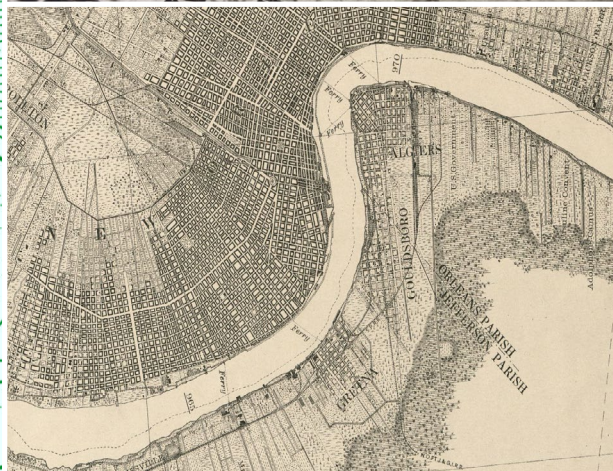
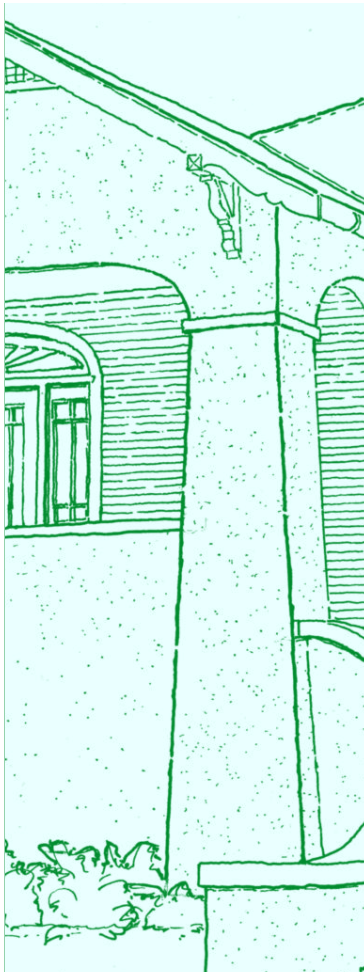




HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

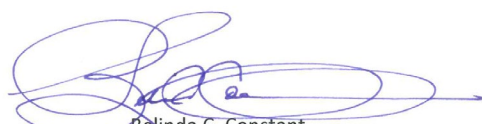
Historic District Commission
City of Gretna, Louisiana



A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

As mayor of the City of Gretna, and on behalf of all the elected officials, please allow us this opportunity to say thank you for investing your resources into the continued preservation of Gretna's historic districts. We are proud of our rich heritage and believe that this publication of the Historic District Design Guidelines will insure the beauty and integrity of our historic neighborhoods for generations to come.

We also want to extend our appreciation to the HDC (Historic District Commission), Clio Associates and all others who participated in seeing this project come to fruition. We believe that because of your efforts, the City of Gretna will enjoy a streetscape forever reminiscent of days long ago.



Belinda C. Constant
Mayor

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the following committees, organizations, and individuals who made these guidelines possible.

City of Gretna

Mayor's Office, Mayor Belinda Constant

City Council

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Milton Crosby, District 1
Joseph A. Marino III, District 2
Mark K. Miller, District 3
Jackie Berthelot, District 4

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Additional thanks to the Jefferson Parish Historical Commission, Sevilla Finley, the German-American Cultural Center, June Duplantis, and Azalea M. Roussell.

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All photos, text, design, and illustrations in these guidelines were prepared by Clio Associates LLC unless otherwise noted.

Gabrielle Begue

Principal/Architectural Historian

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CLIO
ASSOCIATES

On the cover, clockwise from left: Craftsman raised bungalow (drawing by Clio Associates LLC); William Dietrich White House, 1920 (photograph courtesy of Ruth Züfle); Front Street, c. 1900 (Gretna Diamond Jubilee Collection, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans); Gretna City Hall and the Jefferson Memorial Arch, 2013 (photograph by Clio Associates LLC); Mississippi River Commission, Mississippi River, Sheet Number 28 [New Orleans and Vicinity] (Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University)

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GUIDELINES INTRODUCTION

1



INTRODUCTION

Protected and well-maintained historic districts are valuable cultural resources, engines for economic development, and a positive influence on property values and neighborhood stability. The Historic District Commission oversees all exterior work done in Gretna's two local historic districts, Mechanikham-Gretna and McDonoghville, including but not limited to such work as major repairs and alterations, the installation of new windows and doors, the erection of fences and carports, and the placement of solar panels. These design guidelines provide information on the history of the districts, architectural types and styles found in Gretna, and recommendations for the proper maintenance and treatment of properties in the district. All of the recommendations reflect the HDC's review criteria, and it is therefore important for all residents, contractors, and architects who are planning exterior work to consult this document prior to submitting a historic district permit application.

To find out if your building is located within a local historic district, consult the map in Part 2: History of the Districts or visit the City of Gretna's website, www.gretnala.com.

>>What is a historic resource? A historic resource is a structure, site, or monument that is at least fifty years old and is determined to have historical significance, which is defined by its architectural or cultural value. For example, a building might be important because of its connection to an illustrious political figure or historic event, or it might be a town's last surviving example of a Creole cottage. Eligible historic resources may be individually designated as historic landmarks for their local, state, or national significance.

>>What is a historic district? A historic district is a designated grouping of historic resources. While not every building in a historic district is individually significant, many historic buildings in a concentrated area give a block or a neighborhood a historic character that is significant as a whole.

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- Introduction - 3
- The Purpose of Design Guidelines - 4
- Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties - 5
- Historic Designation - 6
- Historic District Commission (HDC) - 6
- HDC Review Process - 7

>>Is my building considered historic? If your building is located within the boundaries of one of Gretna's two historic districts and it is over fifty years old, it is most likely considered historic. However, *all* buildings within the historic districts—regardless of their age, style, or condition—are subject to the same HDC review process as historic buildings. This is because every property in a historic district, whether built one hundred years ago or yesterday, impacts the look and feel of its surrounding district. The HDC review process is designed to protect and enhance historic Gretna's character and integrity through the stewardship of not only the buildings themselves, but the districts' overall scale and streetscapes as well.

THE PURPOSE OF DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design guidelines are intended to manage change in a historic district. Although change is a natural part of any neighborhood, in historic districts it is important to make appropriate modifications that maintain the district's historic integrity and sense of place. Changes made to a single property affect neighboring properties, the streetscape, and the district as a whole. Therefore, all exterior work should be architecturally compatible with the building itself and with its surroundings. This includes issues such as the scale of a new addition, the type of fence erected at a property line, or the installation of new windows on a historic shotgun.

Design guidelines provide recommendations that are meant to protect and maintain a district's integrity. They encourage preservation over replacement and modifications that are sensitive to a building's history. The goal is to repair and retain—rather than replace—such defining details as historic building materials, ornamentation, openings, height, massing, and scale. Once these elements are lost, they are often difficult if not impossible to retrieve. Modern replacement materials rarely have the same level of craftsmanship and quality as their historic counterparts. That said, guidelines are also written with the knowledge that historic districts are dynamic, changing places that are always adapting to the demands and desires of modern life. This balance of meeting modern needs and protecting historic significance informs all of the guidelines' recommendations.

The recommendations in these guidelines adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (see opposite page) and are intended as a supplement to any determinations made by the HDC.



Gretna celebrates its centennial birthday.



A historic streetscape in the McDonoghville historic district



A historic streetscape in the Gretna-Mechanikham historic district

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

According to the National Park Service, “the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties are common sense historic preservation principles in non-technical language. They promote historic preservation best practices that will help to protect our nation’s irreplaceable cultural resources.” These guidelines adhere to the following list of standards:

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.

For more information, visit: <http://www.nps.gov/history/tps/standards.htm>.

HISTORIC DESIGNATION

>>What is local designation?

Historic resources and historic districts may be locally designated by a governing authority such as a city council or an authorized preservation commission. Designated properties and districts are subject to locally determined regulations and restrictions. Gretna-Mechanikham and McDonoghville are both local historic districts and all exterior work must be reviewed by the HDC.

>>What is the National Register of Historic Places?

Historic resources and historic districts may be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the federal government's list of structures, sites, monuments, areas, and districts that are worthy of preservation. National Register designation is determined by the National Park Service in partnership with a state historic preservation office (SHPO), which reviews all applications. Designation requires that all federal projects consider the impact of their project on registered properties or districts, but National Register properties and districts are not subject to local or federal regulations or restrictions. Gretna City Hall, St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Most Holy Sacrament Convent/Infant Jesus College, David Crockett Firehall, Jefferson Memorial Arch, and the Kerner House (1012 Monroe Street) are all individually listed properties on the National Register. In addition, the Gretna National Register Historic District is a smaller district within the boundaries of the local Gretna-Mechanikham district.

>>What are the benefits of historic designation?

There are many potential benefits to local and national historic designation, including:

- Formal recognition of a place's cultural or architectural significance
- Increased opportunity for tourism and civic promotion
- A distinct sense of identity
- Bolstered community pride
- Increased property values
- Neighborhood stability
- Awareness of the built environment
- Eligibility for state and federal tax incentives and grant programs (see Part 8: Glossary & Additional Resources for more information).

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION (HDC)

The Historic District Commission (HDC) is a 7-member appointed board that is responsible for maintaining the historic character of Gretna's local historic districts. All commission members are recommended by the city council and appointed by the mayor.

The HDC reviews all substantive exterior changes to all historic and non-historic properties within the historic districts to determine whether the requested changes are aesthetically compatible with both the structure and its historic surroundings. A substantive exterior change is defined as any work that alters the historic or architectural character of a property. This may include structural alterations such as additions and foundation work; the replacement of windows and doors; the replacement of siding; the modification of historic details such as brackets, porches, and columns; and the addition of site amenities, such as fences and sheds. A copy of the HDC's governing ordinance is located in Part 9: Appendix.

The purpose of the HDC is:

- To promote the preservation of historic districts, buildings, and landmarks for the educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare of the public through preservation, protection, and regulation of such districts, buildings, and landmarks within the city
- To safeguard the cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history of the city
- To preserve and enhance the environmental quality of neighborhoods
- To strengthen the city's economic base by the stimulation of the tourist industry
- To establish and improve property values
- To foster economic development
- To manage growth.

HDC APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

Exterior work on all of the **historic and non-historic buildings** that are located within the boundaries of Gretna's historic districts must be reviewed and approved by the HDC before the project begins. If you plan to do exterior work on any building within the districts' boundaries, please consult the following steps before beginning your project.

1. Consult the relevant sections of these guidelines. This document is designed to provide recommendations for the appropriate treatments of Gretna's historic buildings and districts. They reflect the criteria that the HDC uses in its decision-making process and will help the applicant better prepare for the review process.

2. Visit the Department of Building & Regulatory Inspections at City Hall. There, you will be asked to fill out a building permit application and provide staff with preliminary information about the proposed project. If possible, bring photos of your building as well as photos or images of the work to be done. For example, if you would like to install a new front door on your residence, bring images of the door you have in mind, either a photo of another house in your neighborhood or a printout from a website or catalog. However, **do not** purchase any replacement materials before they have been approved.

3. Fill out a historic district permit application and provide all required materials. If the building is located within the boundaries of a historic district, fill out a historic district permit application in addition to the building permit application. Be sure to include all required materials with the application (which can include photographs, sketches, comparable examples, etc.). Applications must be submitted **14 days** before the next HDC meeting in order to be included on the agenda. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. A \$50 processing fee is due at the time of submission.

4. Provide additional information if needed. The City reviews each filed application and makes a preliminary determination of its completeness before adding it to the HDC agenda. If the City or the HDC determines that an application is incomplete, the applicant must provide the additional required information before the application process can proceed.

5. Attend the HDC meeting. The building owner and/or a representative (e.g., contractor or architect) is required to attend the HDC meeting at which the project will be discussed. If the building owner sends a representative to the meeting in his

place, the owner is still responsible for the HDC's determination. If neither the applicant nor a representative is in attendance, the application may be deferred to the following month's HDC meeting and the project will be delayed.

6. HDC approves. If the HDC approves the project, the applicant will receive this decision in writing at the HDC meeting and will receive a **certificate of appropriateness** within 48 hours. The certificate of appropriateness serves as evidence of HDC approval. The applicant must then secure any additional required permits from the relevant departments at City Hall before the project may proceed.

7. HDC approves with modifications. If the HDC approves the project with modifications, the applicant will receive this decision in writing at the HDC meeting and will receive a **certificate of appropriateness** within 48 hours that specifies the HDC's required modifications. The applicant must then secure any additional required permits from the relevant departments at City Hall before the project may proceed.

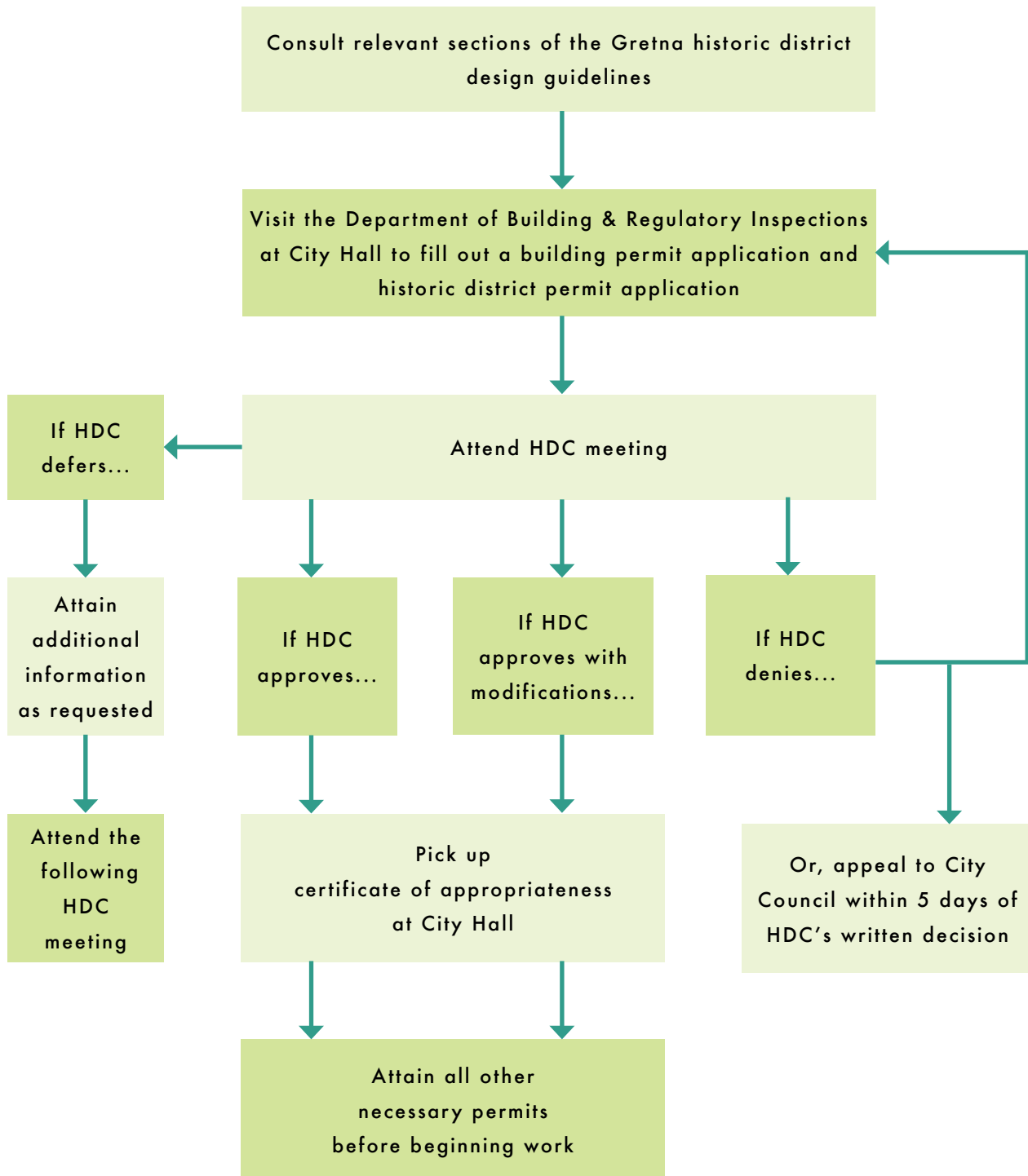
8. HDC defers. If the HDC requires additional information and determines that the application is therefore incomplete, it may change the hearing to a preliminary conference and make recommendations for a complete application to be considered at the next meeting of the HDC.

9. HDC denies. If the HDC denies the project, the applicant will receive this decision in writing at the HDC meeting and must revise the project and restart the historic district permit application process. The applicant may appeal the decision of the HDC directly to the City Council. Appeals must be made in writing to the clerk's office within 5 days of receipt of the HDC's written decision. City Council has the power to affirm, reverse, or modify any of the HDC's decisions by majority vote.

The HDC does not review paint color, ordinary repairs, or standard maintenance that prevents the deterioration, damage, or decay of a building. However, such repairs and maintenance must restore the building to its appearance prior to the onset of the problem, not alter its appearance. If the appearance is to be altered, the HDC must review the work.

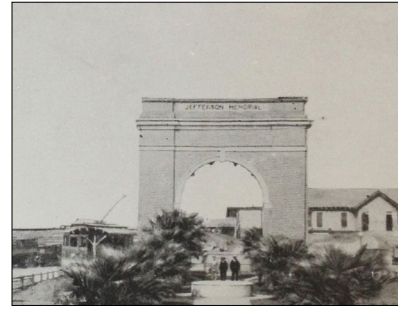
For additional information, please contact the Department of Building & Regulatory Inspections, (504) 363-1563.

HDC APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS



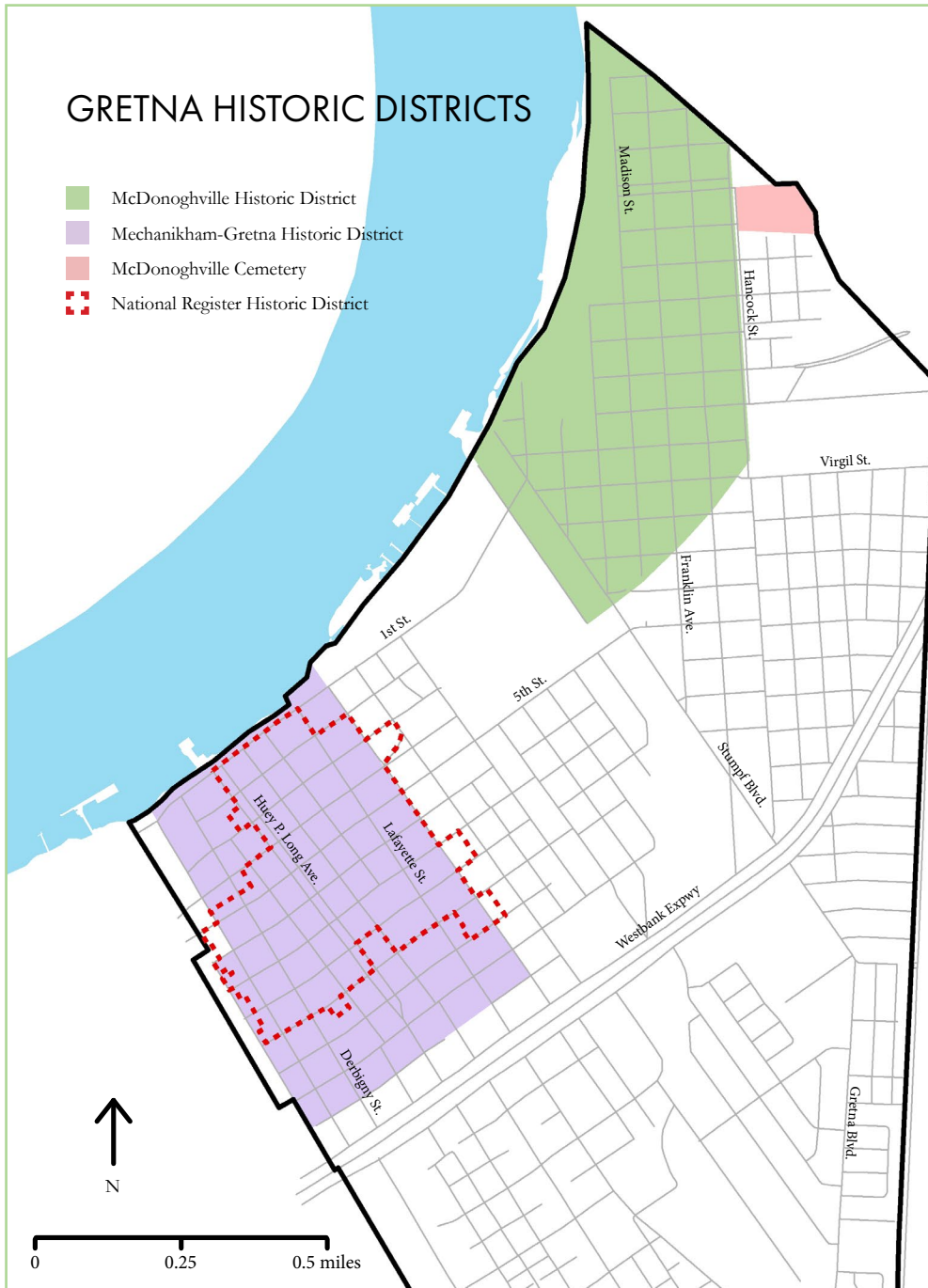
HISTORY OF THE DISTRICTS

2



GRETNA HISTORIC DISTRICTS

- McDonoghville Historic District
- Mechanikham-Gretna Historic District
- McDonoghville Cemetery
- National Register Historic District



MECHANIKHAM-GRETNA HISTORIC DISTRICT

Local designation: 1997

Boundaries: East side of Gulf Drive and north side of Sixth Street to the west side of Dolhonde Street on the west; north side of Twelfth Street on the south; east side of Amelia Avenue on the east; and the Mississippi River on the north.

National Register designation: 1985

Boundaries: Roughly bounded on the north by 1st Street; on the south by 9th Street, on the east by Amelia Avenue, and on the west by Dolhonde Street. In the southeastern corner, the district extends further south for approximately one block to 10th Street.

McDONOGHVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Local designation: 2005

Boundaries: East side of Ocean Avenue from the river to the 4th Street right-of-way; west side of Hancock Street; the Orleans Parish line; and the Mississippi River.

The material in this section is based in part on Dr. Mary Grace Curry's *Gretna: A Sesquicentennial Salute* and Betsy Swanson's *Historic Jefferson Parish: From Shore to Shore*.

MECHANIKHAM-GRETNA HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Mechanikham-Gretna Historic District has the highest concentration of historic structures in Jefferson Parish. Named for two of the city of Gretna's earliest communities, Mechanikham and Gretna, the district is predominantly residential in character and maintains a quiet, small-town feel despite the fact that it has been the seat of Jefferson Parish government since 1884. Pockets of commercial activity are found along the Mississippi River, Lafayette Street, and on the northern end of Huey P. Long Avenue, Gretna's historic central commons. The largest homes in the district are also located on this tree-lined avenue, which turns residential beyond the Fourth Street railroad tracks. The regular street grid surrounding the commons features a relatively dense concentration of modest late-19th and early-20th-century homes, primarily shotguns and bungalows, as well as a handful of commercial and industrial structures. The district's oldest remaining buildings, which include a few examples of Creole cottages and the David Crockett Firehall (1859), are found on the north end of the district near the river where the two settlements originated.

Mechanikham was established in 1836 when wealthy landowner Nicholas Noel Destrehan hired surveyor Benjamin Buisson to divide his long and narrow swath of land on the river into lots. Buisson's original symmetrical plan created a two-block-wide settlement with Huey P. Long Avenue (originally Copernicus Avenue) at the center and one street on either side (now Newton and Weyer streets). Mechanikham quickly became home to many German immigrants who played a vital role in the city's development and whose descendants became some of Gretna's most prominent citizens.

The community of Gretna was established two years later when the St. Mary's Market Steam Ferry Company purchased and divided a four-block-wide stretch immediately downriver from Mechanikham. Gretna's streets were regularly laid in the same manner as Mechanikham, and its cross streets were numbered as they are today. An essential feature of the new development was its dedicated ferry landing located directly across the river from St. Mary's Market in New Orleans. In 1839, the company marketed its new land to the butchers, gardeners, and dairymen of the market as "decidedly the most desirable of any site in the neighborhood of New Orleans for health and salubrity of climate, being free from the epidemics of the city." One of these "epidemics" was no doubt the city's number of noxious slaughterhouses, which were forbidden in Gretna.

Although Mechanikham and Gretna maintained separate identities on maps for much of the 19th century, the name Gretna was often used early on to refer to both settlements. Together, they grew into a sizeable community with an economy fueled by dairies and farms, the river's shipbuilding industry, and several manufacturing efforts. Less than a decade after Gretna was founded, it was home to hundreds of residences and several shops, many of them housed in Creole cottages, as well as a hotel, coffee houses, three steam sawmills, a brickyard, a foundry, and a carriage factory. The first school was open by 1845. Yet despite the community's remarkable rate of development, Gretna was distinctly rustic. A guidebook published the same year, *Norman's*

PUBLIC AUCTION.
GRETNA.

THE TOWN OF GRETNA, situated opposite the city of Lafayette, will be sold at Auction by **BEARD & KENIG** and **HEWLETT & CENAS**, on Thursday the 26th inst., at 12 o'clock, at Banks' Arcade, Magazine street. The town comprises 44 squares, and will be sold in lots to suit purchasers.

The location of Gretna is decidedly the most desirable of any site in the neighborhood of New Orleans for health and salubrity of climate, being free from the epidemics of the city, and having the facility of a regular steam Ferry conveyance to the centre of business.

To the merchant, the mechanic, as well as the unencumbered, wishing for retirement and economy, the inducements are too apparent to need enumeration.

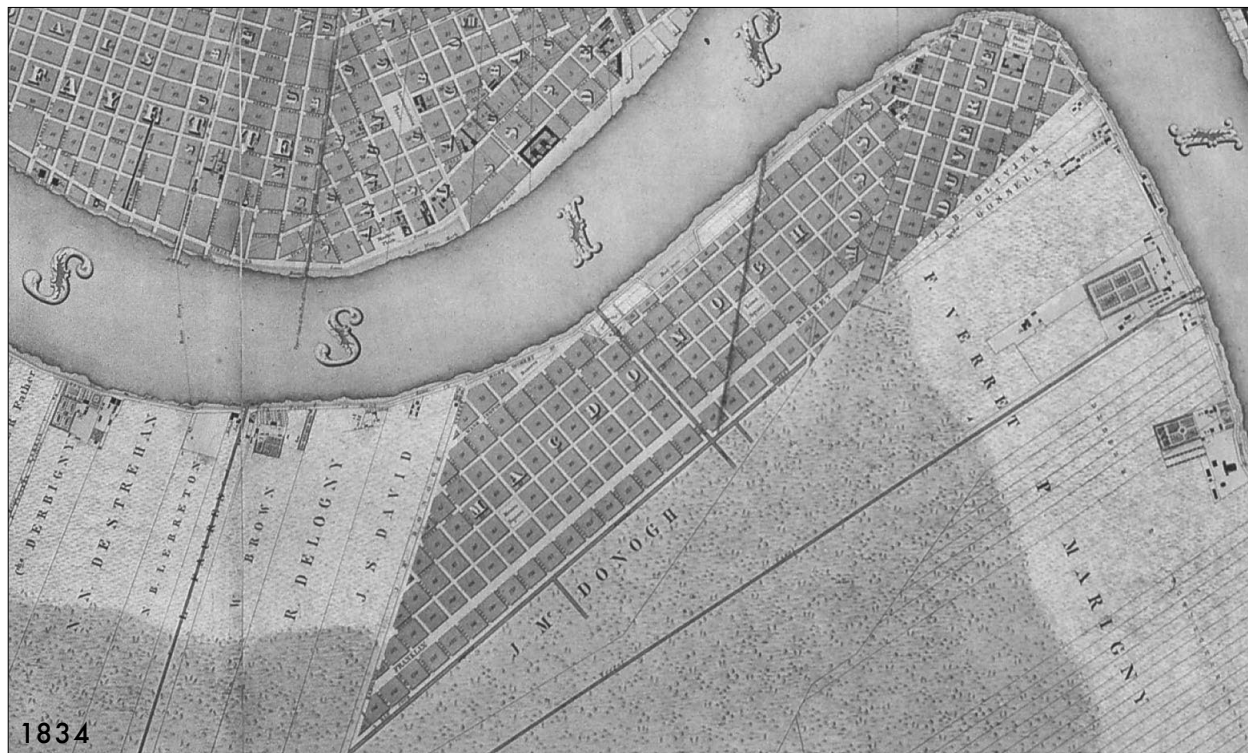
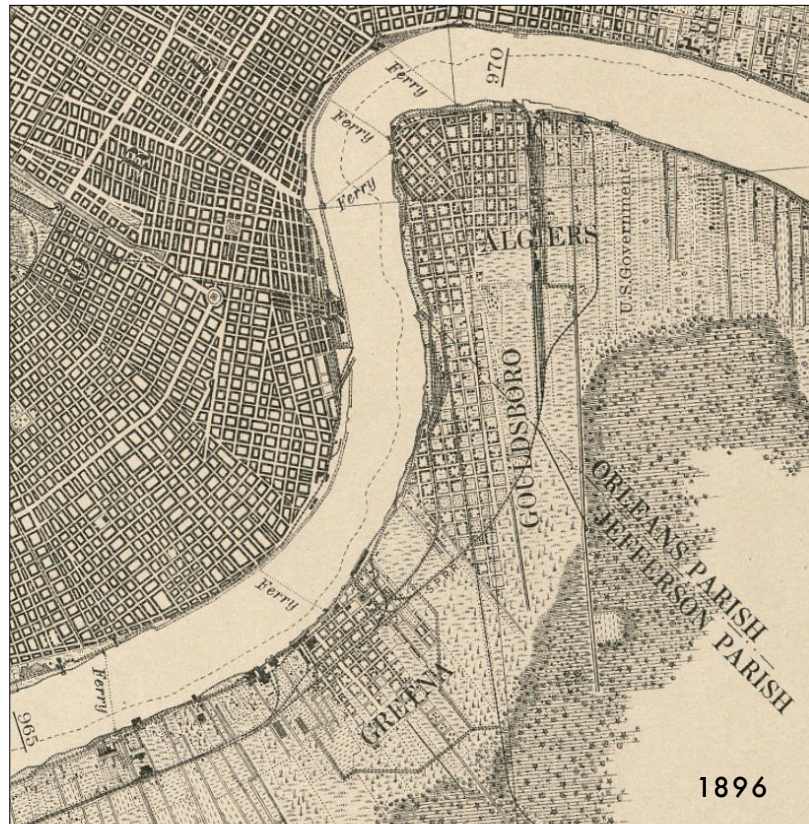
To the Market Gardiner, Butcher and Dairy Man, it is truly advantageous, having the facility of arriving at the St. Mary's Market in 15 minutes. Those who wish to purchase are particularly requested to view the property before the day of sale.

The Directors of the St. Mary's Market Steam Ferry Company hold out further inducements. They will issue a free ticket to all purchasers for one year, and pledge themselves to renew the same for four years more to all who build a tenement at Gretna in one year from the day of sale.

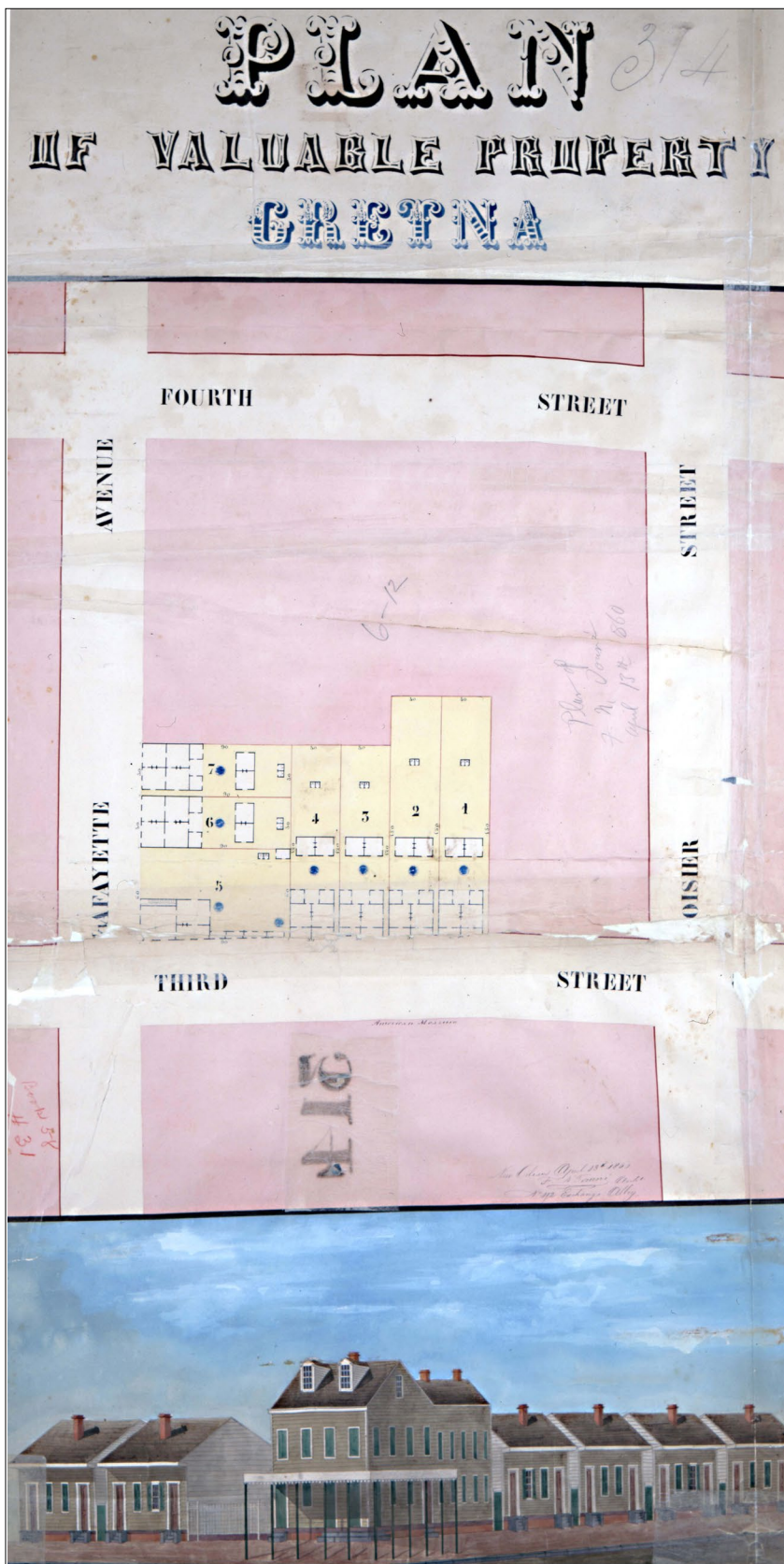
The terms of sale are extremely liberal and no endorser required, viz: One fourth cash, and the balance in 1, 2 and 3 years, for notes with mortgage until final payment.

Acts of sale before J. B. Marks, Esq. Notary Public, at the expense of the purchaser. dec 18 1839

St. Mary's Market Steam Ferry Company advertised its new Westbank development in the *Daily Picayune*, February 21, 1839.



Top left: An 1839 map of New Orleans depicts the three communities of Mechanikham ("Mechanik's Village"), Gretna, and McDonoghville. Springbett, Enoch and Pilié, L. I. *Topographical Map of the City and Environs of New Orleans*. New Orleans, 1839. Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University. **Top right:** An 1896 map depicts Gretna and Gouldsboro, a late-19th-century name for McDonoghville. Mississippi River Commission. *Mississippi River. Sheet Number 28 [New Orleans and Vicinity]*. Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University. **Bottom:** An 1834 map of New Orleans includes McDonoghville and the future land of Gretna, then owned by N. N. Destrehan. Zimpel, Charles F. *Topographical Map of New Orleans and its Vicinity*. New Orleans, 1834. Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.



Top right: Front Street, c. 1900. Gretna Diamond Jubilee Collection, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans. **Above:** A daughter of the Ruiz family poses on the porch of the family home at 526 Front Street, c. 1910. Their Queen Anne/Eastlake shotgun would have been about two decades old. Photograph courtesy of Chris Züfle. **Left:** Large-scale, hand-drawn watercolor plans were used to advertise properties prior to their sale at public auction. This 1860 plan illustrates a group of Creole cottages and a store at the corner of Third and Lafayette streets. Only the corner building remains. Tourné, F. Nicolas. Plan Book 58, Folio 31 (058.031), April 13, 1860. Clerk of Civil District Court, Notarial Archives Division, New Orleans, LA.

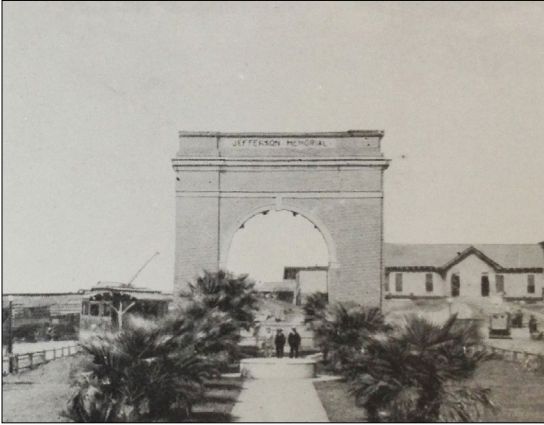


Left to right: The Gruhlars on their porch at 409 Newton Street, August 1916. Photograph courtesy of JoAnn Kerner Olsen. The Züfle corner grocery at Sixth and Lavoisier streets, 1900. Photograph courtesy of Ruth Züfle. A flooded Creole cottage at 635 Lafayette Street, c. 1891, illustrates the impact of an upriver crevasse. Gretna Diamond Jubilee Collection, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans.

New Orleans, wrote that “[Gretna] has a rural appearance....The forest approaches quite near and, the idea that one may lose himself in the neighboring woods, gives the place a touch of romance which only the denizens of a crowded city know how to appreciate.” The author also remarked on the many cattle grazing along the river.

Gretna’s first railroad, the New Orleans, Opelousas and Great Western (later known as the Southern-Pacific) was built in 1853. In subsequent years, Gretna also gained the Texas-Pacific line, the Union Stone Company, the Louisiana Cypress Lumber Company, the Southern Cotton Oil Company, and John Stumpf’s Son, which began selling its famous “Magic Hoodoo” insecticides and Rust-Away in 1876 at the corner of Front and Lavoisier streets. In 1887, Jefferson Parish passed a resolution to actively encourage and promote industrial activity, and many companies were drawn to Gretna’s riverfront and railroad access. As a result, the community soon cemented itself as a manufacturing hub, and, in the 1890s, its factories and mills were able to support numerous small businesses, including twelve groceries and nine saloons. By the turn of the century, Gretna and nearby McDonoghville made up nearly half of Jefferson Parish’s total population. This period of expansion was responsible for Gretna’s numerous shotguns in the Italianate and Queen Anne/Eastlake styles, as well as many of its corner stores. In 1901, Front Street opened to connect the riverfront communities, and, a few years later, an electric streetcar service between Gretna and Algiers replaced the mule-drawn streetcar that had been running since 1884. Soon to follow were Gretna’s two railroad depots on Third and Fourth streets (1902 and 1906, respectively) and the Renaissance Revival Jefferson Parish Courthouse (1907), which has operated as Gretna City Hall since 1961.

