

A DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR HISTORIC STRUCTURES

SITE SPECIFIC SETTING

Historic Fabric

This chapter began by describing the historic “fabric” of La Verne as the result of the interweaving of many different forces — the railroads, citrus industry, the Brethren churches, and the university. But the historic fabric remains as it is because of the City’s own decisions.

La Verne’s decision makers have used their zoning power to protect the area. Compared to other San Gabriel Valley cities, Lordsburg neighborhoods suffer few of the intrusions created by 1950s and later “dingbat” apartment buildings (that is, buildings of no architectural distinction designed to maximize coverage of a site). Redevelopment has been applied without the use of eminent domain. An increasing interest in historic preservation has led the City to develop incentives for sensitive rehabilitation.

Physical reminders of La Verne’s social fabric are significant. The strongest threads are the Brethren churches and the University of La Verne, as well as commercial buildings and residences that lend character to the neighborhood. The fabric itself includes block after block of bungalows built between 1900 and 1930, interspersed with later residences. These physical reminders comprise the Lordsburg heritage.

Heritage Infrastructure in Lordsburg

Heritage infrastructure in Lordsburg consists of street grid and alleys, building lots, sidewalks and parkways, and street trees. They represent the traditional grid system, which has for the most part been retained.

The grid system that was used for the layout of Lordsburg was typical of the rectilinear plan employed by the railroad companies when they plotted new communities along their burgeoning systems. The companies track formed the main span of the community. The business district was located at the center of the town. The commercial blocks were laid straddling the tracks. The lots in the business center were laid out in long narrow lots that provided all commercial buildings with frontage on streets that ran perpendicular to the train line. Adjacent to the business district were residential districts. In general, the houses fronted on streets that ran parallel to the tracks. The least desirable lots were located near the railroad. The lots were small because they would accommodate only modest houses. Further back from the rail line and the commercial district the lots were more generous in anticipation of the larger homes for the “average” resident. The largest lots which were meant to accommodate the most commodious homes were laid out adjacent to the rural landscape. The social stratification of the community was set even before the town was settled. It is important to note that while the town plan for Lordsburg clearly laid out the business and the residential pattern of the community, there is nothing inherent in the plan that provides specifically for the industrial, religious, educational, recreational or political life of the town.

Street Grid

The Lordsburg townsite that was laid out in 1887-1888 provided for a grid system of blocks that were laid out parallel to the tracks of the Santa Fe Railroad. Streets running north and south were given alphabetical designations starting with A Street at the western edge of the city. The streets running east and west were numbered from one to eight. The railroad track ran down the center of Palomares Avenue, along the north side of what is now Arrow Highway.

The street grid has generally remained intact within the center of Lordsburg with a few exceptions. As the campus of the University of La Verne expanded, the original streets were either integrated into the intra-campus street system or completely removed. On the east side of Lordsburg, new housing tracts built after World War II replaced the grid system with cul-de-sacs and interior streets. Second Street was laid out as a cul-de-sac when the tract east of I Street was laid out in lots. Third Street, which had the traditional lot layout, forms a dead end at the border with a tract that was laid out with lots that open onto Madison Avenue.

Alleys

Although the original townsite plan does not show alleys, the older blocks in Lordsburg are laid out with an alley that runs parallel to the street frontage. The alleys were generally not continued on the east side of I Street when the land was subdivided into lots after World War II.

Building Lots

The original blocks in Lordsburg were laid out so that lots would face a number street except for the streets planned to be the commercial center of the community and the larger suburban lots at the periphery of the townsite. D and E Streets, between south First Street (Walnut Street) and north Fourth Street (Bonita Avenue), were subdivided so that commercial buildings could be built creating the business center of the town. The lots were approximately 23 feet wide. The smallest residential lot was 25 feet x 140 feet. They were located adjacent to the central business district. Lots that were 50 feet x 140 feet were located around the central residential core. At the edge of the townsite lots were laid out so that some faced a number street and some faced a letter street.

The actual subdivision of Lordsburg follows the 1887-1888 survey generally. One change to the original plan is the subdivision laid out by Henry L. Kuns. He altered the lots he subdivided in order to allow all lots to face Eoline Park (now Kuns Park), which formed a central open space. An additional north-south street (now Magnolia Street) was created to provide frontage on the west side of the park.

