

2026 Morris County Historic Preservation Trust Fund

APPLICATION WORKSHOP

January 28, 2026



Creation of the Trust Fund

- Morris County voters approved a referendum in November 2002 authorizing the County Commissioners to permit historic preservation funding under the Open Space Trust Fund, as allowed by state law.
- Between 1/8 and 1/4 cent of the existing tax for Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund was to be used for the preservation and acquisition of historic properties, structures, facilities, sites, areas or objects.



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Funding Summary 2003~2025 (23 Rounds)

- 701 applications requested \$83 million.
- \$56 million were awarded through 579 grants to 136 historic sites located in 35 municipalities.
- 315 Construction grants were awarded with a median amount of \$135,000
- 264 Non-Construction grants were awarded with a median amount of \$22,640

For 2026, about **\$6 million** will be available for the
Historic Preservation Trust Fund.



ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- **Municipal governments within Morris County**
- **Morris County Government**
- **Charitable Conservancies**

A corporation or trust exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code of 1986) whose purpose includes historic preservation of historic properties, structures, facilities, sites, areas or objects, or the acquisition of such properties, structures, facilities, sites, areas or objects for historic preservation purposes.

ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES

- Located in Morris County
- Listing on the National or New Jersey Register of Historic Places, individually or as part of a historic district listed on the National/State Register.
- If not listed on either Register, property must be certified as eligible for listing by the State Historic Preservation Office, either as an individually listed site or as part of a historic district.



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- If property/district is not listed on the Registers, a **Certification of Eligibility (COE)** letter or a State Historic Preservation Officer Opinion (SHPO Opinion) must be included with the application.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- Plans and reports associated with the implementation of a historic preservation project (Preservation Planning application, Construction Documents application)
- Register Nominations (Preservation Planning application)
- Acquisition (Preservation Planning application)
- Stabilization, Rehabilitation, Restoration and Preservation (Construction application)

Religious Institutions

Eligible activities include:

- Historic Structure Reports, Preservation Plans, and Assessment Reports;
- The preparation of construction documents and completion of construction activities for the exterior building elements, and the building's structural and MEP systems (mechanical, electrical and plumbing)

Cemeteries

- Must be **individually listed** on or eligible for the New Jersey or National Register of Historic Places.
- Eligible activities include the preparation of reports, assessments and studies that document the conditions of tombstones or other elements of the cemetery; and the preparation of construction documents and completion of construction activities for all historic cemetery elements.



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All proposed activities must be in
conformance with

*The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the
Treatment of Historic Properties 1995*

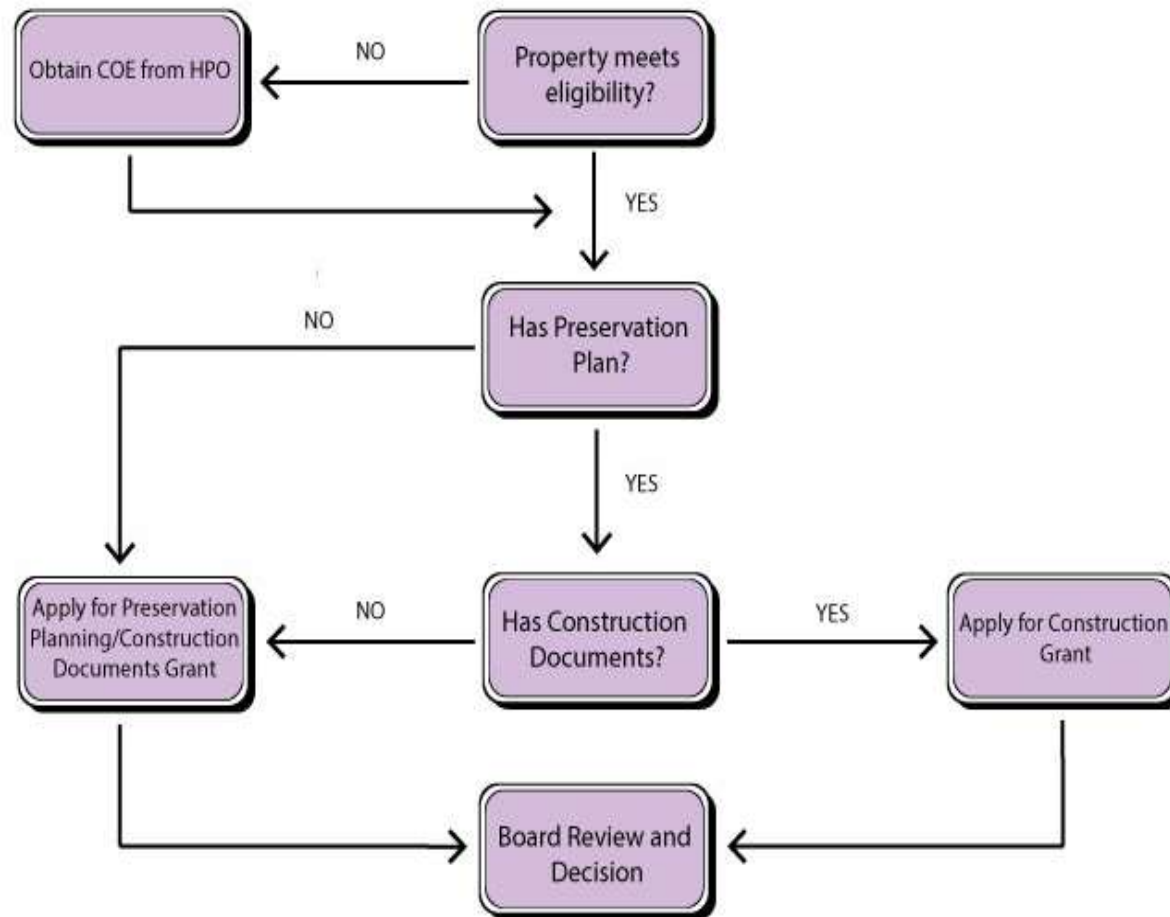
Conformance review by County
Consultant approved by NJ HPO

