

**DESIGN STANDARDS FOR THE HISTORIC DISTRICT
CHARACTER AREA #1:
East Side Residential**



BRECKENRIDGE, COLORADO

December 1991

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NOTE:

A **(P)** symbol adjacent to a design standard indicates that it is a "Priority" that must be met in order to be in "substantial compliance" with the guidelines, under policy 5A of the town's Development Code.

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Historic photographs are provided courtesy of the Summit Historical Society and the Colorado Historical Society.

#1. East Side Residential Character Area

Note: The special design standards presented here for the East Side Residential Character Area apply in addition to the general standards on pages 19 through 26 of the main book of standards for all of the historic districts.

Location description

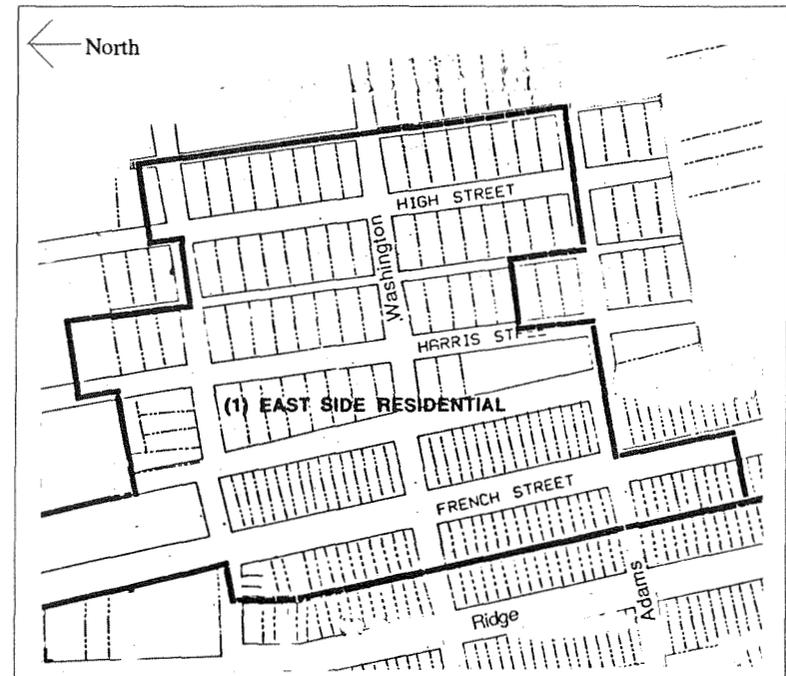
The East Side Residential Character Area is bounded by Highland Terrace on the east, the alley between French and Ridge Streets to the west (including lots on the north side of Lincoln, with an additional block on the northeast side of French Street), and Adams Street to the south, with an additional block on the southwest side of French Street.

Character of historic development

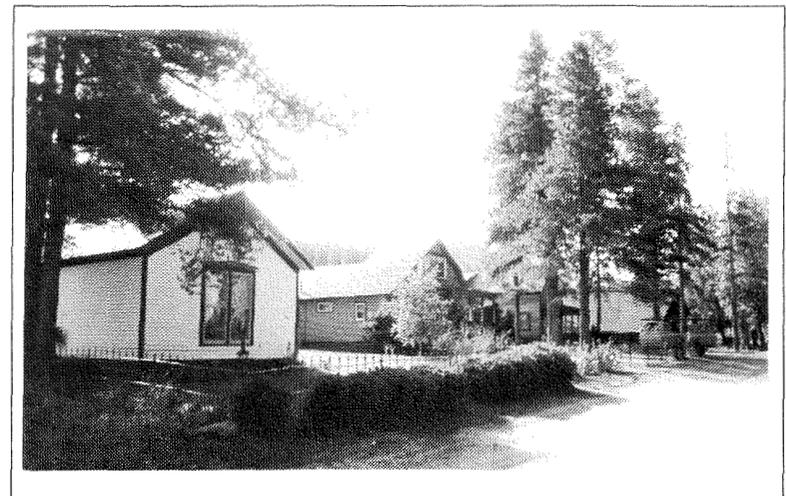
In the early years of Breckenridge's development, the East Side area was composed primarily of single family residences, many of which were 1-1/2 stories. Of these, the second floor was often tucked into the roof gables. Dormers were frequently used for upper floor windows. A mix of materials existed in primary structures, including combinations of rustic log and more refined painted wood clapboard. Wood was by far the dominant building material and wood shingles were typical on earlier roofs, with metal roofs also appearing within the historic period of significance.

