



## NEW HAMPSHIRE DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

State of New Hampshire, Department of Cultural Resources  
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# THE CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENTS PROGRAM IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

The “**Certified Local Governments**” (CLG) program, enacted by the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 (P.L. 96-515), is a *partnership* between municipal governments and the state historic preservation program, *to encourage and expand local involvement in preservation-related activities*. To be certified, a town or city must:

- (1) enforce appropriate state or local legislation for designation and protection of historic properties (this means that the community must have a legally-adopted *historic district*, and *adequate regulations* for administering the district ordinance);
- (2) establish an adequate and qualified historic preservation review *commission* (historic district commission, or heritage commission with historic district responsibilities) under state law and local ordinances;
- (3) maintain a system for the *survey and inventory* of historic properties;
- (4) provide for adequate *public participation* in the local historic preservation program, including the process of recommending properties for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places; and,
- (5) *satisfactorily perform* the responsibilities delegated to it by the State Historic Preservation Officer under P.L. 96-515.

The *entire municipality*, and not the Historic District or Heritage Commission alone, is designated as a “Certified Local Government.” Local governments that are certified have specific responsibilities for review of National Register of Historic Places nominations, for all properties within their communities (not just those within a historic district); they participate in the development of regional and statewide historic preservation goals; and they are eligible to apply for federal matching grants from a special “pass-through” fund set aside for the exclusive use of CLGs. (However, certification and funding are two separate processes; a community may choose to become certified, but not to apply for the federal CLG matching grants—but it must be certified in order to receive CLG grants.) CLG grants can be made only to certified communities, for eligible non-construction preservation activities. The federal program requirements specify that CLG grants are to be awarded exclusively to CLG communities, so *only* towns and cities can be CLG subgrantees. Non-profit organizations are encouraged to work *with* eligible municipalities to cooperatively plan and conduct CLG projects that address shared needs.

To learn more about the CLG program, or about working on a CLG project with an eligible municipality (Concord, Derry, Durham, Gilford, Goffstown, Hollis, Jaffrey, Nashua, Newington, Newport, Sanbornton, and

Somerset), or with a municipality which has applied for CLG status (Londonderry, Wakefield), contact the Division of Historical Resources, so that it can refer the inquiry to the appropriate local contacts.

To apply for CLG designation, the chief local elected official should send a letter of request to the State Historic Preservation Officer, accompanied by an application form (available from the DHR) and supporting documentation, including: a copy of the local historic preservation ordinance, as adopted by the Town Meeting or Mayor & Council or Board of Aldermen; the historic district commission’s rules of procedure, and the published criteria and guidelines for the commission’s actions; a map of the community, showing clearly-delineated boundaries of the locally designated historic district/s; a sample public notice for a historic district commission meeting; a sample notice to an applicant of a commission decision; and a list of the members of the commission and their terms of office, along with a brief resume for each, that demonstrates their interest, knowledge, or competence in historic preservation, and whether or not their qualifications meet the National Park Service professional standards (36 CFR 61).

The application materials are reviewed by the DHR to determine if they meet state and federal standards established by the CLG program. If they are approved, the certification agreement is signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer and the chief elected local official. If some of the application materials do not meet the standards (for example, the local historic district ordinance may not include a code of conduct), the DHR will work with the community to help it make the changes needed to qualify for the CLG program. After certification, ongoing technical assistance is available from the DHR to help the community and the historic district (or heritage) commission conduct historic preservation projects, address preservation issues and opportunities, and resolve concerns relating to federally-assisted activities that may affect historic properties.

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*The New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources / State Historic Preservation Office (DHR/SHPO) in the Department of Cultural Affairs is the New Hampshire state agency responsible for administering the federal preservation program created by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470). The DHR/SHPO is supported by the State of New Hampshire, the National Park Service (NPS) of the United States Department of the Interior, and by donated funds and services.*

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### THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION INCLUDE:

1.  Reviewing and rendering an opinion on all new construction, and on all alteration, repair, moving and demolition of structures and places within officially designated local historic district/s;
2.  Enforcing its decisions through appropriate procedural or judicial means;
3.  Preparing community-wide historical overviews;
4.  Conducting a comprehensive community-wide survey of historical resources;
5.  Making recommendations for designation of local districts to the appropriate local governing body;
6.  Establishing and using written guidelines for the conservation of formally designated historic districts;
7.  Acting in an advisory role to other elements of local government, regarding the identification, protection, and preservation of local historical resources;
8.  Acting as a liaison between local government to individuals and organizations concerned with historic preservation;
9.  Working toward continuing education about historic preservation issues and concerns for the community and its citizens;
10.  Providing general technical assistance, and specialized education and training services, for commission members, municipal officials, and the public;
11.  Participating in informational or educational meetings about Certified Local Governments, historic district [and heritage] commissions, and historic preservation issues;
12.  Preparing historical resources components of local master plans; and insuring that historical resources are taken into account at every level of local decision-making; and,
13.  Reviewing all proposed National Register nominations within the geographic boundaries of the community.
14.  [reserved for future initiatives that CLGs may recommend]

(based on paragraph V.B.2.p. of  
*REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE*  
March 1995)