as a curtain wall.
- Detailing is reduced to the composition of elements rather than decorative effects.
- Materials are generally manufactured and standardized, surfaces are smooth, with minimal or no detail at window jambs, grade, and roof edge.
- Entry is usually marked by a void in the wall, a cantilevered screen element, or other architectural clue that directs one into the composition.
- Buildings are connected to nature through the use of courtyards, wall elements that extend into the landscape, and areas of glazing that allow a visual connection to the natural environment.
- Schemes are monochromatic, using neutral colors. Primary colors are used for accents.

Chalet

Circa 1945-1960s, Residential and Commercial

This style is reminiscent of alpine architecture in Europe and was popular for early American ski resort towns, including Aspen. Large balconies and shallow roofs with wide eaves are identifying features. Wood trim often reflected a jig-saw cutout design, especially on balustrades and gable ornaments. Stucco was often combined with wood siding. Occasionally, mountain scenes were painted on the stucco. The style primarily used for hotels and residences.

Mountain Chalet Style at 312 W. Hyman, constructed in 1956.

Characteristics:

- Large, singular roof form, generally low in slope.
- Deep overhangs with the structure of the roof expressed on the underside.
- Eaves and rakes decorated with cutouts and fretwork bargeboards.
- Continuous porch or balcony running the length of the primary side.
- Decorative elements such as balustrades with cut out shapes (hearts, edelweiss, snowflakes, nature theme).
- Rectangular footprint.
- Stucco ground floor with minimal openings and wood lintels.
- Slider and casement windows, horizontally proportioned and used sparingly.
- Decorative shutters or flowerboxes.
- Colors are restricted to white for the stucco base and dark brown wood walls, eaves, and balustrades. Bright colors are used sparingly for accents and decorative elements.

Log Kit/Pan Abode Buildings

Circa 1950s to 1970, Residential and Commercial

Pan Abode is a brand name for log kit houses available beginning in 1952. These buildings were also manufactured by other companies as early as 1948. The logs were milled, tongue and groove and came pre-cut and notched for easy assembly. The system was popular in Aspen for ski lodges and modest homes. They were quick to build (a plus in Aspen's limited construction season) and inexpensive.

A Pan Abode located at 630 W. Main, constructed 1965.

Characteristics:

- Tongue and groove cedar log construction.
- Overlapping notches at corners.
- Wood framed, multi-light picture window.
- Low-pitched roof, usually gabled but occasionally shed.
- Deep overhanging eaves.
- Recessed entrance with rounded or squared corners.
- Natural, stained wood.
- Simple, rectilinear footprint usually one story.

Modern Chalet

Circa 1950s-1960s, Residential

A distinctive postwar housing type in Aspen is locally termed a Modern Chalet. With its moderately pitched gable roof oriented to the front, it recalls traditional chalets associated with ski country, but in its expansive glass and minimal decoration, it also seems classically modernist. For the most part, the sizable window walls on these buildings are oriented to Aspen Mountain.

A Modern Chalet Style home at 120 Red Mountain Road, constructed in 1962.

Characteristics:

- Rectilinear footprint, classic chalet orientation with gable end to the street and/or mountain view.
- Broad gabled facade organized in rectilinear solid or glass panels, generally in a tripartite organization.
- Low to moderate pitched roof, often based on a 3:12 ratio.
- Roof eave comes down to a low plate height at the upper level.
- Deep eave overhang, may have exposed roof beams.
- Glass in gable ends extending to the eaves.
- Large central glazed areas is flanked by brick or stone piers.
- Minimal decoration.
- Balcony on front facade.
- Entry door recessed or on side elevation.

Wrightian/Organic

Circa 1945-Early 1970s, Residential, Commercial, Public

The Wrightian style was developed by the architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Several buildings in Aspen were designed by architects who studied under Frank Lloyd Wright.

Characteristics:

- Low horizontal proportions, flat or low pitched hip roofs.
- Deep roof overhangs that create broad shadow lines across the facade, glazing is usually concentrated in these areas.
- Materials are usually natural and hand-worked, such as rough-sawn wood timbers and brick, brick is generally used as a base material, wall infill, or in an anchoring fireplace element.
- Wood structural systems tend more toward heavy timber or post-and-beam rather than typical stud framing.
- Structural members and construction methods are usually expressed in the building.
- Roof structure is often expressed below the roof sheathing.
- Glass is used as an infill material which expresses a void or a structural system, or it is used to accentuate the surface of a wall through pattern or repetition.
- No trim isolating the glazing from the wall plane, window openings are trimmed out to match adjacent structural members in a wood context, brick openings tend to be deeply set with no trim other than the brick return.
- Structures are related to the environment through battered foundation walls, cantilevered floors and/or porches, clear areas of glazing that create visual connections between inside and outside, and the effect of the roof plane hovering over the ground.
- Decoration stems from the detailing of the primary materials and the construction technique, no applied decorative elements are used.
- Colors are usually related to the natural colors of materials (natural brick, dark stained wood, white stucco), accent colors are used minimally and mainly to accentuate horizontal lines of the structure.

This Wrightian style building is located at 720 E. Hyman, and was constructed in 1976.

This Wrightian residence is located at 835 W. Main, and was constructed in 1947.

Design Guidelines: Context

Chapter 1: Site Planning & Landscape Design

Background

The character of a historic structure is greatly influenced by the surrounding framework of streets and public spaces, the physical characteristics of the specific site, and the way in which the historic resource is situated on the lot. It is important to analyze the context of a property before developing a strategy for treatment and/or alteration. Analysis should begin with a study of the overall development pattern of the neighborhood or district. The defining elements of the site need to be identified, and the placement of the historic resource reviewed for its consistency or deviation from the context of the neighborhood or district. How structures occupy their site, in terms of alignment, orientation, and spacing creates much of the context of a neighborhood. This context, along with right-of-way treatment, sidewalks, pedestrian and vehicular access, fences, natural features, alley relationship, landscaping and other site features all combine to define Aspen's historic character.

In the original Aspen townsite, the consistency of site development reflects a specific and identifiable time period. Some neighborhoods located outside of the formal townsite grid were planned much later and reflect a less formal pattern of development. HPC's intent is that any project acknowledges the history of the surrounding area and uses the strongest and most common features as a framework for proposed development.

In addition to architectural landmarks, Aspen has significant cultural and historic landscapes that represent early development patterns. Included in these private and public landscapes are: cemeteries, parks, campuses, public art, alleys, street right of ways, waterways, and similar public features. These landscapes are integral to the historic pattern of the community and should be preserved.

Policy: *Historic landscapes, landscape elements, and landscape patterns should be preserved. Additions and/or changes to the landscape should be compatible with the associated historic resource and the historic context of the neighborhood or district in which the project is located.*

Note: *A permit is required for modifications within the publically owned right-of-way, including planting strips, sidewalks and irrigation ditches. This permit is issued by the Engineering Department in consultation with other City agencies. In general, the right-of-way within a given neighborhood should have a consistent design character. Right-of-ways should not be altered in a manner that makes them appear to be an extension of the adjacent private property. The Municipal Code includes detailed information about the City's regulations affecting trees on public and private property.*

How to Start

When beginning a project, the applicant should follow these steps:

- Document the existing site conditions, including existing plant material, natural features, historic artifacts, and configuration of the site.
- Note neighborhood development patterns including existing and historic street and alley conditions, setbacks, and alley development.
- Determine whether the existing context supports or detracts from the historic resource and incorporate findings into the design process.
- Retain historic site features and incorporate important existing and historic development patterns into the site.

Neighborhood and District Patterns

Maintaining significant development patterns in Aspen's neighborhoods is important. Intentionally siting buildings to highlight historic development patterns reflects the evolution of Aspen's development. Resources which are helpful in studying development patterns include Victorian era fire insurance maps (Sanborn Maps), the 1896 Willit's Map, the 1893 Bird's Eye View of town, subdivision maps, aerial photography, and GIS mapping. These are found in the Community Development Department or the Historical Society. GIS maps can be found online at aspenpitkin.com and Sanborn maps are online at www.cudl.colorado.edu.

Historic photograph of Aspen's west end neighborhood.

Within the historic townsite, the road layout is a grid. The neighborhoods and structures were organized in an orthogonal pattern, regardless of topography, with building façades parallel to the street. Main Street is the widest boulevard dividing Aspen north and south. Garmisch Street, formerly Center Street, divides the townsite east and west. In the west part of town, historic irrigation ditches are found alongside many streets.

Within the original townsite, some Post-World War II buildings were set at an angle on the lot as a reflection of a different design philosophy – for example, many chalets are oriented to face Aspen Mountain. In later subdivisions, the grid is generally absent: streets are curvilinear and lots are irregular. It may require careful study to discern consistent or original development patterns remaining in these areas due to intense redevelopment. Consult with a landscape architect early in the conceptual process.

This historic structure is easily viewed from the street and is surrounded by a large open yard.

1.1 All projects shall respect the historic development pattern or context of the block, neighborhood or district.

- Building footprint and location should reinforce the traditional patterns of the neighborhood.
- Allow for some porosity on a site. In a residential project, setback to setback development is typically uncharacteristic of the historic context. Do not design a project which leaves no useful open space visible from the street.

Streets, Alleys, & Ditches

Alleys are an important feature of the historic townsite and have traditionally been used for utilitarian functions. Today, this is an appropriate location for cars, storage, service areas, and in some cases, secondary residential units or small businesses.

Though alterations to streets, alleys, and ditches are not generally within the HPC's purview, development which removes a platted street or alley, or overplants a ditch, is discouraged. Ditches should be simple water channels planted with sod banks that do not include flower beds, hardscapes, or bridges that change the simplicity of the feature.

A ditch in the West End neighborhood.

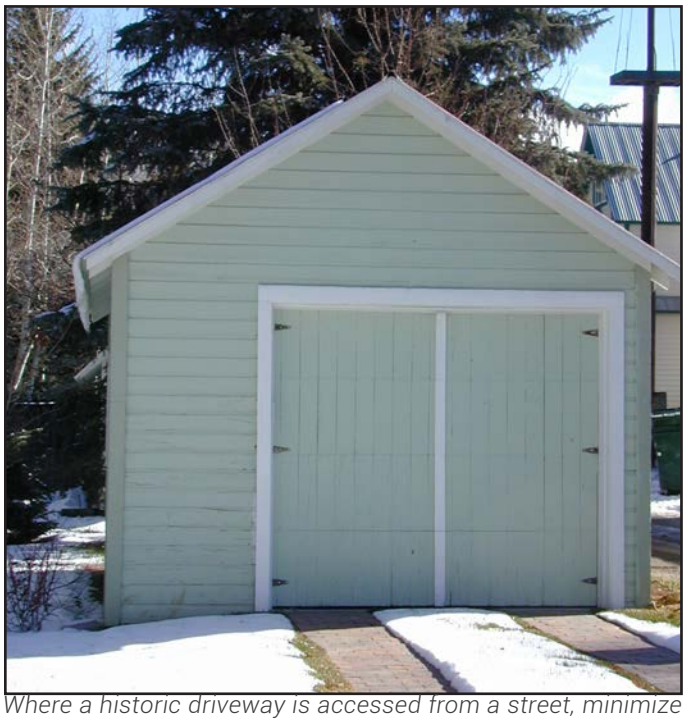
1.2 Preserve the system and character of historic streets, alleys, and ditches.

When HPC input is requested, the following bullet points may be applicable.

- Retain and preserve the variety and character found in historic alleys, including retaining historic ancillary buildings or constructing new ones.
- Retain and preserve the simple character of historic ditches. Do not plant flowers or add landscape.
- Abandoning or re-routing a street in a historic area is generally discouraged.
- Consider the value of unpaved alleys in residential areas.
- Opening a platted right of way which was abandoned or never graded may be encouraged on a case by case basis.

Driveways & Parking

Typical transportation in the 19th Century included horses and wagons that were housed in the alleys or on side streets. As cars became more common after World War II, some development was automobile oriented and included driveways accessed from the primary street. Many Post-War residences incorporated this auto-centric trend with carports and these examples should be preserved. Generally though, in an effort to minimize the visual impact of vehicles, and meet current pedestrian safety goals, vehicular access should now be accommodated at the alley where possible.



Where a historic driveway is accessed from a street, minimize the visual impacts by limiting paving.

1.3 Remove driveways or parking areas accessed directly from the street if they were not part of the original development of the site.

- Do not introduce new curb cuts on streets.
- Non-historic driveways accessed from the street should be removed if they can be relocated to the alley.

This Herbert Bayer designed residence, built in 1963, features a streetfacing carport.

1.4 Design a new driveway or improve an existing driveway in a manner that minimizes its visual impact.

- If an alley exists at the site, the new driveway must be located off it.
- Tracks, gravel, light grey concrete with minimal seams, or similar materials are appropriate for driveways on Aspen Victorian properties.

Yards, Walkways, and Patios

Key landscape features include setbacks, public space and private space, the arrangement of trees, shrubbery and hedges, species of vegetation, natural features, walkways and patios, site furnishings, site lighting, fences, vehicular and pedestrian access, and walls.

Aspen Victorian Properties

Commercial zone districts allow lot line to lot line development with minimal setbacks if any. As such, most commercial properties do not contain on-site walkways and patios. This alignment of structures contributes to a sense of visual continuity and vitality for 19th Century resources in the Commercial Core Historic District.

