CHIHUAHUTA HISTORIC DISTRICT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION
URBAN DESIGN DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING,
RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDELINES

Purpose 5
Enabling Legislation 5
Background 6-8

THE CHIHUAHUITA HISTORIC DISTRICT

Creation of the Chihuahuita Historic District 10
Landmarks 11
Architectural Styles 12-14

GUIDELINES FOR RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

General Considerations 16
Height and Scale 17
Setbacks 18
Proportion 18
Pattern and Rhythm 18
Site Details:
- Fencing 19
- Sidewalks 20
- Parking and Driveways 21
- Lighting 21

Landscaping and Open Space 22
Roofs 23
Chimneys and Vents 24
Openings:
- Windows 24-25
- Security Considerations 26
- Doors 27

The Three Foot Rule 28
Foundations 28
Auxiliary Buildings 29
Materials and Finishes:
- Masonry 29
- Wood 30
- Metal 30-31

Color 31
Mechanical Equipment 31
Health and Safety Codes 31

GUIDELINES FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS
Storefronts 33
Signs 34-37
Parking 38

GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION
Infill Construction 40
Additions 40

MAINTENANCE 42

OFFICE PROCEDURE
Certificate of Appropriateness 44-45
Certificate of Demolition 46

APPENDIX I 48

BIBLIOGRAPHY 49

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 49

Introduction to the Guidelines

Purpose
Enabling Legislation
Definitions
Background

The Design Guidelines for the Chihuahuita Historic District are a set of recommendations for the rehabilitation, restoration and new construction of structures.

Generally, design guidelines serve to improve the quality of physical change, protect investments, protect existing architectural characteristics, and prevent incompatible new construction. Specifically, these guidelines have been established to preserve the unique character and identity of Chihuahuita landmarks and their environments. They are also intended to serve as an outline for new construction so that future development will harmonize and support existing structures.

Design Guidelines for the Chihuahuita Historic District are meant to be utilized not only by professionals but by property owners who aspire to participate in the revitalization of their community.

ENABLING LEGISLATION

The City of El Paso made a commitment to historic preservation in 1978, when City Council passed the El Paso Landmark Preservation Ordinance Number 6243. City Council found and declared that as a matter of public policy:

> **The protection, enhancement, preservation and use of historic landmarks is a public necessity and is required in the interest of the culture, prosperity, education and general welfare of the people.**

The purposes of the ordinance are:

> **To protect, enhance and perpetuate historic landmarks which represent or reflect distinctive and important elements of the city's, state's, or nation's architectural, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, ethnic and political history and to develop appropriate settings for such places;**
>
> **To safeguard the city's historic and cultural heritage, as embodied and reflected in such historic landmarks by appropriate regulations;**

To stabilize and improve property values in such locations;

To foster civic pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the past;

To protect and enhance the city's attractions to tourists and visitors and provide incidental support and stimulus to business and industry;

To strengthen the economy of the city;

To promote the use of historic landmarks for the culture, prosperity, education and General welfare of the people of the city and visitors to the city.

CHIHUAHUITA HISTORIC DISTRICT

After the Mexican-American War of 1848, the Rio Grande became an international boundary, splitting what had been a unified community, El Paso del Norte.

The first houses built in Chihuahuita were constructed along the banks of the Rio Grande and its water was used for domestic purposes. As Chihuahuita grew away from the river, water was hauled in barrels.

The Mexican influence was evident in material forms - the adobe row house, the acequias, techniques such as viniculture, societal relations, all appeared on the north bank of the river and continued well into the 1880's.

One of the first connections across the river between El Paso and Juarez was a hand-hauled ferry operated for many years by the Acosta family of Juarez. This ferry landed between Santa Fe and Chihuahua Streets.

In 1881, Zach White built the first permanent bridge for the Mexican Central railroad at El Paso Street. The Santa Fe Bridge was built in 1892 by the Santa Fe and Juarez Railway Company. This bridge was low and narrow and had room only for a single line of track, a pedestrian way and one wagon lane. Trees and vegetation on both banks almost hid the bridge from sight.

The City of El Paso issued franchises for twelve railroads in the years between 1880 and 1900. The Santa Fe occupied a two-story frame building at Fifth and Santa Fe. This structure also served the Mexican Central. Chihuahuita served as a labor pool for these railroads.

The Franklin Canal, one of many schemes, advanced during the 1880's to assure irrigation water for farmers south of El Paso was chartered on July 6, 1889, and obtained right-of-way from the City on September 16. This canal cuts through Eighth Street and forms part of the southern boundary of Chihuahuita.

Floods were common to Chihuahuita. May of 1897, all of El Paso south of Fifth Street was a sea of water, and hundreds of Mexican homes and the homes of quite a number of Americans were washed away....Judge Magoffin, the Mayor, put a large force of men to work building a levee with sacks of sand along Seventh Street. Quite a number of residents, whose homes in Chihuahuita were destroyed, moved to the mesa (Rim Road). D. Storms owned land up there and he permitted the refugees to locate on the high bluff and to build what later became known as "Stormsville". Mayor Magoffin joined forces with the Mayor of Juarez to dig a new channel for the Rio Grande and thereby reduce flood pressures. Their cut, known as Cordova cut-off, had been under discussion by the International Boundary Commission since 1894. The levees were finally reported finished on April 13, 1899, and the Commission officially ratified the new channel in 1904.

The Mexican Revolution brought a great number of refugees into Chihuahuita and spurred the construction of a number of brick tenements between 1910 and 1922. Chihuahuita sheltered dozens of organizers, agents, undercover workers and exiles during the Mexican Revolution. General John Pershing stationed black infantry troops at the foot of the Santa Fe Bridge when Pancho Villa attacked Cuidad Juarez. The General called on Mayor Tom Lea to offer the City the services of the medical officers of the brigade in providing medical services to the residents of Chihuahuita.

A frequent complaint in the early days was of dusty and muddy streets. There were neither paved streets nor sidewalks in 1900. In December of 1915, the City began to grade and fill streets in the area. Caliche taken out in the grading of San Jose Street in Highland Park was being hauled to Chihuahuita and used to fill holes and bring thoroughfares up to proper grades.

Prohibition brought many problems. "Fifteen prohibition agents, using sand bag emplacements, routed a gang of smugglers attempting to cross from Juarez on the night of May 20, 1922, at the foot of Eighth Street." Similar battles continued until repeal occurred in 1933.

In 1925, the El Paso City Plan Commission published a report on the City. It was the work of a planning consultant, George Kessler.

> "Between the business center of El Paso and the Rio Grande lies an area of three-fourths of a square mile constituting the most densely populated area in the city. A few of its main streets are lined closely with small but busy retail shops: some industrial establishments are in the area, and railroads occupy some parts of it. But for the most part, it is covered with one-story or two-story tenement houses crowded with human beings. A

large market place and permanent outdoor fair should be provided in Chihuahuita, possibly as part of the Bridgehead Project. Future use of the river front depends in large measure on final location of the railroads and on the establishing of industrial zones; however, it is probable that a project can be worked out to develop the river front along part of its extent for beauty and use as parkway drive and playground."

In an effort to curtail the continuation of the slum conditions of this area, the City zoned much of South El Paso for commercial and industrial use in 1930. This decision was reversed in 1969 to reflect the actual use of the land, but the construction permitted by the zoning that existed prior to that time has resulted in an undesirable mixture of land uses.

Paisano Drive, today a major arterial, was constructed in 1953. It passes along what was formerly Second Avenue, then an integral part of South El Paso. The area north of Paisano evolved into non-residential, "downtown"-type development, and severed the continuity of South El Paso and Chihuahuita. The effect of this, the railroad yards, and the water treatment plant, has been to create a neighborhood with a distinct identity which is socially and physically isolated from the remainder of the City.

The Chamizal Treaty of 1964 settled a one-hundred year boundary dispute between the United States and Mexico and transferred over 600 acres of land from the United States (and the City of El Paso) to Mexico. As part of the same transaction, Mexico transferred about 193 acres in the Cordova Island sector to the United States. Chihuahuita lost Ninth and Tenth Streets in this settlement.

The neighborhood presently has an excellent inventory of community facilities. There is a multi-purpose recreation and community center, two daycare centers, three hospitals, two health clinics, five public schools, four private schools, two Catholic, one Baptist and one Methodist Church; a Ba-Hai Center, Masonic Lodge, a Boys' Club, Baptist Mission and a Youth Center. All of these facilities are located within a one-half square mile area east of Chihuahuita.

The remaining tenements on Chihuahua Street and on Seventh and Canal Streets have been rehabilitated, providing apartments with heat, hot running water, inside bathrooms, refrigerators and gas stoves.

There has been a relatively high upward economic and cultural mobility in this area. Residents of Chihuahuita when given the opportunity to acquire an education, language facility and work-skills, have made important contributions to the life of El Paso and the nation.

