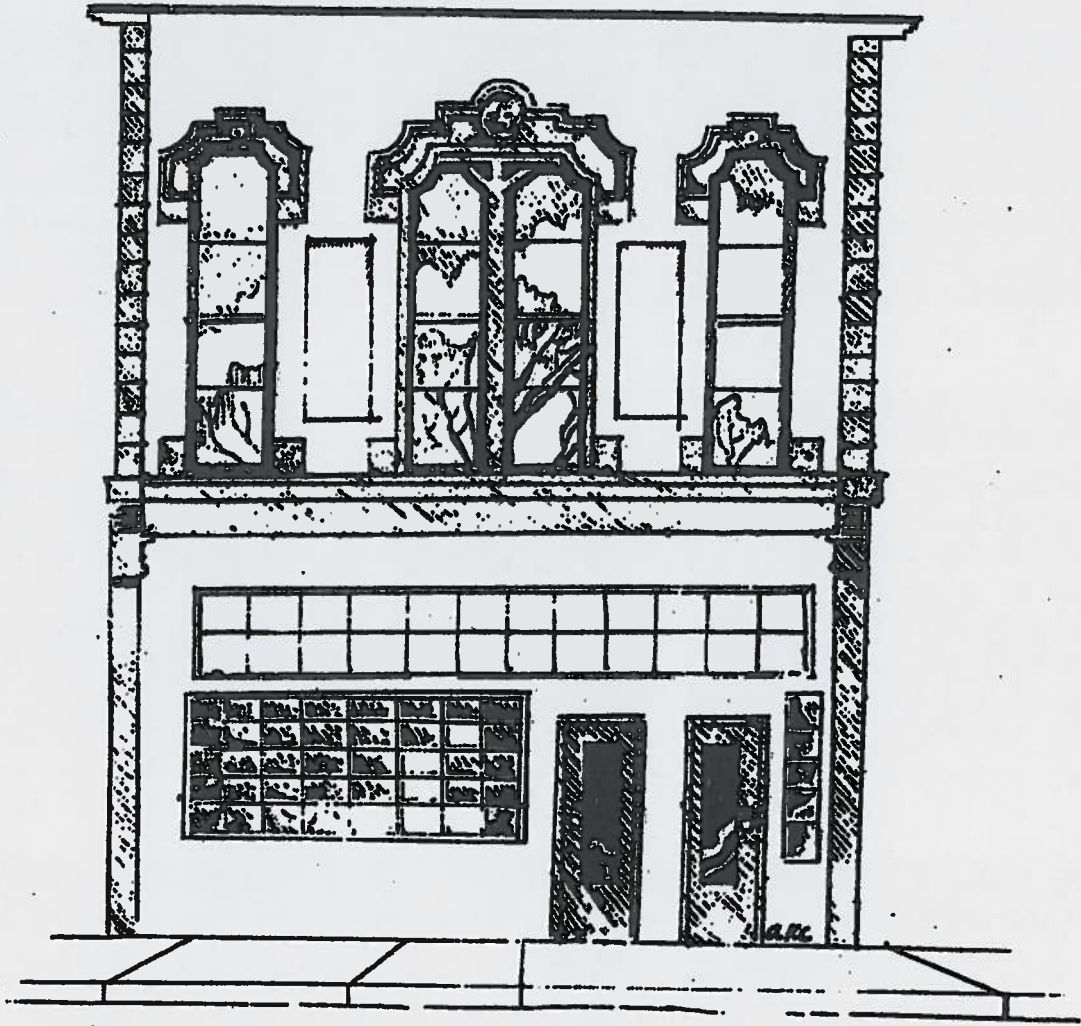


# DESIGN GUIDELINES



Design Guidelines for the original six Historic District of Las Vegas, New Mexico

# DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS OF THE CITY OF LAS VEGAS, NEW MEXICO

## I. OVERVIEW

### A. Objectives

- 1 To provide guidelines for use by owners, developers, city government, and the Design Review Board in the required review process.
- 2 To describe the special characteristics of each district which, if maintained and strengthened over the years, will result in the preservation of the unique character of each district.
- 3 To limit the statement of characteristics to those specific to the district, permitting owners and the Design Review Board as much latitude as practical making determinations regarding each building or public area.
- 4 To describe general preservation concepts to provide additional support to the Design Review Board during the review process.

### B Compliance with the Guidelines

Ordinance 64-10 defines six areas zoned "CH" and the required review process. Any proposed alteration, addition, demolition, removal, construction, or rehabilitation of buildings, vegetation, or public areas within the defined areas shall be subject to review as specified in the ordinance. The painting or repainting of structures as well as the addition or changing of permanent signs shall also be subject to review.

