

Architectural and Urban Integration Guide

**Valois residential
neighbourhood**

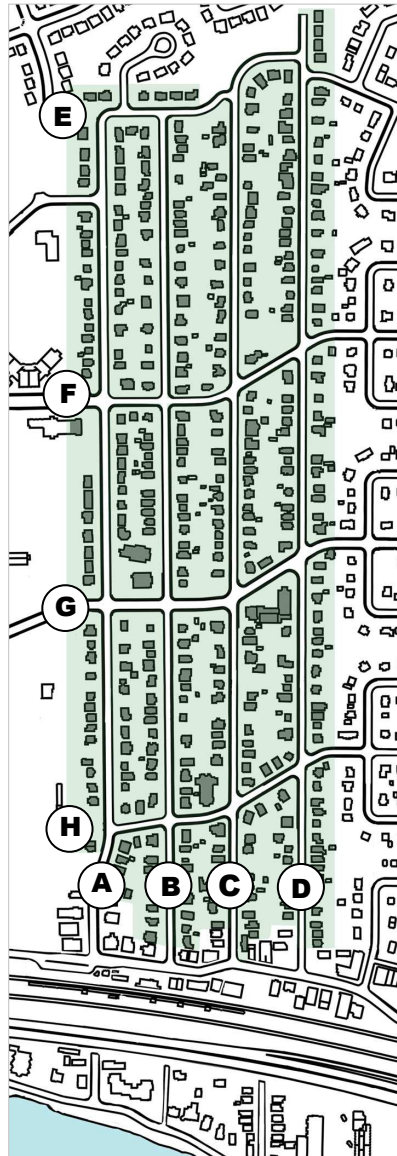
City of Pointe-Claire



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THE VALOIS NEIGHBOURHOOD



Valois is located three kilometres east of Pointe Claire Village. It occupies a plateau to the north of the railway tracks, with a slight dip down to the river on the shores of Valois Bay on Lake Saint-Louis.

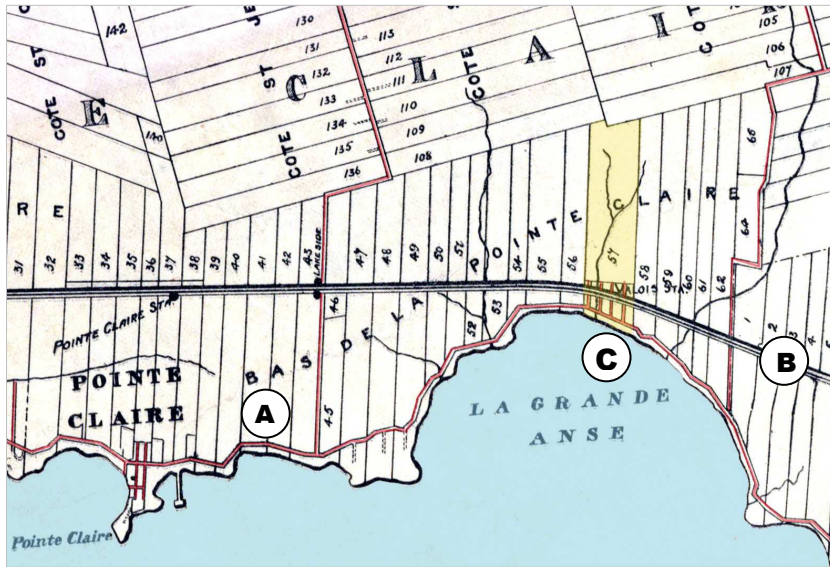
The ensemble includes Valois Bay Avenue (A), Prince Edward Avenue (B), Queen (C) and King (D) Avenues, and four cross streets: Woolmer (E), Summerhill (F), Belmont (G) and Mt. Pleasant (H) Avenues. Its proximity to the river and the station was conducive to the establishment of the neighbourhood in the early 20th century and the development of its countrified character. In general, that unique character, so prized by the residents, has been well preserved.

The main objective of this guide is to make sure that projects that involve renovations or extensions to existing homes or the construction of new homes fit in with the architectural and landscaping features of the Valois area. The guide is designed to make homeowners and citizens aware of the architectural and urban features of this sector. It is also intended to facilitate the evaluation of projects submitted to the Pointe-Claire Planning Department by illustrating good practices that apply to the heritage area under the Site Planning and Architectural Integration Program (SPAIP) by-law.

In the first part of the guide, we look at the history of Valois over the past century and more, describing the various phases in the formation of its built environment. Landscaping and architectural features are then described and illustrated.

We conclude with some recommendations on how to renovate or extend homes in the area while preserving their architectural and urban features. Design principles for new home construction and landscaping are also addressed in this guide.