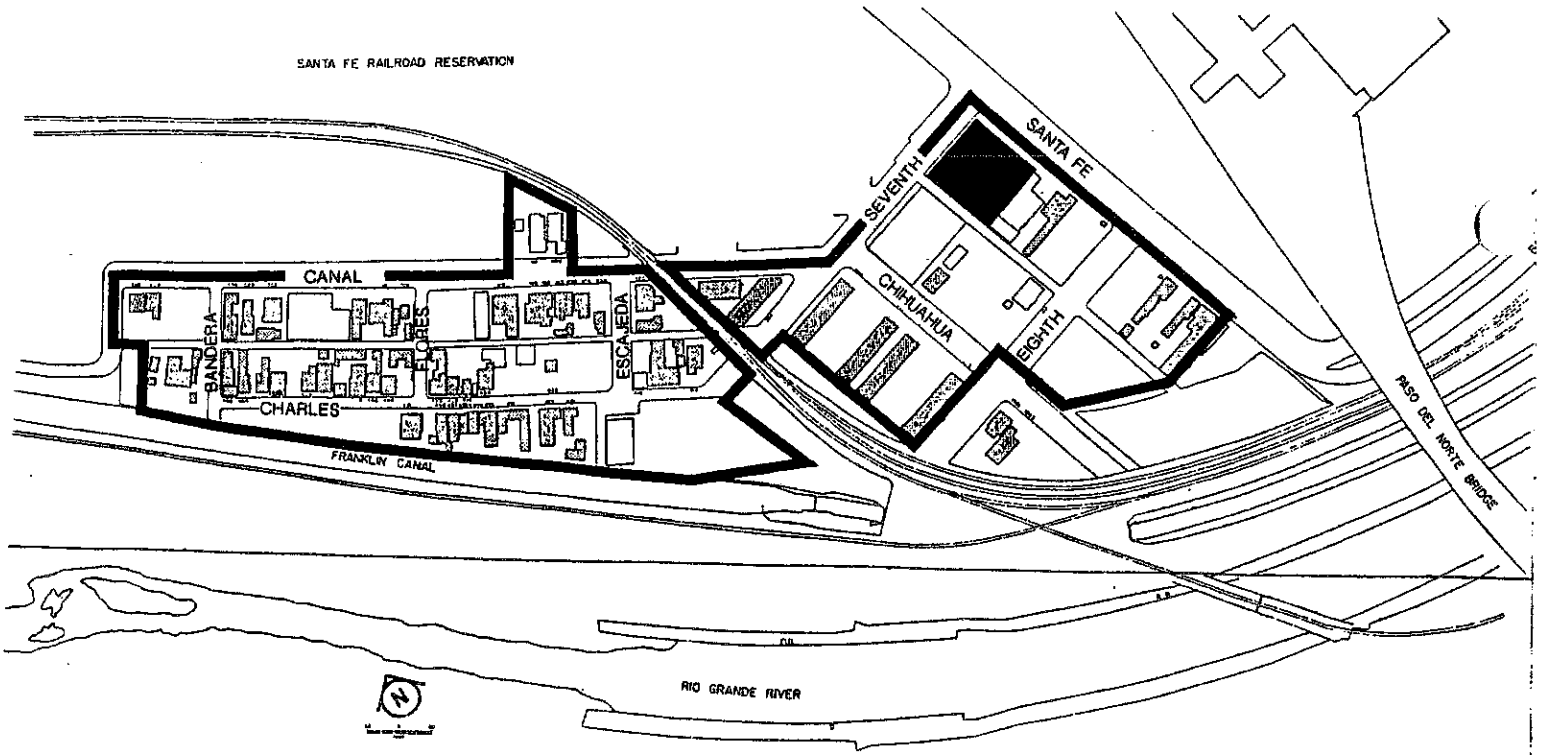
The Chihuahuita Historic District

Creation of the Chihuahuita Historic District
Landmarks
Architectural Styles

The ~~Chihuahuita~~ Historic District

On _____ ~~1994~~, the City Council passed Ordinance No. _____ designating ~~the Chihuahuita~~ an historic site/district:

> **That the City Council finds and hereby declares as a matter of public policy that the designation of the property... as an historic site is in the interest of the public and that the protection, enhancement and preservation of the property included within his historic site is required in the interest of the culture, prosperity, education and general welfare of the people and citizens of El Paso.**



CHIHUAHUITA HISTORIC DISTRICT

- ■ LANDMARK
- ⊡ CONTRIBUTING
- □ NON-CONTRIBUTING

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION AUGUST 1990
CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS

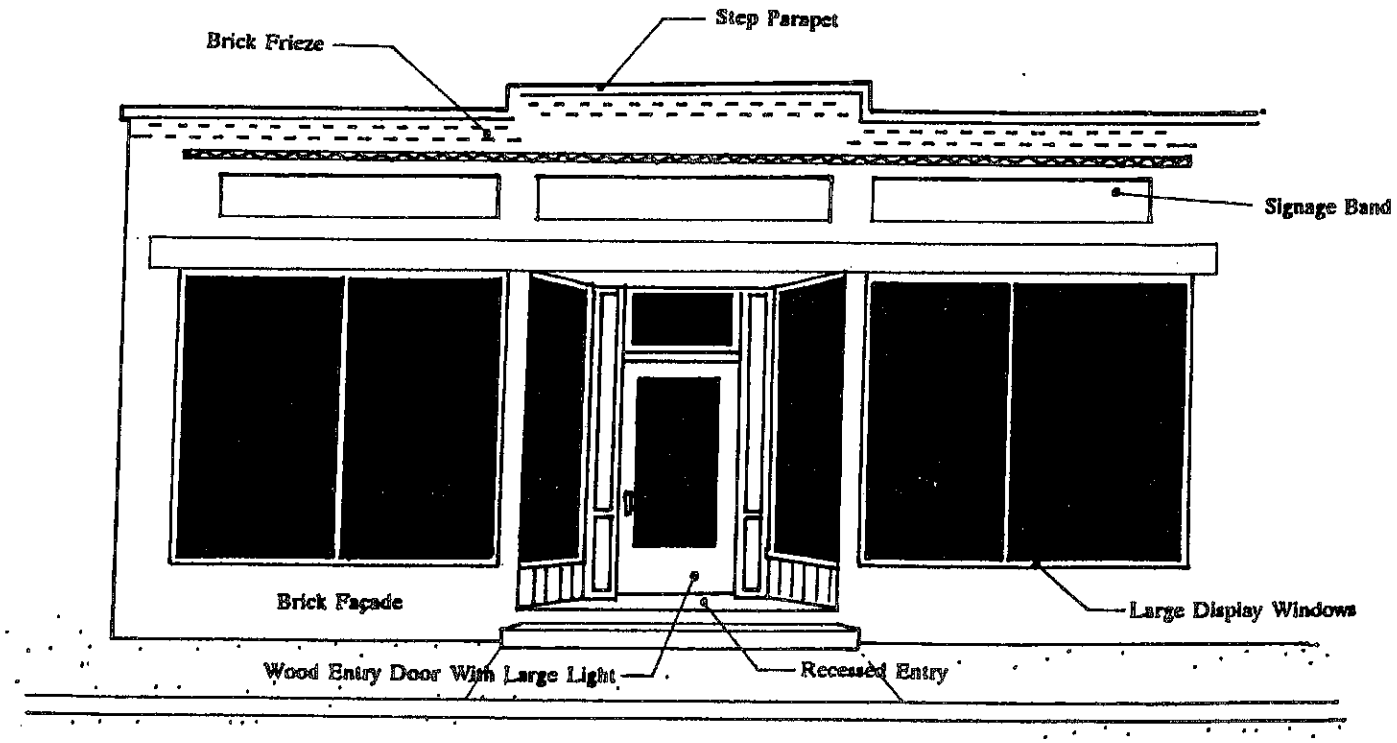
Landmarks

The architectural character within the Chihuahuita Historic District is diverse. Most structures cannot be identified as reflecting one particular architectural style. Rather, the majority of the structures are a mixture of styles, materials and construction techniques.

Although a substantial amount of structures do not conform to any one particular architectural style, the intent of these guidelines is to set forth recommendations in cases where additions and/or new infill construction is being proposed. In addition, they provide guidance in the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing non-conforming structures, and existing adobe structures. Adobe structures are the typical and original type of construction to this area of the City of El Paso.

