

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

LOCAL PRESERVATION & DESIGN REVIEW

Many cities and towns across the nation have chosen to adopt design guidelines to help preserve heritage and character. The City of Bowling Green formally adopted their Historic Preservation Ordinance in April 1990.

The Ordinance directed the City-County Planning Commission of Warren County to incorporate the Bowling Green Historic Preservation Board into the Zoning Ordinance of Warren County in section 3.13. In January of 2002, the Board's jurisdiction was expanded to include Warren County and two Warren County Judge Executive appointed positions were added to the Board. The purpose and intent of the preservation ordinance is to:

- Maintain and preserve the distinctive historic and architectural characteristics of areas and buildings in Bowling Green.
- Promote and use these areas and buildings to strengthen the economy of the City and enhance its attractions to residents, visitors and tourists.
- Promote the educational, cultural, and general welfare of the people.
- Stabilize and improve property values in historic districts and in the City as a whole.
- Foster civic pride in the value of notable accomplishments of the past.
- Enhance the visual and aesthetic character, diversity and interest of the City.

The *Historic Preservation Design Guidelines* are intended to assist owners and tenants of historic buildings to maintain, preserve, and enhance the architectural character of their property. This in turn will foster civic pride in the value of notable accomplishments of the past.

These *Design Guidelines* are also intended to assist architects, contractors, and others involved in maintaining and preserving historic buildings to plan and implement rehab and treatments of historic materials.

The *Design Guidelines* shall pertain to historic buildings of all types including residential, commercial, government, and institutional. They also pertain to the design and preservation of landscaping, landscape features, and secondary buildings.

The *Design Guidelines* and the Section 3.13 of the existing Zoning Ordinance shall promote and use these areas and buildings to strengthen the economy of the city, and to enhance it's attractions to residents, visitors, and tourists alike. As well as improve and stabilize property values as a whole.

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In addition to the *Design Guidelines*, owners of property with Local Historic Designation must also consult the Zoning Ordinance of the City-County Planning Commission.

WHY ESTABLISH DESIGN GUIDELINES?

Design guidelines are one of the tools of historic preservation. They provide the Bowling Green-Warren County Historic Preservation Board (HPB), local officials, residents and property owners in Bowling Green and Warren County's historic neighborhoods with established criteria for the preservation and rehabilitation of their historic resources. The guidelines define the historic character of the districts, identify historic periods and styles, outline appropriate rehabilitation methods, and recommend acceptable standards for new construction.

The purpose of these *Design Guidelines* is to provide the HPB with standard and objective criteria on which to base design decisions. The *Design Guidelines* also provide design assistance to property owners desiring to build or remodel in historic districts.

Property owners should refer to the guidelines when planning and designing new construction projects or when making any exterior changes to their property, even when completing regular maintenance work.

OVERALL APPROACH AND POLICY

Design guidelines serve two important purposes within the context of an overall preservation plan. First, they provide the Bowling Green-Warren County Historic Preservation Board (HPB) with uniform standards on which to base design review decisions. Secondly, they provide property owners the necessary information regarding appropriate rehabilitation and construction within an historic district.

The principal philosophy behind these *Design Guidelines* is the emphasis of *preservation* over complete restoration. This outlook is demonstrated through the use of such words as *repair*, *retain*, *maintain*, and *protect*. It is important to *repair* original materials rather than *replace* them; *retain* original landscaping features like cast iron fences and stone retaining walls; *maintain* the original fabric because it is integral in displaying historic character; and *protect* the original setting of the house to protect its integrity.

These *Design Guidelines* take into account all the aspects that define the historical character of a structure and its surroundings. Essentially these *Design Guidelines* apply to the primary and secondary facades of a building that are readily visible to the public, and they apply only to the exteriors of buildings. This *Design Guideline* manual is divided into chapters dealing the rehabilitation, construction and demolition in both residential and commercial settings. Both out of area and local images have been included to familiarize property owners with the distinguishing features of different structures. In addition, procedural, technical, and architectural terms are clearly defined to eliminate any “gray areas” that may arise. The appendices include rehabilitation criteria set by the Secretary of the Interior, on which these *Design Guidelines* are based. Every effort shall be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by, or adjacent to, any project.

Sections 1, 2, 7, 8 and the appendices of the *Design Guidelines* may be updated without public review to provide the most up to date information. Sections 3-6, that contain the regulations of the *Design Guidelines* may only be changed with public review, specifically owners of properties with Local Historic Designation.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

In its near two centuries, Warren County has developed from a clearing in the wilderness to a thriving community of 50,000. Cheap and rich land attracted the earliest settlers to the area. More recent residents have found the area a fertile atmosphere for business enterprises as well as a center of cultural and educational endeavor.

