

RESIDENTIAL ALTERATIONS

Intent

The Snohomish Historic District's residential neighborhoods are quaint and charming, with beautiful homes, pedestrian scale, and an old world feel. The overall character and integrity of this area is the sum of the important contributions of each home. Inappropriate alterations, even to a non-historic building, can detract from the visual character of the neighborhood.

Alterations and additions to historic buildings may be necessary from time to time, to ensure their continued use. Older homes may need modifications such as room additions, seismic strengthening, new entrances, façade maintenance, and accessory structures in order to remain viable as modern residences and to prevent deterioration. However these modifications should be carefully considered and designed to respect historically significant features, materials, relationships, and finishes. Façade modifications should only be considered after closely evaluating alternate means of accomplishing the same goal.

Applicability

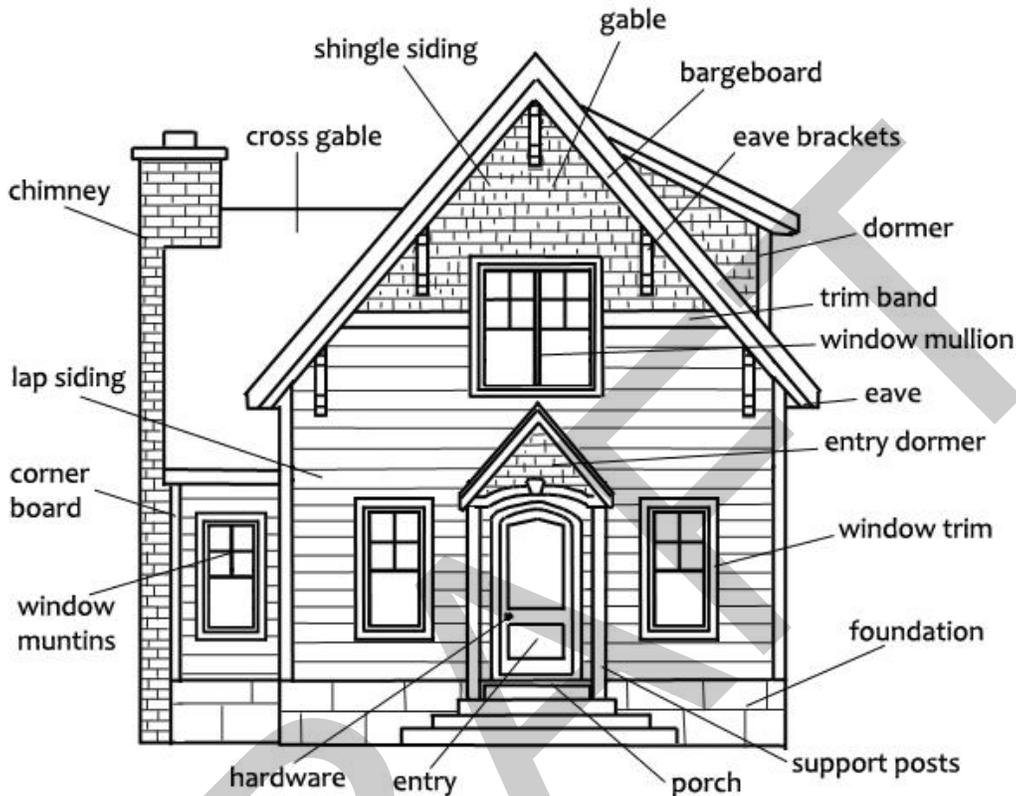
The design standards in this section apply to all alterations and additions to all existing single family homes within the Residential portions of the Historic District (refer to map on page X). For the purposes of this chapter, *alteration* is any modification to the exterior of a building requiring a building permit, and an *addition* is any change that results in an expansion of building height, shape, or footprint.

In addition to the standards contained in this section, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are applicable for additions and alterations to existing historic structures. Standards for new residential construction may be found in section X.

