



Historic Designation Frequently Asked Questions

How is a historic district designated or a property designated as a historic landmark in the City of Fort Lauderdale?

The designation of local historic landmarks or districts are handled through the City of Fort Lauderdale, not through the State of Florida.

The overall process for local designation includes the submission of a complete application for historic designation. Once a complete application has been received, the case is scheduled within (60) days of receipt on a Historic Preservation Board (HPB) agenda where the HPB considers the application and makes a motion to provide a recommendation to the City Commission. Within (90) days following the HPB meeting, the case is scheduled for a regular City Commission meeting agenda for a final vote.

Why aren't there restrictions on who can designate a property?

The Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR) allows the property owner, any person residing in the city or any legal entity in the City, including the City to submit a designation application. At this time, direction was not received to amend this aspect of the ULDR however; the intent of historic preservation is to act as a social benefit and to allow for a proper public process. The U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Penn Central Transportation Co. v. City of New York establishes that historic preservation ordinances without owner consent provisions are constitutionally valid.

Does a property need to be over 50 years old in order to be designated a historic landmark?

No, properties that are less than 50 years old may be considered for historic designation if the structure qualifies under criterion g, which are outlined within the National Register Bulletin #15:

g. A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

Does the designation of my property prevent me from changing its use?

As long as a desired use is permitted under the property's existing zoning designation, the historic designation of a property does NOT restrict a property owner from changing the uses.

For example, motels can be turned into condos, gas stations can be turned into restaurants, and single family homes can be turned into offices as long as the underlying zoning district lists these as permitted uses and all other aspects of the City's zoning requirements can be met.

Am I restricted on what I can do to the interior of my building?

No. Interior remodeling or renovations are not part of the historic preservation design review process, unless the property has specifically had its interior designated as well. Building permits may be required as with any other interior renovation.



Are there any restrictions on buying or selling a designated historic property?

There are no restrictions concerning the sale of a property due to its historic designation.

Would an owner be forced to restore his property if it is designated?

No. A property is designated as is, including features that are not in compliance with the new standards. It is much the same as a grandfather clause: everything can remain as long as it was permitted and can be maintained.

Can a designated property be altered or an addition constructed?

Yes, alterations and additions may be proposed through a Certificate of Appropriateness application to the Historic Preservation Board. Review of proposed alterations and additions utilize criteria listed in the [ULDR](#), the [Historic Preservation Design Guidelines](#), and the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards](#) for the treatment of historic properties.

Are there any existing incentives for historic designation?

Yes, there are a number of incentives for property owners. See the list of [Incentives for Historic Structures in the City of Fort Lauderdale](#).