

Chapter 2: District Settings & Site Features

A. General Guidelines for the Existing Site & Structure	9
B. Archaeology	10
C. Trees, Landscaping & Site Features	11
D. Driveways, Walkways & Parking Areas	13
E. Streets, Sidewalks & Public Right of Way	15
F. Garages & Accessory Buildings & Structures	16
G. Exterior Lighting	18
H. Signage	19
I. Fences & Walls	20
J. Art	22

Chapter 2: District Settings & Site Features

A. General Guidelines for the Existing Site and Structure: These guidelines are to be applied to every application submitted unless the applicant is proposing new construction.



Guidelines:

1. First priority is to retain, repair, protect and preserve the dimensions, details patterns, texture and finishes to maintain the historic character. If too deteriorated to preserve, then replace only deteriorated portion with same as original material
2. If original material is not feasible, then replace with a material that is compatible in design, dimension, material, pattern, detail, texture, and finish.
3. Last resort, if all of the current material needs to be replaced, introduce new material that is compatible with the original in design, dimension, material, pattern, detail, texture, and finish.

***Note: Historic Preservation Commission approval does not automatically constitute approval from the City of Statesville or the Iredell County Building Codes Department.

B. Archaeology

Archaeological resources include the material evidence of any past human activity found below or partially below the ground. Old wells, cisterns, foundation stones, piers, walkways, soil stratifications, and even buried refuse piles are all examples of archaeological features that can reveal valuable information about the history of a site and the lifestyles of the previous occupants. In a historic district, such archaeological features often provide useful information on the location of earlier additions and outbuildings, previous garden designs, fence lines, and patterns of site use. Unfortunately, the uncovering of archaeological resources endangers them, for exposure to the elements typically accelerates their deterioration. Consequently, protecting archaeological resources is best accomplished by leaving them undisturbed *in situ*.



Guidelines

1. Retain and preserve *in situ* known archaeological resources that contribute to the overall history of the historic district or site. If cannot be preserved in place, record the archaeological evidence.
2. Protect from damage and topography change when implementing any site work or new construction.
3. Plan, survey, and document the site in advance to determine any potential impact
4. Work with professional archaeologists and use current archaeological methods to investigate.

Major:

All Archaeology request

Requirements for application:

Site Plan

Pictures

C. Trees, Landscaping and Site Features

Plantings are continually growing and landscapes are evolving; therefore, it is not possible to “freeze” natural elements in time or size. Efforts should be taken to maintain significant plantings (including mature trees, hedges, foundation plantings, and gardens), because they play a prominent role in defining the site context for districts, buildings and streetscapes. Such maintenance efforts might include routine pruning, fertilizing, and treatment for disease. A listing of recommended plant material is included in Appendix E. The City’s Urban Arborist can also provide technical advice to property owners.



Guidelines

1. Protect existing plantings and site features that contribute to the overall historic character of the district such as hedges, retaining walls, sidewalks, mature trees, foundation plantings, terraces, patios, grassy lawns, ground cover, gardens, trellises, fountains, walkways, and driveways.
2. It is not appropriate to substantially alter the topography of a district site through excavating, grading, or filling.
3. Landscaping must not obscure the main structure on a property from the street.
4. It is not appropriate to disfigure the shape of mature trees through excessive pruning or “topping.” Public utilities are exempt.
5. If plantings are removed, then select replacement plantings that, when mature, will create a similar appearance and scale to the original plantings. It is not appropriate to remove large mature trees at an 8” diameter 4’ off the ground unless it is diseased, damaged or have a trunk within two (2) feet of a structure. The appropriate replacement species and size will be determined by the City Arborist.
6. Landscape material of any size may be removed if determined by staff to be voluntary in nature (voluntary is not planted for landscaping purposes, but grows due to natural seeding). If removal impacts utility lines then approval from the City arborist is required.
7. It is not appropriate to introduce raised planting beds, landscape timbers, interlocking concrete block, railroad ties, diagonal lattice or contemporary edging materials in front yards. It is also inappropriate to use boulders and rip-rap as decorative elements.

