

Historic Design Guidelines

City of Binghamton , New York

FINAL REPORT

September 2011



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**City of
Binghamton**
Restoring The Pride

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City of Binghamton Historic Design Guidelines

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- Matthew T. Ryan | Mayor
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- Lea Webb | 4th District
- Sean Massey | 5th District
- Charles Kramer | 6th District
- Edward Collins | 7th District

Project Steering Committee:

- Peter L'Orange | City of Binghamton Historic Preservation Planner
- Caroline Quidort | City of Binghamton Chief Planner
- James Bryden | Preservation Association of the Southern Tier
- Ruth Levy | Preservation Association of the Southern Tier / CAUD
- Peter Klosky | Commission on Architecture and Urban Design

Commission on Architecture and Urban Design:

- Ruth Levy
- Donna Dewey
- Anthony Brunelli
- Mike Haas
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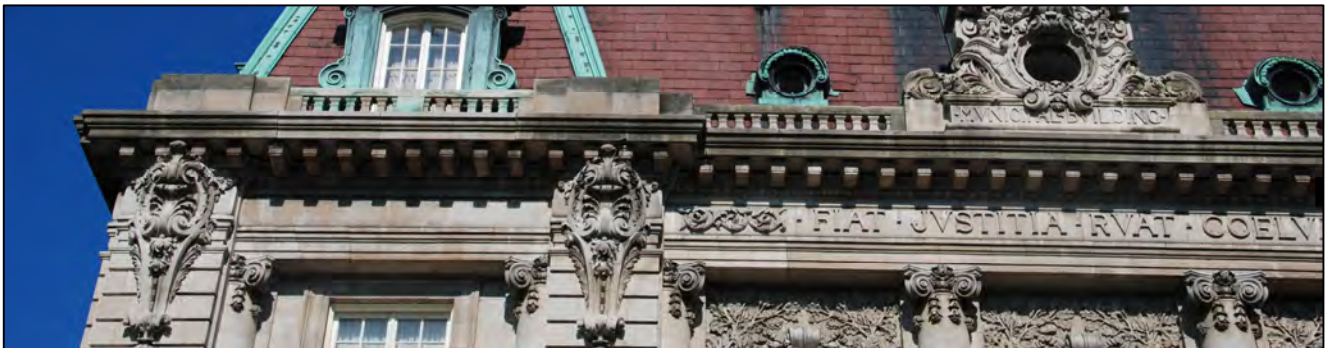
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Section 1:
Historic Preservation Approach and
Procedures

Chapter 1: Introduction



OVERVIEW

The City of Binghamton landscape is rich with treasured and significant architectural resources that reflect the City's evolution from a mill village to a thriving industrial center. The City has recognized the need to develop a comprehensive and thorough set of design guidelines to maintain and protect the value and integrity of historic properties and districts which help to tell the story of the City.

The purpose of the Guidelines is to ensure the protection and preservation of historic buildings and sites through the use of appropriate treatment approaches. One of the greatest threats to the historic character and identity of Binghamton is the slow and incremental loss of historic fabric, whether an entire block, an individual building, or a character-defining feature of one structure. The Guidelines are intended to supplement the Historic Preservation Ordinance and establish a basis for determining the appropriateness of changes or modifications proposed for historically significant buildings.

Design Guidelines

Provide:

- *Context*
- *General information on architectural styles*
- *Basic information associated with preservation principles*
- *Flexibility for addressing needs of individual properties*
- *Recommendations for appropriate design and material treatments*
- *Recommendations for achieving design compatibility in historic districts*

Design Guidelines Do

Not:

- *Regulate use*
- *Regulate interior changes*
- *Dictate a single, absolute treatment*

HOW TO USE THE GUIDELINES

The Guidelines recognize that the style, condition and issues associated with buildings and sites throughout the City are different. Therefore the guidelines are intended to be a flexible document that allows property owners to tailor treatments and approaches to meet and address their specific conditions and building features.

What Are Historic Design Guidelines?

The Historic Design Guidelines are an educational tool and resource for property owners. They are intended to educate property owners about common architectural styles and the significance of the City's historic building stock. They are provided to familiarize property owners with the most appropriate tools and techniques for caring for, and maintaining, their historic structures. They enable people to make informed and appropriate decisions regarding historic buildings and sites within the City of Binghamton. They should be considered principles that are intended to inspire innovative and sensitive solutions to addressing changes to historic buildings and properties.

Who Should Use the Guidelines?

The City of Binghamton Historic Design Guidelines should be used by property owners who are considering modifications to an historic structure that is designated as a Local Landmark or is within one of the City's locally designated Historic Districts. Developers considering new construction projects in a designated historic district or the adaptive reuse of a Local Landmark should also consult the Guidelines. The Guidelines will allow applicants to better prepare for local review of their proposed project by understanding the criteria that the project will be judged against. The City's Commission on Architecture and Urban Design (CAUD) will use the Guidelines when reviewing projects.

The Guidelines will be used by CAUD to evaluate proposed projects impacting Local Landmarks and Historic Districts. In addition, they are a resource for the City's Department of

What is historic preservation?

Historic preservation is the practice of maintaining and preserving those buildings, structures and objects which hold a special level of significance in the history of a community.

What is a historic building?

Historic buildings are typically broken into two types: individual resources and contributing buildings to a historic district. In Binghamton, individual resources are locally designated as Landmarks. Contributing buildings are identified as part of Local Historic District designation.

What makes a building significant?

