



DELAWARE COUNTY 2035

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

IDENTIFY | PROTECT | PROMOTE

Executive Summary



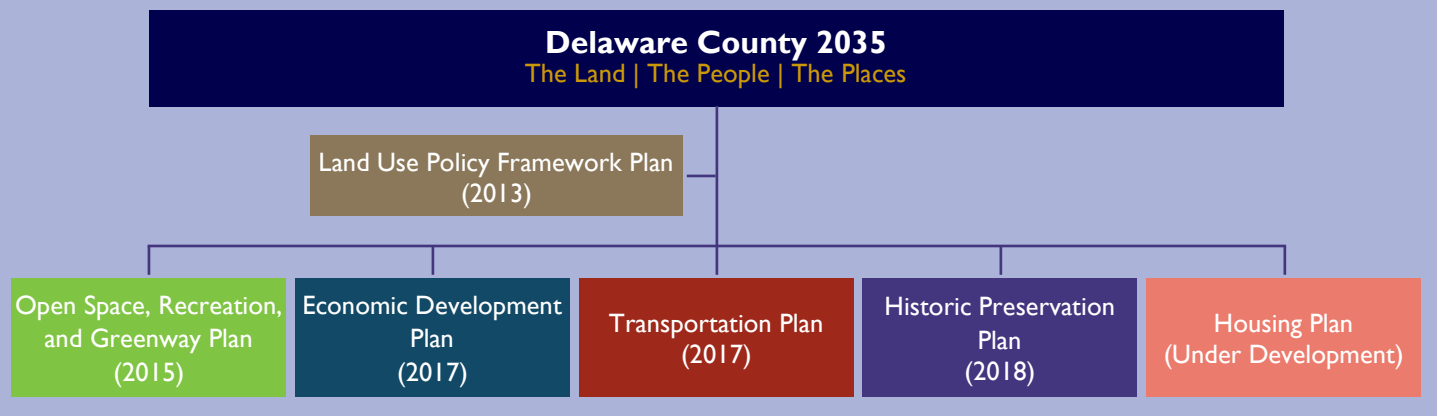
The diverse character of communities is one of Delaware County’s strongest assets. From the historic architecture of Mature Neighborhoods and the rolling hills of Growing Suburbs to the cultural attractions of Central Places and Activity Corridors, the diverse characteristics of Delaware County play an important role in historic preservation.

The *Historic Preservation Plan* intends to capture the essence of the variety of historic resources in the County and seeks to better understand how to best identify, protect, and promote them. The County’s comprehensive plan calls for simultaneously protecting these valuable resources while implementing smarter use of development around natural and historic areas.

The *Historic Preservation Plan* is the component of Delaware County 2035 that incorporates information on known historic resources and countywide history, shares preservation planning strategies, and identifies actions that will further the role of the County and its municipalities as good stewards of our rich heritage, and help to incorporate historic resources into what makes our communities thrive.

Delaware County 2035

Delaware County 2035, the County’s comprehensive plan, establishes a long-range vision for the County and provides municipalities with a framework for local planning efforts. It is a network of plans comprised of a *Land Use Policy Framework Plan*, which established broad policies, and more detailed component plans which provide specific goals, objectives, and actions.



