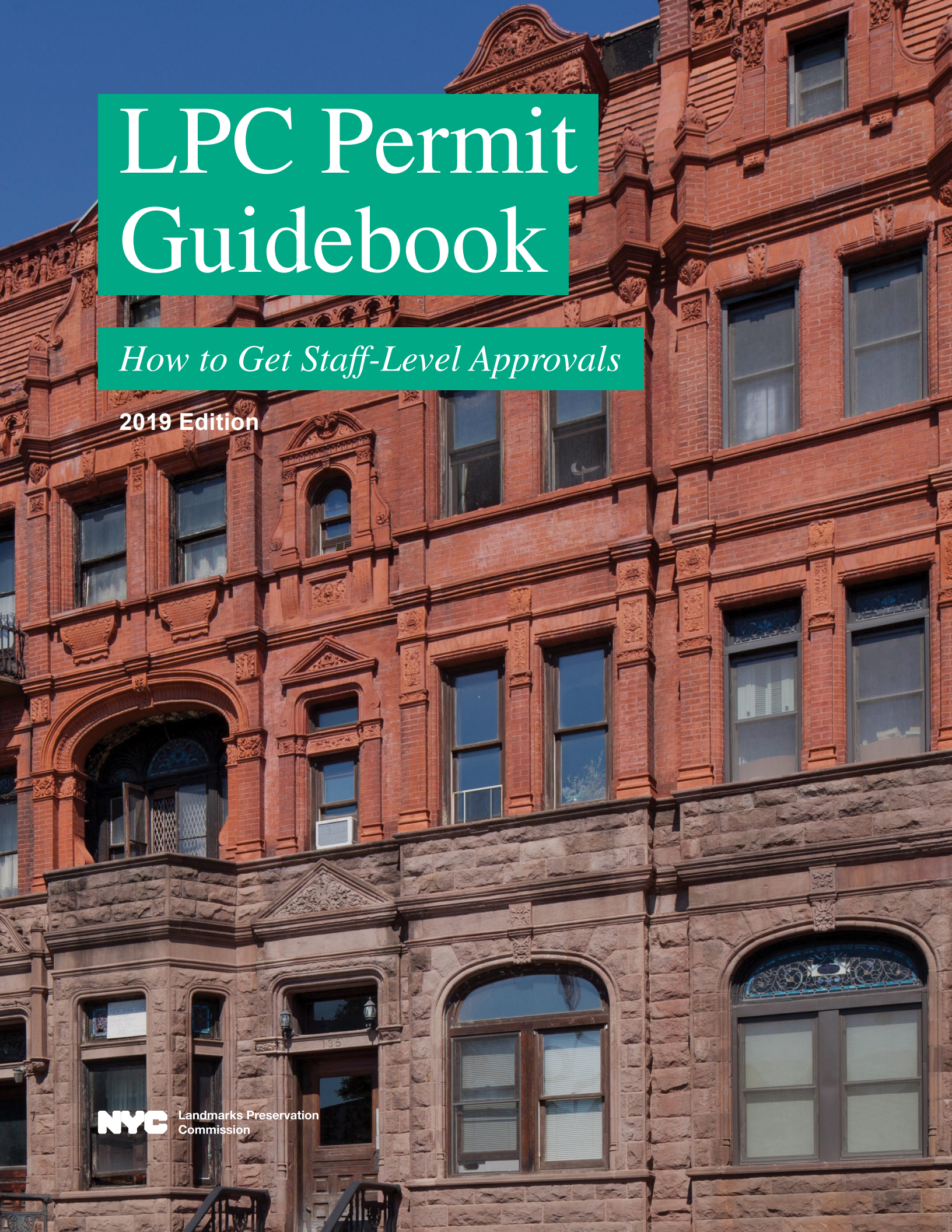

LPC Permit Guidebook

How to Get Staff-Level Approvals

2019 Edition

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

LPC Permit Guidebook:
How to Get Staff-Level Approvals
2019 Edition

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Commission
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Christopher Postlewaite/Mayoral Photography Office, City of New York

Foreword from the Chair

For more than fifty years, LPC has been designating and regulating historic districts and landmarks, and I have seen firsthand the power of preservation to revitalize communities, support economic development, drive investment into existing buildings, and bring about pride in neighborhoods. Our approach to regulation is not static; it evolves over time to allow historic buildings to adapt to modern needs and use new technologies. The Commission recognizes that all buildings, especially historic buildings, need to be maintained, used, and appropriately adapted to remain relevant in the future.

Over the past fifty years, the Commission has developed rules that allow a faster and more streamlined review of some applications by staff, which allows the agency to be more efficient and responsive to property owners who want to make these kinds of changes. Most recently, the Commission adopted updated rules in January 2019 to further streamline the permitting process and make the regulatory process more efficient and transparent. The Commission receives approximately 14,000 permit applications a year and approximately 95 percent of permits are issued by staff. If those applications are complete when submitted, they can be issued in as few as ten days.

Our goal is to approve appropriate work as quickly as possible, and to make the agency's processes clear and fair, which is why I am so pleased to present the second and updated edition of the LPC Permit Guidebook. The guidebook explains and illustrates the rules for staff-level approval and the application requirements, and is designed to help property owners successfully work with the Commission so they can get their permits as quickly as possible.

The fastest way to get a permit is if your application is complete when you file it. The purpose of this guidebook is to provide applicants with a clear explanation of the Commission's processes and rules, and what information is needed in order to get staff approval so the appropriate information can be included in the initial submission. The Guidebook breaks down the application into simple steps and identifies what materials are required for the most common work types.

The updated guidebook also addresses important issues facing the city. It includes new guidance on barrier-free access in order to ensure buildings are accessible, and, for the first time, it also addresses sustainability, resiliency, and flood-proofing measures in historic buildings so they may best adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Preservation is a partnership between owners, their agents, and LPC, and I hope that by making this information accessible and the process easier, we can continue to develop these relationships and make preservation of NYC's rich historic and architectural heritage a success!

Sarah Carroll, *Chair*
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

Will Steacy/Mayoral Photography Office, City of New York

Introduction

This guidebook is intended to help you get a permit as quickly as possible. The easiest way to do so is to **file an application that is complete when you first submit it**. Filing a complete application will allow the staff to approve the work if it conforms to the rules of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. If an application does not conform to the rules, it can be presented to the LPC Commissioners at a public hearing. This guidebook is focused on helping applicants submit applications that meet the rules and can therefore be approved by staff. Staff approval is the fastest way to get a permit.

What does it mean to file a complete application?

It means submitting a **fully filled out application form accompanied by materials that document existing conditions, describe the proposed work, and demonstrate that the work you propose satisfies the criteria of the LPC Rules**. If your application materials fulfill these requirements, staff can quickly issue your permit.

The sooner your application is fully complete, the sooner your permit can be issued. Permits for many work types can be issued in as few as ten business days if your application is complete upon submission. Certain expedited permits can be issued within three days.

The guidebook focuses on the most common work types, such as window replacement, restoration, and maintenance, as well as building additions and accessibility. **If your work type is not included in this guidebook, please contact LPC** at 212-669-7817 or **info@lpc.nyc.gov**. If you wish to pursue an application that does not meet LPC Rules, staff will guide you through the process.

The LPC Permit Guidebook should be used in conjunction with the LPC Rules, available on our website at www.nyc.gov/landmarks. It does not replace or amend the LPC Rules.

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Following this guidebook does not release property owners from the obligation of obtaining a permit for work from the Commission.

How to Use This Guidebook

To help you plan your project and submit a complete application for a work permit, the guidebook offers two main sections:

The Permit Application Process

This section explains the permit application process, including permit types and requirements, and how to submit a complete application. Use it to determine if your work requires a permit and learn how to get started on your application.

LPC Rules and Filing Instructions

This section contains chapters on the most common types of work that staff can approve. Each chapter explains the rules and criteria for specific types of work, lists the application materials you need to show that your project meets the rules, and includes tips for finding information about your building plus other resources and guidance.

To get the most out of this guidebook:

Find the chapter that matches the type of work you plan to do.

Review "How to Get Started" and requirements for staff-level approval. If you understand the criteria, a complete application will be easier to put together.

Make sure your proposal conforms to the LPC Rules. If your proposal does not conform to the rules, you will either need to revise your proposal or present your proposal before the LPC Commissioners.

Submit your application, along with the materials listed in the chapter that show how your work complies with the LPC Rules.

The Permit Application Process

When planning your project and compiling your application materials, use the LPC Rules criteria as a checklist.

Permit applications are reviewed and approved by either LPC staff or the full Commission. Work that meets the LPC Rules can be issued by staff. Work that does not meet the rules must be reviewed by the LPC Commissioners at a public hearing.

Your application must include the application form itself, completely filled out and signed by the property owner, plus materials that explain existing conditions and proposed work. For staff approval, materials must show how the work meets the LPC Rules.

→ **In This Section:**

When Is a Permit Required?

When Is an LPC Permit Required?

With few exceptions, the Landmarks Law (found in Title 25, Chapter 3, Sections 301 to 322 of the New York City Administrative Code) requires owners of landmark properties to obtain permits from the LPC before doing work that affects the exterior and, in some cases, interior of a landmark property.

LPC permits are required for the following exterior work:

Restoration, alteration, reconstruction, demolition, or new construction that affects the exterior of an individual landmark or building in a historic district, even parts of the building that are not visible from the street.

Any project that occurs on a landmark site or within the boundaries of a historic district, such as a new building or other improvement on a vacant lot.

LPC permits are required for the following interior work:

Projects that require a permit from the Department of Buildings (DOB).

Projects that may be thought of as "interior" but affect the exterior of a building, such as HVAC louvers and vents.

Projects that affect interior spaces designated as interior landmarks.

When Is an LPC Permit Not Required?

LPC permits are not required for minor ordinary repairs or maintenance, such as:

Replacing broken window glass.

Repainting a building's exterior or architectural feature a color that matches the existing color.

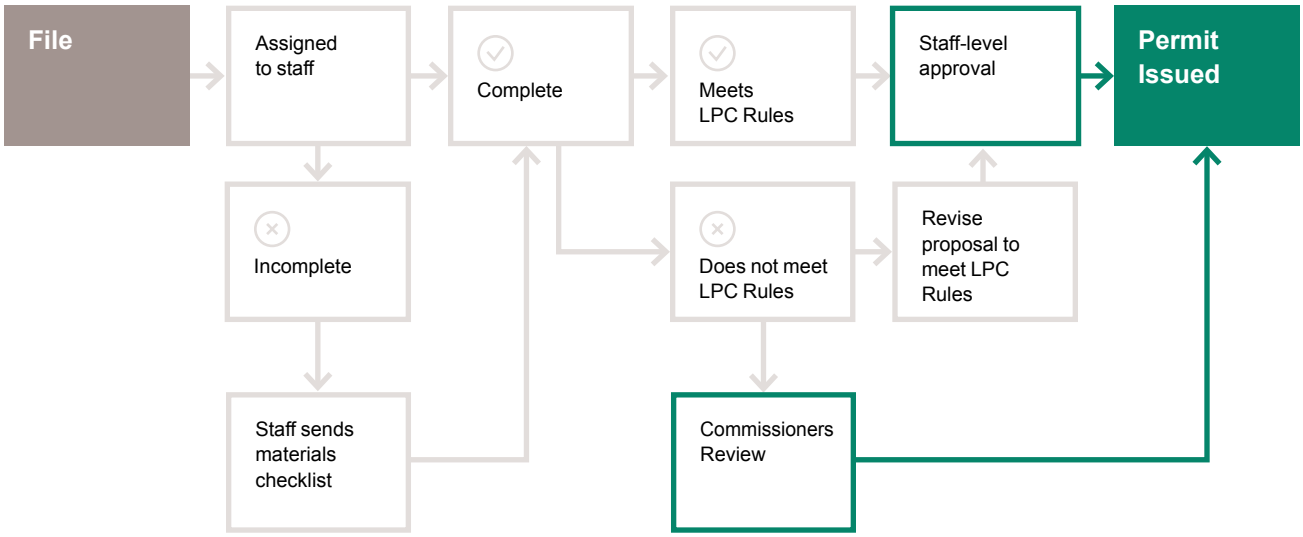
Replacing caulk around windows and doors.

Note: Ordinary repair and maintenance does not include repointing, rebrownstoning, replacing siding, or replacing features like windows. Do not presume your work qualifies as an ordinary repair or maintenance — always check with the Commission.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?

Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

How LPC Processes Your Application



File

You provide your application, consisting of a fully filled-out application form and supporting materials, to the LPC. You can either mail in your application or submit it in person.

Assigned to Staff

When LPC receives your submission, staff reviews the application form to identify key information (including property address, block and lot, and primary contact name and email) and type of review (standard or expedited). Your application is given a reference number ("docket number") and assigned to a preservationist.

Staff reviews your application to determine the permit type and process required: whether the work can be approved at the staff level or must undergo a full Commission review at a public hearing. They also note if your application is complete, and whether it requires additional materials.

If Complete

If your application is complete upon submission, staff can issue a permit in as few as ten days. "Complete" means it includes the descriptive materials necessary for staff to determine that the work conforms to the LPC Rules. LPC can then issue a **staff-level approval**.

If Incomplete

If your application is incomplete, staff will send you a Materials Checklist and request additional materials. After you provide the missing information, staff can determine whether the work meets the LPC Rules.

Meets Rules

After your application is complete, if your proposed work meets the rules, LPC can then issue a staff-level approval.

Does Not Meet Rules

If your application does not meet LPC Rules, staff may suggest modifications or other alternatives that can be approved at the staff level. Otherwise, staff will guide you through the public hearing process for **Commission review**.

Permit Issued

All permits are issued to the property owner. A permit describes the proposed work and explains why it has been approved. Permits must be posted prominently at the building while the work is underway.

Permit Types

The type of permit issued for your project depends on the type of work you plan to do. Permit types are categorized as staff-level permits, Commission-level review, or post-approval actions.

Staff-Level Permits

Standard Review

Permit for Minor Work (PMW) is issued when the proposed exterior work does not require a DOB permit and is found to be restorative or appropriate, such as repairing brownstone or window replacement.

Certificate of No Effect (CNE) is issued when the proposed work requires a DOB permit and the work is found to have "no effect" on protected architectural features, such as facade restoration (Local Law 11), barrier-free access ramps, creating new window openings, or HVAC equipment.

Authorization to Proceed is issued for work that will be done pursuant to a Commission-approved master plan. Master plans establish criteria that allow for approval of repetitive work that will occur over an extended period of time, such as replacing windows or installing through-wall air conditioners. Depending on the work, a master plan can be approved at the staff level or by the full Commission.

Expedited Review

Staff-level permits for certain types of work can be expedited through two different services:

FasTrack Service
Certificates of No Effect and Permits for Minor Work can be processed through FasTrack if the application is for interior work or select exterior work on non-visible facades, such as window replacement, minor restoration, or HVAC equipment. The FasTrack Application Form lists eligible work types and criteria that must be met to qualify for FasTrack service. A permit can be issued **within ten days** if:

The proposed work meets LPC Rules.

The application is complete.

No outstanding LPC violations exist on the associated property.

The application includes the correct application form, plus one copy of signed and sealed DOB filing drawings for interior alterations only or two copies for exterior work.

Expedited Certificate of No Effect
An Expedited Certificate of No Effect (XCNE) permit can be issued for certain interior work. The application form lays out the specific criteria that must be met to qualify for XCNE service. A permit can be issued in **two or three business days** if:

The work is limited to an interior space that is not a landmark.

The work does not include partitions behind windows, through-wall or through-window HVAC equipment, or other work that may affect the exterior.

No outstanding LPC violations exist on the associated property.

The application includes the correct application form with notarized signatures, plus one copy of signed and sealed DOB filing drawings.

If you apply for an expedited review but staff determines that the application is incomplete or does not meet the criteria for expedited review, the application is moved to LPC's standard review process.

Commission-Level Review

Status Update Letter (SUL) is issued when the Commission approves a proposal presented at a public hearing and notifies the owner of the outcome and the required materials (often, the DOB filing drawings) needed to issue an actual permit. The SUL is not a permit and does not authorize work.

Certificate of Appropriateness
A Certificate of Appropriateness (C of A) permit is issued after the owner submits all required materials identified in the SUL. Final drawings are reviewed to ensure they match the design approved by the full Commission, including any modifications required as part of the approval.

Remember
Only work approved by the LPC is legal and permitted. If unauthorized changes are made during construction — even if approved by the DOB — they will later need to be approved by the Commission and may need to be modified to meet LPC's requirements.

Post-Approval Actions

Amendments
A valid, existing LPC permit can be amended to reflect certain changes and to extend or even reinstate a permit. Staff can approve amendments to a Commission-approved or staff-approved permit if the work meets the rules and/or is found to be in keeping with the intent of the original approval, and/or has no effect on significant protected architectural features. If the changes to the approved work are significant, they may need to be reviewed at the Commission level instead of the staff level.

Notice of Compliance
A Notice of Compliance (NOC) letter or "sign-off" can be issued upon request for approved projects, but LPC does not require an NOC except when addressing open violations and permits issued in connection with related approvals from the City Planning Commission (CPC). However, the DOB often requires an NOC prior to final closeout of the DOB process. Requests for NOCs must be accompanied by clear photos of all approved exterior work, including work not visible from a public thoroughfare, and a list of any "as-built" conditions that differ from the original approval.

If on-site conditions are different from what LPC approved or other conditions require modifications to approved work, speak with your staff preservationist and seek an amendment before beginning work. Otherwise, you risk having to remove or redo the work.

How to Get Started

Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information About Your Building

This will help you determine how the rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for the building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine if it is designated and how the LPC Rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find construction date, architect and style, building and landmark type, and a link to the LPC designation report with historical background.

What did the building look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services' NYC Municipal Archives Collections. Knowing what your building originally or historically looked like will help you plan your project.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide**, Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

See If the Work Requires a Permit

See *When Is an LPC Permit Required?* earlier in this section, plus the chapter on the appropriate work type in this guidebook.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

Is There a Rule for Your Work Type?

Carefully read the portion of this guidebook relevant to your proposed work. Use the checklists provided for planning your project and compiling application materials.

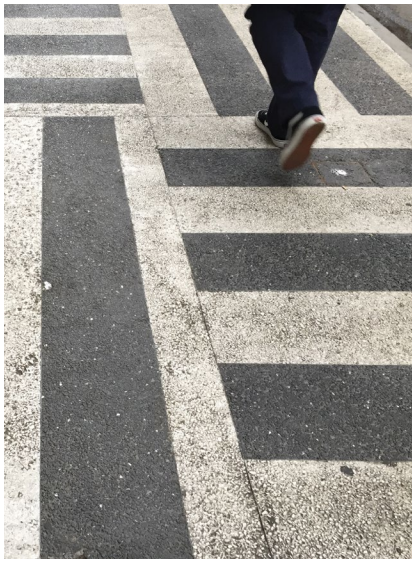
To further understand LPC requirements, review the rules that pertain to your project, available on LPC's website, nyc.gov/landmarks.

If your project does not appear to meet the LPC Rules, or there is no rule for your work type, contact LPC for guidance.

Start Compiling All Necessary Materials

Using the list of required materials in the guidebook chapter that pertains to your project, compile all the materials necessary to show that the work meets LPC Rules criteria for your work type.

Print the appropriate application form to be signed by the property owner or an officer of the cooperative (co-op) or condominium board.



How to Submit a Complete Application for Staff Approval

All forms are available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

A complete application consists of the correct LPC application form properly filled out and signed, along with supporting materials that explain the proposed work such as photos, drawings, written specifications, and material/color samples. A staff-level permit can only be issued if the materials you submit allow the staff to determine that the work meets the criteria found in the LPC Rules. Follow the five steps below to ensure that you file a complete application.

Step 1

Fill out your application form. Start by filling out the appropriate application form. Four types are available:

Standard Application Form
Use this form for interior or exterior work, or to correct or legalize a landmark violation.

FasTrack Application Form
Use this form for interior work and select exterior work ranging from interior alterations to window replacement and HVAC equipment on non-visible facades. The FasTrack Application Form lists types of work and includes a checklist of required submission materials.

Expedited Certificate of No Effect Application Form
Use this form for most interior work, with some limitations on lower floors as identified on the form. **Absolutely no exterior work can be included on this form.** A checklist of required authorizations and consents is on the form.

Post-Approval Application Form
Use this form to amend or sign off on previously approved work.

Amendment applications must be accompanied by a list of any exterior work that differs from your original approval, plus drawings clearly annotated with notes that explain revisions. **Changes not clearly identified in this manner will not be considered part of the amendment, even if they are shown on the filing drawings.** Making such changes to your building may result in a violation.

Step 2

Check to see what application materials are required.
Use the guidebook to understand which materials you must include with your Standard or FasTrack application. Chapters are organized by work type and explain which required application materials apply to the most common types of work. Your application materials must show how your work conforms to the LPC Rules criteria for your specific type of work. For FasTrack and Expedited Certificate of No Effect applications, materials and other requirements are listed in the application form itself.

Sign-off or Notice of Compliance applications must be accompanied by clear photos of the completed exterior work, including work that is not visible from a public thoroughfare, and a list of any exterior work that differs from your original approval. Neglecting to clearly identify all work that differs from the original approval may result in delays. As a result, the sign-off may not include the work, leaving it subject to potential enforcement action in the future.

Step 3

Check to see whether a violation exists on the property.
Contact LPC to find out whether an LPC violation or summons is in effect against your property. A violation indicates that conditions at the property have changed without an LPC permit or are in non-compliance with an existing permit.

If a Notice of Violation is in effect, LPC may not process your application unless it meets the following conditions:

The application is limited to work addressing the violation.

The proposed work will correct a hazardous condition.

The proposed work will clearly further the continuing preservation of the building by addressing deterioration or maintenance issues.

A permit has been issued to correct work cited in the violations, and an escrow agreement or other acceptable form of assurance has been established to ensure that corrective work will be completed within a specific timeframe.

These conditions do not apply to a warning letter, which is issued when LPC first learns of a violation and gives owners the opportunity to correct a condition. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks to learn more about violations.

How long does it take for LPC to review your application?

Standard applications are reviewed within two weeks of submission. If your application is complete and meets the LPC Rules, staff can issue a permit upon initial review. FasTrack and Expedited Certificates of No Effect are reviewed and issued within ten days and two days of submission, respectively.

If staff cannot determine what your work entails or whether it meets the LPC Rules, you will be sent a Materials Checklist. Each submission in response to a Materials Checklist will be reviewed in the order in which it is received. Issuance of a Materials Checklist and having to submit additional materials in response delays the issuance of a permit.

Step 4

Have your application form signed by the property owner.
Your application form must be signed by the property owner. An improperly signed form, such as a form signed by a tenant, is not sufficient.

For co-op and condominium buildings, the chair or other appropriate officer of the co-op board or condominium association must sign the application. However, a condominium unit owner may sign for interior work only.

Please note that your **original** signed application form (not a copy or a PDF) must be submitted for all application types except for sign-offs and amendments. You still need to submit the form to the Commission for these work types. If the owner is the same, it does not have to be the form with the original signature (i.e., can be a copy).

Step 5

Submit your application.
Applications can be submitted by mail or dropped off at our office. Applications cannot be submitted online, except for amendments and Notices of Compliance.

Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North
New York, NY, 10007
Attention: Permit Applications

Applications for amendments and Notices of Compliance can be emailed to applications@lpc.nyc.gov, if there are no DOB filing drawings being submitted and the owner is the same.

If you require guidance, please contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or email info@lpc.nyc.gov.

How long do applicants have to complete an incomplete application?

If your application remains inactive for **more than 90 days** after a Materials Checklist is issued, it may be withdrawn and a Withdrawn at Staff Level letter will be sent. The application will then be closed, and you will need to reapply if you wish to pursue the proposal.

If an application to legalize a violation remains inactive for a period of **55 days** from issuance of a Materials Checklist, staff will withdraw the application and a Notice of Violation or Warning letter will remain in effect against the property. Failure to resolve this matter may result in a summons that originates from the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings, and a fine may be imposed. A second summons requires a court appearance, and a civil fine will be imposed.

Chapter 1

Restoration

Repair, Restoration, Replacement, and Re-creation of Building Facades and Related Exterior Elements

The rich texture and character of New York City's streetscapes and historic buildings are created through the architectural elements and materials used in their construction. Historic materials, including wood, stone, terra cotta, metal, and stucco, among others, were deliberately chosen by architects and builders and are considered a significant part of a building's landmark designation. Historic materials, therefore, should be maintained, repaired, and replaced in-kind whenever possible. The protection of these historic materials serves as the basis for LPC's rules for work involving repair, restoration, replacement, and re-creation of historic materials such as building facades and related exterior elements (see **LPC Rules**, Section 2-11, available at **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**.)

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

This chapter explains LPC's rules on repair, restoration, replacement, and re-creation work. Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to LPC Rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

Section A
How to Get Started

Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for the building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine how the rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find **construction date, architect and style, building and landmark type,** and a link to the **LPC designation report** with additional historical background.

What did your building look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services NYC Municipal Archives Collections.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide**, Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

Do you need a special permit?
Verify whether your property is subject to a special permit such as a **Modification of Use (MOU)**. Specific guidelines for repair and replacement of historic materials may apply. To verify, contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or email info@lpc.nyc.gov.

How big is your building?
Verify the **height** of your building. Eligibility requirements for using substitute materials can vary, depending on the height (number of stories). See *Section B, Replacing Historic Materials*, for more information.

See If Your Work Requires an LPC Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
LPC requires permits for most types of work involving repair, restoration, replacement, and re-creation of historic materials.

A permit is **not required** for:

- Routine maintenance such as minor repairs to wood trim, polishing metalwork, or refastening loose elements.
- Repainting a facade or an architectural feature the existing color, provided it was painted the color prior to historic district designation or was approved by the Commission.
- Replacing flat roofs.
- Minor probes or other investigative work.

Probes must take place in unobtrusive areas, with the simple removal of a limited amount of material to expose underlying conditions for a short period of time, and all existing conditions must be restored in-kind upon completion of the probe.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

What You Will Need

A complete application typically requires the materials listed below, but additional materials may be required depending on the type of work. See *Section B* for a list of all materials required for your work type.

Basic Application Materials

- **An LPC Permit Application Form**, filled out and signed by the property owner.
- **Color photos** of the entire building and close-ups that pinpoint areas of proposed work for context.
- **Documentation** that supports restoration of missing or altered architectural features, if available, including historic photographs or drawings of the building or similar buildings.
- **Assessment** of deteriorated conditions.
- **Comparative drawings:**
  - Elevation of existing conditions and proposed restoration work
  - Section of existing conditions and proposed restoration work for reconstructing architectural features, parapets, and partial / full facades
  - Large-scale details (in elevation, section, or plan, as needed) of existing conditions and proposed restoration work for replacing architectural features (sills, lintels, band courses, cornices, ornamentation, etc.) to illustrate proposed work
- **Written specifications** on methods of repair or replacement, noting that new work will match existing or historic conditions.
- **Material specifications.**
- **Color specifications / samples** to illustrate the proposed work.
- **Two sets of Department of Buildings (DOB) filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules — or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. LPC staff can guide you through this process. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks for more information.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of work involving repair, restoration, replacement, and re-creation of building facades and related exterior elements. See LPC Rules, Section 2-11, for more information.

In This Section:

General Criteria

Staff can approve work to repair, restore, replace, and re-create building facades and related exterior elements if it meets the criteria in this chapter. Additional criteria may apply, depending on the work you are planning to do. See your specific work type for more information. Historic materials must be maintained, repaired, and replaced in-kind whenever possible, as most buildings are designated based in part on the presence of historic materials. Maintaining these elements in good repair keeps the building in a condition that is closer to its original appearance and helps its long-term preservation.

Repair, restoration, replacement, or re-creation must match the physical and aesthetic characteristics of the original or historic materials and features, including design, detail, profile, dimension, material, texture, tooling, dressing, color, and finish.

If materials are too deteriorated to repair and need to be replaced to ensure safe conditions, detailed information about the deterioration must be provided by a qualified engineer, contractor, or other industry professional. When feasible, repair is preferred over replacement.

Staff may consider alternative repair methods and substitute materials in certain situations. In others, use of substitute materials is prohibited. See your specific work type to determine whether materials must be replaced in-kind, i.e., match historic materials, or if substitute materials can be used.

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Note: If repair, restoration, replacement, or re-creation of architectural elements occurs on the front facade of the building, staff requires a sample of the material to be used to ensure it matches original or historic materials. Once your application is approved and prior to commencing work, contact the staff preservationist assigned to your application to inspect the sample on-site.

Repairing or Restoring Facade Materials and Features

Cleaning and Removing Paint

Staff can approve cleaning and removing paint and coatings from exterior masonry and facade materials if it meets the following criteria:

Removal Methods

The cleaning and paint removal methods and products should be the gentlest possible to avoid causing damage.

Tip: *Always start with the mildest possible form of cleaning (such as mild soap, water, and a soft bristle brush) before proposing a stronger method.*

Pressure Washer

A pressure washer can be used to clean the facade and remove paint but should not be used on wood or other fragile surfaces. Water pressure cannot exceed 500 psi on masonry or 300 psi on cast iron.

Tip: *To clean and remove paint or coatings, begin with the lowest possible water pressure and hold the nozzle at a safe distance. As needed, increase to the maximum allowable pressure.*

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos of building facades.**
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available. (See *Section A* for information on how to obtain tax photos.)
- ☐ **A conditions statement** that describes type, extent, and cause (if known) of deterioration, if applicable.
- ☐ **Proposed annotated elevation or photo** of areas of the facade or architectural features to be stripped, cleaned, painted, or coated.
- ☐ **Written specifications** of method of stripping or cleaning and painting/coating products (e.g., water pressure will not exceed 500 psi).
- ☐ **Color samples,** if applicable.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Coating removal without damaging the historic material

Historic masonry damaged by harsh coating removal and cleaning methods

Chemical Detergents

Chemical detergents can be approved, as long as they do not damage historic materials.

Tip: *Testing multiple products in consultation with LPC is the best way to find a cleaner that does not damage historic materials.*

Products should be tested in a small, discreet area.

Alternative methods such as micro-abrasive, dry ice, chemical, or laser cleaning can only be approved in specific cases and only in consultation with LPC staff.

Sandblast Cleaning

Sandblast cleaning ("sand-blasting") is **prohibited**. It can cause permanent damage to historic materials and allow water to infiltrate the building.

Heavy sandblasting scarred the surface of the masonry, contributing to its deterioration.

Historic bricks (on the left) damaged by heavy sandblasting.

Painting

Staff can approve painting facades and building features that were originally or historically painted to protect them from damage or to more closely return them to their historic appearance.

First confirm that your building was painted prior to designation (grandfathered) or was previously approved to be painted a certain color by the Commission.

Paint must match physical and aesthetic characteristics of the building's original or historic paint. Color should be in keeping with the historic palette of buildings of the same type, style, and age, except in the following cases:

For painted historic masonry, proposed paint color needs to match the color of the underlying masonry, unless the color is part of a significant later alteration. However, removal of paint is preferred.

For individual landmarks, if a substantial portion of the paint on a primary facade is being removed, you must perform a paint analysis to document it (unless one already exists).

Note: The facade or architectural feature can be repainted the existing color, as long as the color is grandfathered or was previously approved by the Commission. This work does not require a permit.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos of building facades.**
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available. (See *Section A* for information on how to obtain tax photos.)
- ☐ **A conditions statement** that describes type, extent, and cause (if known) of deterioration, if applicable.
- ☐ **Proposed annotated elevation or photo** of areas of the facade or architectural features to be stripped, cleaned, painted, or coated.
- ☐ **Written specifications** of method of stripping or cleaning and painting/coating products (e.g., water pressure will not exceed 500 psi).
- ☐ **Color samples,** if applicable.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Restoring Architectural Features: Painting

Style	Dates	Body	Trim	Shutter	Window Sash
Federal	1790–1830	Gentle pastel shades: Light yellow Beiges Grays Smoky blues Muted greens	Slightly lighter tones than body: Off-white Creams Pale yellows Buffs Restrained blues	Rich greens Dark reds Deep brown Blacks	Whites
Greek Revival	1820–1860	White Pale yellow Light gray/blue Buffs Gray/green Light gray	White Gray blue Olive green Buffs Evergreen	Greens Black Dark red Dark brown	White
Italianate	1845–1880	Warm neutral tones: Muted stone grays Yellow ochres Peachy tans Moss green Yellows Grayish greens Terra cotta reds	Similar color as building but lighter or darker: Deep browns Olive green Evergreen	Warm browns Reddish browns	Black Deep green
Second Empire	1860–1880	Rich earthy tones: Maroons Warm browns Burnt orange Dark terra cotta reds Olive/sage/evergreen Dark ochres Soft tans Yellow beige	Contrasts with body: Evergreen Light chocolate brown Whites Beiges Creams Yellows	Slate gray Green blacks Dark browns	Dark brown Dark gray
Romanesque	1875–1895	Natural masonry colors	Red browns Dark browns Dark stone grays	Olive/blue greens Brown Grays Deep reds	Olive/dark greens Reds Browns Brown/gold yellows
Queen Anne	1875–1900	Harmonious 3-5 colors, emphasis on decorative details: Brick/terra cotta reds Warm light yellows Greenish/yellow ochres Gray greens Deep tans Dark browns Sage/bottle/olive greens Muted grays	Wood: Maroons Dark browns Slate grays Sage/olive green Burnt sienna Stone: Dark copper Maroons Dark browns Deep tans White	Dark reds Tan Dark blues Evergreen	Dark reds Maroons Olive/dark greens Black Whites Crimson
Colonial Revival	1885–1940	Whites Pale yellows Beige Muted terra cotta reds Pale olive green Medium grays	Whites	Dark olive green (sometimes same color as building)	Whites Same color as trim Dark green
Craftsman	1905-1930	Natural colors Muted earth tones	Natural colors	Natural colors	Natural colors

If a building is currently not painted, can it be painted?

If the building's facade or features were originally painted but are currently unpainted, staff can approve repainting to match original conditions if it meets the following criteria:

Paint color matches the color of the underlying masonry; or

Paint color blends with surrounding materials and other elements on the building or adjacent buildings

Note: Staff cannot approve painting of existing unpainted masonry which was not historically painted.

How are appropriate paint colors determined?

The historic painted condition of a facade or architectural elements such as cornices, windows, and doors can be determined by using historic and existing conditions, photographs, and physical evidence at the building. Conditions are typically documented through probes and/or a paint analysis.

Work with LPC staff to determine the style, type, and age of the building. Begin by referring to the designation report for the building's historic district. You can also consult the reference chart on page 1.9, which lists appropriate paint colors for 19th century residential buildings.

What type of paint should be used?

In most cases, use paint that is breathable and appropriate for exterior use. Interior paints may not perform well outdoors.

Do not use paints described as "waterproof," as they may trap water inside materials and accelerate deterioration. If you have questions about what type of paint is appropriate, reach out to LPC.

These rowhouses in the MacDougal-Sullivan Gardens Historic District were historically painted in a variety of colors.

Coating

To protect a masonry facade and building features from damage, staff can approve coating with non-paint materials such as a mineral coating or stain, if:

Water has infiltrated through the facade or features due to deteriorated conditions of the surface.

It is always preferable to make appropriate repairs to deteriorated materials, but staff can approve a coating that temporarily protects the facade or features from further damage.

Existing deteriorated conditions (i.e., water infiltration) must be documented so an appropriate coating may be selected in consultation with staff.

Coatings can be approved if the base of the facade has been repeatedly subjected to graffiti.

The coating used on the bricks resulted in severe deterioration of the brickwork.

Coating would be appropriate in this case where cleaning revealed staining and previous repairs.

The color of the historic masonry on the left is matched by the mineral stain coating on the right.

Coatings described as "waterproof" cannot be approved by staff. These types of coatings can contribute to and sometimes accelerate deterioration of historic materials.

If coating is an approved method, which types of coatings can be used?

The type of coating varies, depending on the deteriorated condition to be addressed. In general, it must be breathable and compatible with historic materials.

Most coatings are clear, with a dull, not shiny, finish. In certain cases coatings can be pigmented to provide a more uniform appearance to a facade with poorly matched patches. Staff makes this determination.

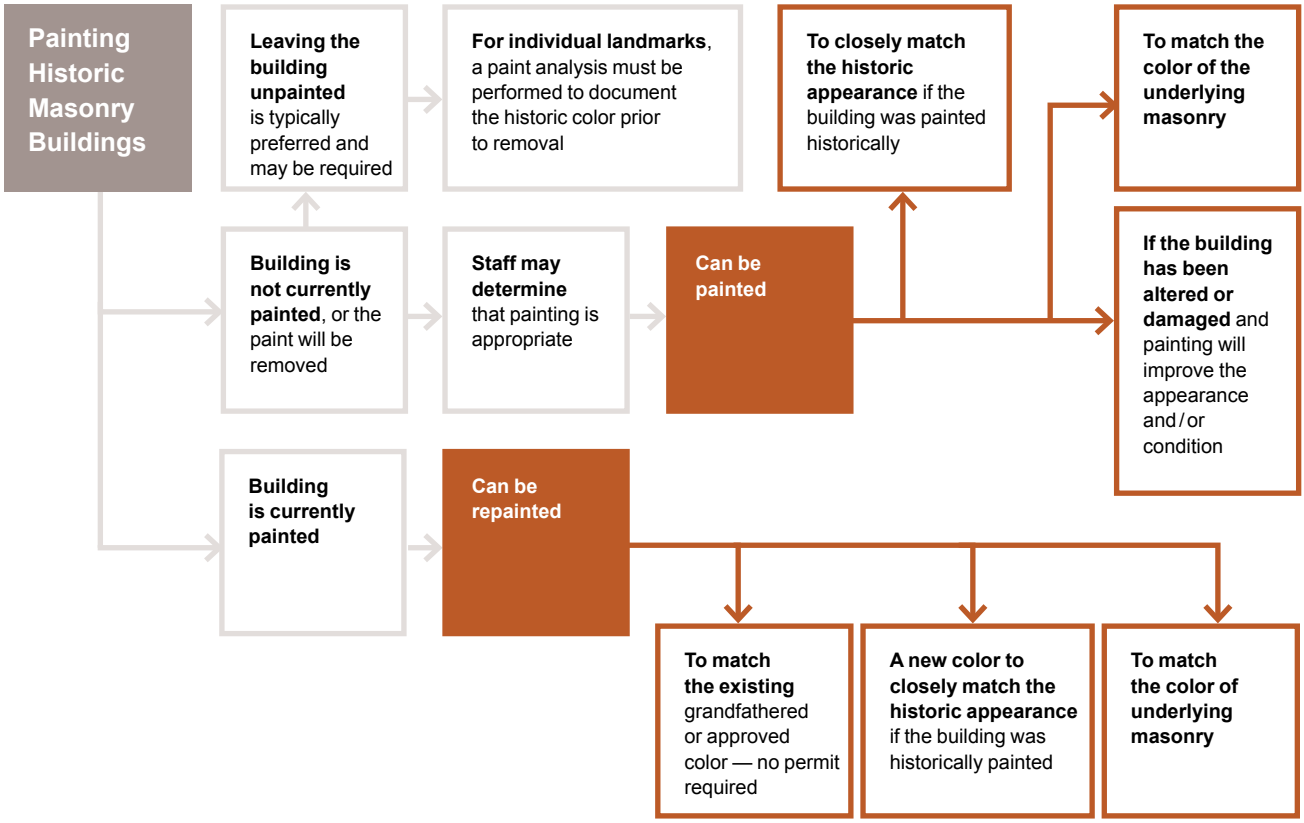
Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos of building facades.**
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available. (See *Section A* for information on how to obtain tax photos.)
- ☐ **A conditions statement** that describes type, extent, and cause (if known) of deterioration, if applicable.
- ☐ **Proposed annotated elevation or photo** of areas of the facade or architectural features to be stripped, cleaned, painted, or coated.
- ☐ **Written specifications** of method of stripping or cleaning and painting/coating products (e.g., water pressure will not exceed 500 psi).
- ☐ **Color samples,** if applicable.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Can the building be painted?

This chart shows when staff can approve paint or coating a masonry building in historic districts and individual landmarks.



Example of inappropriate coating. In addition to being a poor color match, the coating extends over the mortar joints, sealing the masonry and mortar and restricting moisture transmission, which could accelerate deterioration.

Example of inappropriate coating. Repair mortars and patching compounds should be tinted to match the original material, not the coated and/or stained materials.

Repairing Natural and Historic Cast Stone

Staff can approve repairs to natural stone and historic cast stone facades and elements if they meet the following criteria:

Patching

Patching repairs are typically made using a cementitious repair mortar or patching compound.

Deteriorated stone is cut back to sound stone, and the new surface keyed into sound stone with a tinted cementitious patching compound. See *Section C* for more information on how to prepare and apply patching compound.

Patching should match the physical and aesthetic characteristics of the original or historic stone.

Dutchman Repair

The term "Dutchman repair" refers to new or matching salvaged stone fitted into existing facade stone.

Dutchman repairs require the craftsman to cut back an area of existing stone deep enough and large enough to give the new fitted stone sufficient surface area to adhere to, using a thin grout or adhesive at the perimeter.

Dutchman repairs must match the physical and aesthetic characteristics of the original or historic stone.

Materials and methods for adhesives and/or anchoring must be compatible with existing stone and discreet or concealed from view.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos of building facades.**
- ☐ **Photos of the areas** of the historic material or architectural feature to be repaired.
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available. See *Section A* for information on how to obtain tax photos.
- ☐ **A conditions statement** that describes the type, extent, and cause (if known) of deterioration.
- ☐ **Written specifications** of method of repair and materials/products used should reflect the methods described in this chapter.
- ☐ **If the work is substantial,** prescriptive construction specifications that describe requirements regarding materials, products, installation procedures, and quality aspects involved in execution of the work.
- ☐ **For masonry repairs,** specifications including the recipe mortar mixture and confirmation that work will be performed by hand; will match the color, texture, dimension, and tooling of the original; and will take place only when the exterior temperature remains a constant 45 degrees or above for a period of 72 hours from commencement of the work. All other written specifications should reflect the methods described in this chapter.
- ☐ **Proposed annotated photos or elevations.**
- ☐ **Detailed drawings of repairs** if the work is substantial or complex, e.g., rebuilding or resetting large areas of masonry, mending fractured cast iron.
- ☐ **Color samples** if applicable.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

The patching material used here (the light colored areas) is not compatible with the original stone, was installed incorrectly, and was not tinted properly (the color is wearing off).

Here, the patched stone matches the physical and aesthetic characteristics of the historic material so well the patch is virtually invisible.

Anchoring

"Anchoring" is using pins, ties, anchors, etc. to secure stone.

All anchors must be galvanized or stainless steel, compatible with the existing stone, and discreet and/or concealed from view.

The light colored stone seen on the lower step is replacement stone installed as a Dutchman repair.

The light colored stone shown here is replacement stone installed as a Dutchman repair.

Repairing Brownstone

Staff can approve repairing or resurfacing brownstone facades and elements, which are very susceptible to deterioration over time and often in need of repair. Resurfacing applies the same process and materials used for patching natural stone to an entire facade. All resurfacing work must be undertaken by a qualified contractor since it often requires the skilled re-creation of decorative elements. See *Section C* for more information on resurfacing procedures.

Significantly deteriorated brownstone, often referred to as delamination.

Staff can approve brownstone resurfacing of select areas, such as the stoop or base of the building or elaborate carving, if warranted by the extent of deterioration and if an appropriate method and material is used (see *Section C* for approvable methods and materials). An entire facade should not be resurfaced unless LPC determines that the historic brownstone is in extremely poor condition.

Resurfacing ornament with cementitious brownstone-tinted stucco to replicate historic details.

Repointing Masonry Facades

Repointing is one of the most common types of repair work for masonry facades. It is the process of removing deteriorated mortar from the joints and installing new mortar to reestablish a watertight bond with the masonry. Staff can approve repointing if it meets the following criteria:

Materials

Mortar must match the physical and aesthetic characteristics of the original or historic mortar.

It is important that replacement mortar be **compatible with the historic masonry,** i.e., less strong and more permeable than the historic brick or stone. If the mortar is too strong or less permeable, it will cause masonry units to deteriorate. (See *Which types of mortar should be used?*.)

If the building is an individual landmark and the facade needs to be completely repointed, a mortar analysis should be performed to determine the appropriate type of replacement mortar.

Color and Tooling

Typically, **new mortar must match the color and tooling (joint profile)** of the original mortar. To ensure a good match, samples of the new mortar must be installed next to areas of clean original mortar.

In two specific cases it may not be necessary to match new mortar with the historic mortar's original color, texture, or tooling:

Example of inappropriate mortar joint repointing. Note how the new mortar has been layered on top of the old mortar, overlapping the brick faces and covering the joints rather than filling them.

If very limited areas of the facade require repointing and the entire facade was previously repointed with mortar that does not match the historic mortar, the new mortar can match adjacent mortar in terms of color, texture, and tooling.

If mortar joints have previously been widened by improper joint cutting, an alternative mortar can help minimize the appearance of joints and unify the facade.

The mortar joints have been repointed to match the historic joints in terms of color, texture, and profile.

Which types of mortar should be used?

Mortar is the matrix that attaches masonry units (such as bricks) to each other in a wall. Classified by its compressive strength and other properties, ASTM International (formerly the American Society for Testing and Materials) identifies mortar strength by the letters M, S, N, and O — with type M mortar having the highest compressive strength and O having the lowest. Type N is commonly used for repointing historic masonry because its compressive strength is lower than the masonry itself. Using a mortar with a higher compressive strength than the masonry, i.e., mortar that is too hard, causes masonry to crack and deteriorate. Soft mortar such as type O or other lime-rich mortars is commonly used to repoint 19th century buildings. With 20th century buildings, a mortar equivalent to type N can be used.

How is mortar color determined?

Since mortar is frequently replaced, determining its original color can be difficult. Removing mortar from a sample area can expose original mortar deeper within the joint. **Hard-to-access areas are a good place to find original mortar.**

What tools can be used for repointing?

Deteriorated mortar must be removed from mortar joints by hand using a chisel. Care should be taken not to chip bricks while removing mortar, particularly when working with the very thin mortar joints often found at 19th century buildings.

In certain cases, such as when the building has wide horizontal joints, deteriorated mortar can be removed with power tools. This work must be supervised to ensure there is no overcutting or widening of mortar joints, causing irreversible damage to bricks and changing the appearance of the historic facade.

An example of careful mortar joint removal.

Inappropriate mortar joint removal. Note how the edges of the bricks have been damaged by the process.

Repairing Brick and Terra Cotta

Staff can approve repairs for brick and terra cotta (fired clay and ceramic unit masonry) if they meet the following criteria:

Repairs should match the physical and aesthetic characteristics of the original or historic brick or terra cotta.

Repairs are generally limited to minor spalling or chipping of the brick or terra cotta and its glazing.

A patching compound can be used to make terra cotta repairs.

Deteriorated material is cut back to sound material, and the new surface is keyed into sound material with a patching compound.

A repair glaze is applied to the patch to replicate the historic finish and texture of the terra cotta unit.