Many of Warren County's first inhabitants came to the area to claim land promised by Virginia to her Revolutionary War veterans. As the area's population increased, so did the need for organized local government, and in December, 1796, Kentucky's legislature created Warren County out of the northeast section of Logan County. During the following year, the county's officials built the first courthouse and jail on what is now Fountain Square Park, and George and Robert Moore donated land for the town of Bowling Green.

From its birth, the community's economic welfare relied heavily on the Green and Barren rivers, down which rafts and flatboats took farm products to market. To improve river transportation, the state authorized in the 1830s a series of locks and dams, making possible steamboat navigation upriver to Bowling Green. Improved river travel and the 1859 completion of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad through Warren County assured the area of its role as a center of trade and commerce.

At the onset of the Civil War, the area's population was about 3-1 pro Union. Nevertheless, most local families provide soldiers for both armies. Each belligerent wished to control Bowling Green because of the town's strategic location. A large Southern army occupied the area for five months, and at least a garrison of Union troops camped in the area for more than three years. The bitterness resulting from military rule and divided families left economic and emotional scars that required years to heal.

Bowling Green emerged from the Civil War in a sorry plight, but gradually the damage was rectified. Postwar prosperity brought growth and changes to the town and much of the existing stock of commercial buildings and older residences were constructed during this period. A large Italianate-style courthouse was built in 1868-69 on 10th Avenue. By 1876, Bowling Green had a population of 6,000, a water system, gas lighting, a park on the public square, and in 1885 converted its old mule-drawn street car line into one of the first electric street car lines in Kentucky.

Progress in education during this period was notable, with three young women's schools and a men's college being established. By 1889, city schools had been organized, and both a girl's college and the Southern Normal School for training teachers were added to the number of educational institutions.

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By 1928 Bowling Green had become a growing industrial center for the area. This industrial expansion created a demand for workers and for housing which clustered near the factories and railroad west of town. In the 1920s and 1930s a small residential area of bungalows was developed east of the downtown area. Rapid expansion immediately after World War II and again in the 1950s continued to propel Bowling Green to regional prominence in industry, commerce, and education. Western Kentucky State Normal School, Bowling Green Business University and Ogden and Potter Colleges eventually became Western Kentucky University.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

The images and descriptions that follow are intended to assist in identifying the stylistic character of buildings in Bowling Green and Warren County, and to provide direction for their restoration or rehabilitation.

For more information about styles consult:

A Field Guide to American Houses by Virginia & Lee McAlester

Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945 by John J.-G. Blumenson

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING STYLES

The earliest avenue of settlement in the county was the Cumber Trace, which connected the Wilderness Road at a point to Lincoln County with Nashville. The Trace passed through the center of Warren County near the county seat, Bowling Green, crossing the Barren River at Ewing's Ford near the mouth of Drake's Creek. McFadden's Station was built at this major river crossing in about 1785 and is held to have been the first structure erected in the county. Early settlement patterns in the county are represented by concentrations of log houses in the northwest and southeast sections and brick Federal style houses along the main north-south route.

Most of the log houses in Warren County are single-pen form, and most of these are of roughly square proportions with three openings on the main front and single, evenly coursed stone chimneys. However, all of the log house forms are found in Warren County: dogtrot, double-pen, and saddlebag.

The architectural style that dominates pre-Civil War is the Greek revival. The style reached the area in the 1840s. While frame versions of the style, usually following the I-house plan, are fairly evenly distributed across the county, the brick Greek revival structures are concentrated in the northeast quadrant of the County: Smiths Grove, Bowling Green. The areas of the county in which Federal style brick houses are found are agriculturally richer than the upland sections. Most are found along the principal north-south route, now US31W, and in Bowling Green. They include the following plans: hall-and-parlor, central passage, side passage. In character, these structures are relatively plain with very little elaborate exterior detail.

In the later part of the nineteenth century, versions of Italianate styles are more abundant than other revival styles, such as, Gothic Revival, Romanesque, Second Empire, and Queen Anne. Relatively pure forms of any of the revival styles are scarce compared to the number of structure that combines two or more styles.

FEDERAL STYLE CA. 1780 TO 1820



The Federal style is typified by a low-pitched roof, flat facade, large glazed window areas and elliptical fan-light with flanking slender sidelights. Geometric forms such as polygonal or bowed bays accentuate the rhythm of the exterior as well as indicate dimensions in interior spaces. Tripart windows are often framed in recessed arches. Ornamental elements found on many of the houses during this period herald the work of Robert Adam. Exteriors are usually of smooth brick finish with fine joints. An example of the Federal Style is the home at 1234 State Street, Bowling Green.

