

# CHAPTER 11

## HISTORIC BUILDINGS

### SECTION 1101 GENERAL

**1101.1 Scope.** It is the intent of this chapter to provide means for the preservation of historic buildings. Historical buildings shall comply with the provisions of this chapter relating to their *repair, alteration, relocation and change of occupancy*.

**1101.2 Report.** The code official shall be permitted to require that a historic building undergoing repair, alteration, or change of occupancy be investigated and evaluated by an RDP or other qualified person or agency as a condition of determining compliance with this code.

**1101.3 Special occupancy exceptions—museums.** When a building in Group R-3 is also used for Group A, B, or M purposes such as museum tours, exhibits, and other public assembly activities, or for museums less than 3,000 square feet (279 m<sup>2</sup>), the *code official* may determine that the occupancy is Group B when life-safety conditions can be demonstrated in accordance with Section 1101.2. Adequate means of egress in such buildings, which may include a means of maintaining doors in an open position to permit egress, a limit on building occupancy to an occupant load permitted by the means of egress capacity, a limit on occupancy of certain areas or floors, or supervision by a person knowledgeable in the emergency exiting procedures, shall be provided.

**1101.4 Flood hazard areas.** In flood hazard areas, if all proposed work, including repairs, work required because of a *change of occupancy*, and alterations, constitutes *substantial improvement*, then the *existing building* shall comply with Section 1612 of the *International Building Code*.

**Exception:** If an *historic building* will continue to be an *historic building* after the proposed work is completed, then the proposed work is not considered a *substantial improvement*. For the purposes of this exception, an *historic building* is:

1. Listed or preliminarily determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places;
2. Determined by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Interior to contribute to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined to qualify as a historic district; or
3. Designated as historic under a state or local historic preservation program that is approved by the Department of Interior.

### SECTION 1102 REPAIRS

**1102.1 General.** Repairs to any portion of an *historic building* or structure shall be permitted with original or like materials and original methods of construction, subject to the provisions of this chapter.

**1102.2 Dangerous buildings.** When an *historic building* is determined to be *dangerous*, no work shall be required except as necessary to correct identified unsafe conditions.

**1102.3 Relocated buildings.** Foundations of relocated historic buildings and structures shall comply with the *International Building Code*. Relocated historic buildings shall otherwise be considered an *historic building* for the purposes of this code. Relocated historic buildings and structures shall be sited so that exterior wall and opening requirements comply with the *International Building Code* or with the compliance alternatives of this code.

**1102.4 Chapter 5 compliance.** Historic buildings undergoing repairs shall comply with all of the applicable requirements of Chapter 5, except as specifically permitted in this chapter.

**1102.5 Replacement.** Replacement of existing or missing features using original materials shall be permitted. Partial replacement for repairs that match the original in configuration, height, and size shall be permitted. Such replacements shall not be required to meet the materials and methods requirements of Section 501.2.

**Exception:** Replacement glazing in hazardous locations shall comply with the safety glazing requirements of Chapter 24 of the *International Building Code*.

### SECTION 1103 FIRE SAFETY

**1103.1 Scope.** Historic buildings undergoing alterations, changes of occupancy, or that are moved shall comply with Section 1103.

**1103.2 General.** Every *historic building* that does not conform to the construction requirements specified in this code for the occupancy or use and that constitutes a distinct fire hazard as defined herein shall be provided with an approved automatic fire-extinguishing system as determined appropriate by the *code official*. However, an automatic fire-extinguishing system shall not be used to substitute for, or act as an alternative to, the required number of exits from any facility.

**1103.3 Means of egress.** Existing door openings and corridor and stairway widths less than those specified elsewhere in this code may be approved, provided that, in the opinion of the *code official*, there is sufficient width and height for a person to pass through the opening or traverse the means of egress. When approved by the *code official*, the front or main exit doors need not swing in the direction of the path of exit travel, provided that other approved means of egress having sufficient capacity to serve the total occupant load are provided.

