

SECTION 7 Historic Resources – Heritage Tourism

Purpose

The history of Hanover County and its significant historic resources are unique to any other place, and whether shared through its people, places or structures, contributes to Hanover's distinctive sense of place. The preservation of historic structures and places sustains the community's connection to its past. Historic structures and places are reminders of a pivotal time in the County's history and of the contribution made by people and places. Many historic sites are woven into the cultural heritage of the Hanover community. Stewardship of these resources is a responsibility of the entire community.

This section of the Comprehensive Plan provides guidance for the identification and protection of the County's abundant historic resources and to ensure development decisions are made in a manner that will preserve these vital historic resources whenever possible. This section discusses current proactive approaches for the preservation of historic sites that give Hanover County its unique cultural heritage and distinguishes it from other localities, and sets the stage for future ideas and actions.

Goal

Hanover County will be a community that has preserved the physical links to its history, maintained its unique character and cultural heritage for existing citizens, future residents and, visitors to the County.

Objectives

- Provide a better foundation for understanding historic resources in context - the value of historic resources is best appreciated when given information related to the time period in which the resource was established, why it is important, how the resource has been used and changed over time
- Preserve and protect irreplaceable historic resources while addressing the needs and demands of a growing community

Strategies

To Promote Education:

- Incorporate Hanover County history in the school curriculum
- Encourage youth participation in historic stewardship
- Promote special events or festivals highlighting Hanover County heritage

- Support ongoing efforts of Hanover County Government organizations to understand and encourage the preservation of the County's cultural resources:
 - Hanover County Historical Commission - established to serve as a consultative and advisory body for the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, and County Administration on the preservation and promotion of the County's historic heritage
 - Architectural Review Board (ARB) established to administer the Historic Preservation Overlay (HPO) district ordinance requirements
 - The Historic Courthouse Area Advisory Committee - established to oversee the area of the Old Courthouse Overlay Historic District with the objective of promoting preservation and enhancement of the old Historic Courthouse and its setting as a historic, cultural, and educational center for the County

- Provide opportunity for education, training, and other resources to members of the ARB and Historical Commission so that they may develop an expertise on one or more areas of study related to history, architecture, archaeology, historic contexts, or development periods, as well as preservation methods and practices

- Continue participation in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program and Preserve America Designation, and explore additional opportunities for State and Federal programs to promote cultural preservation

For Identification of Resources:

- Make use of the principles outlined in the following documents prepared by the National Register of Historic Places as guidelines related to historic structures, appurtenances, landscapes, and historic context of such features:
 - "Bulletin 12 & 21 – Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties"
 - "Bulletin 22, Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance within the Past Fifty Years"
 - "Bulletin 30, Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes"
 - "Bulletin 39, Researching a Historic Property"
 - "Bulletin 40, Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating and Registering America's Historic Battlefields"
 - "Bulletin 41, Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places"
 - "Telling the Stories: Planning Effective Interpretative Programs for Properties Listed in the National Register of Historic Places"
 - "Historic Residential Suburbs - Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places"

- The Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) maintains that preservation surveys should include eligible properties, specifically those that are 50 or more years old. The County should proactively identify neighborhoods and commercial development of an eligible age which have maintained a high degree of integrity, including an examination of the contemporary development trends and influences. Trends or building styles that are not over 50 years old, but are determined to be culturally, architecturally or historically significant to the community should also be preserved and protected
- The County has identified over 1,700 sites within the locality through periodic surveys. These surveys have served to improve the protection of historic resources through identification and documentation; surveyed properties are now maintained on the County's GIS database providing ready access to staff, residents, developers and others as development decisions are made
- The County should make every effort possible using VDHR programs to ensure that historic survey documentation be an on-going, continual process since protection of historic resources begins with identification and recordation of the age, architecture and the cultural and historical importance of each site.

