

I. GENERAL APPLICABILITY

The design standards and their enforcement apply to all contributing buildings and new construction, including additions to existing contributing buildings, in the district. The design standards apply to only the exterior and site of a contributing structure, and for new structures. (Chapter 25-2, Subsection B Historic Area District Ordinance and Preservation Plan).

All construction activity within the District on contributing buildings or for new construction, including but not limited to those projects which require a Certificate of Appropriateness will follow the Design Standards defined in this document. The City Historic Preservation Office and the City Historic Landmark Commission will evaluate all projects on contributing buildings and (for) any new construction in terms of compliance with these Design Standards. These Standards may also be used as advisory guidelines in evaluating projects on non-contributing buildings, in an effort to encourage projects which restore a non-contributing building to contributing status within the District and to encourage building projects that are compatible with the historic character of the District, even if the building itself is non-contributing. The Standards are based upon the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. For properties designated as individual historic landmarks (H), the Secretary of the Interior's Standards shall govern to the extent of conflict with these Design Standards.

A. THE SECRETARY OF INTERIOR'S STANDARDS

1. Make every reasonable effort to use a property in a way that requires minimal alterations to the building, structure, or site and its environment.
2. Do not destroy the distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure or site and its environment. Avoid the removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features.
3. Recognize the building as a product of its time. Do not make alterations that have no historical basis or which seek to create an earlier appearance.
4. Respect changes that have taken place in the course of time as evidence of the history and development of the building.
5. Treat with sensitivity distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize a building.
6. Repair rather than replace deteriorated architectural features whenever possible. If replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features substantiated by historic, physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjecture.
7. Undertake the surface cleaning of a building with the gentlest means possible. Do not sandblast or use other cleaning methods that damage the materials of the building.
8. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties is acceptable when the alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural, or cultural material and are compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property or neighborhood.
9. New additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if the addition or alteration were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

B. REFERENCE TO CITY ORDINANCES

The following Standards identify requirements for construction within the District that are in addition to and may modify all existing city ordinances, as provided by the City Land Development Code.

“McMansion” Ordinance (25-2, Subchapter F – Height, Setback, etc.) a. All single family properties contained in the LHD are subject to the LHD Design Standards in addition to all the regulations contained within the City of Austin’s “McMansion” Ordinance. When these conflict, the more restrictive shall apply.

Notwithstanding the provisions of § 25-2-1052 (A)(2), Article 10 Compatibility Standards, shall apply to the Old Judges Hill Historic District.

C. EXCLUSIONS

These Design Standards do not apply to:

1. Construction that is not visible from public streets (alleys are not considered “public streets” for the purposes of this document);
2. Exterior paint color; or
3. The interior of a building.

II. DESIGN STANDARDS FOR THE OLD JUDGES HILL LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**A. GENERAL DISTRICT STANDARDS**

The following Standards reflect over-arching principles of design and architectural detail, and apply to **all** properties within the district. The Standards are organized by:

- a. Provisions for which compliance is required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Landmark Commission, and
- b. Recommendations for greater compatibility with the character of the District.

Recommendations/Advisory Standards are not mandatory, but will be considered in the Certificate of Appropriateness process particularly when tax benefits are associated with the proposed work.

1. Requirements

- (a) Repair, rather than replace, original materials. Replace only materials that are deteriorated beyond repair. Replacement materials shall be “in-kind” whenever feasible, or shall match the original materials in terms of profile, dimensions, and detail. “In-kind” replacement is defined as replacing a current element (whether a single material or a whole feature) with a new element whose material has the same profile (thickness), dimension (width and height), and texture (grain, smoothness) as the material of the current or historic element. This new material may or may not be the same material as the current or historic material, but should match. Some replacement materials should be considered very carefully, as even though they replicate the existing material, they could damage surrounding materials because of different vapor transmission rates or expansion/contraction properties.

Replace only those materials which have deteriorated beyond repair, and seek to repair salvageable materials. Avoid unnecessary removal of historic fabric.

Do not remove any element of an original front porch, except non-character-defining porch floors which may be replaced with a concrete slab on grade. Do not add porch elements (gingerbread, brackets, etc.) that were not historically present. Use available photographic or physical evidence to replace ornamental metal porch posts and railings with historically-accurate columns, posts, or railings.

