

# Certified Local Government Program

## Program Overview for Pennsylvania Communities

---



The Certified Local Government (CLG) program is a partnership between municipal governments, the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO), and the National Park Service (NPS) that promotes and supports holistic historic preservation programs and policies in Pennsylvania municipalities. Designation is a mark of distinction that provides participating communities with credibility, as well as access to technical assistance and grant programs; it means that the municipality follows best practices and views preservation as an integral part of its community and economic development.

### What does the CLG program in Pennsylvania do?

The CLG program in Pennsylvania recognizes the unique characteristics of the Commonwealth's communities while promoting technical, legal, and procedural best practices that are common to all participating communities. The CLG program in Pennsylvania:



- Establishes standards and distributes guidance for best practices in municipal historic preservation programs;
- Engages CLGs in implementing State and Federal historic preservation programs;
- Provides technical and financial support for projects that increase local capacity and implement best practices related to historic resources;
- Facilitates networking and the exchange of ideas among CLGs; and
- Facilitates training opportunities for municipal leaders.

### Why should my community become a CLG?

The CLG program provides exclusive benefits for participating communities, including a dedicated grant program, specialized technical assistance, and participation in the National Register of Historic Places nomination process. Beyond the tangible benefits, being a CLG also provides **credibility** and **distinction** by demonstrating that the community is following best practices and meeting its legal and ethical obligations.



- The **CLG Grant Program** provides funding to develop the tools, products, programs, and services municipalities need to administer their local preservation programs effectively and in accordance with the CLG program guidelines.
- **Designing for Preservation Solutions** provides free design services to CLGs and related community organizations.
- **Guidance for Preservation Solutions** is a technical assistance program that provides CLGs with free, comprehensive advice from the PA SHPO on cultural resource issues and projects in their communities.
- CLGs participate formally in the **National Register of Historic Places review process** for properties in their communities.
- Projects within CLGs will receive **special consideration** for **Keystone Communities funding** from DCED and **Keystone Historic Preservation Grants** from PA SHPO.

## What are the requirements for being a CLG?



In order to become a CLG, municipalities must demonstrate their commitment to historic preservation by having certain policies and practices in place at the time of application. These minimum certification requirements are the building blocks of an effective local preservation program and will help the community make the most of its participation in the CLG program. To remain active and in good standing, CLGs must meet ongoing performance standards and submit brief annual reports.

The Certification Checklist and the CLG Guidelines and Procedures provide detailed information about the specific tools, policies, and practices that a municipality must have in place in order to be eligible for the CLG program. These core requirements include:

- Enacting an historic preservation ordinance that, at a minimum, requires the municipality to review and approve the proposed demolition of designated historic buildings and new construction in historic districts;
- Appointing a preservation commission or Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB) to administer the preservation ordinance;
- Incorporating historic resources and historic preservation strategies into the community's comprehensive plan.

## How can my community become a CLG?

If your community is interested in becoming a CLG, your first step should be to talk with the PA SHPO Community Preservation Coordinator for your region about your community's preservation program and the application process.



Here are a few important pointers and tips about the application process:

- There are no application deadlines, and applications are accepted on a rolling basis.
- Once your municipality submits its application, the certification process generally takes 3 to 4 months to complete.
- The CLG application must be signed by the chief elected official in your municipality. This typically requires authorization from the governing body, such as the City or Borough Council or Board of Supervisors.

### For more information:

CLG Program in Pennsylvania website:

<https://www.phmc.pa.gov/Preservation/CLG-Program/Pages/default.aspx>

Find your Community Preservation Coordinator:

<https://www.phmc.pa.gov/Preservation/Community-Preservation/Pages/Contact-Forms.aspx>

Email:

[ra-phclg@pa.gov](mailto:ra-phclg@pa.gov)