Historic Tax Credit Media Toolkit

A resource for sharing stories of historic tax credit project successes and advocating for the continuation of state and federal credits

The Tennessee Theatre in Knoxville, Tenn., which originally opened in 1928, was restored with the help of the historic tax credit beginning in 2003.
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I. Introduction to the Federal Historic Tax Credit

Called one of the most significant community reinvestment program in the country, the federal historic tax credit (HTC) has created good jobs, fueled local economies and revived deteriorated treasures of our past. Its impact has been felt in Main Street districts and downtowns across the country. The historic tax credit is by far the federal government’s most significant financial investment in historic preservation. Since it was permanently written into the tax code more than 30 years ago, the HTC has leveraged $131 billion in private investment, created more than 2.4 million jobs and adapted 42,293 buildings for productive uses through 2016.

Over the life of the program, $25.2 billion in tax credits have generated more than $29.8 billion in federal tax revenue associated with historic rehabilitation projects, according to a study commissioned by the National Park Service. Even better, 75 percent of the economic benefits of these projects stay on the ground, in state and local economies. Developers generally buy materials close to the project site and hire local workers. Moreover, because historic building rehabilitations are more labor intensive than new construction, they often require additional workers at higher wages.

Despite its nationwide impact to enhance community revitalization and economic vitality, the federal HTC remains threatened by tax reform on Capitol Hill. The continuation of the federal historic tax credit and its enhancement requires a nationwide effort to raise awareness about its impact and advocate for its protection and enhancement in Congress. This toolkit is designed to serve as a resource for local and statewide preservation organizations and advocates to tell the story of HTC projects in their communities through local media, online channels and supporter and member communications.
II. Preservation in the News

Working with Local Media

Sharing historic tax credit project success stories through a news story, letter to the editor, contributed column or radio or TV broadcast news interview brings historic preservation and the impact of the historic tax credit to life. Through stories in local newspapers, blogs and broadcast media, local and statewide preservation organizations can educate the broader community on how these projects are contributing to the local economy, Main Street revitalization, cultural identity and community well-being.

Media Relations: General Tips for Pitching Reporters

The following are tips on pitching a story or event to a reporter. Some of these tips are also relevant to establishing and maintaining a solid working relationship with reporters. Initiating contact with relevant reporters before, during, and after coverage will help affirm a relationship which may prove helpful when you seek to pitch a story to score media coverage.

- Do Your Research

Learn as much as you can about the reporter’s interests before you pitch them on a story idea. Follow them on Twitter, read their recent stories and blogs and create a Google news alert with their name to keep up with their writing. Leave a comment on a relevant story, retweet it and/or email them with a comment or question when appropriate to begin cultivation of the relationship. This will help you both get to know each other.

- Grab Their Attention

Get to the point, and then work the details. If you are cold calling a reporter with whom you do not already have a relationship, or even if you have worked with the reporter before, it is important to get their attention quickly. You should know why the reporter might cover your story. You should be able to quickly and interestingly explain the story or event.

- Practice Your Pitch

Prepare your story by practicing the pitch on a co-worker to be sure your story and approach is interesting. Write down important details and outline how you plan to pitch the story.

- Listen First

When you call a reporter, be sure they are not on deadline. If so, the reporter may wish to speak to you at a better time. Inquire as to a better time to call and call back at that time. If you’ve sent an introductory email or already left a voicemail, don’t assume they’ve already seen/heard it. Also, don’t ask them if they have. Start fresh, at the beginning.
• **Be Specific**

When you talk to the reporter, be prepared with supporting facts including sources, names, and details. You need to be organized in case the reporter wants to follow up on any stories or facts you present. Be specific in regards to your story.

• **Know the Issue**

The reporter you work with may be very knowledgeable on the details surrounding your story. You should have a clear message and story as well as in-depth knowledge on the issues.

• **Relevance**

Connect your story with a relevant current event. Maybe there is a related bill in Congress or a new study or local issue that makes sense to reference.

• **Facts**

If you do not know the answer to a reporter's inquiry, suggest that you call them back when you have the information. Do not make up facts as they may appear on tomorrow's front page.

• **Additional Materials**

Be prepared to offer additional materials such as pictures, background information and sources which they may need to complete a story.