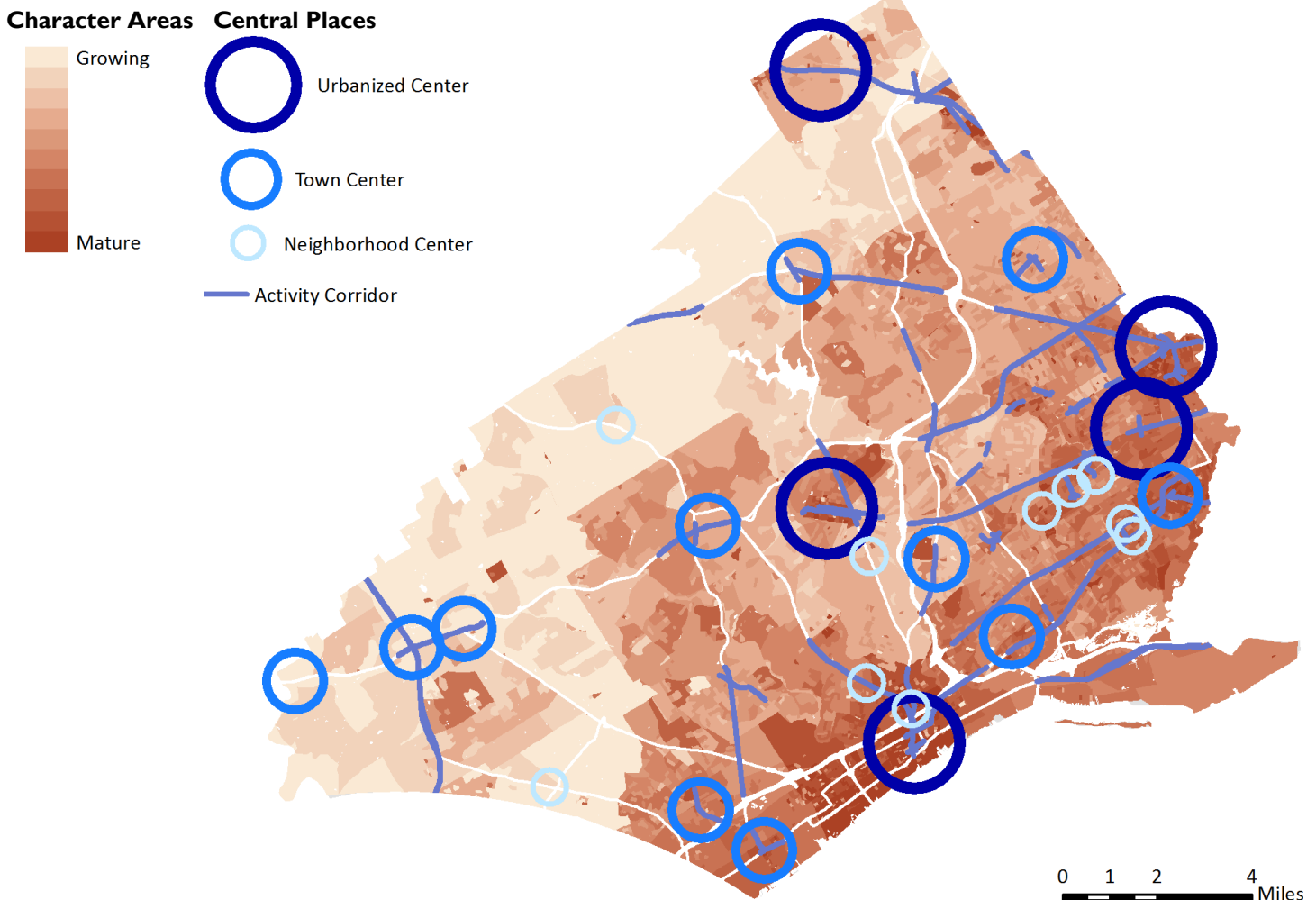
BACKGROUND

The character of communities in Delaware County plays an important role in the protection and promotion of historic resources. The *Historic Preservation Plan* uses the community framework established for Delaware County 2035 to evaluate historic preservation priorities.

The Delaware County 2035 community framework organizes the diverse place types of the County into an array of Character Areas, which are broad areas with similar development patterns and characteristics. The two primary types of Character Areas are **Mature Neighborhoods** and **Growing Suburbs**. Mature Neighborhoods are those that are essentially built-out; current development generally occurs in the form of infill of unused or vacant sites or in the redevelopment or renovation of older properties. Growing Suburbs, however, still have undeveloped lands, making them attractive for new development; the majority of new development proposed in Delaware County since 2000 has been located in Growing Suburbs. The majority of communities in the County exist in the array between Mature Neighborhoods and Growing Suburbs and have elements of both.

The community framework of Delaware County 2035 also identifies **Central Places** and **Activity Corridors**, which are community focal points that reinforce or establish a sense of place and which differ depending on the underlying Character Area. Central Places are the “downtown” and “main street” areas of the County and can vary in scale. Activity Corridors are linear-shaped places that flank major transportation corridors or highway interchanges with intensive development. Examples, but not an exhaustive list, of Central Places and Activity Corridors are shown on the map below.

Delaware County 2035 Community Framework



OVERVIEW

Historic preservation encompasses the body of actions taken to safeguard the significant places existing in our communities today for the use, enjoyment, and enrichment of future generations. It can mean everything from re-pointing a masonry wall from the seventeenth century to documenting the patterns of development in a twentieth century subdivision. There are a variety of tools and techniques that can be utilized to accomplish this objective, a few of which are touched on in this document. Just as natural resources are non-renewable and require planning to ensure their survival, significant historic places are also non-renewable and require the same planning efforts.

