

What is Historic Preservation?¹

Historic preservation is a conversation with our past about our future. It provides us with opportunities to ask, "What is important in our history?" and "What parts of our past can we preserve for the future?" Through historic preservation, we look at history in different ways, ask different questions of the past, and learn new things about our history and ourselves. Historic preservation is an important way for us to transmit our understanding of the past to future generations.

Our nation's history has many facets, and historic preservation helps tell these stories. Sometimes historic preservation involves celebrating events, people, places, and ideas that we are proud of; other times it involves recognizing moments in our history that can be painful or uncomfortable to remember.

Within the National Park Service, many people work in historic preservation: archeologists, architects, curators, historians, landscape architects, and other cultural resource professionals. The National Park Service carries out historic preservation both within and outside the National Park System:

- Designation of historic sites (includes federally, state, and privately owned properties)
- Documentation (includes written, photographic, and technical documentation, as well as oral histories)
- Physical preservation (includes stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction)

California Register of Historical Resources²

The State Historical Resources Commission has designed this program for use by state and local agencies, private groups and citizens to identify, evaluate, register and protect California's historical resources. The Register is the authoritative guide to the state's significant historical and archeological resources.

The California Register program encourages public recognition and protection of resources of architectural, historical, archeological and cultural significance, identifies historical resources for state and local planning purposes, determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding and affords certain protections under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Note: There are no manuals available for nominating California Register properties. Please contact OHP Registration Unit staff for advice and consultation regarding the components necessary to nominate a property to the California Register of Historical Resources.

¹ <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservation/what-is-historic-preservation.htm>

² http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21238

Criteria for Designation³

- Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States (Criterion 1).
 - Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history (Criterion 2).
 - Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values (Criterion 3).
 - Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation (Criterion 4).
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Effects of Designation⁴

- Limited protection: Environmental review may be required under CEQA if property is threatened by a project. Contact your local planning agency for more information.
 - Local building inspector must grant code alternatives provided under State Historical Building Code.
 - Local assessor may enter into contract with property owner for property tax reduction (Mills Act). Owner may place his or her own plaque or marker at the site of the resource.
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Procedures for Registration⁵

1. Download the Nomination Packet. Only use the DPR 523 Forms that are applicable to the nominated resource. If you need assistance contact OHP.
2. Complete application, including all necessary supplemental forms, according to instructions.
3. Notify the clerk of the local government in whose jurisdiction the resource is located by **certified mail** that

³ http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21238

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ *ibid.*

an application will be filed with OHP and request that the local government provide written comments within 90 days. The notification must include a copy of the application.

4. At the end of the 90 days, forward the completed application and any comments to OHP.

5. OHP staff will send notification to the property owner (if the applicant is not the property owner) and ensure that the nomination packet is complete.

6. California Register nominations will be reviewed by OHP staff. Those that are incomplete or not prepared in accordance with the instructions in TAS #7 will be returned to applicant with a comment letter for revision.

7. When a nomination, including all revisions, is complete, it can be scheduled for a quarterly SHRC meeting. OHP notifies all applicants, property owners and appropriate governmental jurisdictions of the time and place of the SHRC meeting.

8. If approved by the SHRC, the resource is listed in the California Register.

Owner Consent and Local Government Notification⁶

Consent of owner is not required, but a resource cannot be listed over an owner's objections. The SHRC can, however, formally determine a property eligible for the California Register if the resource owner objects.

Local government **must be given 90 days** in which to comment on the application before it is sent to OHP.

⁶ http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21238