

4.7 Historic Properties and Districts

I. GOALS

- A. To preserve Santa Rosa's historic heritage.
- B. To encourage maintenance and retention of historic structures and districts.
- C. To ensure that alterations to historic buildings are compatible with the character of the structure and the neighborhood.
- C. To discourage the demolition of significant historic structures.
- E. To assist property owners and designers in developing plans for historic properties and to encourage the compatibility of new structures in historic districts, and having those plans approved by the City.



Fig. 4.7.1 The De Turk Round Barn, built in the late 1890's, is located within the West End Preservation District. It is pictured here being restored by the City of Santa Rosa.

II HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND PRESERVATION DISTRICTS



Fig. 4.7.2 The NWPRR Depot built in 1904 and restored by the City in 1996, located in the Railroad Square Preservation District.



Fig. 4.7.3 The old St. Rose School in the St. Rose Preservation District. Built in 1931.



Fig. 4.7.4 The Sweet House, located in the Cherry Street Preservation District.

A. Landmarks in Santa Rosa are individual properties that have historical, architectural, or cultural significance to the City. As of the date of this publication, the City has designated 16 Landmarks, including the De Turk Round Barn, the Carrillo Adobe, the Rosenberg Building, and the Luther Burbank Home and Gardens.

B. Preservation districts are neighborhoods that are recognized as having special historic significance to Santa Rosa. As of this date, the City has designated six districts:

1. Railroad Square Preservation District
2. St. Rose Preservation District
3. Cherry Street Preservation District
4. Olive Park Preservation District
5. West End Preservation District
6. McDonald Preservation District

The Railroad Square Plan, adopted by the City in 1979, helped to guide development in the District over the past 20 years. While much of the Plan has come to fruition, other elements have not been implemented. The Saint Rose Historic Preservation District also has had a plan adopted by the City. These Plans are available at the Department of Community Development.

The remaining preservation districts have not yet had plans or neighborhood-specific guidelines prepared. When such guidelines are developed, they will be added to this document.

III. DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR HISTORIC PROPERTIES AND DISTRICTS

General design guidelines that apply to all historic structures and neighborhoods have been adopted by the City and are summarized in the following document: “Processing Review Procedures for Owners of Historic Properties.” It is available at the Department of Community Development. The Secretary of Interior’s “Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings” is a primary reference source used by the Cultural Heritage Board of Santa Rosa to evaluate development proposals and was a reference in developing the guidelines below. A summary of the “Standards” is included in the Appendix. The full document is identified in the Reference Section.

Design review is the process whereby proposed changes to historic properties (generally buildings older than 50 years) are reviewed by the Cultural Heritage Board or Design Review Board to ensure that the historic character of the structure and the neighborhood is maintained. Generally, projects that result in changes to historic buildings need to be reviewed by the City. Examples of such projects are restoration, rehabilitation, alteration, new construction, relocation, and demolition.

The design guidelines apply to all designated landmarks, all existing and proposed new structures located within preservation districts, all commercial projects adjacent to districts, and all historic commercial buildings located anywhere in the City of Santa Rosa. Commercial buildings are defined as duplexes, multiple residential structures, retail buildings, offices, warehouses, institutional buildings, etc.

A. ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

1. Locate a new garage, carport, or accessory building to the side or rear of the property, wherever possible.



Fig. 4.7.5 The Reilly House, located in the Olive Park Preservation District.



Fig. 4.7.6 The McKune-Babbini House located in the West End Preservation District.



Fig. 4.7.7 The Dr. J. W. Hooper House, located in the McDonald Preservation District.



Fig. 4.7.8 A two-story addition has been placed inconspicuously to the rear of this one-story Queen Anne Cottage.



Fig. 4.7.9 A second-story addition to this St. Rose Bungalow has been set back from the existing building front.



Fig. 4.7.10 A fine example of adaptive reuse is this Queen Anne house located in the St. Rose Preservation District that was converted from a home to an office.

2. Derive accessory building designs and details from the same era as the main structure.
The details can be less elaborate than those found on the main structure.
3. Design an accessory building to be in proper scale for the property and have an appropriate site relation to the main structure as well as surrounding structures.

B. ADDITIONS

1. Design a new addition so that it does not visually overpower the original building, compromise its historic character, or destroy any significant features and materials.
2. Locate an addition as inconspicuously as possible, on the rear or least character-defining elevation of the building.
3. Limit the size and scale of an addition so that it does not visually overpower the original structure.
4. Differentiate the addition from the original building so that the original form is not lost.
A design for a new addition can echo the original structure. Compatible contemporary designs are also acceptable.
5. Use historic materials that are compatible with the materials of the original building.
Contemporary substitute materials, such as vinyl siding, are not acceptable.
6. Design second story additions to single story homes to be subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling and set back from the existing building front.

C. DEMOLITION

The demolition of Landmarks or contributing buildings located within Preservation Districts may be restricted by State and City law and should not ordinarily be considered unless there are unusual circumstances surrounding the proposed demolition.

1. Provide mitigation for the demolition of historical resources.

Examples of mitigation measures for the demolition of significant historic buildings include adaptive reuse, reconstruction, or relocation. Examples of mitigation measures for less significant buildings include moving a building outside a district, restoring another building in exchange for the demolition, or the least desirable option, documentation and salvage. The Cultural Heritage Board is always willing to discuss other creative solutions. Early consultation with the Board is highly recommended.



