



CITY OF GRASS VALLEY DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES FOR THE 1872 HISTORIC TOWNSITE



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PREFACE

The Historic Design Review Guidelines are intended to supplement the City of Grass Valley's existing general plan policies guidelines, such as the South Auburn Street Master Plan, development code, ordinances, and specific plans.

Over the past two decades design guidelines for cities have evolved from simple documents with sketches and limited information to more informative and illustrative documents that reflect current preservation issues facing local governments. Of particular importance in the development of these design guidelines was the "Truckee Downtown Specific Plan: Volume 3 Historic Design Guidelines" prepared in 2003 by Nore` V. Winter. Other design guidelines reviewed and found to have merit included those for the City of Riverside, California (1993; 2003), the Topeka/Emporia, North Topeka/10th Street, Park Place/Fairview, and Biting Historic Districts, Wichita, Kansas (1995), and the City of Manitou Springs, Colorado (July 2009).

The design review guidelines do not override existing regulations, yet they will provide an important tool for both the public and the City of Grass Valley, including Historic Preservation Commission members, to make informed decisions regarding additions, alterations, infill, and other similar types of changes to historically significant residential homes and businesses located within Grass Valley's Historic 1872 Townsite.

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HOW TO USE THESE GUIDELINES

The City of Grass Valley Historic Design Review Guidelines are discussed in 8 chapters. The chapters begin with an introduction, followed by purpose and need, and historic context. Owners of historic homes in Grass Valley should become acquainted with the city's architectural history and the guidelines should address all the ranges of building types found in the Historic 1872 Townsite.

Once the owner of a property identifies the architectural style of his or her home or commercial building, Chapters 3-5 place the property into its proper context and describe character defining features of each of the Character Areas (Downtown Commercial; West Residential; and South Residential).

Chapter 6 provides details of specific "character defining features" found in the full range of historic properties identified in the Historic 1872 Townsite. This chapter also provides project specific recommendations that are important to understand before commencing rehabilitation or restoration of historic properties.

Chapter 7 discusses landscapes as they relate to the Historic 1872 Townsite, and makes recommendations to maintain and improve those landscapes.

Finally, Chapter 8 addresses additions and adaptive reuse of designated historic properties.

SUMMARY

The following 5 steps are intended to assist home owners in making prudent decisions regarding the preservation, restoration, and/or rehabilitation of their property.

STEP 1 - Identify your building's *architectural style*. It is important to understand the style of a building and how that style is reflected in specific architectural elements.

STEP 2 - Identify *similar architecture* in your neighborhood or Character Area, eg. Downtown Commercial, West Residential, and South Residential. The character of each neighborhood may help define and direct the specific preservation approaches taken on an individual property.

STEP 3 - Define the *character defining features* of your building, eg. windows, roofs, door openings, porches, siding, and ornamentation. Architectural styles generally have their own specific characteristics that give identify a particular property.

STEP 4 - Develop a *rehabilitation or preservation plan* that takes into account the historic context of the building and its character defining features.

STEP 5 - *Provide documentation* regarding the age of your building (historic photographs, maps, tax deeds, etc), as well as the specific design changes, additions or alterations in a concise manner for review by the City of Grass Valley.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE GRASS VALLEY HISTORIC DESIGN REVIEW SYSTEM



1.1 INTRODUCTION

Portions of the City of Grass Valley 1872 Historic Townsite are the focus of these guidelines. The historic 1872 Townsite is comprised of the Downtown Commercial District, the West Residential District, and the South Residential District (refer to Figures 1 and 2). These guidelines are intended to comply with and further define the design standards and development regulations found in the City of Grass Valley's Development Code, Municipal Codes, General Plan (Chapter 13 - Cultural/Historical Resources), Downtown Strategic Plan, and specific planning documents, such as those for Colfax Avenue.

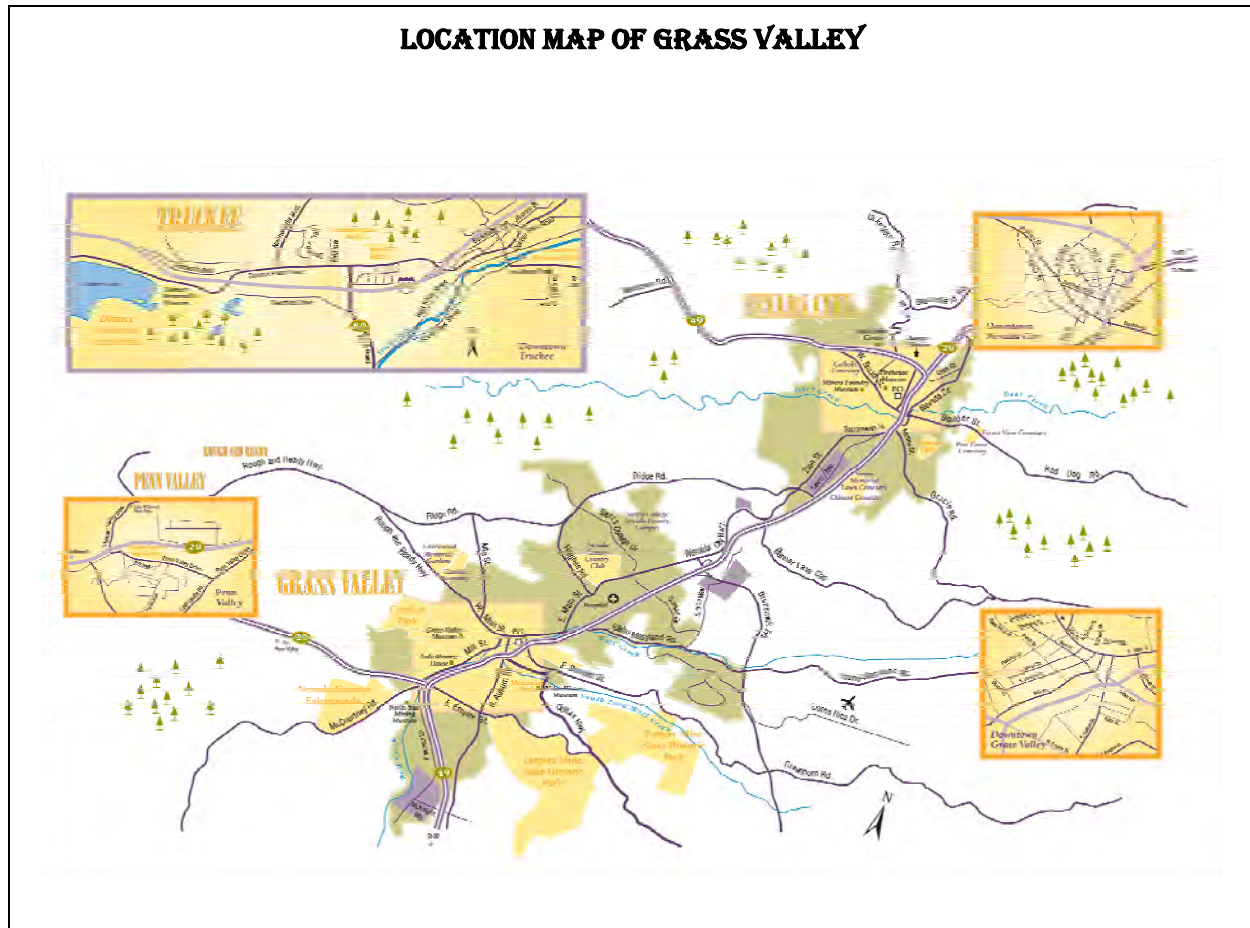


Figure 1: Location Map of Grass Valley (From Nevada County Gold, 2010)

Design Review Guidelines, administered by the Community Development Director, are one of the principal regulatory tools the City has chosen to protect, preserve, and enhance its heritage and architectural resources. The Historic Design Review system includes guidelines adopted by the City to assist in assessing the appropriateness of proposals for improvements that involve alterations and additions to historic buildings, structures, landscapes, and associated features located within the three historic districts illustrated in Figure 1, as well as for new construction within those districts.

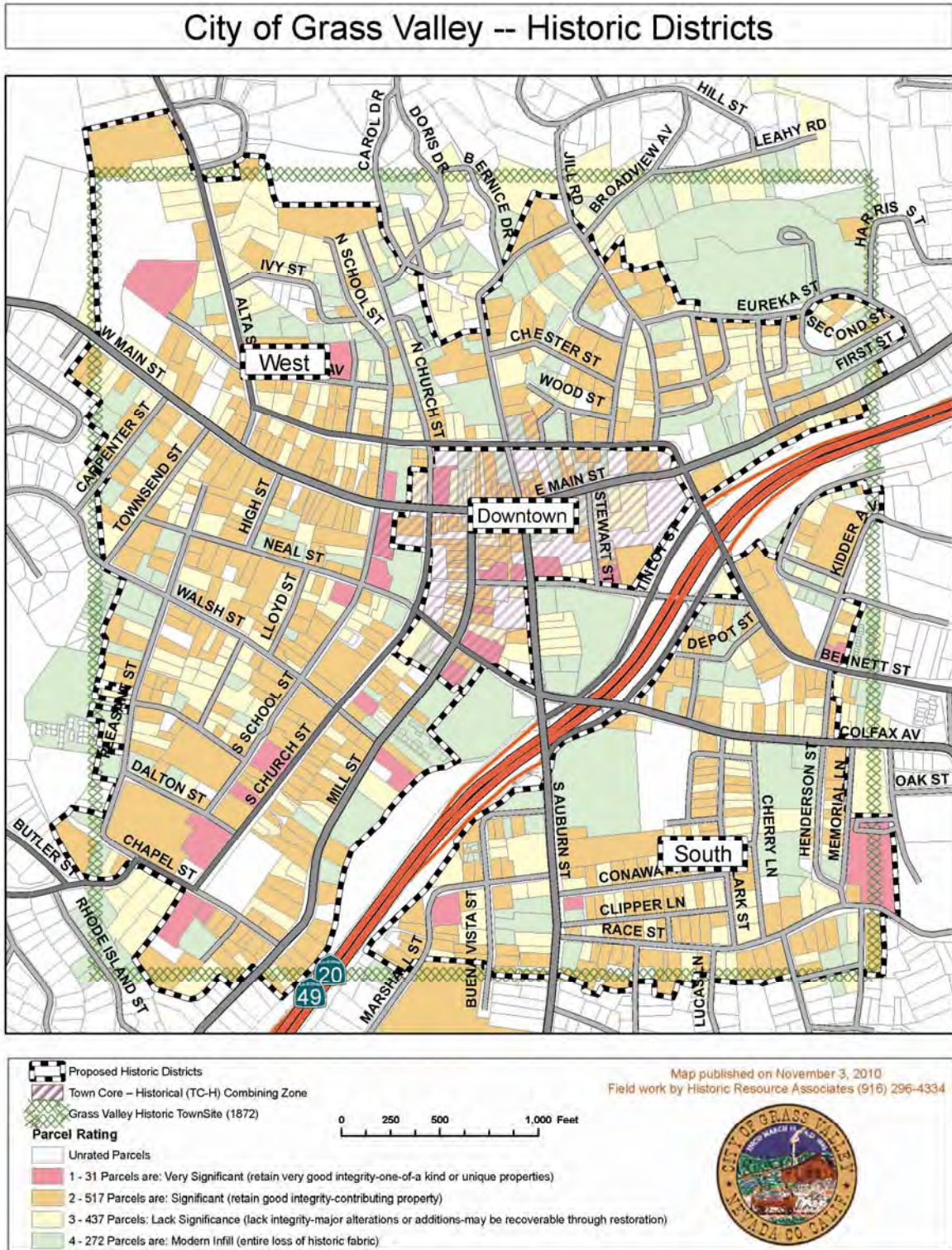


Figure 2: Grass Valley Historic 1872 Townsite District Map

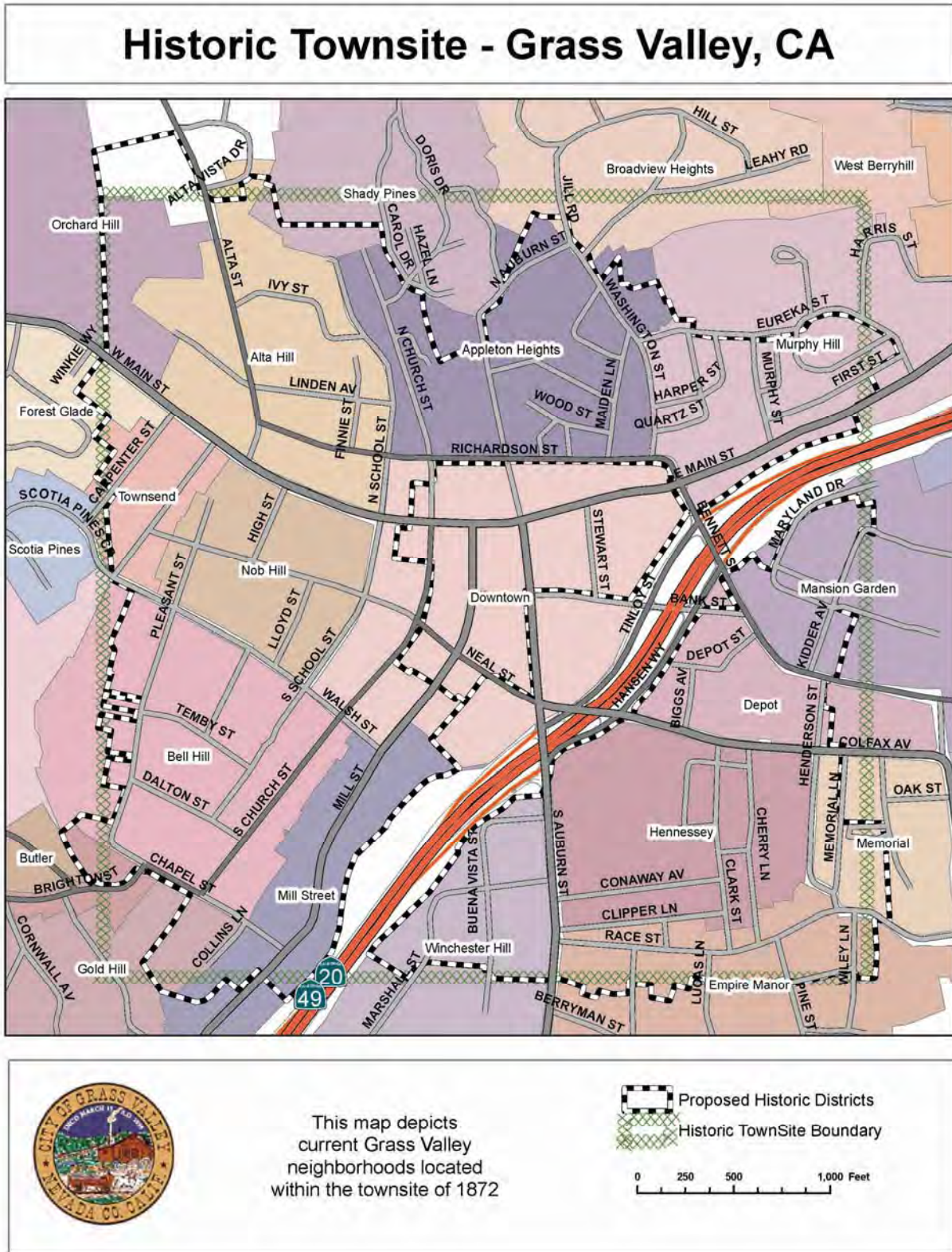


Figure 3: Grass Valley Historic 1872 Townsite Neighborhood District Map

It is the intent of the City to encourage the preservation of Grass Valley's historical and architecturally significant resources. The Design Review Guidelines are divided into nine chapters that address the range of issues that the City recognizes as important towards preserving the historic character of the community. It is the function of the City's Historical Commission to assist in the identification and designation of historical properties within the City, to provide guidance for the restoration and rehabilitation of historic properties, and to honor those property owners who have maintained or restored historical properties through special designation. The Grass Valley Historical Commission consists of five (5) members and one (1) alternate, each appointed by the City Council for a four year term.

As part of the City's ongoing preservation efforts, the Grass Valley Historical Commission has published "Heritage Homes of Grass Valley: A Catalog of Award-Winning Homes 1997-2006." This publication honors the rich architectural history of Grass Valley and celebrates the 10-year anniversary of the Heritage Home Program. The publication is available for purchase by contacting the Historical Commission Clerk.

1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED

Beginning in 2009 a comprehensive inventory was begun of residential and commercial properties located within the City of Grass Valley 1872 Historic Townsite (Figures 2 and 3). The objective was to photograph and record those properties that were deemed to warrant consideration as significant resources. Information regarding significant historical properties within the 1872 Townsite is available to the public by contacting the City of Grass Valley Community Development Department. In addition, historic resource inventory forms are available to interested property owners and the public. The inventory forms and recommendations regarding property significance are an essential part of moving towards a more comprehensive approach at preserving and enhancing the city's historical resources.

The format for these guidelines is intended to simplify and codify for the property owner flexible methods for maintaining, rehabilitating, enhancing, and preserving historic properties. Thinking "green" or making "eco-friendly" decisions regarding older properties is integral to historic preservation. Historic preservation is itself a form of conserving the earth's energy and casting a "green" shadow on the environment. Retaining historic fabric is a method of conserving the earth's natural resources. It is important to understand how a property relates to its immediate

environment from both a physical and historical perspective, and in this regard the property's landscape may also be important in defining a property's significance. The retention of shade trees, for example, provides relief from summer heat and saves energy. Besides retaining historic landscape features associated with residential properties, streetscapes and street furniture play an important part in defining the historic context and character of the community, adding to its charm, along with enhancing tourism and economic sustainability.

1.3 HISTORIC CONTEXT

The City of Grass Valley is located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains at an elevation of 2,200 to 2,800 feet above sea level. Grass Valley is a historic gold mining community that was established in the early 1850s. According to current records with the City of Grass Valley, the 1872 Townsite encompasses 370 acres, 1,164 parcels, and approximately 1,928 buildings and structures. The 1872 Townsite, however, does not include the entire jurisdictional boundaries of Grass Valley.

