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Introduction

General Information

The City of Elgin, Illinois is one of over 2,000 communities in America which has enacted measures to preserve and protect its historic resources. In 1981, The Elgin Historic District was designated by the Elgin City Council and in 1983, it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The following year, in 1984, the Elgin City Council passed a Historic Preservation Ordinance creating the Elgin Heritage Commission. This was followed by the approval of Title 20 of the Elgin Municipal Code—“Elgin Historic Preservation Ordinance” in 1989 which allowed for the creation of additional historic districts as well as provided protection of historic district properties. In 1996, the Spring-Douglas Historic District was designated. Again, in 1997 for the designation of the Elgin National Watch Historic District, in 2007 for the designation of the D.C. Cook-Lawell Area Historic District and in 2015 for the designation of the Bungalow Thematic Historic District. Elgin has many other areas which retain significant historic architecture and which have the potential to be designated as historic districts.

This design guidelines manual provides information for property owners and the Elgin Heritage Commission on appropriate methods for preserving and maintaining the architectural character of the overall districts and individual buildings. Design guidelines outline the practical methods for building rehabilitation and new construction which are essential to preserving a district’s sense of time and place. Design guidelines offer property owners protection against actions which could be harmful to their property values and the marketing of their dwellings or commercial buildings. Without design guidelines the qualities which make an area appealing for investment can easily be lost.
Introduction

What is the Elgin Heritage Commission?

The Elgin Heritage Commission is a citizen advisory board made up of nine members including an architect, a historian, a real estate agent, a licensed attorney, a representative of the local historical society appointed by the city council, and interested citizens as available. The Commission was created in 1984 with a broad range of duties and responsibilities including to “promote the education of property owners, local government agencies and the public at large regarding the protection, maintenance, and preservation of Elgin’s architectural, historic and cultural resources.” The Commission has an advisory role in matters pertaining to historic building surveys, nominations to the National Register of Historic Places and other preservation planning efforts.

Through the Heritage Commission’s Design Review Subcommittee and as a part of the COA process applies to denial of Certificates of Appropriateness for rehabilitation, new construction, and demolition in locally designated districts and landmarks. The COA process applies to those who own property in locally designated districts and locally designated landmarks. Locally designated districts and landmarks are those which have been afforded protection through the efforts of residents, the Commission and the action of the Elgin City Council.

What are the Benefits of Design Guidelines?

Guidelines Benefit the City

Design guidelines in Elgin are part of the overall city-wide effort to promote and improve its older neighborhoods and quality of life. Rationalization of historic areas increases the city’s tax base and promotes economic development. Design guidelines provide practical assistance and information to make sure that improvements are compatible with the goals and desires of property owners, the historic districts, and the city.

Guidelines Benefit the Historic Districts

Elgin’s historic districts contain an excellent collection of historic buildings from the 19th and early through mid-20th centuries. A large percentage of these are substantial two-story frame dwellings which retain their original architectural character. Design review guidelines assist in the preservation and maintenance of the unique appearance of these districts.

Guidelines Benefit Property Owners

Historic district designations and the design guidelines review process helps to ensure that our investment in historic Elgin will be protected from inappropriate new construction, misguided remodeling, or demolition. Historic district zoning and the use of design guidelines generally stabilizes or increases property values. Historic designation and design review help not only existing residents of the historic districts but it often attracts new buyers since they know their investment will be protected.

Guidelines Do Not Impose Excessive Requirements

- Design guidelines do not affect the use of your property or its interior. Property owners may remodel the interior as they choose and these changes are not reviewed as part of the design review process.
- Design guidelines do not affect what color you paint your property. Paint colors are not regulated and are left to the preference of the owner. However, the guidelines provide recommendations for colors that would be appropriate for use on historic buildings.
- Design review only occurs when property owners propose actions to the exterior of their property which may require a Building Permit or a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- Design guidelines do not prohibit new construction or additions to historic buildings. Design review ensures that new construction and additions are compatible as possible in the historic districts.

Historic Buildings Have Value

- Buildings in Elgin’s historic districts are known for their quality of construction and craftsmanship. Many are over one hundred years old and if properly maintained will last indefinitely.
- Historic buildings have inherent energy, conservation, quality and ultimately consume less energy than demolition and new construction. Preserving and restoring an existing historic resource has many environmental, cultural and economic benefits. For more information go to page 137 of this document and the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s webpage on quantifying the environmental value of building reuse.
- Current law makes certain properties in Elgin’s historic districts and locally designated landmarks eligible for property tax credits or deductions. For information on these incentives, call the Historic Preservation Planner at 847-931-6004.
- Properties in Elgin’s historic districts and locally designated landmarks are also eligible for the City’s Historic Architectural Rehabilitation Grant program. The Historic Architectural Rehabilitation Grant program is intended to emphasize the unique architecture in Elgin’s historic districts and its landmarks. The grants are meant to be used to recreate or uncover missing architectural elements. It is not meant for compliance with the basic minimum property maintenance codes. Selected projects receive a fifty or seventy-five percent reimbursement for eligible work on the exterior of the property.
- Information on these programs can be obtained on the City’s website or from staff at the Community Development Department, 847-931-5920.

Elgin Design Guideline Manual
Intent and Purpose of this Manual

Approach and Format

The purpose of this manual is to present architectural design guidelines to property owners, residents, contractors and others, relating to the type of rehabilitation work and new construction that may be approved by the City of Elgin in locally designated historic districts and to locally designated landmark structures. Additionally, the guidelines may be used as a reference source for rehabilitation of vintage structures not located within the designated historic district.

The guidelines apply only to the exteriors of properties and are intended to protect the overall character of Elgin’s locally designated historic districts as well as the architectural integrity of the district’s individual buildings and locally designated landmark structures. The guidelines emphasize maintaining architectural styles, details and streetscape elements which collectively make up the unique character of the districts. For new construction, the guidelines provide information on the importance of relating new buildings and landscape elements to the existing historic streetscapes.

The Elgin Design Guidelines are based on the U.S. Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. These federal standards provide a framework for the more detailed guidelines presented in this manual. The Elgin Design Guidelines state the generally appropriate and inappropriate treatments for rehabilitation work and preserving the architectural styles, details and streetscape elements which collectively make up the character of the designated districts and structures.

The Elgin Design Guidelines, as adopted by the Elgin City Council, shall be the official document used by the City to evaluate and approve applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA).
Questions and Answers

How are the Guidelines Written?

Design review guidelines emphasize preservation of existing building details, materials, and overall plan rather than complete remodeling. That is why terms such as repair, retain, maintain, and protect are widely used throughout the guidelines. To repair, retain and maintain original architectural features and materials is preferred to their replacement. To protect the overall character of the district is the goal of the preservation ordinance and the guideline document.

Other common terms used in this manual are should and should not. The use of the terms should or should not signify that in most cases the Elgin Heritage Commission’s staff will usually expect property owners to follow the meaning and intent of the guideline as written. These terms also provide guidance as to how the Commission will generally approve or disapprove a COA application. There are many instances where more flexibility or creative solutions are needed in applying the guidelines.

What is the Primary Focus of the Guidelines?

The design guidelines are primarily concerned with the fronts and readily visible sides of a building. The design guidelines apply to all properties within the locally designated districts and locally designated landmarks regardless of age or architectural style. For non-historic buildings (properties which are less than fifty years of age or which have been substantially altered), the Commission may apply the guidelines with more flexibility than for historic buildings. In reviewing work affecting non-historic buildings, the Commission’s approach is to maintain or enhance their relationship and compatibility with adjacent historic buildings and environments.

How to Use the Manual

Property owners are encouraged to refer to the guidelines when planning or designing new construction projects, planning exterior rehabilitations, and completing everyday renovations. The manual lists guidelines in alphabetical order and includes information on common rehabilitation questions, recommendations for maintaining the site and setting of the neighborhood and guidance for new construction. Similar guidelines for commercial buildings are addressed in a separate section. Illustrated descriptions of the guidelines are included throughout to further assist property owners with common design questions and characteristics. At the end of the guideline section are appendices which have a sample Certificate of Appropriateness, Local, State and National Assistance, Definition of Terms, Bibliography and links to the National Park Service—Preservation Briefs.

What are the Guidelines Based On?

The Elgin Design Guidelines are based upon the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (published in 1977, revised in 1990). These standards are used throughout the country by the majority of America’s preservation commissions as a basis for local design review guidelines and for projects utilizing federal funds or tax credits. They pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. The standards also encompass related landscape features and the building’s site and environment. The guidelines presented in this manual are modeled after these standards. In the event of any conflict in this manual and the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, the provisions of the Elgin Design Guidelines shall control. The Elgin Design Guidelines are based upon the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (published in 1977, revised in 1990). These standards are used throughout the country by the majority of America’s preservation commissions as a basis for local design review guidelines and for projects utilizing federal funds or tax credits. They pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. The standards also encompass related landscape features and the building’s site and environment. The guidelines presented in this manual are modeled after these standards. In the event of any conflict in this manual and the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, the provisions of the Elgin Design Guidelines shall control.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding decorative features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, finish, and other visual qualities and, where possible, material. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken in the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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.
Historic Districts are overlays to the existing zoning districts within the City of Elgin. In addition to following the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) process within the designated preservation districts, property owners must also follow the overall zoning for their property. Sections of the historic districts are zoned for residential use under RC2 and RC3 Conservation Districts. The purpose of these districts is to conserve the urban residential environment of neighborhoods which primarily developed prior to 1950 with single family dwellings.

Zoning issues within the Historic Districts will be significant primarily for any proposed changes in the use of a property, any new construction, the erection of signs, or proposed lot subdivisions. Property owners must follow the provisions of the zoning ordinance as well as the design guidelines for the Historic Districts.

Property owners must follow their overall zoning regulations in addition to following the design review process as historic districts. The City’s zoning ordinance and regulations are within a separate document and should be consulted on building issues such as setback and lot coverage. Site design regulations within the historic districts shall be the same as the underlying zoning district. Planned Developments, Conditional Uses, and Variances are subject to provisions with the City’s zoning ordinance and should be coordinated with prior review from the Elgin Heritage Commission regardless of design guidelines issues.
General Policies

Pre-Existing, Non-Original Conditions

Many non-historic and non-original features of buildings and their sites exist within the city’s historic districts. Substitute siding materials, enclosed or altered porch design, decreased window size, and chain link fences are some of the most common and visible of these alterations.

Those alterations of historic structures which occurred before the area’s designation as a historic district or landmark and subsequent enabling of the preservation ordinance overlay are considered to be pre-existing, non-original conditions.

Pre-existing, non-original conditions may continue in place throughout the useful life of the material. Generally, if a localized portion of a non-original material is damaged through fire, auto collision, vandalism, etc., that portion of the non-original material may be repaired or replaced with a similar material. However, if more than 50% of the non-original material fails due to neglect, lack of maintenance, wear and tear, or exceeding its useful life, or in the event an owner proposes to replace more than 50% of a non-original material, then the repair or replacement shall be considered within the context of the design guidelines as they apply to other structures within the historic districts. Repairs or replacements of non-original materials shall not be artificially or arbitrarily divided so as to avoid the requirements in this paragraph that the repair or replacement of more than 50% of a non-original material be considered within the context of the design guidelines as provided herein.

Materials and Workmanship

All work completed under the historic preservation ordinance should be skillfully performed using appropriate materials approved by the city staff and the members of the Elgin Heritage Commission’s Design Review Subcommittee and be conducted, installed and completed in a workmanlike manner so as to secure the results intended by this document.

The City’s staff has the authority to reject work not completed using the acceptable materials and standards of workmanship.

Upon verbal or written notice from the owner that the work is entirely complete, city staff will make an inspection and notify the owner of any incomplete or defective work or the use of non-approved materials. The property owner should then take immediate measures to remedy such deficiencies.
COA Application Process

Historic Districts and Landmarks

If your structure is in one of the locally designated districts or a local landmark and you want to make changes to the exterior of your property, you have to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness and a Building Permit from the Community Development Department.

A Certificate of Appropriateness is a form issued to ensure that the exterior of work planned for a building’s rehabilitation or new construction meets the criteria of the design guidelines. A Building Permit is a separate form and type of review which ensures the structural soundness and safety of the building. The COA needs to be obtained in addition to the regular building permit and in some cases where a building permit is not required. The City does not charge a fee for the COA.

If you are planning to do work on a property located within a locally designated district or landmark, call the Historic Preservation Planner at 847-931-6004.

A Certificate of Appropriateness is generally required for the following:

- Any construction, alteration, demolition, or removal within a locally designated district or to a landmark structure which requires a building or demolition permit such as construction of additions to buildings, demolishing buildings, or moving buildings;
- Construction, alteration, demolition, or removal of structure(s) or appurtenances, any of which affect the exterior architectural appearance of a property within a locally designated district or to a landmark structure, but not requiring a building permit;
- Maintenance such as porch repair, window/door repair, masonry repair like walls, chimneys, foundations, etc.

A Certificate of Appropriateness is generally not required for:

- Minor maintenance such as replacing a floor board on a porch, replacing a damaged siding board and repainting it;
- Exterior paint colors; however, it is suggested that property owners consider following the recommendations for appropriate colors included in the guidelines.
- Installation of plant material. However, construction of landscape features such as retaining walls, sidewalks and fences require a COA;
- Interior changes. Interior changes may need a regular building permit before work begins.

Note: A COA is required for the paint removal process and surface preparation before the paint application.
Obtain a COA
A COA must be obtained prior to beginning the work

COA applications are available from the City’s Community Development Department and on the City’s website. This office is located in City Hall at 150 Dexter Court, Elgin, IL 60120. A copy of the COA Application is located in Appendix A or can be found here.

Required documentation for a COA includes:

- For new construction (including garages) or extensive renovation, a complete set of architectural stamped plans and specifications are required for the project. Plans shall be drawn to scale and shall include a site plan showing all existing and proposed improvements. Specifications and/or samples of exterior materials need to be provided such as siding, roofing, doors, windows, and ornamentation. Photographs are also needed of the property showing the area of scope of work as well as overall photographs of the property.

- For rehabilitation or repair, detailed drawings are required of proposed modifications to the structure. Photographs of the existing building are required along with specifications and/or samples of exterior materials (such as siding, roofing, doors, windows, and ornamentation).

- For paint removal, a description is needed of the proposed methods for paint removal of the building material.

- For fences, scale drawings and a plat of survey of the property are required which show the proposed location of the fence, height, style, material, thickness or spacing and what the fence will look like. Photographs of the property are also needed.

- For signs, scale drawings of the sign are required to show the size of the sign and its lettering. Photographs and a plat of survey (if installing a monumental sign) are also needed showing the sign location on the building or site. Color samples should also be submitted.

- For parking areas, driveways, or parking lots, a plat of survey is required which shows the location and layout of the parking lot and landscaping. The drawings shall clearly indicate the dimensions of the parking stalls, drive aisles, and setbacks. Information on the plants proposed for the landscaping should also be submitted.

- For demolition, photographs of the building proposed for demolition are required along with a statement describing the reason for demolition and proposed use of the site.

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- For demolition, photographs of the building proposed for demolition are required along with a statement describing the reason for demolition and proposed use of the site.
Upon receipt of the COA, staff or the Heritage Commission’s Design Review Subcommittee (DRSC) will review the application. In most cases, a COA can be obtained in one day depending on the nature of the proposed work. In some cases it may be necessary to schedule a site visit with the staff to discuss your project and answer any questions about the COA. Staff will advise you on whether or not your plans meet the Design Guidelines. If there is a conflict between your plans and the guidelines, staff can offer advice on how to modify them to meet the guidelines.

If staff feel the work requires additional review, the COA shall be presented before the Heritage Commission’s Design Review Subcommittee at the next scheduled meeting. The applicant will be notified of the date, time, and location of the meeting.

COA Review
- If work needs to be reviewed by the DRSC, the applicant or a representative must be in attendance to present information and, if needed, ask questions of the committee. After which, the applicants will receive a written notification of the approval or denial of the application.

Approved COA
- Upon approval, staff will issue the COA which includes a list of approved work. Depending on the extensiveness of the work, the applicant may need to be reviewed by additional staff to obtain a building permit.

Denied COA
- A denied application may require additional information, clarification or modification. The Historic Preservation Planner may be able to assist you with design details.
- A modified COA application may be resubmitted at any time.
- The right to appeal the decision to the Heritage Commission is also available. The applicant has 10 business days to appeal the decision through a formal letter to the Heritage Commission. Appeals can be based on economic hardship or unusual or compelling circumstances. If an appeal is not granted, the applicant may either withdraw their COA application or follow the guidelines and staff’s recommendations for the proposed work.

Obtain a Building Permit and Begin Work
- Building permits are available at the Community Development Department in City Hall located at 150 Dexter Court. If your plans change while work is in progress, contact the Historic Preservation Planner at 847-931-6004 before undertaking a change, purchasing materials or departure from the COA. Undertaken work which is different from the original COA approval or beyond its scope requires approval from the Commission or staff. If a violation of the COA is discovered or reported to the staff, penalties may include fines and/or restoration of the building or site’s appearance prior to the violation.

Helpful Tips
- The guidelines are organized alphabetically according to type of work. To use them, applicants should list each type of work they plan to do on a building or property and check the applicable guidelines. Exceptions to the guidelines can be made by the Commission if applicants demonstrate that the proposed work will be appropriate based on historical evidence and documentation in the context of the particular structure.

Help is Available
- Assistance is available to help property owners plan and design projects or improvements to meet the design guidelines. Staff is available for free consultation. You may contact the Historic Preservation Planner at 847-931-6004 to schedule an appointment.

And Thanks!
- Improvements are constantly taking place in the locally designated districts and landmarks thanks to the efforts of property owners and residents. This improves the quality of life for everyone in the City of Elgin. The Elgin Heritage Commission appreciates your good work!
A Brief History of Elgin
Overview of the City

The City of Elgin (U. S. Census Bureau 2020 population 114,797) is located on the Fox River in northeastern Illinois approximately 40 miles northwest of the city of Chicago. Elgin developed on gently rolling hills along both sides of the Fox River. Today, the city encompasses approximately 37 square miles and is considered part of the Metropolitan Chicago area.

The first Anglo-European settler in Elgin was Hezekiah Gifford who first arrived in 1834 and returned with his brother, James Gifford, in April of 1835 to permanently settle in the area. Other families soon followed and by 1837 a dam was built across the Fox River to provide power for grist mills. The original town plat was recorded by James Gifford in 1842. The town benefited from being along the major east-west route between Galena and Chicago. A stage coach line ran through Elgin between these two cities and the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad was completed through Elgin in 1850.

The coming of the railroad spurred growth and development in the community. One of the major industries of the city had its origin in these years as Elgin became a major dairy center for the region. Throughout the 1850s, Elgin shipped train cars of milk into Chicago and in the 1860s, Gail Borden opened a condensed milk plant in Elgin. During the late nineteenth century, other creameries and butter manufacturers joined the Borden milk plant in Elgin.

In addition to the dairy industry, the coming of the Elgin National Watch Company had a major effect on the growth of the city in the late 19th century. This company founded its operations in Elgin in 1866 and produced its first watch in 1867. The company was the largest producer of watches in America and became the largest watch factory in the world. From the 1870s to the 1890s the growth of employment in the watch factory more than doubled as did the population of Elgin. By 1890, the city’s population had risen to 17,823 residents.

By the early 20th century, Elgin was a prosperous community with a wide variety of industries and businesses. This prosperity was reflected in the many fine homes built during these years and the rapid expansion of Elgin on both sides of the Fox River. Limestone quarries located south of Elgin near the Fox River supplied much of the stone used in building construction at the turn-of-the-century. Many dwellings in Elgin boast fine cut limestone foundations and accent and trim work. Clay deposits along the river also provided a readily accessible material for brick manufacturing.

