

GEORGIA HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY COUNCIL
STRATEGIC PLAN, 2017-2020
2017-04-06

Purpose

The Georgia Historical Records Advisory Council (GHRAC) 2017-2020 Strategic Plan identifies specific, actionable, impactful steps to improve the care and use of our state's records. Our goals are designed to be realistic ones for a volunteer board working with the support of the Georgia Archives and key partners, and with a base level of NHPRC operational funding. GHRAC developed its goals at a strategic planning meeting held at the Association County Commissioners headquarters in Atlanta on February 20, 2017.

Georgia Historical Records Advisory Council

The Georgia Historical Records Advisory Board was created in 1993 by act of the Georgia General Assembly. In 2013, the Georgia General Assembly changed GHRAB to The Georgia Historical Records Advisory Council (GHRAC). The Council is a continuation of and successor in interest to the former Georgia Historical Records Advisory Board.

Per legislation, the purpose of the Council is to advise the Board of Regents and the Georgia Archives; to serve as the state advisory body required by federal granting agencies; and to encourage cooperative efforts to improve the condition of Georgia's historical records.

The Council consists of 12 members appointed by the Governor. A majority of the members shall have recognized experience in the administration of government records, historical records, or archives or in a field of research or activity that makes extensive use of historical records. The Council shall be as broadly representative as possible of the public and private archival and research communities and organizations in the state. Terms are for three-years, except that each member serves until a successor is appointed. Members are eligible for reappointment. The Council may hire temporary staff for specific activities if funds are available. The director of the Georgia Archives serves as Georgia Historical Records Coordinator and assists the Council in its activities.

Previous Activities

During its history, GHRAC has awarded significant funding to local governments for records management and disaster preparedness projects. The purpose for these grants was to assist local governments with the maintenance of records related to official governmental actions, as well as real estate transactions (deeds, plats), probate court records (wills, trusts, estates), and other records of importance to the people of the municipality or county. The Council administered a successful and highly useful "Circuit Rider Archivist" program to guide local governments and other repositories, and it has developed an annual awards program highlighting excellence in the preservation and use of records.

Mission

The mission of the Georgia Historical Records Advisory Council per its bylaws is to:

- Promote the educational use of Georgia's historical records;

- Evaluate and improve the conditions of records;
- Encourage statewide planning for preservation and access;
- Foster cooperation and collaboration among users and keepers of Georgia's historical records; and
- Advise the University System of Georgia and the Georgia Archives on issues concerning records.

2017-2020 Goals

1. Promote the educational use of Georgia's historical records.

GHRAC Awards Program: GHRAC will promote the educational use of records by acknowledging annually excellent examples of teaching and learning with archival material. The Council will present awards to individuals, organizations, and institutions that integrate primary sources into classrooms or school district curricula. Recipients will demonstrate how the use of records in teaching improves student academic performance, enhances community involvement, or models innovative and creative pedagogical techniques. GHRAC also will present awards to students (grades 6-12, undergraduate, and graduate) for their meritorious use of primary sources. The Chancellor of the University System of Georgia will preside over the GHRAC Awards presentations. This goal continues what has become the Council's signature annual event, consistently well-attended. The Governor, First Lady, and numerous state legislators have participated in past years.

Georgia Archives Educational Program: The GHRAC Awards program will carry the added benefit of raising the public profile of the Georgia Archives and its own educational program, which supports the use of Georgia Archives holdings among Georgia educators and students.

2. Evaluate and improve the conditions of records.

Sub-Grant Program: Given sufficient federal or state funding, GHRAC will execute a new round of sub-grants to local governments and other archival repositories. Between 1993 and 2012, GHRAC (then GHRAB) awarded 389 grants to cities, counties, school systems, probate and superior courts, regional development centers, historical societies, libraries, and museums. The Council distributed grants to repositories in 125 of Georgia's 159 counties, leveraging matching funds in almost all cases and generating an impact that far exceeded the relatively small grants awarded. Reinstating this vital program is a high priority for the Council.

Professional Education/Training: Key to preservation and use is a robust continuing education program for those charged with the care of our state's essential records. GHRAC will advance this goal through the following activities:

- a. Support the Georgia Archives' efforts to provide disaster preparedness training through: 1) additional funding and 2) outreach to local governments via GHRAC partners, particularly the Association County Commissioners of Georgia;
- b. Initiate a Georgia Archives Institute scholarship/grant program to: 1) defray the cost of attendance for the nationally-recognized Institute by local government representatives and 2) provide matching mini-grants to allow recipients to follow up on their training with a specific records project;

- c. Sponsor archival training workshops provided by the Society of American Archivists, Society of Georgia Archivists, and/or Lyrasis; and
- d. Promote records management training provided by state and Atlanta-area record management associations.

Georgia Archives Records Management Program: Increase the Georgia Archives' coordination with local governments and its work to achieve uniform records management methods, in part through an outreach partnership with the Association County Commissioners of Georgia.

GHRAC Awards: Encourage and acknowledge excellent work in preservation and access through awards in the following categories: Legislative advocacy, local history advocacy, archival program development, documenting Georgia's history, and research using the holdings of archives.

NHPRC Grant Proposal Review: GHRAC members will serve as reviewers on NHPRC grant proposals as called upon by the Commission.

3. Encourage statewide planning for preservation and access.

GHRAC will organize a statewide Archives Summit (see below), support the Georgia Archives Records Management Program (see above), and invite aligned organizations to GHRAC meetings to explore new partnerships.

4. Foster cooperation and collaboration among users and keepers of Georgia's historical records.

Archives Summit: GHRAC will convene a facilitated discussion among representatives of the Council, Georgia Archives, Georgia Public Library Service, Association County Commissioners of Georgia, GALILEO (statewide virtual library), Regents' Academic Committee on Libraries (University System of Georgia library directors), Georgia Department of Education, Society of Georgia Archivists, and other key stakeholders. The objective will be to explore ways to work together to advance a shared goal of "creating a more educated Georgia" through the preservation and use of historical records.

Georgia Historical Organizations Directory: Generate a current web-based directory of repositories to facilitate cooperation, advance Georgia Archives preservation and training programs, and assist in disaster response.

5. Advise the University System of Georgia and the Georgia Archives

GHRAC will advance this goal through the Archives Summit report, providing periodic reports, and offering input and advice as needed.