

**El Paso de Robles
Westside Historic District Conservation Plan**

DESIGN GUIDELINES

January 11, 2005

Statement of Purpose

The oldest residential buildings in the City of Paso Robles are located in the Westside Historic District. These include many which are historically significant and contribute to the unique character of Paso Robles. Compatibility of new residential buildings, renovations and change of use with existing neighborhood buildings is a key issue and a complex one; in that, areas included within the proposed district boundaries encompass single-family, multi-family and office/professional uses. Therefore, additions to and the conversion of existing single-family buildings to multi-family and office/professional units is addressed by these guidelines as well as the appropriate design of new units in this area.

There are four categories as follows:

1. New Construction: New construction and additions to existing non-historic residential buildings for single, multi-family use or office/professional.
2. Historic Buildings: Modifications and/or additions to landmarks, potential landmarks, contributing and potentially contributing buildings.
3. Site Improvements: All residential building types.
4. Office/Professional: Residential building types in office or professional use. These guidelines apply only to those buildings located within the Office Professional Overlay (see map and zoning code).

Boundaries of Westside Historic District:

Oak, Vine, Olive and Chestnut Streets from 8th to 21st Street inclusive of both sides of each street.

New Construction

These guidelines apply to new development in the proposed Westside Historic District. Additions and alterations to historic buildings are addressed in the section titled “Historic Buildings.” (See Exhibit A)

POLICY 1: SITING AND SETBACKS

New development should maintain the pattern of building setbacks, spacing and siting of the adjoining historic residences and the neighborhood as a whole.

Guidelines

- 1.1 Provide setbacks as specified for the zoning district in which the property lies, or in line with other structures on the street. The overall density and lot coverage should be residential in character with typical open spaces such as backyards.
- 1.2 All new construction should be limited to three stories above ground. (See 2.4 below)
 - a. Upper story tucked under the roof with windows in allowable space.
 - b. Garage and basement as terrain allows.

POLICY 2: SCALE, FORM AND MASSING

Guidelines

- 2.1 Ensure that the basic structure and form of the building incorporates neo traditional elements with respect to the placement of room or floor additions, bays, projections, and window and door openings.
- 2.2 Larger, multi-family buildings should use smaller building modules to reflect the predominant scale and façade rhythms of nearby historic residences.
- 2.3 Depending on style, use projecting bays, porches, individual balconies, upper floor setbacks, bay windows and/or variations within the floor plan to provide variation in building volume and form.
- 2.4 To minimize the height and bulk of larger buildings, third floor spaces should be partially concealed beneath the building’s roof by the use of gables, dormers, and other projections.
- 2.5 Access to upper floor units should be by interior stairs when possible. Exterior stairs should be integrated into the overall design with minimize façade exposure.
- 2.6 Provide detached garages accessed from alleyways or side (east/west) streets whenever possible. Double or multiple garage doors on street front facades are strongly discouraged and incompatible.

POLICY 3: ARCHITECTURAL STYLE AND CHARACTER

Encourage designs that reflect the architectural qualities that tie the buildings of the district together.

Guidelines

- 3.1 Avoid the use of contemporary architectural styles or stylistic elements and materials.
- 3.2 Where a single architectural style is predominant in a given area or along a street, the use of that style for new residential construction is strongly encouraged.
- 3.3 Provide a covered entry or entry porch that does not obscure the detail or composition of the facade beneath it.
- 3.4 Use pitched roof forms with overhanging eaves.
- 3.5 Detached structures (e.g. granny units, garages, storage buildings) should:
 - a. Follow the architectural style of the primary residence with use of similar building form and materials, or
 - b. Conform to the architectural period of the original structure.
 - c. Wherever possible should be a single-story unless:
 - 1) Structure does not detract from the house in front or the surrounding properties.
 - d. Pay special attention to the scale of the buildings so that the addition does not dominate views from the main streets. (See Exhibit B)

POLICY 4: MATERIALS AND COLOR

Encourage use of materials commonly used for the construction and finishing of historic buildings in the district and colors that complement those materials and styles.