To Categorize Historic Sites and Structures:

- All of the sites that been surveyed have significance; however, certain sites merit a more intense focus for preservation. Categorizing sites that are most important to the community and sites that have retained integrity to convey cultural and historical significance is a proactive step to preservation planning. The Historical Commission has been and shall continue to be a resource for recommending properties for inclusion into the following categories:
 - Category 1: This category includes properties or structures that have been designated as National Historic Landmarks (NHL) and sites that have been determined to be exceptional cultural and historical resources. Properties identified as *Category 1* should be evaluated to determine whether they can serve as "anchors" for heritage tourism in Hanover County. As of 2017, three places in the County have been designated as a NHL: Hanover Courthouse, Scotchtown, and Marlbourne (Edmund Ruffin Plantation). Properties that have been recognized as exceptional historic resources include Hanover Tavern, Hanover Meeting House, Garthwright-Kelley House, Gaines Mill Battlefield, Cold Harbor Battlefield, and Rural Plains.

The Historical Commission, with the assistance of staff, should develop a preservation strategy for *Category 1* properties and structures, including the following:

- Evaluate the historic landscape of these sites to establish features that should be preserved, including those essential and contributing to the historic setting of the property or structure, and delineation of the boundaries of those areas, including any viewsheds contributing to the integrity of the historic resource;
 - Staff review of development proposals within the boundaries delineated by the *Rural Plains - Polegreen Church Study Area*, adopted in 2010, as directed by the guidelines provided in this Study;
 - Identify segments of historic road corridors in the areas of Category 1 sites that can illuminate the cultural experience of those sites and consider regulatory provisions that will preserve these road segments;
 - Evaluate existing regulations, policies, and available tools to determine their applicability and sufficiency in protecting and preserving the historic setting; additional regulatory provisions such as the creation of an HPO, revisions to the regulations or boundaries of an existing HPO, and the creation of conservation easements should be also considered where appropriate;
 - Maintenance of these historic resources in accordance with the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* is a priority; where appropriate, financial incentives should be utilized to encourage maintenance and to receive guarantees of preservation; and,
 - The use of required conservation and open space easements should be encouraged to preserve historic resources where appropriate
- Category 2: This category should include properties and districts that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, those determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, Century Farms recognized by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs, and battlefield sites which are not included in *Category 1* but which have been determined by the National Park Service to have a significant degree of integrity. As of 2017, thirty-eight (38) places have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places and thirty-four (34) Century Farms have been recognized.

Assisted by staff, the Historical Commission should work toward a preservation strategy for *Category 2* places, which includes the following:

- Evaluate all surveyed sites to determine if local surveys indicate possible eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Place those possibly eligible sites into the *Category 2* listing and take action to have any

Category 2 site reviewed professionally for an official reclassification as “eligible for listing on the Register” within the local survey listing document;

- Take action to support those properties that are determined eligible for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places by notifying each property owner of their site’s eligibility; should a property owner choose to pursue nomination of their site, provide them assistance in the nomination application process through identification of funding resources available for that use and volunteer resources available for assistance in the nomination process;
- Make use of resources from the DHR, the ARB, and the Historical Commission to conduct educational sessions with property owners, which shall include advice for the appropriate restoration and use of the property, a discussion of the availability of assistance through a listing on the National Register of Historic Places and the use of open space and historic easements, and consideration of other programs to assist in the incorporation of historic properties into a heritage tourism program;
- Review Category 2 properties in conjunction with the General Land Use Plan map to identify potential encroachment by future development on those properties and their historic landscape; then create development guidelines that address boundaries of the historic resources considering direct impact areas, viewsheds, and site interpretation influences related to essential and contributing features of the property’s historic setting or structure;
- Take the following steps in cases where development proposals appear to potentially impact identified historic resources:
 - Educate the developers/owners as to the importance of their properties to the community at large;
 - Help owners identify available sources of assistance to maintain their properties;
 - If a property subject to a zoning action requires an open space area, the conceptual/sketch plan should be designed to include the historic resource in the open space area; and,
 - Encourage use of the Historic Overlay Preservation Districts as a means for owners to preserve their sites through adaptive reuse concepts that preserve the historic resource or the predominant and historically important portion thereof, so as to preserve the character of the community in which the resource is located

