

DAVID
JACKSON.

I
4pm.

ANALYSIS OF WHY REDONDO BEACH SHOULD PERFORM A NEW HISTORICAL SURVEY

The first and only Historical Survey for Redondo Beach was initiated in 1986 prior to the passage of the Preservation Ordinance in 1989. Although there were supplemental surveys for North Redondo in 1989 and an updated windshield survey for South Redondo in 2000 this was for all intents and purposes a completion of the 1986 survey. A review of this series of partial surveys has revealed countless errors and omissions. When one considers the importance of preserving a city's historical resources these actions have resulted in many historical structures being torn down without any review by the Preservation Commission. Even the United States Census Bureau conducts a nationwide census every 10 years. It has been almost 30 years since a Historical Survey in Redondo Beach.

Most cities have preservation programs and perform regular Historical Surveys to assess and identify historical structures and locations. Some cities even have a separate department devoted to preservation instead of being part of a city Planning Department. Los Angeles and San Diego even have a separate website devoted to historical preservation. I encourage you to check out these websites and obtain a complete a thorough understanding of the importance of this process to a city and their citizens.

Other cities that have remarkable records of historical preservation include Pasadena, Santa Barbara and Torrance. It should be part of the regular responsibilities of the city to support efforts in this area. For the past 10 years the Preservation Commission has recommended to the mayor and city council that a new survey should be conducted without any response or action. In light of the modest expenses for a new survey this course of action is unacceptable. Once a historical resource is gone it is gone forever. Perhaps if more attention had been given to the fate of the Hotel Redondo we would still have that magnificent resource today. I have included some articles off the internet for your review.

David Jackson, chair Preservation Commission

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER PUBLICATIONS

NR HOME

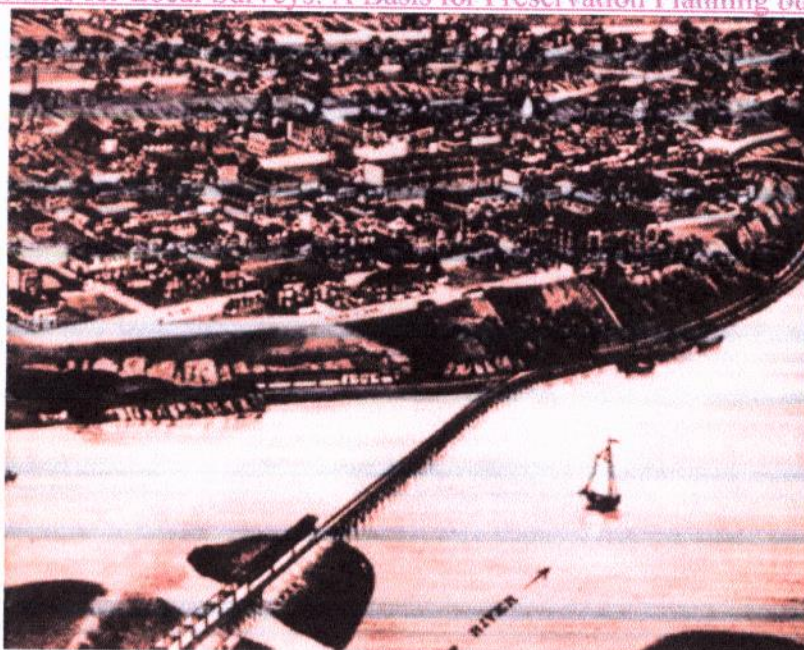
RESEARCH

TRAVEL

EDUCATION

**NATIONAL REGISTER BULLETIN****GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL SURVEYS:
A BASIS FOR PRESERVATION PLANNING**

Next

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park ServicePDF of: [Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning bulletin \(28 MB\)](#)

By

Anne Derry

H. Ward Jandl

Carol D. Shull

Jan Thorman

1977

REVISED, 1985, by Patricia L. Parker

Photo credit: view of Tacoma, Washington, published by J.J. Stoner, Madison, Wisconsin, 1884. (Library of Congress, Map Division, Washington, DC)

Contents

[Acknowledgments and Foreword](#)[Introduction](#)

How to use this publication ?
What is a survey?
What is a historic resource?
Why undertake a historic resource survey?
What should you know about the National Register before undertaking a survey?
Who is the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)?
What assistance can the SHPO provide?
What is a *certified* local government preservation program and how can survey contribute to certifications?
What is the value of a historic resource survey and inventory?
Who should sponsor a survey?

Chapter I: Planning the Survey

Initial Questions

What kinds of resources should the survey seek?
What kinds of information should be gathered?
What different kinds of surveys are commonly used?
How large an area should be included in a survey?
How long should a survey take?

Elements of Survey Planning

How is the purpose of the survey established?
What are *historic contexts*?
How are survey goals and priorities established?
How should the storage and use of survey data be considered during survey planning?
How can a community involve the public in planning a survey?
What form should a survey design take?

Mobilizing Resources for the Survey

What qualifications should those supervising a survey have?
Where can qualified professionals be located?
How is a professional consultant selected?
What fees do historic resources consultants charge?
How do non-professionals fit into a survey?
What kind of training will ensure a consistent and high-quality survey?
How much should a survey cost?
Where can funding for surveys be obtained?

Chapter II: Conducting the Survey

Archival Research

How should archival research be organized?
What sources of information should be consulted?
Where may primary and secondary information be found?

Conducting Field Survey

How is a reconnaissance of above-ground properties carried out?
How is a reconnaissance of archeological sites carried out?