GREEK REVIVAL STYLE CA. 1820-1860



The Greek Revival style is based on the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian orders in ancient Greek architecture. The Greek Revival style was commonly employed in the construction of public and religious buildings, but also came to be closely associated with the country's prosperity in the early nineteenth century. In its urban residential form, it is commonly characterized by a dominant full-height portico on a broad, two-story facade. The entry often contains a paneled door with a surround of engaged columns and a transom and sidelights. The cornice lines may be emphasized with a wide band of trim or a band of windows in the frieze. The house at 1253 State Street, Bowling Green is an example of the Greek Revival Style.

ITALIANATE STYLE CA. 1840-1880



The Italianate style began in England in reaction to the formal classical ideals that had dominated art and architecture for two centuries. The style is decorative and can be applied to any house form: I-house, double-pile central hall plan, and gabled ell. When built in the gabled ell plan, a square tower may be added in the corner of the ell and the style becomes Italian Villa, popular for country estates. Distinguishing elements of the style are the tall, narrow windows that are almost always hooded, bracketed, or framed with ornate molding. Window sashes are either two-over-two or one-over-one double-hung sash, often paired and in arched frames. The cornice of the building is always bracketed with ornately carved-paired brackets. Like the windows, the entrances are highly decorated with elaborate surrounds that are hooded, bracketed, or arched. The roof is flat or has a low-pitched pedimented hip. The house at 1267 State Street, Bowling Green is an example of the Italianate Style.

QUEEN ANNE STYLE CA. 1880-1910



Queen Anne houses are irregular in plan with hipped or gable roofs that are sometimes punctuated by towers or cupolas. One of the most pronounced characteristics of the style is the porch. On larger high-style houses, it wraps around two or more facades and is supported by milled columns, balusters, and brackets. The front facade is often dominated by a cross gable or tower with canted corners. Decorative wood shingles in multiple patterns and jig-sawn vergeboards elaborate the gable fields. Windows are usually one-over-one double-hung sash, with colored border glass common in the upper sash. Some Bowling Green houses display various detailing in brick and stone. Frame houses were clad with weatherboard and painted bright colors. Stick Style, Eastlake, and Shingle Style are all decorative treatments included in the context of the Queen Anne form. The asymmetrical forms of the Queen Anne combined with details of the Colonial Revival became the free classic form that was common until about 1910. The building at 628 E. Main, Bowling Green is an example of the Queen Anne Style.

COLONIAL REVIVAL STYLE CA. 1890-1940



The Colonial Revival style is an example of the rebirth in interest in the American colonial past. Identifying features of the style include symmetrical building plans, classical porch columns and eave decoration such as modillion blocks or dentils. Fanlights are often found above doors and sidelights are also popular. Windows are often paired, with multi-light glazing in double-hung sashes. Palladian windows are common. The roof is side-gabled or hipped. In the late nineteenth century, transitional examples were built with Colonial Revival elements adapted to the asymmetrical Queen Anne plan. Simplified versions of this style are known as American Foursquares and many examples are found in Bowling Green and Warren County neighborhoods. Colonial Revival forms built in the 1920s and 1930s may also be found in the various neighborhoods. The house at 620 E. 13th Street, Bowling Green is an example of the Colonial Revival Style.

BUNGALOW STYLE CA 1895-1940



The Bungalow style became the most common national style in the early part of the twentieth century. Bungalows are characterized by square plans with low-pitch gable or hipped roofs, often with shed roof dormers. Windows are double-hung sash with three or more vertical lights in the top sash and a single-light bottom sash. Like the Queen Anne houses, bungalows are characterized by their porches, which usually extend across the front facade and are supported by tapered columns resting on stone, frame or brick piers. Side or second-story porches often acquired secondary functions as dining areas or summer sleeping quarters. In contrast to the vertical emphasis in Victorian styles, Bungalows emphasized the horizontal, with wide windows and wide roof eaves. In many examples, rafter ends and knee braces are visible below the eaves. A house located on the corner of 13th and Park Street, Bowling Green is an example of the Bungalow Style.

COMMERCIAL BUILDING STYLES

Warren County's towns developed along the rivers and railroads. Bowling Green's downtown commercial area's are a melange of commercial, government and religious buildings. Until the late 1950s the area that Robert Moore donated to the City of Bowling Green in 1797 was Bowling Green's and Warren County's civic and commercial heart.

