

Downtown Design Overlay District (D-1)

What is an Overlay District?

An overlay district does *not* change the base zoning for any area it covers. Rather, it is an extra layer of protection superimposed over the existing land use of an area in order to maintain its design character. This protection comes from a set of design guidelines established by ordinance. Applications for building permits in the overlay area must be accompanied by Certificates of Appropriateness certifying a project has been approved through staff review or by the review board appointed to oversee the overlay.

Downtown Design Overlay District (D-1)

This overlay district is intended to foster attractive and harmonious development and rehabilitation in Downtown Knoxville that reflects the goals and principles of the Downtown Knoxville Design Guidelines. It regulates building elements and setbacks of new construction, protects the look of historic properties and requires certain standards for sidewalks, parking lots, bus stops and landscaping on public property.

Historic Zoning Overlay (H-1) Districts have their own boundaries and guidelines and are not included within this district.

Downtown Design Review Board

This board reviews the plans for public and private improvements in the overlay district. They must issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for private developments such as new construction, major exterior renovations and parking facility improvements. Projects initiated by the City and Knoxville Utility Board, such as improvements to or construction of streets, sidewalks, signs, lighting, parks and civic buildings, must also be submitted to the Review Board for review. The Board can request the Mayor's assistance to pursue Board review of other public projects including those by the county, state or federal governments.

The 10-person board is appointed by the City Mayor with the approval of the City Council. It includes permanent members from MPC and City Policy Development along with rotating members

to include an architect, urban design professional, downtown residents, business professionals, Central Business Improvement District Board member, and City's Historic Zoning Commission member. Ex-officio members may serve as non-voting members when cases require their technical and professional expertise.

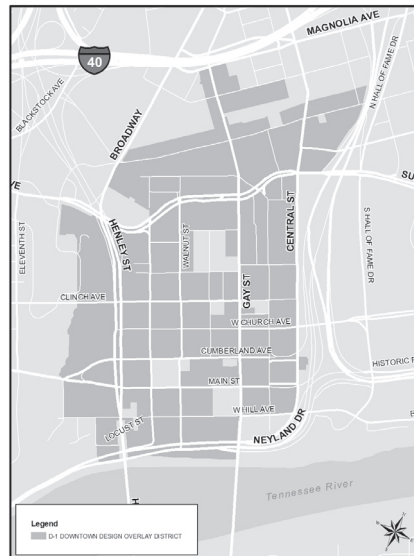
When does the Board meet?

The Downtown Design Review Board meets on the third Wednesday of each month in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building at 4 p.m.

Exemptions

Ordinary repairs, removal of signs (without replacement), temporary signs or structures, emergency safety repairs and interior alterations that do not obscure windows do not need to be reviewed by the Board.

Staff may approve the following if they conform to adopted guidelines: new signs, demolition of non-historic features on publicly-oriented facades, demolition of historic features to be replaced in-kind, replacement of windows at ground level with transparent glass or the replacement of other building features that are consistent with the Design Guidelines.



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Approval Process for Downtown Projects