Long-Term Facilities Planning

A preservation planning document, such as a Preservation Plan, Historic Structures Report, Historic Landscape Report, Conservation Assessment must be completed prior to requesting funding for the preparation of Construction Document or for Construction.

All preservation planning documents for County-funded sites can be accessed at [Preservation Planning Documents](#)

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Typical Timeline (New Project)

July 2026: Grant award (Preservation Plan)

July 2027: Grant award (Construction Doc.)

July 2028: Grant award (Construction)



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Review Schedule

For projects with HP funding for the preparation of Preservation Planning or Construction Documents, the following deadlines must be met to be considered for additional funds for the funding request year:

- By Jan. 7th : 75% documents must be **digitally submitted**
- By Feb. 28th: 100% documents must be **digitally submitted**

Projects failing to meet the submittal dates will not be considered for additional funding during that grant year.

**Grant work may not start prior to
the execution of Grant Agreement.**

Professional Services Checklist

All applicants seeking funding for

- a) Professional Services and/or
 - b) Construction activities requiring Professional Services
- must complete the Professional Services Checklist in the program portal

Preservation Plan and Construction Documents – Review

Draft Preservation Planning Documents and Construction Documents must be at least **50%** complete before submission for County review and funding reimbursement.

Construction Document Review Schedule

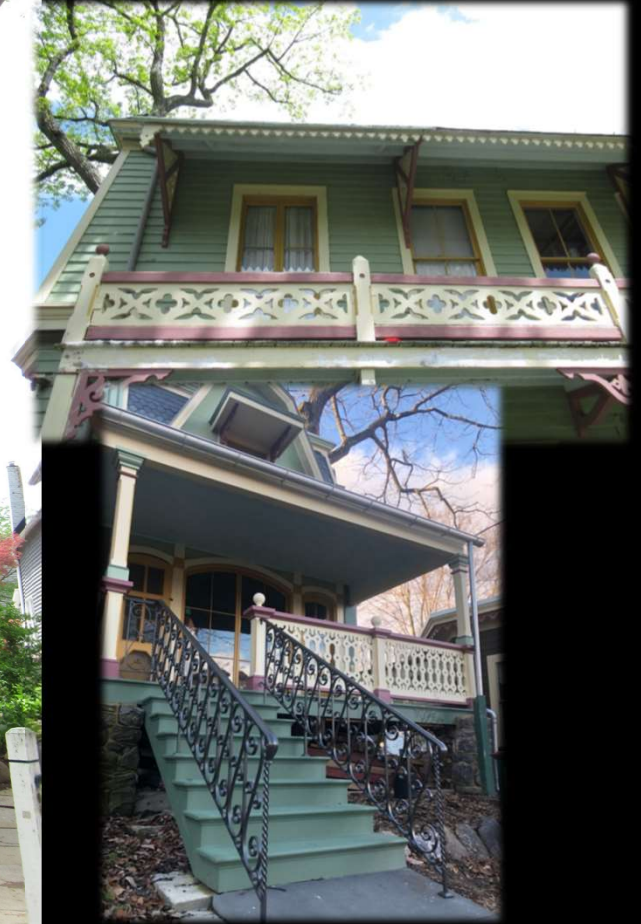
- Those projects for which Construction Documents were prepared without HP funding could submit Construction Documents for preliminary review prior to the grant application deadline.
- Completed Construction Documents could also be submitted with a Construction Grant application through the portal.



