



REVITALIZE OHIO

SPRING 2026 | A HERITAGE OHIO PUBLICATION



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Queen City
this fall!*

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REVITALIZE OHIO
Spring 2026

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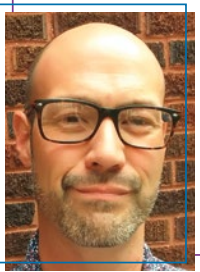
If you've attended the Appalachia Heritage Luncheon, you are familiar with the legacies of the winners of the Sam Jones Model Citizen Award. Meet the man, his storied gym, and his lasting impact on downtown Glouster.

On the Cover

Join us in the Queen City this fall for the 2026 Heritage Ohio Annual Preservation & Revitalization Conference, September 29th through October 1st. Registration opens in June.



Executive Director Note



One of my favorite activities every spring is compiling the cumulative reinvestment statistics for the Ohio Main Street Programs, and seeing how their communities are thriving with new investments, new jobs, new housing, and economic impact. All Affiliate level Main Street programs across the country are required to track the progress in their communities, and this past year was another outstanding impact year across Ohio.

In 2025, our 21 Ohio Main Street Program Affiliate communities reported 127 net new full-time jobs, 254 net new part time jobs, 50 net new businesses, 387 new housing units built, 92 facade improvements, 111 building rehabilitation projects, 776 special events hosted, \$34,842,592 in privately funded rehabilitation work, and \$78,398,833 of public improvements made in their districts.

Those are impressive numbers, indeed. It's even more impressive when you monetize their outcomes. Collectively, 57,539 volunteer hours were tracked. Valued at \$32.42 per hour, that's \$1,865,414 in DONATED labor and services. That shows that community business owners and residents value the work being done to improve their quality of life, and that they're willing to help support the initiatives. That's a huge number, and it shows broad-based community support within the Main Street communities.

Let's dig into those 776 special events hosted in 2025. Cumulative estimated attendance was reported at 742,012 guests. A special event could be a three-day holiday kick-off, a weekly farmers market, an evening shopping promotion, a weekend concert, or really any formal event that brings residents and guests to the district. To show the value of those 742,012 guests, we estimate that each guest spends roughly \$30 per person. That's \$30 being spent at a local restaurant, food truck, boutique, or other locally owned and operated businesses, not online or in a big-box store. To understand that scale of the impact of those 776 special events, let's multiply 742,012 guests x \$30 per person, and all of a sudden, the Ohio Main Street Programs are generating \$22,260,360 of direct economic impact across the State of Ohio.

In a bigger picture, Heritage Ohio also tracks census data for our Ohio Main Street Program 21 Affiliate and 24 Aspiring communities, and those statistics are even more impressive. While the population of Ohio has remained stagnant at roughly 11,500,000 since 2000, we saw a 3.4% increase in population in our Main Street communities.

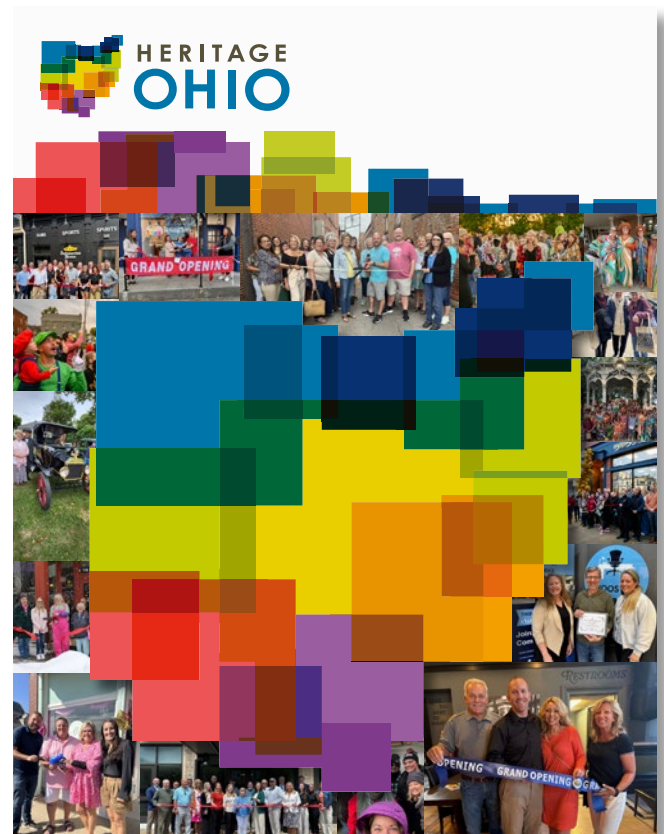
Median family incomes increased 4.6%, and housing values increased around 10%.

Main Streets are doing far more than throwing parties and making buildings look great. They're directly support local businesses and improving the quality of life for everyone who lives in, or visits, their communities. They are organically creating places where people want to live, work, and play, and the numbers prove that.

With the semiquincentennial, 2026 is going to be a year of celebration and reflection. Many of our Main Street communities are planning special events to honor the founding of the United States of America. Check out the list in this issue and try and join in the festivities.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Wiederhold".

Matt Wiederhold,
Executive Director of Heritage Ohio



THE DOLLARS & SENSE OF HISTORIC REAL ESTATE REDEVELOPMENT

Thursday, June 11, East Liverpool

Tuesday, July 14, Dayton

Each workshop eligible for 9.00 AIA LU continuing education credits.

Save the date now and plan to join us as we bring back Corey Leon from Grow America for two separate one-day deep dive workshops, *The dollars & sense of historic real estate development*. The summer workshops happen in East Liverpool in June, and Dayton in July, and registration information will be available soon on our website.

This workshop will equip those new to redeveloping historic buildings with the tools and knowledge needed to confidently move forward on a project, or to know when the dollars available to invest in a project fall short. Participants will learn about the role of TIME (how Tenants, Interest, Material, and Environment can all strengthen or weaken a prospective project), how bank loans fit into the mix, and what variables contribute to the final decision about the viability of a project. We'll conclude with a case study based on real world examples, giving attendees a chance to apply the insights & knowledge they've gained.

Visit heritageohio.org for more details and registration.

