

JOINT STUDY COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION FINAL REPORT

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DECEMBER 1998

JOINT STUDY COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Study Committee on Historic Preservation was first created by House Resolution 425 in the 1997 Session of the Georgia General Assembly and recreated in 1998 by Senate Resolution 552. The purpose of both Committees was to develop recommendations for legislation, funding, and other strategies to strengthen preservation in Georgia. Both resolutions identified a broad slate of preservation topics for examination: community revitalization, economic development, technological and computerization needs, existing infrastructure, urban sprawl, regional preservation planning services, archaeology, financial assistance, the Georgia Heritage 2000 Program, stewardship of historic properties, delivery of community preservation services, and heritage tourism.

Reappointed as co-chairs for the 1998 Study Committee were Senator George Hooks of Americus and Representative Jeanette Jamieson of Toccoa. Also appointed to represent the General Assembly were Senators Mike Egan, Atlanta; Jack Hill, Reidsville; Eric Johnson, Savannah; and Mary Margaret Oliver, Decatur; and Representatives Kathy Ashe, Atlanta; Bill Cummings, Rockmart; and Burke Day, Tybee Island.

Joining the state legislators on the Committee were eight individuals representing a variety of preservation interests throughout Georgia: Davis Morgan, Newton County, Association County Commissioners of Georgia; Mayor Ralph Moore, Union City, Georgia Municipal Association; Jim Langford, Calhoun, Georgia Chamber of Commerce; Lisa White, Savannah, Georgia Historical Society; Pratt Cassity, Athens, Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation; Gregg Logan, Atlanta, Urban Land Institute; Lewis Glenn, Atlanta, Trust for Public Land; and Paul Brockington, Norcross, public utilities.

Ex-officio members were Mike Gleaton, representing Jim Higdon, Commissioner, Department of Community Affairs; Hanna Ledford, representing Randy Cardoza, Commissioner, Department of Industry, Trade, and Tourism; Lonice Barrett, Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources; David Studstill, representing Wayne Shackelford, Commissioner, Department of Transportation, and Bill Chatham, representing Stephen Portch, Chancellor, University System of Georgia.

The Committee's framework for discussion was again focused on three primary issues that guided each of the three subcommittees:

Preservation and Economic Development: the impact of preservation on Georgia's economy through job creation, tax revenues, retail sales, and tourism expenditures; state tax credits for commercial properties and for private residences; a statewide heritage tourism plan; financial and technical assistance for historical and cultural museums; and a source of stable funding for state and local historic preservation projects.

Preservation and Resource Stewardship: responsible treatment and management of historic properties by their owners, whether public agencies, non-profit organizations, the private sector, or individuals; implementation of the state agency stewardship program;

incentives and financial assistance for property owners, including state agencies; the protection of historic county courthouses and city halls; and land protection and preservation activities of the Civil War Commission.

Preservation and Communities: facilitating a comprehensive preservation approach within a community whether in downtowns, neighborhoods or rural areas; amendments to the Georgia Historic Preservation Act; growth strategies and the impacts of sprawl; computerization and technological improvements; regional planning services; African American preservation issues; and heritage education.

The Committee's initial meeting was held in Atlanta, on September 8, and featured a status report on the Committee's 1997 recommendations and an overview of the potential topics and issues for consideration in 1998. At the Milledgeville meeting on October 15, the Study Committee convened for an overview of the state agency stewardship program and to explore preservation issues identified for the three subcommittees. In Savannah, on November 11 and 12, the full Committee and the subcommittees met again for preliminary discussion of recommendations. At the final meeting in Atlanta on November 19, the Committee approved its final recommendations. A public hearing was conducted in Savannah at the SCAD/Trustees Theater on November 12, with 29 individuals making statements. Written statements and materials were submitted by 24 individuals.

The full final report provides a summary of the 1998 Committee's activities and deliberations, as well as information gathered from presentations, public hearings, and written statements. The following recommendations were formally approved by the Committee:

RECOMMENDATIONS ON STATEWIDE PROGRAMS AND INCENTIVES

State Tax Incentives

Enact new legislation authorizing a state income tax incentive to encourage the rehabilitation of historic buildings that includes a 25 percent credit for income-producing properties; a 30 percent credit for residential properties; a mortgage certificate program; and a pass-through provision.

