

Creating a Historic Conservation District (HCD)

1. Read and make sure you understand the HCD ordinance (#2002-322)
2. Meet with the Historic Landmark Commission to make sure there will not be any problems with the proposed district (i.e., not enough historic buildings in the district, or large open spaces that might weaken the application). Back up materials must be turned in by the first Monday of the month in order to be on the agenda (exception: when a public hearing is required, additional time is needed to run a public notice in the newspaper). The HLC meets the second Monday of the month at 5:30 p.m., in the Main Street office, 101 S. Locust (Wells Fargo Bank Building), Suite 500, Denton, Texas, 76201, 940-349-8529.
3. Gather public support. See who your supporters are (and aren't) and build a map of the district. Keeping everyone involved and having lots of meetings is time consuming, but the best way to approach this project.
4. Once you have a good idea of the area you want to encompass, circulate a petition of support for the HCD (door-to-door works best). Although the ordinance says that a petition will be considered with "more than 50%" of the property owners expressing support, you should have as much support as possible for a smooth transition through HLC, Planning and Zoning and City Council.
5. Once you have HLC's initial approval, each building, structure, object, open space and/or feature, which would be landmarks, should be inventoried. The inventory (which can be a list in Excel or Word) should have the address, owner's name, year built (can be approximate), style of structure (colonial, ranch, etc.), and whether it is contributing or non-contributing to the district.
6. Write a short narrative regarding why this district should be considered for HCD status.
7. Create your design guidelines. The HPO will have examples of other city's guidelines. It is very important to have the buy-in of your stakeholders on the guidelines. All the meetings to follow are public hearings and everyone will have a chance to speak his or her mind on the issue.
8. Once you have the map, petition, inventory, narrative and design guidelines, contact the Historic Preservation Officer (Julie Glover, 940-349-8522) so she can verify the materials are complete and deliver the back up materials to HL Commissioners.
9. When your item is set on an HLC agenda, plan to attend the HLC meeting and, if possible, bring some of your supporters with you. Be prepared to answer questions concerning your data methods, neighborhood support or other questions about the application.
10. If HLC approves the application, the HPO will forward the information to Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z), which will publish a public hearing ad and place the item on the next available meeting agenda. Be prepared to attend the P&Z meeting to answer questions, and, if possible, bring some of your supporters with you. The P&Z will submit a final report to the City Council stating its recommendations along with a draft of any proposed change.
11. Once P&Z has reviewed and ruled on the application, the HPO will forward the application, minutes of all meetings and proposed changes to the City Secretary to place on the City Council agenda. They will publish a public hearing notice and place the item on the agenda. Be prepared to attend the City Council meeting to answer questions, and, if possible, bring some of your supporters with you.
12. If City Council approves your petition, an ordinance will be created for your district, which will include your map and guidelines.