



## Certificate of Appropriateness Application Historic District Approval

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The City of Delaware Planning & Community Development Department works to help you obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for your property located in the Downtown Historic District. The Certificate of Appropriateness design review process is designed to preserve buildings that are architecturally and historically significant. The establishment of such districts recognizes the particular historic and architectural qualities of neighborhoods, buildings, and sites and encourages their protection and maintenance for the benefit of the entire City. The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) reviews and decides on all Certificates of Appropriateness guided by the *Architectural Standards for the Downtown Historic District*.

**What is the Downtown Historic District?** The Downtown Historic District is comprised of three subdistricts: Downtown Core, Transitional and Residential. Refer to the map in the appendix of the *Architectural Standards for the Downtown Historic District* for subdistrict boundaries.

**When is a COA needed?** Changes to sites or to the exteriors of existing buildings within the Downtown Historic District (Downtown Core, Transitional and Residential Subdistricts) must receive a COA from the HPC before work can begin. Changes that require a COA include signage, awnings, painting (other than maintenance), roofing, window replacement, rehabilitation, total or partial demolition or addition, new construction and site changes. A COA permit is available on the Licenses, Permits, and Forms page of our website at [www.delawareohio.net](http://www.delawareohio.net).

**Does being in a historic district mean that I can never change the appearance of my property?** No. Properties in historic districts are not frozen in time. Historic district protection is designed to ensure that when changes occur, they do not destroy or are contrary to the unique qualities of the district.

**What guidelines have been established for the historic district?** The City has created the *Architectural Standards for the Downtown Historic District* to assist property

owners, business owners, architects and contractors who are proposing work on any building or site within the historic district. This guide can be downloaded from the City's website at [www.delawareohio.net](http://www.delawareohio.net).

**My building is not very historic, but it is in a historic district. Do I need a COA to make exterior changes?** Yes. A major goal of local historic districts is maintaining the overall character of the area. Prior to designation most districts have had a certain amount of infill new construction - some sensitive, some not. Reviewing proposed changes to non-historic properties as well as historic properties ensures that more recent construction will not become more intrusive and hopefully will become less so.

**What is an Informal Review?** Applicants interested in exploring their options for signage, rehabilitation, new construction or site changes are strongly encouraged to arrange and attend an Informal Review to receive feedback from the HPC to address any initial concerns with the application prior to a formal application submission. Informal Reviews are held at the beginning of each HPC meeting. Contact the Planning & Community Development Department for more details on the Informal Review process.

**Where do you apply for a COA?** Mail or drop off your HPC COA application submission with the processing fee to:

City of Delaware Planning & Community Development  
City Hall Annex, 1 South Sandusky Street  
Delaware, Ohio 43015

(740) 203-1600 or (740) 203-1623  
Hours: 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday

**What is the next step once the application is approved?** The applicant must then obtain the necessary permit(s) to begin construction work.