Financial Assistance/Grants

Support a stable funding source, comparable to the proposed Georgia Land, Water, Wildlife and Recreation Heritage Fund, to include the rehabilitation of historic properties.

Support the Historic Preservation Division / Department of Natural Resources (HPD/DNR) SFY 2000 enhancement budget request of \$300,000 for Georgia Heritage 2000 Program grants to include projects such as pre-development, planning, surveys and

evaluation, education, and revolving funds, as authorized through SB 446.

State Agency Stewardship Program

Concur with the "Georgia Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties" that have been developed for the implementation of the State Agency Stewardship Program.

Support the HPD/DNR SFY 2000 enhancement budget request of \$177,792 for implementation of SB 446 that includes two staff and operating expenses for the state agency stewardship program.

Support the creation of two other historic preservation staff positions for the state agency stewardship program, either within the Board of Regents SFY 2000 request or the HPD/DNR SFY 2001 request.

Growth Strategies

Authorize the Co-Chairs of the Committee to communicate to the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs and to the Chairman of the Growth Strategies Task Force the Committee's endorsement of historic preservation as an important tool for growth management and to also call for full integration and implementation of historic preservation in the state planning process.

Heritage Tourism

Support the development of a statewide heritage tourism plan incorporating a statewide network of tourism, economic development, museum, and preservation professionals and organizations.

Heritage Education

Support coordinated nonprofit programming in Georgia that encourages quality heritage education and encourages increased awareness among students of the importance of history and historic preservation.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON DELIVERY OF PRESERVATION SERVICES AND INFORMATION

Rehabilitation Technical Assistance

Support the HPD/DNR SFY 2000 budget request of \$47,836 for a preservation architect to provide rehabilitation technical assistance.

Historic Preservation Planners

Endorse strengthening the regional historic preservation planning program and support the HPD/DNR SFY 2000 continuation budget request of \$238,000.

Encourage additional funding in subsequent years to provide sufficient funding for coverage of the entire state and for preservation planners to use 100 percent of their time on preservation activities.

Georgia African American Historic Preservation Initiative

Support the continued growth of the Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network by: (1) encouraging adequate staff support at the Historic Preservation Division; (2) encouraging that grant funds be awarded for African American projects through the Georgia Heritage 2000 program; and (3) implementing the existing strategic plan and the findings of the planning process currently underway with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Computerization and Information Technology

Support the DNR Supplemental SFY 1999 budget request of \$100,000 to match \$400,000 from the Department of Transportation enhancement funds to develop and implement an external Internet-based Geographic Information System (GIS) resource inventory, and support the DNR SFY 2000 enhancement budget request of \$675,000 that includes \$265,000 specifically for the Historic Preservation Division's general computerization needs, enhanced internal GIS capability, and database development.

Support the Georgia GIS Data Clearinghouse in promoting compatibility of computer investment among government agencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON HISTORIC PROPERTIES IN GEORGIA

State Capitol

Support the ongoing restoration of the State Capitol and the development of a Capitol Education Center.

Rural Landscapes and Historic Districts

Enact legislation to amend the Georgia Historic Preservation Act to provide flexibility and alternative forms of protection for rural areas and archaeological sites.

Historic County Courthouses and City Halls

Encourage the General Assembly, the Historic Preservation Division, the Association County Commissioners of Georgia, and the Georgia Municipal Association to examine legislative and funding initiatives for the protection of Georgia's historic county

courthouses and city halls that includes an analysis of conditions and preservation needs, cost estimates, technical assistance requirements, and grants assistance.

Underwater Archaeological Resources

Support the continued development of and planning for a statewide underwater archaeology program for the identification, protection, and management of submerged cultural resources.

JOINT STUDY COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION FINAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The three subcommittees continued their detailed analysis and preliminary recommendations of the various proposals and strategies presented throughout their discussions. As was the case last year, many of the proposals and recommendations built upon and depended on each other, testimony to the breadth and scope of preservation's impact on individuals, communities, and the state.

PRESERVATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Historic preservation is an extraordinarily effective community and economic development tool. Historic preservation is "good for business." Historic preservation is a cost-effective strategy that supports the cultural, aesthetic, and economic vitality of communities. Historic preservation provides citizens with the tools to protect important places so that historic resources can be actively used to carry out a wide range of programs that benefit all Georgians. Historic preservation is a proven economic strategy for Georgia's communities interested in creating jobs, attracting investors and visitors, revitalizing their downtowns, and providing affordable housing.

Since 1976, federal and state rehabilitation incentives have resulted in over \$800 million in private reinvestment in Georgia's older historic towns and cities. Many direct construction jobs, and many indirect jobs, have been created because of this investment. According to Donald Rypkema, author of *The Economics of Preservation*, "Nationwide, \$1 million spent in rehabilitating older buildings creates 39 jobs - 20 in the construction industry and 19 elsewhere in the economy. This is 2.2 more jobs than the same amount spent in new construction." Rehabilitation of existing historic building stock has also been shown to cost less than new construction.

The measures of a successful preservation and economic development strategy are revitalized downtown areas, rehabilitated historic neighborhoods, heritage museums and tourist destinations that accurately and fully interpret Georgia history and pre-history, and new development that complements existing investments.

Many areas in Georgia are prospering and growing. The cost of roads, schools, public utilities and other public and private services are substantially higher in new growth areas. Historic preservation is a cost effective economic development strategy that reuses infrastructure investment which then results in more sustainable communities in Georgia. The level of historic preservation-related economic benefits derived by different jurisdictions, and the state as a whole, are constrained by a number of limiting factors. If Georgia is to continue to be a national leader in economic growth and historic preservation, improved tools are needed for use by the public and to ensure that the "delivery system" of state services provided through Georgia's preservation partners continues to respond in an efficient and effective manner. In addition, if private reinvestment in our communities and historic resources is to be increased, new preservation programs will need to be put into place, and increases in state funding for existing and new programs will need to be provided.

PRESERVATION AND RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

Most decisions about the preservation of historic properties vital to Georgia's heritage are made by the property owner. Properties owned by federal, state, or local governments are held in trust for Georgia citizens. These public agencies, in particular, must set the example through responsible stewardship, creative uses, and positive cooperation. Historic properties in Georgia reflect the remarkable diversity that makes Georgia unique: commercial downtowns, rural crossroads, Civil War battlefields, farms, urban neighborhoods, African American churches, bridges, canals, mills, and educational institutions.

Georgia's inventory of state-owned historic buildings is impressive and implementation strategies for the state property stewardship program authorized in the 1998 General Assembly are nearing completion. There are other important historic properties owned by state agencies that warrant special preservation attention because of their historical and architectural significance. The planning process outlined in the implementation of the state agency stewardship program can provide the framework for management of these properties. Historic county courthouses and city halls offer a broad range of architectural styles, building uses, and sources of pride for communities throughout Georgia, while at the same time providing a suitable environment for the important functions of local governments.

Georgia's Heritage 2000 Program, currently funded at \$161,000, provides for the preservation of threatened community landmarks that are owned by local governments or non-profit groups. However, the current funding level does not meet the demonstrated

needs of preservation organizations and other groups involved in preservation efforts. The private sector, local governments and non-profit organizations spend hundreds of millions of dollars on preservation projects, yet the current annual appropriation for the Georgia Heritage 2000 Program is less than the cost of some new houses.

Archaeological sites, in particular, require special techniques for identification, evaluation, management, and interpretation. Thanks to the Committee's support last year, Georgia is well underway in the process of consolidating and improving its archaeological programs. Still, there is a considerable need to increase the public's understanding of the educational and scientific contributions of archaeological sites, the economic potential of archaeological tourism programs, and the critical need for a statewide underwater archaeology program.

Owners of historic properties at all levels struggle to protect these historic resources for future generations. Additional financial and technical assistance, as well as advanced technological capabilities, must be provided if we are to pass Georgia's historic legacy to the next generation.

