

# California OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

## MISSION

The mission of the Office of Historic Preservation and the State Historical Resources Commission is to provide leadership and promote the preservation of California's irreplaceable and diverse cultural heritage.

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This publication is available in alternate formats by contacting the Office of Historic Preservation at (916) 445-7000

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**H**istorical resources have been registered in California as State Historical Landmarks since the 1930s; however, the genesis of the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) began in 1953 with the establishment of the History Section of the Division of Beaches and Parks (the precursor to today's California State Parks). Eventually, in 1975, the Office of Historic Preservation was created within the offices of the Director of California State Parks. The formation of the OHP was an outgrowth of the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which called for the creation of a state agency to implement provisions of the law, including the preparation of a comprehensive historic preservation plan and a statewide survey of

### The Congress finds and declares that—

- (1) The spirit and direction of the Nation are founded upon and reflected in its historic heritage;
- (2) The historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people.

*From the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966*

historical resources. Since its inception, the responsibilities of the OHP have grown to encompass a variety of federal and state preservation laws and programs.

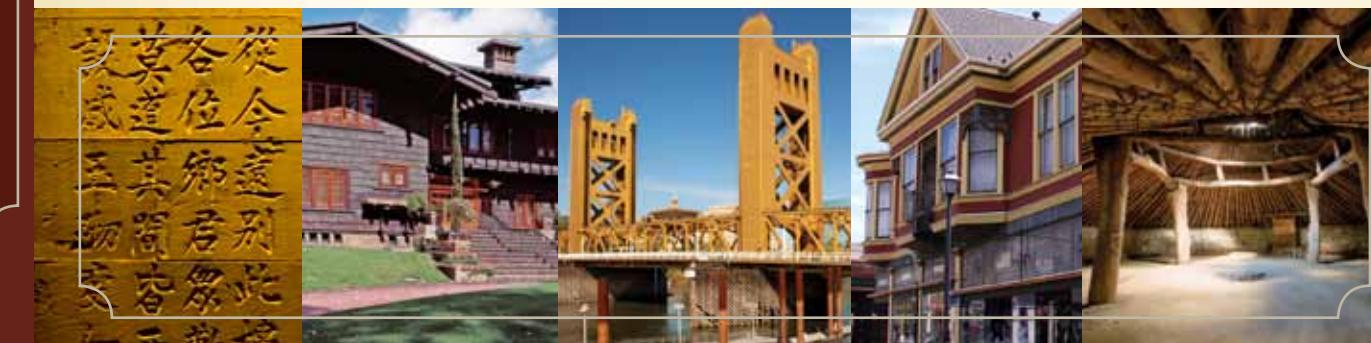
## OUR ORGANIZATION

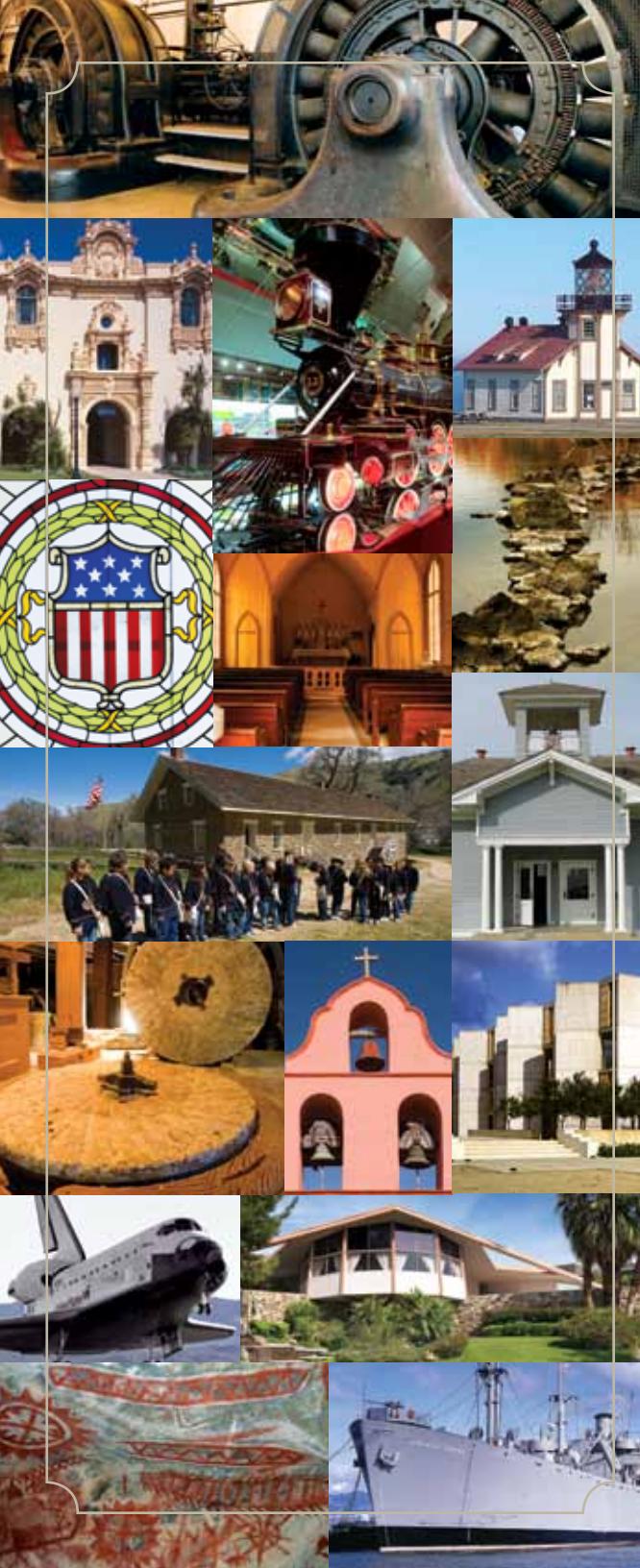
The **Office of Historic Preservation (OHP)** is the state agency primarily responsible for administering and implementing historic preservation programs in California. The office's efforts are guided by the four essential components of historic preservation: Identification, Evaluation, Registration, and Protection. The OHP either directly administers or indirectly influences most state and federal preservation programs.

