

**SAN FRANCISCO**  
**PRESERVATION BULLETIN NO. 17**

**A PRESERVATION ELEMENT GLOSSARY**

**Alteration.** Any act or process that changes any portion of the exterior architectural appearance or exceptionally significant interiors of a structure or object, including, but not limited to the erection, construction, reconstruction or removal of any exterior architectural features or interior architectural design of a structure.

**Archaeological District.** A significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites important in history or prehistory.

**Archaeological Site.** Property containing archeological deposits or features, usually with site boundaries defined by the character and location of said deposits or features.

**Archaic Materials and Methods of Construction.** Any material or method of construction that was part of the historical structure and may be reused in a preservation, restoration or rehabilitation projects.

**Architecturally and/or Historically Significant Building.** Shall mean, in part, a Cultural Resource. *See Cultural Resource.*

**Boundaries.** Lines delineating a geographical extent or area.

**Boundary Description.** A statement or description of the precise boundaries of a historic property such as lot number, and metes and bounds of a township and range.

**Boundary Justification.** An explanation to justify selection of boundaries.

**Building.** A resource created principally to shelter any form of human activity, such as a house.

**California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS).** California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) is a statewide system for managing information on the full range of historical resources identified in California. Specifically, those resources evaluated in historical resource surveys conducted in accordance with criteria established by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), formally determined eligible for, or listed in the National Register of Historic Places or designated as California Registered Historical Landmarks or California Points of Historical Interest. CHRIS is a cooperative partnership between the citizens of California, historic preservation professionals, twelve Information Centers, the CHRIS Hub, and various agencies.

**California Register of Historical Resources.** The California Register of Historical Resources is a comprehensive listing of California's historical resources, including those of local, state and national significance. The "significance" criteria for the California Register are similar to those used by National Register of Historic Places, which includes resources formally determined eligible for, or listed in, the National Register of Historic Places.

**California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA).** (13 Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq). The act requires private and public activities not specifically exempted to be evaluated against the potential for environmental damage, including effects to historical resources.

**Certified Local Government (CLG).** The CLG program is a model and cost-effective local, state, and federal partnership that promotes historic preservation at the grassroots level. Through an agreement between the City and County of San Francisco and the California OHP, the City carries out some of the functions of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended. The OHP also provides the City with technical assistance and small matching grants to aid in the preservation of local resources.

**Certificate of Appropriateness.** A Certificate of Appropriateness is the authorization designated City Landmarks and Historic Districts require for the following types of work: 1) Designated City Landmarks -- exterior alterations requiring a permit and demolitions of a site or structure; 2) Designated City Historic Districts -- alterations requiring a permit and other types of exterior changes visible from a public street or other public places (as provided in the historic district ordinance, even when a permit is not required) demolitions and new construction of a site or structure within the district.

**Context Statement.** An organizing structure for interpreting history that groups information about historic resources that share a common theme, common geographical area and a common time period. Context statements are similar to a statement of significance for a local historic district or the summary statement for a local landmark nomination.

**Contributory.** A classification applied to a site, structure or object within a historic district signifying that it generally shares, along with most of the other sites, structures or objects in the historic district, the qualities that give the historic district cultural, historic, architectural or archaeological significance as embodied by the criteria for designating the historic district. These resources are of the highest importance in maintaining the character of the historic district. Typically, contributory resources have been modified very little over time.

**Conservation District.** Conservation Districts are areas that contain substantial concentrations of buildings that together create sub areas of special architectural and aesthetic importance.

**Conservation Easement.** Also called a preservation easement, a conservation easement is a legal agreement designed to protect a significant historic, archaeological, or cultural resource through a “less than fee” interest in real property acquired through donation or purchase and carried as a deed restriction on the property. In the case of a façade easement, the historic property owner is assured that the building's façade will be maintained, protected and preserved forever.

**Cultural Heritage Tourism.** Cultural Heritage Tourism, which includes historic, cultural and natural resources, is the function of traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present.

**Cultural Landscape.** A cultural landscape is a geographic area that historically has been used by people, and is shaped or modified by human activity, occupation or intervention or possesses significant value in the belief system of a culture or society.

