

PRESERVATION PLANNING GUIDELINES

Cemeteries are both sacred burial grounds and significant cultural landscapes. Their long-term care requires thoughtful planning due to the diverse natural and manmade elements they contain. Developing a formal preservation and maintenance strategy is essential for their ongoing stewardship.

Why a Preservation Plan Matters:

- A **preservation plan** lays the foundation for long-term care by:
 - Defining the **goals and priorities** of preservation efforts
 - Explaining the rationale behind maintenance and conservation decisions
 - Guiding both immediate actions and future planning

Recommended Preservation Plan Components:

It's strongly recommended that a preservation plan be developed by an experienced professional. At a minimum, a well-prepared plan should include:

- **Mission Statement**

Outlines the overall vision and purpose of the preservation effort.

- **Inventory and Documentation**

Catalogs cemetery features, including gravestones, fencing, walls, pathways, and landscape elements.

- **Condition Assessment**

Evaluates the physical state of the site as a whole and of individual features.

- **Maintenance and Treatment Plan**

Prioritizes tasks based on urgency (schedule of maintenance), condition (severity of threat) and available funding (budget).

The Role of a Maintenance Plan:

A **comprehensive maintenance** plan works in tandem with the preservation plan and focuses on:

- Routine landscape upkeep
- Headstone cleaning and minor repairs
- Specialized conservation work aligned with long-term goals

Any property owner or other entity that has received a Basic Maintenance Grant from DHR is welcome to apply for funding to cover professional preservation planning of their cemetery. We cannot fund projects after the fact.