

Elkins Historic Landmarks Commission

Strategic Plan

Final, September 10, 2009

Mission

To serve the City of Elkins by providing local leadership, education, governance and advocacy to preserve our historic places and revitalize our community.

Goals

Create a culture of preservation within our community.

Function as an integral part of Elkins City government and a respected partner in all matters related to preservation and planning for historic structures and districts.

Objectives

Organize and strengthen EHLC processes to improve performance, sustainability, and public image.

Enhance communications with the Mayor and Elkins City Council.

Manage the Darden House Complex to support preservation.

Educate citizens on the value and benefits of preservation.

Increase funding available for local preservation.

Protect Elkins's historic properties as charged in our charter.

Five-Year Project Plan

Organize and strengthen EHLC processes to improve performance, sustainability, and public image.

- Develop annual workplan based on this strategic plan. Implement and periodically update.
- Review and update bylaws, rules and documents, operating policies, and bookkeeping procedures.
- Improve reporting for CLG requirements, City and the public.
- Maintain active membership on EHLC including selection, recruiting and training of new members.
- Encourage EHLC meeting attendance and public participation with open, efficient meetings.
- Review past accomplishments and use in planning, outreach, and educational materials.
- Organize office and establish public accessibility with operating hours, staffing, and technology.
- Develop and implement a plan and acquisitions policy for the adaptive reuse and/or display of the EHLC inventory of artifacts

Enhance communications with the Mayor and Elkins City Council.

- Encourage reciprocal meeting attendance, and provide regular minutes and reports to Council.
- Attend City Council committee meetings including streets, municipal properties, building, and planning commission.
- Attend for information and/or participate in other community meetings, such as RCDA, County Commission, downtown merchants, On Trac, Action 2010.

Manage the Darden House Complex to support preservation.

- Develop a comprehensive use and sustainability plan for the Darden House, Carriage House, and garden working with the City to set forth and confirm future of the complex. Plan will address purpose and uses, rehabilitation needs, financial sustainability to support and properly maintain property, and other elements as needed.
- Complete porch rehabilitation.
- Establish the Darden House as a resource center for preservationists and an example of adaptive re-use which may include interpretation, library, office and meeting use by preservation groups.
- Raise awareness of the Darden House as preservation center and public use space.

Educate citizens on the value and benefits of preservation.

- Continue building web site with logo and branding elements.
- Communicate regularly with historic property owners through mailings, meetings and other channels.
- Build connections with other preservation and historic organizations, and with other organizations whose work may impact historic structures, in order to establish role of EHLC, and to coordinate together for common goals.
- Publish plaque guidelines and promote placement of national-register plaques.
- Create an awards/recognition program for significant efforts by property owners for preservation practices.
- Connect architecture and history to build support for preservation by writing a series of newspaper articles on historic properties and/or by other educational programming.
- Provide education on preservation tools and how-tos, working with C-HOPE or other preservation groups, through workshops, publications, voluntary guidelines, and/or other educational means.

Increase funding available for local preservation.

- Submit grant applications to SHPO regularly for all types of projects, and provide sponsorship when appropriate for other community preservation groups.
- Develop annual fundraising program in support of our ongoing mission.
- Research grant-making organizations and other resources to expand our revenue base.
- Develop a preservation minigrant program, possibly with City funding, and other resources.

Protect Elkins's historic properties as charged in our charter.

- Advocate on behalf of properties that may be negatively impacted by City or development plans.
- Review and participate when needed on 106 and other review issues for the City.
- Investigate possibilities for pro-active preservation including planning processes and consideration of zoning change or overlay, design review, or other regulations.
- Support advocacy on behalf of community preservation projects led by grassroots groups by such means as advice, letters of support, and other available resources.
- Survey the historic structures in Elkins, denoting current conditions, and develop an endangered listing or watch list of our own.
- Establish a local Landmarks Program, with guidelines, recognition and incentives.
- Review previous historic surveys and NR listing and conduct or support additional if needed.