In 19th century residential settings, a "hierarchy" of open space exists along the street. Access from the public street to private residences was commonly achieved with a modest walkway. These walkways were typically narrow in width, made of simple, indigenous materials, and ran perpendicular from the street to the entry or porch. Typical residential neighborhoods located in the original townsite had a relatively consistent front yard setback. Open lawns were common. Side and rear yard setback patterns created distinctive patterns and contributed to the overall open space and rhythm of a neighborhood. Rear yard setbacks have traditionally been fairly minimal

AspenModern Properties

Post-war development oftentimes reflects a deliberate effort to bring the outside indoors or to contrast a natural, wild landscape with a minimalist, stark building. Many Post-War buildings incorporated patios, built in planters, deep overhanging eaves, wide steps, and other types of design elements to define the landscape as part of the architecture of the building. These features are integral to the design tenets of Post-War architecture and should be preserved.

An elevated front patio was part of the original design for this AspenModern landmark in the Commercial Core Historic District.

1.5 Maintain the historic hierarchy of spaces.

- Reflect the established progression of public to private spaces from the public sidewalk to a semi-public walkway, to a semi private entry feature, to private spaces.

The historic hierarchy of spaces from public to semi-public to private.

1.6 Provide a simple walkway running perpendicular from the street to the front entry on residential projects.

- Meandering walkways are not allowed, except where it is needed to avoid a tree or is typical of the period of significance.
- Use paving materials that are similar to those used historically for the building style and install them in the manner that they would have been used historically. For example on an Aspen Victorian landmark set flagstone pavers in sand, rather than in concrete. Light grey concrete, brick or red sandstone are appropriate private walkway materials for most landmarks.
- The width of a new entry sidewalk should generally be three feet or less for residential properties. A wider sidewalk may be appropriate for an AspenModern property.

A Victorian era walkway in Aspen.

1.7 Provide positive open space within a project site.

- Ensure that open space on site is meaningful and consolidated into a few large spaces rather than many small unusable areas.
- Open space should be designed to support and complement the historic building.

1.8 Consider stormwater quality needs early in the design process.

- When included in the initial planning for a project, stormwater quality facilities can be better integrated into the proposal. All landscape plans presented for HPC review must include at least a preliminary representation of the stormwater design. A more detailed design must be reviewed and approved by Planning and Engineering prior to building permit submittal.
- Site designs and stormwater management should provide positive drainage away from the historic landmark, preserve the use of natural drainage and treatment systems of the site, reduce the generation of additional stormwater runoff, and increase infiltration into the ground. Stormwater facilities and conveyances located in front of a landmark should have minimal visual impact

A flagstone walkway suits the character of this 1956 Pan Abode home.

when viewed from the public right of way.

- Refer to City Engineering for additional guidance and requirements.

1.9 Landscape development on AspenModern landmarks shall be addressed on a case by case basis.

1.10 Built-in furnishings, such as water features, fire pits, grills, and hot tubs, that could interfere with or block views of historic structures are inappropriate.

- Site furnishings that are added to the historic property should not be intrusive or degrade the integrity of the neighborhood patterns, site, or existing historic landscape.
- Consolidating and screening these elements is preferred.

Softscape Features & Plants

While most historic plant materials on private property have been replaced over time, some specimens do survive, particularly in residential settings. 19th Century photographs indicate that front yards were typically mowed grass and a mix of cottonwood trees, lilacs, sweet peas, flowering vines, and yellow shrub-roses. Back yards were often dirt to accomodate animals and livestock.

A simple, albeit contemporary, walkway may be acceptable for a large, ornate Victorian.

In later periods, yard designs evolved - a Rustic Style building may have a more natural, less manicured character with informal planting of native trees, shrubs and flowers and prominent placement of spruces near the entry. Always refer to historic photos of the site when available to guide landscape design.

While HPC may not have the opportunity to review landscape alterations that do not occur as part of a development project, the following guidelines apply to all activity on historic sites and will be enforced when necessary. Permits are required for site disturbances great than 200 square feet. Refer to the Engineering page on the city website ***aspenpitkin.com*** for updated information.

Historic cottonwood trees surround this corner lot.

1.11 Preserve and maintain historically significant landscaping on site, particularly landmark trees and shrubs.

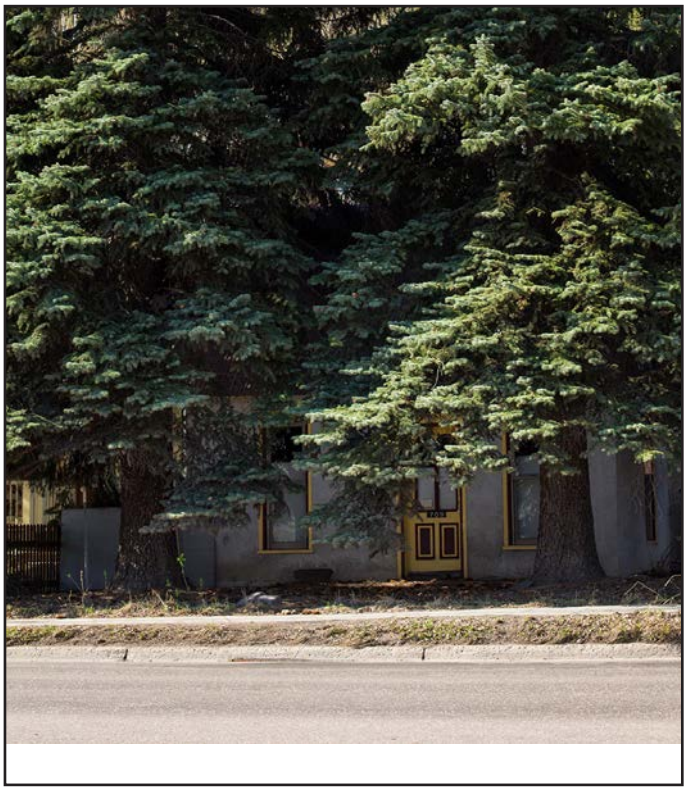
- Retaining historic planting beds and landscape features is encouraged.
- Protect historically significant vegetation during construction to avoid damage. Removal of

damaged, aged, or diseased trees must be approved by the Parks Department.

- If a significant tree must be removed, replace it with the same or similar species in coordination with the Parks Department.
- The removal of non-historic planting schemes is encouraged.
- Consider restoring the original landscape if information is available, including original plant materials.

1.12 Provide an appropriate context for historic structures. See diagram.

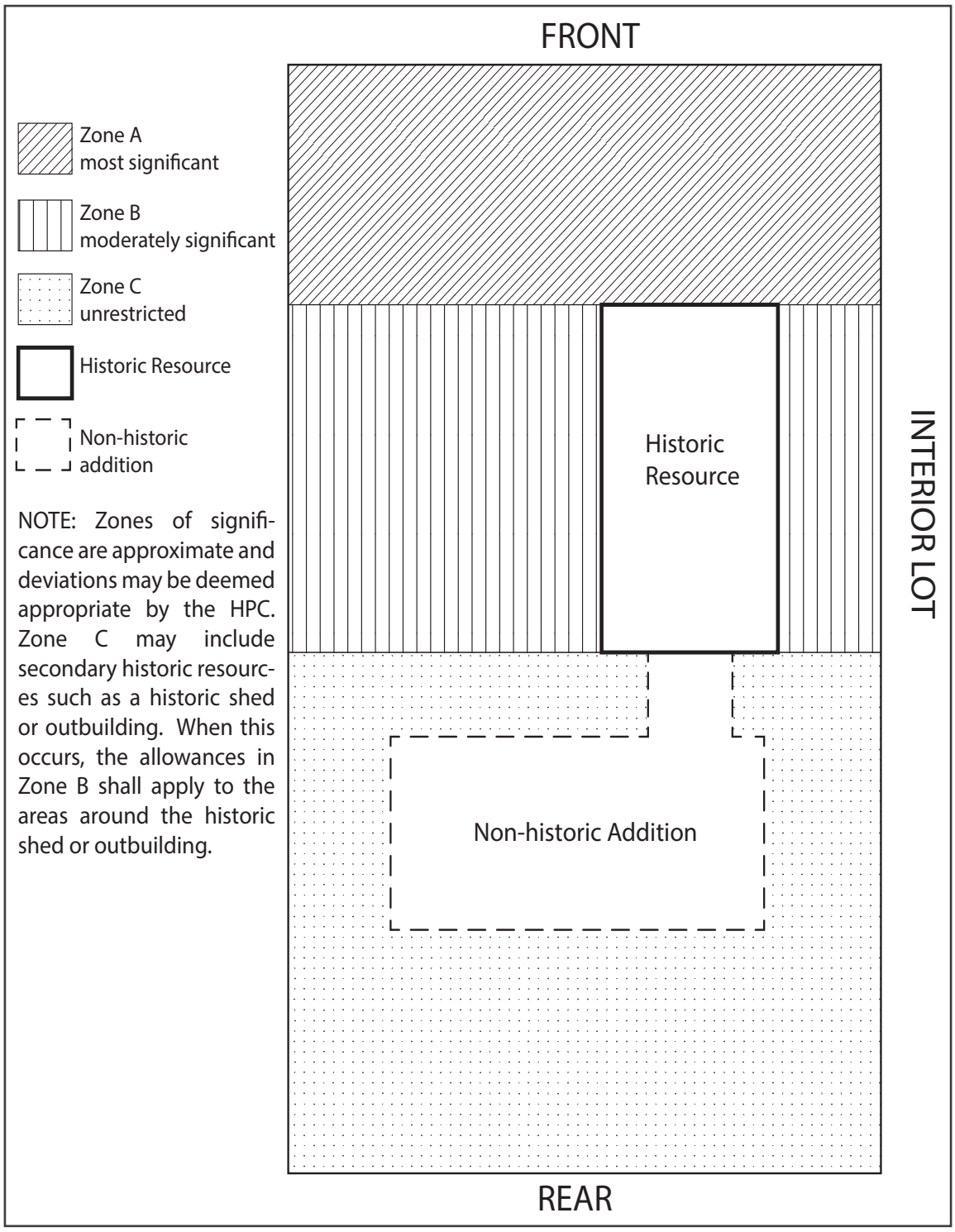
- Simplicity and restraint are required. Do not overplant a site, or install a landscape which is overtextured or overly complex in relationship to the historic resource, particularly in Zone A. In Zone A, new planting shall be species that were used historically or species of similar attributes.
- In areas immediately adjacent to the landmark, Zone A and Zone B, plants up 42" in height, sod, and low shrubs are often appropriate.
- Contemporary planting, walls and other features are not appropriate in Zone A. A more contemporary landscape may surround new development or be located in the rear of the property, in Zone C.
- Do not cover areas which were historically unpaved with hard surfaces, except for a limited patio where appropriate.
- Where residential structures are being adapted to commercial use, proposals to alter the landscape will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The residential nature of the building must be honored.
- In the case of a historic landmark lot split, careful consideration should be given so as not to over plant either property, or remove all evidence of the landscape characteristics from before the property was divided.
- Contemporary landscapes that highlight an AspenModern architectural style are encouraged.

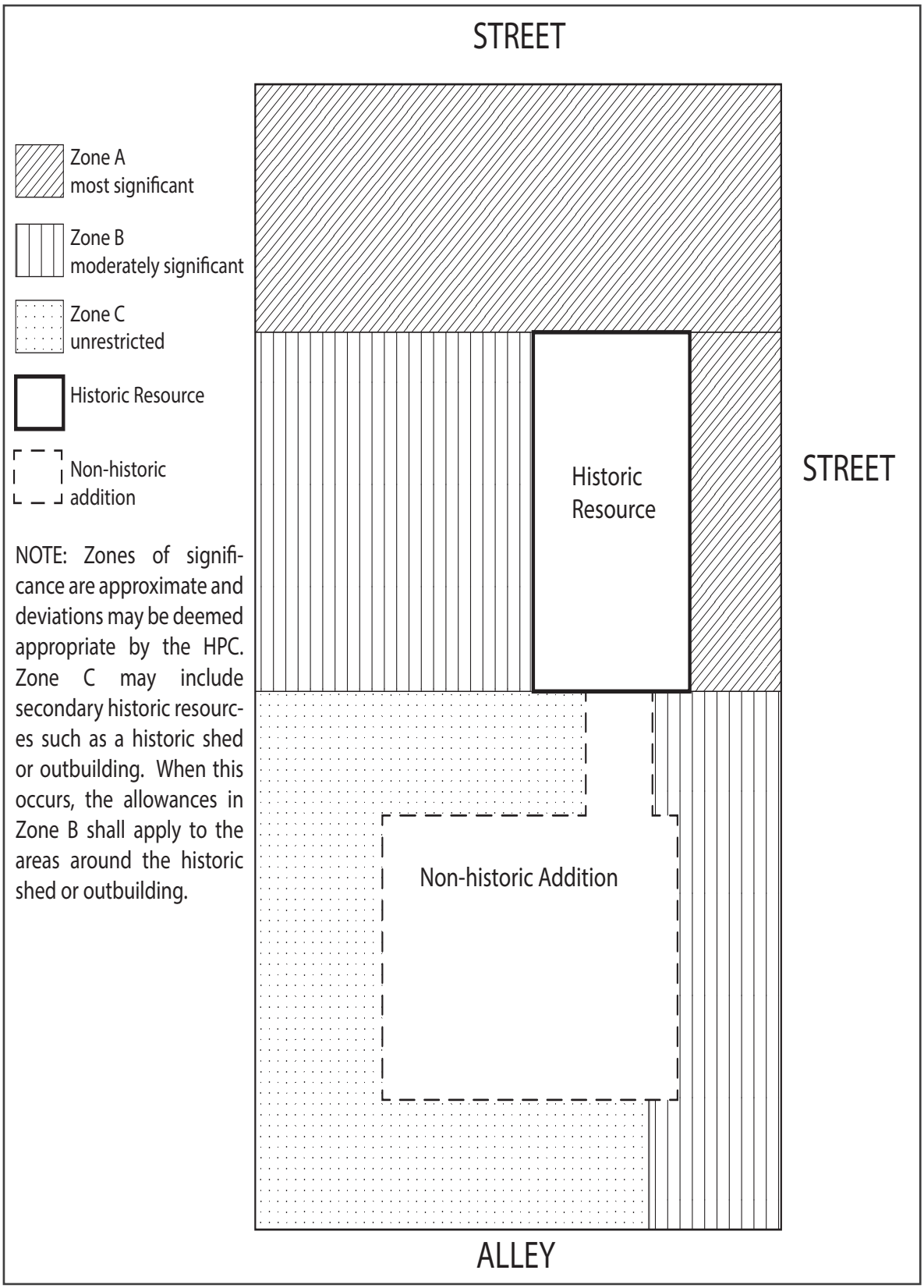


A small conifer planted in front of a historic structure can grow beyond expectations and completely block the building.

