

FERNANDINA BEACH'S HISTORIC DISTRICTS + THE CRA

Old Town

Originally the site of the town of Fernandina, Old Town has the unique distinction of being the last Spanish city platted in the Western Hemisphere. Retaining the 1811 plat, as well as the historic homes in the area, is of special importance.

Downtown

When David Yulee established the railroad running from Fernandina Beach to Cedar Key, the town of Fernandina shifted to its present location. Buildings in the Downtown district reflect this late 19th and early 20th century development.

Community Redevelopment Area (CRA)

In 2005, the City established the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) along the riverfront in order to revitalize the area and boost development activity. Historically, this area was home to an active working waterfront centered around shrimping and the community adopted guidelines to ensure development reflects this heritage.

The Historic District Council (HDC)

The HDC was established to be the City's primary agency responsible for furthering historic preservation within the city. There are 5 regular members and 2 alternate members, all appointed by the City Commission for terms of 3 years.

Members of the HDC protect sites of architectural and historic significance by acting as a design review board for exterior alterations, repairs, and moving or demolition of historic structures or landscape features within Old Town, Downtown, and the CRA.



The purpose of the review is to ensure that any proposed changes are compatible with existing historic features in terms of design, texture, materials, siting, and location.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
<http://www.flheritage.com/preservation/>
Phone: (850) 245-6333

Florida Trust for Historic Preservation
<http://www.floridatrust.org/>
Phone: (850) 224-8128

National Trust for Historic Preservation
<http://www.preservationnation.org/>
Phone: (800) 944-6847

National Register of Historic Places
<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/index.htm>

**Secretary of the Interior's
Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating
Historic Buildings**
<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/rhb/index.htm>

Getting to Know the Standards
[http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/e-rehab/
welcome_index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/e-rehab/welcome_index.htm)

Tax Incentives for Income-Producing Properties
<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/incentives/index.htm>

**National Park Service Technical
Preservation Services Publications**
<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/index.htm>

Historic Preservation Learning Portal
[http://www.historicpreservation.gov/NPS_Portal/
home/home.jsp](http://www.historicpreservation.gov/NPS_Portal/home/home.jsp)

Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation in Florida
http://www.law.ufl.edu/cgr/pdf/technical_report_2010.pdf

**Contributions of Historic Preservation to
Quality of Life in Florida**
[http://www.law.ufl.edu/cgr/pdf/UF-Historic-report-final-
2006.pdf](http://www.law.ufl.edu/cgr/pdf/UF-Historic-report-final-2006.pdf)

City of Fernandina Beach
Community Development
204 Ash Street
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034
Phone: 904-310-3135
Fax: 904-310-3460
www.fbfl.us/historicdistrict

CITY OF
FERNANDINA BEACH

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

Building in the Downtown + Old Town Historic Districts and the Community Redevelopment Area



WWW.FBFL.US/HISTORICDISTRICT

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FAQ ABOUT PROPERTIES IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND CRA

How do I know if I need HDC review?

If your property is within the boundaries of either the Old Town or Downtown historic districts OR the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA), you will need HDC approval for:

- exterior alterations or additions
- new construction
- demolition or relocation.

Maps of the district boundaries are available on the website and at the Community Development Department (CDD) office. If you are uncertain whether your property is in a historic district or the CRA, please call CDD at 904-310-3135. Applications for projects are required to be submitted with CDD. There are administrative fees for filing applications.

Are there specific design guidelines to follow?

Yes. Both Old Town, Downtown, and the CRA have their own sets of design guidelines. Copies are available for free download at the city website (www.fbfl.us/historicdistrict) or in hard copy for a fee at the CDD office.

Do I have to go before the HDC at a hearing?

Not necessarily. Certain projects may be approved at CDD staff level, while others require HDC review in front of the Council at a hearing before approval. For more information, please contact the CDD or see Ch.8.03.03 (B) of the City Land Development Code. You can view the LDC at www.fbfl.us/LDC. Please note all projects are required to submit an HDC application, UNLESS you are doing matching repair work that does not need a building permit. Always check with staff first if you are unsure about whether to apply.

How do I know when I can start my project?

Projects are issued a Certificate of Approval (COA) after either staff or HDC approval. Only after a COA is issued may a property owner apply for a building permit to start their project.

Do I need HDC approval for interior projects?

No. The HDC reviews exterior work only.

How does the HDC judge my COA application?

The HDC applies the design guidelines, which are based on the US Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and utilized nationally to ensure uniformity in historic preservation.

What if specific circumstances prevent me from complying with guidelines?

The HDC has the ability to grant variances where certain criteria are met. This process requires a separate application, fee, and HDC review.

If I disagree with the HDC decision, can I appeal?

Yes. COA appeals go to the City Commission, and variance appeals go to Circuit Court.

If you own property in one of the historic districts or the CRA, check with CDD staff before:

- Demolishing or Moving a Building/Structure
- Adding to Existing Building
- Adding Additional Structures
- New Construction
- Installing a Swimming Pool
- Adding a Driveway or Walkway
- Adding/Changing Porch/Deck
- Changing Paint Colors
- Removing/Replacing Windows or Doors
- Adding/Changing a Fence
- Adding/Changing Signs
- Replacing Roofing



THINGS TO REMEMBER...

Plan Ahead. The HDC meets the third Thursday of every month at 5pm in the City Hall Commission Chambers. Applications for the HDC meeting must be received no later than 30 days prior to the date of the meeting. Staff-approval applications are accepted on an ongoing basis and have no deadline. Also note that new construction and large-scale projects should present conceptual plans for review and comment prior to preparation of construction drawings. Feel free to contact staff for more info.

Be Prepared. The HDC application for a Board-Reviewed COA application requires:

- Pre-Application Meeting
- Proof of Ownership and Survey
- Site Plan of the Proposed Work
- Photos of Existing Building, Accessory Structures or Site
- Construction Drawings to Scale Showing Exterior Elevations
- Product/Material Details and Specifications

Attend the Hearing. You or your authorized representative must be present at the hearing in order for your application to be heard. Applicants under CDD staff-approved COA do not have to attend the hearing. Homeowners are invited to attend a meeting to learn more about the process.

Ask Questions. CDD staff welcome any questions or concerns you may have and do their best to work with you to meet your needs within the context of design guideline standards.