



## Historic Preservation Tax Credit Qualifying Expenses

The cost of qualified work (which can include interior or exterior preservation, restoration and rehabilitation work) on landmark structures may qualify for the historic preservation tax credit. Cultural Resources staff must review the *full scope* of proposed work, and will certify those work items that meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (*see next page*) as qualifying for the tax credit.

### **Key questions staff will use in reviewing a proposed rehabilitation project are:**

- Does any part of the *full scope* of work compromise the integrity of the historic structure?
- Does the work impact historically significant features?
- Is the work reversible?
- Does the complete project follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards?

*Staff is available to assist applicants to explore treatment alternatives to ensure that work meets the Standards for Rehabilitation and can receive the maximum potential tax credit.*

The list below includes common work items that may qualify for the historic preservation tax credit. This list is not exhaustive; applicants should contact the Cultural Resources Division early in project planning to discuss the scope of work.

### **Potential Qualifying Work and Expenses**

- In-kind repairs to original features, such as doors, windows, railing, porch decking, wood siding, trim, plaster, etc.
- In-kind replacement of deteriorated original features
- Reversing modern treatments to restore a historic character-defining feature (e.g. removing vinyl siding to restore original wood siding, or removing carpeting and refinishing original wood floors)
- Structural repairs
- Roof repair/replacement
- Chimney repair and lining
- Storm windows or doors to protect original features
- Masonry repointing
- Life-safety improvements (e.g. required sprinkler systems, lead paint remediation, etc.) and ADA-required improvements
- Plumbing/electrical/mechanical work (when required to bring up to current code)
- New architecturally-compatible infill construction (within a County Landmark Historic District only)
- Architectural/Engineering/Archeological fees related to qualifying work

### **Non-Qualifying Work and Expenses**

- remodeling work, including upgrades or modernization of functioning systems or fixtures
- replacing historic features with modern materials (e.g. vinyl siding or windows or modern doors)
- appliances
- landscaping, sidewalks, patios, decks, driveways, fences
- tool/equipment purchases
- work on non-residential outbuildings on a residential property
- interior décor
- permit fees

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### *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:*

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

*Source: US Department of the Interior, Technical Preservation Services  
(<http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/treatment-rehabilitation.htm>)*