

The Historic Preservation Division of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (HPD of MDAH) is responsible for the development and implementation of a Statewide Preservation Plan under National Park Service requirements. The Plan addresses the preservation of Mississippi's historic and cultural resources, including architectural, historic, and prehistoric properties. The Plan identifies the trends affecting historic and cultural resources so that informed decisions can be made about the management and care of these properties. Individuals, private businesses, community groups, local governments, and state and federal agencies can and should be active participants in the implementation of this Plan. Since Mississippi does not have a formal statewide governmental planning program, the development of partnerships between the public and private sector is crucial to the success of the preservation plan.

Planning Process

The Comprehensive Plan for 2011 through 2016 is an update and revision of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, building upon the earlier framework with modifications and new goals and objectives derived with input from the public and the experience of the users. During the spring of 2010, the staff of HPD of MDAH conducted a well-advertised public meeting at the Eola Hotel in downtown Natchez, Mississippi, in conjunction with the Statewide Preservation Conference. The meeting was well attended by a broad spectrum of Mississippi's community leaders—elected officials, economic development coordinators, merchants, businessmen, educators, housing authorities, tourism promoters, and representatives of non-profit organizations, in addition to preservationists. A Web-based questionnaire was sent to over 1000 people throughout the state and was available through the homepage of the MDAH Web site. Comments that were received were incorporated into the Plan and the results of the survey are found in the appendix.

The Cultural Resources of Mississippi

While antebellum houses and Civil War battlefields are often thought of as the places that most vividly represent the history of Mississippi, the state, in fact, boasts a diverse array of cultural resources that reflects the many layers of meaning in this state's complex history.

Native American tribes and their predecessors left lasting and obvious impressions on the landscape by building various types of earthen mounds, some magnificently large. But many of the state's most notable archaeological sites are not visible to the casual observer. These sites include villages and campsites where slight impressions in the ground and scatters of buried artifacts are all that remain. The state's 30,000 or so recorded archaeological sites form an extremely rich component of Mississippi's cultural heritage, spanning back some 12,000 years.

The prehistoric and early historic era Native American sites are defining characteristics of the state's past. They include a remarkable collection of ceremonial, burial, domiciliary, and midden mounds, as well as mound centers, villages, campsites (some of which are over 12,000 years old), fish weirs, earthworks, palisades, and other diverse resources. Recent studies have suggested that the Jaketown site, a Poverty Point culture site in Humphries County, precedes the Poverty Point site itself and may have been the actual point of origin for that culture.

The Carson Mounds, once perhaps the second largest mound group in North America, was occupied around 1400 AD and originally encompassed about 89 mounds. Recent research has so far recorded 15 houses, 170 pits, over 40 burial pits, 3 stockades, and over 2,000 postmolds

within a one-acre area. The present excavation encompasses but a small sampling of the mile-long site, and work is ongoing. Research at the Parchman Mounds Site, containing three mounds and over 50 acres of village area, has revealed several large clusters of houses and numerous construction phases on the primary mound. Research at Parchman and the Carson site is providing data for several theses and dissertations. MDAH has also involved the University of Southern Mississippi in archaeological explorations at the Winterville Mounds, an MDAH-interpreted property and National Historic Landmark, for several years, providing new insight into its occupational history.

In addition, historic archaeological sites in Mississippi are important for their association with early historic-era inhabitants of Mississippi, particularly during the French, Spanish and English colonial periods, the Territorial period, and the early years of statehood. Historic archaeological sites provide important information about such subjects as early trading posts and Indian agencies, life in riverboat towns, plantation life, and tenant farming. Buildings, settlements, transportation routes, and cultural landscapes all have associated archeological components as well. Many sites in Mississippi are also multi-component and can range in occupation from the Mississippian era through early historic periods, such as French settlements on what once were previously Natchezan settlements. Continuing research at the Dog Branch and Leflore sites, early 18th century villages on the Yazoo Bluffs near Greenwood, is providing data on little known small tribal groups such as the Chakchiuma, believed to have lived there. Historical archaeological sites such as these are invaluable to the heritage of Mississippi because they provide a wealth of information that is not available from other sources.

