

Preservation Through Partnership

an introduction to the
Certified Local Government program



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Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in joining the Certified Local Government (CLG) program!

If you are reading this, you are likely searching for ways to take your community's historic preservation program to the next level. Perhaps your community is just starting to look more seriously at how preservation can be coordinated with community development activities and you need ongoing technical assistance. Or, perhaps your community has been making strides in historic preservation for decades and you are interested in grant funding that can be used to support ongoing activities. No matter where your community is in its preservation journey, the CLG program might be the tool you need.

Jointly administered by the **Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)** and the **National Park Service (NPS)**, the CLG program provides an effective framework for promoting, supporting, and enhancing historic preservation activities at the local level. Through the program, communities partner with SHPO to plan for, protect, and tell the story of important historic places. In exchange, they gain access to specialized technical assistance, exclusive grant funding opportunities, and other benefits that help them meet their goals.

Put simply, the CLG program provides a platform for communities to build strong local preservation programs and gives them access to the tools they need to be successful in their efforts.

Ready to learn more? We encourage you to review this brief guide, which will introduce you to the CLG program. As you do, consider the ways that the program can support your efforts to promote community character, sense of place, economic vitality, and quality of life through historic preservation.

Have questions? Want to talk further about the program or preservation in your community? Reach out to us. We're always happy to chat.

We look forward to working alongside your community in its preservation journey!

Alan Higgins
SHPO CLG Coordinator



CLG Program — Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Certified Local Government?

Broadly speaking, a CLG is a local unit of government that makes a commitment to historic preservation at the local level. CLGs demonstrate this commitment by engaging in a partnership with the State Historic Preservation Office to plan for and carry out preservation activities that are important to the community.

Which communities can become a Certified Local Government?

Any local unit of government (county, township, city, or village) of any size can become a CLG.

How many communities are in the program?

More than **2,000 communities** across the country have joined the CLG program in recognition of the important role historic preservation plays in community development. See the **SHPO website** for a current list of CLGs in Michigan.

Does it cost anything to become a Certified Local Government?

No, there are no application or program fees.

What are the benefits of becoming a Certified Local Government?

The CLG program provides a framework for communities to develop strong local preservation programs and offers participating communities access to exclusive benefits and tools from SHPO and the National Park Service, including prioritized technical assistance, grant funding opportunities, training and education, and more. See pages 4-5 for additional details.

What are the requirements to become a Certified Local Government?

Every community that participates in the CLG program must meet five simple requirements designed to provide a solid foundation for an effective local preservation program. These include enacting a local historic district ordinance, appointing a historic district commission, identifying important historic places in the community, engaging the public, and meeting SHPO standards. See page 6 for additional details.

How does my community become a Certified Local Government?

Interested communities complete a brief application through which they demonstrate that they meet program requirements and identify their historic preservation goals. SHPO works with your community during this process to outline a practical approach for local preservation. See page 7 for additional details.

When are applications accepted?

Communities can apply to become a CLG at any time. SHPO accepts applications year-round and reviews them on a continual basis.

Can SHPO help me figure this out, talk to my community, or assist with an application?

Yes! SHPO's CLG Coordinator is available to help communities build support for local preservation activities and complete the CLG certification process. If you are interested in discussing the program, contact **SHPO's CLG Coordinator**.

What if we already have a local historic district ordinance and are ready to move forward?

If your community already has a local historic district ordinance meeting state requirements, your community has a quick path to CLG certification! Reach out to **SHPO's CLG Coordinator** to discuss next steps and begin the application process.

How Does The CLG Program Help My Community?

The Preservation Framework

Rooted in preservation best practices, the CLG program gives credibility to local historic preservation activities, their importance, and their relationship to community planning and development initiatives. The program also promotes preservation activities consistent with national and state standards, which encourage responsible decision-making for important historic places in the community.

Participation in the CLG program also signals that a community is preservation-ready, supporting a vision for its future that respects the link between the community's built and cultural environment and its sense of place. At a basic level, the program helps communities to:

- Integrate preservation into local planning and decision-making processes;
- Identify, protect, and tell the story of important historic places in the community;
- Plan for and leverage historic resources as valuable community goods;
- Identify and facilitate opportunities for reinvestment and rehabilitation; and
- Partner with state and federal programs in support of local efforts.

The Preservation Partnership

CLG status signifies that your community is part of a larger movement built on a network of partnerships among local communities, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the National Park Service. Importantly, the partnership provides your community with exclusive access to dedicated and prioritized assistance from SHPO, which works closely with CLGs as they plan for, build, and engage local historic preservation programs. The partnership also gives your community access to annual grant funding opportunities, which are made available solely to communities that participate in the CLG program.

