

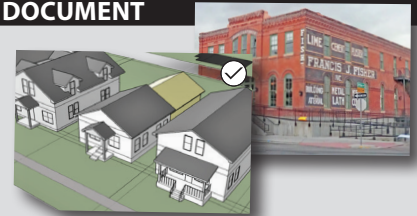
3. GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Additions to Landmark Structures and Contributing Structures in Historic Districts

This chapter includes:

- Introduction Page 62
- General Principles for Additions Page 64
- New Residential Additions Page 67
- New Commercial Additions Page 70

ILLUSTRATIONS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT



The design guidelines include many photographs and diagrams to illustrate acceptable or unacceptable approaches. The illustrations are provided as examples and are not intended to indicate the only options.

If there appears to be a conflict between the text of the design guidelines and a related illustration, the text shall prevail.

KEY TO ILLUSTRATION SYMBOLS



A checkmark on an illustration indicates an approach that is generally appropriate.



An asterisk on an illustration indicates an approach that may be acceptable in some contexts or situations.



An X mark on an illustration indicates an approach that is generally inappropriate.



INTRODUCTION

An addition may be an appropriate improvement to a historic structure. It can enhance the continued use of a property, and express its changing functions.

This chapter provides guidelines for additions to historic structures, including individually-designated Denver landmarks and contributing structures in historic districts.

The guidelines seek to minimize the visual and physical impacts of an addition on the historic structure and its surrounding context. However, an addition does not have to be completely hidden from view.

OTHER GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS

Chapter 4 "Guidelines for New Buildings & Non-Contributing Buildings" on page <?> provides new construction guidelines that also apply to an addition within a historic district. These include guidelines for overall massing, roof decks and patios, and other features of new construction.

Approaches for an Addition

For many properties, an addition to the rear of the historic structure is the best approach. This is particularly the case for single-family residences. In other situations, a rooftop addition may be an approach, more often in commercial structures. When considering the appropriateness of a proposed addition, the impacts of the work on the property and a number of specific design variables will be evaluated as described below.

IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS FOR AN ADDITION

Impact considerations address the visual and physical impacts of the addition on the integrity of the property, and one's ability to perceive its historic character, as well as that of its context.

Some impact-related factors to consider include:

- » *The impact on the historic structure*
 - a. *Is the addition visible?*
 - b. *Does the addition remain visually subordinate to the historic structure?*
 - c. *Is one's ability to interpret the historic character retained? (Especially in terms of perceiving the original mass, scale and prominence of the property)*
 - d. *Are alterations to key character-defining features avoided or at least minimized?*
 - e. *Is the structural integrity of the property retained, or even improved?*
- » *The impact on the abutting contributing properties*
 - a. *Is one's ability to interpret the historic character of the abutting properties retained? (Especially in terms of perceiving their original mass, scale and relative prominence on the street or from other public vantage points?)*
- » *The impact on the block as a whole*
 - a. *Are the rhythm and alignment of structures and their key features typical of the block retained?*
 - b. *Is the perception of the scale of structures along the block retained, as experienced at the street level?*
 - c. *If the character of an alley wall is also a key feature, is its scale also retained?*

DESIGN VARIABLES FOR AN ADDITION

Design variables include basic scale and proportion considerations that relate to the compatibility of the addition with the primary structure and surrounding historic context.

Design variables to consider include:

- » *The height of the addition.*

Keeping floor heights in the range of those on the historic structure, or even lower, may help keep an addition visually subordinate to the historic structure.
- » *The degree of setback.*

Does the original primary façade (front) remain visually prominent? An addition should be set back from the façade and other key walls that contribute to the character of the property. The setback should be a sufficient distance such that the historic structure remains prominent.
- » *Simplicity of design.*

Is the design of the addition subordinate in character? The design should be relatively simple in architectural character and detailing, such that it does not call undue attention to itself. The historic structure should remain the prominent feature.

See "Designing in Context" on page <?> for additional information on design variables.

