

**Long-Range Interpretive Plan**  
**for**  
**Independence National Historical Park**

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*There is nothing more common than to confound the terms of the American Revolution with those of the late American war. The American war is over; but this is far from being the case with the American revolution.*

Benjamin Rush, January, 1787

From the *Columbia Magazine* article urging a new central government

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## **Message from the Superintendent**

Independence National Historical Park has witnessed major changes in the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Independence Mall has been redesigned and is now home to impressive new public buildings including: the Independence Visitor Center in 2001, the National Constitution Center in 2003, and the Liberty Bell Center in 2003. The President's House Site outdoor exhibits and the Mall landscape projects are expected to be completed in 2007. The east end of the park is now anchored by the Independence Living History Center and the Independence Park Institute. These major new facilities and visitor services offer us a unique opportunity to revitalize the interpretation of America's premier historical park.

The Long Range Interpretive Plan planning process assesses where we are and where we hope to be in the near future. Part one of this document defines the new park themes, describes the desired visitor experience, lists issues and challenges, and identifies our audience. Part two of the document lists specific actions the park will take to meet our vision for the future of interpretation and visitor services.

Independence National Historical Park is supported through partnerships with many local organizations. The park's interpretive staff engaged hundreds of park staff and partners throughout the planning process. This collaborative effort produced a more comprehensive and inclusive look at how we will interpret America's birthplace to tens of millions of park visitors in the future.

I hope you will take time to review this important plan and visit the new Independence National Historical Park.

Sincerely,

Dennis R. Reidenbach  
Superintendent  
Independence National Historical Park

## **Comprehensive Interpretive Planning in the National Park Service**

The National Park Service (NPS) has a unified planning approach for interpretation and education. This approach combines planning for interpretive media, personal services, and education programs. The Comprehensive Interpretive Planning (CIP) process is the basic planning document for interpretation and was incorporated into NPS guidelines. Responsibility for accomplishing the CIP process lies with each park's superintendent.

### **What is a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan?**

The CIP helps parks make choices, and is written to provide guidance to park staff. It helps them decide what their objectives are, who their audiences are, and what mix of media and personal services to use. Although the CIP as defined in Director's Orders 6 is composed of specific elements, good planning is customized to meet an individual park's needs and situations. The CIP is not a recipe; rather it is a guide to effective, goal-driven planning. While it considers past interpretive programming, it is primarily a forward-looking document that concentrates on actions needed to create or sustain a vigorous and effective interpretive program for the future. All CIPs have these three components: the Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP), a series of Annual Implementation Plans (AIP) and an Interpretive Database (ID).

### **What is a Long Range Interpretive Plan?**

The heart of the CIP is the Long Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP). The LRIP defines the overall vision and long term (7-10 years) interpretive goals of the park. The process that develops the LRIP defines realistic strategies and actions that work toward achievement of the interpretive goals. This document is the Executive Summary of the park's LRIP which will be completed by the park's interpretive staff.

### **The Annual Implementation Plan and Interpretive Database**

The completed LRIP is a critical part of the CIP, but it does not stand alone. Actions in the LRIP are divided into annual, achievable steps and reproduced in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), the second component of the CIP. Creating a series of these AIPs that implement the recommendations outlined in the LRIP simplifies the park's annual planning. The third component of the CIP is the Interpretive Database (ID), an ongoing compilation of information, reports, bibliographies, plans, and inventories that document the LRIP's ongoing progress.

# Interpretive Planning

*“Well done is better than well said”*

Ben Franklin, *Poor Richard's Almanac*, 1737

## **Park Legislation and Purpose**

### **Park Legislation**

On June 28, 1948, Congress passed Public Law 795, H.R. 5053, that established Independence National Historical Park (NHP) *“...for the purpose of preserving for the benefit of the American people as a national historical park certain historical structures and properties of outstanding national significance located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and associated with the American Revolution and the founding and growth of the United States, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized....such park to be fully established as ‘the Independence National Historical Park’...”*

P.L. 100-433 Constitution Heritage Act of 1988- Authorized the establishment of a National Center for the United States Constitution

In 1997, Congress passed H.R. 1635 to establish the National Underground Network to Freedom *“to establish within the United States National Park Service the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program, and for other purposes. Each park will identify its own sites that help to tell the dramatic story of fugitives from slavery and those who assisted them in their flight to freedom.”*

P.L. 106-131 Gateway Visitor Center Authorization Act of 1999- Authorizes the city and regional mission of the Independence Visitor Center.

### **Park Purpose**

A park purpose statement summarizes the reasons a park is included in the National Park System. It is derived from the legislation that created both the National Park Service and a specific park.

*The purpose of Independence National Historical Park is to preserve its stories, buildings and artifacts as a source of inspiration for visitors to learn more about the ideas and ideals that led to the American Revolution and the founding and growth of the United States.*

(From the 1995 General Management Plan)

## Park Significance

**Statements of significance describe a park's distinctive natural, cultural and recreational resources and values that are the factual rationale for national recognition of the site. The significance statements for Independence were developed for the Independence National Historical Park General Management Plan of 1995.**

Independence National Historical Park is nationally and internationally significant for many reasons. The park includes a World Heritage Site (Independence Hall), and seven national historic landmarks (American Philosophical Society Hall, Carpenters' Hall, Christ Church, Deshler-Morris House, First Bank, Merchants' Exchange Building and Second Bank). The park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom. The park's original structures and artifacts are the tangible remains of some of the most momentous events to shape this country and the world.

