

# ***CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL***

## ***GENERAL INFORMATION + INSTRUCTIONS***

### ***WHAT IS A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL?***

A Certificate of Approval is a written authorization, much like a permit, that must be issued before any changes can be made to the designated feature of a [City landmark](#), or before changes can be made to the external appearance of any building, structure, or site, including the construction of any new building or structure, within the [City's eight historic districts](#). In certain historic districts, a [Certificate of Approval](#) is required before making changes to the use of a building or space, or establishing use in a new building, located within that district.

### ***WHAT KIND OF CHANGES REQUIRE A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL?***

- a. Alterations to a building exterior in a district (see individual district Ordinance)
- b. Alterations to sites, right-of-way, and public spaces in a district (see individual district Ordinance)
- c. Change of use in Pioneer Square Preservation District, International Special Review District and the Pike Place Market Historical District; and, in some cases, changes to business or services provided or changes of ownership for businesses within the Pike Place Market Historical District
- d. Alterations to the designated features of a Landmark: this may include a landscape, building exterior, building interiors, structure, or object (see individual landmark Ordinance)

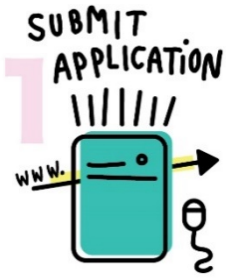
In addition, Certificates of Approval are required for work that normally would not require other permits, such as minor exterior remodeling and painting.

*Repair-in-Kind:* If the proposed work you want to do involves ONLY repair using the same materials and exact same details and finishes, then a Certificate of Approval is not required. However, the method and scope of work must be reviewed and confirmed as in-kind by the relevant Board/Commission Coordinator prior to undertaking the work.

The Historic Preservation Program can provide more information about the landmark or the historic district where your property is located: (206) 684-0228 / [seattle.gov/neighborhoods/preservation](http://seattle.gov/neighborhoods/preservation)

## HOW DO I GET A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL AND HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

This section is a snapshot of the process for getting a certificate of approval. Language from the Seattle Municipal Code can be found later in this document and provides greater detail about some of these steps.



**1. Application submittal:** Certificate of Approval applications are submitted via the [Seattle Services Portal](#). Please refer to the application checklist later in this document to ensure that you have gathered the required submittal documents.



**2. Staff review of application:** Historic Preservation staff review applications to determine whether they are complete—that is, they are looking to see if all the items on the checklist are included and fulfill the code requirements. *Within twenty-eight (28) days of the application being filed*, staff notify the applicant in writing (a letter sent in the mail) whether the application is complete or what additional information is required. If additional information is provided by the applicant, staff notify the applicant in writing *within fourteen (14) days of receipt* whether the application is now complete or what additional information is necessary. Additional information may be requested at other times during this process.



**3. Board/Commission Review:** Board/Commission Review involves at least one review of a complete application. When reviewing an application, the Board/Commission uses its District / Landmark regulations, guidelines and Secretary of the Interior Standards to evaluate proposals. Depending on the Board/Commission, there will either be a vote on a decision as to whether a Certificate of Approval should be issued, issued with conditions, or denied, OR a vote on a recommendation to the Director of the Department of Neighborhoods as to whether a Certificate of Approval should be issued, issued with conditions, or denied. For larger, more complex applications, Board/Commission reviews and/or briefings may occur during the conceptual, design development and final “working drawings” stages of the project.

**Other Reviews or Briefings:** Depending on the Board/Commission, proposals may require review by the Architectural/Design Review Committee (ARC) or a Use Review Committee prior to full Board/Commission review.

See [District or Landmark pages](#) for Board/Commission meeting schedules.



**4. Certificate of Approval Issuance:** Typically, a Certificate of Approval will be issued within 28 days following the Board or Commission meeting, assuming no successful appeals have been filed. This 28-day period encompasses a *maximum 14-day period for issuing the decision* and an *exactly 14-day period for appeals*, as required in the code.

The decision will be accessible via the [Seattle Services Portal](#).

**Appeal:** Any interested person may appeal a decision of the Board/Commission to the City Hearing Examiner. Details about this process can be found later in this document.

### SCHEDULING FOR BOARD REVIEW

In order to have an application reviewed by the relevant Board or Commission, the application and all required documentation and any applicable fees must be submitted to the Board staff via the [Seattle Services Portal](#). Once the Board/Commission staff has determined that your application is complete, your proposal will be placed on the agenda for review at the Board/Commission’s next regularly scheduled meeting. If you do not have the technological access or tools necessary to complete the application online through the Seattle Services Portal, please call 206-684-0228 and you can receive assistance for submitting using a hard copy application form.