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 12

Young Ohio Preservationists Tour of German Village
Columbus

APRIL 22

How to Participate in Ohio Open Doors
Webinar

MAY 1

Young Ohio Preservationists Virtual Home Maintenance Series with Blind Eye Restoration
Web

MAY 2

Young Ohio Preservationists Second Historic Window Restoration Workshop Series
Columbus

MAY 6

How to Successfully Write an RFQ for Your Project
Webinar

MAY 7

C.A.M.P.
Newark

MAY 13

Utilizing Placer.AI Data in Your Community
Webinar

MAY 20

Revitalization Series Workshop: Design That Drives Downtown Success
Tiffin

JUNE 3

Shaping Vibrant Neighborhoods: Tools for Success, Presented by Neighborhood Strategies
Webinar

JUNE 4

Main Street 101
Port Clinton

JUNE 11

The Dollars & Sense of Historic Real Estate Redevelopment
East Liverpool

JUNE 24

Revitalization Series Workshop: Engaging with Your Downtown's Stakeholders
Troy

JUNE 26-28

Young Ohio Preservationists Cleveland Takeover
Cleveland



DESIGN TRAINING IN TIFFIN CONTINUES 2026 REVITALIZATION SERIES WORKSHOPS

Heritage Ohio will host a revitalization training on May 20th in Tiffin, focused on how storefront design can attract customers and strengthen downtown businesses. The session, “Magnetic Main Streets: Designing Storefronts That Invite, Engage, and Increase Cash Flow,” will explore practical strategies that help storefronts stand out and encourage foot traffic.

Led by architect Tiersa Wodash, founder of Brick and Mortar, the workshop will cover lighting fundamentals, common storefront design pitfalls, and affordable improvements that merchants and property owners can implement right away. Participants will leave with practical ideas for making their buildings more inviting and effective at drawing customers.

The training is designed for downtown merchants, building owners, and Main Street leaders who want to strengthen the visual appeal and economic vitality of their downtown districts.

More Upcoming Revitalization Series Workshops

The June Revitalization Training will be held on Wednesday, June 24th in Troy. This workshop will focus on communication and the many innovative ways Ohio’s Main Street programs share information about their projects, initiatives, and community impact. Designed to be both inspiring and practical, the session will provide fresh ideas and immediate takeaways for reaching and engaging your downtown’s many stakeholders.

The final training of the year will be held in downtown Wadsworth on Wednesday, September 16th. The training will focus on how Main Street organizations are economic drivers for community development and the important role the organization plays in business recruitment and retention throughout the community.

Registration for Heritage Ohio Quarterly Revitalization trainings can be found at www.heritageohio.org

JOIN US AT CAMP

Design Review Training to be held in
Newark on May 7



Heritage Ohio and the City of Newark will host a one-day preservation commissions training on Thursday, May 7, 2026. This training is designed to support the local leaders who play a critical role in protecting and guiding historic community assets and provide them with the tools to fulfill their mission. The training will take place at NETWORK, 14 North Park Place in downtown Newark, bringing together preservation commissioners, design review board members, planning commission representatives, and municipal staff from across Ohio for a day of practical learning and peer connection.

This workshop is specifically tailored for the individuals responsible for reviewing projects, applying design guidelines, and making decisions that shape the future of historic districts and community character. Whether participants serve as volunteer commissioners or professional staff members, the training is designed to provide useful guidance for the everyday challenges that come with preservation-related decision making. The event

will also offer valuable networking opportunities, allowing attendees to share experiences and learn from peers working in similar roles across the state.

The program will be delivered through the Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program (CAMP), the signature training initiative of the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC). CAMP sessions are led by an experienced team of preservation professionals—including commissioners, planners, attorneys, consultants, and government staff—who bring practical knowledge and real-world insight to the training.

Throughout the day, participants will explore topics such as design review, preservation law, meeting procedures, enforcement strategies, and how to apply national preservation standards to local projects. Interactive exercises and group discussions will give attendees the opportunity to practice decision-making, build confidence in their roles, and leave with tools they can immediately apply in their own communities.

Registration information and additional details are available on the Heritage Ohio website at www.heritageohio.org. This training is made possible in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior’s Historic Preservation Fund administered by the Ohio History Connection, Historic Preservation Office.

Preservation Month Photo Contest

Heritage Ohio invites any Ohioan to submit an entry for our 2026 Preservation Month Photo contest. A picture is worth a thousand words, and we want to see what image embodies the best in “historic preservation” to you. The contest opens on Friday, April 24th, and all entries must be submitted by 5pm on Friday, May 15th. All entries should be made through the link on our website, starting April 24th. The winner will be announced on our website and social pages on Friday, May 22nd. Digital images must be at least 300 dpi, and can be formatted either portrait or landscape orientation.


This year, we’re leaving the theme up to you. Submit an outstanding image that conveys the importance and meaning of Preservation Month. This could be a historic building, historic preservation in action, or downtown revitalization that is making a difference in your community. The winning image will be featured on a future cover of Revitalize Ohio!

Visit heritageohio.org for full entry details. We’ll also share contest info on our social media accounts: @heritageohio on Facebook and LinkedIn, and @heritageohiomainstreet on Instagram.



2025 Preservation Month Photo Contest winning entry, *Past Lives!* from photographer Ben Morales.

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Meet a Main Street Director

Melanie Black Amato

Executive Director of Main Street Barberton



How long have you been in your position and what excites you most about downtown revitalization?

Just over 2 years.

What part of your job is the most rewarding?

Meeting with potential new businesses or new building owners and working with them from start to finish to get a building

renovated and a new business placed.

What is your professional background, what did you do prior to this position?

My professional background started as an Investigator with the State of Ohio. I worked in the criminal justice field for over 12 years. I shifted over to nonprofit work and became the executive director of the organization shortly after being hired in a different capacity. From there I went to a larger nonprofit organization as an associate executive director while also deciding to start my own business. I purchased the fitness and dance studio that I was currently a member of after hearing they were selling. I operated this business for just over four years and through COVID. In spite of COVID, I still had a very successful four years and was able to sell it for more than double what I purchased it for. After selling the business, the Main Street ED position came up and I decided to apply.

What is your leadership style and how does it serve you in your role as Main Street director?

My leadership style tends to be democratic or delegative. When you rely on a large number of volunteers to help guide the goals and objectives, you have to have their buy in and they need to feel that their voice and ideas matter.

Favorite place to vacation or dream vacation:

Since being in this role, vacations and time off have been challenging. I dream of going to Hawaii some day.

Anything else you want to share?

Although this job has been my biggest challenge when looking back at my career over the years, I still feel rewarded when we hold a ribbon cutting for a new business where I had a hand at fulfilling their dream and seeing a building that was once vacant for 20 plus years, become occupied.

Jacqueline Langhals

Executive Director of Go Ottawa



How long have you been in your position and what excites you most about downtown revitalization?

