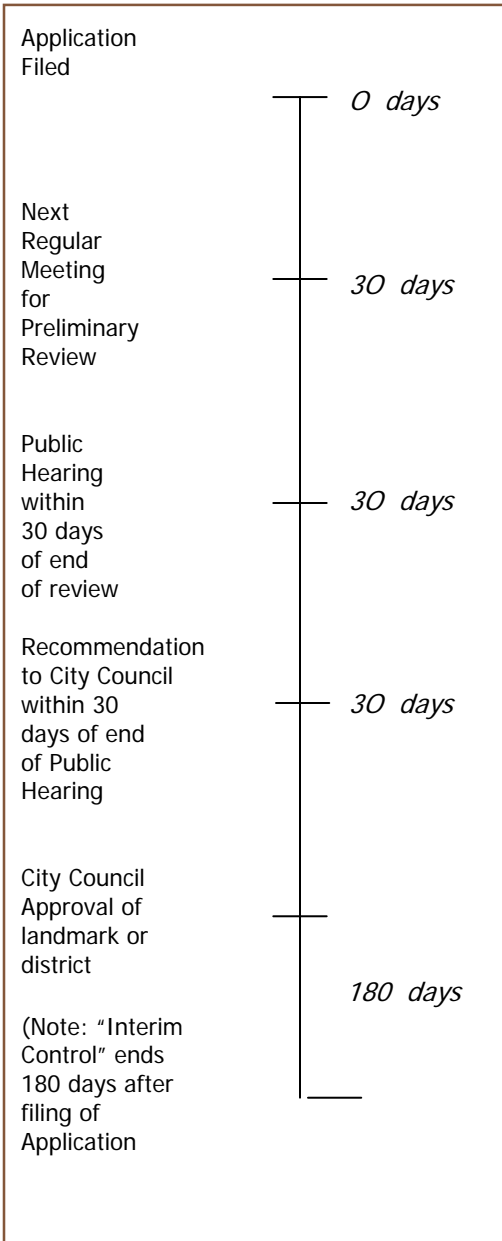


*Local Historic  
Preservation District*



*Where Can I Get More Information?*

The Historic Preservation Commission meetings are open to the public and are held at Noon on the second Thursday of every month at City Hall, 301 West Madison Street, Ottawa, IL.

For more information, visit our website at:

[www.cityofottawa.org](http://www.cityofottawa.org)  
or contact us via e-mail:  
[historicpreservation@cityofottawa.org](mailto:historicpreservation@cityofottawa.org)  
or at 815-433-0161, ext. 10 or 40.



City of Ottawa  
Historic Preservation Commission  
301 W. Madison Street  
Ottawa, IL 61350  
[www.cityofottawa.org](http://www.cityofottawa.org)

*Recognition to the  
Joliet Historic Preservation Commission for their  
assistance in the development of this brochure.  
9/2008*



*What is a  
Local  
Historic District?*



## *How is a District Established?*

The Ottawa Historic Preservation Commission, any individual or group may nominate an area within the City of Ottawa for Historic District Designation. The nomination must include written documentation identifying the area and illustrating its historic significance. The nomination is filed with the Commission. A public hearing is held. The Commission then makes its recommendation to the Ottawa City Council. The City Council must approve the designation before it can be recognized as an historic district. This process must then be complete within 180 days.



## *What Types of Properties Qualify to be a Historic District?*

A district is established because a group of buildings within distinctive boundaries has certain distinguishing characteristics:

- ∞ Significant value as part of the cultural heritage of the nation, state, or our local community.
- ∞ Similarity of architectural design, dates of construction, or land use.
- ∞ Representation of a significant type of style or architecture.
- ∞ Notable work of a master builder, designer, or architect.
- ∞ Association with important persons or events of national, state or local history.

## *How is a District Maintained?*

The residents of the local historic district and the District Committee of the Ottawa Historic Preservation Commission work together to formulate a set of design guidelines. The adopted guidelines are used by the Commission to determine whether proposed property changes, demolition or new construction is appropriate to and compatible with the historic nature of the district. These types of permanent changes require the concurrence of the Commission by the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.



## *What Restrictions Apply in an Historic District?*

Designation of a local district does NOT force residents to bring their houses or buildings up to an architectural standard. The Commission review considers on a case-by-case basis whether proposed changes to properties:

- ∞ Are compatible with and appropriate to the historic structure.
- ∞ Will highlight or enhance historic exterior features, and
- ∞ Harmonize with neighboring properties.

There are no restrictions on routine maintenance of structures.

## *Why Is a Local Historic District Important?*

Designation on the National Register of Historic Places recognizes an area's historic and cultural importance. The local district goes beyond mere recognition by assuring that an area maintains its integrity by requiring sensitive and knowledgeable review of major exterior property alterations or demolition.

It is important to enhance and protect areas of Ottawa or neighborhoods which are valued as historic, aesthetic, cultural, educational, and economic assets. A Local Historic District is a way to foster community involvement in Ottawa, and provides a heritage for our families.

## *What Are the Benefits in Becoming a Local District?*

Buildings in an Historic District are afforded protection against inappropriate alterations or demolition of historic structures through special ordinance and building permit processes. This can encourage community reinvestment in traditional neighborhoods. Residents in the district can receive assistance with grants and technical information related to preservation, rehabilitation and restoration. An "Ottawa Historic District" plaque can be displayed on the structures in the district.

## *Ottawa's Historic District*

Currently, Ottawa has one historic district. The Washington Park Historic District, covering 12.8 acres, was entered into the National Register on April 11, 1973. Its location is designated as "bounded by Jackson, La Salle, Lafayette and Columbus Streets." The Commission believes there are more "historic districts" in Ottawa and seeks to gain recognition for them.