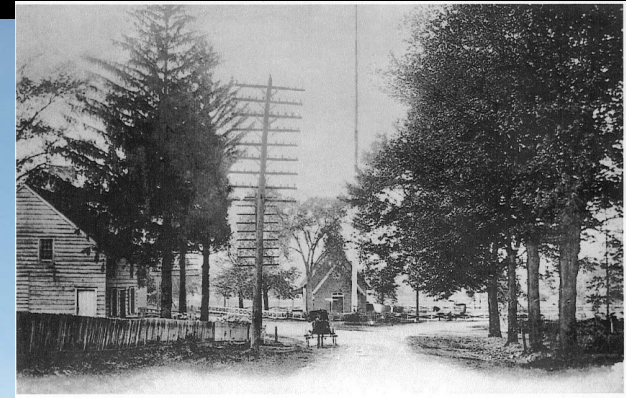
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Construction Documents

- Full Construction Documents must be submitted for all projects with an anticipated construction cost of over \$50,000.
- A complete set of Construction Documents provides a comprehensive, fully coordinated set of detailed plans, elevations, sections and details sufficient to accurately and completely describe the proposed scope of construction work; in addition to detailed Construction Specifications Institute standard 16-part or 50-part specifications.
- The coordinated drawings and specifications should allow the Contractor to determine a guaranteed maximum price and obtain necessary permits to construct the project.



Site: J. Smith Richardson History House, Parsippany-Troy Hills Twp.
Applicant: Mount Tabor Historical Society
Scope: Preservation Plan, Structural Repairs, Utilities, Interior finishes,
 Exterior Restoration



Site: Little Red Schoolhouse, Borough of Florham Park
Applicant: Borough of Florham Park
Scope: Preservation Plan, Roof, Interior & Exterior Restoration



Site: Orchard Street Cemetery Gatehouse, Town of Dover
Applicant: Orchard Street Gatehouse Historical Association
Scope: Preservation Plan, Register Nomination, Exterior Restoration



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Ownership

- Owner consent is required for all applications, except for an acquisition.
- For Preservation Planning / Construction Documents grants, if applicant is not the owner or lessee with a 20-year unexpired lease term, applicant must prove significant involvement with the property's preservation.
- For Construction grants, if applicant is not the owner, applicant must have lease with 20-year unexpired lease term from the date of application.
- All properties to be acquired must be purchased in fee simple and purchasing entity must have full control of the land.

Ineligible Activities

- Reconstruction
- Administrative or operational costs of the agency
- Routine or ongoing maintenance work such as grounds maintenance, painting or cleaning that is not part of a comprehensive project
- Interpretive activities such as displays, signs, etc.



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Matching Requirement

Grant Type	Trust Fund pays:	Applicant pays:
Construction	80%	20%
Acquisition	50%	50%
Preservation Planning / Construction Documents		
If > \$5,000	80%	20%
If ≤ \$5,000	100%	0%

- Applicant shall show evidence of matching funds in hand or demonstrate clearly the ability to match the grant requested.
- Need guarantee from town / other sources in case match source e.g. NJHT grant is not successful.

Easement Requirement

- An easement agreement with a 30-year term with the County of Morris is required for Construction grants over \$50,000, applied cumulatively over any number of funding cycles.
- A perpetual easement is required for all acquisition projects at time of funding.
- Easements are not required for non-construction projects resulting in plan development.

Unexpended Funds

All unexpended balances will be canceled and returned to the Trust Fund to be made available for the next HP grant round.

Grant Extensions

- Initial extension not to exceed 2 years
- Second extension not to exceed 1 year
 - More than 50% of work must be completed
 - Prove circumstances beyond applicant control
- All extensions are reviewed by the HP Review Board



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2026 Review Schedule

Feb. 27	Declaration of Intent due
Mar. 27	Application deadline
May~June	Review Board site visits and Applicant Presentations
June 24	Review Board makes funding recommendations to Commissioners
July 8	Commissioners make grant awards

Application Submission

- All application materials must be submitted digitally through the program portal.
- The time you submit the application through the portal will be considered the official time of submission of your application.
- If submitting more than one application, please prioritize each project in the portal.



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Video

- For all sites that have not provided a video before
- 10-minute video in MP4 or MOV format
- Historic significance, property setting, general views of the exterior and interior, areas specific to the grant request
- One method is to use PowerPoint, voice over, save as MP4
- Video must be submitted through a County-provided link by the application deadline
- Funded site videos will be incorporated into the HP StoryMap illustrating all funded sites

Application Review

Site Visits

30-minute visit with at least one HP Review Board member and County staff in May (Whole Board for new sites)

- No more than 4 applicant representatives

Final Presentation

15-minute presentation with HP Review Board in early June

- PowerPoint must be submitted through a County-provided link one week before your final presentation date
- No more than 4 applicant representatives



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File Naming Convention (PDF files)

Application Form	Professional Qualifications
501(c)(3) Documentation	Cost Estimates
By-Laws / Leases	Drawings
Applicant Personnel	Specifications
Register Nomination	Match Commitment
Maintenance Plan	Site Plan / Location Map
Professional Proposals	Long Range Plan
Professional Services Checklist	Preservation Plan Checklist
Photos (Labels)	Certificate of Eligibility



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[A StoryMap Celebrating Over 20 Years of Historic Preservation](#)