How is an intensive survey of above-ground properties carried out?
How is an intensive survey of archeological sites carried out?
How can oral history or ethnography contribute to the survey?
What kinds of data will be needed to evaluate historic resources?
What additional planning information may be gathered in the survey process?
Forms, maps, photographs: How should survey data be recorded?
What equipment will be needed for survey work?

Chapter III: Review and Organization of Survey Data

How are survey data reviewed during fieldwork?
How and why are resources evaluated?
What are the advantages and disadvantages of using numerical and categorical evaluation systems?
What kinds of due process considerations may be required in evaluating properties?
What kind of documentation should be included in the inventory files?
How can information be stored to permit efficient retrieval at a later date?

Chapter IV: Use of Survey Data in Planning

What are the major components of preservation planning?
How are survey data used in ongoing identifications?
How are survey data used in making evaluation decisions?
How can survey data contribute to strategies for the preservation and enhancement of historic resources?
How can survey data be used in community development planning?

Chapter V: Publications

What should be published once a survey is completed?
What are some considerations in production and distribution of survey publication?
What are some alternatives to traditional publication?

Appendix I: Archeological Surveys

Appendix II: Federal Legislation Affecting Historic Preservation

Appendix III: Legal and Financial Tools Used to Preserve and Enhance Historic Resources

Appendix IV: Bibliography

Appendix V: Contacts

[Back to top of page](#)

[Next](#)

[National Register Home](#) | [Publications Home](#) | [Next Page](#)

[Comments or Questions](#)

JPJ



NATIONAL REGISTER BULLETIN

GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL SURVEYS: A BASIS FOR PRESERVATION PLANNING

[Previous](#)[Table of Contents](#)[Next](#)

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Introduction

How to use this publication

Guidelines for Local Surveys provides guidance to communities, organizations, Federal and State agencies, and individuals interested in undertaking surveys of historic resources. Although it contains information and recommendations with broad applicability, it is designed primarily for use by local government officials and those who undertake surveys of cities and other communities. Because these guidelines will be read by people of varied interests-local government administrators, community-based preservation organizations, civic groups, preservation professionals, planners, members of preservation commissions, developers, Federal and State agency officials, and other interested persons-information is included that is familiar to some and foreign to others. Some communities may be interested in doing a survey of only one neighborhood using volunteer labor, while other communities may be interested in planning and conducting a comprehensive survey of every building within their city limits using professional consultants.

This publication is divided into five chapters: planning the survey, conducting the survey, review and organization of survey data, use of survey data in planning, and publications. Because many of the activities within these areas are interrelated, some duplication of information is necessary. Many complex procedures, programs, and laws are referred to throughout the text; brief explanations of these are provided in the appendices. The index should aid those readers with specific ideas and questions in mind.

This edition of *Guidelines for Local Surveys* has been thoroughly updated and rewritten based on the original edition, published in 1977. It will be further updated periodically; therefore, comments and suggestions for future editions are welcome. They should be addressed to: Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1849 C. St, NC400, Washington, DC 20240.

NATIONAL REGISTER RESOURCE CLASSIFICATIONS: DEFINITIONS

District: A district possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

Site: A site is the location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location

itself possesses historical, cultural, or archeological value regardless of the value of any existing structure.

Building: A building, such as a house, barn, church, hotel, or similar construction is created to shelter any form of human activity. Building may also be used to refer to a historically and functionally related unit, such as a courthouse and jail or a house and barn.

Structure: The term structure is used to distinguish from buildings those functional constructions made usually for purposes other than creating shelter.

Object: The term *object* is used to distinguish from buildings and structures those constructions that are primarily artistic in nature or are relatively small in scale and simply constructed. Although it may be, by nature or design, movable, an object is associated with a specific setting or environment, such as statuary in a designed landscape.

Properties nominated to the National Register may be classified in one of the five property classifications listed above. Those evaluated as meeting the National Register criteria may be nominated separately or as part of a multiple property submission.

A multiple property submission includes nominations for all or a portion of the significant historic properties that relate to one or a series of established historic contexts, i.e. properties that share some significant historic or cultural relationship. A multiple property submission calls for the development of historic contexts, selection of related property types, and the identification and documentation of related significant properties. It may be based on the results of a comprehensive interdisciplinary survey for a specific rural area, town, city, section of a city, county, or region of a state, or it may be based on an intensive study of the resources illustrative of a specific type of building or site, a single cultural affiliation, the work of a specific master, or a single or closely related group of historic events or activities. This publication is intended to provide guidance on the conduct of surveys that may in turn form the basis for multiple property submissions. Further information about multiple property submissions for nominating properties to the National Register is contained in the National Register bulletin entitled [*How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form*](#).

What is a survey?

In this publication *survey* means a process of identifying and gathering data on a community's historic resources. It includes *field survey*- the physical search for and recording of historic resources on the ground-but it also includes *planning* and *background research* before field survey begins, *organization* and *presentation of survey data* as the survey proceeds, and the development of *inventories*.

Survey data refers to the raw data produced by the survey; that is, all the information gathered on each property and area investigated.

An *inventory* is one of the basic products of a survey. An inventory is an organized compilation of information on those properties that are **evaluated** as significant.

Evaluation is the process of determining whether identified properties meet defined criteria of historical, architectural, archeological, or cultural significance. In other words, evaluation involves winnowing the survey data to produce an inventory.

Survey can be conducted at a variety of scales, producing different kinds of survey data applicable to different needs. These will be discussed in detail later in this publication.

What is a historic resource?

The National Historic Preservation Act defines *historic resource, or historic property*, as:

any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in the National Register (of Historic Places); such term includes artifacts, records, and remains which are related to such a district, site, building, structure, or object.

