

**PLANNING AND  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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**HISTORIC DESIGNATION INFORMATION SHEET**

There are two types of independent designation for historic properties and districts: the National Register of Historic Places and Local Historic Landmark Designation. A property or district can be listed as either or both designations.

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION**

For Transylvania County, local historic landmark designations are for properties that are deemed to have historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural value to local history. The designation process is initiated by the Transylvania County Joint Historic Preservation Commission (JHPC) and the landowner. Once JHPC approves the application and recommends a property for designation as a local historic landmark, the designation must be approved by the City Council when the property is within the city limits, or by the County Commission when the property is outside the city limits. Designations may be for an individual property or for a district.

For an individual property, this designation

- gives owners the right to apply for an annual 50% property tax deferral as long as the property's important historic features are maintained.
- maintains the historic integrity of the structure and any construction work that includes alterations, additions or removals has to be approved by JHPC prior to initiation of the project.

For a district, this designation

- includes a neighborhood or area that has a concentration of historic buildings.
- has no effect on local property tax (tax deferrals are not made available by this designation).

Both kinds of local designations

- are accomplished by the passage of a city or county ordinance.
- allow for a stay on demolition requests.
- require that a Certificate of Appropriateness be obtained from JHPC before making changes or additions to a property, before new construction, or before demolition. This review ensures that the proposed work is appropriate to the special character of the property or district.

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### **NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts worthy of preservation for their significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture. The National Register is a federal program under the National Park Service and administered by the State Historic Preservation Office. Established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the purpose of the Act is to ensure that as a matter of public policy, properties significant in national, state, and local history are considered in the planning of federal undertakings, and to encourage historic preservation initiatives by state and local governments and the private sector. This designation

- may provide protection against federal undertakings, such as highway construction.
- places no obligation or restriction on owners using private resources to maintain or alter their property.
- has no tax deferral benefit.

### **ADVANTAGES TO THE COMMUNITY OF HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS**

- Gives the community special recognition and identity
- Honors past and preserves history
- Promotes the quality of life
- Increases tourism
- Encourages re-investment rather than neglect
- Retains sales tax dollars in the community as buildings are redeveloped
- Protects the character and uniqueness of an area