

# PORCHES AND DECKS

## DESIGN GUIDELINES



Porches are important elements of traditional Louisville architecture. They frame and protect primary entrances, and add a sense of formality to the entrance space. Porches also often display a concentration of decorative details and help to personalize many of Louisville's historic residences and apartment buildings.

Preserving a front porch is a high priority. Rear and side porches may also be important architectural features, especially for buildings located on corner lots, and their preservation is encouraged.

### Original Historic Porches

Louisville's historic front, side, and rear porches add important character and definition to historic structures and districts. Porches and their details should be maintained whenever possible.

#### P.1 Preserve an original porch in its original location.

- » Do not move, screen, enclose, or demolish an original porch.
- » Do not add new ornament to a historic porch that did not exist historically or cover architectural details.
- » Do not add a front porch to the primary facade of a historic structure that has never had a porch.

#### P.2 Repair a porch in a way that maintains the original character.

- » Use a material that is similar to the historic building material in style, texture, finish, composition, and proportion.
- » An alternative material may be considered for a porch when the appearance is similar to that of the original. Consult the "Alternative Materials" chapter for more information.



*Preserve an original porch in its original location. Porches personalize many of Louisville's residences and apartment buildings and are important to preserving the character of a building and preservation district.*



Preserve an original porch in its original location. An original porch enhances the design of a single facade and unifies an area of a preservation district through repetition of form.

**P.3** If reconstruction is required, design porch elements in a way that reflects the time period of the historic structure and use in-kind materials. Consult the “Alternative Materials” chapter for more information.

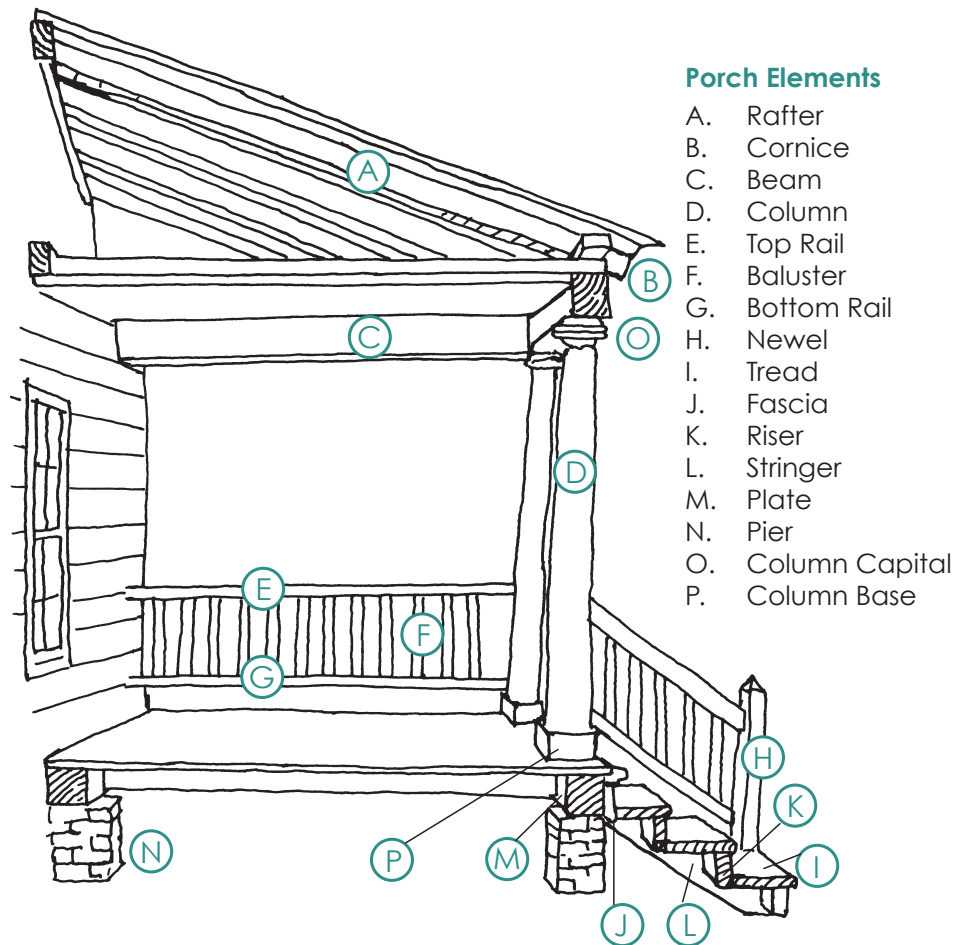
- » Install replacement flooring that closely matches the original tongue and groove flooring dimensions.
- » Match the dimensions of the original material.
- » Do not use over-sized boards for a porch floor.
- » Do not replace historic stone steps unless the stone is no longer usable.

