



City of Franklin

Mailing Address:
109 3rd Ave S
Franklin, TN 37064
(615) 791-3217

Meeting Agenda

Preservation Plan Steering Committee

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

1:00 PM

Harlinsdale Main Barn

239 Franklin Road
Franklin, TN 37064

CALL TO ORDER

CITIZEN COMMENTS (Open for citizens to be heard on any issue or concern, including those related to items on the agenda. Please submit a Speaker Card at the beginning of the meeting if you would like to address the Commission. If you would like to speak on an agenda item, the Chair will hold your comment until the public comment period associated with the item. As provided by law, the Commission shall make no decisions or consideration of action of citizen comments for items not on the agenda, except to refer the matter to the Planning Director/Staff for administrative consideration, or to a schedule the matter for consideration at a later date. Those addressing the Commission are requested to come to the microphone and identify themselves by name and address for the official record. The Chair may restrict the period for public comment, including the length of the public comment period, the number of individuals who can speak and the length of time each individual may speak. When time allows, the standard individual public comment time is two minutes.)

Comments on agenda items may be made in person or by emailing planningintake@franklintn.gov before noon on the day of the meeting. Comments will be submitted for the record.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion Of The Preservation Plan Update

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Anyone needing accommodations due to disabilities please contact the ADA Coordinator at 615-791-3277 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.



Franklin Preservation & Civil War Plan Steering Committee Packet

Date: November 18, 2025

The engagement and analysis conducted throughout this planning process have revealed a number of key themes that reflect the community's priorities, values, and aspirations for the future of preservation in Franklin. Building on this foundation, the project team has been expanding each theme into a series of **DRAFT** Goals and Strategies that begin to outline potential directions for the Historic Preservation Plan.

As the team developed these ideas, it became clear that many of the themes are interrelated and reinforce one another. To reflect this, we have grouped them under broader umbrella topic areas that highlight where strategies may overlap, complement, or build upon one another.

This packet is intended to share these initial ideas with the Steering Committee ahead of our next meeting on Tuesday, November 18th. Each goal and strategy is open for discussion; we encourage you to add to, revise, challenge, or workshop any of these ideas during our session. The intent is to use this meeting as a working dialogue that shapes the next phase of the plan together. Each strategy is accompanied by a short explanatory note beginning with "Today, Franklin...", which provides additional insight into why the strategy is being recommended and how it could support Franklin's preservation goals moving forward. Following each theme's set of goals and strategies, you will also find a series of prompting questions (highlighted in orange). These are designed to spark creative discussion and help the committee think broadly about potential opportunities, partnerships, and new ideas that could strengthen or expand each theme.

Together, your feedback will help refine these **DRAFT** ideas into a cohesive, actionable framework for preservation in Franklin, one that honors the city's history while charting a vision for its continued evolution.

Historic Preservation Workshop Outline

Pod 1: Inclusive Storytelling

Theme 1.1: Inclusive Storytelling & Representation

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1.1.1: Continue to support a deep and diverse Franklin narrative.

Strategy 1.1.1.1: Create a resource hub to collect, expand, and formalize historic context research to capture the full extent of Franklin's communities and heritage.

Create a resource hub to collect existing cultural and thematic contexts and develop new contexts to guide preservation priorities and interpretation across the city.

Today, Franklin's preservation work includes references to historic context studies in the City's 2001 Historic Preservation Plan. Leadership Franklin, The African American Heritage Society of Williamson County, and other groups, have also developed specific cultural or thematic contexts. This strategy would create a resource hub to combine existing documentation and provide a home for new context studies that bring forward the people, traditions, and industries that shaped Franklin's broader heritage.

Strategy 1.1.1.2: Broaden Franklin's digital storytelling presence through a coordinated media platform that highlights lesser-known stories, people, traditions, and resources.

