

I. Statement of Principles

A. It is the responsibility of the State to deepen understanding of, promote, and popularize our country's history, both national and local, and safeguard our historical treasures in order to strengthen our people's nationalism, love of country, respect for our heroes, and pride in our people's achievements. Toward this end the NHCP shall recognize, support, protect and conserve sites and structures of demonstrated historical significance.

B. The NHCP recognizes that historic sites and structures also oftentimes possess cultural value. For this reason the NHCP shall collaborate with the National Museum and other cultural agencies in recognizing sites and structures with historical and artistic, scientific, or cultural value. Such collaboration may take the form of joint declarations of important sites and structures and joint installation of markers in these sites.

C. In keeping with its mandate, the NHCP shall focus on the historical significance of the site or structure being considered for inclusion in or delisting from the National Registry of Historic Sites and Structures in the Philippines.

D. Historical significance shall be determined in terms of the following:

1. Whether the person, event, site or structure led to or resulted in profound changes in the lives of the community, the country, or a considerable segment of our population;
2. If the changes are durable or lasting (as distinct from short-lived);
3. Whether and how much the event, person, site or structure reveals something meaningful or important about our past; and
4. Whether the event, person, site or structure resonates or concerns us to this day.

E. The Commission shall support to the greatest extent possible, financially and/or through technical assistance, the maintenance, conservation and restoration of historic sites and structures listed in the National Registry of Historic Sites and Structures.

F. The Commission shall comply with international principles and standards of conservation as set forth in the following:

- International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, 1964/1981 (Venice Charter)
- Charter on the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas, 1987 (Washington Charter)
- Nara Document on Authenticity
- Code of Ethics of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works
- Other universally accepted standards of conservation

G. Given the potentially large number of significant sites and structures, the cost of maintenance, conservation, and restoration, the extent of need and budgetary constraints, the principle of shared responsibility between the NHCP and concerned government units or private parties shall be vigorously encouraged. This responsibility shall also include raising public awareness of the historic site or structure.

II. Identification of Historic Sites and Structures

The criteria for identifying historic sites and structures shall be as follows:

- A. Properties strongly associated with important historical events, heroes and illustrious Filipinos whose distinctive historic contribution endures;
- B. Properties that bear strong foreign historical or period influences such as Chinese, Arabic, Spanish, Mexican, American, or Japanese and those that provide strong evidence of historical relations with other countries;
- C. Sites of first establishments in the Philippines (e.g., site of the first printing press, commercial house, theater, school, transport system, distillery, etc.); and
- D. Groups or clusters of buildings or structures, or a whole precinct, district, or town center, including plazas, gardens, landscapes, historic ruins, streets, pathways, stairs, bridges, fences, visual corridors, vista points and other open spaces, town plan patterns, and immediate environs, whose historic importance is seen in the entirety of the setting, unit, or space rather than in its individual elements or characteristics.

III. Classification of Historic Sites and Structures

A. To qualify for consideration, a site or structure as described above being proposed for NHCP recognition must:

1. Possess demonstrable historical significance; and
2. Be at least fifty (50) years old and seventy (70) percent authentic.

B. Historic sites and structures shall be classified according to the recognition conferred by the NHCP, as follows:

1. Level I: Declaration of a historic site or structure and installation of a marker
2. Level II: Installation of a historical marker

C. Level I recognition shall entail the declaration of any of the following:

1. Heritage Zone/Historic Center – a historic space, unit, district or cluster of structures and their environs, with distinctive historical importance in its entirety
2. National Cultural Treasure – a unique cultural property possessing outstanding historical value and significance
3. National Historical Shrine – A hallowed site or structure in honor of a national hero or highly significant historical event (e.g., Rizal Shrine in Calamba and Fort Santiago, Aguinaldo Shrine in Kawit, Pinaglabanan Memorial Shrine in San Juan, Quezon Memorial Shrine in Quezon City, Mabini Shrine in Tanauan)
4. National Historical Monument/Memorial – An object, structure or site that commemorates, memorializes or gives reverence to a special historic personage or

event (e.g., Rizal National Monument, Rizal Park; Bonifacio National Monument, Caloocan; Juan Luna Monument, Intramuros; Quezon Memorial, Quezon City)

5. National Historical Landmark – (a) A site or structure closely associated with a significant historical event, achievement, characteristic, turning point or stage in Philippine history (e.g., P. Burgos Elementary School, Pasay City; Sheik Mahkdum Historical Landmark, Tawi-Tawi); or (b) a structure made or created by a national hero (e.g., Map of Mindanao by Jose Rizal)

D. Level II recognition shall entail the installation of a historical marker in a historic site or structure that is not declared a heritage zone/historic center, national cultural treasure, shrine, monument or memorial, or historical landmark, but nonetheless has some historical significance. Such a site or structure may later be elevated to Level I recognition pending further research and re-evaluation.

