

The Historic Preservation Economy

How Small Repair Businesses Can Tap Into a \$10 Billion Restoration Market



About Us

Preservan is the nation's largest network of professional wood repair experts, with over 17 locations nationwide. Our teams have extensive historic preservation experience performing epoxy-based repairs on windows, doors and architectural woodwork for landmark properties that demand precision, authenticity and lasting craftsmanship.



“We Save the Future by Preserving the Past”

-Ty McBride, Preservan, Founder & CEO

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The Hidden Industry of Preservation

Across the country, America's historic buildings are being restored and repurposed at record pace — from downtown storefronts to old schools, churches and factories. These projects don't just preserve history; they revitalize communities and drive billions of dollars in construction investment each year.

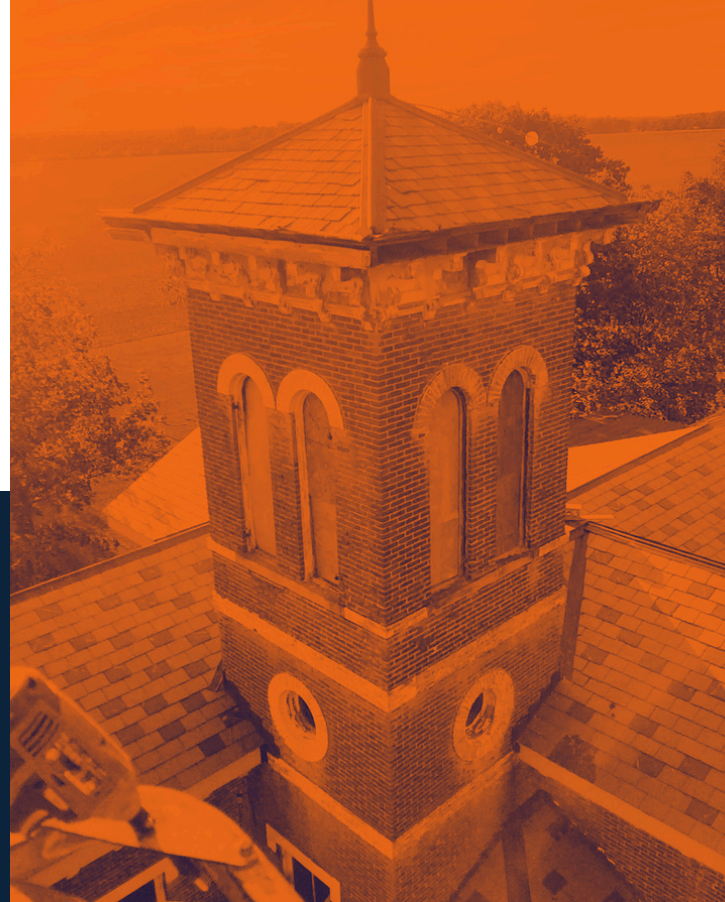
The challenge? Skilled craftsmen who can perform this work are in short supply, and the few who can are often overbooked or cost-prohibitive. This shortage has created one of the most promising — and least crowded — opportunities in today's property services market: professional wood repair for historic preservation.

Behind the beauty of these restorations lies a simple truth: wood is everywhere.

Windows, doors, trim, and siding are essential to a building's character — yet in many cases, they are rotted or damaged. Under preservation standards, they can't simply be replaced. They must be repaired using approved methods.

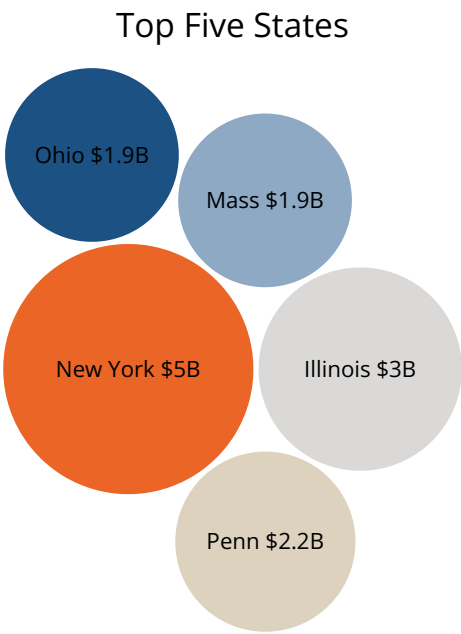
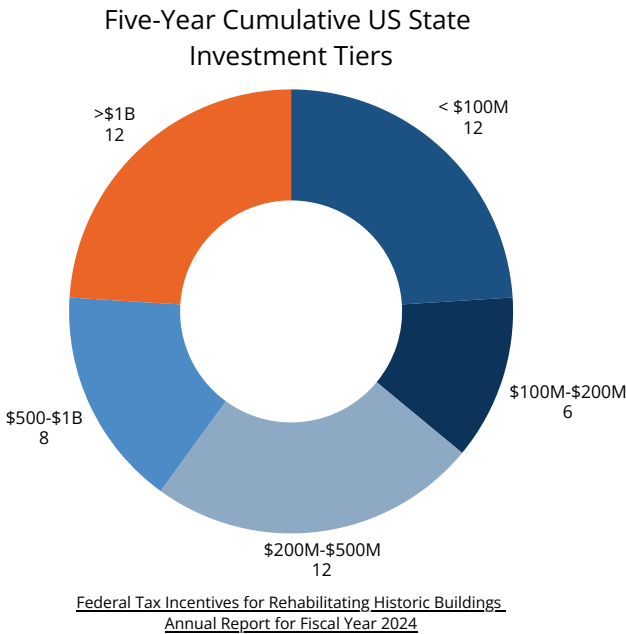
"Historic preservation is not niche, It's a major component of the nation's construction industry...the need for communities all across America to invest in the workforce that will sustain this growing, diverse, and significant component of the trades landscape."