To determine significance, a building must typically be over 50 years old, have high integrity and be associated with an important historical event; be associated with an important individual; have a high degree of architectural value; or be likely to yield archeological information.

Planning, Planning Commission, building professionals, designers and contractors. The City of Binghamton has a wealth of historic buildings worthy of sound preservation and appropriate treatment, above and beyond those that are regulated. *The Guidelines should be reviewed and considered by all property owners of historic buildings in an effort to preserve and protect the unique resources that define the City of Binghamton.*

How the Guidelines are Organized

The Guidelines are organized into three distinct sections as described below.

Section 1: Historic Preservation Approach and Procedures | includes background information on the Guidelines themselves, as well as architectural styles in the City of Binghamton and general background on historic preservation. Also included in this section is an overview of the regulatory process associated with obtaining the required certificates and permits when proposing modifications to a designated Local Landmark or building or site in a local Historic District. This section should be reviewed by anyone considering making a modification to an historic property.

Section 2: Historic Design Guidelines | includes all of the specific guidelines that should be considered for projects impacting historic structures or districts. The Guidelines are formatted as topic-specific worksheets that can be tailored for each individual project, with one or more worksheets used as a reference. The section has been divided into various chapters to help direct users to the information sheets that are most applicable to them, whether related to materials or a building feature, a residential or commercial structure, or a rehabilitation project as opposed to new construction.

For example, if a residential property owner is proposing work on the front porch and entry of their home, they can go directly to the sections on Wood, Porches and Doors.

Local Historic District Boundaries

Each of the locally designated Historic Districts in Binghamton are also listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Rail Terminal Historic District
Centered at the intersection of Chenango Street and Erie-Lackawanna Railroad tracks, the district represents the significance of the railroad in the development of Binghamton.

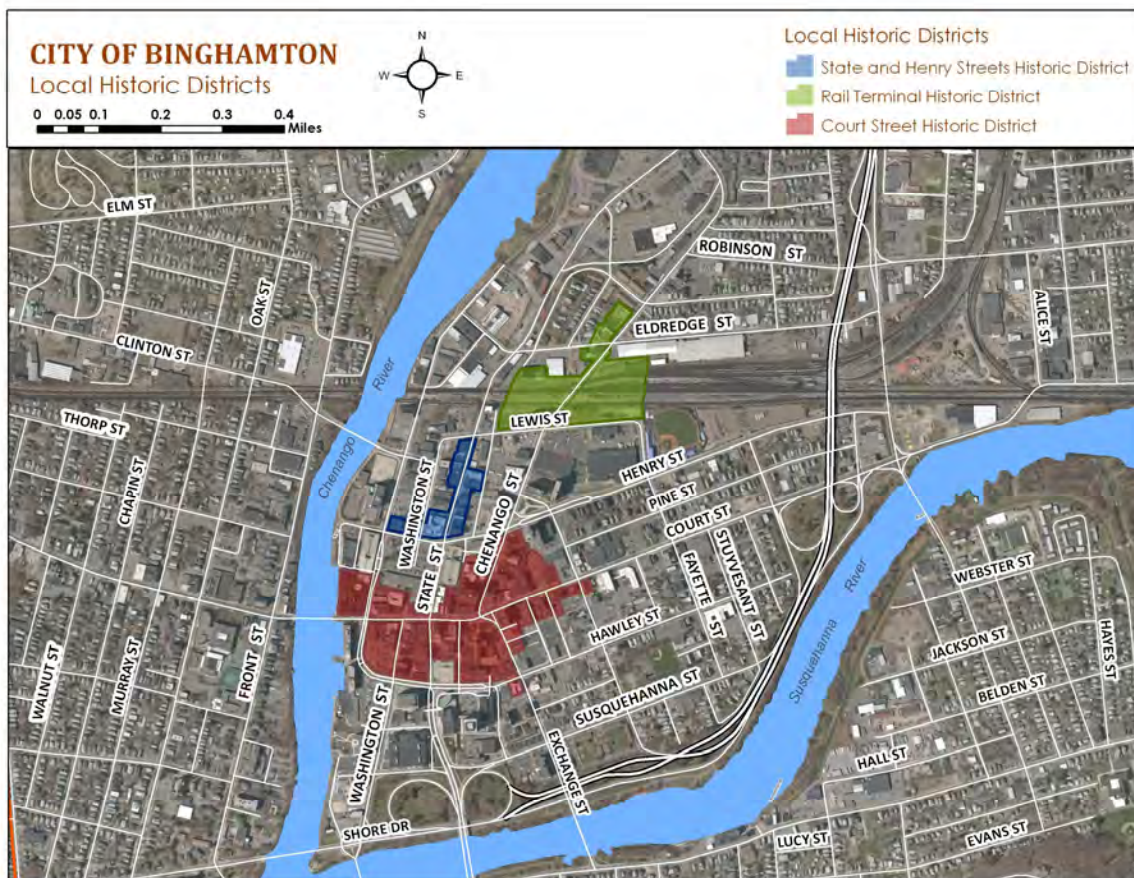
State and Henry Street Historic District
Bounded by Lewis Street, Prospect Avenue, Henry Street, and Water and Washington Streets. Represents center of commerce and industry around the former Chenango Canal in downtown Binghamton.

Court Street Historic District
The District includes the historic core of downtown, bounded by the Chenango River, Carroll, Henry, and Hawley Streets. Eighty-nine structures are considered contributing, representing the period from c.1840 and 1939.