Gretna was not without its challenges. Crevasses, or breaks in the Mississippi River levee, were frequent and sometimes devastating floods that plagued residents from the communities’ earliest days until the final crevasse of 1912. Also, the parish government was slow to provide much-needed public improvements such as streetlights. Pedestrians out after dark navigated the streets with hand-held kerosene lamps. Sidewalks remained unpaved into the 20th century, and the streets were muddy and full of ruts and debris, a hazard made worse by an



Top: A scene from the 1920 St. Rosalie procession shows paved sidewalks, gutters, electric poles, and a backyard cistern still in operation. Photograph courtesy of Ruth Züfle. **Middle:** The newly constructed Jefferson Memorial Arch on Huey P. Long Avenue, 1923. Gretna Diamond Jubilee Collection, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans. **Bottom:** Miller's Grocery at 415 Wiedman Street, shown here in 1925, was built in the very popular Craftsman style. Gretna Diamond Jubilee Collection, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans.

inadequate drainage system. Finally, in 1911, frustrated citizens formed the Good Government League, an organization that provided the impetus to separate from the parish government and establish the City of Gretna, which was incorporated in 1913. Comprising Mechanikham, New Mechanikham, Gretna, New Gretna, and McDonoghville, the new city embarked on an improvements campaign that resulted in streetlamps, cleaner streets, a new waterworks system, and a system of gas mains. By 1936, all sidewalks were paved and a modern sewerage system was installed. Gretna's population reached ten thousand. It was during this period of progress and prosperity that Gretna's many Craftsman and Eclectic Revival residences and several of its landmarks were built.

The Mechanikham-Gretna Historic District was locally designated in 1997. The Gretna National Register Historic District, which is a smaller, federally designated district contained within the local district's boundaries, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.

MCDONOGHVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

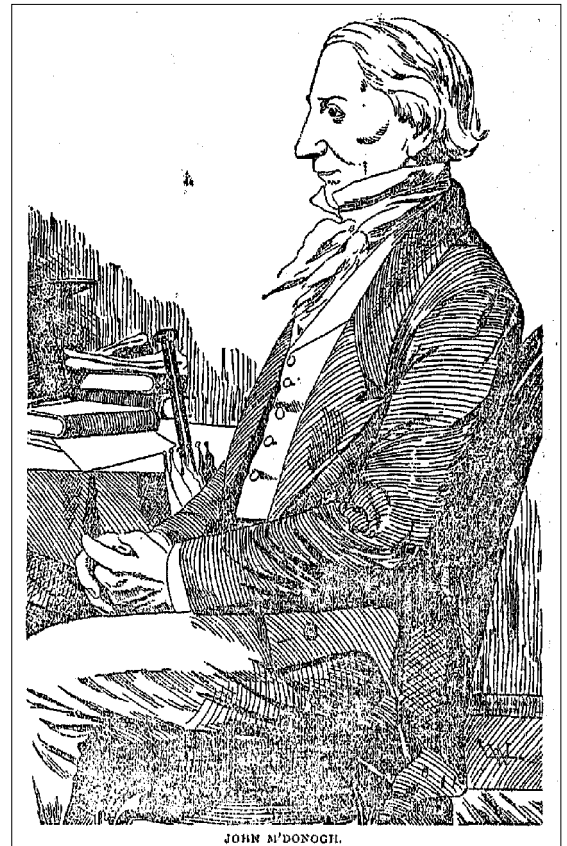
Named for its philanthropic and reclusive founder, John McDonogh, McDonoghville was established in 1815, which makes it Gretna's earliest subdivided development. The McDonoghville Historic District is characterized by modest residences set back on sizeable lots and a lack of commercial corridors, which gives it a sleepy, pastoral atmosphere that is rooted in its origins as a residential farming community. The 1845 guidebook *Norman's New Orleans* remarked in its brief mention of the place ("MacDonough") that "the country, the beautiful country is all around—and the noise and confusion of the city no longer annoy you." Although McDonoghville has been part of the city of Gretna since 1913, this sense of being removed from city life continues to distinguish it from its more urbanized neighbors.

Before McDonogh purchased the former plantation of Francois Bernoudy in 1813 and founded his namesake settlement, the western bank of the Mississippi River was a long row of working plantations backed by woodlands. McDonogh's property was the site of Monplaisir, a 1750 plantation house built for Jean de Pradel that sat near the present-day McDonoghville-Algiers border. The house and its auxiliary buildings were taken by the river in the late 19th century. McDonogh, who had been residing in New Orleans, moved into the house and divided the remaining land into regular lots and narrow, thirty-arpent strips for farming, which he sold or leased to laborers and some free people of color. While living there, he owned several slaves, whom he educated and encouraged to work for their freedom. Many of those freed men and women settled in a portion of McDonoghville called Freetown.

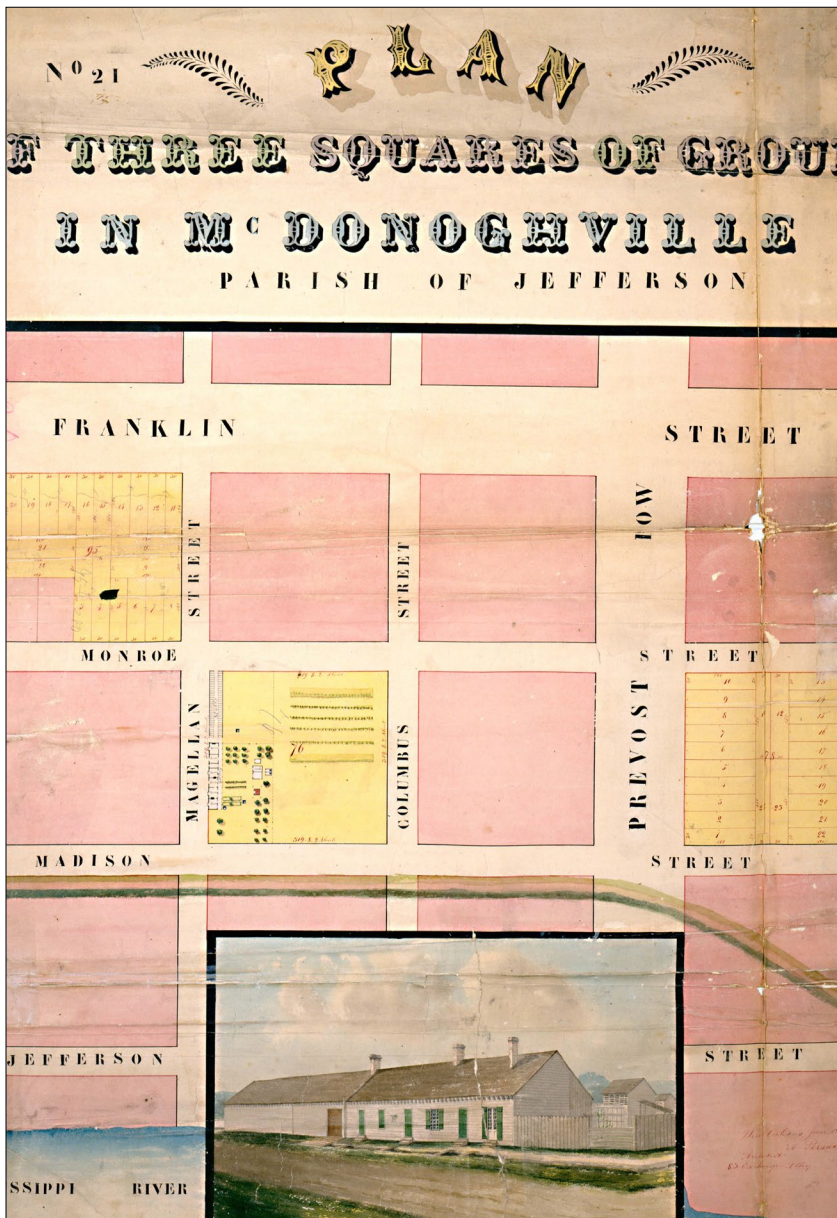
Because of McDonoghville's rural nature and the absence of local business, early residents had to travel to do their shopping, either at the New Orleans markets, which were accessible by ferry or skiff, or in Algiers and Gretna once those two communities had developed commercial districts. Many of the settlement's early dwellings were Creole cottages, a handful of which remain today, as well as some early shotguns and a few grander plantation-like residences with outbuildings, gardens, orchards, and livestock.

McDonogh died in 1850 and was buried in McDonoghville Cemetery on Hancock Street. Ten years later, his remains were moved to his hometown of Baltimore, but his tomb still stands with an inscription of the guiding principles he wrote as a young man. Rules such as "Never spend but to produce" and "Labor then to the last moment of your existence" communicate McDonogh's hard-working and frugal nature, which made it possible for him to amass a vast personal fortune. Although many accused the man of miserliness, in his will he famously established the John McDonogh School Fund, which provided enough money to create thirty-six public schools throughout New Orleans, including McDonogh No. 26 and No. 27 and McDonogh-Jefferson High School (No. 33) in McDonoghville.

By the 1880s, McDonoghville had become an important railroading center with a roundhouse, railyards, and numerous spurs. At this time, the community also became known as Gouldsboro, named for railroad magnate Jay Gould. The rise in economic opportunities led to a population increase and a building



Top: A portrait of John McDonogh, founder of McDonoghville, was published in the *Daily Picayune* on December 13, 1891. **Bottom:** A detail of an 1855 watercolor plan advertising a shotgun for sale on Anson Street. Tourné, F. Nicolas. Plan Book 76, Folio 21 (076.021), November 16, 1855. Clerk of Civil District Court, Notarial Archives Division, New Orleans, LA.



For Rent or Sale.
 That elegant Square of Ground next the Hospital, at Macdonough, exactly opposite this city, with the two Dwelling Houses, a large Bakery, and extensive out buildings thereon. The situation is one of the best on the opposite bank, being healthy at all seasons, and is suitable for a large family. On the premises is a large Garden now in cultivation, with a number of valuable fruit trees. With the premises may be had several fine Cows and Horses. Apply at 33 CAMP ST. [d20-t]

Left: Large-scale, hand-drawn watercolor plans were once used to advertise properties prior to their sale at public auction. This 1866 plan shows a small farm with a cottage dwelling, attached stables, outbuildings, and planted crops that was likely typical in McDonoghville's rural setting. Persac, Adrien. Plan Book 38 (038.020), June 18, 1866. Clerk of Civil District Court, Notarial Archives Division, New Orleans, LA. **Above:** A spacious property was advertised in the *Daily Picayune* on January 11, 1849. The neighboring hospital mentioned in the ad was the United States Marine Hospital, which exploded in 1861 after Confederate troops began using it as a powder magazine.

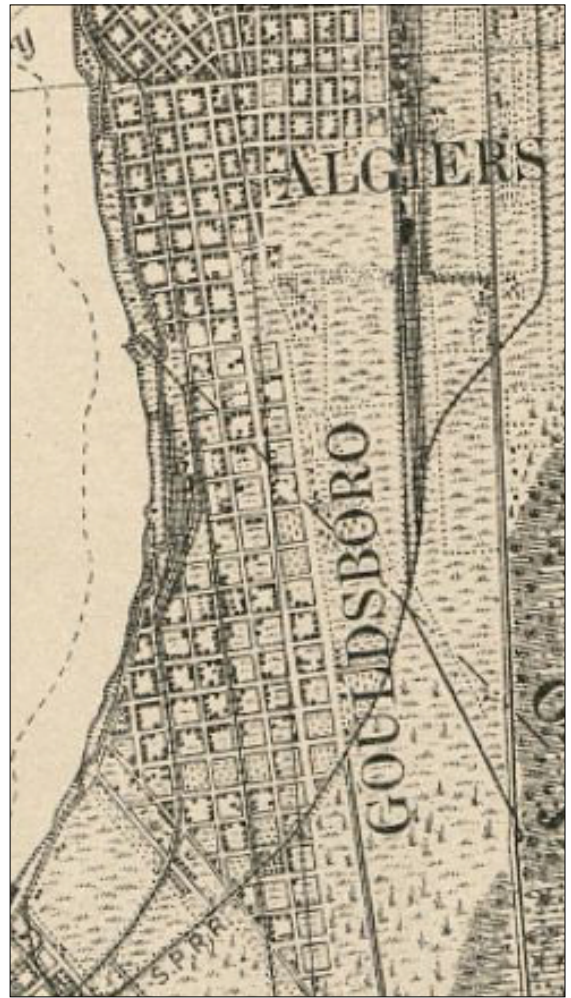


A detail from an 1851 watercolor plan advertising a trio of simple galleried cottages for sale on Hancock Street. Giroux, Claude & Castaing, Alexander. Plan Book 65, Folio 48 (065.048), February 18, 1851. Clerk of Civil District Court, Notarial Archives Division, New Orleans, LA.

boom, which produced McDonoghville's robust collection of Italianate and Queen Anne/Eastlake shotguns and cottages.

Another flurry of development took place in the years after McDonoghville's 1913 incorporation into the City of Gretna. In the early 20th century, fire insurance rates in the area had become prohibitively high due to the lack of a waterworks system. When a system was finally installed in 1914, however, it gave newcomers the confidence and means to settle there. Numerous residences, many of them in the Neoclassical Revival and Craftsman styles, sprang up throughout the district.

The McDonoghville Historic District was locally designated in 2005.



Top: McDonogh No. 26 was constructed in 1891 in McDonoghville. It was one three public schools made possible by the John McDonogh School Fund, which was established after McDonogh's death in 1850. The school was replaced with a modern structure in 1927. Photograph courtesy of Jerome Wilson. **Bottom:** In the late nineteenth century, McDonoghville was also known as Gouldsboro, named for railroad magnate Jay Gould. A detail of the Mississippi River Commission's 1896 map illustrates that the community's development pattern was relatively sparse compared to that of Algiers, its more urbanized neighbor. Mississippi River Commission. *Mississippi River. Sheet Number 28 [New Orleans and Vicinity.]* Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.

MAJOR HISTORIC LANDMARKS



Gretna City Hall
(former Jefferson Parish Courthouse)
Built 1907
National Register of Historic Places, 1983



Jefferson Memorial Arch
Built 1923
National Register of Historic Places, 1985



St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church
Built 1926
National Register of Historic Places, 1983



**Most Holy Sacrament Convent/
Infant Jesus College**
Built 1899
National Register of Historic Places, 1983



David Crocket Firehall
Built 1859
National Register of Historic Places, 1983



Kerner House, 1012 Monroe
Built mid-19th century
National Register of Historic Places, 2000



McDonoghville Cemetery
Founded early 19th century

RESIDENTIAL TYPES & STYLES

3



INTRODUCTION

Gretna has a rich architectural heritage that reflects its own long history of development and the broader architectural trends of the greater New Orleans metropolitan area. The city's two local historic districts, Mechanikham-Gretna and McDonoghville, feature examples of several different historic residential building types and styles, from Creole cottages to Craftsman bungalows.

Identifying a property's type and style is the crucial first step in planning a successful project. Not only does it lead to a deeper understanding of a building's place in the city's history and its reflection of local and national developments in technology and design, but it also directly impacts a homeowner's options for appropriate repair and modification. A building's style informs its materials and detailing, such as porch flooring, doors, and windows. A building's type dictates the proper massing of additions and other structural changes, such as roof repairs and the addition of dormers.

Not every historic residence falls neatly into one style category. In the past just as today, a building was a reflection of the owner's tastes, needs, and budget. If one homeowner desired a textbook example of an Eastlake shotgun, his neighbor might have worked with a contractor to devise a more personalized design, perhaps one that combined Neoclassical Revival windows and Queen Anne shingles. As a result, historic residences can be purely one style, a blend of two or more styles, or they may lack a style altogether. A center-hall cottage might have a mixture of Greek Revival and Italianate details, implying that it was likely built during the time that the two styles overlapped. A shotgun's only hint at a style might be its paneled doors.

Buildings, again in the past just as today, were often modified to reflect changing tastes, needs, and budgets. A Creole cottage might gain a shed-roof rear addition to increase living space. When indoor plumbing became widely available in the early twentieth century, many houses were altered to accommodate the new luxury. An 1890s Eastlake shotgun might have been stylishly updated with new Craftsman doors twenty-five years after it was built. If fifty years or older, these historical alterations are often significant themselves and contribute to the building's historic value. By contrast, recent changes that utilize inappropriate materials, detailing, scale, and massing compromise the building's integrity and thus decrease its historic value.

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HOW TYPES AND STYLES WERE CHOSEN

The historic types and styles chosen for this section reflect those most commonly found in Gretna. If more information is needed on a type or style that is not included here, please consult Part 8: Glossary & Additional Resources.

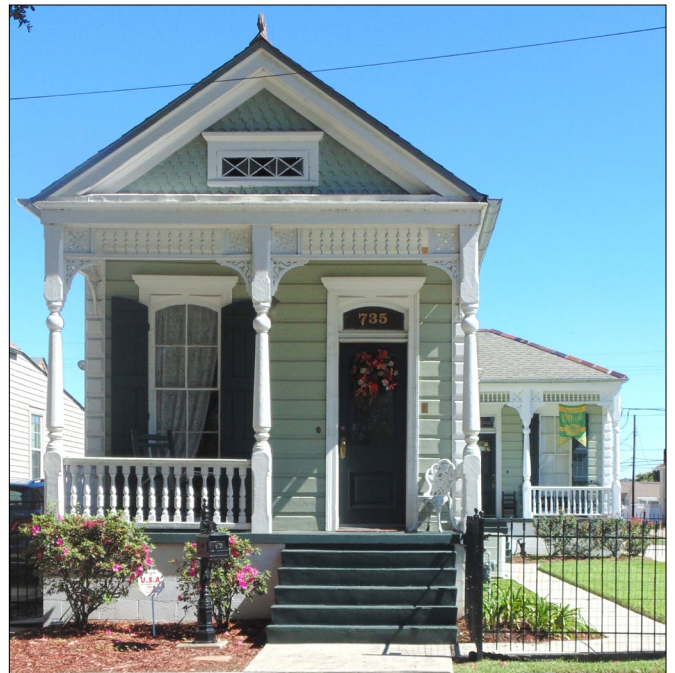
TYPE vs. STYLE

A building **TYPE** refers to the overall structure of the building. Is it long and narrow? How many stories does it have? Is it one room wide? Is the roofline parallel or perpendicular to the street?

An architectural **STYLE** is the decoration and detailing applied to the building type. Style can be integrated into the building's structure or added onto it as ornamentation. Are the windows arched or flat on top? Is the facade symmetrical or asymmetrical? What do the porch columns look like? Is the siding narrow, plain, or patterned?

Historically, styles waxed and waned in popularity like any other trend. If a house was built during a transitional period between two styles, it might have elements of both. Other houses have elements of more than one style because they were updated to reflect the latest tastes.

Some building types, such as the long-lived shotgun, are associated with several different styles, from Italianate to Eastlake to Craftsman. By contrast, the bungalow type is strongly tied to the Craftsman style.



This single shotgun has elements of the Eastlake, Queen Anne, and Italianate styles, a very common combination at the turn of the 20th century.



This raised bungalow combines a Mediterranean Revival roof and porch detailing with Craftsman windows and exposed rafter tails. The two styles overlapped in the 1920s.

TYPE: CREOLE COTTAGE

1800s–1870s

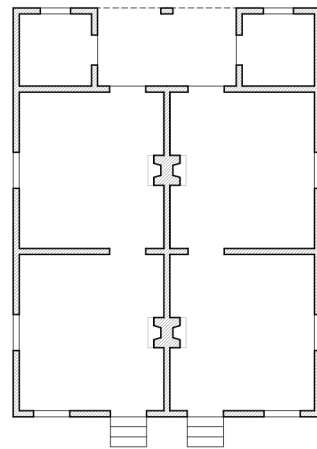
The Creole cottage, a colonial blend of cultural building methods, is the earliest housing type still found in Gretna. Modest and straightforward, the frame Creole cottage is one or one-and-a-half stories tall and is traditionally built low to the ground on short brick piers. Its roofline runs *parallel* to the street. Gretna's remaining examples are all historically two rooms wide with symmetrical facades that feature either four uniform French doors or two French doors and two double-hung windows. A few examples have lost one or more of their historical openings but retain their original two-room width. All have side-gable roofs with a front projecting eave that protects the facade from the elements. They are either sited at the lot line and accessed by stoops or set back far enough to accommodate a front gallery below the overhanging roof.

In addition to being two rooms wide, Creole cottages are generally two rooms deep with two additional smaller rooms, or *cabinets*, at the rear. The hall-less floor plan and *en suite* rooms, or rooms that open directly onto each other, allow for maximum air circulation. Chimneys are centered on the gable slopes or near the roof's ridge line. Paired gable dormers and gable windows provide light to finished attics, which are typically reached by a staircase in one of the cabinets.

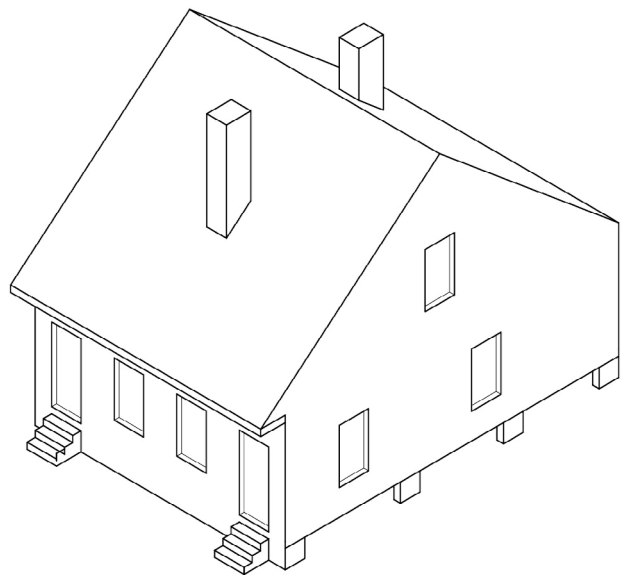
Gretna's Creole cottages most commonly feature simple Creole and Greek Revival detailing, although some were altered to reflect later styles, including Italianate and Eastlake.



Galleried Creole cottage with dormers



Galleried Creole cottage with replaced doors, windows, and railing



TYPE: CENTER-HALL COTTAGE

1830s–1880s

The center-hall cottage, essentially a Creole cottage that has been widened by a central hall that runs from the facade entrance to the rear, is an Americanized version of the Creole floor plan. The Americans, who were arriving in New Orleans in droves after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, preferred the privacy of a hallway to the communal nature of Creole *en suite* rooms. The center-hall cottage, like its Creole cousin, is typically two rooms wide by two rooms deep with smaller *cabinets* at the rear and front and back porches. Most are single-family homes with finished attics lit by gabled dormers. The front entrance is typically the largest and most prominent opening and is centered on the symmetrical facade. Gretna's examples are frame structures on short brick piers or raised on brick piers approximately 5 feet above grade.

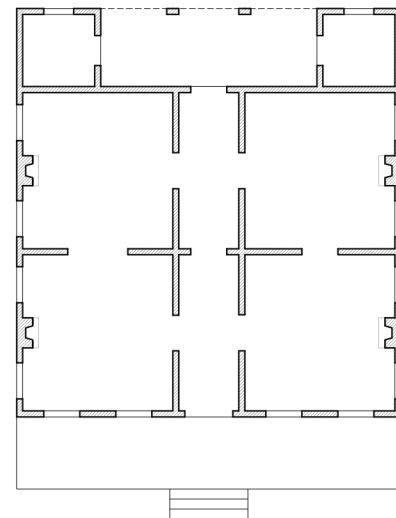
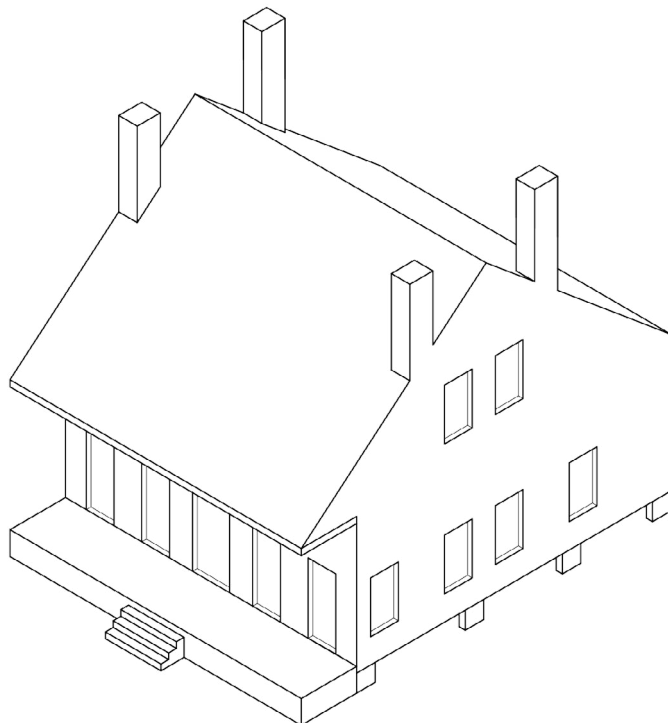
Gretna's center-hall cottages were traditionally in the Greek Revival or Italianate styles, although many were altered over subsequent years to reflect prevailing tastes.



Center-hall cottage in the Italianate style



Heavily altered center-hall cottage in the Greek Revival style



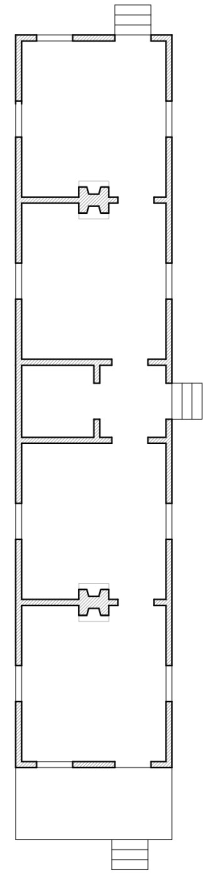
TYPE: SINGLE SHOTGUN

1850s–1930s

Shotguns make up over half of Gretna's historic building stock. This residential type's popularity stems from its efficient use of narrow urban lots, its variability, and its relative low cost to build. Like the Creole cottage, shotguns are typically one story tall and hall-less with *en suite* rooms that open directly onto one another. Unlike the cottage, however, a shotgun's roofline runs *perpendicular* to the street. There are five common subtypes: single shotgun, sidehall shotgun, side-gallery shotgun, double shotgun, and camelback shotgun.

Gretna's shotguns were adapted to a wide variety of architectural styles, including Greek Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne/Eastlake, Neoclassical Revival/Colonial Revival, and Craftsman.

Single shotguns, or two-bay shotguns, are one room wide and three to five rooms deep. Access is provided via a front gallery or stoop. The facade has two openings, or bays: either two full-length openings or one full-length and one short opening. One full-length opening is often seen on Craftsman-style single shotguns. The typical single shotgun roof is hip, front gable, or gable on hip.



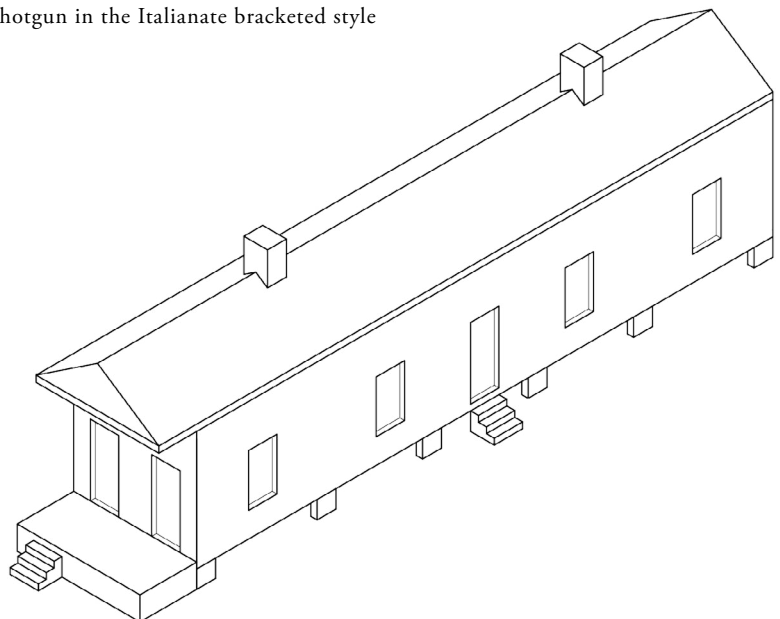
Craftsman single shotguns often have one central opening rather than two.



Single shotgun in the Italianate bracketed style



Single shotgun with rear wing that blends the Queen Anne, Eastlake, and Italianate styles



TYPE: SIDEHALL AND SIDE-GALLERY SHOTGUNS

1850s–1930s

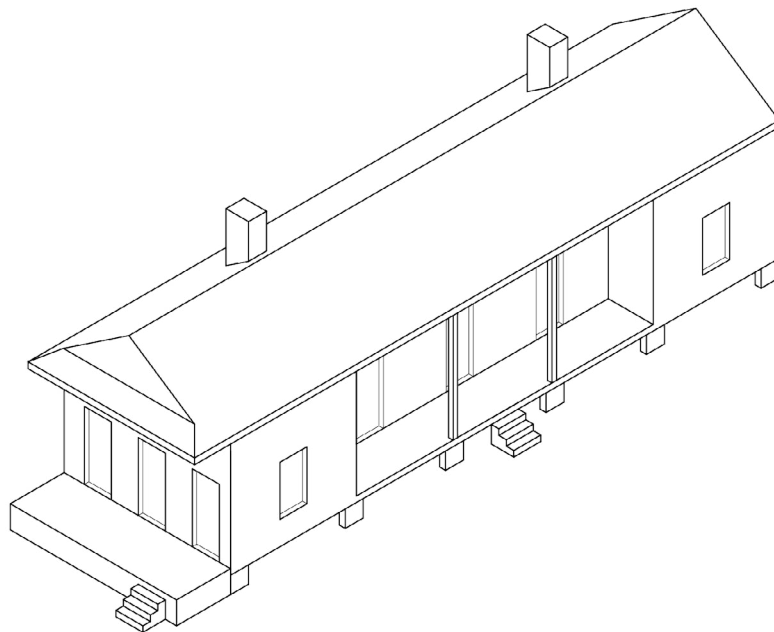
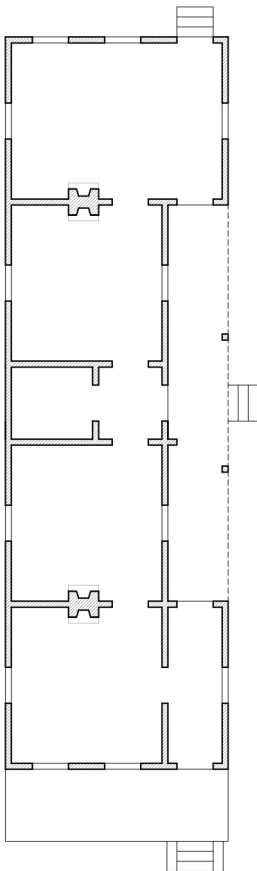
A small number of single shotguns feature an interior or open-air side hall with a dedicated front entrance that moves traffic out of the rooms. A handful of single shotguns have a side gallery, which resembles an open-air side hall but lacks a devoted entry. Both of these subtypes, the **sidehall shotgun** and the **side-gallery shotgun**, are also referred to as three-bay shotguns. Both varieties sometimes feature a historic rear wing.



Open sidehall shotgun with rear wing in the Greek Revival style



Side-gallery shotgun with rear wing in the Queen Anne/Eastlake style



TYPE: DOUBLE SHOTGUN

1850s–1930s

Double shotguns, or four-bay shotguns, are essentially two single shotguns fused together. A typical example is two rooms wide and three to five rooms deep with four facade openings: two front doors and a pair of full-length or short matching windows. Most often they are two mirrored residential units, although several have been converted over time to single-family homes. Access is provided via a pair of stoops or two sets of steps that lead onto a front gallery. The typical double shotgun roof is hip, front gable, or gable on hip.

Single and double shotguns can be seen in **raised** form with a finished “basement,” or ground floor, which started to appear in the twentieth century alongside other raised residential types such as bungalows.



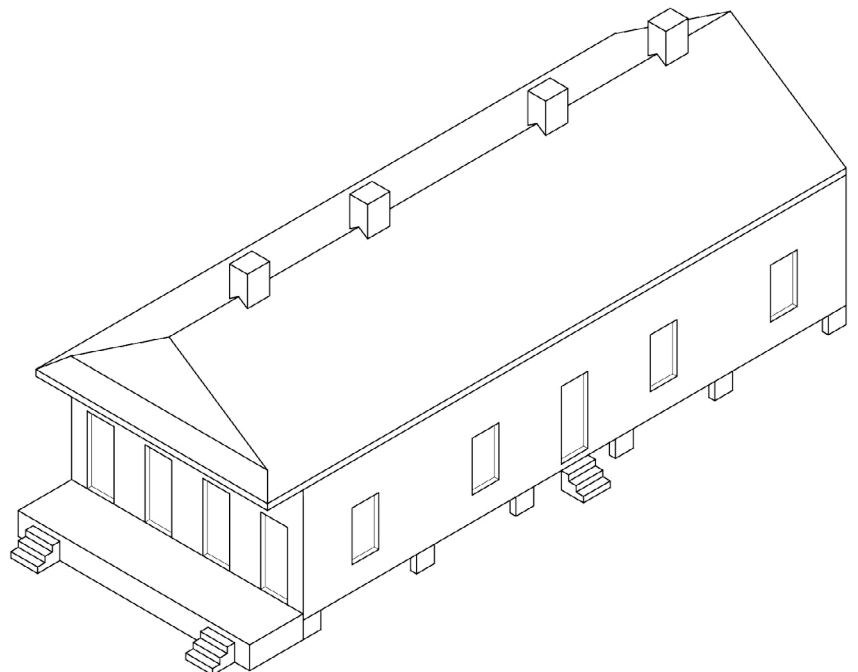
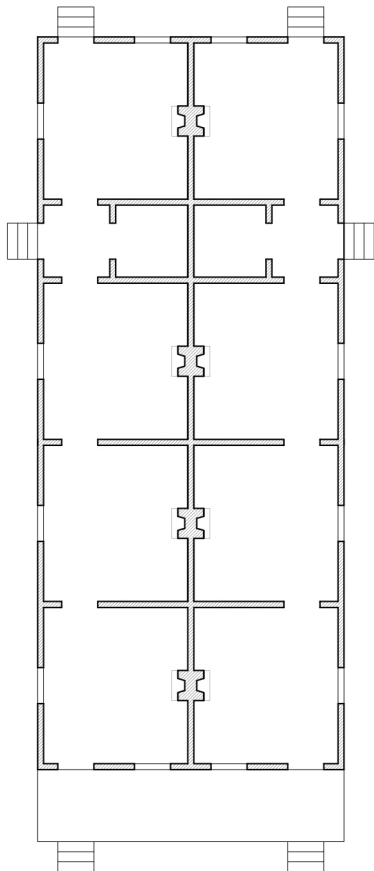
This Italianate bracketed double shotgun features stoops instead of a front porch.



Raised double shotgun in the Craftsman style



Double shotgun in the Neoclassical Revival style



TYPE: CAMELBACK SHOTGUN

1850s–1930s

Camelback shotguns are single or double shotguns with a second story or “hump” stacked onto the rear half of the structure to increase the amount of living space. The roof of the camelback portion may or may not match the roof of the one-story front half of the structure; a gable-on-hip shotgun, for instance, may have a hip-roof camelback. The roof pitch, however, remains the same.

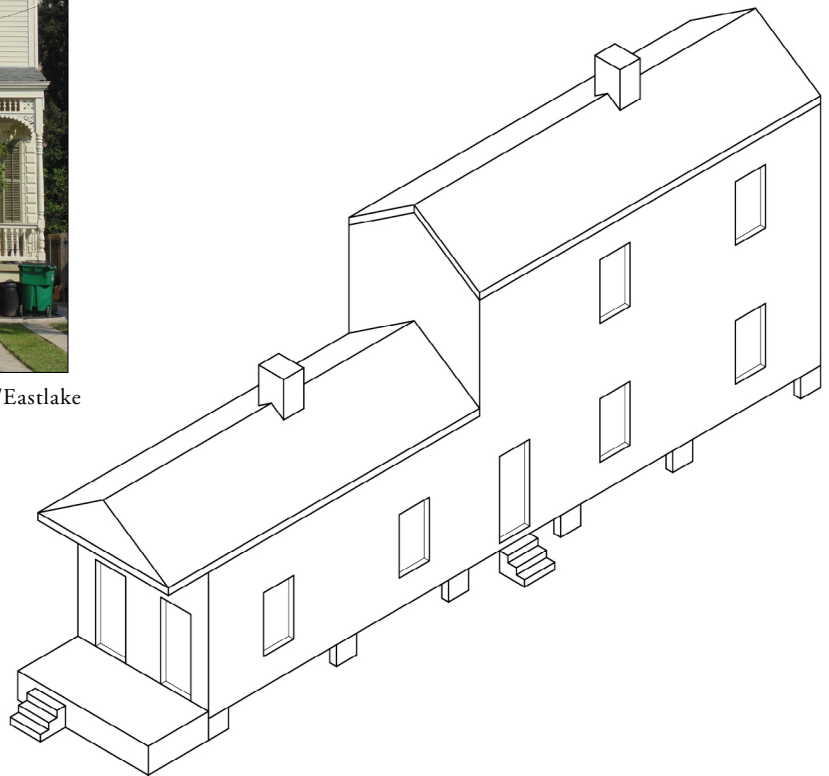
The majority of camelback shotguns in Gretna are in fact modern second-story additions to historic single or double shotguns, which is a popular method of increasing a property’s square footage. See Part 6, Guidelines: New Construction and Additions, for more information.



Sidehall camelback shotgun in the Italianate bracketed style



A single camelback shotgun with rear wing in the Queen Anne/Eastlake style



TYPE: BUNGALOW

1910s–1930s

The bungalow is a twentieth-century residential type that arrived in New Orleans in the 1910s via California and the Arts and Crafts movement. It is typically a one or one-and-a-half-story modest frame structure that is two rooms wide and roughly square in shape. Larger bungalows may have a central hall separating the two rooms. Other defining features can include a substantial partial-front porch reached via a wide set of stairs, extended eaves, and an asymmetrical floor plan. Roofs are often cross gable or hip with a gabled porch. Projecting gabled bays are also common. Dormer roofs are gable, hip, or shed. Bungalows are either built on short brick or concrete piers or raised above a finished ground-floor “basement.”

The majority of Gretna’s bungalows are in the Craftsman style, with a few examples detailed in the Spanish Colonial Revival and Mediterranean Revival styles.