- Seek assistance from the National Park Service, Richmond National Battlefield Park, in the design and implementation of a battlefield resource protection plan for both Civil War and Revolutionary War sites
 - Encourage the proper maintenance of historic sites in accordance with the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties*; if the owner guarantees maintenance and preservation of a site in accordance with the *Standards*, and depending on the methods applied, financial incentives should be identified or created, and then utilized to encourage that maintenance
- Category 3: This category should contain those surveyed resources or potential resources that are not included within Category 1 or Category 2. Inclusion in Category 3 is not a determination that the resource or potential resource is less valuable than the sites included in Category 1 and Category 2; however, these places may not have had sufficient evaluation to determine their significance or integrity and may in fact, after evaluation, be reclassified as Category 1 or Category 2. It must be recognized that, with over 1,704 currently surveyed sites and the likely addition of more sites in the future, it is probable that many surveyed properties will be lost or have their integrity compromised.

Working with the Historical Commission, staff should develop a preservation strategy for Category 3 places, which should include the following:

- As determined, update survey records to provide information indicating whether those resources have now been lost, substantially compromised, or are structurally unstable
- Establish a program to notify and educate property owners of the cultural and historical significance of their properties
- Encourage the proper maintenance of historic sites in accordance with the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties*; if the owner guarantees maintenance and preservation of a site in accordance with the *Standards*, and depending on the methods applied, financial incentives should be identified or created, and then utilized to encourage that maintenance
- Consider ways that historic resources can be adapted to assimilate resources into a changing landscape or setting that is consistent with the General Land Use designation while maintaining the character and significance of the resource to the greatest extent possible

For Preservation of Historic Resources:

- Develop criteria for Historic Commission review and create a list of logical, potential remediation methods that could be recommended for Categories 1, 2 and 3 historic sites
- Develop criteria for cemetery documentation and the compilation of a list and description of cemeteries within the County; these cemeteries should be mapped and shown in GIS
- Promote preservation with the application of Overlay Historic Preservation (OHP) districts for appropriate properties that have been determined to have historic, architectural or cultural significance
 - Regulations within each OHP district should ensure that uses will maintain the historic and cultural character of the vicinity and that structures are protected from irreversible exterior alteration or demolition
 - If a resource is not located within an OHP, protection of the resource is primarily achieved as the result of voluntary proffers made by applicant for a change in zoning of the property or through conditions imposed by the Board of Supervisors in connection with the issuance of a Conditional Use Permit or Special Exception Permit
- Follow a process for evaluating zoning requests to mitigate the impact of the proposed development on the historic landscape as outlined:
 - Establish the historical, cultural or architectural significance of a structure/feature and its integrity through the following methods:
 - Review the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) local surveys to determine if there is a historical structure/feature on site or in the general area
 - Determine the resource category (as previously outlined), the historical context, and its significance related to history, architecture, or archaeology of the historic resource
 - Consult with the appropriate agencies and organizations (i.e. Historical Commission, DHR, Preservation Virginia, National Park Service, Hanover Historical Society) to determine the integrity of the resource and whether it should be preserved

- Ensure those historic resources that are determined to be important to the County are preserved and protected through the following means:
 - Preserve and integrate historic structures/features, and if possible, their contributing structures and viewsheds, through appropriate proffers and conditions
 - Dedicate open space or the conveyance of conservation easements for the historic resource, its contributing features, viewshed(s) and adjoining open space so as to create a continued greenway
 - Utilize site design standards to enhance views (such as the use of natural features, surface planes, building materials, and unobtrusive parking areas);
 - Establish buffers that enhance the historic landscape and utilize compatible screening material (i.e. existing vegetation, appropriate walls or fences, supplemental native trees and hedgerows)
 - Utilize architecture that complements the historic character of the resource;
 - If a historic structure is to be relocated, utilize appropriate materials and features on the new site that are sympathetic to the historic context
- Review existing zoning regulations that could have the unintended effect of discouraging preservation, such as regulations regarding adaptive reuse, the status and maintenance of non-conforming structures and uses, setback requirements, and lighting and landscape requirements; if issues are identified, consider amendments to the zoning ordinance to correct the identified issues
- Allocate resources to ensure that GIS and other technological capabilities are used in assisting preservation efforts
- Identify funding options for preservation of individual historic and cultural resources, and provide that information to owners of those sites, and assist as possible