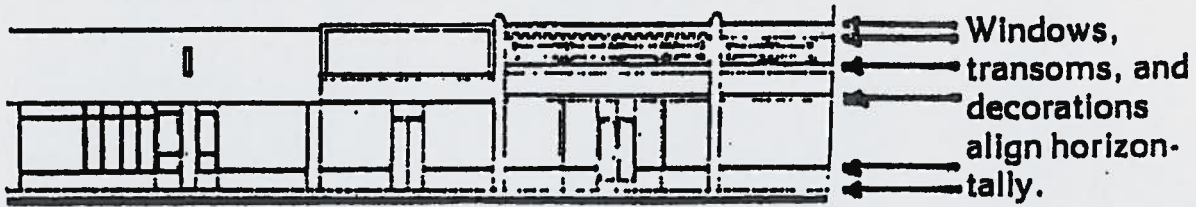
## II. DEFINITIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

### A Definitions

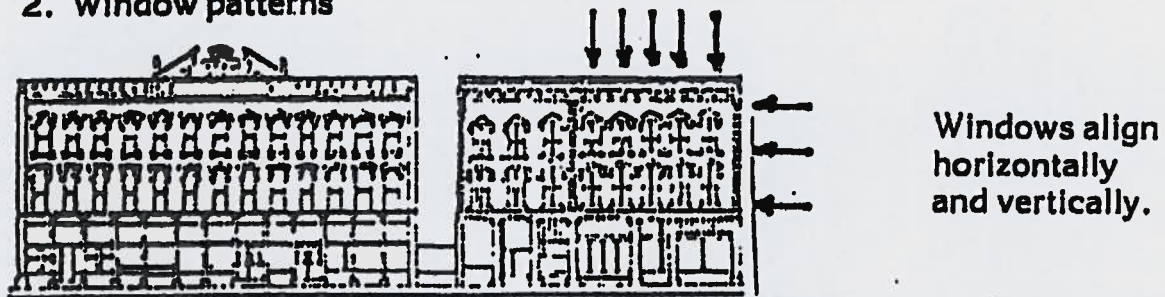
- 1 Alteration. For purpose of compliance with Ordinance 64-10, alteration shall be defined in the broadest possible terms.  
Alteration shall include but not be limited to:
  - a Any change visible from dedicated streets within the district;
  - b Painting or other coloration including stucco;
  - c Removal or significant alteration of existing trees, hedges, or fences;
  - d Addition or deletion of major elements within public areas including but not limited to gazebos, bandstands, benches, playground equipment, lighting, vegetation, pathways or sidewalks.
- 2 Facade. The Face of a building; the elevation of a building.
- 3 Clerestory windows Windows located above storefront windows in Commercial-type buildings.
- 4 Cornice The horizontal member along the top of a building.
- 5 Quoins Stones or bricks marking the corners of a building.
- 6 Preservation Stabilizing and maintaining a structure in its existing form and preventing further change or deterioration.
- 7 Restoration Restoring a building as nearly as possible to its appearance at a given date in time.
- 8 Scale The general feeling of mass and size of a structure as related to other structures.
- 9 Setback The distance of buildings from the curb, street, or sidewalk.

## B. Illustrations\*

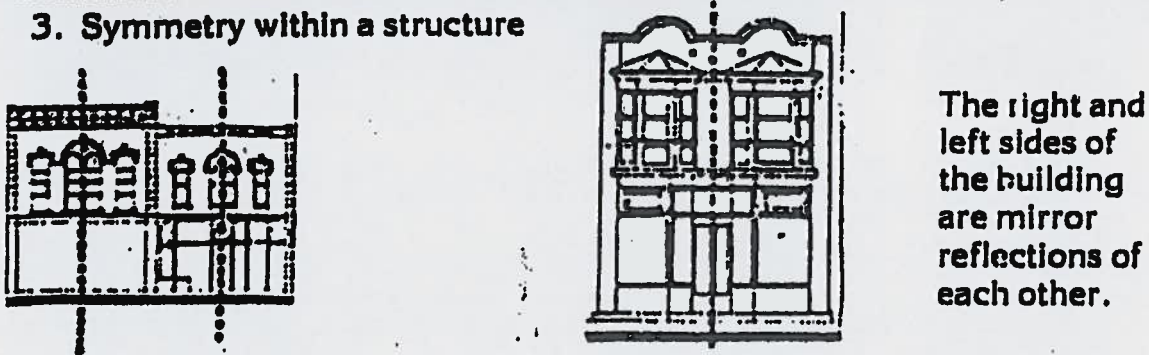
### 1. Horizontal elements



### 2. Window patterns



### 3. Symmetry within a structure



\*Drawings are from "The Other Las Vegas," by Anthony C. Antonaides, *New Mexico Architecture* (August, 1974).