Section 3: Appendix | includes a variety of supplemental materials that support information included and identified in Sections 1 and 2. Each of the documents within the Appendix will likely be helpful and useful to property owners, such as a copy of the Preservation Ordinance and the application form required when seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness.

APPLICABILITY

All properties located within a Local Historic District (see map below and sidebar on previous page) or designated as a Local Landmark (see list of properties in Appendix 4) are required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Commission of Architecture and Urban Design prior to any work being completed to the exterior of their property, even those changes not requiring a building permit. This includes all exterior alterations, additions and repairs, as well as new construction projects in a Historic District. See Chapter 4 for list of project types that require review, as well as a summary of review procedures. Appendix 4 also includes a map of all of the City’s existing and proposed historic districts. The City does not have power to review projects in National Register Districts that are not locally designated or proposed districts unless the property is a Local Landmark. The areas subject to City and CAUD review may be expanded in the future as more individual properties and districts are considered for local designation.



Chapter 2: Preservation Approach



OVERVIEW

The City of Binghamton takes great pride in its extensive collection of historic buildings, sites and resources. Through pro-active planning efforts, the City is preserving, protecting and enhancing these resources that contribute to the character of Binghamton. The City recognizes that its physical appearance is a direct reflection of its people, its diversity, its culture, and its history. Binghamton remains committed to preserving and maintaining its historic fabric in order to foster and promote a sense of pride in who we were and who we will become.

It is important to note that the Historic Design Guidelines are not intended to stop or prohibit the continued growth and evolution of the community, but rather ensure that change is considerate of and sensitive to the character of the City's historic resources. The approach to preservation planning undertaken by the City of Binghamton recognizes that once a building, landscape, or site element is lost, it is irreplaceable.

BENEFITS OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic preservation enhances individual buildings and sites, neighborhoods, and the City of Binghamton by improving the appearance of the public realm and contributing to the unique character and identity of city neighborhoods. Historic preservation is not just about preserving individual buildings, but strengthening the essence and character of places that are unique to Binghamton.

Through the designation of Local Landmarks and Historic Districts, the City of Binghamton and CAUD are seeking to promote the history of Binghamton in a manner that stimulates local pride and creates a community that is attractive to residents and visitors, as well as investors and new businesses. Historic preservation translates into economic development for the community, through reinvestment in the local economy, as well as tax incentives and grant moneys.

Tax Credit Incentives

The following section identifies some tax credit programs that are available in 2011. Tax credit and grant programs are consistently being modified. For the most up to date information on tax credit and grant programs available for historic preservation projects, please contact the City of Binghamton Historic Preservation Planner in the Department of Planning, Housing and Community Development. Refer to Appendix 9 for a partial list of other resources that may be available.

New York State Historic Homeowner Rehabilitation Tax Credit

Rehabilitation work on historic residential structures may qualify for a tax incentive through New York State for up to 20% of qualified rehabilitation costs of structures (credit value of up to \$50,000.00). Houses must be an owner-occupied residential structure and be individually listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places, or they must be a contributing building in a historic district that is listed on the state or National Register of Historic Places. In addition, the house needs to be located in an eligible census tract (based on 2010 Census

Historic Preservation and Community Character

Not all of the benefits associated with historic preservation are based on the financial aspects of completing rehabilitation work. While the direct monetary incentives are compelling, historic preservation has community-based impacts associated with character and pride. These can have long-term positive implications on the City of Binghamton, its neighborhoods, and property owners. Location in a historic district can:

- Increase property values.
- Protect your neighborhood from inappropriate changes to the public realm.
- Protect your neighborhood from inappropriate new development.
- Foster pride among community members.
- Promote a strong and stable neighborhood base that promotes redevelopment and investment.

information, all census tracts in the City of Binghamton are eligible for this tax credit). At least \$5,000.00 must be expended on qualifying work and at least 5% of the total project cost must be spent on the exterior of the building.

New York State Tax Credit Program for Income Producing Properties

This tax credit must be used with the Federal Investment Tax Credit Program for Income Producing Properties in New York State. Owners of income producing properties that have been approved to receive the 20% federal rehabilitation tax credit automatically qualify for the additional state tax credit if the property is located in an eligible census tract (based on 2010 Census information, all census tracts in the City of Binghamton are eligible for this tax credit). Owners can receive an additional 20% of the qualified rehabilitation expenditures up to \$5,000,000. After Part 1 and Part 2 of the federal application are approved by the National Park Service, The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation will issue a certification form allowing owners to take the state credit. There is no required application form.

Federal Investment Tax Credit Program for Income Producing Properties

This tax credit is available to owners of income producing real properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The program provides a federal tax credit, up to 20%, for the substantial rehabilitation of historic properties. The final dollar amount is based on the cost of the rehabilitation; in effect, 20% of the rehab costs will be borne by the federal government. All work performed must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and be approved by the National Park Service.

Local Economic Development

In cities, towns and villages across the United States, the impact of historic preservation has been critically studied and analyzed. Each time it is found that historic preservation has a direct impact on bolstering the local economy through placemaking and creating desirable places for people to live, visit and do business. In addition to City staff and officials, numerous groups and programs already exist which are focusing on the revitalization of downtown Binghamton, including the Susquehanna Heritage Area, Downtown Binghamton Business Association, Gorgeous Washington, Chamber of Commerce, and the Binghamton Local Development Corporation, in addition to others. Historic preservation efforts will help support, strengthen and further their efforts associated with downtown revitalization.

