

Certificates of Appropriateness

Application Form and Procedures

This certificate (COA) is the Commission's written affirmation that a proposed change is sympathetic to the historic character of the property and is consistent with the intent of the ordinance. All exterior repairs, replacements, alterations, and building permits at your locally designated historic property and yard require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) prior to beginning work. Many changes that do not require building permits nonetheless require a COA (such as re-roofing, re-siding, window replacement, tuck-pointing, and major landscaping) because of their potential to harm the historic character of the building and the unique characteristics and intricate details older homes have. *However, most of these smaller projects can be approved quickly without waiting for the monthly public hearing.* New construction and demolition always require a public hearing.

When a permit is applied for, the [Permit & Development Center](#) will check to see if the property in question is a designated Historic Structure, Historic Site or within a Historic District. If it is, the applicant is required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness.

[Application form](#) (PDF)

Email Client Instructions (Outlook, Thunderbird, Apple Mail, etc.)

Both an email client and Acrobat Reader/Pro are necessary. Download the application form and open in Acrobat Reader/Pro. Do not complete the application form within a browser.

The "SUBMIT" button should open a new email message in your email program. Please attach any further necessary materials such as drawings, renderings, and photos in this email message. If the "SUBMIT" button does not open a new, blank email message, follow the web-based email instructions below. A signature is not necessary for this form of electronic submission.

Web Mail Instructions (Gmail, Icloud, Yahoo, etc.)

The "SUBMIT" button does not work with web-based e-mail. If you have Acrobat Pro, fill out the form and "Save As" and attach it to an email along with other materials. If you do not have Acrobat Pro, you may need to download, print, and scan the form and then submit to hpc@milwaukee.gov with all further necessary documentation as additional email attachments.

Most projects that require a COA are eligible for a state income tax credit of 20%-25%. Plumbing, wiring, HVAC, and structural repairs are also often eligible expenses. Fences, landscaping, and fixtures typically do not qualify for the credit. This is a separate and additional approval process that is not managed by the city. See <https://wisconsinhistory.org/taxcredits> for details.

If you are applying for those [tax credits through the Wisconsin Historical Society](#) you may submit a copy of your Homeowner tax credit form, State Commercial Credit Part II, or NPS Part II, in place of our form. You must include the approval and conditions of approval if you have received such.

Procedure for approval is in the [HPC by-laws](#). Most small projects can be approved quickly without a public hearing, per the staff approval criteria listed in the by-laws.

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[El video sobre Certificados de Adecuación es disponible en español también.](#)

Records

Information concerning Certificates of Appropriateness issued beginning in 2010, is available at the City of Milwaukee's [Legislative Research Center](#). For further assistance in locating a particular CoA issued after 2010, please contact [Linda Elmer \(click for email\)](#) at 414-286-2231.

For records prior to 2010, contact City Records at cityrecordscenter@milwaukee.gov.
