

Restoring Granite Steps Are First Phase of Repairs to Denver City and County Building

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The granite front steps of the Denver City and County Building will be in pristine condition when the inauguration ceremony for Michael Hancock, Denver's 45th mayor, is conducted there on July 18.

Courtesy of BRS

BRS is restoring the granite front steps of Denver's City and County Building.

But the project is not just a facelift for the cameras.

Masonry contractor Building Restoration Specialties Inc. (BRS) is restoring the existing stone steps, utilizing replacement granite where needed from another set of steps workers unearthed onsite. As part of the restoration process, BRS has removed the steps and is in process of installing a waterproof membrane to protect the basement vaults from water infiltration.

The steps are the first phase in the restoration of the Denver City and County Building, consisting primarily of repairs to the building's exterior stonework. The remainder of the project, funded by the Better Denver Bond Program approved by voters in 2007, is expected to be complete in October.

Besides completing the steps to meet the inaugural deadline, BRS also has begun cleaning the exterior stone and removing the deteriorated mortar. The mortar joints will be repointed to prevent leaks and damage, using a mortar custom mixed to match the formulation used in the original construction. "Using comparable materials is necessary to retain the historical integrity of the project," said BRS President Rhonda Maas. The Denver firm specializes in historically sensitive restorations.

BRS also is repairing and repolishing the decorative marble panels located at the top corners of the building's east and west elevations, preserving and restoring them to their original vibrant colors. Scaffolding has been erected at the roof ascending the clock tower so the tower stones and clock glass can be restored as well.

BRS is evaluating other maintenance and restoration items that need to be addressed while accessibility is available.

"Overall, the building is in excellent shape," says Maas. "Regular maintenance will keep it strong and protect a beautiful historical building that our children can be proud of."

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