## **ASSISTANCE**

Copies of pertinent guidelines, procedures, development regulations, and other information are available for download on the [Historic Preservation Program's website](#). You may request a hard copy by contacting the Board/Commission Coordinator (see below) at the Department of Neighborhoods, Seattle City Hall, 600 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, PO Box 94649, Seattle, Washington 98124-4649.

## **STAFF CONTACTS**

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# CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please read all of the Application Instructions and General Information sections of this document carefully before submitting your Certificate of Approval application through the [Seattle Services Portal](#).

Refer to the checklists below and make sure you have all the relevant required submittal items in electronic format before you begin the online submittal process. Where possible and according to section, combine files into single pdfs rather than uploading individual documents. Incomplete applications will not be scheduled for Board review. For Board/Commission members to properly act on a Certificate of Approval request, they require an accurate and thorough understanding of the proposal.

If you have questions about the process or what is required to be submitted for your specific proposal, please contact the relevant Board/Commission coordinator.

## APPLICATION SUBMITTAL DOCUMENTS CHECKLISTS FOR DESIGN AND/OR USE

### *DESIGN APPLICATION CHECKLIST*

#### [ ] **Description of Proposed Work \***

- Describe the proposed work and any changes it will make to the landmark/historic district building or property. All items must be included in this application. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)
- For proposals that include demolition of a structure or object:
  - A statement of the reason(s) for demolition
  - A description of the replacement structure or object
- If the proposal includes replacement, removal, or demolition of existing features, a survey of the existing conditions of the features being replaced, removed, or demolished. Please check with Board/Commission staff if you need more detailed instructions.

#### [ ] **Set of scale drawings with all dimensions shown:**

- A site plan of existing conditions, showing adjacent streets and buildings and a site plan showing proposed changes;\*
- A floor plan showing the existing features and a floor plan showing the proposed new features or changes;\*
- Elevations and sections of both the proposed new features and the existing features'\* construction details;
- A landscape plan showing existing features and plantings, and another landscape plan showing proposed site features and plantings.

**For proposals including new signage, awnings, or exterior lighting please make sure to include the following:**

- Scale drawings of proposed signage or awnings showing the overall dimensions, material, graphic designs, typeface, letter size and colors;
- Scale plan, photograph, or elevation drawing showing the location of the proposed awning or sign;
- Scale detail drawing showing the proposed method of attaching the new awning, sign, or proposed exterior lighting;
- The wattage and specifications of the proposed lighting, and a picture of the lighting fixture;

**Photographs\***

- Color photographs of any existing features of the building, site or object that would be altered and photographs showing the context of those features such as the building facade where they are located. The photographs must clearly show these features. Photographs must be combined into one pdf, not uploaded individually.

**Materials, Colors and/or Finish Samples**

- Please upload a digital image that represents the proposed materials, colors and/or finishes. If the proposal includes new finishes or paint, and an elevation drawing or a photograph showing the location of proposed new finishes or paint.
- Please upload a digital image of sample of proposed sign colors or awning material and color;
- DON staff will follow up with the applicant if a physical sample needs to be submitted.
- Photographs must be combined into one pdf, not uploaded individually.

**Landlord Consent\***

- [Property Owner Authorization Form](#)

**Fee (see below for fee schedule)\***

## **USE APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

**Check all boxes that apply:**

- New business
- Change of use for existing business
- Expansion of use
- Temporary use
- Change of ownership for existing business (**FOR PIKE PLACE MARKET ONLY**)
- Change of location
- Increase business area (square footage)
- Increase/decrease commercial area/areas not open to the public
- Street use/right of way
- Other

**Current use/vacancy information, if applicable:**

- Provide a written description of the current use.

**Written description of proposed merchandise/service:**

- Provide a complete written description of the merchandise or service to be provided. The description should include any proposed use, change of use, expansion of use, change of ownership or location, increase in business area. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

**[ ] Proposed business hours (FOR PIKE PLACE MARKET ONLY):**

- Provide the business hours using 24-hour clock.

**[ ] Site plan showing location of business:**

- Provide a scale site showing the location of the business.

