

Historic Preservation Options for Downtown Robbins

This document provides a comprehensive overview of three historic preservation pathways available to the Town of Robbins for downtown economic development. Each option offers different benefits, requirements, and implementation timelines.

KEY FINDING: National Register Historic District designation provides the most immediate economic development benefits (35% combined tax credits) with minimal ongoing administrative burden, making it ideal for downtown Robbins revitalization.

Quick Comparison of Options

Feature	National Register Historic District	Local Historic District	Certified Local Government (CLG)
Primary Benefit	Federal & State Tax Credits (35% combined)	Design Control & Preservation Protection	Access to CLG Grant Funding
Tax Credits Available?	YES - 20% Federal + 15% State	Only if also National Register	Only if also National Register
Design Review Required?	NO	YES - by local commission	YES - by local commission
Property Owner Restrictions?	NONE	Exterior alterations require approval	Exterior alterations require approval
Timeline	18-24 months	6-12 months	2-4 months (after local district exists)
Upfront Cost	\$25,000-\$40,000	\$10,000-\$25,000	No fee
Consultant Needed?	YES - Architectural Historian	YES - for ordinance/guidelines	NO - staff application
Ongoing Municipal Cost	\$0	\$15,000-\$50,000+ annually (staff time)	\$5,000-\$15,000 annually (staff time)
Property Owner Consent	Owners notified, can object to inclusion	Majority consent typically needed	N/A - applies to municipality
Survey Requirements	Comprehensive architectural/historical survey	Basic survey of proposed district	Comprehensive survey required
Best For	Economic development, tax incentives, no restrictions	Strong preservation controls, design standards	Grant funding for preservation projects
Can Be Combined?	YES - often combined with Local District	YES - often combined with National Register	YES - enhances existing local district
Ongoing Administrative Burden	MINIMAL - essentially none	HIGH - commission meetings, design reviews	MODERATE - grant applications, reporting

Option 1: National Register Historic District

Overview

A National Register Historic District is a federal designation managed by the National Park Service that recognizes areas of historical or architectural significance. This is the most common pathway for communities seeking economic development benefits through historic preservation tax credits.

Key Benefits

- **Federal Historic Tax Credit:** 20% tax credit for substantial rehabilitation of income-producing properties
- **State Historic Tax Credit:** Additional 15% North Carolina tax credit (35% combined total)
- **No Design Review:** Property owners retain complete freedom to alter, demolish, or develop unless seeking use of historic tax credits
- **Marketing Value:** "Historic" branding for tourism and downtown revitalization
- **Increased Property Values:** Studies show 5-20% premium in historic districts
- **Flexible Application:** No requirement to use tax credits - purely voluntary incentive

Detailed Implementation Process

Step 1: Initial Assessment (Months 1-2)

Action Items:

- Contact NC State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) - Preservation Services Section
- Request preliminary eligibility consultation (free service)
- Identify preliminary district boundaries
- Conduct informal windshield survey of downtown buildings
- **Assess age (50+ years old), historic integrity, and architectural character**

Key Contacts:

- NC HPO: (919) 814-6570 | hpo@dnrc.nc.gov
- Regional Preservation Specialist for Moore County area

Costs: \$0 (HPO consultation is free)

Expected Outcome: Determination of whether Robbins downtown has sufficient historic resources

Step 2: Secure Funding (Months 2-4)

Action Items:

- Research grant opportunities (CLG Survey & Planning Grants, if Robbins becomes CLG)
- Explore local funding sources (town budget, community foundation, downtown association)
- Consider cost-sharing with major property owners who will benefit

- Prepare budget request and funding proposal

Potential Funding Sources:

- NC HPO Certified Local Government (CLG) grants: up to \$25,000
- Private donations from property owners/businesses

Costs: Staff time for grant writing/coordination

Expected Outcome: Secured funding commitment of \$25,000-\$40,000

Step 3: Hire Qualified Consultant (Months 4-6)

Action Items:

- Request proposals from architectural historians meeting National Register professional qualification standards
- Check consultant credentials (must meet Secretary of Interior Professional Qualification Standards)
- Review past National Register nominations completed by consultant
- Execute contract with selected consultant

Consultant Requirements:

