

Maple Heights Historic District Design Guidelines



Revised 2025

Design Guidelines Committee:

Neighborhood Members: Kate Crum, Thomas Doak, Jane Goodman, Rose Pawlowski, Lucy Schaich

Bloomington Historic Preservation Commission Members: Sam DeSollar

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Credits

Bloomington Historic Preservation Commission, 2019, 2024

Members of Bloomington City Council, 2019, 2024

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Introduction

This document was developed by residents of the Maple Heights Historic District and the Bloomington Historic Preservation Commission (BHPC) to provide guidelines for maintaining the unique character of the district. The guidelines address potential changes to the exterior appearance of houses and other structures within the neighborhood. They do not address interior changes. These guidelines apply only to properties located within the historic district, established in 2021. Please see the [Maple Heights Historic District map](#) to determine whether your property is in the district.

For properties in the district, a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the BHPC is required for any new construction or exterior alterations, including changes to the size, shape, or placement of the existing or new structure or to the exterior building materials that are [visible from the public way](#) (except for colors or plantings). A COA is **not required** for [in-kind](#) repairs and replacements.

Why is Maple Heights a Historic District?

The Maple Heights Historic District has long been a dynamic area. Just a half mile north of the Showers Brothers Furniture Factory complex in downtown Bloomington, Maple Heights developed out of a need for worker housing near downtown factories during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. However, the story of the neighborhood goes back further to the Blair family, which in 1825 settled the land where the neighborhood is located. Prominent Covenanters in the Bloomington community, the Blair family farmed the land and through the years also played important roles in the Underground Railroad, Indiana University, and local government and development.

As the family sold off portions of the farm beginning in the late 1800s, developers subdivided the land to create plots for prospective homeowners. With the exception of the Blair farmhouse (the house now known as the “Blair House”), which was built around 1860, construction dates of houses within the Maple Heights Neighborhood closely follow the creation of the platted additions, with the earliest of the houses being constructed between 1895 and 1915.

The construction and styles of houses built in Maple Heights were representative of the need for worker housing near the downtown area. As factories and businesses such as the Showers Brothers Furniture Factory and the Nurre Glass Works grew and prospered with the expansion of the rail industry, companies began employing more factory workers throughout the city. This led to an increased need for small, affordable houses located near a worker’s place of business. Maple Heights became an ideal location for families to live affordably while remaining close to most of the major factories into at least the 1930s.

As the neighborhood evolved it welcomed the B-Line Trail and community organizations such as The Overlook. Its proximity to downtown Bloomington still makes Maple Heights an attractive place to live. At the same time, that proximity also makes Maple Heights an attractive

target for development, creating new needs for neighborhood oversight. The Maple Heights Historic District was created so that the unique character of the area would be taken into account when future changes are proposed. The intent of the Maple Heights Historic District guidelines is to maintain the district's livability for residents. Livability can be supported by maintaining affordability and property values as well as the visual compatibility of the neighborhood, fostering energy conservation, promoting aging in place, and sustaining the character of notable and contributing buildings.

In creating this set of design guidelines, the Maple Heights Neighborhood Historic District Design Guidelines Committee consulted guidelines used by similar neighborhoods in Bloomington, especially Prospect Hill, Near West Side, and McDoel Gardens, as well as similar neighborhoods and communities in other states.

The BHPC should seek the input of residents and owners when reviewing projects where the guidelines are applicable.

What do the Maple Heights Historic District Design Guidelines Cover?

The most obvious evidence of a neighborhood's history is the kinds of buildings and structures it contains. These guidelines regulate the demolition of properties, delineate design guidelines for new construction, cover exterior alterations to existing houses and other structures, and address the movement of houses into and out of the district. The guidelines present concepts, alternatives, and approaches that will produce design solutions that recognize the characteristics of the Maple Heights Historic District and bring architectural compatibility between new and existing buildings.

The guidelines are not meant to restrict creativity, but to set up a framework within which sympathetic design will occur. Within the overall framework established by these guidelines, many different design solutions may be appropriate. The underlying goal of the guidelines is to preserve the elements of the district that create its unique character while acknowledging the advantages of reuse, alteration, and repair.

Note: Though HAND staff and the BHPC are required by city ordinance to review any exterior changes and new construction that are [visible from the public way](#), the Maple Heights Historic District guidelines do not regulate exterior alterations and new construction visible only from alleys (changes that cannot be seen from the street). Accordingly, the Maple Heights Historic District requests that HAND staff and the BHPC regulate exterior alterations and new construction visible only from alleys with as much lenience as possible.

What Principles Inform These Guidelines?

These design guidelines were developed to help property owners and their design professionals (architects, builders, etc.) plan projects that can be approved by the City of Bloomington Historic Preservation staff in the Housing and Neighborhood Development Department (HAND) and the BHPC.

City of Bloomington Historic Preservation staff and members of the BHPC are responsible for administering the City's Municipal Code, Title 8 - HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION, which can be found at the following URL:

https://library.municode.com/in/bloomington/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT8HIPRPR

In doing so, they rely on several sources of information:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. This document provides general guidance and best practices developed throughout the United States. It is used by federal and state government agencies, as well as local historic preservation commissions. Developed and updated by the National Park Service, the Secretary's Standards include four types of projects: Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction. The most common approach is Rehabilitation, defined as "the process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, changes, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values." The Secretary's Standards are available online at <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/secretary-standards-treatment-historic-properties.htm>.

City ordinance. HAND staff and BHPC members apply those standards and practices within the framework of the City's own guiding criteria, which are established by ordinance.

The Maple Heights Historic District Design Guidelines are tailored specifically for the Maple Heights Historic District. They are designed to be used in conjunction with the Secretary's Standards (where feasible and appropriate), and the City's established criteria for historic preservation. Further information about the City of Bloomington's design review process is available at:

<https://bloomington.in.gov/neighborhoods/preservation/certificate-of-appropriateness>.

You can learn more about historic preservation in the City of Bloomington at:

<https://bloomington.in.gov/historic-bloomington/info>

Neighborhood Design Review Committee

The Maple Heights Neighborhood Historic District Design Review Committee exists to:

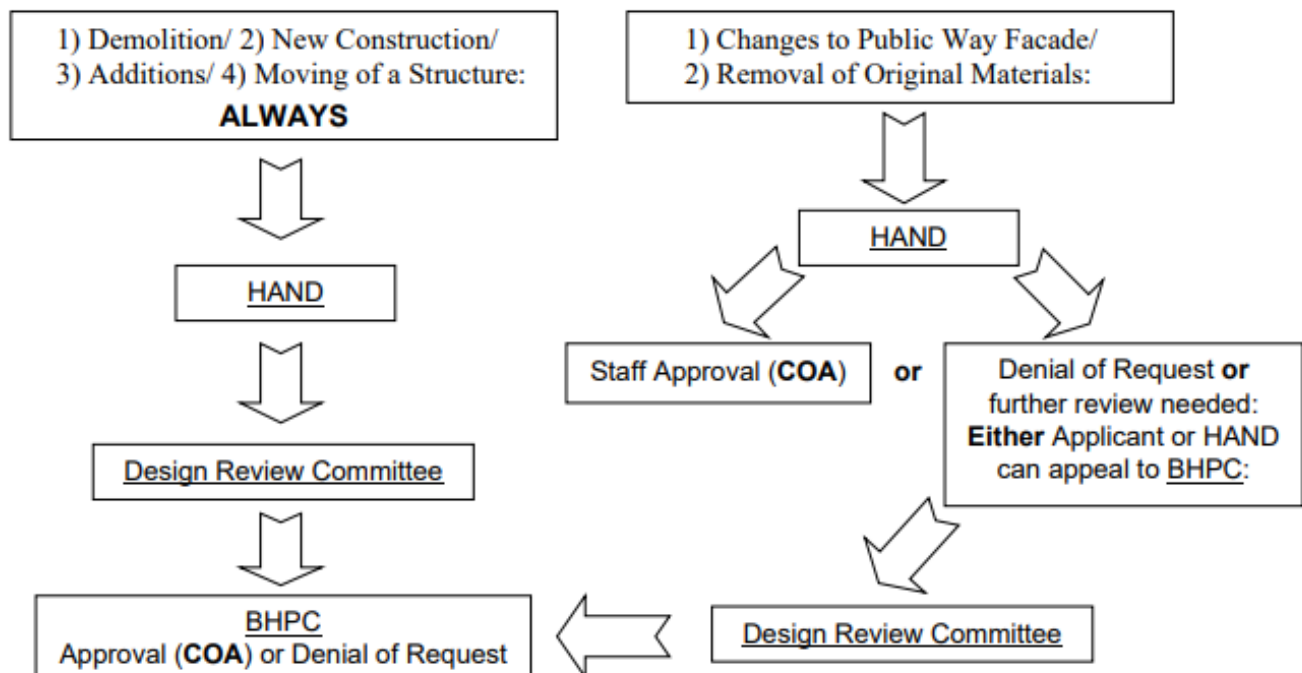
- Assist neighbors through the review process, acting as a liaison when necessary to HAND and the BHPC and providing neighborhood support on design issues.
- Recommend or comment (if necessary) on a homeowner's design plans before they meet with the BHPC; and
- Help inform the neighborhood about these projects.

