ADOPTED

DESIGN GUIDELINES

EAST PORTLAND/GRAND AVENUE HISTORIC DESIGN ZONE

A NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

July 1994
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Portland, Oregon
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ADOPTED GUIDELINES FOR PORTLAND'S
EAST PORTLAND/GRAND AVENUE HISTORIC DESIGN ZONE
A NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Adopted by the Historical Landmarks Commission, and
the Portland City Council
Ordinance No. 167732, June 1, 1994

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Drawings courtesy of the publication "21st Century Production District" produced by the Department of Architecture, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, through a grant from the National Endowment for Arts to the Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Program of the City of Portland, Oregon. The project was completed February 1989.
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The Field's Motor Car Company building is typical of the historic structures in the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District. (OrHi 002208)
INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES

The guidelines for the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone are to guide exterior alterations of existing buildings, and new construction, including additions. These guidelines apply to you if you own a building in the Historic District. (See Map on page 3) Derived from the federal guidelines for historic districts, these guidelines have been approved by Portland’s Historical Landmarks Commission and City Council. Following the guidelines will maintain compatibility between buildings in the District. However, because some discretion is involved in interpreting the guidelines, it is imperative that you work closely with the East Portland Historic Advisory Council, the Bureau of Planning and Bureau of Buildings in designing your project.

The nature of the design review process is discretionary. Because of this exercise of discretion the design review process requires that decisions occur with public notice and the opportunity for appeal. Portland develops and publishes design guidelines to inform those facing design review with the issues that must be successfully addressed for a project to be approved.

If you are utilizing federal or state historic district tax credits and/or a property tax freeze, these guidelines are also criteria for receiving those credits and remaining qualified for the tax freeze.
HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document contains the design guidelines for the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone. These guidelines supplement the "Fundamental Design Guidelines of the Central City Plan." They replace the "Special Design Guidelines for the Design Zone of the Central Eastside District of the Central City Plan," within the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District. The "fundamentals" provide a basic framework to guide and encourage development throughout the Central City. The East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone guidelines, presented in this document, focus on a relatively small area with unique historic significance and foster that area's historic qualities. Projects within the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District must meet both the Central City Fundamentals and the special historic district guidelines presented in this document.

Grand Avenue as it appeared in 1910. (OrHi 80862)
There are three different sets of historic design zone guidelines for the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone included in this document. The first set are those guidelines applicable to projects involving the alteration of the exterior of an existing building. Following these are a set of guidelines which are applicable to projects that include development of new buildings or addition of area to existing buildings. The third set presents guidelines applicable to parking lot and street improvements.

Projects must respond to the fundamental and historic district design guidelines. Development projects are subject to all those guidelines which are applicable to the proposal. Should a project include the development of a new building, alteration of the exterior of an existing building, creation or alteration of an off-street parking lot and alterations in an adjacent right-of-way the project would be reviewed against all three sets of guidelines in this document. For convenience, the titles of the Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines are also listed in this document.

The Historic District guidelines establish the scope of the design review process. They are intended to lead or guide the developer and designer. They are not intended to be inflexible prescriptive requirements. Rather, they are intended to stimulate thinking about issues of fit and compatibility. As used in the design review process they provide a series of mandated discussions about how a development or remodeling proposal will fit with and enhance the historic characteristics of the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone. The cumulative nature of the two levels of design concern ensures that projects enhance the historic qualities of the East Portland/Grand Avenue historic area and link with the larger characteristics of Portland's Central City.

The following listing of design guidelines shows how the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone Guidelines fit in with the Central City Fundamentals. The guidelines are structured in three broad groupings; Portland Personality, Pedestrian Emphasis and Project Design. Central City Fundamental Guidelines are shown with a short alpha-numeric designation, i.e., A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2 and so on. The Central Eastside District guidelines are listed following a Central City Fundamental guideline that introduces a topic. Central Eastside District guidelines are indicated with the alpha-numeric designation for the Central City Fundamentals followed by another numeral, i.e., A5-1, A5-2, A5-3, B3-1, C3-1, C3-2, etc. The same system is extended to organize the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone Guidelines which are shown with a subheading of a, b, c, etc. East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone Guidelines are shown in bold text for quick identification.
Example

A. General guideline topic area
A1 Central City Fundamental Guideline
   A1-1 District Guideline (such as the Central Eastside District)
   or
   A1-1a Subdistrict Guideline (such as the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone Subdistrict)

COMPLETE LISTING OF GUIDELINES:

Not all of the following guidelines are applicable to the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District. Projects located within the historic district must address both the Central City Fundamental Guidelines and the East Portland/Grand Avenue Guidelines. They need not address the Central Eastside District Guidelines. New development projects and projects which include exterior remodeling or expansion of existing buildings must demonstrate how each of the guidelines is met by the project’s design or why each guideline not met should not be met for the project to better meet the goals, policies and objectives for design review in the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District.

A. Portland Personality
   A1 Integrate the River
   A2 Emphasize Portland Themes
      A2-1 Recognize Transportation, Produce, and Commerce as Primary Themes of East Portland
   A3 Respect the Portland Block Structure
   A4 Use Unifying Elements
   A5 Enhance, Embellish & Identify Areas
      A5-1 Reinforce the Effect of Arcaded Buildings Fronting East Burnside Street
      A5-2 Acknowledge the Sandy River Wagon Road (Sandy Boulevard)
      A5-3 Plan for or Incorporate Underground Utility Service
      A5-4 Incorporate Works of Art
      A5-5 Incorporate Water Features
   A6 Re-use/Rehabilitate/Restore Buildings
      A6-1 Use Special East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone Guidelines
         Guidelines for Alterations
         A6-1a Scale and Proportion
         A6-1b Exterior Building Materials
         A6-1c Rear and Side Walls
         A6-1d Exterior Mechanical Systems
         A6-1e Color
A6-If  Signs
A6-1g  Lighting
A6-1h  Awnings, Canopies and Marquees

**Guidelines for New Construction and Additions**

A6-1i  Siting and Building Orientation
A6-1j  Parking
A6-1k  Scale and Proportion
A6-1l  Materials, Colors and Textures
A6-1m  Rear and Side Walls
A6-1n  Signs, Lighting, etc.
A6-1o  Awnings, Canopies and Marquees

**Guidelines for Street Systems and Parking Improvements**

A6-1p  Landscaping of Off-Street Parking Lots
A6-1q  Sidewalk Improvements
A6-1r  Streets
A6-1s  Street Light Standards and Public Utility Features
A6-1t  Street Embellishments

A7  Establish & Maintain a Sense of Urban Enclosure
A7-1  Maintain a Sense of Urban Enclosure When Single Story Buildings are Set Back

A8  Contribute to the Cityscape, the Stage & the Action

A9  Strengthen Gateways
A9-1  Acknowledge the Sandy River Wagon Road at the Sandy Boulevard/East Burnside Street Central City Gateway

**B. Pedestrian Emphasis**

B1  Reinforce and Enhance the Pedestrian System
B2  Protect the Pedestrian
B3  Bridge Pedestrian Obstacles
B3-1  Reduce Width of Pedestrian Crossings
B4  Provide Stopping & Viewing Places
B5  Make Plazas, Parks, & Open Space Successful
B6  Consider Sunlight, Shadow, Glare, Reflection, Wind & Rain
B6-1  Provide Pedestrian Rain Protection
B7  Integrate Barrier-Free Design

**C. Project Design**

C1  Respect Architectural Integrity
C1-1  Integrate Parking
C1-2  Integrate Signs
C2  Consider View Opportunities
C3  Design for Compatibility
C3-1  Design to Enhance Existing Themes in the District
C3-2  Respect Adjacent Residential Neighborhoods
C4  Establish a Graceful Transition Between Buildings & Open Spaces
C5 Design Corners That Build Active Intersections
C6 Differentiate the Sidewalk Level of Buildings
C7 Create Flexible Sidewalk-Level Spaces
C8 Give Special Design Attention to Encroachments
  C8-1 Allow for Loading and Staging Areas on Sidewalks
C9 Integrate Roofs & Use Roof Tops
C10 Promote Permanence & Quality in Development

In addition to compliance with the two levels of Guidelines that apply to this historic design zone, compliance with the Secretary of the Interior’s “Standards” for national historic districts is also required by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. Those projects that comply with Portland’s guidelines will generally meet the Secretary’s “Standards.” However, a careful review of the Secretary’s “Standards” will also be part of the design review process with the State’s Historic Preservation Office. The Secretary of the Interior’s “Standards” are included in Appendix A of this document.
STEPS LEADING UP TO THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

The following design steps are recommended to those developing projects within the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone.

STEPS:

1. Read and consider the East Portland/Grand Avenue History, Character and Context statement contained in this document (page 21).

2. Meet and discuss the project with the East Portland Historic Design Zone Advisory Board.

3. Meet and discuss the project with the staff to the Portland Historical Landmarks Commission. Determine the required review procedure for the project. A formal pre-application conference may be required of large projects (a fee is required for a pre-application conference).

4. Read and address the Secretary of the Interior’s “Standards,” Guidelines.

5. Read and address the Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines.

6. Read and address all applicable sections of this document.

7. Submit required drawings and formally apply for design review (a fee will be required for the design review process).
THRESHOLDS AND PROCEDURES

Developments on Private Property

The determination as to whether a project is major or minor and the associated type of required review procedure is based on the cost of the project. Projects of lower cost are considered minor and those of high cost are considered major. Minor projects will be reviewed through a Type II procedure. Major projects will be reviewed through a Type III procedure. The threshold for major design review is a dollar value of $1,000,000 or higher (in adjusted 1990 dollars). Costs used in determining project value and review type are the sum of all construction costs shown on all building permits associated with the project.

The Type II procedure is an administrative review process with notice and the opportunity to appeal the Planning Director's administrative decision to a hearings review body. Projects reviewed by a hearings review body in the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone will be heard by the Portland Historical Landmarks Commission. The Type III procedure requires a public hearing before the Historical Landmarks Commission. The Commission's decision may be appealed to the City Council. Projects to be reviewed through a Type III procedure are required to go through a pre-application conference. Projects to be reviewed through a Type II procedure may go through a pre-application conference but are not required to do so. There is a fee for pre-application conferences as well as for the design review procedure.

The Type II and Type III procedures are presented in detail in Chapter 33.730 of the Municipal Code of the City of Portland (Portland's Zoning Code).

Changes to Right-of-Ways

Maintenance, alterations and changes in the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District's streets are not ordinarily subject to design review. Portland's Department of Transportation has established standards which such projects must comply with. In addition, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Grand Avenue are a State of Oregon highway. The Oregon Department of Transportation establishes standards which govern changes to state highways. Projects which must meet the East Portland/Grand Avenue design guidelines are those changes proposed as part of development projects where the developer wishes to vary from the applicable right-of-way standards. In such cases the project must be first approved by the Portland Department of Transportation and then by the City's Historical Landmarks Commission. When their review is required the Historical Landmarks Commission will consider the guidelines contained in this document as part of their review.
Guidelines, (A6-1q, A6-1r, A6-1s, and A6-1t) which address details of street and sidewalk design are advisory to the Portland Department of Transportation. These are not mandatory requirements and should not be taken as implying that design review of right-of-way projects is required. The guidelines are intended to improve the community's awareness of the role which streets and sidewalks may play in enhancing the district's historic character.
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE 
DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

East Portland, 1928.