Guidelines

- 4.1 Horizontal wood siding or equivalent design is the preferred principal building material. Stucco may be appropriate if it is the original or the predominant finish for adjoining buildings.
- 4.2 Wood should generally be painted unless used in the Craftsman style.
- 4.3 Plywood, aluminum or other panel siding products and composition shingles (on walls) are inappropriate building materials.
- 4.4 Brick, stone, concrete and other types of masonry should not be used as the principal building wall material. They may be considered on a case-by-case basis if appropriate to the context.

- 4.5 Metal or metallic finishes such as aluminum canopies or awnings are generally inappropriate.
- 4.6 Chimneys should generally be of brick or stone. Where zero-clearance or pre-fab units are used, avoid the use of plywood or wood sheathing. Stucco or dark painted metal flues are preferable finishes.
- 4.7 Set in or “nail-on” aluminum windows with thin frames set close to the exterior wall surface are not appropriate.
- 4.8 Window frames should be painted or factory-finished. Metallic finishes such as silver or bronze anodized aluminum are inappropriate.
- 4.9 Colors that are neon bright, shiny, metallic iridescent or otherwise attention grabbing are inappropriate for paint or any other finish.
- 4.10 Rustic, rough-hewn, or heavily textured materials, such as wood shakes, rough-sawn timber or siding are inappropriate.
- 4.11 Composition shingles in a similar or darker tone than the building walls should generally be used for roofing. White and black colors that contrast strongly should generally be avoided. Mission style clay tiles or other decorative roofing materials are appropriate only where authentic for the particular architectural style of the building.

POLICY 5: RESIDENTIAL – OFFICE/PROFESSIONAL OVERLAY AREA

Maintain the residential character of the district.

Guidelines

- 1.1 All new construction should conform to the residential nature of the neighborhood.
- 1.2 When new construction is intended for office/professional use, it is strongly encouraged that a portion of the square footage (preferably one-third or more) be designed for residential use.
- 1.3 When new construction is intended for office/professional use, design and architecture must be residential in character and conform to Policies 1 through 4 of this section.

Historic Buildings

These design guidelines apply to all structures within the Westside Historic District that are identified in the City of Paso Robles' Historical Resources Inventory. They are also applicable to historic institutional buildings in residential zoning districts. They are intended to guide renovation work as well as building additions. They are applicable to potentially contributing buildings to the extent that it is still feasible to include them. Since some of these buildings have already undergone major design changes, which may be difficult to reverse and are inconsistent with the guidelines, the decision to apply them will have to be made on a discretionary case-by-case basis. However, whenever feasible, any inappropriate modification should be reversed and additional modification should follow the guidelines to the extent that a consistent design will result.

POLICY 1: DESIGN INTEGRITY

Maintain the design integrity and distinguishing features of historic buildings.

Guidelines

- 1.1 Additions or alterations, which alter the height, bulk, principal façade elements, distinguishing architectural features or overall architectural character of a historic building when viewed from the street are inappropriate.
- 1.2 Additions should be arranged to complement and balance overall form, massing and composition of the existing building.
- 1.3 Building additions should be located to the rear of the existing structure whenever possible.
- 1.4 Where necessary to locate additions to the side of an existing building, the addition should be set back behind the line of the front façade. If the addition is large, it may be appropriate to provide some visual separation (i.e., narrow link such as breezeway, hallway, etc.) between the new and old construction.
- 1.5 Second floor additions, which do not significantly alter roof forms, are appropriate except where they will alter the principal façade(s) or character of a historic building.
- 1.6 Raised basements, garages or other additions below the first floor level are generally inappropriate. Exceptions may be made where the existing grade differential between the sidewalk level and the house provides enough of an embankment to excavate for such an addition without noticeably raising the main floor level of the house. Additionally, the street façade(s) of the building should not be altered in such a way as to detract from the original design.
- 1.7 Additions to existing buildings should employ the same materials and opening proportions as the original. It is not necessary or even desirable to make the

addition look identical, especially if original workmanship or details cannot be matched.

- 1.8 Special care should be given to existing historical churches so that additions are complimentary to their historical style and sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood.

POLICY 2: FAÇADE ELEMENTS AND DETAILS

Retain the traditional façade elements, proportions and architectural details, which give historic buildings their special character, and use appropriate replacements where necessary.

