CHAPTER 3: GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

The guidelines in this section apply to all projects, including rehabilitation, addition, and new building throughout the city, both inside the historic district and outside it. Similarly, they apply to all primary and secondary structures as well as site features and landscapes.

The Central City Historic District, which encompasses nearly the entire City of Central, is unusual among Colorado mining communities, both in the organic quality of the city's plan as it winds around and up and down the hills and gulches, and in the degree to which structures have been preserved. The residents of Central City are justly proud of their city's history and its architectural quality. This pride, combined with the Landmark District status, demands the preservation of the unique qualities of this historic mining community.

When looking at a neighborhood, certain elements, such as the height of buildings, the distances between structures, or the size and shape of openings create patterns that, when repeated, elicit a sense of visual continuity to the streetscape. This continuity is vital to the historic character of the district.

In addition to the general guidelines, special guidelines apply to each neighborhood. In these, the neighborhood as a whole is considered the context for a project, as well as its immediate surroundings.

Building Scale

Similarity in historic building heights is an important factor that contributes to the visual continuity of the district in general and specifically to the individual neighborhoods. New building should not overwhelm nearby historic structures in building height, but rather should be within the range of heights found historically along the block. The size and scale of a building, as defined by its height, width and depth, therefore, should be similar to those of other structures historically found in the neighborhood.

In addition to creating visual continuity, the consistent size of most historic buildings in Central City helps establish a sense of human scale that encourages walking and contributes to a feeling of community the town enjoys. This pedestrian-friendly character is a key to the well-being of the town's residents and enhances the economic health of the area; therefore, it should be emphasized in new buildings.

An Important Note:
When considering building heights, also refer to the city's zoning ordinance, which sets limits on construction heights; note that the height limit is a maximum which cannot be exceeded but may theoretically be achieved under certain combinations of development concepts. It is not a guaranteed building height. Each project must still respect its context, and the relationship of the height of the proposed project to that of historic buildings must be considered.

Guideline 1:

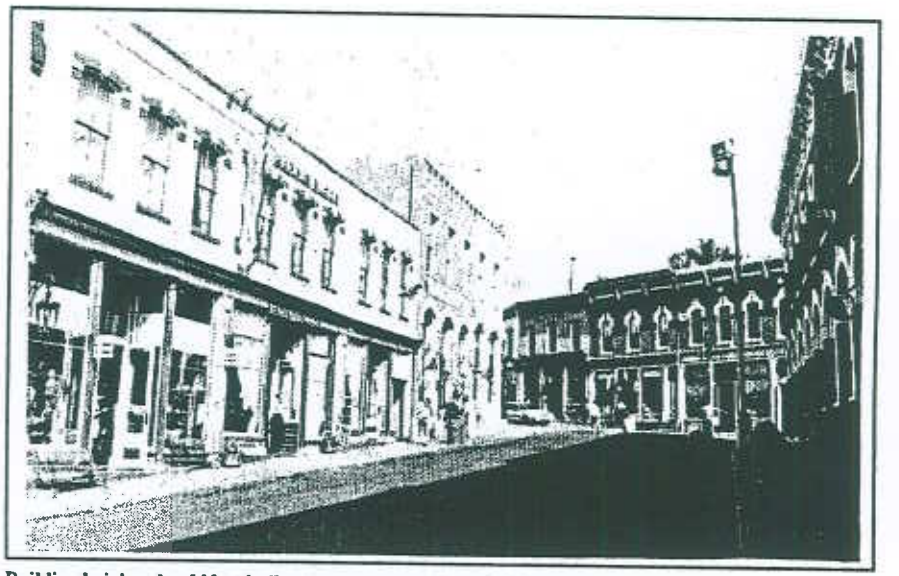
Reinforce the visual unity of the block.

- The more specific design guidelines of this document help define the specific elements of each character area that contribute to the sense of visual unity.
- The specific context of each individual block is an important feature to consider, as is the neighborhood.
- The context of each block should be considered in its entirety, as one would see it when standing on the street, viewing both sides of the street for the entire length of the block.
- In some neighborhoods, a variety in buildings and settlement patterns contributes to the visual character and this feature should be respected in these cases.

Guideline 2:

Buildings should appear to be similar in scale to those historically found in the neighborhood.

- In some neighborhoods an abrupt change in scale within the historic district may be inappropriate, especially where a new, larger structure would directly abut smaller historic buildings.
- Dividing the total floor area of a project into multiple structures is encouraged as a means of reducing the scale of individual buildings.
- Using secondary structures to house some functions is also encouraged as a means of reducing the scale of individual buildings.

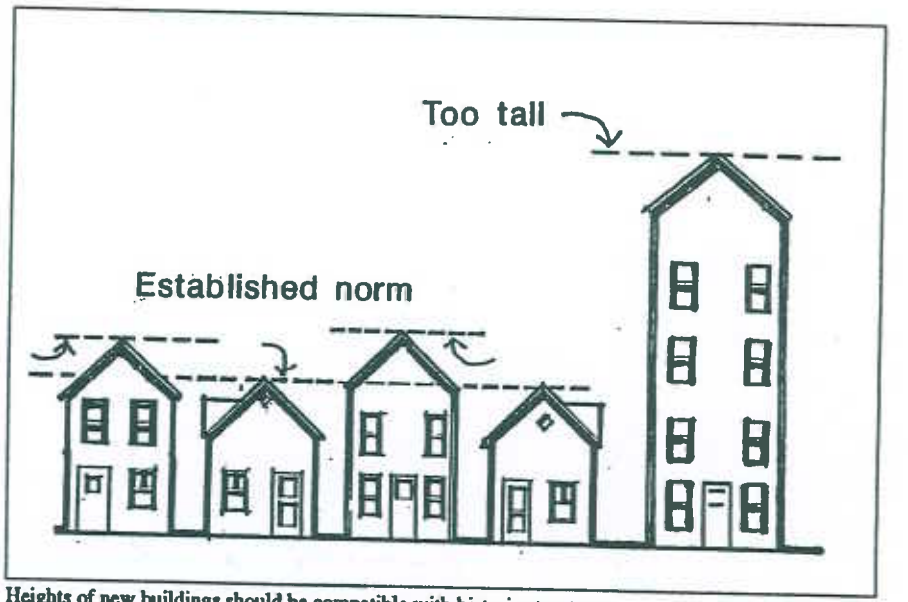


Building heights should be similar to those of nearby historic buildings.

Guideline 3:

Buildings should be of heights similar to those found historically in the neighborhood.

- The purpose of this guideline is to help preserve the historic scale of the block and of the neighborhood.
- New buildings should be designed to be similar and compatible to historic buildings in the immediate vicinity.
- The range of historic building heights of a building's neighbors should establish the appropriate heights.
- Buildings also may not exceed the height limits established by the zoning ordinance.



Heights of new buildings should be compatible with historic structures.

Guideline 4:

The rear portion of a building may be taller than the established norm if the change in scale will not be perceived from major public view points.

- This may be appropriate only where taller portions of the building will not be seen from a public way.
- The new building should not noticeably change the character of the area as seen from a distance. Because of the mountain terrain, some areas of the district are prominent in views from the surrounding areas of higher elevation. Therefore, how buildings are perceived at greater distances should be considered as well.
- In general, stepped buildings are more appropriate against steep slopes.
- Adding floors onto historic buildings is discouraged because this alters the perceived scale of the structures and diminishes their historic integrity.

Guideline 5:

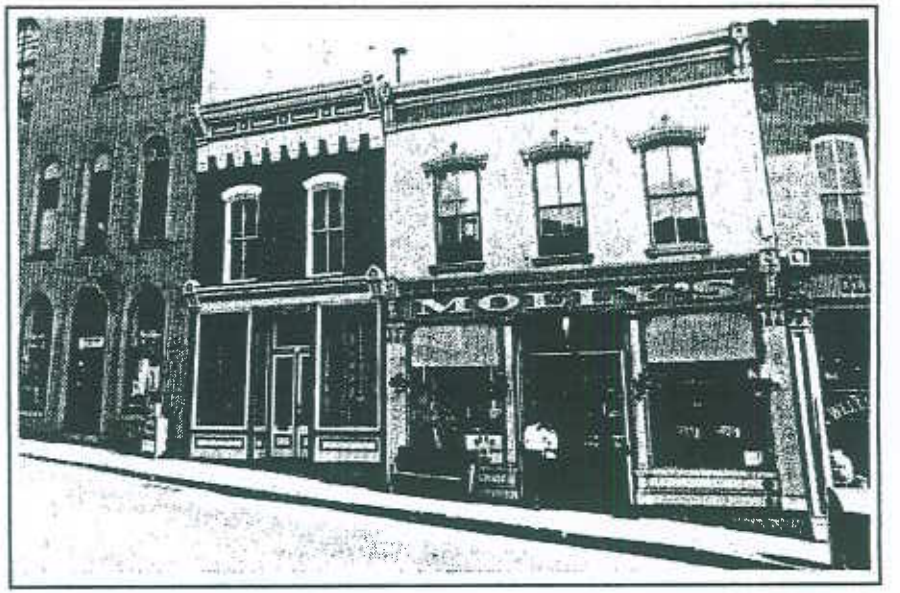
Buildings should be of widths similar to those found historically in the neighborhood.

- New buildings should especially be designed to be similar in width to historic buildings in the immediate vicinity.
- Buildings in commercial areas may be wider so long as they are divided into components that appear to be similar to historic building widths found in the area. (See the guidelines for the Core Area.)
- In cases where facades of new commercial buildings are divided in to modules, they also should have walls perpendicular to the street facade at each apparent storefront module. These walls should continue, without openings, from the building face at least 10 feet back, where feasible.

Guideline 6:

Typical facade components should be similar in size, proportion and importance to those of related elements that typically were found in historic structures in the neighborhood.

- Windows, doors, porches, cornices and foundations are examples of elements that should be similar in size to historic elements.
- See guidelines for the individual neighborhoods for more information on this subject.



Typical facade components should be similar in size, proportion and importance to those of related elements that typically were found in historic structures in the neighborhood.