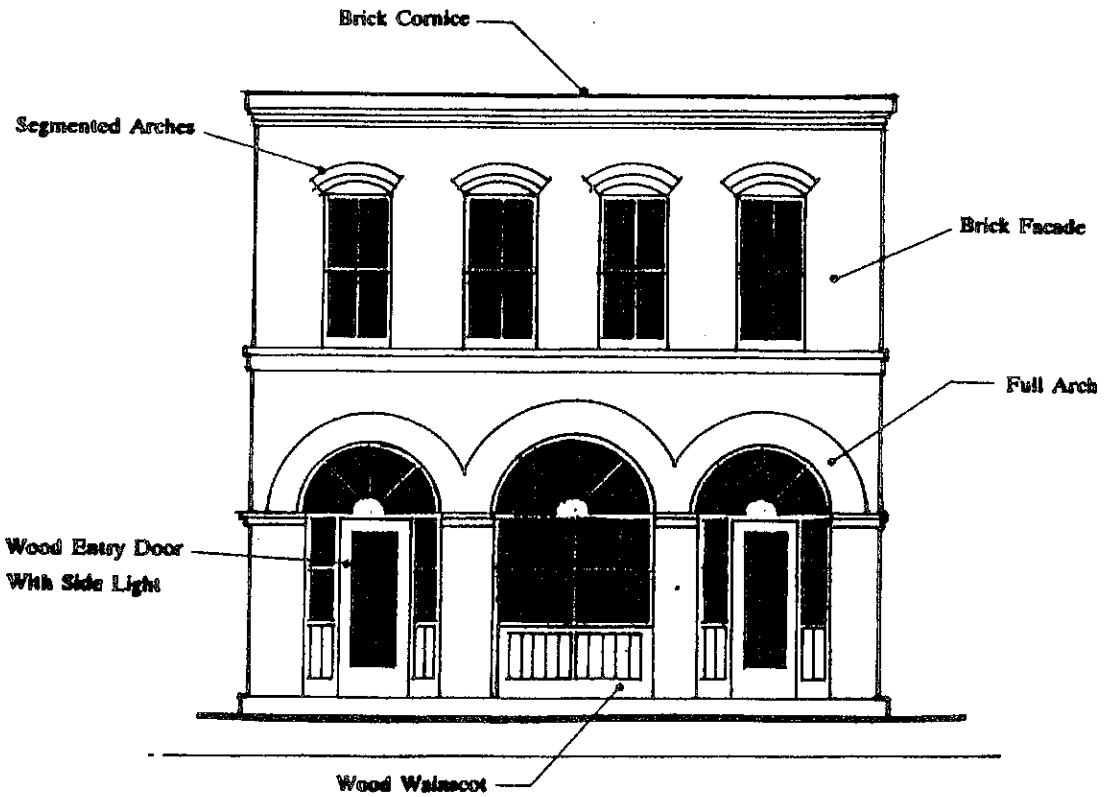
One-part commercial type

The one-part commercial type building originated from the mid 19th century and primarily functioned as retail stores. All one-part commercial types are single story structures. Although early structures were constructed of wood, masonry construction is now typical of the one-part commercial block. Composed of symmetrical bays, most of these buildings were and are of a simple design; buildings are usually nothing more than "boxes" with decorated facades. Store fronts usually have recessed entry ways with large display windows positioned on either side of the entry. Between the windows and cornice, a large portion of the wall area is used for advertising. These structures are known for their simplicity and have little "embellishment" except near the roof line.



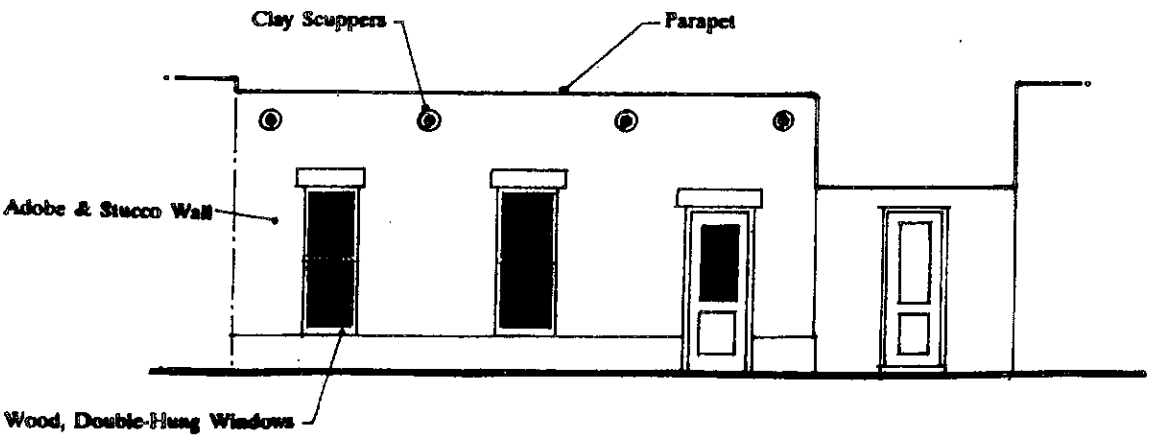
Two-part commercial type

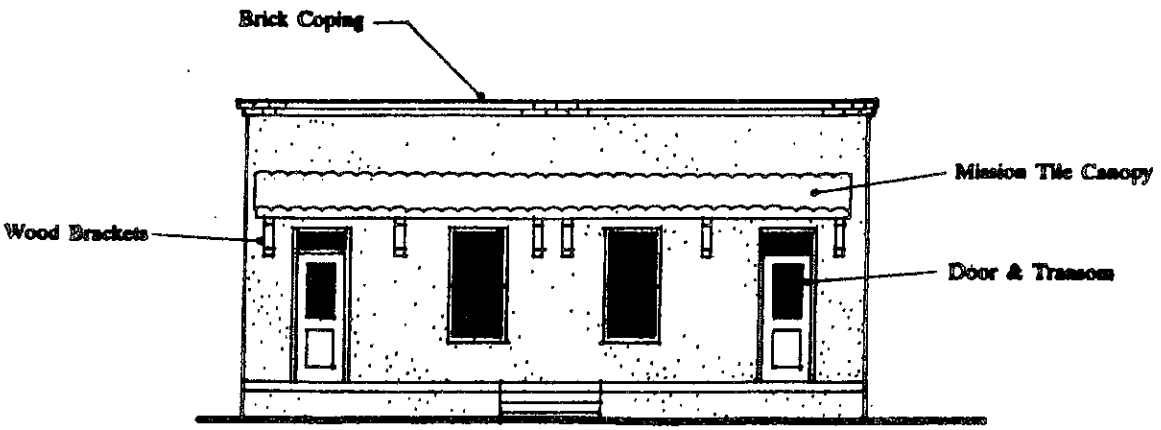
The two-part commercial is similar to the one-part commercial type, except it is two or three stories in height. A commercial retail store occupies the ground floor and apartments occupy the upper stories. The facades are brick with simple or complex cornices and friezes. Segmented arches or flat lintels support the walls above the doors and windows. Street facades are usually simple and symetrical. Balconies are sometimes used on the upper floors. These are cantilevered from the walls and have wrought-iron railings.



19th Century Mexican Row House

The single-family row housing on Charles and Canal Streets reflects exactly the simple styles to be found in northern Mexico at the end of the 19th Century. This type of style provided housing for middle and lower-middle classes in the State of Chihuahua. Because of the cost of land, lots have narrow frontage and no side yards. Common walls are the norm with no front yard. Some houses are set back slightly to allow for a small front yard. All houses have parapet walls with flat roofs. Materials are limited to brick or stucco covered adobe. Facades are treated modestly with one door and two or three windows evenly spaced or symetrically arranged. Metal or clay *canales* are common on street elevations to drain water from the roofs. Wrought-iron grills over windows are another unifying design element. Bright pastel colors often cover stucco walls and this is a strong Mexican tradition. Narrow streets along Charles Street complete a unified environment found only in Chihuahuita.





Guidelines for Residential Buildings

General Considerations
Height and Scale
Setbacks
Proportion
Pattern and Rhythm
Site Details
Landscaping and Open Space
Roofs
Chimneys and Vents
Openings
The Three Foot Rule
Porches
Foundations
Secondary and Outbuildings
Materials and Finishes
Color
Mechanical Equipment
Health and Safety Codes

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Approval must be obtained from the Historic Landmark Commission prior to construction or reconstruction of buildings or any alterations to properties located within the Chihuahuita Historic District. Proposed plans should address the following concerns to determine the acceptability of modifications.

Do the plans maintain as much of the original building as possible?

Are exterior alterations and changes kept to a minimum?

Is the proposed design compatible in scale, materials, and style to the original design of the structure?

Are the original building materials maintained or restored?

Are all of the proposed building materials compatible with the surrounding historic buildings as well?

Are architectural elements such as parapets, window and door openings, porches, roof lines and vigas retained?

Are the original architectural details such as scroll work, balcony and porch railings and columns kept?

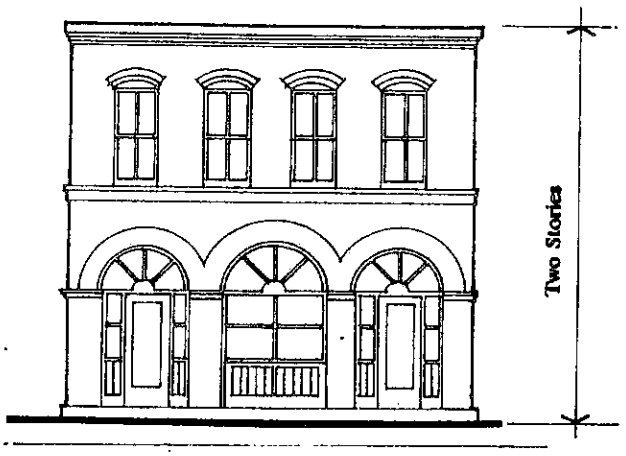
Approval of plans by the HLC will depend on the applicant's documentation of appropriate actions to address these general considerations.

