

Module 2

This is the script for Module 2 of OHP's eLearning course *Interpretation and Application of Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* available online at www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/eLearning.

1.1 Understanding the Four Treatments for Historic Properties - Module 2

Welcome to Module 2 of the California Office of Historic Preservation's training on the interpretation and application of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

Hello, my name is Timothy Brandt. I am a Senior Restoration Architect with the California State Office of Historic Preservation. I will be your guide through this module created for local preservation commissioners and others who want to learn how to interpret and apply the Four Treatments and specifically the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties.

By the end of this module you will have an understanding of the Four Treatments for Historic Properties.

1.2 How to Choose the Appropriate Treatment

So how do you choose the most appropriate treatment for work on a historic building?

Choosing one of the four treatments requires careful decision making and taking into account a number of other considerations, including:

- A building's historical significance
- Its physical condition prior to work
- The proposed use
- Any mandated code requirements that may impact the building

This module focuses in depth on the four treatments and how to select the appropriate Treatment for a variety of scopes of work.

In Module 1 we introduced The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as the general principles to govern work on historic resources, including Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction.

The Standards for each of these Treatments are relatively brief; however each of them is accompanied by lengthier Guidelines. The Guidelines provide more specific guidance on how to apply each specific Standard in the form of Recommended and Not Recommended actions.

Please note that much of this presentation is based on the guidance provided in the reference. To read more on the Four Treatments and their Standards and related Guidelines, click on the Resources tab at the top of this screen.

1.3 Preservation

So let's look at the Four Treatments, beginning with Preservation.

The National Park Service, or NPS, defines Preservation as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a historic property.

Work, including any preliminary measures to protect and stabilize a property, generally focuses on the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction.

The goal of Preservation is to retain a building's existing form, features, and detailing as they evolved over time.

This may be as simple as basic maintenance and repair or may involve preparing a historic structures report, undertaking laboratory testing such as paint and mortar analysis, and hiring conservators to perform sensitive work such as reconstituting interior finishes.

1.4 Preservation - Arrested Decay

Arrested decay is the Preservation Treatment used at Bodie State Historic Park. Buildings remain essentially as they were when the last residents left. To preserve the look of the town at the time it was abandoned, there are no commercial facilities at Bodie; however there is a bookstore and museum within the original Miners Union Hall building. Visitor services are placed outside the perimeter of the park so they do not intrude on the overall character of the town.

Preservation as a treatment emphasizes protection, maintenance, and repair while replacement is minimized. The options for replacement are limited because it is assumed at the outset that the building materials and character defining features are essentially intact and that more of the building's fabric has survived unchanged over time.

1.5 Question 1 of 6

Follow the instructions on the screen to select your answer. Click the next button to continue through the questions.

Retaining an original 19th century building and its early 20th century landscaping—is this scope of work appropriate under the Preservation Treatment?

Yes, by selecting Preservation as a treatment, all features would be retained and protected.

1.6 Question 2 of 6

Scraping, sanding, and repainting historic windows—is this scope of work appropriate?

Yes, basic maintenance and repair is appropriate work under Preservation.

1.7 Question 3 of 6

Constructing a new addition to accommodate visitor services and keeping the new use out of the preserved house—is this scope of work appropriate?

No, new exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment (Preservation).

1.8 Question 4 of 6

Retaining all three phases of a building development, including its original 1912 configuration, an early 1920's addition, and a 1950's addition—is this scope of work appropriate?

Yes, if Preservation is the treatment selected, all three phases are part of the history of the building and should be retained.

1.9 Question 5 of 6

Installing air-conditioning—is this scope of work appropriate?

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 care must be taken not to obscure, damage, or destroy character defining materials or features in the process of undertaking work to meet code and energy requirements.

1.10 Question 6 of 6

Installing new gypsum board ceilings to replace plaster ceilings that have been failing—is this scope of work appropriate?

No. Deteriorated portions of a historic building may need to be protected through preliminary stabilization measure until additional work can be undertaken. In this case, the stabilization of any loose plaster should occur immediately until the reason for the failure is determined and a repair solution identified and undertaken. In no case should the plaster be allowed to continue to deteriorate. If it is determined that the plaster needs to be replaced the preferred treatment would be to replace the original feature with in-kind plaster.

1.11 Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is “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.”

In Rehabilitation, historic building materials and character defining features are protected and maintained as they are in the Preservation treatment; however, an assumption is made prior to work that existing historic fabric has become damaged or deteriorated over time and as a result, more repair and replacement will be required. Thus, latitude is given in the Rehabilitation treatment to replace extensively deteriorate, damaged, or missing features using either traditional or substitute materials.

The goal of Rehabilitation is to encourage the continued use and repair of a historic building while allowing appropriate alterations to ensure their contemporary use. This includes providing for accessibility.

Only Rehabilitation acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character.

