



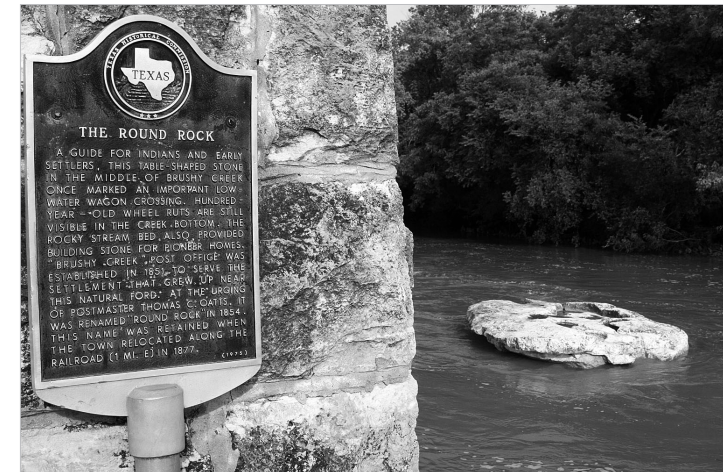
Round Rock's Commercial Historic District, the city's only National Register Historic District, during the 1965 centennial parade.

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Historic Landmarks and Historic Districts

Historic Preservation in Round Rock • Preserving Historic Properties Through Historic Designation • Historic Landmarks • Historic Districts • Maintaining & Modifying Historic Properties • Historic Tax Exemption • Historic Preservation Terms



The Round Rock is a Round Rock historic landmark. The subject marker from the Texas Historical Commission was erected in 1975.

City of Round Rock Planning & Development Services

301 W. Bagdad, Suite 210, Round Rock, TX 78664

512-218-5428

www.roundrocktexas.gov/historicpreservation

Para información en español por favor llame al 512-218-5428.

Historic Preservation in Round Rock

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is a citizen commission appointed by the City Council to preserve, protect and promote the City of Round Rock's historic resources.

Goals of Historic Preservation

- **Preservation:** Increase the number of historic designations within the community and assist in maintaining the integrity of designated historic properties.
- **Public Education:** Increase public awareness of historic preservation and the history of Round Rock.
- **Heritage Tourism:** Work to improve tourism through historic preservation.
- **Community Partnerships:** Establish partnerships with business and community organizations supporting preservation efforts and strengthen ties with state and county historical commissions.



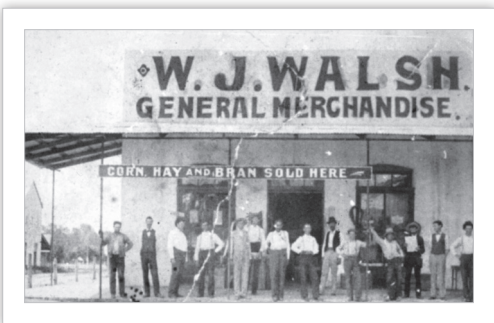
Above: The Peterson-Jordan House, built in 1905, is a Round Rock historic landmark.

Right: The Carrington Building, built 1882, is a Round Rock historic landmark in a National Register Historic District.

Round Rock's Historic Preservation Program

The Planning & Development Services Department (PDS) and the HPC administer a number of initiatives to promote historic preservation:

- **Historic designation:** Round Rock designates both individual historic landmarks and historic districts in order to preserve the city's architectural and cultural history. Eligible properties may be identified with a historic resources survey.
- **Certificates of Appropriateness (CofAs):** When an owner proposes exterior alterations to their historic structure or site, the HPC reviews their plans for consistency with established guidelines for the treatment of historic properties.
- **Tax Exemption:** Qualifying property owners can participate in a program that reduces city property tax by 75% for older and historic properties that satisfy certain maintenance criteria.
- **Education & Awareness:** The HPC and PDS raise awareness of the city's preservation program and the city's history by observing National Preservation Month and offering other opportunities and materials to educate the public.

