

3.2 Health and Safety Code Requirements

As a part of the new use, it is often necessary to make modifications to a historic building so that it can comply with current health, safety and code requirements. Such work needs to be carefully planned and undertaken so that it does not result in a loss of character-defining spaces, features, and finishes.

Recommended

- ✓ Identifying the historic building's character-defining spaces, features, and finishes so that code-required work will not result in their damage or loss.
- ✓ Working with local code officials to investigate alternative life safety measures or variances available under some codes so that alterations and additions to historic buildings can be avoided.
- ✓ Upgrading historic stairways and elevators to meet health and safety codes in a manner that assures their preservation,
- ✓ i.e., so that they are not damaged or obscured.
- ✓ Installing sensitively designed fire suppression systems, such as a sprinkler system.
- ✓ Adding a new stairway or elevator to meet health and safety codes in a manner that preserves adjacent character-defining features.
- ✓ Placing a code-required stairway or elevator that cannot be located within the historic building in a new exterior addition. Such an addition should be located at the rear of a building or on an inconspicuous side; and its size and scale limited in relationship to the historic building.

Not Recommended

- ❑ Altering, damaging, or destroying character-defining spaces, features, and finishes while making modifications to a building or site to comply with safety codes.
- ❑ Making changes to historic buildings without first seeking alternatives to code requirements.
- ❑ Installing permanent ramps that damage or diminish character defining features.
- ❑ Reinforcing a historic building using measures that damage or destroy character-defining structural or other features.
- ❑ Covering character-defining wood features with fire-resistant sheathing which results in altering their visual appearance.
- ❑ Using fire-retardant coatings if they damage or obscure character defining features.