Through the program, SHPO actively works alongside your community to help you build and implement an effective local historic preservation program. SHPO's approach to this partnership is rooted in the following guiding principles:



Collaborative: SHPO is an active partner in the success of local preservation programs and believes that meaningful engagement with and assistance to our CLG partners is crucial to the success of the program. SHPO's CLG Coordinator provides ongoing support and assistance designed to help our communities succeed.



Flexible: Communities across the state vary widely in their size, capacity, and resources, and preservation tools and activities will look different in every community. While CLGs are required to meet minimum standards, SHPO works with each CLG to move preservation interests forward in a way that is practical, achievable, and meaningful for the community.



Incremental: The CLG program recognizes that preservation activities are not stagnant; they are part of dynamic, ongoing processes. Change takes time, and no community has everything figured out. Incremental, sustained progress toward preservation best practices is the goal.



Goal-oriented: The CLG program doesn't tell you what your community's preservation goals should be. Rather, the program is intended to help you put in place the tools necessary to meet the goals that are important to you. It's a bottom-up approach that recognizes that historic preservation is most meaningful and impactful at the local level.

What Are The Benefits Of Being a CLG?

The CLG program provides a unique opportunity for communities to leverage the skillset, assistance, and resources of the State Historic Preservation Office and National Park Service. A summary of the program's primary benefits is provided below, and additional detail on select benefits follows on the next page.

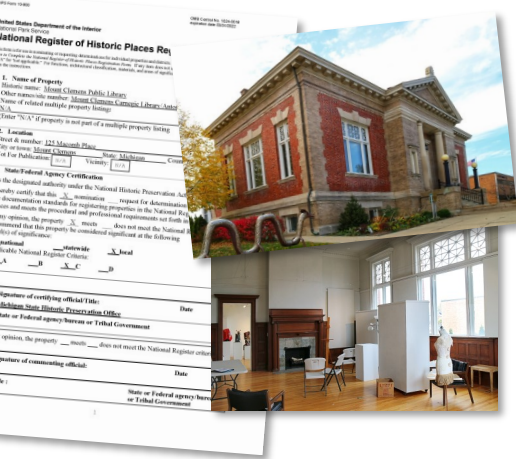
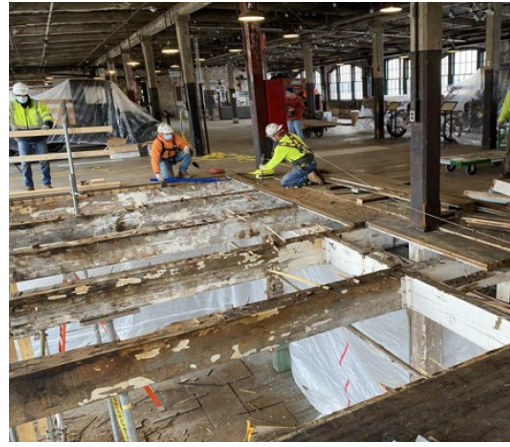
	CLG Community	Non-CLG Community
SHPO Technical Assistance	Prioritized support from SHPO CLG Coordinator	General SHPO support
Building Consultations with one of SHPO's Historical Architects	Yes, with brief report following visit	Yes, no report
Archaeological Advice		
Annual SHPO grant opportunities for rehabilitation projects		
Annual SHPO grant opportunities for planning, documentation, and education projects		
Access to SHPO CLG Virtual Resource Library, Program Bulletins, and more		
Dedicated email list and newsletters with news and notices of training and funding availability		
Access to Community Partnership Projects, which provide no-cost solutions for small preservation planning projects		
Program-specific training and educational opportunities		
Enhanced role in nominating properties to the National Register		
Scholarships from National Park Service to attend certain preservation conferences*		
Access to National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund grants*		Some

*Dependent on annual availability from NPS

CLG GRANTS

One of the greatest benefits of becoming a CLG is that participating communities are eligible to apply for annual grant funding set aside exclusively for CLGs. That's right, yearly grant funding is only available to CLGs! Non-profits and public entities in a CLG community can also apply in partnership with the CLG (local government).

Since the start of Michigan's CLG program, SHPO has provided more than 150 grants to CLGs across the state, supplementing local preservation activities and often serving as a catalyst for additional investment. Grants are provided for two categories of projects: (1) preservation planning, documentation, and education projects and (2) rehabilitation planning and rehabilitation projects. For more detailed information, see our [CLG Grants page at the SHPO website](#).