- Graduate degree in architectural history, historic preservation, or related field
- Experience with National Register nominations in North Carolina
- Familiarity with NC textile mill town history (relevant to Robbins)

Costs: \$25,000-\$40,000 for comprehensive survey and nomination

Expected Outcome: Contracted architectural historian ready to begin survey

Step 4: Comprehensive Historic Resources Survey (Months 6-12)

Action Items:

- Consultant conducts field survey of all buildings in proposed district
- Research historical background (deeds, maps, photographs, newspapers, mill records)
- Photograph all properties (exterior views, key architectural details)
- Complete individual inventory forms for significant properties
- Identify contributing vs. non-contributing structures
- Develop historic context narrative

Key Deliverables:

- Building inventory database
- District boundary map with contributing/non-contributing properties marked
- Historic context statement (e.g., "Textile Manufacturing in Robbins, 1900-1950")
- Photographic documentation

Costs: Included in consultant contract

Important Note: Contributing buildings are those that retain historic character and add to district significance. Non-contributing buildings are too new, too altered, or incompatible but don't prevent district listing.

Step 5: Property Owner Notification (Months 12-13)

Action Items:

- Prepare draft nomination document
- Send certified letters to all property owners in proposed district
- Explain tax credit benefits and clarify that National Register has NO restrictions
- Hold public information meeting
- Address property owner questions and concerns
- Collect formal objections (if any)

Critical Information to Communicate:

- National Register listing does NOT restrict what owners can do with properties
- No design review, no permission required for alterations unless seeking tax credits
- Tax credits are voluntary - use them if beneficial, ignore if not
- Listing may enhance property values and marketability

Property Owner Objection Rules:

- If majority of private property owners object, property cannot be listed
- However, district can still be designated as "determined eligible" for tax credits

Costs: Postage, meeting venue, informational materials (~\$500-\$1,000)

Expected Outcome: Property owners informed and objections (if any) documented

Step 6: Draft National Register Nomination (Months 13-16)

Action Items:

- Consultant prepares formal nomination document using National Park Service forms
- Include: district description, significance statement, boundary justification, photos
- Submit draft to NC HPO for preliminary review
- Revise based on HPO feedback
- Finalize nomination package

Nomination Components:

- Section 7: Architectural Description - detailed description of district resources
- Section 8: Statement of Significance - why district is historically important
- Section 10: Geographical Data - boundary description and justification

- Photographs: digital images meeting NPS specifications
- Maps: USGS topographic map with boundary, sketch map showing resources

Costs: Included in consultant contract

Expected Outcome: Complete nomination ready for state review

Step 7: State Review and Federal Listing (Months 16-24)

Action Items:

- Submit final nomination to NC State Historic Preservation Office
- HPO staff reviews for completeness and technical adequacy
- Nomination presented to NC National Register Advisory Committee (meets quarterly)
- If approved by committee, State Historic Preservation Officer signs nomination
- HPO forwards nomination to National Park Service in Washington, DC
- National Park Service reviews (typically 45 days)
- Final listing in National Register published in Federal Register

Review Timeline:

- NC HPO staff review: 30-60 days
- NC National Register Advisory Committee: Meets Feb, May, Aug, Nov
- State Historic Preservation Officer signature: 15 days after committee approval
- National Park Service review: 45 days
- Publication in Federal Register: 15 days after NPS approval

Costs: \$0

Expected Outcome: Downtown Robbins Historic District listed in National Register

Ongoing Administrative Responsibilities

MINIMAL TO NONE

Required Responsibilities: NONE

- No annual reports or paperwork to file
- No fees or renewal processes
- No mandatory maintenance standards
- No required inspections or compliance reviews
- No design review for alterations
- No restrictions on demolition, sale, or use
- Listing is essentially permanent unless district loses historic integrity

Optional Activities (Not Required):

- Educational outreach to inform property owners about tax credit opportunities
- Technical assistance on rehabilitation standards (can be provided by HPO)

- Marketing and branding using National Register status
- Informal monitoring of rehabilitation projects
- Documentation of success stories

Estimated Ongoing Municipal Cost: \$0

Key Advantage for Robbins: National Register designation is "set it and forget it" - one-time nomination process with permanent benefits and NO ongoing burden on town staff. This makes it ideal for smaller municipalities that want economic development tools without administrative overhead.