Guidelines

- 2.1 Architectural elements such as porches, steps and railings should not be removed. Replacements, where required, should be similar in character to the original.
- 2.2 Maintain the proportions of existing door and window openings and the pattern of existing window sash in replacement work or additions.
- 2.3 New or replacement window sash should match the original sash in thickness, depth, pattern and finish. Where the original has been completely removed, new windows should match the existing unless a replacement program for the entire façade using the original style sash is undertaken.

POLICY 3: INTEGRITY OF MATERIALS

Maintain the integrity of original building materials.

Guidelines

- 3.1 Original siding material should not be replaced, covered over or clad with another material such as stucco, wood or composition shingles, aluminum or vinyl siding, etc.
- 3.2 Where original materials have been covered over, use the gentlest means possible to remove them. Certain cladding such as stucco may be difficult, if not impossible to remove without destroying the underlying material.
- 3.3 Where inappropriate or later materials have been removed, they should be replaced with the original or similar material.
- 3.4 When necessary to re-roof, the original or a similar material, generally composition shingles, should be used.
- 3.5 Integrally colored materials such as brick or stone and stained wood (shingles, rafters, trim) should not be painted over. Sandblasting of masonry surfaces to remove paint may damage the material and other methods should be used if necessary.

- 3.6 Where necessary to re-build or replace an existing chimney or add a new one, the original material, generally brick, should be used.

POLICY 4: APPROPRIATE MATERIALS, COLORS AND FINISHES

Promote the use of appropriate materials in restorations, renovations and additions to historic buildings and colors that complement their styles and particular combination of building materials.

Guidelines

- 4.1 Use original materials wherever possible in restoration, renovation or repair work and use the same materials for building additions.
- 4.2 When necessary to use a substitute material, take care that its outward appearance, durability, texture and finish will be as close as possible to that of the original. If the original material was painted, be sure that the substitute will accept and retain the same painted finish.
- 4.3 Wood window sash is preferred for historic buildings. Vinyl clad wood or factory finished (i.e., baked enamel) aluminum frames may be acceptable as long as the original design can be duplicated.
- 4.4 Materials or colors listed as inappropriate for new construction are also inappropriate for historic buildings (New Construction – Policy 4).
- 4.5 Paint colors and color schemes should be appropriate to the style and design intent of the building.

Site Improvements

The guidelines that follow apply to all residential and institutional building types, whether in residential or office use and whether existing or new. Additional guidelines relating to site and other improvements for buildings in office use are found in the next section of this chapter under “Office/Professional.” The intent of these guidelines is to encourage site improvements that are consistent with the historic character of the residences in the district and will serve to unify the area into a visually more cohesive district.

POLICY 1: PLANTING AND PAVING MATERIALS

Encourage landscape treatments that are appropriate to a residential neighborhood and enhance the character and unity of the historic district.

Guidelines

- 1.1 Landscaping with live plant material should be the principal treatment of front and exterior side yard areas.
- 1.2 Mature trees, especially those which have historic associations with the building or the city’s development should be retained unless diseased, hazardous or located such that development of the property is unduly constrained.
- 1.3 Paving in front and exterior side yards should be kept to the minimum area necessary for circulation and maintenance of plant material.
- 1.4 Decorative rock or gravel as the predominant yard treatment is inappropriate.
- 1.5 Artificial turf or indoor/outdoor carpeting is inappropriate.
- 1.6 Planting within the public right-of-way should be subject to the approval of the city. Only approved plant materials—designated street trees, lawn or other approved walkable ground cover—should be used.
- 1.7 Property owners should be responsible for the maintenance and replanting, if necessary, of lawn or ground cover in the curbside planter strip for the full frontage of the property. Street tree planting may be required in conjunction with new development.

POLICY 2: LIGHTING

Encourage the use of residentially scaled light fixtures to supplement street lighting and to highlight and complement the historic and architectural features of residences.

- 2.1 The use of historic, period-style light fixtures is encouraged for exterior illumination.
- 2.2 The design and style of period light fixtures should be consistent with that of the building and for the site on which they are placed.
- 2.3 Light fixtures should be residentially scaled.