**Cultural Resource.** Includes, but is not limited to, any building, area, place, record or manuscript, site, structure, street furniture, monuments, object, district, or landscape evaluated as historically or archaeologically significant, or is significant in architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of San Francisco, the state of California or the nation.

**Cultural Resources Inventory.** A set of data, such as a list of historic resources generated through a Historic Resource Survey.

**Cultural Resource Survey.** The process of systematically identifying, researching, photographing and documenting archeological or historical resources within a defined geographic area or setting.

**Demolition.** The San Francisco Building Code defines demolition as the “removal of all debris and remove all parts of the structure above grade excepting those parts that are necessary to provide support for the adjoining property.” Article 10 defines demolition as “(1) removal of more than 25 percent of the surface of all external walls facing a public street(s); or (2) removal of more than 50 percent of all external walls from their function as all external walls; or (3) removal of more than 25 percent of external walls from function as either external or internal walls; or (4) removal of more than 75 percent of the building's existing internal structural framework or floor plates unless the City determines that such removal is the only feasible means to meet the standards for seismic load and forces of the latest adopted version of the San Francisco Building Code and the State Historical Building Code.”

**Design Guidelines.** Design Guidelines detail the character defining features that are unique to a particular landmark or historic district. Design Guidelines are used to evaluate the appropriateness of projects that may result in alteration, construction, relocation or new construction of a landmark or historic district. Design Guidelines are any design standard specified by the San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) at the time of designation of the landmark or historic district. The Planning Department also uses the Residential Design Guidelines adopted in 1989 (revised in 2003) to review alteration and new construction projects that affect both non-historic as well as historic buildings and sites.

**DPR 523.** California Department of Parks and Recreation Historic Resource Inventory Forms. The **DPR 523A** provides descriptive information about a resource. The **DPR 523B** form provides an evaluation of the resources and includes a determination as to whether the resource is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Formally Determined Eligible for Listing.** An action through which the eligibility of a property for listing is decided but the property is not actually listed. Nominating authorities and federal agency officials commonly request determinations of eligibility for federal planning purposes.

**Exterior Architectural Appearance.** The architectural character and general composition of the exterior of a structure visible from a public street or way, including but not limited to the kind, color and texture of the building material and the type, including, but not limited to, windows, doors, light fixtures, trim and signs.

**Façade Easement.** *See Conservation Easement.*

**Generally Accessible to the Public.** Any area that may be for private use but depends upon public patronage and allows members of the public to enter and view an area. This includes, without limitation, areas such as a hotel or office building lobby, theater, or department store.

**Historic Building.** In general, an historic building includes all buildings designated as city landmarks or located within designated historic districts as identified through Article 10 of the Planning Code; all buildings listed in, or determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (which includes the California Register of Historical Resources); Category I and II buildings listed in Article 11 of the Planning Code; and resources surveyed through the following: North Beach, Dogpatch, Central Waterfront and Here Today cultural resource surveys.

**Historic Context.** An organizing structure for interpreting history that groups information about historic resources that share a common theme, common geographical area, and a common time period. The development of historic contexts is a foundation for decisions that affect the planning, identification, evaluation, registration and treatment of historic resources.

**Historic Context Statement.** *See Context Statement.*

**Historic District.** A concentration of historic buildings, structures, sites or objects that are related through history, architecture or cultural association and possess a high level of integrity. Historic districts are commonly defined by precise geographic boundaries. Districts with unusual boundaries usually require a description of what lies outside the area delineated in order to define the edge of the resources and to explain the exclusion of adjoining areas. Local historic districts are designated by ordinance of the Board of Supervisors for the City and County of San Francisco.

**Historic Fabric.** For an historic building -- the particular materials, ornamentation and architectural features that together define the historic character of the building. For an historic district -- all sites, building, structures, historic landscape features, objects, infrastructure improvements and related design components that together define the historic character of the district.

**Historical Resource.** *See Qualified Historical Building.*

**Investment Tax Credit.** A provision under tax law which allows the amount of money invested in capital rehabilitation to be deducted from personal income taxes owed, specifically the provisions for certified National Register structures included in the Economic Recovery Act of 1981 (Internal Revenue Code 48, 168, 170, 280B).

**Integrity.** Integrity is the authenticity of physical characteristics from which resources obtain their significance. Integrity is the composite of seven qualities: location, design,

setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. When properties retain integrity, they are able to convey their association with events, people, and designs from the past.