PRESERVATION AND COMMUNITIES

Historic preservation is most effective at the local level. Preservation activities in communities range from the preservation of an individual local landmark such as a county courthouse, to the revitalization of entire historic neighborhoods and downtowns. Preservation takes the form of a component in a comprehensive plan, or the passage by a city council of a historic preservation ordinance and appointment of a preservation commission, or the restoration of an abandoned building by a non-profit group or local business, or the long-term protection of a rural area, or interpretation of an archaeological site for children. Preservation is a tool that creates opportunities for reinvestment and for new development

to go hand-in-hand. Such development reduces the impacts of sprawl and capitalizes on the existing investment in infrastructure, while still meeting current market needs. Preservation provides the tools to protect historic places that are important locally and to use historic properties to help carry out an array of civic, social and economic programs beneficial to the entire community. Preservation activities are initiated, implemented and maintained within the local community, but must be encouraged and assisted by regional and state organizations and agencies.

Statewide assistance and incentives for preservation are provided by the Historic Preservation Division, Regional Development Centers, the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, universities and others in coordination with local planning agencies, non-

profit preservation groups, and preservation commissions. However, the existing demand for help far exceeds the capacity to provide it, much less to offer assistance to those communities unaware of preservation's potential. Using the full potential of computer technology and information management systems is critical for local comprehensive planning, economic development, and education purposes. The results of these preservation activities by local groups and individuals are stronger, more vibrant, sustainable, economically stable communities.

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a detailed explanation of the rationale and intent behind each of the recommendations listed in the executive summary section of this report. These recommendations were approved by the full Committee, and confirmed as action items deserving immediate attention.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON STATEWIDE PROGRAMS AND INCENTIVES

State Tax Incentives

Owner-occupied historic residential buildings represent over 80 percent of the total number of buildings in the state inventory of historic properties, and 85 percent of the listings included in the National Register of Historic Places. The need for technical and financial assistance for owner-occupied residences are greater than any other category of historic building. Rehabilitation or restoration of owner-occupied, private residences is not currently eligible for matching federal or state grant assistance or for federal historic rehabilitation tax credit assistance. Financial incentives for historic buildings used as private residences accomplish a number of other important public goals: increasing the opportunities for home ownership among Georgia's citizens, encouraging housing for a variety of income levels, and providing alternatives to new development in outlying areas. While income-producing properties already receive federal tax credits for rehabilitation, a similar state tax credit for commercial properties would further strengthen preservation and economic development locally.

Currently, the State of Georgia offers only one tax incentive program for historic preservation projects. In 1989, Georgia citizens approved a referendum and the General Assembly passed a state property tax freeze program to encourage historic rehabilitation projects for both income-producing and residential buildings. The cost of this incentive is primarily borne by local governments, but it was supported by the Georgia Municipal Association and the Association County Commissioners of Georgia because local governments would collect greater revenue within only 11 years. This property tax freeze program has worked well, but in essence it merely eliminates a disincentive to rehabilitation - higher property taxes. By combining this freeze with a state income tax credit for commercial and residential buildings, the State would create a key economic

stimulus and catalyst for extensive community reinvestment in areas where there is existing infrastructure. The loss of revenue would be balanced by the reduced need for new infrastructure and the economic return from the investment. Preservationists enthusiastically support creation of such a program. Developers who also routinely use the federal rehabilitation tax incentive have strongly encouraged a similar provision for residential historic property.

Key components of the proposed tax credit include: (1) a 25 percent income tax credit for rehabilitating an income-producing historic building; (2) a 30 percent income tax credit for rehabilitating a non-income producing historic building; (3) a 30 percent home mortgage credit certificate program whereby an owner or purchaser would receive, in lieu of an income tax credit, a reduction in interest rate or principal or down payment; (4) a provision that allows a developer to "pass-through" the credit to a homeowner.

The Committee also discussed several other aspects of the state tax incentive that will be considered as legislation is drafted. Rehabilitation should be substantial; expenses should exceed the greater of the adjusted basis of the building or \$5,000 for commercial buildings within a 24-month period or a 60-month period for phased projects, or \$25,000 for private residences within a 24-month period. The credit should be taken in five equal installments over a five year period. Any unused portion of the credit could be taken in the succeeding five years.

Recommendation:

Enact new legislation authorizing a state income tax incentive to encourage the rehabilitation of historic buildings that includes a 25 percent credit for income-producing properties; a 30 percent credit for residential properties; a mortgage certificate program, and a pass-through provision.

