

## City of Round Rock Historic Preservation

The City of Round Rock works with owners of historic properties to encourage maintenance and upkeep, as well as retention of the historic character of buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts.

The City of Round Rock Code of Ordinances allows for the designation of areas or properties that are architecturally, culturally, or historically significant to the City.

Within the City government, primary responsibility for historic preservation rests with the Department of Planning and Community Development and the Historic Preservation Commission.

The Department of Planning and Development Services manages the City's historic preservation programs.

Members of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) are appointed by City Council. They are charged with preserving, protecting, and promoting the City's historical resources.

The HPC works with the Planning Department to enforce the City Ordinances that involve historic preservation.



The Olson House, a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark

## Local Landmarks and Historic Districts

In the City of Round Rock, an historic property may be designated either individually, as a local landmark, or as part of an historic district. This is accomplished through the addition of Historic Overlay Zoning to the property.

Historic Overlay Zoning may be added to a building, an entire property (land and buildings), or a portion of the property. The addition of Overlay Zoning does not change the base zoning on the property.

This process begins when the property owner completes a zoning application (available online or from the Department of Planning and Community Development) and submits it to the Historic Preservation Commission for consideration at their monthly meeting.

In the case of an historic district, a majority of the property owners within the district's boundaries must be in favor of the designation.

The City Code of Ordinances includes approval criteria that the HPC uses to review the application and make a decision about local landmark designation. If approved by the HPC, the application then goes to the Planning & Zoning Commission and to the City Council for final approval.

## State and Federal Designations

Buildings may also be recognized by the Texas Historical Commission as Recorded Texas Historical Landmarks or by the National Park Service, through the National Register of Historic Places. These designations are separate from the City Local Landmark process.

For more information about state and national recognition for your historic building, visit the Texas Historical Commission website: [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us).

## City of Round Rock

### Information for Owners of Older and Historic Buildings



Downtown Round Rock

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## What Historic Overlay Zoning Means to Property Owners

The City of Round Rock zoning ordinance includes regulations for the development and maintenance of different kinds of properties throughout the City. In the case of Historic Overlay Zoning, the ordinance requires that the owners of the City's historic properties maintain both the quality of construction and appearance/character of their buildings.

Zoning regulations are enforced by the Department of Planning and Community Development and the Historic Preservation Commission.

If a property has Historic Overlay Zoning, the owner is required to obtain a "Certificate of Appropriateness" before obtaining a building permit or beginning work involving any change to the exterior of the property (including paint color).

This includes the erection, moving, demolition, reconstruction, restoration or alteration of the exterior of any structure or site on the property.

If the property owner does not obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness before beginning work, they may be charged with a misdemeanor, the work can be stopped, and may be forced to undo the work that has been done.

### Applying for a Certificate of Appropriateness

When applying for a Certificate of Appropriateness, it is recommended that the property owner first contact the Department of Planning and Development Services. The Planning staff can advise and help the property owner prepare this application.

The Certificate of Appropriateness application is one page long. Additional information, such as photographs, material samples, etc. may be required.

The HPC and Planning staff refer to a set of adopted design guidelines when reviewing projects.

Applicants and others may attend the Historic Preservation Commission meeting and present additional information to support their application. The Planning staff can provide advice and assistance.

## Ordinary Repair and Maintenance

Ordinary repair and maintenance does not require review by the Historic Preservation Commission. Ordinary repair and maintenance is defined in the Round Rock Code of Ordinances Section 46-108 (g) as:

Any work, the sole purpose and effect of which is to correct deterioration, decay, or damage, including repair or damage caused by fire or other disaster and which does not result in a change in the existing appearance and materials of a property. Examples of this work shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Caulking or reglazing windows;
- Minor repairs to windows, doors, siding, gutters, etc;
- Replacement of existing mechanical equipment;
- Repairing or repaving of flat concrete work in side and rear yards;
- Repairing or repaving of existing front yard paving, concrete work and walkways, if material the same or similar in appearance is used;
- Roofing work, if no change in appearance occurs;
- Foundation work, if no change in appearance occurs; and
- Chimney work, if no change in appearance occurs.

Property owners should be aware that proposed changes may require building permits. For more information, please contact the City Building Inspectors Office at 512-218-5550.

## Frequently Asked Questions: City of Round Rock Historic Preservation Program

**Q. When is a property considered "historic"?**

A. According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Texas Historical Commission, any building that is more than 50 years old is considered "historic".

**Q: Will I get a plaque?**

A: At this time, the City of Round Rock does not provide markers for locally designated historic properties. Markers are available for Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks and properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Q. Do I have to open my house to the public?**

A. No. The City has no such requirement. While some property owners have participated in historic homes tours in the past, this has been and will continue to be strictly voluntary.

**Q. Do I need a Certificate of Appropriateness before I can make changes to the inside of my house?**

A. No. The interior design, interior renovation, and use of a designated structure is not affected by Historic Overlay Zoning.

**Q. Will my yard be affected?**

A. Yes. While plants and landscaping are not subject to review, a Certificate of Appropriateness is required for any changes to paving (other than ordinary repair and maintenance), as well as the addition of any architectural structures (such as fences or lampposts).

**Q. What about my storage shed (or other out-buildings)?**

A. Existing permanent accessory structures are not required to meet historic design standards. Any new additions or renovations, however, require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

**Q. Will historic designation hurt my property value?**

A. No. The value of a designated historic structure usually increases in value. The designation can spur re-investment and often increases property values in an entire neighborhood.

**Q. Will I still be able to sell my house?**

A. Yes. An historic home that is kept in good condition often commands a higher price in the real estate market, and many people will pay a premium for the prestige of owning an historic home.

**Q. Can I lease my house?**

A. Yes. Any previous legal use of the property is still permitted.

**Q. What if I want to demolish my house?**

A. All property owners in the City desiring to demolish an entire, or part, of a structure must obtain a permit from the Building Inspector. In addition, owners of historic properties must first obtain approval from the Historic Preservation Commission, which may delay demolition up to 120 days while further review is conducted and options are evaluated.

**Q. Does the City provide any guidelines that I can refer to while I'm planning my project?**

A. Yes. The Historic Preservation Commission uses a set of adopted guidelines for commercial and residential historic districts and landmarks. These "Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial and Residential Districts and Properties" serve as a helpful reference for property owners who are considering making changes to a property with Historic Overlay Zoning. They are available online at the Historic Preservation section of the city website: [www.roundrocktexas.gov](http://www.roundrocktexas.gov)