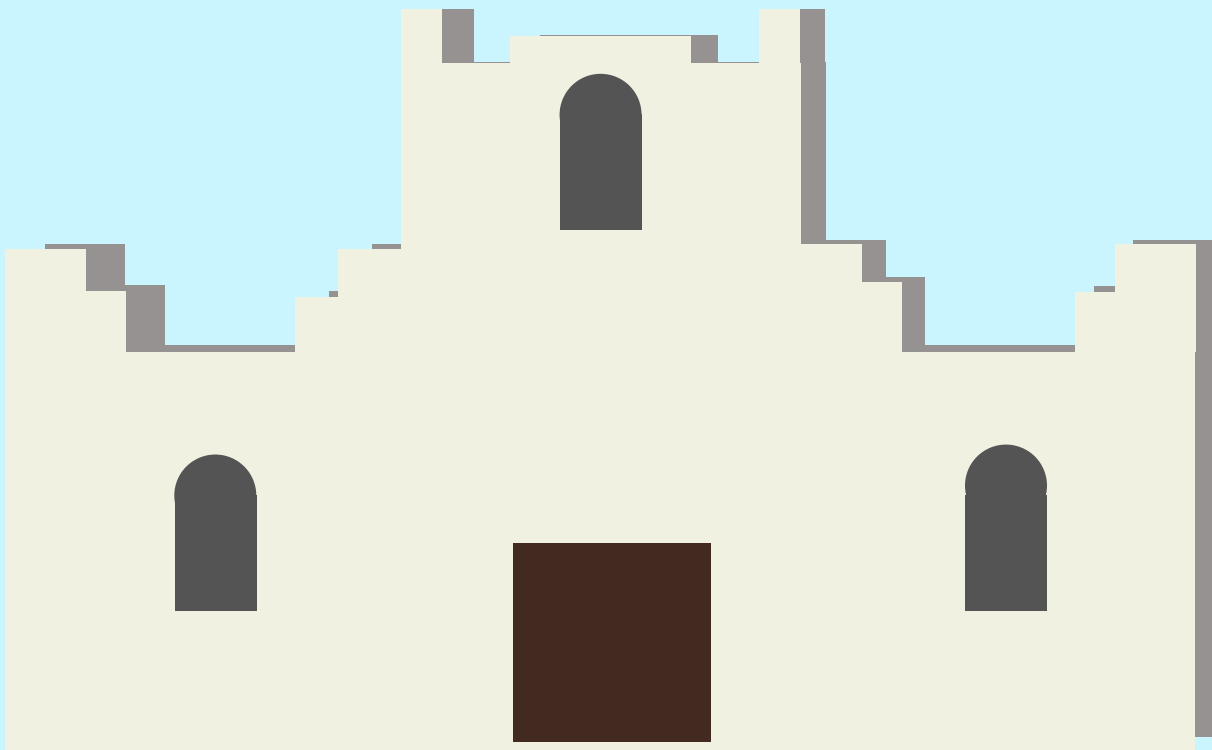


FAQ's for Living in a Historic District



What is historic preservation?

Historic preservation is the process by which buildings and structures of historic, cultural, architectural, archaeological, or educational significance are preserved through the adoption of design guidelines aimed at protecting structures which would otherwise, if demolished, constitute an irreplaceable loss to the quality and character of the City.

What is a historic district?

A historic district means an area, urban or rural, residential or commercial, defined as a "historic district" by city council, state or federal authority and which contains within definable geographic boundaries one or more landmarks or clusters.

How do I know if my property is located within a historic district?

Historic districts are designated by an "H" overlay on the Official Zoning Map for the City of El Paso. You can verify if your property is located within a district by calling the office and having the staff check.

Will local historic designation affect the use of my property?

No, the use of your property is regulated by the city's zoning ordinance. Whatever uses are permitted by the zoning for the property are not affected by district or landmark designation. Designation is concerned with aesthetics, not the uses of the property.

Does being in a historic district or an individual landmark mean I can't make changes to my property?

You can always make changes to your property. As part of a historic district, your property will require review by the HPO (Historic Preservation Office) whenever you want to make changes. Any proposed changes should be in keeping with the character of the building, the property, and the district.

What is a Certificate of Appropriateness ("COA")?

The certificate of appropriateness (COA) is a document rendered by the HLC which is required to be issued prior to the issuance of a building permit granted for the alteration, rehabilitation, construction, reconstruction or demolition of a landmark structure, landmark site or any improvement in a historic district.

What do I need to submit for a COA?

When applying for a building permit for work on a historic landmark or on a property within a historic district, the applicant shall submit an application for a COA signed by the property owner, copies of proof of ownership along with all detailed plans, elevations, perspectives, specifications, and other documents pertaining to the work to the HPO.

What other type of documentation is needed?

The applicant is required to submit current photographs of the subject property, a generalized site plan, and detailed site plan depending on whether the property is vacant or there are existing structures. Existing and proposed elevations of the facades are also required.