Principal streets within the 1872 Townsite include Neil Street, North and South Auburn Street, Alta Street, Eureka Street, Richardson Street, West and East Main



View of present-day Mill Street looking south from Main Street.



View of Mill Street looking south, circa 1866. Lawrence and Houseworth Photograph (courtesy Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco)

Street, Carpenter Street, Townsend Street, High Street, South School Street, South Church Street, Mill Street, Walsh Street, Columbia Street, Chapel Street, Race Street, and portions of Hwy 174/Colfax Avenue. There are cross-streets, as well as State Highway (SR) 49/20, which bisects the Townsite from north to south on its way to Nevada City.

The 1872 street pattern is not unlike other gold rush era mining communities, being irregular, following natural contours of the landscape, and limiting creek crossing as much as possible. The general aspect of the Townsite is east to west with gentle to moderate slopes on both sides of State Highway 49 and 20. While the topography of the Townsite was critical to the layout of streets and buildings, the geomorphology, namely gold bearing quartz, formed the catalyst for the creation of the Townsite itself.

Grass Valley's downtown core retains many Gold Rush Era brick masonry and stone buildings, and its residential neighborhoods are lined with homes dating from the 1850s through the 1930s, representing a wide variety of architectural styles. This City's rich architectural character is a valuable asset to its charm and an important draw for the region's tourism industry. Until the 1940s, the numerous mines in the area were the primary sources for employment and were complemented by commercial and service functions, most of which were concentrated in downtown Grass Valley. Annexations beginning in World War II and the post-war era generally facilitated residential development outside the original 1872 Townsite.



Rare vernacular rammed earth residence at the intersection of Bennett and Kidder streets.

1.4 THE VISION

Preserving and enhancing Grass Valley's downtown corridor and historic neighborhoods is one of the primary objectives and vision for the city's future. The City of Grass Valley General Plan "Historical Policies" (1-HP-11-HP) emphasize "preservation and restoration within the 1872 Townsite and 1893 and 1894 annexation area." Not only does historic preservation increase property values, it also helps foster heritage tourism, along with maintaining economic diversity and a "small town" atmosphere by providing a wide range of goods and services to the citizens of Grass Valley and the general public, and expanding employment opportunities, critical to achieving a sustainable community. Towards this end, the City and the Grass Valley Downtown Association have together crafted policy that guides the future of the downtown corridor. The Design Review Guidelines are an important part of the City's strategy to enhance its historical character and expand tourism opportunities that are part of the Mother Lode region and Highway 49 corridor. The vision for the future of Grass Valley is also defined and shaped by county-wide plans and the State Highway 49 corridor.

1.5 DESIGN GUIDELINES: AN OVERVIEW

Unlike zoning standards, design guidelines express community preferences for preservation, enhancement, and development, but may be applied to projects with greater flexibility than other zoning standards or municipal codes. The design guidelines can be used during the land use/development permit review process as additional criteria for project review. Design guidelines may be applied to specific projects with flexibility, because not all design criteria may be workable or appropriate for each project. In some circumstances, a guideline may be relaxed in order to accomplish another goal or meet the requirements of another guideline that the project review body determines is more important in the specific case. The overall objective is to ensure that the intent and spirit of the design guidelines are followed and to attain the best possible design. For these reasons, the guidelines are defined in terms of both goals and procedures. Site work and improvements to existing, non-historic structures are also addressed if they lie within one of the three historic districts.

Development of these guidelines conforms to the standards of the National Register of Historic Places, the California Office of Historic Preservation, the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties. Foremost, the guidelines reflect the historic context for the community as a whole and visual characteristics of the proposed districts, both as they exist today and

when first developed. The scale of the buildings, their materials and their site relationships are examples of the specific characteristics or patterns that were carefully analyzed and from which the design guidelines were developed. As noted earlier, these patterns and characteristics were identified through on-site field inspections of the entire 1872 Historic Townsite, as well as discussions with City staff and Historical Commission members. The guidelines were also developed to encourage the retention of the visual and historic integrity of Grass Valley, while encouraging creative design solutions. While the guidelines help to focus on architectural character, style, and specific design motifs, the intent is to provide a variety of approaches for design compatibility that will assist property owners in various restoration and rehabilitation issues.

1.5.1 Types of Projects Reviewed

Public and private entities doing work within the designated Historic Districts may be subject to city review. The following are among the types of work reviewed when an historic property is encountered or projects proposed within designated historic districts:

- Alteration to the exterior of an existing building or structure
- Repair of exterior features on an existing building or structure
- New construction
- Additions to the exterior of an existing building or structure
- Moving an existing building or structure
- Demolition of an existing building or structure
- Construction of a fence or wall facing the public street
- Construction of a sign
- Construction or alteration to an awning or canopy
- Site work, including landscaping
- Excavation and fill

1.5.2 Methodology

One of the first steps in the process of historic restoration is to identify specific issues that may affect the integrity of an individual property and/or a proposed historic district. These steps include: (1) Identify key features of historic resources that should be respected when planning any repairs, alterations, or new construction; (2) Retain original materials, detail and design as much as possible; (3) Avoid the addition of modern elements, which would diminish the features that define the historic character of the structure; (4) Avoid removing or altering any

historic material or significant architectural features; and (5) Rehabilitation work should not destroy the distinguishing character of the property or its environment.

1.5.3 Design Districts and Character Areas

In addition to general guidelines for preservation and new development, specific guidelines are included that relate to differing design contexts for individual neighborhoods or zones, describe herein as "character areas." The three character areas or areas of interest include: Downtown Commercial; West Residential; and South Residential. The boundaries of the Character Areas are depicted in Figure 1.

1.6 GRASS VALLEY HISTORIC RATING SYSTEM

In order to effectively assess the relative value or historical significance of buildings and structures in the 1872 Historic Townsite of Grass Valley, a priority rating system was applied with four categories.

A **Priority 1** rating was applied to properties that retain superb integrity, are one-of-kind or unique examples, are associated with a theme, event, or person of significance in the history of Grass Valley, or have already been listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR), or in certain circumstances have already been locally designated by the City of Grass Valley as a Heritage Home. These properties may be individually significant and/or contributors to a historic district. This rating may be applied to sites or locations of significant events, such as the discovery site of quartz gold.



Priority 1 Property

A **Priority 2** rating was applied to properties that retain good integrity with some loss of historic fabric, but continue to convey their period of significance and architectural style or sub-style. They also include properties that have been locally designated by the City of Grass Valley as a Heritage Home. Generally, these properties will be considered as contributors to a proposed historic district.



Priority 2 Property

A **Priority 3** rating was applied to properties that have lost a substantial amount of integrity, either through remodeling, additions, or other types of alterations. These properties were not considered individually significant, and only in exceptional cases were they deemed to be contributors to the proposed historic district(s). Priority 3 properties, however, may still be recoverable through proper restoration or rehabilitation.



Priority 3 Property

A **Priority 4** rating was applied to properties that generally lacked integrity or were modern (post 1950s) infill. It is extremely unlikely that these properties may be recoverable and elevated to a higher rating.



Priority 4 Property

The historic survey criteria have implications with regard to the role of the Historic Design Standards and Guidelines. For example, for properties rated Priority 1, the primary goal is preservation of the property to the highest degree possible.

For properties rated Priority 2 (contributing properties), it is desirable to preserve original features. In addition, removal of non-historic alterations and reconstruction of historic features are also important objectives. With respect to a request for demolition, the full list of criteria which are specified within the City's Demolition Ordinance must be met in order to substantiate the need for the demolition.

For Priority 3 properties, it is recommended that character defining features and historic fabric be preserved. In addition, special encouragement will be provided for property owners to restore or rehabilitate their properties, and the guidelines for removing non-historic alterations and the reconstruction of missing architectural elements will be emphasized. Owners of Priority 3 properties are encouraged to restore their buildings to their historic condition, but there will be greater flexibility in treatment of more recent alterations and in repair of historic materials. Emphasis is placed on using preservation incentives.

Finally, for properties rated Priority 4, preservation is not an objective. In these cases, the guidelines for new construction apply. Alterations to the properties may occur that are compatible with the overall character of the district. Demolition applications for structures in this category are generally handled through normal city permitting procedures.

1.7 DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

The degree to which a property owner must comply with the guidelines varies from project to project. The following terms related to compliance are used in the design guidelines contained in this document.

Historic Context - In many cases, the applicant is instructed to relate to the "historic context" of the project site or neighborhood. The historic context relates to those properties and structures adjacent to and within the same historic district or block as the proposed project.

Historic Structure - In general, an historic structure is one that is at least 50 years old or older, or is associated with significant people or events in the history of Grass Valley or Nevada County. In the context of these guidelines, an historic structure is one that dates from the community's historic period of significance (circa 1852-1950) used for defining context and retains good integrity. Buildings that have been rated Priority 1 and 2 in the historic resources inventory are considered historic structures.

Contributing - Buildings within boundaries of the three historic districts that were rated Priority 1 or 2 during the historic resource inventory are considered contributing properties, meaning that they were constructed during the period of significance (circa 1852-1950) and retain adequate architectural integrity.

Non-Contributing - These properties would more strongly contribute to the proposed historic districts if they were returned to their original appearance through appropriate restoration and/or rehabilitation. Non-Contributing properties were categorized as Priority 3 in the historic resources inventory.

Character Area - Describes a term used to define a particular area of the Historic Grass Valley 1872 Townsite with common physical characteristics and a shared historic context. The three identified character areas include: Downtown Commercial; West Residential; and South Residential.

Consider - When the term consider is used, a design application is offered to an applicant as an example of one method of how the design guideline at hand could be met.

Essential - Those buildings within the Grass Valley 1872 Townsite Historic Districts that are Priority 1 are considered essential structures in the local survey rating. These buildings are in comparatively original condition or have been properly restored. While the buildings might be improved by some further, relatively minor, restoration efforts, preservation is the primary goal.

Non-Essential - These structures, rated Priority 4, are located within the 1872 Historic Townsite, but either were built after the period of significance (1950), or have been so compromised that they retain little or no historic fabric and form.

Preferred - In some cases, the city may recommend that a certain design approach is preferred. In such a case, that approach should be employed, unless an alternative can be demonstrated to meet the intent of the guideline.

Encourage - In some cases a particular design approach is encouraged. In such cases, that method should be employed, unless an alternative would better meet the intent of the guidelines.

Appropriateness - In some cases, a proposed action or design choice is defined as being appropriate. In such cases, by choosing that design approach, the applicant will be in compliance with the Historic Design Review Guidelines as well as other municipal codes and ordinances. However, in certain situations, there may be another design approach that should be considered which may ultimately be deemed appropriate. Inappropriate means that the proposed design or improvement is not compatible with the guidelines. When the term inappropriate is used, the relevant design approach will generally not be permitted.

Guideline - In the context of this document, a guideline is a design preference that should be met when appropriate for a particular project. On a case by case basis, a guideline may be relaxed by the review authority in order to facilitate compliance with another guideline that has been deemed more important, without compromising the overall objectives of the project or the guidelines.

Should - If the term should appears in a design guideline, compliance is expected, when the particular condition described applies to the project at hand. However,

flexibility in applying the guideline may occur, when relaxing it would permit greater compliance with other guidelines and when the general intent is still met.

1.8 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: What do design guidelines do?

A: Design guidelines help retain the visual cohesiveness of a historic neighborhood, and ultimately enhance property values.

Q: What is an historic district?

A: An historic district is a specific area of a city or town that has been identified and recognized for its historic and architectural significance.

Q: How many does Grass Valley have?

A: There are three historic districts, two residential and one commercial, which include the Downtown Commercial, West Residential, and South Residential.

Q: How does being listed in a historic district protect historic neighborhoods?

A: A locally designated historic district can be a tool in fighting many of the negative economic trends that occur in the older sections of a community. There is a connection between the effectiveness of community awareness programs, the creation of effective municipal rehabilitation programs, and improved resident and investor confidence – all factors that can have a positive effect on property values. Further, once a district is designated, all demolitions occurring within its boundaries are reviewed. For historic properties that contribute to the significance of the historic district, demolition can be delayed while the City's Historic Commission seeks alternatives to demolition.

Q: What are “Contributing” and “Non-Contributing” structures in historic districts?

A: “Contributing” elements in a historic district include buildings, sites, structures or objects that significantly add to the architectural quality or historic association of a district. By possessing high to good levels of integrity, these buildings, sites, structures or objects add to the historic character of a district. “Non-Contributing” elements do not add to the architectural quality or historic association of a district. Due to alterations, disturbances, additions, or other changes, non-contributing elements no longer possess integrity, nor reflect significant historic character.

Q: What do Design Review Guidelines do?

A: In general, design review guidelines help preserve historic districts as records of our heritage. They help to protect property values by managing changes, thereby reinforcing the assets of a district. The value of individual historic structures and groups of historic buildings will thus be strengthened. Design review guidelines provide a fair and consistent review of proposed work in historic districts and provide uniform standards by which all projects are evaluated.

Q: Are there any benefits in having a property located in a historic district?

A: Besides taking pride in owning a recognized historic property, your project may qualify for incentives such as a low interest loan through a variety of programs offered by the city, state, and federal government.

Q: What should I think about when I consider changes to my home?

A: When considering changes to your historic structure, try to retain as much of the historic fabric as possible. Retain the massing and overall form of the property, particularly as it is viewed from public spaces.

CHAPTER 2

GRASS VALLEY

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES



2.1 INTRODUCTION

The architecture of the City of Grass Valley reveals, perhaps better than anything else, the fabric that characterizes the community's cultural and economic history. While Grass Valley's architecture at first glance may appear to be representative of many other gold rush era towns, at closer examination it is apparent that Grass Valley developed its own rather unique style. This style was, in part, a consequence of its working-class community, as compared to Nevada City, and its workforce, many employed as laborers in the area's quartz mining industry.

It is also apparent that while the city's commercial architecture remained relatively intact through the early and middle part of the 20th century, with the exception of the lower floor facades, that its residential architecture evolved as a result of changes in popular taste, such as the Arts and Crafts and Revivalist movements. The most deleterious changes to the city's architecture appear to have occurred after World War II, in part due to deteriorated building fabric, a lack of architectural design standards, and the trend towards absentee landownership. Even so, the city still retains a large stock of pre-1920s buildings and structures.

2.2 ARCHITECTURAL PERIODS AND STYLES

A variety of historic house styles contribute to Grass Valley's architectural diversity. Admirers of old houses will observe that although some houses are stylistically pure and easy to characterize, many are vernacular (folk or evolved locally) and exhibit features of several styles and time periods. Like food and fashion, houses were a cultural index of wealth and sophistication. Hence, alterations and additions over the years reflect the changing social fabric of the community, wealth, prestige, and expanding households. New house forms that were the height of fashion in San Francisco and Sacramento may not be well represented in Grass Valley, yet a number of exuberant homes were built in the city, displaying high style architecture and expressing the owner's affluence. The following styles were identified in Grass Valley's Historic 1872 Townsite during a historic resource survey, and are the focus of this chapter.

2.2.1 Commercial Buildings (circa 1850-1900)

Predominantly brick or stone commercial buildings were constructed in Grass Valley beginning in the early 1850s following several devastating fires. Variations include an iron-front or iron and brick-front façade; Italianate façade; a classically-inspired brick, stone, or stucco-faced façade; arcaded blocks; and false-front designs. All these variation applied to commercial architecture in Grass Valley and the greater Mother Lode region have their antecedents in Europe and later in the Northeast and the Mid-West United States. Each design could be adapted individually, and in groupings, often-times sharing a common wall.



A handsome Classical Revival brick masonry hotel known as the Holbrooke on West Main Street. Note the stepped parapet roof and repetition in the cornice windows and doors.



Note the flat parapet, use of arched lintels to dress the windows, and row of brick dentils below the belt course on the Washington Brewery Building facing E. Main Street.



Row of circa 1850s commercial brick storefronts with modest remodeling along W. Main Street.



Architectural details for a typical Grass Valley masonry commercial building

Character defining features of the city's commercial buildings include 1-3 stories in height, 2 to over 6 bays, classical detailing, brick construction with cast-iron architectural detail, flat roofs with a parapets, columns, decorative pilasters, dentils, cornices, single and double recessed entrance doors, deeply-set windows, iron shutters, large display or store-front windows, bays, a continuous sill, corbelling, belt courses, rectangular and arched windows, and, in the case of false-front designs, a gable or hipped roof behind the front parapet. Parapets often varied from a stepped gable, semi-circular gable, pediment or stepped gable, to a triangular pediment. Some commercial buildings include wood gable roofs set atop flat roofs with brick parapets.

2.2.2 Gold Rush/Mother Lode Residential Vernacular (circa 1849-1865)

Gold Rush or Mother Lode Vernacular architecture is generally derived from pre-fabricated house design plans brought to California from the East Coast, particularly New England. The architectural style generally lacks the ornamentation exhibited in styles such as Italianate, Empire, and Queen Anne. Key character defining features include wrap-around porches or verandas, modest ornamentation, clapboard or horizontal ship-lap siding (other lap sidings were generally added later), moderate to steep gabled roofs, many with intersecting

gables, symmetrical facades, boxed eaves, one to two-stories high, 6 over 6 or 4 over 4 light double-hung wood-sash windows, and paneled wood doors.



The elegant Coleman House with its intersecting gable roof and wrap-around porch.



Influenced by New England's Greek Revival homes, this early two-story vernacular Gold Rush Era home occupies a large parcel overlooking Grass Valley.

2.2.3 Greek Revival (circa 1849-1865)

The Greek Revival style was based on the architecture of classic Greek temples and grew from an increasing interest in classical buildings in western Europe and America. It was known as the “National Style” in America between 1830 and 1850 because of its nationwide predominance and popularity. Massachusetts architect-carpenter Benjamin Asher (1773–1845) is credited with disseminating the Greek Revival style through his influential house plan books.

