



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

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in listing property in the National Register of Historic Places. This document is meant to provide a general overview of the process and requirements. Each historic place is different, which means that each process for preliminary evaluation to listing in the National Register may be different. This document is not meant to cover every variation in the process or every property type. Rather, it is meant to provide information for the most common types of properties and experiences.

Overview

In general, 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 (*National Register of Historic Places 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.

Timeframe

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.

If the property has not been evaluated, the place to begin is the with *National Register of Historic Places Preliminary Questionnaire*, found at the National Register page of our website, www.michigan.gov/nrhp.

In some cases, SHPO staff evaluated a property as eligible for listing in the National Register some ten, twenty, or thirty or more years ago. When SHPO opinions (sometimes referred to as “determinations”) are ten or more years old, a current SHPO opinion is required and preparers must complete a preliminary questionnaire.

Once the necessary materials have been gathered and the preliminary questionnaire has been completed, please send it to SHPO (see Submission of Materials to SHPO at the end of this document for more information).

While SHPO staff will make every effort to review preliminary questionnaires within a month, workloads, resources, and project complexity may result in additional review time.

After we have reviewed the questionnaire we will provide a formal 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.

Preparing 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, 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 basic NPS “how-to” 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 found on the National Park Service’s website. SHPO may also be able to provide a sample nomination.

SHPO 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. In particular, preparers should review:

- *General Guidance and Requirements for National Register of Historic Places Nominations in Michigan*
- *Photograph Specifications for National Register Nominations in Michigan*
- *Map Requirements for National Register Nominations in Michigan*
- *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Pre-Submission Self-Review Checklist*
- *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Package Checklist*
- *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Deadline Calendar*
- *Michigan State Historic Preservation Office Style Guide*

Reviewing this documentation and guidance prior to beginning, and referencing those documents throughout, the nomination process will foster an efficient and successful process.

Sample Nominations

Sample nominations are available at the National Register page of the National Park Service website. Sample nominations are also available from SHPO for most project types. SHPO recommends reviewing applicable, listed nominations prior to completing both the preliminary questionnaire and the NRHP registration form.

Thematic Nominations and Context Documents

One of the keys to successfully completing a National Register nomination is the development of a historic context. Historic context provides the framework for evaluating the significance of place, and thus determining its eligibility for listing in the National Register. This concept is

explained in detail in the NPS and SHPO documentation described previously. The SHPO website, contains a number of thematic nominations and context documents that may aid in completion of a preliminary questionnaire or a nomination. These documents are available at: <https://www.miplace.org/historic-preservation/programs-and-services/national-register-of-historic-places/michigan-thematic-contexts/>.

Who Prepares the National Register Nomination?

Not SHPO staff.

Due to workload and resources, SHPO staff prepares few nominations in-house. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide SHPO with a preliminary questionnaire or 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.

Property owners interested in hiring a professional consultant may consult the SHPO list of consultants who meet federal qualifications for Archaeology, History, and Architectural History. Please note that inclusion in this list does NOT constitute endorsement or approval by SHPO, the State of Michigan, or any agency thereof. It is list of individuals who meet e minimum federal professional qualifications. Additionally, experience and expertise vary. We recommend soliciting multiple quotations and checking references when engaging with a consultant. The SHPO list of consultants is available at the bottom of the National Register page of the SHPO website, www.michigan.gov/nrhp.

Submitting a First Draft of the Nomination

Once a first draft of the nomination – registration form, photographs, maps, etc. – has been completed, we encourage preparers to review the materials against the *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Pre-Submission Self-Review Checklist*, found on our website, <https://www.miplace.org/4ad16b/globalassets/documents/shpo/programs-and-services/national-register-of-historic-places/guidance-and-instructions/nrhp-pre-submission-self-review-checklist.pdf>. This checklist is not required and does not need to be submitted with the nomination materials. The checklist is a tool addresses many of the general aspects of a nomination that SHPO staff considers during their review. Please note, the checklist is not a complete set of requirements, nor does use of the checklist constitute a completed or approved nomination or that the property will be listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

When submitting a first draft of a nomination, please provide a completed *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, a set of draft photographs, draft locational maps, and all

other items noted in the [National Register of Historic Places Nomination Package Checklist](#), found at the National Register page of the SHPO website.

