



Historic Districts Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who do I contact to get additional information on the Historic Districts Commission (HDC) and applicable regulations and reviews?

Contact the Planning and Economic Development (PED) Department at 248-656-4660 or visit www.rochesterhills.org/historicdistricts. Please check with the PED Department prior to beginning any project on an historic property.

2. What are the criteria for local designation?

The building or area of buildings must be important to the history of Rochester Hills, or in the case of an archaeological site important to the area's history or pre-history. Buildings can relate to general historical trends or specific historic events, important people, or the architecture of the city.

3. Is review and approval from the HDC required for work done on the interior of my designated home?

No, reviews are only done for work affecting the exterior appearance.

4. What types of review and approval from the HDC are required for work done on the exterior of my designated home?

Any work done to the exterior of a building or on the property in a locally designated district requires a Certificate of Appropriateness to be granted by the HDC. This includes changes to any existing buildings and construction of new buildings or outbuildings such as garages and sheds. The one EXCEPTION to this is repainting. The HDC does not regulate paint color and property owners can re-paint previously painted surfaces without HDC approval. Masonry surfaces that were not previously painted should not be painted.

5. What if I want to do maintenance on my house that replaces an existing material, but does not change the exterior?

The HDC's charge is to preserve as much historic material as possible and they do not recommend replacing historic elements such as siding and windows with modern materials. However, the HDC may consider alternate materials if extenuating circumstances exist. All projects of this nature will need to be reviewed by the HDC at one of their monthly meetings.

6. Can any work be approved by City staff?

Minor work items can be approved by staff as identified in the bulleted list below. Requirements apply to each of these; contact the PED Department for specific requirements.

- Replacing an existing asphalt shingle roof with a new asphalt shingle roof
- Replacement of gutters and downspouts that match existing
- Reconstruction of porches that match existing
- Replacement of fencing
- Window and storm door installation
- Removal or diseased or damaged trees and shrubbery
- Replacement of walkways and driveways that match existing
- Installation of glass blocks to replace basement windows
- Antenna and satellite dish installation

7. Are tax credits available for rehabilitation done on an historic home?

Federal historic tax credits are available for depreciating (income-producing) properties that undergo a substantial rehabilitation. State legislation was recently passed that will provide up to a 25% tax credit to the property owner for rehabilitation completed on a locally designated property. The State Historic Preservation Office is currently drafting regulations to enact the legislation. This process is expected to be completed sometime in 2022. State credits will not be available until this process is completed.