Each residential site included a collection of secondary structures that housed supporting functions. Storage sheds, barns, outhouses and stables were typical outbuildings. Many were located at the back of properties, some on alleys. These outbuildings were a smaller scale, made of unpainted wood, usually "barnwood" siding. Most had metal roofs.

Landscaping usually consisted of a grass yard with small flower gardens in front of houses and perhaps a vegetable garden to the side or rear. Native evergreen trees were retained or planted in many yards. Some yard areas were used to contain livestock, which required that the property be fenced. Wrought iron, 1"x 1" painted pickets, or thin aspen log fences were used. Boardwalks often were used to separate animal areas from "yards" as well.



The boundary of the East Side Residential Character Area.



Yards, defined by fences and hedges and shaded with mature evergreens, are features that should be respected.

#1. East Side Residential



Gable-roofed buildings set back from the street, large trees and similar building materials reinforce the historic context of the East Side Residential Character Area.



Maintain the typical range of set-backs of historic buildings in the area.

Although some portions of the East Side area were “densely” built with a solid row of houses along a block, early photographs show other portions where substantial open space remained between properties. In fact, some blocks had only one or two residences during the early period of historic significance. This was especially true of streets on the north and south ends of the East Side Residential Character Area.

Existing character

Today, the East Side Residential Character Area contains a relatively high proportion of historic residential-type buildings that contribute to the significance of the district. Most of the historic buildings are perceived as individual structures, but in a few cases, older buildings still survive in a row and are perceived as a group. These establish “pockets” of historic context within the area. Elsewhere, historic buildings stand as individual accents among new structures. In contrast to the established residential scale of the area, the Colorado Mountain College building stands as a major landmark in this area.

Design Goal for the character area

The East Side Residential Character Area is one of the most important parts of Breckenridge and protection of its character is extremely important to the community. A major goal for this area is to protect the historic scale where it exists and to re-establish the historic scale and residential character in new development.

Conceptual standards for the East Side Residential Character Area follow :

Building Setbacks

Policy:

Most buildings in the area have front and side yards, and although there are variations in their dimensions, a relatively uniform setback exists. No new buildings should project in front of the typical setback line for the block.

