



A **National Register historic district** is a historic district that is listed in the **National Register of Historic Places**. The National Register is our country's official list of historic properties and resources worthy of preservation. It includes individual buildings, structures, sites, and objects as well as historic districts that are considered to be significant in American history, architecture, engineering, archaeology, and culture.

National Register listing **recognizes** the significance of properties and districts. By doing so, it identifies significant historic resources in a community. Boundaries of National Register districts are tightly drawn to encompass only concentrated areas of historic buildings. Information compiled to nominate a historic district can be used in a variety of planning and development activities. National Register listing also makes available specific preservation incentives and provides a limited degree of protection via review of the effects of federally funded, licensed, or permitted activities.

The National Register is maintained by the US Department of the Interior. In Washington state, the National Register program is administered by the National Register Coordinator at the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. National Register historic districts most commonly encompass central business districts, residential neighborhoods, industrial areas, rural areas, and, occasionally, entire communities.

A **local historic district** is a district designated by a local ordinance that falls under the jurisdiction of a **local historic preservation review commission**. A local historic district is generally "overlaid" on the existing zoning classifications in a community. Therefore, it deals only with the appearance of the district, not with the uses of those properties.

A local historic district is a geographically definable area, urban or rural, which contains structures, sites, and/or works of art which have special historical or aesthetic interest or value; represent one or more periods or styles of architecture typical of one or more eras in the history of the municipality, county, state, or region; and cause that area to constitute a visibly perceptible section of the community.



The designation of a local district **protects** the significant properties and the historic character of the district. It provides a community with the means to make sure that growth, development, and change take place in ways that respect the important architectural, historical, and environmental characteristics within a district. Local designation encourages sensitive development in the district and discourages any unsympathetic changes from occurring. This happens through a process called **design review**. The historic preservation commission reviews major changes that are planned for the district and issues **Certificates of Appropriateness** which allow the proposed changes to take place.



Identifies significant properties and districts for general planning purposes.

Analyzes and assesses the historic character and quality of the district.

Designates historic areas based on uniform national criteria and procedures.

Sets district boundaries tightly, based on the actual distribution pattern of intact historic properties in the area.

Makes available specific federal and state tax incentives for preservation purposes.

Provides a limited degree of protection from the effects of federally assisted undertakings.

Qualifies property owners for federal and state grants for preservation purposes, when funds are available.

Does not restrict the use or disposition of property or obligate private property owners in any way.

Does not require conformance to design guidelines or preservation standards when property is rehabilitated unless specific preservation incentives (tax credits, grants) are involved.

Does not affect state and local government activities.

Does not prevent the demolition of historic buildings and structures within designated areas.



Protects a community's historic properties and areas through a design review process.

Protects the historic character and quality of the district with specific design controls.

Designates historic areas on the basis of local criteria and local procedures.

Sets district boundaries based on the distribution pattern of historic resources plus other preservation and community planning considerations.

Provides no tax incentives for preservation purposes unless such are provided by local tax law.

Provides no additional protection from the effects of federally assisted undertakings.

Does not qualify property owners for federal or state grants for preservation purposes.

Does not restrict the use to which property is put in the district or require property owners to make improvements to their property.

Requires local historic preservation commissions review and approval, based on conformance to local design guidelines, before a building permit is issued for any "material changes" in appearance to the district.

Does not affect federal, state, or local government activities.

Provides for review of proposed demolitions within designated areas; may prevent or delay proposed demolitions for specific time periods to allow for preservation alternatives.