• **Keep Record**

Record what stories you pitch and to whom. This will provide you with a log of reporter interests and particular requirements that may aid in working with the reporter in the future.

• **Retry, Re-pitch**

Do not harass a reporter. However, you should consider different angles which strike different interests if one method is not working. If you come up with a new angle or development, feel free to pitch the story to the reporter again. Also, feel comfortable to ask for feedback if they aren't interested; it may help generate another hook.

• **Be a Resource**

Even if you don’t have a particular story idea to pitch to your media contacts, if a preservation story makes the news (demolition threat, ground breaking, ribbon-cutting, funding vote, etc.), reach out and offer to be a resource for any future coverage.
Media Relations: Making Contact

Print:

Newspaper deadlines vary according to individual newspapers, but a reporter typically hits deadline around 2 pm for morning newspapers. Most print reporters, due to daily deadlines, are only free for phone conversations a few hours during the early part of the day. Email is a great way to communicate with a reporter.

DO NOT call print reporters after 4 pm as they are usually filing their stories at that point.

Television:

Television stations operate primarily off media alerts, a brief one-page outline invites the media to attend an event, and press releases, an announcement written like a news story to describe compelling news your organization is making, since these are tools that allow them to look quickly at information. The correct person to send these to and to call to pitch the story will be the assignment editor or manager or the planning editor or manager.

It is always a good idea to fax or email the media alert a day or two before your event and again the morning of the event. If you email it, be sure to copy and paste into the body of the email to ensure it is delivered—emails with attachments can trigger spam filters. Call and ask for the assignment desk, which will confirm receipt of your press materials.

Television needs a visual opportunity to make a story happen. When contacting an assignment editor, be sure to include the visual elements of your story—the photo opportunities. If you already have video it is even easier to gain television coverage. Video footage that is not packaged into a complete news story is called B-roll. Having this sort of footage available gives you an advantage when you are pitching a television story, but it is sometimes expensive to create and may not help if the story is not one that has the right news hook. However, having good B-roll can often make the difference to a decision about coverage.

Television newsrooms tend to be even more pressed for time than print publications. You may have to speak to more than one assignment editor or forward your materials several different times and to several different people.

Radio:

Familiarize yourself with the station’s audience and informational needs. If you are contacting a news radio station, research their different programs and determine which one would be a good match with your story. Organizations like National Public Radio like to have stories with a rich variety of sound. Think about what kind of audio your story can include, and who can be a dynamic spokesperson for your story. Offer these elements in your pitch to the producer or reporter.

Blogs:

Blogs are niche by nature, meaning they focus on a specific topic and can help get a message out to your target audience. Reaching out to bloggers is smart because there is the potential that they will take interest in your cause and write about it every day. They might also link to your Web site and/or the National Trust’s site.
You can search for blogs covering your geographic area/area of interest on Technorati www.technorati.com, Google http://blogsearch.google.com and Blogflux www.blogflux.com, in addition to many other places.

To approach bloggers, look for an email address on their page. The email might be under their profile link, a “contact us button” or on the side bar. If you can’t find an email, leave a post that expresses your interest in contacting the blogger. Also look for them on Twitter and Facebook. Bloggers are vigilant by nature, and will usually respond to you as soon as they can.
Historic Tax Credit Key Messages

• The Historic Tax Credit (HTC), initially enacted in 1978 and made permanent in the tax code in 1986, encourages private investment in the rehabilitation of historic buildings. The credit attracts private capital to revitalize often abandoned and underperforming properties and generates new economic activity in communities nationwide.

• The HTC is market driven. It attracts private capital to projects that have a financing gap between what a bank will lend and the total development cost of the transaction.

• The credit benefits a broad range of communities, especially our nation’s urban core and rural areas; over 40 percent of projects financed in the last fifteen years are located in communities with populations less than 25,000.

• Tax reform aimed at growing the economy should enhance, not diminish the HTC.

• There is solid bipartisan support for several reforms included in the Historic Tax Credit Improvement Act that would direct more investment to older Main Street corridors in both rural and inner-city communities (H.R. 1158 and S. 425).

