

Welcome to Albany's Historic Preservation Program



Albany's Historic Preservation Program centers around more than 600 historic buildings in the Monteith, Hackleman, Downtown Commercial and Municipal Airport National Register Historic Districts and about 80 historic properties outside of the district's boundaries that are considered local landmarks. These landmark buildings make up Albany's Local Historic Inventory.

Why is your building so special?

Albany has one of the best collections of historic buildings in the state of Oregon. In a 50-block area there are examples of all the architectural styles popular from 1840 through 1945, from flamboyant Queen Anne houses and classic Colonial Revivals to sturdy Craftsman Bungalows and Oregon Farmhouses. Visitors tour our buildings because they appreciate the look and authentic vintage feel of them and our neighborhoods. Many people choose to live in our historic homes because they offer unique character and craftsmanship, convey a sense of place and history, have great neighbors and are in a wonderful location with easy access to schools, parks, rivers and downtown.

The National Register is the official list of our nation's significant districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects determined by the Secretary of the Interior to be worthy of preservation. Albany's districts contain a large concentration of significant buildings. The buildings represent a variety of architectural styles, craftsmanship and development patterns that helped shape our town and make it what it is today. All buildings within the National Register districts are on the National Register and are on Albany's Local Historic Inventory. The Local Historic Inventory also includes buildings outside of the districts.

Benefits of Albany's Preservation Program

- **Grants:** Local exterior rehabilitation grants have been available the last few years for properties on the National Register. National Register properties are eligible to apply for the "Preserving Oregon" rehabilitation grants offered by SHPO. Applications are invited, usually in November. Contact the SHPO for the grant schedule. Grants are awarded competitively since demand invariably exceeds availability of funds.
- **Special Assessment:** This program allows owners of properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places to apply to freeze the assessed value of the property for a 15-year period. The program is designed as an incentive to assist property owners in the preservation of historic resources. The law establishes a requirement for a public open house once a year, the installation of a property identification plaque, and the option for commercial property owners to apply for an additional 15-year freeze.
- **Building Code Leniency:** Under Section 3403.5 of the Uniform Building Code/Oregon Structural Specialty Code, buildings on the Local Historic Inventory are eligible to be considered for waivers of certain normal code requirements in the interest of preserving the integrity of the property.
- **Eligibility for Federal Tax Credit:** The SHPO administers a federal tax credit program that can save building owners 20% of the cost of rehabilitating their National Register-listed commercial, industrial, or residential rental building. Requirements include submitting a short application form and performing only work that meets appropriate rehabilitation standards.
- **Technical and Design Assistance:** Free technical assistance is available for any historic renovation or rehabilitation project – including many topical brochures and handouts explaining how to go about rehabilitating your building. The City's preservation planner has access to local and state experts, as well as technical information from the National Trust For Historic Preservation, the State Historic Preservation Office, the Historic Preservation League of Oregon, the University of Oregon School of Historic Preservation, and historic architects. City staff can assist you in preparing your preservation plan, finding solutions to old house problems, or helping you locate special products for historic buildings.
- **Education:** Seminars and workshops are held throughout the year to assist owners of historic properties with the special historic building concerns. The Downtown branch of the Albany Public Library (302 Ferry Street) also has a large collection of preservation-related information that features a variety of historic resources materials including magazines, videos, books and local history.

Responsibilities and Stewardship

In 1985, the City of Albany passed an ordinance requiring all buildings built before 1946 in the National Register Historic Districts and those included on the City's official Local Historic Inventory, to have historic approval for all exterior alteration and demolitions or building relocation. All new construction over 100 square feet in the districts requires review. The purpose of historic review is to encourage the preservation of characteristics that led to the buildings designations as historic landmarks.

The Albany Development Code (Article 7, Historic Overlay) requires historic review the following things:

- exterior alterations that make an addition to the building or that remove a part of the building
- exterior alterations that change the physical appearance of the building, including the use of non-original materials, and new windows and doors
- demolition or relocation of historic buildings
- new buildings in the historic districts

The Development Code regulations focus on:

- preserving the original distinguishing characteristics,
- repairing elements rather than replacing them, and
- when replacement is necessary, the replacement material should match the original material in composition, design, and texture.

In other words, don't destroy good old work!

Review is not required for general repair, painting, and maintenance and replacement if it is done with matching materials.

Being on the Local Historic Inventory does not:

- require approval of interior changes or alterations;
- restrict painting or paint color choice;
- restrict ordinary maintenance or improvements, if needed, to assure public safety due to unsafe conditions;
- require improvement or restoration of the building;
- require the purchase or placement of an historic sign or plaque or that the building be open to the public; or
- affect tax assessments unless the building is on the State's Special Assessment Program (15 year value freeze).

Prior to beginning any exterior renovation project, contact Anne Catlin at 917-7560 to discuss the proposed alterations. She will review the project to determine if historic review is necessary and guide owners through the process for historic review. If necessary, she will schedule a review by the Landmarks Advisory Commission.

For more information contact:

City of Albany: Anne Catlin, Planner,
anne.catlin@cityofalbany.net (541) 917-7560

Community Development Department
333 Broadalbin SW; Albany, OR 97321

Information available at City Hall:

- Folders on each property with the Survey/Inventory and sometimes history and old photos
- The Sanborn Fire Maps
- The old City directories
- Brochure on how to research your home
- Handouts on "how-to" do a variety of repairs, weatherizing, etc.

Visit the City's Historic Resources site online at:

cityofalbany.net/comdev/historic/

State Historic Preservation Office: egov.oregon.gov/OPRD/HCD/SHPO/index.shtml

Joy Sears, Special Assessment Program Specialist, Joy.sears@state.or.us (503) 986-0688

