



HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION

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Certified Local Government Program: Preservation Through Local Planning

Any historic resource is important in the history of a particular community. Preservation activity occurs first at the local level; therefore, a community is in the best position to identify and protect its own resources. The Certified Local Government (CLG) program assists local governments with integrating historic preservation concerns with local planning decisions. Joining the CLG program is an important and effective way to preserve Georgia's historic places.

The Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources coordinates the CLG program through the Public Service and Outreach Office at the University of Georgia. This partnership provides assistance to CLGs and historic preservation commissions throughout Georgia.

Historic preservation has been a part of local government planning in this country since the 1930s. However, only a few communities took advantage of this early opportunity to include preservation as part of their planning process. With the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, a federal and state partnership was initiated that developed into a nationwide preservation program. As this program matured, the need for relating federal and state activities to local efforts became apparent.

The CLG program extends the federal and state preservation partnership to the local level. It enhances the local government role in preservation by strengthening a community's preservation program and its link with HPD. In Georgia, the CLG program builds upon the longstanding working relationship between HPD and the local governments by expanding the scope of local responsibilities and opportunities for preservation. Any city, town, or county that has enacted a historic preservation ordinance, enforces that ordinance through a local preservation commission, and has met requirements outlined in the *Procedures for Georgia's Certified Local Government Program* is eligible to become a CLG.

What are the benefits of becoming a CLG?

- Once certified, a local government becomes eligible to apply for federal historic preservation grant funds that are available only to CLGs.
- A CLG participates directly in the National Register of Historic Places program by reviewing local nominations prior to their consideration by the Georgia National Register Review Board.
- Opportunities for technical assistance in historic preservation are available in the form of training sessions, information material, statewide meetings, workshops and conferences.
- Communication and coordination are increased among local, state, and federal preservation activities, as well as with other CLGs.

There are five broad standards that must be met by a local government in order to become a CLG:

1. Enforce appropriate state or local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties. A local government must adopt a preservation ordinance that complies with the Georgia Historic Preservation Act, the state's enabling legislation for designating and protecting historic buildings, sites, and neighborhoods.
2. Establish an adequate and qualified historic preservation review commission by state or local legislation. A preservation review commission is a locally appointed board that reviews design changes in designated historic districts in order to maintain the district's special and irreplaceable qualities.
3. Maintain a system for survey and inventory of historic properties that furthers the purpose of the National Historic Preservation Act. A survey identifies properties that have historic significance and are therefore worthy of protection. The survey is the basis for the identification, designation, and protection of local historic districts and properties.
4. Provide for adequate public participation in the local historic preservation program, including the process for recommending properties for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. A local government must encourage the public's participation in its preservation efforts by having meetings that are open to all local residents, by sponsoring community-wide information and education activities and by encouraging National Register nominations.
5. Satisfactorily perform the responsibilities delegated to it under the National Historic Preservation Act. HPD works closely with a CLG to help it meet local needs and interests and to fully participate in the CLG program.

For more information, visit our Web site at www.gashpo.org or contact Leigh Burns, Certified Local Government Coordinator at, 404-651-5181 or Leigh.Burns@dnr.state.ga.us

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