1.13 Additions of plant material to the landscape that could interfere with or block views of historic structures are inappropriate.

- Low plantings and ground covers are preferred.
- Do not place trees, shrubs, or hedgerows in locations that will obscure, damage, or block significant architectural features or views to the building. Hedgerows are not allowed as fences.
- Consider mature canopy size when planting new trees adjacent to historic resources. Planting trees too close to a landmark may result in building deteriorate or blocked views and is inappropriate.
- Climbing vines can damage historic structures and are not allowed.


FRONT
Zone A
most significant
Zone B
moderately significant
Zone C
unrestricted
Historic Resource
Non-historic
addition
NOTE: Zones of significance are approximate and deviations may be deemed appropriate by the HPC. Zone C may include secondary historic resources such as a historic shed or outbuilding. When this occurs, the allowances in Zone B shall apply to the areas around the historic shed or outbuilding.
Historic
Resource
Non-historic Addition
INTERIOR LOT
REAR

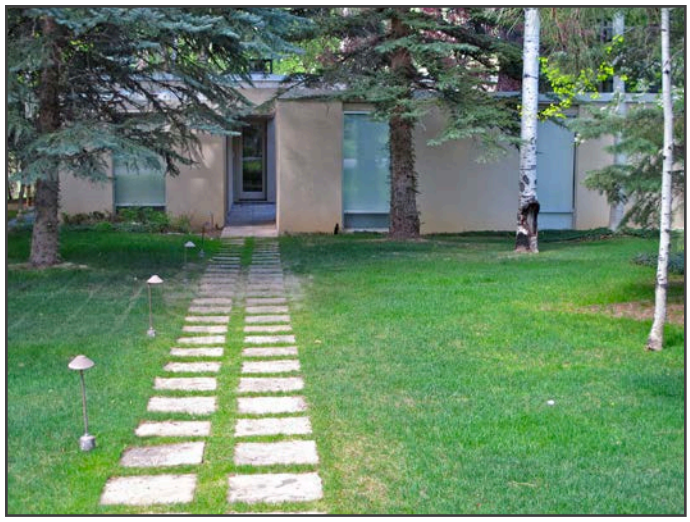

STREET
Zone A
most significant
Zone B
moderately significant
Zone C
unrestricted
Historic Resource
Non-historic
addition
NOTE: Zones of significance are approximate and deviations may be deemed appropriate by the HPC. Zone C may include secondary historic resources such as a historic shed or outbuilding. When this occurs, the allowances in Zone B shall apply to the areas around the historic shed or outbuilding.
Historic
Resource
STREET
Non-historic Addition
ALLEY

Site Lighting

Traditionally, outdoor lighting on 19th century sites was minimal or non-existent. While electricity was available in Aspen in the late 1880s, based on available historic photographs, exterior lights, including porch lights, were not commonly found. To maintain historic character, all outdoor lighting must be minimized.

Landscape lighting on AspenModern properties varies based on architectural style and time period of development.

For additional information, see the City's Lighting Standards.



Landscape lighting that suits this AspenModern home.

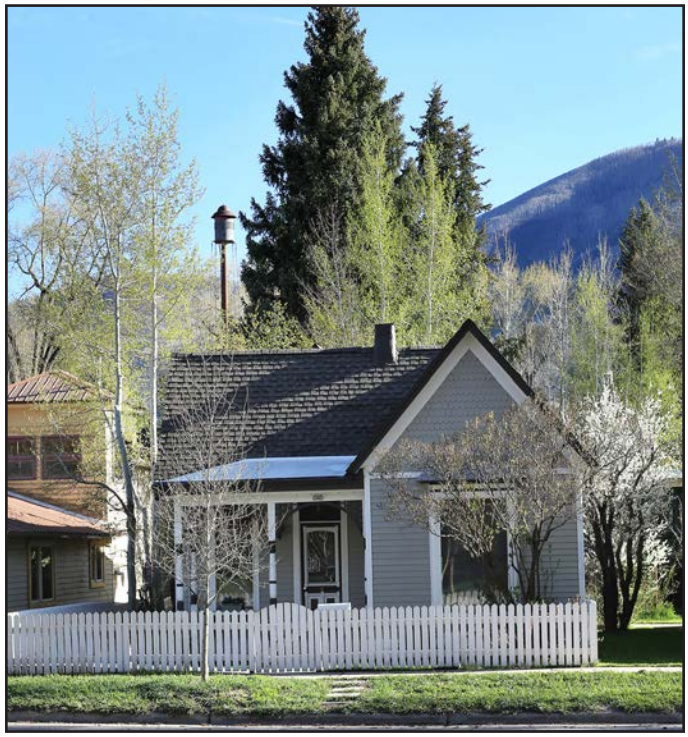
1.14 Minimize the visual impacts of landscape lighting.

- Landscape and pathway lighting is not permitted in Zone A (refer to diagram) on Aspen Victorian properties unless an exception is approved by HPC based on safety considerations.
- Landscape, driveway, and pathway lighting on AspenModern properties is addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- Landscape light fixtures should be carefully selected so that they are compatible with the building, yet recognizable as a product of their own time.
- Driveway lighting is not permitted on Aspen Victorian properties.
- Landscape uplighting is not allowed.

Fences

Originally, wood picket fences were commonly used to define front yards on Aspen Victorian properties. These fences provided a subtle delineation of private yard versus public right-of-way and were low in height, transparent in design, and did not create walled off private areas. The fence's vertical slats were set apart with spaces between, and the overall height of the fence was approximately three feet. Many properties traditionally had open lawns with no fencing.

Some Post-WWII properties may have original fences that provide less transparency than those used in the 19th century, or have other unique characteristics. Fencing on these properties will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.



A picket fence is an appropriate choice for a Victorian era home.

1.15 Preserve original fences.

- Fences which are considered part of the historic significance of a site should not be moved,

removed, or inappropriately altered.

- Replace only those portions of a historic fence that are deteriorated beyond repair.
- Replacement elements must match the existing.

1.16 When possible, replicate a missing historic fence based on photographic evidence.

1.17 No fence in the front yard is often the most appropriate solution.

- Reserve fences for back yards and behind street facing façades, as the best way to preserve the character of a property.

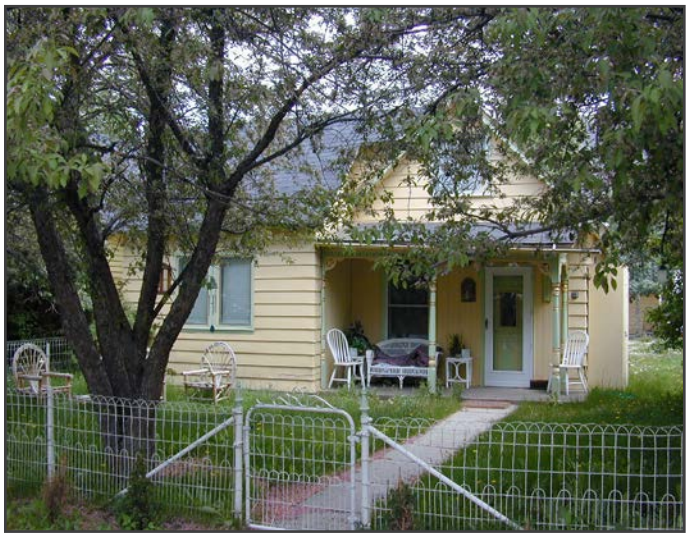
1.18 When building an entirely new fence, use materials that are appropriate to the building type and style.

- The new fence should use materials that were used on similar properties during the period of significance.
- A wood fence is the appropriate solution in most locations.
- Ornate fences, including wrought iron, may create a false history are not appropriate for Aspen Victorian landmarks unless there is evidence that a decorative fence historically existed on the site.
- A modest wire fence was common locally in the early 1900s and is appropriate for Aspen Victorian properties. This fence type has many desirable characteristics including transparency, a low height, and a simple design. When this material is used, posts should be simply detailed and not oversized.

1.19 A new fence should have a transparent quality, allowing views into the yard from the street.

- A fence that defines a front yard must be low in height and transparent in nature.
- For a picket fence, spacing between the pickets must be a minimum of 1/2 the width of the picket.
- For Post-WWII properties where a more solid type of fence may be historically appropriate, proposals will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Fence columns or piers should be proportional to the fence segment.

1.20 Any fence taller than 42" should be designed so that it avoids blocking public views of important features of a designated building.



A historic wire fence ;located on Cooper Ave.

A privacy fence that reflects a traditional picket fence style.

A historic photograph showing both a simple wire fence and a taller and more opaque privacy fence.

- A privacy fence should incorporate transparent elements to minimize the possible visual impacts. Consider staggering the fence boards on either side of the fence rail. This will give the appearance of a solid plank fence when seen head on. Also consider using lattice, or other transparent detailing on the upper portions of the fence.
- A privacy fence should allow the building corners and any important architectural features that are visible from the street to continue to be viewed.
- All hedgerows (trees, shrub bushes, etc.) are prohibited in Zones A and B.

This is one of the last remaining original Victorian fences in Aspen.

Retaining Walls

Historically stone retaining walls were sometimes used on steep slopes. Some of these walls survive and are important character-defining features. Whenever feasible they should be preserved. The addition of retaining walls on flat sites or in locations where they were not seen historically should be avoided.

1.21 Preserve original retaining walls

- Replace only those portions that are deteriorated beyond repair. Any replacement materials should match the original in color, texture, size and finish.
- Painting or covering a historic masonry retaining wall or covering is not allowed.
- Increasing the height of a retaining wall is inappropriate.

A restored historic retaining wall located at 320 W. Main Street.

1.22 When a new retaining wall is necessary, its height and visibility should be minimized.

- All wall materials, including veneer and mortar, will be reviewed on a case by case basis and should be compatible with the palette used on the historic structure.

1.23 Re-grading the site in a manner that changes historic grade is generally not allowed and will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Cultural and Designed Landscapes

In addition to architectural landmarks, Aspen has historical landscapes. Historic landscapes are just as important to preservation goals as buildings. All alterations to cultural and designed landscapes are considered on a case-by-case basis. Some architectural landmarks include designed landscapes and hardscapes that blend the building into the surrounding environment. These features are integral to the preservation of the historic site.

Red Butte Cemetery, one of the three historic cemeteries in Aspen.

1.24 Preserve historically significant landscapes with few or no alterations.

- An analysis of the historic landscape and an assessment of the current condition of the landscape should be done before the beginning of any project.
- The key features of the historic landscape and its overall design intent must be preserved.

1.25 New development on these sites should respect the historic design of the landscape and its built features.

- Do not add features that damage the integrity of the historic landscape.
- Maintain the existing pattern of setbacks and siting of structures.
- Maintain the historic relationship of the built landscape to natural features on the site.
- All additions to these landscapes must be clearly identifiable as recent work.
- New artwork must be subordinate to the designed landscape in terms of placement, height, material, and overall appearance. Place new art away from significant landscape features.
- Avoid installing utility trenches in cultural landscapes if possible.

Herbert Bayer's 1955 Marble Garden at the Aspen Meadows.

