

8. Glossary

City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines

Office of Historic Preservation



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Using the Historic Design Guidelines

The City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines (“Historic Design Guidelines”) establish baseline guidelines for historic preservation and design. The Historic Design Guidelines apply to all **exterior** modifications for properties that are individually designated landmarks or within a locally designated historic district. All applicants are encouraged to review the Historic Design Guidelines early in their project to facilitate an efficient review process. In addition to compliance with the Unified Development Code (“UDC”), applicants must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (“COA”) from the Office of Historic Preservation (“OHP”) for all proposed exterior modifications as described in the Using the Historic Design Guidelines section of the Historic Design Guidelines. The Historic Design Guidelines are comprised of eight sections as follows:

- 1. Using the Historic Design Guidelines
- 2. Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations
- 3. Guidelines for Additions
- 4. Guidelines for New Construction
- 5. Guidelines for Site Elements
- 6. Guidelines for Signage
- 7. A Guide to San Antonio’s Historic Resources
- **8. Glossary**

The Historic Design Guidelines as a whole are intended to work congruently with other sections, divisions and articles of the Unified Development Code but have been separated into individual sections for ease of use. In the event of a conflict between other sections or articles of the Unified Development Code and these Historic District Guidelines, the Historic District Guidelines shall control except in the case of signage where the more strict regulation or guideline shall control. Additionally, if an exception from the application of Chapter 28 of the city code of San Antonio has been approved for signage in historic districts, such exception shall remain unless removed by official action of the city council. The meaning of any and all words, terms or phrases in the Historic District Guidelines shall be construed in accordance with the definitions provided in Appendix A of the Unified Development Code. In the case of a conflict regarding a definition as provided in these guidelines and Appendix A of the Unified Development Code, the Historic District Guidelines definition shall control. All images courtesy of the City of San Antonio, Clarion Associates, and Hardy, Heck, Moore, Inc. unless otherwise noted.

For questions and guidance please contact the Office of Historic Preservation: Email: ohp@sanantonio.gov | Phone: 210.215.9274

Glossary

Terms Defined

The meaning of any and all words, terms or phrases in this document shall be construed in accordance with the definitions provided in Appendix A of the Unified Development Code, which is incorporated into this document by reference as if set forth in its entirety herein. In the case of a conflict regarding a definition, the Historic Design Guidelines definition shall control.

Abut

To adjoin at an end; to be contiguous.

ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Adjacent

To physically touch or border upon, or to share a common property line or border. Includes properties or uses that are separated by a drive, street, or other public-dedicated right-of-way.

Arch

A curved and sometimes pointed structural member used to span an opening.

Architectural Style

Useful tools for analyzing general types of historic resources that tend to be related to the building's era of construction and popular regional trends. See the Architectural Styles section of A Guide to San Antonio's Historic Resources.

Awning

A projecting roof-like structure sheltering a door or window, often canvas.

Balcony

A railed projecting platform found above ground level on a building.

Baluster

Any of a number of closely spaced supports for a railing.

Battered Foundation

A foundation that is inclined, so that it appears to slope inward as it rises upward.

Historic Design Guidelines

Bead Board

Wood paneling with grooves.

Block

The properties abutting both sides of a street and lying between the two nearest intersecting or intercepting streets.

A molding or projecting course running horizontally along the face of a building, such as a continuous row or layer of stones or brick in a wall.

BOA

Board of Adjustment

Bracket

A projecting support used under cornices, eaves, balconies, or windows to provide structural or visual support.

Brick

A building or paving unit made of fired clay, usually rectangular in shape.

Building Plans

See Simple Building Plan and Compound Building Plan.

Bulkhead

A structure covering a stairwell or other opening, to provide adequate headroom.

Canopy

A projection over a niche or doorway; often decorative or decorated.

Capital

The uppermost part, or head, of a column or pilaster.

Casement Window

A window sash that swings open along its entire length; usually on hinges fixed to the sides of the opening into which it is fitted.

Channel Letters

Channel letters are custom-made metal or plastic letters mounted to the face of a building for exterior signage.

Character

The attributes, qualities, and features that make up and distinguish a development project and give such project a sense of purpose, function, definition, and uniqueness.

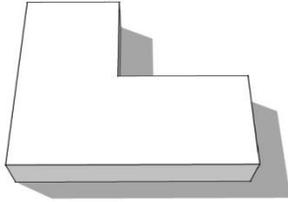
Glossary | Terms Defined

Column

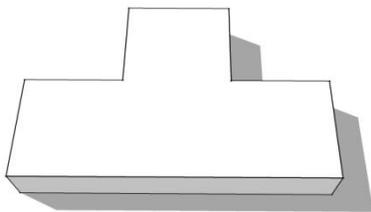
A round, vertical support; in classical architecture, the column has three parts, base, shaft, and capital.