EXAMPLES OF COMPATIBLE RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL ADDITIONS



64. Appropriate side-gabled dormer addition that has minimal impact on adjacent contributing properties.



65. An appropriate side shed dormer addition, located behind the chimney. See "Dormer Location" on page <?> for more information.



66. An appropriate rooftop addition to a commercial storefront.

Figure 22: Approaches for an Addition

General Principles for Additions



67. Locate an addition to be subordinate to the original structure.

INTENT STATEMENTS

- 3a To maintain the general appearance of a historic structure, especially from key public vantage points, when building an addition
- 3b To minimize damage to the original structure and preserve character-defining features when building an addition
- 3c To avoid adversely affecting the character-defining features of a historic district when building an addition
- 3d To ensure that an addition relates to the fundamental characteristics of the block while also appearing as current construction

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES OF A HISTORIC DISTRICT

When planning a new addition in a historic district, it is important to carefully review the district's character-defining features. See "Appendix A: The Character-defining Features of Denver's Historic Districts" for more information.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC STRUCTURES

- 3.1 **Locate an addition to be subordinate to the original structure.**
 - a. Place an addition to the rear of the original structure whenever possible.
 - b. See Guideline 3.8 for additions to residential structures and Guideline 3.11 for additions to commercial structures.
- 3.2 **Design an addition to a historic structure to respect the character-defining features of the historic district, the surrounding historic context, and the original primary structure.**
 - a. Design an addition to be compatible with the scale, massing and rhythm of the historic structure and context.
 - b. Align porch eaves, roof lines and other features with adjacent structures, when possible.
 - c. Retain the appearance and orientation of the historic primary entrance
 - d. Use materials that are of a similar color, texture, and scale to those in the historic structure and surrounding historic context. See Guideline 4.6 on page 76 for more information.
 - e. Design windows and doors to be compatible with the primary structure and surrounding historic context, particularly when visible from public vantage points. See Guideline 4.8 on page 77 for more information.

General Principles for Additions (continued)



68. Design an addition to be recognized as current construction.



69. Differentiate an addition from the original structure with an offset of at least four inches and/or with a change in material or size.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC STRUCTURES (Continued)

3.3 Design an addition to be recognized as current construction.

- a. Differentiate an addition from the original structure with an offset of at least four inches.
- b. Differentiate an addition from the original structure with a change in material or size. In more vernacular building styles, this may be a relatively subtle change or distinction. If distinctions from old and new are subtle, a date plaque for new construction is also recommended.
- c. Use simplified versions of building components and details found in the surrounding historic context. These may include:
 - » A cornice or other definition of the roof line
 - » A distinctive storefront or main door surround
 - » Window, moldings or other features
 - » Porches
- d. Do not design an addition to be an exact copy of the existing style or imply an earlier period or more ornate style than that of the original structure.
- e. Do not design an addition to contrast starkly with the original structure. At a minimum, an acceptable design should be neutral and not detract from the district's or structure's historic character.

3.4 Locate an addition to retain open space patterns.

- a. Retain original open space at the sides and rear of the structure.
- b. Avoid removing existing open space with a large addition.

General Principles for Additions (continued)



70. Do not damage historic building fabric or obscure key character-defining features of the primary structure when building an addition.



71. Use a roof form that is consistent with the original structure's roof form and those of structures in the surrounding historic context. A "nested" gabled addition is being added to the bungalow house illustrated above. There is no street visibility and the roof form matches the historic house.

ADDITIONS TO A HISTORIC FAÇADE

In some historic contexts, precedent may exist for constructing an addition that is flush with the façade of the structure. Some of these changes may now be considered to be historically significant alterations. While such a design for a new addition is theoretically possible, the LPC discourages a flush addition today because it may negatively affect the integrity of the historic property.