The National Register, in turn, defines a *historic property* as a district, site, building, structure, or object significant in American history, architecture, engineering, archeology, and culture. A historic property may be a row of stores having cast-iron fronts or Mount Vernon, a water tower or a city park, a railroad station, an ethnic neighborhood, or the archeological remains of a prehistoric Indian village. It may be of value to the Nation as a whole or important only to the community in which it is located.

Why undertake a historic resource survey?

The underlying reason for undertaking a survey to identify a community's historic resources is the growing recognition, by citizens and governments at all levels, that such resources have value and should be retained as functional parts of modern life. The historic resources of a community or neighborhood give it its special character and cultural depth. Some historic resources contain information whose study can provide unique insights into a community's past, and help answer broad questions about history and prehistory. In more utilitarian terms, each historic building and structure represents an investment that should not be discarded lightly; maintaining and rehabilitating older buildings and neighborhoods can mean savings in energy, time, money, and raw materials.

To make effective use of historic resources, to respect their value and extend their lives, it is necessary to integrate historic preservation into community planning. This is the immediate reason for undertaking a local historic resources survey: **to gather the information needed to plan for the wise use of a community's resources.**

A historic resources survey can define the historic character of a community or a particular area and can provide the basis for making sound judgments in community planning. Survey data can be used to construct a *preservation plan* that helps the community identify the historic, cultural, aesthetic, and visual relationships that unify and define its component areas, and to establish policies, procedures, and strategies for maintaining and enhancing them. It can lead to an increased understanding and awareness of the human environment by officials and citizens within the community and an increased commitment to preserving it.

An official preservation plan, prepared and adopted by the community and its planning agency, should provide a basis for integrating survey information with other planning data; it should be an important part of comprehensive community planning. It can establish priorities for dealing with historic resources within the framework of existing local planning programs and present specific recommendations for meeting these priorities.

A preservation plan may present specific ways to maintain and enhance the positive character of an area, identify legal and financial tools-easements, tax incentives, historic preservation commissions, preservation ordinances, zoning and land use controls, and revolving funds-that aid in the conservation of historic resources, and present design standards for new construction and for the enhancement of environmental amenities. A preservation plan can also illustrate the effect of revitalizing historic resources and can discuss the application of standards for restoration and rehabilitation.

The conduct of historic resources surveys and the development of preservation plans can also facilitate cooperation among local, State, and Federal government agencies in both preservation and community development activities. Establishment of a preservation planning program can help a local government qualify to participate in Federal historic preservation grants-in-aid programs, upon certification by the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Secretary of the Interior. It can also serve as a basis for the Secretary of the Interior's certification of local statutes and historic districts, which can facilitate the use of Federal Investment Tax Credits to stimulate rehabilitation of historic buildings. It can help a local government carry out the historic preservation review responsibilities delegated to it by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development in the administration of Community Development Block Grants and certain other grant programs, and it can simplify environmental review of Federal agency projects and assistance programs in the community. Finally, it can provide the basis for designing preservation projects that can receive funding assistance from the State Historic Preservation Officer, the Federal government, and other sources. Further information on relevant funding programs can be found in [Appendix III](#).

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR PRESERVATION PLANNING, IDENTIFICATION, EVALUATION, AND REGISTRATION

Standards for Preservation Planning:

Standard I. Preservation planning establishes historic contexts.

Standard II. Preservation planning uses historic contexts to develop goals and priorities for the identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment of historic properties.

Standard III. The results of preservation planning are made available for integration into broader planning processes.

Standards for Identification:

Standard I Identification of historic properties is undertaken to the degree required to make decisions.

Standard II. Results of identification activities are integrated into the preservation planning process.

Standard III. Identification activities include explicit procedures for record-keeping and information distribution.

Standards for Evaluation:

Standard I. Evaluation of the significance of historic properties uses established criteria.

Standard II. Evaluation of significance applies the criteria within historic contexts.

Standard III. Evaluation results in a list or inventory of significant properties that is consulted in assigning registration and treatment priorities.

Standard IV. Evaluation results are made available to the public.

Standards for Registration:

Standard I. Registration is conducted according to stated procedures.

Standard II. Registration information locates, describes, and justifies the significance and physical integrity of a historic property.

Standard III. Registration information is accessible to the public.

What should you know about the National Register before undertaking a survey?

The National Register, authorized under the 1935 Historic Sites Act and expanded under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, was designed to be an authoritative guide to be used by Federal, State, and local governments, private groups, and citizens in identifying the Nation's historic resources of local, State, and national significance and to indicate what properties are worthy of preservation and consideration in the planning process. The National Register is maintained by the National Park Service' U. S. Department of the Interior, located in Washington, DC.

The primary way that properties are listed in the National Register is through nominations by the [State Historic Preservation Officers](#). Potential entries to the National Register are reviewed against established criteria for evaluation which are worded in a flexible manner to provide for the diversity of resources across the country. These criteria are listed below.

The National Register has become an important component of many State and local historic preservation programs. Criteria for designating local landmarks and local historic districts, which by local ordinance may qualify properties for special tax rates or trigger special review when changes to the property are proposed, are often modeled after the National Register criteria. National Register listing often follows and reinforces State and local designations, extending the concern for preservation and protection to the Federal level. The Register is also central to a number of Federal programs that encourage protection and improvement of the manmade environment, which are discussed in [Appendices II](#) and [III](#).

Federal agencies, and communities using Community Development Block Grants and other forms of Federal assistance, are required to consider the effects of their projects, and projects they license or assist, on properties included in or eligible for the National Register. They must also give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment on such projects. For further information see [Appendix II](#) and the [Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's](#) publication, *Working with 106*.