-Nicholas Reeding, The Campaign for Historic Trades



The Preservation Market Is Growing

Historic rehabilitation isn't a niche effort. It's a national economic driver generating billions in construction and investment each year. In 2024 alone, federally certified preservation projects accounted for \$10.7 billion in rehabilitation activity and 853 approved developments across the country.



Since 1976, the Federal Historic Tax Credit program has fueled more than \$131 billion in private investment, revitalizing over 49,000 historic properties nationwide. This isn't a short-term trend — it's a decades-long, government-backed growth engine for construction and community redevelopment.

Today, 39 states offer their own historic tax credits that can be paired with federal incentives, creating momentum in nearly every region. From downtown lofts and courthouses, to schools and factories, historic preservation has become a \$10+ billion annual industry — and it's still expanding.

The Competitive Landscape: The Preservation Labor Gap

“The money is there — the people aren’t.”

Even with billions in funding for preservation projects each year, the biggest challenge isn’t investment — it’s labor.

The demand for skilled tradespeople who can meet historic preservation standards far exceeds the available workforce.

How Preservation Projects Get Delivered

Step 1 — Design & Approval

Developers and property owners work with architects and preservation consultants to design projects that qualify for federal, state, and local tax credits.

Step 2 — Construction Award

Once approved, projects are awarded to large, multi-state general contractors (GCs) through competitive bids.

Step 3 — Subcontracting the Work

GCs subcontract specialized work like wood repair, masonry and finishes to local tradespeople — and this is where the system breaks down.

Where Projects Fall Apart

- Not enough trained local labor to meet preservation standards.
- Overbooked boutique firms deliver quality but move slowly.
- High labor costs stretch budgets beyond approval limits.
- Lack of national consistency leaves GCs scrambling for reliable partners in each state.

The result? Delays, cost overruns and loss of credibility — even on well-funded projects.



The Data Behind the Shortage

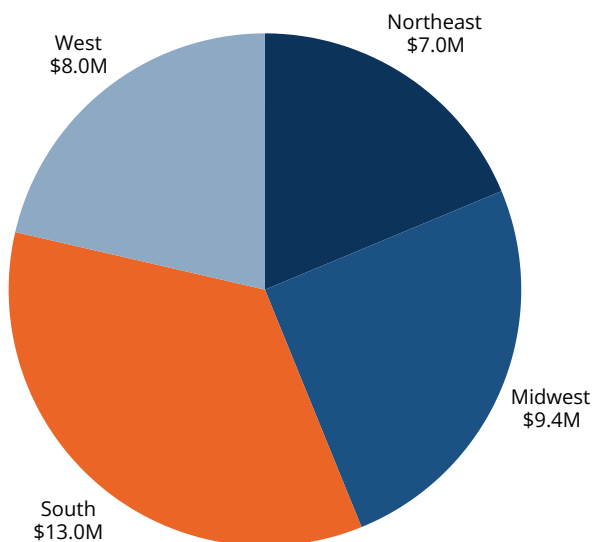
According to the Campaign for Historic Trades (2022):

- The U.S. needs over 100,000 preservation tradespeople in the next decade.
- About 12.6% of all building rehabilitation requires heritage trade skills.
- Each year, 261,000 historic properties need preservation-grade work.
- For every \$100 of labor, another \$186 circulates through the economy.

