

Kingston City Land Bank Design Guidelines

In recognition of the City of Kingston's unique historic fabric, and the KCLB's place in preserving and restoring historic housing stock through local renovations and rehabilitations, the following standards have been assembled to guide this important work. Our overarching goal with these renovations is to honor the historic integrity of these buildings, taking a "do no harm" approach to our rehab work that will provide high-quality housing poised to stand the test of time.

It should be noted that these standards are intended to provide a basic framework rather than rigid rules, and will mostly be applicable to buildings constructed pre-WWII. All buildings slated for renovation by the KCLB or any partners subject to these guidelines will have a site-specific scope of work and design specifications that detail layouts, materials, and finishes. Where details may not be listed (such as the quantities or amperage of electrical receptacles, for instance), local building/safety code should be consulted.

Best efforts should always be put forth to obtain historic reference photos to guide the work. The Tax Assessor's Office in City Hall should be able to provide at least one photo, although other sources may have more. In the unlikely chance that a property falls within the historic district, all exterior alterations should be approved by the local Landmarks Board.

EXTERIOR GUIDELINES

ROOFING

- **Metal Roofing:** If standing seam or flat-seam metal roofing is present, evaluate whether it can be recoated with a suitable membrane rather than removed.
- **Slate Roofing:** If slate roofing is present, it should be repaired and preserved. If it must be replaced, the original design should be replicated with slate or composite. Alternate materials may be selected if they will not visually alter the building from the street.
- **New Roofing/Replacement:** Where replacement is necessary, a full tear-off should be done with sheathing evaluated and replaced as needed.
- **Drip Edge/Flashing/Chimneys:** Drip edge should be pre-finished or painted to match roofing color. Flashing around chimneys should be copper. Intact chimneys should be retained unless they are beyond repair and/or already demolished below the roofline.

Acceptable Materials:

- Architectural Asphalt Shingles
- 3-Tab Asphalt Shingles
- “Straight” Standing Seam Metal
- Slate
- Cedar Shake
- Cedar-Look Composite
- Flat/Low-Slope Roofs:
- Standing Seam Metal
- EPDM
- Torch-down rubber roofing
- Roll Roofing, such as Elastoflex

Unacceptable Materials:

- Plastic, fiberglass, or metal corrugated roofing
- Ribbed or striated standing seam metal

GUTTERS/DOWNSPOUTS/BOX GUTTERS

- Use seamless gutters fabricated on-site for long spans.
- Use half-round gutters and 3” or 4” corrugated round downspouts.
- Downspouts should be painted the siding color, and gutters the fascia color.
- If Box Gutters (or Yankee Gutters) are present, they should be evaluated for restoration. If they are in poor repair, it may make sense to sheath over and shingle them in conjunction with a roof replacement, and attach hanging gutters in their place.
- Where box gutters are in salvageable condition, they should be recoated with a suitable membrane or re-lined with EPDM or metal.

Acceptable Materials:

- Aluminum/galvanized half-round gutters
- 3” or 4” round corrugated downspouts
- Where K-style gutters are used, round downspouts should still be fitted.

Unacceptable Materials:

- Vinyl, plastic, or “accordion” style fittings
- K-Style gutters
- Rectangular downspout

TRIM/SOFFITS/FASCIAS/CORNICES

- Original trim should always be preserved, either for continued use or replication.
- Where original trim work is rotted or missing, best efforts should be made to match original profiles. This can often be done by combining readily-available stock profiles, sourcing components online, or having the correct profile fabricated by a local millwork supplier.

- Where soffits have been covered with vinyl or aluminum that is in poor condition, removal is recommended. Repair/necessary replacement of the original surface with like material is encouraged.
- PVC or Composite Board such as AZEK can be used to replace rotted/missing wood trim, provided it is properly fastened and painted once installed.

Acceptable Materials:

- Wood suitable for exterior use such as pine, cedar, or mahogany
- PVC Board such as AZEK, painted. Where there is a smooth and textured side, the smooth side should be visible.

Unacceptable Materials:

- Aluminum or vinyl to cover cornices or other trim work.
- Finger-jointed wood, often called “pre-primed.”