**P.4** When enclosing a side or rear porch, preserve the design and detailing of original porch elements.

- » Use large sheets of recessed glass rather than solid materials for the enclosure.



If reconstruction is required, design porch elements in a way that reflects the time period of the historic structure and use in-kind materials.



## Original Porch Railings and Balusters

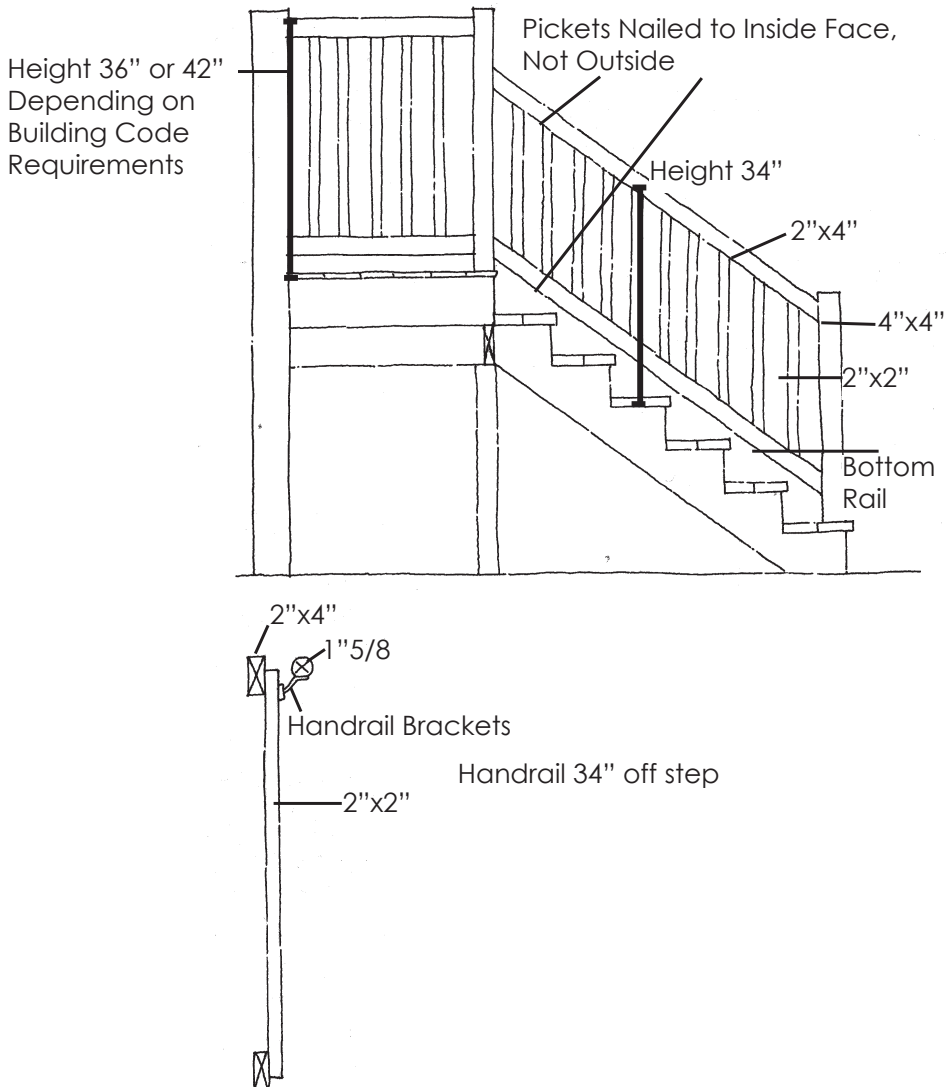
The railings and balusters on historic porches contribute to the style and character of a historic building, the overall historic property, and the district. Railings and balusters are essential porch elements and should be maintained.