Maintain original dormers. New dormers must match existing dormers in design and scale, or match dormers on similar houses in the District. New dormers must be located on the side or rear facing slopes of the building's roof.

Do not enlarge, move, or enclose original window or door openings visible from the street. Do not add new window or door openings on the primary façade of the house. Do not replace front-facing doors with windows. Replacement doors should match the historic door, if present; or select a style of door that is historically appropriate for the style of the house. Steel and hollow-wood doors are not appropriate for the main entries of contributing houses.

Maintain original chimneys. New chimneys must match the existing chimney in design, materials and scale, or match chimneys on similar houses in the District.

- (b) Do not make changes to the public view of an existing contributing or non-contributing building that have no historic basis and/or that seek to create the appearance of an architectural style that is not original to the existing building. In other words, do not add architectural features to a building that it never had.
- (c) Use photographic and/or physical evidence when reconstructing missing original historic details.
- (d) The maximum allowable height for all development, additions and new construction is thirty-two (32) feet.

2. Recommendations/Advisory Standards

- (a) Locate new buildings and site features, walls, fences, pools, ponds, landscaping, garages and garden sheds in a manner that complements the historic character of the district.
- (b) For buildings, which are non-contributing due to alterations, seek to restore the original appearance of the building where feasible and appropriate. A tax abatement may be available for projects meeting certain other criteria. Check with the Historic Preservation Office or on this website, www.ci.austin.tx.us/historic, for applicability.

B. SITE IMPROVEMENTS

1. Required Standards

- (a) Fences
 - (1) Repair, rather than replace, existing historic fences, walls, retaining walls, and steps as character defining features of the district.
 - (2) Avoid front yard fences. New front yard fences must be open, meaning a structure of rails, planks or painted pickets with more than 50% of their surface area open for free passage of light and air, which avoid obscuring the front elevation of the primary structure on the property of not more than four (4) feet in height. Acceptable materials include iron and painted wood pickets.
 - (3) Chain link, wire mesh fences and concrete block walls shall not be constructed in the front yard, or less than 15 feet from the front wall of the building (excluding the porch) or 1/3 of the depth of the building from the front wall of the building, whichever is greater.
 - (4) Privacy fences in the back or side yards of houses in the District are acceptable and must comply with City fence height codes.
- (b) Masonry retaining walls (exposed on one side, earth-retaining on the other)

are permitted as per city code, at not greater than two (2) feet in height. Recommended materials are rubble stone from the site, and brick.

- (c) Masonry site walls (exposed on both sides of the wall) in the front yard may not exceed two (2) feet in height unless pre-existing. Recommended materials are limestone, cement (not cement bricks) rubble stone from the site, and brick.
- (d) Preserve existing mature trees according to the Heritage Tree Ordinance.
- (e) Driveways
 - (1) Repair, rather than replace existing concrete ribbon or lattice driveways.
 - (2) Do not replace concrete drives with asphalt.
 - (3) New driveway entrances shall be consistent with the pattern on contributing buildings on the same primary street.
- (f) Mechanical Equipment
 - (1) Locate all new mechanical or energy conservation equipment in a manner that does not obscure or damage historical architectural features of contributing buildings, and to the rear or side of the building.
 - (2) Rainwater collection systems that are visible from the public street must use traditional materials such as metal and wood; use of PVC containers or piping is not permitted within the public view.
 - (3) Design photovoltaic and solar thermal installations on contributing buildings must be in scale with the existing structure's roofline, to be in scale with the existing structure's roofline, installed on the same plane as the roof, and compatible with the color of the surrounding historic roof materials and must not damage or obscure historical architectural features or materials. Locate the photovoltaic and solar thermal installations on a back or side slope of the roof whenever possible, or as free-standing installations in a back or side yard and must not damage historical architectural features or materials. Locate the photovoltaic and solar thermal installations on a back or side slope of the roof whenever possible, or as free-standing installations in a back or side yard.
 - (4) Locate wind power systems to the rear of the site or to non-historic rear building additions. The color of the turbine and tower must be muted and free from graphics.

2. Recommendations/Advisory standards

- (a) To conserve energy, first implement weatherization insulation and energy efficient strategies in the structure.
- (b) Locate photovoltaic, solar thermal, wind power, and satellite dishes on ancillary/secondary structures or non-historic additions to the maximum extent feasible.