Fine examples of the architecture from the antebellum period have been preserved, many of them beautifully restored, and they are often perceived as the epitome of Mississippi architecture. Towns such as Natchez, Vicksburg, Columbus, Aberdeen, and Holly Springs regularly hold pilgrimages when visitors can tour antebellum homes and plantation era mansions, like Stanton Hall and Longwood in Natchez, Beauvoir in Biloxi, Ammadelle in Oxford, and Riverview in Columbus. These houses are architectural icons of the Mississippi. However, the architectural legacy of the state is far richer than such visible icons, encompassing a wide array of significant buildings ranging from pioneer log houses to Art Deco skyscrapers. There are notable examples of virtually all major American architectural styles of the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as a fascinating and diverse range of traditional vernacular architecture. Many of these buildings have significance individually, but it is when they are grouped into the historic districts of neighborhoods, downtowns, and rural communities that they most evocatively tell the story of Mississippi's people.

Because of Mississippi's segregated past, African-American historic sites tell important stories that often cannot be found elsewhere and, therefore, must be preserved. Ranging from large districts, such as Jackson's Farish Street Historic District to small traditional cultural neighborhoods like Gulfport's Turkey Creek Community, to individual sites of national significance such as the home of civil rights martyr Medgar Evers or the Tallahatchie County Courthouse in Sumner, site of the infamous Emmett Till murder trial, these places can be viewed from multiple historical perspectives and present special opportunities and challenges for preservation and interpretation.

Transportation development in the state can also be seen through the historic fabric. Ships and boats, dugout canoes, steamboats, shipwrecks and other underwater resources along the Gulf Coast and in Mississippi rivers are symbols of the history of early exploration and the marine industry. The historic roads like the Natchez Trace that first connected Indians, and later pioneers, with the larger world are maintained and preserved. The railroad was an important means of

transportation and the symbol of connectivity within the state, and the related buildings and equipment still allude to that period of the state's history. Most recently, rocket testing facilities at the Stennis Space Center are the physical evidence of Mississippi's impact on space exploration and the future of transportation.

Because Mississippi has historically been an agrarian state, the landscape uniquely expresses the identity of the state. The natural rural landscapes and landscape features greatly influenced the development of towns, industry, agricultural pursuits, and modes of transportation, even in prehistoric times. The man-made landscapes that speak of a people's aspirations, desires, and artistic expression can be seen in the mounds and earthworks, parks, gardens, cemeteries, and college campuses as well as public and private statuary and art. The monumental Mississippi River levee from Memphis to near Vicksburg is perhaps the most pronounced landscape feature in the state.

The Documentation and Accessibility of Information on Historic Resources in Mississippi

The Department of Archives and History holds the only comprehensive statewide body of information about the state's historic resources. This information is found in collections housed at the William F. Winter Building and at the Charlotte Capers Building. The files at the offices of HPD in the Capers Building have until recently been the only available documentary library of cultural resource material in the state. In 2005, with funding from the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), work began with Mississippi Automated Resource Information Service (MARIS) to transfer MDAH's archaeological files and over 800 topographical quadrangle maps into a Geographic Information System (GIS). This project was completed in July 2010 and the archaeological file system became solely electronic. However, it was still only accessible by visiting the MDAH offices and did not include the architectural history files. Therefore, an effort to make available existing architectural and archaeological databases in an online interface linked to maps in the GIS system began in 2006 with the help of funding through the Mississippi Development Authority. This system, expected to contain almost 75,000 records of cultural resources around the state, will be available online beginning in 2011. Information about standing structures and National Register historic districts will be available to the general public, while more sensitive archaeological data will be available only to qualified archaeologists through a subscriber model.

Efforts over the past several years to produce archaeological context documents have resulted in a useful body of broad context information about Mississippi's prehistory. The Paleoindian and Early Archaic contexts have been published by the University of Alabama as a part of a larger work on the early archaeology of the Southeast, and the remaining contexts are being prepared for publication by MDAH. Survey work has provided documentation about more than 30,000 archaeological sites throughout the state, and archaeological survey work is ongoing, particularly directed toward locations where there is known or suspected development activity. In addition, MDAH-funded research has added a wealth of information on sites across the state that will enhance our historic contexts as well. Funding from Katrina-related projects has also allowed for much needed research on coastal sites, one of the main focus areas of our historic context.

Historical research and survey work has documented over 45,000 buildings and other historic properties throughout the state. Detailed architectural and historical surveys have been conducted in many of the communities that have the highest concentrations of significant historic properties,

but comprehensive survey-based information is still needed for large areas of the state. Many scattered, individual historic properties remain unrecorded in much of Mississippi, though ongoing architectural and historical survey work continues on a regular basis. Of the historic and prehistoric resources identified and recorded in Mississippi, many have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Mississippi currently has over 1,300 listings in the National Register (districts are counted as a single listing.) These range from small, individual sites (including archaeological sites) and buildings to districts encompassing more than 700 buildings.

