

# Our Rich Historical Heritage

## Answers to Questions for Owners of Historic Properties



### Why Preserve the Past?

Historic Preservation involves recognizing places from our past that are important, caring for them, and using them in ways that enrich all our lives. These special places reveal every aspect of our country's origins and development - our land, houses, workplaces, parks, roadways, waterways, places of worship and objects of art. Historic places help us understand who we are, as well as the meaning of our accomplishments and shortcomings. Preservation, above all, protects and maintains our past for future generations - the stewardship of our nation's legacy. County regulations for historic properties provide criteria for additions and alterations to ensure that the historic character of the property is preserved while also allowing for contemporary uses.

### Why is Preservation Important?

- First, it encourages a balance between cultural stability and appropriate growth, to improve the quality of life for everyone. America's richness is its diversity of peoples and cultures. Historical places play a critical role in defining and reinforcing this unique American identity. These places from the past also root us to our neighborhoods and communities.
- Second, preservation makes economic sense. Compared to new construction, rehabilitating existing structures often costs less and conserves scarce materials. Preservation is one solution to many problems facing the country, from green building to affordable housing.
- Third, preservation of public buildings provides opportunities to visit historical sites for both educational and recreational purposes. Such popular activities contribute significant tourist income to many local and state governments.
- The wide range of preservation activities is carried out by a partnership among Federal, Tribal, State and local governments, and the private sector.

### What is the Santa Cruz County Historic Resources Inventory?

Originally adopted in 1980, the Santa Cruz County Historic Resources Inventory includes any structure or collection of structures (along with associated sites) which has been judged to be of importance to the history of the County and meets the designation criteria for a historic resource.

Properties that are included in the Historic Resources Inventory are included in the Historic Landmark Combining Zone District. In the County GIS system, the "-L" symbol in the zoning description indicates that the property is a designated historic resource.

### How Does a Property Qualify for the Inventory?

Anyone can nominate a property for inclusion in the Santa Cruz Historic Resources Inventory. The nomination is reviewed by the County's Historic Resources Commission (HRC) with final approval by the Board of Supervisors. The HRC evaluates the nomination by the following criteria among other factors:

- Properties must have retained their architectural and historic integrity

- Architectural significance, including buildings representing a distinct architectural style or construction method, and works of a master architect or builder
- Cultural or social historic significance, including association with a person of local, state or national significance or association with an important historic theme or event.

### What Are the Benefits of Inclusion on the Inventory?

- The property becomes eligible to use the California Historical Building code, an alternative to the standard building codes. The Historical Building Code recognizes the unique construction problems inherent in historic buildings and can allow for cost-effective repair and rehabilitation of historic buildings.
- Properties listed on the California or National Register of Historic places may be eligible for tax credits.
- Exceptions to zoning and parking standards are available to designated historic properties
- The historic value of the property is protected for future generations from the vagaries of changes in ownership or local development policies.

### For Additional Information

The following organizations and agencies can answer questions you may have about national, state, and local preservation activities:

**Historic Resources  
Commission of Santa  
Cruz County**  
701 Ocean St, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
(831) 454-3111

**National Park Service**  
Historic Preservation  
<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservation/index.htm>

**California Preservation  
Foundation**  
101 the Embarcadero,  
Suite 120  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
(415) 495-0349  
<https://californiapreservation.org/>

**California Office of Historic Preservation**  
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95816  
(916) 445-7000  
<https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/>



Daubenbiss House, Soquel



Brookdale Lodge, Brookdale