

HISTORIC DISTRICT  OVER THE RHINE



Over-the-Rhine Foundation

Active in ***Preserving, Protecting, and Celebrating*** OTR for over 30 years

Instrumental in preserving local landmarks including:

- The Alms & Doepke Building,
- Rothenberg Academy, and the Rooftop Garden
- The Davis Furniture Building among many others

Hosted Owner-Occupied OTR and Green Historic workshops.

Advocated for appropriate infill construction through the infill committee

- Consulted on the design of new buildings since 2014
- Created the New Construction Guidelines (under development)



Local Historic Districts and the HCB

Cincinnati City Council passed Historic Conservation Legislation in 1980 to promote the conservation, protection, restoration, rehabilitation, use and overall enhancement of structures and districts in the City that possess special historic or architectural value.

- Revitalization of neighborhoods
- Enhancement of the environmental and aesthetic quality of the city
- Stabilization and improvement of property values

Each district has a set of new construction guidelines to ensure infill development is sympathetic and compatible to the distinct features of the surrounding historic buildings and overall district character

The Urban Conservator and Historic Conservation Board reviews a property owner's proposal for compliance with the established conservation guidelines. The Board may approve, approve with conditions, or deny a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Decisions may be appealed to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

City of Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine Historic District

Cincinnati City Council passed Historic Conservation Legislation in 1980 to promote *the conservation, protection, restoration, rehabilitation, use and overall enhancement of structures and districts in the City that possess special historic or architectural value.*

- Southern OTR [Central Parkway to Liberty] was designated in 1993.
- Northern OTR [Liberty to Mulberry] was added and combined with the south in 2003.

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Over-the-Rhine Historic District

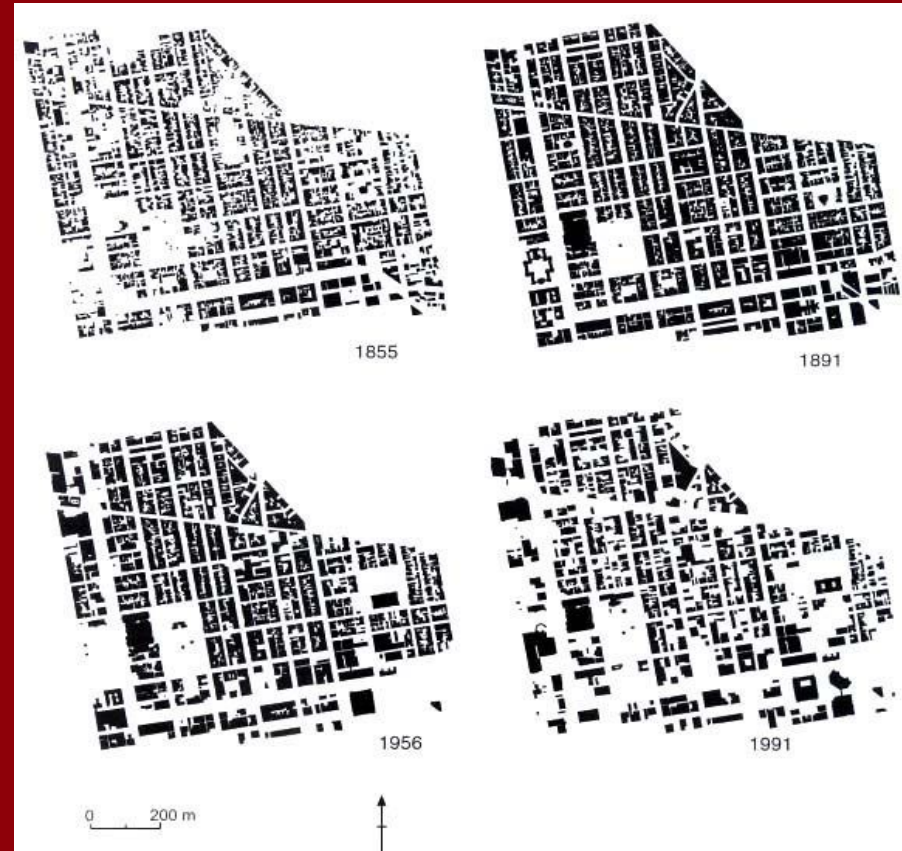
Over-the-Rhine is Cincinnati's historic heart, and a national treasure. Few neighborhoods in America inspire like Over-the-Rhine, with its expansive and dense collection of Italianate, Greek revival, 2nd empire buildings and churches, breweries, and tenements providing a cohesive representation of what it was like to be in a 19th century urban neighborhood. The district serves not only as the showpiece of Cincinnati's cultural heritage, but as an economic engine and driver of the local economy.



Over-the-Rhine Historic District

Over 50% of OTR's original fabric has been lost to demolition.

What is built in the 21st century will greatly impact the appearance, character and desirability of our 19th century treasure.



Update Needed

The outdated guidelines do not meet the needs of today's rapid development environment

- Architects and property owners are uncertain what the guidelines are trying to convey.
- Results in unnecessary city administrative and client costs.

