



Manchester Historic District Design Guidelines Update

Manchester Chateau Partnership
Alliance

Development Activities Meeting
October 2026

What Has Changed?

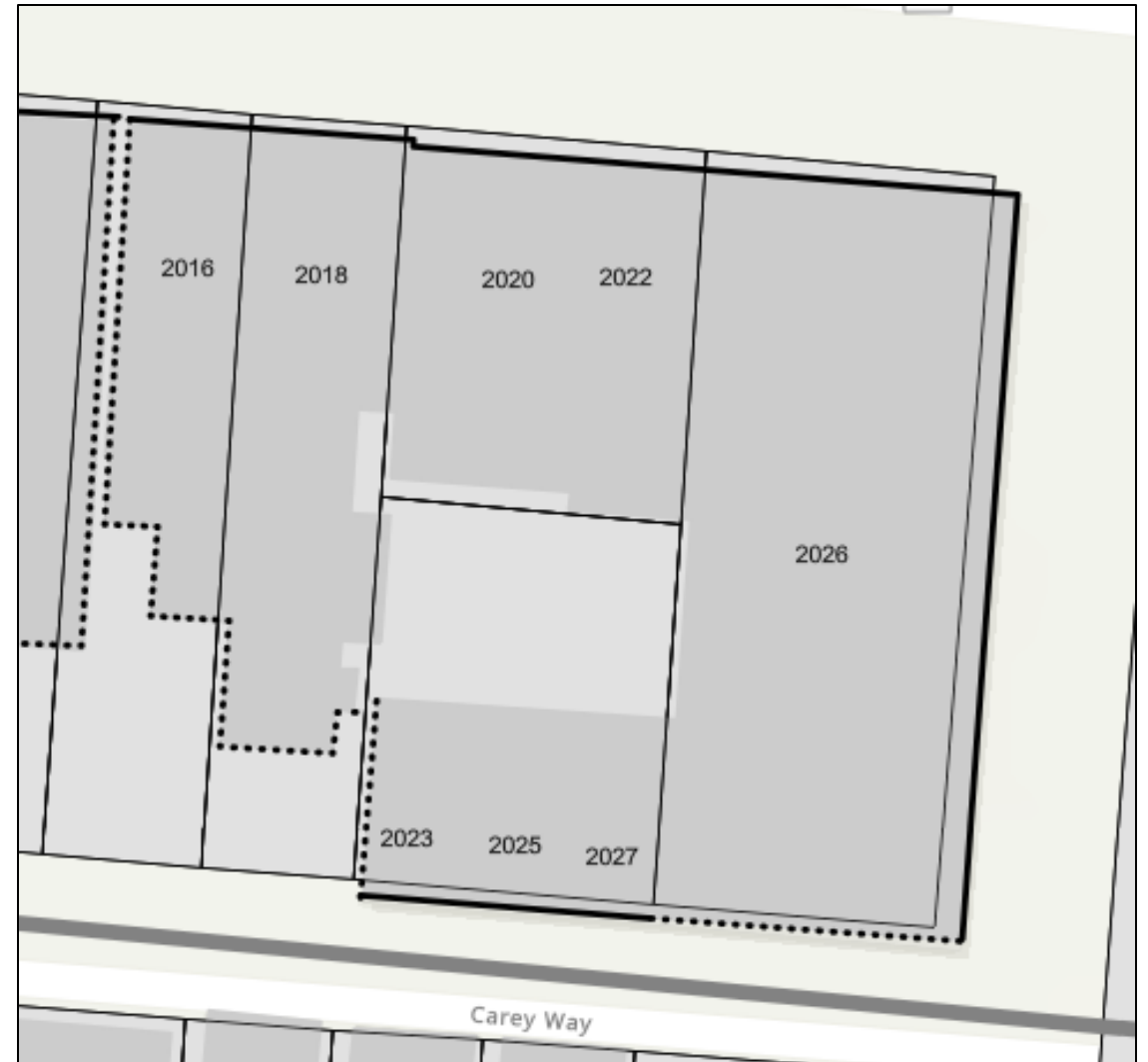
Current	Proposed
Exact original materials only	Flexible modern materials
Strict rules for all elevations	Focus on most important facades
Lack of clarity on modern systems	Allow compatible modern home upgrades in thoughtful locations
Solar panels highly limited	Solar panels allowed in more situations
Solid wood windows only	Alternate materials permitted
Text-heavy	More graphics and examples
Lack of guidance on new construction	Clear assistance for infill buildings
Focus on equitable and accessible preservation practices and practical solutions.	