**P.5 Preserve an original railing or baluster.**

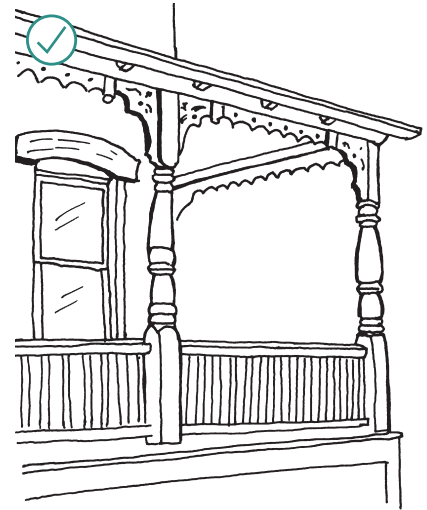
**P.6 Design a replacement railing or baluster to match the original as closely as possible.**

- » If matching the original design is technically or economically unfeasible, a simplified porch rail and baluster may be used. Consult the diagram below for more details about typical dimensions for brackets, railings, and balusters.
- » When installing a code-required handrail or railing, select a design that is simple and stylistically compatible with a historic railing.
- » Use a replacement material appropriate to the material of the historic structure. For example, a cast- or wrought-iron column, railing, or baluster should not be used to place a brick or wood porch element.

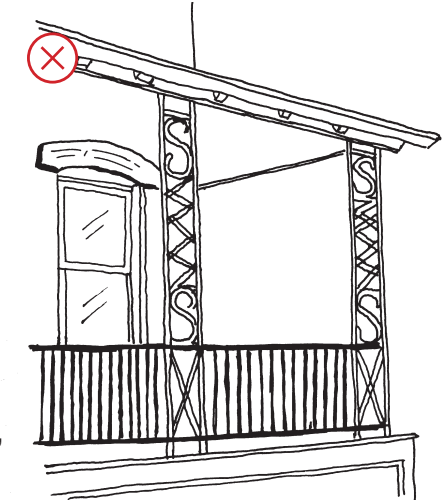
### Typical Handrail Pattern Used in Preservation Districts



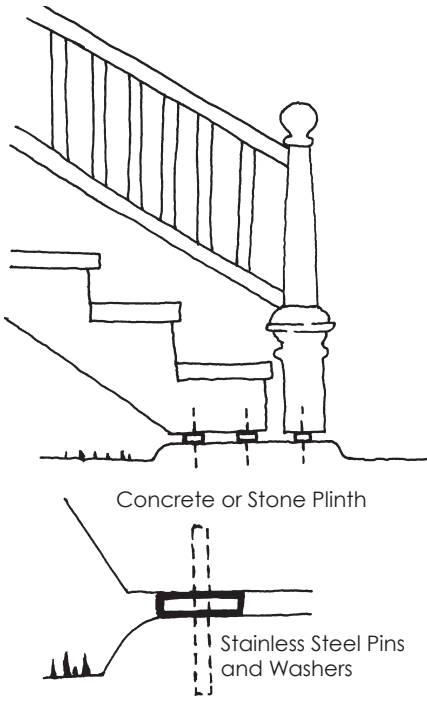
### Historic Porch



### Inappropriate Replacement



*Repair a porch in a way that maintains the original character.*



*Resting the bottom step on a concrete or stone plinth inhibits moisture-related deterioration.*

## New Deck

The construction of a new deck on a historic structure responds to the modern use of a building and should be designed in a way that is sensitive to the character of the historic building. Prior to constructing a new deck, permit and Building Code requirements must also be met.

### **P.7 Minimize visibility of a new deck.**

- » Construct a new deck at the rear of a historic structure but not extending beyond the side walls of the historic structure.
- » Do not construct a new deck along a front or side facade.

### **P.8 Minimize damage to the original historic structure and maintain the ability to remove the new deck.**

### **P.9 Use wood when constructing a new deck.**

- » Choose a wood material that is opaque, stained, or painted when constructing a new deck.
- » Alternative materials may be allowed on certain portions of a new deck. Consult the "Alternative Materials" chapter for more information, and contact Metro Staff in Louisville's Planning and Design Services Office for more information.