

Glendale Design Guidelines for Residential Buildings in Adopted Historic Districts

Glossary

The following Glossary is intended as a useful tool for architectural, building, and construction terms used in the document. The selections included are common terms used to refer to features and elements on residential properties. However, this is not a comprehensive glossary of terms. There are several excellent architectural and construction dictionaries available that could be referenced for more complete definitions and information.

Alteration Changes made through the removal and / or addition of building material.

American bond Also called common bond. A brick masonry bonding pattern where every seventh course consists of headers, with all other courses consisting of stretchers.

Arcade A series of arches supported by columns or pillars; a covered passageway.

Arch A construction technique and structural member, usually curved and made of masonry. Composed of individual wedge-shaped members that span an opening and support the weight above by resolving vertical pressure into horizontal or diagonal thrust.

Architrave The lowest part of an entablature, or the molded frame above a door or window opening.

Balconet A low, slightly projecting, ornamental railing around the lower portion of a window; a false balcony.

Balcony A platform projecting from the wall or window of a building, usually enclosed by a railing

Baluster One of a series of small pillars or units of a balustrade; also an upright support of the railing for a stair; balusters can often be decoratively designed.

Balustrade A railing or parapet consisting of a top rail on balusters, sometimes on a base member and sometimes interrupted by posts.

Battered pier A pier that is inclined with respect to the surface of the wall on the face that is not perpendicular to the walls.

Bay A regularly repeated spatial unit of a building or wall as defined by columns, piers or other vertical elements; also a structural projection, most often with windows, expressed on the elevation of a building.

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Bay window A projecting bay with windows which forms an extension to the interior floor space. On the outside, the bay should extend to ground level, in contrast to an oriel window, which projects from the wall plane above ground level.

Belt A horizontal band course on a brick or stone wall; it may be of a different kind of brick or stone.

Board-and-batten siding Vertical siding made up of alternating wide and thin boards where the thin boards cover the joints between the wide boards.

Bonding The repeating arrangement of bricks into patterned rows.

Bracket A projection from a vertical surface providing support under cornices, balconies, window frames, etc.; also sometimes used to describe a metal fastener.

Cantilever A projecting beam, girder, or other structural member that is supported at only one end.

Capital The topmost member of a column or pilaster. It is usually decorated and often carries an architrave.

Casement window A window that is hinged on the side and opens in or out.

Character-defining feature Essential to the perception or understanding of the building; contributes to the special quality of a building or a site, without which the uniqueness is lost.

Chamfer An oblique surface produced by cutting an edge or corner, usually at 45 degrees.

Chimney pot A decorative masonry element placed at the top of a chimney, common on Queen Anne and Tudor Revival buildings.

Clapboards Narrow, horizontal, overlapping wooden boards that form the outer skin of the walls of many wood-frame houses. In older houses, the exposure (the exposed area of each board not overlapped by another board) ranges from four to six inches.

Clerestory An elevated range of windows in a wall that rises above the ridgeline of the primary roof.

Clinker brick A brick that has been deformed in the firing process.

Colonnade A row of columns supporting a beam or entablature.

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Column An upright supporting member, either attached or freestanding, such as a pillar or a post; generally composed of a capital, shaft, and base.

Contributing resource Adds to the historic association, historic architectural qualities, or archaeological values for which an historic district is significant because the resource was present during the period of significance, relates to the documented significant contexts, and possesses integrity.

Corbel A projection from a masonry wall, sometimes supporting a load and sometimes for decorative effect.

Corbeled cap The termination of a brick chimney that projects outward in one or more courses.

Corner board A board which is used as trim on the external corner of a wood-frame structure and against which the ends of the siding are fitted.

Cornice The exterior trim of a structure at the meeting of the roof and wall; usually consists of bed molding, soffit, fascia, and crown molding.

Course In masonry, a layer of bricks or stones running horizontally in a wall.

Cresting Decorative grillework or trim applied to the ridgecrest of a roof, common on Queen Anne style buildings.

Cross gable A gable that is perpendicular to the main axis or ridge of a roof.

Cupola A small, sometimes domed structure surmounting a roof. Found mainly on Italianate and Colonial Revival buildings.

Dentil molding A molding composed of small rectangular blocks run in a row.

Dormer A structure containing a vertical window (or windows) that projects through a pitched roof.

Double-hung sash window A window with two or more sashes; it can be opened by sliding the bottom portion up or the top portion down, and is usually weighted within the frame to make lifting easier

Eave The part of the roof that overhangs the wall of a building.

Elevation Building elements in a vertical plane.

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Entablature Above columns and pilasters, a three-part horizontal section of a classical order, consisting of the cornice at the top, the frieze in the middle, and the architrave on the bottom.

Façade The entire exterior elevation of a building, particularly the front.

Fanlight A window, often semicircular, over a door, with radiating muntins suggesting a fan.

Fascia board A flat board horizontally located at the top of an exterior wall, directly under the eaves.

Fenestration The arrangement or pattern of windows or other openings in the facade of a building.