Independence National Historical Park is nationally significant because:

- The park was the site of meetings of the first and second Continental Congresses, which gave direction to the American Revolution and the confederation government.
- It was the site where the founding documents of the United States of America were debated and signed.
- It includes the site of the home of Benjamin Franklin, who personified the spirit, ideals, curiosities, and ingenuity of 18th century America.
- It is the site of the tomb of the Unknown Revolutionary War soldier, and the 18<sup>th</sup> century burial ground for other soldiers, Yellow Fever victims and African- Americans.
- It was where the United States Congress met from 1790 to 1800 adding the Bill of Rights to the Constitution and the first new states to the union (Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee.)
- It was the site of the presidency of George Washington (1790-1797) and John Adams (1797-1800) which established precedents and witnessed, with Adams' inauguration, the first peaceful transfer of executive power in the western world.
- It is the site of the First and Second Banks of the United States which set monetary policy and regulated U.S. currency.
- It was the site of efforts to establish treaties with various Indian nations, such as the Mohawk nation led by Chief Joseph Brant.
- It was the site of the first decisions of the United States Supreme Court.

- This is the place where the 1793 Fugitive Slave Act was passed and was signed into law by our first President, George Washington.
- Independence Hall was the scene of trials in Federal District Court related to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.
- Independence Square was the scene of activity related to abolition such as Frederick Douglass’s famous 1844 speech while a fugitive slave, and other abolition society meetings.
- Independence Square was the site of the first public reading on July 4, 1876, of the “Women’s Declaration of Rights....” by Susan B. Anthony urging women’s suffrage.
- The park represents the founding ideals of the nation and is a national and international symbol of democracy and liberty.
- The park with its affiliated Churches represents the spirit of religious diversity and tolerance beginning with William Penn and codified in the Bill of Rights.
- Resources in the park are tangible links to the past; they are authentic and have direct associations with the people and events of the early American republic.

The park is also significant to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the City of Philadelphia because:

- Philadelphia’s central location in the colonies and the fact that it was the largest city at the time made it the logical place for the nation’s capital under the First and Second Continental Congresses, the Confederation Congress and the United States Congress.
- Independence Hall was the seat of the state government for most of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, where the State constitution was adopted.
- Philadelphia was a center in the Underground Railroad network, in part due to the large free black population resulting from the Pennsylvania Gradual Abolition Act of 1780.
- Many park buildings date to the colonial period of Pennsylvania and Philadelphia, which were founded on principles of religious and intellectual tolerance that provided a supportive atmosphere and model for the revolutionary ideas of the 1770s.
- The park is an integral part of Philadelphia—symbolically, historically, visually, and economically; it is the primary historical attraction in the city.
- The Park, especially the area near the Liberty Bell Center, is a place where citizens invoke their rights under the Constitution to public assembly and free speech.
- The park’s designed cultural landscape is a clean, safe, and open green space in the heart of the urban environment; Independence Square has been an open public green since 1735.

- The park is a pioneer in forging agreements and partnerships to jointly preserve historic sites which are not owned by the National Park Service and in working with outside scholars and others to develop historical narratives to interpret these sites.
- The park is significant in the history and practice of historic preservation in America. Many of the practices that are now standard in preservation were developed at INDE.

## **National Park Service Mission Statement**

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

## **Park Mission Statement**

**A park’s mission statement is a vision for the future and articulates, in broad terms, the ideas that the NPS strives to achieve.**

It is the mission of Independence National Historical Park to preserve, manage, operate, maintain, protect and interpret park resources significantly associated with the American Revolution and the establishment of the United States of America in order to perpetuate these resources and to help all people understand the people, events, and ideas associated with the park’s tangible resources.

## **Park Mission Goals**

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), enacted in 1993, requires federal agencies to establish standards for measuring performance and effectiveness. The law requires federal agencies to develop strategic plans describing their overall goals and objectives, annual performance plans containing quantifiable measures of their progress, and performance reports describing their success in meeting those standards and measures.

Park mission goals articulate in broad terms the ideal conditions the park and its partners will strive to attain. The following mission goals were prepared in 2000 as part of the planning process required by GPRA. In addition to Goals related to resource and visitors protection, there are some goals specifically related to Interpretation and Visitor Services.

**Mission Goal IIa, 1a:** Visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities.

**Mission Goal IIb, 1:** Visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of parks and their resources for this and future generations.

## **Interpretation and Visitor Services Vision Statement**

The Division of Interpretation and Visitor Services at Independence National Historical Park will create public programming that is creative, thought provoking and interprets history from multiple perspectives using the most current research. Park interpreters will provide visitors with opportunities to make intellectual and emotional connections to park sites and stories, fostering the public's interest in the stewardship and preservation of the park's resources.

Interpretation will fully examine the context, events, and effects of America's struggle for independence and the founding and growth of the United States. It will explore how the ideas and ideals of the American Revolution have influenced people across time and around the globe.

Specifically, interpretive programming will encourage visitors to consider what was so revolutionary about the American Revolution, contemplate the promise and paradox of liberty, recognize the dynamic tension inherent in our heritage as expressed in *E Pluribus Unum*- from many, one, and appreciate the extraordinary life and legacy of Benjamin Franklin.

### **The Northeast Region Visitor Services Strategy: *Connecting People to Parks***

*Connecting People to Parks* (2005) is the Northeast Region (NER) interpretation and education strategy. It outlines the most important actions to be taken in order to address the challenges parks face and maintain the Region's commitment to excellence in visitor services. This Regional Strategy incorporates specific goals and actions of the NPS Advisory Board recommendations from *Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century* (2001), *Renewing Our Education Mission* (2003), and the *NER Strategic Plan* (2001). Principles of civic engagement are embedded throughout the strategy to involve the public, partners, and NPS colleagues in dialogue that is designed to strengthen the role of parks to examine the values of society and encourage citizens to reflect on the many meanings ascribed to park resources.

The park's Comprehensive Interpretive Plan will support and implement these eight goals:

**GOAL 1 – *Connect People to America's Stories:*** Each park provides opportunities for all people to experience authentic, tangible resources that help them understand and draw inspiration from larger meanings, concepts, themes, and stories about our natural world and cultural heritage.

**GOAL 2 – *Use a Business Approach to Enhance Financial Means and Capacity:*** Parks develop and adopt best business practices to leverage NPS resources and to ensure the implementation of effective interpretive and educational opportunities for all people.

