# Maryland RAILROADS STATEWIDE HISTORIC CONTEXT

TRAIN INFORMATION INFORMATION

Destinations

Schedule/Delays

Train Number/Track

Status

## 

### CONTEXT DEVELOPMENT

In 2023, the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (SHA) developed a historic context and survey methodology for the treatment and evaluation of railroad resources in the state. Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, cultural resources survey is required as part of environmental review and project delivery. SHA regularly encounters unidentified railroad resources during project survey, and the proposed context needed to address the following:

No comprehensive document existed for the identification and evaluation

Existing surveys often addressed only a segment or individual component

of a larger linear resource, resulting in inconsistent documentation.

parisons difficult and complicated the evaluation process.

Nonstandard terminology and conflicting definitions made resource com-



Abandoned lines which may not be apparent on maps, aerials, or even in the field.



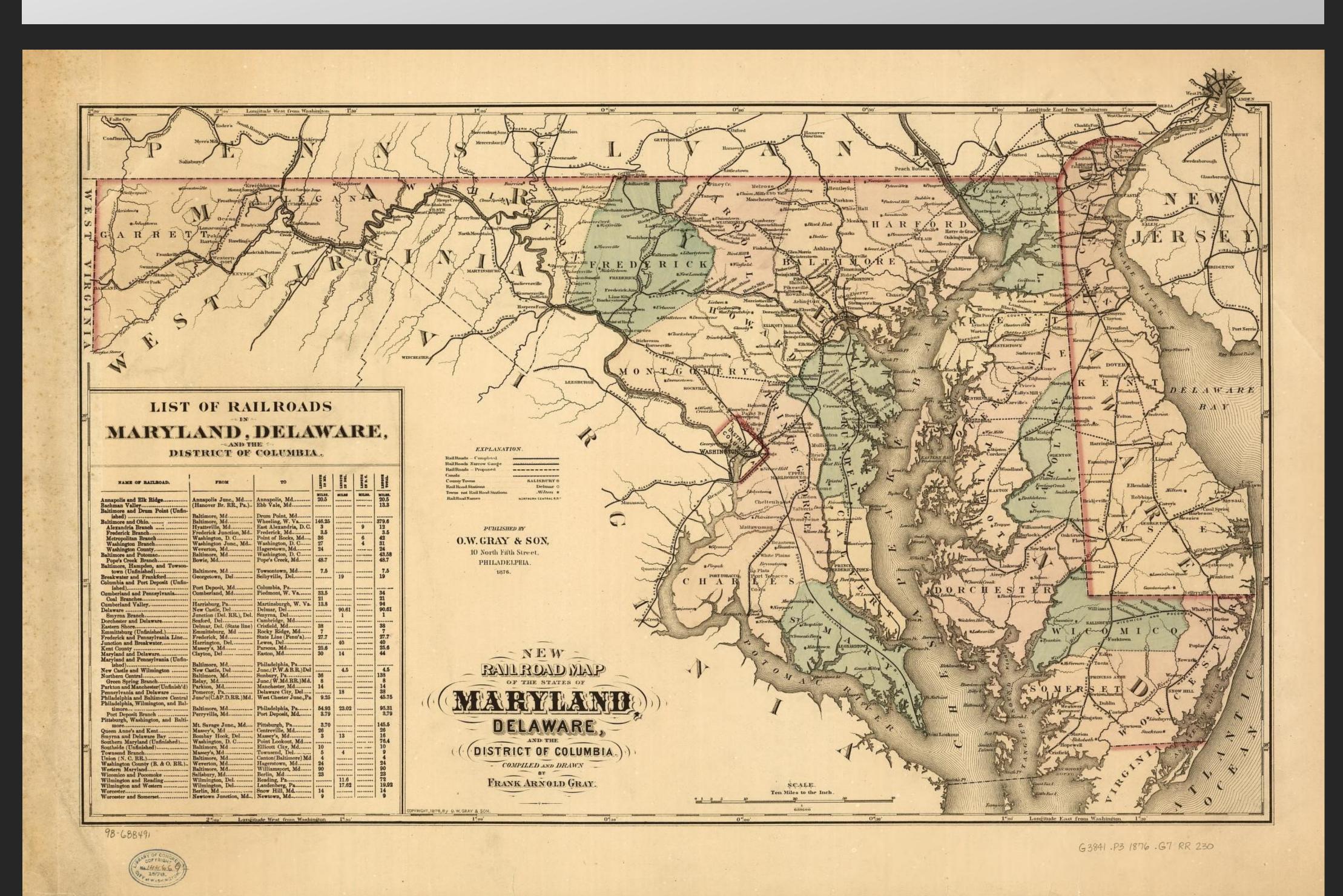
At-grade highway crossings of track beds.

