

PROCESS FOR DESIGNATING A PROPERTY AS A LAKEWOOD “HISTORIC PROPERTY”

If you own a home or a commercial property in Lakewood, or are a possible sponsor of a non-commercial property such as a church, and are interested in designating that property as a “Historic Property” under Lakewood’s preservation ordinance (Chapter 1134 of the codified ordinances of Lakewood, found on the City’s website under “A - Z Index”). This article will describe the process you can expect.

The benefits of designation as an “Historic Property” are described in a companion article. Districts can be designated as an “Historic Property District” but are not covered by this discussion.

The designation process involves two governmental bodies in Lakewood: the Lakewood Historic Heritage Advisory Board (“LHAB”) and the Lakewood Planning Commission (“Planning Commission”). LHAB serves in an advisory capacity to the City and the community on matters relating to historic preservation.

It all starts with a nomination form prescribed by LHAB and available from LHAB. The individual or organization proposing the designation will complete the form and submit it to LHAB or the Planning Commission. LHAB can assist with the preparation; it meets at City Hall monthly and welcomes attendees.

In most cases the property owner will submit the nomination, but the ordinance does permit a non-owner to make the nomination. By submitting the nomination, the owner consents to the designation if approved. If the nomination is submitted by a non-owner, the owner’s consent will be requested, but if not granted, the nomination can still be processed. It is a matter of record that that one of Lakewood’s Historic Properties was designated without the consent of the owner.

The nominated property must meet one or more criteria for designation, enumerated in the ordinance. The criteria are broad in scope, embodying a variety of noteworthy qualities relating to the property’s importance to the community. The property must also have a high degree of historic integrity and internal historic cohesiveness.

When completed, the nomination for will be considered by the Planning Commission in a two-step process. First, the Planning Commission will hold a hearing to determine the property’s eligibility under the criteria mentioned above.

If the Planning Commission determines the property is eligible under the ordinance, it will hold a second public meeting to consider approval of the application for designation. This second meeting will be open to the public, with proper notice given to all interested parties under

Lakewood's public meeting requirements. After hearing from all parties, considering the advice of LHAB and deliberating, the Planning Commission will vote to approve or not approve the application for designation. If approved, the designation becomes official and a matter of public record. If not approved, the nomination may be resubmitted with any additional pertinent information within ten days after the Planning Commission's denial .

The designation process is designed to be user-friendly. It is an important tool to recognize and preserve Lakewood's unique heritage.

John Pyke, April 2025