• The bill creates a 30 percent credit for smaller deals to make sure the rural and non-urban areas have the same ability to take advantage of the credit. This increased small deal credit would be capped at Qualified Rehabilitation Expenses of $2.5 million, or $750,000 in credits.

• The bill also allows the historic tax credits in these small transactions to be transferred with lower transaction costs, as a tax certificate, making it easier for small project owners to bring outside investment into smaller transactions.

• The HTC has been an effective tool for many years. In the past it has been adapted to provide economic help to areas with special needs. For example, increasing the credit amount in Rust Belt communities through an enhanced HTC could be implemented, similar to how the HTC was temporarily increased (to 26 percent) to help rebuild New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina through the GO-ZONE Act of 2005.

• In addition to revitalizing communities, this tax credit tax credit tax credit tax credit returns more to the federal Treasury than it returns more to the federal Treasury than it returns more to the federal Treasury than it returns more to the federal Treasury than it costs. The Treasury receives $1.25 in tax revenue for every dollar invested. According to a study commissioned by the National Park Service, since inception, $25.2 billion in federal tax credits have generated more than $29.8 billion in federal tax revenue from historic rehabilitation projects.

• Since its inception, the HTC has leveraged $131 billion in private investment, preserved more than 42,290 historic buildings and created more than 2.4 million jobs. In FY2016, the National Park Service approved 1,039 projects that utilized $1.2 billion in credits, which then leveraged a total redevelopment investment of $5.9 billion.

• The federal HTC anchors complementary state historic tax credit programs. Thirty-four states across the country, including Louisiana, Wisconsin, Texas, Ohio, Missouri, North Carolina and Virginia, have enacted individual state Historic Tax Credit programs that work in tandem with the federal program.

• A tax reform package that focuses primarily on lowering income tax rates will be insufficient to encourage investment in historic buildings. Historic rehabilitation projects frequently have higher costs, greater design challenges, and weaker market locations - all of which results in lender and investor bias against investments in rehabilitation.

• As an economic activity, historic rehabilitation greatly outperforms new construction in job creation. Rehabilitation project costs are on average 60 percent labor and 40 percent materials compared to new construction, which is about 40 percent labor and 60 percent materials. In addition to hiring local labor, historic rehabilitation materials are more likely to be purchased locally. As a result, approximately 75 percent of the economic benefits of these projects remain in the communities where these buildings are located.
III. Storytelling Outlets and Tools

Sample News Story

Historic Tax Credits Pack a Preservationist Punch

Next City
Published on 7/10/14

With the help of the Historic Tax Credit program, the Fuller Paint Building was renovated into a construction firm’s headquarters in Salt Lake City.

A new report from the National Trust for Historic Preservation zeroes in on the impact of the federal Historic Tax Credit (HTC) program. According to the National Parks Service, the program has supported the rehabilitation of 39,600 historic properties and attracted $109 billion in private investment, when adjusted for inflation, according to the report. (This week’s *Forefront* covers how cities around the U.S. have looked to the National Park Service hoping to stimulate economic development in “Can a Poor Chicago Neighborhood Be Reborn as a National Park?”)

Preservationists regularly describe the national program as vital to their field. It’s no surprise that advocates have risen in defense of federal HTCs after Rep. Dave Camp, chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, recommended repealing federal HTCs in March. NTHP’s report, anchored with research from D.C.-based consulting firm PlaceEconomics, provides case studies of six projects: two in Georgia, two in Maryland and another two in Utah.

Why are HTCs so important to preservation and to cities? Here is a look at how the credits are doled out and a rundown of the report’s key findings.

How Does the Historic Tax Credit Program Work?

Developers restoring buildings listed on National Register of Historic Places or certified by the National Parks Service can apply for 20 percent income tax credits for rehabilitation expenses. To bolster the program’s usefulness as an economic development tool, only “income-producing” projects are eligible; NPS clarifies this requirement as spaces that serve “commercial, industrial, agricultural or rental residential purposes.”

A sister tax break exists for rehabbing buildings without certification for 10 percent of the cost, as long as the structures were built before 1936.

Why Is the Historic Tax Credit Program So Important?

While federal HTCs don’t make financing large rehabilitation projects happen with a snap of the finger, they are seen as crucial tiles to the jigsaw: They can be paired with other tax incentives and represent a standard for cognate programs at the state level.

