

Why designate?

La Porte has a lot of incredible historic architecture. We want to celebrate this heritage, safeguard these important places for generations to come, and invest in our community.

There is extensive data that shows historic preservation actually helps raise property values, adds to long-term stability of neighborhoods, encourages higher-level occupancy, and encourages growth through heritage tourism.



What is the general philosophy for the guidelines?

Projects should retain and repair the parts of their building that give it its look and architectural design rather than replace them wholesale. Original materials are important, conveying the age of the building and its connection to the past. Oftentimes, these original materials are of actually of better quality than modern replacements! If a part of a building cannot be repaired, then it should be replaced with a matching material of the same type and design, if possible. The Historic Guidelines have pre-approved material lists to help guide proposals.

FAQs

What kind of changes require a COA?

For big alterations, like additions or new construction, or anything that significantly changes the exterior. This includes siding, windows, porches, or paint colors.

Due to new streamlining, many projects can be approved quickly by staff and do not necessarily require a full commission meeting.

Would I need a COA for interior changes?

No, local designation only covers the exterior of the building (unless there is a special designation made).

What are the Historic Design Guidelines?

These provide the historic preservation standards for everything from chimneys to doors, roofs to windows. Recommendations for approaches, materials, and whether projects can be administratively approvable are explained. These are linked on our website.

How do I apply to be locally designed?

Contact us at hpc@cityoflaportein.gov for an application, or download it on the HPC page on the city website. We can help you with any part of the application.

Historic Preservation Commission of La Porte



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Historic Preservation Commission
of La Porte (HPC)

Guide to Local Designation



What is local designation?

Local designation means that a structure or group of structures is formally recognized as being architecturally or historically significant. Designation can include residential homes, commercial properties, places of worship, privately or publicly owned.

To protect against irreversible change and loss, changes to the exterior of a locally designated property must be reviewed before they are made. This preserves the architectural integrity for future generations. Our historic preservation guidelines have been developed from best practices promoted by the National Park Service, the State Historic Preservation Ordinance, and historic districts commissions nationwide.

What is the process of review like?

Once a building or area is designated as part of a local historic district, a property owner will need to submit a **Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)** proposal prior to making changes to the exterior of the property. A COA proposal is a simple form that helps you outline your project so that we have enough information to complete a review. Overall, this is a straightforward process that can be completed online (link is on our website!). There are also a wide range of projects that can be approved administratively by staff.

Benefits of being locally designated

Design and Maintenance Assistance

City staff and Indiana Landmarks liaisons are credentialed and experienced in historic preservation and architectural history, and will provide courtesy assistance to the owners of historic properties with their maintenance and design decisions. Staff can meet you at your property to talk over design concepts or potential materials, answer questions, at no cost

Certificate of Appropriateness Program (COA) Local Program

Streamlines design review for certain rehabilitation or restoration projects

Compatibility input and historic research are also available for qualifying historic properties at no cost. This benefit applies to a property that is designated individually or is located within a local historic district.

Free education and resources

Free access to trade workshops, educational events, and social events for all designated homeowners

Assistance with grant writing

For example, the Indiana Residential Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit is available for structures on the National or State Register, or those considered "contributing" in the National Register listed district. For qualifying homes, this tax credit is equal to 20 percent of the qualified expenditures which exceed \$10,000.



La Porte has a historic district on the National Register. **Over 200 homes** could potentially qualify for this tax credit!

The HPC has programs, resources, and trained staff to help homeowners with their maintenance and design decisions. We are here to help!

These resources includes a newly updated set of Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, available online:

The guidelines are available through this QR code and on our page on the city website. Feel free to email for the link!

