



MODULE 06

Preservation Toolkit

Working with the Right Preservation Professionals



There are few decisions that will be as critical to the success of your project as finding the right team to help you complete it. Oregon has thousands of architects, contractors, and engineers, but only a few have the skills and experience to creatively solve the unique issues of a historic rehabilitation. Getting the wrong advice, or choosing the wrong architect or contractor, can easily cripple a project before it even starts. A team with the right historic preservation experience, working for you, will help wade through design questions, code challenges, and craft a cost-effective, buildable project that supports your ultimate success.

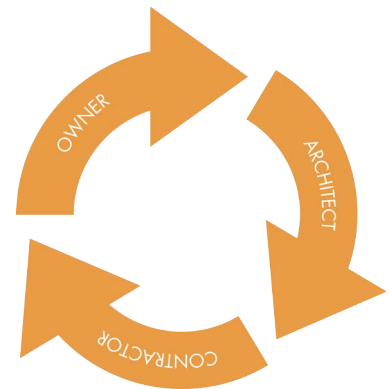
No matter how skilled the podiatrist, you wouldn't go to them to cure a heart problem. Don't go to an architect or contractor who specializes in new construction when planning a historic rehab.

What Makes Up a Preservation Project Team?

Be it for a historic theater, warehouse, or barn, every rehab project team includes three core members: the owner, the architect/designer, and the contractor. Depending on the complexity of the work and the project's goals, additional professionals such as a preservation consultant, structural engineer, subcontractors, and craftspeople may also be needed. Putting your team together early and maintaining coordination and communication during project planning is critical.

The Role of the Architect

Typically, your architect will lead the discussion on potential re-use options, design considerations, provide rehabilitation illustrations, have an understanding of rehabilitation costs, zoning and building code issues, and the knowledge to assess the building's current condition and make baseline recommendations as to the types of upgrade and repair that will be needed to put it into the proposed use. An architect typically serves as the owner's point of contact and primary advocate. He or she will work with you to ensure your goals are being addressed both before and during construction.



Once you find your architect, or other design professional, they can help you find the right contractor, engineer, and other preservation professionals you'll need. Typically, their recommendations are based on past experience. If you know of specific contractors you'd like to recommend who are outside of the architect's network, suggest them early on in the process. Putting your team together early, and having them involved from the outset, saves you both time and money.

The Role of the Contractor

The general contractor will play an equally important role in your project and the complexity of the restoration should guide their selection. Whereas not all capable contractors will have directly relevant experience, such as theater rehabilitation, they should, at a minimum, be familiar with the challenges of working on historic properties. The contractor is responsible for determining the construction budget, schedule, and performing the work. Having the contractor involved early also provides feedback on the impact of design choices and helps to assess construction costs associated with them. A contractor can also provide guidance on whether or not your project could be phased over time to spread out costs.



Oswego IronWorks arch reconstruction, Lake Oswego

A general contractor, like the architect, should have a good network of sub-contractors experienced in historic rehabilitation. These specialties may include electrical, fire protection, and HVAC. Restoration of historic elements such as masonry, interior finishes, woodwork, windows, or light fixtures may require the skills of various specialized tradespeople.

Other Preservation Professionals

Every project is different. In some cases, even before hiring an architect, it may make sense to engage a historic preservation consultant to provide advice on how to approach your rehabilitation project and help you navigate preservation laws and ordinances, assist with listing your resource in the National Register of Historic Places, or evaluating whether you can take advantage of historic tax credits. Preservation consultants can also help you select other professionals, including the architect and contractor, based on their own experience with similar projects. The right preservation specialist could bolster the knowledge of the architect and contractor team members, and help assure that your resource's historic integrity is retained through its rehabilitation.

Additional professionals needed will be identified by your core team. If your building is constructed of unreinforced masonry (URM) an important specialist is a structural engineer. Most jurisdictions prioritize life safety as a base line requirement for rehabilitation or reuse of existing structures. Upgrades to the structural system, whether for seismic retrofitting or to create additional capacity for the new use, can have major impacts on the design and project costs. Like the core

team members, the structural engineer should also have experience working with older structures. Structural engineers will first conduct a structural condition assessment, explore rehabilitation options and concepts based on the resource's condition and the proposed use, and evaluate methods of upgrade to meet building codes and ordinances related to life safety needs.

In certain cases such as theaters or large specialized commercial uses, conducting a market analysis to determine the demand and revenue potential can be central to creating a sound business plan that attracts funding. Consulting firms that specialize in this type of study can be a worthwhile investment.

The right team is key to success



Preservation is a team sport! Assembling the right professionals, including the architect and contractor, and perhaps a preservation consultant, engineer and others, is truly the key to successfully completing your project. Ask around to find the right people – people who have experience with similar projects, people that you want to work with, and people who can work well with each other throughout the entire process. Find people you can rely upon, and do!

These two resources will provide you with list of preservation professionals with historic experience throughout the State of Oregon.

- Restore Oregon's Resource Directory www.restoreoregon.org/resource-directory
- Oregon State Historic Preservation Office list of consultants and contractors www.oregon.gov/oprd/HCD/pages/publications.aspx

== If Historic Places Matter to You, Join Restore Oregon! ==



Since 1977 Restore Oregon has worked to preserve, reuse, and pass forward the historic homes and buildings, bridges and barns, churches and Main Streets that make Oregon, Oregon.

As a nonprofit, our ability to advocate, deliver programs, and produce materials like the Preservation Toolkit depends on the support of people like you. We invite you to stand up for the historic places that matter to you and become a member by visiting us at restoreoregon.org/join.

Thank you!



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