

## ***Bell Avenue Conservation District Design Guidelines***

Like Historic Districts, Conservation District status is a form of overlay zoning which adds a level of protection to selected neighborhoods. These guidelines will help to ensure sensible and harmonious design in terms of massing, fenestration and scale for cases involving new construction or developments that include infill construction within established neighborhoods. In terms of proposed exterior rehabilitation or maintenance of existing structures, the guidelines will provide property owners with solutions that respect the traditional design and intention of the built and natural environments.

In addition to these guidelines, development is also subject to the requirements in the Denton Development Code as they relate to building height, lot size, setbacks and parking.

The Bell Avenue Conservation District consists of the area facing Bell Avenue between University Drive (Highway 380) and Sherman Drive (FM 428). The purpose of these guidelines is to prevent the loss of the District's historic buildings, and to serve as a guide for rehabilitation of existing buildings, construction of new buildings, and additions and relocation of buildings so as to preserve the historic and cultural character and the visual identity of the District.

### **Appendix A.3 Existing Buildings / Streetscapes**

#### **A. Façade Treatments**

##### **1. Materials**

###### **a. Original Materials**

i Brick or stone that was originally unpainted should remain so, since irreversible damage can result from attempts to remove paint by methods such as sandblasting. Painting or covering original brick or stone is discouraged.

ii Retain significant character defining wooden or metal façade elements. Examples include cornice brackets, gingerbread, decorative trim elements, ornamental barge/fascia board, and Soffit.

###### **b. Maintenance**

i The United States Department of the Interior's publication, Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings indicates that light detergents and water are the only acceptable methods for cleaning masonry. However, certain chemical stripping agents are safe to use on masonry surfaces within controlled environments, and are acceptable to use. Upon request, the Texas Historic Commission (512-463-6092) or the City of Denton Preservation Officer (940-349-8529) can provide details as to these cleaning agents.

ii Sandblasting and other methods that utilize harsh abrasives/chemicals, or contents under high pressure are not permitted.

iii When repainting masonry, every effort must be made to duplicate the original strength and color of the original mortar, so as not to damage the brick or stone face due to spalling and to help the repair blend in with the original work.

##### **2. Roofs**

a. Existing roofs that are visible from the public right of way should retain their profile as it relates to shape and slope. Appropriate roof treatments in Conservation Districts include dimensional shingles, real or synthetic slate shingles or standing seam metal.

b. Historic systems that are integral to the roof, such as flashing, and leader/conductor boxes, built in gutters, downspouts or snow guards, should be retained and maintained on a regular basis, as these types of systems often were crafted of heavy gauge, resilient materials such as copper or zinc and generally outperform modern materials, as well as retain a patina and contribute to the appearance of the structure.

c. Buildings that incorporate a sloped roof, such as a gable and/or hipped roof, often feature decorative elements that should be retained, including but not limited to, roof cresting, ridge caps and finials.

##### **3. Doors**

a. Replacement doors should be sized to fit in the existing opening. The opening should not be altered so as to accept either a smaller door (e.g., filling in excess space with material such as lumber, bricks

or cement blocks) or to facilitate a larger door or doors (e.g., knocking out part of the surrounding wall and reframing the opening).

#### 4. Windows

- a. Window openings should not be altered to accommodate replacement windows (e.g., "blocking down" or "blocking in" the opening).
- b. Replacement windows should relate to and be appropriate for the age and architectural style of the structure.
- c. In situations where original windows remain, every effort should be made to repair such windows, rather than replace them outright.
- d. Certificate of Appropriateness review will be required for any window repair or change due to code and safety regulations.

#### 5. Porches

- a. Character defining details, such as decorative wooden or metal trim, turned wooden or cast iron columns, sections of the balustrade (e.g., spindles, newel posts and hand/top railings), and skirting should be retained. Every effort should be made to repair damaged portions of original materials.
- b. Porch roofs and their original character defining features, such as shed roofs commonly found on rowhouses or gabled roofs specified on semi-detached twins or detached homes, should be retained.
- c. Original porch flooring or ceiling materials, such as tongue and groove planks, also known as center matched strip flooring (also used as a ceiling material), should be preserved and retained wherever possible, or replaced in kind.

### **B. Building Materials, Proportion, and Profile**

#### 1. Roofs

- a. For new construction, the principal roofline should be consistent with the adjacent streetscape.
- b. New additions must respect the existing building's roof profile and, if visible from the primary street, be in harmony with it in terms of form, texture and color.
- c. Appropriate roofing materials, when visible from the public right of way, should consist of dimensional shingles, real or artificial slate, wooden shakes or standing seam metal.