Financial Assistance/Grants

Preservationists in the state have identified a goal of \$5,000,000 a year for financial assistance for historic preservation programs. The failure of the Land, Water, Wildlife and Recreation Heritage Fund to pass on the November ballot will prevent many of the "bricks and mortar" preservation needs in the state from being addressed. Furthermore, the Georgia Heritage 2000 Program's SFY 1999 appropriation of \$161,000 meets only a fraction of the demonstrated need. At the current funding level, less than one in five applications can be awarded. Not only are funds needed for "bricks and mortar" projects, but also for other preservation activities such as comprehensive historic structures surveys, non-construction planning, evaluation and education projects, local government assistance programs, African American preservation initiatives, a heritage museum assistance program, and Civil War Commission projects. Senate Bill 446 provided the authorization for this broad array of preservation education, planning, identification, evaluation, promotion and rehabilitation activities.

Preservation grants leverage substantial private investment. Local financial commitment is built into the program through a required 40 percent cash match. Most projects contribute much more since Georgia Heritage 2000 Program grants are merely "seed" grants or for critical stabilization. There is a positive value for use of these public state funds since the Historic Preservation Division monitors work, provides technical assistance, requires compliance with preservation standards and guidelines, and requires public access to the property. While commercial properties are eligible for a federal tax credit and private residences for the state property tax freeze, historic properties owned by public agencies or non-profit groups have no other source of financial assistance, specifically for preservation.

Recommendation:

Support a stable funding source, comparable to the proposed Georgia Land, Water, Wildlife and Recreation Heritage Fund, to include the rehabilitation of historic properties.

Support the HPD/DNR SFY 2000 enhancement budget request of \$300,000 for Georgia Heritage 2000 Program grants to include projects such as pre-development planning, surveys and evaluation, education, and revolving funds as authorized through Senate Bill 446.

State Agency Stewardship Program

The State of Georgia owns some of the state's most important historic resources ranging from the State Capitol, college and university buildings, state parks and historic sites, archaeological resources, to agricultural and industrial structures. The State Agency Historic Property Stewardship Program, created through Senate Bill 446, was one of the major accomplishments of the 1998 legislative session. The legislation directs State agencies to establish a plan to administer and protect historic properties under State ownership. State agency "Preservation Officers" have been appointed and training sessions for them are underway. Agencies are proceeding to identify historic resources they control and to establish more effective methods to protect them.

Two issues remain to implement this program. First, the legislation provides that preservation standards be established with input from the Joint Study Committee. To facilitate this process, a working group on Georgia historic preservation treatment standards was established to provide technical advice and make recommendations to the Stewardship Subcommittee. Standards were drafted and reviewed by the Subcommittee. Second, additional financial resources are needed to provide technical assistance for state agencies.

State repairs and stabilization must be done according to preservation and archaeological standards and guidelines, to enhance, and not harm, buildings and sites. Expertise is

needed to help administrators and building managers in preserving these properties. Such expertise could be provided by the Historic Preservation Division or individual agencies or both.

Recommendation:

Concur with the "Georgia Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties" that have been developed to guide the implementation of the State Agency Stewardship Program.

Support the HPD/DNR SFY 2000 enhancement budget request of \$177,792 for implementation of SB 446 that includes two staff and operating expenses for the state agency stewardship program.

Support the creation of two other historic preservation staff positions for the state agency stewardship program, either within the Board of Regents SFY 2000 request or the HPD/DNR SFY 2001 .

Growth Strategies

Historic preservation is one of the most effective tools for countering sprawl. Historic preservation concentrates development in historic downtowns and established neighborhoods. Historic preservation utilizes the existing infrastructure of streets, sidewalks, landscaping, and utilities. Historic preservation encourages "recycling" of historic buildings, re-use of upper stories in commercial districts for housing, and compatible new construction on vacant lots. The preservation and reuse of historic buildings in turn protects the thousands of archaeological sites that are located below ground in the open space that is targeted for new development.

The effects of sprawl with its low-density, land-consumptive, automobile-dominated development outside of Georgia's older cities and within its rural areas erase physical reminders and the distinctive characteristics of Georgia's heritage. The uncontrolled development that produces sprawl shifts public funds to new construction and away from preservation and stewardship of historic properties. Historic properties are robbed of their ability to successfully compete for public and private financial assistance.

