



# **City of Rome, Georgia Historic Preservation Certificate of Appropriateness Manual**

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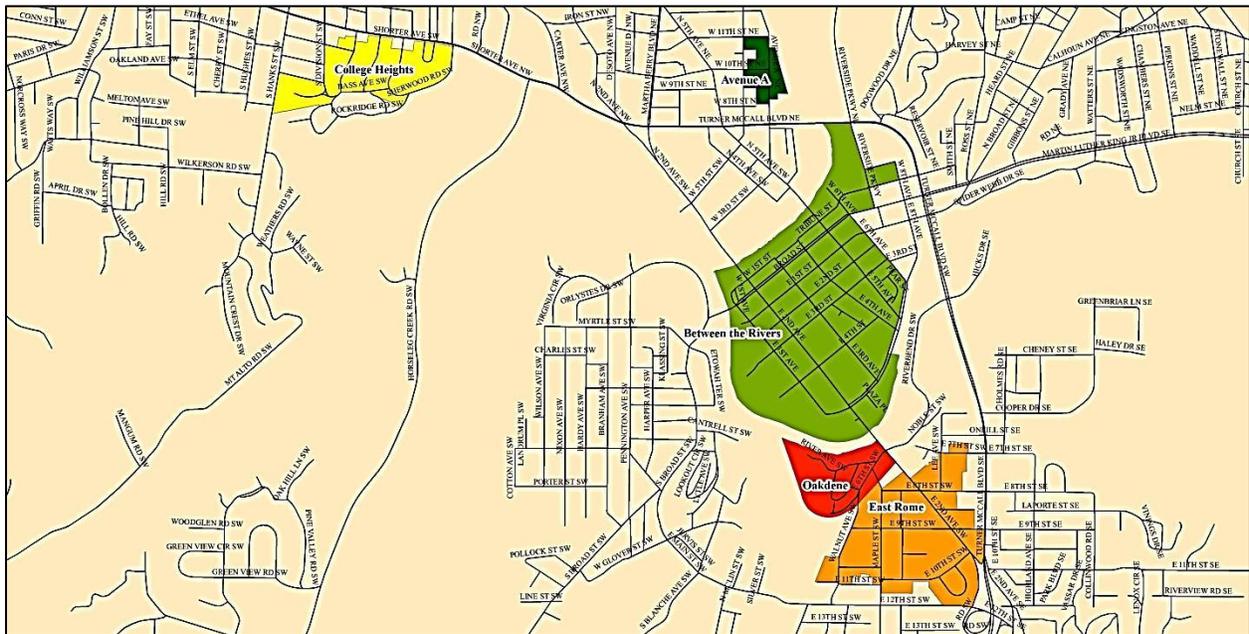
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**Rome-Floyd County Planning Department  
City of Rome, Georgia  
Updated February 2018**

## Getting Started

The Historic Preservation Commission preserves, protects, and promotes the City of Rome’s historic resources through preservation, public education, community partnerships, and heritage tourism. Its preservation responsibilities include issuing Certificates of Appropriateness for proposed changes to historic properties; making recommendations for historic designations, historic policy and programs; and assisting the City of Rome with Historic Grant Funding. For more information, contact the Rome-Floyd County Planning Department at 706-236-5025.

Are you beginning a project on a property that is a historic landmark or located in a historic district? The City of Rome strives to preserve areas and properties that are architecturally, culturally, or historically significant through historic designation. A historic property may be designated either individually, as a local landmark, or as part of a historic district. This is accomplished by placing the property or the district in which the property resides on the National Register. The City of Rome has five (5) Historic Districts where this is applicable: Between the Rivers, East Rome, Oakdene Place, College Heights, and Avenue A. These historic districts are depicted in the map below.



### How to work the GIS:

You can check to see if the property is located in a historic district by going to the City of Rome/Floyd County Geographic Information System (GIS) site at <https://gis01.rome.ga.us>. When you get to the site, type the property address into the search box in the upper left corner. If you get a drop-down option, just select the address listed under “Parcels by Address”. Next, move your mouse to the upper right corner where there are several icons. Choose the one that looks like a stack of papers. If you hold the mouse over it, an information box appears named “Layer List”. When you click on this icon, a list of layers will appear. Click the selection box beside the layer named “Historic Districts”. If your property is within one of these districts, the background will change color. If you do not notice a color change, zoom out so that you can clearly see the historic district outlines and colors. The colors correspond to the colors in the map above.

If a property is within one of the historic districts, the owner/applicant is required to obtain a “Certificate of Appropriateness” from the City’s Historic Preservation Commission before obtaining a building permit for work involving any change to the exterior of the property (excluding paint color). A copy of the appropriate design guidelines is available with this pack for the applicant to review. A copy can also be found online at <http://www.romefloyd.com/departments/historic-preservation-commission>.

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) members, appointed by the Rome City Commission are volunteer citizens; their goal is to steward growth and redevelopment while maintaining the historical legacy and charm that makes Rome, the largest Victorian-era downtown in the state, so special.

