



Historic Preservation Commission

Regular Meeting

September 18, 2026, 11:00 AM

Council Conference Room, La Plata Town Hall

305 Queen Anne St.

La Plata MD

Agenda

1. Call to Order

- 1.1. Attendees, please use meeting courtesy. Virtual attendees are asked to mute microphones when joining the meeting. Participants may be muted by the Town Clerk, and meetings will be recorded.

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to view/listen to the discussion only. At their discretion, the Historic Preservation Commission may allow participants to voice questions or provide comments on the topics under discussion. Written comments may be submitted via email to Legislative@townoflaplata.org

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 258 482 113 801 02

Passcode: K2DX3Ei7

(Calendar Year: 2026)

- 1.2. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Approval or Correction of Minutes

- 2.1. Approval of minutes from the meeting on May 15, 2026 & July 17, 2026.

3. Roll Call

4. Public Comment

5. Old Business

- 5.1. Development of a Legacy Business Ordinance

6. New Business

- 6.1. Centennial Plaque Program (CPP) 01-2026

- Request to install a Centennial Plaque at 309 Charles St. for Martin's Service Station

7. Staff Reports

8. Member Comments

9. Adjournment



TOWN OF LA PLATA
Historic Preservation Commission Minutes

May 15, 2026, 11:00 AM

Regular Meeting

Council Conference Room, La Plata Town Hall

305 Queen Anne St.

La Plata MD

PRESENT: Chair Rich Gilpin
Vice Chair Steuart Bowling
Mary Beth Chandler
Jane Hobbs

ABSENT:

TOWN STAFF: Don Dooley, Director of Planning
Shelby Pritchett, Town Clerk

GUESTS:

1. Call to Order

- 1.1. Attendees, please use meeting courtesy. Virtual attendees are asked to mute microphones when joining the meeting. Participants may be muted by the Town Clerk, and meetings will be recorded.

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(Calendar Year: 2026)

Chair Gilpin called the meeting to order at 11:03 AM.

1.2. Roll Call

The Town Clerk conducted Roll Call.

1.3. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Gilpin led all assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Bowling moved to amend the agenda to address items 3.2 and 6.2 in advance of the remaining agenda.

Moved By: Steuart Bowling, seconded by Jane Hobbs.

Ayes: Chair Gilpin, Vice Chair Bowling, Chandler, Hobbs

Nays: None
Abstained: None
Absent:
Passed

2.1. Approval of minutes from meeting on March 20, 2026.

Vice Chair Bowling moved to approve the minutes from the meeting on March 20, 2026, with amendments to item 5.2 to reflect Councilman Guttenbergs request for staff to develop meeting procedures.

Moved By: Steuart Bowling, seconded by Mary Beth Chandler.

Ayes: Chair Gilpin, Vice Chair Bowling, Chandler, Hobbs

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent:

Passed

3. Matters of Discussion

3.1. Draft of Preservation Professionals List (HPC Work Plan Item No.3)

Director Dooley provided a brief overview of the Draft Preservation Professionals List (HPC Work Plan Item No. 3) and acknowledged the Commission's concerns regarding legality, contractor qualifications, and the verification of historic renovation skillsets. He agreed to address these issues and stated he will bring the Historic Preservation Professionals List back as an HPC Resolution for consideration at a future meeting.

3.2. Former Fire House Building Capital Improvement Project (CIP) for FY 2027

Councilman Guttenberg reported that FY27 funding for the Former Firehouse Building is limited to exterior maintenance, with no interior improvements budgeted at this time. He explained the Council's preference for a partnership model in which an external entity would eventually operate the museum functions, while commissioners raised concerns about interior deterioration, ADA needs, and long-term usability. Future decisions may depend on identifying a viable partner and addressing site challenges such as parking.

3.3. Historic Preservation Commission Vacancy for Alternate Member

Director Dooley reported that the alternate member position was re-advertised with no new applicants, and one prior candidate remains under consideration pending confirmation of continued interest. A recommendation will be forwarded to the Town Council once that confirmation is received.

4. Subcommittee Appointments

No business was conducted on this agenda item.

5. HPC Work Plan Subcommittee Updates

5.1. Maryland 250 Programs for La Plata (Work Plan Item No. 2)

Jane Hobbs provided a subcommittee overview and answered questions on current work within the Maryland 250 programs. The Commission noted strong public engagement in recent activities

and agreed that Maryland 250 programming should be integrated into existing Town events. Director Dooley answered Historic Preservation Commission questions regarding coordination with the Town of La Plata Event Planner, and no formal action was taken.

5.2. Promotion of the Approved Centennial Plaque Program (Completed Work Plan Item No. 3)

Marybeth Chandler provided an overview of initial outreach efforts and confirmed that several eligible property owners have expressed interest in the Approved Centennial Plaque Program. Staff noted that applications will be finalized and prepared for distribution before the July 1 program start date, with public promotion planned through Town communication channels.

Commissioners agreed to proceed with outreach, and no formal action was taken.

6. Matters of Information

6.1. Commissioners Report

The commissioners reported on activities and concerns within the Historic Preservation Commission's scope of work, including operational needs at the Train Station Museum, upcoming tours, exhibit adjustments, and parking limitations. Additional discussion addressed coordination with Public Works for facility maintenance and communication improvements regarding event schedules and signage.

6.2. Town Council Report

Councilman Guttenberg gave a brief Town Council Report, providing updates on recent Council actions and coordination with the Historic Preservation Commission. Additional clarification was offered regarding committee assignments and preservation-related initiatives. He departed at 11:25 AM in advance of the remaining agenda.

6.3. Staff Report

Staff provided updates on ongoing work items, including preparation of application materials for the Centennial Plaque Program and the next steps in developing the Legacy Business Program. Director Dooley reported that he will bring the Historic Preservation Professionals List back as an HPC Resolution at the next meeting.

