





## Historic Preservation Overlay Fact Sheet

Thank you for your interest in Historic Preservation. This fact sheet is meant to provide additional assistance to Neighborhood and Homeowner Associations who are considering pursuing an overlay for their neighborhood, and for individual property owners seeking an overlay on a single property. As you begin this process, as leaders for your neighborhood, you should be able to answer questions your neighbors have about the overlay and why your association is considering using this tool.

### What is a Historic Preservation Overlay?

An overlay is a type of district that can be placed over traditional zoning districts which provide additional standards for development in the area of an overlay. A Historic Preservation Overlay (or HP Overlay) is a zoning district that is intended to help preserve significant historic resources within the area. It places additional restrictions on any exterior work that takes place on a property in a district. HP Overlays have standards for contributing and non-contributing structures. HP Overlays may only apply to areas at least forty (40) years old and meet two (2) of the following criteria:

- Possesses significance in history, architecture, archaeology, and culture;
- Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local, regional, state, or national history;
- Associated with events that have made a significant impact in our past;
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction;
- Represents the work of a master designer, builder, or craftsman;
- Represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood or city; or
- Is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, or a State Archaeological Landmark, as determined by the Texas Historical Commission.

### What is the process for getting a designation report?

Typically, a designation report is created by an outside consultant for the City of College Station who has expertise in architecture and historic preservation. City funding for a designation report will be determined as part of an overall neighborhood planning program. Neighborhoods and individuals wishing to pursue an overlay prior to City funds being available may fund the contract themselves or utilize other resources to obtain the necessary information for a designation report.

### What should be in a designation report?

A designation report is required by City Ordinance to provide the following:

- A listing of the architectural, archaeological, paleontological, cultural, economic, social, ethnic, political, or historical characteristics upon which the designation is based;
- A description of the historical, cultural, and architectural significance of the structures and sites
- Identification of contributing and noncontributing resources to the district; and
- Description of the boundaries of the district including subareas and areas where new construction will be prohibited.

Planning and Development Services Staff will have an example of a designation report once an overlay is in place, and can also provide examples from other communities.

## What are contributing and non-contributing structures?

Contributing structures are buildings with architectural or historic significance under an overlay that are intended to be preserved. Non-contributing structures are those structures under an overlay that do not provide historic significance, but can impact those in the area that do.

## Where can we look for historic documents?

Most likely your neighbors will be your best source of information about their property, however, a good place to start in finding ownership and deed information is through the County Appraisal District. This information can also be found on the City's Internet Mapping Service - <http://www.cstx.gov> - or through the County Appraisal District. The Planner on Call or GIS Technician in Planning and Development Services can assist in how to use this mapping program. Staff may be reached at 979-764-3570. The Brazos County Appraisal District information can be found at <http://www.brazoscad.org>.

The City also has resources available through Project HOLD. This is an online collection of historic documents maintained by the City's Historic Preservation Advisory Committee. It is accessible at <http://hold.cstx.gov>. Historic photographs can also be found at the Cushing Library site, <http://cushing.tamu.edu>. Also, depending on the area, Planning and Development Services may have more detailed building permit information available to document changes in the area. Property and deed information can be searched at the Brazos County Courthouse in the office of the County Clerk. It is helpful to already have volume and page numbers of recent deeds to begin researching.

The Carnegie Library and the Brazos County Historical Commission also have expertise in historic research.

## What is the process?

**Pre-application Conference** - If you are considering a rezoning for a Historic Preservation Overlay, you must first schedule a Pre-Application Conference (PAC) with City Staff. This is an opportunity to meet the staff that will be assisting you in the rezoning process, as well as go over how the process will work, schedule a neighborhood meeting, and gain any assistance you need with gathering information.

**Neighborhood Meeting** - After the PAC, Staff will work with you to schedule a time for a Neighborhood Meeting in which staff will make a presentation to you and your neighbors about the Overlay and answer any questions.

**Complete zoning application** - Finally, complete the application and turn it in with all appropriate materials to the City of College Station, Planning and Development Services Department.

**Landmark Commission recommendation** - After the application is reviewed by Staff, it will be presented to the Landmark Commission in a public hearing for recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. City Staff will notify anyone in the boundary of the proposed overlay as well as all property owners within 200 feet of the overlay of the public hearing.

**Planning and Zoning recommendation** - Once the Landmark Commission has made a recommendation, the rezoning will be scheduled for the Planning and Zoning Commission. A similar public hearing will take place at this meeting.

**City Council action** - The City Council will hold a final public hearing at a regular meeting after a recommendation is forwarded by the Planning and Zoning Commission. They will take final action on the request. If it is approved, an ordinance is adopted creating the overlay district.

**Recordation at County Courthouse** - Once an overlay is adopted, City regulations require that documentation of the Historic Preservation Overlay is filed at the Brazos County Courthouse. Once it is officially filed, this information will be shown on any title insurance or searches on the properties located in the Overlay. This is to help insure that all future owners of the property are aware of the historic designation and development restrictions placed on the property.

## How long will the process take?

It is estimated that the process for creating a Designation Report will likely take between 3 and 6 months to compile. If a Designation Report is being done by a consultant through the City of College Station, it is estimated an additional 3 months will be needed to establish a contract. Depending on the interest and resources from your neighbors, it may take less, or it could take longer. Surveying and researching each individual property can take a long time, depending on the number of properties in the proposed district. Once the report is complete and the application ready to submit, it takes about 2 to 3 months to go through the rezoning process due to the legal notification requirements for each public hearing.

## **We've been rezoned. Now what?**

Once an HP Overlay has been established, property owners will need to obtain Certificates of Appropriateness and Certificates of Demolition from the Landmark Commission anytime there are exterior changes on a property within a district. Routine maintenance may be approved by the Historic Preservation Officer. Any changes to contributing structures must be found to have no adverse impact on the architectural features of the structure, the district, or on the future preservation, maintenance, and use of the structure or district. Work on noncontributing structures must be compatible with the overlay and the standards set forth in the Design Guidelines or the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation in the absence of approved guidelines.

Ordinary maintenance like maintaining existing paint (not a change in color) or the replacement of a roof with the same or original material do not require Certificates of Appropriateness, but anyone considering work on their property is encouraged to discuss the work with the Planning and Development Services Staff to determine if a Certificate of Appropriateness is required.

Additionally, no property owner may allow a property in an HP Overlay to fall into such a state of disrepair that it has a detrimental effect on the character of the district, and the City may require repairs in order to preserve the integrity of the structure or property.