A. General Guidance

1. Building design should exhibit and incorporate elements that reflect the identity and visual character of the Snohomish community. Justification of consistency of proposed elements, proportions, relationships, or materials with local context and the specific structure may be necessary if antecedents within the community are not clear. Refer to Appendix X for historically appropriate architectural details and building styles in Snohomish.
2. Historic, character-defining architectural features and details should be preserved through continued maintenance or restored.
3. Modifications made to existing buildings should be sympathetic to the structure's original design, and should not significantly alter the historic appearance. Restoring original features that were previously obscured through past alterations is encouraged.

4. Before beginning any restoration work, research of available documents and a physical investigation of the building should be done, in order to determine the history of the structure and establish the most appropriate restoration plan.



B. Identifying Architectural Character

Every old building possesses its own unique character and identity. *Character* refers to all visual aspects and physical features that comprise the appearance of a building (Secretary of the Interior). Elements that define a building's character include shape and massing, materials, elements of craftsmanship, decorative details, and aspects of its size and setting. In order to determine which architectural qualities should be preserved, first a building owner must understand those elements that give the building its distinctive character.

The Secretary of the Interior recommends a three step approach to identify the visual character of an historic building. Steps 1 and 2 pertain to the building exterior and are summarized below. Additional information can be accessed via the preservation briefs published by the Secretary of the Interior at www.nps.gov.

Overall Visual Aspects

These include the building's shape, openings, roof and related features, projections, trim, and setting. These distinguishing physical elements are typically viewed from a distance, without focusing on building details.

Visual Character at Close Range

These include the materials used for construction, and details of craftsmanship including texture, variety and arrangement of materials, and decorative details. These surface qualities are visible from an arm's length.

C. Building Design

1. General

The intent of these standards is to encourage preservation of historic homes and maintenance of the pedestrian scale and character of the built environment.

- a. Architectural styles and stylistic references shall be consistent throughout one building.
- b. Architectural features should not be removed or changed if original to the building.
- c. Unpainted masonry shall not be painted.

2. Building Materials

Exterior surface materials may be consistent with traditional architectural materials and shall contribute to the appearance of a 100-year functional building life.

Appropriate materials include brick, stone, wood, and stucco. The scale and texture of these traditional materials contribute to the character of the Historic District. Cement fiber siding is an appropriate alternative to traditional wood siding.

New or alternative materials shall be considered on a case-by-case basis, based on the longevity and appearance of the material. The material must have a demonstrated durability in the local climate, and shall be used in a manner that appears similar in character to historic materials. In all cases, building materials proposed for modifications to existing structures shall be compatible with existing materials. If a substitute material is proposed for a restoration project, its physical properties should be carefully considered and compared to the historic material to ensure a similar performance over time.

The following exterior surface materials are prohibited, when visible from off-site locations.

- a. Plain or smooth face concrete masonry unit
- b. Corrugated metal
- c. Imitation or synthetic cladding materials such as vinyl, plastic, or aluminum
- d. T1-11 siding
- e. Perforated pressure treated wood, when readily visible
- f. Plexiglass

CONSISTENT



Original lap siding and shingles have been well maintained and preserved.