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

Intended to fill the gap between a community's desire to complete preservation projects and its lack of capacity to carry out projects on its own, **Community Partnership Projects** allow a CLG to leverage the expertise of SHPO to complete small projects that might not otherwise be possible and to do so at no cost. CLGs can apply for one of three project types: historic resource surveys, National Register nominations, or design guidelines.

At the end of the process, CLGs get a professionally finished product from SHPO that they can use to carry forward their preservation goals. Because this is both a technical assistance and educational initiative, participating CLGs also get hands-on experience and training in preservation activities, which better equip them to carry out future projects on their own.

SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

While SHPO assists all communities, CLGs receive dedicated and prioritized assistance from SHPO's CLG Coordinator, who works daily with CLGs on their preservation programs; visits communities to have on-the-ground discussions about local preservation strategies; and develops special initiatives to help communities move their preservation programs forward.

The CLG Coordinator also works with other SHPO staff on collaborative efforts. These include, for example, working with the Survey Coordinator to help CLGs identify practical strategies for identifying and documenting important places in the community; coordinating with SHPO's historical architect to complete building consultations for "problem" properties; and coordinating with SHPO archaeologists to provide education and assistance with archaeological sites.



TRAINING AND EDUCATION

CLGs have access to a curated collection of training materials and technical resources available from SHPO, as well as ongoing program bulletins and newsletters. CLGs can also participate in workshops, regional roundtables, webinars, and other community outreach initiatives designed specifically for CLG staff, elected officials, and HDC members. Communities that want one-on-one support can work with SHPO's CLG Coordinator to arrange for community visits. These provide the opportunity to discuss local preservation strategies, request feedback on particular challenges the community may be facing, and provide the HDC and its staff with training on issues related to design review and administration of local historic districts.

What's Required To Be A CLG?

All communities across the country that participate in the CLG program agree to meet five basic requirements established by the National Park Service. Each State Historic Preservation Office then further defines the requirements based on its own standards and guidelines.

In total, these requirements provide an effective framework for integrating historic preservation into local decision-making processes and community development activities. They also provide the community with a solid foundation for identifying, planning for, protecting, and telling the story of important historic places.

Program Requirement	Why Is It Important?
<p>1. Enact a Local Historic District Ordinance meeting the requirements of Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act (Public Act 169 of 1970 [PA 169])</p>	<p>A local historic district ordinance is basic to the success of a community's preservation efforts. The ordinance formally demonstrates the local government's commitment to preservation and provides the legal authority for communities to protect single site and multi-resource historic districts.</p>
<p>2. Appoint and maintain an active Historic District Commission in accordance with PA 169</p>	<p>A local government appointed commission is vital to making informed decisions about changes to designated historic resources in the community and ensuring that due process is fairly applied to all property owners. The commission is also critical in helping guide the community's preservation planning goals and outreach.</p>
<p>3. Implement a strategy for ongoing, incremental survey of important historic places across the community</p>	<p>Effective planning begins with knowing what you have; preservation is no different. When we understand the sites important to our community, we are better equipped to plan for them. We are also better positioned to collaborate with local stakeholders in discussions about place, heritage stewardship, and community identity.</p>
<p>4. Provide for public participation in the local historic preservation program, including activities of the historic district commission</p>	<p>Public participation is key to the success of a local preservation program. It fosters public awareness and appreciation for our built and cultural environment and links preservation to broader community goals, priorities, and place-based initiatives. Public participation also includes ensuring that the activities of the historic district commission are transparent, consistent, and free of bias.</p>
<p>5. Satisfactorily meet program requirements, including compliance with SHPO goal setting and reporting requirements</p>	<p>A goal-oriented approach helps CLGs prioritize use of their resources and provides momentum for grant funding and technical assistance requests. Completing a brief annual report detailing basic preservation activities complements this approach and provides an easy way to capture preservation activities in the community, which can be used to boost support with the public and elected officials and identify important next steps.</p>

How Does Our Community Become A CLG?

Step 1. Contact SHPO's CLG Coordinator

Communities are encouraged to contact SHPO's CLG Coordinator prior to applying to become a CLG. They should also review [Michigan's Certified Local Government Program Certification Manual](#) for full information on the program. SHPO's CLG Coordinator is here to help you at each step. They are available to meet with local stakeholders to discuss the program and talk through the application process, which can streamline the community's entry into the program.