Building Form and Shape

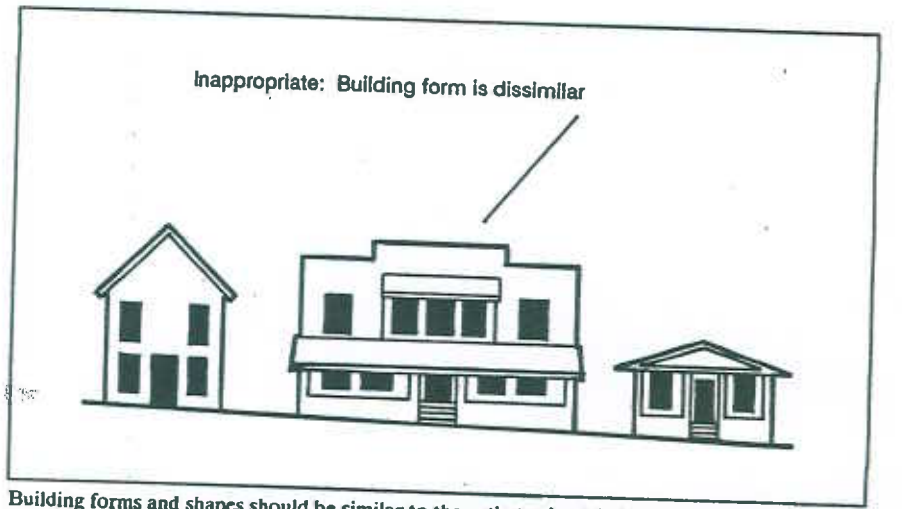
New construction should maintain and reinforce the pattern of historic building forms and shapes along the streetscape. In residential neighborhoods, for example, historic alley buildings presented a flat, rectangular face to the street, with gabled or shed roof forms. Although the size of these structures varied, they all contributed equally to the identity of the neighborhood. This traditional set of building forms found in each neighborhood should be respected.

Guideline 7:

Building forms and shapes should be similar to those that once existed in the neighborhoods.

- The most common visual element is the main body of the structure, which is usually comprised of a simple, rectangular solid form.
- Residential structures are either square or rectangular in shape with gabled or hipped roofs. The narrower side of the rectangle is typically parallel to the street, as is the ridge of the gabled roof-line.
- Residences and commercial buildings should be comprised of simple, block-like forms, inherent to Central City.
- Building components such as porches and outbuildings should be kept simple and also should be rectangular/block-like in shape.

The residence exhibits building forms that are similar to those found historically, including a hip roof, vertically-oriented windows and a front porch. Building forms and shapes should be similar to those that existed in the neighborhoods.



Building forms and shapes should be similar to those that existed in the neighborhoods.

Building Proportion

All buildings in a neighborhood should appear to be similar in proportion, in order to reinforce the visual continuity of the area. The exceptions are in the few neighborhoods where variety in scale is desired.

Guideline 8:

The directional emphasis of a facade, either horizontal or vertical, should be similar to buildings found in the neighborhood historically.

- For example, a row of windows may create a horizontal emphasis to a structure that is similar to others in the neighborhood.

Guideline 9:

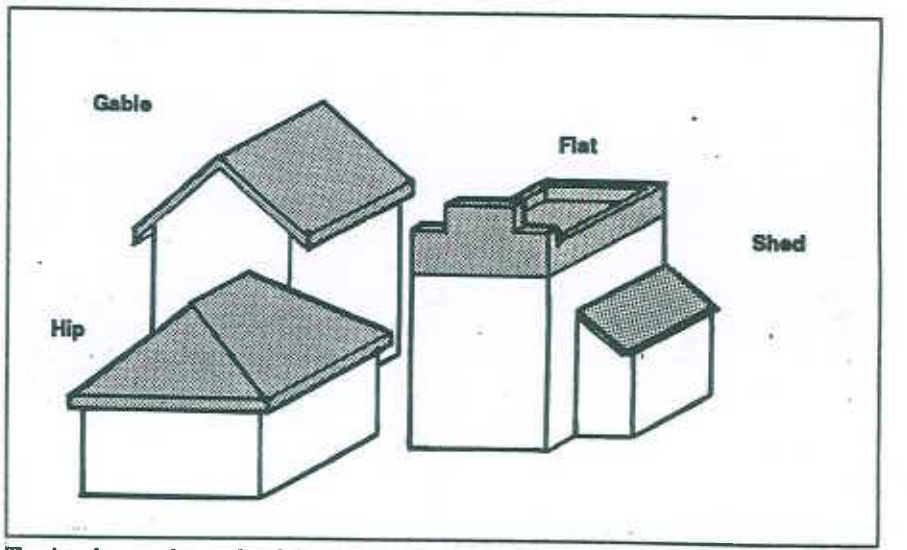
Roof forms should be similar to those of other structures found historically in the neighborhood.

- Flat and gabled roofs are typical of commercial and warehouse areas.
- Gabled, hip, mansard and shed roofs are typical of residential areas.
- The repetition of these forms is important to the visual continuity of a neighborhood.
- Dormers should have roof forms similar to that of the main structure.
- Refer to the relevant neighborhood guidelines for the specific context.

Guideline 10:

Minimize the visual impacts of mechanical equipment on the exteriors of buildings.

- For gable roofed buildings, equipment should be incorporated into roof forms.
- For flat-roofed commercial buildings, roof-top equipment should be integrated into the structure of the building so the image of a flat roofline is maintained.
- If under any special circumstances mechanical equipment is allowed on the roof, it should be placed so as to minimize its visual impact from public rights of way.
- If allowed, mechanical equipment, including duct work, should not exceed six feet in height above the roof, except where no feasible alternative exists.



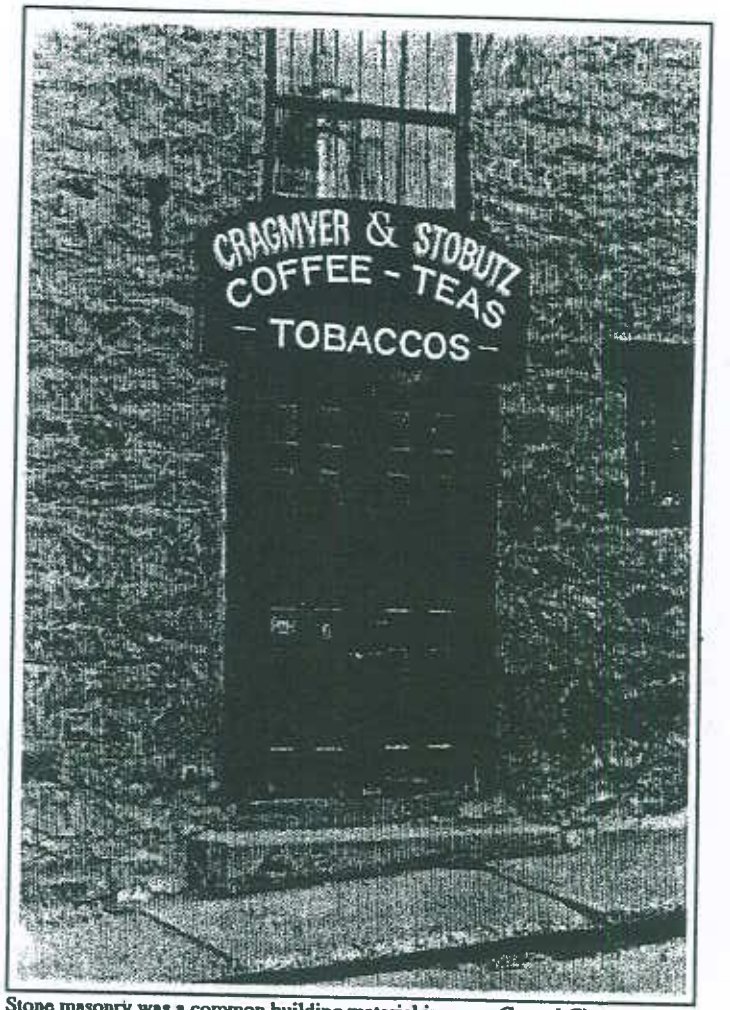
The size, shape, and type of roof should be similar to those of other structures found historically in the neighborhood.

Building Materials

Guideline 11:

Exterior wall materials for new buildings and additions to existing ones should be similar to those historically used in the neighborhood.

- Wood clapboard, wood lap siding, board-and-batten siding, brick, stone and patterned metal cladding are materials that were used historically and may be appropriate, depending upon the specific neighborhood context. Refer to the relevant neighborhood guidelines.
- Wood clapboard siding also should have an exposed dimension that is similar to that used historically.
- Brick used in new construction should be similar in color and texture to that used historically.
- Stamped or flat metal siding, such as that used historically, may be considered.
- Painted metal storefronts may be used in the commercial core.
- All exterior materials on primary structures should have a weather-protective finish, such as paint.
- Synthetic siding materials, such as aluminum or vinyl siding, are inappropriate and generally unacceptable.
- Tar paper, although found on early buildings, is not appropriate.
- The use of unpainted, metallic-appearing aluminum window frames, doors and door frames is discouraged.
- New materials that appear to be the same in scale, texture and finish as those used historically may be considered for trim. Imitation materials that do not successfully repeat these historic material characteristics are inappropriate.
- Native stone is encouraged. Other stone similar in character to that of native stone also may be considered.



Stone masonry was a common building material in many Central City neighborhoods, and should be considered for new construction.

Guideline 12:

Exterior roof materials should be similar to those used historically.

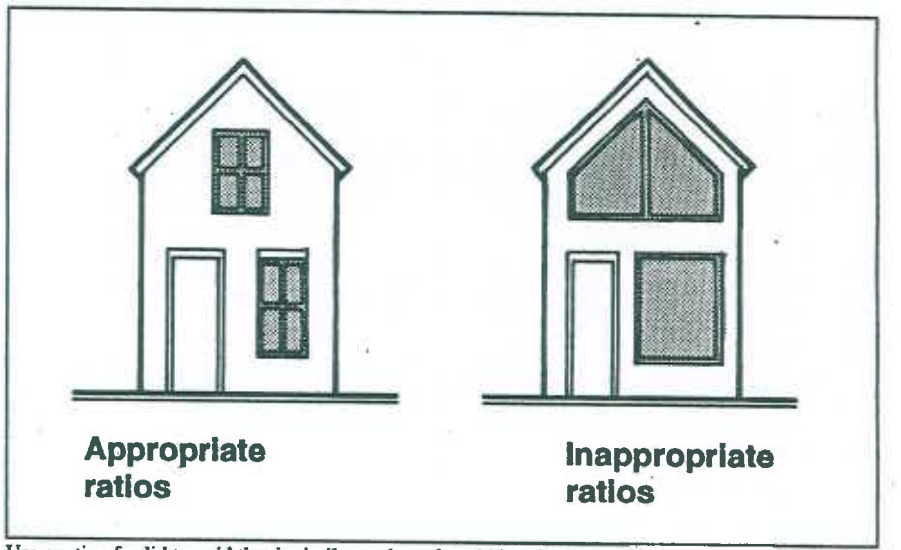
- Corrugated, true standing seam metal, wood and composition roofing are appropriate roof materials.
- Finishes should be matte. Unpainted metal roofs may not retain a shiny, glaring surface longer than one year after installation.