Option 2: Local Historic District

Overview

A Local Historic District is established through municipal ordinance and creates local regulatory protections for historic resources. It requires design review by a local Historic District Commission for exterior alterations and demolition. This option provides stronger preservation controls but requires significant ongoing municipal commitment.

Key Benefits

- **Design Control:** Ensures compatible new construction and appropriate renovations
- **Demolition Protection:** Prevents loss of historic buildings
- **Community Character:** Maintains architectural and historical integrity
- **Property Values:** Studies show local districts can stabilize or increase values
- **Can Be Combined:** Often paired with National Register for both protection and tax credits

Key Limitations

- **Design Review Required:** Property owners must obtain Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior changes
- **Political Challenge:** Property owners may resist regulatory controls
- **Ongoing Cost:** Municipality must staff and support Historic District Commission
- **Administrative Burden:** Regular meetings, design reviews, appeals process

Detailed Implementation Process

Step 1: Preliminary Study and Planning (Months 1-3)

Action Items:

- Form steering committee (town officials, property owners, preservation advocates)
- Define preliminary district boundaries
- Conduct initial community outreach and education
- Gauge property owner support
- Research other NC local historic districts as models

Costs: Staff time, meeting expenses (~\$1,000-\$2,000)

Expected Outcome: Feasibility assessment and community support baseline

Step 2: Hire Consultant (Months 3-4)

Action Items:

- Issue RFP for preservation consultant or attorney with historic district ordinance experience
- Select consultant to draft ordinance and design guidelines
- Execute contract

Consultant Scope:

- Draft historic district ordinance
- Prepare design guidelines document
- Conduct basic architectural survey of district
- Provide implementation guidance

Costs: \$10,000-\$25,000

Expected Outcome: Qualified consultant under contract

Step 3: Prepare Ordinance and Design Guidelines (Months 4-6)

Action Items:

- Consultant drafts historic district ordinance
- Ordinance must include: district boundaries, commission structure, review procedures, appeals process
- Develop design guidelines specific to Robbins architectural character
- Review drafts with steering committee
- Refine based on feedback

Key Ordinance Components:

- Purpose and intent
- District boundaries (with map)
- Historic District Commission composition (typically 5-9 members)
- Certificate of Appropriateness procedures
- Design review criteria
- Demolition review process
- Appeals procedures
- Penalties for violations

Costs: Included in consultant contract

Expected Outcome: Draft ordinance and design guidelines ready for public review

Step 4: Property Owner Engagement (Months 6-8) - CRITICAL

Action Items:

- Mail information packets to all property owners in proposed district
- Hold multiple public information sessions
- Conduct one-on-one meetings with major property owners
- Address concerns about restrictions and costs
- Emphasize economic benefits and flexibility in guidelines
- Gauge support level

Key Messages:

- Design review focuses on preserving character, not preventing change
- Guidelines are flexible and allow for reasonable alterations
- Protection from incompatible development benefits all property owners
- Can be combined with National Register for tax credits

Costs: Mailings, meeting spaces, materials (~\$2,000-\$5,000)

Critical Success Factor: Local historic districts require strong property owner support. Without majority support, ordinance adoption will be politically difficult or impossible.

Step 5: Public Hearings (Months 8-10)

Action Items:

- Schedule public hearing before Planning Board (if applicable)
- Planning Board reviews ordinance and makes recommendation to Town Board
- Publish legal notice of Town Board public hearing (required by NC General Statutes)
- Hold Town Board public hearing
- Record all testimony and feedback

Legal Requirements (NC General Statute 160D):

- Public notice published at least 10 days before hearing
- Notice must include description of proposed district and ordinance
- All interested parties have right to speak
- Written comments must be accepted and included in record

Costs: Legal advertising, staff time (~\$500-\$1,500)

Expected Outcome: Public input received and documented

Step 6: Ordinance Adoption (Months 10-12)

Action Items:

- Town Board considers Planning Board recommendation and public input

- Make any final revisions to ordinance
- Town Board votes on ordinance adoption
- If approved, ordinance becomes effective upon adoption or specified date
- File adopted ordinance with Town Clerk

