

# Landmarks Commission Design Review

PJR-114

**Purpose:** The Landmarks Commission Design Review process was developed to preserve the County's unique and irreplaceable structures and sites that have significant historic, architectural, or aesthetic interest. This process is intended to ensure that exterior alterations, additions, new construction, and relocation of structures involving historic resources or sites are conducted in a way that preserves the significance of the resource and the character of any historic district in which it is located. Demolition permits affecting historic resources must also be reviewed under this process.

**Procedure:** The planner assigned to the project reviews the application for completeness and notifies the applicant of any materials that are needed to complete the application. Generally, a complete application should be submitted a minimum of four weeks before the desired Landmarks Commission meeting. The Commission holds regular public meetings the first Tuesday of each month in the hearing room of the Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD). A 10-day notice of the public meeting is provided for all projects located within any of the County's Historic Districts. All interested persons are given an opportunity to comment on the proposed project at the meeting.

Commercial project applications may be referred to other PRMD divisions, County departments, and State agencies for their review, comments and conditions. Projects involving historical resources are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and environmental review must be conducted unless the proposed project is found to be exempt. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties are nationally accepted standards for preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction projects which affect historic properties and districts. Projects which are found to meet these standards can be considered categorically exempt from CEQA. The majority of the projects reviewed by the Landmarks Commission qualify for a categorical exemption. Projects which are not specifically exempt from CEQA may require additional fees and studies to complete the environmental analysis and prepare the required documents.

Historic Design Review is conducted by the Landmarks Commission. The Commission is comprised of five dedicated volunteers appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The commissioners represent various fields of expertise which enables them to assist applicants with construction and design issues. The Landmarks Commission is dedicated to helping applicants achieve their objectives while maintaining the character of the historic building and district. Projects located within a Historic District are evaluated for their consistency with the applicable Historic District Design Guidelines. The Commission's Design Review Standards for Historic Structures are used by the Landmarks Commission as a guide to evaluate Sonoma County Landmarks and projects outside Historic District Boundaries. The Landmarks Commission must also assess the project for conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards since a finding of consistency is needed to invoke the categorical exemption under CEQA. Finally, the Commission also relies on the Historic Resource Evaluation which provides information regarding the specific historic structure and the reason for its significance. A joint session of the Landmarks Commission and Design Review Committee will be arranged for commercial projects involving major alterations or new construction. Some residential development projects may also require review by both the Landmarks Commission and Design Review Committee. All projects must be consistent with applicable policies of the General plan, Specific/Area Plans, and the Zoning Ordinance.

Landmarks Commission approval must be obtained, and all conditions must be met, before any building permits may be issued. The decision of the Landmarks Commission is appealable to the Planning Commission. Appeals must be submitted within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the Landmarks Commission action.

**Required Application Materials:** Please be sure that all the required application materials listed below are submitted to ensure that your application is processed as expediently as possible. A complete

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application must include all of the following:

1. **Applications:** Planning Application form PJR-001, signed by all property owners and Indemnification Agreement form PJR-011 signed by the applicant.
2. **Digital Version of Supplemental Materials.** Digital versions of project materials must be submitted on CD or USB Flash drive and are needed **in addition** to the hard copies required. Digital versions may also be submitted by email after the application and all required hard copies have been filed.
3. **Proposal Statement.** Provide a detailed description of all of the following:
  - a. Current and proposed use of the property.
  - b. Existing structures and their uses including year built and condition.
  - c. Historic district in which the property is located, if applicable.
  - d. All proposed changes to existing buildings including additions, alterations, colors and materials.
  - e. All new building(s) and site improvements.
  - f. Discussion of how the proposed project complies with applicable Historic District Design Guidelines, Standards And Criteria for Design Review of Exterior Alterations to Historic Structures ([http://www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/historic/pdf/standards\\_criteria.pdf](http://www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/historic/pdf/standards_criteria.pdf)), and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. [http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/rehab/rehab\\_standards.htm](http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/rehab/rehab_standards.htm)
2. **Historic Resource Evaluation.** Seven copies of a Historic Resource Evaluation prepared by an architectural historian or other qualified professional. The evaluation must be submitted on State Historical Resource Inventory forms (DPR 523A and 523B) and must include the following minimum information:
  - a. Description of the property as it appears today and as it appeared historically.
  - b. Date of construction, architectural style, distinguishing architectural features, exterior construction materials, type of roof, etc.
  - c. Analysis of integrity with respect to the historic structure's location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
  - d. A statement of significance which provides specific information about the historic events, persons, architecture, etc, that make the property significant. The statement of significance must also explain why the resource is important in relation to its historic context and identify the specific physical characteristics that convey its significance. The historic function of the property, the historic themes represented by the property, and the period of time when the property played a significant role or acquired significance, must also be included.
  - e. Identify all structures on the property as contributing or non-contributing depending on whether or not they relate to the significance of the property and identify any significant landscape features.