Business attraction and retention is particular to the types of small businesses that can be supported in downtown Binghamton by the existing residential base, students from nearby colleges and universities, and visitors. The diversity of the historic building stock in Binghamton, from small storefronts to expansive office buildings, provides a range of opportunities. Today, the reuse of historic commercial buildings for multifamily and student housing is ensuring the protection and preservation of the City's historic building stock. Historic places are also a desirable destination for heritage tourism. At the

heart of the Susquehanna Heritage Area, the City of Binghamton can capitalize on its resources as part of a targeted economic development initiative.

Smart Growth

In addition to the economic and community-based arguments for historic preservation, it also supports sound planning practices. The reuse of historic buildings utilizes existing infrastructure, reduces suburban sprawl, supports urban revitalization, supports denser residential development and helps sustain local neighborhoods that may be suffering from disinvestment. The rehabilitation of an existing building is typically more cost-effective over the life cycle of a building than new construction, both from the perspective of the developer and any public investments necessary from the City of Binghamton.

COMMON PRESERVATION ISSUES IN BINGHAMTON

The following section identifies some of the most common preservation issues in the City of Binghamton, as well as approaches for addressing these issues in the future.

Local Knowledge and Understanding

For some property owners, the first time they realize they have a building listed as a Local Landmark or located in a locally designated Historic District is when they apply for a building permit and are told they must first secure a Certificate of Appropriateness from CAUD. The City should continue to be proactive in marketing existing and future local Historic Districts and Local Landmarks, focusing on the required review process and highlighting the positive benefits associated with designation and historic preservation in general. Having access to local contractors with experience working on historic buildings and historic materials is also critical to overall preservation efforts in the City. Many contractors have developed skills working on new construction projects and may not have the specific skills required for working on historic buildings. Property owners need to ensure they are using the right contractor for their project and contractors should be educated about proper historic preservation and rehabilitation treatments and techniques.

Demolition and Demolition-by-Neglect

The demolition of historic buildings can have a significant impact on the character of a neighborhood and overall sense of place. When a historic building is demolished with no replacement, the resulting vacant property can signal the decline and underutilization of a neighborhood and may also be an attractive location for loitering or undesirable activity. When an area starts to lose its identity and sense of safety as a result of demolitions, it can have a significant impact above and beyond the loss of historic fabric. It can impact the overall attractiveness and desirability of a place, impact property

values and overall economic development initiatives. Demolitions in historic neighborhoods and of individual historic buildings should only be permitted when a public safety issue emerges, or if a replacement project is already identified that is consistent with Binghamton’s long-term revitalization goals and objectives.

When a historic building is not maintained or cared for to the point where it begins to deteriorate to an unsafe, unusable and unsalvageable condition, it is considered to be demolition by neglect. The long-term preventative care of buildings that are not being used has been a significant issue in the City of Binghamton. In order to protect historic buildings for the future, a process known as *mothballing* can be an effective means for protecting a building when there is currently no viable use or no moneys available for rehabilitation. Mothballing is essentially the action of temporarily closing up a building to protect it from the elements as well as any potential interior vandalism or theft. Long-term mothballing is a multi-step process aimed at preserving a structure for a period of up to ten years. Although interim uses and monitoring is preferable, mothballing, remains an important means to prevent long-term neglect and deterioration of a building beyond repair. Additional information of the mothballing of historic buildings can be found in Section 2, Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 10: Demolitions.



A c. 1910 postcard shows the Phelps Mansion in the foreground, with similar mansions on adjacent lots. Although the Phelps Mansion has been preserved and is used as a house museum, the adjacent structures have since been demolished and replaced by the library and a surface parking lot.

Deferred Maintenance

For many owners of historic properties, the cost of repairs and property upkeep is often cited as one of the most significant constraints for ensuring the preservation and protection of historic features and materials. However, many of the most expensive repairs can actually be prevented by regular upkeep and maintenance. When regular maintenance to historic materials and features is not performed, it is known as “deferred maintenance”.



The roof of this Queen Anne structure is in need of repair and general maintenance and upkeep. The water damage is an example of a problem that can arise as a result of deferred maintenance.

Deferred maintenance increases the risk for the deterioration of materials that can become costly to repair. Deferred maintenance issues are identifiable throughout the City, impacting commercial and residential structures. However, deferred maintenance appears to be a more significant issue in residential neighborhoods where property owners may not have the resources, whether monetary or otherwise, to properly maintain their historic building stock. The Historic Design Guidelines for the City of Binghamton outline specific strategies for the regular maintenance and upkeep of typical materials and

Examples of problems that can arise due to deferred maintenance include: leaks from poorly maintained roofs or gutters; insect infestation; rusting of metal features beyond repair; or large-scale failure of a major architectural element, such as a porch or chimney.

building features found in the city. The appropriate sections of the Guidelines should be referred to as they relate to individual buildings to ensure that deferred maintenance, and the subsequent loss or destruction of historic materials, does not continue to impact local historic resources. The Historic Preservation Ordinance discusses maintenance and repair requirements for Local Landmarks and Historic Districts within the City.

Inappropriate Treatments

The rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings for new uses requires historic buildings to evolve in order to accommodate a changing society and new safety, efficiency and accessibility requirements. Required updates may be structural, mechanical or aesthetic in nature. The Historic Design Guidelines provide the necessary guidance needed to make these changes in an appropriate and sensitive manner. Inappropriate treatments degrade the historic character of a building by destroying historic building fabric and introducing materials or elements that diminish its stylistic intent. Even minor renovations, if done incorrectly, can have significant impacts on the loss of historic fabric and character-defining historic features. However, when done correctly, rehabilitation projects can turn a derelict and forgotten building into an inspirational gem.