7. Adjourn

7.1. Adjournment

Hobbs moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:27 PM.

Moved By: Jane Hobbs, seconded by Steuart Bowling.

Ayes: Chair Gilpin, Vice Chair Bowling, Chandler, Hobbs

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent:

Passed

Submitted by:



TOWN OF LA PLATA
Historic Preservation Commission Minutes

July 17, 2026, 11:00 AM

Regular Meeting

Council Conference Room, La Plata Town Hall

305 Queen Anne St.

La Plata MD

PRESENT: Chair Rich Gilpin
Vice Chair Steuart Bowling
Mary Beth Chandler

ABSENT: Jane Hobbs
Councilman Patrick McCormick

TOWN STAFF: Don Dooley, Director of Planning
Shelby Pritchett, Town Clerk

GUESTS:

1. Call to Order

Chair Gilpin called the meeting to order at 11:04 AM.

- 1.1. Attendees, please use meeting courtesy. Virtual attendees are asked to mute microphones when joining the meeting. Participants may be muted by the Town Clerk, and meetings will be recorded.

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to view/listen to the discussion only. At their discretion, the Historic Preservation Commission may allow participants to voice questions or provide comments on the topics under discussion. Written comments may be submitted via email to Legislative@townoflaplata.org

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 258 482 113 801 02

Passcode: K2DX3Ei7

(Calendar Year: 2026)

1.2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Gilpin led all assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Minutes

2.1. Approval of minutes from meeting on May 15, 2026.

Commissioner Chandler moved to continue the minutes to the next regularly scheduled meeting to allow for Historic Preservation Commission-requested changes.

Moved By: Mary Beth Chandler, seconded by Steuart Bowling.

Ayes: Chair Gilpin, Vice Chair Bowling, Chandler

Nays: None
Abstained: None
Absent: Hobbs, Councilman McCormick
Passed

3. Matters of Discussion

3.1. La Plata - Maryland 250 Programming (PC Work Plan Item No. 2)

Director Dooley gave a brief overview of updates on the Maryland 250 programming in the absence of Lucinda Anderson, Special Events Coordinator.

3.2. Adoption of the Preservation Professionals List (PC Work Plan Item No. 3)

Director Dooley gave a brief update on the Preservation Professionals List and made a staff recommendation to adopt the draft Historic Preservation Commission Resolution.

Vice Chair Bowling moved to approve the draft Historic Preservation Commission Resolution.

Moved By: Steuart Bowling, seconded by Mary Beth Chandler.

Ayes: Vice Chair Bowling, Chandler

Nays: Chair Gilpin

Abstained: None

Absent: Hobbs, Councilman McCormick

Passed

3.3. Introduction and Discussion on the Development of a Legacy Business Program for the Town of La Plata (PC Work Plan Item No. 6)

Director Dooley gave a brief presentation on the development of a Legacy Business Program. The Historic Preservation Commission asked questions regarding the Town's goals with the program.

4. Subcommittee Appointments

4.1. Legacy Business Program

Vice Chair Bowling moved to nominate Chair Gilpin as the Legacy Business Program subcommittee representative through the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Moved By: Steuart Bowling, seconded by Mary Beth Chandler.

Ayes: Chair Gilpin, Vice Chair Bowling, Chandler

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Hobbs, Councilman McCormick

Passed

5. Subcommittee Updates

5.1. Comments from the HPC Subcommittee concerning the Maryland 250 Programs for La Plata (Work Plan Item No. 2)

No additional updates beyond the discussion that occurred in agenda item 3.1.

5.2. Comments from the HPC Subcommittee Concerning the Promotion of the Approved Centennial Plaque Program (Completed Work Plan Item No. 3)

Commissioner Chandler gave a brief update on her work to promote the Centennial Plaque Program through the distribution of informational packets to the community.

6. Matters of Information

6.1. Commissioner Comments

Chair Gilpin highlighted ongoing maintenance concerns at the La Plata Train Station, including parking and ADA issues, deteriorating decking, safety and security problems, lack of signage, and general cleanliness. The commission requested that staff address these items before the Spring Dell visit on August 20, 2026.

6.2. Town Council Report

Director Dooley read a brief note from Council Liaison McCormick in his absence.

6.3. Staff Report

Director Dooley stated he had no additional staff comments. Director Dooley answered questions from Chair Gilpin on the topic of filling the vacancy on the Historic Preservation Commission.

7. Public Comment

No public speakers were present at this meeting.

8. Adjourn

8.1. Adjournment

Vice Chair Bowling moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:24 PM.

Moved By: Steuart Bowling, seconded by Mary Beth Chandler.

Ayes: Chair Gilpin, Vice Chair Bowling, Chandler

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Hobbs, Councilman McCormick

Passed

Submitted by:

Shelby Pritchett, Town Clerk



LEGACY BUSINESS PROGRAM
Historic Resources Commission
July 17, 2026

What Are Legacy Businesses?

- Longstanding, locally rooted businesses in the community (typically 20–25+ years)
 - A legacy business could be any type of business.
 - They meaningfully contribute to a community's cultural and social heritage, sense of place, and historical continuity of a community.
 - Often serve as gathering places and/or "tradition keepers" sustaining community memories and traditions that embody tangible and intangible local heritage and community identity.
 - They are businesses connected to broader movements in historic preservation that relate to place retention that supports economic development.

Why Legacy Businesses Matter

- Legacy Businesses help:
 - Preserve community identity.
 - Enhance economic stability and heritage tourism.
 - Provide authenticity within a community in contrast to national and globalized businesses chains.
 - Support community heritage, traditions and cultural fabric that hold meaning to members of a community.

What Is NOT a Legacy Business

- Not simply any long-standing business
 - Must have **meaningful** social, cultural, or heritage connection to a community.
 - Not based on building age or commercial success.

