



Guidance for Developing Statewide Historic Preservation Plans

National Park Service Requirements

State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) developing statewide preservation plans (“state plan”) in accordance with Section 101(b)(3)(C) of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, must meet the program requirements found in Chapter 6, Section G, *Historic Preservation Fund Grants Manual* (June 2007; on-line at www.nps.gov/history/hps/hpg/downloads/June2007HPFManual.pdf).

In summary, the requirements include the following activities and products.

- The SHPO develops a written state plan and implements its recommendations. SHPOs may use HPF funds to hire qualified consultants to manage the planning process, or they may manage the project entirely in-house. SHPOs should implement the plan in general, but often the plan will contain objectives that are more appropriately carried out by other entities.
- A state plan is a strategic plan, not an office work plan. It should reflect the views of citizens and stakeholders and be written so that any number of organizations, individuals, agencies, and governments can adopt and implement actions that further its goals and objectives.
- The state plan addresses the full range of historic and cultural resources in the state. Please ensure that your historic resource data are up-to-date and have been produced in ways that meet the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation*.
- The planning process for the state plan will include broad-based public and professional involvement. See “How Much Public Participation is Enough?” below for recommendations.
- The state plan is a single document. SHPOs and preservation partners may use sections of the NPS-approved state plan for outreach efforts or websites as long as the single document approved by the NPS is readily available for public review online as a PDF and available in print for those without internet access.
- The state plan shall be widely distributed. In the case of online publication, this means the SHPO must announce, through a variety of media, the web page/link to the plan.
- The State Plan shall contain the following:
 - ✓ **A summary of the planning process.** This is a detailed but concise review of the steps taken to gather and analyze data, collaborate with partners, stimulate public participation in the planning process, and develop goals and objectives for the future.
 - ✓ **A clear statement describing the planning cycle** (how long will the plan be in effect, e.g., 2014-2020).
 - ✓ **A summary assessment of historic and cultural resources**, including important issues, threats, and opportunities among resource types. At a minimum, this section is based on 1) the SHPO’s analysis of existing inventory and registration data; 2) other outside data sources pertinent to historic preservation (census data, economic impact studies, housing studies, state transportation plans, local and state emergency management plans, etc.); and 3) feedback from stakeholders and the public.
 - ✓ **A vision for historic preservation.** The vision statement should flow from issues identified and feedback gathered during the planning process.

- ✓ **Goals and objectives.** *Goals* are broad statements about future desired conditions. They may not be achievable in the near future, but are pursued through objectives and other discrete actions. *Objectives* are realistic and feasible desired outcomes. Propose objectives that respond to issues identified in other sections of the plan, that can be accomplished within the established planning cycle, that can be measured, and that contribute directly to the fulfillment of the planning *goals*. Think of the *objectives* as your state's preservation priorities for the near future.
- ✓ **A bibliography** of all sources used to develop the plan. The bibliography should not include extra information provided for the reader's benefit, e.g., a "Further Reading" list, although such a list may be included in addition to the bibliography.

How Much Public Participation is Enough?

The NPS does not set quotas for the number or type of public engagement events a SHPO must conduct during the statewide planning process. Rather, we encourage SHPOs to design feasible and flexible public engagement strategies that will produce maximum participation and feedback among a broad range of interest groups.

NPS does require "active involvement of a wide range of public, private, and professional organizations" [*HPF Grants Manual*, Chapter 6, Section G.2.b.2)]. This means reaching out to the usual preservation constituency—state and national preservation /architecture /archeological /landscape/ planning organizations, CLGs, design review commissions, local history organizations, Main Street partners, state historic sites, national park units, etc.—but also reaching beyond that network of friends.

In all planning efforts, we encourage you to seek out and engage with the following groups.

- Young people.
- American Indian tribes associated with historic and cultural resources in your state, even if those tribes no longer reside in your state and even if those tribes are not federally recognized.
- