



Introduction

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Historic Covington Design Guidelines (Design Guidelines) is intended to meet several needs. For property owners, residents, and contractors, it provides guidance and rules to follow as they are planning projects for their buildings and properties within the Historic Preservation Overlay Zones and other designated Development Areas. These rules help to create projects that are sympathetic to the architecture and character of the buildings and neighborhoods. For the Urban Design Review Board members and staff, it offers a basis for evaluating proposed changes. Overall, the purpose of these guidelines is to promote the educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare of the community by:

- Identifying and preserving the distinctive historic and architectural characteristics of Covington;
- Fostering civic pride in the beauty and noble accomplishments of the past as represented in Covington's landmarks and Historic Areas;
- Conserving and improving the value of property designated as landmarks or within Historic Areas;
- Protecting and enhancing the attractiveness of Covington to home buyers, businesses, tourists, visitors, investors, and shoppers; and
- Encouraging the preservation and restoration of neighborhoods.

These guidelines are intended to:

- Give detailed guidance to property owners contemplating alterations to structures and sites within the Historic Areas;
- Provide standards for the Urban Design Review Board to guide decision making;
- Assist the local building industry, including architects, contractors, and suppliers, in understanding the character of the Historic Areas and how to reinforce that character; and
- Reinforce and maintain the distinctive character of the Historic Areas by;

Designing improvements that are appropriate to the period and style of the architecture;

Protecting the maintenance of the overall relationship of any one building's height, mass, and scale to those of other buildings on the block;

Encouraging the maintenance of the pattern created by the setback of buildings from the street;

Encouraging the maintenance of existing streetscape components;

Protecting the integrity of existing significant and contributing buildings; and

Encouraging the use of materials and techniques compatible with those existing in the district.





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These guidelines are **not** intended to:

- Return the Historic Areas to any style of architecture prevalent in the past;
- Dictate the new construction be designed to resemble any “old-fashioned” style;
- Govern land use questions; or
- Require that any structure be altered against the owner’s wishes.

These guidelines are concerned with the relationship of buildings and space to one another, and with encouraging the preservation and enhancement of the distinctive architectural features in the Historic Preservation Overlay Zones. The guidelines view changes to existing buildings not only as they affect a given building, but as they influence surrounding structures.

Guiding Principles

Because there are a variety of building types in Covington, each project must be considered on an individual basis. Using the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation as a foundation, the following represent some basic guiding principles that apply to all rehabilitation work.

1. Avoid removing or altering historic material or distinctive architectural features: if it’s original and in fairly good shape, try to keep it.
2. Repair rather than replace wherever possible. If replacing, replicate the original—don’t invent something new that might have been.
3. Be sensitive to distinct stylistic features and examples of skilled craftsmanship.
4. Uncover original design features that may be buried under layers of improvements. It takes detective work, but there may be evidence of where original elements were located. Research may turn up pictures of what your building originally looked like.
5. New additions should be compatible with the context, but should be representative of its own time.
6. Don’t try to make the building look older than it really is.
7. Don’t assume that a later addition or alteration to an old building is worthless just because it’s not part of the original building. Additions made at a later time may have gained significance on their own.
8. Don’t sandblast or use abrasive cleaning methods. Surface cleaning should be done by the least damaging means possible. Cleaning often is not necessary.

While we have tried to make the guidelines as clear as possible as to what is appropriate and what is not permissible, because each changes to buildings need to be evaluated on an individual basis due to sometimes unique building architecture or circumstances the certain words when used shall be interpreted as follows:

Shall= a mandatory action Should= a preferred action May = a permissible action



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1.1 COVINGTON HISTORIC PRESERVATION OVERLAY (HPO) ZONES



Corner of Washington and Pike Street.

Covington's historic buildings, monuments, neighborhoods, public squares, and landscapes help define our community. They remind us of what previous generations of Covington residents have built and accomplished while inspiring us to continue the work of creating good places in our city for ourselves and future generations.

Development that enhances this character of Covington's historic resources is encouraged. Through the Zoning Code and the use of Historic Preservation Overlay (HPO) Zones, the City has recognized that there are areas that retain historic integrity that should be preserved. In the Zoning Code, the HPO Zones are defined as areas intended to preserve structures, buildings, appurtenances, and places that are of basic and vital importance

for the development of the culture, because of their association with history; because of their unique architectural style and scale, including color, proportions, form, and architectural details; or because of their being a part of or related to a square, park, or area of cultural, historical, or architectural importance to the city.