1.26 Preserve the historic circulation system.

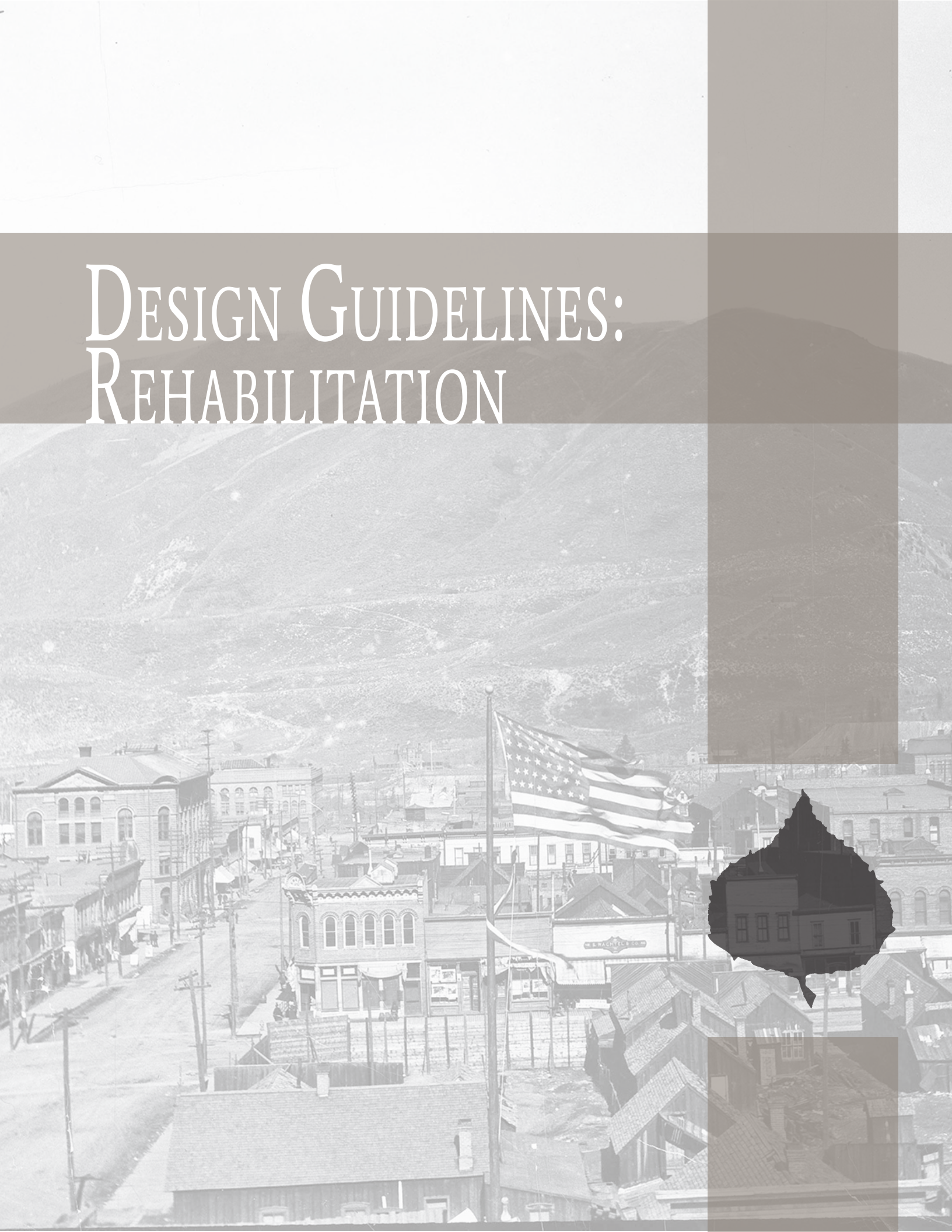
- Minimize the impact of new vehicular circulation.
- Minimize the visual impact of new parking.
- Maintain the separation of pedestrian and vehicle which occurred historically.

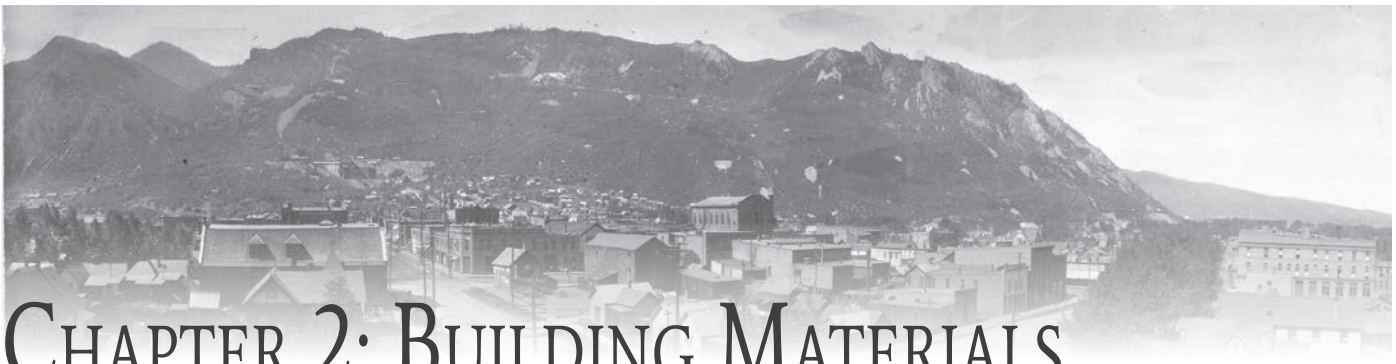
1.27 Preserve and maintain significant landscaping on site.

- Protect established vegetation during any construction.
- If any tree or shrub needs to be removed replace it with the same or similar species.
- New planting should be of a species used historically or a similar species.
- Maintain and preserve any gardens and/or ornamental planting on the site.
- Maintain and preserve any historic landscape elements.

In 1976, several downtown streets were redesigned as pedestrians malls.

Design Guidelines: Rehabilitation





CHAPTER 2: BUILDING MATERIALS

This chapter addresses the treatment of primary historic building materials—those that compose the dominant exterior surfaces of historic buildings. The treatment of materials used for architectural trim is addressed in a separate chapter.

In Aspen, wood siding and masonry have been the typical primary building materials for both Aspen Victorian and AspenModern landmarks. For Aspen Victorian properties, horizontal clapboard is the most common material for residences. Most downtown buildings are brick or stone. AspenModern often used stucco, concrete block and brick. In each case, the distinct characteristics of the primary building material, including the scale of the material unit, its texture and finish, are key features that contribute to the historic character of a building.

The best way to preserve historic building materials is through well-planned maintenance. It is important to inspect a historic building regularly.

Horizontal building surfaces such as chimneys, caps, sills, railings, and parapet copings are likely to show the most wear because they are more exposed and may retain water for longer periods of time.

When deterioration occurs, repairing the material rather than replacing it is preferred. It is important that the extent of replacement materials be minimized, because the original materials contribute to the authenticity of the property as a historic resource. Even when the replacement material exactly matches that of the original, the integrity of a historic building is to some degree compromised when extensive amounts are removed. This is because the original material exhibits a record of the labor and craftsmanship of an earlier time and this is lost when materials are replaced.

It is also important to recognize that all materials weather over time and that an aged finish, or patina does not represent an inferior material, but simply reflects the longevity of the building. Preserving original materials that show signs of wear is therefore preferred to replacement.

Policy: *Historic building materials should be preserved in place whenever feasible. When the material is damaged, then limited replacement that matches the original in appearance should be considered. Primary historic building materials should never be covered or subjected to harsh cleaning treatments.*

AspenModern properties which exhibit deterioration may require more substantial material replacement in order to preserve the original design intent. For example, CMU block that has been damaged over time may need to be entirely replaced in order to preserve the monochrome coloring or crisp edges indicative of the style. Approval of replacement materials on AspenModern properties is handled on a case by case basis.

Treatment of Materials

2.1 Preserve original building materials.

- Do not remove siding that is in good condition or that can be repaired in place.
- Masonry features that define the overall historic character, such as walls, cornices, pediments, steps and foundations, should be preserved.
- Avoid rebuilding a major portion of an exterior wall that could be repaired in place. Reconstruction may result in a building which no longer retains its historic integrity.
- Original AspenModern materials may be replaced in kind if it has been determined that the weathering detracts from the original design intent or philosophy.

2.2 The finish of materials should be as it would have existed historically.

- Masonry naturally has a water-protective layer to protect it from the elements. Brick or stone that was not historically painted shall not be painted.
- If masonry that was not painted historically was given a coat of paint at some more recent time, consider removing it, using appropriate methods.
- Wood should be painted, stained or natural, as appropriate to the style and history of the building.

Repair of historic siding in preparation for new paint.

Replacement of Materials

2.3 Match the original material in composition, scale and finish when replacing materials on primary surfaces.

- If the original material is wood clapboard for example, then the replacement material must be wood as well. It should match the original in size, and the amount of exposed lap and finish.
- Replace only the amount required. If a few boards are damaged beyond repair, then only those should be replaced, not the entire wall. For AspenModern buildings, sometimes the replacement of a larger area is required to preserve the integrity of the design intent.

2.4 Do not use synthetic materials as replacements for original building materials.

- Original building materials such as wood siding and brick should not be replaced with synthetic materials.

Covering Materials

2.5 Covering original building materials with new materials is inappropriate.

- Regardless of their character, new materials obscure the original, historically significant material.
- Any material that covers historic materials may also trap moisture between the two layers. This will cause accelerated deterioration to the historic material which may go unnoticed.

Monitor the condition of horizontal surfaces that collect snow and water.

2.6 Remove layers that cover the original material.

- Once the non-historic siding is removed, repair the original, underlying material.

Before: *Building prior to alteration.*

After: *A cornice has been installed over the original brick.*

Before: *The original siding on this house was covered with asbestos shingles.*

After: *The same house after non-historic siding materials were removed to expose original clapboard.*

Before: *A sign was installed overtop of the original decorative molding.*

After: *The molding after restoration.*

CHAPTER 3: WINDOWS

Background

Windows are some of the most important character-defining features of historic structures. They give scale to buildings and provide visual interest to the composition of individual façades. In fact, distinct window designs help define many historic building styles. For example, AspenModern properties in the Wrightian/Organic style typically have mitered windows that blur the line between the outside and the inside. The treatment of a historic window and the addition of a new opening to a historic structure requires careful consideration.

Policy: *The character-defining features of historic windows and their distinctive arrangement on a wall should be preserved. This is especially important on primary façades. New windows should be in character with the historic building.*

Key Features of Windows

The size, shape, location, and proportions of historic windows are among their essential features. Many Aspen Victorian windows were "double hung" with two sliding vertical sashes. These windows were usually sparsely placed around the structure. In contrast, a key defining feature of the Modern Chalet is large areas of glazing spanning from floor to roofline. The design of window casings, the depth and profile of window sash elements and the materials of which they were constructed are also important features.

Casement windows.

Window Types

Window types typically found on Aspen landmarks include:

- Casement - Hinged windows that swing open typically to the outside.
- Double Hung - Two sash elements, one above the other; both upper and lower sashes slide within tracks on the window jambs.
- Single Hung - Two sash elements, one above the other; only the lower sash moves.
- Fixed - The sash does not move.
- Mitered - Also called butt glazed windows, two windows joined together create a 90 degree corner.

Double hung windows.

Deterioration of Historic Windows

Properly maintained, original windows will provide excellent service for centuries. Most problems that occur result from a lack of proper maintenance.

Water damage and the ultra-violet degradation caused by sunlight are major concerns, specifically for wood windows. If surfaces fail to drain properly, water may be introduced which quickly begins to cause material damage. In most cases, windows are protected if a good coat of paint or stain is maintained.

Repair or Replacement of Historic Windows

Whenever possible, repair a historic window, rather than replace it. In most cases it is in fact more economical to repair the existing frame and glass rather than to replace them. Even when replaced with an exact duplicate window, a portion of the historic building fabric is lost when new windows are installed, and therefore such treatment should be avoided.

Inspect historic windows to determine their condition. Distinguish superficial signs of deterioration from actual failure of window components. Peeling paint, dried wood, or a rotted sill, for example, are serious problems, but often do not indicate that a window is beyond repair. Patching and splicing in new material for only those portions that are decayed is preferred. Complete window replacement will only be approved when unavoidable, on a case-by-case basis.

While replacing an entire window assembly is discouraged, it may be necessary in some cases. When a window is to be replaced, the new one should match the appearance of the original to the greatest extent possible, including the material, size and proportion of window elements, glass and sash components, the original profile, and the original depth of the window opening.

Energy Conservation

In some cases, owners may be concerned that an older window is inefficient in terms of energy conservation. In winter, for example, heat loss associated with an older window may make a room uncomfortable and increase heating costs. In fact, most heat loss is associated with air leakage though gaps that are the result of a lack of maintenance, rather than loss of energy through the single pane of glass found in historic windows. The glazing compound may be cracked or missing, allowing air to move around the glass. Sash members also may have shifted, leaving a gap for heat loss. Adding a storm window, which

Mitered windows.

Fixed windows.

was typical practice in the 19th century, or weather stripping successfully addresses air leakage while preserving the historic window.

Treatment of Windows

3.1 Preserve the functional and decorative features of a historic window.

- Features important to the character of a window include its frame, sash, muntins/mullions, sills, heads, jambs, moldings, operations, and groupings of windows.
- Repair frames and sashes rather than replacing them.
- Preserve the original glass. If original Victorian era glass is broken, consider using restoration glass for the repair.

Before: *Window and door openings filled in with non-historic materials.*

3.2 Preserve the position, number, and arrangement of historic windows in a building wall.

- Enclosing a historic window is inappropriate.
- Do not change the size of an original window opening.

Replacement of Windows that are Beyond Repair, or Have Been Removed

3.3 Match a replacement window to the original in its design.

- If the original is double-hung, then the replacement window must also be double-hung. If the sash have divided lights, match that characteristic as well.

After: *Restored storefront.*

3.4 When replacing an original window, use materials that are the same as the original.

3.5 Preserve the size and proportion of a historic window opening.

- Changing the window opening is not permitted.
- Consider restoring an original window opening that was enclosed in the past.

3.6 Match, as closely as possible, the profile of the sash and its components to that of the original window.

- A historic window often has a complex profile. Within the window's casing, the sash steps back to the plane of the glazing (glass) in several

increments. These increments, which individually only measure in eighths or quarters of inches, are important details. They distinguish the actual window from the surrounding plane of the wall.

- The historic profile on AspenModern properties is typically minimal.

Adding Windows

3.7 Adding new openings on a historic structure is generally not allowed.

- Greater flexibility in installing new windows may be considered on rear or secondary walls.
- New windows should be similar in scale to the historic openings on the building, but should in some way be distinguishable as new, through the use of somewhat different detailing, etc.
- Preserve the historic ratio of window openings to solid wall on a façade.
- Significantly increasing the amount of glass on a character defining façade will negatively affect the integrity of a structure.

