

## Principle 4: PRESERVE HISTORIC RESOURCES

### Know the Value of History



Do you think more tourists visit George Washington's home at Mt. Vernon, or his boyhood home in Stafford County?

**T**HE HUMAN FORCES that have shaped the Shenandoah Valley for nearly 300 years are evident today in the many historic buildings and sites that dot the Valley landscape. Native American burial sites, historic farmhouses, Civil War battlefields, old mills, stone barns and unique agricultural structures, rural hamlets and villages, spring resorts, quaint downtowns and older neighborhoods, even older roads and bridges tell distinct stories about each area of the Valley.

In particular, the Shenandoah Valley was the site of two historical events that are of lasting interest to Americans all over the continent. As the staging ground for westward emigration in the late 1700s and 1800s, the Valley is the place to which many Americans trace their ancestors. In the 1860s, the Valley bore the full brunt of the Civil War, the nation's most searing conflict. Our landscape offers tales not only of the fighting but of the daily tribulations on the home front. Making personal connections to these two events brings many, many Americans to the Shenandoah Val-

ley. What they also can find is other historical themes, from Native American times to rural Virginia traditions.

These historic sites are a tremendous asset to the region. They give us a sense of identity and stability. They contribute greatly to the vitality of the region and are an immense attraction to visitors from throughout the world. Current residents of this Valley have inherited these distinctive resources and can hand them intact to future generations.

Much of the Valley's heritage is rural. Scattered historic buildings and their landscape context make up much of what has always defined the Valley. However, most of the new development in the Valley is occurring in unincorporated rural areas. This raises the challenge for communities individually and the Valley as a whole to recognize the value of rural historic sites, to identify the most important features and sites, and to develop ways to retain the historic integrity of these resources.

## History Is Good Business

PRESERVING HISTORIC ASSETS makes economic sense. In fact, studies in Maryland, New Jersey, and Virginia confirm that preservation projects have a greater economic impact than other projects.

- Visitors spend \$9.1 billion in Virginia every year. Historic and cultural sites are the number one attraction in the Commonwealth.
- Historic preservation visitors stay longer, visit twice as many places, and spend, on average, over two-and-one-half times more money than do other visitors.
- Every \$1 million spent on the rehabilitation of historic buildings creates 15.6 construction jobs and 14.2 jobs elsewhere in the economy and adds \$779,800 to household incomes.
- Every \$1 million spent on historic rehabilitation creates 3.4 more jobs and adds \$53,500 more to Virginia household incomes than \$1 million in new construction.
- Since creating a revolving fund, Preservation of Historic Winchester has leveraged \$110,000 in working capital into nearly \$2.7 million, used to buy, restore, and sell 64 historic buildings.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Preservation Alliance of Virginia, 700 Harris Street, Suite 106, Charlottesville, VA 22902; (804) 984-4484.

*The Economic Benefits of Preservation: Making the Case*, by Donovan D. Rypkema, The Real Estate Services Group, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC; (202) 673-4258.

Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, VA 23221; (804) 367-2323. (VDHR can help fund a variety of historic preservation projects through its Certified Local Government program.)

Virginia Main Street Program, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, 501 N. Second Street, Richmond, VA 23219; (804) 371-7030.

*Virginia's Economy and Preservation: The Impact of Preservation on Jobs, Business, and Community*, Preservation Alliance of Virginia, 1996, Charlottesville, VA; (804) 984-4484.

*“Choosing to destroy—or to witness destruction—is easy. We need to make that decision only once. But choosing to preserve is much harder. We must choose to preserve over and over again, each day, each generation. One bad choice, or one lost opportunity, can cause irreparable devastation.”*

John Hennessy, Civil War author

# Identify and Designate Historic Sites

Preserve  
Historic  
Resources



Thomas Wolfe can't go home again; his birthplace is now a parking lot.

**T**HE MANY HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND SITES in the Valley are a testament to the wise stewardship of current and previous owners. But as development increases in the Valley, so does the threat that these resources may be destroyed, often through lack of awareness of their value.

Historic preservation is a three-step process: identify, designate, and protect. The foundation of historic preservation is awareness—identification of historic sites and what makes them historic. Architectural surveys have been completed for many localities in the Valley. Others could take this step.

Designation recognizes particularly important historic sites. Individual buildings as well as districts can be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

National Register listing informs local, state, and federal governments of the existence of important historic resources. The federal government must consider and

try to protect a National Register property's historic value in the course of its actions, including construction projects. Listing also can qualify owners for federal and state tax credits. National Register listing is purely honorary. It does not regulate or restrict the actions of the owners or the locality in any way.

*“Preservation brings new jobs, new businesses, good wages, significant tourist traffic, and economic benefit.”*

Virginia's Economy and  
Historic Preservation

Many of Virginia's 230 National Register Historic Districts are in the Valley region. A good number are in cities—Staunton alone has five historic districts—but districts can be villages, agricultural complexes, or any other related cluster of buildings. In fact, 29 of the historic districts in the Valley are in the counties. Many more places could qualify as historic districts, particularly in the small towns and villages that so define the Valley's traditional development pattern.

