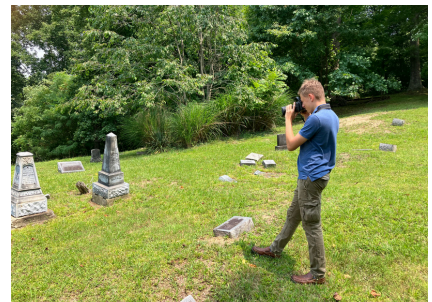


# West Virginia Preservation Plan

## Executive Summary 2025-2031



# Overview

In the summer of 2023, the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) started the process of updating the state's comprehensive historic preservation plan. This plan is intended to guide the actions of individuals, local governments, organizations, communities, and the SHPO itself. Our office undertakes the effort to revise the comprehensive statewide historic preservation plan every five years to guarantee that it remains relevant for West Virginians. Through this reflection, we can identify the ways the state's historic preservation field can build off of our shared successes.

At the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office we work alongside West Virginians daily, whether guiding them through nominating a local historic resource to the National Register of Historic Places or providing a webinar on state and federal financial assistance for historic properties. As such, our first action in the planning process was to reach out to all West Virginians. Our office took on a two-pronged approach to engaging West Virginians in the reevaluation of our existing goals and objectives: a public survey and a series of meetings with historic preservation stakeholders.

Through both parts of the planning process, our office learned things like: what types of historic resources people are the most concerned about losing in their communities, the reasons people believe the state's heritage is important, and the ways they could envision themselves participating in preservation efforts. Participants also noted that communication between preservation experts and the broader public should be strengthened in the coming years as communities face important decisions about their historic resources.

West Virginia's wealth of historic resources are affected by a variety of challenges. Our participating historic preservation professionals identified a range of concerns from property abandonment to balancing economic growth with preservation as being the greatest challenges to historic and cultural resources. Each of West Virginia's 55 counties experiences these issues in unique ways. SHPO, our partner organizations, local preservation professionals, and our state's communities all have an array of financial and technical resources that can be used to help better steward our important resources.

Following the information gathering strategies, our office drafted four goals: 1.) outreach & engagement, 2.) identification & evaluation of historic resources, 3.) community & economic development, and 4.) stewardship. Each of these goals represents an opportunity to be in continued conversation with West Virginians; to engage a broader audience in the preservation process; and to further ensure that that history is not only preserved, but that it serves as the basis for communities to grow and thrive. These are exciting prospects to lead us through the next five years.

Cover photographs:

Downtown Charles Town, Jefferson County, photo courtesy of WV SHPO  
Surveying Westlake Cemetery, Fayette County, photo courtesy of WV SHPO  
Aerial of Cook's Fort, Monroe County photo courtesy of WV SHPO

Staff site visit near Weston, Lewis County, photo courtesy of WV SHPO  
Adventures' Station, Fayette County, photo courtesy of WV SHPO  
Façade of the Hotel Morgan, Monongalia County, photo courtesy of WV SHPO

# Goals & Objectives

Historic preservation is most successful when it is a collaborative effort among a variety of stakeholders. Thus, each of our goals is aimed at fostering relationships between people and organizations with different levels and types of knowledge and experience. Through the planning process we identified the following goals and objectives:

**Goal 1:** West Virginians will be engaged with their history and view historic preservation as an opportunity to learn more about our shared heritage, and retain a sense of place.

- Increase access to information about historic preservation.
- Provide the public with opportunities and resources to recognize and understand the value of the state's historic resources.
- Assist the public in getting involved in local historic preservation efforts.

**Goal 2:** West Virginians will participate in the identification and evaluation of our state's historic resources in order to sustain preservation efforts.

- Advance the identification, evaluation, and designation of the state's historic resources.
- Increase survey and designation efforts that recognize communities that have not historically been documented and their resources throughout the state.
- Increase access to information on our state's historic resources.

**Goal 3:** West Virginians will understand the potential of historic preservation and utilize its tools and resources to revitalize our communities.

- Expand the use of financial incentive programs, such as state and federal tax credits, and grants.
- Identify and promote financial and technical assistance for programs that link historic preservation with recreation and tourism.
- Develop tools to help property owners, non-profit organizations, and government entities to protect identified threatened resources.