Inappropriate treatments are particularly notable in residential neighborhoods where homeowners



The integrity of the Strand Theatre has been compromised by inappropriate treatments on its historic façade.

have inadvertently made repairs that have damaged historic materials including the application of inappropriate coatings and causing damage to materials due to invasive cleaning methods. In many instances throughout Binghamton's residential neighborhoods, the replacement of historic materials with modern materials is prevalent, particularly the use of vinyl siding covering or replacing original wood siding and the installation of modern replacement windows. These changes, which may seem small in nature, can significantly impact the integrity of a historic building. Also common is the removal of architectural and character-defining features, such as front porches.

In the downtown and commercial corridors of Binghamton, the most noticeable impacts can be seen to the storefronts of small businesses and mixed use buildings. Many storefronts have been significantly altered to the point where they look like they don't even belong on the same building as the stories above them. New development in the designated historic districts, or even non-designated historic neighborhoods, can negatively impact the character of the neighborhood when it does not consider the historic setting and surrounding context. The scale, size and relationship of new construction to surrounding historic buildings is very important and when not done sensitively, can disrupt and alter the entire streetscape. Pockets of this type of inappropriate development are visible downtown, as well as along other outlying commercial corridors in the City.

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS

Overview and Use of the Standards

The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, initiated as part of the National Preservation Act of 1966, are used by the CAUD and thousands of other preservation commissions across the country to guide decisions on historic resources for which design review applications have been submitted. In the simplest of terms, the *Standards* strive for preventative maintenance of original character, and the repair of damaged features instead of replacement. The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards* have evolved and distilled over time into ten flexible and widely applicable principles.

The *Standards* are not prescriptive, but are intended to promote responsible preservation practices. They alone do not provide enough guidance to make decisions about which features of a historic building should be saved and which should be changed, but once a treatment is selected, the *Standards* provide a common philosophy with regards to approach. The *Standards* should not be confused with Design Guidelines, as they are intended to present a preferred approach to the treatment of historic resources, not absolute treatments. It is the philosophy and intent of the *Standards* that serves as the basis for the City of Binghamton Historic Design Guidelines. The official language of the *Standards* is available through the many publications of the Department of the Interior National Parks Service, including online at their webpage.

The *Standards* can and should be used by the City of Binghamton to establish a comprehensive approach to the identification, evaluation, registration and treatment of historic properties.

Preservation Treatments

When applying the *Standards* to a historic preservation project, it is first important to identify a treatment approach. The four treatment approaches are Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction. The most common preservation treatments undertaken in the City of Binghamton are preservation and rehabilitation, with the latter being the most prevalent.

Understanding the various treatments will help identify the most appropriate approach for moving a project forward and provides context for proposed work.

Preservation | places a high premium on the retention of all historic fabric through conservation, maintenance and repair. It reflects a building's continuum over time, through successive occupancies, and the respectful changes and alterations that are made. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction, including new exterior additions. However, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems required to make properties functional is appropriate.

Preservation should be considered as a treatment when:

- the property's distinctive materials, features, and spaces are essentially intact and thus convey the historic significance without extensive repair or replacement; or
- depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate; or
- when a continuing or new use does not require additions or extensive alterations.

Rehabilitation | emphasizes the retention and repair of historic materials over replacement, but more latitude is provided than in a preservation project to accommodate change in use. The term rehabilitation is often referred to as adaptive reuse.

Examples of Preservation Treatments

Preservation

Saving an intact commercial storefront from change and repairing it to original condition.

Rehabilitation

Converting a 19th century warehouse building into market rate condos while preserving its windows and wide plank floors.

Restoration

Removing 20th century changes to a significant 19th century building that is to be used as a house museum or educational exhibit.

Reconstruction

Rebuilding an early twentieth century church after it was nearly razed by a massive fire.

Rehabilitation should be considered as a treatment when:

- repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary; or
- alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use; or
- its depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate.

Restoration | focuses on the retention of materials from the most significant time in a property's history, while permitting the removal of materials from other periods.

Restoration should be considered as a treatment when:

- the property's design, architectural, or historical significance during a particular period of time outweighs the potential loss of extant materials, features, spaces, and finishes that characterize other historical periods; or
- there is substantial physical and documentary evidence for the work; or
- contemporary alterations and additions are not planned.

Reconstruction | establishes limited opportunities to re-create a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object in all new materials for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.

Reconstruction should be considered as a treatment when:

- a contemporary depiction is required to understand and interpret a property's historic value (including the re-creation of missing components in a historic district or site); or
- no other property with the same associative value has survived; or
- sufficient historical documentation exists to ensure an accurate reproduction.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties are, in simple terms, the best advice to everyone on how to protect historic properties. Each of the preservation treatments defined above has its own set of standards and guidelines, which share a similar philosophy and intent. As the most common preservation treatment in Binghamton is rehabilitation, due to the ability to make alterations and additions, the *Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation* are presented below.

Standard 1

A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.

Standard 2

The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Standard 3

Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

Standard 4

Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

Standard 5

Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

Standard 6

Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Standard 7

Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

Standard 8

Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation will be undertaken.

Standard 9

New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Standard 10

New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.

