

# Wisconsin's Certified Local Government Partnership Program

Local historic preservation ordinances enable Wisconsin communities to identify and protect historic places and maintain the local identity that sets them apart. The CLG partnership program helps communities develop local historic preservation policies that fit their needs and employ best practices refined over nearly a century of local preservation policy experience in America. At the end of 2023, Wisconsin had 78 CLG partner communities.



## WHAT IS A CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CLG)?

A CLG partner is a city, village, county, or town government that has been certified by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the National Park Service to meet these basic standards:

- ▶ Has adopted an ordinance that provides criteria for designating historic properties (often called landmarks) and design standards for guiding changes to those properties, and creates a Historic Preservation Commission to administer the ordinance.
- ▶ Provides for public participation in local decision-making for historic places.
- ▶ Enforces state and local legislation for the identification and protection of historic properties.
- ▶ Maintains a strategy for the survey and inventory of local historic properties.

## HOW DOES A HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC) WORK?

An HPC is a commission of a local government, created by ordinance and empowered to administer the provisions of a local historic preservation ordinance. Local experts with knowledge of history, architecture, planning, construction, and related fields are appointed and have the powers and duties granted by the ordinance. In the CLG program, HPCs have quasi-judicial authority to review and approve (permit) exterior alterations to designated historic properties based on the design standards in the local ordinance. Wisconsin state law allows decisions of the HPC to be appealed to the local council or board. HPCs often take on additional educational or advisory roles for which they have expertise.

## WHAT IS A LANDMARK?

A Landmark is a building, structure, or district that has been shown to meet the criteria in a local ordinance for being a historically important place, and has been officially designated as a historic place under the provisions of the local ordinance by the local government.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING A CLG?

CLG partner governments are eligible to apply for no-match grants from the Wisconsin SHPO to undertake historic preservation planning projects like surveys, nominations, design guidelines, and educational programs. The Wisconsin SHPO grants around \$130,000 each year.

CLG partners have direct access to the wide range of expertise in the Wisconsin SHPO to help them comply with state and federal laws, resolve problems in local preservation ordinances, and build a local historic preservation program that fits the needs and goals of their community.

## WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES?

CLG partners are required to:

- ▶ Send copies of HPC meeting minutes to the Wisconsin SHPO.
- ▶ Enforce and comply with local, state, and federal laws related to historic properties.
- ▶ Submit an annual report of HPC activities to the Wisconsin SHPO.
- ▶ Meet at least quarterly.



For more information and resources visit [wisconsinhistory.org/hp/about.asp](https://wisconsinhistory.org/hp/about.asp).

For more information about the CLG partnership program contact Jason Tish at (608) 264-6512 or [jason.tish@wisconsinhistory.org](mailto:jason.tish@wisconsinhistory.org).

This data comes from 2022 Annual Reports submitted by Certified Local Government partner governments in Wisconsin and from grant records. Annual reporting is a requirement of the CLG program.



## 2023 STATEWIDE CLG STATISTICS

**94%**

of CLGs have an active commission that enforces the local ordinance.

**96%**

of proposed projects on historic properties were approved.

**75%**

of commissions met at least twice in 2023 (range 2 to 20).

**100%**

of proposed projects were closed out within 2 meetings.

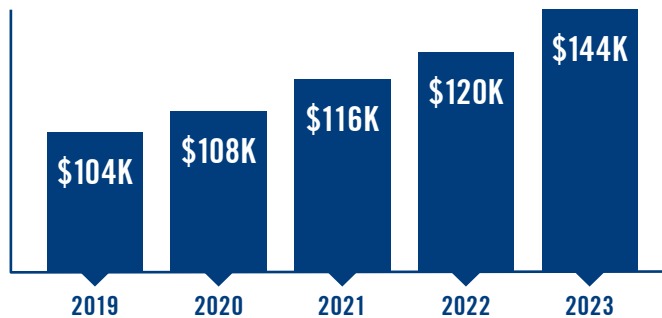
**68%**

of commissions reviewed at least one exterior project on a local landmark (range 1 to 203).

**36%**

of CLG communities offer some sort of assistance to owners of historic properties (including grants, utility assistance, or fee waivers).

### 5-YEAR GRANT FUNDING TO CLGs



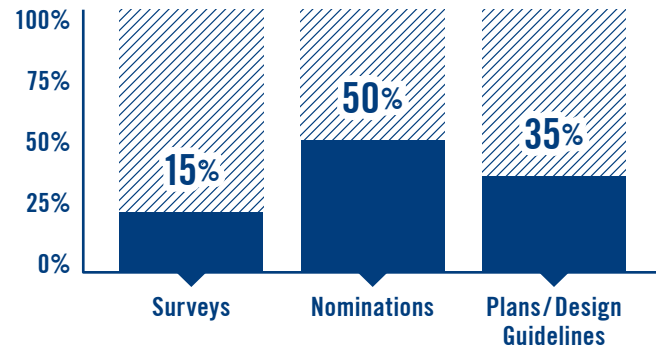
#### THREE NEW CITIES JOIN THE CLG PROGRAM

► **Reedsburg (Sauk County)** had an active local historic preservation program for many years, and an ordinance that met the requirements for the CLG program. In 2022, the city became a CLG partner, and received a grant to survey the whole city for historic places.

► **Prairie du Chien (Sauk County)** had a good local historic preservation ordinance, but wanted to bring tax credit financing to downtown property owners. They adopted amendments to their ordinance and became a CLG partner. The city received a grant to nominate their downtown to the National Register of Historic Places, bringing tax credit financing to the district.

► **Wisconsin Rapids (Wood County)** In order to reach their community goals for cultural resources, the city became a CLG partner to take advantage of the expertise and funding from the SHPO. The city will use grant funding to survey the whole city for historic places.

### 5-YEAR CLG GRANT AWARDS



#### THE CLG PROGRAM IN WISCONSIN

► [wihist.org/CLG](http://wihist.org/CLG)

All the requirements, responsibilities, and benefits of the CLG program on one page.

#### HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION TRAINING

► [wihist.org/hpc-training](http://wihist.org/hpc-training)

The Wisconsin SHPO provides a self-guided online training course for Historic Preservation Commissioners.

#### APPLY FOR A CLG SUBGRANT

► [wihist.org/subgrant](http://wihist.org/subgrant)

The Wisconsin SHPO administers an annual no-match grant program that supports historic preservation planning projects in CLG partner communities. Eligibility criteria and application materials are available online.