

GOOD THINGS TO KNOW

about historic properties
in Palm Springs.



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What you will learn...

- The four classifications of Historic Sites in Palm Springs.
- Historic Districts in Palm Springs – how things work.
- Where to look – Listings of Historic Sites & Districts in Palm Springs.
- Important facts everyone needs to know about Historic Sites in Palm Springs.
- Teardowns – its a lot more than just getting a demolition permit.
- Local Incentives – Mills Act Contracts in Palm Springs.
- Incentives for Class 1 Commercial Sites in Palm Springs.
- How the State Historic Building Code applies.



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“Good to know...”

Palm Springs has four classes of historic sites:

- Class 4 – Everything built prior to 1978... everything...
- Class 3 – Properties identified as “potentially eligible as historic sites.”
- Class 2 – Historically significant, but significantly altered.
- Class 1 – Most prestigious class of historic sites in Palm Springs.
- And there are properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places



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“Good to know...”

Palm Springs has several historic districts:

- HD-1 Las Palmas Business Historic District.
- HD-2 Royal Hawaiian Estates.
- HD-3 Racquet Club Cottages West (Racquet Club Garden Villas).
- HD-4 Pompeii de las Palmas.
- HD-5 Sandcliff Garden Homes.
- HD-6 Park Imperial South.

(the “Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood” is NOT a City-designated historic district....)



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“Good to know...”

About Historic Districts:

- Historic Districts have **Contributing** and **Non-Contributing** Sites.
- Contributing Sites = Class 1.
 - Eligible for Mills Act Contracts
 - Contact Planning for HSPB review for exterior alterations prior to issuance of building permits.
- Non-Contributing Sites treated like Class 3.
 - HSPB review prior to full demolition.
 - Not eligible for Mills Act Contracts.
- Some Historic Districts have Design Guidelines for new construction.



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“Is this listing historic? What do we have here?”

- Confirm the date of construction (Building Department, County database)
- Check the City Website (www.palmspringsca.gov) Planning home page under Historic Resources – List of Class 1, Class 2, Class 3 and Historic Districts.
- Check the Citywide Historic Resource Survey. (Potentially Eligible) also on the city website under Historic Resources on the Planning home page.

www.palmspringsca.gov/government/departments/planning/historic_resources



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What to know about Class 3:

- To apply for Class 1 historic designation of a Class 3 site:
 - DO NOT BE AFRAID, IT'S NOT THAT HARD!
 - Download and complete the “Historic Designation” application from the Planning home page of the City website (www.palmspringsca.gov).
 - Local preservation organizations may be able to assist. (example: pspreservationfoundation.org)
 - Public hearing of the HSPB to recommend to City Council.
 - Public hearing of City Council to consider designation.
 - Recorded with the County....



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What to know about Class 2 Historic Properties:

- Like Class 3, full teardown requires approval by HSPB prior to applying for a demolition permit.
- NOT eligible for any incentives.
- Does NOT require HSPB approval for new buildings, additions, alterations, signs, or changes of use that may affect the exterior.



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What to know about Class 1 Historic Properties:

- Eligible for Mills Act Historic Property Preservation Agreements.
- Interior alterations possible? YES, Contact Building Dept. for building permit requirements. No HSPB review necessary.
- Exterior alterations possible? YES...
- Additions possible? YES...
- New accessory structures possible ? YES...
- Changes of use that affect the exterior appearance possible? YES...

YES...Contact Planning Dept. for HSPB review. Approval is based on historical sensitivity of the proposed alterations and Secretary of the Interior Standards...



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What to know about Class 1 Historic Commercial Properties:

- Same incentives and procedures as Residential Class 1 Properties.
- Commercial Properties:
 - Class 1 historic structures are exempt from the requirements to provide additional off-street parking or to pay “parking in-lieu fees” for any new or higher intensity use allowed by the zoning code in the zone in which the Class 1 historic structure is located.
 - Alterations may qualify under the State Historic Building Code – Check with Director of Bldg. BEFORE submitting for bldg permit.



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What to know about Mills Act Contracts

“Historic Property Preservation Agreement”

THE BEST INCENTIVE FOR HISTORIC PROPERTIES

- Possible property tax reduction in exchange for maintaining / preserving a historic site.
- Only Class 1 historic sites and Contributing sites in Historic Districts are eligible in Palm Springs.
- Can be Commercial or Residential.
- Palm Springs does not limit the number of contracts per year...



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What to know about Mills Act Contracts

“How can my client get one of those?”

- Step 1: Contact the Planning Department and ask for a copy of a standard Mills Act contract and review the terms and conditions.
- Step 2: Contact County Tax assessor to be sure it will make a difference in the tax bill.
- Step 3: Write a letter to the Director of Planning requesting one!
- Step 4: Include the processing fee (currently \$1,425).
- Step 5: Be patient... it usually takes several months to process...



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What to know about Mills Act Contracts

- Adjusted tax bill should show up the following year.
- The contract “runs with the land” so the BUYER of a Class 1 site with a Mills Act contract benefits too!
- 10-year contract term with an automatic 1-year extension every year.
- Caution: Those owners who bought the property many years ago may not see a significant reduction (because of ol’ Prop 13), but the subsequent buyer will.



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What to know about Properties in a Historic District:

- “Contributing sites” are eligible for the same incentives as a Class 1 historic site.
- “Contributing sites” require HSPB review of exterior alterations PRIOR to applying for building permits.
- “Contributing COMMERCIAL sites” are eligible for the same parking exemptions for intensified uses as Class 1 historic sites.



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Thank you!

The City of Palm Springs, California

Ken Lyon, RA, Associate City Planner, Historic Preservation

ken.lyon@palmspringsca.gov

760-323-8245

[www.palmspringsca.gov/government/departments/planning/historic resources](http://www.palmspringsca.gov/government/departments/planning/historic%20resources)



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