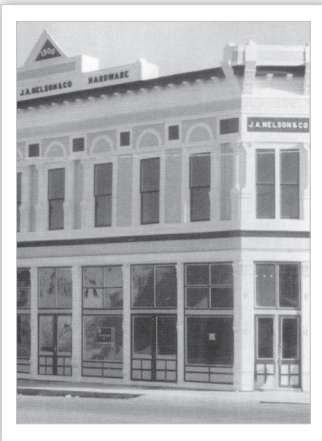


Benefits of Historic Preservation

The preservation of historic buildings and sites is beneficial for the community as a whole and for individual property owners. Research conducted by numerous states and cities have shown:

- Fewer resources are typically required to renovate a historic building than to build a new one of comparable quality.
- Improving energy efficiency in an existing building is far less expensive than tearing it down and constructing a new "green" building.
- Rehabilitating a historic building is labor intensive. In contrast, new construction is material-intensive. Historic preservation activities create more jobs and more local economic activity than new construction.
- Historic designations boost and help to support stable property values.

Preserving the character of the historic built environment enhances the quality of life in Round Rock and helps to attract new residents and businesses to the City.



The Nelson Hardware Building, built in 1900, is a Round Rock historic landmark and a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark in a National Register Historic District.

Preserving Historic Properties Through Historic Designation

Historic Overlay Zoning

The City of Round Rock designates historic landmarks and historic districts by applying overlay zoning. Designation recognizes and protects properties that are architecturally, culturally, or historically significant to the community.

All properties within the city limits of Round Rock are subject to zoning. The base zoning district (e.g. General Commercial, Office, Single-family, etc.) establishes the permitted uses for a property. Historic overlay zoning, which can be applied to individual properties or districts, requires property owners to have exterior modifications reviewed for historic appropriateness.

Identifying Historic Properties

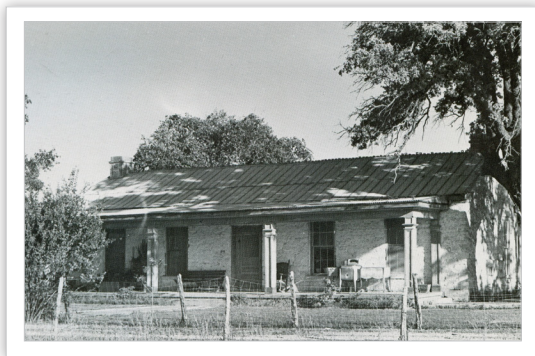
The process of researching and identifying historic properties may be conducted by members of the public or by the City. In order to identify potentially significant historic properties, the City has conducted historic resource surveys, including a citywide survey and a survey of downtown properties. The city continues to update and catalog properties as they become potentially eligible for designation, which is typically 50 years after construction. These surveys identify properties that meet the City's criteria for historic designation and document the City's development over time.

Historic Landmarks

Criteria for Historic Designation

Per City code, designated historic landmarks may be buildings, structures, objects, or sites. Properties must meet at least one of the following criteria for historic designation:

- Historic designation by the National Register of Historic Places or Texas Historical Commission;
- The property's role in the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, State or other society;
- Occurrence of a notable event on the property;
- Identification of the property with a person(s) who contributed notably to the culture and development of the City, State or other society;
- Distinctive elements of architectural design, material or craftsmanship, or the distinctiveness of a craftsman, master builder or architect, or a style or innovation;
- Archaeological value that the property can be expected to yield; or
- Other unique historical value.



The Inn at Brushy Creek, built ca. 1850-1862, is a Round Rock historic landmark is on the National Register of Historic Places.

State & National Programs

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 created the National Register of Historic Places and requires that all federally-funded projects are evaluated for their impact on historic properties. The federal government also developed the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and funds local government grants that are distributed and administrated by the state preservation offices.