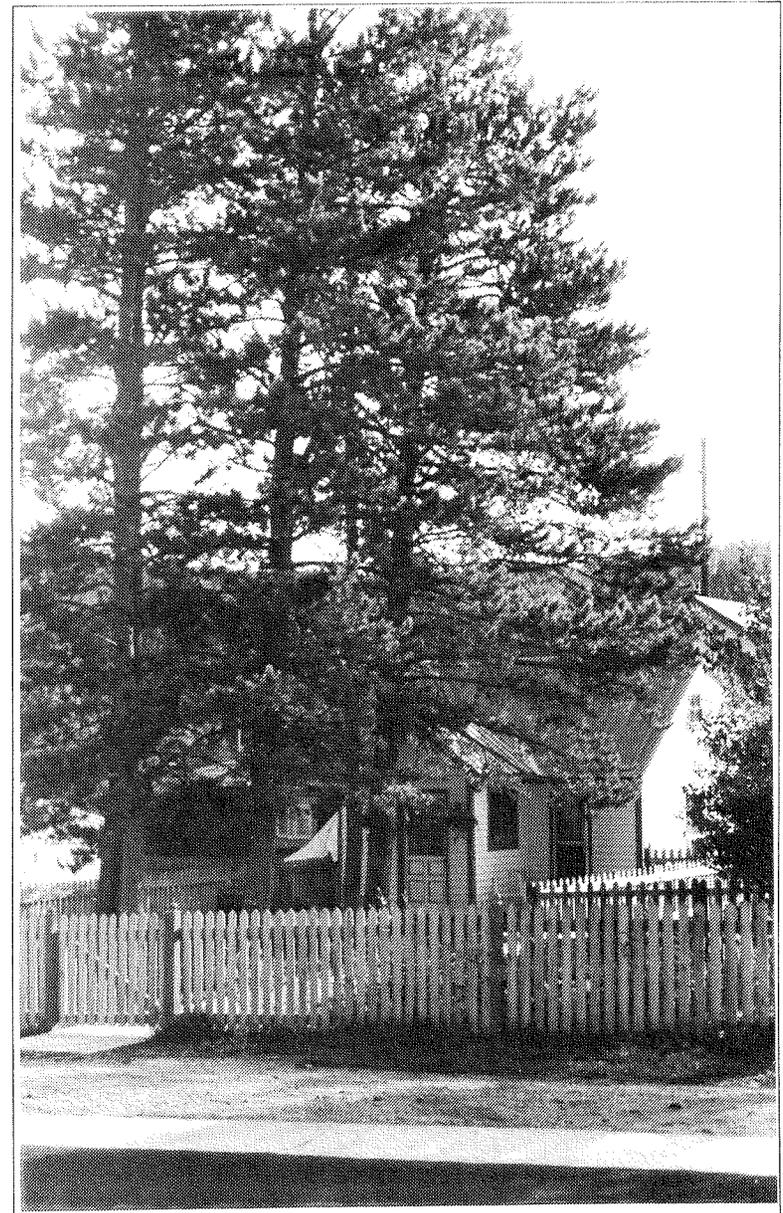
Design Standard:

P 114. Maintain the typical setback of buildings along the block.

- This is a very important standard.
- Align building fronts with other historic structures in the area.
- The East Side Residential Character Area setbacks occur as front and side yards.
- New buildings in this area should be set back in line with traditional house types. Locating a building at the sidewalk line, in a commercial building format, would be inappropriate in this context. Similarly, a setback that is farther back than the norm is inappropriate.
- Note the characteristic setback dimensions may vary from block to block.

P 115. Design front yards to be composed predominantly of plant materials, including trees and grass, as opposed to hard-surface paving.

- Hard surface plazas in front of buildings are generally inappropriate in this area.
- Avoid locating parking in front yards.



Design front yards to be predominantly plant materials.

#1. East Side Residential



Sacrificing front yards for use as parking should be avoided.



Design garages as separate structures, or as subordinate forms with small connectors to the main building to reduce the mass of individual buildings.

Parking

Policy:

Many sites have off-street parking slots located along the street edge, with parking perpendicular to the street. This arrangement has effectively widened the street and reduced the area that is perceived to be allocated to front yards. This parking arrangement deviates significantly from the historic development pattern and should be avoided. Front yards should retain a rustic, lawn-like image, and the front edge of the yard should be clearly defined.

Design Standard:

116. Minimize the visual impact of parking as seen from the street.

- Avoid locating parking in front yards. Locate parking in rear yards where feasible.
- If parking must be sited in the front, use paving designs that will help to retain a yard character and visually separate parking from the street edge.
- Avoid placing garage structures in front of primary houses. Attaching garages to the front of buildings is strongly discouraged. Garages that are built as smaller, separate structures are preferred. Where feasible, these should be sited to the side or to the rear of the main building.

117. Develop parking such that the front edge of the site is retained as yard.

Building Scale

Policy:

The historic building scale should be respected. Typically historic buildings of between 500 and 2,300 square feet survive today. The average size of representative historic structures surviving today is 1,500 square feet.

- P 118. New buildings should be in scale with existing historic and supporting buildings in the area.**
- Development densities of less than nine units per acre are recommended.
 - Locating some building area below grade to minimize the mass of the structures is encouraged.
 - Locate larger masses back from public view.
 - Use landscaping, especially large trees, to screen larger building masses.