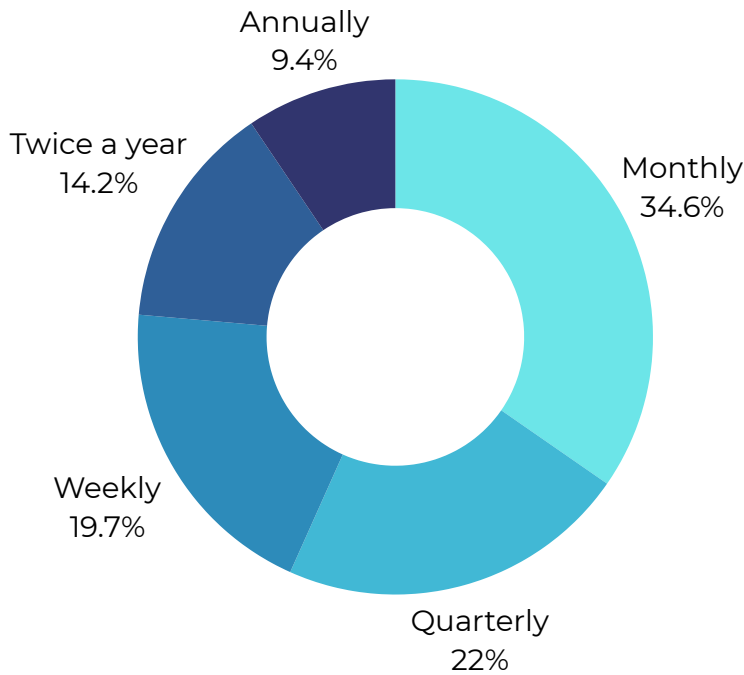
**Goal 4:** West Virginians will continue to act as stewards of our shared heritage, protecting and sustaining our historic resources across the state.

- Strengthen the relationship between individuals, organizations, local governments, and state agencies invested in historic preservation activities.
- Investigate and develop established and new funding sources, as well as connect communities and organizations to existing resources and financial assistance.
- Collaborate with communities (i.e. historic landmark commissions and local governments) interested in instituting local preservation ordinances, design review, preservation easements, and conservation covenants.
- Provide information about how historic preservation can overlap with disaster planning and recovery operations at the local, regional, and state level.
- Advise and assist state and federal agencies to ensure the protection of the state's historic resources.

The framework for the next five years consists of goals, objectives, and strategies. The goals are intended to be overarching ideas which will organize our state's efforts. Our objectives are specific aims, while the strategies are intended to inspire the actions of local and state historic preservation organizations, and should be adapted to best suit individual communities and their needs. The staff of the SHPO are eager to begin this important work and support West Virginians with resources and expertise at each juncture along the way.

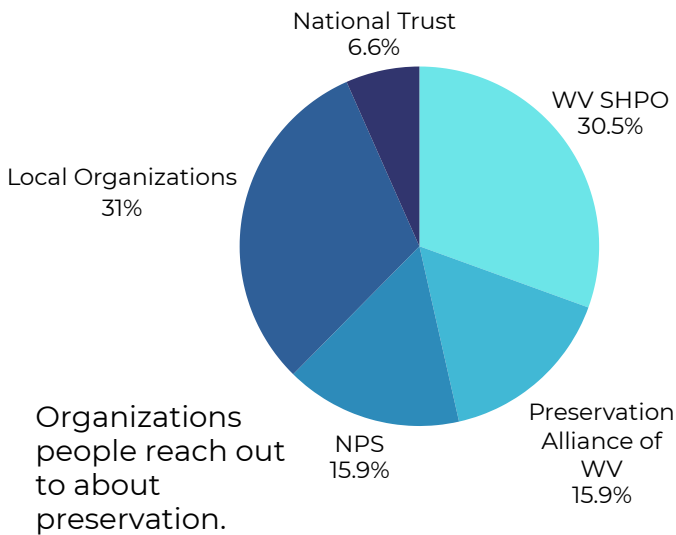
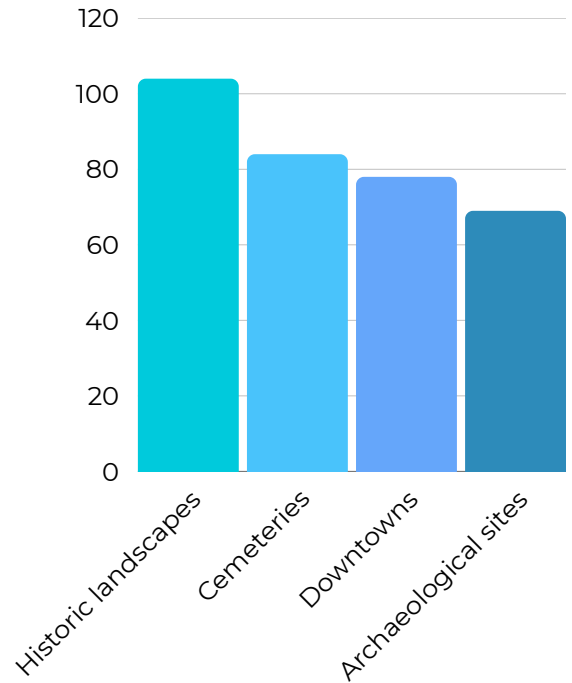
# West Virginians & Preservation

## A Snapshot of Our Survey Results



West Virginians report they visit historic resources at least monthly.

These are the historic resources people are most concerned about being altered.



Organizations people reach out to about preservation.

Top reasons people preserve.



# 137

West Virginians responded to our survey.

To learn more about West Virginia's State Historic Preservation Plan scan the QR Code



The activity that is the subject of this comprehensive plan has been partially financed with federal funds for the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior and administered by the WV Department of Tourism. However, the contents and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior. Statutes and regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental Federal Assisted Programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1849 C Street NW, Washington DC 20240.