The Design Review Committee cannot stop a project, only review and provide recommendations before the project goes to the BHPC, which has the authority to approve or deny the request.

The Design Review Committee will review items that require BHPC approval ([demolition](#), [new construction](#), [alterations to existing structures](#), [moving of a structure](#)).

The Design Review Committee can be reached at: mapleheightshistoricdistrict@gmail.com

Procedures for Reviewing Submitted COAs:



Recommendations for a Successful COA Process:

Submit COA applications within a minimum of 2 weeks (14 days) prior to a scheduled BHPC hearing. A link to the application, as well as an explanation of the process, contact information for HAND staff, and a link to the BHPC meeting schedule can be found at:

<https://bloomington.in.gov/neighborhoods/preservation/certificate-of-appropriateness>

- Contact HAND staff at the beginning of the planning process for a preliminary meeting to determine project compliance with current Maple Heights Historic District Guidelines (this can be done in-person or via phone or teleconference).
- Contact the Maple Heights Neighborhood Historic District Design Review Committee at mapleheightshistoricdistrict@gmail.com as early in the process as possible to obtain feedback on the project. If the Design Review Committee approves the project, they will issue a formal recommendation to the BHPC.
- Communicate with the Monroe County Building Department and the City of Bloomington's Planning and Transportation Department to verify if there are additional requirements for the project.
- Review all instructions and documentation requirements before submitting your COA application to ensure it is complete. Only complete applications will be scheduled for review.
- Any COA not accompanied by a recommendation from the Maple Heights Neighborhood Historic District Design Review Committee may face delays due to the petitioner not following the recommended review process.
- Do not begin any work or buy materials until after you have received confirmation that a COA has been issued for the project.

Once a petitioner submits their review request to the Maple Heights Neighborhood Historic District Design Review Committee, the committee will respond within 72 hours with the committee's meeting availability and any initial questions regarding the submitted application.

The Review Committee will submit a formal recommendation to the BHPC for every COA review request (submitted within the 14 days prior to a BHPC hearing).

Procedures for Enforcing the Guidelines

Enforcement of Title 8, which these guidelines serve, for the Maple Heights Historic District is made possible in Section 8.16.020 of the Bloomington Municipal Code.

Historic District Boundaries

The Maple Heights Historic District roughly covers the area bounded on the south by West 11th Street, on the north by West 15th Street, on the west by North Maple Street, and on the east by North Jackson and Rogers Streets. The district boundaries were drawn to include the houses deemed of greatest architectural and historic significance. See the attached map for the exact boundaries. This area is currently zoned residential core.

