

I. INTRODUCTION

These “**Design Guidelines in Key West’s Historic District**” are intended to preserve and protect the architectural environment and unique character of the historic neighborhoods of the Key West Historic District. **Key West has one of the most significant of Florida’s historic districts to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service.** The guidelines are intended to assist **property owners, architects, developers and the Historic Architecture Review Commission** (also known as HARC) in making appropriate decisions concerning renovation methods and materials in Key West’s historic districts. **Signs, kiosks, outbuildings, streetscapes, street furniture, murals, additions, and other new construction** planned within these historic planning zones are a primary concern of the guidelines. Understanding the guidelines and the architectural review will assure that projects affecting historic structures will contribute to the sense of place and time, as well as, the visual beauty of the historic district of Key West.



Any proposed rehabilitation or relocation of a designated historic structure shall follow the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Structures (*City of Key West Land Development Regulations, Chap III, article X: 3-10.3, p. X-13*). **All exterior work must have HARC approval whether or not a building permit is required. If a building permit is required, the applicant shall obtain HARC approval prior to the issuance of the permit.**

New construction, major alterations, additions, moving and demolition of structures are governed by these guidelines and reviewed for appropriateness by the HARC, since such major changes may drastically alter the nature of buildings and the neighborhood streetscape.

HARC approval MUST be secured on:

- Repairs to buildings
- Any painting and associated removal of existing paint
- Restoration or rehabilitation of buildings
- Additions to existing buildings
- New construction
- Fences, either new or replaced
- Alterations to streets, sidewalks, or street furnishings
- Installation of signs, awnings, benches or lighting



- Construction of swimming pools and/or decks
- Placement of temporary facilities such as vendor stands
- Miscellaneous structures (i.e. towers, etc.)
- Improvements of a right-of-way, public and private
- Exposed utilities
- Historic interior public spaces
- Interiors of all property individually listed on the National Register

The design guidelines pertain to buildings of all occupancy and construction types, which are categorized as located within the historic planning zones of the city. They apply to **permanent and temporary exterior construction** affecting structures listed on the local, state and national registers of historic architecture. They also apply to **infill construction, development or alterations to noncontributing structures, which may negatively impact architectural historic zones.** The exact boundaries of historical zoning districts are found on the official Key West zoning map.

The guidelines are based upon the foundation of the **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.** These national standards were implemented to prevent the loss of our historical architectural heritage and are the basis for establishing design guidelines for historic districts. The **Key West Land Development Regulations** also contain many provisions pertaining to historic structures and districts. Whether a structure is considered **contributing** or **noncontributing** is an important factor in the decision that HARC makes regarding the impact upon the building and its streetscape.

Contributing and Noncontributing Structures

Contributing buildings are more significant historically and architecturally and should be rehabilitated more carefully than noncontributing structures. However, **noncontributing buildings cannot be changed in ways which would detract from the integrity of the overall neighborhood, district or streetscape, and must be considered in conjunction with their location and relationship to nearby buildings.** The City Building Department maintains a copy of the site inventory of Key West's Historic properties. The buildings were surveyed in 1976 and then again in 1998 to evaluate and determine the contributing or noncontributing status of each building.

Taken by Monroe County Property Appraiser's Office circa 1965

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