

Oskaloosa Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) Quick Guide for Property Owners

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Terms to Know

HPC = Historic Preservation Commission

COA = Certificate of Appropriateness

Who We Are and Why We Exist

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is a voluntary committee that exists to preserve the historical integrity of Oskaloosa's downtown historic district. The Oskaloosa City Square Commercial Historic District is on the National Register of Historic Places for the era of significance from 1860-1920. The commission ensures that new construction and alterations to existing buildings will be complementary to the historic character in both scale and design.

Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs)

Projects that need a COA given by the HPC include:

1. The construction of a structure within an historic district
2. The alteration of any exterior features of an historic building or structure within an historic district
 - a. This includes, among other items, projects involving signs, doors, windows, awnings, and all items affixed to the exterior of a building or property
3. The removal or demolition, in whole or in part, of an historic structure or structure within an historic district
4. The painting of signs, awnings, and unpainted masonry, as well as adding new color to storefronts.

* *Ordinary maintenance generally does not require a COA unless it would alter the exterior of a building.*

The Building Official will not issue a building permit without a COA from the HPC. COAs are given by individual property, not necessarily by project, and owners have 120 days to complete the work before a new COA must be approved.

Regularly Scheduled HPC Meeting Times and Submission Deadlines

The HPC holds regularly scheduled meetings every third Friday of the month at 12:00 PM in the City Council chambers unless there are no COAs to review. All completed COA applications must be submitted by the end of the month to be considered at next month's meeting, so be proactive in getting your materials submitted in a timely manner. See the end of this document for a checklist of all items to be included in the COA application.

Basic Preservation Practices

The following list contains basic information pertaining to HPC standards. While this list may provide most of the information necessary for property owners, it is by no means exhaustive. Complete guidelines are located in *Oskaloosa's Design Guidelines for the City Square Commercial Historic District* and the supplemental links found below.

1. Windows

The Oskaloosa Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) approves only non-reflective, non-tinted, clear glass for all new and/or replacement storefront and street-facing glass within the Oskaloosa City Square Commercial Historic District. Colored glass may only be used where it matches historic colored glass. Clear, Low-E II glass is accepted for new and/or replacement glass, and a sample is available for viewing from city staff.

Windows shall only be replaced when repairs are too extensive. In cases where a property owner wants to replace a window, photographic and descriptive evidence must be provided to the commission, whereupon the commission shall make the final determination over the window's repair or replacement. In order to avoid the committee potentially denying your request for replacement at the regularly scheduled meeting, it is recommended that you submit your evidence for approval beforehand to the HPC's Community Relations Subcommittee. When a replacement window is warranted, it must match the historic windows in size, shape, and design characteristics. Replacement of missing or non-historic windows must always fill the original window openings and must be compatible with the overall historic character of the building. The application for Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) will include a glass sample (not needed only if using clear, Low-E II glass) and a window mockup. The mockup consists of a dimensional detailed drawing or photograph of the replacement window, product literature that includes material and finish details, and a paint color sample. All of these submitted items become a permanent part of the application.

Please refer to the HPC's complete window policy at <http://www.oskaloosaiaowa.org/DocumentCenter/View/1201>.

2. Lights

Although new lamp types may be considered, the overall effect of modest, focused building light should be continued. Shielded, gooseneck-fixture down-lighting with a low-level of luminescence is preferred.

3. Color Palette

The HPC endorses colors from historic color palettes that tend to be in muted tones. Colors from the historic palette at your local paint store are generally approved.

4. Signs

The basic principle of sign design, as stated in the *Design Guidelines for the City Square Commercial Historic District*, is as follows:

Therefore, these traditions, of having a diversity of signs that remain subordinate to the overall context, and of signs complementing architectural compositions, should be maintained.

Good sign guidelines:

1. Sizing:
 - a. Signs should be in proportion to the building and not too large
2. Location:
 - a. Signs should be located within, and not obscuring, architectural features
3. Colors:
 - a. Signs should use colors that are compatible and complementary with the exterior building colors
 - b. Signs, when at all possible, should use colors from historic color palettes
4. Style:
 - a. Signs should use fonts or typefaces that appear compatible with the historic appearance of the specific building and general downtown historic features
 - b. Signs should not be highly reflective
5. Lighting:
 - a. External downlighting is highly encouraged.

*Note: For full sign design guidelines, including pictures of proper and improper signage, [see pp.63-66](#) in the *Design Guidelines for the City Square Commercial Historic District*.

5. Doors

The size and shape of original doors are important historic characteristics that contribute to the integrity of historic commercial buildings. Use original doors and door hardware when they can be repaired and reused in place. When replacement is necessary, use a door style that is found on similar storefronts in the area. The original doorway configuration should be preserved in any situation. No tinted or reflective glass is allowed in storefront and street-facing doors.

These above guidelines include only the basics. Please consult the full HPC guidelines for complete information on the above listed items, as well as items not addressed here.