SITE DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of reviewing proposed alterations to structures within the Chihuahuita Historic District is to assure compatibility with existing buildings. This also applies to the way a building is situated on its site. Site development is important in maintaining a building's historic integrity.

HEIGHT AND SCALE

Height limitations are established primarily to ensure the compatibility of height and scale between existing structures and new construction. Height limits for the Chihuahuita Historic District are specifically established in order to prevent development from dominating the residential environment. **Therefore, no residential structure, detached, row or apartment building shall exceed structure two-stories in height.**



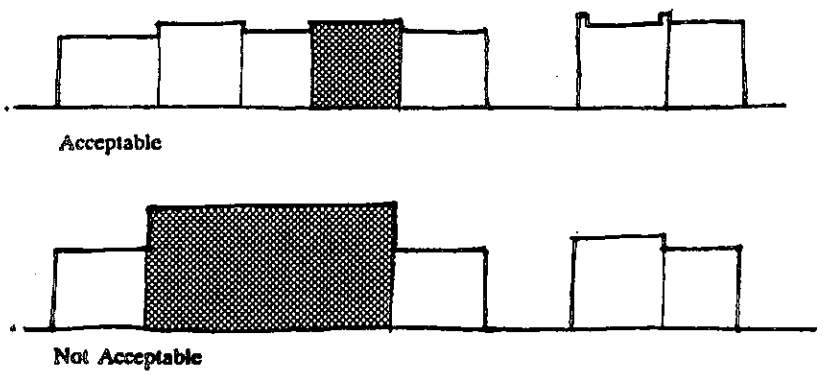
Heights of new buildings should conform to the heights of existing surrounding buildings. If a single story addition is being designed and proposed for a two story structure, it should match the vertical and horizontal dimensions of other nearby/adjacent structures. Avoid overwhelming original massing with excessive additions (heights). Excessive additions can detract from the architectural character of a building. New construction and additions should be compatible in height and scale to attached and adjacent structures.

SETBACKS

Setbacks help to create a unified rhythm along a street. Maintain the predominant existing building line. **The existing building line along Santa Fe, Chihuahua, Canal and Charles Streets shall be maintained.** Existing building lines should not be disturbed by new construction. New construction of structures should be flush with the existing building line, and parking space should be located to the rear of the building.

PROPORTION

The relationship between the height and width of a building establishes proportion. The proportions of new buildings should be consistent with the dominant proportions of existing buildings. Proportions of a group of structures defines a pattern which is called a streetscape. Streetscapes help to establish the architectural character of a neighborhood. All new construction and additions to existing structures should preserve and enhance the streetscape.



PATTERN AND RHYTHM

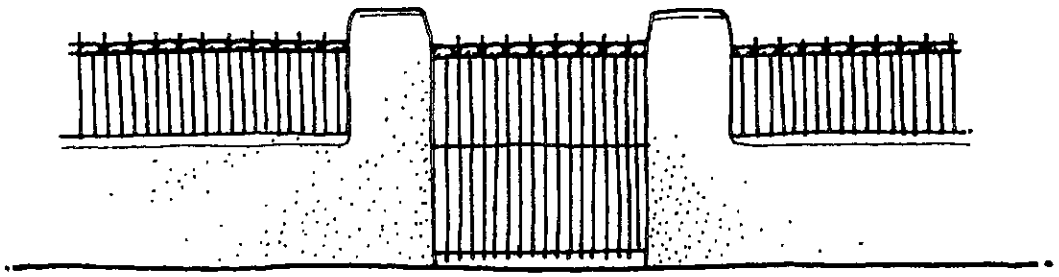
Solids and voids (walls to windows and doors) establishes a pattern in the facade of a building. A pattern of solids and voids establishes rhythm. Other architectural elements such as porches, projections and bays contribute to pattern and rhythm. New construction of additions to existing structures should maintain and reinforce the existing pattern. The proportions of open space between facades should remain constant so that the rhythm of the street is maintained.

SITE DETAILS: Fencing

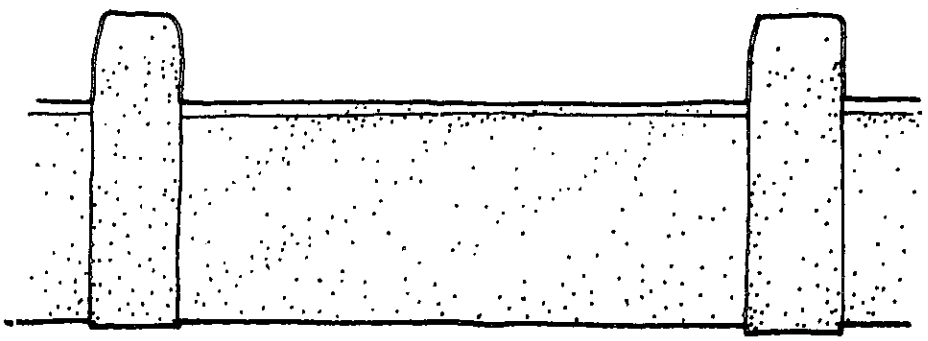
If fencing is desired, it should be incorporated into the overall design. Construction of new fences and replacement of older existing fences should be of compatible materials, in order to compliment the building. Brick, adobe, and wrought-iron are generally acceptable materials but each case should be decided individually. For instance, adobe with stucco, or block with stucco, are appropriate fencing materials.

Cinder block with stucco can also be used for fencing but plastics should be avoided. Metal or wrought iron may be used with brick buildings and some adobe structures.

The height of the proposed fence should compliment the structure and should not obstruct the public's view of the building. **Solid fencing and/or landscaping on residential and commercial properties located on any corner lot, shall not exceed 3 feet in height (Ch. 12.68 City Ordinance).**



Fence With Wrought-Iron

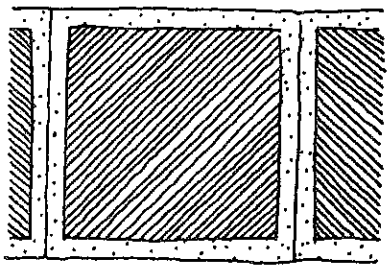


Cinder Block or Adobe Fence & Stucco

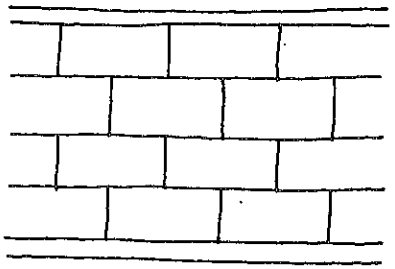
SITE DETAILS: Sidewalks

Almost all of the sidewalks in El Paso are made of concrete; however, other alternatives exist. For example, brick and stone pavers are available in a wide assortment of colors and patterns and can contribute to the overall enhancement of an area. Exposed stones and pebbles are other possibilities to consider as well. (Refer to Ch. 13 City Ordinance, Street and Sidewalk Construction and Maintenance.)

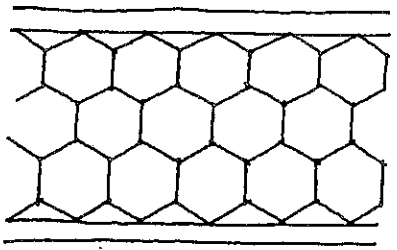
Scored Concrete



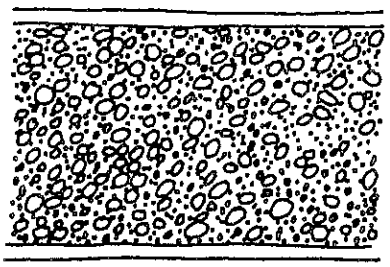
Stone



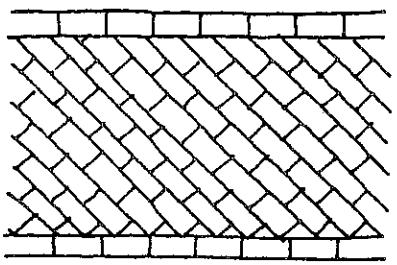
Unglazed Tile



Exposed Pebble Surface



Brick



SITE DETAILS: Parking and Driveways

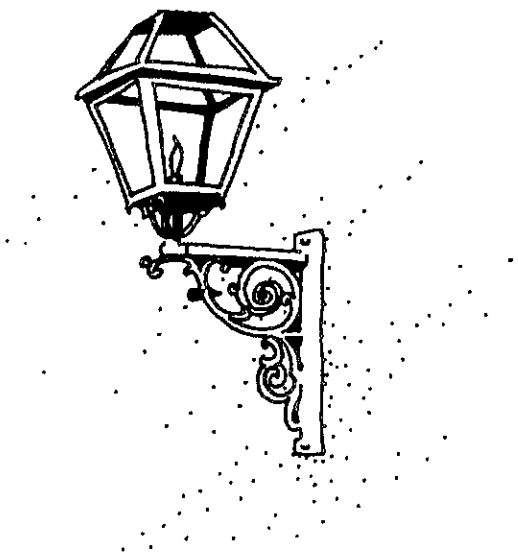
Most residential structures have parking at the rear of the property in the form of a garage or carport. Effort should be taken to maintain the use of the original parking area. When repair or replacement is required, the existing garage or driveway should be replaced in kind.