Architectural and historical contexts are not as complete as those for prehistoric resources. Historical overview contexts have been prepared for the colonial period and partially for the territorial period. Fieldwork for a context study of public schools in the state began in 1999 and was mostly completed when Hurricane Katrina diverted staff time to other duties. Additionally, topical context studies have been written for several of the more important architectural styles and building types, and local context reports have been prepared for numerous local communities. A continually updated system of topical reference files and computerized topical lists of historic resources has proven to be invaluable in recent years, and has been particularly useful in providing a basis for assessing National Register eligibility. Much more context information needs to be compiled, however. The most critical need is for guidelines for assessing National Register eligibility for certain types of resources, such as schools, rural stores, post-World War II resources, and industrial facilities. Beyond this, there is a need for topical studies on a wide variety of subjects, and overviews are needed for the antebellum period, the Civil War, the postbellum years of the nineteenth century, and the twentieth century. There is a critical need for a comprehensive survey of sites associated with the modern civil rights movement.

Other organizations and agencies maintain information about historic properties in Mississippi, but their focus is more specific than that of the Historic Preservation Division. Certified Local Governments maintain information on historic properties within their own jurisdictions. In some communities, local historical societies or preservation organizations have reference files about historic sites, and in many communities public libraries maintain information of this type. The units of the National Park system in Mississippi all have a strong cultural resources emphasis. Other federal agencies, such as the Forest Service, have historic preservation programs directed toward the management of culturally significant properties within their ownership or jurisdiction. Additionally, many of the state's colleges and universities have substantial collections of historical and archaeological reference materials.

Despite these sources of information, there is still a need for more widespread awareness and appreciation of historic resources among the general population of the state. In particular, there is a need for more books and other published information that pull together the scattered sources and analyze the wide variety of information about Mississippi's cultural resources.

Several major works have been published in recent years addressing the state's prehistoric and Native American legacy, as well as numerous specialized archaeological studies. These works include **The PaleoIndian and Early Archaic** by David Anderson and Kenneth Sassaman (1996), **Native American Place Names in Mississippi** by Keith Baca (2007), **The Natchez Indians: A History to 1735** by James Barnett (2007), **Fishweirs: A World Perspective with Emphasis on the Fishweirs of Mississippi** by John Connaway (2007), **Choctaws in a Revolutionary Age: 1750-1830** by Greg O'Brien (2005), **Mississippi Q & A** by Evan Peacock (2005), **Time's River: An Archaeological Synthesis from the Lower Mississippi River Valley** edited by Janet Rafferty and Evan Peacock (2008), and **The Mississippi Emergence** edited by Bruce D. Smith (2007). The journal *Mississippi Archaeology* is an excellent source of information about the prehistoric and historic archaeology of the state. *Identifying and Reporting Mississippi's*

Archaeological Heritage (2009) was produced by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History with funding from the Mississippi Development Authority. Intended to reach a popular readership, this free brochure seeks to broaden the community's understanding of Mississippi's buried cultural heritage. A manuscript is due to be published by MDAH soon, **The Oliver Site (22CO503), Coahoma County, Mississippi: Collected Papers, Part I** by John Connaway. In addition, an interactive **Mississippi Timeline**, funded by the Mississippi Humanities Council, will be featured on the MDAH Web site. With funding from the Mississippi Development Authority, a new Web site, **Mississippi Archaeological Heritage Trails**, is currently being developed to focus first on Mississippi's coastal archaeological resources and later include the entire state. The goal of this Web site is to bring attention to Mississippi's rich archaeological heritage through current work, various driving trails, lesson plans, interactive maps, and videos and commentary by archaeologists working in the state.

Relatively few books and articles have been published that address the historic architecture of the state. *Art in Mississippi, 1720-1980*, written by Patti Carr Black and published in 1998 as Volume I of the Heritage of Mississippi Series, includes the state's architecture in its overview of Mississippi's art history. Other works addressing various aspects of the architectural heritage of the state have included *Lost Mansions of Mississippi, Vol II* (2010) and *Lost Landmarks of Mississippi* (2002) both by Mary Carol Miller. *Written in the Bricks* (1999) and *Great Houses of Mississippi* (2004) by Mary Carol Miller and Mary Rose Carter provide an overview of the built history of fifteen Mississippi communities and thirty-five homes, respectively. Books about church architecture in Mississippi include *Historic Churches of Mississippi* (2007) with photographs by Sherry Pace and an essay and captions by Richard J. Cawthon and *Lost Churches of Mississippi* (2010) by Richard Cawthon. Pace and Cawthon also collaborated on *Victorian Homes of Mississippi* in 2005.