Alternate Materials

Current	Proposed
Degraded details must be replaced with replicas made of only original materials.	Durable modern substitutes that have a similar appearance are permissible. Smooth fiber cement, composite wood, cellular PVC. Focus on the appearance and strength, not on original material.

Hierarchy of Facades

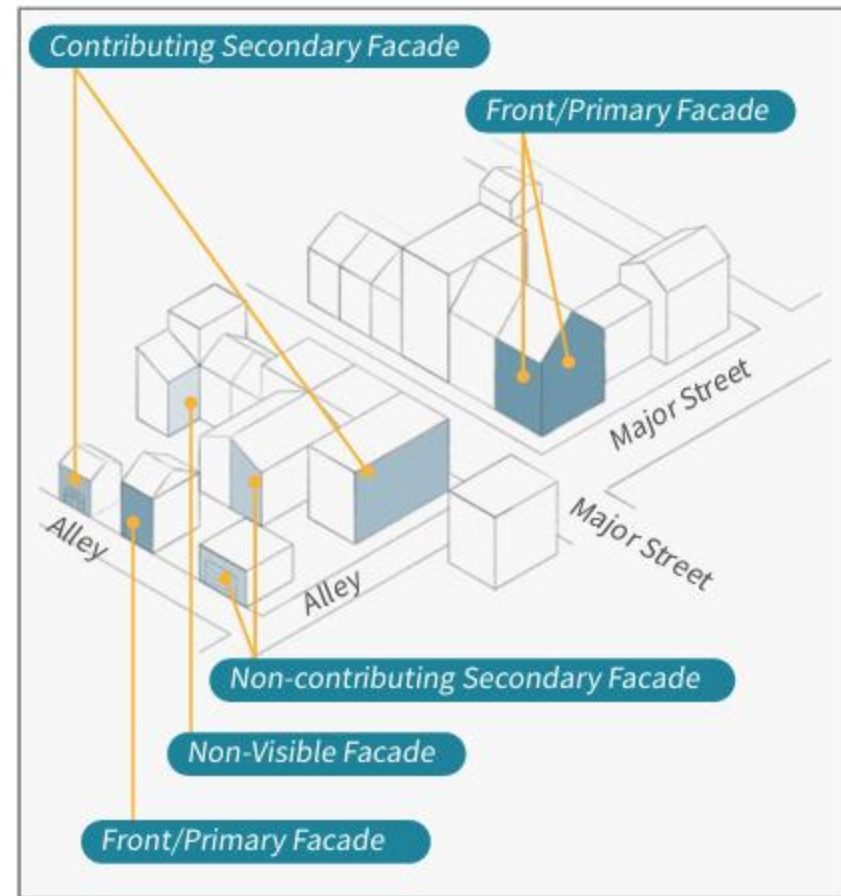
Buildings have multiple faces, some of which are visible from the public street and some of which are not. These Design Guidelines primarily focus on alterations, additions, and new construction that can be seen from the street or sidewalk, as those changes to the historic district have the most impact on the historic district's character.



Primary Facades

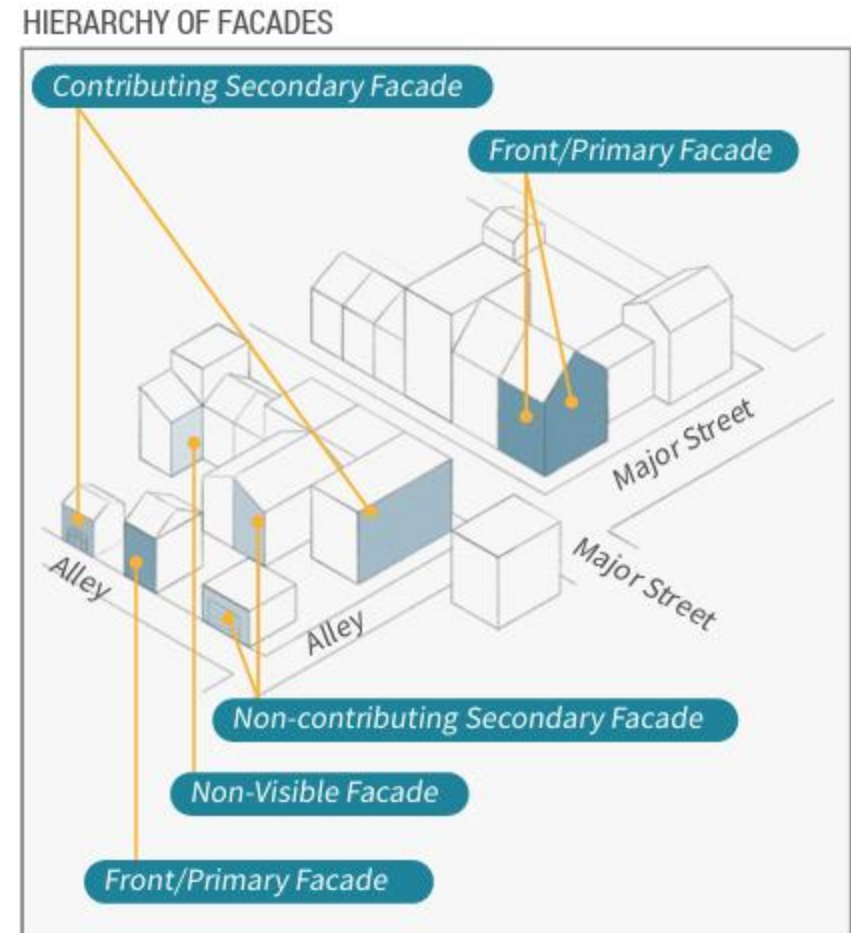
A front/primary façade is the building face most visible from and facing a public street. It contains the main entrance to the building and typically has the most characterdefining architectural features. Primary facades include sides of corner buildings that do not contain the main entrance but are visible from a major public street. The HRC reviews new construction, exterior alterations, and alternative materials on primary facades.