### III GUIDELINES

**A General** The following are general guidelines and are applicable to all six districts.

- 1 The rehabilitation, restoration, or utilization of buildings within districts shall be encouraged.
- 2 The demolition of significant or pivotal buildings (as defined in Ellen Threinen's 1977 "Architecture and Preservation in Las Vegas; A Study of Six Districts") shall be discouraged. The intent of these Guidelines is to discourage demolition of significant buildings. It is recognized, however, that in some instances, rehabilitation of significant structures may be structurally and/or economically infeasible. It shall be the responsibility of owner or developer to convince the Design Review Board that a structure subject to review is inrehabilitatable, structurally or economically.
- 3 Any obvious pattern shall be maintained and strengthened.
- 4 The imitation of historic styles shall be discouraged in new construction. New buildings shall be compatible with existing patterns within the district.
- 5 Alignment of horizontal elements, where they exist, shall be maintained and emphasized, including:
  - a building height
  - b first and other story windows
  - c clerestories
  - d cornices
- 6 Maintain and strengthen any pattern formed by setback; yard spaces or the lack thereof; building widths; the relationship between street, sidewalks, and planting strips; or vegetation.
- 7 Maintain and strengthen any pattern formed by the size and shape and horizontal or vertical alignment of windows. New construction shall use windows of similar sizes and shapes and incorporate other facade elements to strengthen existing patterns.
- 8 signs within commercial districts under Ordinance 64-10 shall be secondary to and not detract from the architectural elements of the building facade. Flat-mounted and painted window signs shall be encouraged. Overhanging, neon, opaque or internally-lit, flashing, or other obtrusive signs shall be discouraged. Permanent signage utilizing brand names shall be discouraged.
- 9 The priorities for coloration of buildings within the six districts shall be:

First Priority--the proven original color;

Second priority--the natural color of the building materials  
(e.g., fieldstone or flagstone);

Third priority--colors in harmony with existing tones within the district  
(e.g., any white or pastel color).
- 10 Contrasting colors or highlighting shall be utilizing to emphasize architectural elements.
- 11 The addition to or alteration of structures subject to review for the purpose of conserving energy or providing for alternative energy utilization shall be encouraged, but shall be subject to approval by the Design Review Board, using the same guidelines as for any other alteration, restoration, addition or rehabilitation.

## **B Specific**

### **1. Plaza Historic District**

#### **a. Dominant characteristics**

Three distinct dominant characteristics are obvious within the district. The Plaza Park is the major characteristic. The evolution of both residential and commercial buildings, side by side in many instances, constitutes the other two characteristics. Guidelines are specified for each of the three dominant characteristics which have traditionally existed harmoniously.

#### **b. Plaza Park**

- 1 Asymmetry:** The existing pattern within the park is one of asymmetry. Neither the walkways within the park, the vegetation, nor the man-made structures demonstrate symmetrical patterns. To attempt to achieve symmetry within the park would require changing its character.

**GUIDELINE: MAINTAIN THE ASYMMETRICAL PATTERN OF THE PARK.**

- 2 Vegetation:** Vegetation within the park consists of mature trees and lawns which provide a relaxing, shaded environment during the summer months permit visual access to and from the park. Little of the park area is paved or otherwise devoid of vegetation.

#### **GUIDELINES**

**-ENCOURAGE REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING TREES; AS REQUIRED.  
-DISCOURAGE THE INTRODUCTION OF SHRUBS OR OTHER PLANTS WHICH INHIBIT VISUAL ACCESS TO ALL PARTS OF THE PARK.**

**-ENCOURAGE INCREASED PERCENTAGE OF PLANTED AREAS  
DECREASED PERCENTAGE OF PAVED OR NON-PLANTED AREAS.**

- 3 Use:** The traditional and current use of the park is for the benefit of the citizenry.

**GUIDELINE: ENCOURAGE THE PLACEMENT OF BENCHES AND OTHER FURNITURE TO SUPPORT UTILIZATION OF THE PARK.**

- 4 Man-made structures and monuments:** The gazebo is a well-constructed focal point of the park. Other man-made structures and monuments are haphazardly placed and, in some instances, present a hazard to those utilizing the park.

