

NATIONAL REGISTER FACT SHEET 3

HOW HISTORIC PROPERTIES ARE LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Who Administers the National Register Program?

The National Register of Historic Places is a list maintained by the National Park Service of buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture, and that meet criteria for evaluation established by the [National Historic Preservation Act of 1966](#). Nominations to the National Register are submitted from each of the states by the **State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)**. In North Carolina, the SHPO is the Deputy Secretary of the Office of Archives and History. The section that administers the National Register and related programs is the [State Historic Preservation Office \(HPO\)](#). The personnel of the Historic Preservation Office serve as staff for the SHPO in National Register activities and duties.

In every state, a review board examines potential nominations and makes recommendations to the SHPO regarding the eligibility of properties and the adequacy of nominations. In North Carolina, the review board is called the **National Register Advisory Committee (NRAC)**. The NRAC meets thrice annually (February, June, October) to consider the eligibility of properties for nomination to the National Register. Nominations prepared under the supervision of the HPO staff and recommended for nomination by the NRAC are forwarded to the SHPO for review and formal nomination. They are then forwarded to the Keeper of the National Register in the National Park Service in Washington, D.C. Final authority to list properties in the National Register resides with the National Park Service.

How are Eligible Properties Identified?

Properties and districts that may be eligible for the National Register are usually brought to the attention of the HPO staff and the NRAC either (1) through a county or community survey of historic properties co-sponsored by the Historic Preservation Office and a local government or organization; (2) by interested individuals who provide preliminary information about properties to the HPO staff; or (3) through historic property surveys conducted as part of the environmental review process.

Persons who seek National Register listing for properties that have not been recorded in survey projects co-sponsored by the Historic Preservation Office may submit a "[Study List Application](#)" to the HPO. If adequate information and color views of the property are included with the application, the NRAC will consider the property at its next quarterly meeting. If in the opinion of the NRAC the property appears to be potentially eligible for the National Register, it is placed on the Study List. This action by the NRAC authorizes the HPO staff to work with the owner to coordinate a formal nomination of the property to the National Register.

The NRAC can best evaluate the eligibility of an individual property within the context of a community-wide or regional inventory of historic or prehistoric properties. This provides a basis for comparing the relative significance of similar types of historic or prehistoric properties in a community or region. *In counties or communities where no such inventory has been assembled, the NRAC will sometimes find it necessary to defer a decision about the eligibility of an individual property until a comprehensive survey of historic properties has taken place.* Likewise, the NRAC may consider some properties as contributing components within larger districts but not as individually eligible. [Information about grants](#) to local governments for local historic property surveys and nominations is available from the Historic Preservation Office.