National Background

- First major program: San Francisco (2015)
 - Programs spread to Austin, Seattle, D.C., Portland
 - Small-town models comparable to La Plata include Leadville, Bisbee, Eureka Springs, and San Elizario have adopted scaled approaches to Legacy Business Programs.

Maryland Landscape

- There are currently no formal Legacy Business Programs in Maryland based on staff's initial research.
 - Several communities are exploring heritage initiatives. However, none have a structured Legacy Business Program.
 - La Plata could become a state leader, particularly for small towns.

Key Issues – Defining Legacy Businesses

- Developing Clear Criteria for a Legacy Business Program Includes:
 - Clear, fair, and culturally relevant criteria to determine what qualifies as a Legacy Business in La Plata.
 - Understanding the Town's cultural heritage themes like foodways, activities, traditions, gathering spaces etc. that have meaning to residents and promote sense of place....what makes La Plata, La Plata!
 - HPC input is essential in identifying the criteria.

Key Issues – Zoning Alignment

- Current Zoning Code Lacks Necessary Flexibility
 - Non-conforming land-uses and/or the non-conforming development of a property under our current zoning regulations can significantly restrict a longstanding business' ability to grow, modernize and prosper.
 - Tools: Nonconforming land-use and/or development waivers can provide a potential means to help support Legacy Businesses.
 - Marketing/advertisement support, and small grants can also help provide low-cost strategies for small towns to show support for their Legacy Businesses.

Potential Legacy Business Benefits

- Helping to Stabilize Legacy Businesses
 - Zoning flexibility.
 - Small grants (FY 27 Budget Funding - \$1,800).
 - Advertising and visibility support through Town events and website.
 - Reduce development fees.
 - Provide expedited processing of Town permits.
 - Using Town staff as advocates/advisors for Legacy Business support.

Cultural & Economic Value

- Preserves local identity
 - Strengthens community pride and sense of place.
 - Supports local economy and promotes heritage tourism.

Approval Findings

- Objective criteria needed
 - Cultural heritage themes must be identified.
 - Character defining attributes that make a Legacy Business meaningful and recognizable (tangible and intangible attributes) as part of the Town's cultural heritage.

Funding Considerations

- FY2027 budget: \$1,800
 - Current Town funding supports up to 5 Legacy Businesses with \$1,800 grants.
 - Should grants prioritize how the money is used or should they be used for any purpose that supports the needs of the Legacy Business?
 - Should explore supplemental funding sources as Town funding may not always be available.

Outreach Requirements

- Gathering feedback.
 - Engage public to help identify cultural and heritage themes pertaining to La Plata.
 - Ensure diverse cultural representation
 - Identify a strategy to garner public input.

Program Strategy Overview

- Draft outline based on small-town models
 - Promotes recognition and zoning flexibility
 - Supports early program development

Next Steps

- HPC provides feedback
 - Subcommittee formation
 - 1st Round of Legacy Business Program Refinement
 - Public Outreach
 - 2nd Round of Legacy Business Program Refinement
 - Public Comments and HPC Recommendations
 - Planning Commission + Town Council review and approval.

Case Study

Moore's County Store (Lynchburg, Virginia)



Moore's County Store (Lynchburg, Virginia)









"Moore's is built around a long-standing tradition of community, food, and family. This dedication to being welcoming and attentive is what helps us maintain the sense of community that Moore's is known for." Jennifer Moore (Owner) - Lynchburg Living May/June 2026, Page 51



“We have watched children grow into adults, we have been part of celebrations from birthdays, graduations and even weddings. We’ve been part of the hard and sad part of people’s lives and they have been part of ours.” Jennifer Moore (Owner) - Lynchburg Living May/June 2026, Page 52



The mural depicts some of the store's important iconology that the community immediately recognizes. It promotes sense of place and community culture (i.e., tree through the store roof and their famous hot dogs). The newspaper clippings on the wall also create memories for both the owners and customers reenforcing the store's place in community heritage.



The image depicts other goods sold in the store, including souvenirs of the store. Customers buy souvenirs because of the meaning and value they associate with special businesses/places. Ultimately, it promotes heritage tourism as people seek **authentic** places for goods and services.