PHASES IN BUILDING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



Map from 1850, showing the agricultural cadastre of part of the West Island

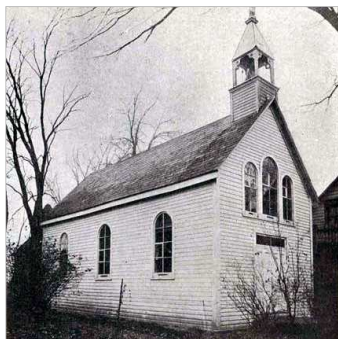
Phase 1

Up to 1870: Farmland

In the 18th century, to the east of the village, the côte de la Pointe-Claire included a number of long narrow farmlands perpendicular to the banks of the river (A). Farm houses were built on a winding river road along the shores of Lake Saint-Louis.

One of the farms fronting on the Grande Anse du lac Saint-Louis belonged to Pointe-Claire doctor Michel-François Valois (1801-1869). In 1870, the Valois family owned three pieces of land that together formed lot 57 on the parish cadastre, corresponding to the boundaries of today's Valois neighbourhood (shown in yellow). The Grand Trunk Railway tracks that connected Montreal with the West Island cut across the land from 1856 on (B).

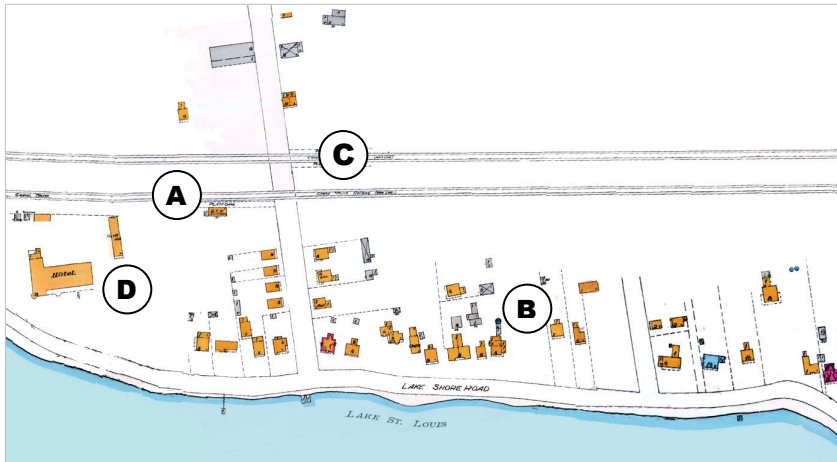
Houses, outbuildings and the Valois family chapel occupied lots near the banks of the Grande Anse along Valois Bay and Godin Avenues (C).



Valois family chapel
Archives, City of Pointe-Claire



Beach on Lake Saint-Louis
Archives, City of Pointe-Claire



Lakeshore Road and houses built along the bay (Goad Atlas, 1912)



The first station and the Château Saint-Louis hotel Archives, City of Pointe-Claire



Valois Boating Club Archives, City of Pointe-Claire



Countrified atmosphere on Lakeshore Road at the turn of the century Archives, City of Pointe-Claire

Phase 2

1870 to 1920: Vacation country

The first train station was opened in 1870, south of the tracks (A), which made it easier for vacationers to get to Lake Saint-Louis and the beaches in the summer. In 1876, the part of the Valois family property located between the tracks and the lakeshore was subdivided to accommodate cottages and second homes for well-to-do families (B). It was only a 25-minute train ride from the city to the beaches on Valois Bay (Grande Anse).

The Valois Boating Club, which opened in 1882, offered a range of recreational activities, including sailing. In 1887, there were plans to sell lots in the part of the Valois family property located north of the train tracks, but the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Line created a new barrier to that development (C).

The Château Saint-Louis Hotel, built in the early 1900s near the station, soon became a popular resort. The three-storey frame building with its steeply sloping roof and wide porch is long gone now, but it does appear in the Goad Atlas for 1912 (D) and on a postcard from around that time.

In 1912, the Valois Bay Heights Company subdivided the Valois family property north of the tracks into building lots. The first allotment was along King and Queen Avenues, where about 15 small cottages or larger cube houses were built. New residents enjoyed the countrified atmosphere of the big bay sheltered from Lake Saint-Louis.



The first Church of the Resurrection (B)



Valois United Church (C)



The first library was located in this house (D)



Train station built in 1927 (E)



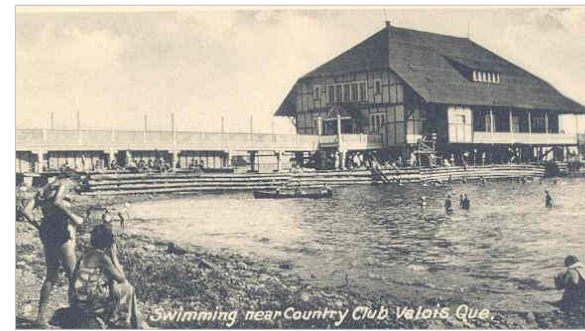
Area map, 1951

Phase 3

1920 to 1950: Subdivision

In the 1920s, the pace of development picked up and a real residential neighbourhood took shape. With the advent of daily commuter train service between Valois station and downtown Montreal, many city-dwellers began to think about putting down permanent roots in the area. Valois Bay and Prince Edward Avenues were marked out in 1922. Between 1922 and 1929, about 50 houses were built, some reflecting the influence of the Arts & Crafts movement, which borrowed some features from medieval English country houses. The Valois Country Club, located at the end of a pier on the bay at the time, also showed that influence.

