

Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

Preservation is defined as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project. However, new exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment.

The Standards for Preservation require retention of the greatest amount of historic fabric along with the building's historic form.

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Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

The rehabilitation Standards acknowledge the need to alter or add to a historic building to meet continuing or new uses while retaining the building's historic character.

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Restoration is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

The Restoration Standards allow for the depiction of a building at a particular time in its history by preserving materials, features, finishes, and spaces from its period of significance and removing those from other periods.

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Reconstruction is defined as the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.

The Reconstruction Standards establish a limited framework for recreating a vanished or non-surviving building with new materials, primarily for interpretive purposes.

From the American Institute for Conservation (AIC)

Conservation encompasses all those actions taken toward the long-term preservation of cultural heritage. Activities include examination, documentation, treatment, and preventive care, supported by research and education.

The primary goal of conservation professionals, individuals with extensive training and special expertise, is the preservation of cultural property. Cultural property consists of individual objects, structures, or aggregate collections. It is material which has significance that may be artistic, historical, scientific, religious, or social, and it is an invaluable and irreplaceable legacy that must be preserved for future generations.

As defined by the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (2004)

Maintenance is routine, cyclical, non-destructive actions necessary to slow the deterioration of a historic place. It entails periodic inspection; routine, cyclical, non-destructive cleaning; and making minor repairs.

Staying on top of regular maintenance is the most cost effective method for caring for a historic building. Routine and preventive maintenance can help avoid costly interventions when building components have become damaged or fail.

As defined by the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (2004)

Deferred Maintenance is maintenance or repairs to fixed assets that were not performed as scheduled or in sequence, and are put off to a future period.

Emergency Maintenance is work that must be done immediately for health, safety or security reasons or that may result in the rapid deterioration of the structure or fabric if not done, such as roof repairs after a storm or repairing broken glass.

The Getty Conservation Institute

Preventive Conservation can be defined as any measure that prevents damage or reduces the potential for it. It focuses on collections rather than individual objects, nontreatment rather than treatment.

“When successfully implemented, preventive conservation is a philosophy for sustainable management that avoids capital interventions while mitigating the effects of active deterioration mechanisms on functional building components. **It necessitates that building components are in a stable condition before entering the preventive conservation system, meaning that a separate system must address deferred maintenance.**”

(Elizabeth Trumbull, *Building Organizational Capacity for Preventive Conservation*, 2018)