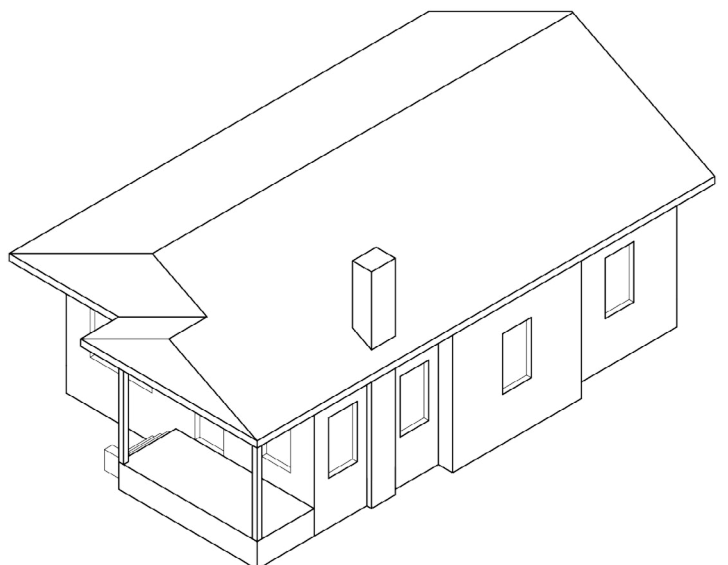
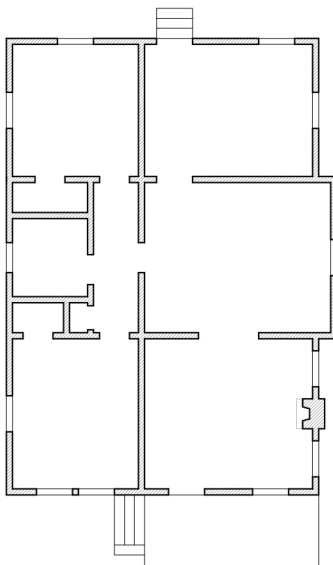
Classic Craftsman bungalow



Bungalow with a central hall in the Craftsman style



Raised Craftsman bungalow



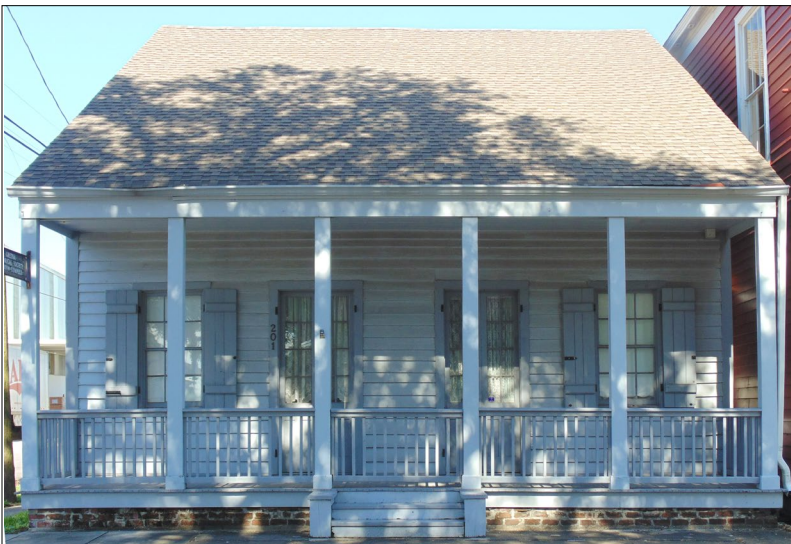
STYLE: CREOLE

1800s–1840s

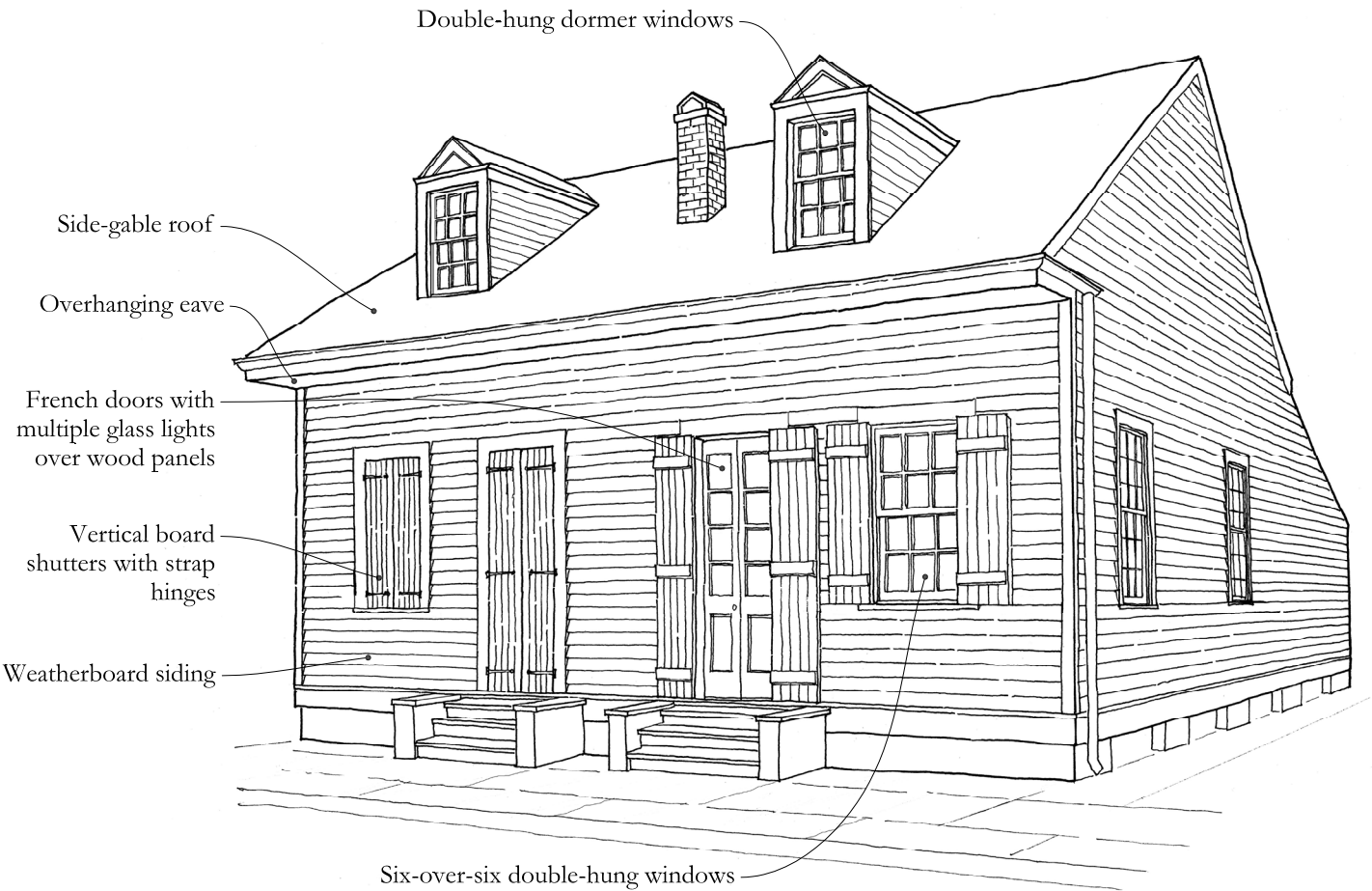
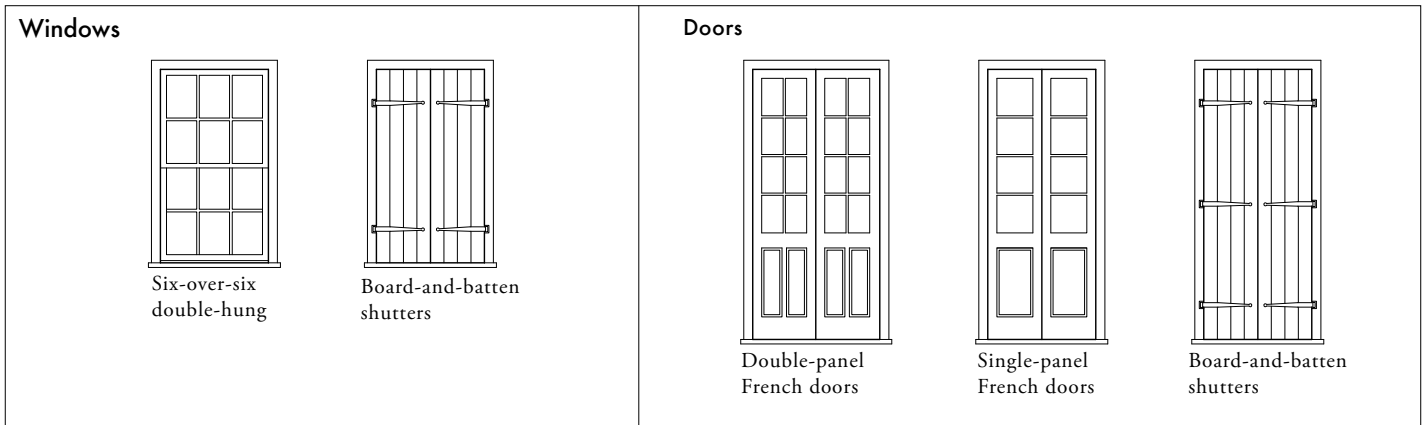
Many of Gretna's earliest structures, like those in New Orleans, were built in the French- and Spanish-influenced Creole style, which is defined by its simplicity, symmetry, and its colonial adaptation of European forms to suit local materials and conditions. In Gretna, the style is limited to Creole cottages. Although few of Gretna's examples remain intact, the style is typically characterized by French doors, six-over-six double-hung windows, board-and-batten shutters, weatherboard siding, a central chimney, gable dormers on cottages with a finished attic story, and an unadorned, shallow roof overhang at the facade. Toward the end of the Creole period, facades were sometimes embellished with Greek Revival door surrounds and rectangular posts, which supported a deeper roof overhang to create a front gallery.

COMMON FEATURES

- Simplicity
- Symmetry
- Board-and-batten shutters on windows and doors
- French doors
- Six-over-six double-hung windows
- Lack of dominant front entrance
- Shallow, unadorned roof overhang at facade
- Weatherboard siding
- Central chimney
- Gable dormers with double-hung windows



CREOLE: TYPICAL ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS



CREOLE COTTAGE

STYLE: GREEK REVIVAL

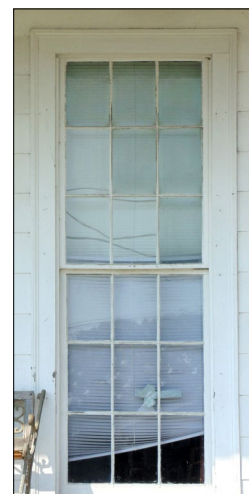
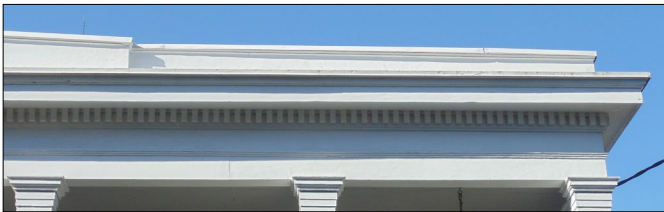
1830s–1860s

The stately Greek Revival style, inspired by the architecture of the ancient Greeks, evolved as a symbol of democracy for the young United States. Popular nationwide for institutional and commercial buildings such as schools and banks, which often took the form of Greek temples, the style was also frequently interpreted for a variety of residential types, from modest cottages to grand Southern plantation homes. In Gretna and New Orleans, this classical style appeared on a number of local building types, including Creole cottages, raised center-hall cottages, and shotguns.

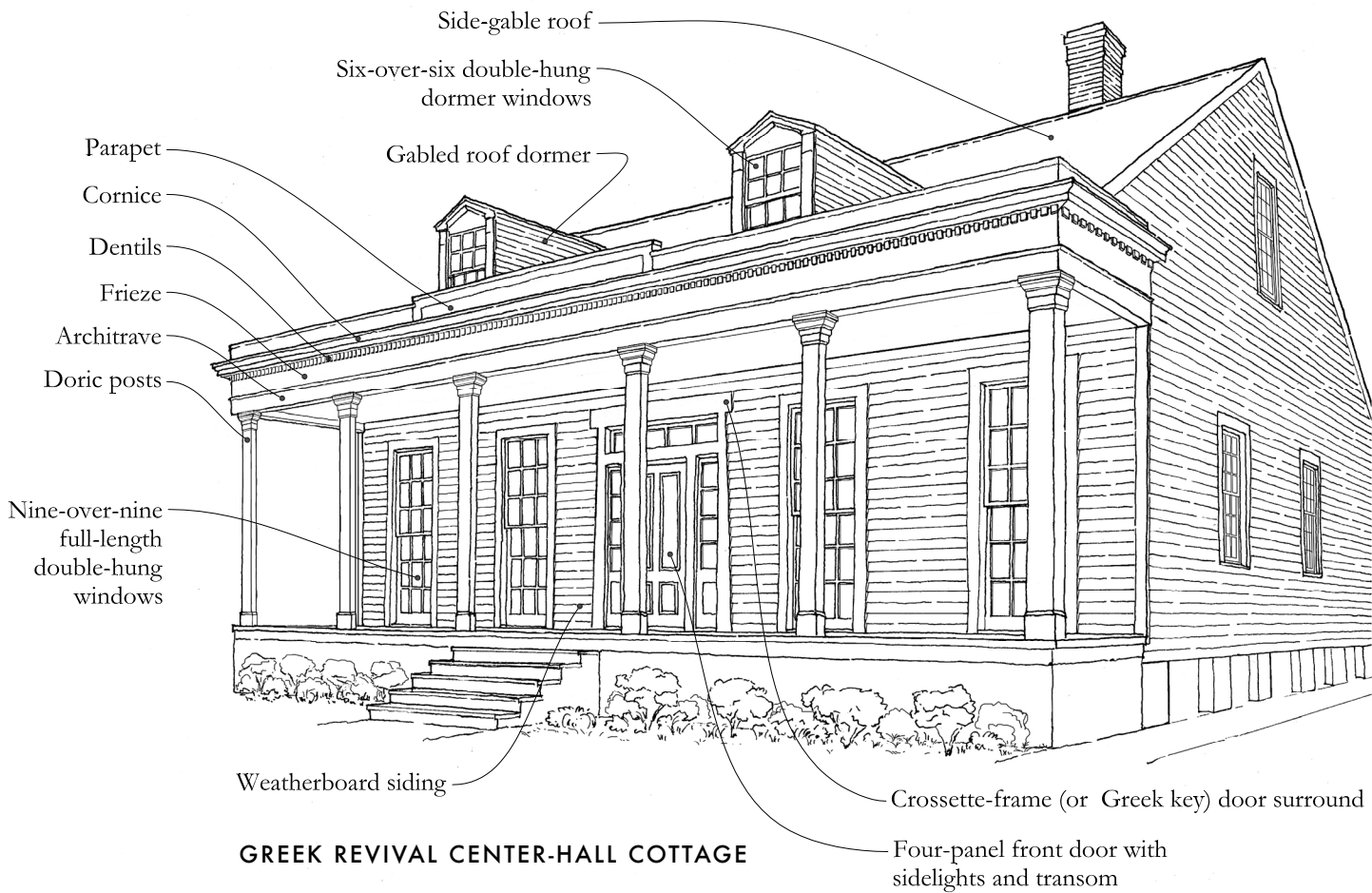
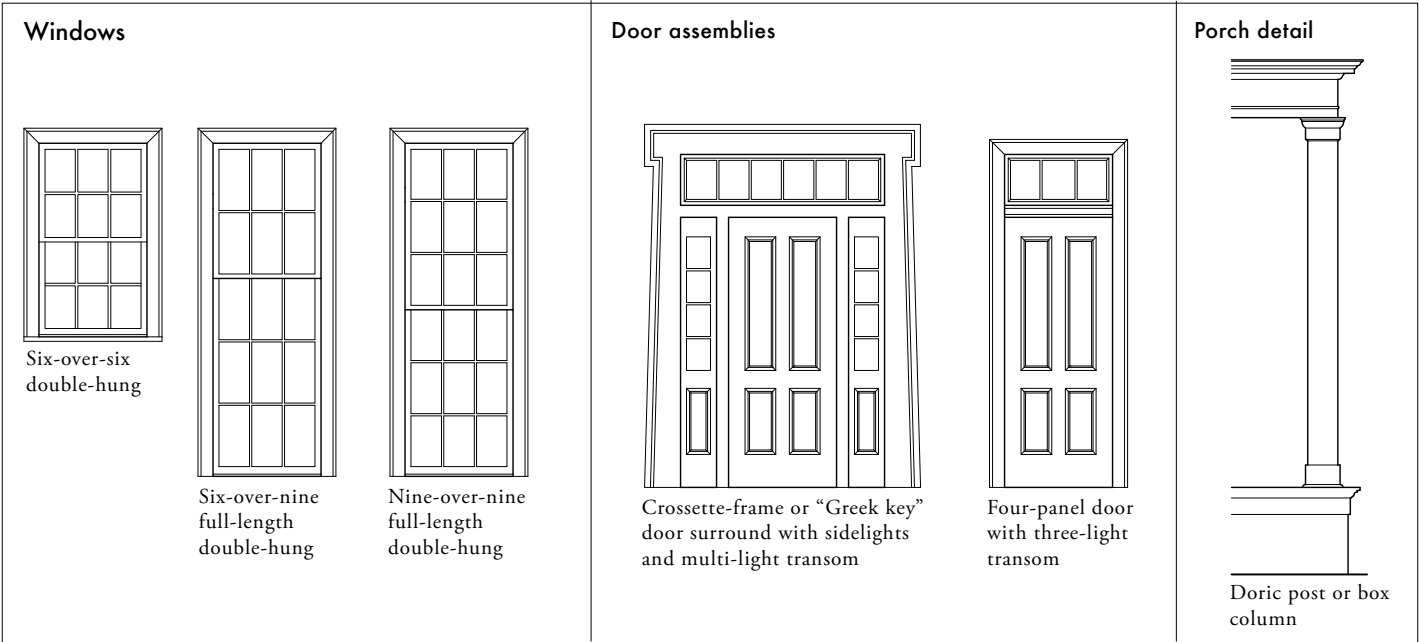
Common features include the use of Greek Doric or Ionic columns, or simpler rectangular Doric posts, to support a front gallery. Entrances may feature a crossette-frame door surround (sometimes called “Greek key”) or may be recessed and flanked by pilasters and rectangular sidelights. Other identifying elements are rectangular openings (the Greeks did not use the arch, a Roman invention), double-hung windows, paneling, dentil molding, and parapets. Foundations are brick piers. Cladding may be weatherboards or, on high-style examples, the structure may have a stucco exterior that has been scored to mimic stone blocks.

COMMON FEATURES

- Crossette-frame (or “Greek key”) door surround
- Doric posts or box columns
- Louvered shutters
- Paneled doors
- Double-hung windows
- Dentil molding, especially at the cornice (which is known as a denticulated cornice)
- Parapets
- Rectangular openings
- Pilasters at entrance or dormers
- Multi-light transoms and sidelights
- Gable dormers



GREEK REVIVAL: TYPICAL ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS



STYLE: ITALIANATE AND BRACKETED

1860s–1900s

The Italianate style, a Victorian interpretation of Italian Renaissance architecture, was introduced to the New Orleans area around 1850 but became a dominant residential style in the 1860s and 70s. It combines classical elements such as arches and quoins with the mass-production capabilities of the late nineteenth century to create an ornate style that mimicked the stone construction of Italy. It persisted in New Orleans until the turn of the twentieth century in the form of “bracketed” shotguns. Defining elements include segmental-arch openings with decorative window and door cornices, modillions, small paired brackets, quoins (placed at corners to mimic stone blocks), drop siding on the facade (also known as droplap siding), classical columns or Doric posts, keystones, curved parapets, and double-hung windows. Foundations are brick piers.

In Gretna, the style is most commonly expressed in the city’s numerous bracketed shotguns, which are defined by the large milled brackets that support the roof overhang on the facade, where quoins and drop siding are also common. Bracketed shotguns often also include Queen Anne details, such as shingled gables and pigmented-glass attic lights, as well as Eastlake millwork. Ornamentation is generally limited to the facade. The Bracketed style persisted in the area until about 1910.

COMMON FEATURES

- Curved parapets
- Brackets (large milled or small paired)
- Four-over-four or four-over-six double-hung windows
- Drop siding (facade only)
- Quoins
- Louvered shutters
- Segmental-arch openings
- Classical columns or rectangular posts
- Full-width porches or stoops



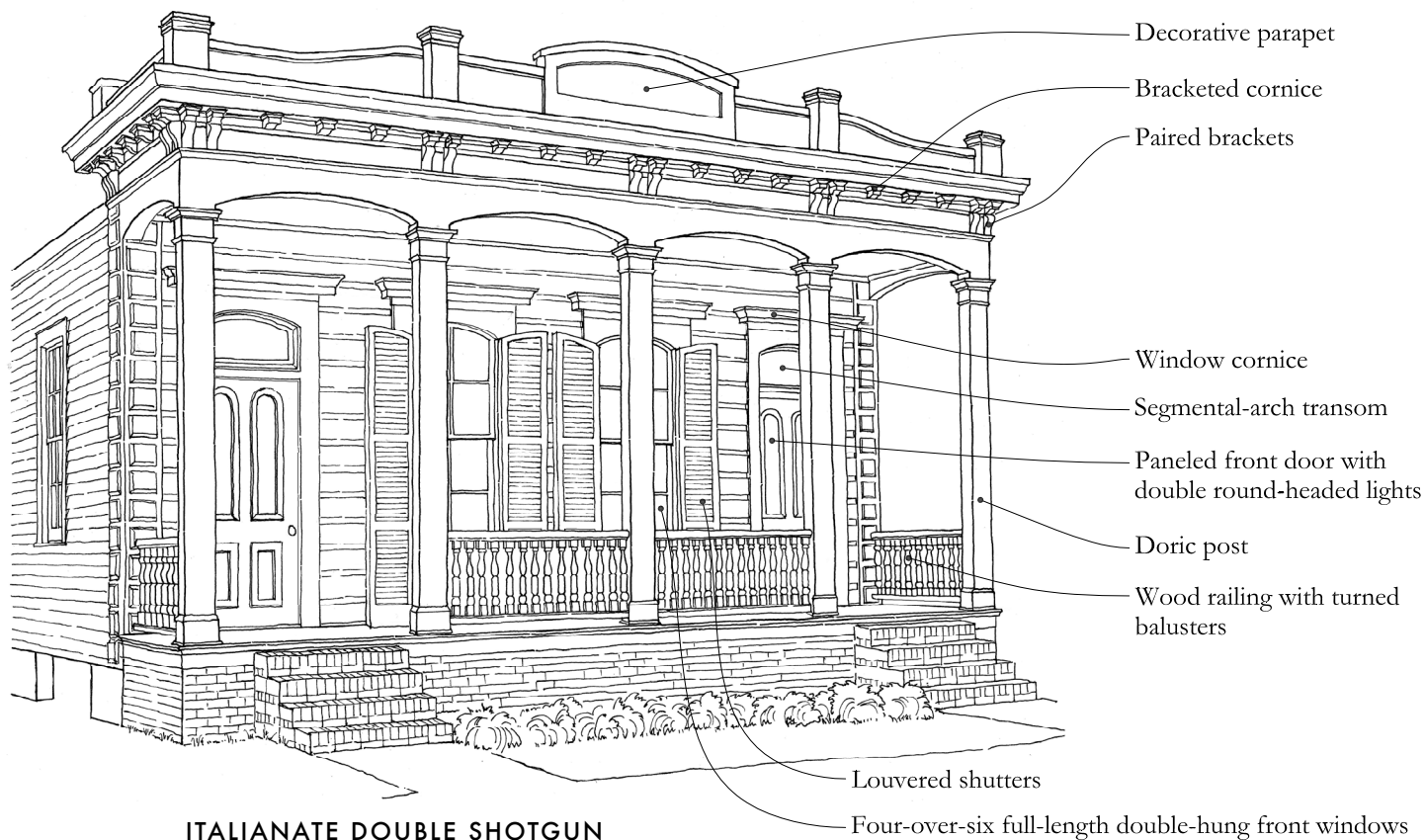
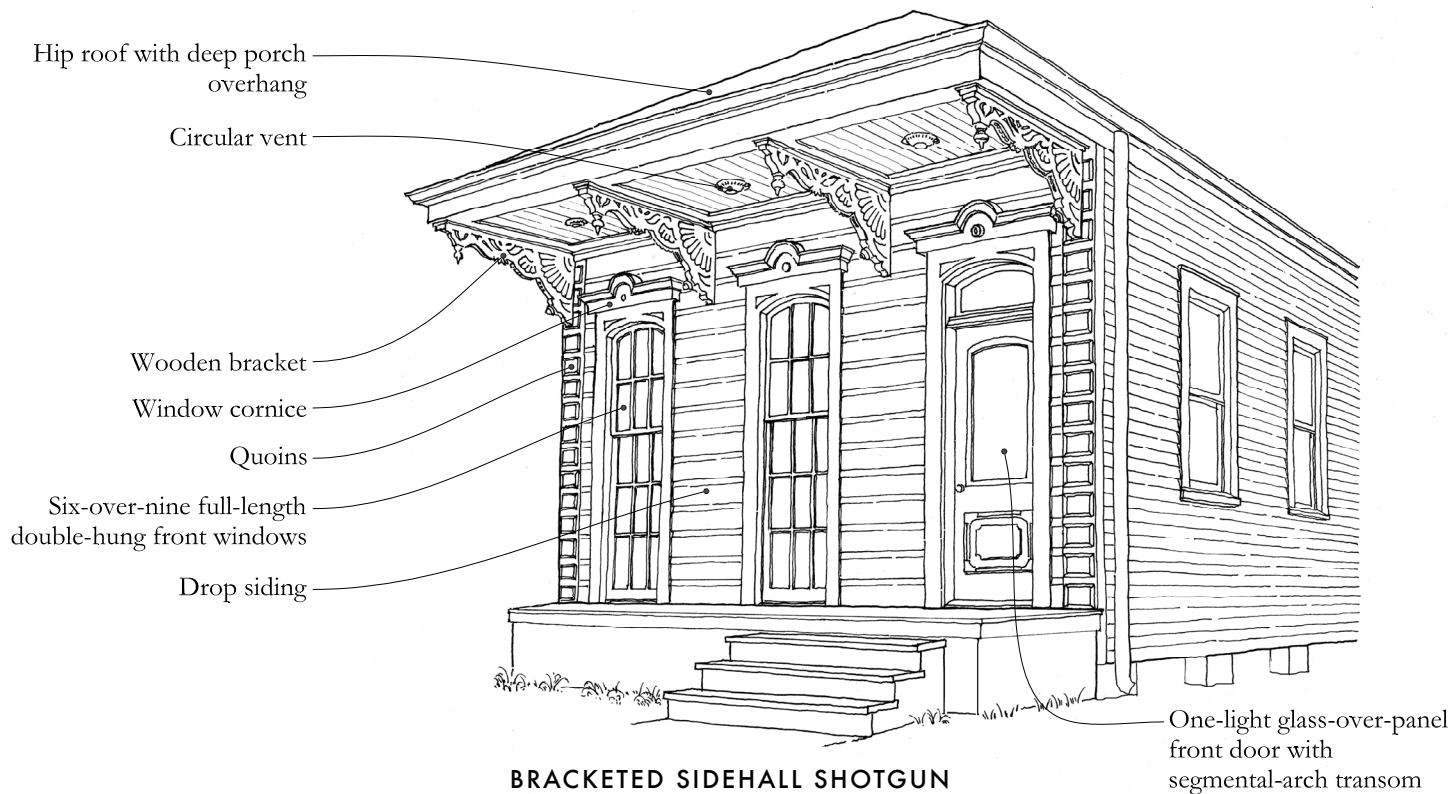
Bracketed double shotgun



Bracketed single shotgun

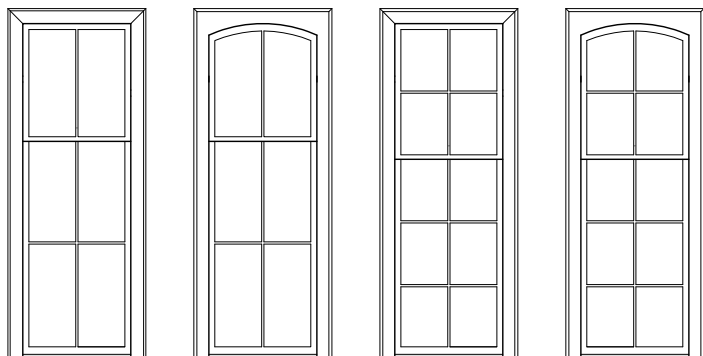


Double shotgun with parapet

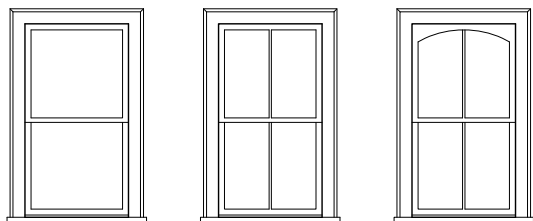


ITALIANATE: TYPICAL ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

Windows

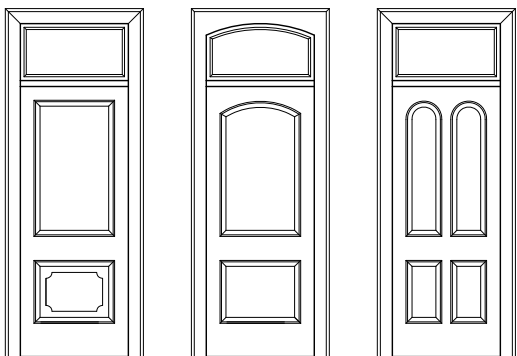


Full-length double-hung windows

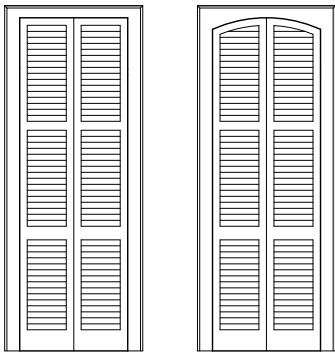


Double-hung windows

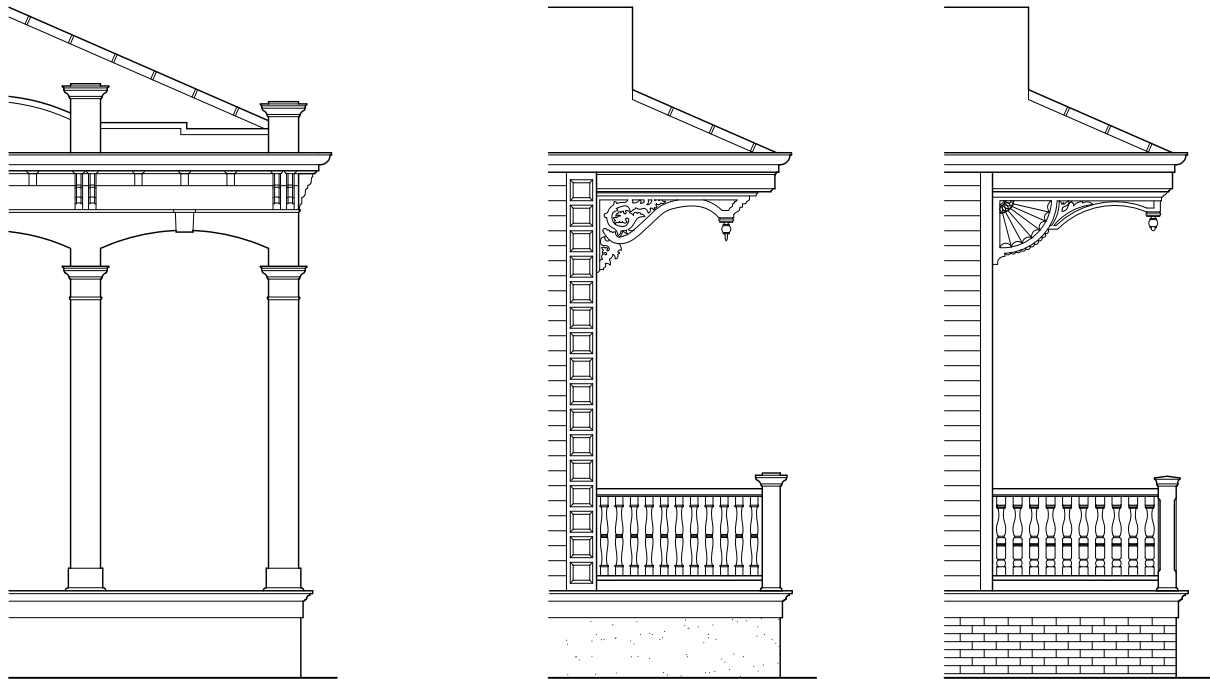
Doors



Louvered shutters



Porch details



ITALIANATE: DETAILS GALLERY



STYLE: QUEEN ANNE AND EASTLAKE

1870s–1900s

The highly decorative Queen Anne and Eastlake styles swept the nation in the late 19th century. Their hallmark abundance of architectural ornamentation was made possible by the new mass production capabilities of the period's sawmills and the country's fast-growing system of railroads, which transported the affordable building materials from coast to coast. The Queen Anne style originated in England, where architects were striving to capture a quaintness associated with their country's past. It is characterized by asymmetry, vertical massing, shingles, textured surfaces, ornamental woodwork, steep roof pitches, bay windows, towers, stained glass, and wraparound porches. The Eastlake style, which is named for British furniture designer Charles Locke Eastlake, is defined by its ornate woodwork, including spindles, piercework, brackets, turned posts, and carved sunburst panels.

In Gretna, Queen Anne and Eastlake elements were most often combined to create a hybrid style for many of the city's single and double shotguns, where the ornamentation is concentrated on the facade. This hybrid frequently features elements of the contemporaneous Italianate style as well, particularly drop siding, segmental-arch openings, and quoins. Foundations are typically brick piers. Chimneys may be finished with decorative brick trim and rooflines with terra cotta. This style is not to be confused with the Italianate "bracketed" style, which often includes a few Queen Anne and Eastlake elements but is defined by the large milled brackets that support the roof overhang.

COMMON FEATURES

- Ornamental woodwork
- Pigmented or slag glass (Queen Anne)
- Double-hung windows
- Bay windows (Queen Anne)
- Textured surfaces, often with shingles (Queen Anne)
- Full-width porches with decorative friezes, turned balusters, and posts
- Louvered shutters
- Decorative brick chimneys
- Terra-cotta roof details, such as cresting and rooster-comb finials



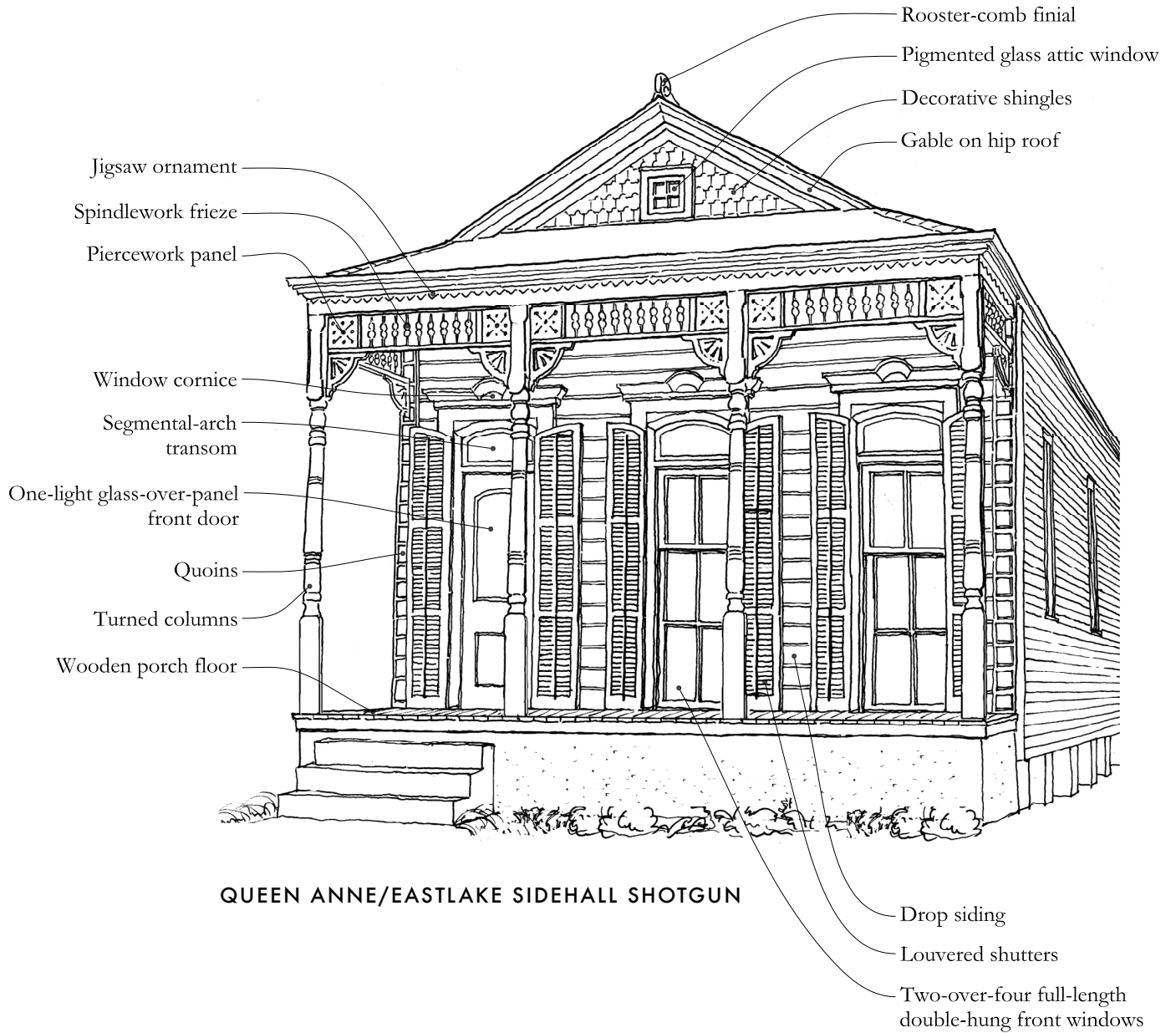
Eastlake single shotgun



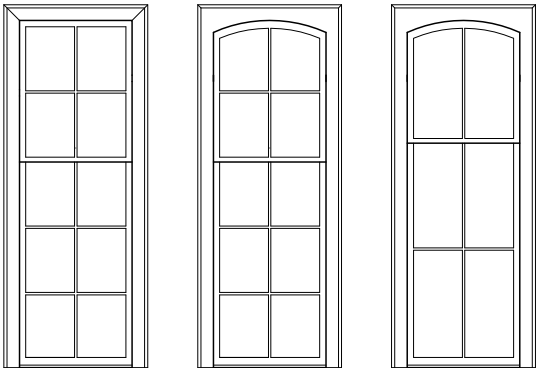
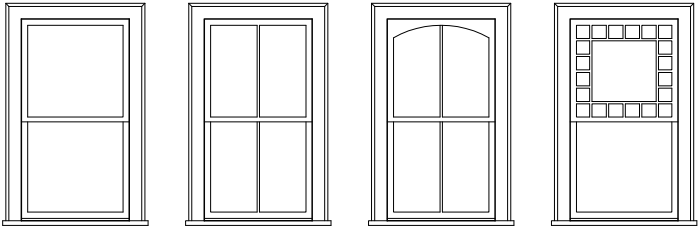
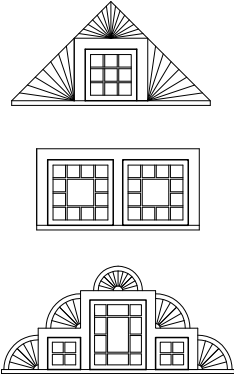
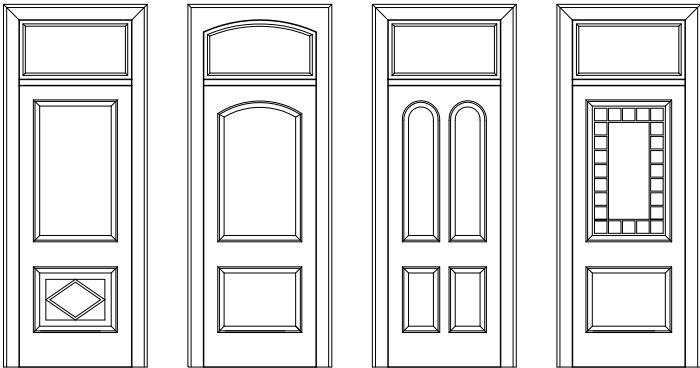
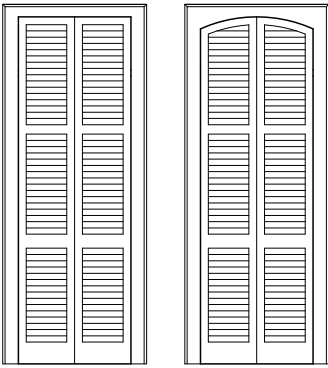
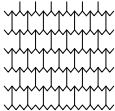
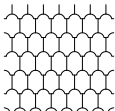
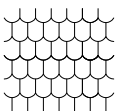
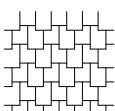
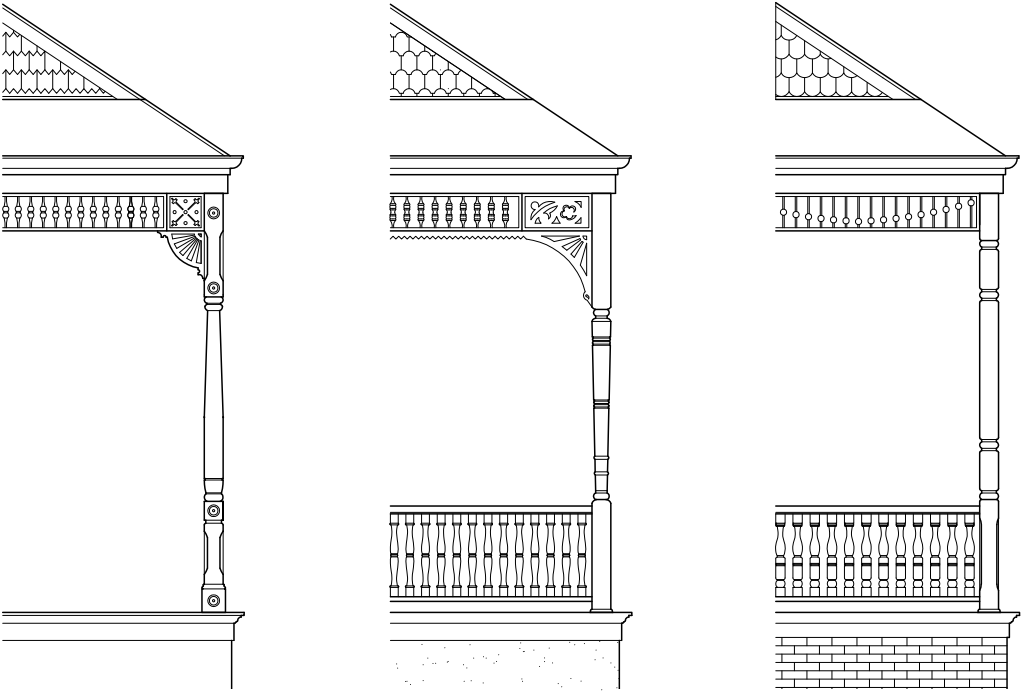
Queen Anne cottage



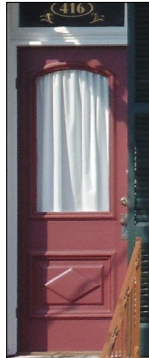
Side-gallery shotgun with rear wing and Queen Anne and Eastlake details



QUEEN ANNE AND EASTLAKE: TYPICAL ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

Windows  Full-length double-hung windows  Double-hung windows		
Gable details 	Doors 	Louvered shutters 
Shingles  Sawtooth  Half cove  Fishscale  Staggered	Porch details 	

QUEEN ANNE AND EASTLAKE: DETAILS GALLERY



STYLE: NEOCLASSICAL REVIVAL AND COLONIAL REVIVAL

1870s–1940s

The Neoclassical Revival style became popular in the years after the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where the symmetrical and orderly White City reignited America's desire for classical architecture. Rather than looking entirely to the past, however, the style incorporated modern, turn-of-the-century materials such as pressed concrete block and large panes of glass. Other identifying features include a symmetrical facade, massive porticoes topped with pediments, modified-diamond-pattern windows and transoms, one-over-one double-hung windows, Ionic or Tuscan Doric porch columns, classical ornamentation such as dentils, laurels, and modillions, and fanlights. Porches and foundations are either brick or pressed concrete block. Windows generally lack shutters. In Gretna, the style is seen on two-story residences but is most common for shotguns and cottages, several of which have a front-gable roof supported by columns to mimic a temple form. Most of Gretna's examples were built between 1900 and 1920.