Vote Requirements:

- Simple majority of Town Board typically sufficient
- Check Robbins Town Charter for any special requirements

Costs: \$0 (staff administrative time)

Expected Outcome: Historic district ordinance adopted and in effect

Step 7: Commission Setup and Implementation (Month 12+)

Action Items:

- Town Board appoints Historic District Commission members
- Provide training for commission members (HPO offers free training)
- Develop application forms and review procedures
- Establish meeting schedule
- Begin reviewing Certificates of Appropriateness
- Create public education materials about review process

Commission Composition (typical):

- 5-9 members appointed by Town Board
- Should include: design professional (architect/landscape architect), historian, property owner from district
- Staggered terms (usually 3-4 years)
- Members should receive historic preservation training

Costs: Initial setup ~\$2,000-\$5,000

Expected Outcome: Functioning Historic District Commission ready to review applications

Ongoing Administrative Responsibilities

SIGNIFICANT ONGOING COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Required Municipal Responsibilities:

- Staff the Historic District Commission (typically 5-9 appointed members)
- Hold regular commission meetings (monthly or quarterly)
- Review Certificates of Appropriateness applications for:
 - Exterior alterations (paint, siding, windows, doors, roofing)
 - New construction
 - Demolition requests

- Signage
- Conduct design reviews and site visits
- Process appeals
- Maintain meeting minutes and records
- Provide administrative staff support
- Update design guidelines periodically
- Enforce ordinance compliance
- Handle legal issues and violations

Estimated Annual Ongoing Costs:

- Staff time (planning/zoning administrator): \$10,000-\$30,000
- Commission meeting expenses: \$1,000-\$2,000
- Legal support (as needed): \$2,000-\$10,000
- Training and education: \$500-\$1,000
- Materials and supplies: \$500-\$2,000
- TOTAL: \$15,000-\$50,000+ annually

Time Commitment:

- Staff administrator: 5-15 hours per month (small districts) to full-time position (large active districts)
- Commission members: 2-4 hours per month for meetings plus application review time
- Legal counsel: As needed for complex cases or appeals

Key Consideration for Robbins: Local Historic Districts require substantial ongoing municipal resources. Need to carefully assess whether there is staff capacity and budget to properly administer a design review program before establishing a local district.

Option 3: Certified Local Government (CLG) Status

Overview

Certified Local Government (CLG) status is a federal designation managed by the National Park Service that recognizes communities with strong local historic preservation programs. CLG status provides access to dedicated grant funding and technical assistance. However, it requires having an established local historic district and preservation commission already in place.

Key Benefits

- **Grant Funding:** Access to dedicated CLG grant pool (10% of NC HPO federal funding)
- **Grants Available:** \$5,000-\$25,000 for surveys, nominations, plans, education
- **Technical Assistance:** Enhanced support from State Historic Preservation Office
- **Review Authority:** Formal role in reviewing National Register nominations in jurisdiction
- **Professional Recognition:** Demonstrates commitment to quality preservation program

Prerequisites - MUST HAVE FIRST

Critical Requirement: CLG certification requires an existing local historic preservation program. You cannot become a CLG without first establishing:

- 1. Local Historic District Ordinance:** Must have legally adopted ordinance
- 2. Historic District/Preservation Commission:** Active commission meeting regularly
- 3. Design Review System:** Functioning Certificate of Appropriateness process
- 4. Qualified Staff:** Adequate staff support for preservation program

For Robbins: This means CLG status is a "Phase 2" option that can only be pursued AFTER establishing a local historic district. CLG should be viewed as an enhancement to an existing program, not a starting point.

