



# Listing Property in the National Register of Historic Places in Michigan: An Overview of the Process & Requirements

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Thank you for your interest in listing property in the National Register of Historic Places. In brief, the process of listing property in the National Register includes the following steps:

1. Completion of a National Register of Historic Places Preliminary Questionnaire, and evaluation of the property's eligibility for listing in the National Register by SHPO staff.
2. Preparation of a National Register nomination (registration form, maps, photographs, etc.) by the applicant, or a consultant hired by the applicant.
3. Review and approval of the nomination materials by SHPO staff (multiple drafts is typical).
4. Presentation of the property to the State Historic Preservation Review Board for its approval, by the applicant, or a consultant hired by the applicant.
5. Submission of the nomination materials to the Keeper of the National Register by SHPO.
6. Listing of the property in the by the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places.

Each of these steps is explained in greater detail below. Please note that this document is not an exhaustive manual or guide to completing a National Register nomination in Michigan, it is meant simply as an overview of the process.

## **Timeline**

Listing a property in the National Register of Historic Places is not a quick process. In the most advantageous situation, the process will take several months. Typically, the process takes between twelve and eighteen months, but the length of time depends upon a great many factors. This timeframe takes into consideration research and preparing a preliminary questionnaire to listing in the National Register of Historic Places by the Keeper of the National Register. Preparers can minimize the time it takes to complete the nomination process by reviewing applicable NPS and SHPO guidance both prior to and during the nomination process.

## ***The National Register of Historic Places Preliminary Questionnaire and evaluation by SHPO staff.***

Unless we already have sufficient historical information on the property in hand because of previous inquiries or other historic designations, we will request that you complete a *National Register of Historic Places Preliminary Questionnaire* for the property. The preliminary questionnaire is available on the National Register page on the SHPO's website, [www.michigan.gov/nrhp](http://www.michigan.gov/nrhp).

Once you complete the questionnaire mail it to us along with the additional information requested in questionnaire checklist. **The SHPO does not accept preliminary questionnaires by email or file-transfer websites (Drop Box, etc.).**

Please note that workloads and resources necessitate the prioritization of some projects over others. While SHPO staff will make every effort to review preliminary questionnaires within a few weeks, it may very well take several months for SHPO to review lower priority projects. After we have reviewed the questionnaire we will provide our in opinion by letter. In some cases we may request additional information before completing an evaluation.

If we evaluate the property as appearing to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, we will encourage you to proceed with preparing a full *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (NPS Form 10-900) and accompanying documentation needed to nominate the property.

## **Preparation of a National Register Nomination**

### *National Park Service Guidance*

Nominating a property for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places requires the preparation a nomination that includes a *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, photographs, maps, and other documentation.

Please visit the National Register's official website, [www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm), for the following basic tools:

- NPS Form 10-900, *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* template (available only in Microsoft Word)
- National Register Bulletin 16A, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* – the NPS instruction manual for preparing a nomination
- National Register Bulletin 15, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*
- National Register Bulletins 12 and 21, *Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties* (with Appendix, Definition of National Register Boundaries for Archeological Properties)
- National Register Bulletin 39, *Researching a Historic Property*

Preparers are also encouraged to review the additional bulletins and guidance and sample nominations on the National Park Service's website. Please be sure to review the type of nomination similar to yours. The SHPO may also be able to provide a copy of a sample completed nomination form for a property similar to yours that may serve as a guide to the format and appropriate level of information needed.

### *State Historic Preservation Guidance*

In addition to reviewing National Park Service guidance, preparers are also encouraged to review SHPO guidance, available at the National Register page of the SHPO website, [www.michigan.gov/nrhp](http://www.michigan.gov/nrhp). In particular, preparers are encouraged to review:

- *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Submission Checklist*
- *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Deadline Calendar*
- *Michigan State Historic Preservation Office Style Guide*
- *Photograph Specifications for National Register Nominations in Michigan*

Reviewing all available and relevant documentation and guidance prior to beginning – and throughout – the nomination process will foster an efficient and successful process.

## Who Prepares the National Register Nomination?

**Not SHPO staff.**

Because of the workload, SHPO staff prepares few nominations in-house. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide SHPO with a nomination form and the accompanying documentation that meet all National Register and SHPO standards and requirements. SHPO will not proceed with the process of nominating a property to the National Register until the application is complete and in final form. See the list of required items to complete the National Register nomination package under **Before We Place Your Property on the Agenda for a State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting** below.

It is important to consider that a National Register nomination is a specific type of historical document that requires specialized knowledge, expertise, and experience. While anyone may prepare a National Register nomination, property owners may find it to be advantageous to hire a professional historic preservation consultant. SHPO maintains a list of federally qualified consultants, many of whom are experienced in preparing National Register nomination. Contracting this work out can often expedite the process of listing a property in the National Register. The *Historian/Architectural Historian Consultant List* can be found on the National Register page of the SHPO's website, [www.michigan.gov/nrhp](http://www.michigan.gov/nrhp).

