



## RENEW > Historic Preservation



Philadelphia2035  
Citywide Vision

### Goal 8.1:

Support sensitive development that preserves and enhances Philadelphia's multifaceted past.

### Goal 8.2:

Expand tourism programs to highlight Philadelphia's cultural and historic heritage and to increase spending on heritage tourism.

### Definition | Philadelphia Register of Historic Places

The Philadelphia Register of Historic Places is the comprehensive, dynamic inventory of buildings, structures, sites, objects, interiors, and districts that the Philadelphia Historical Commission has designated as historic. The Historical Commission has jurisdiction over all entries on the Register; it must review all proposals that require a building permit and/or that would alter the appearance of the historic resource prior to the commencement of work.

For more information visit:  
[www.phila.gov/historical/register](http://www.phila.gov/historical/register)

## Cultural, Historical & Architectural Resources, & Heritage Tourism

The South District contains a varied collection of historic resources including objects of art, and structures from the 18th Century through the mid 20th century. Its evolution from rural farmland to shipbuilding and industrial hub and finally to a fully gridded and incorporated section of the city has left it with an impressive and varied physical legacy.

The district is home to 682 properties that are listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places which includes one historic district: Girard Estate. Two National Register Historic Districts are located within the district as well. They are the Southwark Historic District and the Washington Avenue Historic District. Three properties in the district are listed individually in the National Historic Register. A National Register designation offers property owners financial incentives to maintain and restore properties through tax credits. Designation in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places however, is meant to protect a property against inaccurate or unsympathetic alterations and from unnecessary demolition.

PCPC supports ongoing efforts to designate significant historic resources to the Philadelphia Register though the goal of this plan is instead to identify opportunities for preservation that will strengthen existing community assets and advance the long-term vision of the district. Particular attention can be paid to officially recognizing unregistered districts that share a historic quality and value. By combining historic preservation with the other recommendations in this book, there are increased opportunities to look to the future of the district while paying respect to the past with contextually sensitive development.

### Recommendations

42. Preserve resources within historically significant districts (see opposite page)
  - South Broad Street Historic Thematic District
  - Federal Street Historic Thematic District
    - > Implementing Agencies: PHC | CW Objective 8.1.3
43. Preserve and market abandoned art deco and moderne industrial buildings for reuse.
  - Vacant historic buildings in Quartermaster Depot, for new uses.
  - Bok Vocational School, for reuse as a mixed use development to include the arts and creative industries.
  - Fire station at 20th Street and Point Breeze Avenue [see [FOCUS AREAS](#), p. 52]
    - > Implementing Agencies: PIDC, Commerce, PHC | CW Objective 8.1.2
44. Expand heritage tourism highlighting the Italian Market as a culinary destination.
  - > Implementing Agencies: non-profits | CW Objective 8.2.1



### Case Study | Reuse of former institutional sites for new users

As the Philadelphia School District disposes of surplus schools, these large, historic buildings can be adapted to new development. Rehabilitation and reuse of these buildings can preserve these community landmarks and promote investment in neighborhoods. The Edward W. Bok Technical School, located at 1901 S. 9th Street, was built in 1938, is over 338,000 square feet, and stands eight stories high. The building is in the Art Deco design and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986. The school was closed in 2013 and was put up for auction in 2014. Later that year, Scout, Ltd. won the auction to repurpose the school for mixed use development. The vision for a revitalized Bok is for a creative center that highlights the legacy of making at the old school. The phased development includes adding co-working and incubator spaces, neighborhood commercial and retail amenities, and live-work units.

*Left: Auditorium of the Bok Technical School, image courtesy of Scout Ltd.*

The South district's history includes a long period of time as an industrial powerhouse before its current role as a residential community. It is a place of immigrants and inclusivity, convenient to the city center and beyond. The diverse heritage of the South district has left it with a wealth of physical resources, many of which are still unprotected by historic designation. Below is a map showing some places that could be deserving of historic nomination.

01

**Engine House No. 46 Firehouse**  
1894, Attributed to:  
John T. Windrim



02



**Federal St. Thematic Historic District**  
Late 18th Century row homes on the 200 block of Federal Street are emblematic of the shipbuilding community that once thrived here.



03

**Wharton Hall c. 1890**  
Recently renovated, Wharton Hall has served as a Catholic school, billiards hall and boxing venue, among other uses.



**Broad St. Residential Thematic Historic District**  
1308 S. Broad, c. 1901  
Architect: Werner Trumbauer

04



Potential high priority historic sites



Resources listed on the Philadelphia Register



Potential thematic historic district

05

**Harrison-Lincoln Day Nursery**  
1898  
Architects: Furness Evans and Co.

