

PEOPLE PROTECTING COMMUNITY RESOURCES

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



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WORKING
ON THE IN
PAST LOCAL
HISTORIC
DISTRICTS

"Development that enhances the character of our historic districts is encouraged. We recognize that change is an important element in the city's evolution, an indicator of a healthy, vital neighborhood, and reflects the pride of residents in their community."

DAN BECKER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
RALEIGH HISTORIC DISTRICTS COMMISSION
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA.

BENEFITS OF LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

>>Local districts protect the investments of owners and residents.

Buyers know that the aspects that make a particular area attractive will be protected over a period of time. Real estate agents in many cities use historic district status as a marketing tool to sell properties.

>>Local districts encourage better design. It has been shown through comparative studies that there is a greater sense of relatedness, more innovative use of materials, and greater public appeal within historic districts than in areas without historic designations.

>>Local districts help the environment. Historic district revitalization can, and should, be part of a comprehensive environmental policy.

>>The educational benefits of creating local districts are the same as those derived from any historic preservation effort. Districts help explain the development of a place, the source of inspiration, and technological

advances. They are a record of ourselves and our communities.

>>A local district can result in a positive economic impact from tourism. A historic district that is aesthetically cohesive and well promoted can be a community's most important attraction. The retention of historic areas as a way to attract tourist dollars makes good economic sense.

>>The protection of local historic districts can enhance business recruitment potential. Companies continually re-locate to communities that offer their workers a higher quality of life, which is greatly enhanced by successful local preservation programs and stable historic districts.

>>Local districts provide social and psychological benefits. A sense of empowerment and confidence develops when community decisions are made through a structured participatory process rather than behind closed doors or without public comment.

Excerpted and adapted from Maintaining Community Character: How to Establish a Local Historic District by Pratt Cassity. National Trust for Historic Preservation. 2000.

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From the VA Department of Historic Resources:

If the local districts are approved, the City can apply to become a **Certified Local Government**, and if accepted, can apply for Certified Local Government Grants for surveys, public education programs, local ARB training, testing archeology sites, rehabilitation of publicly owned buildings, and more.

Certified Local Governments can also apply to become a **Preserve America Community**, and if accepted, with grant opportunities for support planning, development, and implementation of innovative activities and programs in heritage tourism such as surveying and documenting historic resources, interpreting historic sites, planning, marketing, and training.