



Historic Hawai'i Foundation
Preservation Brief No. 3

EXTERIOR ADDITIONS TO A HISTORIC BUILDING
Secretary of the Interior Standard: Rehabilitation

Exterior Additions

Exterior additions can include anything from a new carport to a new bedroom or a new lanai. Though it is not ideal to alter the exterior of a historic structure, these types of projects can be accomplished while retaining the historic integrity of the structure. An addition should be considered only after the determination that the new use cannot be met by altering non-significant, or secondary, interior spaces. If the new use cannot be met in this way, then an attached addition may be an acceptable alternative if carefully planned.

Compatible Additions

The Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties: Rehabilitation contains two standards specifically regarding additions. They state that the exterior addition should not destroy historic materials, and should be removable in the future; and that the additions should be compatible, yet differentiated from the original. Those standards apply to all additions, and are accompanied by guidelines explaining how to follow the standards.

National Park Service's Technical Preservation Brief #14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings, Preservation Concerns discusses how the standards apply to different types of additions, and gives examples of good and bad additions. Creating an addition that is both compatible and differentiated from the historic structure can seem complicated, yet it can be accomplished and benefits the historical and functionality of a building. The overall goal is to keep the structures scale and massing; the new addition should overwhelm the original. If possible the new addition should be to the rear of the historic structure, minimizing its visual impact. It is important to remember that just because you have a historic structure, does not mean that it cannot be changed, but there are certain considerations which are detailed in the available guidelines.

Resources and More Information

Secretary of Interior Standards: Rehabilitation
<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/TPS/standguide/>

National Park Service Technical Preservation Brief #14
<http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/14-exterior-additions.htm>

Check out Historic Hawai'i Foundation's Resource Center for more information!
<http://historichawaii.org/resource-center-2/>

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Historic Hawai'i Foundation was established in 1974 to encourage the preservation of historic buildings, sites and communities on all the islands of Hawai'i. As the statewide leader for historic preservation, HHF works to preserve Hawai'i's unique architectural and cultural heritage and believes that historic preservation is an important element in the present and future quality of life, environmental sustainability and economic viability of the state.