

CITY OF GRANBURY  
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*Historic Preservation*  
**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

## **1. CATEGORIES OF PRESERVATION FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND LANDMARKS**

To provide clear and consistent guidance for owners, developers, and city officials, these guidelines are organized in order of historic preservation concerns so that a rehabilitation project may be successfully planned and completed. The intent of the guidelines is to assure the retention of a building's important or "character-defining" architectural materials and features, and, secondly, to make possible an efficient contemporary use.

Buildings more than 50 years old are considered historic and many historic structures in Granbury were built in different eras and reflect different architectural styles. Each historic structure has its own historic context that should be preserved. Many historic districts and neighborhoods reflect a certain historic era or context that should also be preserved.

Rehabilitation guidance begins with **protection and maintenance**-this work should be maximized in every project to enhance overall preservation goals. Next, where some deterioration is present, **repair and rehabilitation** of the building's historic materials and features is recommended. Finally, when deterioration is so extensive that repair is not an option, the most problematic area of work is considered: replacement of historic materials and features with new, but compatible, materials.

The preservation of historic structures may be defined in three categories of work:

**The first category: *Stabilize*** the building, which is basic to preventing further deterioration, by weatherproofing surfaces, providing appropriate drainage, eliminating threatening plants and other destructive elements.

**The second category: *Rehabilitate*** the building by making possible a compatible use for the property through repair, alterations, and additions, while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural character.

**The third category: *Restore*** the property by accurately depicting the form, features, and character of its original condition.

### **Identification and Retention**

The first level of guidance basic to the treatment of each historic building is ***identifying and retaining*** the form and detailing of those materials and features of a structure that are important in defining and preserving its historic character. Items cited as ***Prohibited*** list the types of actions that are most apt to cause the diminution or even loss of the building's historic character. (It should be remembered, however, that such a loss of character is often caused by the cumulative effect of a series of actions that would seem to be minor interventions.)

## Protection and Maintenance

After identifying those materials and features that are important and must be retained in the process of rehabilitation work, **protecting and maintaining** these items is addressed. Protection generally involves the least degree of intervention and is preparatory to other work. For example, protection includes the maintenance of historic material through treatments such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal, and re-application of protective coating; the cyclical cleaning of roof gutter systems; or installation of fencing, protective plywood, alarm systems and other temporary protective measures. Although a historic building will usually require more extensive work, an overall evaluation of its physical condition should always begin at this level.

## Repair

When the physical condition of character-defining materials and features warrants additional work, **repairing** is recommended. Guidance for the repair of historic materials such as masonry, wood, and architectural metals again begins with the least degree of intervention possible. Examples of repairing include: patching, piecing-in, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing or upgrading materials or features according to recognized preservation methods. Repairing also includes the limited replacement in-kind or with compatible substitute material-of extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features when there are surviving prototypes (for example, brackets, dentils, steps, plaster, or portions of slate or tile roofing). Although using the same material is always the preferred option, substitute material is acceptable if the technical and structural requirements, visual appearance, and finish of the new work matches in detail that of the original.

## Replacement

Following repair in the hierarchy, guidance is provided for **replacing** an entire character-defining feature with new material because the level of deterioration or damage of materials precludes repair (for example, an exterior cornice; a complete porch; or a storefront). If the essential form and detailing are still evident, this physical evidence can be used to re-establish the feature as an integral part of the rehabilitation project.

## Design for Missing Historic Features

When an entire interior or exterior feature is missing (for example, an entrance, or cast-iron façade; or a principal staircase), its contribution to the definition of the former historic character of the building is lost, unless it can be accurately recovered in form and detailing through the process of carefully documenting the historical appearance. Where such an important architectural feature is missing, its recovery or recreation is always recommended in the guidelines as the **first** or preferred course of action. If adequate historical, pictorial, and physical documentation exists, recreating the feature should be based on this information.

A second acceptable option for the replacement feature is a new design that is compatible with the remaining character-defining features of the historic building. The new design should always consider the size, scale, and material of the historic building itself, and most importantly, should be clearly differentiated so that a false historical appearance is not created.

If a building's life spans several periods, there is always a question of which period the building's restoration should reflect. The period that best supports the building's current function should be chosen, as well as the period that is most compatible with the building's historic district or neighborhood.

### **Alterations/Additions to Historic Buildings**

Generally, some exterior and interior alterations to historic buildings are needed to assure their continued use, but it is most important that such alterations do not radically change, obscure, or destroy character-defining spaces, materials, features, or finishes.

Alterations may include providing additional parking space on a site; cutting new entrances or windows on secondary elevations; inserting an additional floor; installing an entirely new mechanical system; or creating an atrium or light well. Alteration may also include the selective removal of buildings or other features of the environment or building site that are intrusive and therefore detract from the overall historic character.

The construction of an exterior addition to a historic building may seem to be essential for the new use, but it is emphasized in the guidelines that such new additions should be avoided, if possible, and considered only after it is determined that those needs cannot be met by altering secondary, i.e. non-character-defining interior spaces. If, after a thorough evaluation of interior space solutions, an exterior addition is still deemed to be the only viable alternative, it should be designed to be clearly differentiated from the historic building, then approved by the Granbury Historic Preservation Commission before construction. The character-defining features of the original historic building must not be changed, obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

An addition should utilize similar scale, proportions, and materials as the original structure, such as the roofline and window and door patterns and sizes. Details should be distinct from the original, so that preservationists can easily detect when and where an addition was built.

### **Energy Efficiency/Accessibility Consideration/Health and Safety Considerations**

Although these considerations are quite often an important aspect of rehabilitation projects, they are not usually a part of the overall process of protecting or repairing character-defining features. Rather, the means of accomplishing such work most often must be assessed for its potential *negative* impact on the building's historic character. Particular care must be taken *not* to radically change, obscure, damage, or destroy character-defining materials or features in the process of rehabilitation work to meet code and energy requirements. Where compliance with code requirements is not feasible in the historic structure, appeals to the code authority may be in order.

Per Section 2, Chapter 229 (b) of the Texas Local Government Code: A municipality may not prohibit or restrict the installation of solar energy device by a residential or small commercial customer...

These City of Granbury *Historic Preservation Design Guidelines* were published in 2000 by the City of Granbury's Historic Preservation Commission. Professional guidance and artwork were provided by James Pratt Architecture/Urban Design, Inc, of Dallas. The Design guidelines were updated in 2023 by the Historic Preservation Commission.

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