- 119. Divide site functions into separate structures in order to reduce the mass of individual buildings.**
- Providing a garage separate from the main structure is preferred.
 - Creating outbuildings to provide additional storage space rather than increasing the bulk of the main building with these functions is encouraged.

Form and Shape

Sites along the east side of High Street climb steeply to the rear of the lots. Buildings located here appear to step down to the street. On the west side of High Street, older buildings are set below the street grade. Walkways here slope down to building entries.

Policy:

In terms of building form and materials, the East Side Residential Character Area is typified by sloped roofs and wood frame dwellings. Some structures are larger, multi-unit structures, which generally date from the 1960s and 1970s. New residences are often three stories, with a garage integrated into the structure. These more modern structures often face directly onto the street, instead of onto an alley and diminish the perception of the historic forms and shapes. This type of design should be avoided.

Design Standards:

- P 120. Use building forms similar to those found historically in the East Side Character Area.**
- Simple rectangular shapes were typical for residential structures.



Use dormers to provide a second floor in a one-and-a-half story building form.

#1. East Side Residential



Three-story buildings are out of scale in the area. (Avoid parking configurations such as this.)



Align porches with others on the block. Sawn shingles and low-profile metal roofs, along with wood clapboard siding, are appropriate materials.

P 121. Use roof forms that reflect the angle, scale, and proportion of historic buildings in the East Side residential character area.

- Roof shapes have a significant impact on the character of this area because they can be seen from higher elevations of mountain slopes.
- Those styles which were popular in the 19th century and are still in use today, such as high gable, high hip, shed and gambrel, are appropriate.
- Roofs should have a slope similar to those used historically.
- Note that although many gable roofs were accented with dormers, these were used in limited numbers on an individual building.

Building Height

Policy:

The typical range of historic building heights should be strengthened in order to reinforce the traditional scale of the neighborhood.

Design Standards:

P 122. Building height should be similar to that of nearby historic buildings.

- Primary facades should be 1 or 1-1/2 stories tall.
- Refer to height limits in related development regulations.
- Note that the height limits are absolute maximums and do not imply that all buildings should reach these limits. Visually appropriate buildings are often ones which are less than the maximum height allowed by ordinance.

123. Maintain the alignment of porch roof heights in the area.

- Align porch eaves with others in the block.
- Porches are typically one story in height.
- Porches projected forward from the main structure and were sheltered by separate roofs.
- On new buildings, porches that appear to be attached forms and subordinate to the main structure are preferred.

Façade Widths

Policy:

New buildings should have primary façades similar in dimension to those found historically. Typical building widths of surviving historic buildings range between 13 and 38 feet; the average is 26 feet.

Design Standard:

P 124. Reinforce typical narrow front façade widths that are typical of historic buildings in the area.

- Projects that incorporate no more than 50 feet of lot frontage are preferred.
- The front façade of a building may not exceed 30 feet in width.

Building Materials

Policy:

The historic district should be perceived as a collection of wooden structures. A strong uniformity in building materials is seen in the area. Most structures, both historic and more contemporary, have horizontal lap siding. This material is usually painted. Although a few historic log buildings serve as accents to the lap siding standard, this uniformity of materials should be respected.



Use painted wood lap siding as the primary building material.

Design Standard:

P 125. Maintain the present balance of building materials found in the Character Area.

- Use painted wood lap siding as the primary building material. An exposed lap dimension of approximately 4 inches is appropriate. This helps establish a sense of scale for buildings that is similar to that found historically.
- Contemporary interpretations of these historically-compatible materials are discouraged. Wood imitation products are discouraged as primary façade materials because they often fail to age well in the Breckenridge climate. The long term durability of siding materials will be considered.
- Modular panel materials are inappropriate.
- Masonry (brick or stone) may only be considered as an accent material. Stone that is indigenous to the mountains around Breckenridge may be considered.
- Logs were used here historically; but new, milled logwork is discouraged. It must be handhewn.
- Rough-sawn, stained or unfinished siding materials are inappropriate on primary structures.