Guideline 13:

Preserve and maintain the use of indigenous stone foundation walls.

- Foundations should reflect the size, proportion and character of similar foundations in the neighborhood.
- Stone foundation walls, of running bond, are preferred for all new construction where exposed foundation walls occur.
- Exposed concrete foundation walls are discouraged for new construction.

These stone foundation walls are characteristic of historic structures in Central City and should be used in new construction where exposed foundations occur.



Use a ratio of solid to void that is similar to those found historically in the neighborhood.

Building Details

Guideline 14:

Windows and doors should be similar in character, proportion, scale and material to those of historic buildings in the neighborhood.

- These details strongly influence the compatibility of a building within its context.
- Oversized doors that would create a "grand entry" are also inappropriate.
- Most windows have a ratio of width to height of one to two and one-half. Other proportions may be considered, based upon historic reference.

Guideline 15:

Use a ratio of solid to void that is similar to those found historically in the neighborhood.

- Large expanses of glass on exterior façades, either vertical or horizontal, are generally inappropriate on commercial or residential buildings.

Guideline 16:

Use building components that are similar in size and shape to those found historically along the street.

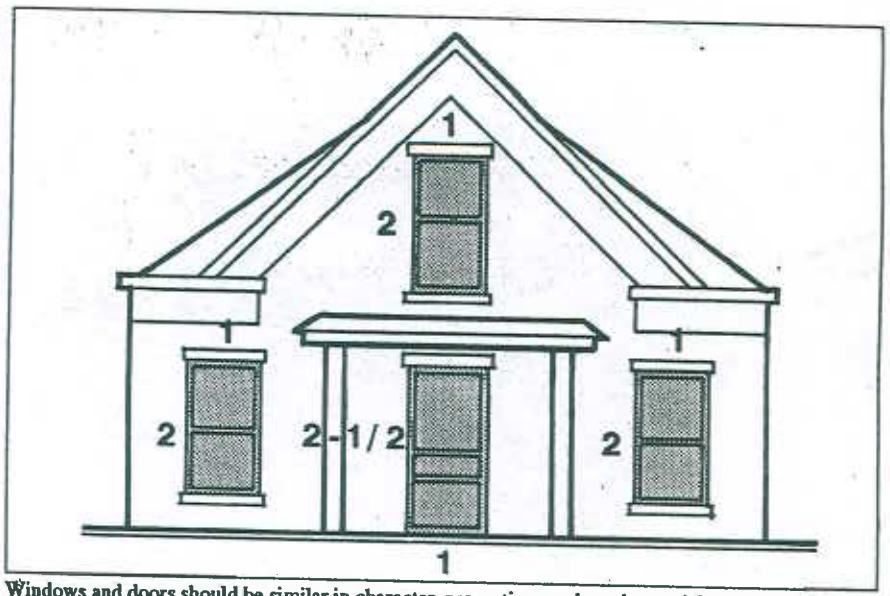
- These include windows, doors and porches.

In most residential neighborhoods, primary building entrances are defined by porches, which usually face the street. The use of porches to identify primary entrances should be continued.

Guideline 17:

Porches should be of a size and proportion similar to that seen historically in Central City and they should be compatible with the primary structure.

- Placement of a porch at the front entry (street entry) of a residence is encouraged.
- The scale of a porch should reflect the size and proportions of similar porches within the streetscape.
- Porches typically cover 1/3 to 1/2 of the front facade or cover the whole of the facade; they may extend 5 feet to 15 feet out from the face of the structure.



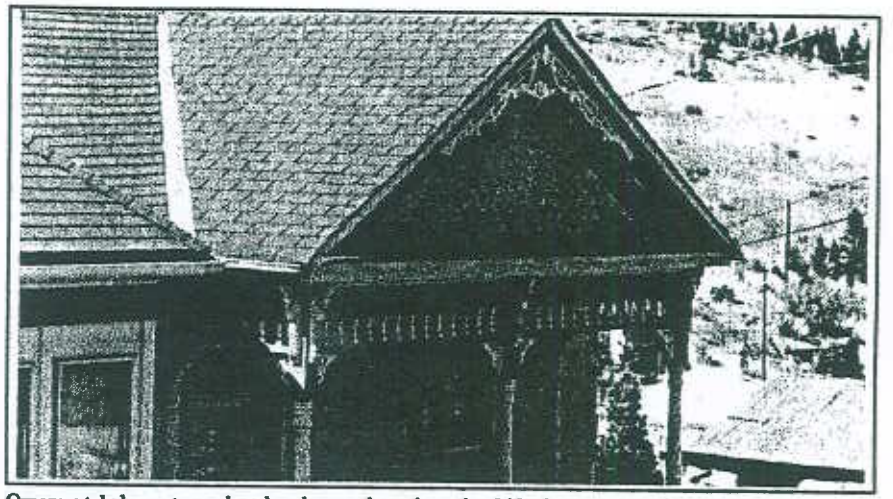
Windows and doors should be similar in character, proportion, scale and material to those of historic buildings in the neighborhood.

If ornamental details are used, they should appear to be functional in the same manner in which they originally occurred. Traditionally, decorative brackets were used to support overhanging cornices, for example. Today, when such details are applied, they should be used in similar ways.

Guideline 18:

Ornamental elements, such as brackets and porches, should be in scale with similar historic features.

- Avoid the use of thin, fake brackets and strap work applied to the surface of a building. These are inappropriate uses of these traditional details.
- Modest ornamental details may be considered but highly ornate decorative features that would compete with historic details are inappropriate.



Ornamental elements, such as brackets and porches, should be in scale with similar historic features.

Architectural Style

Styles that are compatible yet distinguishable from the original historic buildings may be considered, as long as they are generally compatible with historic styles of Central City. Designs that accurately convey historic styles and building types used in Central City may also be considered.

Guideline 19:

New buildings that can be interpreted as a product of the present, and not a false interpretation of the past may be considered.

- These designs must satisfactorily meet the general guidelines for compatibility.
- All new buildings should have the date of construction indicated on the façade.
- Designs that misuse the historic design vocabulary are especially inappropriate.
- Similarly, it would be inappropriate to use historic design details in ways that were never employed in the past.

These facades reflect the character of many historic buildings in Central City but, because of subtle variations in details, can be interpreted as being newer. Note that this is one building with individual facades that reflect the traditional building widths of Main Street.

Guideline 20:

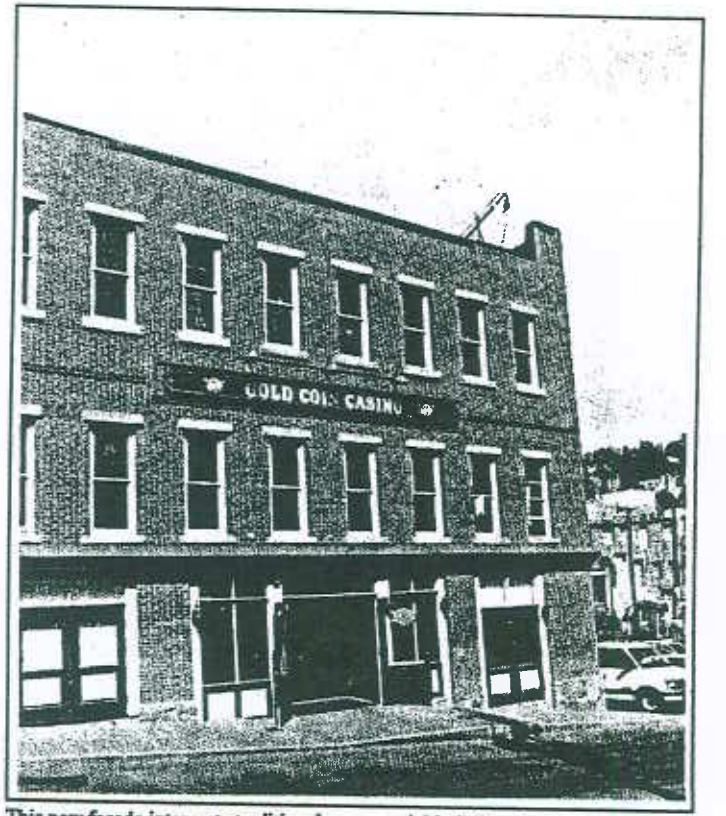
The duplication of historic styles may be considered. Accurate interpretations of styles that once were found in Central City may be considered if:

- The characteristic features of the style are correctly used, in terms of scale, location, materials, etc.
- The building site is located in a neighborhood where such a style may have occurred historically. Historic buildings in similar neighborhoods may be used as a reference.
- A marker is placed on the building indicating its date of construction.
- The design also satisfactorily meets the general guidelines for new construction.
- Different architectural styles may not be combined in a single facade unless historic reference can substantiate their use.
- Directly copying an existing building is inappropriate, however; rather new designs should creatively combine features of local historic styles.

Guideline 21:

Avoid designs that confuse the interpretation of the history of Central City.
Inappropriate styles include:

- Older styles that never appeared historically in Central City. These would suggest a false heritage for the community.
- Inaccurate interpretations of styles that were found historically in Central City. These could distort one's appreciation for the genuine historic buildings.
- Contemporary or modern styles that conflict with the general guidelines for new construction in terms of overall mass, scale, materials, etc. These would alter the visual continuity of the district.



This new facade interprets traditional commercial building features in a manner that is compatible with its surrounding context on Spring Street.

CHAPTER 3 LIGHTING INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Exterior Lighting: A goal for the City is to reduce the level of glare on the street, especially the light spill generated from the illumination of buildings. Lighting should not overwhelm the street or alter the perceived character of an historic building Architectural lighting to highlight historic architectural elements or special architectural ornamentation is allowable on a site-specific basis.