List of Maps

Figure 1: Maple Heights Neighborhood Boundaries

Figure 2: Maple Heights Historic District Boundaries

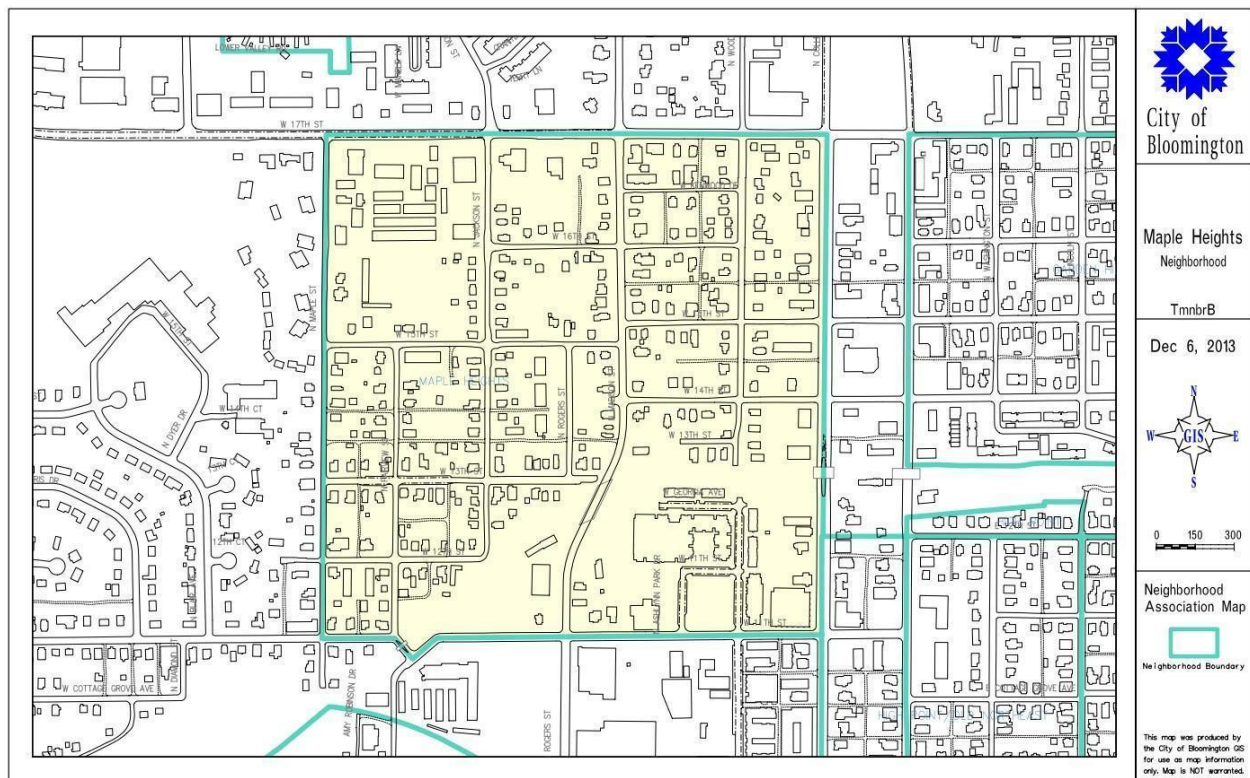


Figure 1: Maple Heights Neighborhood Boundaries

Maple Heights Historic District Map

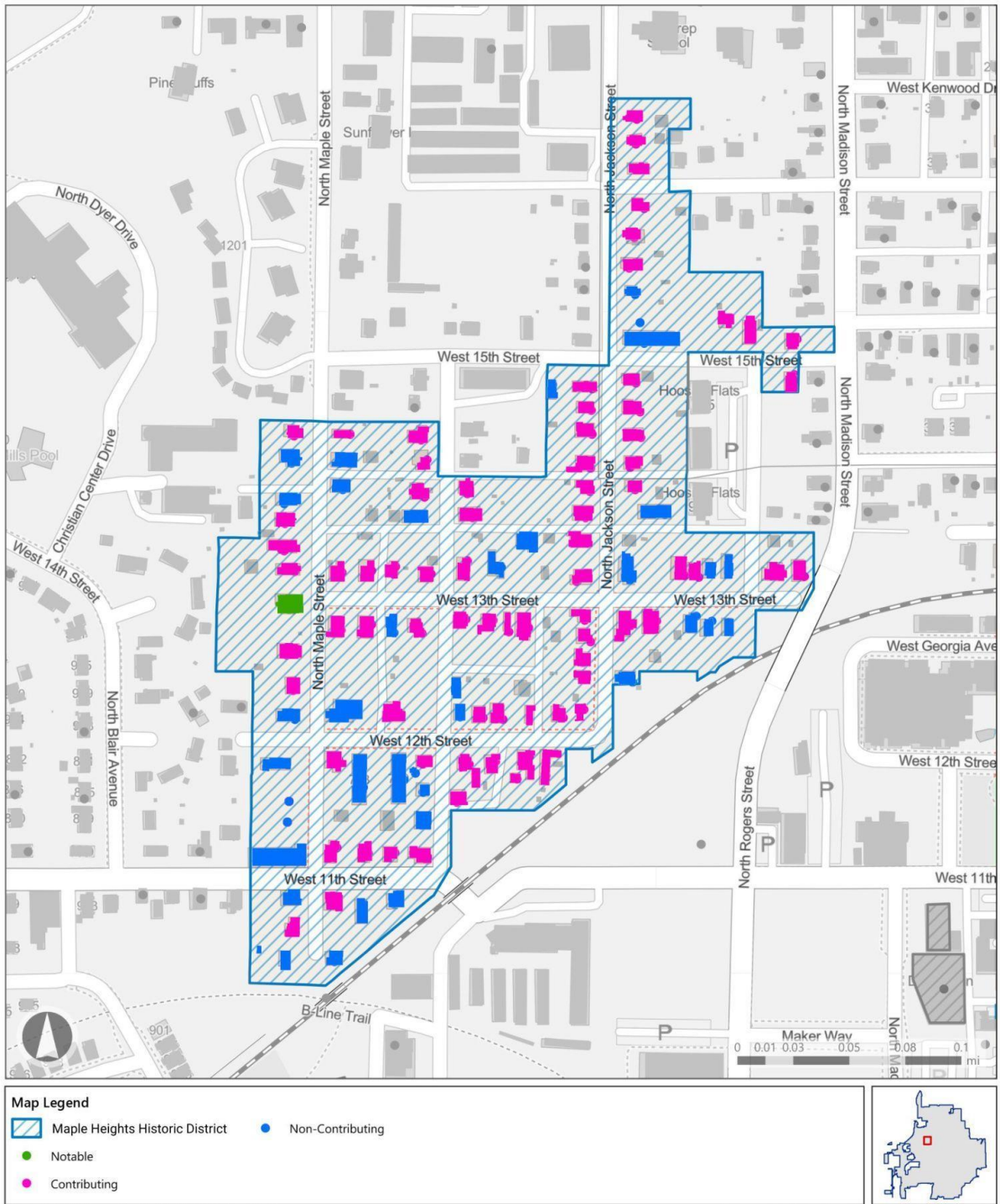


Figure 2: Maple Heights Historic District Boundaries

Traditional House Forms

The area included in the Maple Heights Historic District displays housing forms and styles that were commonly constructed from the 1890s through the 1930s. These forms are not unique to Maple Heights, but illustrative of early working-class residential neighborhoods in Bloomington generally. It is the architectural fabric created by these many small houses which make this neighborhood distinctive and which we seek to protect through the guidelines.

The dominant styles of houses in the neighborhood are gabled ell and pyramidal cottages. However, there are examples of shotgun houses, double-pen houses, I-houses, dormer-front bungalows, and California bungalows. Many of these early twentieth century structures are intact and maintain their historic integrity.

Sample Styles of Houses Found in the District:

<u>Gabled Ell Cottage:</u>	Common between 1890 and 1910.
<u>Pyramidal Cottage:</u>	Common between 1900 and 1930.
<u>California Bungalow:</u>	Common between 1910 and 1939.
<u>Dormer-front Bungalow:</u>	Common between 1905 and 1930.
<u>Shotgun house:</u>	Common between the mid-1800s and 1930.
<u>Double-pen house:</u>	Common in the 19th century.
<u>I-house:</u>	Common between the mid to late 19th century.

Gabled Ell Cottage

The gabled ell form has a cross-gabled plan with a front porch stretched across the intersecting gables.

The house is usually placed with the long side of the house parallel to the street.

The entrance is double-sided with doors on each of the wings facing one another. These houses convey a horizontal plane much like that of a ranch-style house.

Sometimes the house is located on an alley with the long side appearing perpendicular to the street.



819 N Jackson Street. Contributing. Architectural style: gabled ell (c.1900).



600 W 12th Street. Contributing. Architectural style: gabled ell (c. 1930).

Pyramidal Cottage

A variant of the gabled ell, the pyramidal cottage is common throughout Maple Heights.

Although the plan of the house is similar to that of the gabled ell, the entire structure is covered by a hipped or pyramidal roof, so the massing and height are different.

A pyramidal cottage is generally taller and appears more massive than the gabled ell, even when the lot coverage is similar.

This form retains the facing front doors and the front porch, although sometimes the porch is recessed or cut-in beneath the principal roof.



Blair family house constructed by James N. Blair. 715 W 13th Street. Contributing. Architectural style: pyramidal cottage (c. 1915).

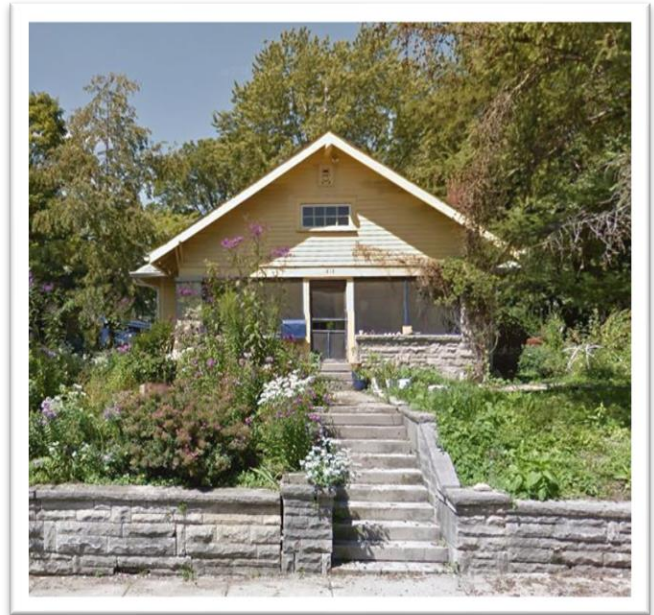
Bungalow

The bungalow form is also a single story but can have living space on the second floor with dormer windows providing light.

The front porches are large and comfortable and stretch entirely across the front façade.

They can be covered by a gable or a hipped roof.

The roof shapes are simple and the houses are small and compact in scale compared with pyramidal cottages.



Blair family house constructed by James N. Blair. 813 N Maple Street. Contributing. Architectural style: Bungalow (c.1927).



621 W 12th Street. Contributing. Architectural style: bungalow.



938 N Jackson Street. Contributing. Architectural style: dormer-front bungalow (c. 1930).

Shotgun House

The shotgun house is visibly narrower than any other form.

It is a single room wide and two to three rooms deep.

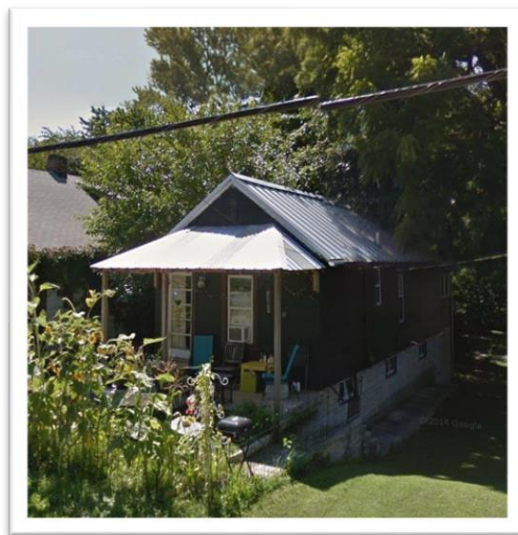
The gables always face the street and the small shed-roof porch stretches across the narrow front façade.

Shotguns are always the smallest width in plan and have minimal mass.

The style of these minimal habitations was brought up from the south.



612 W 12th Street. Contributing. Architectural style: shotgun house.



619 W 13th Street. Contributing. Architectural style: shotgun house.

Double-Pen House

Double-pens are another early vernacular form that first appeared in rural areas.

The house is side-gabled and symmetrical from the front elevation.

The front porch covers paired front doors.



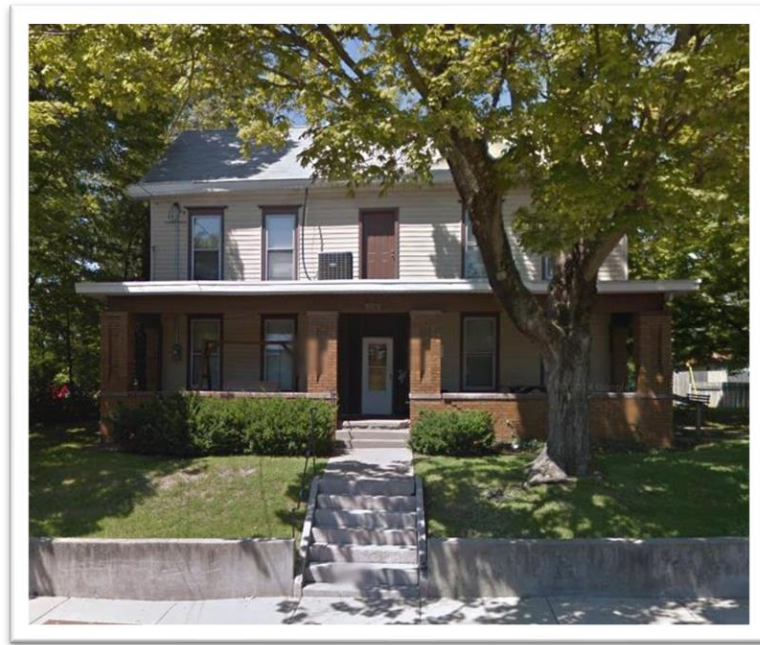
625 W 13th Street. Contributing. Architectural style: double-pen.

I-House

I-houses generally feature gables to the side and are at least two rooms in length, one room deep, and two full stories in height. They also often have a rear wing or ell for a kitchen or additional space.

The façade of an I-house tends to be symmetrical, and they were constructed in a variety of materials, including logs, wood frame, brick or stone.

The Blair House, built by John Blair around 1860, is the only I-house in Maple Heights.