**GUIDELINE: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE A GAZEBO. APPROPRIATELY LOCATE PLAQUES AND MONUMENTS.**

c. Non-park areas

1 General Patterns:

Obvious patterns dominate the non-park areas despite the mix of commercial and residential styles. These patterns include a strong pattern of setbacks and the absence of spaces between buildings.

**GUILDLINE: MAINTAIN THE STRONG PATTERN OF SETBACKS AND CONNECTED BUILDINGS.**

2 Patterns in commercial-style buildings:

Besides the size or scale obvious in most commercial-type buildings in the same area, other obvious patterns exist. Important among these patterns are the size of display windows at street level, clerestories, obvious horizontal patterns in upper-story windows, decorative ornamentation on upper-story windows, and ornamental cornices. Symmetry within the structures is also obvious.

**GUIDELINES:**

- MAINTAIN THE SCALE OF EACH BUILDING IN THE DISTRICT.
- LIMIT THE HEIGHT OF COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS TO THE HEIGHT OF THE TALLEST EXISTING BUILDING.
- MAINTAIN THE PATTERN OF LARGE DISPLAY WINDOWS AND ENCOURAGE THE REOPENING OF CLERESTORY WINDOWS WHEN POSSIBLE TO STRENGTHEN THAT PATTERN.
- MAINTAIN THE STRONG HORIZONTAL PATTERN OF UPPER-STORY WINDOWS, AND ENCOURAGE THE REOPENING OF THESE WINDOWS WHEN POSSIBLE TO STRENGTHEN THAT PATTERN.
- MAINTAIN AND EMPHASIZE DECORATIVE ORNAMENTATION ABOVE UPPER-STORY WINDOWS AND BETWEEN THE FIRST AND OTHER STORIES.
- MAINTAIN AND EMPHASIZE DECORATIVE CORNICES.
- MAINTAIN AND ENCOURAGE SYMMETRY WITHIN SINGLE STRUCTURES EVEN WHEN BUILDINGS HAVE MULTIPLE USES OR MULTIPLE OWNERS.

(3) Patterns in residential-style buildings:

Door and window patterns obvious in residential-type buildings should not be altered in imitation of commercial-type structures. Commercial or residential use of residential-type buildings does not require copying of commercial styles.

**GUIDELINES: SMALLER, RESIDENTIAL-TYPE DOORS AND WINDOWS SHOULD BE MAINTAINED IN RESIDENTIAL-TYPE STRUCTURES TO THE HEIGHT OF THE TALLEST EXISTING RESIDENTIAL-TYPE BUILDING.**

2 Bridge Street District

Bridge Street exhibits the broadest range of patterns of the several historic districts in Las Vegas. A virtually perfect pattern of setbacks exists. All buildings are either one or two-storied. Almost all buildings were of a commercial type when constructed, evidencing large display windows and clerestories, although a few of each have been covered over. Two-story buildings have a strong horizontal pattern of windows, with decorative



ornamentation over the windows of the second floor in many instances. Most buildings exhibit piers or quoins, and many have decorative separations (cornices) between first and second stories, as well as ornamental cornices.

**GUIDELINES:**

- MAINTAIN THE PATTERN OF SETBACKS.
- MAINTAIN THE SCALE OF BUILDINGS. LIMIT NEW CONSTRUCTION OR REHABILITATION WHICH WILL RESULT IN ANY BUILDING BEING TALLER THAN THE TALLEST EXISTING BUILDING.
- MAINTAIN THE STRONG PATTERN OF LARGE STOREFRONT-TYPE GLASS AND ENCOURAGE THE REOPENING OF THESE AND CLERESTORY-TYPE WINDOWS.
- ENCOURAGE THE HIGHLIGHTING OF DECORATIVE PIERS AND QUIONS; ORNAMENTATION OVER SECOND-STORY WINDOWS; ORNAMENTATION BETWEEN FIRST AND OTHER STORIES; AND CORNICES.
- MAINTAIN THE PATTERN OF HORIZONTAL ALIGNMENT ON SECOND-STORY WINDOWS. ENCOURAGE THE REOPENING OF WINDOWS WHEN POSSIBLE.
- MAINTAIN THE SYMMETRY EXISTING WITHIN THE INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS EVEN THOUGH THE BUILDING MAY HAVE BEEN DIVIDED AND IS BEING USED FOR MULTIPLE PURPOSE OR BY MORE THAN ONE OWNER.

**3 El distrito de las Escuelas**

**a Dominant Characteristics**

Like the Plaza District, El Distrito de las Escuelas evolved into two distinct sets of patterns along its two major streets, South Pacific and South Gonzales. Although both streets curve gently in a north-south direction, the similarities end there, requiring separate guidelines for each major street within the district.

