

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Creating Curb Appeal



NEIGHBORS
BUILDING
Neighborhoods

CREATING NEIGHBORHOODS OF CHOICE



Bureau of Community Enrichment

CURB APPEAL

is the visual attractiveness of a home as seen from the street. The role of curb appeal extends beyond just making a good first impression. The way your home looks from the street can impact its value and the desirability of your neighborhood. In fact, the way your house looks from the street—attractively landscaped and well-maintained—can add thousands of dollars to its value.

From a distance, look at your home and answer these questions:

- How does it look from the street?
- Are your shrubs overgrown?
- Does the paint on the house need retouching?
- Are there lights to welcome you and visitors?
- Does your garage door reflect the style of your house?
- Is your front door hidden or just uninviting?
- Is your home boxy or does it lack design and character?

If you want to change the message your house is sending, improving the curb appeal is a relatively affordable place to start. Make your home a place that makes you smile.



Norfolk is a city of over 120 neighborhoods with diverse character and style. Every day, residents are demonstrating their sense of pride as they enhance the façade and aesthetic appeal of their homes and communities.

Join in and get started here!

the big picture



Elements of curb appeal.

Curb appeal is really part of the whole package when it comes to your home. It is important to take into consideration the architectural style of the house as well as the neighborhood. Take an inventory of the following elements and consider how they may be improved or even added.

1. Paint (color)
2. Shutters
3. Porches and Porticos
4. Doors (front and garage)
5. Architectural features
6. Landscaping
7. Lighting
8. Fencing



Sweat the small stuff.

Home maintenance and painting are essential to maintaining the value of your home. It is easy to overlook what may seem like insignificant flaws when around them day-after-day, but to an outsider those flaws may look like significant eye sores.

On top of being unsightly they could also be code violations. Peeling paint, falling gutters and rotted wood are some examples.

Power wash or repaint siding as appropriate on a regular basis. If the siding is past its prime and needs replacing, make sure to hire a qualified contractor and choose siding that complements the house and neighborhood.



getting started



Selecting a palette.

Often, just repainting the trim of the windows, shutters or doors with a contrasting color will add visual appeal. Paint should be an appropriate color(s) for the style of the house and for the neighborhood. Most paint manufacturers have a variety of paint color charts/palettes that show colors that complement, harmonize, blend, and contrast well together. Paint samples (4"x5" chips minimum) should be used to verify what the colors will look like. The samples should be viewed under the actual light conditions for the surfaces the paint will be applied. View the colors at different times of the day as colors will appear different under different light conditions.



Color Tips

- Light colors will make your home look larger.
- Draw attention to the details of your house through the use of three colors for siding, trim/shutters and doors.
- Use changes in color and texture to create variety in architectural, landscaping and plant materials.
- Window boxes of appropriate design and with appropriate seasonal flowers can add vitality and character to the front of the house.
- If there is a detached garage, it should receive a similar treatment as the main house.

the focal point



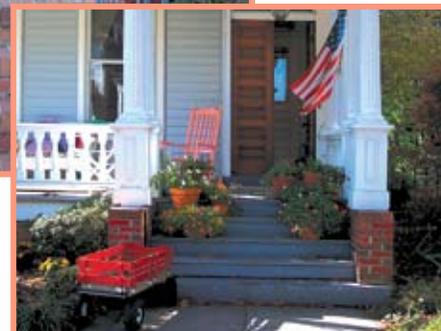
Getting noticed.

The front entry of your home is the focal point of its curb appeal. Your entry needs to be inviting and easy to sight. Upgrade railings on porches and stoops. If your railings are past their prime, look for quality wood or metal components to replace the existing material. As with other improvements attached directly to the house, make sure the color, scale, design, details, and material are compatible with the home's main features.