Detailed Implementation Process

Step 1: Verify Prerequisites (Month 1)

Action Items:

- Confirm local historic district ordinance is adopted and in effect
- Verify Historic Preservation Commission is appointed and meeting regularly
- Ensure commission has processed at least a few Certificates of Appropriateness
- Review commission member qualifications (need professionals in relevant fields)
- Assess staff capacity to handle CLG administrative requirements

Minimum Program Requirements:

- Ordinance must establish preservation commission with design review authority
- Commission must meet federal composition requirements
- Municipality must maintain public participation process
- System must include provisions for survey and designation of historic properties

Costs: \$0 (internal assessment)

Expected Outcome: Confirmation that all prerequisites are met

Step 2: Prepare CLG Application (Months 1-2)

Action Items:

- Request CLG application materials from NC HPO
- Gather required documentation:
 - Copy of historic preservation ordinance
 - Historic District Commission bylaws
 - List of commission members with qualifications
 - Sample Certificates of Appropriateness and meeting minutes
 - Description of design review procedures
- Complete application forms
- Obtain local government authorization (mayor/manager signature)

Application Components:

- Written narrative describing preservation program
- Documentation of ordinance and commission structure
- Evidence of public participation process
- Demonstration of survey and planning activities
- Commitment to maintain program standards

Costs: \$0 (staff time only)

Expected Outcome: Complete CLG application package

Step 3: Submit Application to State (Month 2)

Action Items:

- Review completed application with HPO staff informally (recommended)
- Make any recommended adjustments
- Submit formal application to NC State Historic Preservation Office
- Confirm receipt and estimated review timeline

Submission Contact:

- NC State Historic Preservation Office
- Local Government Programs Coordinator
- 4617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4617
- Phone: (919) 814-6570
- Email: hpo@dncr.nc.gov

Costs: \$0

Expected Outcome: Application under state review

Step 4: State and Federal Review (Months 3-4)

Action Items:

- HPO staff reviews application for completeness and compliance
- Address any questions or requests for additional information
- State Historic Preservation Officer recommends certification to National Park Service
- National Park Service conducts final review and approves
- Receive official CLG certification letter

Review Criteria:

- Ordinance meets federal standards (36 CFR Part 61)
- Commission properly constituted with qualified members
- Adequate public participation provisions

- System for survey and inventory of historic properties
- Commitment to maintain program

Typical Timeline:

- State review: 30-45 days
- Federal review: 30-45 days
- Total: 2-3 months from submission

Costs: \$0

Expected Outcome: CLG certification approved

Step 5: CLG Certification and First Year (Month 4+)

Action Items:

- Receive CLG certification from National Park Service
- Announce certification publicly (press release, town website)
- Attend CLG training workshops offered by HPO (required annually)
- Begin planning for first grant application (available in Year 2)
- Submit annual CLG report to HPO

First Year Requirements:

- Commission must meet at least quarterly
- At least one commission member must attend HPO training
- Submit annual CLG report by December 31
- Maintain accurate records of commission activities
- Participate in HPO site visits or evaluations

Costs: Travel/training expenses (~\$500-\$1,000)

Expected Outcome: Established as CLG community in good standing

Step 6: Grant Eligibility and Ongoing Participation (Year 2+)

Action Items:

- Monitor HPO announcements for CLG grant opportunities
- Develop competitive grant applications for survey, planning, or education projects
- Continue required annual training
- Submit annual CLG reports on time
- Maintain program standards to retain CLG status

CLG Grant Opportunities (Typical):

- Historic Resource Surveys: \$10,000-\$25,000
- National Register nominations: \$5,000-\$15,000

- Preservation plans: \$10,000-\$20,000
- Design guidelines: \$5,000-\$15,000
- Educational programs: \$2,000-\$10,000
- Requires 40-60% local match (cash or in-kind)

Costs: Staff time for grant applications, local match funds

Expected Outcome: Successful grant awards to enhance preservation program

Ongoing Administrative Responsibilities

MODERATE ONGOING COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Required CLG Responsibilities (Beyond Local District Requirements):

- Annual CLG Report - Comprehensive report due December 31 each year documenting:
 - All commission meetings and activities
 - Certificates of Appropriateness issued
 - Survey and planning work completed
 - Training attended by commissioners
 - Educational and outreach activities
- Annual Training Requirement - At least one commission member must attend HPO-sponsored training
- Maintain Federal Standards - Ensure ordinance and procedures continue to meet 36 CFR Part 61 requirements
- Grant Administration - If awarded CLG grants:
 - Quarterly financial reports
 - Project status updates
 - Final grant reports with deliverables
 - Compliance with federal procurement requirements
- HPO Coordination - Respond to HPO requests, participate in site visits, maintain communication
- National Register Review - Provide formal comments on National Register nominations in jurisdiction