Like many cities, Bowling Green's commercial district concentrated in a single area creating a dense hub of activity. The essential artery of development was the street. Bowling Green's streets brought together its other transportation links: the steamboat barges and flatboats on the Barren River and the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. With the street as an anchor, buildings tended to hug the sidewalk and adjacent buildings. This dense urban configuration, with buildings covering the entire parcel, occurred whether a building had a very narrow frontage or stretched for half a block. Openings were the result of necessity--to allow service access to the functions within or to permit natural light and air to reach interior spaces. If an open space existed next to a commercial building, it was presumed that a new structure would be erected there. Bowling Green was very fortunate to have the foresight to maintain a green space in the center of its commercial area when the courthouse was moved to its present site in 1869. Fountain Square Park continues to be Bowling Green's most endearing landmark. Almost no first generation buildings exist around Bowling Green's Fountain Square and its adjacent commercial blocks. Many of the initial buildings surrounding the square were hostleries, grocery stores and specialty shops. Many were burned in the Civil War, some were razed and others have been the victims of fire in later years. Only a handful of antebellum structures still survive in the area and most would be classified as Federal in style. The Civil War devastated the Bowling Green economy for many years, and few buildings were erected directly after the war. Two notable exceptions are the Warren County courthouse (1869) original Louisville and Nashville Railroad depot (circa 1879-razed in 1925). The boom for erecting commercial buildings in the district occurred from 1870 to 1892 when many large mercantile buildings were built. Storefronts have changed dramatically over the years. Almost all nineteenth century storefronts had recessed entrances. During the 1930s and 1940s many of the businesses removed the rusting cornices that crowned their buildings. In the following two decades, a number of businessmen in the district covered these fading beauties with aluminum siding.

Beginning in 1980 rejuvenation in the downtown district took place. Under the direction of the Landmark Association the area became a prototype for a national program, the Main Street Program. This redevelopment effort was spurred and supported by a tax abatement program offered by the City of Bowling Green and federal tax credits for restoration projects. The funding cycle for the program ended in the early 1990s, but the Downtown Business Association and

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Downtown Redevelopment Authority have assured a cooperative effort to maintain a positive downtown image.

Few, if any, of the buildings in the commercial district are textbook examples of any particular architectural style. The Italianate style predominates, but the district includes structures that could be classified as Federal, Gothic, Venetian Gothic, Classical, Functional, Art Deco, and International. This gamut of styles blends into a fascinating collection of commercial structures. Building materials are similar to those found in other Kentucky communities, the one exception being the brilliant white limestone facings of many of the buildings. This stone was quarried in Warren County and was known in trade circles as Bowling Green limestone .

FEDERAL STYLE CA. 1770-1820



The Federal style was created in Scotland chiefly by Robert Adam around the time of the American Revolution. It was a mixture of the French rococo and Classical architecture. Thus it is generally symmetrical with smooth faced facades accentuated by delicate ornament, including urns, swags, sheaves of wheat and garlands. The Federal style is most recognized for interiors rather than exteriors. Federal style structures are generally square or rectangular, brick or frame and three stories tall. Common exterior features include balustrades, domed circular entrances, beautifully scaled and articulated door and window openings that frequently incorporate fan and oval forms. Columns and moldings are narrow and delicate. Exterior decoration was generally confined to a porch or entrance motif. Tri-partite windows are often framed in recessed arches and louvered shutters are common, as are bull's eye corner blocks on lintels. Flemish bond brickwork is almost universally used in Federal buildings. One of the best remaining examples of the Federal style is The Quigley-Younglove Building, at 900 State Street, which originally boasted a magnificent fanlight entrance with sidelights.

ITALIANATE STYLE CA. 1840-1880



The Italianate style is a very decorative and versatile style. It can be as picturesque as the Gothic or as restrained as the Classical. Characteristics of residential and commercial Italianate vary little, the chief difference being that most commercial Italianate buildings lack belvederes, lanterns, or cupolas. Hipped roofs are also quite rare, particularly in row buildings. Other Italianate features are found in both, including tall, narrow windows with rounded tops, which are generally capped with elaborate hoodmolds. String courses are quite common between stories. Most Italianate structures feature recessed entrances. Cornices can be quite elaborate or severely simple, but they are always bracketed. As Italianate style designs ventured away from the initial interest in stone and masonry toward cast iron and wood, mass production and duplication of Italianate style designs became quite economical, thus increasing its popularity throughout the United States. The Nahm Building located at 422 E. Main Street is an excellent example of this particular style.

ART DECO STYLE CA 1900-1930



Art Deco takes its name from the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes, held in Paris in 1925. This style broke the revivalist tradition and created something new. It is characterized by a linear, hard edge or angular composition with a vertical emphasis and highlighted with stylized decoration. Art Deco ornamentation consists largely of low-relief geometrical features, often in the form of parallel straight lines, zigzags, chevrons and stylized floral motifs. Facades are often arranged in a series of set backs emphasizing the geometric form. Strips of windows add to the vertical feeling of the composition. Concrete, smooth faced stone and metal were characteristic exterior coverings with accents in terra cotta, opaque glass and colored mirrors. Forms were simplified and streamlined. Art Deco was a conscious rejection of historical styles. The Capitol Theatre at 416 E Main Street, is a good example of the Art Deco Style.