The characteristic element shared by virtually all Greek Revival buildings is the wide band of trim below the cornice, representing the classical entablature. Other defining features include pilasters or paneled trim at the building corners, flat-roofed entry porches supported by round or square columns, and door surrounds that include a transom and sidelights. The sidelights on Greek Revival houses are characteristically nearly door-height versus the partial-height sidelights seen on Federal houses. Windows typically have 6/6 sashes per window with decorative surrounds using layered molding sometimes flanked by wooden shutters, and both open and pediment style gable roofs. Corner squares are often seen on window surrounds. The most enduring innovation of the Greek Revival period was the introduction of the front-gabled house, in which the gable end is turned 90 degrees to face the street. Elaborate examples feature a full-height, full-width colonnaded porch that presents a temple-like façade.



Modest Greek Revival Cottage with porch modifications.



Modest Greek Revival Cottage embellished with fish-scale and standard rectangular shingles and a Late-Victorian style porch.



- shallow roof pitch
- end gabled
- triangular pediment
- of wide trim boards
- window crown
- lap siding
- 2 over 2 windows
- tall & narrow 6 over 6
- double-hung windows
- doorway with transom
- & side lights
- porch not original-
- redone in Queen Anne
- style
- raised porch at entry

Architectural detail for a Greek Revival House

2.2.4 Gothic Revival (circa 1850–1880)

The Gothic Revival style, less popular nationally than the competing Greek Revival and Italianate styles, was used primarily for churches, colleges, and rural houses. Steeply pitched roofs, cross gables, and lacy verge boards (gable trim, also called bargeboards) are the signatures of Gothic Revival houses. The most common plan is symmetrical with a central cross gable and a one-story porch. Typical features include hood molds over pointed arched or rectangular windows and doors, towers, and bay windows.



Mount St. Mary's Convent Gothic Revival Church. Note the rose window below the gabled spire and above the main entrance door.



Gothic Revival Residence lacking icicles in the central gable, but exhibiting classic Carpenter Gothic design elements, such as the steep front facing cross-gable roof.

2.2.5 Grass Valley Italianate (circa 1860–1880)

The Italianate style was loosely based on rural Italian farmhouses with their characteristic square towers. Sometimes called the “Bracketed Style,” its most obvious distinguishing feature is the use of widely spaced ornamental brackets, single or in pairs, supporting the cornice eaves. Almost always two or three stories in height, Italianate houses have low-pitched roofs with wide, overhanging eaves. Windows are generally tall, narrow, and curved or arched with elaborate crowns; paired and triple windows are common. Doors are often double with heavy molding. Italianate was the most popular house style in America in the 1860s and 1870s.



Italianate influence house with a complex hip and gable roof.



- shallow roof pitch
- bracketed cornice
- brackets
- shutters not original
- bay window
- shrubs normally trimmed to bottom of window
- entry porch
- curved walks

Architectural detail for a Italianate House

2.2.6 Mid to Late Victorian Gold Rush Vernacular (circa 1850-1900)

2.2.6.1 Cross-Gable House (circa 1855-1900)

The Cross-Gable house style developed from the Gold Rush Vernacular homes found throughout the Mother Lode. Cross-Gabled homes are scattered throughout Grass Valley's Historic 1872 Townsite. The chief benefit of the cross-gable design was to create a living space within the second-story of the home, usually consisting of a modest attic. Windows are generally placed below the apex of the roof peak to provide light and ventilation.



Late Victorian Vernacular Cross-Gable design.



Typical details of a Late Victorian Residence

2.2.6.2 Hipped Roof House (circa 1855-1900)

Another important subtype of the Late Victorian Gold Rush Vernacular homes is the “hipped roof” house. This form of building transcended from the mid-19th century through the 20th century and was a popular house form into the 1920s. The style is identified by its square massing and hipped roof. Virtually all the homes of this style in Grass Valley were designed with a full-length front porch or a wrap-around porch. The ornamentation of these homes generally includes brackets under the roof eaves, gingerbread and fretwork above the porch columns, and a symmetrical façade.



Late Victorian hipped roof home.



*Rare mid-Victorian (circa 1870) brick hipped roof residence.
Note the more recent window alterations.*

2.2.7 Queen Anne (circa 1880-1910)

“Queen Anne architecture” is a misnomer because the style drew no inspiration from the formal Renaissance architecture that dominated Queen Anne of England’s reign (1714-1792). It was named and popularized by a group of English architects who borrowed the visual vocabulary of late medieval styles, including half timbering and patterned surfaces. The William Watts Sherman house in Newport, Rhode Island, built by Boston architect Henry Hobson Richardson and featuring a half-timbered second story, is recognized as the first Queen Anne style house built in America. The British government introduced the Queen Anne design to America with several buildings it constructed for the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, and helped to launch a style that soon replaced Second Empire as the country’s most popular and fashionable domestic architecture style.

High-style Queen Anne houses are the most exuberantly decorated and ornate manifestations of Victorian-era architecture. The style’s defining characteristics include an asymmetrical façade; a partial or full-width one-story porch that frequently wraps around one or both sides; a steeply pitched, irregularly-shaped gable roof; elaborate chimneys; towers, turrets and other wall projections (bays and overhangs); and multiple surface materials creating textured walls. Windows generally have simple surrounds and single-paned sash. Entrance doors are single and often feature carved detailing and a pane of glass in the upper half. Stained glass accents are trademark features in doors and windows. Polychromatic paint schemes that emphasize complex trim details are particularly well suited to Queen Anne houses. Four main subcategories of the Queen Anne style have been defined based on detailing, such as spindle work (with delicate spindle ornamentation), free Classic (with classical columns), half-timbered (with half-timbering on gables or upper story walls), and patterned masonry (with patterned brick, stone and terra cotta).



Another variation, albeit later, of the Queen Anne design. Note the square bays.



Common example of a modified Queen Anne Row House.



2.2.8 Late Victorian Eclectic (circa 1890-1910)

Late Victorian Eclectic houses reflect the transition between architectural designs that were popularized through the 1880s, such as Italianate, Stick, and Queen Anne, and more modest derivations of those designs. Late Victorian homes in Grass Valley share design elements of earlier homes, but generally lack architectural detail expressed by home based upon more rigid and ornamented architectural styles popularized in plan books and magazines of the period. Many of Grass Valley's modest miner's cottages fall into this category.



This home illustrates the transition between a Queen Anne Row house, early "hipped roof" house, and the more simplified Late Victorian cottage.



An unusual example of a Late Victorian asymmetric plan, having an inset porch and front gable design bearing Queen Anne architectural elements. A nearly identical house was built upslope on the adjacent parcel.

2.2.9 Prairie (circa 1900–1920)

Modernism arrived at the turn of the century with its Prairie and Craftsman styles. The Prairie style was a short-lived modernistic style developed by a group of Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired Chicago architects. Its single most distinguishing characteristic is a shallow hipped roof with widely overhanging eaves, providing a “low to the ground” feel. Prairie houses, frequently executed in stucco, often feature massive, square porch supports; prominent horizontal elements; and grouped casement windows.



This rare Grass Valley Prairie style home along W. Main Street typifies the design styles influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright in Chicago at the turn of the century

2.2.10 Craftsman/Bungalow (circa 1905–1930)

The Craftsman style was born in California and drew inspiration from the Arts and Crafts movement and its focus on natural or organic materials. Widely disseminated through pattern books and magazines, some of which were available in kits, it became the most prevalent style for small houses in America until the Great Depression. One and 1½ story Craftsman style houses were popularly known

as "bungalows," a term that reflected the exaggerated rooflines of many of the houses.

In common with the Prairie style, the hallmark of a Craftsman house is its roof. In this case, it is generally a shallow gable (versus hipped) roof with overhanging eaves and visible roof beams and rafters. Full or partial-width porches with tapered square or multiple supports, often of stone or concrete block, are typical. Characteristic bungalow windows are set in pairs or triples, double-hung with rectangular divided lights in the top sash and a single light in the bottom sash.



*One of the better examples of the true Craftsman or Craftsman Bungalow design.
Note the clipped gable roof and multiple porch columns.*



Classic front-gable Craftsman with an extended roof porch.



*Another front gable Craftsman with shingle exterior cladding.
The triple window with divided sashes typifies this house type.*

2.2.11 Revivalist Styles (circa 1910-1940)

The Eclectic movement began near the end of the 19th century and embraced a variety of Old World architectural traditions. Emphasizing careful copies of historic patterns, it spawned a number of period revival styles that coexisted in friendly competition, including Colonial Revival, Tudor/English Cottage Revival, Neoclassical, Italian Renaissance, and Mission.

2.2.11.1 Tudor/English Cottage Revival

The Tudor, or English Cottage, Revival style in America was based loosely on medieval English architecture. Enormously popular in the 1920s and 1930s, it benefited from advances in masonry veneering technique that allowed for the recreation of English brick and stucco façades. Steeply pitched roofs, prominent cross gables, half-timbering, large chimneys with chimney pots, and tall narrow windows with multi-pane glazing are the hallmarks of the Tudor/English Cottage Revival style. Entrance doorways, typically arched, are often elaborated with brick surrounds mimicking quoins. Multi-pane casement windows in groups of three or more are common.



An example of English Cottage Revival design along W. Main Street exhibiting many important design elements emphasizing the use of brick, arches, bays, steep gables, and hipped roofs to create an attractive residence. This home, built in 1926 for Ernest and Clara George, was restored after a recent fire.



Architectural details for a Storybook style masonry English Cottage

While not a common architectural form in Grass Valley, Spanish Revival, Mediterranean, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Mission Revival Architecture were extremely popular forms of architecture built throughout California from the early 1900s through the 1940s. Character defining features of these building types include Spanish clay tile roofs, arched windows and doors, stucco exterior cladding, and the use of Spanish or Mediterranean style glazed tiles for entries, exterior wall ornamentation, and interior fireplace surrounds.



Spanish Colonial Revival Architecture. Once a mortuary.

2.2.12 Art Deco/Modern (circa 1920–1940)

Art Deco architectural styles evolved in America during the 1920s and the 1930s. Characteristics of Art Deco architecture include smooth wall surfaces, usually clad with stucco, zigzag, chevron, and other stylized linear design motifs, along with towers and vertical projections. The later Modernistic styles, emphasizing horizontals, flat roofs, smooth wall surfaces, and large window expanses, renounced historic precedent in a radical departure from the revival styles of previous decades. Most suburban houses that were built after 1935 fall into the Modern style category. These include the familiar forms, particularly California Ranch, split-level, and contemporary. The one-story ranch house form, designed by a pair of California architects, was the prevailing style during the 1950s and 1960s. Contemporary was the favored style for architect-built houses between 1950 and 1970. Neo-Eclecticism, which emerged in the mid-1960s and supplanted the Modern style, represented a return to traditional architectural styles and forms. It includes Mansard, Neo-Colonial, Neo-French, Neo-Tudor, Neo-Mediterranean, Neo-Classical Revival, and Neo-Victorian. These styles borrow prominent details from historic models in bold, free interpretations.



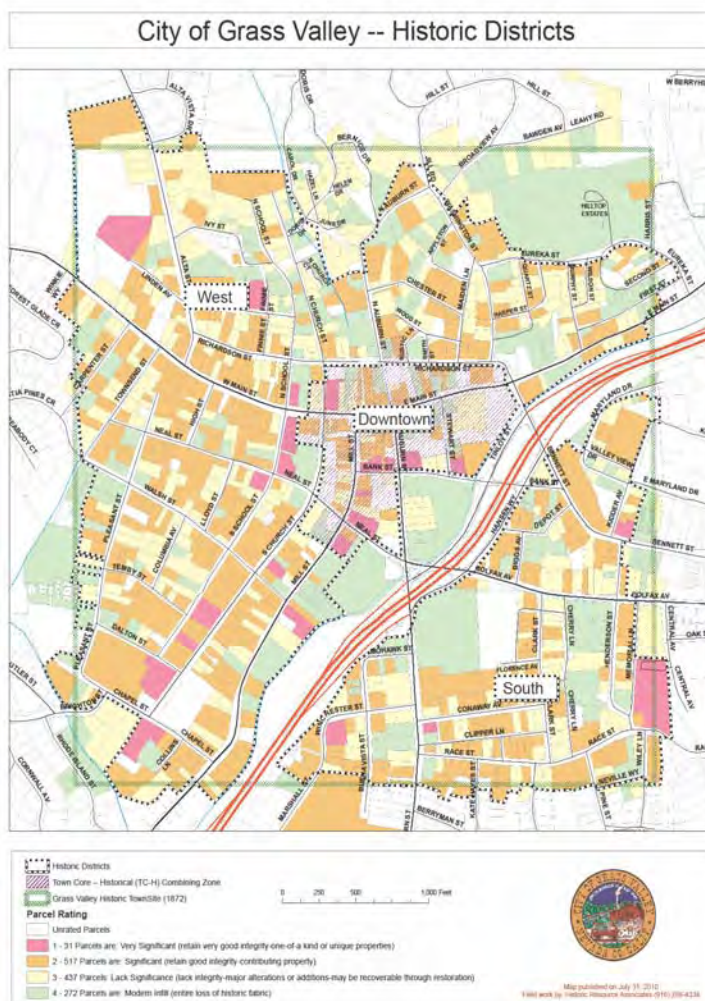
The striking Art Deco Del Oro Theater at the corner of Mill and Neal Streets.

CHAPTER 3

DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT CHARACTER AREA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Commercial District Character Area of Grass Valley comprises all of the city's core historic commercial district, including Mill Street, West and East Main Street, South Auburn Street, portions of North and South Auburn Street, Bank Street, Stewart Street, and portions of Neal Street.





Row of two-story brick storefronts facing W. Main Street

3.2 HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Downtown Grass Valley has been the center of commerce and trade in Grass Valley for the past 160 years. The commercial district includes many of the city's earliest buildings, some dating to the first few years of the California Gold Rush.

Unlike the residential neighborhoods, the commercial downtown buildings are generally built of brick, stone, or, in several cases, concrete. The original wooden buildings constructed during the Gold Rush were replaced with fire resistant materials following several devastating fires during the early 1850s. Street level facades are built of brick, wood, and stone, most having large vertically oriented display windows.

One of the most notable key buildings in the commercial district is the Holbrooke Hotel built in 1862. The hotel, designed in the Gold Rush Classical Revival architectural style with a full width second-story balcony and rows of tall vertical windows once having steel shutters, reflects the importance of Grass Valley during the halcyon years of the quartz gold mining boom. The hotel conveys an important prototype architecture that creates a sense of visual continuity along West Main Street.



Holbrooke Hotel (California State Historical Landmark)

During the past 75 years, breaks in architectural continuity in the historic downtown have been largely a product of incremental alterations to the front facades, most at street level. Signs, building color, and the loss of original architectural details all contribute to a diminishing continuity in the historic downtown. While Grass Valley emerged as a center of commerce and trade during the Gold Rush, it is important to understand that its history spans the succeeding decades through World War II. Hence, certain alterations, along with new infill in the historic downtown, should be viewed as part of the city's historic evolution and context. In essence, diversity should be viewed as positive just so long as the diversity is consistent with the historic context and architectural character that evolved in the historic downtown from the 1850s through the 1940s.

3.3 HISTORIC CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Historic character is an important term that reflects a wide range of specific architectural designs and features. Historic character includes a building's massing, roof shape, wall ornamentation, window and door arrangement, and signage.

Two of the most distinguishable character features in the historic downtown are the false front or parapet walls of many of the buildings, and the placement and configuration of verandas and balconies.



Row of brick storefronts with flat parapets of different heights facing W. Main Street.

The continuity of the historic downtown is influenced by the symmetry of its numerous false front storefronts and the linear arrangement of verandas and awnings shadowing the sidewalk below.

Street furniture, such as clocks and planting beds, enhance the character of the historic downtown and create a sense of place and aesthetics conducive to both shopping and heritage tourism.

Tourists and the general public often experience Grass Valley through the backs of buildings, such as along S. Auburn Street where the city offers public parking. Architectural continuity from the rear of the city's historic commercial buildings is in some respects equally as important as it is from the primary streetscapes and fronts of the buildings.



View looking west at the rear of the Union Building from the parking lot facing South Auburn Street.

Another important feature of Grass Valley's historic downtown is the curvature of the street, the slope or gradient as one travels north and west respectively once entering from State Route 49, and the width of the street as it pertains to the flow of traffic and public parking.



View looking north from Neal Street at the curvature of Mill Street.

Grass Valley's historic downtown circulation system was designed in the 19th century for use by horses and buggies. Later an electric railway or streetcar line, built in 1901, connected Grass Valley with Nevada City. The line, which included 6 miles of track, was abandoned in 1923. The railway line, however, provided the city with its first form of public transportation. Since the 1920s, the automobile has garnered favor, and today the city's historic downtown corridor is frequently congested, particularly during events and on weekends.

3.3.1 Current Character Description

Today, Grass Valley's historic downtown is an eclectic blend of architecture, dating from the 1850s through the 1940s. The predominant architectural style, however, is that of the Gold Rush, characterized by brick single and two-story false-front buildings.

While other buildings of later vintage may display important architectural features and design, such as the Nevada County Bank, it is the Gold Rush Era architecture that visitors expect to see when they enter downtown Grass Valley. The public has

come to recognize this form of quintessential architecture as inherently part of the history of the broader Mother Lode region and of Grass Valley itself.



The elegant Neo-Classical Nevada Bank Building.

3.3.2 Character Defining Features

The Downtown Commercial District Character Area is presently dominated by historic period commercial structures, although some modern garage and warehouse buildings exist. Wood shingles and standing seam metal were used on many early buildings in Grass Valley. Some key design characteristics of this Character Area include:

- Buildings one to five stories in height
- Flat parapet roofs
- Masonry facades of brick, stone and stucco
- Full front verandas or awnings of metal and cloth
- Deeply inset door entries
- Large picture or display windows
- Banks of clerestory or transom windows
- Rows of dentils and simple friezes
- Raised foundations
- Classical Revival/Gold Rush False Front architectural styles
- Use of cast iron in facade decoration



High Verandah – Made of substantial materials and turned posts



Shed Awning – Made of lighter materials using posts or braces



Above-transom awning of either fixed or flexible materials –

Verandas and awnings frame many, if not most of the downtown commercial buildings. Awnings and verandas were important architectural elements historically provided shade during the hot summer days and shedding rain and snow during the winter months.



Bret Harte Hotel looking east across W. Main Street.