In addition to the residential area, Elgin also boasted a busy commercial area and various industries adjacent to the Fox River. Although the Elgin National Watch Company complex was used in the 1960s, many other important commercial and industrial buildings remain extant. In recent years, the city has promoted the revitalization of its downtown area and is now funding a variety of civic and historic preservation efforts.
The Elgin Historic District contains part of the original plat of Elgin which was laid out in 1842 by James Gifford. Land within the district was completely platted by 1859 with streets laid out in a modified grid pattern. The Elgin Historic District contains an excellent collection of late 19th and early 20th century residential architecture. Located to the east of the downtown area, lots were platted as early as the 1840s. Construction within this area was limited until after the Civil War. Many of the dwellings were erected during the boom years of the 1880s and 1890s when Elgin prospered as a result of the growth of the Elgin National Watch Company. Between 1879 and 1891, this company grew from 840 to more than 3,000 employees. Many of the company’s foremen and managers built large two-story frame dwellings along the streets in the neighborhood. By 1892, more than 400 buildings had been constructed within the present boundaries of the historic district.

In addition to the homes for the city’s middle and upper class residents, the district was also the home to many of the factory workers and their families. A number of multi-family brick apartment buildings or “flats” were constructed in the district in the 1880s and 1890s. Most of these were built along E. Chicago and other streets in the western section of the district. These brick buildings are illustrative of the rapidly urbanizing character of Elgin at the turn-of-the-century.

The west section of the historic district also becomes the home of several of the city’s most important churches. At the northwest corner of Gifford and Fulton Street is St. Mary’s Church constructed between 1896 and 1899 in the Gothic Revival style. When it was built, this was the most costly church constructed in Elgin. Another prominent church in the district is the First Universalist Church at the corner of Villa and DuPage Streets. This brick church was completed in 1892 and was designed to resemble from above a pocket watch enclosed in a case. This church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

Gifford Park is the city’s first public park and it was laid out by James Gifford in his 1844 addition. The park was later enlarged in the 1850s. The park has been an amenity in the district since the mid-19th century and it was landscaped and equipped as a playing area in 1980.

Although much of the Elgin Historic District was developed by 1900, construction continued well into the early 20th century. Architectural forms such as the American Foursquare and Bungalow dwellings were constructed in these years and by 1930, few vacant lots remained in the area. In recent decades demolition and new construction has been limited on most blocks and the district contains a remarkably homogeneous collection of 19th and early 20th century dwellings. The significance of this area was recognized in 1983 when it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Many of the dwellings within the district have been well maintained and there is renewed interest in preserving the district’s architectural character.
The Spring-Douglas Historic District
Designated 1996

The Spring-Douglas Historic District is located in the north section of Elgin on the east side of the Fox River. The district encompasses both sides of Spring Street and Douglas Avenue for a distance of twelve blocks. These two streets run parallel to each other northward from the downtown area. The district terminates north of River Bluff Road.

Like much of the city, this historic district developed during Elgin’s boom years of the late 19th century. Much of this land was platted and subdivided in the 1840s and 1850s and the earliest remaining dwellings in the district date to just before the Civil War. The growth of the city’s dairy industry and the establishment of the Elgin National Watch Company resulted in a dramatic increase in Elgin’s population towards the end of the century. Housing construction moved northward from the downtown area and by 1890, an electric streetcar line ran up Douglas Avenue. Dozens of homes were built on these two streets which reflected popular, national architectural trends of the period including Queen Anne and related styles.

Douglas Avenue was called “Elgin’s Fashionable Avenue” by a local newspaper in 1894 and it was home to many of the city’s leading citizens. Numerous large dwellings were also built on Spring Street and this section of the city was one of the preferred residential areas of the turn-of-the-century. In addition to residential construction, Sherman Hospital was built just east of Spring Street during the 1890s.

The district continued to develop in the early 20th century and many fine Colonial Revival and Prairie style dwellings were built in the years just before and after World War I. Both streets were largely developed by 1930 and only a few buildings were constructed after this period. The Spring-Douglas Historic District continues to contain some of Elgin’s finest historic architecture and it remains an attractive residential section of the city.
Just south of Elgin’s downtown is the section of town most closely associated with the Elgin National Watch Company. The company was established in 1864 and built its factory on a 35-acre site on the east bank of the Fox River just south of downtown. Housing for watch factory workers was provided through land purchased by the company for the construction of cottages and through the construction of the National House, a boarding house for single workers. At its peak in 1919, it contained 350 rooms. The structure was unfortunately demolished in 1932.

With the doubling of the size of the company by 1880, many new houses were constructed around the factory by employees of the company. Most of these were simple vernacular house types such as Gable Front cottages, Gable Ells, or Upright and Wings. Of the high-style buildings, most were Italianate with some Greek Revival and Second Empire.

Construction reached its peak during the prosperous years of the company until 1920 when many new structures were built.

Notable structures within the district are the Watch Company Observatory, which set the time for clocks and watches by the stars, the Watch Factory Depot, Fire Barn No. 5, and the Illinois National Guard Armory.
The D.C. Cook-Lovell Area Historic District

The D.C. Cook-Lovell Area Historic District comprises part of Home in the Woods Subdivision established in 1926, the David C. Cook’s Addition established in 1901, the Lovell’s Grove Addition established in 1893, the Pilgrim’s Subdivision, the Lovell’s Subdivision of Lovell’s Addition established in 1913, (Lovell’s Addition was established in 1868) and the Towner’s Subdivision established in 1862.

The district is associated with David C. Cook who is credited with establishing the David C. Cook Publishing Company. The company was established in Chicago in 1875, moved to Elgin 1882 and finally to its present eight acre location along the Fox River in 1901. The company was a publisher of religious texts. The portion of David C. Cook’s Addition within the district includes the residential lots and a park (Esmeralda Park) located opposite the publishing house.

The district is also associated with Vincent Lovell, an early settler in Elgin who owned lands north of Jefferson Avenue. Lovell, a merchant, came to Elgin in 1837 and bought 160 acres extending east from the Fox River. Lovell was one of a small group that was granted a charter for Elgin Academy in 1839. The school did not open until 1856, after Lovell’s death. His wife, Lucy, a teacher, became a benefactor of the Academy, and saw to it that her two sons were well educated. With her son, Vincent S., (a later mayor of Elgin between 1887-1889), she began subdividing family lands in 1868, particularly those west of Spring Street and to the areas north and south of Lincoln Street.

The district embodies very fine examples of the Queen Anne, Craftsman, Colonial Revival, Prairie, Tudor Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, Renaissance Revival, Cape Cod and Mid-Century Modern styles. The building types that exist within the district include Front and Side Gable Houses, the Mail Order Bungalow, the Gambrel Cottage and the American Foursquare.
The Elgin Bungalow Thematic Historic District

The Elgin Bungalow Thematic Historic District boundaries are not limited to a specific area but are city-wide, allowing any property that meets the following criteria to be eligible for inclusion into the district. The bungalows that are approved for inclusion will be subject to the same restrictions and benefits as existing locally landmarked and historic district properties.

The bungalow emerged in the early 1900s as part of a move away from the pretense and formality of the Victorian period, a renewed interest in the natural sciences, a reaction against growing industrialization, and embracing a more authentic craftsmanship and a simpler way of living. These homes could be built quickly and inexpensively reflecting the changing times. At its simplest, a bungalow is defined as a one and half story house with a low-pitched roof and front porch. Many bungalows can be identified with an architectural style. A defined style is not necessary for inclusion in the district but, when present, gives added luster to the structure.

Over the course of two years (2013-2015) staff, volunteers, and consultants for the City of Elgin have identified over 2,000 examples of bungalows within the City limits. Many of these were found throughout the older neighborhoods of the city.

The Historic Elgin Bungalow Organization began with the receipt of a grant from the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation that helped fund the production of informative brochures. This campaign ultimately led to an initial bungalow survey conducted by Allen+Pepa Architects.

Bungalows designated within this district include: 121 Monroe Street, 903 Cedar Avenue, 356 Jewel Street, 408 Orange Street, 841 Bellevue Avenue, 1023 Bellevue Avenue, 674 S. Liberty Street, 1032 Prospect Boulevard and 54 S. Liberty Street.
In addition to the locally designated districts, the design guidelines also apply to locally designated landmarks. These properties are as follows:

1. Lord's Park Pavilion – 100 Chadsworth Boulevard, (Landmarked 1991) – Dedicated in 1958. The building was completed as a focal point for Lord’s Park on the eastern edge of the city. The park was a gift from George P. and Mary E. Lord to provide “outdoor enjoyment and recreation” for the residents of Elgin. The building was recently restored and continues to be well maintained by the City of Elgin.

2. Fire Barn No. 5 – 533 St. Charles Street. (Landmarked 1991) – Commissioned in 1904, Elgin’s last fire barn was designed by Smith Hoag in the Classical Revival style. The first floor housed the horses and fire fighting equipment while the second floor housed the firefighters. The building was decommissioned in 1991 and is presently home to the Elgin Fire Barn Museum.

3. Lord Memorial Museum – 225 Grand Boulevard. (Landmarked 1992) – Designed by D. E. Postle in the Neo-classical style, the museum was built in 1907. The museum is located in Lord’s Park and was the final gift of George P. and Mary E. Lord to the people of Elgin. The museum formally held it’s east wing completed to reach the west wing in 2000.

4. Elgin National Watch Company Observatory – 312 Water Street. (Landmarked 1992) – Built in 1910, the observatory’s purpose was to record and transmit precise time from the movement of the stars to the Elgin National Watch Factory.

5. The Professional Building – 164 Division Street. (Landmarked 1998) – Completed in 1928, this Gothic Style building was designed as offices for doctors, lawyers, insurance agencies, and dentists. The interior contains a very ornate lobby with arcade designed in the Gothic Revival Style. The eighth floor was originally occupied by the Union League Club, which maintained a downstairs dining facility and huge fireplace.

6. The Elgin Tower Building – 100 East Chicago Street. (Landmarked 1998) – Completed in 1929 by the St. Louis Bank Building & Equipment Company, this 15-story 186 foot Art Deco building was designed to house Home National Bank & Home Trust & Savings Bank. Gray granite and Bedford Indiana limestone are used on the exterior surfaces.

7. The Ora Pelton Residence – 214 South State Street. (Landmarked 1998) – Built in 1889, the house is an excellent unaltered representation of high Victorian detailing and form. The residence was designed by renowned architect and builder, Gilbert M. Turnbull. The carriage house in the rear, built in 1890, is also an essentially unaltered significant structure.

8. Lovell House – 600 Margaret Place (Landmarked 2001) – Constructed in 1886 by local builder Henry Jensen, the Stick Style home with Eastlake characteristics was originally owned by Vincent Smith Lovell, former mayor of Elgin (1887-1889).

9. The Charles & Louisa Bache Home – 616 Park Street (Landmarked 2003) – Designed by two of Elgin’s notable architects, Gilbert M. Turnbull and David E. Postle, the Queen Anne Free Classic Style home was constructed in 1892 by local builder Charles Garte.

10. The Thomas P. & Emma Matthews Estate – 636 Park Street (Landmarked 2003) – Constructed in 1903, the Queen Anne Free Classic Style home was originally owned by Thomas P. Matthews, the proprietor of the Matthews Tubular Well Company.

11. The Alexander & Margaret McTavish House – 650 Park Street (Landmarked 2003) – Constructed in 1922, the Colonial Revival Style home was originally owned by Alexander McTavish, a local carpenter and contractor forSteven Smith who built many of the homes in the Lord’s Park Neighborhood.
13. The Larkin Center – 1212 Larkin Avenue (Landmarked 2004) – Designed by Elgin architect, George Morris, the Colonial Revival style building, originally known as the “Larkin Home for Children,” was constructed in 1911. It is named in memory of Sarah A. Larkin, a local politician and farmer, who first donated property to start the home.

14. The McClure Mansion – 770 W. Highland Avenue (Landmarked 2005) – Built by Martin Bullard, a local carpenter and builder, the Shingle Style home was constructed in 1891 for Finla Lawrence McClure and later altered by noted Elgin architect, W. Wright Abell in 1901 for Willis L. Black.

15. The Traub House – 625 Lillie Street (Landmarked 2005) – Constructed around 1892, the Colonial Revival style house was built for Fred Traub, a local businessman credited with opening the first bakery in Elgin at 61 Douglas Avenue in 1889, and a second one at 8 N. State Street.

16. Wing Park Golf Course – 1000 Wing Street (Landmarked 2008) – Designed in 1908 by Thomas Bendelow, the Johnny Appleseed of American Golf Course design, Wing Park Golf Course is the oldest operating public golf course in the State of Illinois.

17. The Lanning House – 324 Franklin Boulevard (Landmarked 2008) – Constructed around 1855, the Italianate style home was built for William & Sarah Lanning. William was a brick and stone mason responsible for the construction of many homes in early Elgin.

18. The Wilcox House – 327 W. Chicago Street (Landmarked 2009) – Constructed around 1892, 327 W. Chicago Street was built for Sylvanus Wilcox, and designed by notable Elgin architect, W. Wright Abell.

19. The Kemler House – 703 Raymond Street (Landmarked 2009) – Constructed around 1892, the Queen Anne style house was built for Paul Kemler. Kemler was a Civil War Veteran and served under General Grant. He also served as a policeman in Chicago during the Great Chicago Fire and then managed the Washington House Hotel in Elgin for 17 years.

20. The Sawyer Mansion – 806 W. Highland Avenue (Landmarked 2011) – Designed by W. Wright Abell in 1894, the Queen Anne style house was built for William G. and Augusta D. Sawyer. William was a big business man who was a member of the Kane County board of supervisors and held several private businesses.

21. The Alfred Bosworth Mansion – 705 W. Highland Avenue (Landmarked 2014) – Constructed in 1894, the Queen Anne style house was built for Alfred Bosworth and designed by notable Elgin architect, Smith Hoag and built by Henry Jensen. Bosworth was a cashier and later President of the Federal National Bank in Elgin.

22. The Wing Mansion – 972 W. Highland Avenue (Landmarked 2017) – Constructed in 1891, the Eastlake – Queen Anne Style house was built for William and Alvly Wing, who contributed greatly to Elgin’s development in the 19th century. At the time, the home was considered the most elegant home in the Fox Valley designed by notable architect, Smith Hoag.

Elgin’s Architecture Styles & Types

Elgin possesses an impressive collection of late 19th, early and mid-20th century residential architecture. The city’s rapid growth and development after 1860 led to intense construction efforts on both sides of the Fox River and the prosperity of the community is reflected in the many fine dwellings built during the period. The majority of homes built in these years are of frame construction and are two-stories in height.

The architectural styles built in Elgin mirror those popular throughout the country including Italianate and Queen Anne styles. Other dwellings were simpler in design such as the “Homestead” house which was attractive yet functional and economical. Early 20th century houses such as the Prairie Style and Tudor Revival style and building types such as American Foursquare and Bungalows were all built in Elgin.

Elgin’s architectural legacy is not only impressive due to its large number of historic dwellings but in their quality of construction as well. The city’s various industries supported a substantial middle-and-upper-class who built many architect designed homes. Local architects such as Smith Hoag, W. Wright Abell, Gilbert Turnbull, and Chicago based architectural firms provided many fine designs for buildings in the city. These dwellings set high standards and the overall approach to Elgin’s construction from 1870 to the early 1900s emphasized substance, diversity of styles and attention to detail. The following building styles and types are those most common in the locally designated districts. Architectural terms are defined for each building type as well as its characteristics and context. The illustrations present specific examples but variations of the same style may also exist.
The Greek Revival style was an important architectural style of the mid-19th century. The style reflected the influence of early Greek architecture which was felt to embody the ideals of democracy and classical beauty. Dwellings constructed in this style were built with symmetrical floor plans and with classical columns or pilasters. In Elgin, the most prominent examples were built with a side wing extending from the main gabled front section. Common details include multi-light sash windows with plain lintels, entrances with sidelights and transoms and classically detailed columns or pilasters. In addition to the dwelling pictured below, other examples of this style are located at 443 E. Chicago Street, 140 N. Gifford Street, and "Old Main" at 360 Park Street.

Greek Revival Style
1850-1865

The Gothic Revival style was influenced by the formal Gothic designs and forms of Europe. This style was especially popular for churches and civic buildings; however, it was also used to a limited degree for dwellings. This style is characterized by the use of pointed Gothic arches for windows and doors. Roofs are steeply pitched and windows are often decorated with hood molding. Bay windows are common as is eave decoration and attached millwork. Other examples of this style are found at 306 N. Spring Street and 373 Park Street.

Gothic Revival Style
1850-1880

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The Italianate style was a popular national style from the mid-to-late 19th century. The style was influenced by rural villas and urban architecture of Italy and promoted by a number of notable American architects such as Alexander Davis and Andrew Downing. Italianate dwellings in Elgin are generally two stories in height with low-pitched gable roofs and wide eaves. Characteristics of this style include elaborate eave brackets, segmental arched windows, and decorative hood molding. Porches with ornate milled columns and railing are also common on these dwellings. There are several fine examples of this style in both the Elgin and Spring-Douglas Historic Districts including 165 S. Gifford Street, 320 N. Spring Street and 469 Douglas Avenue.

**Italianate Style**

1840-1885

The Second Empire style is related to the Italianate style in its design, detailing, and overall proportions. The primary distinguishing characteristic of this style is its mansard roof for its main roof line or attached tower. These mansard roofs can be concave (bow in), convex (bow out) or straight sided. Slate is a common material covering the mansard roofs. Second Empire style dwellings are usually ornate with bracketed eaves, arched windows with hood molding, and milled porch columns and railings. Several fine examples of this style are found in the locally designated districts including 117 Tennyson Court, and the "Stone Cottage" at 363-365 Prairie Street.

**Second Empire Style**

1865-1890
Stick Style 1860–1890

The Stick style is characterized by the widespread use of decorative milled detailing and varying uses of wood wall surfaces. These dwellings are similar in form to the Queen Anne style and generally have high pitched gable roofs and asymmetrical floor plans. Large porches are common with decorative railings, turned columns, and applied vergeboard or spindles. Second floor balconies and bay windows are also characteristics of this style. Windows and doors often have decorative glass and surrounds. Eaves are embellished with milled woodwork such as brackets, sunburst designs, and attached vergeboard. Other examples of this style are located at 126 N. 10th Street and 730 Douglas Avenue.

Queen Anne Style 1880–1910

The Queen Anne style was one of the most common American house forms in the late 19th century and featured an asymmetrical floor plan and extensive exterior detailing. This style is generally two-stories in height and often features corner towers, turrets, or projecting bays. Exterior wall surfaces are often varied with mixtures of brick, wood siding, stone, and wood shingles. Large wraparound porches with milled columns and balusters are usually present on the main façade. Windows are one-over-one sash or of small multi-light design. Brackets or decorative vergeboard are often found in the gables. The boom years of Elgin’s late 19th century growth coincided with the popularity of the Queen Anne style and hundreds of excellent examples of these dwellings were built throughout the city. Representative examples of this style include 711 Douglas Avenue and 600 E. Chicago Street.
Related to the Queen Anne style is the Shingle style which is characterized by an exterior wall sheathing of wood shingles. The shingles are often designed in various interlocking shapes and provide a rich texture to the exterior appearance. In many cases not only is the exterior wall surface covered with shingles but also the front porch columns are sheathed in shingles. Decorative sash windows and doors are common as are turned porch railings and balusters. Examples of the Shingle style are found throughout Elgin’s historic districts including 416 Fulton Street and 706 Douglas Avenue.

