

APPENDIX D

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The Secretary of the Interior is responsible for establishing standards for all programs under Departmental authority and for advising Federal agencies on the preservation of historic properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In partial fulfillment of this responsibility, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects have been developed to direct work undertaken on historic buildings.

Initially used by the Secretary of the Interior in determining the applicability of proposed project work on registered properties within the Historic Preservation Fund grant-in-aid program, the Standards for Historic Preservation Projects have received extensive testing over the years—more than 6,000 acquisition and development projects were approved for a variety of work treatments. In addition, the Standards have been used by Federal agencies in varying out their historic preservation responsibilities for properties in Federal ownership or control; and by State and local officials in review of both federal and nonfederal rehabilitation proposals. They have also been adopted by a number of historic district and planning commissions across the country.

The Standards for Rehabilitation (36 CFR 67) comprise that section of the overall historic preservation project standards addressing the most prevalent treatment today: Rehabilitation. "Rehabilitation" is defined as the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values.

The Standards for Rehabilitation are as follows:

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.
2. The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
3. All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
4. Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
5. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.
6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplication of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.
7. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible.

Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.

8. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by, or adjacent to any project.
9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment.
10. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be one in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

In the past several years, the most frequent use of the Secretary's "Standards for Rehabilitation" has been to determine if a rehabilitation project qualifies as a "certified rehabilitation" pursuant to the Tax Return Act of 1976, the Revenue Act of 1978, and the Economic Recovery Act of 1981, as amended. The Secretary is required by law to certify rehabilitations that are "consistent with the historic character of the structure or the district in which it is located." The Standards are used to evaluate whether the historic character of a building is preserved in the process of rehabilitation. Between 1976 and 1982, over 5,000 projects were reviewed and approved under the Preservation Tax Incentive program.

As stated in the definition the treatment "Rehabilitation" assumes that at least some repair or alteration of the historic building will need to take place in order to provide for an efficient contemporary use; however these repairs and alterations must not damage or destroy the materials and features—including their finishes—that are important in defining the building's historic character.

In terms of specific project work, preservation of the building and its historic character is based on the assumption that (1) the historic materials and features and their unique craftsmanship are of primary importance and that (2) in consequence they will be retained, protected, and repaired in the process of rehabilitation to the greatest extent possible, not removed and replaced with materials and features which appear to be historic, but which are-in fact-new.

To best achieve these preservation goals a two-part evaluation needs to be applied by qualified historic preservation professionals for each project as follows: first, a particular property's materials and features which are important in defining its historic character should be identified. Examples may include a building's walls, cornice, window sash and frames and roof; rooms, hallways, stairs, and mantels; or a site's walkways, fences, and gardens. The second part of the evaluation should consist of assessing the potential impact of the work necessary to make possible an efficient contemporary use. A basic assumption in this process is that the historic character of each property is unique and therefore proposed rehabilitation work will necessarily have a different effect on each property; in other words, what may be acceptable for one project may be unacceptable for another. However, the requirement set forth in the definition of "Rehabilitation" is always the same for every project: those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values must be preserved in the process of rehabilitation. To accomplish this, all ten of the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" must be met.

GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

The Guidelines were initially developed in 1977 to help property owners, developers, and Federal managers apply the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" during the project planning stage by providing general design and technical recommendations. Unlike the Standards, the Guidelines are not codified as program requirements. Together with the "Standards for Rehabilitation" they provide a model process for owners, developers, and federal agency managers to follow.

It should be noted at the outset that the Guidelines are intended to assist in applying the Standards to projects generally; consequently, they are not meant to give case-specific advice or address exceptions or rare instances. For example, they cannot tell an owner or developer which features of their own historic building are important in defining the historic character and must be preserved—although examples are provided in each section—or which features could be altered, if necessary, for the new use. This kind of careful case-by-case decision-making is best in the planning stage of the project. Such professionals include architects, architectural historians, historians, archeologists, and others who are skilled in the preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic properties.

The Guidelines pertain to historic of all sizes, materials, occupancy, and construction types; and apply to interior and exterior work as well as new exterior additions. Those approaches, treatments, and techniques that are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" are listed in the "Recommended" column on the left; those approaches, treatments, and techniques which could adversely affect a building's historic character are listed in the "Not Recommended" column on the right.

To provide clear and consistent guidance for owners, developers, and federal agency managers to follow, the "Recommended" courses of action in each section are listed in order of historic preservation concerns so that a rehabilitation project may be successfully planned and completed—one that, first, assures the preservation of a building's important or "character-defining" architectural materials and features and, second, makes possible an efficient contemporary use. Rehabilitation guidance in each section begins with protection with protection and maintenance, that work which should be maximized in every project to enhance overall preservation goals. Next, where some deterioration in present, repair of the building's historic materials and features is recommended. Finally, when deterioration is so extensive that repair is not possible, the most problematic area of work is considered: replacement of historic materials and features with new materials.

To further guide the owner and developer in planning a successful rehabilitation project, those complex design issues dealing with new use requirements such as alterations and additions are highlighted at the end of each section to underscore the need for particular sensitivity in these areas.

