



HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

1. Why should I list my property on the Historically Significant Structures Property List?

The Historic Overlay District is intended to promote historic preservation efforts and protect Hinsdale's built heritage – the buildings that represent the Village's history, architecture, and sense of place. The Historically Significant Structures Property List includes properties that are officially identified as architecturally, historically, or culturally significant to the Village of Hinsdale. Placing your house on this List may help preserve your home or building for future generations and helps officially recognize historic structures that are important to Hinsdale's history. The owner of a building on the Historically Significant Structures Property List will enjoy the prestige and honor that the property is recognized as an important element of the Village's heritage.

In addition to bolstering Hinsdale's preservation efforts, you may be eligible to receive various preservation incentives if you pursue exterior improvements or a building addition, including:

- Access to flexible alternative zoning regulations that are not afforded to new construction, including the waiving of floor area ratio (FAR) and building height, reduced setbacks, and increased lot coverage
- Permit and application fee waivers
- Expedited processing of applications
- A property tax rebate for the Village portion of a tax bill
- Matching grant funds

Additionally, if you choose to sell your property in the future, you have the ability to market the eligibility of these historic preservation incentives to future homebuyers.

2. Does my property need to be located in a Historic District to be included on the Historically Significant Structures Property List?

No, properties do not need to be located in a Historic District. Properties in the R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, B-1, B-2, O-1, O-2, IB, HS, and OS Open Space District are included in the Historic Overlay District and may be eligible to be listed on the Historically Significant Structures Property List.

3. How do I know if my house is historic?

Property owners should contact the Village Planner, Bethany Salmon, at 630-789-7035 or bsalmon@villageofhinsdale.org if they are interesting in learning about the historic resources on file with the Village. Staff can research if your property was included in one of the past historic surveys or if the Village has archived building permits files that can be used to determine the history of a building. The Hinsdale Historical Society may also have historical information on properties.



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4. How do I list my property on the Historically Significant Structures Property List? Is there an application fee?

After you contact Village staff, your property will be added to a preliminary list and a public hearing will be held at a future Historic Preservation Commission meeting to evaluate a group of properties. Notice will be provided in the local newspaper and to the owners of any property considered to be included on the List. The Village Board will have final authority over the approval of the List.

Attendance is not required at these meetings and inclusion of your property on the List will be coordinated by Village staff. A Notice for a Historically Significant Property will be recorded against the title of all properties approved for inclusion on the List to help make future property owners aware of the availability of preservation incentives offered by the Village.

There is no cost to a property owner to add a property to the List. Property owners should contact Village Planner, Bethany Salmon, at 630-789-7035 or bsalmon@villageofhinsdale.org if they are interesting in adding their property on the Historically Significant Structures Property List.

5. How is a property removed from the Historically Significant Structures Property List?

Adding or removing properties to the List in the future may be done at any time. This process entails submittal of an application by the property owner or the Village, completion of notification requirements, a review at a public hearing by the Historic Preservation Commission, and final consideration by the Village Board. A property shall automatically be removed from the List without public hearing if the building is demolished.

6. What will be recorded against the title for each property on the Historically Significant Structures Property List?

A Notice for a Historically Significant Property will be recorded against the title to each property approved for inclusion on the official Historically Significant Property List. This is intended to help make future property owners aware of the availability of preservation incentives offered by the Village. Applying for and utilizing any preservation incentive is completely voluntary.

7. If my house is included on the Historically Significant Structures Property List, am I obligated to make improvements to my house or apply for any preservation incentives provided by the Village? Will it prevent me from demolishing my house?

The program is completely voluntary and property owners are not required to take advantage of any of the incentives offered by the Village. Listing your house on the Historically Significant Structures Property List does not prevent demolition or changes to your house. A homeowner may choose to demolish their home and make changes to their building without the use of any of the preservation incentives. However, even if you do not have a future project in mind, formally adding a property to the List early on makes it easier to take advantage of preservation incentives if you or a future property owner intends to pursue a project later on.

8. What is the review process if I want to apply for a preservation incentive?

Property owners seeking to take advantage of a preservation incentive must apply for a Preservation Incentive Certificate. Applications requesting a fee waiver and/or the use of alternative zoning regulations are reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. Applications requesting financial assistance via grant funding or a property tax rebate are reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission and the Village Board. A building permit would then be obtained following approval by the Historic Preservation Commission or Village Board.

9. Can preservation incentives be used to construct a modern building addition onto a historic home?

Building additions with modern designs will be considered and should be designed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Standards for Rehabilitation, which are available for review on the National Park Service's [website](#). The National Park Service has also created several Preservation Briefs that provide guidance on historic building additions at the link [here](#).

The preservation incentives offered by the Village are not intended to force property owners to recreate the original appearance of a building or make it like a museum. In general, projects should be compatible with the historic character of the building and additions should be designed to respect the architectural integrity of the publicly visible elevations of a historic building. All building improvements will be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission to ensure that the work is done in an appropriate manner that is sympathetic to the structure's historic character and in conformance with good preservation practices.

10. What types are projects are eligible if I apply for a preservation incentive offered by the Village?

Construction costs for eligible exterior improvements as well as costs for architectural, engineering, design, or historic preservation services, such as historic surveys, historic assessment reports, feasibility studies, and National Register nominations, are eligible for funding subject to approval by the Historic Preservation Commission and Village Board. The following are not eligible:

- Painting
- Landscaping
- Fences
- Driveways, sidewalks, and other paved areas
- Reversible appurtenances, including air conditioning units, gutters, downspouts, antennas, satellite dishes and mail boxes
- Routine maintenance and cleaning
- New detached garages or changes to existing detached garages, unless the detached garage is considered a historically significant structure
- Any accessory building or structure other than a garage (e.g., shed, rear deck, patio, trellis, etc.), unless the accessory building or structure is considered a historically significant structure.
- Interior improvements or work.



11. If my project is approved for a preservation incentive, what other program requirements should I be aware of?

Property owners will sign a Preservation Incentive Agreement, which outlines the use and distribution of incentives and funds prior to commencing any work. Construction work must be completed within 1 year after the date of approval, unless additional time is approved. Applicants are responsible for maintaining approved exterior improvements for a period of 5 years following the completion of work unless otherwise approved by the Historic Preservation Commission or Village Board. The Village reserves the right to terminate any agreements for failure to comply with program requirements and the applicant may be liable for reimbursing all incentive funds provided back to the Village.

12. How is local landmark designation different than including my house on the Historically Significant Structures Property List?

Homeowners of a local landmark are required to obtain approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the Historic Preservation Commission prior to completing exterior alterations, demolition, or other changes to the architectural appearance of a structure. Landmark structures may be eligible for preservation programs offered by outside agencies, such as the Property Tax Assessment Freeze for Historic Residences administered by the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office.

Owners of properties on the Village's Historically Significant Structures Property List are not required to obtain additional approvals for exterior alterations, demolition, or other changes to the architectural appearance of a structure from the Village, Historic Preservation Commission, or Village Board, unless the project is tied to an application for a Village preservation incentive. Applying for a preservation incentive is completely voluntary and does not prohibit demolition.

13. Where can I find qualified consultants or contractors that have experience with historic preservation projects?

Landmarks Illinois maintains an Illinois Restoration Resource Directory that provides a list of professionals offering a range of preservation services on their website at the link [here](#).

14. What other incentives may be available to me?

Landmarks and contributing properties in the Robbins Park Historic District and Downtown Historic District may be eligible for additional financial incentives provided by the State of Illinois. The Illinois State Historic Preservation Office offers a Property Tax Assessment Freeze for Historic Residences. The Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program freezes the assessed value of a historic, owner-occupied, principal residence for 8 years when the owner undertakes a substantial, approved rehabilitation. The assessed value is brought back to market level over a period of 4 years. Applicants must spend at least 25% of the Fair Market Value determined by the County Assessor's Office on eligible costs for rehabilitation for the year the project began. The building must be owner-occupied and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, individually or contributing to a National Register District or local historic district, or be a local landmark. For more information on this program, please visit the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office's website at the link [here](#).