French door Two doors, composed of small panes of glass set within rectangularly arrayed muntins, mounted within the two individual frames. Usually such doors open onto an outside terrace or porch.

Frieze A horizontal member of a classical entablature, often decorated, located above the architrave and below the cornice.

Gable The vertical triangular portion of the end of a building having a double-sloping roof, usually with the base of the triangle sitting at the level of the eaves, and the apex at the ridge of the roof. The term sometimes refers to the entire end wall.

Gable-on-hip A roof that has a hip as the primary roof form and a gabled element that caps the roof at the ridge line. Also referred to as a Gablet, this element is typical of the Ranch style.

Gambrel roof A roof having two pitches on each side, typical of Dutch Colonial and Colonial Revival architecture.

Gingerbread Highly decorative woodwork with cut out ornament, made with a jigsaw or scroll saw, prominent in Gothic Revival architecture

Glazing A transparent material (such as glass) used to enclose windows.

Header Bricks laid horizontally with their lengths perpendicular to the face of the wall.

Half-timbering In late medieval architecture, a type of construction in which the heavy timber framework is exposed, and the spaces between the timbers are filled with wattle-and daub, plaster, or brickwork.

Hipped roof A roof which slopes upward on all four sides.

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Historic district An ensemble of buildings and their surroundings given a designation due to their significance as a whole; a geographically definable area (urban or rural, small or large) possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, and/or objects united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A district may also comprise individual elements separated geographically, but linked by association or history.

Historic fabric Materials or elements of a building or place, which contribute to its historic character.

Hood molding A decorative molding over a window or door frame, commonly found on Italianate style buildings.

Horizontal rhythm The pattern of solids and voids created by the openings (such as doors and windows) or the repetition of design elements on each floor of a building or series of buildings.

Jerkinhead roof A gable roof truncated or clipped at the apex - also called either a "clipped gable" or "hipped gable" roof. Common in Bungalows and Tudor Revival, and Arts and Crafts style buildings.

Latticework A wood or metal screen composed of interlaces or crossed thin strips.

Leaded glass Small panes of glass, either clear or colored, that are held in place by strips of lead.

Lintel A horizontal beam over an opening in a wall that carries the weight of the structure above.

Mansard roof A roof with two slopes, the lower slope being nearly vertical, often concave or convex in profile. Common to the Italianate and Queen Anne styles.

Massing Arrangement of geometric volumes into a building's shape.

Modillion A scrolled ornamental bracket placed horizontally below a cornice.

Molding A decorative band or strip with a constant profile or section generally used in cornices and as a trim around window and door openings. It provides a contoured transition from one surface to another or produces a rectangular or curved profile to a flat surface.

Monitor A raised structure on a roof with louvers or windows admitting air or light; frequently found on large utilitarian buildings.

Mullion The vertical member of a window or door that divides and supports panes or panels in a series.

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Muntin a small bar separating and holding individual glass panes within a window sash; also found on glazed, multi-paned doors. A secondary member within the window assembly.

Non-contributing resource Does not add to the historic associations, historic architectural qualities, or archaeological values for which an historic district is significant because the resource was not present during the period of significance, does not relate to the documented significant contexts, and does not possess integrity.

Oriel window A window bay that projects from the building beginning above the ground level.

Order In classical architecture, a particular style of column with its entablature, having standardized details generally called Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian.

Palladian window A window divided into three parts: a large arched central window, flanked by two smaller rectangular windows. These are found in Colonial Revival as well as Italianate buildings.

Parapet A wall that extends above the roofline. Common in California Mission style buildings.

Pediment In classical vocabulary, the triangular gable end of the roof above a cornice; also a similar decorative element above a window or door.

Pent roof A small, sloping roof, the upper end of which butts against a wall of a house, usually above the first-floor windows.

Picture window A large, single-pane window, commonly set in a metal frame, that was a common building element of the mid-twentieth century. Unmarred by vertical or horizontal members, the window created a "picture" view from the building's interior.

Pier A member, usually in the form of a thickened wall section, placed at intervals. Provides lateral support or takes concentrated vertical loads.

Pilaster A shallow rectangular column or pier attached to a wall, often modeled on a classical order; frequently found flanking doors or windows.

Pillar A post or column-like support.

Pitch The degree of slope or inclination of a roof. A medium, or average, pitched roof slopes at an angle of between 30 and 45 degrees. These angles roughly translate into rise-over-run ratios of between 6:12 and 12:12.

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Plate glass A sheet of glass ground flat on both surfaces and polished, most often used in windows and mirrors.

Pointed arch Any arch with a point at its apex, common but not restricted to Gothic architecture. Tudor Revival buildings also frequently incorporate pointed arch motifs.

Portico A porch or covered walkway consisting of a roof supported by columns.

Quatrefoil An architectural motif composed of four leaves in a radial pattern; typically refers to an opening for a window; in tracery, in the form of four intersecting circles; most frequently found in Gothic Revival style. Mission Revival style architecture also incorporates this motif.