Several important works address specific individual communities. The rich architectural legacy of Natchez is explored in a variety of books and articles, including *The Great Houses of Natchez* (1986) and *Classic Natchez* (1996). Several other communities have published studies, including *The Buildings of Biloxi: An Architectural Survey* (1976, revised and reissued in 2000 and 2010, following Hurricane Katrina) and *Architecture in Claiborne County, Mississippi: A Selective Guide* (MDAH, 1974) and *Reflections: History and Homes of Columbus* (2001). Additionally, books have been published about several of the state's most important individual buildings, including the Old Capitol in Jackson, the Governor's Mansion in Jackson, Beauvoir in Biloxi, and Longwood in Natchez. Other historical accounts have generally focused on social and political history and have given little attention to the physical manifestations and symbols of the state's history and culture. Local communities have begun to privately publish their own history books with photographs from their past. These have allowed the general public to remember the historic resources lost in the community and remind them of the importance of these physical symbols of their past.

Many properties associated with Mississippi's rich African American heritage are included in *African American Historic Places*, published by the National Park Service in 1994. Some local communities have guides to African American sites. The most extensive published guide to African American historic sites in a single community in the state is *African American Associated Historic and Architectural Resources of Vicksburg, Mississippi*, published in 1993 by the City of Vicksburg and the Vicksburg Foundation for Historic Preservation, assisted by a federal Historic Preservation Fund grant through the Certified Local Government program. An extensive driving tour of civil rights sites in Jackson was published in 2002 by the City of Jackson with a Certified Local Government grant from MDAH and received local and national publicity. Other cities also have developed brochures and walking tours to promote awareness of

their African American resources. The state's Division of Tourism has recently published an African American Tour Guide, which contains statewide touring itineraries. In 2010 the Mississippi Legislature authorized the sale of bonds to provide \$2.1 million to pay costs for repair, renovation, improvements, and additions to civil rights-related sites across Mississippi, but so far this money has not been released.

Several years ago, MDAH published two concise but scholarly Civil War tour guides (A Guide to the Campaign and Siege of Vicksburg and A Guide to the Corinth Campaigns of 1862) for the two largest and most significant events in Mississippi Civil War history. In early 2011, MDAH will publish a companion statewide Civil War tour map through funding from the Mississippi Civil War Trails transportation enhancement grant. In 2008, the Friends of the Vicksburg Campaign and Historic Trail, a private, non-profit organization, published the Vicksburg Campaign: A Driving Tour through funding provided by the American Battlefield Protection Program of the NPS and the Lower Mississippi Delta Initiatives. In addition, a number of scholarly works have been published in recent years highlighting Mississippi's Civil War history, including Civil War Mississippi: A Guide (2000), Mississippi's Civil War: A Narrative History (2006), Mississippi in the Civil War: The Home Front (2010), Vicksburg: The Campaign that Opened the Mississippi (2003), and The Battle of Okolona: Defending the Mississippi Prairie (2009). The Civil War in Mississippi: Major Campaigns and Battles, a volume in the Heritage of Mississippi Series, is scheduled for publication in 2011.

Within recent years, a few Web sites have been developed that are devoted to historic preservation of sites in Mississippi. Local preservation commissions and organizations have made information about their local historic sites through websites such as *Preserving the Future of our Past* (www.jgwchpc.com), developed by the Joint Greenville Washington County Historic Preservation Commission. Social networking sites have been embraced by the preservation community as a means of strengthening grassroots efforts through distribution of preservation related material and sharing of related experiences. MDAH is currently digitizing its own statewide survey files (as discussed above) which will make information on specific sites and places even more accessible.

Progress in Preservation

Through a myriad of partnerships at the federal, state, and local levels, and through the efforts of private individuals, private nonprofit organizations, and public agencies and representatives, much is being accomplished in historic preservation in Mississippi.