(OrHi 078735)
Goals of East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District Guidelines

The opportunity now exists to re-establish the visual and developmental patterns that supported this District as a bustling, urban environment through sensitively designed infill, new construction and restoration. The goal is to integrate the old with the new to enhance the District's continuity. By building upon the basic design tenets historically established here, yet considering the functional needs of new but compatible uses, this goal can be reached and the future of a vibrant Historic District secured.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF PORTLAND’S CENTRAL CITY DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

The general purpose of design review in the Central City is to preserve the area's heritage and guide changes to ensure the area's attractive appearance and livability. The design review process is intended to do this by accomplishing the following:

- Encourage urban design excellence in the Central City.
- Integrate urban design and preservation of our heritage into the process of Central City development.
- Enhance the character of Portland’s Central City districts.
- Promote the development of diversity and areas of special character within the Central City.
- Establish an urban design relationship between the Central City districts and the Central City as a whole.
- Provide for a pleasant, rich and diverse pedestrian experience in the Central City.
- Provide for the humanization of the Central City through promotion of the arts.
- Assist in creating a 24-hour Central City which is safe, humane and prosperous.
- Assure that new development is on a human scale and that it relates to the character and scale of the area and the Central City.
POLICIES FOR THE CENTRAL EASTSIDE DISTRICT

The Central City Plan's overall policy for the Central Eastside calls for preserving the district as an industrial sanctuary while improving freeway access and expanding the area devoted to the Eastbank Esplanade. A relatively small portion of the Central Eastside District is subject to design review and the guidelines contained in this document. Those areas subject to design review are identified with a "d" design overlay zone designation on the City's zoning maps. The following policies are directed to the Central Eastside's design zones.

- Allow mixed use developments, including housing, in areas committed to non-industrial use;

- Preserve buildings which are historic and/or of architectural significance;

- Develop Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Grand Avenues as the principal north-south connection and commercial spine in the district for transit and pedestrians with the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District as its focus; and

- Allow closure and use of local streets for loading, employee parking and small plazas.

View of East Portland waterfront from a west side rooftop. The Willamette River is at flood stage and its waters threaten the Morrison Bridge, 1890.
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE CENTRAL EASTSIDE DISTRICT

The following goals and objectives define the urban design vision for new development and other improvements in the Central Eastside.

Goal
Encourage the special distinction and identity of the design review areas of the Central Eastside District by:

Objectives

- Fostering development that preserves and enhances the historic fabric, characteristics, and significance of the particular area.

- Emphasizing transportation as a district theme which acknowledges its importance to the city and region. The Sandy River Wagon Road (Sandy Boulevard), rail lines, and the advent of the combustion engine vehicle were important ingredients to the district’s transportation evolution.

- Reinforcing and continuing the effect of the unique arcading of building fronts along East Burnside Street.

- Recognizing the historical characteristics and importance of warehouses and light industrial buildings.

- Promoting the historical use of the public sidewalks to continue to serve as a multi-functional, personality trait of the district. Besides accommodating pedestrian passage, the Central Eastside sidewalks serve as staging areas for goods to move in and out of buildings, as well as displaying goods. They become “showrooms” to the public, an extension of internal services.

- Giving emphasis to the gateways of the district in a manner that is relative and distinctive to district history and significance.

- Retaining, re-establishing and adding four-bowled Simon Benson drinking fountains within the district.

- Using neon and wall signs, and banners to attractively present commercial themes.

- Recognizing and giving emphasis to significant geologic landforms underlying the district.
Goal
Provide continuity between the Central Eastside and the Lloyd District by:

Objectives

• Extending the right-of-way improvement system from the Convention Center into the Central Eastside District along East Burnside Street, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Grand Avenue, i.e., sidewalk design, street lighting, street trees, and other street furniture.

• Establishing physical and visual linkages between areas that accommodate ease of access and circulation by pedestrians, vehicles and transit.

Goal
Provide continuity between the Central Eastside and the river, downtown, and adjacent residential neighborhoods by:

Objectives

• Enhancing the physical and visual linkages that improve pedestrian access and circulation.

• Continuing, expanding and supporting the bridge lighting program.

Citizens National Bank Building at Grand Avenue and Alder Street, 1929. This handsome structure reflects the pride owners took in new commercial development located in the district. (OrHi 002126)
Goal
Enhance the safety, convenience, pleasure, and comfort of pedestrians by:

Objectives

• Retaining and maintaining existing pedestrian orientation.

• Reinforcing the presence of transit service would contribute to the character, appearance, and vitality of the area.

• Extending curbs/sidewalks at intersections to reduce long pedestrian crossings at streets, while accommodating for truck turning radii.

• Creating an appealing quality environment in which to do business, live and visit.

• Incorporating public art in the rights-of-way.

• Acknowledging and responding to the effects of weather.

• Encouraging the sidewalk level of development to be active with multi-use opportunities.

• Enriching the pedestrian environment with quality materials and design features that are respective of the district’s urban character.

• Making parking, and access to and from it, attractive and convenient.

• Promoting the use of awnings to protect pedestrians and to enhance business appearance.

• Promoting the use of roof tops for various housing and commercial activities.

Trees, ornamental lighting standards, and windows located adjacent to the sidewalk enhance the district for pedestrians.
Eastside Farmers Market, 1949. Produce sales and distribution have always been important business activities in the Central Eastside District.

(OrHi 054067)
EAST PORTLAND/GRAND AVENUE
HISTORIC DISTRICT'S
HISTORY, CHARACTER & CONTEXT

BACKGROUND

Historically, the East Portland/Grand Avenue District was the bustling, concentrated commercial core of East Portland and has continued as a key business area through its 1891 incorporation into the City of Portland. Two- to four-story brick buildings with elements of wood, stucco and cast iron were constructed in the high-styles of the Victorian period. In its early years, the District was serviced by the railroad line along its western edge, Third Avenue. Horses, carriages and pedestrians filled the streets. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (Union) and Grand Avenue were main thoroughfares and were visually similar in form and in the design of facing buildings. Historic photographs from the 1920s show that the District's density and quantity of Victorian buildings were still largely intact at this point, however, streetcars and early automobiles now shared the streets with pedestrians. New building styles were introduced in the first quarter of the 20th century including Colonial Revival, Mission and Art Deco. With the introduction of the automobile and buses in 1915, streets were widened and paved.
The automobile also impacted the building form. Throughout the District one- and two-story simple concrete buildings were constructed to house garages, auto-related businesses and other small commercial and industrial enterprises. These structures were developed either as infill in the core or as new development surrounding the commercial core. Some of the Victorian buildings along Grand Avenue were demolished and most of the buildings on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard were replaced with newer concrete buildings. After the secondary historic period ended in 1940, other buildings were lost due to economic downturns and other factors.

The Central Eastside is a unique neighborhood. The property and business owners are proud of the district’s heritage and service to the community and region. Light industry, distribution/warehousing, and transportation are important components of the district’s personality. To the general public, retail stores and commercial businesses provide the central focus within the district.

The underlying urban design objective for the Central Eastside is to capitalize on and emphasize its unique assets in a manner that is respectful, supportive, creative, and compatible with each area as a whole. Part of the charm and character of the Central Eastside District which should be celebrated is its eclectic mix of building types and uses. An additional strength, which should be built on, is the pattern of pedestrian friendly retail uses on Grand Avenue, East Burnside and Morrison Streets, as well as portions of 11th and 12th Avenues.

Attention to the above considerations will strengthen and enhance the interest, relationship, and connections to the Convention Center complex, downtown, and the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The industrial and distribution functions of many of the buildings are recognized as important operational traits and must be accommodated and acknowledged in the design review process. Therefore, situations with individual projects may arise where it is determined that one or more Fundamental Design Guidelines are not applicable to the circumstances, and consequently should be waived. The objective is to encourage urban design excellence within the context of the Central Eastside environment, in a manner that allows for flexibility and change.

The East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District is an approximately 20-block area in Portland, Oregon. The historic district is roughly bounded on the south by S.E. Main Street, north by S.E. Ankeny Street, west by S.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and east by S.E. Seventh Avenue. Some irregularity is found at the boundary edges where the concentration of significant properties did not warrant inclusion of all properties. The primary resource type found within the district is Commercial. Industrial, Government and Culture resource types comprise a smaller portion of the district. The central commercial spine, SE Grand Avenue, is characterized by two- to three-story buildings. Although some intrusions have occurred the district retains its overall integrity. The main intrusion is on the full
block between Alder and Washington along Grand Avenue where a modern gas station is located.

The purpose of the design review process and of these guidelines is to ensure that new buildings, building alterations, parking and street improvements recognize and enhance the qualities that characterize the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone. Throughout this document the guidelines make reference to the area's character and/or require that the project be compatible. A key question facing those planning a development is then the nature of the area's character. The characteristics of the area that the project must respond to are based on the district's context statement. The following context statement is largely drawn from the National Register of Historic Places district registration forms and from "East Portland Historic District," prepared by Karen Zisman, Melissa Darby, Elizabeth O'Brien, Kimberly Poe and Peter F. Fry.
The historic district is located within the City of Portland, Oregon. Portland is located near the mouth of the Willamette River which flows into the Columbia River at the northern boundary of the state. The Willamette River bisects Portland east-west. The East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District is sited near the east bank of the Willamette River. Historically, this area straddled a network of sloughs and marshes extending from the river into a gently rising plain which comprised the City of East Portland from 1861-91. This plain gradually ascends from the river doted by several buttes connecting with the foothills of the Cascade Mountain Range to the east. Today the historic district area is sited in the inner city area known as the Central Eastside Industrial District (CEID). The historic district occupies a prominent location between two major new regional projects: the Convention Center to the north and the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry to the south. Directly across and on the west side of the Willamette River is Portland’s Downtown. On the east side of the river and immediately to the west of the district is the heart of Portland’s east side industrial area. To the east of the historic district are industrial and residential areas. Strip trolley-car era commercial districts are located on major east-west arterials, East Burnside, Sandy Boulevard, SE Hawthorne and SE Belmont to the east of the district.
The historic district is platted in 200' by 200' blocks. East-west streets are named. Avenues run true north-south and are numbered, with the exception of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Grand Avenue. These two roadways are the major north-south arterials of the district and function as State Highway 99 East. Most of the area included in the historic district was laid out as the East Portland town site in 1850 and was formally platted by James B. Stephens in 1861 on a portion of his donation land claim. Other subdivisions included within the historic district are Park Addition to East Portland which was recorded September 20, 1882 by Mr. McGeorge, President of Park Homestead Association; and Hawthorne Park platted by Rachel Hawthorne and her daughters, Louise and Catherine, in 1889.