Homestead/Gable Front Form
1870-1900

The “Homestead” or “Gable Front” dwellings of Elgin are vernacular or folk housing forms of the late 19th century. These dwellings are typically of frame construction, two stories in height, and have gable roofs. In Elgin, these house forms generally have a central projecting gabled bay on the main façade or an overall gable front plan with a one- or two-story lateral rear wing. Decoration is often more restrained than found in the Queen Anne style except for milled porch columns and brackets on the primary façade. One-over-one rectangular sash windows are common as are single-light glass and wood front doors. Examples of this house form include 370 Douglas Avenue and 571 Douglas Avenue.
Elgin retains a fine collection of late 19th century brick worker’s flats. These two-to-three-story multi-family dwellings were built to accommodate the many factory workers who came to Elgin in the 1880s and 1890s. Constructed in rectangular plans, the buildings reflect the Italianate style in their bracketed eaves, arched windows and hood molding. Several of these buildings also display ornate porches and bay windows on the main facades. The brickwork of these flats is often decorative with contrasting bands of varied color brick. Terra cotta panels are also visible on many of the buildings. These brick flats of the late 19th century are especially common in the Elgin Historic District. Other examples include 71-73 Park Row, 350-358 E. Chicago Street and 314 E. Chicago Street.

Brick Flats & Row Houses 1885-1900

Worker’s Cottages 1880-1900

The growth and development of the Elgin National Watch Company and the dairy industry resulted in a large expansion of the city’s work force. Many small frame dwellings were constructed in these years to accommodate the many workers who came to Elgin. These dwellings were generally one-story or one-and-one-half stories in height with gable roofs and limited detailing. Gable front plans were commonly built and decorative detailing was generally confined to porches or simple moldings over the windows. Many of these dwellings can be found in the Elgin Historic District such as 381 Park Street, 28 N. Gifford Street and 465 Division Street.
The Colonial Revival style was one of the most popular architectural styles of the early 20th century. During the 1890s there was a renewed interest in the architectural forms of Colonial America. These dwellings were built with symmetrical floor plans and with classically detailed formal porches. Common characteristics are columns and pilasters in Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Tuscan orders, eave dentils, and pedimented windows and doors. Dwellings in this style were constructed both of brick and frame and are generally two-stories in height. Colonial Revival style dwellings can be found throughout Elgin’s historic districts such as at 396 Division Street, 916 Douglas Avenue and a mid-century’s interpretation of the Colonial Revival style at 1013 Douglas Avenue.

Neo-Classical Style
1890-1930

The Neo-Classical style is closely related to the Colonial Revival style of the early 20th century. The Neo-Classical style maintains the symmetrical forms and classical detailing, but is distinguished by two-story or full-height porches called porticos. These porticos most commonly display wood columns in the Doric and Ionic orders. Entrances are often highly decorative with pediments, sidelights, and transoms. Elgin has a number of examples of this style such as at 126 Cooper Avenue.
The Prairie style originated in America in the early 1900s, designed by architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and John S. Van Bergen. This style emphasized the importance of blending houses with their surroundings and relating the house to the flat, horizontal lines of the Midwest. Prairie style houses have low-pitched hipped roofs, wide eaves, and broad porches. Exterior wall surfaces are often stucco or brick. These dwellings are generally two-stories in height and have decorative multi-light windows. Notable examples of this style are located in the Spring-Douglas Historic District at 1014 N. Spring Street and 900 Douglas Avenue.

American Foursquare
1900-1925

The American Foursquare house reflects an early 20th century return to simple building forms and minimal decoration. These house forms are common throughout Elgin’s neighborhoods and feature rectangular plans with hipped roofs and one-story porches on the primary façade. Porches often have square or Tuscan columns and eaves often feature modillion blocks or brackets. The roofline on the primary façade generally displays a hipped dormer window. In addition to the example pictured to the right, other examples may be found at 462-464 North Street and 911 Douglas Avenue.
Craftsman/Bungalow 1910-1940

The Craftsman style, which may go hand in hand with the Bungalow form, was the most common architectural style in America during the early 20th century. The Craftsman style is characterized by square plans with low-pitched gable or hipped roofs, often with shed dormers. Windows are double-hung sash with three or more vertical lights in the top sash and a single-light bottom sash. Craftsman dwellings have large broad porches which usually extend across the front façade and are supported by tapered columns resting on stone, frame or brick piers. In contrast to the vertical emphasis in Victorian styles, Craftsman dwellings emphasized the horizontal, with wide windows, and wide roof eaves. Both the Elgin and Spring-Douglas Historic Districts were largely developed by the 1910s and there are fewer examples of this style in these districts than in areas of the city which grew after World War I. Examples of this style include dwellings at 1020 Douglas Avenue, 121 Monroe Street and 159 Hill Avenue.

Tudor Revival Style 1910-1940

The Tudor Revival style was another popular national style of the early 20th century. These dwellings are based upon medieval house forms of England and were built in America from 1915-1940. These house forms have high pitched gable roofs, multiple gables on the main façade and are generally of brick and stucco construction. Doors are often set within rounded or Tudor arches while windows often have multiple lights in the upper and lower sashes. In gable fields, stucco and wood are often combined to create the appearance of a design known as “half-timbering.” Examples of the Tudor Revival style are scattered throughout both the Elgin and Spring-Douglas Historic Districts such as the dwellings at 1031 N. Spring Street, 208 Lovell Street and 50 N. Liberty Street.
A very popular trend in the Midwest was the manufacture or selling of houses through mail-order catalogs. The late 19th and early 20th centuries were ripe for entrepreneurs who sold architectural plans as well as the houses themselves. Sears, Roebuck and Company, the Hodgson Company, Aladdin Homes, and Montgomery Ward all had their start in the housing business between 1895 and 1910. Sears, however, was the largest; its sales reached 30,000 houses by 1925 and nearly 50,000 by 1930, more than any other mail-order company. In fact, its 1939 homes catalog claimed that “over one hundred thousand families, or approximately half a million people, are living in Future 20th Modern Homes today.” In its three decades of operation, Sears set an impressive record, making substantial contributions to 20th century housing in America. Examples of catalog homes are found through the historic districts and older established neighborhoods. Good examples of them are 626 Orange Street, 317 Hamilton Avenue and 833 Cedar Avenue.

Catalog Homes 1895-1940

The Mid-Century Modern Movement was the final push away from Victorian pretenses. The movement was not only within architecture but included graphic design, furniture, products and interior design. The designs during this time was an American interpretation of the Bauhaus and International movement that was happening in Europe with inspiration coming from Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe, Florence Knoll and Le Corbusier. The focus was on a simpler form of architecture that was still tied to nature with its use of large grouped and ribbon windows, open floor plans and a feel of being anchored to a site with its low sloped roofs and one-story configurations. There are several examples of the Mid-Century Modern style ranch home within the D.C. Cook-Lovell Area Historic District including 45 River Bluff Road and 65 River Bluff Road.

Mid-Century Homes 1945-1975

SA Ogilvie Avenue (Sears, Roebuck and Company—The Alhambra)
Rehabilitation & Restoration
Architectural Details & Features
Elgin’s historic dwellings display a wide variety of architectural features and detailing. These details are essential in defining a property’s architectural style and period of construction. Original architectural features and detailing should be preserved and maintained. If the details need to be replaced, the new materials should match the original as closely as possible.

Details and features include, but are not limited to: Gingerbread Verge Boards, Eaves, Brackets, Dentils, Terra Cotta, Cornices, Mouldings, Trim Work, Shingles, Columns, Pilasters, Balusters, Cupboard, Shingle and Stucco Surfaces, or any Decorative or Character Defining Features.

Details and Features...
A. should be repaired rather than replaced.
B. should not be removed or altered if original to the building.
C. should not be covered or concealed with vinyl, aluminum or other substitute material.
D. should not be added unless there is physical, or historical evidence that such features were original to the house or consistent with the style which would allow them to be added to the house. These features should match the original in materials, scale, location, proportions, form and detailing.
Architectural Details & Features

132 N. Channing Street (Octagonal Wood Shingles at Gable)

321 Division Street (Terra Cotta Cornice and Window Detail)

424 Prairie Street (Window Hood and Eave Bracket)

903 Cedar Avenue (Exposed Rafters and Bracket Details)

427 Raymond Street

653 Douglas Avenue (Spring-Douglas Historic District)

507 Raymond Street

457 Villa Street

321 Division Street (Terra Cotta Cornice and Window Detail)

424 Prairie Street (Window Hood and Eave Bracket)

903 Cedar Avenue (Exposed Rafters and Bracket Details)

427 Raymond Street

653 Douglas Avenue (Spring-Douglas Historic District)

507 Raymond Street

457 Villa Street

321 Division Street (Terra Cotta Cornice and Window Detail)

424 Prairie Street (Window Hood and Eave Bracket)

903 Cedar Avenue (Exposed Rafters and Bracket Details)

427 Raymond Street

653 Douglas Avenue (Spring-Douglas Historic District)

507 Raymond Street

457 Villa Street
Awnings

Canvas awnings were often applied to windows, doors, and porches to provide shade during the summer. Awnings fell out of favor following the introduction of air conditioning. However, in recent years the popularity of awnings has increased due to their attractiveness and energy savings. The application of canvas or acrylic awnings is appropriate for Elgin’s historic dwellings.

Awnings may not be appropriate for all window locations. If you are considering adding awnings to your older house, avoid using modern, metal awnings, since they bear little resemblance to historic canvas awnings. Select an awning style that is appropriate for your older house.

Awnings...

A. should be designed for traditional locations such as over windows and doors or attached to porches.
B. should be of canvas, or similar woven material.
C. should be attached with care to prevent unnecessary damage of original details and materials.
D. should be of colors to complement the dwelling.
E. should fit the opening to which they are applied. Rectangular window and door openings should have straight across shed type awnings, not bubble or curved forms. Awnings over arched windows should have curved or rounded awnings to match the opening.

Chimneys

Chimneys often feature decorative brickwork or designs which are part of a dwelling’s architectural character. Many exterior wall chimneys in Elgin are essential features to a dwelling’s overall design. Chimneys should be maintained and preserved in accordance with the brick, masonry, and mortar guidelines. The most common roof problems arise due to poor flashing. Often, flashing develops leaks before the roofing material does.

The most complex flashing problem is to make a watertight joint between a chimney and a shingle roof. Chimney flashing is often damaged, badly installed, or missing altogether. The most appropriate material for metal flashing is cold-rolled copper, or the easier to use, soft tempered copper. If there is a concern for the green stains from copper, lead-coated copper may be used.

Chimneys...

A. should not be removed or altered, if original.
B. should be rebuilt to match the original design and materials, if rebuilding is required.
C. should be cleaned and repointed in accordance with masonry guidelines to match the original in materials, colors, shape, and brick pattern. Mortar shall be a soft type of mortar, Type S or N, as the use of Portland Cement mortar can damage the brick. Chimneys that have been extensively repointed resulting in mismatched colors and textures may be painted in brick colors such as dark red or brown.
D. should have clay, slate, or stone caps. Metal caps may be acceptable if they are minimally visible.
E. should have proper flashing at the point where they meet the roof.
F. should have proper flashing at the point where they meet the roof. Metal flashing should be used instead of the application of caulking material or bituminous coating, which can deteriorate due to weathering and allow moisture damage.
G. should be constructed properly, using red brick in traditional dimensions, if applicable.
H. should involve tie rods incorporating decorative designs appropriate to the house, if applicable.
I. should not be covered with stucco or other materials.
Doors and door surrounds are highly visible and significant in defining the style and character of a dwelling. Original doors, door surrounds, and hardware should be preserved and maintained. Original features should be repaired rather than replaced. Doors available from most wholesale hardware stores generally are not appropriate for front entrances. The majority of these doors do not have panels or glass lights which match historic door designs. Original doors should not be thrown out. They should be kept in the basement or be made available for salvage.

Doors & Door Features

A. should not be removed or altered, if original.
B. if replacement is required, the original size of the door opening shall not be enlarged or reduced in height or width.
C. if replacement is required, the doors should be replaced with new doors appropriate for the style and period of the dwelling. Replacement doors should be similar in design to the original in style, glazing (type of glass and area) and lights (pane configuration). Wood or solid core fiberglass (smooth) is acceptable materials for use in replacement doors.
D. should be constructed of solid wood panels, such as the four-panel Homestead or Italianate design may be used on the front, if appropriate to the style of the house.
E. should involve glazing to door exedra or beveled glass as appropriate to the style of the house, if applicable.
F. if the glass needs to be replaced due to damage, it must be replaced with glass (tempered, if applicable). Lexan or other acrylic-based materials are not appropriate.
G. should not be replaced by doors with new designs, especially those at the front entrance or at side entrances which are readily visible from the street.
H. should not be added at locations where they did not originally exist. If needed to meet safety codes or to enhance the use of a property, doors should be added at the rear or sides of dwellings where they would not be readily visible.

Screen and storm doors can be appropriate for historic dwellings. New screen doors should preferably be full view design or with minimal structural dividers to retain the visibility of the historic door behind the screen door.

Storm doors can assist in lowering energy costs. Doors should be of a color complementary to the house. “Raw” or shiny aluminum doors should be avoided, unless appropriate to the era of the house. Consistency of style around the house is encouraged.

Screen & Storm Doors

A. should be preserved and maintained, if original.
B. should be correctly sized to fit the entrance opening. Door openings should not be enlarged, reduced, or shortened for new door installation.
C. should preferably be made of wood, but aluminum full-view design with baked-on enamel or anodized finish in colors complementary to the house are also acceptable, if new combination storm and screen doors are required. A kick-plate may be used in combination with storm and screen door, with a maximum height of twelve (12) inches.
D. should not involve ornamentation on storm door, unless appropriate to the era of the house.
Security Doors & Gates

Security doors are non-historic additions to dwellings. While the installation of security doors on fronts of buildings is discouraged, they may be installed if they are full view design and have minimal structural framing to allow the viewing of most of the historic door behind them. Ornate security doors with extensive grillwork or decorative detailing are not appropriate for entrances on the fronts of dwellings. The addition of security doors on the rear or sides of dwellings which are not readily visible is acceptable.

Security Doors...
A. should be full view design or have minimal structural framework to allow for the viewing of the historic door behind them, if installed on the front door. Security doors in steel clad designs should be used only at side or rear entrances which are not readily visible from the street. These doors are encouraged to be of traditional designs, although doors which are not readily visible may have more extensive structural framework that would be acceptable for front doors.
B. should be correctly sized to fit the entrance opening. Door openings should not be enlarged, reduced, or shortened for new door installation.

Security Gates...
A. should not appear in the Historic District.

Foundations

Most Elgin dwellings have stone or concrete foundation, with stone or concrete bands above them known as water tables. The repointing and repair of foundations should follow masonry guidelines.

In many cases, foundations on buildings contain openings for windows. These should be maintained in an operable condition so as to allow for the ventilation of the basement to prevent the buildup of moisture and subsequent mold.

In some cases, a basement may be approved for use as living space and a window may need to be converted to an opening for egress.

Foundations...
A. should be cleaned, repaired or repointed according to masonry guidelines.
B. should be parged or stuccoed if the brick or mortar is mismatched or inappropriately repaired. Parging material must be out of a soft type mortar mixture and not be of Portland cement.
C. should not be concealed with concrete block, plywood panels, corrugated metal, or other non-original materials.
D. should not be altered and original designs shall be retained. If removal of sections of the foundation is required, such as for mechanical unit installation, removal should occur at the rear façade or non-readily visible side facades.
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Elgin’s historic districts contain a wide variety of 19th and early 20th century outbuildings including servant’s quarters, sheds, chicken coops, carriage houses, and automobile garages. These buildings add to the district’s character and many have notable architectural significance. These buildings were often built with construction techniques and materials to match the dwellings. These buildings should be preserved and maintained.

Replacement garage doors are available in many designs and material, and can even be custom built to replicate the design of a traditional door using all the modern hardware of an overhead door.

Many metal garage doors are also available with a solid or hollow core, depending upon the strength and durability desired. Generally, solid core metal doors are stronger and more durable than hollow core metal doors.

NOTE: For new garages, see New Construction guidelines.

Garages, Carriage Houses & Outbuildings

A. should be preserved and maintained. Original features should be repaired to match the original, as close as possible.
B. should not be moved or relocated to another part of the lot, if original to the property.
C. should not be hidden or obscured by a new accessory structure.

Garage Doors...

A. if original or has gained significance over time, should be maintained to the greatest extent possible, but may be retrofitted with modern hardware and custom garage door openers. If the original doors are missing or too deteriorated to repair, they should be replaced with new doors that fit the original opening and are appropriate to the design and period of construction of the garage.
B. should be raised panel designs, with a solid core, if proposed to be in metal designs. Flush design doors (built from panel panels), unless retrofitted to look like traditional doors and hollow core metal doors should be avoided, when possible.
C. if windows are necessary, they should be simple in design with clear glass. Muntins in a simple design may be used. The use of ornamental stained glass and openings in decorative shapes such as sunbursts and oval designs are not permitted.
D. should have painted metal panel doors to match the house in a color appropriate to the period of the house.

Historic Examples of Chicken Coop

6x70 Lilla Street – Horsh, Chicken Coop

Historic Examples of Garage and Garage Door Design

Image Source: vintagegaragedoor.com

Elgin Design Guideline Manual
Gutters & Downspouts

Traditionally, half round gutters were used on most roofs with extended eaves, since they did not conceal any decorative features on the fascia such as crown molding or exposed rafters. Modern construction has fascia without this molding that is more conducive to K-style or ogee gutters and so should be avoided.

Gutters and downspouts should be regularly cleaned and maintained. If new gutters are required, half-round designs are the most historically accurate.

Gutters are necessary to be installed over paved areas that are susceptible to water run-off from the roof.

Gutters & Downspouts:
A. should be repaired rather than replaced, if possible.
B. should be located away from significant architectural features on the front of the building.
C. should provide property drainage through use of downspouts and splash blocks to avoid water damage to the building. Round downspouts are more appropriate than rectangular forms; however, rectangular forms are also acceptable.
D. should be designed to channel the water as far away from the dwelling as possible. Downspouts should extend at least 4 to 6 feet, or utilize a splash block.
E. should be half-round rather than “K” or ogee, is of hang-on type. Ogee is permissible if fascia is vertical.
F. should have straps nailed under, not on top, of roofing material. Metal flashing should also be properly installed so as not to conceal any crown molding in the roof areas.
G. should not result in the removal of existing eave features.
H. should be sized proportionate to the building. Gutters and downspouts should not exceed 6 inches.

YES - Half-Round & Crown
YES - K-Style & Flat Fascia
NO - K-Style & Crown

Lighting for Porches & Exterior Walls

Many of Elgin’s dwellings retain original exterior wall and porch ceiling light fixtures. Distinctive tinted globes and the “box” shaped fixtures for Craftsman/Bungalows are part of a building’s character and should be preserved and maintained. If the original light fixtures are missing, light fixtures with simple designs and detailing are preferred to large, ornate colonial or Williamsburg style fixtures. Many companies now provide light fixtures based upon historic designs and the addition of these types of period fixtures is appropriate and encouraged.

Fixtures:
A. should be preserved and maintained, if original.
B. should be compatible with the style, scale, and period of the structure, based on traditional designs of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and mounted on porch ceilings or adjacent to entrances.
C. should be compatible with the character of the house, if a freestanding fixture.

Flood/foot lights:
A. should be mounted on rear or sides of dwellings rather than on the front.
B. should be small, simple in design, and their number kept to a minimum where readily visible. Commercial grapple lamps, such as mercury sodium or metal halide, are discouraged.

Examples of historic light fixtures (c. 1910)
Many of Elgin’s dwellings are of brick or brick veneer construction. If well maintained, brick can last indefinitely. The most important points in brick wall preservation are to keep out water and to use an appropriate mortar mix when repair is needed.

