



Public Information- Cultural Heritage Review

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency • Planning Division
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Certificate of Appropriateness

A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is an authorization issued by the Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) or support staff in accordance with criteria adopted by the CHB. A COA indicates that the *proposed maintenance, alteration, restoration, rehabilitation, remodeling, additions, change of use, demolition, relocation, or subdivision* of a designated Cultural Heritage Site will not adversely affect its cultural heritage values, or unduly compromise the eligibility of a potential site to become a designated Cultural Heritage Site.



Neo-Classical Architecture
Carnegie Library in Oxnard, CA

Historic Resource Categories

Buildings, structures, objects, and sites within a historic district or other cultural resource site are normally divided into two categories: *contributing* and *non-contributing*. Broadly defined, a building or structure is classified as *contributing if it adds to the historic character or integrity of a cultural resource site/district*. It is *considered non-contributing when it does not add to the historic character or integrity of the cultural resource site/district*. Generally, any building or structure less than fifty years old is considered to be non-contributing. Even though the primary concern of the CHB is to protect historic buildings, changes to more recent buildings can have a significant effect on the character-defining features of the historic district and the character of the resource as

it appeared during its period of historic significance. Contributing or non-contributing structures located within a historic district or on a cultural resource site are reviewed through the same process as work on designated historic buildings. This ensures that any proposed changes to a structure *do not have a negative impact on themselves or the surrounding area*.

COAs are required for the following categories of sites and applications: Landmarks, Districts, Demolition of Sites of Merit, Demolition of Potential Sites, and Designated Cultural Heritage Sites seeking a Planned Development Permit pursuant to Section 8107-37 of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance. (§1371-1).

Certificate of Review (COR)

A Certificate of Review (COR) is issued by the CHB or support staff in accordance with criteria adopted by the CHB (§1372-2) for which a permit application is received to *construct, change, alter, modify, or remodel* a Site of Merit or potential Cultural Heritage Site in a manner that affects the exterior character-defining features or integrity of the site. Using the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards* as a guide, the CHB (or support staff) reviews and comments upon the permit application and advises the applicant concerning the effects of the proposed action(s) on a Site of Merit or potential Cultural Heritage Site.

How is a COA/COR Approved?

Depending on the type of work proposed and its potential impact upon the historic resource, COAs/CORs are approved in two different ways: *Administrative Review and Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) Approval*. Most COAs/CORs require approval by the CHB; however, the CHB has delegated authority to staff to approve some minor types of modifications, such as reroofing using like-materials, rear yard fences, and patios and wood patio covers not visible from the street. General information on these two types of approvals is on the following page.

Administrative Review - Staff Approval

- No public meeting or public notice is required.
- Required documents include an application, site plan, floor plan, elevations, photos and any additional information deemed necessary with required fees to CHB staff. (See the Checklist for Filing a COA/COR)
- The Administrative COA/COR review is complete when CHB staff determines that the proposed work complies with the CHB Ordinance, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, also known as The Standards, and the CHB administrative approval resolution. Staff may set any conditions on an approved application to ensure compliance with the adopted Ordinance and Standards. If the proposed work is approved, an Administrative COA/COR will be issued, generally within one to three business days.
- If it is determined that an application does not comply with the CHB Ordinance, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the CHB administrative approval resolution, CHB staff shall provide technical assistance to the applicant to ensure compliance. If an applicant is unwilling to make modifications to the submitted proposal, the application shall be forwarded to the CHB for consideration in accordance with the procedures for Board members' review.
- The owner or applicant obtains any other necessary ministerial permits.
- Certificate expires in one year but may be renewed, if necessary.
- Contact CHB staff immediately if plans change during construction. Changes are often accommodated by staff.

Cultural Heritage Board Review - Requires Public Hearing

- Meetings are conducted on the second and fourth Mondays of every month at 1:15 pm in the Ventura County Government Center, Hall of Administration (date and meeting room location are subject to change).
- It's recommended that applicants schedule an appointment with CHB staff to discuss the project before submitting an application.
- Required documents include an application, site plan, floor plan, elevations, photos and any other documentation staff determines necessary with the required fees. (See the Checklist for Filing a COA/COR) Applications must be submitted with all pertinent documentation, at least fifteen calendar days prior to the regularly scheduled meeting.
- Written comments and recommendations for action will be prepared by CHB staff. Staff reviews may be routed through other departments to request comments pertaining to other regulations or ordinances which might apply.
- Copies of the staff report may be sent to applicants, neighborhood associations, and any interested parties prior to the public hearing.
- The applicant is advised to attend the CHB public hearing to present information to the CHB members. If the applicant is unable to attend the meeting, a representative may be sent to present information and answer questions.
- The CHB may approve, approve with applicant modifications, deny, or continue the project to a future public hearing.
- If the CHB or staff find that the application is inadequate to take appropriate action on a case, the application shall be returned to the applicant. CHB members may request an applicant to provide any additional information they find necessary to make a fair and equitable decision.
- If an application is denied, the CHB shall state its findings for denial. These findings shall be provided to the applicant in writing. An aggrieved party may appeal a denial to the Board of Supervisors by filing an appeal application with the Planning Director within ten calendar days (or the following work day if the tenth day falls on a weekend or holiday) of such decision.
- If an application is approved, a COA shall be issued. The CHB has the authority to set any conditions on an approved application to ensure compliance with the adopted guidelines and the Standards.
- The owner or applicant shall obtain any other necessary permits.
- The COA/COR expires in one year but may be renewed, if necessary.
- Contact CHB staff immediately if plans change during construction. Changes are often accommodated by staff.

Contact

CHB website:

<https://vcrma.org/en/cultural-heritage-board>

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