I have been the Executive Director for Go Ottawa for two years and served on the steering committee that created Go Ottawa for the year prior to that. It is tough to pinpoint what excites me most about downtown revitalization. I

come from a buildings background, so my initial response is seeing new life given to our downtown spaces. I love to see the world, and our buildings, in terms of 'what if' and 'this could be,' – to think about the potential of the built environment around us.

What part of your job is the most rewarding?

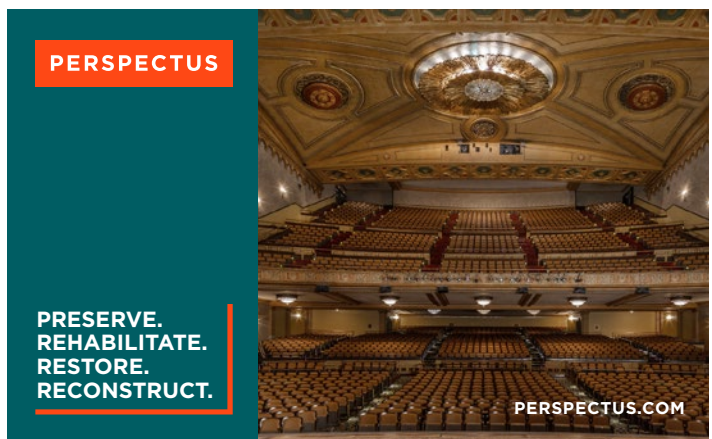
When someone offers to help with something we are working on. We didn't ask, they just offered -because they see the value in what we are doing, and they want to be a part of it. From the very beginning, we said this was a movement. Each person that decides they want to help, has started to understand and will help us to continue to grow and build. While our buildings are critical, we can't have revitalization without people. And this work never ends, so we constantly need to be thinking about how to reach and engage more people – building the movement.

What is your professional background, what did you do prior to this position?

I studied architecture, but always worked tangential to building design. Most of my career has been spent trying to make buildings healthier and more sustainable. I think that is part of why I was drawn to this position. I understand how our built environment impacts all that we do. From the house we live in, the office we work in, to the

MEET A MAIN STREET DIRECTOR

Continued on page 8



MEET A MAIN STREET DIRECTOR

Continued from page 7

paths we travel each day – each can add or detract from our quality of life.

What is your leadership style and how does it serve you in your role as Main Street director?

My style really depends on the situation, but I try to be more democratic, servant and (hopefully) transformational. I once heard that the most predictive thing for long-term involvement is: 1) does the volunteer expand their social network and 2) do they have an experience of their own agency. If the volunteer is just assigned tasks, they may stick around for a bit but likely won't stay unless they also start to feel empowered. Empowered and with friends is even better. So whenever I can, I try to keep this in mind.

Favorite place to vacation or dream vacation:

India. I did a short study abroad in Gujarat in college and fell in love. With the food, the sounds, the architecture, the

people – all of it. I was able go back to India 6 or 7 years later for a wedding and saw even more of the country. My husband and I made a pact to go back every 5 years. It has now been 8 years ... I think we are overdue. My favorite spot (besides the many individual buildings I could list) was Goa. One day, I hope to see those beaches again. Preferably, within the next 5 years.

Anything else you want to share?

I once read that us community development people are 'a unique breed.' I had no idea I would stumble into this career, but I am sure grateful to have found this unique breed of people. People that see the potential in our towns and are not afraid to try to do something about it. To all of my other community development people out there, thanks for being unique with me!

Celebrating America 250 in Ohio's Main Streets

Across Ohio, Main Street programs are planning a wide range of creative and community-focused events to celebrate America 250, the nation's 250th anniversary. From patriotic concerts and festivals to historic reenactments, family activities, and special downtown promotions, these celebrations highlight the unique ways Ohio communities are honoring our shared history while bringing people together in their historic downtowns. The events below represent just a sampling of how Main Street organizations across the state are marking this milestone and inviting residents and visitors alike to take part in the celebration.

MAY

May 1 — 5:30 PM

Main Street Wadsworth — First Friday: A 50's Inspired Hometown Hop

mainstreetwadsworth.org/2026-events/

Historic American figures will stroll and interact with visitors downtown. Characters will include Dean Martin (celebrating Ohio connections), Elvis Presley, Marilyn Monroe, and other icons from American history.

Main Street Wadsworth in an Affiliate Ohio Main Street Program.

JUNE

June 6, 2026 — 7:30 PM

Troy — Troy's America 250 Concert

troyohio.gov/m/newsflash/home/detail/1057

As Troy celebrates both the 250th anniversary of the United States and the 50th anniversary of the Troy Strawberry Festival, two quintessentially American bands are set to take the stage at a free concert at Troy Memorial Stadium on June 6. The evening will feature a powerhouse double bill including multi-platinum headliners Collective Soul with special guests and rock legends Grand Funk Railroad.

Main Street Troy in an Affiliate Ohio Main Street Program.

JULY

July 3, 2026 — 4:00 PM

Main Street Wadsworth — Fireworks & Food Trucks Festival

mainstreetwadsworth.org/2026-events/

An annual festival hosted with the City of Wadsworth featuring food trucks and fireworks. During the event, the Mayor will unveil historic signage funded by an America 250 grant that highlights buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Main Street Wadsworth in an Affiliate Ohio Main Street Program.

July 3, 2026 — 5:00 PM
Downtown Tipp City Partnership — Red, White and Play Weekend
downtown Tipp City Partnership

The celebration begins with old-fashioned family games and music in downtown Tipp City. Saturday features an enhanced fireworks experience at Kyle Park, and Sunday includes a vintage baseball game between the town's vintage team and community members followed by school teams. A free community picnic will be held at City Park between games.

The Downtown Tipp City Partnership in an Affiliate Ohio Main Street Program.

July 3, 2026 — 6:00 PM
Wooster — Main Street Music
www.mainstreetwooster.org/upcoming-events

A CCR/Linda Ronstadt cover band will perform as part of the Main Street Music series.

July 4, 2026 — 8:00 AM
Wooster — Farmers Market
www.mainstreetwooster.org/farmers-market

Patriotic activities and special additions are planned for the Independence Day market.

Main Street Wooster in an Affiliate Ohio Main Street Program.

July 4, 2026 — 10:00 AM
City of Franklin — A Community Celebration: United for 250
franklinohio.org/community/events___activities_/independence_day_celebrations.php

Franklin, Franklin Township, and the City of Carlisle will join together to celebrate Independence Day and commemorate America's 250th anniversary while honoring their shared history.

