

City of Fredericksburg Historic District Design Guidelines & Standards

Fredericksburg, Gillespie County, Texas
Final Draft Adopted July 19, 2021



Prepared for
The City of Fredericksburg

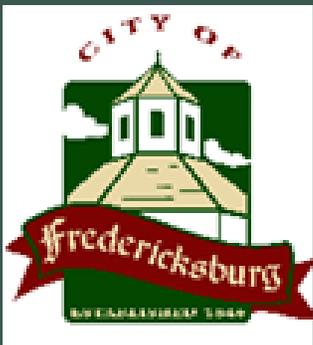
Prepared by



HMM & Associates



Winter & Company





City of Fredericksburg Historic District Design Guidelines & Standards

Fredericksburg, Gillespie County, Texas

Adopted July 2021

Prepared by



HHM & Associates



Winter & Company

Executive Summary

This report includes Design Guidelines and Standards for the Fredericksburg Historic District developed in 2020 through a contract awarded to the consulting team of HHM & Associates, Inc. of Austin, Texas, and Winter & Company of Denver, Colorado. Together, the team worked with City of Fredericksburg staff and public stakeholders to gather input about relevant issues faced by property owners in Fredericksburg at the time of this project. Public engagement efforts occurred in January and February 2020, including public meetings and a public survey. The consulting team then synthesized public input to develop draft design guidelines and standards tailored to the historic character and current needs of Fredericksburg. The draft was presented to the City in May 2020.

Between May 2020 and December 2020, the City Historic Preservation Office and the Historic Review Board collaborated to recommend revisions to the document. Online meetings hosted by HHM & Associates occurred on May 28, 2020; June 2, 2020; and June 3, 2020. The City Historic Preservation Office hosted numerous additional discussions with the Historic Review Board and other City staff and elected officials. On December 17, 2020, the City presented a matrix of all comments to HHM & Associates. In January 2021, HHM revised the document to address all comments, communicating extensively with the City Historic Preservation Office throughout the revision process.

City Staff hosted public meetings and open houses in Spring of 2021 and gave the HRB and City Council updates on the progress. Another online survey was open during April-June 2021. Final edits were made by staff and presented to the HRB and City Council in July of 2021.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	ii
Acronyms.....	iii
1. Purpose and Scope	1-1
1.1. Introduction	1-1
1.2. Background	1-2
1.2.1. Nationwide Preservation History	1-2
1.2.2. Local Regulatory Context.....	1-3
1.3. Purpose	1-10
1.4. Using these Guidelines & Standards	1-11
1.4.1. Applicability	1-11
1.4.2. Process.....	1-12
2. Architectural Character	2-1
2.1. Architectural Styles	2-2
2.1.1. Pre-Railroad Folk	2-3
2.1.2. National Folk.....	2-7
2.1.3. Gothic Revival.....	2-9
2.1.4. Folk Victorian.....	2-11
2.1.5. Queen Anne.....	2-12
2.1.6. Italianate.....	2-13
2.1.7. Classical Revival	2-14
2.1.8. American Commercial	2-15
2.1.9. Art Deco.....	2-16
2.1.10. Art Moderne.....	2-17
2.1.11. Craftsman	2-18
2.1.12. Tudor Revival	2-19
2.1.13. Spanish Colonial Revival	2-20
2.1.14. Mission Revival	2-21
2.1.15. Minimal Traditional	2-22
2.1.16. Midcentury Modern	2-23
2.1.17. Contemporary	2-24
2.1.18. Ranch	2-25
2.2. Building Forms.....	2-26
2.2.1. Pre-Railroad Folk Residential Forms.....	2-26

- 2.2.2. Post-Railroad National Folk Residential Forms... 2-31
- 2.2.3. Twentieth-Century Residential Forms 2-34
- 2.2.4. Commercial Forms 2-36
- 2.2.5. Institutional Forms 2-38
- 2.2.6. Auxiliary Building Forms 2-39
- 2.3. Complex Types 2-44
 - 2.3.1. Residential Lots 2-44
 - 2.3.2. Commercial Streetscapes 2-48
 - 2.3.3. Industrial Lots 2-50
- 3. Standards & Guidelines for Historic Properties 3-1**
 - 3.1. Introduction 3-1
 - 3.1.1. Standards versus Guidelines 3-1
 - 3.1.2. Treatment Sequence Options 3-2
 - 3.2. Alterations to Historic Properties 3-3
 - 3.2.1. Structural and Mechanical Systems 3-3
 - 3.2.2. Energy Efficiency 3-5
 - 3.2.3. Roof and Roof Features 3-7
 - 3.2.4. Chimneys and Stove Pipes 3-13
 - 3.2.5. Porches and Exterior Stairs 3-14
 - 3.2.6. Exterior Walls 3-19
 - 3.2.7. Doors and Door Openings 3-23
 - 3.2.8. Windows and Window Openings 3-26
 - 3.2.9. Canopies and Awnings 3-32
 - 3.2.10. Storefronts 3-33
 - 3.2.11. Signage 3-35
 - 3.2.12. Landscape and Site Features 3-37
 - 3.2.13. Lighting 3-39
 - 3.3. Additions to Historic Properties 3-42
 - 3.4. New Infill Construction 3-49
 - 3.4.1. Lot Coverage 3-50
 - 3.4.2. Primary Buildings 3-53
 - 3.4.3. Auxiliary Buildings 3-60
- 4. Bibliography 4-1**

APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Glossary
- Appendix B: Inventory of Landmarks and Historic District Resources
- Appendix C: Historic District Maps
- Appendix D: City of Fredericksburg Ordinance Information
- Appendix E: Historic Preservation Office Contact Information
- Appendix F: Planning Your Project
- Appendix G: Treatment Methods for Architectural Materials
- Appendix H: Preservation Resource Toolkit
- Appendix I: Public Input

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HHM & Associates and Winter & Company together thank the City of Fredericksburg for its hospitality and engagement throughout the course of this project. The members of the Historic Review Board, particularly, deserve acknowledgement for donating their time and wisdom to providing input necessary to ensure that the document accurately reflected Fredericksburg’s needs. The Pioneer Museum generously provided facilities for public meetings.