1.12 Rehabilitation Is Flexible

Rehabilitation is the most flexible of all the treatments and would be the appropriate treatment when considering adaptive reuse projects such as the conversion of former office buildings into apartments, warehouses into offices and retail, or industrial buildings into commercial space.

Here we see the Railway Express Agency building in Sacramento that was adaptably reused as retail and office space.

The rehabilitation treatment allowed for flexibility in the interior rebuilding due to the extremely deteriorated shell condition and collapse of the roof structure. Work included a seismic retrofit, all new services, and reconfiguration of the interior; all while maintaining and rehabilitating the character defining features of the building.

1.13 Question 1 of 7

Rehabilitation can encompass the past, present and future.

Retaining the 1905 exterior appearance of a building as well as a significant 1940's public entrance and elevator lobby—is this scope of work appropriate under the goal of the Rehabilitation Treatment?

Yes, changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved when Rehabilitation is the selected treatment.

1.14 Question 2 of 7

Thorough cleaning of a building exterior is always a good thing as part of any project. Is this scope of work appropriate?

Removing the patina of historic materials is never a good thing, and the patina may actually be a protective coating on some metals, such as bronze or copper, as well as a significant historic finish. Any cleaning should use the gentlest and least abrasive means possible.

1.15 Question 3 of 7

Removing deteriorated wood siding and replacing it with new stucco—is this scope of work appropriate?

Repair versus replacement is always emphasized by the Rehabilitation Standards. Only when a feature is too severely deteriorated and beyond repair should replacement be considered, and then, preferably in-kind. This involves the new feature matching the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. In this case, the replacement of one cladding with another type of cladding is not an acceptable treatment under Rehabilitation.

1.16 Question 4 of 7

Adding a new stair and elevator tower on a non-visible rear elevation—is this scope of work appropriate?

While new additions to a property are possible to serve the new use, the building's distinctive materials, features, and spaces must still be preserved. The new design must also be compatible but differentiated from the original building. We will talk more about compatibility in Module 3.

However, exterior additions should be considered only after it is determined that needs can't be met by altering secondary and/or non-character defining spaces.

1.17 Question 5 of 7

Installing solar panels on a highly visible roof surface—is this scope of work appropriate?

Consider alternatives such as placing solar panels on non-visible roof areas or by placing them on the ground in an inconspicuous location. You may also want to consider buying shares of a solar farm, where such an option is available, which will provide an economic benefit while avoiding any visual impact to a historic property.

1.18 Question 6 of 7

Installing new exposed ducts as part of a new mechanical system—is this scope of work appropriate?

Generally, if original systems and services in the historic building were not visible or if they were not incorporated into the original construction, any new systems and services should be invisible to the extent possible, and in no case adversely impact any historic character defining features, spaces, or materials. An exception to this approach may be an industrial or utilitarian setting where exposed systems may be appropriate if designed to be compatible with the vernacular context in which they are placed.

1.19 Question 7 of 7

The color of paint chosen is not important because rehabilitation allow for flexibility. Is this scope of work appropriate?

Not always true. The material or finish color of a building may be part of the character defining features of the building and a significant part of the building's exterior appearance. To answer this question you need to assess whether color is an important feature of the building's history.

1.20 Restoration

Restoration is “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.”

Rather than maintaining and preserving a building as it has evolved over time, the goal of Restoration is to return a building to its appearance during a particular period in time.

Once you have selected the period of restoration you need to develop a work plan for the restoration. What are some of the important aspects of this plan? Begin by identifying those materials and features from the restoration period based on thorough historical research. And then, maintain, protect, and repair those identified features.

The use of the restoration treatment may require removing features from other periods in a building's history and reconstructing missing features from the restoration period.

For example, as part of the adaptive reuse of this building at Fort Baker in Marin County, a later addition front porch was removed and the original front porch was constructed based on historical documentation. As a result, the new porch restored the front appearance of the building to the property's period of significance.

1.21 Question 1 of 6

Removing a later addition that is outside the property's period of significance and restoring a house to its original appearance. Is this scope of work appropriate under the goal of the Restoration Treatment?

Establishing and selecting a restoration period should be your first step in guiding decisions made on the project using the Restoration Treatment. Typically, the period deemed the most significant to the building's interpretation should be used to guide the work, which may mean removing later additions.

1.22 Question 2 of 6

Adding architectural detail to make a plain building look more "period" or adding features from other buildings of the period to better relate the building to its context—is this scope of work appropriate?

Combining features that never existed together historically can create a false sense of history and should be avoided.

1.23 Question 3 of 6

Replacing a missing brick chimney, closing a non-original window opening, and seismically reinforcing the original foundation to restore a wood frame bungalow to its 1907 period of significance—is this scope of work appropriate?

Yes, based on the period selected it would be appropriate to retain and repair materials from the most significant time in a property's history, remove features from other periods, and recreate non-surviving features.

1.24 Question 4 of 6

Rebuilding a missing cast stone cornice with a glass fiber reinforced concrete product—is this scope of work appropriate?

