



**FLORIDA TRUST FOR HISTORIC
PRESERVATION, INC.**

**PRESERVE FLORIDA
2026 CONFERENCE
SCHEDULE**

Session Key

Our sessions will present and explore key insights and practical perspectives, offering attendees an engaging opportunity to learn and reflect while shaping the future of preservation. The topics are to include:

1. Getting organized to achieve resilient historic communities through grassroots partnerships and volunteer engagement
2. Welcoming underrepresented heritage and preserving the intangible stories that define our shared past
3. Practical approaches to planning historic building projects, including the value and significance of traditional building materials
4. Archaeology and the conservation of cemeteries as vital cultural landscapes

Session Descriptions

Conference Location:

St. Petersburg First United Methodist Church (FUM)
212 3rd St. N.
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Educational sessions, registration and our vendor hall will be at First United Methodist Church in St. Petersburg, where it traces its roots to 1888 and built its Gothic Revival sanctuary around 1925 on 3rd St. N. Designed by James Baldwin with English influences, the church was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1990 and features stained-glass windows and a 15-bell carillon.

Wednesday, May 13

3 - 5 p.m.

Early Registration opens
Fellowship Hall, FUM

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Welcome Reception
Florida CraftArt
501 Central Ave.

St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Sponsor: REG Architects

Thursday, May 14

7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Registration open

Fellowship Hall, FUM

Refreshments available

9 - 9:50 a.m. **1**

The State of Preservation in Florida and Future Goals

This session is part of the Division of Historical Resource's update to the Statewide Historic Comprehensive Preservation Plan for the period 2027-2032. The Division prepares a comprehensive plan every five years as part of its duties as the State Historic Preservation Office. The plan informs the Division's annual Historic Preservation Fund grant applications and provides guidance for other division activities. This session provides an overview of the planning process, summarizes our current plan and invites feedback on plan objectives, vision and implementation strategies. Help us plan for the future by setting goals and establishing benchmarks for success.

Speaker: Ruben A. Acosta, bureau chief for historic preservation, Florida Division of Historical Resources

Gilbert Chapel (1st Floor), FUM

10 - 10:30 a.m.

Break with Vendors

Fellowship Hall, FUM

Refreshments available

10:30 - 11:45 a.m.

Opening Plenary with Keynote Speaker Tina Marie Osceola, of the Seminole Tribe of Florida where she serves as Executive Director of Operations and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer **2, 4**

Announcing the 2026 11 to Save List

Save the Date: Announcing 2027 Conference Location

Sanctuary, FUM

12 - 12:50 p.m.

LUNCH (*on your own*)

1 - 2:20 p.m.

Advocating for Cemetery Preservation & Cemetery-Based Education **2, 3, 4**

Historic cemeteries are rich cultural landscapes that tell stories of a community and its identity. This session highlights how local advocates across Tampa Bay are transforming cemeteries through preservation. The session highlights the catalysts behind the efforts, the research undertaken, grassroots community outreach, stakeholder coordination, technical and

grant-related planning support and the role of local government in safeguarding culturally significant community landscapes. Furthermore, this session will dive into how spaces like these and the work done by the advocates can be integrated into school curricula, transforming these cemeteries into dynamic educational spaces. Attendees will leave with the knowledge and tools to initiate similar preservation and education efforts in their community.

Speakers: Jacqueline Anderson, president, Whispering Souls African American Cemetery, Inc.; Aileen Henderson, The Cemetery Society; Colleen Marshall, AICP, CFM, executive planner, Hillsborough County; Jay Molokwu, community planner, Ayers Associates; Dr. Hilary VanDyke, assistant professor, Education, University of Tampa
Choir Room (3rd Floor), FUM

Designing Your City: Tramor Cafeteria 3

Built in 1924, the Tramor Cafeteria is a downtown St. Petersburg landmark known for its Mediterranean Revival architecture, including stucco walls, a red clay tile roof, decorative tiles, metal balconies and distinctive red towers. Located near the waterfront, it played a notable role in the city's tourism history by operating seasonally to serve winter visitors and closing each summer, an unusual practice among local businesses at the time. Its architectural character and historic connection to St. Petersburg's identity as a tourist destination has made it a cherished local landmark. The building is currently vacant and privately owned, with no published plans for adaptive use, so participants are invited to bring their ideas for this year's charrette activity which will be an in-depth, fun and collaborative session filled with maps, sketches and drawings that allow us to discuss multiple ideas and suggestions for future uses of the property. This will be a basis for a report to share with the owner.

