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35 YEARS

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For Historic Preservation**
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August 15, 2008

The National Trust for Historic Preservation
785 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20036-2117

RE: Athens, Georgia

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, Georgia's statewide preservation organization, it is my pleasure to recommend the City of Athens, Georgia, as one of the National Trust's "Dozen Distinctive Destinations." Athens is an architectural and cultural gem, boasting a top-notch University with a beautiful campus, a lively historic downtown eating and entertainment scene, and a dazzling array of historic homes.

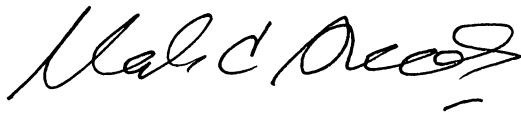
The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation held its first Annual Meeting in Athens in 1969, and has returned many times since. Our members never tire of touring its magnificent historic resources and enjoying the vitality of its downtown. Besides holding four Annual Meetings in Athens, we have recognized numerous rehabilitated structures with our Preservation Awards. From our first awards ceremony in 1978, when the University of Georgia's White Hall was honored, until last year's award for the T.R.R. Cobb House, Athens has been covered with accolades from The Georgia Trust.

Athens' community of dedicated preservationists has much to do with this success. The local non-profit preservation organization, the Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation, has been an active member of our Georgia Preservation Non-Profits (GPNP) since its beginning. Professors and staff at the University are not only training the next generation of preservation professionals, but are active in their community as well. The local Regional Development Center leads the state in preservation planning. Several statewide initiatives, such as the Main Street Design Assistance and the Certified Local Government programs, are based in Athens.

Athens, Georgia, represents the goals and values of America's historic preservation movement. Its distinctive blend of cultural and historic resources makes it an attractive and exciting place to visit. Its strong local preservation community takes its stewardship seriously.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for Athen's nomination as one of America's "Dozen Distinctive Destinations." It is one of Georgia's most beloved towns, with a unique sense of place.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark C. McDonald". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Mark C. McDonald
President and CEO