

# A Realtor's Guide to Roanoke's Local Historic Districts



## Introduction:

Regulation of historic districts has an obvious benefit of protecting the integrity of historic neighborhoods, which in turn protects the investment of each property owner in the district. Research of the City's real estate records show that historic districts consistently outperform other areas in terms of appreciation. While owning property in a historic district can have financial benefits, it also carries certain responsibilities. Recent amendments to the Virginia Residential Property Disclosure Act require that buyers be advised that a property is within a historic district. Potential buyers should be aware of what a historic designation means. Therefore, it is important that Realtors be informed about local historic districts.

## Designation of Historic Districts:

Local historic districts are established by the zoning ordinance for the protection of architecturally, historically and culturally significant buildings, structures and neighborhoods. The City of Roanoke has two local historic districts: the H1, Historic Downtown Overlay District (typically commercial properties located in the City's downtown) and the H2, Historic Neighborhood Overlay District (typically residential neighborhoods near downtown). To determine if a property lies within an H-1 or H-2 district, refer to the attached map or go to the City's Geographic Information System <http://gis.roanokeva.gov>.

## Review Process:

Any exterior alteration/restoration, new construction, or demolition of a structure in a historic district is subject to a review process. Review is performed by the Architectural Review Board (ARB), which is appointed by City Council, and the ARB's Agent, a member of City staff. The nature of a proposed project will determine the review process. Minor repairs, in-kind replacement, and minor construction is usually reviewed by the ARB Agent, while larger projects such as major changes to a structure or new construction are generally reviewed by the Board. All applications are evaluated based on the project's consistency with the Architectural Design Guidelines, which can be found on the Planning Division's webpage at [www.roanokeva.gov/planning](http://www.roanokeva.gov/planning). Approval of an application is given by issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness. The key to a successful review is to contact the ARB Agent before beginning any exterior work to determine what type of approval is needed and to get assistance with the application process.

Parviz Moosavi, Agent Architectural Review Board  
Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building  
215 Church Avenue, S.W., Room 170  
Roanoke, Virginia 24011  
(540) 853-1522 or [parviz.moosavi@roanokeva.gov](mailto:parviz.moosavi@roanokeva.gov)