SHPO staff will review the nomination materials as soon as time permits and respond to you with our comments, questions, and advice. Due to the number of preliminary questionnaires and nominations we receive and SHPO capacity, we may not be able to review all projects as quickly as we would all like. We fully understand delays are frustrating, and SHPO staff will make every effort to review questionnaires and nominations within a reasonable amount of time, but applicants should be aware that delays may occur.

SHPO staff uses the Track Changes feature of Microsoft Word and may provide a separate evaluation letter that provides additional information. Once SHPO has reviewed the draft nomination materials, the review nomination form and the evaluation letter will be sent to the preparer. Once the preparer has addressed the revisions, the revised draft nomination should be sent to SHPO for review. This process repeats until the nomination is complete.

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 Package 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 and in final form**. “Complete and in final form” means that the final version of the nomination incorporates all revisions noted by SHPO staff.

Presentation to the State Historic Preservation Review Board

The process of nominating a property to the National Register of Historic Places includes review and consideration of the property by the [State Historic Preservation Review Board](#). Part of this review includes the presentation of the property and nomination to the Review Board at one of its meetings, which are 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 seven (7) minutes. Presentations of historic districts are limited to no more than ten (10) minutes.

Notification Requirements for Nominations

Prior to the meeting of the State Historic Preservation Review Board, SHPO must notify certain individuals. For single-property nominations preparers must provide correct mailing information for each full or partial property owner, the chief elected official of the county, and the chief elected official of the municipality in which the property is located.

For historic district nominations preparers must provide correct mailing for each full or partial owner of property within the historic district, including noncontributing buildings and vacant parcels; the chief elected official of the county; and the chief elected official of the municipality in which the property is located. For each property the list must provide both the property address and the owner's correct mailing address. For commercial or institutional properties the list must contain a name and title for the appropriate person to be notified. For districts containing twenty or more properties, the mailing list must be provided in .xls or .xlsx (Microsoft Excel) format.

SHPO provides written notification to Property owners, local elected officials, and other interested parties. This notice includes a statement of our intent to nominate the property as well as the date, time, and place of the Review Board meeting. Recipients are invited to attend the meeting and submit comments relative to the nomination of the property. Notifications also include a list of property owner rights and the results of listing a property in the National Register.

For properties in non-Certified Local Government (CLG) communities, notification is sent between 30 and 75 days prior to the Review Board meeting date.

For properties in CLG communities, SHPO sends notification between 60 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 allow SHPO to publish a general notice in a local newspaper in lieu of sending individual letters to owners. Applicants or sponsors of historic districts with more than fifty property owners are responsible for the cost of the placing the general notice.

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. NPS reviews nominations within 45 days of receipt. A nomination may be approved, returned for revision, or returned as not eligible for

listing in the National Register. Returned nominations are revised by the preparer. In the event of a returned nomination, SHPO staff will contact the preparer to discuss NPS comments and the required revisions. SHPO is informed of new National Register listings weekly by email, and notifies the property owner, preparer, and the parties noted above by letter as soon thereafter as possible.

Other Information

A Note on File Types and Applications

The State of Michigan utilizes the Microsoft Office suite of applications. The *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* must be submitted in Microsoft Word .doc or .docx format. Registration forms submitted in PDF or another format will be returned to the preparer.

Photographs may be submitted in JPEG, TIFF, or RAW format.

Maps and figures may be submitted in JPG or PDF format.

Review Board presentations must be submitted in Microsoft PowerPoint .ppt or .pptx format.

Submission of Materials to SHPO

Preliminary questionnaires, first drafts, and final materials may be submitted to SHPO on either a USB drive (also referred to as a “flash” or “thumb” drive) or a CD or DVD. The SHPO will generally communicate with applicants via email during the nomination process.

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

Send the complete package to: National Register Coordinator, State Historic Preservation Office, 300 North Washington Square, Lansing, Michigan 48913.

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.