

History and Background:

The origins of the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (hereafter: HPC) date to 1981, when the university created a “Task Force on Historic Conservation” to make recommendations regarding the “conservation” of WSU Pullman’s historic properties. This group, with ten members from across the university and community, was retitled the “Task Force for Historic Preservation” in 1982 and formally established as the HPC by the 1990s.¹

The task force completed the [Historic Resources and Survey Analysis](#) in 1985, which included ratings for several pre-World War II buildings on the Pullman campus which, at the time, existed within the fifty-year threshold for buildings that might be considered “historic” according to the National Register of Historic Places. Several recommendations from the Task Force were incorporated, nearly verbatim, into the university’s 1985 comprehensive plan.²

From 2015-2018, the HPC toured several WSU Pullman buildings, either individually or as a group, and provided nearly ninety (90) assessments of each building’s “cultural value” for WSU Facilities Services. In 2019, the committee drew heavily from the digital collections of the Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections of the WSU Libraries and placed online a comprehensive database of nearly all major [Washington State University Buildings and Landscapes](#).³

The HPC remained active until the 2020 pandemic, after which it went dormant and its mission and composition, last updated in August of 2015, disappeared from the Faculty Senate website (as of 2025, the document was available only on the Wayback Machine).⁴

In the summer of 2025, a handful of long-standing and prospective members attempted to resurrect the committee, revising the “function” and “composition and tenure” sections of the original document.

Since its establishment, the HPC has always existed under the broad umbrella of the university’s financial wing (variously called “Business Affairs” or “Finance and Administration”) and has worked closely with the unit in charge of campus building and construction (referred to, since the 1950s, as the offices of the College Architect, Campus Architect, Facilities Planning, Capital Planning, Facilities Operations, and Facilities Services).

Mission and Function

- Conducts research and promotes educational and interpretive programs regarding WSU’s historic built environment in accordance with the university’s land-grant mission.
- Serves as an advisory committee to the Executive Vice President for Finance and Operations to identify, document, and develop strategies to preserve the historic integrity of buildings and landscapes on the Washington State University Pullman campus.⁵

- Works closely with WSU Facilities Services to make recommendations in compliance with [Executive Order 21-02](#), which stipulates that state agencies “shall take all reasonable action to avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse effects to archeological and historic archaeological sites, historic buildings/structures, traditional cultural places, sacred sites or other cultural resources.”

Capital Projects

- Facilities Services typically brings capital projects potentially affecting WSU’s historic resources before the HPC for recommendations as part of the development of the 10-year capital budget plan.
- HPC recognizes that the WSU Board of Regents is ultimately responsible for making decisions regarding the construction, alteration, or demolition of WSU buildings and landscapes, regardless of their historic significance, and that the HPC’s recommendations are non-binding.

Committee Membership and Term Limits

- All committee members are appointed by the EVP for Finance and Operations by written letter of appointment.
- Members serve three-year renewable terms, save for the student representative who will serve a one-year term with an optional renewable year. No committee member should serve for more than six (6) consecutive years (or two consecutive terms).
- The committee shall have a chair elected by the committee that rotates every three (3) years. A chair may be elected for a second three-year term, but no chair should serve for more than six consecutive years.
- A chair-elect shall be elected by the committee during the last six (6) months of chair's term to succeed to the position of chair.
- As committee members need to be replaced, the chair should solicit suggestions from department chairs, directors, and unit supervisors for new members (for faculty and staff positions within departments). Members should consult with their department chair, director, or unit supervisor prior to agreeing to serve.

Meetings:

- The HPC should meet at least two (2) times per semester, but the chair or the EVP for Finance and Operations may request more frequent meetings as needs arise.
- Meetings should take place in person when feasible but may move to videoconference (e.g. Zoom) should in-person meetings prove challenging.

- The chair is responsible for setting up meetings, sending agendas in advance to committee members, and acting as the lead in communicating with outside parties.
- Minutes should be taken with each meeting, but the taking (or gathering and posting/sending) of minutes should rotate among the members. Approval of the minutes of the prior meeting should occur by majority concurrence at the next subsequent meeting.

Composition, Qualifications, and Tenure:

- The HPC should consist of no more than six (6) voting members, a majority of whom should have appropriate professional qualifications (see [Professional Qualifications Standards \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#) and/or demonstrated experience in identifying, evaluating, and protecting historic resources.
- The HPC should consist of members who hold the roles identified below, noting that some individuals may hold multiple roles. If certain roles remain unrepresented, the committee may agree to solicit new membership from other categories, even if this results in adjustments to the committee's overall size or composition.
 - Four (4) WSU faculty or staff members. Representatives could include faculty or staff from the disciplines or units of Anthropology, Architecture, Art, Construction Management, History, Interior Design, Landscape Architecture, and University Archives, but should not be restricted to these disciplines or units. If interested faculty or staff reside in disciplines or units not listed above, they may be considered for this committee. (F-S)
 - Two (2) representatives, from the City of Pullman Community Development Department Planning Division; a local community member residing or working in the Pullman area; or a WSU alum.
 - One (1) ex officio (non-voting) enrolled WSU graduate or undergraduate student, preferably majoring in one of the disciplines and/or with some experience in the preservation of the built environment or broad familiarity with campus design and construction. If interested students reside in disciplines not listed above but are interested in historic preservation or the built environment, they could be considered for this committee.
 - One (1) ex officio (non-voting) representative from WSU Facilities Services.
- A quorum (majority) of voting members must be present in order to conduct business. When necessary, voting may occur via email.

Please note: This document was most recently updated on 2-20-26. Major updates prior to the most recent update include 11-4-25, 7-9-25 and 8-13-15.

¹ “Task Force on Historic Conservation,” attachment to “Minutes of the Task Force on Historic Preservation,” February 17, 1983. The task force, originally named the “Task Force for Historic Conservation” and renamed the “Task Force for Historic Preservation” by 1982, served primarily as an on-campus consultant to the Physical Facilities Subcommittee of the Office of Facilities Planning. Also see Task Force for Historic Preservation, *Historic Resource and Survey Analysis: The Report of the Task Force for Historic Preservation of the Historic Core of the Washington State University Campus* (Pullman, WA: Washington State University), February 12, 1985. Both documents are available at the Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections at WSU Libraries.

² See Burke/Lee, A Joint Venture, *Washington State University Comprehensive Physical Planning Process*, vol. II, G, *Historic Resources* (Pullman, WA: Washington State University, 1985), II-G-7. By 2025, the threshold for “historic” buildings had been reduced to 45 years, which made buildings completed beginning in 1980 eligible for the register.

³ <https://scalar.libraries.wsu.edu/wsuh-buildings-landscape/index>.

⁴ Wayback Machine, https://web.archive.org/web/20151030083705/http://facsen.wsu.edu/committees/university_committees/historic_preservation.html, accessed July 9, 2025.

⁵ The committee shall use the U.S Department of the Interior’s “[Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties](#)” to help guide their assessment of “historic integrity.”