CHAPTER 3, GUIDELINE 24

- Use lighting to unify the building composition at night.
- Lighting may be used only on these exterior elements:
  - Building entrances
  - Signs
  - Architectural features or special architectural ornamentation
- Lighting should stay focused at the street level, to encourage a pedestrian-oriented environment.
- Do not use-extensive lighting on other facade elements or signs.
- Subtle architectural lighting of upper facade elements is allowed on a site-specific basis, provided low-wattage systems are used, no light trespass occurs, and that the installation causes minimal impact to the historic structure. Wiring and/or conduit must not be visible
- Use shielded, indirect light sources for all exterior lighting for signs.
- Fixtures must be concealed, or of a very simple design, or of a style that is appropriate to the period of the building.
- Lighting the entire building front, either with permanent spot lights or with permanent strings of lights, is inappropriate.
- Neon, fluorescent and other linear light sources are inappropriate for signs or building lighting.

Color

In order to maintain the historic quality of Central City, building colors should be similar to those historically found in the neighborhood.

Guideline 22:

Building colors should be similar to those used historically.

- Colors may be selected from color charts approved by the Historic Preservation Commission.
- Applicants may propose to use other colors, however these will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine their appropriateness in the specific context.

Guideline 23:

Color schemes should be coordinated for an entire building.

- Use color to establish a sense of unity for a building rather than fragment it visually.
- Avoid strongly contrasting colors that would disrupt a sense of unity.

Exterior Lighting

A goal for the city is to reduce the level of glare on the streets, especially the light spill generated from the illumination of buildings. Lighting should not overwhelm the street or alter the perceived character of an historic building.

Guideline 24:

Use lighting to unify the building composition at night.

- Lighting may be used only on these exterior elements:
  - Building entrances
  - Signs
- Lighting should stay focused at the street level. Do not use extensive lighting on other facade elements or signs.
- Use shielded, indirect light sources for all exterior lighting for signs.
- Fixtures must be concealed, or of a very simple design, or of a style that is appropriate to the period of the building.
- Lighting the entire building front, either with permanent spot lights or with permanent strings of small exposed lights, is inappropriate.
- Neon, fluorescent and other linear light sources are inappropriate for signs or building lighting.

This building demonstrates the use of shielded, indirect light for the lighting of the exterior sign.

Settlement Patterns

A sense of visual unity of a block or neighborhood is established where similar building features are frequently repeated. The uniform alignment of building fronts on Main Street is an example of a repeated feature, which, in that case, contributes to the visual unity of the commercial core. The orientation of a structure in a neighborhood is a strong visual element which creates and establishes a sense of "neighborhood" and must be maintained. These distinctive settlement patterns vary with each neighborhood and should be respected.

Guideline 25:

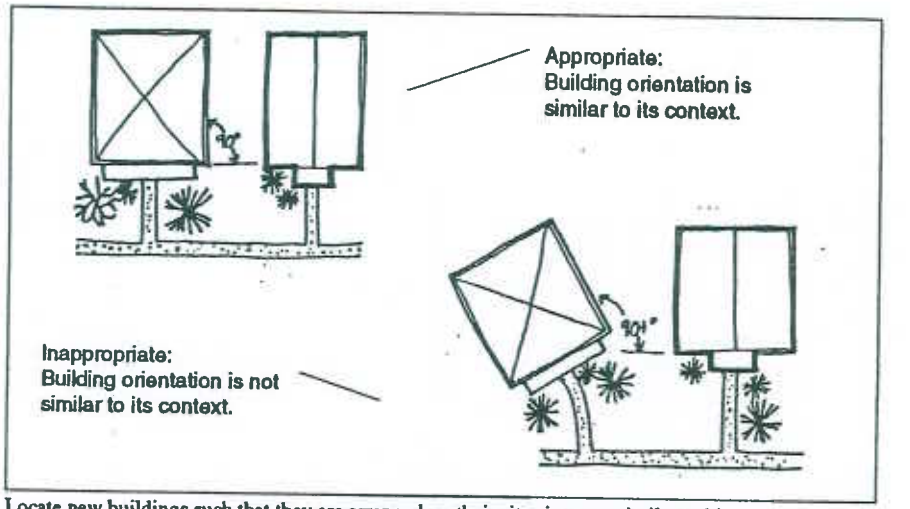
Respect historic settlement patterns.

- Locate new buildings so they are arranged on their sites similarly to historic buildings in the neighborhood.
- This includes consideration of building set-backs, building orientation and open space, all of which are addressed in more detail in other design guidelines that follow.
- An important characteristic is that buildings in residential areas were often sited on terraces or were partially excavated into hillsides. Specific conditions are discussed in the neighborhood guidelines.

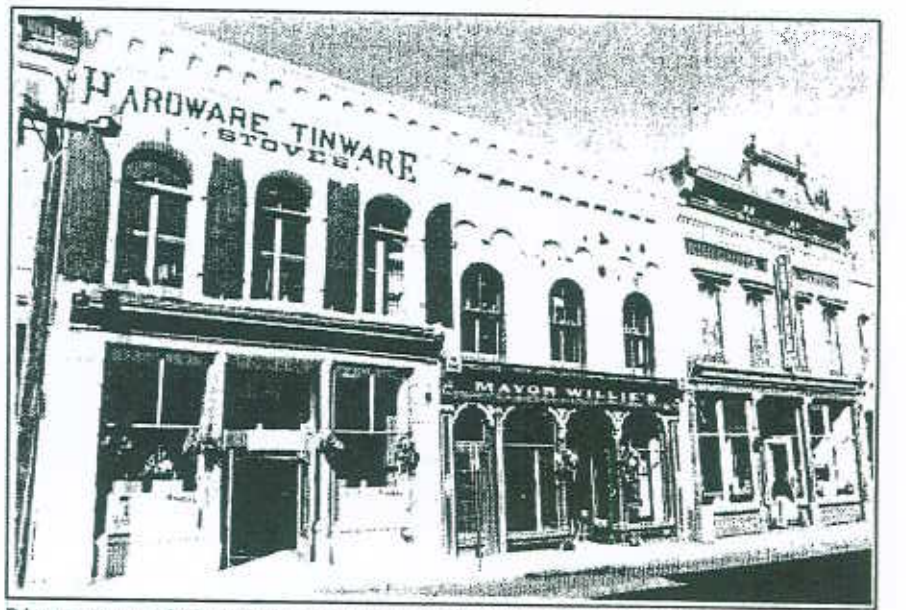
Guideline 26:

Buildings should be oriented in a manner that is similar to those typically found historically in the neighborhood and specifically on adjoining properties.

- In most cases, primary entrances were oriented to the street. This siting pattern should be maintained in new construction.
- Avoid facing main entrances toward the side yards.



Locate new buildings such that they are arranged on their sites in ways similar to historic buildings in the neighborhood. (Illustration: Community Services Collaborative)



Primary entrances for both commerical and residential structures in Central City were oriented to the street. This siting pattern should be maintained in new construction.

Guideline 27:

Buildings should be aligned in a pattern that is similar to those found historically in the neighborhood.

- Building set backs should be similar to those seen historically.
- In most neighborhoods, building set backs are relatively uniform and this feature should be respected in all new construction.

Guideline 28:

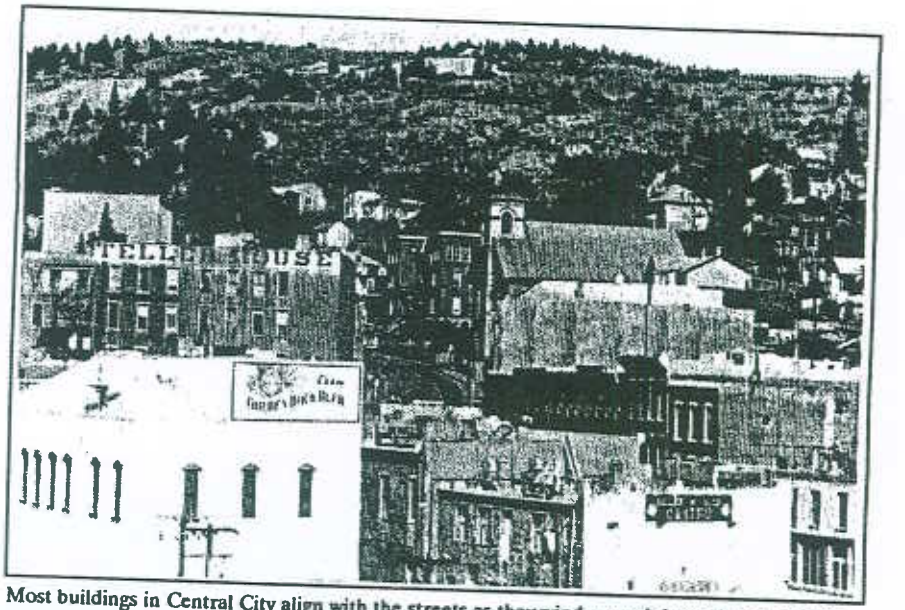
Provide side yard set backs in spacing patterns similar to those seen historically in the neighborhood.

- Spacing between buildings should be similar to that of adjacent structures to provide a sense of visual continuity.
- Locating secondary structures to the side and rear of primary buildings is appropriate (but not within required zoning set backs).

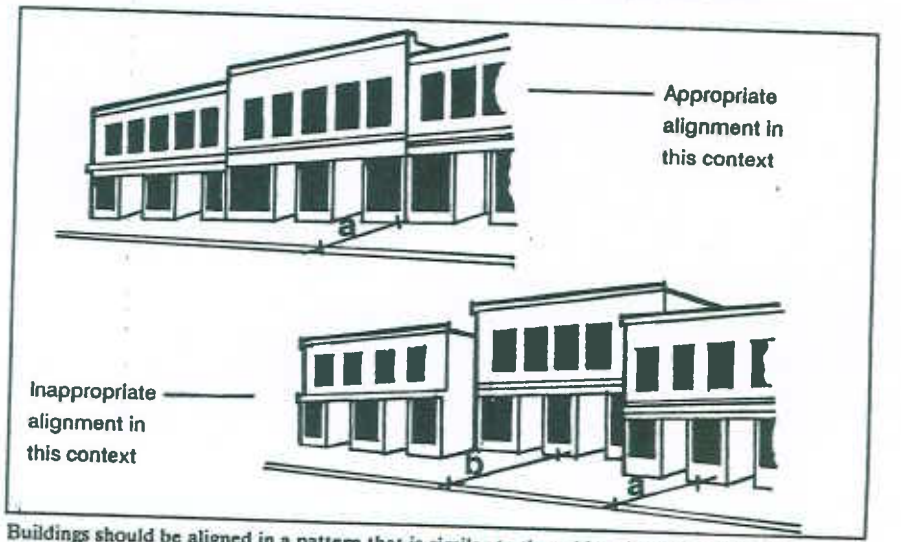
Guideline 29:

Preserve the historic street layout.

