

RESEARCH INFORMATION FOR SECTION 106 FCC TOWER APPLICANTS

Applicants for certain Federal Communications Commission (FCC) licenses related to communications tower construction are required to follow 47 CFR Part 1, Nationwide Programmatic Agreement (NPA) for Review Under the National Historic Preservation Act – for detailed instructions see <http://wireless.fcc.gov/siting/npa/applicability.html>. Submittal packages must be in a format determined by the FCC (FCC Form 620 or 621 with attachments). The following is not intended to interpret FCC regulations or forms, but to provide researchers with information for utilizing files at the Georgia Historic Preservation Division (HPD). Please note that HPD has not identified areas to be excluded from review, other than those designated by the FCC. For other specific questions, please refer to the federal regulations or forms or contact the FCC at (202) 418-0896.

Archaeological Assessment:

For information on known archaeological resources in the project area, a Georgia Archaeological Site File (GASF) search must be conducted at 1125 Whitehall Road, Athens, Georgia 30602. This is the current database of all identified sites in Georgia, along with manuscripts and research reports. Only a qualified archaeologist or GASF staff may undertake this research. To contact GASF, please call (706) 542-8737. For information on whether an archaeological field survey is required, please see the federal regulations.

Identification and evaluation relating to archaeological resources, including archaeological fieldwork or a determination that a survey is not necessary, must be performed by a professional who meets the *Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards* in archaeology (see 36 CFR Part 61).

All archaeological submissions should conform to the *Georgia Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Surveys* found here:

<http://georgia-archaeology.org/GCPA/wp-content/uploads/2007/05/GA-Arch-Standards-and-Guidelines-revised-April-2014.pdf>

Since archaeological reports are sent to the GASF for permanent retention, please submit one electronic copy of the report with the initial submittal. Please ensure the electronic copy is an optical character enabled .pdf.

Identification of Buildings, Structures, and Districts:

Background research within a proposed area of potential effect (APE) should be undertaken at HPD. At a minimum, this should include Historic Resources County and City Survey files, National Register of Historic Places files, Identified Sites files, Centennial Farms files, Topical Files, Environmental Review files, and NAHRGIS. **If the APE falls into more than one county, the researcher is responsible for researching files in all counties.**

To make an appointment please email moira.church@dca.ga.gov. When setting up the appointment, please identify that you are working on a tower project and please follow any guidelines provided by HPD staff. While not required by the FCC, we strongly recommend that research be conducted by a historian or architectural historian who meets the *Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards*.

***Please note: the APE is defined under 36 CFR Part 800.16 as “the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if*

any such properties exist.” The FCC has suggested the APE for visual effects as follows: within ½ mile radius for towers 200 feet or less in height, ¾ mile radius for towers more than 200 but no more than 400 feet tall, and 1 ½ miles radius for towers taller than 400 feet. Other factors such as topography and vegetation may also determine an alternative APE for visual effects.

Regarding alternative APEs, HPD recommends reaching out to our office to discuss alternatives in cases of small cell (under 50-feet), collocations (on rooftops in urban areas), or similar.

- **Historic Resources County and City Survey files** have information on field surveys and individual properties organized by county, with some keyed to USGS topographic maps, as well as to specialized maps for certain areas. There is also a state-owned buildings survey organized by state agency. Many areas have more than one survey that cover the same county, city, or area. It is important to check all surveys that cover the APE – old and new. Resources that have previously been determined eligible, depending on the year of the survey and the guidance available at that time, may be noted in different ways. For example, “appears to meet National Register criteria” equates to eligible, while “may meet National Register criteria” equates to unknown eligibility for Section 106 purposes. HPD recommends taking into account resources with unknown eligibility when at all possible.

Please note: many areas of the state have no surveys, out-of-date surveys, or incomplete/incorrect data or locations. Additionally, HPD recommends reviewing those resources that fall just outside of the APE as they may actually be within the APE. **The absence of information does not mean that no historic resources are present.

- **National Register of Historic Places files** are organized by county and official property name. Special file areas exist for Ossabaw and Sapelo Islands, as well as for thematic nominations such as county courthouses. Finding aids include notebooks with countywide listings and maps. We do not recommend web-based National Register searches, as the boundaries are not digitized on these sites. In order to determine district boundaries, you must review the files at HPD. Districts could include hundreds or even thousands of acres of land.
- **Identified Sites files** include material submitted for information purposes, as well as pending National Register nominations. Names may vary if the project was never finalized, and some files do not contain maps. It is up to the researcher to determine the location of the subject property by searching the documents contained in the file. If files are checked out to staff, please request the information.
- **Centennial Farms files** are our State’s historic farms. Some are also listed or eligible for listing in the National Register. Most files will contain maps to easily help a researcher locate the farm.
- **Topical files** include important topics related to Georgia history. This includes transportation, industry, and many other topics. These files will primarily need to be accessed when there are known resources within the APE, such as railroads, the Dixie Highway, streetcar resources, and similar.
- **Environmental Review (ER) files** contain consensus determinations of eligibility (DOEs) and are not located with the above files. ER files contain information on properties previously considered eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places for the purpose of previous or on-going Section 106 projects. Files are organized by county and date initially received, and may require a time-consuming manual search. ER files are normally archived after five years of no activity.