There are two primary avenues for protection. First, for property owners who know they want to permanently protect a site's historic features, historic easements can be the answer.

Second, for communities wanting to address protection of historic resources, a local historic district ordinance can be the means for ensuring that new development is compatible with historic buildings and sites. Typically these ordinances guard against unnecessary demolitions and insensitive alterations to the exterior of buildings. Making sure that these historic places will remain so also can help protect investment and increase tourism.



Urban National Register historic district, Staunton



Rural National Register historic district, Clarke County

## THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

- In Virginia, more than 1,600 historic resources are listed on the National Register. Properties in historic districts bring this number to more than 31,000.
- Studies show that property values increase more in historic areas than non-historic areas. For example, between 1987 and 1995, residential properties in each of Staunton's five historic districts appreciated from 51.9 to 66.0 percent, compared to 51.1 percent for those not in historic districts. Commercial gains were even more dramatic—27.7 to 256.4 percent in historic districts versus an average of 25.2 percent for non-historic commercial properties.
- Historic neighborhoods also offer modest-priced housing, with the opportunity for substantial appreciation of property values.
- Approximately 60 localities in Virginia have local historic district ordinances, including a number of Valley localities.
- Historic easements protect 241 properties in Virginia. Historic easements in the Valley protect sites ranging from historic farmhouses and city residences to the Cedar Creek Battlefield.



Historic easement: Waverley House, Staunton



Buffalo Springs herb farm, Rockbridge County

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Preservation Alliance of Virginia, 700 Harris Street,  
Suite 106, Charlottesville, VA 22902; (804) 984-4484.

Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, VA 23221; (804) 367-2323.

*Virginia's Rural Historic Districts: Making the Case*,  
Preservation Alliance of Virginia, 1998; (804) 984-4484.

# Find New Uses for Old Buildings



**Pampered Palate, Staunton, before and after: Which do you think attracts more customers?**

**V**IRGINIANS SHARE A HERITAGE that is among the oldest and richest in America. This heritage is as diverse as the colonial capital of Williamsburg, the historic market in Roanoke, Monument Avenue in Richmond, the homes of Presidents and patriots, battlefields from the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, and the historic villages and towns of the Shenandoah Valley.

Statewide, a total of 1,600 buildings, districts and sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These historic buildings, neighborhoods and sites give Virginia its unique sense of place. Historic buildings are important because they physically connect us to the past. They tell us who we are and where we came from.

Saving historic buildings is also important because it makes economic sense. Preservation brings new jobs and businesses. It attracts tourists and retirees and it enhances property values and quality of life.

## THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

- Historic preservation is a big business in Virginia. Preservation brings new

jobs, new and expanded businesses, good wages, significant tourist expenditures and economic benefits to all Virginians.

- Nearly 75% of first-time visitors and over a third of all visitors to Virginia visit historic sites. What's more, historic preservation visitors stay longer, visit twice as many places and spend an average of over two and a half times more money in Virginia than other visitors.
- In Virginia, there are 275 historic attractions which generate over 6.5 million visitors annually. Another 22 million annual visits are made to national park sites including Civil War Battlefields.

*“The economic benefits of historic preservation are enormous. The knowledge of the economic benefits of preservation is minuscule.”*

*Economics of  
Historic Preservation*

■ The economic impact of Colonial Williamsburg alone is over half a billion dollars a year to Virginia's economy. Old Town Alexandria generates \$8 million dollars a year in lodging and restaurant taxes by visitors drawn to this historic community.

■ Property values of historic buildings and sites throughout Virginia almost always go up when buildings are designated for their historic value. This is

## Preserve Historic Resources

because scarcity and certainty create value in real estate. Historic resources are a scarce resource and investors, home buyers, and business people are attracted to communities that care enough about these resources to protect them.

- For example, during the 1980s and 1990s, property values in the historic districts in Staunton, Fredericksburg and Richmond grew considerably faster than property values in non-historic areas of these communities.
- In a recent 15-year period, the rehabilitation of some 900 historic buildings throughout Virginia provided 12,697 jobs, about half in the construction trades, and the other half in other fields.
- The rehabilitation of historic structures is generally cost competitive with new construction but it is

much more labor intensive. The net effect of this difference is that the local economic impact of construction expenditures on older buildings is greater than on new buildings.

- Historic rehabilitation has been responsible for restoring economic health to many well-known Virginia landmarks such as the Jefferson Hotel in Richmond, the Homestead in Bath County and the Hotel Roanoke. Less well-known but equally important local landmarks such as Wade's Mill in Rockbridge County, the train station in Staunton, the Kurtz Cultural Center in Winchester, and hundreds of other buildings have provided economic boosts to communities throughout the Valley.



Calhoun's, Harrisonburg, formerly a Woolworth's



Hampton Inn, Lexington, incorporates historic house



Glasgow School, converted to elderly housing



Alleghany Building, Clifton Forge, rehabilitated for apartments

“The man who feels no sentiment or veneration for the memory of his forefathers is himself unworthy of kindred regard and remembrance.”

Daniel Webster

© STAUNTON PLANNING DEPT.



