

APPENDIX D: THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS, AND LOCAL ORDINANCE DISTRICTS

1. The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, it is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service under the Secretary of the Interior.

Properties listed in the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register includes:

- all historic areas in the National Park System;
- National Historic Landmarks that have been designated by the Secretary of the Interior for their significance to all Americans; and
- properties significant to the Nation, State, or community which have been nominated by State historic preservation offices, Federal agencies, and Tribal preservation offices, and which have been approved by the National Park Service.

America's historic places embody our unique spirit, character and identity. Representing important historical trends and events, reflecting the lives of significant persons, illustrating distinctive architectural, engineering, and artistic design achievement, and imparting information about America's past, historic places tell compelling stories of the Nation, and of the States and communities throughout the country. The National Register helps preserve these significant historic places by recognizing this irreplaceable heritage. Its primary goals are to foster a national preservation ethic; promote a greater appreciation of America's heritage; and increase and broaden the public's understanding and appreciation of historic places.

The National Register encourages citizens, public agencies, and private organizations to recognize and use the places of our past to create livable and viable communities for the future.

2. Results of listing in the National Register

Listing in the National Register honors the property by recognizing its importance to its community, State, or the Nation.

Federal agencies, whose projects affect a listed property, must give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on the project and its effects on the property.

Owners of listed properties may be able to obtain Federal historic preservation funding, when funds are available. In addition, Federal investment tax credits for rehabilitation and other provisions may apply.

Owners of private property listed in the National Register have no obligation to open their properties to the public, to restore them, or even to maintain them, if they choose not to do so. Owners can do anything they wish with their property provided that no Federal license, permit, or funding is involved. *(Local historical commissions, design review committees, or special zoning ordinances are established by State legislation or local ordinances, and are not part of the National Park Service's National Register program.)*

The city of Little Rock has over 200 properties listed individually on the National Register. (Structures inside an historic district are not counted individually.)

National Historic Landmarks have been designated by the Secretary of the Interior, recognizing the national significance of properties that possess exceptional values or qualities in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. National Park Service historians and archeologists study and evaluate these properties within the context of major themes of American history. Properties judged to be nationally significant are nominated by the National Park Service and forwarded to the National Park System Advisory Board, which may recommend to the Secretary of the Interior that the property be designated a National Historic Landmark. If not previously listed in the National Register, National Historic Landmarks are automatically listed in the Register when they are designated.

Out of nearly 80,000 listings on the National Register of Historic Places, only about three per cent are designated as National Historic Landmarks. Little Rock is home to five of these extraordinary treasures: the U.S. Arsenal (Tower) Building, the Old State House, Central High School, the J. T. Robinson House, and the Daisy Bates House.

3. Comparison of National Register Historic Districts and Local Ordinance Historic Districts

A National Register Historic District is an historic district that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is our country's official list of historic places worthy of preservation. It includes individual buildings, structures, sites, and objects as well as historic districts that are historically, architecturally, or archaeologically significant.

National Register listing recognizes the significance of properties and districts. By doing so, it identifies significant historic resources in a community. Boundaries of National Register districts are tightly drawn to encompass only concentrated areas of historic buildings. Information compiled to nominate a historic district can be used in a variety of planning and development activities. National Register listing also makes available specific preservation incentives and provides a limited degree of protection from the effects of federally funded, licensed, or permitted activities.

In 2015, Little Rock had twenty-one National Register Historic Districts: Boyle Park, Capitol View, Capitol Main Commercial, Central High School Neighborhood, Dunbar, East Markham Street, Governor's Mansion, Hanger Hill, Hillcrest, MacArthur Park, Main Street Commercial, Marshall Square, Philander Smith College, Railroad Call, South Main Street Apartments, South Scott Street, South Main Commercial, South Main Residential, Stiff Station, Tuf Nut, and West Seventh Street Commercial.

A Local Ordinance Historic District is a district designated by local ordinance and falls under the jurisdiction of a local preservation review commission. A local historic district is generally "overlaid" on existing zoning classifications in a community; therefore, a local district commission deals only with the appearance of the district, not with the uses to which properties in the district are put.

The designation of a local district protects the significant properties and historic character of the district. It provides communities with the means to make sure that growth, development, and change take place in ways that respect important architectural, historical, and environmental characteristics. Local designation encourages sensitive development in the district and discourages unsympathetic changes from occurring. This happens through a process called *design review*, whereby the preservation commission approves major changes that are planned for the district and issues Certificates of

Appropriateness which allow the proposed changes to take place.

Little Rock has one local ordinance historic district under the jurisdiction of the Little Rock Historic District Commission: The MacArthur Park Historic District. Through the Capitol Zoning Commission, the State of Arkansas maintains similar jurisdiction over the Governor’s Mansion Historic District and areas around the Arkansas Capitol Building.

| National Register District | Local Historic District |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies significant properties and districts for general planning purposes • Analyzes and assessed the historic character of the district • Designated historic areas based on uniform national criteria and procedures • Sets district boundaries tightly, based on the actual distribution pattern of intact historic properties in the area • Makes available specific federal and state tax incentives for preservation purposes • Provides a limited degree of protection from the effects of federally assisted undertakings • Qualifies property owners for federal and state grants for preservation purposes, when funds are available • Does not restrict the use of disposition of property or obligate private property owners in any way • Does not require conformance to design guidelines or preservation standards when property is rehabilitated unless specific preservation incentives (tax credits, grants) are involved • Does not affect state and local government activities • Does not prevent the demolition of historic buildings and structures within designated areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protects a community’s historic properties and areas through a design review process • Protects the historic character and quality of the district • Designated historic areas on the basis of local criteria and local procedures • Sets district boundaries based on the distribution pattern of historic resources plus other preservation and community planning considerations • Provides no tax incentives for preservation purposes unless such are provided by local tax law • Provides no additional protection from the effects of federally assisted undertakings • Does not qualify property owners for federal or state grants for preservation purposes • Does not restrict the use to which property is put in the district or require property owners to make improvements to their property • Requires local commission review and approval, based on conformance to local design guidelines, before a building permit is issued for an “material changes” in appearance to the district • Does not affect federal, state and local government activities • Provides for review of proposed demolition within designated areas; may prevent or delay proposed demolitions for specific time periods to allow for preservation alternatives |

Figure 174. Comparison of national and local districts