To counter the devastating effects of sprawl on historic properties, financial incentives and grants are needed for survey, evaluation, planning, and rehabilitation. Tax incentives to encourage rehabilitation in downtowns and historic neighborhoods are needed for businesses and homeowners. State legislation and local ordinances need to be strengthened to better protect archaeological sites, rural areas, and historic districts. Decision-makers and the general public need to be better educated about the positive role historic preservation plays. Communities throughout Georgia need rehabilitation technical

assistance, technical material, and planning workshops to help with their efforts against sprawl and for sustainable development.

Georgia's growth strategies planning process must incorporate historic preservation as a critical component of comprehensive planning for local governments. Historic preservation must be fully integrated into the overall plan by requiring compliance with historic preservation standards in implementation strategies. Presently, the Department of Community Affairs' Task Force on Growth Strategies is considering ways to strengthen the Georgia Planning Act and this initiative offers opportunities for historic preservation.

Recommendation:

Authorize the Co-Chairs of the Committee to communicate to the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs and to the Chairman of the Growth Strategies Task Force the Committee's endorsement of historic preservation as an important tool for growth management and to also call for full integration and implementation of historic preservation in the state planning process.

Heritage Tourism

In 1997, the Travel and Tourism Association of America reported that heritage travelers stay longer and spend more money than other kinds of visitors. Cultural tourism, which includes heritage tourism, is a growth industry across the United States. Many states, including Virginia and Utah, have recently developed statewide heritage tourism plans and programs that go beyond simple marketing of historic properties to visitors. A state heritage tourism destination plan, which would be used to increase the ability of operators of local historical and cultural museums to provide improved heritage tourism services, is needed.

Senate Bill 446 authorized creation of the Georgia Historical and Cultural Museum Assistance Program as a way to provide technical and financial assistance to the over 490 local heritage museums in Georgia. Such a program could assist these small museums in enhancing their contributions to Georgia's heritage tourism. As a first step in future implementation of this program, DNR/HPD has included a request of \$20,000 within its \$177,000 "enhancement" level request (for Senate Bill 446 implementation) to undertake a consultant-derived needs assessment and survey of these institutions across the state. Subsequent goals for the museums assistance program include funding for program coordination, technical assistance, and direct financial assistance for museums.

Recommendation:

Support the development of a statewide heritage tourism plan incorporating a statewide network of tourism, economic development, museum, and preservation professionals and organizations.

Heritage Education

Heritage education is a teaching method for using local resources along with classroom instruction and hands-on activities in virtually any subject area. Many local and statewide programs are active in Georgia and utilize historic subject matter as diverse as Indian heritage, downtown revitalization, oral history, and historic documents. The Georgia Trust's Heritage Education Program is endorsed by superintendents in each school system, has developed a successful model for system-wide training and technical assistance, trained over 1200 teachers in 44 counties, serves as a clearinghouse for information, tools and practices, publishes a newsletter, and is developing a web page for its heritage education network. The Georgia Historical Society coordinates activities in Savannah each year in celebration of Georgia Day on February 12 and plans to expand its programs statewide. The Georgia Humanities Council annually sponsors History Day to encourage Georgia students to participate in projects that feature local historic places, artifacts, and records. The Society for Georgia Archaeology coordinates Archaeology Awareness Week each year and provides classroom materials for Georgia teachers. In communities throughout Georgia, local governments, school systems, and preservation groups have developed lesson plans, architectural slide programs, cemetery studies, oral histories and archaeological excavations to teach Georgia students about their historic communities and their place in it.

Recommendation:

Support coordinated nonprofit programming in Georgia that encourages quality heritage education and encourages increased awareness among students of the importance of history and historic preservation.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON DELIVERY OF PRESERVATION SERVICES AND INFORMATION

Rehabilitation Technical Assistance

Technical assistance to historic property owners is at the heart of the Historic Preservation Division's delivery of preservation services. Private sector investors seeking federal and state tax incentives rely on the advice and direction provided by HPD's architectural staff to comply with the required national and state preservation standards, treatments and guidelines. The Georgia Heritage 2000 grant program and basic program services through HPD's financial assistance, environmental review, and public outreach efforts all rely on extensive architectural technical review and assistance. At present, only two architects (only one is state-funded) provide this assistance through a "circuit rider" approach, providing architectural advice, project review, and program information each year for hundreds of preservation projects that represent tens of millions of dollars in

private and public investment. The Committee's recommendations for a new state tax incentive in particular, as well as increased financial assistance and state agency stewardship programs, will place even further demands on HPD's architectural staff.

