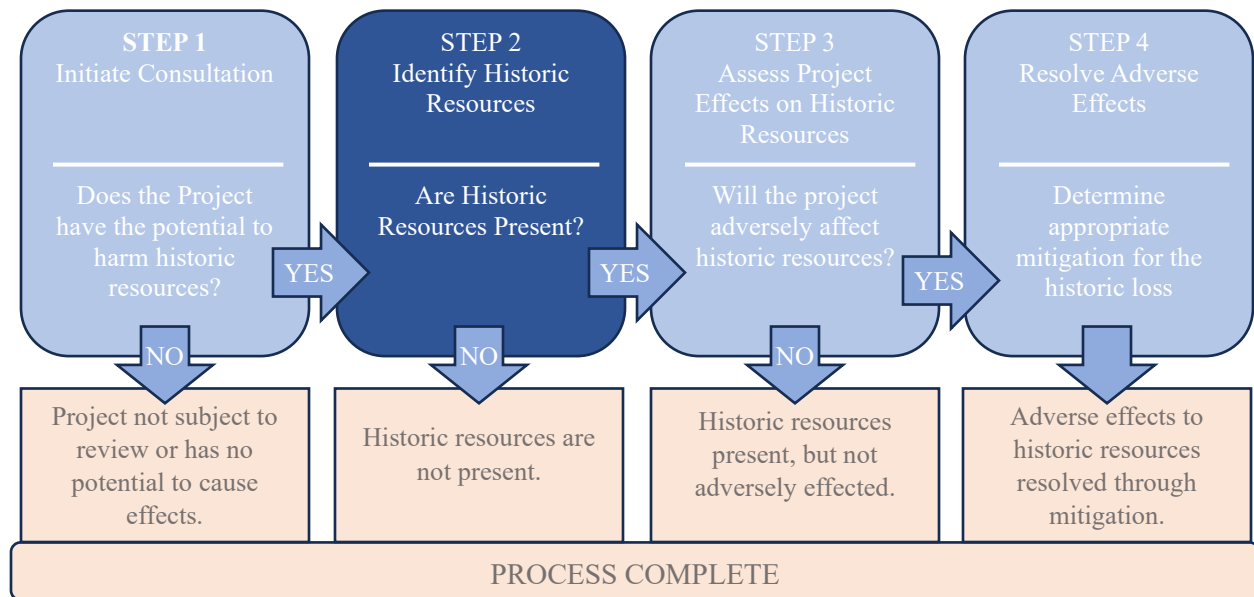


State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Environmental Review Process Step 2: Identify Historic Resources

The second step of SHPO's Environmental Review process is to Identify Historic Resources. Sometimes this step is completed and included with the information provided in Step 1.



WHAT are Historic Resources

Historic Resources also may be referred to as cultural resources or historic assets. While all archaeological sites and buildings greater than 50 years in age may be characterized as historic resources, not all historic resources are given additional considerations or protections under the law. SHPO relies on two legal definitions, described below, to differentiate *significant* historic resources that merit special treatment. SHPO is using the phrase 'significant historic resources' in its explanatory step documents to encompass both definitions.

Section 106 evaluates project effects on a "historic property." A **historic property** is any district, building, structure, site, or object that has been listed or is considered eligible for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places*. Historic properties retain integrity and convey significance of association, type, or research potential. Projects subject to environmental review under federal regulations use this definition to evaluate the project effects. The guidelines for identifying and evaluating a historic property is defined by the National Park Service. Additional information can be found here: www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister.

The **National Environmental Policy Act** must consider its effects on the human environment or cultural resources. Cultural resources have a broader definition than historic properties, but the terms are often used interchangeably. If there are potential effects on a historic resource, then an agency typically chooses to integrate this compliance with Section 106. Follow [this link](#) for a comprehensive description of this integration.

The **Connecticut Environmental Policy Act** refers to a consideration of impacts on "historic structures and landmarks" (§22a-1c). These are defined as any building, structure, object or site that is significant in American history,

architecture, archaeology and culture or property used in connection therewith including sacred sites and archaeological sites (§10-410 and §10-381). Because state statutes do not define “significance,” SHPO uses the criteria, qualities, and considerations developed for the National Register of Historic Places that have been adapted for the State Register of Historic Places.

WHERE to find information

To assist with identifying known historic resources, SHPO maintains the Connecticut Cultural Resources Inventory (ConnCRIS), an online tool for information on historic resources mapped across the state (<https://conncris.ct.gov/>). Some information, such as archaeological sites, are restricted because sharing their locational information could put them at risk of harm. SHPO staff can assist with identifying reported resources in a project area.

Reported information is a result of prior surveys and not all locations have been surveyed. Appropriate identification efforts may require a survey of the proposed project area by a historic preservation professional. SHPO maintains lists of professionals that have routinely completed these types of surveys in Connecticut. A consultant does not have to be on the list to complete a survey, but they must be qualified according to Appendix A of 36 CFR Part 61. As stated earlier, not everything old is subject to additional regulatory consideration. For this reason, it is important to have someone evaluate resources that may be impacted by professionals familiar with the implementing procedures for identifying significance.

Why is it significant

The concept of significance is critical to the environmental review process. Not everything that is old merits additional consideration or protection under the laws requiring SHPO involvement. Although there are exceptions, generally a property must be greater than 50 years in age. For federal laws significance is determined if a historic property is listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Similarly, state laws describe significance as being listed or eligible for listing on the National or State Register of Historic Places. A place does not need to be listed to be significant but if it is not listed, it must be eligible for listing.

Significance comes from the consideration of two things: why is the place important and can it convey that importance. To determine the historic importance of a place, SHPO applies criteria of evaluation. Although the criteria differ in how they are grouped for the National and State Register, they basically include having associations with important historic events or people, importance in design or construction, and/or research potential. If a place has one or more of these qualities, then SHPO considers the integrity of the property by specifically considering its current condition with its historic location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The State Register has more flexibility with the aspects of integrity than the National Register and there may also be differences between individual properties and those that are part of a group of properties. For additional information, please see [National Register Bulletin 15](#)).

WHAT happens next

If no significant historic resources are present or they will not be directly or indirectly impacted by the project, SHPO will issue a finding of **No Historic Properties Affected** and no additional consultation with SHPO is required. If there is the potential to harm significant historic resources, the review process will proceed to Step 3. The finding of effect is not an evaluation of the project, but of the project’s impact on historic resources. For all other findings, please proceed to Step 3.