SIDING/CLADDING

- Where original wood clapboard/shingle siding is present, it should be repaired and repainted as necessary.
- Where new siding is required, it should be either wood or composite, such as cedar, JamesHardie or LP Smartside. Exposure of siding boards should match the original treatment (typically 5”).
- Siding should be painted in quality exterior paint in flat finish. Trim, window sash, and doors should be semi-gloss.
- Where vinyl or aluminum siding is present and in poor condition, it should be removed.
 - If original material underneath is in salvageable condition, it should be repaired and repainted.
 - If original material underneath is unsalvageable, new wood or composite siding should be installed.
 - Sills and other moldings removed for the installation of vinyl or aluminum siding should be restored.

Acceptable Materials:

- Wood, such as cedar or pine. Back of lap siding should be primed before installation.
- Composite siding such as LP Smartside or JamesHardie. Where smooth or faux-grain boards are an option, smooth should be selected.
- Cedar shingles or composite shingles.

Unacceptable Materials:

- Vinyl Siding
- Aluminum siding
- Faux-stone Veneer
- Stucco, unless appropriate

BRICK/MASONRY/FOUNDATIONS

- Where mortar has failed, it should be repointed by a qualified mason with appropriate mortar. Mortar that is too hard will contribute to further erosion of brick and cracking of stone. The general formula for this region is 6 parts masonry sand, 3 parts lime, 1 part Portland Cement, although this should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- Unpainted brick should be preserved.
- Previously painted brick may be repainted or stripped using the least damaging chemical method.
- Stone lintels or sills should be stripped of any paint or coatings.

Acceptable Materials:

- Brick
- Bluestone
- Lime mortar

Unacceptable Materials/Techniques:

- Cement mortar, unless appropriate.
- “Parging” foundations, unless to repair existing work.
- DryLock or similar “moisture-blocking” paint.
- Painting stone or brick foundations that are not already painted.
- Sandblasting or Pressure-Washing brick or stone walls can cause irreparable damage and should only be done under extreme caution

WINDOWS AND DOORS

- Where original sash windows, storm windows, and/or doors are present, they should be repaired and preserved. Original windows not only preserve the historic character of a house, but they are easily repairable and roughly as energy-efficient as a new window when in good working order and fitted with storm windows and weatherstripping. New windows, by contrast, tend to need replacement every 10-20 years at significant cost to the homeowner.
- Wood shutters should be repaired and preserved. If a window has been removed and cannot be practically restored, a “false window” comprised of a casing, sill, and closed ornamental shutters may be acceptable. Vinyl or aluminum shutters should most likely be removed.
- Where new storm windows are required, they should be either:
 - Wood exterior storms
 - Interior storms (such as Indow Windows)
 - Aluminum Triple-Track, with frames painted or pre-finished to match window sash.

- Where new/replacement windows are required:
 - Best efforts should be made to match the original style, whether the current windows reflect it or not.
 - Where original sash are present but certain windows need to be replaced, having wood sash custom-made to match should be considered.
 - More typical replacement windows should be all wood or have painted wood interiors and vinyl or aluminum-clad exteriors. In general, new window exteriors should be black.
 - Divided-Lite windows should always be Simulated Divided Lite with a space bar and putty profile on mullions to most closely match original sash windows, provided true divided lite windows are not a practical option.
 - Where window sizes have been altered (generally, minimized), best efforts should be made to restore the original sizes and scales.
- Where new doors are required, best efforts should be made to match the historic style, including side-lites and transoms.
- Where budgetary constraints make these guidelines impractical, it may be acceptable to follow them only for the street-facing side of a building, reserving the sides and back for more budget-friendly alternatives.

Acceptable Materials:

- Replacement all-wood sash
- Replacement windows that are all wood or wood interior and vinyl or aluminum-clad exterior.
- Wood or wood-look composite shutters.

Unacceptable Materials:

- Vinyl Interior/Vinyl Exterior Windows, unless already present or specifically requested.
- Vinyl/Aluminum shutters
- Divided lite windows with snap-on grilles or grilles between the glass panes, unless specified for sides/back of building

PORCHES

- Porches should be repaired and preserved. Where alterations or rebuilding is necessary, best efforts should be made to match the historic style and reference photos.
- Where new flooring is necessary, it should generally be tongue-and-groove fir, painted or stained. If tongue-and-groove is not applicable (such as where joists run perpendicular to the building), wood decking such as cedar can be used.
- Where a new floor system must be built, it should be pitched slightly away from the building, and joists should run parallel to the building so that flooring can be laid perpendicular for water run-off.
- Railings should generally be wood or composite. Composite materials must be painted. Where a porch platform is under 30" off the ground, a railing lower than 36" may be encouraged to match historic specifications.
- Columns should be either wood, fiberglass, or another structural composite, painted.

