

## WHAT IS DESIGN REVIEW?

Referral of a property owner's plans for renovation to the Pierce County Landmarks & Historic Preservation Commission by the Planning and Land Services Department triggers the design review process. The Commission's task is to ensure that the renovation work is consistent with the building's historic character and appearance. The Commission reviews all proposed changes to the exteriors of such properties, whether they are commercial or residential. The process encourages the preservation of the building while recognizing that its use may change.

The Commission uses the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation as a guide. The Standards are designed to preserve features of a property significant to its historic, architectural and cultural values. Such features include, but are not limited to siding, windows, entryways, porches, balconies, chimneys, colors, ornamentation and roof treatments. Design review strives to find reasonable solutions, taking into account current building code, and other factors. Commission discussions often assist the applicant in working through preservation and permitting issues.

## WANT MORE INFORMATION?

We are here to help.

Pierce County's Historic Preservation Program is in the Planning and Land Services Department. Call 253-798-3683 or 253-798-3736, or go online at: [www.piercecountywa.org/historicpreservation](http://www.piercecountywa.org/historicpreservation)

## DO YOU OWN A LANDMARK?



LANDMARKS & HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

12/11

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION

PIERCE COUNTY  
LANDMARKS & HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
COMMISSION



## WHAT DO THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION SAY?

### THERE ARE 10 BASIC GUIDELINES:

- 1) Make use of the property for its historic purpose or introduce a new use preserving the defining elements of the building, site and environment with minimal changes.
- 2) Retain and preserve the property's historic character. Materials, features, or spaces that reflect the property's character should be retained.
- 3) Recognize the property for its place in time. A false sense of history should not be created.
- 4) Retain and preserve significant changes that occurred over time.
- 5) Preserve distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques.
- 6) Repair rather than replace deteriorated historic materials and features where possible. Match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and materials.
- 7) Surface clean structures using the gentlest means possible. Do not sandblast.
- 8) Preserve and protect archaeological resources. Mitigate the effects of any necessary changes.
- 9) Keep new additions compatible with the building's historic character. New work should not damage the old, but size, mass, scale, and architectural features should be compatible.
- 10) New construction shall be done so that it can be removed in the future so the essential form and integrity of the property can be restored.

Retention of original design features is important. Examples of appropriate material for a historic house: wood windows, clapboard, or wood siding, natural stone, and masonry chimneys. Each project is unique. The Commission is available to help identify solutions.

Cover: ThorneWood, in Lakewood (built 1910), circa 1929. Tacoma Public Library, #15-1 Richards Studio Collection  
< Harstad Hall (built 1891) at Pacific Lutheran University, Parkland, circa 1921. Tacoma Public Library, Marvin Boland Collection #BU-12762

## CAN I BUILD AN ADDITION ON MY HISTORIC BUILDING?

**Yes.** The Commission needs to review designs to ensure that an addition will be compatible with the historic structure. Staff is available to help.

## ARE THERE FINANCIAL BENEFITS FOR FOLLOWING THE GUIDELINES?

**Yes.** The Special Tax Valuation program abates property taxes on the value of qualifying improvements for ten years. Rehabilitation costs must be at least 25% of the building's assessed value and all work must be completed within 24 months in accordance with Commission requirements and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Other tax credits may also be available. Call us.

## WHAT IS THE PIERCE COUNTY HISTORIC REGISTER?

Individual properties and buildings are listed on the Pierce County Historic Register for their architecture or history. Pierce County also has a historic district, Home, Washington, which is a special review district. Buildings and sites may be placed on the register after review by the Pierce County Landmarks & Historic Preservation Commission. A private building may be designated at the request of the property owner. A designation remains with the structure unless its demolition is authorized.

Historic properties reflect Pierce County's history, growth, and development. To preserve that history the Pierce County Council created the Landmarks & Historic Preservation Commission in 1984. The Commission reviews changes to historic properties and makes recommendations to the County Council on registering properties.

A complete list of properties on the historic register in unincorporated Pierce County is available online:

[www.piercecountywa.org/historicpreservation](http://www.piercecountywa.org/historicpreservation)