Blair House. 823 N Maple Street. Notable. Architectural style: I-house (c. 1900).

Guidelines Overview

Finding Information in the Design Guidelines

The design guidelines are organized into five sections. Each section is organized using a common format, as shown below.

Section Title

Each section begins with a brief explanation of the topic and a general description of desired outcomes.

Guideline

Within each section, individual guidelines provide direction for specific project components:

- Historic elements as they exist in the district
- Compatible changes
- Incompatible changes

Images help clarify each guideline by illustrating compatible and incompatible changes. They are marked for easy reference:

Compatible Changes:



Incompatible Changes:



Using the Levels of Review Chart

The Levels of Review chart beginning on the following page provides a quick reference for residents of the Maple Heights Historic District who are planning to make exterior changes to their properties. If a project is designated as requiring review by HAND staff and/or the BHPC, this means a COA will be required. See [“Procedures for Reviewing Submitted COAs”](#) on page 8 of these guidelines for an explanation of the COA process.

An asterisk next to an “X” in the “BHPC Review” or “Neighborhood Review” sections of the chart indicates that these reviews will only take place if deemed necessary by HAND staff. If HAND staff denies a COA, an appeal to the BHPC is always possible. Appeals to the BHPC will initiate reviews by both the BHPC and the Maple Heights Neighborhood Historic District Design Review Committee.

Please note that:

- **The chart is not the final authority.** It is intended for quick reference only. Refer to specific sections for additional clarification.
- [In-kind](#) repairs and replacements never require review of any kind.

Levels of Review Chart

Streetscapes				
Item	No Review	HAND Staff Review	BHPC Review	Neighborhood Review
Installing a porch, deck or patio—visible from street			X	X
Repairing/replacing limestone sidewalk		X	X*	X*
Changing steps to house—change to configuration and/or material of steps			X	X
Changing steps to house— replacement in kind	X			
Installing fencing, new (see guidelines for fencing on page 41)		X		
Installing temporary or removable structures such as sheds or playground equipment (staff review if visible from the street)	X			
Removing mature tree (street facing yards)		X	X*	X*
Installing exterior mechanicals or reception devices		X		
Installing new paving materials		X		
Installing seasonal gardening fence	X			

**If deemed necessary by HAND staff. All HAND staff decisions may be appealed to the BHPC.*

Alterations

Item	No Review	HAND Staff Review	BHPC Review	Neighborhood Review
Adding stories, changing roofline, changing square footage		X	X	X
Replacing exterior elements— replacement in kind	X			
Removing a substantial amount of original siding material and replacing with different material (see siding guidelines on page 34)		X	X*	X*
Altering the back of a building		X	X	
Changing exterior paint color (Exception: Not recommended—branded coloring, patterning, or lettering—including IU cream and crimson)	X			
Replacing or adding a new type of material to building exterior, excluding windows and doors (replacing wood with plastic, etc.)		X	X*	X*
Replacing doors and windows— replacement in kind	X			

Replacing doors and windows—changing size, configuration, and/or operation (see door and window guidelines on page 37)		X	X*	X*
Replacing gutters	X			
Installing a porch, deck, or patio on back of building		X		
Replacing roof with new type of roofing material (see guidelines for roofs on page 39)		X	X*	X*
Adding exterior accessibility features (ramps, bars) (Exception: if temporary accessibility features are necessary for health and/or safety reasons, they do not require review) (See accessibility guidelines on page 39)			X	
Adding rooftop solar panels (generally OK—see sustainability guidelines on page 39)		X	X*	
Adding ground level solar panels visible from the street			X	X

**If deemed necessary by HAND staff. All HAND staff decisions may be appealed to the BHPC.*

New Construction

Item	No Review	HAND Staff Review	BHPC Review	Neighborhood Review
Adding new accessory structure (temporary or removable)		X		
Adding new accessory structure (with a foundation/permanent)			X	

Demolition or Moving of a Structure

Item	No Review	HAND Staff Review	BHPC Review	Neighborhood Review
Moving or demolition of an accessory structure (temporary or removable)		X		
Moving or demolition of an accessory structure (with a foundation/permanent)			X	
Demolishing any part of the building (including non-contributing structures)			X	X
Moving any structure on the property			X	X

Streetscapes

The collection of buildings along a block face creates a streetscape. The size and shape of those buildings, along with their distance from the street and orientation, together affect the overall look and feel of the neighborhood. The way that buildings relate to the street and each other affects the way that people relate to them as well.

To maintain a consistent, compatible streetscape, buildings must be appropriately sized and sited on their lots.

Context

Context refers to two aspects of a site: (1) the historic value of the particular structure located on the site, which has been evaluated as “Outstanding,” “Notable,” “Contributing,” or “Non-contributing” (as found on the Bloomington Historic Preservation Map: <https://bloomington.in.gov/historic-bloomington/districts>), and (2) the buildings in the nearby area (often the surrounding block), the unique sub-area within the district, and the district as a whole.

In a historic district like Maple Heights, the historic value of a group of “contributing” houses may be greater than the historic value of any one house. “Contributing” properties are important to the density and continuity of the historic neighborhood but are not necessarily individually outstanding or notable.

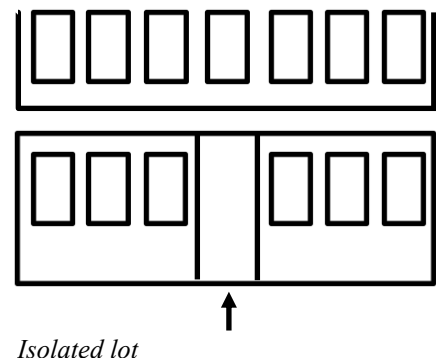
Proposals for new construction or alteration should take into consideration both the historic value of the house itself and the houses in the surrounding area (typically in the same block, the facing block, and adjacent blocks on the same street). Together, these make up the “context.”

Most contexts in the Maple Heights Historic District fall under one of the categories described below:

DEVELOPED SITE. This is usually a site upon which there already exists a historic primary structure. Proposals for new construction or for alteration to the primary structure should use the existing historic building as the most important context.

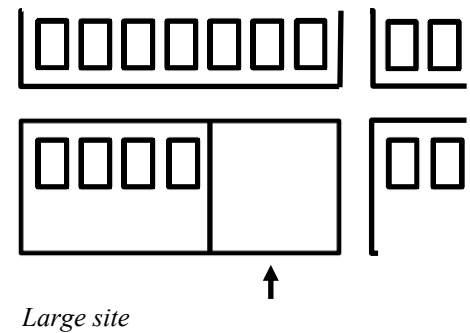
ISOLATED LOT. This is usually a single vacant lot (sometimes two very small lots combined) in a highly developed area with very few if any other vacant lots in view.

Context: The existing contributing buildings immediately adjacent, in the same block, and in the facing block provide a very strong context to which any new construction or alteration must primarily relate.



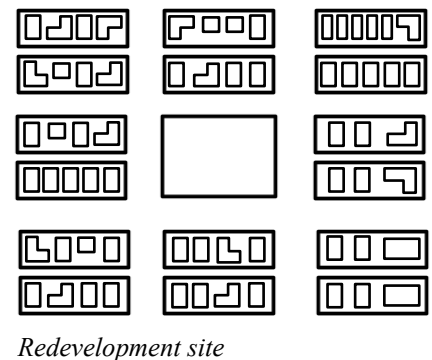
LARGE SITE. This is usually a combination of several vacant lots, often the result of previous demolition.

Context: In a large site, a somewhat larger area than the immediate environment must be looked to for context, especially if other vacant land exists in the immediate area.



REDEVELOPMENT SITE. This site may consist of four or more contiguous vacant lots. Often there is vacant land surrounding the site as well.

Context: The context of adjacent buildings may be weak or non-existent. In this case, the surrounding area provides the primary context to the extent that it exists. Beyond that, the entire historic area is the available context for determining character. This type of site often offers the greatest design flexibility. Where the strength of the context varies at different points around a site, new design should be responsive to the varying degrees of contextual influence.



Orientation & Entry

All houses in the Maple Heights Historic District face the street. In most cases—including both single-family and multi-family homes—front doors also face the street. Gabled ell and pyramidal cottages have inset porches with both front-facing and side-facing doors that open onto the porch.

Compatible Changes

Maintain front-facing primary façades and primary entry doors. Maintain primary entry doors that were originally side-facing and opened to the porch.

Incompatible Changes

New construction with a primary façade or primary entry that faces a side property line is not allowed.

Not Recommended: The entryway is not located on the street-facing façade.

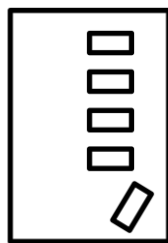
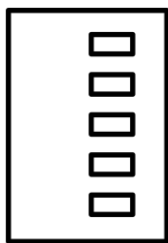
Not Recommended: The building on the left is not oriented towards the street.