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) administers federal programs, provides minimum standards for preservation programming through the Certified Local Government Program, provides technical assistance in historic preservation to local governments, and designates state historic landmarks.

Properties may hold multiple designations. In Round Rock, all nationally and state-designated properties are automatically designated as City landmarks with historic overlay zoning.



The Old Broom Factory, built in 1880, is a Round Rock historic landmark and a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark in a National Register Historic District.

Historic Districts

A neighborhood or area that contains a collection of buildings and other historic resources which, as a whole, convey a sense of history and authenticity, may be designated as a historic district. Historic districts may contain a mix of properties, and not all of those properties must be individually historic, architecturally significant, or materially intact to be included. The primary goal of creating a historic district is to preserve the overall character of the district.

Those properties within a historic district that retain their historic appearance or otherwise support the overall character of the district are classified as "contributing." "Non-contributing" status may be due to a building being relatively new or having been altered in ways that are incompatible with its historic appearance.

A historic district designation helps to protect the rights of property owners who have chosen to live in a historic neighborhood. It also helps to protect their investments, supports stable property values, and may result in improved property values over time. Historic designations accomplish this by managing the changes that can be made within the district for the benefit of the community as a whole. The appearance of both contributing and non-contributing properties is managed in the same way, since all properties in the district affect its overall character.



Farmers State Bank, built in 1920, is a Round Rock historic landmark located in the Commercial Historic District, the city's only National Register Historic District.



The Commercial Historic District encompasses 25 properties within four city blocks.



Round Rock's Commercial Historic District, pictured in the 1930s, was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

FAQs : Historic Landmarks

Q: What's the difference between an old building and a historic landmark?

A: While all historic landmarks are “old” (typically at least 50 years old), not all older buildings are historic landmarks. If a building meets the City's criteria for significance, it may be designated as a Round Rock historic landmark.

Q: Will I be required to restore my property?

A: No. Historic designation does not require property owners to restore any landmark to the way it looked in the past. It does require that future alterations do not diminish its historic character.

Q: Will I get a historic marker?

A: Yes. Round Rock historic landmarks outside of the Commercial Historic District will receive a marker from the city. Properties in the Commercial Historic District receive a placard describing their properties.

Q: Will I be able to lease out my house as an office?

A: If the house is in a base zoning district that permits offices, yes. Historic designation does not regulate the allowable uses of the property, only the base zoning does.

Q: How do I get my property designated as a Round Rock historic landmark?

A: If research shows that your property meets one or more of the city's criteria for designation, you may apply for Round Rock historic landmark designation. Because this is a zoning change, it must be recommended by the Historic Preservation Commission and Planning & Zoning Commission and approved by City Council.

FAQs : Historic Districts

Q: What are some of the benefits of owning property in a historic district?

A: Historic property values are typically higher and more stable than similar properties not in historic districts, because historic districts require everyone to maintain the historic character within the district. The City of Round Rock offers tax exemptions for historic properties to help offset costs associated with renovation and preservation.

Q: Why would a property be included in a historic district if it is not historic?

A: A historic district is an area that includes a collection of historic resources. Nearly all historic districts include both properties that are historically or architecturally significant and properties that are not considered “historic.” The non-historic buildings are included in the district and are required to have alterations approved with a Certificate of Appropriateness so that changes to their appearance do not diminish the historic character of the district as a whole.

Q: Can a property owner opt out of being included in a historic district?

A: A property may be rezoned as a historic landmark or as part of a historic district over the objection of the owner only with a three-quarters vote of both the HPC and City Council.

FAQs : Historic Landmarks and Historic Districts

Q: Can a property owner make changes to a historic property?

A: Yes, however any exterior changes to a historic landmark or to a property in a historic district must first be approved by the HPC to ensure their historic appropriateness. The City has adopted design guidelines for historic properties to define changes that are compatible with historic properties in Round Rock. Some minor changes (such as paint color) can be reviewed by PDS staff instead of the HPC.

Q: If my property is a historic landmark or is in a historic district will I be required to open it to the public?