Special thanks go to Anna Hudson, the City of Fredericksburg Historic Preservation Officer, for her energy, positivity, and spirit of cooperation throughout the development of this project.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADU	Accessory Dwelling Unit
CMEC	Cox McLain Environmental Consulting
COA	Certificate of Appropriateness
FHA	Federal Housing Administration
HHM	HHM & Associates, Inc.
HRB	Historic Review Board
MDO	Medium Density Overlay
NPS	National Park Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
ROW	Right-of-way
SOI	<i>Secretary of the Interior's (Standards for Rehabilitation)</i>
THC	Texas Historical Commission
TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation

1. PURPOSE & SCOPE

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The Fredericksburg Historic District and landmark properties stand as testaments to Central Texas' rich and layered history. This document aims to guide preservation of Fredericksburg's built fabric. Across the United States, municipalities long have recognized historic preservation as a vital tool for maintaining livable and sustainable communities. As Lady Bird Johnson expressed in her foreword to the 1966 publication "With Heritage So Rich:"

...the buildings which express our national heritage are not simply interesting. They give a sense of continuity and of heightened reality to our thinking about the whole meaning of the American past.¹

At the local level, historic preservation officers and historic landmarks commissioners are tasked with translating these broad goals into detailed, technical decisions about how to manage change within historic districts. Design guidelines and standards help streamline this process. In Fredericksburg, the Historic Preservation Ordinance requires adoption of design guidelines and standards to ensure fair, equitable, and consistent implementation throughout the historic district.

The Certified Local Government Program in Texas

The purpose of the Texas Historical Commission's CLG Program is to empower local communities to better protect historic resources by identifying local priorities, meeting recognized historic preservation standards and providing access to financial and technical services to further the identification, evaluation, designation, and protection of buildings, sites, districts, structures, and objects. In 1966, Congress passed the National Historic Preservation

Act, establishing preservation as a national priority and creating programs to encourage preservation including State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs). The Texas Historical Commission (THC) serves as the SHPO and is charged with administering federal preservation laws and policies in Texas.

Congress amended the National Historic Preservation Act in 1980. The amendment built upon the successes of the original legislation and outlined a program to encourage participation in preservation at the local level, known as the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program. The CLG Program formally recognizes a partnership between the local, state, and federal governments to enhance preservation.

1.2. BACKGROUND

1.2.1. Nationwide Preservation History

Nationwide, local grassroots preservation efforts began in the late nineteenth century. In the early twentieth century, those efforts led to the first federal policies promoting preservation – the 1906 Antiquities Act protecting archeological sites on federally owned land, followed by the 1916 establishment of the National Park Service (see table 1-1). Preservation-minded local governments followed suit, and in 1931, Charleston, South Carolina passed the nation’s first local historic preservation ordinance.

		and local historic district adopted
	1997	Fredericksburg Design Guidelines adopted
	2002–05	Fredericksburg Historic Resources Survey updated
	2015	Texas State Historic Tax Credit Created
	2017	Fredericksburg Historic Preservation Ordinance amended. Hired first Historic Preservation Officer.
	2018-19	Fredericksburg Historic Resource Survey completed and Local Historic District expanded

Table 1-1. Timeline of preservation history: national vs. state and local.

National	Year	State/Local
Antiquities Act protects archeological sites on federally owned land	1906	
National Park Service est.	1916	
Charleston, South Carolina passes nation’s first local historic preservation ordinance	1931	
	1953	Texas Historical Commission established
National Historic Landmarks created	1960	
	1962	Official Texas Historical Marker Program founded
National Historic Preservation Act establishes National Register and federal review process	1966	
	1969	Antiquities Code of Texas est.
National Environmental Policy Act passed	1970	Fredericksburg Historic District listed in National Register
Tax Reform Act provides incentives for rehabilitation	1976	
Secretary’s Standards for Rehabilitation published	1978	
	1982–83	THC survey of Fredericksburg
	1985	National Register district updated; Fredericksburg Historic Preservation Ordinance

In the 1960s, preservation increasingly became a priority nationwide. The 1966 National Historic Preservation Act represented a watershed moment in the preservation movement. This act created an official National Register of Historic Places, as well as incentives for federal use of historic places (Section 110) and review for federal undertakings adversely impacting historic places (Section 106). These new policies led to analysis of what, exactly, constituted an adverse effect to a historic place.

This effort resulted in the publication of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* between 1977 and 1978, intended to guide preservation projects undertaken by federal agencies.² The *Secretary's Standards* set forth the four tiers of treatment, presented below in table 1-2.

Table 1-2. Tiers of treatment of historic buildings.³

Preservation	The act or process of sustaining the existing form, integrity, or material of a building or structure.
Rehabilitation	The act or process of returning a historic property to a state of utility through repair or alteration that makes possible an efficient, contemporary use while preserving those portions or features of the property that are significant to its historical, architectural, or cultural character.
Restoration	The act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular time by means of the removal of later elements or by the replacement of missing earlier elements.
Reconstruction	Treatment that "establishes limited opportunities to recreate a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object in all new materials."

Over time, preservation practice found the *Standards for Rehabilitation* the most commonly applicable for buildings in continuous use. The *Standards for Rehabilitation* form the basis for these design guidelines

and standards. The *Standards'* requirements and intended meanings are clarified in table 1-3 on page 1-5. Illustrations and descriptions of **core concepts** associated with the *Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation* follow the table on pages 1-6 through 1-9.

1.2.2. Local Regulatory Context

Beginning as early as the 1930s, local governments created historic preservation ordinances intended to ensure the integrity of local landmarks and historic districts. Fredericksburg began its local preservation efforts in 1970, listing the Fredericksburg Historic District in the NRHP.⁴ From 1982 through 1983, the Texas Historical Commission surveyed historic resources in Fredericksburg. Based on additional information gained from the survey, in 1985 the Texas Historical Commission revised and updated the district's National Register nomination form, clarifying both the period of significance (1846–1935) and contributing versus noncontributing resources.⁵ To ensure protection of this district and its buildings, the City of Fredericksburg adopted a local Historic Preservation Ordinance on October 25, 1985 (amended in 2017). Also in 1985, the City designated a local historic district, corresponding to the National Register. Under the 1985 Historic Preservation Ordinance, a Historic Review Board was formed to review all exterior work proposed within the historic district, with regular maintenance work as the exception. (For further information on the Historic Preservation Ordinance and the Historic Review Board, see the Historic Preservation Ordinance in *Appendix D.*) The City updated its historic resource surveys from 2002–2005 and again in 2018.

