

# National Historic Preservation Act of 1966

## AS AMENDED

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This Act became law on October 15, 1966 (Public Law 89-665, October 15, 1966; 16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). Since enactment, there have been 22 amendments. This description of the Act, as amended, follows the language of the United States Code except that (in common usage) we refer to the “Act” (meaning the Act, as amended) rather than to the “subchapter” or the “title” of the Code. This description also excludes some of the notes found in the Code as well as those sections of the amendments dealing with completed reports.

16 U.S.C. 470,  
Short title of the Act,  
Congressional finding  
and declaration of policy

16 U.S.C. 470(b),  
Purpose of the Act

### Section 1

(a) This Act may be cited as the “National Historic Preservation Act.”

(b) 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;

(3) historic properties significant to the Nation’s heritage are being lost or substantially altered, often inadvertently, with increasing frequency;

(4) the preservation of this irreplaceable heritage is in the public interest so that its vital legacy of cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational, economic, and energy benefits will be maintained and enriched for future generations of Americans;

(5) in the face of ever-increasing extensions of urban centers, highways, and residential, commercial, and industrial developments, the present governmental and nongovernmental historic preservation programs and activities are inadequate to insure future generations a genuine opportunity to appreciate and enjoy the rich heritage of our Nation;

(6) the increased knowledge of our historic resources, the establishment of better means of identifying and administering them, and the encouragement of their preservation will improve the planning and execution of Federal and federally assisted projects and will assist economic growth and development; and

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(7) although the major burdens of historic preservation have been borne and major efforts initiated by private agencies and individuals, and both should continue to play a vital role, it is nevertheless necessary and appropriate for the Federal Government to accelerate its historic preservation programs and activities, to give maximum encouragement to agencies and individuals undertaking preservation by private means, and to assist State and local governments and the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States to expand and accelerate their historic preservation programs and activities.

16 U.S.C. 470-1,  
Declaration of policy of  
the Federal Government

## Section 2

It shall be the policy of the Federal Government, in cooperation with other nations and in partnership with the States, local governments, Indian tribes, and private organizations and individuals to—

(1) use measures, including financial and technical assistance, to foster conditions under which our modern society and our prehistoric and historic resources can exist in productive harmony and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations;

(2) provide leadership in the preservation of the prehistoric and historic resources of the United States and of the international community of nations and in the administration of the national preservation program in partnership with States, Indian tribes, Native Hawaiians, and local governments;

(3) administer federally owned, administered, or controlled prehistoric and historic resources in a spirit of stewardship for the inspiration and benefit of present and future generations;

(4) contribute to the preservation of nonfederally owned prehistoric and historic resources and give maximum encouragement to organizations and individuals undertaking preservation by private means;

(5) encourage the public and private preservation and utilization of all usable elements of the Nation's historic built environment; and

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(6) assist State and local governments, Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations and the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States to expand and accelerate their historic preservation programs and activities.

## Title I, Historic Preservation Programs

### Section 101

16 U.S.C. 470a, Historic preservation programs

16 U.S.C. 470a(a), National Register of Historic Places, expansion and maintenance, regulations, etc.

(a)(1)(A) The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to expand and maintain a National Register of Historic Places composed of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. Notwithstanding section 1125(c) of Title 15 [of the U.S. Code], buildings and structures on or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (either individually or as part of a historic district), or designated as an individual landmark or as a contributing building in a historic district by a unit of State or local government, may retain the name historically associated with the building or structure.

National Historic Landmarks designation

(B) Properties meeting the criteria for National Historic Landmarks established pursuant to paragraph (2) shall be designated as “National Historic Landmarks” and included on the National Register, subject to the requirements of paragraph (6). All historic properties included on the National Register on December 12, 1980 [the date of enactment of the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980], shall be deemed to be included on the National Register as of their initial listing for purposes of this Act. All historic properties listed in the Federal Register of February 6, 1979, as “National Historic Landmarks” or thereafter prior to the effective date of this Act are declared by Congress to be National Historic Landmarks of national historic significance as of their initial listing as such in the Federal Register for purposes of this Act and the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666) [16 U.S.C. 461 to 467]; except that in cases of National Historic Landmark districts for which no boundaries have been established, boundaries must first be published in the Federal Register.

