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**California Office of Historic Preservation  
Technical Assistance Series #7****How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of  
Historical Resources**

*[Note: This document is to be used in conjunction with the Instructions for Preparing Documentation for Nominating Historical Resources to the California Register of Historical Resources (August 1997), which is attached as an appendix to this document and details how to fill out the nomination forms for the California Register program.]*

**GENERAL NOMINATION PROCEDURES**

To determine what information has already been collected regarding a particular resource, interested parties should first contact the Information Center that serves the county in which the property is located. Please refer to the Office of Historic Preservation website ([www.ohp.parks.ca.gov](http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov)) for the locations of the Information Centers.

For a checklist to ensure your nomination packet contains all necessary and supplementary material, please refer to pages 8-10 of this document. This section contains lists for standard nominations as well as for the nomination of surveys and ordinances.

**Cover Letter**

A cover letter must be submitted with the nomination and must include the names and addresses of the applicant, the resource owner and local government with land-use authority, and a concise statement of significance. The statement of significance should clearly list the justification for the importance of the historical resource.

For surveys being nominated to the California Register, the cover letter must include the names and addresses of the applicant and local government, owner names and addresses for all properties within the survey, an overview of the survey methodology to verify that it meets the standards outlined in the next section, and adequate mapping showing all areas surveyed.

For the nomination of local ordinances designating significant historical resources, the cover letter must include the names and addresses of the applicant and the local government acting as the designating body and a list of all locally designated resources being nominated with complete ownership information for each.

## **Appendix**

# **INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING DOCUMENTATION FOR NOMINATING HISTORICAL RESOURCES TO THE CALIFORNIA REGISTER OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES**

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## PREFACE

This manual is to be used in conjunction with the booklet entitled *How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of Historical Resources* (#7 in the Technical Assistance Series), which details the process of nominating a resource for listing in the California Register. The process discussed therein is based on the implementing regulations for the California Register program, codified in California Code of Regulations, Section 4850 et seq.

Direct any questions or comments about this manual to the Office of Historic Preservation at:

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## CALIFORNIA REGISTER CRITERIA

An historical resource must be significant at the local, state, or national level, under one or more of the following four criteria:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method or construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values; or
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

In addition to having significance, resources must have integrity. Integrity is the authenticity of an historical resource's physical identity as evidenced by the survival of characteristics or historic fabric that existed during the resource's period of significance. To be eligible for listing, resources must retain enough of their character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and convey the reasons for their significance. Historical resources that have been rehabilitated or restored may be evaluated for listing.

Integrity is evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It is also judged with reference to the particular criteria under which a resource is proposed for eligibility. Alterations over time to a resource or historic changes in its use may themselves have historical, cultural, or architectural significance. It is possible that historical resources may not retain sufficient integrity to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register, but they may still be eligible for listing in the California Register. A resource that has lost its historic character or appearance may still have sufficient integrity for

the California Register if it maintains the potential to yield significant scientific or historical information or specific data.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In this manual, you will find the instructions for preparing the DPR523 forms used for nominating historical resources to the California Register of Historical Resources, henceforth the California Register. The California Register is an authoritative guide to those historical resources which deserve to be preserved. However, before a resource can be listed on the California Register, it is necessary to record enough information about it to know where the resource is located, its current physical condition, and what attributes make it significant.

The State Historical Resources Commission, henceforth the Commission, has determined the Historical Resources Inventory Form (DPR Form 523 A through L) series, henceforth DPR Form 523, provides the best means for recording the necessary level of information. Using the DPR Form 523 series will also facilitate the inclusion of the resource into the California Historical Resources Information System if the resource has not been previously included.

Depending on the nature and complexity of the resource, it may be necessary to use several of the forms included in this manual. For every resource, the Primary Record and the appropriate evaluative and/or descriptive form (Building, Structure, and Object Record; Archeological Site Record; or District Record) will be the minimum level of information required to nominate an historical resource to the California Register.

### A. CLASSIFYING HISTORICAL RESOURCES

When nominating an historical resource to the California Register, it is useful to classify it. Categories of historical resources eligible for nomination are as follows:

**Building:** A resource, such as a house, barn, church, factory, hotel, or similar structure, created principally to shelter or assist in carrying out any form of human activity. "Building" may also be used to refer to a historically and functionally related unit, such as a courthouse and jail or a house and barn;

**Structure:** The term "structure" is used to describe a construction made for a functional purpose rather than creating human shelter. Examples of structures include mines, bridges, and tunnels;

**Object:** The term "object" is used to distinguish those constructions that are primarily artistic in nature or are relatively small in scale and simply constructed, as opposed to a building or structure. Although it may be movable by nature or design, an object is associated with a specific setting or environment. Objects should be in a setting appropriate to their significant historic use, role, or character. Objects relocated to a museum are not eligible for listing on the California Register. Examples of objects include fountains, monuments, maritime resources, sculptures, and boundary markers.

**Site:** A site is the location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses historic, cultural, or archeological value regardless of the value of any existing building, structure, or object. A site need not be marked by physical remains if it is the location of a prehistoric or historic event and if no buildings, structures, or objects marked it at that time.

Examples of such sites are trails, designed landscapes, battlefields, habitation sites, Native American ceremonial areas, petroglyphs, and pictographs;

**Historic District:** Historic districts are unified geographic entities which contain a concentration of historic buildings, structures, or sites united historically, culturally, or architecturally. Historic districts are defined by precise geographic boundaries. Therefore, districts with unusual boundaries require a description of what lies outside the area, in order to define the edge of the district and to explain the exclusion of adjoining areas. The district must meet at least one of the criteria for significance discussed in Section 4852 (b) (1)-(4) of the regulations.