

CLG FAQs

What is a Certified Local Government (CLG)?

In a nutshell, a Certified Local Government (CLG) is any local government – be it a town, city, municipality, or county – that has an established historic preservation commission and has been certified by the State Historic Preservation Officer as having met all federal and state standards. The CLG must sign an agreement with the Commonwealth of Kentucky, agreeing to develop and administer its local preservation program so that it complies with national and state preservation goals and standards.

What are the basic requirements for participation in the CLG program?

- A local preservation ordinance.
- A preservation review commission.
- A system for survey and inventory of historic properties.
- Public involvement in the local preservation program, including nominations to the National Register.

Is there a population requirement for participation in the CLG program?

No, participation is open to local governments of any size.

What is the process for enacting a local preservation ordinance?

Kentucky does not have a detailed statutory framework for local historic preservation ordinances. However, Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) Chapter 100 does contain several sources of authorization for historic districting. Prior to adoption of a local preservation ordinance, citizens should contact their local city/county attorney for additional guidance. The SPHO can also provide information on other communities that have successfully adopted a local preservation ordinance. In general, an ordinance establishing specific historic overlay zone will contain (1) an accurate description of the boundaries of the district; (2) a description of the historical, architectural, cultural, aesthetic, natural, or other distinctive characteristics of the district that are to be preserved or conserved; (3) a delegation of responsibility for the administration of overlay regulations to an appropriate entity of government; and (4) the standards, guidelines, or criteria that shall govern development within the district to preserve, conserve, or protect the historical, architectural, cultural, aesthetic, or other distinctive characteristics of the district.

What must be included in the local preservation ordinance for CLG participation?

- Statement of purpose.
- Definitions.
- Specific membership and duties of the local historic preservation review commission.
- Designation procedures for local landmarks and districts
- Criteria for designation of local landmarks and districts.
- Provisions for public hearings in accordance with KRS 61.800-61.850 and public notification in the designation process for local landmarks and districts in accordance with KRS Chapter 424.
- Mandatory review of alterations, demolitions or new construction to listed landmarks and within listed historic districts.
- Specific guidelines to be used by the local review body.
- Specific time frames for review and for consideration of alternatives.
- Procedures for appeal from an adverse decision.

What are the minimum CLG requirements for the formation of a historic preservation commission?

- At least five members, all of whom have demonstrated interest in historic preservation.
- At least two of these shall be preservation-related professional members (this includes the professions of architecture, history, archaeology, architectural history, planning or related disciplines such as urban planning, American studies, American civilization, cultural geography or cultural anthropology).
- Professionals in a related discipline must be involved on a regular basis with historic preservation activities as part of their work in that discipline. Exceptions to this requirement are made on a case-by-case basis in accordance with state and federal requirements.
- At least two-year terms of office which are staggered.

- Rules of procedure established and made public. At least four meetings per year, held at regular intervals, in a public place, advertised in advance and open to the public.
- Review decisions made in a public forum, applicants notified of meetings and advised of decisions.
- Written minutes of actions of the commission available for public inspection.
- Written annual report of commission activities, cases, decisions, special projects and qualifications of the members, etc., kept on file and available for public inspection.
- Vacancies on the commission filled within sixty (60) days.

What duties must the historic preservation commission perform to meet CLG requirements?

- Continuing surveys of cultural resources in the community according to guidelines established by the Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).
- Recommendations for designation of local landmarks and historic districts to the appropriate local governing body.
- Establish written guidelines for the preservation of designated local landmarks and historic districts.
- Approve applications for permits (Certificates of Appropriateness) for alterations, demolitions, new construction or relocation affecting listed landmarks or properties located within historic districts.
- Act in an advisory role to other officials and departments of local government regarding the protection of local cultural resources.
- Act as a liaison on behalf of the local government to individuals and organizations concerned with historic preservation.
- Work toward the continuing education of citizens within the CLG's jurisdiction regarding historic preservation issues and concerns.
- Attend at least one informational or educational meeting per year, approved by the SHPO, pertaining to the work and functions of the commission or to historic preservation.
- Review all proposed National Register nominations for properties within the boundaries of the CLG's jurisdiction.

What is the process used by historic preservation commissions to preserve the historic integrity of landmarks & properties in historic districts?

When a property owner wishes to alter the exterior of a building, demolish a building, or engage in new construction or relocation of structures, the property owner must make an application for a permit (also referred to as a Certificate of Appropriateness or COA). Some "normal maintenance" or "routine repairs" that do not involve a change in design, material, or appearance may be excluded by an ordinance or involve only routine approval by a commission. Check with your local historic preservation commission to see how they handle routine maintenance and repairs. Work performed without a COA can result in fines and/or removal or reversal of unauthorized alterations. There are provisions for appeal from an unfavorable decision and provisions regarding hardship cases. However, experienced preservation commissions generally seek to provide suggestions or give alternatives whenever possible to avoid an outright denial of a COA.

What steps does my city/county take to become a CLG?

After passage of a preservation ordinance and creation of a preservation commission, an application must be submitted to the SHPO. Any local government (city, county, or joint city-county) may apply. Your city/county may require passage of an ordinance or resolution prior to becoming a CLG. Check with your city or county attorney. Applications are reviewed and subject to approval by the SHPO and the National Park Service.

For complete information, see the [Kentucky Certified Local Government Manual](#). Visit the [National Park Service website](#) for more about how the federal-state-local Certified Local Government partnership works, [why local preservation programs are important](#) and how the NPS can assist local preservation efforts. Another good source for technical assistance and advocacy is the [National Alliance of Preservation Commissions](#).

Can someone help with the CLG process or provide technical assistance?

Yes, please contact [Vicki Birenberg](#), KHC Certified Local Government Program and Planning Coordinator (502) 892-3606