Inclusion of a property in the National Register makes it eligible to be considered for grants-in-aid from the Historic Preservation Fund. When available, these grants may be used to acquire a property or to develop it in a way that preserves its historic and architectural character. The State Historic Preservation Officer can provide advice on the availability of Historic Preservation Fund grants.

Federal tax law provides incentives for the preservation of properties listed in the National Register or included within registered historic districts. Investment Tax Credits are provided for the rehabilitation of National Register properties qualifying as *certified historic structures* when rehabilitation work is certified by the National Park Service as meeting the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation](#). Tax deductions are permitted for the charitable contribution of easements on historic properties to qualified organizations. Tax incentives are discussed further in [Chapter V](#), and current information on Federal tax incentives can be obtained from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the [regional office of the National Park Service](#).

When a property listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register must be destroyed or damaged by an undertaking involving a Federal agency, funds authorized by the Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-291) may be used to recover any important historical or archeological data the property contains.

THE CRITERIA OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The following criteria are designed to guide the States, Federal agencies, and the Secretary of the Interior in evaluating potential entries (other than areas of the National Park System and National Historic Landmarks) for the National Register:

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 prehistory or history.

Ordinarily 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 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 deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
- B. a building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
- C. a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no other appropriate site or building directly associated with his or her productive life; or
- D. a cemetery that derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent 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 master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
- F. a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value, has invested it with its own historical significance; or
- G. a property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

For further information on the National Register criteria and how to interpret them, contact the National Register office of the National Park Service.

Who is the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)? What assistance can the SHPO provide?

State Historic Preservation Officers, appointed by the governors of the States, the chief executives of the territories, and the Mayor of the District of Columbia, carry out the historic preservation programs of their jurisdictions and are given the following responsibilities by the National Historic Preservation Act and other Federal authorities:

1. Carrying out comprehensive statewide survey of historic properties and maintaining inventories of such properties.
2. Nominating properties to the National Register.
3. Preparing and implementing a statewide historic preservation planning process.
4. Administering Historic Preservation Fund grants.
5. Advising and assisting Federal and State agencies and local governments in historic preservation matters.
6. Working with the Department of the Interior, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and others to ensure that historic properties are taken into account in planning.
7. Providing public information, education, and training in historic preservation.
8. Cooperating with local governments in developing preservation programs, and assisting them in becoming certified to manage Historic Preservation Fund grants and otherwise participate actively in the national program.
9. Reviewing requests for historic preservation certification and making recommendations to the National Park Service, as part of the Federal tax incentives program.

The Comprehensive Statewide Historic Preservation Plan, which is prepared and implemented by the State Historic Preservation Officer, is a dynamic planning process that entails organizing into a logical sequence information pertaining to the identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment of historic properties. It also sets priorities for accomplishing preservation activities within the State. Generally the plan takes the format of a series of established historic contexts that correspond to important aspects of the State's prehistory and history and characterize its significant historic resources. A *historic context* is, by definition, an *organizational 'framework that groups information about related historic properties based on a theme, geographical area, find period of time*. A knowledge of statewide historic contexts may help to identify themes of local as well as State importance and may strengthen the basis for evaluating the significance of properties identified during survey. In turn, survey results may help to augment, refine, and revise historic contexts and preservation priorities established at the State level.

The State Historic Preservation Officer can assist communities and Federal agencies undertaking historic resources surveys by:

1. Providing guidelines, standards, forms, and approaches to survey used in conducting historic resources surveys on a statewide basis.
2. Advising about approaches used by other communities and agencies, and providing contacts with those responsible for survey and planning activities elsewhere.

3. Providing documentation on what historic resources have already been identified by the State or others.
4. Advising in the development of high-quality local surveys.
5. Helping coordinate local surveys with Federally sponsored surveys and the State survey conducted by the SHPO.
6. Helping establish systems for survey data maintenance that will be most effective in meeting the community's needs and most compatible with regional, statewide, and national data management systems.
- 7 Nominating properties to the National Register.
8. Passing through funds for survey where a local government's historic preservation program has been certified to participate in the national preservation program.
9. Allocating National Park Service matching grants-in-aid for survey work.
10. Providing information on other sources of funding and assistance for preservation.

What is a *certified* local government preservation program and how can a survey contribute to certification?

The National Historic Preservation Act provides for *the certification* or approval of local historic preservation programs by the SHPO and the Secretary of the Interior. Certification of a program operated by a local government makes the program eligible for grants-in-aid from the Historic Preservation Fund administered by the Secretary, passed through the SHPO. Certification also makes it possible for a local program to exercise greater autonomy in the nomination of properties to the National Register and in other aspects of the national historic preservation program. Regulations covering the certification of local government programs can be found in [36 CFR Part 61](#).

To be certified, a local government program must enforce appropriate State and local preservation legislation, establish and maintain a qualified historic preservation review commission, provide for adequate public participation in its activities, perform other functions delegated to it by the SHPO under the National Historic Preservation Act, and maintain a system for the survey and inventory of historic properties, consistent with guidelines provided by the SHPO. Thus the conduct of a survey is a necessary basis for the SHPO's and the Secretary's certification of a community's preservation program for participation in activities under the National Historic Preservation Act.

What is the value of a historic resources survey and inventory?

To summarize, historic resources surveys and the resulting survey data and inventories can be used to:

1. Identify properties that contribute to the community's character, or that of its neighborhoods, or that illustrate its historical and architectural development, and as a result deserve consideration in planning.
2. Identify properties or areas whose study may provide information about the community's past, and contribute to scholarship, which should be preserved or subjected to scientific investigation.

3. Establish priorities for conservation, restoration and rehabilitation efforts within the community.
4. Provide the basis for using legal and financial tools to protect and enhance historic resources.
5. Provide planners with a data base from which to monitor and channel new development.
6. Increase awareness in the public and private sectors of the manmade environment and the need for preservation efforts.
7. Enable local governments and Federal agencies to meet their planning and review responsibilities under existing Federal legislation and procedures.