Porches and porticos do more than give shade and protection from the rain. As part of the entry, they are the first important impression your home makes. There are many design and renovation approaches that can help you transform an existing porch, or add one that doesn't exist, to make this area the most beloved part of your home. Porches vary from platform in front of a door to one or more story roofed open spaces, and vary depending on the house style. Porches are typically seven to eight feet deep and porticos are typically four to six feet deep.



Front porches should never be converted into enclosed interior rooms of the house. The result is rarely satisfactory or successful. The house's appearance is almost always diminished along with curb appeal and the appeal to the neighborhood.



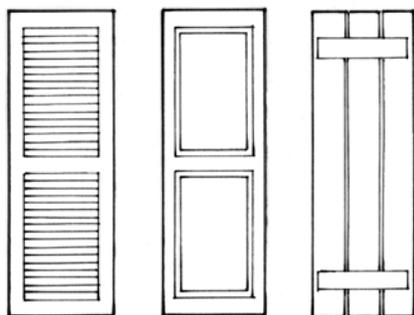
create definition



Highlighting details.

Shutters and molding act like an architectural eyeliner, adding definition to your home. They create a layer of beauty to the exterior and provide an opportunity to showcase style and color.

Whenever possible ornamental details should be preserved or repaired. If it is necessary to remove details due to damage or deterioration, replace with materials that replicate the original material whenever possible. Exterior shutters can be made of wood, aluminum, vinyl, composite, or fiberglass. New composite materials, such as PVC resins or polyurethane, make trim details durable and low maintenance. Shutters should be sized and mounted to appear operable. Below are drawings showing the correct mounting of shutters and examples of different styles.