**GOAL 3 – *Evaluate and Identify Best Practices:*** To achieve the best practices in Interpretation and Education, each park fosters a culture that uses relevant social science techniques to continuously develop, assess, and improve visitor experiences.

**GOAL 4 – *Collaborate with Others:*** Each park connects to the National Park System and seeks opportunities to link themes and build relationships with parks and partners locally, nationally, and globally.

**GOAL 5 – *Connect People to Places through Technology:*** Each park integrates established and emerging technologies to enhance interpretive and education programs to reach new audiences.

**GOAL 6 – *Open New Doors to Learning:*** Parks provide meaningful and relevant resource-based opportunities for life-long learning for diverse audiences, particularly for cultural minorities and populations who have felt excluded from parks. Schools, colleges, civic and academic institutions, organizations, and life-long learners recognize and use parks as dynamic classrooms to enhance learning, to engage in civic dialogue, and to transform their interests into personal action.

**GOAL 7 – *Invest in Students and Educators:*** Parks offer curriculum-based education programs for students of all ages, especially school-age students, so that children have quality educational “park experiences” during their elementary and high school years.

**GOAL 8 – *Foster America’s Best Interpreters and Educators:*** Interpreters at all levels seek their own professional development opportunities and execute their responsibilities with innovation and professionalism. NPS managers create a climate conducive to professional growth and learning.

## **Accessibility**

The Rehab Act (and its amendments) are the laws that apply to the federal government.

**1. The Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-480)** requires all buildings and facilities built or renovated in whole or in part with Federal funds to be accessible to, and usable by, physically disabled persons. Since 1968, official standards for making buildings accessible have been developed and the U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board has been created to monitor and enforce compliance with the law.

**2. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112)**, as amended, is more encompassing than the Architectural Barriers Act. While the Architectural Barriers Act requires physical access to buildings and facilities, Section 504 requires program accessibility in all services provided with Federal dollars. The act itself is very brief. It states:

*No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by Federal Financial Assistance or by any Executive Agency.*

Further, NPS policy mandates that interpretive programming be developed in accordance with NPS Director’s Orders 42, and that interpretive media be developed within the NPS Accessibility Guidelines for Interpretive Media.

## Park Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes capture the essence of the park’s significance. They include the park’s most important stories and represent core messages that every audience should have the opportunity to hear.

While interpretation of any park could touch upon many stories, focused themes increase effectiveness. When well conceived, they explore the meanings behind the facts. They open minds to new ideas and perhaps to multiple points of view. When linked to commonly held emotions or universal human experiences, themes encourage audiences to see themselves in a park’s story and discover personal relevance.

*The following interpretive themes were developed for Independence National Historical Park during a series of workshops involving a cross-section of park staff, constituents, and partners.*

### **Theme 1: What Was “Revolutionary” About the American Revolution?**

*The American Revolution was the result of new ideas expressed in our founding documents, which created profound changes in power, perception and opportunity that continue to affect people in the United States and around the world.*

This theme supplies context for the Revolution. It helps visitors enter the world of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and then builds upon this understanding of the past to examine the changes that came with independence. The founding documents were a bold experiment testing a new idea-government by the people. It takes a long look at the 18<sup>th</sup> century European world in which the revolution occurred and focuses on the political, economic and social ferment triggered by the Enlightenment’s new thinking on both sides of the Atlantic.

### **Theme 2: Liberty: The Promises and the Paradoxes**

*The promises of liberty and equality granted in the founding documents present a paradox: not only are they ideals to strive for but also unfulfilled promises for people who struggle to be fully included as citizens of our nation.*

This theme explores the theory and reality of attaining liberty and ensuring equality, extending that exploration over time and around the globe. It looks at the origins of the Founders’ ideals, at how those ideals actually worked in everyday life, and at how they evolved and spread around the world. In 1776, the phrase “all men are created equal” in the Declaration of Independence was interpreted by many of the Signers to mean “well educated property owning men”. The definition of who was entitled to liberty, including the right to vote has changed over time. This theme not only speaks of the American Revolution, but the continuing struggle for liberty and freedom that is part of the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom story.

### **Theme 3: E Pluribus Unum: Out of Many, One**

*The motto E Pluribus Unum- meaning "out of many, one," illustrates a distinctive characteristic of the United States—a democratic nation of many states and diverse people with different cultures, beliefs, and political ideas - which contributes to the dynamic tension and growth of American society.*

This theme looks at the many forms of diversity in the United States, at how the Founders viewed diversity, and at the commonly held beliefs that hold such a diverse nation together. The United States is composed of many different parts. The population then as now, is divided into geographic regions, ethnic and racial groups, religions and political opinions. This theme considers how the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries viewed diversity and how government and society responded to these differences.

### **Theme 4: Benjamin Franklin- the relevant revolutionary**

*Benjamin Franklin was revolutionary in his thinking and actions, he struggled to achieve liberty but did not always extend it to others, and he worked to bring many people together for a common goal.*

Franklin's many accomplishments capture the spirit of 18<sup>th</sup> century enlightenment and American revolutionary thought in science, politics, and society. This theme illustrates how Franklin struggled with the practical and philosophical paradoxes and worked for the promises and responsibilities of liberty in his professional and personal life. It demonstrates the lesson he learned early, that when many people contribute their talents and efforts towards a common goal, much can be accomplished.

## **The Desired Visitor Experience**

In addition to the themes that the park plans to communicate to the public, it is important to consider the nature of the park's interaction with its targeted audiences, whether in person, on a website or distance learning program.

What will the initial contact with the park be like? How will audiences be oriented? What activities and which programs can the park provide that will reinforce its current themes? How can audiences actively participate in learning? Are there ways to encourage visitor reflection and inspiration? What will create positive memories and nurture stewardship and support?