E. Sites and structures recognized by the Commission, whether through a formal declaration and/or the installation of a historical marker, shall be recorded in the NHCP's National Registry of Historic Sites and Structures in the Philippines.

IV. Declaration and Marking of Historic Sites and Structures

A. The process of considering a site or structure for NHCP recognition may be initiated by any of the following, with the requisite documents indicated below:

1. NHCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field evaluation • Archival/documentary research and oral interviews with knowledgeable local residents, if necessary
2. Government unit or agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board resolution in the case of a local government unit • Supporting documents • Written commitment that the government unit or agency will maintain the site/structure and marker to be installed, if approved by the NHCP Board
3. Private owner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request letter • Supporting documents • Written commitment that the owner will maintain the site/structure and marker to be installed, if approved by the NHCP Board • Written commitment that if the owner sells the property or site after its entry into the National Registry, the responsibility to maintain, preserve and protect the historic property shall transfer to the new owner
4. Concerned citizen, historical or heritage society, association, or private establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petition • Supporting documents • Statement on the sustainability and maintenance of the site/structure and marker to be installed, if approved, and the source of funds

Whenever necessary, the NHCP shall solicit expert opinion in considering the proposed site or structure.

B. The appropriate NHCP divisions shall conduct research (field and archival/documentary) on the site/structure being considered in order to recommend a course of action to the Board. Recommendations to the Board shall be accompanied by:

1. Visual and textual descriptions of the site/structure;

2. Explanation of its historical significance;
3. Counterpart commitment of the concerned government unit, owner, or private party;
4. Availability of funds, whether from the NHCP or the proponent; and
5. Other pertinent documents.

C. Recognition initiated by the NHCP may take the form of:

1. Upgrading (or downgrading) the level of recognition;
2. Reclassifying a registered site or structure;
3. Registering a site/structure declared by the National Museum as an important cultural property or national cultural treasure, provided its historical significance is demonstrated.

D. Sites and structures that meet the NHCP criteria and categories and are duly supported by financial commitments shall be officially recognized through an NHCP Board Resolution and entered into the National Registry of Historic Sites and Structures.

1. The declaration shall be stated in the resolution and in the text of the marker.
2. The NHCP shall bear the cost of the marker fabrication.

E. Every site/structure approved for entry into the NHCP Registry shall have a historical marker.

1. The standard marker text shall be in Filipino. The text shall be factual based on solid research on the historical significance of the site/structure. The text shall be approved by the Board;
2. Should the Board approve a request for a companion marker in another Philippine language or dialect or in English, the fabrication and installation costs of the second marker shall be borne by the proponent.
3. The standard marker shall be made of cast iron material, having a molded text plate/panel on which the title and brief historical account are embossed.
4. The official seal of the Republic and the year the marker is installed shall be placed at the top center of the marker.
5. The marker shall be attached to the wall at eye level, either on the right or left side of the front door of the building, or installed on a separate pedestal at an appropriate location at the front of the building. It may also be installed on any section of the building façade where it can best be viewed by the public or at the front gate if the previous options are not possible.
6. The marker is government property and as such may not be removed, altered or destroyed without written authority from the NHCP Chair. Anyone who vandalizes the marker or violates this provision shall be charged criminally in keeping with the law.

F. Historical markers may also be installed to honor illustrious Filipinos whose historic contribution is unquestionable, worthy of public recognition, and enduring.

1. The marker may not be installed in honor of living persons.
2. The marker may not be installed to honor a person deceased fewer than fifty (50) years, except in the case of a remarkably (extraordinarily) outstanding honoree.
3. In exceptional cases, a marker may be installed to honor a foreigner whose historic contribution to the country is beyond doubt.

G. As a general rule, the marker shall not be removed from the original site or structure which it signifies. Neither shall it be transferred to another site or location without prior written permission of the NHCP Chairperson.

1. When a historic structure is authorized to be relocated in a site determined to be the actual historic site (not the first site of installation), the marker shall accompany the relocated structure.
2. When a historic structure is authorized to be relocated because it can be better preserved and appreciated in the new site, the old marker shall accompany the structure, and a simple replacement marker indicating the old site as the original site may be installed.

H. In the case of a lost marker, a replacement shall be fabricated that retains the seal of the Republic, year of original installation, and the original agency which installed the marker.

I. Historic sites and structures listed in the National Registry shall enjoy the support and protection of the NHCP, subject to the availability of funds.