POLICY 3: FENCES, WALLS, SITE FEATURES

Use fences and walls in traditional designs and applications to set off residential buildings and define, but not obscure, their street-front garden areas. (See Exhibit C)

Guidelines

- 2.1 Fences, walls and other site features associated with historic buildings should be maintained in good repair. Where already deteriorated, replacement with like materials and designs is encouraged.
- 2.2 New fences in front yards should not exceed three (3) feet in height and should generally be constructed in an open work pattern.
- 2.3 Chain link, chicken wire or other pre-fab metal fencing materials are undesirable and strongly discouraged.
- 2.4 Pre-fab or flimsy wood trellis should not be used as the principal material for fence construction but may be appropriate as a decorative element for higher fences (i.e., rear or side yards).
- 2.5 New or replacement retaining walls should be constructed of dressed stone, field stone, brick or brick veneer, textured or split faced concrete block or poured concrete designed to resemble stone. Plain or rough textured poured concrete walls higher than 12 inches or plain cinderblock masonry unit walls are inappropriate.

Office/Professional

These guidelines shall apply to all residential building types in office/professional use and located in the Office Professional Overlay (see map and zoning code) within the Westside Historic District. Their intent is to minimize the intrusion of building and site improvements such as signs, parking and service areas, which can disrupt the visual continuity and historic integrity of the Westside Historic District and the streetscape.

POLICY 1: PARKING AND SERVICE AREAS

Design and locate site improvements for parking and service areas so that they do not detract from adjacent uses, particularly residential.

Guidelines

- 1.1 Parking areas should be located behind buildings and accessible from public alleys whenever possible. Alternatively, they may be located in interior side yard areas if screened but not in front yards. (See Exhibit D)
- 1.2 Parking areas serving five (5) or more cars should be screened from adjoining residential uses by a solid wall or fence of wood or masonry.
- 1.3 Commercial walkways and handicapped ramps should be sited at the rear or side of the building and not a prime feature of the front elevation. Handicapped ramps should be located within porch elements and screened by landscaping. Handicapped railings should be constructed to resemble residential-type railings. Industrial railings are discouraged.
- 1.4 Refuse storage areas should be located within a building or in a screened enclosure accessible from the parking lot drives or aisles. Screening should be designed to be compatible with the architectural design of the structure.
- 1.5 The material, finish and color of fences and enclosure walls should be consistent with that of the building materials for the building type.
- 1.6 Outdoor lighting sources for parking areas should be appropriate to the building and compatible with the architectural character of the district. Light sources should have a cut-off angle to avoid producing glare on adjoining properties.

POLICY 2: SIGNAGE TYPES

Encourage sign types and designs which are compatible with the residential features of the building and which will enhance the character of Westside Historic District as a whole. (See Exhibit E)

Guidelines

- 2.1 Three types of signs are permitted for this building type: hanging (i.e., under-marquee), wall and lawn mounted. Except for wall mounted directories or name plates, only one such sign should be permitted for each building.
- 2.2 Signs should be carefully designed and detailed with special attention given to framing elements, mounting hardware and color schemes. Decorative detailing using the architectural details of the building's style is strongly encouraged.
- 2.3 Lawn mounted signs should be finished on both sides and mounted parallel to the building in the front setback area in a location which is visible to passing motorists, but does not obscure critical sight lines to or from the building, access drives or streets.
- 2.4 Lawn mounted signs should be limited to 30 inches by 42 inches inclusive of framing structure and mounted no higher than 36 inches. (The zoning code for this area permits a maximum sign height of 4 feet, however the 3-foot height is strongly recommended.) Lettering should be no larger than 4 inches in height.
 - a. Style of signage for multiple business names should work together to form a cohesive sign, i.e. color, lettering style. (Signage program)
 - b. One sign per property.
- 2.5 Hanging signs should be limited to 1 foot by 3 feet inclusive of framing, if any. Lettering should be limited to 3 inches in height. Wall signs should be mounted below the roof eaves or porch at the building entry.
- 2.6 Wall signs should be limited to three (3) square feet in area and should be mounted on a solid wall surface without obscuring architectural details or features.
- 2.7 Wall mounted directories or nameplates should be mounted adjacent to the entry door and are limited to three (3) square feet in area.
- 2.8 Awning signs should not be used in the historic district.

POLICY 3: SIGNAGE MATERIALS AND ILLUMINATION

Use materials and methods of illumination for signs that are compatible with the style and design of the building and historic character of the district.