Who should sponsor a survey?

In order to have the greatest impact on planning decisions within a community, surveys of historic resources should have the official endorsement of the local government, although historical societies, professional groups, and interested individuals can help compile documentation, undertake research, and participate in fieldwork. It is important that, in addition to official endorsement, an ongoing process for collecting and evaluating survey data be officially incorporated into the community's planning activities to ensure the availability of current data for community development and planning agencies, local, State, and Federal agencies, public service organizations, developers, and others. Once a process for gathering data has been organized, a community will be able to respond expeditiously to requests for information about a particular building or an entire neighborhood. It is important that surveys be coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officer from the earliest stages of planning.

A community historic preservation office and commission established as part of local government can help to protect the resources identified through survey activities and to evaluate proposed development that may adversely affect the community's special character. A historic preservation planner in an existing planning commission or office may provide further assistance in carrying out these functions. Other techniques for protecting the community's historic resources are discussed in [Appendix III](#).

[Previous](#)[Back to top of page](#)[Next](#)

[National Register Home](#) | [Publications Home](#) | [Previous Page](#) | [Next Page](#)

[Comments or Questions](#)

JPJ

Planning Department

Find Out About Historical Surveys



What is a historical survey?

A Historical Survey is an inventory of properties that are at least 45 years old and retain reasonable architectural integrity. Historical Surveys are often used as planning tools as part of redevelopment activities or community plan updates. Although often conducted by volunteers, they are best prepared by, or under the guidance of, individuals meeting professional standards set forth by the National Parks Service. There are two types of survey: Reconnaissance Level and Intensive Level.



What is a Reconnaissance Survey?

A Reconnaissance Level survey is a broad-brush look at a study area to indicate what is potentially historical, what is not historical, and what needs additional study to make a determination of historical significance. Typically, properties are mapped, photographed and documented on standardized state forms (http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=1069).

Documentation includes information available through public records, like building or water permits. This includes original owner, architect, builder and date of construction, if known. The building's condition is noted, including obvious exterior improvements and alterations, with dates, if known. A short description records the architectural style, materials and method of construction. Finally, the property is evaluated for potential historical significance, based upon its condition and architectural merit.

A Reconnaissance Level Survey is a sorting tool. It separates properties with no potential for historical significance from those that merit closer scrutiny. It also provides baseline data for further research. It does not necessarily reveal information about significant persons or historical events associated with documented properties. They are most useful for quickly analyzing opportunities and constraints for future development as part of a larger planning effort.



What is an Intensive Survey?

An Intensive Level Survey starts with the information provided in a Reconnaissance Level survey, and adds more property-specific historical data. The property's Chain of Title indicates if significant persons lived or worked at the site during their productive years. Further research also identifies the architect, contractor or builder as significant practitioners and assesses how their body of work is represented by the subject property. Historical records can associate a property with significant historical events, or patterns of events in San Diego's history, as indicated in a Context Statement.



How is potential historical significance determined?

Potential historical significance is determined by a comparative analysis of similar properties within a related context. Historical contexts are developed through professionally prepared Context Statements that accompany the survey and provide the framework for decision-making.



What is a Context Statement?

A Context Statement provides the history of the survey area, organized into significant themes and related property types. Themes may include topics like: Early San Diego Settlement; Health Seekers and the Medical Community; the Pan American Exhibition; Business and Commerce; Auto-Related Development; Influence of the Navy; and Modernism.

Property types are identified and analyzed for expected frequency, location and integrity. For example, Spanish-era adobes may be extremely rare in the survey area, while post-war tract houses are common. Commercial buildings would be expected along old rail corridors, while naval facilities would be found in the port area. Adobes would most likely be somewhat deteriorated, since they are made of easily perishable materials, while more recent masonry structures would be in good condition because of the durability of their construction material.

In this way, common, ever-present and representative property types can be identified, and interesting, rare or exceptional examples are likewise noted. Rare properties in poor condition could attain exceptional status, in contrast to common properties in poor condition that would not be considered significant.



What does it mean if my property is included in a historical survey?

It most likely means that your property is 45 years old or older and has good architectural integrity. Depending upon the evaluator's rating, it could indicate that your property is: 1) potentially eligible for individual designation; 2) is a contributor to a potential historical district; or, 3) is not historically significant. An "individually significant" rating in a Reconnaissance Survey would indicate a good probability of meeting local designation criteria.

In cases where your property is identified as potentially historical, further research would need to be done to determine whether your property meets Historical Resource Board criteria for designation. This would only be necessary if you want to designate your property, or want to remodel or demolish your property. If you want to remodel or demolish your property, you would be asked to provide a historical study prior to getting your permit. The requirements for historical studies are located in the [Land Development Manual \(/development-services/industry/landdevcode/landdevmanual\)](https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/development-services/industry/landdevcode/landdevmanual) Historical Resources Regulations.

