



Character Preservation Overlay



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The City of Raleigh implements overlay districts in targeted areas to supplement the base zoning districts. Overlay districts are meant to achieve a specific purpose, such as preservation of existing neighborhood built characteristics, protecting public safety and welfare, or conserving natural areas.

Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District (NCOD)

An NCOD is a zoning overlay district intended to preserve and enhance the general quality and appearance of established neighborhoods by regulating built environmental characteristics such as lot size and frontage, building setback, and building height. This district reduces conflicts between new construction and existing development, and encourages compatible infill development. Generally speaking, NCOD's apply more restrictive standards than base zoning districts.

Historic Overlay District (HOD)

A Historic Overlay District is a zoning overlay district more specifically crafted for preservation of neighborhoods with identified historic assets. This is accomplished through a design review process that prioritizes preservation of historic building features and overall external appearance. Regulations associated with an HOD are largely concerned with changes to the external portion of the building and property such as building materials, landscaping, and architectural features.

There are two types of HOD:

- General HOD (HOD-G) regulates 100 percent of all exterior changes.
- Streetside HOD (HOD-S) only regulates what can be seen from the street (as defined in the Unified Development Ordinance [UDO] and explained in the "What is typically regulated?" section of this brochure).



What is the process for creating and implementing the Overlay District?

NCOD

- Citizens submit petition to City Council requesting analysis of neighborhood built environmental characteristics and regulations.
- City Council directs staff to complete the built environmental characteristics and regulations analysis.
- Staff from the City Planning Department completes the analysis and holds a neighborhood meeting for all affected property owners.
- Staff presents findings to City Council. Council decides whether to authorize a text change to incorporate the neighborhood characteristics and regulations into the UDO.
- The Text Change public process occurs, which results in either an approval or denial. The process requires review by both the Planning Commission and City Council, including a public hearing.
- If the text change is approved, it is adopted into the UDO, a rezoning petition may then be submitted to apply the NCOD to a specific area. Rezoning petitions must be signed by a majority of the property owners within the area to be rezoned, and must be received within four years of the adoption of the NCOD into the UDO.



HOD

- Either the neighborhood or the city funds an investigation resulting in a report describing the significance of the buildings, structures, and/or sites of the proposed HOD, as well as the boundaries of the area.
- The Raleigh Historic Development Commission (RHDC) receives the report and determines whether the neighborhood has sufficient “special significance and integrity” to warrant overlay protection.
- RHDC’s report is presented to City Council, which then sends the report to the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources (NCDRC) for review.
- A rezoning petition may be submitted to apply for an HOD in a specific area. The petition must include the investigation report and any comments received from NCDRC.



What is typically regulated?

NCOD

- Lot size
- Setbacks
- Street frontage
- Parking (total square footage and location)
- Building height

HOD-G/HOD-S*

- Building design
- Setbacks
- Materials
- Architectural features
- Parking (including configuration)
- Building height
- Landscaping/fences

* The HOD-S regulations are the same as HOD-G, except regulations only apply to the first 50 percent of a primary building, some additions, the front yard, and the first 25 percent of a vacant lot (adjacent to the street right-of-way), and when new construction is proposed. Corner lots are subject to more review because they are adjacent to two rights-of-way and measurements will be taken from both streets.



How does this affect the permitting process?

NCOD

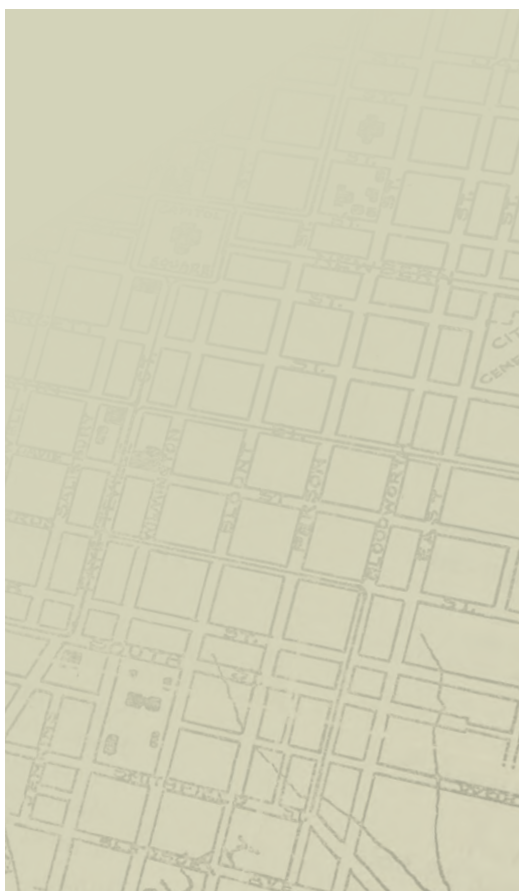
Regulations are enforced with other zoning regulations during the standard permitting process.

HOD-G/HOD-S

Prior to standard approval processes, applicants must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for changes to the exterior of the building and property. Depending on the work proposed, this may either be a Minor Work COA, which is reviewed by staff, or a Major Work COA, which is reviewed and decided by a City Council appointed citizen commission. Applications are assessed according to the Design Guidelines for Raleigh Historic Districts, a document providing guidance for reviewing proposed changes in Historic Overlay Districts and designated landmarks. The guidelines are context based, and decisions may vary from district-to-district based on each neighborhood's special character.



Additional information is available on the city's website, www.raleighnc.gov. Search the phrase "Historic Districts" to view web pages related to this subject.



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