



Potential Historical Resource Review

City of San Diego
Development Services Department

INFORMATION
BULLETIN

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This Information Bulletin explains the process and supplemental submittal requirements for the Potential Historical Resource Review. If your project requires a construction permit, including No-Plan construction permits, and there is a structure 45 years old or older on any parcel affected by your project then it is subject to this review. If your project involves any parcel with a designated historical resource, or is located within the boundaries of an adopted historic district, please refer to Information Bulletin 581, "Designated Historical Resource Review."

The Potential Historical Resource Review is required by San Diego Municipal Code Section 143.0212. This code section directs City staff to determine whether a potentially significant historical resource exists on site before the issuance of a construction permit for any parcel in the City that contains a structure 45 years old or older. Interior development and any modifications or repairs that are limited in scope to an electrical or plumbing/mechanical permit shall be exempt where the development would include no change to the exterior of existing structures. City staff in the Historical Resources (HR) section and Development Services Department (DSD) administers this review. All permit applications for work on site containing buildings or structures 45 years old or older must be submitted through the Development Services Department for this review. Because of a commitment to consider public information in the review of projects 45 years old or older, there is no over-the-counter review. The length of this review will typically be ten business days for ministerial projects or 20 business days for discretionary projects.

I. POTENTIAL HISTORICAL RESOURCE REVIEW PROCESS

The review process begins with the submittal of plans and other required documents directly to the Development Services Department. Your plans and required submittal documents will be routed to HR staff for review and a determination of the potential historical significance of the

Documents Referenced in this Information Bulletin

- [San Diego Municipal Code, \(SDMC\)](#)
- [Land Development Manual](#)
- [Information Bulletin 122, How to Prepare a Site Plan and Vicinity Map](#)
- [Information Bulletin 513, Preliminary Review](#)
- [Information Bulletin 581, Designated Historical Resource Review](#)
- [Historical Resources Guidelines, Appendix E, Part 1.1](#)
- [Historical Resources Guidelines, Appendix E, Part 1.2](#)

property. Following is a brief outline of the two most common Potential Historical Resource Review determinations:

A. Not Historic

If City staff determines after review of these documents that no potentially significant historical resource exists on site, the parcel will be exempt from further historical review for five years. Cycle issue comments clearing the property for historic will be issued; however no plan set stamp from HR staff is required.

B. Potentially Historic

If City staff determines that a potentially significant historical resource exists on the site, all modifications and additions will be evaluated to determine consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties (Standards).

You can review the Standards at www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehabilitation-guidelines.pdf.

Staff's review of the project under the Standards can lead to the following scenarios:

- 1. Consistent with the Standards:** If the proposed project is consistent with the Standards, the permit process may

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proceed. The parcel would require additional review for all future modifications. Cycle issue comments identifying the property as potentially historic will be issued, and the plan set will be stamped by HR staff.

2. Potentially Historic: If the proposed project is not consistent with the Standards, the applicant has the option of choosing from the following two alternatives:

a. **Redesign:** If the project can be redesigned to consistency with the Standards, City staff can approve the project without requiring the Historical Research Report, and a permit can be issued. The property would still carry a determination of Potentially Historic, and all future modifications would be subject to the Potential Historical Resource Review process. Cycle issue comments identifying the property as potentially historic will be issued, and the plan set will be stamped by HR staff.

b. **Historical Research Report:** If the project cannot be designed to consistency with the Standards, a site specific Historical Research Report (Land Development Manual, Historical Resources Guidelines, Appendix E, Part 1.1) will be required to fully determine historical significance. A review of the Historical Research Report will be performed by City staff who will either determine that the property is not significant; or that the property is potentially significant. If the determination is that the property is potentially significant, it will be docketed to a hearing of the Historical Resources Board for consideration of historical designation. If the site is designated, any future projects would be reviewed under the Historical Review process. See Information Bulletin 580,

“Designated Historical Resource Review” for more information on this process.

If you would like preliminary advice on your project prior to submitting plans, please see the section on First Contact Assistance in Section III of this bulletin.

II. SUPPLEMENTAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to other documents required by DSD, the following items must be submitted. Incomplete submittals will result in a request for additional information, which may increase your review time and hourly fees, as well as delay your project.

All information in Items A and B below must be provided digitally on a CD. The CD must be labeled with the project number, property address, Council District and community plan name.

The customer is responsible for ensuring the submitted CD contains the required information.