Coordinate with public entities, private organizations, museums, parks, and cemeteries, and others to include a diverse range of stories. Today, there are many groups and organizations that capture and share Franklin's heritage stories. This strategy would expand collaboration and create a community library of oral histories from the many groups who are working to document them to connect these efforts and reach broader audiences.

Strategy 1.1.1.3: Offer interpretive micro-grants for churches, community groups, or neighborhoods to design small-scale signage or digital content about their own histories.

Prioritize projects that bring forward stories of resilience, culture, and creativity often overlooked in traditional preservation narratives.

*Today, Franklin has robust institutional storytelling through projects like *The Fuller Story* and exhibits by the African American Heritage Society. However, there is no dedicated funding mechanism for smaller, community-led interpretation. A micro-grant program, funded by Franklin's preservation partners, would empower residents and local organizations to share more of Franklin's untold stories.*

Prompting Table Discussion Questions:

- If Franklin could tell its story in a completely new way, what would it look or sound like? Perhaps a podcast, a festival, or something no one's tried yet?
- How could we bring Franklin's hidden histories to life in public spaces? Examples include projections, augmented reality, art installations, or soundscapes?
- How could young people re-tell Franklin's history in their own voice? Maybe through film, music, gaming, or social media challenges?
- What's one unconventional place where Franklin's stories should live? Did we consider a park bench, more mural walls, or something simple like a café napkin?
- How might digital tools (AI voice stories, interactive archives, QR-code memory trails) help people experience Franklin's history differently?
- Storytelling never stops! How could we use it to imagine Franklin's future?
- What other goals and strategies should Franklin consider?

Pod 2A: Civil War & Battlefield Sites

Goals & Strategies

Goal 2A.1: Preserve battlefield sites and associated resources that tell the story of the Battle of Franklin and Franklin's broader Civil War experience.

Strategy 2A.1.1: Create an inventory of battlefield sites and associated resources and prioritize them for future acquisition, preservation, and interpretation.

Franklin has made major progress in battlefield reclamation over the past 20 years, but there is no single, publicly accessible inventory maintained that maps all remaining battlefield parcels, archaeological resources, view sheds, and landscape features at risk. Existing data is spread across multiple organizations, making it difficult to plan long-term acquisitions or respond quickly when key properties come up for sale. A coordinated inventory would allow the City and its partners to prioritize land protection strategically rather than reactively.

Strategy 2A.1.2: Document and interpret Civil War stories for sites undergoing development that cannot be preserved.

Today in Franklin, when battlefield land is redeveloped, interpretation typically happens only if a partner organization initiates it. There is no formal process requiring documentation, archaeological investigation, or storytelling when historic land is altered or lost. As infill development accelerates along Columbia Avenue, Downs Boulevard, and Lewisburg Pike, Franklin risks losing untold civilian life, African American stories, and post-war stories unless a documentation protocol is established.

Strategy 2A.1.3: Unify Civil War wayfinding and interpretation signage using the 2022 Historic Wayfinding Guidelines developed by the Civil War Historical Commission.

Today in Franklin, multiple organizations manage Civil War interpretation in the city, including the Battle of Franklin Trust, City of Franklin, Heritage Foundation, and the African American Heritage Society, resulting in signage and storytelling that vary in format, tone, and visibility. Franklin's Historic Wayfinding Guidelines offer a template, but they have not yet been fully implemented across all battlefield and Civil War-

related sites. A coordinated system would create a more seamless visitor experience and help visitors understand the full geography of the battle, not just individual sites.

Prompting Table Discussion Questions:

- How could Franklin's preservation partners collaborate to expand information resources around historic battlefields?
- How could wayfinding and interpretation be improved?
- How can the stories told at the battlefields be broadened and made more inclusive and accessible?

Topic 2: Strengthening Franklin's Places

Theme 2.1: Housing, Infill & Neighborhood Character

Goals & Strategies

Goal 2.1.1: Preserve smaller, older homes and stabilize historic neighborhoods as attainable housing options.

Strategy 2.1.1.1: Strengthen local protections against demolition by neglect to prevent the loss of smaller historic homes through prolonged disrepair.