Not every state has a historic tax credit program, and the amount of credits promised in the 34 states that do varies. It’s not unusual to see state HTCs at risk or reduced as legislators balance the books. Take Wisconsin, which froze $35 million in approved tax credits in late June. Earlier that month,
Rhode Island eliminated funding for its program for next fiscal year, despite Gov. Lincoln Chafee’s support.

“The elimination of the federal historic tax credit would virtually end preservation efforts in Illinois,” Lisa DiChiera, Landmark Illinois’ director of advocacy, told Next City this spring. Shrunken state programs have caused preservationists to become more reliant on the federal program and its survival.

“We don’t have the public dollars to make many buildings into museums, nor do we want to do that,” Michael Allen of the Preservation Research Office explained in an email. “Without the federal historic tax credit, preservationists would be back to selecting a tiny number of buildings to preserve like specimens — instead of sustaining their place in local economies.”

**Historic Tax Credit, by the Numbers**

NTHP’s report provided this handy graphic to illustrate the program’s impact.

Also worthy of note: Research shows that program isn’t in the red. “Over the lifetime of the program, the cost of the historic tax credit to the U.S. treasury has been $21 billion, but it has generated $26.6 billion in federal tax receipts.”

**The Impact of Historic Tax Credits**

The six case studies draw from three states, Georgia, Utah and Maryland, looking at both a city and town in each, to evaluate the success of HTCs in a range of settings.

“The study startled me with the local measures of tax collection and economic impact,” Michael Allen said in his email. “Previous studies showed the multiplier impacts of the federal historic tax credit, but not with such compelling local data.”

The (Macon) Telegraph has credited HTCs with spreading Georgia’s historic preservation beyond Savannah, reporting this fall that the local preservation group had its hands in 43 HTC-backed restorations. The NTHP study shines a light on the Warehouse Lofts, which opened in 2010. Originally a factory, the building now features three stylish apartments.

Why did the report zoom in on these lofts out of the myriad recent preservation projects in Middle Georgia? Researchers identify them as a tipping point: Two new business licenses were issued in the two years before the lofts were complete, and 57 licenses were issued in the three years after.

The report doesn’t explain exactly how the small, $385,000 project ($77,000 in federal HTCs) inspired that much new commerce. PlaceEconomics principal Donovan Rypkema wrote this, however, in an introduction to the report:

Why? Why did all of these projects serve as a catalyst for nearby development? First, taking a property out of the category of ‘vacant, deteriorating white elephant building’ significantly reduced the risk of private investment in the neighborhood as a whole. Second, these projects demonstrated the capacity of existing older buildings to undergo rebirth through adaptive use, opening the eyes of other property owners to the possibilities for their own buildings as well.
Researchers also argue that the proof is in the program’s consistency. Analysis of the use of HTCs in Salt Lake City tells a similar, transformative story — through two projects in the city’s Depot District within three blocks of each other.

The Fuller Paint Building was renovated in 2005 into a corporate headquarters for a construction firm. The rehab price tag tallied to $9.4 million, with $464,380 in federal HTCs and $4 million in New Markets Tax Credits. The following year, an old warehouse was converted into affordable townhouses and gallery space for artists to the tune of $8.3 million, claiming $1.6 million in federal HTCs and $1.4 in NMTCs.

Property values in Salt Lake City declined by 17 percent from 2008 to 2012, but Depot District bucked the trend, rising by 22.5 over the same period.

**How Much Danger Is the Historic Tax Credit Program In?**

Legislators grasping for criticisms of the tax credits may raise questions of potential gentrification, or cite recent studies on the negative effects historic districts can have on affordable housing growth. Another issue that could come up during discussions of the tax code is its preclusion of school renovation projects.

Nevertheless, observers say Rep. Dave Camp’s proposed Tax Reform Act of 2014 (and with it, his push to repeal federal HTCs) probably isn’t going anywhere. As the bill hasn’t earned support from fellow Republicans, and since Camp won’t be seeking re-election, the credits are likely in the clear at the national level for the rest of the year.
Sample Op-Ed

➢ An op-ed is a column that is generally 600-800 words and should adhere to the guidelines of the specific website or newspaper in which it will be published. The purpose of an op-ed is to help educate and influence public opinion on an issue. Op-eds are published in one print publication exclusively in accordance with the media outlet’s editorial policy and often have a call to action related to the issue.