Most pre-1920 dwellings in the districts have soft mortars and require similar mortar compounds when repointing or repairing. The use of hard mortars like Portland cement can cause the brick to crack and break when it can’t expand and contract with hot and cold weather. Portland cement was used for dwellings after 1920 and generally this type of hard mortar will be appropriate for dwellings from this period.

Abrasive cleaning methods such as sandblasting or water blasting should not be used since it erodes the outer skin of the brick causing water to get inside. Low pressure cleaning at garden hose pressure using water or detergents is best for cleaning Elgin’s brick dwellings.

Masonry...
A. should be preserved and maintained, if original.
B. should be cleaned only if there are major stains or paint build-up. If the staining or dirt is limited, it may be best to leave it alone. Do not introduce water or chemicals into brick walls.
C. should be cleaned with detergent cleansers if the brick walls are stained. If you wish to remove paint from bricks, the use of chemical removers is appropriate. This is a job that usually requires professionals. Information concerning the use of chemical paint removal can be found on page 141.
D. should be repointed carefully to match the original brickwork and mortar, using hand tools, not electric power saws, to remove mortar, if repairs are necessary.
E. should have repointing (filing the mortar between the bricks) that matches the original brick and mortar regarding width, depth, color, raking profile, composition, and texture. Repointing should never be done with Portland cement or other hard mortars unless these mortar compounds are original to the dwelling. For more pre-1920 dwellings, use soft mortars to match the original composition. If the original composition cannot be determined, use a historic compound such as one part lime and two parts sand.
F. should not be sandblasted or subjected to any kind of abrasive cleaning. Brick should never be cleaned with high pressure water which exceeds 200 pounds per square inch (PSI).
G. should not be coated with silicone-based water sealants. Water sealants or water repellents generally have the effect of keeping interior moisture from evaporating through the walls and thereby damaging the brick.
H. should not be painted unless the brick and mortar is extremely mismatched from earlier repairs or patching. Previously sandblasted brick or brick in poor condition may be painted to provide a sealing coat.
I. should not be covered in stucco or other coating materials.
Mechanical Systems

Today’s air conditioning and heating units often require condensers and other mechanical units to be placed within a few feet of the exterior walls of a dwelling. Heating and cooling units should be placed at the rear or sides of dwellings not readily visible from the street. The placement of these units at the front of dwellings is not appropriate and should be avoided. Screening of these units on side or rear facades through shrubbery is highly recommended. In some instances, screening with fencing or latticework is also acceptable.

Window air conditioners should be located in windows on the rear or sides of dwellings rather than on the front. The installation of such window units should not result in the removal or replacement of the original window sash or sills.

Electrical Conduits, Gas Meters, Cable TV Connections, Satellite (DBS) Dishes...

A. should be located on the rear or side of a building. When the ability to receive a clear signal requires the DBS satellite dish to be installed in a particular location that is readily visible from the street, it should be placed as far from the front of the house where it would not detract from the character of the house, and continue to receive a clear signal.

Paint Removal & Surface Preparation

If paint is to be removed by using a heat gun, the utmost care should be taken during the process. The use of blow torches to remove paint is not recommended as this may lead to a fire hazard. Also, the use of abrasive sand and water blasting is not recommended as the force of the sand and water may damage the wood siding and raise the grain. In addition, during this process, water is forced into the wood and can take a very long time to dry. Wet or damp wood will not allow a coat of paint to properly adhere to the surface, and may additionally cause the wood to stain due to the formation of mildew. Water may only be used at a pressure no greater than 200 p.s.i. (the typical pressure produced by a garden hose and sprayer) to remove flaking or peeling paint.

It should also be noted that unpainted masonry should be left unpainted. Paint Removal & Surface Preparation...

A. should be performed by manual scraping or by using appropriate chemical removers. A paint shaver may be used, but with caution so as to avoid removal of wood siding.

B. should be performed cautiously when removing paint through heat plates or heat guns to avoid unnecessary damage to the wood through charring or fire.

C. should not be removed by abrasive techniques such as sand or water blasting since this can damage the wood and introduce moisture into the building.

Air Conditioners...

A. should be located where they are not readily visible from the street.

B. should be screened preferably with shrubbery, but fencing or lattice panels are also acceptable.

Recommended: Screening Units with Shrubbery

Acceptable: Screening Units with Fencing

Not Recommended: No Screening of Unit
The selection of paint colors does not require approval by the Commission. City staff is available to provide recommendations for paint colors if requested. Paint charts with historic colors are also available at most paint stores.

Consider painting the dwelling in keeping with its style and period of construction. Avoid loud, garish, or harsh colors and bright hues and avoid too many colors on a building. Select sections of the dwelling to highlight architectural details in contrast to the body of the dwelling. Painting with high quality oil based or exterior latex paints will last from eight to fifteen years depending on sunlight exposure, regular gutter and downspout maintenance, and wood surface condition and preparation.

Note: This section is provided only as a recommendation for property owners on the types of paint colors that are appropriate for use on historic buildings. Property owners are free to use colors of their choice on the exterior of their properties.

Paint & Paint Colors...

A. should be of high quality to provide a long lasting finish.
B. should be appropriate for the dwelling’s architectural style and design:
• Italianate Style - Light colors for the body and trim.
  Body - Tan, Light Brown, Beige, Light Green, Yellow
  Trims and Accents - Cream, Gray, Light Brown
• Queen Anne/Second Empire/Italianate - Diversity of color using combinations of contrasting colors for the body and trim.
  Body - Tan, Red, Green, Brown
  Trims and Accents - Darker colors such as Dark Olive, Salmon, Red, Dark Brown
• Shingle - Most Shingle style dwellings were originally built with the exterior wood shingles stained or left natural rather than painted. Most of these dwellings in Elgin have been painted over the years and a return to the dark brown and red of the wood shingles is recommended.
  Body - Dark Red, Brown, Dark Gray, Dark Green
  Trims and Accents - Dark Green, Dark Brown
• Prairie - A return to lighter colors such as yellow and white.
  Body - Light Tan, Light Yellow, Light Brown, Gray, Medium to Light Greens
  Trims and Accents - Whites and Off-Whites, Cream, Brown, Blues, Greens
• Colonial/Colonial Revival - Darker colors again such as earth tones. Dark stone also used in place of paint. Brick, stone, stucco, and concrete generally left unpainted.
  Body - Brown, Green, Gray, Dark Red
  Trims and Accents - Both light and dark trim colors such as Reds, Browns, Greens, and shades of Tan
• Colonial Revival - Light colors predominate
  Body - Yellow, Light Gray, Light Blue
  Trims and Accents - White, Off-White, Cream

155 S. Gifford Street — Italianate Paint Schemes

121 Monroe Street — Bungalow Paint Schemes

116 N. Porter Street — Queen Anne Paint Schemes

34 N. Porter Street — Colonial Revival Paint Schemes

Elgin Design Guideline Manual
Elgin Design Guideline Manual
Porches

Porch design, materials, and placement are key defining characteristics of a historic dwelling. Original porches should be maintained and repaired where needed. Porches on the fronts of dwellings should not be enclosed with wood or glass for additional living space. The screening of porches on the fronts of buildings is appropriate as long as the open appearance of the porch is maintained.

If replacement of porch features is required, use materials to closely match the original. If the original porch is missing, a new porch should be constructed based upon photographic or physical evidence. If such evidence does not exist, base the design upon historic porches of similar dwellings from the same time period and architectural style. In some cases turn of the century dwellings had their original porches removed and replaced with "modern" porches in the 1920s and 1930s which do not necessarily match the original style of the house. If desired, these porches may be replaced with porches in keeping with the original design; however, some of these porches have acquired significance in their own right and can be preserved.

Enclosing porches on the front of a house or where readily visible is not appropriate or recommended. Front porches should not be enclosed with glass, wood siding, or other materials. Porches on the rear or sides of dwellings may be enclosed when not readily visible from the street and if the height and shape of the porch roof is maintained.

Porches:
A. should be maintained in their original design with original materials and detailing.
B. should not be removed if original to the dwelling.
C. should be repaired or replaced to match the original in design, materials, scale, and placement.
D. should be screened only if the structural framework for the screen panels is minimal and the open appearance of the porch is maintained. Screen panels should be placed behind the original features such as columns or railings and should not hide decorative details or result in the removal of original porch materials.
E. should have steps of the same material as the porch floor (e.g. porches with wood floors should also have steps made of wood, not concrete or brick).
F. should have poured concrete steps if the porch, patio or terrace floor is made of concrete (see Porch Steps).
G. should have 1x4 wood tongue and groove flooring running perpendicular to the façade, if the porch floor is made of wood.
H. should have trellises made of wood, if trellises are appropriate.
I. should have porch skirting that matches the type and style of the house, which may include decorative wood framed skirting, vertical slats or lattice panels.
J. should not be enclosed with wood, glass, or other materials which would alter the porch’s open appearance.

Common Historic Skirting Designs

YES—Lattice between porch piers should be placed within frames
NO—Lattice should not touch the ground or be added without framing, nor shall it be nailed to the surface of the foundation/porch piers.
Porch Columns and Railing

Original porch columns and railings should be retained and repaired with materials to match the original. If the original porch columns and railings are missing, replacement porch columns and railings should be appropriate for the dwelling’s architectural style and period; handrail height and style should be determined by photographs, paint outlines, paint shadows, or similar homes in the area.

Porch columns often deteriorate first at the bottom next to the porch floor. If this is the case, consider sawing off the deteriorated area and replacing this section rather than replacing the entire column.

A note on porch railing height: Traditionally, the height of porch railing was based on the height of window sills within the porch, and ranged anywhere from 24 to 30 inches. This was done to provide a clear view from the inside of the house.

However, modern building codes require that railing heights be no less than 36 inches, with an exception for historic properties if the lower height of the porch railing is judged by the building official to not constitute a distinct life safety hazard in accordance with the requirements of Section 16.36.020 of the Elgin Municipal Code, 1976, as amended, creates Section 102.8 of the 2015 International Residential Code — “Historic Buildings.”

Drawings should be provided that properly integrate the porch features with the design of the house.

Porch height less than 36 inches high will need to be reviewed by the building official so as not to constitute a life safety hazard.

Porch Columns and Railings
A. should be preserved and maintained. Where repair is required, use materials to match the original in dimensions and detailing.
B. should be rebuilt in historic designs if the original columns and railings have been removed or replaced.
C. should have new balusters for the railing, if required. Porch balusters (also called spindles) should be appropriate for the building’s style and period. The height of the railing should be in line with the window sill level, if present, and no greater than 30 inches in height.
Porch Stairs and Steps

Most of Elgin’s pre-1945 dwellings were built with wood steps leading to the door or front porch. Since steps are readily exposed to the sun and rain they require continual maintenance and repair. In many cases the original wood steps have been removed and replaced with steps of concrete. Concrete was widely used for porch steps after early 1900 and these original stairs should also be repaired and retained.

Porch Staircases and Steps...

A. should be retained in their original location and configuration, if original to the property. Wood and concrete steps should be repaired with materials to match the original.

B. should be replaced with wood rather than brick or concrete, if the porch floor is made of wood.

C. should have their tread constructed in either 5/4x12 or 2x12 lumber. The ends of the treads should be bull-nosed and overhang the riser by no less than 1 inch.

D. should have newel posts and balusters, treads and risers, to match original porch construction.

Original concrete stairs at 177 Lincoln Street (Spring-Douglas Historic District)
Roofs

Original roof forms should be retained. If additions will affect roof forms the additions should be added at rear or side rooflines which are not readily visible from the street. Historic roof materials such as metal shingles, clay tiles, or slate should be repaired and preserved. If repair is no longer practical, replacement with asphalt shingles may be considered. Sawn cedar shingles were also a common roof material used on Elgin’s older houses.

The process of saw cutting the siding/shingle at the junction of a roof and vertical wall sections to be filled in later with a tiny board is not permitted.

A. should be retained in their original shape and pitch, with original features (such as cresting, chimneys, finials, cupolas, etc.), and, if possible, with original roof materials.

B. should be re-roofed with substitute materials such as asphalt or fiberglass shingles if the original materials are no longer present or if the retention of the original roof material is not economically feasible. Architectural shingles shall be installed on homes that pre-date the 1920s. 3-Tab shingles may be appropriate dependent on age and style of the home.

C. should be in appropriate colors such as dark grey, black, brown or shades of dark red; red or green may also be appropriate for Craftsman/Bungalow period dwellings for new asphalt or fiberglass shingled roofs.

D. should have sawn cedar shingles added only after a complete tear-off of the existing roof materials is completed. This is necessary to provide adequate ventilation and proper drying of the roof during wet conditions.

E. should have soldered metal panels added as the surface material, if the roof is flat. If not readily visible, rolled composition or EPDM.

F. should have proper water-tight flashing at junctions between roofs and walls, around chimneys, skylights, vent pipes, and in valleys and hips where two planes of a roof meet. Metal flashing should be used instead of the application of caulking material or bituminous coating, which can deteriorate due to weathering and allow moisture damage.

G. should not have new dormers, roof decks, balconies or other additions introduced on fronts of dwellings. These types of additions may be added on the rear or sides of dwellings where not readily visible.

H. should not have split cedar shakes, in most cases.

Original tile roof at 515 N. Spring Street (Spring-Douglas Historic District)

Original pressed metal shingle roof at 730 Douglas Avenue (Spring-Douglas Historic District)

Elgin Design Guideline Manual
Roof Skylights, Vents and Dormers

Skylights are often installed to help make usable space in upper floor areas or attics. The installation of skylights is acceptable as long as they are placed on rear roof lines, behind gables or dormers, or at other roof locations not readily visible from the street. Skylights which are flush with the roofline or lay flat are more acceptable than those with convex or “bubble” designs. Historically, roof windows, light wells or skylights were designed into the architecture of the building.

Skylights:
A. should be preserved, if original to the house.
B. should be flat or flush with the roofline, not convex or “bubble” designs.
C. should have ridge treatment in ridge roll and balls on end on cedar roofs.
D. should not be added where they would be visible from the street. Skylights should be placed at rear roof lines or behind gables and dormers.

Vents:
A. should be ridge vents rather than pot vents. If used, they should be set at rear rooflines.

Dormers:
A. should be used instead of skylights in highly visible portions of the roof.
B. should be constructed as two gables and a connector, if larger in volume.
C. should not occupy more than fifty percent of the slope of the roof of which it is being constructed and should be trimmed out in the style of the house.
D. should be designed and located as not to detract from the character of the roof.

Appropriate dormer at 724 N. Spring Street (Spring-Douglas Historic District)

Ridge vents are more appropriate than pot vents. Original gable vents shall be maintained.

Static vents are acceptable as long as they are minimally visible from the street.

Appropriate dormer at 258 N. Liberty Street

NO - Bubble, convex designs are not appropriate.

YES - Skylights shall not be visible from the public right-of-way.

Elgin Design Guideline Manual
Windows

Elgin’s dwellings display a wide variety of historic wood windows in various sash designs and sizes. It is preferred that wood windows should be repaired to match the original design. In some instances it is less expensive to repair windows than to replace them with new windows.

Where original wood windows are replaced, the installation of new wood windows to match the original design is recommended. Aluminum clad windows are also acceptable as replacement windows. Factors to be considered in determining whether the severity of deterioration of windows requires replacement shall include but not be limited to the following factors: damage, excessive weathering, loss of soundness or integrity of the wood, deterioration due to rot or insect attack, and cost to repair. As to the factor of the cost to repair windows, a particular window may be permitted to be replaced rather than repaired if the estimated cost to repair the window is more than the estimated cost of the purchase and installation of appropriate replacement windows.

Windows may also be replaced without consideration of the severity of deterioration of the windows, provided, however, character defining features such as its size, shape, operation, frame, sash dimensions, glass configuration, material, and finish (generally a painted surface) must all match the original window profile as close as possible.

A. which are original should be preserved in their original location, size, and design and with their original materials and numbers of panes (glass lights). Which is not original should not be added to primary facades or to secondary facades where readily visible.

C. repair is preferable to replacement, but if replaced the recommended replacement should be in-kind to match the original window profile in material and design.

D. the replacement of a building’s original wood or steel windows will be deemed acceptable if the replacement in-kind is as close as a match as possible to the original window’s material, profile, and configuration. "Replacement-in-kind" windows are windows that closely match the original window material and form (style, dimension, texture, and detailing).

Wood replacement windows for original or non-original windows will also be considered provided that the proposed window profile will continue to complement the historic character of the building and district.

Replacement windows will be considered upon consideration of a submitted photo of the existing window or a drawing which identifies the dimensions of the existing such as applicable, muntins, mullions, transoms, and any other window details is submitted. A manufacturer’s specifications or standard cut sheet with the replacement window details will also be required prior to window replacement approval.

The replacement of just the sash with new sash installed to fit the existing frame rather than the replacement of an entire window is recommended and preferred. Window openings may not be modified to accommodate a replacement window.

E. Windows clad in aluminum or baked-on aluminum are acceptable as replacement windows for those throughout the structure. Factors to be considered in determining whether the severity of deterioration of windows requires replacement shall include but not be limited to the following factors: damage, excessive weathering, loss of soundness or integrity of the wood, deterioration due to rot or insect attack, and cost to repair. As to the factor of the cost to repair windows, a particular window may be permitted to be replaced rather than repaired if the estimated cost to repair the window is more than the estimated cost of the purchase and installation of appropriate replacement windows.

F. which are original of steel or aluminum should be repaired with materials to match the original if repair is not feasible, replacement should be with new windows to match the original as closely as possible in material and dimensions. Aluminum clad windows are an acceptable replacement substitute for original steel sash windows, as long as their size, shape and profile match the original windows.

G. Vinyl extruded windows are not permitted for use on windows which are approved for replacement may be fitted with new double pane Low-E glass that will improve the energy conservation on the interior. Only Low-E glass that does not contain a tint shall be used.

H. which are new should not have snap-on or flush muntins. True divided muntins are preferred over these types of muntins which do not have the same appearance as historic windows. New muntins which are an integral part of the window sash and installed on both sides of the glass are preferable to snap-on single grilles. Muntins that are permanently affixed to the interior of the window may also be permitted.

I. screens and/or storms should be wood or baked-on or anodized aluminum and fit within the window frames. That are approved for replacement may be fitted with new double pane Low-E glass that will improve the energy conservation on the interior. Only Low-E glass that does not contain a tint shall be used.

J. that are approved for repair may be fitted with new double pane Low-E glass that will improve the energy conservation on the interior. Only Low-E glass that does not contain a tint shall be used.

Elgin Design Guideline Manual

Elgin Design Guideline Manual
Windows - Decorative Glass

Elgin’s dwellings display a wide variety of decorative historic windows including materials such as stained glass, beveled glass, leaded glass, and etched glass. These windows should be retained and repaired to match the original design. Decorative windows should not be removed or concealed.

Full-view storm panels may be added to provide protection from vandals and for energy conservation.

Windows - Decorative Glass:
A. should be preserved in their original location, size, and design with their original materials and glass pattern.
B. should be repaired rather than replaced. Consultation with a glass specialist is recommended when extensive repairs are needed.
C. should not be added to primary or secondary facades unless there is physical or photographic evidence that the dwelling originally had them.

Original stained glass window at 470 E. Chicago Street (Elgin Historic District)
Original repaired stained glass bay window at 467 Division Street (Elgin Historic District)
Screen, Storm and Security Windows

Screen, storm, and security windows are acceptable for historic dwellings. Screen windows should be full view or have the meeting rail location match that of the window behind it. Storm windows assist in lowering energy costs and should be wood full view design or have the central meeting rail at the same location as the historic window behind it. Windows of dark anodized aluminum or baked enamel are preferred to those of “raw” or shiny aluminum. Windows of raw aluminum are not acceptable unless painted to match the color of the window sashes.