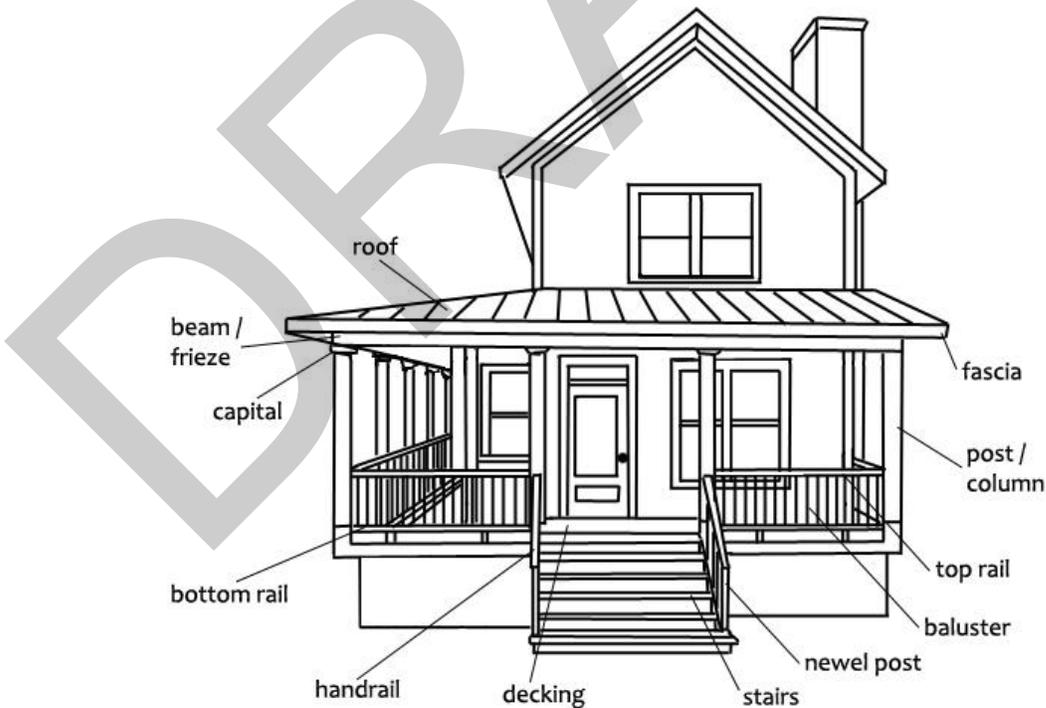
INCONSISTENT



This home has been re-sided with T1-11.

3. Porches

Porches are a significant character-defining feature of many historic homes, and their preservation is of great importance. Porches are not only functional, providing weather protection, shade, and a connection to the outdoors, but they also serve an important visual function by reducing the overall scale of the home and relating to human size. The porch also provides an architectural focus to define entryways.



- a. Historic porches shall be preserved whenever possible, and shall not be removed.
- b. Porches on the primary façade shall not be enclosed.

CONSISTENT



The front porch has been maintained and preserved in its original design.

INCONSISTENT



The front porch has been enclosed, altering the overall appearance of the home.

- c. It is appropriate to replace porches that were previously removed. Replacement porches shall be consistent in materials and style with the building to which they are attached.
- d. The roof form and eave depth of an historic porch shall be preserved.
- e. Decorative details that help define the porch shall be preserved, including balusters, balustrades, columns, and brackets.
- f. New porch elements that did not exist historically, or are inconsistent with the overall architectural style shall not be added.
- g. Wood stairs are appropriate for wood porches.
- h. Porch details shall be retained. Replacement of deteriorated elements is appropriate. All replacement features shall match the original in material, design, scale, and placement.

CONSISTENT



The original porch design and details have been maintained, contributing to the visual appeal.

INCONSISTENT



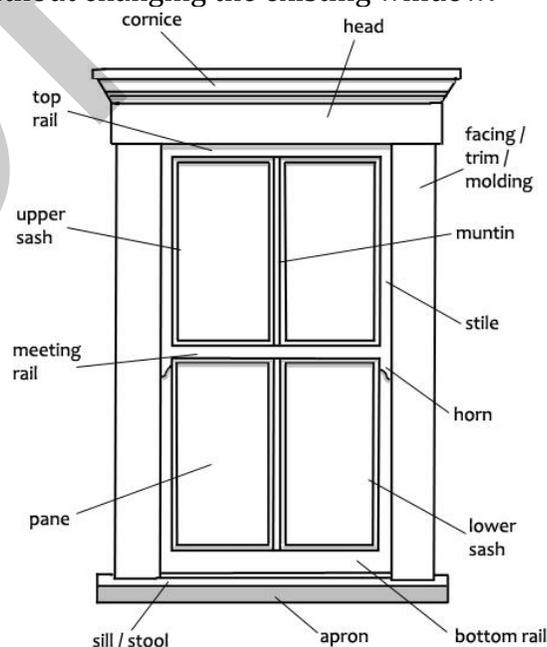
The porch posts have been replaced with metal columns, making the roof appear to float.