3.4 DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DESIGN GOALS & POLICIES

The Downtown Commercial District Character Area should continue to develop in a coordinated manner, so that an overall sense of visual continuity is achieved. Preservation of the historic integrity of this area is a primary goal. Retention of the architectural detail and scale of the false-front walls, parapets, dentils and friezes is important.

At the same time, the walking experience should be enhanced for pedestrians and the visual impacts of parking on site should be minimized. Projects that include a primary building with a subordinate secondary structure will aid in maintaining the historic character of the area.

The design goals for the Downtown Commercial District Character Area are:

- To emphasize the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and structures
- To preserve individual historic character defining features
- To maintain the historical alignment of buildings

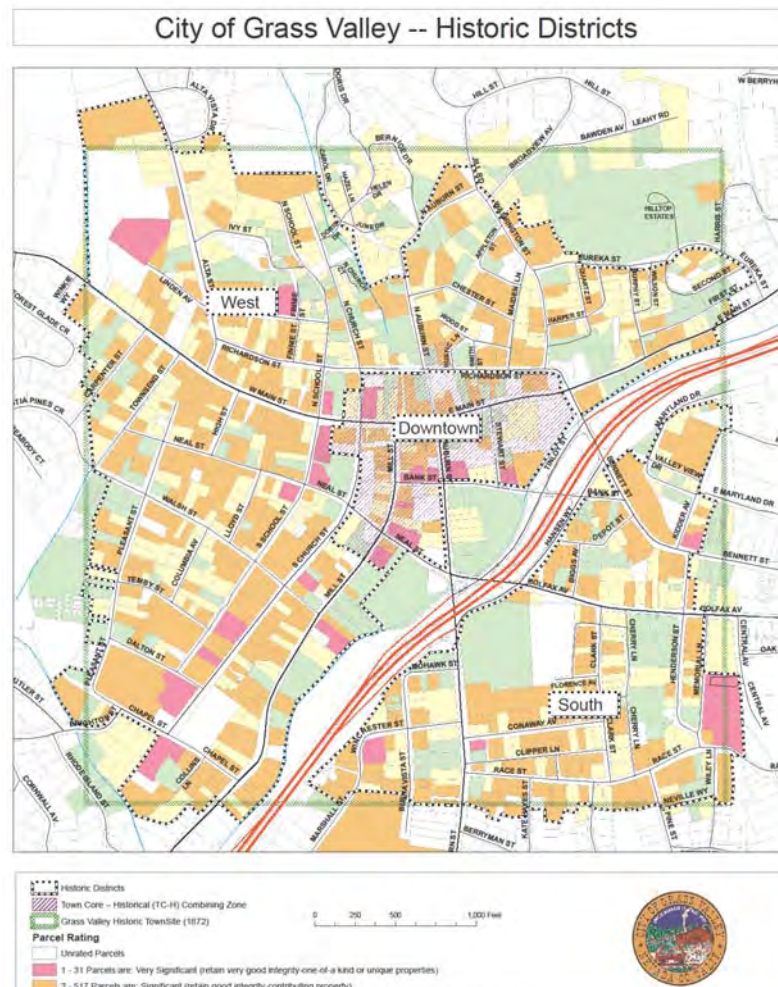
- To maintain traditional building mass, scale and forms along the front facades of commercial buildings
- To locate additions away from the primary building facades
- To continue the use of verandas or awnings using historic designs and heights appropriate to the scale of the historic building
- To retain and preserve the original display windows, frames, and recessed entries, and other architectural features of historic buildings
- To continue the use of traditional building materials
- To enhance the pedestrian experience; and to minimize the visual impact of cars
- To improve energy efficiency consider "cool" roof colors that reflect sunlight and reduce annual air conditioning use, unless the roof is a significant part of the building's architectural character, then historic colors and designs are recommended.

CHAPTER 4

WEST RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT CHARACTER AREA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The West Residential District Character Area of Grass Valley comprises an area from Mill Street on the east to Pleasant Street on the West, and includes many of the city's oldest residences, some dating to the mid-1850s.



The West Residential District Character Area also encompasses some of the city's most hilly topography. The sloping topography of the West Residential District Character Area required different building designs that took into account the sloping lots. This was accomplished by building homes with full or partial basements, the construction of fieldstone and later concrete retaining walls, and cuts and fills into the natural side of hills.

In general, most of the residential properties in the West Residential District Character Area were built between 1855-1930. Exceptions include residences built along the upper end of Alta Street and infill along streets where homes were intentionally demolished or burned to the ground and were rebuilt. Most are wood frame residences with the exception of several brick or partial brick homes (123 Richardson Street; 507 Richardson Street), a traditional Cornish fieldstone masonry home (303 Mill Street), and a rammed earth home (303 Bennett Street).



Simple rectangular one and two-story Greek Revival homes of the 1850s and 1860s gave way in the 1880s to more complex Eastlake and Italianate influenced homes, and by the late 1880s and 1890s Queen Anne homes were being built throughout the West Residential District Character Area. After 1900, early circa 1850s-1860s home were remodeled in the Craftsman taste, new Craftsman homes were being constructed, and stucco and brick Revivalist cottages infilled vacant lots.





The tree cover in the West Residential District Character Area is quite distinctive, with many mature conifer and deciduous trees, some over 150 years of age.

4.2 HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The West Residential District includes many of the city's earliest residential buildings. The district is also characterized by its moderately steep topography, views of the city, large parcels, and wide variety of introduced shrubs and trees. A diverse assemblage of homes spans the district, reflecting the full range of architectural styles found in Grass Valley.

4.3 HISTORIC CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Historic maps and photographs provide evidence that the area was predominantly residential in character with some widely scattered commercial businesses located

along Mill, N. Church, and Neal Streets. In addition to the minimal commercial use, churches and social/lodge buildings were also built in the area intermixed with residences.



Romanesque/Mediterranean influenced United Methodist Church

Generally, one house was built per parcel, many originally having carriage houses, which were either demolished in later years or converted to automobile garages.



One of the few remaining 19th century carriage houses left in West Grass Valley

While some houses have deep setbacks, others were built with shallow setbacks from the sidewalks and curb of the street. Street widths vary greatly, some, like West Main Street, having ample room for two cars, while others like Walsh Street or Lloyd Street have barely enough room for one car.

Many residential properties in the area include street fencing. Historic photographs suggest the first fences in the city were pickets built of milled lumber. Later iron and wire fences were built. Since the 1920s fence designs have evolved to include dog-eared fencing or board fencing, chain-link fencing, chicken wire fencing, and modern rail fencing. More recently resin or vinyl fencing has been used.



Circa 1890s photograph of the formally landscaped front yard along W. Main Street. Note the fountain in the center of the entry path leading to the house.



Historic Coleman House facing Neal Street. Note the original cast iron fence and urn.



A circa 1910 era wire fence defining the front yard from the sidewalk and nearby curb

Some key design characteristics of the character area are:

- Wide diversity of house types
- Gable, cross-gable, clipped-gable and hip roof forms
- Raised central or wrap-around porch designs
- Wood-frame or stick-frame buildings predominate
- Buildings heights vary from one to two-stories.
- Attic conversions for sleeping quarters
- Wide variation in yard sizes and building setbacks

The character area was fully developed before 1900, and has a wide range of architectural styles, from Greek Revival to English Cottage houses. The District should continue to develop in a unified manner so that an overall sense of place and visual continuity is maintained. A rich landscape is an important part of this Area, and preservation of the existing historic inventory of properties is a primary goal. The Character Area also shares a strong connection with the historic commercial downtown and its walk ability from the residential neighborhood to the historic downtown should be enhanced.

4.4 DESIGN GOALS & POLICIES

The design goals for the West Residential District Character Area are:

- To emphasize the preservation and restoration of the existing diverse range of historic buildings and structures.
- To maintain the general historical character, massing, and siting of houses on lots when infill or new construction is warranted.
- To maintain traditional building mass, scale and form for preservation projects and infill.
- To continue the use of traditional building materials sympathetic to homes in the character area.
- To use the natural topography or slope to conceal additional building mass.
- To use natural landscaping materials such as fieldstone, stepped retaining walls, stem walls, and similar construction methods to minimize visual impacts of cut slopes
- To use period cast iron, metal, or wood fences to frame the front yards of residential homes.

CHAPTER 5

SOUTH

RESIDENTIAL

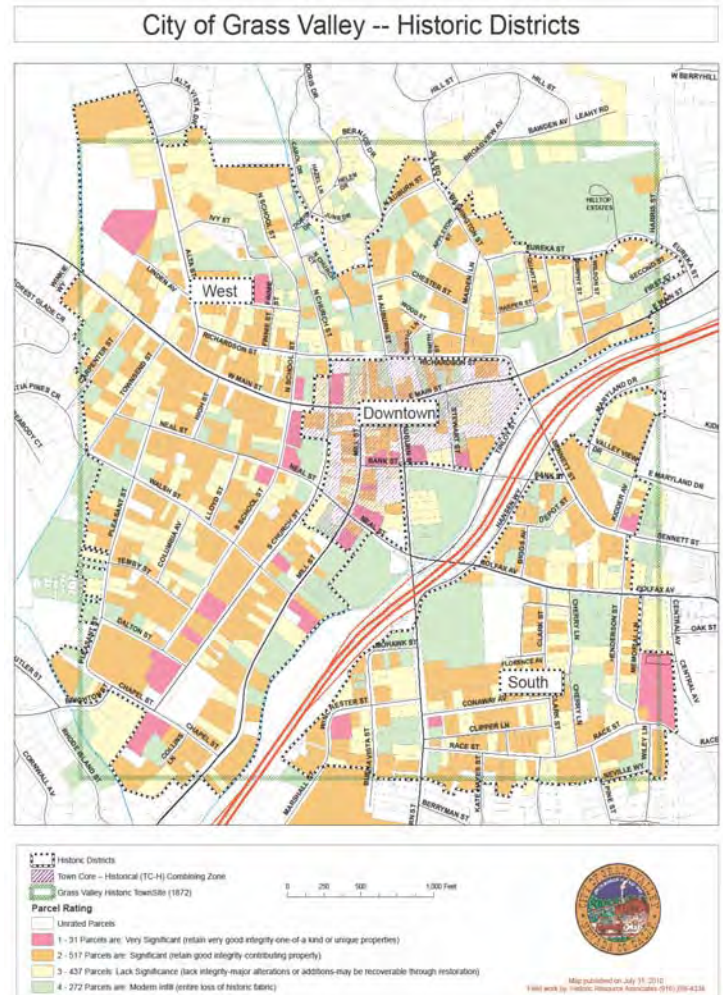
DISTRICT

CHARACTER

AREA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The South Residential District Character Area of Grass Valley comprises an area that is roughly bounded on the north by Maryland Drive, on the east by Wiley and Memorial Lane, on the south by Race Street, and on the west by Marshall Street and Highway 49 or Hanson Way.



5.2 HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The South Residential District Character Area includes residential homes that primarily date from the 1880s through the 1940s. While Conaway Street includes many homes that date from the late 1880s as depicted in the following photograph, Clark Street on the other hand was developed in the late 1920s and 1930s with modest Craftsman and Revival style homes. Prior to 1880 most of the level ground in this Character Area was cultivated and developed with orchard crops, particularly apples and later plums. The gold quartz mines lay to the north, east, and south, and the valley drained by Wolf Creek was an ideal location for the expansion of the city. Unlike the hilly topography of the West Character Area, the south's gentle topography made home construction much easier.



Vegetation on the south is sparser than in the west, perhaps due to the intensive agricultural use of the land through the late 19th century. Lots are somewhat more uniform and alley ways delineate the rear of some residences, such as along Conaway and Henderson Streets.



With the exception of commercial development adjacent to State Highway 49, South Auburn Street, Colfax Avenue, and portions of Race Street, the south area was confined to residential development. Another important feature in the south was the construction of the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad (NCNGR). An important part of the area's infrastructure and primary source of transporting goods and people, the NCNGR remained in operation from 1876 to 1942. Today, the only evidence of the railroad on the south side of Grass Valley is the site of the Kidder Mansion at the intersection of Bennett and Kidder Streets, and the coursed fieldstone wall that supported the cut bank where the NCNGR Depot once stood.



*N.C.N.G.R.R. Passenger Entrance
coursed, mortared, and faced stone
retaining wall facing Bennett Street*

Boy Scout Lodge



5.3 HISTORIC CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

In addition to the minimal commercial use, schools, churches and social/lodge buildings were also constructed in the South Residential District Character Area, such as the Winchester School (now a residence) along Winchester Street and the Boy Scout Lodge next to Memorial Park.



Former Winchester School, now a residence.

Generally, one house was built per parcel, many of the early homes (pre-1900) having carriage houses which were either demolished in later years or converted to automobile garages, while other homes were constructed with single or even two-car garages.



While some houses have deep setbacks, such as those along Race Street, others were built with shallow setbacks from the sidewalks and curb of the street, as is the case along Conaway and Clark Streets. Street widths in general were designed to accommodate horse and buggy traffic, but were wide enough to accommodate two vehicles in later years. The overall pattern is a standard grid design with streets running east to west.



Typical Craftsman home with a shallow setback

Some key design characteristics of the South Residential District Character Area are:

- More uniform style of houses
- Gable, cross-gable, clipped-gable and hip roof forms
- Raised porch entrances
- Wide variety of siding types
- Buildings heights vary from one to two-stories, but the predominant height is one-story in a rectangular or L-shaped design.
- Attic conversions for sleeping quarters
- Modest variations in yard sizes and building setbacks

5.4 DESIGN GOALS & POLICIES

The South Residential District Character Area was fully developed by the late 1930s. Depression Era homes along Clark Street reflect more modest, but trendy, working class housing. New construction consists of infill on the few vacant lots that remain or structure replacement due to fires. The area should continue to develop in a unified manner so that an overall sense of visual continuity is achieved. Preservation of the historic integrity and sense of place of this Character Area is a primary goal.

A mix of styles is the prevalent theme, including Revival style cottages dating from the 1920s and 1930s. The most exuberant Victorian style homes were generally located along Race Street on large lots. Gabled or hip roof buildings from one to two-stories in height should be the predominant theme. At the same time, the walking experience should be enhanced for pedestrians by improving sidewalks, retaining walls, and landscaping in front of homes, and providing user friendly bike and pedestrian walkways underneath State Highway 49 along Bennett and South Auburn Streets.

The design goals for the South Residential District Character Area are:

- To emphasize the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and structures
- To preserve the full range of diverse properties in the Character Area
- To maintain the general historical alignment of buildings

- To maintain traditional building mass, scale and forms of properties
- To locate additions to the rear of the property
- To continue the use of traditional building materials
- To use cut slopes to conceal additional building mass
- To minimize the visual impacts of cut slopes by using natural landscaping, materials such as fieldstone, stepped retaining walls, stem walls, and similar construction methods
- To enhance the pedestrian experience
- To minimize the visual impacts of cars

CHAPTER 6

IDENTIFYING AND PRESERVING CHARACTER DEFINING ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Historic character is defined by a property's architectural features, such as massing, roof shape, window and door fenestration, along with ornamental trim, which may include cornices, brackets, finials, pickets, attic vents, window surrounds, shingle patterns, and moldings. This chapter provides descriptions and general guidelines for the treatment of these types of architectural features.



Old Post Office Building on South Auburn Street.



Rehabilitation involving reuse of historic fabric and replacement materials that match the building's original design and fabric.

The most prudent way to preserve historic building features is through periodic maintenance. In certain situations historic building features and fabric may be damaged or deteriorated. When damage or deterioration occurs, if practical, the architectural feature should be repaired and any other related problems addressed at the same time.

In other situations, some features, or portions thereof, may be beyond repair. In such a case, consider replacement in-kind or using compatible materials. It is important, however, that the extent of replacement features and fabric be minimized, because the original features and/or fabric contribute to the overall historic character of the property.

Even when the replacement feature or fabric exactly matches that of the original, the integrity of a historic property is to some extent compromised when extensive amounts of original feature or fabric are removed. This is because the original feature or fabric helps document the property, both in terms of its age, architectural style, and workmanship. It is also important to recognize that all features weather and deteriorate over time and that a marred finish or minimal damage does not represent an inferior feature or fabric, but simply reflects the age of the building and a lesser degree of maintenance. Restoring original features and fabric is preferred over replacement.

An important tool before commencing any preservation project is to review the "*Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, and Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings*" (www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/2010). The standards provide general guidance and a methodology for choosing the appropriate treatment. The four treatment approaches are **Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction**, outlined below in hierarchical order and explained as follows:

Preservation, the first treatment, places a high premium on the retention of all historic fabric through conservation, maintenance and repair. It reflects a building's continuum over time, through successive occupancies, and the respectful changes and alterations that are made.

Rehabilitation, the second treatment, emphasizes the retention and repair of historic materials, but more latitude is provided for replacement because it is assumed the property is more deteriorated prior to work. Both Preservation and Rehabilitation standards focus attention on the preservation of those materials, features, finishes, spaces, and spatial relationships that, together, give a property its historic character.

Restoration, the third treatment, focuses on the retention of materials from the most significant time in a property's history, while permitting the removal of materials from other periods.

Reconstruction, the fourth treatment, establishes limited opportunities to re-create a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object in all new materials.

Before choosing the most appropriate treatment for a building, careful thought should be given to why a building is deemed to be historically significant, and the characteristics or features that add to that significance.

6.2 PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC FEATURES



Elegant Hipped-roof Victorian residence

The concept of preservation is synonymous with retaining a high percentage of the original fabric and features, and maintaining those features and fabric in good condition in order to retain the integrity of the property. Historic features, including architectural details along with massing, form, and scale, contribute to the character and significance of a property and should be preserved.

Ongoing routine maintenance is clearly the best method of preserving historic fabric. Provided below are a list of "best practices" or general guidance that will assist owners of historic properties in selecting appropriate treatment options:

(1) Protection and Maintenance of Significant Stylistic Features

Maintain historic features and architectural detail so that major intervention is not required. Employ preventative treatments, such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint.