### **General Characteristics of the Desired Audience Experience**

*Based on responses during planning workshops, the park's interpretive program will be most effective when it includes:*

- opportunities for visitors to easily and safely locate key park sites with a minimum of inconvenience due to enhanced security procedures
- opportunities to interpret the park story from multiple perspectives
- opportunities for visitors to have more program options to balance constraints due to security, historic preservation, or crowd control
- opportunities for all ages (especially younger visitors) to have fun experiencing the park

### **Orientation & Wayfinding Goals**

*Based on responses during planning workshops, the park's interpretive program will be most effective when it includes:*

- easy access to pre-visit information and orientation materials via the park's website, phone, mail or in person at the Independence Visitor Center so visitors can make informed choices
- directional signs so that visitors may easily navigate to key park sites and programs

## **Theme Reinforcement**

*Based on responses during planning workshops, the park's interpretive program will be most effective when it includes:*

- opportunities to visit the original buildings where historic events took place either in person or on a virtual tour using innovative programming
- tangible connections through original artifacts, historic buildings and landscapes to the people and events represented in the park stories
- links demonstrating the relevance of the 18th century to 21<sup>st</sup> century people

## **Thought, Reflection, Inspiration, and Stewardship**

*Based on responses during planning workshops, the park's interpretive program will be most effective when it includes:*

- thought-provoking programming that presents park stories from multiple perspectives so that visitors can make personal connections to the park resources and themes
- a variety of interpretive programs and techniques that encourage personal connection between the visitor and the park
- identifying Independence NHP as a unit of the National Park Service

## **Issues & Challenges Affecting Interpretation**

Independence National Historical Park has many assets upon which to build an effective interpretive program, including evocative and compelling stories, outstanding cultural resources, ongoing research, a professional staff, and dedicated supporters. It also faces a number of challenges. Well designed programs can build on interpretive strengths to help overcome the challenges.

## Wayfinding and Orientation Challenges

*Based on responses during planning workshops, the following challenges and issues facing Independence NHP should be addressed:*

- Because of the park's urban setting, visitors often have difficulty locating parking and finding their way to and through the park.
- Many visitors spend all their time on Independence Mall (the Independence Visitor Center, Liberty Bell Center, Independence Hall and the National Constitution Center) and are not aware of other park sites.
- Visitor may not have enough time to see other park sites such as Washington Square, the Portrait Gallery in the Second Bank, the Franklin Court sites, Carpenters' Hall, Declaration House, the American Philosophical Society Museum, New Hall, the Dolley Todd, William White and Deshler Morris Houses, the First Bank, City Tavern, Welcome Park, the Independence Living History Center, and nearby historic houses of worship and burial grounds.
- Access to programs and buildings can be confusing because of seasonally changing hours and procedures such as our timed tickets for certain tours.

## Security

*Based on responses during planning workshops, the following challenges and issues facing Independence NHP should be addressed:*

- Security practices present another layer of regulations and procedures that visitors must learn and navigate through. It creates lines and increases the amount of time needed for visiting key park "icons" such as the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall.
- The presence of security screening raises questions about the delicate balance between personal freedom and restrictions imposed to protect citizens from harm. Park security issues relate to the park theme: *Liberty: the Promises and the Paradoxes*.

## **Creating an 18th-Century Experience in Present-Day Philadelphia**

*Based on responses during planning workshops, the following challenges and issues facing Independence NHP should be addressed:*

- The 21<sup>st</sup> century urban scene creates many challenges in recreating a historic 18<sup>th</sup> century setting.
- Preservation needs and heavy visitation limit visitor access to historic buildings and the original artifacts that witnessed history.
- Some of the park's exhibits are out-of-date in both content and technology. Exhibits tend to be text-heavy and are not engaging.

## **Training and Preparation**

*Based on responses during planning workshops, the following challenges and issues facing Independence NHP should be addressed:*

- Staff needs ongoing training and coaching to sustain programming that is innovative and thought provoking and uses a variety of techniques to engage visitors.
- We need to continue to work with our own and outside scholars to make use of current research.

## **Partnerships**

- We need to work more effectively with these stake holders to provide a seamless visitor experience.

## **Budget and Staffing Constraints**

*Based on responses during planning workshops, the following challenges and issues facing Independence NHP should be addressed:*

- We need to continually evaluate our operations to ensure that we are making the best use of our staff and providing the best program access to our park sites.
- Many of the parks audio-visual exhibits are outdated and require frequent repairs to work reliably. We need to incorporate new technology into our programming.

## **Visitor Profiles and Targeted Audiences**

This is a broad description of park audiences and their needs—including current and potential audiences. “Audience” describes anyone who uses a site’s interpretation and educational services, whether in person or “virtual”.

### **Existing Audiences**

Annual visitation to the Liberty Bell Center, which provides a reasonable baseline visitor count for the entire park, has been increasing and topped two million people in 2005. Visitation data from the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Council’s “Money Generation Model,” estimates 20 percent of visitors to Independence National Historical Park are local day visitors, 60 percent are non-local day visitors, and 20 percent are overnight visitors. Park visitors come from all over the world and many have a basic knowledge of the founding of the United States.

More than 500,000 children visit the park each year, especially during the week in the spring and fall. On weekends and during the summer, the majority of our visitors are individuals and small family groups.

## **Targeted Audiences**

The park will continue to provide services to all audiences, but the following groups were identified in the planning workshops.

It is important to identify targeted audiences so that programming, media, and facilities can be shaped to address their interests and needs. Further, identifying audiences helps in evaluating the effectiveness of interpretive programming.

*Based on responses during planning workshops, the audiences targeted for interpretive programming and community outreach in the next 5-7 years are, in priority order:*

- Virtual visitors – The Internet is often the “front door” for visitors to the park, and we need to meet the expectations of this ever-growing technologically savvy audience.
- Families – from local, regional and out of state including: parents with children, couples, and grandparents and grandchildren.
- Teachers and school groups (especially 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades) will continue to be a primary audience during the fall and spring seasons.
- African-American visitors both local and out of town
- Non- English speaking visitors, both local and international
- Center City residents and regional recreational users.
- Business travelers and convention participants

## **Existing Conditions**

### **Facilities**

The park has more than 25 historic and public use buildings that are open to the public. Most are staffed by NPS interpreters while some are staffed and owned by our park partners.