Guidelines

- 3.1 Wall mounted and hanging signs should be made of wood, either routed and stained, sealed or painted, or smooth-finished and painted. Painted metal panels if well framed, or cast metal plaques may also be appropriate if compatible with the architecture.
- 3.2 Wall mounted nameplates may be of cast or engraved metal, such as bronze, brass or aluminum, as long as the color and finish is appropriate for the style and materials of the building.

- 3.3 Wall mounted directories may be of wood throughout or of metal frame construction with changeable nameplates of metal or matte finish plastic.
- 3.4 Lawn mounted signs may utilize a combination of materials for the mounting base and sign panel. Appropriate sign panel materials are identified above in 3.1. Base elements may be wood poles and/or frames or masonry piers of a finish and color compatible with that of the building.
- 3.5 Where desired, illumination of signs should be by indirect or inconspicuous sources, such as concealed or mini-spot lights.
- 3.6 Inner-lit plastic or metal signs should not be used in the historic district and are strongly discouraged.

Exhibit A

New Construction

POLICY 3: ARCHITECTURAL STYLE AND CHARACTER

RECOMMENDED



This newly built home reflects the architectural qualities of the neighborhood.

NOT RECOMMENDED



This home does not reflect the architectural elements found in other homes within the district.

Exhibit B

POLICY 3: ARCHITECTURAL STYLE AND CHARACTER – Detached Additions

RECOMMENDED



The second unit in the rear of this property conforms in design and materials to the primary residence.

NOT RECOMMENDED



This second unit (foreground) does not conform to the style of the primary residence, and as a two-story structure, detracts from the surrounding properties.

Exhibit C
Site Improvements

POLICY 3: FENCES, WALLS, SITE FEATURES

RECOMMENDED



Fence is of traditional design and compatible with historic nature of neighborhood

NOT RECOMMENDED



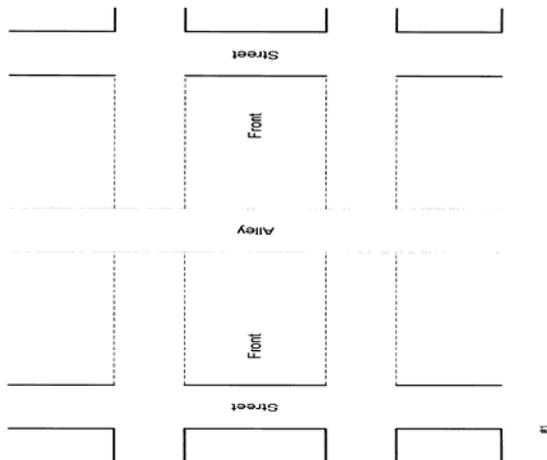
Use of Chain link fencing is discouraged.

Exhibit D

Office Professional

POLICY 1: PARKING AND SERVICE AREAS

Residential Alley Configuration



Preferred Office/Professional Parking Configuration

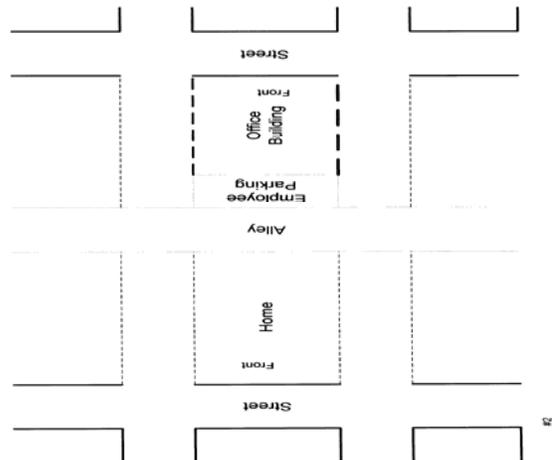


Exhibit E

Office Professional

POLICY 2: SIGNAGE TYPES & POLICY 3: SIGNAGE MATERIALS AND ILLUMINATION

RECOMMENDED



Sign is compatible with the residential features of the building and historic character of the district.

NOT RECOMMENDED



Sign is out of character for the neighborhood and size of sign as well as lettering is oversized and inappropriate for the setting.