Energy Conservation

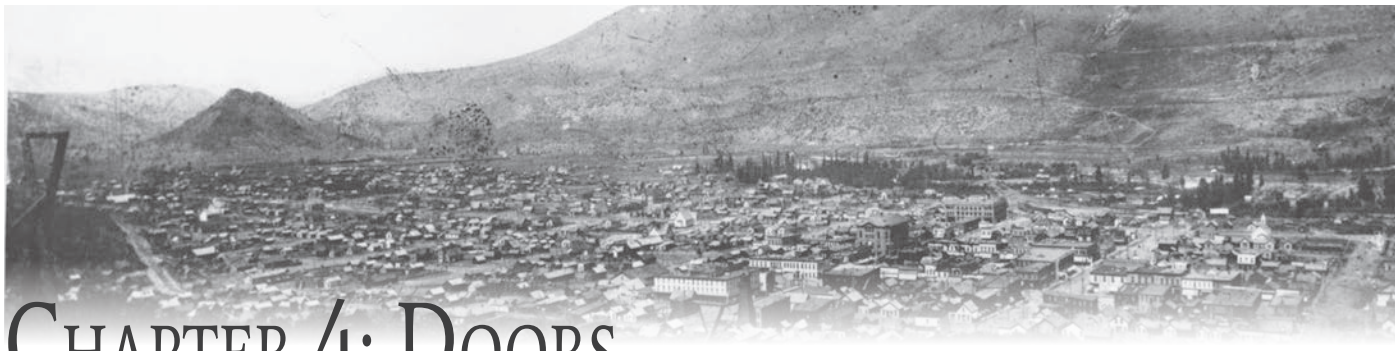
3.8 Use a storm window to enhance energy conservation rather than replace a historic window.

- Install a storm window on the interior, when feasible. This will allow the character of the original window to be seen from the public way.
- If a storm window is to be installed on the exterior, match the sash design and material of the original window. It should fit tightly within the window opening without the need for sub-frames or panning around the perimeter. A storm window should not include muntins unless necessary for structure. Any muntin should be placed to match horizontal or vertical divisions of the historic window.

Before: *Look for evidence of original openings and restore.*

After: *Restored windows.*

Exterior mounted wood storm windows.



CHAPTER 4: DOORS

Background

Doors are important character-defining features of historic structures, which give scale to buildings and provide visual interest to the composition of individual façades. Many historic doors are noted for their materials, placement and finishes.

Policy: *The character-defining features of a historic door and its distinct materials and placement should be preserved. A new door should be in character with the historic building.*

Door Features

Important features include the materials and details of the door itself, its frame, sill, head, jamb and any flanking windows or transoms.

Door Types

Door types found on historic structures in Aspen include:

- Doorway with transom - Typically a wooden door topped with a rectangular transom with glass.
- Half-lite door - This type of door has a wide sash of glass in the upper portion of the door. Many early Aspen houses have half-lite doors.
- Full-lite door - This type of door is predominantly glass.
- Paneled door - Wooden door with raised panels.
- Slab door - A door without panels or glass.

Doorway with transom.

Half-lite door with double arched windows.

Slab door.

Full-lite door.

Deterioration

A typical Aspen Victorian door is sheltered by a porch, which extends the life of the door. However, deterioration can still occur due to water damage, weathering, and constant use. AspenModern properties typically have minimal roof overhangs or porches. As a result of deterioration, some historic doors do not properly fit their openings and allow moisture and air into the building.

Repair of Historic Doors

A problem door sometimes just needs to be re-hung in order to properly work. If is often easier and more economical to repair an existing door rather than to replace it. This is preferred because the original materials contribute to the historic character of the building. Even when replaced with an exact duplicate, a portion of the historic building fabric is lost and such treatment should be avoided.

When rehabilitating a historic door it is important to maintain original doors, jambs, transoms, window panes and hardware. Surfaces may require cleaning and patching and some components may be deteriorated beyond repair. Patching and splicing in new material for only those portions that are decayed should be considered in such a case, rather than replacing the entire door.

Door at 827 dean street.

Replacement Doors

Replacing an entire door assembly is discouraged. When a door must be replaced, the new one should match the original. A frequent concern is the material of the replacement door. Using the same material as the original is required. If the historic door was wood, then use a wood replacement. It is important to preserve the original jamb when feasible.

Door Function

The historic front door on a primary façade must be the main entrance into the building. Aspen Victorians with two front doors are permitted to fix one of the doors in place so that it does not operate. The procedure to fix the door must be reversible.

Energy Conservation

Owners may be concerned about the energy efficiency of old doors that seem to leak cold air during the winter. Most heat loss is associated with air leakage through the space below the door.

The most cost-effective energy conservation measure for a typical historic door is to install weather stripping

along the door, to fit the door to the jamb and threshold and to caulk any window panes. These measures will dramatically reduce heat loss while preserving historic features. If additional energy savings are a concern, consider installing a storm door. This may be applied to the exterior of the door. If a storm door is to be installed, it should match the design and materials of the original door.

Treatment of Existing Doors

These guidelines for the treatment of doors apply to all existing and proposed exterior doors, and screen doors.

4.1 Preserve historically significant doors.

- Maintain features important to the character of a historic doorway. These include the door, door frame, screen door, threshold, glass panes, paneling, hardware, detailing, transoms and flanking sidelights.
- Do not change the position and function of original front doors and primary entrances.
- If a secondary entrance must be sealed shut, any work that is done must be reversible so that the door can be used at a later time, if necessary. Also, keep the door in place, in its historic position.
- Previously enclosed original doors should be reopened when possible.

4.2 Maintain the original size of a door and its opening.

- Altering its size and shape is inappropriate. It should not be widened or raised in height.

4.3 When a historic door or screen door is damaged, repair it and maintain its general historic appearance.

Replacement Doors

4.4 When replacing a door or screen door, use a design that has an appearance similar to the original door or a door associated with the style of the building.

- A replica of the original, if evidence exists, is the preferred replacement.
- A historic door or screen door from a similar building also may be considered.
- Simple paneled doors were typical for Aspen Victorian properties.

Many Victorian era homes in Aspen had two front doors; one for receiving guests and one for family use.

An original screen door must be preserved.

A new screen door.

- Very ornate doors, including stained or leaded glass, are discouraged, unless photographic evidence can support their use.

Adding Doors

4.5 Adding new doors on a historic building is generally not allowed.

- Place new doors in any proposed addition rather than altering the historic resource.
- Greater flexibility in installing a door in a new location may be considered on rear or secondary walls.
- A new door in a new location should be similar in scale and style to historic openings on the building and should be a product of its own time.
- Preserve the historic ratio of openings to solid wall on a façade. Significantly increasing the openings on a character defining façade negatively affects the integrity of a structure.

Energy Conservation

4.6 If energy conservation and heat loss are concerns, use a storm door instead of replacing a historic entry door.

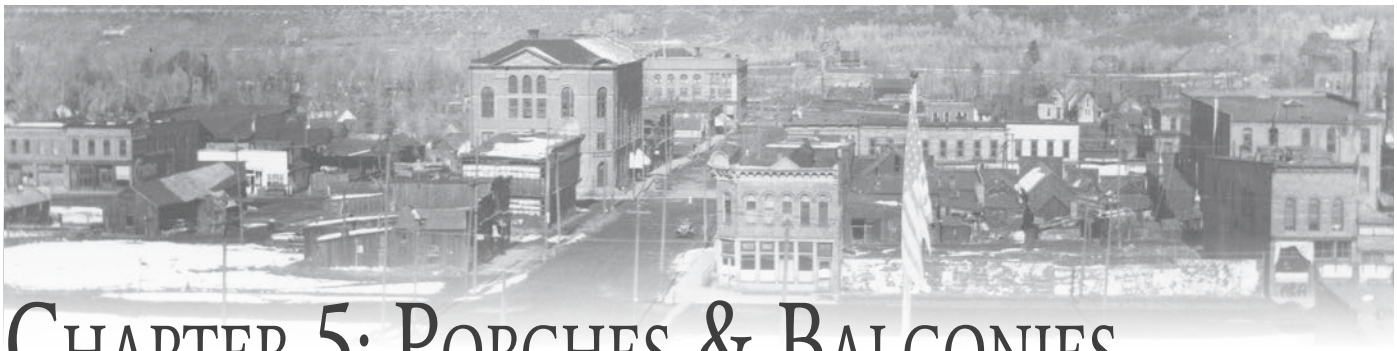
- Match the material, frame design, character, and color of the primary door.
- Simple features that do not detract from the historic entry door are appropriate for a new storm door.
- New storm or screen doors should be in character with the primary door.

Door Hardware

4.7 Preserve historic hardware.

- When new hardware is needed, it must be in scale with the door and appropriate to the style of the building.
- On Aspen Victorian properties, conceal any modern elements such as entry key pads.

A decorative door knob.



CHAPTER 5: PORCHES & BALCONIES

Background

In the 19th century, front, side and rear porches were popular features in residential design. A porch protects an entrance from snow and provides shade in the summer. It also provides a sense of scale and aesthetic quality to the façade of a building. A porch often connects a house to its context by orienting the entrance to the street. Because of their importance as character-defining features, porches should receive sensitive treatment during exterior rehabilitation and restoration work.

Some AspenModern styles employed recessed entries and roof overhangs as porches. Open balconies are common on Chalet and Modern Chalet buildings.

Key Features

Porches and balconies vary as much as architectural styles. They differ in height, scale, location, materials and articulation. A porch or balcony may be cut in, project or wrap around a corner and it may have elaborate details and finishes. Although they vary in character, most Aspen Victorian porches have these elements in common:

- Balustrades or railings
- Posts/columns
- Architectural details
- Hipped/shed/flat roofs

These elements often correspond to the architectural style of the house and therefore, the building's design character should be considered before any major rehabilitation or restoration work is done.

AspenModern properties sometimes feature traditional porches, but may have balconies which run the full width or length of a structure and sit 1/2 story of a full story above the ground. The balustrade may be decorative or simple squared rails.

Policy: *An original porch or balcony should be preserved. In cases where the feature has been altered, it should be restored to its original appearance.*

A balcony on a Chalet.

A Victorian porch.

An entry porch on a Pan Abode building.

Deterioration

Because of constant exposure to sun and rain and the fact that a porch or balcony is open to the elements, it decays faster than other portions of a building. Furthermore, if water is not channeled away from the foundation of a porch, its footings may be damaged. Peeling paint is a common symptom. In some cases a porch or balcony may experience sagging or detachment from the main structure due to settling.

Handrails are susceptible to deterioration.

Repair of Porches

After discovering structural or cosmetic problems, a porch or balcony should be repaired rather than replaced. Repair is preferred to replacement because the original materials contribute to the historic character of the porch. Even when replaced with an exact duplicate, a portion of the historic building fabric is lost; therefore, such treatment should be avoided when feasible.

Reconstructing a porch or balcony that is beyond repair or has been removed

When reconstruction is necessary, research the history of the building to determine the original design of the feature. Look for physical evidence including "ghost lines" on walls that indicate the outline of the features as it once existed. Reference similar buildings for guidance if needed.

Before: *A historic porch where the original posts and details were replaced with an inaccurate design.*

Treatment

5.1 Preserve an original porch or balcony.

- Replace missing posts and railings when necessary. Match the original proportions, material and spacing of balusters.
- Expanding the size of a historic porch or balcony is inappropriate.

5.2 Avoid removing or covering historic materials and details.

- Removing an original balustrade, for example, is inappropriate.

5.3 Enclosing a porch or balcony is not appropriate.

- Reopening an enclosed porch or balcony is appropriate.

After: *A restored porch based on historic documentation.*

CHAPTER 5: PORCHES & BALCONIES

Reconstruction

5.4 If reconstruction is necessary, match the original in form, character and detail.

- Match original materials.
- When reconstructing an original porch or balcony without historic photographs, use dimensions and characteristics found on comparable buildings. Keep style and form simple with minimal, if any, decorative elements.

Before: *An enclosed porch significantly changes the character of the historic structure.*

Steps, Handrails, and Guardrails

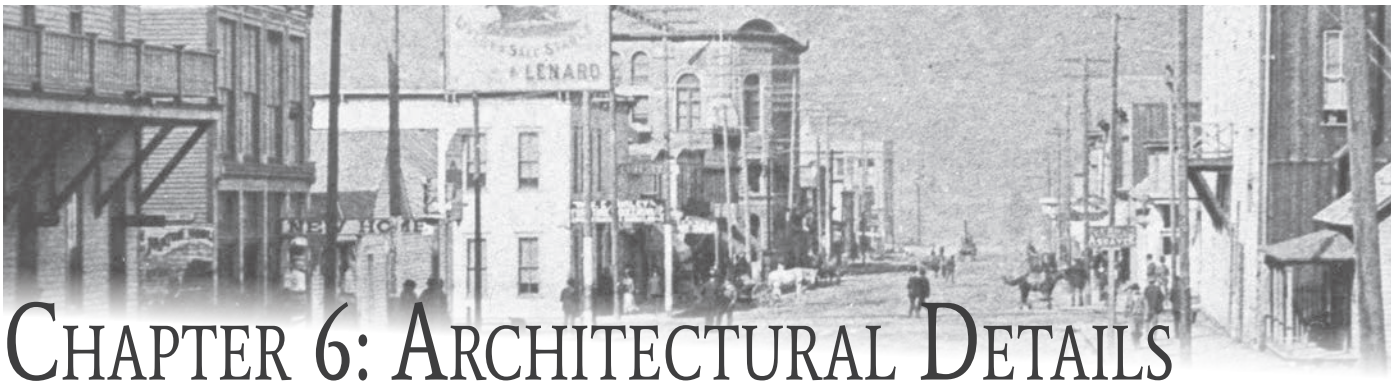
5.5 If new steps are to be added, construct them out of the same primary materials used on the original, and design them to be in scale with the porch or balcony

- Steps should be located in the original location.
- Step width should relate to the scale of entry doors, spacing between posts, depth of deck, etc.
- Brick, red sandstone, grey concrete, or wood are appropriate materials for steps.