The recreation of missing features from the restoration period should be based on documentary and physical evidence, using traditional materials such as the original material or compatible substitute materials such as a glass fiber reinforced concrete product.

1.25 Question 5 of 6

Constructing a porch shown on original construction drawings but never built—is this scope of work appropriate?

No, contemporary alterations and additions or designs that were never executed historically are not appropriate under Restoration.

1.26 Question 6 of 6

Installing exposed fire sprinkler lines and mechanical ducts because they are technically reversible—is this scope of work appropriate?

Although energy efficiency, accessibility and code considerations are often a necessary part of restoration projects, it is usually not part of the overall process of protecting, stabilizing, conserving, or repairing features from the restoration period; rather, such work is assessed for its potential negative impact on the building's historic appearance. Any new systems and services undertaken should not obscure, damage, or destroy historic features.

1.27 Reconstruction

Reconstruction is “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 goal is to create a new building as it appeared at a particular, and most significant, time in its history. Or, to recreate something from the past that no longer exists.

It should be noted that while Restoration focuses on restoring or recreating building features, Reconstruction provides the guidance necessary to recreate an entire non-surviving building or structure with new material.

1.28 Reconstruction

In Reconstruction there is far less extant historic material prior to treatment, and in some cases nothing visible.

Sutter's Fort in Sacramento is a reconstruction of an original fort built in 1839. However by 1851, Gold Rush vandals had destroyed all but the central two-story building.

Between 1891 and 1893 The Native Sons of the Golden West reconstructed the fort and then donated it to the State of California. Sutter's Fort became part of the State Parks system in 1947. Today the Fort reflects its 1846 appearance and stands as the oldest reconstructed fort in the United States.

Because of the potential for historical error in the absence of sound physical evidence, this treatment can be justified only rarely and, thus, is the least frequently undertaken. Documentation requirements prior to and following the work are very stringent. Measures should be taken to preserve extant historic surface and subsurface materials. Finally, the reconstructed building must be clearly identified as a contemporary recreation.

1.29 Question 1 of 6

Installing new garden paths, planting beds, and perimeter fencing based on archeological documentation—is this scope of work appropriate under the goal of the Reconstruction Treatment?

Yes, the goal of physical research such as archeology is to identify the features of the building and site essential to an accurate recreation, while leaving those archeological resources that are not essential, undisturbed. Any remaining historic materials and features, such as remnants of a foundation or chimney and site features such as a walkway or path, should be retained, when possible. Both historic and new material should be carefully documented to guide future research and treatment.

1.30 Question 2 of 6

Reconstructing a building to reflect two significant and equally important periods of history—is this scope of work appropriate?

No, only one period of significance is generally identified; a building as it evolved is rarely recreated.

1.31 Question 3 of 6

Reconstructing a building based on a historic painting of the property—is this scope of work appropriate?

A painting may contain a certain amount of artistic license and may not accurately represent the building at any time in its history. Only a building whose original design can be documented as having been built should be considered for reconstruction. Justifying a reconstruction requires detailed physical and documentary evidence to minimize or eliminate conjecture and ensure that the reconstruction is as accurate as possible.

1.32 Question 4 of 6

Incorporating new structural and mechanical systems not original to the building as part of its reconstruction—is this scope of work appropriate?

The use of contemporary materials and technology for non-visible features of the building, such as interior structural components or mechanical systems, is acceptable under Reconstruction. However, new systems and services should be concealed to the extent possible and not destroy any extant historic features and materials or obscure reconstructed features. New systems such as the vertical runs of ducts, pipes, and cables should be installed in closets, service rooms and wall cavities or in the least intrusive way possible.

1.33 Question 5 of 6

Reconstructing a building based on historic documentation but locating it on a new site—is this scope of work appropriate?

No, reconstructing a building on a site other than its historic location would not be an accurate reconstruction of the building or property.

1.34 Question 6 of 6

Installing identifiable dates on all new work so that the average visitor is aware of the reconstruction is ok because everything has been recreated--is this scope of work appropriate?

While new construction must be clearly identifiable as a contemporary recreation, it can be done in subtle ways so as to not overpower the sense of place being conveyed. This could be done through an explanatory brochure or exhibit, or the select placement of signs to identify the building as a contemporary recreation.

1.35 Four Treatments Quiz

Follow the instructions on the screen to select your answer. [This exercise asks the learner to match each of the four treatments, Restoration, Rehabilitation, Preservation, and Reconstruction with its definition.]

Emphasizes the retention of materials from the most significant time in a property's history.

Establishes limited opportunities to re-create a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object in all new materials.

Focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property's form as it has evolved over time.

Acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character.

1.36 Thank you

This concludes Module 2 of the three modules contained in this course about the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

For additional information and guidance on a number of historic preservation issues, as well as all of the reference materials cited in this module, click on the "Resources" tab at the top of the screen. This will direct you to an OHP web page with a listing of, and links to a variety of related reference materials.