Front-facing door



Side-facing door



Size

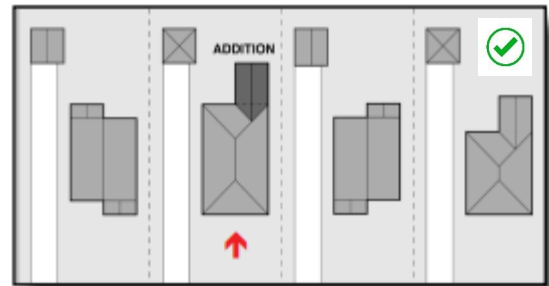
Maple Heights Historic District contains one- and two-story houses. Most single-family houses and duplexes are one or two rooms wide. Some homes have been expanded with rear and side additions.

Compatible Changes

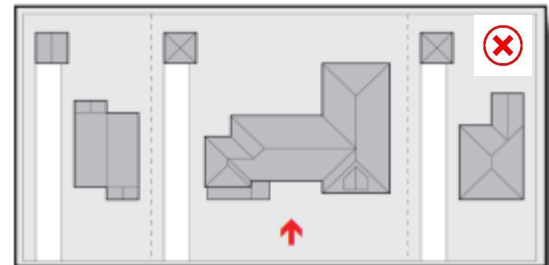
- Additions should not overwhelm the original house—the mass and form of the original building should be discernible, even after an addition has been constructed.
- For one-story houses, rear additions shall be no more than one story taller than the original house.
- Additions to two-story houses should not exceed the height of the existing house.
- Infill construction must be similar in size, scale, and massing to contributing homes in the neighborhood.

Incompatible Changes

- New construction that is taller or wider than original contributing homes in the neighborhood (see guidelines for [Height](#) on page 29).
- Additions to the front of the house.
- Additions to the side of the house may not be taller than the original house and should be located toward the rear of the house.
- Additions in any location may not visually dominate the original house.



Compatible addition to original building



Incompatible new construction; out of scale for district



Incompatible new construction; out of scale for district



Incompatible addition; visually dominates original building

Massing

Massing, or architectural form, is the overall shape and volume of a building.

The proportion of solid surfaces (walls, roof) to voids (windows, doors, porches) also affects the perception of form and volume.

Most of the houses in Maple Heights Historic District are relatively small, with simple rectangular shapes.

Subordinate building elements are mostly rectangular. These generally project from the main house in the form of front porches or rear additions.

Where additions increase both the size and complexity of these buildings, they are located far enough from the street to be visually subordinate to the traditional forms of the original houses.



Compatible massing is generally small and rectangular



Incompatible complex, non-linear massing



Appropriate solid-void proportion



Too few windows; too many windows

Compatible Changes

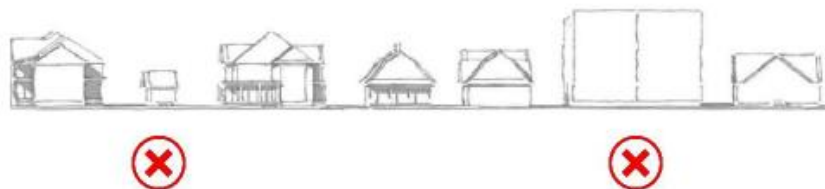
Maintain traditional building forms. Maintain traditional proportions of solid walls to voids (windows, doors, porches).

The perceived total mass and site coverage of new buildings should be consistent with surrounding buildings.

New construction of a larger than typical mass might be appropriate if it is broken into elements that are visually compatible with the mass of the surrounding buildings.

Incompatible Changes

Houses with disproportionate solid-to-void proportions are not allowed.



These inappropriate examples of mass for new construction break the rhythm of the street and look out of place with their historic counterparts.

Height

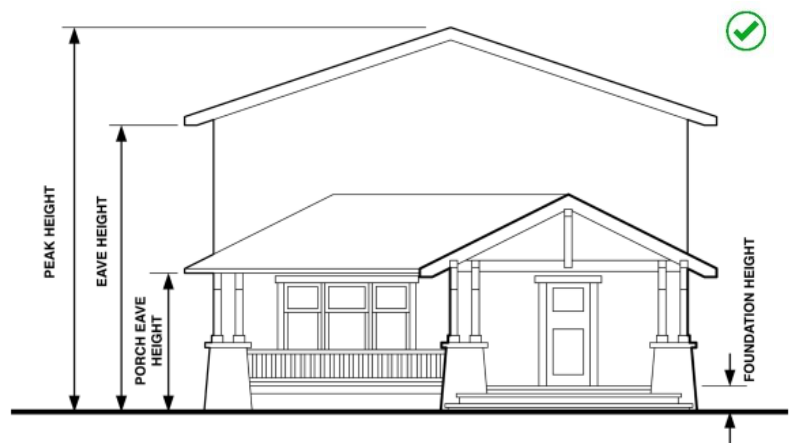
The height of additions and new construction should be compatible with the height of contributing buildings in the surrounding context. The most important height measurements to be considered include:

- **Building height:** The height of buildings shall be measured as the vertical distance from the average finished grade surface of the building, structure, or wall exposed above the ground surface to the highest point of the roof, parapet wall, or uppermost part.
- **Foundation height:** measured from the surface of the ground to the bottom of the sill plate on which the building is constructed.
- **Roof pitch:** the slope of a roof surface expressed in inches of vertical rise per 12 inches of horizontal distance. Since the height of the roof is a function of pitch and width, even a shallow-pitched roof can be relatively tall if the building is very wide.

Compatible Changes

Maintain building height and foundation height within the typical range for the neighborhood (with particular attention to the same block face and opposing block face). The roof pitch of an addition should not be steeper than the roof pitch of the existing building.

If the area immediately contiguous to new construction does not offer adequate context to establish an appropriate new building height, the larger historic area context should be assessed.



Considerations in determining compatible building height:

- A zoning variance may be required to accommodate an appropriate height.
- Consideration should be given to historic structures that previously occupied the site.
- Varied building heights may be appropriate depending upon the context of a particular area or zone:
 - 30 feet and two-story height maximum.
 - New construction at the end of a block should also take into account building heights on adjacent blocks.
 - If the area immediately contiguous to new construction does not offer adequate

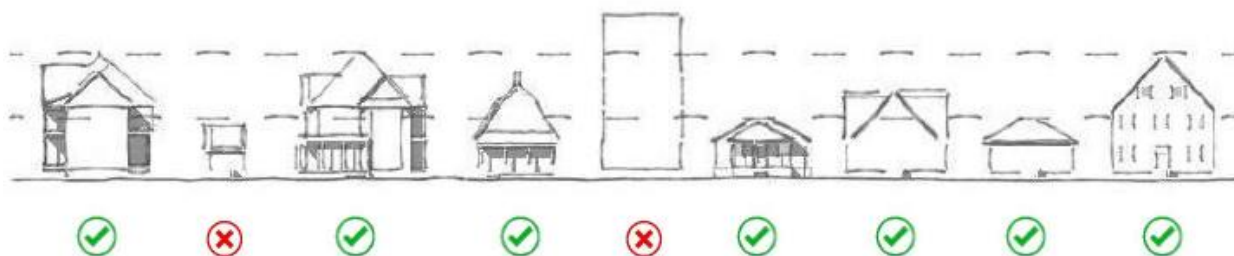
context to establish an appropriate new building height, the larger historic area context should be assessed.

- Porch height can have an impact on the height relationships between buildings and should align with contiguous porch foundation and roof heights in a similar manner to building heights.
- Foundation and floor line heights should be comparable to contiguous properties.

Incompatible Changes

Any building height that appears either diminutive or overscale in relation to its context.

Building eave, porch eave, and peak heights should fall within the range for Contributing houses in the district.

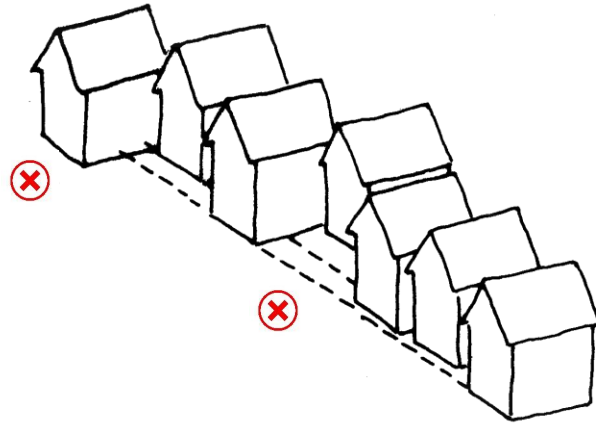


Setback

Definition: The distance a building is set back from a street, alley, or property line.

Recommended:

- A new building's setback should conform to the setback pattern established by the existing block context. If the development standards for the particular zoning district in which the building will be located do not allow appropriate setbacks, a variance may be needed. On corner sites, the setbacks from both streets must conform to the context.
- Existing structures that are much closer to or further away from the street than most houses in a given block should not be used to determine appropriate setback.