5.6 Avoid adding handrails or guardrails where they did not exist historically, particularly where visible from the street.

- If handrails or guardrails are needed according to building code, keep their design simple in character and different from the historic detailing on the porch or balcony.

After: *The porch is restored, based on historic documentation.*



CHAPTER 6: ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

Background

Architectural details play several roles in defining the character of a historic structure. They add visual interest, distinguish certain building styles and types, and often showcase superior craftsmanship. While architectural details on many styles are ornamental in nature, some are very simple. In both cases, the character of the details contributes to the significance of historic properties. Features such as window hoods, brackets and posts exhibit materials and finishes often associated with particular styles.

Treatment & Repair

Preserving original architectural details is critical to the integrity of the building. Where replacement is required, one should remove only those portions that are deteriorated beyond repair. Even if an architectural detail is replaced with an exact copy of the original, the integrity of the building as a historic resource is diminished. Therefore, preservation of the original material is preferred.

Replacement

Using a material to match the historic material is always the best approach. In unique circumstances, a substitute material may be considered when it appears similar in composition, design, color, and texture to the original. Substitute materials may be considered when the original is not available, where the original is known to be susceptible to rapid decay, or where maintenance access may be difficult.

Treatment of Architectural Features

6.1 Preserve significant architectural features.

- Repair only those features that are deteriorated.
- Patch, piece-in, splice, or consolidate to repair the existing materials, using recognized preservation methods whenever possible.
- On AspenModern properties, repair is preferred, however, it may be more important to preserve the

Policy: *Architectural details help establish a historic building's distinct visual character and should be preserved. If architectural details are damaged beyond repair, replacements should match the original detailing.*

An ornate Queen Anne home.

Simple miner's cottage with ornate details.

integrity of the original design intent, such as crisp edges, rather than to retain heavily deteriorated material.

6.2 When disassembly of a historic element is necessary for its restoration, use methods that minimize damage to the original material.

- Document its location so it may be repositioned accurately. Always devise methods of replacing the disassembled material in its original configuration.

6.3 Remove only the portion of the detail that is deteriorated and must be replaced.

- Match the original in composition, scale, and finish when replacing materials or features.
- If the original detail was made of wood, for example, then the replacement material should be wood, when feasible. It should match the original in size and finish.

6.4 Repair or replacement of missing or deteriorated features are required to be based on original designs.

- The design should be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence to avoid creating a misrepresentation of the building's heritage.
- When reconstruction of an element is impossible because there is no historical evidence, develop a compatible new design that is a simplified interpretation of the original, and maintains similar scale, proportion and material.

6.5 Do not guess at "historic" designs for replacement parts.

- Where scars on the exterior suggest that architectural features existed, but there is no other physical or photographic evidence, then new features may be designed that are similar in character to related buildings.
- Using ornate materials on a building or adding new conjectural detailing for which there is no documentation is inappropriate.

Broken balusters within this railing were carefully replicated.

The Health Club at the Aspen Meadows features a simple, but carefully detailed fascia.

A portion of the metal crown on the Elks Building was missing and needed to be replicated.

The restored dome on the Elks Building.

CHAPTER 7: ROOFS

Background

The character of the roof is a major feature for most historic structures. In each case, the roof pitch, materials, size and orientation are all distinct features that contribute to its character. Aspen Victorian properties have a range of gabled, hip, shed, and flat roof forms depending on building type. AspenModern properties typically have a range of gable, parabolic, butterfly or flat roof forms depending on the architectural style. Although the function of a roof is to protect a structure from the elements, it contributes to overall architectural character of the building.

Policy: *The character of a historical roof, including its form and materials, should be preserved.*

Characteristics Most Associated with Aspen Architectural Styles

- Deep Overhangs - Chalet, Modern Chalet, Rustic, Wrightian
- Flat roof, minimal eaves - Modern
- Gables, shed - Victorian

An A-Frame roof form on a Fritz Benedict designed home.

Deterioration

The roof is the structure's main defense against the elements. Over time all components of the roofing system are vulnerable to leaking and damage. When the roof begins to experience failure it can affect other parts of the structure by no longer acting as a barrier from water, wind, and exposure. Common sources of roof leaks include:

- Cracks in chimney masonry
- Loose flashing around chimneys and ridges
- Loose or missing roof shingles
- Cracks in roof membranes caused by settling rafters
- Water backup from plugged gutters
- Ice dams

Deep overhangs on a Chalet.

Repairing a Historic Roof

When repairing a historic roof it is important to preserve its historic character. It is not appropriate to alter the pitch of a historic roof, or to change the orientation of the roof to the street. Eave overhangs are extremely important to the style of the house and should be preserved.

Preserve original roof cresting, as found on the Sardy House.

Gutters, Downspouts, Snowstops, and Snow Fences

Gutters and downspouts are used to divert water away from a structure. Without this drainage system, water may splash off the roof onto exterior walls and run along the foundation of the building. Snowstops and snow fences are used to protect inhabitants and the building from the sudden snow avalanches that rip off architectural details and can cause serious injury. Gutters can be seen in some 19th century photos of historic buildings and are more common on AspenModern structures. Overall, the visual impact of these functional elements should be minimized.

Dormers

Historically, a dormer was sometimes added to create more head room and light in an attic. It typically had a vertical emphasis and was usually placed as a single element or in a pair on a roof. A dormer did not dominate a roof form. A new dormer should always read as a subordinate element to the primary roof plane. A new dormer should never be so large that the original roof line is obscured. It should also be set back from the roof edge and located below the roof ridge. In addition, the style of the new dormer should be in keeping with that of the building. Dormers are generally foreign to some architectural styles, such as Modernism.

Roof Materials

Exterior roof materials like shingles are usually not original on Aspen Victorian properties due to age and replacement over time. Periodic replacement of roofing is accepted. However, roof sheathing and structure is typically original on most of these buildings should be preserved. When repairing or altering a historic roof, do not remove significant materials that are in good condition. Always repair materials when feasible. For example, sister beams when roof rafters need more structural integrity rather than removing and replacing the element. Where replacement is necessary, use a material that is similar to the original in style and texture. Some AspenModern styles exposed roof rafters under deep overhangs as part of the architectural style. These character defining features must be preserved.

Additions to Roofs

Many Aspen residences have original chimneys. Wood burning appliances are no longer allowed in the City of Aspen, which means that historic chimneys are being retrofitted to accommodate other vents. New venting of any type added to a roof should be low profile, carefully located, and painted a matte black or dark color to not detract from the historic chimney.

Treatment of Roofs

7.1 Preserve the original form of a roof.

- Do not alter the angle of a historic roof. Preserve the orientation and slope of the roof as seen from the street.
- Retain and repair original and decorative roof detailing.
- Where the original roof form has been altered, consider restoration.

7.2 Preserve the original eave depth.

- Overhangs contribute to the scale and detailing of a historic resource.
- AspenModern properties typically have very deep or extremely minimal overhangs that are key character defining features of the architectural style.

7.3 Minimize the visual impacts of skylights and other rooftop devices.

- Skylights and solar panels are generally not allowed on a historic structure. These elements may be appropriate on an addition.

7.4 New vents should be minimized, carefully, placed and painted a dark color.

- Direct vents for fireplaces are generally not permitted to be added on historic structures.
- Locate vents on non-street facing facades.
- Use historic chimneys as chases for new flues when possible.

7.5 Preserve original chimneys, even if they are made non-functional.

- Reconstruct a missing chimney when documentation exists.

7.6 A new dormer should remain subordinate to the historic roof in scale and character.

- A new dormer is not appropriate on a primary,

Before: *Skylights are inappropriate on a miner's cottage.*

After: *The historic resource after the skylights were removed.*

These new chimney vents are consistent with the building type, located behind the ridgeline, and a dark color.

This non-historic chimney is overscaled for the miner's cottage.

character defining façade.

- A new dormer should fit within the existing wall plane. It should be lower than the ridgeline and set in from the eave. It should also be in proportion with the building.
- The mass and scale of a dormer addition must be subordinate to the scale of the historic building.
- While dormers improve the livability of upper floor spaces where low plate heights exist, they also complicate the roof and may not be appropriate on very simple structures.
- Dormers are generally not permitted on AspenModern properties since they are not characteristic of these building styles.

Before: *A historic resource before dormers were added.*

After: *New dormers that are too large can change the massing of the original building.*

Materials

7.7 Preserve original roof materials.

- Avoid removing historic roofing material.
- Using recognized preservation methods, repair deteriorated historic material when possible.
- When replacement is necessary, replace the roofing in kind, and/or use a material that is similar to the original in both style and physical qualities.

7.8 New or replacement roof materials should maintain or restore the character of the historic roof.

- If a substitute is used, the roof material should be of a design, scale, color, texture, and composition akin to the original, or a simplified, neutral, modest, and deferential alternative that is visually compatible with the building's historic features.
- Flashing should be in scale with the roof material.
- Flashing should be tin, lead coated copper, galvanized or painted metal and have a matte, non-reflective finish.
- Design flashing, such as drip edges, so that architectural details are not obscured.
- A metal roof material should have a matte, non-reflective finish and match the original seaming.

Preserve original roof material when possible.

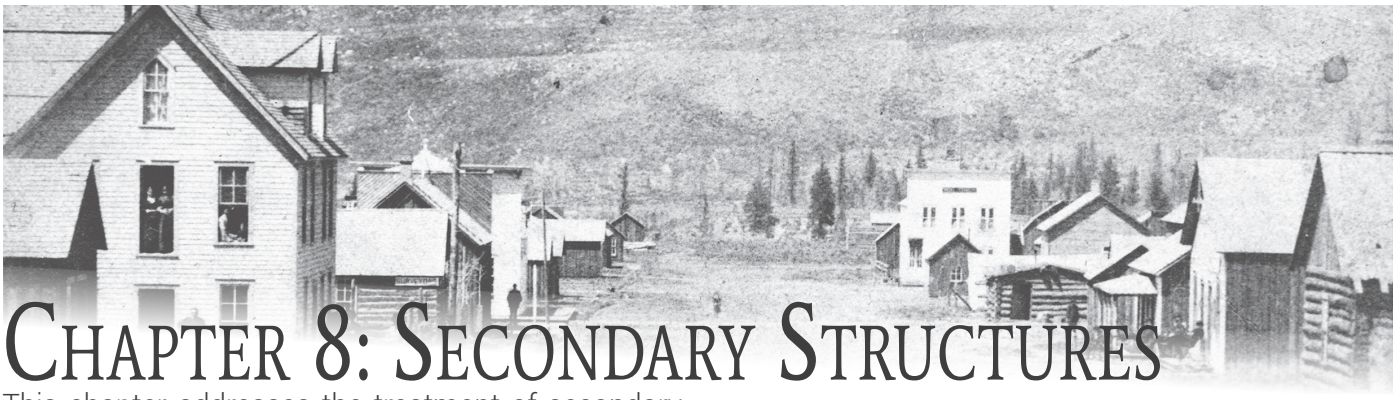
7.9 Avoid using conjectural features on a roof.

- Adding ornament or detail where there is no evidence that it existed, creates a false impression of the building's original appearance, and is inappropriate.
- Roofing materials should reflect the architectural style of the affected building or be substantiated by documentary or physical evidence

7.10 Design gutters so that their visibility on the structure is minimized to the extent possible.

- Downspouts should be placed in locations that are not visible from the street if possible, or in locations that do not obscure architectural detailing on the building.
- The material used for the gutters should be in character with the style of the building.

These simple gutters are in character with a miner's cottage.



CHAPTER 8: SECONDARY STRUCTURES

This chapter addresses the treatment of secondary structures. These guidelines apply in addition to the guidelines for treatment of doors, windows, roofs, materials, additions and architectural details presented in the preceding chapters.

Secondary structures include detached garages, carriage houses, and sheds. Traditionally, these structures were important elements of 19th century residential sites in particular. Secondary structures help interpret how an entire site was used historically. Most secondary structures are simple in form, materials, and detailing, reflecting their more utilitarian functions. Because secondary structures are subordinate to a primary building, greater flexibility in their treatment may be considered, but their preservation is a priority.

Policy: *When a secondary structure is determined to be historically significant, it must be preserved. This may include keeping the structure in its present condition or, rehabilitating it or adapting it to a new use so that the building continues to serve a useful function.*

Note: *Outbuildings often encroach into the alleys or at least into setbacks. The owner should be aware of variances or encroachment licenses that may be required to renovate these buildings. Typically an outbuilding that is over a property line must be moved entirely onto one lot during a major redevelopment.*

Secondary Structures

8.1 If an existing secondary structure is historically significant, then it must be preserved.

- When treating a historic secondary building, respect its character-defining features. These include its materials, roof form, windows, doors, and architectural details.
- If a secondary structure is not historically significant, then its preservation is optional. The determination of significance is based on documentation of the construction date of the outbuilding and/or physical inspection. A secondary structure that is related to the period of significance of the primary structure will likely require preservation.

8.2 Preserve a historic secondary building as a detached structure.

- Any proposal to attach a secondary structure is reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- The position and orientation of the structure should be maintained except when HPC finds that an alternative is the best preservation option.
- Some AspenModern properties incorporated garages and carports into the architecture. This pattern should be maintained.

This carriage house illustrates how Victorian secondary buildings were typically placed along alleys.

8.3 Do not add detailing or features to a secondary structure that are conjectural and not in keeping with its original character as a utilitarian structure.

- Most secondary structures are basic rectangular solids, with simple finishes and no ornamentation.

8.4 When adding on to a secondary structure, distinguish the addition as new construction and minimize removal of historic fabric.

