

Cultural Resources

Summary

Cultural resources play an important role in defining the County's quality of life and enhancing the everyday interaction and interplay of residents and visitors. This element focuses on historical and archaeological resources and cultural resources. In an effort to better provide vital cultural facilities, it is important cultural needs are continually met. Both the private and public sectors are needed in an effort to seek funding to finance cultural efforts. Further, in an effort to protect historic resources, it is crucial to continue research and inventory activities so that such sites can be identified and protected. Efforts should be taken to avoid incompatible land uses in or near historic cultural communities.

Planning Issues

*The following is an overview of cultural resources-related planning issues. For a detailed discussion, please refer to the report **Planning Issues**.*

Wayne County's quality of life and attractiveness is linked to its cultural and historic resources. The need for cultural resources will grow as the County's population grows. At the same time new demands are being placed on existing facilities and programs, and alternative funding sources will be necessary. The geographic distribution of facilities should also be addressed.

The arts must continue to play a key role in the community, particularly as an integral part of student education. At the same time, the arts community should expand programming to build new audiences for various art activities, such as theater and dance. The Wayne Center for the Arts is revisiting its role and mission in the community, particularly as various public agencies approach the Center to provide programming and services that address social needs, such as for at-risk teenagers. New demands such as these for nonprofit organizations always raise important questions regarding future staff and funding levels.

Existing Conditions and Trends

*The following is an overview of existing conditions and trends. For a detailed discussion, please refer to the report **Existing Conditions and Trends - 2**.*

Data used to identify existing conditions included inventories of existing cultural resources and facilities, and for historic and archaeological resources - the Ohio Historic Preservation Office's Ohio Historic Inventory and National Register of Historic Places, as well as local documents.

Historical and Archaeological Resources

Wayne County's rich history has left citizens with a legacy of artifacts and architectural treasures. Indian mounds are still found in five townships while artifacts dating as far back as the Paleo Period have been recovered.

Several of Wayne County's historic structures have been placed on the National Register. Historic building classifications include religious, civic, commercial, utilitarian and residential. Residences are by far the most numerous of the historic structures within the County. Architectural styles vary from Colonial to Greek Revival and Italianate to Victorian. Structural material commonly used include wood, brick and cut stone. The Wayne County Historical Society maintains a substantial historic center in downtown Wooster. A variety of local historical societies are found throughout the County, many with successful local preservation efforts.

Cultural Resources

A broad range of cultural resources are found in the County, including arts facilities, civic organizations and the Amish community. Wayne County has several cultural facilities that support the arts, providing education and recreation opportunities. These include the Wayne Center for the Arts in Wooster and the College of Wooster which provides stage and musical productions, including the Freedlander Theater (home to the Ohio Light Opera). The Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center's conference facility hosts cultural events as well and the Secret Arboretum is an outstanding cultural resource.

There are several civic and religious organizations located in Wayne County and several denominations are represented.

Rural indigenous populations, including the Amish community, are located principally in southeastern Wayne County - which makes the County one of the few in northeastern Ohio to have a significant Amish population. A heritage centered on church and family, the Amish have a lifestyle based on manual labor. The Amish presence in Wayne County contributes directly to its ambiance and attracts tourism.

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Policies are the basis of the **Comprehensive Plan** and this section presents the Cultural Resources Goal and two objectives and related strategies. Together these policies are the driving force behind the Cultural Resources Element. The Implementation section presents actions for each objective. The goal is:

[Cultural and historic resources to be protected.](#)

The objectives and their respective strategies are:

Objective 1 - Historic and Archaeological Preservation - Continue to preserve Wayne County's outstanding historic and archaeological resources, by:

- 1.1 Continuing to support the Wayne County Historical Society in its effort to inventory, preserve and protect historic and archaeological resources.
- 1.2 Encouraging preservation and rehabilitation of all County-owned buildings and structures.
- 1.3 Supporting designation of structures and districts on the National Register of Historic Places with support of property owners.
- 1.4 Encouraging historic preservation easements through creation of a nonprofit land trust.

Objective 2 - Cultural Preservation - Preserve Wayne County's historic farm-based culture, by:

- 2.1 Implementing the rural conservation objective and strategies (Land Use Objective 6).
- 2.2 Creating a publicly-owned and -operated historic farm park to recreate a pre-1900 family-owned farm.
- 2.3 Discouraging development that would be detrimental to the County's historic cultural communities.
- 2.4 Creating a county-level Barn Again Program under the guidance of the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) and create a

mechanism for brokering the preservation of barns through a seller/buyer network.

Cultural Resources Plan

Cultural resources play a very important role in Wayne County's quality of life. Their protection and long-term viability is crucially important to ensuring the County remain an outstanding location to live, work and raise a family.

Historic and Archaeological Resources

The Wayne County Historical Society has been a strong advocate for preservation and maintains an outstanding facility in Wooster. In addition a large number of structures have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Together these represent the significant assets that have been recognized and in some cases protected. Support should continue to be extended to the Society as the County's lead organization in preservation efforts. Such support should include:

- The County should support all nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. Placement on the Register does not affect a property owner's control of the historic property, unless federal funds are used to rehabilitate, renovate or demolish the structure. Also, nomination of historic rural districts could be pursued if sufficient and concentrated historic resources are present in one of the townships.
- The County should continue to consult with the Historical Society and OHPO in all public actions that affect the built environment, such as new construction, renovation of existing buildings and demolition, and environmental reviews relative to grant applications.
- The continued rehabilitation of County-owned historic structures should be stressed, with an emphasis on historical accuracy within budget constraints.
- The County should recognize outstanding preservation efforts and important architectural structures with an annual award and education program.

