

**City of San Diego
City Planning & Community Investment
Urban Form Division**

Historic Resource Survey Guidelines

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July 2008

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Introduction

Historic resource surveys are important historic preservation tools used to understand, recognize, and protect heritage resources. A historic resource survey is the process of identifying and gathering data on a community's resources and placing those resources in a historic context. Historic resource surveys are vital to the success of a city's historic preservation program as they lay the groundwork for the identification, evaluation, and registration of properties.

The Historic Preservation Element of the City of San Diego's recently adopted (March 2008) General Plan provides for the identification of historical resources in the City. Policies in the General Plan call for a comprehensive citywide inventory of historical and cultural resources and the development of context statements specific to areas being surveyed.

The City of San Diego will be updating community plans and in an effort to support these efforts and comply with the goals and policies identified in the General Plan, the City will be performing historic resource surveys for each community plan area. In an effort to standardize the surveys and the information that will be collected and analyzed, these Historic Resource Survey Guidelines (Guidelines) were compiled. These guidelines are intended to apply to above ground resources (buildings, structures, etc.), and does not apply to archaeological surveys.

The Guidelines were compiled based on guidance and bulletins from the National Park Service and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The Guidelines summarize information found in historic preservation publications, including *National Register Bulletin 24 Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning* (<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb24/>) and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Identification (http://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_2.htm) and Evaluation (http://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_3.htm). These Guidelines are not meant to be a substitute for these other resources (these resources should be consulted by surveyors), but rather as a summary of survey practices and procedures. Surveyors should consult the above named references for more detail on the information contained in the Guidelines.

Types of Surveys

Two types of historic resource surveys exist: **reconnaissance** and **intensive** level surveys. A reconnaissance survey includes a "once over" inspection of a community or neighborhood, useful in characterizing resources in an area. Reconnaissance surveys are used to form the basis for more intensive, detailed survey efforts. During a reconnaissance survey, descriptive information about buildings, structure, and objects are collected and analyzed primarily through architecture and dates of construction.

An intensive survey is designed to identify precisely and completely all historic resources in an area. It involves detailed background research and a thorough documentation of all

historic properties in the field. Intensive surveys should produce enough information to evaluate historic properties and generate an inventory.

Historic resource surveys completed in support of upcoming community plan updates will be completed at the reconnaissance level. As time and funding allow, and as information is identified through the reconnaissance survey, intensive level surveys will be completed.

Survey Documentation

The information collected for a historic resource survey depends on whether the type of survey to be conducted is a reconnaissance or intensive survey. Information regarding survey documentation is provided in *National Register Bulletin 24, Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Identification specify the kind of information that should be collected for both reconnaissance and intensive surveys. The following identifies the minimum level of documentation required for both reconnaissance and intensive level surveys.

Reconnaissance Survey

A reconnaissance survey should document:

1. The kind of properties looked for;
2. The boundaries of the area surveyed;
3. The method of survey, including the extent of survey coverage;
4. The kinds of historic properties present in the survey area;
5. Specific properties that were identified, and the categories of information collected; and
6. Places examined that did not contain historic properties.

Intensive Survey

An intensive survey should document:

1. The kind of properties looked for;
2. The boundaries of the area surveyed;
3. The method of survey, including the extent of survey coverage;
4. A record of the precise location of all properties identified; and
5. Information on the appearance, significance, integrity, and boundaries of each property sufficient to permit an evaluation of its significance.

Reconnaissance surveys may include some information collected in intensive surveys, provided that sufficient time and funds exist to collect the data. This may include an architectural description, identification of architectural style, significance, integrity, and a preliminary evaluation of significance or identification of an appropriate California Historical Resource Status Code (http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1069).

Personnel Requirements

A preservation professional must direct all aspects of a historic resource survey. A preservation professional is defined as someone who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications in architectural history or history as outlined by the federal government in 36 CFR 61, Appendix A (http://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_9.htm). For architectural history, these qualifications, in general, are a graduate degree in architectural history or a closely related field; or an undergraduate degree in architectural history and at least 2 years full time experience in research, writing, or teaching American architectural history. For history, the qualifications are a graduate degree in history or a closely related field; or a bachelor's degree in history or a closely related field and at least two years of full time experience in research, writing, teaching, interpretation or other professional activity with an academic institution, historical organization, museum, or other professional institution.

Non-professionals may assist with certain parts of the survey, including historic research, address checking, mapping, photography, data entry, and word processing. If non-professionals are to be utilized, they should be trained in proper survey methods by preservation professionals. Training methods and materials to be used should be approved by City staff.

Survey Preparation

In most cases, the survey will typically include all building constructed before a certain date (45 years at time of survey completion). For example, if the survey is to be complete in 2015, it should include all resources constructed before 1970. However, thematic surveys or surveys that are focused on a particular property type or architectural style may also be conducted and in these cases the buildings included may not be defined by their construction date.

Background data on the buildings and parcels in the survey area should be gathered prior to undertaking fieldwork or detailed research. This would include Assessor Parcel Number, Address, and Date of Construction, if available. In addition, if any properties have been previously surveyed, the relevant survey and forms should be reviewed.

Project Methodology

A methodology must be developed at the outset of the project during the earliest stage of the survey. This methodology should outline what is currently known about the survey area, as well as the work that will be undertaken for both archival and field research. Coordination with City staff is important during the initial stages of the survey to ensure that the goals of the survey can be achieved. The project methodology should include:

1. Project Objective – A clear statement regarding the purpose of the survey and how it is intended to be used. Explain relation of survey to Community Plan Update and General Plan.

2. Explanation and justification of survey boundaries – Description of the boundaries and number of acres in the project area. The number of buildings to be surveyed should be noted.
3. Brief description of the archival research techniques (repositories to be visited) and field survey methods.
4. Explanation of applicable designation criteria
5. Description of field work – How data will be collected and documentation to be completed
6. Summary of survey report

Historic Context Statement

A historic context is a narrative statement that describes a broad pattern of historical development in a community. These patterns of historical development may be represented by historic resources. The historic context is the most important factor in defining the structure of a survey effort. Historic contexts establish the themes and property types that are important in a community or neighborhood. Themes may include a variety of subjects including military history, transportation development, waterfront development, residential subdivisions, or the influx of immigrants to a particular area. In addition, depending on the historic context and themes, one property type may be identified or several property types may be identified. For example, if one of the themes associated with downtown San Diego is waterfront development, a variety of property types would likely be identified such as factories, warehouses, transportation facilities, workers housing, and docks. Without an adequate historic context, surveys may fail to identify significant resources or contain biases.

Historic contexts are developed on the basis of archival research and background data on a community's history. The preparation of a historic context typically involves the following:

1. Identify the concept, themes, chronological period, and geographical area for the historic context.
2. Assemble information
 - a. Collect information about the history of the geographical area encompassed by the historic context, including information about properties that have already been identified. Identify individual properties or groups of properties that may have important roles in defining historic contexts and values.
 - b. Assess information to identify bias in historic perspective, methodological approach, or area of coverage.
3. Synthesize information and prepare a written narrative of the historic context, providing a detailed synthesis of the information collected and analyzed. Important patterns, events, persons, architectural types and styles, or cultural values should be identified. The following are general topics to consider:
 - a. Trends in area settlement and development;

- b. Aesthetic and artistic values embodied in architecture, construction, technology, or craftsmanship, and
 - c. Research values
4. Define property types
- a. Identify property types that have relevance and importance in illustrating the historic context. Outline and justify the specific physical and associative characteristics and quality of historic integrity that an individual property must possess to be eligible for listing as a member of the property type.
 - b. Characterize the locational patterns of property types; identify areas where particular property types are likely to be found
 - c. Characterize the current condition of known properties relating to each property type.

The historic context is the cornerstone of the planning process. Decisions about identifying, evaluating, registering, and treating historic properties are made in the context of other related properties. A historic context is an organizational format that groups information about related historic properties, based on a theme, geographic limits and chronological period. A single historic context describes one or more aspects of the historic development of an area, considering history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, culture and identifies the significant patterns that individual properties represent.

Conducting a survey

Conducting a survey involves three types of activities: archival research, field survey, and recording of information. Though research is normally conducted at the beginning of a survey, all three activities occur concurrently. The archival research informs what to look for in the field and what to record, while fieldwork may identify information that needs to be explored through archival research.

Archival Research

Archival research is the foundation on which historic contexts are based and provide direction for the survey. It is recommended to develop a written research design at the beginning of the process to establish the goals and direction for the research. A research design should include the following: the geographic area of concern; the historic context of concern; research questions to be addressed; previous research completed; the amount and kind of information expected to be needed; the types of sources to be used; the types of methods to be used; the types of personnel likely to be needed; and where possible, expectations about what will be learned or hypothetical answers to major research questions.

The level of detail of archival research will depend on the scale of the survey. An initial reconnaissance survey of a community should be structured towards the identification and description of general trends, groups, and events in the community's history, and

information regarding how events or people may have impacted a community's development. Archival research undertaken as part of an intensive survey will involve a more detailed analysis of each property and gathering data specific to each property included in the survey.

Archival research should include both primary and secondary sources. A variety of repositories and resources exist in every community and are too numerous to be listed here, but at a minimum the San Diego Public Library, the San Diego Historical Society, local archives, and museums should be utilized. In addition, knowledgeable persons on a community's history should be consulted for information that may not be published or documented in written form.

Field Survey

Surveys are typically conducted from the public right-of-way, street or alley. Access to private property is not required for most surveys. If access to private property is necessary, permission must be obtained from the property owner. Surveyors should obtain a letter from the City project manager that describes the survey, and can be provided to the public if they should ask surveyors why they are examining particular properties in an area.

Reconnaissance Survey

The windshield survey is a common method utilized in reconnaissance surveys. When the windshield method is employed, surveyors literally drive or walk the streets and roads of a community and make notes of the buildings, structures, and landscape characteristics they see. A closer inspection of certain properties may be necessary, but the main goal of a reconnaissance survey is not to gain detailed information of every building in the survey area, but to get a general picture of the distribution of property types, architectural styles, and the character of neighborhoods.