The 2018 resurvey led to expansion of the local historic district's boundaries in June of 2019, with the period of significance updated to extend through 1968 (1846–1968).

Definition of "Period of Significance"

The National Register defines "period of significance" as the "time when a property was associated with important events, activities, or persons, or attained the characteristics which qualify it for National Register listing." ⁶ For the Fredericksburg Historic District overall, this period dates from 1846 through 1968. For individual landmarks, interpretation of period of significance may be more narrow – perhaps only including the original construction for significant architect-designed landmarks, or spanning dates of occupancy of significant owners or tenants, or stretching from the date of construction until 50 years ago—incorporating all alterations up to 50 years ago—for properties with continuous significant historic use. (Refer to the Glossary in *Appendix A* for a fuller definition.)

"Period of Significance" (continued)

To acknowledge that buildings change over time, the *Secretary's Standards* encourage the preservation of features dating from a building's "period of significance," rather than exclusively original features. The restoration of the Nimitz Hotel illustrates this concept. Originally built ca. 1850, an iconic ship-like superstructure was added ca. 1888 by Charles Nimitz – Admiral Chester Nimitz's grandfather. This addition was removed ca. 1926, returning the building an earlier appearance (as shown below, top). The 1967 restoration of the building for use as the Nimitz Museum determined the period of significance to be during the period associated with the Nimitz family, when the ship-like addition was present, from ca. 1888-ca. 1926. As a result, the ship-like superstructure was restored (shown below, bottom). Today, this restoration would be considered significant in its own right—extending the period of significance to 1967—making the 1967 addition recommended for preservation even though it isn't original. Photos from the Portal to Texas History, crediting the Austin History Center and the Texas Historical Commission.

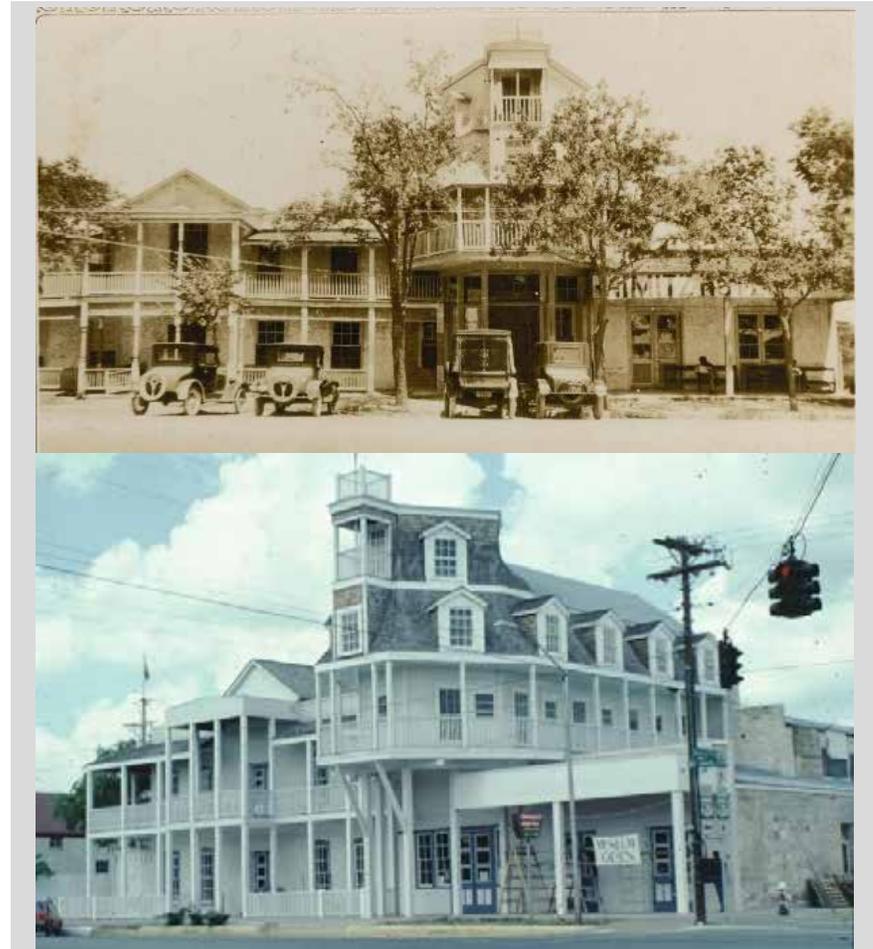


Table 1-3. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

Standard	Intended Meaning
1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.	Keeping buildings in use helps keep them maintained. If a new use is necessary, choose a use that won't require changing the building's character too much.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.	Do not remove or change a building's character-defining features. See <i>Section 2</i> for illustrations of character-defining features of common building styles and types in Fredericksburg. The City Historic Preservation Officer also can help identify character-defining features.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.	Do not create a false sense of history . New alterations to a building should not pretend to be historic. Modern alterations should be distinguishable as modern. In addition, alterations should not pretend to "restore" stylistic elements that were not really part of the building historically. For example, replicated "gingerbread" ornament should not be added to a house where it wasn't present historically.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.	Alterations and additions that date to a property's period of significance should be preserved. For example, if a house was constructed around 1860 and then had "gingerbread" ornament installed around 1900, that ornament now should be considered historic and preserved. In some cases, a property's period of significance may extend up to the 50-year cutoff date to reflect important historic evolution over time. For such properties, meeting this standard entails preserving alterations that are historic age (at least 50 years old).
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.	Again, do not remove or change a building's character-defining features. See <i>Section 2</i> below for character-defining features of common building styles and types in Fredericksburg. The City Historic Preservation Officer also can help identify character-defining features.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.	Repair first. Do not replace historic-age elements unless they are deteriorated beyond repair . Then, patch only the deteriorated portion of the element. If necessary, replace the element matching the size, profile, dimension, and finish. If an element is missing, do not restore it unless you have evidence that allows you to accurately replicate its historic size, profile, dimension, and finish (like a photo or a salvaged element from elsewhere on the building).
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.	Don't treat a building with materials and techniques that may damage historic materials.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.	If site or foundation work is occurring, be mindful of archeological resources that may be present. Contact the City Historic Preservation Officer and/or the Texas Historical Commission beforehand.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.	Ensure that alterations and additions do not damage, destroy, or obscure character-defining features. Design new construction so that it is compatible with but differentiated from the historic-age property. "Integrity" means that a building retains enough of its historic character or appearance to be recognizable as being from the district's period of significance.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.	Design new construction so that it does not damage or destroy character-defining features. If possible, additions should be reversible – possible to be removed without major damage to the historic building.