Policy:

Steeply-pitched roofs are the predominant historic roof style because they serve well to shed snow in this high snow-fall community. Roofing materials have a significant impact on overall design and should be compatible in pattern, texture and color with those used historically in the area.

Design Standard:

P 126. Use roofing materials similar to those found historically.

- Smooth-sawn wooden shingles and rolled seam sheet metal are appropriate materials. These are encouraged.
- Newer materials, such as asphalt shingles, may be considered if their appearance will be similar in scale and texture to the historic roofing materials.
- Rough-split shake shingles are inappropriate.
- Matte finishes are required to minimize glare from roofs.

Outbuildings

Policy:

Barns, storage sheds, and outhouses are typical building types that are part of the scene in historic Breckenridge. These structures served practical functions that were essential to daily life in the community. Where historic sheds survive, they help to convey this sense of character and help to demonstrate life in Breckenridge's earlier days. These should be preserved. The tradition of developing a site with a complex of buildings should be continued in new construction.

Smaller outbuildings located to the rear of the main house are seen on many lots. The scale of the primary structure is established by contrast with these smaller structures. The supporting structures are important features of the historic districts and contribute to the sense of historic character. More recently some lots have been developed with two residential structures; a primary structure in the front and a separate unit at the back. This arrangement occurs more frequently at the east end of the area.

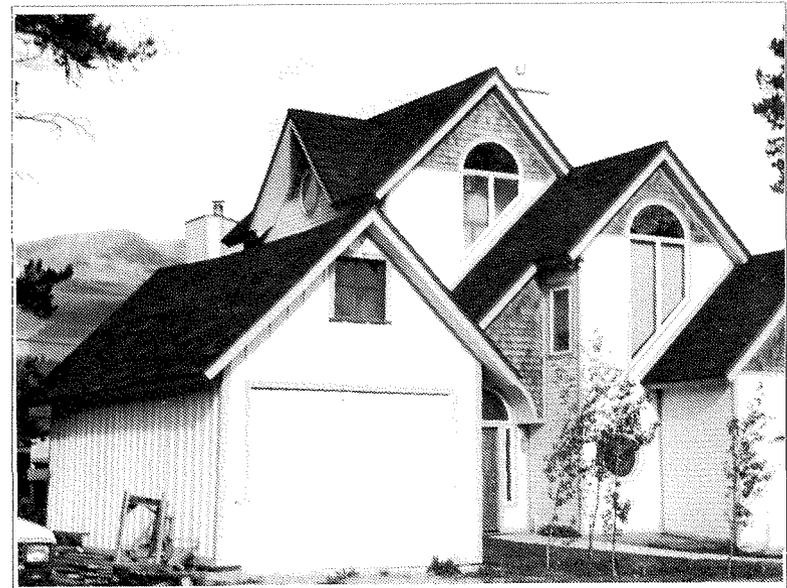
Design Standard:

127. Use secondary structures in new development where feasible.

- Housing utilitarian functions, such as parking, storage, and waste receptacles in secondary structures is encouraged.
- Using secondary structures for utilitarian functions (not living area) will help reduce the perceived scale of the development by dividing the total floor area into a cluster of smaller structures rather than one large building.
- Use simple building forms and materials for these structures.



The tradition of using secondary structures should be continued.



Garages that are separate, secondary structures are encouraged.



Many historic structures in the East End are well preserved. Some have minor alterations, such as the out-of-scale shutters applied to this original window.



Doors and windows should be similar in size and shape to those used traditionally.

Finally, design standards that address more detailed issues follow:

Doors and windows

Policy:

Vertically-oriented windows are the primary window type both in historic and new buildings. Doors were traditionally wood, often with simple decorative panels; upper panels included glass. These features, when repeated along the street, provide a unifying element throughout the area. Their use should be continued in new construction.

Design Standard:

128. Use building features similar in size and shape to those used traditionally.

- Windows should be similar in size and shape to those used historically.
- Doors that include glass are encouraged.

Porches

Policy:

Throughout the area, primary building entrances are defined by porches, which usually face the street. The use of porches to define primary entrances should be continued.