Major:

Trees over 8 inches in diameter measured 4 feet off the ground; determined to be healthy by the City Arborist
Landscape edging (contemporary material)

Minor:

Trees over 8 inches in diameter at breast height (dbh); determined to be unhealthy by the City Arborist or have a trunk within two (2) feet of a structure
Tree removal when the trunk is less than 8” in diameter at breast height (dbh)
Landscape material that is voluntary in nature and is not considered historical by staff
All landscape plans related to new construction or re-landscaping projects
Pruning large mature trees over 8” in diameter at breast height (dbh)
Planting new trees, shrubs, ground cover, and other plants that are not listed in Appendix E:
Suggested Plant Material

Routine:

Clearing of overgrown bushes, vines, saplings, and similar vegetation
Planting new trees, shrubs, ground cover, and other plants that are consistent with Appendix E:
Suggested Plant Material
Landscape edging (traditional material)
Flower, vegetable and rock gardens
Landscape lighting
Flower pots, planters, window boxes, birdbaths, birdhouses and similar projects.

Requirements for application:

Pictures
Landscape Plan/location map

Appropriate Materials:

Appendix E: Suggested Plant Material

D. Driveways, Walkways, and Parking Areas

The movement of automobiles and pedestrians through Statesville’s historic districts is accommodated by concrete sidewalks and brick or concrete walkways, asphalt streets edged with granite or concrete curbs, and driveways. Harkening back to an era less dominated by the automobile, some adjoining properties share narrow driveways requiring neighborly cooperation and courtesy. In the residential neighborhoods, the rear yard parking area or garage was typically designed to accommodate one or, at most, two cars. The driveways vary in their materials from gravel, to concrete runners, to asphalt toppings or concrete. Typically, they lead directly back to the rear yard or garage, although a few circular drives can be found.



Guidelines

1. Introduce new driveways, walkways, and parking areas in materials, preferably “green” materials, if possible, so the general topography of the site, is not damaged.
2. No paving materials are specifically prohibited by the SHPC. The appropriateness of non-traditional or alternative paving materials and styles will be considered on a case by case basis. Asphalt paving is not allowed for sidewalks, curb cuts and aprons.
3. In residential districts, it is not appropriate to locate parking areas:
 - a. in locations visible from the street
 - b. where the paving will abut the principal building and not allow room for foundation planting beds,
 - c. The paved area will substantially alter the proportion of the site that is paved versus landscaped.
4. Screen new off-street parking areas from view and adjacent properties through the use of perimeter plantings, fences, walls, or hedges.
5. Large Parking Areas: subdivide them with interior planting medians or islands (applies to commercial and institutional sites).
6. Commercial and/or Institutional Parking Lots /Areas: Locate them to the rear of buildings, and screen them from view with landscaping and/or fencing.

Note: Proposals for new parking lots or off-street parking areas should be accompanied by scaled site plans, including all proposed landscape and ground cover changes and information on proposed lighting type, placement and intensity.

Major:

Construction of new parking areas and driveways

Minor:

Addition, Removal or Construction of walkways

Addition or Removal of existing driveways and Parking Areas

Routine:

Repair and Replacement of existing parking areas, driveways and walkways

Required for application:

Site plan

Materials list and samples

Photos of existing

Appropriate Materials:

Pea-gravel

Concrete

Brick

Stone

Asphalt (allowed but not suggested)

Inappropriate Edging Materials:

Landscaping timbers

Railroad ties

Concrete (appropriate for commercial and institutional sites)

Plastic

E. Streets, Sidewalks and Public Right of Way

Streets, sidewalks, parks, and other public spaces are important parts of the neighborhood setting. The public right-of-way has evolved and changed over time, but much of the early twentieth century appearance and character remains in the Historic Districts. Most streets retain their original curbs and gutters, with a grass strip separating the street from the sidewalk. Neighborhood streets are usually two lanes wide and somewhat narrow compared with current standards. Mature shade trees along many streets provide a green canopy. Future changes should maintain this character. Other than what is required for traffic and pedestrian safety, keeping traffic signage in the public right-of-way to a minimum helps to avoid obstructing the appearance of the street.