Former downtown Leggett's Department Store, now Staunton City Hall



F&M Bank, Bridgewater

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

*Economics of Historic Buildings: A Community Leaders Guide*, by Donovan D. Rypkema, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, DC, 1994; (202) 588-6000.

*New Uses for Obsolete Buildings*, by Urban Land Institute, Washington, DC, 1996; (202) 624-7000.

*Virginia's Economy and Historic Preservation*, by Preservation Alliance of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, 1996; (804) 984-4484.



Lyric Condos, Lexington

# Preserve Battlefields

Preserve  
Historic  
Resources



Doesn't it make sense to preserve Virginia's Civil War battlefields?

**T**HE BATTLEGROUND OF THE CIVIL WAR defines the character of many Virginia communities. But the lands where armies clashed, where bravery and sacrifice turned farm fields into hallowed ground, are today threatened by development.

A Civil War battlefield—whether protected and open to visitors or preserved by a private owner as open space—can be a significant component of a community's well-being, yielding economic, cultural, and environmental benefits.

The Shenandoah Valley was the site of two strategically important campaigns involving 15 major battles and hundreds of smaller encounters. A 1992 National Park Service study found that the integrity of these sites is generally high, but that several significant battlefields have suffered severe degradation and most are threatened by future development. The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District Commission has been formed by Congress to devise a plan to protect and interpret Civil War sites in the Valley.

*“When one knows where to look, the Civil War history of the Shenandoah Valley is everywhere.”*

Study of Civil War Sites in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, National Park Service, 1992

## BATTLEFIELDS CONTRIBUTE TO ECONOMIC WELL-BEING:

- Many valley communities are located near historic battlefields, which provide important economic benefits. A battlefield can be a basic industry that generates jobs in a community.
- Battlefields can generate income from tourist expenditures and sales tax revenue. A quarter of all Virginia visitors stop at Civil War sites. Civil War tourists are among the highest daily spenders of all visitors.
- In 1994 tourists at Gettysburg National Military Park generated \$100.4 million in expenditures and \$6.5 million in state and local tax revenues.
- Battlefields bring additional income into communities through the multiplier effect. Every dollar a visitor spends is multiplied—spent again in the community—an average of two times. For example, at Pea Ridge, Arkansas, the \$10.8 million spent by visitors in 1991 had a total economic impact of \$20.2 million.

- As historic open space, a battlefield also adds economic value to adjacent properties and enhances a community's quality of life by protecting its natural resources, environmental qualities, and visual amenities.

### THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

- The Frederick County-Winchester Battlefield Network Plan used a local task force and public forums to set a strategy for protecting and promoting the area's many Civil War Battlefields. A five-year program is being implemented.
- Frederick County also recognizes the importance of the county's Civil War sites in its comprehensive plan.
- Third Hill, used as a signal hill during Stonewall Jackson's campaign, is protected by a conservation easement donated by a private landowner.
- Piedmont Battlefield in Augusta County is part of an approximately 9,000-acre agricultural district.
- A concept plan for the McDowell Battlefield/ Staunton-to-Parkersburg Pike includes a description of the varied resources along the route traveled to and from the battle and provides strategies for protecting and interpreting the corridor.



**Third Hill, protected by a conservation easement**



**McDowell Battlefield, Highland County**

- Highland County received an ISTEA grant to purchase conservation easements on sites associated with the McDowell Battlefield.
- The "Civil War Campaigns of Virginia's Shenandoah Valley" ISTEA project designated key Valley sites,

*"[T]he public cannot expect agricultural land uses to continue to preserve open land that conveniently coincides with Civil War battlefields."*

Study of Civil War Sites in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, National Park Service, 1992



**Piedmont Battlefield, part of Middle River agricultural district, Augusta County**

marked them with signs, and developed a brochure and map for self-guided tours.

- Lee's Retreat, a popular and effective multi-jurisdictional marketing effort in southside Virginia, ties together sites touched by the Confederate Army under General Robert E. Lee during the last days of the Civil War.
- Chancellorsville Battlefield in Spotsylvania County, one of the fastest-growing localities in Virginia, is on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 1998 list of "America's Most Endangered Places."

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

American Battlefield Protection Program, National Park Service, Heritage Protection Services, 1849 C Street NW (NC330), Washington, DC 20240; (202) 343-3449.

"Battlefield Network Plan," Frederick County Department of Planning and Development, February 1997; (540) 665-5651.

*Dollar\$ and Sense of Battlefield Preservation: A Handbook for Community Leaders*, Frances Kennedy and Doug Porter, The Conservation Fund, 1994; (703) 525-6300.

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District Commission, P.O. Box 897, New Market, VA 22844; (540) 740-4543.

*Study of Civil War Sites in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia*, U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, September 1992.

*The McDowell Battlefield Staunton-to-Parkersburg Pike Concept Plan* (1996) and *McDowell Battlefield Landowners Guide* (1999), Valley Conservation Council; (540) 886-3541.

Virginia Civil War Trails, 550 E. Marshall Street, Richmond, VA 23219; (800) 370-9004.