



## **Certified Local Government Program**

### **Implementation Process and FAQs**

#### **Why is the PA SHPO changing the CLG guidelines?**

Preservation is an inherently local effort that is most effective when local governments are active partners in preservation programs and policies. The CLG program is one way the PA SHPO recognizes and supports municipalities in the development and implementation of their preservation goals and priorities. The proposed changes better describe the best practices communities should follow and clarifies some sections of previous versions of the guidelines. Changes to the grant program are intended to make the grants more attractive and usable for eligible communities and encourage the development of tools and systems that build local capacity.

#### **What is the goal of the proposed changes to the CLG program?**

The overarching goal of these changes is to rebrand participation in the CLG program as a sign that the municipality is committed to preserving the community's heritage and employs best practices in its policies and programs. Designation as a CLG is a mark of distinction that signifies that the community is committed to integrating historic preservation into planning and community development programs, implementing fair and effective policies, engaging the public, being a good steward, and providing adequate resources to implement programs effectively.

#### **What types of changes are being proposed?**

The specific changes are highlighted in the revised guidelines, include the following specific sections/issues:

- New purpose and intent statements for the CLG program
- Changes to the requirements for communities to become CLGs:
  - The municipality's comprehensive plan must address historic resources and historic preservation programs
  - The municipality must adopt and implement the International Existing Building Code
  - Preservation ordinance must include a process for designating historic properties that does not reference the National Register status of the property
  - Ordinance must include criteria and procedure for addressing claims of economic hardship
  - The municipality must adopt and utilize illustrated design guidelines
  - The community must have survey information for locally designated historic resources that has been gathered or updated within the last 10 years
  - The municipality must have a program for carrying out comprehensive survey in place or have a plan for implementing such a program
  - The community must consider municipally-owned historic properties for local designation



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- Clarification of the requirement to provide staff support to historic preservation programs
- Two-tiered evaluation process and Performance Standards
- Reduction of the number of hours of training/education members of review boards/commissions must attend annually from 8 to 4.
- Better definition of the topics that training/education programs must cover
- New comment form for National Register nomination reviews
- Revised grant program, including multiple application rounds per year, longer grant periods, and lower match requirements. Full details on the proposed changes are available in a separate document
- New technical assistance programs exclusively for CLGs

### **Will existing CLGs be able to comment on the proposed changes before they are implemented?**

Yes. The revised guidelines and supporting materials will be distributed to all existing CLGs and other organizations who may have an interest in the program at the beginning of October 2017. Written comments will be accepted for 60 days from the date of release. The PA SHPO will review all comments and make the appropriate revisions and will issue a written explanation for all comments that are not addressed in the revised document.

### **What happens after the PA SHPO issues the second round of revised guidelines?**

At the end of the public comment period, the PA SHPO will publish the second version of the revised guidelines along with an explanation of the comments that were not addressed in the revised document. The revised documents will then be sent to the National Park Service for review, who will have 45 working days to issue their approval. The guidelines will go into effect for new communities seeking certification after PA SHPO is notified of NPS approval.

Within 120 days of NPS approval of the revised guidelines, existing CLGs will receive new certification agreements for signature. Executed agreements must be returned to PA SHPO within 120 days after receipt or in conjunction with a grant application submitted during the subsequent grant round.

### **What will be expected of existing CLGs following the execution of the new certification agreement?**

Existing CLGs that renew their participation in the program will be evaluated on a rotating 4-year cycle beginning in Fall 2018. CLGs will then have 3 years from the date of the evaluation to make changes to the existing local preservation program to meet the revised CLG program requirements.

### **What if an existing CLG no longer wants to participate in the program under the revised guidelines?**

Participation in the CLG program is voluntary. A municipality may ask to be decertified at any time by sending a letter to PA SHPO requesting decertification. PA SHPO will then initiate the decertification process outlined in the program guidelines. If a municipality fails to sign and return the certification agreement within 120 days of receipt, the PA SHPO may pursue involuntary decertification.