

WHAT IS A CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

The National Historic Preservation Act established a nationwide program of financial and technical assistance to preserve historic properties--buildings, structures, sites, neighborhoods, and other places of importance in the historical and cultural life of the nation. A local government can participate directly in this program when the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) certifies that the local government has established its own historic preservation commission and a program meeting Federal and state standards. A local government that receives such certification is known as a "Certified Local Government" or "CLG".

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BECOMING A CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

- Certified Local Governments are eligible to apply for specially earmarked grants from the SHPO. At least ten percent of the annual Historic Preservation Fund grant made to the State Historic Preservation Office—Louisiana's Division of Historic Preservation - DHP) under the National Historic Preservation Act is distributed among CLGs.
- Certified Local Governments are recognized by Federal and state agencies as having special expertise in historic preservation.
- Certified Local Governments receive technical assistance and training from DHP. Such training and assistance can help a community pursue its preservation goals and its plans for development.
- Certified Local Governments review nominations of properties within their jurisdictions to the National Register of Historic Places before such nominations are submitted to the SHPO. This provides for formal local participation in the identification and national recognition of their historic resources.
- Certified Local Governments become part of a national technical assistance network. They receive publications issued by DHP and by the National Park Service (NPS). They know who in the state office to call upon for assistance, and how to obtain aid from National Park Service offices such as the National Register, Technical Preservation Services, Historic American Buildings Survey, and the Historic American Engineering Record.
- Representatives from CLGs are provided the opportunity to meet periodically with DHP, sharing experience and information.
- Certified Local Governments provide local perspective to the plans and programs of the state office, including statewide planning for preservation and development.

WHY SHOULD A LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATE IN THE CLG PROGRAM?

Obtaining status as a CLG can help a local government encourage, develop, and maintain its local preservation efforts in coordination with its development plans.

No one benefits as much from the preservation of local historic sites and buildings nor suffers as much by their destruction as the citizens of a community. It is they who live and work in historic homes and neighborhoods, who see the effects of rehabilitation projects every day, and who enjoy the economic and social benefits that rehabilitation of the community's historic properties bring. It is they who feel most personally the loss of a treasured local landmark.

Each historic building and structure represents a community investment that should not be discarded lightly; maintaining and rehabilitating older buildings and neighborhoods can mean savings in time, money, and raw materials. The preservation of a community's historical resources will enrich the lives of its inhabitants now and in the future.

WHAT IS A CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT REQUIRED TO DO?

The National Historic Preservation Act requires that a Certified Local Government:

- enforce state or local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties,
- establish and maintain a qualified historic preservation commission,
- maintain a system for the survey and inventory of historic properties in coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office,
- provide for public participation in its activities, and
- satisfactorily perform the responsibilities delegated to it by the State Historic Preservation Office

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, AND WHAT IS THE INVOLVEMENT OF CLGS IN THE PROCESS OF NOMINATING AND REVIEWING NOMINATIONS?

The National Register is a working list of properties determined to be of national, state, or local significance and worthy of preservation and consideration in planning or development decisions. The National Register is maintained by the National Park Service in Washington D.C.

Properties are listed in the National Register primarily through nominations by State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs). The significance of potential entries in the National Register are reviewed against established criteria. These criteria, established by the National Park Service, are worded in a flexible manner to provide for the diversity of resources across the country. Sources of further information concerning the National Register are listed at the end of this booklet.

Certified Local Governments participate in the National Register nomination process by reviewing all nominations of properties in their jurisdictions. Before a property within the jurisdiction of a Certified Local Government may be nominated by the SHPO for inclusion on the National Register, the SHPO must notify the local historic preservation commission, the chief elected official, and the owner of the property. After providing opportunity for public comment, the historic preservation commission can prepare a report as to whether or not, in its opinion, the property meets the criteria of the National Register. Subject to appeal, if both the chief elected official and the local historic preservation commission recommend that the property not be nominated to the National Register, the SHPO can take no further action on its nomination. The property may, however, be formally determined eligible for the National Register, even though it may not be nominated, to ensure that Federal agencies will consider it if Federal assistance or a Federal license is involved in projects that will affect it.

HOW DOES LISTING ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER BENEFIT CLGS?

National Register listing can enrich local preservation efforts by publicly establishing that local properties are significant enough to merit national recognition.

Federal tax law provides incentives for the preservation of properties listed on the National Register or included within registered historic districts. Investment tax credits are provided for the substantial rehabilitation of certified historic structures, and tax deductions are permitted for the contribution of easements on historic properties to qualified entities. Current information of Federal tax incentives as well as state incentives can be obtained from the State Historic Preservation Office.

The National Register is central to a number of Federal programs that encourage protection and improvement of historic properties.

National Register status, or a determination that a property is eligible for the National Register, identifies a property as one whose historical value must be considered in planning by Federal agencies and by communities using Community Development Block Grants and other forms of Federal assistance. These agencies and communities are required by the National Historic Preservation Act to obtain the comments of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation on the effects of their projects.