Several other institutions were built to meet the growing needs of the population. Valois Park School (A) was opened in 1926, the same year as the Anglican Church of the Resurrection (B), followed by Valois United Church in 1929 (C). The first library was located in a house at the corner of Summerhill and Queen Streets (D). In 1927, the Canadian Pacific Railway built a new station, this time north of the train tracks (E). At the end of the Second World War, several houses and the Château Saint-Louis were torn down to make way for the construction of highway 20 south of the tracks. By 1950, there were buildings on most of the lots in the south and east parts of the Valois neighbourhood.



The Valois Country Club, Archives, City of Pointe-Claire



The old Valois-Park School (B)



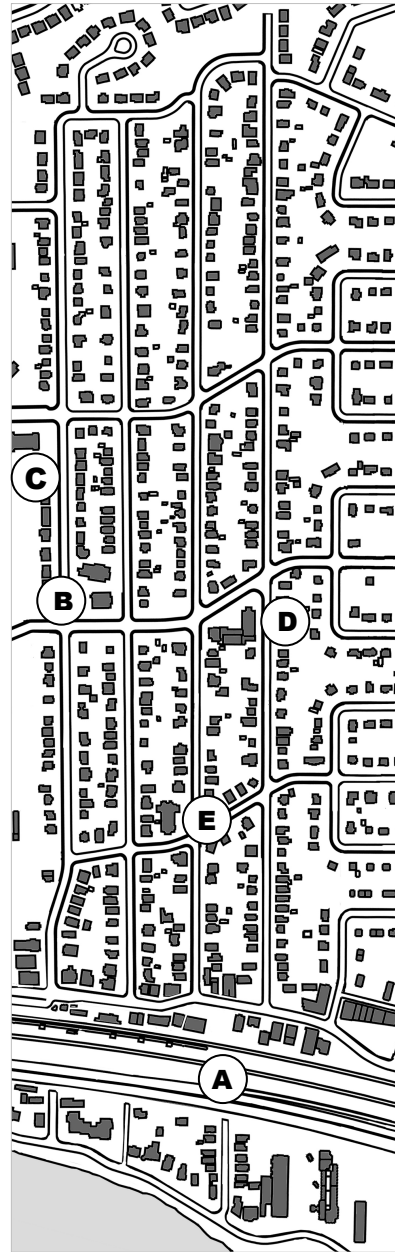
Saint John Fisher Church (C)



Addition to Valois United Church (D)



Church of the Resurrection (E)



Area map, 2012

Phase 4

After 1950 The neighbourhood coalesces

With the more generalized use of the automobile and the opening of highway 20, Valois began to come together as a neighbourhood. However, the footprints of the highway and the train tracks formed a physical barrier between the neighbourhood and the shores of Valois Bay (A).

After the war, the government made it easier for people to acquire certain types of residential property through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). Small townhouses were dotted around the neighbourhood. With the new prosperity of the 1960s, as cars played a growing role in daily life, two new types of houses were built, larger and with built-in garages.

As the population grew, the churches and public buildings in the area were enlarged or rebuilt. In the early 1950s, Valois Park School, which had become too small, was replaced by a larger building, which in 1990 became the Pointe-Claire Public Library (B). Saint John Fisher Church (C) was built in 1954, Valois United Church was enlarged in 1955, and the Anglican Church of the Resurrection was replaced by a larger building in 1958 (E).

In 2001, the Service de Garde de la Pointe (a daycare centre) was set up in a new building constructed directly to the north of the library.

FEATURES OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



Sidewalks run along only one side of the street.



Mature trees and dense hedges line the avenues.

The built environment and green space

It took 50 years for Valois to become fully urbanized, with most of the houses built between 1915 and 1965. Although there is a range of architectural styles, generally the facades are 7 to 8 metres (23 to 27 feet) wide, with a prominent roof and a porch or veranda along the front of the house.

The streets are arranged on a rectangular grid, with north-south streets running straight and parallel (Valois Bay, Prince Edward, Queen and King) and east-west streets that curve (Woolmer, Summerhill, Belmont and Mt.-Pleasant). Most streets only have a sidewalk running along one side, which enhances the rural and verdant appearance of the area.

