

Chapter 5: Design Standards for Additions and Alterations

This chapter presents design guidelines for additions and alterations to buildings in the Historic Business District and local landmarks.

Alterations

Alterations may be considered for historic buildings; however, these alterations should occur in a manner that will not diminish the historic integrity of the contributing properties.

5.1 Avoid alterations that would damage historic features.

- Avoid alterations that would hinder the ability to interpret the design character of the original building. For example, mounting a sign panel in a manner that causes decorative moldings to be obscured, chipped or removed would be inappropriate. Refer to Chapter 8.
- Alterations that seek to imply an earlier period than that of the building are inappropriate.

5.2 Paint colors should be based on historic research of local structures or buildings from the same time period.

- A summary of acceptable exterior color consideration is reviewed in Appendix D.

Commercial Additions

Many buildings have experienced additions over time. A historic addition typically was subordinate in scale and character to the main building. The height of the addition was usually positioned below that of the main structure and it was often located to the side or rear, such that the primary facade remained dominant. An addition was often constructed of materials that were similar to those in use historically. In some cases, owners simply added on to an existing roof, creating more usable space without increasing the footprint of the structure. This tradition of adding on to buildings is anticipated to continue. It is important, however, that new additions be designed in such a manner that they maintain the character of the primary structure.



An addition should be set back from the primary, character-defining facade, to preserve the perception of the historic scale of the building. (Boulder, CO)



In the angle view above, two newer floors are visible. Note how in this building the addition cannot be seen when looking at the building straight on in the top photo. (Denver, CO)



The addition should be distinguishable as new, albeit in a subtle way. (Boulder, CO)



Design a new addition such that the original character can be clearly seen. This addition to the front of the historic structure is inappropriate. (Washington, MO)

5.3 An addition shall be compatible in scale, materials and character with the main building.

- An addition shall relate to the building in mass, scale, form and materials. It should be designed to remain subordinate to the main structure.
- An addition to the front of a building is inappropriate. However, where a non-contributing property within the Historic Business District is set back from the front property line, the consideration for the placement of an addition should be to fill the gap between the existing building and sidewalk. This will maintain the consistent “street wall” desired within the district.

5.4 An addition shall not damage or obscure architecturally important features.

- For example, loss or alteration of a cornice line should be avoided.

5.5 An addition may be made to the roof of a commercial building if it does the following:

- An addition should be set back from the primary, character-defining facade, to preserve the perception of the historic scale of the building.
- Design should be modest in character so it will not detract from the historic facade.
- The addition should be distinguishable as new, using subtle architectural detailing to delineate the difference between old and new.

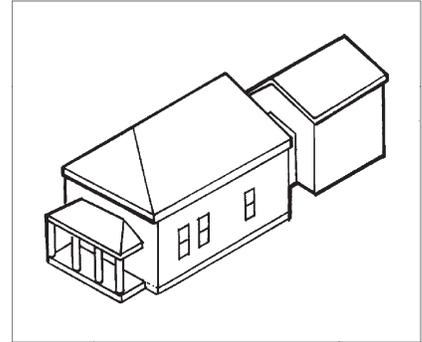
Residential Additions

An addition to a residentially designed structure can radically change its perceived scale and character if inappropriately designed. When planning an addition, consider the effect the addition will have on the building itself. When creating an addition, keep the size of the addition small, in relation to the main structure. If an addition must be larger, it should set apart from the main structure and connected with a smaller linking element.

One also should consider the effect the addition may have on the character of a street or neighborhood, 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 could be a better solution in such a case.

5.6 Design a new addition such that the original character can be clearly seen.

- A design for a new addition that would create an appearance inconsistent with the character of the building, especially a historic one, is unacceptable.
- An addition should be made distinguishable from the original building, even in subtle ways, such that the character of the original can be interpreted.
- Creating a jog in the foundation between the original and new structures may help to define an addition.
- Apply a new trim board at the connection point between the addition and the original structure to help define the addition.
- Refer to Preservation Brief #14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings, published by the National Park Service.



Place an addition at the rear of a building, set it back from the front or create a linking element to minimize the visual impacts.

5.7 An addition shall be set back from any primary, character-defining facade.

- An addition should be to the rear of the building, when feasible.
- Placement should allow the original structure and character to remain prominent.
- Locating an addition at the front of a structure is inappropriate.



An addition shall be set back from any primary character-defining facade. An addition should be to the rear of the building, when feasible. (Durango, CO)

5.8 Do not obscure, damage, destroy or remove original architectural details and materials of the primary structure.

- When preserving original details and materials, follow the guidelines presented earlier in this chapter.

5.9 An addition shall be compatible in scale, materials and character with the main building.

- An addition shall relate to the historic building in mass, scale and form and be designed to remain subordinate to the main structure.
- While a smaller addition is visually preferable, if a residential addition would be significantly larger than the original building, one option is to separate it from the primary building, when feasible, and then link it with a smaller connecting structure.
- An addition should be simple in design and consistent with the historic building to prevent it from competing with the primary facade.
- Consider adding dormers to create second story spaces before changing the scale of the building by adding a full second floor.



Adaptive reuse maintains the original development patterns. (Breckenridge, CO)

5.10 The roof form of a new addition shall be in character with that of the primary building.

- Typically, gable, hip and shed roofs are appropriate for residential additions. Flat roofs are appropriate for commercial buildings.
- Match existing roof slopes and materials.
- If the roof of the primary building is symmetrically proportioned, the roof of the addition should be similar.



When adapting a residence to a commercial use, respect the residential character of the building by preserving the overall form of the building, the front porch and front yard character. (Boulder, CO)



Several older residential structures on Hwy. 160 have been converted to commercial uses. (Pagosa Springs, CO)

Adaptive Reuse

Converting a building to a new use that is different from that which its design reflects is considered to be “adaptive use.” When residential use ceases to be viable, the first preference is to choose new uses that minimize the negative changes in building features. Often there are new uses that are inherently less disruptive to residential structures such as a bed and breakfast, professional offices, small specialty restaurants and personal service businesses.

The adaptive use of a residence for a commercial or office use is commonplace in Pagosa Springs. When such adaptations occur, the building should retain the front yard and work to link the building to the public right-of-way and sidewalk using spaces such as lawns, patios and walkways.

5.11 Seek uses that are compatible with the historic character of the building.

- The primary goal should be preserving the original residential character, appearance and scale of the structure.
- Building uses that are closely related to the original use are preferred. Avoid radical alterations to either the interior or exterior of the structure.
- Avoid altering porches and original windows and doors.

5.12 When use changes demand that structures be altered such that little or no use can be made of the original structure, consider moving the structure to a compatible location.

- This move can be made to another location on the same site or to a vacant site in another neighborhood and shall comply with relocation criteria set forth in the Land Use and Development Code.