

City of Fort Lauderdale Historic Preservation Design Guidelines

SITE ELEMENTS



Landscape elements should complement a building's architectural style. In this example, planting beds are located along the house's foundation and the narrow palm tree trunks allow the historic home to remain visible from the public sidewalk. Many of the plants are native to the area requiring less water and chemicals for their upkeep.

PURPOSE

These *Guidelines* were prepared to assist property owners with information when considering the alteration or installation of site elements. It is not intended that these *Guidelines* should replace consultation with qualified landscape architects, architects, contractors, the Historic Preservation Board (HPB), City Staff and applicable ordinances.

These *Guidelines* were developed in conjunction with the City of Fort Lauderdale's Historic Preservation Board (HPB) and the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD). Please review this information during the early stages of planning your project. Familiarity with this material can assist in moving a project quickly through the approval process, saving applicants both time and money.

The DSD Staff is available to provide informal informational meetings with potential applicants who are considering improvements to their properties.

Additional *Guidelines* addressing other historic building topics are available at City Hall and on the City's website at www.fortlauderdale.gov. For more information, to clarify whether a proposed project requires HPB review, or to obtain permit applications, please call the DSD at (954) 828-3266.

FORT LAUDERDALE'S SITE ELEMENTS

Site elements frame the architecture along a streetscape. In some areas, the established components such as sidewalks, street trees, walls, fences, walkways and driveways provide a consistent setting that is unique to a neighborhood.

When considering alterations to a site, property owners are encouraged to develop an understanding of the environmental characteristics of their immediate surroundings and allow that understanding to direct their design. When considering alterations to a historic site, the following should be considered:

Encouraged:

- Keeping views of historic buildings open to street
- Front yard development with traditional, simple arrangements, similar to neighboring properties

Discouraged:

- ✗ Modern amenities in front and side yards in view from public roadways
- ✗ Dense foliage, walls, fences or other screening blocking views to historic buildings from the public way

It should be noted that the only planting subject to Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) review are those required for screening of non-contributing site elements such as air conditioner equipment and generators. However, property owners are encouraged to select plants that are native to the region to minimize the use of water and chemicals in their upkeep.

WALLS, FENCES & GATES

Walls, fences and gates are important elements of the overall character of a neighborhood. They:

- Identify boundaries, provide privacy and security
- Are often a major element of a streetscape – separating public from private property
- Are often related to a building's design



Most landscape walls in Fort Lauderdale are stuccoed, with the color and texture generally complementing the principal historic building.

WALLS

Landscape walls are typically constructed of masonry or concrete, and often include a stucco finish. In some cases, landscape walls are constructed of decorative, patterned block, with openings to allow the passage of light and air.

The construction of walls that visually block primary building façades from the public right of way, particularly at historically important buildings, is discouraged. It is recommended that walls in front yards be limited to 36" in height. In addition, the construction of walls with plain concrete block is discouraged; however, decorative concrete block and stuccoed walls are an acceptable alternative if stylistically appropriate for the property.



Low wood picket fences are generally appropriate for wood-framed homes.

FENCES

Wood is a traditional material for fences in the City of Fort Lauderdale, with some fences being made from metal. Traditional fencing types not only marked the boundaries of a specific space, but also allowed visual access to and from the historic structures located on a property from the roadway. Similar to walls, fences in front yards should be limited to 36" in height, and preferably picket-style that is at least 30% open.



A simple wood gate provides access through the stuccoed wall.

GATES

Pedestrian gate, traditionally along a walkway, are generally 3 to 3½ feet wide. Gates for residential vehicular access are generally approximately 10 feet wide. When installed with a fence, gates tend to be of the same material and similar design as the fence, although potentially more elaborate. When installed within a wall, they are generally flanked by gate posts, and can be either wood or metal.

Encouraged:

- Use of traditional materials for walls, fences, gates and other boundary markers in an appropriate manner
- Maintain building views open to the surrounding public streets and sidewalks
- Install fence posts towards the interior of a property
- Regular maintenance and upkeep to fences

Discouraged:

- ✗ Block views to historic buildings and settings with solid walls, or dense fencing materials or planting
- ✗ Use of non-traditional fencing materials such as vinyl
- ✗ Chain link fences



Vinyl fencing is discouraged, as is tall solid fencing, particularly in the front yard.

MAINTAINING WALLS, FENCES & GATES

Similar to building walls, landscape walls, fences and gates, require regular maintenance. Similar to wood on buildings, wood fences require regular maintenance. Refer to the *Guidelines for Exterior Woodwork & Cladding* and *Guidelines for Masonry, Stucco & Concrete* for additional information.



A variety of materials can be used for walkways including stone. The stone paving in this example is a local limestone known as oolite or keystone.

PAVING

Paving, which includes sidewalks, walkways, patios and driveways, has changed significantly with the development of new materials. Historically, paving could be as simple as crushed shells or hard materials, such as brick or stone, laid in simple or ornamental patterns. Materials popularized in the 20th century include concrete and asphalt, and more recently, cast concrete pavers, often colored and shaped to resemble brick.

In an effort to retain the quality of the City’s historic properties and Districts, the retention and maintenance of existing historic paving materials is encouraged. The City also encourages minimizing new paving and impervious paving whenever possible to maximize storm water absorption.

Since the character and context of every property is unique, each application for changes in paving location and material is taken on a case by case basis.

