



WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

816 State Street • Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Historic Preservation - Public History Division

Preservation Information

Procedures for the Certification of Local Governments in Wisconsin

The Certified Local Government program was enacted as part of the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 and has been established in Wisconsin to further encourage and assist historic preservation by local governments.

A Certified Local Government (CLG) is any city, village, county, or town that has been certified by Wisconsin's State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the Department of the Interior as meeting the following basic criteria:

1. Enforces appropriate local ordinance for the designation and protection of historic properties.
2. Has established a qualified historic preservation commission by local ordinance.
3. Maintains a system for the survey and inventory of local historic properties.
4. Provides for public participation in the local historic preservation program.

Once certified, a local government will:

- Be eligible to apply for matching subgrants from the federal Historic Preservation Fund allocation to the state, to be used for eligible CLG activities
- Be eligible to authorize the use of the Wisconsin Historic Building Code for locally designated historic buildings
- Be responsible for reviewing National Register of Historic Places nominations within its municipal boundaries before they are sent to the State Historic Preservation Review Board
- Submit an annual report of historic preservation activities to the SHPO

How to Apply for Certified Local Government Status in Wisconsin

The chief elected official of the local government submits a letter requesting certification to the State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historic Preservation, Wisconsin Historical Society, 816 State Street, Madison, WI 53706. The request must consist of the following:

1. Assurance that the local government will enforce appropriate state and local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties and coordinate its activities with the State Historic Preservation Officer. If all requirements are not presently met, a statement must be included indicating how and when they will be fulfilled.
2. A copy of the local historic preservation ordinance, including any amendments.
3. A list of properties and districts designated under the local ordinance, including proper names and addresses.
4. A list of the local historic preservation commission members, including qualifications or expertise in fields related to historic preservation.
5. If the local preservation commission does not include professional members from the disciplines of history, architectural history, architecture, or archeology, a statement demonstrating that the local government has made reasonable efforts to appoint such members.

6. If the disciplines of history, architectural history, architecture, and archeology are not all represented on the commission, a proposal on how the local preservation commission will obtain such professional expertise to review National Register of Historic Places nominations or take other delegated actions that will impact properties normally evaluated by professionals in these disciplines.

7. A copy of the local historic preservation plan, if available, or a brief statement describing the local preservation program.

8. If appropriate, a list of any additional duties, responsibilities or activities that the local government agrees to undertake if certified.

The SHPO will respond to an adequately documented request for certification in less than 60 days. If the local government fulfills the requirements, the SHPO will approve the certification request and prepare a written Certification Agreement for signature by the chief elected official of the local government. It will list the specific responsibilities of the local government when certified. The Certification Agreement and the CLG application will then be sent to the Department of the Interior for review.

What Certified Local Government Activities are Eligible for Funding?

In general, activities that are eligible for CLG funding include:

- Survey projects to identify and evaluate significant historic properties
- Preparation of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places
- Educational activities, such as workshops, production of slide or video programs, preparation of booklets, brochures or other publications that further the goals of historic preservation

- Development of a cultural resource section of a comprehensive plan
- Development of a historic preservation plan for a historic district
- Facade rehabilitation plans for historic buildings

How Does a CLG Apply for Funding?

After becoming certified, a CLG may apply for matching subgrants during the annual application period. Application forms, annual state priorities for funding, and criteria for awarding subgrants are available from the SHPO.

Local Governments may be certified and participate in review of National Register nominations and other activities whether or not they elect to apply for CLG funds.

For further information contact Joe DeRose, Division of Historic Preservation, Wisconsin Historical Society, 816 State St., Madison, WI 53706, telephone 608-264-6512; email jrderose@whs.wisc.edu. Also available for loan is a 30-minute videotape (VHS) entitled *Preservation Possibilities*, which describes the national Certified Local Government program.

Visit the Wisconsin Historical Society Web site: www.wisconsinhistory.org