- **Independence Visitor Center** – Opened in November 2001, this regional visitor center is a joint venture between the NPS and the Independence Visitor Center Corporation. The building functions as the park’s primary visitor center as well as a center for city and region information. From early spring through the fall, 6,000 -12,000 visitors use it daily.
- **Liberty Bell Center** – Opened in October 2003, this building provides exhibits and an audio visual presentation on the history and meaning of the Liberty Bell. The Bell itself is showcased at the south exit of the building with a view of Independence Hall and is seen by an average of 6,000-10,000 people a day (March-November).
- **Independence Square** – Once through security for Independence Square, visitors can enter several buildings: Old City Hall, home to the Supreme Court, the West Wing Document exhibit with original copies of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, Congress Hall with its restored House and Senate Chambers, and Independence Hall - where our country was born in 1776 and our government created in 1787.
- **Washington Square**- One of the city’s five original public squares planned by William Penn, it is now the site of the Tomb of the Unknown Revolutionary War Soldier and an eternal flame.
- **The National Constitution Center** is a partnership building on Arch Street just north of the Visitor Center, with world class exhibits and programs on the U.S. Constitution.
- **Franklin Court** – includes a “Ghost House” structure on the site of Franklin’s former mansion plus the underground museum and five Market Street houses, three of which contain exhibits: on Franklin and printing, the *Aurora* newspaper office, archeology at Franklin Court, and two that are a museum gift shop and a United States Post Office staffed by partners.
- **The “People of Independence” exhibit in the Second Bank of the United States** features our extensive C.W. Peale portrait collection of the Founding Fathers and interprets the age of Enlightenment in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- **Independence Living History Center** – Our former visitor center built in 1974 has been converted for multiple uses, which include: educational programs at the Independence Park Institute, theatrical productions and a gift shop operated by *Once Upon A Nation*, a park partner and an archeology lab staffed by park employees and volunteers who sort and catalogue millions of artifacts unearthed during the construction of the National Constitution Center.
- **325 Walnut St.** – Future site of three additional learning labs for the Independence Park Institute.

- **Other park buildings we staff include: New Hall Military Museum-** with exhibits on the 18<sup>th</sup> century Army, Navy and Marine Corps, **Declaration House**, a reconstruction of the place where Jefferson lived when writing the Declaration of Independence, two restored 18<sup>th</sup> century houses: the Dolley **Todd Madison** and the **Bishop William White houses**.
- **The Deshler-Morris House** (Germantown White House) summer retreat for President Washington is open for tours by our volunteers. The **First Bank of the United States** is currently not open to the public.
- **The American Philosophical Society Museum and the Carpenters' Hall** are still owned and operated by their original organizations and are open to the public. **Pemberton House** is operated as a museum store by Eastern National. *Once Upon A Nation* offers public programming at the **Free Quaker Meeting**. The **City Tavern** is leased as an operating restaurant and the **Thomas Bond House** is currently a bed & breakfast. The **First Bank** and the **Locust Street Houses** are now participating in the historic lease program.
- There are several historic houses of worship and burial grounds with formal or traditional associations with the park: **Christ Church, St. Joseph's, St George's, Mikveh Israel, Free Quaker Meeting, Gloria Dei, Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal and St. Thomas African Episcopal**.

## Non-Personal Services (Interpretive Media)

There is a variety of interpretive media throughout the park, including:

- **Website** – The Park has a website ([www.nps.gov/inde](http://www.nps.gov/inde)) that is updated regularly. The Independence Park Institute website ([www.independenceparkinstitute.com](http://www.independenceparkinstitute.com)) is linked to the park website. The website is a resource for teachers and school groups that provides tips for visiting the park, pre & post lesson plans for IPI programs and Teacher Guides.
- **Exhibits** – The Park's indoor exhibits range from older, text-heavy, wall-mounted panels to portable, interactive reproductions. Most of the older exhibits need to be replaced. All of the exhibits – including those designed and installed in recent years – need to be reevaluated for their effectiveness in providing interpretive opportunities for a wide variety of visitors.
- **Historically furnished areas** – Many of the park's historic structures have all or part of their interiors furnished as period room settings with original artifacts, period pieces, or reproductions. All of these spaces should be evaluated to see how they can support the new interpretive themes and to evaluate interpretive opportunities through other media.

- **Audiovisual programs** – The Independence Visitor Center theaters show our award winning 1975 film “Independence “ and the 2002 film “Choosing Sides.” Both films provide a good historic overview but do not provide a basic orientation to the park. The park has a range of audiovisual programs from the 1976 Bicentennial that need replacement.
- **Wayside exhibits** – The majority of the park’s wayside exhibits were developed and installed in the mid-1980s; a few waysides were added in recent years. Most of the existing wayside exhibits still provide good 24 hour service to park visitors. However, some of the waysides panels need replacement in the short-term, and the entire wayside system needs to be redesigned as a long-term goal.
- **Wayfinding signs** – A number of partner-sponsored wayfinding sign efforts have been tried in the past decade. However, these sign systems do not complement the NPS roadway vehicle directional signs, building identification signs, or the wayside exhibit orientation panels. The park needs a comprehensive sign plan.
- **Publications** –The Park’s primary publication is the NPS brochure with the park map. There are a number of other free publications produced by both the NPS and our partners.
- **Park Library and Archives** – a special collection of books, manuscripts, pamphlets, drawings and images that is open to interested scholars. It is a valuable resource for history, historic preservation and historic landscape research. It is widely used by historians and scholars writing histories as well as teachers attending workshops, and employees of the Park and neighboring institutions. The library is now included on the Park’s website.
- **Books and other sales items** – Eastern National (EN) operates several Cooperating Association sales areas with the park and sells a variety of books, publications, and other education items. The park staff reviews and approves all sales items offered by EN. Other bookstores and private vendors operate in partner managed park buildings.