- Curvilinear streets, which follow site contours and "sloped grids" that were laid against a hillside, were a part of the City's heritage. New streets, extensions to existing streets, and access drives should maintain a curving quality, repeating the patterns established by existing streets.
- This topographically-shaped street pattern should be maintained throughout the City. Closing streets or alleys and aggregating properties into larger developments would also diminish the perception of the street pattern.
- Any new streets, extensions of existing streets, or access drives that would run directly up steep hills are discouraged. Streets running directly up hills are difficult to maintain, run-off from such streets creates erosion and access in the winter is difficult.



Most buildings in Central City align with the streets as they wind up and down the hills. This produces an organic and visually unique site condition that should be maintained.



Buildings should be aligned in a pattern that is similar to those historically found in the neighborhood. Provide side yard set backs in spacing patterns similar to those seen historically in the neighborhood.

Guideline 30:

Respect the natural setting of building sites.

- Avoid damage to natural resources on site, including significant rock formations and mature trees.
- Preserve existing trees in their original location.
- Work with the existing topography rather than radically reshaping it, since the topography is a part of the historic character.

Guideline 31:

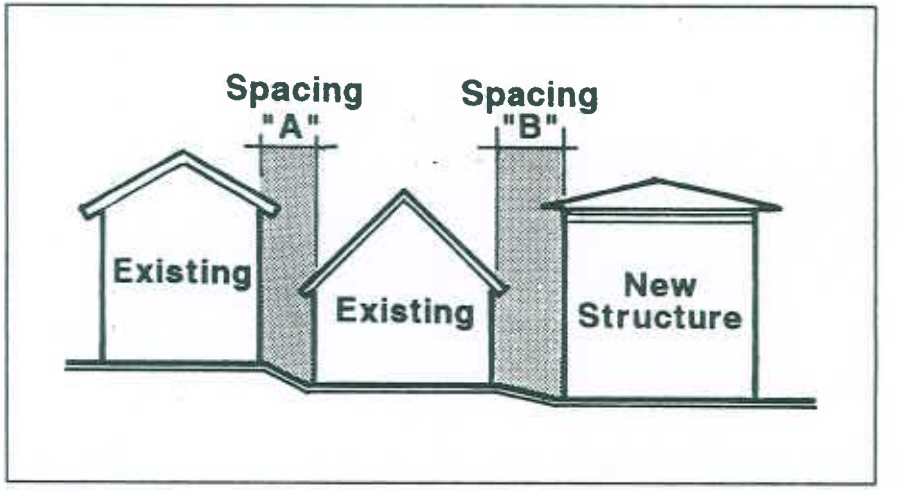
Mine waste dumps are historic features in Central City and should be preserved and maintained where feasible.

- Hazardous conditions may require remedial attention in some cases.

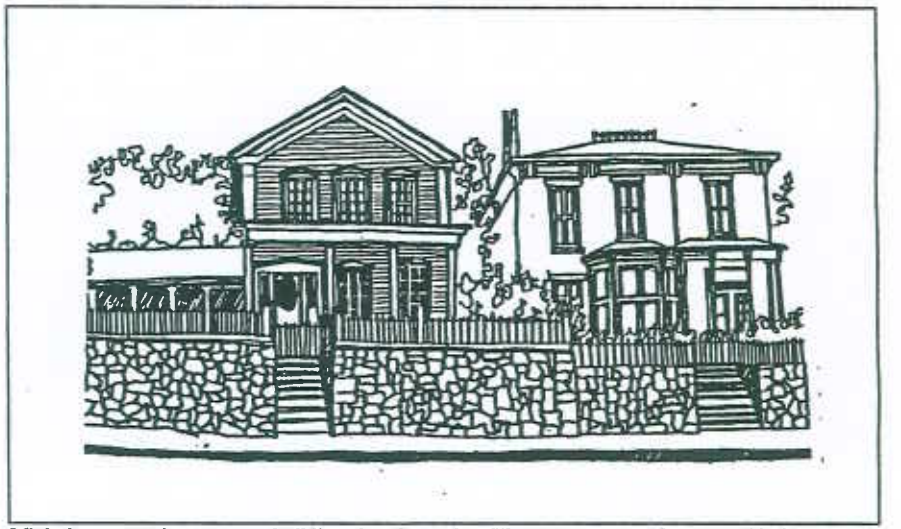
Guideline 32:

Use site improvement techniques that are similar to those used historically.

- Fill to create terraced areas and hold them with stone retaining walls, where feasible. Retain the perceived natural slope of the site in the development.



Provide side yard set backs in spacing patterns similar to those seen historically in the neighborhood.



Minimize excavation to create building sites, but rather fill to create terraced areas and hold them with stone retaining walls. (Illustration: Community Services Collaborative)

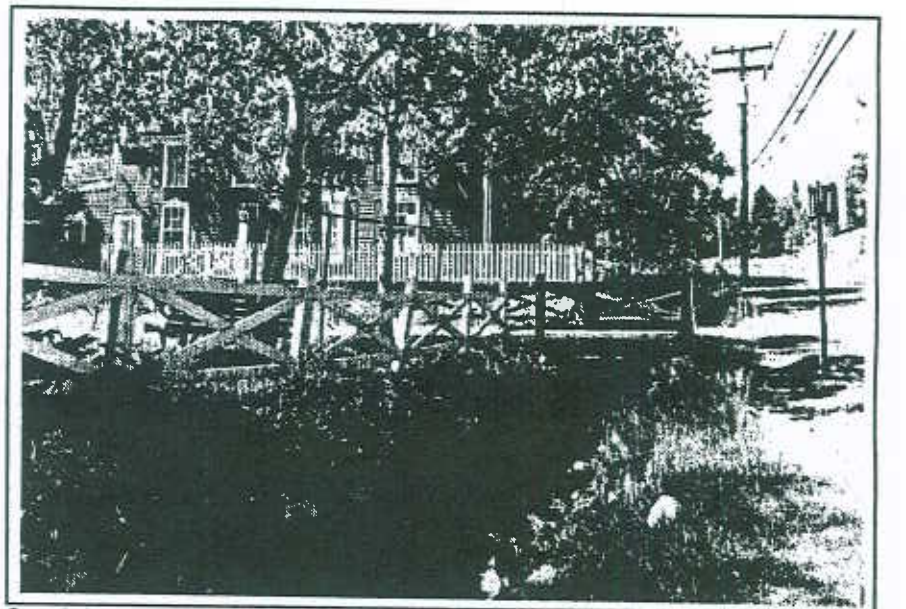
Historic Drainages

Historically, streams helped shape the settlement patterns of Central City. Some of these were more tightly "channeled" than they are now, while others have always flowed in open drainageways. Retaining these features is important in order to interpret how the community developed.

Guideline 33:

Drainageways should reflect their historic character in the neighborhood.

- Eureka Gulch will remain an open drainage to the west of the Commercial Core.
- Portions of Gregory Gulch may be bridged, flumed or channeled where historic precedent can be demonstrated (assuming such actions are allowed by relevant state and federal agencies).
- In cases where portions were flumed, bridged or channeled, the overall percentage distribution of these features may not exceed that seen historically in the neighborhood.
- Pedestrian bridges may be constructed over drainages at ground level.
- Enclosed, inhabited structures may not be located over historic drainages.
- Other secondary drainages may not be piped or covered where historically they were open.



Open drainageways contribute to the historic character of Central City and should be protected and maintained.

Guideline 34:

Developing historic drainages as recreational and aesthetic amenities is encouraged.

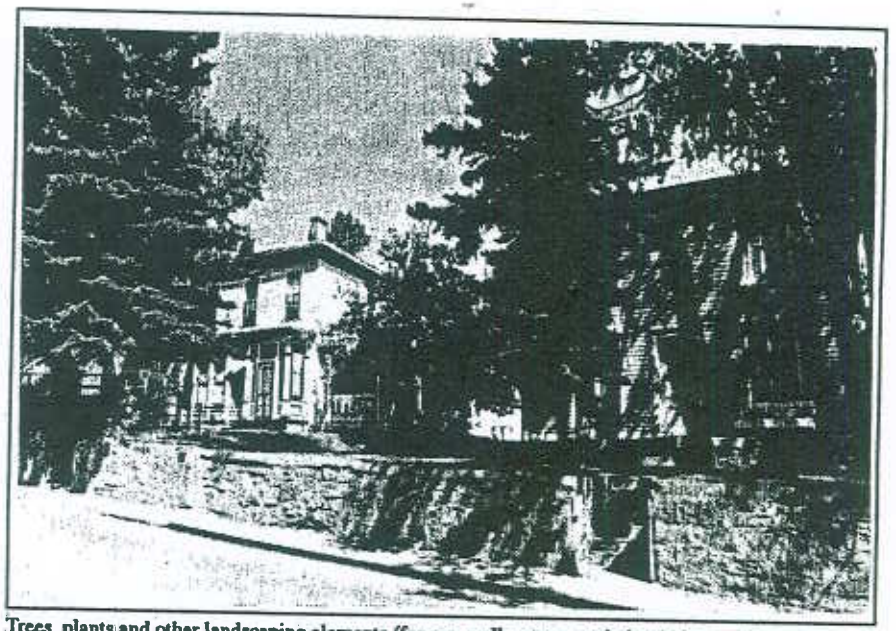
- Constructing stone retaining walls and wood cribbing along creek edges will be considered.
- Establishing riparian vegetation is encouraged.
- Providing pedestrian ways, overlooks and plazas that are oriented to historic waterways is encouraged where the gulch channel is restored.

