



Training and Continuing Education Guidelines for Municipal Historic Preservation Programs in Pennsylvania

Local governments are critically important partners in the preservation of the Commonwealth's historic communities. In addition to owning and stewarding many historic buildings, municipalities enact ordinances, administer incentives, facilitate projects, and provide leadership on preservation issues. To be effective, it is important that individuals involved in these programs and initiatives, including review board members, elected officials, planning and zoning commissioners, and municipal staff, have an understanding of core preservation programs and key concepts. Education helps these leaders provide sound advice to their citizens, make good decisions, and be effective advocates for their communities. It is also important for this knowledge to be current and based on best practices. These guidelines are an effort to identify the key concepts, skills, and competencies that individuals who serve in official capacities in local government preservation programs should have knowledge of to be effective in their roles and responsibilities.

How these guidelines are used

The PA SHPO does not evaluate or certify individual training programs for their consistency with these guidelines. Training and education programs may be offered by a variety of providers, including private consultants, nonprofit organizations, industry/trade associations, and government agencies. Organizations and individuals developing training programs for local governments are encouraged to use these guidelines to select content and speakers that address the needs of municipalities. Attendees and participants in training programs should use these guidelines to evaluate the quality and relevance of available programs to their community's needs.

Relationship of these guidelines to the Certified Local Government program

The Certified Local Government (CLG) program requires HARB/preservation commissions members in participating communities to participate in at least 4 hours of training/continuing education programs each year. Programs that meet that requirement will relate to one or more of the standards identified in these guidelines.

Training and education programs may take many forms

Training programs may take multiple forms and formats including conferences, seminars, webinars, demonstrations, etc. These programs may be offered at large national or regional gatherings or tailored to a community's specific needs and presented locally.

Speakers and program sponsors should be knowledgeable about relevant subject matter

Training programs may be offered by a variety of organizations and individuals including private consultants/contractors, nonprofit organizations, industry/trade associations, government agencies, and for-profit entities. Speakers should have demonstrated knowledge, training, and experience in the subject matter they are presenting. Programs related to specific products, materials, or proprietary services are acceptable provided they are related to one or more of the content areas outlined in these guidelines.

GUIDELINES: Programs must provide knowledge or skills that relate to local historic preservation issues

- A. **Identifying and Understanding Historic Places** – programs should help participants understand American history, culture, architecture, and landscapes and offer skills and methods for research and documentation. Examples may include, but are not limited to:
- American architectural history, style, and construction techniques
 - Research resources and methods for historic places
 - Cultural resource survey methods and documentation
- B. **Evaluating Significance and Designating Historic Properties** – programs should explore the concepts and theories of what makes places worth preserving and the systems used to designate such places. Examples include, but are not limited to:
- Significance and integrity
 - National Register of Historic Places
 - Applying designation criteria
- C. **Treatment of Historic Places** – programs should explore the various approaches to how historic places change and evolve over time and how decisions related to these approaches are made. Examples include, but are not limited to:
- The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties
 - Construction methods and materials, both traditional and modern, and new technologies
 - Application of guidelines
 - Reading plans and specifications
- D. **Defensible Decision-Making** – programs should provide participants with information, resources, and practices that facilitate sound, rational, and defensible decision-making. Examples include:
- Meeting procedures
 - Legal principles, including due process
 - Documentation of decisions and record-keeping
 - Evaluation of economic hardship
- E. **Community Engagement, Education, and Constituent Service** – programs should explore topics related to fostering public support and appreciation for historic places and preservation, and making preservation programs accessible and user-oriented. Examples include, but are not limited to:
- Public programming and interpretation for historic places
 - Communicating effectively with the media
 - Advocacy and relationship-building with elected officials
 - Developing an effective web and social media presence
 - Developing forms, procedures and guidance that are user-friendly
- F. **Community Design and Context** – programs should explore issues of community planning and urban design in historic environments. Examples include:
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- Streetscapes and the public realm
- New construction
- Placemaking and public art
- Viewsheds and corridor management

G. **The Relationship of Historic Preservation to other Municipal Roles and Responsibilities** – programs should explore how other municipal programs and functions impact historic places and preservation programs. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Effectively integrating historic preservation into comprehensive planning
- Zoning regulations
- Revitalization and community development programs
- Property maintenance and blight management

H. **The History and Legal Foundations of Historic Preservation** – programs should provide context and background related to the practice of historic preservation in the United States. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- The evolution of historic preservation philosophy and practice
- Federal or state laws related to historic preservation and cultural resources
- Legal concepts related to planning, zoning, environmental resources, and land management
- Current legal issues