

# Commercial Property Renovation

Providing historic property protection and development services to the City of Spokane and Spokane County since 1979



The mission of the preservation program is to identify and facilitate the preservation of significant properties over fifty years old, thereby recycling existing structures at a savings to the community and enhancing our quality of life.

## **Steps to Commercial Property Renovation Using Historic Preservation Incentives**

### **Step 1: Meet with Historic Preservation staff.**

Staff can help you plan the phases of your project and help insure that you meet the criteria. You can also access information at [www.historicspokane.org](http://www.historicspokane.org) and at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

### **Step 2: List your property on the Spokane and National Registers.**

Local: Typically, a consultant is hired to prepare the application. The cost varies from \$1,000 to \$2,000, depending on the complexity of the application. City fee processing fee of \$100 for a commercial building, plus recording fee. *See forms: Spokane Register Nomination, National Register Nomination.*

Listing in the registers requires a agreement by the owner to follow federal rehabilitation standards when renovating the building. This is a commitment to keep the building looking pretty much like it did originally on the outside, while updating the interior. *See form: Management Agreement.*

National: Typically, a consultant is hired to prepare the application. The cost varies from \$1,000 to \$2,000, depending on the complexity of the application. No federal fees for application. No Management Agreement required. Note: most

downtown properties are already listed on the National Register—check first!

### **Step 3: Design Review.**

Local: Submit your rehabilitation proposal to the Spokane Historic Landmarks Commission for approval. Staff review fee; \$25. Commission review fee of \$75. *See form: Certificate of Appropriateness application.* Work done without a Certificate of Appropriateness fee; \$150. Bonus: Submit a letter of intent to file for federal incentives, and local review and fees will be waived.

National: Fill out Part II and submit to the State Historic Preservation Architect for Review. *See form: Part II.*

### **Step 4: Code Relief.**

Local only: Apply to the Building Department for relief from new code requirements. No fee.

### **Step 5: Apply for Incentives**

Local Special Valuation: Apply for Special Valuation incentive through Spokane County Assessor. Costs can be included if expended 24 months prior to the application month. Must have spent 25% of assessed value to qualify. Commercial fee based upon rehab expenditure. Additional documentation includes before and after photographs, cost breakdown, and proof of payment (receipts, spreadsheet, canceled checks, etc.). *See*

*form: Special Valuation application and Special Valuation checklist.*

**Local Façade Easement:** Apply to the City of Spokane for the calendar year in which you intend to take the easement. Then, take an income tax deduction as if you made a charitable donation of the amount of the easement. Amount of easement is determined by an appraisal of the façade. *See form: Façade Easement.*

**National:** Take federal tax credit. Must have spent 100% of adjusted base value to qualify. Federal fees apply. *See form: IRS Forms*

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### **Forms**

[Spokane Register of Historic Places nomination](#)  
[National Register of Historic Places nomination](#)  
[Management Agreement](#)  
[Certificate of Appropriateness](#)

### **Other Informative Links**

[Area Consultants](#)  
[House Research Guide](#)  
[Secretary of the Interior Guidelines](#)  
[Preservation Briefs](#)

### **Contact Information**

#### **Spokane City-County Historic Preservation Office**

Third Floor, City Hall  
808 West Spokane Falls Boulevard  
Spokane, WA 99201  
Phone: (509) 625-6543  
FAX: (509) 625-6013  
Web Page: <http://www.historicspokane.org>  
E-mail: [kgriffin@spokanecity.org](mailto:kgriffin@spokanecity.org)

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

The Standards (Department of Interior regulations, 36 CFR 67) pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior, related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
3. Each property shall 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 architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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 or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