Speaker: Rick Gonzalez, AIA, president, REG Architects
Gilbert Chapel (1st Floor), FUM

2:30 - 3:20 p.m.

Crossroads of History: Innovative Mitigation at the Etna Turpentine Site 2, 4

Explore the intersection of modern highway planning and the remnants of the historic town of Etna, a turpentine and lumber camp that operated from 1898 to 1926. This session highlights collaborative efforts to document Etna's archaeological and historical significance, address regulatory requirements and mitigate impacts during the Suncoast Parkway Extension project. Attendees will learn about the turpentine industry's historical role, Section 106 compliance and how mitigation strategies can become public education tools that preserve underrepresented histories and engage communities in the process.

Speakers: Annemarie Hammond, FDOT Florida's Turnpike Enterprise, environmental administrator; Jo-Anne Peck, AtkinsRéalis, Florida Cultural Resource team lead
Choir Room (3rd Floor), FUM

Material Compatibility and Failure in Historic Masonry: Lessons from Case Studies 3

Explore how incompatible repair materials and misunderstood wall assemblies can cause premature failure in historic masonry buildings, particularly in Florida's humid, coastal environments. This session uses case studies to show how traditional masonry systems manage moisture, movement and vapor differently from modern materials. It highlights common problems such as hard mortars, impermeable coatings and modern patching compounds that can trap moisture and damage historic fabric. Participants will take away practical strategies for

evaluating masonry conditions, spotting material incompatibilities and making informed repair decisions that support resilience and preserve historic integrity.

Speaker: Cody Clark, vice president, Olde World Walls & Ceilings Inc.
Gilbert Chapel (1st Floor), FUM

3:30 - 4:20 p.m.

Emerging Trends in Historic Preservation: Student Poster Talks 1, 2, 3

Students are invited to present research posters on current issues and innovative approaches in historic preservation, and attendees are encouraged to visit, ask questions and engage in discussion. Come learn about topics that will include emerging preservation trends, creative conservation strategies for overlooked resource types, the use of documentary filmmaking as a preservation communication tool and evaluations of preservation management practices at nationally significant sites.

Through Fellowship Hall, Room 101, FUM

4 - 4:50 p.m.

Cemetery Conservation in Florida 3, 4

Florida's historic cemeteries are complex cultural landscapes requiring preservation efforts that balance material conservation, environmental realities and cultural sensitivity. This session focuses on best practices for conserving grave markers, monuments and associated features in Florida's challenging environment. Participants will learn about common funerary materials such as concrete, marble and metals, and how factors like high humidity, salt exposure and biological growth contribute to deterioration. Case studies highlight successful conservation interventions, surveying methods and common treatment mistakes, offering practical guidance for cemetery managers, preservation professionals, archaeologists and community advocates to safeguard burial grounds for future generations.

Speaker: Caroline Dickensheets, Miami managing conservator and professional associate, AIC, RLA Conservation
Choir Room (3rd Floor), FUM

The Case for Historic Windows 3

Take an in-depth analysis of the energy performance of historic windows compared to modern alternatives. Attendees will learn techniques to upgrade historic windows to meet current energy codes while preserving their character-defining features. The session emphasizes the sustainability of restoring historic windows versus replacing them, offering insights into lifecycle comparisons and the long-term performance of insulated glass. Participants will also gain practical knowledge to determine when restoration or replacement is the best option, equipping them with the tools to advocate for the preservation of historic windows as a sustainable solution.

Speaker: Scott Sidler, CEO & founder, Austin Historical
Gilbert Chapel (1st Floor), FUM

5 - 6 p.m.

Happy Hour Mix & Mingle

The Lure

661 Central Ave.
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

This is an opportunity for you to catch up with friends and colleagues on your own!

6:30 - 9 p.m.

Florida Preservation Awards and Reception

Unitarian Universalist Church of St. Petersburg

100 Mirror Lake Drive N.

St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Please note this is a ticketed event for \$55.

Friday, May 15

8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Registration open

Fellowship Hall, FUM

Refreshments available

9 - 9:50 a.m.

Coffee Klatch: Overcoming Preservation Regulation Obstacles 1

Join this informal coffee klatch for candid conversation about the real-world challenges of navigating historic preservation regulations at the local, state and federal levels. From permitting hurdles to funding barriers, attendees will explore practical strategies, creative workarounds and lessons learned. This collaborative space invites you to share experiences, ask questions and learn from peers across the field. Whether you're facing obstacles or have success stories to inspire others, your voice will help shape more effective, inclusive preservation practice. Bring your coffee, challenges and solutions!