If pieces of terra cotta are at risk of becoming detached, staff can approve **stabilizing those units with galvanized or stainless steel anchors.**

Anchors must be compatible with the terra cotta itself.

All anchors must be discreet and/or concealed from view.

If the bricks are deteriorated, they can be **replaced by new bricks, as long as they match the historic bricks**.

In some cases, if the brick is cracked, a **repair grout or epoxy can be used**.

Repairing Stucco

Staff can approve repairing stucco if it meets the following criteria:

Areas of deteriorated stucco can be patched using new stucco in a traditional three-coat (or lath) system or a two-coat system.

Three-Coat Stucco System

A traditional three-coat stucco system consists of a lath base (made of wood or galvanized/stainless steel metal mesh), a scratch coat, a brown coat, and a finish coat. The first layer, or scratch coat, has a rough, "scratchy" surface so the next layer better adheres to it. The middle layer, or brown coat, uses a long trowel or "darby" to create a smooth finish. The top coat, or finish coat, is the layer that is colored and/or textured to achieve the final desired appearance.

Two-Coat Stucco System

A two-coat stucco system is used when stucco is applied directly to masonry. Therefore, it only consists of a brown coat and a finish coat.

Staff cannot approve most modern stucco wall systems, including exterior insulation and finish systems (EIFS), multiple layers of wallboard, weatherproofing membranes, and lath.

Repairing Ornamental Sheet Metal and Cast Iron or Wrought Iron

Staff can approve repairing metal, including sheet metal, cast iron, and wrought iron used in fences, railings, cornices, balconies, cladding, storefront piers and elements, lintel and sill caps, etc., if repairs meet the following criteria:

Small holes and small areas of loss can be repaired using soldering, spot welding, anchors, fasteners, and/or filling compounds/sealants.

All repair materials must be compatible with the historic metal in order to avoid galvanic corrosion.

Repairs must be made in a discreet location, with anchors and fasteners concealed from view wherever possible and painted to match surrounding metalwork.

Repairing Wood Features

Staff can approve repairing wood used in cornices, cladding, window frames, window lintels or sills, doors, decorative elements, etc., if repairs meet the following criteria:

Small repairs can be made using wood putty, a patching compound, or a consolidant.

The Dutchman method can be used to repair larger areas of loss or deteriorated wood by replacing portions of the historic wood with new pieces of wood.

All repair materials must be compatible with the historic wood. High-strength putty or consolidant is not permitted, although Dutchman repairs are not required to match historic wood in terms of wood species.

Repairing Other Materials

Staff can approve repairing other materials such as laminates, plastic and synthetic rubbers, curtain walls, and poured concrete if repairs meet the following criteria:

Repairs must match the physical and aesthetic characteristics of original or historic materials.

Staff can approve minor repairs with substitute materials as long as repairs do not detract from the appearance of original materials.

The wood mullions (vertical pieces of unpainted wood) have been repaired with a Dutchman repair. The new pieces of wood match the dimensions and profiles of the adjacent historic wood and will be repainted to blend in.

Replacing Historic Materials

General Criteria

When feasible, repair is preferred over replacement, but if materials are too deteriorated to be repaired, staff can approve the replacement of historic materials, which can be replicated or recreated and reinstalled, if they meet the following general criteria. Additional criteria may apply depending on the work you are planning to do. See your specific work type for more information.

Replacement materials (both in-kind and substitute) must match the physical and visual characteristics of the historic materials in every way, including, but not limited to, details, profiles, dimensions, texture, color, tooling, dressing, and finish.

Replacement material must either be in-kind or substitute. For example, an in-kind replacement material for limestone would be limestone while a substitute replacement material for limestone could be cast stone or precast concrete.

If the property is an individual landmark or building subject to a special permit such as a Modification of Use (MOU), criteria are very strict in order to keep the replacement materials as **aesthetically and physically compatible** as possible. Consult staff prior to filing your application to determine if substitute materials can be used. Call 212-669-7817 or email info@lpc.nyc.gov.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos of building facades.**
- ☐ **Photos of areas of historic materials** or architectural features to be replaced.
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available. See *Section A* for information on how to obtain tax photos.
- ☐ **A conditions statement** that describes the type, extent, and cause (if known) of deterioration.
- ☐ **Written specifications** of method of replacement and materials/products used.
  - – **If the work is substantial,** prescriptive construction specifications must describe requirements for materials, products, installation procedures, and quality aspects involved in execution of the work
  - – **For masonry replacement,** specifications must state that work will take place only when the exterior temperature remains a constant 45 degrees or above for a period of 72 hours from commencement of the work
- ☐ **Proposed annotated photos** or elevations.
- ☐ **Detailed drawings** of replacements if work is substantial or complex, e.g., cornice replacement.
- ☐ **Color samples,** if applicable.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

Shop drawings of certain features may be required to ensure a good match to the historic condition. See *Section C* for examples of shop drawings.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Photo: Higgins Quasebarth & Partners LLC

Replacement polychrome (colored glaze) terra cotta at the head of the window units.

Substitute Materials

Modern cast building materials can be used as an alternative to natural and historic cast stone. Modern cast materials, which became popular in the mid-20th century, include precast concrete (colored concrete molded and cured in a controlled environment); glass fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC), which consists of a concrete matrix embedded with glass fibers; glass fiber reinforced plastic (GFRP), which consists of a plastic matrix embedded with glass fibers; and microcotta, a polymer-based composite resin material intended to imitate terra cotta.

Substitute Materials

Materials	Buildings in Historic Districts			Individual Landmarks and MOU Buildings		
	Primary facades *(6th story and below)*	Primary facades *(7th story and above)*	Secondary facades *(visible and non-visible)*	Primary facades *(Individual landmarks)*	Secondary facades *(Individual landmarks)*	Primary / Secondary facades *(MOU buildings)*
Cast iron	yes *(limited to cast aluminum or other cast metal)*	yes *(in limited quantities of discrete elements only)*	yes *(in limited quantities of discrete elements only)*	⊗ no	yes *(in limited quantities of discrete elements only)*	⊗ no
Other cast metals	⊗ no	yes	yes	⊗ no	yes	⊗ no
Wrought metals	⊗ no	yes	yes	⊗ no	yes	⊗ no
Natural finish sheet metals (i.e., copper)	⊗ no	yes	yes	⊗ no	yes	⊗ no
Painted sheet metals and painted wood elements (excluding siding)	yes [5]	yes	yes	⊗ no	yes	⊗ no
Stucco	⊗ no	⊗ no	⊗ no	⊗ no	⊗ no	⊗ no
Brick	⊗ no	⊗ no	⊗ no	⊗ no	⊗ no	⊗ no
Natural stone (excluding brownstone) and cast stone (historic)	yes [1]	yes [1 2 3]	yes	yes [1]	yes	⊗ no
Brownstone **(Note: resurfacing brownstone with tinted stucco is considered a repair, not a replacement.)**	yes *(limited to cast stone at facade elements, and cast stone or stucco at stoops and areaway walls)*	yes *(limited to cast stone)*	yes	*yes (limited to cast stone)*	yes	yes *(limited to cast stone, if the particular type of historic brownstone is no longer commercially available)*
Terra cotta	yes [1 3]	yes [1 2 3]	yes	yes [1 3]	yes	⊗ no
Wood siding	yes [4]	yes [4]	yes	yes [4]	yes [4]	⊗ no
Historic roofing	yes [6] *(not visible)*	yes [6] *(minimally or not visible)*	yes [6] *(minimally or not visible)*	⊗ no	⊗ no	⊗ no
Non-historic roofing	yes [6]	yes [6]	yes [6]	yes [6]	yes [6]	⊗ no

General Note: Substitute materials should match the physical and visual characteristics of the historic materials in terms of design, detail, profile, dimension, material, texture, tooling, dressing, color and finish, as applicable.

Where a substitute material has previously been approved as an aspect of a Certificate of Appropriateness application, LPC staff may continue the use of the same or other comparable substitute material in new applications for the same building or structure consistent with that approval, provided the substitute material has proven to be an acceptable match in terms of appearance and compatibility over time with the surrounding original or historic material.

Substitute materials may not be used on a building or portions of a building where in-kind replacement was an important aspect of an approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness application.

1 Allowed at coping elements only

2 Allowed at projecting cornices and balconies with weight and/or attachment issues where in-kind replacement has potential to cause additional loss at surrounding material

3 Allowed at limited quantities of other discrete elements that are not part of a cladding field of similar units where physical and visual compatibility is critical

4 Allowed to use untextured painted fiber-cement siding if wood is prohibited by code

5 Painted wood and sheet metal elements may be used interchangeably at facade elements that were historically used in a similar manner (consistent with the age and style of the building), such as cornices and bay windows, and other painted substitute materials (such as fiberglass) allowed at elaborate top floor cornices less than 25 feet in length where any joints in the material would be hidden or obscured by the design elements

6 Substitute material must visually match or recall the original roofing and not call attention to itself or detract from the building; visible flashing, gutters, etc., must match original materials

Replacing Natural Stone and Cast Stone

Staff can approve replacing natural stone and cast stone if it meets the following criteria:

Cast stone and natural stone (other than brownstone) must be in-kind at or below the sixth story of the primary facade; however, substitute materials may be used for coping elements (top course of a masonry wall).

Above the sixth story on the primary facade, substitute materials may be used in limited quantities of other discreet elements that are not part of a cladding field (typically the flat masonry units in a wall) of similar units where physical and visual compatibility is critical.

Substitute materials may also be used at projecting cornices and balconies with weight and/or attachment issues. This applies when a licensed engineer has determined that in-kind replacement has the potential to cause additional loss of surrounding materials.

At individual landmarks substitute materials may not be used, except coping elements.

Replacement of brownstone may be in-kind on the primary facade, or cast stone can be used for facade elements and features. Cast stone or stucco over backup masonry can be used at stoops and areaway walls. **At individual landmarks, stucco over backup masonry cannot be used.**

The replacement masonry (on the left) matches the historic masonry.

Replacement balusters that match the historic ones in terms of their dimensions, profiles, and finish.

Replacement terra cotta unit (bottom) next to a piece of historic terra cotta (top).

New brick that matches the historic brick in terms of size, dimensions, and finish.

Example of a poor brick match. Note how the new bricks (above the lintels) do not match the historic bricks, calling undue attention to the repair.

Replacing Brick and Terra Cotta

Staff can approve replacing brick and terra cotta (fired clay and ceramic unit masonry) if it meets the following criteria:

Replacement of terra cotta is in-kind at or below the sixth story of the primary facade. However, substitute materials can be used for coping elements, as well as for limited quantities of other discrete elements that are not part of a cladding field of similar units where physical and visual compatibility is critical.

Above the sixth story of the primary facade, substitute materials may also be used at projecting cornices and balconies with weight and/or attachment issues. This applies when a licensed engineer has determined that in-kind replacement has the potential to cause additional loss of surrounding materials.

At individual landmarks, substitute material cannot be used, except for coping elements and limited quantities of other discrete elements that are not part of a cladding field of similar units where physical and visual compatibility is critical.

Brick must be replaced in-kind. No substitute materials are permitted for brick replacement.

Replacing Ornamental Sheet Metal And Cast Iron Or Wrought Iron

Staff can approve replacing ornamental sheet metal and cast iron or wrought iron if it meets the following criteria:

Replacement materials are in-kind at or below the sixth story of the primary facade. Cast aluminum or another cast metal with a painted finish can be used.

Above the sixth story of the primary facade, substitute materials can be used. For cast iron, substitute materials may also be used only for limited quantities of discrete elements.

Painted sheet metal elements can be used interchangeably with wood at facade elements historically used in a similar manner, such as cornices and bay windows.

For sheet metal, other substitute materials may be used at elaborate top floor cornices less than 25 feet in length where joints in the material would be hidden or obscured by design elements.

At individual landmarks, substitute materials cannot be used.

Replacement decorative metal feature matches the historic metalwork.

Replacement decorative metal stoop matches the historic metalwork.

Replacing Wood Features

Staff can approve replacing wood features if replacement meets the following criteria:

Wood should be replaced in-kind at the primary facade. However, painted wood elements can be used interchangeably with painted sheet metal on facade elements (such as cornices and bay windows) historically used in a similar manner.

Other substitute materials can be used at elaborate top floor cornices less than 25 feet in length where joints in the material would be hidden or obscured by design elements.

Above the sixth story at the primary facade, substitute materials can be used.

At individual landmarks, substitute materials cannot be used.

Wood siding at primary facades and individual landmarks must be replaced in-kind. However, fiber cement board can be used only if applicable building, fire, or other codes prohibit the use of wood siding and provided that the substitute material is the minimum required by code.

Replacing Other Materials

Staff can approve replacing materials such as laminates, plastic and synthetic rubbers, curtain walls, and poured concrete if replacement meets the following criteria:

Physical and aesthetic characteristics of other materials match original or historic materials.

Minor repairs using substitute materials, as long as substitute materials do not detract from the appearance of the original material.

Replacing Roofing Elements

Staff can approve roofing elements if they meet the following criteria:

If the existing roofing material is original or historic, visible from a public thoroughfare, and the building is six stories or fewer (most commonly gable and mansard roofs), historic materials must be replaced in-kind.

At buildings seven stories or taller, historic visible roofing can be replaced with substitute materials if the new materials are not discernable from the street.

If roofing is not visible (such as flat roofs), substitute materials can be used.

At individual landmarks, substitute materials cannot be used to replace original or historic roofing.

If historic roofing material has been replaced in the past, new roofing materials must match historic roofing in terms of visual characteristics such as artificial slate or clay shingles and architectural asphalt shingles.

Asphalt shingles are commonly approved to replace visible roofing, provided they are an architectural shingle that better recalls the historic roofing material. Solar shingles can also be approved if they are designed to look like and function as conventional roofing materials while producing electricity.

What kinds of materials can be used to replace flashing, gutters, and leaders?

If historic elements are visible they must be replaced in-kind. At non-visible locations, substitute materials can be approved.

Replacement roofing material that matches the historic roofing material.

Recreating or Restoring Missing Facade Features

Every effort must be made to retain existing architectural features on historic buildings. In certain instances, however, facade elements may be missing, including roofs, cornices, stoops, storefronts, window and door enframements, ironwork, and porches. While restoring architectural elements removed prior to designation is not a requirement, LPC encourages the practice. These architectural elements are not only aesthetically significant but can be functional as well, e.g., a cornice protecting a facade from water infiltration. In such cases, staff can approve re-creation or restoration of missing facade features, provided features are returned to their original or historic appearance and meet the following criteria:

Design

Design of replacement elements must be based on historic photographs, physical evidence at the building (or matching buildings, e.g., another house in the row or a building of the same style), or historic drawings, if available.

If historic evidence does not exist, contact LPC prior to filing your application to determine a design appropriately based on buildings of a similar age and style. Call 212-669-7817 or email info@lpc.nyc.gov.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos of building facades.**
- ☐ **Photos of areas** of the facade or architectural features to be restored (reinstated).
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available. See *Section A* for more information on how to obtain tax photos.
- ☐ **Written specifications** on method of installation and materials / products used.
  - **If the work is substantial,** prescriptive construction specifications that describe requirements regarding materials, products, installation procedures, and quality aspects involved in execution of the work
- ☐ **Proposed annotated photos or elevations.**
- ☐ **Detailed drawings of installations** if the work is substantial or complex, e.g., cornice replication.
- ☐ **Color samples,** if applicable.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

Shop drawings of certain features may be required to ensure a good match to the historic condition. See *Section C* for examples of shop drawings.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

1940s tax photo (left) and designation photo in 2006 (right) of 120 Kingston Avenue in the Crown Heights North Historic District. In the 1950s, the building was altered at the base with black and red glass cladding when it housed a notable jazz club. This alteration is considered a significant feature in its own right and should be retained.

Materials

Materials for recreating and restoring missing facade features must match original or historic materials in-kind or must meet the requirements for using substitute materials in this chapter.

Can architectural features that are not original to the building and were added over time be removed to restore missing original features?

Consult with staff about the removal of any facade features that were added to the building after construction but before designation. Such features may be considered significant layers of the building's historic fabric, i.e., Victorian period features added to a Federal style structure (see photo above for example).

Before: Photo of 60-66 White Street in the Tribeca East Historic District showing two decorative finials at 60 and 62 White Street and a missing decorative finial at 66 White Street.

After: Photo of 60-66 White Street showing the restored decorative finial at 66 White Street, based on evidence at 60 and 62 White Street, which were built at the same time as 66 White Street.

Reconstructing Building Facades

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos of building facades.**
- ☐ **Photos of areas of deterioration and reconstruction.**
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available. See *Section A* for information on how to obtain tax photos.
- ☐ **A conditions report,** prepared by a licensed engineer, that documents and assesses deteriorated conditions and the need for facade reconstruction.
- ☐ **Existing condition survey drawings of the facade,** including unit masonry size, joint size and patterns, size and horizontal/vertical location of window and door openings, and architectural features such as sills, lintels, band courses, and cornices.
- ☐ **Proposed annotated floor plans and elevations.**
- ☐ **Comparative vertical section drawings** of the existing wall and proposed reconstructed wall.
  - – **Large-scale detailed drawings** of the wall section showing construction type, window and door openings, and architectural features
- ☐ **Prescriptive construction specifications** that describe requirements for materials, products, installation procedures, and quality aspects involved in execution of the work.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings**.

Shop drawings of certain features may be required to ensure a good match to the historic condition. See *Section C* for examples.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Staff can approve reconstruction of the building facade if the entire facade is highly deteriorated and/or unstable and the work meets the following criteria:

Staff can only approve facade reconstruction for buildings in historic districts, not individual landmarks or buildings seeking a special permit for Modification of Use and Bulk.

Staff can approve reconstructing the facade of a building if a licensed professional engineer has prepared a thorough report demonstrating why the existing facade cannot be repaired or restored if it is a primary facade. The report then undergoes peer review by a structural engineer contracted by the Commission, who must concur with the recommendations in order for staff to approve the application.

Reconstructing an entire facade is not common, but, if deemed necessary, applications for this type of work must include thorough documentation of the condition, an assessment of existing materials and the potential for salvaging and re-use, and fully dimensional survey drawings of the facade.

Facade Materials

Facade materials, such as brick or stone window lintels and sills, must be salvaged and reused to the greatest extent feasible.

Before facade reconstruction.

After facade reconstruction.

Otherwise the facade must be reconstructed in-kind in terms of wall construction — with the exception that backup masonry can be either brick or concrete masonry units (CMU) — and architectural features.

Substitute Materials

Substitute materials can be used to recreate historic details, provided they meet the requirements for replacement of deteriorated architectural features explained above and in this chapter.

Section C
Technical Guidance and Resources

This section provides additional guidance and resources to help you understand LPC's rules and criteria in order to submit the correct materials with your application.

In This Section:

Glossary

Brick
is a small rectangular block, typically made of fired or sun-dried clay. Bricks are available in various sizes, shapes, colors, textures, and finishes.

Brownstone
is a type of sandstone. Despite its name, the color of brownstone can vary widely.

Cutting and "Raking"
are both names for the process of removing old mortar. Removal prepares joints between masonry units (brick, stone, or terra cotta) for new mortar. Deteriorated mortar on historic buildings must be carefully removed with hand tools, not electric grinders.

Dutchman Repair
is a repair made by removing a small portion of deteriorated natural stone, cast stone, or wood and replacing it in-kind with a piece of new natural stone, cast stone, or wood.

Facade
is the main exterior face of a building, sometimes distinguished from the other faces by elaboration of architectural or ornamental details.

- **Primary facade** refers to a facade fronting a street or a public thoroughfare that is not a street such as a mews or a court; a visible facade with a level of design or significant architectural features commensurate with the building's street-fronting facades but does not front a street, such as a setback facade or part of a dominant massing element where at least one facade is street-fronting or street-facing, such as a tower element; and a facade with a primary entrance to the building.
- **Secondary facade** refers to a facade that does not front on a street or a public thoroughfare and does not possess significant architectural features commensurate with the street-fronting facade.

Historic Cast Stone
is a cement-based matrix (a mixture of water, sand, coarse aggregate, and cementing agents) molded or "cast" into shapes that mimic the color, texture, profile, and details of natural stone.

In-Kind Replacement
refers to replacing a material with a new material of the same type as the original or historic material, e.g., using a new piece of limestone to replace an original or historic piece of limestone.

Masonry
refers to a variety of different building materials that are made of stone or fired clay units. The term can be used to describe natural stone, cast stone (historic and modern), brick, and terra cotta.

Modern Cast Stone
refers to modern building materials that include precast concrete, which consists of colored concrete molded and cured in a controlled environment; glass fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC), consisting of a concrete matrix embedded with glass fibers; glass fiber reinforced plastic (GFRP), consisting of a plastic matrix embedded with glass fibers; and microcotta, a polymer-based composite resin material intended to imitate terra cotta.

Mortar
is a mixture of water, aggregate (typically sand), lime, and, in most cases, cement. Ingredients are mixed together to form a paste that is used to bond building materials such as brick and stone.

Natural Stone
is a construction term for building material that is quarried from the earth. Various types of natural stone were used on historic buildings, most commonly sandstone, limestone, marble, and granite.

Patching Compound
is a mixture of water, cement, and minerals used to repair damaged or missing portions of natural stone, cast stone, or terra cotta. The mixture is typically tinted to match the color of the original or historic masonry, and can be molded and shaped to match the masonry's profile and texture. Care must be taken to use a patching product that does not contain latex, acrylic, or other bonding agents, additives, or modifiers and is appropriate for use on historic materials.

Physical and Aesthetic Characteristics
are the tangible attributes of materials and features, such as design, detail, profile, dimension, material, texture, dressing, color, or finish.

Pinning
is a method of anchoring that uses pieces of stainless steel or galvanized metal to secure one item to another. Pins can be used in conjunction with patching compounds and Dutchman repairs, as well as to re-secure loose pieces of original or historic masonry.

Repointing
is the process of removing old mortar and installing new mortar. Replacing deteriorated mortar helps ensure the building stays watertight.

Resurfacing
is the process of repairing large areas of deteriorated sandstone (specifically brownstone). See *Section C, Resurfacing Procedure and Stucco Recipe*.

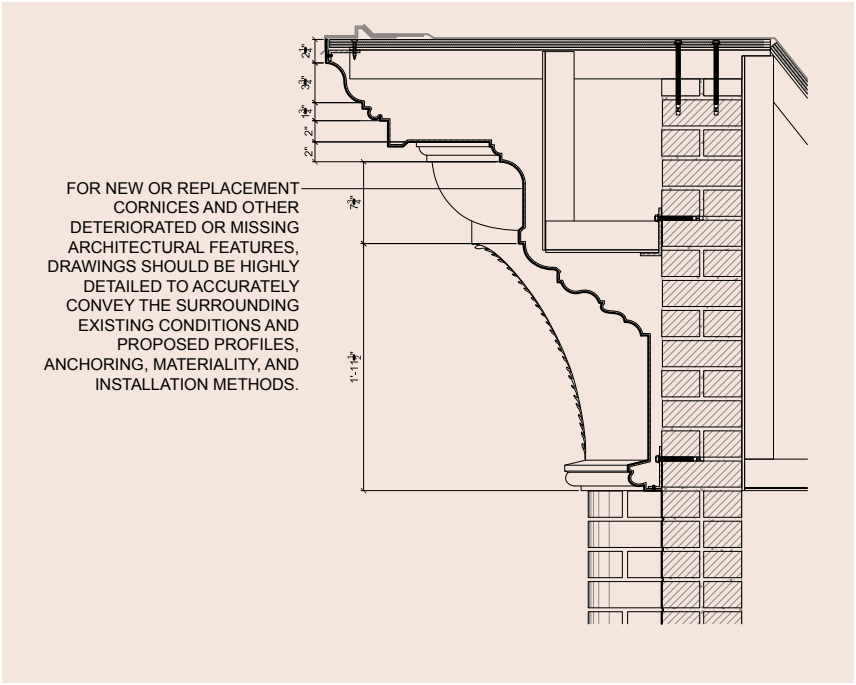
Substitute Material
A material with a substance made of something other than the original or historic material, but one that matches its dimensions, profiles, texture, color, and finish, e.g., using a piece of precast concrete to replace a piece of original or historic limestone.

Terra Cotta
is unglazed or glazed fired clay used for architectural purposes. A terra cotta "biscuit" is a piece of unglazed terra cotta. Glazed terra cotta has been coated with a type of liquid glass that hardens during the firing (baking) process and forms a protective layer on the clay. Glaze can be colored or clear, and sometimes features a special texture or pattern.

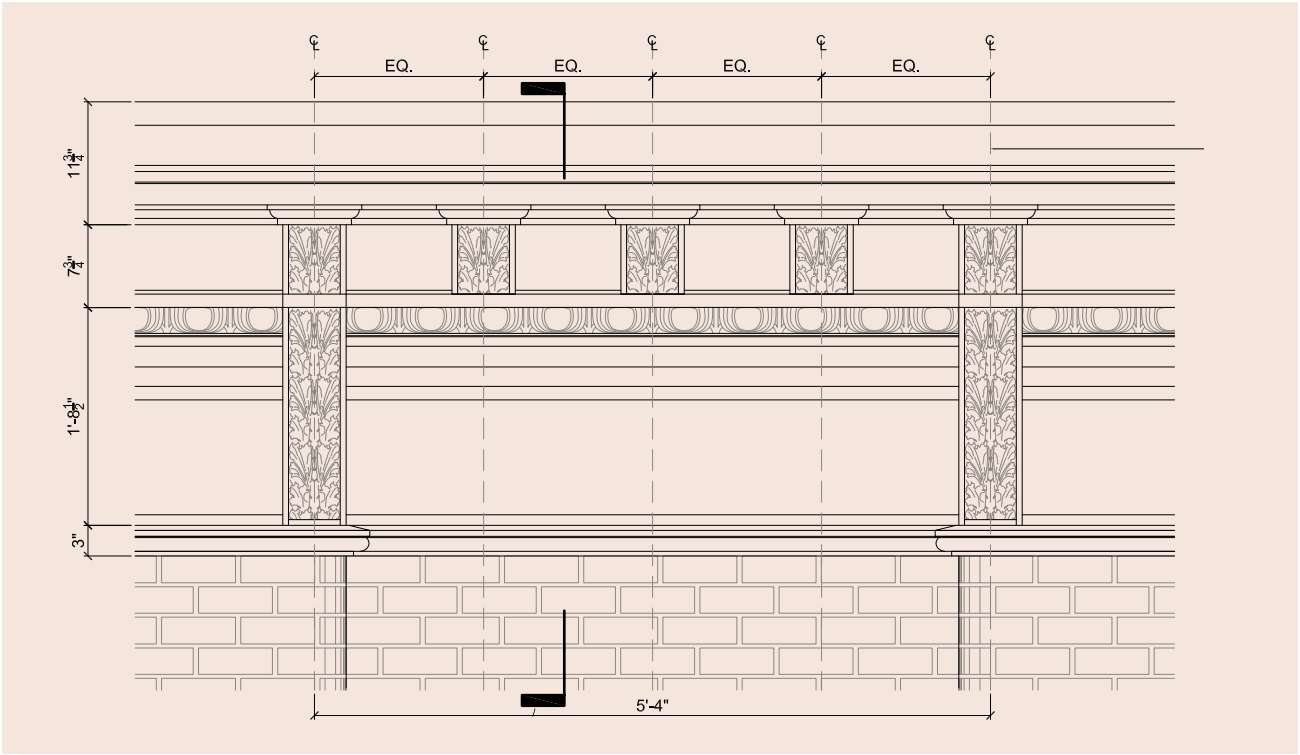
Tooling
is the process by which natural stone is cut with chisels and hammers to form surface textures and profiles.

Shop Drawings

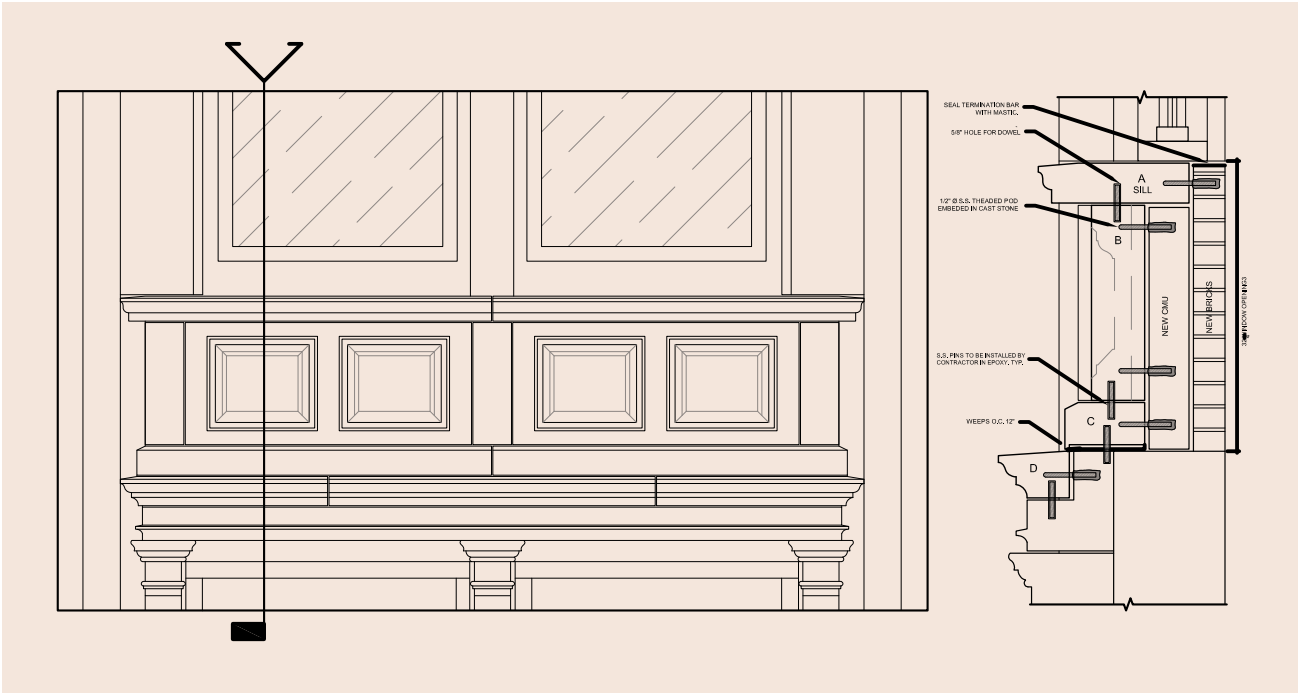
Shop drawings (a drawing or set of drawings produced by a contractor, supplier, manufacturer, or fabricator) are often required as a condition of approval once LPC has issued a permit since it is sometimes only possible to take accurate dimensions of facade features once scaffolding has been erected. Shop drawings must be provided to staff prior to any manufacturing or installation, if requested. In some cases, staff may require shop drawings before your permit is issued.



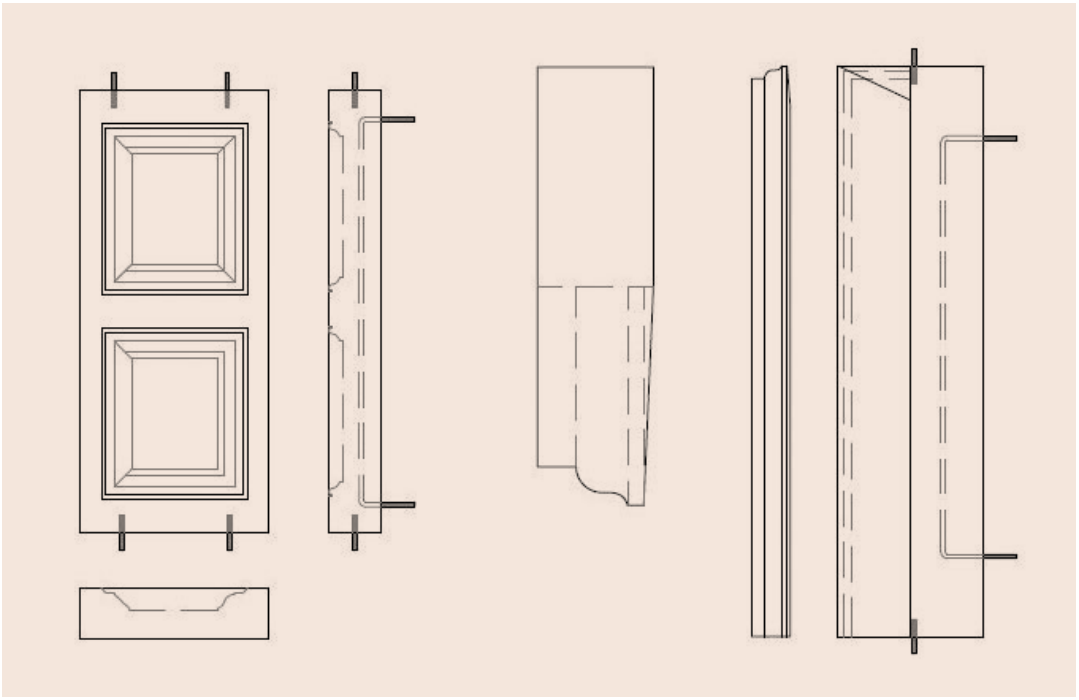
Vertical section shop drawing of a proposed cornice.



Elevation shop drawing of a proposed cornice.



Elevation and vertical sections illustrating proposed masonry unit replacement.



These drawings illustrate individual masonry units.

Sample Review

Samples of materials, methods, and finishes may be required for review and approval prior to commencement of your work. Email or mail color photos of prepared samples to LPC staff, along with a memo detailing the scope of work and materials depicted. A site visit by staff may be necessary in order to review samples in person. **Work may not commence or proceed until LPC staff has approved required samples.**

A sample review of potential bricks and mortar.

Sample reviews most commonly include:

- Cleaning methods and products.
- Raking/cutting and repointing masonry joints.
- Masonry repairs (patching, Dutchman, etc.).
- Sandstone resurfacing.
- Replacement materials, e.g., brick.

Guidelines for Sample Review

Prior to installing a mock-up, the historic materials surrounding or adjacent to it must be lightly cleaned to ensure accurate assessment.

Clearly identify the mock-up or sample review area on the building, either with drawings or annotated photos.

Identify the cleaning product and product number being issued.

Patching and repointing mock-ups are reviewed for color, texture, and profile, so prepare your samples as they will appear when finished. Ensure that temperature-sensitive materials have been installed under the correct conditions and sufficiently cured. (Temperature must remain a constant 45 degrees or above for a period of 72 hours after installation.)

For masonry replacement, mock-ups must be installed in the historic masonry where feasible, at locations where repair is needed, and photographed next to the historic materials they are intended to match.

Always provide at least two sample options for review, e.g., multiple mortar or patching compound colors, a range of brick colors and blends, etc.

High-quality photographs of each sample are required, including, but not limited to, photographs of the overall facade and overall mock-up area; close-ups of mock-ups and historic materials; and close-ups that detail texture, finish, etc. Images from Google Street View are not accepted.

Take photos in both bright sunlight and in shade.

Prior to submitting, make sure your photos are of high resolution so staff can evaluate texture and color. Annotate photos, as necessary, to clearly identify materials to be reviewed — especially if multiple materials are shown.

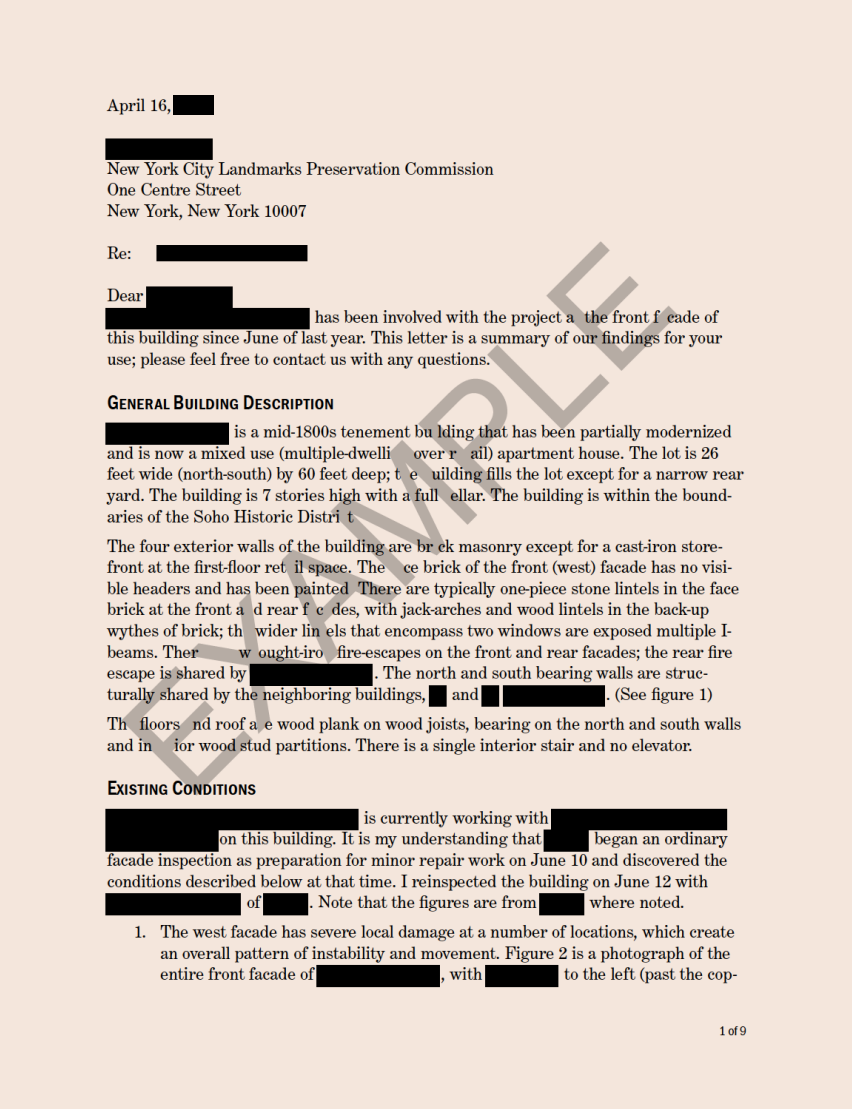
Prior to accepting samples, staff may request additional photos, information, and/or a site visit.

Conditions Report / Assessment

When replacement is proposed for large quantities of materials or significant architectural features (such as cornices), you must provide a conditions report or assessment of deteriorated conditions that warrant replacement. In some cases, probes are required in combination with the conditions report.

Your report must include:

- High-quality photographs showing locations of proposed work.
- Identification of the type of materials, e.g., wood, limestone, brick, terra cotta.
- Written statements that assess conditions.



April 16, [redacted]

[redacted]
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street
New York, New York 10007

Re: [redacted]

Dear [redacted] has been involved with the project a the front f cade of this building since June of last year. This letter is a summary of our findings for your use; please feel free to contact us with any questions.

General Building Description

[redacted] is a mid-1800s tenement bu lding that has been partially modernized and is now a mixed use (multiple-dwelli over r ail) apartment house. The lot is 26 feet wide (north-south) by 60 feet deep; t e uilding fills the lot except for a narrow rear yard. The building is 7 stories high with a full ellar. The building is within the boundaries of the Soho Historic Distri t

The four exterior walls of the building are br ck masonry except for a cast-iron storefront at the first-floor ret il space. The ce brick of the front (west) facade has no visible headers and has been painted There are typically one-piece stone lintels in the face brick at the front a d rear f c des, with jack-arches and wood lintels in the back-up wythes of brick; th wider lin els that encompass two windows are exposed multiple I-beams. Ther w ought-iro fire-escapes on the front and rear facades; the rear fire escape is shared by [redacted]. The north and south bearing walls are structurally shared by the neighboring buildings, [redacted] and [redacted]. (See figure 1)

Th floors nd roof a e wood plank on wood joists, bearing on the north and south walls and in ior wood stud partitions. There is a single interior stair and no elevator.

Existing Conditions

[redacted] is currently working with [redacted] on this building. It is my understanding that [redacted] began an ordinary facade inspection as preparation for minor repair work on June 10 and discovered the conditions described below at that time. I reinspected the building on June 12 with [redacted] of [redacted]. Note that the figures are from [redacted] where noted.

1. The west facade has severe local damage at a number of locations, which create an overall pattern of instability and movement. Figure 2 is a photograph of the entire front facade of [redacted], with [redacted] to the left (past the cop-

1 of 9

An example of a conditions assessment report.

Investigative Probes

To assess the current condition of building materials and systems, staff can approve select intrusive investigative work or probes. These methods can also be used for discovery and documentation of hidden historic materials in connection with an anticipated or open application for work, or for an approval that has been granted.

LPC requires that:

- No more material than necessary be removed to discover underlying conditions or to make a mold for replication. Where possible, removal is limited to non-character-defining features and materials.
- Probes or removals be performed in unobtrusive locations.
- Temporary protection of the probe area be provided.
- Where original material is removed in connection with a probe, it be reinstalled to match the original condition, or, if necessary, replaced in-kind.
- For removals in connection with making a mold for replication, the original fabric be reinstalled or adequate protective measures taken to ensure that the facade is kept watertight until reinstallation or replacement of the feature is complete.

Example of a minor probe. A very small portion was carefully removed to determine the condition of the underlying material. This type of probe would not require a permit.

Example of a major investigative probe that would require a permit.

Mortar Analysis Report

If a substantial amount of the facade at an individual landmark or a building subject to a special permit (Modification of Use and Bulk) is being repointed, an analysis report of the original/ historic mortar is required. The analysis must investigate the type and contents of the original mortar to create specifications for the replacement mortar. Please consult with staff for further guidance.

Soft Mortar Recipe for Repointing Brick Facade

- 1 part white Portland cement
- 2 1/ 2 parts lime
- 5-6 parts sand

Parts are noted by volume. Mix dry ingredients first, then add potable water. Use dry pigments (natural or synthetic stable oxide pigments) to tint or color mortar. Thoroughly mix all ingredients.

Mixing Tips

All measurements are parts by volume.

Combine dry ingredients, then mix with potable water.

When crushed stone is an insufficient color match, use dry pigments (natural or synthetic stable oxide pigments). Do not exceed recommended maximum amounts, as too much pigment can reduce strength and result in unstable color.

The best brownstone patching contains actual crushed stone. Consider using stone removed from the area being repaired or old stone with the same qualities. Crushed stone must be ground, passed through a 16-mesh screen, and thoroughly washed.

Resurfacing Procedure and Stucco Recipe

Preparation of the surface

Use a toothed chisel to cut back all deteriorated surfaces to be repaired to a sound base, removing all loose stone to provide a rough surface.

Mechanical keying

To create a mechanical key or holding mechanism for the patch, undercut edges of the patch to form a slight dovetail. Drill holes 1/2 inch in diameter and 1/2 inch deep, spaced 2-3 inches apart in staggered rows. Angles of holes must be varied.

Application of patching material: Proper application of patching material involves several steps.

Surface washing: Wash the prepared surface with water and a soft brush.

Slurry coat

Apply a thin slurry coat with a brush and rub vigorously into the surface.

The slurry coat consists of the following mix, by volume:

- 1 part white Portland cement
- 2 parts type S lime
- 6 parts sand
- Mix with water

Scratch coat

The first scratch coat must be pressed into the slurry coat while the slurry is still moist. Each scratch coat must be scored before initial drying to provide a key for following coats. No coat should exceed 3/8 inch in thickness. Allow 2-4 hours between scratch coat applications.

The scratch coat consists of the following mix, by volume:

- 1 part white Portland cement
- 1 part type S lime
- 6 parts sand
- Water for mixing

Finish coat

The finish coat is applied once the patch has been built up to the required thickness. This final coat is the only coat formulated to match the color and texture of the stone being repaired.

The finish coat consists of the following mix, by volume:

- 1 part white Portland cement
- 1 part type S lime
- 2-3 parts sand
- 3-4 parts crushed stone (of the same type being resurfaced)
- Dry pigments
- Water for mixing

All measurements are parts by volume.

All ingredients must be combined dry then mixed with potable water.

Use dry pigments (natural or synthetic stable oxide pigments) when crushed stone is not a sufficient color match. Do not exceed recommended maximum amounts, as too much pigment can reduce strength and result in unstable color. The best brownstone patching contains actual crushed stone. When possible, use stone removed from the area being repaired or old stone with the same qualities. Crushed stone must be ground, passed through a 16-mesh screen, and thoroughly washed.

Surface finishing

The surface must be finished to match the original stone tooling or existing condition. Possible surface treatments include damp sponging (stippling), dry toweling with a wooden float, and acid etching with diluted hydrofluoric acid. All treatments are executed while the patch is partially cured to leather hardness.

Chapter 2

Windows and Doors

In most historic buildings in New York City, windows, doors, and the architectural details surrounding them were carefully designed as integral components of the building's character and design. Their historic appearance and relationship to the building serve as the basis for LPC's rules for work involving the replacement and modification of windows and doors (see **LPC Rules**, Section 2-14, available on our website, www.nyc.gov/landmarks).

ⓘ

LPC encourages repairing or upgrading your historic windows. This chapter primarily covers the replacement of windows and doors. If you are looking for guidance on repairing or upgrading your historic windows, which LPC encourages, please see page 2.27 for best practices.

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

This chapter explains LPC's rules for the replacement and modification of windows and doors. Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to the LPC Rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

Section A
How to Get Started

ⓘ

Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the LPC Rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for your building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine how the LPC Rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find **construction date, architect and style, building and landmark type,** and a link to the **LPC designation report** with additional historical background.

What did it look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services NYC Municipal Archives Collections.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide**, Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

How big is it?
Verify **height and street frontage** to determine the size of your building. Requirements for replacement materials vary depending on building size.

See If Your Work Requires an LPC Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
A permit is not required for the following work types:

- Ordinary maintenance, repair, and retrofitting.
- Replacing window/door screens and glazing.
- Installing interior storm windows or clear films.
- Repainting windows or doors their existing color.
- Installing perimeter caulking, sealants, and weatherstripping.
- Repairing or replacing hardware such as hinges, knobs, pulley chains, and handles.
- Patching or straightening metal components and patching or partially rebuilding wood components; partially rebuilding wood window or door components.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

Consider Establishing a Master Plan

If you plan to to install replacement windows over time, apply for a master plan. A master plan provides the opportunity to incrementally perform work. Once you have a master plan, future applications that conform to it can be quickly reviewed since specific work standards are established and approved. This type of permit generally does not expire.

What You Will Need

A complete application typically requires the materials listed below, but additional materials may be required depending on the work type. See *Section B* for a list of all materials required for your work type.

Basic Application Materials

- **An LPC Permit Application Form,** filled out and signed by the property owner.
- **Color photos** of the entire building and close-ups of the windows / doors / openings that show location and context of proposed replacement or modification work.
- **Comparative drawings:**
  - Elevation of existing (if historic) and proposed windows and doors
  - Floor plans of locations of existing and proposed windows and doors
  - Section (horizontal and vertical) of existing (if historic) and proposed windows and doors at primary facades only
  - Details of existing (if historic) and proposed windows and doors at primary facades only
  - Comparative drawings that show any changes to the size of existing window and door openings or creation of new openings
- **Color specifications/ paint cards at visible facades only.**
- **Material specifications** at primary facades and special windows only.
- **If available, documentation to support matching historic windows and doors at visible facades only,** including historic photographs or drawings of your building or similar buildings.
- **An assessment of deteriorated conditions** is required for replacement of historic front doors, special windows / doors, and at individual landmarks only.
- **Two sets of Department of Buildings (DOB) filing drawings** if the proposed work requires a DOB permit.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules — or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. LPC staff can guide you through this process. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks for more information.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of work involving windows and doors. See LPC Rules, Section 2-14, for more information.

