

“FEMA Variances”

Federal law requires that any structure undergoing a renovation costing 50% or more of its value must comply with current floodplain requirements. The 50% figure is calculated from the cost of the building alone, not including the land, and is based on the assessed value from the Charleston County tax records unless a certified valuation from a licensed appraiser is provided.

Buildings that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as contributing buildings to a National Register Historic District, may receive an exemption from the floodplain regulations if they meet certain requirements. (See map of National Register Historic District and Expansion Area.)

To exempt a building from compliance, a variance must be granted by the Board of Appeals, which is administered through the Building Inspections Division in the Department of Public Service. (Please note that this is different from the two Boards of Zoning Appeals, which are administered through the Zoning Division of the Department of Planning, Preservation & sustainability.) The following is the process for requesting a variance:

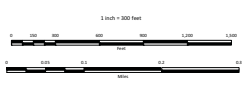
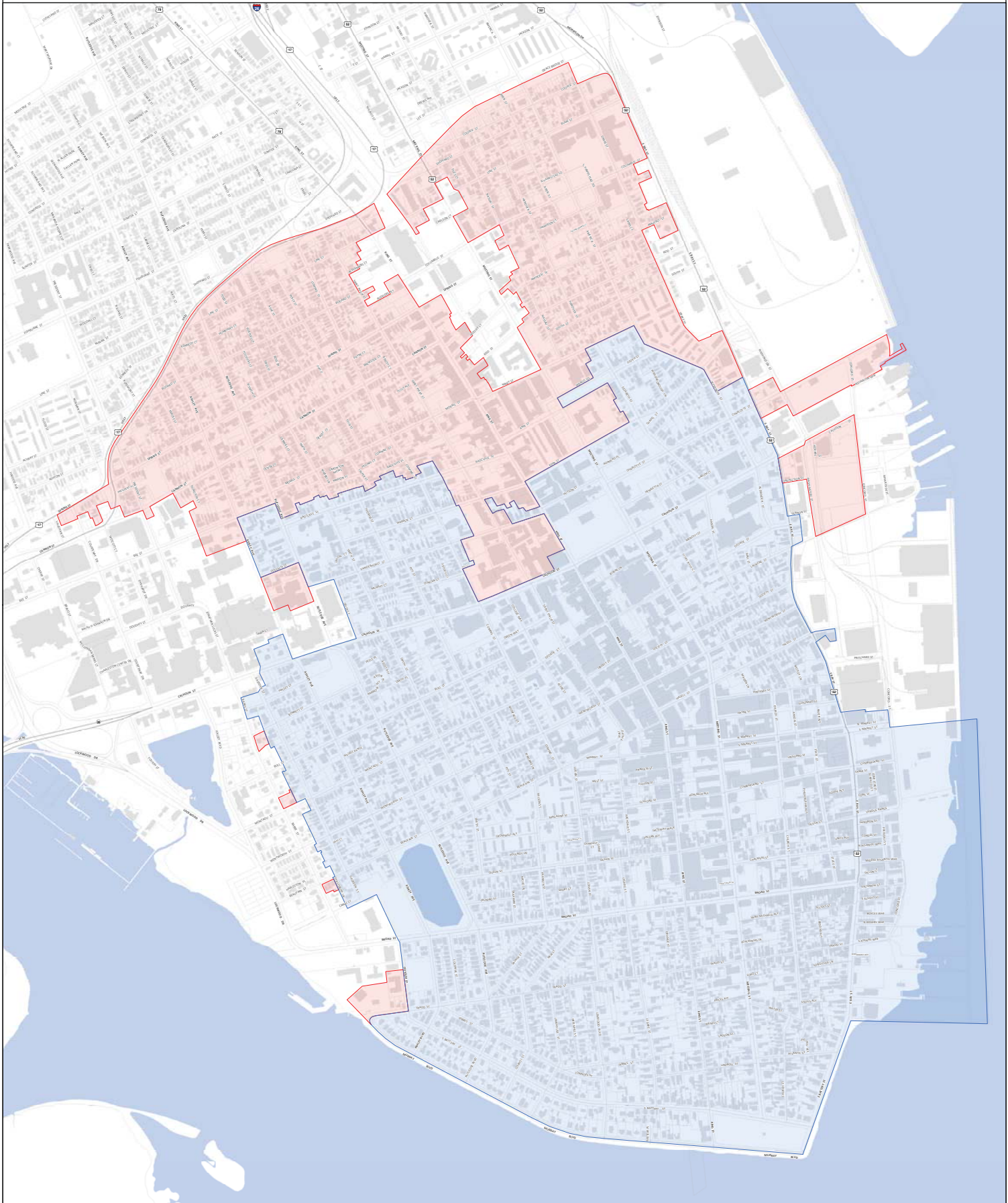
1. Plans for the work must be approved by the Board of Architectural Review or its staff (where applicable).
2. Submit an application form and fee for the Board of Appeals (BOA) to the Building Inspections Division. The BOA meets at 4:30 PM on the second Monday of each month.
3. Provide a copy of the approved plans and photographs of all four sides of the building, including views showing it in context with neighboring structures, to the Urban Design and Preservation Division.
4. Preservation Division staff will forward the plans and photographs, along with a letter requesting certification of National Register status, to the State Historic Preservation Office. The SHPO will review the proposed work to ensure that it will not have an adverse effect on the building. If the SHPO agrees that there is no adverse effect, a letter of concurrence will be provided to certify that the building is eligible for exemption.

Once a determination is received from the SHPO, the variance request will be heard at the next available Board of Adjustment and Appeals meeting. The following deadlines will apply:

- Materials submitted to Preservation Division - three weeks prior to the desired meeting date
- Application form & fee to Building Inspections Division - by Thursday prior to the desired meeting date

If you have questions concerning the variance process, please contact Edey Graves at 843-724-7438 or gravese@charleston-sc.gov; for questions concerning the certification process, please contact Erin Lanier, Senior Preservation Planner, at laniere@charleston-sc.gov or 843-724-3793.

- National Register District
- Expansion Area
- Highways
- Streets
- Railroads
- Parcels
- Water



National Register Status
The City of Charleston hereby certifies, representing the City of Charleston, that the information provided herein is a true and accurate representation of the National Register District and Expansion Area as of the date of this map. The City of Charleston is not responsible for any errors or omissions, including without limitation, the material content of this map, and the City of Charleston shall not be held liable for any damages, including without limitation, any damages caused by the use of this map, or any other map created by the City of Charleston.

