

# Instructions for Completing the Historic-Cultural Monument Nomination Form

The following instructions are based on those available on the Department of City Planning's website. These instructions correct several inaccuracies regarding potential sources of information on the form and provide a limited amount of additional commentary. To download an application, go to <http://cityplanning.lacity.org>, click on "Forms/Procedures" on the left-hand menu, click on the letter "H" at the top of the screen, and finally click on "Historic-Cultural Monument Instructions and Application." Each item below corresponds to the numbered sections on the application form.

## 1. Name of the Proposed Monument

The historical name of the building is most often used as the name of the proposed Monument. If the building does not have a historical name, the name of the original owner is appropriate.

## 2. Street Address

Provide primary street address (i.e. mailing address) for the property where the subject structure is situated.

## 3. Assessor's Parcel Number

*Available on ZIMAS*

## 4. Legal Description

A legal description generally consists of a tract name, block number or letter, and lot number. In more complicated cases, legal descriptions can consist of portions of blocks and lots. *Available on County Assessor's website.*

## 5. Range of Addresses on Property

Many properties have a range of addresses or, in some cases, addresses on different streets when there is more than one street-facing façade. It is critical that all known street addresses be included in the designation to ensure that designated properties are properly identified as HCMs. *Check ZIMAS and the County Assessor's website to verify all addresses.*

## 6. Present Owner

If a nomination is submitted without the owner's knowledge and his or her name and address are not known, you can *obtain this information only by visiting the County Assessor's Office in person.* [Note: realtors may have access to ownership information, which could save you a trip.]

## 7. Present Use/Original Use

The present use of the building should be simply stated as single-family residence, apartment building, hotel, museum, commercial office building, church, etc. The original use may be the same or different.

## 8. Architectural Style

See the style guide on the Monument application form and the books listed below in Physical Description (#9). Not all buildings are pure examples of a particular style. Many architects and designers in the past, as well as today, draw upon various sources for inspiration. If this is the case with your building, feel free to describe it as a combination of styles.



## 9. Physical Description

Following the description worksheet application form, write a concise, factual, and well organized description. Consult one of the standard books on architectural styles for additional terminology.

The following is a list of those books written for people outside the architecture profession. Most of these are still in print, and can be purchased at bookstores specializing in art and architecture or borrowed from a public library.

- *What Style Is It?* National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1983.
- *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles*, Marcus Whiffen, 1969.
- *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Virginia and Lee McAlester, 1984.
- *Old House Dictionary: An Illustrated Guide to American Domestic Architecture (1600-1940)*, Steven Phillips, 1989.
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For more information on writing architectural descriptions, please see page 19.

## 10. Construction Date

The date of construction can be factual or estimated. Factual dates are those based upon official records or other reliable sources such as building permits, tax assessor's records, deeds, etc. If you have been unsuccessful in using these sources, Sanborn Maps, oral histories, construction methods, and architectural style can be used to estimate the date of construction.

## 11. Architect, Designer, or Engineer

The names of architects, designers, or engineers are often on building permits, and are sometimes mentioned in publications such as *Southwest Builder and Contractor*. If there is no name on the building permit, write "unknown" in this space. If the name on the building permit is also that of the owner, this does not necessarily mean that the owner designed the building. Rather, it usually means the owner acted as the general contractor, and may have purchased the design from a catalog. In this case, also write "unknown" in this space and explain your findings in the Significance Statement (#18).

## 12. Contractor or Other Builder

The names of contractors or other builders are often on building permits, and are sometimes mentioned in publications such as *Southwest Builder and Contractor*. If there is no name on the building permit, write "unknown" in this space. If the name on the building permit is also that of the owner, that means they acted as their own general contractor. If this is the case, write the owner's name in this space and explain your findings in the Significance Statement (#18).

## 13. Visual Documentation of Property

It is important to include enough visual documentation to adequately describe the property as visual documentation may be used in lieu of on-site inspection (structure of structures and site). All photographic documentation shall be submitted on 8x10 black and white prints. At least one image of the primary facade shall be transmitted via digital format with the application. An image key plan (including site plan and floor plans as needed) shall be part of the visual documentation (8 1/2 x 11 format). All photographic prints shall be labeled on the back with proposed monument name, date of exposure, photographer's name, and key plan reference number. Use self-adhesive labels with word processing generated text. Prints shall be on archivally-stable paper. All images shall also be submitted electronically to [CHC@lacity.org](mailto:CHC@lacity.org).

## 14. Condition

Check the appropriate category.



## **15. Alterations**

While researching the building, make note of major changes. Describe and date major alterations such as additions or changes to the materials – doors, windows, siding, roofing, and other features that determine the historic character of the building. Building permits and on-site physical evidence may help determine the alteration history of the building.

## **16. Threats To Site**

Check the appropriate category.

## **17. Is the Structure on Its Original Site?**

You may assume that the structure is on its original site, especially if you obtain an original building permit and other documentary evidence. If you have evidence that the building has been moved, state it here.

## **18. Significance**

The statement of significance is basically a summary of your research results. Begin with a brief sentence stating why the building is important and how it meets the criteria in the Cultural Heritage Ordinance.

1. If the building is notable as an outstanding example of an architectural style, discuss how the style developed, its characteristics, other examples and their condition, and how the building you are nominating compares to others.
2. If the building is notable as the work of a gifted architect or craftsman, give a brief biography of the person; describe how they influenced the architecture of Los Angeles; give other examples of their work and their condition; and tell how the building fits into their career.
3. If the building is identified with historic persons, present a brief biography of the person, the role that person played in the history of Los Angeles, other buildings associated with the person and their condition, and why the building you are nominating best represents his or her life.
4. If the building is historically significant, avoid making statements like first, last, only, unique, unusual, etc., as these statements are usually difficult to prove. The statement of significance should be based upon documentary evidence. If you have proof that a building was the “first” of its type, by all means state it. If you suspect that something is true, but are not sure, qualify your statements with language such as “it is likely,” “apparently,” “attributed to,” “appears to be,” “probably,” etc.

For more information on writing effective significance statements, please see page 19.

## **19. Sources**

List the books, photographs, oral history informants, etc. that you utilized to gather information on your building.

## **20. Name and Date**

Fill out your name, street and e-mail address, date, and organization (if any) with which you are working. Upon completion of your application, please mail it to the Cultural Heritage Commission at: City Hall, 200 North Spring St., Room 667, Los Angeles, CA 90012