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Criteria for National Register and National Historic Landmarks and regulations

(2) The Secretary in consultation with national historical and archaeological associations, shall establish or revise criteria for properties to be included on the National Register and criteria for National Historic Landmarks, and shall also promulgate or revise regulations as may be necessary for—

(A) nominating properties for inclusion in, and removal from, the National Register and the recommendation of properties by certified local governments;

(B) designating properties as National Historic Landmarks and removing such designation;

(C) considering appeals from such recommendations, nominations, removals, and designations (or any failure or refusal by a nominating authority to nominate or designate);

(D) nominating historic properties for inclusion in the World Heritage List in accordance with the terms of the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage;

(E) making determinations of eligibility of properties for inclusion on the National Register; and

(F) notifying the owner of a property, any appropriate local governments, and the general public, when the property is being considered for inclusion on the National Register, for designation as a National Historic Landmark or for nomination to the World Heritage List.

Nominations to the National Register

(3) Subject to the requirements of paragraph (6), any State which is carrying out a program approved under subsection (b) of this section, shall nominate to the Secretary properties which meet the criteria promulgated under subsection (a) of this section for inclusion on the National Register. Subject to paragraph (6), any property nominated under this paragraph or under section 110(a)(2) of this Act shall be included on the National Register on the date forty-five days after receipt by the Secretary of the nomination and the necessary documentation, unless the Secretary disapproves such nomination within such forty-five day period or unless an appeal is filed under paragraph (5).

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16 U.S.C. 470d(k),  
Prohibition against  
acquisition by Federal  
Financing Bank

~~(k) No debt obligation which is made or committed to be made, or which is insured or committed to be insured, by the Secretary under this section shall be eligible for purchase by, or commitment to purchase by, or sale or issuance to, the Federal Financing Bank.~~

16 U.S.C. 470e,  
Recordkeeping

## Section 105

The beneficiary of assistance under this Act shall keep such records as the Secretary shall prescribe, including records which fully disclose the disposition by the beneficiary of the proceeds of such assistance, the total cost of the project or undertaking in connection with which such assistance is given or used, and the amount and nature of that portion of the cost of the project or undertaking supplied by other sources, and such other records as will facilitate an effective audit.

16 U.S.C. 470f,  
Advisory Council on  
Historic Preservation,  
comment on Federal  
undertakings

## Section 106

The head of any Federal agency having direct or indirect jurisdiction over a proposed Federal or federally assisted undertaking in any State and the head of any Federal department or independent agency having authority to license any undertaking shall, prior to the approval of the expenditure of any Federal funds on the undertaking or prior to the issuance of any license, as the case may be, take into account the effect of the undertaking on any district, site, building, structure, or object that is included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The head of any such Federal agency shall afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation established under Title II of this Act a reasonable opportunity to comment with regard to such undertaking.

16 U.S.C. 470g,  
Exemption of White  
House, Supreme Court,  
and Capitol

## Section 107

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to be applicable to the White House and its grounds, the Supreme Court building and its grounds, or the United States Capitol and its related buildings and grounds.

# Department of Transportation Act

## DECLARATION OF PURPOSE AND SECTION 4(F), AS AMENDED

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This Act became law on October 15, 1966 (Public Law 89-670), 49 U.S.C. 303 (formerly 49 U.S.C. 1651(b)(2) and 49 U.S.C. 1653f). Public Law 90-495 (August 23, 1968) amended section 4(f) to its most commonly known form which is presented here. Public Law 97-449 (January 12, 1983) re-codified the Act from 49 U.S.C. 1651 to 49 U.S.C. 303. Congress has amended this Act three other times. The description of the Act, as amended, tracks the language of the United States Code except that (following common usage) we refer to the “Act” (meaning the Act as amended) rather than to the “subchapter” or the “title” of the Code.

49 U.S.C. 303,  
Policy on lands,  
wildlife and water-  
fowl refuges, and  
historic sites.

### Section 4(f)

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States Government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites.

49 U.S.C. 303(b)

The Secretary of Transportation shall cooperate and consult with the Secretaries of the Interior, Housing and Urban Development, and Agriculture, and with the States, in developing transportation plans and programs that include measures to maintain or enhance the natural beauty of lands crossed by transportation activities or facilities.

49 U.S.C. 303(c)

The Secretary may approve a transportation program or project (other than any project for a park road or parkway under section 204 of title 23) [of the United States Code, “Federal Lands Highways Program”] requiring the use of publicly owned land of a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, State, or local significance, or land of an historic site of national, State, or local significance (as determined by Federal, State, or local officials having jurisdiction over the park, area, refuge, or site) only if—

(1) there is no prudent and feasible alternative to using that land; and

(2) the program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site resulting from the use.