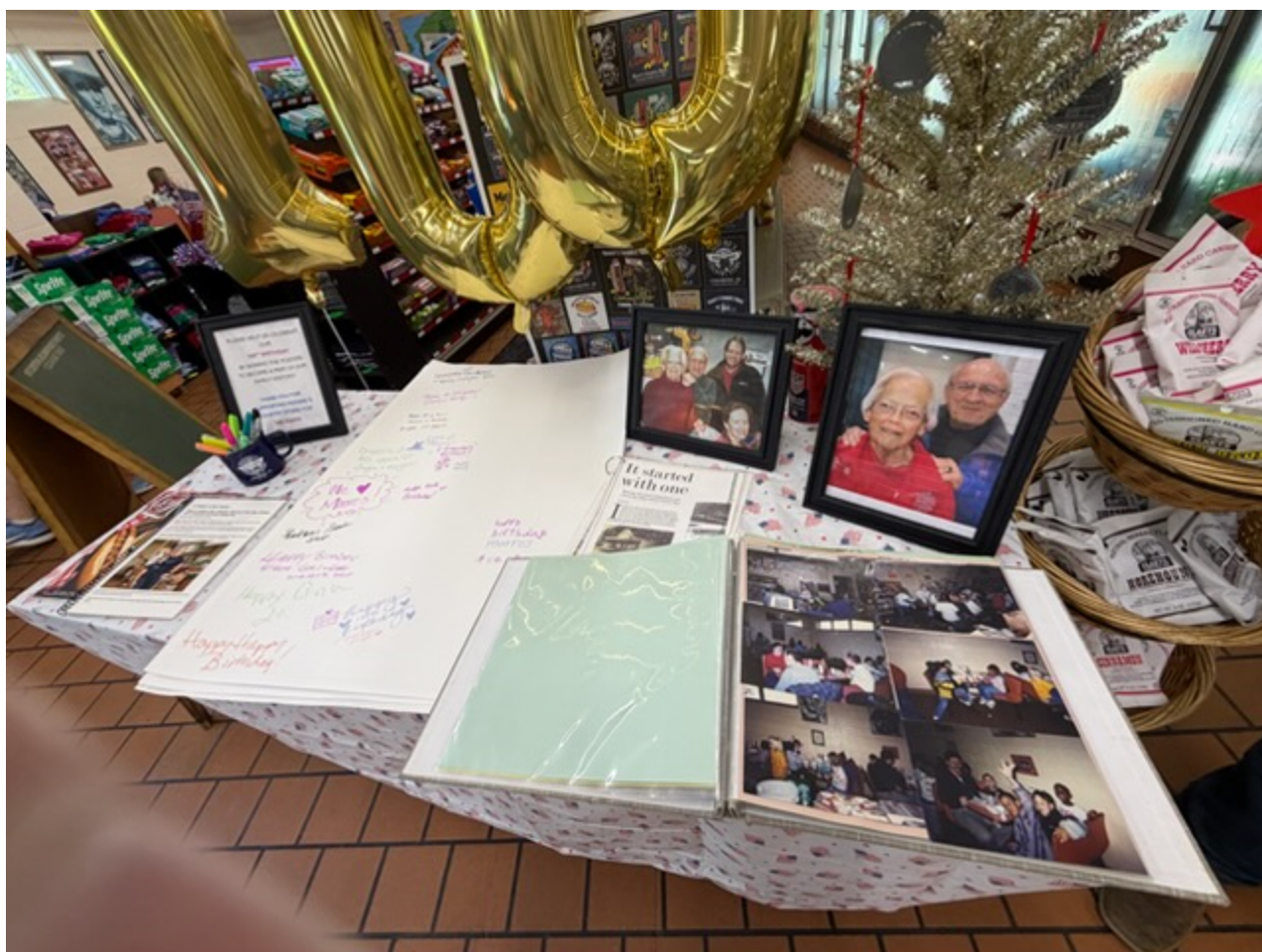
Recognition of the store's community value attracts interest and helps facilitate its success.



Moore's famous hot dogs



The store is currently celebrating its 100 years in business with pictures and memories of its customers as well as customer memories of the store. A birthday card for the store has been placed on the table for its customers to sign.





Customers are asked to share their memories of the Country Store over the past 100 years. Here's what they said....

Written Memory Comments

- *My memory of this place is when my dad brought me in here and my dad was laughing and smiling...he would always stop here for his hotdogs on the way home from work...Well, my dad is gone and I still come here with a friend.” (Sharon C.)*
- *“We always stop by the “tree store” as we use to call it as little kids...so happy to be part of Moore’s beautiful journey and giving us the best service and food” (Chantel B.)*
- *Moore’s has been a “family tradition” to say the least. That tradition may just be a random Sunday drive or even a special trip out of the house just to get some hot dogs...” (Gunter)*
- *“My mom used to take me and my siblings here 24/7...we stopped and ate here before we bought our house we live in now.” (Gracie)*
- *Every time I visit my parents...we come to Moore’s. My son’s been wearing Moore’s T-Shirts since he was 6 mos.[old]. He’s here with me today at 8 years old and still loves how spicy the Chili is.” (Priscilla)*



Based on the County Store's connection and meaning to the community, could it be a potential Legacy Business?

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



TOWN OF LA PLATA

**305 Queen Anne Street
Post Office Box 2268
La Plata, Maryland 20646**

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DATE: September 18, 2026

TO: Honorable Chair and Members of the Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Don Dooley, Director of Planning

SUBJECT Development of Legacy Business Program (HPC Work Plan Item No. 6)

REQUEST: To create a Legacy Business Program for the Town of La Plata.

BACKGROUND

On February 24, 2026, the Town Council adopted the Historic Preservation Commission's (HPC) Five-Year Work Plan (2025–2030) to guide the long-term development of a comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan for the Town of La Plata, as required under Chapter 11, Section 11-8(A)(10) of the La Plata Municipal Code. One of the initiatives identified in the Work Plan, Project Item No. 6, is the creation of a Legacy Business Program.

Legacy Businesses are long-standing, locally rooted enterprises that have shaped the cultural, social, and economic identity of their communities for decades, typically 15 to 30 years. These businesses may include restaurants, shops, service providers, and other small or mid-sized establishments that have become familiar, place-based institutions. They are often the kind of places residents rely on, remember fondly, and introduce to younger generations. Across the country, cities and towns are increasingly adopting Legacy Business programs to recognize, support, and preserve these valued contributors to community heritage and economic stability.

The growing movement to protect long-standing, community-defining businesses aligns with broader trends in historic preservation and cultural heritage protection. While traditional historic preservation efforts have largely focused on architecture, notable individuals, and historic sites, planners and preservationists increasingly understand that local cultural identity is deeply influenced by long-tenured businesses, their founders, and their patrons. These establishments often act as social anchors and generational gathering places such as sites where neighbors meet, conversations take place, traditions are learned and passed down, and cultural practices find continuity. Some preserve traditional food recipes or methods, others host longstanding events, and many serve

signature offerings woven into local life. Their significance lies not in the age or style of their buildings, but in the meaning they hold for the community.

Consistent with preservation values and activities in other communities, the HPC's proposed Legacy Business Program aims to recognize businesses that have operated in La Plata for at least 25 years and have meaningfully contributed to the Town's cultural legacy. These businesses help define La Plata's sense of place and are often establishments "everyone knows" locally.

The program seeks not only to honor these legacy institutions but also to support their continued presence, stability, and growth. In doing so, it also advances the Town's broader economic development goals and reinforces the HPC's commitment to recognizing all forms of cultural resources that shape La Plata's identity and heritage. Likewise, the formulation of the Legacy Business Program reflects the HPC's ongoing effort to acknowledge the full spectrum of cultural resources that contribute to La Plata's identity and to advance Work Plan Item No. 6 as part of the Town's long-range preservation strategy for the Town.