Step 2. If not already completed:

2a. Enact a Local Historic District Ordinance

Adopt a local historic district ordinance complying with the requirements of Public Act 169 of 1970. Need a starting point? Use [SHPO's model ordinance](#), which you can adapt for your community.

2b. Appoint a Historic District Commission

Following adoption of the ordinance, appoint members to the historic district commission. Once established, the commission should hold its first meeting and approve bylaws.

Step 3. Complete the Application for CLG Certification

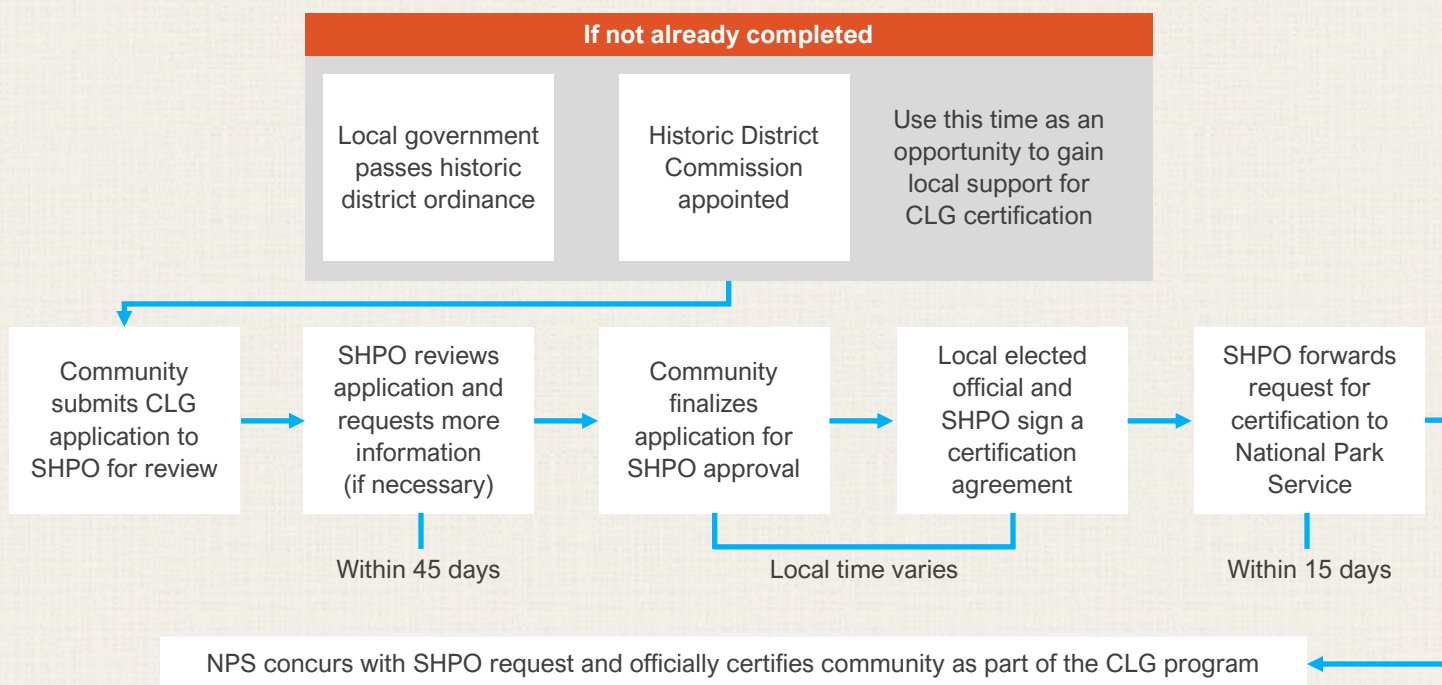
Once a community has its local district ordinance and historic district commission in place, it can apply for CLG certification. Applications can be requested from SHPO or accessed at the [SHPO CLG program webpage](#).

Step 4. SHPO Review of Application and Certification Agreement

SHPO reviews the application to make sure it's complete. If necessary, SHPO may request supplemental information. Once the application is satisfactory, SHPO prepares a certification agreement for signature by the chief elected official (e.g., mayor) of the local government and the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Step 5. NPS Review and Approval

SHPO compiles the community's information and requests certification from the National Park Service. Upon concurrence from NPS, the community is officially entered into the CLG program and eligible to take advantage of program benefits.



