

6. Roofs

Context & Character

Roof shape and design are major features of historic buildings. Although the function of a roof is to protect a building from the elements, it also contributes to the overall character of the building. Roof pitch, profiles, materials, size, and orientation are all distinct features that convey the historic character of a building. Repetitions of similar roof forms along a street or block create or add to the sense of rhythm, scale, and cohesiveness.

The most common roof forms for commercial buildings are flat or shed roofs, with gable and hipped forms being less common. Traditional materials include wood, slate and tile. Associated detailing may include parapets, cornices and decorative elements such as finials and cresting. In many cases, these are an expression of the building's architectural style.

Design Objective

The roof form, its pitch, materials and associated parapets are all character-defining features that should be retained and preserved.

General

6.1 Historic roof forms, features and materials should be retained.

- Removing original or early roofing material that is in good condition should be avoided.
- Avoid altering the angle of an original roof.
- Original features including parapets, cornices, decorative features and chimneys should be retained.

CONTEXT & CHARACTER	6 : 1
DESIGN OBJECTIVE	6 : 1
GENERAL	6 : 1
CHIMNEYS	6 : 2
GUTTERS & DOWNSPOUTS	6 : 3
SKYLIGHTS	6 : 5
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	6 : 5



Most historic commercial buildings were designed with flat or gently sloping roofs.



Decorative elements such as this statue at the Promised Valley Theatre are part of a building's unique roof profile.



A decorative chimney can be a unique element of the city's skyline.



This chimney is incorporated into the building facade.

6.2 Materials that convey a scale and physical quality similar to those used historically should be used where replacement is necessary.

- Style, texture and color are important characteristics.
- Specialty materials such as tile or slate should be replaced with matching material whenever feasible: replacement of a few individual units may be all that is required with these durable materials.

6.3 The profiles associated with the original historic eave depth should be preserved.

- The shadows created by the overhang of traditional eaves contribute to the perception of the building's historic scale and character.
- Eaves also provide weather protection for the building, and therefore should be preserved.
- Exposed roof rafters, soffits and other eave details should be retained and restored.

6.4 Introducing new roof elements that detract from a building's historic appearance and character should be avoided.

- New roof elements should not be highly visible from the street or obscure original features.

Chimneys

The design of a historic chimney may be decorative as well as functional. A chimney may be integrated into a building wall or it may form an important part of the roof profile, adding to the visual quality of the surrounding skyline. Removing an original chimney may adversely affect the architectural integrity of the building.

6.5 Original chimneys should be retained and repaired.

- Care for chimneys should follow the guidelines for brickwork/masonry in Chapter 3.
- Match the original material, color and shape as closely as possible when making repairs and finding replacement material.
- A disused chimney should be retained, but may be capped in an unobtrusive manner.

6.6 Consider reconstructing a previously existing historic chimney if historical documentation supports that it was a significant feature of the building and previously removed or damaged.

6.7 Chimneys may be supported for seismic stability.

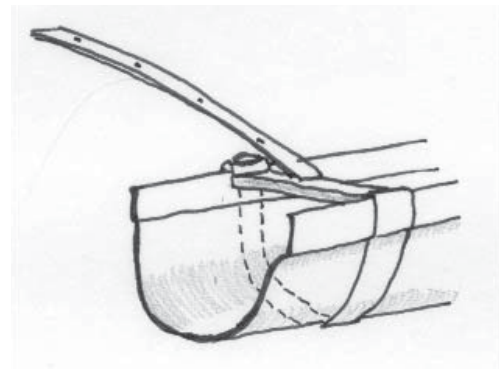
- Physical structural supports may include metal straps or brackets anchored to the roof framing.
- Seismic upgrades should not be over-engineered.

Gutters & Downspouts

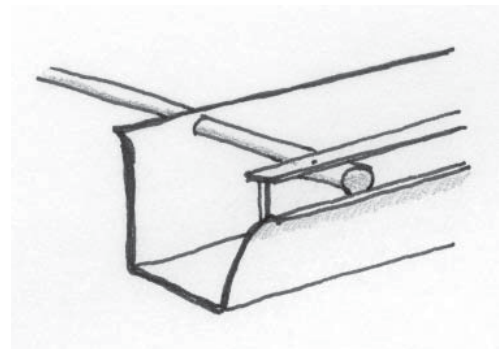
Gutters and downspouts are important utilitarian elements used to safely convey water away from buildings. Some historic buildings were clearly built with gutters and downspouts. Boxed or built-in gutters, an internal gutter system integrated within the structure of a roof, are the type most used through the early 20th century. For externally mounted drainage, the “K-style” gutter trough has become the standard today. Prior to the advent of the “K-style” gutter, the most common external gutter was the half-round gutter.



Chimneys can be an integral part of the roof composition.



The half-round design is intended to hang free of trim details and rafter tails.



Use “K” style gutters on buildings with vertical fascia boards on the eaves.



Underground downspout extensions move water away from the foundation.



An appropriate downspout and splash block.

6.8 Historic gutters, downspouts, and splash blocks should be retained and maintained.

- Existing boxed or built-in gutters should be retained and kept in good working order.
- Deteriorated or damaged historic external gutters should be repaired to match wherever possible.
- Perform seasonal maintenance to ensure proper drainage.

6.9 If original gutters are beyond repair, replacement gutters of an appropriate type should be installed.

- Retain historic molding and rafter details.
- Ogee or “K” design gutters may be considered, if there is no evidence of an external gutter or the original design of a gutter.
- New external gutters should be simple in design and not detract from the historic character of a building.

6.10 Downspouts should be located away from architectural features and on the least public facade of the building.

- Proper placement of downspouts will protect the building and not detract from its historic character.
- Downspouts should drain away from foundations and not affect neighboring buildings.

Skylights

Original skylights on historic buildings often play a significant architectural role in the exterior of the building, while also adding more natural light to a building's interior. The installation of new skylights can enhance daylighting of a historic building, but should only be considered when these features do not adversely affect the architectural integrity of the building.

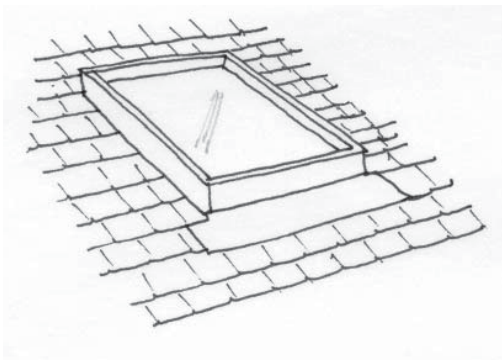
6.11 Skylights that are original to a building should be preserved and maintained.

6.12 New skylights should be placed in inconspicuous areas where they will not detract from the historic appearance of the building.

- Skylights should not be readily visible from the street.
- Skylights should be placed in less obvious locations such as on rear rooflines or behind gables, parapets, or dormers.

6.13 Use appropriate skylight design.

- When installing skylights, the most appropriate types are those that lie level with the roofline.
- Convex or “bubble” designs are not recommended.



A skylight constructed flush with the roof.