#### 2. Doors

- a. For new construction, principal facades facing the street shall contain an entry door.
  - i For corner properties, either façade facing the street can qualify as 'primary,' and thus be eligible for placement of the entry door.

#### 3. Porches

- a. Residential new construction should incorporate a front or side porch, if a porch exists on the immediately adjacent properties within the block face.

#### 4. Paint

- a. *Certain colors prohibited.* Fluorescent, metallic colors are not permitted on the exterior of any structure in the district.

#### 5. Windows

- a. Primary windows should be harmonious with adjacent properties and generally reflect vertical proportions (e.g., taller than they are wide). Accessory or ornamental windows such as gable windows, sidelights and transom windows are allowed.

#### 6. Utilities

- a. Utilities, such as gas and electric meters, should not be placed on or along the primary façade of new residential or commercial structures, when possible.
- b. Where visibility of utilities is an issue, they should be:
  - i painted so as to blend into the background.
  - ii screened with vegetation so as to minimize the impact on the facade.
  - iii placed at or near ground level.
- c. HVAC equipment should be placed on or along the rear facade or rear half of secondary facades and be screened from view by vegetation or fencing as referenced below.
- d. Cable and satellite television accessories, such as dishes and antennae, should be located on the rear half of the side facades or rear half of the roof, out of plain view where possible.

#### 7. Fencing

- a. All matters regarding fencing to be located in the front yard, or front and side yards of a corner property, shall fall under the jurisdiction of the amended portion of Section 35.13.9 of the City of Denton Development Code.

## 8. Topography

- a. The site for new construction which is within view of the public right of way shall be in harmony with existing topographical features typical of the neighborhood.

### Appendix A.4 Review Process

All exterior changes require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) prior to beginning work. The COA should be filed with the Historic Preservation Officer (HPO). All existing timelines will be followed.

Things that require a COA include:

- A. Constructing a new building or making an addition to an existing building
- B. Reconstructing, altering changing or restoring the exterior façade of an existing building
- C. Placing or relocating a building
- D. Removing or demolishing exterior architectural features
- E. Constructing, repairing or erecting a permanent improvement (fence, driveway, etc.)

Any ordinary maintenance or repair shall be submitted on a COA to the HPO prior to the beginning of the work to determine whether the work jeopardizes the character of the building or district. Examples of routine maintenance would include:

- A. Paint
- B. Repairing the structure using like materials (wood with new wood, composition shingles with new composition shingles, etc.)
- C. Replacing windows or doors with like materials of the same size

If the HPO determines that the work should be reviewed by the HLC, they will place it on the next agenda and notify the applicant of the time and date of the public hearing. If the HLC denies the COA, the applicant may appeal their decision to the Denton City Council.

Subchapter 7

Development Code

7-39

### Appendix A.5 Definitions

**Addition:** A construction project physically connected to the exterior of building.

**Alteration:** Any change affecting the exterior appearance of an existing improvement by additions, reconstruction, remodeling, or maintenance involving changes in form, texture, or materials.

**COA:** Certificate of Appropriateness; a form which must be filled out and turned in to the Historic Preservation Officer prior to beginning exterior work on a structure.

**Demolition:** The act or process of wrecking, destroying, or removing any building or any part thereof. Demolition includes, but is not limited to, the removal of a building from its site, or the removal or destruction of a façade or surface.

**Design Guidelines:** Written criteria, supplemented by graphic illustrations as appropriate, illustrating architectural considerations, which will affect the granting of building permits within the urban conservation district.

**Façade:** Any of the exterior faces of a building.

**HLC:** The City of Denton Historic Landmark Commission.

**HPO:** The City of Denton Historic Preservation Officer.

**Improvement:** Any building, structure, fence, gate, wall, walkway, parking facility, light fixture, bench, fountain, sign, work of art, earthworks, or other man-made objects constituting a physical betterment of real property, or any part of such betterment.

**Infill:** Descriptive of buildings that have been designed and built to replace missing structures or otherwise fill gaps in the streetscape. Infill architecture shall be compatible in such elements as height, proportion, and materials.

**Ordinary Maintenance or Repair:** The process of conserving a site, building, structure or object over time to prevent deterioration as opposed to restoration or rehabilitation; may include inspection and planning as well as housekeeping, minor repairs, and painting.

**Preservation:** The act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity, and material of a building or structure and the existing form and vegetative cover of a site. It may include initial stabilization work where necessary, as well as ongoing maintenance of the building materials and vegetation.

**Primary Façade:** The front wall of a building, or the wall in which the principal building entrance is located.

**Public Right-of-Way:** Any designated public street, sidewalk, or alley.

**Rehabilitation:** The act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

**Restoration:** The act or process of accurately recovering the form, features and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time, which may involve the removal of later additions or alterations, or the replacement of missing features.