The main landscaping feature of the area is abundant vegetation, with different kinds of mature trees dating from the early 20th century. Although there was no systematic planting of rows of trees in the public parts of the sector, most private lots have several trees in front. Thick hedges or wooden fences frequently mark side boundaries between lots, and sometimes run all around the perimeter of properties.



A solid hedge along the sidewalk on Valois Bay Avenue.



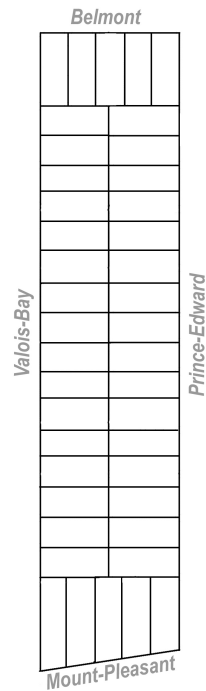
Trees planted along Prince Edward Avenue.



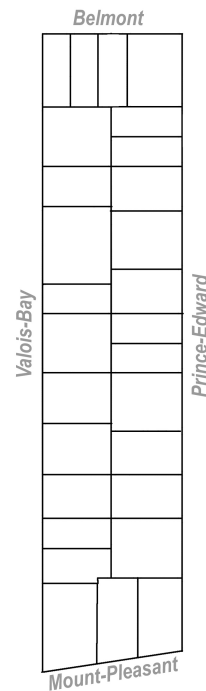
Two mature leafy trees front a property on Valois Bay Avenue.



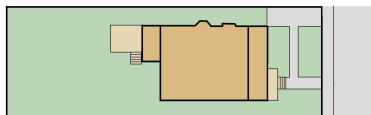
Imposing trees and cedar hedges along King Avenue.



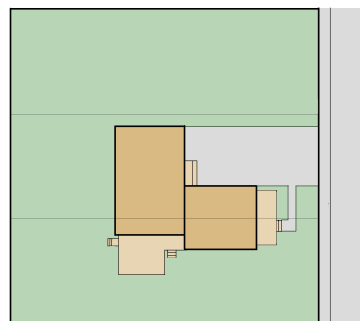
Allotment, 1921



Parcels of land, 2012



House on a 40-foot lot.



House on a 120-foot lot.

Land divisions

Land allotments in the neighbourhood were based on the first streets marked out perpendicular to the river. The original parcels of land, formed in 1912 along both sides of King and Queen Avenues, and in 1921 on both sides of Valois Bay and Prince Edward Avenues, generally measured 12 to 14 metres (40 to 45 feet) wide. Over the years, however, some parcels of land were joined to form wider lots measuring 18, 24, or more rarely, 30 and 36 metres (60, 80, 100 and 120 feet). For example, an 18-metre lot (60 feet) would consist of a 12-metre (40 feet) lot plus a half-lot measuring 6 metres (20 feet). Sometimes three parcels of land would be acquired by the same owner to form a lot measuring 36 metres (120 feet) wide.

The block bounded by Valois Bay and Prince Edward Avenues, shown here, illustrates how things have changed over the century between 1912 and 2012. The grouping of narrow lots by the original owners has meant that this sector is less densely built than might have been expected, with a great deal of green space.

Placement of buildings

Most of the houses in Valois are deep and narrow in volume, corresponding to the proportions of the original parcels of land in the 1912 subdivision (12 metres or 40 feet wide by 30 metres or 100 feet deep). That basic module serves as an organizing principle for space in the neighbourhood.

Where a site is composed of two or three adjoining lots, as shown here (36 metres or 120 feet wide), the building is placed not in the middle of the property but on one side, leaving room for a big yard along the side.

TYPES OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS



All the houses in the neighbourhood are free-standing, except for three pairs of attached houses forming a single built volume, like this pair at the corner of Mount Pleasant and Prince Edward Avenues.

Homes in the neighbourhood can be divided into categories with some common traits in terms of their general volume, roof geometry, shape of openings and covering materials. These categories of buildings, known as typologies, reflect the techniques and the specific socio-economic context of the era in which they were built.

The residential buildings in Valois are variants of seven architectural typologies. When the area was considered a summer playground, **summer cottages** with simple volumes were built with a gently sloped gable roof and a front veranda. Two-storey homes were also built, forming a cubic volume under a pavilion roof, the so-called **Four Square** house. As the pace of subdivisions soared from 1920 to 1950, the influence of the Arts & Crafts movement was seen in houses with large expressive roofs covered in **shingles** to the top of the veranda. The English influence can also be seen in homes with steeply sloped multiple **gables**. After the Second World War, construction shifted to **post-war houses** with simple volumes, as well as **split-levels** and **cottages**, larger homes with built-in garages and distinctive volumes. Here is a list of the seven typologies found in the neighbourhood:

1870 to 1920

- Summer cottages
- Four Square houses

1920 to 1950

- Shingle style Arts & Crafts houses
- Gable style Arts & Crafts houses

1950 to 1970

- Post-war houses
- Split-levels
- Cottages



96 Prince Edward Avenue



75 King Avenue



76 Queen Avenue



29 Valois Bay Avenue

SUMMER COTTAGES

At the end of the 19th century, the mechanization of labour and the appearance of specialty equipment for cutting wood revolutionized construction. The standardization of materials and the design of plans for mass housing sales gave the general public access to low-cost materials and simple construction techniques. The first summer cottages, often built by their owners, were pared-down in terms of their volumetric expression and ornamentation.

