



Date of Council Meeting: May 12, 2015

**TOWN OF LEESBURG
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

Subject: Certified Local Government Grant Application - Historic Survey Project and Preservation Opportunity

Staff Contact: Tom Scofield, Preservation Planner

Council Action Requested: (1) Statement of support from the Town Council for the historic survey project; and (2) authorization to submit a grant application for partial reimbursement for the project from the Virginia Certified Local Government (CLG) program.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends that Council: (1) approve the attached resolution stating support for the historic survey project; and (2) authorize staff to submit a Virginia Certified Local Government grant for partial reimbursement on the project.

Commission Recommendation: The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) has identified the update of the historic architectural survey as one of their goals for 2015.

Fiscal Impact: Staff estimates the total cost for the project to be \$30,000 inclusive of approximately \$6,000 in staff time which is already included in the Adopted Fiscal Year 2016 budget. The grant awards range from 30-50% of the total project cost. Grant money is distributed to awardees on a reimbursement basis upon completion of the project.

Executive Summary: The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) and staff plan to complete an update of the historical architectural survey in phases over a two-year period. Phase 1 will be undertaken in Fiscal Year 2015-16, and is an update to historic surveys for up to 50 resources in the Old and Historic District. Phase 2 will be undertaken in Fiscal Year 2016-2017, and involves developing an on-line mapping and information resource base for the public.

Staff seeks a statement of support from the Town Council for the historic survey project, as well as authorization to apply to the CLG program for a matching grant to update the historic resource surveys for the H-1 district (Phase 1). The application deadline for the grant is May 15, 2015.

Background: The Town of Leesburg is one of thirty-three (33) localities in Virginia recognized as a Certified Local Government (CLG) which recognizes our historic preservation efforts as meeting certain “best practices” criteria and requirements

established by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR), and the National Park Service (NPS). Viewed as a partnership between governments, the CLG designation provides municipal and county governments with a way to participate formally in state and national historic preservation programs. One of the benefits available to a designated CLG is access to an annual grant program that is administered by VDHR for historic resource surveys, design guidelines, preservation planning, and public outreach projects.

Among the goals for the future of the Town's preservation program, the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) has identified a project that is potentially eligible for CLG grant funding. The Town's records on historic structures in the historic district should be regularly and systematically updated and maintained. These records should also be readily available to property owners and the public in general. This project addresses both of these objectives. The project can be implemented in two phases as follows:

Architectural Survey Update – The first phase of the project would update the historic resource inventory for Leesburg. The last inventory was conducted in 1999, and many downtown buildings currently listed as “noncontributing” are now over 50 years of age and may be contributing resources. Other properties in the vicinity of downtown will be surveyed for the first time. It is the intent of staff and the BAR to update the historic resource inventory every ten years consistent with CLG guidelines.

Also, several historical topics will be researched as part of this phase including: (1) with the recent commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Leesburg's Old & Historic District, several buildings constructed under the earliest version of the district's design guidelines are now potentially eligible for National Register listing; (2) there are several notable Midcentury residences that are not currently documented; and (3) backgrounds on architects and designers practicing in Leesburg during this period such as Joanne Rust.

Historic Property Online Map & Database – The second part of the project will result in online access to the historic resource survey, and Certificate of Appropriateness information for properties in the H-1 district. Similar to the recently-launched Leesburg Interactive Applications Map (LIAM), this information which currently is difficult for the general public to access without staff assistance would be made available through a GIS map interface on the Town's website. Baseline data including photographs and descriptions of significant features from the architectural survey update would also be accessible for enforcement monitoring and the development of a virtual tour of the district.

The phased project would be implemented over a two-year period and be funded by back-to-back CLG grant applications. Funding would be used to pay interns and research personnel to perform field work and data entry under the direction and guidance of Town staff. Also, it may be necessary to seek the professional services of National Register and GIS/database consultants. Total estimated staff time for both phases the project is 150 hours.

Attachments: Resolution

PRESENTED May 12, 2015

RESOLUTION NO. _____

ADOPTED _____

A RESOLUTION: TO SUPPORT THE HISTORIC SURVEY PROJECT AND AUTHORIZATION FOR STAFF TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION FOR MATCHING FUNDS FROM THE VIRGINIA CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, the Town of Leesburg is one of thirty- three localities in Virginia that is recognized by the Department of Historic Resources as a Certified Local Government (CLG); and

WHEREAS, the state has bestowed this recognition on Leesburg due to the Town's efforts to meet 'best practices' criteria for historic preservation; and

WHEREAS, one of these best practices is conducting surveys of properties in the historic district and assuring that continued maintenance of this survey information is performed on a regular basis; and

WHEREAS, it is the Board of Architecture and staff's intent to update historic survey information and make it readily available to the public through a new on-line map and information system; and

WHEREAS, matching grants are available from the CLG program to localities for preservation efforts including updating and maintaining historic surveys and public outreach efforts.

THEREFORE, RESOLVED by the Council of the Town of Leesburg in Virginia as follows:

1. Town Council endorses the historic survey project; and
2. Authorization is provided for staff to submit a matching grant proposal to the CLG program to fund the first phase of this project which is the historic survey update.

PASSED this 12TH day of May, 2015.

Kristen C. Umstatt, Mayor
Town of Leesburg

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council