Sidewalks and Parkway

When the City began to lay out concrete curbs and sidewalks in late 1910 or early 1911, it also provided a parkway for the planting of street trees between the street and the sidewalks. The concrete sidewalks that were originally built in Lordsburg were scored to create a twenty-four inch grid. Concrete sidewalks built later in the century were scored using either a forty-eight or sixty inch grid. The maintenance of the street, curb, parkway, trees and sidewalk was the responsibility of the City. The practice of installing parkways continued until the 1950s when builders and developers stopped building parkways and then also eliminated sidewalks. The discontinuity of parkways affected the planting of street trees. The City’s 1989 general plan calls for such parkways to be included in new development at the traditional location (adjoining the curb). Today’s codes also require the property owner to maintain sidewalks.



Heritage Residence Area. The residential neighborhoods of Lordsburg represent a unique blending of well maintained older homes and a regular sidewalk/street grid” planted with mature street trees. Homes and residential streets developed in the 1950’s and early 1960’s also contribute to the residential heritage of Lordsburg.

GUIDELINES
&
PRINCIPLES

Lordsburg Heritage Preservation
and Rehabilitation Guidelines

The Lordsburg Heritage and Preservation Guidelines are designed to preserve the original character of the infrastructure, buildings and landscape features in Lordsburg built from 1888 to 1960. The Guidelines apply to all projects affecting the infrastructure, buildings and landscape features in the LORDSBURG SPECIFIC PLAN area.

Precise Plan Requirement

Alterations and additions to heritage buildings shall be reviewed as set forth in Chapter 18.16 of the *La Verne Municipal Code* (Development Review). In making the required findings, the Community Development Department, Development Review Committee or Council (“decision making body” in future references) shall certify that additions, alterations and new construction proposed are consistent with this specific plan.

Incentive Measures

Notwithstanding any other provision of the La Verne Municipal Code or resolutions of Council, the decision making body may, as part of its approval, incorporate incentive measures including (but not limited to) any of the following:

1. A reduction in building permit fees not to exceed 50 percent where the decision-making body certifies that the remodeling or construction is fully consistent with these guidelines;
2. Free architectural or technical assistance provided by the City’s designated-authorized architect, seismic engineer, or historic preservation staff not to exceed five hours’ maximum time;
3. Assistance in the preparation of forms and documents for submittal to the State Office of Historic Preservation, National Register of Historic Places, or other preservation agency where such documents are a condition of approval;
4. Subject to Council approval, execution of a Mills Act contract offering property tax relief in exchange for a specified-term agreement to preserve the structure(s) and features of the property;
5. Rehabilitation loans and grants, provided that all normal and customary City requirements for such grants have been met by the applicant;
6. City installation of a plaque designating the structure, *where the structure has previously been granted landmark status by the Council*. A “heritage structure” designation in this plan shall not imply landmark status in the absence of Council designation.

Conditions and Approval

The decision making body shall have all normal and customary authority to impose conditions of approval ensuring the protection of heritage buildings. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, any conditions which may otherwise be adopted by the City Council in a preservation ordinance, or which are otherwise authorized by the City’s general plan. These include, but are not limited to, documentation of history, archival photographic and plan documentation, façade easements, interpretive exhibits or displays, impact fees, or other similar conditions.

Preservation

All heritage buildings shall be preserved. Specific standards for the preservation of heritage buildings may be found in the section of this plan entitled *Architectural Preservation Standards* at the end of this chapter.

Use

Heritage buildings should continue to serve their present or historical use wherever feasible. New uses for the heritage buildings shall be permitted if the character-defining features of the building are preserved. Adaptive and mixed use is strongly encouraged when the present or historical use is not feasible.

Demolition

1. No demolition of a heritage building shall be permitted without City approval.
2. Environmental review shall be required as part of the procedure prior to the issuance of a demolition permit.
3. Demolition of character-defining features shall not be permitted.
4. Demolition of non-character-defining features and non-original features will be permitted if they do not impact character-defining features.
5. Demolition of non-character-defining features and non-original features will be permitted with City approval.

