

## **STEPS TO BECOMING A CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CLG)**

1. Adopt a local historic preservation ordinance based on Code of Alabama 11-68-1 to 11-68-15. A model ordinance is available from the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC).
2. Appoint a seven-member historic preservation commission with at least three members with formal training in the fields listed in Section 11-68-3(a) in order to qualify for Certified Local Government program. The municipality may also choose to adopt an architectural review board.
3. The local historic preservation commission (HPC) holds an organizational meeting to learn about their responsibilities, nominate the officers, establish monthly meeting date, and develop by-laws. A staff member from AHC is available to assist with this meeting.
4. Adopt by-laws, approve officers, and establish an annual work plan. The work plan should be individual to the community. The town may need to have a historic resource survey conducted, apply for a grant, educate community on benefits of local designation, lobby to save a local landmark, etc. A staff member from AHC is available to assist with this meeting.
5. The city clerk or other appropriate staff requests review of their local program for compliance with the Certified Local Government requirements. This correspondence should include an application form; copy of the ordinance; name of city staff member assigned to work with the HPC, Letter of Intent signed by the mayor; list of any buildings, sites, structures or districts including addresses of locally designated properties; proposal of how National Register nominations will be reviewed; how and where records will be kept; and resumes from HPC members to verify at least three meet the educational requirements of the ordinance. The AHC will review the local ordinance for compliance with the state enabling legislation. If the ordinance meets the requirements and the application is approved, a CLG Agreement will be signed by the AHC Executive Director and the mayor. The AHC will then forward all paperwork to the National Park Service for final approval.
6. **OPTIONAL FOR CLGs:** For communities who decide to designate a local district, the preservation ordinance must be followed for this process. It requires the HPC to survey the district according to the AHC standards, justify the district boundaries based on architectural and historical merits, and develop local design guidelines to protect the significant features of the district. The HPC must hold a public hearing and notify all district residents of the hearing. Within 15 days (according to the model ordinance) of the hearing the HPC must present the proposed district to city council for their approval.

Once the city council's approval is given, an ordinance establishing the local district is passed. Property owners must have approval from the local HPC (or architectural review board) before making any major changes to the property in the district. The HPC must develop an application form and process. Building permits are not issued until property owner has commission or review board approval (called a Certificate of Appropriateness). City personnel must be educated on their role. Regular maintenance work can be "expedited" by the city staff. These expedited work items must be listed and have the HPC's or review board's approval. Typically, this expedited work includes re-roofing with same material, re-painting in a similar color, and ordinary maintenance to correct decay, deterioration, or damage that does not involve material change or a change in appearance.

**For more information please contact:**  
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