The installation of security windows on the fronts of buildings is discouraged; however, they may be installed if they are full view design. Window bars should not be added to windows which are readily visible from the street. The addition of window bars on the rear or sides of dwellings which are not readily visible is acceptable.

screens...
A. should coincide at the original meeting rail, if a sash window is uneven.
B. should be correctly sized to fit the window opening, including round arched windows.
C. should be wood or baked-enamel or anodized aluminum and fit within the window frames, not overlap the frames. Screen window panels should be full view design or have the meeting rail match that of the window behind it.

Storm Windows...
A. should coincide at the original meeting rail, if a sash window is uneven.
B. should be sized and shaped to fit the window opening. Round arched window openings should be preserved and not closed off with wood panels in new storm windows.
C. should preferably be of wood but aluminum full view design and with baked-enamel or anodized finish in dark colors are also acceptable.
D. should be full view design or with the central meeting rail at the same location as the historic window.
E. should have built-in lower screens, if triple track.

Security Windows...
A. should not be readily visible from the street, especially those with security bars.

Window Shutters

Window shutters were often added to pre-1945 houses to provide interior shading in the summer and to protect windows during storms. With the advent of air conditioning, window shutters are more ornamental in design than practical. Over the years many original window shutters have been removed. Original shutters should be preserved and maintained. The addition of new shutters should only be of wood, of louvered or paneled design, and with dimensions which match the window opening.

Window Shutters...
A. should be preserved and maintained, if original.
B. should be louvered or paneled wood construction and the shutters should fit the window opening so that if closed they would cover the window opening.
C. should not be added unless there is physical or photographic evidence that the dwelling originally had them.
D. should not be of vinyl or aluminum construction. These shutters generally have dimensions or textures which are not compatible with historic dwellings.

Appropriate sized shutters should cover the window when closed
Wood Siding

The majority of Elgin’s pre-1945 dwellings are of frame construction with various types of wood siding. On many of the dwellings there are combinations of horizontal weatherboard or clapboard siding and wood shingles. These original siding materials are essential components in defining a building’s architectural character. The concealment of original wood siding with vinyl, aluminum, or other synthetic sidings is not appropriate. These siding materials do not successfully imitate original wood siding dimensions or textures.

In addition to the challenge of imitating original wood sidings in appearance, the use of synthetic sidings also poses potential structural problems for historic buildings. Most importantly, these materials may not be cost effective compared to continued maintenance and painting of the wood siding. All materials have a finite life span and we are now seeing property owners having to paint aluminum and vinyl siding which is 15 to 20 years old. The sale of paint for vinyl and aluminum siding has risen dramatically over the past few years due in part to these materials fading, chipping, or cracking.

NOTE: Before considering the replacement of siding, obtain a determination from Staff of the City of Elgin on the condition of the siding.

Wood Siding:

A. Should be repaired rather than replaced, if original. If replacement is necessary, wood siding and shingles should be replaced with clear cedar (no knots), finger jointed cedar or with smooth cement board siding to match the original siding in size, placement and design.

B. Should not be altered for the addition of insulation. The creation of plugs or holes for blown-in insulation is not acceptable.

C. Should not be concealed beneath synthetic materials such as vinyl, masonite, or aluminum, if original. Original siding should also not be concealed beneath wood based materials such as particle board, gyp board, or press board. These materials generally do not possess textures or designs which closely match original wood siding. However, if more than 50% of the original siding material is damaged beyond repair, or missing, substitute materials may be applied if the following conditions are met:

1. The existing damaged siding materials are removed prior to the installation of substitute materials.

2. Finger jointed cedar is acceptable; however, natural continuous board stock (cedar, no knots) is preferable for use as siding.

D. If the home has original asbestos shingle siding, they must be kept stained or painted. If asbestos shingle siding is deteriorated or poses a health hazard, the deteriorated shingles may be removed and replaced with wood or other substitute siding. Removal of asbestos siding should follow hazardous material guidelines.

The application of these materials must not result in the concealment of or removal of original decorative detailing or trim including window and door surrounds. However, if no trim or surrounds exist then new wood trim in the form of fascia, corner boards, base boards, molding and windows should be installed.

Substitute materials should match the dimensions of the original wood siding as closely as possible. The cement board should abut the wood trim and be caulked to prevent moisture damage. The wood trim must sit proud of the siding.
Site and Setting
General Information

Elgin's Historic Districts developed from the mid-19th to the early 20th centuries and most blocks retain their original character of site and setting. Dwellings were built with consistent setbacks from the street, with front yards for landscaping and plantings, and with the house’s porch and main entrance oriented towards the street. Most blocks were laid out with similar lot dimensions and distances between houses, creating a consistent rhythm and pattern in the location of dwellings and their intervening spaces. This streetscape character is retained on most blocks in the locally designated districts and should be preserved and maintained.

Subject to the limitations imposed by the underlying zoning district and applicable building codes, any new construction, remodeling, demolition and/or landscaping should attempt to blend proposed work into the traditional design of the area. This includes considerations of items such as:

A. Setbacks
B. Lot Sizes
C. Density
D. Location on the Lot
E. Orientation and size of new buildings, additions and remodeling
F. Placement of hardscape features such as driveways, sidewalks, parking pads, retaining walls, patios, planters, fountains, pools, gazebos, etc.

In the case of Planned Developments, Conditional Uses and Variations, prior review from the Heritage Commission should take place regarding design guideline issues.

The following guidelines provide information on changes and alterations to a property’s site and setting which could affect its architectural appearance.
Elgin Design Guideline Manual

Driveways, Parking Lots and Paving

Elgin’s locally designated districts were largely platted and developed in the days of horses and horse-drawn vehicles and in the early days of the automobile. Some streets were laid out with rear alleys to provide access to barns, carriage houses, and sheds. These buildings were generally located directly off the rear alleys. With the rising popularity of the automobile, many of these original outbuildings were replaced or converted to garages. Today, vehicular access to Elgin’s historic dwellings is by driveways off the street or through the rear alleys. The addition of garages and parking places in areas other than rear yards is thus not consistent with traditional streetscape design. Thus, if the property abuts an alley, parking should be located there rather than near the building.

Access to properties in Elgin is generally from driveways added alongside lot lines from the street or from rear alleys. Within the districts, original driveway materials such as concrete should be preserved and new driveways should be designed with traditional materials and placement.

Driveways...
A. should always be preserved in their original designs, materials, (cobblestone, concrete, brick, etc.), and placement.
B. should be of brick, concrete, or concrete tracks (narrow strips) if it is a new or replacement driveway in the front or side yards. Asphalt or textured concrete designed to look like brick pavers are also appropriate materials. Gravel driveways are discouraged because gravel migrates and is difficult to maintain. If existing, gravel driveways may be maintained but must have proper edging in brick, stone, concrete, or metal.
C. should have their parking areas located behind the front building line and be screened with hedges, shrubs, or fences where noticeable from the street. The width of driveways in front of the building line should not exceed ten feet. In width, sidewalks should not be constructed adjacent to the driveway and should be distinguished by a landscaped barrier.
D. should not be sited in front yards if of semi-circular or drive-thru design.

Parking Lots...
A. should be screened through plantings of hedges, shrubs, trees, or fences at edges and in medians within.
B. should be located in rear yards for commercially-used houses, churches, apartment buildings, or schools. If placement along a side yard is required, the parking lot should be located no closer than the front wall of the building.
C. should align edge landscape screening with front facades of adjacent buildings if on vacant lots between buildings.
D. should have edge landscape screening on both the primary and secondary street, if a corner lot.
Wood picket and board fences were widely used in Elgin’s residential areas before 1945 to separate lots, outline front yards, and enclose domestic animals and pets. Cast iron was also used in the city’s residential areas, however, few original cast iron fences remain standing. In recent years, chain-link fences have been popular. However, chain-link is a non-historic fence material and its use is not acceptable. Traditional fences, built prior to 1945 should be preserved and maintained. The construction of new fences based upon historic designs and materials is appropriate.

Many Victorian era wooden front yard fences were essentially ornamental, low, open, and often three feet in height or less. Fence posts were usually thick, often measuring eight inches square or more. End posts, corner posts and gate posts were often larger than line posts repeating architectural features from the house.

Fences...
A. should be proportionate to the house and the design should be compatible with the character of the building and district.
B. in front and side yards shall be painted white or a complimentary color found on the home. Privacy fences located at the rear yard may be left to weather.
C. must be of rot resistant wood for traditional designs or cast iron or aluminum for ornamental fences. Pre-engineered plastic fence materials are not allowed. Composite materials may be considered but need approval by the Design Review Subcommittee.
D. of cast iron or other material of original design should be preserved.
E. of cast iron or ornamental, colored aluminum may be added to buildings constructed in the late 19th and early 20th century. Cast iron fences are generally not appropriate for dwellings built after 1925.
F. if placed along common property lines should not be placed against another fence – double line fencing is not permitted.
G. should have posts that are set a minimum of 30 inches below grade and no more than eight feet apart.
H. that has a decorative gate or arbors must be submitted with a drawing complete with dimensions.
I. Chain link, Shadow Box, Stockade and Concrete Block fences are not permitted.

Fences in Front Yards
A fence is a “frame” around a house. Fences and gates are an extension of the architecture of the house. Fences are often character defining features of a property and should be treated sensitively. Most of the classic picket and baluster fences built through the 1930’s feature a continuous horizontal bottom board or baseboard, which is seldom part of a modern picket fence design today. The baseboard is a wooden imitation of a stone base, called a plinth, which is a feature of many iron and stone fences. The baseboard is an easy way to enhance the design of a simple picket fence as well as to add strength. Visually, a baseboard is desirable since it gives a fence a much more solid, architectural appearance.

Chain link fences are not permitted in the Historic District. Property owners with existing chain link fences are encouraged to screen them with hedges, ivy or other creeping cover or by painting them dark green or black.

Fences on common property lines can have a negative impact on neighboring properties. To avoid conflicts, any applicant proposing to install a fence along a common lot line should contact the owner(s) of the property directly abutting the lot line to confirm that the proposed fence is acceptable.

Fences will be judged on a case by case basis, in terms of design, materials, and location.

Fences in Front Yards...
A. should be no higher than 42 inches with the posts being slightly higher and having caps.
B. should have pickets no wider than three and a half inches with spacing between boards a minimum of one inch up to the width of the board depending on the design of the fence.
C. if applicable to the layout, should have a minimum of corner posts, end posts and gate posts which are slightly taller than the fence and line to ten inches wide with a cap and finial. Line posts can be visible and decorative to complement the main posts or be hidden behind the picket design. Fences which cross a driveway or sidewalk should have gate posts. Gates should be designed to swing onto the private walkway or driveway, not onto the public sidewalks.
Recommended Front and Side Yard Fence Designs

- **Balustrade Style Fence at 636 Park Street (Landmark)**
- **Picket Style Fence at 116 N. Porter Street (Elgin Historic District)**
- **Picket Style Fence at 327 DuPage Street (Elgin Historic District)**
- **Cast Iron Fence at 625 Lillie Street (Landmark)**
- **Split-Rail Fence at 845 N. Grove Avenue (D.C. Cook-Lovell Area Historic District)**

**Fences in Rear Yards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>Privacy Fences are located at rear yards</th>
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<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Privacy Fences shall not be located in front or side yards</td>
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A. **Built for Privacy** should not extend beyond the rear yard beginning at the back corner of the house.

B. **Built for privacy** should have a minimum of gate post, corner post, and end posts which are five to ten inches wide and taller than the pickets, if applicable.

C. **Can be constructed** in the same low fence design found in the front yard, if applicable.

D. **Of rot resistant wood boards or planks for privacy** should be located in rear yards and be no taller than six feet. Boards should be no more than six inches wide.

E. **Built of privacy fences of flat board with flat tops in a single row** are an acceptable design for the historic districts. Vertical boards topped with lattice or picket are also appropriate as privacy fences.

In addition to a filled out application for a COA, documentation on fences should include:

1. A Plat of Survey with property lines, location of house, garage and driveway shown.
2. Location of proposed gates with their sizes.
3. Brochure or picture of the proposed fencing, if available.
4. Drawings with dimensions that represent the proposed final product including:
   a. Dimensions of the spacing between members (posts, rails, distance between pickets, height, etc.).
   b. Height of fence at front, rear and sides of property.
   c. Material to be used.
   d. Color of fence.
5. A scaled elevation drawing showing the design of the proposed fencing in relation to the building.
6. Photos of the building and site showing the area where the work will occur.
7. List neighboring fences, if any.
8. Acceptance letter of abutting property owner, where applicable.
Garbage Collectors, Landscaping, Grade Changes

Garbage Collectors... A. should be located at the rear of the building and be screened from the street view with shrubbery and fencing.

Landscaping—Trees and Shrubbery... A. should be regularly pruned and maintained, so as to not conceal, obscure, or damage a dwelling. The lower branches of trees should be pruned up as the tree grows so that the dwelling is visible beneath the branches. Trees on the street bank are the responsibility of the city. Please contact the city if they need trimming.

B. should be indigenous or traditional to the historic district. Recommended shade tree species include Red Oak, Linden, Tulip, Maple, and Hackberry.

Retaining Walls... A. should be preserved and maintained, if original to the dwelling (or built before 1945) and not replaced with new materials.

B. should be of poured concrete or in stone designs such as cut stone, random rubble, coursed rubble, or cobblestones. Retaining walls of brick are less appropriate but may be constructed. If constructed of artificial or cultured stone, textures, colors and random designs should replicate natural stone. If located in front yards, the walls should be constructed using up to two courses and an additional cap course, not to exceed twenty inches in height. Poured-in-place concrete may be required to be parged upon review.

C. of Concrete Masonry Units (CMUs) or concrete block that have a smooth face, hollow core, are not permitted in the historic districts. Concrete block that has a rough face, tinted color and varying widths and heights to give an appearance of stone, may be acceptable dependent on location.

D. with materials such as timbers or railroad ties shall not be installed in the historic districts.
Sidewalks and Walkways

Sidewalks and walkways in Elgin’s historic districts are primarily of concrete construction. Many of these were poured in the early 20th century and remain in good condition. The use of concrete is traditional and appropriate in Elgin and the repair, replacement and addition of concrete sidewalks and walkways is recommended. Materials such as brick pavers and aggregate for sidewalks and walkways, though not as appropriate as concrete, may be used.

New stone and brick paver sidewalks should be installed in a proper fashion. These pavers should be set in a bed of sand over compacted gravel, as opposed to being set in concrete.

Sidewalks and Walkways...
A. should be preserved, if original to a dwelling or block.
B. should be constructed of smooth concrete poured in detail, dimension, and placement as that of original or early sidewalks.
C. should not be of aggregate or pebble-surfaced concrete. Smooth-poured concrete, flagstone pavers, brick pavers, or pavers that replicate brick such as stamped concrete can be used.
D. should not be constructed of asphalt.
E. should not abut existing driveways and should be located a minimum distance of three feet from any existing driveway.

Yard Features

Pergolas, Arbors, Gazebos, Fountains, Ponds and Statuary

Substantial yard structures such as pergolas, gazebos, or fountains are appropriate for rear yards or side yards.

Pergolas are wooden framed roofed garden structures, often latticed, and supported by regularly spaced posts or columns. The structure, often covered by climbing plants such as vines or roses, shades a walk or passageway.

Arbors are light open structures of trees or shrubs closely planted, either twined together and self-supporting, or supported on a light lattice.

The designs for these structures should be based on historic designs appropriate for pre-1945 dwellings. Wood construction should be used rather than brick, concrete, metal, or glass.

Appropriate structures in front yard shall be reviewed by the Design Review Subcommittee.

Yard Features...
A. should be sited in rear yards or side yards.
B. should be of wood construction in designs appropriate for pre-1945 dwellings. Yard features constructed of materials such as glass, metal or brick can be placed in yards if situated near the rear of the lot and effectively screened by fencing or landscaping.
C. should not be located in street yards.
New Construction

Decks

A deck is a wooden surface, not covered by a roof. Decks were generally not used prior to 1945 on Elgin’s older homes and as such are not appropriate additions on the front façade or other readily-visible locations. However, as in the case of any type of addition, a wood deck may be acceptable if placed at the rear of a dwelling where it will not be visible from the street.

Deck railings should be designed using traditional forms rather than contemporary designs (See section on porches)

Porches or verandas, as they were called in Victorian times, can be utilized the same way as a deck is used in modern architecture.

More appropriate outdoor sitting areas for back yards are stone or brick terraces (or patios, as they are now called) next to the house or built under the shelter of a large tree; summer houses or gazebos, especially popular in the latter half of the 19th century, and pergolas, either attached to or house or freestanding, which were popular after the turn of the century.

Decks:
A. should be located at the rear of dwellings only, where they are not readily visible from the street.
B. should be stained with an opaque stain or painted to blend with the colors of the dwelling.
C. should be kept simple in design. Wood decks are recommended to have traditional style wood balusters complimentary to the design of the building.
Fire Escapes

Within Elgin’s locally designated districts are historic dwellings which have been converted into duplexes or apartments. These buildings often have or require fire escapes to meet fire and safety codes. Fire escapes should be sited at the rear or non-readily visible sides of dwellings.

Fire escapes and stairs should be removed when a dwelling is converted back from multi-family to single-family use.

Fire Escapes...
A. should be located at the rear of dwellings only, where they will not be readily visible from the street.
B. should be of wood construction with simple balusters and handrails, if built on the exterior. Metal fire escapes may be applied if they are not readily visible from the street.

Accessible Ramps

Accessible ramps are sometimes needed to provide access to dwellings for those who are ill or have disabilities. Accessible ramps should be sited at the rear or sides of dwellings which are not readily visible from the street.

Accessible Ramps...
A. should be added in such a way that original historic materials are not removed and that the ramp construction should be reversible.
B. should be located at the rear or sides of dwellings. If a handicapped ramp must be placed on the front of a residential dwelling it should be of wood construction rather than of brick, concrete, or metal.
C. should be of wood construction and simple traditional design and configuration or designed to match the original porch railing in materials, dimensions, and detailing. Brick, concrete, and metal ramps are more acceptable at rear and sides of dwellings. Ramps should be painted to match the color of the porch railing or to match the overall paint color of the building.
D. should have pipe railing painted in darker colors to reduce the impact of the railing on the structure, if applicable.
E. should be screened with landscaping, if readily visible.
Residential Additions

Elgin's historic dwellings generally possess the flexibility to be enlarged for additional living space. Additions are acceptable only where they are planned at rear or side locations not readily visible from the street. Additions should also be built so they will have a minimal impact on the building's overall character. The rear of dwellings and the sides of dwellings are the least visible areas for the addition of rooms, wings, porches, or decks.

Before beginning any work on an addition, be sure to check the zoning of the location for the addition of rooms, wings, porches, or decks.

In most older established residential neighborhoods, the expansion of any "lawful non-conforming" use is not permitted.

Recreational Additions... 

A. are to be located at the rear of dwellings, not on the front or readily visible areas of the sides of dwellings.
B. should be secondary (smaller and simpler) than the original dwelling in scale, design, and placement.
C. should be of a compatible design in keeping with the original dwelling's design, roof shape, materials, color, and location of window, door, and cornice heights, etc.
D. should be located at the rear of dwellings, not on the front or readily visible areas of the sides of dwellings.

E. should be constructed to avoid extensive removal or loss of historic materials and to not damage or destroy significant original architectural features.

F. should not imitate an earlier historic style or architectural period. For example, a ca. 1850 Queen Anne-style rear porch addition would not be appropriate for a 1920s Craftsman/Bungalow house.

New Residential Buildings

Few vacant lots exist in the Elgins, Elgin National Watch, Spring/Douglas and D.C. Cook areas. However, it is important that any new construction on these lots or in any future locally designated districts be compatible with neighboring historic dwellings. The general approach to new construction is for it to be compatible with adjacent dwellings or blend in with the district through replication.