- **NAHRGIS** is Georgia’s Natural, Archaeological, and Historic Resources GIS. It is a web-based registry designed to catalog resource information for public accessibility. This online database can be found at www.gnahrgis.org. The database gives the researcher the opportunity to locate a site, draw an APE, and determine the cataloged resources within that APE.

***Please note: the locations of resources and the APE distance drawn are not always accurate in GNAHRGIS. HPD recommends also reviewing those resources that fall just outside of the drawn APE as they may actually be within the APE.*

Important notes regarding identification:

- Due to inconsistencies in resource locations, HPD recommends checking the tax assessor’s site, historic topographic maps, and Google Earth to compensate for errors that may have occurred in existing documentation.
- HPD recommends including all resource identified, whether eligible or not and affected or not, in FCC forms since the forms note eligibility and effect determinations.
- HPD requests that if a resource is found in more than one of the above file locations to please note all file numbers associated with the resource.
- HPD requests that if a resource is no longer extant to please include evidence of such in the submittal.

Assessment of Effects to Identified Resources:

Please refer to FCC regulations regarding procedures and consultant qualifications. HPD recommends submitting multiple quality photographs of the resources identified, whether considered eligible or not, including photographs of areas where a demolished resource once existed, and viewback photographs from all resources with indication of the location and height of the proposed tower. In some situations HPD may request photographic simulations or recommend a balloon or crane test to more accurately assess visual effects.

Public Participation:

FCC regulations include provisions for public notice. HPD has made available a list of other groups who should be provided notice as allowed through the NPA. We currently request FCC applicants to utilize the list included herein, which includes web-based contact information for Regional Commission historic preservation planners, Georgia historical organizations, Certified Local Governments (CLGs), historic preservation commissions, preservation non-profit organizations, Georgia Better Hometown and Main Street managers, registered local government authorities, and others.

HPD's ability to complete a timely Section 106 review and issue meaningful comments largely depends on the quality of the material submitted. Some applicants may find it advantageous to hire a historic preservation professional who meets the Professional Qualifications Standards for history or architectural history (as required for archaeology).

**Submittals should be mailed to:
Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Attn: Environmental Review, Historic Preservation Division
60 Executive Park South, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30329**

HPD Research File Checklist

For Tower Project Consultants

Please fill out and check off the following form, which will allow HPD to better evaluate and review your tower project (Form 620 or 621). **Attach this to your project submission packet or cover letter.**

Name and Title _____

Company _____

Tower Address (include city and county) _____

Date Research was compiled at HPD _____

Please check off that you have researched the project site and APE in the following locations. Please write or attach your findings (maps, survey forms, etc.) from these records, as applicable:

___ GA Archaeological Site File (UGA, Athens)

___ Historic Resources Survey Files (HPD)

___ National Register Files (HPD)

___ Identified Sites Files (HPD)

___ Centennial Farms Files (HPD)

___ Topical Files (HPD)

___ Environmental Review Files (HPD)

___ NAHRGIS (online)

Signature and Date _____

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TOWER APPLICANTS

In accordance with Stipulation V.D of the NPA, here is a list of groups that should be provided notice for Undertakings within their jurisdiction(s):

Regional Commission (RC) Preservation Planners:

<https://georgiashpo.org/regionalplanning> (see maps and lists of RC Preservation Planners)

Georgia historical organizations:

<https://www.georgiaarchives.org/ghrac/directory> (search by county and/or city)

-and-

<https://georgiahistory.com/education-outreach/affiliate-chapter-program/affiliate-chapter-list-by-county/>

Certified Local Governments (CLG) and Historic Preservation Commissions (HPC):

https://georgiashpo.org/sites/default/files/hpd/pdf/CLG/HPC-CLG_List.pdf (PDF list of CLGs)

Preservation Non-Profit Partners:

<https://georgiashpo.org/localpreservationgroups>

-and-

<https://www.georgiatrust.org/resources/preservation-directory/>

Georgia Better Hometown and Main Street Managers:

<http://www.georgiamainstreet.org/our-tiers/> (expand each tier for information)

Registered Local Government Authorities

<http://www.dca.ga.gov/development/research/programs/RAsearch/RAsearch.asp>

(word document)

Local Neighborhood or Community Organizations (where applicable)

It is HPD's experience that local neighborhood groups can often provide the best information pertaining to historic resources in their communities. These organizations are also often involved in the local zoning process and so it is advantageous to notify and seek their comments on potential effects to historic properties as early in project planning as possible. In most instances, such groups can be found via a simple online search.

***Please note: per Stipulation V.E of the NPA, an Applicant is required to consider the comments of the public. As such, HPD recommends including any historic resources noted from the above entities either with the initial submittal or forward such resources as soon as they are received so that it is evident that the comments have been considered.*