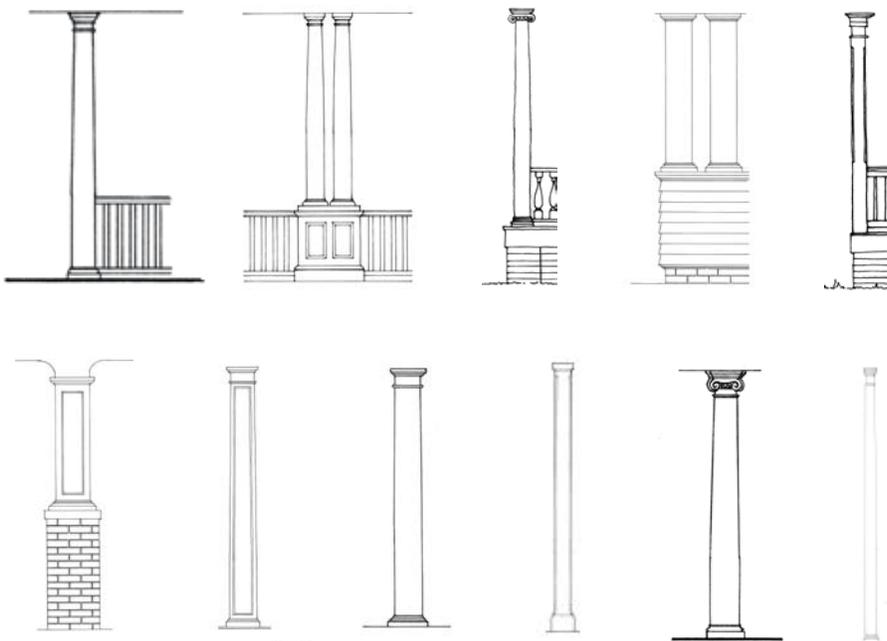
How Not to do it



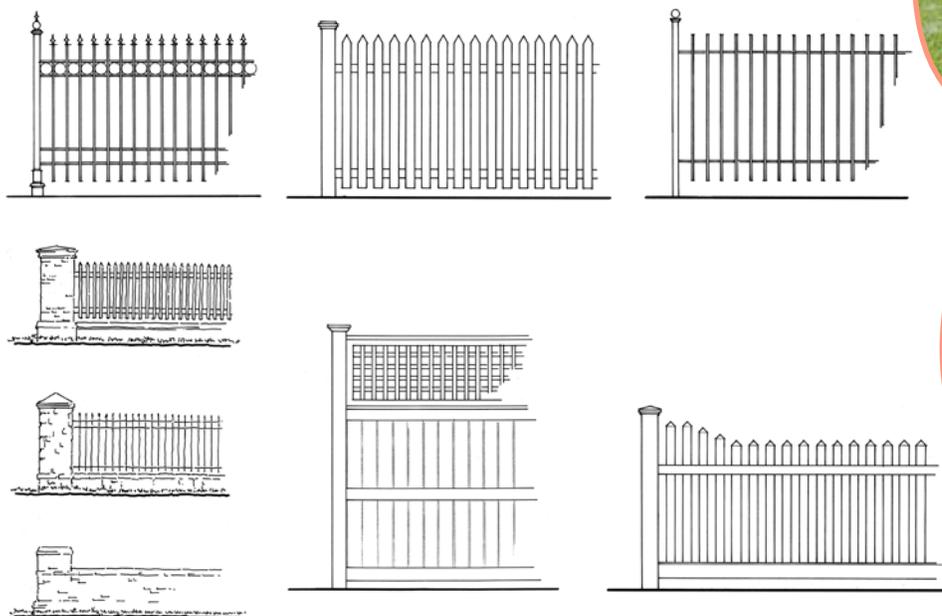
How to do it



Porch columns should maintain and support the character and style of the house. If it is necessary to replace columns, try to replicate the original as closely as possible. Below are examples of various types of porch columns.



Besides providing privacy, security and keeping the children and pets in the yard, fences can be a great asset to any property by adding stylized definition to your garden and yard. Fencing is available in a range of materials including natural and pressure treated wood composites, vinyl and metal. Be sure to consider maintenance in choosing materials. In addition, gardens can be defined with treatments such as hedges and shrubs to create a natural fence.



landscaping



Creating natural appeal.

Landscaping can seem overwhelming, but it need not be. Simple changes and additions can make a big—and colorful—impact. Alternatively, ignoring the yard, or doing something that's out of character with the neighborhood, not only detracts from curb appeal but can jeopardize the value of your home. Start by renewing planter beds to get the most out of a basic landscaping make-over. Prune bushes, pull weeds, plant flowers, add new mulch and edge the lawn.



The use of stone or brick for sidewalks, edging and steps make an elegant statement. If stone or brick borders a planting bed, make sure it is clean and all pieces are firmly set in place.

Any landscaping done on a right-of-way should be approved by the City prior to beginning work.

Good lawns are an integral part of your house's curb appeal. Mowing at the correct blade height, using a sharp mower blade, and properly watering the grass can lead to a thick lawn without brown spots or excessive weeds. Grasses such as tall fescues, Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, fineleaf fescues, and St. Augustine should be cut 2.5 inches tall. Zoysias grass and Bermuda grass should be cut 1 to 1 1/5 inches tall. Grass should be cut when it is 1/3 taller than the cut height.

Trees and bushes create a dynamic setting and give the property a look of permanence. Recent nationwide surveys show that mature trees in a well-landscaped yard can increase the value of a house by 7 to 19%.

Have a right-of-way that could use a tree? Contact the City of Norfolk's Recreation, Parks and Open Spaces to request a tree planting at 757-823-4023, or go online: www.celebratetrees.norfolk.gov

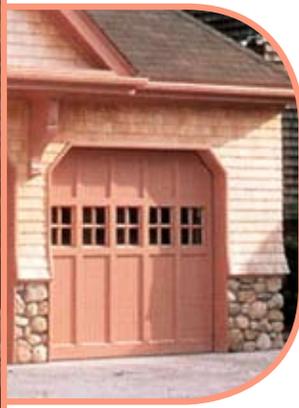


garage doors



Giving the garage a facelift.

