

# ANNUAL WORK PLAN

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**RALEIGH HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION (RHDC)**

FY 2026

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# ANNUAL WORK PLAN (ADOPTED BY RHDC 8/18/25)

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Raleigh Historic Development Commission serves as the City Council's official historic preservation advisory body to identify, preserve, protect, and promote Raleigh's historic resources.

### Purpose and Powers

The Raleigh Historic Development Commission (RHDC) is a historic preservation commission established and appointed by the City Council pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-303. The duties and powers of the RHDC are created by statute, see N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-942, and are administered via the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The powers and duties granted to the RHDC by the City Council are set forth in UDO Section 10.1.4.

The duties and responsibilities of the RHDC includes the following items of regular business:

- Review and make decisions on Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications in quasi-judicial evidentiary hearings.
- Review and make decisions on subdivision applications in quasi-judicial evidentiary hearings for Historic Overlay Districts and Raleigh Historic Landmarks.
- Review rezoning cases, right-of-way closures, recombinations, and other code required reviews as they arise.
- Act on Demolitions by Neglect
- Maintain an inventory of properties of historical, prehistorical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural significance.
- Identify, prioritize, and recommend historic properties and neighborhoods for Raleigh Historic Landmark, Historic Overlay District, and National Register designation.
- Conduct educational programs with respect to historic properties and districts. This includes launching mobile app tours of Raleigh Historic Landmarks, actively engaging the community through social media, and holding events.

## STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The City of Raleigh's Strategic Plan outlines the City's key priorities and sets a clear path for future goals and actions. The Raleigh Historic Development Commission mission and its initiatives are aligned with the following strategic objectives:

- Community Safety
- Environmental Resilience
- Housing
- Organizational Excellence
- Quality of Life
- Transportation

## FY25 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

For additional accomplishments please see the FY25 Annual Report. We are especially proud of the Preserving Black Churches and Historic Bike Ride events, both of which were on the FY25 Work Plan.

- Hosted a two-part series of events to build relationships with pastors of Black churches and share information about the National Trust's for Historic Preservation's Preserving Black Churches grant program. Throughout the project, the RHDC engaged with over 90 participants and more than 20 churches.
- Hosted the 2nd annual Raleigh Historic Bike Ride in partnership with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission. The public group ride led about 40 cyclists of varied skill levels on a 4.5-mile route through downtown Raleigh. Riders visited and learned about 6 important places highlighted in the recently completed LGBTQIA+ Historic Context project.

## FY26 FOCUS AREAS

In addition to regular business, the Commission utilizes its standing committees, specifically Community Awareness and Research, to lead its engagement and education initiatives.

### Education and Outreach

**Table at Events:** Continue attending events to speak with the public and share information about the benefits of historic preservation, Raleigh Historic Landmark designation, and the histories of Raleigh communities. Examples include the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward Gospel Extravaganza and Celebrate Oberlin! Annual BBQ. (ongoing)

**Sir Walter Awards for Community Appearance:** At the 2026 Sir Walter Awards event, present official plaques to owners of newly designated Raleigh Historic Landmarks. (September 2025)

**Raleigh Historic Bike Ride:** Work with staff to hold the 3rd Annual Raleigh Historic Bike Ride in May to celebrate Preservation Month. This public group ride leads cyclists of many skill levels through Raleigh to learn about Raleigh Historic Landmark properties. RHDC will set the theme and select historic stops. (May 2026)

**Biltmore Hills National Register Historic District:** The process to place the Biltmore Hills neighborhood in the National Register of Historic Places is underway. In anticipation of that momentous occasion RHDC will work with neighborhood leaders to plan a celebration. When the celebration happens depends on the timing of the State and Federal reviews. (ongoing)

**Potential Historic Landmarks:** Send letters to owners of properties on the Places Worthy of Preservation List with a focus on places recommended as eligible for Historic Landmark designation in the LGBTQIA+ Historic Context study. Sending these letters is a regular part of the Research Committee's work. They share the benefits and responsibilities of Raleigh Historic Landmark designation and invite owners to attend a meeting of the committee. (ongoing)

**Jewish History:** Gather available research related to Raleigh’s Jewish communities, their histories and their important places. Connect with owners of Jewish Cemeteries who have expressed interest in historic designation. (ongoing)

**Community Awareness:** Create content to help increase engagement for the Design Standards and Preservation Plan projects described below.

## Major Projects

**Design Standards Update:** Design standards (*Design Guidelines for Raleigh Historic Districts and Landmarks*) are used to review Certificate of Appropriateness applications. The Historic Preservation Program in Planning and Development is initiating an update to these design standards with community engagement set to begin this winter. RHDC has a few responsibilities in this project. These include auditing the current design standards document, considering public comments, reviewing and commenting on proposed new design standards, and finally adopting the new design standards. This work is anticipated to begin in December 2025 and conclude in Summer 2026.

**Preservation Plan:** The 2030 Comprehensive Plan has a specific section that focuses on Historic Preservation (Section 12). As part of the development of the next comprehensive plan, a historic preservation plan will be created as an appendix. The Historic Preservation Program in Planning and Development is initiating the project with community engagement anticipated to begin in Summer 2026. RHDC responsibilities will include auditing the historic preservation section of the comprehensive plan, attending public meetings and considering public comments, and reviewing and adopting the Preservation Plan. This work is anticipated to begin in Winter 2026 and conclude in Summer 2027.

## BOARD OR COMMISSION MEMBERS

Rob Allen, Chair

David Serxner, Vice-Chair

Jonathan Anderson

Ariel Kocourek

Bang Le

Octavia Rainey

Jordan Ryland

TraShanna Sanchez

John Shimer

Melissa Todd

Samuel "Wes" Tripp

Lauren Woodard

Christina Jones, City Council Liaison

Tania Tully, Staff Liaison

Collette Kinane, Staff Liaison

Erin Morton Pugh, Staff Liaison