Quoins Cornerstones of a building, rising the entire height of the wall, and distinguished from the main construction material by size, texture, or conspicuous joining. In masonry construction, they reinforce the corners; in wood construction, they do not bear any load, are made of wood, and imitate the effect of stone or brick.

Rafters The sloping wooden roof-frame members that extend from the ridge to the eaves and establish the pitch of the roof. In Craftsman and Bungalow style buildings the ends of these, called "rafter tails" are often left exposed rather than boxed in by a soffit.

Rehabilitation The act or process of making possible a compatible use of a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions of features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Renovation The act or process of altering or upgrading a building.

Replace in kind Substitute similar or same materials and workmanship.

Restoration The act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration period.

Reversibility A condition which allows removal of an added material or feature and return to the original, without damage to the original.

Ribbon window A continuous horizontal row, or band, of windows separated only by mullions. Used to some extent in Craftsman designs, but more commonly on post-war modern buildings.

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Round arch A semicircular arch, often called a Roman arch.

Rusticated The treatment of masonry to create a rough appearance, usually through sinking joints, beveling edges and artificial texturing of the stone's surface.

Sash Window framework that may be fixed or moveable. If moveable, it may slide, as in a double-hung window; or it may pivot, as in a casement window.

Scale The relationship of parts, their relative size and proportions, to one another and to the human figure.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties A set of standards and guidelines, issued by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, for the acquisition, protection, stabilization, preservation, restoration, and reconstruction of historic properties. The Standards, written in 1976, and revised and expanded in 1983, 1990, and 1995 were developed pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 which directs the Secretary of the Interior to develop and make available information concerning historic properties. The Standards are neither technical, nor prescriptive, but are intended to promote responsible preservation practices. There are four treatments: preservation, rehabilitation, reconstruction and restoration.

Setback The distance between the property line, road, or sidewalk, and the facade of the building.

Shiplap siding Wooden siding tapered along its upper edge where it is overlapped by the next higher courses of siding.

Sidelights The commonly vertical oriented glazed openings surrounding an entry or doorway.

Siding The narrow horizontal or vertical wooden boards that form the outer face of the walls in a traditional wood-frame building. Horizontal wooden siding types include shiplap and clapboard/weatherboard, while board-and-batten is the primary type of vertical siding. Shingles, whether of wood or composite material, are another siding type.

Sill The lowest horizontal member in a frame or opening of a window or door. Also, the lowest horizontal member in a framed wall or partition.

Skirting Siding or latticework applied below the watertable molding on a building.

Soffit The underside of the eaves on a building, particularly the boards enclosing the eaves and covering rafter tails.

Spandrels The roughly triangular-shaped space between two adjoining arches below a line connecting their crowns.

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Stiles One of the vertical members of the frame of a door or window.

Stretcher Bricks laid horizontally with their lengths parallel to the face of the wall.

Stucco A material, usually composed of cement, sand, and lime, applied to a surface to form a hard, uniform covering that may be either smooth or textured. Also, a fine plaster used in decoration and ornamentation of interior walls.

Style Characteristics and decorative elements that form a clear group associated with a specific period or design philosophy.

Surround The molded trim around a door or window.

Swan's neck pediment A pediment with an open apex; each side terminates in curves resembling a swan's neck. Found mainly on Colonial Revival buildings.

Terra cotta A red-brown fired but unglazed clay used for roof tiles and decorative wall covering. These roof tiles are common in the California Mission style. Glazed terra cotta was frequently used for exterior decoration on commercial buildings of the early 20th Century.

Tongue and groove A type of board milled to create a recessed groove along one long side and a corresponding flange along the other that lock together when two or more boards are placed side-by-side. Tongue and groove boards are commonly used for flooring and siding.

Tooling The finish of a mortar joint, composed of depth and angle as well as any decorative pattern.

Transom Horizontal window opening above a door or window.

Tudor arch A four centered pointed arch, characteristic of Tudor style architecture in England in the 15th and 16th centuries.

Turret A small, slender tower, usually corbeled from a corner of a building

Veranda A covered porch or balcony, running alongside a house; the roof is often supported by columns.

Vergeboard An ornamental board, sometimes jigsaw cut, that serves as trim and is attached to the overhanging eaves of a gable roof; sometimes called a bargeboard.

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Vertical Rhythm The pattern of solids and voids created by the openings (such as doors and windows) or decorative elements from floor to floor

Water table A projecting ledge, molding, or string course along the bottom side of a building, designed to throw off rainwater; it usually divides the foundation of a building from the first floor.

Weatherboard siding Siding, usually wooden, consisting of overlapping, narrow boards usually thicker at one edge; also called clapboard siding.

Weeping mortar A decorative use of mortar where the joint is untooled and excess mortar spills out of the joint.

Window Head The upper horizontal cross member or decorative element of a window frame.

Window Lintel The horizontal structural member above a window opening, which carries the load of the wall above it.

Wing A parallel extension to a building.