Macon’s historic preservation successes

To glimpse historic preservation’s power to help revitalize Georgia’s economy and protect its history, one need look no further than Macon-Bibb over the past eight years. The Historic Tattnall Apartments project, for example, by the Historic Macon Foundation brought together private investors, Mercer University and state and federal tax credits to breathe new life in one of Macon’s once-fading historic neighborhoods. This project is no exception. With more than 45 projects that leveraged the federal historic tax since 2001, Macon is the top city in the state for historic tax credit activity two years in a row, exceeding both Atlanta and Savannah.

Your opening should make clear the column topic, answer why the subject is important and grab the reader’s attention.

While I love to brag on the city where I was born, I have to give credit for some of our inspiration to Savannah, which hosted more than 2,000 preservationists from across the country at the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s annual conference this month. Savannah proved long ago that economic development and historic preservation go hand-in-hand. Recognizing and learning about this connection, we are moving ahead by building upon our rich history. We are using our fourteen National Register districts and more than 6,000 historic buildings to grow jobs, attract talent, provide affordable housing, and build a quality of life that is unique in all the country.

Add additional paragraphs that support your focal point and communicate your preservation message. Use clear and concise examples and anecdotes.

Since 2007, we have overcome some tremendous challenges with the help of historic preservation. It is our rich history, architecture and infrastructure that provides us – and every town and city in Georgia – the blueprint upon which to take advantage of the current national trend of urban revitalization. It is our downtowns and surrounding neighborhoods that will draw people back to the cities that are, ultimately, the economic drivers of entire regions.

Having gone through the decline of downtowns brought about by the growth of the suburbs, and then our loss of a major industry and the recent housing and economic crash, Macon-Bibb was at a low point. In fact, only two business new licenses were issued around our downtown in 2007. But in 2009, a local developer helped set off a wave of revitalization activity by investing $350,000 and creating a four-unit loft project.

Now it might seem impossible to turn $350,000 into $17 million, but these statistics are straight out of the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s June 2014 study of the catalytic impact of historic preservation tax credits. In the three years after that project was complete, Macon-Bibb issued 28 times as many business licenses, saw downtown values jump 17 percent in value, and other developers added another 130 loft units at a total investment of more than $17 million. Since November 2013, 19 new businesses have opened in our Central Business District. Including compelling numbers that support the theme strengthens the column’s impact.

It should be noted our preservation-based revitalization success in not limited to just our downtown – nor is it possible only in Macon. Our historic neighborhoods are experiencing a resurgence as well. Thanks to our long-term partnership with the Macon Housing Authority, Mercer University, and Historic Macon Foundation, we created the Historic Hills and Heights organization and are turning abandoned historic houses into hip and
affordable urban cottages. Using Georgia’s tax credits and the federal credit for historic preservation, the average $150,000 home in this neighborhood costs less than $500 per month to own.

Imagine, $500 per month to own a totally rehabilitated 1,500 square foot home within walking distance of 25,000 jobs, more than 200 businesses, regular outdoor concerts and events, and, most recently, Mercer University’s nationally recognized football and basketball programs. This is just the kind of quality of life Atlanta residents will enjoy when the historic Ponce City Market rehab concludes, and this is just the type of revitalization historic neighborhoods like Sweet Auburn are poised to experience.

As Georgia’s profile rises as a leading state for historic preservation in the aftermath of the preservation conference, I encourage folks from near and far to look to Macon-Bibb for proof that historic preservation can create a community and economy ready for the twenty-first century and its denizens. Ours is a city on the move, gaining steam, and out to defend our title as Georgia’s biggest producer of historic tax credit activity, but we welcome the competition. Using our heritage to drive our future would benefit all of Georgia.

-Your name, title and other pertinent identifying information. For example: Jane Doe, Executive Director of XXX organization
Sample Letter to the Editor

➢ A letter to the editor is typically less than 200 words and is written in response to an article, editorial or news published in a newspaper or website. The letter should be written and submitted within days of the original article's publication. The purpose of the letter is not simply to praise or denounce an article, but instead to raise additional questions, make an expanded point or clarify part of the original article.

