

## Frequently Asked Questions About How Multifamily Complexes Become Historic Districts

### ***Q. What is a historic district?***

A historic district is a concentrated collection of buildings, structures or sites that are united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. The collection as a whole is considered significant historically and/or architecturally and worthy of preservation, although each building may not be individually distinctive.

### ***Q. How does a complex/neighborhood become “historic?”***

In Arizona, the formal means by which a City can officially recognize historic properties, list them on local historic registers, and accord them special protections and benefits is through the establishment of a Historic Preservation (HP) overlay zone. This zoning overlay does NOT change the underlying zoning in any way.

### ***Q. How were the proposed multifamily districts identified?***

The Historic Preservation Officer compiled research on the important trends and architectural influences that shaped how Scottsdale developed historically. Multifamily complexes were identified as an important building type, and in 2003 the City conducted a citywide survey of multifamily complexes constructed during the building boom after World War II to identify and document individual buildings and districts eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Data was collected and analyzed for 368 multifamily complexes built between 1946 and 1965 within current City Boundaries, including multifamily complexes that were built in unincorporated areas of the county and those that were converted from apartments to condominiums. Buildings that illustrated the important historic and architectural trends of the period were determined to be “contributors” to the historic district. Buildings that had substantial alterations to their character-defining features were determined to be “non-contributors.” Historic Districts must have a high percentage of buildings that are contributors, but not all buildings within a district must contribute to the historic district.

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***Q. What is the process for becoming a historic district?***

There are three governmental bodies that are involved in the process to designate a historic district: the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning Commission and the City Council.

Information about the history of Scottsdale's postwar development and the associated historic multifamily projects is gathered by the HP staff and is presented to the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), the citizen body appointed to make recommendations to the City Council on historic preservation. If the HPC determines that the proposed district merits consideration for designation, they initiate an HP overlay zone for an area with delineated, justified boundaries. The HPC reviews additional analysis prepared by the HP staff on the district's significance and integrity and recommends to the Planning Commission and City Council to approve or deny the proposed HP overlay zoning.

The Planning Commission next conducts a public hearing to determine if the proposed designation is in conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan and other relevant plans and makes a recommendation to the City Council for approval or denial accordingly.

The City Council makes the final decision as to listing the historic district on the Scottsdale Historic Register.

***Q. How can a property owner or interested citizen be involved in the process?***

During the study process, several meetings are held to explain how the multifamily projects will be selected and gain input and additional information about the proposed historic districts. After initiation of HP overlay zones for the selected neighborhoods and before the HPC public hearing on the designations, two open houses are held to explain why the proposed district is considered significant and what are the consequences and benefits of designation. A public hearing before the HPC is then scheduled and property owners are notified by mail 30 days in advance of the public hearing. A notice is published in the newspaper and the proposed districts are posted with signs about the date and location of the hearings before the HPC, Planning Commission and City Council.

***Q. Does a certain percentage of the tenants or owners have to support being designated before a building is zoned HP?***

The basis for deciding to designate a multifamily project as part of a historic district is whether or not the building and larger district meets the HP ordinance selection criteria for the Scottsdale Historic Register. While owner consent is not required, the support or opposition of the property owners is considered by the City Council in making a final decision about designation.