(2) Removal or Alteration of Significant Architectural Features

Original exterior siding, doors, windows, cornices, fretwork, porches, turned columns, brackets, vergeboards, pickets, and other ornaments are examples of architectural features which should not be removed or altered. Maintain character-defining features, then repair only those features that are deteriorated. Finally, replace only those features that are beyond repair.

(3) Repair of Deteriorated Features

In some cases, original architectural features may be deteriorated, or missing. Isolated areas of damage may be stabilized using consolidants, such as special epoxies and resins. Patch, piece-in, splice, consolidate or otherwise stabilize existing materials. Removing a damaged feature that can be repaired is not recommended. During rehabilitation be sure to protect other architectural features that are adjacent to the area being worked on. When disassembly of an historic feature is required for its restoration, minimize damage to the original material. Prior to rehabilitation work document the location of an historic feature to be disassembled so it may be repositioned accurately.

(4) Cleaning, Refinishing and Repairing Architectural Features

When choosing a preservation treatment, use the gentlest and safest means possible that will achieve the desired goals without damaging the historic fabric. In general, sandblasting historic material, particular brick surfaces is not recommended. Repairs, such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint are recommended. Maintain character-defining features, such as original porches.

(5) Replacement of Architectural Features

While restoration of a deteriorated feature is the preferred alternative, replacement may be necessary if it is beyond repair. The new material should match that being replaced in scale, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Historic architecture trade journals such as *Old House Journal* and *Traditional Homes* provide a wealth of sources for acquiring replacement fabric.

Use the same kind of material as the original, when feasible. In some instances, a substitute material may be acceptable if the scale, size, shape, texture and finish convey the visual appearance of the original material. When replacing a deteriorated feature use care to remove only the feature that requires replacement.

(6) Reconstruction of Missing Features

If an original feature is missing, reconstructing it is encouraged. This is especially important in Grass Valley, where many buildings have lost significant features, such as original windows, doors, and porches. The design should be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence to avoid creating a misrepresentation of the original building. When reconstructing a feature, use the same material as the original when feasible. In some cases, however, an alternative material may be considered. Adding a new decorative element that did not exist historically is generally inappropriate. Proposed treatment or restoration projects aimed at replacing missing features should be accompanied by written, physical or pictorial evidence.

(7) Preservation of Individual Building Components

Preserving all key building components is a high priority, particularly those components that are visible from public spaces, such as primary streets or overlooks. On ancillary buildings and structures that share historic features or are contemporaneous with the primary building on the parcel, preserving existing features is also a priority and reconstructing missing ones is strongly encouraged.

6.3 COMMERCIAL STOREFRONTS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS

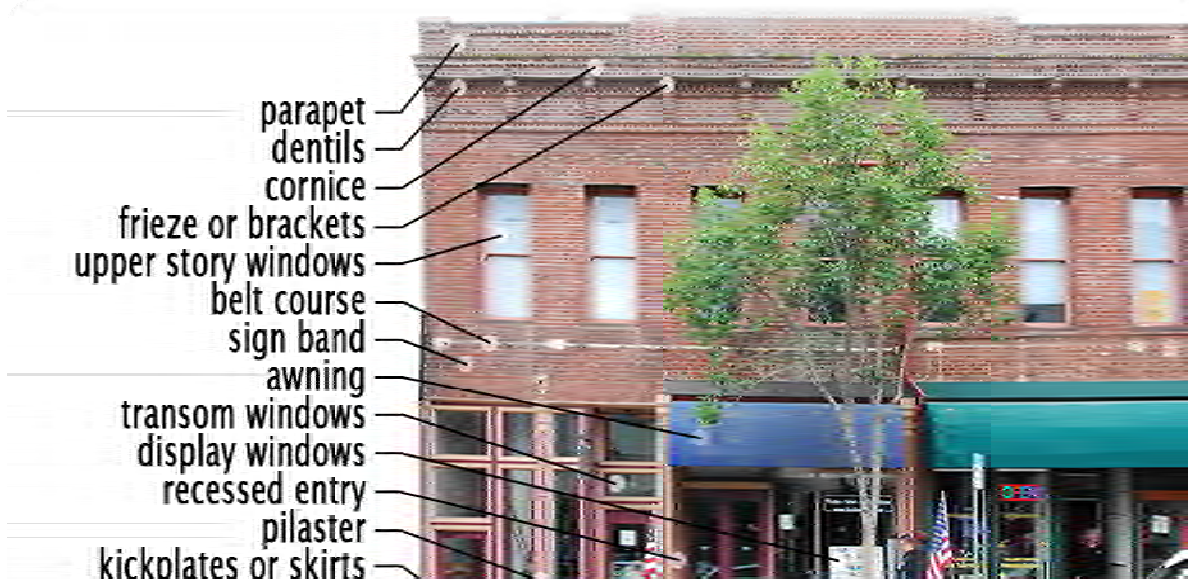
Commercial buildings typically have a clearly defined primary entrance and large display windows that visually portray the goods or services being offered by the merchant. The scale and symmetry of window arrangements found on commercial storefronts helps create visual continuity on the streetscape. Public buildings also share common features that are identifiable in form and function. A good example is the Carnegie Library (Royce Library) located on Mill Street in downtown Grass Valley.



Typical Architectural Details for a Public Building (Grass Valley Carnegie Library)

While Grass Valley's public buildings are much fewer in numbers, those that still exist convey some of the city's most important architectural designs, such as the Grass Valley Carnegie Library depicted in the photograph above.

The majority of Grass Valley's downtown commercial storefronts have undergone some degree of alteration since their original construction. Storefronts exhibit architectural details that reflect Gold Rush Era design elements through the 1940s, with alterations dating to the last two decades.



Architectural detail for a typical brick masonry commercial building



Row of circa 1850s-1860s storefronts with parapets or false fronts facing W. Main Street

All historic commercial storefront and public building architectural components should be maintained and preserved if practical. The main goal is to preserve the historic character of a storefront, when it is intact. If a storefront is altered, restoring it to its original design is encouraged.

Large plate glass display windows, set in wood or metal frames, are typically supported on a bulkhead, with a kick plate or skirt below. In many cases clerestory windows or transoms have been set above the primary display windows. The shape of the windows and the framing of the windows, as well as window dressing, are an essential part of the building's historic fabric.

Historic photographs are an important tool in discerning the original fabric and design of historic storefronts, such as those on Mill and Main Streets. Original fabric is often covered or concealed by later additions.



Rehabilitated commercial storefront facing E. Main Street.



Storefront recessed entrances of various ages facing W. Main and Mill Street



Architectural detail of Grass Valley commercial storefronts: (Top left) Below grade entrance; (Top right) Below grade window detail (Middle left) Ornate tile entry IOOF Hall; (Middle center) Iron pilaster manufactured by Taylor Bros. Machine Works, Grass Valley (Middle right) Cast iron frieze made by Taylor Bros at the base of a pilaster; and (Bottom center) Restored Art Deco Del Oro theater entrance and ticket booth.

Recommendations:

- (1) If no evidence exists regarding the design and fabric applied to a particular commercial storefront, adopt a compatible design borrowed from storefronts of a similar age. If a storefront is altered, restoring it to the original design is preferred.
- (2) Where an original storefront is missing, and no evidence of its character exists, an alternative design is appropriate. The design, however, should be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence to avoid creating a misrepresentation of the building. An alternative storefront design should convey the characteristics of typical storefronts, including the transparent character of the display windows, recessed entries, cornices, friezes, dentils, and other architectural details.

6.3.1 Recessed Entries



Many primary entrances to commercial and public buildings are recessed, providing a shaded area that helps to define doorways and to provide shelter to pedestrians. The repetition of recessed entries also provides a rhythm of shadows along the streetscape, which helps establish a sense of scale and symmetry to the facades.

Deeply recessed entry on the Union Building on Mill Street. Note the curved glass display windows.

Entrance doors were also traditionally topped with transom or clerestory windows that provide light and extend the vertical emphasis of these openings.



Row of circa 1850s-1860s commercial storefronts with varying recessed entries facing E. Main Street.



Pair of circa 1850s commercial storefronts with altered door entrances.

Recommendations:

Maintain recessed entryways. Avoid adding a door or facade that is flush with the sidewalk, especially those that swing outward. Restore an historic recessed entry if it has been altered.

In some cases the historic door was not recessed. While retaining this position is preferred, it may be necessary to relocate the door to an inset position in order to comply with building codes.

6.3.2 Verandas and Awnings

Historically, verandas and awnings are character defining features in downtown Grass Valley. Originally, most verandas in Grass Valley were wood and later sheathed with corrugated metal roofs.



Today, Grass Valley has three predominant types of verandas or awnings: a free-hanging style that is flat or slightly sloped; a free-hanging but flat design; and a style supported by steel columns. Most of the existing verandas in Grass Valley have metal roofs, while those that have been replaced are often replaced with awnings of various shapes.

The original height of most Grass Valley verandas was just below the second-story row of windows, and above the first story clerestory or transom windows. Generally the clerestory or transom windows were visible from the street because of the elevation in which they were secured to the outer wall, mainly by "L-shaped" brackets or hooks.



Row of circa 1890s wood and metal roof, and steel column verandas along the west side of Mill Street.

Recommendations:

(1) Original verandas should be preserved intact. Both a metal-roof or cloth awning is appropriate in many historic style buildings in Grass Valley, supported by wood or steel columns. If an awning or veranda is altered, consider restoring it to the original design. Historic photographs of Grass Valley should be used when determining the original character of awning designs and placement. If evidence of the original design is missing, use a simplified interpretation of similar canopies.

(2) Where an original awning is missing, reconstruct it to match the original design. The design should be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence to avoid creating a misrepresentation of the building's original design. Where an original awning or veranda is missing, and no evidence of its character exists, an alternative design may be appropriate. An alternative veranda or awning design should continue to convey the characteristics of typical verandas or awnings seen on buildings in the area. The veranda or awning should reflect the scale and dimensions of the facade width.

6.3.3 Cornices

Cornices are projecting ornamental moldings at the upper portion of a building wall or storefront. They are most apparent on late 19th and early 20th century commercial structures in Grass Valley, such as the Union Building, displayed in the photograph to the right.



Mid-20th century commercial and public buildings were, as a rule, less ornamented. In either case, the character of the cornice is an important feature that should be preserved. Preserve the original cornice, otherwise, reconstruct a missing cornice when historic evidence is available.

Recommendations:

(1) Replacement elements should match the original details, especially in overall size and profile. Use historic photographs to determine design details of the original cornice. A simplified interpretation may be considered for a replacement cornice if evidence of the original is missing. Appropriate materials include stone, brick and stamped metal and fiberglass.

(2) Reconstruct a missing cornice when historic evidence is available. When a building is missing its cornice, consider reconstruction or replacement with a new design. A simplified interpretation may be considered for a replacement cornice if evidence of the original is missing.

6.3.4 Windows and Doors

Windows and doors are some of the most important character-defining features of any property. They give scale to a building and provide visual interest to the composition of individual facades.



Window and door designs help define the commercial storefront or public building.



Windows and doors in downtown Grass Valley reflect styles that span nearly 100 years from the 1850s through the 1940s. Most windows are set vertically in deeply recessed openings and at one time many if not all of the downtown commercial brick buildings features iron shutters, as was the case with the Holbrooke Hotel shown in the photograph below.



Storefront windows were originally set in decorative wood frames, and later steel or aluminum frames by the 1930s. Angled and recessed entries with divided display windows defines the city's storefronts, together with transom and clerestory windows set individually or in rows.



Another important feature is the number of lights or panes into which a window is divided. The design of surrounding window casings, the depth and profile of window sash elements and the materials of which they were constructed are also important features. The manner in which windows and doors are combined or arranged on a building face also may be distinctly associated with a specific

building style. All of these features are examples of elements in historic window and door designs that should be preserved.



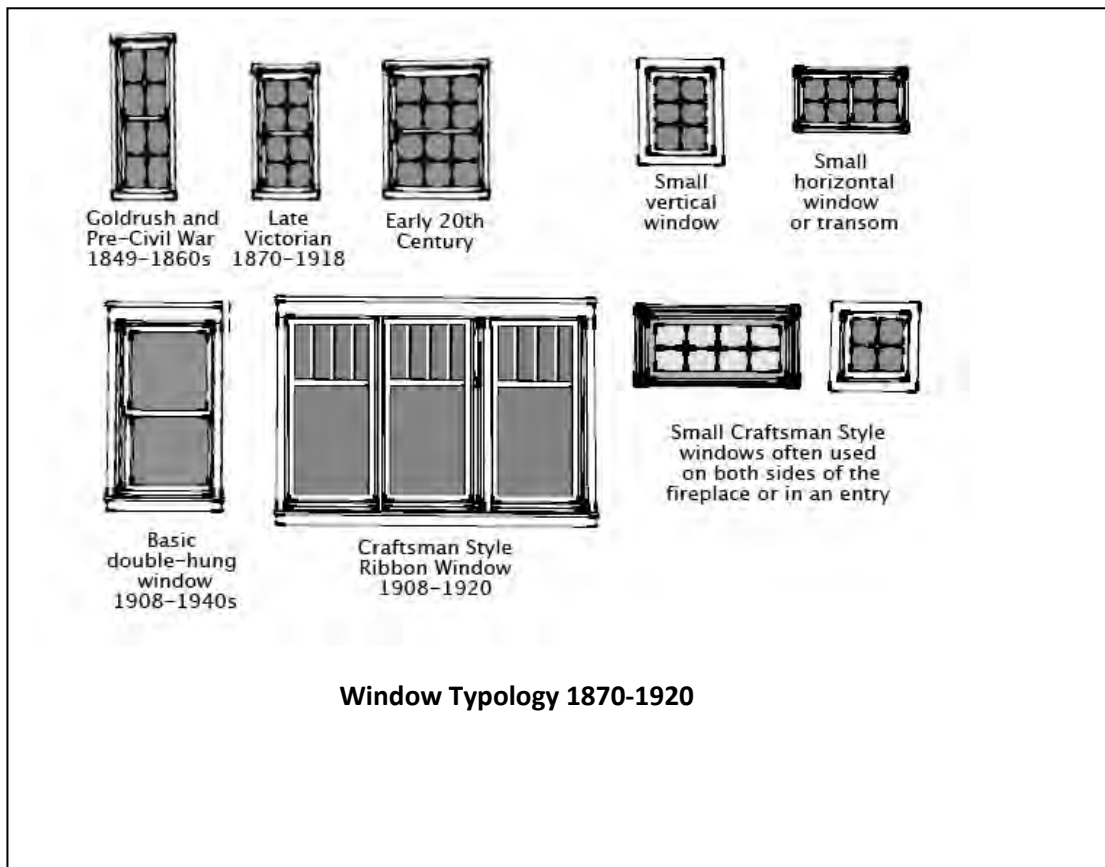
Note the second-story double-hung wood windows and arched brick lintels above each window along with flanking shutters. The only distraction is the addition of exterior mounted air conditioning units.



Commercial window detail Grass Valley

Typical wood-sash, double-hung window components:

- Wall Head (the framing for the window)
- Glazing (putty that holds the glass in)
- Sill (base of window usually made of wood)
- Muntin (bars between glass made of wood or steel)
- Stile (framing)
- Stops (stop molding to prevent glass from falling out)
- Casing (wood that surrounds the outside of the window)
- Sash (wood frame that runs vertically to secure the glass)
- Sash pulley (the rope rides on the pulley)
- Sash weights (counterbalance the window)
- Sash locks/lifts (to open and close windows)

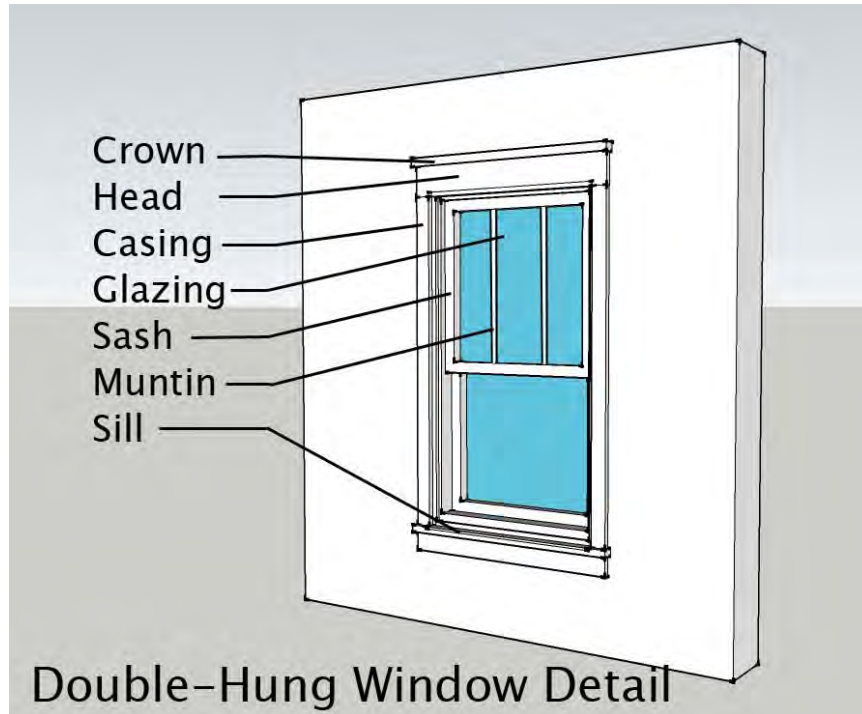




Use of a repeating ribbon type window in a Grass Valley school building.



Replacement windows in a circa 1850s historic brick commercial building.



Recommendations:

(1) It is essential to repair frames and sash by patching, splicing or reinforcing. Avoid the removal of historic windows and sash. If replacement is necessary, replace with a similar design, to match the original. Avoid changing the position of historic openings.

(2) Windows and doors on the fronts of ancillary buildings should be preserved as well. Avoid creating an additional opening or removing existing ones on facades that are visible from the street.

Maintain the historic subdivisions of window lights. Maintain original window and door proportions. Altering the original size and shape is inappropriate. Do not close down an original opening to accommodate a smaller window.

(3) Restoring an original opening which has been altered over time is encouraged. Consider reconstructing windows and doors that no longer exist in a primary facade. Such reconstruction should occur only if it can be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence.

