CITY OF MANASSAS
HISTORIC PROPERTY OWNER'S GUIDE

WHAT ARE **HISTORIC DISTRICTS?**

A historic district is a preservation tool used to promote and preserve areas and structures of historic and cultural significance. Historic districts can also be a tool for promoting tourism, enhancing community character, generating new investment, and increasing local tax revenue. Historic districts and designations are intended to preserve the character of an area, rather than freeze it in time. Historic districts may be designated at the national, state, and local level. National and state designations are primarily honorary, while local historic districts are regulatory.

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Manassas regulates building design in three local historic districts. The City of Manassas' three local historic districts – Manassas Local Historic District, Liberia Mansion Historic District, and Mayfield Fort Historic District – are used to protect and preserve these areas. Redevelopment, rehabilitation, and new construction in these districts must follow the Zoning Ordinance and the Historic District Design Guidelines; both documents are available on the City of Manassas website.

MANASSAS LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

LIBERIA MANSION HISTORIC DISTRICT

MAYFIELD FORT HISTORIC DISTRICT

WHAT ARE **STRUCTURE DESIGNATIONS?**

Historic designations recognize a difference in structures with varying degrees of historical and architectural significance or integrity. To recognize the varying levels of significance, all structures within the Manassas Local Historic Districts are designated as Landmark, Contributing, or Non-contributing. Structure designations are determined using historic surveys, and are part of the zoning ordinance.

LANDMARK

Meet at least one of the criteria in the Zoning Ordinance, Section 130-401; exemplify architectural, political, or cultural significance; are associated with persons of historical significance; exemplify local architectural design or craftsmanship; are a work of a nationally recognized architect or attributed to a locally prominent builder; or foster civic pride.

The greatest care must be given to preserving, rehabilitating, and/or designing additions to these buildings.

CONTRIBUTING

Built within the district's period of significance that represent the period in which they were built by material, design, or other physical features; or are places of significance that preserve, protect, or enhance the character of the historic overlay district in which they are located.

Rehabilitations and additions should be sensitive and appropriate to the historic building and district.

NON-CONTRIBUTING

Found within a historic district and have *not* been identified and listed as historic structures. These structures typically were built after the period of significance or have been altered to such a degree that they are no longer representative of the period in which they were built.

Alterations to these buildings should be done with district compatibility in mind. Additionally, new construction and infill development should be sensitive to its surroundings.

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OWNING PROPERTY **IN A HISTORIC DISTRICT**

IS MY STRUCTURE IN A HISTORIC DISTRICT?

Visit the City of Manassas website to access zoning maps of the historic districts. Find your property and determine if it lies within the Local Manassas Historic District, the Liberia Mansion Historic District, or the Mayfield Fort Historic District.

WHAT IS MY STRUCTURE'S DESIGNATION?

Visit the City of Manassas website to access historic structure inventories. Find your address to determine your structure's designation.

HOW DO I MAINTAIN MY PROPERTY?

Good maintenance practices can extend the life of most features of a historic building. If a historic building is maintained, it should not require extensive rehabilitation except for necessary modernization of mechanical systems and periodic replacement of items that wear out. Regular maintenance is one of the best preservation tools available to keep historic buildings from deteriorating into disrepair and keep the integrity of the structure. The best way to care for a historic property is to provide regular maintenance. Maintenance should be focused on maintaining historic building features, not replacing them.

WHAT TYPE OF REVIEW DOES MY PROJECT NEED?

Most exterior alterations and projects require review by the Architectural Review Board (ARB). The ARB is a City Council appointed board that carries out the historic design guidelines, and zoning ordinance section 130-401. Contact city staff to understand the level of review required for your project. Example projects that may require ARB review are window, siding, and roof replacements, additions, changes in design elements, new construction buildings, and commercial signs. Once a project is approved, a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is issued by the ARB.

Minor modifications do not require ARB review and are delegated to administrative review by City staff pursuant to the Zoning Ordinance, Section 130-401; example projects include routine maintenance, in-kind replacement of materials, and residential fences and accessory structures under 150 sq. ft.

WHAT IS A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS?

A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is issued by the ARB and indicates the project meets the design guidelines and zoning ordinance. A COA provides approval for the project/work to be completed, as approved by the ARB. Obtaining a COA is the first step in the development review process, and additional permits, such as site plans and building permits may be required.

HISTORIC STRUCTURE INVENTORY SURVEYS

These surveys provide a comprehensive inventory of all historic structures – Landmark, Contributing, and Non-contributing – within the City of Manassas. This tool helps property owners learn their structure's designation.

Find these surveys on the City of Manassas HOD website.

MAINTENANCE CHECKLISTS

These checklists are designed to help property owners identify signs of typical deterioration and other damages to help find what areas of their property may need maintenance.

Find these checklists in the appendix of the Guidelines and on the City of Manassas HOD website.

HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

These guidelines provide information to understand why property is historic and how it contributes to the overall character of Manassas' historic district(s). These guidelines also identify the appropriate options for rehabilitation or additions to existing structures; promote sensitive infill and new construction; and outline the required level of review for your project.

Find the Guidelines on the City of Manassas HOD website.