- Lattice should be wood and painted.
- Existing pressure-treated stairs should be coated with an opaque stain, such as Cabot, which performs better than paint over time on pressure-treated wood.
- Porch ceilings should be narrow beadboard—preferably tongue-and-groove, although beadboard-look plywood or composite may be specified.

Acceptable Materials:

- Tongue-and-groove fir flooring, or better such as mahogany.
- Painted exterior-grade wood or composite for railings, spindles, and columns

Unacceptable Materials:

- Composite flooring such as trex, unless for an open-air deck
- Vinyl railings and posts
- pressure-treated decking, railings or spindles.
- vinyl/pvc lattice

FENCING

- Fencing in general should be cedar or pressure-treated lumber, left to weather or coated with an opaque stain to prevent peeling. Dog-Ear or Stockade-Style pickets are generally encouraged. Privacy fences should be 6', other fencing should not exceed 4'.
- Where wrought iron fencing is present, it should be repaired and preserved.
- Where wrought iron fencing is appropriate but unattainable, a suitable aluminum reproduction may be used.
- Where chainlink fencing is present, it should be removed and replaced. In certain instances, the posts may be reused for the installation of wood fencing.

Acceptable Materials:

- Cedar
- Pressure-treated lumber
- Dog-Ear style pickets
- Stockade-style pickets
- Wrought iron fencing
- Aluminum fencing

Unacceptable Materials:

- Chain link
- Vinyl/PVC

LANDSCAPING/DRIVEWAYS/WALKWAYS

- Whenever possible, an appropriate tree or trees should be planted between the sidewalk and the street. The Kingston Tree Commission should approve the species and location.

- Best efforts should be made to install native and/or non-invasive plant species.
- Driveways should preferably be gravel (such as pea gravel), pavers, or stamped concrete. Concrete and blacktop are discouraged.
- Walkways should be either gravel, stone dust or bluestone slabs.
- Mulch should be natural, brown, or black.

Acceptable Materials:

- Bluestone
- Decorative Gravel
- Stamped Concrete
- Concrete/Brick/Stone Pavers
- Untreated, black, or brown mulch

Unacceptable Materials:

- Asphalt (except to repair existing)
- Red mulch
- Exotic decorative stones such as white marble.
- Item 4, unless used as a base for paving or decorative stone.

INTERIOR GUIDELINES

DEMOLITION

- Where possible, original materials should be retained to the greatest extent possible. Do not remove more of the interior than is necessary. Removal of over 50% of the interior will trigger the requirement that the entire building must be brought up to modern building code, which can be costly and ultimately damaging to the building.
- Where wall material must be removed, use an oscillating saw to cut around moldings so that they can remain in place.
- Where salvageable materials such as moldings, doors, or fixtures are removed, they should be reused, donated, or sold.

WALLS AND CEILINGS

- Original plaster and lath walls should be stabilized, skim-coated, and preserved where possible. Where drywall must be used, it should be minimum 1/2" thick, layered or furred to the original wall thickness. Lath provides some structural rigidity and can often be left in place and covered in gypsum board to achieve the correct wall thickness.
- Where ceiling heights have been lowered to install acoustic tiles or other common treatments, such materials should be removed and the original ceiling height restored.
- Where tin ceilings are present, they should be preserved where possible unless specified.

- Unless otherwise noted, ceiling paint should be flat/matte.
- Unless otherwise noted, wall paint should be eggshell.
- Unless otherwise noted, trim/door/sash paint should be satin or semi-gloss.

Acceptable Materials:

- 1/2" or 5/8" drywall. Seams should be taped with fiberglass mesh tape rather than paper.
- Joint compound, DuraBond, or plaster veneer.
- Cementboard for wet locations with direct water contact.
- Beadboard tongue-and-groove (preferred) or prefabricated panels.

