

Belmont Heights Historic District

Welcome to Belmont Heights Historic District. The ordinance for our historic district was signed by the city in May 2002. The designated area is from 7th to 4th, Newport to Roswell (see map). Our neighborhood of homes was developed in the first decades of the 20th Century with some Victorian homes remaining. The Craftsman Bungalow style predominates with 2/3 of the homes in the area constructed in this style. Other historic styles are Mission Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and Neo-Traditional. The peak period of construction occurred from 1918 to 1923, but the period of architectural significance is from 1905 to 1939.

What is a historic district?

Historic Districts are areas containing groups of older houses that are intact and unaltered. While each building may not be individually worthy of landmark status, collectively they preserve the visual qualities and ambiance of the past. Streetscape features, such as trees or light standards, may contribute to the historic value of the district. Even if interspersed with some non-historical structures, areas may qualify for historic district status if at least two-thirds of the houses are original older homes. There are presently 17 historic districts in Long Beach.

What is the planning rationale for a Historic District?

To qualify for historic district status, an area or neighborhood must contain a concentration of vintage architectural styles that have not been extensively remodeled or altered. Buildings may represent a variety of architectural styles built over several decades, and are usually over 50 years old. An architectural survey compiles this information, and research on the history of the neighborhood provides a historical context. Buildings are evaluated architecturally and are categorized as “contributing” and

“noncontributing.” Contributing buildings are architecturally significant to the historic value of the neighborhood and are targeted for preservation; noncontributing buildings are also required to undergo review.

What are the benefits of being in an historic district?

Historic District status encourages neighborhood pride by confirming that vintage homes in the district are valuable assets. The regulations help to protect the value of each owner’s investment by ensuring that all renovations will meet certain architectural quality standards.

The preservation and restoration of historic homes tends to attract homeowners who appreciate the qualities of craftsmanship and design in older homes. Studies in various cities across the country have shown that property values in protected historic districts tend to be higher than comparable neighborhoods that have no architectural regulations.

Historic district designation creates a neighborhood where contributing structures are not demolished.

Windows, facade improvements and additions have to pass through the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) to ensure architectural integrity. This extra step protects the neighborhood from tear-downs, as well as inappropriate lot-to-lot re-builds and additions.

What is the downside?

Property owners of contributing homes who wish to make exterior changes will need to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the CHC or from staff prior to the issuance of a building permit. There are fees charged for this review.

Permits may be denied, revised or allowed, depending on the scope of work. Although the CHC is guided by standards, and the Commission and staff are experienced architects, historians and planners, they are still human and their rulings may, at times, be contrary to what the homeowner thinks.

How DO I Proceed with Changes?

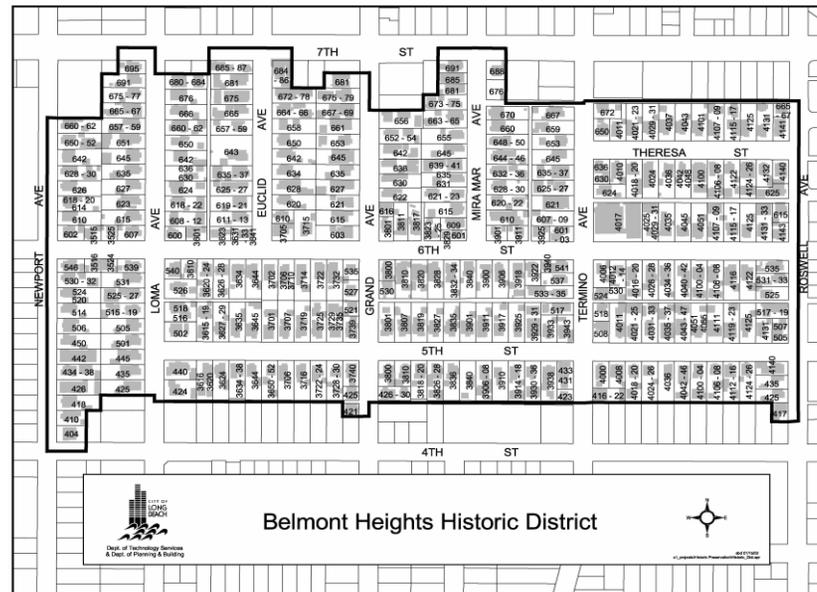
Changes to your home can be simple or involved.

Simple changes (such as: painting/repairing your house, fixing a fence, etc.)

1. Select your paint color, fence style, etc.
2. Call the Preservation Office for an appointment (562-570-6194)
3. Preservation Officer will review request and approve
4. Pay necessary fees, if any
5. Certificate of Appropriateness issued

Involved changes (such as: additions, remodeling and changing out windows, etc.)

1. Plan out your project
2. Call the Preservation Office to review (562-570-6194)
3. Cultural Heritage Commission Review
4. Unless this requires a review of revised plans, you will be issued a Certificate of Appropriateness
5. Apply for a building permit
6. Pay necessary fees



The architectural guidelines used by the CHC are the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Buildings. The philosophy underlying the Standards is to understand and respect the original architectural character of a historic structure, and to change it as little as possible. Repair is always preferable to replacement. These standards help us maintain the character of the Belmont Heights Historic District.

If you live in a historic home and are thinking of renovation, the best thing to do is live with it for a while. Don't be hasty in deciding to make changes. Talk with your neighbors and do your research. There are many bungalow books and magazines out there for reference. One of the best resources for a homeowner is your neighborhood community association. We encourage you to join Belmont Heights Community Association and the subgroup of Belmont Heights Historic District. Happy restoration!

Historic Area Resources

City of Long Beach, Historic Preservation Office
(562) 570-6194
<http://www.longbeach.gov/lbds/planning/preservation/>

National Trust for Historic Preservation
<https://savingplaces.org/>

California Office of Historic Preservation
<http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/>

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation
<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservation/standards.htm>

American Bungalow Magazine
<https://www.americanbungalow.com/>

Old House Journal

<https://www.oldhouseonline.com/>

Powell, Jane and Linda Svendsen. *Bungalow Kitchens*

Powell, Jane and Linda Svendsen. *Bungalow Bathrooms*

Schweitzer, Robert. *Bungalow Colors*

Duchscherer, Paul and Douglas Keister. *Outside the Bungalow*

Duchscherer, Paul and Douglas Keister. *Inside the Bungalow*

Gellner, Arrol. *Red Tile Style: America's Spanish Revival Architecture*

If you are interested in becoming a committee member of the Belmont Heights Historic District or have concerns about our community, please visit us at: www.mybelmontheights.org

Join Belmont Heights Community Association today!

For Belmont Heights Community Association Membership, please send a check for \$30.00 payable to:

Belmont Heights Community Association (BHCA)
375 Redondo Ave. #332
Long Beach, CA 90814



What you need to know living in a Historic District