Today, Franklin lacks clear enforcement measures or incentives to address situations where historic properties are intentionally or unintentionally allowed to deteriorate to the point of requiring demolition. This gradual decline of the housing stock threatens neighborhood character as well as reducing attainable housing options in established districts. A stronger demolition-by-neglect policy, paired with education, code enforcement coordination, and potential repair assistance programs, could help stabilize aging homes and preserve the integrity and affordability of Franklin's historic neighborhoods. Establishing a demolition delay process would create a structured review period, typically ranging from 60 to 180 days, during which staff, preservation commissions, and property owners could explore feasible alternatives such as rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, or relocation. The process would balance private property rights with community interest in maintaining Franklin's architectural diversity and sense of place.

Strategy 2.1.1.2: Update and expand Franklin's Historic Resource Survey.

Document mid-century neighborhoods, postwar subdivisions, and culturally significant areas that are not currently protected under overlays.

Today: Franklin's last historic resource survey was completed in 2007 and primarily focused on pre-World War II architecture. A new survey or a survey update could identify newer resources and at-risk areas that represent Franklin's more recent heritage and community diversity.

Strategy 2.1.1.3: Work with partners to establish a revolving loan fund that assists with the acquisition, rehabilitation, and affordable resale of older and historic homes.

Today, Franklin does not have a dedicated funding tool to keep older homes affordable, even though many are being purchased, demolished, or flipped at price points out of reach for local families. A revolving loan fund could expand this work beyond one neighborhood and support long-term attainability in multiple historic areas.

Strategy 2.1.1.4: Explore creation of a Community Land Trust (CLT) to preserve long-term affordability in historic neighborhoods experiencing speculative teardowns and rising property values.

A Community Land Trust is an organization or program that purchases and holds buildings or land for future affordable housing development. Today, Franklin has no CLT model in place. Some other cities facing similar displacement pressures (e.g., Charleston, Durham, Decatur) are using CLTs to preserve affordability in historic neighborhoods. Several Franklin neighborhoods, including Natchez Street, Hard Bargain, and Columbia Avenue corridor, are experiencing rapid appreciation, making a CLT a potential tool to stabilize housing costs while preserving cultural heritage.

**Case Study - Townsite Community Land Trust
Flagstaff, AZ**

Townsite Community Land Trust (TCLT) is a non-profit organization that purchases and renovates historic properties for sale to low- and moderate-income residents. The TCLT provides affordable housing by removing the land cost from the housing price. The purchaser buys the house and enters into a 99-year, renewable, and inheritable ground lease, giving them exclusive use of the land under their home. The TCLT is a membership organization and accepts tax-deductible contributions of real estate and money to further its mission.

Goal 2.1.2: Encourage adaptive reuse and context-sensitive infill that supports affordability and character.

Strategy 2.1.2.1: Adopt an "adaptive use ordinance."

Consider regulatory barriers, such as zoning limits, parking requirements, or building code requirements, that prevent older commercial, industrial, or civic buildings from being adaptively reused.

Today, Franklin's zoning and building codes provide limited flexibility for reusing older structures. An adaptive use ordinance could open opportunities for creative reuse projects while preserving the city's historic fabric.

Strategy 2.1.2.2: Amend the section of Franklin's Zoning Ordinance that regulates transitional areas adjacent to Historic Preservation Overlay districts (Zoning Code Chapter 8) to strengthen design guidance for residential infill and edge conditions.

Today, Franklin's zoning ordinance already establishes transitional features that regulate scale, height, and buffering between new development and existing neighborhoods. These standards, outlined in Chapter 8, provide a good foundation for managing physical relationships and ensuring compatibility between developments of varying scales and intensities. However, these transitional provisions are largely focused on setbacks, buffers, and height relationships and could use more specificity regarding compatibility with height, architectural character, materials, and rhythm of surrounding buildings and the adjacent HPO. The technical nature of the standards can also make them challenging for property owners, small builders, and designers to interpret, particularly for smaller infill projects adjacent to historic districts.

