6 Easy Steps to Becoming a Certified Local Government Community

BACKGROUND:
The Certified Local Government (CLG) Program is a preservation partnership between local, state and national governments focused on promoting historic preservation at the grass roots level. The program is jointly administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation (VDHP), with each local community working through a certification process to become recognized as a Certified Local Government. CLGs then become an active partner in the Federal Historic Preservation Program and the opportunities it provides.

BENEFITS:
The key reason to become a CLG is the access certification provides to the expert technical advice of the VDHP as well as the NPS. The program's primary goal is to encourage municipalities to develop and maintain historic preservation efforts as part of local land use planning and development activities. Being a CLG shows your community's commitment to keeping what is significant from the past for future generations. As a certified town or city seeking other opportunities, it becomes easy to demonstrate a readiness to take on a preservation project and be successful.

Access to Federal funding for local historic preservation projects is another benefit, making certified communities able to apply for an annual portion of Federal funds set aside by the VDHP for use by CLGs.

REQUIREMENTS:
A community must address the following minimum goals to demonstrate to the VDHP and NPS that they are committed to historic preservation:

- Establish a qualified historic preservation commission;

- Enforce appropriate State or local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties. In most cases this is done in the form of a local ordinance;

- Maintain a system for the survey and inventory of local historic resources;

- Provide for public participation in the local historic preservation program, including participation in the National Register process; and

- Follow any additional requirements as outlined in the State's Procedures for Certification.

6 Easy Steps:

STEP 1: **Get approval from the local legislative body to pursue CLG designation.**
Contact the local legislative body and ask to be included on an upcoming meeting agenda. At the meeting, explain what the CLG program is, the benefits to the community, and the requirements for certification. VDHP staff may be able to attend the meeting if requested. If approved, forward the meeting minutes to the CLG coordinator at VDHP.

STEP 2: **Prepare an ordinance to establish a local Historic Preservation Commission.**
A sample ordinance is available from VDHP. Follow the process described in 24 V.S.A. Chapter 59 to adopt the ordinance locally.

STEP 3: **Staff the new Historic Preservation Commission.**
Solicit volunteers from throughout the community to serve on the local Historic Preservation Commission. The commission must consist of at least three (3) and not more than nine (9) members, who are appointed by the local legislative body.

STEP 4: **Hold the first Historic Preservation Commission meeting.**
At the meeting, approve written rules of procedure, including bylaws and conflict of interest provisions. The commission must meet at least four (4) times annually and maintain an attendance rule for commissioners.

STEP 5: **Request certification.**
Complete and submit the "Request for Local Government Certification" and all required attachments to the VDHP. Upon receipt, VDHP staff will review the request and issue a letter or approval or disapproval.

STEP 6: **Execute the Certified Local Government Agreement.**
If approved, VDHP staff will prepare a "Certified Local Government Agreement" to be executed by VDHP and the local government requesting certification. Upon execution, VDHP will submit all materials to the NPS for final review and certification. Your community is now a CLG!

Questions?

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