Creating a "False Sense of History"



Historic resources are not considered significant merely for their aesthetic value; they are considered significant because they are material artifacts of culture. They document how people lived and worked with the technology of the day – how they found innovation within their technological limitations. They express the social and cultural values of the day, whether optimistic and striving or modest and humble. When later generations attempt to replicate the aesthetics of prior generations without the same technological, social, or cultural context, they risk mocking and devaluing authentic historical assets. The most iconic example of an environment with a false sense of history is Disney’s nostalgic Main Street, presenting an idealized version of a historic commercial district disconnected from the stories of the men and women who designed and built the buildings, or the time in which they lived. Source: (left) Nathan Masters, “How Disneyland’s Main Street , USA Changed the Design and Preservation of American Cities,” Lost LA: KCET, accessed April 21, 2020, <https://www.kcet.org/shows/lost-la/how-disneylands-main-street-usa-changed-the-design-and-preservation-of-american-cities>.



Application of faux half-timbering creates a false sense of the building’s structural system. In the image at the left, the use of faux half-timbering becomes especially confusing when combined with building scales too large to be authentic in Fredericksburg, as well as an irregular, clustered site plan configuration not historically found in Fredericksburg. If the public interpreted these buildings as authentically from period of early settlement, they could gain false ideas about the scale, massing, and site planning that characterized Fredericksburg’s early history. Source: (left) City of Fredericksburg Historic Review Board, accessed February 26, 2020, <http://fbqtx.org/DocumentCenter/View>.



This log cabin shown in the photo at the left was constructed in Kentucky and relocated to 409 East Travis Street in Fredericksburg in the 1990s. The materials used in its construction are not native to Central Texas, and the methods of workmanship do not accurately reflect those used by Fredericksburg’s early German settlers. No signage explains that the building was relocated. As a result, this cabin can appear original to its site, creating a false sense of Fredericksburg’s history. Other relocated cabins that are not original to Fredericksburg are located at 217 Mistletoe (the “Town Creek Log Cabin”) and 508 East Travis Street (part of the former SAS retreat property). Source: (left) Cox McLain Environmental Consulting (CMEC), “City of Fredericksburg Historic Resources Survey: Phase I,” prepared for the City of Fredericksburg, 2019.

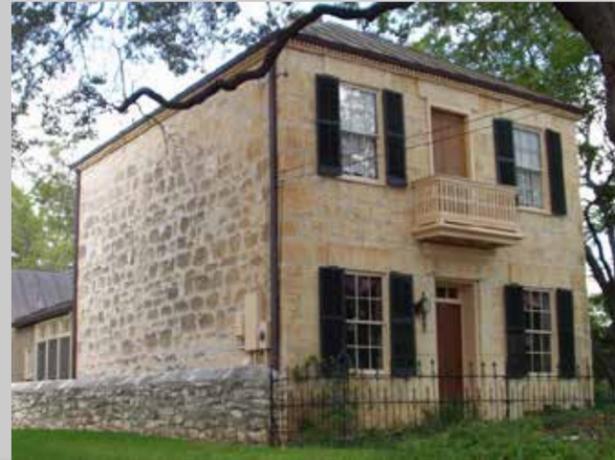
Avoiding a "False Sense of History"

Buildings avoid creating a "false sense of history" when they clearly communicate their date of construction. This doesn't necessarily mean that buildings need to look starkly modern in style. Instead, it can be accomplished by combining traditional building forms or materials with contemporary understanding of construction methods and technology. This is in keeping with a longstanding tradition of adopting new technologies and integrating them into building traditions. Many of the architectural characteristics that we revere as historic today were considered innovative when first developed. The timeline below chronicles how historic buildings in Fredericksburg communicate the technology available at their time of construction, placing contemporary architecture within this continuum. Sources: HHM 2002 survey, CMEC 2019 survey.



Ca. 1846

Vernacular fachwerk and log cabins reflect access to only local materials and limited building tools



Ca. 1852

Stone becomes available with establishment of quarries.



Ca. 1880

Circular saw technology and steam power make milled lumber and mass-produced "gingerbread" ornament available



Ca. 1890

Cast iron beams and lintels allow wider window openings for glass storefronts, as well as broad open interior spaces



Ca. 1914

The arrival of the railroad in Fredericksburg in 1913 brings access to brick



Ca. 1920

New iron presses for cast concrete create "Basse Block" and "Roos Block"



Ca. 1960

Industrial-scale production of "float glass" enables large window walls; popularization of air conditioning spurs adoption despite heat exchange



Ca. 2020

New research about sustainability inspires return use of local materials and passive climactic features, combined with continued use of steel frames and large glass panes

Defining "historic age"

To acknowledge that buildings change over time, the *Secretary's Standards* encourage the preservation of "historic-age" features, rather than exclusively original features. "Historic age" features date from the period of significance, typically 50 years of age. Within a historic district, preservation priorities and contributing/noncontributing status should be reevaluated as new buildings gain historic age (as detailed in *Appendix B.2*) – and alterations also should be reevaluated as they gain historic age. Both photos below show houses in Fredericksburg with alterations that are now more than 50 years old. The philosophy of the *Secretary's Standards* supports preserving "historic-age" alterations if they occurred within the historic district's period of significance. Alterations dating from the period of significance show the evolution of the Fredericksburg Historic District, and thus have significance in their own right. Photos by HHM, 2019.