Compound Building Plans

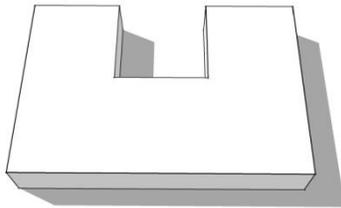
L Plan



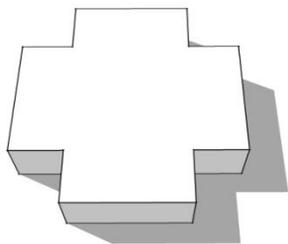
T Plan



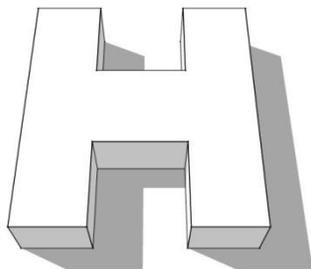
U Plan



Cross Plan



H Plan



A hollow or solid concrete masonry unit consisting of cement and suitable aggregates combined with water.

Concrete Slab

A flat, rectangular, reinforced concrete structural member; especially used for floors and roofs.

Concrete

Made by mixing cement or mortar with water and various aggregates such as sand, gravel, or pebbles.

Contributing

A building, site, structure, or object within a historic district that adds to the values or qualities of that district because it was present during the period of significance and possesses historical integrity, or it independently meets National Register of Historic Places criteria.

Coping

The protective uppermost course of a wall or parapet.

Corbelling

Pattern in a masonry wall formed by projecting or overhanging masonry units.

Cornice

A projecting, ornamental molding along the top of a building, wall, etc., finishing or crowning it.

Crenelation

A parapet with alternating solid and void spaces, originally used for defense; also known as battlement.

Dentils

A series of closely spaced, small, rectangular blocks, used especially in classical architecture.

Deteriorated Beyond Repair

More than 50 percent of the element or material is damaged.

Display Window

A window of a store facing onto the public right-of-way used to display merchandise for sale in the store.

Dormer

A vertically set window on a sloping roof; also the roofed structure housing such a window.

Concrete Block

Double-Hung Window

A window of two (or more) sash, or glazed frames, set in vertically grooved frames and capable of being raised or lowered independently of each other.

DRC

Design Review Committee; a sub-committee of the Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC).

Eaves

The lower edges of a roof that project beyond the building wall.

Exterior Insulated Finish Systems (EIFS)

A type of building exterior wall cladding system that provides exterior walls with an insulated finished surface and waterproofing in an integrated composite material system intended to simulate the texture and appearance of actual stucco.

Entablature

A horizontal, continuous lintel on a classical building supported by columns or a wall, comprised of the architrave, frieze, and cornice.

Façade

An exterior wall.

Fanlight

An arched window with muntins that radiate like a fan; typically used as a transom.

Fascia

A horizontal member or board that covers the rafter ends along the edge of the roof.

Fenestration

An opening in a surface.

Flat Roof

A roof that has only enough pitch so that water can drain.

Form

The shape and structure of a building as distinguished from its substance or material.

Gabled Roof

A roof having a single slope on each side of a central ridge; usually with a gable at one or at both ends of the roof.

Gambrel Roof

A roof having a double slope on two sides of a building; the most common example is a barn roof.

Half-Timbered

Heavy timber framing with the spaces filled in with plaster or masonry.

HDRC

Historic Design and Review Commission

Hipped Roof

A roof having adjacent flat surfaces that slope upward from all sides of the perimeter of the building.

Historic District

An area, urban or rural, defined as an historic district by city council, state, or federal authority and which may contain within definable geographic boundaries one or more buildings, objects, sites or structures designated as exceptional or significant historic landmarks or clusters, as defined herein, including their accessory buildings, fences and other appurtenances, and natural resources having historical, architectural, archaeological, and cultural significance, and which may have within its boundaries other buildings, objects, sites, or structures, that, while not of such historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural significance as to be designated landmarks, nevertheless contribute to the overall visual setting of or characteristics of the landmark or landmarks located within the district.

Hood

A protective and sometimes decorative cover over doors, windows, or chimneys.

HPO

Historic Preservation Officer

Impervious

Roads, parking areas, buildings, pools, patios, sheds, driveways, private sidewalks, and other impermeable construction covering the natural land surface; this shall include, but not [be] limited to, all streets and pavement within the subdivision. "Percent impervious cover" is calculated as the area of impervious cover within a lot, tract, or parcel or within the total site being developed, divided by the total area within the perimeter of such lot, tract, parcel or development. Vegetated water quality basins, vegetated swales, other vegetated conveyances for overland drainage, and public sidewalks shall not be calculated as impervious cover.