Numerous historically significant properties in public ownership have been preserved, and many of them admirably restored or rehabilitated through the Mississippi Landmark program under the provisions of the Mississippi Antiquities Law, nationally one of the strongest and most effective state-level historic preservation laws.

The Community Heritage Preservation Grant and Mississippi Landmark Grant Programs have seen steady funding as legislators view the program for historic properties as positive public works projects to spur economic development in communities of all sizes throughout the state. Over 207 buildings have received \$31,975,064 in assistance through these programs.

Preservation occurs most effectively at the local level. The number of communities with active local historic preservation programs has continued to expand, with a total of sixty active Certified

Local Governments and several other communities with local governmental historic preservation programs in place. The Preserve America program has also been embraced by communities, and Mississippi has twenty-one Preserve America communities. Almost \$500,000 of Preserve America grant funds have been awarded to Mississippi to promote historic preservation and heritage tourism.

The number of Investment Tax Credit Projects that adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation has grown substantially. Although most of these projects are of a smaller scale (under \$500,000), their impact on downtown and neighborhood revitalization has been tremendous. In addition to the federal tax credit, there is also a state investment tax credit. This program provides a 25% state income tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic buildings. In effect, the combined federal and state credits can reduce the cost of a certified rehabilitation of an income-producing historic structure by 45%. Unlike the federal tax credit, which is available only for income producing properties, the state tax credit is available for owner-occupied dwellings as well. In order to qualify for the 25% state income tax credit a building must be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or contributing to a National Register district, or be designated as a Mississippi Landmark. Only expenses incurred after January 1, 2006, qualify for the state tax credit and, since the law contained a "sunset" provision, it must be reauthorized if it is to continue beyond December 31, 2011. In part because of the increased interest in these programs, the number of National Register listed individual buildings, sites, or districts in Mississippi have grown to over 1,300.

The Mississippi Heritage Trust (MHT), a statewide private, non-profit preservation organization, has continued to promote the cause of preservation throughout the state, cosponsoring the annual statewide Historic Preservation Conference, recognizing significant achievement through the annual historic preservation awards, identifying threatened resources through the biennial "10 Most Endangered Historic Places" listings, and serving as a voice and advocate for historic preservation all across the state. MHT was an invaluable partner in responding to preservation needs following Hurricane Katrina. www.mississippiheritage.com

One of the most important interdisciplinary efforts was led by MHT—the production of a preservation curriculum for all ages. Partners were the State Department of Education, Mississippi Arts Commission, the Mississippi Development Authority, the Humanities Council, the Mississippi AIA chapter, the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, local historic preservation commissions and preservation organizations, and individual teachers and advocates. The curriculum was tested in a variety of schools and grade levels and revised according to the input by the practitioners and the students. The entire curriculum is available on the MHT Web site for download.

The Historic Natchez Foundation, the Woodville Civic Club, the Vicksburg Foundation for Historic Preservation and the Columbus Historic Foundation have been important local private organizations in their respective communities for over 40 years. Recently other communities have formed non-profit organizations to preserve, promote, and protect their local historic resources. Save Aberdeen Landmarks has begun a revolving fund and bought, stabilized, and resold three buildings that were slated for demolition. The Oxford-Lafayette County Heritage Foundation was the private partner in the restoration of the L.Q.C. Lamar House and continues to work on the African American Burns Church restoration. Some other organizations that have also played a role in their communities are the Historic Ocean Springs Association, the Starkville Central Neighborhood Foundation, and the Belhaven Improvement Association.

The Mississippi Main Street Program, administered by the Mississippi Main Street Association, a private, non-profit organization, is another strong partner among the state's preservation leaders and continues to influence the revitalization of the downtown business districts of towns all across the state. The program, with fifty active towns, has for years been recognized as one of the nation's strongest, leveraging more than \$4 billion in private investments in historic downtowns. Much of this investment has utilized the historic preservation investment tax credits, seeing over 3,611 buildings rehabilitated. In Mississippi over 4,699 businesses opened or expanded and 27,727 jobs were created. The City of Columbus was named a Great American Main Street in 2010 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. www.msmainstreet.com

Through funding provided by the Mississippi Legislature and the Mississippi Department of Transportation, MDAH developed a "Mississippi Civil War Trails" program. The \$6.2 million Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) project includes interpretive wayside exhibits at Brices Crossroads, Raymond, and Champion Hill; museum exhibits at the Brices Crossroads Interpretive Center and the restoration of the 1917 Corinth Depot as a museum; the restoration of the Coker House at Champion Hill and the Shaifer House at Port Gibson; and the construction of hiking/biking trails at Raymond, Corinth, and Brices Crossroads. In addition to these project components, MDAH will be publishing a statewide Civil War tour map for distribution at MDOT welcome centers and other venues. In 2009 the Mississippi Legislature established the Mississippi Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission to plan the state's commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the war.