Kenosha sees benefits of historical tax credits

Kenosha News

Historical tax credits are working for downtown Kenosha!

The recently passed Wisconsin historical tax credit is already paying off for our community. Two prominent local historical landmarks, the Kenosha Youth Foundation and the Heritage House, both long dominant, and each possibly facing a wrecking ball, will be brought back to use and contribute significantly to the life and vitality of our lakefront downtown. Highlight the impact of the HTC in the first paragraph.

These historical tax credits are the catalyst to get experienced developers to commit millions to the renovation of these historic structures. Both buildings have been so prominent in our rich Kenosha heritage. Now, due in part to these historical credits, they will be revitalized. The capital improvements are significant, approximately $10.5 million for the KYF, and $18-plus million for the Heritage House. With these new improvements, these structures will be around for many decades to come, and once again contribute to the real estate tax roles.

Many thanks to all involved, especially our own state Rep. Todd Ohnstad, who was instrumental in supporting this growth and job initiative. It is paying off handsomely here in Kenosha, and no doubt, throughout the state.

-Your name, title and other pertinent identifying information. For example: Jane Doe, Executive Director of XXX organization
Sample Press Release

➢ The press release should be one to one and a half pages, include at least one quote from your organization’s spokesperson and conclude with a boilerplate, which is a brief description of your organization and its mission. The purpose of a press release is to share timely news with media and the public and compel reporters to cover your story.

New Study Shows Tax Credits Key to Revitalization of Ohio’s Downtowns and Main Street Districts

Contact Name, Phone and Email

Date (City) – A new report released today by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Heritage Ohio announces that the federal historic tax credit has helped spur $958 million in historic rehabilitation work and created over 15,000 jobs in Ohio since 2007. The publication comes as Congress considers reforming the nation’s tax code. The opening paragraph should present the most important part of your news and why it matters.

The report finds that the federal historic tax credit has been instrumental in helping owners afford to restore historic structures, many of which were previously vacant and dilapidated. Ohio also has a state historic tax credit that combines with the federal credit, creating an even greater financial incentive to rehabilitate its historic buildings. The result is vibrant, modernized buildings that generate income, sales and property tax, and new enthusiasm in their communities.

“By breathing new life into vacant warehouses, factories, hotels and more, the federal historic tax credit brings new hope and stability to neighborhoods, setting the stage for additional investment,” said Stephanie Meeks, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. “This is exactly the type of program we need to keep our country moving forward.” The release should include quotes from leaders whose words and credibility add meaning and impact to the announcement.

The report highlighted ten projects of varying size and type, including the former St. Luke’s Hospital in Cleveland, the former Fort Piqua Hotel in Piqua, and the Born Capital Brewery in Columbus. All have created new places to work, live and play within buildings that help define Ohio’s heritage.

“Across Ohio, cities and small town main streets are experiencing redevelopment because of historic tax credits,” said W. Kevin Pape, Board Chair of Heritage Ohio. “The credits leverage private investment in places that matter and harness Ohio’s heritage to drive economic development where it is needed most.”


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The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a privately funded nonprofit organization, works to save America’s historic places. Savingplaces.org
WASHINGTON (February 17, 2017) – Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), Sen. Ben Cardin (D-MD), Rep. Mike Kelly (R-PA) and Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) introduced the Historic Tax Credit Improvement Act (S. 425, H.R. 1158) yesterday. This new legislation would increase the number of historic buildings across the country that can benefit from historic tax credits and thus enable more rehabilitation projects. The following is a statement from Stephanie K. Meeks, president and CEO of the National Trust for Historic Preservation:

“The federal historic tax credit is the driving force behind rehabilitation projects that have given new life to historic buildings, created millions of jobs and attracted billions in private investment. We commend Sens. Collins and Cardin and Reps. Kelly and Blumenauer for their leadership in proposing sound improvements to the federal historic tax credit. Now, more libraries, theaters, town halls and other buildings can be restored to serve their communities in new ways. Tax reform aimed at growing the economy should enhance the historic tax credit.”

