

# News Release

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Media Contact

Chris Havel  
Associate Director  
503-931-2590 or [chris.havel@oregon.gov](mailto:chris.havel@oregon.gov)

Ian P. Johnson  
Associate Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
503-986-0678 or [ian.johnson@oregon.gov](mailto:ian.johnson@oregon.gov)

## Public comments extended through Aug. 31 for updates to state rules for national register program

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) is extending the date to accept public comments on proposed changes to rules governing how the state protects important historical places until 5 p.m. Aug. 31, 2020. The extension comes with a new opportunity on Aug. 18 for local and tribal governments to learn more about the proposed rules and comment on them.

The state is proposing updates to the Oregon Administrative Rules that govern how the state administers the federal National Register of Historic Places Program, which lists buildings, districts and other sites important to local, state or national history. The Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) — an office of OPRD — administers the local program, which is run by the National Park Service.

In Oregon, 2,065 properties — including 133 historic districts located across the state's 36 counties and representing many aspects of our rich history — are now listed in the National Register.

In the last several years, several high-profile, controversial nominations exposed problems with the National Register process, including determining owner consent and public involvement. Proposed changes seek to establish a fair and transparent process in alignment with federal requirements.

In addition to extending the comment period, OPRD will have an informational webinar at 10 a.m. Aug. 18 for government staff and leaders to learn more about the proposed rules and potential impact on communities, local governments and tribes. The webinar will be open to the public and end with an opportunity to provide public comment. Register to attend at [oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Pages/PRP-rulemaking.aspx](https://oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Pages/PRP-rulemaking.aspx).

“Local governments and Native American tribes are a critical partner in the national register program,” said Ian Johnson, associate deputy state historic preservation officer.

The Oregon SHPO provides local governments participating in the federal Certified Local Government (CLG) Program grants to list properties in the federal National Register of Historic Places. Using SHPO grant funds, the City of Jacksonville listed the Britt Gardens and the City of Gresham listed the Roy E. and Hildur L. Amundesen House in the National Register.

Local governments may comment on National Register nominations. Local governments participating in the CLG program may object to a nomination, ending the nomination process unless appealed. The revised rule includes updated procedures for hearing notifications, including specific provisions to notify CLGs, as well as a provision that allows the SHPO to coordinate outreach efforts with local governments. The revised rule also now includes provisions for comments from Oregon’s nine federally-recognized Native American tribes.

OPRD will accept public comments on the proposed changes through 5 p.m. Aug. 31, 2020. Comments can be made online, in writing or via email:

- Online: [oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Pages/PRP-rulemaking.aspx](https://oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Pages/PRP-rulemaking.aspx)
- In writing: Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, attn. Katie Gauthier, 725 Summer St NE, Suite C, Salem OR 97301
- Email: [OPRD.publiccomment@oregon.gov](mailto:OPRD.publiccomment@oregon.gov)
- Informational, online webinar to discuss potential impacts of proposed rules on local governments, communities and federally-recognized Native American tribes. The webinar is set for 10-11:30 a.m. Aug. 18. Register at [oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Pages/PRP-rulemaking.aspx](https://oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Pages/PRP-rulemaking.aspx).

After reviewing public comments, OPRD staff plan to present a final recommended rule for consideration to the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission.

The full text of the proposed change is available online: [oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Pages/PRP-rulemaking.aspx](https://oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Pages/PRP-rulemaking.aspx).

Properties listed in the National Register are:

- Recognized as significant to the nation, state or community;
- Considered in the planning of federal or federally assisted projects;
- Eligible for federal and state tax benefits;
- Eligible for historic preservation grants when funds are available;
- Eligible for leniency in meeting certain building code requirements.

National Register listing does not place any restrictions on a property at the federal level, unless property owners choose to participate in tax benefit or grant programs. State law requires local governments to review the demolition or relocation of all properties listed in the National Register at a public hearing, and allows local governments to add additional regulations following a formal public process. Learn more about the National Register of Historic Places program in Oregon at [oregon.gov/oprd/OH/pages/national-register.aspx](https://oregon.gov/oprd/OH/pages/national-register.aspx).