**[ ] Floor plan showing location of business:**

- A floor plan showing the existing features and a floor plan showing the proposed new features or changes;\*

**[ ] Written description of ownership interest and role in the business operation (FOR PIKE PLACE MARKET ONLY):**

- Changes to existing business ownership structure only: List all existing owners and their roles in the business operation.
- Describe the type of proposed ownership of the business (sole-proprietor, LLC, corporation, etc.).
- What percentage in the corporation, LLC, etc. does each owner own? Provide a copy of documentation listing all proposed owners and the percentages they own, such as corporation/LLC formation documents or an Annual Report. *Note: Sole proprietors do not need to submit this documentation.*
- Describe any financial affiliations of all the prospective owners have an existing business or businesses, including any retail locations. If there are no affiliations, write “none.”
- State specifically the role of each owner in the operation of the business, including which owner or owners will be onsite regularly at the business.

**[ ] Landlord Consent**

- [Property Owner Authorization Form](#)

**[ ] Fee (see below for fee schedule)**

- Please be prepared to provide the construction value. The construction value is only the value for the scope of work in the application, which may be less than the overall project cost. Once you enter the construction value, a fee will be calculated for you and you will receive an email informing you of the fee amount due.

**FEE INFORMATION**

SMC 22.900G.010 requires that an application fee be charged for each review for a Certificate of Approval. The fee is determined by the dollar value of the proposed project:

Design Approval  
 \$0 - 1,500 of construction costs.....\$25.00  
 Each additional \$5,000 of costs.....\$10.00  
 Maximum fee per review.....\$4,000.00\*\*  
 Use Approval.....\$25.00  
 Street Use Approval.....\$25.00

\*\* Except that the maximum fee for a Certificate of Approval for new construction projects shall be \$20,000; except projects including housing financed, in whole or in part, by public funding; or projects that elect the MHA performance option according to Sections 23.58B.050 or 23.58C.050.  
Estimate the construction costs, calculate the fee and make checks payable to the City of Seattle.

### ***DETERMINATION OF COMPLETENESS***

The staff shall determine whether an application is complete and shall notify the applicant in writing within twenty-eight (28) days of the application being filed whether the application is complete or that the application is incomplete and what additional information is required before the application will be complete. Within fourteen (14) days of receiving the additional information, the staff shall notify the applicant in writing whether the application is now complete or what additional information is necessary. An application shall be deemed to be complete if the staff does not notify the applicant in writing by the deadlines in this section that the application is incomplete. A determination that the application is complete is not a determination that the application is vested.

The determination of completeness does not preclude the staff or the Board/Commission from requiring additional information during the review process if more information is needed to evaluate the application according to the standards in SMC 23.66, SMC 25.12, SMC 25.16, SMC 25.20, SMC 25.21, SMC 25.22, SMC 25.24, or SMC 25.30 and in any rules adopted by the relevant Board/Commission, or if the proposed work changes.

### ***PRELIMINARY DESIGN***

An applicant may make a written request to submit an application for a Certificate of Approval for a preliminary design if the applicant waives in writing the deadline for a Board/Commission decision on the final design and any deadlines for decision on related permit application under review by the Department of Construction and Inspections. ***A written waiver must be included with this application.*** The staff may reject the request if it appears that approval of a preliminary design would not be an efficient use of staff or Board time and resources, or would not further the goals and objectives of SMC 23.66, SMC 25.12, SMC 25.16, SMC 25.20, SMC 25.21, SMC 25.22, SMC 25.24, or SMC 25.30. To be complete, an application for preliminary design must include the following information listed in the checklist identified with an asterisk above; please consult with the relevant Board/Commission coordinator if you are unsure. *A Certificate of Approval that is granted for a preliminary design shall be conditioned upon subsequent submittal and Board approval of the final design, including all of the information listed above in subsection B, prior to issuance of permits for work affecting the landmark.*

### ***REVISIONS TO PLANS, EXPIRATION OF CERTIFICATES***

Work must occur exactly according to approved plans. ANY revisions, omissions or additions to plans must be reviewed by the Board prior to execution. Unless specified otherwise, work approved under any Certificate of Approval must be completed within eighteen (18) months of the date of issue. If work has not been completed within eighteen months, the Certificate becomes null and void.

### ***APPEAL PROCEDURE***

Any interested person may appeal a decision of the Board/Commission to the City Hearing Examiner. The appeal and a copy of the Certificate of Approval decision must be filed with the Hearing Examiner, City of Seattle, POB ox 94729, Seattle, WA 98124-4729 before 5:00 p.m. on the fourteenth (14th) day following the date of issuance of the decision, and must be accompanied by a \$85.00 filing fee in the form of a check



payable to the City of Seattle. Appeals must be in writing and must clearly state objections to the decision. A copy of the appeal shall also be served upon the Department of Neighborhoods Director, Seattle City Hall, 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor, PO Box 94649, Seattle, Washington 98124.