The 1876 Centennial celebration inspired the related Colonial Revival style, which is far less common in Gretna but can be seen in some of the details on Neoclassical Revival and Craftsman residences. This style combines the classically inspired Georgian and Federal styles of the Revolutionary era with early American colonial forms. Identifying details include six-over-six and nine-over-nine double-hung windows or diamond-pattern casements, Palladian windows, pediments over doors and windows, urn details, and classical balustrades. More delicate in its ornamentation and massing than Neoclassical Revival, Colonial Revival was popular through the 1940s.

COMMON FEATURES

Neoclassical Revival

- Tuscan Doric or Ionic columns
- Modified-diamond-pattern windows and transoms
- Massive porticoes
- Narrow weatherboard siding
- Swag and laurel friezes
- Dentils or modillions

- Fanlights
- No shutters
- One-over-one double-hung windows

Colonial Revival

- Six-over-six and nine-over-nine double-hung windows
- Diamond-pattern casements
- Pediments over doors and windows
- Palladian windows
- Classical balustrades
- Urn details



Neoclassical Revival shotguns



Neoclassical Revival cottages



Two-story Neoclassical Revival with Colonial Revival windows

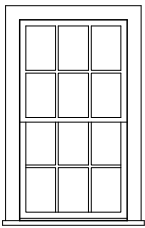
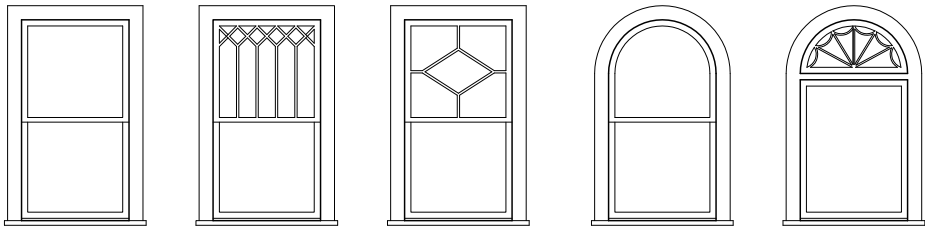


NEOCLASSICAL REVIVAL AND COLONIAL REVIVAL: TYPICAL ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

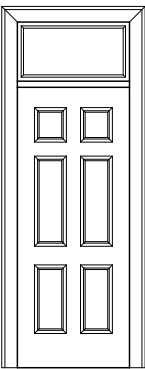
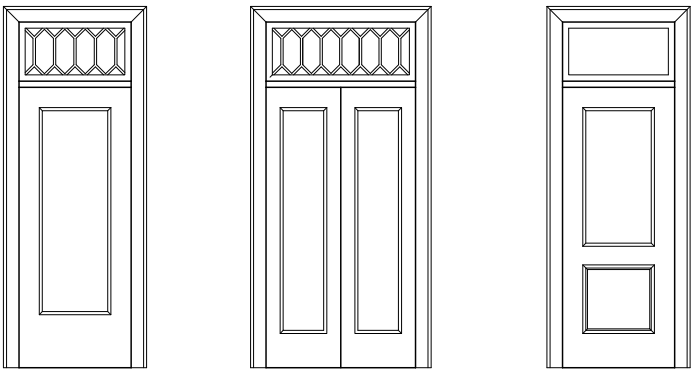
Neoclassical Revival

Colonial Revival

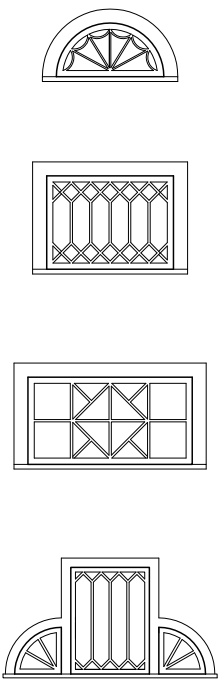
Windows



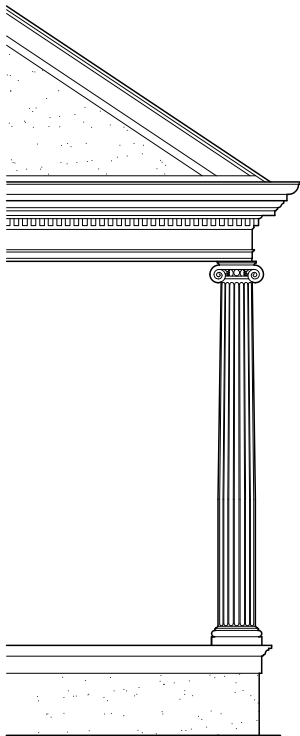
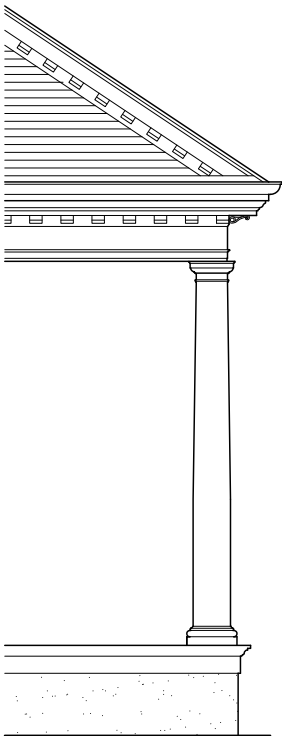
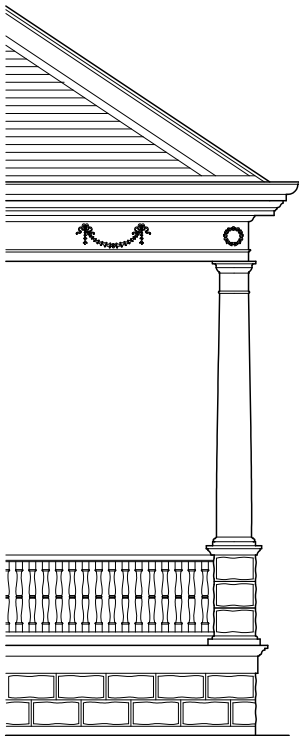
Doors



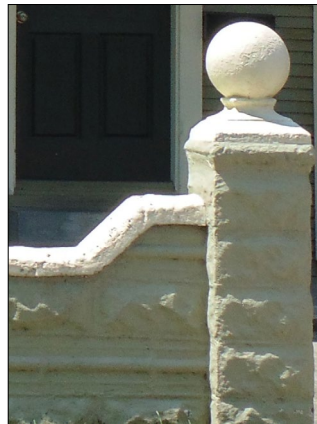
Attic lights



Porch details



NEOCLASSICAL REVIVAL AND COLONIAL REVIVAL: DETAILS GALLERY



From the start of the 20th century through World War II, residential architecture was frequently inspired by historical revival styles adapted for modern American life. In Gretna, Mediterranean Revival, Tudor Revival, and, to a lesser extent, Spanish Colonial Revival, are most common. Many of the city’s examples make subtle reference to these styles with only a handful of defining features. Others are stylistic hybrids, often blending with the popular Craftsman style.

Mediterranean Revival is a wide-ranging style that took inspiration from the residential architecture of the Mediterranean Coast, including Italian villas. Gretna examples, generally two-story single-family homes or bungalows, feature hip or flat-on-hip barrel-tile roofs, arcaded porches, casement windows, stucco exteriors, and classical detailing and symmetry.

Tudor Revival references the picturesque residences of sixteenth-century England. Gretna examples are typically modest cottages with steeply pitched gabled entrances or cross-gabled facades, semicircular openings, half-timbering, and prominent exterior chimneys.

Spanish Colonial Revival takes its cues from the architecture of the Spanish colonies, particularly present-day Central and South America, Florida, and the Southwest. While similar to Mediterranean Revival in its roof treatments, arcades, and use of stucco, Spanish Colonial Revival homes are usually asymmetrical one-story, single-family residences or bungalows with cast ornament concentrated at the entrance, decorative ironwork, exterior chimneys, ogee parapets, and Baroque Solomonick or twisted columns. A notable non-residential example of the style is Gretna’s St. Joseph’s Catholic Church.

COMMON FEATURES

Mediterranean Revival

- Symmetry
- Classical detailing
- Arcades and arched openings
- Barrel-tile flat-on-hip or hip roofs
- Double-hung and casement windows
- Stucco

Tudor Revival

- Steep gables
- Semicircular openings, particularly entrances
- Prominent exterior chimney
- Decorative half-timbering
- Grouped windows
- Stone detailing

Spanish Colonial Revival

- Asymmetry
- Arcades and arched openings
- Cast ornament
- Decorative ironwork
- Solomonick (twisted) columns
- Ogee parapets
- Stucco
- Heavy paneled doors



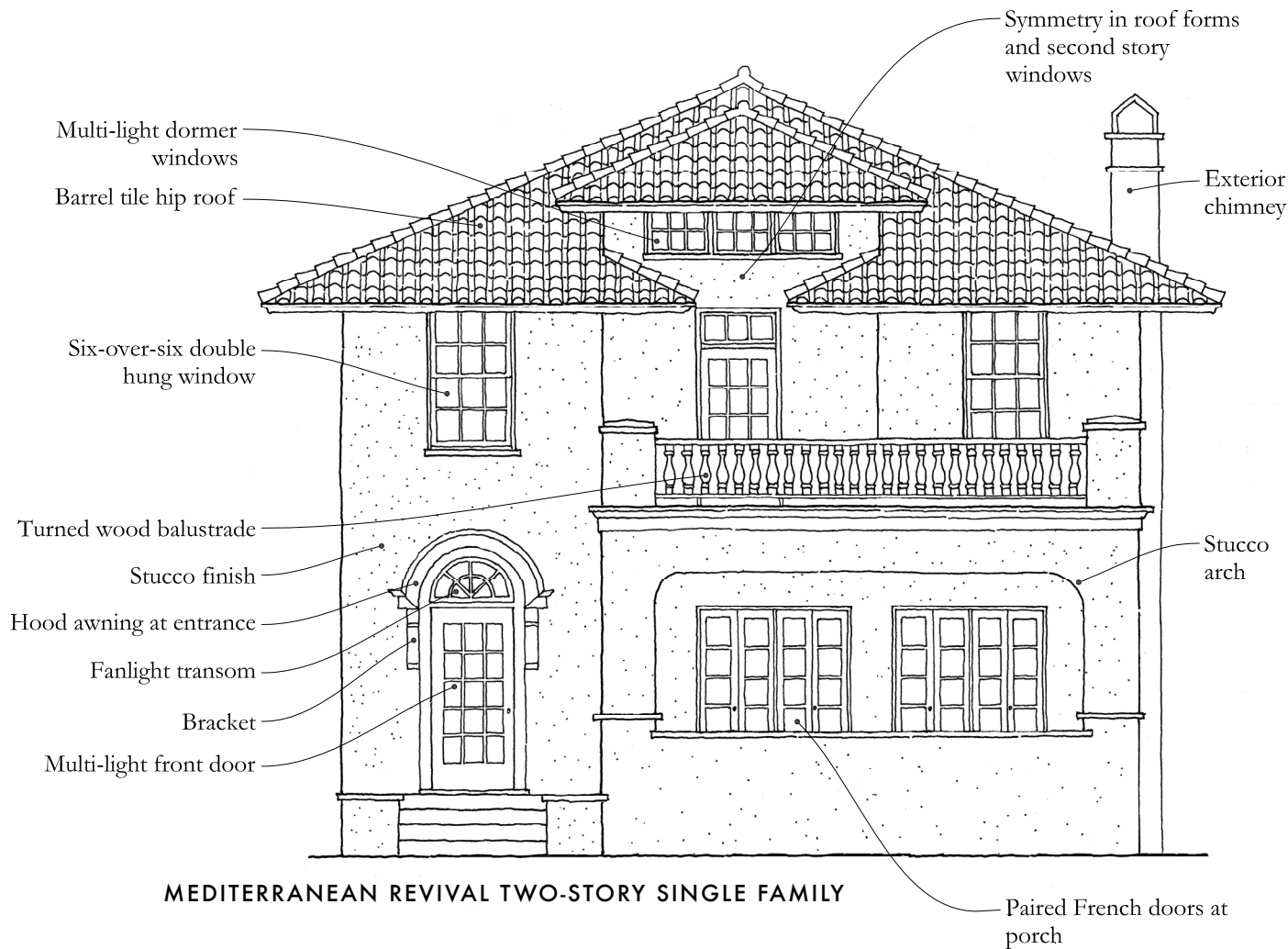
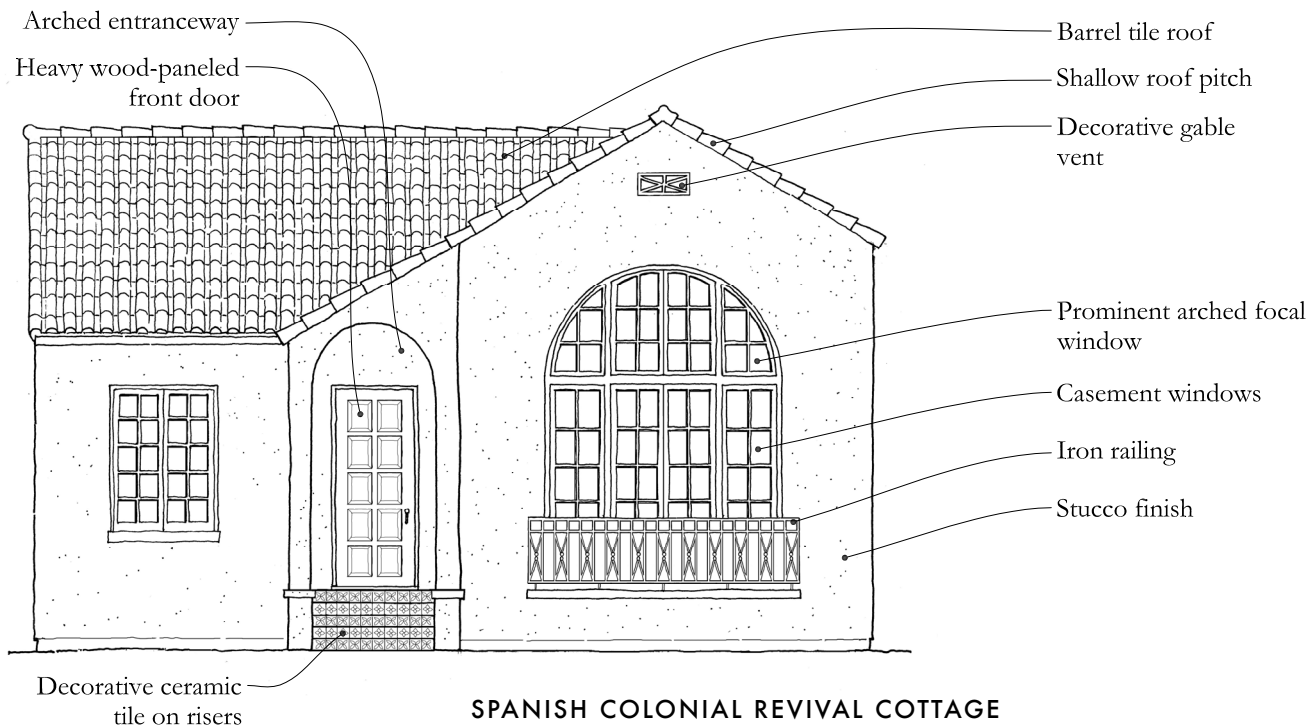
Mediterranean Revival two-story single family



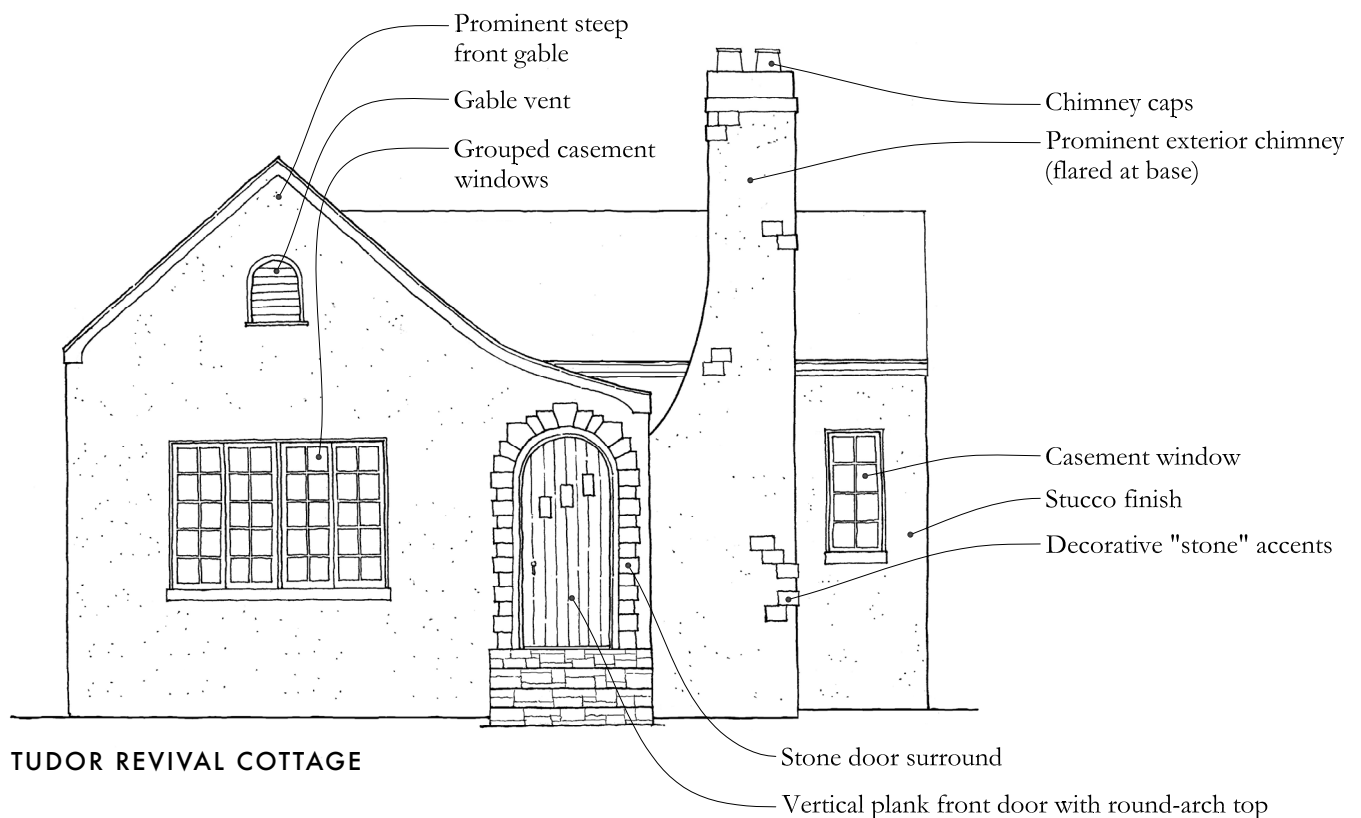
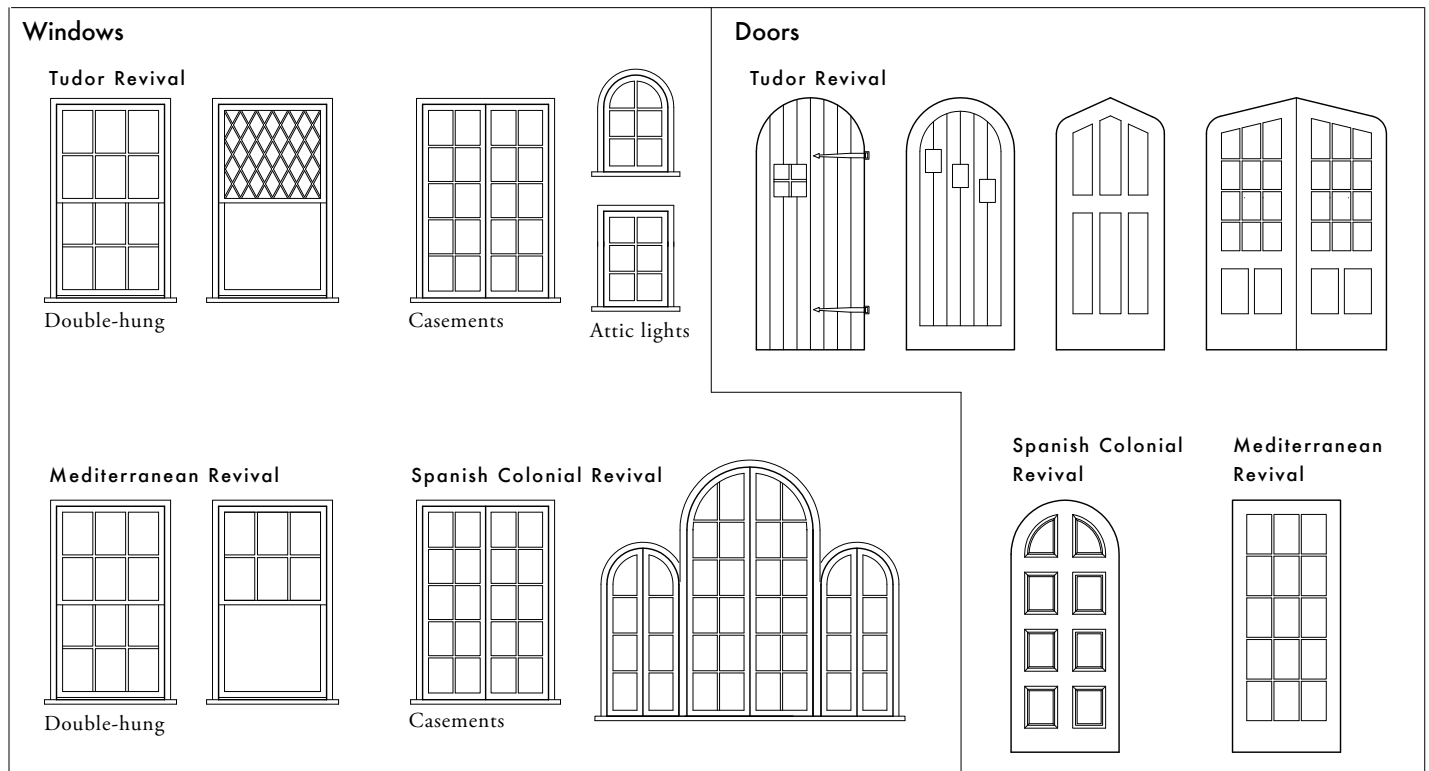
Tudor Revival double cottage



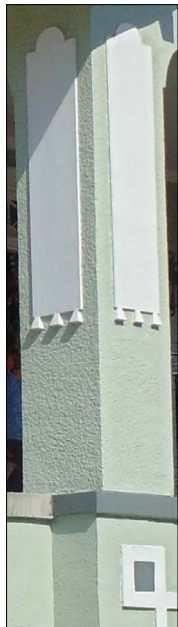
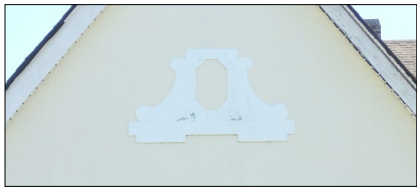
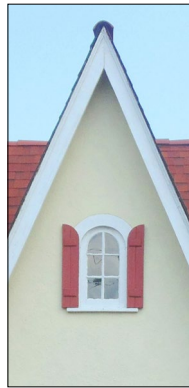
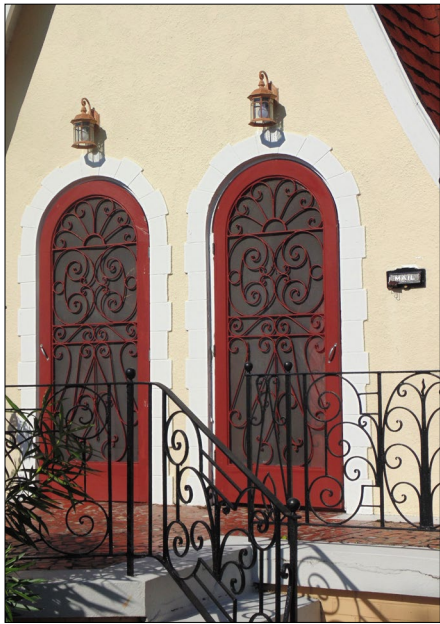
Spanish Colonial Revival raised bungalow with Craftsman elements



20th-CENTURY ECLECTIC REVIVALS: TYPICAL ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS



20th-CENTURY ECLECTIC REVIVALS: DETAILS GALLERY



STYLE: CRAFTSMAN

1910s–1940s

The Craftsman style, also known as Arts and Crafts or Bungalow, was a nationally popular style that originated in California soon after the turn of the 20th century. It was heavily influenced by the late-19th-century English Arts and Crafts movement, which favored the natural and hand-crafted over the abundant machine-made ornamentation that dominated the Victorian period. The Craftsman style first appeared in the New Orleans area in the 1910s and spread quickly to become the predominant residential style of the 1920s and 30s.

Identifying elements include horizontal massing, exposed structural elements, rustic materials and textures, and geometric ornamentation. Foundations are typically brick or concrete-block pier; exteriors are often clad in narrow wood weatherboards. Windows generally lack shutters and can be either double hung or casements. Craftsman houses were among the first to include incorporated garages, which were accessed via double board-and-batten doors that reflected the style in light pattern, texture, and geometry. In Gretna, the Craftsman style was applied to a variety of residential building types, including bungalows and raised bungalows; single, double, and raised double shotguns; two-story doubles; and two-story single-family homes.

COMMON FEATURES

- Deep, unenclosed eaves with exposed rafters
- Exposed structural elements used as ornament, such as carved false beams
- Short, tapered wooden posts or paired brick posts on piers (typically brick, stucco, or rusticated concrete block)
- Geometric brackets or “knee braces”
- Decorative vergeboard
- Full or partial front porch, often with arched openings
- Multi-light geometric transoms, windows, doors, dormer and attic windows, and sidelights
- Board-and-batten garage doors

Bungalows

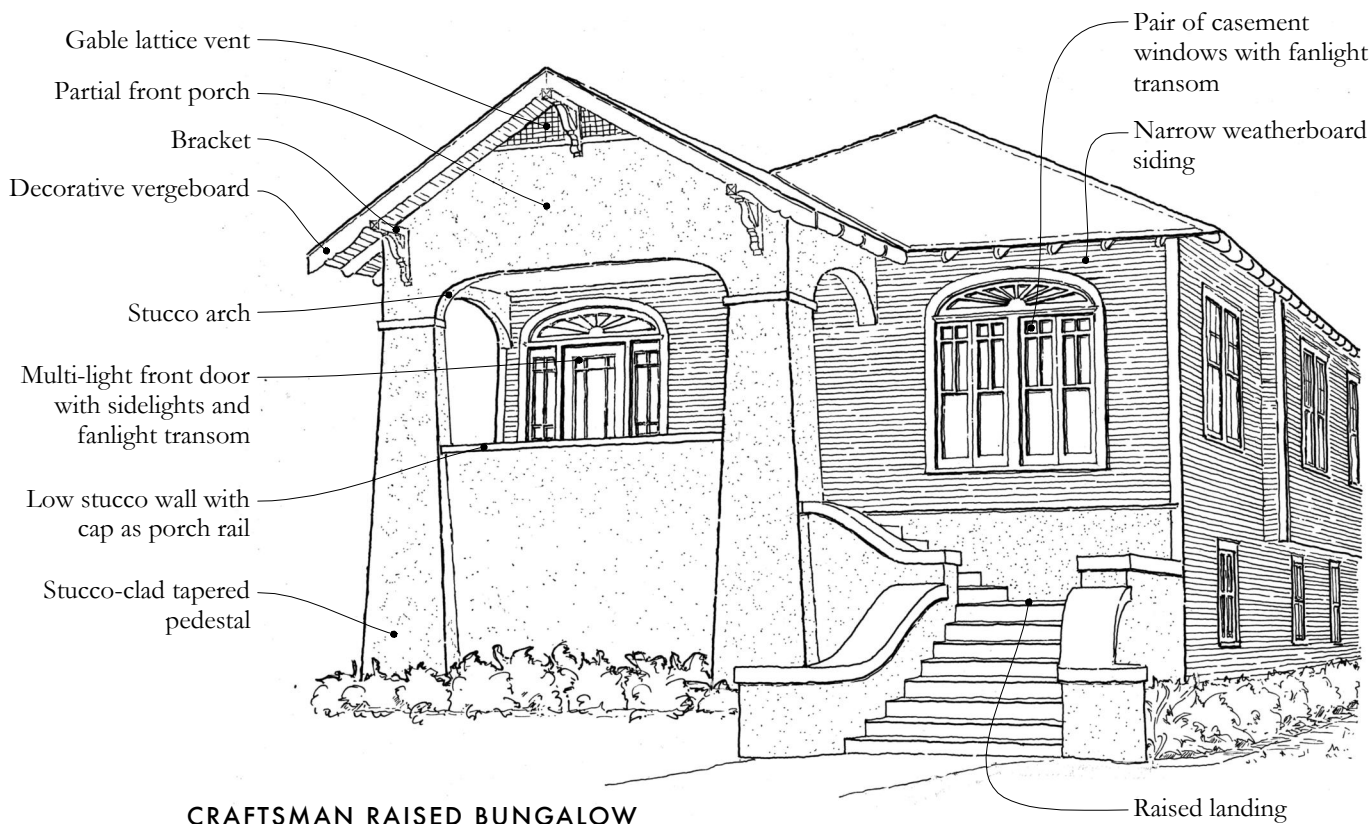


Shotguns



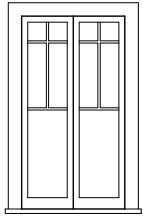
Two-story single family residences and doubles



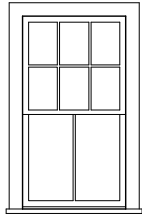
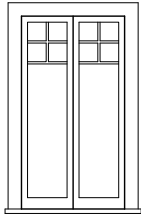


CRAFTSMAN: TYPICAL ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

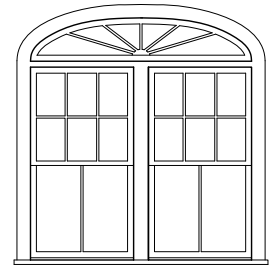
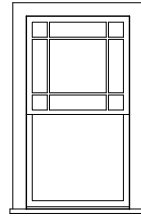
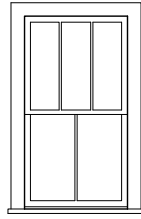
Windows



Casements

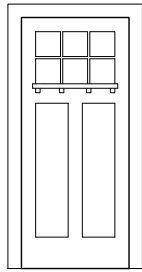
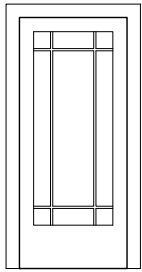
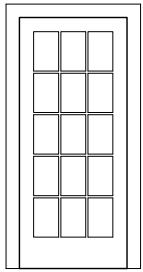


Double-hung

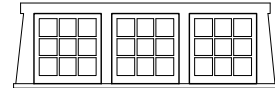
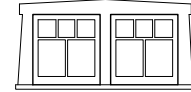


Window assembly

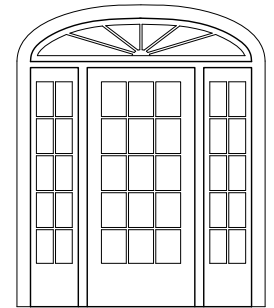
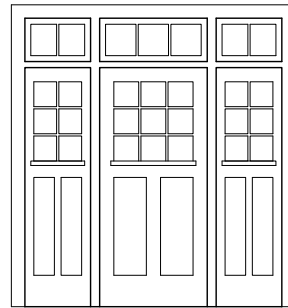
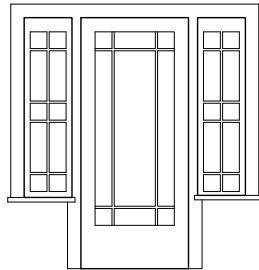
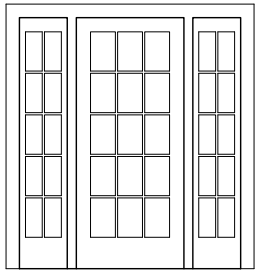
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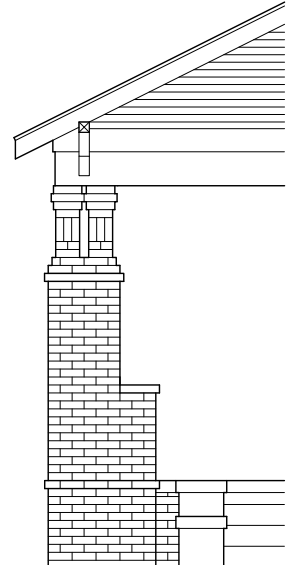
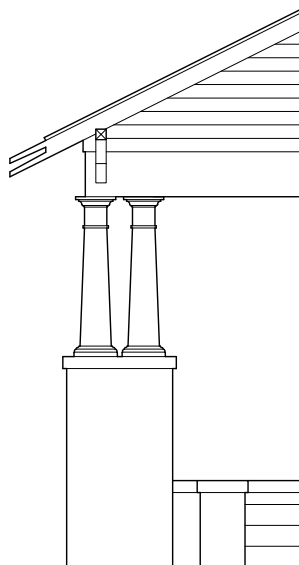
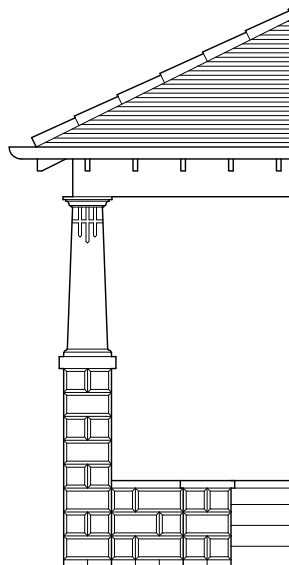
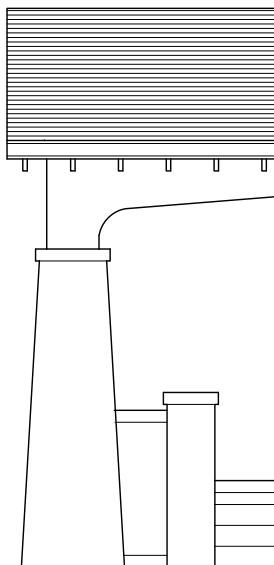
Attic lights



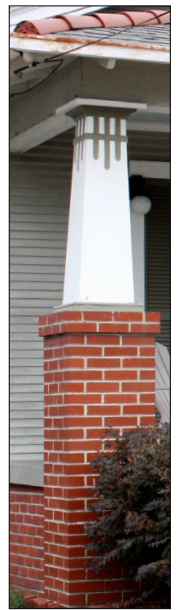
Door assemblies



Porch details



CRAFTSMAN: DETAILS GALLERY



HISTORIC PAINT COLORS

While the HDC does not regulate paint color, the following tips can assist homeowners in choosing a paint color that is appropriate to their building's style:

Creole: Buildings in the Creole style reflect the natural pigments that were available to tint both paint and stucco in the early to mid-19th century. Yellow and red ochres predominated, with accents of white, brown, green (common for shutters) and black (common for railings). Hardware with intricate moving parts, such as locks, was painted black. Simpler hardware, such as hinges, was generally painted the color of the door, window, or shutter on which it was installed.

Greek Revival: White was the dominant choice during the Greek Revival period, as it reflected the faded white marble of the Greek temples discovered by 18th-century explorers. Pale neutral tones such as light grey or parchment would also be considered appropriate. Shutters were often painted green.

Italianate: Houses in the Italianate style were often painted lighter tints that reflect colors found in nature, such as pale grays, light blues and greens, pale yellows, and light rust. Trim was often a darker contrasting color. Pattern books from the mid-19th century (such as those by Andrew Jackson Downing and John Riddell) show color palettes common to the period.

Queen Anne and Eastlake: These styles tended to use a combination of more vibrant colors (often three or more) to highlight a building's various wall surfaces, textures, and abundance of ornamental detailing.

Neoclassical and Colonial Revival: Buildings in these styles were typically painted in softer, lighter colors such as yellow, white, tan, pale blue, or gray. Doors and shutters were often painted a darker contrasting color such as dark green, while trim was generally white or ivory.

Craftsman: Craftsman color schemes tended to reflect the natural hues found in nature: earth tones, browns, red-browns, greens, steely blues, and grays.

Spanish Colonial Revival and Mediterranean Revival: Warmer-toned, light-colored stucco was often used to complement the red/orange clay tile roofs most commonly associated with these two styles.

Tudor Revival: As Tudor Revival often incorporated elements from nature with stone and brick accents, colors tended to be complementary neutrals and earth tones in simple, limited palettes. Trim was often painted a deep contrasting brown.

GUIDELINES: COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

4



INTRODUCTION

Commercial buildings make a vital contribution to Gretna's historic districts because they:

- Represent the history of the city's economic development and its patterns of density
- Provide visual variety
- Promote pedestrian activity
- Contribute to the city's vitality through a dynamic mix of uses.

Gretna's historic commercial buildings are concentrated along the city's retail and mixed-use corridors, and a handful can be found on corners throughout its residential areas. These structures are designed to function as public or semi-public spaces that provide goods and services, including restaurants, offices, and shops. Gretna's examples typically range from one to two stories tall, with clearly defined ground-floor storefronts that may include display windows, awnings, transoms, signage, and entrances that open directly onto the sidewalk. Upper facades on multistory commercial buildings are simpler than the ground floor in order to communicate semipublic or private uses, including office, storage, or residential space.