Speaker: Melissa Wyllie, CEO & president, Florida Trust for Historic Preservation
Through Fellowship Hall, Room 101

MOBILE EVENTS: *These programs take place off-site and involve travel along public routes. Conditions may include ambient noise (traffic or construction), uneven walking surfaces (such as brick, grass or sloped sidewalks) and limited access to seating or restrooms. Each event listing includes specific details about distance, terrain and accessibility to help participants plan accordingly. We are committed to providing equitable access to all programs. Bring sunscreen if you wish, along with wearing comfortable clothing and shoes. If you require accommodations, please contact us at least five days in advance so we can make appropriate arrangements.*

9 - 10:30 a.m.

Mobile Workshop: Climate Changes at Home 3

Identify practical improvements to address climate change impacts on older and historic buildings. Through a pedestrian exploration in downtown St. Petersburg, participants will learn to identify physical threats such as sea level rise, extreme heat and severe storms. The session highlights mitigation and adaptation strategies compatible with historic structures, including flood prevention, storm resistance and heat reduction techniques. Attendees also will gain insights into building and zoning codes related to climate resilience and explore cost-effective solutions for homes and small businesses, emphasizing professional assistance and municipal permit requirements. This event will cover a maximum of two miles within the downtown area at a slow pace in public rights-of-way, stopping at select locations for informal discussion.

Workshop Leader: Jenny Wolfe, AICP, president, Planning 2 Preserve, LLC
Start at: Gilbert Chapel (1st floor), FUM

9 - 11 a.m.

Mobile Workshop: Snell Arcade Restoration 3

The Snell Arcade Restoration Workshop offers an on-site visit to explore the multi-phase restoration of the historic Snell Arcade Building, one of the Florida Trust's preservation easements. Participants will learn about the building's history, the challenges it faces and the phased approach to its restoration. The session will highlight the significance of the building and its future. Attendees will gain insights into the restoration process, including strategies for preserving architectural integrity while ensuring accessibility. This workshop provides a unique opportunity to understand the complexities of restoring historic structures while meeting modern accessibility standards.

Tour Guides: Rick Kimble, project manager, Specialized Services Group, Inc.; Jaime Lefebvre, senior estimator, Specialized Services Group, Inc.

Start at: Fellowship Hall (FUM); .3 miles from Church/Conference location

Please be sure to register for this session, as attendance is limited.

9 - 11 a.m.

Mobile Tour: Preserve the 'Burg and Florida Trust 2, 3

Get to know the evolution of St. Petersburg by joining us on an interactive, walking tour. Our Florida Trust and Preserve the 'Burg experts will lead you through the city's past and present, highlighting the historical buildings, landmarks and stories that define our unique sense of place. Whether you're a local or a newcomer to the area, this tour will provide you with new perspectives on the "Sunshine City" and a sense of pride for the city so many call home.

Tour Guides: Ennis Davis, AICP, principal, Community Planning Collaborative; Manny Leto, executive director, Preserve the 'Burg

Start at: Church/Conference location parking lot

Please be sure to register for this session, as attendance is limited. Note: this is a ticketed tour for \$25.

11 - 11:45 a.m.

Mobile Workshop: Nature Journaling in North Straub Park 1, 4

Immerse yourself in one of St. Petersburg's most beloved green spaces with this hands-on session in North Straub Park. Participants will explore the basics of nature journaling as a tool for close observation, reflection and creative engagement with the landscape. Through guided prompts and on-site sketching and note-taking, you'll learn simple techniques to capture plants, wildlife and city-park edges and consider how documenting these experiences can deepen appreciation for urban nature and inform place-based storytelling in your work.

Workshop Leader: Melissa Wyllie, CEO & president, Florida Trust for Historic Preservation
Start at: North Straub Park, .6 miles from Church/Conference location

While there is no cost, please be sure to register for this session. This session will be outside, so please dress comfortably.

10:30 - 11:15 a.m.

Saving Apalachicola History in the Wake of Climate Uncertainty - A Case Study 1, 3

The city's efforts to preserve its historic antebellum buildings, including the Middlebrook Cotton Exchange & Warehouse Building, damaged by Hurricane Michael in 2018 are an example that could be modeled across the state. Through collaboration with federal, state and private partners, Apalachicola integrated resilience planning with historic preservation funding to repair and restore this iconic structure while safeguarding it against future storms. The session explores how small grants and partnerships can drive climate adaptation, increase community resilience and protect cultural assets. Attendees will gain insights into balancing historic preservation with sea-level rise adaptation in vulnerable Gulf communities.