**Interior Architectural Design.** The architectural character and general composition of the interior of a structure, including but not limited to room design and configuration, material and the type, pattern and character of all architectural details and elements, including but not limited to staircases, floors, hardware, moldings, trim, plaster work, light fixtures and wall coverings.

**Kalman Methodology.** From 1980 to 2000, San Francisco utilized the Kalman Methodology (a ratings system) to evaluate landmark eligibility. The methodology used 13 criteria to evaluate a cultural resource, under four broad areas: architecture, history, environment and integrity. In 2000, the Landmarks Board adopted the National Register of Historic Places criteria as the official measure to determine eligibility.

**Landmark.** A cultural resource (building, structure, site or object) designated as a “landmark” by ordinance of the Board of Supervisors for the City and County of San Francisco pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

**Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board.** The San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Board is a mayoral-appointed, nine-member advisory board to both the Planning Department and the Planning Commission on historic preservation matters.

**Mural.** A painting, picture or decoration applied, executed on or affixed to a wall as defined in Article 10 of the Planning Code and may require a Certificate of Appropriateness to modify or alter.

**National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).** (42 United States Code 4321-4347). NEPA established a review and assessment process for federally funded or license projects with the potential to render adverse environmental impacts, including historic properties.

**National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).** The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470-470t), as amended. Established the National Register of Historic Places program and extended national historic preservation programs to properties of state and local significance.

**National Register of Historic Places.** The official inventory of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architectural, archeology and culture, maintained by the Secretary of Interior under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (amended) (16 U.S.C. 470-470+, 36. C.F.R. Sections 60, 63).

**National Register Criteria.** The federally established standards for evaluating the eligibility of properties for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

**Noncontributory.** A classification applied to a site, structure or object within a historic district indicating that it is not representative of the qualities that give the historic district cultural, historic, architectural or archaeological significance as embodied by the criteria for designating the historic district. Buildings constructed after the district’s period of

significance, or dating from the district's period of significance but have undergone significant alterations, shall qualify for this rating.

**Object.** Objects are constructions primarily artistic in nature of relatively small in scale and simply constructed. An object is typically associated with a specific setting or environment, such as a fountain or boundary marker.

**OHP.** The California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) is the governmental agency primarily responsible for the statewide administration of the historic preservation program in California. The mission of the Office of Historic Preservation and the State Historical Resources Commission, in partnership with the people of California and governmental agencies, is to "preserve and enhance California's irreplaceable historic heritage as a matter of public interest so that its vital legacy of cultural, educational, recreational, aesthetic, economic, social, and environmental benefits will be maintained and enriched for present and future generations."

**Ordinary Maintenance.** Acts of maintenance or repair that do not include a change in the design, material or outer appearance of a resource, including repainting, replacement of materials or windows of the same scale, texture and color.

**Permit to Alter.** Refers to applications under Article 11 of the Planning Code where a building permit is required for buildings designated Significant or Contributory or located within a Conservation District. The Zoning Administrator determines whether the proposed alteration is a major or minor alteration pursuant to Section 1111.1 of the Planning Code.

**Preservation (treatment).** The act or processes of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity, and material of a building or structure, and the existing form and vegetative cover of a site. It may include initial stabilization work, where necessary, as well as ongoing maintenance of the historic building materials.

**Preservation Planning.** A series of activities through which goals, priorities and strategies for identification, evaluation, registration and protection of historic properties are developed, set forth and carried out.

**Point of Historical Interest.** The California Point of Historical Interest (Public Resources Code 5021) is a state historical resources registration program that provides official recognition for historical resources that are significant to a county or regional level, but do not qualify for designation as state designated landmark.

**Qualified Historical Building.** The State Historic Building Code (SHBC) contains a definition of a qualified historic building that is any building, structure, object, or collection or grouping thereof and their associated sites and any historic landscapes, which have been designated as important to history, architecture, archaeology or culture of an area by a local, state or federal governmental jurisdiction. This definition includes 1) properties listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources, or both; 2) properties designated or listed as historically, architecturally or culturally significant, whether individually or as contributing to a geographical or thematic district, under any municipal or county ordinance; 3) properties identified as significant historical resource surveys, if the survey meets the criteria listed in subdivision (g) of Section 5024.1 of the Public Resources

Code; and properties not included in sections 1 through 3 above, but determined to be historical resources by a lead agency pursuant to and for the purposes of Section 21084.1 of the Public Resources Code.