### **Submitting a First Draft of the Nomination**

When submitting a first draft of a nomination, please provide a completed *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* and all items noted in the *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Submission Checklist*, found at the National Register page of the SHPO website.

**We will review the nomination materials as soon as time permits and respond to you with our comments.** While we understand delays are frustrating, workloads and available resources necessitate the prioritization of some projects over others. The SHPO staff will make every

effort to review draft nominations within a reasonable amount of time, but applicants should be aware that other duties may delay a reply for several months.

The SHPO review priorities are as follows:

1. Nominations that related to economic development projects (e.g. those projects receiving tax credits)
2. Nominations with grant or funding deadlines (including grants, contracts, etc.)
3. Nominations of federal properties
4. Nominations of properties located in [Certified Local Government communities](#)
5. Nominations that address priorities addressed in [Michigan's statewide historic preservation plan](#)
6. All others

**A note on site visits:** unless SHPO staff is familiar with the property, a site visit may be necessary during the nomination process.

### **Before We Place Your Property on the Agenda for a State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting**

Applicants and their consultants should review the [National Register of Historic Places Nomination Deadline Calendar](#) and the [National Register of Historic Places Nomination Submission Checklist](#). The deadline calendar provides useful dates for developing a timeframe for your project, and the submission checklist enumerates all of the materials that are needed before a nomination package is considered complete.

Following SHPO approval and before being submitted to the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places, National Register nomination materials are reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Review Board at review board meetings currently held three times per year.

**Please note:** nominations will not be scheduled for consideration by the Review Board until all materials are **complete and in final form**. “Complete and in final form” means that the final version of the registration form incorporates all revisions noted by SHPO staff, and all other required items have been received and accepted by us.

**For historic district nominations:** in addition to the parties noted above, a complete nomination package must include a mailing list of owners for all resources within the historic district boundaries, whether they contain buildings or not. For each property the list must provide both the property address and the owner's mailing address. For churches, institutional properties, and properties owned by governmental bodies, a name and title for the appropriate person to be notified must be provided. For districts containing twenty or more properties, the mailing list must be provided in .xls or .xlsx (Microsoft Excel) format.

### **A Note on File Types and Applications**

[www.michigan.gov/shpo](http://www.michigan.gov/shpo)

The State of Michigan utilizes the Microsoft Office suite of applications. Applicants and consultants are free to use any application to produce the required documents, but the final submitted products must be in the types specified above. Please contact SHPO with any questions you have or problems you encounter.

### **Submission of Materials to SHPO**

Preliminary questionnaires and final materials may be submitted to SHPO on either a CD or DVD or a “flash” drive (also called a USB or thumb drive). The SHPO will generally communicate with applicants via email during the nomination process. Please note: **we do not accept final materials by email or file-transfer website** (Drop Box, etc.).

All photographs, materials, and media (CDs, USB drives, etc) submitted to the SHPO become the property of SHPO and will not be returned. Additionally, photographs may be used in promotional materials unless copyrighted.

### **Deadlines**

Please see the [Nomination Deadline Calendar](#), found on the National Register page of the SHPO website contains a list of dates and prospective dates of upcoming meetings of the State Historic Preservation Review Board as well as a list of deadline dates for completed nominations.

### **Presentation to the State Historic Preservation Review Board**

The process of nominating a property to the National Register of Historic Places includes the presentation of the property and nomination to the [State Historic Preservation Review Board](#), currently held three times per year, usually in January, May, and September.

The presentation to the board (and by extension, the public) is made by the property owner or their consultant through a short presentation using electronic images in a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation. SHPO staff does not present nominations to the board.

Presentations of individual properties are limited to no more than ten (10) minutes.

Presentations of historic districts are limited to no more than fifteen (15) minutes.

### **Notification Requirements for Nominations**

Property owners, local elected officials, and other interested parties are notified and given an opportunity to attend the meeting and submit comments relative to the nomination of the property.

The property owner, sponsor, or consultant is required to provide SHPO with a list of property owners, local elected officials, and other interested parties. SHPO provides written notification to these individuals of our intent to nominate the property as well as the date, time, and place of the Review Board meeting.

For properties in non-Certified Local Government (CLG) communities, notification is sent between thirty and seventy-five days prior to the Review Board meeting date.

For properties in CLG communities, SHPO sends notification between sixty and 120 days prior to the Review Board meeting date. For a list of CLG communities in Michigan, please visit [the Certified Local Government webpage of the SHPO website](#).

In the case of historic districts with more than fifty property owners, federal regulations governing the National Register program allow the SHPO to publish a general notice in a local newspaper that serves the area in lieu of sending individual letters to owners.

Notifications also include a list of property owner rights and the results of listing a property in the National Register.

### **Submission of the Nomination to the National Park Service and Listing in the National Register of Historic Places**

Once the nomination materials have been approved by the Review Board and State Historic Preservation Officer, they are forwarded to the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior.

Listing in the National Register normally takes place within forty-five days following their receipt of the nomination materials, unless the nomination is returned to SHPO.

We are informed of new National Register listings weekly by email, and will notify the property owner, preparer, and the parties noted above by letter as soon thereafter as possible.