Gretna's historic commercial styles followed design trends of the period, from late-19th-century Romanesque Revival to early-20th-century Craftsman and 1930s Art Moderne. Others are examples of vernacular style, or structures designed by local builders that do not adhere to any one defined style. These examples, which include many of Gretna's corner stores and some of its masonry structures with modest decorative brickwork, feature commercial elements such as storefronts and awnings but may have few or no identifiable stylistic elements.

Inappropriate changes to a commercial property's scale, materials, and openings can significantly reduce a property's historic integrity. It is important to identify and maintain the key defining components of historic commercial structures in order to maintain their character and maximize their functionality, while ensuring that they continue to serve the needs of Gretna's business community today.

Institutional Buildings

Institutional buildings such as banks, churches, and schools are included in this section of the guidelines because they share many of the same issues as commercial buildings, including signage, lighting, and facade treatments. Recommendations in this section shall apply to both commercial and institutional properties.

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Introduction

Design Issues

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Introduction

Design Issues

COMMERCIAL TYPES

A **one-story commercial building** is designed for purely commercial use. Its dedicated storefront facade may feature display windows, transoms, bulkheads, a canopy or awning, and signage.

A **two-story commercial building** resembles a one-story commercial building with a second floor used for storage, offices, or residential space. The second-floor facade is plainer than the commercial ground floor in order to differentiate between the building's public and more private uses.

A **converted residential building** is a residential structure that has been altered to serve a commercial function. Many of Gretna's examples are shotguns that now function as offices or restaurants.

A **corner store** is a one- or two-story residentially scaled commercial building located on a corner. Historically, these structures had a dedicated living area for the proprietor in the back of the building or upstairs, although this portion of the building is now often used for additional retail, office, or storage purposes. Many examples, though not all, have corner entrances and canopies that extend over the sidewalk.

Institutional buildings, such as churches, schools, and banks, are a range of different architectural types but share some stylistic and functional traits with commercial buildings and are subject to the same design guidelines.



One-story commercial



Two-story commercial



Corner store



Converted residential



Two-story commercial



One-story commercial



Institutional



Institutional

COMMERCIAL STYLES



Tapestry Brick



Vernacular corner store



Craftsman corner store



Craftsman



Spanish Colonial Revival



Art Moderne

Many of Gretna's historic commercial building styles mirrored residential design trends, particularly early-20th-century styles such as Neoclassical Revival, Craftsman, and the Eclectic Revivals. Other styles, such as Art Moderne and Art Deco, were generally reserved for the commercial sphere. Vernacular styles, which encompass many of Gretna's corner store examples as well as its handful of Tapestry Brick buildings, also appear with some frequency throughout the districts.

Vernacular commercial buildings (1880s–1930s) in Gretna feature key elements such as storefronts and awnings but do not adhere to a particular architectural style. Many corner stores qualify as vernacular. Other examples of the vernacular are **Tapestry Brick** commercial structures, which are generally simple in ornamentation with some modest decorative brickwork on the facade, usually at the storefront cornice and roofline.

Craftsman commercial buildings (1910s–1930s) are similar to residential examples of the style. They include exposed rafter tails and other structural elements, multi-light casement doors and transoms, vergeboard, knee braces, and arched stucco openings. A few of Gretna's corner stores are in the Craftsman style.

Spanish Colonial Revival commercial buildings (1910s–1930s) are similar to residential examples of the style in their use of ogee parapets, red tile roofs, and applied ornamentation such as diamonds and medallions.

Art Deco commercial buildings (1920s–1930s) are identified by their smooth, machine-cut surfaces, vertical projections, and geometric detailing. Common construction materials are stucco, various metals, and pigmented terra cotta.

Art Moderne commercial buildings (1930s–1950s) feature curved or angled edges, decorative horizontal lines, flat roofs, and expanses of glass or glass blocks. Materials commonly associated with the style are steel, aluminum, concrete, clear or tinted glass (such as Vitrolite), and neon.

STOREFRONTS

The storefront is the most significant and visually prominent architectural component of a historic commercial building. Located on the building's facade (or wrapping around the primary and secondary facades on corner buildings), its primary role is to communicate that a property is in commercial use and open to the public. The location of the entrance, the use of display windows, the high proportion of glazing, and the presence of some form of overhang to protect pedestrians from the elements all serve to entice potential customers. Historic storefronts in Gretna may have some or all of a storefront's defining features. Any historic features that remain intact should be properly maintained in order to preserve their integrity and function. Inappropriate alterations can have a particularly detrimental impact on the character of a historic streetscape given the storefront's highly visible relationship with the street.

PARTS OF A STOREFONT

Front entrance: single or double doors that provide access to the commercial space. Front entrances typically sit at grade or one step above the sidewalk. They may be recessed in an alcove or sit flush with the property line. Doors are often partially or fully glazed. Exterior floors of recessed entries or steps to doors above grade may feature decorative tiling or terrazzo flooring.

Display windows: large panes of glass behind which merchandise is displayed. Display windows convey a sense of transparency or openness to pedestrians, signaling that the space is open to the public.

Bulkheads: horizontal components between the foundation and display windows on installed storefronts. Bulkheads may be smooth or paneled.

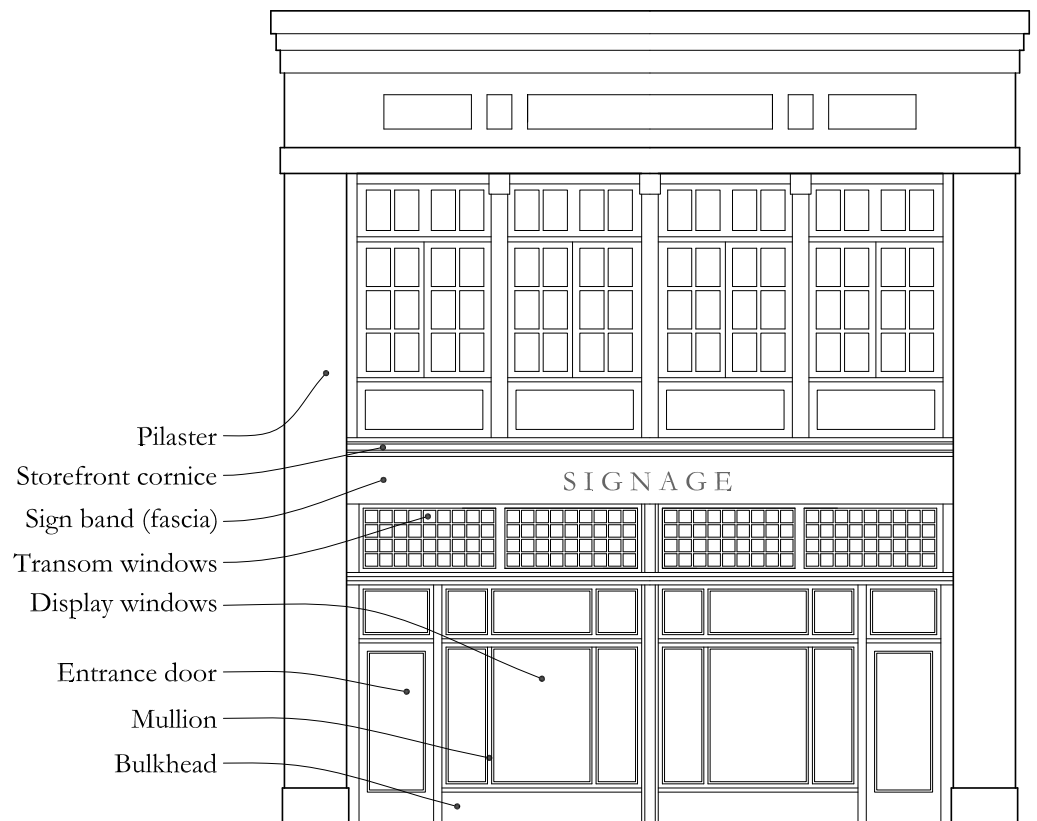
Mullions: vertical components that frame the openings of an installed storefront.

Transom window: glazed openings located above the door, display windows, and/or below the storefront cornice line to provide additional light to the interior. Operable transoms also provide additional ventilation.

Cornice: uppermost line of an installed storefront that caps the transoms and visually separates the ground-floor commercial space from semipublic or private upper floors.

Awning or canopy: wood, metal, or fabric overhang that protects the storefront and pedestrians from the elements and provides a potential space for signage.

Signage: advertising mechanism that may be found attached to the building along a sign band or fascia, printed on an overhang, applied to glazing, or laid into the street or recessed entry with tiles.



MATERIALS AND CONTEXT

The appearance of a historic storefront often reflects the materials and technology that were prevalent at the time of its construction. In Gretna, early storefronts were generally of wood frame construction, housing perhaps one or two commercial tenants with living quarters above. Wood was used not only for the structure of the building, but also the detailing and ornament—from wood cornices, to wood window and door frames, to wood-paneled bulkheads.

While wood framing remained a popular and economical choice for modestly scaled commercial buildings through the 1920s, other commercial buildings—particularly those occupying prominent sites in Gretna’s downtown—were sometimes constructed of brick. Masonry buildings conveyed a sense of permanence and durability and reflected prevailing trends and preferences for storefront design: wide repetitive structural bays for storefronts to fit within and large plate-glass surfaces for merchandising and display. Masonry buildings also employed a variety of materials to express both structure and ornament. It was not uncommon to incorporate cast-iron columns and lintels on the ground floor. Glazing units could be framed in wood or a variety of metals such as cast iron, bronze, or copper. Ornamentation might incorporate decorative brick patterns, limestone, cast stone or terracotta. Bulkheads could be brick, stucco, wood, stone, or tile.

Storefronts were frequently altered. It was not uncommon for a new owner or occupant to give a building a facelift, swapping out dated or deteriorated components with more fashionable and trendy materials. In the 1930s and 40s, that might mean introducing new modern materials made available through advances in technology: aluminum and stainless steel window frames, pigmented structural glass (such as Vitrolite), glass block, mirrored glass, and neon. Some of these retrofits have gained historic significance in their own right.

Later alterations from the 1960s onward, however, often compromised the historic integrity of older storefronts. Original character-defining features were often removed or covered with metal cladding. Other common alterations included covering transoms (often in tandem with dropped interior ceilings), filling in window and door openings, cutting out new openings for air-conditioning units and vents, and cluttering the facade with oversized or inappropriate awnings and signage.

In recent years there has been a renewed interest in restoring and preserving historic storefronts, often in conjunction with efforts to revitalize downtown “Main Streets.” This reflects the growing recognition that storefronts with intact historic character significantly contribute to a community’s sense of place.



A variety of ornament adorns this masonry commercial building.



This Art Moderne storefront features pigmented structural glass.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

DO

- Determine the character-defining elements of the storefront that should be retained. What materials are original to the building? What may have been changed over time? Keep in mind that some early alterations (such as a 1920s installation of Vitrolite glass) might be considered historic and worthy of preservation. The HDC can advise in such situations.
- When possible, materials used in a storefront's renovation should reflect the building's period of initial construction (e.g., match existing wood, brick, stucco, or metal). Contemporary materials such as modern extruded aluminum storefront units, vinyl siding, or concrete block may compromise the building's historic integrity.
- Multiple storefronts within a single building facade should be considered as a whole. Elements such as matching doors and windows establish a rhythm along the street and convey a unified image. Tenants should convey their individuality through distinctive signage and creative window displays.
- Try to maintain a storefront's original door and window openings, and well as original mullion patterns.



This storefront retains a majority of its character-defining features, including transoms, a suspended canopy, and display windows.

DON'T

- If a commercial building has been converted to a non-retail use (e.g., a restaurant or bar, offices, or living quarters), do not board up existing storefront display windows for privacy. Consider instead installing interior shutters, curtains, or blinds.
- Retain window transparency when possible. Dark or tinted glass tends to be alienating to pedestrians and should be replaced with clear glass.
- Do not infill or alter window and door openings, including transoms. If a ceiling must be lowered below the level of the window, allow an interior full-height space adjacent to the window before dropping the ceiling.
- Metal security bars or grilles are not recommended on historic storefronts. When possible, use alternate methods to secure the property such as tempered glass, electronic security systems, and motion detectors. Roll-down open-weave security shutters installed on the interior of the window are an appropriate option.
- Components related to building systems (e.g., HVAC equipment, air conditioners, electrical equipment, etc.) should be concealed from the street view and preferably located on side or rear elevations. Any rooftop mechanical equipment should not be visible from the street.



Many of the original character-defining features of these storefronts have been altered or removed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Maintenance, Repair, and Replacement

Small improvements can make a dramatic difference in the appearance of a streetscape. It is generally recommended that existing and original materials on a storefront be maintained and repaired as needed to extend their useful life. Typical maintenance items include:

- Regular cleaning to remove dirt and corrosive pollutants
- Repointing of brick and masonry
- Periodic repainting of exterior woodwork
- Minor carpentry repairs at doors and windows
- Repair of damaged or missing glass panes
- Repair of sagging gutters and rusted downspouts
- Replacement of faded or damaged awnings and canopies.

When only part of a storefront such as a door or window must be replaced, the new component should match the original to the extent possible. In instances where an entire storefront unit must be replaced, the new design should complement the existing building in terms of materials, patterns, and scale. Be mindful that some contemporary off-the-shelf storefront units may not be compatible with a building's architectural type or style. For example, a modern anodized aluminum storefront system would likely look out of place on a nineteenth-century wood-frame building.

SUSTAINABILITY

Most historic commercial buildings possess a number of inherent “green” qualities. Because air conditioning was not commonplace until after World War II, buildings were typically designed to promote natural ventilation. Artificial lighting was expensive and not always effective, so it was important to maximize the amount of daylight a building could receive. Also, many early buildings were constructed using local materials, which required less energy to transport and were representative of local culture and building traditions. The following building strategies were often employed in the design of early storefronts, and still represent a smart and sustainable response to Louisiana's hot and humid climate.

- Operable transoms to promote cross-ventilation.
- Awnings and canopies to provide shade and control solar heat gain.
- Tall ceilings and ceiling fans to moderate indoor temperature.
- Large panes of glass and transoms for daylighting.
- Use of local materials (brick, stucco, lime-based plaster, cypress and pine).



This historic storefront's character-defining features are in place but require repair and maintenance.



The original storefront windows of this two-story commercial building have been replaced with inappropriately sized window units and concrete-block fill.

AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

Storefront awnings and canopies over sidewalks have long been a familiar feature of commercial streetscapes, as evidenced by photographs of 19th- and early-20th-century downtowns. As shading devices, awnings and canopies shield storefront windows from direct sun, reduce interior glare, and prevent merchandise displays from fading. They add visual interest to a facade in the form of color, pattern, rhythm and texture. They also provide a secondary location for signage, most often along the valence or skirt.

The simplest awnings are generally composed of lightweight fabric stretched over a rigid triangulated frame that is attached to the building exterior at one end and sloped at an angle towards the sidewalk. Historically, cotton duck was the fabric of choice, but its tendency to stretch, fade, and mildew over time led shopkeepers to favor more modern materials such as vinyl, acrylic, and polyester, and later aluminum and fiberglass. In the nineteenth century, plumbing pipe was a popular option for awning frames. Now most are constructed of aluminum or light-gauge steel. Awnings may be fixed or retractable.

Canopies, like awnings, project from the face of the building and provide similar protection from sun and rain. However they tend to be constructed of more rigid and permanent materials and may be either flat or shed-like in form. They are generally supported with cables from above, brackets below, or with slender posts along the sidewalk edge.

Awnings may be located directly above the building entrance or between structural bays, which allows the architectural framework and organization of the building to still be clearly expressed. It would be rare in a historic context to find a single awning spanning multiple bays. Canopies, by contrast, occasionally do run continuously along the length of the facade. It is most common for awnings and canopies to be attached to the building between the display window and transom or just below the lintel.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

DO

- Canopies and awnings that protrude into the public way are regulated by the local building department. Rules regarding size, placement, and the vertical distance to the sidewalk should be consulted when planning an awning installation.
- If awnings are already present on a historic building, they should be evaluated to determine if they are appropriate to the style, age, and character of the building.
- When a building has multiple tenants, awnings should be coordinated to present a unified appearance (although they need not necessarily be identical).

DON'T

- Barrel and balloon-shaped awnings are discouraged. Traditional, sloped shed awnings tend to be more appropriate for historic buildings.
- Vinyl and glossy plastic fabrics are discouraged. Canvas, canvas blends, or durable, weather-resistant acrylic fabrics that resemble canvas are more appropriate for historic buildings.
- Do not alter, obscure or remove historic components of a building in order to install an awning or canopy.



A traditional, sloped shed awning in downtown Gretna



Balloon-shaped awnings are generally inappropriate in historic contexts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Maintenance, Repair, and Replacement

Due to repeated exposure to sun, rain and pollution, awning fabric tends to fade and wear over time and may need to be periodically replaced. Frames are generally more durable than fabric, but are subject to frequent wind loads and may weaken, bend, or break. Their condition should be regularly checked and any broken components repaired or replaced.

When a new awning is to be installed on an existing building, care should be taken with the design so as not to overwhelm or detract from the building's historic character. Sometimes it is possible through photographs or remnant hardware to determine what type or style of awning might have historically complemented the storefront.

If possible, existing hardware or brackets should be reused so as to minimize the number of holes that must be drilled into an existing facade. Or, choose mounting methods that can easily be patched if/when an awning is removed (e.g., locate anchors in mortar joints or stucco rather than in stone surfaces).



This corner building incorporates a well-maintained suspended canopy.



A suspended canopy with applied scalloped detailing



A canvas awning in its rolled-up position

SIGNAGE

Signage is the primary way that commercial tenants communicate their business brand and identity, establish a presence on the street, and attract potential customers to their location. While a well-designed sign can complement and add visual interest to a facade, a poorly designed or installed sign can overwhelm a storefront, detract from the streetscape, and even harm historic elements of a building.

Signs that are mounted to a building facade generally fall into the following categories:

- **Wall signs** are one-sided and fastened to the face of a building.
- **Projecting signs** are two-sided and mounted perpendicular to the face of a building.
- **Suspended signs** are hung from an architectural element such as a canopy or balcony.
- **Window signs** are attached directly to glazing. They may be hand painted or appliqued vinyl.
- **Awning signs** incorporate lettering on the awning fabric, typically along the skirt or valence.

Signs may be made of a variety of materials including wood, cast iron, bronze, stainless steel, or glass. Selected materials should be durable and weather resistant so that they do not corrode, rust, crack, peel, or flake when exposed to the elements. “Box” signs that incorporate built-in lighting are generally inappropriate for historic buildings and are better suited to freestanding locations in landscaped beds or parking lots. Neon signs, which gained popularity in the 1920s and 30s, are rare in Gretna’s historic districts. Neon is generally only recommended if it was historically part of a storefront design.

Because new signs are required each time a tenant moves in, they are frequently subject to replacement. Any new signage should comply with the City of Gretna’s sign ordinance, which regulates the sizes and types of signage allowed on a building.

HISTORIC SIGNAGE

Historic signage reveals information about the former use of the building and the original owner or tenant. It is often an inherent part of the building’s architecture, with lettering cast in stone along a building frieze or embedded in an ornamental medallion. Embedded street tiles at a storefront entrance are also valuable remnants of a building’s history.

These types of historic signage are an important part of the building fabric and should be retained. Doing so does not reduce the amount of allowable signage that a new tenant is permitted to display.



Historic street tiles add character and texture to a district’s streetscape.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

DO

- Consult the City of Gretna's sign ordinance to determine what size and type of sign is allowed for your location.
- When designing a new sign for a historic building, research what types of signs might historically have been used. Allow that information to guide decision making.
- Pay attention to scale. Small-scale signs are generally appropriate to small-scale buildings and pedestrian traffic. Larger signs are more appropriate to vehicular traffic where it is necessary to catch the eye of someone traveling at a higher speed.
- Flat wall signs should be well integrated into the overall facade design.
- When a building has multiple tenants, sign locations and styles should be coordinated to present a unified appearance.
- Remnant signs from recent tenants should be removed before new signs are installed. In some cases, it may be possible to reuse existing anchors or hardware.



This corner florist shop features an example of a classic projecting sign.



This bank incorporates raised lettering along a sign band as well as signage above the entrance door.

DON'T

- Do not alter, obscure, or remove historic components of a building in order to install a sign.
- Do not run conduit across the face of a building in order to electrify a sign. When illumination is allowed, any conduit should be well concealed.



This building has an overabundance of signs that obscure the historic storefronts and balconies.

LIGHTING

While streetlights provide a base level of illumination on a block, many buildings incorporate additional decorative or ornamental lighting along their facades. Well-designed lighting highlights building elements, signs, and distinctive features, and it also provides a sense of security for pedestrians.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

DO

- Lighting should be appropriate to the building's style and scale.
- Historic fixtures should be retained, and may be outfitted with new bulbs or fittings to increase light levels.
- Warm tones, similar to the light cast by incandescent bulbs, are preferred in historic contexts.
- Any conduit, wiring, or junction boxes on the facade should be well concealed.



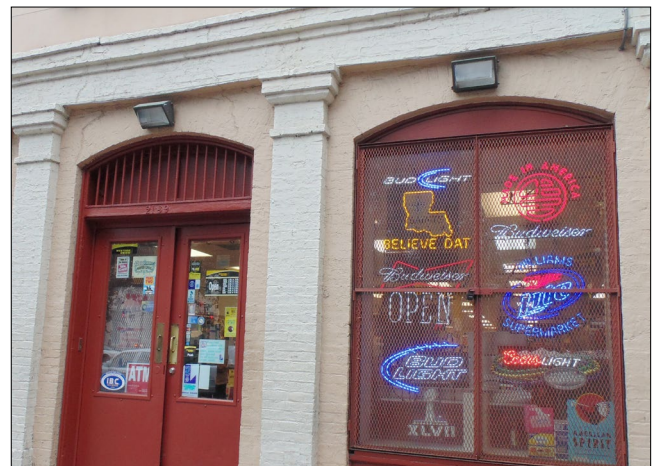
Gooseneck lighting is an appropriate way to illuminate a building's features.



Traditional gaslamp-style fixtures are a subtle and effective addition to this storefront.

DON'T

- Light illumination should not spill over to neighboring properties (light pollution).
- Excessive lighting (e.g., too many fixtures) should be avoided.
- Avoid flashing, pulsating, or similarly dynamic lighting. Aim for an even illumination level.
- Fluorescent tube lighting is generally not appropriate along street elevations.



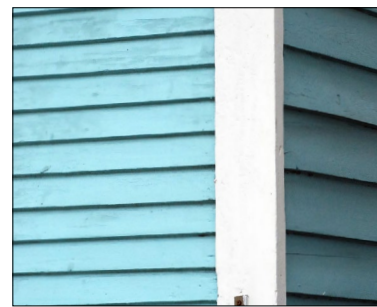
These modern light fixtures do not match the building's historic style.



These flood lights with exposed wiring detract from the historic building's storefront.

GUIDELINES: REPAIR & RENOVATION

5



INTRODUCTION

Caring for Historic Buildings

The following guidelines are designed to assist owners, residents, and contractors interested in repairing or renovating a historic property within Gretna's two historic districts. The information and examples provided here can benefit both small- and large-scale projects. The section begins with an introduction to various preservation approaches, from simple repairs to large-scale alterations. Major building components—foundations, porches, exterior woodwork, windows and doors, walls, and roofs—are then addressed in detail, with specific information about function, historic context, design, maintenance, repair, and replacement.

Maintenance

While all buildings need regular upkeep, older structures in particular require systematic preventive maintenance. Exterior materials exposed to rain, wind, intense sun, temperature fluctuations, and pollution, not to mention wear and tear from regular use, can be expected to weather over time. However, a material's useful life can be extended through regular maintenance. Many installed building materials, from foundations to framing materials to column capitals, may already be a century old. With care, they can be expected to last many years more.

The aim of maintenance is to keep building components from deteriorating beyond repair. It is best to find and resolve issues before they become serious problems, perhaps even impacting a building's structural system. For example, overflowing gutters can allow water to enter exterior walls, potentially damaging framing members. This type of damage may not be visible when located within the walls. However, regular cleaning of gutters and downspouts can prevent such issues from arising. Other examples of regular maintenance include painting weatherboards, treating for termites, and caulking around windows and doors.

Repair

Sometimes it is difficult to see the value in an aging building when the paint is peeling, floorboards are loose, masonry is cracking, and door frames are sagging. It may be tempting to simply replace old materials with new. However, that irreversible act can actually destroy the historic integrity of a building, de-

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crease its value, possibly render it ineligible for historic preservation tax incentive programs, and compromise the integrity of its associated historic district.

When it comes to building materials, age and authenticity are often assets. Some materials such as old-growth cypress are no longer readily available. In other cases the mill shop that produced a particularly intricate and unique baseboard profile may no longer exist. A hallmark of many older homes—even modest shotguns—is their fine expression of craftsmanship. It is difficult today to find skilled craftsmen who can match that same level of quality at labor rates affordable to the average homeowner. Because original materials are often character-defining components of a building, which may be costly or even impossible to replace in-kind, it is important to repair and preserve them whenever feasible.

Replacement

When a historic building component simply can't be repaired, then it should be replaced in-kind (i.e., with an exact match of the same material). If replacement in-kind is not an option, then it is recommended that a substitute component matching the proportion, detail, and finish of the original as closely as possible be used. For example, if replacing an original front door that has deteriorated beyond repair, and an exact match cannot be found, consider the type of wood, the thickness of the door, the dimensions of the rails and stiles, the number and configuration of glass panes, any special molding or trim, and whether it will be painted or stained. Searching out appropriate materials may require a little extra time and effort (for example, finding a specialty millwork shop or placing a custom order). The Glossary & Additional Resources section of this document (Part 8) lists organizations that can help direct building owners and contractors to local resources.

What should be done with discarded original materials such as doors, windows, flooring, hardware, or lighting fixtures? Rather than relegating them to a dumpster, consider donating or selling them through local architectural salvage stores or classified ads. Besides keeping valuable materials out of the landfill, this also provides another homeowner the opportunity to source vintage components that may be appropriate for their project.

Renovation

Renovation is generally considered to be a major alteration that has the potential to greatly impact the character of a building. It often involves changing the exterior configuration, for example adding new dormers or window openings to an existing facade. Renovation is often done in conjunction with a change in use (see adaptive reuse below). Care should be taken to ensure that

character-defining historic features of the building are not compromised in the renovation process.

Additions and New Construction

Additions and new construction can greatly impact a historic district, as they may introduce new materials, scale, form, and details into a context largely defined by nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century structures. Specific guidelines for additions and new construction are detailed in Part 6 of this document.

Adaptive Reuse

Adaptive reuse is a specific type of renovation that converts a building from one use to another. Examples include converting a single shotgun into office space or transforming a former warehouse loft into housing. Adaptive reuse is especially beneficial when a building's former use is obsolete, or no longer suited to a particular location. This allows the structure, which may be historically significant, to remain occupied, stable, and contributing to the local economy.

THE HDC RECOMMENDS:

- Consult the relevant sections of these guidelines to understand your building's type and style. Type and style dictate what features define a building's special character and indicate what should be preserved (e.g., full-length double-hung wood windows, multi-light doors, decorative parapets, drop siding, carved brackets, or turned columns).
- Develop a preventive maintenance plan to protect a building's important features.
- Promptly repair any damaged elements of the building.
- If repair is not possible, then replacement in-kind is preferred (i.e., an exact physical and visual match).
- If replacement in-kind is not possible, then a substitute component should be selected that matches the finish, design, and detail of the original to the extent possible.
- If a major renovation is undertaken, make sure that any new elements are compatible with the existing building in terms of scale, design, and material.



Example of maintenance: This porch column needs to be sanded, primed, and repainted.



Example of repair: A piece of trim on this column base has fallen off and needs to be reattached.



Example of replacement: The missing ornamental trim on the gable's left side should be replaced to match the trim on the right.

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S Four Treatment Approaches to Historic Properties

The Secretary of the Interior has established standards and guidelines for four specific treatment approaches for historic buildings. Additional information is available on their website: <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments.htm>.

Preservation involves applying measures to sustain, protect, and stabilize a property in its existing state. This approach assumes that much of the building's historic fabric is intact, and so the focus is generally limited to ongoing maintenance and repair.

Rehabilitation is a treatment that allows a property's use to be updated through repair, alterations, or additions while still preserving features that convey its historic significance. It is an inherently flexible approach that recognizes the need to adapt buildings to meet contemporary expectations in order to keep them occupied and functioning.

Restoration is a specific preservation treatment that returns a building's appearance, form, features, and character to a particular period in time. Photographic, physical, and documentary evidence is used to determine which features are to be retained, removed, or reconstructed. The selected period of restoration may not necessarily be the date of initial construction. For example, if a 19th century building's significance stems mainly from its association with a Depression-era political figure, it may be restored to its 1930 appearance. Restoration involves meticulous research and analysis and is most often employed when a building is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or is to be used for historical interpretation, such as in a museum setting.

Reconstruction involves reproducing through new construction the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving structure in order to replicate its appearance at a specific point in time. It is the least common treatment, and it is generally only advisable in situations where the new structure is to be used for historical interpretation and sufficient documentation exists to ensure an accurate reproduction.

FOUNDATIONS AND MASONRY

A building's foundation is intended to both support the frame or masonry construction above it and transfer the structural load to the ground. On historic wood-frame buildings in the Gulf South, it is common to find simple pier-type foundations that raise the main living area just a few feet off the ground. This practice is appropriate to the local climate because a raised first floor promotes air circulation and minimizes flooding risk. Early foundations in Gretna were typically constructed of soft local red brick, which needed to be protected with a layer of stucco plaster to prevent deterioration. By the late nineteenth century preferences shifted to pressed brick, which were made from drier clay, fired longer, and were generally harder and more uniform. Extruded brick, which was even more durable, stable, and could be mass produced in large factories, gained popularity in the twentieth century. The 1910s and 20s also saw the increased use of alternative foundation materials including pressed concrete block, which was a precursor to the modern concrete block (also known as a cinder block or concrete masonry unit [CMU].)

While the sides and rear of a structure might have regularly spaced visible piers, it was common on the front elevation to construct a solid and continuous foundation wall, sometimes called a *chain wall*. Often covered with a layer of stucco, chain walls were a more formal and elegant option for a building's street elevation. Decorative cast iron grilles and vents set within the chain wall allowed for cross ventilation beneath the building.

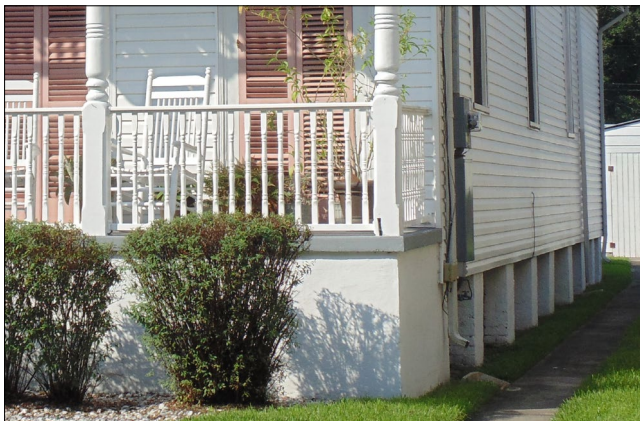
DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

DO

- Retain original materials whenever possible (brick piers, stucco chain wall, cast-iron vents)
- Place chain wall foundation vents in locations that make structural and visual sense (e.g., beneath windows and doors or between porch columns.)



Do retain original cast iron foundation vents, as they are important character-defining features both functionally and aesthetically.



Original brick piers are visible on the side elevation, while the front facade has a stucco-covered chain wall.

DON'T

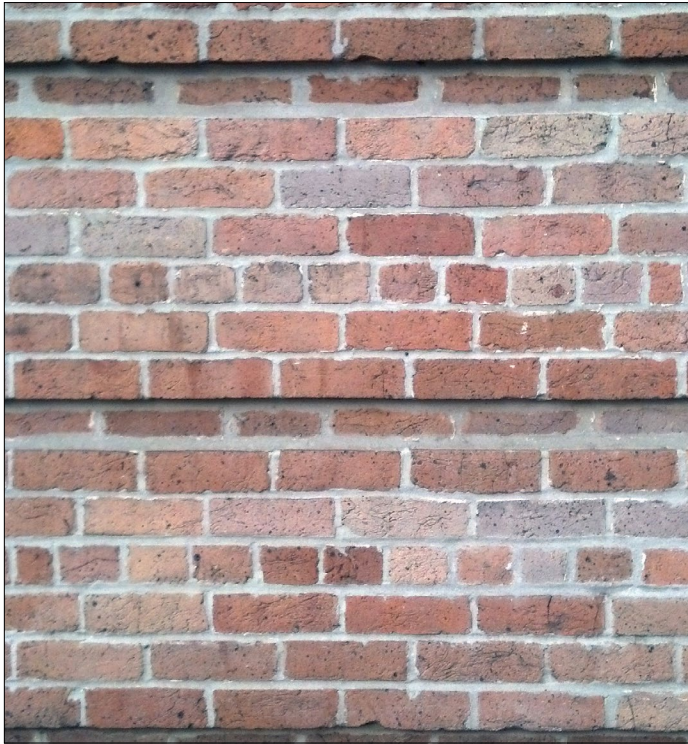
- Do not use modern exposed concrete masonry units on chain walls on the front facade.
- Any screening or latticework between piers should be kept simple and visually subordinate.
- Do not paint brick that was originally intended to be unpainted.



This chain wall is unvented and the concrete masonry units have been left exposed.



Inappropriate galvanized metal was placed over the side wall piers and is now in a deteriorated state. A better choice would have been to install simple screens or latticework between the masonry piers.



This masonry wall features decorative coursing.



The foundation has been reinforced with new concrete piers placed between the original brick piers. Note that the piers have metal caps to prevent water and termite damage to the wood sills.



This chain wall has a rough stucco finish.

DEFINITIONS

Rising Damp: the migration of moisture from the soil into the masonry through capillary action.

Efflorescence: the migration of water-soluble salts via capillary action to the face of the brick resulting in a white and powdery surface.

Spalling: a condition in which the outer layer of a masonry brick or block begins to break off unevenly. Spalling can be caused by overly abrasive cleaning or by the inappropriate use of hard mortars which do not allow the masonry to expand and contract.

Repointing: the process of removing deteriorated mortar from the joints of a masonry wall and replacing it with new mortar. May sometimes be referred to as *tuck pointing*.

Stucco: a smooth plaster exterior finish traditionally composed of sand, lime, water, varying amounts of Portland cement, and possible pigments or other additives. When applied directly to masonry surfaces, stucco becomes an integral part of the wall when set.

HISTORIC CONCRETE BLOCK

The production of pressed concrete blocks, also called “artificial stone,” began with the 1900 patent of H. S. Palmer’s portable block machine, which allowed builders to produce the material on site in a variety of patterns. Some mimicked stone or brick, while others took on more fanciful designs such as wreaths and cobblestones. The economical new technology caught on rapidly across the United States, and by 1910 it was being used to construct fences, foundations, columns, and entire buildings. As the technology became more standardized, local manufacturers began using Palmer’s machine for mass production. Gretna’s leading purveyor was Melling Bros. Concrete Block Manufacturing Company, which operated on Dolhonde Street between Fourth and Fifth. The historic block types found in Gretna—including rusticated or “rock face,” ornamental rope, and smooth face with inset panel—add an important textural and decorative dimension to many of the districts’ early-20th-century buildings. Modern concrete blocks, however, are generally not produced with the same level of craftsmanship or variety in design and are not sufficient replacements for their historic counterparts.



Stamped concrete blocks with an ornamental rope pattern



Stamped concrete blocks with inset panel combined with rusticated concrete blocks



The stucco layer has been allowed to deteriorate, exposing the brick foundation beneath.



The mortar on this foundation wall is cracking and falling out in places. The brick is in need of repointing.



This is an extreme example of what happens when an inappropriately hard cement-based mortar is used on historic local soft brick. The brick wears away while the mortar, which should be “sacrificial” and fail first, remains intact.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Common problems for foundation walls include uneven settling, weathering (particularly when protective stucco layers have fallen away), deteriorated mortar joints, spalling and chipping, and efflorescence. Water infiltration and moisture—whether through faulty downspouts and gutters, rising damp, or standing water—can significantly worsen any existing signs of deterioration.

General Maintenance

It is important to regularly inspect masonry foundations so that potential areas of concern can be addressed before they turn into larger, costlier problems. Specifically, it is advised to:

- Inspect for cracks, missing mortar, and bulging or leaning walls as these can all be signs of uneven settling or other serious structural issues.
- Inspect for areas of potential water infiltration such as deteriorated joints or places where a protective stucco surface has been damaged.
- Inspect sills regularly for water and termite damage. If damage is severe, the sills may need to be replaced.
- Treat efflorescence when it appears. This is best done by gently cleaning the brick surface with low-pressure water, a mild non-ionic detergent, and a natural bristle brush.
- If a coating is used (e.g., paint or stucco), make sure that it is compatible with the historic brick and allows the masonry to breathe. Water-repellent coatings that keep water from penetrating the surface of the brick but allow water vapor to escape may be appropriate in some situations. Avoid water-proof coatings and inappropriate paints, which can seal and trap moisture.
- Make sure that under-floor areas are properly vented, as this can minimize moisture buildup.
- Direct downspouts and splash blocks away from the foundation.
- Vegetation can trap moisture and should be kept away from foundation walls.

Repair

Because historic bricks and mortar have different material properties than their contemporary counterparts, it is important to select appropriate products and techniques for any repairs.

One issue that frequently arises involves the use of inappropriate mortar mixes during repointing. Repointing is the process of repairing mortar joints by carefully removing and replacing damaged or missing mortar. Historically, mortar was composed of sand, lime, water, and the occasional additive (such as animal hair.) Starting in the nineteenth century, small amounts of Portland cement were included to improve workability and setting time, with the proportion of Portland cement gradually increasing over the last century. Whereas older high-lime mortars were

soft, porous, pliable, and designed to work well with soft brick, the newer, harder mortars with a high Portland cement content were designed to be compatible with newer, harder brick. Problems arise when people inappropriately use hard, modern mortars on older, softer brick, which can cause substantial damage over time.

Mortar should be slightly softer and weaker than brick, so that over time it will fail first. In that sense it is considered “sacrificial,” as it is far preferable to repoint a brick wall or pier than to replace it entirely.

In addition to selecting the right chemical composition of mortar, it is important to match the appearance, size, and profile of existing joints during any repointing job. The color and texture of the new mortar should match the unweathered interior portions of the historic mortar. Similarly, any new brick or stucco used to repair a masonry wall should match the physical characteristics of the existing material.

Replacement

If a chain wall or piers must be completely replaced, it is preferable to select materials that match the appearance of the original foundation (e.g., replace brick with brick.) In instances where a brick foundation was previously covered with stucco, it may be acceptable to use poured-in-place concrete or concrete block as an alternative, providing that the concrete receives a similar stucco finish.

PORCHES AND EXTERIOR MILLWORK

Porches are important character-defining features of historic buildings and streetscapes. Located on the more formal front elevation, they tend to be the foremost expression of a building's style through the design of their columns, railings, and ornamentation. In addition, a porch's width and depth are key factors in determining a building's type.

Functionally, porches form an important part of the entry sequence into a house. They provide a transition between the public exterior of the street and the private interior of the living quarters. Additionally, they may serve as an outdoor "room" or social space where one can interact with neighbors.

In terms of design, porches typically abut the front of the building, are open on three sides, raised off the ground, and covered with a roof. Porches on shotgun residences tend to span the full length of the building facade, while porches on bungalows may be partial-width and asymmetrically placed off to one side. Most porch elements, such as columns, railings, ceilings, and floorboards, are painted wood. Cypress was a common choice for historic houses in Gretna and the greater New Orleans area because it is naturally resistant to rot and insects. Other materials may also be present, including partial brick or stucco column bases, which were common on 20th-century Craftsman and Neoclassical Revival-style homes.

It should be noted that the term *gallery*, derived from the French *galerie*, is used regionally to refer to a porch that typically spans the length of a facade, is under the main roof of a house, and extends the living area or provides passage. Front porches are often called front galleries. The term *veranda* or *verandah* refers to a freestanding roofed structure supported by columns that typically abuts a building, is open on three sides, and is most often constructed of light and airy cast iron. Verandas were common in New Orleans, especially during the Italianate period, but are rare in Gretna. A *balcony*, by contrast, projects from the face of building and has railings but no roof.