4. Windows

Windows are important elements of architectural character and prominent building components. The pattern of windows, doors, and other openings on the façade of an historic home strongly defines its character through shape, size, construction, arrangement, and profile. Changing these can have a negative impact on the historic integrity of the structure. Wood sash and casement windows were most common in historic homes.

Aluminum and vinyl framed windows have become more popular and readily available over recent years. These windows are often marketed as being more energy efficient than wood windows. However there are many benefits to maintaining the original wood windows rather than replacing them. Wood windows can be repaired to seal as tightly as modern windows, and can last another hundred years or more with proper maintenance. Vinyl and aluminum windows have an overall lifespan of about 15 to 20 years, and are all one piece so they cannot be repaired or restored; if they leak, they must be replaced entirely. Heat loss through windows represents a relatively small percent of a home's energy leaks, at around ten to 20 percent. With that in mind, it actually makes more sense to focus on other areas of the home, such as new insulation in the attic, basement or around doors and ductwork, before considering window replacement.

Window maintenance and restoration is often the best choice. Cracked panes or frames, crumbling putty, or drafts preventing solid closure can be repaired. Even a full restoration can still be a more cost effective option than replacement, including removal of the window, paint stripping, new epoxy and glazing and any needed repairs before reinstallation. Weatherstripping can also be added to seal gaps and air leaks. Storm windows are also a good option, to get the double-pane window effect and seal drafts at a fraction of the cost of new windows. Storm windows are removable and can double the energy efficiency without changing the existing window.



- a. When present and intact, existing windows shall be maintained and preserved in their original size, location, design, and proportions.
- b. New and replacement windows shall appear to be set back from the exterior building plane and finished with trim elements that are appropriate for the building. The use of vinyl windows is discouraged.
- c. New window openings shall not be added on the primary façade.
- d. Filling in or altering the size of historic window openings on the primary façade is not appropriate.
- e. Mullions and muntins shall be vertically proportioned. False muntins, or simulated divided lites shall not be used.
- f. The original position, size, number, and arrangement of windows shall be retained in a building wall. Original window openings on a primary building façade shall not be enclosed.

CONSISTENT



Original windows have been preserved and protected with storm windows.

INCONSISTENT



Replacement windows with false muntins in the upper sash.

5. Roofs

Not only does the roof protect the building from the weather, the material, size, and orientation of a roof also contribute to the overall building character. Roof pitch, materials, size, orientation, eave depth and configuration, and roof decoration are all distinct features.

- a. The original roof form shall be preserved to the extent possible.
- b. Skylights shall be flat against and parallel with the roof form. Other roof equipment shall not be readily visible from the street.
- c. Character defining roof-related features such as chimneys, shingles, finials, and parapet walls shall be preserved.

- d. The original eave depth and configuration shall be preserved.
- e. Cornices shall be retained and preserved.
- f. Appropriate materials for roofs include metal, clay tiles, slate, and wood shingles. Architectural composition roofing is an appropriate alternative to traditional roofing materials.
- g. Built-up and torch-down (modified bitumen) roofing are appropriate for flat roofs. Synthetic materials may be allowed if the roof is not visible from the street.
- h. New roof forms for building additions shall be consistent with and subordinate to the primary roof, and shall not become a dominant visual aspect of the structure.
- i. Shed roofs are appropriate for small accessory structures and subordinate roof forms, such as porches, canopies, or upper floor projections.