Guidelines

1. If any portion of the public right of way, streets or sidewalks is damaged due to the installation or alteration of a personal property owner request, then the property owner is responsible for the cost and work associated with the damage.
2. Repair or replacement of sidewalks, streets, concrete curbs, and gutter patterns, widths, and construction materials with previously existing materials.
3. Installation and maintenance of traffic and parking signs for private use shall not be located in the public right of way.
4. Pruning or removing trees along utility lines is not appropriate without approval of the city arborist
5. Construction of new streets or the resurfacing of existing streets and sidewalks shall match the existing as close as possible
6. It is not appropriate to install pavement or other materials in the planting strip between the street and sidewalk. Brick may be considered where a hard surface is needed.
7. Maintain historic paving materials for roads and sidewalks. When they are disturbed for underground utility construction or other work, repair pavement, gutters, and curbs with matching materials.
8. Maintain door mail slots and letterboxes. Freestanding mailboxes are not in keeping with the historic neighborhood design and should be avoided.

***Note: Review and approval of the Engineering Department and/or Electric Utilities Department may be required prior to application submittal.

F. Garages and Accessory Buildings and Structures

A number of early garages, outbuildings, and storage sheds can still be found within Statesville's historic districts. The garages are typically one bay wide, located in the back yard, and are oriented with the large doors opening towards the street. Most are frame structures although a few brick houses have matching brick garages. Traditionally, smaller storage sheds and accessory buildings were also located in the rear yards, and were painted to match the primary structure.

It is most common in the historic districts to find accessory structures such as but not limited to satellites, antennas, mechanical equipment, dumpsters, etc. It is important to understand that even though the historic districts are constructed with older homes and accessory buildings many of the accessory structures may not be original. Many of today's accessory structures are made of contemporary materials. In historic districts, the introduction of large contemporary manmade accessory structures such as large playground equipment, pools and outdoor kitchen facilities are often a challenge. Such features require identifying an unobtrusive location that minimizes their impact on the historic district and successfully screens their visibility from the street. Smaller features, such as mechanical equipment units and garbage cans can usually be located in side or rear yards and screened from view through plantings or fencing.

Historic homes are continually being repaired, preserved and maintained, it is not uncommon to have property owners request the use of a temporary dumpster (usually about 1 to 3 weeks) to complete cleaning before or after a large renovation project. Due to the dumpster being temporary in nature placement in the front yard is acceptable.



Guidelines

1. New Accessory Buildings must be constructed using materials and finishes that are in keeping with the main building they serve. Appendix G: New Construction Materials Guide should be utilized.
2. Garage doors that are sustainably visible from any street must be of a style and materials that are appropriate to the building and the district. Stamped metal and vinyl doors are considered to be inappropriate.
3. It is not appropriate to add features or details in an attempt to create a false historical appearance.
4. Aluminum or vinyl clad storage units are not appropriate; however prefabricated, wood-sided utilitarian storage sheds may be considered for rear yard locations that are not visible from the street
5. Introduce contemporary accessory structures such as swimming pools, mechanical units, back-flow preventers, playground equipment, concrete pads, storage buildings, basketball goals, tree houses, solar panels, trash receptacles and telecommunication equipment, only in locations that are not visible from the street and do not compromise the historic character of the site or district.
6. Satellite dishes shall not be visible from the street. They shall be concealed with flat material or placed in the side or rear yard.