PARTS OF A PORCH

Flooring: Most residential porches were historically wood tongue and groove. Later styles, such as Craftsman and Mediterranean Revival, sometimes had concrete porch floors. Some houses updated in the 1920s and 30s had concrete porch floors installed at that time.

Columns/posts or brackets: An overhanging roof is typically supported by columns (round), posts (square/rectangular) or brackets. Scrolled metal posts, which became popular starting in the 1950s as replacements for wood columns, are not historic or considered appropriate to any of the districts' contributing styles.

Lintels/beams: Horizontal elements that span between columns or posts and support the porch roof above.

Ceilings: Porch ceilings are typically made of thin tongue-and-groove boards, and sometimes incorporate ornamental molding, trim, and vents. As a regional custom, they are often painted a pale blue.

Railings: Where present, railings most often comprise a handrail, bottom rail, and regularly spaced balusters. Together, this assembly may be referred to as a balustrade. Balusters may be simple 1-inch wood posts, or may be hefty and dense with intricately turned details. Historically, handrail heights on porches ranged from 28 to 32 inches above the floor, which is lower than today's standards.

Wood ornament: Decorative elements such as friezes and cornices add visual interest to a porch and help to convey a building's style.

Steps: Most steps were initially constructed of wood or brick. Later styles, and houses renovated after the 1920s, might have concrete steps. Some steps are flanked by partial-height plinths that might incorporate decorative elements and curves. Steps that lead directly to an entrance without a landing or a porch are known as stoops.



This Eastlake porch retains many of its original features, including brick steps, tongue-and-groove porch floor, turned posts, and decorative spindle frieze.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

DO

- Original porch materials should be maintained and repaired whenever possible, as they are often the primary way that a building's style is expressed. If porch components have deteriorated beyond repair, then replacement in-kind is recommended.
- If searching for salvaged replacement materials, be certain that selected items are appropriate to the house's style. For example, ornamental brackets from an 1890s Italianate shotgun would look out of place on a Craftsman bungalow.
- Historic stoops or steps should be retained, even when a double residence (such as a double shotgun) is converted to a single-family home.



This porch features several character-defining elements, including paired brick columns, weatherboards, louvered shutters, and door/transom assembly.



Exterior original millwork should be retained.

DON'T

- Do not remove porches that would have been historically present on a building.
- Do not enclose or screen a porch that would historically have been open.
- Do not remove original decorative porch details including brackets, railings, and columns. Similarly, do not add faux historic details that would not have been appropriate to the house's type and style.
- Do not cover porch beams with vinyl siding (either vertical or horizontal vinyl siding.)
- Do not replace porch components with modern scrolled metal columns and railings.



Several character-defining features have been removed. The porch beam has been covered with inappropriate vertical vinyl siding and the porch columns have been replaced with metal posts.



Do not combine architectural styles that are not original to the building. This shotgun has been modified to have both Italianate brackets and Eastlake columns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

General Maintenance

Because porches form such a prominent part of the streetscape, original materials should be preserved to the extent possible. As most elements are wood, regular repainting is one of the most important ways to protect and maintain historic porches. Only a few porches in Gretna have cast-iron ornament or balustrades, but these too should be protected through regular cleaning, removal of surface rust, priming, and painting.

Repair

Necessary porch repairs should be addressed in a timely manner, especially if deteriorated components pose a structural risk or a safety hazard (such as failing columns, loose railings, or missing floor boards). Any materials used for repair or replacement should match the dimensions, material, and profile of the originals.

Replacement

When elements of a historic porch have deteriorated beyond repair, replacement in-kind with like materials is almost always the preferred approach. For example, a wood porch floor should be replaced with tongue-and-groove boards of the same width and thickness, not with concrete. Also, components to be replaced should be kept to a minimum. If, for example, a column capital has deteriorated beyond repair, it should be replaced with a custom fabricated piece matching the original. In such a case, it would not be necessary or advisable to replace the entire column.

When a porch that has already lost most of its original elements is to be replaced, and no documentation exists to substantiate a restoration, then a simple design approach would be considered most appropriate. Columns, beams, balustrades, and other components should be compatible with the building's style, well proportioned, and free of conjectural ornamentation. The drawing of a typical wood porch railing (facing page), with evenly spaced square balusters and simple top and bottom rails, provides a suitable example.

The same approach, emphasizing simplicity in design and materials, holds true when adding guardrails or handrails to existing porches in order to meet building code or insurance requirements. Simple wood railings are generally compatible with the historic housing stock found in Gretna. Metal railings, also frequently employed in these instances, tend to work best when minimally detailed and painted a dark color in order to visually recede.



An example of a new wood porch and stair railing that is well proportioned, simply detailed, and compatible with the existing historic building.



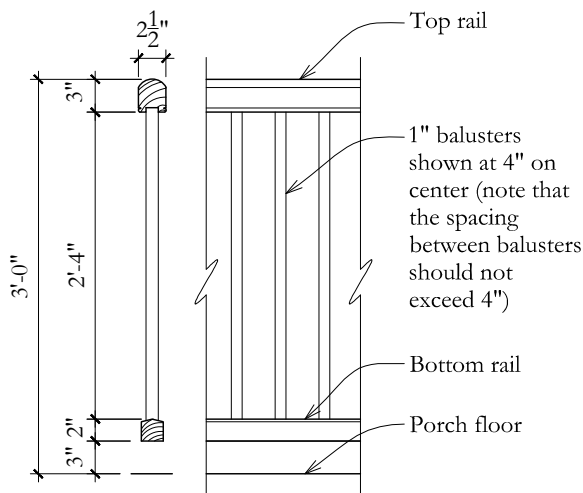
An example of a new simple metal porch and stair railing that is compatible with the existing historic building.



An example of a new compatible replacement stair.



This porch retains a majority of its original elements. Although they are in poor condition, none are beyond repair.



A typical porch railing

HISTORIC MILLWORK

The decorative “gingerbread” exterior millwork on many of Gretna’s late-19th-century residences is a hallmark of the Queen Anne, Eastlake, and bracketed Italianate styles. Technical advances in woodworking technology, the proliferation of railroads, and the 1880s Louisiana lumber boom made wood ornament affordable for the first time, and as a result its popularity soared. Mail-order catalogs such as Sears, Roebuck & Co. offered everything from brackets to doors to entire houses. In its 1891 catalog, local millwork company Roberts & Co. (est. 1850) offered over 75 different bracket designs alone. In the New Orleans area, the majority of exterior millwork was made of cypress lumber, which was considered most suitable for the city’s subtropical climate because of its resistance to insects and rot. Today cypress millwork is highly coveted, for it is nowhere near as affordable or available as it was one hundred years ago.



Milled brackets support the porch roof of a shotgun.



Piercework panels, a spindle frieze, spandrel brackets, and turned columns characterize the porch of this Queen Anne/Eastlake style shotgun.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

DO



Retain existing porches in their original configurations.



The two sets of steps are an important character-defining feature of historic double shotguns and cottages and should always be retained.



These wooden steps with concrete-block plinths are character-defining components of this Neoclassical Revival-style porch.

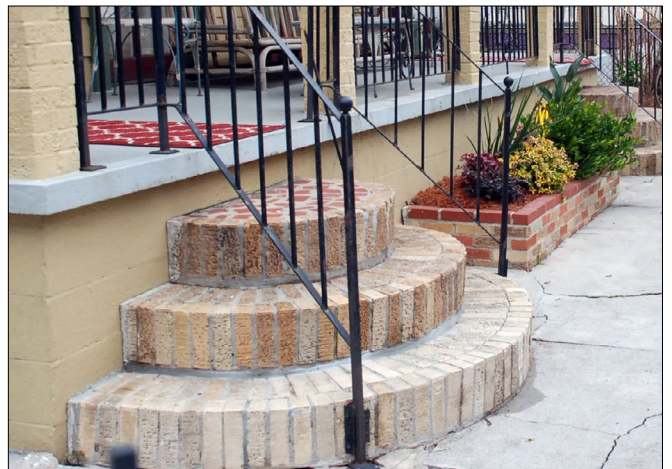
DON'T



The original porch floor, balustrade, and steps have been inappropriately removed from this double shotgun.



The steps to the entrance on the right were inappropriately removed when this residence was converted from a double to a single.



The original steps have been inappropriately replaced with a modern brick version that does not match the building's style.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

DO



This wooden balustrade is compatible with the ornate Eastlake style of the porch.



This simple wood balustrade is an appropriate option when it is necessary to replace a non-historic railing or add a new porch railing.

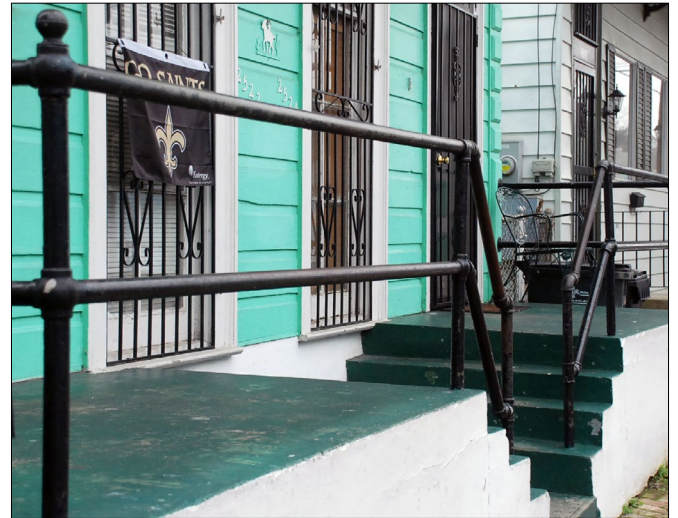


Particularly on porches that never had balustrades, metal guardrails and handrails are sometimes installed to meet building code or insurance requirements. Such railings should be kept simple in design.

DON'T



Deck railings are generally considered to be inappropriate for historic buildings.



Metal pipe rails are considered to be inappropriate for historic buildings.



Metal railings with added scrollwork and ornamentation are generally considered to be inappropriate.

WINDOWS AND DOORS

Windows and doors, along with their associated trim and shutters, are character-defining features of historic buildings. They communicate a building's particular type and style and can help to date the age of construction. Most were built with durable, high-quality hardwood and exhibit a high degree of craftsmanship. Functionally, windows are designed to provide daylight and ventilation. Doors provide security and access to a building, and when configured with glass panels can also be a significant source of daylight.

The historic buildings considered in these guidelines were all constructed prior to the proliferation of indoor air conditioning, and so doors, windows, and shutters were one of the key ways to moderate temperature and comfort. Windows were generously proportioned, often with full-height double-hung or slip-head units extending to the floor on the front elevation. Doors were commonly paired with operable transoms to facilitate cross ventilation. Tall windows and doors complemented the high ceilings typical of older buildings in the region; such height allowed warmer air to rise and escape during the summer months. Louvered shutters could be adjusted to either allow or block the sun's radiant heat, depending on the season and time of day, while still providing ventilation.

GENERAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR WINDOWS AND DOORS

DO

- Original doors and windows (including trim and casing) should be maintained and repaired whenever possible, particularly on the front facade.
- If replacing a missing door or window, select a replacement that is appropriate to the type and style of the building. Remaining original doors and windows may provide important design clues and details that can be matched.
- Shutters should be sized appropriately for their openings so that when closed, they completely cover the door or window.
- Screens, when applied, should be simple in appearance and should complement the historic door or window (e.g., align rails and stiles when possible.)
- Security measures such as alarm systems, closed shutters, motion detectors, tempered glazing, and interior security bars are preferred over exterior security bars. However, if exterior security bars are installed on a historic building, try to minimize their appearance by using simple grilles without decorative detailing, and aligning the horizontal and vertical bars of the grille with the rails and stiles of the door or window.



Retain historic shutters.

DON'T

- Do not replace existing doors or windows with units that are inappropriate to the building's type or style. (See Part 3: Residential Types and Styles.)
- Do not replace existing doors and windows with units of a different height or width (e.g., in an existing 7-foot opening, do not install a 6-foot 8-inch door and cover the 4-inch gap with a plywood infill panel.)
- Do not fill an existing window or door opening with an inappropriately sized vent, window air conditioner, or other piece of equipment.
- Do not install windows in door openings, or doors in window openings.
- Do not remove existing original transoms.
- Do not add faux inoperable shutters to a facade or add shutters to buildings that would not originally have had them (e.g., most bungalows).
- Do not permanently install hurricane shutters. They should be stored and installed only when needed for storms. Also, roll-down hurricane shutters are generally not appropriate on historic buildings.



Do not install permanent metal storm shutters.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR WINDOWS

DO



The size and proportion of these original full-length windows are typical of double shotguns.



The muntins and true divided lights of these original historic six-over-six wood windows create depth and detail.



Retain historic attic lights.

DON'T



The original full-length double-hung windows on this front porch have been inappropriately replaced with smaller units and plywood infill.



The proportions and details of the original sashes and divided lights have not been maintained in these six-over-six vinyl replacement windows with interior (sandwiched) grilles.



Do not remove original attic lights. In this case, the original window was inappropriately replaced with a small vent and plywood infill.

PARTS OF A WINDOW

Casing: the exposed trim molding around a window that may be flat or milled with a decorative profile.

Frame: the head, jamb, and sill assembly that forms a precise opening into which a window sash or door fits.

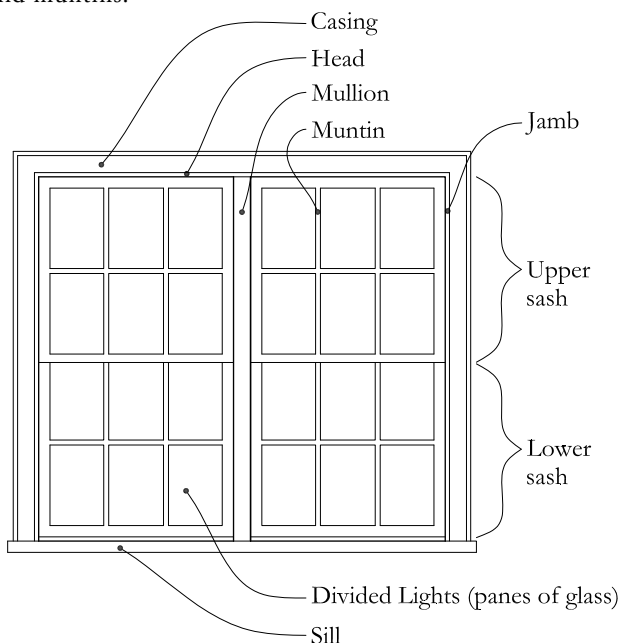
Sash: refers to the interlocking framework of rails, stiles, and muntins that hold the glazing of a window in place. Double-hung windows, for example, typically have two sashes (upper and lower) that can be vertically raised or lowered.

Mullions: the vertical elements separating two or more individual door or window frames.

Muntins: the narrow strips of molding that separate individual panes of glass in a multi-light sash.

True Divided Lights: the several individual panes of glass (or lights.) Found most often on older buildings, true divided lights were common when smaller panes of glass were more economical to produce than larger sheets. They are now increasingly rare and generally must be custom made.

Simulated Divided Lights: sheets of glass with applied molding that mimic the look of a true-divided-light window. Strips of molding that approximate muntins are applied to the front and back of a single large glazing unit (usually high-performance double insulated glass). In some instances a spacer bar might be set between the sandwiched glass panes to give the illusion of solid muntins.



These historic wood windows are in good repair.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND HISTORIC WOOD WINDOWS

Older wood windows are often criticized for not being as energy efficient as their modern counterparts. However, small measures can significantly increase their performance at a fraction of the cost of replacement. Because original windows contribute greatly to the character and integrity of a historic building, it is especially important that they be retained and made to work as well as possible. To improve performance and regulate heat gain/loss, consider the following options:

- Install weather stripping between moving parts
- Caulk perimeter joints (e.g., at frame and casing)
- Remove and replace missing or cracked glazing compound
- Insulate unused weight pockets, as this can be a significant source of air infiltration.
- Consider replacing the existing single-pane glazing with high-performance glazing if the muntin profiles allow it (i.e., if they are wide and deep enough).
- In some instances, interior storm windows may be appropriate. They form a secondary barrier, which can approximate the benefits of double glazing.
- Consider retrofit window films to minimize solar heat gain while maintaining visible light transmittance.
- Install interior curtains or blinds.
- Use functional exterior shutters to block or admit direct sunlight, depending on the need.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WINDOWS

General Maintenance and Repair of Windows

Most historic residential buildings in Gretna originally had wood windows. Whether double-hung or casement, they generally were constructed with true divided lights with single (not insulated) glazing. These windows were designed so that individual components such as sash cords, glass panes, or sills could be easily repaired or replaced by a skilled craftsman. Even now, it is rarely necessary to replace an entire window just because one component is damaged. In contrast, most low-cost modern windows do not have this built-in flexibility and can be significantly more difficult to repair.

When historic windows are not maintained, they may become prone to draftiness, rattling, loose joints, or they may simply become stuck. These are manageable problems that can typically be addressed by a knowledgeable carpenter or handyman. To keep windows operating optimally, it is advised to:

- Regularly inspect sash cords, chains, and weights. Repair/replace any damaged or missing components.
- Replace broken glazing.
- Replace and repaint dry and cracked glazing putty.
- Repaint windows regularly.
- Treat early signs of wood deterioration before they become larger problems (which can take the form of splitting, cracks, insects, or rot). Consolidants and putty are commonly used to effectively treat damaged wood.

Replacement of Windows

It is far preferable to retain original windows on an older building, as this preserves the historic fabric and integrity of the structure. However, when replacement is the only option, several factors must be considered including material, configuration options, quality, lifespan, cost, and energy efficiency.

The most common replacement windows today are generally made of vinyl or cellular PVC (a synthetic material that can be molded to look like wood.) Other materials used in new replacement windows include fiberglass, aluminum, composite, wood (albeit mostly from softer, less durable new growth timber such as pine), and metal-clad wood.

Because it is recommended that historic windows be replaced in-kind, typically only wood replacement windows would be considered appropriate. It might be possible to find a suitable historic wood window at a local architectural salvage store. Even if some repairs and repainting are required prior to installation, such a window will likely last far longer and cost less over time than a modern replacement.

Replacement windows should also match the overall size, proportions, divided light configurations, and muntin profiles of the original. Details matter immensely and can make the difference between a replacement window that fits seamlessly into a facade versus one that stands out as glaringly inappropriate. If a manufacturer's standard sizes and options do not allow for a proper match, it may be necessary to place a custom order.

In terms of quality and lifespan, historic wood windows made from durable hardwood often have an advantage. They were built to last, and with proper maintenance can have a lifespan well exceeding one hundred years. In contrast, materials such as cellular PVC and vinyl degrade in the presence of ultraviolet light (even with protective coatings that slow the process) and so their life spans are in the range of twenty to twenty-five years.

To increase energy efficiency, newer windows are most commonly made with insulated (or double) glazing. This involves a sealed air space, typically filled with an inert gas such as argon and sandwiched between two panes of glass. Combined with features such as "low-emissivity" coatings, these glazing units can significantly reduce ultraviolet light and heat transfer. Problems arise, however, when perimeter sealants fail, allowing condensation to form between the glass layers. When condensation occurs, the entire sash and sometimes the entire window must be replaced.

The full, long-term costs of replacement windows must be considered before deciding to permanently remove original windows. These costs include the labor to remove existing units, the cost of carpentry repairs to realign and plumb existing openings, the purchase price and delivery of new windows, installation labor, and any costs associated with more frequent replacement.



This double-hung wood window is in need of painting and sash/sill repairs.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR DOORS

DO



The trim above the doors and windows align (which is typical of shotgun facades), and the original transoms are still intact.



This entrance door, complete with sidelights and transom, is compatible with its Craftsman-style setting.



Historic louvered shutters are a traditional means of providing security at front entrances.

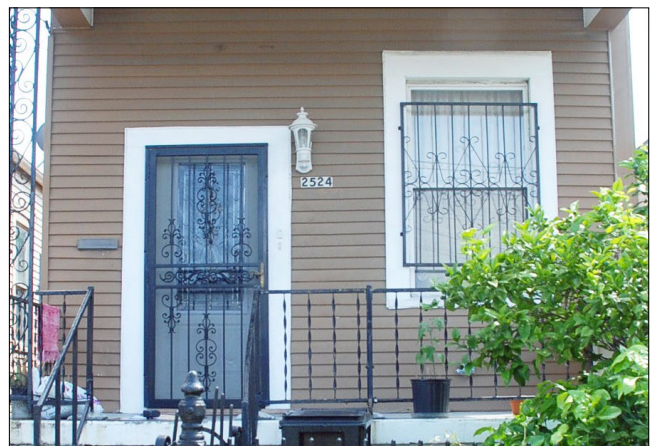
DON'T



The original front doors were inappropriately replaced with new doors of a different height, and the transoms were removed.



Modern doors with contemporary leaded glass details, as well as modern screen doors, are generally inappropriate in historic contexts.



Modern metal security grills are discouraged in historic districts.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DOORS

General Maintenance and Repair of Doors

Paneled wood doors, with or without glass lights, are the most common type found on historic buildings in Gretna. They are typically constructed of horizontal rails and vertical stiles that form a framework to support inset panels and glazing. Paneled doors can take on a number of different configurations and are sometimes combined with transoms and sidelights. Together with exterior casing, door assemblies are tremendously important in visually communicating a building's style.

Maintenance concerns common to wood doors include sagging and misalignment, loose hinges, slipping of inset panels, deterioration of wood members (splitting and rot), and peeling paint. These are typically simple issues that can be repaired by a knowledgeable carpenter or handyman. Regular maintenance, including periodic repainting, is the best way to avoid such problems.

Replacement of Doors

When an original door has deteriorated beyond repair and replacement is warranted, the new door should match the old in material, type, style, size, configuration, and detail to the extent possible. Any new door should be appropriate to the building's overall style and period of construction. For example, a door that may be appropriate for a 1920s Craftsman bungalow would look out of place on an 1890s Eastlake shotgun. Newer off-the-shelf doors, which often incorporate half round or oval windows and modern leaded glass, are generally not considered historically appropriate.

Architectural salvage stores are potentially good sources for historic doors. Because of their quality and construction, older doors that are properly maintained will often outlast their modern counterparts. Any salvaged door selected for use should precisely match the physical characteristics of the door it is replacing.

It is important to note that on a historic home, the primary front entrance should be left intact even if the preferred access is via a side or rear door. The same is true when a double residence is converted to a single—both front doors should be retained. Removing these openings or replacing them with windows fundamentally changes the character of the historic streetscape.



This historic door can be easily repaired with a fresh coat of paint and replacement of the segmental-arch light.



This modern door is inappropriate for its Greek Revival door frame.

WALLS

Exterior walls function as a building envelope, or skin, that provides protection from sun, rain, and wind. Through material, texture, color, and pattern, they convey information about a building's style and construction. This section focuses on exterior walls found on wood-frame structures, which are by far the most common construction type for residential buildings within Gretna's two historic districts. Materials commonly used for exterior wall cladding on wood-frame structures include wood siding, wood shingles, and stucco.

Wood siding can be found in a variety of sizes and configurations:

- **Weatherboard**, also called clapboard, beveled, or lap siding, is the most common type of siding found in Gretna. It consists of long thin boards that overlap one another horizontally when installed. Historically, weatherboards were milled with a square profile, but tapered boards became more common in the second half of the 19th century. While most weatherboards have an exposure (visible face) ranging from 4 to 5 inches, narrower weatherboards (2 to 3 inches) were sometimes used on the front facade, especially on Neoclassical Revival and Craftsman houses.
- **Drop siding**, also known as drop-lap siding, has a concave top and notched bottom that interlock when installed. This type of siding was generally only used on the front facade, and was especially popular with the bracketed Italianate, Queen Anne, and Eastlake styles.
- **Flush siding** involves flat boards nailed edge to edge to approximate the appearance of a flat wall. It is generally only found on the front facade of Greek Revival houses.

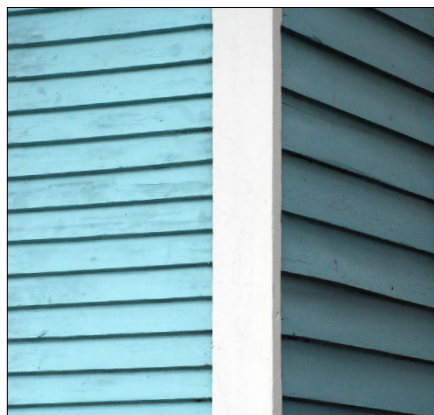
In Gretna, wood shingles are most commonly found in front gables, although there are a few examples of shingles used as wall cladding. Similar to weatherboards, they are installed in an overlapping pattern with staggered joints. Shingles can be cut and arranged in a variety of patterns that add visual interest to a facade. They are most strongly associated with the Queen Anne style (see page 38).

Stucco is a smooth or textured exterior finish that was initially used primarily as a protective coating over soft brick masonry foundations and walls. In the twentieth century, however, it became popular as an exterior finish for wood-frame buildings, especially those in the Craftsman and Eclectic Revival styles. When used in wood-frame construction, stucco is typically applied in a three-coat process over a supporting structure of wood or metal lath. Together, the bottom scratch coat, the middle brown coat, and the top finish coat form a stucco layer that is approximately 1 inch thick. Stucco was historically made of sand, lime, water, and sometimes added pigments or binders. Similar to changes in mortar composition, Portland cement was added in increasing concentrations after 1900.

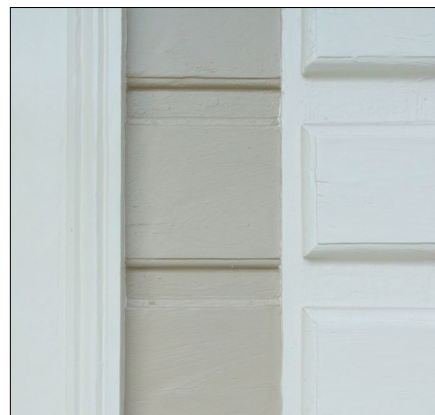
A few homes, particularly those in the Craftsman style, have brick accents most often in the form of extended piers and partial height walls on the front gallery. For information on how to best care for these brick and mortar components, please consult the Foundations and Masonry section of these guidelines (page 68).



Sawtooth shingles in a front gable



Narrow weatherboards on the front facade (left) meet common weatherboards on the side elevation (right).



Drop siding

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

DO

- Retain and preserve a building's original cladding (whether wood siding, shingles, or stucco). This is particularly important on the visually prominent front facade, which can be seen from the street.
- If replacing exterior wall cladding, select a material that matches the original in appearance, design, texture, and, when possible, material.



Wood shingles are defining elements of the Queen Anne style.



Smooth-faced HardiePlank siding (right) may be an acceptable alternative to wood weatherboards (left), especially on side and rear elevations.

DON'T

- Do not apply vinyl or aluminum siding over existing wood siding. This can trap moisture within the walls and cause significant deterioration over time.
- Do not remove or conceal important architectural details when repairing or replacing exterior wall cladding.
- Do not add conjectural architectural features that did not originally exist on a building. For example, do not add a new stone veneer to the base of an existing stucco wall.



This vinyl siding swallows the wood trim around the window, concealing the casing's original profile.



Aluminum siding was applied over the original wood weatherboards. It should be removed and the weatherboards restored.



Asphalt shingles conceal the original wood siding beneath and should be removed if possible.



Remove vegetation from building walls.



Veneers such as vinyl and brick should be removed because they can trap moisture and deteriorate the underlying structure.



This shotgun's original siding is intact and well maintained.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Maintenance

Exterior walls should be inspected regularly for common issues such as peeling paint, termites, and rot. If left untreated, simple problems can lead to larger and more costly repairs down the road. Damage on the surface of walls can also be indicative of deterioration within the walls, including possible deterioration of structural members.

Many common problems are the result of unwanted exposure to water, and so the best way to keep exterior wood walls in good order is to reduce the potential for moisture intrusion. This generally means keeping exterior wood painted and well caulked, and making sure that openings such as doors and windows are properly sealed or flashed. It is important to identify and treat the source of any moisture problem, such as a leaking condensate drain that is keeping part of a wall perpetually damp.

Exterior wood walls should be cleaned with the gentlest means possible—a garden hose, mild detergent and soft natural bristle brush are usually sufficient. Avoid high pressure washes that can force water into small crevices, and avoid harsh chemical washes that can damage exterior surfaces. If sanding or removing existing paint in preparation for a new finish, take care to follow all precautions regarding lead paint removal.

Repair

Small cracks and splits in wood siding or shingles can usually be treated by patching with a wood filler or epoxy. If damage is more substantial, try to selectively replace only those sections that have deteriorated beyond repair, and make sure that any new materials match the existing in material, dimensions, texture, color, and finish. It is rarely necessary to replace all of the siding on a house.

When repairing damaged stucco, patching is preferable to wholesale replacement. It is fairly easy to seal small hairline cracks with a thin slurry coat. Any repairs should be made in such a way that they blend seamlessly with the remaining stucco finish. While this can be tricky on unfinished stucco, painting can generally hide most patched areas.

With the mass production and availability of aluminum siding after World War II, along with asphalt veneers and asbestos shingles, it became somewhat common to cover existing siding with the newly available materials. Vinyl siding, which hit the market in force in the 1960s, continued this trend. Made from polyvinyl chloride (PVC), vinyl siding was touted as a low- or no-maintenance synthetic product that could provide a spiffy new appearance for an aging house. In reality, because PVC degrades in the presence of sunlight over time, much of the vinyl installed over

the last fifty years has been subject to fading, brittleness, and deterioration. Worse, the vinyl siding can trap moisture within the exterior walls, ultimately leading to further deterioration of the underlying wood. While new products are marketed as having improved coatings, durability, and permeability, which in theory allows wood walls to better “breathe,” it can still be a risky proposition to clad existing wood weatherboards with vinyl.

Another argument against encapsulation is aesthetic. Vinyl siding is often used to wrap and conceal important historic details and trim. When door and window casings are wrapped in vinyl, the result is typically a loss of depth, shadow, detail, and crispness. Porch beams, in particular, are often inappropriately covered. Sometimes ornamental woodwork is even removed in order to provide a flat surface to simplify the installation. These actions can all severely compromise the historic integrity of a building.

Because of these concerns, it is recommended that any additional layers of siding (asbestos, asphalt, aluminum, or vinyl) be removed if it is possible to do so without causing damage to the underlying original exterior wood. The original wood siding and any exterior trim should then be repaired and restored. It should be noted that asbestos siding should only be removed by a professional as it is considered to be a hazardous material.

Replacement

If full replacement of an exterior wall is warranted, the preferred option is to replace the material in-kind (e.g., wood weatherboards with wood weatherboards, or stucco with stucco.) This is especially recommended on any primary facade visible from the street.

If replacement in-kind is not possible, then a material should be selected that duplicates the appearance and profile of the original sheathing. Smooth-faced fiber cement siding (such as Hardie-Plank) is an economical alternative to wood weatherboards for use on secondary elevations not visible from the street. Introduced in the mid-1980s, it is a solid yet lightweight material made primarily from wood pulp and Portland cement that has an appearance and workability similar to traditional wood. It is considered to be dimensionally stable and resistant to rot and termites.

Vinyl remains a popular choice for many homeowners and contractors, although its use is not encouraged in historic districts. Even when installed new, vinyl often appears flatter than wood and lacks the same exposures, shadow lines, and texture. Critically important historic details, such as the way wood siding abuts thick corner boards and door casings, are nearly impossible to

reproduce accurately in vinyl. A homeowner who does choose vinyl should opt for a professional installation that preserves as much of the original detailing of the building as possible. Also, the homeowner should consider selecting one of the newer product lines with increased permeability to allow existing wood walls to better “breathe.”

While vinyl may be the least expensive option up front, it may not be the best value when life cycle costs are considered. Vinyl has an average lifespan of approximately twenty to thirty years, and typically cannot be touched up with a coat of paint without voiding the manufacturer’s warranty. In contrast, the original wood siding on historic houses can last well over one hundred years with regular maintenance and periodic repainting.

ROOFS

The roof has a fairly straightforward function: to shelter the interior space of a building. It must be structurally capable of spanning between the frame's structural supports, and its form should allow it to easily shed water. A roof can also be an important character-defining element of a historic building. Shape, pitch, material, and ornament all convey vital information about a building's type, style, and period of construction.

The most common roof shapes found on buildings in Gretna include front gable, side gable, hip, gable on hip, shed, and flat. Particular shapes are often associated with particular building types. For example, Creole cottages always have side gables, while shotgun houses, which always have ridge lines running perpendicular to the street, have either hip, gable on hip, or front gable roofs. The historic house types in Gretna all tend to have projecting roofs or overhangs on the front facade, which are often integrated into front porches or galleries. On bracketed shotguns, the roof overhang at the facade is an inherent part of the building's style. Parapets, which were especially common on commercial buildings and Greek Revival and Italianate residences, and dormers provide additional variation and detail to roof forms.

Roof pitch helps to communicate a building's style. For example, Craftsman shotguns tend to have a more horizontal expression, with lower roof pitches in the range of 6:12 (see the definition of *roof pitch* on the facing page.) Queen Anne and Eastlake shotgun houses are typically closer to 8:12, while Creole cottages may be 10:12. Tudor Revival houses, known for their steep roofs, can have pitches ranging from 12:12 to 20:12.

Traditionally, roofs were clad in wood shingles, slate, or terra-cotta (clay) tile, and each material lent a particular color, texture, and pattern to the roof surface. Lightweight metal (including corrugated iron and tin) was less common on houses, but was often used for sheds and other ancillary structures by the mid-19th century. Advances in technology made several new roofing materials available by the early twentieth century, including stamped metal shingles, asbestos-cement shingles, asphalt shingles, and rolled roofing for flat installations.

Today, the most common roofing material for residential applications is the asphalt shingle, sometimes also referred to as a "composition" shingle. These are typically made from a woven fiberglass mat that is coated in waterproof asphalt and topped with ceramic granules to provide a measure of UV protection. Fiberglass-based asphalt shingles have more or less replaced the heavier and more costly organic asphalt shingles, which used cellulose-based mats. Asphalt shingles today come in a wide variety of styles and thicknesses that can mimic the look of historic roofing materials. Other roofing products made from lightweight concrete, recycled rubber, and plastic are marketed as replacements for traditional wood, slate, and clay tile, although few can match the appearance and character of historic materials.

Lastly, roofs provide a canvas for ornament and detailing. It is common in Gretna and New Orleans to find terra-cotta tiles capping a roof ridge, ornamental terra-cotta finials, and decorative wood gable trim. Parapets, cornices, and brackets all serve to provide visual interest where the roofline meets the exterior wall. Even utilitarian components such as copper flashing and half-round gutters can contribute greatly to a building's historic appearance.

DEFINITIONS

Eave: the overhanging lower edge of a roof. A rake is the inclined, usually projecting edge of a sloped roof.

Fascia: the horizontal trim board affixed to the ends of roof rafters.

Vergeboard: the trim board attached to the projecting end of a gable roof. Vergeboard may be plain or carved in a decorative pattern. In other parts of the country it is referred to as barge-board, but in Louisiana that term is reserved for the wooden planks salvaged from early river barges.

Overhangs: extensions of the roof system (joists, rafters, trusses) beyond the building's exterior walls. Overhangs protect the upper portion of exterior walls from rain and direct sun. Overhangs can be "open" with exposed rafters, or "closed" with a soffit.

Soffits: the enclosed underside of sloped- or flat-roof overhangs. In historic buildings, soffits are most often constructed of tongue-and-groove wood boards.

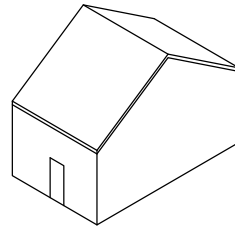
Gutters: channels placed at the eaves for carrying off rainwater. Early gutters were simply V-shaped wooden troughs. These were later succeeded by half-round gutters in a variety of materials, from lead and copper to galvanized iron, steel, and aluminum. Modern "K-style" gutters with their distinctive ogee shape became popular after World War II.

Dormers: small roofed projections on the sloping surface of a roof. Dormers are typically named for the types of roofs they themselves sport (e.g., gable dormers or shed dormers), although there are other variations such as eyebrow dormers. Dormers provide increased headroom in attics and permit the presence of a window or vent.

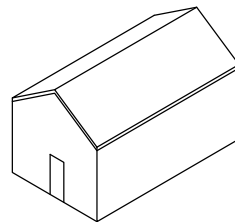
Parapets: low walls at the edge of a roof.

Roof pitch: the slope of the roof. It is often expressed in a ratio of rise to run (imagine the legs of a right triangle). For example, a 6:12 pitch translates into 6 inches of vertical rise for each 12 inches of horizontal run.

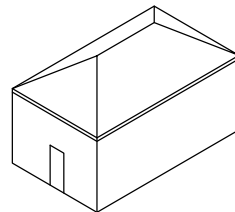
ROOF TYPES



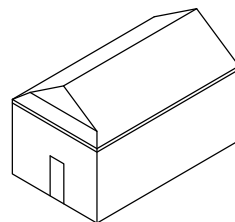
Side gable



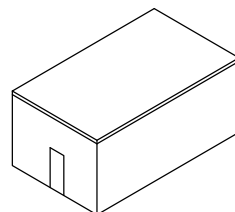
Front gable



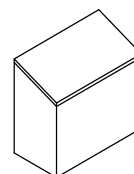
Hip



Gable on hip



Flat



Shed

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

DO

- Retain the original shape and pitch of the roof, including dormers and overhangs.
- Retain character-defining details such as parapets and cornices.
- Retain original gutter styles. Half-round gutters are generally more appropriate for historic buildings.



Asphalt shingles work well as replacement roofing material when blended with original elements such as terra-cotta ridge tiles.



These half-round gutters and downspouts are appropriately placed and well maintained.

DON'T

- Do not remove vergeboard or other ornamental trim.
- Do not remove terra-cotta ridge tiles, roof cresting, or finials.
- Do not enclose soffits that would originally have been exposed.
- Do not replace tongue-and-groove wood soffits with plywood, aluminum, or vinyl.
- Do not add decorative elements that would not historically have been present on a roof.



Modern metal roofing is generally not appropriate on historic residences.



Enclosing soffits that were originally exposed jeopardizes a building's historic integrity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Maintenance

As roofs are subject to wind, rain, sun, and frequent temperature variations, they should be inspected regularly for any deterioration. Because water infiltration is a major concern, gutters and downspouts should be routinely checked to make sure that they are functioning properly and are not clogged with debris. Attic areas should be checked after heavy rains to make sure that water is not entering the building. Any condensation or moisture should be noted, as this can also indicate improper venting.

Masonry chimneys may need periodic repointing because both bricks and mortar will weather over time. Chimneys should be capped, and they must also be properly flashed where they meet roof surfaces.

Other problems to look for include sagging or bowing ridges (which can indicate structural problems), loose or missing roof tiles, cracked or worn asphalt shingles, vegetation, mold, and deteriorated woodwork (particularly fascias or soffits).

Repair

If original roof materials are still present and in good condition, they should be maintained and preserved. This recommendation applies to all elements of a historic roof, including cladding, soffits, gutters, cornices, trim, cresting, and chimney caps. For minor repairs, match existing materials and replace only those components that have deteriorated beyond repair.

In some cases, original roof cladding may be buried beneath layers of newer shingles. While this may be common practice (building codes typically specify an allowable maximum number of layers), such build-up can add significant weight to a structure. At some point, all layers need to be removed down to the sheathing, and a new roof installed. It is rarely possible to salvage the original underlying roof material, but its presence can provide important clues as to what type of replacement roof might be appropriate.

Replacement

If it is necessary to replace a roof on a historic building, the preferred approach is replacement in-kind (e.g., clay tile with clay tile). However, the use of a historic roofing material may be restricted by building codes, the availability of materials, labor, or cost.

When that is the case, an alternative material should be chosen that complements the type and style of the structure. Asphalt shingles are widely used and generally considered acceptable alternatives for most historic buildings. With such a variety of col-

ors, thicknesses, and textures available, it is usually possible to select a shingle style that approximates the look and feel of the original roof. If other replacement materials are preferred, the HDC can advise on their suitability.

It should be noted that even when roof cladding is replaced, other character-defining elements of the roof can and should be preserved. These include wood fascias and soffits, vergeboards, and cornices. Even original ridge tiles and copper gutters can be temporarily removed and replaced once the new cladding has been installed.