Compatible means reinforcing typical features that buildings display along the block such as similar roof forms, materials, window and door sizes and placement, roof slope and foundation heights. Replications are dwellings which are constructed to be exact copies of historic building forms or architectural styles in the districts.

It is important that new construction complement the dwellings found along the specific block. A design that may be appropriate along one block may not work for a different block. For example, a new dwelling compatible with one-story Craftsman design may not be appropriate for a block where multi-story Queen Anne architecture predominates and vice versa. Commonality of architectural styles balanced with variety and diversity shall be a goal.

New Residential Buildings...

A. should maintain, not disrupt, the existing pattern of surrounding historic buildings along the block on which the building is sited.
B. should have roof forms of gable, hipped or shed design and at least cover the minimum of 6:12 to a maximum of 12:12 (6:12 refers to six inches of rise to 12 inches of run in measuring slopes). Roof forms of gable and hipped variations are more common than roof forms which are flat, mansard, or gambrel forms.
C. should have columns and railings with balusters that are traditional in design and compatible with the overall character of the building.
D. should have roof forms of gable, hipped or shed design and at least cover the minimum of 6:12 to a maximum of 12:12 (6:12 refers to six inches of rise to 12 inches of run in measuring slopes). Roof forms of gable and hipped variations are more common than roof forms which are flat, mansard, or gambrel forms.
E. should have roof forms of gable, hipped or shed design and at least cover the minimum of 6:12 to a maximum of 12:12 (6:12 refers to six inches of rise to 12 inches of run in measuring slopes). Roof forms of gable and hipped variations are more common than roof forms which are flat, mansard, or gambrel forms.
F. should be constructed to avoid extensive removal or loss of historic materials and to not damage or destroy significant original architectural features.
G. should not imitate an earlier historic style or architectural period. For example, a ca. 1850 Queen Anne-style rear porch addition would not be appropriate for a 1920s Craftsman/Bungalow house.
H. should impact the exterior walls of the original dwelling as minimally as possible.

When building additions use existing door and window openings for connecting the addition to the dwelling.

E. should be constructed to avoid extensive removal or loss of historic materials and to not damage or destroy significant original architectural features.
F. should not imitate an earlier historic style or architectural period. For example, a ca. 1850 Queen Anne-style rear porch addition would not be appropriate for a 1920s Craftsman/Bungalow house.

One-story and two-story additions should be placed at the rear, not on prominent side locations.

New window openings should be similar in:

1. Shape
2. Scale (height and width)
3. Material
4. Roof slope ratio
5. Orientation to the street
6. Placement on the lot.
7. Location and proportion of porches, entrances, and decorative elements.
8. Roof slope ratio for new construction should be a minimum of 6:12 to a maximum of 12:12 (6:12 refers to six inches of rise to 12 inches of run in measuring slopes). Roof forms of gable and hipped variations are more common than roof forms which are flat, mansard, or gambrel forms.
9. Placement on the lot.
10. Roof slope ratio
11. Material
12. Orientation to the street
13. Placement on the lot.
14. Location and proportion of porches, entrances, and decorative elements.
15. Roof slope ratio for new construction should be a minimum of 6:12 to a maximum of 12:12 (6:12 refers to six inches of rise to 12 inches of run in measuring slopes). Roof forms of gable and hipped variations are more common than roof forms which are flat, mansard, or gambrel forms.
16. Placement on the lot.
17. Roof slope ratio
18. Material
19. Orientation to the street
20. Placement on the lot.
21. Location and proportion of porches, entrances, and decorative elements.
22. Roof slope ratio for new construction should be a minimum of 6:12 to a maximum of 12:12 (6:12 refers to six inches of rise to 12 inches of run in measuring slopes). Roof forms of gable and hipped variations are more common than roof forms which are flat, mansard, or gambrel forms.
23. Placement on the lot.
24. Roof slope ratio
25. Material
26. Orientation to the street
27. Placement on the lot.
28. Location and proportion of porches, entrances, and decorative elements.
29. Roof slope ratio for new construction should be a minimum of 6:12 to a maximum of 12:12 (6:12 refers to six inches of rise to 12 inches of run in measuring slopes). Roof forms of gable and hipped variations are more common than roof forms which are flat, mansard, or gambrel forms.
30. Placement on the lot.
31. Roof slope ratio
32. Material
33. Orientation to the street
34. Placement on the lot.
35. Location and proportion of porches, entrances, and decorative elements.
36. Roof slope ratio for new construction should be a minimum of 6:12 to a maximum of 12:12 (6:12 refers to six inches of rise to 12 inches of run in measuring slopes). Roof forms of gable and hipped variations are more common than roof forms which are flat, mansard, or gambrel forms.
37. Placement on the lot.
38. Roof slope ratio
39. Material
40. Orientation to the street
41. Placement on the lot.
42. Location and proportion of porches, entrances, and decorative elements.
43. Roof slope ratio for new construction should be a minimum of 6:12 to a maximum of 12:12 (6:12 refers to six inches of rise to 12 inches of run in measuring slopes). Roof forms of gable and hipped variations are more common than roof forms which are flat, mansard, or gambrel forms.
44. Placement on the lot.
45. Roof slope ratio
46. Material
47. Orientation to the street
48. Placement on the lot.
49. Location and proportion of porches, entrances, and decorative elements.
50. Roof slope ratio for new construction should be a minimum of 6:12 to a maximum of 12:12 (6:12 refers to six inches of rise to 12 inches of run in measuring slopes). Roof forms of gable and hipped variations are more common than roof forms which are flat, mansard, or gambrel forms.
51. Placement on the lot.
52. Roof slope ratio
53. Material
54. Orientation to the street
55. Placement on the lot.
9. **Foundation height.** Height of foundations should generally be similar to foundation heights in the area. Foundation heights can increase along the sides or at the rear of a building if necessary to follow slope contours. No slab foundations or at-grade foundations should be utilized on the fronts or readily visible sides of buildings.

10. **Material and material color.**

   **Foundations:** Most historic dwelling foundations are of stone or cast concrete and new construction should continue the appearance of these foundation materials. Poured concrete, concrete block, and split-faced concrete are acceptable foundation materials. Stucco or other finishes are recommended to provide a textured surface.

   **Brick Dwellings:** If the new construction is of brick, the brick should closely match typical mortar and brick color tones found in the locally designated districts and along the block. White or light mortars provide too much contrast with typical dark brick colors and should be avoided.

   **Frame Dwellings:** If the new construction is of frame, the preferred exterior material is wood or a material which is similar to original materials in the area like clapboard, shingles, stucco, etc. The use of cement board siding, or similar materials is acceptable if it meets size recommendations and proper construction detailing of traditional siding materials. If wood siding is used, its exposure should reflect the exposure of traditional wood siding.

   **Windows:** Wood construction is preferred for windows. However, the use of aluminum clad windows is also acceptable as long as they are sized to be compatible with historic window openings. The use of dark tinted windows, reflective glass and coatings for windows is discouraged on readily visible sides of buildings.

   **Details and texture.** The details and textures of building materials should be applied in a manner consistent with traditional construction methods and compatible with surrounding structures.

**B. Replications are new buildings which closely imitate historic dwellings typically found in the historic district. Replications are acceptable if they are consistent with historic dwellings in their overall form and plan, porch design and placement, window and door treatments, roof forms, and architectural details. It is important for replications to be identified as new construction through the use of signs, or plaques prominently displayed on the front of the building. Replication of specific structures within the immediate vicinity is discouraged.**
Secondary Buildings
Garages, Sheds, Chicken Coops, Other Outbuildings

New construction of secondary buildings such as garages and sheds are acceptable as long as they are simple in design and sited in traditional locations. Construction materials should be similar to those of the primary dwelling.

Prefabricated (store bought) temporary sheds and chicken coops are available in many designs and materials, some are appropriate and others are not, for installation in a historic district.

Secondary Buildings...
A. should be smaller in scale than the dwelling; clearly secondary in nature.
B. should be simple in design but reflecting the general character of the associated dwelling. For example, use gable roof forms if the dwelling has a gable roof, hipped roof forms if the dwelling has a hipped roof, etc.
C. should be built at traditional locations for outbuildings in the locally designated districts. These include at rear lot lines, adjacent to alleys, and at the back side of a dwelling.
D. should be compatible in design, shape, materials, and roof shape to the associated dwelling.
E. should be of an exterior material to match the associated dwelling such as clapboard, stucco, or brick. However, if not readily visible from the street, secondary buildings may have exterior substitute siding materials such as fiber cement board with appropriate trim and exposure and cementitious materials.

Lighting for Front Yards

Light fixtures for front yards have been popular in recent decades. These include free-standing gas or electric post mounted lamps and sideway floodlights. The installation of these light fixtures is acceptable for front yards. Large security lights mounted on the dwelling or free-standing are appropriate for side or rear locations that are not readily visible from the street.

Lighting for Front Yards...
A. should be of small footlights rather than post-mounted fixtures. Post-mounted fixtures may be installed if they are compatible with the structure.
B. should not have colored lenses and/or bulbs.
C. should not be of a period earlier than the dwelling such as colonial or "Williamsburg" designs.
D. Flood Lights...
A. should be properly concealed by landscaping so as not to be readily visible.
Satellite Dishes and Antennas

Satellite dishes are common additions to lots and are typically the eighteen inch DBS satellite dishes which are much smaller in size and easier to mount than the larger dishes. Satellite dishes may be installed if they are sited in rear yards or along side yards which are not readily visible from the street.

As non-historic features, the smaller dishes are preferred to the larger dishes. These dishes generally have a clear view of the southwest sky to receive a clear signal. This should be taken into account when placing these dishes in historic districts. Sometimes antennas may be installed in the attic where it will not inhibit the ability of the antenna to receive signals.

Satellite Dishes and Antennas—
A. should preferably be smaller in size. Larger freestanding dishes and antennas should be mounted as low to the ground as possible and the use of landscaping, lattice panels, or fencing to screen the dish from view is recommended.
B. should not be installed in front yards or in readily visible side yards. Dishes should also not be installed at readily visible roof lines. In many instances when the ability to receive a clear signal requires the DBS satellite dish to be installed in a particular location that is readily visible from the street, it should be placed as far from the front of the house where it would not detract from the character of the house, and continue to receive a clear signal.

Signs and Graphics

Elgin’s locally designated districts are primarily residential in character and most signs are confined to a few blocks with commercially used dwellings or commercial and community facility buildings.

Signs for churches may be freestanding or attached to the face of the building. For commercial buildings, signs may be freestanding, on windows, or affixed to the face of the building.

Signs and Graphics—
A. should also follow regulations subject to the provisions of Chapter 19.50 of the city’s zoning ordinance.
B. should be kept to a minimum with preferably a maximum of two per commercial business or community facility.
C. should have no more than three colors and use colors that coordinate with the building colors.
D. should be anchored into the mortar, not the masonry.
E. should be of traditional materials such as finished wood, glass, copper, or bronze, plywood, plastic, or unfinished wood.
F. should not cover or obscure architectural features.
G. should not be backlit or internally lit.
H. should not be illuminated with visible bulbs, flashing lights, or luminous signs, but with remote sources.
Solar Panels

The below guidelines for solar systems in historic districts were provided by the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions. For additional information regarding solar options please visit ElginDesignSage.

When planning the installation of solar panels the overall objective is to preserve character-defining features and historic fabric while accommodating the need for solar access to the greatest extent possible.

All solar panel installations must be considered on a case-by-case basis recognizing that the best option will depend on the characteristics of the property under consideration. Some guidelines apply to virtually all installation options and are repeated in each section below.

Solar Panels:
A. should also follow regulations subject to the provisions of Chapter 19.90 of the city’s zoning ordinance.
B. Any solar panel system should be treated to be as unobtrusive as possible.
C. Solar panel installations should be positioned behind existing architectural features such as parapets, dormers, and chimneys to limit their visibility.
D. Use solar panels and mounting systems that are compatible in color to the property’s roof materials. Mechanical equipment associated with the photovoltaic system should be treated to be as unobtrusive as possible.

Primary Elevations

For most properties, locating solar panels on the primary facade is the least desirable option because it will have the greatest adverse effect on the property’s character.

A. Panels should be installed flat and not alter the slope of the roof. Installation of panels must be reversible and not damage the historic integrity of the resource and district.
B. Solar panels should be positioned behind existing architectural features such as parapets, dormers, and chimneys to limit their visibility.
C. Use solar panels and mounting systems that are compatible in color to establish roof materials. Mechanical equipment associated with the photovoltaic system should be treated to be as unobtrusive as possible.
D. Solar panel installations should be positioned behind existing architectural features such as parapets, dormers, and chimneys to limit their visibility.
E. Flat roof structures should have solar panel installations set back from the roof edge to minimize visibility. Pitch and elevation should be adjusted to reduce visibility from public right-of-way.
F. Solar panel installations should be positioned behind existing architectural features such as parapets, dormers, and chimneys to limit their visibility.
G. Use solar panels and mounting systems that are compatible in color to the property’s roof materials. Mechanical equipment associated with the photovoltaic system should be treated to be as unobtrusive as possible.

Secondary Elevations

A. Solar panels should be installed on rear slopes or other locations not easily visible from the public right-of-way.
B. Solar panels should be positioned behind existing architectural features such as parapets, dormers, and chimneys to limit their visibility.
C. Solar panels should be integrated into the initial design of new construction or infill projects, when possible, to ensure cohesion of design within a historic context.
D. Solar panels should be installed on rear slopes or other locations not highly visible from the public right-of-way whenever possible. Panels should be installed flat and not alter the slope of the roof.
E. Flat roof structures should have solar panel sets back from the roof edge to minimize visibility. Pitch and elevation should be adjusted to reduce visibility from public right-of-way.
F. Use solar panels and mounting systems that are compatible in color to the property’s roof materials. Mechanical equipment associated with the photovoltaic system should be treated to be as unobtrusive as possible.

Freestanding or Detached

Consideration to the visibility of solar panels from neighboring properties should be taken, without infringing upon the required solar access.

A. Freestanding or detached on-site solar panels should be installed in locations that minimize visibility from the public right-of-way.
B. Solar panels should be installed on rear slopes or other locations not highly visible from the public right-of-way. These systems should be screened from the public right-of-way with materials everywhere in the district such as fencing or vegetation of suitable scale for the district and setting.
C. Placement and design should not detract from the historic character of the site or destroy historic landscape materials.

Plastic Aesthetics Structure
A. Solar panels should be installed on rear slopes or other locations not highly visible from the public right-of-way. Panels should be installed flat and not alter the slope of the roof. Installation of panels must be reversible and not damage the historic integrity of the resource and district.
B. Flat roof structures should have solar panel installations set back from the roof edge to minimize visibility. Pitch and elevation should be adjusted to reduce visibility from public right-of-way.
C. Solar panel installations should be positioned behind existing architectural features such as parapets, dormers, and chimneys to limit their visibility.
D. Use solar panels and mounting systems that are compatible in color to the property’s roof materials. Mechanical equipment associated with the photovoltaic system should be treated to be as unobtrusive as possible.

New Construction
A. Solar panels should be integrated into the initial design of new construction or infill projects, when possible, to ensure cohesion of design within a historic context.
B. Solar panels should be installed on rear slopes or other locations not highly visible from the public right-of-way whenever possible. Panels should be installed flat and not alter the slope of the roof.
C. Flat roof structures should have solar panel sets back from the roof edge to minimize visibility. Pitch and elevation should be adjusted to reduce visibility from public right-of-way.
D. Use solar panels and mounting systems that are compatible in color to the property’s roof materials. Mechanical equipment associated with the solar plane system should be treated to be as unobtrusive as possible.
E. Use of solar systems in windows or on walls, siding or shutters should be installed with limited visibility from the public right-of-way.

Not Recommended for Any Reason
A. Removal of historic roofing materials during the installation of solar systems.
B. Removing or otherwise altering historic roof configuration – dormers, chimneys or other features – to add solar systems.
C. Any other installation procedure that will cause irreversible changes to historic features or materials.
Solar Panels Continued

Swimming Pools, Hot Tubs, Whirlpools and Saunas

The installation of in-ground or above-ground swimming pools in rear or side yards is acceptable, as long as they are effectively fenced and screened from view.

Swimming Pools, Hot Tubs, Whirlpools and Saunas...

A. should be located in rear or side yards and screened from the street view by fencing or landscaping.

Example of a swimming pool located in a fenced rear yard.
Commercial Buildings
General Information

Several structures currently exist within Elgin’s historic districts that more closely resemble commercial structures when their exterior materials, massing, site design, and architectural style are compared with the preceding residential guidelines. The rehabilitation of these structures shall be considered by the more applicable commercial building guidelines on the following pages.

Both the historic downtown area and State Street on the west side of the Fox River contain a fine collection of late 19th and early 20th century masonry buildings. These designs are typical of commercial architecture of the period and display elements of the commercial Italianate, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Art Deco styles. Historic designs and details should be preserved and maintained and traditional storefronts should be added where original materials have been removed.

The commercial areas of Elgin which are not within locally designated districts are not required to comply with the COA process. However, property owners are encouraged to follow these guidelines when work is undertaken. For additional guidelines on the construction and alteration of buildings in Elgin’s center city, please reference the City’s Comprehensive Plan which contains recommendations on the treatment of commercial buildings.

10–12 Douglas Avenue (Elgin Downtown Historic District)
Storefronts and Facades

Most of Elgin’s historic storefronts have been removed or altered since 1950. Only a few original storefronts remain intact and these should be preserved and maintained. For storefronts which have been altered, traditional storefront designs are most appropriate for historic commercial buildings. These types of storefront designs include details such as recessed entrances, transoms, display windows, bulkheads, and glass and wood doors.

A. should be repaired rather than replaced, if original.
B. should be repaired with features to match the original in design and materials.
C. should be reconstructed based upon pictorial or physical evidence of the original, if altered after 1945. If the original storefront appearance is unknown, install a storefront based upon traditional designs. This should include the construction of bulkheads, display windows, and transoms in appropriate materials such as wood or brick.

New storefronts should be typical of those built during the late 19th and early 20th century and not reflect earlier or later architectural styles or periods unless the alteration has gained significance over time.

Windows and Doors...
A. should cover a minimum of sixty percent of the storefront.
B. should not be removed. Storefronts which were built from the 1920s to the 1940s with materials such as tinted glass may possess significance, even if they were added later than the building itself.

Architectural Features

Architectural and decorative features original to a building should be preserved, maintained, and repaired. These features may include cast iron pilasters, bay windows, brick corbeling, terra cotta, sheet metal cornices, decorative cast concrete, window hoods, and cornices. Architectural features should not be removed or concealed.

A. should be repaired or replaced (if removed in the past) with materials to match as closely as possible the design, material composition, proportion, and detail of the original (e.g. Colonial Revival pediments should not be added to a storefront on an Italianate style building).
B. should be maintained through regular painting. If cleaning is desired, chemical or detergent cleaning is recommended. The use of abrasive cleaning methods such as power washing or sandblasting is not acceptable.
C. should not be added to a building where none originally existed.

New storefronts should maintain traditional designs such as transoms, recessed entrances, single-light doors, display windows & bulkheads.

Architectural Features...
A. should be repaired or replaced if removed in the past with materials to match as closely as possible the design, material composition, proportion, and detail of the original (e.g. Colonial Revival pediments should not be added to a storefront on an Italianate style building).
B. should be maintained through regular painting. If cleaning is desired, chemical or detergent cleaning is recommended. The use of abrasive cleaning methods such as power washing or sandblasting is not acceptable.
C. should not be added to a building where none originally existed.
Awnings

Awnings have been used since the 19th century for storefronts and windows on Elgin’s commercial buildings. The application of appropriate new awnings is encouraged, as long as they are in traditional awning designs, materials, and placement. Awnings may be added to both the storefronts and upper facade windows. They may be retractable or fixed in place and may also be used as locations for signs.