Design Standard:

129. Use porches to define primary entrances to buildings.

- Roofs over porches are usually arranged in one of two ways: Where the ridge line of the main roof is perpendicular to the street, the porch appears as a subordinate attachment to the end elevation.
- Where the ridge line of the main roof is parallel to the street, the porch usually appears to be a more integral element to the building. Both options may be considered.

Ornament and detail

Policy:

Traditionally, ornamental details were used sparingly on buildings in the East Side Residential Character Area. Most were wooden elements and were typically small in scale, in proportion to the buildings themselves. Simple moldings were used around windows. Decorative shingles were used at times in the gables of dormers, and decorative brackets were applied to porch columns. Many decorative features were modest elaborations of functional elements. When decorative features are used in new construction, they should be applied in a similar spirit.

Design Standard:

130. Use ornament and detail with restraint, in keeping with the modest character of the East Side Residential Character Area.

- Avoid elaborately ornate details that would confuse the genuine history of the area.

Plant materials

Policy:

Large evergreens are randomly scattered throughout the area and provide a sense of visual continuity to this part of the district. They also provide shade and visual relief to many of the simpler cottages. The contrast in scale of these large trees to the small historic residential structures is especially noteworthy. Mature plantings help unify the area and should be encouraged.

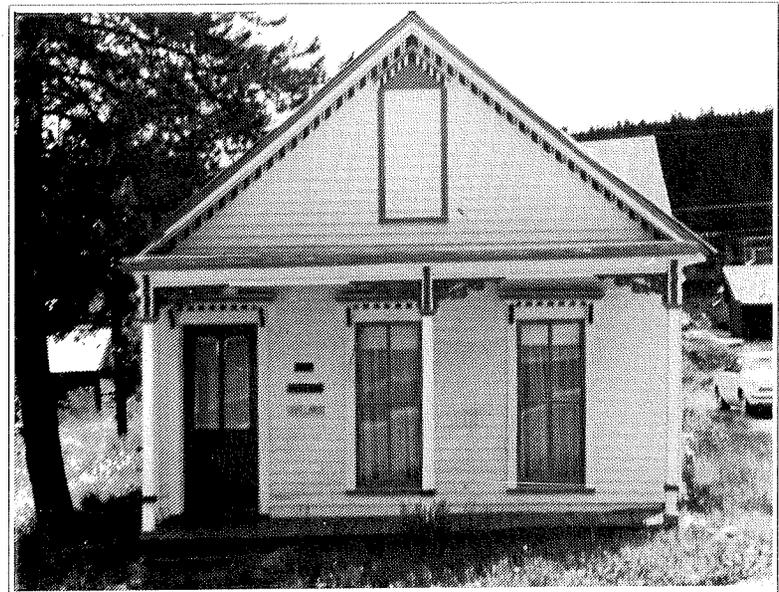
Design Standard:

131. Use evergreen trees in front yards where feasible.

- When initially installing trees, begin with a tree, or cluster of trees, that is large enough in scale to have an immediate visual impact.



Use porches to define primary entrances.



Use ornament and detail with restraint, in keeping with the modest character of the area.

#1. East Side Residential



Landscape designs should reinforce the traditional site design characteristics that emerged in the early years of Breckenridge.

Policy:

Trees help to give a block uniform character. Cottonwood trees were originally planted along the street edges. The trees were uniformly aligned along the block and established a strong edge to the street. Although few survive, their reintroduction should be encouraged. This would be particularly helpful in promoting a uniform character in blocks where newer construction has deviated from historic building traditions.

Design Standard:

132. Reinforce the alignment of street trees along property lines.

- Planting new cottonwood trees along street edges is encouraged.

Policy:

Plant materials should be used to mitigate negative visual impacts of existing structures that are out of scale. Plantings should also be used to minimize the visual impact of new service areas abutting adjacent properties and public ways.

Design Standard:

133. Use landscaping to mitigate undesirable visual impacts.

- Use large trees to reduce the perceived scale where larger building masses would abruptly contrast the historic scale of the area.
- Include hedges and other masses of lower-scale plantings to screen service areas.