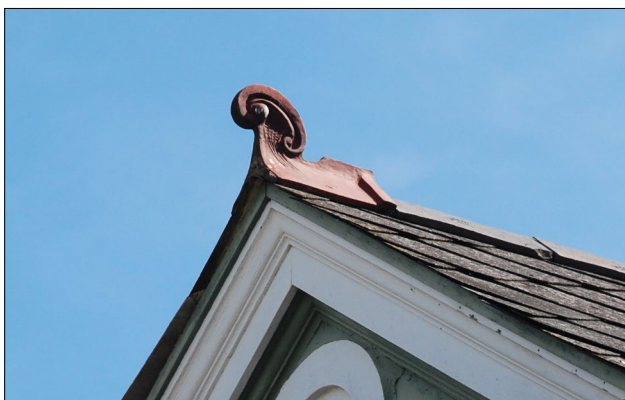
A well-maintained asphalt-shingle roof



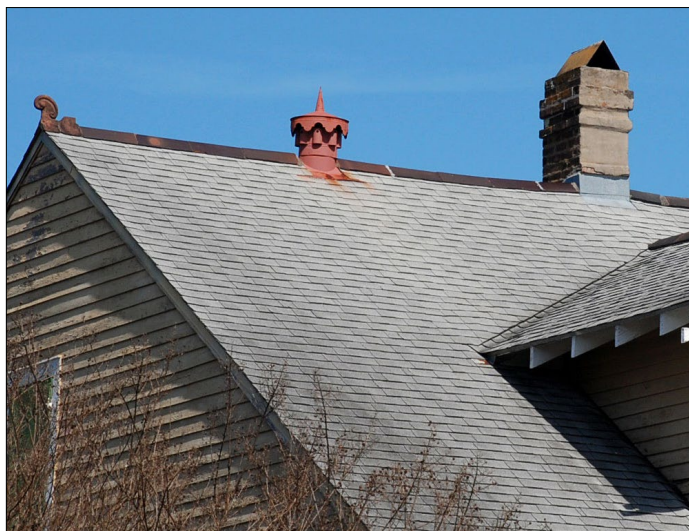
A well-maintained asbestos-shingle roof with copper flashing

HISTORIC MATERIALS: Cresting and Finials

The use of terra cotta as a roofing material dates back thousands of years. In colonial New Orleans, shallow-pitched roofs were often sheathed in flat clay tiles or Spanish barrel tiles. When tile gave way to slate in the 19th century, builders continued to use the clay tiles to cover the ridge-line gap where the two roof slopes meet. The two most common types of clay ridge tiles throughout the New Orleans area are the English V, which is laid flush and mortared at each joint, and the overlapping Spanish barrel tile. In the 1880s, with the popularization of the Queen Anne and Eastlake styles, the tiles grew more decorative at the top ridge. This treatment, which is called cresting, often terminates with a terra-cotta finial. In Gretna, the most common finial shape is a stylized rooster comb. The districts' remaining ridge tile and ornament examples are valuable components of the city's skyline, serving both an important protective function and helping to define a building's architectural style.



Rooster-comb finial



There are a variety of historic elements visible on this side-gable roof, including a Chinese cap, rooster-comb finial, brick chimney with V cap, and English V ridge tiles.



English V ridge tiles



The rhythm of the chimneys is a distinctive feature of this historic shotgun.



Barrel ridge tiles

GUIDELINES: NEW CONSTRUCTION & ADDITIONS

6



INTRODUCTION

Gretna's historic districts are characterized by their abundance of intact historic architecture, nineteenth-century development patterns, and distinctive streetscapes. They are also dynamic places that must continue to adapt and change if they are to stay vibrant and attractive to residents and businesses.

This chapter addresses one of the common challenges facing historic districts: how to incorporate new construction and additions without sacrificing the qualities that make older buildings and neighborhoods so distinctive.

Compatibility and context

For both new construction and additions within historic districts, the City of Gretna encourages quality design that is compatible with its surroundings. But how, specifically, are these terms defined?

While admittedly subjective, *quality design* may be thought of as architecture that reflects a high level of attention to form, function, material, and construction. It should be thoughtful, responsive to an occupant's needs, based on solid design principles, well suited to its site, durable, well detailed, and well constructed. Quality design is an achievable objective no matter a project's scope or budget.

Buildings that are *compatible* take cues from their immediate context. They attempt to respect—rather than overwhelm or detract from—their surroundings. That means, for example, that a compatible new building is not significantly taller, or shorter, than the buildings around it; that it is set back from the sidewalk a similar distance as its neighbors; and that on a block of storefronts it does not present a blank wall to the street. Compatible buildings may continue a pattern of alternating front doors and windows, or they may follow the cornice lines of adjacent buildings. The design principles and recommendations detailed in this section illustrate ways to achieve compatibility without copying or mimicking existing historic buildings.

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- New Construction - 95

Building Height and Width

Building Form and Massing

Setbacks

Orientation

Facade Composition

Architectural Elements

Materials

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Planning an Addition

Increasing the Height of a Building

Increasing the Footprint of a Building

- Building Elevation - 103

Definitions

Limited Elevation Change

Substantial Elevation Change

Because compatibility is about responding to context, it is crucial to begin with a thorough understanding of the visual and physical characteristics that uniquely define a particular setting. Character-defining elements of historic districts that are especially important to study when contemplating new construction include building height and width, building form and massing, setbacks, orientation, facade composition, architectural elements, and materials.

Consider, for example, the buildings on your block. Are they one story tall or two? Are they narrow with steeply pitched roofs, or are they more horizontal? Are they built on slabs, or raised off the ground? Are they set back the same distance from the sidewalk? Are the entrances on the front facade or are they around the side? Are the windows and doors aligned? Do they have porches? Driveways? Garages? Are they mostly brick or wood frame?

A note on building types and architectural styles

The City of Gretna does not mandate any particular building type or architectural style for new construction or additions. In fact a modern structure reflective of current design trends and materials can fit quite well within a historic district if fundamental design principles are followed. If a building owner does choose to replicate a historic building type or style, close attention should be paid to matters of detail and proportion. For example, one of the defining characteristics of a typical nineteenth-century shotgun house is its high ceilings (approximately 11 or 12 feet), which translate into tall window and door openings on the front facade. If a new shotgun house is built with 8-foot ceilings to take advantage of standard 4-by-8-foot dimensions for building materials, the result will be awkward in appearance.

Secretary of the Interior's Approach to New Construction and Additions

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, upon which these guidelines are based, outlines three primary concepts that should be followed when planning new construction and additions:

- **Preserve historic character:** Additions and new construction should not destroy the historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize a property.
- **Differentiate old from new:** A visual distinction should be made between old and new work. While new work should be compatible with the materials, features, size, proportion, and massing of a historic building or district, it is not necessary to replicate existing building details, types, or styles. The rationale is that this can make it more difficult to identify what is truly considered historic.
- **Plan for reversibility:** Additions and new construction should be undertaken in such a way that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

While the availability of vacant lots is limited within Gretna's historic districts, there are occasionally opportunities for new construction. Compatible development can have a positive impact on a neighborhood because it demonstrates re-investment, growth, and the appeal of an area. Incompatible development, by contrast, can compromise a historic district's desirability and integrity.

All new construction must comply with the City of Gretna's zoning regulations and building codes. The design principles below are intended to help residents, contractors, architects and others develop new construction projects that are compatible with their historic surroundings.

In the previous section, we identified several character-defining elements of historic districts, including building height and width, building form and massing, setbacks, orientation, facade composition, architectural elements, and materials. Here we will elaborate on each element and discuss fundamental design principles and recommendations that should be followed when planning for new construction.

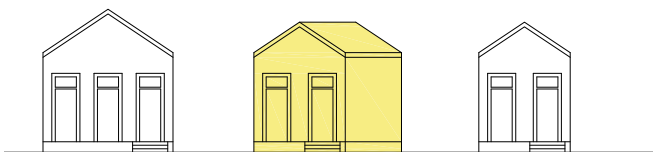
BUILDING HEIGHT AND WIDTH

A building's height and width determine its overall size. However, the appropriateness of a building's size depends on its context. This is where the design principle of scale comes in to play. *Scale* refers to how one perceives a building's size in relation to adjacent properties. A building that towers over its neighbor may be described as over-scaled, whereas a diminutive building that is significantly smaller than adjacent structures may appear to be under-scaled.

Another design principle that must be considered is *proportion*, which in general terms refers to the relationship between building elements. Here, the relationship between height and width determines whether a building's overall proportion is predominantly vertical (tall and narrow) or horizontal (short and wide).

DO

- To maintain a consistency of scale and proportion, the height and width of new construction should generally be similar to neighboring buildings.



The one-story new construction (in yellow) matches the scale of its neighbors.

DON'T

- Do not construct a new building that is significantly taller than adjacent properties. In general, within Gretna's historic districts, the height differential should not exceed one story.
- Do not construct a new building whose proportions differ significantly from adjacent properties.



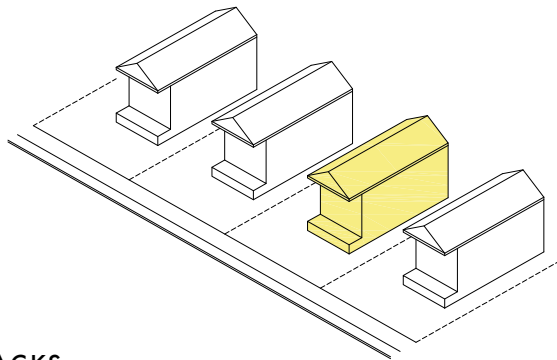
The three-story new construction (in blue) is oversized in relation to its neighbors.

BUILDING FORM AND MASSING

While both of these terms describe a building's three-dimensional qualities, there are slight variations in the way each is defined. *Form* refers to a building's overall shape and volume, including roofs, wings, and projections. *Massing* is commonly used to refer to a building's overall bulk or presence on a site. In new construction, form and massing may be governed in part by the maximum height limitations and minimum lot-line setbacks specified in the city's zoning ordinance.

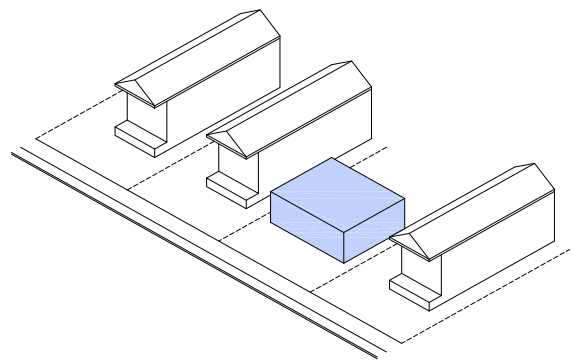
DO

- To best blend in, the form and massing of new construction should generally be similar to that of other buildings on the block.
- As roofs are a prominent component of a building's form, consider matching the types (hip, gable, etc.) and pitches found on adjacent buildings.
- Consider visually breaking up a large building into smaller volumes in order to make it more compatible with its surroundings.



DON'T

- Do not construct a new building whose form and massing vary substantially from its surrounding context.

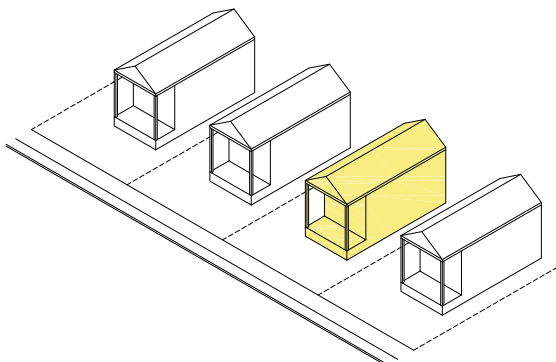


SETBACKS

Setbacks refer to the distance between a building and a property line, with minimum requirements typically specified in zoning regulations. Front yard setbacks are particularly important in defining a building's relationship to the street. To achieve a sense of continuity, it is recommended that buildings in sequence have consistent front yard setbacks. Often, on a block where many of the buildings were developed at the same time—for example a row of 1920s Craftsman double shotguns—it is not uncommon to find elements such as fences, gates, steps, and porches in alignment as well. The net effect is a streetscape with a consistent pattern and rhythm.

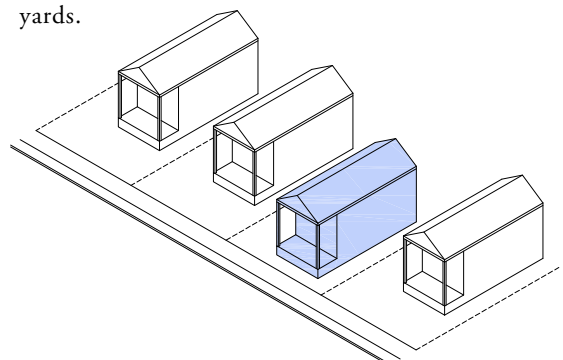
DO

- To achieve a cohesive and continuous streetscape, new buildings should maintain the front yard setbacks characteristic of the district or block.
- If incorporating fences, porches, balconies, or similar elements, they too should match the prevailing setbacks on the block.



DON'T

- Do not site a building too close or too far from the front property line relative to adjacent buildings, as this will result in unnecessary setbacks that disrupt the continuity of the street frontage.
- It is inappropriate to create large front yards for parking when such an arrangement was not part of the historic development pattern of the block. It is more appropriate to provide parking within side or rear yards.

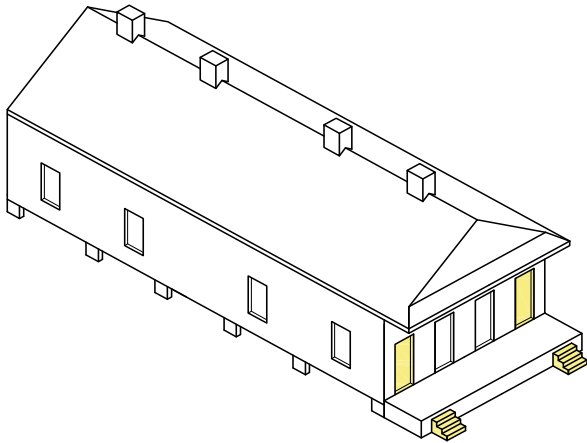


ORIENTATION

The orientation of a building is simply the direction it faces. Within Gretna's historic districts, most buildings squarely face the street and have their primary entrance located on the front facade.

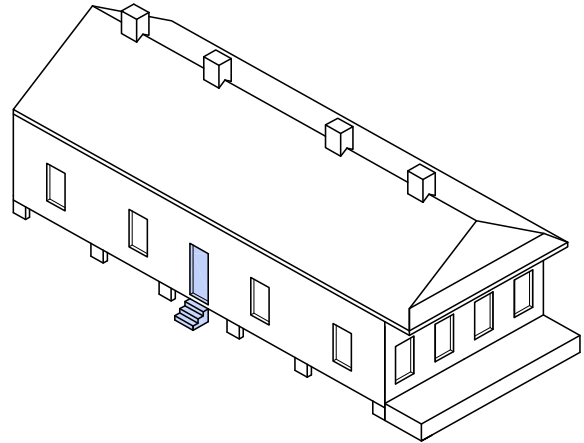
DO

- Orient new construction to reflect the orientation of neighboring buildings. This includes the location of front entrances.



DON'T

- It is not appropriate to locate a main entrance on the side of a building when adjacent buildings have prominent front entrances.



FACADE COMPOSITION

Facade composition refers to the arrangement of doors, windows, and other similar features present on a facade. Most of the historic building types found in Gretna have character-defining patterns of openings set within individual bays. Consider, for example, the door-window-window-door configuration common to shotgun doubles. When repeated across multiple facades, this sets up a well-defined rhythm along the street. A similar effect can be achieved on a commercial block through the arrangement of storefronts and entrance vestibules.

There are also vertical relationships between building elements. For example, consider the distance between floors, the vertical spacing between rows of windows, or the alignment of building cornices. Repetition of these elements, too, contributes to a sense of continuity along a street facade.

DO

- New buildings should respect the proportions, sizes, and locations of existing window and door openings that are characteristic of a streetscape or block.
- Door and window openings should be organized so as to promote a pedestrian-friendly presence at ground level.



The new construction (in yellow) complements the window and door arrangements of its neighbor.

DON'T

- Do not propose buildings with blank or opaque front facades (including windows and doors with reflective mirrored glass).
- Do not propose prominent garage doors on a front facade, as this is not consistent with the traditional development patterns found in historic districts.



The new construction (in blue) is incompatible with the facade composition of its neighbor.

MATERIALS

Materials used for roofs, walls, foundations, windows, doors and details are important contributors to the visual character of a historic district. While it is advisable to use compatible materials such as brick, wood, iron, and stone when building within historic districts, one should not go to great lengths to make such materials appear aged or historic. The patina of century-old wood or iron is nearly impossible to duplicate, and in fact the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties discourage any attempt to do so because it confuses one's perception of what is truly historic.

DO

- Do select high quality, durable materials such as actual brick, wood, or stone for primary elevations that are visible from the street.
- Materials selected for new construction should complement those found on surrounding buildings through the careful consideration of color, pattern, and texture.

DON'T

- Do not try to "historicize" a building material through artificial aging or weathering.
- Artificial materials such as vinyl "weatherboards" and faux plastic "bricks" are not recommended within historic districts, particularly along a building's primary facade.

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

Architectural elements such as porches, galleries, chimneys, dormers, and parapets provide a common vocabulary among historic buildings. Incorporating modern versions of such elements can be an effective way for new construction to relate to its context. Keep in mind that when such elements are incorporated in new construction, they should have simplified detailing reflective of their contemporary design.

DO

- Consider incorporating architectural elements similar to those found on neighboring buildings.



The simply detailed porches on these newly constructed shotguns capture the appropriate rhythm and scale of their historic counterparts.



This well-scaled new construction is compatible with its historic surroundings.

DON'T

- Do not construct a "historicized" architectural element (mimicking traditional ornament and detailing) on a contemporary building.



These modern "historicized" details lack the proportions and craftsmanship of their historic counterparts.



This new construction lacks the full-length windows, steps, and main entrance of a traditional front porch.

ADDITIONS

Additions have historically provided a way to keep an older building functioning and viable when new space is needed or an extra function must be accommodated. In fact, it is often possible to understand how a building has changed over time by studying the sequence of prior alterations and additions. Some early alterations (generally those over fifty years old) may now even be considered historically significant in their own right.

To understand the pressure placed on buildings to expand, consider for example how the size of the typical house has changed over the last century. According to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), the average size of a new home in 1900 ranged from 700 to 1,200 square feet. Today, the average size is closer to 2,300 square feet, with 2.5 bathrooms and 3 or more bedrooms. Kitchens, once purely functional rooms at the back of a house, are now larger, more lavish, and more connected to other spaces in the home. Open floor plans, family rooms, home offices, mud rooms, laundry rooms, and master suites represent modern living concepts that were not necessarily part of the building vocabulary in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Commercial and institutional buildings, too, may face changing demands. Successful companies might require extra retail, office, or storage space. A historic bank might wish to add a drive-through, or a school might need more classrooms.

Sensitively designed additions can provide needed living and working space while still preserving historic character. Poorly designed additions, in contrast, can seriously detract from or even overwhelm a historic structure. This section will examine the two most common approaches to additions—increasing the height and increasing the footprint—and will detail the challenges and recommendations specific to each.

PLANNING AN ADDITION

New additions may be considered appropriate as long as they do not destroy historic features, materials, and spatial relationships that are significant to the original building and site. It is usually best to place an addition towards the rear of the property where it is least visible from the public way so that the historic character of the streetscape is preserved. When possible, additions should be located on the least character-defining elevation so as to minimize their impact.

Additions should be compatible with the original building in terms of scale, proportion, composition, architectural elements, and materials. They should not overpower the original building in terms of form or massing.

While designed to be compatible, additions should also be visibly differentiated from the original building. This can be accomplished, for example, through a break in the roofline, a change in the wall plane, or a change in materials. Additions should also be planned and constructed so that they can be easily removed in the future without damage to the original building.

INCREASING THE HEIGHT OF A BUILDING

Historically, one of the most common strategies for increasing the size of a building has been to add an additional story or build out an attic space by incorporating dormers. Both of these approaches may be appropriate for new additions so long as they are sensitively designed.

Shotgun houses are particularly well suited to partial rear second-story additions, historically referred to as *camelbacks*. Such additions should be set back at least one to two room lengths from the facade to minimize visibility from the street. Volumes should be kept simple, and roof pitches should match the original building.

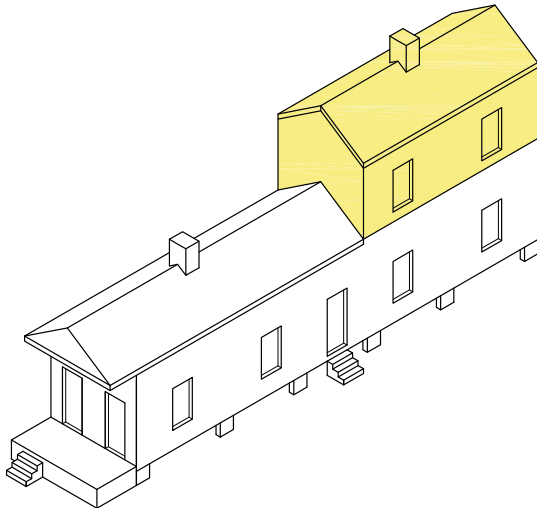
Creole cottages tend to have slightly steeper roof pitches than shotgun houses, translating into increased headroom in the attic. As long as building code requirements for habitable space can be met, these areas may be built out to provide additional living space. It is recommended that new dormers be added only to rear-facing (secondary) elevations, and that they maintain the proportions traditional for that building type.

Bungalows inherently tend to have more variety of form (such as asymmetry, changes in wall planes, and projecting bays). As a result, they may be good candidates for both second stories and dormers, provided that such additions are sensitively designed.

Most residential buildings within Gretna's historic districts are one to two stories tall. Vertical additions that increase a building's height to three full stories or more would generally be considered inappropriate.

DO

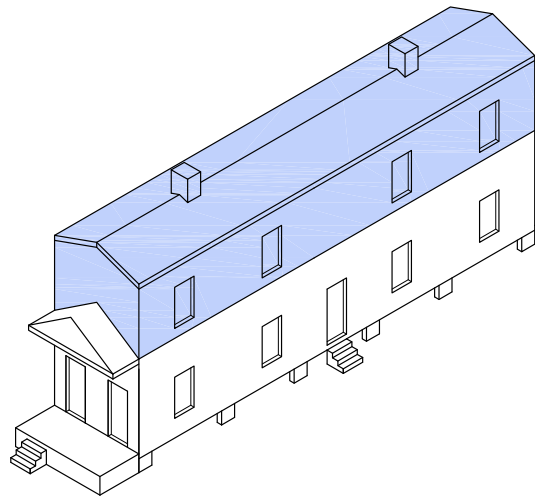
- Second-story additions should be set back from the street to minimize the impact to the front facade.
- New dormers should be located on secondary elevations.
- Existing roof pitches should be matched when possible.



This camelback addition is appropriately set back from the front facade.

DON'T

- Do not add dormers or vertical elements such as towers to building types that would not historically have had them.
- Do not build a second-story addition flush with the front facade.



This second-story addition is built too close to the front facade.

INCREASING THE FOOTPRINT OF A BUILDING

Another common strategy for increasing the size of a building is to expand its footprint. The feasibility of this approach depends on the placement of the original building on the site and whether there is room within the side or rear yards for an expansion. Zoning regulations concerning setbacks and minimum yard requirements may restrict where and how an addition is sited.

Many of the lots within Gretna's historic districts are relatively long and narrow, conforming to early development patterns. Gretna's most common building type, the shotgun, maintains similar proportions. Because of the way shotguns are typically sited, there are two main options for expansion.

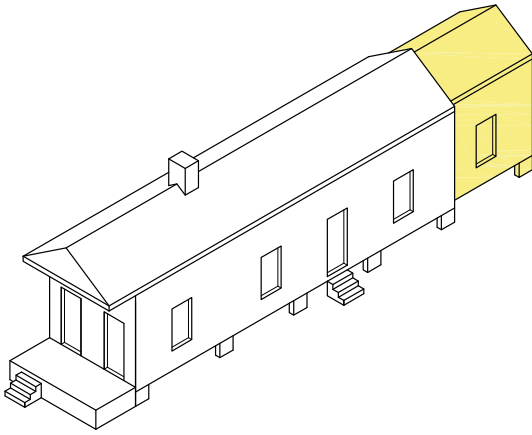
- First, it might be possible to continue to add to the length of the building. In fact, many existing shotguns have rear rooms that were added over time, most often to accommodate additional bedrooms, kitchens, small baths, or utility closets.
- Second, there might be enough room within a side yard to add a small addition (making the overall plan ell-shaped). Such additions are best located toward the rear of the property, where they will have less of an impact on the facade.

For building types with more horizontal proportions (e.g., Creole cottages and wide bungalows), rear additions are generally a more appropriate solution.

On large sites with ample room for expansion, consider incorporating a transitional space such as a hall or passageway to visually divide a new wing from an existing building.

DO

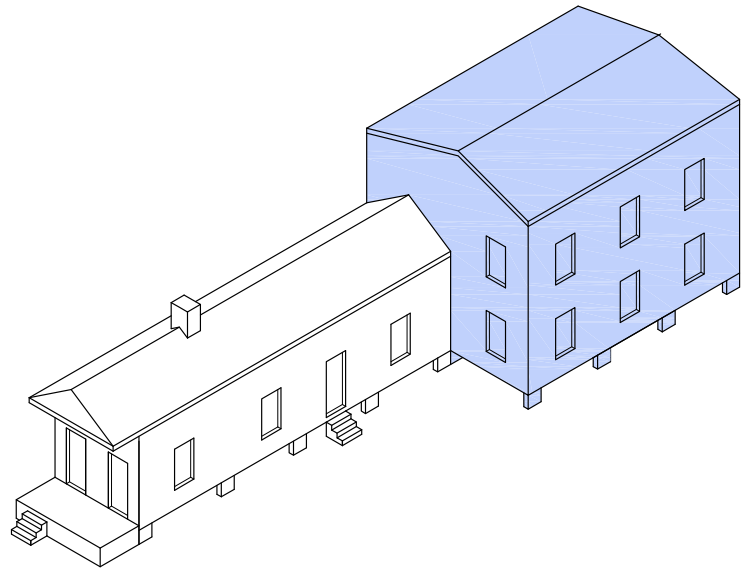
- Do consider rear-yard additions first, as they typically have very little impact on the historic streetscape.
- Side-yard additions should be set back from the street so as not to visually impact the front facade.
- It is generally appropriate to maintain similar proportions for doors and windows, and to align their openings (heads and sills) with the existing building.
- Additions typically have simpler trim and detailing that complement (but don't necessarily replicate) the trim and detailing on the original building.



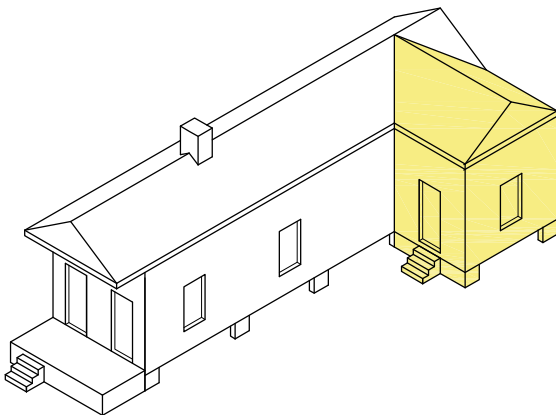
This rear addition is appropriately scaled for this shotgun. The wall plane is set back one foot to signal that it is an addition and not part of the original building.

DON'T

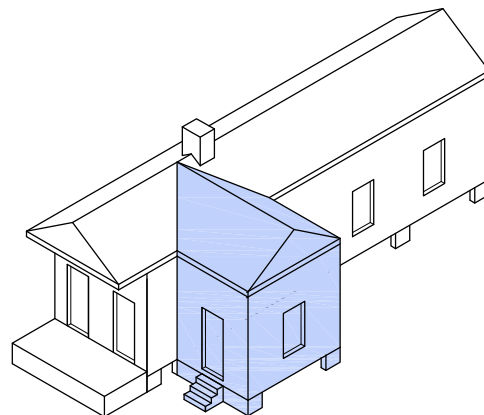
- Do not construct an addition at the front elevation of a building.
- Do not relocate a building's primary entrance to a new side or rear addition.



This rear addition is too large and overscaled in relation to the existing shotgun.



This side addition is appropriately set back from the street.



This side addition is too close to the street. Also, the front door was inappropriately relocated to the addition and the original front steps removed.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

DO



This camelback addition is set back an appropriate distance from the facade.



Both the front dormer and early rear addition are appropriately scaled and are secondary to the main house.



This side addition provides additional living space and supports an adjacent carport.

DON'T



This second floor addition is too close to the front of the building and projects awkwardly over the side.



The upper story addition to this Creole cottage is out of scale and compromises the historic integrity of the building's facade.



This porch was inappropriately filled in to accommodate a garage.

BUILDING ELEVATION

Any proposal to elevate a historic property must carefully consider the building's relationship to other properties within the neighborhood. The increased height, taller foundations, and expanded runs of stairs associated with elevated buildings present unique design challenges that must be thoughtfully addressed in order to minimize any potential negative impacts on a district's architectural character. It is the intent of this section to provide guidelines and examples to allow elevated buildings, whether lifted a few feet or a full story above grade, to better fit within their historic neighborhoods.

Gretna's two historic districts comprise a number of different building types (see Part 3: Residential Types and Styles) that reflect architectural preferences and styles over various periods of development. Each building type was distinguished, in part, by its height above grade.

- *Creole cottages* were typically built low to the ground, with the living area situated no more than 2 to 3 feet above grade.
- *Center-hall cottages* often had main floors approximately 5 feet above grade.
- *Shotgun houses*, with their myriad variations, were initially built with low piers and first floors approximately 2 feet to 3 feet above grade. They typically had chain walls with ornamental cast-iron vents on the front façade and exposed piers on the sides and rear. Beginning in the 1910s, corresponding roughly with the influence of the Craftsman style and the growing popularity of the automobile, some shotguns were built higher off the ground (approximately 8 feet above grade) to incorporate additional storage or garage space.
- *Bungalows*, most commonly associated with the Craftsman style, were typically raised between 3 feet and 8 feet off the ground. Stairs and landings featured prominently in the composition of their asymmetrical façades.

While most property owners today choose to elevate their homes in order to minimize potential impacts from flooding and storms, others do so to gain additional living or storage space or to provide room for a garage. The guidelines in this section address both approaches to building elevation.



An example of a Craftsman-style bungalow originally built as a raised residence



An example of a Neoclassical Revival-style raised residence

DEFINITIONS

Raised Dwelling: A structure originally designed and built with a first-floor living area in the range of 5 feet to 8 feet above grade. Examples include raised center-hall cottages, raised bungalows and raised basement houses.

Elevated Dwelling: An existing structure that is lifted and placed on a new elevated foundation, necessitating new columns, piers, posts, or raised foundation walls.

Base Flood Elevation: The elevation, in feet above or below sea level, shown on the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), to which floodwater is expected to rise during a base flood (i.e., a flood having a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year). Building owners are typically required to meet the Base Flood Elevation when substantially improving a property. All requirements relating to building elevation should be verified with the City of Gretna's Department of Building & Regulatory Inspections.

Open Foundations: Foundations characterized by the use of piers or piles. The resulting open area under the elevated structure may be screened with non-structural porous panels (e.g. lattice panels) through which rising flood water can flow freely.

Closed Foundations: In a closed foundation, perimeter walls (of masonry, concrete, or wood studs) enclose the area beneath the main level of the structure.

LIMITED ELEVATION CHANGE (TO MEET OR MINIMALLY EXCEED BASE FLOOD ELEVATION)

This approach generally involves raising an existing building a few additional feet to meet or minimally exceed the required Base Flood Elevation (BFE). Throughout most of Gretna's historic districts, this means elevating a structure to be approximately 3-4 feet above grade. Typically, this involves the replacement of piers on both sides of the house, construction of a new chain wall at the front porch, and new porch steps. There is generally very little noticeable impact to the streetscape with this type of minimal elevation.

DO

- From the standpoint of maintaining architectural character, it is advisable to elevate historic buildings only the amount needed to meet Base Flood Elevation.
- Consider a building's type and style to understand if a proposed change in elevation is within the range of what might be considered historically appropriate.
- Chain walls along front facades and porches should be rebuilt. Retain and replace any existing vents, and match the finish of the original material (e.g. stucco, brick, or historic pressed concrete block). See Part 5: Guidelines: Repair & Renovation for additional information regarding foundation design.



This bracketed shotgun has been minimally elevated. Landscaping effectively screens the foundation and provides a graceful transition to the ground plane.



An example of a historic shotgun in which the first floor sits approximately 4 feet above grade

DON'T

- Unless the concrete block is of the historic pressed variety, do not leave new concrete piers or chain walls exposed on the front facade of the building.
- Although new treads and risers will likely be needed, do not alter the position or orientation of the front steps unless site constraints (e.g. a shallow setback) require it.



This Craftsman double shotgun was elevated more than 6 feet above grade, the concrete block chain wall was inappropriately left exposed, and the original front steps consolidated and repositioned.



This two-story home was elevated approximately 6 feet above grade and the front porch was enclosed and finished with a layer of stucco. The foundation vents appear out of proportion compared to the prominence of the foundation.

SIGNIFICANT ELEVATION CHANGE (TO INCREASE THE BUILDING HEIGHT BY A FULL STORY)

A building elevated a full story above grade (approximately 8 feet to 9 feet) has the potential to significantly alter the streetscape, particularly on blocks where adjacent buildings share similar porch heights and ridgelines. Not only might such buildings be considerably taller than their neighbors, but they also often combine new elements such as expanded stairs and modern garages with existing historic porches and ridgelines. Potential impacts to architectural character, however, can be mitigated through the sensitive design of foundations, garages, and entry stairs. Each is addressed below.

Foundations: Whether designed as closed masonry walls or open piers, foundations can become imposing and out of scale in relation to neighboring houses when structures are significantly elevated. Measures may be taken to mitigate these impacts by selecting materials and finishes compatible with the rest of the house, using screening and landscaping to soften the transition to the ground, and carefully designing the foundation's outward appearance. A solution that may be appropriate for some structures, and was historically employed in many early 20th-century Craftsman residences, involves designing the ground floor as a wood-framed "first floor" supported by a low, continuous foundation. This allows the "first floor" to more easily accommodate windows and doors, and to continue the same wall cladding (e.g., wood weatherboards or stucco) used on the rest of the house.

Garages: Garages added to elevated historic homes should be kept as visually unobtrusive as possible. Modern roll-up garage doors can appear out of scale on historic houses, while carriage doors (typically smaller, of wood construction, and with greater architectural detail) may be a more suitable choice depending on the building's architectural style.

Entry stairs: Most of the residences located in Gretna's two historic districts have prominent porches and stairs that clearly signify a front entrance. Even when a house is elevated, it is important to maintain this sense of hierarchy. When houses are elevated, it is typically necessary to expand and sometimes reposition the front steps and landings, a task that is more difficult on tightly constrained urban lots.

DO

- New expanded foundations should be designed to coordinate visually with the main portion of the house. For example, align structural piers with key façade elements (e.g., existing columns, colonnades, corners, trim elements, and other architectural features).
- Use landscaping to screen and lessen the visual impact of new foundations.
- Where possible, minimize the visual impact of new garage doors by setting them back from the street and limiting their prominence. Consider carriage doors which may be more appropriately scaled for historic buildings.
- Openings (e.g., windows, doors, vents) planned for the foundation/first floor should correspond to the design of the rest of the building in terms of materials, detailing, proportion, etc.
- Maintain historic porches and their important character-defining features.
- Plan new entry stairs to be sufficiently wide (typically at least the width of a bay) in order to maintain a sense of hierarchy, prominence, and scale.
- New entry stairs should generally have a closed foundation that matches or complements the foundation of the house.

DON'T

- Do not elevate a historic structure more than one full story, which would significantly alter the building's architectural character.
- Do not leave new piers or concrete masonry walls exposed, particularly along any street-facing facades. Exposed concrete should generally be covered with a coat of paint or stucco.
- Even when an open foundation is the preferred alternative, the front of the building should be well-screened. A house should not look like it is supported on stilts.

DO



This double shotgun was likely elevated in the early 20th century. The ground floor, with its recessed entrances and darker paint scheme, visually recedes into the background.



This Craftsman double effectively incorporates screening to minimize the impact of the elevated first floor. The front steps are sufficiently wide and are a prominent feature of the facade.



Likely elevated earlier in the 20th century, the structural piers and porch columns create strong vertical elements on this facade, and the front steps are well proportioned.

DON'T



This Craftsman bungalow has been elevated more than 1 story above grade, and as a result the building towers over its more modestly scaled neighbors.



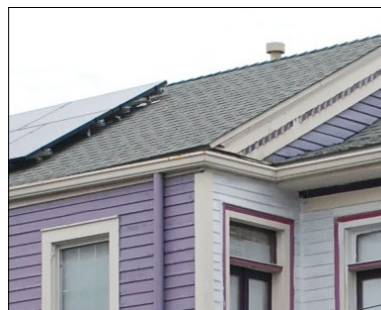
This front elevation could use screening or landscaping to lessen the impact of the visually dominant stucco chain wall.



The porch roof of this elevated double shotgun was inappropriately extended, and the steel stairs and railing are not compatible with the rest of the house. The lack of ground-floor openings on the prominent side elevation is visually jarring.

GUIDELINES: BUILDING & SITE AMENITIES

7



INTRODUCTION

This section addresses auxiliary structures and amenities that have the potential to impact the streetscape within historic districts. Many of the topics covered, including fences, detached structures, solar panels, and antennas, are also addressed in the city's municipal code. The guidelines presented here are intended to complement, not replace, the city's regulations by adding perspective on design, historic context, and best practices.

GARAGES AND CARPORTS

Garages and carports are functional structures designed to shelter one or more vehicles. Garages are fully enclosed, whereas carports are open-sided and usually attached to the side of a building.

While contemporary houses are often built with attached garages, early garages were more often free-standing. They were smaller than their modern counterparts, designed for one car only, usually with wide side-hinged carriage doors for vehicle access. While utilitarian in purpose, they were sometimes detailed to mimic the style and features of the main house.

The proliferation of both garages and carports in the 1920s and 30s corresponded to the rise in automobile ownership among the general population. Many early garages and carports have been demolished and replaced over the years with more modern structures. The few that remain, however, are generally considered to be contributing elements to Gretna's historic districts.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- Historic garages and carports should be preserved. They should be maintained and repaired in keeping with the guidelines described in Part 5.
- If historic garages are no longer suitable for sheltering vehicles, they should be adapted to an alternate use such as a storage or garden shed.
- New garages and carports should be located so as to minimize their visibility from the street.
- When designing a new garage, take cues from the appearance and detailing of the principal residence. For example,

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consider matching the roof pitch, form, color, and wall cladding.

- It is inappropriate to build an attached garage on a historic building that would not originally have had one. Consider a free-standing garage instead.
- New carports should generally be simple in appearance so as not to detract from the historic character of the building or district.



A Craftsman garage with a modern roll-up door retains its original use.

FENCES AND GATES

Fences and gates are important and highly visible elements of a streetscape. They demarcate boundaries between public and private property, and also provide privacy and security for building owners. Until the early twentieth century, it was common to locate fences and gates adjacent to the sidewalk at the property's perimeter. Gradually the practice of fencing front yards fell out of favor, however, and by the 1940s typically only rear yards were enclosed.

While few early wood fences and gates remain in Gretna, many of those made from cast iron have lasted because of their high degree of material durability. Dating primarily from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they are considered to be important character-defining features of Gretna's historic districts and should be maintained, even when only partial remnants remain. Minor deterioration due to rust can usually be addressed by light sanding, followed by an appropriate primer and paint.

