

## Chapter 9

# Building Relocation & Foundations

### **Policy:**

Moving a historic structure is discouraged; however, in some instances this may be the only viable option, and it may be considered in limited circumstances to preserve the structure's integrity.

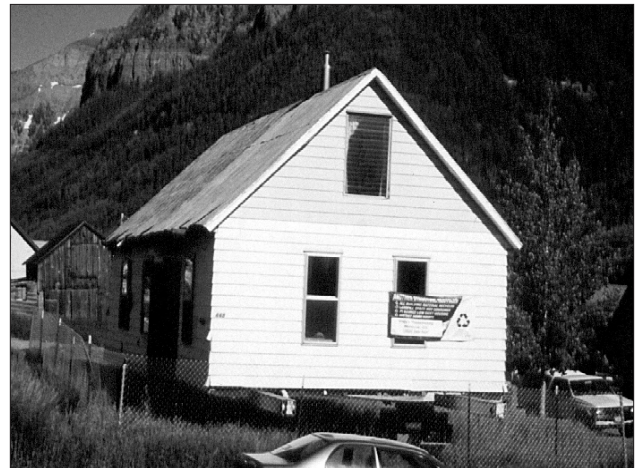
This chapter presents guidelines for relocating historic structures and for the reconstruction of building foundations. They apply to primary and secondary structures.

### **Background**

A part of a historic building's integrity is derived from its placement on its site and therefore, its original position is important. Preserving the original foundation is always encouraged. Generally, removing a structure from the parcel with which it is historically recorded will compromise its integrity. However, there may be cases when relocation will not substantially affect the integrity of a property and its rehabilitation can be assured as a result.

Early city maps suggest that some structures were shifted on their sites, and even relocated within a block to make room for more buildings. Therefore, some precedent exists. Today, however, such relocation must be considered very carefully and on a case-by-case basis.

In some cases, it may be possible to reposition a structure on its original site if doing so will accommodate other compatible improvements that will assure preservation. For example, if a house straddles two parcels, shifting it to one side may accommodate construction of a new, detached structure. Doing so may better preserve the scale of the original structure, as opposed to erecting a large addition.



*Proposals to relocate a building within its site boundaries will be considered on a case-by-case basis.*

A related concern is the character of the building's foundation. Traditionally, most buildings in Aspen had simple foundation designs. Many had a wooden sill that was clad with siding. A few of the grander structures had stone foundations. These features should be preserved. However, even when a building is preserved in place, it is often necessary to rebuild the foundation. When doing so, it is important to convey the character of the original foundation.

At times, it may be necessary to "mothball" a building in order to keep it safe until it can be improved. Wood panels should be mounted on the exterior of the building to protect existing openings and particularly historic glass. Special care should be taken to keep from damaging door and window frames and sashes in the process of covering the openings.





*When relocating a historic building, it should be sited with an orientation similar to its historic arrangement.*

## ***Preserving Building Locations and Foundations***

### **9.1 Proposals to relocate a building will be considered on a case-by-case basis.**

- In general, relocation has less of an impact on individual landmark structures than those in a historic district.
- It must be demonstrated that relocation is the best preservation alternative.
- Rehabilitation of a historic building must occur as a first phase of any improvements.
- A relocated building must be carefully rehabilitated to retain original architectural details and materials.
- Before a building is moved, a plan must be in place to secure the structure and provide a new foundation, utilities, and to restore the house.
- The design of a new structure on the site should be in accordance with the guidelines for new construction.
- In general, moving a building to an entirely different site or neighborhood is not approved.

### **9.2 Moving an existing building that contributes to the character of a historic district should be avoided.**

- The significance of a building and the character of its setting will be considered.
- In general, relocating a contributing building in a district requires greater sensitivity than moving an individually-listed structure because the relative positioning of it reflects patterns of development, including spacing of side yards and front setbacks, that relate to other historic structures in the area.

### **9.3 If relocation is deemed appropriate by the HPC, a structure must remain within the boundaries of its historic parcel.**

- If a historic building straddles two lots, then it may be shifted to sit entirely on one of the lots. Both lots shall remain landmarked properties.



**9.4 Site the structure in a position similar to its historic orientation.**

- It should face the same direction and have a relatively similar setback.
- It may not, for example, be moved to the rear of the parcel to accommodate a new building in front of it.

**9.5 A new foundation should appear similar in design and materials to the historic foundation.**

- On modest structures, a simple foundation is appropriate. Constructing a stone foundation on a modest miner's cottage is discouraged because it would be out of character.
- Where a stone foundation was used historically, and is to be replaced, the replacement should be similar in the cut of the stone and design of the mortar joints.

**9.6 When rebuilding a foundation, locate the structure at its approximate historic elevation above grade.**

- Raising the building slightly above its original elevation is acceptable. However, lifting it substantially above the ground level is inappropriate.
- Changing the historic elevation is discouraged, unless it can be demonstrated that it enhances the resource.

**9.7 A lightwell may be used to permit light into below-grade living space.**

- In general, a lightwell is prohibited on a wall that faces a street (per the Residential Design Standards).
- The size of a lightwell should be minimized.
- A lightwell that is used as a walkout space may be used only in limited situations and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If a walkout space is feasible, it should be surrounded by a simple fence or rail.



*A replacement foundation should be similar to an original foundation such as this one.*



*Locate the structure approximately at its historic elevation above grade. Lifting it too far up from ground level, such as in this example, is inappropriate.*



