

## TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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### RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARKS: REVIEW OF PROPOSED CHANGES

Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHLs) are properties judged to be historically and architecturally significant by the Texas Historical Commission (THC). Most RTHLs are marked with a medallion and plate. Some buildings with subject markers also have been designated RTHLs, as noted at the end of the inscription. The landmark status is a permanent designation that cannot be voluntarily removed.

The exterior appearance of RTHL buildings should retain historic architectural integrity after designation. If any exterior changes are desired—such as remodeling, additions, relocation, or demolition of the building—the owner must conform to the provision of the Texas Government Code, Chapter 442, Section 442.006 (f), which states that:

**A person may not damage the historical or architectural integrity of a structure the commission has designated as a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark without notifying the commission at least 60 days before the date on which the action causing the damage is to begin.** After receiving the notice, the commission may waive the waiting period or, if the commission determines that a longer period will enhance the chance for preservation, it may require an additional waiting period of not longer than 30 days. On the expiration of the time limits imposed by this section, the person may proceed, but must proceed not later than the 180<sup>th</sup> day after the date on which notice was given or the notice is considered to have expired.

Violation of this law is subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$50 nor more than \$1,000 for each day of violation. If appreciable changes are made to a landmark, either without THC review or following THC objection, the designation may be removed and return of the marker required.

To formally request review of proposed changes, the property owner or their authorized representative must submit a letter to the THC describing the overall scope of the proposed project. Accompanying documentation should include plans and specification, if available, and detailed photographs of areas in which work is to be performed. THC review of the proposed work is based on the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. Copies are available from our office, or may be found at [www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm).

The THC strongly encourages owners considering changes to their property to contact the Division of Architecture as early in the planning process as possible. By consulting with staff early, and providing project information and photographs of the project area, owners can avoid work that may be damaging or inappropriate for the historic property and ensure its continued landmark designation. In addition, THC staff is available to provide technical assistance. Since the Division of Architecture is involved in the review of hundreds of projects annually, many of the potential problems that an owner will face have been resolved at other properties. Do not hesitate to contact THC staff should you have concerns or questions.

The THC Official Texas Historical Marker Program, inaugurated in 1962, includes both the RTHL and subject marker programs. More than 15,000 markers now have been placed, including 3,600 RTHLs. For additional information on RTHL designation, please visit our website at [www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/recorded-texas-historic-landmarks](http://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/recorded-texas-historic-landmarks).

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