## **When do I need a Certificate of Appropriateness?**

Exterior work that is repairing or replacing the material with like or in-kind materials does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness as these are done through the Administrative Approval process. Minor changes or routine maintenance may be approved at any time by submitting an application for administrative review to the Historic Preservation Office as long as the proposed work constitutes in-kind replacement or minor repairs.

A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for **any exterior alteration, material change, construction, removal or demolition of all or part of a structure or site**, but does not apply to building interiors.

An applicant must obtain the approval of the Historic Preservation Planner and/or Historic Preservation Commission before beginning any work on a structure or site within any Historic District (this includes all new construction or renovation of existing structures). This approval, in the form of a Certificate of Appropriateness, verifies that the historic character of a property or district is maintained. There is a **\$45 application fee** for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Signs within the Historic Districts do require a Certificate of Appropriateness and may, if needed, follow a separate review and permitting process outside of the Historic Preservation Commission. In addition, the Historic Preservation Planner has the authority to approve *some* Certificates of Appropriateness administratively, without presenting them to the Historic Preservation Commission through the administrative approval process.

Building permits for any property within the Historic Districts are not issued until the applicant has obtained a Certificate of Appropriateness.

## **Contact information**

Rome-Floyd County Planning Department  
Brittany Griffin, Planning Assistant  
607 Broad Street  
Rome, Ga 30161  
P: 706-236-5025  
Hours: Monday – Friday; 8:00 am - 5:00

# City of Rome

## Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Review Process

### Application Conference

Owners contemplating exterior changes to buildings or structures designated as historic by the City of Rome should first consult with the Historic Preservation Planner in the Rome-Floyd County Planning Department. Please contact staff to schedule a meeting or discuss the plans for your historic property. **Applications and payments must be submitted in their entirety by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the meeting.** Staff will explain the design guidelines that will apply to the project and will be a resource for information about architectural styles and materials. Attached you will find a copy of the application that must be completed at the application conference. Please bring *all* materials/exhibits that you may find necessary for the Historic Preservation Planner and/or Historic Preservation Commission to review for your case; a checklist of required materials is also provided in this packet.

### Design guidelines for historic properties

Any exterior modifications to buildings and properties that are located within any historic district, or to a locally designated historic landmark, are required to conform to criteria included in the City of Rome Code of Ordinances governing these buildings and properties (Article V., Section 23-176-188) and with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings*. The City of Rome *Historic Rome Design Guidelines* explain these standards and also serve as a reference for property owners thinking about making modifications to their properties and for those who may be planning new construction or additions to properties located in any historic district or to a designated historic landmark. A summary of the principles of the design guidelines is included in this information packet, and the complete *Design Guidelines* are posted at <http://www.romefloyd.com/departments/historic-preservation-commission>.

In reviewing applications for Certificate of Appropriateness the Historic Preservation Commission and Department staff shall be governed by the *City of Rome Design Guidelines* and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

The *Design Guidelines* have been written primarily for use by the Rome Historic Preservation Commission in evaluating proposed material changes in appearance to historic properties in the City of Rome's locally designated Historic District. The guidelines are also intended for use by property owners in making decisions about proposed rehabilitation and new construction projects that are sensitive to the historic character of the local district. The guidelines should be viewed as guiding principles that, when followed, will result in sound historic preservation practices and help maintain the unique "sense of place" enjoyed by residents of Rome.

## Principles of the design guidelines

The *Design Guidelines* incorporate several guiding principles; these pertain to buildings of all occupancy and construction types, sizes, and materials, permanent and temporary construction on the exterior of existing buildings within the historic districts or as individual historic landmarks, as well as new construction. The *Design Guidelines* are molded after and honor the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* which is provided through the U.S Department of Interior and National Park Service.

1. Original or historically significant materials and/or features of a structure or site shall be maintained and repaired rather than replaced whenever possible.
2. If replacement of existing materials or features is necessary, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.
3. Replacement of missing features should be based on historical, documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.
4. Minimal alteration of the building, structure, site or environment should be made.
5. Each property should be recognized as a product of its own time. Alterations that seek to create a false sense of historical development should be discouraged.
6. Changes to a building or site that have taken place over time are evidence of its history and development. Those changes that have acquired significance in their own right should be recognized and preserved.
7. Where historic architectural or site features are determined by the Commission to contribute to the historic character of the property or the district, proposed alterations or additions affecting such features should be reviewed more stringently.
8. New additions, exterior alterations, or new construction should not destroy historic materials or general features that characterize the property. The new work may be differentiated from the old and should be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features of the property and the surrounding neighborhood, to protect the historic integrity of the property and the site.
9. Whenever possible, new additions or alterations to structures should be done in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure and the site would be unimpaired.

## Complete a Certificate of Appropriateness application

An application is required for all exterior projects, whether or not a building permit is also necessary. Applications **must** be accompanied by documentation (such as photographs, drawings, written specifications, color samples and other information) sufficient to illustrate the proposal and its impact on the property. This will assist the applicant, the staff, and the HPC in reaching a successful conclusion to the review, and provides a detailed record of the project for future reference.