DISCUSSION

At the Historic Preservation Commission meeting on July 17, 2026, staff presented a comprehensive overview of the origins and evolution of Legacy Business programs, including how they have been generally applied in other communities. As the Commission will recall, the Legacy Business concept first emerged in San Francisco in 2015 and has since gained growing national attention, particularly in preservation-oriented communities seeking to support long-standing, community-defining, businesses for local cultural heritage protection.

While many municipalities across the country have begun exploring and implementing elements of the Legacy Business concept, no town, city, or county in Maryland appears to have adopted a formal Legacy Business Ordinance that designates long-tenured businesses or provides protections and incentives tied specifically to Legacy Business status. Instead, Maryland jurisdictions generally direct their preservation and economic development efforts toward building rehabilitation programs (such as historic tax credits), downtown revitalization initiatives, heritage tourism activities, and broad business-assistance programs.

Based on staff's research, communities that have adopted Legacy Business-related programs tend to focus on economic stabilization, cultural recognition, and targeted support for qualifying businesses. Notably, none of these programs provide zoning-related benefits or relief such as modifying a business's non-conforming land-use status or altering land-use requirements to support Legacy Businesses.

It is also important to recognize that the development of any Legacy Business Program, particularly for a small town like La Plata, must be thoughtfully crafted to ensure that the benefits offered are truly meaningful and practical for participating businesses, while also remaining sustainable and manageable for the community to support over time.

Outlining a Conceptual Legacy Business Program for La Plata

As the Planning Department is in process of developing a Draft Legacy Business Ordinance, staff has provided, below, a broad overview of a conceptual Legacy Business Program components for the Commission's feedback. The feedback will be used to help provide additional perspective and ideas for consideration in drafting the proposed Ordinance that will be available for Commission review at its regularly scheduled meeting of November 20, 2026.

1) Purpose of the Program

The draft ordinance establishes a Legacy Business Program to recognize and support long-standing, locally owned businesses that contribute meaningfully to La Plata's cultural identity. The program is also designed to help preserve the Town's community heritage by providing these businesses with targeted assistance and regulatory flexibility under the Zoning Code, acknowledging their important role in sustaining cultural production throughout La Plata.

2) Program Goals

The program aims to celebrate and protect long-standing businesses that shape La Plata's identity. These goals highlight cultural preservation, economic development, and regulatory flexibility.

Key attributes include:

- a) Recognizing and promoting locally owned small businesses that define La Plata's identity.
- b) Reduce regulatory barriers for culturally significant, long-standing, establishments.
- c) Support both tangible and intangible cultural heritage.
- d) Provide zoning, building design, and land-use flexibility.
- e) Strengthening local pride, heritage tourism, and business stability.
- f) Ensure benefits afforded to designated Legacy Businesses are sustainable for the Town to administer.

3. Core Eligibility Definition

A Legacy Business must demonstrate longevity, cultural relevance, and continuity. Staff's conceptual definition for a Legacy Business consists of four parts:

- a) Has been in continuous operation for at least twenty-five (25) years in the town of La Plata.
- b) It is a “brick-and-mortar” type business in the corporate limits of the Town of La Plata that is independently owned, not franchised, and is not affiliated with a national or regional corporate chain. If it is an independently owned local business with multiple locations in the Town of La Plata, only the original or oldest physical location may be considered as a Legacy Business. It is not a home-based business. For the purposes of this definition, a fraternal or civic organization occupying a dedicated building shall be considered a business.
- c) The business demonstrates long-term continuity in its current location, name, and core identity. The business' core identity is its consistent provision of traditional goods and services it has historically provided to the community in addition to its sustained business practices or traditions.
- d) The business significantly contributes to and sustains community, ethnic, or group identity through cultural production using any combination of tangible or intangible cultural traditions, rituals, practices, entertainment, lifeways, foodways, or heritage activities that are meaningful, important and culturally accessible to its patrons or recipients throughout its history.

4. Administration & Registry

The Town Manager or designee oversees application processing, eligibility verification, and benefit management. A formal Registry documents all designated Legacy Businesses attributes.

Key attributes of the Registry would include:

- a) Program administered by the Town Manager or designee.
- b) Annual cap of five (5) approved applications, unless modified by the Town Council each fiscal year.
- c) The Registry records key information about each designated Legacy Business, including its name, ownership, establishment date, internal and external photographs of its arrangement, cultural significance, and other character-defining features of the business. This information helps document the business's essential attributes and ensures that its defining cultural and historical characteristics remain consistent over time, preventing any “drift” away from the qualities that justified its designation as a Legacy Business.

5. Legacy Business Designation Process

Designation follows a structured review process. Once a Legacy Business Designation Application is submitted, staff first reviews the application for completeness before forwarding it to the Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission then considers the application at a public meeting and adopts formal findings in a resolution recommending its approval or denial to the Town Council. The Council reviews the application at a separate public meeting and makes the final decision on whether the business should be added to the Town's Legacy Business Registry.

Key Attributes:

- a) Application submitted to staff and reviewed for completeness.
- b) HPC evaluation and recommendation to the Town Council.
- c) Town Council makes decision to approve or deny Legacy Business designation.

6. Five-Year (Quinquennial) Review

All Legacy Businesses are reevaluated at least once every five years to ensure they continue to meet the definition and standards of a Legacy Business. A business may be removed from the Registry if it significantly changes, "drifts," or discontinues the core cultural heritage practices that originally qualified it for designation.

Key Attributes:

- a) Staff conducts a compliance review of each Legacy Business at least once every five years to verify that it continues to meet all eligibility criteria and the findings originally adopted by the Town Council for its inclusion in the Legacy Business Registry. If staff determines that a business may no longer qualify, the case is forwarded to the Town Council, which makes the final decision on whether the business is to be removed from the Registry.
- b) A Legacy Business is automatically removed from the Registry if it permanently closes, changes its principal use, or remains inactive for more than one year.

