The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, it is a part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources.

How Properties are Listed in the National Register

The National Register nomination process usually starts with your State historic preservation office. If the property is on Federal or tribal land, then the process starts with the Federal preservation office or Tribal historic preservation office. See reverse side for contact information.

Nominations can be submitted to your State historic preservation office from property owners, historical societies, preservation organizations, governmental agencies, and other individuals or groups. The State historic preservation office notifies affected property owners and local governments and solicits public comment. If the owner (or a majority of owners for a district nomination) objects, the property cannot be listed but may be forwarded to the National Park Service for a Determination of Eligibility (DOE).

Proposed nominations are reviewed by your State’s historic preservation office and the State’s National Register Review Board. The length of the state process varies but generally will take a minimum of 90 days.

Complete nominations, with certifying recommendations, are submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office, Federal Preservation Office, or Tribal Historic Preservation Office to the National Park Service in Washington, DC for final review and listing by the Keeper of the Register of Historic Places. The National Park Service makes a listing decision within 45 days.

Contact your SHPO or THPO or check their website for National Register information, research materials, and necessary forms to begin the nomination process.

The National Register & Your Community

Listing in the National Register helps preserve listed properties in the following ways:

- Federal preservation grants for planning and rehabilitation
- Federal investment tax credits
- Preservation easements to nonprofits
- International Building Code fire and life safety code alternatives

Nominations become part of the National Register Archives, a public searchable database that provides a wealth of research information.

There are possible state tax benefits and grant opportunities. Check with your State Historic Preservation Office (see NSHPO website, on reverse side) for financial incentives available within your state.

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation becomes involved when a federal agency project may affect a historic property.

How Properties Are Evaluated

To be considered eligible, a property must meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. To be considered significant, the property’s significance, age, and integrity must be evaluated.

Significance is the property associated with events, activities, or developments that were important in the past? With the lives of people who were important in the past? With the activities of federal and/or state, local, or Tribal governmental agencies?

Age is the property old enough to be considered historic (generally at least 50 years old) and does it still look much the way it did in the past?

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, or
B. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, or
C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
D. that have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Criteria for Evaluation

Ordinarily, cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

A. A religious property demonstrating primary significance from architectural, artistic, or historic distinction or historical importance.
B. A building or structure removed from its original location but which is primarily significant for

Architectural, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event;
C. A birthplace or grave of historic significance, or
D. A cemetery that derives its primary importance from graves of persons of transcendental importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or
E. A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration.

Property that has

and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
F. A property primarily commemorative in nature with design, age, tradition, or architectural style that has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or
G. A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

Criteria Considerations

Ordinarily, cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

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Contact information for National Park Service in Washington, DC for final review and listing: www.nps.gov/history/nr

For a list of National Park Service Preservation Officers, Federal Preservation Officers, and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers can be found on our website (www.nps.gov/history/nr) or on reverse side.
Web addresses and phone numbers of State, Tribal, and Federal historic preservation offices can be found on the National Register website.

Federal Tax Incentives for Rehabilitation
Since 1976, the Federal Internal Revenue Code has contained a variety of incentives to encourage capital investment in historic buildings and to spur revitalization of historic properties. These incentives encourage the preservation of historic commercial, industrial, and residential buildings listed in the National Register by allowing favorable tax treatments for rehabilitation. More information can be obtained by contacting the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Act Program at the web address listed in the Quick Reference section of this brochure or by contacting your State Historic Preservation Office.

Easement Donations
The Federal Internal Revenue Code also provides for Federal income, estate, and gift tax deductions for charitable contributions of partial interests in real property (easements on land and buildings). Further information on easements may be obtained from the sources listed above in the tax incentives section.

Federal Historic Preservation Grants
Owners of National Register listed properties may be eligible to obtain Federal historic preservation funding, when funds are available. Information about Federal historic preservation grant assistance is available on the Heritage Preservation Services website (see Quick Reference below) or by contacting your State Historic Preservation Office.

State Historic Grant and Tax Programs
States also administer State grant assistance programs and many of them allow for property tax abatements and State income tax credits for rehabilitated historic properties. See NCSHPO website contact information listed below.

Quick Reference
National Park Service
www.nps.gov
National Historic Landmarks
www.nps.gov/history/nhl
Archeology Program
www.nps.gov/archeology
Teaching with Historic Places
www.nps.gov/history/twhp
Travel Itineraries
www.nps.gov/history/travel
Heritage Preservation Services
www.nps.gov/history/hps
Cultural Resources Diversity Internship Program
www.nps.gov/history/ploy
NPS Park History
www.nps.gov/history/nph
Preservation Officers
National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO)
www.ncshpo.org
National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (NATHO)
www.natpog.org
Federal Agency Preservation Programs and Officers
www.achp.gov/lpulist

“My students truly appreciated the chance to learn more about the church’s history and architecture directly from this important source document.”

-Catherine, NH elementary school teacher

Contact Us
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye Street NW
Washington, DC 20005
202-354-2211
www.nps.gov/history/nr
nr_info@nps.gov

Quick Register Listings by County

The National Register of Historic Places lists properties in all States, Federal and Tribal Lands, and Territories, including: Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Micronesia, Guam, Marshall Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, and the Virgin Islands.