For Franklin, amending the standards in Chapter 8 could enhance existing zoning requirements by illustrating how the transitional features align with the intent of the Historic District Design Guidelines. The amendments would ensure that new construction near historic areas reinforces neighborhood character, supports predictability in review, and maintains flexibility for context-sensitive and creative design solutions.

Prompting Table Discussion Questions:

- What would help homeowners keep and maintain Franklin's smaller, older houses rather than sell to teardown developers?
- What types of older or underused buildings could be adapted for housing in Franklin?
- What incentives would make preservation more attractive to homeowners and small developers?
- Are there other partnerships or policy ideas that could link preservation with housing affordability?
- What other goals and strategies should Franklin consider?

Theme 2.2: Preservation Framework & Incentives

Goals & Strategies

Goal 2.2.1: Ensure that historic preservation permitting and review processes are clear, accessible, and expedient.

Strategy 2.2.1.1: Conduct an audit of existing preservation-related permitting and review processes to identify opportunities to clarify or streamline procedures and expedite review and approval processes.

Today in Franklin, residents and builders alike describe the review process as unpredictable and time-consuming. Applicants often struggle to understand which approvals are needed and when, leading to delays and frustration. A process audit would allow Franklin to pinpoint where redundancies, unclear steps, or overlapping reviews can be eliminated - making preservation review both more efficient and more user-friendly.

Strategy 2.2.1.2: Review historic preservation design guidelines and related preservation guidance to ensure that they are accessible and usable by a typical homeowner, building owner, or lay-person.

Today, Franklin's design guidelines are thorough but highly technical, which can make them difficult for first-time applicants or homeowners to interpret. Revisiting the guidelines to include more visuals, diagrams, and plain-language explanations would make preservation less intimidating and help residents better understand how to maintain and improve their historic properties.

Strategy 2.2.1.3: Amend the Historic District Design Guidelines to expand the work that may be approved under the administrative review process.

Most Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications in the Historic Preservation Overlay (HPO) require full review by the Historic Zoning Commission. While staff can administratively approve a limited set of projects, the current process still results in longer review timelines for smaller, minor alterations that would not negatively affect the building or district.

Prompting Table Discussion Questions:

- How can the preservation review process be made clearer, faster, and more predictable for applicants?
- Should there be a set of pre-approved designs to streamline the design review process, such as window and fence products?
- What tools or resources would help property owners better understand what requires review?
- How can the City of Franklin better regulate compatible infill and transitions near historic districts?
- What minor work could qualify for administrative review to simplify approvals?
- How might process improvements or incentives encourage more investment in preservation?
- Where could coordination between staff, the Historic Zoning Commission, and applicants be strengthened?

Theme 2.3: Land, Water & Cultural Landscapes

Goals & Strategies

Goal 2.3.1: Improve connectivity with the Harpeth River to facilitate public access and preserve historic, archaeological, and environmental resources.

Strategy 2.3.1.1: Identify and preserve existing historic and archaeological resources along the Harpeth River through overlay zoning and interpretation.

Today Franklin recognizes the Harpeth River as one of its defining natural and cultural landmarks, yet many of the historic and archaeological sites along its banks remain undocumented and unprotected. Strengthening preservation through zoning and interpretation would help ensure that development and recreation efforts along the river celebrate and protect these deeply rooted historic resources.

Strategy 2.3.1.2: Create public access to the Harpeth River to allow passive recreation opportunities.

Today Franklin has limited public access or visibility to the Harpeth River, leaving many residents disconnected from this important part of the city's identity. Expanding opportunities for trails, overlooks, and small gathering areas would allow people to experience the river's natural and cultural beauty while promoting stewardship and education about its history.

Goal 2.3.2: Identify and preserve Franklin's cultural landscapes.

Strategy 2.3.2.1: Create a digital inventory of historic cemeteries for potential preservation.