Despite East Portland's proximity to Portland's harbor trade on the west bank of the Willamette, the east bank's land form was marshy and swampy and was not conducive to river transport, thus restricting early commerce. Most early trade was conducted by water routes or ferries across the Willamette River. East Portland's commercial boom was not initiated until a railway system was installed by the Oregon Central Railroad Company and began operating in 1870.
BOUNDARIES

The East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone has its origin in the platting of the City of East Portland which began as early as 1850 by James B. Stephens. The town site of East Portland was formally recorded in 1861 and incorporated in 1871. East Portland was annexed to the City of Portland in 1891. The historic district boundaries are confined within the larger original town site of East Portland, later subdivided into the East Portland Park and Hawthorne Park Additions. The end date of historic significance, 1930, correlates with the dramatic decline of new construction for the next 50 years due to a combination of factors, including the lack of new immigration to the area, the impact of the depression and World War II, and the construction of the Interstate 5 Freeway on Portland’s east bank.

The historic design zone boundary encompasses an approximately 20-block area roughly bounded by SE Ankeny to the north, SE Main to the south, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to the west and Seventh Avenue to the east. The historic design zone was proposed under National Register Criteria “A” for its significant history. The historic district’s theme is Commerce as it evolved in East Portland. The historic period of significance is 1883-1930. The historic district is made up of 61% primary and secondary significant buildings excluding vacant land. Eighty-nine percent of the buildings were constructed prior to 1930. A synopsis of the factors used to determine the historic district boundaries are as follows:

Grand Avenue looking south from Alder Street picturing the Citizens Bank, U.S. National Bank, and Weatherly Building, 1941. (OrHi 000187)
1) Historic Factors

The historic district represents the early origins of the City of East Portland and its subsequent development as the major commercial core of Portland's east side. The original town site as platted in 1861 stretched from the Willamette River on the west to 12th Street on the east, Glisan on the north and beyond Hawthorne to the south. The East Portland town site as incorporated in 1870 stretched from the Willamette River on the west to 24th Street on the east, NE Halsey to the north and SE Holgate to the south. The historic district represents a portion of the East Portland town site encompassing the nucleus of the original core development and the most concentrated representation of later commercial growth.

The identification of the primary importance of the community business center suggests an East Portland Historic District defined by the historic commercial and community activities of Grand Avenue. As an historic artery, the blocks of Grand Avenue from Ankeny to Salmon are the core for delineating such a district. Also important are the surviving blocks along Alder and Morrison Streets between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Seventh, which served as major intersecting streets for commercial and community activities.

These identified blocks offer the most intense concentration of primary period buildings within the larger East Portland study area. Most of the primary, secondary and historic non-contributing buildings were built to serve the community business center with retail, office and meeting space. Beyond this core area building types tend to change to industrial and residential rather than commercial. Precise boundaries have been determined on the basis of land use patterns and building characteristics within this historic framework.

The Barber Block on Grand Avenue, built in 1889, reflects the vitality of the City of East Portland.
2) Concentration of Significant Properties

The boundaries represent the largest concentration of historically significant, commercially oriented buildings located within the East Portland town site and currently within the central southeast area of Portland. The district is made up of primary (1883-1915) and secondary (1916-1930) buildings. The concentration of resources dating from the historic period (primary, secondary and historic non-contributing) comprises 68% (50 of 74) of the total number of properties in the historic district, or 89% (50 of 56) of the total number of buildings within the district.

Many commercial buildings at locations along Grand Avenue retain the turn of the century character which typifies the District.
3) Visual and Physical Factors

The northern and southern boundaries begin and end where clear concentrations of resources exist. The Morrison Bridge at the center of the district is the oldest connection between the east and west banks of the Willamette River. The original bridge was constructed in 1887 and was later replaced with a newer bridge. The spine of the district is SE Grand Avenue.

The district is composed largely of commercial buildings and some industrial, governmental and cultural buildings. Many of the buildings have architectural significance in addition to historic significance.

U.S. Laundry Building under construction in East Portland. The Building, located at Yamhill Street and Grand Avenue, is a good example of care in design and the choice of materials resulting in a handsome work of architecture. (OrHi 009234)
The district is highly visible due to its prime location between the new Oregon Convention Center and the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI). As a unifying link between these major attractions, the historic district strongly supports the goals of the City of Portland in its commitment to developing a cohesive plan for the central city. The district’s identity is one which recognizes the evolution of stages of critical development in roughly a 50-year period of time in Portland’s east side history.

Generally boundaries were drawn to include both sides of the public right-of-way along Grand Avenue, bridge heads, and entire blocks for the purpose of clarity and consistency in future planning and regulation.

Grand Avenue looking north from Alder Street showing trolley tracks, Citizens Bank and Western Union Buildings, 1926. Characteristic use of retractable awnings on these buildings is shown.

(OrHi 000186)
5) Economic and Socio-political

New interest in east side development is encouraged by current public plans but needs to be designed in a manner compatible with the area's history. The design review process within the district's boundaries will ensure that new buildings are designed in a manner compatible with the district. The historic district can draw significant revenue and attention to the central east side as a major customer and tourist destination and a source of identity and pride. Tax benefits, loans and grants available to primary and secondary properties encourage rehabilitation and restoration.

Southeast Morrison in the district, 1926.
IDENTIFICATION

There are four basic property types found within the historic district, as follows: Commercial, Industrial, Social/Cultural and Governmental. Property types include buildings of architectural styles commonly found in the 19th and 20th centuries. The primary styles represented within the district include Italianate, Second Empire, Colonial-Georgian, Modern Movement and Commercial style. However, many buildings are designed without a strong influencing style and are categorized as commercial, industrial or utilitarian in design.

Buildings within the district generally range from one to four stories in height and cover about one-eighth to one-half block. The Weatherly building, which towers above all other buildings at 12 stories, is the only skyscraper in the district.

The commercial property type includes buildings originally associated with retail and wholesale businesses. Road/vehicular related (original use) buildings comprise 31% and the largest property type group. This type includes auto repair shops, auto dealerships and showrooms, auto part stores, garages and early gas stations. Buildings with original use as specialty stores comprise 23% of the historic properties and include grocery stores, drug stores, furniture stores, and building supply and hardware stores. Mixed use buildings which originally combined specialty stores on the ground floor and hotels or multiple dwelling units above make up 13% of the historic buildings. Original use as warehouse facilities and for civic/social organizations each make up 8% of the properties. Other original uses include mortuaries, financial institutions, hotels, and other businesses.

The largest present use group of buildings is in the specialty store category comprising 35% of the historic buildings. Over time road/vehicular related uses have dropped to 15% but still remain a major use group in the district. Other businesses also constitute 15% of the district currently. Mixed use buildings (special store/multiple dwelling) now comprise 10% of the historic properties, as do restaurants. Other current uses include financial institutions and civic/social organizations.
Commercial Property Type

These buildings range from one to twelve stories in the historic district. The majority of properties are of masonry construction, either brick or concrete. Three buildings have some cast iron elements. A few of the primary buildings are wood frame in construction with brick facing. One building in the district is wood frame with wood siding and may have been constructed as early as 1871. Several buildings use other decorative materials such as rusticated stone, terra cotta, tile, plaster and wood. Concrete buildings from the secondary period of development are simple and utilitarian in their design, corresponding with the onset of the automobile era (1914 to 1940).

Commercial buildings sited on the typical 200' by 200' block range in footprint size from one-eighth, one-quarter, to one-half block. Generally, buildings are sited at the sidewalk along the major arterials and side streets; setbacks were not part of the historic pattern of development. Buildings along Grand Avenue generally had central entries.

The original commercial core hub of East Portland developed in the 1880s and was located between "N" Street or Morrison Street and "J" Street or Oak Street. By 1930 the commercial core had expanded north and south along Grand and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard from the Hawthorne Bridge to the head of the Burnside Bridge. A commercial core of Victorian era buildings still remains along Grand Avenue from Morrison to Oak Street.

Attractive turn of the century commercial building with recent awning addition illustrates how an inappropriate awning design may detract from a building's architecture.
The styles of note which characterize the commercial buildings are Italianate, Second Empire, Colonial Revival and Georgian, Commercial style and Modern Movement. The Italianate style and other Victorian styles were commonly used in the 1880s and 1890s. These buildings are generally rectangular in plan, symmetrically composed with prominent cornices, double-hung windows with label molding and simple design elements. The ground floor level of a building in the Italianate style is usually composed of storefronts and a recessed central entry. The Italianate style buildings are typically two to three stories, wood frame, with brick facades. The Second Empire style, also from the Victorian period, is distinguished from other Victorian period styles by a mansard roof.

The historic period styles, Colonial Revival and Georgian, generally apply to commercial buildings constructed between 1910-30 with characteristics as follows: decorative elements such as columns in classical orders, pilasters, keystones, medallions, dentils and pediments. The Colonial and Georgian type buildings are rectangular in plan and are constructed of brick. They generally have low pitched or flat roofs, bilateral symmetry and central entries.

The Commercial style is generally associated with automobile showroom buildings in this district. The buildings are of brick and concrete construction, rectangular in plan, generally two stories with expansive multi-paned windows, wide and numerous bays, stucco finish, geometrical and abstract ornamentation, simple cornice and flat roof line.

Elements from a variety of substyles from the Modern Movement were used in the design of commercial buildings within the district including Art Deco, Modern and Contemporary. Generally, modern details include simplified massing, geometrical ornamentation and streamlined detailing.
Industrial Property Type

This property type includes buildings associated with processing, manufacturing and related storage and warehouse facilities. Food processing and agricultural implements, furniture and garment manufacturing were among the common original uses for these resources. The buildings are generally one or two stories in height and constructed of concrete or brick. Simple in design, the buildings were rectangular/square in plan and in some cases involved a complex of interrelated buildings and additions on one block.

The industrial buildings generally surround the commercial core and represent the secondary period of development. Earlier brick industrial buildings are found just to the west of the district between Third Avenue and the Willamette River. Most of East Portland’s earliest industrial wood buildings have been destroyed by fire, the infilling of the swampy and marshy lands which once characterized this area, or other redevelopment.

Simple bold structural expression in the design of those buildings used for industry helps to blend them with commercial buildings in the District.
Social/Cultural Property Type

This property type includes social buildings. Social buildings in the district include fraternal lodges/meeting halls. There are two existing lodges/meeting halls: the Orient Lodge Building which is designed in the Arts and Crafts style, and the Woodmen of the World Building in the Colonial/Georgian style. Both buildings are rectangular in plan, constructed of concrete and brick and located on Alder Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues. The Orient Lodge Building (1907) is from the primary period of development while the Woodmen of the World Building (1924), is from the secondary period of development.

