

Cost Share Program Takes Targeted Approach

For the past 10 years, the Department of Historic Resources' Cost Share program has been the primary tool used to undertake comprehensive cultural resource surveys. The program partners state and local governments to fund survey projects aimed at identifying cultural resources, while eliminating the administrative burden for localities. The program has developed a cultural resources database that is used by local governments in their planning processes, and it has greatly expanded the state's holdings of cultural resource information.

The Cost Share program continues to provide opportunities to identify and protect important resources across Virginia. Given the uncertainty of federal funding levels, coupled with the current state budget, the amount of cost share funding is likely to be reduced in the short term. However, the program will continue, with a targeted approach designed to address high-priority projects that are in keeping with departmental and statewide initiatives.

Recently, DHR has entered into several new cost share agreements. Lunenburg County and the department have partnered to hire a consultant to conduct a countywide cultural resources survey. This document will provide much-needed, basic information regarding cultural resources in the area.

The city of Danville and the department have entered into an agreement to fund the preparation of a national register nomination for the North Danville Historic District. The project is intended to recognize a historically and architecturally significant area and to aid in economic development efforts currently underway in the vicinity.

The Southside Planning District Commission is working with the department to prepare a publication about the cultural resources of Clarksville and Boydton, in Mecklenburg County. DHR staff is drafting much of the text, based on the information presented in recent national register nominations.

It has come to DHR's attention that a National Historic Landmark thematic nomination for Jeffersonian courthouses would help to recognize and develop a larger context for these distinctive properties. The department will partner with the Piedmont Planning District Commission, whose jurisdiction includes many localities with Jeffersonian courthouses, to develop the nomination and see that several of the courthouses are listed as part of the thematic study. The study will increase the understanding and underscore the relationship of these architecturally significant buildings.

Goochland County and DHR are proud to announce the funding of a countywide survey for this rapidly developing suburb of Richmond. Taking the lead in the project are the Goochland County Historical Society and the Goochland County Board of Supervisors. Goochland County is the only metro-Richmond locality without a formal comprehensive survey; the information gathered through this project will provide important data about local historic resources and will be an invaluable tool as Goochland plans for its growth.

Clearly, the Cost Share program is serving its intended purpose—to identify and document cultural resources for the benefit of Virginia’s communities. While the program will continue to be a significant component of the departmental mission, it is clear that funding will be reduced. To put the limited funding to the most efficient and effective use, DHR will implement a targeted strategy for selecting this year’s recipients.