DOWNTOWN AND OLD TOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

August 14, 2012
Effective Date

Georgetown, Texas
Credits - 2001
The first publication of these design guidelines occurred in 2001, with the support and assistance of these people:

City of Georgetown

City Council
MaryEllen Kersch, Mayor
Llorente F. Navarrette, District 1
Clark Lyda, District 2
Doug Smith, District 3
Jack Noble, District 4
Sam L. Pfiester, District 5
Charles (Hoss) Burson, District 6
Ken Evans, District 7
Susan Hoyt, former member
Lee Bain, former member
Ferdinand L. Tonn, former member

Downtown Business District Design
Steering Committee
Renee L. Hanson, Chair
Gordon Baker
Jim Dillard
Steve Doering
Clare Easley
David Hays
Joan King
Edward Lee, AIA
Bill Lindstrom
Clark Lyda
Thomas M. Nichols, AIA
Joyce Perry
Gabe Sansing
Virginia Stubbs
Roy Headrick, Jr., Alternate
John Montgomery, Alternate

Historic Preservation Commission
(now the Historic and Architectural Review Comm.)
Joe Burke, Chair
James Dillard
Clare Easley
Thomas Langley
Jack Noble
Karalei Nunn, AIA
Richard Rickey
John Treuhardt, RA
Richard Zinsmeyer
James Fowler, Alternate
Kari Hunt, Alternate

City Staff
George Russell, City Manager
Tom Yantis, Assistant City Manager
Marianne Banks, City Attorney
Amelia Sondgeroth, Director, Dev. Services
Dave Hall, Building Official
Carla Benton, Development Planner
Steve O’Neal, Building Plan Reviewer
Karen Frost, Administrative Assistant

Special Thanks
A special thank you to all the Downtown Overlay District property owners, tenants and interested persons who participated in the workshops and public hearings during the design guidelines process.

Consultants

Winter & Company
1265 Yellow Pine Avenue
Boulder, CO 80304
(303) 440-8445

With the assistance of:
Urban Prospects
Parshall & Associates Architects
Duncan Associates
Credits - 2012 Update
The design guidelines were updated in 2012, with the support and assistance of these people:

City of Georgetown

City Council 2012
George Garver, Mayor
Patty Eason, District 1
Troy Hellmann, District 2
Danny Meigs, District 3
Bill Sattler, District 4
Jerry Hammerlun, District 5
Rachael Jonrowe, District 6
Tommy Gonzalez, District 7

2012 Historic Preservation Commission
(now the Historic and Architectural Review Comm.)
Dee Rapp, Chair
Sarah Blankenship
Jennifer Brown
Anna Eby
Susan Firth
David Paul
Tim Urban
Raymond Wahrenbrock

City Staff
Elizabeth Cook, Community Development Director
Valerie Kreger, Principal Planner
Robbie Wyler, Historic District Planner
Karen Frost, Administrative Supervisor

Consultants

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1265 Yellow Pine Avenue
Boulder, CO 80304
(303) 440-8445

A Note about photographs:
Note that these update incorporates many photographs from Georgetown that represent successful implementation of the guidelines since they were initially adopted. New language has also been added which clarifies the intent of the guidelines in areas that had been identified as needing more detail to assist in administering them. Photographs from other communities appear in this document, to illustrate some of the design guidelines. Often, the location is cited, in order to clarify that while the example may appear similar to a Georgetown property, it is not actually in the city. Also note that each photograph is selected to portray a specific principle and that there may be other features shown in an image that would not meet other guidelines. Georgetown photos date from various years.
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Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Appendix B: Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation
Interpretation of Terms Used in this Document

These definitions apply to terms related to compliance in the chapters that follow.

**Appropriate** - In some cases, a stated action or design choice is defined as being “appropriate” in the text. In such cases, by choosing the design approach referred to as “appropriate,” the reader will be in compliance with the guideline. In other cases, there may be a design that is not expressly mentioned in the text that also may be deemed “appropriate” by the Historic and Architectural Review Commission.

**Consider** - When the term “consider” is used, a design suggestion is offered to the reader as an example of one method of how the design guideline at hand could be met. Applicants may elect to follow the suggestion, but may also seek alternative means of meeting it. In other cases, the reader is instructed to evaluate the ability to take the course recommended in the context of the specific project.

**Context** - In many cases, the reader is instructed to relate to the context of the project area. The “context” relates to those properties and structures adjacent to, and within the same block as, the proposed project.

**Guideline** - In this document, a “guideline” is a requirement that must be met when it is relevant to the project under consideration, in order to be in compliance with the City of Georgetown’s design review process.

**Historic** - In general, an historic property is one that is at least 50 years old or older, associated with significant people or events or conveys a character of building and design found during the city’s period of significance. In the context of this document, an “historic” property is one that is designated by the City as an Historic Site or is listed as “contributing” within an Historic District.

**Imperative mood** - Throughout this document, many of the guidelines are written in the imperative mood. The reader is often instructed to “maintain” or “preserve” an established characteristic. For example, one guideline states: “Preserve significant storefront components.” In such cases, the user shall comply. The imperative mood is used, in part, because this document is intended to serve an educational role as well as a regulatory one.

**Inappropriate** - Inappropriate means impermissible. When the term “inappropriate” is used, the relevant design approach shall not be allowed. For example, one guideline states: “Signs that are out of character with those seen historically and that would alter the historic character of the street are inappropriate.” In this case, a design out of character with those seen historically would not be approved.

**Preferred** - In some cases, the reader is instructed that a certain design approach is “preferred.” In such a case, the reader is encouraged to choose the design option at hand. However, other approaches may be considered.

**Should** - If the term “should” appears in a design guideline, then compliance is required, unless specific circumstances of a project make it impractical to do so. In such cases where HARC determines that compliance is not required, then the applicant must demonstrate how the related policy statement still will be met.
Note that, these guidelines also apply to the Old Town area (not shown).