C. REHABILITATION OR ALTERATION OF CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS**1. Required Standards.**

- (a) Maintain the historic style and retain character-defining features. Character-defining features include exterior wall materials, windows and window screens, doors and entryway details, roof form, porches, chimneys, railings, and trim.
- (b) Do not install new materials that obscure or endanger original materials, including but not limited to the painting of original masonry or installation of vinyl, synthetic, or aluminum siding over original siding. Historic brick and mortar walls must be able to “breathe”. Painting a brick wall prevents evaporation, which can cause water/ moisture damage.
- (c) Repair existing historic windows unless determined infeasible due to excessive deterioration that is adequately documented in the application for a certificate of appropriateness. Utilize recommended repair practices listed below where feasible.
- (d) Replacement windows, where permitted, must match the historic in terms of size, profile, muntin shape, pane configuration, and details. Do not use vinyl-clad windows. Do not use windows with false muntins attached to or inserted between insulated glass panels.
- (e) Roofs.
 - (1) When replacing a roof, maintain the original roof form and other character defining features of the roof including overhangs, barge boards, rafter tails, and cresting, where existing.
 - (2) Unacceptable roof materials are those that were not historically used elsewhere in the district: slate, metal, cement, plastic. Prevailing materials for roofs within the district include composition shingle, which replaced original wood shingles and which replaced original ceramic tile roofs. Prevailing materials also include flat gravel roofs on several houses built in the 1950’s.
- (3) Maintain existing chimneys
- (f) When repointing existing masonry, new mortar shall match the original mortar in color, composition, texture, and tooling.
- (g) Do not enclose or screen original front porches.

2. Recommendations/Advisory standards

- (a) When replacement materials are required, consider sustainably-harvested or reclaimed materials where appropriate.
- (b) Repair original wood wherever possible using epoxy repair techniques.
- (c) Windows. To maximize energy efficiency of existing windows, consider
 - (1) installation of clear heat-rejecting window film
 - (2) replacement of deteriorated weather-stripping and glazing compound
 - (3) restoration of historic functioning shutters. New shutters may be installed if there is evidence to show that they once existed.
 - (4) installation of sun control fabric awnings.
 - (5) solar screens that are compatible with the historic screens in the district. Solar screens, if used, must be wood framed.
 - (6) installation of interior insulating clear plexi-glass inserts that fit on the interior of the window, curtains and blinds.
- (d) Roofs
 - (1) Acceptable roof materials include but may not be limited to composition shingle, fiberglass shingles, tile, and gravel as determined appropriate.
 - (2) When appropriate, consider Energy Star qualified roof products, which lower roof

surface temperature and can reduce peak cooling demand by 10-15 percent.

- (3) Consider adding a radiant barrier in the attic or underneath the roof deck to reduce summer heat gain and reduce air-conditioning loads.

D. ADDITIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS

This section applies to all additions with specific standards that apply to contributing and non-contributing buildings as noted.

1. Required Standards

- (a) Locate and design new additions in a manner that is compatible with the character and scale of the existing contributing building. New additions should not be visible from the primary street view of the house to the greatest extent possible. **Any one addition should not exceed the size of the existing house;** large additions may be constructed as a separate building and connected to the house with a linking elements such as a breezeway or hallway. Do not add new porches, pergolas or deck to the main façade where one never existed. Additions shall not compromise the historic character of the house, or destroy any unique character defining features. Minimize the removal of historic fabric for the construction of an addition.
- (b) For contributing buildings, two-story additions to one-story buildings must be set back a minimum of 1/3 the depth of the building measured from the front wall of the house (excluding the porch), or 15 feet measured from the front wall of the house (excluding the porch), whichever number is greater.
- (c) Design an addition using appropriate scale and detailing to avoid creating a top-heavy appearance such as matching or being compatible with the scale and fenestration patterns on the existing house.
- (d) Materials of the addition (walls, roofing materials, and windows) shall be compatible with the original building, and may include use of like existing materials such as fiber-cement siding, as appropriate.
- (e) New roof forms, including gables, must be compatible with the pitch of the roof on the existing house to the greatest extent possible.
- (f) Windows shall be compatible in form and materials with the existing building, and can be used to define contemporary design when determined appropriate for the particular application.
- (g) Chimneys shall be compatible in form and materials with the existing building on new additions.