## Personal Services

The division of Interpretation and Visitor Services offers a wide variety of interpretive programs to visitors from ranger-led tours of Independence Hall to demonstrations of printing and the Glass Armonica at Franklin Court. Uniformed park rangers give tours and talks in several historic buildings, present interpretative demonstrations in period clothing, lead guided outdoor walking tours and conduct hands-on programs for children. Park Guides provide informal interpretation at various locations.

Orientation to the park is offered primarily by park guides who staff the NPS desk in the Independence Visitor Center. However, all park employees and park partners provide orientation to visitors throughout the day at many park locations.

Approximately 60 full-time park interpreters offer up to thirty visitor service programs daily throughout most of the year. Park guides welcome and prepare visitors for security screening and provide crowd control at the Liberty Bell Center and Old City Hall. More than 100 volunteers provide additional interpretive services at the park's major sites and donate almost 8,000 hours of their time annually to support the park's interpretive program.

## Curriculum- based Education Program

The park's Education Program began planning in 2003, and is funded by a unique combination of a William Penn Foundation endowment and a self-sustaining fee program. Led by a Supervisory Education Specialist whose salary is paid by Eastern National through an endowment by a grant from the William Penn Foundation, the Independence Institute has developed on-site curriculum-based school programs with pre and post visit lesson plans to fully engage students. The first learning space opened to students in the fall of 2005.

Currently housed in three learning labs in the Independence Living History Center, the IPI will expand its facilities at 325 Walnut Street and add three new learning spaces in the fall 2007. Park interpretive staff offers curriculum-based programs linked to park resources and themes. The IPI also conducts annual teacher workshops (one-two weeks long) and offers full day and half professional development programs.

Materials created for teachers include on-site teacher guides designed for self guided visits as well as classroom lesson plans. The park charges a program fee for ranger conducted formal education programs. The fee pays for seasonal and term employees, course materials, utility costs, and contract services. Once the program is in full operation, up to 50,000 students a year are expected to participate in the Independence Park Institute education programs.

## Partnerships

- Independence National Historical Park has established relationships with numerous stakeholders. On a regular basis, the park has contact with about 100 partners. **The City of Philadelphia** was critical to the formation of the park and Independence Mall in the 1950s and 1960s. Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, Congress Hall and Old City Hall are still owned by the City of Philadelphia and managed by the NPS under a long term cooperative agreement which is signed by the Secretary of the Interior.

- Other organizations dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> century continue to own and operate their buildings in the park: the **American Philosophical Society (APS)** a still active scientific and historical society and the **Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia** the oldest trade guild in America has owned and operated Carpenters' Hall since 1770. The First Continental Congress met there in 1774. The nine affiliated historic houses of worship also own their own buildings and burial grounds: **Christ Church, St. Joseph's, St George's, Mikveh Israel, Free Quaker Meeting, Gloria Dei, Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal and St. Thomas African Episcopal Church.**
- Another long term partner is **Eastern National (EN)** a 501(c) non-profit organization that provides sales outlets in the park with high quality educational products and services that help visitors better understand the park and its resources. **The Friends of Independence National Historical Park** was established in 1972. The friends group raises money for the park, funds exhibits and educational programs, buys artifacts, and presents volunteer programs.
- The park also works closely with the **Independence Visitor Center Corporation (IVCC)** a non-profit organization which operates the Independence Visitor Center and works with the park to produce events, initiate programs, and manage projects. **Once Upon a Nation (OUAN)** operating under a memorandum of agreement, presents walking tours and storytelling benches in various locations and craft demonstrations inside the Independence Visitor Center. The **National Constitution Center (NCC)** operating as a public-private partner with the NPS, tells the story of the U.S. Constitution through more than 100 interactive and multi-media exhibits. **Lights of Liberty** is a non-profit organization that tells the story of America's struggle for independence through a sound and light show that projects images up to 50 feet high onto park buildings during summer evenings. The park works closely with various tourism organizations in the city such as **The Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation (GPTMC)** and the **Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau.**

## **Part 2: Actions**

**“We have it in our power to begin the world over again.”**

**Thomas Paine *Common Sense*, January 1776**

## **The Planning Process**

In developing this Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) as part of the Comprehensive Interpretive Planning process, the park's Interpretive Division created a process that collected information from previous planning documents and conducted a series of workshops with park staff and many park partners.

In May 2005, a 3-day workshop reviewed and revised the topics outlined in Part One of this document. In July 2005, a 2-day workshop evaluated the existing interpretive media and how it supports the park's personal services programming. In August 2005, core team members from the park traveled to the NPS Interpretive Design Center in Harpers Ferry (HFC), West Virginia. Over 3 days, HFC media specialists recommended improvements to consider in the next 5-7 years. In the fall of 2005, several smaller workshops at the park met to recommend changes in the park's personal services programming.

Once the initial *Draft Long Range Interpretive Plan* was completed in the spring of 2006, it was reviewed by the core interpretive team and park management. The revised draft was then reviewed by park divisional representatives, and key park partners including historians from the OAH team, and planning workshop participants. A final draft was sent to all park employees for comments. This collaborative planning effort produced a more comprehensive document.

## **Goals for Interpretive Programming**

*After reviewing the contents of Part 1, park staff identified the following areas of focus for the next 5-7 years. These are important areas that have not been adequately addressed.*

### **The Highest Priority - Orientation, Wayfinding and access to Information**

The most important goal for providing interpretive programming over the next 5-7 years is to improve orientation, wayfinding and access to basic park information. No unified NPS sign system exists to clearly identify park buildings and major exhibits, help visitors locate parking, or provide information and clear directions to park sites. The park needs to create a comprehensive sign plan (CSP) to help visitors easily discover key park buildings within a crowded urban environment.

## Park Interpretive Themes

*In order to enhance the effectiveness of the overall interpretive programming in the park, several issues must be addressed over the next 5-7 years:*

The traditional themes for Independence were stated in terms of events (the Revolution), people (Franklin), or time periods (Capital City) and did not fully express the purpose of the park which is; “the American Revolution and the founding and growth of the United States.”

