

Historic Resource Photography Guide—Key Tips

For Grant Application, Progress Reports, and Reimbursement Requests

Grant administrators use photos to see your historic resource and—if awarded a grant—your work progress. Photos also help us advocate for additional funding and celebrate your project in print and on social media.

Three Key Photo Types

The following are the three key photo types that help us see your project and work:

- **Full context shots.** The entirety of the historic resource. Be sure to avoid cutting off roofs, corners, etc. Include marquees or signs with structure's name as well as the wider landscape (mountains, trees, downtown, etc.) **(1)**
- **Detailed shots.** Close-ups of the specific areas of the historic resource your project scope will address. Show historically significant features. Avoid getting so close to the detail that you lose the larger context. **(2)**
- **Action shots.** *(Optional)* Photos of contractors/volunteers executing the work for your project, community events/engagements hosted at the historic resource, etc. We prefer candid photos, please avoid staged group shots. We use these photos for press release and social media features. **(3)**



Full Context Shot of Davis Creek Ranch & Homestead Barn (Okanogan County)



Detailed Shot of Columbia Theatre (Cowlitz County)



Action Shot of Newcastle Cemetery (King County)

Equipment Tips

Camera phones are allowed! Please keep the following in mind when shooting on a camera phone:

- **Use your autofocus.** This will help when shooting against bright backgrounds like the sky and avoid blur.
- **Do not add filters or text to the photos.** Create a separate document to share photo captions.

Sending Photos

Use the following tips to successfully send your photos.

- **iPhone users, beware.** iPhones automatically save photos as .HEIC, which Windows computers cannot read. To change, go to Settings > Camera > Formats > Most Compatible; this ensures your iPhone takes .JPG photos.
- **Check the size before you send.** High quality photos are over 300 DPI (Dots Per Inch) and often over 4 MB (Megabytes). Check to be sure your photos meet the above dimensions.
- **Provide captions and a caption document.** Change the name of each photo file to a descriptive label (ex: *Cowlitz_Doble Farm_NE Exterior Wall*). Then create a document listing each photo's name and a caption.
- **Uploading photos.** This is our preferred method of receiving photos. Upload photos as .JPG, .GIF, .PNG, or .PDF.
- **Emailing photos.** If you need to email photos, your email application may ask what size you want the photos to be attached/sent at; always send photos as "Large Size" or "Actual Size" and never "Small" or "Reduced."

Note: We can only accept photos as .JPG, .GIF, .PNG, or .PDF.

Historic Resource Photography Guide—Examples

Examples of Historic Resource Photography Do's and Don'ts

Don't Cut Corners—Literally!

When photographing your historic resource, be sure to avoid cutting off roofs, corners, etc. in your shot.



The corner and roof shape are clearly visible in this photo. (Gregory Farms, Lewis County)



The left corner and peak of roof are cut off in this photo. (Gregory Farms, Lewis County)

Avoid Shadows That Create Illegibility

When photographing engraved features, ensure the engravings are readable.



The lighting on this tombstone is consistent, making it easier to read. (Valley View, Douglas County)



The shadows on this tombstone make it hard to read. (Valley View, Douglas County)

How Close is Too Close?

Photos taken too close-up can lose their meaning. Make sure close-up shots still have contextualizing details.



This photo shows clearly the damaged floor in its larger context. (Wild Isle Farm, King County)



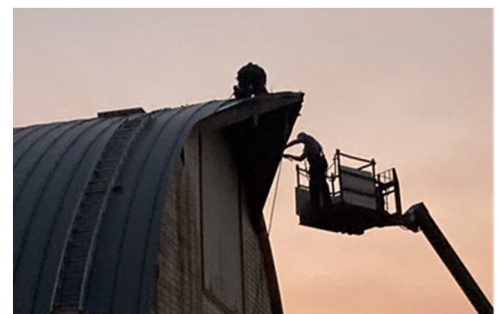
This photo is so close to the wood that it's hard to see the larger context. (Wild Isle Farm, King County)

Action Shots

Action shots that clearly show the work underway are great for **Progress Reports**, while beautiful photos that catch the public's eye are better for **Press Releases** and **Social Media**.



Progress Report. This photo clearly shows the work underway, making it an informative photo for grant administrators. (Vekved Barn, Whatcom County)



Press Release. This photo isn't super informative to grant administrators, but the sunset makes it great for press releases. (Vekved Barn, Whatcom County)

Historic Resource Photography Guide—Specific Considerations

Specific Considerations for DAHP Capital Grant Programs

The following are specific tips to keep in mind for the four DAPH capital project grant programs.

Heritage Barn

- **Capture all sides of your barn.** Be sure each side has its own photo.
- **Barn name.** Include a photo of signs or exterior paintings with name. **(5)**
- **Photograph these historically significant features:** Roof shape and structure, doors and windows, siding type.



Include at least one photo of any exterior paintings showing barn name.

Historic County Courthouses

- **Courthouse name.** Include at least one photo of a sign or entrance marker featuring the courthouse name.
- **Photograph these historically significant features:** Front façades, plaques, columns, building materials.

Historic Cemetery

- **Cemetery name.** Include a photo of the front gates, entrance, or other elements featuring the cemetery name.
- **Tombstone legibility.** Ensure the engravings are readable (avoid shadows on tombstones, etc.).
- **Photograph these historically significant features:** Structural buildings (if any), signage and gates, gravestones and markers.

Historic Theatre

- **Theatre name.** Include at least one photo of the marquee or entrance marker featuring the theatre name.
- **Photograph these historically significant features:** Marquee, entrance, box office, auditorium and stage. **(6)**



Marquees are both historically significant features and show theatre names.

Additional Photographic Techniques

What to improve your approach to photographing historic resources? Keep these following techniques in mind when you are taking photos:

- **Clear photos.** Photos should be taken from a stationary position and using autofocus to avoid blur.
- **Time of day.** The middle of the day is the best time to photograph historic resources as the sun is high and shadows are minimal.
- **Prioritize good lighting.** Shoot with the sun at your back so the light faces the site. Shoot on a slightly overcast day to avoid shadows. If shooting inside, use flash or turn on as many lights as you can to avoid dark shots.
- **Angles.** Photographing from an angle shows the depth of your historic resources. A 3-D view shares size, depth, and scale. Do not tilt camera. **(1)**
- **Beware of clutter.** Be sure everything in the frame is intentional. Avoid including trees, plants, cars, etc. that might obscure or hide the historic resource.