One of the important functions of a reconnaissance is the identification of areas that should become the subject of an intensive survey. This may include the boundaries of potential historic districts. The boundaries should be clearly mapped and the basis for defining each boundary should be specified.

It is anticipated that reconnaissance level surveys will result in Department of Park and Recreation (DPR) 523A Forms. City staff will work with surveyors/consultants to develop a standard architectural description for large surveys. For reconnaissance surveys, this description will likely include the following: architectural style, number of stories, roof shape/material, window type/material, exterior siding, and alterations (addition, window modifications, siding, porch enclosure). In addition, an assessment of integrity should be provided. Photographs of each property included in the survey should be provided.

Intensive Survey

The goal of an intensive survey is to document all historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and potential districts in sufficient detail to evaluate resources for the City of San Diego Historic Site List. Therefore, intensive surveys will typically be carried out on foot and all buildings and structures constructed prior to the survey cut off date should be included in the survey. If the goal of the survey is to address a potential historic district, contributors and non-contributors should be identified. Sufficient information and detail to complete a DPR 523B Form on each individual property should be collected. For potential historic districts, a DPR 523D Form should be completed.

A statement of significance must be included in an intensive survey for potentially eligible individual buildings and potential historic districts. In order to evaluate the significance of an individual resource or district, a historic context statement is necessary. During the survey, surveyors should record the qualities of each property that relate to the historic contexts of the survey area and may make the resource significant. A statement of significance needs to identify the historic context or contexts which could be relevant to the property or district in question, define the property types that represent the historic context, and then show how the property or district does or does not reflect the property type.

Recording of Information

At the beginning of the survey, methods of recording survey data need to be established. For reconnaissance surveys, the minimum level of documentation is the DPR 523A form for each property surveyed. Much of the information needed to complete this form can be acquired through research, maps, or aerial photographs. The architectural description and photograph would be collected through fieldwork. At the outset of the survey, City staff will work with surveyors to determine the appropriate level of detail for descriptions and develop a standard architectural description that meets the survey goals. Documentation completed for an intensive level survey should include both the DPR 523A and DPR 523B forms for each property surveyed. Architectural descriptions prepared for intensive level surveys will provide more detail than those descriptions developed for reconnaissance surveys.

Resources should be recorded on DPR forms according to the *Instructions for Recording Historical Resources* (1995) (http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1069). In addition, California Historical Resource Status Codes should be assigned as appropriate based on guidance from the SHPO found in *Technical Assistance Bulletin #8 User's Guide to the California Historical Resource Status Codes & Historical Resources Inventory Database* (http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1069).

Digital Data

Data collected for surveys should be stored and archived in a digital format. Typically, a database will be the most appropriate way to store and archive data. A spreadsheet may also be used to organize the data. The survey team should work with City Staff to design an appropriate digital format for the scale and type of survey. Databases will likely be completed in Microsoft Access; spreadsheets will likely be completed in Microsoft Excel. The advantage of digital databases is the ability to store, sort, and analyze a large amount of data. In addition, the database should be compatible with ArcView GIS, so that survey maps can be generated and analyzed for trends or themes. Databases may also be used to generate DPR forms, thereby eliminating the need to complete the forms in Microsoft Word. Prior to completing field work, the City and surveyors will decide the design and format of the database based on the goals and type of survey to be conducted.

Report Guidelines

After the survey has been completed, a report must be prepared. This report should summarize the survey methodology and results. In addition, the historic context statement on the survey area/community planning area must be included. The Final Report must contain the following information:

1. Title Page
2. Executive Summary
3. Project Overview
 - a. Introduction to the project (discuss community plan update, personnel, etc.)
 - b. An explanation and justification of the survey boundaries
 - c. Description of the methodology for both archival research and fieldwork
4. Historic Context
 - a. Brief history of the area and relevant important themes
 - b. Overview of property types found in survey area and how they relate to historic context
 - c. Discussion of architectural styles, building construction methods and materials, prominent architects and buildings in the survey area
5. Survey Results
 - a. This section should include a detailed summary of properties identified in the survey. Criteria used in the evaluation (City of San Diego) as well as integrity thresholds should be identified. A summary of properties found eligible, ineligible, that warrant further investigation and potential historic districts should also be identified.
6. Recommendations
7. Bibliography
8. Maps of the Survey Area
 - a. A series of maps should be included as part of the report. This should include a map depicting the survey boundaries, a map indicating designated properties in the survey area, and a separate map indicating potential historic sites and districts identified as part of the survey effort.
9. Appendices
 - a. Appendices should include the detailed data collected during the survey. This may include a master list of all surveyed sites. Suggested data to include in this table: Parcel #, Address Information, Year Built, Architectural Style, Integrity, and California Historical Resource Status Code (http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1069).
 - b. Any DPR forms completed as part of the survey should be provided as an appendix. The forms should be in numerical order by address, including all addresses on one street before beginning with those on a second street. Any 523(D) forms for historic districts should precede forms on individual properties.
 - c. If a training packet was used to teach volunteers, this should be included as an appendix.