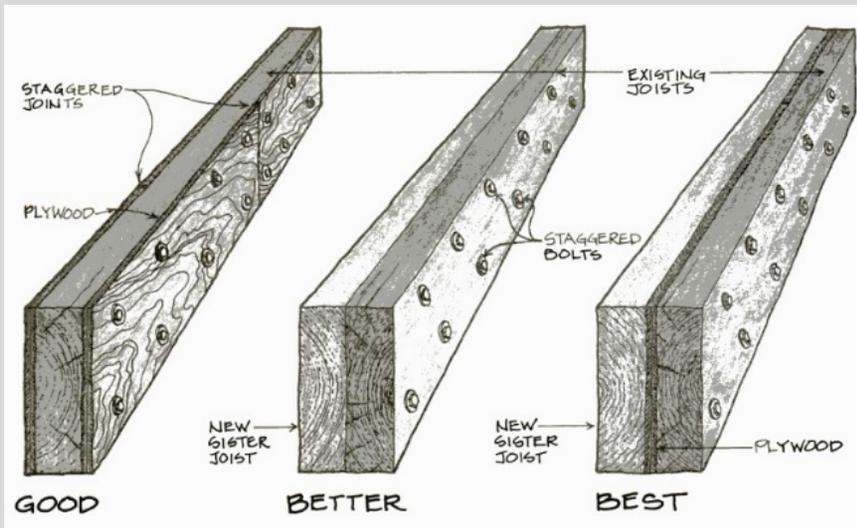
Researching construction and alteration dates

How can a property owner determine if a building's construction is "historic age," or if an alteration dates from a building's "period of significance?" The City of Fredericksburg Historic Preservation Office is a good place to start. Additional research recommendations are provided in *Appendix H.1*. Sometimes, though, the building fabric itself can be the best resource. Sometimes old building fabric is hidden under layers of alterations. When undertaking demolition or selective demolition, proceed slowly and carefully watch for signs of hidden historic materials. Contacting the Historic Preservation Office immediately is recommended upon inadvertent discovery of historic material, as is pausing the demolition process until the building is reevaluated in light of the new information.

Testing for "deterioration beyond repair."



A material is considered "deteriorated beyond repair" when it no longer has the structural capacity to serve its intended function. These design standards and guidelines use different thresholds for gauging whether a feature is "deteriorated beyond repair" based on the building's priority level. For a HIGH priority building, a feature is considered beyond repair if it no longer can serve its original role after being filled with a material like epoxy or joined ("sistered") with a new reinforcing member. For a MEDIUM priority building, a feature that can no longer serve its intended function may be removed and replaced—without consideration of epoxy or reinforcement—although the smallest feasible portion of the feature should be removed. (See *Appendix B* and heading 1.4.2.1. below for more information on priority levels.) Source: (top left) photo showing how a "deteriorated window sash is saturated with liquid epoxy consolidant, with special attention paid to end grain," from Patricia Poore, "Epoxy for Wood Repair," *Old House Online*, January 2, 2019, <https://www.oldhouseonline.com/repairs-and-how-to/epoxies-wood-repair>; (bottom left) an illustration of methods for sistering deteriorated beams, from Walter Jowers, "Beam Repair Basics," *The Old House Journal* vol. XII no. 8 (October 1984): 176; (bottom right) before-and-after images depicting replacement of only the deteriorated column bases—the smallest feasible portion—rather than the entire column, from Aleca Sullivan and John Leeke, *Preservation Brief 45: Preserving Historic Wood Porches* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2006), 12, from the National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/45-wooden-porches.htm>.



1.3. PURPOSE

Local historic district designations protect and enhance historic neighborhoods. They also create a public process to review proposed exterior changes to contributing buildings and consider whether those changes are compatible with the district’s historic character. While the standards and guidelines are based upon nationwide best practices, they also recognize that the Fredericksburg Historic District has its own, unique, historic character. This document interprets the relationship between the nationwide *Secretary’s Standards for Rehabilitation* and the specific architectural character of the Fredericksburg Historic District. The standards and guidelines emerged from mindful analysis of the district’s special physical character, combined with careful listening to the community members that interact with Fredericksburg’s historic buildings on a day-to-day basis.

Functionally, the purpose of these design standards and guidelines is to create a clear framework for the Historic Preservation Officer and Historic Review Board to use when evaluating proposed exterior alterations within the historic district. Clear standards and guidelines help guarantee that the district will retain its overall historic integrity, while also insuring fair and equitable treatment of property owners throughout the historic district.

At the same time, these standards and guidelines aim to educate property owners before exterior alterations are planned or executed. The standards and guidelines can help property owners evaluate what is, or is not, appropriate before bringing plans to the Historic Preservation Officer or the Historic Review Board for review or approval. While some of the concepts set forth in the *Secretary’s Standards for Rehabilitation* are clear and intuitive, others can be confusing and challenging to interpret. Illustrations and definitions are provided to help translate the complexities of the *Secretary’s Standards*.

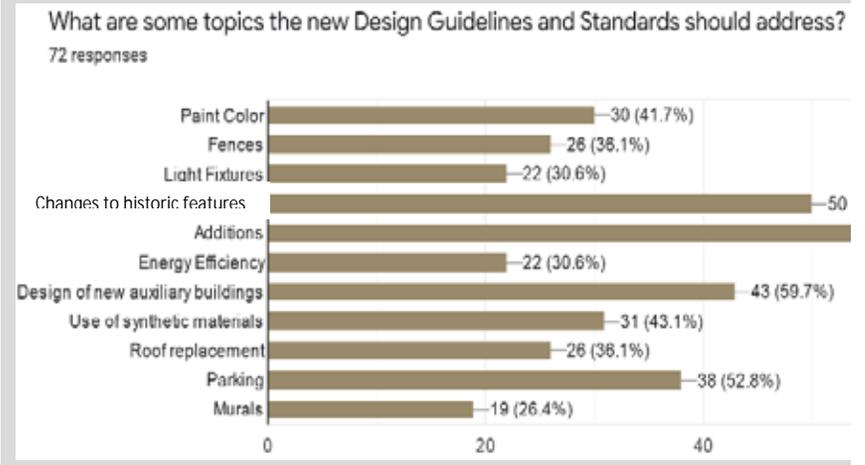
Public Input Process and Findings

Understanding how and why Fredericksburg’s citizens interact with historical buildings is key for creating standards and guidelines that are practical and feasible to implement. At the same time, though, the standards and guidelines must comply with local codes and ordinances like the Historic Preservation Ordinance, which cross references the *Secretary’s Standards for Rehabilitation*. Public input efforts focused on gauging local opinion regarding the flexible areas within the *Secretary’s Standards*. The public review process completed in tandem with development of these standards and guidelines is set forth below.