Documentation **must** be complete in order for staff to begin a review of an application. If you have any questions about what is needed to complete your application, please contact the Historic Preservation Planner right away.

Applications must be submitted no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the month prior an HPC meeting. Please refer to the HPC's published meeting schedule below.

## Who may apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness?

A Certificate of Appropriateness is an entitlement that runs with the property; therefore, the property owner or a party designated as the owner's agent may apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness. [The owner's signature **must** be on the application at the time of submission.]

## Application submittal

The applicant should schedule a meeting with the Historic Preservation Officer to review the COA application and accompanying documentation by the submittal deadline. Applications **must** be completed in their entirety along with the checklist before they can be submitted to the HPC for consideration.

The COA application and accompanying documentation must be submitted. The applicant should discuss with staff how samples of proposed materials will be provided to the HPC prior to or at the hearing.

Please be aware that additional supplemental information and a more extensive process is required for applications to relocate or demolish a property, beyond the basic information required for alterations.

When the Historic Preservation Planner determines that the application is complete, the project will be scheduled for a hearing at the Historic Preservation Commission. All Certificates of Appropriateness require public notification prior to the scheduled hearing. Applications must have a legal notice ran in the local newspaper at least 15-days prior to the meeting and poster erected on the project site. Notice of the meeting must also be given via mail to the owner of the property and all adjacent property owners.

## Staff review and recommendation

The COA application will be reviewed by staff, which will make a recommendation to the Historic Preservation Commission. Staff will distribute copies of the application and material samples, as submitted by the applicant, to the HPC for review.

## HPC hearing

The applicant or a representative is encouraged to be present at the public hearing. At the hearing, the applicant and any other interested parties are invited to speak about the proposed project. At the end of the discussion, the HPC will vote on the application; they may vote to approve the application as submitted, to approve with conditions, or to deny the application. The applicant will receive a letter in the mail detailing the outcome of the case and any conditions associated with the HPC's decision.

For applications to demolish or remove properties that are located within historic districts but are not also designated individually as historic landmarks, the HPC can opt to postpone demolition for a period of up to 120 days in order to seek alternatives to demolition or removal. The HPC has the authority to deny the demolition of individually designated historic landmarks, properties, or buildings.

If an application is denied, the applicant may appeal the denial to the Superior Court.

## **Obtain permits (as necessary)**

When a favorable decision is issued, applicants may proceed with the project, pending issuance of any necessary permits. It is the *applicant's responsibility* to find out whether additional permits are needed and to obtain them. If a COA application is approved, all the conditions of the approval must be met by the applicant throughout the project. The applicant must contact staff upon completion of the project.

## **What applicant should know about the Public Hearing?**

The Historic Preservation Commission requests that applicants familiarize themselves with the procedure for public hearings.

Hearings -- A public hearing may be held on any matter before the Commission at either a Regular or a Special Meeting. The procedure for such public hearings shall be as follows:

1. A presentation of the proposal and description of the project by the applicant.
2. A description of the project by the Department staff along with the Department's recommendation.
3. Public testimony from proponents of the proposal. An individual, organization, or group may speak for a period not to exceed 10 minutes in total for all combined public testimony.
4. Public testimony from opponents of the proposal. An individual, organization, or group may speak for a period not to exceed 10 minutes in total for all combined public testimony.
5. The Chair will close the public portion of the meeting and the commission will discuss the application amongst themselves. The Historic Preservation Commission may question the applicant about the project during this time.
6. A motion will be made and a vote by the Historic Preservation Commission on the matter before it.
7. The Chair with guidance from the City Attorney, Assistant City Manager, and Planning Staff may exercise his or her discretion on procedures for the conduct of public hearings.



## Historic Preservation Commission 2018 Application and Meeting Schedule

<b>Application Deadline</b> (20 <sup>th</sup> of prior month)	<b>HPC Meeting</b> (3rd Wednesday unless otherwise noted)
December 20, 2018	January 17, 2018
January 20, 2018	February 21, 2018
February 20, 2018	March 21, 2018
March 20, 2018	April 18, 2018
April 20, 2018	May 16, 2018
May 20, 2018	June 20, 2018
June 20, 2018	July 18, 2018
July 20, 2018	August 15, 2018
August 20, 2018	September 19, 2018
September 20, 2018	October 17, 2018
October 20, 2018	November 21, 2018
November 20, 2018	December 19, 2018

Historic Preservation Commission meetings are held starting at 2:30 p.m. at the Carnegie Building, 607 Broad Street, in Carnegie Training room.

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# City of Rome, Georgia Historic Preservation Certificate of Appropriateness Manual

My signature below indicates that I have received a copy of the City of Rome's *Historic Preservation Certificate of Appropriateness Manual*.

I understand that this manual contains information regarding the Rome Historic Preservation Commission's rules, regulations and processes pertaining to the Certificate of Appropriateness Application and Public Hearing which affect me as the applicant.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the materials presented to me in this Handbook and on the *Certificate of Appropriateness Application*.

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Print Name

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Applicant Signature

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Date