

# Design Standards for New Construction in the Springville Historic District





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# Introduction

“A historic district strengthens the local economy, enhances property values, affirms historic and community values and promotes tourism.”

*The American Mosaic: Preserving a Nation's Heritage*

The history of Springville City is rooted in the development of Plat A and adjacent areas. In January 2004, the significance of the history of this area was recognized by listing of the “Springville Historic District” on the National Register of Historic Places. The historic district is significant because of the story it tells of Springville’s growth from an agricultural outpost to a thriving city with a diverse economic base. The major themes of Springville, through the years, have included agriculture, mercantilism, industry, construction, transportation and tourism as Utah’s “Art City.” The historic district is also significant because of the 897 (72% of the 1,238) primary buildings in the district which are identified as contributing to the historic character of the area.

The Historic District includes a representative sample of architectural styles and types covering the complete historic period, ranging from well-preserved early adobe homes, to elaborately-detailed examples of Victorian Eclectic Architecture from the late nineteenth century. Twentieth century styles such as bungalow, period-revival and ranch style houses make up about three-quarters of the significant primary buildings. The primary exterior materials used during the historic period include brick (59%), wood (13%) and stucco/plaster 14%, along with limited amounts of stone (as a foundation material), concrete, adobe and other external cladding materials such as asbestos and asphalt shingle. The past forty years have seen the inclusion of aluminum and vinyl siding over the historic materials. According to the National Register nomination, the district retains a high degree of historic integrity, despite the presence of some late twentieth-century alteration and new construction.

During the latter part of the twentieth century, this area experienced dramatic changes that largely ignored the historic nature of the area. This included the adoption of a zoning ordinance that allowed for residential densities of up to 39 units per acre. This resulted in new, large-scale apartment buildings that greatly affected the physical and social character of the area. Unfortunately, public safety and code enforcement issues increased within this area and resident-owners were often frustrated by the changes that were occurring. Additionally, zoning boundaries along Main Street and 400 South allowed for the encroachment of commercial uses off of those streets into areas that had been used residentially, with residences being rezoned commercially, which caused greater instability in those areas of the neighborhood.

In 2001, a design standards committee was established that originally focused on commercial areas, but later looked at the residential areas of Plat A. The efforts of owner-residents resulted in changing the zoning ordinance to a single-family residential zone that allowed accessory apartments in owner-occupied dwellings, which was more reflective of the general character of the area. In 2003, changes were made al-

lowing for a smaller lot for single-family dwellings and the Planning Commission directed Staff to develop standards that would help protect the character of the area as new development occurred, recognizing that the smaller lot requirement could have significant impacts depending on the design of houses that could be built in the area.

Since the 2004 National Register listing of the site, the Springville Landmarks Commission have continued to preserve and improve the Historic District. The Landmarks Commission's [www.historicspringville.org](http://www.historicspringville.org) website is an important resource for sharing information. Annual home tours highlight historic buildings in the District. Small grants have been provided for renovation of historic structures through the Certified Local Government Grants program administered by the State Preservation Office.

The "Design Standards for New Construction in the Springville Historic District" are intended to help preserve, stabilize and improve the area referred to as 'extended Plat A' which generally follows the boundaries of the Springville Historic District. The recognition of those who have directed and supported the development of these standards is that they are an important piece of an overall puzzle that will lead to a strong, attractive and desirable neighborhood and eventually overcome the neglect of this significant part of Springville's history, character and identity.

#### Use of the Standards

The Design Standards can be divided into two parts: required and recommended. The first part of the Design Standards are general in nature and refer to basic design features found throughout the Historic District. These include such things as front entries facing a public street, height and scale of housing, basic elevation features, location of parking, use of building materials, porches and house type. The General standards need to be met for new constructions occurring in the District, unless they are identified as recommendations.

New construction needs to be identifiable within the five house types identified in the general standards. These types allow for a large variety of options. A pattern-book for each style has also been provided. The pattern book portion are recommendations that serve as an important resource for people who choose to 'detail' houses in a way that reflects the historic architectural specific features of the area. These include detailed examples of window and door sections, porches, windows, columns, chimneys, lighting, etc.

As people consider constructing a new house or adding to an existing house, they should set an appointment to spend a few minutes with a city planner. This provides an opportunity to clarify what is being proposed and to ensure that required standards are considered when the building plans are developed. The formal approval of the building plans by the Design Review Board may take place before submission for building plans or simultaneously with building plan submission.