In This Section:

Windows

Replacing Windows at Primary Facades

Staff can approve new windows at primary facades if they match original or historic windows in terms of configuration, operation, details, materials, and finish. However, variations are permitted in certain situations. See *Acceptable Variations* below and on page 2.8.

Configuration

New windows must match the original design in terms of number, shape, organization, and relationship of panes (lights) of glass, mullions, and muntins. Check historic tax photos to determine historic window configuration.

Operation

New windows must open, close, and function generally in the same manner as historic windows, e.g., casement or double-hung. Variations are acceptable, depending on type. See *Acceptable Variations* below.

Details

New window details — the dimensions and contours of stationary and movable portions of windows and moldings — must be as dimensionally close to historic window details as possible.

Materials

New windows must generally match historic windows. Exceptions are allowed based on the size of the building and window type:

For small buildings classified by LPC as six stories or less with street frontage of 40 feet or less, if original windows had a one-over-one configuration, replacements may be made of other alternative materials.

Other materials, including wood, metal, or fiberglass (but not vinyl), may be used for windows and brick molds.

For large buildings, classified by LPC as seven or more stories or with street frontage of more than 40 feet, replacement windows may be made of other alternative materials.

Other materials, including wood, metal, or fiberglass (but not vinyl), may be used for windows and brick molds.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos** of windows to be replaced.
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans or elevations** showing location of windows.
- ☐ **Comparative window elevation** for each proposed window type, and historic windows, if they exist, to show configuration.
- ☐ **Comparative vertical and horizontal section drawings** of proposed windows, and historic windows, if they exist, to show details.
  - – Large-scale detail drawings of heads, jambs, sills, meeting rails, mullions, muntins, and brick molds
  - – Glazing calculations may be required to ensure historic framing and glazing proportions are maintained. See *Technical Guidance and Resources* for more on how to calculate glazing
- ☐ **Material specifications on drawings.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**
- ☐ **Conditions assessment** for special windows and historic windows at individual landmarks. See *Technical Guidance and Resources* for how to conduct a conditions assessment.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

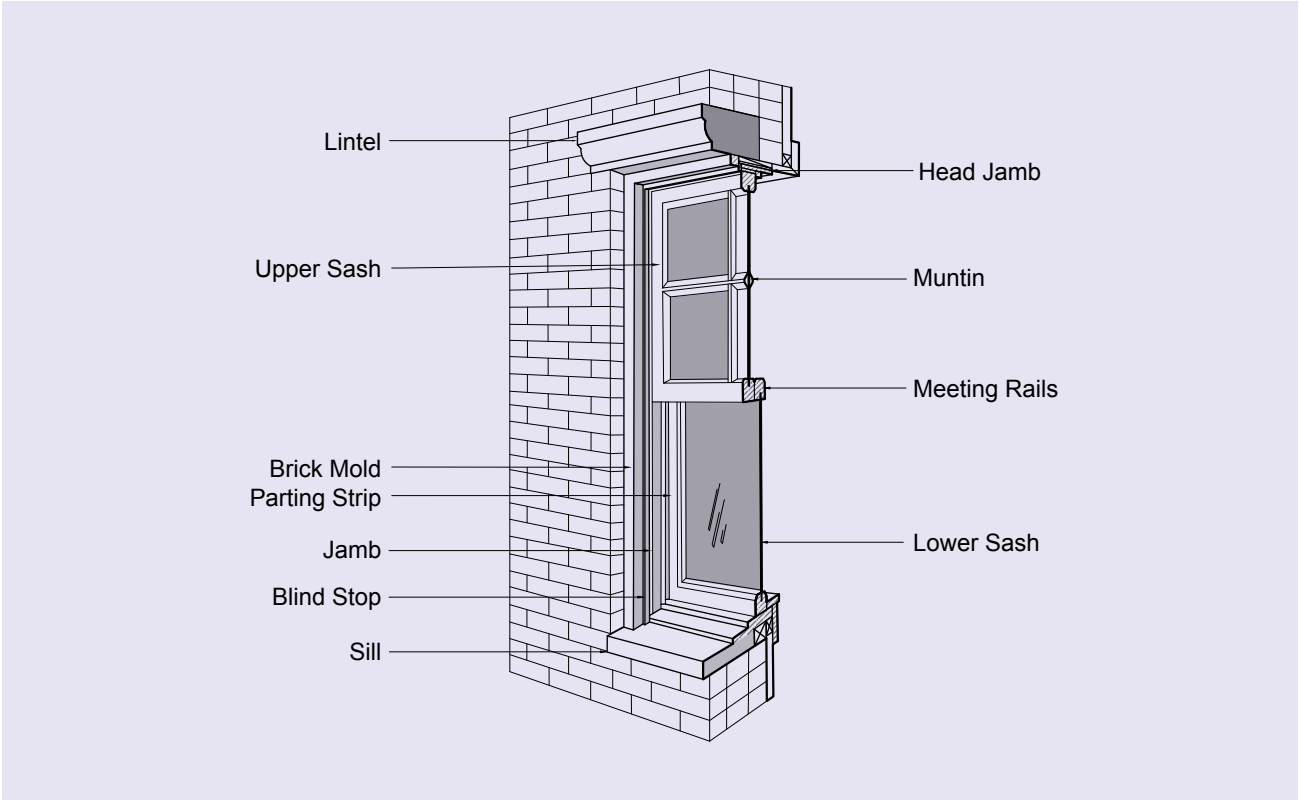


Diagram showing the individual elements that make up double-hung a window within a masonry opening.

Note: The exceptions above do not apply to individual landmarks or buildings with special windows.

Finish

New windows must be painted to match visual characteristics of historic windows, including color, texture, and reflectivity of all exterior materials. See *Chapter 1, Restoration*, for a chart of historically accurate colors by building style.

Acceptable Variations

Variations in operation, details, and materials may be permitted in certain situations. This provides some flexibility when matching historic windows.

Operation

The following are acceptable variations in operation:

The upper sash of a double-hung window or transom window may be fixed or non-operable, even if it was historically operable. The direction of the swing (i.e., outward or inward) of a casement, awning, or hopper window may be changed.

A pivot window may be changed to hinged operation if it matches orientation of the pivot operation (i.e., outward or inward), except at individual landmarks.

Installation of high-performance simulated double-hung windows (passive house windows) at buildings in historic districts is another acceptable variation. This type of window is typically part of an intensive building-wide energy efficiency program, using energy-efficient frames and sashes with triple glazing, high insulation values, and minimal air leakage. Typical modern double-hung windows and retrofitted older windows cannot match their performance.

Appearance of the window must simulate a double-hung window, but operation of the upper sash is fixed and lower sash changed to hinged operation for ventilation.

Details must closely match the historic double-hung window, but additional dimensional tolerances (typically deeper sashes and frames) are permitted to accommodate thicker insulated glazing and a change in operation at the lower sash.

Since this type of window slightly differs in appearance from historic windows, all windows on a primary facade (excluding special windows) must be replaced at the same time to ensure a uniform aesthetic.

Details (including muntins, mullions, and brick molds)

The following are acceptable variations in details:

Variations that do not significantly affect appearance. New windows, however, must be installed in approximately the same plane as historic windows.

Due to variations in materials and details, the glazing area of new windows can be decreased by up to 10 percent for historic metal windows and 6 percent for historic wood windows (see *Technical Guidance and Resources* on how to calculate a glazing decrease). Further variations in percentages exist for certain window types due to their small size or muntin pattern, or due to code requirements (see *Section C* for more information on how to calculate glazing diminution).

Simulated divided light (SDL) muntins can be used instead of true divided light muntins, as long as exterior muntins match materials and are permanently secured to the frame, and spacers

The operation of a pivot window may be changed to hinged.

A high-performance simulated double-hung window with its lower sash tilted in is an acceptable variation in window operation.

A double-hung replacement window with simulated divided light muntins, featuring exterior and interior muntins, and spacers within the double glazing.

exist between multiple layers of glass and interior muntins.

Large residential and commercial buildings in historic districts only require exterior muntins.

Materials

The following are acceptable variations in materials:

A historic wood window can be replaced with wood of any species.

A historic metal window can be replaced in a different metal, including a metal-clad window with a non-metal substrate. Staff will determine whether special windows require an exact match with original materials.

A steel casement window (left) and a fiberglass replacement window (right).

If a historic transom window originally or historically had stained or leaded glass but was removed prior to historic district designation, the replacement can be clear glass or recall the stained/leaded glass window.

What if an opening at the primary facade has been altered from its historic condition?

While a majority of windows on primary facades are installed in existing historic openings, some single and multiple openings have been modified, e.g., removal of a stoop and installation of a window within a modified opening; window openings related to fire escapes.

New windows at these locations must be designed to follow the general criteria for primary facades. This includes modifying the height and width of existing non-original openings or introducing new architectural features surrounding openings, such as moldings around lintels and sills (except at individual landmarks).

Staff determines whether the proposed window is harmonious with the existing fenestration and facade.

Historic photos and existing physical evidence at the building or other buildings within a row must be reviewed to determine how and when the facade was altered.

Before, left: A multi-light casement window in a non-original opening.

After, right: A replacement double-hung one-over-one window that is harmonious with the existing fenestration.

Replacing Windows at Visible Secondary Facades

Criteria for replacing windows at a visible secondary facade are less restrictive. For staff to approve new windows, they only need to match the **configuration and finish of historic windows at the facade**. This ensures a consistent appearance at visible building facades. Thus, new windows do not have to match the material, operation, or detail of the historic windows.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos** of windows to be replaced.
- ☐ **Existing or proposed annotated floor plans and elevations** that show window locations.
- ☐ **Comparative window elevations** for each proposed window type and historic windows, if they exist.
- ☐ **Color samples.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Replacing Windows at Non-Visible Secondary Facades

If the facade is minimally or non-visible and the window is not a special window, staff can approve new windows of any configuration, operation, material, or finish installed within the existing opening without reviewing details.

New windows can also be installed in conjunction with reducing or enlarging an opening. See *Modifying Window Openings and Creating New Window Openings at Visible Secondary Facades* below.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos** of window to be replaced.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans or site plans** to show that the location is not visible.
- ☐ **Window elevations or catalog cut sheets** for each proposed window type.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

What does "minimally visible" mean when replacing or modifying windows and doors?

A window or door is considered minimally visible if it is seen at such an angle that its configuration cannot be recognized, or only a small portion of the facade can be seen through a gap in the street wall and is visually disconnected from the building's primary facade.

The windows indicated, located deep in the block at an oblique angle, would be considered "minimally visible".

Modifying Window Openings and Creating New Window Openings at Visible Secondary Facades

Staff can approve modifying or creating new window openings at visible secondary facades if they meet the following criteria:

New or modified openings must match the same general shape and pattern of existing window openings on the facade.

If there are no existing openings, new openings must be a size and shape that forms the basis for a consistent pattern.

Number, size, and placement of new window openings must maintain the high solid-to-void ratio typically found at secondary facades of historic buildings, where sizeable areas of masonry separate window openings without large expanses of glazing.

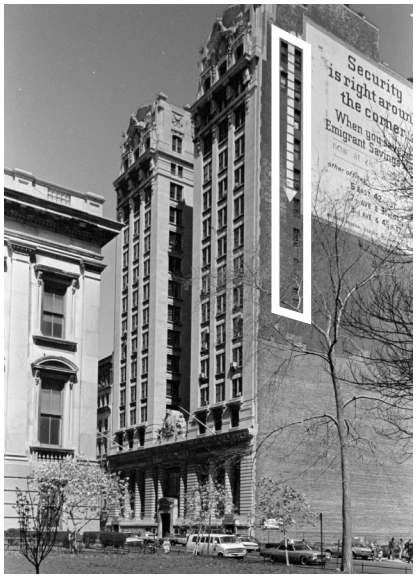
If the building is a rowhouse, mansion, detached house, semi-detached house, or carriage house, new window openings at secondary facades can only be approved if, together with existing openings:

No more than one window opening exists on a secondary facade of less than 20 feet.

Up to two window openings if the facade is 21–40 feet.

Up to three window openings if the facade is more than 40 feet.

New window openings created at the secondary facade match the shape, size, and pattern of the existing windows and openings.



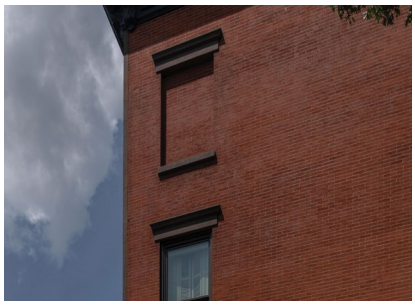
Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos** of windows to be modified.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans and elevations** that show locations.
- ☐ **Comparative window elevations** for each proposed window type to be modified and the historic window, if it exists.
- ☐ **Color samples.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Can window openings be filled in at a secondary facade?

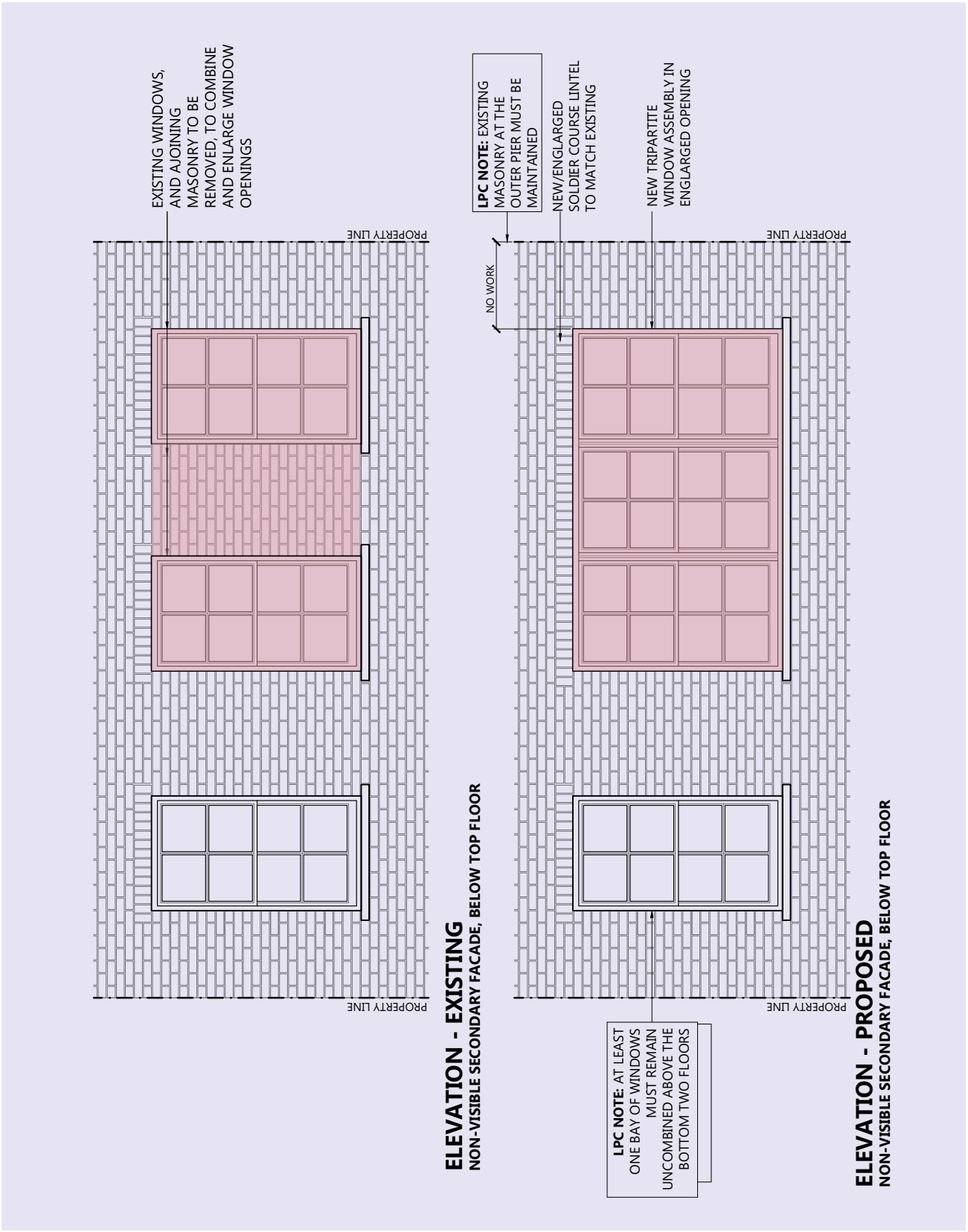
Window openings at most locations can be filled in with a material that matches the surrounding material. For example, if the facade is brick, stucco, or wood, the window must be infilled with matching brick, stucco, or wood.



A filled-in window opening at a secondary facade.

If an original or historic window opening at a masonry facade is being filled in at a visible location, the presence of the former opening must be maintained by retaining the lintel and sill and infilling new masonry flush with or set slightly back from the plane of the facade. At a wood facade, simple trim work around the opening can be removed and the opening infilled with wood cladding to match the wood facade.

A sample drawing for combining window openings below the top floor at a non-visible secondary facade.



A sample drawing for combining window openings horizontally and vertically at the bottom two floors of a non-visible secondary facade.

Modifying Window Openings and Creating New Window Openings at Non-Visible Secondary Facades

Staff can approve modifying or creating new window openings at non-visible secondary facades if they meet the following criteria:

Windows and doors on non-visible facades on the same floor, with the exception of the top floor, can be enlarged or reduced in height and width.

Adjacent openings can be horizontally (but not vertically) combined, provided at least one bay of windows is not combined, with the exception of the top floor. For example, if the facade has three window or door openings, only two may be combined.

Outer masonry piers must be maintained and other mullions or muntins must subdivide the combined window. There must be at least 18 inches between the enlarged opening and windows above and below.

At the bottom two floor levels, all windows and doors can be combined and vertically span floors to create a single large opening.

The new combined opening at the bottom two floor levels must be designed to include the following:

At least 24 inches of masonry or wall cladding at outer piers.

A spandrel or horizontal element of at least 12 inches that marks the location between floors.

Mullions or muntins that subdivide and break down the scale of the window assembly.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos** of windows to be modified.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans or site plans** that show location is not visible.
- ☐ **Comparative elevation** of existing conditions and proposed window type to be created.
- ☐ **Color samples,** if visible.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Can windows at upper floors of a rear facade be modified or combined?

As a general rule, top floor windows cannot be changed.

However, **one original window opening at the top floor of a rowhouse** can be lowered or widened to provide access to an approved or grandfathered balcony, terrace, or deck.

If openings have previously been altered, they can be enlarged or reduced to restore or more closely match the size of original top floor openings.

Doors

Replacing Doors at Primary Facades

Staff can approve new doors at primary facades if they meet the following criteria:

For a historic or special door, you must include a conditions assessment or report that confirms that the existing door is deteriorated beyond reasonable repair. Once staff has reviewed and accepted findings, a new door can be approved if it matches the historic door's **materials, operation, configuration, details, and finish.**

If the existing door is non-historic, the new door can be approved if it matches the historic door's **materials, operation and finish, and recalls but does not necessarily match the configuration and details of the historic door.** Look at historic doors on similar buildings for guidance.

If the door is at a large residential building, the new door must satisfy the above criteria. However, an alternative material can be used.

This replacement door recalls, but does not match, the historic door.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of the building facade.
- ☐ **Photos** of doors proposed for replacement.
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available.
- ☐ **Comparative door elevation for each proposed door type and historic door,** if it exists.
- ☐ **Comparative vertical and horizontal section drawings of proposed door and historic door,** if it exists.
  - – Large-scale detail drawings of head, jamb, sill, glazing, paneling, and molding
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**
- ☐ **Conditions assessment** for historic or special doors. See *Technical Guidance and Resources* for more on how to conduct a conditions assessment.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Replacing Doors, Modifying Door Openings, and Creating New Door Openings at Secondary Facades

Staff can approve replacing doors, modifying existing door openings, and creating new door openings at visible and non-visible secondary facades consistent with windows criteria laid out in this chapter.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos** of door to be replaced or modified.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans and elevations** that show locations.
- ☐ **Comparative elevations** for each door to be replaced (if visible) or modified, showing the existing condition and proposed change.
- ☐ **Color samples.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Entrances

Replacing Entrance Infill

Staff can approve replacing entrance infill — the assembly of doors, transoms, sidelights, spandrels, and other framing elements — at existing entrance openings that include more than a single or paired door. This applies to primary and secondary entries for lobbies, vestibules, service areas, and egress at buildings in historic districts where no significant historic materials exist. For replacement of storefront infill, please refer to Section 2-12 of the LPC Rules since different rules and criteria apply to storefronts.

New entrance infill must meet the following criteria:

Design

Materials, details, finish, and configuration must be based on historic entrance prototypes and details within the specific historic district for buildings of similar age, type, and style.

If your application includes removal of modern cladding (non-historic materials and finishes) at the entrance surround and/or infill, probes must be performed to see if historic materials, such as original wood or metal moldings or stone or cast iron elements, exist behind modern cladding. Probes entail removing portions of cladding to expose underlying elements for evaluation.

If a significant portion of the historic entrance surround exists underneath cladding, the entrance surround must be restored according to criteria in Section 2-11 of the LPC Rules as part of your application. Staff makes this determination.

Proportions and framing details of doors, sidelights, and transoms must be consistent with historic entrance infill or Commission-approved entrance infill at your building.

Materials

If your building was constructed prior to 1900, the new infill material must match the historic infill, which was in most cases painted wood. If your building was constructed after 1900, the new infill material can be painted wood or metal, or match the historic material.

If the existing entrance opening is not original to your building, proposed work must maintain the existing entrance opening or modify the height and width of the existing opening to better recall the original opening or otherwise harmonize with the facade.

Orientation

New entrance infill must be installed parallel to your building's sidewalk. It must be set back from the face of the existing entrance surround by four or more inches to avoid concealing significant architectural features.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos** of entrance infill to be replaced.
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans or elevations.**
- ☐ **Comparative entrance infill elevations and historic entrance infill,** if it exists.
- ☐ **Comparative vertical and horizontal section drawings of proposed and historic entrance infill,** if it exists.
  - – Large-scale detail drawings of doors, sidelights, transom, mullions, moldings, and other elements
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**
- ☐ **Conditions assessment** of historic or special doors and other historic features.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Special Windows and Doors

Windows and doors are considered "special" when they possess rare or distinctive features or represent a unique typology, such as stained glass, bronze frames, or curved sashes. All windows dating to 1850 or earlier are also considered special.

Characteristics of Special Windows and Doors

LPC has five categories for special windows and doors, characterized as follows:

A rare shape and distinctive pattern, including but not limited to square sash with complex arched paneling; diamond, round, and oval sash; sash with intersecting curved muntins; multi-light sash or door leafs with densely gridded window panes of 30 square inches or less; and arch-headed doors.

Distinctive glazing, including but not limited to leaded, stained, etched, textured, and curved.

Fine craftsmanship and/or distinctive materials, including bronze, brass, nickel, silver, cast metal, and elaborate carved woodwork.

Unique typology, including curved sash, bi-folding sash, operable true arch-headed double-hung or casement sash, and monumental window or door assemblies.

Age, including original windows at buildings constructed prior to 1850.

Not Considered Special Windows and Doors

Unless otherwise classified as a special window or special door, the following window and glass types and materials **are not considered** special windows or special doors:

A square sash with simple arched paneling, e.g., half-round arch, elliptical arch, quarter-round arch, pointed arch; a fixed or operable sash in simple arched transoms; a sash with simply curved muntins; a multi-light sash or door leafs with large panes of more than 30 square inches.

Clear or frosted glazing.

Copper or other sheet metal, kalamein, rolled steel, or extruded aluminum.

A pivot sash, French doors, and casements.

Replacing Special Windows and Doors

Special windows and doors must be preserved whenever possible. There are a range of approaches to repairing and retrofitting special windows and doors; these options must be explored prior to proposing replacement (see *Chapter 2, Restoration*, for more information). Staff can approve

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos** of windows or doors to be replaced.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans or elevations** that show locations.
- ☐ **Comparative window elevations** for each proposed window type and the historic window, if it exists.
- ☐ **Comparative vertical and horizontal section drawings** of the proposed window and the historic window, if it exists.
  - – Large-scale detail drawings of head, jamb, sill, meeting rail, mullions, muntins, and brick molds
  - – Glazing calculations may be required to ensure that historic framing and glazing proportions are maintained. See *Technical Guidance and Resources* for more on how to calculate glazing
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**
- ☐ **Conditions assessment** of historic or special doors and other historic features. See *Technical Guidance and Resources* for more on conditions assessments.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

replacing special windows and doors if they match original or historic windows and doors in terms of configuration, operation, details, materials, and finish, plus the following criteria:

Your application must include a conditions assessment or report confirming that existing historic special windows or doors are deteriorated beyond reasonable repair.

The report must be prepared by a qualified professional (e.g., a window conservator or preservation architect) or contractor with preservation experience. See *Section C* for more information.

Once staff has reviewed and accepted findings of the assessment or report, new windows or doors can be approved if they match historic special windows and doors in terms of **materials, operation, configuration, details, and finish.**

A window that is special only due to its glazing, such as stained glass, can be removed and the special glazing reinstalled in a new window that matches criteria for replacement of non-special windows.

Special window featuring leaded stained glazing.

Special window featuring an arched casement sash and curved muntins.

Original windows that date from 1850 or earlier are special windows.

Special window featuring curved sash and glazing, an example of a unique typology.

Special door featuring fine craftsmanship and elaborate carved woodwork.

Can a special window at a secondary facade be replaced with a different type of window?

No. Staff is not allowed to approve replacing special windows with another type of window. Even if the window is located at a visible or non-visible secondary facade, special windows must still be retained or replaced in-kind (if deteriorated beyond repair).

Staff can approve removal and relocation of distinctive glazing of a special window at a non-visible or minimally visible secondary facade to a new window or new location on the facade.

Special window featuring complex corners at the upper sash.

A monumental special window and door assembly.

Special window featuring densely gridded multi-light and curved glass sashes with stained glass transoms.

Accessories

Installing accessories or add-ons such as interior or exterior storm windows, often in conjunction with repairing and retrofitting existing historic windows, can sometimes be just as effective as modern replacement windows in terms of improved energy efficiency and occupant comfort. Exterior screens and films can also be approved.

Installing Screens, Films, Storm Windows, and Storm Doors at Primary or Visible Secondary Facades

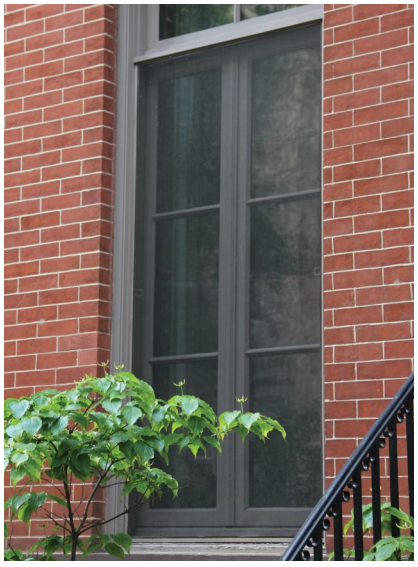
Add-ons such as screens, storm windows, and storm doors must fit tightly within openings without the need for additional panning around the perimeter, and be set as far back from the exterior wall plane as possible.

Add-ons must be made of wood, metal, or fiberglass in a painted finish that matches the color of the primary window or door frame, with clear glass or a screen.

If primary windows have mullions or meeting rails, exterior storm windows should match this configuration if the mullions or meeting rails are needed.

Films can be applied to the interior face of the glass and can be clear or translucent — or tinted in grayscale with no coloration. Only clear films can be used at special windows or doors.

The amount of applied films on a single facade must be limited so the character of the building's overall fenestration is not changed. For example, applied films limited to a bay of bathroom windows could be approved.



This window screen and track are set back from the facade and fit tightly in the window frame.

Required Application Materials

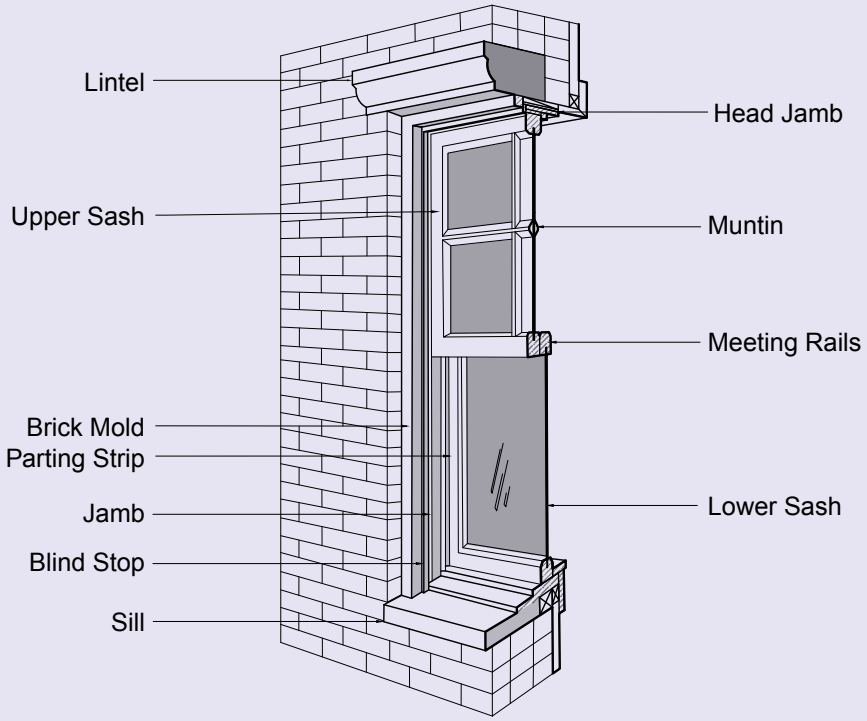
- ☐ **Photos** of primary building facades only.
- ☐ **Photos** of windows or doors affected.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans or elevations** that show locations.
- ☐ **Elevations** for each proposed type at primary facades only.
- ☐ **Vertical and horizontal section drawings** at primary facades only.
- ☐ **Catalog cut sheets.**
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples at visible facades only.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Section C
Technical Guidance and Resources

In This Section:

Glossary



Brick Mold
is the molding, usually wooden, that covers the gap between the window frame and the opening into which the window is set.

Casing
is the molding surrounding the window jamb, usually seen on the exterior on frame buildings.

Configuration
is the number, shape, organization, and relationship of panes (lights) of glass, sash, frame, muntins, or tracery.

Details
are the dimensions and contours of both the stationary and moveable portions of a window or door, and moldings.

Dutchman
is a repair technique for replacing small sections of a damaged material with new material that matches the original material.

Existing Windows
are the windows existing at the time of designation or windows that have been changed subsequent to designation pursuant to a permit issued by the Commission.

Finish
refers to the visual characteristics, including color, texture, and reflectivity, of all exterior materials.

French Door or French Window
is a tall casement window that reaches to the floor, usually arranged in two leaves as a double door.

Head
is the upper horizontal part of a window frame or window opening.

Historic Windows
- Windows installed at time of construction of the building; or
- windows of a type installed at time of construction of similar buildings in similar periods and styles; or
- windows installed at time of major facade alterations 30 or more years ago.

Jamb
refers to the side parts of a window.

Leaded Window
is a window composed of small panes, usually diamond-shaped or rectangular, held in place by narrow strips of cast lead.

Lintel
is a horizontal structural element over an opening that carries the weight of the wall above it.

Large Buildings
are seven or more stories in height or have a street frontage of more than 40 feet. This includes large apartment buildings and hotels; large commercial and loft buildings, including cast-iron fronted buildings, department stores, banks and office buildings; and other building types.

Lights / Glazing / Panes
are the glass that makes up the transparent portion of a window.

Match
is either an exact or approximate replication. If not an exact replication, the approximate replication shall be so designed as to achieve a suitable, harmonious, and balanced result.

Materials
are the substances used to fabricate the various elements and details of a building (e.g., wood, steel).

Minimally Visible
A window or door is considered "minimally visible" if it is located on a secondary facade that is seen at such an angle that the configuration of the window or door is not visible or is very difficult to discern, or only a small portion of the facade is seen through a gap in the streetwall and is visually disconnected from the primary facade of the building.

Meeting Rail
is a sash rail in a double-hung window designed to interlock with an adjacent sash rail. It is the bottom horizontal member of the upper sash and the top member of the lower sash.

Mullion
is the thick vertical divider that separates paired or multiple windows within a single opening.

Muntin
is the narrow horizontal and vertical pieces that subdivide the glazing into individual panes or panels.

Operation
is the manner in which a window unit opens, closes, or functions. If non-operable, a window unit (such as a side light) is identified as "fixed."

- **Awning**
  Window sash that is hinged on the top.

- **Casement**
  A window sash that is hinged on the side.

- **Double-hung**
  A type of window with two sashes, each sliding on a vertical track.

- **French Casement**
  A tall casement window that reaches to the floor, usually arranged in two leaves as a double door.

- **Hopper**
  A window sash that is hinged on the bottom.

- **Pivot**
  A window sash that rotates around a fixed point at or near the center.

- **Tilt and Turn**
  A window sash that is hinged at the side and the bottom.

Panning
is an applied material, usually metal, that covers the front (exterior) surface of an existing window frame or mullion.

Parting Strip
is the small member, usually wood and usually removable, that separates the upper and lower sash pockets in the jamb of a double-hung window.

Primary Facade
can include a facade with a primary entrance to the building; a facade fronting a street or a public thoroughfare that is not a street, such as a mews or court; a visible facade that possesses a level of design or significant architectural features of the same quality as the building's street-fronting facade(s), and faces but does not front a street, such as a setback facade, or is part of a dominant massing element where at least one facade is fronting the street or facing the street, such as a tower element, or a facade with a primary entrance to the building.

Rail
is a horizontal sash member.

Sash
is the frame located inside the jamb that holds the glazing.

Secondary Facade
is all facades not considered Primary Facades (see definition above) are considered secondary facades for purposes of the LPC.

Sill
is the lower horizontal part of a window frame or window opening.

Small Buildings
are six stories or less in height and have a street frontage of 40 feet or less. These include rowhouses, townhouses, mansions, detached and semi-detached houses and carriage houses; small apartment buildings, tenements, and hotels; small utilitarian commercial and loft buildings; and other building types.

Stiles
are the vertical sash members.

Segmental Arch
is an arch that is in the form of a segment of a semicircle.

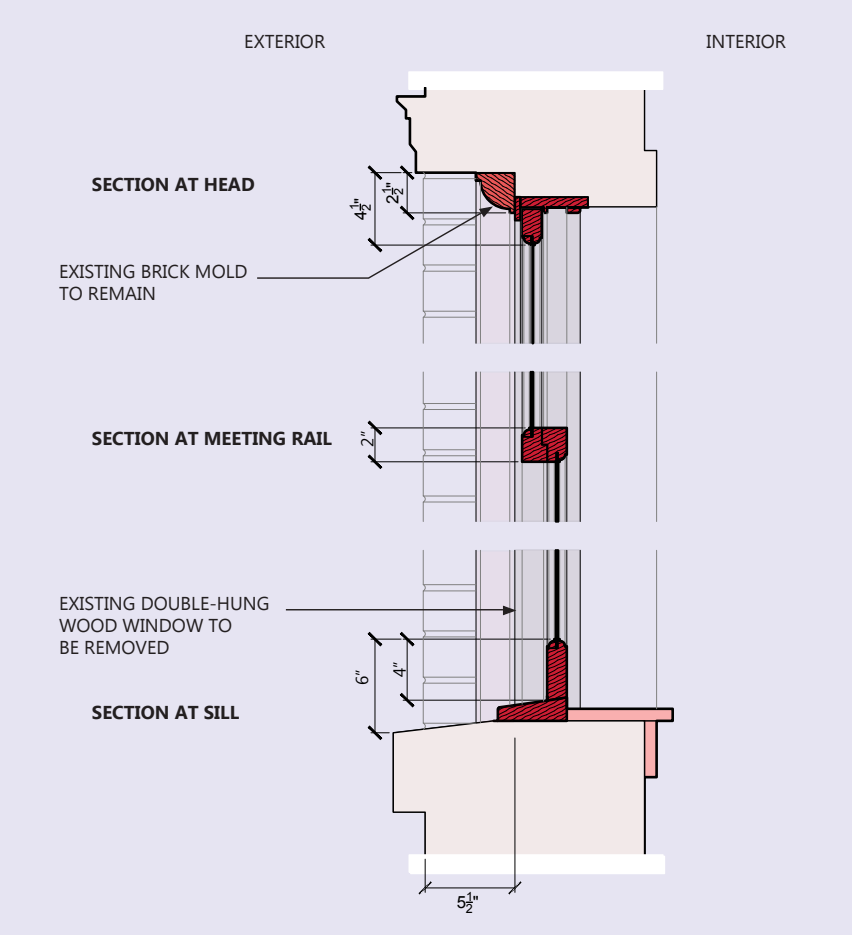
Subframe
is a secondary frame set within a masonry opening.

Surround
is the ornamental frame of a door or window.

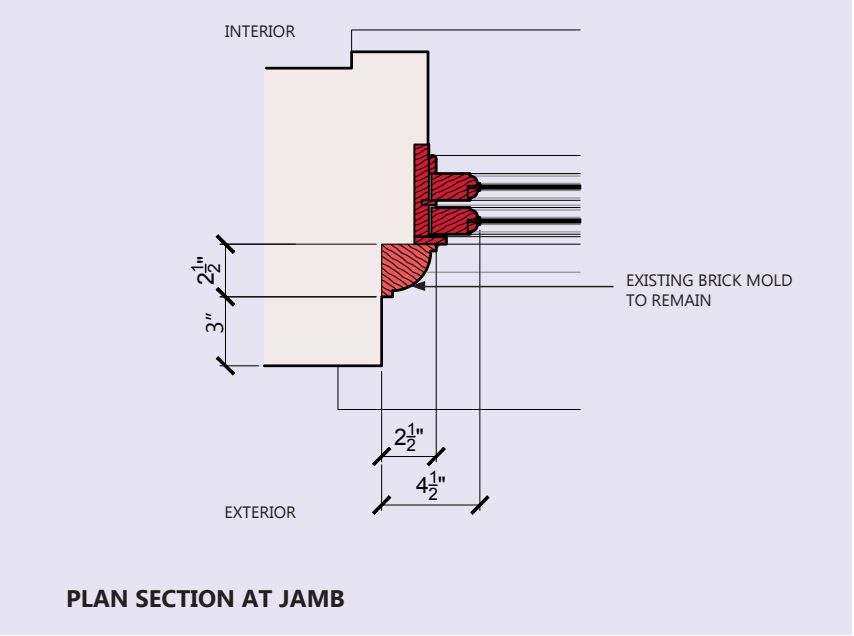
Transom
- A horizontal bar of wood or stone across a window.
- The cross-bar separating a door from the window, panel, or fanlight above it.
- The window above the transom bar of a door.
- The glazed area above a display window or door separated from the main window area or door by a transom bar.

Window Drawings

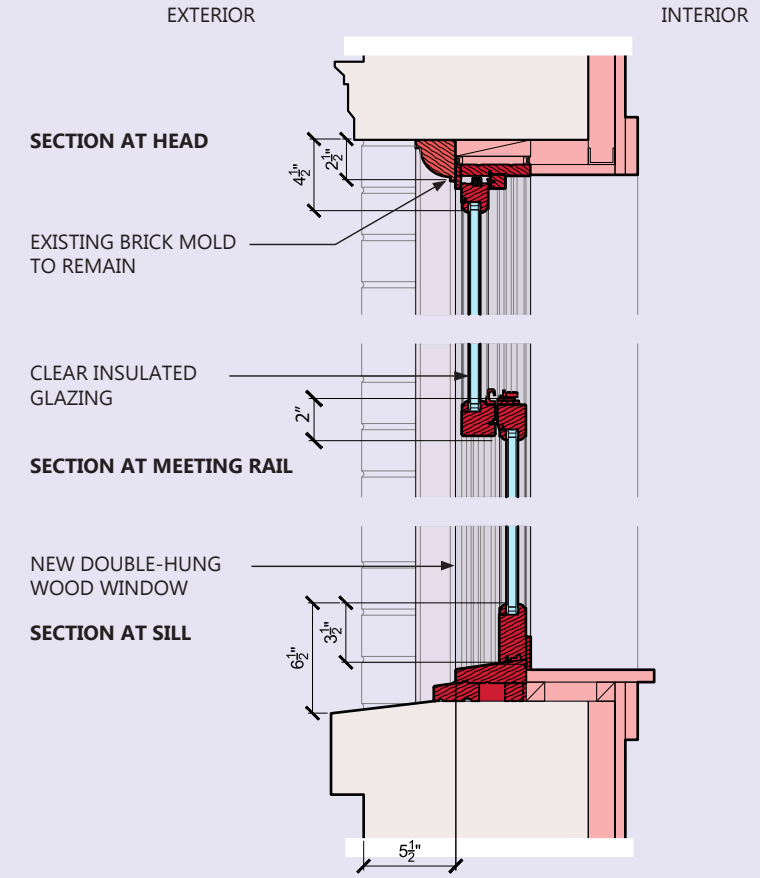
When applying to replace windows at a primary facade, submit detailed window drawings of existing historic windows and proposed new windows so staff can assess whether replacement windows or doors meet the criteria of the LPC Rules. All elevation, section, and detail drawings must be fully comparative for both existing (if historic) and proposed windows, with each unique type drawn. Existing (non-historic) windows do not need to be drawn. Examples of typical window drawings can be found on the following pages.



Vertical section drawing of a historic wood double-hung window and brick mold, with all required dimensions.

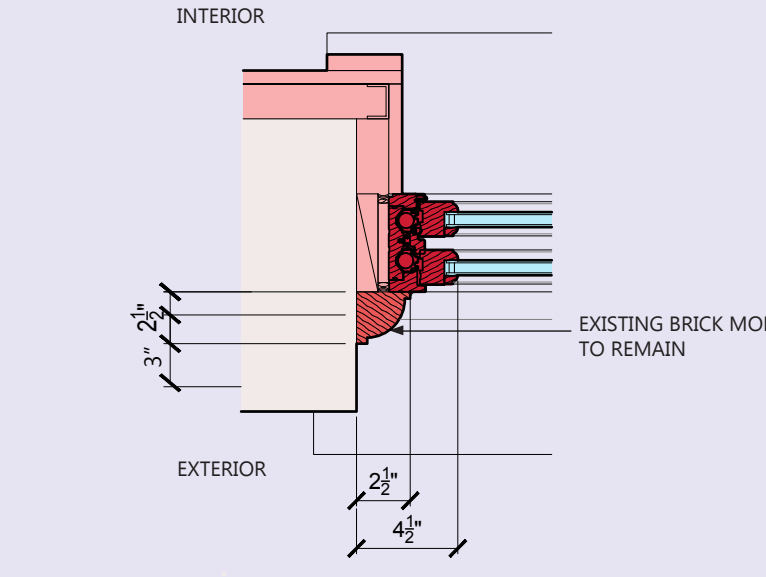


Horizontal section drawing at the jamb of a historic wood double-hung window and brick mold, with all required dimensions.



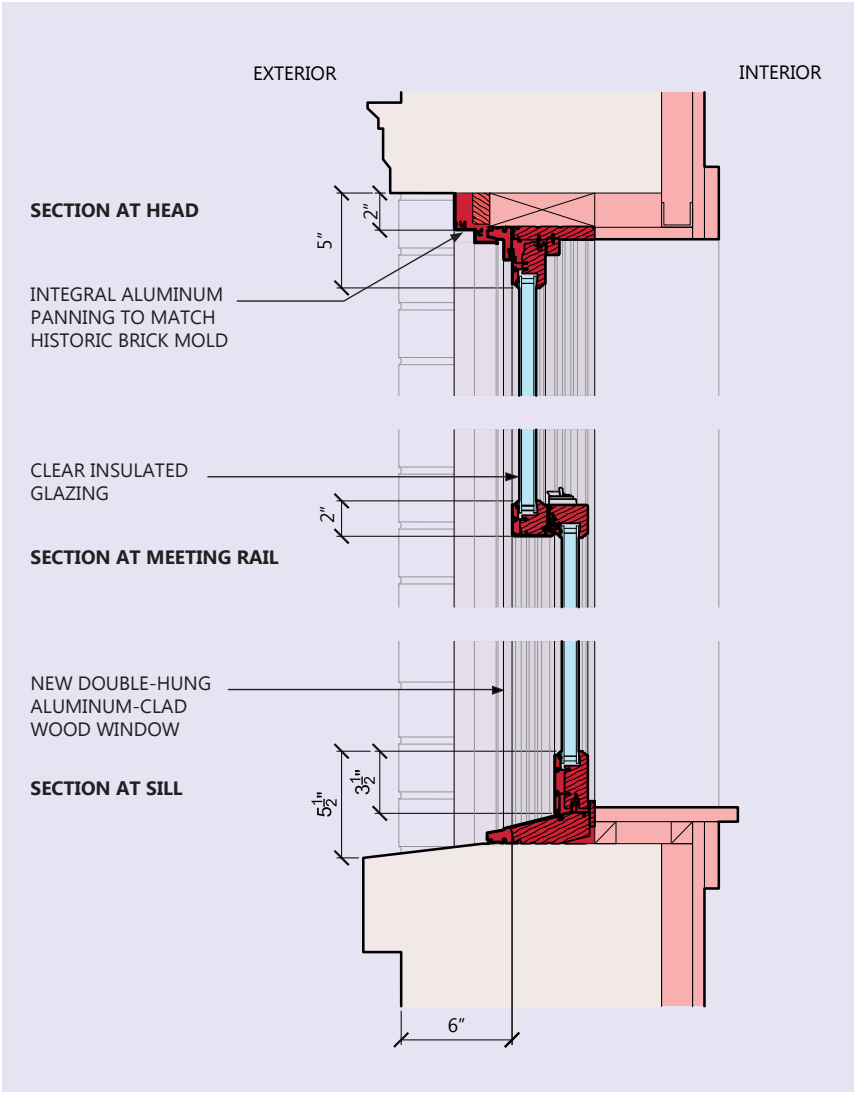
NEW WOOD WINDOW SECTION DETAIL

Vertical section drawing of a new wood double-hung insert window installed within the existing window frame and brick mold to remain, with all required dimensions.