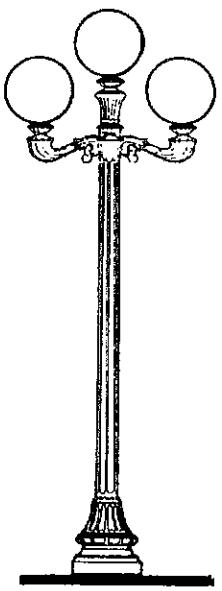
Paved areas for driveways should be kept to a minimum. Acceptable driveway materials are concrete.

Use plantings to screen parking areas.

SITE DETAILS: Lighting

Most properties in Chihuahuita are not lit in a decorative manner. If you wish to accent your property with exterior lighting it is recommended that you first try to find a replica (or an original) of a late nineteenth or early twentieth century period style fixture. If you are buying a new fixture, keep it as simple as possible such as a plain pole with one globe attached.





LANDSCAPING AND OPEN SPACE

Landscaping is an inherent part of a building's siting and design. Good landscaping reinforces and highlights the architectural qualities of a structure. Original vegetation should be maintained in good condition as it takes years for trees, shrubs and lawns to properly mature. When new landscaping is planned, it should be designed to compliment the structure and the streetscape.

Santa Fe, Chihuahua, Seventh, Eighth and Canal Streets are arterials in need of landscaping. Planting trees with a combination of shrubs and/or ground coverings can greatly enhance these streets. Properly designed landscaping can set the tone for immediate and surrounding areas.

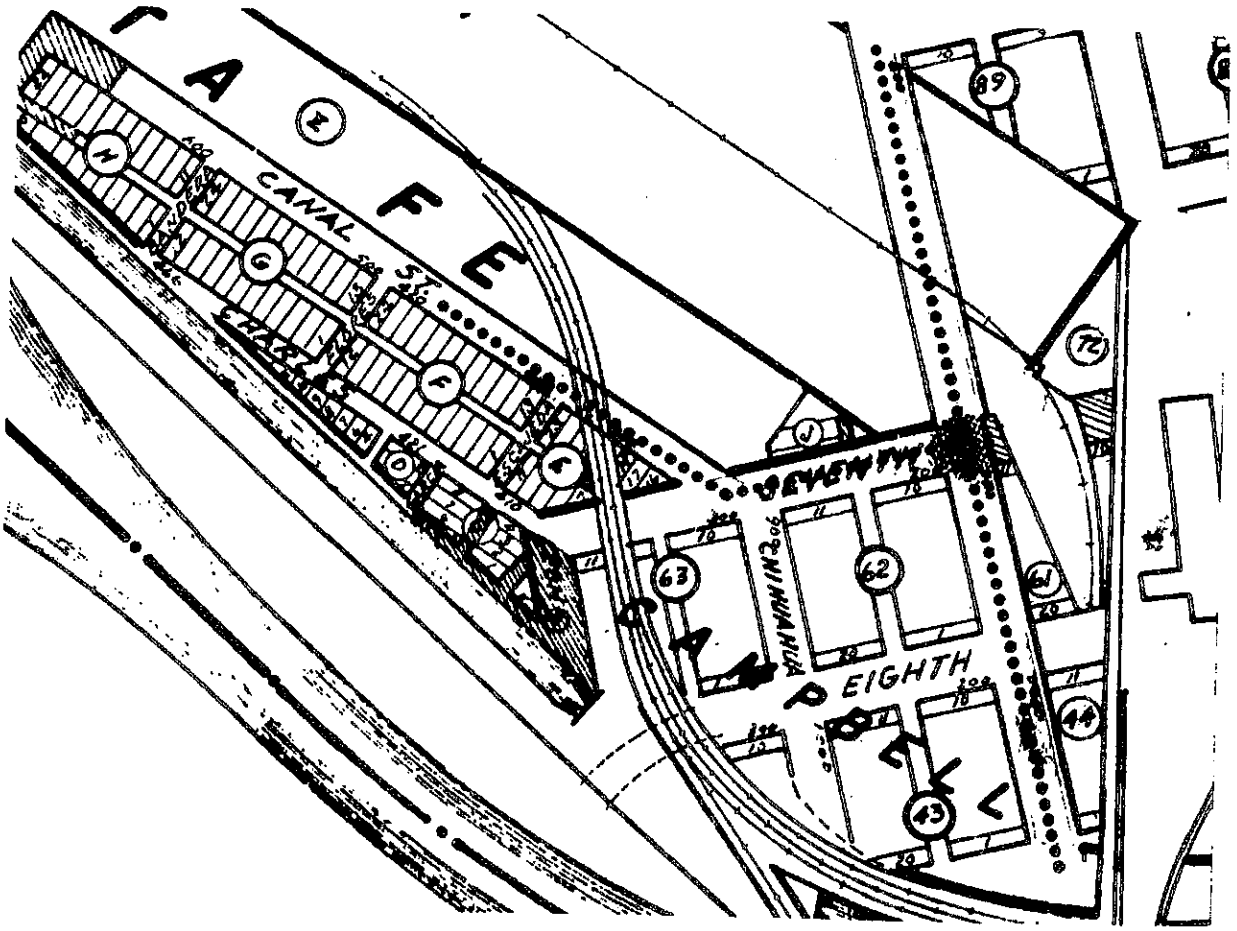
It should be emphasized that landscaping on main arterials and residential streets must follow landscaping standards established by the Department of Traffic and Transportation for the City of El Paso. For example, on main arterials, trees must clear standard size trucks: 13.5 feet above the pavement. On residential streets, trees shall have a minimum clearance of 10 feet above the street level at the curb line, and graduate toward the centerline of the street to a minimum clearance of 12 feet above the pavement.

Arterials in need of landscaping are also identified in the map below.

KEY

Arterials

Gateways



There are several indigenous plants that require little water and maintenance, and are appropriate to the Chihuahuita Historic District. The following are examples of landscaping plants appropriate for residential and public properties, including right-of-ways.

Ice Plant	Honey Mesquite
Mexican Elder	Arizona Ash
Peruvian Verbena	Santolina
Red Yucca	Vitex (Chaste Tree)
Desert Broom	Bird of Paradise
Desert Willow	Arizona Ash
Mexican Paloverde	Purple Leaf Plum
Globe Willow	Spanish Broom

Fruit trees to consider for yard landscaping include Fig, Jordan Almond, Tilton Apricot and Alberta Peach.

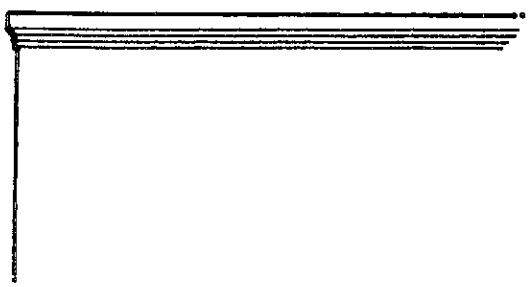
Mulberry trees are not native to the southwest and are inappropriate for landscape use.

Refer to the most current copy of Residential Landscaping for Desert Climates, by The El Paso Water Utilities Company and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station (Texas A&M University), for further landscaping guidance and information.

Landscaping proposed for parkways, right of ways, and other areas where vegetation might obscure traffic sight distances, must get approval from the Department of Traffic and Transportation, and must comply with City Ordinance.

ROOFS

Flat roofs are characteristic of Chihuahuita architecture.



Essentially, all structures are intended to be wall dominated, "a building's geometry should be more defined by walls than by roofs." The height of the roof above the wall should not be greater than the height of the wall itself.

If roofing is beyond repair, replacing materials should match the original as close as possible. A roof and all roofing materials should be compatible with the structure. **Do not change the style or construction of the roof.** For example, constructing a gable or hip roof on top of an existing flat roof would be inappropriate.

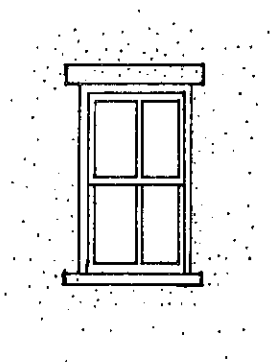
CHIMNEYS AND VENTS

Existing chimneys and vents should be maintained. If repair is required the original materials, style, color and construction should be matched. New construction should not involve the removal of these elements.

Spark arrestors should compliment the termination of the chimney in design, shape and color. Installation of spark arrestors should not disturb the character of the chimney nor the character of the structure. In addition, all spark arrestors must meet city code requirements.

