

BERO ARCHITECTURE PLLC

ARCHITECTURE SUSTAINABILITY PRESERVATION

Thirty Two Winthrop Street, Rochester, New York 14607
585-262-2035 (phone) • 585-262-2054 (fax) • contact@beroarchitecture.com (email)

SOME THOUGHTS ON BUILDING SURVEYS

Owners want to know how to take care of their buildings. We are often asked to survey buildings and make recommendations regarding maintenance and repair. There are many different levels of studies available, depending on the needs of the building, the needs of the owners, and the funds available.

DEFINITIONS

Site Consultation: Usually based on one to four hours at a site. This consultation can include any subject of interest to the owner. Brief oral or written recommendations are made. No construction costs are estimated. These consultations are often provided to owners concerned about maintaining and improving their buildings without damaging architectural integrity or physical fabric.

Report of Site Visit: After a brief walk-through a spreadsheet is prepared which identifies general work areas and priorities. Photographs and sketch floor plans are usually included in the report. No construction costs are estimated. This report is a very preliminary planning document, seldom used for funding applications.

Condition Report: This extensive report concentrates on the physical fabric. It is a detailed report which identifies deficiencies, recommends repairs, includes cost estimates, and prioritizes work items. Granting agencies often ask for a condition report to ensure the owner understands the full scope of maintenance requirements and is attacking high-priority needs.

Historic Structures Report: The highest level report currently recognized in the preservation field, often required when restoration is anticipated. It may be used when high-level funding is being sought for a significant resource. Historical analysis as well as study of the physical condition of the building is included.

COSTS

Professional fees vary depending on size and complexity of the building or site, location, general condition of the building, extent of the survey and report, etc., so any simple summary of fees is approximate:

Site consultation	\$ 400	to	\$ 1,200
Report of Site Visit	1,000	to	5,000
Condition Report	5,000	to	20,000
Historic Structures Report	20,000	to	120,000+

Each building and owner is unique. An estimate of professional fees usually requires a brief site visit and consultation with the owner to determine the scope of the survey.

Some Thoughts On Building Surveys

SUMMARY OF SCOPE

	SC	SV	CR	HSR
Targeted inspection and/or walk-around inspection	X			
Walk-through inspection		X		
Detailed inspection			X	X
Brief oral or written recommendations	X			
Annotated spreadsheet of work items w. priorities		X		
Spreadsheet as above plus a written description			X	X
Construction cost estimates			X	X
Review of existing drawings			X	X
Review of maintenance records			X	X
Interview of maintenance personnel			X	X
Interview of maintenance contractors			X	X
Maintenance chronology			X	X
Sketch floor plans			X	
Measured drawings				X
Description of existing fabric				X
Construction chronology				X
Brief historical overview			X	
Extensive historical analysis				X
Table of Contents			X	X
Attachments				
Technical supplements	X	X	X	X
Photographs		X	X	X
Historic Photographs			X	X
Historic Documentation				X
Bibliography				X
Glossary				X
Engineering systems inspection			*	*
Structural engineering analysis			*	*
Archaeological Investigations			*	*
Special studies (such as wheelchair accessibility, future uses, renovations or additions)			*	*

* These services are options. Many reports are customized with these or other studies.

Note that these reports do not include construction Contract Documents such as Working Drawings and Specifications.