**1103.4 Transoms.** In fully sprinklered buildings of Group R-1, R-2 or R-3 occupancy, existing transoms in corridors and other fire-resistance-rated walls may be maintained if fixed in the closed position. A sprinkler shall be installed on each side of the transom.

**1103.5 Interior finishes.** The existing finishes of walls and ceilings shall be accepted when it is demonstrated that they are the historic finishes.

**1103.6 Stairway enclosure.** In buildings of three stories or less, exit enclosure construction shall limit the spread of smoke by the use of tight-fitting doors and solid elements. Such elements are not required to have a fire-resistance rating.

**1103.7 One-hour fire-resistant assemblies.** Where 1-hour fire-resistance-rated construction is required by these provisions, it need not be provided, regardless of construction or occupancy, where the existing wall and ceiling finish is wood or metal lath and plaster.

**1103.8 Glazing in fire-resistance-rated systems.** Historic glazing materials are permitted in interior walls required to have a 1-hour fire-resistance rating where the opening is provided with approved smoke seals and the area affected is provided with an automatic sprinkler system.

**1103.9 Stairway railings.** Grand stairways shall be accepted without complying with the handrail and guard requirements. Existing handrails and guards at all stairs shall be permitted to remain, provided they are not structurally *dangerous*.

**1103.10 Guards.** Guards shall comply with Sections 1103.10.1 and 1103.10.2.

**1103.10.1 Height.** Existing guards shall comply with the requirements of Section 505.

**1103.10.2 Guard openings.** The spacing between existing intermediate railings or openings in existing ornamental patterns shall be accepted. Missing elements or members of a guard may be replaced in a manner that will preserve the historic appearance of the building or structure.

**1103.11 Exit signs.** Where exit sign or egress path marking location would damage the historic character of the building, alternative exit signs are permitted with approval of the *code official*. Alternative signs shall identify the exits and egress path.

**1103.12 Automatic fire-extinguishing systems.** Every historical building that cannot be made to conform to the construction requirements specified in the *International Building Code* for the occupancy or use and that constitutes a distinct fire hazard shall be deemed to be in compliance if provided with an approved automatic fire-extinguishing system.

**Exception:** When the *code official* approves an alternative life-safety system.

## SECTION 1104 ALTERATIONS

**1104.1 Accessibility requirements.** The provisions of 605 and 706, as applicable, shall apply to buildings and facilities designated as historic structures that undergo alterations, unless *technically infeasible*. Where compliance with the requirements for accessible routes, entrances or toilet facilities would threaten or destroy the historic significance of the building or facility, as determined by the *code official*, the alternative requirements of Sections 1104.1.1 through 1104.1.4 for that element shall be permitted.

**1104.1.1 Site arrival points.** At least one main entrance shall be accessible.

**1104.1.2 Multilevel buildings and facilities.** An accessible route from an accessible entrance to public spaces on the level of the accessible entrance shall be provided.

**1104.1.3 Entrances.** At least one main entrance shall be accessible.

### Exceptions:

1. If a main entrance cannot be made accessible, an accessible nonpublic entrance that is unlocked while the building is occupied shall be provided; or
2. If a main entrance cannot be made accessible, a locked accessible entrance with a notification system or remote monitoring shall be provided.

**1104.1.4 Toilet and bathing facilities.** Where toilet rooms are provided, at least one accessible family or assisted-use toilet room complying with Section 1109.2.1 of the *International Building Code* shall be provided.

## SECTION 1105 CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY

**1105.1 General.** Historic buildings undergoing a *change of occupancy* shall comply with the applicable provisions of Chapter 9, except as specifically permitted in this chapter. When Chapter 9 requires compliance with specific requirements of Chapter 5, Chapter 6, or Chapter 7 and when those requirements are subject to the exceptions in Section 1102, the same exceptions shall apply to this section.

**1105.2 Building area.** The allowable floor area for historic buildings undergoing a *change of occupancy* shall be permitted to exceed by 20 percent the allowable areas specified in Chapter 5 of the *International Building Code*.