Several government and former government buildings are located within the District. Such buildings are characterized by the use of more formal architectural styles and materials, such as brick. These forms and materials create a sense of quality and permanence.

Governmental Property Type

This property type includes buildings associated with governmental agencies and is limited to two extant public works buildings, the Water Bureau Building in the Jacobethan style and the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Building in the Italianate style.
ALTERATIONS

Alterations made to buildings within the district generally relate to removal, modernization or obscuring of architectural features such as storefronts, cornices, entrances, exterior surfaces, pilasters, columns, roofs, windows and doors. Alterations also include additions. Buildings constructed during the historic period that have major alterations which negatively impact the historic appearance of the building were ranked as historic non-contributing in the district.

When existing buildings are modified architectural features such as storefronts, cornices, entrances, columns, windows, and doors should be retained. In this example the building's clerestory windows on the ground level commercial floor have been obscured damaging the historic integrity of the structure.

ZONING

All properties within the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District fall within one of two zones, EXd and GI-1. The "EXd," stands for mixed employment with design review required. This zone allows for a broad range of uses as outlined in the Portland Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The GI-1 zone allows for general industrial uses. The floor area ratio (FAR) of the historic district area ranges between 6:1 and 9:1. Maximum building heights allowed in the district range from 100 to 200 feet (bonus height and density may increase the maximum height and density by up to 3:1).
At the center and western edge of the historic district is the Morrison Bridge. This 1958 structure replaced the original bridge, which was the first bridge connecting East Portland to Portland in 1887. The northern and southern entries of the district were provided by the Burnside (1892) and Hawthorne (1891) bridges which opened soon after the Morrison Bridge and expanded the opportunity for boom time development on Portland’s east side. The view down Grand Avenue is the most prominent vista at the street level in the district; it is highlighted by architecturally significant buildings from the primary and secondary periods of development and historically designed street lighting.

The most prominent landmark in the historic district is the Weatherly Building. It can be seen from most street vantages in the area. A western backdrop is provided by the west hills, the downtown cityscape and bridges spanning the Willamette River.
Public Improvements

All roadways were originally 60 feet in width (from property line to property line). Variations have occurred due to road widening: SE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (Union), SE Grand Avenue and SE Seventh Avenue were widened to 80 feet and a portion of Morrison to 84 feet. Due to road widening adjacent city blocks have decreased in size from the original 200' by 200' size. Many of these streets were originally planked and built upon pilings over the sloughs and marshy land which webbed the historic district. Most roadways are currently paved with asphalt, although there is a variety of prior paving materials found beneath the current surface. Most significant features are the streetcar tracks and stone block paving located along Grand Avenue and Ankeny Street.

Sidewalks are generally 12 feet wide and constructed of concrete. With the exception of portions of the Morrison bridgehead, sidewalks are found on all blocks.

Utilities under private ownership were initiated during the early development of East Portland. Several private water companies offered their services to the East Portland area, drawing clean, potable water from deep wells. East Portland did not have the same difficulties in obtaining quality water that the adjacent City of Portland had and actually grew as Portlanders sought property with a more reliable water source. In 1897, after consolidation of the cities, the East Portland Water Company sold its interest to the City Water Committee which controlled the city's Bull Run water supply and discontinued drawing from wells located near SE 11th and Powell (Pacific Engineer, Charles E. Oliver, April 1930).

Sewer lines run north-south on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Grand Avenue, Sixth Avenue, Seventh Avenue, and east-west on Alder, Stark, Oak, Pine, Ash, Ankeny, Taylor and part of Yamhill Streets. Overhead wiring runs north-south on Seventh, Sixth, and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and east-west on Yamhill, Salmon, and Stark Streets.
Historically designed street lighting is located along Grand Avenue, Alder Street, and Morrison Street. Modern design lighting serves Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and other major thoroughfares.

Shed cloth awnings are found primarily on commercial buildings along the major commercial thoroughfare, SE Grand Avenue. Metal marques are utilized primarily on the service entries of industrial buildings. Signs are either painted, applied directly to the facade of the building, or hung from the center or corner of the facade. Relatively few 1920s style neon signs remain intact; most have been replaced by backlite plastic signs.
EVALUATION

Properties were ranked according to construction date and level of integrity as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>CONSTRUCTION DATE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF PROPERTIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1883 to 1915</td>
<td>20 (6 Nat. Reg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>1916 to 1930</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Non-contributing</td>
<td>1883 to 1930</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-contributing</td>
<td>1931 to present</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Buildings</td>
<td></td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Lots</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Properties</td>
<td></td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary and secondary rankings represent those properties constructed between 1883 and 1930 which are virtually intact or have minor or moderate alterations. Six of the primary buildings are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Historic Non-contributing buildings, also constructed between 1883 and 1930, have major alterations that have negatively impacted their historic appearance.

Buildings falling within primary and secondary classifications were categorized by date of construction and integrity. If the building was constructed within the historic period and had only minor alterations, then the building was ranked primary or secondary by virtue of its date of construction. (Minor alterations are those that do not heavily impact the overall visual appearance, scale, proportion, craftsmanship or detailing of the building.) Major alterations to a building constructed within the historic period resulted in its classification as Historic Non-contributing. (Major alterations typically include removing or obscuring the majority of storefronts on a one-story building, masking an original facade with a modern false facade, adding a false mansard cornice/roof, removing the majority of primary original windows, and removing or obscuring the original surface material or architectural detailing.) Generally, buildings that have had a majority of the exterior levels altered are considered Historic Non-contributing. With rehabilitation or restoration work most of these buildings could potentially be reranked as primary or secondary, depending upon the reversibility of the alterations and quality of the work done. Non-contributing properties were constructed after the historic period of significance. All buildings post-dating the secondary period of 1931 were ranked Non-contributing. Vacant lots are separately held parcels listed in county records as vacant or separately held parcels without buildings.
IMPACT OF MODERN DEVELOPMENT

Until recently and for the past 50 years there was very little new construction in the historic district. Economic conditions were largely responsible for this stagnation. Currently, however, Portland's central east side is the target for major new development projects which are likely to have an unprecedented impact on the historic district.

The historic district is the commercial link connecting Oregon's recently completed Convention Center and the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry. The Central City Plan proposes an historic trolley down Grand Avenue connecting these projects and linking the downtown and the Lloyd Center shopping mall to the central east side. The trolley will reinforce the district's historic character and the citywide goal to create a cohesive Central City. Many public improvement projects for the Central Eastside Industrial District exceeding $70 million in capital outlays were identified in the City of Portland's 1979 Central Eastside Industrial Revitalization Study. The Central City Plan adopted by the City of Portland in 1988 further cites numerous public and private projects planned or anticipated. Excerpts from the 1989 Central Eastside Business Directory describe some of the key public and private projects as follows:

**Oregon Convention Center**: A 400,000 sq. ft. convention center on the northern edge of the Central Eastside Industrial District (CEID) adjacent to the Banfield Light Rail at NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Holladay Street, completed in September 1990.

**Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI)**: Property known as Station “L” (on the Willamette River's east bank south of the Hawthorne Bridge) was donated by Portland General Electric for the relocation and development of an expanded OMSI. The facility was completed in 1992 and includes scientific exhibits, educational activities and an OMNIMAX theater.

**East Bank Esplanade**: The esplanade is located along the east bank of the Willamette River. It offers a bike and pedestrian path, benches, landscaping and spectacular views of downtown Portland. The esplanade will eventually connect the Oregon Convention Center on the north and OMSI on the south.
Transit Service: Transit service in the CEID continues to improve with the addition of a north-south route along the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard-Grand Avenue corridor. This route and the 11th and 12th Avenue corridor connects numerous east-west routes with MAX, a $147 million Light Rail project running from Gresham to Portland's Central Business District. Tri-Met continues to work toward developing a southeastern Light Rail line from Milwaukie. This line may be routed through CEID over the Hawthorne Bridge into downtown Portland. The Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC), the business association for the area, supports Tri-Met's construction of an historic trolley line along Grand Avenue connecting with downtown Portland and Lloyd Center. The trolley would connect with the Milwaukie Light Rail at OMSI near the Hawthorne Bridge and with the Banfield Light Rail at the Oregon Convention Center near the Steel Bridge.

Other public improvements planned for the central east side include street improvements, sewer improvements and lighting improvements.

SE Grand Avenue near Madison Street, 1926. Sale and service of automobiles has been a significant activity within the District since the twenties. (OrHi 005634)
In 1988 the Portland Eastside Multiple Property Submission was listed in the National Register of Historic Places under the sponsorship of the Hawthorne Boulevard Business Association, updating and expanding the data collected in the 1984 City of Portland Historic Resources Inventory. The project involved a three-year long effort by numerous business organizations, neighborhood groups and professional staff to comparatively analyze all properties for their historic and architectural significance within a 600-block area of central southeast Portland. In addition to developing an historical context for East Portland and Portland’s east side, the result of that project was threefold: 1) a Comprehensive Survey and Inventory of Cultural Resources for the Central Southeast Portland area; 2) determination and listing of properties individually eligible for the National Register in the project area under a multiple property submission vehicle; and 3) proposal for an East Portland Historic District in the general area between E. Burnside Street, SE Hawthorne Street, SE Third Avenue and SE Seventh Avenue.

Historic buildings near the center of the district reflect many important compatibility concerns. Building heights are similar. Cornice lines match. Windows are placed to produce a harmonious effect when looking at the two structures. The area’s historic importance is punctuated by the use of Portland’s ornamental lighting standards.
The Oriental Theater was once a significant part of the East Portland/Grand Avenue District's character. The Theater's prominent sign is typical of the strong role signs have traditionally played in shaping the District's character. (OrHi 084880)
GUIDELINES FOR ALTERATIONS

Alterations: Primarily cosmetic changes made to the building's exterior, such as painting, awnings, facade ornament or changes to doors or windows.

A6-1a Scale and Proportion

Introduction:
A building's bulk in conjunction with its proportional height and width will have a significant impact on the degree to which it fits in with its historic neighbors. Structures which are much wider, taller or just are significantly bigger than neighboring structures will disrupt the continuity of the area and may damage the area's historic integrity.

Guidelines:

1. The added height or width of an alteration should be compatible with the original scale and proportion first of the affected building and second of adjacent buildings.

2. The scale and proportion of altered or added building elements, such as the size and relationship of new windows, doors, entrances, columns and other building features should be visually compatible with the original architectural character of the building.

3. The visual integrity of the original building should be maintained when altering or adding building elements including the vertical lines of columns, piers, the horizontal definition of spandrels and cornices, and other primary structural and decorative elements.

University of Oregon Architecture student's concept for an infill development in the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District. The design uses several devices to conform with the district's character. Cornice lines above the ground floor and at the roof line match. The taller portion of the new building would step back from the height established by the adjacent existing structure. The exterior is articulated with several vertical bays which break up the building mass.
Introduction:
After issues of height, mass and bulk the building characteristic having the greatest impact on the District's character will be its exterior materials. Maintaining the integrity of exterior materials is important to protecting the character of the District.

