



Supervisor

**Mark Ridley-Thomas**

Los Angeles County • Second District

<http://Ridley-Thomas.LACounty.gov>

## Los Angeles County

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **What is the County's historic preservation ordinance (HPO)?**

The County's historic preservation ordinance (HPO) is enabling legislation that seeks to preserve, conserve and protect buildings, objects, landscapes or other artifacts of historical and cultural significance in the unincorporated communities. On January 27, 2015, the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to establish an HPO. The date for final adoption of the HPO is pending.

## **Once the HPO is adopted, how do I nominate a County landmark or historic district for designation?**

County Landmarks may be nominated if the property meets certain HPO criteria. Upon receipt of the nomination application, the County notifies the property owner and identifies the date of the public hearing. The Historic Landmarks Commission holds a public hearing, solicits public comment, and makes a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors may officially designate a landmark if it finds that the property is worthy of designation and that it meets the applicable HPO criteria.

County Historic Districts may be nominated if a majority of property owners within the proposed historic district support the application and the area meets HPO criteria. The County notifies all affected property owners and solicits public comment. A series of three public hearings are required, to be held by the Historic Landmarks Commission, Regional Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors, in order to receive public testimony. Following the public hearings, the Board of Supervisors may officially designate a historic district if it finds that the area meets applicable historic or cultural criteria. However, if a majority of the owners object, the district cannot be designated.

The HPO provides for an open and transparent designation process to ensure community involvement. The processes are outlined in further detail at:

[http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/hp\\_ord-flowcharts.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/hp_ord-flowcharts.pdf).

## **What are the advantages of landmark or historic district designation?**

Historic preservation can safeguard a community's historic and cultural heritage, support the local economy by increasing property values, and foster civic pride. Numerous studies have shown that preserving historic landmarks is a key ingredient in building stronger communities, creating jobs, and supporting environmental sustainability. Historic districts promote neighborhood stability by ensuring that the distinctive architectural features of a particular neighborhood are protected over time. In some cases, owners may be eligible for financial incentives that encourage rehabilitation and reinvestment in historic buildings, such as the County's Mills Act program or federal tax credits.

## **How does historic designation affect my property?**

Proposed demolitions and exterior changes to landmarks and historic district properties are subject to planning department review and may also require review by the Historic Landmarks Commission. The project review is required to ensure that changes and new construction are compatible with the site or district's historic architecture and character.

## **Has the County initiated the process to designate any unincorporated community as a historic district?**

No, the County has not initiated the process to designate any unincorporated community as a historic district.

## **What is an HPOZ?**

HPOZ is an acronym used by the City of Los Angeles to describe a "historic preservation overlay zone" that has been designated within the boundaries and jurisdiction of the City of Los Angeles. It is not applicable to the unincorporated communities in Los Angeles County.

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