A Historic Resource Evaluation is not required for structures located within a Historic District that have been identified as "non-contributing" by the applicable Historic District Design Guidelines.

3. **Site Plan.** Provide eight full-sized, folded Site Plans (either 24 in. x 36 in. or 11 in. x 17 in.) drawn to scale. All plans must be of sufficient scale to show all information clearly. See Minimum Standard Site Plan form CSS-019. If the site will be significantly modified by the proposed project, both an existing and proposed site plan should be submitted. Preparation of

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the required Site Plan by a professional draftsman, architect, or engineer is recommended. Site Plans must include the following:

- a. Site address
  - b. Scale, north arrow, and dimensions of all property lines. (An engineer's scale of 1 in. = 10 ft. or 20 ft. is recommended). The entire property must be shown. For large parcels, a vicinity inset map may be used to orient the viewer to the proposed development area. Please delineate "Limits of Work" for all areas on the property to be developed or graded.
  - c. Location and identification of all existing and proposed buildings, structures, fencing, lighting, landscape areas, etc., including their dimensions and approximate distances to property lines. Identify land uses on adjacent properties and depict buildings, structures, etc. within 50 ft. of the subject property.
  - d. Location, width, name and status (public or private) of all existing and proposed roads and easements lying within, adjacent to or serving the site, showing route of access from the road.
  - e. Location of streams, ditches, drainage facilities and other water courses, water storage facilities, wetlands, ponds, and areas subject to periodic inundation.
  - f. Contour lines indicating the direction of slope and approximate percent of grade.
  - g. Location of any existing or proposed wells and septic systems including distances to waterways, drainage courses, cut/fill areas, structures and roadways.
  - h. Location and dimensions of all parking areas and driveways from adjacent roadways.
  - i. Location, size, and species of existing trees in the development area. Specify which trees are intended for removal.
4. **Architectural Plans.** Eight full-sized (24 in. x 36 in. or 11 in. x 17 in.) copies of all building elevations (front, rear and side views). Include signs, light fixtures, mechanical and electrical equipment, exterior colors and materials. Structural plans are not required until application is made for building permits.
  5. **Floor Plans.** Eight full sized (24 in. x 36 in. or 11 in. x 17 in.) plans of existing and proposed floor plans with rooms labeled.
  6. **Landscape Plans.** Eight full-sized (24 in. x 36 in. or 11 in. x 17 in.) Landscape Plans showing location, species, common name, and size of plants to be planted.
  7. **Product Information (cut sheet).** Manufacturer's product information (cut sheets) for proposed light fixtures, doors, windows, handrails, exterior trim, etc.
  8. **Materials and Color Samples.** Provide color and material samples of proposed roof, siding, trim, and window materials. Color photographs of materials are acceptable.
  9. **Photographs.** Eight sets of color photographs and one photo CD with images of all existing structures on the site. Photos of the front, rear and side views of all historic structures must be included as well as a view of the historic structure in its setting. Prints of historic photos should be provided if available.
  10. **Location/Vicinity Map.** Provide an 8 ½ in. x 11 in. map identifying the project site in relation to nearby lots, streets, highways and/or major natural features (e.g., locator maps & road maps).
  11. **Assessor's Parcel Map.** Provide one 8 ½ in. x 11 in. copy of the current Assessor's Parcel Map with the project site identified. Maps may be obtained from the County Assessor's Office or PRMD.

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12. **USGS Quad Map.** Provide one 8 ½ in. x 11 in. map with site outlined. Maps are available from PRMD.
13. **Filing Fee.** See Project Review Fee Schedule.