

# Michigan's Certified Local Government Program

## The Purpose of the Certified Local Government Program

The Certified Local Government (CLG) program was created in 1980 through an amendment to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Jointly administered by the National Park Service and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the program is meant to strengthen preservation efforts at the local level. The CLG program encourages local communities to engage in preservation planning and, through a matching grants program, provides funding to implement a preservation planning program.

## Becoming a CLG

Any municipality can become a CLG: a county, township, city, town or village. Certification of the local government is done by the National Park Service (NPS) while the SHPO administers the CLG application process and provides on-going technical assistance to CLG communities. A community must meet the following requirements in order to be eligible for CLG status:

- Have a historic district ordinance in place that complies with Michigan's *Local Historic District's Act*, PA 169 of 1970, as amended
- Have an appointed historic district commission with a least one member that meets professional qualifications established by NPS (36CFR61)
- Provide for adequate public participation in the local historic preservation program
- Outline an on-going survey program to inventory historic resources in the community
- Develop four-year preservation goals for the community

A CLG community is required to submit an annual report of its preservation activities to the SHPO. Every four-years, the SHPO conducts a program review of the CLG.

## The Benefits of the CLG Program

Participation in the CLG program promotes a positive image for the community by demonstrating the commitment of local officials to work with the state and federal government to preserve historic resources. Becoming a CLG ensures that historic preservation issues are understood and addressed at the local level and are integrated into the local planning and decision-making process at the earliest possible opportunity. Other benefits include:

- participation in the preservation matching grants program
- an expanded role in the national register nomination process
- the review of federal undertakings for impact on historic resources under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act if the CLG has a qualified professional on staff

## CLG Grants and Projects

Perhaps the greatest benefit to local communities participating in the CLG program is that they are eligible to apply for preservation grant funds. The SHPO is required to pass through 10 percent of the funds it receives through the federal Historic Preservation Fund to the state's CLGs. Grants are awarded annually on a competitive basis. All grants must be matched 60/40 with local funds or donations and are available on a reimbursement basis only. Grant activities may include:

- Conducting a survey of historic resources;
- Preparing nominations to the National Register of Historic Places for buildings, sites, structures, objects and districts in the community;
- Developing design guidelines for local historic districts;
- Preparing a local preservation plan for managing historic resources;

- Preparing condition assessment or feasibility study for restoration of a historic structure;
- Cultural heritage tourism initiatives such as a walking or driving tour based on historic resources
- Rehabilitation of national register-listed properties; or
- Educating the community on historic preservation through the publication of brochures, a speaker's bureau, or the development of a website.

Innovative proposals that promote historic preservation, community development, and/or cooperation between organization in order to preserve historic resources are encouraged. The intent of the CLG grant program is to augment rather than replace existing local financial commitment to historic preservation activities.

The following projects were funded with CLG grants. They helped to identify, promote, and enhance the communities' historic resources, as well as bolster economic development and tourism in Michigan's CLGs:

- Washtenaw County surveyed 2,494 acres of farmland as part of an intensive level survey of German settlements in the western portion of the county. They later received a grant to put all the county's historic resource survey data into a Geographic Information System (GIS) and make it available to the public on the Internet.
- The city of Allegan undertook several education projects with three separate CLG grants. The city published a brochure for property owners in historic districts on how to comply with the historic district ordinance. A second brochure featured a walking tour of Allegan's historic resources. In addition, the city developed a historic preservation website, which contains information to assist property owners in historic districts. The city recently received a grant to restore a historic theater marquee downtown.
- The city of Holland installed footings, replaced rotted wood, and reattached the kitchen addition of the 1871 Thomas and Anna Morrissey House, now the Settler's House museum.
- The city of Lansing undertook a survey of historic resources related to its early automotive history in partnership with the Automobile National Heritage Area
- The city of Ypsilanti rehabilitated a brick freight depot in its historic Depot Town district for use as a farmer's market.
- The city of Kalamazoo undertook a condition assessment of the Kalamazoo State Hospital tower.
- The city of Detroit partnered with a local community college to develop a historic preservation curriculum that enabled students to participate in hand-on preservation work at Fort Dearborn
- Canton Township developed a cemetery preservation manual for use by Michigan communities.

Upon request, *The Certified Local Government Program in Michigan*, a manual that outlines the process for requesting certification, will be forwarded to you. Applications for certification may be submitted to the SHPO at any time during the year. Contact the State Historic Preservation Office, Michigan Historical Center, Box 30740, 702 W. Kalamazoo, Lansing, MI, 48909-8240, 517/373-1630 or e-mail us at [preservation@michigan.gov](mailto:preservation@michigan.gov). Visit our web site at [www.michiganhistory.gov/shpo](http://www.michiganhistory.gov/shpo).