



November 1, 2021

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NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Albany NY, 12238
Via email to erik.kulleseid@parks.ny.gov

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Dear Commissioner,

The Preservation League of New York State thanks you and your staff at the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for your partnership during the year in protecting New York's most treasured historic and cultural assets. It has been a pleasure working with you in communities both large and small, to promote historic preservation as a tool to revitalize our neighborhoods, encourage economic development, and protect New York's many historic buildings, neighborhoods, and landscapes.

Jay DiLorenzo
President

As New York recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, we feel more strongly than ever before that historic preservation has a key role to play in nurturing healthy, sustainable communities, where New Yorkers want to live and work. Our shared efforts to revitalize neighborhoods, encourage small business, recognize diversity, promote sustainability, and advance sites affiliated with the arts and tourism, is often dependent on the strong partnership of New York State. Funding opportunities, tax incentives, policies and programs of the State are crucial to this work.

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With that in mind, and after discussion with our colleagues, we respectfully request your agency's consideration of the following budget priorities for the 2022-23 New York State fiscal year.

Reauthorize the NYS Rehabilitation Tax Credit for Commercial Properties and the Historic Homeownership Rehabilitation Credit

The New York State Rehabilitation Tax Credit Programs are authorized until December 31, 2024. As that date draws closer, those that want to utilize the credits will wonder if they will be available when they are ready to proceed with their projects. This uncertainty will slow reinvestment in our communities until the credit programs have been reauthorized. To secure the predictability of this valuable revitalization tool, **we are asking you to advance as a 2022-2023 budget priority the reauthorization of the New York State Rehabilitation Tax Credit Programs through December 31, 2029.**

Historic tax credits have a proven track record of revitalizing historic buildings and neighborhoods throughout New York State. Their use has leveraged significant federal dollars in economically challenged neighborhoods suffering from disinvestment. Extending these credits will ensure that reinvestment in our urban cores, downtowns, neighborhoods, and Main Streets will continue.

Increase the Environmental Protection Fund

The current funding of the Environmental Protection Fund at \$300 million has meant thousands of acres of open space conserved, park land improved, and dozens of historic buildings restored. However, due to the high demand for these very competitive grants, need consistently outpaces availability. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has only increased the demands placed on parks and historic sites in our state. **Therefore, we are asking you to advance as a 2022-2023 budget priority an increase in the value of the Environmental Protection Fund to \$500 million and within that request, to allocate an increased amount for the historic preservation grant fund.**

EPF funding has provided crucial support for municipal and non-profit historic preservation projects throughout the state. Each grant helps to leverage many times its value in private support which in turn supports local tourism efforts. With the semi quincentennial of the American Revolution quickly approaching, an increase in the Environmental Protection Fund will help to prepare historic sites in New York State for increased visitation, while also enabling them to tell a broader, more inclusive story of our founding.

Include Historic Preservation in the Proposed Environmental Bond Act

Governor Kathy Hochul has recently proposed a \$4 billion Environmental Bond Act for New York State that would assist the state in combating climate change and protecting our important natural areas. Historic preservation needs to be a part of this initiative as it has been a part of every past environmental bond act with the exception of the Restore Mother Nature Bond Act. **We are asking you to support Governor Hochul's bond act proposal to specifically include historic preservation funding.**

We know that crafting a budget is a balance of needs versus funding availability. However, we also look to historic preservation as a critical contributor to economic recovery, sustainable job growth, and the protection of our environment. We hope that you will consider these budget requests.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the organizations below with questions or for further discussion. Thank you for your consideration of these budget priority requests.

Very truly yours,



Jay A. DiLorenzo
President, Preservation League of NYS

(Supporting Organizations on next page)

The following 22 organizations join the Preservation League in support of consideration of the above-mentioned budget priorities:

Andrew Berman
Executive Director
Village Preservation

Samantha Bosshart
Executive Director
Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation

Peg Breen
President
The New York Landmarks Conservancy

Jessie Fisher
Executive Director
Preservation Buffalo Niagara

Elizabeth Goldstein
President
The Municipal Art Society of New York

Wayne Goodman
Executive Director
Landmark Society of Western New York

Susan Holland
Executive Director
Historic Ithaca

Pamela Howard
Executive Director
Historic Albany Foundation

Jane Kellar
Director
Friends of Historic Kingston

Sean Khorsandi
Executive Director
LANDMARK WEST!

Gloria Kishton
Chair
Schenectady Heritage Foundation

Rachel Leuy
Executive Director
FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts

Dr. Marcela Micucci
Executive Director
Greater Oneonta Historical Society

Tolga J. Morawski
Executive Director
Greater Mohawk Valley Land Bank

Alan Neumann
President
Historic Hudson, Inc.

Lorna Nowé
Interim Executive Director
Historic Districts Council

Gerritt Platel
President
Mohawk Valley Collective

Ellen Pope
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Andrew Roblee
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Preservation Association of Central New York

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Adirondack Architectural Heritage

Austin Wheelock
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Heritage Foundation of Oswego County

Alexandra Parsons Wolfe
Executive Director
Preservation Long Island