Required for Review:

- Detailed, dimensioned site plans indicating the size and location of all proposed paving changes

Encouraged:

- Retain, repair and maintain historic paving materials
- Minimize the amount of paving on a site
- Install more permeable small scale paving materials, such as gravel or exposed aggregate paving instead of poured concrete or asphalt
- Simple, steel-troweled concrete finish – design and color of stamped concrete is subject to HPB review
- Narrow parking strips instead of driveways
- Patios instead of raised decks

Discouraged:

- × Removal of historic paving materials
- × Parking areas in the front yards of residences
- × Asphalt at walkways

LIGHTING

Outdoor lighting is an amenity of modern life. For a historic house, outdoor lighting should highlight the architecture and be of a style appropriate for the historic building. A wide range of wall-mounted or free-standing, replica historic lighting is available to complement a variety of historic properties and their lighting needs.

Residential lighting should be installed to illuminate pathways and access routes, limiting the spillage onto adjacent properties and the public way. Generally lighting on one property should not extend onto the neighboring lots or into the night sky. To minimize light spillage, many lights are available that cast light downward where it is needed to illuminate walking surfaces. In addition, existing lights can often be fitted with hoods or shields to direct light downwards.

If security lighting is desired, it is generally best when it is located as discretely as possible, generally limited to side and rear elevations. The number of security lights should be limited, and they should be activated by motion sensors whenever possible.

Encouraged:

- Unobtrusive lighting of historic properties that limits light spillage onto neighboring properties and into the night sky
- Lighting fixtures that complement the architectural style

Discouraged:

- × Obtrusive lighting of historic properties that illuminates neighboring properties
- × Lighting fixtures that are not stylistically appropriate on historic buildings
- × Highly visible security lighting
- × Security lighting that is not activated by motion sensors

ZONING REQUIREMENTS

The Zoning Ordinance dictates the amount of paving permitted on a lot as well as illumination levels at properties. Please contact the Department of Sustainable Development at (954) 828-3266 to review allowable paving and lighting at your parcel.

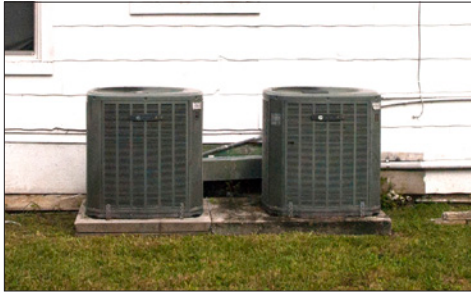
SIDEWALKS

Property owners are required to maintain sidewalks, particularly historic sidewalk materials. If sidewalks require replacement, replacement with a compatible material is recommended.

The Public Works Department at (954) 828-5000 for additional information regarding sidewalk maintenance requirements.

LANDSCAPE FEATURES & PLAY EQUIPMENT

Landscape features, such as pergolas and fountains; as well as play equipment such as jungle gyms, swimming pools, Jacuzzis and tennis courts can all add to our outdoor enjoyment of our properties. Similar to ground mounted equipment, these are all examples of modern alterations that can affect the historic integrity of a site and its surroundings. Property owners are encouraged to locate landscape features and play equipment in a rear yard to minimize their visibility.



Equipment such as air handling units should be screened from public view to the greatest extent possible.

GROUND-MOUNTED EQUIPMENT

Ground-mounted equipment, which includes air conditioning condensers, generators, ground-mounted solar collectors, trash dumpsters, and satellite dishes are all examples of modern mechanical equipment that can affect the historic integrity of a site and its surroundings. Property owners should locate ground-mounted equipment in a rear yard, or when this is not possible, in a side yard as far back from the front of the building as possible to minimize visibility.

SMALL STRUCTURES

Small structures can be functional and provide enjoyment for property owners. They are generally less than 100 square feet in size, include tool or garden sheds; play houses; dog houses; permanent sun shading canopies; building or wall-mounted awnings, and gazebos. They are examples of modern alterations that can affect the historic integrity of a site and its surroundings. Small structures that are visible from the public right-of-way are generally more appropriate if constructed of the same historic materials as the existing main building such as walls and roof. The installation of pre-manufactured sheds that are visible from the public right of way, particularly those with metal or vinyl wall cladding, are discouraged. To minimize their visual impact, small structures should be located in the rear yard and should not block the view of historic buildings or features from the public way.

SECONDARY STRUCTURES

For information regarding secondary structures such as garages, larger sheds and carports please refer to the *Guidelines for New Construction & Additions, Page 11.*

Fencing and landscaping can be used to screen modern landscape elements such as garbage dumpsters.



Encouraged:

- Unobtrusively locate landscape features, small structures and ground mounted equipment where they are not visible from the public way
- If it is not possible to locate landscape features, play equipment, small structures and ground mounted equipment where they cannot be seen by the public, minimize the public's view and screen with dense plantings, a wall and/or wood fencing

Discouraged:

- × Landscape features, small structures and ground mounted equipment in the front yard of a property
- × Visually prominent landscape features, play equipment, small structures and ground mounting equipment

FUNDING

This project has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, and administered by the Florida Division of Historical Resources. The contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

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PREPARATION

All components of the *Fort Lauderdale Historic Preservation Design Guidelines* including all text, graphic design, photography and illustrations unless noted otherwise were prepared by:

Preservation Design Partnership, LLC

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; www.pdparchitects.com
Principal-in-Charge: Dominique M. Hawkins, AIA