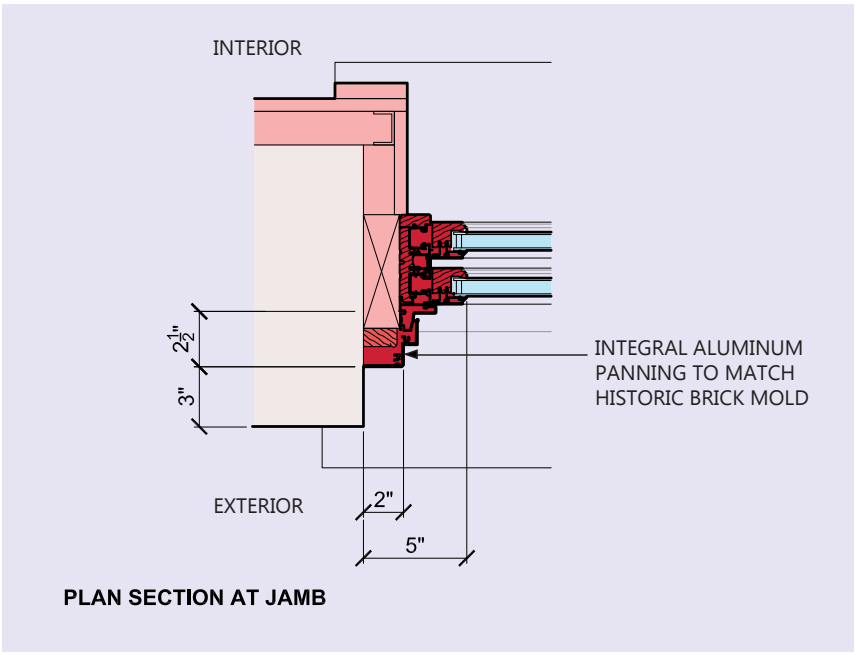


PLAN SECTION AT JAMB

Horizontal section drawing at the jamb of a new double-hung wood insert window installed within the existing window frame and brick mold to remain, with all required dimensions.



Vertical section drawing of a new aluminum-clad double-hung window with new aluminum brick mold to match the historic profile, with all required dimensions.



Horizontal section drawing at the jamb of a new aluminum-clad double-hung window with new aluminum brick mold to match the historic profile, with all required dimensions.

Window Glazing Calculations

When replacing a historic window at a primary facade, you may be required to provide glazing calculations that compare the original amount of glazed surface with the new amount. The LPC Rules allow a decrease of up to 10 percent of the glazed area for metal windows and up to 6 percent for wood windows. However, the smallest increase possible must be the goal. Following are step-by-step instructions on how to calculate this percentage.

Step 1

Obtain measurements (in inches) of the height and width of the glass in one sash of the existing window and one sash of the proposed window. Measure the daylight opening only, that is, the portion of the sash that is transparent (glass).

Example

The daylight opening of the existing window sash on my building is 32 × 27 inches.
The daylight opening of the sash of the window I propose to replace it with is 31.5 × 26 inches.

Step 2

Multiply sash height by width to determine the square inches of each window.

Example

32 × 27 inches = 864 sq. in. (existing window)

31.5 × 26 inches = 819 sq. in. (proposed window)

Step 3

Subtract the lesser number of square inches from the greater number. The result is the difference in glazed area, which can either be a decrease or an increase.

Example

864 – 819 sq. in. = 45 sq. in. (the decrease in glazed area from existing to proposed window)

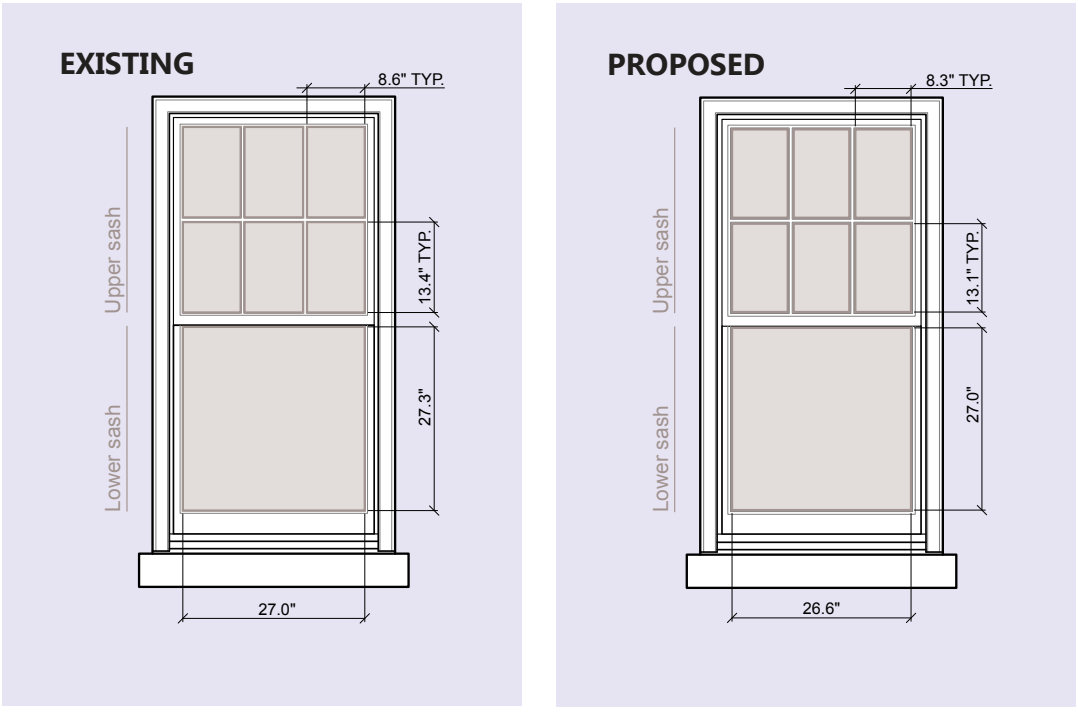
Step 4

To obtain the percentage difference between existing and proposed windows, divide the result from Step 3 by the glazed area of the existing window calculated in Step 2.
Then multiply by 100.

Example

45 sq. in. ÷ 864 sq. in. = .052

.052 × 100 = 5.2 percent (the decrease in glazed area)



How to measure windows to get the required glazing calculations.

Investigative Probes

Investigative probes are a way to identify concealed historic materials surrounding a window opening and assess materials for retention or replication. Probes are most commonly used to expose the condition and profile of historic wood brick molds, which are often concealed under modern metal panning. Probes must be performed in an unobtrusive location and remove as little material as possible.

How are investigative probes useful when replacing or modifying windows and doors?

Probes help uncover the underlying condition and can be used to help make molds for replication.

Conditions Assessment

A conditions assessment or report documents the deterioration of windows or doors. Staff evaluates the findings to determine if conditions warrant replacement. A conditions assessment must be prepared by a contractor or other professional with preservation experience.

The report must always include:

High-quality color photographs showing the facade and locations of proposed work, close-ups of windows and doors assessed, and details of deterioration.

Identification of types of materials.

Annotated descriptions of deteriorated conditions.

A written narrative explaining reasons for replacement rather than repair.

When is a conditions assessment of historic windows or doors required?

If your proposal includes replacing historic doors or special windows and doors at any building, or replacing historic windows at the primary facade of an individual landmark, you must provide a conditions assessment or report to justify replacement.

Best Practices for Repairing and Retrofitting Windows

Maintenance and repairs to historic windows do not require a permit if certain criteria are met. Windows that have not been well maintained and have minor deterioration can often be repaired and retrofitted rather than replaced. When properly done, functionality and efficiency are improved. The following best practices for maintaining and repairing historic windows do not require a permit, except as noted:

Operation

Poor operation is often due to over-painting that seals window sashes to window jambs and sills, making them difficult to open. Cutting the paint seal at all points of contact usually resolves the issue. Replacing hardware (pulley chains or ropes, hinges, and sash locks), in addition to scraping, sanding, and repainting window jambs, often improves functionality as well.

Deterioration

If a window shows signs of deterioration, it is often the result of moisture penetration. This is preventable by thorough painting, regular maintenance, and prompt repairs. If rot has already occurred, it is best to remove deteriorated sections to a solid material and install a Dutchman that matches original window details. For wood windows, consider using a compatible rot-resistant hardwood.

General Maintenance

To prevent deterioration, it is important to caulk around frames and sills, scrape peeling paint, sand to a smooth finish, prime with an oil-based primer, and repaint window sashes and frames with two coats of exterior-grade paint. To increase longevity, routinely inspect windows every five to seven years and make necessary minor repairs. A permit is only required when painting windows and frames a different color.

Glass

Broken glass and glazing putty failure also contribute to window deterioration. It is important to replace broken glass and failing glazing putty as soon as practical. The affected area must be primed and painted to maintain a waterproof seal.

Retrofitting

Making repairs presents an opportunity to retrofit or upgrade historic windows to improve performance and energy efficiency. All types of historic windows can be retrofitted with appropriate insulation, air sealing, and weatherstripping while minimizing the impact on functionality and aesthetics.

Storm Windows

Installing interior or exterior storm windows, in conjunction with repairing and retrofitting existing historic windows, can be just as effective as modern replacement windows in terms of improving energy efficiency and occupant comfort.

Interior storm windows with clear glazing that require no mullions, muntins, or wide frames, visible from the exterior of the building, do not need an LPC permit.

Exterior storm windows with clear glazing require an LPC permit and must have tightly fit framing within window openings, without the need for sub-frames or panning around the perimeter. Meeting rails are used only in conjunction with double-hung windows in a matching finish.

Master Plans

Master plans, which generally do not have an expiration date, allow you to install windows or doors over time as finances or vacancies permit. (See *Section 2-02* of the LPC Rules). Master plans are more efficient because once approved, applications can be processed more quickly.

Master plans can be approved at the staff level or by the Commission, depending on whether the work meets the LPC Rules.

Once established, you may move forward with work covered by the master plan by submitting a completed application form to the Commission, describing the scope of work and stating that it conforms to master plan drawings and other documents.

Staff reviews the application and issues an Authorization to Proceed permit prior to commencement of work.

Chapter 3

Storefronts

Storefronts and commercial streetscapes contribute to the vitality of historic buildings and historic districts in New York City. The appearance of storefronts and relationship to their buildings and streetscapes are the basis of LPC's rules for work involving storefronts. (See **LPC Rules**, Section 2-12, available on our website, **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**.)

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

This chapter explains LPC's rules as they apply to the replacement and modification of storefronts. Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to the LPC Rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

LPC has a separate guide that specifically covers new storefronts. See *Guidelines for Storefront Design in Historic Districts*, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

Note: If your storefront work involves signage, barrier-free access, or HVAC, please refer to *Chapter 5: Signage*, *Chapter 9: Barrier-Free Access*, and *Chapter 12: HVAC and Other Mechanical Equipment*.

Section A
How to Get Started

Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for the building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine how the rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find **construction date, architect and style, building and landmark type,** and a link to the **LPC designation report** with additional historical background.

What did the building look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services NYC Municipal Archives Collections.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide** Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

Is the building in a historic district that has a storefront master plan?
Special regulations may apply if your building is part of a district-wide master plan for storefronts. Visit the Rules and Master Plans page at www.nyc.gov/landmarks for information on the following:

Carnegie Hill Historic District

Jackson Heights Historic District

Metropolitan Museum Historic District

Stone Street Historic District

Upper East Side Historic District

Does the building have a storefront master plan?
If one has been established, ask the property owner for a copy or contact 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

See If Your Work Requires an LPC Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
LPC generally requires a permit for altering and installing new storefronts, but a permit is **not required** for the following types of work:

Ordinary maintenance of storefronts including repainting the same color, replacing broken glass, and graffiti removal.

Replacing storefront door hardware.

Minor probes or other investigative work.

- *Probes must be made in connection with an open or future application for storefront work.*
- *Probes must take place in unobtrusive areas and require simple removal of a limited amount of material to expose underlying conditions for a short period of time.*
- *All existing conditions must be restored in-kind upon completion of a probe.*

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

Consider Establishing A Master Plan

If your building has multiple storefronts and you plan to make repetitive storefront alterations over time, you can apply for a master plan. A master plan provides the opportunity to incrementally perform work. Once you have a master plan, future applications that conform to it will be quickly reviewed by staff since specific work standards have already been established and approved. This type of permit generally does not expire. See *Section C* for more information.

What You Will Need

A complete application typically requires the materials listed below, but additional materials may be required depending on the type of work. See *Section B* for a list of all materials required for your work type.

Basic Application Materials

- **An LPC Permit Application Form**, filled out and signed by the property owner.
- **Color photos** of the entire building and close-ups of the areas of the storefront or alteration to pinpoint proposed work and provide context.
- **A full floor plan** showing all existing storefronts and entrances.
- **Comparative drawings:**
  - Elevation of existing conditions and proposed storefronts or alterations
  - Floor plan of existing conditions and location of proposed storefronts or alterations
  - Section of existing conditions and proposed storefronts or alterations
  - Details of existing conditions and proposed storefronts or alterations
  - Comparative drawings to show any changes to the size of existing storefront openings or creation of new door openings
- **Color specifications / paint cards.**
- **Material specifications / manufacturer cut sheets.**
- **Two sets of Department of Buildings (DOB) filing drawings** if the proposed work requires a DOB permit.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

In This Section:

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules — or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. LPC staff can guide you through this process. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks for more information.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of work involving storefronts. See LPC Rules, Section 2-12, for more information.

Storefront Probes

Before considering storefront work, you must first determine whether significant historic features exist. Investigative probes are a way to identify concealed historic materials within or surrounding a storefront so they can be assessed for retention or replication. Probes are most commonly used at storefronts to expose the presence and condition of historic columns, cornices, and profiled trim, which are often concealed under modern metal or stucco cladding. Probes must be performed in unobtrusive locations and remove as little material as possible.

If you plan to remove infill and/or exterior cladding or finishes at a storefront, you must first perform probes to see if historic material exists behind the modern cladding.

If a significant portion of the historic storefront surround exists underneath cladding, it must be restored as part of your application for new storefront infill. Staff can help you determine whether a significant portion of the historic storefront remains, based on your probes and photographic or on-site documentation. See *Chapter 1* for guidance on restoring architectural features.

The historic storefront has been covered with metal cladding. Probes have revealed the original cast iron piers.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **An LPC Permit Application Form,** filled out and signed by the building's owner.
- ☐ **Color photos of the entire building and close-ups** of areas of investigation.
- ☐ **Proposed annotated elevation or photos** of areas of the facade to be probed.
- ☐ **Material specifications for repairs** that may be required after probing.
- ☐ **Timetable and plan for performing probes and reinstating the existing condition**.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if the proposed work requires a DOB permit.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

If parts of the storefront are historic but not original to the building, can they be removed?

It depends. Consult with staff to review your specific case. Storefront features added to a building after construction but before designation may be considered significant layers of its historic fabric. For example, a 20th century Art Deco storefront at a 19th century building would likely be considered a significant part of its history and should be retained and restored.

New Storefronts

As a general matter, staff can approve either replicating or restoring a historic storefront or approving a new storefront for buildings in historic districts where no significant historic storefront features exist and the storefront design is based on storefronts in that district for buildings of a similar age and style. However, there are some limitations on what the staff can approve. Staff can only approve replicating or restoring the historic storefront where:

The building is an individual landmark.

The building has three or more matching storefronts and at least one is historic.

The historic storefront was removed illegally.

Where the building is subject to a *Modification of Use or Bulk*, there may be other requirements for an approvable storefront.

Where the building is subject to either a district-wide master plan or a building master plan that controls storefront design, check the plan to see what the requirements are.

Where the building has at least three storefronts and one was approved by the Commission at a public hearing and the building has no master plan, staff can only approve a design that replicates the historic storefront.

See *Chapter 1, Restoration*, for more information on how to restore or replicate your storefront.

If you are unsure whether your building is an individual landmark, needs a special permit, or has three or more matching storefronts with at least one being historic or Commission-approved, contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or email info@lpc.nyc.gov.

Note: Storefront design may be affected by the presence of historic elements that are hidden under modern storefront cladding. See *Storefront Probes* for more information.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos of building facades**.
- ☐ **Photos of storefronts** to be altered or replaced.
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos**, if available. See *Section A* for information on how to obtain tax photos.
- ☐ If available, **documentation that supports matching the historic storefront at the building or other buildings used as prototypes**, including historic photographs or drawings of the building or similar buildings.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans and elevations**.
- ☐ **Comparative storefront elevations for each proposed storefront type**, including configuration and indication of operable windows and the historic storefront, if it exists.
- ☐ **Comparative vertical and horizontal section drawings of proposed storefront**, including security gates and the historic storefront, if it exists.
  - – Large-scale detailed drawings of bulkhead, transom, door, and window components and trim
- ☐ **Proposed interior plan and elevation** showing any built-in vitrines or partitions that are in close proximity to display windows.
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Replacing Storefronts in Historic Districts

Matching the historic storefront is also encouraged but not required (see *Chapter 1, Restoration*, for more information).

The rules for new storefronts are intended to support creativity. While certain elements may be necessary based on the age of the building, new elements do not require a specific design. Staff can approve new storefronts that meet the following criteria:

Design

The design of new infill can match the original or historic storefront, or it can be a contemporary design based on the configuration and proportions of historic storefronts on similar buildings within the same historic district, and feature traditional storefront elements such as a large display window, transom, and bulkhead.

Configuration

The configuration of new storefront infill must be consistent with the proportions of display windows, transoms, and bulkheads of the typical or historic infill that serves as the basis of the design.

Bulkheads must be between 18 and 30 inches in height. In most cases, height includes a curb.

Profile

Storefront framing must have a molding profile that recalls the articulation of historic storefront framing. It can refer to a historic molded profile or it can be a contemporary profile. Stock rectangular extruded aluminum framing is generally not permitted.

An example of new storefront infill, based on traditional designs.

Materials

If the building was constructed prior to 1900, the new infill material must match the historic infill material (in most cases, painted wood).

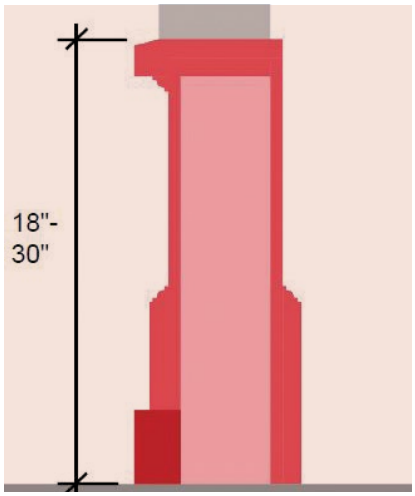
If the building was constructed after 1900, the new infill material can be painted wood or metal regardless of the historic material, or it can match the historic material.

Details

Details can be contemporary or match historic details such as large display windows, transoms, and bulkheads.

Finish

The new storefront finish must recall the finish of historic storefronts.



A section detail of the bulkhead, marked in red. The bulkhead must be between 18-30 inches tall in most cases.

The molding profile used in this storefront recalls the articulation of historic storefront framing.

Creating New Door Openings

Staff can approve new door openings if they meet the following criteria:

A new door and door opening can be installed to provide access to an existing storefront if the new door is on the same facade and in close proximity to an existing storefront display window.

The new door opening must be installed in non-historic storefront infill or through plain brick. The design must be consistent with existing storefront doors or meet criteria for a replacement door.

The width of the new door opening must be the minimum necessary to provide for a door that meets accessibility requirements and, if necessary, a sidelight.

The height of the door opening must align with the height of storefront features.

A storefront display window, top, was renovated to include a new door opening, bottom.

Installing Café-Style Operable Windows and Doors

A "cafe-style" storefront is a storefront where the display window and bulkhead completely or partially open up to allow outdoor or open air dining. In some cases, the entire display window and bulkhead can slide open to allow uninterrupted access to sidewalk dining, while in other areas the bulkhead remains but the display window opens up. Staff can approve the installation of café-style operable windows and doors if they meet the following criteria:

If new display windows are being installed as part of the storefront infill, staff can approve operable windows installed over storefront bulkheads. Staff can also approve windows configured as operable doors where the doors must have a solid bottom panel that maintains the height and design of the storefront bulkhead.

New infill must include mullions, piers, or some fixed display windows — or a combination of these elements — so the storefront is not completely open.

The width of each operable door or window panel must be as large as is practical.

A serving window can be no larger than 50 percent of the width of the storefront bay. Mullions and other associated elements must match the material and finish of the storefront framing.

New operable storefront window featuring fixed transom windows and mullions.

Installing Translucent or Opaque Glazing

Staff can approve new translucent or opaque glazing if it meets the following criteria:

Glazing in display windows and transoms must be clear. A reversible grayscale translucent film can also be applied to a portion of the interior face of display window glazing.

The film must be less than 48 inches above the sidewalk or half the height of the display window.

Film can also be installed to the interior face of a transom window where clear glazing would expose unsightly interior conditions such as a dropped ceiling or security roll-gate housing.

Installing Security Gates

Staff can approve installing security gates if they meet the following criteria:

Whenever possible, security gates must be located behind the storefront infill.

If it is necessary to mount a security gate on the exterior of the storefront, its housing must be recessed into the top of the opening so it does not protrude beyond the storefront framing. Tracks must be recessed or concealed within the framing.

Security gate installation must not obscure or damage historic fabric. The actual security gate build must be open mesh where it covers glazed areas.

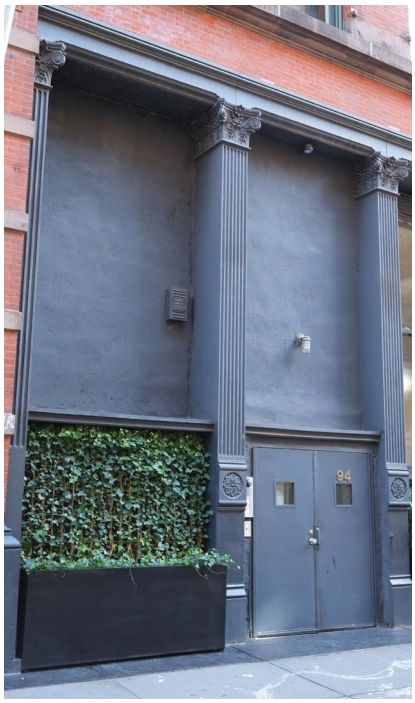
Replacing Service Entrances

Staff can approve replacing service entrances if they meet the following criteria:

Non-historic infill can be removed at service entrances.

New infill at service entrances with egress doors, freight elevators, and other utilitarian uses can vary in design, configuration, and material — as long as it is in keeping with similar service entrances found throughout the historic district.

Alternatively, a service entrance that was not a garage opening or vehicle loading bay can be removed and replaced with a storefront entrance, display window, or other storefront infill.



This service entrance has been infilled with a planter. Staff can approve removing such non-historic infill and installing new infill or a storefront in some cases.

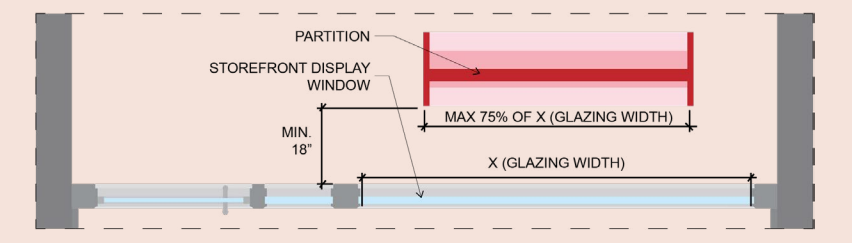
Installing Interior Partitions and Vitrines

Staff can approve installing interior partitions and vitrines if they meet the following criteria:

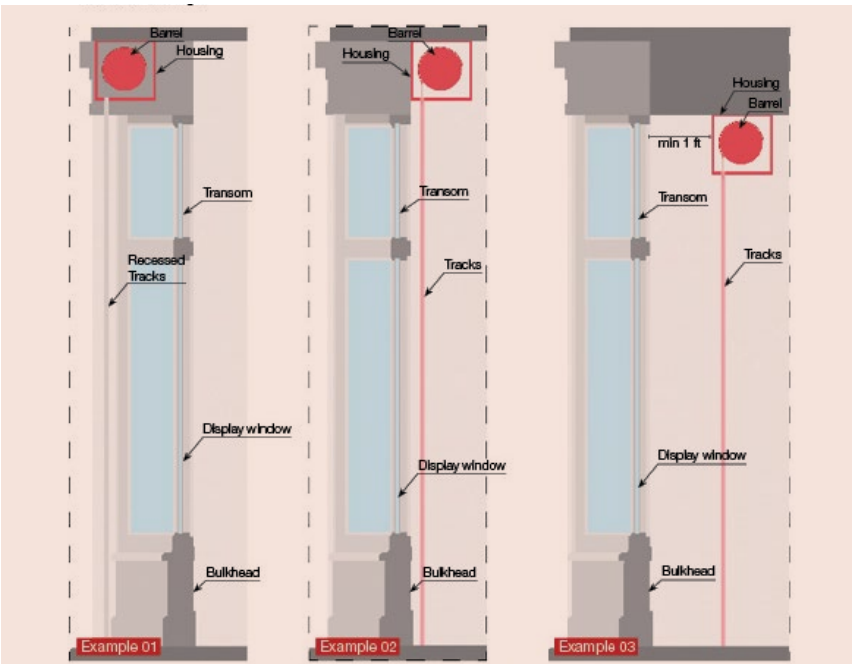
Interior partitions must be 18 inches or more away from display window glass and cannot box in an entire display window (sometimes known as a "vitrine"). Some transparency into and out of the window must be preserved.

Interior partition surfaces cannot block more than 75 percent of the width and 50 percent of the area of the display window.

Interior partition surfaces in close proximity to display windows must have an interior-quality finish and/or materials on the street-facing side, and feature non-illuminated or indirectly illuminated displays of graphics or merchandise.



An interior partition, in red, seen in plan. The interior partition is located a minimum of 18 inches from the glazing, and its width is no more than 75 percent of the width of the display window.



Example 01: A roll-down security gate installed on the exterior of the storefront door. Examples 02 and 03: A roll-down security gate installed on the interior of the storefront.

Section C
Technical Guidance and Resources

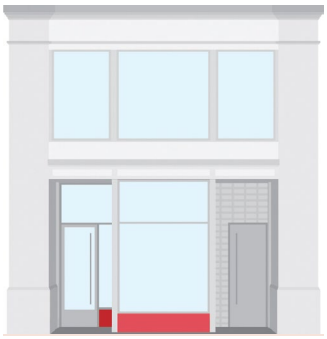
This section provides additional guidance and resources to help you understand the rules and criteria and submit the correct materials with your permit application.

In This Section:

Glossary

A storefront is the area of the facade that provides access or natural illumination into a retail or commercial space. A typical storefront includes the following elements, defined and illustrated below.

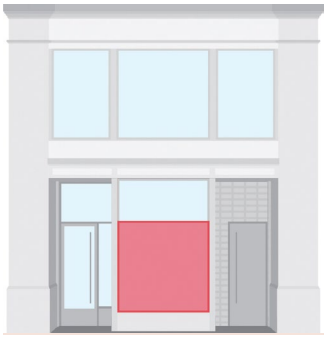
Awning
is a metal frame clad with fabric above or within an opening, or within an integral housing, over the storefront to provide protection from the weather.



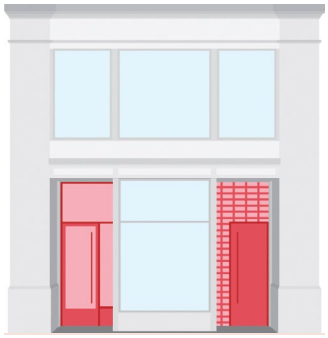
Bulkhead
is the part of the storefront that forms a base for one or more display windows.

Cladding
is an outer layer of material covering another.

Cornice
is a horizontal projecting component that crowns an architectural element like a storefront or a building. Typically with a profile, it is functional, ornamental, and sometimes used for signs.



Display Window
is the large glazed portion of the storefront infill, and the associated framing above the bulkhead and below the transom, that extends pier to pier. It is typically used to display goods and provide daylight and visibility into the commercial space.

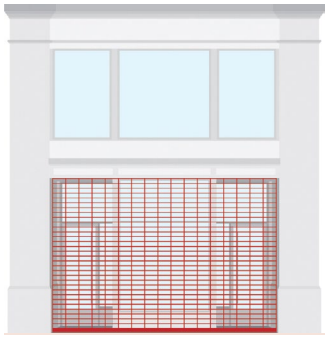


Entranceways
may refer to storefront, service, and/or building entrances. They are often recessed in straight or splayed returns, and doors typically have transoms and glazing.

Framing
is the elements that together give structural support and shape to the storefront.

Lintel
is the horizontal member or element above a door, window, or storefront opening.

Pier
is an exterior vertical member or element, usually of brick, stone, or metal, placed at intervals along a wall that typically separates storefront openings within a single building or defines a single storefront opening.



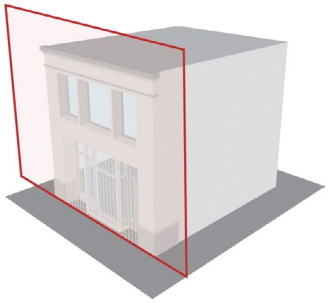
Security Gate
is a movable metal fixture installed in front of a storefront opening or bay, or inside the display window or door, to protect the store from theft or vandalism when closed.

Signage
includes sign bands, signs installed within display windows, and awnings.

Storefront Infill
is the framing, glazing, and cladding contained within a storefront opening in the facade, including but not limited to display windows, bulkheads, and entranceways.

Storefront Opening
is the area of the facade between the piers and lintel which contains storefront infill.

Storefront Surround
includes decorative elements or treatment on the facade, around the storefront opening.



Street Wall
is a wall or portion of a wall of a building or buildings that faces a street and keeps the plane of the facade.

Transom
is the glazed area above a display window or door that is separated from the display window or door by a horizontal framing member.

Master Plans

Master plans, governed by Section 2-02 of the LPC Rules, allow property owners to apply for approval of repetitive alterations on architectural features, including storefronts. A master plan provides the opportunity to incrementally make alterations over time, as this type of permit generally does not expire.

Master plans can be approved at the staff level or by the Commission, depending on whether the work meets the LPC Rules.

Once established, you can move forward with work covered by the master plan by submitting a completed application form to the Commission, describing the scope of work and stating that it conforms to master plan drawings and other documents.

Staff reviews the application and issue an “Authorization to Proceed” permit prior to commencement of work.

Chapter 4

Awnings and Sidewalk Canopies

Awnings and sidewalk canopies have a long history of use at various types of buildings found throughout New York City. Many historic buildings with storefronts had awnings installed as a climate control measure to keep the sun out. They also allowed businesses to advertise. Other buildings had awnings installed over windows, doors, and porches, or sidewalk canopies installed at the main entrance for practical and decorative purposes. The historic uses and appearance of awnings and canopies in New York City are the basis for LPC's rules for work involving these installations. (See **LPC Rules**, Section 2-12, available on our website at **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**.)

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

ⓘ

This chapter explains LPC's rules for installation, replacement, and modification of awnings and sidewalk canopies. Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to the LPC Rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

Section A
How to Get Started

ⓘ

Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the LPC Rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for your building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine how the LPC Rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find **construction date**, **architect** and **style**, **building and landmark type**, and a link to the **LPC designation report** with additional historical background.

What did the building look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services NYC Municipal Archives Collections.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide** Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

Check to See if the Work Requires a Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
A permit is **not required** for the following work types:

Seasonal removal/reinstallation of awnings and sidewalk canopies

Patching awnings and canopies in a matching material

Maintaining/repairing hardware and frames

Cleaning awning and sidewalk canopy material

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

Consider Establishing a Master Plan

Is this going to be the first of many projects?
If your building has many storefronts, you might want to consider establishing an awning **master plan**, which will allow you to do repetitive awning work incrementally over time.

Once you have a master plan, future applications can be quickly reviewed since specific work standards are established and approved. This type of permit generally does not expire. See *Section C* for more information.

What You Will Need

A complete application requires all the materials listed below.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ An **LPC Permit Application Form**, filled out and signed by the property owner.
- ☐ **Color photos** of the entire building and close-ups of the storefront, entrance, window, or terrace that show the location of the proposed work and its context.
- ☐ **Drawings:**
  - Elevation, section, and/or side elevation of proposed awning or sidewalk canopy
  - Details of the awning or sidewalk canopy, and showing installation methods
- ☐ **Color specifications / canvas samples.**
- ☐ **Material specifications/ manufacturer cut sheets.**
- ☐ **Two sets of Department of Buildings (DOB) filing drawings** if the proposed work requires a DOB permit.
  - All awnings and canopies must comply with the NYC Zoning Resolution, NYC Department of Transportation regulations, and the NYC Building Code

If LPC needs additional materials once your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

→ **In This Section:**

ⓘ

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules — or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. Staff can guide you through this process. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks for more information.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of work involving awnings and sidewalk canopies. See LPC Rules, Section 2-12, for more information.

Awnings

Historically, awnings were typically made from cloth or canvas and featured a straight slope, a flexible skirt, and open sides. They were installed within a door, window opening, or storefront, depending on the type of building. The rules are different depending on whether you are installing an awning at a storefront or at a residential building, so be sure to read the appropriate section.

Installing Storefront Awnings

Many 19th and 20th century storefronts had awnings installed at transoms, at the tops of openings, or built into the storefront itself. Staff can approve awning installation at ground floor storefronts/display windows or second floor display windows. See *Section A* on how to determine landmark type.

Staff can approve storefront awnings that meet the following criteria:

Operation

Awnings can be fixed or retractable, unless the storefront was designed with an integral retractable awning housing.

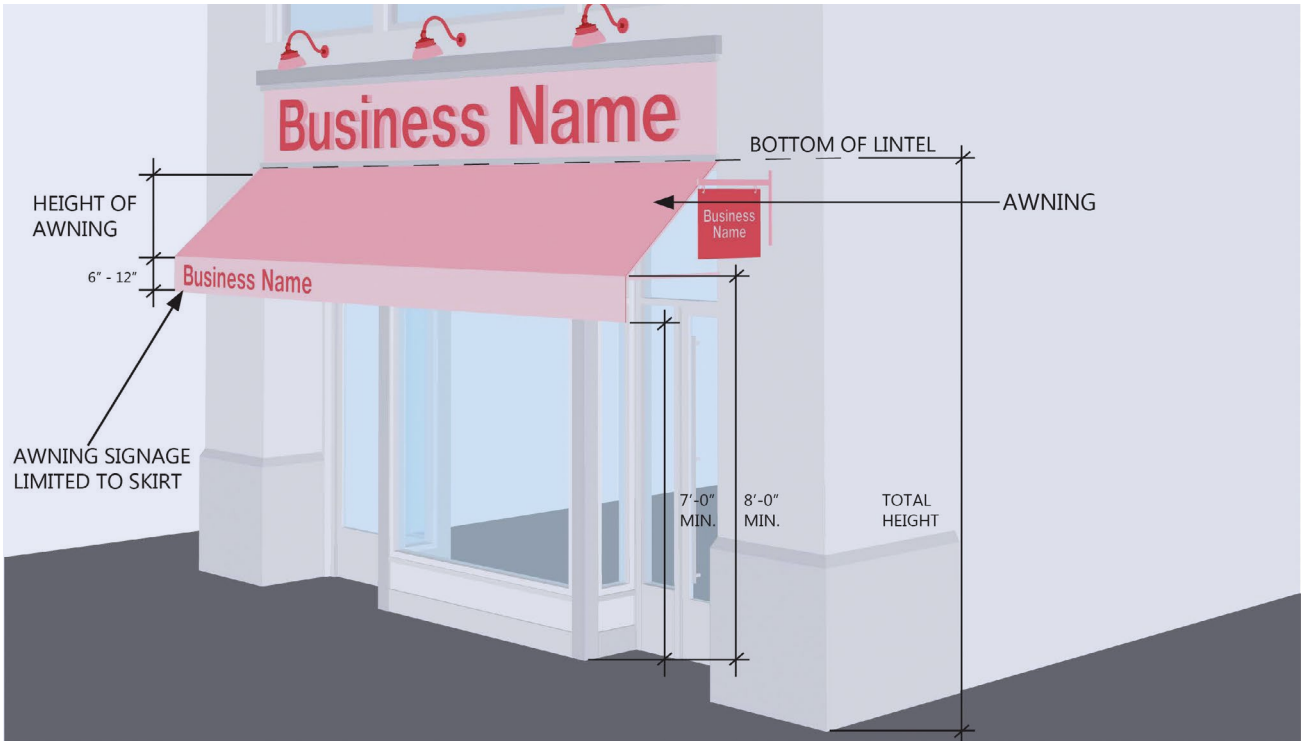
With an integral retractable awning housing, the housing and mechanism must be restored or retrofitted and a new awning installed.

At **individual landmarks**, a fixed awning must have a "lean-to" frame with no connection between the top bar and the side bar that is perpendicular to the facade. The side bar must be round; the frame must have a natural gray metal or gray painted finish.

Installation

The awning must not obscure or damage significant building features, such as historic stained glass transoms or other decorative elements.

The awning must be installed at the top of the storefront opening or at the transom. If that is not possible, install it just above the opening.



Typical storefront awning location and dimensions.

The awning can be installed slightly above the top of the opening if:

It would not obscure or detract from significant features.

It would result in the lowest framed portion of the awning being less than eight feet above the sidewalk.

An existing roll-down security gate makes it impossible to install the awning at the top of the opening.

Awning framing must attach to the storefront framing or surround, avoiding historic or decorative features. Limit the number of framing elements and penetrations as much as possible.

Design

The awning must project at an angle and be proportional to the length, size, and slope of the storefront's size and height. The length must not exceed the length of the storefront opening. Edges must closely align with the inside face of the storefront piers or wall.

The awning's underside must be open, with minimal framing elements and no "ceiling."

The lowest framed portion must be at least eight feet above the sidewalk; the lowest unframed portion, typically the skirt, must be at least seven feet above the sidewalk.

The awning must have an unframed skirt that is proportional to its height and size, but not larger than 12 inches. Lettering or graphics can be painted on the skirt only, not on the awning's sloped portion, and must be proportional to the skirt's height.

Material

The awning can be clad with matte-finished canvas or fabric of a similar texture.

Fabric must consist of a solid color or vertical stripes that harmonize with the building's historic color palette. In most cases it is not required to match other awnings at the storefront. Avoid visually jarring colors and patterns.

Awnings that are "grandfathered" (present when the building received designation) but do not meet LPC Rules can be re-clad in matte-finished canvas or fabric of a similar texture, in a solid color or vertical stripes that harmonize with the historic color palette of the building.

A fixed storefront awning installed at the top of the projecting display window.

Awnings on second-story display windows are subject to the same criteria as awnings on ground-floor storefronts.

A retractable storefront awning installed at the top of the storefront infill within the opening.

Installing Residential Awnings

Many row houses, apartment buildings, and freestanding houses built in the 19th and 20th centuries had canvas awnings installed over windows, doors, and porches. Awnings were usually retractable or designed to be installed seasonally. They were often decorative, with a wider variety of colors, patterns, and designs than storefront awnings. Staff can approve residential awnings that meet the following criteria:

Operation

Awnings at windows, doors, and porches can be either fixed or retractable.

Location

Awnings should be installed at the tops of openings and the length should fit within the window/door opening. Window awnings should cover more than one opening.

Installation

Framing must attach to a window frame, door frame, or the porch, and avoid historic or decorative features. The number of framing elements and penetrations should be as limited as possible.

Awnings installed at terraces and setbacks above the ground floor can extend over more than one window or door opening as long as their depth does not exceed the depth of the terrace.

Design

The awning must project at an angle and be proportional in length, size, and slope to the size and height of the window, door, or porch opening.

Before air conditioning was widely available, retractable window awnings were commonly found on residential buildings throughout New York City, as seen in this historic photo of a building on West End Avenue.

The building's address number can be placed on an awning above the entrance, with letters or numbers no taller than six inches. No other lettering or signage is permitted on residential awnings.

Material

The awning must be clad only with a matte canvas or similar fabric, in a solid color or vertical stripes that harmonize with the building's historic color palette. Avoid visually jarring colors and patterns.

Awning canopies that are "grandfathered" (present when the building received designation) but do not meet LPC Rules, or that were previously approved by the Commission, can be re-clad in matte-finished canvas or fabric of a similar texture, in a solid color or vertical stripes that harmonize with the historic color palette of the building.

At primary or visible secondary facades, the new awning must match the fabric color and pattern of existing awnings.

Sidewalk Canopies

Many larger residential buildings built in the 19th and 20th centuries had canvas sidewalk canopies installed at the main entrance. These canopies were usually installed after the building was built, and typically constructed of light-gauge metal tubing with canvas cladding that was removed seasonally or when not needed.

This sidewalk canopy has a design consistent with a typical historic canopy. The installation fits within the opening and does not obscure or damage significant features.

Installing Sidewalk Canopies

Staff can approve sidewalk canopies at apartment buildings, hotels, and buildings historically constructed with an accessory residential component, such as private clubs. Historic precedent may exist for a sidewalk canopy at your building or buildings of a similar type within the historic district. Staff can approve sidewalk canopies that meet the following criteria:

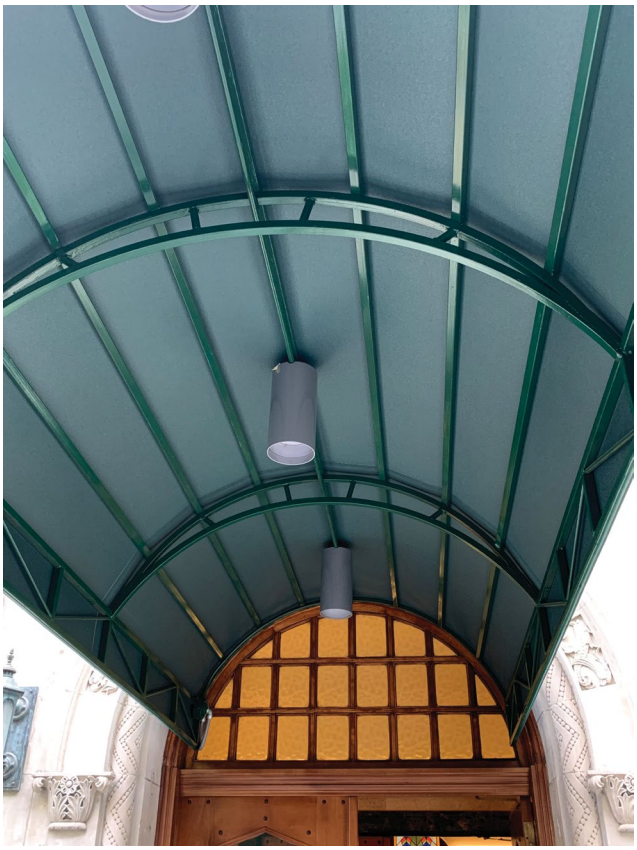
Installation

The canopy must not obscure or damage significant features.

The canopy frame can attach to the facade at mortar joints or plain masonry. Limit penetrations as much as possible.

The canopy must be installed within architectural features and frame the opening, except where installation within the opening would result in the lowest portion of the canopy being less than eight feet above the sidewalk or operation of the door would be

Looking up at the open underside of the canopy, showing simply designed light fixtures attached to the framing.



impeded. Overlap at the opening must be avoided, as possible.

Canopy poles must attach to non-historic paving when possible.

Design

Size and design must be consistent with canopies historically found at buildings of the same type.

The canopy must be at least eight feet above the sidewalk, with an open underside and no "ceiling."

The canopy must have a bowed profile, or, if precedent exists, a profile that relates to the shape of the opening.

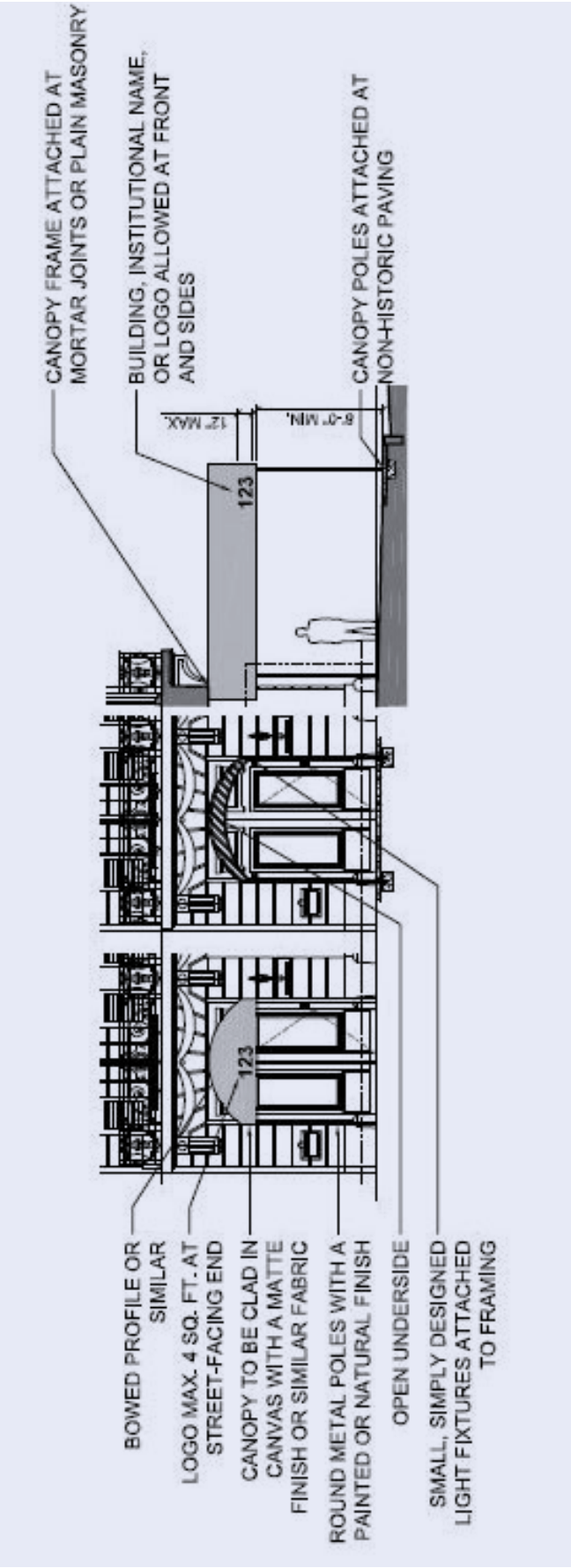
The canopy's front and sides can note the building or institutional name and address in numbers and letters less than 12 inches high, plus a logo — provided the logo appears on the street-facing end of the canopy and is no more than four square feet.

Material

The canopy must be clad in matte canvas in a color that matches the historic color or does not detract from the building. It must have round metal poles with a painted or natural finish that is in keeping with the style and age of the building.

Fixtures

Small, simply designed light fixtures can be attached to the framing underneath the canopy. Cameras and heat lamps can also be installed, as long as they are only visible from directly beneath the canopy.



Elevation and sections of a typical sidewalk canopy installation.

Section C
Technical Guidance and Resources

This section provides additional guidance and resources to help you understand LPC's rules and criteria and submit the correct materials with your application.

→ **In This Section:**

Glossary

Awning
is a metal frame clad with fabric attached above or within an opening, or within an integral housing, at a window, door, porch, or storefront to provide protection from the weather.

Bulkhead
is the part of the storefront that forms a base for one or more display windows.

Canopy
is a metal frame clad with fabric that extends from a building entrance over the sidewalk to the curb, where it is supported on vertical posts.