Links to Further Information

1. HPC Guidelines

- a. Full guidelines can be found in *Oskaloosa's Design Guidelines for the City Square Commercial Historic District*, located here:
<http://www.oskaloosaiowa.org/DocumentCenter/View/606>.
- 2. Full Window Policy
 - a. The HPC's full complete window policy can be found here:
<http://www.oskaloosaiowa.org/DocumentCenter/View/1201>.
- 3. National Park Service Preservation Briefs
 - a. This Preservation by Topic index assists users in finding the online and printed information that has been developed on the subjects of historic preservation, cultural landscapes, and the rehabilitation of historic buildings. Located at:
<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/by-topic.htm#O>

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. *Can I use tinted glass?*

Only non-reflective, non-tinted, clear glass is allowed in storefront and street-facing windows and doors in the district. Colored glass may be used only where it matches historic colored glass. Clear, Low-E II glass is accepted for new and/or replacement glass, and a sample is available for viewing from city staff.

2. *Do I need to get seasonal/temporary items approved?*

Items not affixed or attached to a property do not need HPC approval. See above information on COAs for more details.

3. *When do I need to submit a COA application for the next meeting?*

All completed COA applications must be submitted by the end of the month to be considered at next month's meeting, so be proactive in getting your materials submitted in a timely manner. The HPC holds regularly scheduled meetings every third Friday of the month at 12:00 PM in the City Council chambers unless there are no COAs to review.

4. *What happens after I submit my COA application?*

The HPC will hold a public hearing on the COA at the next regularly scheduled meeting, and no later than thirty days after the completed application was filed. At least ten days before the hearing date, the city will post the application on the property to indicate that a COA has been requested. The city will also send a notice to the recorded owners of all property that is the subject of the application, to abutting properties, and to the chair of the preservation commission.

5. *What happens at the HPC meeting?*

The HPC will recommend that the COA either be approved as submitted, denied as submitted, or approved with conditions.

6. *How do I contact the HPC if I have questions*

If you cannot find the information you are looking for within this sheet and the linked guidelines, and/or if you still have questions regarding a particular project, you may contact the HPC subcommittee at <http://www.oskaloosaiowa.org/forms.aspx?FID=73>. Please

understand the HPC is a volunteer board and so plan accordingly when allocating time for communication with the subcommittee.

7. What if the HPC rejects my COA?

If the preservation commission denies approval of an application for a COA, no person may submit a subsequent application for the same work within sixty days. So be sure to follow the guidelines and to contact the Community Relations Subcommittee beforehand if necessary and if you still have questions. Please understand the HPC is a volunteer board and so plan accordingly when allocating time for communication with the subcommittee.

8. What if I need a special meeting?

Special meeting requests will be considered only under the following conditions:

1. Proof of unmitigable significant deterioration and/or further damage to property in waiting for a regularly scheduled meeting must be given by the property owner and agreed upon by at least half of the HPC members available to attend the special meeting.
2. A fully complete application must be filed with the city at minimum of 16 calendar days before the requested meeting.
3. A quorum of HPC members must agree to be able to meet on the designated meeting date and time.

9. What if emergency work to the property is necessary in order to repair unsafe and dangerous conditions?

Municipal code section 15.50.140 listed below addresses this issue as follows:

15.50.140 - Unsafe or dangerous conditions exempted.

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prevent any measures of construction, alteration, removal, or demolition necessary to correct the unsafe or dangerous condition of any structure, other feature, or parts thereof where such condition is declared unsafe or dangerous by the city building or zoning division or fire department and where the proposed measures have been declared necessary by the city to correct the condition, as long as only such work that is absolutely necessary to correct the condition is performed. Any temporary measures may be taken without first obtaining a certificate of appropriateness under this chapter, but a certificate is required for permanent alteration, removal, or demolition.

10. What are the boundaries of the district?

See the map at the end of this document.

Checklist of Things to Submit for COA Application

Completed COA application forms must include:

1. Site plan/roof plan (drawn to scale)
2. Proposed building elevations (to scale)
3. Photographs of existing building conditions (also historic photos when possible)
4. Product literature or specifications, including photos or depictions of the new product.
5. Material samples and color samples

- a. When a replacement window is warranted, a glass sample and a window mockup is required, both of which become a permanent part of the application. A glass sample is not necessary only if using clear Low-E II glass. The mockup consists of a dimensional detailed drawing or photograph of the replacement window, product literature that includes material and finish details, and a paint color sample.

** All submitted application items become a permanent part of the application.*

HPC Community Relations Subcommittee Contact Information:

Please understand the HPC is a volunteer board and so plan accordingly when allocating time for communication with the subcommittee. Contact the HPC subcommittee at

<http://www.oskaloosaiowa.org/forms.aspx?FID=73>.

Approved by the Historic Preservation Commission on April 21, 2017.

REFERENCE MAP : SITE NUMBERS