ALTERNATIVES TO A NEW ADDITION

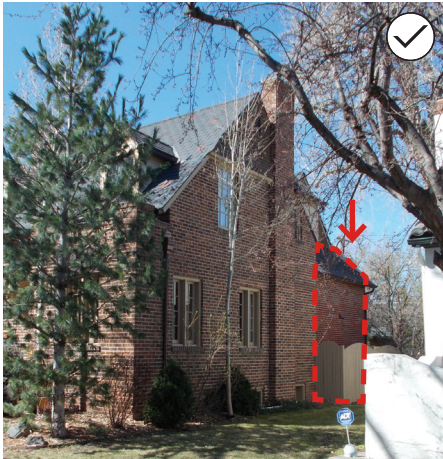
Owners of a historic property are encouraged to consider alternatives to making an addition to a historic property. Alternatives include finishing basement or attic spaces to add usable square footage.

A new secondary structure, or an addition to an existing secondary structure, may also be considered as an alternative. Guidelines for new secondary structures are provided on page 83. Strategies for an addition to a historic secondary structure are provided on page 47

GUIDELINES FOR ALL ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC STRUCTURES (Continued)

- 3.5 **Do not damage historic building fabric or obscure key character-defining features of the primary structure when building an addition.**
 - a. Minimize the removal of original building fabric when attaching an addition.
 - b. Design an addition so it can be removed without destroying original materials or features.
 - c. Avoid damaging historic façades, cornice lines or other details.
 - d. Avoid adding an addition that impacts the original building's structural system.
- 3.6 **Design windows, doors and other features on a new addition to be compatible with the original structure and surrounding historic context.**
 - a. Incorporate windows, doors and other openings at a ratio similar to those found on nearby historic structures. For additions with public visibility, doors and windows should have similar proportions and rhythms as windows on historic façades.
 - b. When using contemporary window patterns and designs, ensure that they respect the typical historic character and proportions of windows on the primary structure and adjacent structures.
 - c. Proportion building features, such as brackets and trim, to reflect those seen in the surrounding historic context.
- 3.7 **Design the roof of a new addition to be compatible with the original structure and surrounding historic context.**
 - a. Use a roof form that is consistent with the original structure's roof form and those of structures in the surrounding historic context in terms of pitch, orientation, and complexity. An addition with a pitched roof is usually inappropriate for a structure with a flat roof.
 - b. If using contemporary materials, they should be compatible with historic roof materials in visual impact, texture, and relationship to architectural style.

New Residential Additions



72. Place a one-story addition to the rear of the existing structure, if possible. The addition illustrated above is subordinate to the main structure and uses similar materials but is slightly differentiated.



73. Design a rooftop addition to minimize impacts on the residential structure and context of the historic district. The rooftop addition illustrated above is incompatible because it overwhelms the original structure and has a high visual impact.

INTENT STATEMENT

- 3e To preserve the appearance and integrity of a historic residential structure and district by ensuring that an addition does not damage historic materials
- 3f To ensure that an addition is subordinate to the main structure, has minimal visibility from public vantage points, and is compatible with the surrounding historic context

DENVER ZONING CODE RESIDENTIAL BULK PLANE STANDARD

The Denver Zoning Code includes a “bulk plane” standard for most older residential districts that is intended to prevent new construction and additions that could loom over adjacent properties. The standard limits building height near the sides of a property and reduces height on the rear 35% of the lot to preserve back yard privacy.

Because the most compatible location for an addition to a historic structure is generally to the rear, it may sometimes be a challenge to fit within the bulk plane standard. A qualified architect who has worked in Denver’s historic districts can help design a compatible addition that meets zoning standards.