Guideline:

Exterior surfaces need to be repaired and maintained in a manner that is compatible first with the original building and second with the District.

Quality building materials, such as the stone and brick shown in this example, should be respected when the building is altered. Maintaining these materials in good condition adds to the District's character and the building's value.
Introduction:
Portland and the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District share a pattern of orienting corner building entrances to the adjacent north-south street. Within the Historic District city blocks are small resulting in most buildings extending to one or more of the block’s corners. Orientations to King Boulevard and Grand Avenue are characteristic of the East Portland/Grand Avenue District. Building alterations should respect this pattern.

Guidelines:

1. Side and rear walls should be compatible with building facades or public street elevations, but can be simple and basically blank.

2. New window and door openings may be added in moderation and when compatible in size, scale, proportion and detailing with the original building. New openings should be designed to be subtly distinguishable from the original building.

3. Where possible, avoid filling openings with concrete block, wood or other material that will change the overall appearance of the wall and/or create blank walls along pedestrianways.

Rear and side walls may be plain while achieving compatibility through the use of materials, window sizes and proportions, consistent use of color, and consistent signage.
Introduction:
The character of the district may be damaged by the introduction of distracting visual elements which clutter building exteriors. When updating a building's mechanical systems, locating its trash areas and installing electronic communications equipment, care must be taken to avoid visual clutter.

Guideline:

Avoid unnecessary clutter and unsightliness of mechanical systems, auxiliary structures, and service elements such as trash containers, storage sheds, satellite dishes, etc.

The attractiveness of this building is protected by reducing mechanical protuberances which might clutter the facade or the sidewalk. Keeping sidewalks open and furnished with attractive street furniture is particularly important on Grand Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.
A6-1e  Color

Introduction:
All new color schemes should be reviewed. To choose appropriate colors, it is best to start with a paint analysis on the building to determine its original color. Though it may not be possible to duplicate that color, the color should at least be compatible with the original color. (See Appendix B for guidance on how to do a paint analysis and consult local paint companies for assistance). Experimenting with colors in small sample locations is encouraged. For additional guidance, consult the State Historic Preservation Office in Salem at 1 (503) 378-6508, or the East Portland Historic District Advisory Board.

Guidelines:

1. When painting a building or making color changes, colors chosen should be visually compatible with the architectural character of the District represented by both the primary (1870-1914) and secondary (1915-1935) historic periods of development. A broad range of color schemes may be acceptable.

2. The colors should be compatible with the original architectural style of the building. If the building has no apparent style, use the surrounding buildings and any character-defining features on the building itself as a guide.

See Appendix C: Color Guide
A6-1f Signs

Introduction:
All exterior signs are reviewed. Signs must meet all applicable provisions of the City of Portland's ordinances and guidelines.

Guidelines:

1. Exterior building signs should be visually compatible in size, scale, proportion, color and materials with the original architectural character of the building.

2. A variety of signs within the District are encouraged, incorporating excellence in graphic design and lettering, careful color coordination with the building, mounting, and readability.

3. Prominent signs that are creative yet compatible with the building and the District are encouraged, particularly on simple concrete buildings.

4. Sign lighting that is creative and compatible with the building and the District is acceptable. Plastic signs and back-lit plastic signs are generally not acceptable.

Although prominent signs are consistent with the East Portland/Grand Avenue District's historic character it is important to ensure that signs integrate with rather than distract from the architecture of the District's structures.
A6-1g Lighting

Introduction:
Lighting should be compatible with the overall character of the building first and the District second. Lighting should not detract from the character defining features of the building, introduce radically incompatible design elements or damage the building through its installation.

Guidelines:

1. Repair or replace damaged period lighting with the same or similar lighting fixtures and design elements.

2. Lighting in entryways and doorways and other highly visible public areas should match the original fixtures where possible, or be designed in a manner that is compatible with the historic building and with the district.

3. Bathing a historic building with light or the use of exterior spotlights on the major facade is discouraged, unless historic precedence exists to support such display.
Introduction:
Traditionally, awnings, canopies and marquees were found throughout the District. Awnings were usually sloped at an angle and were attached on the first and second levels of buildings, at entrances, and above storefronts. They should be compatible first with the building and second with the District in size, shape, color, material and overall design. Oversized, inappropriately detailed and shaped awnings, canopies or marquees detract from the historic and architectural character of the building. Though the owner is not required to create an exact duplicate of the historic awning, canopy or marquee, the use of historic photographs of the building or the District that offer precedent for the use and design are highly encouraged in providing a basis to work from.

Guidelines:

1. Awnings, Canopies, and Marquees should enhance the character-defining features of the original building.

2. Awnings, Canopies, and Marquees should not re-orient the public’s perception of the main entry to the building by overemphasizing a minor or secondary facade.

3. Two-story awnings, extremely long horizontal awnings and highly unusually shaped awnings were not part of the traditional character of the District and generally are not in harmony with the District.

Attractive awnings were placed to emphasize the structural elements of this building’s design.

Bingham Pump Co. (OrHi 003939)
4. Awnings should be placed between pilasters or in window bays, not across an entire building, and should be installed below the mezzanine windows.

5. Preferably, awnings and canopies should be made of fabric except when there is historic evidence that the original was made of a material other than fabric. Plastic and aluminum should not be used.

6. Awnings and canopies should be installed in the least destructive manner, generally with a lightweight frame, installed within the window frame. However, it must be recognized that installation of even the most sensitive awning system may result in some damage to the historic fabric. Special care should be taken to avoid harm to decorative features. Retractable awnings are acceptable.

7. Illuminated awnings of a sign-like character are not historic and should be avoided.
Painted sign framed by architectural columns and cornice lines can complement a building's architecture.
GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION
AND ADDITIONS

Additions: Newly constructed rooms and/or floors that modify the building’s exterior.

A6-1i Siting and Building Orientation

Introduction:
In general, buildings should be sited and oriented to create a strong, concentrated urban environment throughout the District. New construction should enhance the District and continue its cohesive identity. Siting and building orientation should reinforce patterns of defensible space, such as providing windows that building occupants can see out and pedestrians can see in as a safety and comfort feature, rather than blank walls that leave pedestrians feeling less secure. Functionally, the major arterials in the Historic District each have a different degree of pedestrian, auto and truck-related usage. This should be taken into consideration but should not override the basic goal of this section to re-establish the historical patterns of a concentrated urban environment. The major arterials can be functionally characterized as follows:

Morrison/Belmont (E/W) Grand Ave. (N/S) - Primarily pedestrian oriented with heavy truck and auto usage, future streetcar or trolley anticipated. Primarily commercial buildings or mixed use commercial with housing above.

Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. (N/S) - Primarily auto and truck oriented with some pedestrian usage. Commercial, industrial and retail related uses.

Alder St. (E/W) - Primarily pedestrian oriented with local auto usage. Primarily commercial buildings or mixed use commercial with housing above.

Sixth Ave. (N/S) - Auto, truck and pedestrian oriented usage. Mostly industrial buildings and auto-related businesses.

Guidelines:

1. In addition to meeting zoning requirements, sitting and building orientation should be visually compatible with adjacent buildings and the District's architectural character.
2. Buildings and additions should be built up to the sidewalk along major arterials and side streets. Buildings should front Grand Avenue or Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Setbacks at ground level from major arterials and cross streets are discouraged as they break the traditional development pattern of the District and are counter to establishing a concentrated urban environment.

3. Development along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard should be in harmony with and compatible in design and orientation with Grand Avenue.

4. Building entrances should be located in a manner that re-establishes the traditional pattern in the District. Central entries were the most common along Grand Avenue. Corner entries were also used along the major arterials and side streets. Where buildings were oriented on the side streets, central, corner and off-center entries were common.

   a. On Grand, main central entries are encouraged, but some flexibility should be allowed for main corner entries where they are found to be compatible with the District.

   b. On Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, corner and central entries on the boulevard are encouraged. For buildings fronting the boulevard, main entries on cross streets or on the interior of the block are discouraged.

Architectural student's drawing of historic buildings forming a single frontage within the district. New infill buildings need to develop in harmony with their neighboring structures, just as these three structures, developed at different times, are able to contribute to the district's shared character.
Introduction:
The character of the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District predates the emergence of the automobile as the dominant transportation mode it is today. The District’s character is created by its collection of historic buildings. It is important in emphasizing this character to prevent surface parking from dominating the District’s buildings. This is particularly true along both Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Grand Avenue to which most of the District’s buildings are oriented.

Guidelines:

1. Parking should be located behind buildings on Grand Avenue or Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

2. Parking lots should be accessible from the east-west cross streets, Third and Sixth Avenues.

3. Design solutions should reduce visible surface parking along Grand Avenue and along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

4. Parking lots located along King and Grand should provide a sense of edge along the street with a gateway, compatible fence, masonry wall or arcade located adjacent to the sidewalk.

A low architectural wall both separates pedestrians from a surface parking lot and helps to enhance the sense of enclosure present in the District’s sidewalks.
A6-1k Scale and Proportion

Introduction:
The architectural character of the District must be considered when addressing this guideline. The reader is referred to the third section of this document, "East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District's History, Character and Context" for information which will aid in understanding the District's character. In addition this document contains many photographs, both contemporary and historic. They are included to aid the reader in understanding the area's character.

Guidelines:

1. The scale, form, proportion, and detailing of the new building or addition should be compatible with adjacent historic buildings and the architectural character of the District. The relationship of voids to solids, the size and relationships of window bays, doors, entrance and other architectural elements should be of a scale and proportion that is visually compatible with the adjacent historic buildings and the District.

2. New buildings should maintain the cornice and roof lines of adjacent historic buildings. This may be accomplished by setting back the taller building at the cornice or roof-line level of the adjacent buildings.

3. Rooftop additions should meet all of the above guidelines for scale and proportion and should be designed to have minimal visual impact on the original facades of the buildings either through simple or subdued detailing, through setbacks from the facades and/or simplicity of form and massing. Rooftop additions are discouraged if the size, scale, form or detailing of the proposed addition strongly compromise the integrity of the original building.

4. The height to width and length relationships of adjacent and nearby buildings should be used as a guide in determining compatibility of new buildings. However, as a rule it is not intended that the height or bulk of buildings be kept below the floor area ratio and height limits permitted by Central City Plan. The critical consideration is the compatibility of the scale, proportion and form of the new building and the impact of such elements as shadows on the District's character.

