



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

DIVISION OF PLANNING & PERMITTING

Livable Frederick Planning & Design Office

Jan H. Gardner
County Executive

Steven C. Horn, Division Director
Kimberly Golden Brandt, Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Historic Preservation Commission
FROM: Beau Lockard, Historic Preservation Planner
DATE: August 19, 2022
RE: County Executive Request for 2023 Legislative Considerations

Issue:

Does the Commission have any ideas or suggestions for Frederick County's legislative package for the 2023 General Assembly Session?

Background and Discussion:

County Executive Gardner has reached out to the Historic Preservation Commission seeking ideas and suggestions for Frederick County's legislative package for the 2023 General Assembly Session ([Attachment 1](#)). If the Commission is aware of any issues or concerns that could be resolved through state legislation, these suggestions should be provided by September 14, 2022. All suggestions for legislation will be reviewed and considered at a public meeting in October before specific bills are drafted.

Suggestions that the Commission may want to consider submitting include:

- Support increasing or, at the minimum, maintaining current funding levels to the State's historic preservation grant programs. These grant programs are important for preserving and interpreting historic sites throughout the State. However, the amount of grant requests far outweighs the amount of funding available. Typically, Frederick County averages about one awardee per program per year.

The Historic Preservation Capital Grant Program is currently funded at \$600,000 to support capital upgrade projects on certified historic structures state-wide with each applicant able to request up to \$100,000.

The Historic Preservation Non-Capital Research and Survey Grant Program is currently funded at \$300,000 to support architectural and archeological research, survey and documentation, public education, and planning and feasibility projects state-wide with each applicant able to request up to \$75,000. Frederick County has applied for two 2023 Non-Capital Grants.

The African American Heritage Grant Program is currently funded at \$1 million to support capital upgrade projects on sites representing African American historical experiences with each applicant able to request up to \$100,000.

- Support funding the State's Barn Preservation Fund. The bill to create this fund was passed in 2006 and amended in 2015, but has yet to be allocated any funding. This fund would be used to preserve historic barns and agricultural structures in the State. The Fiscal and Policy Notes for House Bill 699 indicate that the fund would require approximately \$300,000 to begin to address the demand for barn preservation. While Frederick County has created the Rural Historic Preservation Grant Program to support preservation of historic resources such as barns and other agricultural outbuildings, the Barn Preservation Fund would provide an additional funding source to meet the needs of preserving these historic resources.
- Support maintaining current funding levels for the Maryland Heritage Areas Program. This program supports capital and non-capital projects within the boundaries of a heritage area and with a clear heritage tourism component. Funding for this program was recently increased from \$3 million to \$6 million. Parts of Frederick County are included within the boundary of the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area (HCWHA), which encompasses areas of Washington, Frederick, and Carroll Counties. The HCWHA routinely has one of the largest applicant pools of all the heritage areas seeking funding from this program.
- Support recommendations outlined by the 2022 Historic African American Cemeteries Report ([Attachment 2](#)), including providing funding for African American cemetery maintenance, rehabilitation, and restoration activities, create statutory requirements to strengthen cemetery protection, and increase penalties for violation of Maryland cemetery law.
- Supports an amendment that allows historic state tax credits to go to locally designated sites, without the need for National Register designation/eligibility.
- Support increasing acquisition funding for the Historic Preservation Training Center in Frederick County.
- Support the creation of the *Maryland Smart Growth Investment Fund*, which was proposed in the 2018 legislative session (SB3/HB117) but did not pass, and the funding needed to support its execution. ([Attachment 3](#))

Staff will forward the suggestions approved by the Commission to the County Executive.

Attachment

Attachment 1: Legislative Letter from County Executive Gardner.
Attachment 2: 2022 Historic African American Cemeteries Report
Attachment 3: Preservation Maryland Smart Growth One Pager.