**b South Pacific**

South Pacific Street was one entrance into the Plaza on the Santa Fe Trail. The buildings on this street display fine examples of Spanish Colonial styles exemplified by predominantly connected facades along the street, with courtyards and other outdoor living spaces protected from traffic on the other side of the buildings. There is a clear pattern of setbacks and building heights. Pitched roofs now dominate. A strong pattern is formed by frequently-occurring, deep-set doors. The absence of vegetation (trees) along the street is also a strong pattern.

**GUIDELINES:**

- MAINTAIN THE PATTERN OF BUILDING HEIGHTS
- MAINTAIN THE STRONG PATTERN OF SETBACKS.
- MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN THE PATTERN OF FREQUENT, DEEP-SET DOORS AND PITCHED ROOFS.
- DISCOURAGE THE ADDITION OF VEGETATION ALONG THE EAST SIDE OF SOUTH PACIFIC STREET.
- MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN WHEN POSSIBLE THE PATTERN OF CONNECTED BUILDINGS.

**c South Gonzales**

There is no strong pattern of setbacks on South Gonzales. Single-story detached houses centered on their lots predominate. There is a pattern of porches and of fences along the South Gonzales property line. Most roofs are pitched. Vegetation is plentiful, if randomly placed, on the lots.

**GUIDELINES:**

- IMPROVE THE PATTERN OF SETBACKS WHEN PRACTICAL (e.g., DURING NEW CONSTRUCTION).
- MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN THE PATTERN OF BUILDINGS SIZE AND LOCATION OF THE PREDOMINANT STRUCTURE ON THE LOT.
- MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN, WHEN POSSIBLE, THE PATTERNS OF PORCHES, FENCES, AND PITCHED ROOFS.
- ENCOURAGE THE PLANTING OR REPLACEMENT OF TREES ON SOUTH GONZALES.

**4 Library Park**

Outstanding visual characteristics of the Library Park District include the symmetry of the park and the scale of the buildings. Consistent use of brick for buildings and stained glass and arched windows are other dominant characteristics.

**GUIDELINES:**

- MAINTAIN THE SYMMETRY OF THE PARK IN VEGETATION, PATHWAYS, AND STRUCTURES.
- MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE PATTERN FORMED BY THE SCALE OF BUILDINGS WITHIN THE DISTRICT.
- MAINTAIN THE PATTERN OF ARCHED WINDOWS IN MASONRY BUILDINGS.

**5 Lincoln Park**

The north, west, and south side residential areas have many clear patterns. The symmetrical nature of the park is the dominant visual characteristic of this district. The east side of the park does not offer obvious patterns. Strong patterns in the residential areas (north, west, and south sides) include central placement of the structures on the lots, resulting in a strong pattern of spaces between buildings. Setback patterns are strong in the district as a whole and especially strong in the three residential areas. The size of the buildings is very consistent, and virtually all buildings have pitched roofs.

**GUIDELINES:**

- MAINTAIN THE STRONG SYMMETRY OF ALL ELEMENTS IN LINCOLN PARK, INCLUDING PATHWAYS, CENTRAL BANDSTAND, AND VEGETATION.
- MAINTAIN THE PATTERNS FORMED BY PLACEMENT OF STRUCTURES IN THE NORTH, WEST, AND SOUTH SIDE RESIDENTIAL AREAS, INCLUDING THE PLACEMENT OF STRUCTURES ON LOTS, SETBACKS, AND SPACING BETWEEN BUILDINGS.
- LIMIT THE HEIGHT OF BUILDINGS TO THE TALLEST NOW EXISTING, AND MAINTAIN THE PATTERNS FORMED BY THE



**SCALE OF BUILDINGS IN THE DISTRICT.**

**·MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE PATTERN OF PITCHED ROOFS WHEN PRACTICAL.**

**·MAINTAIN THE PATTERN OF VEGETATION IN THE PARKWAY**

**6 Railroad Avenue District**

**Dominant characteristics of the district are affected by the fact that the local historic district includes only three structures. While each is commercial structure, large in size, utilizing brick and stone as building materials and featuring arched windows, little else serves as a unifying force.**

**GUIDELINES:**

**·MAINTAIN THE SCALE AND HEIGHT OF THE BUILDINGS IN THE AREA.**

**·MAINTAIN THE PATTERNS FORMED BY BRICK AND SANDSTONE BUILDINGS MATERIALS AND ARCHED WINDOWS IN THE DISTRICT.**

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