



BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

# POLICY STATEMENT CHARLESTON STANDARDS

CITY OF CHARLESTON  
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(A clear vision and strong design principles will help guide the Board of Architectural Review in its decisions. Recognizing that Charleston is unique in its collection of historically and architecturally significant buildings, the standards below have been adapted from the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. These basic principles were created to help preserve the distinctive character of a historic building and its site, while allowing for reasonable change to meet new needs.

The Charleston Standards apply to historic buildings of all periods, styles, and types. They are intended to be applied in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility; they are not hard and fast rules, but rather are meant to serve as principles to assist in determining appropriate treatments for historic buildings.)

- 1. The historic character of a property should be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property may negatively impact the historic character and should be avoided.**
- 2. The buildings of Charleston provide a physical record of their time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, obscure that record and are not encouraged.**
- 3. Many of Charleston's buildings have evolved over time. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right should be retained and preserved as a part of its history.**
- 4. Charleston has a tradition of expert craftsmanship in even its simplest structures. Examples of craftsmanship such as distinctive materials, architectural features, finishes, and construction techniques should be protected.**
- 5. It is important to maintain the historic fabric of Charleston as much as possible; therefore, deteriorated historic features should be repaired rather than replaced. When deterioration is so severe that replacement is necessary, the new feature should match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Wherever possible, replacement of missing features should be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.**
- 6. Chemical or physical treatments should be matched to the period of the building on which they are used. They should be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Modern treatments that may cause damage to historic materials should not be used.**
- 7. Additions or exterior alterations to historic properties should be sympathetic to historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work should be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its setting. To respect the authenticity of the historic structure and its context and setting, the new alterations or addition should be clearly discernible from the old. The differentiation may or may not be stylistic, and may be as subtle as a change in building footprint, material, or other means.**
- 8. New construction should be sympathetic to the historic features that characterize its setting and context. To respect the significance of the historic context, the new work should respect the historic materials, features, size, scale, proportions, and massing of its setting.**
- 9. Additions, adjacent or related new construction, and modifications should be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its context and setting remain unimpaired.**