

# Glendale Design Guidelines for Residential Buildings in Adopted Historic Districts



*Above: This curved Glendale street has two-story single-family homes with mature landscaping.*

*Below: A Pacific Electric Railway car southbound on Brand Boulevard at Glenoaks Boulevard in Glendale in the 1940s or early 1950s.*



## Setting

This city of Glendale consists of approximately thirty square miles located about six miles north of downtown Los Angeles. It is bounded by the communities of La Canada Flintridge, La Crescenta, and Montrose on the north; Pasadena and Eagle Rock on the east; Atwater on the south; Burbank, Tujunga, and the Los Angeles River on the west.

The Glendale area was carved from the Rancho San Rafael in the "Great Partition" of 1871. The town of Glendale was surveyed and recorded in 1887 during a period of economic boom in Southern California that followed the completion of transcontinental railroad service to the region. The City of Glendale was formally incorporated in 1906. Both small and large annexations of land followed, including the annexation of the City of Tropic in 1918.

The joint mission of the Glendale and Tropic Improvement Associations at the turn of the century was the establishment of an interurban rail line connecting Glendale to Los Angeles. Their goal was finally achieved in 1904 through the investment of Leslie C. Brand. The Los Angeles Railway and Glendale Railroad Company, later becoming part of the Pacific Electric network, provided electric streetcar service between Glendale and downtown Los Angeles along Brand Boulevard. Easy streetcar service, and subsequently freeway access, to Los Angeles focused Glendale's development as a "community of homes."

Residential neighborhoods that were laid out by a single development company often demonstrated a consistency of architectural styles, size, and scale, popular at the time. Other neighborhoods, however, were developed over two or three decades and continued to evolve as newer structures were placed next to older ones and as changes in zoning allowed for more intense development. These neighborhoods exhibit a variety of characteristics that today document the historical trends in population and architectural taste.

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## Single Family Residences

Single-Family residences date from the turn of the twentieth century to the post-war era and consequently display a variety of architectural styles. A few examples date from Glendale's earliest settlement period. Typically, these take the form of simple Folk Victorian, Queen Anne, and Foursquare styles. More prevalent, however, are the Craftsman style bungalows built from approximately 1900 into the mid-1920s.

The Craftsman style was eclipsed after World War I by a variety of Revival styles, including Spanish Colonial and Tudor. The Spanish Colonial Revival style became the dominant architectural style in Southern California during the 1920s. There are several variations, drawing broadly on historical precedents to imagine the California past. As such, late Mission Revival, Andalusian, Churrigueresque, and Adobe Revival styles can all be seen as part of the same movement. Mediterranean and Italian Renaissance Revival houses also drew upon historical precedents in their design and were considered appropriate choices for the Southern California climate. Tudor Revival and French-inspired styles drew on a popular sense of the "picturesque" to create both grand residences and cozy cottages.

Another Revival style used for residential architecture was the American Colonial Revival. The style attained popularity nationally in the late nineteenth century but found its popularity in Southern California during the 1920s and 1930s along with other Revival styles. The style evokes the United States' early history and was created using the stylistic elements common the Georgian, Federal, and Greek Revival styles from the colonial and early national periods of the late 18th and early 19th century.

While construction slowed dramatically in most parts of the country during the 1930s as a result of the Great Depression, Southern California continued to experience a housing boom. Revival style houses continued to be built but often in pared-down versions with simplified details. By the late 1930s, houses often mixed traditional and more modern building materials. Late Revival style and Minimal Traditional houses were built throughout the decade.



*Above: This Craftsman style house is typical of small scale single-family houses in Glendale. Note the palms in the background from a parallel street.*

*Below: The Tudor Revival style is just one of several Period Revival styles popular in Glendale.*



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*Above: This Midcentury Modern home is one of many of Glendale's exceptional modern era residences.*

*Below: Detailed view of the John Derby House in Glendale designed in 1926 by Lloyd Wright.*



Minimal Traditional homes continued to enjoy popularity following World War II which suggests an ongoing appreciation for traditional styles. The development of new suburbs in the postwar period saw the advent of new architectural styles. The Ranch style and Midcentury Modern both took advantage of large suburban parcels to create new low-lying, linear house forms. The Ranch style was more traditional in its design elements while Midcentury Modern emphasized geometric forms and textures. Both styles, however, were usually a single story, accommodated a two-car garage into the design, and celebrated outdoor living. Both styles also enjoyed tremendous popularity throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

## Ecclecticism

Ecclecticism is a term used to define the composite use of various architectural styles in a single building. Architectural styles are, of course, not static. Often, homes are designed with the influences of multiple styles. In other cases, a historic home designed in an early style will have substantial alterations in a later popular style. Still others reflect the transition between styles. Most examples of ecclecticism in Glendale were built in the 1920s and express the exuberance of both the decade's building boom and the architecture of the various Period Revival styles. In addition, housing construction in Southern California continued throughout the Depression and World War II when it had virtually stopped in other parts of the nation. As a result, late and transitional examples of these popular architectural styles can be found in Glendale.

The predominant architectural style is usually reflected in a building's massing and materials. The influence of other styles is more frequently seen in the decorative detail. For example, late examples of the Craftsman bungalow, built in the 1920s, often exhibit Colonial Revival elements such as classical columns and pedimented front porches. Minimal Traditional houses, constructed in Glendale in the 1930s and 1940s, combine the economy of compact massing, modern materials, and spare ornamentation with simplified elements of the Revival styles that were, by then, waning in popularity.

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glendale's residential character

## Multi-Family Residences

Beginning in the mid 1920s, a variety of multi family residential structures emerged including duplexes, fourplexes, apartment buildings and courts. Craftsman-style architecture was a popular choice for early duplexes and some fourplexes. Spanish Colonial Revival style became the prevailing style in the 1920-30s, particularly for courtyard apartment buildings. Courtyard apartment buildings combined features of the single-family residences and high-rise apartment buildings. The earliest form of courtyard housing was the bungalow court, a group of detached units placed around a shared central garden. The bungalow court gave rise to a variety of courtyard housing schemes, which became very popular during the 1920s and 1930s because they provided a "community within a community."

Two- and three-story apartment buildings were also executed in the Revival styles, such as Spanish Colonial, Mission, and Italian Renaissance. The buildings are generally two- or three-story buildings with square plans and flat roofs. Larger apartment buildings were constructed in the post-war period in both Minimal Traditional and Mid-century modern styles.



*Above: Colonial Revival was a popular multi-family style of architecture in the 1920s through the 1940s.*

*Below: Spanish Revival was also a common multi-family architectural expression in Glendale.*