Moving

1. Heritage buildings should be preserved on their present site.
2. A conditional use/relocation permit, with appropriate environmental documentation, shall be required as part of the procedures prior to issuance of a permit to move a structure in the historic district.
3. Moved heritage buildings shall be relocated in an environment that has buildings with the same or similar character-defining features.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR HISTORIC STRUCTURES

Maintenance

- 1. All original character-defining features of a heritage building shall be maintained in an appropriate manner in order to preserve the features.
- 2. When a character-defining feature can no longer be maintained, it shall be replaced with a new member that matches the appearance of the original object.

Alterations

- 1. Alterations to heritage buildings shall be permitted if the changes do not affect the character-defining features of the building.
- 2. No exterior alterations of heritage buildings will be permitted without City approval.

Additions

- 1. All additions to heritage buildings shall be sympathetic to the character-defining features of the heritage buildings. Additions shall be recognizable as a product of their own time.

Commercial Structures

Rehabilitation of Heritage Commercial Structures

Many of the existing commercial structures in Lordsburg that were constructed before 1950 have had the exterior extensively remodeled. In most cases the original appearance of the buildings has been obliterated by new display windows, entrance doors, and surface finishes.

When owners of existing heritage commercial buildings wish to renovate the exterior of their building, the following guidelines must be met:

- 1. All existing historic elements on the exterior of the building shall be preserved.
- 2. All new work shall be limited to the removal of existing non-historic fabric and the installation of architectural details that restore the original appearance of the building or a significant period in the history of the building.
- 3. The original or significant appearance of the building shall be based on historic documentary evidence or physical evidence. Documentary evidence may include written material, photographs or drawings.
- 4. The original or significant configuration of the exterior walls shall be restored.
- 5. New stories shall not be built on top of existing heritage buildings.
- 6. The original or significant finish materials on the building shall be restored.

- 7. The location of the original door and window openings shall be restored.
- 8. The original door frames and doors shall be restored.
- 9. The original window frames and windows shall be restored.
- 10. Signs for the building shall be in keeping with the types of historic signs appropriate for the period of the building.
- 11. Exterior lighting shall follow the type of historic lighting appropriate for the period of the building.
- 12. Original outdoor walkways and paving designs and landscaping concepts should be preserved.

Rehabilitation of Non-Heritage Commercial Structures
Within the Historic Commercial District

The non-contributing commercial structures shall retain their original appearance. The rehabilitation of a non-contributing building shall retain the original design of the building unless the owner is prepared to carry out an extensive rehabilitation that would be similar to the construction of a new building. In this case the owner would be permitted to utilize the guidelines for the construction of a new commercial building in the Heritage Commercial District.

Construction of New Commercial Structures
Within Historic Commercial District

New commercial structures constructed within the Third and D Street heritage commercial district shall be designed to be compatible with the heritage style of the commercial buildings constructed between 1910 and 1940. The design of the new building shall utilize the Commercial Design Guidelines, and be consistent with the architectural vocabulary of the historic commercial buildings in Lordsburg (see illustrations and discussion on the following pages).

Construction of a new commercial building in the heritage commercial district shall be permitted under the following conditions:

- 1. All general conditions and requirements of the La Verne Municipal Code are met; and
- 2. The owners wish to remove a non-contributing building and replace it with a new historically consistent commercial structure.

The new building shall be compatible with the original designs of the contributing buildings in the historic commercial district. The design of the new building shall incorporate the following considerations:

- 1. The design shall incorporate the design features of the 1900-1930 commercial class brick buildings or the 1930-1940 Art Deco/Moderne or the Normandy Revival reinforced concrete buildings (see illustrations on the following pages).
- 2. The new buildings shall not incorporate details from both periods.

- 3. The height, width and length of the new building shall be consistent with the original characteristics of the contributing structures.
- 4. A maximum of two stories will be allowed in the new buildings.
- 5. The width of individual shops within a row of shops shall be similar to the contributing buildings.
- 6. The design, proportions and organization of the door, window and transom openings shall be similar to the contributing buildings.
- 7. The exterior wall materials shall be similar to the contributing structures.