OPENINGS: Windows

Windows are important character defining features because of significant detailing as in decorative windows, or because they help to define a pattern through the use of voids (see Pattern and Rhythm). Window design will vary with the architectural styles within the Chihuahuita Historic District.

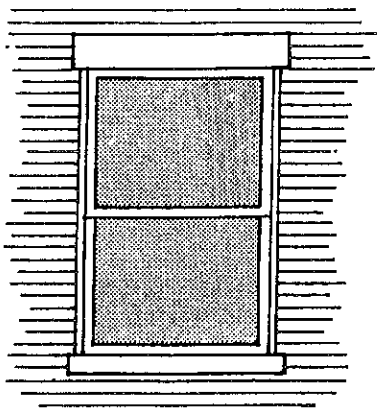


Wood, Double-Hung Windows

Windows should be repaired rather than replaced. In most cases this will simply entail removing old paint, installing new weather striping, and then repainting. If windows are damaged beyond repair, replacement windows should match the type, style, material and finish of the original. Do not plug, cover, and/or widen windows if they are on the exterior walls of the original structure.

In Chihuahuita, however, window treatment is usually basic and less ornate. Frames, lintels, and sills should preferably be constructed of wood. Metal alternatives may be used if finished. The finish must be in character with the overall appearance of the structure and adequately complement its' style.

Storm windows should look like part of the building rather than something tacked on. Well proportioned storm windows can be installed without causing adverse visual effect. Color, shape, and general appearance of storm windows should correspond to the inner windows as closely as possible. Avoid using unpainted aluminum, and other unpainted types of storm windows, that may disturb the character of the building.

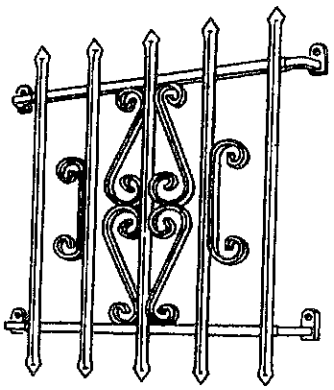


OPENINGS: Security Considerations

Crime in El Paso and the Chihuahuita Historic District has become an important factor for citizens to contend with. The security measure most visible in Chihuahuita, as well as throughout the city, are "security bars." Originally, bars and/or grillwork was more of a decorative treatment found in Mediterranean style architecture. Regardless of whether bars are used for security and/or decoration, improper design and color can adversely affect the architectural style/design of a structure.

Ideally, bars should be installed on the interior of the building envelope. This procedure, however, is not always feasible. Bars can also be mounted within the window opening on the exterior of the building. Each case will have to be considered individually, in order to determine the impact of bar installation on the structure.

Avoid using complex, ornate bar designs. Simple bar designs will compliment a structure far better than ornate patterns.



A permit for bar installation must be obtained from the City Department of Public Inspection. Public Inspection will approve only those grill designs, in which the grills over the bedroom windows can easily be pushed open from the inside. This is a precautionary measure in the case of fire.

OPENINGS: DOORS

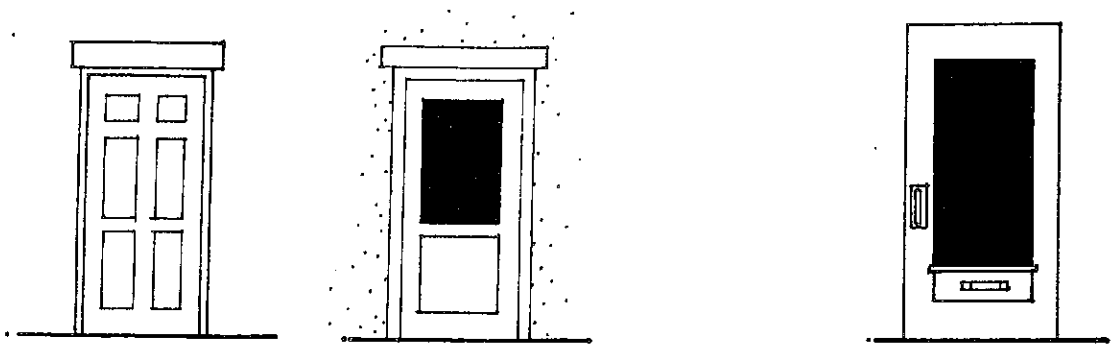
Doors are important elements contributing to the character of structures. Proportion, composition in elevation, detail and trim are all essential to the overall scheme.

If possible, original doors should be retained. This includes original hardware such as doorknobs, hinges and pulls. Do not widen doorways or attempt to cut new ones, on the exterior walls of the original structure.

If existing doors are beyond repair, new ones should be installed. New doors should match original materials and should also be similar in design.

Doors appropriate to the Chihuahuita Historic District:

Acceptable

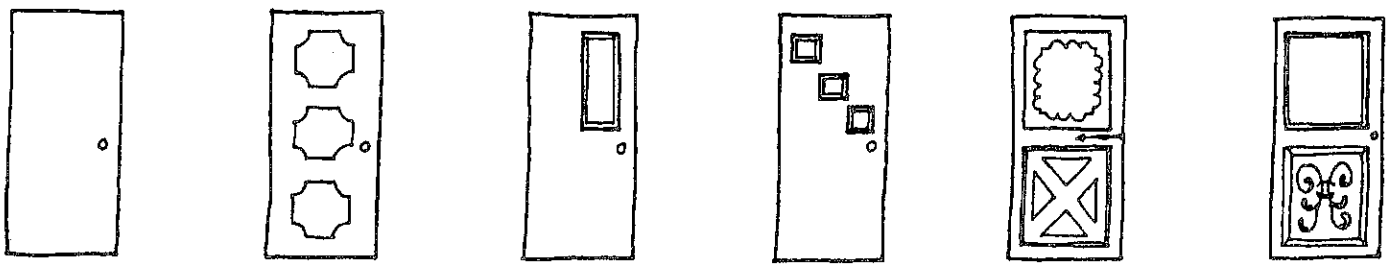


Residential

Commercial

Flat surfaced and contemporary doors with small decorative windows should be avoided.

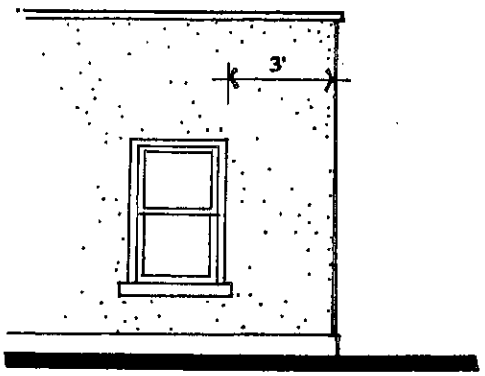
Not Acceptable



Like windows, storm doors should appear to be part of the building. Storm doors can be installed without causing adverse visual impact. Converted storm units (those with sliding, stationary glass and screen), can be used if they are proportionally correct. If possible, storm doors and windows should be set back from the surface of the exterior frame, and should be painted to minimalize their visual presence.

THREE FOOT RULE

Respect and protect the integrity of adobe style buildings. Windows and doors should not be placed within three feet of the outside corner of the structure, for in practice, the corner is load-bearing.



FOUNDATIONS

All buildings have foundations of one kind or another; wooden post and beam, rock, or cinder block for example. The majority of the structures found in the Chihuahuita Historic District, however, do not have exposed foundations. The exception is the El Paso Laundry and some adobe buildings. In these cases a thick coating of cement or stucco has been applied to the bottom courses to protect them from water damage.

The finished skin of the structure should run to the grade line or below it as required by building codes. Isolation joints are permitted at the floor line for the purpose of complying with code requirements. It is recommended that joints be finished with a color(s) that compliments the structure.

AUXILIARY BUILDINGS

An auxiliary building is a free standing structure near the primary building. A garage, for example, would be considered an auxiliary building. Since most auxiliary buildings were usually built at the same time and in the same style as the primary structure, they contribute to the architectural character of the property. Same attention to detail should be taken while planning construction for a secondary structure as was taken for the primary structure. In respect to modernization, the most common element impacted is the door. Original doors should be repaired, but if replacement is necessary, new doors should match the original design as closely as possible. (See Doors)

MATERIALS AND FINISHES

Much of a structure's character is determined by the way materials and finishes are combined. The character of the Chihuahuita Historic District should be preserved through proper design and construction practices.

MATERIALS: Masonry

Appropriate masonry for the Chihuahuita Historic District includes brick, stucco finishes or synthetic coatings, and adobe.

Adobe is part of the southwest tradition of wall construction. Adobe bricks are essentially composed of three elements: 20-30% is caliche or clay, the bonding agent; 50-60% sand or fine gravel for compressive strength, and 3% organic fiber (straw, grass, etc.) used as an agent to prevent cracking during curing. Although water is another important element, it evaporates as the brick dries. Adobe structures reflect the durability this type of masonry has to offer. There are several adobe structures within the Chihuahuita Historic District dating from the 1800s that exemplify this durability. Although keeping water out of adobe walls can be a principle problem, routine maintenance will help to preserve a structure. Any rehabilitation effort and all new construction should refer to the City of El Paso Adobe Code, Ch. 18 Section 8.160.

