



## Types of Historic Designation

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### Local Historic District

Designation as a local historic district is the highest level of protection for a historic resource. State law defines it as: “an area, or group of areas not necessarily having contiguous boundaries, that contain one resource or a group of resources that are related by history, architecture, archeology, engineering or culture.” Properties within a district are protected with historic district ordinances containing design review guidelines based on national standards, and designation remains with the property regardless of ownership. A Local Historic District protects the integrity of a historic resource or group of resources. In 1970, the state of Michigan passed the Local Historic Districts Act, PA 169, which safeguards a community's heritage by allowing local governments to adopt an ordinance that contains design review guidelines based on national standards. A Historic District Commission is selected to implement the ordinance, and provide support to each resource. Designating an area as a local historic district is one of the few ways a community can provide legal protection for its historic resources.

### National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official federal list of properties that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, and engineering. It contains over 80,000 historic properties located across the United States, and is maintained by the National Park Service, US Department of the Interior. Listing on the National Register is primarily an honorary recognition of the historic or architectural significance of a property, and contains no protection for the structure. It does not interfere with a private property owner's right to alter, manage or dispose of the listed property. The owner is not required to restore or maintain the property or open it to the public.

### National Historic Landmarks

National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) are nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Today, just over 2,500 historic places bear this national distinction. Listing is primarily an honorary recognition of the historic or architectural significance of a property, and contains no protection for the structure. It does not interfere with a private property owner's right to alter, manage or dispose of the listed property. The owner is not required to restore or maintain the property or open it to the public.

## Historic Marker Programs

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### State Historic Markers

The Michigan Historical Marker Program was established by the legislature and governor in 1955, and since then, more than 1,700 have been placed all across the state. Each marker reflects an important story of a place, an event or a person. No restrictions or requirements are placed upon properties with historic markers.

### Washtenaw County Historic Markers

The Washtenaw County Historic District Commission oversees the identification and recognition of historic and cultural resources and sites through a Historic Marker Program. Markers are used to designate sites, buildings, structures and objects of historical, architectural, archeological or cultural significance. Any site, building, structure or object in the county that meets these criteria may be nominated for a plaque or larger marker.