[View historical surveys \(/planning/programs/historical/faq/surveydocs\)](https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/historical/faq/surveydocs)

More frequently asked questions (/planning/programs/historical/faq)

Programs & Projects

- [Programs & Projects Home \(/planning/programs\)](/planning/programs)
- [Historic Preservation Planning \(/planning/programs/historicpreservationplanning\)](/planning/programs/historicpreservationplanning)
- ▼ [Transportation Planning \(/planning/programs/transportation\)](/planning/programs/transportation)
 - [Travel Forecasting \(/planning/programs/transportation/travel\)](/planning/programs/transportation/travel)
 - [Mobility Management \(/planning/programs/transportation/mobility\)](/planning/programs/transportation/mobility)
 - [Corridor and Special Studies \(/planning/programs/transportation/corridor\)](/planning/programs/transportation/corridor)
 - [Transportation Library \(/planning/programs/transportation/library\)](/planning/programs/transportation/library)
 - [Helpful Links \(/planning/programs/transportation/links\)](/planning/programs/transportation/links)
- ▼ [Multiple Species Conservation Program \(MSCP\) \(/planning/programs/mscp\)](/planning/programs/mscp)
 - [General Information \(/planning/programs/mscp/geninfo\)](/planning/programs/mscp/geninfo)
 - [Frequently Asked Questions \(/planning/programs/mscp/faq\)](/planning/programs/mscp/faq)
 - [MSCP Plan Summary \(/planning/programs/mscp/summary\)](/planning/programs/mscp/summary)
 - [Biological Monitoring \(/planning/programs/mscp/biomonitor\)](/planning/programs/mscp/biomonitor)
 - [Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan \(/planning/programs/mscp/vphcp\)](/planning/programs/mscp/vphcp)
 - [Documents and Maps \(/planning/programs/mscp/docsmaps\)](/planning/programs/mscp/docsmaps)
 - [Management Plans \(/planning/programs/mscp/mgmtplans\)](/planning/programs/mscp/mgmtplans)
 - [Helpful Links \(/planning/programs/mscp/links\)](/planning/programs/mscp/links)
- [Park Planning \(/planning/programs/parkplanning\)](/planning/programs/parkplanning)
- [Urban Forest Management Plan \(/planning/programs/urbanforest\)](/planning/programs/urbanforest)
- ▼ [Maps & Urban Analysis \(/planning/programs/mapsua\)](/planning/programs/mapsua)
 - [Mapping and Geographic Information \(/planning/programs/mapsua/map\)](/planning/programs/mapsua/map)
- [CEQA Policy and Review \(/planning/programs/ceqa\)](/planning/programs/ceqa)

Planning Department

1010 Second Avenue, Suite 1200

East Tower, M.S. 413

San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: (619) 235-5200

Email: planning@sandiego.gov (<mailto:planning@sandiego.gov>)

Planning Department

Historic Resources Survey Program

Only a small fraction of San Francisco's historic and cultural resources have been identified.

ON THIS PAGE

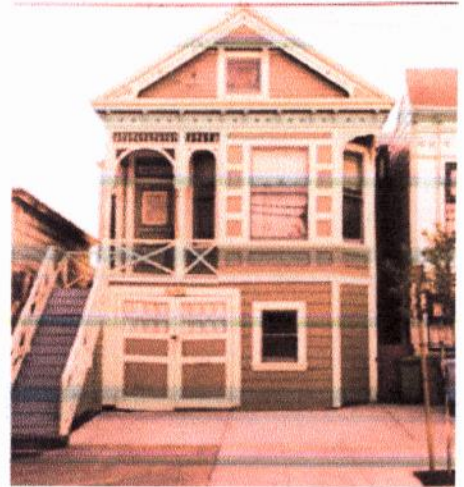
- ▶ [SURVEYS AND HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENTS](#)
- ▶ [NON-DEPARTMENT SURVEYS AND CONTEXT STATEMENTS](#)
- ▶ [HISTORIC RESOURCES CONSULTANT POOL](#)
- ▶ [SURVEY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS](#)
- ▶ [CONTACTS](#)



The foundation of a successful preservation program is an understanding of the location, distribution, and significance of historic and cultural resources, which include buildings, sites and/or landscapes.

This understanding is achieved through the historic and cultural resource survey process, described in more detail in [Preservation Bulletin No. 11](#). In addition to identifying important individual historic or cultural resources and potential districts, a survey can help identify buildings that qualify for local or national [preservation incentives](#) or inform the development of neighborhood-specific guidelines that protect neighborhood character.

To facilitate these and other preservation efforts, the Planning Department has established the Comprehensive Citywide Cultural and Historical Resource Survey (Survey Program) to manage and conduct historic and cultural resource surveys. A typical Planning Department Area Plan survey includes the development of a [Historic Context Statement](#), documentation and evaluation of buildings on [DPR-523 forms](#), and identification of potential Historic Districts and individually significant properties. This level of documentation and evaluation helps inform the public, property owners, government officials, and those who do business in San Francisco, making environmental review more transparent.



For information on historic and cultural resource surveys, please see the Survey Program's [Frequently Asked Questions](#), or the [Survey Work Plan](#).

In addition, the Survey Program has recently embarked upon development of the San Francisco Citywide Historic & Cultural Context Statement (SF Context Statement). The SF Context Statement will facilitate and guide the completion of neighborhood and thematic surveys, as well as evaluations of individual properties, in all areas of San Francisco. It will provide a comprehensive framework for surveying, identifying and evaluating San Francisco's historic and cultural resources. For more information, see the SF Context Statement [Work Plan](#).

Surveys and Historic Context Statements

The Planning Department's Survey Program focuses primarily on areas which are subject to long-range planning efforts, such as Area Plans and Better Neighborhoods Plans. Additional surveys address neighborhoods or topics that are also important for planning purposes. The table below includes a list of both current and completed historic surveys. For a PDF map of completed Planning Department survey areas, as well as other historic surveys in San Francisco, [click here](#).

The Department also maintains a library of older historic survey documents, as well as surveys not sponsored by the Planning Department. To learn more, [click here](#).

Survey Name
Details
Status

Central SoMa

The Central SoMa Historic Resources Survey began in 2013 as a planning effort associated with the [Central SoMa Plan](#). It focuses primarily on buildings that were constructed 45 or more years ago, and that have not been addressed by prior survey efforts.