The City of Franklin is an Aspiring Ohio Main Street Program.

July 4, 2026 — 10:00 AM
Fremont — Fremont Federal Credit Union Car Show & Community Amphitheater Concert
downtownfremontohio.org

The day begins with the Fremont July 4th Parade downtown, followed by a concert at the Fremont Community Amphitheater. The Fremont Federal Credit



Union Car Show runs from 5–8 PM on Front Street and concludes with fireworks at dusk. Free and family-friendly.

Fremont is an Aspiring Ohio Main Street Program.

July 4, 2026
Medina — July 4th Farmers Market Celebration
mainstreetmedina.com/saturdays-around-the-square

The Farmers Market will serve as the hub for Medina's America 250 festivities, including the annual Twin Sizzler races, Revolutionary War reenactments in Spring Grove Cemetery, and wreath-laying ceremonies at the graves of two Revolutionary War soldiers. The market will feature patriotic music and décor, and Main Street Medina will sell a commemorative America 250 ornament.

Main Street Medina in an Affiliate Ohio Main Street Program.

July 4, 2026 — 2:00 PM
Piqua — America 250 Picnic
mainstreetpiqua.com

This community picnic celebrating America's 250th anniversary will be held in partnership with the City of Piqua Parks & Recreation Department. Residents and visitors are invited to gather for an afternoon of patriotic celebration, community connection, and family-friendly activities.

Mainstreet Piqua is an Affiliate Ohio Main Street Program.

July 4, 2026 — 7:00 PM
Wooster — Ohio Light Opera Community Pops Concert
mainstreetwooster.org/upcoming-events

The Ohio Light Opera presents its annual free Independence Day community concert.

Main Street Wooster in an Affiliate Ohio Main Street Program.

OTHER AMERICA 250 HAPPENINGS

Vermilion
 Vermilion Lighthouse has been named an official stop on the America 250-Ohio Lake Erie to Ohio River Trail, part of the statewide Trails & Tales program commemorating the 250th anniversary of the United States.

The Lake Erie to Ohio River Trail highlights over 150 sites across Ohio, telling the story of how the state's waterways have shaped communities, commerce, and culture for more than two centuries. As one of the featured Lake Erie Lighthouses, the Vermilion Lighthouse stands as a beacon of the city's maritime heritage.

To learn more about the America 250-Ohio Trails & Tales Program, visit america250-ohio.org/lake-erie-to-ohio-river/.

Main Street Vermilion is an Affiliate Ohio Main Street Program.

Kent
 Kent will be participating in the Murals Across Ohio program as a part of Ohio 250 celebration. Through this initiative, Ohio aims to honor the artists, the stories, and the places that make Ohio unique. To learn more about the America 250 Murals Across Ohio visit <https://america250-ohio.org/murals-across-ohio/>

Main Street Kent is an Affiliate Ohio Main Street Program.

Main Street 101

By Frances Jo Hamilton

Starting or strengthening a local Main Street organization is one of the most effective ways to revitalize a downtown district, support small businesses, and foster community pride. The Main Street America framework provides a proven structure through its 4-Point Approach, while state-level support—such as the Ohio Main Street Program—can significantly accelerate progress and sustainability.

1. Organization

The first step is building a strong, collaborative foundation. A Main Street organization typically includes local business owners, property owners, residents, and civic leaders working under a shared mission. Establishing a nonprofit structure, defining leadership roles, and creating a sustainable funding model are key early tasks.

The state coordinator with the Ohio Main Street Program can provide guidance on board development, organizational structure, and best practices. They often assist with training, strategic planning, and connecting local leaders to statewide resources and peer networks. In addition, experienced professionals with the Ohio Main Street Program are available to offer hands-on support, mentorship, and practical insight as you build or refine your organization.

2. Promotion

Promotion focuses on shaping a vibrant and welcoming image of your downtown. Events, branding, and marketing campaigns help attract visitors and energize the community. Whether it's seasonal festivals or coordinated social media efforts, consistent promotion builds identity and momentum.

State coordinators can support these efforts by sharing successful campaign ideas from other communities, offering branding guidance, and helping align local promotions with broader statewide tourism and economic initiatives. Frances-Jo and Lorna can also provide feedback on promotional strategies and help tailor messaging to reflect your community's unique character.

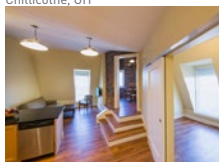


Photos by Jeff Goldberg; Esto Photographics



The beautiful, enduring structures we create for government, education, cultural and other public and private clients are inspired by the people that interact with them where they live, learn, work and play.

Pictured: the Carlisle Building in Chillicothe, OH



www.schooleycaldwell.com



3. Design

Design enhances the physical environment of your Main Street. Improvements to storefronts, signage, public spaces, and historic buildings create a more inviting and cohesive district. Preservation of historic character is often a key component.

Through the Ohio Main Street Program, communities can access design expertise, technical assistance, and sometimes grant opportunities. State coordinators may also facilitate design workshops or connect communities with architects and preservation specialists. Our state coordinating staff can help interpret design recommendations and guide communities in prioritizing impactful, realistic improvements.

4. Economic Vitality

This point focuses on strengthening and diversifying the local economy. Efforts include supporting existing businesses, facilitating expansion of those businesses, recruiting new ones, and analyzing market data to identify opportunities. A healthy business mix ensures long-term resilience.

State coordinators play a crucial role by providing data tools, business development strategies, and training. They can also help communities navigate funding programs, understand market trends, and implement strategies that have proven successful in other Ohio Main Street districts. The Ohio Main Street Program and Heritage Ohio are valuable partners in this process, offering one-on-one guidance and sharing real-world examples to help communities move from planning to action.

A Collaborative Path Forward

By combining the structured 4-Point Approach of Main Street America with the hands-on support of the Ohio Main Street Program communities gain both a roadmap and a dedicated support system. Whether launching a new organization or advancing an existing one, leveraging these resources can streamline efforts, build local capacity, and ultimately lead to a more vibrant and economically strong downtown.