GUIDELINES FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL ADDITIONS

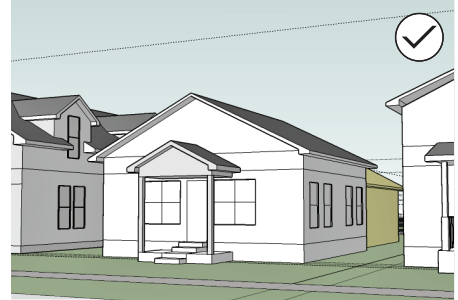
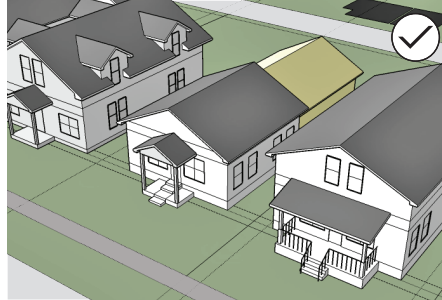
- 3.8 **Locate an addition to a residential structure to be subordinate to the existing structure.**
 - a. Design an addition to have minimal visual impact to the existing structure.
 - b. Place a one-story addition to the rear of the existing structure, if possible.
 - c. Consider a compatible side addition if a one-story rear addition is not possible.
 - d. Consider a compatible rooftop addition for a one-story house if there are no other alternatives. A limited program rooftop addition on a one-story house may be appropriate when the house is located on a small lot and there are no opportunities for expansion elsewhere on the property.
 - e. Avoid locating a rooftop addition on an individually-designated Denver landmark structure. Such additions are generally not allowed because of the existing structure’s elevated level of significance.
- 3.9 **Design an addition to a historic residential structure to be compatible with, but differentiated from, the existing structure.**
 - a. Use subtle changes in material, color, and/or wall plane, to differentiate an addition.
 - b. Design an addition as a simplified version of the architectural style of the original structure, or in a compatible, contemporary style.
 - c. Consider using a lower-scale connecting element to join an addition to a historic structure, particularly for large or two-story additions.
- 3.10 **Design a rooftop addition to minimize impacts on the residential structure and context of the historic district** (when warranted based on Guideline 3.8).
 - a. Set back a rooftop addition a minimum of 15 feet from the highest point of the primary façade to reduce its visual impact, help preserve the historic roof form, differentiate it from the original façade, and remain subordinate to the existing structure.
 - b. Set back a rooftop addition at least two feet from the side façades of the existing structure to reduce potential visual impacts and help preserve the existing roof form and historic building materials.
 - c. Minimize the height of a rooftop addition to ensure the historic structure remains visually prominent. Utilize dormers and knee walls to keep heights low.
 - d. Do not obscure, cover or remove historic features when adding a rooftop addition.

Location & Design of a Residential Addition

A number of scenarios for rear and rooftop additions to a historic structure are illustrated below and on the following page. The illustrations demonstrate one condition on an interior (non-corner) lot. The location and design of the additions illustrated on this page are compatible with the historic structure and surrounding context.

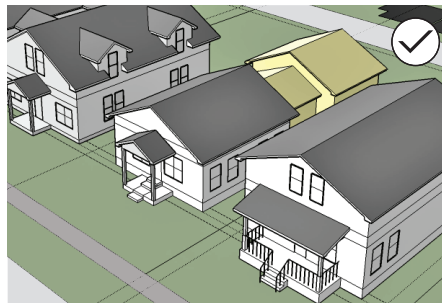
1. SUBORDINATE REAR ADDITION

This modestly-scaled rear addition is minimally visible from the public right-of-way to achieve a high level of compatibility with the historic structure and context.



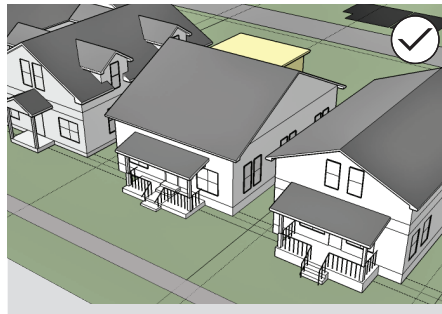
2. SUBORDINATE REAR ADDITION WITH CONNECTING ELEMENT

This rear-addition is clearly differentiated from the original structure with a connecting element that also breaks the wall plane between the original structure and the addition to achieve a high level of compatibility with the historic structure and context.



3. REAR DORMER ADDITION

This new shed dormer provides a compatible small-scale addition because it is located on the rear slope of the existing roof line and is minimally visible from the public right-of-way. See "Dormer Location" on page 35 for more information.



4. SIDE DORMER ADDITION

This new shed dormer provides a compatible small-scale addition because it is subordinate to the roof form and is located substantially to the rear of the front façade.