Today Franklin contains many small family cemeteries that are often hidden within newer neighborhoods or left without maintenance, despite their historical significance. Developing a comprehensive inventory in coordination with Williamson County would help the city locate, protect, and interpret these sites as important parts of Franklin's heritage and cultural landscape.

Strategy 2.3.2.2: Identify and prioritize additional battlefield sites for acquisition, preservation, and interpretation.

Today Franklin has made major strides in battlefield preservation at sites like Carter Hill and Eastern Flank, but several other battle-era and Reconstruction-era landscapes remain unprotected. Expanding these efforts would allow Franklin to tell a more complete story of its Civil War history and ensure that these landscapes remain part of the community's shared memory.

Goal 2.3.3: Preserve archaeological sites, both above-ground and below-ground, to protect these significant historic and prehistoric resources from potential threats.

Strategy 2.3.3.1: Expand the inventory of known archaeological sites and resources and identify areas of potential archaeological significance in cooperation with the Tennessee Division of Archaeology.

Partnering with the Tennessee Division of Archaeology to create an inventory would help the city identify sensitive areas and manage development more responsibly.

Strategy 2.3.3.2: Create an Archaeology Overlay Zone to protect known and potential archaeological sites and resources.

Today Franklin is home to archaeological resources that reflect centuries of settlement and cultural activity, but many remain undocumented or vulnerable to disturbance. Establishing an overlay zone and requiring Phase 1A investigations for proposed development would help the city identify and preserve archaeological resources early in the review process before they are lost to construction or disturbance and provide an added level of protection to these sites, ensuring that their stories are preserved for future generations.

Cultural Resource Report

When a proposed construction project has the potential to impact archaeological resources, a preliminary technical review known as Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is prepared to determine whether further action is needed to protect those resources. The Phase 1 ESA includes a review of historical records, an on-site inspection, and interviews with relevant stakeholders. The report may identify the potential for archaeological resources or determine that no further investigation is required. In circumstances where there is potential for archaeological resources, or

archaeological artifacts are found during construction, a Phase 2 ESA is required to document the resources and recommend actions to avoid, minimize, or mitigate negative impacts from the project on those resources. A Cultural Resource Report is prepared documenting the actions taken throughout the process.

Prompting Table Discussion Questions:

- How can Franklin reconnect people to the Harpeth River while protecting its natural, historic, and archaeological character?
- Where could new trails, overlooks, or small gathering spaces provide better river access or storytelling opportunities?
- What types of cultural landscapes, like cemeteries, farms, or battlefields, best represent Franklin's identity and deserve stronger protection?
- How can residents or organizations play a bigger role in maintaining and interpreting small cemeteries or hidden historic sites?
- What are some of the most effective way for Franklin to identify and protect archaeological sites without creating barriers for property owners?
- How could archaeological resources be made more visible or meaningful to the community through education or public interpretation?

Pod 3: Cultivating Franklin's Economy

Theme 3.1: Heritage & Cultural Tourism

Goals & Strategies

Goal 3.1.1: Ensure that the benefits of tourism and visitation in Franklin are balanced with the needs and quality of life of existing residents and property owners.

Strategy 3.1.1.1: Explore opportunities that enhance the character of Downtown Franklin, residential neighborhoods, and historic sites to increase livability and quality of life for residents.

Today, Downtown Franklin is compact and walkable providing easy access to shopping and dining from adjacent residential neighborhoods. In 2023, the City of Franklin completed a streetscape project connecting Downtown to the Factory. However, ongoing streetscape improvements are necessary to ensure connectivity and accessibility. This strategy focuses on completing enhancements to the streetscape including sidewalk connections, ADA improvements, replacing brick pavers and crosswalks, and providing additional street trees to make a contiguous and pleasant pedestrian connection.

Strategy 3.1.1.2: Evaluate policies that balance short-term vacation rental (Airbnbs) needs in the Downtown area with impacts on adjacent property owners and the housing needs of Franklin residents.