The new guidelines will be comprehensive and clear

- Illustrative graphics will provide designers a visual representation of the guidelines
- Results in streamlined design process



Updating the New Construction Guidelines

CURRENT GUIDELINES

-vs-

PROPOSED GUIDELINES

Vague Language

REVISE

Specific Language

Words Only

DESIGN

Graphic Illustrations

Potential for Clashing Architecture

ENCOURAGE

Potential for Great Architecture

Key Terms Undefined

DEFINE

Glossary of Terms

Room for Uncertainty

REVISE

Create Clarity

Current Guideline language:

8. **Height:** The height of new construction should not vary more than one story from adjacent contributing buildings. Most buildings in Over-the-Rhine are between two- and five-stories.

Proposed Guideline, “Massing, Height, & Scale”:

- 1) Width must be within 10% of the average width of non-institutional contributing buildings located on the same side of the street within the same block
- 2) Height must be within 10% of the average height of non-institutional contributing buildings located on the same side of the street within the same block
- 3) Must have either a rectangular or an [“L”-shaped] volume
- 4) Height and depth must both be greater than building width

Graphic illustrations will accompany the text to visually and clearly demonstrate the goals of each guideline

Exception Requirements

An exception can be sought for one or more of the 9 guidelines.

In cases when an applicant chooses a design that does not meet the outlined guidelines, they will be required to include additional submissions that will demonstrate how the design is compatible or elevates the character and integrity of the neighborhood such as:

- architectural renderings,
- comparative analysis,
- alignment with neighborhood plan

The appropriateness, based on the applicant's justification, will be evaluated by the Urban Conservator and decided on by the Historic Conservation Board.

Funding

The content of the document has been composed by citizen volunteers.

Funding for the finalized document and graphic creation is being funded by:

- The Over-the-Rhine Foundation
- US Bank/Haile Foundation
- Ohio Certified Local Government Grant

No local tax dollars are being used to pay for the development of the document.



Process Schedule

Early 2014	Infill Committee formed
August 2014	First focus group; invited community stakeholders to participate
November 2014	Design Build Cincy presentation and focus group
March 2015	Ellen Harris workshop and public focus group
2015	Research on best practices; committee half day workshops; first draft composed
2016 - 2017	Continued editing and revisions; fundraising for graphics
2018	Public input sessions, document design, and design competition

Draft Document underway

CHP. 01 – MASSING, HEIGHT & SCALE

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GUIDELINE

In order to be deemed compliant with these Guidelines, buildings must incorporate the following characteristics for massing, height, and scale:

01

Building width must be within 10% of the average width of non-institutional contributing buildings located on the same side of the street within the same block.

a. If there are fewer than three (3) non-institutional contributing buildings located on the same side of the street within the same block, then the average must be calculated by including non-institutional contributing buildings located on the same side of the street within the same block plus an additional block in either direction.

02

Building height must be within 10% of the average height of non-institutional contributing buildings located on the same side of the street within the same block.

a. If there are fewer than three (3) non-institutional contributing buildings located on the same side of the street within the same block, then the average must be calculated by including non-institutional contributing buildings located on the same side of the street within the same block plus an additional block in either direction.

b. Mid-block buildings must not exceed the height of non-institutional contributing buildings located on the same side of the street within the same block.

03

Must employ either a rectangular or an "L"-shaped volume

04

Building height and depth must both be greater than building width

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INTENTION

Massing, Height and Scale are fundamental to the unique identity and character of Over-the-Rhine. The District was developed on long, narrow parcels of land, resulting in the construction of tall, long, narrow buildings designed to maximize density. Thus, the quintessential Over-the-Rhine building is significantly taller and longer than it is wide, with either a rectangular or "L" shape volume. The massing and height of each building varies from its neighbors, but within a limited range, resulting in the particular scale that defines each block. While some blocks feature buildings that range from 2-4 stories in height, others have a 3-5 story range.

► MASSING

the general shape and size of a building

► HEIGHT

the measurement from lowest to highest point on a building

► SCALE

the general shape and size of a building



For example, the north side of E. 19th Street is dominated by 4 story buildings built on relatively narrow 15 foot lots which gives the block an immense scale.



▲ Conversely, the south side of Magnolia Street is also dominated by 15 foot wide buildings but are only two stories tall giving the block a diminutive scale.

OTR

2017 OTR CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

Public Input

Public input is welcomed and encouraged.

Please contact:

Beth Johnson, Urban Conservator at beth.johnson@cincinnati-oh.gov and

Matt Deininger, Infill Ops Manager at otrfinfill.committee@gmail.com

Two public input sessions will be held in the neighborhood in late February/March. Notice of specific dates and times will be sent to the community council and other public forums.

Over-the-Rhine Historic District New Construction Guidelines: **REVISIONS IN PROGRESS**

**50% OF OVER-THE-RHINE
IS, OR WILL BE, INFILL**

WAYS TO SUPPORT GUIDELINE REVISIONS

1. **Donate** at otrfoundation.org
2. Offer **feedback** at otrinfill.committee@gmail.com
3. Vote to **approve** updated guidelines at OTR
Community Council
4. **Support** approval by the Planning Commission
5. **Vote** to approve updated guidelines at City Council



CONTACT

Over-the-Rhine Foundation
Infill Committee
Matt Deininger, Operations Manager
otrinfill.committee@gmail.com