From the native inhabitants and earliest settlers to the Industrial Revolution and World Wars, Delaware County has been an important part of American history for more than 300 years. Delaware County has a rich history of people, places, and events, which have not only shaped the landscape of the County today but also played a role in the development of the region, the state, and even the nation as a whole. That rich heritage is still evident today in the built environment - reminders of the important role that the County played in the region and nation's development and the significance of preserving that history for future generations to appreciate and enjoy.

GOALS

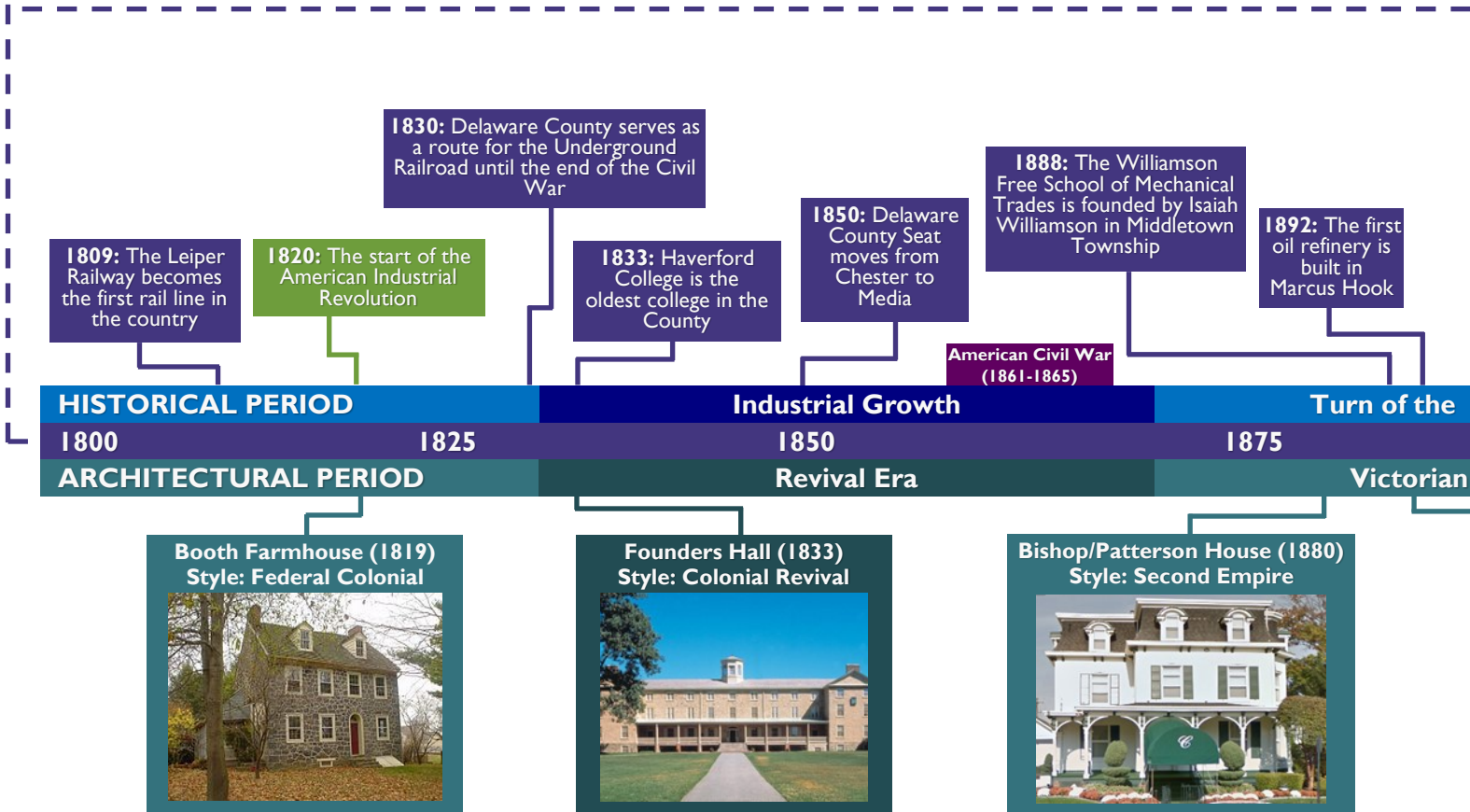
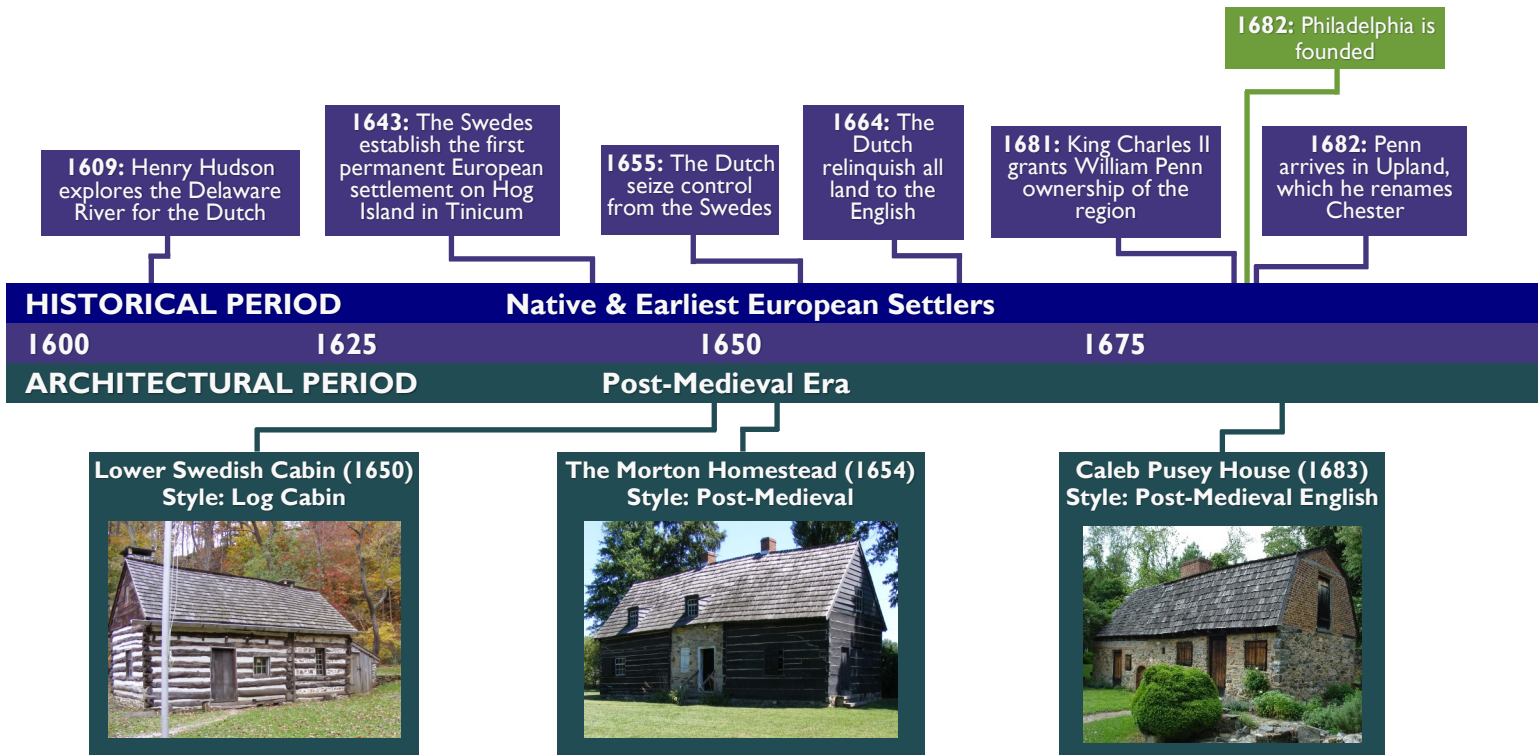
As part of the planning process, three overarching goals were identified to guide the historic preservation planning efforts in the County. They are the result of the research and analysis compiled for this plan and guided by Delaware County 2035. The goals of the *Historic Preservation Plan* are:

IDENTIFY	Identify and document historic resources, narratives, and themes in Delaware County.
PROTECT	Protect resources that have the most meaning, cultural impact, or historical significance to the County and its communities.
PROMOTE	Promote the benefit that historic resources and historic preservation practices contribute to the County's character and future prosperity.

Five objectives, each with its own list of actions, were established to guide the implementation of the historic preservation strategy in line with the three over-arching goals. The five objectives are:

OBJECTIVES	
1	Widen the scope of historic significance to include more recent resources, more types of resources, and the narrative of underrepresented groups.
2	Utilize Delaware County's Historic Resource Inventory as a tool for the County, municipalities, and preservation community.
3	Support preservation efforts at the municipal, private, and non-profit levels.
4	Cultivate knowledge of and responsibility for our historic resources.
5	Integrate the goals of Historic Preservation into all aspects of planning and community governance.

DELAWARE COUNTY TIMELINE



1700: Eighteen townships settled in Delaware County

1724: The Chester Courthouse is the oldest public building in continuous use in the country

1776: The Declaration of Independence is signed in Philadelphia

1776: John Morton of Ridley Township signs the Declaration of Independence

1777: The Battle of the Brandywine

1787: The Constitution of the United States is adopted

1789: Delaware County secedes from Chester County

American Revolutionary War (1775-1783)

Revolutionary War & New Nation

1700

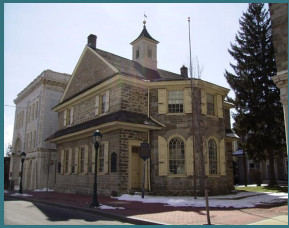
1725

1750

1775

Colonial Era

Chester Courthouse (1724)
Style: Georgian Colonial



The Minshall House (1750)
Style: Colonial Vernacular



Thomas Leiper House (1785)
Style: Georgian Colonial



1909: The Barnstormers in Ridley Park is the oldest continuously operating community theatre in the state

1919: William Sproul becomes the only Pennsylvania Governor from Delaware County

World War I (1914-1918)

1923: The Hedgerow Theater in Rose Valley is the oldest repertory company in the United States

1927: Charles Lindbergh dedicates Hog Island in Tinicum as the Philadelphia Municipal Airport

Great Depression (1929-1939)

World War II (1939-1945)

1949: Brandywine Battlefield Park is established

1966: The National Preservation Act is created

1964: Construction begins on Interstate 476, also known as the "Blue Route"

1972: The John Heinz Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum is America's First Urban Refuge

1972: Ridley Creek State Park opens to the public

Century

Interwar Period & Post-War Boom

1900

1925

1950

1975

Era

Modern Era

Hillhurst (1890)
Style: Queen Anne



Media Theater
Style: Beaux Arts



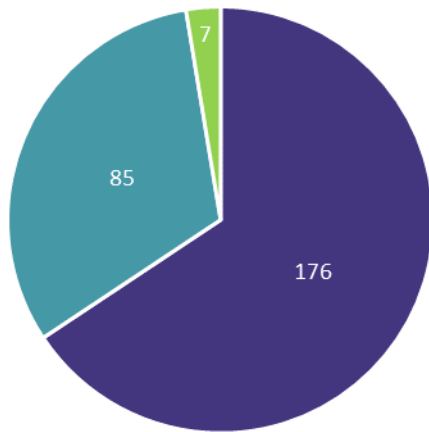
St. Francis of Assisi School
Style:



HISTORIC RESOURCES

Taking stock of existing resources and gathering pertinent information regarding their locations, conditions, and potential historical value is an important first step to furthering the subsequent goals of providing the most effective protection techniques and promoting their value to the community. The *Historic Preservation Plan* examines known resources in Delaware County and discusses the different means of keeping track of resources of varying types and levels of significance.

National Register & National Historic Landmark Resources



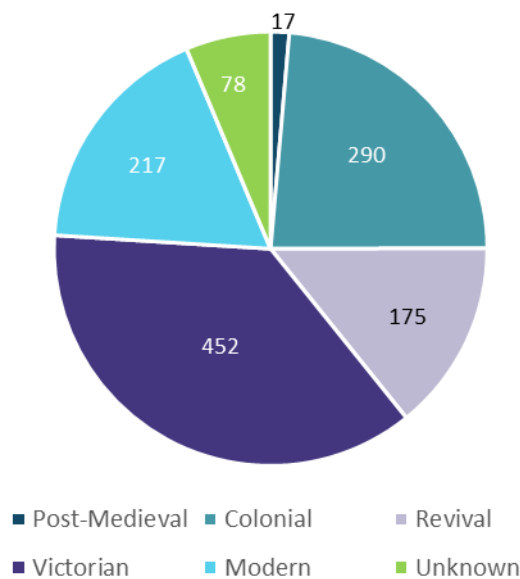
■ National Register Eligible Resources ■ National Register Listed Resources
■ National Historic Landmarks

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is an official list, maintained by the National Parks Service (NPS), of historic buildings, sites, districts, objects, and structures that have been deemed significant to the history and heritage of a region, state, or the entire nation. Some historic places are designated as National Historic Landmarks (NHL) if they possess exceptional significance or value related to the history of the United States. Delaware County currently has a total of 268 National Register and National Historic Landmark resources. Of these, 85 are listed on the National Register while 176 have been determined eligible for listing. A total of seven resources are designated as National Historic Landmarks. The resources identified in this plan are only the ones that have been evaluated or nominated thus far, but there are likely many more places in the County that are worthy of recognition.

Delaware County Pilot Historic Resource Inventory

As part of the process for developing the *Historic Preservation Plan*, the planning department began compiling a Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) for all known historic sites, buildings, and districts throughout Delaware County. For the purpose of analysis in this plan, a pilot of the Historic Resources Inventory was created with ten municipalities and 1,229 resources, making sure that the level of information for each of the documented resources was comparable and as complete as possible. Below are some of the results of the analysis of the pilot HRI.

Historic Resources by Architectural Period



■ Post-Medieval ■ Colonial ■ Revival
■ Victorian ■ Modern ■ Unknown

Original Resource Use	Same as Historic	Adaptively Reused
Residential	62%	13%
Religious	77%	9%
Commercial	42%	14%
Mixed Use	37%	28%
Educational	29%	39%
Industrial	8%	25%
Agricultural	6%	72%
Unknown	30%	39%
Civic	22%	44%
Governmental	35%	41%
Infrastructure	33%	20%
Recreational	82%	9%
Transportation	83%	17%
Military	0%	50%
Medical	33%	0%
All Original Uses	55%	18%

PRESERVATION TOOLBOX

There are a number of tools available to assist Delaware County and its municipalities in identifying, protecting, and promoting the County's historic, cultural, and archaeological resources. These efforts help enhance the character of communities and generate economic vitality.

Documentation Tools

A critical and often first step in the historic preservation process is identifying those resources extant in a community. There are a number of tools and resources available for identifying and documenting historic resources in order to best decide how they should be preserved and integrated into the community's fabric.

- **Historic resources surveys**—collecting information about historic resources is an important first step in planning to protect them
- **National Register of Historic Places**—the official source for federally recognized historic resources of value

Revitalization-Based Tools

In communities that have experienced disinvestment, focusing revitalization efforts on historic resources can be a productive first step to restoring the health of the entire community. There are a number of ways that communities can protect or restore their community character by focusing on historic resources.

- **Building conservation**—ongoing maintenance of historic buildings reduces the need for major restoration
- **Adaptive reuse**—reusing buildings preserves community character

Regulatory Tools

One of the most effective ways to ensure the continued protection of historic resources is through ordinances that regulate the alteration and/or demolition of those resources. Such regulations are best put in place by municipal governments, but must be developed and enacted with input and buy-in from municipal residents and property owners.

- **Zoning**—zoning can protect historic resources from demolition or provide incentives for restoration
- **Act 167 Local Historic District**—a district wherein proposed alterations to historic resources must be reviewed and approved

Funding Tools

The availability of funding is often the most critical aspect of any historic preservation project. The most thorough documentation, the most carefully-crafted regulation, or the most well-planned reuse project can only do so much to protect historic resources without funds to back them up. Funding is available through federal, state, and private sources.

Preservation Partner Organizations

These tools can be further assisted through the involvement of organizations dedicated to the practice of historic preservation. Whether formed to protect a specific resource or promote a certain historic topic, or just to address preservation in general, preservation organizations can play a key role in carrying out a community's historic preservation goals.

- **Historic Commissions**—an advisory board that serves as part of the municipal government
- **Historical Societies**—a volunteer entity, formed without needing any formal sanction, that may focus on a specific area of history

NEXT STEPS

As a component plan of Delaware County 2035, the *Historic Preservation Plan* will be used to guide the County's historic preservation projects and priorities. The objectives and actions listed throughout the plan provide the path for the County to meet the overarching goals of **Identify**, **Protect**, and **Promote**.

The plan is intended to serve as a resource for local governments. Municipalities should reference this plan when developing their own comprehensive plans or ordinances, and incorporate the countywide vision as appropriate.

It will take the combined efforts for many government agencies, organizations, officials, and motivated citizens to implement the ideas and actions in this plan.

PARTNER



Strengthen partnerships with state and local agencies, local institutions, and non-profits to address historic preservation needs.

IMPLEMENT



Work together to implement the objectives and actions identified in the Historic Preservation Plan



EVALUATE



Periodically evaluate progress, needs, and opportunities in order to best meet the goals of the historic community.



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