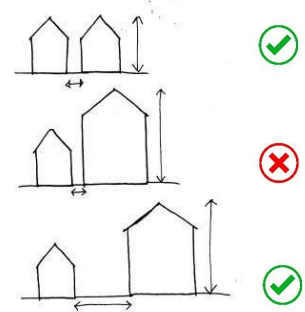


Building Height / Side Setback

Definition: The relationship between the heights of houses and the distance between them.

Recommended:

- A new house of the same height as existing houses may be as close to them as they are to each other.
- A new house which is taller than the house next to it must be set back further from the side property line than existing houses.



Building Outline

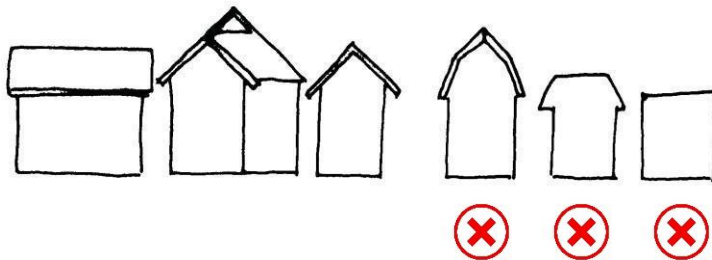
Definition: The silhouette of a building as seen from the street.

Recommended:

- The basic outline of a new building should reflect building outlines typical of the area.
- The outline of new construction should reflect the directional orientations characteristic of the existing buildings in its context.

Not Recommended:

- Roof shapes that create uncharacteristic shapes, slopes and patterns.



Spacing

Definition: The distance between contiguous buildings along a block face.

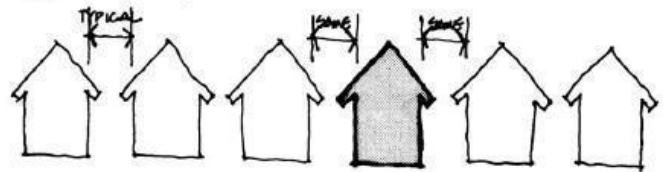
Recommended:

- New construction that reflects and reinforces the spacing found in its block. It should maintain the perceived regularity or lack of regularity of spacing on the block.

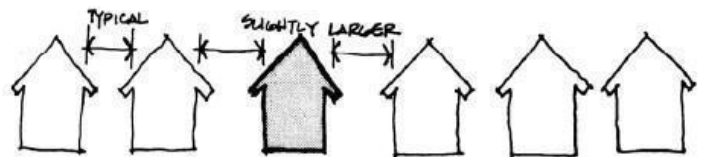
Not Recommended:

- The creation of large open spaces where none existed historically. Such spacing is uncharacteristic and establishes holes in the traditional pattern and rhythm of the street.

✓ Recommended



Maybe



✗ Not Recommended



Alterations to Existing Structures and New Construction

Siding Materials

Definition: The visual, structural, and performance characteristics of the materials utilized to clad a building exterior.

Note: Siding materials do not include paint color; paint color is never reviewed (except for branded painting such as “cream and crimson”).

Compatible Changes:

- Efforts to maintain original materials, or to use materials that will provide a similar look to the original, are encouraged.
- Clapboard, fiber cement board, wood, wood shingles, or limestone are preferred. Vinyl or aluminum are acceptable.
- When fiber cement board or vinyl siding is used, it should reflect the directional and dimensional characteristics found historically in the neighborhood.
- Match the house trim details when possible. Brick, limestone, clapboard, cement board, wood, or wood shingles/shakes may all be used decoratively.



Incompatible Changes:

- Asphalt shingles for walls.

Porches

Definition: A raised, usually unenclosed platform attached to one or more sides of a building and used primarily as a sitting area, outdoor living space, or covered access to a doorway.

Many houses in the Maple Heights Historic District have a prominent front porch. Some porches wrap around one side of the house. The look of open front porches is a significant feature of the neighborhood both architecturally and culturally. Although enclosing a front porch can be an affordable way to add space, the impact on the neighborhood can be significant. For this reason, porch enclosures are reviewed by the full commission, and impact on the original design and structure assessed.

Compatible Changes:

- Inclusion of a front porch is recommended for new construction.
- Porch height should not exceed a single story.
- Solid masonry foundation.
- Lattice or visual barrier below porch.
- Columns and posts should be appropriately sized for the porch roof they are supporting and for the base on which they rest. Slender posts, with large roofs and massive bases, are visually out of balance.
- Columns and posts should be an appropriate type for the style of house. Note that square posts (which historically were handmade) may be especially suitable for the plain-style houses that abound in the neighborhood.
- Enclosed porches are preferable in the rear of the home. If enclosing the front porch, use of screens rather than walls is encouraged.

Incompatible Changes:

- Porch elements that use more than one architectural style.
- Porch elements that differ from the architectural style of the primary structure.
- Enclosed front porches.

Foundation / First Floor Elevation

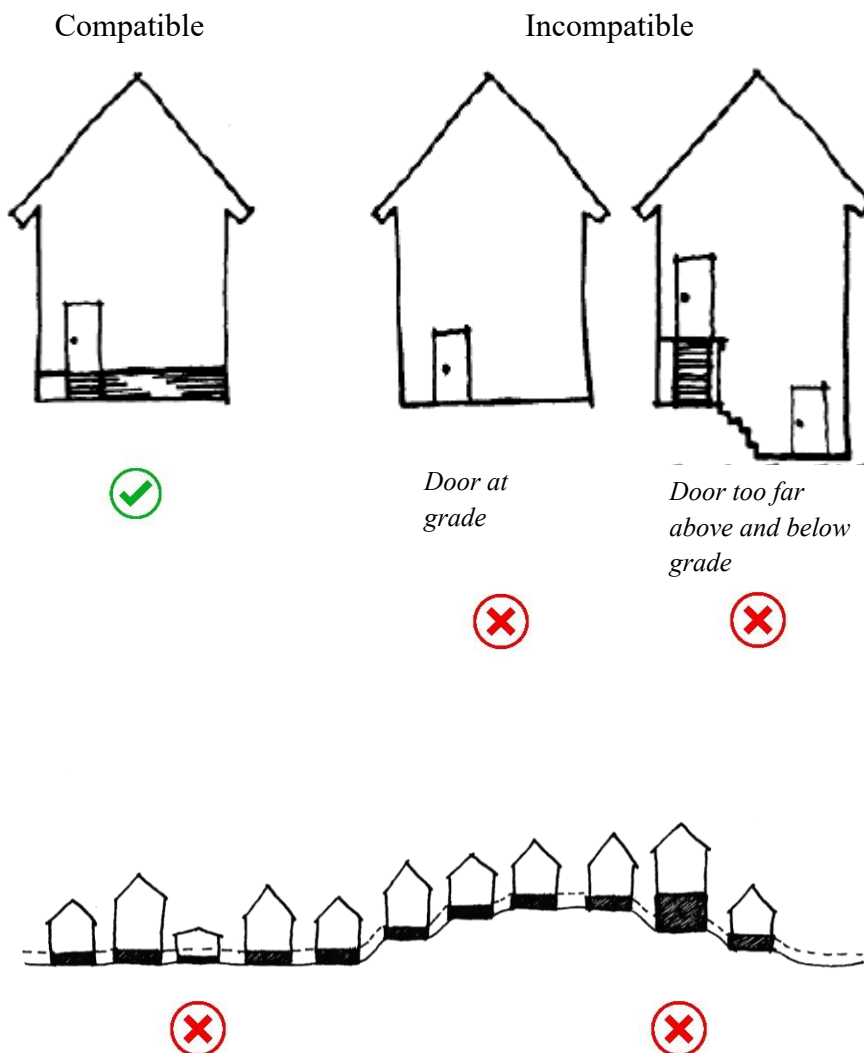
Definition: The foundation refers to the supporting base upon which a building sits. First-floor elevation refers to the finished elevation of the living space.

Compatible Changes:

In new construction, first-floor elevation and foundation height should be consistent with contiguous buildings.

Incompatible Changes:

- High, raised entrances if surrounding buildings are raised only two or three steps off the ground.
- Designs that appear to hug the ground if surrounding buildings are raised on high foundations.



Windows and Doors

Definition: The arrangement, proportioning, and design of windows, doors, and openings.

Historically, doors in the Maple Heights Historic District were constructed of wood. In this district, bungalows, shotgun houses, and I-houses have single front doors; gabled ell and pyramidal cottages have two front doors, one facing the street and one facing the front porch; double-pen houses have two front-facing doors. Many original front doors have been replaced. Screen doors are present on many front entry doors.

Windows and doors are important character-defining features of a house. They also provide important historical continuities across many of the houses in the district. Creative expression with windows and doors is not precluded as long as the result does not conflict with or draw attention from surrounding historic buildings.