Landscape Design

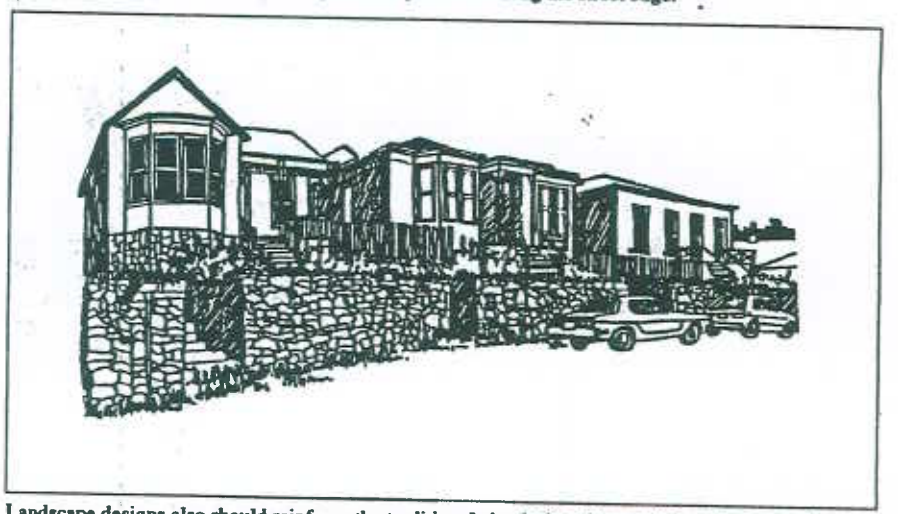
Native plant materials significantly contribute to the sense of the "natural setting" that is part of the heritage of the historic district. Where buildings are set back from the sidewalk, they typically have yards, walks, fences and plant materials that all contribute to the sense of open space in the community. This characteristic should be maintained because it plays an important role in establishing a context for the historic buildings.

Landscape elements, such as fences, steps, walls, wooden cribbing and walks, should reflect the historic neighborhood context and should provide a sense of visual continuity for the streetscape.

Landscape designs should also reinforce the traditional site design characteristics that emerged in the early years of Central City. A sense of large open yards, the use of local materials and similar placement of trees all contributed to a sense of visual continuity in the neighborhoods. Developing new landscape designs that reinforce these traditional relationships is encouraged.



Trees, plants and other landscaping elements (fences, walls, steps, etc.) should be used to create continuity along the block, especially in front yards and along the street edge.



Landscape designs also should reinforce the traditional site design characteristics that emerged in the early years of Central City. (Illustration: Community Services Collaborative)

Guideline 35:

Maintain established native plantings on site.

- Established trees should be preserved on site, where feasible.
- Protect established vegetation during construction to avoid damage.
- Replace damaged, aged or diseased trees.
- If trees must be removed as part of a development, replace them with native species of a scale large enough to have a visual impact in the early years of the project.

Guideline 36:

Plantings should reflect the mountain character of Central City and provide a sense of continuity with the surrounding hillsides.

- The use of indigenous plant materials, such as cottonless cottonwoods, aspens, evergreens, which are noted for their durability and survival in mountain climates, is encouraged. Native grasses and natural ground covers are also recommended.
- The arrangement of these landscape materials should be informal in order to reflect the natural vegetation patterns of the neighborhood.

Guideline 37:

Maintain the historical character of yards, particularly in front and side yards visible from the street.

- Front yards should consist predominantly of plant materials that are indigenous to Central City. These include grass, shrubs, trees, etc.
- Hard surfaces, such as asphalt drives, are to be avoided. Minimize the amount of hard surfaces in front yards where feasible.
- To the greatest extent possible, rear and side yards should be planted with indigenous grass, shrubs and trees.

During mining days, the hillsides and gulches were almost totally cleared of trees. The trees were used for construction and for shoring up mine tunnels. Many hillsides remain relatively barren. Areas disturbed by construction should be reforested (though sparingly) to help buffer weather and to stabilize slopes.

Guideline 38:

Re-vegetate all areas disturbed by new construction.

- Provide slopes at an angle that can sustain vegetation.

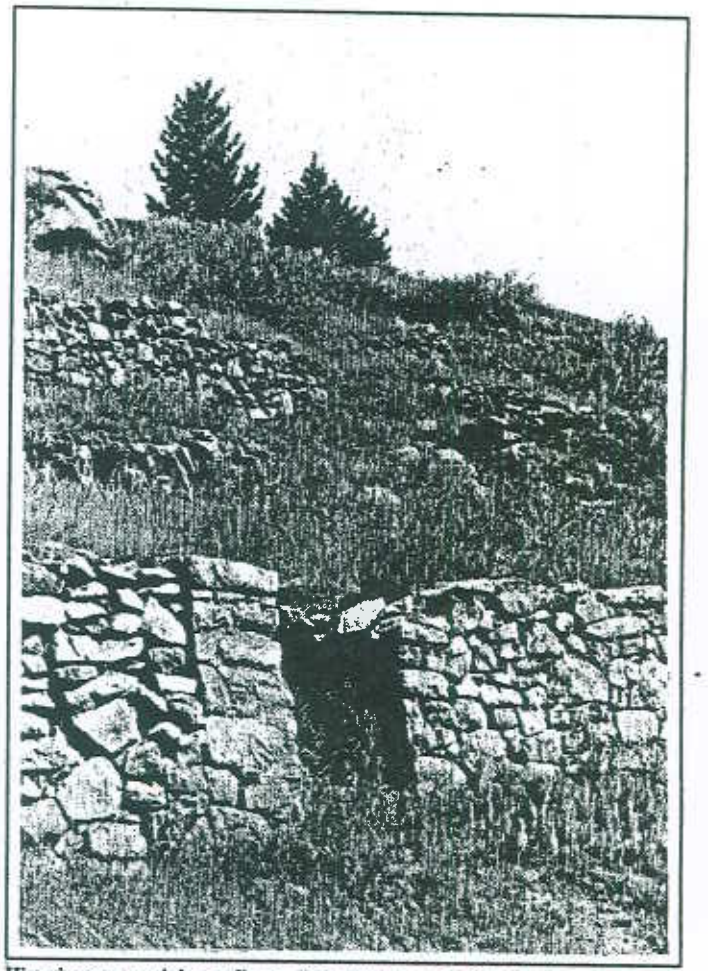
Stone Walls

One of the most distinctive and characteristic elements of Central City is the use of dry-laid, native stone retaining walls that line the hillside streets. These were used to retain areas of fill that established level building sites in the steep terrain. Low fences frequently run along the top of these retaining walls, and are usually of an open character, such as wood pickets or iron. Steps cut through the retaining walls provide access to structures. All significant historic stone walls and fences should be preserved and new ones should be visually compatible with these elements. (Note that the following guidelines apply to site retaining walls, as opposed to building foundation walls.)

Guideline 39:

All historically significant stone retaining walls should be strictly maintained as key elements of visual continuity throughout Central City.

- Stone walls that retain their historic integrity as determined by HPC may not be removed or relocated.
- In developing a rehabilitation plan for historic stone walls, first determine the type of construction to assure that repairs will retain the integrity of the wall.
- Factors considered in evaluating the integrity of a stone wall should include the character of the stones, the mortar pattern (or dry stack pattern), the function and location of the wall.
- If it is determined by the Historic Preservation Commission that older walls have lost their historic integrity and they may be demolished, an equal amount of new stone walls should be built on the site. The Commission will consider evaluations by qualified engineers in making its determinations.



Historic stone retaining walls are distinctive elements in the landscape around Central City and should be respected and maintained.

Guideline 40:

New retaining walls along fronts of properties should be of stone construction, similar to those found historically.

- Use of native stone for retaining walls is encouraged along streets throughout the city.
- They should align with others in the neighborhood.
- Genuine dry stack walls are preferred.
- At a minimum, stone should be laid to resemble dry-stack walls.
- Wood cribbing may be used for rear retaining walls in some neighborhoods where it was found historically.

Guideline 41:

The terraced character of the hillsides should be maintained as an important visual element in Central City.

- In residential areas, terracing occurs at the edge of the street, with the retaining wall typically defining this edge. Steps are cut into the wall leading to an elevated front yard and the residence beyond.
- Native stone/rubble rock walls are encouraged along the streets when new construction occurs on sloping lots.
- The pattern of terracing should be consistent with that of the neighborhood to ensure a sense of visual continuity with the rest of the streetscape.

Guideline 42:

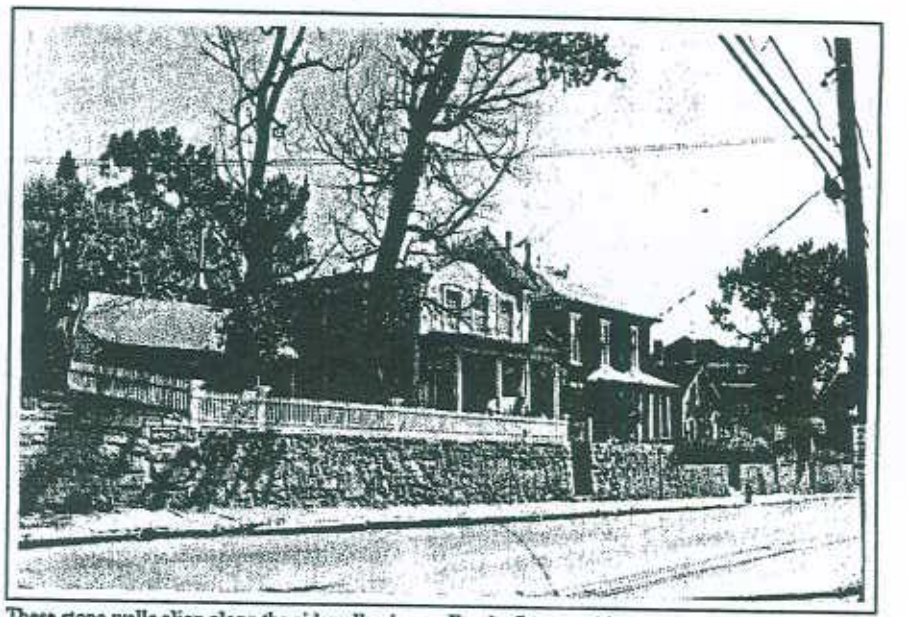
Fences that have an open character are encouraged.

- Fences may be of wooden pickets or metal.
- If they are to be located on top of a retaining wall, they should be no taller than those seen historically, in a similar context.

Guideline 43:

Maintain a clear separation between the sidewalk and the site.

