

within 30 days after the date of submission of the demolition application.

- If the OHP determines that a structure proposed for demolition is significant according to the applicable historic or design code criteria, then a request to the HDRC is made for landmark designation of the structure. The applicant and the property owner are notified of the OHP's request, the meeting date and location where the request will be considered by the HDRC, and any HDRC Demolition Committee meetings that are scheduled. The applicant and/or the owner (if applicant is not the property owner) will have an opportunity to express their opinions about demolition of the structure, or to demonstrate unreasonable economic hardship to the HDRC during the HDRC meeting and during any HDRC Demolition Committee meetings that are held.



- If the recommendation for designation as a historic landmark is approved by the HDRC, the Zoning Commission, and then City Council, the applicant must demonstrate an unreasonable economic hardship by this action to allow for demolition.
- Specific requirements for the demolition of designated landmarks and properties within historic and RIO districts are addressed in the Unified Development Code (UDC) Section 35-614 (as amended 6-24-2010).

In addition to the demolition application fee, there is a demolition permit fee required for properties designated as local landmarks or within local historic districts. Demolition permit fees are based on the approved replacement plan square footage. Refer to the UDC Amendments of 6/24/10 for full details (available at: [www.sanantonio.gov/historic](http://www.sanantonio.gov/historic))

## CITY OF SAN ANTONIO OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION (OHP)

# I want to work on my historic building or my property within a local historic district. What do I do?

### Process for:

- **Administrative COA Application,**
- **Historic & Design Review Commission (HDRC) Application,**
- **Demolition Application**

### Office of Historic Preservation

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### Purpose and Basic Method

The primary purpose of the City of San Antonio's Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) is to preserve and protect the unique historic structures and design features of San Antonio. Accordingly, the historic and design codes from the City's Unified Development Code (UDC) require that certain actions affecting several types of properties within the city limits must be reviewed and approved, either by the OHP or the Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC), which meets every first and third Wednesday of each month.



For affected properties and actions, the historic and design review process must be completed and written approval obtained from the OHP before actions can be taken or permits can be issued by the Planning and Development Services Department or other City departments.

### Affected Properties

The historic and design review is required for projects affecting the property's exterior at the following locations:

- Properties located within any one of the City's 27 historic districts or any of the City's 2000 local historic landmark properties
- Properties located within the six River Improvement Overlay (RIO) districts (including the River Walk)
- Public rights-of-way
- Public construction projects

### OHP Application Forms

- Administrative Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Application
- Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC) Application
- Demolition Application

OHP application forms may be obtained at:

- OHP reception counter (1901 S. Alamo St.)

- OHP website at: [www.sanantonio.gov/historic](http://www.sanantonio.gov/historic)
- By calling 210/215-9274 and asking that the forms be mailed or faxed

### OHP application form submittal:

- Must be submitted in person at the OHP reception counter
- Must be submitted ONLY at the OHP's downtown office (1901 S. Alamo Street)
- Cannot be submitted by fax or mail, except for applicants or project consultants that are located outside of the city limits

### Application Fees:

- **\$100 for HDRC Applications (commercial properties only)**
- **\$100 for Signage Applications**
- **\$100 for Demolition Applications (commercial properties)**
- **\$50 for Demolition Applications (residential properties)**
- **\$500 application fee for all who begin work prior to receiving HDRC approval (Certificate of Appropriateness)**

*There is no fee for residential HDRC applications or Administrative Certificate of Appropriateness Applications.*

### Administrative Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Application

The Administrative COA is used for certain minor alterations, additions, ordinary repairs, or maintenance as specified in the UDC Ch. 35, Article VI, Sect. 35-611 (as amended 6-24-2010) that may be approved administratively by the Historic Preservation Office without HDRC review.

*Administrative COA Examples:*

- Repair using the same materials and design
- Repainting with the same colors or reasonable changes to paint colors on previously painted surfaces which are consistent with the district or landmark characteristics
- Re-roofing with the same type and color of material

Administrative COA applications usually do not require HDRC review and can usually be processed in a few minutes at the OHP reception counter. Provided all other city code requirements are satisfied, building permits can be obtained at 1901 S. Alamo Street immediately after Administrative COAs are approved.

