

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The most widely-used standards and guidelines in the United States for the rehabilitation of buildings in historic districts are *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. Developed in 1979 and periodically updated, the *Secretary's Standards* include extensive information on appropriate and inappropriate methods and techniques of maintenance, repair, selection and installation of replacement elements and materials, as well as alterations and additions for historic buildings. It is recommended that these standards be used to guide the rehabilitation or alteration of all structures built prior to 1940 within the H-2 Corridor District.

According to the *Secretary's Standards* rehabilitation is "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values." There is a recognition in this definition that some alteration to the building's original fabric is often necessary to meet contemporary needs, but these changes should be designed to retain the material and features that are important in defining the building's historic or architectural character. Ten standards were developed to provide guidance for rehabilitation efforts and to determine eligibility for federal tax credits for rehabilitation projects. These standards are generally accepted as guiding principles that determine appropriate and inappropriate rehabilitation efforts.

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.
2. The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
3. All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
4. Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
5. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.
6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.

7. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.
8. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archaeological resources affected by, or adjacent to any project.
9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.
10. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

Further details and copies of the *Secretary's Standards* are available from:

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Preservation Assistance Division
Washington, D.C.. 20013

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Division of Historic Landmarks
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