Masonry requires little maintenance. Adobe and brick, however, are the most easily damaged and/or destroyed materials as result from improper cleaning and repair methods, such as sand blasting.

It is necessary to clean masonry surfaces and repoint mortar joints every 50 to 60 years or when deterioration occurs. Masonry should be cleaned with low pressure water combined with detergents, and scrubbed with natural bristle brushes. There are also many

chemicals available that can be used to remove paint gently, including "spray on-peel off" to "paint on-wash off".

Before cleaning any building, consult local experts on restoration who can help to research the surface of the buildings and determine the safest and most efficient cleaning method. **Sandblasting causes irreparable damage to brick, adobe and stucco finishes.**

If masonry is beyond repair, use similar materials that match the color, size and texture of the material being replaced. Mortar should also duplicate the composition, color, texture, joint size and joint profile of the original construction. If a brick surface has previously been stuccoed, it should probably remain stuccoed since removal may damage the underlying masonry.

It is recommended that the services of a reputable building contractor and a consulting structural engineer, be obtained prior to repair or replacement of major structural support members.

MATERIALS: Wood

With the availability of brick and adobe, very little wood construction is found within the Chihuahuita Historic District. Wood is predominantly used in new construction of framework. Wood is also used for highlighting. For example, it is commonly used for trimming around windows and doors. When working with exposed wood elements, original materials should be maintained where at all possible.

If surface paint must be removed, safe chemical compounds are available to do so. Check for leaks. Undetected moisture may penetrate behind the exterior surface of the building causing insect growth. More importantly, undetected moisture may cause rot and lead to eventual wood decay.

If wood is deteriorated beyond repair, replace with wood to match the existing as close as possible. Metal, vinyl, asbestos, and other synthetic materials are inappropriate, although some of these may be considered on an individual basis. Metal, vinyl, and synthetic materials may be used when a) proposed materials match existing material, b) original detailing is not altered, c) window and door trim is properly detailed, d) unique finishes are not covered or damaged.

MATERIALS: Metals

Like wood, very little exterior metal has been used for construction within the Chihuahuita Historic District. For the most part, metal is used for stair railings, balconies and windows. Metal is used for protection over windows and doors.

Metal functioning as structural hardware can also be decorative when used as a highlight on wood construction. For example, metal wood connectors used to support beams and columns, or as hardware with a black metal finishes on wooden gates.

COLOR

Color is one of the most personal decisions facing property owners. There are general guidelines, however, that should be taken into consideration. Before painting, keep in mind the relationship that buildings have to one another on a street. The color of one building can set the tone for an entire street and can either blend or clash with neighboring structures.

The natural color of originally exposed materials should be maintained. It is not appropriate to paint, stucco, or spray texture on brick. It is recommended to clean brick never to paint over it.

MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT

Mechanical, electrical and telephone equipment, as well as other obtrusive elements and/or structures, should be screened from view. Obtrusive structures include satellite dishes, air conditioning units, and radio and television antennae.

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODES

Most structures that are 50 years and/or older fail to meet the standard requirements of modern health and safety codes. Plumbing, for example, that was installed in the early 1900s might meet current codes, but pipes will more than likely be in need of repair and/or replacement.

Electrical and mechanical systems are other important considerations in respect to safety. For example, electrical wiring was originally wrapped in cloth, as opposed to modern plastics commonly used today. In addition, older circuits were not designed to accommodate modern appliances such as microwaves, stereos, televisions and specialty lighting.

It is important to check code compliance for fire prevention, building construction, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, not only for new construction, but for responsible maintenance as well.

Guidelines for Non-Residential Buildings

Storefronts
Signs
Parking

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The guidelines and recommendations previously mentioned apply to all commercial structures. Site development, building elements, materials and finishes, modernization, etc., are all applicable to commercial properties but may require modification in certain cases.

STOREFRONTS

Brick work, pressed metal decorations, awnings, and large, wood framed display windows are important storefront elements. Storefronts are the predominant elements of a commercial streetscape and should be restored whenever possible. If materials and/or elements are beyond repair, replacing materials should match the originals as close as possible.

Storefronts should be fabricated from wood, but metal storefronts will be acceptable provided that:

- frames are painted
- the design complements the architectural style of the facade and the surrounding area
- entry doors complement the structure's architectural style

Security grill work should be installed in such a manner that assembly, and the grill work itself, does not detract/disturb from the storefront and its facade.

SIGNS

SIGNS

Signs are any public display boards bearing information or advertising. Chapter 20.66 of the El Paso Municipal Code specifically regulates design, color, material, height, location, and size of signs within the city. There are two types of signs: on-premise (those signs advertising the actual business) and off-premise (billboards).

These guidelines present recommendations for both signage types, and cover a few of the basic sign regulations only. A copy of the sign ordinance is included in the Appendix and should be reviewed before making any decisions.

LOCATION

In respect to historic districts, Ch. 20, Section 66.230 of the sign ordinance specifically identifies areas restricted from signage:

> No off-premise signs are permitted within the boundaries of the district and no off-premise signs shall be installed within 250 feet of the center line of streets forming the boundaries of the district.

(Existing nonconforming signs should refer to Ch. 20 Section 66.150 of the sign ordinance.)

Signs should not hide or cover any significant detailing and/or architectural features of the building. On-premise signage should not cover windows, doors, or air vents. On-premise signs should be located in close proximity to the activity it is identifying. In most cases, the best location is usually above, on, and/or near the front door.

SIZE

Signs shall not exceed thirty square feet in all commercial and manufacturing districts, and should not exceed six feet in height.

MATERIALS

Signs constructed for landmark buildings or sites must be made of materials attributed to the era in which the building or site was constructed. Plastics are not permitted.

NUMBER

For single tenant buildings there may be a maximum of one sign for each street frontage per landmark structure or site. For multi-tenant buildings, one sign is allowed for each storefront tenant.

ILLUMINATION/MOTION

Neon is permissible if implemented appropriately.
Flashing, backlit, intermittent of moving light or lights are prohibited.
Twirling and/or revolving signs are prohibited.

COLOR/DESIGN

Colors should compliment the building and/or the surrounding area.
Flourescents should be avoided.
Designs should be artistic, innovative, yet compatible with the building and/or the surrounding area.
Lettering should not exceed 40% of the total area.

BANNERS/AWNINGS

Banners are prohibited, with the exception that they may be used for a period not exceeding 10 days for grand openings and charitable functions only.
Signage should be limited to the drop flaps of the awning.
Awnings made of fabric are more appropriate to the Chihuahuita area, and colors should coordinate and compliment the building, adjacent buildings, and the general vicinity.

WALL SIGNS

A minimum border of three feet is required between the sign and the sides and the top of the building wall.
There must be a minimum clearance of at least eight feet, between the bottom of the sign and the ground level of the building wall.
Signs mounted perpendicular to the front facade of the building should not be attached above the sill of the top story window.
Signs may be placed on bland wall surfaces only.

FREESTANDING SIGNS

These signs may be placed in the front yard no closer than 5 feet to the property line; the setback shall be 15 feet where the property line is located at the curb line.
Signs shall be pedestrian oriented and should not detract from any historic landmarks.
There must be 35 feet of spacing between freestanding signs.
Freestanding auxiliary signs should not exceed 2.5 feet in height and 3 square feet in area.

PROJECTING SIGNS

Double-faced projecting wall signs must have a minimum nine foot clearance between the bottom of the sign and the ground level.
Projecting signs are prohibited at the intersection of building corners, with the exception if they are at right angles to a building front.

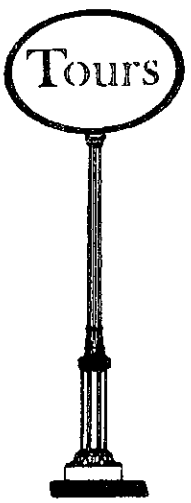
"All signs are subject to review by the El Paso Historic Landmark Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness." (Ch. 20 section 66.350k.)

EXAMPLES OF SIGNS

Band Sign

Shingle Sign

Freestanding Sign



PARKING

Follow these guidelines in designing parking for commercial properties.

Place the parking area where it will have minimal visual impact on the area. Commercial parking should generally be located to the rear of the property. Parking areas should not be placed in front or side yards.

Parking presently located in front of a structure should be screened with compatible fencing materials and/or landscaping. (See Landscaping and Fencing.) The combining of vegetation with fencing materials will enhance the quality of the site.

Guidelines for New Construction

Infill Construction
Additions

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

There is currently a small amount of undeveloped land within the Chihuahuita Historic District. New construction and design should not detract or adversely affect existing historic properties in any way.

New construction may be defined in two ways; new infill construction on vacant land or the building of additions to an existing building. In either case, all of the general guidelines previously mentioned should be adhered to. Any new construction must be compatible in size, texture, color, design, proportion and detail to adjacent buildings and streetscapes, and must follow the specific architectural styles designated appropriate for that particular zone. Incorporating existing architectural features with new design elements can contribute added interest and compatibility.

