



# MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY STATE ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT

345 Kellogg Boulevard West, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102-1906 (651) 259-3260

## Government Records Information Leaflet No. 9 Records of Heritage Preservation Commissions

Heritage preservation commissions in Minnesota create documentation that has significant historical value. Heritage preservation commissions are authorized officially by Minnesota Statutes 471.193, and commissions that meet certain requirements can be certified pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Amendments Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-515). Other statutes pertaining to the commissions are found in Minnesota Statutes 138.71-138.75 (The Historic District Act of 1971). Typically, commissions are housed in city planning or community development departments. Each commission carries out an important mission, and its records are valuable as primary sources of city, township, or county history, as well as for their legal status as government records. Records listed on the leaflet that no longer have administrative value to their custodians may be eligible for transfer to the State Archives in the Minnesota Historical Society. Transfer of these or other records to any other historical agency, public library, or museum is allowed with the permission of the State Archives.

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**MINUTES** of the commission and all committees, subcommittees, task forces, and advisory commissions, including permit/design review committee minutes.

**AGENDA PACKETS:** Complete record of information sent to members of the commission for action at its meetings.

**ANNUAL REPORTS:** Narrative and statistical summaries of activities, including yearly update sent to the State Historic Preservation Office.

**DESIGNATION FILES** relating to local site designations; also called address files, site files, and historic district files. They include site inventories, surveys, descriptions, background on owners and on changes made to the property/site, and photographs.

**PROJECT AND PLANNING REPORTS:** Surveys, consultant reports, committee and task force findings regarding the operation of the commission and its programs.

**AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIAL:** Photographs, slides, videotapes, and sound recordings.

**FINAL REPORTS/PRODUCTS OF GRANTS:** Summaries and other products of commission projects that were sponsored by grants.

**PUBLICITY FILES:** News releases, newsletters, public relations handouts, maps, and guides generated by the commission, and newspaper clipping files. Such files also may include information leaflets and brochures produced by the commission regarding the designation process, historic evaluation, and permit review.

**LEGAL MATERIAL:** Commission bylaws, ordinance establishing the commission and the local relationship between the commission and local government, and legal opinions of attorneys regarding the commission and historic properties.

**RESEARCH FILES:** Background information on historic sites and districts, including photographs, maps, and blueprints; may include information produced by local government units and local organizations.

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Commissions also may have copies of historical review and compliance files which originate from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The review and compliance files come to the State Archives through that office.

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The preservation and orderly disposition of records of heritage preservation commissions operated by Minnesota's local governments are governed by Minnesota Statutes 138.17, Subdivision 1. No records of these governmental entities can be destroyed or removed from agency custody without signed authorization by the Records Disposition Panel as constituted by this statute. Further information and forms on which to request permission to destroy records on a onetime basis or to transfer noncurrent records to the State Archives are available from the State Archives, Minnesota Historical Society, at the address and telephone number shown above.