Today, Franklin allows short-term rentals under rules that require owner-occupancy and limit one rental per lot in residential areas, but there is no publicly documented city-wide cap on the total number of short-term rentals nor a formal mechanism to assess cumulative impacts on housing supply or neighborhood dynamics. There is also no easily accessible map or way to know where they are located and whether they are properly permitted.

Goal 3.1.2: Support a robust, diverse, and mutually supportive cultural and heritage tourism economy in Franklin.

Strategy 3.1.2.1: Explore opportunities to create or promote events, activities, and destinations connected to Franklin’s agricultural heritage, music history, and the arts.

Today, Franklin has a strong tourism brand rooted in history, with successful Civil War sites and downtown events drawing regional and national visitors. Developing additional events or partnerships around other aspects of Franklin’s story, such as its agricultural and equestrian legacy, music industry ties, and creative arts scene could diversify the visitor experience and strengthen local pride in Franklin’s broader cultural identity.

Strategy 3.1.2.2: Identify opportunities to cross-market new or lesser-known tourism attractions to visitors Downtown or at major battlefield sites.

Today, Franklin attracts millions of visitors annually, many of whom come for short, single-purpose trips centered on downtown shopping or the Civil War story. Lesser-known destinations, including historic neighborhoods, African American heritage sites, farms, and craft venues, can continue to be marketed together. Creating cross-promotional efforts, digital story maps, or multi-site itineraries could encourage visitors to explore more of Franklin and stay longer.

Strategy 3.1.2.3: Create a Franklin Heritage Trail that connects buildings and sites associated with the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Civil Rights Movement.

Today, Franklin has a powerful foundation for heritage interpretation through battlefield sites, The Fuller Story initiative, and work by the African American Heritage Society. Yet there is no single cohesive experience that links these historic layers across time and geography. A Franklin Heritage Trail could unite these stories, connecting downtown landmarks, neighborhood sites, and interpretive stops, to tell a more complete and inclusive story of the city’s evolution.

Prompting Table Discussion Questions:

- What small improvements could make living near Main Street feel more livable?
- Should Franklin consider additional limitations, such as a density cap, allowing them to be part-time only, and banning them in residential neighborhoods?
- If you lived one block from Main Street, what would make you feel that tourism benefits your neighborhood rather than burdens it?
- If you could redesign how visitors arrive, move, and park downtown, what would it look like?
- How could we connect downtown visitors to other historic or cultural sites nearby?
- What new partnerships—between farms, artists, musicians, and historians—could expand Franklin’s tourism offerings?
- What technology (apps, QR codes, digital trails) could help visitors explore lesser-known sites?
- If a visitor only had one day in Franklin, what route or story would you want them to experience?

Theme 3.2: Economic Vitality & Small Businesses

Goals & Strategies

Goal 3.2.1: Promote efforts to encourage local ownership of Downtown businesses that support the needs of both visitors and residents.

Strategy 3.2.1.1: Explore zoning and other regulatory tools or reforms to limit the number of chain businesses Downtown or their proximity to each other.

Today Franklin's Downtown retains a unique sense of place, but national and high-end brands have begun to occupy an increasing share of storefronts. Without regulatory safeguards, the concentration of chain businesses could dilute Downtown's authenticity and displace smaller local tenants. Exploring zoning or overlay tools to manage the mix of business types could help protect Franklin's local identity and maintain the diversity that makes Main Street distinctive.

Strategy 3.2.1.2: Identify tax and financial incentives (or penalties) that encourage building owners to affordably rent their storefronts to local businesses.

Today Franklin's property values and rents continue to climb, creating financial pressures that push out small business tenants. Most building owners lease to the highest bidder, and national retailers have a greater ability to pay premium rates. Offering financial incentives, such as tax abatements or small rent subsidies, or imposing vacancy penalties could encourage property owners to rent affordably to local tenants, helping maintain a vibrant and diverse business mix.

