



Criteria for Preservation Awards

May 21, 2026

Residential Preservation Award Criteria

The Residential Preservation Award recognizes exemplary stewardship of historic homes through thoughtful restoration, rehabilitation, and preservation efforts that enhance the character of Duluth's historic neighborhoods.

To qualify for a Preservation Award, a residential property should demonstrate significant restoration or rehabilitation work to the interior, exterior, or both. Projects should reflect high-quality craftsmanship, historically appropriate materials, and a positive impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

Eligibility Criteria

- The home must be at least 50 years old.
- Restoration and rehabilitation work should preserve the home's historic integrity, architectural character, and defining features while reflecting the era in which the home was originally built.
- Materials, finishes, craftsmanship, and replacement elements should closely match those historically appropriate to the home, with original architectural details repaired and retained whenever feasible.
- Modern improvements or additions are acceptable when they are sensitively integrated and compatible with the home's historic character, scale, materials, design, and surrounding neighborhood context.
- Restoration, rehabilitation, or renovation work should be substantially complete at the time of nomination and should positively contribute to neighborhood character and historic preservation efforts.
- Applicants should provide photographs and a brief description documenting the completed restoration or rehabilitation work.
- Alterations that significantly diminish the home's historic character or remove important architectural features may negatively affect eligibility.
- During the evaluation process, at least 75% of the review criteria must be rated as positive for the property to qualify for an award.

Letters of Recognition

A *Letter of Recognition* may be awarded to properties where restoration work is still in progress, or to projects that include historic preservation efforts but do not currently meet all criteria for a Preservation Award.



Commercial or Public Buildings

The Commercial or Public Building Preservation Award recognizes outstanding restoration, rehabilitation, and preservation efforts that protect and enhance historically significant commercial, civic, industrial, transportation, or public-use properties within the community.

To qualify for a Preservation Award, a property should demonstrate substantial restoration or rehabilitation work that preserves the historic integrity, architectural character, and public presence of the structure or site. Adaptive reuse projects are encouraged when historic features and character are thoughtfully retained.

Eligibility Criteria

- The property must be at least 50 years old and may include commercial, public, industrial, transportation, or other historically significant structures or sites, including bridges, boats, and trains.
- Restoration and rehabilitation work should preserve the property's historic integrity, architectural character, and defining features while reflecting the era in which it was originally constructed.
- Exterior restoration, particularly at street level and other public-facing areas, will be an important consideration in the evaluation process.
- Materials, craftsmanship, and replacement elements should be historically appropriate whenever feasible, with original architectural features retained and repaired whenever possible.
- Adaptive reuse, modernization, or additions are acceptable when they are compatible with the property's historic character, scale, materials, design, and surrounding environment.
- Restoration, rehabilitation, or renovation work should represent a substantial improvement to the property or a significant restoration effort and should be substantially complete at the time of nomination.
- Projects should positively contribute to the surrounding neighborhood, business district, or public environment.
- Applicants should provide photographs and a brief description documenting the completed work.
- Alterations that significantly diminish the property's historic character or remove important architectural features may negatively affect eligibility.
- During the evaluation process, at least 75% of the review criteria must be rated as positive for the property to qualify for an award.

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Adaptive Reuse

The Adaptive Reuse Award recognizes projects that successfully repurpose historic properties for new uses while retaining important elements of the property's historic character and identity.

Eligibility Criteria

- The property must be at least 50 years old.
- Adaptive reuse projects should retain significant portions of the original structure and preserve important historic or architectural characteristics whenever feasible.
- Eligible projects may include conversions between residential, commercial, industrial, or other uses that give historic properties a viable new purpose.
- Adaptive reuse projects may incorporate modern materials, design elements, updates, or substantial changes when they respect the property's overall historic character and presence.
- Restoration, rehabilitation, or renovation work should be substantially complete at the time of nomination and should positively contribute to the surrounding neighborhood or community environment.
- Applicants should provide photographs and a brief description documenting the completed project and its new use.
- During the evaluation process, at least 75% of the review criteria must be rated as positive for the property to qualify for an award.

Letters of Recognition

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Deadline for Nomination: April 15 annually

Nominate Online: <https://duluthpreservation.org/awards/nominate-property>

Email your Nomination: DuluthPreservationAlliance@gmail.com