Note that dormer shapes on street visible sides should match roof forms and dormer shapes seen historically whenever possible, but shed dormers can be appropriate if unobtrusive as illustrated.

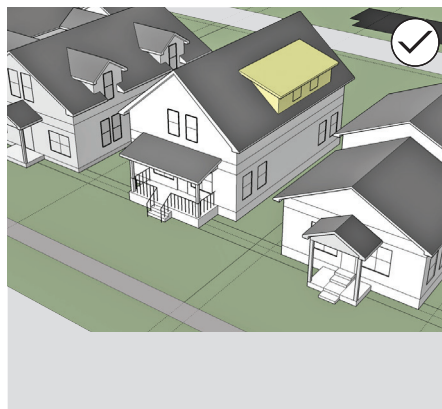


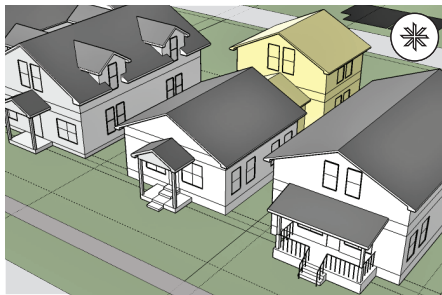
Figure 23: Location & Design of a Residential Addition

Location & Design of a Residential Addition (continued)

The location and design of the first two additions illustrated on this page (scenarios 5 & 6) may be acceptable in some contexts or situations, while the remaining additions (scenarios 7-9) illustrate incompatible approaches.

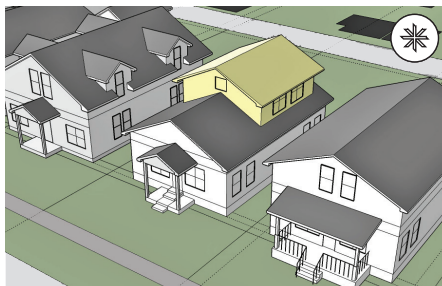
5. TWO-STORY REAR ADDITION WITH CONNECTING ELEMENT

This rear-addition is taller than the original structure but is still clearly differentiated with a connecting element to achieve an acceptable level of compatibility with the historic structure and context in most cases.



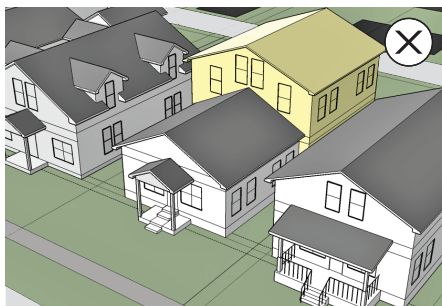
6. GABLE-FRONT ROOFTOP ADDITION WITH SETBACKS

This rooftop addition is set back from the front and side façades. The illustrated design may not be appropriate in all cases and would require sensitivity to ensure that the integrity of the historic house is retained.



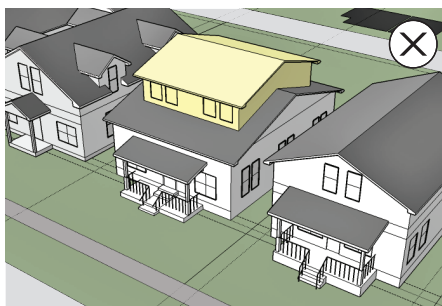
7. INCOMPATIBLE TWO-STORY REAR ADDITION

This two-story rear addition is not compatible with the historic structure and context because it overpowers the original structure. It is also wider than the original structure, which makes it more visible from the public right-of-way.



8. INCOMPATIBLE ROOFTOP ADDITION WITH SETBACKS

This rooftop addition is set back from the front and side. However, it is not compatible with the historic context because it overpowers the original structure, extends onto the front-facing roof plane, and destroys a significant proportion of the historic roof.



9. INCOMPATIBLE ROOFTOP ADDITION

This rooftop addition is not compatible with the historic structure and context because it overpowers the original structure's mass and scale and adversely affects its integrity. The minimal setback from the front façade makes it highly visible from the public right-of-way.