Local Application of Standards 3 and 4

The Whitney House, originally a Federal Style home, was renovated in the 1840s into Greek Revival. The Phelps Mansion had a large and conspicuous ballroom addition in 1905. Both of these major alterations have acquired their own historic significance and should be preserved.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A list of common preservation terms and definitions is provided below as a reference for persons using this document. Included are terms and definitions that have specific meaning when used in the context of historic preservation. Although this is not an exhaustive and all-inclusive list of preservation terminology, it identifies many of the common terms used in this Historic Design Guidelines document. The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission has a comprehensive online glossary of architectural terms available at: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/html/glossary/glossary.shtml#s>.

Addition | Any new construction that alters the exterior appearance of a property, site or building or that increases the size, floor area or height of any existing area.

Alignment | The linear placement of structures and/or primary facades along a row of adjacent properties or street.

Alteration | Any modification, rearrangement, or other work that cannot be defined as an addition, but still modifies the original exterior appearance of a property, site, building, or structure.

Architectural Feature | A single, distinguishable part of the whole design composition of a building or structure.



This Campbell Road Court residence's multiple diverse windows, rounded tower and large chimney & Ascension Slovak Lutheran Church's wall buttresses, arched windows, and central tower, are all architectural features.

Balustrade | A railing supported by balusters [short vertical posts] placed along perimeter of a courtyard, porch, balcony, or roof.

Bay | A portioning of a building created by columns, pilasters, or other vertical elements –or– A projection from the main mass of a building or structure, typically including fenestration.

Bulkhead | The section of a commercial storefront that forms the base for the first floor display windows.

Casement Window | A common window type, where the sash is hinged its side.

Certificate of Appropriateness | An official document affirming that proposed work to a landmark or historic district property, site, building, or structure is suitable and meets the requirements of Section 6 of the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance of the City of Binghamton, New York.



The Perry Building's highly ornate wrought iron façade and paint scheme and the Tabernacle Methodist Church's "bellcast" shaped tower roof and unique masonry work are character defining elements.

Character Defining | A distinctive quality or component of a property, site, building, or structure that comprises their historic nature and appearance. This includes, but is not limited to overall site layout, plantings, trees, civil improvements, overall mass of a building, materials, craftsmanship, style specific details, decorative details, interior spaces, interior features, and vernacular traditions.

Clapboard | Wood siding constructed of long, skinny, horizontal, overlapping boards.



This Greek Revival structure on Oak Street retains high integrity with its original clapboard siding.

Commission on Architecture and Urban Design | Established in 1964, it is the City of Binghamton's official governing body for reviewing and approving any projects that alter the exterior appearance of local landmarks and buildings within the boundaries of designated Historic Districts.

Compatible | A material, element or feature that is harmonious with the historic materials, elements, qualities or features of the property, site, building, or structure and its surrounding context.

Context | The historic elements, features, landscape, buildings, structures, and cultural history that establishes the setting of a historic resource.

Cornice | A decorative horizontal element which emphasizes the vertical terminus of an exterior wall – or– The projecting molding which crowns the elements to which it is attached [Typically placed above a classical frieze in the composition of an entablature].

Demolition | The partial or complete razing, destruction or dismantling of an existing property, site, building, or structure, and/or their features.

Demolition by Neglect | The slow destruction of a historic resource through failure to perform necessary maintenance over a long period of time.

Dormer | A bay typically containing windows that projects from the slope of a roof.



This Dutch Colonial Revival on Avon Road showcases a very large shed dormer, with a small eyebrow dormer above it.



This Arts and Crafts Bungalow on Front Street has a large gabled dormer with complimenting eyebrow dormers to the sides.



The Phelps Mansion displays multiple extravagantly detailed segmented dormers.

Double Hung Window | A common type of fenestration where the window is comprised of two sashes that slide past each other vertically.

Elevation | A two-dimensional scale drawing of a face of a building or structure, where all features are shown without distortion, as if contained all on one plane.

Engaged | Attached to and/or partially embedded in a wall [Typically enacted upon columns].

Entablature | The band of horizontal elements carried by columns or pilasters. This element is comprised from top to bottom of a cornice, frieze, and architrave.

Façade | The exterior face of a building.

Fanlight | A semicircular or semielliptical window placed above a door.

Fenestration | The arrangement and placement windows, doors, and exterior openings of a building.

Gable | The top portion of an exterior wall directly underneath the end of a pitched roof.

Glazing | The clear/translucent material, typically glass, through which light passes into a building.

Height | A measurement from ground level to the vertical terminus of a building or element.

Hipped Roof | A roof that is sloped on all four sides, thus having no gable.



These three Riverside Drive residences utilize a hipped roof in a multiplicity of styles and applications.

Historic Building | A building that is at least fifty (50) years old and meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for integrity and significance.

Historic Fabric | Any and all original materials, features and details used in the construction of a historic building.

Historic Resource | A property, site, building, object, or structure that is designated or has been determined eligible at the local, state, or federal level.

Lintel | The horizontal structural element which spans rectangular fenestration in a wall.

Local Landmark | A historic resource designated by the City of Binghamton as being important for representing broad patterns of history, for their association with a historically significant individual, or for conveying high architectural or artistic value. All proposed alterations and additions to the exterior of a local landmarks in the City of Binghamton must be reviewed and approved by the Commission on Architecture and Urban Design.

Materials | The physical matter that makes up the products used in the construction and ornamentation of a building.