6. Building Elements

- a. Architectural detailing may include trimwork, moldings, gingerbread, vergeboard, bargeboard, eaves, brackets, corbels, knee braces, dentils, cornices, decorative shingles, columns, pilasters, balusters, or any other decorative of character-defining feature.
 - 1. Architectural detailing shall not be removed or changed if original to the building.
 - 2. If possible, architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced. If replacement is necessary due to significant deterioration, the appearance, profile, and texture of the original materials shall be approximated in the replacement.
 - 3. New architectural detailing may be added to a building if historic evidence indicates it is consistent with the original building or buildings of similar design and age in the surrounding area.

CONSISTENT



Corbels and porch details are appropriate for the Italianate style home.

INCONSISTENT



Ornate details including spindles and jigsaw work are inconsistent with the style of home.

b. Chimneys.

1. Original or architecturally significant chimneys shall not be removed or altered.
2. If a chimney becomes unstable or has collapsed, the replacement chimney shall match the original design with the same or similar materials.
3. Brick or masonry chimneys shall not be covered with stucco, paint, or veneers.

c. Exterior staircases.

1. Historic staircases shall be maintained and preserved in their original shape, design, materials, and proportions.
2. Unless associated with a front porch, new staircases shall not be located on a primary façade.
3. Staircases shall not damage architectural features or other building components.
4. Staircase surface materials shall be consistent and compatible with the overall structure.
5. Railings shall be consistent with the standards contained in Section X.

d. Decks, balconies, and ramps.

1. Historic decks and balconies shall be maintained and preserved in their original shape, design, materials, and proportions.
2. New decks and balconies shall not be located on the primary façade.
3. Where ramps are necessary, they shall be integrated with the architecture of the building, to the extent possible.
4. New decks, balconies, and ramps shall not obscure character-defining features.
5. New decks and balconies shall be simple in design yet consistent with the character of the structure. The solid-to-void ratios of balusters and rails shall be designed to appear mostly transparent.
6. Railings shall be consistent with the standards contained in Section X.

e. Shutters.

1. Window shutters original to the structure should be retained and preserved.
2. If historic evidence indicates that a structure originally had shutters, new ones may be added.
3. Shutters should be of wood louver design. Fiberglass and vinyl shutters are not appropriate.
4. Shutters should fit the window opening to appear operable.
5. Shutters should be attached to the window frame rather than the façade wall.

CONSISTENT



Shutters are attached to the window frame and appear functional.

INCONSISTENT



Shutters are attached to the building face, and are inappropriately sized for the window.

7. Garages and Accessory Structures

Many homes in the Historic District have retained their original or added garages and outbuildings that have gained historic significance. These accessory structures contribute to the character of the district and should be preserved and maintained.

- a. Garages and outbuildings that contribute to a property's historic character or are original to the property should be maintained and preserved. Original or historic features such as siding, doors, and windows should be repaired or replaced in kind if readily visible.
- b. New accessory structures shall be recessed from the front of the primary building and located behind the house wherever possible. Garages shall be located at the rear of the property and set back substantially from the house.
- c. Accessory structures shall be subordinate in size and consistent with the character of the primary structure.
 1. The structure shall be subordinate in terms of mass, size, and height. Detailing shall be simple, and shall not compete visually with the primary structure.
 2. Building materials shall be consistent with those of the main structure.

8. Service Areas, Equipment, and Energy

Exterior equipment and service areas can detract from the appearance of a building and site, and can create noise impacts on adjacent public ways. These elements should be located away from streets and pedestrian areas, and screened from view.

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- a. Mechanical equipment shall be screened from view using walls, fencing, or vegetation. Screening shall be in character with the building and site it serves.
- b. Service and utility equipment such as satellite dishes shall be located on a non-street side of the home, or if not possible due to line of sight requirements, shall be installed in an inconspicuous location.
- c. Skylights shall not be located on a street-facing side the home. Skylights shall be flat against the plane of the roof. Framing shall be consistent in color and hue to roof material.
- d. Solar panels are recognized as a valuable technology, however their visual prominence can drastically alter the appearance of a structure. Solar panels are allowed in the Historic District, subject to the following standards.
 1. Solar panels shall not be readily visible from streets or public areas.
 2. The color of the frame and panels shall be similar in hue and value to the color of the roof material.
 3. Solar panels shall be integrated with the design of the structure and roof forms to reduce the visual impact.

