

CULTURAL RESOURCES (Draft 3-28-25)

Introduction

Goal Statement:

Albemarle County will recognize, celebrate and promote awareness of its rich and extensive historic, cultural, and scenic resources, and will actively work to identify, preserve and protect these valuable resources.

Objectives

- 1. Develop and maintain an accurate and comprehensive inventory of the historic, cultural, scenic, and rural resources that contribute to Albemarle's unique sense of place.**
 - a. Establish and maintain a comprehensive inventory of county resources, including but not limited to those recognized by other registers, such as the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places. Establish a system for updating outdated surveys, completing new inventories, and prioritizing the work.
 - b. Develop and maintain an inventory of the county's cemeteries, including but not limited to abandoned, neglected, private and commercial, and historic Black/African American cemeteries, to assist in identifying development impacts and for general education purposes.
 - c. Identify, document and monitor resources that are threatened by potential demolition, neglect or redevelopment. Expand the County's historic resource GIS layer to include these resources.
- 2. Increase County-sponsored programs to educate about Albemarle's unique resources and history and support efforts of other individuals/organizations doing the same.**
 - a. Regularly engage community members to understand topics of interest related to Albemarle County's history and resources. Provide education on identified topics through a variety of methods including but not limited to historical markers, endangered places lists, exhibits, etc.
 - b. Broaden access to, and awareness of, the county's resources, emphasizing the benefits of preserving the resources, through digital and social media and traditional methods such as tours, lectures, and exhibits, and recordings of events available online.
 - c. Encourage property owners to apply to new and established programs that bestow honorary designations on important resources in the county.
 - d. Educate the community about historic preservation programs and regulations, and the cultural, financial and environmental benefits of those programs, including but not limited to those related to demolition and cemeteries.
 - e. Partner with community groups, including religious institutions, civic and arts/cultural organizations, schools, and businesses to increase awareness and engagement in education, ownership, management and recognition of the county's significant resources.
 - f. Create tools to help owners of historic and culturally significant places connect with experts that provide rehabilitation and preservation services.
 - g. Investigate establishing a placemaking program, including but not limited to an art in public places program, that acknowledges the unique history and character of the county and its neighborhoods.
- 3. Increase the number of protected historic resources through local regulations.**
 - a. Establish an historic preservation ordinance with a broad view of eligibility criteria.
 - b. Investigate legal tools for historic preservation including a demolition ordinance, stronger

- code enforcement tools for demolition of protected historic resources, and scenic overlays.
- c. Establish requirements to protect significant archaeological resources, including proactive measures to prevent disturbance and potential destruction, and controls to ensure that archaeological sites and subsurface materials are properly identified, evaluated, and mitigated prior to development.

4. Increase the availability of incentives and funding streams to preserve and protect historic resources and to support adaptive reuse that maintains character-defining features.

- a. Evaluate and consider adopting real estate and tax incentives to encourage retention of historic resources.
- b. Promote sustainable design in the renovation and adaptive reuse of historic resources, including energy-efficient upgrades and the salvage/reuse of building materials.
- c. Update the Historic Preservation Plan and the Priority Recommendations List to direct future work of the HPC.
- d. Establish and make available a toolbox for restoration and reuse of existing structures, prioritizing historic structures.
- e. Create technical assistance programs to increase understanding and give guidance on how to protect resources from various threats, including natural disasters, neglect, and other risks.
- f. Acquire funding for historic preservation. Actively pursue grants, promote tax credits for historic preservation projects, establish funding streams and financial incentives in collaboration with the Board of Supervisors for maintenance, documentation, restoration, renovation, adaptive reuse, and stabilization of historic resources.
- g. Establish funding streams and financial incentives to encourage land and scenic conservation.
- h. Collaborate with local, state, and national agencies on preservation efforts, programs, policies, and opportunities, including matching grants and technical assistance available in the Certified Local Government program through the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.
- i. Identify partnerships and funding sources for the identification, protection, and preservation of abandoned and neglected cemeteries, especially historic Black/African American cemeteries.
- j. Periodically survey the community to determine the historic preservation incentive programs that are desired.
- k. Emphasize greater protection of historic resources in the County's conservation easement programs.

5. Preserve and protect the county's scenic viewsheds, landscapes, waterways, and the scenic character of the county's roads.

- a. Establish programs and policies for preserving and prioritizing the county's scenic resources, including viewsheds, and scenic streams.
- b. Collaborate with local community members and groups on voluntary programs and efforts to preserve and restore scenic resources.
- c. Evaluate and consider establishing a local scenic highway overlay with design standards and/or other protections to help maintain the rural character of the county and its roads, both within and outside the Entrance Corridor overlay.
- d. Enhance the appearance of county roads by establishing programs to reduce litter, to maintain landscaping and other vegetation, to reduce invasive species, and eliminate non-permitted signs.
- e. Monitor changing state and federal road classifications and analyze and consider designating additional roads as Entrance Corridors as appropriate.
- f. Revise Entrance Corridor Design Guidelines to elevate the quality of design and include corridor specific criteria. Engage local communities to inform guidelines updates.
- g. Update the Entrance Corridor Design Guidelines to provide direction on coordinating

strategies for climate resilience, renewable energy sources, and sustainable building materials while meeting the guidelines.

- h. Expand opportunities for streamlined review of ARB applications, including more categories of staff-level review.
- i. Update the Entrance Corridor Design Guidelines to promote native vegetation and integration of vegetation in building design.
- j. Complete a cultural resources overlay study to prioritize protection zones.

6. Reduce light pollution to protect and enhance the dark sky while balancing the need for a safe environment.

- a. Update the outdoor lighting ordinance to address previously planned Phase 2 amendments and to address new technologies, including LED lights.
- b. Lead the protection of dark skies by designing and implementing lighting for County facilities that is energy efficient and dark sky friendly.