5. Along King Boulevard and Grand Avenue blank walls, architectural decoration or ornament are strongly discouraged on street facades in place of windows.
University of Oregon students of architecture have designed several infill buildings for the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District. These two designs show several design tools which help ensure that the new building supports and contributes to the district's historic character. Stepping the taller portion of the building back maintains the scale of the building walls most apparent from the sidewalk. The use of clerestory windows in new ground level commercial space repeats a common pattern. Buildings exteriors are reduced in mass by creating vertical elements within the facade which break the wall visually into smaller areas.
Introduction:
Materials, colors and textures schemes will be reviewed. After issues of height, mass and bulk the building characteristic having the greatest impact on the District's character will be its exterior materials and colors. Maintaining the integrity of exterior materials is important to protecting the character of the District. For additional guidance, consult the State Historic Preservation Office in Salem at 1 (503) 378-6508, or the East Portland Historic District Advisory Board.

Guidelines:

1. Exterior materials, colors and textures used in new buildings should be visually compatible with adjacent buildings and the District's architectural character.

2. The use of traditional materials such as brick and concrete are encouraged. The use of non-traditional metal, wood and plastic as major exterior surfaces is discouraged.

The East Portland/Grand Avenue district is characterized by the use of traditional materials such as the brick exterior in the above example. New buildings should continue and reinforce the district's use of attractive permanent materials.
Introduction:
Portland and the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District share a pattern of orienting corner building entrances to the adjacent north-south street. Within the Historic District city blocks are small resulting in most buildings extending to one or more of the block's corners. Orientations to King Boulevard and Grand Avenue are characteristic of the East Portland/Grand Avenue District. New buildings should respect this pattern.

Guideline:

Side walls and rear walls should be compatible with building facades or public street elevations, but can be simple and basically blank.

The backs and sides of buildings may be as prominent as their front elevations. Design new buildings to ensure that should their backs or sides be visible they will make an attractive addition to the district's character. This drawing is a University of Oregon architectural student's concept for an infill project (building at left) as seen from the rear.
Introduction:
All exterior signs are reviewed. Signs and exterior lighting must meet all applicable provisions of the City of Portland's ordinances and codes. Large creative signs and lighting may be permissible when they do not negatively impact the adjacent historic buildings or the District.

Guidelines:

1. Exterior building signs and lighting and other site embellishments, such as flagpoles, fences, walls and landscaping features, should be visually compatible in size, scale, proportion, color and materials with the character of the building and District.

2. A variety of signs within the District are encouraged. Signs should incorporate excellence in design, color coordination with the building, and mounting which does not distract from the building's design. Large signs that are creative yet compatible with the building and the District are encouraged, particularly on simple concrete buildings.

3. Plastic signs and back-lit plastic signs are generally not acceptable.

Grand Avenue as seen from Alder Street during the 1920s. Note the prominent signs and awnings that characterize the District's early development. (OrHi 001673)
A6-10  Awnings, Canopies and Marquees

Introduction:
Traditionally, awnings, canopies and marquees were found throughout the District. Awnings were usually sloped at an angle and were attached on the first and second levels of buildings, at entrances, and above storefronts. They should be compatible first with the building and second with the District in size, shape, color, material and overall design. Oversized, inappropriately detailed and shaped awnings, canopies or marquees detract from the historic and architectural character of the building. Awnings, canopies and marquees should be compatible with the traditional patterns of the District. However, creativity in design and contemporary awnings should not be discouraged when the awnings are compatible in size, scale, proportion, color, lighting, and materials with the character of the District.

Guidelines:

1. Awnings, Canopies, and Marquees should enhance the character-defining features of the building.

2. Awnings, Canopies, and Marquees should orient to the building’s main entry.

3. Two-story awnings, extremely long horizontal awnings and highly unusually shaped awnings were not part of the traditional character of the District and generally are not in harmony with the District.

Canopy of the Post Office Pharmacy in Northwest Portland is typical of many of the canopies historically used in the East Portland/Grand Avenue District, photo taken 1935. Also note the historic street furniture, ornamental lighting standards, drinking fountain, traffic signals, and call box. Although signs are prominent their placement respects the building’s window openings. (OrHi 005983)
GUIDELINES FOR STREET SYSTEM
AND PARKING IMPROVEMENTS

A6-1p   Landscaping of Off-Street Parking Lots

Introduction:
Surface parking lots were not part of the District's original fabric. Their introduction has often diluted and disrupted the District's character. The East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District's character is urban and built up. When surface parking is included in the District an effort to enhance the sense of urban enclosure along the street must be made.

Guideline:
Off-street parking lots should be defined by hedges, low walls, or ornamental fences along their perimeters to provide a sense of enclosure for pedestrians on the sidewalk and to partially buffer automobiles from view, while allowing for surveillance of the parking lot.

This low architectural wall separates a surface parking lot from the sidewalk and maintains a sense of the shape of the street in the district.
A6-1q   Sidewalk Improvements

Introduction:
An important character giving aspect of the District is the improvements in District's sidewalks. Retaining historic sidewalk details is as important to preserving the District's character as preservation of one of its buildings.

Guidelines:

1. When repairs are made in the vicinity of stamped sidewalk details, all intact details (even those with minor hairline cracks or flaws) should be preserved. This includes the names and dates of streets, addition names, parks, and names of contractors.

2. When possible wheelchair ramps should be located to avoid stamped details at sidewalk intersections.

3. When curb repairs are made, original horse rings or other such attachments should be reset in place. When original rings are badly damaged or missing, they should be replaced at their original spacing.

4. Maintain glass blocks installed in sidewalks.

[Photograph of Potter's Drug Company (1929) once located at the corner of SE Morrison Street and Grand Avenue in the district. Note the use of historic street furnishings and cobblestones. (OrHi 000350)]
Introduction:
The streets of the City of East Portland were paved with cobblestones during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Restoring some of the texture which this paving imparted will enhance the District's identity and the historic quality.

Guidelines:

1. Existing evidence of cobblestone streets should be retained.

2. Where streets are being rebuilt and the historic cobblestone paving has, in the past, been removed or covered over the rebuilt street should include details that use cobblestones. Where practical, and with the prior approval of the appropriate highway or street authority, cobblestone paving supports the district.

Historic photograph of SE Grand Avenue near Washington Street. Note the use of cobblestones as paving within the area of the street committed to trolley use. (OrHi 130232)
Introduction:
The East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District's character will be greatly enhanced when its street lights are all Portland's distinctive cast iron standards. Other historic public utility features should also be retained.

Guideline:
1. Portland's historic twin-ornamental lighting fixtures should be retained and whenever existing street lighting is upgraded, twin-ornamentals should be installed.
2. Original public utility features, such as water meter covers, manhole covers and hydrants should be retained.
A6-1t  Street Embellishments

Introduction:
Street embellishments, such as historic markers, grates around trees and publicly displayed garbage cans play a significant role in creating the Districts character.

Guidelines:

1. Street embellishments, such as historic markers, grates around trees and garbage receptacles, should be chosen to emphasize the historic character of the District.

2. Street embellishments should be consistent through the District. If the design of such features as the grates around street trees is changed, it should be changed District-wide.

3. If one or more street trees must be replaced, they must be replaced with a tree of the appropriate species as identified in the City Forester's listing of street trees.

Remnants of a building once located on this site are retained to create a gateway to a parking area.
University of Oregon architecture student's concept for an infill building in the district. Note the setback of the upper portion of the building; the use of historic lighting standards; and the division of the building's facade into vertical bays which reduce the building's apparent mass.
APPENDIX A:

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S "STANDARDS" FOR REHABILITATION

The following requirements are those of the Federal Government applicable to national historic districts such as the East Portland/Grand Avenue National Historic District. Because the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone is a National District as well as a City of Portland District alteration and new construction projects are required to meet these requirements as well as those of the City. To continue to qualify for Federal and State tax incentives encouraging historic preservation in national historic districts conformance with these standards is required. The State Historic Preservation Office administers these Standards.

Historic Purpose

A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building, its site and environment.

Historic Character

The historic character of a property should be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property should be avoided.

Record of its Time

Each property should be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, should not be undertaken.

Historic Changes

Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historical significance in their own right should be retained and preserved.
Historic Features

Deteriorated historic features should be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature should match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features should be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

Protect Historic Materials

Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials should not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, should be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

Archaeological Resources

Significant archaeological resources affected by a project should be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures should be undertaken.

Differentiate New from Old

New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction should not destroy historic materials that characterize a property. The new work should be differentiated from the old and should be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

Thompson Motor Company at SE Sixth and Hawthorne were dealers in Chryslers and Plymouths, 1935. Note the clear structural expression of the architecture, use of clerestory windows, and use of an entry canopy. Canopies are distinguished from awnings in that they extend across the sidewalk to the street and focus on the building's entrance.
Preserve the Form and Integrity of Historic Structures

New additions and adjacent or related new construction should be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Hierarchy of Compatibility

Exterior alterations and additions should be designed to be compatible primarily with the original building, secondarily with adjacent buildings, and finally with the rest of the Historic District. Where possible, it is best to pursue compatibility on all three levels, but the preferred hierarchy is as stated.

Handicapped Accessibility

When retro-fitting buildings or sites to become handicapped accessible, solutions that respect the disabled community but don’t compromise the architectural integrity of the Historic District are encouraged.

Historic structures were designed to accommodate signs, and retail entrances within a framework created by their architecture. When altering historic structures to add signage or to remodel retail outlets it is important that additions and changes respect the original building design.
APPENDIX B:

ORDINANCE No. 167732
Adopted June 1, 1994
ORDINANCE No. 167732 As Amended

Adopt design guidelines for the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone. (Ordinance)

The City of Portland ordains:

Section 1. The Council finds:

1. Adopting design guidelines for the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone is required by the Council’s creation of the design zone in February of 1991, (Ordinance No. 163754).

2. Portland’s Zoning Code (Section 33.420.050) requires that before a historic design zone may take effect the Council must approve the design guidelines that will be used in the design review process.

3. Policy 10.12 of Portland’s Acknowledged Comprehensive Plan calls for the City Council to consider recommendations for additional areas where design review would be appropriate and for the preparation of design review standards that will guide development in new design zones.

4. Policy 12.3 of Portland’s Acknowledged Comprehensive Plan calls for enhancement of the City’s identity through the protection of historic resources. The East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District is such a resource, adoption of the proposed design guidelines will aid in the protection of existing historic buildings and help to ensure that new development is sympathetic with the district’s historic character.

5. Policy 12.7 of Portland’s Acknowledged Comprehensive Plan calls for establishing design review requirements in those areas which are important to Portland’s identity, setting, history and to the enhancement of the City’s character. The East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic district is such an important historic area and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed design guidelines provide the design requirements called for by Policy 12.7.

6. Policy 12.7 is accompanied by an Objective A which calls for the establishment of design guidelines which ensure the continuation of each design district’s desired character, (including historic design districts). The proposed design guidelines satisfy the direction given by this objective for the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District.
7. Policy 12.7 is accompanied by an Objective C which calls for design guidelines to share the public's concern and objectives for the design review process with developers and designers through the use of examples illustrating ways to comply with the guidelines. The proposed East Portland/Grand Avenue Design Guidelines include such examples and illustrations.