The **State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC)** is a nine-member state review board, appointed by the Governor, with responsibilities for the identification, registration, and preservation of California's

cultural heritage. In addition to having broad oversight authority over the OHP, the SHRC is responsible for reviewing nominations to the four federal and state registration programs administered by the office.

The **State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)**, a gubernatorial appointment mandated by federal law, serves as the chief of the OHP and as Executive Secretary to the Commission. The SHPO is responsible for the operation and management of the OHP and for developing the Commission's administrative framework and implementing the Commission's preservation programs and priorities.





## WHAT WE DO

### Registration Programs

The Office of Historic Preservation manages four registration programs for historical resources: National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, California Historical Landmarks, and State Points of Historical Interest. Although each of these programs has its own set of criteria for eligibility and there are some differences in benefits for listing, all nominations must be submitted to the State Historical Resources Commission for review and approval. The OHP staff can provide assistance to individuals and organizations seeking to nominate a resource for listing.

### Information Management

The OHP administers the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), an organization that includes the OHP and a number of regional Information Centers (ICs). The CHRIS manages the statewide historical resources inventory, which includes the Historical Resources Inventory database maintained by the office and the records maintained and managed on behalf of the OHP by the ICs. The ICs provide historical resources information, on a fee-for-service basis, to local governments and individuals with responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, California Environmental Quality Act, and California Public Resources Code, as well as to the general public.

### Local Government Support

Historic preservation is most effective when it is integrated into and coordinated within the broader context of overall community planning and development, along with a robust public participation program. The OHP helps

communities to do this by providing guidance and technical assistance to city and county governments. The office also administers the federal Certified Local Government program and makes competitive grants available to those local governments that are a part of the program. Additionally, the OHP works with the California Main Street Alliance to carry out the requirements of the Main Street program, which is an important economic development program.

### Review and Compliance

The OHP promotes the preservation of California's heritage resources by ensuring that projects and programs carried out or sponsored by federal, state, and local agencies comply with federal and state historic preservation laws (including the National Historic Preservation Act, Sections 106 and 110; Public Resources Code Sections 5024, 5024.5, and 5028; and the California Environmental Quality Act), which amounts to several thousands of projects annually. As the state's primary historic preservation advocate, the office's priority is to ensure that projects are planned in ways that avoid any adverse effects to resources. In carrying out this responsibility, the OHP works with a variety of stakeholders, including the many recognized and non-recognized Indian tribes in California, as well as the state's Tribal Historic Preservation Officers.

### Preservation Incentives

There are a number of historic preservation incentives that can provide cost savings for properties and projects. The OHP can assist with understanding of the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives, including deductions for preservation easements and credits for rehabilitation projects, as well as the statewide Mills Act, which is a property tax abatement

program. Incentives are an important component of any preservation program because they promote and encourage the retention, repair, rehabilitation, maintenance, and sustainability of historical resources.

### Outreach and Education

In addition to providing assistance with the state and federal programs the OHP administers, the office also provides general advice and information to members of the public and organizations interested in preservation. The OHP works with a variety of non-profit partners and federal, state and local agencies, including the CHRIS Information Centers, to provide guidance and training, both in-person and via the web. As part of its ongoing efforts to better inform the public about preservation issues, the office produces a periodic newsletter, *Preservation Matters*.

Additionally, the OHP coordinates the nomination and selection process for the Governor's Historic Preservation Awards, presented annually to individuals, organizations, companies, and public agencies whose contributions demonstrate notable achievements in preserving the heritage of California.

The OHP is active on the web, with a wealth of information available on its website ([www.ohp.parks.ca.gov](http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov)). The office also communicates with the public via its social media outlets on Facebook and Twitter.

**Test your knowledge** of California's historical resources by identifying the images included in this brochure. You can find a key identifying these images at [www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/brochureimages](http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/brochureimages)