

OREGON CITY HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD POLICIES

HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD POLICY #12:

Solar Technology

A Guide for Property Owners



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ABOUT THE HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD POLICIES

The City has adopted protections for locally designated properties to ensure these historic buildings maintain their integrity.

The Historic Review Board (HRB) adopted policies for minor alterations to historic structures that can be done without formal Board review. The policies are meant to provide clear direction to historic property owners on exterior changes including but not limited to roofing, siding, windows and doors. HRB Policies were first adopted in 1986 and updated in 2019.

Locally designated properties are subject to HRB Policies. This includes designated structures in McLoughlin Conservation District, all structures in Canemah National Register District, and landmarks outside of districts. To see if a property is designated, visit www.oregoncity.org/maps/historic-resources.

HRB POLICY #12: SOLAR TECHNOLOGY

Adding solar panels to historic properties can have a significant impact on the character and visual qualities that convey a property's significance. Solar panel installations are permitted under some circumstances, but should not become prominent new elements that detract from the character-defining features of a building or landscape.

Solar technology that meets the criteria in the list below may be utilized on historic properties through staff review. Any proposal that deviates from this policy shall be considered by HRB.

- **Sloped roof location:** Solar panels are permitted on secondary facades of historic buildings ~~and on accessory structures,~~ accessory structures, and the rear two-thirds of a primary side gable roof (note: porch dimensions are not included in this calculation). Solar panels on primary gables shall be set back from the roof peak three feet.
- **Design:** Panels on sloped roofs shall project five inches or less from the roof surface and be installed flat; they shall not alter the slope of the roof.
- **Color:** Panels and mounting systems shall be the same color as established roof materials. Mechanical equipment associated with the photovoltaic system shall be as unobtrusive as possible.
- **Flat roof structures:** Solar panel installations on flat roofs shall be set back at least five feet from the roof edge to minimize visibility unless fully obscured from the street by a parapet.



- **Shingles:** Solar shingles are permitted on secondary facades if they match the roof color.
- **Freestanding:** Freestanding or detached on-site solar technologies are permitted in locations behind the front of the home in side and rear yards, unless the side or rear yard abuts an improved public right of way.



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WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

This means a few things as a property owner with a designated historic property:

- If the solar installation meets the HRB policy, it is reviewed at the staff level with no application fee.
- If the solar installation does not follow these guidelines, then it must be referred or submitted to the HRB for review and decision, which will require a fee. Fee for alterations is \$50 plus mailing labels.
- When installing solar technology, building and electrical permits are required from the Building Division. Applications for the permit can be found at: www.orcity.org/building/residential-permits.
- When the HRB is considering solar proposals that do not meet the policy, the Secretary of Interior's Standards are used as guidance. The Secretary of Interior Standards on Solar Panels on Historic Properties can be found at: www.nps.gov/tps/sustainability/new-technology/solar/park-solar.htm.



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Further information about the HRB and HRB Policies can be found at: www.orcity.org/planning/hrb-policies

If you have any questions about the City's Preservation Program or if your property is locally designated, please contact:
Oregon City Preservation Program
Phone: 503-722-3789
ocplanning@orcity.org

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