8. In 1992 the Central Eastside Industrial Council created a "Historic District Guideline Committee." The Committee worked with property owners and others interested in the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District to prepare design guidelines. The Committee's Draft Guidelines For The East Portland/Grand Avenue National Historic District were submitted to the City in early 1993.

9. During the spring of 1993 Bureau of Planning Staff worked with the Committee to generate a revised draft which would mesh with the format of other Central City Design Guidelines documents and which included a more complete set of examples and illustrations.

10. In July of 1993 the Central Eastside Industrial Council conducted a public workshop to review the revised draft with property owners and others interested in the draft set of design guidelines for the historic district. Notice of the workshop was distributed door to door throughout the district by the Central Eastside Industrial Council.

11. Over the fall of 1993 a revised draft was prepared which included extensive illustrations and responded to concerns which had been raised during the review of the earlier draft.

12. During the review process of the East Portland/Grand Avenue Design Guidelines Bureau of Planning staff provided an in depth briefing to the Historical Landmarks Commission. This briefing covered the content of the proposed guidelines and occurred on March 28, 1994.

13. Notice of the Historical Landmarks Commission's hearing was sent to all neighborhood and business associations whose boundaries include, or are within 1,000 feet of, the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District. In addition, the Historical Landmarks Commission's hearings were advertised in The Oregonian.
14. In January 1994, the Proposed East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District Design Guidelines document was published. The Historical Landmarks Commission held hearings on the Proposed Guidelines on April 11, 1994. At this hearing the Commission listened to testimony and then voted to adopt the Proposed East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District Design Guidelines. The Commission also recommended that the Portland City Council adopt the Guidelines, approving them for use in historic district design review cases located within the East Portland/Grand Avenue District.

15. The Proposed East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District Design Guidelines are the unanimous recommendation of the Historical Landmarks Commission for their use in conducting design review procedures in the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone.

16. It is in the public interest and critical to the successful implementation of the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone that design review procedures be guided by the procedures and guidelines contained within the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District Design Guidelines.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Council directs:

a. The East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District Design Guidelines attached as Exhibit A, are hereby adopted and approved for use in the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone.

b. The Historical Landmarks Commission and the City Council on appeal, shall conduct design review in the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic Design Zone using the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District Design Guidelines.

c. The review body conducting design review is authorized to waive individual guidelines for specific projects based on findings that such waiver will better accomplish the goals and objectives for the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District design review and/or the Comprehensive Plan's Urban Design Goal policies and objectives. Should the review body find that one or more special design guidelines are not applicable to the circumstances of the particular project being reviewed, the guideline or guidelines may be waived by the review body.

d. The review body may also address aspects of a project's design which are not covered in the guidelines where the review body finds that such action is necessary to better achieve the goals and objectives of design review in the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District.
e. The Historical Landmarks Commission may modify, delete or add to these design guidelines where such a change will aid in the accomplishment of the goals and objectives for the East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District Design Guidelines and/or the Comprehensive Plan's Urban Design Goal policies and objectives; provided, however, that the specific modification, addition or deletion may not take effect until approved by the Portland City Council.

Passed by the Council, JUN 1 1994
Commissioner Hales
M. Harrison
April 28, 1994

BARBARA CLARK
Auditor of the City of Portland
By
Deputy
APPENDIX C:

COLOR GUIDE

During the past decade the historic use and composition of architectural paints have become major topics of research and debate among preservationists in America. Increasingly, the proper use of paint on older buildings has also become the concern of homeowners, historic district and landmark commissions, public officials, and others who are eager to protect and in some cases to restore property which they own or control.

The historic use of paint as a protective and decorative finish and the methods of preserving and reproducing old paints are highly complex subjects. The application of new paint to old surfaces is also a complicated problem. While much important research into the history of architectural paints in America has been undertaken, a comprehensive history of the subject is not available. The Preservation League has prepared this technical leaflet as a short introduction to these subjects. The leaflet is intended to guide readers to pertinent publications and other resources in the field. As with all aspects of architectural preservation and restoration, property owners must remember that the restoration of a particular painted finish will require careful investigation of each individual situation.

Types of Historic Paints and Their Use

Until the introduction of alkyd resins to the paint industry in the 1930’s, paints most commonly used on American buildings were either oil-base or water-base. Historic oil base paints were composed of a non-volatile oil and a thinner, together known as the vehicle, and various hiding and coloring pigments. Linseed oil was usually the non-volatile base or binder of the vehicle although sometimes nut, tung, or fish oil was used. Turpentine or japan driers were used to thin the vehicle and speed the drying process of the paint respectively. Until the 19th century thinners were seldom used. The most common hiding pigment was white lead. A great variety of natural and manufactured pigments was available to the painter in 18th and 19th century America, and his palette was often brighter than suspected today.

There were a number of historic water-base paints. Whitewash, the most common, was composed simply of water, acting as the vehicle, and slaked lime, to which was often added a small amount of salt or tallow and possibly a shading pigment. In drying, whitewash formed a calcium carbonate or sort of plaster. When a protein glue, gelatin, or gum was added to whitewash or when a paint was principally bound by glue or size, it was known as distemper paint. Distemper paints were able to hold darker pigments than whitewash. Calcimine is a type of distemper paint which was made with whitening or powdered chalk. It takes its name from the earthen pigments which were calcined or burnt, then finely ground and added to the paint. Casein paint is a type of distemper paint which has a binder of skimmed or curdled milk. It was not used in America until the early years of the 19th century and again had wide usage during World War II. When dry, casein paint is a very tenacious material which is also difficult to cover with modern paints.

Throughout the 18th century and up through the early 20th century oil-base paints were most commonly used on interior woodwork and all exterior surfaces. Water-base paints were usually used for interior plaster walls and ceilings. Whitewash, however, was used extensively on fences and outbuildings. Calcimines continued to be used by high quality professional painters down through the 20th century because of the paint’s color retention and velvety texture. Calcimine was often applied as a final coat over whitewash and frequently was used on ceilings. Distemper paints were used for both interior and exterior work. Fine mural painting and stenciling was often done in distemper colors. Casein paint to which pitch was added was also used on the exterior of buildings. Tar and pitch, sometimes in combination with oil, are encoun-
tered as paint on old buildings. This type of finish was primarily used for waterproofing and was usually reserved for roofs, masonry surfaces, or wooden outbuildings.

Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries masonry was often painted for protection. Most building brick, especially that used for commercial buildings and speculative housing, was underfired and therefore did not have a durable weathering surface. Buildings constructed of this material were always intended to be painted or treated with linseed oil. Today, unfortunately, many are being sandblasted or chemically cleaned, leaving the exposed surface scarred and vulnerable to atmospheric attack, water penetration, and discoloration.6

Generally speaking, the professional painter, glazer, or stainer manufactured and applied oil-base and distemper paints; the property owner mixed and applied his own whitewash. However, calcimines were used most often by professionals. Ready-mixed canned oil paints were not produced in quantity in America until after the Civil War.7 Skilled painters, however, continued to mix their own paints up through World War II.

Colors and Special Finishes

Historic buildings were often designed with specific color schemes which were an integral part of their architectural character. When researching the paint history of a structure, one should always consider the stylistic trends as well as the technological advances in paint manufacture that occurred throughout a building's life. Paint application techniques, recommendations of contemporary tastemakers, dates different pigments were introduced, and aging characteristics of paint are important factors in accurate paint restoration.

Nineteenth century architectural pattern books, farmers' and home owners' journals, and almanacs often discuss paint colors and recipes and recommend their utilitarian and decorative use. Painters' manuals, which were updated throughout the 19th century, are an excellent source of technical information.8

Since the chemical composition of many historic paint pigments is known along with their introduction dates, that information can be a tool in dating paint colors and the layers in which they appear.9

When investigating paint colors it should be remembered that oil paint has a tendency either to yellow with too little exposure to light (as when covered by succeeding layers of paint) or to bleach with overexposure. Furthermore, some pigments are light-sensitive, or fugitive, and can fade with time.10 Physical investigation, the most accurate method of determining paint colors, is described on pages 4-5.

Research and physical investigation into paint should also consider the possibility that polychromy was used; where polychromy is suspected, it should be thoroughly investigated. Both interior and exterior architectural details were often highlighted with different colors of paint. Buildings constructed or redecorated during the latter half of the 19th century will often reveal striking combinations of colors, while earlier color schemes may feature subtly shaded hues of the same color.11 Interiors should also be checked for decorative wall painting and stenciling.12

The paint colors on the wooden elements of the water tower of Olana, Hudson, New York, were recently restored through microscopic analysis of carefully removed paint samples. The restored paint scheme complements the constructional polychromy of the masonry and of the slate roofs. Photograph courtesy of the Division for Historic Preservation, N.Y.S. Office of Parks and Recreation.

A craftsman is shown completing the restoration of a stylized floral and geometric stenciled ceiling surface at Glenview, the John Bond Trevor Mansion at the Hudson River Museum, in Yonkers, New York. The original stencils, dating from c. 1876, were uncovered, accurately traced, and restored in 1974 (see bibliography). Photograph courtesy of the Hudson River Museum.

2 Copyright 1978. The Preservation League of New York State, Inc.
Graining and marbling or marbleizing were common practices throughout the 18th and 19th centuries in all types of buildings. Graining was usually used to disguise domestic American woods as costly, imported hardwoods such as mahogany or rosewood. However, it is also not unusual to find a base surface of oak or walnut finished with a grainer's imitation of the same wood. Marbling — painting in imitation of expensive, polished stone — was used in America from at least the early years of the 18th century. Mantels and paneled mantel walls with definite architectonic features very often were marbled. In many formal houses the walls of entire rooms — particularly entrance halls — were painted and scored in imitation of marble blocks. Soon after the Civil War, the factory process of marbleizing slate, particularly for mantels, became an important industry. It was not, however, the province of the painter.

The colors and design of a painted surface were not the only factors that contributed to the appearance of that surface. The sheen of the surface, for instance, was an important consideration. During the 18th century interior woodwork was often painted and then given an oil-base glaze to increase surface reflectivity and depth of color. On the other hand, the neoclassical taste of the

Left. When layers of paint were removed from the staircase in the front hall of the Van Cortlandt Manor House in Croton-on-Hudson, New York, much of the original graining (c. 1750) was found intact. Damaged areas were inpainted using the original technique. The graining and color simulate a rich mahogany and match the woodwork elsewhere in the hall. Photograph courtesy of Sleepy Hollow Restorations.

Below. After seventy years of abandonment, the Cohoes Music Hall was restored and opened on November 23, 1974, exactly one hundred years after the original opening night. The original polychromed paint scheme, including the elaborate canvas ceiling, was carefully researched and painstakingly restored. Photograph by E. M. Weil, courtesy of Mendel Mesick Cohen Architects.
early 19th century demanded that walls and other planar surfaces not have a glaring sheen. So interior walls during that period were often covered with a high pigment content oil-base paint which produced a flat or dull surface. During later periods the sheen of easily maintained varnished woodwork and pumiced and polished paint was again often preferred.