A. BUILDING RECORD (RESIDENTIAL OR COMMERCIAL)

Please call the County of San Diego Assessor's Office at (858) 505-6262 to verify where your Building Record is located. If the property has not been assessed by the County and no Building Record is available, provide a note or letter to that effect with your submittal.

B. PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY

A photographic survey of the property shall consist of color photographs of each elevation of each building on the site (regardless of whether or not the building will be directly impacted by the project); a view of the front of the building or structure from the street; and photographs of any additional details relevant to the project. A photographic survey key showing the location and direction of each photo must be included as well. These photos shall be provided in color digitally on a CD. Please note: the

photos must be current and must be taken by the applicant. Photos from sites such as Bing Maps and Google Maps will not be accepted.

C. SITE PLAN

If your application is for a No Plan Permit, you must include a site plan. Please refer to Information Bulletin 122, "Plot Plan and Vicinity Map" for more information on how to prepare this document. **NOTE:** An additional site plan is not required if you are submitting construction documents or if you are seeking a demolition permit.

D. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS (DISCRETIONARY PROJECTS)

If your project is being reviewed through a Discretionary process, you must submit the following in addition to the items listed above. Discretionary Projects for detached companion units are not required to submit additional documents.

1. Written description of the property including architectural style, materials, features, setting and related structures.
2. Notice of Completion is typically provided as part of a chain of title search. This item can be obtained at the same location as the building record, County Administration Center, 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 103, San Diego CA 92101. If a Notice of Completion cannot be located, add the following note on the Building Record: "Notice of Completion cannot be located."

E. RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS (DISCRETIONARY PROJECTS)

The following documents may be requested by historical resources staff during the review process. They are not required for the submittal to be deemed complete, but providing them at this time can potentially decrease review times.

1. Written description of any alterations

including dates and the architect/builder associated with the alterations. Provide any available building permits. Note: The City of San Diego does not have building records older than 1955.

2. Chain of Title, available through title search companies or by conducting research at the County Administration Center. The Chain of Title must list the property's conveyance from seller to buyer (with date) since construction through the present day. Please note that deed copies do not satisfy this requirement.
3. List of Occupants, available in the City Directories at the San Diego Public Library, 820 E Street, San Diego CA 92101; or San Diego Historical Society Archives, 1649 El Prado #3, San Diego, CA 92101.
4. Historic photographs, available at San Diego Historical Society Archives and through research. Please note in writing if historical photographs cannot be located.
5. Sanborn Maps for all published years, available at San Diego Public Library or San Diego Historical Society Archives. Please note in writing if the property is not mapped in any published year of the Sanborn Maps.

These items will be reviewed by EAS as part of the CEQA review process, and by HR staff in order to determine whether a potential historical resource exists on the site. Additional information may be requested or the applicant may be required to submit a Historical Resource Technical Report (Land Development Technical Manual, Historical Resources Guidelines, Appendix E, Part 1.2).

III. FIRST CONTACT ASSISTANCE

The following options are available to you if you would like to consult with City staff before submitting your project for review.

A. You may make an appointment to meet with HR staff about your intentions for changes to your property for up to one half hour at no charge. This will allow you to discuss the appropriateness of changes or additions to your existing building. You should bring any sketches of your proposal to review with staff. Staff will discuss historical issues with you but will not make a determination during this meeting about whether the site should be considered for historical designation. During the meeting, staff will provide you with verbal comments about whether proposed additions or modifications appear to comply with the Standards which govern modifications to potentially historical sites. Staff may also be able to indicate to you whether your building appears, from photographs provided, to retain architectural integrity. Staff may also advise you to apply for historical designation, and explain the benefits of doing so. Meeting with staff does not waive the submittal requirements or Potential Historical Resource Review. The project will still be subject to this review (see Section I of this bulletin) once a permit application for the project is submitted to DSD. To schedule a meeting, please call or e-mail historical resources staff at HistoricalResources@sanidiego.gov or 619-235-5224.

B. You may seek a Single Discipline Preliminary Review (SDPR) for historical purposes. As part of the SDPR process HR staff can determine the potential for historic resources on your project site. In addition, if you have a proposed project, staff can provide comments on your projects consistency with the Standards. The project will still be subject to the Potential Historical Resource Review (see Section I of this bulletin) once a permit application for the project is submitted to DSD. Please see Bulletin 513, "Preliminary Review" for more information and submittal requirements.

In addition to other fees charged by DSD for the services of review and permit processing for your project, an hourly fee of review time is charged. Please refer to [Information Bulletin 501](#).

V. FEES

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