Features

- Extended rectangular volume
- Generally with gable roofs
- Gently sloping roofs, with or without rampant dormer windows
- One storey, with a half storey under the attic
- Large front porch or veranda
- Vertically proportioned windows
- Clapboard siding
- Asphalt shingle roofing
- Façade 7 to 8 metres (25 to 27 feet) wide



5 Prince Edward Avenue



7 King Avenue



58 Prince Edward Avenue



146 Valois Bay Avenue

FOUR SQUARE HOUSES

This type of dwelling was designed in 1891 by Denver architect Frank Kidder. It became very popular in Quebec because it provided a much more generous living area than the summer cottage. The square plan was arranged on two full-height storeys, with the rigid pyramid structure of the roof resting on the four exterior walls. One or more skylights brightened the space under the attic. Around 1900, these types of houses were built as summer homes for many merchants from Montreal who came to enjoy the attractions of Valois Bay. These houses were built in the neighbourhood up to the 1950s.

Features

- Cubic volume defined by a square plan
- Pyramid hip roof, gently sloped
- Two storeys, full height, with a crawl space
- Attic with one or more skylights
- Front porch or veranda
- Vertically proportioned windows
- Unified brick or clapboard siding
- Asphalt shingled roof
- Façade 7 to 8 metres (25 to 27 feet) wide



85 Mount Pleasant Avenue



35-37 Valois Bay Avenue



117 King Avenue



43 Queen Avenue

SHINGLE STYLE ARTS & CRAFTS HOUSE

The Arts & Crafts movement was founded in the 19th century by theoreticians, architects and creative people who took issue with the industrialization of construction. They advocated craftsmanship and human production in harmony with the natural world. The “shingle style” Arts & Crafts type house was inspired by the English medieval cottage with its large imposing roof, hipped-end or with rampant dormer windows, over a large front porch or veranda

Features

- Squat volume with large overhanging roof
- Gable roof or hip roof
- Sloping roof with a wide rampant dormer window or gable
- One full storey with a second storey under the attic
- Front porch or veranda integrated with the overall volume of the house
- Squat or curved columns on the porch
- Windows with vertical or square proportions
- Stucco, brick or wood shingle siding
- Shingled roof
- Façade 7 to 8 metres (25 to 27 feet) wide



144 Queen Avenue



124 Prince Edward Avenue



60 Queen Avenue



69 King Avenue

GABLE STYLE ARTS & CRAFTS HOUSE

The gable style house was also inspired by the medieval and artisanal esthetic of the Arts & Crafts movement. Unlike the shingle style house with its symmetrical layout and enveloping roof, however, the gable style house features an asymmetrical L-shaped layout and a roof with steeply sloped gables. The roof overhang is generally quite shallow.

Features

- Asymmetrical L-shaped volume
- Steeply sloped roof with gables
- Gable pediments are sometimes ornamented
- One full storey with a second storey under the attic
- Entryway featuring a canopy, balcony or volume of some kind
- Vertically proportioned windows, often in a row
- Wood, stucco or half-timber siding
- Shingled roof
- Façade 7 to 9 metres (25 to 30 feet) wide



124 King Avenue



46 King Avenue



26 Prince Edward Avenue



64 Prince Edward Avenue

POST-WAR HOUSES

After the Second World War, the federal government set up a program to help Canadians living on modest incomes buy their own single-family homes. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) played the role of mortgage lender and set construction standards that must be met to obtain the necessary financing. CMHC catalogues for suburban homes published between 1946 and 1974 greatly influenced the development of the residential suburbs of the day. Contractors built small single-storey rectangular or square houses with the bedrooms under the attic of a gable roof. Some houses had two storeys, with the shape of the roof simulating an upper storey under the attic.

Features

- Small square or rectangular volume
- Gable roof or false mansard roof
- One full storey with a second storey under the attic
- Concrete foundations and front stairs
- Some horizontally proportioned windows
- Clay brick or clapboard siding
- Asphalt shingled roof
- Façade 7 to 8 metres (25 to 27 feet) wide



23 Woolmer Avenue



96 Valois Bay Avenue



97 Valois Bay Avenue



159 Valois Bay Avenue

SPLIT-LEVELS

In the 1950s and 1960s, middle-class families had more money and were able to own one or two cars. The split-level was a new type of dwelling that had become very popular in the United States and elsewhere in Canada. It was a variant on a model dating from 1935, the *Homestead* from the *Modern Homes* catalogue based on the *Sears & Roebuck Plan Book*. The house consisted of two separate living spaces connected by a central staircase. The first volume included the vestibule, family room and kitchen, built over an excavated or non-excavated basement. The two-storey second volume included a street-level garage with the bedrooms upstairs.