Estimated Additional Annual Costs (Beyond Local District Costs):

- Annual report preparation: \$1,000-\$3,000 (staff time)
- Training attendance: \$500-\$1,000 (travel, registration)
- Grant administration (if awarded grants): \$2,000-\$10,000 (staff time, match)
- HPO coordination: \$500-\$1,000 (staff time)
- TOTAL ADDITIONAL: \$4,000-\$15,000 annually

Risk of Decertification:

- Failure to submit annual reports can result in loss of CLG status
- Commission must remain active and meet federal composition requirements

- Significant changes to ordinance require re-certification review
- Loss of CLG status means loss of grant eligibility

Key Consideration for Robbins: CLG status adds administrative requirements on top of existing local district responsibilities. The benefits (grant funding) must justify the additional staff time and reporting burden. Best suited for communities with established preservation programs ready to expand their activities.

Strategic Recommendations for Downtown Robbins

Recommended Pathway: Phased Approach

PHASE 1: National Register Historic District (Years 1-2)

PRIORITY: START HERE

Rationale:

- Provides immediate economic development tool (35% tax credits)
- No restrictions on property owners - politically easier
- No ongoing municipal costs or administrative burden
- Builds awareness and support for historic preservation
- Can always add local protections later if needed

Implementation Steps:

1. Contact NC HPO for preliminary assessment (Month 1)
2. Secure funding for consultant (\$25,000-\$40,000) (Months 2-4)
3. Hire qualified architectural historian (Months 4-6)
4. Complete survey and nomination (Months 6-18)
5. Achieve National Register listing (Months 18-24)

Expected Outcome: Downtown Robbins Historic District listed in National Register, property owners can access 35% combined tax credits for rehabilitation projects

PHASE 2: Evaluate Local Historic District (Years 3-5)

CONDITIONAL: Only if strong community support develops

Trigger Conditions:

- Several successful rehabilitation projects using National Register tax credits
- Property owners express concern about incompatible development
- Majority of downtown property owners support design review
- Town has staff capacity to administer design review program

If Conditions Met:

1. Form steering committee with property owner representation

2. Draft local historic district ordinance and design guidelines
3. Conduct extensive property owner outreach
4. Hold public hearings and adopt ordinance
5. Establish Historic Preservation Commission

Expected Outcome: Local design review protections complement National Register tax credits

PHASE 3: Pursue CLG Certification (Years 5+)

OPTIONAL: Only if expanded preservation program needed

Trigger Conditions:

- Local Historic District is established and functioning well
- Commission is active and processing applications regularly
- Town has identified specific grant-funded projects
- Staff capacity exists for grant administration and CLG reporting

If Conditions Met:

1. Ensure local program meets federal CLG standards
2. Prepare and submit CLG application
3. Achieve CLG certification
4. Apply for CLG grants for additional survey/planning work

Expected Outcome: Access to dedicated grant funding for expanded preservation activities

Why This Phased Approach Works

1. Low-Risk Start: National Register provides economic benefits without political controversy over restrictions

2. Builds Momentum: Successful rehabilitation projects demonstrate value of historic preservation

3. Minimal Municipal Cost: Robbins invests one-time in National Register nomination but has no ongoing obligations

4. Flexibility: Can add local protections and CLG status later if community support develops

5. Reversibility: If National Register doesn't generate expected benefits, nothing requires Robbins to proceed to Phases 2 or 3

Next Concrete Steps for Robbins

1. Walk Downtown Robbins

- Photograph historic buildings
- Document what exists
- Assess general condition and architectural character

2. Contact NC State Historic Preservation Office

- Phone: (919) 814-6570
- Email: hpo@dncr.nc.gov
- Request: Preliminary assessment call for potential Robbins downtown historic district
- Ask for: Regional preservation specialist contact information

3. Research Robbins Historic Context

- When was downtown developed? (textile mill/firearms period?)
- Who were key developers/industries?
- What architectural styles are present?
- Any previous survey work or documentation?

