

Frequently Asked Questions: City of Fresno's Historic Preservation Program

For more information see "Historic Preservation" on the City of Fresno's website (www.fresno.gov) and/or call Karana Hattersley-Drayton, Historic Preservation Project Manager at (559) 621-8520

Is my building or site on the Local Register of Historic Resources?

The list of Local and National Register properties for Fresno can be found in "A Guide to Historic Architecture in Fresno, California" (www.historicfresno.org). One can also access this website through a link on the City's historic preservation page.

How do I list my building on the Register? *For buildings, structures, objects or sites to be considered for listing on the Local Register, they must (usually) be at least 50 years of age and have historic significance. For more information please contact the City's Historic Preservation Project Manager at (559) 621-8520. The City's Historic Preservation Ordinance also includes the criteria for listing. The ordinance may be accessed through the City's Historic Preservation home page.*

Are there any benefits to being included on a historic register? *Owners of designated historic properties may use the California Historical Building Code which is a more flexible way to meet health and safety and exempts the property from the cool roof standards and Title 24 (except for new building and HVAC). A property owner may also apply for exemption from property development standards (such as parking and fence heights) under the City's zoning ordinance. A designated property is protected under local and state laws. Commercial properties built before 1936 may also potentially use federal tax credits of 10% or for national register properties, 20%.*

True, or not: I have been told that if my property is "historic," that I can't paint it without someone looking over my shoulder! *Not exactly true. Only activities that require a permit are reviewed by the Historic Preservation staff and, on occasion, by the Historic Preservation Commission. Application of exterior and interior paint does not require a permit, nor does general maintenance, trimming of vegetation etc.*

Are there funds to restore historic buildings? *There is currently no specific source of funds for historic preservation in Fresno. However, a property owner may qualify for the Senior Paint or minor rehab program or, for "commercial" properties, claim the 10% federal tax credit.*

I am thinking about changing out my windows in order to save energy. *The California Energy Commission has shown that windows are NOT a major culprit in energy loss, or gain. Rather look to your roof insulation, leaks around duct work etc. In addition, it will take up to 20 years to recoup the expense of the new windows through savings on your energy bill. Changing out windows can also be detrimental to a home's historic look and thus its resale value.*