A: No. The City has no such requirement. There have been historic homes tours in the past, but this has been and will continue to be strictly voluntary.

Maintaining & Modifying Historic Properties

Benefits & Responsibilities of Historic Designation

Ownership of a Round Rock historic landmark or a property in a historic district carries both benefits and responsibilities. Benefits include owning a city landmark and eligibility for a property tax exemption. In turn, property owners must ensure that the historic integrity of the property is maintained.

In order to ensure that the historic integrity of a property is maintained, the owner must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (CofA) before beginning projects that would alter the exterior of these properties. The CofA process ensures that the proposed changes are consistent with the City's adopted historic design guidelines, which define what is appropriate for historic properties in Round Rock.



The Nelson-Crier House, built 1895-1900, remodeled 1931, is a Round Rock historic landmark and a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL).



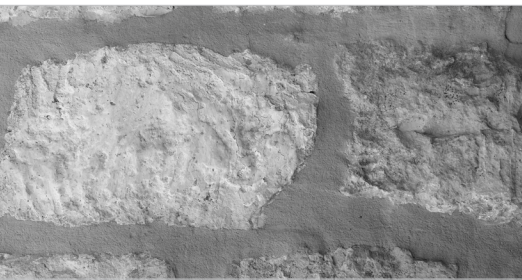
The Nelson-Crier House has been carefully restored as the Woodbine Mansion, maintaining the historic integrity of the property.

Historic Tax Exemption
www.roundrocktexas.gov/historictax

The City’s historic tax exemption program was created in 1982 as an incentive for owners to maintain their properties and to offset the costs of doing so. Round Rock historic landmarks may receive an exemption of 75% of the City’s portion of their property taxes.

To be eligible for the historic tax exemption, properties must include at least one man-made structure and must be designated with historic overlay zoning.

Owners must submit an application to the county each year they wish to apply for an exemption. Eligible historic properties must meet required maintenance criteria. An inspection is conducted of the property utilizing a list of specific maintenance criteria, listed in City Code. Items that need maintenance are noted, and the applicant typically has one year to complete the noted repairs. If the repairs are not completed and the same problem is noted in the following year’s inspection, the property may not be eligible to receive the exemption.



Newly repointed mortar at the Stagecoach Inn. Proper maintenance of historic properties is a requirement of the Historic Tax Exemption program.

When do I need a CofA?
www.roundrocktexas.gov/cofa

Before making most changes to the exterior of a structure or to a site with historic overlay zoning, the owner must obtain a CofA.

A CofA is required for:

- Any exterior work that results in a change of material, finish, design, or color
- Restoration to an earlier condition
- Major changes such as additions, outbuildings, or building a new structure in a historic district
- Relocation of a historic structure to a new location, or of any structure into a historic district
- Demolition of all or part of a historic property

A CofA is not required for:

- Changes confined to the interior of a structure
- Landscaping and plants (changes to patios or hardscape do require a CofA)
- Signs do not require a CofA, but sign attachments and brackets may require a CofA because they impact the building facade. See the Sign Code for historic sign regulations.
- “Ordinary maintenance and repair” (defined in the City Code) which does not change the exterior, but only repairs existing materials or replaces irreparable items with identical materials

If the owner does not obtain a CofA before beginning a project, the owner may be subject to the penalties outlined in the City Code. Work may be stopped and the owner may be required to undo any inappropriate exterior modifications.

Applying for a CofA

To apply for a CofA, first contact PDS staff, who will advise you about what materials to submit with an application and the HPC meeting schedule. The application should be submitted to PDS at least two weeks before the HPC’s monthly meeting. There is no application fee. When issued, a CofA will include conditions for approval associated with the proposed work.

Staff Review: Some minor exterior changes (e.g. paint color, door hardware, light fixtures) may be reviewed by PDS staff, and this review is usually completed in a few days. Items eligible for staff review are listed in the City Code.