# National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

PORTIONS, AS AMENDED

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This Act became law on January 1, 1970 (Public Law 91-190), 42 U.S.C. 4321 and 4331-4335 and has been amended once. The description of the Act, as amended, tracks the language of the United States Code except that (following common usage) we refer to the "Act" (meaning the Act, as amended) rather than to the "subchapter" or the "title" of the Code.

42 U.S.C. 4321,  
Congressional declaration of purpose

## Section 2

The purposes of this Act are: To declare a national policy which will encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment; to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man; to enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation; and to establish a Council on Environmental Quality.

42 U.S.C. 4331,  
Congressional declaration of national environmental policy

## Section 101

(a) The Congress, recognizing the profound impact of man's activity on the interrelations of all components of the natural environment, particularly the profound influences of population growth, high-density urbanization, industrial expansion, resource exploitation, and new and expanding technological advances and recognizing further the critical importance of restoring and maintaining environmental quality to the overall welfare and development of man, declares that it is the continuing policy of the Federal Government, in cooperation with State and local governments, and other concerned public and private organizations, to use all practicable means and measures, including financial and technical assistance, in a manner calculated to foster and promote the general welfare, to create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans.

(b) In order to carry out the policy set forth in this Act, it is the continuing responsibility of the Federal Government to use all practicable means, consistent with other essential considerations of national policy, to improve and coordinate Federal plans, functions, programs, and resources to the end that the Nation may—

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Preservation of historic, cultural, and natural heritage

(1) fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;

(2) assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and esthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;

(3) attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;

(4) preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage, and maintain, wherever possible, an environment which supports diversity and variety of individual choice;

(5) achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and

(6) enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.

(c) The Congress recognizes that each person should enjoy a healthful environment and that each person has a responsibility to contribute to the preservation of the environment.

42 U.S.C. 4332, Cooperation of agencies, reports, availability of information, recommendations, international and national coordination of efforts

## Section 102

The Congress authorizes and directs that, to the fullest extent possible:

(1) the policies, regulations, and public laws of the United States shall be interpreted and administered in accordance with the policies set forth in this Act, and

(2) all agencies of the Federal government shall—

(A) utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach which will insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts in planning and in decisionmaking which may have an impact on man's environment;

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(B) identify and develop methods and procedures, in consultation with the Council on Environmental Quality established by Section 202 of this Act [42 U.S.C. 4341-4347], which will insure that presently unquantified environmental amenities and values may be given appropriate consideration in decisionmaking along with economic and technical considerations;

Environmental impact statements, etc.

(C) include in every recommendation or report on proposals for legislation and other major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, a detailed statement by the responsible official on—

(i) the environmental impact of the proposed action,

(ii) any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided should the proposal be implemented,

(iii) alternatives to the proposed action,

(iv) the relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and

(v) any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented.

Consultation with agencies having special expertise

Prior to making any detailed statement, the responsible Federal official shall consult with and obtain the comments of any Federal agency which has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved. Copies of such statement and the comments and views of the appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies, which are authorized to develop and enforce environmental standards, shall be made available to the President, the Council on Environmental Quality and to the public as provided by section 552 of title 5 [of the United States Code], and shall accompany the proposal through the existing agency review processes;

(Remainder of section 102(D) omitted)

(E) study, develop, and describe appropriate alternatives to recommended courses of action in any proposal which involves unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources;

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(F) recognize the worldwide and long-range character of environmental problems and, where consistent with the foreign policy of the United States, lend appropriate support to initiatives, resolutions, and programs designed to maximize international cooperation in anticipating and preventing a decline in the quality of mankind's world environment;

(G) makes available to States, counties, municipalities, institutions, and individuals, advice and information useful in restoring, maintaining, and enhancing the quality of the environment;

(H) initiate and utilize ecological information in the planning and development of resource-oriented projects;

(Remainder of paragraph omitted)

## Section 103

(42 U.S.C. 4333, Conformity of administrative procedures to national environmental policy, omitted)

## Section 104

(42 U.S.C. 4334, Other statutory obligations of agencies, omitted)

42 U.S.C. 4335,  
Efforts supplemental to  
existing authorizations

## Section 105

The policies and goals set forth in this Act are supplementary to those set forth in existing authorizations of Federal agencies.

(Remainder of Act omitted)