

toolbox

Listing a Site with the National Historic Register

Listing a building or site with National Historic Register is one step to preserve and promote the bricks and mortar that help give a community its flavor. The National Register is the official federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture. The National Park Service administers the Register. Listing a property requires some research and documentation. Here are some criteria and other information to help you get started.

Criteria

Listed properties possess historic significance and integrity as defined in at least one of four aspects of American history recognized by the National Register Criteria:

- ✓ Association with historic events or activities,
- ✓ Association with important persons,
- ✓ Distinctive design or physical characteristics, or
- ✓ Potential to provide important information about prehistory or history.

Generally, properties must be fifty or more years of age to be considered historic places. They must also be significant when evaluated in relationship to major trends of history in their community, state or the nation. Information about historic properties and trends is organized by theme, place and time and is used to weigh the historic significance and integrity of a property. Integrity must also be evident through historic qualities including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Steps

As you research a property you must:

1. Categorize the property as a district, site, building, structure, or object.
2. Determine which prehistoric or historic context(s) the property represents. A property must possess significance in history, architecture, archeology, engineering, or culture.
3. Determine whether the property is significant under the National Register Criteria. Identify the links to events, persons or distinguishing design and construction features.
4. Determine whether the property represents a type usually excluded from the National Register. Ordinarily excluded are cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties of religious institutions, moved or reconstructed structures and structures less than 50 years old. For sites of these types, examine other criteria such as whether a moved building is significant for its architecture rather than location or whether the birthplace or grave is the only significant site associated with a person.
5. Evaluate the integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and association that the property must retain to convey its historic significance.

More about the National Historic Register

Whom to Contact

Begin the nomination process by contacting your State Historic Preservation Office. You can find information for your state's office on the National Register web site at grants.cr.nps.gov/shpos/shpo_search.cfm or contact the National Register of Historic Places at:

National Park Service
Interagency Resources Division
U.S. Department of the Interior
Post Office Box 37127
Washington, DC 20240

Benefits

There are several benefits to being listed with National Register of Historic Places.

1. Owners of properties listed in the National Register may be eligible for a 20% investment tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of income-producing certified historic structures such as commercial, industrial, or rental residential buildings.
2. Federal tax deductions are also available for charitable contributions for conservation purposes of partial interests in historically important land areas or structures.
3. Consideration of historic values in the decision to issue a surface mining permit where coal is located in accordance with the Surface Mining Control Act of 1977.
4. Qualification for Federal grants for historic preservation, when funds are available.
5. The property is listed and promoted by the National Park Service.

Other Information

During the time that the nomination is being reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Office, property owners and local officials are notified of the intent to nominate and given the opportunity to comment or object. Completing the review and notification process usually takes a minimum of 90 days. If the state office and local property owners and officials agree with the nomination, it is forwarded to the National Park Service, where the decision on whether to list the property is made within 45 days.

It's free! There are no fees for nominating or listing a property.

Information for this toolbox was taken from the web site of the National Register of Historic Places. Visit them at www.cr.nps.gov/nr/.