Traditional awning materials include canvas of woven fabric. Awning materials that are discouraged are vinyl coated fabric, fixed metal, transparent or opaque vinyl, or wood.

Awnings...
A. should fit the opening to which they are applied. Shed awnings are appropriate for rectangular openings while arched awnings are appropriate for arched openings.
B. should be straight sided or have shed designs. The use of bubble, concave, or convex forms is appropriate only on round arched openings. Internally lit awnings are not acceptable.
C. should not cover or conceal decorative transoms containing prism glass or stained glass.
D. should not be internally lit.

Cornices

Cornices were designed to provide a decorative focal point for the rooflines of buildings. Cornices should be preserved, maintained, or repaired in their original configuration or with details to match the existing cornices. For Elgin’s commercial buildings the most common cornice material is sheet metal. Cornices should not be removed, concealed or covered with modern materials.

Cornices...
A. should be preserved, maintained, or repaired in their original configuration or with materials and details to match the existing.
B. should be replaced (if missing) based upon physical or pictorial evidence. If no such evidence exists, wood, fiberglass, or sheet metal cornices, in keeping with other cornices on similar commercial buildings, is appropriate.
C. should not be removed, concealed or covered.

43 DuPage Court and 146-172 E. Chicago Street (Elgin Downtown Historic District) - Appropriate awnings above storefront and windows.

Elgin Design Guideline Manual

18-20 Douglas Avenue (Elgin Downtown Historic District) - Preserve and maintain historic cornices.

Elgin Design Guideline Manual
Display Windows and Bulkheads

Original display windows and bulkheads should be preserved, maintained, or repaired.

Bulkheads, also known as kick plates, are the lower panels on which the display windows rest. Original bulkhead materials can include wood, tile, marble, and brick. Original bulkheads should be preserved, maintained, or repaired and not altered or removed.

Display Windows...
A. should match the original in location, design, size, configuration, and materials.
B. should be replaced with traditionally scaled windows, if the original windows are missing and the original design is unknown. Traditionally scaled windows have large glass lights and few structural divisions.
C. should have mullions or framing of wood, copper, or bronze metal, and be similar in size and shape to the original design.
D. should be clear glass, not tinted glass. Interior shades or blinds should be utilized for privacy.

Bulkheads...
A. should be replaced with traditional rectangular designs, if the original bulkheads are missing. Replacement may be of wood or brick panels. Avoid materials such as glass blocks or metal.

Entrances

Original storefront and side entrances should be preserved, maintained or repaired in their entrance design, materials, and arrangement whether recessed or flush with the sidewalks. Entrances should also be designed to be accessible for those with disabilities.

Entrances...
A. should be retained and repaired with materials to match the original. Doors added to storefronts should be replaced with doors to match the original in design and materials. Solid wood doors should not be installed on storefronts.
B. should be replaced with plain wood doors in a single light (glass area) design, if the original door design is unknown. Solid paneled doors, decorative doors, or any kind of door based upon a different historical period or architectural style is generally not acceptable on storefronts.
C. should be of wood and glass design, if new doors are required. However, metal with a dark or bronze anodized finish and with a white stile may be substituted. Raw aluminum or other silver-colored metals are not appropriate.

Appropriate Replacement Doors for Storefronts

20-24 Douglas Avenue (Elgin Downtown National Register Historic District)
Lighting

Light fixtures for commercial buildings should be as simple as possible and mounted where they will be partially or completely hidden. Original light fixtures should be preserved, maintained, and repaired.

A. should be simple in design and/or concealed. Concealed up-lit light fixtures, fixtures of simple design, or fixtures appropriate to the period of the building are encouraged.

B. should not consist of "Colonial" coach lights or similar fixtures.

Windows

Many of the commercial buildings in Elgin retain their original wood sash windows on the upper floors. Original windows should be preserved, maintained, or repaired including their size, number and arrangement of lights, materials, and decorative detailing. Windows should not be concealed, enclosed or covered. If the original windows have been removed, replacement with windows to match the original in appearance is recommended. Historic photographs of Elgin’s commercial areas are available to provide evidence of original window designs.

Storm windows are permitted, as long as they are full view (single light) design or if they match the dimensions of the upper and lower sash with matching meeting rails. "Raw" or unfinished aluminum storm windows are not appropriate. If aluminum windows are used they should have an anodized or baked-on enamel finish.

A. should be repaired rather than replaced. Missing windows should be replaced with windows which match the original in size, number and arrangement of lights, and materials.

B. should have original detailing preserved and maintained. These details may include sheet metal hood molding, brick or stone lintels, and sills.

C. should be replaced (if missing) with windows compatible to the building. For Elgin’s commercial buildings, rectangular or arched one-over-one wood sash windows are most appropriate. Wood or aluminum clad wood windows are the preferable material for new windows because they continue to preserve the profile of the original windows.

D. should be preserved and maintained. If of steel construction, replacement is required. Multi-light aluminum windows to match the existing windows in profile and design is recommended.

E. should not have shutters added unless there is physical or pictorial evidence that they originally existed on the building. Wood shutters may be used to conceal blocked-in or brick-in windows. Shutters should be of louvred wood design and sized to fit the opening. They should be completely cover the window opening.

F. should not have flush or fixed muntins. These materials do not replicate the appearance of historic windows.
New Commercial Construction

Additions to commercial buildings are acceptable as long as they are located at the rear of the building or along a side not readily visible from the street. Roofing additions are less acceptable but may be constructed if they are set back from the front of the building and not be readily visible from the street. However, if new commercial construction is carried out to correct an inappropriate setback created by a non-original structure, and conform to the average original building line on the block, then it may be proposed on the front of a building.

New Commercial Construction...
A. should be at the rear of the building.
B. should be compatible with the original building in scale, proportion and rhythm of openings, and size.
C. should be built as to result in minimal removal of original walls and details from the rear of the building. Try to connect the addition with the original building through existing door or enlarged window openings.
D. should be of exterior materials similar to the existing building.
E. should not be vertical. Rooftop penthouses and additional stories should not be constructed unless the addition will not be readily visible from the street or other pedestrian viewpoints. Roof additions should be set back from the main facade.

New Buildings - Infill

New buildings in Elgin’s commercial areas should be compatible with historic buildings in scale, height, materials, orientation, shape, placement, and rhythm and proportion of openings. As in the case of new residential construction, the general approach to new commercial construction is for it to be compatible with adjacent dwellings or to blend in with the district through replication. Compatible means reinforcing typical features that buildings display along the block such as similar masonry, proportion, roof forms, materials, window and door sizes and placement, traditional storefront designs, vertical divisions, and some type of termination or cornice at the roof line.

Replications are buildings which are constructed to be exact copies of historic commercial building forms or architectural styles. Carved limestone blocks or other traditional means to indicate the year of construction are encouraged.

New Buildings...
A. should be compatible in height with adjacent buildings. In Elgin’s commercial areas, two- to four-story buildings are acceptable.
B. should have exterior wall construction of materials consistent with those in the area. Materials such as wood, metal or glass are less appropriate for exterior wall construction.
C. should be aligned with adjacent buildings along the street and conforms to existing setbacks. Most commercial buildings in the downtown area are flush with the sidewalk and setbacks for open space in front of a new building are not acceptable.
D. should be of similar width and scale and have similar proportions as adjacent buildings.
E. should be oriented towards the primary street on which it is sited.
F. should have roof forms consistent with adjacent buildings.
G. should have window and storefronts of sizes and proportions consistent with adjacent buildings.
H. should maintain the traditional separation between storefronts and upper facades. This separation should be in alignment with adjacent buildings.
I. should have vertical divisions to maintain traditional building width. This is especially important for large buildings which extend across several lots.
J. should fill lot area to form a continuous street façade, if feasible.
K. should have transparent surfaces covering a minimum of 60% of the storefront.
L. should not incorporate historic styles which pre-date Elgin such as “Colonial Williamsburg” designs.
M. should not have flaps or snap-on muntins. These materials do not replicate the appearance of historic windows.

New buildings of new construction should have vertical divisions consistent with building widths along the block.
Signs and Graphic Designs - Commercial Areas

Elgin’s commercial areas displayed a wide variety of signs and sign locations in the late 19th and early 20th century. This variety of design and placement remains appropriate for businesses in the commercial areas.

Signs and Graphic Designs...
A. should follow regulations subject to the provisions of Chapter 19.50 of the City’s zoning ordinance.
B. should be preserved, maintained, and repaired, especially those from the pre-1945 era, such as painted wall signs or those of metal and neon.
C. should be of traditional materials such as wood with ornamental copper or bronze letters, if new. Sandblasted wood signs are also appropriate. Plastic substrate signs or signs of unfinished wood are not recommended.
D. should be sized in proportion to the building and not oversized.
E. should have concealed lighting, if lit. Spot or up-lighting for signs is recommended. Internally-lit and flashing signs are not appropriate for the commercial areas.
F. should resemble logos or symbols for businesses.
G. should be anchored into mortar, not masonry, if mounting brackets and hardware are used.
H. should not exceed three different locations (for those that are physically on the building), not counting painted window signs.
I. should be placed at traditional sign locations including storefront belt courses, upper facade walls, hanging or mounted inside windows, or projecting from the face of the building.

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Moving Buildings

There are a few vacant lots in Elgin’s locally designated historic districts which are appropriate sites for the relocation of pre-1945 dwellings. Moving buildings usually occurs only to avoid demolition or if the historic site and setting of the property will be significantly changed. If a historic (50 years or older) dwelling within or outside the locally designated districts is threatened with demolition, it is acceptable to move the building to one of the district’s vacant lots for rehabilitation.

A building moved into the district should maintain the front and side yard setbacks, orientation, and foundation heights of its neighboring properties. Moving secondary buildings such as garages or other outbuildings from one location to another on the same lot is acceptable if the secondary building is non-contributing and the relocation will not be readily visible.

Prior to demolishing or moving a building it is recommended that the building be properly documented through photographs both on the exterior and interior.

Moved buildings should be identified by a marker or plaque to be paid for by the owner.

Moving Buildings Outside of a Historic District...
A. should be avoided unless demolition is the only alternative.

Moving Buildings Into a Historic District...
A. should occur only if the building subject to move is compatible with the district’s architectural character through style, period, height, scale, materials, setting, and placement on the lot.
Demolition

Elgin’s Historic Preservation Ordinance allows the Commission to deny demolition within the locally designated districts. Demolition of a historic building which retains its architectural character should only occur after all other options are explored. These options may include moving the building to another compatible site or selling the property to a sympathetic buyer for rehabilitation. Demolition of historic (50 years or older) secondary buildings (garages, etc.) may be acceptable if substantially deteriorated (requiring 50% or more replacement of exterior materials or structural elements).

Additionally, demolition will not be permitted unless there is a well-designed plan for the subsequent use of the property which includes items such as designs for new construction, building relocation, vehicle use areas, landscaping and/or green space submitted.

Demolition...

A. should be avoided of any original feature or part of a historic (50 years or older) building.
B. should not occur, unless:
1. an emergency condition exists and the public safety and welfare requires the removal of the building or structure.
2. a building does not contribute to the historical or architectural character of the districts and its removal will improve the appearance of the districts.
3. the denial of the demolition will result in an Economic Hardship on the applicant as determined by Chapter 20.10 of Title 20 of the Elgin Municipal Code — “Elgin Historic Preservation Ordinance.”
4. the denial of the demolition will impede rehabilitation, or redevelopment of the site, and/or adjacent properties from substantially improving the aesthetic, architectural or economic value of the affected properties and surrounding area.

Energy Conservation & Green Principles

Traditional approaches to heating and cooling in historic buildings are often adapted to modern considerations of comfort and energy efficiency. As a result, we are often asking historic buildings to adjust to greater levels of heating, cooling and energy efficiency than for which they were originally designed and can perform. Though, green principles include more than just energy efficiency and conservation to embodied energy and the life expectancy of the material should be taken into consideration.

Historic dwellings already have a number of inherent energy conservation qualities such as tall ceilings and door transoms, thick brick or plastered wood walls, and large attic space. Other traditional energy saving measures available for the old house owner are window and porch awnings, exterior window shutters, and interior drapes and blinds.

Energy Conservation — Overall Approach

A. Air sealing—tightening up the flow of air through exterior walls by weather-stripping, caulking, and repairing cracks — is the most generally useful and least problematic energy-conserving strategy for historic buildings.
B. Maintain and use the inherently energy conserving and comfort-enhancing architectural features of historic buildings. These may include:
- vestibules as air locks
- gable vents to help keep attic dry
- thermal mass of masonry walls to even out daily temperature extremes
- operable windows for cross ventilation during the summer
- drapes, curtains and blinds for winter window insulation and draft-proofing
- exterior awnings and interior silicon shades for summer shading
C. Keep interior humidity within a range that will not lead to damage by condensation.
D. Keep heating and ventilation equipment well-maintained.
E. Generally, do not insulate without using vapor barriers.
F. Ensure as much as possible that moisture does not condense where it will lead to damage in the form of wood rot, corrosion, or freezing. Condensation is often a problem for windows.
G. Vent high moisture areas (bathrooms, laundry, etc.) to the outside.
H. Insulate ductwork and piping in the basement, crawl space, or attic.
Energy Conservation & Green Principles Continued

Property owners can make simple repairs to increase a historic window’s energy efficiency through weather-stripping and the installation of storm windows.

Storm Windows
Installing storm windows is a way to increase energy efficiency that was a common historic practice. The combination of a restored, and properly sealed window with a storm window has shown to have better insulating properties (1.79 R value) than a new, replacement window (1.72 R value). Wood storms have a higher resistance to transfer of heat than aluminum and is, therefore, a more energy efficient storm window.

In addition, the application of storm windows creates a dead airspace which significantly reduces conductivity. Another benefit of an exterior storm window is the additional protection of the historic window, though interior storm windows are also an option for historic dwellings.

Weather-stripping
Weather-stripping is a relatively inexpensive method to reduce energy costs and the installation of most weather-stripping materials will have little, if any, visual effects on a dwelling. Weather-stripping should be considered for all window and door openings since they are a major source of drafts leading to heat loss and gain. Weather-stripping comes in a variety of shapes and materials depending on its application. This includes adhesive strips of foam or plastic, foam strips, felt strips, and metal and plastic sweeps.

For windows, weather-stripping should be added at the junction of the meeting rails for sash windows and at the lower sill. The sash channels along the sides of windows are also good places for felt or foam strips. For exterior wall doors, weather-stripping should be added along the exterior jams, interior stops, and along the bottom. The installation of a plastic and metal sweep at the inside bottom of the door is effective as are foam or rubber gasket type strips along the threshold.

For more information on historic windows and energy efficiency please see the following link: https://www.presnc.org/historic-windows-energy-efficiency/

Environmental Considerations
Hazardous Material

Historic buildings were often constructed using materials containing asbestos or lead, which are considered hazardous today. Mitigation planning for such materials should carefully consider the architectural importance of those elements containing hazardous materials in making decisions as to whether to remove or encapsulate them as part of the mitigation process. Experts in the field should be consulted in the event there is a concern and the work should be done according to existing regulations.

Asbestos Abatement

Asbestos was proclaimed as one of the wonder materials of the early 20th century. This material was resilient, fire-resistant, non-conductive to electricity, and relatively lightweight. Thousands of products were made with asbestos including roof shingles, wall shingles, pipe insulation, and adhesive compounds. Unfortunately, asbestos was also found to be a potential cause of lung cancer and other diseases.

Asbestos products are generally classified as “friable” or “non-friable.” Non-friable asbestos refers to products where the asbestos is embedded with other materials, greatly reducing its chances to become a powder and released into the air. Typical non-friable asbestos in historic dwellings include asbestos-cement roof and wall shingles used from the 1930s to the 1960s. If these products are present on your house it is generally not a cause for concern. Asbestos wall shingles often have been painted over the years further reducing the chances that the asbestos fibers could become airborne. If these shingle or siding materials require removal, care should be taken not to break the shingles which could cause the release of asbestos fibers into the air. Before these materials are handled, it is advised that they be soaked with a fine spray or mist of water and that proper air masks and filters be used.

Friable asbestos products are those which are easily crumbled into powder and released into the air. Typical household products which may be friable in historic dwellings include insulation around furnaces, boilers, and heating ducts, and asbestos floor tiles. When present, friable asbestos should be encapsulated or removed. Encapsulation is a term used to prevent the asbestos fibers from becoming airborne. Encapsulation of insulation is recommended by wrapping plastic sheeting around it and sealing it airtight with tape. Water-based foams and adhesives are also available which will provide a coating surface to this insulation and prevent fibers from escaping. Floor tiles can be encapsulated by the addition of new floor materials. If there are significant areas of asbestos in a dwelling, professional removal may be the best course of action.
Environmental Considerations Continued

Hazardous Material

Lead-Based Paint Abatement

Lead was widely used as a pigment in paints and it is likely that most pre-1945 dwellings have one or two layers of lead-based paint on the interior and exterior. Lead is a health hazard when ingested, especially for children, and flaking or peeling paint can result in lead dust being inhaled. As in the case of asbestos, lead paint can be either removed or encapsulated.

Lead paint removal is the most difficult of these choices but it does result in the end of this problem. Paint can be removed by wet-scrapping or wet-sanding or by the use of a heat gun or plate. Sanding or burning off lead paint creates hazardous fumes and those who undertake this work should wear proper safety equipment such as a toxic-dust respirator, goggles, gloves, and clothes that protect your skin. If working on the exterior walls, cover the ground or adjacent bushes with drop cloths and regularly dispose of accumulations of chips and dust. If working on interior walls, keep the room where you are working closed off from the rest of the house and cover any air ducts. Children should be removed from the premises during the duration of the project.

Encapsulation of lead through applying paint is also an acceptable approach. Latex and oil-based paints can effectively seal lead dust on wall and trim surfaces. However, any kind of paint scraping or sanding prior to applying paint will also require the use of appropriate respirators.

To note: Anyone paid to perform work that disturbs paint in housing and child-occupied facilities built before 1978 must be renovation, repair and painting (RRP) certified and perform safe, lead removal practices.

Chemicals for Paint Removal & Masonry Cleaning

Chemical cleaning is preferable to sandblasting or other types of abrasive cleaning. The use of chemical cleaners is an effective and appropriate method of masonry cleaning; however, extensive preparation and understanding of the chemical's properties and hazards should be undertaken before undertaking the project.

Before beginning chemical cleaning, carefully evaluate the building to determine if cleaning is necessary. Cleaning may not always be the best option. The preferred method of removing paint or extensive stains from masonry is through the gentlest means possible. However, if the application of water or detergent (d.p.i. lower than 200) does not remove the paint or extensive stain, then the application of chemical removers may be explored. There are various types of chemical products on the market and some are more suitable for cleaning brick than stone. Chemical removers can also be hazardous and most cleaning projects are done by professionals.

Whoever performs masonry cleaning using chemical agents should thoroughly read the instructions prior to undertaking the project.

The primary consideration in the handling of chemical cleaners is protection for the person performing the work and protection of the adjacent historic materials and finishes. Window glass and other material may also require protection from some cleaners.

The use of chemical removers can be a messy job. After coatings of the cleaners are applied to masonry they have to be rinsed off with water, detergent, or other chemicals. This creates a fair amount of spray and mist as well as liquid runoff which must be contained. Those applying the cleaners should have the proper safety clothes, respiration, and goggles. Most jobs will also require the use of waterproof tarps or other fabrics to collect the chemical runoff. This runoff is then poured into containers for disposal. Plants which may be affected should also be covered and protected.

Points to remember in handling hazardous materials include:

A. Hazardous materials, when being removed, should be removed in a manner which will not cause damage to adjacent historic materials and finishes. Plants and landscaping should also be protected.