**BACKGROUND ON THE HISTORIC TAX CREDIT IMPROVEMENT ACT of 2017**
The Historic Tax Credit Improvement Act of 2017 makes long overdue changes to the federal Historic Tax Credit to further encourage reuse and redevelopment in small, midsize and rural communities. Main Streets across America will have a stronger tool to help breathe new life into their historic buildings. The bill will increase the credit from 20 to 30 percent for projects with rehabilitation expenses of less than $2.5 million, which will help inject new private investment into smaller and more rural communities. Other improvements include simplifying the process for the transfer of historic tax credits to investors for projects under $2.5 million. The bill provisions would be the first major changes to the federal Historic Tax Credit since the 1986 tax bill.

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Dear recipient,

As anticipated, Republican leadership released a tax reform outline intended to guide House and Senate tax writing committees in their drafting of tax reform legislation.

The framework does not explicitly preserve the historic tax credit and envisions that most business tax credits will be repealed. The federal historic tax credit is the government’s primary way of responding to the failure of the market to preserve historic income-producing buildings. Without a federal historic tax credit, the historic fabric of our urban centers, Main Street commercial districts, and small towns nationwide face a much greater risk of economic obsolescence or demolition. **If you care about the future of historic preservation, now is the time to act.**

**Urge your Congressional delegation to contact members of the House Ways and Means and Senate Finance Committees with the message that repealing the historic tax credit is bad policy.** The need for tax reform is clear, but it must not come at the expense of a program that more than pays for itself and has a proven track record of creating jobs, saving historic buildings, and revitalizing neighborhoods.

Now is the time to speak up for the historic tax credit. Join us in letting Washington know that historic preservation advocates need their voices heard. Our history is too important.

Thank you.

name
title, organization
National Trust Channels

About our online resources
There are several National Trust channels to consider for spreading the word about historic tax credit projects in your state. These include our organizational online resources, publications, e-newsletters and social media platforms.

The National Trust manages two blogs. Our Preservation Leadership Forum blog is geared toward helping professional preservationists stay on top of the latest research, tools, resources and trends. It provides articles, preservation news and analysis, advocacy information, and links to important stories. Detailed information on how to pitch a story idea is available here.

The other is the National Trust website savingplaces.org, which features less-technical treatments of stories of people saving places that would appeal to a national audience. It includes stories, news, and notes from the National Trust for Historic Preservation as well as the wider preservation movement. The public has unrestricted access to all content on this website.

The National Trust also produces the quarterly Forum Journal, preservation’s premier scholarly publication. This all-digital journal offers in-depth articles on preservation practices and current challenges to the field, accompanied by slide shows, videos and links to additional resources. Recent issues have focused on rehab tax credits, urban preservation efforts and international issues in preservation. The public has unrestricted access to all content on this website.

The National Trust also maintains a relationship with a Partner Network of state and local preservation nonprofit organizations and sends those members a monthly e-newsletter. The Trust is very active on social media, especially Facebook and Twitter.

Types of content to submit

Our editorial team would be interested in:
- recent op-eds, editorials, letters to the editor or media stories that reference the HTC—or that didn’t, but should have.
- upcoming ribbon cuttings or ground-breakings of HTC projects
- HTC projects that have helped transform a district or neighborhood
- iconic buildings that have been revived with the HTC
- particularly innovative or creative adaptive use projects, especially those that blend sustainability technology with historic preservation
- historic tax credit projects that have a strong community benefit component, and if possible, leads on individuals who have directly benefited
- compelling before and after photos of a HTC project
- events that relate to raising awareness of the HTC
- blogs from your statewide or local preservation organization

How to submit content

To submit your story idea to be shared in National Trust print or online publications and social media channels, contact editorial@savingplaces.org.
To submit your story idea to Preservation Leadership Forum, email forumonline@savingplaces.org.

In either case, please reach out to ask any questions that could help frame your story idea or research before submitting content.
Sharing Your Story Online

Social media and e-newsletters to supporters or members are great channels to share links to media stories about historic preservation in your region. Media stories can help broaden your preservation constituency and build advocacy for retaining and improving state and federal historic tax credits. Examples of stories that may be of interest include a retrospective on HTC projects, an interview with a local developer, historic buildings that were saved in part by using the HTC, etc. When sharing your story online, use the hashtag #historictaxcredit.
IV. We’re Here to Help

National Trust Contacts

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