

PLANNING FOR REHABILITATION

Evaluate Your Building

Look closely at your building. It's often clear to see where changes have been made. Look at similar buildings along the street that may not have had major alterations. Look for historic photographs. Downtown area photographs may be found at the Northfield Historical Society, or the Minnesota Historical Society. Search through storage areas, basements, and attics for missing facade elements.

Set A Budget

Once you have a good idea what your building looked like, you will need to decide what you can afford to do about it. Don't feel that you have to do everything at once. While your plan should reflect an overall approach, you may want to complete the actual work in phases. Keep in mind that there are potential sources of assistance. Federal tax incentives, accelerated depreciation, or tax credits may also be available and should be explored as part of your budget planning. (See page 10)

Decide On An Approach

The previous section described six typical facade improvement options. Your project may fit into one of these categories or it may straddle categories. Let your budget and your building be your guides. Pay special attention to the impact of your plans on neighboring buildings and on the whole streetscape.

Apply the Design Guidelines

The Northfield Heritage Preservation Commission is responsible for preserving and enhancing the historic character of the downtown's Northfield Historic District and, in that capacity, provides design review for building improvement projects that impact the historic character of Northfield's downtown district.

The design guidelines in this manual cover most of the issues likely to arise in the course of facade remodeling. They are intended to illustrate the kinds of renovation approaches and details most likely to require Heritage Preservation Commission approval. The HPC and the City will be able to give additional guidance in special situations. Remember that the goal is to promote and to preserve the historic character of the downtown commercial district.