- (4) Preserve the functional and decorative features of original windows and doors. Maintain original window and door proportions. Maintain the historic subdivisions of window lights.
- (5) Replacing multiple panes with single pane or operable window with a fixed one is inappropriate. Replacing true divided lights with snap-in muntins is also inappropriate. Maintain original window and door proportions.
- (6) Preserve the historic ratio of window openings to solid wall. Significantly increasing the amount of glass will negatively affect the integrity of a structure.
- (7) When replacing a window or door is necessary on an historic structure, match the original design as closely as possible. Preserve the original casing, and use it with the replacement.
- (8) Use the same material (wood) as that used historically. Vinyl clad and aluminum windows are generally inappropriate.
- (9) Match the number and size of divided lights and panels. Glass in a window or door should be clear. Any type of tinting is inappropriate.
- (10) A new window or door opening, if needed, should be placed on a secondary facade and not the primary facade. A new opening should be similar in location, size and type to those seen traditionally. A general rule for a window opening is that the height should be twice the dimension of the width. Windows should be simple in shape, arrangement and detail.
- (11) Windows and doors should be finished with trim elements similar to those used traditionally. This trim should have a dimension similar to that was used historically.
- (12) Divided lights should be formed from smaller mullions integral to the window. Pop-in muntins and mullions are inappropriate.

6.3.5 Signs

Grass Valley's historic commercial district has always been defined by its eclectic signs. From the 1850s through the 1880s, virtually all of Grass Valley signs were manufactured of wood and hand painted by skilled artisans. Often signs were hand-

made to represent a specialized business, such as a clock for a watch sales and repair shop, a shoe for a cobbler, and a mortise and pestle for a drug store.

Historically signs were mounted on the exterior walls of commercial buildings using cleats or brackets made of metal. Signs were also adhered to buildings from chains or ropes. Some signs were affixed into the wall of the building itself in inset friezes identifying its owner or perhaps affiliation with a fraternal lodge. In other examples, signs were set into the sidewalk in tile mosaic, as was often the case with lodge buildings.

Today, the commercial signs of Grass Valley consist of pole mounted, exterior masonry or wood painted, applied metal, wood, or composite signs, hanging signs, and wall murals or artwork signs.



Decorative applied sign on the exterior facade of a commercial building.



Boldly lettered and attractive exterior wall sign for the "Old Post Office Building."



Another form of sign is the free-form design generally made of metal or a similar product and affixed to the exterior walls of buildings, generally by brackets set into the masonry wall itself, as is the case with the vintage sign for the "Everhart Hotel Apartments." While this Everhart Hotel sign likely dates from the 1920s, it is part of the city's historical context and an important visual feature in the historic downtown.

A common sign in the commercial downtown are those adhered to the display windows or doors of buildings, such as the "logo" style indiscreet window sign for "Mill Street Clothing Company." Note how the light lettering and black background blend with the historic glazed yellow and black tile along the skirt below the window.



Another form of sign is the hanging wood or composite material sign, as depicted in the photograph below, taken along Mill Street. Note the scale of each of the signs, consistency in height, and wide variety of designs and colors. Most of these veranda hung signs are easily viewed from both the street and along the sidewalks bordering the shops.



Signs can also be found in mix-use historic neighborhoods, as is the case with the elegant and well-proportioned hanging sign for the "A Victorian Rose" Bed & Breakfast.

Signs applied or free-standing in the interior of merchant's shops are also common. The signs should not overwhelm the window display and the colors and designs should be sympathetic to the other signs in the area, as is the case of the welcome sign for Grass Valley in the window display of a downtown merchant.



Murals, although not common in Grass Valley, if done correctly, can enhance a building's otherwise austere facade.



Recommendations:

- (1) Review Grass Valley's Historic Commercial Downtown Design Guidelines for consistency.
- (2) Wall murals and artwork of non-commercial nature shall be sympathetic to the historic context and character of Grass Valley. Murals should not become a predominating visual elements of the streetscape and should have limited use on primary facades of historic buildings.

6.4 RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Residential buildings and structures predominate most of the Historic 1872 Grass Valley Townsite. Unlike commercial and public buildings in Grass Valley, residential homes were generally constructed of wood, balloon or stick-framed, with a handful of residences built of brick, stone, and rammed-earth. The earliest residential homes had simple rectangular massing, some having modest additions that formed "L" shapes. By the late 19th century, residential homes became more complex with asymmetric fenestration, additional ornamentation.

The scale of residential homes is essential to their identification, as are the architectural details that make the home more interesting and costly to build. Unlike commercial storefronts, residential homes are almost always detached, sited further from the street, and fully landscaped. The majority of Grass Valley's residential homes and structures have undergone some degree of alteration since they were first constructed. If the alterations, such as additions, were carried out during the property's period of significance, the alteration may have become "historic" in its own right.



Architectural detail of a Craftsman residence

6.4.1 Recessed Entries



Many primary entrances to residential homes are recessed, providing a shaded area that helps to define doorways and to provide shelter to the home's owners and visitors. The recessed entry is also a key architectural feature that directs people into the home and often identifies the home's age and the owner's wealth. Many of residential entries in Grass Valley feature ornate Victorian doors angled recessed panels, using various dimensional molding to form a series of simple friezes and transom or clerestory windows.



Typical circa 1880s Grass Valley recessed and paneled residential entry above and a elegant entry with a transom window and a period paneled wood door in the lower photograph.

6.4.2 Windows and Doors

Residential windows and doors are some of the most important character-defining features of any residential property. They give scale to a home and provide visual interest to the composition of individual facades.



Window and door designs help define many historic building styles, such as Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, and Craftsman. Because window and door designs so significantly affect the character of an historic structure, their treatment is a very important consideration. Many mid- to late-

19th century windows had from 4 to 6 panes of wavy glass, set in narrow muntins, oriented vertically. By the early 1900s, window pattern books and trade catalogues advertised windows set horizontally, some having casement mechanics as opposed to double-hung type mechanics.

The manner in which windows and doors are combined or arranged on a building face also may be distinctly associated with a specific building style. All of these features are examples of elements in historic window and door designs that should be preserved. Windows and doors in masonry buildings are often inset into relatively deep openings or they have surrounding casings and sash components, which have a substantial dimension that cast shadows.



Window detail from the 1860s.



Typical Residential Windows Found in Grass Valley



Original paired wood-sash windows with 2 over 2 lights

Recommendations:

- (1) Preserve the functional and decorative features of original windows and doors. Windows and doors on the fronts of ancillary buildings should be preserved as well. Avoid creating an additional opening or removing existing ones on facades that are visible from the street.
- (2) Repair frames and sash by patching, splicing or reinforcing. Avoid the removal of historic windows and sash. If replacement is necessary, replace with a similar design, to match the original. Avoid changing the position of historic openings.
- (3) Maintain the historic subdivisions of window lights. Maintain original window and door proportions. Altering the original size and shape is inappropriate. Do not close down an original opening to accommodate a smaller window.
- (4) Restoring an original window opening which has been altered over time is encouraged. Consider reconstructing windows and doors that no longer exist in a primary facade. Such reconstruction should occur only if it can be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence.
- (5) Preserve the functional and decorative features of original windows and doors. Maintain original window and door proportions. Maintain the historic subdivisions of window lights.

- (6) Replacing multiple panes with single pane or operable window with a fixed one is inappropriate. Replacing true divided lights with snap-in muntins is also inappropriate. Maintain original window and door proportions.
- (7) Preserve the historic ratio of window openings to solid wall. Significantly increasing the amount of glass will negatively affect the integrity of a structure.
- (8) When replacing a window or door is necessary on an historic structure, match the original design as closely as possible. Preserve the original casing, and use it with the replacement.
- (9) Match the number and size of divided lights and panels. Glass in a window or door should be clear. Any type of tinting is inappropriate.
- (10) A new window or door is discouraged on a primary facade. A new opening should be similar in location, size and type to those seen traditionally. A general rule for a window opening is that the height should be twice the dimension of the width.
- (11) Windows should be simple in shape, arrangement and detail. Windows and doors should be finished with trim elements similar to those used traditionally. This trim should have a dimension similar to that was used historically.

6.4.3 Roofs



The shape of the roof is a major character defining feature for any historic building or structure. The roof pitch, its materials, size and orientation are all distinct features that contribute to the character of the building. Typical residential roof shapes are gabled, hipped and shed. Gabled roofs are the most frequent. Most commercial buildings have flat roofs, but some have gable and shed roofs.



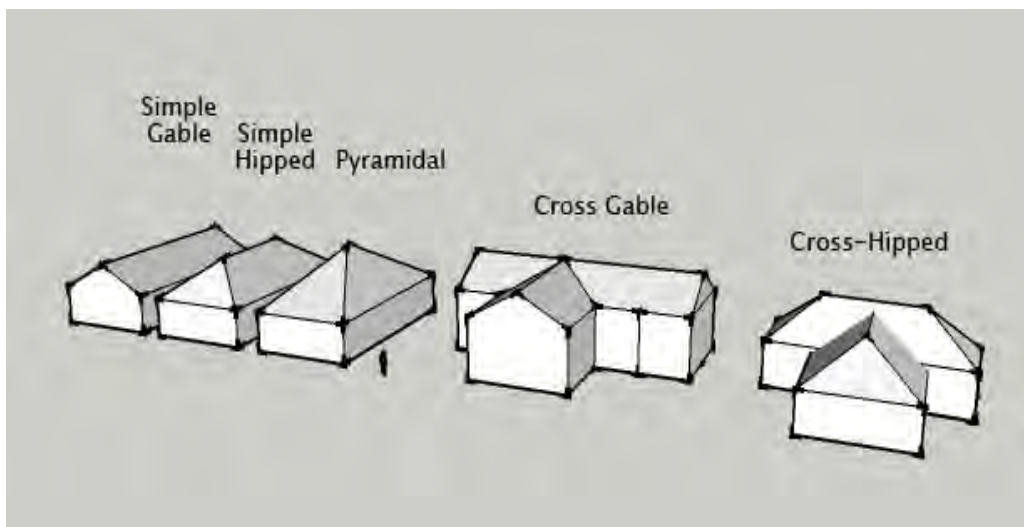
Moderately sloping cross-gable roof applied to a semi-commercial building

Typical roof shapes (see diagram below) seen throughout Grass Valley include:

Gable (clipped and crossed)

Hipped

Pyramidal





Unusual and complex parallel gable roof with a clipped roof and cross-gable tie in.

Recommendations:

- (1) Preserve the original roof form and its details. Avoid altering the angle of the roof. Preserve decorative roof accessories such as cresting, ridge caps and finials. For an entirely new replacement, the roof materials should appear similar to those used historically. A replacement roof material should be in keeping with the character of the architectural style of the historic structure.
- (2) Because of current fire codes, composite shingles or slate are the preferred roofing materials recommended. Roof materials should be earth tones and have a matte, non-reflective finish.
- (3) Preserve the original eave depth. Shadows created by traditional overhangs contribute to one's perception of a building's historic scale and therefore these overhangs should be preserved.
- (4) Cutting back roof rafters and soffits or in other ways altering the traditional roof overhang is inappropriate. Boxing in exposed roof rafters is inappropriate.
- (5) Preserve an historic roof by regular maintenance and cleaning. Inspect the roof for breaks, or holes in the surface, and to check the flashing for open seams. Watch

for signs of accumulated dirt and retained moisture which can lead to damaged roof, gutter or downspout materials.

(7) If a portion of the historic roofing material is damaged, replace it in-kind. Avoid removing historic roofing materials that are in good condition. If replacing some shingles is necessary, match the color, material and pattern of the original as closely as possible.

(8) Bubbled or domed skylights are not appropriate. Water from gutters and downspouts should drain away properly. A downspout should empty onto a metal or concrete splash block that slopes downward and away from the building. Minimize the visual impacts of skylights and other rooftop devices. Locating a skylight or a solar panel on a front roof plane should be avoided. Skylights and solar panels should not be installed in a manner that will interrupt the plane of the historic roof. They should be lower than the ridgeline. Flat skylights that are flush with the roof plane may be considered on the rear of the roof.

6.4.4 Porches

Residential porches differ in height, scale, location, materials and articulation. Some are simple one-story structures, while others may be complex with elaborate details and finishes. These elements often correspond to the architectural style of the house, and, therefore, the building's design character should be considered before any major rehabilitation work is begun. Historic porches should be preserved and should receive sensitive treatment during exterior rehabilitation.



Typical Victorian porch



Typical square column Craftsman style porch with closed railing



Replacement porch on a circa 1860s Late Victorian residence

Recommendations:

- (1) Preserve an original porch. Replace missing posts and railings, where necessary, with wood posts and rails, unless a different material is documented as being a part of the historic character.
- (2) Match the original proportions and the spacing of balusters in the railing. Avoid using wrought iron posts and railings.
- (3) Avoid enclosing a front porch.
- (4) If a porch is missing consider reconstructing it to match the form and detail of the original. Use materials similar to the original. Avoid decorative elements that are not known to have been used on the building.
- (5) Maintain the open, transparent character of a porch. When a porch must be enclosed, glass should be used and detailed in a manner that retains the historic

sense of openness. Enclosing a porch with opaque materials that destroy the openness and transparency of a porch is inappropriate.

6.4.5 Foundations

The foundation and other structural elements of an historic resource is essential to the stability and integrity of a building. Sometimes well-meaning actions can result in foundation damage or weakening, but lack of good maintenance practice is probably the biggest problem. More than anything else, water is the most damaging destructive agent a foundation must face. Many of Grass Valley's historic residences were built on stone foundations. While some of these have deteriorated and must be replaced, many are simply deteriorated and in need of shoring to make them structurally sound again. When replacement is necessary, however, a new foundation should be consistent with the original.



Typical post and pier foundation

It is a common misconception in many preservation projects that original building elements, such as foundation walls, can be removed and replaced with new replica elements, and then call it rehabilitation. Any time original building materials or features are removed from an historic property, the overall integrity of the structure is diminished. Again, only after all other rehabilitation or restoration efforts have failed should an original building feature be replaced with one that is the same or similar in character, and then only that portion that is beyond repair should be replaced.



Mortared rock masonry foundation

Recommendations:

- (1) Preserve original foundation walls and structural elements. Retain a substantial portion of the original structural elements, including structural supports and exterior foundation wall. Replace only those portions that are deteriorated beyond repair. Any replacement materials should match the original in color, texture, size and finish.
- (2) When replacing a foundation wall, design it to be compatible with that seen on similar historic buildings. The form, materials and detailing of a foundation wall should be similar to the original foundation and of nearby historic buildings.
- (3) Match the mortar in strength, detail, composition and color. New foundation walls should not increase the height of the structure to the degree that the historic character or alignment of building fronts are compromised. If it is necessary to install windows and window wells in the foundation for egress, avoid placing them on the street facade, especially on historic structures.

6.4.6 Chimneys and Stovepipes

Chimneys and stovepipes are integral parts of most residential construction in Grass Valley. Any major deterioration of a chimney compromises its purpose, with many implications for the comfort and safety of the building inhabitants. The proper maintenance and repair of historic chimneys is therefore important.



A chimney is an important exterior design element and historic chimneys should not be removed. Re-line and repair an historic chimney rather than replace it, when feasible, or maintain it as a nonfunctioning feature, if necessary.

Recommendations:

- (1) If replacement is absolutely necessary, a chimney should be replaced in the historic style. The chimney shape should match the historic form, including the pattern of brick.
- (2) A chimney should be regularly checked for deterioration. Chimneys are subject to the same forces of deterioration as all other character-defining features. However, because of their location, chimney problems are more often neglected.

(3) Annual chimney inspections should be conducted for leaning, cracking, deteriorated pointing or brickwork, deteriorated flashing, deteriorated flue liner, build-up of surface soot and intrusions such as nests or debris. A stovepipe, on any building, should have a matte, non-metallic dark finish.

CHAPTER 7

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR LANDSCAPE FEATURES

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Landscapes are the most visible and one of the most important elements to be considered in preserving the historic quality and appearance of a community. In Grass Valley's Historic 1872 Townsite there are a variety of different types of landscapes, such as public open spaces and streetscapes, residential landscapes, commercial - Retail streetscapes, and natural landscapes.

While each of these areas has a wide variety of specific landscape forms and treatments, there are a number of treatments that share common elements that can be employed to preserve the historic character of the 1872 Historic Townsite and additional techniques for revitalizing and improving those areas that have lost substantial historic form and quality.



These guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive in the kinds of materials or details employed for the landscaping of individual properties. Rather, they are meant to provide familiarity with many of the considerations made for preservation planning and management of historic landscapes, whether municipal, commercial, or private. These guidelines have been constructed from a survey of over 1,000 properties in Grass Valley. They can be used to preserve and enhance the continuity and character on which historic Grass Valley depends for much of its identity. Later in this chapter the emphasis shifts to defining best practices for different types of landscape design and maintenance

programs. New construction and plantings will be required for renewal of the landscape. There are design restrictions and requirements that must be factored into design and maintenance practices.



Grass Valley already has guidelines that specify construction details and allowable plant materials. There are also standards that apply to the historic downtown commercial area of Grass Valley.

The importance of streetscapes and landscaping to a community lies in maintaining continuity of period and style within the various districts. Grass Valley has some excellent clusters of historic houses, storefronts, and stand-alone commercial or industrial structures which share many common elements, evidenced by street trees, sidewalks, curbs, retaining walls, driveways, and street furniture. While less dependent on individual tree or plant variety, the consistent use and location of front yard or street side trees is an important character defining feature of Grass Valley landscapes in residential areas. In other neighborhoods, the continuous ribbon of front lawns, most often with no trees, provides the same level of continuity.

Grass Valley's landscape evolved over a period of 150 years. In contrast to today, people in the 19th and 20th century often had a shared understanding of landscape

that evolved from personal experience and popular gardening and landscaping literature of the period. This knowledge extended to the understanding of the kinds of trees and shrubs that grew in the area, and the availability of certain species from local or regional nurseries.