CONSISTENT



The solar panel array is located on a side elevation and is not readily visible.

INCONSISTENT



The solar panel array becomes a dominant feature of the street-facing façade.

9. Doors and Hardware

- a. Original or historic doors and hardware shall be maintained and preserved. If doors and/or hardware are replaced, the replacement shall be of a similar design to the original, to the extent possible.
- b. Wood is the preferred material for doors. If metal is proposed, it shall be dark and shall not have a bright or shiny finish. Painted metal is acceptable. Fiberglass and plastic shall not be used.

- c. Metal used for exterior hardware shall be dark and shall not have a bright or shiny finish, with the exception of copper and copper alloys (including brass and bronze).
- d. Hardware shall be traditional and historic in character.

10. Additions

Additions of new floor area to existing buildings may be an acceptable alternative to reconfiguring existing interior space to meet the needs of residents. Building additions can enhance or detract from the appearance of an historic structure. The best approach is to site additions where they will not be visible from the street, or where they will have the smallest impact on the building's overall form and appearance. The rear is the best location for additions of rooms, wings, porches, or decks.

While some destruction of original materials may be expected to accommodate the addition, such loss should be minimized. Careful planning and thoughtful designs minimize the destruction of original character-defining features, and complement the original architecture.

- a. Additions shall maintain the character, craftsmanship, fenestration patterns, finish materials, and proportions of the main structure.
- b. Additions shall be compatible in size and scale with the main structure, though subordinate in massing.
- c. Additions shall not imitate an earlier historic style or architectural period that is inconsistent with the main building.
- d. Additions shall not damage or obscure historically or architecturally important features.
- e. Additions shall be compatible with, but differentiated from the historic building. It is preferred that the addition is designed to reflect characteristics of the current period, but remain compatible with the original building.
- f. Two-story additions to one-story buildings are not appropriate.
- g. Older additions that have achieved historic significance shall be preserved.
- h. Building additions may be allowed in the following areas, under conditions:
 - 1. Rear or side of existing building.
 - The alignment of architectural elements, moldings, roof forms, and windows on the main structure shall be maintained.
 - The addition shall be subordinate in appearance to the main structure.
 - Wherever possible, larger additions shall be physically set apart from the main structure with a small connecting element, or "hyphen".

CONSISTENT



Rear addition that maintains consistent materials, style, and fenestration.

INCONSISTENT



Side addition with inconsistent cladding materials, windows, and details.

2. Above roof of existing building.

- The addition area shall be set back from the primary façade to preserve the original building scale.
- The addition shall be simple in character and subordinate in appearance to maintain the original structure as the primary focus.
- Wherever possible, window and trim elements shall align with those on the existing structure.
- Dormer additions shall be subordinate to the structure in scale, roof pitch, and general form.

CONSISTENT



The upper story addition is set back from the exterior walls of the first floor.

INCONSISTENT



The addition extends beyond the surface of the first floor wall, creating a lopsided appearance.

11. Restoration Guidelines

1. Before beginning any restoration work, research of available documents and a physical investigation of the building should be done, in order to determine the history of the structure and establish the most appropriate restoration plan.
2. Historic building materials should be preserved. Original façade materials should not be covered or obscured.
3. If material replacement is necessary due to deterioration or significant damage, materials similar to those used historically should be used. Historic evidence may be helpful in determining the material that was originally used on the building.
4. Masonry should be protected from water deterioration.
5. Character-defining details should be restored to their original appearance. Elements or details that were not part of the original building should not be added.

The Secretary of the Interior is an excellent resource for guidance on preserving, rehabilitating, restoring, and maintaining historic structures. The online Presentation Briefs include 47 printed publications to help applicants and property owners:

<http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm>