

CHAPTER 24

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

24.01 Purpose and Intent
24.02 Definitions

24.03 Structure of the Commission
24.04 Powers of the Commission

24.01 PURPOSE AND INTENT. The purposes of this chapter are to:

1. Promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the recognition, enhancement and perpetuation of sites and districts of historical and cultural significance;
2. Safeguard the City's historic, aesthetic and cultural heritage by preserving sites and districts of historic and cultural significance;
3. Stabilize and improve property values;
4. Foster pride in the legacy of beauty and achievements of the past;
5. Protect and enhance the City's attractions to tourists and visitors and the support and stimulus to business thereby provided;
6. Strengthen the economy of the City;
7. Promote the use of sites and districts of historic and cultural significance as places for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the people of the City.

24.02 DEFINITIONS. For use in this chapter, the following terms are defined:

1. "Commission" means the Polk City Historic Preservation Commission, as established by this chapter.
2. "Historic district" means an area which contains a significant portion of buildings, structures or other improvements which, considered as a whole, possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and which area as a whole:
 - A. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
 - B. Is associated with events that have made significant contributions to the broad patterns of our local, state or national history; or
 - C. Possesses a coherent and distinctive visual character or integrity based upon similarity of scale, design, color, setting, workmanship, materials or combinations thereof which is deemed to add significantly to the value and attractiveness of properties within such area; or
 - D. Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
 - E. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

3. “Historic site” means a structure or building which:
 - A. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
 - B. Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
 - C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
 - D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

24.03 STRUCTURE OF COMMISSION.

1. The Commission consists of five (5) members who are residents of the City.
2. Members of the Commission shall be appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the Council. Members shall demonstrate a positive interest in historic preservation, possessing interest or expertise in architecture, architectural history, historic preservation, city planning, building rehabilitation, conservation in general or real estate.
3. The Commission members are appointed for staggered terms of three (3) years. Members may serve for more than one term. Each member shall serve until the appointment of a successor.
4. Vacancies occurring in the Commission, other than expiration of term of office, shall be only for the unexpired portion of the term of the member replaced.
5. Members shall serve without compensation.
6. A simple majority of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
7. The Commission shall elect a Chairperson who shall preside over all Commission meetings and elect a Secretary who shall be responsible for maintaining written records of the Commission’s proceedings.
8. The Commission shall meet at least three (3) times a year.

24.04 POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.

1. The Commission may conduct studies for the identification and designation of historic districts and sites meeting the definitions established by this chapter. The Commission may proceed at its own initiative or upon a petition from any person, group or association. The Commission shall maintain records of all studies and inventories for public use.
2. The Commission may make a recommendation to the State Bureau of Historic Preservation for the listing of an historic district or site in the National Register of Historic Places and may conduct a public hearing thereon.
3. The Commission may investigate and recommend to the Council the adoption of ordinances designating historic sites and historic districts if they qualify as defined herein.

4. The Commission may appoint three (3) members to a local design review committee, which committee shall have the power to review applications for the Main Street Linked Investments for Tomorrow program. Projects receiving preliminary design review approval from this committee will be submitted to the State Main Street LIFT Design Review Board.
5. In addition to those duties and powers specified above, the Commission may, with Council approval,
 - A. Accept unconditional gifts and donations of real and personal property, including money, for the purpose of historic preservation;
 - B. Acquire, by purchase, bequest or donation, fee and lesser interests in historic properties, including properties adjacent to or associated with historic properties;
 - C. Preserve, restore, maintain and operate historic properties under the ownership or control of the Commission;
 - D. Lease, sell and otherwise transfer or dispose of historic properties subject to rights of public access and other covenants and in a manner that will preserve the property;
 - E. Contract with State or Federal government or other organizations;
 - F. Cooperate with Federal, State and local governments in the pursuance of the objectives of historic preservation;
 - G. Provide information for the purpose of historic preservation to the Council; and
 - H. Promote and conduct an educational and interpretive program on historic properties within its jurisdiction.