7. Key Benefits for Legacy Businesses

The key benefits provided to designated Legacy Businesses are intended to offer flexibility for establishments that were originally built or developed under older zoning and development standards that no longer exist and may render the business non-conforming today. Current zoning and development standards may restrict or prevent future expansion and, in some cases, jeopardize the continued operation of long-standing businesses. The Legacy Business Program is designed to help stabilize and support these businesses by offering targeted development relief within the zoning

code, along with strategic public investment and promotional support to retain their cultural importance to the community, incentivize investment in order businesses and allow Legacy Businesses to continue contributing to the community's economic vitality.

a) Legacy Businesses are Permitted Uses.

Designated Legacy Businesses receive land-use flexibility, limited development allowances, opportunity for some financial assistance, and promotional support intended to help stabilize their operations and preserve both their cultural significance and economic viability within the community. In addition, all designated Legacy Businesses are treated as permitted principal land-uses, even if they were classified as legal non-conforming uses prior to being added to the Legacy Business Registry. Should a Legacy Business be removed from the Legacy Business Registry, it would revert back to any legal non-conforming land-use status it had prior to its designation based on the Town's current Zoning Ordinance.

b) Development Flexibility

- i) Any Legacy Business developed contrary to the current zoning regulations and development standards contained in Article IV (Zoning Regulations), Article V (Development Standards), and Article VIII (Signs) of the La Plata Municipal Code would be deemed "conforming" for the purposes of advancing the goals of the draft ordinance so long as the business remains listed on the Town's Legacy Business Registry.
- ii) A Legacy Business would have the right to 100% fully rebuild the building it is housed in to the same size and footprint if it is damaged or destroyed by accident, disaster or Act of God. However, all reconstruction must comply with current building, fire, and life-safety codes.

c. Legacy Business Expansion

- i) A Registered Legacy Business may expand its existing building or structure by encroaching up to fifteen percent (15%) beyond the minimum required front, side, or rear setback applicable to the property.

d. Parking

- i) A registered Legacy Business would be entitled to receive a one-time parking waiver of up to 15% percent of its required on-site parking to accommodate an expansion of the building or structure in which the business is located

e. Design Review Relief

- i) Exemption from Design Review Board approval for a Legacy Business expansion provided the design of the addition is compliant with the Town's Design Guidelines for the CBT, CH and CB Zones. The Planning Department would review these Guidelines as part of its normal plan review process.

8) Grants & Promotion

- i) The Town may provide limited competitive and/or non-competitive grants to Legacy Businesses for repairs, improvements, stabilization, or permits, subject to budget allocation each year by the Town Council.
- ii) The Town provides promotional recognition of its registered Legacy Businesses to facilitate economic development and heritage tourism to the Town of La Plata in a sustainable manner. For example, this could be accomplished through the Town's website and/or community newsletter.

Draft Legacy Business Designation Program Outreach

It will be essential to gather direct feedback from potential Legacy Businesses to understand their common needs, challenges, and priorities. Legacy Business programs across the country consistently emphasize early engagement with business owners to ensure that program benefits, recognition, and support tools are meaningful and help sustain their long-term operation in the community. Input from these businesses will ultimately help guide the Town in designing a Legacy Business program that reflects conditions on the ground and provides value where it is most needed and can be supported.

Based on the Commission's feedback, staff will continue to evolve the Legacy Business program details.

CONCLUSION

Legacy Businesses can serve as vital cultural and economic anchors in communities. Recognizing and supporting these businesses complements historic preservation efforts and strengthens broader revitalization initiatives. For communities seeking to protect their unique character while promoting sustainable economic growth, Legacy Business initiatives can be a meaningful and impactful tool.

Based on the Commission's feedback, staff will continue to evolve the Legacy Business program details and develop a draft ordinance for the Town Attorney's legal comments and revisions before returning to the Commission in November with a formal, draft, ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Historic Preservation Commission provide its feedback on the proposed Legacy Business Program outline.

ATTACHMENTS

None



TOWN OF LA PLATA

**305 Queen Anne Street
Post Office Box 2268
La Plata, Maryland 20646**

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DATE: September 18, 2026

TO: Honorable Chair and Members of the Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Don Dooley, Director of Planning

SUBJECT Centennial Plaque Program (CPP) 01-2026

REQUEST: To install a Centennial Plaque at 309 Charles Street for Martin's Service Station.

BACKGROUND

On March 10, 2026, the Town Council, at the recommendation of the Historic Preservation Commission, adopted Town Council Resolution No. 26-14 to establish a "Centennial Plaque Program" for the Town of La Plata.

The Centennial Plaque Program ("Program") is to formally recognize buildings, structures, objects, and sites that have existed in the Town for 100 years or more. The Program is designed to honor and recognize the Town's oldest buildings, strengthen community pride, and promote heritage tourism by increasing public awareness of La Plata's architectural and cultural history.

To qualify, a resource must be documented to:

- Be at least 100 years old;
- Have been originally constructed in La Plata (or moved to La Plata at least 100 years ago); and,
- Its historic age verified through research submitted by the property owner.

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) would confirm eligibility and approve the issuance of centennial plaques. Property owners must consent to the plaque's placement and maintain it in good condition. Plaques remain property of the Town and may be inspected during normal business hours.

Nominations may be submitted by property owners, the Town Council, or the Historic

**Historic Preservation Commission
Centennial Plaque Program (CPP) 01-2026 -Martin's Service Station
September 18, 2026**

Preservation Commission, provided the owner(s) agrees. No more than five plaques per year may be authorized, subject to available funding.

Overall, the Program is intended to create a consistent and meaningful method for celebrating La Plata's century-old plus resources while supporting preservation awareness and economic development through heritage tourism.