HIERARCHY OF FACADES



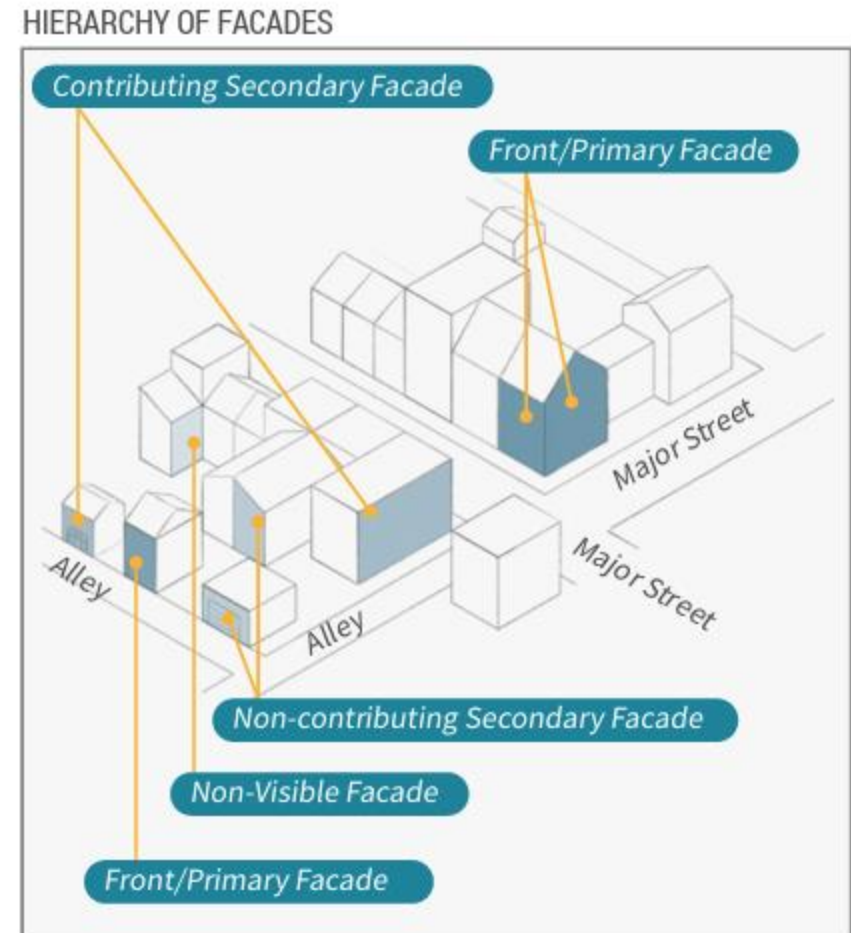
Contributing Secondary Facades

Contributing secondary façades are those that are visible from the public street but are not on the front of the building. This can include the sides of detached buildings, provided that those side walls are visible from the public street, and the street-facing facade of contributing accessory structures such as carriage houses and historic era garages. Contributing secondary façades often contain character defining architectural features. The HRC reviews new construction, exterior alterations, and alternative materials on contributing secondary façades.



