

Port of Dubuque

A guide to the Design Review Process



Planning Services Department,
50 West 13th Street, Dubuque, IA 52001-4845
(563) 589-4210 e-mail: planning@cityofdubuque.org



Port of Dubuque Design Review

Guidelines to help you through the application process.

What is a Design Review?

Design review standards for the Port of Dubuque have been developed to ensure that new and existing facilities work together to create an attractive, high quality, pedestrian-oriented urban neighborhood for visitors, residents and workers. These standards are both prescriptive and descriptive in nature. They prescribe specific minimum requirements for elements such as parking lot landscaping and signage as well as describing parameters for the design of new buildings and the remodeling of existing buildings.

When do I need a Design Review?

These design standards apply to the following:

- New and existing parking facilities and signs
- New buildings and vessels
- New site development
- New public and private open space
- All sites, exclusive of their existing buildings or vessels, and including parking, outdoor storage and perimeters
- Painting of 25% or more of existing building exterior
- Remodeling/renovation of existing building or vessel exterior which requires a building permit (exclusive of roof repair)
- Interior remodeling/renovation of 50% or more of existing building floor area
- Renovations of existing sites
- Expansions of existing facilities, buildings or vessels which require a building permit

How long does the application process take?

In most cases, the Design Review process takes about 21 days from the application deadline. Filing an application, however, does not guarantee approval.

Who is the Port of Dubuque Design Review Committee?

The Port of Dubuque Design Review Committee is an appointed group of community stakeholders who meet once a month to review requests for improvements in the Port of Dubuque.

What criteria are considered when reviewing a Design Review application?

The Port of Dubuque Design Review Committee uses the Port of Dubuque Master Plan & Design Standards to evaluate development requests.

How do I apply for a Design Review?

1. Review the Port of Dubuque Design Standards. The standards are posted on the City's website at www.cityofdubuque.org/designguidelines. The standards also are available on CD from the Planning Services Department.

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2. Schedule a pre-application conference with a representative from the City Planning Services Department to discuss the project and design standards.
3. Following this meeting, all development projects, improvements, additions and new facilities including parking must be described in narrative text and illustrative engineering and/or architectural drawings, including the following:
 - Colored front and side building elevations (1/4" scale min.)
 - Colored illustrative site landscape plan (1:30 scale min.)
 - Dimensioned site plan (1:30 scale min.)
 - Dimensioned site lighting plan (1:30 scale min.) indicating proposed illumination patterns and light levels
 - Dimensioned architectural plans, including building elevations, cross sections, floor plans and details
 - Exterior construction materials samples, including brick, stone, glazing, windows and doors, signage materials, fencing, etc.
 - Project narrative
4. These application materials are to be submitted as a complete package to the Planning Services Department. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

Please include any other documentation that will help clarify your request and support your position. This information must be submitted by the application deadline. The Port of Dubuque Design Review Committee application deadline and meeting dates are attached.

Additional City reviews may be needed: For information on site development review and approval, contact the Planning Services Department at 589-4210.

For information on building, sign, demolition and other building-related permits, contact the Inspection & Construction Services Department at 589-4150.

For information on excavation in the public right-of-way and curb cuts, contact the Engineering Division at 589-4270.

For information on underground utilities, call Iowa One-Call at 800-292-8989.

How does Planning Services staff help you through the Design Review Process?

Planning Services staff provide a pre-application conference to orient you to the Design Standards and the review process. When we receive a complete application, your request will be placed on the agenda for the next available meeting date.

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Planning Services staff then will review your application, and prepare a report. Staff will send an agenda and a copy of your application materials to the Port of Dubuque Design Review Committee approximately one week before the Committee meeting.

Approximately one week before the meeting, you will receive an agenda for the meeting.

Do I need to be at the meeting?

Yes. You or your representative must present your request to the Port of Dubuque Design Review Committee and be available to answer questions, if needed. If you or your representative aren't at the meeting, your application will be tabled and your project will be delayed.

What happens at the meeting?

At the meeting, you or your representative will make presentations to the Committee. The Committee will recommend to approve, deny, modify, or table your request for more information.

Design approval, based on a review of the application materials identified above, and the Committee's recommendations, will be considered by the City Manager. The City Manager will approve, deny, modify or table your request for more information or further review. The applicant will receive a notice of decision from the City Manager to sign in agreement to any terms or conditions, and then return to the Planning Services Department. A building permit will not be issued by the Inspection & Construction Services Department until such approval is received in writing. Site development approval will not be issued by the Planning Services Department until such approval is received in writing. Once written approval is received, the project may commence, provided all other required City approvals and/or permits have been obtained.

If your proposal is denied by the City Manager, you may re-submit a revised application or file an appeal with the City Council.

This guide is not intended to cover every aspect of the design review process. It should not be considered the final or definitive authority on any of the matters it addresses. It is only a general guide. Questions on specific projects should be addressed to the Planning Services Department, 50 W. 13th Street, Dubuque, Iowa 52001, phone (563) 589-4210; e-mail: planning@cityofdubuque.org.

Attachments: Application Form

Description of Proposed Project Worksheet

Meeting Schedule

DESIGN REVIEW CHECKLIST

The following required information is needed to assist the Port of Dubuque Design Review Committee in understanding your proposed project. You are urged to bring any other items or information that would help describe what your project will look like and how it will impact the existing structure and/or the neighborhood.

