

## THE BENEFITS of DESIGN REVIEW

- Reinforce the overall appearance of the city and promote unified marketing of the Downtown Historic District.
- Preserve historic buildings and promote tourism.
- Help to prevent or delay the demolition of historic buildings.
- Protect the overall economic value and marketing of the Downtown Historic District.
- Do not affect the use of your property or its interior.
- Promote compatible new designs, new construction, and additions to historic buildings within the Downtown Historic District.
- Reinforce tax incentives for rehabilitation.
- Generally improve property values.

### How does the process work?

You must apply for a COA if you own a building in the Downtown Historic District and you plan to do one of the following:

- Change or alter the exterior of a building or structure;
- Construct a new building, structure or dwelling;
- Remove/demolish a building or structure;
- Move a building or structure;
- Add to an existing building or structure;
- Add new signs;
- Add new fencing, walls, driveways or parking areas to your property.

## IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- Design review is initiated for any new construction in the Downtown Historic District or for changes to existing buildings.
- The HPC reviews only exterior changes. Interior alterations or changes are not reviewed unless they affect the exterior.
- If a violation occurs or work is unauthorized, a Stop-Work Order may be issued. If the violation continues, a property owner may be issued a citation for violation of the ordinance or a citation to appear in court.
- Tenants must get approval from property owners before submitting a COA.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Gunterville Historic Preservation Commission  
341 Gunter Avenue  
[www.guntervilleal.org](http://www.guntervilleal.org)  
(256) 571-7565

Alabama Historical Commission  
334-230-2691  
[preserveala.org](http://preserveala.org)



## DOWNTOWN GUNTERVILLE

## HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT AND DESIGN REVIEW



Preserving  
and Protecting  
Gunterville's Northtown  
Historic District

## Guntersville's Downtown Historic District

The City of Guntersville enacted historic district legislation in 2014 creating the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). The HPC is authorized to conduct design review within the historic district for commercial, residential and public properties. The HPC reviews proposed alterations or changes to existing buildings, proposals for new construction, and requests for demolition within the district. Prior to initiating work, a property owner must first obtain a Certificate Of Appropriateness (COA) from the HPC.



### Guntersville's Design Guidelines Manual

The Guntersville Design Guidelines Manual provides specific criteria for appropriate rehabilitation work, new construction and demolition in the Downtown Historic District. The criteria follow the guidelines set forth by the National Park Service's "Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation." The guidelines assist property owners in maintaining and enhancing the appearance of their properties and in improving property values. The manual can be viewed on the city's website at [www.guntersvilleal.org](http://www.guntersvilleal.org).

### How do I get a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) ?

#### Step 1: Does your work require a COA ?

##### A COA is required...

- for any construction, alteration, or demolition of a building or building detail which would affect its exterior appearance.
- for any new sign in the historic district.
- for actions such as door and window repair, masonry repair, painting of previously non-painted surfaces and for the addition or replacement of new awnings or light fixtures, if such actions will change the exterior appearance.

- for moving or relocation on site or to another site.

##### A COA is not required...

- for routine maintenance such as window glass replacement, gutter and downspout repair, or minor repairs where the material and design are replaced in-kind to match the original.
- for painting of previously painted surfaces.
- for interior remodeling and rehabilitation which do not affect the exterior appearance of the property.

#### Step 2: Obtain a COA Application

COA Applications can be obtained at the Building Inspection Office at 341 Gunter Avenue. If your project meets the criteria of routine maintenance or minor repairs, the HPC may be able to waive the need for COA review. If your project exceeds routine maintenance or minor repair, or if you are uncertain if a COA is required, then you should file a COA application.

#### Step 3: Complete the COA Application

##### **THIS MUST BE COMPLETED AND APPROVED BEFORE ANY WORK CAN BEGIN!**

Complete the COA application and include all documentation outlined for your specific project as stipulated in the Guntersville Design Guidelines Manual which can be found on the city's website [www.guntersvilleal.org](http://www.guntersvilleal.org).

#### Step 4: File the COA Application

Once a property owner has completed a COA application, it should be filed with the Building Inspector at 341 Gunter Avenue. The Building Inspector will schedule the application for the next regular monthly meeting of the HPC. HPC meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of each month other than November (no meeting) and December (second Tuesday).

#### Step 5: Present the COA Application to the HPC

The applicant or their representative must present the COA before the HPC. The HPC may approve or deny an application or request additional information for review at a later date. If the COA is denied, the applicant may work with the HPC to amend it to meet the guidelines. Appeals of denial may be made to the Circuit Court.

#### Step 6: Begin Work

If your plans change while work is in progress, contact the HPC BEFORE undertaking a change or deviation from the COA.