

Villa Rica is Georgia's 94th Certified Local Government

ATLANTA (March 29, 2016) – The Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources is pleased to announce that the City of Villa Rica (Carroll and Douglas County) is Georgia's 94th Certified Local Government (CLG). The National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, confirmed the designation on March 14, 2016.

The City of Villa Rica passed a local historic preservation ordinance in 2008 and has a five-person citizen board serving as its historic preservation commission (HPC). The HPC has participated in statewide training and continues to encourage the preservation education of its members, as well as the larger Villa Rica preservation community. "This will give the historic preservation process a powerful boost in Villa Rica," City Manager David A. Milliron said. "This designation is not something that's taking away from people but rather giving to the residents, visitors and future generations of this community in the way of historic preservation of our most precious assets."

Located in the northwest of the state, the City of Villa Rica was established in 1826 and incorporated in 1881. Villa Rica grew rapidly due to the gold strike and the construction of the railroad. The city boasts several agricultural, commercial, and religious historic sites to include Wicks Tavern and the First United Methodist Church of Villa Rica, both originally erected in the 1830s. Several properties are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as is the North Villa Rica Historic District which was recognized in 2002.

The CLG program extends federal and state preservation programs to the local level, expanding the scope of local responsibilities and opportunities for preservation. Georgia has the second highest number of CLG-designated communities in the United States. Participation requires the community to create a preservation ordinance that establishes a design review commission as well as other state and federal requirements. Villa Rica is now eligible for federal Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) grants that administered by the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources. These HPF grants may be used for a variety of preservation activities including historic resource surveys, National Register of Historic Places nominations, educational activities, marketing purposes, publications, heritage tourism studies, and predevelopment plans. To learn more about the CLG program, visit HPD's website at www.georgiashpo.org/community/clg.

The Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources serves as Georgia's state historic preservation office. Its mission is to promote the preservation and use of historic places for a better Georgia. HPD's programs include archaeology protection and education, environmental review, grants, historic resource surveys, tax incentives, the National Register of Historic Places, community planning and technical assistance.

The mission of the Department of Natural Resources is to sustain, enhance, protect and conserve Georgia's natural, historic and cultural resources for present and future generations, while recognizing the importance of promoting the development of commerce and industry that utilize sound environmental practices.

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