- Additions to a secondary structure must be smaller in footprint than the original building and lower in height. Maintaining the overall mass and scale is particularly important.
- Do not alter the original roof form.
- An addition must be inset from the corners of the wall to which it attaches.

8.5 Preserve the original building materials, or match in kind when necessary.

8.6 Preserve original door and window openings and minimize new openings.

- If an original carriage door exists, and can be made to function for automobile use, this is preferred.

8.7 If a new garage door is added, it must be compatible with the character of the historic structure.

- The materials and detailing should be simple.

8.8 Adaptation of an obsolete secondary structure to a functional use is encouraged.

- The reuse of any secondary structure should be sensitive so that its character is not lost.

This former barn has been adapted for residential use, with character defining features preserved.

Before: *Outbuildings can fall into disuse and disrepair.*

After: *The same outbuilding, after restoration, contributes to the collection of small structures along the alley.*

When converting an outbuilding for vehicular use, install a simple garage door.

Design Guidelines: New Construction

CHAPTER 9: EXCAVATION, BUILDING RELOCATION & FOUNDATIONS

This chapter presents guidelines for constructing basements, relocating historic structures and installing new foundations. The guidelines apply to primary and secondary structures.

The original placement of a building on its site is an important aspect of history, contributes to integrity and authenticity, and should be preserved.

Historic records indicate that structures have been occasionally moved within the City reaching back into the Victorian era, therefore, some precedent exists. Today, however, such relocation must be considered carefully.

Installing a foundation that meets modern standards can be very beneficial to the long term condition of the building. Ideally the structure will not be permanently repositioned as part of this process.

It may be acceptable to reposition a structure on its original site if doing so will accommodate other compatible improvements that will assure preservation. For example, if a house straddles two parcels, shifting it to one side may accommodate construction of a new, detached structure. Doing so may better protect the scale of the original structure, as opposed to erecting a large addition in close proximity to the landmark.

Preserving Building Locations and Foundations

9.1 Developing a basement by underpinning and excavating while the historic structure remains in place may help to preserve the historic fabric.

- This activity will require the same level of documentation, structural assessment, and posting of financial assurances as a building relocation.

Policy: *Moving a historic structure is discouraged; however, in some instances it may be the most appropriate option. Generally, buildings must be relocated within the boundaries of their original site. Permanent off-site relocation is detrimental and will only be allowed when no other preservation alternative is available.*

9.2 Proposals to relocate a building will be considered on a case-by-case basis

- In general, on-site relocation has less of an impact on individual landmark structures than those in a historic district.
- In a district, where numerous adjacent historic structures may exist, the way that buildings were placed on the site historically, and the open yards visible from the street are characteristics that should be respected in new development.
- Provide a figure ground study of the surrounding parcels to demonstrate the effects of a building relocation.
- In some cases, the historic significance of the structure, the context of the site, the construction technique, and the architectural style may make on-site relocation too impactful to be appropriate. It must be demonstrated that on-site relocation is the best preservation alternative in order for approval to be granted.
- If relocation would result in the need to reconstruct a substantial area of the original exterior surface of the building above grade, it is not an appropriate preservation option.

9.3 Site a relocated structure in a position similar to its historic orientation.

- It must face the same direction and have a relatively similar setback. In general, a forward movement, rather than a lateral movement is preferred. HPC will consider setback variations

where appropriate.

- A primary structure may not be moved to the rear of the parcel to accommodate a new building in front of it.
- Be aware of potential restrictions against locating buildings too close to mature trees. Consult with the City Forester early in the design process. Do not relocate a building so that it becomes obscured by trees.

9.4 Position a relocated structure at its historic elevation above grade.

- Raising the finished floor of the building slightly above its original elevation is acceptable if needed to address drainage issues. A substantial change in position relative to grade is inappropriate.
- Avoid making design decisions that require code related alterations which could have been avoided. In particular, consider how the relationship to grade could result in non-historic guardrails, etc.

The original sandstone was used as a veneer on this foundation after a new basement was built.

9.5 A new foundation shall appear similar in design and materials to the historic foundation.

- On modest structures, a simple foundation is appropriate. Constructing a stone foundation on a miner's cottage where there is no evidence that one existed historically is out of character and is not allowed.
- Exposed concrete or painted metal flashing are generally appropriate.
- Where a stone or brick foundation existed historically, it must be replicated, ideally using stone salvaged from the original foundation as a veneer. The replacement must be similar in the cut of the stone and design of the mortar joints.
- New AspenModern foundations shall be handled on a case by case basis to ensure preservation of the design intent.

Storing the historic resource on site during construction of the new foundation is strongly preferred.

9.6 Minimize the visual impact of lightwells.

- The size of any lightwell that faces a street should be minimized.
- Lightwells must be placed so that they are not immediately adjacent to character defining features, such as front porches.
- Lightwells must be protected with a flat grate, rather than a railing or may not be visible from a street.
- Lightwells that face a street must abut the building foundation and generally may not "float"

in the landscape except where they are screened, or on an AspenModern site.

9.7 All relocations of designated structures shall be performed by contractors who specialize in moving historic buildings, or can document adequate experience in successfully relocating such buildings.

- The specific methodology to be used in relocating the structure must be approved by the HPC.
- During the relocation process, panels must be mounted on the exterior of the building to protect existing openings and historic glass. Special care shall be taken to keep from damaging door and window frames and sashes in the process of covering the openings. Significant architectural details may need to be removed and securely stored until restoration.
- The structure is expected to be stored on its original site during the construction process. Proposals for temporary storage on a different parcel will be considered on a case by case basis and may require special conditions of approval.
- A historic resource may not be relocated outside of the City of Aspen.

9.8 Proposals to relocate a building to a new site are highly discouraged.

- Permanently relocating a structure from where it was built to a new site is only allowed for special circumstances, where it is demonstrated to be the only preservation alternative.

Temporary off-site storage of a structure requires special efforts to protect historic features.

CHAPTER 10: BUILDING ADDITIONS

Background

This chapter presents guidelines for the construction of additions to historic structures. They apply to primary and secondary structures. Some special references are made to additions planned in historic districts.

Many historic buildings in Aspen, including secondary structures, were expanded over time as the need for more space occurred. Typically the addition was subordinate in scale and character to the main building. The height of the addition was usually lower than that of the main structure and was often located to the side or rear, such that the original building retained its prominence.

The addition was often constructed of materials that were similar to those used on the original structure. This tradition of adding onto buildings is appropriate to continue. It is important, however, that a new addition be designed in such a manner that it preserves the historic character of the original structure.

Existing Additions

An existing addition may have taken on historic significance itself. It may have been constructed to be compatible with the original building and it may be associated with the period of historic significance, thereby meriting preservation in its own right. Such an addition should be carefully evaluated before developing plans that may involve its alteration.

In some cases, an early alteration that has taken on significance actually contrasts with the original building, for example, a Modernist addition that was constructed on a Chalet style structure. The change reflects the evolution of the property. This type of addition could be significant and worthy of preservation.

The majority of more recent additions usually have no historic significance. Some later additions in fact detract from the character of the building, and may obscure significant features. Removing such noncontributing additions is encouraged.

Policy: *A new addition to a historic building must be designed such that the character of the original structure is maintained. It shall also be subordinate in appearance to the main building. Previous additions that have taken on significance must be preserved.*

Basic Principles for New Additions

When planning an addition to a historic building, minimize negative effects to the historic building fabric. Alterations and additions should reflect their own time while being subordinate and supportive of the historic resource.

The addition shall not affect the architectural character of the building. In most cases, loss of character can be avoided by locating the addition to the rear. The overall design of the addition must be in keeping with the historic structure and be distinguishable from the historic portion. This philosophy balances new and old construction and allows the evolution of the building to be understood.

Keeping the size of the addition small and subordinate, in relation to the main structure, helps minimize its visual impacts. An addition must be set apart from the historic building, and connected with a one story linking element. This creates a break between new and old construction and will help maintain the perceived scale and proportion of the historic resource.

In historic districts, consider the effect the addition may have on the character of the area, as seen from the public right-of-way. For example, a side addition may change the sense of rhythm established by side yards in the block. Locating the addition to the rear

would be a better solution in such a case.

When designing an addition to a building, it is also important to remember that the maximum potential floor area in the Land Use Code is not guaranteed if it cannot be appropriately accommodated on the site. In some cases, smaller additions may be necessary. Approval for Transferrable Development Rights may be sought if unbuilt floor area cannot be accommodated on the site.

Before: *An addition extended the length of the cross gable and porch on this house, significantly altering its character.*

Existing Additions

10.1 Preserve an older addition that has achieved historic significance in its own right.

10.2 A more recent addition that is not historically significant may be removed.

- For Aspen Victorian properties, HPC generally relies on the 1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps to determine which portions of a building are historically significant and must be preserved.
- HPC may insist on the removal of non-historic construction that is considered to be detrimental to the historic resource in any case when preservation benefits or variations are being approved.

After: *The same house after the non-historic addition was removed and the building was restored using historic photos.*

Before: *Additions on the front of this structure, and an application of stucco masked the architectural significance of the building.*

After: *The same building after restoration.*

New Additions

10.3 Design a new addition such that one's ability to interpret the historic character of the primary building is maintained.

- A new addition must be compatible with the historic character of the primary building.
- An addition must be subordinate, deferential, modest, and secondary in comparison to the architectural character of the primary building.
- An addition that imitates the primary building's historic style is not allowed. For example, a new faux Victorian detailed addition is inappropriate on an Aspen Victorian home.
- An addition that covers historically significant features is inappropriate.
- Proposals on corner lots require particular attention to creating compatibility.

The rear addition varies from the form of the resource, but addresses the materiality and fenestration.

10.4 The historic resource is to be the focus of the property, the entry point, and the predominant structure as viewed from the street.

- The historic resource must be visually dominant on the site and must be distinguishable against the addition.
- The total above grade floor area of an addition may be no more than 100% of the above grade floor area of the original historic resource. All other above grade development must be completely detached. HPC may consider exceptions to this policy if two or more of the following are met:
    - The proposed addition is all one story.
    - The footprint of the new addition is closely related to the footprint of the historic resource and the proposed design is particularly sensitive to the scale and proportions of the historic resource.
    - The project involves the demolition and replacement of an older addition that is considered to have been particularly detrimental to the historic resource.
    - The interior of the resource is fully utilized, containing the same number of usable floors as existed historically.
    - The project is on a large lot, allowing the addition to have a significant setback from the street.
    - There are no variance requests in the application other than those related to historic conditions that aren't being changed.

A side and rear addition that uses materials to differentiate between new and old construction.

An addition that does not provide a transition between old and new, and imitates the original building is no longer allowed.

- The project is proposed as part of a voluntary AspenModern designation, or
- The property is affected by non-preservation related site specific constraints such as trees that must be preserved, Environmentally Sensitive Areas review, etc.

10.5 On a corner lot, no portion of an addition to a one story historic resource may be more than one story tall, directly behind that resource, unless completely detached above grade by a distance of at least 10 feet

HPC may consider exceptions to this policy if two or more of the following are met:

- The connector element that links the new and old construction is a breezeway or transparent corridor, well recessed from the streetfacing side(s) of the historic resource and the area of two story construction that appears directly behind the one story historic resource is minimal
- The footprint of the new addition is closely related to the footprint of the historic resource and the proposed design is particularly sensitive to the scale and proportions of the historic resource
- The project involves the demolition and replacement of an older addition that is considered to have been particularly detrimental to the historic resource
- The interior of the resource is fully utilized, containing the same number of usable floors as existed historically
- There are no variance requests in the application other than those related to historic conditions that aren't being changed
- The project is proposed as part of a voluntary AspenModern designation, or
- The property is affected by non-preservation related site specific constraints such as trees that must be preserved, Environmentally Sensitive Areas review, etc.

This addition to this Victorian is clad entirely in brick to distinguish itself from the original clapboard sided Victorian.

This addition is taller than the resource, but setback on the lot and scaled in a sympathetic manner.

10.6 Design a new addition to be recognized as a product of its own time.

- An addition shall be distinguishable from the historic building and still be visually compatible with historic features.
- A change in setbacks of the addition from the historic building, a subtle change in material, or a modern interpretation of a historic style are all techniques that may be considered to help define a change from historic construction to new

construction.

- Do not reference historic styles that have no basis in Aspen.
- Consider these three aspects of an addition; **form, materials, and fenestration**. An addition must relate strongly to the historic resource in at least two of these elements. Departing from the historic resource in one of these categories allows for creativity and a contemporary design response.
- Note that on a corner lot, departing from the form of the historic resource may not be allowed.
- There is a spectrum of appropriate solutions to distinguishing new from old portions of a development. Some resources of particularly high significance or integrity may not be the right instance for a contrasting addition.

The side addition and connecting element on a lot with no alley use simple forms and contemproary materials. A low profile flat roof rear addition hides the new construction behind the landmark.

10.7 When planning an addition to a building in a historic district, preserve historic alignments on the street.

- Some roof lines and porch eaves on historic buildings may align at approximately the same height. An addition can not be placed in a location where these relationships would be altered or obscured.

An addition that uses traditional forms with contemproary architectural details and materials.

10.8 Design an addition to be compatible in size and scale with the main building.

- An addition that is lower than, or similar to the height of the primary building, is preferred.

10.9 If the addition is taller than a historic building, set it back from significant façades and use a "connector" to link it to the historic building.

- Only a one-story connector is allowed.
- Usable space, including decks, is not allowed on top of connectors unless the connector has limited visibility and the deck is shielded with a solid parapet wall.
- In all cases, the connector must attach to the historic resource underneath the eave.
- The connector shall be a minimum of 10 feet long between the addition and the primary building.
- Minimize the width of the connector. Ideally, it is no more than a passage between the historic resource and addition. The connector must reveal the original building corners. The connector may not be as wide as the historic resource.