7. The members of the Statesville Historic Preservation Commission and its staff will work with property owners seeking antenna installation approval to determine an installation location that meets the technological needs of the owner while having the least impact on the district. Both parties will be responsible for working in good faith to find a balance between the needs of the applicant and the legal mandate of the Commission. The SHPC cannot prohibit the installation of such antennae, but at the same time it is under no obligation to approve any antenna configuration or location brought before it that fails to meet the Secretary of Interior Standards.
8. Temporary Dumpster/Temporary storage unit can be utilized in the front yard, not to exceed a period of four weeks. A COA can be renewed. However it will not to exceed a total of three months from the original date of issuance.

Major:

New building or an addition to a building (including carports) larger than 144 sq. ft.
Removal of Accessory building (including carports) which is architecturally significant. Any accessory structure that is visible from the street

Minor:

New building or an addition to a building (including carports) that is 144 sq. ft or smaller.
Temporary dumpsters/temporary storage unit
Accessory structure not visible from the street

Routine Maintenance:

Repair and preserve existing building, site feature or garage.

Application Requirements:

Site Plan
Brochure or dimensional information
Photos
Dimensions

Appropriate materials:

Reference Appendix G: New Construction Materials Guide

G. Exterior Lighting

Historically, exterior lighting in residential neighborhoods such as Statesville's historic districts was minimal. Simple porch lights and occasional street lamps were often the only sources of exterior lighting.

Often contemporary expectations and safety or security concerns lead to far higher levels of night-time site lighting in neighborhoods. Such demands should be met in ways that do not compromise the historic character of the site or district. Selective low-level lighting in key locations and the use of directional fixtures can help prevent problems with excessive lighting in historic districts. Timers and motion sensors that control light sources are also beneficial in limiting the impact of exterior lighting.



Guidelines

1. Ensure that the location, orientation, brightness, height, and design of new exterior lighting fixtures are compatible with the human scale and historic character of the district.
2. In residential areas, introduce low-level lighting and directional lighting (to prevent lighting from invading adjacent properties) where needed to ensure safety and security (instead of a more intensive yellow or orange light. Metal halide bulbs will achieve the desired effect instead of sodium vapor or fluorescent light sources).
3. Footlights, recessed lights, directional lights, and lights on posts are appropriate.
4. It is not appropriate to:
 - a). introduce lighting to illuminate the facades or front yards in the historic district.
 - b). introduce period lighting fixtures from an era other than when the historic structure was built, in an attempt to create a false historical appearance.
5. Introduce exterior lighting of site features and plantings, if needed, so that it does not compromise the historic character of the site or district.

Minor:

Installation, Alteration, Removal of exterior lighting
Repair and Replacement of exterior lighting

Routine Maintenance:

Landscape lighting

Application Requirements:

Photo or brochure of lighting fixture

H. Signage

Institutional traffic, historic district and commercial signs, as well as, signs identifying the name and date of some historic buildings are found within Statesville's historic districts.



Guidelines

1. Replace missing, deteriorated or damaged signs with new signs that are compatible with the location, orientation, material, height, scale, and design of signs in the historic district.
2. Install freestanding signs on low posts or bases that are compatible with the pedestrian scale of the historic district.
3. Mount small identification signs on building facades so as not to conceal or damage significant architectural details.
4. Construct new signage out of traditional sign materials, such as wood, stone, or metal.
5. It is not appropriate to introduce new signage in contemporary materials, such as plastics, or internally lighted signs
6. The SHPC will not exercise control over logos or color. It is strongly recommended that color schemes relate to the building the sign serves.
7. All signage must comply with the local sign ordinance.

Major:

Signs larger than 2' X 3'

Minor:

Appropriately designed and sited signs that are two feet by three feet or smaller may be approved by staff without commission review.

Incidental signage, such as parking and entrance signs

Routine:

The repair and replacement of existing sign as long as they meet the local zoning ordinance and keep the historical character.

