



## **Frequently Asked Questions about the Riverside Historic Overlay**

### **Why do we want an Historic Overlay?**

Historic character is better protected; a new property owner across your street will help maintain historic character of the district by following the Historic Overlay guidelines and standards. The historic character of the neighborhood is created primarily by the streetscape – the style of historic houses and how they are positioned on their lots. The Overlay guides new construction to have these same characteristics.

### **Can I make changes to my home and property?**

Yes. The Historic Overlay does not prevent changes. The goal is for changes to fit in to the existing building and district.

### **What can I do to the interior of my house?**

Anything permissible by regular city code. The overlay guidelines only apply to the exterior.

### **What restrictions do I have on house color?**

It is a personal decision. Historic colors are recommended, but not required.

### **Will repairs, renovation and additions cost more due to the overlay?**

In general no, and the value of your home will be better protected by matching the original style.

### **If I build or rebuild a structure, what can I do?**

You must still get a building permit. This does not change. The City of Everett Planning staff already reviews new building plans to see if they meet zoning code requirements, and they will also review the plan to see if it meets the Historic Overlay standards. The Historic Overlay guidelines and standards are available to everyone and can help you get started in the right direction when you plan a project. Planning staff is available to help you.

### **Can I make change to my front or back yard landscaping?**

Yes. The guidelines do not address existing landscaping and is not reviewed by staff or commission.

### **Can I put up a fence of any type?**

Yes. New front yard fences must be less than 3'6" high and not solid fencing. Rear fences are not addressed by the guidelines, but must meet zoning code requirements as they currently do.

### **Will my property taxes increase?**

Taxes will not increase just because the Historic Overlay is adopted.

### **Will the Overlay affect my property value?**

Property values in Historic Overlay zones generally appreciate at the same or slightly greater rate than in other areas. This is because the quality of the neighborhood is better maintained, not necessarily due to the overlay.

**Does the overlay affect access to home owner financial assistance programs such as the PUD Packages or the CHIP (Community Housing Improvement Program)?**

It will not affect qualification for these programs. Vinyl windows are allowed in the overlay, but the guidelines encourage window shapes appropriate for older homes.

**Can I tear down my house?**

The demolition permit may be subject to review by the Historic Commission.

**Can I build a new home in the overlay?**

Yes. Design of the new building must be compatible with the historic district.

**What single family home issues must come in front of the Historic Commission?**

Only major deviations from guidelines, such as a reduction of a front or side setback, or on work that requires a building permit. The City of Everett Planning staff review single family home permits, not the commission. In general the Historical Commission does not get involved in single family homes.

**Can I put any front door on my existing house?**

Door replacement does not require a permit and will not be reviewed. It is preferred to install a door that is consistent with the style of the home and neighboring homes, and this will also maintain the character of your house. The Planning Department has information available on what style of door would be appropriate.

**What kind of windows can I use to replace existing windows?**

Windows should match the style of your home if you want to maintain its character. Vinyl windows are allowed in the overlay.

**How were the boundaries selected?**

- The area must meet the criteria in the zoning code for a Historic Overlay, including Everett registered properties and surrounding areas.
- High concentration of historically contributing homes in an area.
- Reasonable size (450 homes) had to be researched.
- Adjoining (contiguous) boundaries.
- Development pressures started focus on Baker and Virginia.