The General Management Plan of 1995 expanded the list to 5 themes: 1. Independence Hall as the physical reminder of the epic struggle for freedom and self-government; 2. the evolution of the American idea of democracy expressed in the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution; 3. Benjamin Franklin the quintessential founding father; 4. 18<sup>th</sup> century Philadelphia and 5. The Liberty Bell as an international symbol of liberty.

However, in order to better engage all of our visitors **we need to restate our interpretive themes in terms of ideas and the context in which these ideas were created.**

Specifically, interpretation needs to:

- Help visitors consider what was revolutionary about the American Revolution
- Encourage visitors to contemplate the promises and paradox of liberty and the continuing pursuit of liberty around the world and through time.
- Facilitate visitors’ recognition of the dynamic tension in our unique heritage which is expressed as *E Pluribus Unum*...out of many, one.
- Explore with visitors the modern relevance of the life and accomplishments of Benjamin Franklin.

## The Visitor Experience

*In order to enhance the effectiveness of the overall interpretive programming in the park, several issues must be addressed over the next 5-7 years:*

New or revised interpretive programming should:

- Provide a variety of interpretive options for visiting park sites, so that visitors are able to experience a personal connection to the park resources and stories.
- Offer ranger facilitated programs which encourage visitor involvement and interpret events within the context of their times and from multiple viewpoints.

- Continue to take full advantage of modern technology in developing programs.
- Working with our partners, foster a seamless experience for visitors to the historic area.

## **Issues and Challenges**

*In order to enhance the effectiveness of the overall interpretive programming in the park, several issues must be addressed over the next 5-7 years:*

- The park needs to continually re-evaluate how it provides visitor services to adapt to changing visitation, techniques and technology.
- Historical information should be continually updated and modern scholarship incorporated and we should follow park stories into the 19th & 20th century.
- Continue to explore effective ways to provide information so visitors are aware of how much there is to see.
- We need to foster visitor appreciation of the park’s many authentic buildings and collections, and the importance of “place”.
- We need to make better use of interpretive opportunities at security and visitor waiting lines.

## **Targeted Audiences**

*In order to enhance the effectiveness of the overall interpretive programming we will focus on the following audiences in the next 5-7 years:*

- Virtual visitors who use the park website to plan or substitute for their visit
- Families with children, grandchildren and regional visitors with out-of- town relatives.
- African-American visitors to the park.
- Teachers and school groups especially 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades
- Non- English speaking visitors both local and international
- Center City residents and regional recreational users, especially young adults
- Business visitors and convention participants

# **Action Plan Over the Next 5-7 Years**

## **1. Actions to Address Identity, Orientation, and Wayfinding**

*In order to better inform and direct visitors to the park, park staff will:*

- Provide updated, easy to find orientation information on the park's website
- Create and install a comprehensive sign plan which identifies the park as an NPS site and provides directions
- Create brief orientation programs for the Independence Visitor Center and the park website so visitors can plan their visit more easily.

## **2. Actions to Address Themes and Experiences**

*In order for our visitors to better understand our park themes, park staff will:*

- Ensure that interpretive programs and media support the park themes, provide a variety of visitor experiences, and tell our stories from multiple perspectives.
- Create curriculum-based education programs for the Independence Park Institute (IPI). Use the IPI to create in depth programs for adult learners.
- Explore ways to better interpret current historic room settings through additional interpretive media such as labels and virtual tours.
- Staff will continue to explore innovative program options rather than just staff buildings
- Modern technology will be used to expand our ability to reach audiences, rather than to replace staff.

## **3. Actions to Address Targeted Issues**

*In order to address the targeted issues that stand in the way of effective interpretation, park staff will do the following:*

- Continue working with park staff and partners to increase visitor access to historic buildings.

- Explore better audio visual technology and better ways to maintain equipment
- Develop a “virtual park tour” program through internet or cell phone technology.
- Explore ways to share information with our visitors through modern technology.
- Continue to offer staff training to update historical knowledge and develop new and innovative programs.

#### **4. Actions to Address Targeted Audiences**

*In order to reach out to targeted audiences, park staff will do the following:*

For all visitors

- Participate in the NPS Visitor Services Project (VSP) to develop a visitor survey to learn more about our park visitors and use this data in evaluating programs and staffing.
- Continue to explore ways to incorporate the arts in our programming to attract a wider audience.

For Virtual Visitors

- Offer the Electronic Field Trip program titled “Freedom In America: Some Assembly Required” produced by Ball State University and the park on our web-site to interpret the park stories to millions of school children who cannot visit Philadelphia.
- Reassess the effectiveness of the park’s website and identify what products should be added including park information, lesson plans and curriculum materials.
- Plan and develop with partners, programs using new technology such as a podcast, cell phone or audio tour, or virtual tour of a park site or program.

For Families

- Develop and publicize programs that are desirable to families.
- Offer Junior Ranger program activities throughout the park and on our website.

For African American visitors

- Continue to research and offer a variety of programs that highlight the African American experiences related to our park themes.

For Non- English Speakers

- Inventory and continually evaluate what services we offer in other languages.
- Explore new ways to deliver programs in other languages such as audio programs over cell phones or other devices.

For Center City residents and recreational users

- Offer special programming for local residents, in cooperation with park partners.

For Business travelers and convention participants

- Explore new ways to deliver information and programs in a way they can use such as cell phones or pod casts.

For school groups – The Independence Park Institute

The Park formalized its commitment to education in 2003 by hiring a Supervisory Education Program Specialist and creating a formal education program. The Independence Park Institute (IPI) staff is developing six curriculum-based school programs and teacher guides. It conducts professional development workshops for teachers. The IPI staff has created on-site guides for visiting school groups, and will develop programs for families and adult learners.