- Kickoff Public Meetings & Workshops (Jan. 2020)
- Online Survey & Follow-up (Jan.-Feb. 2020)
- Stakeholder Review & Public Hearing (May 2020)
- Public Presentations via Zoom (June 2020)
- Stakeholder & Steering committee workshop (October 2020)
- Deadline for public comments on 1st Draft (Nov 2020)
- HRB voted on Changes to 1st draft (December 2020)
- HSM submitted their final draft to staff (Jan 29, 2021)
- HRB comments on 2nd draft (Feb 2021)
- Steering Committee Meeting (March 2021)
- City Council Update (April 2021)
- Public Open Houses (April 2021)
- Online Survey Open for comments (April-May 2021)
- HRB recommendation for adoption (July 13, 2021)*
- City Council adoption (July 19, 2021)*

Results of public input filtered into every aspect of these design standards and guidelines. Key findings from public input are shown below, and results of public input efforts are included within *Appendix I*.

*anticipated dates of adoption at time of printing



1.4. USING THESE GUIDELINES & STANDARDS

The scope of these design standards and guidelines intends to set parameters for Certificates of Appropriateness for exterior alterations and additions to contributing buildings in the local historic district. The design standards also set parameters for compatible new construction within the district. The design standards intend to supplement the City of Fredericksburg’s Historic Preservation Ordinance, Building Code, and other applicable development-related regulations (compiled within *Appendix G*). Maintenance and construction within the district shall conform to *both* these design standards *and* the Building Code and any other applicable development-related regulations.

The section below discusses determining when and where these design standards and guidelines apply, as well as the process for following the standards and guidelines when applicable.

1.4.1. Applicability

The City of Fredericksburg’s Historic Preservation Ordinance sets forth when and where these standards and guidelines apply. The key factors affecting whether the standards and guidelines are applicable are:

- Location within the boundaries of the historic district, and
- Exterior alterations beyond “ordinary repair and maintenance.”

Choosing to Initiate a Project

Note that these design standards do not require a property owner to rehabilitate or restore their property. Rather, the standards apply if and **only if the property owner opts to initiate an exterior project**. That said, Fredericksburg’s Historic Preservation Ordinance does require baseline maintenance to prevent demolition by neglect. (See Historic Preservation Ordinance *Section 23-65* in *Appendix G*).

1.4.1.1. Landmarks and Historic District Boundaries

These standards only apply to *designated* local landmarks and local historic districts. The process for designation requires property-owner

notification, a series of public meetings, and a series of votes by City boards and commissions, as well as City Council. (The Historic Preservation Ordinance in *Appendix G* outlines the designation process.) A current inventory of individual landmarks, as well as properties within designated historic district boundaries, is included within *Appendix B*. The boundaries of the locally designated Fredericksburg Historic District—as updated in 2019—are presented in *Appendix C*.

1.4.1.2. Exterior Review Only

The language of Fredericksburg’s Historic Preservation Ordinance limits the purview of these design standards and guidelines to the *exteriors* of designated local landmarks and historic districts. The focus set forth in the ordinance is on exterior architectural features, stating that:

*The architectural style, design, general arrangement and components of all of the outer surfaces of a building or structure, or Appurtenance as distinguished from the interior surfaces enclosed by such outer surfaces. Exterior architectural features shall include, by way of example but not by limitation, the kind, color, texture of the building material and the type and style of all windows, doors, lights, signs and other fixtures of such building, structure or appurtenance.*⁷

In order to refine property owners’ understanding of which architectural features are relevant for review for their specific building, *Section 2* of these design guidelines and standards will set forth *character-defining* exterior features for specific architectural styles and property types found within the district. The focus of these standards and guidelines will be to promote preservation of the character-defining exterior features identified in *Section 2* in order to promote preservation of the overall historic character found within the district.

1.4.1.2.1 Ordinary Repair and Maintenance

Fredericksburg’s Historic Preservation Ordinance requires that ordinary repair and maintenance be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Officer only; it is exempt from the Historic Review Board hearing process applied to most exterior alterations. As stated within the ordinance:

Ordinary repair and maintenance which is repairs, replacement or repainting using the same design and color and the same, or updated similar materials which match the original material as closely as possible, and which does not require structural alteration and, the following exterior alterations:

- *replacement of a non-historic door with one in keeping with the character and era in which the home was built,*
- *removal of extraneous non-historic features such as burglar bars, awnings, inappropriate shutters and the like,*
- *restoration of original window openings, replacement of non-historic windows with those that match the original windows as closely as possible,*
- *slight modification to exterior steps, walkways or stairways using same material or that which matches the original material as closely as possible,*
- *reopening of porch,*
- *addition of louvers and vents in if placed in an existing opening with no other exterior alteration needed,*
- *removal of non-historic siding to expose historic siding materials,*
- *removal of roofing and replacement with original material, changing color of roofing material if within the color guidelines,*
- *construction of rear addition under two hundred (200) square feet using same (non-historic) material as existing structure as well as existing roof ridge line for low rated structures,*
- *changes to paint colors on previously painted surfaces or changes of fabric colors which are consistent with the color guidelines, removal of paint to expose original masonry,*
- *changes to landscape as follows: replacement of inappropriate fence or construction of new fence historically appropriate materials, design and color,*
- *changes to sign content that involve no other changes,*
- *new construction of ADA ramps, rear porches, decks, pools, fountains and other backyard amenities,*
- *demolition of non-historic accessory structure, addition or carport that is made of non-historic materials,*
- *installation of temporary features to protect a historic resource or to weatherize or stabilize subject to formal approval within a reasonable time,*
- *installation of mechanical units, electrical or plumbing facilities or fixtures, antennas, rooftop HVAC, mechanical or communication equipment that is not visible from the public right-of-way and results in no modifications to the Resource⁸*

1.4.2. Process

For designated landmarks and properties within the designated historic district, the City of Fredericksburg requires review and consultation to ensure that exterior alterations beyond “ordinary repair and maintenance” comply with these standards and guidelines.

1.4.2.1. Tiers for High, Medium, and Low Priorities

The process for interpreting how these standards will apply to your specific property and project begins by understanding the priority assigned in the most recent historic resources survey (High, Medium, or Low). (Current priority rankings are included within *Appendix B.*) Definitions of “High,” “Medium,” and “Low” from the 2005 and 2019 surveys of Fredericksburg are provided in table 1-4, followed by examples in figures 1-1 through 1-4.

These design guidelines and standards require a higher degree of preservation for higher priority resources (as detailed in *Section 3*). Understanding your property’s priority will help set clear expectations at the outset of a planned project. Note that each property’s priority rating should be reevaluated as it becomes 50 years old, as alterations become 50 years old, and/or as new historic fabric is uncovered.