Display Window
is the large glazed portion of the storefront infill, and the associated framing, above the bulkhead and below the transom, extending pier to pier. The display window is typically used for the display of goods and to provide daylight and visibility into the commercial space.

Facade
is the entire exterior face of a building.

Fixed awning
is an awning with a non-retractable metal frame clad with fabric.

Historic Fabric
is a building's original or significant historic facade construction material or ornament, or fragments thereof.

Lintel
is the horizontal member or element above a door, window, or storefront opening.

Pier
is the exterior vertical member or element, usually of brick, stone, or metal, placed at intervals along a wall that typically separates storefront openings within a single building or defines a single storefront opening.

Residential Awning
is any awning on a residential building and any awning on a commercial or mixed-use building except for storefront awnings.

Retractable Awning
is an awning attached to a frame which allows it to be extended out or folded or rolled back tight against the building facade.

Skirt
is a bottom finishing piece of fabric that hangs from the lower edge of an awning.

Storefront
is the first or second story area of the facade that provides access or natural illumination into a space used for retail or other commercial purposes.

Storefront Bay
is the area of a storefront defined by and spanning two piers.

Storefront Infill
is the framing, glazing, and cladding contained within a storefront opening in the facade, including but not limited to display windows, bulkheads, and entranceways.

Storefront Opening
is the area of the facade between the piers and lintel which contains storefront infill. Steps and platforms in front of, and leading up to, an entry door are not part of the storefront opening.

Storefront Surround
is decorative elements or treatment on the facade around the storefront opening.

Transom
is the glazed area above a display window or door separated from the display window or door by a horizontal framing member ("the transom bar"). The glazing in the transom may be fixed or operable.

Master Plans

Master plans, which generally do not have an expiration date, allow you to perform repetitive awning work over time as finances or vacancies permit (See *Section 2-02* of the LPC Rules). Master plans are more efficient because once approved, applications can be processed more quickly.

Master plans can be approved at the staff level or by the Commission, depending on whether the work meets the LPC Rules.

Once established, you can move forward with work covered by the master plan by submitting a completed application form to the Commission, describing the scope of work and stating that it conforms to master plan drawings and other documents.

Staff reviews the application and generally issues an Authorization to Proceed prior to commencement of work.

Chapter 5

Signage

Signage has always been used by businesses to advertise goods and services. The Commission recognizes that vibrant commercial activity depends, in part, on dynamic and effective signage that both respects and animates the New York City streetscape. Typically, signs were painted or affixed above storefronts in signbands, installed within display windows, suspended from brackets, or hung beneath canopies. These historic uses serve as the basis for LPC's rules for installing, modifying, and removing signage.
(See **LPC Rules**, Section 2-13, available on our website, **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**.)

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

This chapter explains LPC's rules for signage. Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to LPC Rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

Note: If you are installing signage on an awning, please see *Chapter 4, Awnings and Sidewalk Canopies*, for further information.

Section A
How to Get Started

Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for the building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine how the rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find **construction date, architect and style, building and landmark type,** and a link to the **LPC designation report** with additional historical background.

What did the building look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services' NYC Municipal Archives Collections.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide** Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

What about zoning?
Since maximum size and projection of bracket signs is determined by the zoning applicable to your building and the character of the historic district, check **New York City Planning's Zoning and Land Use Map.**

See if the Work Requires a Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
LPC generally requires a permit for installing signage, but a permit is **not required** for:

Replacing banners or flags on "grandfathered" or previously LPC-approved signs on brackets and flagpoles.

Installing interior signs more than 18 inches behind a storefront display window.

Replacing signs not permanently attached to railings or storefront elements.

Replacing lenses on preexisting box signs.

Placing sandwich boards or installing temporary signage that does not physically attach to any part of the building or can easily be moved.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

What You Will Need

A complete application requires all the materials listed below.

Basic Application Materials

- **LPC Permit Application Form** filled out and signed by the property's owner.
- **Color photos** of the entire building and close-ups of the storefront or commercial entrance that show location and context of proposed work.
- **Drawings:**
  - Elevation of storefront with proposed signs and lighting
  - Elevation, section, and / or side elevation of proposed signs and lighting
  - Details of signs and lighting, plus installation methods
- **Color specifications / paint cards**.
- **Material specifications / manufacturer cut sheets.**
- Two sets of Department of Buildings (DOB) **filing drawings,** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

  All signage must be as-of-right, in accordance with the NYC Zoning Resolution and the NYC Building Code. You can find zoning resolution information on the NYC City Planning website at www.nyc.gov/planning and the NYC Building Code is available on the DOB website at www.nyc.gov/buildings.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish the criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules — or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. Staff can guide you through this process. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks for more information.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of work involving signage. See LPC Rules, Section 2-13, for more information.

In This Section:

General Criteria

Staff can approve installation of signage if it meets the general criteria discussed below. Certain types of installations have additional requirements. See the appropriate work type for more information.

All types of signage must be as-of-right, pursuant to the NYC Zoning Resolution and the NYC Building Code. See *Section A* for how to find information on your building.

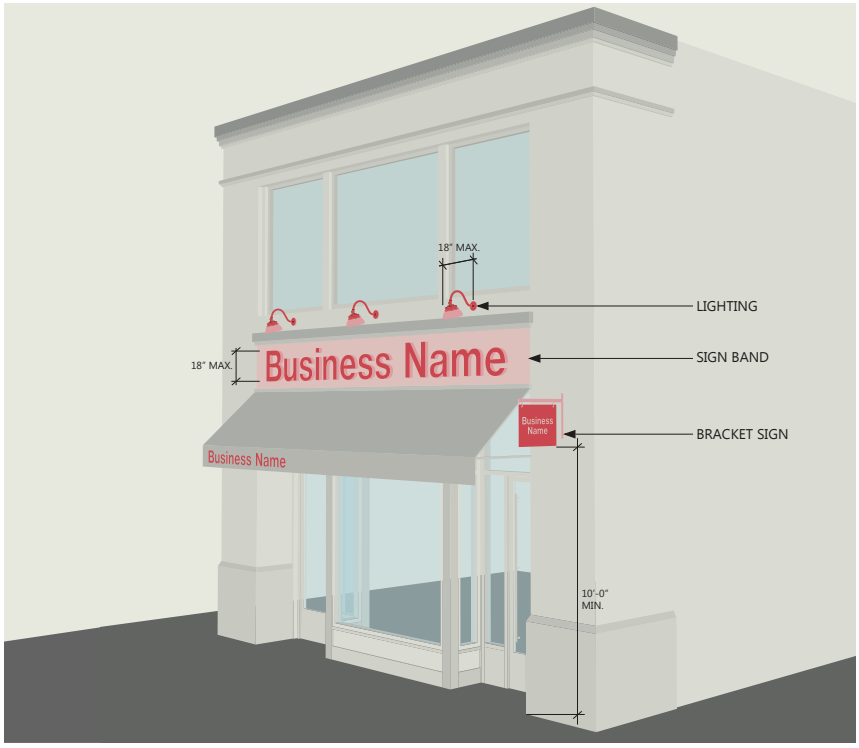
Signage cannot be installed through decorative features and cannot damage, obscure, or eliminate architectural features. To confirm compliance, provide annotated photos and notes on drawings with your application.

Signage, both individually as well as the cumulative impact of all signs, cannot detract from the architectural features of the building, adjacent buildings, or the streetscape.

If the Commission has already approved signage or it is grandfathered, staff will consider the overall amount of signage for the storefront and building, including lettering on awning skirts, signage in the signband or applied to storefront glazing, and bracket signs when reviewing an application. The LPC may require that some signage be eliminated or reduced.

Signage in Signbands and Within Storefronts

LPC staff can approve signage in signbands and on storefronts. Signs must be in proportion to the signband, typically leaving an open border along the perimeter. Letters and / or graphics cannot exceed 90 percent of the signband area.



Staff can approve installing signage in many places on the storefront, including but not limited to on the signband, on an awning, on a bracket sign, or on a display window or transom.

Installing Painted and Pin-Mounted Signage

Staff can approve installing signage in signbands and storefronts if it meets the following criteria:

Location

Letters and logos can be attached in the signband (see *Glossary*) or **onto a channel** in front of a storefront or transom

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos of storefront** or commercial entrance locations of proposed new signs.
- ☐ **Storefront or building elevation** showing sign.
- ☐ **Elevation** for each proposed signage type:
  - Height and coverage of lettering and logo
- ☐ **Section or side elevation** of the proposed sign:
  - Height and depth of lettering and logo
  - Installation method
- ☐ **Details of the proposed integrated light fixtures, if any.**
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

window. They should not be attached to a decorative cornice or historic storefront framing. Signage should be located and attached in such a manner as to avoid obscuring or damaging architectural features.

Material
Letters and logos can be painted directly onto the historic masonry signband or a flat sign panel installed within the signband. Letters and logos can also be individual dimensional letters made of wood, metal, or painted plastic.

Dimension
Individual dimensional letters can be no taller than 18 inches. Dimensional letters can project up to two inches from the signband, sign panel, or metal channel.

Installation
Pin-mounted letters that require attachment to the historic masonry signband should use mounting strips or a channel to limit penetrations, where feasible.

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The **signband** is the flat, horizontal area on the facade, usually located immediately above the storefront and below the second story window sill where signs were historically attached. Signbands can also be found immediately above the storefront display window but below the masonry opening's lintel. A signband shall not include the flat portion of a cornice that is less than 12 inches in height. A signband may exist above a second story storefront. See this chapter's *Glossary* for more information.

Lettering mounted on a metal channel within a transom.

Installing Flat Sign Panels

In addition to the criteria for installating painted and pin-mounted signage, there are additional criteria that apply specifically to installing a flat sign panel. Staff can approve installing flat sign panels in signbands and storefronts if it meets the following criteria:

Location
A sign panel should be located in the signband.

Material
A sign panel can be made of wood, metal, or opaque glass. Letters can be painted or pin-mounted metal, wood, or painted plastic.

Dimension
The sign panel should be proportional to the signband, and must not exceed 90 percent of the signband's area. Letters can be up to 18 inches high. The sign panel can project up to two inches from the facade; dimensional letters attached to the sign panel can project up to two additional inches, for a total of four inches of projection.

Installing Dimensional Letters On or In Front of a Metal Channel

In addition to the criteria for installating painted and pin-mounted signage, additional criteria apply specifically to installing dimensional letters on or in front of a metal channel. This type of installation allows for individual free-standing letters attached to a metal channel, which in turn can be mounted to the facade with a minimal number of attachment points or in front of a transom or display window. Staff can approve installing dimensional letters on or in front of a metal channel if the installation meets the following criteria:

Location
The metal channel can be placed in a signband or in front of a transom window.

Design
The channel must be straight or slightly bowed.

Material

Letters attached to the channel can be made of wood, metal, or painted plastic. Where installed in front of the transom, the letters cannot be taller than the transom.

Dimension

The channel can be no more than one inch in height and cannot project beyond the plane of the facade. Individual dimensional letters can be no taller than 18 inches. Letters may project up to two inches from the channel.

Pin-mounted lettering on a sign panel.

Installing Painted and Vinyl Signage

Staff can approve installing painted and vinyl signage if it meets the following criteria:

Location

Vinyl letters, numbers, and graphics / logos can be applied directly onto storefront glazing, including glazing at the display window, transom, and door.

Dimension

Vinyl signage can occupy no more than 20 percent of the glazed area. The signage area is calculated by the total area of the sign as a visual object, without subtracting for voids between letters, numbers, or graphics / logos.

Vinyl lettering applied to storefront glazing.

Bracket Signs

Bracket signs are a common form of signage found in historic districts. While the LPC Rules provide a great deal of flexibility in materials, finishes, and overall design for bracket signs, location and size are also dictated by the NYC Zoning Resolution. Familiarize yourself with your property's zoning restrictions before submitting your application.

Installing Bracket Signs

Staff can approve installing bracket signs if they meet the following criteria:

Location

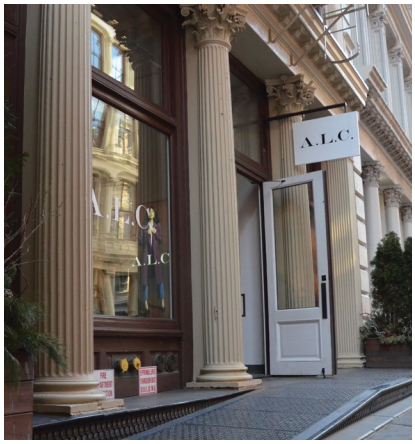
Bracket signs must be installed in close proximity to the commercial tenant identified on the sign.

The armature must be installed below the second story, or above the second story at the lowest possible point that meets minimum height requirements of the NYC Zoning Resolution. The armature must be installed within the storefront opening or flat face of plain masonry, wood, or metal pier, but not cast iron.

Signs located at historically industrial buildings with a metal canopy can be mounted to the canopy's underside, as long as the bottom of the sign is at least ten feet above the sidewalk.

Installation

Signs can be either fixed or swing freely from points of attachment to the armature. They cannot be made to move by mechanized or controlled means.



This bracket sign with armature has been anchored to the storefront framing and not through the historic cast iron.

A bracket sign anchored through mortar joints at plain masonry.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos of storefront** or commercial entrance locations for proposed new signs.
- ☐ **Storefront or building elevation** or side elevation.
- ☐ Height of installation above sidewalk.
- ☐ **Elevation and side elevation** of proposed sign and armature.
  - – Height and depth of sign, lettering, logo, and armature
  - – Installation method
- ☐ **Details of the proposed integrated light fixtures**, if any.
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Design, Materials, and Finish

The armature must be simply designed and in a finish that is harmonious with the storefront finish.

The bracket sign can be made of wood or metal.

Letters, words, numbers, or graphics can be painted, applied, or pin-mounted to the sign and made of wood, metal, or painted plastic.

Display faces, letters, words, numerals, illustrations, or graphics must be colors that do not detract from significant architectural features. Jarring colors and graphics must be avoided.

Size and Projection

Signage cannot exceed the following dimensions: 24 × 36 inches, with a projection up to 40 inches from the facade in historic districts that were historically manufacturing or industrial; 18 × 24 inches, with a projection up to 18 inches from the facade in historic districts that were historically commercial; and 12 × 18 inches, with a projection up to 12 inches from the facade in historic districts that were historically residential.

The NYC Zoning Resolution also regulates the size and projection of bracket signs. Be sure to also check the Zoning Resolution to make sure your proposal complies with those rules as well.

Novelty shapes such as circles, polygons, and irregular shapes are permitted, provided they fall within general surface area size parameters.

Measured from face to face, **overall sign width** cannot exceed two inches. Signs with raised lettering or graphics cannot exceed three inches in total width.

Bracket signs under canopies have different requirements for size and projection under the NYC Zoning Resolution but must generally fall within area size parameters for bracket signs.

Number

One bracket sign can be installed per storefront. Corner storefronts may qualify for two. Buildings with more than one ground floor tenant can have multiple signs, as follows:

One sign per establishment, with no more than two signs per 20 feet of building street frontage.

Size, design, placement, materials, and details of armatures must be similar or match each other.

Ground floor corner storefronts may qualify for two signs.

One bracket sign can be installed on each building facade with at least 20 feet of street frontage. However, each facade must have a primary entrance and the sign must be in close proximity to the entrance.

Only one bracket sign can be located within 20 feet of the corner of a building.

A bracket sign in a novelty shape.

Can bracket signs be installed for upper story tenants?

Bracket signs for upper story tenants can be installed adjacent to the building entrance, as follows:

One sign per tenant is permitted on armature.

Signs must hang underneath one another on the same armature.

Total dimensions of signs taken together cannot exceed specified size requirements.

Can a bracket sign be installed if the building already has a flagpole and a banner?

New bracket signs are not permitted if an existing Commission-approved, grandfathered, or unapproved flagpole exists on the building. A new bracket sign may be permitted if the existing flagpole is removed.

Illumination of Signage

Staff can approve installation of light fixtures above storefronts to illuminate signage in signbands, or to illuminate storefronts where signbands or sign panels do not exist. Signs can also be "halo-lit." There are options for external illumination of bracket signs and for interior neon signs behind display windows. **Staff cannot approve exterior signage that is internally illuminated**, e.g., light emitted through the front or sides of letters or a logo. All other interior illuminated signage, aside from what is described below, must be installed at least 18 inches behind the inside plane of the display window glass or transom.

Halo-lit, pin-mounted lettering at a signband.

Installing Illuminated Signage Above Storefronts

Staff can approve storefront signage illumination that meets the following criteria:

Light fixtures installed in or on plain masonry, metal, or wood (but not cast iron).

Signbands and sign panels with integrated cove fixtures in the same finish as the sign.

Small projecting light fixtures 12 inches or less in diameter, length, or width can be installed above the sign or storefront in the following quantities and spacing:

One fixture if the storefront opening is 1–6 feet

Two fixtures if the storefront opening is 6–12 feet

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos of storefront** or commercial entrance locations and signage locations to be illuminated.
- ☐ **Elevation and side elevation** of proposed light fixtures.
- ☐ Height and projection.
- ☐ Installation method.
- ☐ **Details of the proposed integrated light fixtures**, if any.
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Three fixtures if the storefront opening is 12–18 feet

Four fixtures if the storefront opening is 18–24 feet

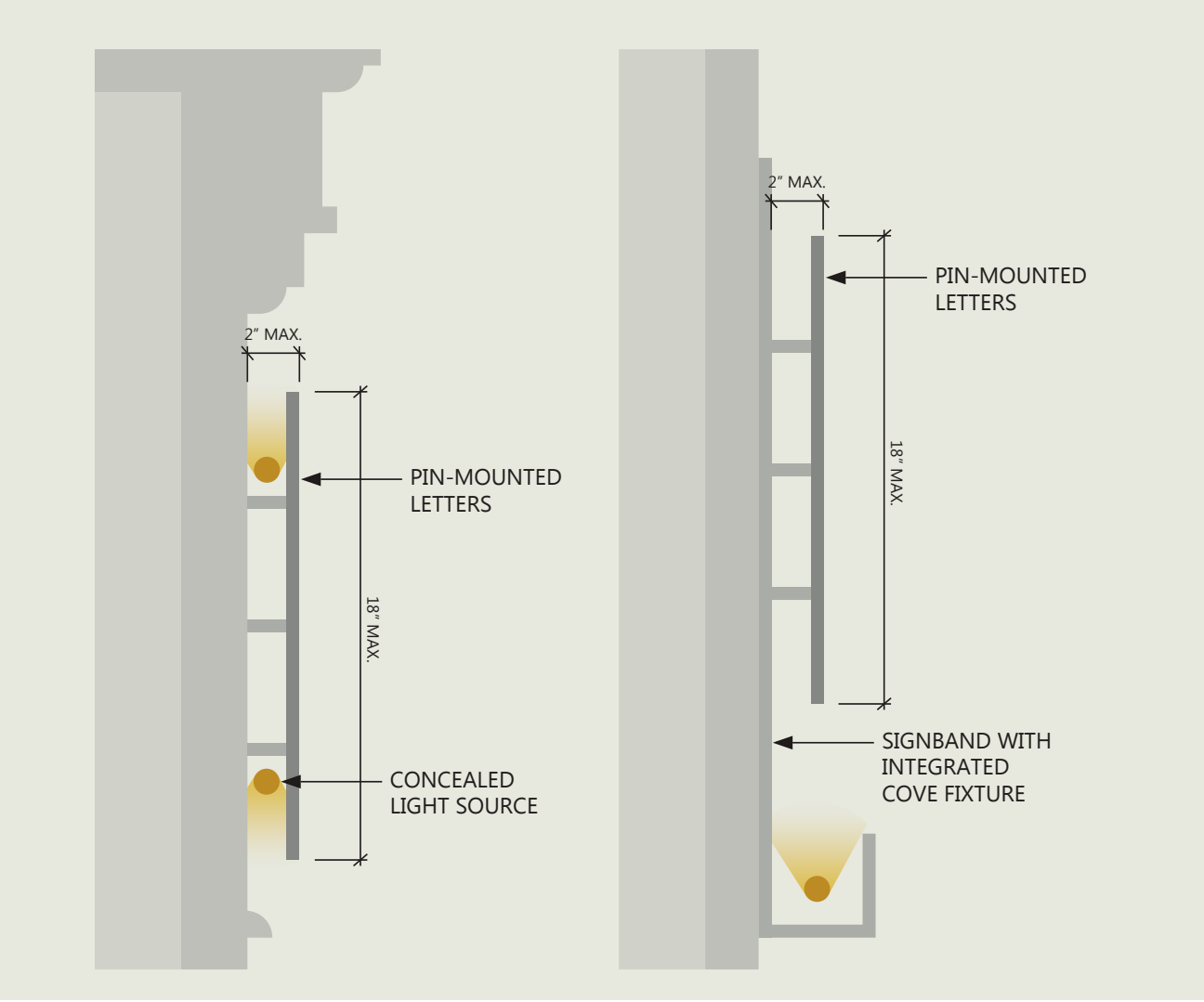
Light fixture armature cannot project more than 18 inches from the sign.

Conduit must be concealed.

Installing Halo-Lit Signage

Staff can approve installing halo-lit signage with a concealed light source that emits a glow behind solid letters or logo but does not emit light through the front or sides. Halo-lit signage must otherwise meet criteria for pin-mounted signage at signbands, as described earlier in this section.

Below left, a section drawing of halo-lit signage; below right, a section drawing of signage illuminated with an integrated cove fixture.



Installing Neon Signage

Staff can approve installing one interior neon sign per display window if it meets the following criteria:

Backing panel must be clear.

Sign must be installed at least six inches behind the glass.

Sign must not exceed 15 percent of the area of the display window or transom.

Visible illuminated lighting strips that outline display windows are **not permitted**.

A combination of neon and vinyl signage that meets staff-level rules.

Installing Bracket Sign Lighting

Staff can approve lighting a bracket sign by concealed lighting integrated into the sign or by small, discrete light fixtures on projecting arms attached to and finished to blend with the sign or armature. **Staff cannot approve internally illuminated bracket signs.**

Other Types of Commercial Signage

Signage can be installed at locations other than within or adjacent to storefront infill. Often these are commercial spaces that are not necessarily storefronts or locations that do not qualify for other types of signage.

Installing Signage in Commercial Spaces Partially below the Sidewalk

Staff can approve installing signage in commercial spaces below the sidewalk if it meets the following criteria:

Sign panels can be installed on a plain masonry band or wall above the commercial space opening and must otherwise follow criteria for sign panels above storefronts.

Flat metal or wood signs up to 12 × 36 inches in size and one inch thick with painted or applied lettering can be attached to an existing areaway fence in front of or associated with the store.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos of storefront** or commercial entrance locations of proposed new signs.
- ☐ **Storefront or building elevation or side elevation:**
  - – Height of installation above sidewalk
- ☐ **Sign elevation for each proposed signage type:**
  - – Height and width of sign, plaque, or poster / menu box
- ☐ **Section or side elevation** of proposed sign, plaque, or poster / menu box:
  - – Height and depth of lettering and logo
  - – Installation method
- ☐ **Details** of the proposed integrated light fixtures, if any.
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

An example of a sign panel installed at plain masonry for a below-grade commercial space.

Plaque signage marks the entrance to a building.

Installing Plaques

Staff can approve installing plaques if they meet the following criteria:

On the entrances of institutional buildings or other commercial buildings that **cannot typically utilize other sign types**.

Composed of metal, glass, or stone and installed at plain masonry, metal, or wood, but not cast iron.

Up to 12 × 18 inches and 1/2 inch thick.

Mounted on a free-standing metal pole with a dark finish up to six feet tall, installed through non-historic paving within an areaway. Each plaque must be no larger than 6 × 12 inches, with no more than three plaques total on the pole.

Installing Poster Boxes

Staff can approve installing poster boxes if they meet the following criteria:

Installed at buildings that traditionally used poster boxes, including religious institutions, community centers, libraries, museums, and clubs.

Must be installed in areas of plain masonry, wood, or metal, but not cast iron. Must have a metal or wood frame with clear glass.

Lighting must be inside the box with concealed wiring.

An example of a poster box at an institutional building.

Installing Menu Boxes

Staff can approve installing menu boxes if they meet the following criteria:

At or near a storefront entrance, installed on plain masonry, wood, or metal, but not cast iron.

With a metal or wood frame and clear glass, and no larger than 28 × 30 inches.

Lighting must be inside the box with concealed wiring.

Menu boxes installed at areas of plain masonry at a corner storefront.

Installing Flags and Banners

A new fabric flag with signage can be hung on an existing flagpole armature, provided that the flagpole was approved by the Commission or present at the time of designation. Staff cannot approve a new flagpole unless one existed historically. Staff may suggest alternatives — or the proposal may be presented to the full Commission for review at a public hearing. Flags with signage must comply with zoning requirements as well.

Section C
Technical Guidance and Resources

This section provides additional guidance and resources to help you understand LPC's rules and criteria — and submit the correct materials with your permit application.

→ **In This Section:**

Glossary

Armature
is a metal structural support for a rigid projecting sign. The armature may support the bracket sign by means of one or two projecting arms.

Bracket Sign (or Blade Sign)
is a rigid outdoor sign installed perpendicular to a building facade and attached to an armature, consisting of the (two) display faces and all letters, words, numerals, illustrations, and logos associated with the establishment that are applied to the faces. In addition, a bracket sign may consist solely of an outline of a shape and/or letters intended to act as a symbol or sign for the establishment.

Cornice
is a projecting architectural molding that tops the elements to which it is attached, used especially for a roof or the crowning member of an entablature (the lintel and its architectural components), located directly above the frieze or flat portion of the entablature.

Channel-mounted Sign
is a sign made up of dimensional letters attached to a metal channel or bar that spans in front of the transom window, mounted directly to the storefront framing or the returns of the piers of the storefront surround.

Cove Lighting
is a form of indirect lighting built into projecting coves or trays at the top or bottom of sign panels or installed on existing ledges, recesses, or the cornice or entablature above the storefront. Illumination can be directed upwards or downwards on the sign.

Dimensional Letters
are painted wood, metal, or plastic three-dimensional letters (solid or with an open back) that are applied to sign panels, sign bands, sign channels, or bracket signs.

Display Window
is the large glazed portion of the storefront infill, and the associated framing, above the bulkhead and below the transom, extending pier to pier. The display window is typically used for the display of goods and to provide daylight and visibility into the commercial space.

Flat Panel Sign
is a sign made up of digital print, die-cut vinyl, or dimensional letters attached to a wood or metal substrate (the panel) that can be mounted directly to the building above a storefront.

Gooseneck Light Fixture
is a type of projecting light fixture that is curved like the neck of a goose, with a lamp shade shielding the light bulb and directing the illumination downward toward the sign.

Halo Illumination
is a type of indirect illumination where the source is placed behind the face of the letters to create a glow effect onto the wall or backing panel that the sign is mounted to.

Lintel
is the horizontal member or element above a door, window, or storefront opening.

Pier
is an exterior vertical member(s) or element(s) (usually of brick, stone, or metal), placed at intervals along a wall, which typically separates storefront openings within a single building or defines a single storefront opening.

Pin-mounted Sign
is a sign mounted directly on the signband of a building wall as individual letters, numbers, or symbols without a background. Individual letters, numbers, or symbols can also be pin-mounted to a sign panel.

Sign
is a fixture or area containing lettering or graphics used to advertise a store, goods, or services.

Signband
is the flat, horizontal area on the facade, usually located immediately above the storefront and below the second story window sill where signs were historically attached. Signbands can also be found immediately above the storefront display window but below the masonry opening's lintel. A signband shall not include the flat portion of a cornice that is less than 12 inches in height. A signband may exist above a second story storefront.

Storefront
is the first or second story area of the facade that provides access or natural illumination into a space used for retail or other commercial purposes.

Storefront Infill
is the framing, glazing, and cladding contained within a storefront opening in the facade, including display windows, bulkheads, entranceways, etc.

Storefront Opening
is the area of the facade between the piers and lintel that contains storefront infill.

Transom
is a glazed area above a display window or door that is separated from the display window or door by a horizontal framing.

Master Plans

Master plans, which generally do not have an expiration date, allow you to perform repetitive signage work over time as finances and vacancies permit (See *Section 2-02* of the LPC Rules). Master plans are more efficient because once approved, applications can be processed more quickly.

Master plans can be approved at the staff level or by the Commission, depending on whether the work meets the LPC Rules.

Once a master plan is established, you can move forward with work covered by the master plan by submitting a completed application form to the Commission, describing the scope of work and stating that it conforms to master plan drawings and other documents.

Staff reviews the application and generally issues an Authorization to Proceed permit prior to commencement of work.

Chapter 6

Additions

Photo: Baxt Ingui Architects, P.C.

Historic buildings in New York City are often modified or expanded over time as building uses and needs change. The relationship of a proposed addition to an existing building in terms of scale, visibility, massing, and materials, as well as its effect on significant building features, serve as the basis for LPC's rules for additions (see **LPC Rules**, Section 2-15, available on our website, **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**.)

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

This chapter explains LPC's rules for rooftop and rear yard additions, bulkheads, decks, dormers, and other rooftop elements. Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to the LPC Rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

Note: If **excavation work** is part of your application for an addition, please refer to *Chapter 7* for more information. If **rooftop or rear yard mechanical equipment** is part of your application, please refer to *Chapter 12.*

Section A
How to Get Started

Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the LPC Rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for your building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine how the LPC Rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find **construction date, architect and style, building and landmark type,** and a link to the **LPC designation report** with additional historical background.

What did your building look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services NYC Municipal Archives Collections.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide** Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

What's the visibility?
Determine how visible your proposed addition would be by reviewing block plans or aerial maps, walking the block and surrounding streets, and testing with mock-ups. Document whether visibility is over the primary facade or a secondary facade. Visibility (or invisibility) is an important factor.

How big is the building?
Verify the number of stories and dimensional height of your building. Visibility requirements can vary depending on building height.

See If Your Work Requires an LPC Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
LPC requires a permit for constructing, enlarging, or replacing most additions to existing buildings, but a permit is **not required** for:

Replacing flat roofing on existing additions.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

What You Will Need

A complete application typically requires the materials listed below, but additional materials may be required depending on the work type. See *Section B* for a list of all materials required for your work type.

Basic Application Materials

- **An LPC Permit Application Form,** filled out and signed by the property owner.
- **Color photos** of the entire building and close-ups of the areas of the addition that show location and context of proposed work.
- **For rear yard additions only,** a full block plan showing the number of floors (height) and approximate depth of existing additions.
- **Comparative drawings:**
  - Elevation of existing conditions and proposed additions
  - Roof, floor, and/or site plans of existing conditions and locations of proposed additions
  - Section of existing conditions and proposed additions on/adjoining the building
  - Sightline section taken at 6-foot eye level from directly across the street at the property line and at other points where the addition may be visible. This determines maximum level of visibility and overall visibility
  - Details of existing conditions and proposed additions
- **Color specifications/ paint cards.**
- **Material specifications.**

  *A **physical mock-up** may be required to determine potential visibility, typically for rooftop additions but sometimes for rear yard additions as well. If so, submit the following application materials:*
- **Color photos** of the mock-up and roof from surrounding points on the street to determine potential visibility.
- If the addition would be visible from a public thoroughfare, **color photos** from points of visibility:
  - If requested by staff, a photo montage for each view with the addition drawn into the image
- Staff must be invited to the site to **review the mock-up in place**.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

In This Section:

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules — or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. LPC staff can guide you through this process. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks for more information.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of work involving additions to existing buildings. See LPC Rules, Section 2-15, for more information.

Visibility Standards for Additions

Staff can approve **minimally visible rooftop additions** in some cases, depending on the type of addition, how it is seen in the context of its building and neighboring buildings, and building height. In this section, "minimally visible" refers to visibility of the addition from its maximum point of visibility when viewed from any public thoroughfare. Certain types of buildings may have different visibility requirements for rooftop additions.

Staff **cannot approve visible rear yard additions**, even if visibility is minimal.

Staff assesses visibility using dimensional standards or contextual standards.

Dimensional Standards

Using dimensional standards, **the addition must meet maximum visibility standards from a public thoroughfare,** based on the height of the building or setback as set forth in the below chart.

Using dimensional standards, the visible portion of the addition must not span more than 50 percent of the length of the facade it is seen above — unless it is an open railing or installation with a similar open quality. (Read *Rooftop Additions* for more information.)

Contextual Standards

In assessing minimal visibility using **contextual standards**, staff considers the following factors:

Whether the addition is visible at a significant distance.

Whether the addition is visible from limited vantage points, including through alleyways, yards, or similar open portions of sites that are not vacant building sites.

Whether the addition is visible from an oblique angle.

Whether the addition is visible in combination with other existing additions or structures that share a similar level of visibility.

ⓘ

Note: The invisibility or minimal visibility of an addition is a critical consideration in approving a rooftop addition. It is the applicant's responsibility to accurately describe the visibility, including the maximum points of visibility from public thoroughfares. Mistakes or errors are the responsibility of the applicant and can result in alterations or removal after construction.

This mock-up of a proposed addition, in orange, is visible through a narrow break in the street wall.

Visibility of Occupiable Rooftop Additions for Staff-Level Approval

Building or setback height at installation	**Maximum amount of visibility**
Up to 60 feet	12 inches or less
61–80 feet	18 inches or less
81–100 feet	24 inches or less
More than 100 feet	36 inches or less

Rooftop Additions

When reviewing a proposed rooftop addition, staff considers its relationship to the building in terms of scale, visibility, form, materials, and significant features. If the building is in a historic district, staff also considers how the addition relates to surrounding buildings when it is visible from a public thoroughfare.

Rooftop additions can be **occupiable** space: rooms or enclosures and accessory installations intended for human occupancy. They can also be **non-occupiable space**, including stair and elevator bulkheads, storage, privacy fences, decks, and railings.

Occupiable Space

Staff can approve rooftop additions of occupiable space on individual landmarks and buildings in historic districts if they meet the following criteria:

Installation

The installation must not damage or remove significant roof features.

If a rooftop element is considered a significant feature, e.g., artist's studio windows or decorative chimneys, that element must be preserved to obtain a staff-level approval.

If you are unsure whether a rooftop element is a significant feature, staff can help when you file your application and photos; you can also contact LPC in advance of filing.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades and roof.
- ☐ **Photos** of areas of construction at the roof.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated roof plans** showing locations where construction will occur.
- ☐ **Comparative elevations** of existing conditions and proposed additions.
- ☐ **Comparative building section drawings** showing existing conditions and proposed additions on the roof, including chimneys, railings, and surrounding parapets:
  - – Sightline section taken at 6-foot eye level from directly across the street at the property line and other points where the addition may be visible
  - – Large-scale detail drawings of visible additions only
- ☐ **Material specifications on drawings.**
- ☐ **Color specifications** for visible additions only.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if work requires a DOB permit.
- ☐ **DOB Objections Sheet or HUB documentation** clear of zoning objections.

A physical mock-up of the construction is required to determine potential visibility. The following application materials must be submitted:

- ☐ **Color photos** of the mock-up and roof from surrounding points on the street to document visibility of proposed addition at a 6-foot eye level.
- ☐ If the proposed addition is visible from a public thoroughfare, **color photos from points of visibility:**
  - – If staff requests, a photo montage of each view with the addition drawn in.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

An artist studio window, considered a significant feature in the Greenwich Village Historic District.

ⓘ **Note:** All permit applications for occupiable additions must be filed with the Department of Buildings (DOB). In order for your permit to be issued, your application must include a copy of the DOB Objections Sheet or HUB documentation showing that no outstanding zoning objections exist.

Roof features that are not considered significant, such as a roof hatch, may be removed as part of proposed construction work.

Visibility

The addition must not be visible over the primary facade, and can only be minimally visible over secondary facades at buildings seven stories or higher. However, minimal visibility of chimneys or flues is allowed over primary facades in some cases. See the chart on the next page, *Visibility of Occupiable Rooftop Additions*, for more details. Staff will request that you construct a mock-up of your proposal to verify visibility.

Height

The addition may be no more than one story high and up to 11 feet above the midpoint of the existing roof.

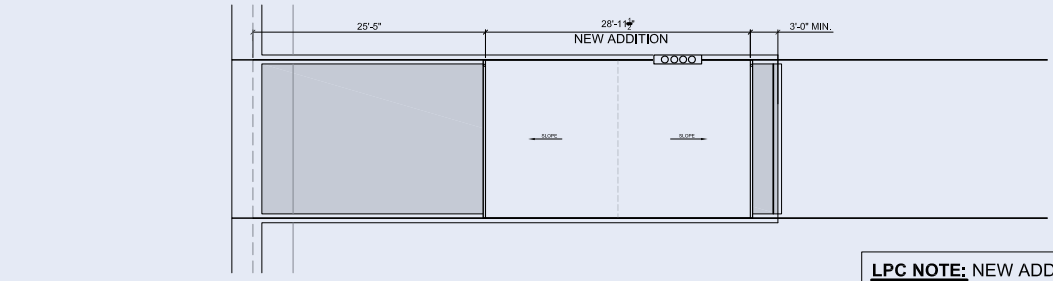
Setback

The addition must be set back from sightlines at the front facade and set back at least three feet from the rear facade.

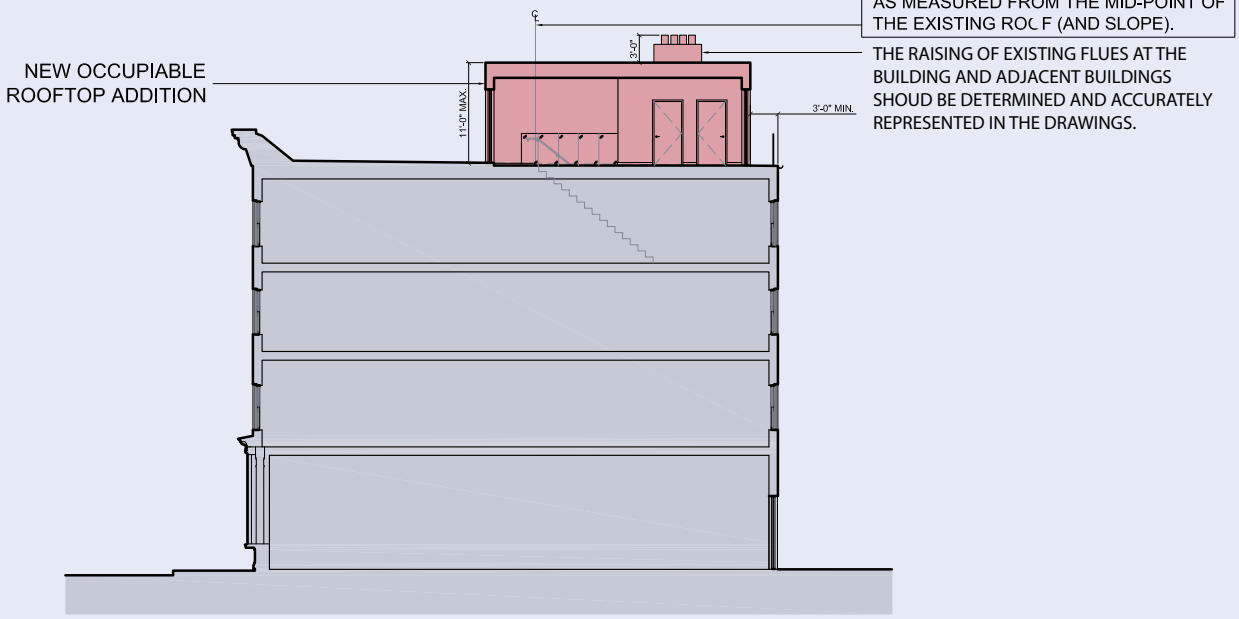
Cumulative Impact

Staff assesses the cumulative impact of additions at the roof and rear of the building. If there is an existing rear yard addition or an approval for one, staff cannot approve constructing a new occupiable rooftop addition unless the rear yard addition is considered original or historic.

To determine whether your existing addition is original or historic, do preliminary research as described in Section A and/or submit photos of existing conditions to discuss with staff.



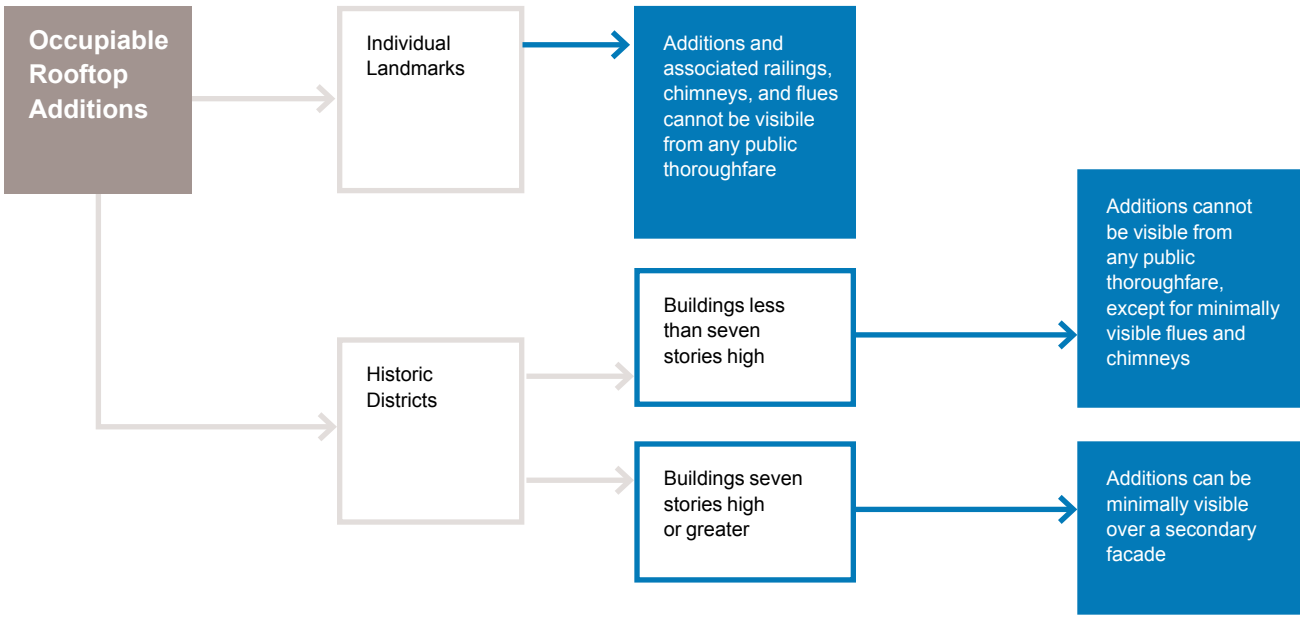
PROPOSED ROOF PLAN



PROPOSED SECTION

A plan and elevation drawing showing an occupiable single-story rooftop addition with instructions for determining the maximum height allowed for staff-level review.

Visibility of Occupiable Rooftop Additions



A photograph showing a chimney flue extension seen over the front facade of a row house as a result of a new rooftop bulkhead. The bulkhead itself is not visible from public thoroughfares.

Non-Occupiable Space

Staff can approve non-occupiable rooftop additions, including stair and elevator bulkheads, pergolas, storage, privacy fences, decks, and railings on individual landmarks and buildings in historic districts if they meet the following criteria:

Installation

The installation must not damage or remove significant roof features. **If a rooftop element is considered a significant feature**, e.g., artist's studio windows or decorative chimneys, that element must be preserved.

If you are unsure whether a rooftop element is significant, staff can help when you file your application and photos; you can also contact LPC in advance of filing.

Roof features not considered significant may be removed as part of proposed construction work.

Visibility

The addition **can be minimally visible over the primary facade in some cases, and minimally visible over the secondary facade**. See the chart on the following page, *Visibility of Non-Occupiable Rooftop Additions*, for more details, as well as the chart on page 6.6 documenting how far additions can project into the maximum line of sight from a public thoroughfare. Staff may request that you construct a mock-up of your proposal to verify visibility.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades and roof.
- ☐ **Photos** of areas of construction and/or installation at the roof.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated roof plans** showing where construction/installation will occur.
- ☐ **Comparative elevations** of existing conditions and proposed additions and /or installations.
- ☐ **Comparative building section drawings** showing existing conditions and additions on the roof, including chimneys, railings, and surrounding parapets with heights:
  - – Sightline section taken at 6-foot eye level from directly across the street at the property line and other points where additions and/or installations may be visible
  - – Large-scale detail drawings of visible additions and/or installations only
- ☐ **Material specifications on drawings.**
- ☐ **Color specifications** for visible additions and/or installations only.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if work requires a DOB permit.

*If the visibility cannot be documented from the previous items, **a physical mock-up** of the construction and/or installation is required to determine potential visibility. The following application materials must be submitted:*

- ☐ **Color photos** of the mock-up and roof from surrounding points on the street to document the potential visibility of the proposed addition and/or installation at a 6-foot eye level.
- ☐ If the proposed addition is visible from a public thoroughfare, **color photos from points of visibility and maximum visibility**:
  - – If requested by staff, a photo montage for each view with the addition or installation drawn into the image

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

In some cases, staff can approve work that **increases visibility** of an existing addition or structure if it meets the following criteria:

Work is required by NYC Building Code or Fire Code, and documentation confirms that there is no feasible alternative.

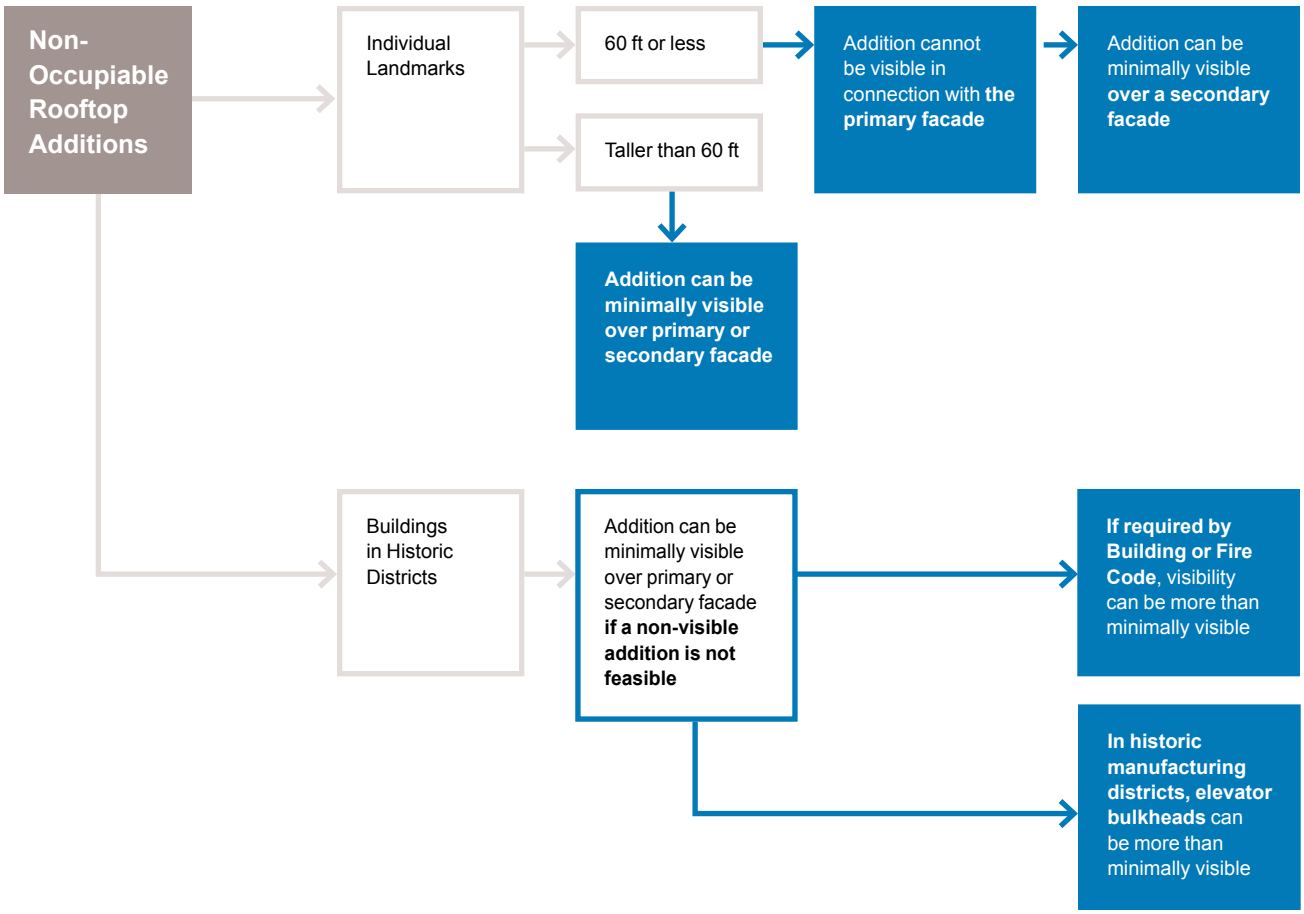
Extending an existing historic elevator shaft bulkhead to a visible (or more visible) condition to meet relevant codes, without adding an additional stop to a new floor or the roof.