Fig. 4.7.11 Picket fence with 36 inch posts and 30 inch pickets.

D. FENCES

1. Design new fences to be compatible with the architectural style, material, scale, and era of the main building or neighborhood.
2. Fencing should not obscure the front elevation of the primary structure on the property.



Fig. 4.7.12 Mechanical lift is screened by lattice work on this Queen Anne house used as an office.

E. DISABLED ACCESS

1. Place access ramps to the side or rear of a building wherever possible.
In lieu of ramps, mechanical lifts are encouraged.
2. Design new ramps or other structures to be as simple and unobtrusive as possible.

F. LANDSCAPING

1. Preserve significant historic landscape elements, such as grassy lawns, mature trees, hedges, foundation plantings, fences, walls, ground cover, trellises, patios, terraces, fountains, and gardens.
2. Preserve both the proportion of green area to building mass and the formal or informal character of the landscaping.
3. Match new landscape plants and materials with the original materials wherever possible.



Fig. 4.7.13 Landscape elements contribute to the character of this property as well as to the McDonald Preservation District as a whole.

G. NEW CONSTRUCTION

1. Design new construction so that the architectural character of the neighborhood is maintained. *Specific architectural styles are not mandated. Designs for new construction can also be contemporary.*
2. Design new construction to be compatible in height and proportion with adjacent structures.
3. Use materials and designs similar to that found throughout the neighborhood.



Fig. 4.7.14 New construction in the St. Rose Preservation District provides both office use (first floor) and residential units (second floor).

H. NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

1. Design changes to a newer building to be compatible with the house's architectural style and that of the neighborhood.
2. Changes to an older building should attempt to return the building to its original appearance

I. PAINTING

While the City does not regulate paint colors for individual homes in Historic Districts, applicants are encouraged to look to the surrounding neighborhood and attempt to harmonize new colors with the existing color palette. The Board can give advice on historic paint colors if desired.

J. PORCHES

1. Do not remove a porch, as it is one of the main defining features of a house.
Partial enclosure of a porch may be acceptable.
2. Do not add a new porch or deck to the main facade where one never existed.
3. Do not replace wood porches and porch steps with brick, ironwork, concrete, or concrete blocks.
Porch alteration compromises the overall appearance of a structure and disturbs its size and scale.



Fig. 4.7.15 A porch is one of the main defining features of a house and should not be enclosed or removed.

K. RELOCATION

1. Avoid the relocation of a historic building out of a District, as this negates the integrity of the site and setting.

Moving a building into or within a District may be acceptable if it is of an appearance and architectural style for the neighborhood and its new setback matches the existing buildings in the block.



Fig. 4.7.16 The old Santa Rosa Post Office, a Roman Renaissance style building, was moved from its Fifth Street site (in a Redevelopment area) to its current Seventh Street location in the St. Rose Preservation District. The restored landmark building houses the Sonoma County Museum.

L. REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT

The City does not regulate design aspects of ordinary repair and replacement projects. However, the Cultural Heritage Board can be a valuable resource to property owners undertaking routine maintenance projects.

M. REPLACEMENT ROOFING

1. Use roofing materials which duplicate the original wherever possible.
2. Do not change specialty materials such as tile or slate to something different.
A change to other materials could have an adverse effect on the property's integrity.



Fig. 4.7.17 Tile roofing is an integral part of this Mediterranean Revival house's character.

N. REPLACEMENT STOREFRONTS

1. Design new storefronts to be compatible with adjacent existing designs.
New storefronts should "read" as a storefront.
2. Respect the scale and proportion of the adjacent buildings in the new storefront design.
2. Select construction materials that are appropriate to the storefronts.
Wood, metal, and glass are usually more appropriate replacement materials than masonry which tends to give a massive appearance.
3. Differentiate the primary retail entrance from the secondary access to upper floors.
In Railroad Square, most entrances are recessed, with the side display windows at a 60 degree angle.



Fig. 4.7.18 New storefront in the Railroad Square Preservation District "reads" as a traditional storefront.

O. REPLACEMENT WINDOWS AND DOORS

1. Maintain the same configuration and details as the original windows and doors.
2. Ensure that any alterations to window and door openings should remain in proper proportion to the overall design of the building.



Fig. 4.7.19 The placement and relationship of windows and doors are critical parts of this Craftsman Style house.

P. SIGNS

1. Select traditional materials for new signs wherever possible.
2. Place signs in locations that do not damage or conceal architectural features and details.
3. Maintain a size that is consistent with the pedestrian scale of the district.
4. Keep graphics simple and legible.

Graphics painted on windows or applied to fabric awnings are also appropriate. Neon signs mounted inside the storefront window are also consistent with the historic period of the Railroad Square District.



Fig. 4.7.20 The old Railway Express Agency building is now used as a coffeehouse, with signage applied to the fabric awning and a neon sign mounted inside the window.

Q. SUBSTITUTE SIDING AND TRIM

1. If the original siding of a building is in need of repair, repair is preferred to replacement or covering over with a different material (for example, aluminum siding over wood siding).
The original siding material is a character-defining element of a building.