4. Identify Key Stakeholders

- Major downtown property owners
- Town manager and planning staff
- Town board members
- Local business owners
- Any downtown development/merchant associations

5. Check Existing Documentation

- NC HPOweb database: <http://gis.ncdcr.gov/hpoweb/>
- Search for any previously surveyed properties in Robbins
- Check if any individual properties already listed in National Register

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS (60-90 Days):

1. Present Concept to Town Leadership

- Use this document as briefing material
- Emphasize economic development benefits
- Stress minimal ongoing municipal cost
- Gauge support level

2. Informal Property Owner Outreach

- Meet one-on-one with major property owners
- Explain tax credit benefits
- Clarify no restrictions with National Register alone
- Assess level of interest and any concerns

3. Identify Funding Sources

- Town budget allocation?
- Moore County economic development funds?
- Private donations from property owners who will benefit?
- Foundation grants?
- Goal: \$25,000-\$40,000 for consultant and nomination

4. Robbins Town Board Meeting

- Present during public comment or request agenda item
- Share preliminary findings and concept
- Request formal support for pursuing National Register nomination

MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS (4-6 Months):

1. Secure Funding Commitment
2. Issue RFP for Architectural Historian Consultant
3. Select Consultant and Execute Contract
4. Begin Comprehensive Survey and Documentation
5. Develop Property Owner Communication Strategy

Resources and Key Contacts

North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office

Main Office:

NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
 State Historic Preservation Office
 4617 Mail Service Center
 Raleigh, NC 27699-4617

Phone: (919) 814-6570

Email: hpo@dncr.nc.gov

Website: <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/state-historic-preservation-office>

Key Services:

- Free preliminary assessments for National Register eligibility
- Technical guidance on nomination process
- Review and approval of National Register nominations
- Administration of CLG program
- Training workshops for local preservation commissions
- Access to HPOweb database of surveyed properties

Other Key Resources

National Park Service - National Register Program

Website: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm>

National Register Bulletins (technical guidance):

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/publications.htm>

NC HPOweb - Searchable Database

Website: <http://gis.ncdcr.gov/hpweb/>

Search for previously surveyed properties and National Register listings in Moore County

Historic Preservation Tax Incentives

Federal Program: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>

NC State Program: <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-state-historic-preservation-office/preservation-tax-credits>

Preservation North Carolina

Statewide nonprofit historic preservation organization

Website: <https://presnc.org/>

Phone: (919) 401-8540

Provides technical assistance, revolving loan fund, and advocacy

NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center

Technical assistance for downtown revitalization

Website: <https://www.commerce.nc.gov/about-us/divisions-programs/main-street-rural-planning-center>

Phone: (919) 814-4658

Can help coordinate historic preservation with broader downtown development strategies

Moore County Examples

Aberdeen Historic District

Status: Local Historic District, Certified Local Government

CLG Certification Date: May 24, 2012

Contact: Town of Aberdeen Planning Department

Southern Pines Historic District

Status: Local Historic District, Certified Local Government

CLG Certification Date: April 12, 2010

Contact: Town of Southern Pines Planning Department

Village of Pinehurst Historic District

Status: National Register Historic District (NO local district or CLG status)

Demonstrates "National Register Only" approach - economic benefits without local restrictions

Good model for Robbins to consider

Value of Local Examples:

- Aberdeen and Southern Pines staff can share lessons learned
- Review their ordinances and design guidelines as models
- Understand administrative costs and time commitments
- Learn about community reception and property owner response

Conclusion

Historic preservation offers powerful economic development tools for downtown Robbins. The National Register Historic District pathway provides the strongest immediate benefits - 35% combined federal and state tax credits - with minimal ongoing administrative burden and no restrictions on property owners.

The recommended phased approach allows Robbins to start with National Register designation, demonstrate success through rehabilitation projects, and then consider adding local protections or CLG status only if strong community support develops and additional capacity becomes available.

Key Success Factors:

- Strong partnership between MCEDP, Town of Robbins, and property owners
- Clear communication about benefits (tax credits) and limitations (no requirements)
- Adequate funding for quality consultant and comprehensive nomination
- Patient timeline - National Register process takes 18-24 months
- Celebration of early wins as rehabilitation projects come online

With downtown Robbins' textile mill heritage and historic building stock, the community is positioned to leverage historic preservation as a catalyst for economic revitalization. The first step is reaching out to NC HPO for a preliminary assessment.