Verifying and Updating Resource Priority

Historic resource surveys capture a snapshot of a moment in time. They are invaluable tools for guiding planning decisions, but they cannot reflect the changes that happen over time. They also reflect values and opinions about what is historically significant, which change over time as preservation professionals learn more and gain new appreciation of different resource types and styles. Priority evaluations also can change as new information is found, or as inappropriate alterations are reversed to restore historic character. To ensure that you begin planning your project with accurate information, **always check with the Historic Preservation Officer to verify that your understanding of your resource’s priority ranking is accurate and current.** As necessary, the Historic Preservation Officer will work with property owners to update a resource’s priority status. Priority status also may be appealed following *Section 23-66* of the Historic Preservation Ordinance in *Appendix G*.

Table 1-4. Definitions of "High," "Medium," and "Low" priorities from the 2005 and 2019 historic resources surveys of Fredericksburg.

Priority Ranking	2019 Definition	2005 Definition
High	Outstanding, unique, or good examples of architecture, engineering, or design, or an association with an important trend or event in history; these resources retain strong integrity.	Properties ranked in the HIGH category are the city's most significant historic resources and are considered to be outstanding, unique, or good examples of architecture, engineering, or crafted design. Some are unique to the Fredericksburg area and are indicative of rare German-Texan vernacular forms and/or unusual building techniques. Others are noteworthy examples of widely built nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural types, styles, and forms that were erected using local building materials and construction technologies. Properties in this category are either individually listed or are good candidates for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Properties identified with a HIGH rating typically retain their contextual integrity to a high degree. If moved, these resources have strong historical associations and retain their architectural integrity to a remarkable degree.
Medium	Contributes to neighborhood character; typical examples of common architectural style or form; may be somewhat altered.	Resources in the MEDIUM priority category are those properties that are not individually eligible for listing in the NRHP because they are older properties that have been modified or are typical examples of common building forms. Though not identified as architecturally significant on an individual basis, these properties are nonetheless valuable resources that add to the district's overall historic character. MEDIUM-priority resources generally retain their historic integrity to a good to moderate degree. Despite changes to their exterior materials, doors, and/or fenestration, these resources retain their overall form and massing.
Low	Do not contribute to the neighborhood's sense of time and place; may be significantly altered.	The LOW priority category includes properties that represent typical examples of more recent, common local building forms, architectural styles, or are examples of distinctive building forms, architectural styles, or plan types that have been severely altered. Among the types of alterations that collectively may warrant classification in the LOW priority category include the replacement of original exterior cladding with materials that adversely affect a building's historic appearance, the truncation or enclosure of original window or door openings, and major additions, particularly to publicly visible views, that alter the property's form, roofline, and/or massing.



Figure 1-1. This example of a **High Priority** resource at 711 W San Antonio Street holds individual significance as a representative example of the Folk Victorian style. It also retains its integrity to a high degree. Photo by CMEC, 2019.



Figure 1-2. Example of a **Medium Priority** property at 714 W Creek Street. The property was constructed prior to 1924 per Sanborn maps and is representative of homes constructed within the historic district at that time. Although the building might not hold individual significance, it contributes to the collective historic character of the overall district. Although the property has a rear addition and some minor alterations, the majority of the fabric visible from the public right-of-way retains its historic character. Photo by CMEC, 2019.



Figure 1-3. Example of a **Low Priority** house at 410 N Pine Street. Although this property was constructed in the early twentieth century, its historic form and materials have been concealed by non-historic additions. If these additions are removed and the historic fabric is uncovered, the building's priority should be reevaluated. Photo by CMEC, 2019.



Figure 1-4. Example of the house at 223 W Creek Street, which was considered a low priority during a 2002 survey. Subsequent rehabilitation work revealed historic fabric concealed by later additions, and the house's priority changed to High after it was restored. Photo by City of Fredericksburg

1.4.2.2. Planning the Project

Historic buildings are complicated systems with interdependent parts – all of which move and fluctuate depending on factors like the weather and the structural load. Careful planning is required to ensure that your project does not inadvertently damage your building. *Appendix F* includes a project planning checklist to be completed early in the project planning process. Factors considered in the checklist in *Appendix F* include:

- The property’s history
 - Associated architectural style and form
 - Changes to the building over time
 - Changes to the lot and surrounding lots over time
- The property’s condition
 - Structural problems
 - Materials deterioration
- Programmatic needs
 - The size of the building
 - Modern functional needs
- Logistics
 - Financing
 - Professional tradespeople needed
 - Project scheduling – including Certificate of Appropriateness review and approval

Understanding these interrelated factors can help property owners plan thoughtful and respectful projects that meet their needs with minimal alteration and disruption to their building’s historic fabric.

Early Planning and Consultation

The City of Fredericksburg highly encourages property owners to **communicate with the Historic Preservation Officer early in the project planning process**. The Historic Preservation Office offers free public resources and expertise that streamline the project planning process.

1.4.2.3. Applying for a Certificate of Appropriateness

After developing a clear concept for the proposed exterior project, the property owner must apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) prior to seeking a building permit. The goal of the COA is to document that the proposed project has considered these design guidelines and standards and responded to them to the greatest extent feasible. A sample COA application form is included in *Appendix F*; however, always check with the Historic Preservation Officer to ensure that you receive the most updated version of the COA application form.

Once submitted, the Historic Preservation Officer will review the COA application, requesting additional information or clarification as needed. The Historic Preservation Officer will review the COA application against these standards and guidelines, noting where the proposed project does or does not comply. The Historic Preservation Officer will prepare a recommendation for the Historic Review Board. The Historic Review Board will review the application, along with the Historic Preservation Officer’s notes, and vote on whether to issue the COA. The review process is depicted in figure 1-6 below. Note that some types of alterations also may require a building permit, while other types of alterations require a COA even if they don’t require a building permit. For applicable exterior work on landmarks or in the historic district, a building permit may not be issued until the Historic Review Board votes to issue a COA.