### Administrative COA Application Requirements:

The applicant must provide the OHP with the following:

- (1) Color photographs of the fronts of all homes, buildings, or other structures where work is proposed;
- (2) Color photographs of each location where changes are to occur;
- (3) Completed Administrative COA form

### HDRC Application

The HDRC application is used for:

- Exterior changes in materials or designs;
- New construction;
- Demolitions within historic districts (all properties) and RIO districts (commercial properties only)

Examples of items that are typically reviewed using HDRC applications:

- New construction, additions, or exterior renovations
- New exterior signage or changes to existing exterior signage
- Placement of exterior ornament or accessories
- Exterior landscaping, lighting, and fencing

### HDRC Application Requirements:

For each property address where work is proposed, the applicant must assemble and bring to the OHP the following:

- (1) Completed HDRC application;
- (2) Site plan, floor plan, and exterior elevation drawings;
- (3) Written description detailing the scope of the proposed project;

- (4) Color photographs of the fronts of all buildings or other structures to be modified and current color photographs of each location where changes are to occur;
- (5) Completed Owner Authorization Form (page 2 of the HDRC application) if the applicant is not the property owner.

### HDRC Review Process:

Once the completed HDRC application is submitted to the OHP, the following process begins:

- Upon submission to the OHP, a staff member will explain the details of the HDRC meeting.
- The OHP staff reviews the application within approximately three days after the deadline date to determine completeness of the application.
- If staff decides to recommend anything other than approval as submitted, OHP staff collaborates with the applicant to decide whether or not the application will be withdrawn, postponed, or revised. Staff has the option to withhold from HDRC consideration any request that appears to be in contradiction with the City's Unified Development Code, historic and design codes, or zoning statutes or regulations; that appears to contain factual misrepresentations, errors, or omissions; or for which there appears to be insufficient information to make an informed decision.
- The applicant or a representative, such as the project architect or contractor, must attend the designated HDRC meeting, which occurs every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at 3:00 at 1901 S. Alamo. The HDRC will either approve, deny, postpone, or send the application to committee.
- If an application is rejected, withdrawn, or postponed, it becomes inactive until it is resubmitted in an acceptable form.

- If the request is denied, the applicant may submit revised plans that address the reasons for denial or appeal to the Board of Adjustments within 30 days after the denial date.
- If there are issues or questions about the request that cannot be resolved without a visit to the work site by the HDRC, the request is sent to an HDRC committee. Each committee consists of approximately 3-5 commissioners. The applicant is required to attend the committee meeting and will be notified of the committee meeting date in advance. Such meetings usually occur during the interval between the commission meeting at which a request is referred to committee and the next commission meeting. Issues are often resolved and requests approved at the next HDRC meeting.
- If the request is approved, the applicant will receive the approval document (Certificate of Appropriateness) in the mail. If needed immediately, a copy can be obtained at the 1901 S. Alamo OHP counter (call 215-9274 to make arrangements). The certificates are usually mailed to applicants within 10 days of the HDRC meeting when approval was granted. Provided all other city code requirements and regulations relating to the project are satisfied, building permits for projects that do not require plan checking may be obtained through the Planning and Development Services Department immediately after receiving the Certificate of Appropriateness from the OHP.
- For projects that require plan checking, permits can be obtained after plan approval.



### Demolition Application

The Demolition Application is used for:

- All demolition requests by private property owners or contractors for demolitions of whole structures or partial exterior demolitions within the city limits, including designated landmarks and properties within historic and RIO districts.
- Other City departments' demolition applications cannot be accepted in lieu of OHP/HDRC demolition forms and the OHP staff does not sign other departments' forms.

### Demolition Application Requirements:

For each property address where demolition is proposed, the applicant must submit the following to the OHP:

- (1) Color photographs of the front, rear, and all sides, of all homes, buildings, outbuildings, or other structures proposed for demolition;
- (2) Two or three color photographs of the property where demolition is proposed that are taken from across the street from the property and that include some of the surrounding properties and structures;
- (3) A completed OHP demolition form.

### Demolition Application Review Process:

Submission of the demolition application to the OHP is the beginning of a process that includes the following additional elements:

- OHP demolition applications that are complete, that do not require HDRC review, and that request demolition only of structures that staff determines not to be significant according to the applicable historic or design code criteria, can usually be approved at the time of submittal.
- OHP staff may elect to postpone a decision about demolition until additional research and/or an inspection of the structures concerned can be performed by the OHP. The OHP's research and inspection must be concluded