Speakers: Cynthia Clark, owner, Bay Media Services; Leslie Glaze, GPC, grants coordinator, City of Apalachicola, Mark Tarmey, AIA, Founder 4M Design Group
Choir Room (3rd Floor), FUM

11:15 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Adaptive Reuse: Case Studies Throughout Florida 3

Learn from the challenges, solutions and processes behind 10 unique preservation projects completed across the state. From Everglades City to Marianna, attendees will explore how adaptive reuse strategies breathe new life into historic buildings while preserving their architectural integrity. The session delves into the development and construction processes, offering insights into best-use cases for historic properties and solutions for accessibility challenges, including wheelchair access. This engaging presentation provides practical knowledge for architects, planners and preservationists to implement adaptive reuse strategies that balance historical significance with modern functionality.

Speaker: Rick Gonzalez, AIA, president, REG Architects
Choir Room (3rd Floor), FUM

12 - 12:50 p.m.

LUNCH (*on your own*), or:

Lunch and Learn Live: Using GIS to Manage Heritage Assets - A Case Study of Pinellas County 1, 3

An innovative public-facing tool developed by Pinellas County, the UF Historic Preservation Program and UF GeoPlan shows how to integrate GIS layers to capture heritage assets,

including floodplain management, housing and transportation data, enabling planners and the public to prioritize historic resources within broader planning processes. The tool incorporates locally designated resources, National Register-listed sites and potentially eligible properties. Attendees will learn how GIS enhances public engagement, facilitates heritage asset discovery, and supports preservation planning. The session also explores the platform's adaptability for other local government entities. Bring your own lunch or pay a nominal fee for a bag lunch delivered on site. During your conference registration, select Yes for a brown bag lunch to be provided. This event will also be streamed live.

Speakers: Kate Norris, geospatial data manager and senior GIS specialist, University of Florida GeoPlan Center; Tom Scofield, principal planner and historic preservation specialist, Pinellas County; Dr. Linda Stevenson, AIA, University of Florida School of Architecture
Gilbert Chapel (1st Floor), FUM

1 - 2:20 p.m.

Getting Organized: Branding Your Plan and Case Studies of Success 1

Branding is a powerful tool for making preservation, public art, cultural planning and place-keeping/making work. This visually driven presentation explores how thoughtful branding elevates planning processes, from supporting preservationists, artists, community, tourism and the cultural economy to turning technical work into something people actually want to engage with. Through real case studies from across the nation and right here in St. Pete, learn how dynamic campaigns with bold visual identities and compelling messaging improve community participation, educate stakeholders, build trust across departments, and sustain momentum from kick-off through implementation. Intentional, informed branding creates clarity, generates excitement and transforms skeptics into champions, whether you work in preservation, community development, public works, parks or economic development. This session will also offer case studies highlighting grassroots models for historic preservation.

Speakers: Laura Bessinger, partner, DRMTM Brand Consulting; Latorra Bowles, executive director, The Deuces Live, Inc.; Margaret Murray, CEO, Creative Pinellas.
Choir Room (3rd Floor), FUM

Preservation Pays: Unlocking the Economic Power of Florida's Historic Places 1,3

This session provides an exclusive discussion of the economic impacts of historic preservation in Florida, showcasing its transformative role in community revitalization, contextual design and sustainable growth. Combining insights from recent studies by PlaceEconomics, GBX Group and REG Architects, the discussion highlights how preservation drives investment, strengthens local identity and fosters community engagement. Attendees will explore findings from the PlaceEconomics report on St. Petersburg, which quantifies the cultural and economic benefits of preservation. Additionally, the session examines how rehabilitation projects activate underutilized assets, form public-private partnerships and generate measurable economic impacts. Participants will gain practical knowledge on leveraging federal and state programs, navigating preservation tools and unlocking investment opportunities.

Speakers: Rick Gonzalez, AIA, president, REG Architects; Manny Leto, executive director, Preserve the 'Burg; Antonin Robert, principal, GBX Group
Gilbert Chapel (1st Floor), FUM

2:30 - 3:20 p.m.