- Colored front and side building elevations
- Colored illustrative site landscape plan
- Dimensioned site plan
- Dimensioned site lighting plan indicating proposed illumination patterns and light levels
- Dimensioned architectural plans, including building elevations, cross sections, floor plans and details
- Exterior construction materials samples, including brick stone, glazing, windows and doors, signage materials, fencing, etc.
- Project narrative

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT
(use additional pages as needed)

- 1) Please describe your project:

- 2) Please indicate the type of construction materials to be used in this project:

- 3) What is your timeline for completion of the proposed project?

- 4) What is the estimated project cost?

- 5) Any other information or comments?

Signature

Date

Board and Commission Meeting Schedule January-December 2026

Submit Application to:

Planning Services Department

City of Dubuque
50 W. 13th Street
Dubuque, IA 52001

planning@cityofdubuque.org

APPLICATION DUE BY

Dec 01
Jan 05
Feb 02
Mar 02
Mar 30
May 04
Jun 01
Jun 29
Aug 03
Aug 31
Sep 28
Oct 26
Nov 30

MEETING DATE

Long Range
Planning
Advisory
Commission
(LRPAC)

Meets Monthly	3rd Wednesday 5:30 p.m.
* Agenda link	cityofdubuque.org/LRPAC

Dec 17
Jan 21
Feb 18
Mar 18
Apr 15
May 20
Jun 17
Jul 15
Aug 19
Sep 16
Oct 21
Nov 18
Dec 16

Historic
Preservation
Commission
(HPC)

3rd Thursday 5:30 p.m.
cityofdubuque.org/HPC

Dec 18
Jan 15
Feb 19
Mar 19
Apr 16
May 21
Jun 18
Jul 16
Aug 20
Sep 17
Oct 15
Nov 19
Dec 17

Port of
Dubuque/
Chaplain
Schmitt Island
Design Review

4th Wednesday 3:00 p.m.
Design Guidelines

Dec 17
Jan 28
Feb 25
Mar 25
Apr 22
May 27
Jun 24
Jul 22
Aug 26
Sep 23
Oct 28
Nov 18
Dec 16

Zoning Board
of Adjustment
(ZBA)

4th Thursday 5:30 p.m.
cityofdubuque.org/ZBA

Dec 18
Jan 22
Feb 26
Mar 26
Apr 23
May 28
Jun 25
Jul 23
Aug 27
Sep 24
Oct 22
Nov 19
Dec 17

Zoning
Advisory
Commission
(ZAC)

1st Wednesday 6:00 p.m.
cityofdubuque.org/ZAC

Jan 07
Feb 04
Mar 04
Apr 01
May 06
Jun 03
Jun 15
Jul 01
Aug 05
Sep 02
Oct 07
Nov 04
Dec 02
Jan 06

City Council

3rd Monday 6:30 p.m.
cityofdubuque.org/novusagenda.com/AgendaPublic/

Tues. Jan 20
Feb 16
Mar 16
Apr 20
May 18
Jun 15
Jul 20
Aug 17
Sep 21
Oct 19
Nov 16
Dec 21
Tues. Jan 19

* Agenda contains meeting location information.

The agenda link connects to the Board or Commission website home page.

Scroll to 'Agendas & Minutes' and click on 'Most Recent Agenda'

APPLICATION FORM

Zoning Advisory Commission

- Amended PUD
- Rezoning/PUD/ID
- Text Amendment
- Simple Subdivision
- Preliminary Plat
- Major Final Plat
- Minor Final Plat
- Waiver from Site Design Standards

Zoning Board of Adjustment

- Conditional Use Permit
- Special Exception
- Variance
- Appeal

Development Services

- Annexation
- Limited Setback Waiver
- Site Plan Simple
- Site Plan Minor
- Site Plan Major
- Simple Subdivision
- Temporary Use Permit
- Port of Dubuque/
Chaplain Schmitt Island
Design Review

Historic Preservation Commission

- Demolition Review
- Historic Revolving Loan
- Certificate of Economic Non-Viability
- Design Review Certificate of
Appropriateness
- Advisory Design Review (Public
Projects)
- Historic Designation

Please complete the applicable sections below. Please type or print legibly.

A. Property Information

Site Location/Address: _____

Legal Description/Parcel ID#/Subdivision: _____

Existing Zoning: _____ Proposed Zoning: _____ Site Area (square feet/acres): _____

Historic District: _____ Landmark: Yes No

B. Describe proposal and reason for application (attach a letter of explanation, if necessary):

C. Applicant/Agent Information

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

D. Property Owner(s) Information

Name(s): _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

E. Certification: I/we, the undersigned, do hereby certify/acknowledge that:

1. Payment does not guarantee approval and fees are nonrefundable;
2. All additional required written and graphic materials are attached;
3. It is the property owner's responsibility to locate property lines and to review the abstract for easements and restrictive covenants; and
4. The information submitted herein is true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and upon submittal becomes public record.

Applicant/Agent: _____ Date: _____

Property Owner(s): _____ Date: _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Fee \$ _____ Ck# _____ CC Cash Received by _____ Date _____