- Yard edges were typically defined with a wall or fence in residential areas.
- When front yards separate the sidewalk from building facades, these should be maintained and incorporated into the site design.
- Developing a paved patio that extends forward from a set-back facade to the sidewalk and that would be visible from the street is therefore inappropriate in a residential context because it blurs this distinction between the sidewalk and the site.



These stone walls align along the sidewalk edge on Eureka Street and incorporate a variety of fences on top. They provide a clear separation between the sidewalk and the site. New retaining walls along fronts of properties should be of stone construction, similar to those found historically.

Guideline 44:

Paving materials used in landscape design should be similar to those used historically.

- Rectangular stone paving blocks are appropriate for use in court yards.
- Flagstone, cut in rectangular shapes (not random) is also appropriate.
- Concrete and colored concrete may also be considered.
- Brick and cast modular pavers are not appropriate.

Guideline 45:

Use landscape elements to define circulation patterns and separate uses.

- Use landscape buffers to separate conflicting uses and to define pedestrian paths.
- Consider using border plantings, fences, a change in paving material, and a change in elevation to distinguish different areas. In so doing, however, these elements should be compatible with the historic character of the neighborhood.

Guideline 46:

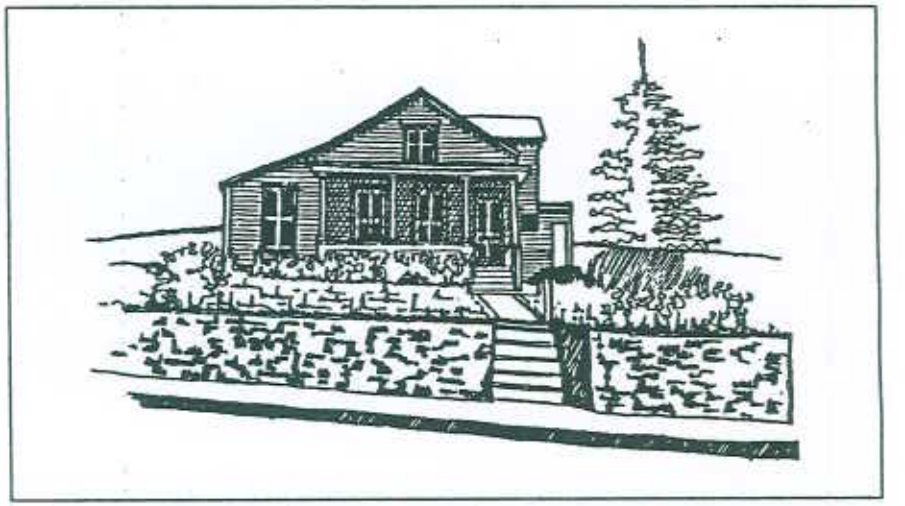
Landscape elements, such as walkways and steps, leading from the street to the entrance of a residence, should be consistent with those in the neighborhood.

- Wood plank walkways and wooden treads and risers are common elements in Central City and may be considered for private locations where other codes and regulations permit.
- Native stone, flagstone, concrete or gravel and dirt paving are also appropriate for residential walks and decks.
- Asphalt walks are not appropriate.

Guideline 47:

Use landscape improvements to buffer the effects of weather on individual sites.

- Effective use of landscaping can actually reduce a building's winter heat loss by blocking the wind while still allowing the building to be warmed by the sun.
- Use landscaping to shade the building from summer sun.
- Use deciduous trees that will provide shade in summer but allow sun exposure during winter months.
- Use evergreen plantings to establish wind breaks.

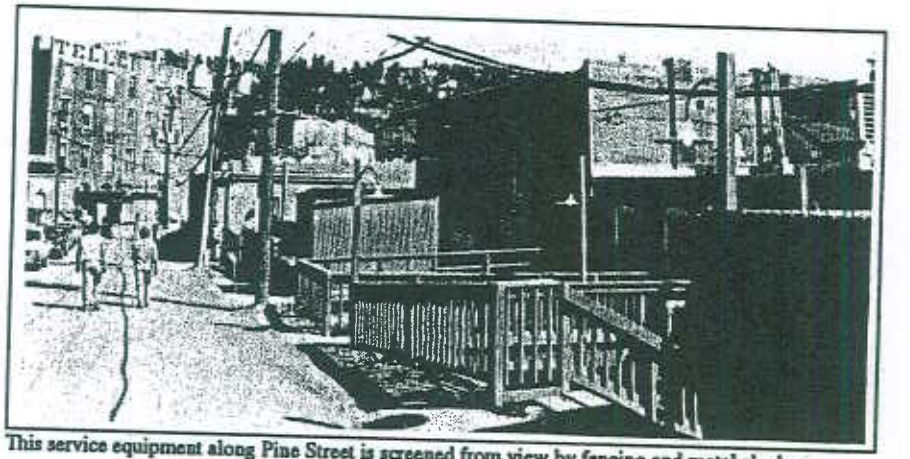


Landscape elements, such as walkways and steps, that lead from the street to the entrance of a residence, should be consistent with those in the neighborhood. (Illustration: Community Services Collaborative)

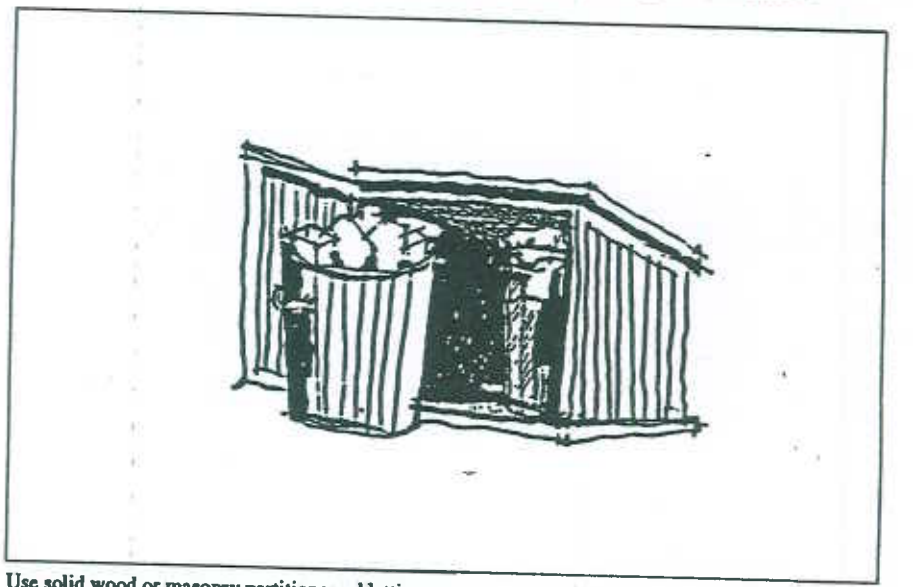
Guideline 48:

Screen all ground-mounted service equipment and trash containers.

- Use solid wood or masonry partitions and lattice screens, or consider hedges to screen trash areas, depending upon the neighborhood context.
- Keep electrical service boxes and conduits in good repair and painted to match background wall colors.



This service equipment along Pine Street is screened from view by fencing and metal sheds.



Use solid wood or masonry partitions and lattice screens, or consider hedges to screen trash areas, depending upon the neighborhood context.

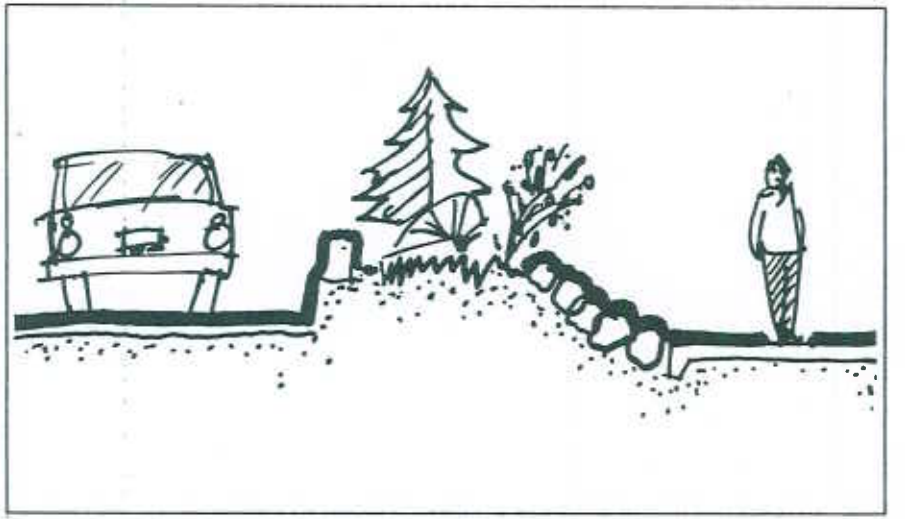
Parking Facilities

Automobiles are a more recent arrival in the historic district and their presence can alter the perception of the character of an individual block or neighborhood. Their visual impact should be minimized.

Guideline 49:

Screen parking areas from view in residential areas.

- Parking areas should be placed to the rear and/or screened with landscaping.
- Provide buffers to the edges of parking lots to enhance the pedestrian character of the street by screening cars and providing visually interesting landscaping near walkways. Appropriate screens may include plant beds, stone walls and fences. (Note that native plant materials that can tolerate snow storage impacts should be used.)
- Use plant materials that are large enough in size to have an appreciable impact.

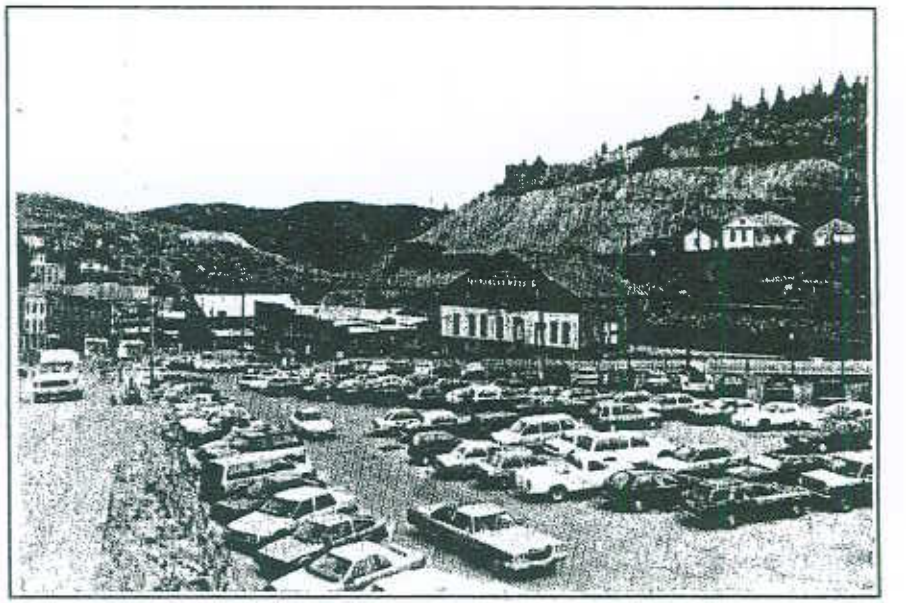


Provide buffers to the edges of parking lots to enhance the pedestrian character of the street

Guideline 50:

Maintain adequate parking without disrupting the visual continuity of the neighborhood.