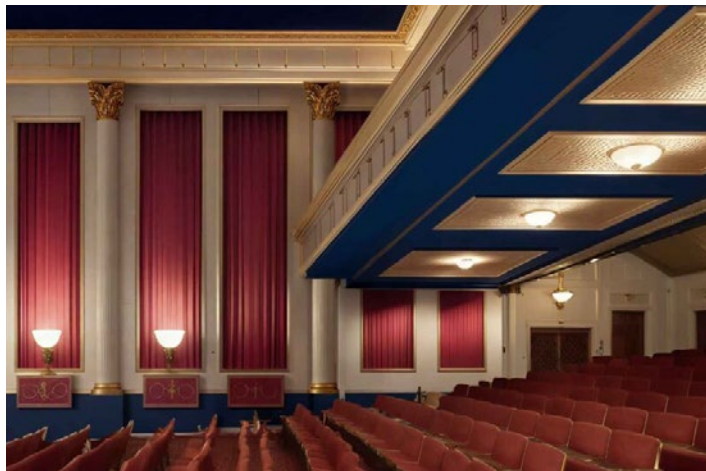
If you or your community would like to learn more about the benefits of becoming a Main Street community, join us at our informational workshop in Port Clinton on June 4th. Visit heritageohio.org for full entry details.

Saved, Threatened, Demolished

SAVED

Celestia Theater at Wadsworth Square Commons (the former O. J. Work Auditorium of the Central Intermediate School Building)

The school theater at the former Central Intermediate School Building in Wadsworth, dating to the early 1900s, has been remade into a modern theater venue, thanks to the vision and work of Todd Baughman, Bob Thurber, and Tom Weyand. The 800-seat theater was brought up to code and rehabilitated in a matter of months and has already begun booking events. The theater renovation serves as a first phase of a multi-phase project to reimagine the historic former school as a mixed-use space.



THREATENED

The Curtis Building, Mount Vernon

Many historic buildings across Ohio sustained wind-related damage following back-to-back wind storms in mid-March. The Curtis Building, located in downtown Mount Vernon, suffered a partial façade collapse. The building, and two neighboring buildings, are currently being investigated for structural soundness and emergency demolition permit requests have been filed. Hearings will be held later in March to determine the fate of the Curtis.



DEMOLISHED

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, Maria Stein

After the tragic fire struck the church in May of last year, compromising the structure, a high winds incident in December caused additional damage that compromised the entire structure beyond the point of no return, necessitating its complete demolition.

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati is planning to reconstruct a new parish church on the site, and may incorporate salvaged stained glass windows, organ pipes, and the original cornerstone.



More than Rehabilitation: The Standards for Preservation, Standards for Reconstruction, and Standards for Restoration

By Frank Quinn, Director of Revitalization

Last issue, we discussed the nuances of using the Standards for Rehabilitation versus the Standards for Restoration when deciding how to embark on a building project. But what happens if you have an old building “specimen” you want to preserve as is, or a building that was demolished long ago that you want to rebuild? There’s a Standard for that. Namely, the standards for Rehabilitation and Restoration (which we covered), Preservation, and Reconstruction. As you might imagine, each set of Standards has its specific use cases.

The Standards for Preservation help guide work on historic properties when your objective is to “sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property,” from the National Park Service. We may use these Standards on a brick & mortar building project when we have a museum property interpreted not according to a slice of time, but to a certain period (for instance, a family that occupied a house museum as its residence from 1880-1960). We may not be adding in elevators, or otherwise making important changes to the property, so we’re not as concerned with standards such as the Standards for Rehabilitation.

The Standards for Reconstruction, as you might guess, guide the process of replicating missing components of buildings, or missing buildings in whole. Standard 4 distills when to or when not to launch a reconstruction:

Reconstruction will be based on the accurate duplication of historic features and elements substantiated by documentary or physical evidence rather than on conjectural designs of the availability of different features from other historic properties. A reconstructed property will recreate the appearance of the non-surviving historic property in materials, design, color and texture.

The critical two-word term to take from this paragraph is “conjectural designs.” In other words, to undertake an accurate replication, you need to have very good documentation of what existed. While photo images can be helpful, they’re typically not sufficient for getting your project right. Measured drawings, structural reports, surviving fragments of materials, in addition to historical images, can give you a strong base of knowledge for successfully completing a reconstruction.

What’s Happening with the Young Ohio Preservationists

By Abby Marshall

The year 2026 brings fantastic opportunities for Young Ohio Preservationists and other historic preservationists across the state. The group has been working to plan events that will take attendees to all corners of the state of Ohio. With a goal to introduce opportunities to learn about historic trades, rehabilitation tax credits, and historic preservation values – Young Ohio Preservationists are partnering with entities around the state of Ohio that work within the historic preservation field.

Beginning in March, YOP is partnering with Blind Eye Restoration out of Columbus to host a series of historic wood window restoration workshops. This series will include four sessions hosted by Blind Eye Restoration owner Lindsay Jones. The first session in March will serve as an in-depth lecture that overviews the rehabilitation of historic wood windows, issues that they may have, and how to correct them. The following 2-3 sessions will be held throughout the year as a hands-on workshop style at the Blind Eye Restoration workshop that focuses on skills

in wood window restoration including but not limited to repairing rotted wood, glazing and painting, and removal/installation. Additionally, YOP and Heritage Ohio will be partnering with Lindsay Jones to host a series of historic home improvement training videos that provide a wide series of tips and tricks to address common issues and maintenance in historic buildings. These will begin in May of 2026 and continue throughout the year.

Following the success of the YOP Toledo Takeover from 2025, the group will be heading to Cleveland in June. Partnering with GBX Group, Sandvick Architects, and Take-a-Hike – attendees will get to tour Cleveland’s historic gems and active historic rehabilitation tax credit projects including the Bell Building, West Side Market, and the Superior Avenue Corridor. Additionally, Ohio State Historic Preservation Office employee Dani Cohen will provide a

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guided tour of the historic and culturally significant Erie Street Cemetery. Networking opportunities through events at local businesses and a happy hour sponsored by GBX Group will allow for attendees to connect and discuss topics surrounding the historic preservation field today.

YOP has many other events and workshops planned for 2026 including a walking tour of German Village in Columbus, a tour of historic Bruckmann Brewery in

Cincinnati, a cemetery preservation workshop at Green Lawn Cemetery in Columbus, and a plaster workshop in Toledo. To stay connected, follow Young Ohio Preservations on Instagram, @youngohiopreservations. For other young professionals in the field interested in being involved with this organization, contact Abby Marshall at amarshall@ohiohistory.org.