These HPOs provide a mechanism of design review process for changes to the exterior of a property; however, they do not affect the underlying uses of properties that are permitted in its base zoning. The HPO Zones are adopted by ordinance by City Commission and include legal enforcement of compliance with these Historic Covington Design Guidelines.

Covington's HPOs are established by the Covington City Commission after an application has been submitted by a neighborhood organization, a preservation group, or the City. The application for an HPO follows that of a Zoning Map Amendment allowing for staff recommendations, the Kenton County Planning Commission recommendation, and public input. As of 2012, Covington has seven Historic Preservation Overlay Zones:

- MainStrasse
- Seminary Square
- Pike Street
- Downtown Commercial
- Mutter Gottes
- Licking Riverside
- Ohio Riverside

These areas represent residential neighborhoods, downtown commercial areas, neighborhood commercial areas, institutional areas or a mixture of uses. Maps and descriptions of these areas are included in Appendix 6.3.



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1.2 URBAN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD



The Urban Design Review Board (UDRB) and the procedures for which it is responsible for implementing are intended to promote the educational, residential, cultural, travel, industrial, and other economic resources and the general welfare of the City by preserving and protecting the old, historic, and architecturally worthy structures, sites, monuments, streetscape, and neighborhoods. The UDRB is established for the purpose of stabilizing and improving property values in the City and encouraging new buildings and developments that will be harmonious with the existing historic buildings and districts, but will not necessarily be of the same architectural style.

The UDRB consists of nine members appointed by the City Commission for overlapping 4-year terms. They are residents and property and business owners in Covington who have demonstrated knowledge and/or interest in the preservation of historic and architectural landmarks. The members must be residents whenever possible and the makeup of the board must consist of the following: a member from the American Institute of Architects, a member from the Board of Realtors or Appraisers, a member of the Covington Business Council, a member of MainStrasse Village Association, and five members representing Historic Preservation Overlay Zones or Development Areas where the UDRB has design review authority.



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1.3 THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS/COA

Historic Preservation Overlay Zones are not meant to prevent changes, but rather to guide and ensure that changes are historically and architecturally appropriate. In Section 12.14 of the City of Covington Zoning Ordinance, the process for obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness is outlined. In this process, changes are to be reviewed and evaluated before work begins. The process does not require property owners and it does not apply to the interior alterations or routine maintenance. However, any exterior changes, new construction, demolition, or major alterations must be reviewed and evaluated before work begins. In the case of demolition, the Zoning Ordinance outlines in Section 12.14.07 the conditions or circumstances that must be found to allow for a demolition.

When property owners are considering changes, they should consult with the Historic Preservation staff early on in the process to ensure that their work is consistent with the Guidelines and that the proper procedures for approval are met.

Certificate of Appropriateness

All exterior changes to properties located within the Historic Preservation Overlay Zones and some KRS Chapter 99 Development Areas will require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to be issued before work begins. There is no charge for this permit if the permit is issued before work begins. The permit remains valid for 6 months. Building and/or zoning permits will not be approved for properties within the Historic Preservation Overlay Zones until a COA has been issued by the City's qualified Historic Preservation Professional.

A COA is not required for maintenance and repair if no replacement materials are necessary. For

most minor work, staff can issue a COA upon receipt of a completed application. For major work projects, the COA will be reviewed by the Urban Design Review Board. Major work includes new construction, additions, demolitions, major alterations, and any work that does not comply with the Covington Historic Design Guidelines. Typically for COA applications that do not have to go the UDRB, are submitted fully complete, and that meet the guidelines stated in the Covington Design Guidelines, an approved COA will be issued within a few days.

Appeals

In any action denying a COA, an appeal may be taken to the City Commission. A written appeal must be submitted to the City's Historic Preservation Professional within 30 days after the UDRB's decision.

Compliance and Enforcement

Any person or corporation who violates the provisions and regulations of the Covington Historic Design Guidelines or the conditions of their COA is subject to the same penalties as any other violation of the city zoning code. These include zoning violation citations issued by the Code Enforcement Department. Failure to comply with the Certificate of Appropriateness process or the Covington Historic Design Guidelines can result in legal action and fines up to \$500 per day, with each day of violation constituting a separate offense.

Maintenance

All buildings and structures in designated Historic Preservation Overlay zones must be properly maintained and repaired at the same level required elsewhere in the city.



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1.4 THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDS FOR REHABILITATION

The Standards that follow were originally published in 1977 and revised in 1990 as part of the Department of the Interior regulations. They pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and uses. The regulations encompass the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. The Standards also encompass related landscape features and a building's site environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction.

These Standards are used as a foundation and building block for the Covington Historic Design Guidelines.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

