



## Certificates of Appropriateness

Note: Additional applications (Design Review, Site Plan Review, Use Permit, etc.) may be required, depending on the specific project. Please see Planning Division.



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## **What is a Certificate of Appropriateness?**

A Certificate of Appropriateness is a permit to allow the construction, demolition, or alteration of any property that is designated as a City of Stockton Landmark or is located in a designated Historic Preservation District. A Certificate helps ensure the preservation of the historic character and architectural integrity of these buildings and sites.

## **When is a Certificate Required?**

A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for any new construction, exterior alterations, expansions, demolitions, relocations, or removals of any artifact, natural feature, site, or structure within a Historic Preservation District or to any designated Historic Landmark, as well as any removal, alteration, expansion, or addition of lights, signs, landscaping, street trees, or other frontage improvements in a Historic Preservation District or property of a Landmark. Stockton currently has two Historic Preservation Districts, the Magnolia Historic Preservation District and Doctor's Row Historic Preservation District (located in University Park)

## **Are There Any Exemptions To The Requirement To Obtain A Certificate Of Appropriateness?**

Yes, there are exemptions. Certificates are not required for interior changes to a structure or minor changes, including landscaping which does not alter the style of the site or structure or adversely impact the general architectural and/or cultural features of the property, electronic security systems; interior fire and life safety devices and/or systems, and other conditions the Director determines to be minor. In addition, Certificates are not required if the Director determines that an emergency or hazardous condition exists that needs to be corrected to ensure public health, safety, and welfare.

## **What and Where Do I Need to File?**

File a completed Certificate of Appropriateness Application and any applicable fees with the Planning

Division of the Community Development Department in the Permit Center at 345 North El Dorado Street, Stockton. Each application should include, in addition to the application form:

- Photographs of the structure/site showing the structure in general and the location of the proposed alteration(s).
- A sketch of the proposed alteration(s) or pictures/brochures of similar projects.
- A site plan showing any structures and the location of any proposed alterations or site changes.

## **What if Another Permit is Required?**

The Certificate of Appropriateness is required in addition to any other permit that may be required for the proposed project. If Design Review is required, applications for both should be submitted at the same time. Applications for other permits, such as Use Permits, may be submitted with the Certificate application or at a later date.

## **What is the Process for Approval of Certificates of Appropriateness?**

The first step in the process is to file an application with the Community Development Department. The application is then reviewed for completeness. Once the application is determined to be complete, it is forwarded to the Alterations Review Committee of the Cultural Heritage Board. The Alterations Review Committee reviews the request. If the proposal involves a Landmark or is controversial, review by the entire Board is required. Review of the project often requires meeting with the applicant and/or an on-site visit. After reviewing the request, a recommendation is sent to the Community Development Director for a final determination. The applicant may appeal the decision of the Director to the Planning Commission. Please see the Flow Chart on the back of this brochure.

## **What is Considered?**

In reviewing the application, the Board will consider the following:

- Architectural design and style
- Texture and surface materials
- Appurtenant fixtures, fences, signs, and steps
- Major landscaping, alterations, additions, and/or removals
- Site development and placement of structures
- Height and bulk of structures
- Parking provisions
- Public areas, including fixtures, signs, street furniture, and trees
- Relation of the proposed work to the surrounding neighborhood

## **Are Certificates of Appropriateness Subject to CEQA?**

Yes, Certificates are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) although an exemption is appropriate in most cases.

## **How Long Should It Take to Obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness?**

Depending on whether the work being proposed is to a Landmark or other building, a Certificate may take between three to six weeks to obtain. The Alterations Review Committee meets as needed, and a decision can often be reached within a couple of weeks. For Landmarks or controversial items that require review by the entire Board, it frequently takes a month, depending on when the application is submitted. The Cultural Heritage Board meets the first Wednesday of each month.

## **How Long Does an Approved Certificate of Appropriateness Remain Valid?**

An approved Certificate of Appropriateness is valid for twelve months. One extension may be requested, but any extension must be in compliance with the requirements applicable at the time of the extension request.