



# DIVISION REPORT HISTORIC PRESERVATION

*Division of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation*

## INTRODUCTION

The Historic Preservation staff works with property owners, local businesses, public agencies and community organizations to help identify, preserve, and promote St. Petersburg's unique character. Division Staff is responsible for the administration of the Local Landmarks Program, the Monuments and Markers Program, the Ad Valorem Tax Exemption Program, and the Transfer of Development Rights program. Further, Division staff reviews all Certificates of Appropriateness for changes affecting Local Landmark properties. Additionally, staff coordinates Certified Local Government (CLG) responsibilities with the State Historic Preservation Office, reviews nominations to the National Register of Historic Places nominations, conducts Section 106 reviews, serves as staff to the Community Planning and Preservation Commission and aids the public with historical research, rehabilitation issues and economic incentives.

## DEPARTMENT

Urban Planning and Historic Preservation Division  
Planning and Economic Development Department  
City of St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida  
Municipal Services Center  
One Fourth Street North, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

## RESPONSIBILITIES of DIVISION STAFF

- **(Nomination to) the National Register of Historic Places for Designation**

Since 1988, the City has utilized matching grants to fund the preparation of five district nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. These districts include the Downtown St. Petersburg Historic District, Kenwood Historic District, North Shore Historic District, Roser Park Historic District, and Round Lake Historic District. Including the aforementioned historic districts, 33 properties within the city are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, with 14 of these having been listed since 1998.

- **Local Landmark Designations, Individual and District**

Staff members are responsible for administering the Local Landmark Program Designation Reports to the St. Petersburg Register of Local Landmarks. An inventory of these buildings and districts is on file in the Urban Planning and Historic Preservation Division. There are currently over 114 local landmarks and three (3) local historic landmark districts.

- **Certificate of Appropriateness**

A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is required for any exterior alteration to a designated landmark, landmark site, or property within a historic district prior to undertaking construction. The COA process protects locally designated properties from being adversely altered or demolished and requires the submission of building plans and material descriptions for approval. Division staff processes each application, manages public notification where required, and conducts a review, prepares a report and renders a decision or presents to the CPPC utilizing design guidelines based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation to review COAs.

- **Certificate to Dig**

Similar to a COA, the Certificate to Dig (CTD) is required for any alteration to a Sensitivity Level I or II archaeological site prior to undertaking ground disturbing activity. The CTD process protects archaeologically sensitive locations from being adversely altered or demolished. Division staff processes each application, manages public notification where required, and conducts a review, prepares a report, and renders a decision or presents to the CPPC.

- **Research Assistance**

Division staff provides substantial assistance to property owners of historic buildings and structures regardless of whether these buildings and structures are local landmarks. General research assistance includes counsel on the use of historically appropriate materials, architectural elements, such as windows and ornamentation, and the impact of renovations and new additions on the historical integrity of a building or structure.

- **Special Projects**

Special projects include efforts to inform and engage St. Petersburg residents, visitors, and the broader historic preservation community. Recent accomplishments include completion of the African American Heritage Trail, hosting the Society for Commercial Archaeology National Conference, and centennial celebrations such as the Open-Air Post Office in 2017.

- **Section 106 Reviews**

In the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), Congress established a comprehensive program to preserve historical and cultural amenities. Section 106 of the NHPA requires consideration of historic and archaeological resources in the multitude of projects with federal involvement. Section 106 requires federal agencies to consider the effects of projects they carry out, approve, or fund on cultural resources. At the municipal level, Division staff reviews a variety of projects for compliance with the Section 106 process, including cellular towers, municipal properties, and transportation and housing projects.

- **Florida Master Site File Forms**

The Florida Master Site File is the State of Florida's official inventory of historical and cultural resources. The Site File includes archaeological and historical survey reports and other information relevant to specific properties throughout the State of Florida. A local landmark or National Register designation is not required to submit documents into the Florida Master Site File. Updates to the Florida Master Site File are sometimes required as a condition of a grant or the Section 106 process. Division staff provides this service, when required.

- **Ad Valorem Tax Exemption**

The Rehabilitation Ad Valorem Tax Exemption Program is a local program for qualifying residential or non-residential historic properties that exempts up to 12.1 mils of certain property taxes for a ten-year period. The program allows approximately \$121 per every \$10,000 of qualified expenses spent on the rehabilitation. There is presently no cap to the calculable rehabilitation expenses exempted.

- **Legislative Tasks**

Division staff perform legislative tasks, including recent updates to the Historic and Archaeological Preservation Ordinance, and the creation of the Community Planning and Preservation Commission, whose first meeting occurred on February 12, 2014.

- **Historic Plaque Applications**

Division staff reviews applications for the placement of plaques and markers intended to commemorate events, individuals, and buildings or sites that have been significant to St. Petersburg's local culture and heritage. Markers commemorating historic events, people and buildings must be reviewed by the CPPC; markers commemorating local landmarks additionally require COA approval.