Period landscapes, such as formal Victorian gardens, require constant care and effort, while more naturalistic Craftsman-era (circa 1910-1930) cottage landscapes require less maintenance to retain their original design and overall effect. The home landscape in some ways mimics natural landscapes, which are usually based on the creation of shade in order to thrive. Once the overstory trees provide shade other layers of vegetation can survive beneath. It is important to think in terms of this layered system when managing the overstory on a property.

Grass Valley, like many other Gold Rush Era communities designed its streetscapes to assist in the free passage of stage coaches, wagons and horses, while its downtown sidewalks, built originally of wood, provided easy pedestrian access to a variety of businesses.



Today, despite modern roads and highways, one can walk to the historic downtown from other parts of the city in ten minutes or less. Walking also reduces the need for automobiles and therefore reduces air pollution and our dependence on oil.



Street trees often provide a visual sense of neighborhood continuity, while the landscapes of individual houses that line the streets express something unique about those who lived there. Walking these streets is at once fascinating due to the variety of houses and landscapes, but also because of the potential for interacting with others in the community.

The scale of the landscape and the balance of architecture to green areas is in itself significant. In many ways, the historic balance of shade trees, garden spaces and lawns in relationship to buildings, creates a sustainable environment.

Part of the challenge in maintaining Grass Valley's landscape is, of course, that today the common vision and limited range of options of the past two centuries are a thing of the past. We find ourselves with a wide choice of residential landscaping strategies, such as low-water xeriscaping, zero run-off gardens, creative handling of storm water to improve water quality, the use of recycled materials, the use of recycled water, and the general desire for low maintenance. There is also a whole array of contemporary landscape styles and materials available, most of which are uncharacteristic of the past, and often become a detriment to maintaining the historical character.

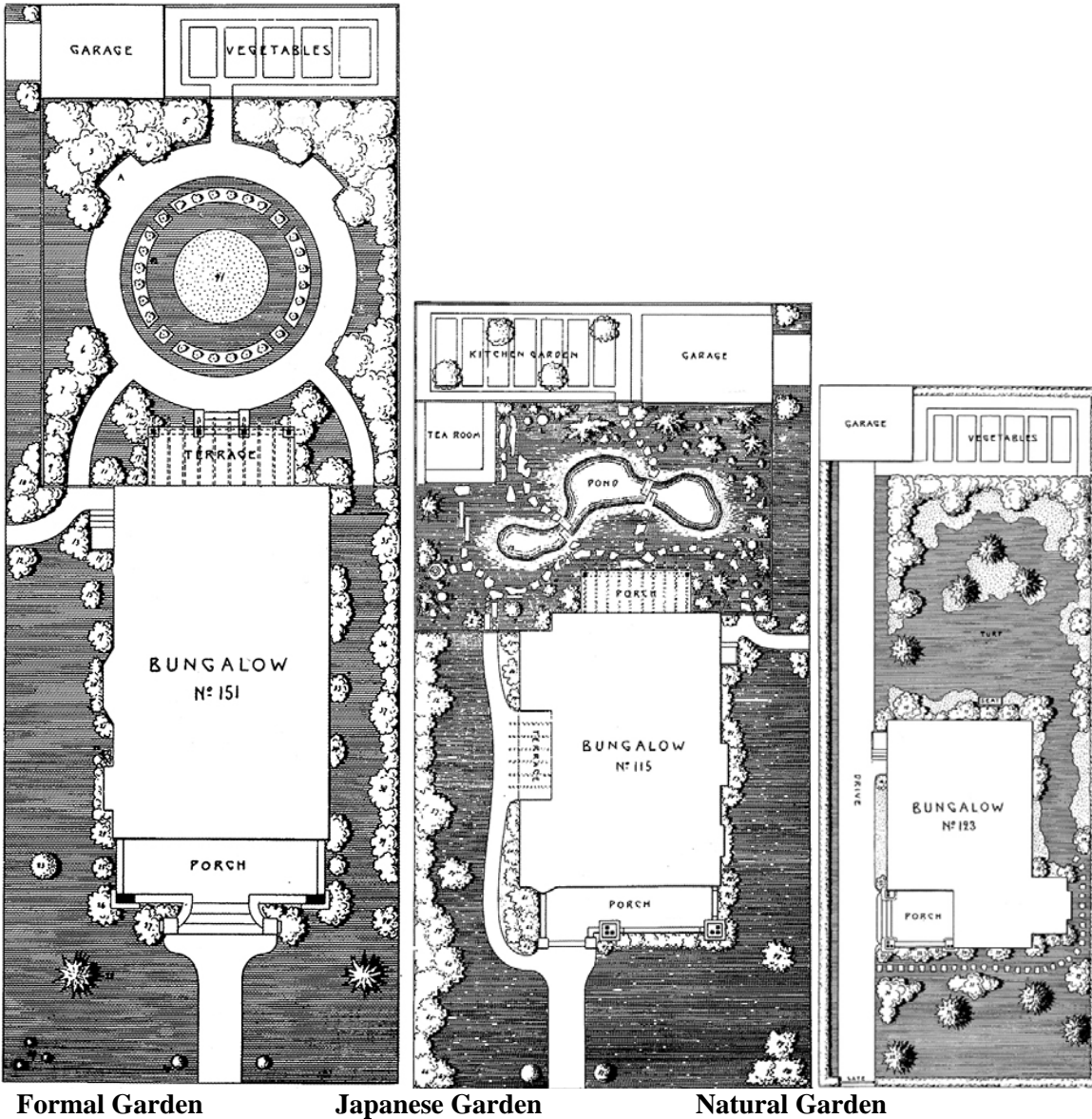
The most difficult issue in preserving landscapes inside the historic districts of Grass Valley hinges on maintenance. Certainly there are design strategies that, when employed, can help by minimizing individual effort while still achieving acceptable results. Many of these strategies are discussed in the section on historic landscape design.

7.2 BENEFITS OF WELL MAINTAINED LANDSCAPE

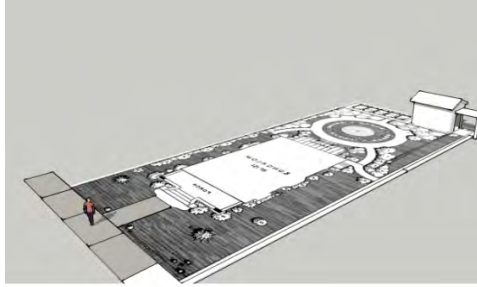
The benefits from a well maintained landscape are many, including improved "curb appeal" and retaining neighborhood continuity. Mature street trees, lawn trees, side-yard trees, or features, such as front yard fences or rock walls, should be identified, protected, and maintained. Property owners should make an effort to ensure that their landscape design and maintenance is in keeping with the historical period of the property.

7.3 DESIGN OF HISTORIC LANDSCAPES

In previous centuries, design pattern books, garden periodicals, and local nurseries influenced landscape design. In Eugene O. Murmann's *California Gardens of the Arts & Crafts Period*, published in 1914, the author provides sample residential landscape plans for most of the styles represented in the buildings and homes of Grass Valley's historic areas.



We have listed the important design characteristics and have provided three examples from Mr. Murmann's book depicted above. The intent here is not to suggest the exact design shown in the plans, but rather to distinguish the range of plans that were popular in a particular period, such as the early 1900s, and the various uses of formality versus informality or naturalness. Similar plans or remnants of layouts akin to those in the pattern book exist throughout the community, though many are hidden under layers of newer gardening.



In addition to preserving style and continuity of design, another difficulty with maintaining the period characteristics of landscapes is inherent in the nature of plant materials themselves. Plants constantly change over time, growing and maturing, dying and being replaced. While buildings change frequently, and often all at once during restoration or redevelopment, this is less true with plant material that mature slowly over time. The figure to the left represents a typical evolution of a historic residential landscape from the construction of the home to full maturity.

7.4 TOPOGRAPHY, GRADING AND DRAINAGE

The topography of Grass Valley contributes significantly to the character of its neighborhoods and commercial areas. Site development may require grade changes, such as cutting new driveways into relatively steep slopes or excavating for foundations. While basic engineering concerns are major issues in these cases, the visual impacts of these grading changes can be significant.

Recommendations:

(1) To the greatest extent possible, cutting-and-filling of sloping areas should be avoided, but, where it must occur, the visual impacts should be minimized.

(2) It is also crucial that the alteration of existing water run-off patterns be minimized to the fullest extent possible. Minimize cut-and-fill excavation that would alter the natural topography of the hillside. Use earth berms, rock forms, or stone retaining walls to minimize visual impacts of cuts. Hedges and fences may also be appropriate

in some locations. Simple rock walls that use native stone may be considered. Exposed gabions, large, continuous surfaces of smooth, raw concrete and related structures are inappropriate.

7.5 SITE FEATURES

Site features vary from property to property, but generally include plant materials; fences, walls, and gates; service areas, where equipment or materials are stored; accessory structures, such as sheds; retaining walls; site lighting; and parking areas, garages, and driveways.

7.5.1 Plant Materials

Historically, the landscape and plant materials of Grass Valley included a relatively narrow range of species until the late 19th century, when many new varieties of plants and trees were cultivated and made available commercially to the public. Grass Valley's relatively mild climate was conducive to growing a wide range of species, including fruit trees, such as apples, plums and peaches.

Plant materials should be used to create continuity among buildings, especially in front yards and along the edge of streets. Plants should be adapted to the climate of Grass Valley, while also being compatible with the historic context. Consideration also should be given to the future care and maintenance requirements of these materials.



Appropriate use of groundcover to dress the planting bed between the sidewalk and street.



Formal Design after 15 years – as the designer would have preferred to see it



Formal Design after 60 years – fully mature – provides shade and screening



Formal Design at Full Maturity – provides maximum shade and screening and sense of place

Change over the first 100 years of a residential landscape

- focal point tree
- hanging pot
- shrubs flanking entry
- arbor
- moveable furniture
- bed edging
- decorative gate
- fountain
- decorative boundary
- fence
- circular path
- bedding out in lawn
- perimeter fence
- and hedge



Common Characteristics of Victorian Gardens

Choices of plant material and design may be reevaluated in light of current standards and conditions (e.g., a cluster of smaller new trees may be used to establish a massing similar to one large original tree). Planters or planting boxes may be appropriate to dress alcoves or the skirts of commercial buildings. Historically, planters would have generally been made of cast iron.



7.5.2 Fences, Walls and Gates

When used historically, fences were simple wood picket or metal. These were relatively low in height and had a transparent character, allowing views into yards and providing interest to pedestrians. A few historic fences survive and should be preserved.

Typical historic fence types include: wood picket, wrought iron, cast iron and twisted wire. An historic wood fence should be protected against the weather with a painted finish of similar color to that used historically.

A fence that defines a front yard is usually low to the ground and transparent in nature. A fence should not exceed four feet in height. Solid, stockade fences do not allow views into front yards and are inappropriate.





Recommendations:

- (1) New fences should be compatible with the historic setting.
- (2) Iron, wire, and wood fences are recommended in period styles.
- (3) Preserve an original fence. Replace only those portions that are deteriorated. If a new fence is necessary, it should be similar in character both in scale and detail to those seen historically.
- (4) A new wood fence should be painted with a color similar to that used historically.
- (5) Chain link, unfaced concrete block, plastic, fiberglass, plywood, and mesh construction fences are discouraged.

7.5.3 Service Areas

Service areas include places for loading, as well as storage for trash, recycling containers, snow, firewood and site maintenance equipment. Many of these require

access year-round and should therefore be carefully planned as an integral part of a site. At the same time, the visual impacts of service areas should be minimized. When laying out a site, adequate provision should be made for service areas. They should not simply be located in “leftover” side yards.

Service areas should not be visible from major pedestrian ways and should be located at the rear of a property, when feasible. Trash areas, including large waste containers or dumpsters, should also be screened from view, using a fence, hedge or enclosure. For a larger storage area, consider using a shed to enclose it.

Recommendations:

- (1) Service areas should be placed in the rear or side yards of properties so they are not visible from public spaces.
- (2) Service areas should be screened with appropriate plant materials, fencing, or other visual screens that are consistent with the historic character of the neighborhood.

7.5.4 Accessory Structures

Accessory structures are a part of the design traditions of downtown Grass Valley. They include garages, carriage houses, barns and sheds. Because accessory structures help interpret how an entire lot was used historically, their preservation is strongly encouraged, particularly if an existing accessory structure has historic significance.



Recommendations:

- (1) When repairing and preserving an historic accessory building, respect its character-defining features such as its primary facade and roof materials, roof form, windows, doors and architectural details, and avoid moving it from its original location.
- (2) If an existing accessory structure is beyond repair, then replacing it with a structure having a similar function is encouraged. Although an exact reconstruction of the accessory structure is not necessary, the replacement should be compatible with the overall character of the historic structure, while accommodating new uses.
- (3) The preservation of an existing accessory structure is preferred to construction of a new one. A new accessory structure should be subordinate, in terms of mass, size and height, to the primary structure on a site, and should be similar in character to those seen traditionally. Accessory structures should be unobtrusive and not compete visually with the primary structure. It should be located to the rear of a lot, although, if necessary locating an accessory structure to the side of a primary structure, but set back substantially, may also be considered. While the roofline does not have to match the primary structure, it should not vary significantly.
- (4) Simple rectangular forms, with hip, gable or shed roofs, are recommended.
- (5) Maintain the traditional range of building materials seen on historic accessory structures. Appropriate siding materials for secondary buildings include painted or stained wood siding, wood planks, vertical board and batten siding or corrugated metal. These materials should be utilitarian in appearance. The use of muted, natural colors and finishes is encouraged.
- (6) Maintain the simple detailing found on historic accessory structures by avoiding ornate detailing, unless the original structure had such character defining features.
- (7) Accessory structures should not mimic primary structures.

7.5.5 Site Retaining Walls

The existing historic retaining walls of Grass Valley form one of its strongest elements of landscape character.



Recommendations:

(1) Whenever possible, preserving an existing retaining wall is preferable to new construction. Only those portions that are deteriorated beyond repair should be replaced. Any replacement materials should match the original in color, texture, size and finish. Do not introduce mortar into dry-stack retaining walls.

(2) The historic height, form and detailing of a retaining wall should be maintained. The current development code allows for a maximum 6' tall wall. If additional height is needed a design exception issued by the City will be required. If additional privacy screening is necessary, add plant materials or a fence. Increasing the height of a wall to create a privacy screen is inappropriate.

(3) If a new retaining wall is necessary or appropriate, its perceived scale and mass should be minimized and should reflect the scale of traditional development. The width and height of a wall should be limited to the minimum necessary. A wall that is less than four feet tall is encouraged. Where the overall height must be greater than four feet, when feasible, use a series of terraces with short walls to maintain the traditional sense of a hillside. Also consider varying the setback of individual walls to minimize the perceived overall width of a long wall and consider varying the masonry pattern to provide variety in large walls.

(4) For a new retaining wall, use natural stone or fieldstone similar to those seen historically. Stone retaining walls are frequently used in areas where steep slopes occur. In some areas, it may be appropriate or necessary to use pour-in-place concrete for a retaining wall, as this was used in the past. However, the use of conventional unfinished concrete block is inappropriate. Concrete block, with stone veneer or special texturing or color may be considered, where it can be demonstrated that the result will be in character with the area. Reduce water pressure on a retaining wall by improving drainage behind it and by providing drains in the wall to allow moisture to pass through it.

7.5.6 Site Lighting

Exterior lighting should be a subordinate element, so that the stars in the night sky are visible. Traditionally, exterior lighting was supplied by gas and later electricity, and was simple in character. Colors were generally black or dark forest green. Lamp posts were equally spaced along the primary commercial streets, such as Mill and Main Street. Made of tubular iron or metal, the simple lantern was applied to the top of the post.

In recessed store entries, lights were either hung by a tube supplied with gas or a chain that supported a simple chandelier that was lit by kerosene and later electricity.



A simple light post and lantern graces the front of Foothill Mercantile along Mill Street.

Recommendations:

- (1) Exterior building lights should be functional and be in harmony with surrounding buildings and should not attract unnecessary attention to any one building. External light fixtures should be simple in design and compatible with and complementary to the style of the building. Light fixtures should be constructed with traditional materials, such as baked enamel, porcelain, oxidized copper and cast iron. Light poles should be steel, anodized aluminum or wood.
- (2) Lights on individual building should be secondary and should not detract from the primary lighting. This will help to prevent lighting chaos and energy waste, which should be avoided. To further minimize the visual impacts of site and architectural lighting, indirect lighting should be used whenever possible so that the light source is hidden from direct view.
- (3) Lighting that is associated with service areas and parking lots should also be shielded. Unshielded, high intensity light sources and those that direct light upward are inappropriate.

7.5.7 Residential Parking, Garages, and Driveways

Before the automobile, many of Grass Valley's residential homes included carriage houses along the side or in the rear of the parcel. The garage was introduced along with the automobile and came into common use after 1920. Remnants of the use of carriages and the early days of the automobile abound in historic Grass Valley. Many homes still have a two-strip driveway leading to a small, detached garage located at the rear of the property.



Recommendations:

- (1) The visual impacts of parking, including driveways, garages and garage doors, should be minimized. On-site parking should be subordinate to other uses and the front yards should not appear to be a parking area.
- (2) Avoid parking in the front yard. Traditionally, front yards were not used as paved parking lots. Instead, front yards were open and provided views to the facades of buildings and open space of the surrounding property. Side or rear parking is recommended.
- (3) A garage should not dominate the view of the property from the street. It should be subordinate to the primary structure on the site. When possible, a detached garage, located to the rear of the building and accessed from the rear of the site rather than the street, is preferred in order to minimize the impact of a garage on the street scene. Setting a garage back substantially from the primary building front may also be considered. This will help reduce the perceived mass of the overall development. When a garage must be attached, the percentage of

building front allocated to it should be minimized. If the garage is attached, it should be detailed as part of the primary building. The material and detailing of a detached garage should be utilitarian and should be compatible with existing historic accessory structures.

(4) Garage doors should be designed to minimize the apparent width of the opening. Use materials on the door that are similar to that of wall surface of the primary structure or one that reflects the style of the building. The door will then blend in with the rest the structure. Wood clad garage doors are preferred.