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina inflicted the largest natural and cultural disaster in American history, destroying hundreds of buildings listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Within days of the storm, however, MDAH deployed teams of architectural historians, architects, and engineers, who evaluated the damage to hundreds of other historic buildings and provided owners with information about how to repair and preserve their properties.

After months of work to make emergency repairs and to promote historic preservation as a viable alternative to demolition—and with the help of partners from across the nation, including the Mississippi Heritage Trust, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Association of Preservation Technology, and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers—MDAH was able to convince Congress to include historic preservation in the 2006 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Hurricane Recovery. It created the nation's largest historic preservation grant program to include privately owned residences.

The program provided \$26 million to repair and restore the hurricane damage to approximately 300 of Mississippi's historically significant structures, both publicly and privately owned, and made preservation economically competitive with modern renovation and new construction, thus saving almost 300 historic buildings that otherwise might have been lost.

Because historic buildings are powerful symbols of continuity and stability in Mississippi's storm-ravaged communities, the Hurricane Relief Grant Program for Historic Preservation has made significant contributions to the state's hurricane recovery efforts, both physically and emotionally.

Although the state has faced the dearth of skilled preservation craftsmen for years, the rebuilding of the Mississippi Gulf Coast and other affected areas following Katrina underscored this fact. MDAH has been working with Copiah Lincoln Community College, the Historic Natchez

Foundation, and the Mississippi Development Authority to determine the feasibility of establishing a preservation trade school in the state.

The Mississippi Archaeological Association (MAA), a nonprofit group of professionals and amateur archaeologists, and MDAH continue to sponsor a statewide archaeology month every October that focuses on educating Mississippi's residents on archaeology through lectures, artifact identifications, demo-digs, and much more. The newest edition to the month is an Archaeology Expo held at Millsaps College, which is a hands-on, family fair for children. This has been quite a success, attracting an enormous amount of local support. MDAH has also effectively worked with the MAA in implementing an annual MAA Weekend Dig at various archaeological sites in the summer, assisting with excavations in progress by several institutions. www.msarchaeology.org

MDAH has worked closely with the Archaeological Conservancy for over ten years, assisting with their efforts to preserve archaeologically significant sites throughout the state. The Conservancy's Southeastern Regional headquarters is in Marks, Mississippi, with their jurisdiction ranging over eight states. To date, they have purchased and preserved fifteen sites in Mississippi. . In addition, MDAH has continued to work with the Civil War Preservation Trust and the American Battlefield Protection Program of the NPS to acquire and preserve Civil War battlefield properties through fee-simple acquisition and conservation easements. www.americanarchaeology.com

The rise of heritage tourism has prompted a wider recognition of the tourist appeal of historic properties. In some communities, most notably Columbus, Corinth, Natchez, and Vicksburg, heritage tourism is a very important aspect of the local economy. Other communities have begun to form relationships to promote their historic sites cooperatively through a region of the state. The designation of three National Heritage Areas—the Mississippi Gulf Coast, the Mississippi Hills, and the Mississippi Delta—will be a boon to economic development through historic preservation.

In addition to these efforts, the Mississippi Legislature has initiated several heritage tourism trails over the last few years. The Mississippi Development Authority works with the Department of Archives and History and other partners to develop these trails. These trails, including the Mississippi Blues Trail and the Mississippi Country Music Trail, highlight sites related to the cultural history of the state. The erection of a marker at each trail site documents the events, people, and places and makes that information readily accessible to residents and visitors alike.

MDAH was recently awarded a transportation enhancement grant from the Mississippi Department of Transportation for a Mississippi Mound Trail. This will be a self-guided driving tour through the Mississippi Delta into the Southwest Hills from Memphis, Tennessee, to Wilkinson County, Mississippi. The purpose of this trail project is to raise awareness and enhance protection of the vast array of pre-contact (prehistoric) Indian mounds and earthworks in Mississippi. The project will accomplish this by encouraging preservation, providing interpretation, fostering education, and promoting heritage-tourism related economic development along Mississippi's roadways.

