



SIGNIFICANT PROPERTY ALTERATION PERMIT (SPA)

What is a Significant Property Alteration permit?

The City of Santa Clara Historic Preservation Ordinance (Ordinance) formally establishes procedures for properties that are listed on the City's Historic Preservation and Resource Inventory (Inventory) or located within 200 feet of these properties.

The attached chart outlines the process for various requests related to these properties. Generally speaking, a SPA permit is required for nominating a property for inclusion on the Inventory, demolition requests, and major alterations to a property on the Inventory or, if a major alteration or demolition of an unlisted property is located within 200 feet of an Inventory property.

The attached chart clarifies the appropriate process and applicable properties requiring a SPA permit. Planning Division staff can assist you with your development plans and determining when a SPA permit is required.

What else should I know?

- The permit process has been simplified and streamlined. Small additions, repair and rehabilitation work as well as interior change and utility upgrades to Inventory properties can now be approved administratively.
- Maintenance projects including painting or other similar types of repair and rehabilitation, not requiring Architectural Committee (AC) review are not subject to a SPA permit and may be approved over the counter or without City review.
- The City has a number of properties that are not listed on the Inventory, but could be "eligible." These properties are reviewed by city staff for an initial determination when demolition is proposed. Referral of "eligible" properties to the Historical and Landmarks Commission or AC is determined by the Director of Community Development.

SUMMARY OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION REGULATIONS & PROCESS

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY 					
SCOPE OF WORK 	HRI PROPERTY	POTENTIALLY HISTORIC PROPERTIES*	MILLS ACT PROPERTY	PATIO HOME	PROPERTY WITHIN 200' of HRI
Roof replacement, single window replacement, door change, new gutters	SPA permit (OTC)	Arch. Review (OTC)	SPA permit (OTC)	Arch. Review (OTC)	Arch. Review (OTC)
Maintenance/upgrades: dry rot repair, painting, interior e.g. floors, doors, molding, fixtures etc.	—	—	—	—	—
Interior Changes: kitchen remodel, plumbing, electrical upgrade, plaster removal, partial wall demo	SPA permit (OTC)	—	SPA permit (OTC)	—	—
Deck, minor changes to rear or side elevation, ground floor expansion not exceeding 3 bedrooms	SPA permit (OTC)	Arch. Review (OTC)	SPA permit (HLC)	Arch. Review (OTC)	Arch. Review (OTC)
Ground floor expansion w/ 4 or more bedrooms or Second story addition	SPA permit (HLC/AC)	AC	SPA permit (HLC/AC)	AC	Arch. Review (HLC/AC)
Substantial Window replacement on front elevation or > 50% of windows	SPA permit (HLC/CDD)	Arch. Review (OTC)	SPA permit (HLC/AC)	Arch. Review (OTC)	Arch. Review (OTC)
Full Demolition (w/ new construction proposed)	SPA permit (HLC/AC)	SPA permit (HLC/CC/AC)	SPA permit (HLC/AC)	AC	Arch. Review (HLC/AC)
Interior Demolition (to studs) with substantial floor plan reconfiguration	SPA permit (HLC/CDD)	—	SPA permit (HLC/AC)	—	—
Nomination to HRI	—	SPA permit (HLC/CC)	SPA permit (HLC/CC)	SPA permit (HLC/CC)	SPA permit (HLC/CC)
ADU (Granny Unit)	SPA permit (OTC/HLC,CDD)	Admin. Review (OTC)	SPA permit (HLC/CDD)	Admin. Review (OTC)	Admin. Review (OTC)
APPLICABLE STANDARDS	Secretary of the Interior Standards	CSC SF and Duplex DG	Secretary of the Interior Standards	CSC SF and Duplex DG	CSC SF and Duplex DG

*Potentially Historic properties are properties flagged under the parcel number tab in Tidemark or formally recognized by City Council after HPO adoption.

Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation

The following Standards for Rehabilitation are the criteria used to determine if a rehabilitation project qualifies as a certified rehabilitation. The intent of the Standards is to assist the long-term preservation of a property's significance through the preservation of historic materials and features. The Standards pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. The Standards also encompass related landscape features and the building's site and environment, as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. To be certified, a rehabilitation project must be determined by the Secretary to be consistent with the historic character of the structure(s) and, where applicable, the district in which it is located. The following Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.