Depending on the neighborhood and design elements of the house, a garage door can be one of the most visible features from the street. Replacing an old front facing garage door with the latest carriage house style door can completely change the look of a home. Make sure to consider the style of the house when choosing a door. It should complement the architecture of the house, and the color of the garage door should coordinate with the overall house color.



ada ramps

Making accessible appeal.

Accessibility doesn't have to mean giving up on great curb appeal. Using quality materials and good design can make an ADA ramp look right at home. Ramps built in front of a house will have better curb appeal if constructed in a porch-like fashion rather than deck style.



dormers



Adding distinction.

Like other features in the architectural and design themes, dormers take on many shapes and sizes depending on the style of home they compliment.



Gable dormers look best with American Colonial, Colonial Revival, Federal, Georgian, Queen Anne, and English Tudor house styles.

Shed dormers look best on English, Tudor, Arts and Crafts, Bungalow, and Dutch Colonial house styles.

Hipped dormers look best with shingle and French eclectic house styles.



Higher expectations.

Looking at doing an ambitious renovation or improvement? If so, be sure that what is done is a quality improvement. Doing otherwise not only detracts from the house but may actually lower its value. Deal with licensed contractors, secure the proper permits, and it is always good practice to obtain three quotes for the work.

resources



Building Permits

Building permits may be obtained at the City's Bureau of Building Construction Safety located at 400 Granby Street. For more information call 757-664-6565.

Encroachment Permits

Improvements involving encroachments into the public with-a-way will need to be approved by the Department of Planning and Community Development (Zoning Administrator). Offices are located in City Hall, 5th Floor. For more information call 757-664-4752.

Right-of-Way Work or Improvements

For information on policy and procedures for work or improvements in a right-of-way contact the Department of Public Works located in City Hall, 7th Floor, 757-664-4600.

Celebrate Trees

For information on planting trees or landscaping on right-of-ways contact the City of Norfolk's Recreation, Parks and Open Spaces located at 501 Boush Street, 757-823-4023 or go to: www.celebratetrees.norfolk.gov

Historic District Compliance

For information on the applicability and compliance to the requirements of the historic district designation, contact the Historic Preservation Manager. Offices are located at City Hall, 5th floor, or call 757-664-4752.

Tax Abatement Program

For information on participating in the Tax Abatement Program for significant improvements of a residential property, call the Office of the Real Estate Assessor at 757-664-4732. **NO IMPROVEMENT DONE PRIOR TO AN APPROVED APPLICATION FROM THE CITY ASSESSOR WILL BE ELIGIBLE.**

City Ordinances

For information on city ordinances go to:

http://library1.municode.com/default-test/home.htm?infobase=10121&doc_action=whatsnew

Neighborhood Information

To obtain information on real estate assessments, maps and other information go to: <http://gis.norfolk.gov/>



why curb appeal?

Curb appeal makes a difference to the bottom line.

First impressions are everything. A house with curb appeal - one that appears tidy and well-cared for - not only makes a difference to the neighborhood but can make a substantial difference to the value of your home. In fact, a good first impression can add as much as 10% to the value of the home.

Conversely, a home that is unkempt lowers its value, and the value of its neighbors' homes! Crime and other negative impacts are also related to the appearance of homes and overall neighborhood appeal.

Exterior projects, "Not only provide the most value, but also are among the least expensive improvements for a home," says National Association of Realtors President Ron Phipps. "Curb appeal remains king - it's the first thing potential buyers notice when looking for a home, and it also demonstrates pride of ownership."

So be a good neighbor and pick up a rake, get out the paint, and plant some flowers! Easy and affordable improvements can turn your neighborhood into a "neighborhood of choice."



Bureau of Community Enrichment

NEIGHBORS
BUILDING
Neighborhoods

This publication is brought to you by the Neighbors Building Neighborhoods initiative that is providing residents the tools they need to make their neighborhoods "neighborhoods of choice." For more information on how to get involved, contact the Bureau of Community Enrichment at (757) 664-6770 or visit us online.

www.norfolk.gov/communityenrichment