MDAH has also developed a very successful volunteer program. Citizens can apply online to volunteer with the department in areas such as curation, GIS, survey, excavation, or the archaeological files. In addition, MDAH has developed a student internship program with Millsaps, a local college, which offers course-credit in return for curation experience. A student

internship program has also been in effect with the University of Mississippi and the University of Memphis for two years, using the Carson Mounds and other projects as instructional resources.

In addition to housing the state's archaeological and architectural collections, MDAH is also a federally approved curation facility. In 2009, MDAH applied for and was awarded a Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) grant that will be used to train staff on NAGPRA procedures, hold on-site meetings with Indian tribes that are culturally affiliated with the state, and catalog and digitize MDAH's archaeological collection, beginning with the Chambers collection.

MDAH is also working closely with MDOT to maintain the most up-to-date and accurate archaeological information possible. Since 2008, MDOT has funded an intern to assist with quality control of the site cards, survey reports, and GIS system.

In 2006, MDAH established the Mississippi Archaeological Research Grant Program. The Mississippi Archaeological Research Grant Program is designed to provide funding for archaeological research, data recovery, and laboratory testing (such as carbon-14 dating) to increase the knowledge of the prehistory and history of Mississippi through an archaeological perspective. The goal of this program is to provide the tools to perform intensive analysis of archaeological data and curated collections and the opportunity to publish findings by researchers who are otherwise limited by financial constraints.

Specifically, this grant program provides funding to university archaeologists and graduate students for research projects within the State of Mississippi. At present, most archaeological surveys in Mississippi are performed to fulfill the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The majority of this work consists of Phase I surveys (identifying and recording archaeological sites), and only minimally enhances our knowledge of Mississippi's archaeological past. Only through controlled testing (Phase II) and excavation (Phase III) can more in-depth knowledge of prehistoric and historic archaeological data be obtained and analyzed. The publication of the research funded by this grant program is meant to answer and refine archaeological research questions in Mississippi that are not addressed by Section 106 archaeology, as well as to update the Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan. The program will help focus the research questions and aims of the Section 106 projects conducted within the state. The information will also help in making determinations of National Register eligibility for archaeological sites (Criterion D). To date, this program has funded seven research grants through four universities.

In 2009, with mitigation funding from the Mississippi Development Authority, five large projects were developed with a focus on coastal archaeology. Four of these projects were research and excavation, while the fifth project focused on developing the **Mississippi Archaeological Heritage Trails** Web site, specifically designed for the public to raise awareness of Mississippi's rich archaeological heritage. Information from the four projects will be uploaded and made available on the Web site as will all other new and current on-going research in the state. This Web site will include interactive maps, podcasts, videos of excavation and various archaeologists working in the state, an education section specifically for teachers to use in the classroom, games, current events, ongoing excavations information, and more.

Threats and Challenges Facing Historic Resources

Despite these successes, historic preservation faces many challenges in Mississippi. The following are among the most serious threats to historic resources:

- Neglect and decay of historic properties, especially in economically disadvantaged areas.
- Depopulation of many core urban and rural areas, leading to widespread abandonment of houses, retail buildings, churches, and industrial/agricultural buildings.
- Development pressures from gambling/tourism industry, especially on the Gulf Coast and in college towns, and to some extent in the Delta.
- Coastal erosion and subsidence of marsh shell middens, affecting coastal archaeological sites due to natural and man-made conditions.
- Traditional suburban sprawl and New Urbanism developments.
- Leveling of thousands of acres of farmland for irrigation, resulting in the widespread destruction of archaeological sites, especially including mounds, earthworks, and shell rings.
- Consolidation of public schools and replacement of school facilities throughout the state, resulting in the abandonment or destruction of many older school buildings.
- Erosion and improper maintenance along historic roads in the loess bluff areas.
- Lack of understanding by policy makers of the importance of historic preservation for community identity and economic development, specifically in respect to land use.
- U.S. Green Building Council's leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system
- Lack of trained tradespeople in proper historic preservation methodology.
- Abandonment or demolition of historic buildings in need of rehabilitation/retrofitting for new pre-fabricated buildings by government agencies.
- Economic conditions limiting the number of historic preservation professionals in the state as well as the current professionals' ability to assist constituents through travel, research, and education.
- Governmental policies and laws that are at odds with historic preservation practice.
- Increased insurance rates and new flood zones on the Mississippi Gulf Coast
- Natural erosion of cultural resources, such as mounds and fishweirs.