Features

- Horizontal and rectangular in volume, more wide than deep
- Garage completely integrated into the volume of the building
- Hip or half-hip roof, with not much of a slope
- Asymmetrical composition overall
- Vertically or horizontally proportioned windows
- Concrete front stairway
- Brick or artificial stone siding on the main floor
- Wood clapboard or aluminum siding upstairs
- Asphalt shingled roof
- Façade about 12 metres (40 feet) wide



55 Valois Bay Avenue



109 Summerhill Avenue



153 Valois Bay Avenue



168 Valois Bay Avenue

COTTAGES

Cottages consist of two storeys with a large (often finished) basement. The floor space is very generous. The garage is attached to one of the side walls and is frequently integrated into the volume of the house with a long protective roof over the door. Since the façade of the house with the garage is very wide, these houses occupy double lots.

Features

- Rectangular in volume, more wide than deep
- Single-storey garage adjoining the house
- Half-hip roof, not much of a slope (prefab)
- Entryway protected by the extension of the garage roof
- Vertically or horizontally proportioned windows
- Brick or artificial stone siding on the main floor
- Wood clapboard or aluminum siding upstairs
- Asphalt shingled roof
- Façade about 15 metres (50 feet) wide



Example of an Arts & Crafts house that requires maintenance on the woodwork, repairs to trim that has deteriorated and replacement of most of the components of the front porch, all at the same time.

The architecture of the old houses in Valois gives the neighbourhood its special cachet. To preserve that charm, homeowners need to take care of maintenance and repairs or replacements of components that have deteriorated. It's important to respect the original features of the various types of residential buildings, based on the following principles:

Maintenance

When the original materials or components of the building are in *good condition*, we recommend regular maintenance. Metal surfaces and outdoor woodwork need to be painted and protected from water infiltration so that rust or rot will not set in. Caulking, mortar or flashing joints also require maintenance to remain waterproof.

Repairs

When the building's original materials or components are in *poor condition*, it's easy to repair them by replacing the damaged parts, such as a section of a wood railing or a few cracked shingles. If the material or component is not original, the part that has deteriorated can be replaced with another element of better quality, just as a recent component that does not go with the original ensemble can be removed.

Replacement

When the original building's materials or components are in *very poor condition* and cannot be repaired, they can be replaced with identical or similar elements. If the components have been removed or replaced by elements that alter the heritage quality of the façade, we recommend restoring the missing features. Observing buildings of the same type whose original features have been preserved can provide inspiration for the restoration process.



This shingle style Arts & Crafts house has been renovated to showcase its typical architectural features: sash or double windows; large windows on the veranda integrated into the volume of the shingled roof; stucco siding and woodwork that complements the bricks.

Examining architectural components

Observe the components that are typical of your home's architectural type to make sure any work that's done shows the house at its best. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

Which architectural typology is the building?

- The volumetry of your house should more or less correspond to one of the typologies found in the area: summer cottage, Four Square, shingle style Arts & Crafts, gable style Arts & Crafts, post-war house, split-level or cottage.

Are the doors and windows original?

- Are the doors and windows made of wood?
- Do you have double windows or sash windows?
- Are the windows horizontally or vertically proportioned?
- Do they have plain glass or leaded panes?
- Are the shutters appropriate and functional?

Are the siding and trim original?

- Has the roll roofing been replaced?
- Are there skylights on the roof? What kind?
- Have the walls been covered with new siding?
- Is there trim to be maintained (cornices, woodwork, etc.)?

Is the entryway protected?

- Has the glassed-in porch, veranda or original balcony been removed or replaced?

Is the garage original?

- Does it form part of the volumetry of the house?
- Is it in the back yard or on the side of the house?
- Does its volume seem too imposing?
- Does the siding on the garage match the siding on the house?