Mass | The three-dimensional qualities of a building or structure that comprise its size, shape, and overall exterior presence.

Motif | A principal repeated element in the design and ornament of a building.

New Construction | Any construction that is not part of the original building or structure.

Orientation | The placement of a historic resource as it relates to the physical conditions of its site [e.g. geography, man-made features, boundaries, or cardinal direction].

Ornamentation | Any detail of structure, shape, texture, and color that is deliberately exploited or added to attract attention or define an architectural style.

Pattern | A repeating arrangement of form.

Pediment | The triangular face of a gable end above a horizontal cornice [typically placed above columns or pilasters].



The Old Binghamton Public Library is highlighted by a large front portico, adorned with a highly detailed and classically correct pediment.

Pilaster | A shallow engaged pier or column.

Portico | A small to large porch whose roof is supported by columns on at least one side.

Principal Façade | Typically the front, main entry, face of a building distinguished by the elaboration of architectural ornament and details.

Proportion | The comparative quantified relation between elements with respect to size, dimension, ratio and quantity.

Roof Form | The overall shape, outline, and composition of the roof of a building.

Roof Pitch | The steepness of a roof plane typically expressed as a ratio of the rise of the roof in feet over twelve foot increments in horizontal span [e.g. A 4/12 roof, rises 4 ft in a 12 ft span].

Section | The arrangement and design of spaces in a building seen as if cut by a vertical plane.

Scale | The proportional and measured relationship of buildings and elements to each other.

Scale Drawing | A proportionally exact computer or hand drawn visual representation of an object that has a defined ratio of size between itself and the object.

Setback | The distance between the extents of a building or structure and their respective site or lot boundaries.

Setting | The physical and cultural environment surrounding a historic resource.

Sill | The bottom horizontal cross piece of a window or door.

Spalling | The chipping or erosion of masonry caused by abuse or weathering

Transom Window | A rectangular horizontal window placed above a residential doorway –or– The horizontal ribbon window directly above a commercial storefront.

Transitional | Used to describe a building that cannot be defined by one specific style, and instead encompasses two or three distinct styles that were present during its construction.



This Riverside Drive residence's front door is bordered by a transom and a pair of sidelights.

Chapter 3: Binghamton's Architecture



Panorama of Binghamton c.1900

Today, the City of Binghamton is known not only for its picturesque landscape, and academic resources, but also its ethnic diversity. As a hub for technological and industrial innovation, Binghamton has developed an equally diverse architectural heritage representative of its economic and social evolution. Chapter 3 discusses the evolution and growth of the City, as well as representative examples of its rich architectural tapestry, further explored and identified in Appendix 1 and 2.

HISTORIC INFLUENCES

Origins: From Chenango Point to Binghamton Town

Archeological evidence and reports of early European colonist document that the first inhabitants of the area that came to be known as Binghamton were Native Americans. It was not until after the American Revolutionary War that people of European descent first settled in the area.

The city is named in honor of, William Bingham Esq. of Philadelphia, who in 1792 bought the land in Upstate New York that now contains the city. Bingham contracted with a local merchant, Joshua Whitney, to begin to build a town at the confluence of the Susquehanna and Chenango Rivers.

Bingham died in 1804, never having the opportunity to visit the land he had purchased. Nevertheless the Village of Chenango, as it was then known, had already begun to grow. By 1802 Court and Water Streets had already been paved and a court house and village square had been constructed. Lumber milling soon established itself as a major industry in the area due to the vast forests throughout the region.



View of the Suquehanna Valley

In 1834 the growing settlement was incorporated as the Town of Binghamton, and to many residents' excitement, 1834 was also the year that work began on the Chenango Canal. The canal ran nearly one hundred miles from the Erie Canal in Utica south to Binghamton. The canal resulted in an influx of economic and population growth that was further enhanced with the arrival of the Erie Railroad in 1848. The lumber milling remained Binghamton's largest industry, however many commercial, retail, and service businesses began to fill the downtown. These two transportation routes established Binghamton as the transportation hub of the Southern Tier. Nevertheless by 1875 the canal could not compete with the railroad and was permanently closed and filled in becoming what is now State Street.

Growth: A City of Manufacturing, A City of Innovation

Binghamton grew from a small village of two thousand, in 1840, to a large town of ten thousand, in 1865. As a result, the town was incorporated as the City of Binghamton in 1867. Along with this population growth, the Civil War brought the industrial revolution to Binghamton. Long established raw goods industries like lumber milling slowly disappeared to make way for finished goods industries such as cigar, furniture, shoe, and munitions factories.

The first cigar factory appeared in 1858, and the cigar industry soon became the region's largest employer with over fifty firms and five thousand employees. The success of Binghamton's cigar, furniture, shoe and wagon industries had positive effects throughout the community, providing opportunities for the construction of libraries, opera houses, hospitals, and other social services. As a direct result of these developments thousands of homes were constructed in the mid and late nineteenth century.

Settlement in the City of Binghamton pushed beyond the initial Chenango Point eastward along the Susquehanna River and westward along Riverside Drive and Main Street. The commercial and industrial district stretched from the Susquehanna River north to the train yards.

Court Street, Riverside Drive, and Front Street were lined with mansions built by Binghamton's industrial giants, banking executives, and land barons, while the rising middle class built homes off of these avenues of wealth. These areas earned Binghamton the nickname "Parlor City" because of their manicured gardens and high style Queen Anne, Stick, and Colonial Revival homes. The working class lived in smaller cottages or apartments in the downtown commercial district where they could walk to work.