Goals and Objectives

Several issues have continued to be of paramount concern in formulating goals and objectives for historic preservation for the next several years. The goals and objectives stated in the historic preservation plan have been developed to address these concerns, as well as other concerns expressed by members of the public and the historic preservation community.

The following goals and objectives are intended to guide historic preservation activities in Mississippi from 2010 to 2015 and to provide general direction for organizations and agencies. Specific tasks, projects, and assignments will be detailed in work plans for those organizations and agencies, which will be prepared in order to implement this comprehensive plan.

Increase public appreciation of cultural resources and promote their use.

- Use the Internet and traditional media outlets to promote historic preservation and to publicize preservation success stories.
- Establish a central Web-based inventory of the statewide archaeological and architectural inventory.

- Conduct educational events and activities to inform the public about preservation procedures, programs, and partners.

Expand and enhance the identification, preservation, and interpretation of cultural resources.

- Undertake increased survey work to identify and record historic resources, particularly where substantial development pressures or other threats exist.
- Provide funding and project supervision for survey and registration projects in communities throughout the state in cooperation with local governments and non-profit organizations.
- Increase the listing of properties to the National Register of Historic Places, particularly districts and threatened properties.
- Increase the designation of National Historic Landmarks.
- Prepare new historic context reports and update existing contexts to provide a sound basis for the evaluation of the eligibility of related properties for the National Register of Historic Places.
- Establish a preservation trade school.
- Produce tourism-based information such as tour guides, interpretive signage, and historic and trail markers.
- Increase accessibility to and interpretation of historic places by the physically impaired.
- Broaden participation in and awareness of historic preservation by racial and ethnic minorities, including those of less numerous and less recognized ethnicities.
- Develop additional educational outreach programs for children.
- Expand archaeological excavations and provide more funding for archaeological research, especially in cooperation with universities, amateurs, and volunteers.
- Identify and document shipwrecks, boats, fishweirs, and other underwater archaeological resources.

Develop and maintain productive partnerships

- Strengthen statewide and local nonprofit organizations as effective, independent advocates of preservation.
- Provide instructional information to local, state, and federal governmental groups and their representatives to increase their capacity to administer their respective historic preservation responsibilities.
- Develop and maintain relationships between organizations and agencies, as well as a variety of national and conservation organizations whose programs impact preservation efforts.
- Develop a published guideline for coordinated responses to natural disasters in concert with federal and state agencies, local governments, and non-profit preservation organizations.

Promote a preservation ethic at the local and state level.

- Educate local historic preservation commissions and elected officials on preservation law and procedure, as well as design issues.
- Designate local landmarks and districts for greater protection at the municipal or county level.
- Incorporate preservation policy into the local comprehensive planning process.

- Assess the historical, architectural, and/or archaeological significance of publicly owned properties for consideration as designated Mississippi Landmarks.
- Develop Mississippi Landmark eligibility criteria for various property types to ensure consistent assessment.
- Conduct reconnaissance surveys for all state-owned properties previously un-surveyed to evaluate them for potential Mississippi Landmark designation.
- Promote the donation of preservation easements and encourage the designation of private properties as Mississippi Landmarks.
- Strengthen the relationship between MDAH and the Attorney General's office to provide effective enforcement of the Antiquities Law on all publicly owned lands.
- Provide instructional information to schools and universities to increase their capacity to administer their respective historic preservation responsibilities.
- Disseminate a layman's guide to the various laws that protect historic properties.
- Enact appropriate laws and regulations to govern historic preservation.
- Continue operation of MDAH field offices in the Delta and northeast Mississippi and on the Gulf Coast.
- Implement and follow this Comprehensive Plan.

Promote economic incentives and develop and secure fiscal resources to preserve public and private properties.

- Promote and achieve widespread participation in the Federal Investment Tax Credit program.
- Promote the state tax incentive program and achieve legislative reauthorization of the program in 2011.
- Publicize funding sources for historic preservation, including not only preservation organizations and agencies, but also other programs that can support preservation efforts.
- Use local taxing options for the preservation of historic properties.
- Expand the Community Heritage Grant and Mississippi Landmark state grant programs.
- Facilitate the donation of façade, scenic, and development easements to provide financial incentives for the preservation of significant privately owned properties.
- Achieve a greater inter-relatedness between historic preservation, community revitalization, and tourism development and promotion activities.
- Increase funding for the HPD of MDAH.

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This publication has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior; nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

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