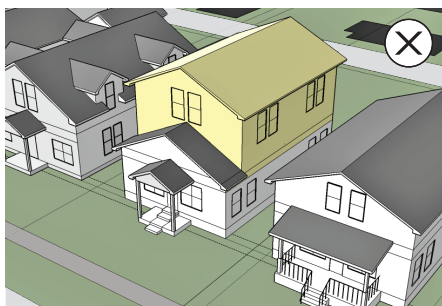
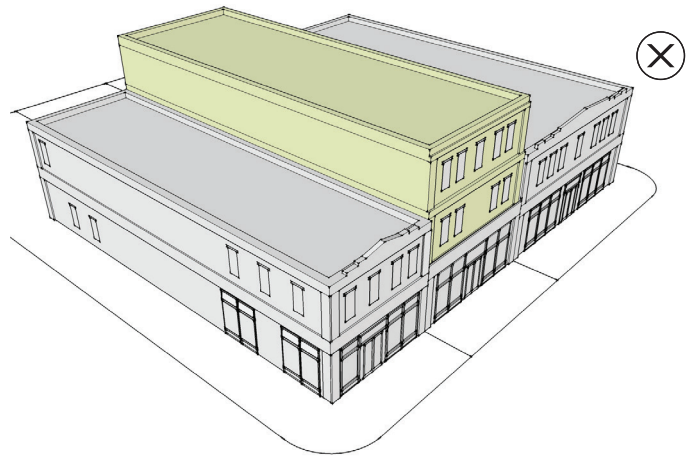
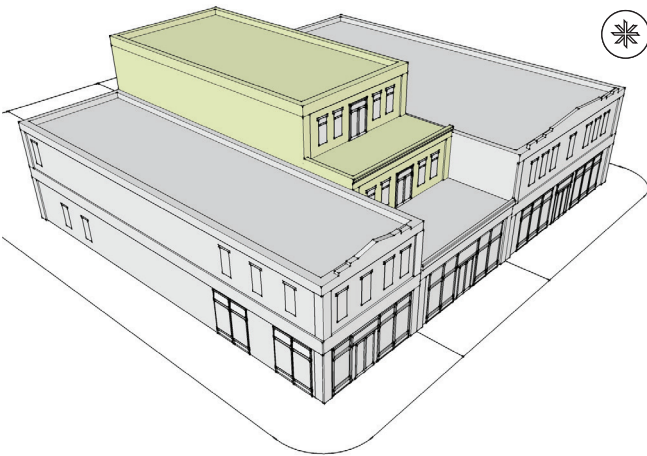


Figure 23: Location & Design of a Residential Addition (continued)

New Commercial Additions



74. Minimize the visibility of a rooftop addition from the street. The building illustrated above has a rooftop addition (right) that is set back and not visible when the building is viewed from the front (left).



75. Set an upper-floor addition back from the primary, character-defining façade, to preserve the perception of the historic scale and character of the structure.

INTENT STATEMENTS

- 3g To preserve the historic streetscape and the appearance of a historic commercial structure by minimizing the visibility of a new addition from the street, sidewalk and surrounding properties
- 3h To maintain patterns found in the surrounding historic context when designing and locating a commercial addition

GUIDELINES FOR NEW COMMERCIAL ADDITIONS

- 3.11 **Locate an addition to a historic commercial structure to be subordinate to the primary structure.**
 - a. Set an upper-floor addition back, typically at least 15 feet, from the primary façades, to preserve the perception of the historic scale of the structure. Small exceptions to a side street setback may be appropriate for buildings less than 75 feet wide as long as the addition is not readily visible from public vantage points.
 - b. Minimize the height of a rooftop addition to ensure the historic structure remains visually prominent.
 - c. Do not locate an addition in front of, or flush with the primary façade.
- 3.12 **Design an addition to a historic commercial structure to be clearly differentiated from the original structure.**
 - a. Design the addition to be modest in character, and either a simplified version of the original structure's style or a compatible, contemporary style, so it will not detract from the historic structure.
 - b. Differentiate an addition from the original structure with a change in material, color and/or wall plane.