of Maryland railroad resources.

# SWITCHING TRACKS

As initially conceived, the context would have four components:

- A history of railroads in Maryland from 1827-1976
- A table and interactive map of all known Maryland railroads
- A railroad resource glossary and typology
- Survey and evaluation methodologies

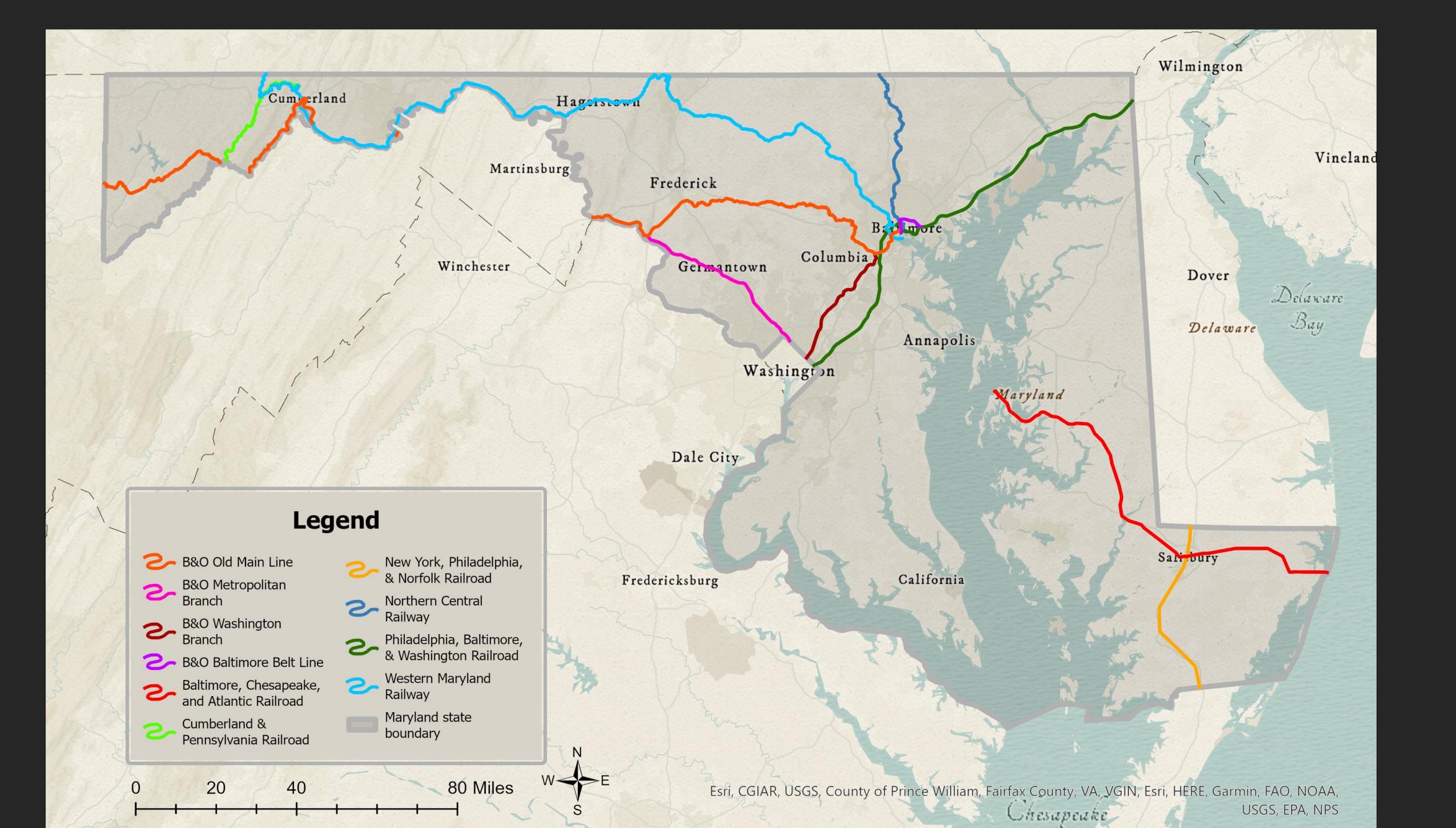


A review of Maryland's historical railroad maps and archival records made it clear that a comprehensive account of all railroads that began construction or operation in the state could not be practically or reliably completed within the scope of the context. Could the context still help streamline project review without the interactive map of railroad lines?

### IIII RAILROAD SIDING III

The Baltimore & Drum Point Railroad in Calvert County may be the most significant railroad never built. It is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, despite never starting operation. Almost the entire route was graded and ready for track installation before the company went bankrupt in 1891. The corridor is eligible under Criteria A and C, but only intermittent ground modifications remain.

#### FULL SPEED AHEAD REFINISTHE PROCESS FOUNDATIONAL MD RAILROADS



Instead of a comprehensive map of railroads, the context identifies ten Foundational Maryland Railroads, specific Maryland railroad corridors that are most likely to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). These ten railroads are the focus of evaluation efforts. If a portion of a Foundational Maryland Railroad corridor within an Area of Potential Effects (APE) has integrity and was constructed within the proposed period of significance, the railroad resource would most likely contribute to the corridor.

### ARCHITECTURE OR ARCHAEOLOGY?

In Maryland, railroad ground modifications, including those in ruinous condition, are considered above-ground architectural resources. Common railroad resources that may be encountered during archaeological survey include portions of trackage such as ground modifications and subgrade, rails, ties, or other connectors; ROW objects or their components; and the remains of grade separated structures. These resource types are unlikely to yield information important in history and will not have significance under NRHP Criterion D. Railroad resources were thoroughly documented and are well understood from historical records. Other railroad resource types may be considered under Criterion D only in those rare cases in which the physical material of the resource can provide important historical information not available otherwise.