Historic preservation easements are an effective tool to preserve valuable historic structures and buildings. The easement would protect the exterior of a structure by transferring the ownership of that facade to a public or semipublic entity. The easement could be sold or donated with attached tax benefits for the property owner. The holder of the easement could be the Historical Society or a nonprofit land trust.

Cultural Resources

Wayne County's cultural facilities provide a range of programming that meets a variety of local needs. But adequate funding is an ever present challenge. Efforts should be made to strengthen arts funding by both the public and private sectors, through countywide support and corporate sponsorship.

Preserving the County's cultural heritage is a strong recommendation of this Plan. The following activities should be undertaken:

- Rural conservation strategies recommended in the Land Use Element should be implemented to preserve the County's outstanding rural landscape and character. The rural countryside defines Wayne County and reflects local values and heritage. It is reflected in the

natural landscape, development patterns, and structures and buildings.

- To gain a better understanding of the County's agricultural heritage, a historic farm park should be developed that recreates a pre-1900 family-owned farm. Such a facility would serve educational purposes for local school children and as a tourism attraction. Several examples are found in Ohio, such as farm parks operated by the Lake County Parks Department, Columbus Metropolitan Parks District and the Ohio Department of Natural Resource's Malabar Farms.
- Development that could be detrimental to historically- and culturally-significant sites should be discouraged and negative impacts mitigated. Inappropriate land uses should be discouraged where they either directly impact a site or change the historical reference of the site's context. An example is a strip retail center adjacent to a historic homestead.
- To further preserve historic barns, a county level "Barn Again" program could be started and could broker the preservation of barns through the use of a seller/buyer network. OHPO staff should be consulted and may be available to provide technical assistance.

Implementation

The cultural resources addressed in this chapter focus on two specific areas: historic and archaeological resources and cultural facilities. Several organizations in Wayne County play a major role in this arena, specifically the Wayne County Historical Society and Wayne Center for the Arts. The County should do all it can to support these organizations in fulfilling their respective missions.

Specifically related to the Comprehensive Plan, the following implementation activities should be undertaken:

Historic and Archaeological Inventory

The County Planning Department should assist the Historical Society in completing and maintaining an inventory of historic and archaeological resources. This should be based upon the County's GIS system, which can provide a database for detailed information on individual sites and a graphic component which can display resources by location. This tool can then be used to evaluate development proposals and permits relative to their potential impact on these important resources and provide information for grant applications. The County Subdivision Regulations should be strengthened to incorporate review of these resources at the preliminary plat stage.

Historic Preservation Support

The County should support historic preservation to the extent feasible in all public actions. These would include the following:

- Preserving County-owned buildings and structures through sensitive rehabilitation. This includes continued rehabilitation of the County Courthouse and any other County-owned building of historic, architectural and/or cultural value.
- Extending support for historic preservation of publicly-owned buildings to the cities, villages, hamlets and townships in Wayne County. This can occur through educational efforts, funding efforts to assist in rehabilitation and support for state and federal grants.

- Supporting all qualifying nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic preservation easements are another tool to ensure long-term preservation of a property. Any funding program involving an historic structure, such as CDBG grants, tax abatements, etc., should include a requirement that an easement be granted to the County or the Wayne Historical Society to protect the facade of the subject structure. The easement would help ensure that the benefiting structure is protected long-term.

Cultural Preservation

The policies of this Element also focus on preserving the County's unique cultural heritage, which includes rural conservation, recreating a historic farm, discouraging development that would impact historic cultural communities (such as the Amish) and preserving barns.

- Rural conservation strategies are presented in the Land Use Element. These strategies should be implemented in order to meet the desired outcome.
- Establishing a historic farm is intended to capture the County's historic agricultural roots through a living museum. The significant role Wayne County has played in the development of agriculture as discussed in the Land Use Element, provides an ample basis for undertaking this project.

Several examples of similar museums are found in Lake and Franklin Counties in Ohio, the State's Malabar Farm near Loudonville, as well as throughout the United States. The County Commissioners, Wayne County Parks Board, Wayne Historical Society, OARDC and Farm Bureau should together appoint a study committee. The committee's mission would be to gather information on similar museums (size, scale, administration, budget, funding, etc.), design an educational program with identified farm operations, prepare an initial physical concept and draft development, operation and maintenance budgets.

Funding sources would be evaluated by the committee and a strategy established to fund the project. A nonprofit corporation could be established as the agent to oversee the project, which could eventually be transferred to the County Parks District for long-term management.

- Barn preservation, as a component of rural conservation, is addressed through strategies in the Land Use Element.

Actions

A detailed set of recommended actions follows which provide direction relative to strategies presented in this chapter. Actions are intended to be very defined steps that are necessary to implement individual strategies. Parties are identified that are responsible for implementing individual actions. Recommended timeframes are also provided to measure success. A summary of all actions presented in the **Comprehensive Plan** is provided in the Implementation Element.