Heritage Tourism

Heritage tourism can be defined as traveling for pleasure by individuals who wish to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. Preservation of features that are historically significant makes a community more attractive to visitors, and promotes opportunity for greater heritage tourism. Hanover County's unique history and collection of many sites that are historically or culturally significant should be

embraced through promotion of heritage tourism. To capitalize on people's fascination with Civil War sites, Colonial Virginia, and the role Hanover County played in the establishment of religious freedom and the Country's independence, Hanover should promote the visitation to its Civil War battlefields, places and events related to Patrick Henry, Henry Clay, Samuel Davies, and others who had roots in Hanover County and were important to the history of Virginia and the United States.

Hanover County's vast array of cultural and historic resources provides an opportunity for economic benefits for the owners of these resources, and the County as a whole. In pursuing heritage tourism opportunities, a balance must be maintained between the economic benefits to the property owner and the County and the preservation of the character of the resource. The County has partnered with the Town of Ashland Office on Tourism to promote sites, activities, events, and tourism-related businesses including lodging, meals, and retail establishments within the Town and the County. The County also works with the Metro Richmond Convention and Visitor's Bureau to identify and promote opportunities in the County and to coordinate activities within the County with activities occurring throughout the Richmond region. The proximity to the capital of Virginia and to important sites in our Nation's history, from the pre-Revolutionary War period through the Revolutionary War period, through the Civil War period, to today, affords great opportunity to the County. This also requires that Hanover businesses be in a position to make use of these opportunities. Without the means to take full advantage of these opportunities, a significant portion of the economic benefit from heritage tourism will go to other jurisdictions in the region.

Objectives

- Create a comprehensive heritage tourism program to successfully promote the County's historic and cultural resources as well as the businesses and industries that support such places, which results in the visiting public's enjoyable experience of our historic and cultural places, artifacts, and activities that represent the history, stories and people of Hanover County's past and present
- Involve all sectors of the community in defining a comprehensive heritage tourism program that includes direction regarding preservation strategies for historic resources. A strong public-private working relationship is essential for the implementation of a successful program

Strategies

- Review zoning regulations for provisions that inhibit heritage tourism opportunities and consider amendments to zoning regulations that facilitate heritage tourism, including:
 - Provisions that would allow for adaptive-reuse of historic structures, the availability of public tours, the adoption of design standards that bolster the

cultural experience, and the promotion of destinations that provide entertainment and educational opportunities

- The development of properties that are conveniently located to provide support services for historic and cultural resources, such as restaurants, bed and breakfasts, gift shops, and cultural recreation facilities:
 - The rural villages of Hanover Courthouse, Beaverdam, Montpelier, and Doswell
 - Along the Civil War Trails and the Road to Revolution Trails routes
 - Revolutionary and Civil War battlefield sites
- Provisions that encourage heritage tourism and agri-tourism in connection with the County's agricultural resources, such as overnight accommodations, markets/gift shops, and recreational farming experiences
- The tourist potential of Kings Dominion and the State Fair property located in Caroline County should be utilized to complement the County's cultural tourism program. The Route 30 corridor should be enhanced to provide visitors with an attractive tourist destination in an environment that is aesthetically pleasing and which provides modern services and recreational activities
- Support property owner initiatives to preserve or enhance properties that contribute to the character of historic U.S. Route 1
- The County should explore ways to benefit from public-private financial incentives offered to Hanover County as a designated *Preserve America Community*