



# CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

## CITY LANDMARK INFORMATION



### DEFINITION:

A **landmark** is any structure, natural feature, site or area having historic, architectural, archaeological, cultural or aesthetic significance and designated as a **landmark** under the provisions of Municipal Code Chapter 22.22.

“Structure” is defined as any building or any other man-made object affixed on or under the ground.

***A City Landmark is the highest distinction given to a historic resource in the City of Santa Barbara.***

### ELIGIBILITY:

The building must qualify for one or more of following criteria provided by the Municipal Code, Section 22.22.040 to be eligible for designation as a City Landmark and retain most of its original features so that it still retains its original appearance.

- A. Its character, interest or value as a significant part of the heritage of the City, the State or the Nation;
- B. Its location as a site of a significant historic event;
- C. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the City, the State or the Nation;
- D. Its exemplification of a particular architectural style or way of life important to the City, the State or the Nation;
- E. Its exemplification of the best remaining architectural type in a neighborhood;
- F. Its identification as the creation, design or work of a person or persons whose effort has significantly influenced the heritage of the City, the State or the Nation;
- G. Its embodiment of elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship;
- H. Its relationship to any other landmark if its preservation is essential to the integrity of that landmark;
- I. Its unique location or singular physical characteristic representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood;
- J. Its potential of yielding significant information of archaeological interest;
- K. Its integrity as a natural environment that strongly contributes to the well-being of the people of the City, the State or the Nation. (Ord. 5333, 2004; Ord. 4848, 1994; Ord. 3900 §1, 1977)

## PROCEDURE:

Upon its own initiative or upon the application of any person or entity (hereinafter referred to as the applicant) the Commission may recommend to the City Council the designation as a landmark of any structure, natural feature, site or area (hereinafter referred to as the property) having historic, architectural, archaeological, cultural or aesthetic significance. The procedure for designation of any landmark is as follows:

- A. City architectural historian will prepare the historic significance report and present the report to the Designation Sub-committee.
- B. The Commission may adopt a resolution of intention announcing its intention to consider recommendation of the property to the City Council for designation as a landmark.
- C. At least ten (10) days before the hearing, notice is put in the newspaper and is sent to the applicant, to the property owner, and to owners of abutting properties.
- D. The public hearing is held by the Historic Landmarks Commission, and oral or written comments are received at the meeting. The public hearing may be continued to subsequent meetings if there is no objection. Reasons for a continuance may include the need for more information, or the desire to consult with other persons, among other things.
- E. If the Commission decides to recommend designation of a **landmark**, it adopts a resolution to recommend the designation to the City Council.
- F. The Commission's written report and resolution are sent to the City Council, and the Council considers them at a public hearing. If the Council decides to designate a **landmark**, it adopts a resolution within ninety (90) days after receipt of the recommendation.
- G. The designation becomes effective with adoption of the City Council resolution, and the designation is then recorded with the County Recorder.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND RESTRICTIONS:

- A. Exterior alterations may be made to a **landmark** for the purpose of restoration to its original appearance, or to substantially aid its preservation or enhancement, with the written approval of the Historic City Landmarks Commission.
- B. A **landmark** may be relocated, under certain conditions, with the written approval of the above named bodies.
- C. A **landmark** may only be demolished, subject to the written approval of the Historic Landmarks Commission, if it is damaged by earthquake, fire, or act of God to such an extent that it cannot reasonably be repaired and restored.
- D. Municipal Code Chapter 22.22 requires that every **landmark** shall be maintained in good repair by the owner or other person in legal control of it.

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

Title to **landmark** property does not change as a result of designation. There are no restrictions on sale of **landmarks**. Designation as a **landmark** does not establish a requirement that the site, area or structure be open to the public.

In many cases, research performed during the City's Survey of Architectural and Historic Resources has provided information about the background of individual buildings available at the City Planning Department

The office of the City Planning Division, Community Development Department, has a collection of publications on the preservation of historic properties. Interested persons are welcome to contact the office to see these publications, or to obtain further information on the designation process. A list of designated **landmarks** is available on the City's Historic Preservation Web Page at [www.santabarbaraca.gov](http://www.santabarbaraca.gov).

# Benefits and Incentives

## Preservation BENEFITS

Historic preservation is not just about regulations that prevent inappropriate changes to historic resources. Residential homeowners also find that property values stabilize or increase when historic preservation standards are used in rehabilitating their homes. This occurs in part because of the investments made to rehabilitate the homes, as well as the added prestige of owning a designated structure. Nationwide studies also show that preservation projects contribute more to the local economy than do new building programs because each dollar spent on a preservation project has a higher percentage devoted to labor and to the purchase of local materials. By contrast, new construction typically has a higher percentage of each dollar spent devoted to materials that are produced outside the local economy and to special construction skills that may be imported. National and California State studies have proven that local designation provides the following benefits:

- Increases neighborhood stability
- Increases property values
- Preserves the physical history of the area
- Promotes an appreciation of the physical environment
- Fosters community pride and self-image by creating a unique sense of place and local integrity
- Increases the awareness and appreciation of local history
- Attracts potential customers to city businesses
- Increases city tourism

## STATE AND FEDERAL TAX CREDIT INCENTIVE

Economic incentives are available to historic preservation projects at the local, state, and federal levels. The State of California and the Federal Government offers rehabilitation tax credits to designated and qualified projects and properties.

## MILLS ACT PROPERTY TAX INCENTIVE

The Historical Property Contract Program (Mills Act) provides property tax abatement to properties designated as Structures of Merit or City Landmarks. Under the program, property owners receive a significant reduction in local property taxes in exchange for their promise to actively participate in restoring, rehabilitating, repairing, and preserving their properties. Participants enter into a perpetual 10-year contract with the City. For details, please refer to the web site:

<http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/services/community/historic/preservation/mills.asp>

## CALIFORNIA STATE HISTORICAL BUILDING CODE

One of California's most valuable tools for the preservation of historic resources is the California State Historical Building Code (CHBC), which is defined in Sections 18950 to 18961 of Division 13, Part 2.7 of Health and Safety Code (H&SC), a part of California Law. The CHBC is intended to save California's architectural heritage by recognizing the unique construction issues inherent in maintaining and adaptively reusing historic resources. The CHBC provides alternative building regulations for permitting repairs, alterations, and additions necessary for the preservation, rehabilitation, relocation, related construction, change of use, or continued use of a "qualified historical building or structure." The CHBC's standards and regulations are intended to facilitate the rehabilitation or change of occupancy so as to preserve their original or restored elements and features, encourage energy conservation and a cost effective approach to preservation, and

provide for reasonable safety from fire, seismic forces, or other hazards for occupants and users of such historic resources, structures, and properties, and to provide reasonable availability and usability by the physically disabled.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS**

“The greenest building is one that is already built.” Preserving an historic structure is sound environmental conservation policy because “reusing” saves energy and reduces the need for producing new construction materials. Many historic resources are inherently “green” in the following ways:

- Energy is not consumed to demolish a building and dispose of the resulting debris.
- Energy is not used to create new building materials, transport them, and assemble them on site.
- The embodied energy which was used to create the original building and its components is preserved.
- By reusing older historic resources, pressure is reduced to harvest new lumber and other materials that may have negative impacts on the environment.