Glossary | Terms Defined

In-Kind Replacement

To replace a feature of a building with materials of the same characteristics, such as material, texture, color, etc.

Integrity

Condition or description of a property that is physically unaltered or one that retains enough of its historic character, appearance, or ambiance to be recognizable to the period when the property achieved significance.

Jalousie Window

A window composed of angled, overlapping slats of glass, arranged horizontally like a shutter in order to tilt open for ventilation.

Kickplate

The horizontal element or assembly at the base of a storefront parallel to a public walkway. The kickplate provides a transition between the ground and storefront glazing area.

Leaded Glass Window

A window composed of pieces of glass that are held in place with lead strips; the glass can be clear, colored, or stained.

Lintel

The piece of timber, stone, or metal that spans above an opening and supports the weight of the wall above it.

Lites

Window panes.

Mansard Roof

A roof having two slopes on all four sides; the lower slope is much steeper than the upper.

Massing

The three-dimensional bulk of a building height, width, and depth.

Mortar

A mixture of cement, lime, sand, or other aggregates with water; used in plastering and bricklaying.

Masonry

A construction method that stacks masonry units, such as stones or bricks, and binds them with mortar to form a wall.

Muntin

One of the thin strips of wood used to separate panes of glass within a window.

Non-Contributing

A building, site, structure, or object within an historic district that does not add to the values or qualities of that district because it was not present during the period of significance or because it no longer retains integrity.

OHP

Office of Historic Preservation

Orientation

Set in relation to, or adjusted to, the surroundings, situation, or environment; placed with the most important parts facing in certain directions; set or arranged in a determinate position.

Parapet

A low wall or protective railing, usually used around the edge of a roof or around a balcony.

Pedestrian-Oriented

Development that is designed with a primary emphasis on the street, sidewalk and/or connecting walkway access to the site and building, rather than on auto access and parking lots.

Pediment

A triangular section framed by a horizontal moulding on its base and two sloping mouldings on each side, usually supported by columns or pilasters.

Pier and Beam Foundation

Foundation consisting of vertical piers spaced at appropriate intervals that support horizontal beams.

Pilaster

A rectangular column or shallow pier attached to a wall.

Planting Strip

The landscaped area between the street and the sidewalk.

Porch

A covered entrance or semi-enclosed space projecting from the façade of a building; may be open sided, screened, or glass enclosed.

Porte-Cochere

A roofed structure attached to a building and extending over a driveway, allowing vehicles to pass through.

Preservation

The act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.

Primary or principal building

The building or structure on a lot used to accommodate the primary permitted use, such use possibly occurring in more than one building or structure.

Primary Façade

That portion or portions of a wall of any permanent structure that is visible from and oriented parallel to a dedicated public right-of-way. For a structure that is not oriented parallel to the right-of-way, the street wall facade shall include all of the facades visible from the right-of-way and oriented at an angle greater than zero degrees but less than 60 degrees to the right-of-way. Also referred to as Street Wall Façade.

Public Right-of-Way

An area or strip of land, either public or private, occupied or intended to be occupied by a street, walkway, railroad, utility line, drainage channel, or other similar uses.

Pyramidal Roof

A pyramid-shaped roof with four sides of equal slope and shape.

Quoins

Large or rusticated stone blocks at the corners of a masonry building.

Rafter

One of a series of structural members spanning from the ridge of the roof to the eaves, providing support for the covering of a roof.

Reconstruction

The act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.

Rehabilitation

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.

Restoration

The act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

Repointing

The act of repairing the joints of brickwork, masonry, etc., with mortar or cement.

Rusticated

Masonry left with a rough outer surface and wide joints that emphasize the edges of each block.

Sash

A window made of one or more movable panels or "sashes" that form a frame to hold panes of glass, which are often separated from other panes (or "lites") by narrow muntins.

Scale

The size and proportion of a building as distinguished from its substance or material.

Screening

Open spaces, landscaped areas, fences, walls, or any combination thereof, used to physically separate or screen one use or property from another so as to visually shield or block noise, lights, or other nuisances.

Secondary Façade

That portion or portions of a wall of any permanent structure that is not considered a primary façade.

Glossary | Terms Defined

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties are intended to promote responsible preservation practices that help protect historic and cultural resources. The Standards are neither technical nor prescriptive, but once a treatment is selected, they provide philosophical consistency to the work. The four treatment approaches are Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction.

Setback

The open space between the property line of the lot and the nearest projection of a structure.

Shed Roof

A roof containing only one sloping plane.

Shoring

A general term used in construction to describe the process of supporting a structure in order to prevent collapse so that construction can proceed.

Side Light

A vertical window flanking a door.