For purposes of CEQA (see *California Environmental Quality Act*), “historical resource” is used when the property meets the terms of the definitions in Section 21084.1 of the CEQA Statute and Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines. “Historical Resources” include properties listed in or determined eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources, or listed in a local historic register. The term “local historic register” or “local register of historical resources” means a list of resources that are officially designated or recognized as historically significant by a local government pursuant to resolution or ordinance. Additionally, properties that are not listed but are otherwise determined to be historically significant, based on substantial evidence, may also be considered “historical resources.”

**Reconstruction (treatment).** The act or process of reproducing by new construction the exact form and detail of a vanished building, structure, or object, or any part thereof, as it appeared at a specific period of time.

**Rehabilitation (treatment).** The act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration that makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural value.

**Restoration (treatment).** The act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of later work or by the replacement of missing earlier work.

**Secretary of Interior’s Standards.** The Secretary of the Interior’s *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Standards)*, with accompanying interpretive guidelines, are utilized by federal agencies in the preservation of historic properties that are listed or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; by State Historic Preservation Offices in evaluation projects proposed for historic properties in accordance with federal regulations; by local governments, organizations and individuals in making decisions about the identification, evaluation, registration and treatment of historic properties. The list of 10 Rehabilitation Standards, published as the Secretary of the Interior’s *Standards* is aimed at retaining and preserving those features and materials that are important in defining the historic character of a resource. Technical advice about archaeological and historic preservation activities and methods is included in the *Standards* along with guidelines for archaeology and historic preservation.

**Site.** 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 archaeological value regardless of the value of the existing structure.

**Stabilization.** The act or process of applying measures designed to reestablish a weather resistant enclosure and the structural stability of an unsafe or deteriorated property while maintaining the essential form as it exists at present.

**State Historical Building Code (SHBC).** The State Historical Building Code is Part 8 of Title 24 (State Building Standards Code) and applies to all qualified historic structures, districts and sites, designated under federal, state and local authority. It provides alternative building regulations for the rehabilitation, preservation, restoration or relocation of structures designated as qualified historic buildings.

**State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).** Appointed by the Governor, under Public Resources Code (Section 5020.6), the SHPO serves as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Office of Historic Preservation and Executive Secretary of the State Historical Resources Commission and administers state and federally mandated historic preservation programs under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Section 101 (b) (3) as amended.

**State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC).** Appointed by the Governor under Public Resources Code (Section 5020.4-5020.5), the SHRC is provided broad responsibilities for the statewide historic preservation program including, conducting a statewide inventory of historic resources, establishing criteria for evaluating historic resources and conducting public hearings to develop and review a statewide historic resources plan and nominations to the National Register and California Register of Historical Places.

**State Historical Landmarks.** The California Register of Historical Landmarks program (Public Resources Code 5021) is a state historical resources registration program created to recognize historical resources with regional and statewide significance to the history of California.

**Structure.** Anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires, directly or indirectly, a permanent location on or in the ground, including without limitation to bridges, buildings garages, fences, gazebos, signs, street paving, utility meters, antennas, satellite sending or receiving dishes, swimming pools, walks, walls steps and sidewalks.

**Structure of Merit.** Pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code, the Planning Commission may approve a list of structures of historical, architectural or aesthetic merit not designated as landmarks and not situated in designated historic districts.

**Transfer of Development Rights (TDR's).** Units of gross floor area that may be transferred or sold, pursuant to the provisions of Sections 128 and Article 11 of the Planning Code. The transfer is from a preservation lot to a development lot in order to compensate the owner of an historic building for the loss of development potential and thus retain the historic building.

**Unreinforced Masonry Building (UMB).** A masonry building, generally made of brick, constructed without the benefit of reinforcement. UMBs have been identified as being hazardous in the event of an earthquake and have a strong likelihood of failing, either by the collapse of walls or the entire building.

**UTM Reference.** A set of coordinates that indicates a unique location according to the Universal Transverse Mercator grid appearing on maps of the United States Geological Survey and based on the metric system.