

# INTRODUCTION

This new Design Guidelines Handbook has been written to reflect the current Historic Preservation Ordinance (No. 3554-02). The intention of this publication is to assist owners, builders, and architects in making sound and educated decisions related to the care and enhancement of historic properties in West Palm Beach. It will be a resource for historic property owners, the Historic Preservation Board, and the City's Preservation Planners through its suggestions and guidelines for rehabilitation, restoration, additions, and new construction.

Included is a brief history of the City to provide an understanding of the context of its historical resources and architectural development. Not only is this the foundation of a solid historical preservation program, it will also serve as framework to help evaluate what is important to preserve.

Brief descriptions of the architectural styles seen in this community are provided, and the discussion points out those features which give a particular building its character. While change is inevitable, it should not be of such magnitude that it reshapes the character of a district. These guidelines focus on individual features and elements that give character and interest to a building. Unsympathetic changes to individual features, such as windows, doors, and roofs can cause a building to lose its historic character and visual interest. Sometimes changes can be reversed, but often the loss is permanent and what once was an enhancement to a neighborhood may become an eyesore.

These guidelines should be viewed as having some flexibility as they are applied on a case-by-case basis. The guidelines will be reviewed from time to time, and adjusted as new issues and concerns arise in the historic districts, and as new technologies need to be addressed. It is hoped that the suggestions and guidelines offered in this publication will be helpful to all who are interested in preserving the tangible, architectural links to the past.