The two primary features of this survey are the preparation of [historic context statement](#) and a reconnaissance level historic survey.

The draft survey results are [available here](#).

Current

Neighborhood Commercial Buildings

In 2014, the Planning Department began The Neighborhood Commercial Buildings Historic Resource Survey under a grant from the [California Office of Historic Preservation](#). The first phase focused solely on neighborhood commercial buildings constructed prior to 1965, which may be subject to the recently enacted mandatory seismic retrofit program for soft-story buildings. The second phase, begun in 2015, will examine commercial buildings located in San Francisco's neighborhood commercial zoning districts.

Current

Automotive Support Structures

The Automotive Support Structures Survey was designed to document early automotive support structures. The project began in 2008 and focused on areas along the multi-block Van Ness Avenue corridor, from Mission to Pacific Streets. These often low-rise buildings are a rare and vulnerable property type, and are located in an area facing increased development pressure.

Both the survey results and a historic context statement were combined in a report entitled [Van Ness Auto Row Support Structures](#). Overall, the survey resulted in the documentation of 112 properties with DPR 523A and DPR523B [survey forms which can be viewed here](#). A DPR 523D form was also completed for the [Pine Street Auto Shops Historic District](#).

Click [here](#) for a copy of the Planning Department's [Survey Case Report](#).

Completed

The survey was adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission on **July 21, 2010**.

Balboa Park

Balboa Park is located at the convergence of several neighborhoods: Ingleside, Westwood Park, Sunnyside, Excelsior and the Outer Mission. The Balboa Park survey was part of the greater [Balboa Park Station Area Plan](#). The survey focused on buildings located along and adjacent to the Ocean Avenue corridor (see the [survey area map](#)).

The history of Balboa Park's development was documented in the draft [Balboa Park Historic Context Statement](#). The survey documented 66 properties with DPR 523A forms, and 15 properties with the more intensive DPR 523B forms, as well as DPR 523D (District) forms for the Ocean Avenue commercial corridor and Balboa Park.

Results from this survey are expected to be reviewed before a public hearing at the [Historic Preservation Commission](#) in 2015.

Completed

Central Waterfront Survey

The Central Waterfront Historic Survey was a component of the [Central Waterfront Area Plan](#) and completed in 2000-2001 by the Planning Department in association with the Dogpatch Neighborhood Association. The survey boundaries encompassed the area from Mariposa Street south to Islais Creek, and from I-280 east to the Bay. The survey generated DPR 523A and DPR 523B survey forms for all properties built before 1956 within the plan area.

The history of the area was also documented in the [Central Waterfront Cultural Resources Survey Summary Report and Draft Context Statement](#). A significant residential enclave identified by the survey was subsequently listed as the [Dogpatch Historic District](#), under Article 10 of the Planning Code.

The Department's 2001 survey was updated in 2007-2008 to include the completion of a historic district record for the industrial area outside of both Pier 70 and Dogpatch, and to update DPR 523B forms with current historic resource status codes. The Port of San Francisco independently opted to seek consultant services to address Port-owned properties at Pier 70. As part of this, the [Union Iron Works Historic District](#) was added to the National Register of Historic Places on April 17, 2013.

Click here to view the [Pier 70 Master Planning web page](#).

Completed

The Central Waterfront Survey was [adopted by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board](#) on **December 5, 2001**.

Civic Center Cultural Landscape Inventory

The Civic Center Cultural Landscape Inventory provides information about historic landscape features that contribute to the Civic Center Historic District. These include public plazas, trees, pathways, and lighting, as well as other features that make the Civic Center a vital center of activity in San Francisco. The information will help inform planning decisions and encourage consistent design and maintenance of the Civic Center Historic District.

Projects within Civic Center are managed by various groups including: the San Francisco Planning Department, Recreation & Parks Department, Public Utilities Commission, Municipal Transportation Agency, Department of Public Works, and local partners.

Click here for a copy of the [Civic Center Cultural Landscape Inventory Report](#).

Completed

The Civic Center Cultural Landscape Inventory was [adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission](#) on **September 16, 2015**.

Inner Mission North

The Inner Mission North Survey was conducted by Planning Department staff as one of several planning studies used to inform the [Mission Area Plan](#).

The survey area was bounded approximately by Duboce Avenue and Market Street to the north, 20th Street to the south, Folsom Street to the east, and Dolores Street to the west. The Inner Mission North Survey included the documentation and assessment of more than 2,000 individual buildings and several historic districts that are located within the area.

Click [here](#) for a copy of the [Planning Department's Survey Case Report](#).

Completed

The Inner Mission North Survey was [adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission](#) on **June 1, 2011**.

Japantown

The Japantown Historic and Cultural Resource Survey began in 2007 and was conducted in association with the [Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan](#), a long-range planning effort undertaken jointly by the Japantown community and the Planning Department. As part of the survey, a [Historic Context Statement](#) was prepared to document the history of the area and inform the survey findings.

The survey documented over 500 individual properties on DPR 523A forms. More intensive research was conducted for selected properties using draft DPR 523B forms and a draft DPR 523D form. The survey results have not been adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission. The Japantown community and the Planning Department are reviewing the survey evaluations to better understand how the findings will integrate with the Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan in preserving the essential historic and cultural character of Japantown while also meeting other community objectives.

Completed

This context statement was subsequently [adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission](#) on **September 18, 2013**.