1. The NHCP shall prioritize technical assistance projects in the order of historical significance and the urgency of the need for conservation or restoration.
2. Requests that provide counterpart support shall also be given priority as such support demonstrates the commitment of the local partner to maintain the historic site/structure.
3. Technical assistance shall consist of feasibility studies, architectural, structural, and other technical plans and drawings.
4. The NHCP shall provide such assistance after a mutually acceptable memorandum of agreement is reached by and between it and the requesting party/proponent.
5. Subject to the availability of funds, the NHCP may, in addition, finance the restoration, protection, improvement or development of declared historic sites and structures.

J. For their part, government units and private owners whose property or structure has received NHCP recognition shall:

1. Maintain and protect the marker and site it signifies;

2. In the case of local government units, document and inventory their local historic heritage sites and structures, and provide protective and fiscal measures; and
3. For local historical or heritage societies and concerned citizens and groups, monitor the condition of historic sites in their vicinity, report any damage or deterioration to the local government unit and the NHCP, help raise funds to maintain the site, and encourage public awareness of the value of the site.

K. All declarations pertaining to historic sites and structures, including those donated to the NHCP, shall be covered by a Memorandum of Agreement between the NHCP and the beneficiary or donor.

1. The agreement shall detail the powers, obligations and limitations agreed upon regarding the maintenance and use of the site.
2. A certificate of transfer from the NHCP to the beneficiary shall be signed upon the formal unveiling of the historical marker.

L. Markers of local significance may be installed by local government units, individuals, or organizations under the conditions below.

1. The LGU, local organization, or individual shall bear the cost of fabricating and installing the marker.
2. The seal of the Republic of the Philippines, the name of the NHCP, and the NHCP marker design may not be used.
3. Locally installed markers shall not be recorded in the National Registry of Historic Sites and Structures.

V. Delisting Declared/Marked Historic Sites or Structures

Historic sites and structures listed in the National Registry of Historic Sites and Structures may be removed from the Registry by the NHCP Board under the conditions and procedures outlined below.

A. The grounds for delisting a registered site or structure shall be the following:

1. New evidence and substantial proof that the subject site or structure does not merit the historical significance and recognition given it;
2. New evidence and solid proof that points to another site or structure instead of the subject site or structure;
3. Misrepresentation by the owner or custodian of the site;
4. Damage and degradation of the registered site or structure so severe as to diminish or destroy its historical significance or overall historical ambience, and restoration is found to be untenable.

B. Sites and structures declared historic by law (e.g. P.D. 260, P.D. 375, etc.), however, may not be delisted from the roster of historic sites and structures unless by a specific act from the executive or legislature revoking or amending the declaration.

C. Should the damage of a site/structure result from a violation of P.D. 1505 (Amending Presidential Decree No. 260, as Amended, by Prohibiting the Unauthorized Modification, Alteration, Repair and Destruction of Original Features of All National Shrines, Monuments, Landmarks and Other Important Historic Edifices), the Commission shall charge the person(s) responsible for the damage.

D. The request for the removal of a site/structure from the National Registry may emanate from the same parties as those proposing the recognition of a site/structure. Pertinent documents shall accompany the request for delisting.

E. Once the request for delisting a site/structure is processed and found to be meritorious by the NHCP, i.e., it meets the criteria for delisting and the supporting documents are complete, a public hearing shall be conducted by the Board prior to its decision. The purposes of the hearing shall be to:

1. Enable the petitioner and all concerned parties to share their knowledge and opinion on the proposed delisting of the site or structure;
2. Provide the Board with as much information as possible so that it can judge the merit of the proposal and its implications now and in the future.

F. The Board shall designate two of its members to serve in the hearing Board along with the Chair, provided that at least one of the two members is a historian.

G. The Board shall publicly announce the schedule and venue of the hearing, invite concerned parties to make an appearance, and ensure that the proceedings are properly and accurately documented.

H. The private owner, custodian of the site/structure, or the proponent of the request who fails or refuses to appear in the hearing shall forfeit his/her right to be heard.

I. The hearing Board shall decide on the request for delisting a site/structure within ninety (90) days after the public hearing is concluded and submit its recommendation to the entire NHCP Board for approval.

J. In the case of a site/structure jointly declared by the NHCP and the National Museum, both bodies shall issue a joint resolution regarding the composition of the hearing Board, the manner of hearing the case, and the deadline for rendering a decision.

K. The decision of the Board, or joint bodies of the NHCP and the National Museum, on all delisting cases may be appealed to the Office of the President, provided the appeal is made within fifteen (15) days from receipt of the order by the appealing party. Otherwise, the decision shall be deemed final and executory.