EXTENSIONS

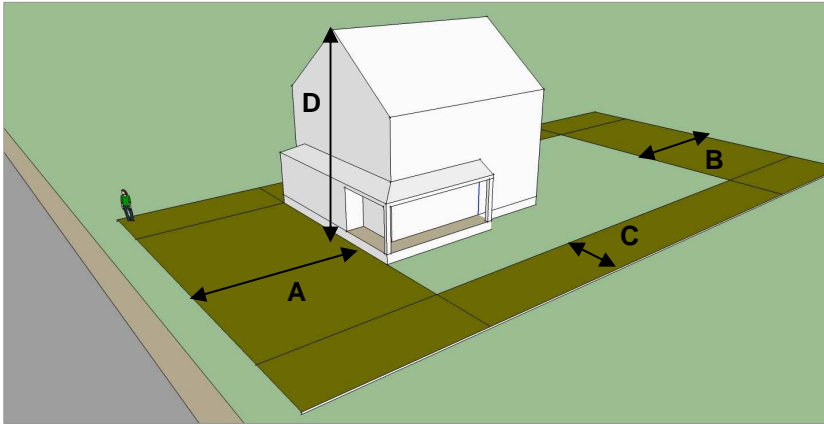
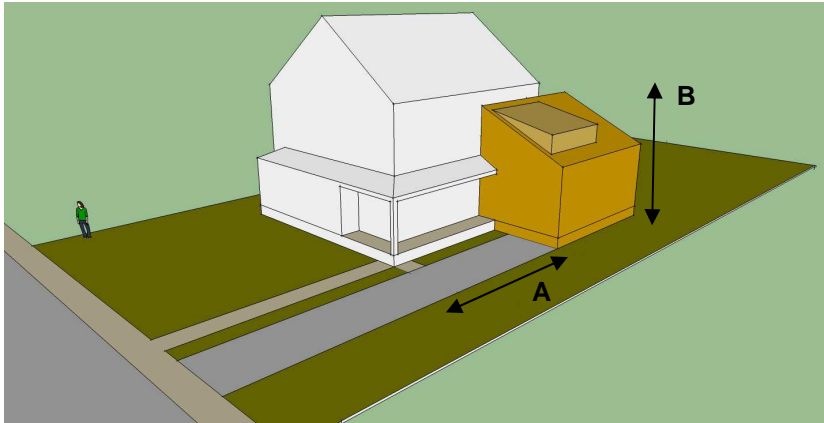


Diagram showing height and setback requirements

Before you make plans for an extension to your house, it's important to contact the Pointe-Claire Planning Department to make sure you understand the planning by-laws that apply to your property. The Zoning By-law, for example, includes the following provisions:

- A. The minimum setback required in the front of the property, i.e. the distance between the boundary of the site along the street and the façade of the house;
- B. The minimum rear setback required behind the property, i.e. the distance between the rear boundary of the site and the rear façade of the house;
- C. The minimum side setbacks required on the sides of the property, i.e. the distance between the side boundaries of the site and the side façades of the buildings;
- D. The maximum height of the roof;
- The lot coverage of the building, i.e. the maximum floor footage your house may occupy on your lot;
- The floor space index (FSI), i.e. the floor area that may be constructed based on the size of your lot;

To preserve the architectural quality of the Valois neighbourhood, the Site Planning and Architectural Integration Program (SPAIP) by-law applies to extensions and new constructions. Respecting the grid, preserving architectural features and harmonizing new constructions in the neighbourhood are at the heart of the by-law, and these are the considerations that have inspired the design principles illustrated in this guide.



The setback position of the extension, shown in yellow, is less imposing in terms of volumetry than the existing house.

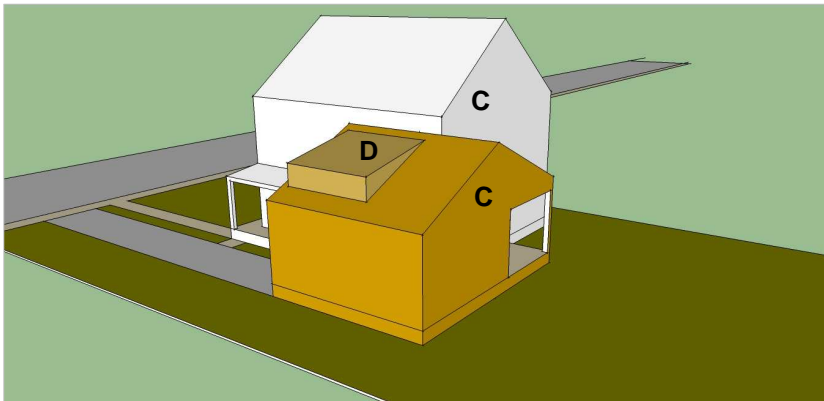


Illustration showing roof slopes and the addition of a rampant dormer window to make use of the attic space.

Design principles

Based on the regulatory parameters described above, a decision can be made on which option to choose, either:

- An extension on the side and/or rear of the existing house
- Adding a storey to the existing house

When it is not possible to build an extension on the side or add another storey, it is permissible to turn an existing adjoining garage into living space as long as the garage was built before 1991. It is also possible to turn an outdoor porch into interior space as long as the porch does not encroach on the prescribed front setback.

Side and/or rear extension

A side or rear extension must respect the minimum distances prescribed in the Zoning By-law, as well as the following design principles:

- A. Locate the extension set back from the façade so that its volume remains secondary in the overall composition. A setback of 6 metres corresponds to the length of a car parked on the side of the house, which is more discreet than parking the car in front;
- B. Make sure that the volume of the extension is less imposing than the volume of the house (about half the height and width of the existing façade);
- C. Match the roof slopes and siding materials on the extension to the components of the existing house;
- D. With the addition of dormers, the attic of the extension can be turned into living space.