Case Study - Prosper Portland: Affordable Commercial Tenanting Grant Portland, OR

The Affordable Commercial Tenanting (ACT) Grant provides funding to property owners and small business owners who are in the process of negotiating a lease. By offering rents that are 15-25 percent below market for at least three years, the program facilitates access to commercial space and supports inclusive business growth. Grant awards account for the rent discount the property owner provides and tenant improvement subsidy needed up to \$300,000. Grant funds are reimbursement-

based, and may be used for tenant improvements, space-related soft costs, and permitting support to ready space to open for business. Technical assistance may also be available for business support.

Prompting Table Discussion Questions:

- What kinds of everyday places would make you visit Downtown more often during a regular week?
- Are there certain business types that Franklin is missing that could better serve residents or families?
- If you had to describe Downtown's business mix today – what's overrepresented and what's missing?
- How might Franklin bring new life to upper floors or side streets with more resident-oriented uses?
- What might a "Franklin Originals" seal or recognition program look like – and what benefits could it offer?
- Are there underused spaces or buildings that could become launchpads for new local businesses?
- Are there examples from other places that have successfully managed this balance?
- What other goals or strategies do you have for local businesses in Franklin?
- Are there other areas that you could see local neighborhood commercial being added?

Theme 3.3: Civil War & Tourism

Goals & Strategies (table discussion)

Goal 3.3.1: Strengthen the economic impact of Civil War tourism by increasing multi-site, multi-day visitor engagement.

Strategy 3.3.1.1: Develop a unified Civil War + African American History + Downtown pass/ticket (digital or printed) that bundles site entry, tours, and local business discounts.

Today, Franklin has separate admissions, separate nonprofits, and no shared ticketing system, which limits cross-visits and economic circulation.

Goal 3.3.2: Broaden Civil War interpretation to reach wider and more diverse audiences.

Strategy 3.3.2.1: Launch a Reconstruction & Post-War Franklin interpretive initiative linked to Hard Bargain, McLemore House, and the Public Square.

Today, Franklin holds strong content through The Fuller Story, but this history is still not fully integrated into tourism circuits or wayfinding.

Strategy 3.3.2.2: Partner with schools, the Battle of Franklin Trust, and the African American Heritage Society to create youth-focused field programs, scavenger hunts, or augmented-reality learning.

Today, Franklin's education offerings are site-based and tour-focused, not interactive or curriculum-aligned. There are opportunities to bring experiential learning to the battlefields and other Civil War sites.

Goal 3.3.3: Improve coordination between battlefield sites, tourism entities, and downtown business partners.

Strategy 3.3.3.1: Strengthen communication and coordination between the Civil War Historical Commission (CWHC) and the Downtown Franklin Association (DFA) by appointing a representative from the DFA to the CWHC.

Today, Franklin has collaboration between representative organizations on the Civil War Historical Commission, but this does not currently include the Downtown Franklin Association.

Prompting Table Discussion Questions:

- How might Franklin increase the economic impact of Civil War battlefields and other Civil War sites?
- How might Franklin broaden the visitor experience and create more crossover among Civil War-focused visitors?
- How could Franklin tell the battlefields' preservation story?
- What new educational opportunities are presented by reclaimed battlefield land?

Pod 4: Empowering Franklin's Stewards

Theme 4.1: Preservation Education & Advocacy

Goals & Strategies (table discussion)

Goal 4.1.1: Expand education and awareness of preservation tools, resources, and best practices in Franklin.

Strategy 4.1.1.1: Develop a "Preservation 101" program for Franklin homeowners.

Create a recurring educational program, such as a quarterly workshop, online module, or short video series, introducing residents to Franklin's preservation framework. The program would walk homeowners through key topics like the Historic Preservation Overlay, design guidelines, Certificate of Appropriateness review, and how to collaborate with the Design Review Commission and Historic Zoning Commission.