The park plans programs that will intellectually and emotionally connect all learners to the resources and stories of the Park. Currently the planned topics include: Archeology: History Found in Pieces; Benjamin Franklin; Daily Life and Diversity in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Philadelphia; the Founding Documents and the Underground Railroad in Philadelphia. The Independence Park Institute has developed an education plan that is available on request; some of the highlights of that plan include:

- Adding IPI materials to the park Website.
- The creation of additional curriculum-based school programs linked to park themes.
- The creation of enrichment programs to meet the needs of exceptional students.
- The ongoing assessment of IPI programs through the creation of evaluation instruments.
- Developing a summer Junior Ranger program for families in IPI learning Labs.
- Develop continuing education programs for adults, and explore partnerships with local universities, City Tavern or others.

## **5. Research and Collection Needs**

In order to fully accomplish the actions included in this plan and in support of our new themes, we need research on the following topics:

- The President's House, including the Germantown White House (Deshler-Morris House) which represents certain aspects of 18<sup>th</sup> century American culture
- Philadelphia as a center for Abolition in the United States and the location of an active free African population in the city and region.
- The contributions of various groups of people living in the region in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century
- The philosophical basis for the American Revolution (the Enlightenment) and its worldwide influence.
- The impact of the economy and politics on each other, especially the impact of the First and Second Banks of the United States and other policies such as monetary system, taxation and trade regulations.

Research needs will continue to develop.

## **Staffing and Training Needs**

- Continue to evaluate the most effective use of interpretive staff and the range of visitor services offered.
- Train park rangers to deliver curriculum based programs at the Independence Park Institute and create an IPI teaching staff supplemented by volunteers and interns.
- Review which services are offered by our partners and make sure their visitor services complement ours.
- Ensure that both the ongoing and new hire training reflects the issues and needs addressed in the LRIP and especially involves training in using the new themes.

## **Implementation Plan**

### **Planning Team**

#### **Independence National Historical Park**

Steve Sitarski	Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services
Mary Jenkins	Interpretive Program Specialist
Missy Hogan	Chief of Visitor Service Operations
Coxey Toogood	Historian
Bob Leone	Supervisory Park Ranger
Eric Knight	Park Ranger/Interpreter
Joe Chauncey	Park Ranger/Interpreter
Lynn Nash	Park Guide/Interpreter
Leslie Brodhead	Park Guide/Interpreter
Lynn Wagman	Volunteer-in-Park (VIP)
Ed Uthe	Volunteer-in-Park (VIP)
Martha Bogle	Acting Assistant Superintendent
Doris Fanelli	Chief of Cultural Resources Management
Alan Saperstein	Supervisory Park Ranger, Law Enforcement
Adam Millington	Human Resources Assistant
Julia Clebsch	Maintenance Division

#### **Northeast Regional Office**

Kathy Dilonardo	Chief of Interpretation
Joanne Blacoe	Interpretive Planner

#### **Valley Forge National Historical Park**

Barbara Pollaraine	Deputy Superintendent
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#### **Hopewell Furnace National Historical Park**

Jeff Collins	Chief of Interpretation
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## **Harpers Ferry Interpretive Design Center (HFC)**

Jack Spinnler	Interpretive Planner (Team Captain)
Michael Paskowsky	Project Manager,
Mitch Zetlin	Visual Information Specialist, Exhibits,
Don Branch	Visual Information Specialist, Exhibits,
John Brucksch	Supervisor,
Andy Chamberlain	Staff Curator Historic Furnishings,
Michele Hartley	Producer, AV
Ed Boutte	AV Equipment Specialist,
Ed Zahniser	Editor,
Kris Klein	Design Intern,
Bob Clark	NPS Sign Manager, HFC-SI
Phil Musselwhite	Associate Manager, HFC-SI
David Guiney	IMI Director, HFC-IMI
Rich Helman	Wayside Exhibit Planner, HFC-MS
Cindy Hall	Cost Estimator, HFC-WM
Linda Thomas	Project Assistant, HFC-WM

## **Organization of American Historians**

J. Richie Garrison	University of Delaware & the Winterthur Program in Early American Culture
Emma Lapsansky	Haverford College
Gary Nash	University of California at Los Angeles
Richard Newman	Rochester Institute of Technology
Susan Ferentinos	Organization of American Historians
Marty Blatt	Boston National Historical Park

## **Park Partners**

The park invited the following 59 park partners and other interested neighbors to send representatives to our Long Range Interpretive Planning workshop. Over 60 people attended all or part of the May workshop and many returned for the media workshop in the summer.

These organizations include:

African American Museum  
The African Episcopal Church of Saint Thomas  
All About Philadelphia Tours  
American College of Physicians  
American Philosophical Society  
The Athenaeum of Philadelphia  
Atwater-Kent Museum

Avenging the Ancestor Coalition  
Betsy Ross House  
Big Bus Company of Philadelphia  
Blockson Collection- Temple University  
Carpenters' Hall  
Center City District  
City of Philadelphia – Historical Commission  
City Tavern  
Civicvisions  
Cliveden  
Congregation Mikveh Israel  
Daughters of the American Revolution  
Deshler-Morris House  
Eastern National  
Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia  
Friends of Independence NHP  
Generation Unlimited  
Gloria Dei Episcopal Church  
Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance  
Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation  
Haverford College  
Heritage Philadelphia Program  
Historic Neighborhood Consortium  
Historic Philadelphia, Inc.  
Independence Seaport Museum  
Independence Visitor Center Corporation  
International Visitors Council of Philadelphia  
Johnson House Historic Site  
Landmarks Society  
Lights of Liberty  
Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church  
National Freedom Day Association  
National Liberty Museum  
National Park Service - Northeast Regional Office  
Old City District  
Old City Civic Association  
Old Saint Joseph's Church  
Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission  
Philadelphia Convention and Business Bureau  
Philadelphia Trolley Works  
Philadelphia's Historic Northwest Coalition  
Polish-American Cultural Center  
Ride the Ducks  
Saint George's United Methodist Church  
Saint Joseph's University  
Society Hill Civic Association

Sons of the American Revolution  
Temple University  
Tri-State Coalition of Historic Places  
University of Pennsylvania  
Villanova University  
WHYY-Public Television