DISCUSSION

The first Centennial Plaque application has been submitted by Martin's Service Station, located at 309 Charles Street.

The primary, evidentiary, documentation demonstrating that Martin's Service Station has operated at this location for at least 100 years is provided through a contract dated June 16, 1923, between Frank Martin and Beverly Barnes. The contract establishes their intent to operate a *"joint automobile, garage and accessories business"* and to *"erect a suitable building for the purpose of conducting the business...upon the land."* It also outlines the partnership relationship between the two individuals, confirming the establishment of the business on the site in 1923.

Secondary documentation supporting the 100-year age of the business includes written accommodations/recognitions issued to Martin's Service Station by:

- The Maryland Department of Commerce
- The Charles County Board of Commissioners
- The Comptroller of Maryland

These written accommodations/recognitions celebrate the service station's 100 years of operation in the Town of La Plata.

Based on the primary historical documentation provided, staff concludes that Martin's Service Station was established more than 100 years ago (in 1923) and qualifies for a Centennial Plaque under the Town Centennial Plaque Program.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Historic Preservation Commission adopt the attached resolution approving the authorization of a Centennial Plaque for placement on the Martin's Service Station Building in accordance with the Town's Centennial Plaque Program.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Draft Historic Preservation Commission Resolution for Centennial Plaque Program (CPP) Application 01-2026 for Martin's Service Station

- 2) Application for Centennial Plaque Program (CPP) 01-2026 Received July 28, 2026
- 3) 1923 Contract between Frank Martin and Beverly Barnes.
- 4) Business Accommodation/Recognition from the Maryland Department of Commerce
- 5) Business Accommodation/Recognition from the Charles County Board of Commissioners
- 6) Business Accommodation/Recognition from the Comptroller of Maryland.
- 7) Photograph of Building Façade with Engraved Bricks that State "Martin's" and "Est. 1922"

DRAFT

**TOWN OF LA PLATA, MARYLAND
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 2026-_____**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION
COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF LA PLATA, MARYLAND
APPROVING CENTENNIAL PLAQUE PROGRAM (CPP)
APPLICATION NO. 01-2026 – MARTIN’S SERVICE STATION**

WHEREAS, the La Plata Town Council adopted Resolution No. 26-14 on March 10, 2026, establishing a Centennial Plaque Program for the Town of La Plata; and

WHEREAS, the Centennial Plaque Program (“CPP”) recognizes buildings, structures, objects, and sites that have existed within the Town for at least 100 years; and

WHEREAS, Marty and Caroline Martin submitted Centennial Plaque Program (CCP) Application No. 01-2026 requesting that Martin’s Service Station, located at 309 Charles Street in La Plata, Maryland, be formally recognized through the Centennial Plaque Program; and,

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the primary evidentiary documentation that includes a June 16, 1923, partnership contract between Frank Martin and Beverly Barnes, confirming the establishment of Martin’s Service Station on the site in 1923;

WHEREAS, the Commission further received secondary documentation supporting the business’s 100-year age through recent written accommodations from the Maryland Department of Commerce, the Charles County Board of Commissioners, and the Comptroller of Maryland;

WHEREAS, staff has verified that Martin’s Service Station meets all eligibility criteria for issuance of a Centennial Plaque in accordance with the Town’s Centennial Plaque Program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby approves the authorization of a Centennial Plaque for placement on the Martin’s Service Station building located at 309 Charles Street, La Plata, Maryland.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the plaque shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the Town’s Centennial Plaque Program.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE LA PLATA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION on September 18, 2026, by the following vote:

Yes:

No:

Abstain:

Absent:

Richard Gilpin, Historic Preservation Commission Chair

Attest:

Don Dooley, Director of Planning



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JUL 28 2026

TOWN OF LA PLATA

Town of La Plata

Centennial Plaque Application

Purpose:

This application is to be used to request approval for a Centennial Plaque recognizing a building, structure, object, or site that is at least 100 years old. There is no cost for this application.

Please print all responses.

1) Address or Property Location for the proposed Centennial Plaque:

309 Charles St., La Plata, MD

2) Applicant Information Name:

Martin's Service Station, Inc.
309 Charles St.

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 750, La Plata, MD 20646

Phone Number: 301-934-8873

Email Address: martins1922@yahoo.com

3) Property Owner Information (if different from Applicant)

Name: Marty + Caroline Martin

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 750, La Plata, MD 20646

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Phone Number: 301 848 1686

301 848 1686
Email Address: martins1922@yahoo.com

4) Nominated Resource (check one):

- ☐ Building
- ☐ Structure
- ☐ Object
- ☒ Site

5) Date of Construction: _____ **or Estimated Date of Construction:** June 1923

6) Required Documentation

Please attach all required application submittal information.

7) Certification (Required)

By signing below, I certify that:

1. The documentation submitted with this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge.
2. Based on my research, the nominated building, structure, object, or site is at least 100 years old.
3. I understand that submitting this application does not guarantee approval of my application for a Centennial Plaque.

Property Owner Signature: Joseph B Muntz Jr. **Date:** 7-27-26

8) Responsibilities of Approved Centennial Plaque Recipients

By signing below, the property owner acknowledges and agrees to the following requirements if the resource is approved for a Centennial Plaque:

1. The property owner consents to placing and retaining the plaque along the exterior of the resource in the most visible and/or accessible location for public view.

2. The Centennial Plaque shall be maintained in good condition at all times by the property owner. Any damage to the installed Plaque shall be reported to the Town of La Plata and repaired at the property owner's expense within 90 days, unless waived by the Town of La Plata.
3. The Centennial Plaques remains the property of the Town of La Plata and shall be immediately returned to the Town of La Plata if the property owner no longer wishes to participate in the Centennial Plaque Program.
4. The property owner is responsible for installing the Centennial Plaque within 30 days of receiving it from the Town of La Plata. All installation costs are the responsibility of the property owner.
5. Employees and authorized agents of the Town of La Plata are permitted to inspect each installed Plaque during the Town's normal business hours.