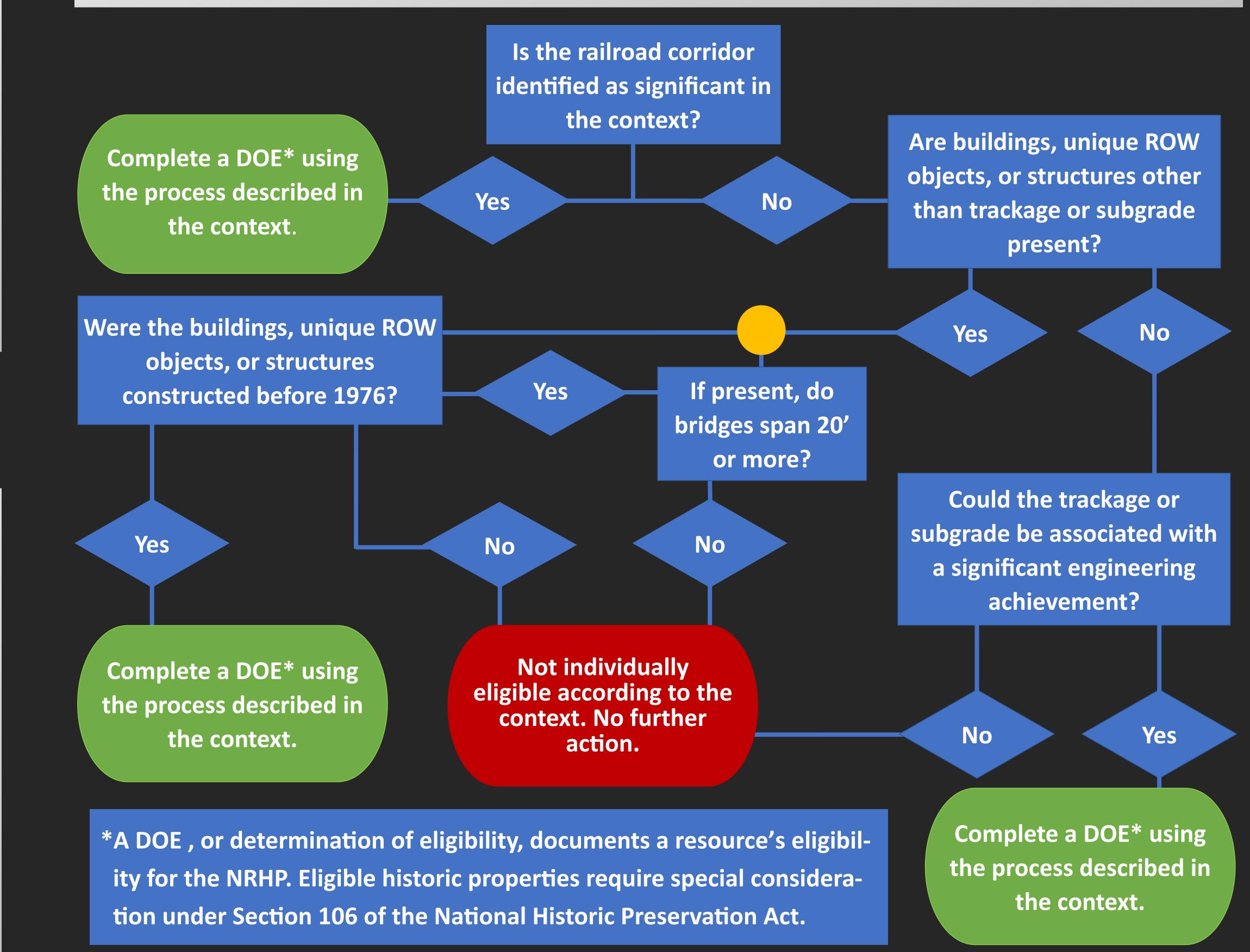
### ARRIVING AT THE STATION EAPPLY INGETHE CONTEXT

The context identifies seven different railroad resource typologies:

- Trackage
- Right-of-Way Objects
- **Grade Separation Structures**
- **Facilities**
- Railroad Yards
- **Railroad Stations**
- Railroad Corridors

Common railroad resources outside the ten Foundational Railroads are unlikely to be NRHP eligible, including railroad trackage and ground modifications, signage and other common ROW objects, and small structures under 20' long. Evaluation efforts are focused on facilities, stations, and yards, grade separation structures over 20' long, and rail segments with significant engineering achievements.

The following process flowchart outlines the steps prescribed by the context when a railroad resource is present in a project APE, reducing uncertainty, improving product, and saving time and effort on project reviews. To access the completed context, visit SHA's Cultural Resources homepage at the link below.



https://www.roads.maryland.gov/mdotsha/pages/Index.aspx?PageId=729



Common elements like concrete culverts as

part of complicated linear resources.

Railroad corridors repurposed for

shared use paths.