Buildings with visible elevator bulkheads at or just behind the primary facade are found at certain originally commercial and manufacturing historic districts, such as the SoHo-Cast Iron Historic District and SoHo-Cast Iron Extension; Tribeca East, West, North, and South Historic Districts; NoHo Historic District; NoHo East Historic District; NoHo Extension; and the Ladies Mile Historic District.

Bulkhead materials and finish must be utilitarian and compatible with materials and finish of the primary facade.

An elevator bulkhead visible over a front facade in the SoHo Historic District.

Visibility of Non-Occupiable Rooftop Additions



Dormers

A dormer is a window, or window assembly and framing, that projects from a sloping roof. Staff can approve installing new dormers if they meet the following criteria:

Location

The dormer must be located on the non-visible side of a peaked or pitched roof above the rear facade, facing the rear yard.

Design

The design must be in keeping with the type of dormers found on buildings of a similar age and style, and must harmonize with the building's fenestration pattern.

A new dormer or an enlarged dormer must not span the entire width of the roof, and the historic roof pitch must be maintained by retaining at least 24 inches at both sides of the dormer.

The highest point of the dormer must be at least 18 inches below the existing ridgeline of the roof, and the lowest point must be at least 18 inches from the plane of the rear facade, unless the building is of a type or style that historically had a higher or lower dormer.

Materials

Materials must be in keeping with the type of dormers found on buildings of a similar age and style.

Dormers at a pitched roof facing the rear yard.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades and roof.
- ☐ **Photos of areas** of construction at the roof.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated roof plans** showing where construction will occur, including setbacks from top, bottom, and sides of roof.
- ☐ **Comparative elevations** of existing conditions and the proposed dormer.
- ☐ **Comparative building section drawing** showing existing conditions and the proposed dormer on the roof, including setbacks from the top and bottom of the roof:
  - Large-scale detail drawings of dormer windows, cladding, and roofing
- ☐ **Full block plan to show potential visibility.**
- ☐ **Material specifications on the drawings.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings.**

A physical mock-up of the construction may be required to determine potential visibility. If so, the following application materials must be submitted:

- ☐ **Color photos** of the mock-up and roof from surrounding points on the street to demonstrate that the proposal is not visible from a public thoroughfare.
- ☐ If the proposed dormer would be visible from a public thoroughfare, **color photos** from points of visibility:
  - If staff requests, a photo montage for each view with the addition drawn in

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Rear Yard Additions

When reviewing proposed rear yard additions, LPC considers the relationship of the addition to the building in terms of scale, visibility, massing, and materials, and its effect on significant building features. In historic districts, the Commission also considers the relationship to surrounding buildings and rear yards. A rear yard addition can generally be no taller or deeper than typical rear yard additions on the block.

ⓘ

Note: Before an LPC permit can be issued, applications for occupiable additions must be filed with the DOB and include a copy of the DOB Objections Sheet or HUB documentation to show that no outstanding zoning objections exist. **The addition must be as-of-right for bulk, massing, and height under the NYC Building Code and Zoning Resolution.**

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades and rear yard.
- ☐ **Photos of areas** of construction at rear facade and rear yard.
- ☐ **Full block plan** showing number of floors (height) and approximate depth of existing additions.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated site, floor, and roof plans** showing where construction will occur.
- ☐ **Comparative elevations** of the existing conditions and proposed rear yard addition.
- ☐ **Comparative building section drawings** showing the existing condition and proposed rear yard addition, including any below-grade floors or crawlspaces:
  - Large-scale detailed drawings of windows, doors, cladding, and parapets / railings
- ☐ **Material specifications on drawings.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings.**
- ☐ **DOB Objections Sheet or HUB documentation clear of zoning objections.**

A physical mock-up of construction may be required to determine potential visibility. If so, the following application materials must be submitted:

- ☐ **Color photos** of the mock-up from surrounding points on the street to confirm the addition is not visible from a public thoroughfare.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

An original or early extension at the back of a rowhouse, often referred to as a rear “el”.

Removing Elements

Staff can approve the removal of features on the rear facade and existing rear yard extensions **not considered significant** as part of proposed construction work. If a facade element or structure is considered **significant,** e.g., stained glass windows or decorative cornice/window surrounds, the element must be preserved.

If you are unsure whether a rear facade element or structure is a significant feature, staff can help when you file your application and photos; you can also contact LPC in advance of filing.

Impact

Staff assesses the **cumulative impact** of additions at the roof and rear of a building. If there is an existing rooftop addition or an approval for one, approval of a new rear yard addition is not permitted at the staff level, unless the addition is considered original or historic.

If you are unsure whether an existing addition is original or historic, staff can help when you file your application and photos; you can also contact LPC in advance of filing.

Visibility

Rear yard additions cannot be visible from any public thoroughfare. Staff may request that you construct a mock-up of your proposal to verify visibility.

Context

A majority (more than 50 percent) of buildings of a similar type (e.g., rowhouses or town houses) in a block must have an existing rear yard addition or extension. The proposal can be as tall and as deep as the predominant height and depth of those existing additions. Full-height rear yard additions are not permitted, regardless of context.

Rear Yards

When reviewing applications for rear yard additions, LPC considers the effect on open space, including the rear yard of the building and shared central space of the block. These additions must not extend to the rear lot line or substantially eliminate the rear yard, as uncharacteristically deep additions can negatively impact the character of shared central space.

Materials

The facade of the addition (facing the central rear open space) can be clad in traditional or modern materials such as brick, stucco, wood, or fiber cement siding.

Exposed or painted concrete or concrete masonry units, vinyl siding, and exterior insulated finish systems (EIFS) are not permitted on facades facing central open spaces.

Lot-line walls of the addition must have a neutral finished surface such as brick or stucco.

Exposed or painted concrete, concrete masonry units, and vinyl siding are not permitted.

Design

The bottom two levels of the addition can be composed of punched window and door openings or a double-height opening, with mullions or muntins to break down the scale of glazing.

Openings must be framed by outer piers of at least 24 inches and separated by a horizontal spandrel of at least 18 inches at the location of the intermediate floor.

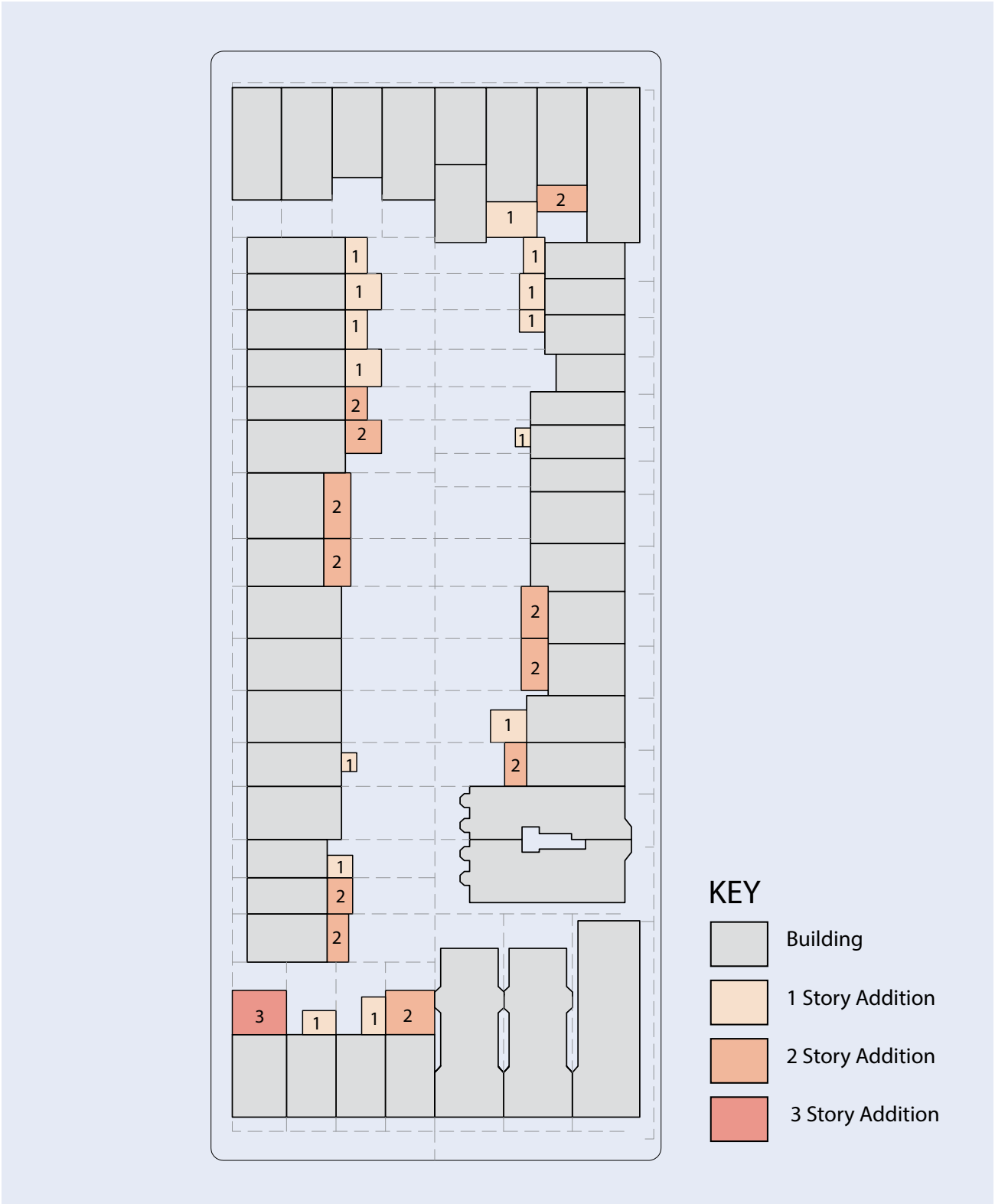
Design of openings must be consistent with Section 2-14 of the LPC Rules for new and modified windows and doors at minimally or non-visible secondary facades. See Chapter 2 for more information on window and door configurations.

Parapets and railings can extend up to 42 inches above the roof or deck surface of the addition, as required by NYC Building Codes and Fire Codes.

Railings must be used.

Elevation and section drawings
illustrating current conditions and a
proposed two-story rear-yard addition.

A block plan should show all the rear yard additions on the block for context and to show visibility.



Decks

Rear yard decks can be constructed to project from the plane of the historic rear facade or in conjunction with a new rear yard addition. Staff can approve rear yard decks that meet the following criteria:

Only one level and without a roof, with access only to the lowest full-height floor, e.g., the basement or first floor. Cannot be built on top of an existing rear addition or deck.

Extend up to eight feet from the rear facade, not including steps from the deck down to the rear yard.

Made of wood or metal framing.

Not visible or minimally visible from a public thoroughfare. If visible, railing must have an open quality, material, and design compatible with the building and streetscape.

If proposed in conjunction with a new addition, the projection of the deck is not taken into account when determining if the proposed addition is consistent with the predominant depth of additions within the block.

This metal deck extends eight feet from the rear facade, plus stairs.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades and rear yard.
- ☐ **Photos of areas** of construction at rear facade and rear yard.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated site and floor plans** showing where construction will occur.
- ☐ **Comparative elevation** of the existing condition and proposed deck, including stairs and railings.
- ☐ **Comparative building section drawings** showing the existing condition and proposed deck, including stairs and railings:
  - – Large-scale detail drawings of visible decks only
- ☐ **Material/color specifications on drawings.**
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if the proposed work requires a DOB permit.

  A physical mock-up of construction may be required to determine potential visibility. *If so, the following application materials must be submitted:*
- ☐ **Color photos** of the mock-up from surrounding points on the street to determine potential visibility of the proposed deck at a 6-foot eye level.
- ☐ If visible from a public thoroughfare, **color photos** from points of visibility:
  - – If staff requests, a photo montage for each view with the deck drawn in

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Section C
Technical Guidance and Resources

This section provides additional guidance and resources to help you understand LPC's rules and criteria in order to submit the correct materials with your application.

→ In This Section:

How to Document Visibility of an Addition

Mock-Ups

A mock-up is a temporary, accurate physical representation of proposed building modifications. It gives the Commission a sense of the impact an addition would have on the building and the streetscape in terms of visibility, massing, and scale as seen from a public thoroughfare.

Mock-ups are always required for rooftop additions of occupiable space and for some non-occupiable rooftop additions and rear yard additions. In cases where a mock-up is not required, staff uses required application materials to determine whether the addition is minimally visible or not visible from a public thoroughfare based on section drawings, sightline drawings, and photos of the building, the rooftop, and its surroundings.

A mock-up is typically constructed from 2x4s or metal pipe and draped with orange construction netting, painted a bright color, or wrapped with bright yellow caution tape, or, in certain circumstances, a story pole is used. These materials ensure that the mock-up is clearly visible from the street.

The mock-up must include all exterior walls and roofs of an addition that may be visible, as well as any required railings or mechanical equipment.

Once the mock-up has been constructed, contact the staff member assigned to your application and schedule a site visit. Your architect must be prepared to verify (with drawings and a measuring tape) heights and setbacks of various elements on-site.

At the site inspection, LPC makes an initial determination on visibility from public thoroughfares at the 6-foot eye level and may suggest modifications to lessen impact.

Mock-ups are often required for projects being presented at a public hearing. In this case, the mock-up must be constructed of sturdy materials so it can be safely left in place over the course of the hearing process so staff, Commissioners, and the community can view and document it.

Depending on the complexity and scale of your project, DOB and LPC permits may be required for the "temporary installation" of a mock-up. See *Chapter 14* for more information on temporary installations.

Photo Montage or Mock-Up Montage

Photo montages and mock-up montages are graphic representations of an existing building with a proposed modification, demonstrating what it would look like if a permit were granted.

The photo montage or mock-up montage may be a hand-rendered or computer-rendered image utilizing a combination of photos and 3D modeling or a full 3D model. It must clearly and honestly demonstrate the design and scale of the proposed addition.

Each image must be clearly numbered and labeled to include the exact location from which it is taken. All views must be keyed to a site map showing the location and direction from which they are taken.

Each proposed image must be shown adjacent to an existing image (the "before" view). If an image of the addition is difficult to see, the proposed image must circle or highlight the addition. Telephoto or zoomed-in views must also be included.

Photo montages must be taken from all surrounding street locations where the addition would be most and least visible (plus several in-between) — both inside and outside historic districts.

A mock-up (left) and photo montage (right) of a proposed penthouse, shown in orange. The penthouse would be an occupiable rooftop addition.

Chapter 7

Excavation

Although often not visible, excavation on landmark sites or in buildings can directly impact a building's physical integrity. Protecting historic buildings and sites is the basis for LPC's rules for excavation (see **LPC Rules**, Section 2-16, available on our website, **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**).

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

ⓘ

Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to the LPC Rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

ⓘ

Note: Excavation work must comply with Department of Buildings (DOB) requirements as well as with LPC criteria.

Note: If your excavation work is related to an addition or alteration in a yard or an areaway, refer to Chapters 6 and 8 for more information.

Section A
How to Get Started

ⓘ

Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for the building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map**.

Click on your building to find **construction date**, **architect** and **style**, **building** and **landmark type**, and a link to the LPC **designation report** with historical background.

What did the building look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available online through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services **NYC Municipal Archives Collections**.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide Researching Historic Buildings in New York City**, available on our website at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

See If Your Work Requires an LPC Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
LPC requires a permit for most excavation work, but a permit is **not required** for the following types of work:

Shallow regrading in yards to match or approximate existing grade.

Minor excavation in yards for shallow trenches or post holes.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

What You Will Need

A complete application requires all the materials listed below.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **An LPC Permit Application Form,** filled out and signed by the property owner.
- ☐ **Color photos** of the entire building and close-ups of areas of exterior excavation work.
- ☐ **Comparative drawings:**
  - – Floor and / or site plans of existing conditions and locations of proposed excavation work
  - – Section of existing conditions and locations of proposed excavation work

  You must also submit the following materials, **unless the work requires only limited underpinning or no underpinning at all.**
- ☐ **Pre-construction site survey** to document existing adjacent conditions.
- ☐ **Structural conditions report** that addresses the building's age, original construction type, condition of foundations and facades, plus relevant site information (adjoining buildings, walls, etc.).
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB Support of Excavation (SOE) filing drawings.**
- ☐ In some cases, a **facade monitoring plan**. See Section B for more information.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

→ **In This Section:**

ⓘ

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules — or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. Staff can guide you through this process. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks for more information.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of excavation work and how to protect your historic building during construction. See LPC Rules, Section 2-16, for more information.

Excavation Work

Staff can approve the following types of excavation work if it meets the following criteria:

Lowering and replacing the lowest existing floor slab (e.g., basement or cellar) to increase floor-to-ceiling height to no more than ten feet.

Excavation to create a new crawlspace, cellar, or basement below an existing addition or new Commission-approved addition, if the depth does not exceed the lowest story of the original building.

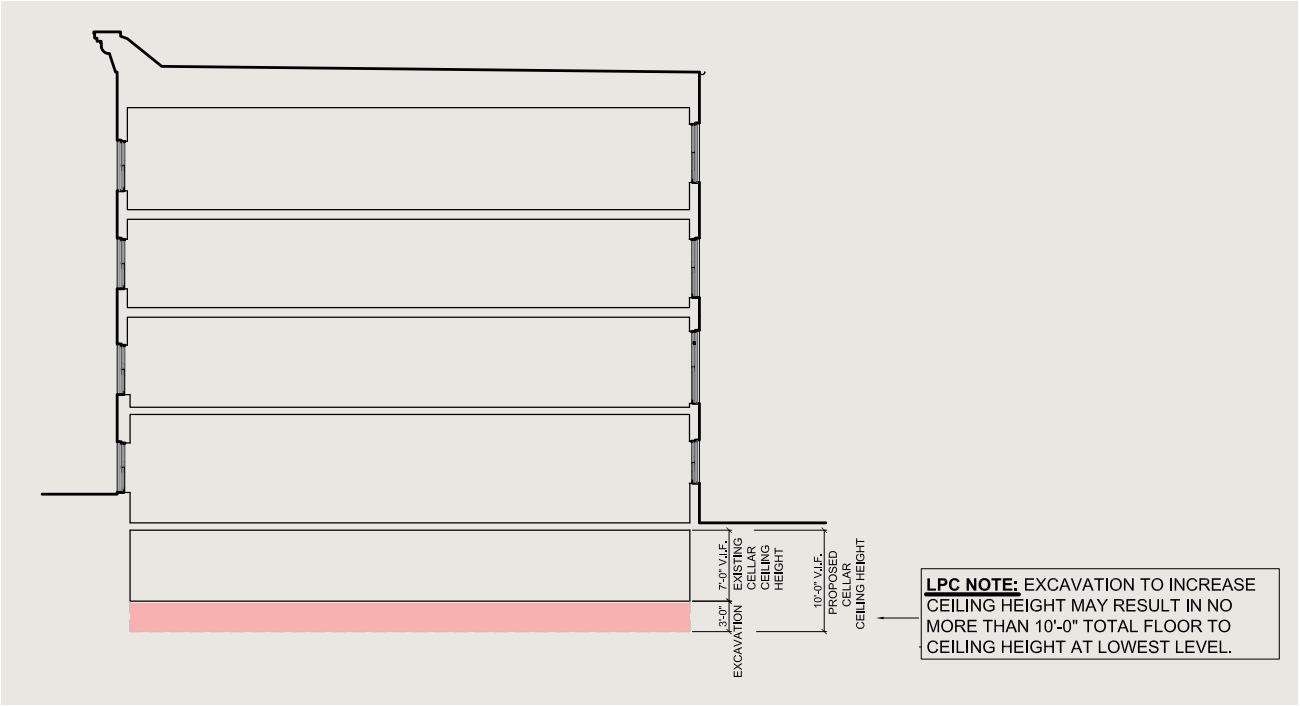
Excavation for construction or repair of new structural elements, including footings, foundation walls, retaining walls, elevator and escalator pits, and other elements.

Excavation for construction or repair of new architectural elements, including light wells, stairwells, sunken terraces, in-ground pools, water features, planting beds, significant landscape features, significant regrading, and other elements, provided:

Work does not detract from the building or substantially eliminate the presence of a rear yard, and

At least a five-foot wide unexcavated planting area is maintained along the rear lot line.

Excavation can be approved in a rear yard to accommodate a sunken terrace.



A section drawing of a row house with an existing cellar floor-to-ceiling height of seven feet. The cellar floor slab may be lowed a maximum of three additional feet.

Protecting Historic Buildings During Construction

Your excavation work must be designed and executed in compliance with DOB regulations under the supervision of a licensed professional engineer or registered architect. Application materials must include a structural conditions report that demonstrates you have examined structural conditions and considered how to protect both the building and neighboring buildings.

Facade Monitoring

For buildings **six stories or less**, you must include a plan for monitoring the facade of the building and adjacent buildings, if either of the buildings:

Were constructed before 1901;

Are constructed of wood;

Have an unreinforced masonry foundation, or

Have a stone or brick foundation affected by or adjacent to excavation.

If the work does not require underpinning or only requires limited underpinning and does not occur at or adjacent to designated buildings under the categories described above, facade monitoring is not required.

Underpinning in progress at the foundation wall of a historic building.

Chapter 8

Front, Side, and Rear Yards

Front and side yards and areaways are historic features at many residential buildings throughout New York City. They serve an important function, physically and aesthetically separating structures from sidewalks and the street. Yards and areaways are incorporated into private open spaces in front and on the sides of rowhouses and semi-detached rowhouses, and sometimes include driveways and walkways. They have historically been modified to address access issues, safety concerns, and to add or remove greenery. Historic alterations serve as the basis for LPC's rules for work in yards and areaways (see **LPC Rules**, Section 2-17, available on our website, **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**).

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

This chapter explains LPC's rules for work on yards and areaways. Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to the LPC Rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

Note: If your work in a yard or areaway is related to an addition, excavation, or HVAC and mechanical equipment, refer to *Chapters 6, 7*, and *12* for more information.

Section A
How to Get Started

ⓘ

Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the LPC Rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for your building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine how the LPC Rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find **construction date, architect and style, building and landmark type,** and a link to the **LPC designation report** with additional historical background.

What did your building look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services NYC Municipal Archives Collections.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide** Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

How big is your building?
Verify your building's **height** and **street frontage,** as requirements vary depending on building size. See *Section B* for more information on work types.

See If Your Work Requires an LPC Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
LPC requires a permit for most work in yards and areaways, but a permit is **not required** for:

Ordinary maintenance, repair, and retrofitting of areaway and yard installations.

Installing very low borders around planted areas.

Planting, installing, replacing, or maintaining vegetation in existing planted areas.

Installing pots, window boxes, or small planters that do not physically attach to any part of the building or sidewalk.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

What You Will Need

Applications typically require submitting the materials listed below but additional materials may be required depending on the type of work. See Section B for a list of required materials by work type.

Basic Application Materials

- **An LPC Permit Application Form,** filled out and signed by the property owner.
- **Color photos of the entire building** and close-ups that identify and provide context of proposed work.
- **Comparative drawings:**
  - Elevation of existing conditions, and proposed yard or areaway alterations and/or installations
  - Floor and/or site plans of existing conditions, and locations of proposed yard or areaway alterations and/or installations
  - Section of existing conditions, and proposed alterations and/or installations at visible yards and areaways only
  - Details of existing conditions, and proposed alterations and/or installations at visible yards and areaways only
- **Color specifications/ paint cards** at visible yards and areaways only.
- **Material specifications or manufacturer cut sheets.**
- **Two sets of Department of Buildings (DOB) filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules — or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. LPC staff can guide you through this process. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of work involving yards and areaways. See LPC Rules, Section 2-17, for more information.

In This Section:

General Criteria

Staff can approve areaway and yard work that meets the following general criteria. Certain types of work may have additional requirements.

If historic materials or features exist within the areaway, such as bluestone paving, masonry wall, or original ironwork, they must be retained in place where feasible. Efforts must be made to minimize damage to these elements.

If the building is part of a row of identical houses, proposed alterations must be in keeping with areaway configurations and features found within the row, and must not detract from the streetscape.

Areaway Alterations

Areaways are the open spaces in front of buildings, typically small residential rowhouses, flats, tenements, or other attached buildings. Historically, areaways were composed of limited areas of paved surface bounded by low ironwork fences. They typically contained utilitarian features like cellar access hatches and window light wells, and were often historically modified to include planting beds.

Making Areaway Alterations

Before proposing alterations to an areaway, document existing conditions and compare them to historic documentation to determine if any historic fabric remains. (See *Section A* for tips on how to find historic information.) Historic elements may include original paving materials, masonry walls, iron fences, and other decorative ironwork. Staff can approve areaway alterations if they meet the following criteria:

If historic fabric remains, the new areaway design must retain existing historic features wherever possible.

Proposed areaway changes must be compatible with the special architectural and historic character of the building and historic district.

ⓘ **Are you installing light fixtures, mailboxes, security cameras, or intercoms?** See *Chapter 11, Health, Safety, and Utility Equipment,* for more information.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades and areaways.
- ☐ **Photos of areas** of alteration or installation at **the areaway or stoop.**
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available. See *Section A* for information on obtaining tax photos.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated areaway plans and elevations.**
- ☐ **Comparative vertical and horizontal section drawings of existing and proposed conditions, showing proposal for altering grade**, replacing or installing walls and/or fences, planting beds, steps or railings.
  - – Large-scale detail drawings of walls and/or fences and railings
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**

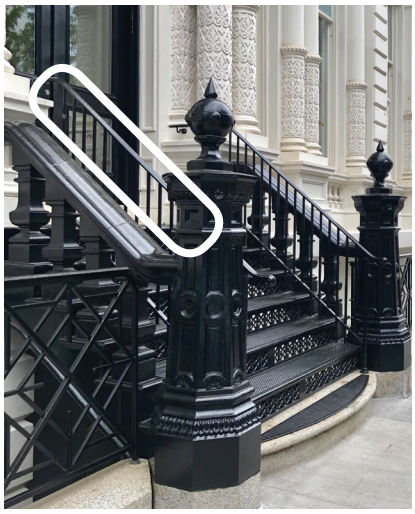
If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Installing Areaway Walls and Ironwork

Historic masonry areaway walls and ironwork fences and railings were designed to provide safety and security and to harmonize with elements of the facade. Staff can approve new installations at areaways, stoops, service alleys, or facades, depending on the type and size of the building and whether installation meets the following criteria:

New areaway walls and ironwork fences at small residential buildings do not need to match historic conditions if location, scale, and design are typical for buildings of a similar type, style, and age, or match similar installations at buildings within the row.

Other types of ironwork installations added to existing stairs, stoops, or walls that are not original to the building and have been installed over time, such as safety railings to low stoop walls, can be approved at small and large residential buildings if the visual characteristics of the installation match or recall ironwork typically found on buildings of a similar age, style, and type.



This iron picket railing's simple design and matching color provide a code-compliant installation on the interior side of the original railings that does not detract from the historic ironwork.

Making Grade Changes and Alterations to Steps and Landings

Since areaways often include entrances to the basement level of rowhouses and other buildings, these spaces sometimes need to be modified to improve access from the sidewalk or under the stoop. Staff can approve making grade changes and alterations to steps and landings if they meet the following criteria:

An entire areaway can be lowered by one step to allow for at-grade access from the sidewalk.

Up to 50 percent of the areaway can be excavated for installation of new or reconfigured steps at the basement entrance.

A ramp (with no switchbacks) can be installed in conjunction with partial excavation of the areaway.

If the ramp requires railings, they must be simple and minimal, such as wall-mounted handrails or simple posts with top rails, with no pickets unless required by code.

See *Chapter 9* for more information about accessibility and barrier-free access.

An at-grade planting bed within an areaway with a simple brick border.

Installing Planting Beds and Built-In Planters

New plantings provide color and greenery to areaways and streetscapes and provide other environmental benefits. Please note, LPC regulates the size and scale of planting beds and built-in planters but **not** the landscape features within. Staff can approve installing planting beds and built-in planters if they meet the following criteria:

Size and placement of planting beds or built-in planters must not call undue attention or detract from significant architectural features of the building or streetscape.

Existing and proposed plan drawings must demonstrate that the size and placement of new or expanded planting beds is in proportion to the overall size of the areaway and does not detract from the building or streetscape.

A garbage enclosure with a compatible finish and color attached to non-historic areaway paving.

Lampposts in a black painted finish installed in a rowhouse areaway.

Installing Garbage Enclosures

Staff can approve installing a garbage enclosure if it is:

Attached to non-historic areaway paving but not attached to the building, fence, or wall.

Simply designed and painted to match the adjacent facade or areaway material, or otherwise with a neutral finish.

Limited in footprint and height to the size of the garbage receptacles it houses.

Installing Lampposts

Staff can approve new lampposts in historic districts and streetscapes where lampposts were historically found at areaways if:

The lamppost is installed at least several feet from the primary facade through non-historic paving such as concrete.

The lamppost and lantern are of a simple and proportional design, with black painted finish and no exposed conduit.

Installing Basement or Cellar Access Hatches

Staff can approve cellar or basement hatches installed through non-historic paving materials and constructed in wood or metal with a dark or neutral finish.

Side and Rear Yard Work

Side and rear yards have historically been modified to address access and safety concerns. This includes the addition of, and modification to, walls and fences.

Installing Side and Rear Yard Walls and Fences

Staff can approve the installation of side and rear yard walls and fences at certain types of buildings if they meet the following criteria. See *Section A* to determine building type.

Small Residential Buildings and Attached Houses

Height

At the side yard of a corner rowhouse, the fence must match the height of any areaway fence up to 36 inches in height.

At the rear yard of a small residential building, the fence can be up to six feet in height.

Design and Finish

At the side yard of a corner rowhouse or the rear yard, if visible, fences must be constructed in wood or iron compatible with the building's age and style. Finish must be dark, neutral, or clear.

Iron fences must be simple in design, with a black or other dark finish and based on ironwork found on buildings of a similar type in the historic district.

If installed along the sidewalk at a corner building, rear yard fences must have a perforated or open design.

If the fence is not visible, alternative materials such as masonry or fiber cement paneling can be used.

Staff can approve the installation of a fence at the side yard of a corner row house, seen here in Brooklyn Heights.

Freestanding Houses

A fence up to six feet high can be placed in the side or rear yard, behind the plane of the street-facing facade and constructed of wood with the finished side facing away from the property. Staff can consider variations in height and material if the fence is not visible from a public thoroughfare or is permanently obscured by mature vegetation.

Large Residential Buildings

Installation of side and rear yard walls and fences at large residential buildings can be approved by staff if restoring a historic condition that was previously altered or removed (see *Chapter 1, Restoration*).

However, since many large residential buildings did not historically have walls or fences, proposals for new installations must generally be presented to the full Commission for review at a public hearing. Be sure to consult the next section about garden historic districts to see if special provisions apply to your property.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades and yards.
- ☐ **Photos of areas** of installation at yards.
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated site plans and elevations.**
- ☐ **Vertical section drawings** of proposed fences and walls at visible yards:
  - *Large-scale detail drawings of fences and walls at visible yards*
- ☐ **Material specifications or manufacturer cut sheets.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Special Provisions for Garden Historic Districts

Some historic districts contain garden-style houses and apartment buildings that were designated in part for the relationship between open green space and the buildings. Garden historic districts include Sunnyside Gardens Historic District and the Jackson Heights Historic District.

Sunnyside Gardens Historic District

Staff can approve new fences in the Sunnyside Gardens Historic District if they meet the following criteria:

Rear yard fences may enclose the private rear yard immediately behind the house, but not the portion of the yard in the historically shared common space. They can be up to 36 inches high and must be constructed of metal pickets with a dark finish.

Staff cannot approve fences in front or side yards in the Sunnyside Gardens Historic District.

This metal fence in Sunnyside Gardens Historic District encloses an immediate rear yard that was not part of the historic shared common space.

Jackson Heights Historic District

Staff can approve new fences and walls in the Jackson Heights Historic District if they meet the following criteria:

Fences at apartment buildings may be installed at a planting area surrounding the building.

Fences must feature black painted metal pickets with an open quality, and a combined curb and fence height of up to 30 inches.

At single- or two-family houses, low brick retaining walls at the border of the sidewalk and front yard may be installed if they are as short as possible to contain erosion, have no more than five courses of brick, and have a coping of brick or stone.

Brick must match the brick facade of the building, with no decorative elements or ironwork.

The wall must only border the sidewalk and not return from the sidewalk to the house, except to stairs in proximity to the wall.

Height and design must match an adjacent low garden wall or be compatible with other low retaining walls that meet the requirements in this section.

Staff cannot approve fences at the front yard of single- or two-family houses in the Jackson Heights Historic District.

New fences at apartment buildings in Jackson Heights can be installed around the building's planting area.

At single- or two-family houses in Jackson Heights, staff can approve installing low brick retaining walls in the front yard.

Work on Driveways

Driveways were common features in historic districts with detached single-family dwellings, including the Ditmas Park, Prospect Park South, and Fiske Terrace Historic Districts.

Repairs and Alterations to Existing Driveways

Staff can approve repairs and alterations to existing driveways if they meet the following criteria:

Repairs and alterations must match the existing driveway in terms of materials, details, and finish.

The existing footprint of the driveway can be altered by widening or creating a bump-out for turning or parking, provided the green yard space is not significantly reduced and the driveway is well scaled to the yard and building.

Driveways are common features at detached single-family dwellings in some historic districts, including in Prospect Lefferts Gardens.

If an original or historic driveway is being replaced, it must match original materials and design but the footprint may be altered as described above.

If an existing driveway that is not original or historic is replaced, it can use different materials and design from the existing, as long as the new materials match the predominant paving material and pattern in the streetscape.

Curb Cuts

If no curb cut currently exists, you must provide documentation that your new curb cut complies with the NYC Zoning Resolution and the City Administrative Code, and that you have filed for the curb cut with the DOB and the Department of Transportation.

Installing New Driveways

If driveways are a common feature in the historic district, staff may approve a new driveway if the proposed location and design of the driveway and curb cut is consistent with other buildings in the historic district. New driveways must meet the following criteria:

The driveway must not significantly reduce open and planted space within the yard, or eliminate significant architectural or landscape features.

Paving materials must match the predominant paving material and pattern within the streetscape.

Substitute paving material recalls the predominant paving material, if the substitute improves the permeability of the paved surface and otherwise does not detract from the building or streetscape.

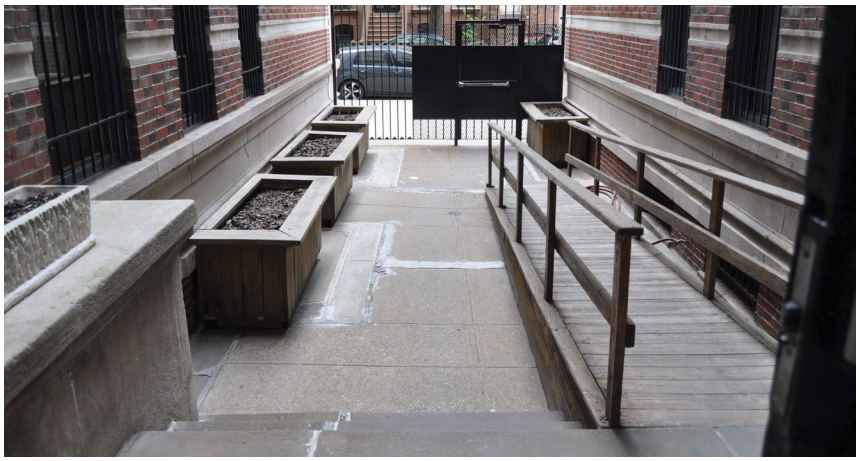
Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades and yards.
- ☐ **Photos of areas** of installation at yards.
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated site plans.**
- ☐ **Material specifications or manufacturer cut sheets.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Installing Accessory Ramps

Areaways, side yards, and rear yards at **larger apartment, hotel,** and **commercial buidlings** may need to be adapted to accommodate accessory ramps, which are used for loading and other service functions. Staff can approve installing accessories that are not intended for barrier-free access if they meet the following criteria:



An accessory ramp installed at the enclosed areaway of a large apartment building.

Location

The ramp must be located in a service alley, side yard, or rear yard.

Installation must be significantly obscured from the street by existing masonry walls or ironwork.

The ramp must not block a window or obscure significant architectural features.

Installation

The ramp must not result in damage to or removal of significant architectural features or historic fabric, including historic paving.

See *Chapter 9* for rules and criteria on barrier-free access installation.

Design

The ramp must have a straight run with no switchbacks. Railings must be simply designed or based on the building's existing ironwork.

Material

The ramp must be made of material that matches the predominant paving or facade material, or is otherwise neutral in appearance and does not detract from the building or streetscape. Railings must have a black or neutral finish.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades, areaways, alleys, or yards.
- ☐ **Photos of areas of installation at areaways,** alleys, or yards.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated site plan and elevations.**
- ☐ **Comparative vertical section drawings** of the accessory ramp, if visible, showing existing and proposed conditions:
  - Large-scale detail drawings of the accessory ramp, if visible
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Chapter 9

Barrier-Free Access

Historic buildings can and should be made accessible to all. Accessibility can be achieved through careful planning and sensitive design to eliminate physical barriers to entry and use of the building. In New York City, these types of alterations and installations call for altering buildings to accommodate ramps, lifts, and associated fixtures such as signage, push plates, and freestanding hardware. Accessibility and the impact of the installation or alteration on the building's significant architectural features serve as the basis for LPC's rules for work involving barrier-free access (see **LPC Rules**, Section 2-18, available on our website, **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**).

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

This chapter explains LPC's rules for work related to barrier-free access. Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to the LPC Rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

Note: Barrier-free access must comply with other applicable local, state, and federal regulations and codes, including the American National Standard (ANSI), the New York City Building Code, and the Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design. Be sure your proposal meets those requirements as well. To learn more, visit the website of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities at www.nyc.gov/mopd.

Section A
How to Get Started

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Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the LPC Rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for your building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine how the LPC Rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find **construction date, architect and style, building and landmark type,** and a link to the **LPC designation report** with additional historical background.

What did your building look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services NYC Municipal Archives Collections.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide** Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

See If Your Work Requires an LPC Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
LPC generally requires a permit for barrier-free access work, but a permit is **not required** for:

Ordinary maintenance, repair, and retrofitting of barrier-free access installations.

Replacing minor hardware elements in-kind.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

What You Will Need

Applications typically require submitting the materials listed below but additional materials may be required depending on the type of work. See *Section B* for required materials by work type.

Basic Application Materials

- **An LPC Permit Application Form,** filled out and signed by the property owner.
- **Color photos** of the entire building to provide context, and close-ups of the areas of proposed barrier-free access work.
- **Comparative drawings:**
  - Elevations of existing conditions and proposed barrier-free access alterations and/or installations
  - Floor and/or site plans of existing conditions and locations of proposed barrier-free access alterations and/or installations
  - Section of existing conditions and proposed barrier-free access alterations and/or installations
  - Large-scale details (in elevation, section, or plan) of proposed barrier-free access alterations and/or installations where they adjoin the building or site features
- **Color specifications / paint cards.**
- **Material specifications or manufacturer cut sheets.**
- **Two sets of Department of Buildings (DOB) filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

When possible, your application materials must be supplemented with a written explanation and/or code citation. This must demonstrate the need to alter historic features at the building's entrance and/or install ramps or lifts at a primary facade location. It must also note less invasive alternatives that were explored but determined not to be feasible.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

In This Section:

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules — or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. LPC staff can guide you through this process. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of work involving barrier-free access. See LPC Rules, Section 2-19, for more information.

General Criteria

Physical barriers to access can include steps, the width of openings, or even the weight of doors. Making buildings accessible can involve many different types of alterations, including changing doors or widening entryways, installing ramps, and/or installing lifts. Staff can approve barrier-free access projects that meet the following general criteria. Certain types of work may have additional requirements.

When feasible, barrier-free access must be provided at the **primary public entrance** to a building or storefront. Before applying to LPC, explore all approaches to making the building or space accessible through the primary entrance to that space.

Note: Providing access at a secondary entrance such as a service entrance may not meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

Your barrier-free access installation must have the **least possible impact** on significant architectural features. Staff may request evidence of option studies, or request such studies, to confirm that your proposal has the least possible impact.

Does your barrier-free access installation extend onto a public sidewalk?

If so, your project may need to be reviewed by the Department of Transportation (DOT) for a revocable consent.

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Does your barrier-free access work require excavation or does it occur in front yards, areaways, or on sidewalks?
If so, please refer to *Chapter 7: Excavation*, *Chapter 8: Yards*, and *Chapter 10: Sidewalks* of this guidebook for additional information.

Ramps

Ramps are the most common way to provide barrier-free access to a building or storefront. If thoughtfully designed, a ramp can blend well with the historic features of the building and not detract from the streetscape or historic district.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos of areas** of installation.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans and elevations.**
- ☐ **Vertical and horizontal section drawings** of proposed ramp and railings:
  - *Large-scale detail drawings of ramp where it abuts the building or site features*
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

If LPC needs additional materials once your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Attention
If your building is an individual landmark, staff can only approve ramps without handrails.

Installing New Ramps

Location, materials, and design of new ramps must be harmonious with features adjacent to the building or sidewalk. Staff can approve new ramps at individual landmarks and historic district buildings if they meet the following criteria:

Location

If possible, the ramp must be located at the primary entrance, closest to grade, to minimize its height and length.

At primary entrances, steps and landings that the ramp connects to must retain their historic orientation whenever possible. For example, front-facing steps must not be closed off or changed to side-facing steps.

At storefronts, the ramp should be confined to the store being made accessible and associated with the accessible entrance planned. See *Chapter 3, Storefronts*, for more information.

At apartment buildings with deeply recessed courts, the ramp must be installed within the recess and typically positioned off to one side.

For ramp installations at all buildings, the visible impact of the ramp must be minimized, if possible, by existing architectural features of the areaway like ironwork or masonry.

Installation

Installation must avoid or minimize damage to significant historic fabric, such as sidewalk paving materials, vault lights, steps, and landings.

A tinted concrete ramp with metal handrails installed in front of a storefront entrance.

Design

Length: Ramps must be as short as possible with no switchbacks or landings. A longer ramp can be approved if it has less visual impact on the facade. Take advantage of natural slopes to minimize length.

Handrail: If required, the handrail must be of simple design, typically constructed of metal with a painted or neutral finish and no pickets unless required by code.

Materials

The ramp should typically be a material that matches the building or sidewalk, or is otherwise neutral. For example, a ramp installed in front of a stone building could be clad in a matching stone, or in some cases could be concrete or diamond plate depending on the immediate context of the streetscape and the historic district. Staff can help you make this determination.

Replacing Existing Ramps

If the existing ramp was grandfathered or Commission-approved, staff can approve a new ramp that meets the following criteria:

Size and footprint must match or be smaller than the existing ramp or altered to the minimum degree necessary for code compliance.

Replacement ramp materials must match existing materials and handrail design or match adjacent facade materials. Utilitarian materials with a neutral finish can also be used.

If required by code, staff can approve additional pickets to the handrail design.

A simple ramp designed in steel diamond plate without handrails in the SoHo-Cast Iron Historic District.

Lifts

Code requirements or site conditions sometimes call for a mechanical platform lift instead of ramps to provide accessibility, such as a vertical lift or one that follows a stair railing. Care must be taken to carefully design and place lifts to minimize impact on the building's historic features. Location, materials, and design must be harmonious with adjacent features on the building.

A metal platform lift installed within an areaway, finished to match the surrounding brownstone and screened by ironwork.

Attention
If your building is an individual landmark, staff **cannot** approve a lift. This type of work requires full Commission review at a public hearing.

Installing New Lifts

New lifts of any type must not detract from the special architectural and historic character of the building or streetscape, not require significant alterations to the existing fabric at the proposed location, and be reversible.

Vertical Platform Lifts

Staff can approve installation of a new vertical wheelchair platform lift if the work meets the following criteria:

Location
The lift must be placed in a recessed location at the base of the facade to minimize disruption of its composition. It must be at least partially obscured by existing features such as ironwork or masonry walls.

A minimal amount of historic fabric can be removed to access the lift in the elevated position, such as a portion of a fence or curb.

The lift must be stored in the down position.

Installation
The lift and associated rails must only require minimal attachment points through non-decorative elements on the facade.

Finish
Lift components, including the platform, machine housing, and rails, must be finished to match immediately adjacent facade materials or elements, or have a neutral finish.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos of areas** of installation.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans and elevations.**
- ☐ **Comparative vertical and horizontal section drawings** of existing conditions and proposed lift:
  - *Large-scale detail drawings of lift where it abuts building or site features*
- ☐ **Material specifications or manufacturer cut sheets.**
- ☐ **Color samples**.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

A chair lift on rails, finished to match the existing metal stairs and installed with minimal attachment points.

Wheelchair and Chair Lifts on Rails

Staff can approve installation of a new wheelchair or chair lift on stair rails if the work meets the following criteria:

Installation

The lift and associated rails must only require minimal attachment points through non-decorative elements on the facade.

Finish

Lift components, including the platform, machine housing, and rails, must be finished to match immediately adjacent facade materials or elements, or must have a neutral finish.

Replacing Existing Lifts

If the existing vertical lift or chair lift on stair rails was either grandfathered or Commission-approved, staff can approve a new lift that meets the following criteria:

Platform lift and guiderails must be installed using existing penetrations in the building facade or other elements. Additional penetrations may be approved if required to meet code.

