

PRESERVATION IN PLANO

Plano heritage resources are those buildings, sites, or districts that have been officially designated by the City Council as culturally and architecturally significant. A property may be individually designated or designated as part of a district. The Heritage Commission (HC), a seven-member board appointed by the Mayor and City Council, in an effort to protect the city's rich, unique, cultural and architectural heritage, recommends properties for designation. The Commission is responsible for reviewing any major proposed exterior alterations, demolition or new construction affecting designated resources or districts in accordance with criteria in the resource or district's Design Guidelines and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings. Copies of guidelines are available from the City of Plano Planning Department.

The Plano Heritage Commission serves the public both as a steward for heritage resources and districts and as a facilitator to owners of these properties. City Staff and the HC provide assistance to owners by helping them plan alterations they may be considering and guide owners through the application process necessary to implement those changes.

WHY HISTORIC PRESERVATION?

- ☞☞ Retention of indigenous character and sense of time and place which provides identity to the community and its residents
- ☞☞ Enhancement of the aesthetic quality of the community
- ☞☞ Maintenance and enhancement of property values
- ☞☞ Reinvestment in and recycling of existing, sometimes abandoned, structures
- ☞☞ Neighborhood revitalization
- ☞☞ Guidance of the orderly growth and development of the community

WHY WOULD I WANT TO OWN A HERITAGE PROPERTY?

Individually designated properties or properties that contribute historically or architecturally to the context of a heritage district:

- ☞☞ Are eligible for a partial property tax exemption (*based on level of maintenance*)
- ☞☞ Fall under the Uniform Code for Building Conservation when renovation are made
- ☞☞ May be officially recognized with plaques

Old buildings:

- ☞☞ Are physical links to the past
- ☞☞ Give a sense of community and personal identity
- ☞☞ Have intrinsic value as art
- ☞☞ Provide environmental diversity
- ☞☞ Continue to be *useful*

ARE THERE ANY FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AVAILABLE TO OWNERS OF DESIGNATED HERITAGE RESOURCES?

The City of Plano offers a partial property tax exemption to individually designated properties and to properties that contribute historically and architecturally to a designated heritage district and that meet a set of basic maintenance standards. Collin County, Collin County Community College District and Plano Independent School District also participate in the program. The program is intended to aid in the maintenance and upkeep of heritage resources. Therefore, the property is inspected once a year to ensure that it is being maintained properly. The program is voluntary.

Other incentive programs may be available. Contact the Heritage Preservation Officer for more information.

HOW DOES THE TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM WORK?

The purpose of tax exemption is to provide additional funds for continued preservation. The Heritage Commission inspects each structure yearly to determine if they are being maintained properly. The amount of the exemption is based on two factors: a) whether the structure is individually designated or the structure is part of and contributes to a heritage district; and b) whether the structure is used solely as a residence or has a commercial use. Class A Structures (individually designated and used for residential purposes) receive 100% exemption from taxation. Class B Structures (individually designated and used for commercial purposes) receive 50% exemption. Class C Structures (contributing to a historic district and used for residential purposes) receive 75% exemption. Finally, Class D Structures (contributing to a historic district and used for commercial purposes) receive 38% exemption. These exemptions are on the value of the structure; full taxes are still paid on the land.

HOW DOES OWNING A HERITAGE RESOURCE OR PROPERTY IN A DISTRICT AFFECT ME AS A PROPERTY OWNER?

Any exterior alterations to buildings and properties that are heritage resources or located within a heritage district are required to conform to design guidelines created for an individual heritage resource or district to avoid unsympathetic changes to the buildings.

The Plano Heritage Commission protects the rights and investments of property owners and business establishments through a design review process called a Certificate of Appropriateness. By preserving and maintaining visual character, the HC ensures that future generations will enjoy the benefits of Plano's rich architectural heritage.

CAN I STILL MAKE CHANGES TO MY PROPERTY?

Yes, you can still make changes to your property. However, prior to any exterior alterations, demolition or new construction, a Certificate of Appropriateness must be approved. This is to ensure that proposed alterations are in keeping with the architectural character of the district or resource and would include the following:

- ✍✍ Changing doors or windows
- ✍✍ Changing architectural details
- ✍✍ Adding/removing siding
- ✍✍ Signs
- ✍✍ Light Fixtures
- ✍✍ New exterior paint colors
- ✍✍ Demolition and new construction
- ✍✍ Major landscape or pavement changes

However, routine maintenance and *in-kind* repairs do not require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Many simple repairs or changes may be approved by Staff. When in doubt, contact the Planning Department.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS?

Contact the Heritage Preservation Officer (HPO) in the City of Plano Planning Department at (972) 941-7152. The Heritage Commission meets on the third Tuesday of every month. Applications for C.A.'s are due by 5:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month. It is highly recommended that an applicant consult with the HPO before and during the planning of a project.

WILL I BE REQUIRED TO RESTORE MY BUILDING OR MAKE IMPROVEMENTS JUST BECAUSE I OWN A HERITAGE RESOURCE?

No. Designation does not require you to make changes you do not choose to make.

Heritage designation also *does not*

- ✍✍ Restrict the use to which property is put
- ✍✍ Restrict the sale of property
- ✍✍ Require approval of *interior* changes or alterations
- ✍✍ Prevent new construction within historic areas
- ✍✍ Require approval for ordinary maintenance or *in-kind* repairs

DOES THE CITY PROVIDE ANY SERVICES TO HELP RESIDENTS WITH APPLYING FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS?

The City of Plano has a professional staff with specific experience in preservation, construction and planning expertise. These services are offered to assist you with design choices in a historic district. Architectural services may also be available through the City's Downtown Development Consultant. Contact the Heritage Preservation Officer at (972) 941-7152 for more information.

HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION ON THE CITY OF PLANO HERITAGE PRESERVATION PROGRAM?

Contact the Heritage Preservation Officer at (972) 941-7152 or check our website at www.historicplano.org.