2. Recommendations/Advisory Standards

- (a) Consider creation of usable space by finishing out an existing attic, including the addition of dormers, the shape of the dormers (such as shed-roofed, gabled, etc) on a side roof that is set back from the front of the building at least 15' or 1/3 the building depth.
- (b) Design a one-story addition to a one-story building if allowed under impervious cover regulations. Use existing attic space for additional living area if possible.
- (c) When constructing a two-story rear addition, consider the use of vegetative screening at the back and side property lines to respect the privacy of your property and that of your neighbors.

E. NEW CONSTRUCTION

The historic context of the district defines the massing, scale, materials, and site design of new construction. New architecture should reflect the era of its construction. New construction within the district should blend in rather than stand out from the contributing houses. This creates a timeline of architectural style that represents the evolution of architecture and construction methods.

1. Required Standards

- (a) Site new construction to be compatible with contributing buildings within the district in terms of front and side setback, street-front orientation, and distance from adjacent buildings. Locate new garage apartments or detached garages to have garage openings on the alley or side street whenever possible. New garage apartments should be compatible with the scale, fenestration patterns, and materials of the principal house on the site. Front porches or other features on the front of a new building and front doors facing the street shall be compatible with contributing buildings within the district.
 - (1) Any new construction shall not exceed 32' in height.
 - (2) Construction on Large Lots (1/2 Acre)

New construction on a lot larger than ½ acre must respect and relate to the surrounding context of contributing buildings and employ design techniques that reduce its visual presence with respect to that context. In addition to complying with the other standards for new construction, the following techniques may be applied where necessary and appropriate.
 - (3) Front yard setbacks shall match existing historic setbacks within the district.
- (b) Form and Architectural Style
 - (1) Design new buildings to be compatible with surrounding contributing buildings of similar use in terms of form, scale, massing, proportion, and roof form, and fenestration patterns.
 - (2) Design new buildings so that they are compatible with but discernible from historic buildings in the district.
 - (3) New construction shall have window-to-wall area ratios, floor-to-floor heights, fenestration patterns, and bay divisions compatible with those seen on contributing buildings throughout the district.
- (c) Materials
 - (1) Select materials for new construction to be compatible with those existing in the district. Examples include but are not limited to roofing materials, wood siding, limestone, brick, fiber-cement siding, and true stucco.
 - (2) Do not use false muntins attached to or inserted between insulated glass panels. Do not use vinyl windows.
 - (3) Materials proposed for use but not referenced in this section will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine appropriateness in the context of existing adjacent buildings. Applicant must provide justification for suitability of proposed material for use.
- (d) For new single-family houses, a garage or carport shall be set back at least 15 feet from the front wall of the building (excluding the porch) or 1/3 of the depth of the building from the front wall of the building, whichever is greater.
- (e) For multi-family and commercial buildings, new and replacement parking shall meet the following requirements.
 - (1) All parking lots shall be located to the side or rear of the building and out of view of the principal street and must be screened with landscaping from adjacent properties zoned or used SF-5 or more restrictive by a 12 foot landscaped area.

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- (2) Garages shall be located at the side, rear or underneath structures, even if they face the principal street.

A garage door or doors shall not face the principal street. A garage shall not be located less than 15 feet from the front wall of the building (excluding the porch) or 1/3 of the depth of the building from the front wall of the building, whichever is greater.

2. Recommendations/Advisory Standards:

- (a) Consider the use of simple hipped or gabled roof forms at the primary façade where appropriate to be compatible with existing adjacent buildings.
- (c) Design the spacing, placement, scale, orientation, proportion, and size of window and door openings in proposed new construction to be compatible with contributing buildings in the District.
- (d) Protect large trees and other significant site features from damage during construction and from delayed damage due to construction activities such as root loss or compaction of the soil by equipment.
- (e) Consider Energy Star qualified roof products, which lower roof surface temperature and can reduce peak cooling demand by 10-15 percent. Consider adding a radiant barrier in the attic or underneath the roof deck to reduce summer heat gain and reduce air-conditioning loads.
- (f) Passive energy savings measures such as usable shutters and awnings are highly encourage