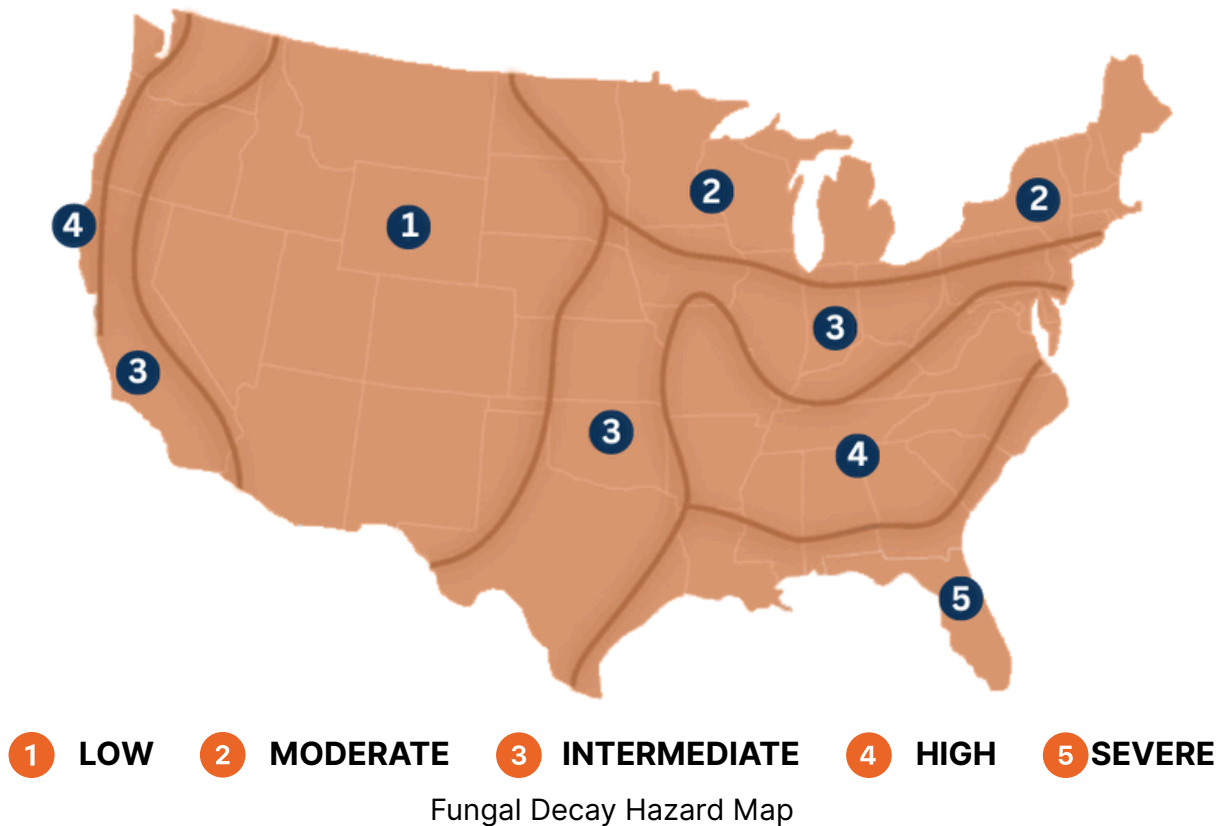
Opportunity Hidden in Plain Sight

This nationwide labor shortage isn't just a workforce issue — it's a massive market gap. General contractors are desperate for reliable partners who can deliver preservation work on time, on budget, and to strict federal standards. With few national providers and rising project volumes, skilled repair businesses have a rare opportunity to fill this need, scale quickly and build enduring regional credibility.

Buildings Over 50 Years Old by Region



STATUS OF HISTORIC TRADES IN AMERICA



Why Wood Repair Is Central to Preservation Work

Federal preservation standards make one thing unmistakably clear: preserving original materials is not optional — it's required.

From the National Park Service's own rehabilitation guidelines:

"Repairing window frames and sash by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing them using recognized preservation methods."

— [NPS Treatment Guidelines \(2017\)](#).

These standards explicitly reference the use of epoxy-based consolidation and patching techniques — now the nationally accepted method for stabilizing and restoring historic wood components.

Among all the elements of a historic structure, windows and doors are among the most protected and heavily regulated. They define a building's architectural character and must be preserved whenever possible. That means rotted wood cannot simply be replaced; it must be stabilized, consolidated and rebuilt using approved restoration techniques.

Preservan's Proven Model

General contractors choose Preservan because we deliver preservation-grade repairs on time, on budget and in compliance with national standards. Our franchise network provides consistency across regions — giving GCs one trusted partner instead of a patchwork of unreliable local trades.

Professional Results

Preservan's systems make complex historic work simple. We combine advanced epoxy repair technology, standardized estimating tools and project management training to ensure every job meets the Secretary of the Interior's standards while maintaining efficiency and profitability.

National Credibility, Local Impact

Each franchise operates with the strength of a national brand behind it — trusted by preservation architects, developers and contractors alike. With professional presentation, certified technicians, and transparent communication, Preservan franchisees earn repeat business and long-term commercial relationships.

Bridging the Labor Gap with Scalable Solutions

Preservan fills the preservation labor shortage with a professional, trained workforce ready to execute high-quality restoration anywhere in the United States. Franchisees benefit from our established demand pipeline and the confidence of a team experienced in multi-million-dollar preservation work.



The Preservation Playbook

Training Built for Real Projects

We train each franchisee and their technicians to master the skills and systems needed to secure and complete preservation projects ranging from \$2,000 to \$40,000. Our proven process ensures confidence, compliance and consistency on every commercial historic job.

Experience That Leads the Way

With over \$10 million in completed historic preservation repairs, our leadership team serves as your guide through every phase — from bidding to delivery. We help franchisees build credibility, win commercial work and grow a business that preserves both history and prosperity.

Join Preservan and build a profitable business in historic preservation!



Phone Number

405.546.9627

Email Address

contact@preservan.com

Website

gopreservan.com