(7) If a new driveway is necessary, use appropriate paving materials, such as concrete, gravel or chip and seal, so that the visual impact of the driveway on a streetscape will be minimized. In keeping with the existing historic fabric of Grass Valley and to minimize runoff, consider providing only ribbon strips of paving. To further minimize visual impacts, consider sharing a single drive and curb cut where multiple driveways are needed. Plain asphalt is discouraged. Use materials that are pervious and that will pass the rainwater into the soil where it can provide moisture for vegetation. Impervious paving also prevents runoff into the street, adjacent properties, and, ultimately, the nearby creek.

7.6 PUBLIC AND COMMERCIAL PARKING

Public parking lots only became a part of Grass Valley physical landscape after World War II. Curb parking existed in Grass Valley since the 1920s and the primary commercial streets in the historic downtown are often congested during much of the week. Off-street parking is available along adjacent side streets that abut residential neighborhoods.





Recommendations:

- (1) The visual impacts of features associated with storage of automobiles, including driveways, garages and parking lots should be minimized.
- (2) Care should also be taken to provide pedestrian circulation that is separate from, and does not conflict with, vehicular circulation.
- (3) Parking and circulation areas should be screened from view from public streets by low walls, berms, plant materials, and/or changes in grade. Parking placed along the side or rear of a property, or between two buildings is preferred.
- (4) Minimize the visual impact that large areas of parking create by minimizing the surface area of paving. Large expanses of plain asphalt or concrete are inappropriate. Consider using materials that blend with the natural colors and textures of the local landscape. Options to consider are: modular pavers, gravel and grasscrete. When large parking lots are necessary, increase landscaping to screen the lot, and consider dividing the lot into smaller components.
- (5) On a sloped site, terrace parking areas to follow the existing topography. Orient parking areas to fit within the topography and take into account the shade cast by existing and newly planted trees. Ensure that trees are placed so that their shade will protect the parked cars and pedestrian ways. Placing a driving lane parallel to a site contour will reduce the need for cut-and-fill. Use landscaping in terraced areas between parking lots.
- (6) When a parking lot must abut a public sidewalk, a planter or landscape strip planted with a combination of trees, shrubs and groundcovers should be used to provide a visual buffer.

7.7 ACCESSIBILITY

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates that places of public accommodation be accessible to all users. The guidelines introduced in this document should not prevent or inhibit compliance with accessibility laws. All new construction should comply completely with the ADA. Owners of historic properties also should comply, to the fullest extent, possible, while also preserving the integrity of the character-defining features of a building. Special provisions for historic buildings exist in Federal and State accessibility laws that allow for some alternative design solutions.

Recommendations:

- (1) Design ADA compliance features in a manner that does not visually conflict with the historic property, or damage important historic architectural elements.
- (2) Consult with the State Historic Preservation Office for more information regarding compliance or alternative design solutions for accessibility in an historic building or structure.

7.8 UTILITIES AND SERVICE EQUIPMENT

Utilities that serve properties may include telephone and electrical lines, electrical transformers, ventilation systems, gas meters, propane tanks, air conditioners and telecommunication systems. Adequate space should be planned in a project from the outset and they should be designed such that their visual impacts are minimized.

Recommendations:

- (1) Minimize the visual impacts of utilities and service equipment by locating them at the rear of a property where feasible and screening them.
- (2) Minimize the visual impacts of exhaust systems by integrating them into the building design. Any utility device or piece of service equipment should have a matte or non-reflective finish and be integrated with the building colors.
- (3) Screen rooftop appurtenances, such as mechanical equipment and antennas, from view and also ensure that they do not alter the roofline.

(4) When solar devices are utilized, they should not block views or significantly detract from their setting.

7.9 LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY



In addition to preserving style and continuity of design, another difficulty with maintaining the period qualities of landscapes is inherent in the nature of plant materials themselves. Plants constantly change over time: growing and maturing, dying and being replaced. Buildings change less frequently, either incrementally or all at once during restoration or redevelopment. The change to a building is intentional and long lasting. Not true with plant material. In preparing landscape guidelines, care must also be given to long-term care, maintenance, and how to provide for replacement of material as it becomes necessary over time.



Recommendations:

(1) In using any plant material, the overall character and level of maintenance should be in keeping with that of the existing neighborhood and period of architecture. Where historic plantings survive, they should be preserved to the extent feasible.

(2) Historic landscape features should be preserved and existing on-site vegetation should be retained whenever possible. New landscaping should respect and incorporate existing plantings and other landscape elements, both on-site and with respect to the surrounding neighborhood.

- (3) Existing landscaping should be incorporated into the final landscape. Move shrubs and small trees rather than replacing them.
- (4) In new, restored or renovated landscape designs, use plant materials that are compatible with the historic context of Grass Valley.
- (5) Landscaping schemes that are simple and subdued in character are encouraged, except when attached to a high-styled Victorian or other elaborately designed building. Then it should match and support the architecture and continuity of the neighborhood.
- (6) Existing historic landscape features, such as fences, sidewalks and trees, should be preserved and protected during construction.
- (7) Use plant materials in quantities and sizes that will have a meaningful impact in the early years of a project. However, care should be taken to avoid placing too many plants or vegetation that will ultimately grow too large.
- (8) Hardy plant materials should be used to accent buildings, pedestrian areas, and parking facilities and to provide shade and to establish the structure of the landscape design. Placement of plant materials should be used to establish a balanced relationship to buildings on and off site, leaving them neither too hidden nor too exposed.
- (9) Use plant materials that are adapted to the Grass Valley climate. Landscape designs should reflect a variety of deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, perennials and ground covers. Plant materials should be selected for their structure, texture, color, ultimate growth characteristics, and sense of unity with the surrounding vegetation, both natural and planted. A balanced ratio of evergreen to deciduous plants should be planted. Plant varieties that will survive the cold and snow loads should be used.
- (10) Shrubs, annuals and native plants in planter boxes (both fixed and free-standing) that are framed in natural wood or stone are encouraged. Maintain a landscaped edge along the edge of a site. This will help to define the road edge and provide a separation between pedestrian and vehicular areas and neighboring properties.

(11) When plant materials are used for screening they should be designed to function year-round. When installed, these materials should be of a sufficient size and number to accomplish a screening effect year-round. For example, shrubs may be selected with a branch structure that will filter views during winter. A mix of evergreens with deciduous plants may also be used for a year-round effect. Planting screens should include trees and shrubs, as well as ground covers and flowering perennials. Ground covers and flowering perennials alone will not provide sufficient screening.

7.10 GRASS VALLEY LANDSCAPE PLANTS

Common Name	Botanical Name	Invasive Risk*
Trees		
American Sweet Gum	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	
Atlas Cedar Glauca	<i>Cedrus atlantica</i> 'Glauca'	
Black Locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Limited
Black Pine	<i>Pinus thunbergii</i>	
Black Walnut	<i>Juglans nigra</i>	
California Black Oak	<i>Quercus kelloggii</i>	
Catalpa	<i>Catalpa speciosa</i>	
Coast Redwood	<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>	
Common Hackberry	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	
Deodar Cedar	<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	
European Hackberry	<i>Celtis australis</i>	
Giant Redwood	<i>Sequoiadendron giganteum</i>	
London Plane Tree	<i>Platanus x acerifolia</i>	
Pin Oak	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	
Ponderosa Pine	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>	
Southern Magnolia	<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>	
Tree of Heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	
Tulip Tree	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	
Valley Oak	<i>Quercus lobata</i>	
Shrubs		
California Lilac (white)	<i>Ceanothus</i>	
Chinese Snowball	<i>Viburnum macrocephalum</i>	
Common Box	<i>Buxus sempervirens</i>	
Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster, spp.</i>	
English Laurel	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>	
Mock Orange, Tobira	<i>Pittosporum tobira</i>	
Photinia	<i>Photinia x fraseri</i>	
Rose	<i>Rose, spp.</i>	

Spiraea	<i>Spiraea, spp.</i>	
Weigela	<i>Weigela, spp.</i>	
Blackberry	<i>Rubus, spp.</i>	High - Rubus armeniacus (Himalyan Blackberry)

Groundcovers

Creeping St. John's Wort	<i>Hypericum calycinum</i>	
Periwinkle	<i>Vinca major</i>	Moderate
Weigela	<i>Weigela, spp.</i>	

Perennials

California Poppy	<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>	
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* Invasive Rating per the California Invasive Plant Inventory published by the California Invasive Plant Council, February 2006. Additionally, California Horticultural Invasives Prevention (Cal-HIP) lists the following common Central Valley Foothills garden plants that are known to be highly invasive. Their planting is discouraged.

Common Name

Arundo, Giant Reed
Blue Gum Eucalyptus
Scotch Broom
Striated Broom
French Broom
Bridal Veil Broom
Spanish Broom
Chinese Tallow Tree
Pampas Grass

Botanical Name

Arundo Donax
Eucalyptus globulus
Cytisus scoparius
Cytisus striatus
Benista monspessulana
Retama monosperma
Spartium junceum
Sapium sebiferum
Cortaderia jubata and *C. selloana*

CHAPTER 8

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS AND ADAPTIVE REUSE



8.1 INTRODUCTION

When adapting an historic building or structure to a new use, all of the other standards and guidelines for the treatment of historic properties continue to apply. This chapter focuses on the procedures and methods that should be considered before adapting a building to a new use, such as converting a property from residential to commercial, as well as new additions. Changing the use of a building may have other consequences and trigger compliance with other building, health and safety codes, which could affect the historic character of a property.

For example, changing a residential property to a commercial use may require fire separations in order to preserve the property's historic character. In a similar manner, complying with accessibility laws may require modifications to buildings.

However, if the building is designated an historic property, the State Historic Building Code may apply and provide some flexibility in design standards. In either case, a design solution should be sought that minimizes the loss of historic building fabric and attempts to avoid altering the historic character of the property.

When adapting an historic building to a new use consider:

- maintaining the overall residential character of the property.
- preserving the key architectural features of the building as well as historic landscape and site design elements.
- seeking a use that is compatible with the historic character of the property. A use that is closely related to the original use is preferred.
- preserving the existing and/or historic character of a front yard.
- preserving and/or rehabilitating historic fabric, such as siding and ornamental details.
- design accessibility improvements in a manner that will preserve the historic character of the property, if commercial use is desired.

8.2 ADDITIONS

This chapter presents design policies and guidelines for the treatment of new additions to historic properties. Constructing additions is part of the design tradition of Grass Valley, even from its earliest history. Historically, as households expanded, additions were placed on existing properties, such as bedrooms, bathrooms, and kitchens. Some of the residential homes in Grass Valley were converted to boarding houses to address the shortage of housing for miners and their families. In later years, popular architectural styles influenced remodeling and new additions on many of the city's residential and commercial properties.



Older additions often used design elements and materials that were similar to the original building, although after 1900 new building materials, particularly windows and siding, varied markedly from 19th century architectural styles. In well thought out additions, the height of the addition was usually positioned below the primary building and it was often located to the side or rear, in such a way that the main, or public or street-facing façade, remained predominate. In some cases, an owner simply added a bay window to the front or a dormer to an existing roof, creating more usable living space without increasing the footprint of the structure. Dormer roof additions can be seen throughout many of Grass Valley's residential homes. What makes a dormer addition sympathetic is its roof shape, scale, and siding, and window fenestration that mirrors the main or original building. Greater flexibility in designing an addition is available to properties that received a Priority 3 or 4 rating score.

8.2.1 Existing Additions

An early addition to a building may be evidence of the history of the structure and its occupants. An older addition may, through the passage of time, have developed significance in its own right. Generally, older addition or additions that occurred during the building's defined period of significance, should be preserved. Poorly designed additions, or those that detract from the building's historic integrity of design, should be considered for removal or restoration.



For example, a sun porch may have been added to the original building, as was the case in the photograph to the left. In this situation the design and fabric of the sun porch detracts from the architectural elements and form that clearly identifies this structure as a Queen Anne home. While it is not inherent that these types of additions be removed, there may be modest solutions to embellish or restore older additions to a more sympathetic

design that will ultimately enhance the value of a historic property.

8.2.2 New Additions

When planning an addition, the effect it will have on the historic building should be considered. The new work should be recognized as a product of its own time and yet it should be visually compatible with the original, and the loss of the historic fabric should be minimized. A design for a new addition that would create an appearance inconsistent with the historic character of the building is inappropriate.



Note the gable room addition to the left of the main residence, whose placement and scale do not diminish the architectural character of the original main residence.

Recommendations:

- (1) A new addition should be designed such that it will not obscure, alter or destroy the character of the original building. An addition that seeks to imply an earlier or later period than that of the building is inappropriate. An addition that conveys an inaccurate variation on the historic style is inappropriate. For example, introducing more modest Craftsman details to an ornate Victorian is inappropriate.
- (2) An addition should not obscure or damage character- defining features (such as windows, doors, porches, brackets or roof lines). An addition should be designed such that it will not obscure, alter or destroy the character of the original building. An addition should be visually subordinate to the main building form. This is especially important for buildings rated Priority 1 and 2.
- (3) An addition should respect the proportions, massing and siting of the historic building.
- (3) The form and detailing of an addition should be compatible with the historic building. Simpler details on an addition can help distinguish it from the original structure.
- (4) An addition should be set back from the primary facade in order to allow the original proportions, form and overall character of the historic building to remain prominent.
- (5) If an addition is proposed to be taller than the main building, it should be set back substantially from primary character- defining facades.
- (6) A small connector linking the historic building and the addition may be considered.
- (7) A substantial addition should be distinguishable from the historic building so it can be understood as a more recent change. This can be accomplished with an offset or jog in the wall planes, or by using a corner board to define the connection, a subtle change in material, or a subtle differentiation between historic and more current styles.

(8) The materials of an addition should be compatible with those of the primary structure. Matching the historic material is an appropriate approach, although new materials may also be considered.

(9) Windows in an addition that are visible from the public way should be compatible with those of the historic structure.

8.2.3 Roof, Dormer, and Balcony Additions

Dormers were frequently adapted to homes in Grass Valley. A roof or dormer addition should be designed in a manner that minimizes damage to historic building fabric, does not alter the historic character of the building as seen from the public view or street, and is in keeping with the original structure.





Greater flexibility may be considered for buildings rated Priority 3 and 4. A new dormer (lower photograph) or balcony (upper photograph) should be constructed in a manner similar to those seen historically within the adjacent block or District Character Area.



Recommendations:

- (1) A roof addition should be in character with the style of the primary structure. The size of a roof addition, including dormers, should be kept to a minimum and should be set back from the primary facade so that the original roof line and form is identifiable from the street.
- (2) Gabled dormers are appropriate for most architectural styles, and hipped dormers may be appropriate for some architectural styles. A new dormer should remain subordinate to the historic roof in size and character. A new dormer should be lower than the primary ridge line and set in from the eave.

8.3 SOLAR PANELS OR SKYLIGHTS

Over the past decade the need and the desire to install solar or green energy components on residential properties has grown. While solar systems may not have the same benefits for every community, the need to conserve energy is a high priority for consumers and government agencies.

To meet the demand for green energy, California enacted the 1978 Solar Rights Act. [Government Code Section 65850.5](#) (a) states that:

it is the intent of the Legislature that local ordinances not adopt ordinances that create unreasonable barriers to the installation of solar energy systems, including, but not limited to, design review for aesthetic purposes, and not unreasonably restrict the ability of homeowners and agricultural and business concerns to install solar energy systems. Review of the application to install a solar energy system shall be limited to the building official's review of whether it meets all health and safety requirements of local, state and federal law. If the building official has a good faith belief that the solar energy system could have a specific, adverse impact upon the public's health and safety, the applicant may be required to apply for a use permit. Application for a use permit may not be denied unless a written finding is made based upon substantial evidence in the record that that the proposed installation would have a specific, adverse impact upon the public health and safety, and there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the specific, adverse

impact. These findings shall include the basis for the rejection of potential feasible alternatives of preventing the adverse impact.

The State Historic Preservation Office describes the applicability of the Act as it relates to historic properties as follows:

Although Government Code 65850.5 states that an application for solar energy systems cannot be denied for other than health or safety reasons, the Act in its entirety, taking into consideration the Reasonableness Standard of Civil Code Section 714, does not appear to prohibit review or reasonable restrictions in the interest of historic preservation or preserving the integrity of historic resources during the appropriate permit reviewing process. Historic preservation commissions should assert their authority to participate in the review of solar energy systems on historic resources. Their review should be timely, even expedited, so as to not delay the permit process. Any recommendations to minimize damage to character-defining features or the integrity of the resource shall comply with the reasonableness limitations imposed by Civil Code Section 714. The review itself should be based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards or locally adopted standards. Preservationists, building officials, historic preservation commissions and homeowners would do well to focus on the language in Civil Code Section 714 that allows for an alternative system of comparable cost, efficiency and energy conservation benefits (Office of Historic Preservation - *Solar Rights Act*, 2009.)

Taking into account recent legislation regarding solar installations on historic properties, the application of materials, such as solar panels or skylights, which will adversely alter the original roof line and/or physical character of designated historic buildings or structures and within designated historic districts, is discouraged. Owners of historic properties should explore alternative means of adding light or conserving energy before considering the use of installation of skylights and solar systems.

Where owners apply to install skylights or solar systems to the structure, the Commission will evaluate each application on its merits.

Generally, utilitarian roof accessories will be reviewed by the staff and given administrative approval. Where the proposed installation will have a significant impact on the roof line or other feature of the structure, such as the installation of large turbine vents or other obtrusive accessories, the proposal will be referred to the Commission.



Solar panels installed properly on a historic property. Note the separation between the rear of the home and the solar panels affixed to structural columns.

Recommendations:

- (1) Attached solar panels or solar systems away from the buildings or structures.
- (2) Avoid damaging significant historic fabric when adapting solar systems to historic buildings.

- (3) Make sure the intended purpose of the installation will provide the desired outcome when selecting solar systems.
- (4) Explore other alternative means for introducing natural light to the structure's interior and/or conserving heat energy before adding solar systems to buildings or structures.
- (5) Avoid having skylights and/or solar system visible from public streets and adjoining properties.
- (6) Design skylights and/or solar systems so they are compatibility with the historic buildings roof line, color, texture, and shape.

CHAPTER 9

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