Recommendation:

Support the HPD/DNR SFY 2000 addition budget request of \$47,836 for a preservation architect for rehabilitation technical assistance.

Historic Preservation Planners

Throughout historic preservation activities in Georgia, there is an increasing need for a wide range of information and technical assistance to constituents at the local level. Much of that expertise is provided by the network of professional preservation planners located within Regional Development Centers (RDCs). Planners are the first line providers of preservation information, services and technical assistance. They provide the "competitive edge" that support local preservation strategies for economic development and community revitalization. The program is one of the greatest strengths of the historic preservation movement in Georgia. Currently, the program is financed by a partnership of monies provided by the Historic Preservation Division (\$238,000 at SFY 1999 level) and the RDCs. At present, only 14 of the 16 RDCs are able to employ preservation planners and they spend only 40 percent of their time on historic preservation. The most critical issues are ensuring complete coverage of the state, guaranteeing a 100 percent commitment of time to preservation, and confirming the most appropriate regional service system.

Recommendation:

Endorse strengthening the regional historic preservation planning program and support the HPD/DNR SFY 2000 continuation budget request of \$238,000.

Encourage additional funding in subsequent years to provide sufficient funding for coverage of the entire state and for preservation planners to use 100 percent of their time on preservation activities.

African American Historic Preservation Initiatives

A variety of historic properties, both urban and rural, reflect the history of African Americans in Georgia: churches, schools, educational institutions, commercial buildings, archaeological sites, and gardens. Georgia's African American citizens are becoming more and more active in local historic preservation projects and statewide public awareness programs. Since 1989, the Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network (GAAHPN) has been responding to that growing interest in preserving the

cultural and ethnic diversity of Georgia's African American heritage. The Network, now numbering over 350 individuals, meets regularly and sponsors workshops, publications and special events that foster heritage education, neighborhood revitalization, and community and economic development. A major focus of GAAHPN's work at present is encouraging the participation of Georgia's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to undertake National Register assessments, to develop preservation proposals, and to seek financial assistance especially through the National Park Service's HBCU funding initiatives. Also, GAAHPN, HPD and the National Trust for Historic Preservation are undertaking a long-range strategic and organizational planning process that will result in updated goals, objectives, and action plans for GAAHPN's future activities.

Recommendation:

Support the continued growth of the Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network by: (1) encouraging adequate staff support at the Historic Preservation Division; (2) encouraging that grant funds be awarded for African American projects through the Georgia Heritage 2000 program; and (3) implementing the existing strategic plan and the findings of the planning process currently underway with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Computerization and Information Technology

Delivery and use of preservation information for local comprehensive planning, economic development, transportation planning, and educational purposes continues to be hindered by inadequacies in computerized information management. While significant progress has been made in the past year, there still is a significant need to accelerate the development, implementation, use and maintenance of a comprehensive information management system, especially a geographic information system (GIS). For example, completed survey files on more than 70,000 historic standing structures have not been entered into a database, nor has basic information on approximately 30,000 archaeological sites. Through the Department of Natural Resources SFY 1999 supplemental and SFY 2000 budget requests for information technology, preservation needs could be improved, by expanding GIS capabilities, increasing site data and transferring it to GIS data bases, and then making the data available to local communities and state agencies for planning and education purposes. The past year has confirmed the ongoing need among the statewide preservation network and local communities to take advantage of standard computer technology, such as access to and distribution of information through the World Wide Web, use of teleconferencing for training, and electronic communication via e-mail.

Recommendation:

Support the DNR Supplemental SFY 1999 budget request of \$100,000 to match \$400,000 from the Department of Transportation enhancement funds to develop and implement an external Internet-based Geographic Information System (GIS) resource inventory, and support the DNR SFY 2000 enhancement budget request of \$675,000 that includes \$265,000 specifically for the Historic Preservation Division's general computerization needs, enhanced internal GIS capability, and database development.