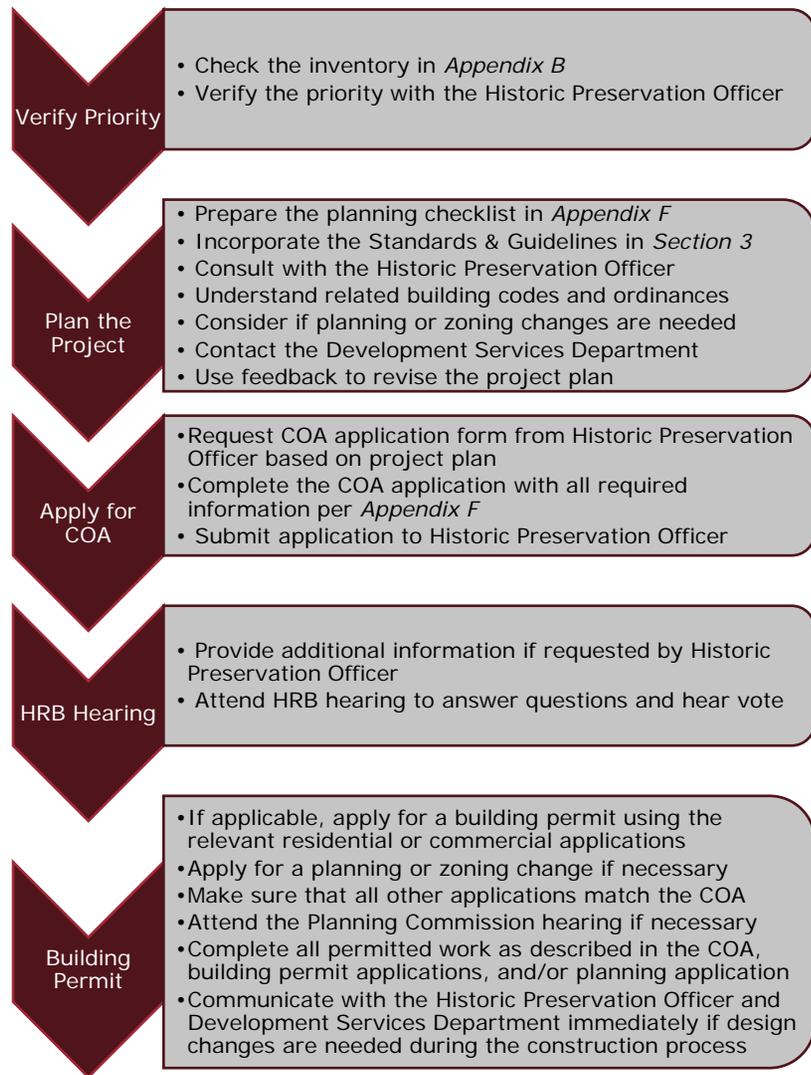


Figure 1-5. Flow chart depicting the recommended process for project planning and Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) review and approval.

1.4.2.4. Exceptions

In a limited number of exceptional circumstances, the Historic Review Board may vote to approve a COA application that meets the spirit of the *Secretary's Standards*, but does not precisely meet the letter of these standards and guidelines.

Exceptions to these Design Guidelines

The Historic Review Board may grant an exception to these design guidelines in approving a COA application that meets the spirit of the *Secretary's Standards*, based on one or more of the following factors:

- Life safety issues per current building codes (2015 International Building Code at the time of this publication), The International Existing Building Code does make exceptions for *Historic Buildings*,
- Basic health and sanitation codes and requirements,
- Energy efficiency,
- Watershed protection,
- Tree protection,
- Accessibility for persons with disabilities,
- Small or irregular lot size,
- Exceptional design, and
- Exceptional public purpose or function.

When the Historic Review Board grants an exception to these design guidelines based on one of the above listed factors, the HRB motion must identify which design guideline was excepted, which of the above listed factors substantiates the exception, and the evidence presented to the HRB that supports the HRB's exception to these design guidelines.

Exceptions to these Design Standards

The Historic Review Board may grant an exception to these design standards in approving a COA application that meets the spirit of the *Secretary's Standards*, based on one or more of the following factors:

- Life safety issues per current building codes (2015 International Building Code at the time of this publication) The International Existing Building Code does make exceptions for *Historic Buildings*,
- Basic health and sanitation codes and requirements,
- Accessibility for persons with disabilities,
- Small or irregular lot size, and
- Exceptional public purpose or function.

When the Historic Review Board grants an exception to these design standards based on one of the above listed factors, the HRB motion must identify which design standard was excepted, which of the above listed factors substantiates the exception, the evidence presented to the HRB that supports the HRB's exception to these design standards, and a finding by the HRB that that it was not feasible to meet the excepted standard as written.⁹



Figure 1-6. The National Museum of The Pacific War at 311 E. Austin Street is an example of an Exceptional Public purpose or function and design. Photo by Google Maps Oct 2019.

NOTES

¹ Lady Bird Johnson, "Foreword," in "With Heritage So Rich," National Trust for Historic Preservation (Washington, D.C.: Preservation Books, 1966), from *Preservation 50: Commemorating 50 Years of The National Historic Preservation Act*, accessed April 7, 2020, <http://preservation50.org/about/with-heritage-so-rich/>.

² "A History of The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties & Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings," Technical Preservation Services, National Park Service, accessed April 7, 2020, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/history-of-standards.htm>.

³ "Treatment of Historic Properties," Technical Preservation Services, National Park Service, accessed April 7, 2020, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>.

⁴ Wayne Bell, Roxanne Williamson, and Gary Hume, "Fredericksburg Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, Texas Historical Commission, Austin, October 10, 1970, from the Texas

Historical Commission, <https://atlas.thc.texas.gov/NR/pdfs/70000749/70000749.pdf>.

⁵ Peter Flagg Maxon, "Fredericksburg Historic District (revised)," National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, Texas Historical Commission, Austin, December 2, 1985, from the Texas Historical Commission, <https://atlas.thc.texas.gov/NR/pdfs/70000749/70000749.pdf>.

⁶ National Park Service, "How to Complete the National Register Registration Form," *National Register Bulletin 16A* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1997), 42, from the National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB16A-Complete.pdf>.

⁷ City of Fredericksburg, Ordinance No. 27-007, Article III, Section 23-55.

⁸ City of Fredericksburg, Ordinance No. 27-007, Article III, Section 23-55.

⁹ For examples of similar motions, see the minutes of the City of San Antonio Board of Adjustment, accessed January 11, 2021, [https://docsonline.sanantonio.gov/DSDDocsOnline/default.aspx?specific=Board%20of%20Adjustment%20\(BOA\)&document=Minutes%20](https://docsonline.sanantonio.gov/DSDDocsOnline/default.aspx?specific=Board%20of%20Adjustment%20(BOA)&document=Minutes%20).