Accepting Nominations for the 2026 Heritage Ohio Annual Awards

Revitalization & Main Street Awards

- Best Downtown Placemaking
- Best Main Street Event*
- Best Main Street Committee Project*
- Main Street Business of the Year*
- Main Street Executive Director of the Year*
- Main Street Volunteer of the Year*
- Spirit of Main Street*

Individual Awards

- Joyce Barrett Preservation Hero Award
- Young Preservationist of the Year

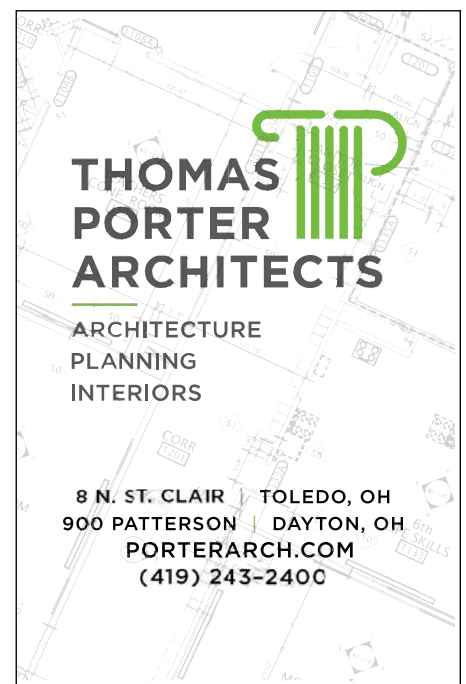
Preservation Project Awards

- Best Commercial Building Rehabilitation
- Best Residential Restoration
- Best Historic Theater Restoration

\$50 nomination fee per nomination. Details on required materials and nomination forms can be found on our website, www.heritageohio.org. **All nominations must be received by June 30, 2026.**

If you have questions about submitting a nomination, please contact Frank Quinn at fquinn@heritageohio.org.

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Honoring Ohio's Revolutionary War Veterans: A Statewide Effort to Preserve Their Legacy—Part II

By Krista Horrocks, Department Manager, SHPO Administration

In the Summer 2025 edition of *Revitalize Ohio*, we introduced the Revolutionary War Veteran Graves Project—a collaboration among AMER250-OH, the State Historic Preservation Office, Terracon Consultants, Inc., the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Sons of the American Revolution. As a reminder, the project aims to document the burial locations of an estimated 7,000 Revolutionary War veterans interred across Ohio.

Using the free smartphone app Survey123, members of the public can contribute by collecting data at gravesites, including GPS coordinates, photographs of gravestones, and assessments of site conditions. The app also includes a separate survey to gather information about cemeteries, helping the State Historic Preservation Office enhance its statewide cemetery records. As the project nears completion, we are pleased to share an update—and issue a final call to action.

Data Collection to Date

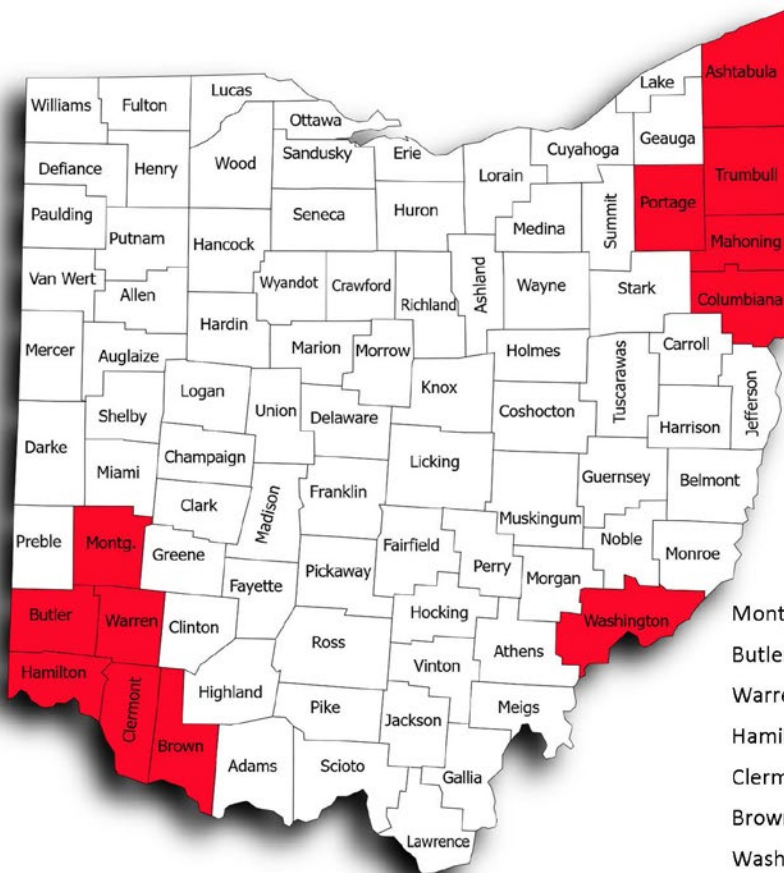
As of mid-March 2026, more than 350 individuals have contributed to the project, documenting over 3,260 gravesites across more than 1,060 cemeteries. We are approaching the halfway mark toward our goal of identifying all 7,000 Revolutionary War veterans buried in Ohio.

With a final public release scheduled for July 4, 2026, the data collection phase will conclude on May 4, 2026, when the Survey123 app will close. Following this deadline, project staff will review, verify, and clean the data in preparation for its official release, commemorating the nation's 250th anniversary.

New Tool: SAR Ohio Cemeteries Dashboard

Through a partnership with the Sons of the American Revolution, Terracon Consultants, Inc., and the State Historic Preservation Office, we have launched the SAR

Ohio's Revolutionary War Veteran Graves Project



- Ashtabula – 85 unrecorded
- Trumbull – 180 unrecorded
- Mahoning – 220 unrecorded
- Columbiana – 94 unrecorded
- Portage – 95 unrecorded

80+ Unrecorded Gravesites

- Montgomery – 155 unrecorded
- Butler – 137 unrecorded
- Warren – 95 unrecorded
- Hamilton – 380 unrecorded
- Clermont - 225 unrecorded
- Brown – 83 unrecorded
- Washington - 194 unrecorded



Ohio Counties with 80+ unrecorded veterans as of March 2026

Ohio Cemeteries Dashboard. This user-friendly tool compiles statewide data on cemeteries known to contain Revolutionary War veterans.

Users can explore cemeteries in their area, view how many veteran graves are known, and compare this information with the project's Live Dashboard Results. This comparison helps identify gaps in documentation, allowing volunteers to focus their efforts where they are most needed.

Milestones

To raise awareness and celebrate progress, we have highlighted individual veterans through milestone-themed social media posts.

One such veteran is Charles DeMaranville (1746–1834), buried in Center Cemetery in Conneaut, Ashtabula County. He served as a private in the Rhode Island Continental Line. Charles married Deborah Lombard in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, on December 3, 1773, and together they had 13 children. By 1830, they were recorded in the Ohio census. Notably, Charles was also a descendant of the Mayflower.