Lift mechanicals must be in the same location and match the footprint and height of existing mechanicals, or be reduced in size.

The vertical lift may be fully enclosed if necessary to meet code.

Doors

In some historic buildings, doors need to be modified to accommodate barrier-free access. This includes replacing doors and accompanying elements, altering door surrounds, and installing hardware to make them more accessible.

Making Door and Door Surround Changes

Staff can approve door and door surround changes if the work meets the following criteria:

If the existing door is original or historic

All historic fabric, such as sidelights, doors, transoms, framing, and door surround detailing must be retained.

Alterations to the doorswing, hardware and hinges, and installation of automatic opener hardware can be approved at the staff level provided door configuration and details are maintained.

If the existing door is non-historic

A new door and accompanying elements can be installed and must recall the historic condition in terms of configuration, detailing, material, and finish.

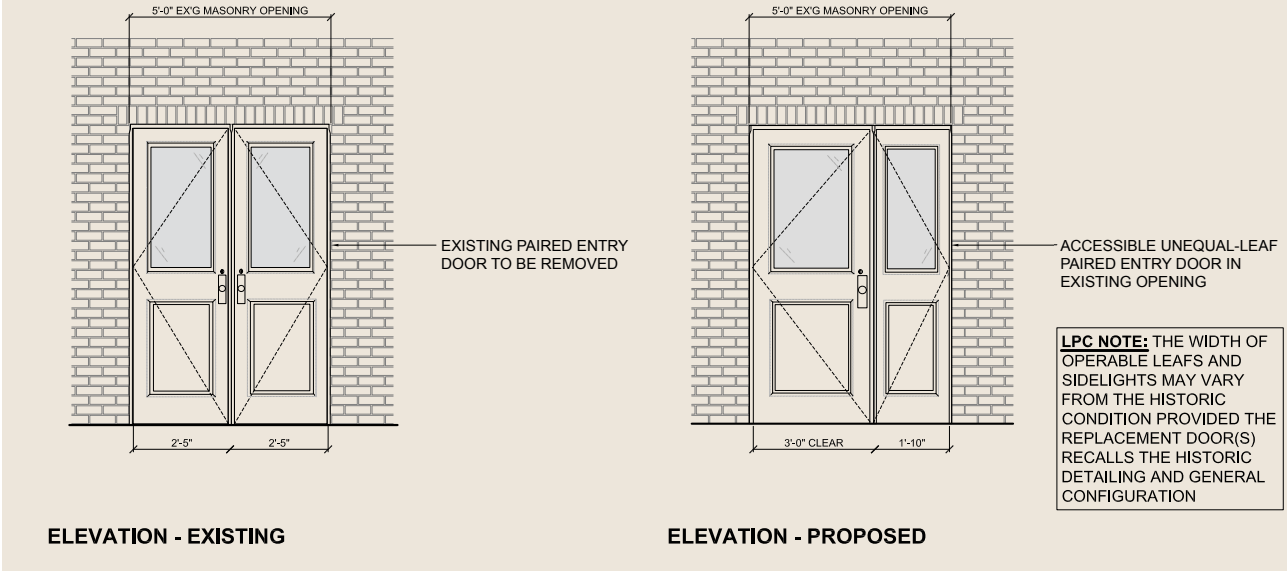
The opening may be widened up to eight inches to meet code,

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos** of door and surround.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans and elevations.**
- ☐ **Comparative vertical and horizontal section drawings** of existing conditions and proposed door and surround:
  - *Large-scale detail drawings of door and surround*
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Elevation drawings showing the replacement of non-historic paired entrance doors with a single door and sidelight to provide a wider entry for wheelchair access.



provided that the door surround is recreated in-kind.

The operation or swing direction of the new door may be altered, and the configuration may vary, to meet required clearances. For example, paired doors can be changed to unequal paired doors, or a single door with a fixed leaf or sidelight.

A replacement door in an alternate material may be installed to meet force requirements — i.e., if the existing door is too heavy or difficult to open.

Installing Door Actuators

Outfitting historic doors with automatic opener hardware such as an actuator or push plate may be a good option for accommodating accessibility. Staff can approve installation of an actuator or push plate if it meets the following criteria:

Actuators or push plates must be as small as possible and installed at an area of plain masonry, wood, or metal, but not cast iron. They can also be installed at a non-decorative door return to minimize damage to historic fabric (with no exposed conduit).

If actuators need to be installed on freestanding posts or bollards, such posts or bollards must be installed through non-historic paving. They must be simply designed and finished to match the adjacent facade material or other neutral finish.

A push plate door actuator installed at an area of plain masonry.

A freestanding post with a push plate door actuator, installed through non-historic paving.

Making Grade Changes

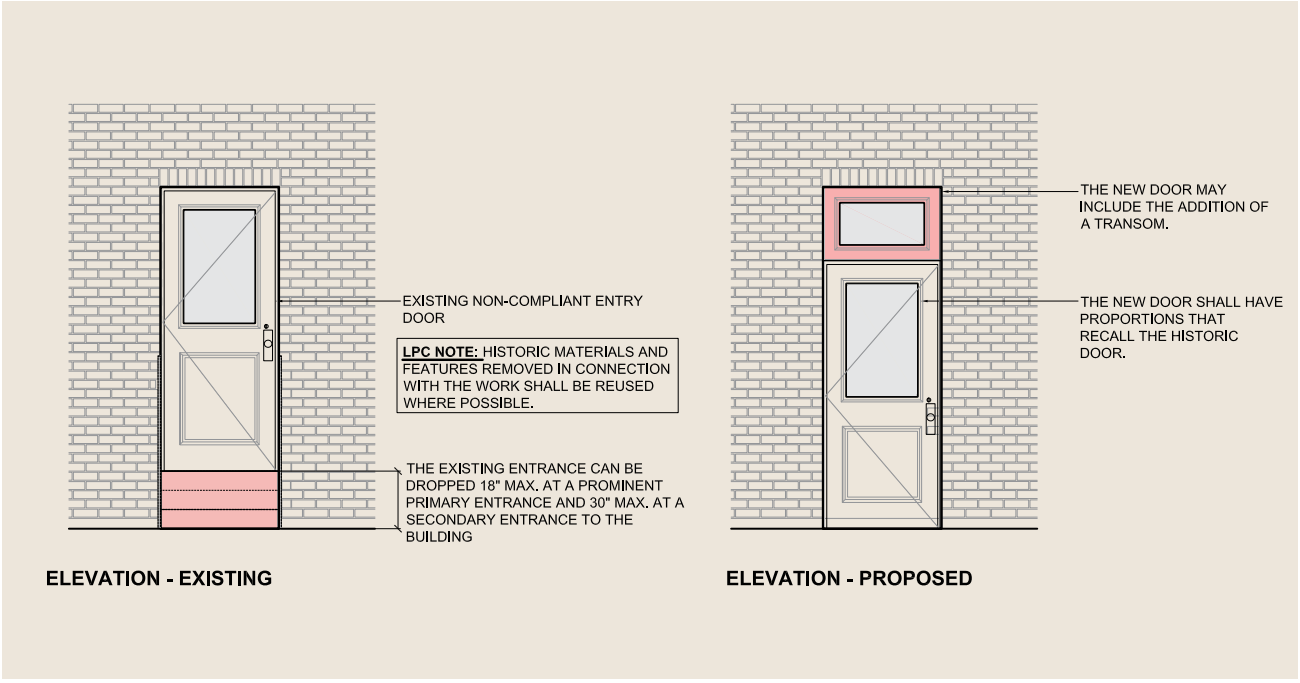
In some historic buildings, lowering the existing entrance to bring it to grade can make it accessible. Staff can approve making a grade change if it meets the following criteria:

Modifications such as removing existing entrance steps, landings, or ramps, provided that the entrance is dropped or raised no more than 18 inches at a primary entrance and no more than 30 inches at secondary entrances.

Significant architectural features, such as granite or cast iron steps, must be retained and reused where possible. For example, a granite step can be reused as a threshold at the new at-grade entrance.

New doors installed in conjunction with an at-grade entrance must have proportions that recall the historic door. This may require the addition of a transom within the enlarged opening even if it did not historically have one.

Sidewalks can be modified to slope the sidewalk up to the entrance. See *Chapter 10* for more information on sidewalks.



Elevation drawings showing the removal of steps and installation of new door and transom at-grade.

Areaways

In some historic buildings, better accessibility can be achieved by installing handrails at existing stoops or areaway steps and making other alterations to areaways.

Installing Handrails

Staff can approve the installation of simply designed handrails, generally consisting of as few elements as possible. The installation can be at an existing stoop or areaway steps at the top of a stoop wall, inside the stoop wall, or at stair treads—whichever location is least obtrusive. Staff can help you make this determination.

Making Minor Areaway Alterations

Staff can approve minor alterations to historic ironwork or masonry to meet accessibility requirements. For example, a small portion of masonry can be removed to widen an opening and enlarge a gate to provide access to an areaway, so long as altered elements are restored to match existing conditions.

A simple metal railing has been installed on the top of this masonry stoop for safety.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos** of entrance.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans and elevations.**
- ☐ **Comparative vertical and horizontal section drawings** of existing conditions and proposed at-grade entrance:
  - *– Large-scale detail drawings of the at-grade entrance*
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ **Color samples.**

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Chapter 10

Sidewalks

Sidewalks are a part of nearly every New York City neighborhood. In some historic districts, sidewalks aesthetically unify the streetscape. In these districts, sidewalk paving materials and location are considered significant features. Protection of historic sidewalks and uniform streetscapes in historic districts serves as the basis for LPC's rules for repairing and replacing sidewalks (see **LPC Rules**, Section 2-19, available on our website, **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**).

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

This chapter explains LPC's rules for repairing and replacing sidewalks. Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to the LPC Rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

Note: Sidewalks may need to conform to other applicable rules, requirements, and guidelines of the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Department of Parks and Recreation, and in some cases, the Public Design Commission. Be sure your proposal meets these requirements as well.

Section A
How to Get Started

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Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the LPC Rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for your building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine how the LPC Rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find **construction date**, **architect and style**, **building and landmark type**, and a link to the **LPC designation report** with historical background.

What did your building and sidewalk look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services' NYC Municipal Archives Collections.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide** Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

Is the building's sidewalk regulated?
Identify whether your building is in a historic district where LPC regulates sidewalks (paving) because they are considered a significant feature of the streetscape. See *Section C* for a list of historic districts.

See If Your Work Requires an LPC Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
A permit is **not required** for:

Sidewalk work in a historic district where sidewalk paving is not considered a significant feature of the streetscape, as determined by LPC. See Section C for a list of historic districts where sidewalk paving is considered a significant feature.

Sidewalk work at an individual landmark outside the boundaries of the landmark site.

Repainting cast iron vault lights black.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

What You Will Need

Applications typically require submitting the materials listed below, but additional materials may be required depending on the type of work. See *Section B* for a list of all materials required for your work type.

Basic Application Materials

- **An LPC Permit Application Form,** filled out and signed by the property owner.
- **Color photos** of the entire building and close-ups of areas of sidewalk work, including adjacent sidewalks.
- **Drawings:**
  - Plan of existing sidewalk, if historic, and proposed work showing paving pattern
  - Section of the proposed sidewalk if sidewalk is to be stone
- **An assessment of deteriorated conditions** is required for replacement of historic paving or cast iron vaults.
- **Material specifications,** e.g., stone type, tint color for concrete, and dimensions of paving units.
- **Two sets of Department of Buildings (DOB) filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

In This Section:

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules – or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. LPC staff can guide you through this process. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks for more information.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of work involving sidewalks. See LPC Rules, Section 2-19, for more information.

General Criteria

Staff can approve sidewalk work that meets the following general criteria. Certain types of work may have additional requirements. See criteria by work type for more information.

Identify whether any historic materials remain at the sidewalk, such as bluestone or granite pavers or curbs, or cast iron vault lights. These features must be retained where feasible.

Identify whether any historic fabric remains at adjacent sidewalks. New paving materials must be harmonious with existing adjacent historic paving to lend continuity to the streetscape.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of overall sidewalks.
- ☐ **Photos of specific stone pavers or other distinctive paving** (not standard concrete) to be replaced.
- ☐ **Comparative drawings:** (You do not need to include existing plans if the present sidewalk is concrete.)
  - – Plan drawing of existing conditions and proposed sidewalk, showing paver and joint pattern at the sidewalk and adjacent sidewalks, including curbs and ramps at intersections.
- ☐ **Comparative section drawings of existing and proposed conditions** when replacing stone pavers or other distinctive paving, or modifying sidewalks for accessibility.
- ☐ **Material specifications on drawings.**
- ☐ **Color tint specifications** for tinted concrete paving or patches.
- ☐ **Conditions assessment** for historic stone pavers or other distinctive paving being altered, removed, or replaced.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Bluestone Sidewalks

Staff can approve removing damaged stone, patching broken areas, and installing new pavers that meet the following criteria:

Removing Bluestone

Staff can approve removing heavily damaged or crushed bluestone pavers, but intact portions that meet DOT size requirements must be retained. All other bluestone pavers must be preserved.

A minimal amount of bluestone can be removed to accommodate enlarging tree pits to meet city requirements. If feasible, bluestone must be salvaged and relocated for use elsewhere on-site.

If necessary, existing pavers may be carefully removed and stored in a dry, secure area so they can later be reinstalled without additional damage.

Repairing Bluestone

Staff can approve installation of small amounts of cementitious patching at voids or other areas that have cracked. The patch must be tinted to match the color of the existing bluestone.

Heavily damaged or crushed bluestone pavers can be removed and replaced with new bluestone or tinted concrete to match.

A new bluestone sidewalk and curb in the Cobble Hill Historic District matches the adjacent historic bluestone pavers in dimension, color, and paving pattern.

Installing New Bluestone

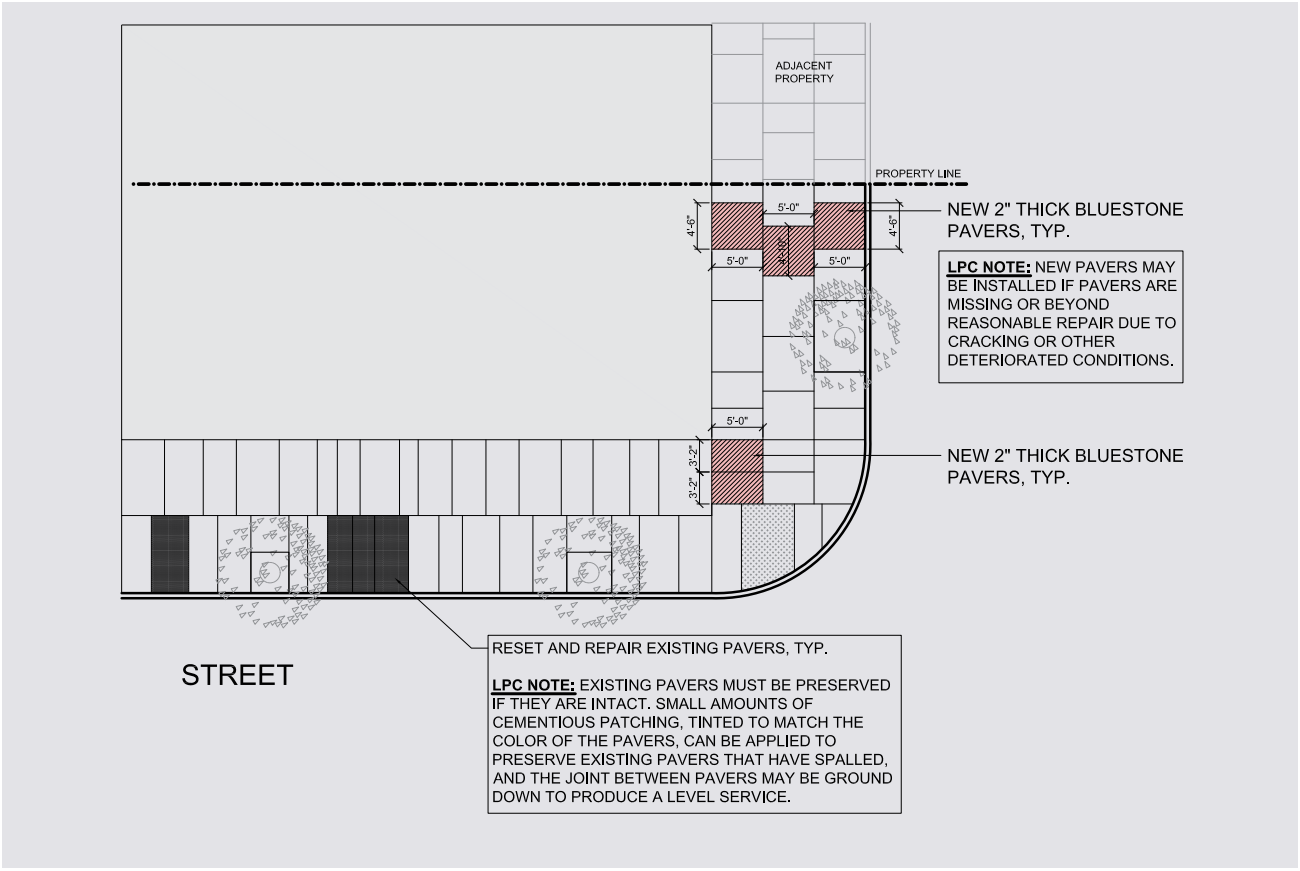
Staff can approve installation of new bluestone pavers if the work meets the following criteria:

New bluestone pavers can be installed if the existing sidewalk is missing one or more bluestone pavers or they are deteriorated beyond reasonable repair. New bluestone pavers can also be installed if the existing sidewalk is concrete but the historic district was historically characterized by bluestone sidewalks.

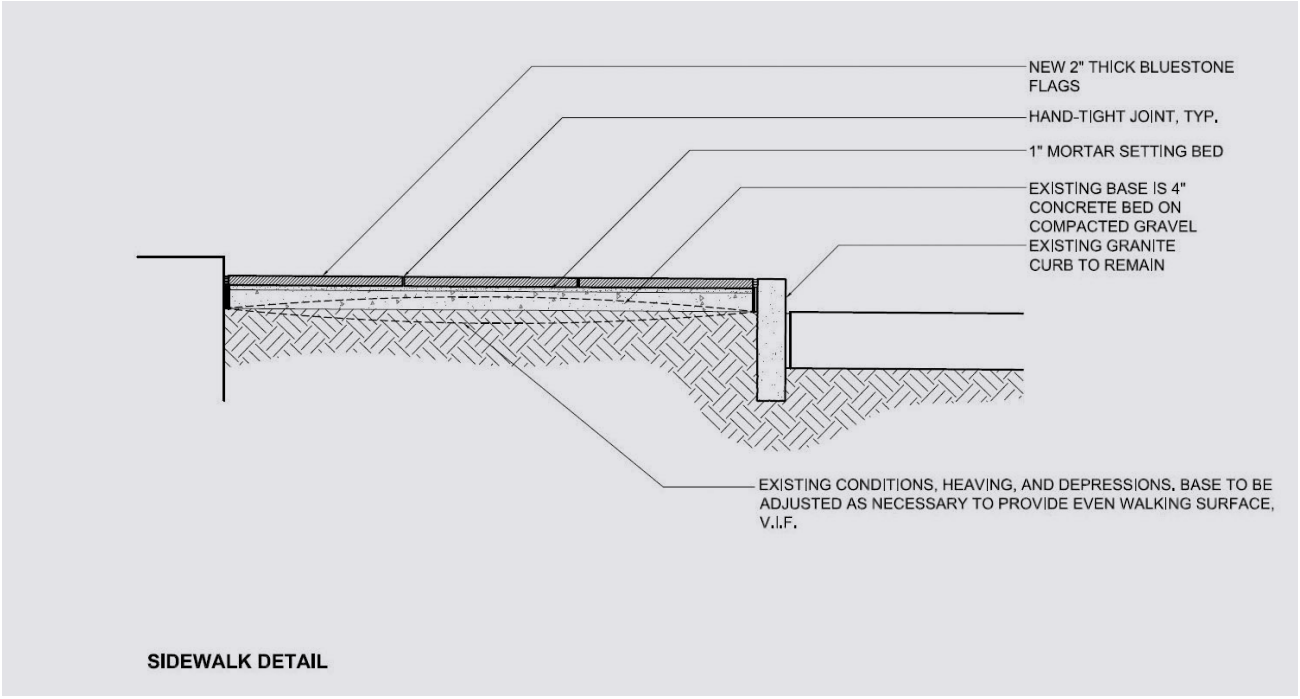
See Concrete Sidewalks for situations in which concrete pavers tinted to look like bluestone can be installed.

Bluestone pavers must be set on a level, non-cement base with very thin joints (1/8 to 3/16 inches wide).

New bluestone pavers must match existing or adjacent historic bluestone pavers in terms of dimension, color, and paving pattern. Most bluestone sidewalks with two rows typically had staggered joints along the center line, as opposed to a uniform grid.



A plan drawing showing the location and dimensions of new bluestone pavers in relation to existing bluestone.



A section drawing showing new bluestone pavers set on a level, non-cement base.

Granite Sidewalks

Staff can approve granite repairs and installing new granite pavers that meet the following criteria. When working on granite sidewalks, reserve or consolidate as many intact granite pavers as possible.

Removing Granite

Staff can approve removing portions of granite sidewalks if the maximum number of intact granite pavers will be maintained or consolidated within the property lines.

Repairing Granite

Small amounts of cementitious patching, tinted to match the color of existing granite, can be installed at voids or other areas that have cracked.

Existing granite pavers can be horizontally sliced to a minimum three- to four-inch thickness if the footprint of each is maintained and the paver reinstalled in approximately the same location.

A new granite sidewalk installed next to cast iron vault lights.

Installing Granite

New granite pavers can be installed if the existing sidewalk is missing one or more granite pavers or they are deteriorated beyond reasonable repair.

New granite pavers must match existing or adjacent granite pavers in terms of dimension, color, and edge treatment, and must have a slip-resistant finish.

ⓘ **See Concrete Sidewalks** for situations in which concrete pavers tinted to look like granite can be installed.

Concrete Sidewalks

Staff can approve installation of concrete sidewalks that meet the following criteria:

Material

If no bluestone or granite exists at the sidewalk or the sidewalk was historically paved in concrete, the new sidewalk can be paved in concrete.

Color

If the sidewalk **is adjacent to** bluestone, granite, or concrete tinted to match the historic stone **on either side of the property**, new concrete pavers must be tinted to match the historic stone.

If the sidewalk is **not adjacent** to historic paving, it can be either untinted concrete to match adjacent sidewalks or tinted concrete to match the historic stone, consistent with the character of historic sidewalks in the historic district.

Scoring

Concrete pavers must be scored to match the size of pavers on adjacent sidewalks, with saw-cut joints that give the appearance of bluestone or granite flags if they are matching those materials.

If the concrete sidewalk at the building once had a decorative scoring pattern or this feature is characteristic of buildings of the same type, e.g., hotels, large apartment buildings, or club buildings, staff can approve a new scoring pattern – if it does not detract from significant architectural features of the building or streetscape.

A decorative terrazzo (concrete and marble chips) sidewalk designed by artist Alexander Calder in the Metropolitan Museum Historic District.

An example of concrete pavers with a decorative scoring pattern.

A new concrete sidewalk with saw-cut joints, tinted to match the adjacent historic bluestone.

Repairing or Replacing Other Sidewalk Materials

Staff can approve repairing or replacing sidewalks and curbs in-kind that are made of materials other than bluestone, granite, or concrete, such as Belgian block, brick, or special concrete aggregates**,** provided the material is typically found in the district or represents a significant historic alteration or feature, e.g., brick pavers in front of a carriage house entrance.

All existing bluestone and granite curbs must be retained whenever possible. If necessary, curbs can be replaced with bluestone, granite, or tinted or untinted concrete to match adjacent curbing or replaced in-kind to match existing curbing.

A sidewalk with a variety of paving materials.

An intersection with tinted concrete paving, granite curbs and detectable warning units next to Belgian block streets.

Accessibility Work

Staff can approve accessibility work on sidewalks that meets the following criteria. All accessible sidewalk work must comply with applicable federal, state, and city codes and requirements. See *Chapter 9* for more information on barrier-free access installations.

On concrete sidewalks, pedestrian ramps at sidewalk intersections must be made of concrete tinted to match the color, texture, and scoring of adjacent or predominant sidewalk paving.

On bluestone or granite sidewalks, pedestrian ramps can have pavers cut to form the slope and flared sides of a ramp or be replaced in-kind to accommodate a ramp.

Detectable warning units, designed to alert people who are vision impaired, can be embedded or applied on top of concrete or stone paving at intersections.

A portion of the sidewalk can be sloped to make a store or space accessible. Change in grade must not damage historic paving or result in concealment of any significant architectural features at the base of the building.

Detectable warning units embedded in a concrete pedestrian ramp.

This concrete sidewalk has been towards the storefront to make it accessible.

Vault Lights

Vault lights are cast iron panels perforated with circular glass lights, historically designed as skylights for spaces beneath the sidewalk. These elements are significant features of districts that were historically manufacturing or industrial in character, such as the SoHo, NoHo, and Tribeca Historic Districts.

Installing New Vault Lights

Staff can approve installation of new vault lights if the work meets the following criteria:

Installation

If existing vault lights (uncovered or covered by diamond plate steel or concrete) are beyond reasonable repair, they can be replaced with new vault lights.

If no vault lights currently exist, new vault lights can be installed to restore missing vault lights.

If no vault lights exist under existing diamond plate steel, diamond plate steel can be replaced in-kind or replaced with new cast iron vault lights.

Design

Design of new vault lights must be based on photographic or physical evidence of previous vault lights at the building or adjacent buildings, or buildings of similar age, style, and type.

Design must match the approximate panel size and overall footprint, material, finish, and details of existing or historic vault lights.

New vault lights can either be set flush with the existing sidewalk over metal framing or concrete substrate, or be on a metal platform if the historic condition was raised above grade.

Staff can approve the installation of new vault lights in a sidewalk that had them historically.

Vaults lights, seen here, on steel risers and at grade, are a significant feature of districts historically manufacturing or industrial in character.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of overall sidewalks.
- ☐ **Photos of specific cast iron vault lights to be replaced,** including underside of vault lights as seen from within the vault.
- ☐ **Historic 1940s tax photos,** if available. See *Section A* for more on how to obtain tax photos.
- ☐ **Comparative drawings:**
  - *Plan of existing and proposed vault light panel and joint pattern, including borders and steps, and / or existing diamond plate cladding.*
- ☐ **Comparative sidewalk section drawings,** showing existing and proposed conditions.
- ☐ **Material and color specifications on drawings.**
- ☐ **Conditions assessment** for historic cast iron vault lights being replaced.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Protecting and Covering Existing Vault Lights

Existing uncovered vault lights that are deteriorated and no longer watertight can be protected by covering them with steel diamond plate with a dark painted finish. Existing vault lights at vertical surfaces and lower traffic areas, such as steps and landings, must remain uncovered whenever possible.

If the historic district is not characterized by vault lights and/or steel diamond plate, staff can approve replacing steel diamond plate with concrete to match adjacent concrete.

Deteriorated historic vault lights can be covered and protected by steel diamond plate with a dark painted finish, as seen here.

Section C
Technical Guidance and Resources

This section provides additional guidance and resources to help you understand LPC's rules and criteria in order to submit the correct materials with your application.

→ **In This Section:**

Historic Districts with Sidewalks Regulated by LPC

LPC regulates sidewalks in the following historic districts:

Addisleigh Park Historic District

African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District

Audubon Terrace Historic District

Bedford Historic District

Bedford Stuyvesant/Expanded Stuyvesant Heights Historic District

Boerum Hill Historic District

Brooklyn Academy of Music Historic District

Brooklyn Heights Historic District

Carroll Gardens Historic District

Charlton-King-Vandam Historic District

Chelsea Historic District

Chelsea Historic District Extension

Clinton Hill Historic District

Cobble Hill Historic District

Cobble Hill Historic District Extension (three buildings)

Ditmas Park Historic District

Douglaston Historic District

DUMBO Historic District

Fieldston Historic District

Fiske Terrace-Midwood Park Historic District

Gansevoort Market Historic District

Governors Island Historic District

Gramercy Park Historic District

Gramercy Park Historic District Extension

Greenpoint Historic District

Greenwich Village Historic District

Hunters Point Historic District

Jumel Terrace Historic District

Ladies' Mile Historic District

Manhattan Avenue Historic District

Metropolitan Museum Historic District

NoHo East Historic District

NoHo Historic District

NoHo Historic District Extension

Park Slope Historic District

Park Slope Historic District Extension

Park Slope Historic District Extension II

Prospect Park South Historic District

Riverdale Historic District

Sniffen Court Historic District

SoHo-Cast Iron Historic District

SoHo-Cast Iron Historic District Extension

South Street Seaport Historic District

South Street Seaport Historic District Extension

South Village Historic District

St. George/New Brighton Historic District

St. Mark's Historic District

St. Mark's Historic District Extension

St. Nicholas Historic District

St. Paul's Avenue-Stapleton Heights Historic District

Stone Street Historic District

Stuyvesant Heights Historic District

Stuyvesant Square Historic District

Tribeca East Historic District

Tribeca North Historic District

Tribeca South Historic District

Tribeca South Historic District Extension

Tribeca West Historic District

Vinegar Hill Historic District

Concrete Tint Specifications

The following list of concrete tint specifications can be approved at the staff level. When proposing concrete replacement, provide concrete tint specifications as a part of your application. Please note that these formulas are approximations. For exact color matches, other tints and/or mixed tints can be tested and used pending approval of the sample by LPC staff.

To simulate the color of light- to medium-gray granite:

- DAVIS Color No. 884: 1 lb. per 100 lbs. Light Gray Portland Cement and sand, *or*
- LANSCO Color No. 437 "Strong Black": 2.5 lbs. per 94 lbs. Light Gray Portland Cement and 3 parts sand, *or*
- SCOFIELD Chromic Admixture "Cool Black" No. I: 1 5-sack-mix bag per 5 94-lb. bags Medium Gray Portland Cement and sand, *or*
- Other equal sample provided for approval.

To simulate the color of dark gray bluestone:

- DAVIS Color No. 884: 3 lbs. per 100 lbs. Light Gray Portland Cement and sand, *or*
- LANSCO Color No. 437 "Strong Black": 5 lbs. per 94 lbs. Light Gray Portland Cement and 3 parts sand, *or*
- SCOFIELD Chromic Admixture "Cool Black" No. 4: 1 5-sack-mix bag per 5 94-lb. bags Medium Gray Portland Cement and sand, *or*
- SCOFIELD "Landmarks Gray" K-157-4, *or*
- Other equal sample provided for approval.

Chapter 11

Health, Safety, and Utility Equipment

Buildings in New York City may be required to accommodate a variety of health, safety, and utility equipment. Some of these installations are mandated by NYC Fire and Building Codes or utility companies. Other safety equipment may not be required by law but is commonly used, like window security bars, security cameras, lighting, and intercom panels. The relatively small and discrete nature of these types of installations, their physical requirements, legal constraints, and their presence throughout the city serve as the basis for LPC's rules for work involving health, safety, and utility equipment installations (see **LPC Rules**, Section 2-20, available on our website, **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**).

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

This chapter explains LPC's rules for installing health, safety, and utility equipment. Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to the rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

Note: If your health, safety, and utility work is related to heating, ventilation, or air conditioning equipment (HVAC) and mechanical equipment installations, please refer to *Chapter 12* as well.

Section A
How to Get Started

Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the LPC Rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for your building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine how the LPC Rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find **construction date**, **architect and style**, **building and landmark type**, and a link to the **LPC designation report** with historical background.

What did your building look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services' NYC Municipal Archives Collections.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide** Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

See If Your Work Requires an LPC Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
A permit is **not required** for:

Ordinary maintenance, repair, and retrofitting of health, safety, and utility equipment.

Re-lamping light fixtures.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

What You Will Need

A complete application requires submitting the materials listed below.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **An LPC Permit Application Form,** filled out and signed by the property owner.
- ☐ **Color photos** of the entire building and close-ups of locations of proposed utility, security, or equipment installation for context.
- ☐ **Comparative drawings:**
  - – Elevation of the existing condition and proposed installations, except in-kind replacement of existing light fixtures, intercoms, security cameras, and mailboxes
  - – Large-scale details (in section, plan, or elevation) of proposed installations at visible facades only, except in-kind replacement of existing light fixtures, intercoms, security cameras, and mailboxes, showing no or minimally exposed conduit
  - – For HVAC on visible facades, floor and/or site plans of the existing condition and locations of proposed HVAC installation only (at visible facades only)
  - – Section of existing conditions and proposed HVAC installations only (at visible facades only)
- ☐ **Color specifications/ paint cards** at visible facades only.
- ☐ **Manufacturer cut sheets** for light fixtures, intercoms, security cameras, and mailboxes.
- ☐ **Two sets of Department of Buildings (DOB) filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

*When possible, your application materials must be supplemented with a **written explanation and/ or code citation.** You must demonstrate the need to install **HVAC, life safety, or utility equipment** at a particular location on the primary facade.*

If LPC requires additional information after your permit application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

In This Section:

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules – or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. LPC staff can guide you through this process. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks for more information.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of work involving health, safety, and utility equipment. See LPC Rules, Section 2-20, for more information.

General Criteria

Staff can approve the installation of health, safety, and utility equipment if it meets the following general criteria. Certain types of installations may have additional requirements. See the appropriate work type(s) for more information.

Installation of equipment cannot be on or in front of a primary facade unless no other option exists, i.e., no feasible alternative exists or the location is mandated by law.

If the installation needs to be on the primary facade, it must be placed in a discreet location that does not detract from the building's significant architectural features (e.g., beneath a band course, underneath a stoop, behind an areaway wall or fence, behind plantings), unless there is no other option.

Equipment must be attached at mortar joints, plain masonry, wood, or metalwork, or concrete paving at the areaway or sidewalk, and must not be attached through cast iron or on any decorative surfaces.

If installation requires conduit, the conduit must be concealed by going through plain masonry or wall cladding behind the installation.

If this is not possible, staff may approve a maximum of approximately ten inches of visible conduit.

If surface-mounted, the conduit must be painted to match the background surface and secured into mortar joints where possible — not installed on any decorative surfaces.

Most equipment must be as small as possible and painted to blend with surrounding building material, if possible.

On this building, required equipment and utilities were installed on plain stone and brick at discreet locations on the primary facade.

Some equipment is required by law to be installed at a primary facade. In this case, they are located on a non-historic wood storefront bulkhead.

Installing Light Fixtures and Intercom Panels

Staff can approve light fixtures and intercom panels if the installation meets the following criteria:

Light fixtures and intercom panels must be installed within or adjacent to a door opening.

An intercom can also be installed on a fence or wall in front of the entranceway.

A maximum of two light fixtures and one intercom panel can be installed per door opening.

Design, size, and finish of installations must be compatible with the architecture of the building (i.e., neutral and discreet).

Staff can approve light fixtures installed at plain masonry adjacent to a door opening, as seen here, or within the opening.

An intercom installed within a door opening.

Installing Security Cameras

Staff can approve security cameras if installation meets the following criteria:

Security cameras must be well spaced to avoid a cluttered, haphazard appearance.

For small residential or commercial buildings, no more than two security cameras can be installed for every 25 feet of street frontage.

For large residential, commercial, and institutional buildings, no more than three security cameras can be installed for every 25 feet of street frontage.

Two examples of dome-type security cameras finished to match surrounding materials.

Installing Mailboxes and Mail Key Lockboxes

Staff can approve mailboxes and mail key lockboxes if installation meets the following criteria:

Installed within or adjacent to the door opening.

Attached to a gate or door underneath the stoop, or on a plain stoop wall adjacent to the opening.

Attached to an areaway fence or installed on a freestanding post in the areaway.

Mailboxes can be installed at a plain masonry stoop wall adjacent to a basement-level entrance door.

Mailboxes can also be installed on a freestanding post in an areaway.

Installing Security Gates and Bars

Staff can approve security gates and bars if installation meets the following criteria:

Window security bars can be installed at cellar, basement, or parlor floor windows, if there is a stoop.

Security gates can be installed at openings below or under stoops.

If there is no gate, installing a gate can be approved at staff level.

If there is an existing historic gate below the stoop, it must be retained. Replacing it cannot be approved at staff level.

If there is an existing door below the stoop but no door existed historically, a new door can be approved at staff level if it has a high level of transparency in keeping with a gated or open passageway.

Security grilles attached at limited points to window surrounds at the ground floor.

Security bars and gates must be attached to the window frame or its surround, or the door surround, at limited attachment points.

Window security bars and security gates must match historic ironwork or be simply designed with minimal pickets or other details, and must not include continuous perimeter framing around the bars or opening.

Installing Certain Types of HVAC Equipment at the Base of Buildings

Staff can approve certain types of HVAC equipment at the base of buildings if installation meets the following criteria:

Staff can approve air intake or exhaust at a primary or visible secondary facade if existing structural or other physical constraints prohibit installing the equipment at a non-visible location.

Interior conditions that mandate installation elsewhere must not be the result of recent or related construction work that could have been designed to avoid installation at the primary facade.

Installation must otherwise be consistent with the criteria set forth for similar installation types found in the HVAC and mechanical section. See Section 2-21 of the LPC Rules and *Chapter 12* of this guidebook.

A vent installed at the base of a building, clad in painted metal to blend with the surrounding material.

Installing Detachable Flood Protection Barriers

LPC encourages resiliency and flood-proofing measures in the historic buildings it regulates so they may best adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Staff can approve detachable flood protection barriers if installation meets the following criteria:

Hardware or fasteners for flood protection barriers must be located at discreet locations on the facade and attached at plain masonry or wall cladding, not through cast iron or other decorative surfaces or features.

Required plugs or covers must be finished to match the surrounding material.

Permanent posts at service and garage door openings and loading bays, and associated **hardware,** must be finished to match the surrounding material or otherwise have a neutral finish.

Posts for removable flood protection barriers, all with a neutral finish, installed at plain masonry at select openings.

Chapter 12

HVAC

Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning, and other Mechanical Equipment

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) and other mechanical equipment are integral features of modern life and New York City buildings. These elements must be installed in compliance with building codes, energy codes, and health and safety standards, which evolve over time as codes and standards advance and occupant needs change. LPC staff can approve equipment installed and upgraded in ways that have little to no effect on a historic facade. These installation methods serve as the basis for LPC's rules for the installation of HVAC and mechanical equipment (see **LPC Rules**, Section 2-21, available on our website, **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**).

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

ⓘ

This chapter explains LPC's rules for installation of HVAC and other mechanical equipment. Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to the rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

Section A
How to Get Started

Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the LPC Rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for your building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine how the LPC Rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find **construction date**, **architect and style**, **building and landmark type**, and a link to the LPC **designation report** with historical background.

What did your building look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services' NYC Municipal Archives Collections.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide** Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

How big is the building?
Verify height and street frontage since requirements for HVAC installations at primary facades depend on the size of the building. See *Section B*, Installing Through-Window and Through-Wall HVAC Equipment at Primary Facades.

See If Your Work Requires an LPC Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
LPC requires a permit for installing most types of HVAC and mechanical equipment , but a permit is **not required** for:

Non-permanent installations that require only raising, lowering, or opening a window sash.

Glazed or solid panels installed along with the AC unit to fill the remainder of the opening. They should be painted to match the window frame (if solid). Support brackets must fasten to the window frame or the interior, and brace against the exterior wall without mechanical attachments.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

Seasonal installations of window air conditioning units, like the one seen here, do not require a permit.

Consider Establishing a Master Plan

If you plan to install HVAC and other mechanical equipment over time, apply for a master plan. A master plan provides the opportunity to incrementally perform work as finances and vacancies permit. Once you have a master plan, future applications can be quickly reviewed since specific work standards will be established and approved in the initial permit. This type of permit generally does not expire. See *Section C* for more information.

What You Will Need

A complete application typically requires the materials listed below, but additional materials may be required depending on the type of work. See *Section B* for a list of all materials required for your work type.

Basic Application Materials

- **An LPC Permit Application Form,** filled out and signed by the property owner.
- **Color photos** of the entire building and close-ups of locations of where the work is occurring for context.
- **Comparative drawings:**
  - Elevation of existing conditions and proposed HVAC or mechanical equipment installations
  - Floor and/or site plans of existing conditions and locations of proposed HVAC or mechanical equipment installations
  - Section of existing conditions and proposed HVAC or mechanical equipment installations at windows, facades, and storefronts only
  - Details of existing conditions and proposed HVAC or mechanical equipment installations at windows, facades, and storefronts only
- **Color specifications/ paint cards** at visible facades, roofs, and yards only.
- **Two sets of Department of Buildings (DOB) filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules – or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. Staff can guide you through this process. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks for more information.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of work involving HVAC and mechanical equipment, including through-window, through-wall, and wall-mounted installations. See LPC Rules, Section 2-21, for more information.

In This Section:

General Criteria

Staff can approve the installation of HVAC and other mechanical equipment if it meets the following general criteria. Certain types of installations may have additional requirements. See criteria by work type for more information.

The installation does not damage or remove significant architectural features.

The installation is not visible, if possible. Make every effort to place equipment in a non-visible location unless no feasible alternative exists. Staff may request evidence or option studies to help determine where equipment can or must be placed.

The installation cannot occur at a special window. See *Chapter 2* for information on special windows.

Installing Through-Window HVAC Equipment

Installing Through-Window HVAC Equipment at Primary Facades

Staff can only approve permanent installations of HVAC equipment, louvers, and vents in window openings on certain types of buildings.

Small Buildings

If the building is classified as a small building (see Glossary in *Section C*), staff cannot approve installation of through-window HVAC equipment. Staff may suggest alternatives – or your proposal may be presented to the full Commission for review at a public hearing.

Large Buildings

If the building is classified as a large building (see Glossary in *Section C*), staff can approve permanent installation of through-window HVAC equipment if window openings meet the following criteria.

Removal

The installation must retain the window frame and only involve removal of glazing, or modifying

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos of windows** where installations are planned.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans or elevations** showing location of windows where installations are planned, including building height and street frontage dimensions at primary facades only.
- ☐ **Comparative window elevations** showing existing and proposed conditions for each installation.
- ☐ **Comparative vertical section drawings** showing existing and proposed conditions of the louver installed within the window sash or frame.
- ☐ **Color samples** to match the window frame at visible facades only.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

A projecting HVAC unit set within a filler panel at the top sash of a window, which may be used if a unit or louver fills only part of a window frame.

or removing one double-hung sash or one portion of a casement window assembly.

A new window can be installed in conjunction with HVAC equipment, subject to requirements for window replacement as described above and in Chapter 2.

Design and Installation

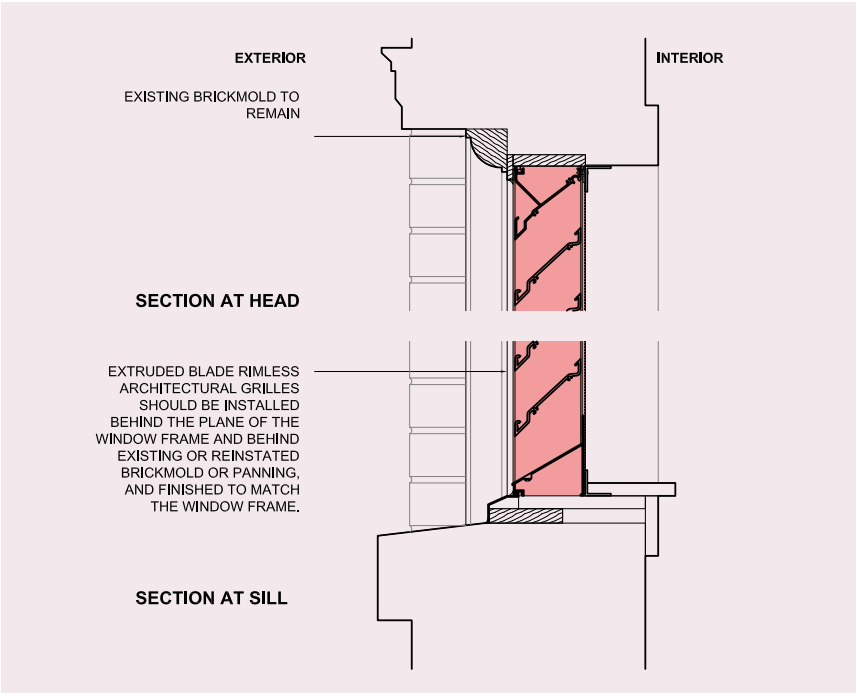
The exterior HVAC louver **must be mounted flush** with or behind the plane of the window frame and behind brick mold or panning.

If the window air conditioning unit projects, it must be **mounted within the window frame**.

In either case, if the exterior louver or window unit only fills a part of the window frame, the remainder of the sash can be filled with a filler panel (glazed or solid) or partial-height window sash to match the overall window configuration.

Finish

The exterior louver and any solid filler panel must be **finished to match the window frame**. A projecting window unit does not need to be painted.



A section drawing of a proposed through-window louver, installed in the same plane as the existing window.

Installing Through-Window HVAC Equipment at Secondary Facades

Staff can approve HVAC and mechanical installations on secondary facades if they meet the following criteria:

Design and Installation

The installation must occur **within an existing window opening**, either as an exterior louver, projecting window unit, or small vent with a flush or minimally projecting cap and filler panel, set back from the plane of the facade to approximate the window depth.

The installation may occur at the same time as a new window is installed.

Finish

At visible secondary facades, the installation involves an exterior louver or small vent with a flush or minimally projecting cap, the louver, vent, cap, and solid filler panel must be **finished to match the window frame**.

If the installation is at a visible secondary facade only part of the full height of the sash being removed, the remainder must be filled with a filler panel (glazed or solid) or partial height window sash that matches (size permitting) the overall window configuration. For more information, see *Chapter 2*.

Installations at non-visible secondary facades do not need to be painted.

Installing Through-Wall HVAC Equipment

Installing Through-Wall HVAC Equipment at Primary Facades

Staff can only approve permanent installations of HVAC equipment, louvers, and vents through the wall on certain types of buildings.

Small Buildings

If the building is classified as a small building (see Glossary in *Section C*), a manufacturing or loft building, or an individual landmark, staff cannot approve installation of through-wall HVAC equipment. Staff may suggest alternatives or your proposal may be presented to the full Commission for review at a public hearing. See *Section A* to verify whether the building is considered a small building according to LPC Rules.

Large Buildings

If the building is classified as a large building (see Glossary in *Section C*), staff can approve permanent installation of through-wall HVAC equipment if it meets the following criteria. See Section A to verify whether the building is considered a large building according to LPC Rules.

Location

The location of the new installation must **match the regular pattern of installations at the building or the installation should be centered beneath the window opening**. If there is no pattern or it is not possible to adhere to an existing pattern, the location can form the basis for a new pattern that does not detract from the facade or adjacent buildings.

If the window opening is wide enough to accommodate two or more windows, **placement must match the predominant existing pattern of through-wall installations**, which can be centered beneath the opening or to one side.

The installation must not occur through decorative masonry such as corbelled or patterned brickwork.