Identify, Retain, and Preserve

The guidance that is basic to the treatment of all historic buildings—identifying, retaining, and preserving the form and detailing of those architectural materials and features that are important in defining the historic character—is always listed first in the "Recommended" column. The parallel "Not Recommended" column lists the types of actions that are most apt to cause the diminution or even loss of the building's historic character. It should be remembered, however, that such loss of character is just as often caused by the cumulative effect of a series of actions that would seem to be minor interventions. Thus, the guidance in all of the "Not Recommended" columns must be viewed in that larger context, e.g., for the total impact on a historic building.

Protect and Maintain

After identifying those materials and features that are important and must be retained in the process of rehabilitation work, then protection and maintaining them are addressed. Protection generally involves the least degree of intervention and is preparatory to other work. For example, protection includes the maintenance of historic material through treatments such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and re-application of protective coatings; the cyclical cleaning of roof gutter systems; or installation of fencing, protective plywood, alarm systems and other temporary protective measures. Although a historic building will usually require more extensive work, an overall evaluation of its physical condition should always begin at this level.

Repair

Next, when the physical condition of character-defining materials and features warrants additional work repairing is recommended. Guidance for the repair of historic materials such as masonry, wood, architectural metals again begins with least degree of intervention possible such as patching, piecing-in, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing or upgrading them according to recognized preservation methods. Repairing also includes the limited replacement in kind—or with compatible substitute material—of extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features when there are surviving prototypes (for example, brackets, dentils, steps, plaster, or portions of slate or tile roofing). Although using the same kind of material is always the preferred option, substitute material is acceptable if the form and design as well as the substitute material itself convey the visual appearance of the remaining parts of the feature finish.

Replace

Following the repair in the hierarchy, guidance is provided for replacing an entire character-defining feature with new material because the level of deterioration or damage of materials precludes repair (for example, an exterior cornice; an interior staircase; or a complete porch or storefront). If the essential form and detailing are still evident so that the physical evidence can be used to re-establish the feature as an integral part of the rehabilitation project, then its replacement is appropriate. Like the guidance for repair, the preferred option is always replacement of the entire feature in kind, that is, with the same material. Because this approach may not always be technically or economically feasible, provisions are made to consider the use of a compatible substitute material.

It should be noted that, while the National Park Service guidelines recommend the replacement of an entire character-defining feature under certain well-defined circumstances, they never recommend removal and replacement with new material of a feature that—although damaged or deteriorated—could reasonably be repaired and thus preserved.

Alterations/ Additions to Historic Buildings

Some exterior and interior alterations to the historic buildings are generally needed to assure its continued use, but it is most important that such alterations do not radically change, obscure, or destroy character-defining spaces, materials, features, or finishes. Alterations may include providing additional parking space on an existing historic building site; cutting new entrances or windows on secondary elevations; inserting an additional floor; installing an entirely new mechanical system; or creating an atrium or light well. Alterations may also include the selective removal of buildings or other features of the environment of building site that are intrusive and therefore detract from the overall historic character.

The construction of an exterior addition to a historic building may seem to be essential for the new use, but it is emphasized in guidelines that such new additions should be avoided, if possible, and considered only after it is determined that those needs cannot be met by altering secondary, i.e., non character-defining interior spaces. If, after a thorough evaluation of interior solutions, an exterior addition is still judged to be the only viable alternative, it should be

designed and constructed to be clearly differentiated from the historic building and so that the character-defining features are not radically changed, obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Additions to historic buildings are referenced within specific sections of the guidelines such as Site, Roof, Structural Systems, etc., but are also considered in more detail in a separate section, NEW ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS.

Health and Safety Code Requirements; Energy Retrofitting

These sections of the rehabilitation guidance address work done to meet health and safety code requirements (for example, providing barrier-free access to historic buildings); or retrofitting measures of conserve energy (for example, installing solar collectors in an unobtrusive location on the site). Although this work is quite often an important aspect of rehabilitation projects, it is usually not part of the overall process of process of protecting or repairing character-defining features; rather, such work is assessed for its potential negative impact on the building's historic character. For this reason, particular care must be taken not to radically change, obscure, damage, or destroy character-defining materials or features in the process of rehabilitation work to meet code and energy requirements.

Specific information on rehabilitation and preservation technology may be obtained by writing to the National Park Service, at the addresses listed below:

Preservation Assistance Division
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Preservation Service Division
Southeast Regional Office
National Park Service
75 Spring St. SW., Room 1140
Atlanta, GA 30303

National Historic Preservation Programs
Western Regional Office
National Park Service
450 Golden Gate Ave.
Box 36063
San Francisco, CA 94102

Office of Cultural Programs
Mid-Atlantic Regional Office
National Park Service
143 S. Third St.
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Division of Cultural Resources
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
National Park Service
655 Parfet St.
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, CO 80225

Cultural Resources Division
Alaska Regional Office
National Park Service
2525 Gambell St.
Anchorage, AK 99503