Another milestone coincided with the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Marine Corps. Joel Philbrook (1759–1820) enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1777 and served under Captain Hector McNeal aboard the 30-gun frigate *USS Boston*. During his service, he participated in the capture of the British

Royal Navy ship *HMS Fox* on June 7, 1777, off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, alongside the *USS Hancock*. The Boston later carried John Adams to France in early 1778 before being captured by the British in Charleston, South Carolina, in May 1780.

After the war, Joel married Mary Leadbetter, and together they raised 15 children. Around 1818, the family relocated to Licking County. Joel passed away in 1820 and is buried in Gaffield Cemetery in St. Albans Township; Mary lived for another 30 years.

Through this research, one thing has become clear: every veteran has a story worth telling. Beyond their military service, these individuals built lives, raised families, and ultimately helped shape Ohio as we know it today. We encourage you to research a veteran in your area and share their story.

How You Can Help

Many Ohio counties still have significant numbers of unrecorded veterans. As of mid-March, several counties

have 80 or more veterans yet to be documented. If you live in or visit these areas, consider contributing your time to help complete the record.

Volunteers who choose to be identified will be acknowledged for their contributions, fostering a sense of shared pride and stewardship in preserving Ohio's history.

For more information or to get involved, visit the Revolutionary War Veterans Graves Project website: <https://www.ohiohistory.org/preserving-ohio/history-preservation-where-you-live/revwarvet-graves/>



Joel Philbrook (1759-1820)
Gravestone, recorded by
Michael Noakes

Charles DeMaranville (1746-1834) Gravestone,
recorded by Diana Edwards and Ed Hanlon



Sam's Gym – A Main Street Anchor in Glouster

By Thomas O'Grady, Southeast Ohio History Center

The main street in Glouster, Ohio is High Street. A high point on that main street is Sam's Gym, likely the oldest gym in America.

Begun almost 90 years ago in the upstairs of an already old building, with a clothing store at street level, the gym was set up for boxing by Frank Buhla and Sam's grandfather, Eddie Jones, in 1936. The gym is home to the Glouster Boxing Club, established to provide sport, conditioning, and amusement for coal miners in the village about 75 miles southeast of Columbus.

One of several boom towns of the coal mining era clustered around the border on Athens, Hocking, and Perry counties, Glouster was a bustling community in the Hocking Valley Coal fields for nearly a century. High Street, lined with two and three-story buildings with false fronts and overhanging porches, looked like a town from the old West. Once boasting two opera houses, and stores offering clothing, groceries, hardware, and all the needs of a thriving economy, the village was known as 'Magic City.' A melting pot like much of Appalachian Ohio, Glouster has a predominantly English heritage with Welsh, German, Irish, Italian, Greek, and Eastern Europeans - some attracted to work in the mines, brick plants, and on the railroad while others built the towns, ran the businesses, and farmed the

surrounding hills and valleys.

Beginning with a fire that destroyed an old hotel during the holidays in the early 1980s, one by one the historic buildings of Glouster's main thoroughfare began to disappear. Ensuing economic decay resulted in the extraction of the old confectionary, theater, icehouse, Wonder Bar, and more like a missing tooth here and there in the business district. Eventually, the main street began to look like it went too many rounds in the ring and now several of its teeth have been knocked out with the loss of so many of its attractive buildings in the past four decades. Sam's Gym, the Glouster Depot, Dirty Girl Coffee, and a few other establishments struggle to keep the main street viable.

When one walks into Sam's Gym from Glouster's main thoroughfare, one steps back in time. It looks a bit like a set in an old black and white movie from the 1940s. A long wooden floor with the ring prominent in a corner. Next to it is a set of drums, a small sound system and mic, boxes of gloves, a punching bag hanging from the ceiling, and mirrors, photos, posters, and inspiring quotes covering the walls. "Home is Where Your Story Begins." "We All Make a Difference." "Teaching Our Youth to be Champions in Life."



Sam's Gym, painted black, the century old three story block building with a bay window on the second story is one of the important place holders on High Street in Glouster, Ohio.

Photos of the traffic and crowded sidewalks of High Street in Glouster, from the horse and wagon period through the tailfin era of autos in the 1950s and 60s, line the walls of Sam's Gym. Old newspaper images of the numerous coal tipples that dotted the hills and hollows of the region are supplemented with pictures of boxers from the early days in the area. The gallery includes photos of every boxer one can name from the time of Joe Louis forward, most of whom Sam Jones has met. Over the years Sam has met Sugar Ray Leonard, George Foreman, Joe Frazier, Larry Holmes and other giants of the sport whose photos cover the gym walls. He has had Buster Douglas come





A steady flow of young and middle aged boxers, male and female, make their way into this gym on Mondays and Wednesdays for workouts and training by Sam Jones and some of his helpers.

to town for his events. On the wall is a photo of Sam, his son, and Ray 'Boom Boom' Mancini when he stopped by one day. The largest number of photos and posters, however, include boxers trained by Sam.

Sam Jones has kept this gym open in service to the youth of Glouster and worked with local boxers since 1962 himself. At 85, his professional days in boxing, kickboxing and martial arts are behind him — he fought at Madison

Square Garden in 1975, but he continues to train youngsters and adults at the gym. Sam is still in the gym every Monday and Wednesday afternoon giving young boys and girls pointers on boxing, kickboxing, and martial arts. He can still kick you in the chest, but he does it only to demonstrate technique. He teaches his students how to protect themselves in the ring or on the street. While Sam has helped many become champions in the ring, his number one goal is to help them become champions in life - to be good citizens in their community and in their family.

"I've known Sam my whole life," said one of his students. "He's an awesome guy. There's so much history on the walls, and he loves to tell it. It's amazing the people he's met over the years." Visitors and boxers all get the tour of Sam's Gym as

he grabs a flashlight and works his way along the walls highlighting the images as he tells the stories associated with each tippie or boxer and their successes in the ring or in life. Sam has taken his underprivileged boxers to bouts in Central America, Canada, Russia and beyond. Some of these kids would never have gotten out of Southeast Ohio any other way. It is all on the wall.

SAM'S

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2026 HERITAGE OHIO ANNUAL CONFERENCE / SEPTEMBER 29 - OCTOBER 1, 2026
 Renaissance Hotel - Downtown Cincinnati



Sam Jones giving a detailed flashlight tour of the gym with a visit to nearly every photo, poster and article affixed to the wall.