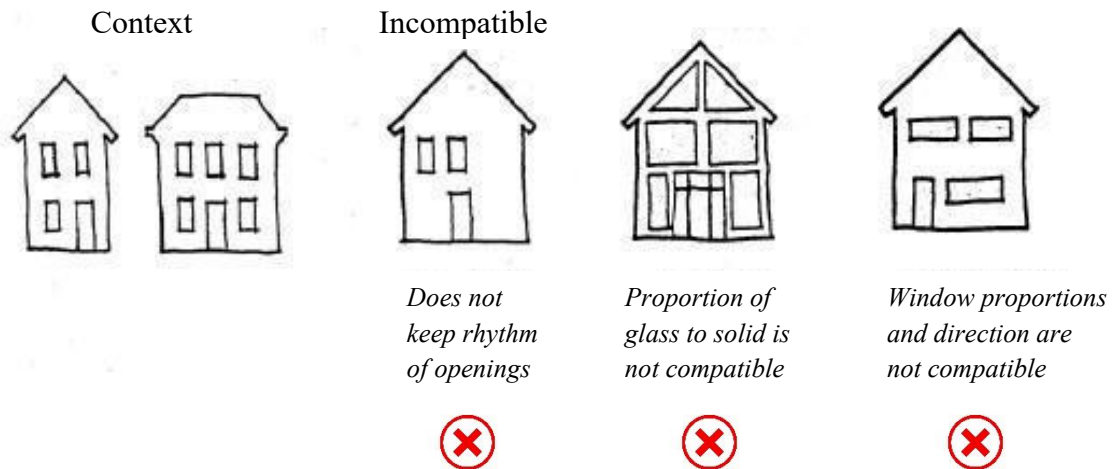
Compatible Changes:

- Maintain historic wood doors when possible.
- In virtually all cases, the new door should fit within the original opening.
- Windows and doors should be arranged on the building so as not to conflict with the basic fenestration (window) pattern in the area.
- The basic proportions and distribution of glass to solid found on surrounding contributing buildings should be reflected in new construction.
- Window and door openings should reflect the basic proportionality and directionality of those typically found on surrounding historic buildings.



Incompatible Changes:

- Window and door openings that conflict with the proportions and directionality of those typically found on surrounding historic buildings.
- Windowpane configurations that conflict with those on surrounding buildings.
- Certain window types (such as casement, jalousie, or Palladian windows) which are not traditionally found on surrounding historic buildings.



Roofs

Most roofs in the neighborhood are shingled with asphalt or fiberglass. The streets have a distinctive look based upon a repeating pattern of roofs.

Compatible Changes:

- Maintain the size, shape, and pitch of the historic roof.
- Maintain the original materials or those used by contributing properties nearby. Standing seam metal roofs are acceptable but should have non-reflective surfaces to avoid reflection on adjoining properties.
- For new construction, roof size, shape, and pitch should be consistent with nearby contributing structures.

Accessibility

The Maple Heights Historic District promotes the inclusion of accessible design elements that ensure homes are adaptable for all residents, including the elderly, individuals with disabilities, and those with mobility challenges. Both permanent and temporary accessibility solutions should be incorporated thoughtfully into new construction and modifications to ensure that accessibility needs are met while respecting the neighborhood's historic and architectural character.

Temporary ramps, handrails, and other mobility aids may be installed as needed to provide short-term accessibility for residents or visitors and should be designed for easy removal without damage to the property or surrounding landscape once they are no longer needed.

Sustainability

The district supports alternative energy and sustainability goals. Good preservation practice is often synonymous with sustainability. There are numerous treatments—traditional as well as new technological innovations—that may be used to upgrade a historic building to help it operate even more efficiently. Creative use and placement of alternative energy sources and sustainable materials is encouraged.

Compatible:

- Locate solar panels on the house roof at the same pitch as the existing roof. Panels should be positioned as close to the roof surface and as inconspicuously as possible. Alternatively, place solar panels in the backyard or on the garage roof.
 - **Acceptable:** Install solar panels at elevations not significantly above the roof surface. Install as inconspicuously as possible while still functional.

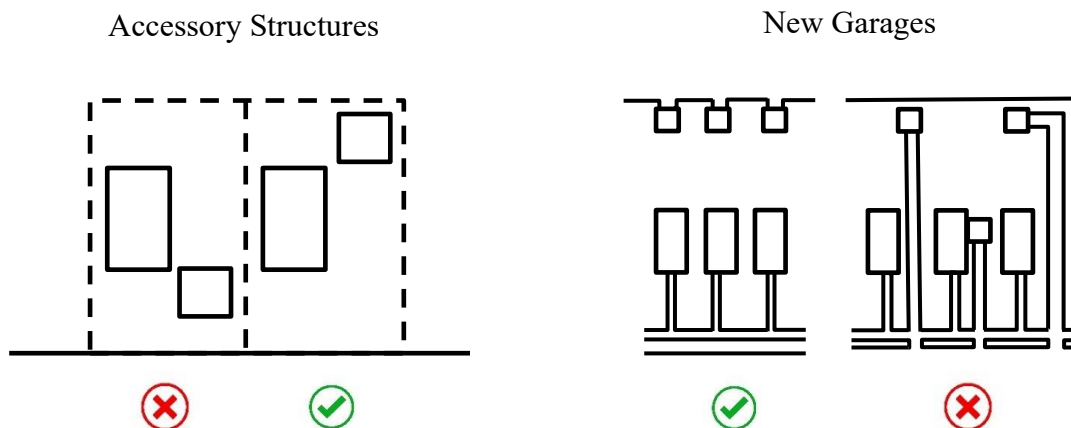
Accessory Structure Guidelines

Definition: An accessory structure is any structure occupying the lot that is secondary to the principal building on the lot, including accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

When designing a new accessory building such as a garage or storage building, the context to which the designer must relate is usually defined by the existing buildings on the site. For the most part, the guidelines pertaining to new construction of primary structures (see [previous section](#)) are applicable to accessory buildings as long as it is remembered that there is always a closer and more direct relationship with an existing building in this case. The following guidelines are specific to accessory buildings and are particularly important when undertaking such a project.

Compatible:

- Accessory buildings should generally be located behind the existing historic building unless there is an historic precedent otherwise. Generally, accessory buildings should be of a secondary nature and garages should be oriented to alleys.
- The setback of a new accessory structure should relate to the setback pattern established by the existing accessory structures on the alley.
- The scale, height, size, and mass of an accessory structure should relate to the existing building and not overpower it.



Subject to review and approval:

- All construction of permanent accessory structures (structures with a foundation) is subject to review and approval by the BHPC.
- The construction or placement of temporary or removable structures (such as sheds) requires HAND staff approval.

The Maple Heights Historic District requests that HAND staff and the BHPC regulate the construction and placement of accessory structures under 120 sq. ft. with as much lenience as possible.

Other Issues

Parking

Definition: Locations for storage of vehicles.

Compatible:

- Where possible, parking should be accessed by existing alleys at the rear of the building.
- Where alleys do not exist, on-street parking is a legitimate alternative.
- Driveways should be built with direct access to parking or storage structures and should pass along the side or rear of the primary building.

Incompatible:

- Oversized parking pads in view of the street are discouraged.

Fencing and Retaining Walls

Definition: A fence is a structure that encloses an area, typically outdoors, and is usually constructed from posts that are connected by boards, wire, rails, or netting. A fence differs from a wall in not having a solid foundation along its whole length.

Front yard fences are not characteristic of the district because of the small front setbacks. Backyard and side yard fences are common and are usually made from wood in a vertically oriented design.

Original retaining walls, usually made from limestone, are a distinctive landscape feature that contributes to the district's historic character.

Compatible:

- Maintaining original limestone retaining walls
- New retaining walls should be limestone when possible
- Wood or wire fencing
- Front yard fencing 4' or lower in height
- Picket fences
- Privacy fence behind the front building wall
- Decorative wrought iron fencing

Incompatible:

- Chain link fences in front of the front building wall
- Plastic or vinyl fencing

Utilities & Equipment

Definition: Any utilities that might be above ground and visible (such as meters and electric lines) and any mechanical equipment associated with the building (such as air-conditioning equipment).

Recommended:

- Mechanical equipment such as permanent air conditioning equipment and meters should be placed in locations that have the least impact on the character of the structure and site and the neighboring buildings.

Guidelines for Moving Buildings

Existing historic buildings in the Maple Heights Historic District should not be moved to other locations in the district. The moving of a historic structure should only be done as a last resort to save a building. It may be considered when a move is necessary to accomplish development so critical to the neighborhood's revitalization that altering the historic context is justified. Moving a building strips it of a major source of its historic significance—its location and relationship to other buildings in the district. The existence of relocated buildings, especially in significant numbers, confuses the history of the district. The following guidelines are meant to assist in determining the appropriateness of moving a building.

Subject to review and approval:

- Moving any building within the Maple Heights Historic District
- Moving any building into or out of the Maple Heights Historic District

Recommended:

- The building to be moved should be compatible with the contributing architecture surrounding its new site relative to style, scale, and era.
- Per city ordinance, movement of small non-contributing storage buildings (under 200 square feet) located in backyards is subject to review. However, it is the intention of these guidelines to take a permissive stance on moving these buildings. Movement of contributing accessory buildings requires review according to guidelines for compatible new construction.