When contemplating new fences and gates for historic properties, some styles tend to be more complementary to older buildings than others. Factors to consider include material, the opacity and spacing of pickets, scale, and simplicity of design.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- Fences and gates in front yards, when permitted, should be kept relatively low (approximately 3 feet to 4 feet in height) with a fair degree of transparency in order to preserve the visibility of the primary building.
- Fences and gates for rear yards can generally be taller and more opaque, allowing for greater privacy.
- Generally speaking, the more modest the building, the simpler the fence design. So, for the traditional shotguns and bungalows common in Gretna, simple wood picket or metal fences would be considered most appropriate.
- Wood picket fences in front yards should be painted or stained with a solid, opaque finish. Light wood stains or clear coats are more appropriate for the taller capped pine, cedar, or redwood fences usually found in rear yards.
- Metal fencing should be either wrought or cast iron, or an alternate material similar in appearance (aluminum with a matte black painted finish is acceptable.)
- Solid masonry walls are generally considered inappropriate in front yards unless their presence can be supported by historic documentation.
- Fence types considered *inappropriate* when visible from the street include vinyl fencing, chain-link, and barbed wire. Exposed concrete block piers are also discouraged.

HISTORIC MATERIAL: Cast Iron

Cast iron is a brittle form of iron that is cast or poured into a mold to take on an infinite number of shapes. Beginning in the mid-19th century, the New Orleans area had several foundries that produced both heavy equipment and ornamental cast-iron work, from steam engines to delicately scrolled railings. Most of Gretna's historic cast iron takes the form of fences and gates, which outpaced wood picket varieties in popularity in the second half of the 19th century. One of the best-known local manufacturers, Hinderer's Iron Works, produced many of Gretna's historic iron fences. Their work is often marked with a small plaque that bears the company name. These fences are irreplaceably important visual components of the city's historic streetscapes.



SHEDS AND GAZEBOS

Small tool and garden sheds, gazebos, and similar structures that are visible from the public way can impact the historic integrity of a site and its surroundings. These small structures should be treated with the same care and attention to detail accorded to the main building, and should be maintained and repaired in keeping with the guidelines described in Part 5.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- Sheds and similar structures should be located in rear yards when possible.
- If an existing shed or outbuilding is visible from the street and detracts from a historic building or property, consider screening it from view with fencing or landscaping.
- When designing or selecting a new shed, consider matching the material, color, style, or detailing of the main building.



Historic shed

SOLAR PANELS AND ANTENNAS

As people consider various strategies for increasing the energy efficiency of their buildings, one option growing in popularity involves the installation of roof-mounted solar panels. While individual solar panels are approximately 3 feet by 5 feet, they are typically grouped together in larger arrays to provide the desired wattage. An installation can occupy anywhere from 100 square feet to well over 400 square feet of roof area. Because solar installations are visually prominent, they have the potential to significantly impact the historic integrity of a property.

Antennas and satellite dishes are also examples of building-mounted equipment that can affect the integrity of a historic property. Because of this, the City of Gretna restricts antennas, aerials, and satellite dishes within historic districts to locations that are not visible from the public way (see Municipal Code Section 52-9(6) in Part 9: Appendix).

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR SOLAR INSTALLATIONS

- The City of Gretna's municipal code (Section 52-9(6)) requires that solar installations within historic districts be a minimum of 10 feet behind the front wall of the structure, a minimum of 12 inches below the ridgeline, and project less than 8 inches above the roof surface.
- Flat-roof structures should also have solar panels set back from the roof edge a minimum of 10 feet. Pitch and elevation should be adjusted to reduce visibility from the public way.
- When solar panels are installed on buildings that are considered to be historic, the installation should be reversible (i.e., it should be possible to remove the panels without harming the original structure.)
- Solar panels should be positioned behind existing architectural features such as parapets, dormers, and chimneys to limit their visibility.
- Select solar panels and mounting systems that are compatible in color with the existing roof.
- For new construction within historic districts, solar panel installations should be designed from the start to be as unobtrusive as possible. When possible, they should be placed towards the rear of the site.



These solar panels are appropriately set back from the facade.

OTHER EQUIPMENT

Air-conditioning condensers, water heaters, generators, and trash dumpsters are examples of equipment that can impact the historic integrity of a site and its surroundings. Generally, these are best located in a rear yard out of view from the public way. If that is not an option, then they should be set back from the street to the extent possible and screened with solid landscaping (such as shrubs) or fencing.

ACCESSIBILITY

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), passed in 1990, is a comprehensive piece of legislation intended to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not discriminated against and that they have the same opportunities as others in areas such as employment, public accommodations, and transportation. This means that people with disabilities (including those who may be wheelchair bound, or vision- or hearing-impaired) should be able to work, eat, and shop within their communities.

Federal regulations, standards, and model building codes have been developed that mandate the level of accessibility required for particular types of buildings and circumstances. While new construction must comply with accessibility requirements, older structures built prior to the enactment of the law often lack accessible features. Many are brought into compliance only as they are renovated.

Historic properties (those that are listed or are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or properties designated as historic under state or local law) must still comply with the provisions of the ADA. However, if following the usual standards would threaten to destroy the building's historic significance, then alternative standards may be considered. The goal is to provide the highest level of access with the lowest level of impact to the property.

The law applies to places of public accommodation, so private residences are generally exempt. However, it is good practice to consider how any building might be made more accessible, whether part of an immediate building project or a plan for the future. Often, accessible features extend benefits to other members of the community (ramps and low thresholds, for example, are much appreciated by parents with strollers, the elderly, and others who have difficulty with steps).

The recommendations below primarily relate to site access, entrances, and doors, as these are the main exterior features under HDC review likely to be impacted. Steps, landings, doors, and thresholds often pose barriers for persons with physical disabilities. A number of solutions are available to increase accessibility while limiting the impact to a building's historic integrity.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- Any work to increase a building's accessibility should be carefully planned and undertaken to prevent the loss of character-defining spaces, features, and finishes.
- Whenever possible, access to historic buildings should be through a primary public entrance. It may be possible to modify existing entrances (e.g., by adjusting hardware or thresholds) to make them more accessible.
- If the original primary entrance cannot be made accessible without compromising character-defining features, then a new accessible entrance should be located as close to the principal entrance as possible.
- Historic doors generally should not be replaced, nor should door frames on the primary elevation be widened, as these actions can alter important character-defining features. However, if historic doors have already been replaced, there may be more flexibility in modifying the entrance to increase accessibility.
- Ramps or lifts should be designed to be as unobtrusive as possible. Railings should generally be simple, and materials should complement the building's exterior.

GLOSSARY & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

8



GLOSSARY

Accessory building: a structure detached from a principal building on the same lot that is incidental and subordinate to the principal building or use

Accessory use: a use of land or of a building or any portion thereof that is incidental and subordinate to the principal use of the land or building and located on the same lot with the principal use

Addition or Enlargement: any construction that increases the size of a structure in terms of site coverage, height, building depth or width, or floor area

Alteration: any change because of new construction, repair, or maintenance that changes the architectural integrity of an historic district, building, or landmark

Applique: applied ornament

Arcade: a series of arches supported by columns or piers

Arch: a curvilinear structural opening

Architrave: the lowest part of an entablature

Attic: all the space under a pitched roof of a building

Awning: a roof-like cover with no supports extending to the ground, constructed of fabric, metal, glass or other material, designed and intended for protection from the weather or as a decorative embellishment, and attached to the wall of a structure over a window, entryway, or walkway

Balcony: a platform projecting from an upper level of a building and surrounded by a railing

Baluster: a shaftlike element used to support a handrail

Balustrade: a railing composed of rails, balusters, and posts

Bargeboard: large boards salvaged from river barges and used to construct early buildings

Barrel tile: a half-cylinder-shaped clay roof tile

Bays: repetitive divisions into which a building is divided

Beam: a horizontal supporting member

Bracket: a structural or ornamental support element under eaves, balconies, or other overhangs

Brick veneer: a nonstructural layer of brick applied to an exterior wall

Building: any structure or any part of such structure when subdivided by division walls or party walls extending to or above the roof and without openings in such separate walls

Cabinet: a small room situated in the rear outer corner of certain house types, primarily French Colonial, Creole cottages, and American cottages

Capital: the uppermost part of a column or pilaster

Canopy: a rooflike cover carried by a frame supported by the ground, constructed of fabric, metal, glass or other material, designed and intended for protection from the weather or as a decorative embellishment, and projecting from the wall of a structure over an entryway

Carport: an open-sided shelter for automobiles

Casement window: a window that opens on hinges like a door

Casing: the exposed trim molding around a window that may be flat or milled with a decorative profile

Cast iron: iron shaped by placement in a mold, used for railing, fences, etc.

Cheek wall: either of two sides of a projection, such as a dormer or stoops

Chinese cap: a traditional, metal, ornamental roof vent

Cistern: a permanent artificial reservoir built to catch rainwater

Colonnettes: slender, turned wood columns

Colossal column: a column that continues uninterrupted for two or more stories

Column: a vertical support typically consisting of a base, a round shaft, and a capital

Construction: the erection of any on-site improvements on any parcel of ground

Context: the buildings, structures, landscape elements, and features immediately surrounding a historic resource

Corinthian order: the most ornate of the classical Greek orders, characterized by a bell-shaped capital decorated with acanthus leaves

Cornice: the upper, projecting section of an entablature or ornamental molding along the top of a building. Also, the molded trim above windows (*window cornice*) and doors (*door cornice*), generally limited to the building's facade.

Cresting: ornamentation occurring at an upper limit, such as the ridge of a roof

Crossette frame: an overlapping lintel over a doorway with a slight flaring out of the face of the doorway surround from the top to the bottom; also known as a Greek Key frame

Deck: a raised platform built above grade on support structures that is open to the sky and attached to the principal building; a deck is distinguished from a terrace in that a terrace is a raised surface constructed above grade built upon a solid base

Demolition: the complete, partial, or constructive removal of a building from any site

Dentils: closely spaced blocks in a cornice or gable; typically found in association with Greek Ionic and Corinthian orders

Dimensional lumber: lumber cut at saw mills to accepted industry standards

District: a part, zone, or geographic area within the city within which certain zoning or development regulations apply

Doric order: the simplest of the classical Greek orders, distinguished by columns with unadorned capitals and no bases

Dormer: a roofed projection on the sloping surface of a roof that features a glazed or slatted opening

Double-hung window: a window type introduced to New Orleans in the early 1800s, consisting of two sashes that operate through vertical movement

Drip edge: a projecting molding over an exterior door or window opening for catching and shedding rainwater

Drop siding: a type of weatherboard with a depression in the upper part of each board; also known as droplap siding

Eave: the overhanging lower edge of a roof

Efflorescence: the migration of water-soluble salts via capillary action to the face of the brick resulting in a white and powdery surface

Entablature: in classical architecture, the horizontal part of a classical order supported by columns or pilasters and consisting of an architrave, the frieze, and the cornice

Exterior: all outside surfaces of any buildings

Facade: the front wall of a building

Fanlight: a fan-shaped or semicircular window over a door or window with radiating muntins

Fascia: the horizontal trim board affixed to the ends of roof rafters. When applied to a sloping gable end, it is sometimes called a *rake fascia* or a *rake board*.

Fenestrations: the window and door openings in a building

Finial: the topping ornament of a roof gable, turret, baluster, post, etc.

Fish-scale shingles: wooden shingles cut in a shape to resemble fish scales

Flashing: pieces of sheet metal or other thin, impervious material installed to prevent the passage of water into a structure from an angle or joint

Flat-headed window: a window whose uppermost part is horizontal as opposed to arched

Flush siding: flat-faced boards nailed edge to edge to form the appearance of a flat wall

Fluting: closely spaced, parallel, vertical channeling on the shaft of a column or pilaster

Footprint: the form of a building on a site

Frieze: the middle part of a classical entablature

Gable: the triangular upper part of a wall formed by the roof pitch

Gallery: exterior space under the main roof of a house; porch and gallery are often used interchangeably

Grade: ground level

Grille: a grating forming a barrier or a screen

Gutter: a channel placed at the eaves for carrying off rainwater

Half-timbering: a method of wall construction in which the wooden structural members are exposed on the exterior of the wall with stucco infill between

Hip roof: a roof with four uniformly sloped sides

Historic building: a structure, site, or monument that is at least fifty years old and is determined to have historical significance, which may be defined by its architectural or cultural value

Historic district: a designated grouping of historic resources

Historic preservation: a broad range of activities related to the protection, maintenance, and care of elements of the built environment that reflect its cultural heritage

Integrity: the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's historic period

Ionic order: an order of classical Greek architecture characterized by columns with a scroll-like capital

Jigsaw work: decorative woodwork, generally curvilinear in shape, common in the Victorian era and produced by the use of a jigsaw

Joist: a beam supporting a floor or a ceiling

Light: a glass pane in a window or door

Lintel: the horizontal structural element above a window or door, usually carrying the wall load above

Mansard roof: a roof with a double slope on all four sides, the lower slope much steeper than the upper

Massing: the overall composition of the exterior of the major volumes of a building, especially when the structure has major and minor elements

Millwork: woodwork shaped or dressed by means of a rotary cutter

Modillions: small bracket-like ornamentation under the cornice of a classical entablature or in a gable

Molding: a linear decorative element or curved strip used for ornamentation or trimwork

Mortar joints: the exposed joints of mortar in masonry

Mullion: the vertical element separating two window or door frames

Multi-light: having many lights or glass panes, as a window or door

Muntin: the narrow molding separating individual panes of glass in a multipaned window sash

Ogee parapet: a parapet with an S-shaped profile at its raised central panel

Overhang: an extension of the roof system beyond the building's exterior walls that protects the upper portion of exterior walls from rain and direct sun

Parapet: a low wall or railing along the edge of a roof

Pedestal: a support for a column

Pediment: a low-pitched gable in the classical manner; also used in miniature over doors or windows

Pier: a square or rectangular support for a structure generally of brick or concrete block

Piercework: Ornamentation common in the Late Victorian period, created by cutting openings in various shapes in a solid piece of wood

Pilaster: a flattened, ornamental column attached to a wall

Porch: a structure, which can be enclosed or unenclosed, that projects from the exterior wall of a structure, has direct access to the street level of the structure, and is covered by a roof or eaves; an unenclosed porch is a porch that is open on all sides; an enclosed porch is a porch that is enclosed by walls, screens, lattice, or other material; a screened-in porch is considered an enclosed porch

Porte cochere: a covered entrance for the passage of vehicles

Portico: a covered entrance to a building

Post: a structural member, usually wood, set in an upright position and used as a support; a pillar; also, the structural element supporting a balustrade

Quoin: a stone, brick, or wood block used to accentuate the outside corners of a building

Rafter: a sloping structural member of a pitched roof

Rake: the inclined, usually projecting edge of a sloped 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 that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values

Renovation: the act or process of repairing and/or updating a structure to make it usable again, without attempting to restore its historic appearance or duplicate original construction methods or materials

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

Repointing: the process of removing deteriorated mortar from the joints of a masonry wall and replacing it with new mortar. May sometimes be referred to as “tuck pointing.”

Ridge cap: a convex or angled roof tile covering the ridge of a roof

Rising Damp: the migration of moisture from the soil into the masonry through capillary action

Roof pitch: the slope of a roof, often expressed in a ratio of rise to run

Round-headed window: a window whose uppermost part is rounded

Rusticated: rough-surfaced stonework

Sash: the wood frame of a window in which the glass panes are set

Segmental-arch head: the uppermost part of a door or window constructed in the shape of a circle with linear sides

Shed roof: a roof that is pitched in only one direction

Shingles: a wall or roof covering consisting of small overlapping pieces, square or patterned

Shutter: a hinged movable cover, usually of wood, for a window or door

Side gallery: a narrow covered side porch serving as an exterior corridor

Sidelights: stationary glass panes flanking an entrance door

Siding: the material used to cover the exposed side of a wood-frame building (weatherboard, drop siding, etc.)

Sign: any inscriptions or logos used for advertising purposes, whether painted upon, attached to, erected on or otherwise maintained on any premises and containing any inscriptions by which anything is made known, to designate an individual, a firm, an association, a corporation, a profession, a business, a commodity or product, which is visible from any public street and is used to attract attention

Sill: a horizontal member forming the lowest portion of a building or window; also the bottom of a door

Single-hung window: fixed upper sash above a vertically rising lower sash

Site plan: the development plan for one or more lots on which is shown the existing and proposed conditions of the lot including: topography, vegetation, drainage, floodplains, marshes and waterways; open spaces, walkways, means of ingress and egress, utility services, landscaping, structures and signs, lighting, and screening devices; any other information that reasonably may be required in order that an informed decision can be made by the approving authority

Soffit: the underside of a roof overhang

Spindle: a turned decorative wooden element

Stile: any of various upright members framing panels of a door or window

Stoop: steps that lead directly to the entrance without a landing or porch

Story: that portion of a building, other than a cellar, included between the surface of any floor and the surface of the next floor above it or, if there is no floor above it, then the space between the floor and the ceiling

Stucco: a smooth plaster exterior finish traditionally composed of sand, lime, water, varying amounts of Portland cement, and possible pigments or other additives. When applied directly to masonry surfaces, stucco becomes an integral part of the wall when set.

Strap hinges: hinges, used primarily on shutters and gates, that are attached to the face instead of the side

Stucco: exterior plaster

Surrounds: the framework and associated trim around a door or window

Swags: classical ornamentation resembling evergreen branches hanging in a curve between two points

Tongue and groove: a joint made by fitting a raised area or tongue on the edge of one member into a corresponding groove in the edge of another member to produce a flush surface

Transom: a glazed opening over a door or window

True divided light: a window or door in which the glass is divided into several small panes

Turned wood: wooden elements such as spindles or balusters produced by being turned on a lathe

Vergeboard: an ornamental board attached to the projected eave of a gable roof

Volute: spiral- or scroll-shaped ornament, typically found on Ionic column capitals

Weatherboard: a long, narrow board, usually slightly thicker on one edge, used for siding; applied horizontally and slightly overlapping

Wood frame: refers to a building whose structural elements are composed of a wood frame constructed of small dimensional lumber and held together with nails

Wrought iron: iron worked into shape by manual effort; used in balcony railings, fences, gates, hardware, etc.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

History of Gretna and Jefferson Parish

Curry, Mary Grace. *Gretna: A Sesquicentennial Salute*. New Orleans: Laborde Printing Company, 1986.

Stahls Jr., Paul F. *Jefferson Parish: Rich Heritage, Promising Future*. San Antonio: Historical Publishing Network, 2009.

Swanson, Betsy. *Historic Jefferson Parish: From Shore to Shore*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 1975.

Architectural History

Fricker, Jonathan, Donna Fricker, and Patricia L. Duncan. *Louisiana Architecture: A Handbook on Styles*. Lafayette: Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, 1998.

Friends of the Cabildo. *New Orleans Architecture Series*.

Longstreth, Richard. *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2000.

McAlester, Virginia, and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

Poppeliers, John C., and S. Allen Chambers Jr. *What Style Is It? A Guide to American Architecture*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2003.

URS Group, *The History of Building Elevation in New Orleans*. Washington DC: Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2012.

Vogt, Lloyd. *New Orleans Houses: A House-Watcher's Guide*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 1985.

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Urban Design Associates. *Louisiana Speaks: Pattern Book*. <http://lra.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/searchable/LA%20Speaks/Pattern%20Book%201.pdf>.

_____. *A Pattern Book for Gulf Coast Neighborhoods*. http://www.mississippirenewal.com/documents/Rep_PatternBook.pdf.

Material Maintenance and Conservation

Feilden, Bernard. *Conservation of Historic Buildings, Third Edition*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. Washington DC: National Park Service, Heritage Preservation Services. <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehabilitation-guidelines.pdf>.

Moss, Roger W., ed. *Paint in America: The Colors of Historic Buildings*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 1995.

Preservation Briefs. Washington, DC: National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services. <http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm>.

Weaver, Martin E. *Conserving Buildings: A Manual of Techniques and Materials, Revised Edition*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 1997.

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

The Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office/Division of Historic Preservation in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, operates under the umbrella of the Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism in the Office of Cultural Development. The SHPO staff works closely with the National Park Service and Department of the Interior, and they are responsible for two preservation-related programs that may be of interest to the citizens of Gretna:

- **Historic Preservation Tax Incentives.** Historic properties located within Gretna's National Register Historic District may be eligible for a 20% federal rehabilitation tax credit, a 25% state commercial rehabilitation tax credit, or a 25% state residential rehabilitation tax credit. Individually designated National Register landmarks may also be eligible for some of the credits. Historic properties located within the City of Gretna Cultural District may be eligible for a 25% state commercial tax credit. Rehabilitation projects must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, as well as several additional requirements that can be found on the SHPO's website. Visit <http://www.crt.state.la.us/hp/> for more information.
- **National Register of Historic Places.** The SHPO evaluates all applications for inclusion on the federal government's list of historically significant sites and structures. Property owners interested in whether their property is eligible should visit http://www.crt.state.la.us/hp/national-register/eligibility_guidelines.aspx to learn more.

Restoration Tax Abatement Program

Properties located within the boundaries of Gretna's National Register Historic District may be eligible for the state's Rehabilitation Tax Abatement Program. Under this program, the assessed value and the property assessment of a commercial or owner-occupied property that has undergone renovation can be frozen at the pre-improvement level for five years. Renovations as well as additions are eligible improvements. Visit http://www.crt.state.la.us/hp/tax_abatements.aspx or <http://www.louisianaeconomicdevelopment.com/page/restoration-tax-abatement> for more information.

Organizations

National

National Park Service (<http://www.nps.gov/index.htm>)

- Helpful online resources such as topic-based *Preservation Briefs* and *Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*

National Trust for Historic Preservation (<http://www.preservationnation.org>)

- A privately funded nonprofit organization that works to save America's historic places

National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, Natchitoches, Louisiana (<http://ncptt.nps.gov>)

- Informational resource for materials conservation that advances the application of science and technology to historic preservation

Association for Preservation Technology International (<http://www.apti.org>)

State

Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, Division of Historic Preservation (<http://www.crt.state.la.us/hp/>)

- Tax credits
- National Register of Historic Places
- Main Street program
- Grant opportunities
- Archaeology

State Library of Louisiana, Louisiana Collection (<http://www.state.lib.la.us>)

Local

Historic New Orleans Collection, Williams Research Center (<http://www.hnoc.org>)

New Orleans Public Library, Louisiana Division (<http://www.neworleanspubliclibrary.org/~nopl/spec/speclist.htm>)

Preservation Resource Center (<http://www.prcno.org>)

- Recommendations for architectural salvage resources and qualified millwork shops

Tulane University, Southeastern Architectural Archives (<http://seaa.tulane.edu>)

Tulane University, Louisiana Research Collection (<http://larc.tulane.edu>)

APPENDIX

9



The following ordinance, Ordinance No. 4653, was adopted by Gretna City Council on February 11, 2015.

Chapter 52. Historic Preservation

- Sec. 52-1. Definitions.
- Sec. 52-2. Purpose.
- Sec. 52-3. Historic District Commission; appointment; term.
- Sec. 52-4. Same—Powers and duties.
- Sec. 52-5. Same—Areas of jurisdiction.
- Sec. 52-6. Historic district powers and regulations.
- Sec. 52-7. Procedures for Application of Certificate of Appropriateness.
- Sec. 52-8. Submission Requirements for HDC Exterior Changes.
- Sec. 52-9. Certificate of Appropriateness - Criteria.
- Sec. 52-10. Recommendation and Action Thereon.
- Sec. 52-11. Appeals.
- Sec. 52-12. Enforcement powers.
- Sec. 52-13. Injunctions.
- Sec. 52-14. Neglect of Historic Structures.

Sec. 52-1. Definitions.

For the purpose of this chapter, the following definitions shall apply:

Alteration. Any change because of new construction, repair or maintenance, which changes the architectural integrity of an historic district, building or landmark.

Applicant. The record owner of the site and/or buildings located thereon, the lessee thereof or a person holding a “bona fide” contract to purchase same.

Application. The form required by the city administration for consideration by the Historic District Commission of any private building, structure or edifice, including fences, boundary walls, signs, or steps to be erected, altered, restored, moved or demolished in the historic districts; including but not limited to plot plans, surveys, elevations, photographs, architectural drawing, ornamental detail drawings, light pattern details and all other constructing documents as may be required by the administration or commission.

Building. Any structure or any part of such structure when subdivided by division walls or party walls extending to or above

the roof and without openings in such separate walls. The term “building” shall be construed as if followed by the words “or any part thereof.”

Construction. The erection of any on-site improvements on any parcel of ground.

Demolition. The complete, partial or constructive removal of a building from any site.

Economic return. The capacity of a building to generate revenue in the form of fair market rents. When the fair market rents less expenses for a building equal zero, the building shall be considered incapable of generating any net economic return on its value.

Exterior. All outside surfaces of any building.

Exterior architectural features. Exterior elements including but not be limited to, the architectural style, general design and general arrangement of the exterior of a structure, including the kind and texture of the building material, the type and style of all roofs, windows, doors, and signs.

Historic building. A building at least 50 years old with significant architectural value and integrity.

Historic district. An area designated by the city council as an historic district and declared to be subject to jurisdiction of this chapter.

Landmark and landmark site. An unimproved parcel of ground (landmark site) or parcel with improvements (landmark) of particular historic, architectural or cultural significance, which said parcel or parcels, plus improvements, if any:

- (1) Exemplify or reflect the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state or community; or
- (2) Identify with historic persons or with important events in national, state or local history; or
- (3) Embody distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for a study of a period, style or method of construction; of indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or
- (4) Represent notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual ability has been recognized.

Neglect of historic building. The maintenance of any building resulting in deterioration of a building to the extent that either creates or permits unsightly, hazardous or unsafe conditions and/or conditions that will lead to the permanent loss of the

whole or any part of the structure.

Ordinary repairs and standard maintenance. Work done on a building to prevent deterioration, decay or damage of a building on any part thereof in order to restore same as nearly as practical to its condition prior to such deterioration, decay or damage.

Substantive change. Changes which alter the historical or architectural character such as windows, columns, porches, doors and exterior ornamental decorative.

Sec. 52-2. - Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to promote the preservation of historic districts, buildings and landmarks for the educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare of the public through the preservation, protection, and regulation of such districts, buildings, and landmarks, within the city; to safeguard the cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history of the city; to preserve and enhance the environmental quality of neighborhoods; to ensure the appropriateness of renovations and new construction in the district; to strengthen the city's economic base by the stimulation of the tourist industry; to establish and improve property values; to foster economic development; and to manage growth.

Sec. 52-3. - Historic District Commission; appointment; term.

A Historic District Commission (HDC) is hereby established and shall consist of (7) seven members recommended by the city council and appointed by the Mayor to four year terms of service. Members shall include one architect and one historian. The architect, the historian and two members shall be appointed at the beginning of the regular term of the mayor and city council. The remaining three members shall be appointed at the beginning of the third year of the regular term of the city council and mayor. In the event that an appointment of a specific discipline is not forthcoming within 60 days of a vacancy, the mayor may appoint a resident of a historic district or property owner of a historic district property without such qualification, subject to the approval of the council. In the event that an appointment by the mayor is not forthcoming within 60 days of a vacancy, the council may appoint and fill such vacancy. Nothing shall preclude the mayor from removing or replacing an appointment, with council approval and nothing shall prohibit the reappointment of any prior member of the committee to the new term.

Sec. 52-4. - Same—Powers and duties.

The historic district commission shall exercise only those duties which may be assigned to it by the mayor and the city council.

Sec. 52-5. - Same—Areas of jurisdiction.

(a) The Mechanickham-Gretna Historic District is hereby bounded by the east side of Gulf Drive, the north side of Sixth Street to the west side of Dolhonde, on the West; the north side of Twelfth Street on the South; the east side of Amelia Avenue on the East; and the Mississippi River on the North. The Mechanickham-Gretna Historic District map shall be on file in the city clerk's office where it is available for reference and review during normal business hours.

(b) The McDonoghville Historic District is hereby bounded by the east side of Ocean Avenue from the river to the Fourth Street right-of-way to the west side of Hancock Street to the Orleans Parish line and Mississippi River. The McDonoghville Historic District map shall be on file in the city clerk's office where it is available for reference and review during normal business hours.

(c) The National Register Historic District mostly included within the Mechanickham-Gretna Historic District. The National Register Historic District map shall be on file in the city clerk's office where it is available for reference and review during normal business hours.

(d) Any other local historic district that is established by the city council upon nomination of the mayor and approval by the Historic District Commission.

(e) The McDonoghville Cemetery.

(f) Any other historic building or landmark that is declared by the city council upon nomination of the mayor.

(g) Ceramic blue letter sidewalk tiles (or similar ceramic tile lettering) and bronze letter street identifiers are hereby declared landmarks.

Sec. 52-6. - Historic district powers and regulations.

(a) No private building, structure or edifice, including fences, boundary walls, signs, or steps shall be erected, altered, restored, moved or demolished within a district until a certificate of appropriateness has been provided by the Historic District Commission and the city has issued a permit for the activity. Ordinary repairs and standard maintenance shall not require such approval. Similarly, there shall be no excavating or moving of subsoil from earthworks of historical or archaeological importance without such approval.

(b) The Historic District Commission shall consider the exterior architectural features and the relationship of the exterior of the buildings concerned with all others in the district to avoid incongruity. In all instances, the city and HDC shall regulate those elements of the outside of a building, structure or edifice, including fences, boundary walls, signs, or steps that can be viewed from a public street.

(c) The style, scale, materials, and location of signs as defined in Article IV of Chapter 102 of this code within a district shall also require a certificate of appropriateness from the Historic

District Commission prior to zoning and permitting by the city. No certificate of appropriateness shall be issued for a sign or display that does not comply with the requirements of the sign ordinance found in Article IV of Chapter 102 of this code; however a certificate of appropriateness may be more restrictive than the requirements found for signs or displays in Article IV of Chapter 102 of this code.

(d) No structure within an historic district shall be allowed to deteriorate due to neglect. All property shall be reasonably maintained to prevent or avoid deterioration described the definition, "demolition."

Sec. 52-7. Procedures for Application of Certificate of Appropriateness

A. Whenever the Director of Building , Regulatory, and/or Permits becomes aware that an application has been filed for a permit affecting a property under the jurisdiction of the preservation commission, the city shall immediately notify chairman of the HDC that such an application has been filed.

B. The City shall make a preliminary determination on the completeness of an application, however the Historic District Commission shall have the final authority to determine when a filed application is complete and contains all required information. An application deemed incomplete by the commission shall not be considered to have been filed for the purposes of this ordinance.

C. The Historic District Commission shall establish a regular schedule for the hearings of the commission. One hearing shall be scheduled for each month unless no application for a certificate of has been submitted. However, the HDC must meet at least once every three (3) months even if no applications for a certificate of appropriateness have been submitted.

D. Notice of the time and place of a scheduled public meeting of the Historic District Commission shall be given by publication in a newspaper having general circulation in the city and placed on the City's official web site at least four (4) days before such meeting and by posting such notice on the bulletin board in the lobby of city hall.

E. At the scheduled public hearing, the applicant for a certificate of appropriateness shall have the right to present any relevant information pertaining to the application. Likewise, the city, the HDC, staff, and members of the public shall have the right to present any additional relevant information pertaining to the application. The HDC shall follow city council's rules of procedure specifying in detail how a public hearing shall be conducted and when comments and information from different sources shall be heard.

F. The HDC, at a public hearing, shall have the right to recommend changes and modifications to enable the applicant to meet the requirements of the HDC. The HDC may choose to convert the public hearing to a preliminary conference after an

application for a certificate of appropriateness has been filed.

G. The commission shall act upon an application, either approving, denying, or conducting a preliminary hearing and then deferring action until the next meeting of the commission , giving consideration to the factors set forth in Section 52-6 and 52-9 hereof. Evidence of approval of the application shall be by certificate of appropriateness issued by the commission and, whatever its decision, notice in writing shall be given to the applicant and the city building official within 48 hours.

H. The issuance of a certificate of appropriateness shall not relieve an applicant of the requirement for a companion building permit, special use permit, variance, or other authorization and compliance with any other requirement or provision of the laws of the city concerning zoning, construction, repair, or demolition. In all such cases, applicants are encouraged to apply first for a certificate of appropriateness as other city agencies will be advised by the commission in making their subsequent decisions.

I. No building permit which affects the historic district shall be issued by the city official prior to the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness by the commission. Even if a building permit is not otherwise required by the city ordinances for construction, alteration, demolition, or relocation of any resource, a certificate of appropriateness from the commission is required.

J. Application for a historic district certificate of appropriateness shall be made in the office of the building official. Each application shall be accompanied by a \$50.00 administration fee. Such application must be filed no later than 3 business days prior to any meeting of the HDC at which time such application is to be heard.

Section 52-8. Submission Requirements to HDC for Exterior Changes

A. The owner of any property within the Historic District shall apply for a certificate of appropriateness from the Commission before the commencement of any work in:

- (1) Demolition of an historic building.
- (2) Moving an historic building.
- (3) Material change by additions, reconstruction or alterations in the exterior appearance of existing buildings classified as historic.
- (4) Any new construction of a building or accessory building or structure if subject to view from a public street.
- (5) Change in existing walls and fences or construction of new walls and fences, if along a public street.
- (6) Change in the exterior appearance of existing non-historic buildings by additions, reconstruction, alteration or maintenance of exterior, if subject to view from a public street.

B. The application therefore shall be made to the HDC, accompanied by the full plans and specifications thereof so far as they relate to the proposed appearance, texture, materials, and

architectural design of the exterior, including the front, sides, rear and roof of such buildings, alterations or addition of any building or outbuilding, party wall, courtyard, sidewalk, driveway, parking area, fence or other dependency thereof.

Sec. 52-9. Certificate of Appropriateness - Criteria.

The HDC shall adhere to and seek compatibility of structures in the district in terms of size, texture, scale, and site plan. The following guidelines shall be applied in evaluating applications:

(1) New construction.

- a. All new construction shall be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which they are related.
- b. The general design, scale, gross volume, arrangement, site, plan, texture, material and exterior architectural features of new construction shall be in harmony with its surroundings and shall not impair the historic character of the neighborhood.
- c. No one architectural style shall be imposed.
- d. Quality and excellence in design shall be major determinants.

(2) Exterior alterations.

- a. All exterior alterations to a building shall be compatible with the building itself and other buildings with which it is related, as provided in(1)b above and in applying these standards, the original design of the building shall be considered.
- b. Exterior alterations shall not affect the architectural character or historic quality of the building.

(3) Signs.

- a. General prohibitions of miscellaneous signs. The display of signs of a miscellaneous character visible from public streets, within an historic district of the city, except as otherwise provided in this code is prohibited.
- b. Signs must conform to character of section. Approval of the display of a sign in any historic district shall be granted by the commission only when they meet the requirements of Article IV of Chapter 102 of this code and, the appearance, color, size, position method of attachment, texture of materials and design of such signs conform to the quaint and distinctive character of an historic district or do not injuriously affect it or impair the value of the community or those buildings having architectural or historical value.
- c. What signs may advertise. No sign shall be displayed in an historic district unless it advertises a bona fide business conducted in or on the premises.
- d. Only one sign per bona fide business. Each bona fide business shall be allowed only one sign.
- e. Recommended Surface area of certain signs.
 1. Single-faced wall sign - no more than eight square feet
 2. Double-faced attached sign - no more than 16 square feet
 3. Detached sign – no more than 28 square feet per side

f. No sign shall be displayed in any manner whatsoever to disfigure or conceal any architectural feature or detail of any building

(4) Demolition. In considering an application for the demolition of a landmark or a building in an historic district, the following shall be considered:

- a. The historic or architectural significance of the building.
- b. The importance of the building to the historic character of the district.
- c. The special character and aesthetic interest that the building adds to the district.
- d. The difficulty or impossibility of reproducing such a building because of its design, texture, material or detail.
- e. The future utilization of the site.
- f. Cost considerations in restoration. Whenever a property owner shows that a building classified as historic is incapable of earning any economic return on its value, as appraised by a qualified real estate appraiser, or if new construction can be demonstrated by a property owner to be the highest and best use of the building site, such building may be demolished provided, however, that before a demolition permit is issued, notice of proposed demolition shall be given three times during a period of 30 days to afford interested persons the opportunity to acquire or to arrange for the preservation of such buildings.

(5) Restriction of intrusions. The reconstruction of buildings legally nonconforming to the surrounding uses and destroyed by fire, storms or other Acts of God shall be governed by the provisions of all applicable building codes and ordinances.

In addition, the city shall regulate the exterior design of such buildings as stipulated by the provisions of this chapter.

(6) Prohibition of aerials, antennas, and satellites, restrictions on solar panels. The construction or installation of aerials, antennas, satellite dishes, or solar panels of any type within an historic district shall require a historic district permit. Permits of aerials, antennas and satellite dishes shall not be denied when the installation is not visible from the street. Permits for solar panels shall not be denied when the installation is ten feet or more behind the front wall of the structure, 12 inches or more below ridgeline of the installation area of the structure, and less than eight inches above the roof surface.

Sec. 52-10 Recommendation and Action Thereon

The Historic District Commission shall, upon due consideration, render its decision concerning the submitted application, which may include such changes, if any, as in its judgment are reasonably necessary to comply with the requirements of this Ordinance, and send its decision, in writing, to the applicant and the Building Inspector. If the permit is approved, the Building Inspector shall promptly issue a permit for such work in conformance with the HDC's decision.

Sec. 52- 11 Appeals

A. Any person or persons aggrieved by any decision, act or proceedings of the Historic District Commission shall have a right to an appeal before the City Council for reversal or modification thereof; such appeal shall be lodged with the City Clerk, and the Mayor, or presiding officer of the City Council, shall have the right to stay all further action until the City Council shall have had an opportunity to rule thereon. Any such appeal shall be taken within 5 days, exclusive of holidays and weekends from date of the written decision, and the City Council may consider said appeal at its next general or special meeting, but, in any event, not more than forty-five days thereafter. The City Council may affirm a decision of the Historic District Commission by majority vote of all its members. The City Council shall have the right to reverse, change or modify any decision of the Historic District Commission by majority vote of all its members.

B. Any person or persons aggrieved by any decision of the city council shall have the right to file a civil suit within 30 days from the date of the decision in a court of competent jurisdiction under the usual rules of procedure governing same.

Sec. 52-12. - Enforcement powers.

Upon request, the building official shall make all necessary inspections in connection with the enforcement of this chapter. The building official shall have the same right to inspect premises in connection with the enforcement of this chapter as he now has in relation to other violations under his jurisdiction.

Failure to comply with the provisions of this chapter the rules and procedures of the city shall constitute a misdemeanor and shall be punishable under Section 1-6 of the city Code of Ordinances.

The city shall have the right to enforce any violations of this chapter by civil action for injunctive relief or other appropriate remedy brought on in the name of the city.

Sec. 52-13. - Injunctions.

Whenever any person has engaged in or is about to engage in any act or practice which constitutes or will constitute a violation of this chapter, the city may make application to the appropriate court for an order enjoining such act or practice, or requiring such person to refrain from such prospective violation or to remedy such violation by restoring the affected property to its previous condition. Upon a showing by the city that such person has engaged or is about to engage in such act or practice, a permanent or temporary injunction, temporary restraining order or other appropriate action shall be granted without bond.

Sec. 52-14. - Neglect of historic structure.

(a) In the event the city determines that a building or landmark is being demolished or allowed to deteriorate by neglect, it shall notify the owner of the preliminary finding, to appear at the next meeting of the Historic District Commission, and direct the owner to within 15 days from the date of notice to begin rectifying the conditions determined to be causing the demolition by neglect. Such notice shall be issued by certified mail to the last known address of the owner; or if the owner cannot be located, then the notice shall be attached to the building or landmark twice within a month.

(b) At the noticed meeting of the Historic District Commission the owner shall appear and give evidence concerning the initial determination of demolition by neglect.

(c) If after the hearing, the historic district advisory committee determines: (1) that the property is a contributing element to the historic district, and (2) that the building or landmark is being demolished or allowed to deteriorate by neglect, and (3) the owner has failed to commence work sufficient to remediate the cited conditions, the city may, through the building official or other appointed officer, bring charges against the owner for the violation of this chapter; and the city may cause such property to be repaired at its expense, which expense shall be paid by the owner and the city may file an affidavit to that in the office of the recorder of mortgages for the Parish of Jefferson, which notice shall constitute a lien and privilege against the property.

(d) If it is determined by the Historic District Commission that the property is not a contributing factor to the historic district the owner may be cited by the city under the provisions of Section 42-103(c) of this Code.

(e) If it is determined by the Historic District Commission that the owner has commenced work sufficient to remediate the cited conditions, no further action shall be taken by the city for a period of 60 days.