Infill Construction

New structures should respect the integrity of existing buildings. Existing historic structures and streetscape need be taken into consideration before designing new infill construction. Setbacks, proportion, rhythm, and building elements should all be addressed. As previously stated, infill construction must follow the architectural styles deemed appropriate for that particular zone.

Additions

"New additions should be planned so that they are constructed to the rear of the property or on a non-character defining elevation." According to the Standards for Rehabilitation, new additions should be designed and constructed so that the character-defining features of buildings are not radically changed, obscured, damaged, or destroyed in the process of rehabilitation. Do not add on top of an original historic structure. Rather, add to a more recent addition, or start a new one-to-two story addition on the side or rear of the building.

Additions should complement the original structure, but not necessarily attempt to duplicate or copy it. The older structure should be identifiable from the new addition.

MAINTENANCE

Property owners should practice general upkeep in order to maintain structures and/or properties. Buildings should be preserved against decay, deterioration and structural defects. General maintenance considerations include roofs and ceilings, walls and fences, and foundations.

Ceilings, roofs and roof supports that sag, split or buckle due to deterioration or defective materials, should be repaired and/or replaced.

Walls, partitions, and fencing that lean, split, buckle or are crumbling, should also be repaired and/or replaced. Loose plaster should be replastered before any possible deterioration occurs. Again, reasons for such occurrences may be a result of deterioration or defective materials.

Faults in a building or structure that render it structurally unsafe should be repaired as soon as possible. Other structural defects, such as damaged columns for example, should also be corrected as soon as possible.

It is also recommended that waterproofing and weather protection be included in maintenance. Protect a structure by waterproofing exterior walls, roofs, foundations, floors, windows, and doors. Exterior walls should be repainted when necessary, or other protective coverings should be used to protect a structure from weather beating elements.

Office Procedure

Certificate of Appropriateness
Certificate of Demolition

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Created in 1978, the Historic Landmark Commission (HLC) is responsible for reviewing requests for modifications, alterations, additions, new infill construction, and demolitions of historic structures and/or of any structure located within a historic district. It is essential to identify and define the scope of the project in the request. **New construction** is the construction of new structures or additions. For example, building a new home or adding a room to an existing building. **Rehabilitation** is the repair and/or replacement of general building elements. For example, roofs, windows, wall finishes, etc. It might also be an attempt to bring a building back up to code, using original and/or similar materials. **Maintenance** refers to general upkeep. (Exception - changing color(s) of a structure.) The following describes the steps of the application process, once the scope of work has been identified by the applicant.

1. Identify if the property is located within the Chihuahuita Historic District. Then identify what zone it falls under. Identify whether it is a non-contributing, a contributing or a landmark structure.

1a. Identify ownership and legal description.

FILL OUT CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION FORM, FROM THE OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

2. Prepare application and necessary documents for the intended scope of work:

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

I. New Construction:

1. Scope of work

2. Drawings (2 sets) to include the following:
   -Site plan clearly indicating location of structure and site improvement elements.
   -Floor plans.
   -Elevations indicating finishes of all four sides of the structure.
   -Roof plan should identify material, roof slope, mechanical elements, and chimneys if intended.
   -Details of architectural elements impacting the appearance and/or character of the structure
3. Photographs
4. Sample materials
5. Description of proposed work

II. Rehabilitation: Provide the documentation that directly relates to the scope of work

1. Scope of work
2. Drawings (2 sets) to include the following:
   -Site plan clearly indicating location of structure and scope of work
   -Floor plans of structure impacted by scope of work
   -Full elevations of structure impacted by scope of work
   -Roof plans (if applicable) indicating roofing material
   -Details of architectural elements impacting the appearance and/or character of the structure
3. Photographs
4. Sample materials

III. Maintenance:

1. Scope of work
2. Photographs of areas to be worked on, clearly identifying the existing structure.
3. Submit application and all necessary documentation to the Office of Historic Preservation, on the first Tuesday of every month. All documentation must be complete before the Historic Landmark Commission can consider it for review.

4. Requests for general maintenance, new construction, and rehabilitation of non-conforming and non-contributing structures will be reviewed by the Office of Historic Preservation. Once approval is granted, obtain all necessary permits from the Department of Public Inspection, in order to begin work. Should the applicant disagree with the decision made by the Office of Historic Preservation, the applicant may appeal to the Historic Landmark Commission. The HLC must take action within 60 days from the date first submitted the request to the Office of Historic Preservation. The HLC meets on the third Tuesday of every month, at City Hall.

   OUTCOMES OF HCL REVIEW:

   -Approval with no stipulations
   -Approval with stipulations
   -Deferred to sub-committee for further study
   -Re-submittal
   -Denial

   Should the applicant disagree with the decision of the HLC, he has the right to appeal to City Council within 30 days from the date of action taken by the HLC.

   The City Council decision is binding and final.

   Failure to appeal within the prescribed time will automatically make the HLC decision binding and final.

5. After receiving project approval, the applicant shall secure all necessary building permits from the department of Public Inspection, in order to begin work.

*If drastic changes are made during the scope of work, re-submittal for approval is required. Failure to comply with approved drawings and scope of work will revoke the Certificate of Appropriateness.

CERTIFICATE OF DEMOLITION

Once a property is demolished it is gone forever and can never be replaced. The demolition of any structure is a dangerous alteration, causing permanent change and damage to the character of an area. Plans to demolish a structure in part or in whole should be avoided until attempts have been made to work with the existing structure, or before approval has been granted by the Historic Landmark Commission.

An application for a Certificate of Demolition must be submitted to the Office of Historic Preservation. Information should include but not be limited to photographs, drawings, and a written description detailing the scope of work.

After receiving project approval, secure the necessary permit from the Department of Public Inspection, in order to begin demolition.

APPENDIX I

The Chihuahuita Historic District shall consist of all those areas within the following described legal description:

SANTA FE ADDITION

1. All of Block B, and vacated Leon Street
2. Lots 1-8, Block C
3. Lots 1-12, Block D (all of block)
4. Lots 7-23, Block E (all of block)
5. Lots 1-24, Block F (all of block)
6. Lots 1-24, Block G (all of block)
7. Lots 1-6, Lots 11-15, Block H
8. Portion of Block 8
   39 feet on Canal Street X 85 feet, beginning 419 feet northwest of southeast corner
9. Portion of Block 8
   29 feet on Canal Street X 85 feet beginning 390 feet northwest of southeast corner except the triangle in the northeast corner (22.50 feet x 14 feet x 26.50 feet).

CAMPBELL ADDITION

1. Lots 1-20, Block 62 (all of block)
2. Lots 1-10, Block 63
3. Lots 5-12, Block 43
4. Portions of lots 13-17, block 43
   (The southern boundary line being a line 30 feet and parallel to the northern Texas Highway Department R.O.W. line.)
5. The Chihuahuita Park site
   (The southern boundary being 40 feet and parallel to the proposed line, said boundary line beginning from a point being the northwest corner of lot 16 on the west side of the railroad tracks in block 63 to a point being the southeast corner of lot 1, corner of lot 1, block Santa Fe Addition.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adobe Codes: A guide to the codes of Arizona, California, Texas and New Mexico. Adobe News, Inc. 1985

"A Short History of South El Paso." Department of Planning, Research and Development. 1967

Border Boom Town. Oscar J. Martinez

Chihuahuita: Forgotten, but not gone. Freddy Morales

Design Guidelines for El Paso's Historic Districts. Department of Planning, Research and Development for the City of El Paso. July, 1988.

Desert Immigrants. Mario T. Garcia. 1981.

El Paso's Historic Districts. Department of Planning, Research and Development for the City of El Paso. September, 1986.

El Paso in Pictures. Frank Mangan.

Pass of the North. C. L. Sonnichsen. 1968.

Revitalization Plan for the South El Paso Project Area. Department of Planning, Research and Development for the City of El Paso. 1976.

"The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings." U. S. Department of Interior, National Park Services, Preservation Assistance Division. Washington, D.C., 1979.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mayor	Suzanne S. Azar
City Council	Gene Finke David W. Chew Tony Ponce Arves E. Jones, Sr. Mateele B. Rittgers Jay J. Armes
City Plan Commission	Ray Mancera, Chairman Steven Anderson Richard Castro Edward Daley Jack Hammond Juliet Hart Annette Means Liz Rogers Angel Romero Joe Rubio, Executive Secretary
El Paso Historic Landmark Commission	Gary Sapp, Chairman Cynthia Anderson Sheri Fashing Bart Fischer Rex Golston Ricardo Gonzalez Ellen Harrison Martin Jorgenson W.E. Kuykendall Johnny Lopez Deborah Martin H.L. Mijares, Jr. Susan Schwartz Florence Villareal
Department of Planning	Nestor Valencia, Director Nat Campos Nancy Gutierrez Aliné Herrera Alfonso Tellez