



HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES HELP TO ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY'S DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER AND SENSE OF PLACE. HISTORIC PRESERVATION, WHICH INVOLVES ACTIONS THAT

SAFEGUARD AND RENEW THESE IRREPLACEABLE ASSETS, IS A POWERFUL YET UNDERUTILIZED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGY. THROUGH ACTIVITIES LIKE BUILDING REHABILITATION, NEIGHBORHOOD REINVESTMENT, AND SENSITIVE NEW CONSTRUCTION, HISTORIC PRESERVATION CAN REINVIGORATE LOCAL LANDMARKS, INCREASE PROPERTY VALUES, STABILIZE BUSINESS AND RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS, CREATE MORE JOBS, RETURN VACANT OR UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES TO PRODUCTIVE USE, AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF COMMUNITY LIFE.

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
FIELD SERVICES BUREAU**



*Above: The state preservation grant program has helped to restore hundreds of historic and cultural resources.*

*On the cover: The bureau provided technical assistance on the Clinton Square revitalization project in downtown Syracuse.*

The **Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau** offers many services to help individuals and communities achieve the social, economic, and environmental benefits associated with historic preservation. As the State Historic Preservation Office, the bureau administers programs authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the New York State Historic Preservation Act of 1980. A network of teams assigned to territories across the state provide assistance in resource identification, preservation, rehabilitation, and archaeology. The bureau works with individuals, private enterprises, organizations, and governments to raise preservation awareness, instill in New Yorkers a sense of pride in the state's history, and encourage community preservation and improvement activities.

# IDENTIFICATION AND RECOGNITION

The historic resources survey program provides a statewide approach to identifying historic and cultural properties. Bureau staff provide guidance on research, documentation, and evaluation to a variety of survey sponsors, including local residents, public officials, and private consultants. Surveys help communities to recognize the importance of a wide range of historic and cultural resources so that they can be incorporated into local planning and development efforts.

The New York State and National Registers of Historic Places are the official lists of properties significant in the history and culture of the state and the nation. Listing on the registers helps to raise a community's appreciation of its past and enhances local preservation activities. It also provides access to various state and federal incentives, such as tax credits and grants. The bureau assists the public in the development of nominations to the registers, which the New York State Board for Historic Preservation reviews and recommends

for listing. The State Historic Preservation Officer, who is also the commissioner of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, approves recommended nominations and confers State Register status. Approved nominations are sent to the National Park Service for final review and listing on the National Register. New York has one of the most active registers programs in the country.



*Brooklyn's Borough Hall subway station was identified through the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's historic subway system survey, which led to more than sixty stations and features being listed on the State and National Registers. These efforts have helped the authority to incorporate historic preservation into the system's rehabilitation.*

# PRESERVATION INCENTIVES

The federal preservation tax credit program offers owners of historic commercial, industrial, or residential rental properties a federal income tax credit equal to 20 percent of the approved rehabilitation cost. To be eligible, properties must be income producing, listed on the National Register, and the proposed work must meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. The tax credit program generates millions of dollars



*With the help of federal preservation tax credits, the vacant 1906 O.M. Edwards factory in Syracuse has been converted for office and residential use, contributing to the area's redevelopment.*

of an easement, a property owner grants a portion of, or interest in, his or her property rights to an appropriate organization, and in doing so may obtain a tax benefit.

Through the state preservation tax credit program, commercial properties that qualify for the federal preservation tax credit are eligible for an additional state income tax credit. In addition, homeowners may be eligible for a state income tax credit for the rehabilitation of owner-occupied residences that are listed on the State and National Registers.

The preservation grant program funded by the state Environmental Protection Fund makes it possible for a municipality or a nonprofit organization to seek assistance in safeguarding some of New York's most significant historic and cultural places through acquisition, restoration, rehabilitation, or interpretation projects. To be eligible, properties must be listed on the State or National Registers at the time of grant award.

worth of private investment in preservation projects in New York State each year.

In addition, owners of National Register listed properties may be eligible for a federal facade easement program that provides a federal tax advantage to those who sign a voluntary legal agreement that protects the historic or cultural resource. Under the terms

# PROTECTION

Under historic preservation laws, state and federal agencies that fund, license, or approve projects in New York must consult with the bureau to determine if historic or cultural properties are involved and whether they will be affected by the proposed activity. This environmental review ensures that properties that are listed on or eligible for listing on the State and National Registers are considered and adverse impacts are avoided or mitigated during the project planning process. The bureau reviews thousands of project submissions each year.



*The bureau's review of a project at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park helped to identify and protect an important archaeological site, which contained evidence of more than 3,600 years of human activity.*

Archaeology is a key component of historic preservation environmental review. The bureau works with public agencies and local communities, providing guidance on archaeology, such as how to identify and investigate archaeological sites, as well as access to a growing collection of cultural resource information.



*Archaeology is the study of the past through the material remains that people have left behind. While New York State's historic built environment records almost 400 years of non-native development, its archaeological resources represent 12,000 years of human activity. Archaeological sites yield important information about the state's prehistoric and historic populations, documenting ancient cultures and early human interaction with the environment.*

# COLLABORATION

Many municipalities across New York participate in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program, which supports community preservation efforts through technical assistance, grants, and information sharing. A village, city, town, or county begins the certification process by requesting that the bureau review its preservation law and procedures. If it is determined that the local legislation meets state and federal standards, the municipality is certified and becomes part of the statewide network. The bureau also works with communities to establish local preservation programs.

The bureau's public education and outreach efforts include various initiatives, such as:

- The State Historic Preservation Office website offers preservation information and online resources.
- The semi-annual *Preservationist* newsletter reaches more than 10,000 readers around the state.
- The New York State Historic Preservation Plan assists communities in setting local preservation priorities and offers a statewide guide to historic preservation.

**For more information, contact the bureau or visit our website:**

**Historic Preservation  
Field Services Bureau**  
PO Box 189, Peebles Island  
Waterford, NY 12188  
518-237-8643

[www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo](http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo)



*The environmental review process ensured the continued use of the Mechanicville Hydroelectric Power Plant in Saratoga County. Built in 1897, the complex remains largely intact and includes a powerhouse, dam, and power generating equipment.*

*This brochure has been financed in part with federal funds from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior. This project has been administered by the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.*

*The bureau receives federal funds from the National Park Service. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental federally assisted programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of federal assistance should write to:*

**Director, Equal Opportunity Program  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20012-7127**



New York State Office of Parks,  
Recreation and Historic Preservation