- Off-street parking spaces should not be provided at the expense of stone retaining walls or significant loss of front yard area (20% maximum).
- Garages are to be built as secondary structures to the primary residence. These may have minor connections.
- In large developments, parking may be located below grade.



Parking lots should be landscaped appropriately to the area.

Guideline 51:

Parking lots should be landscaped appropriately to the area.

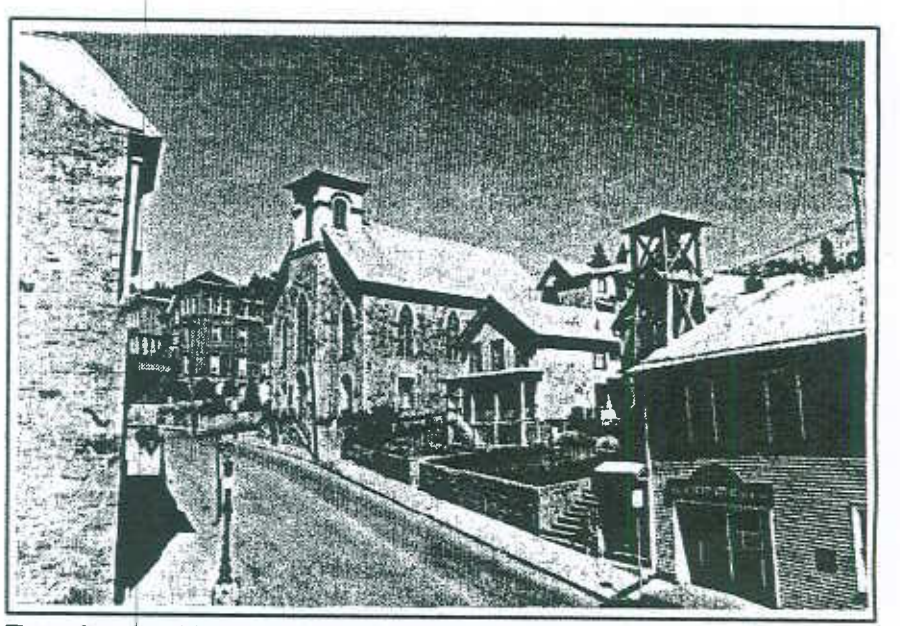
Views

The scenic setting of Central City is one of its greatest assets. Views to the mountains, Gregory Gulch, and historic structures all contribute to the unique character of the town that everyone experiences. All development projects should be planned so they reinforce these views. Building designs and landscape plans should be designed to frame important views.

Although most projects impacting views are likely to be proposed by the private sector, public agencies may also engage in work efforts that impact important view corridors. Public works projects planned within the historic district, such as construction of mini-parks, landscaping of parking lots, or construction of new civic buildings (including parking structures), should be reviewed to consider their impacts on view corridors leading to community focal points.

View preservation is determined from major public view points only. These may be view points that have been used historically for photographic documentation of the city, or that are along major pedestrian circulation corridors.

More detailed design guidelines for views are provided in the neighborhood design guidelines.



The scenic setting of Central City is one of its greatest assets. Views to the mountains, Gregory Gulch, and historic structures all contribute to the unique character of the town that everyone experiences. All development projects should be planned so they reinforce these views. The view west along Eureka Street to the St. James Methodist Church is an example of one that should be respected.

Guideline 52:

Protect significant views of natural resources that serve as major landmarks.

- The mountain ridges are important visual assets of the Central City setting and therefore new development should not obstruct these views.
- Applicants should meet with city staff to determine if significant view corridors may be impacted by a potential project.

Guideline 53:

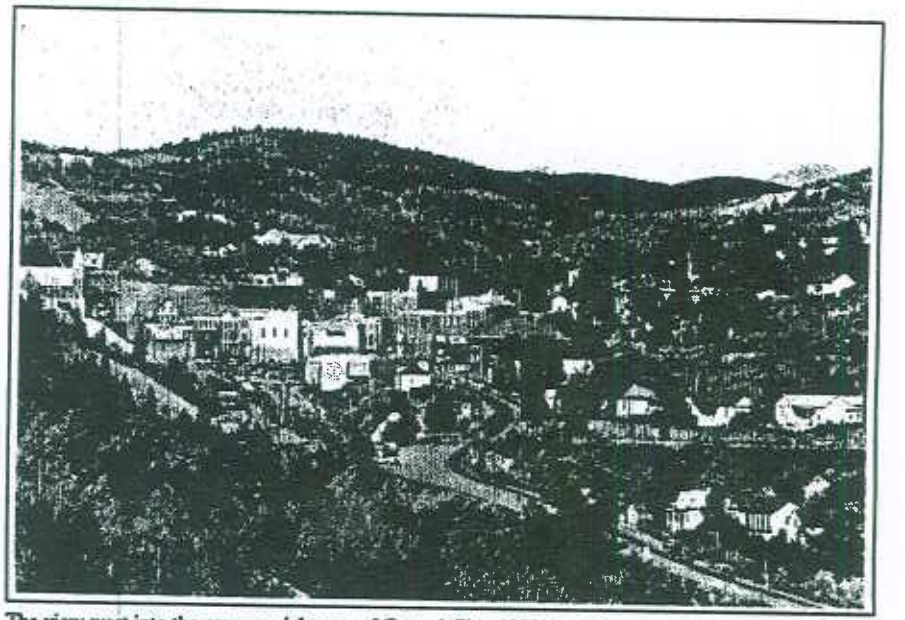
Protect significant views to landmarks and community focal points.

- Views from the public way of major historic buildings, such as those designated as Victorian Landmarks, should not be blocked from important public view corridors.

Guideline 54:

Minimize negative visual impacts during construction.

- Screen construction sites when they will negatively impact scenic views for more than one building season.



The view west into the commercial areas of Central City, 1992. Applicants should meet with city staff to determine if significant view corridors may be impacted by a potential project.

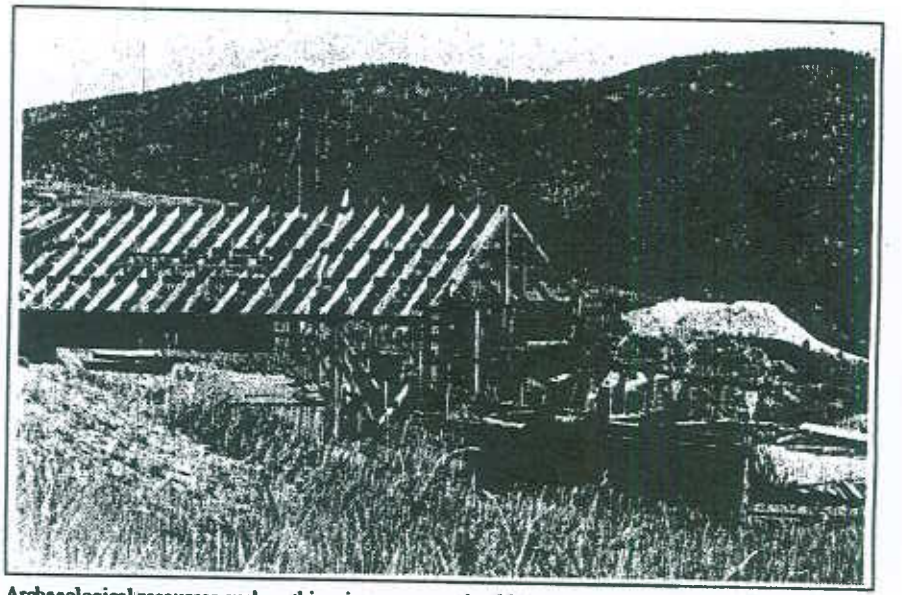
Archaeological Resources

Guideline 55:

Consider the impact on historic archaeological resources.

- Document any resources that may be affected and place this information on file with the City.
- Where practical, avoid impacting archaeological resources. These may include mine waste dumps, retaining walls, and building foundations.

Note: This concludes the General Guidelines for all construction projects in Central City. In addition to these general design guidelines, also see the guidelines for the appropriate neighborhood that follow in this document.



Archaeological resources such as this mine structure should not be negatively affected by rehabilitation or new construction.

NEW GUIDELINE, CHAPTER 3, GUIDELINE 56

- To enable emergency respondents to quickly locate buildings by their addresses.
- For this reason, HPC encourages all owners of homes and businesses to display addresses (house numbers) in a way that they are clearly visible from the street.
- At the same time, these numbers must not be gaudy or so prominent that they distract from the architectural features of the structures they identify. (After all, house numbers were not used the first 115 years of Central City's history.)
- All existing house numbers are grandfathered in.
- Exceptions to these provisions may be considered by HPC.
- Building owners wishing to install plaques must get approval from HPC
- Painting numbers directly on the structure is not allowed.
- Neither numbers nor background can be reflective material.
- Materials: All wood, metal, plastic, or ceramic numerals are permitted.
- Colors: Black, white, brass, gold, or a color matching the trim of the structure all all permitted as long as the color that is chosen contrasts with its background.
- Size permitted: Up to four inches in height
- Content: Numerals of the address only, not spelled out. Do not include the name of the street. Not permitted: "Three thirty-four East High Street" No Roman numerals.
- Arrangement: Numbers must be neatly arranged in a row horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.
- Placement: Numbers may be placed on the structure, garage, gate, fence, etc. Anyplace is permissible as long as it clearly identifies the address of the property from the street.
- Illumination: Lighted numbers are not permitted. Neon is not permitted. Numbers may be illuminated only by porch lights, path lights, and the like, but need not be illuminated. (All emergency vehicles are equipped with spotlights).