Side-Gabled Roof

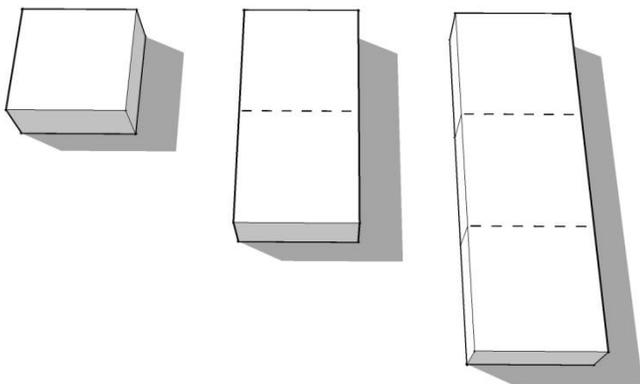
A gable whose face is on one side (or part of one side) of a house, perpendicular to the façade.

Sill

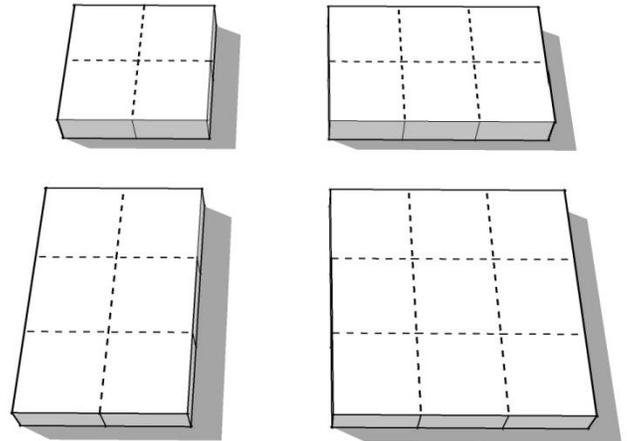
Horizontal member at the bottom of a window or door opening.

Simple Building Plans

Linear Plans: One, Two, and Three Unit Plans



Massed Plans: Two by Two, Three by Two, Two by Three, and Three by Three Unit Plans



Sign, Awning or Canopy

A sign painted on or attached to an awning or canopy. Awning signs are typically applied to the valance portion of the awning. Mounting new signs or letters on historic metal canopies is not recommended.

Sign, Building-Mounted

A sign attached to, painted on, inscribed upon or deriving its major support from a building, including a wall sign, a projecting sign, or an awning sign.

Sign, Freestanding

A sign, supported by one or more columns, uprights or braces, in or upon the ground, but not attached to any building. A sign attached to a flat surface not a part of the building, such as a fence or wall, shall be considered a freestanding sign. A monument sign, as defined below, shall also be considered a freestanding sign.

Sign, Ghost

A hand-painted advertising sign that has been preserved on an exterior building wall for an extended period of time.

Sign, Historic

A historic sign is one that dates to the building or historic district's period of significance or a sign that has gained historic significance in its own right.

Sign, Monument

A ground mounted sign mounted on a contiguous base having at least 90 percent of the sign width and its supporting structure, and not attached to any building. A monument sign listing two or more businesses located on a property or in a shopping center, and which is designed as one sign, shall be considered one monument sign.

Sign, Window

Any sign, picture, symbol, or combination thereof, designed to communicate information about an activity, business, commodity, event, sale, or service that is placed inside a window or upon the window panes or glass and is visible from the exterior of the window. A window sign does not include merchandise or models of products or services incorporated in window display.

Soffit

The underside of an overhanging element, such as the eaves of a roof.

Storm Window

A secondary window installed to protect and/or reinforce the main window.

Stucco

Exterior finish material composed of either Portland cement or lime and sand mixed with water.

Subordinate

Of less or secondary importance.

Transom

A horizontal window over a door or window.

Veneer

A thin layer of material, such as wood, brick, or stone, applied to a different material or to a type of construction not ordinarily associated with it, e.g. a facing of brick applied to a frame house.

Vernacular

A category of architecture based on localized needs and construction materials, and reflecting local traditions. Vernacular architecture tends to evolve over time to reflect the environmental, cultural, technological, and historical context in which it exists.

Window Header

A support found on the upper portion of the window casing that is generally at least twice as thick as the

framing component of the window and found around the opening. The header will span horizontally across the top of the window casing, offering added support that prevents the full weight of the wall from resting on the window casing itself.

Wing Wall

A portion of the front façade extending past the side façade, often sloping down from the eaves to the ground at an angle; a subordinate wall, one end of which is built against an abutment.

Xeric Landscaping (Xeriscape)

A type of landscaping that conserves water and protects the environment by using site appropriate plants, an efficient watering system, proper planning and design, soil analysis, practical use of turf, the use of mulches and proper maintenance. Xeric landscaping does not refer to the use of cactus and/or rock gardens in a landscape design.