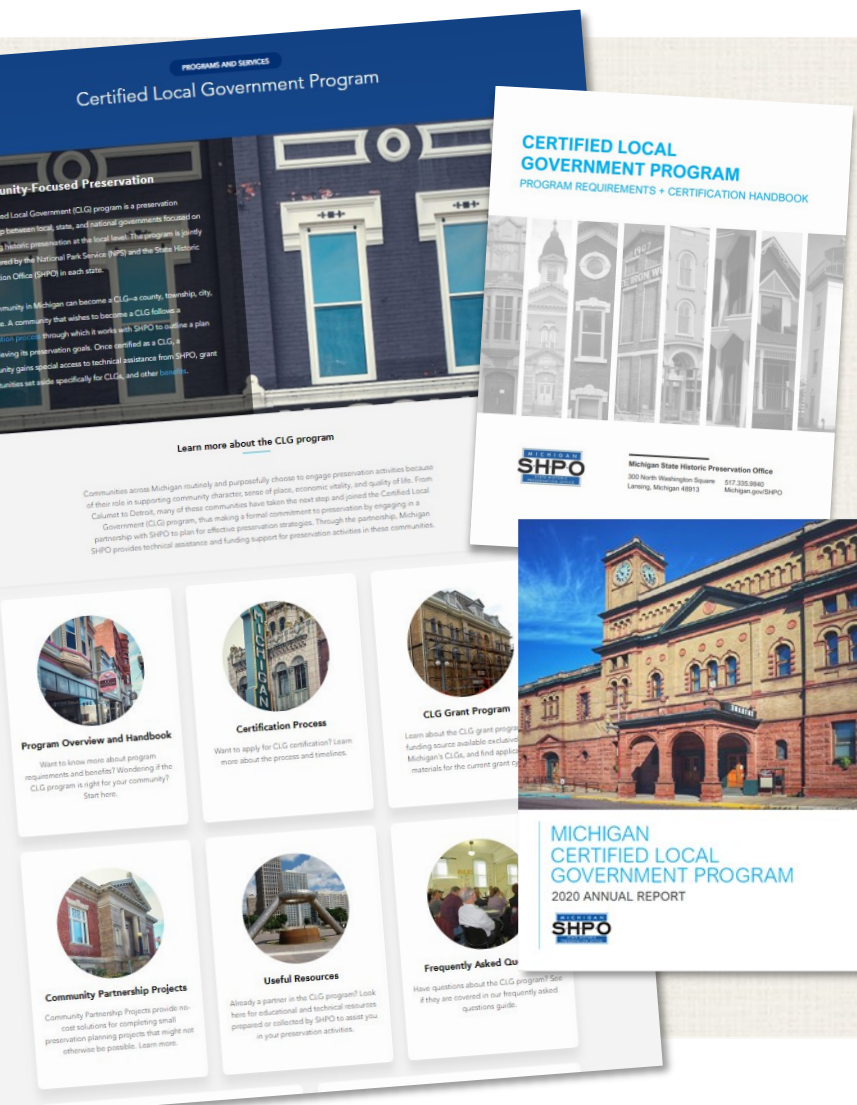
Ready To Be Michigan's Next CLG?

Does the CLG program sound like it might be a good fit for your community? Consider these questions:

- Are you exploring ways to promote historic preservation activities in your community?
- Are you looking for ways to encourage historic preservation as part of community planning and development processes?
- Are you searching for tools to enhance your ongoing efforts?
- Would grant funding opportunities be helpful to your community?
- Is your local government willing to make a commitment to meeting program guidelines?
- Does your community have a local historic district ordinance meeting state standards or is it willing to enact one?
- Has your community appointed a historic district commission or is it willing to do so?
- Is your community willing to collaborate with SHPO on discussions and preservation activities?

If so, let's continue the discussion! Reach out to SHPO's CLG Coordinator, Alan Higgins, at higginsS3@michigan.gov to learn more about the program. We're also happy to support local conversations with stakeholders and discuss how the CLG program can benefit your community.

We look forward to hearing from you!



WANT MORE INFO?

Check out SHPO's CLG program website at www.michigan.gov/CLGgrants. In addition to basic program information, the site includes detailed information on the CLG grant program; a discussion of program benefits; frequently asked questions; and information on Michigan's CLG communities.

In particular, these resources may be useful:

Michigan Certified Local Government Program: Requirements + Certification Handbook

The CLG program handbook discusses program requirements and benefits in detail. It also provides a deeper discussion of SHPO's approach to working with communities.

CLG Program Annual Reports

Our annual reports highlight some of the preservation work happening in CLG communities across the state, including ways in which the CLG program supports local efforts.

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