

# National Register Criteria

## The NR Criteria

National Register criteria are designed to guide the officials of the National Register, SHPOs, federal agencies, local governments, preservation organizations and members of the general public in evaluating properties for entry in the National Register. To be listed in the National Register, properties generally must be at least 50 years old and retain their historic character. Properties must:

- Be associated with important events that have contributed significantly to the broad pattern of our history; or
- Be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; or represent the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

\*Document made possible by support from Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and the National Park Service. Document material adapted from DAHP resources.

## Integrity

In addition to meeting one or more of the above National Register criteria, a property must also have "Historic Integrity" which is the authenticity of a property's historic identity evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's historic period. Historic Integrity is comprised of seven qualities:

- Location
- Design
- Setting
- Materials
- Workmanship
- Feeling
- Association

This means that if a property has been dramatically altered or its setting has been lost, it is probably not eligible for the Register.



## Special Criteria Considerations

Certain property types are eligible for listing in the National Register only under special circumstances. These include cemeteries, birthplaces or 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 last 50 years. Such properties will qualify, however, if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria.

## Benefits of Listing in the National Register

Listing a property on the National Register of Historic Places or being determined eligible for listing does not automatically preserve a building, and it does not keep a building from being modified or destroyed.

### National Register Listing Does:

- Provide recognition of a property's significance in history, architecture, engineering, or archaeology
- Provide a tool for local planning, heritage tourism, and heritage education
- Provide some protection in the form of consideration and mitigation of adverse effects to historic properties from federally-funded or licensed projects (Section 106 NHPA)
- Provide the owner of an income-producing property (commercial, industrial, or rental residential) the opportunity to receive federal investment tax credits of up to 20% of costs for a certified rehabilitation
- Provide the owner the opportunity to apply for matching grant-in-aid funds for restoration, when such funds are available from a variety of organizations
- Allow the owner to receive free technical assistance from Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation staff on following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation for maintenance and rehabilitation or restoration of the historic property



### National Register Listing Does Not:

- Does not place restrictions on a private property owner regarding use, maintenance, or alterations to a property
- Does not require a city/county to restrict the use of a private property, although local ordinances may require architectural review or review of the property by a local historic preservation commission
- Does not require Federal or State review of proposed alterations to a property unless Federal money is being used to fund a project effecting a listing or eligible resource. Owners interested in technical assistance with rehabilitation should contact the Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation
- Does not mean the Federal or State government will seek to purchase or place restrictions on private property
- Does not affect the use or sale of private property
- Does not require that the building/structure be returned to its historic state as the result of loss or damage for insurance purposes
- Does not require an owner to allow public access to private property
- Encourages, but does not require, continual maintenance of the private property
- Does not require any government/or private entity to maintain a property, nor does it automatically provide funds for restoration and preservation
- Does not provide an historical marker for the property, although owners are eligible to purchase one through private vendors

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