B. Where removal is not desired, appropriate methods for encapsulation (wrapping, paint finishes, covering, etc.) should be sought out. Those methods used should attempt to preserve the important visual character of those architectural components affected by this process through the selection of appropriate materials or finishes for use in encapsulation.
Appendices

Appendix A  Sample Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) form
Appendix B  Local, State, and National Sources of Assistance
Appendix C  Definitions and Terms
Appendix D  Bibliography
Appendix E  National Park Service - Preservation Briefs
Appendix A
Certificate of Appropriateness Form

Address of Property

Applicant: [Name]
Address: [Address]
City: [City]
State: [State]
Zip: [Zip]
Phone: [Phone]
Cell: [Cell]
Email: [Email]

Description of Proposed Work

• Restoration
• Renovation
• New Construction
• Addition or Alteration

Description of Structure

• Building
• Site

Applicant’s Name

Applicant’s Address

Applicant’s Phone

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Appendix B
Local, State and National Sources of Assistance

Local Sources

The Historic Preservation Planner with the City of Elgin is available to provide information on building rehabilitation and new construction. The Historic Preservation Planner serves as a staff liaison for the Elgin Heritage Commission and the Design Review Subcommittees. Contact the Preservation Planner at City Hall, 150 Dexter Ct, (847)-931-6004.

The city also has funds available for rehabilitation projects through the “Historic Architectural Rehabilitation Grant Program.” The purpose of this program is to provide a financial incentive to encourage private investment in the exterior rehabilitation and restoration of historically and architecturally significant residential structures within the historic districts and local landmarks. Grants are limited to either 50% or 75% (income-based) of eligible, approved project construction costs with no grant to exceed $25,000. For additional information concerning this program, please contact the Historic Preservation Planner at 847-931-6004.

State Sources

State Historic Preservation Office

IDNR – One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, IL 62702
(217) 782-4856

Statewide Preservation Organization

Landmark Illinois
30 N. Michigan Avenue
#2020
Chicago, IL 60602
(312) 922-1742

National Organizations

National Trust for Historic Preservation
The Watergate Office Building
2600 Virginia Avenue NW, Suite 1100
Washington DC, 20037
(202) 588-6888

National Trust for Historic Preservation – Chicago Office
33 West Jackson Boulevard
Suite 350
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 939-5547

National Alliance for Preservation Commissions
P. O. Box 1011
Virginia Beach, VA 23451
(757) 862-4141

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Appendix C

Definition & Terms

Unless specifically defined in Title 20 of the Elgin Municipal Code, 1976, as amended, or unless specifically defined below, words or phrases in this Design Guideline Manual shall be interpreted in accordance with definitions in Webster’s Dictionary.

A

Accessible Roof: Rehabilitation of a historic structure for use other than its original use such as a residence converted into offices.

Addition: New construction added to an existing building or structure.

Alienation: Any act or process that changes one or more of the exterior architectural features of a structure including, but not limited to, the eaves, construction, reconstruction, addition, sandblasting, powerwashing, chemical cleaning, chemical stopping, or removal of any structure, but not including changes to the color of exterior paint.

American Bond: A brickwork pattern where most courses are laid flat, with the long “stretcher” edge exposed, but every fifth to eighth course is laid perpendicularly with the “header” and edges join by narrow strips called battens.

Appropriate: Small “header” end exposed to structurally tie the wall together.

Appurtenance: Any act or process that changes one or more of the exterior architectural features of a structure including, but not limited to, the eaves, construction, reconstruction, addition, sandblasting, powerwashing, chemical cleaning, chemical stopping, or removal of any structure, but not including changes to the color of exterior paint.

Answer:

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B

Balcony: A series of short, vertical, often case-shaped members used to support a stair or porch handrail, forming a balustrade. (See Spindle)

Balustrade: An entire rail system with top rail and balusters.

Bargeboarding: A board which hangs from the projecting end of a gable roof, covering the end rafters, and often runs into a decorative pattern. Also called Vergeboard.

Bay: The portion of a façade between columns or piers providing regular divisions and usually marked by mouldings.

Bay Window: A projecting window that forms an extension to the floor space of the internal rooms; usually extends to the ground level.

Belt Course: A horizontal band usually marking the floor levels on the exterior façade of a building.

Board and Batten: A board which hangs from the projecting end of a gable roof, covering the end rafters, and often sawn into a decorative pattern. Also called Vergeboard.

Bond: A term used to describe the various patterns in which brick (or stone) is laid, such as “Common Bond” or “Flemish Bond.”

Bosed: A term used to describe the various patterns in which brick (or stone) is laid, such as “Common Bond” or “Flemish Bond.”

Bowed: A window with one or two sashes which are hinged at the sides and usually open outward.

Certificate of Appropriateness: A certificate issued by the building official or the Elgin Heritage Commission indicating its approval of plans for alteration, construction, repair or demolition of a landmark or of a structure within a historic district.

Certified Local Government: Any city, county, parish, township, municipality, or borough or any other general purpose subdivision enacted by the National Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 to further delegate responsibilities and funding to the local level.

Character: The qualities and attributes of any structure, site, or district.

Classical Order: Derived from Greek and Roman architecture, a column with its base, shaft, capital and entablature having standardized details and proportions, according to one of the five canonized modes: Doric, Tuscan, Ionic, Corinthian, or Composite.

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Clapboards: Horizontal wooden boards, thinnest at the top edge, which are overlapped to provide a weather-proof exterior wall surface.

Casement Window: A window with one or two sashes which are hinged at the sides and usually open outward.

Certificate of Appropriateness: A certificate issued by the building official or the Elgin Heritage Commission indicating its approval of plans for alteration, construction, repair or demolition of a landmark or of a structure within a historic district.

Commission: The Elgin Heritage Commission.

Compatible: In harmony with location and surroundings.

Compatibility: The arrangement of elements and details on a building or structure which help define its character.

Contemporary: Reflecting characteristics of the current period. Contemporary design characteristics which illustrate that a building, structure, or detail was constructed in the present or recent past rather than being initiative or reflection of a historic design.

Context: The setting in which a historic element, site, structure, street, or district exists.

Craft: In masonry, a projection, or one of a series of projections, each stepped progressively farther forward with height and articulating a corbel or supporting an overhanging member.

Congressional Order: Most ornate classical order characterized by a capital with ornamental acanthus leaves and corbelled base bands.

Contemporary: Reflecting characteristics of the current period. Contemporary design characteristics which illustrate that a building, structure, or detail was constructed in the present or recent past rather than being initiative or reflection of a historic design.

Cresting: The uppermost projecting ornamental molding along the top of a wall, roof, or cornice.

Cresting: The uppermost, projecting ornamental molding along the top of a wall, building, etc.

Craft: In masonry, a projection, or one of a series of projections, each stepped progressively farther forward with height and articulating a corbel or supporting an overhanging member.

Curb Cut: A secondary gable roof which meets the primary roof at right angles.

Curved Arch: A gable roof where the ends of the ridge are terminated in a small, diagonal roof surface. Also called a “Jerkinhead.”

Colonial Revival: House style of the early 20th century based on interpretations of architectural forms of the American colonies prior to the Revolution.

Compatible: In harmony with location and surroundings.

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D

Décolleté: Any act or process that destroys in part or in whole a landmark or a structure within a historic district.

Destiny: A row of small tooth–like blocks in a classical cornice.

Dentic: A row of small tooth–like blocks in a classical cornice.

Design Guidelines: The “Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings” as adopted by the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior, and other guidelines which may be adopted from time to time.

Direct Order: A classical order with simple, unadorned capitals, and with no base.

Doorway Window: A window that projects from a roof.

Double–Hang Window: A window with two sashes, one sliding over the other.

E

Eave: The edge of a roof that projects beyond the face of a wall.

Element: A material part or detail of a site, structure, street, or district.

Elevation: Any one of the external faces or facades of a building. See Façade.

Elgin: The triangular section of a wall to carry a pitched roof.

Ell: Any one of the external faces or elevations of a building.

Engaged Column: A round column attached to a wall that is load bearing.

Entablature: The middle portion of a classical cornice.

Façade: Any one of the external faces or elevations of a building.

Fence: Any of the external faces or elevations of a building.

Fenestration: The arrangement of windows on a building.

Fenestration: A projecting decorative element, usually of metal, at the top of a roof turret or gable.

Fibonacci: A decorative pattern of wall shingles composed of staggered horizontal rows of wooden shingles with half–round ends.

Flattening: The triangular section of a wall to carry a pitched roof.

Flat Arch: An arch whose wedge–shaped stones or bricks are set in a straight line, also called a jack arch.

Flat–Scale Shingles: A decorative pattern of wall shingles composed of staggered horizontal rows of wooden shingles with half–round ends.

Flat–Roof Vent: A projecting decorative element, usually of metal, at the top of a roof turret or gable.

Flemish Bond: A brickwork pattern where the long “stretcher” edge of the brick is alternated with the short “header” edge and for decorative as well as structural effectiveness.

Flemish Bond: Any one of the external faces or elevations of a building.

Floor: The lowest exposed portion of the building wall, which supports the structure above.

Flower: The physical material of a building, structure, or community, composing an interweaving of component parts.

Porch: A window that projects from a roof.

Flat Roof: A pitched roof with one downward slope on either side of a central, horizontal ridge.

Gabled Roof: A pitched roof with two slopes on either side.

General Building: One of the five classical orders used to describe decorative scroll capitals.

Gable: The triangular section of a wall to carry a pitched roof.

Gable: The wedge shaped top or center member of an arch.

Gambrel Roof: A ridged roof with two slopes on either side.

Gambrel Roof: A pitched roof with one downward slope on either side of a central, horizontal ridge.

Gable: The triangular section of a wall to carry a pitched roof.

Gambrel Roof: One of the external faces or elevations of a building.

Gambrel Roof: A pitched roof with one downward slope on either side of a central, horizontal ridge.

Gable: The wedge shaped top or center member of an arch.

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Gable: The wedge shaped top or center member of an arch.
L

Landmark: A property, structure, or natural object designated as a “landmark” by ordinance of the city council, pursuant to procedures prescribed in this title, that is worthy of rehabilitation, restoration, and preservation because of its historic or architectural significance to the city.

Landscape: The totality of the built or human-influenced habitat experienced at any one place. Dominant features are topography, plant cover, buildings, or other structures and their patterns.

Lintel: An openwork design or interlacing wood strips used as screening.

Lintel: The horizontal top member of a window, door, or other opening.

M

Massing: To keep in an existing state of preservation or repair.

Masonry: Exterior wall construction of brick, stone or adobe laid up in small units.

Massing: The three-dimensional form of a building.

Material Change: A change that will affect either the exterior architectural or environmental features of a historic property or any structure, site, or work of art within a historic district.

Metal Staining Soot Roof: A roof composed of overlapping sections of metal such as copper-hearing steel or iron coated with a tenacious alloy of lead and tin. These roofs were attached or crimped together in various raised seams for which the roof are named.

Melted: A heavy vertical divider between windows or doors.

Mult-Light Window: A window sash composed of more than one pane of glass.

Mullion: A secondary framing member to divide and hold the panes of glass in a multi-light window or a glazed door.

N

New Construction: Construction which is characterized by the introduction of new elements, sites, buildings, or structures or additions to existing buildings and structures in historic areas and districts.

Normally Required: Mandatory actions, summarized in the guidelines, whose compliance is enforced by the Elgin Heritage Commission.

Obsolesced: Covered, concealed, or hidden from view.

Oriel Window: A bay window which emerges above the ground floor level.

Omitted: A bay window which emerges above the ground floor level.

P

Penciled Door: A door composed of solid panels (either raised or recessed) held within a framework of ribs and sides.

Pentarm: A roof horizontal wall at the edge of a roof.

Pilaster: A triangular crowning element forming the gable of a roof; any similar triangular element used over windows, doors, etc.

Ply: A vertical structural element, square or rectangular in cross-section.

Planting: A non-load bearing, square pillar attached, but projecting from a wall.

Pitch: The degree of the slope of a roof.

Porte Cochere: A roofed passageway connected to the front building designed to allow vehicles, historically carriages, to pass through from the street to the rear.

Portico: A roofed space, open or partly enclosed, forming the entrance and centerpiece of a building. It may be load bearing, square pillar attached, but projecting from a wall.

Portland Cement: A strong, inflexible hydraulic cement used to bind mortar. Mortar or patching materials with a high Portland cement content should not be used on pre-1920 buildings. Portland Cement is harder than the masonry, thereby causing serious damage over annual freeze-thaw cycles.

Preservation: Generally, saving from destruction or deterioration of old and historic buildings, sites, structures and objects and providing for their continued use by means of restoration, rehabilitation or adaptive reuse.

Prestressed Ties: Decorative and functional metalwork made of molded tin used to cushion roofs, bases, and columns.

Prestress: Harmless solution of parts to one another or to the whole.

Pyramidal Roof: A roof with four identical sides rising to a central peak.

Queen Anne Style: Popular late 19th century residential style of early 18th century English architecture, characterized by irregularity of plan and massing and a variety of texture.

Quoin: A series of stone, bricks, or wood panels ornamenting the outside of the wall.

Q

Quoin: A series of stone, bricks, or wood panels ornamenting the outside of the wall.

Recommended: Suggested, but not mandatory actions summarized in the guidelines.

Reconstruction: The act of process of reproducing by one construction the exact form and detail of a vanished building, structure, or object, or a part thereof, as it is appeared at a specific period of time.

Replanning: Constructing a building so that it is an exact replication or imitation of a historic architectural style or period.

Restoration: The act or process of actually taking a building’s appearance back to a specific period of time by removing later work and by replacing missing earlier features to match the original.

Retain: To keep secure and intact. In the guidelines, “retain” and “maintain” describe the act of keeping an element, detail, or structure and continuing the same level of repair to aid in preservation of elements, sites and structures.

Reuse: To use again. An element, detail, or structure might be reused in historic districts.

Retain: To keep secure and intact. In the guidelines, “retain” and “maintain” describe the act of keeping an element, detail, or structure and continuing the same level of repair to aid in preservation of elements, sites and structures.

Renew: To use again. An element, detail, or structure might be reused in historic districts.

Retain: To keep secure and intact. In the guidelines, “retain” and “maintain” describe the act of keeping an element, detail, or structure and continuing the same level of repair to aid in preservation of elements, sites and structures.

Renew: To use again. An element, detail, or structure might be reused in historic districts.

Champaign, Illinois
Rhythm: Regular occurrence of elements or features such as spacing between buildings.

Ridge: The top horizontal member of a roof where the sloping surfaces meet.

Rubble Masonry: A type of masonry construction where the stones are rough, undressed and not laid in regular courses.

Rusticated: Roughening of stonework of concrete blocks to give greater articulation to each block.

Sash: The moveable framework containing the glass in a window.

Scale: Proportional elements that demonstrate the size, materials, and style of buildings.

Segmental Arch: An arch whose profile or radius is less than a semi-circle.

Semi-Circular Arch: An arch whose profile is a half circle. It is also known as a Roman Arch.

Setting: The sum of attributes of a locality, neighborhood, or property that defines its character.

Sheathing: An exterior covering of boards or other surface applied to the frame of the structure (See Siding).

Shed Roof: A gently pitched, almost flat roof with only one slope.

Shingle Style: An architectural style of the late 19th century which features frame dwellings largely covered with wood shingles on both floors.

Shingles: Wood which is split into flat shingles and different shapes. Wood shingles are common elements to the Queen Anne style and Bungalow type.

Siding: The exterior wall covering or sheathing of a structure.

Significant: Having particularly important associations within the contexts of architecture, history, and culture.

Sill: The bottom crosspiece of a window frame.

Sloe: This sections of stone which were used as a roof surface material for pre-1945 dwellings.

Spack: Slender, elaborately turned wood shaft found grouped together to support handrail, coping or other ornamental details. (See Baluster).

Stabilization: The act or process of applying measures essential to the maintenance of a deteriorated building, as it exists at present, establishing structural stability and a weather-resistant enclosure.

Streetscape: The distinguishing character of a particular street including its width, degree of curvature, paving materials, design of the street furniture, and forms of the surrounding buildings.

Stretcher Bond: A brickwork pattern where courses are laid flat with the long “stretcher” edge exposed.

Style: A type of architecture distinguished by special characteristics of structure and ornament and often related in time, also a general quality of a distinctive character.

Surround: An encircling border or decorative frame, usually at windows or doors.

Swag: Carved ornament on the form of a cloth draped over supports, or in the form of a garland of fruits and flowers.

T Transom: A horizontal (or bar) over a door or window.

Tyrn: The decorative framing of openings and other features on a façade.

Turret: A small slender tower.

V Veranda: A covered porch or balcony on a building’s exterior.

Vernacular: A regional form or adaptation of an architectural style.

Wall Deterrent: Barrier created by the upward extension of a wall and a breaking of the roofline.

Water Table: A projecting horizontal ledge, intended to prevent water from running down the face of a wall’s foundation.

Weatherboard: Wood siding consisting of overlapping boards usually thicker at one edge than the other.
Appendix D

Bibliography


American Bungalow Magazine. Bi-Monthly. 123 South Badwin Avenue, P.O. Box 756, Sierra Madre, CA 91025-756.


“Elgin Historic District.” National Register Nomination on file with the City of Elgin, 1983.


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Appendix E

Preservation Briefs

Preservation Briefs are available from the Technical Preservation Services Division of the National Park Service. The following is a list of Preservation Briefs in print as of September 2019. The National Park Service often adds to this list or updates the existing briefs.

1. Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings
2. Repainting Metal Roofs on Historic Masonry Buildings
3. Improving Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings
4. Roofing for Historic Buildings
5. The Presentation of Historic Adobe Buildings
6. Dangers of Aluminum Cladding to Historic Buildings
7. The Presentation of Historic Glass Architectural Term-Cotta
9. The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows
10. Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork
11. Rebuilding Historic Architectural Glass (Wright and Carrera Glass)
12. The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows
13. New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns
14. Preservation of Historic Concrete
15. The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Interiors
16. The Repair of Historic Masonry Roofing Systems
17. Architectural Character—Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving their Character
18. Rehabilitation Interiors in Historic Buildings—Identifying Character-Defining Elements
19. The Repair and Replacement of Historic Wooden Shingle Roofs
20. The Presentation of Historic Burial Sites
21. Replacing Historic Flat Plaster—Walls and Ceilings
22. The Preservation and Repair of Historic Braces
23. Preserving Historic Ornamental Plaster
24. Heating, Ventilating, and Cooling Historic Buildings: Problems and Recommended Approaches
25. The Presentation of Historic Signs
26. The Preservation and Repair of Historic Log Buildings
27. The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron
28. Painting Historic Interiors
29. The Repair, Replacement, and Maintenance of Historic Slate Roofs
30. The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs
31. Multi-Unit Historic Buildings
32. Making Historic Properties Accessible
33. The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stained and Leaded Glass
34. Applied Decoration for Historic Interiors: Preserving Historic Composition Ornament
36. Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes
37. Appropriate Methods of Reducing Lead Paint Hazards in Historic Housing
38. Removing Chipping from Historic Masonry
39. Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings
40. Preserving Historic Ceramic Tile Floors
41. The Seismic Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings
42. The Maintenance, Repair and Replacement of Historic Cast Stone
43. The Preparation and Use of Historic Structure Reports
44. The Use of Awnings on Historic Buildings: Repair, Replacement and New Design
45. Preserving Historic Wooden Porches
46. The Preservation and Repair of Historic Gas Stations
47. Maintaining the Exterior of Small and Medium Size Historic Buildings
48. Preserving Grave Markers in Historic Cemeteries
49. Historic Decorative Metal Ceilings and Walls: Use, Repair, and Replacement
50. Lightning Protection for Historic Buildings

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