- Any street-facing doors installed in the connector must be minimized in height and width and accessed by a secondary pathway. See guideline 4.1 for further information.

10.10 Place an addition at the rear of a primary building or set it back substantially from the front to minimize the visual impact on the historic structure and to allow the original proportions and character to remain prominent.

- Locating an addition at the front of a primary building is inappropriate.
- Additions to the side of a primary building are handled on a case-by-case basis and are approved based on site specific constraints that restrict rear additions.
- Additional floor area may also be located under the building in a basement which will not alter the exterior mass of a building.

This lot could not accomodate a rear addition. This side addition is successful because of simplicity, scale & separation.

10.11 Roof forms shall be compatible with the historic building.

- A simple roof form that does not compete with the historic building is appropriate.
- On Aspen Victorian properties, a flat roof may only be used on an addition to a gable roofed structure if the addition is entirely one story in height, or if the flat roofed areas are limited, but the addition is primarily a pitched roof.

10.12 Design an addition to a historic structure that does not destroy or obscure historically important architectural features.

- Loss or alteration of architectural details, cornices, and eavelines must be avoided.

Rooftop Additions on Flat Roofed Buildings

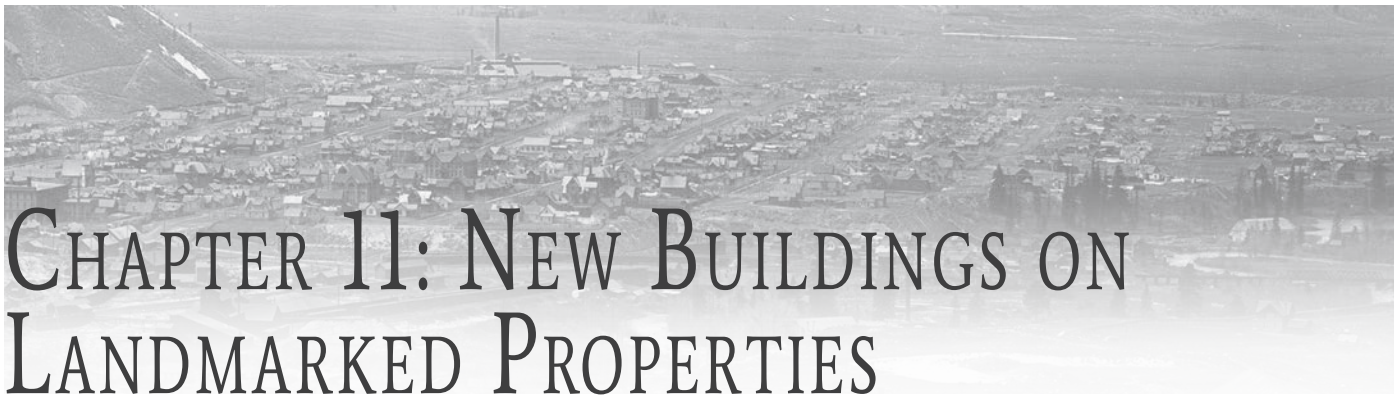
10.13 When constructing a rooftop addition, keep the mass and scale subordinate to that of the historic building.

10.14 Set a rooftop addition back from the street facing façades to preserve the original profile of the historic resource.

- Set the addition back from street facing façades a distance approximately equal to its height.

10.15 The roof form of a rooftop addition must be in character with the historic building.

This rooftop addition is subordinate to the architecture of the original historic resource.



Chapter 11: New Buildings on Landmarked Properties

The City provides several incentives for residential property owners to divide the square footage that could be built on a landmark parcel into two or more separate structures, to reduce the size of an addition made to a historic house and to reinforce the original character of many of Aspen's neighborhoods, which had small buildings on 3,000 square foot lots. To determine if a property is eligible for a historic lot split to subdivide ownership of such structures, refer to the Aspen Municipal Code.

Designing a new building to fit within the historic character of a landmarked property requires careful thought. Preserving a historic property does not mean it must be "frozen" in time, but it does mean that a new building should be designed in a manner that reinforces the basic visual characteristics of the site. The new building should not look old: imitating historic styles is inappropriate. It is appropriate to convey the evolution of the property and neighborhood, discerning the apparent age of each building by its style, materials, and method of construction.

A new design must relate to the fundamental characteristics of the historic resource (site, location, mass, form, materials, details) and be "of it's own time." For instance, a traditional form may have contemporary materials and windows to balance new and old construction. On the other hand, a contemporary form may have traditional materials that relate to the resource to maintain a strong dialogue between new and old construction. Simplicity and modesty in design are encouraged.

Building Orientation

Aspen Victorian buildings are usually oriented with the primary entrance facing the street. This helps establish a pedestrian-friendly quality. AspenModern buildings have a range of orientations depending on the design philosophy of the architect. For example, a Chalet style building is often sited at an angle to face mountain views.

Policy: *New detached buildings may be constructed on a parcel that includes a landmarked structure. It is important that the new building be compatible and not dominate the historic structure.*

Note: *The Residential Design Standards described in the Aspen Municipal Code apply in addition to these guidelines.*

Building Alignment

A front yard serves as a transitional space between the public sidewalk and the private building entry. In many blocks, front yards are similar in depth, resulting in a relatively uniform alignment of building fronts which contributes to the sense of visual continuity. Maintaining the established range of setbacks is therefore preferred.

Mass and Scale

A new building must be compatible in mass and scale with its historic neighbor and not overwhelm it. At the same time, minimizing any addition to the historic resource and shifting square footage to the new structure is generally desired.

Building Form

Most historic buildings in Aspen are composed of simple forms - a simple rectangular solid is typical. In some cases, a building consists of a combination of simple forms. A new building should respect these traditions.

Building Placement

11.1 Orient the new building to the street.

- Aspen Victorian buildings should be arranged parallel to the lot lines, maintaining the traditional grid pattern.
- AspenModern alignments shall be handled case by case.
- Generally, do not set the new structure forward of the historic resource. Alignment of their front setbacks is preferred. An exception may be made on a corner lot or where a recessed siting for the new structure is a better preservation outcome.

Mass and Scale

11.2 In a residential context, clearly define the primary entrance to a new building by using a front porch.

- The front porch shall be functional, and used as the means of access to the front door.
- A new porch must be similar in size and shape to those seen traditionally.

This new home is strongly related to the scale and forms of the adjacent Victorian.

11.3 Construct a new building to appear similar in scale and proportion with the historic buildings on a parcel.

- Subdivide larger masses into smaller "modules" that are similar in size to the historic buildings on the original site.
- Reflect the heights and proportions that characterize the historic resource.

11.4 Design a front elevation to be similar in scale to the historic building.

- The primary plane of the front shall not appear taller than the historic structure.

11.5 The intent of the historic landmark lot split is to remove most of the development potential from the historic resource and place it in the new structure(s).

- This should be kept in mind when determining how floor area will be allocated between structures proposed as part of a lot split.

This new structure uses Victorian inspired forms and materials, but a contemporary approach to fenestration.

11.6 Design a new structure to be recognized as a product of its time.

- Consider these three aspects of a new building; ***form, materials, and fenestration.*** A project must relate strongly to the historic resource in

at least two of these elements. Departing from the historic resource in one of these categories allows for creativity and a contemporary design response.

- **When choosing to relate to building form,** use forms that are similar to the historic resource.
- **When choosing to relate to materials,** use materials that appear similar in scale and finish to those used historically on the site and use building materials that contribute to a traditional sense of human scale.
- **When choosing to relate to fenestration,** use windows and doors that are similar in size and shape to those of the historic resource.

11.7 The imitation of older historic styles is discouraged.

- This blurs the distinction between old and new buildings.
- Overall, details shall be modest in character.

This new home reinterprets the roof form and balcony found on the Chalet home next door.

The adjacent Chalet.

Design Guidelines: General

Chapter 12: Accessibility, Architectural Lighting, Mechanical Equipment, Service Areas, & Signage

Accessibility

In 1990, the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandated that all places of public accommodation be made accessible to everyone. This includes historic structures that are used for commercial and multifamily purposes. While all buildings must comply, alternative measures may be considered to ensure the integrity of a historic resource.

Lighting

The character and intensity of outdoor lighting is a concern in the community. Exterior lighting should be shielded in keeping with "Dark Skies" inspired policies. The City of Aspen has lighting standards which must be met in addition to HPC guidelines.

Mechanical Equipment & Service Areas

New technologies in heating, ventilating and telecommunications have introduced mechanical equipment into historic areas where they were not seen traditionally. The visual impacts of such systems should be minimized such that one's ability to perceive the historic character of the context is maintained. Locating equipment such that it is screened from public view is the best approach.

Awnings

Large fabric awnings were common on commercial buildings in the 19th century, helping to cool the interior and providing shelter for storefronts. They are not typical of AspenModern buildings, where a brise soleil or similar cantilevered element served the purpose of an awning.

Signs

Signs should not detract from character defining elements of a historic structure. Where possible, free standing signs, rather than signs mounted on buildings are preferred. Sign lighting should be minimized or concealed. The City of Aspen has a sign code that must be met in addition to HPC guidelines.

Accessibility

12.1 Address accessibility compliance requirements while preserving character defining features of historic buildings and districts.

- All new construction must comply completely with the International Building Code (IBC) for accessibility. Special provisions for historic buildings exist in the law that allow some flexibility when designing solutions which meet accessibility standards.

A subtle ramp eliminates the need for a step onto this historic porch and therefore meets accessibility requirements.

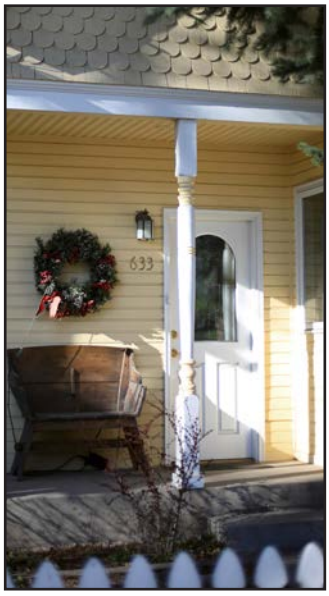
Lighting

12.2 Original light fixtures must be maintained. When there is evidence as to the appearance of original fixtures that are no longer present, a replication is appropriate.

A reconstruction of the original light fixture that once existed on an AspenModern building.

12.3 Exterior light fixtures should be simple in character.

- The design of a new fixture should be appropriate in form, finish, and scale with the structure.
- New fixtures should not reflect a different period of history than that of the affected building, or be associated with a different architectural style.
- Lighting should be placed in a manner that is consistent with the period of the building, and should not provide a level of illumination that is out of character.
- One light adjacent to each entry is appropriate on an Aspen Victorian residential structure. A recessed fixture, surface mounted light, pendant or sconce will be considered if suited to the building type or style.
- On commercial structures and AspenModern properties, recessed lights and concealed lights are often most appropriate.



A simple sconce is appropriate for the front door of this Victorian.

Concealed lighting is appropriate for this AspenModern landmark.

Mechanical Equipment & Service Areas

12.4 Minimize the visual impacts of utilitarian areas, such as mechanical equipment and trash storage.

- Place mechanical equipment on the ground where it can be screened.
- Mechanical equipment may only be mounted on a building on an alley façade.
- Rooftop mechanical equipment or vents must be grouped together to minimize their visual impact. Where rooftop units are visible, it may be appropriate to provide screening with materials that are compatible with those of the building itself. Use the smallest, low profile units available for the purpose.
- Window air conditioning units are not allowed.
- Minimize the visual impacts of utility connections and service boxes. Group them in a discrete location. Use pedestals when possible, rather than mounting on a historic building.
- Paint mechanical equipment in a neutral color to minimize their appearance by blending with their backgrounds
- In general, mechanical equipment should be

Wrightian influenced flush mounted fixtures suit the Hearthstone Lodge.

vented through the roof, rather than a wall, in a manner that has the least visual impact possible.

- Avoid surface mounted conduit on historic structures.

Awnings

12.5 Awnings must be functional.

- An awning must project at least 3 feet, and not more than 5 feet from the building façade.
- An awning may only be installed at a door or window and must fit within the limits of the door or window opening.
- Awnings are inappropriate on AspenModern properties unless historic evidence shows otherwise.

Historic awnings on Cooper Avenue.

Signs

12.6 Signs should not obscure or damage historic building fabric.

- Where possible, install a free standing sign that is appropriate in height and width. Consolidate signage for multiple businesses.
- Mount signs so that the attachment point can be easily repaired when the sign is replaced. Do not mount signage directly into historic masonry.
- Blade signs or hanging signs are generally preferred to wall mounted signs because the number of attachment points may be less.
- Signs should be constructed of wood or metal.
- Pictographic signs are encouraged because they add visual interest to the street.

Awnings at the Wheeler Opera House

12.7 Sign lighting must be subtle and concealed.

- Pin mounted letters with halo lighting will not be approved on Aspen Victorian buildings.
- The size of a fixture used to light a sign must be minimized. The light must be directed towards the sign. If possible, integrate the lights into the sign bracket.

Historic blade signs.

12.8 Locate signs to be subordinate to the building design.

- Signs should be located on the first floor of buildings, primarily.
- Signs should not obscure historic building details.

12.9 Preserve historic signs.

Appendix

The Secretary of the Interiors' Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings.

The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings* are general rehabilitation guidelines established by the National Park Service. *Rehabilitation* is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. These standards are policies that serve as a basis for the design principles presented in this document. The Secretary's Standards state that:

1. A property will 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 will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

3. Each property will 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, will not be undertaken.

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

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

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

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

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

THE CITY OF ASPEN