Sam regales in their stories – where they come from and what they have amounted to. Sam, who was a world heavyweight kickboxing champion himself, never talks about Sam, only about his boxers. Sam Jones is all about community. Sam keeps the drum set in the gym because he plays them along with guitar and blues harp which he also teaches to some kids and occasionally uses in community fundraisers.

While giving a tour of the small gym Sam remarks “I say to the kids, give something back. Be a champion in life. Respect your mother and father and be a productive citizen. That’s our mission right there.” And that’s what Sam has done for a lifetime and is still cranking.

In November of 2025, Sam Jones set up his portable boxing ring for his 50th anniversary of Boxing for Books. Sam brings in kids and adults to spar for a couple rounds to raise money to buy books. Sam is also one of the original members of the Trimble Local Textbook and

Supply Committee, which over the last 25 years has raised almost a million dollars to support Trimble Local Schools, one of the poorest school districts in Ohio. “When they started the textbook committee, we didn’t have anything,” said Diane Hobson, the district’s curriculum administrator. “Other school districts would donate books to us that they were throwing away.” Boxing shows put on by Sam’s Gym have been a consistent part of that fundraising effort.

Lots of people come out to support the fundraiser and cheer on the folks who climb into the ring to give and take a few punches to raise the money. Sam has put gloves on little kids, teens and adults including amateur boxers, local police officers and deputies, firefighters, politicians, teachers and others who get a little training beforehand at Sam’s Gym.

The contestants put on headgear, mouth guards and “very big, very cushioned 16-ounce gloves; we don’t want injuries” says Sam. The contenders spar for three one-minute rounds. The towel is thrown in before that at the sight of the first drop of blood or a dazed participant. Sam then goes into the ring and holds up the arms of both challengers and declares everyone a winner “because they’re helping the schools” Sam said.

According to Sam “Boxing is a metaphor for life. You could be winning and the next moment you might get knocked down to the canvas.” He says “We all experience setbacks like that. He preaches that you must get up off the canvas and get right back in the game. “Never quit. You don’t give up. Boxing teaches you not to give up.”

While he has personally provided the bulk of the time making Sam’s Gym a successful endeavor in downtown Glouster, Sam Jones would be the first to credit his family, Ellen, his wife of more than 67 years, and the community itself. Keeping up with the Jones in this Appalachian Ohio village means giving back to the community and being a model citizen.

In an old building on the main street in a small town in a poor region of Ohio this metaphor is worth millions in a needy community. Sam’s Gym on High Street in Glouster is making history and champions in life where you might least expect it.

Article and photos by: Tom O’Grady, Southeast Ohio History Center.

Ohio Preservation Leaders Bring Strong Voice to Capitol Hill During Advocacy Week

By Rob Naylor, Preservation Action



Members of the Ohio delegation visiting with Representative Mike Carey. L to R: Antonin Robert, Matt Wiederhold, Seth Unger, Rep. Mike Carey, Diana Welling, & Jack Newton.

Heritage Ohio returned to Washington, D.C. for National Historic Preservation Advocacy Week to advocate for sensible historic preservation programs, policies and funding. Hosted by Preservation Action and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO), the event brought together more than 200 preservation professionals from 46 states and territories, who held nearly 300 meetings with congressional offices.

Over two days of programming, advocates participated in policy briefings, training sessions, and tours, and heard from national leaders on the current legislative landscape and key advocacy priorities. Speakers included **Rep. Sarah Elfreth** (D-MD), one of preservation's newest champions in Congress. A key takeaway: even in a time of heightened partisanship, historic preservation continues to enjoy strong bipartisan support.

The following day, **Advocates headed to Capitol Hill** to meet with their members of Congress in support of historic preservation. Ohio, as always, was well represented, bringing one of largest contingencies of any state in attendance. Heritage Ohio joined partners from the Ohio SHPO and preservation professionals from across the state to meet with all 17 congressional offices (15 Representatives and 2 Senators). Meetings focused on advancing federal preservation priorities and highlighting their impact across Ohio communities.

After a day of successful meetings, Advocacy Week concluded with the Champions of Historic Preservation Congressional Reception, which featured remarks from the co-chairs of the Historic Preservation Caucus, **Rep. Teresa Leger Fernandez** (D-NM) and Ohio's own **Rep. Mike Turner** (R-OH). Attendees also heard from **Rep. Mike Carey** (R-OH) and **Rep. Darin LaHood** (R-IL), who both have been extraordinary supporters of historic preservation.

This year's legislative priorities included:

- 1) **Permitting with purpose: support consultation and effective federal reviews.** As Congress considers potential permitting reform, advocates emphasized the importance of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Section 106 process. They called for adequate funding for State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, investments in technology, the use of existing tools like Programmatic Agreements, and sufficient qualified staff at federal agencies to improve efficiency and streamline reviews.
- 2) **Urging Congress to reauthorize Historic Preservation Fund.** The Historic Preservation Fund's (HPF) authorization will lapse in September and urgently needs to be renewed. Congress should support long term reauthorization of the HPF and increase the authorized level from \$150 million to \$250 million. Members of Congress were urged to cosponsor the Historic Preservation Fund Reauthorization Act (H.R. 3418).
- 3) **Encouraging Congress to support \$250 million in funding for the HPF.** As the nation commemorates the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the 50th anniversary of the Historic Preservation Fund, Congress should support a historic investment in preserving places that tell America's story. This includes critical funding for State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, which carry out key federal programs such as Historic Tax Credit reviews and National Register listings; \$25 million for a new preservation technology initiative to improve efficiency; and increased funding for existing competitive grant programs that support preservation projects across Ohio.
- 4) **Supporting efforts to enhance and modernize the Historic Tax Credit** by cosponsoring the Historic Tax Credit Growth and Opportunity Act (H.R. 2941/S. 1459). The Historic Tax Credit (HTC) is a highly successful incentive for rehabilitating historic buildings, but ongoing challenges have limited its effectiveness. Congress should support updates to strengthen the credit, expand access, and increase investment in smaller projects.
- 5) **Lead America's 250th Anniversary.** As we commemorate America's 250th anniversary, we urged Congress to champion efforts that strengthen historic preservation. This includes joining the bipartisan Historic Preservation Caucus, co-chaired by Rep. Mike Turner (R-OH) and Rep. Teresa Leger-Fernandez (D-NM), participating in Semiquincentennial activities, and visiting a Historic Tax Credit project or historic site in their state/district.

Advocacy Week was a strong success for Ohio's preservation community, reinforcing the importance of continued engagement with Congress on the value of preserving our nation's historic places.



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