While the City provides public access to design guidelines and staff support for individual applicants, there is no structured or recurring orientation for property owners navigating preservation rules. Residents often learn the process reactively, once they are already preparing for a project.

Goal 4.1.2: Incorporate historic preservation opportunities into high school and postsecondary education programming in Franklin

Strategy 4.1.2.1: Establish hands-on preservation summer program for high school and/or college students in Franklin. The program could offer practical introduction to historic preservation practices, historic trades, and/or archaeology while supporting repair and maintenance of historic sites in Franklin.

Strategy 4.1.2.2: Establish STEM-based historic preservation, architecture, and construction pathway Franklin high school students.

Strategy 4.1.2.3: Establish preservation trades training program at Columbia State Community College.

Strategy 4.1.2.4: Engage youth directly to understand how they want to participate in preservation activities. Conduct listening sessions, classroom discussions, or small-group workshops to hear their perspectives and co-create meaningful opportunities for involvement rather than assuming what will interest them.

Prompting Table Discussion Questions:

- What would make you more confident navigating the COA process – examples of approved projects? checklists? before/after photos? staff office hours?
- Should the City provide more homeowner-friendly resources (e.g., contractor guides, cost ranges, maintenance calendars)? If so, what's missing today?
- What *barriers* keep people from attending or engaging with preservation education now (timing, format, language, awareness, etc.)?
- What other goals or strategies would you like to include in this theme?

Theme 4.2: Preservation Partners

Goals & Strategies (table discussion)

Goal 4.2.1: Continue to work with local partners to document and share the social history of contemporary historic preservation in Franklin.

Strategy 4.2.2.1: Support ongoing efforts to expand the collection of oral histories with key preservation leaders and stakeholders in Franklin to document key events, strategies, and partnerships.

Today, Franklin has an exceptionally well-known preservation story – but most of it is told through the lens of battlefield reclamation and downtown revitalization, not through the lived experience of the people who made that work possible. There is no formal archive of interviews with early advocates, City officials, nonprofit leaders, or neighborhood heritage stewards. Capturing these stories now would help future generations understand how Franklin became a national preservation model and prevent institutional memory from being lost.

Strategy 4.2.2.2: Develop a public art partnership strategy for Downtown and other historic districts to integrate storytelling, cultural interpretation, and placemaking.

Today, Franklin has scattered public art projects and murals, but no coordinated strategy tied to preservation, heritage storytelling, or neighborhood identity. A formal public art framework could align the City, Visit Franklin, the Heritage Foundation, and local arts groups to bring history into the public realm in new ways, including elements such as street naming, neighborhood or district identifiers, and monument or interpretive art installations that reflect Franklin's layered heritage.

Strategy 4.2.2.3: Establish design and placement parameters for monuments, interpretive signage, and public art to ensure balance, legibility, and respect for the historic environment.

Today, Franklin faces growing interest in commemoration and interpretation, but the absence of clear policies has led to concerns about over signing, visual clutter, and concentration of monuments in the Public Square. Developing design and location guidelines could help prevent overlap, maintain visual quality, and ensure that commemorative elements are placed at or near the sites of significance rather than clustered solely in high-visibility areas. Such parameters would protect the character of Downtown and reinforce authenticity across Franklin's historic districts.

Prompting Table Discussion Questions:

- Where in Franklin would you like to see heritage-integrated public art? (ex: alleyways, parking garages, new trail connections, Harlinsdale, Natchez Street, Five Points, Harpeth riverfront)
- Which local partners should lead or collaborate on this effort – schools? Heritage Foundation? Visit Franklin? Downtown businesses? Churches? Arts organizations?
- Should the City play a larger coordinating role in public art tied to history, or should it be fully community-driven?
- What other strategies could help Franklin share its preservation story in new and creative ways?
- Are there big ideas we haven't listed – festivals, traveling exhibits, neighborhood history days, artist residencies, etc.?
- If Franklin could launch one major storytelling initiative in the next five years, what should it be?
- What does meaningful interpretation look like beyond markers and plaques?