Main St looking West c.1900

By the early 20th century, the cigar industry was declining as a result of automated machinery, labor riots, and other issues. The last of Binghamton's cigar factories had closed by 1920. However, by this time other "finished goods" industries had been attracted to the area by the success of the cigar companies and Binghamton's transportation infrastructure. These companies, such as Endicott Johnson Company (a shoe manufacturer) and AnSCO (a photographic company predating Eastman Kodak) provided thousands of jobs to the area. The profusion of these manufacturing jobs increased the city's population and ethnic diversity, by attracting many new immigrants from New York City and abroad to what was now known as the "Valley of Opportunity". This second wave of growth pushed development further west and north along the train lines, and spread along the south bank of the Susquehanna River.



Court St looking West c.1910

The strength of Binghamton's industrial giants of Endicott Johnson, AnSCO, IBM, and others helped stave off the effects of World War I and the Great Depression. Nevertheless, the City did not survive the 1930s unscathed. In 1935 and 1936 Binghamton was devastated by two large floods that caused millions of dollars in damage. With the arrival of World War II the region's reputation for technical innovation further proved itself with such inventions as the Link Flight Simulator and the rising technological prowess of IBM. These technical capabilities led to a large scale increase of high-tech and defense related industries as major employers within the community. IBM, Raytheon, General Electric, Universal, Link Aviation, and others kept Binghamton's economy booming from the 1940s until 1960s when defense budget spending within the region began to decrease.

Evolution: A City of Diversity and Rich History

It was during the 1950s and 1960s that the City of Binghamton saw its most dramatic changes. With the increase in high-tech white collar jobs at IBM, Raytheon, General Electric, and others, came the inevitable decline of the blue-collar manufacturing base. Many small mills and large factories began downsizing and eventually closing permanently all over the city. In addition, with automobiles so prevalent, businesses and many of the city's residents that could, moved away from the perceived noise and dirt of the city to the suburbs. This also unfortunately included the newly founded Binghamton University. Instead of building in the city, the University was built to the south in the suburb of Vestal. This flight to the suburbs left residences, apartments, commercial buildings, and factories vacant.

The 1960s also brought with it the construction of NYS Route 17 and I-81, which slashed through some of the early twentieth century residential neighborhoods north of the downtown. The final and most egregious result of the 1960s was the concept of “urban renewal”. Binghamton was hit especially hard by this belief that the solution to the suburban flight was to tear down structures deemed to be obsolete. Aerial photography between the 1960s and 1970s shows the loss of nearly 50% of the downtown commercial/industrial district. Instead of being replaced by new infrastructure, most of these urban renewal sites became vacant lots, with many remaining vacant today.

Since the 1960s Binghamton has refocused on its assets as a city and is capitalizing on them to encourage slow, but continued growth. The cultural and architectural diversity of the city reflects its rich history, and through revitalization and preservation efforts, these assets have begun to benefit the community in realized gains. Significant support and emphasis has been placed on this growth of local, Binghamton businesses, supported by cultural events and attractions in the urban center. Events such as First Fridays, Spiedie Fest, Blues on the Bridge, Julyfest, and other cultural festivals have brought attention to the diversity present in the community and have helped spur the growth of downtown businesses. PAST exhibits are held each First Friday highlighting local historic landmarks. The relocation of local businesses to the downtown commercial district combine with the introduction of student housing in adaptive reuse and new construction projects has supported further revitalization in recent years. It is critically important that the City continue to encourage this trend through partnering with the University and local business groups to provide incentives for businesses and residents to move back to the city center. By capitalizing on the sustainable development of the city center through these partnerships, incentives, and preservation of historic resources, the City of Binghamton will encourage continued success and growth as a revitalized urban community.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE GUIDE

Property owners that seek to make changes to the exterior of a historic building should have a basic understanding of the architectural features and elements that make their building unique. The Architectural Style Guide is intended to assist property owners in identifying and understanding the unique features of their building. The style guide will allow property owners to identify changes that are consistent, compatible and appropriate given the historic context. Few buildings will actually include all of the features identified in the Architectural Style Guide, but key features will typically be apparent. This guide is not intended to be all-encompassing and comprehensive in the description of styles, but rather serves to educate the user on the most consistent and character-defining aspects of the architectural styles present in the City. The full Architectural Style Guide, including descriptions, graphic representations and photographs of local examples is included in Appendix 1 and 2 of the Historic Design Guidelines. This should be referenced to help property owners identify key features of their property. The Architectural Style Guide has been divided into two sections: Residential Architectural Styles and Commercial & Civic Architectural Styles.

Residential Architectural Styles

Extant historic residential architectural styles in the City of Binghamton range from the early 19th Century to the mid-20th Century. Prominent residential styles identified in Appendix 1 include:

- Federal / Adam
- Greek Revival
- Gothic Revival
- Italianate
- Second Empire
- Stick
- Shingle
- Queen Anne
- Vernacular
- Colonial Revival
- Dutch Colonial Revival
- Exotic Revivals
- Beaux Arts
- Arts and Crafts
- American Foursquare
- Tudor Revival
- American Ranch

Commercial & Civic Architectural Styles

Prominent commercial and civic architectural styles in the City, as depicted in Appendix 2, include:

- Greek Revival
- Italianate
- Romanesque Revival
- Eastlake
- Queen Anne
- Exotic Revivals
- Beaux Arts
- Neo-Classical
- Art Deco
- Art Moderne

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