

Historic Preservation Manual

City of Houston Planning & Development Department

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Glenbrook Valley

Defining Features

This Historic District Profile was developed to help property owners. It explains the typical features of buildings found in Glenbrook Valley. This can be helpful when you are planning a project that would change your home's exterior.

Most homes in the Glenbrook Valley Historic District are one-story, single-family homes built on concrete slabs. They often feature building techniques and details that were considered innovative in their time. Roofs have a low pitch and wide eaves. Exterior walls are generally brick or a combination of brick and wood. Because the neighborhood developed, in part, due to the construction of Houston highways, carports and garages are usually integrated into the house design. These may be accessed at the front, side, or rear of the house.

The houses closest to Sims Bayou were often designed to fit the land as it sloped toward the water. Many of these houses were built on large lots. They often included many large windows, particularly on the back of the house. That was a popular way to connect the interior of the house with the outside environment.

Historic District designations are used to maintain the character of a neighborhood. Once a Historic District is created, certain rules apply to the entire neighborhood. These rules require that changes to properties in the District must be appropriate. In other words, the historic character of the property must stay the same.

Exterior changes must be approved in advance. The Planning Department can help with this process. If the project is approved, the property owner receives a Certificate of Appropriateness. In many Houston neighborhoods, deed restrictions require that the neighborhood civic association also approve changes to a property. The civic association's regulations and standards may differ from those of the City. The information shown here refers only to City requirements. Property owners should check with their neighborhood association before beginning any project.

When planning a building project within the Glenbrook Valley Historic District, please refer to this chart. It shows which building elements are compatible and which are not. Definitions of common architectural terms can be found here. [[link to glossary](#)]

In general, the elements of a house should be compatible with its own style. Glenbrook Valley contains houses with traditional stylistic influences (Colonial Revival, Tudor) as well as houses that are very Modern.

Primary wall materials are brick, with siding used as a secondary or accent material. Both horizontal lap siding and vertical board-and-batten siding are compatible with homes in this district.

Windows during this period were typically very large. Window frames were often made of aluminum. Replacing these with white or light-colored vinyl windows will change the appearance of the house. The window frames, rather than the windows, will draw attention. If window replacement is necessary, select a product with an unobtrusive frame that will not change the exterior appearance of the house.

When planning a building project within the Glenbrook Valley Historic District, please refer to this chart. It shows which building elements are compatible and which are not. Definitions of common architectural terms can be found in the [glossary](#).

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Compatible**Incompatible****Foundation**

- Slab on grade
- Raised pier and beam

Porch

- No porch
- Covered front entry (may be recessed)
- Front porch

Roof

- Gabled roof, hipped, shed, or flat roof
- Low pitch (may be asymmetrical)
- Wide eaves Composition shingles
- Dentils or classical eave moldings
- Cupolas or towers
- Slate or tile roof
- Standing-seam metal roof

Exterior Wall Cladding

- Standard or patterned brick masonry
- Cedar or redwood siding Horizontal lap or board and batten patterns
- Decorative half-timbering (Tudor-style ranches only)
- Mix of two materials is common
- Corrugated metal
- Flat modular panels

Front Door

- Single or double door
- Recessed panels
- Glass lights
- Sidelights
- Victorian-style beveled glass doors

Windows

- Any size, shape, or proportion (horizontal proportions dominate)
- Aluminum
- Single- or double-pane
- Minimal frame/sash
- Vinyl
- Wide frame
- White frame/sash