Support the Georgia GIS Data Clearinghouse in promoting compatibility of computer investment among government agencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON HISTORIC PROPERTIES IN GEORGIA

State Capitol

The State Capitol is the flagship building for Georgia's historic preservation efforts and the state's most visible and important stewardship project. To date, restoration of the rotunda is complete and restoration of other public spaces is well underway. The House and Senate chambers are undergoing full restoration and updating of mechanical and audiovisual systems. The museum and education center spaces for the State Capitol complex are under development as well. Still, considerable work is needed to complete the restoration process, update the office and technical features, improve the operating systems, and prepare exhibits. The most recent cost estimates total over \$36 million. The goal of this extraordinary project remains to restore and rehabilitate the structure while maintaining its historic function as the center of government in Georgia.

Recommendation:

Support the ongoing restoration of the State Capitol and the development of a Capitol Education Center.

Rural Landscapes and Historic Districts

The Georgia Historic Preservation Act has served the state well in enabling local governments to pass local historic preservation ordinances for the protection of historic resources. Since 1980, the number of local governments enacting these local ordinances has increased from 9 to 83. These ordinances have worked well in urban and small town environments. Technical improvements and new tools are needed in this enabling legislation to provide better protection for rural areas, archaeological sites, and historic districts, and allowing more flexibility to local governments through alternative forms of protection.

Recommendation:

Enact legislation to amend the Georgia Historic Preservation Act to provide flexibility and alternative forms of protection for rural areas and archaeological sites.

Historic County Courthouses and City Halls

County courthouses and city halls are landmarks and symbols for their communities. They are often the most recognizable buildings in local communities, and are usually surrounded by principal businesses and institutions of the community. They are the symbols of community pride and the anchors for economic stability. County courthouses and city halls, many still serving their original function, are invaluable community assets and deserve special attention for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

There are 127 county courthouses currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Four county courthouses have not yet been listed, but have been evaluated as meeting the National Register criteria. There are only six other county courthouses known to have been built by the early 1950's that are not listed in the National Register due to lack of full documentation, or ineligibility. That so many of Georgia's 159 counties retain their historic courthouse is a good indicator of the value citizens place on preservation. At the same time, the financial and technical assistance needed to insure that these local landmarks remain as visible reminders of a community heritage is considerable. A comprehensive, statewide survey of historic city halls has not been conducted. However, an initial analysis reveals that there are 17 historic city halls that are known to be listed in the National Register and others not specifically identified in the documentation may very well be included in historic districts. While perhaps not as extensive in number as county courthouses, historic city halls are yet another highly significant group of buildings that symbolize the American form of government and community identity.

Recommendation:

Encourage the General Assembly, the Historic Preservation Division, the Association County Commissioners of Georgia, and the Georgia Municipal Association to examine legislative and funding initiatives for the protection of Georgia's historic county courthouses and city halls that includes an analysis of conditions and preservation needs, cost estimates, technical assistance requirements, and grants assistance.

Underwater Archaeological Resources

Under Georgia's rivers and coastal waters lie numerous historic and archaeological resources. These include sunken ships and other water craft, docks, wharfs, ferries,

historic houses, structures, prehistoric sites, and artifacts. These resources are vital to an understanding of Georgia's past, deserve proper management and stewardship, and can be important elements for education and for economic development. The protection, preservation, and management of these state-owned historic properties and objects are mandated in current state laws. The location of these resources - submerged below water - requires special identification, analysis, and management practices. Statewide policy coordination and law enforcement is critical to avoid the systematic looting and site destruction that presently takes place. Plans are currently being formulated within the Historic Preservation Division to develop a coordinating program to manage these submerged archaeological resources.

Recommendation:

Support the continued development of and planning for a statewide underwater archaeology program for the identification, protection, and management of submerged cultural resources.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The buildings, structures, districts, and archaeological sites that make up Georgia's historic landscape reflect thousands of years of Georgia history and culture. These historic places reflect our community spirit and are the foundation of our identity as Georgians. The partnerships that have been developed in Georgia are essential to fully utilizing preservation as a tool for a prosperous economy, the responsible stewardship and management of our historic resources, and the revitalization and livability of our communities.

Through the work of the Joint Study Committee on Historic Preservation in the past two years, historic preservation has clearly been recognized as a public priority for state government and local governments. When enacted, the recommendations made by the Study Committee will ensure that Georgia's preservation potential can be realized well into the 21st century.

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