Application Requirements:

Photo or drawing of sign

Site plan

I. Fences and Walls

As a result of Statesville's rolling topography, retaining walls constructed of brick, stone, or cast stone edge the front yards and driveways of many homes. Stone, brick or concrete were commonly used for steps in the historic districts and generally connect the walkway from the public sidewalk to the house. Occasional low iron or wooden picket fences and hedges are used in edging the perimeter of some front and side yards of properties within the historic district. Typically the wooden fences are painted white or occasionally they are painted to match the trim color associated with the house. Iron fences are painted black or other dark colors. Higher wooden privacy fences should be located in rear yard areas. The privacy fences are utilized to enclose and screen the rear yards from street view.



Guidelines

1. Protect and maintain the functional and decorative wood, masonry, and architectural metal features of fences and walls through appropriate maintenance and repair methods.
2. Limit replacement to the deteriorated section only.
3. Introduce contemporary utilitarian fences and walls, if necessary, only in rear or rear side yards; it is not appropriate to introduce contemporary vinyl or metal chain link fences in locations that are visible from the street.
4. Fences along street frontages and front property lines may not exceed four feet in height
5. A desire for privacy or a means to confine pets to rear yards may trigger the planning of a utilitarian rear yard fence. Fences along rear property lines and rear side yards may be up to six feet in height. Fence height is measured from the bottom of the fence.
6. Contemporary vinyl or metal chain link fences are not consistent with the overall historic character of the historic districts and they should only be considered for small applications, such as dog pens, in unobtrusive locations that are not visible from the street. They are not appropriate to use for larger applications such as defining property lines. Screening new or existing metal or vinyl fencing with plantings can soften their visual impact as well.

Major:

Construction of new fences, walls, or other screening in side or rear yard over 6' in height.
Construction of new fences, walls, or other screening located in the front yard

Minor:

Construction of new fences, walls, or other screening in side or rear yard 6' or under in height
Removal of existing fences, walls, hedges or other screening material

Routine:

Repair and Replacement of fence, wall, or other screening material

Application Requirements:

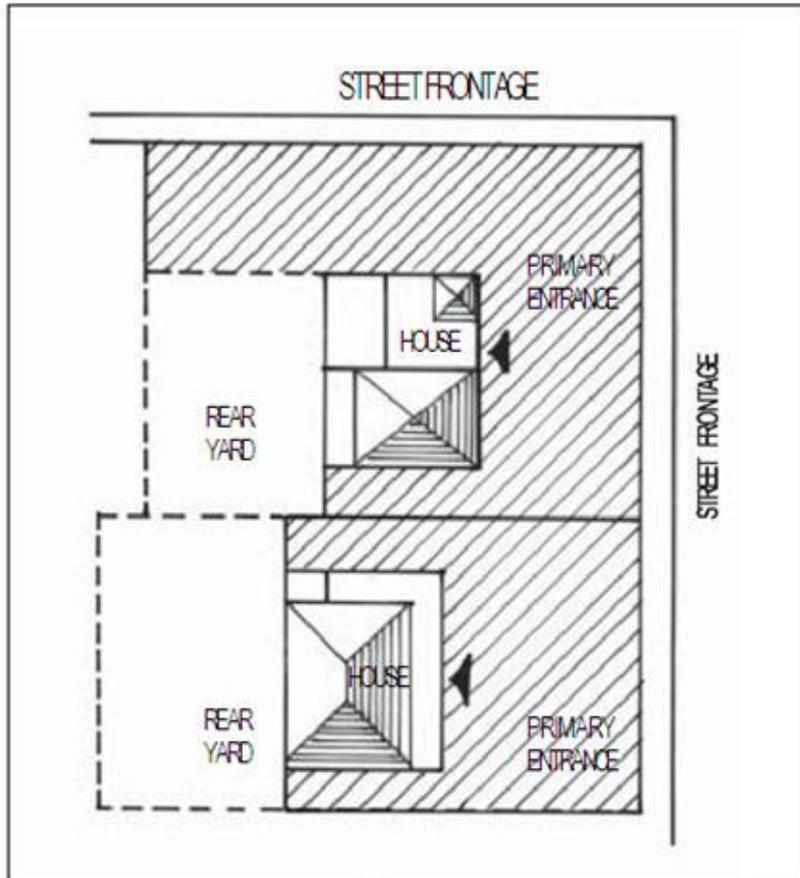
Site plan
Photo of existing or brochure of new screening device
Dimensions