Market Octavia Plan

The Market and Octavia survey was part of the larger [Market and Octavia Area Plan](#). Beginning in 2006, the Planning Department contracted with consultants Page & Turnbull to survey the Area Plan boundaries. These included portions of several neighborhoods, including Hayes Valley, the Mission, SoMa, Civic Center, Upper Market, Duboce Triangle and Duboce Park, Lower Haight, Castro and the Western Addition. [See the survey map](#).

A [Historic Context Statement](#) was prepared to document the history of the area and inform the survey findings. The survey focused on buildings constructed before 1962 which had not been previously surveyed. A total of 1,563 buildings were documented with [DPR 523A forms](#). Individual evaluations for 155 buildings were also made using DPR 523B forms, and 736 buildings were evaluated as part of a group or district on DPR 523D forms ([click here for a map of identified historic districts](#)). The survey also resulted in updates to the previously identified Hayes Valley Residential Historic District, including [Update #1](#) and [Update #2](#).

The historic context statement and survey findings were [endorsed by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board](#) at a public hearing on December 19, 2007.

Completed

These findings were adopted by the Planning Commission on **February 19, 2009**.

Modern Architecture and Landscape Design

The [San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement](#) was funded in part by a grant from the California Office of Historic Preservation. The Planning Department developed the context statement in order to provide a framework for consistent, informed evaluations of San Francisco's Modern buildings and landscapes. The context statement links specific property types to identified themes, geographic patterns, and time periods. It also identifies character-defining features and documents significance, criteria considerations and integrity thresholds.

Completed

The context statement was adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission on **February 2, 2011**.

Showplace Square

The Showplace Square / Northeast Mission Survey focused on a largely industrial area touched by two adjacent planning efforts: the Northeast Mission portion of the [Mission Area Plan](#), and the [Showplace Square / Potrero Hill Area Plan](#). The survey was conducted by Planning Department staff in conjunction with local preservation consultants Kelley and VerPlanck.

A [historic context statement](#) was prepared in conjunction with the survey, which found that Showplace Square and the Northeast Mission share a similar development history characterized by commercial and industrial building stock. The survey documented 633 properties using DPR 523A forms. Two historic districts were also identified and documented with DPR 523 D forms.

For links to the survey results, including an interactive survey map and other resources, go to the [Showplace Square/Northeast Mission Survey page](#).

Click here for a copy of the [Planning Department's Survey Case Report](#).

Completed

The Showplace Square Survey was adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission on **August 17, 2011**.

South Mission

The South Mission Survey was one of several planning studies used to inform the [Mission Area Plan](#). It was conducted by Planning Department staff with assistance from local consultants Page & Turnbull. The survey boundaries included the area bounded approximately by 20th Street, Cesar Chavez Street, Potrero Avenue and Guerrero Street. A [Historic Context Statement](#) was prepared to document the area's development and identify significant themes and property types. In total, the survey documented approximately 3,800 individual buildings, including nearly 1,000 individual historic properties and 13 historic districts.

For an interactive map of surveyed properties and links to the survey forms, click here to visit the [South Mission Historic Resource Survey page](#).

Click here for a copy of the [Planning Department's Survey Case Report](#).

Completed

The South Mission Survey was [adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission](#) on **November 17, 2010**.

South of Market Area

The South of Market (SoMa) Area Historic Resources Survey included properties in the area bounded approximately by Market Street, Townsend Street, 1st Street and 13th Street. Although these boundaries touched on separate planning areas in East and West SoMa, a study by the [Western SoMa Citizen's Planning Task Force](#) determined that the area featured similar building stock. Thus, a single survey was used to benefit both planning efforts.

A [historic context statement](#) was prepared to document the development history of the area and inform the survey findings. The SoMa Survey assessed 2,142 individual properties, including approximately 1,467 properties constructed before 1963. Several historic districts were also identified, including the [Western SoMa Light Industrial & Residential District](#). [Click here for a copy of the Planning Department's Survey Case Report.](#)

Completed

The findings of the SoMa Survey were [adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission](#) on **February 16, 2011**.

Sunset District

In 2012 the Planning Department developed a [Historic Context Statement](#) focused on the Sunset District's prolific builder-developers and the residential tracts they constructed from the 1920s through the mid-20th century. The context statement was used to inform the results of evaluative survey of 2,762 single-family houses in the Sunset District constructed from 1925 to 1950. This included documenting clusters of eligible historic districts, as well as individually eligible historic buildings.

Importantly, the Sunset survey also documented and evaluated buildings that do not qualify as eligible historic resources. Data collection was completed in 2013 and summarized in the [Planning Department's Survey Case Report](#).

Completed

The survey results were [adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission](#) on **September 18, 2013**.

Transbay Survey

The Transit Center District Survey (Transbay Survey) was part of the larger [Transit Center District Plan](#). The survey focused on an area in the South of Market facing increasing development pressure, bounded by Market, Main, Tehama, and New Montgomery Streets. At its center was the 1939 Transbay Terminal, a commuter bus station which was demolished and is to be replaced with a new office tower and multi-modal transit center.

In 2008 a [historic context statement](#) was prepared for the area to help guide the identification of significant historic and architectural resources. The surveyed buildings were documented with [DPR 523 A and B forms](#). The survey also identified the [New Montgomery, Mission and Second Street Historic District](#), which was locally listed under [Article 11 of the Planning Code](#). On August 20, 2008 the context statement and survey findings were [endorsed by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board](#).

To view the plan's historic preservation policies and other materials, visit the Transit Center District Plan [Historic Preservation page](#).

Completed

On **February 1, 2012**, the Transit Center District Historic Resources Survey Update was [adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission](#).

Contacts

[Tim Frye](#)

Preservation Coordinator

[Susan Parks](#)

Preservation Technical Specialist

[Shannon Ferguson](#)

Preservation Technical Specialist

