

8.2 Windows



PURPOSE AND INTENT

Windows strongly define the character of a structure's design. These openings define character through their shape, size, construction, arrangement on the façade, materials, and profile. Important defining features of a window include the sill profile, the height of the rails, the pattern of the panes and muntins, the arrangement of the sashes, the depth of the jamb, and the width and design of casing and the head. In some cases, the color and texture of the glazing are also important. In addition to relating the window components of each building within the windows on the building itself, it is necessary to relate the window components to the windows on the surrounding fabric. The windows on buildings should support local historic traditions and character and a project should contribute to the consistency and quality of neighborhoods.



Most windows found in Los Angeles Historic Districts are wood-frame true divided light windows. True divided light windows have multiple panes of glass. These windows are usually double-hung, fixed, or casement style windows. Double-hung windows have operable sashes that slide vertically. Casement windows open either outwards or inwards away from the wall. In some areas, metal frame casement or fixed divided light windows are common. These windows range from simple one-over-one windows to windows with panes in specialty shapes or leaded and stained glass.

GUIDELINES

1. Preserve the materials and design of historic windows and their surrounds, including hardware.
2. The historic pattern, size, proportion and location of windows on all elevations should be maintained. Filling in or altering the size of historic windows if inappropriate.
3. Windows should be consistent in materials and details throughout. The detailing, type, and quality of materials should be similar on all sides of a building.
4. Adding new windows on the side and rear of a building should, if deemed necessary by the UP HPOZ Board, match the rhythm and scale of existing windows on the structure. Adding new windows on primary façades is inappropriate.



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5. Any window and door openings should align with such openings of the existing structure. Alignment of the top of door/window openings is of particular interest in evaluating the proposed design. Detailing and material of windows and doors should be specified to match existing, such as wood windows with genuine divided lites.

6. Repair windows or doors wherever possible instead of replacing them. Replacement of existing windows should be allowed only when the photographic evidence is provided to the Board by the homeowner that the windows are too deteriorated and cannot be rehabilitated.

7. When replacement of these windows is necessary, replacement windows should match the historic windows in size, shape, arrangement of panes, materials, hardware, method of construction, and profile. True divided-light windows should be replaced with true divided-light windows, and wood windows with wood windows.



8. If a window is missing entirely, replace it with a new window in the same design as the original if the original design is known. If the design is not known, the design of the new window should be compatible with the size of the opening, and the style of the building.

9. The shapes, proportion, orientation, subdivision, and proportion to the exterior surface area should be related and compared to the building and secondly to other buildings on the block.

10. All windows should be in character and consistent with the particular window type appropriate for the architectural style of the building.

11. The installation of 'greenhouse' type windows extending beyond the plane of the facade is inappropriate.



12. If energy conservation is the goal, interior or exterior storm windows, not replacement windows, should be installed. Installation of insulated glass is not appropriate. CA State historic Building Code exempts historic buildings from compliance Title 24 Energy Code standards.

13. Wood framed screens should match the existing window trim in finish color. Aluminum screens are inappropriate.

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14. Awnings and shutters should only be utilized on openings on structures where their use was likely. Awnings and shutters should be similar in materials, design, and operation to those used historically. Awnings should conform to the shape of the window on which they are installed. Aluminum awnings are inappropriate.

15. Burglar or safety bars should only be installed on secondary facades. Bars should match the muntin and mullion patterns of the window on which they are mounted as closely as possible, and should be painted to match the predominant window trim. If burglar or safety bars are requested, they should only be installed on the interior of a window or opening.

16. Bars or grillwork that is original to the structure should be retained.

17. Window modifications may be acceptable to side and rear yards facades on non-historic additions provided that they match and are complimentary to the original building.



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EXEMPTIONS

None

DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO THE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

None



GENERAL BACKGROUND AND ADVICE TO THE APPLICANT



Inappropriate replacement of windows can compromise the integrity of a building and have a serious negative effect on its character. Generally, historic windows should not be replaced unless the applicant provides evidence that all efforts to evaluate the possibility to rehabilitate have been completed and shows that the windows cannot be repaired or rebuilt. If windows must be replaced, the replacement windows should match the originals in dimension, material, configuration and detail. Because it is often difficult to find off-the-shelf windows that will match historic windows in these details, replacing historic windows appropriately often requires having windows custom built.



Maintaining historic windows makes good economic sense, as they will typically last much longer than modern replacement windows. Problems with peeling paint, draftiness, sticking sashes, and loose putty are all problems that are easy to repair. Changing a sash cord, re-puttying a window, or waxing a window track are repairs that most homeowners can accomplish on their own to extend the life of their windows.

Typically, older structures in Los Angeles may have had operable shutters or fabric awnings. Installation of these features on historic structures should only take place if there is evidence that such features existed on the house historically. Some later historic architectural styles, such as the minimal traditional style, may have fixed decorative shutters as a feature of their design, but these types of shutters are not appropriate on most other historic structures.

Please refer to the Appendix for additional assistance and resources.