A practice that affected the surface appearance of exterior paint was sanding -- mixing sand with paint or applying sand to tacky paint. Particularly fashionable during the first half of the 19th century, sanding was used as a finish on wooden elements of masonry buildings, such as a wood cornice on a brownstone-faced building, in order that the entire building would appear to be stone. Later, cast iron building elements, such as storefronts or entire facades, were often given a final coat of sanded paint in order to make the building appear lithic and more substantial.16

Physical Investigation of Paint Colors

Unless a building has been severely damaged or altered, it is usually possible to find enough evidence to reconstruct the paint history of the building. Determining the original and subsequent paint colors actually used on a build-

A painted surface in an old building is typically composed of a number of paint layers separated by nearly microscopic layers of dirt. The above drawing schematically illustrates the components of a typical painted surface including the prime coat and substrate. The components may be interpreted as if they formed the stratiﬁcations of layers of earth uncovered during an archeological excavation.

In the initial investigation of the paint colors of a building or interior room as many small scrapes as necessary to determine a coherent pattern or scheme should be made. Layers are exposed by cutting on a bevel with an X-acto knife or surgical scalpel through the layers to the substrate. Drawings by Douglas Bucher.

For buildings that are of exceptional historic, architectural, or civic interest and for buildings where an extremely accurate restoration is desired, a restoration architect should be called in to undertake historical research and a scientific description of the paint history as part of a historic structure report on the building. This procedure is not, however, practical for most property owners, who can with simple tools accomplish adequate paint investigation.

Tools needed for paint sampling are a surgical scalpel or an X-acto knife, portable lights, and a magnifying glass. The scalpel is used to expose carefully all successive layers of paint in a one inch square area down to the substrate, the original unfinished surface. The layers are then examined with the help of the magnifying glass and the light. Increased accuracy is possible if sampling is done in areas such as corners which have a greater concentration of undisturbed paint film. A detailed explanation of this technique and proper methods of removing samples for laboratory inspection can be found in Paint Color Research and Restoration, by Penelope H. Batchelor (see bibliography). Another technique for initial paint investigation involves the use of the same tools with the addition of ﬁne grit sandpapers and lubricating oil. The knife is used to make a small (½”) gouge in the surface to be sampled. The cut is sanded in a circular motion and kept workable by the oil to reveal a polished dish of component layers.

Another method of initial investigation of a painted surface is schematically illustrated in the above drawings. A shallow, dished scalpel cut is made through the layers of a painted surface (top drawing). The sides of the cut crater are then sanded down to a smooth gradual slope with 220 grit wet/dry ﬁnishing paper (bottom drawing). Liberal use of a clear lubricating oil is essential both to the polishing action and to a clear exposure of the color sequence. Drawings by Douglas Bucher.
of paint from the surface to the substrate. Paint layers exposed in this manner are easily enumerated. This technique is explained in “Some Notes on Paint Research,” by Morgan W. Phillips and Norman Weiss (see bibliography).

In order to determine the original and subsequent color schemes, the property owner should begin by taking as many inconspicuous paint samples as possible on the surfaces to be repainted in a room or on a building. By comparing the layers and colors in samples taken in the same space, the painting sequence of the space can be determined. Comparison of layers will also aid architectural investigation of various building elements dependent on the paint layers they exhibit and the place of those layers in the sequential scheme. Owners should also check all historical records associated with their building and consult other sources, such as contemporary paint catalogues and painter’s manuals (see bibliography). Information gleaned from the physical investigation and the documentary research should be carefully evaluated to determine the color scheme to be restored.

Once the color scheme is decided upon, the property owner must relate the old colors to paint colors available on the current market. Through the use of solvents it is possible to obtain a fairly accurate indication of a color by exposing a larger area of the desired color, measuring approximately two inches square. The exposed square can then be matched in place with commercial paint chips. Yellowing, blanching and fading of the paint should be taken into account. In order to minimize the problem of metamerism, the phenomenon which allows two different pigments to appear the same under one type of light and different under another, the sample area should be examined under different kinds of light including daylight and incandescent. If colors cannot be matched exactly, most paint dealers have mixing machines and are willing to experiment with hard-to-match shades.

Under certain circumstances, a property owner may want to contact a professional restoration consultant about more sophisticated systems for matching samples with modern paint colors. One of these systems is a comparative method in which a paint sample is matched beneath a microscope to a color chip from The Munsell Color Book. Another method, called spectrophotometric curve analysis, involves the illumination of a paint sample with different wavelengths of light through the complete range of the spectrum. The relative absorption and reflectance of the sample at each wavelength are plotted on a graph to produce a unique curve. From this curve the Munsell Laboratories are able to produce a paint formula for most colors. In both methods a Munsell color notation is provided and should become a part of the permanent record of the building.

Preservation and Maintenance of Historic Paints

In some cases, property owners may have an interest in preserving historic paints. This is especially true with interiors which may have original finishes or color schemes of sufficient age and quality to merit antiquarian interests. In any case, it is always advisable to leave exposed in an inconspicuous location a strip displaying the evidence of the different layers of paint. This technique can add to present and subsequent owners’ knowledge and pleasure in the structure. The layers of paint on and within a building are an irreplaceable record of paint history not only as documentation for that particular building, but as a contribution to the general history of the subject. This is especially true in historic house museums in which paint layers should be respected and left undisturbed as valuable archeological resources for future generations.

Paint stripping and scraping in historic buildings should be undertaken only where successive paint layers have built up to an inflexible thickness and are peeling and cracking or where fine architectural detail has been obscured by paint film. Even in this case, removal should proceed only as far as necessary and stop at historically important early layers.

Proper cleaning and maintenance of painted surfaces will aid their preservation and lessen the need for continual, costly repainting and consequent undesirable build-up of paint layers. The choice of the proper cleaning agent will depend upon the type of paint and the surface on which it is found. Much routine cleaning can be accomplished by dusting and vacuuming. Some surfaces, such as white-wash and certain distemper paints, cannot be wet washed; they were, and still must be, removed and reapplied when too dirty or worn. Modern flat emulsion paints, such as latex, have also proved difficult to clean. Wood may be damaged by the strong alkalis in common household cleaners, such as ammonia.

Choosing the Proper Paint for an Old Building

Once the colors are chosen, it is very important to consider the type of paint to be used. If it is decided to reproduce a historically accurate paint scheme, the paint job may well have a longer life than most contemporary
paint jobs that are governed by changing tastes. Permanency is thus the most desirable quality in the paint. Among properties of historic paints which should be emulated when they are reproduced are ropiness, or texture, produced by brush strokes; color depth, which can be achieved by glazes; and sheen.

The two basic types of modern paint — latex and oil-base or alkyd paints — are discussed below. Property owners should be aware that all types of paint have desirable and undesirable qualities depending upon their intended use and should be very careful about the situations and conditions in which they intend to use different types of paint.

Latex paints are based on a suspension of particulate droplets of acrylic or polyvinyl acetate resins dispersed in water. Added to this vehicle are various resins, hiding and coloring pigments, and extenders. Latex paints dry by the evaporation of water and the coalescence of the resin particles. Because they are easy to apply, latex paints have become very popular. Yet many restoration architects do not recommend using latex paints where oil-base paints have traditionally been used. However, masonry acrylic latex paints have proven very successful finishes for exterior masonry. Acrylic latex is also used successfully as a primer and size on interior plaster.

When using latex as a final coat on exterior woodwork, it is recommended that an impervious oil-base, non-porous primer be used.

Oil-base or alkyd paints are generally considered to be the best type for use on historic structures except masonry buildings. In modern oil-base and alkyd paints the vehicle consists of various combinations of nonvolatile oils and resins, usually with thinners. Alkyds are synthetic gela­

Footnotes


2 See Richard M. Candee, “Housepaints in Colonial America” and “Materials Toward a History of House­

3 Comprehensive lists of pigments, including their manu­

4 Richard M. Candee in “Rediscovery at Milk-based House Paints,” p. 79, notes that although milk-based paints were common until the invention of oil-based paints in the 15th century, their use was superseded by oil-based paints until the scarcity of linseed oil became a problem during the Revolutionary era.


6 The Cleaning and Waterproof Coating of Masonry Build­


8 Joseph T. Butler in “A Case Study in Nineteenth Cen­

9 Penelope H. Batcheler in Paint Color Research and Re­

10 For a discussion of the ramifications of these problems in restoration, see Morgan W. Phillips, “Problems in the Restoration and Preservation of Old House Paints” and Robert F. Feller, “The Deterioration of Organic Sub­

12 See Little, *American Decorative Wall Painting*, for examples.


14 At the Seabury-Treadwell House, built in 1832-35 in New York City, the walls of the entrance hall were recently cleaned, revealing an original painted pattern in imitation of bright yellow, coursed marble ashlar.


16 Dornseif, “Exterior Color,” p. 16; Peterson, “Early Sanded Paint Finish,” p. 24. Peterson notes that sanding was also thought to be valuable as fireproofing.

17 Architectural investigation in this manner is sometimes known as chromochronology. The technique has been used with promising success at Washington’s Headquarters, Newburgh, N.Y. See Peter H. Stott, “Summary of Remarks.”

18 Solvents can range from water to acetone to commercial paint removers. Experiments should be undertaken to determine which solvent removes upper paint layers while leaving the desired underlayer intact. Some solvents may discolor samples.


21 In such cases it is best to check with local museums or state agencies on proper conservation methods. In New York State contact Conservation Care, Bureau of Historic Sites, N.Y.S. Office of Parks and Recreation, Peebles Island, Waterford, N.Y. 12188.

22 Exceptions to this statement are historic house museums where, although the paint scheme is constant, touristic wear and tear may require continual renewal of paint.


**Bibliography**

**Case Studies**


**Research and Restoration**


Manuals

The Volz bibliography (below) contains references to most of the important painters’ manuals and architectural pattern books. The most influential of these are Butler (above) and Dornsife (below). The Volz bibliography (below) contains references to most of the important painters’ manuals and architectural pattern books available during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Butler (above) and Dornsife (below) discuss the most influential of these.


The Preservation League is grateful to Morgan W. Phillips, of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, and Samuel J. Dornsife, A.S.I.D., for their useful suggestions in the revision of this leaflet.

The Preservation League of New York State is a private, nonprofit membership organization whose primary purpose is to stimulate and encourage public participation in historic preservation throughout the state. Publication of this leaflet was made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts. Its funds are recommended by the Governor and appropriated by the State Legislature. Reprinting was supported by a grant from the Ellis L. Phillips Foundation.

Additional copies of this leaflet are available for $1.00 from the Preservation League of New York State, 13 Northern Blvd., Albany, New York 12210. Special rates are available for large quantity orders.
