

# DC Historic Preservation 101



## Goals of Historic Preservation



### Identify and Evaluate

- Survey and Document Potential Historic Resources



### Protect

- Nominate and Designate Historic Landmarks and Historic Districts
- Review Alterations, Additions, New Construction, Demolitions, and Subdivisions to Ensure Compatible Treatments



### Promote

- Encourage Reuse and Stewardship of Historic Properties
- Support and Enforce Standards, Design Guidelines, and Regulations
- Boost Financial Incentives
- Educate the Public about Historic Properties

## DC QUICK FACTS

- 800+ Listings in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites
- Over 27,000 Contributing Buildings in 70 Historic Districts
- 600+ Listings in the National Register of Historic Places
- 78 National Historic Landmarks

Find out more at:  
[historicsites.dcpreservation.org](http://historicsites.dcpreservation.org)

Data from DC Office of Planning/Historic Preservation Office

## WHAT MAKES A SITE SIGNIFICANT?

- Events
- History
- Individuals
- Architecture and Urbanism
- Artistry
- Work of a Master Architect
- Archaeology

Additionally, a site must retain physical integrity, which is defined by the National Register as Location, Setting, Design, Workmanship, Materials, Feeling, and Association.

# Benefits of Historic Preservation



✓ Allows for Community Involvement in Managing Change

✓ Maintains Community Character and "Sense of Place"

✓ Helps Ensure Compatibility and Minimizes the Loss of History, both Tangible and Intangible

✓ Promotes Restoration and Rehabilitation, including Adaptive Reuse

✓ Provides Incentives, including Tax Credits, Easements, and Waivers from Certain Building Codes



## PERMITS AND DESIGN REVIEW

- Permits are not required for "routine" work, such as painting, installing storm windows, and adding portable window AC units.
- When a permit is required, a project impacting a historic landmark or a building/structure in a historic district must be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Office (HPO). HPO staff review "minor work," including in-kind repairs to stone and brick masonry, roof replacements, alterations determined to be "unobtrusive," and smaller additions.
- "Major work" must be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) at a public hearing. This includes new construction, larger additions, and significant changes to a historic property.
- HPO staff work with applicants/architects, advising them on the most appropriate and compatible design options.

## HISTORIC HOMEOWNER GRANT PROGRAM

Up to \$50,000 is available to eligible homeowners within all DC historic landmarks and districts.

Funds can be used for exterior restoration, with restoration of original materials preferred over replacement.

Contact HPO at [historic.preservation@dc.gov](mailto:historic.preservation@dc.gov) for more information.

**Connect with DCPL!**  
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