

Changes to the Building Exterior

2.4 PAINTING

It is not necessary to paint a building in its original colors. However, these guidelines encourage that buildings in the Historic Preservation Overlay Zones be painted in historically accurate colors. The color schemes for structures vary depending on the style of the building and its date of construction. Four major phases of color were used in the nineteenth century, the period when most of the buildings in Covington's Historic Preservation Overlay Zones were built, and are listed below.

Federal and Greek Revival buildings, built until ca. 1840. These simply detailed buildings generally were painted white or very light colors with green shutters, to emulate the white marble of Greek and Roman buildings.

Gothic, Italianate, and other early Victorian buildings, built between 1840 and 1870. These more ornate buildings were usually painted pale earth tones, such as light browns, tans, pinks, and grays. The trim was accented with a darker shade.

Second Empire, Queen Anne and other High Victorian buildings, built between 1870 and 1890. The highly detailed and varied buildings generally were painted deep, rich colors such as greens, rusts, reds, and browns. Several colors often were used on a building to highlight its architectural details.



Example of a painted Neoclassical style building

Colonial Revival and Neoclassical buildings, built between 1890 and 1920. As the style of buildings again became simpler, the paint colors returned to lighter, simpler color schemes, usually with a light pastel body and white trim.

For information on the architectural style of the building, refer to the Section 6.4 or contact the Historic Preservation Officer for help in determining the style of the building.

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Example of a painted Victorian style building

GUIDELINES:

1. Use color to tie the architectural elements and details of a building together. For example, the cornice and porch detailing should be painted the same color scheme.
2. Paint the trim, porch framing and columns, and window framing the same color. Paint the walls a contrasting color. In the case of a Victorian style house, the sash, doors, or shutters may be painted a darker shade of the wall color.
3. Research the history of the building and discover its original colors, if possible. A historic painted home often has many layers of color beneath what is seen. Layers of paint may be scraped off to uncover original colors of historic structures. Carefully scrape a small area of paint that has been in the shade,

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Example of a painted Italianate style building

as paint exposed to the sun may have changed over time. Slightly wet the paint to get a better idea of the original color.

4. Apply colors that were available at the time when the structure was originally built. In all circumstances, avoid bright and obtrusive colors, such as neon or day-glow hues.

5. In general, limit the number of colors painted on a building.

6. Simpler structures should have a simple color scheme. More ornate structures, such as larger Queen Anne style houses, may incorporate three or more colors.

7. Paint buildings using matte, flat, or semi-gloss paint. Avoid high gloss paint.

8. Never paint a building, brick or wood, when it is wet or damp.

9. Paint pre-existing aluminum window and door frames a dark color, such as bronze or black.

10. Blend with and compliment a building's paint colors with the overall color schemes that exist on the rest of the street.

11. Painted brick is to remain painted, unpainted brick is to remain unpainted unless one of the following circumstances exists, subject to UDRB approval:

- a. Large Sections of the original wall have been replaced with new brick that is clearly different in color, size, shape, or mortar joint from the original bricks.
- b. A building in which most of the original brick is 25% or greater of the entire building (25% would refer to one entire wall of the building) and is in very poor condition (i.e. spalling, crumbling, or disintegrating), can be painted in order to protect the brick from further damage. Brick and mortar in poor condition needs to be repaired before painting.
- c. A new brick addition can be painted if the original brick was painted. If the new addition is on a building with unpainted brick, it must remain unpainted.