
F. Undertaking a Successful Preservation Project

Evaluate your building

Look closely at your building.

Consider a range of options that will be consistent with the suggestions shown at the back of this manual. Make notes about the historical background of your property, and gather photographs that may show the building in an earlier condition. Talk informally with neighboring property owners about successes and disappointments in renovation work they have undertaken, including trades people who performed good work on their building.

Set a Budget

Once you have a good idea of what your building should look like ideally, based on photographic evidence, try to decide what you can afford to spend. Don't feel that you have to do everything at once. You may want to accomplish work in phases. Keep in mind that there are several sources of

possible financial assistance that may be attractive. Speak with staff at the Community Development Department at City Hall. Federal tax incentives, accelerated depreciation, grants or tax credits may be available in addition to low interest rehabilitation loans.

Apply the Design Guidelines

The Chaska Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) is the local authority charged with administering the community's historic preservation program. Their main objective is to work cooperatively with property owners to preserve and enhance the historic character of buildings in the downtown commercial district. It is important to keep in mind that while this manual was developed to suggest renovation potential for selected properties in the downtown district, other properties may also qualify for preservation fund support, and the best way to verify this would be by discussing your plans with staff at the Community Development Department.

Take into account the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, especially relating to work that may have a permanent or irreversible effect on your building. Try to gather technical information about products and processes, and talk with capable contractors who have performed reputable work of the kind needed for your renovation project.