**1105.3 Location on property.** Historic structures undergoing a change of use to a higher hazard category in accordance with Section 912.6 may use alternative methods to comply with the fire-resistance and exterior opening protective requirements. Such alternatives shall comply with Section 1101.2.

**1105.4 Occupancy separation.** Required occupancy separations of 1 hour may be omitted when the building is provided with an approved automatic sprinkler system throughout.

**1105.5 Roof covering.** Regardless of occupancy or use group, roof-covering materials not less than Class C shall be permitted where a fire-retardant roof covering is required.

**1105.6 Means of egress.** Existing door openings and corridor and stairway widths less than those that would be acceptable for nonhistoric buildings under these provisions shall be approved, provided that, in the opinion of the *code official*, there is sufficient width and height for a person to pass through the opening or traverse the exit and that the capacity of the exit system is adequate for the occupant load, or where other operational controls to limit occupancy are approved by the *code official*.

**1105.7 Door swing.** When approved by the *code official*, existing front doors need not swing in the direction of exit travel,

provided that other approved exits having sufficient capacity to serve the total occupant load are provided.

**1105.8 Transoms.** In corridor walls required by these provisions to be fire-resistance rated, existing transoms may be maintained if fixed in the closed position, and fixed wired glass set in a steel frame or other approved glazing shall be installed on one side of the transom.

**Exception:** Transoms conforming to Section 1103.4 shall be accepted.

**1105.9 Finishes.** Where interior finish materials are required to have a flame spread index of Class C or better, existing nonconforming materials shall be surfaced with approved fire-retardant paint or finish.

**Exception:** Existing nonconforming materials need not be surfaced with an approved fire-retardant paint or finish where the building is equipped throughout with an automatic fire-suppression system installed in accordance with the *International Building Code* and the nonconforming materials can be substantiated as being historic in character.

**1105.10 One-hour fire-resistant assemblies.** Where 1-hour fire-resistance-rated construction is required by these provisions, it need not be provided, regardless of construction or occupancy, where the existing wall and ceiling finish is wood lath and plaster.

**1105.11 Stairs and railings.** Existing stairways shall comply with the requirements of these provisions. The *code official* shall grant alternatives for stairways and railings if alternative stairways are found to be acceptable or are judged to meet the intent of these provisions. Existing stairways shall comply with Section 1103.

**Exception:** For buildings less than 3,000 square feet (279 m<sup>2</sup>), existing conditions are permitted to remain at all stairs and rails.

**1105.12 Exit signs.** The *code official* may accept alternative exit sign locations where such signs would damage the historic character of the building or structure. Such signs shall identify the exits and exit path.

**1105.13 Exit stair live load.** Existing historic stairways in buildings changed to a Group R-1 or R-2 occupancy shall be accepted where it can be shown that the stairway can support a 75-pounds-per-square-foot (366 kg/m<sup>2</sup>) live load.

**1105.14 Natural light.** When it is determined by the *code official* that compliance with the natural light requirements of Section 911.1 will lead to loss of historic character or historic materials in the building, the existing level of natural lighting shall be considered acceptable.

**1105.15 Accessibility requirements.** The provisions of Section 912.8 shall apply to buildings and facilities designated as historic structures that undergo a *change of occupancy*, unless *technically infeasible*. Where compliance with the requirements for accessible routes, ramps, entrances, or toilet facilities would threaten or destroy the historic significance of the building or facility, as determined by the authority having jurisdiction, the alternative requirements of Sections 1104.1.1 through 1104.1.4 for those elements shall be permitted.

## SECTION 1106 STRUCTURAL

**1106.1 General.** Historic buildings shall comply with the applicable structural provisions for the work as classified in Chapter 4.

**Exception:** The *code official* shall be authorized to accept existing floors and approve operational controls that limit the live load on any such floor.

**1106.2 Unsafe structural elements.** Where the *code official* determines that a component or a portion of a building or structure is *dangerous* as defined in this code and is in need of *repair*, strengthening, or replacement by provisions of this code, only that specific component or portion shall be required to be repaired, strengthened or replaced.