Unacceptable Materials:

- Vinyl panels
- Wood paneling
- Acoustic Tile

MOLDINGS AND DOORS

- Unpainted original moldings should generally be cleaned and restored. Unpainted woodwork was typically treated with shellac, which can be rejuvenated with denatured alcohol.
- Any moldings or doors that are removed during demo or renovation should be retained and labeled, and either reinstalled or used elsewhere.
- Where molding needs to be patched in or replaced, best efforts should be made to match original profiles. This can often be done by combining a few readily-available stock profiles, however in certain cases it may be necessary to have the profile replicated by a local millwork shop.
- Doors should generally be of solid wood, and preferably matching existing doors in the building. Vintage and antique doors are readily available locally.
- Where openings between rooms are present that do not require doors, such openings should be cased in molding, not finished with drywall corner-beads.

Acceptable Materials:

- Wood: for painted woodwork, pine or poplar will suffice.
- Architectural polyurethane foam for reproduction crown molding or medallions

Unacceptable Materials:

- Bi-fold or accordion style doors.
- Hollow core doors.
- MDF moldings, generally.
- "Pre-Primed" finger-jointed wood, generally

LIGHTING

- In general, hardwired lighting should consist of a central ceiling fixture and/or sconces placed about 5'-5'6" on center from floor.
- Where appropriate, a plaster medallion or polyurethane foam replica should be installed.
- Recessed lighting or track lighting should be used sparingly (such as in a basement or closet), if at all.
- Fluorescent lighting should be avoided.

FLOORING

- Where wood flooring is present (even under carpeting, linoleum, or another overlay), it should be refinished. Even where floors are in poor condition, best efforts should be made to patch, repair, and salvage existing flooring before new flooring is considered.
- Where wood flooring is not present, new flooring would preferably be of authentic materials such as fir, oak, or maple.
- In certain cases, floating laminate or luxury vinyl floors may be used. In basements, concrete may serve as the finished floor.

Acceptable Materials:

- Solid wood such as fir, oak, yellow pine, maple, mahogany, or similar.
- Natural stone, porcelain, ceramic, or terra-cotta tile, if specified.
- Floating laminate, engineered hardwood, or luxury vinyl if specified.

Unacceptable Materials:

- Sheet linoleum, unless appropriate
- VCT, unless appropriate
- Wood-look porcelain or ceramic tile
- Faux-stone porcelain or ceramic tile, unless specified.
- Wall-to-wall carpeting

KITCHENS

- Original kitchen cabinets or butler's pantries should typically be repaired and preserved. If they cannot be utilized in the renovation, they should be salvaged and sold, donated, or stored for future use.
- All kitchens must meet building code and provide, at minimum, a sink, faucet, range, vent hood, and refrigerator. Providing a dishwasher is preferable.
- Exhaust hoods should vent to the exterior of the building where possible, rather than reciprocating.
- Garbage disposals are discouraged unless specified.

BATHROOMS

- Original bathroom fixtures should typically be preserved, whether or not they are part of the final renovation plan. Cast iron fixtures can be refinished in place and should generally be retained. Double-tap sinks can normally be converted to a single-tap with minimal effort.
- Materials such as tile can be modest in cost but should be period-appropriate. Tile such as 1" or 2" hexagon, basketweave, pennyround, or 3"x6", 4"x8", 4"x4", or 6"x6" subway are good options for vintage bathrooms, provided grout lines are as small as possible. If wood floors are present in a bathroom, they can be refinished with a commercial or marine finish.

HVAC

- Where original cast iron radiators are present, typically they should be cleaned and restored to an operable heat system. Vintage/antique radiators are readily available locally should units need to be replaced or supplemented.
- In tiled rooms, either electric or hot water radiant heat may be installed.
- Where cast iron radiators are not present, energy-efficient ductless mini-splits may be used. Ceiling cassettes are vastly preferable to wall-mounted units. Best efforts should be made to locate exterior condensers in least visible area possible.
- Where traditional ducted systems are present, they may be repaired and reused.
- Electric or hydronic baseboard heating is discouraged, unless installed in the kick plate of the kitchen or other special circumstances.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY/INSULATION

- While modern building code may not always suit the construction of an old building, best efforts should be made to improve the efficiency of the building envelope.
- Best efforts should be made to reduce waste during construction, including minimally-invasive demolition and reuse of old materials where applicable.

Acceptable Materials:

- Borate-treated blown-in cellulose insulation
- Rockwool/Roxul batting
- Rigid foam

Unacceptable Materials:

- Spray foam should be used with careful consideration, particularly on the underside of roofs where it may accelerate rot and shorten the lifespan of roofing materials.
- Fiberglass insulation, unless specified.