Non-Contributing Secondary Facades

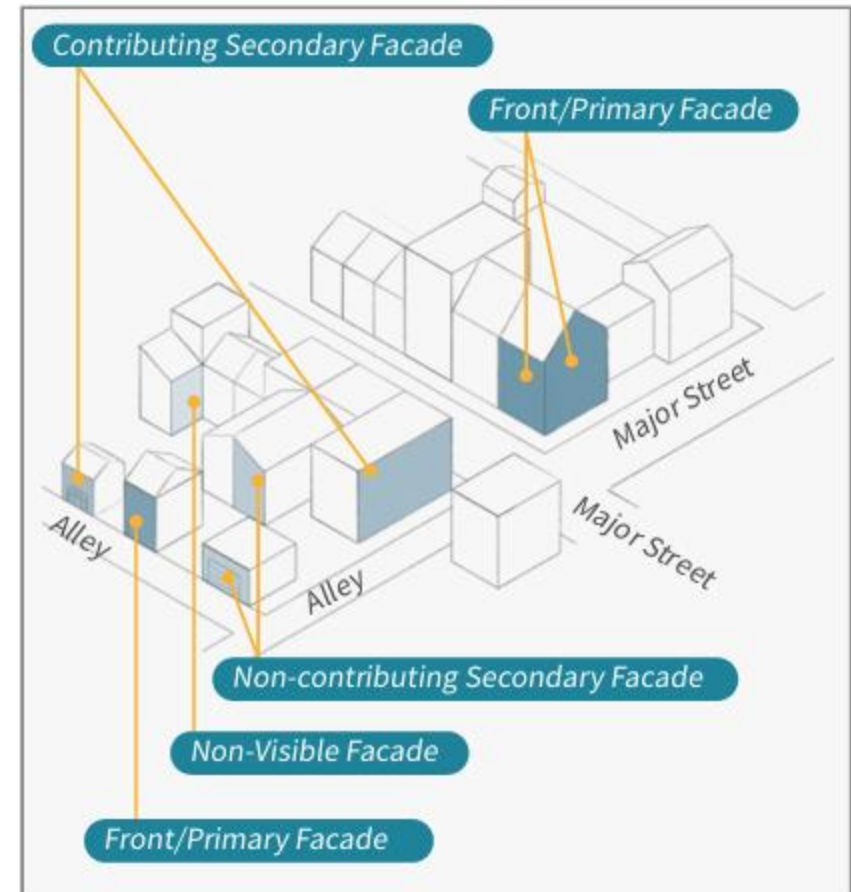
Non-contributing secondary façades are those that are in the rear of a building, visible only from an alley, or on the side of the building, only partially visible from a public right-of-way. The HRC reviews new construction on noncontributing secondary façades. Exterior alterations and alternative materials are reviewed administratively.



Non-Visible Facades

A non-visible façade is one that cannot be seen from the public right-of-way and is not reviewed by the HRC. New construction, exterior alterations, and alternative materials are reviewed administratively.

HIERARCHY OF FACADES



Modern Systems

- Accessibility: Ramps and lifts are allowed. Design them to blend in with the existing structure.
- Heating & Cooling: Outdoor AC units are allowed but should be located in the back yard or screened from the street.
- Security & Lighting: Cameras and modern lighting are allowed, but should be discreetly and carefully installed.

Solar Panels

- Check the roof material: Only install panels if the current roof is not the original historic material.
- Keep them flat: Mount the panels flush against the roof instead of tilting them up.
- Make it reversible: Use attachments that won't damage the roof if the panels are removed later.
- Keep the layout neat: Group the panels together into a clean, organized block that fits the roof's shape.
- Hide them when possible: Position the panels so they are hard to see from the street.

Windows

- Repair is still preferred to replacement
- Focus on character-defining windows
- Modern materials with the same window size and profile are allowed
- Vinyl is prohibited on primary facades

New Construction

- "Compatible but distinct"
- New construction should fit the general "mass and scale" of the block. It should be roughly the same height, width, and distance from the sidewalk as the houses next to it.
- Durable contemporary materials are permissible alongside traditional brick. There is no need to source expensive, archaic materials just to make the house look old.
- Instead of copying ornate Victorian trim, new homes should use clean, simplified versions of traditional features. The goal is to blend in respectfully without being deceptive.

Using the New Guidelines

- Consult the Hierarchy of Facades to determine level of review needed
- Explore the Design Guidelines for the type of work you will be doing
- When possible, consider repairing before replacing
- Talk to City Planning Staff. They are there to help!
- Apply for your Certificate of Appropriateness



Questions and Comments?



Thank You!

WE APPRECIATE YOUR TIME