Design and Installation

Through-wall HVAC equipment **must be mounted as flush as possible** with surrounding masonry, typically no more than 1/2 inch beyond the plane of the facade. This type of installation is typically achieved with a rimless type architectural louver with flat metal blades.

Finish

The louver must be finished to match surrounding masonry.

Required Application Materials

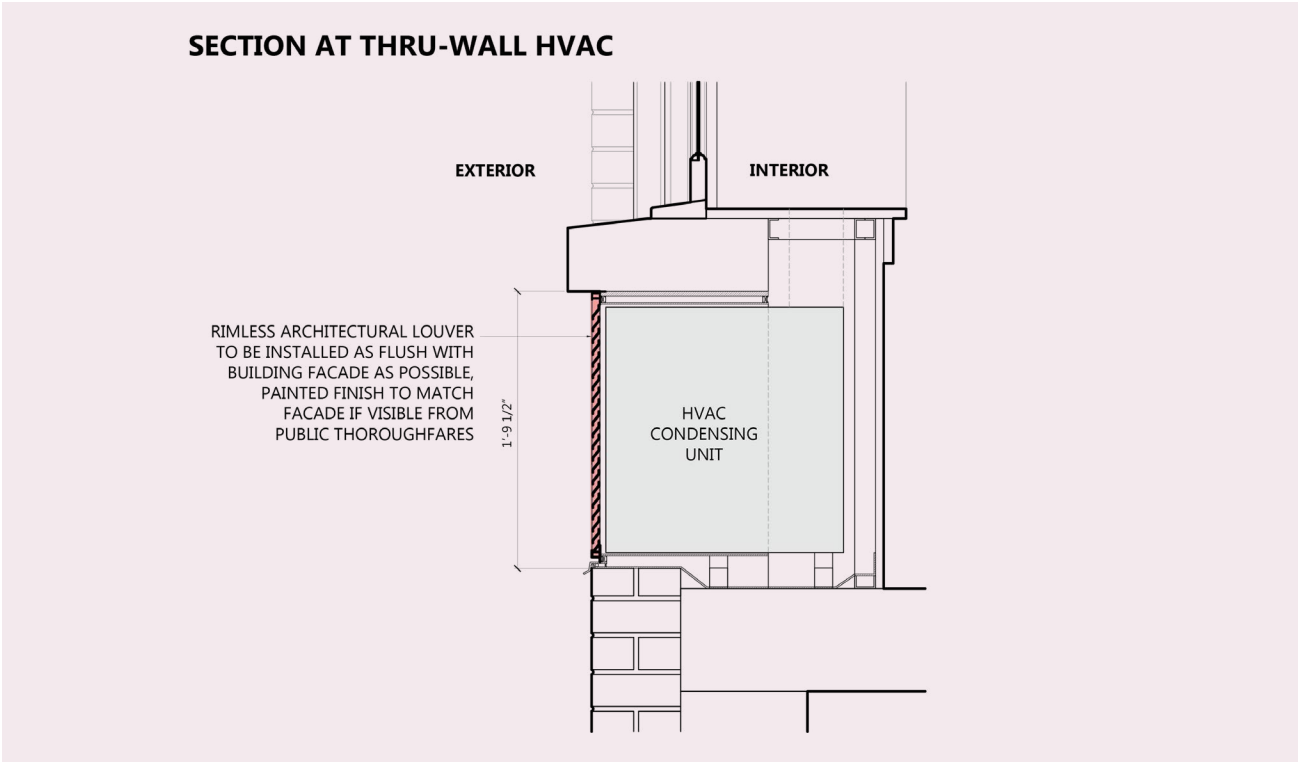
- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos of the specific wall areas** where installations will occur.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans or elevations** showing the location where installations will occur, including building height and street frontage dimensions at primary facades only.
- ☐ **Comparative elevation** for each installation showing existing and proposed conditions, including alignment of the louver to the associated window, if any.
- ☐ **Comparative vertical section drawings** showing existing conditions and proposed louver, installed flush with the wall or minimally projecting.
- ☐ **Manufacturer cut sheets of the louver or vent.**
- ☐ **Color samples** to match the surrounding masonry

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

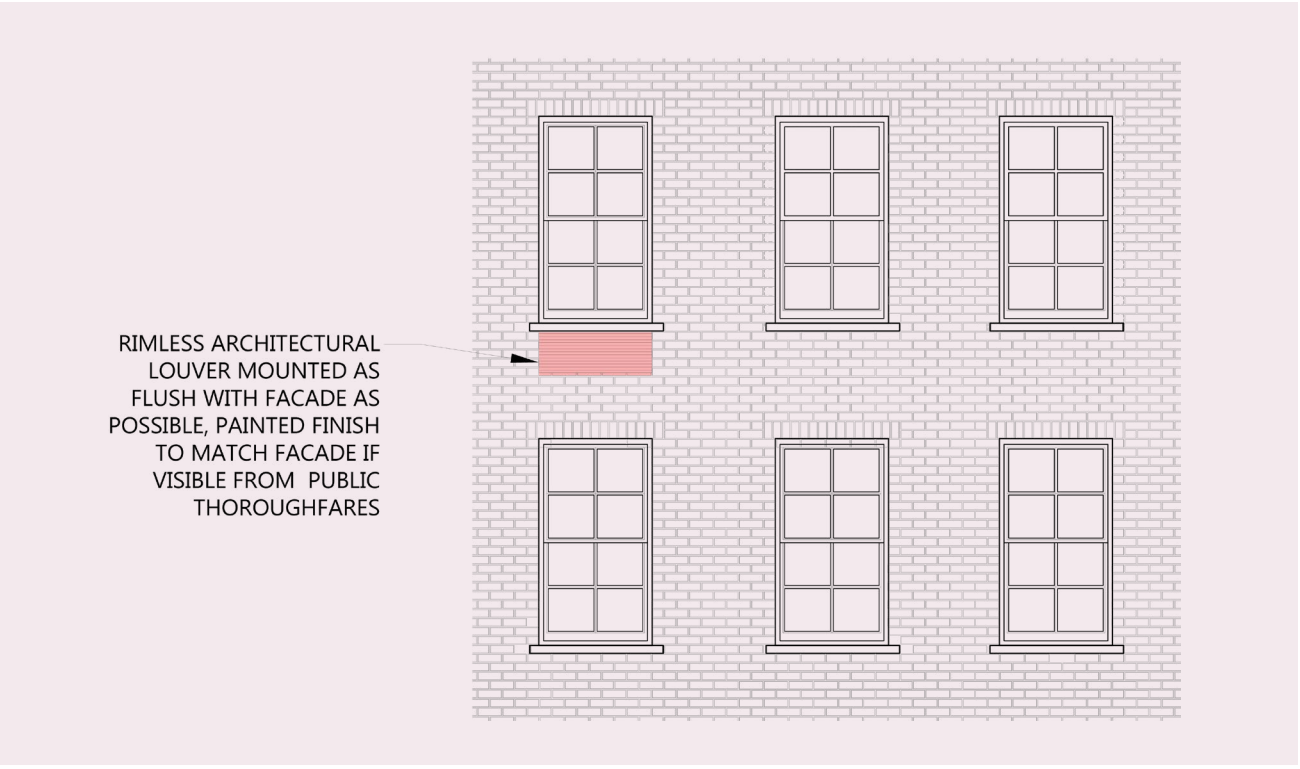
New louver installations should follow the existing pattern of louver installations or may establish a new pattern if necessary.

Through-wall HVAC installations should not be installed at decorative masonry (at left), but may be installed at plain masonry (at right).

New installations should match an established regular pattern of through-wall HVAC installations.



A section drawing of a through-wall HVAC installation with a flush-mounted architectural louver. The louver must be finished to match the surrounding masonry.



A typical elevation drawing of a through-wall HVAC installation centered below a window opening.

Installing Through-Wall HVAC Equipment at Secondary Facades

Staff can approve through-wall HVAC and mechanical installations at secondary facades if they meet the following criteria:

Location

At **visible secondary facades**, if the vent or louver exceeds 144 square inches in surface area, it must be centered beneath or above a window opening.

If the vent or louver is 144 square inches or less in surface area, it must be below, above, or to the side of a window opening.

Design and Installation

At **visible and non-visible secondary facades**, if the louver is 144 square inches or less in surface area, a minimally projecting cap may be installed.

Louvers that exceed 144 square inches in surface area are only permitted through a masonry facade. The exterior louver must be mounted as flush as possible with the exterior wall or facade cladding, and with the minimum feasible projection.

At secondary facades without windows, the unit must be installed in a uniform pattern. Variations from the predominant existing pattern may be permitted if interior space does not permit installation that conforms with the pattern.

Finish

At visible secondary facades, the exterior louver must be finished in a manner that approximates the color of the surrounding facade cladding.

At non-visible secondary facades, the installation does not need to be painted.

Installing Wall-Mounted HVAC

Installing Wall-Mounted HVAC at Primary Facades

Staff cannot approve wall-mounted HVAC equipment at primary facades on any building. These installations must be reviewed by the full Commission at a public hearing.

Installing Wall-Mounted HVAC at Secondary Facades

Staff can approve wall-mounted HVAC installations if they meet the following criteria:

Location

Wall-mounted HVAC can be **no more than minimally visible from a public thoroughfare**. See *Section C* for more information on minimal visibility.

Wall-mounted flues or ducts **can be minimally visible from a public thoroughfare**, or more than minimally visible if required by building, fire. or health codes.

If the duct or flue is more than minimally visible, it must be **located in the least visible location**, not disrupt the composition of the facade, and not extend higher than required.

Design and Installation

Any attachments, such as associated platforms, brackets, and straps, must be **reversible**, if possible, and minimize damage to the historic building. If penetrations through the facade are required for conduits or ducts, they must be as small as possible to conform with the manufacturer's recommended dimensions.

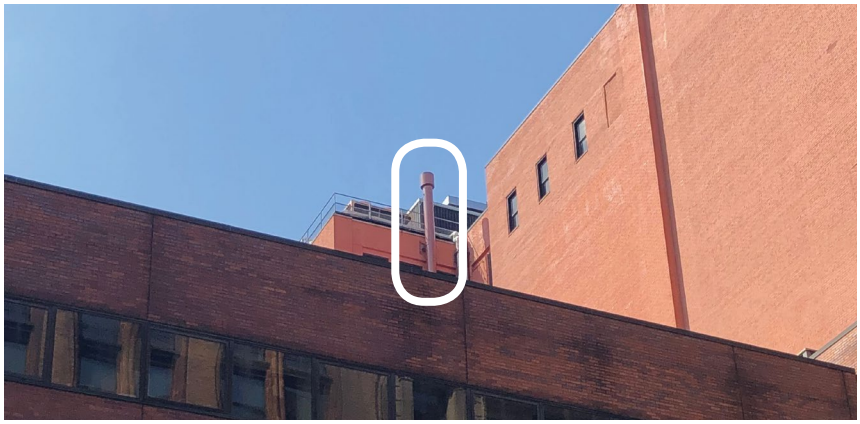
Finish

At visible secondary facades, HVAC and other mechanical equipment, flues, and ducts, plus associated platforms, brackets, and straps, must have a finish that matches the color of the underlying material or is neutral and does not call attention to itself.

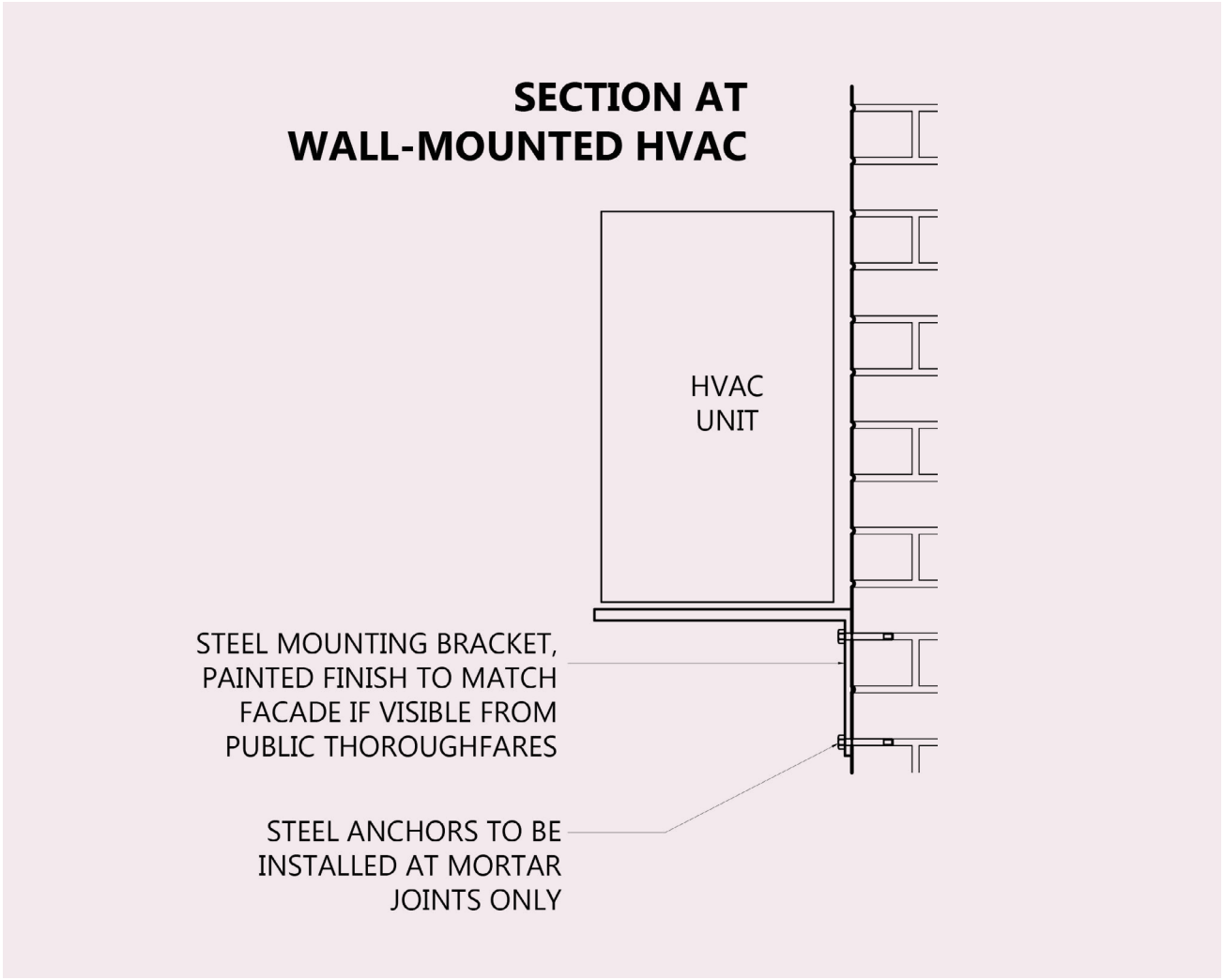
Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos of specific wall areas** where installations will occur.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans or elevations** showing location of proposed installations.
- ☐ **Comparative elevations** showing existing and proposed conditions for each installation.
- ☐ **Comparative vertical section drawings** of existing and proposed HVAC equipment or flue, showing attachment to the wall, including platforms and brackets.
- ☐ **Manufacturer cut sheets of HVAC equipment.**
- ☐ **Color samples** to match or harmonize with the surrounding masonry or wall cladding at visible facades only.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.



Wall-mounted flues at a secondary facade, as required by code. The flues have been finished to match the underlying material.



A section drawing showing the attachment of a platform and brackets for a wall-mounted HVAC unit utilizing existing mortar joints.

Installing HVAC Equipment in Storefronts

Staff can approve storefront HVAC installation if it meets the following criteria:

Removal

The installation must only involve removing glazing, or modifying or removing the transom window sash and retaining the storefront or door frame.

Transom Installation

The exterior louver must be mounted flush with or behind the plane of the transom window frame and behind brick mold or panning.

If the exterior louver replaces only part of the transom window sash being removed, the remainder of the space must be filled with a flat panel (glazed or solid) or partial height transom window sash that matches the finish and configuration (size permitting) of the overall transom window.

At recessed storefront entrances only, the window unit (projecting or flush) can be mounted within the transom window frame.

Bulkhead Installation

At a non-historic storefront bulkhead, a rimless architectural louver can be integrated into the design of the bulkhead and installed as flush as possible.

If installation involves installing the exterior louver and a new storefront or door at the same time, the resulting installation must comply with criteria in this section and Chapter 3 (Storefronts) as well.

Finish

The exterior louver and any solid filler panel must be finished to match the storefront window frame or bulkhead. At a recessed storefront, the projecting window unit does not need to be painted.

The glazing at one of these transom windows has been replaced with a flush-mounted louver, finished to match the transom window frames.

Louvers can be integrated into the design of a non-historic storefront bulkhead.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades.
- ☐ **Photos of storefronts** where installations will occur.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated floor plans or elevations** showing the location of storefront windows where installations will occur.
- ☐ **Comparative storefront window elevations** showing existing and proposed conditions.
- ☐ **Comparative vertical section drawings** showing existing conditions and proposed louver installed within the storefront window.
- ☐ **Color samples** to match the storefront at visible facades only.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Installing Rooftop HVAC or Other Mechanical Equipment

Staff can approve rooftop HVAC or other mechanical installations if they meet the following criteria:

Staff may approve a minimally visible installation if it is not possible to make the installation non-visible, and visibility is not caused by equipment being placed on a Commission-approved addition. See *Section C* for more information on minimal visibility.

If an existing grandfathered or Commission-approved installation is being replaced, staff can approve work that slightly increases visibility over a primary facade if the increase is required by building or fire codes and there is no feasible alternative.

Otherwise, a grandfathered or Commission-approved installation can be replaced with matching or smaller units, even if it is more than minimally visible, provided that no other location would be less visible.

At a secondary facade, the installation can be no more than minimally visible.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades and roof.
- ☐ **Photos of areas** of installation at the roof.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated roof plan** showing locations where installations will occur.
- ☐ **Comparative elevations** existing and proposed conditions for each installation.
- ☐ **Comparative building section drawings** of existing and proposed conditions, showing HVAC or mechanical equipment installations on the roof, including dunnage and surrounding parapets:
  - *– Sightline section taken at a 6-foot eye level from directly across the street at the property line and other points where HVAC or mechanical equipment may be visible*
- ☐ **Manufacturer cut sheets of HVAC or mechanical equipment.**
- ☐ **Color specifications** for visible installations only.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

A physical mock-up of the installation may be required to determine potential visibility of rooftop HVAC and mechanical equipment (see *Section C*, Technical Guidance and Resources). If a mock-up is required, you must submit the following application materials:

- ☐ **Color photographs of the mock-up and roof** from surrounding points on the street to demonstrate potential visibility of the proposed installation.
- ☐ **If the proposed installation is visible from a public thoroughfare,** color photographs from points of visibility noting the maximum point of visibility.

If requested by staff, a photo montage for each view with the installation drawn in.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Rooftop HVAC installations, including vents and condensing units, can be minimally visible if it is not possible to make them non-visible from public thoroughfares.

Rooftop installations can include other mechanical equipment like solar panels, as seen here.

Minimally visible rooftop HVAC units, as seen from a public thoroughfare.

The orange box is a physical mock-up of a proposed rooftop HVAC unit. Staff may require such a mock-up to determine an installation's potential visibility from public thoroughfares.

Installing HVAC and Other Mechanical Equipment in Yards and Areaways

Staff can approve HVAC and other mechanical installations in yards and areaways if they meet the following criteria:

Location

Equipment should be placed in a non-visible location. Equipment can only be installed in front of a primary facade or visible secondary facade if there is no practical or feasible alternative.

In front of a primary facade, the installation can be minimally visible only if at least partially screened by architectural or hardscape features, e.g., behind an areaway wall, within a below-grade light well. See *Section C* for more information on minimal visibility.

In front of a visible secondary facade, the installation must be set back as far as possible from the primary facade. Visibility can be reduced or eliminated through the use of permanent plantings.

Installation

Penetrations for associated conduits or ducts through the facade must be as small as possible to conform with manufacturer's recommended dimensions.

This HVAC unit was installed adjacent to a secondary facade. Evergreen plantings will further reduce the equipment's visibility over time.

Finish

If there is any visibility of HVAC and other mechanical equipment, conduit and ducts, and associated platforms, equipment must have a finish that matches the color of the facade material or is neutral and does not call attention to itself.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **Photos** of building facades and areaway or yard.
- ☐ **Photos of areas** of installation at areaway or yard.
- ☐ **Existing and proposed annotated areaway or site plan** showing where installations will occur; if in the front areaway, include details on why it is not feasible elsewhere.
- ☐ **Comparative elevations** showing existing and proposed conditions for each installation.
- ☐ **Comparative vertical section drawings** of existing and proposed conditions, showing HVAC or mechanical equipment and attachment to paving, yard, or base of the wall, including platforms, conduits, and penetrations.
- ☐ **Manufacturer cut sheets of HVAC or mechanical equipment.**
- ☐ **Color samples** to match or harmonize with surrounding paving or wall at visible areaways and yards only.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Section C
Technical Guidance and Resources

This section provides additional guidance and resources to help you understand LPC's rules and criteria in order to submit the correct materials with your application.

→ **In This Section:**

Glossary

See ***Chapter 6,*** Additions, for more information about minimal visibility.

Decorative Masonry
is terra cotta, cast stone, natural stone (such as limestone, marble, brownstone, or granite), and brick facade areas; any ornamental feature that is a component of the facade such as belt courses, banding, water tables, cornices, corbelled brick work, medallions, enframements, and surrounds; and ornamental bonding patterns, e.g., tapestry or diaper brick patterns. The term does not include entirely plain units of stone, masonry, or brick laid up with simple, non-decorative coursing.

HVAC Equipment
includes through-window, through-wall, rooftop, areaway, and facade- and yard-mounted heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment, including louvers; wall-mounted louvers; and stove, restaurant, bathroom, and/or dryer vents.

Large Buildings
are seven or more stories or have a street frontage of more than 40 feet. Large buildings include large apartment buildings and hotels; large commercial and loft buildings, including cast-iron fronted buildings, department stores, banks, office buildings; and other building types.

Mechanical Equipment
is equipment other than HVAC equipment, such as solar and wind powered equipment, batteries and emergency generators, and any associated elements such as safety railings and sound attenuation screens, baffles, and other structures.

Minimally Visible
is the amount of visibility of HVAC and other mechanical equipment that the staff can approve over the primary and secondary facades:

Over a primary facade:
If there is no feasible or practical alternative, HVAC and other mechanical equipment can project into the maximum line of sight from a public thoroughfare no more than 12 inches in height if the equipment is less than 60 feet above the ground; project no more than 18 inches if the equipment is between 61 and 80 feet above the ground; project no more than 24 inches if the equipment is between 81 and 100 feet above the ground; and project no more than 36 inches if the equipment is more than 100 feet above the ground.

Over a secondary facade:
The visibility of HVAC and other mechanical equipment must not call attention to itself or detract from significant architectural features of the building or other buildings if in a historic district. In determining whether equipment does not call attention to itself or detract, LPC staff considers the following factors:

Visibility at a significant distance.

Visibility against the backdrop of another building or equipment.

Visibility over other buildings and not associated with significant features of the building or adjacent buildings.

Primary Facade
is:

A facade fronting a street or public thoroughfare that is not a street, such as a mews or court.

A visible facade that possesses a level of design or significant architectural features that is commensurate with the building's street-fronting facades, and where such facade:

Faces but does not front a street, such as a setback facade, or

Is part of a dominant massing element where at least one facade is street-fronting or street-facing, such as a tower element it.

A facade with a primary entrance to the building.

Secondary Facade
is a facade that does not front on a street or public thoroughfare and does not possess significant architectural features commensurate with the street-fronting facade.

Small Buildings
are six stories or fewer in height with a street frontage of 40 feet or less. Includes rowhouses, townhouses, mansions, detached and semi-detached houses, and carriage houses; small apartment buildings, tenements, and hotels; small, utilitarian, commercial, and loft buildings; and other building types.

Master Plans

Master plans, which generally do not have an expiration date, allow you to install HVAC or mechanical equipment over time as finances or vacancies permit. (See Section 2-02 of the LPC Rules). Master plans are more efficient because once approved, applications can be processed more quickly.

Master plans can be approved at the staff level or by the Commission, depending on whether the work meets LPC Rules.

Once established, the building owner can move forward quickly with work covered by a master plan by submitting a completed application form to the Commission, describing the scope of work, and stating that it conforms to master plan drawings and other documents.

Staff reviews the application and issues an Authorization to Proceed permit prior to commencement of work.

How to Construct a Mock-Up

If visibility cannot be determined from the drawings, a physical **mock-up** of your installation may be required to determine potential visibility of rooftop HVAC and mechanical equipment. A mock-up is a temporary, accurate, full-scale physical representation of the proposed modifications to a building that allows staff to assess the visibility of the proposed installation and its impact. (The applicant is responsible for the accuracy of the mock-up's visibility; any mistakes in the mock-up are construed against the applicant.)

A mock-up is typically constructed from 2x4s or metal pipe and draped with orange construction netting, painted a bright color, or wrapped with bright yellow caution tape, or, in certain circumstances, a story pole is used. These materials ensure that it is clearly visible from the street.

The mock-up must include all mechanical equipment, as well as any required railings.

Once the mock-up has been constructed, contact the staff member assigned to your application and schedule a site visit. Your architect must be prepared to verify on-site (with drawings and a measuring tape) the heights and setbacks of various elements of the rooftop installation.

At the site inspection, LPC makes an initial determination on visibility of the rooftop installation from public thoroughfares and may suggest modifications to lessen impact.

Mock-ups are often required for projects being presented at a public hearing. In this case, the mock-up must be constructed of sturdy materials so it can be safely left in place over the course of the hearing so staff, Commissioners, and the community may view and document it.

Depending on the complexity and scale of your project, DOB and LPC permits may be required for the temporary installation of a mock-up. See Chapter 6 for more information on mock-ups.

Chapter 13

Fire Escapes

Fire escapes began to appear on buildings in New York City in the 1860s, when they were first required to provide emergency egress for tenement buildings. During the early 20th century, fire escapes were added to many loft buildings after new labor laws were passed. While they served a utilitarian purpose, in some historic buildings they became significant features as they were elaborately detailed and designed to complement facades. In historic districts like SoHo, fire escapes define the streetscape. The historic use and appearance of fire escapes serve as the basis for LPC's rules for work involving modification, removal, and installation of fire escapes (see **LPC Rules**, Section 2-22, available on our website, **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**).

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

This chapter explains LPC's rules for work on fire escapes. Our goal is to help you submit a fully completed permit application for work that conforms to the LPC Rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

Section A
How to Get Started

Before applying for your permit, you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for the building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map** to determine how the LPC Rules apply to your specific building type.

Click on your building to find **construction date**, **architect and style**, **building and landmark type**, and a link to the LPC **designation report** with historical background.

What did the building look like?
Find **historic tax photos** from the 1940s and 1980s, available through the NYC Department of Records & Information Services' NYC Municipal Archives Collections.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, is available in the LPC Resource Guide Researching Historic Buildings in New York City, available on our website at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

Is the building in a historic district?
Fire escapes are considered significant features and characteristic of some historic districts. Staff can help you identify whether a fire escape is a significant architectural feature. Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov to verify before filing your application.

See if the Work Requires a Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
LPC requires a permit for installing, modifying, and removing fire escapes, but a permit is **not required** for:

Repainting fire escapes to match the existing color.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

What You Will Need

A complete application requires all the materials listed below.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **LPC Permit Application Form** filled out and signed by the property owner.
- ☐ **Color photos** of the entire building for context and close-up photos of where the work will be taking place.
- ☐ **Comparative drawings:**
  - – Elevation of existing conditions and proposed alterations or installations
  - – Floor plans of existing conditions and locations of proposed alterations or installations
  - – Section of existing conditions and proposed alterations or installations
  - – Large-scale details (in elevation, section, or plan, as needed) to illustrate proposed alteration or installations
- ☐ **An assessment** of deteriorated conditions of historic fire escapes to be removed or replaced.
- ☐ **Color specifications / paint cards** at visible facades only.
- ☐ **Material specifications.**
- ☐ Two sets of Department of Buildings (DOB) **filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.

When possible, your application materials must be supplemented by a **written explanation and / or code citation** that demonstrates the need to install the fire escape at a particular location on the primary facade or visible secondary facade, rather than on a non-visible facade.

When applying to remove a fire escape, include details and specifications for repairing the facade after removal.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

In This Section:

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish the criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules — or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. Staff can guide you through this process. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks for more information.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of work involving fire escapes. See LPC Rules, Section 2-22, for more information.

Fire Escapes

Modifying and Repairing Fire Escapes

Staff can approve work on an existing fire escape if it meets the following criteria:

Replacing

Replacing a component of the fire escape in-kind; matching the existing fire escape's materials, details, and color.

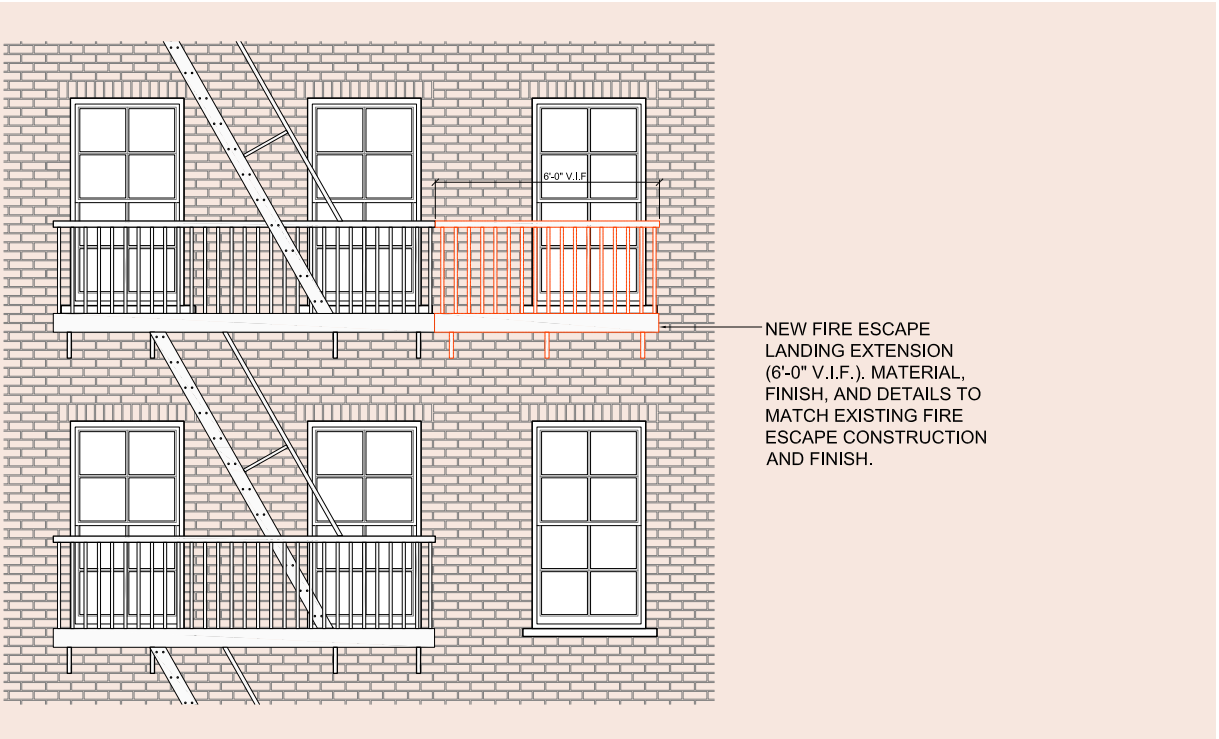
Repainting

Repainting the fire escape the existing color, a dark color such as black or brown that is typical of the historic district, or a color that matches or is similar to the existing color of the facade.

Modifying

Modifying the fire escape to replace a drop ladder with a swing stair (or vice versa), or horizontally and/or vertically extending platforms at each floor. New elements must match materials, details, color, and dimensions of the existing fire escape.

A drop ladder, shown here, may be replaced with a swing stair, or vice versa, through approval at staff level.



Staff can approve horizontally or vertically extending a fire escape platform when material, details, color, and dimensions match the existing assembly.

Removing Fire Escapes

Staff can approve removal of an existing fire escape if it meets the following criteria:

Age and Significance

The fire escape **is not** original to the building or **is not** considered a significant architectural feature. Staff can help identify if your fire escape is a significant architectural feature. If original or considered a significant architectural feature, staff **cannot** approve removal but may suggest alternatives. Your proposal may also be presented to the full Commission for review at a public hearing. Contact LPC before filing your application.

Location

The fire escape **is not** located on a building within a historic district where fire escapes contribute to the special architectural and historic character. Staff can help you identify whether it is a significant architectural feature.

Before: Staff can approve the removal of fire escapes that are not original to the building, like the one seen here, which was added decades after construction.

After: In this case, removing the fire escape brought the building closer to its historic appearance.

These decorative fire escapes are considered significant architectural features of their buildings.

Installing Fire Escapes at Primary Facades

Fire escapes must not be installed on a primary facade if it is possible to install on a secondary or non-visible facade. If not possible, you must demonstrate that the new fire escape cannot be installed on a secondary facade due to interior or structural conditions. Interior conditions must not be the result of recent construction that could have been designed to avoid installation at the primary facade.

Staff can then approve installation of a new fire escape at a primary facade if it meets the following criteria.

Design
Simple and utilitarian in design.

Impact
Installation will not cause removal of, or damage to, significant architectural features of the facade.

Common Feature
Can be approved by staff only if fire escapes are a common feature of the historic district. Staff can help make this determination.

Installing Fire Escapes at Visible Secondary Facades

A new fire escape must not be installed on a visible secondary facade if it is possible to install it on a non-visible facade. If not possible, you must demonstrate that installation on a non-visible secondary facade is due to interior or structural conditions.

Installing Fire Escapes at Non-Visible Facades

Staff can approve the installation of a fire escape at a non-visible facade if it meets the following criteria:

Design
Simple and utilitarian in design.

Impact
Installation does not cause removal of, or damage to, significant architectural features of the facade.

Before: While fire escapes are considered a common feature in Tribeca South Historic District, this building did not have a fire escape at the time of designation.

After: A new fire escape was installed at the primary facade after it was determined that no other location was feasible.

Chapter 14

Temporary Installations

Malcolm Pinckney / NYC Parks

Temporary banners, signs, and art exhibitions are dynamic features of the New York City urban landscape. These installations often call for introducing elements or making modifications to historic buildings that may affect significant architectural features. In addition, construction work sometimes requires the temporary removal of architectural features. Protecting historic architectural features is the basis for LPC's rules for temporary installations and removals (see **LPC Rules**, Section 2-05, available on our website, **www.nyc.gov/landmarks**).

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

In This Chapter, You Will Find:

ⓘ

This chapter explains LPC's rules on temporary installations and temporary removal of architectural features during construction. Our goal is to help you submit a completed permit application for work that conforms to the LPC Rules so you can get your permit more quickly.

Section A
How to Get Started

Before applying for your permit you should:

Find Information about Your Building

This will help you determine how the LPC Rules apply.

What type of building is it?
Search for the building on the **Discover NYC Landmarks map.**

Click on your building to find **construction date**, **architect** and **style**, **building** and **landmark type**, and a link to the LPC **designation report** with historical background.

Additional information, including guidance on finding **historic maps**, can be found in the **LPC Resource Guide Researching Historic Buildings in New York City**, available on our website at www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

See If Your Work Requires an LPC Permit

Maybe you don't need a permit.
LPC generally requires a permit for temporary installations at historic buildings, but a permit is **not required** for:

Fixtures (such as pots, window boxes, small planters, or sandwich boards) that physically do not attach to any part of the building or sidewalk, or can easily be moved.

Unsure whether your work requires a permit?
Contact LPC at 212-669-7817 or info@lpc.nyc.gov.

What You Will Need

A complete application requires all the materials listed below.

Required Application Materials

- ☐ **An LPC Permit Application Form,** filled out and signed by the property owner.
- ☐ **Color photos** of the entire building and close-ups of areas of installation or construction-related work.
- ☐ **Comparative drawings or renderings:**
  - – Elevation of existing and proposed conditions, showing installation or construction-related work.
  - – Details showing existing and proposed conditions of the installation or construction-related work, plus installation methods.
- ☐ **Material specifications for repairs** that may be required after removal.
- ☐ **Two sets of DOB filing drawings** if proposed work requires a DOB permit.
- ☐ **Timetable and plan** for dismantling the features after installation or reinstating construction-related work.
- ☐ **An escrow agreement** or other adequate assurance to ensure removal and/or repairs, if the applicant is not a public agency or authority.
- ☐ **For artwork only: A written statement** signed by the artist and the building owner to ensure removal and/or repairs.

If LPC requires additional materials after your application is reviewed, you will receive a Materials Checklist from LPC staff.

Section B
LPC Rules and Criteria

→ **In This Section:**

ⓘ

This is how the Landmarks Preservation Commission works:

The LPC Rules establish criteria that allow staff to review and approve proposals for certain types of work at landmark properties. Permit applications for work that meets the LPC Rules can be approved faster. If the work does not meet the rules, staff may suggest alternatives that do meet the rules — or your proposal may be presented to the LPC Commissioners for review at a public hearing. Staff can guide you through the public hearing process. Visit www.nyc.gov/landmarks for more information.

This section explains and illustrates the rules and criteria for the most common types of temporary installations and removals. It also discusses temporary removal of architectural features for construction-related work. See LPC Rules, Section 2-05, for more information.

Temporary Installations

Vinyl panels and window films temporarily installed at a primary facade.

Temporary installations, such as signs, artwork, banners, and kiosks, call for introducing elements or making modifications to a landmark property for a limited period only. Staff can approve temporary installations that meet the following criteria:

Length of Time

Temporary signs and banners to promote seasonal events or residential sales or leasing can be installed for up to 180 days.

Art installations can be installed for up to one calendar year.

Construction-related installations can be installed for up to one calendar year.

Installation

Applicants must ensure that historic features of the building are not permanently damaged by the temporary installation.

If the installation needs to be secured, the application drawings should show minimal hardware and small holes, which may be installed for fasteners or tiebacks. The application drawings should additionally show plans for any repair work after the installation is dismantled.

Removal

To ensure that an installation is removed on time, the Commission requires establishment of an escrow agreement or similar assurance.

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"Escrow" and an "escrow agreement" is where money is held by a third party to guarantee the performance of an obligation. Escrows are required for most temporary permits to ensure that the temporary installation can be removed on time. An escrow can be held by a property owner's attorney. See *Section C* for a basic escrow agreement template for temporary permits.

Public art exhibitions, seen here, are considered temporary installations.

Contact the LPC Enforcement Department to prepare necessary documentation in support of your escrow agreement, if required, such as cost estimates for the work.

An escrow agreement is not required if the applicant is a public or quasi-public agency, or if the work is directly related to approved restorative work.

An art installation requires a written letter, signed by the artist and the property owner, establishing the owner's authority to remove the artwork when the temporary installation permit expires. The letter also waives any protection under applicable federal or state law afforded to the artist or artwork that would prevent the installation's removal. (See *Section C* for a letter template.)

Permit Renewal

Approvals at privately owned property for the temporary installation of signs and banners or art installations **cannot be renewed**.

If the property is publicly owned, approval can be renewed for up to two additional periods of time.

Approval for construction-related equipment is for one calendar year but can be renewed for up to two additional one-year periods, if necessary, due to ongoing construction work.

Temporary Removal of Architectural Features During Construction

During major construction work, it may be necessary to temporarily remove and store architectural features, such as doors or windows, to protect them. It may also be necessary to install a new element, such as a service ramp, to provide clearance or access to the building.

To temporarily remove such features, the Commission requires an acceptable plan for dismantling, storing, and reinstallation. Submit the plan as part of your application and include documentation that shows the following:

Which architectural features are to be removed and where they are located on the building.

Why features are being removed.

How the features will be removed, dismantled, and stored.

The condition of features before removal (photos, descriptions).

How features will be reassembled and reinstalled.

Any features that are removed must be reinstalled as required by the permit.

Architectural features, such as these decorative terra cotta spandrels, may be temporarily removed and stored while construction is in progress.

A bracket sign temporarily affixed to a facade.

Fragile or deteriorated architectural features can be stabilized and protected in place, as seen here while construction is in progress.

Section C
Technical Guidance and Resources

→ **In This Section:**

This section provides additional guidance and resources to help you understand LPC's rules and criteria and submit the correct materials with your permit application.

Artist Waiver Letter Template

Art installations require a written letter, signed by the artist and the property owner, which establishes the owner's authority to remove the artwork when the temporary installation permit expires, and waives federal and state laws governing the removal of artwork. (See sample artist waiver template at right.)

WAIVER FOR WORKS OF VISUAL ART INSTALLED AT BUILDING

[redacted]

Property Owner:
Property Owner Address: [redacted]

Re. Property: [redacted]

Work: [redacted]

Ladies and Gentlemen:

1. I, [redacted], am the artist of the Work "[redacted]"
2. The owner of the Property, [redacted], will display the Work from [redacted] to [redacted].
3. I, the artist, agree that the Work has been approved for temporary installation by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission and will be removed on or before [redacted] by [redacted]
4. I, the artist, hereby waive any and all protection under applicable federal and state law afforded to the artist or the artwork that would prevent such removal at the expiration of the temporary permit, including but not limited to, the Visual Artists Right Act ("VARA") of 1990, 17 U.S.C. 101 et seq. and Article 14 of the New York State Law on Arts and Cultural Affairs.

Very truly yours,

[redacted]

[redacted]
Artist

[redacted]

[redacted]
Owner

A sample artist waiver letter.

Sample Escrow Agreement for Temporary Installations

Escrow agreements are required for most temporary installation permits to ensure that the temporary installation can be removed on time. An escrow can be held by a property owner's attorney.

The document on the following pages contains a basic template for such an agreement. Before writing your escrow agreement, be sure to get an estimate for the cost of removing the installation.

The language of this agreement may need to be adjusted depending on the particular project.

ESCROW AGREEMENT

AGREEMENT made this _____ day of _____ between _____ (the "Company") a corporation organized under the laws of the State of New York with offices located at _____ and _____ (the "Escrow Agent") located at _____.

WITNESSETH

WHEREAS the Company is the _____ of certain real property located at _____, which is currently developed with a building (the "Building"): and

WHEREAS the Building lies within the boundaries of the _____ Historic District, an area designated by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (the "Commission") as a Historic District pursuant to the provisions of Section 25-303 of the New York City Administrative Code; and

WHEREAS the Commission has determined that there will be temporary installations made at the Building consisting of _____; and

WHEREAS the Commission will be issuing [permit number] _____ authorizing the temporary installation; and

WHEREAS the Company or an agent thereof has submitted to the Commission an estimate of the cost of such temporary installation, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit B, but has not yet entered into a contract to perform such installation; and

WHEREAS the Company has represented to the Commission that a contract to do the installation will be executed by the Company and the appropriate contractor (s) before _____, that such contract will refer to [permit number] _____ and will annex a copy thereto, that the Company will submit such contract to the Commission for approval prior to executing it, and that the contract will specify and require that the temporary installation shall be removed no later than _____; and

WHEREAS the Company has requested the Commission to consider and issue approvals for other projects proposed within the Building, prior to deconstruction of the temporary installation; and

WHEREAS the Company has deposited the sum of $_____ (said sum together with all interest thereon being the "Escrow Amount") to provide adequate assurance of the removal of the temporary installation, into an escrow account under the exclusive custody and control of the Escrow Agent (proof of such deposit is attached hereto as Exhibit C); and

WHEREAS the Company desires to have the Escrow Agent hold and distribute the Escrow Amount in the manner set forth herein and the Escrow Agent desires to act on behalf of the Company under this Escrow Agreement; and

WHEREAS the Company acknowledges and understands that the escrow amount shall be held by the escrow agent until such time as the temporary installation has been removed; and

WHEREAS the Company acknowledges and understands that this escrow agreement shall no longer satisfy the requirements of 63 R.C.N.Y. § 2-18 if the temporary installation is not removed within the time specified herein, notwithstanding that the escrow amount shall not be released until the temporary installation is removed pursuant to the procedures set forth herein.

NOW, THEREFORE in consideration of the foregoing and the mutual covenants set forth herein, the parties agree as follows:

1. The Escrow Agent shall hold, invest, dispose of and distribute the Escrow Amount as follows:

a) The Escrow Agent shall hold the Escrow Amount in an interest bearing account and release such Escrow Amount only upon the following circumstances and to the extent indicated herein to satisfy the removal of the temporary installation: when the temporary installation has been removed, the Company shall so notify the Commission in writing by certified mail, return receipt requested, so that the Commission can inspect the Building to determine if the installation has been removed. Thereafter, Escrow Agent shall release the Escrow Amount only upon receipt of a written notice of compliance for the removal of the

temporary installation, issued by the Commission.

b) The Escrow Agent undertakes to perform only such duties as are expressly set forth herein.

2. The Escrow Agent may rely and shall be protected in acting upon any written notice, instructions or request furnished to it hereunder and reasonably believed by it to be genuine and to have been signed or presented by the proper party or parties.

3. The Escrow Agent shall not be liable for any action it takes in good faith and which action is reasonably believed to be authorized or within the rights or power conferred upon it by this Escrow Agreement, and shall be fully authorized to perform and protected against any action taken or suffered by it hereunder in good faith.

4. The Escrow Agent may resign and be discharged from its duties hereunder by giving written notice to the Company and the Commission not less than sixty (60) days in advance of the date upon which such resignation shall take effect, provided that the Escrow Agent has deposited the Escrow Amount held by it under this Escrow Agreement with a successor Escrow Agent acceptable to the Company and the Commission. The Escrow Agent's sole responsibility hereunder is to hold, invest, dispose of and distribute the Escrow Amount. Upon delivery of the Escrow Amount, as herein contemplated, the Escrow Agent shall be released and discharged from any further liability.

5. The Company shall indemnify the Escrow Agent for and hold it harmless against any loss, liability or expense incurred without negligence or bad faith on the part of the Escrow Agent, arising out of or in connection with its entering into this Escrow Agreement and carrying out its duties hereunder, including the liability arising out of or in connection with this agreement.

6. Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, Escrow Agent shall only be required to pay the Company's contractors out of the monies held in escrow hereunder and only to the extent of such Escrow Amount.

7. The Escrow Agent agrees to provide a written report itemizing all subsequent

deposits and withdrawals from the Escrow Amount within twenty days after demand for said report is made by the Commission, which report shall detail each deposit and withdrawal of any money into the account holding the Escrow Amount and the reasons for each such deposit and/or withdrawal.

8. This Escrow Agreement contains the entire agreement between the Company and Escrow Agent with respect to transactions contemplated hereby, and no change, modification or waiver of any provision hereof shall be valid unless in writing and signed by the party to be bound.

9. This Escrow Agreement shall bind and inure to the benefit of the respective parties, their successors and assigns.

10. This Escrow Agreement shall be governed by and construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of New York.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Escrow Agreement has been executed and delivered by the parties the _____ day of _____, 20__.

By: _____
[print Signatory's name below; sign above]

for the Company

By: _____
Escrow Agent

www.nyc.gov/landmarks