HPC Review: Any other changes must be reviewed by the HPC, including changes in building or roof materials, changes in window size or style, restoration to an earlier condition, additions, relocation of a structure, or demolition of all or part of a structure. At the HPC’s monthly meeting, PDS staff will present an overview of the proposal to the HPC. It is helpful for the applicant and/or their contractor to attend in order to answer questions about the project.



Changing the exterior color of a historic property requires a CofA.

Historic Design Guidelines
www.roundrocktexas.gov/historicpreservation

The City has adopted historic design guidelines as a reference for what is considered historically appropriate. They include guidelines for modifications and additions to commercial and residential properties. They also include guidelines for new construction in historic districts. These guidelines are based on the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and adapted for conditions in Round Rock.

City review for historic appropriateness does not mean that properties must be restored to an earlier appearance, or that new structures will be required to imitate historic styles. It does mean that any proposed alterations must maintain a landmark’s integrity or be consistent with a district’s overall character.

The historic design guidelines are the City’s primary tool for evaluating CofA applications, so it is advisable for applicants to use them as a reference when planning their projects.



The Stagecoach Inn’s relocation and restoration both required CofAs.

FAQs: Certificate of Appropriateness (CofA)

Q. Does the city provide any guidelines that I can refer to while planning my project?

A. Yes. The City has an adopted set of guidelines for historical appropriateness, which are available at www.roundrocktexas.gov/historicpreservation. Another helpful reference is the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, available at www.nps.gov.

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

A. No. Historic overlay zoning does not affect the interior design, interior renovation, and use of a designated structure.

Q. Will my yard be affected?

A. Yes. While plants and landscaping are not subject to review, a CofA 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 outbuildings)?

A. The requirement to obtain a CofA for exterior alterations applies to any part of the property with historic overlay zoning, including outbuildings.



Round Rock Mercantile, built ca. 1904-1910, is a Round Rock historic landmark in a National Register Historic District. Historic design guidelines ensure that changes to such historic buildings fit the character of the district.

Historic Preservation Terms

Certificate of Appropriateness (CofA): A document certifying that proposed changes to a property with historic zoning have been reviewed by the HPC or PDS staff, and that the proposed changes are consistent with adopted historic design guidelines.

Historic district: An area where properties collectively have historic significance (although all the properties in the district may not be significant individually) and has been designated with historic zoning.

Historic landmark: A property meeting the City's criteria for historic designation, and designated with the application of historic zoning.

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC): City of Round Rock commission appointed by the City Council to oversee the City's preservation programs.

Historic resources survey: A systematic method of documenting historic resources through fieldwork and research in order to understand which properties are historically or architecturally significant and therefore worthy of preservation.

Historic overlay zoning: An overlay zoning district for historic properties that is applied in addition to (overlying) the property's base zoning district. The base zoning district describes permitted uses for the property, and the historic zoning gives the legal basis for enforcing preservation ordinances.

National Parks Service (NPS): A department under the Secretary of the Interior that administers national parks and federal historic preservation programs.

National Register of Historic Places: A registry of historically or archaeologically significant places that is jointly administered by the NPS and state preservation agencies. National Register properties receive extra consideration when federal projects (such as highways) are planned.

Planning & Development Services Department (PDS): City of Round Rock department that administers land development, planning, zoning, building inspection and historic preservation functions.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historically Significant Properties: A set of documents issued by the NPS to offer guidance to local preservation agencies and owners of historic properties about the best ways to preserve their properties' integrity.

Texas Historical Commission (THC): A commission appointed by the Governor of Texas, which serves as the State Historic Preservation Office to administer both Texas preservation programs and federal preservation programs in Texas. Its many activities include administering Texas properties on the National Register of Historic Places and the federal historic preservation tax credit, producing statewide preservation plans, and administering programs including the Certified Local Government program, Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHL), Texas Heritage Trails, Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation, Cemetery Preservation, and several archaeology programs.