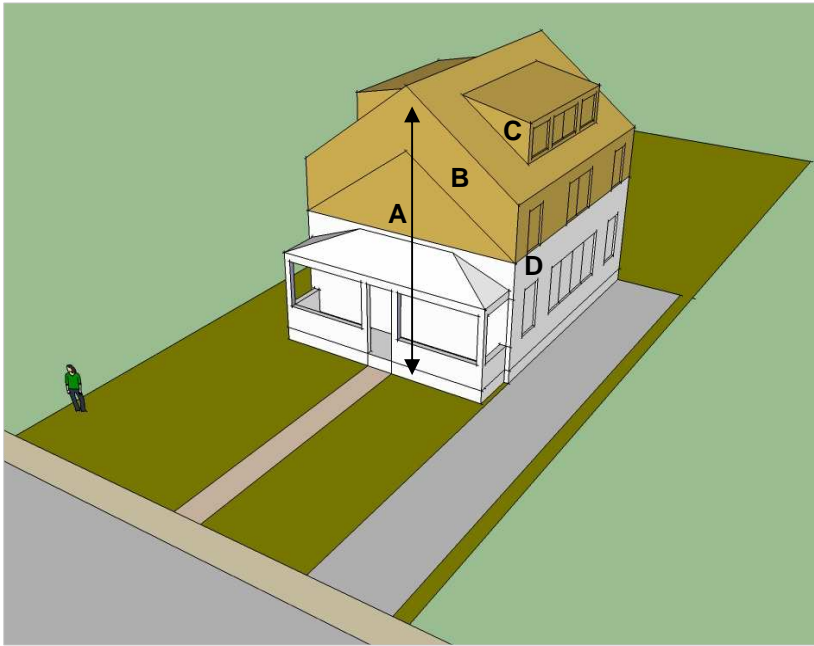


Illustration showing a storey, in yellow, added to a house, extending the existing volumetry, which reflects the slopes and shapes of the old roof. A rampant dormer window lets light into the attic. The position of the new openings matches the position of the windows on the main floor.

Adding another storey

The typological features of your home may be better suited to certain types of extensions than others. Split-levels and Arts & Crafts houses (both shingle style and gable style) do not really lend themselves to the addition of another story on the façade. The following design principles are recommended:

- A. Add the new storey along the vertical extension of the foundations and the volumetry of the main floor of the existing house;
- B. Reproduce the slope of the existing roof and the type of roof that is typical of that type of building;
- C. Make sure that the top storey is located under the attic in accordance with the template for buildings in the Valois area;
- D. Match the siding materials and also the proportions and position of openings on the addition to those on the main floor.



A new house with several architectural features found in the neighbourhood: porch and veranda, vertically proportioned openings, gables and woodwork. Note that setting the garage well forward has the effect of enlarging the entire façade.

The construction of a new house should help to preserve and enhance the architectural and urban character of Valois. The following design principles reflect the current features of buildings in the area: multi-sloped roofs, front porches or verandas, garages on side or rear setbacks, vertically proportioned windows and brick or clapboard siding:

Design principles

- Set the new house on one side of the lot so that there is a yard on the side and respect the module on the division of lots in the area to 12 metres (40 feet) wide;
- Make sure that the main façade is no wider than 8 metres (25 feet) to create a volumetry that is narrow and deep, similar to the volume of other homes in the neighbourhood;
- Set the garage in the back yard or several metres back from the front façade (the length of a car, for example) so that the façade of the newly built volume remains quite narrow;
- For the same reasons, if you add a garage, make it a one-car garage;
- Make sure that the roof has multiple gentle or prominent slopes and put a storey under the attic to maximize the liveable surface of the house;
- Highlight the entryway with a threshold that consists of a covered porch and/or veranda;
- Choose siding made of shingles, clapboard or clay brick;
- Use quality materials.

LANDSCAPING



Narrow driveway



Planting in the front yard



Fence between front and back yards



Mass plantings

A typical and distinctive feature of Valois is the quality of the green cover and the countrified atmosphere. Many lots feature mature cedar hedges and tall trees. Since most of the houses in the neighbourhood were built before the Second World War, they do not have garages, just narrow driveways. The following design principles are intended to preserve the ambiance of the area:

Design principles

- Plant leafy trees and maintain grass-covered lawns on the front and side setbacks;
- Make sure that pedestrian walkways and driveways are narrow and separate from one another;
- Make sure that the driveway is no wider than the garage door;
- Use permeable materials for driveways and walkways;
- Use hedges to mark the boundaries of the property or wood fences between the front and back yards;
- Use mass plantings at the feet of the house.

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