Remote Restorations: Leveraging Logistics to Preserve Florida's Far-Off Places 3

Historic restoration projects face obstacles beyond budget — chiefly logistics. Tracking down obsolete materials, coordinating deliveries, managing long-lead times and transporting heavy equipment to remote locations transforms impractical projects into achievable ones within sensible budgets. This session offers a birds-eye view of major Florida historic restoration efforts made possible through exhaustive planning, accommodating inevitable challenges while building realistic budgets for remote infrastructure and preservation strategies. Projects include the restoration of Boca Chita Lighthouse in Miami, Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas and the Loggerhead Key Lighthouse and keeper's quarters, also in the Dry Tortugas.

Speaker: Chris Dabek, vice president, Stone and Lime Historic Restoration Services
Choir Room (3rd Floor), FUM

Preservation Success in Unconventional Places: A Planner's Guide to Enhancing Neighborhood Pride 1, 3

This session will explore one municipal planner's 25-year experience in St. Petersburg navigating the challenges of rapid change and attempts to nurture a preservation culture by finding common ground beyond traditional landmark designations. Learn how placemaking strengthens emotional investment in our historic neighborhoods and communities, be inspired to expand your community's preservation work plan and return home with renewed purpose, ready for preservation success!

Speaker: Derek Kilborn, planning director, City of St. Petersburg
Gilbert Chapel (1st Floor), FUM

3:30 - 4:20 p.m.

Rethinking Significance, Restoration, and Stewardship at Heritage Village 1, 3

Founded during the American Bicentennial as a preservation-era response to rapid development and cultural loss in Pinellas County, Heritage Village is now historic itself, raising critical questions about evaluating significance, stewarding relocated structures and sustaining open-air museums within local government frameworks. This session examines Heritage Village as a case study in public history infrastructure and preservation education, exploring National Register eligibility for a Bicentennial-era museum and second-generation restoration of relocated buildings per contemporary standards. The discussion reframes stewardship as an active, integrated practice, linking building conservation, collections care, community engagement and long-term sustainability within a public-sector model.

Speaker: Monica Drake, museum operations manager, Heritage Village
Choir Room (3rd Floor), FUM

Material Memory: Technical Decisions in Historic Intervention 3

Every technical design is a negotiation between present performance and preserved memory. Historic buildings retain physical evidence of their construction, alteration, and repair. That material record, embedded in wallpaper fragments, ornamental castings, roofing stratigraphy and structural assemblies, provides the foundation for responsible intervention. Through case studies ranging from wallpaper recovery and digital reconstruction of missing ornament to re-pressing turret shingles and Matterport documentation, the presentation highlights how technical rigor and evidentiary analysis guide appropriate treatment grounded in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Preservation is not nostalgia; it is evidence-based stewardship

rooted in careful interpretation of material evidence, where detail becomes material truth, technical decision, ethical responsibility and cultural continuity.

Speakers: Eric Kleinsteuber, AIA, president & design director, KMF Architects; Alexandra Witthaus, historic preservation coordinator, KMF Architects
Gilbert Chapel (1st Floor)

Saturday, May 16th

10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Preserve the 'Burg Restoration & Design Expo, partnering with The Florida Trust for Historic Preservation

St. Petersburg Shuffleboard Club

559 Mirror Lake Drive

St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Thank you for attending the Preserve Florida Conference! As part of our traditional Community Give Back featured event, we are partnering with Preserve the 'Burg to share our Florida Preservation Toolkit as part of this weekend's Preservation and Restoration Design Expo.

Attendance is free, but registration is recommended by visiting <https://ptb.wildapricot.org/event-6368053>.

Join Preserve the 'Burg for a day dedicated to historic homes, thoughtful design and St. Petersburg's architectural heritage at the annual Restoration & Design Expo. Held at the iconic St. Petersburg Shuffleboard Club, this free community event brings together local vendors, preservation tradespeople and experts in historic restoration, home décor and period-appropriate design.

Connect with professionals who specialize in restoring older homes, explore vintage-inspired home décor and design ideas and attend presentations on topics including Accessory Dwelling Units, best practices for rehabilitation and how to research your home's history. Learn about the architectural styles that define St. Petersburg's neighborhoods and discover resources available to property owners and community advocates.

The Expo will also feature guided tours of the historic Mirror Lake area, offering an up-close look at one of the city's treasured neighborhoods and its distinctive architecture. Whether you're restoring a historic bungalow, researching your home's

past, decorating with vintage flair or simply curious about St. Petersburg's history and design, the Restoration & Design Expo offers tools, tips, resources, and a little St. Petersburg inspiration.

The Expo is presented in partnership with the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation.

Thank You to Our Conference Sponsors!



In-Kind Sponsors



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