Appropriate Materials:

- Wood or iron fencing
- Rock/stone walls
- Decorative wire fence

Inappropriate Materials:

- Chain link and Vinyl fence (if used for larger applications such as defining property lines; however if used in the rear or side yard, not visible from the street and is a small application then appropriate to use)
- Metal wire fence: hog wire, chicken wire, no-climb horse wire, etc.



This diagram illustrates the standards for fence heights. Fences along street frontages and front property lines cannot exceed four feet. These areas are indicated by a hatched line. Fences may be up to six feet in height along rear property lines and rear side yards. These areas are outlined by a dashed line.

J. Art

The installation of artwork creates community focal points and can vitalize landscaped areas, pedestrian corridors, parks, and other public spaces. Art takes many forms. Art can be cast, carved, built, assembled or painted. In addition to sculpture and murals, art may take a functional form such as landscaping, interpretative signage, or artistic amenities. By its presence alone art can challenge a community to heighten awareness and question assumptions.

Public art is any work of art or design that is created by an artist specifically to be sited in a space intended for public use or public viewing. It invites interaction with the surroundings and has the power to reflect or contribute to a community's character. Public art helps define the community's identity and reveal the unique nature of a specific neighborhood. Private art that is installed outdoors also affects the character of the historic district.

The subject or meaning of a piece of art can be interpreted in many ways. Thus review of art installations within the Historic District are intended to be content-neutral. The COA review is meant to ensure that the location, mass and scale, materials, durability, and manner of installation of the art piece are compatible with the character of the district. The Historic District Commission is not responsible for reviewing the content or subject matter of a piece of art.

Artwork should be cared for and refurbished as required by the nature of the materials to maintain the appropriate appearance and safety of the piece. Artwork should also be installed in a manner that considers safety of the general public.



Guidelines:

1. Introduce artwork only in locations that do not compromise or diminish the character of the building, site, or district
2. Introduce artwork only in locations that do not obstruct the view of historic structures or vistas.
3. Introduce artwork in locations that provide for safe pedestrian access and circulation.
4. Introduce wall-mounted art, such as murals, mosaics, or metal installations only in locations that do not compromise or diminish the overall design or architectural rhythm or pattern of the building, site, or district.
5. Install artwork so that it does not conceal or result in the removal of character-defining details or features.

6. Introduce artwork that has appropriate massing in relation to the building, site, or district.
7. Scale artwork appropriately for the intended space.
8. Fabricate artwork from traditional materials including wood, stone, masonry, or metal and that are durable for exterior installation and compatible with the character of the building, site, or district. It is not appropriate to introduce artwork in contemporary materials, such as plastics and resins.
9. Introduce materials for associated pedestals that are typical of those found in the district, such as wood, stone, brick, or metal, unless the artwork itself suggests an alternate but compatible material.
10. Utilize methods of stabilization or attachment that are fully reversible and do not cause damage to historic buildings, sites, or materials.
11. Install accessories to the artwork such as signage, mounting hardware, or lighting so that they are unobtrusive and screened from view as much as possible and are constructed from compatible materials.

Major:

Art affixed to a building or site.

Minor:

Installation/alteration of art such as but not limited to free standing sculpture and wall mounted murals, mosaics, or metal installations that are not affixed to a building or site

Routine:

Common and seasonal decorations and garden accents

Application Requirements:

Site plan

Sketch of proposed art

Material List

*Photo Credits (from left to right): Alison Adams: August 26, 2009, L'archivista Blog: March 27, 2010 and unknown source.