Demolition

Definition: Demolition shall be defined as the complete or substantial removal of any historic structure which is located within a historic district.

A COA must be issued by the BHPC before a demolition permit is issued by other agencies of the city and work is begun on the demolition of any building in the Maple Heights Historic District. This section explains the type of work considered in this plan to be demolition as well as the criteria to be used when reviewing applications for COAs that include demolition.

Subject to review and approval:

- Demolition of primary structures within the boundaries of the Maple Heights Historic District
- Demolition of contributing accessory buildings

Guidelines for Demolition

When considering a proposal for demolition, the BHPC shall consider the following criteria for demolition as guidelines for determining appropriate action. The BHPC may approve a COA or authorization for demolition as defined in this chapter only if it finds one or more of the following:

- The structure poses an immediate and substantial threat to public safety as interpreted from the state of deterioration, disrepair, and structural stability of the structure. The condition of the building resulting from neglect shall not be considered grounds for demolition.
- The historic or architectural significance of the structure is such that, upon further consideration by the Commission, it does not contribute to the historic character of the district.
- Demolition is necessary to allow development which, in the Commission's opinion, is of greater significance to the preservation of the district than the retention of the structure, or portion thereof, for which demolition is sought.
- The structure or property cannot be put to any reasonable economically beneficial use without approval of demolition.
- The structure is accidentally damaged by storm, fire, or flood. In this case, it may be rebuilt to its former configuration and materials without regard to these guidelines if work is commenced within 6 months.
- With the exception of storm, fire, or flood damage, all replacement of demolished properties should follow new construction guidelines. The BHPC may ask interested individuals or organizations for assistance in seeking an alternative to demolition.

Procedure for Revising the Historic District Design Guidelines

Maple Heights Historic District guidelines will be formally reviewed (at minimum) every 5 years.

During the Guidelines Review Process:

- Changes to the guidelines, if desired, may be initiated by the Maple Heights Neighborhood Historic District Design Review Committee or by any property owner within the district.
- Actual revisions to the guidelines are finalized by the Maple Heights Neighborhood Historic District Design Review Committee.
- The Maple Heights Neighborhood Historic District Design Review Committee informs the BHPC of the proposed changes to the guidelines.
- All property owners in the Maple Heights Historic District are notified of the proposed changes in the guidelines. They are given access to the proposed changes and notice of the time and place of the public hearing on the proposals.
- After this notification, the change will go to the BHPC meeting for a public hearing where a vote will be taken.
- It may become necessary to revise sections of these guidelines because of state enabling legislation.

A Certificate of Appropriateness application form is available to download at:

<https://bloomington.in.gov/neighborhoods/preservation/certificate-of-appropriateness>

For more information and assistance:

Call the City's historic preservation program manager at **812-349-3507**.

Terms and Definitions

Maple Heights Neighborhood

Maple Heights Historic District

Maple Heights Neighborhood Historic District Design Review Committee

Glossary of Terms

Alley- A public way owned by the city, usually providing rear access to parking or utility easements. Types of alleys include:

Improved alleys: A secondary public thoroughfare either paved or graveled.

Unimproved alleys: An alley that appears on plat maps but is unimproved and is still owned by the city.

Bloomington Historic Preservation Commission (BHPC)- This statutory commission is charged with the preservation of historic buildings, structures, sites, and objects within the city limits.

Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)- An authorization by the Bloomington Historic Preservation Commission to be attached to the building permit prior to commencing work in historic districts.

Element and Feature- These two words are often used interchangeably in this document but usually a feature (porch) is made up of several elements (rails, materials, brackets, pillars, etc.).

Façade- The exterior wall of a building. Types of façades include:

Primary façade: An exterior wall facing a primary street, frequently including the main entrance to a building and its most elaborate structural features.

Secondary façade: is a building side of lesser importance that can face either a secondary street or an alley.

Bloomington Housing and Neighborhood Development Department (HAND)- A department of the City of Bloomington that develops programs, services, and partnerships to preserve community character, promotes affordable housing, and encourages neighborhood vitality.

In-Kind- Using exactly matching materials in the repair of a feature.

Replacement in kind- Repairs that do not visibly change the materials or appearance of a historic building or site.

Repair- Bringing a feature or an object back to its original character using like or visually similar materials.

Setback- Distance from an adjacent lot line or the street.

Visible from the public way- According to IN Code § 36-7-1-17 (2024), “Public way” includes highways, streets, avenues, boulevards, roads, lanes, or alleys, so this includes areas of a property visible from either streets or alleys. Fences and greenery can change and are therefore not considered an impediment to architectural review.

Building Classification

Outstanding: The “O” rating means that the property has sufficient historic or architectural significance that it is already listed, or is eligible for individual listing, in the National Register of Historic Places. Outstanding resources can be of local, state, or national importance.

Notable: A rating of “N” means that the property does not merit the outstanding rating, but it is still above average in its importance. A notable structure may be eligible for the National Register.

Contributing: A “C” rating means the property is at least forty years old but does not meet the criteria for an “O” or “N” rating. Such resources are important to the density or continuity of the area’s historic fabric. Contributing structures are usually not individually eligible for the National Register, but can be listed as part of a historic district.

Non-contributing: Property rated “NC” is not included in an inventory unless it is located within the boundaries of a historic district. Such properties may be less than fifty years old, or they may be older structures that have been altered in such a way that they have lost their historic character, or they may be otherwise incompatible with their historic surroundings. These properties are not eligible for the National Register.

Historic Districts

Local Historic District: A single site or group of resources that requires design review and approval for all exterior changes including demolition.

Historic District: Resources that require review for new construction, demolition, or relocation. A historic conservation district may elevate to a full historic district by the vote of its owners after three years.

National Register of Historic Places: From the National Park Service website (<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/faqs.htm>): “the National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation...the listing of a property in the National Register places no restrictions on what a non-federal owner may do with their property up to and including destruction, unless the property is involved in a project that receives Federal assistance, usually funding or licensing/permitting.”

State Register of Historic Places: A compilation of historic buildings recognized by the state of Indiana. It does not provide protection against changes or demolition unless accomplished with state funds.

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory: A continually updated list of properties that are deemed architecturally or historically significant to the community.

District Inventory

Properties located within the Maple Heights Historic District boundaries (119):

West 11th Street:	701, 702, 702 ½, 708, 709, 712, 719, 720, 801, 800-812;
West 12th Street:	600, 606, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 619, 621, 708, 709, 713, 720, 723, 801;
West 13th Street:	412, 420, 500, 501, 502, 505, 508, 509, 512, 517, 522, 523, 615, 619, 620, 622, 623, 625, 626, 702, 705, 709, 712, 714, 715, 720, 721;
West 15th Street:	409, 410, 512, 514, 516;
North Maple Street:	633, 634, 639, 715, 717, 803, 807, 813, 823, 901, 905, 909, 910, 911, 912, 916, 917, 918, 919;
North Fairview Street:	714, 715, 721, 721 ½, 800, 802, 914, 915, 916, 917, 917 ½, 927, 931;
North Jackson Street:	811, 812-814, 815, 817, 819, 903, 907, 914, 915, 924, 925, 927, 928, 933, 938, 939, 940, 943, 943 ½, 944, 1002, 1004, 1014, 1020, 1022, 1024, 1106, 1108, 1110.

*Red highlight = vacant lots

Properties listed as NOTABLE on the historic survey¹ (1)

North Maple Street:	823
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Properties listed as CONTRIBUTING on the historic survey (81):

West 11th Street:	702, 708, 712, 719, 720
West 12th Street:	600, 606, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 619, 621, 708, 723
West 13th Street:	412, 420, 508, 509, 512, 517, 523, 615, 619, 623, 702, 705, 712, 714, 715, 720, 721
West 15th Street:	409, 410, 512, 514
North Maple Street:	639, 803, 807, 813, 901, 905, 909, 918, 919;
North Fairview Street:	714, 721, 914, 916, 917, 917 ½, 927, 931;
North Jackson Street:	811, 815, 817, 819, 903, 907, 915, 924, 925, 927, 928, 933, 938, 939, 940, 943, 944, 1014, 1020, 1022, 1024, 1106, 1108, 1110.

Properties listed as NON-CONTRIBUTING on the historic survey (37):

West 11th Street:	701, 702 ½, 709, 801, 800-812;
West 12th Street:	709, 713, 720, 801;
West 13th Street:	500, 501, 502, 505, 522, 620, 622, 709;
West 15th Street:	516;
North Maple Street:	633, 634, 715, 717, 910, 911, 912, 916, 917;
North Fairview Street:	715, 721 ½, 800, 802, 915;
North Jackson Street:	812-814, 914, 943 ½, 1002, 1004.

**Red highlight = vacant lots*