By signing below, I acknowledge and agree to all responsibilities listed above.

Property Owner Signature: Joseph B. Martin Jr. Date: 7-27-26

For Town Use Only

Centennial Plaque Application No: CPP- 01- 2026

Application Received (Date): 7/28/2026

Decision: Approved / Denied on: _____

Plaque Issued (Date): _____

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TOWN OF LA PLATA

CONTRACT

between

Frank A. Martin

, and

Beverley Barnes

THIS AGREEMENT made and entered into this _____ day of June in the year 1923 by and between Frank A. Martin, hereinafter called the party of the first part and Beverley Barnes, hereinafter called the party of the second part, both of Charles County, State of Maryland.

WITNESSETH: That for and in consideration of the sum of \$1 paid the said party of the first part by the said party of the second part and the further consideration of the mutual promises to do and perform certain things hereinafter named and the further consideration of the outlays and expenses incurred by the said party of the first part in the undertakings hereinafter mentioned.

That it is proposed that both of the parties hereto, that is to say, the party of the first part and the party of the second party are desirous of engaging in a joint automobile, garage and accessories business wherein the two parties hereto shall share equally in the net profits of said business and in the manner following:

The said party of the first part agrees to erect a suitable building for the purpose of conducting the business as aforesaid upon land now owned by the said party of the first part in the town of La Plata adjoining the lands or the lot of the Matthews Howard Company, Inc.; using in the construction thereof certain materials in buildings now owned by the said party of the first part and such other materials as are necessary to complete a suitable building for the purpose. All expense for material, cost of building construction not including garage equipment to be borne entirely by the said Frank A. Martin, party of the first part.

The basis of compensation to the said party of the first part for his land, building material, and construction cost shall be as follows:

\$1500 shall be allowed for the ground or lot upon which the building is to be constructed, \$500 for the material furnished from the buildings now owned by the said party of the first part, and in addition thereto the costs of other materials, work and labor necessary in the construction of said completed building. The said party of the first part to receive as a rental therefor 10% of the actual costs of material furnished, labor and other construction costs together with the valuation upon the land and materials supplied from buildings now upon the land of the said party of the first part. Said party of the first part agreeing to pay all taxes and insurance upon the building erected by him out of the aforesaid 10% of said total cost and valuation.

Said Beverley Barnes, party of the second part, is to receive for the remainder of the year 1923 the sum of \$75 per month as salary for the management of said business exclusive of his share in the net profits of the business.

The said party of the first part for such time as he may be able to devote to the business is to receive a per diem on the same basis as that received by the said party of the second part as salary for the management of the business, it being agreed and understood that the said party of the first part will devote the major portion of his time for the remainder of 1923 to his hotel business and such time as may be spared from that will be devoted to assisting said party of the second part in their garage business.

Said party of the first part and the said party of the second part agree to contribute the necessary capital for the conduct of the business exclusive of the building as aforesaid in equal amounts and ~~profits~~ after the payment of the salary to the said party of the second part the per diem to the said party of the first part and the 10% fixed rental value for the building and ground to the said party of the first part are to share equally in the net profits of the business.

Witness our hands and seals this 16 day of June in the year 1923.

Frank A. Martin (Seal)

Burley N. Brown (Seal)

J. L. Summers
Witness



*Secretary of the Maryland Department of Commerce
Is pleased to confer upon you this*

Secretary's Citation

To

MARTIN'S AUTO REPAIR & TOWING

Be it known:

That on behalf of the citizens of the State of Maryland, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of Martin's Auto Repair & Towing; in recognition of being a third generation family-owned business that provides comprehensible solutions for a variety of vehicles; in appreciation for your commitment to the residents of Charles County by rebuilding after two natural disasters and with our best wishes for continued success in the days and years to come, we are pleased to confer upon you this Secretary's Citation.



*Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland,
this Eleventh Day of May, Two Thousand Twenty Two*

Michael Gith, Secretary

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TOWN OF LA PLATA

JUL 28 2026

TOWN OF LA PLATA



COMPTROLLER
of MARYLAND
Serving the People

Be it hereby known to all that this
Certificate of Recognition
is presented to

MARTIN'S SERVICE STATION

*In honor of your 100th anniversary as a family-owned
business serving generations of Charles County residents.
With special appreciation for your commitment to reliable
automotive repair and exceptional customer service. Best
wishes for continued success for the next 100 years.*

Presented this 13th day of May 2022

Peter Franchot
PETER FRANCHOT, COMPTROLLER



County Commissioners of Charles County

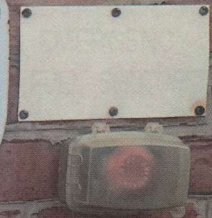


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TOWN OF LA PLATA

309
CHARLES STREET



MARTIN'S

EST. 1922



PRODUCT
REGULAR E10 GASOLINE
HYDRADE E10 GASOLINE
PREMIUM E10
ON-ROAD
OFF-ROAD



County Commissioners of Charles County

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TOWN OF LA PLATA



Official Citation

Be it hereby known to all that
sincere congratulations and appreciation
are offered to

Martin's Service Station
La Plata, Maryland

in recognition of your 100th Anniversary Celebration.

On behalf of the residents of Charles County, Maryland, the County Commissioners recognize and honor Martin's Service Station for being an iconic landmark that has served the community through three buildings, one of which was destroyed by the tornado of 2002 and three generations. Through the challenges of rebuilding came new opportunities to expand services and continue offering the personal touch Martin's established 100 years ago. We honor and appreciate your dedication and commitment to serving the community since 1922.

Presented on this 20th day of May 2022

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND

Reuben B. Collins II, Esq., President

Bobby Rucci, Vice President
District 4

Gilbert O. Bowling, III
District 1

Thomasina Coates, M.S.
District 2

Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed.
District 3

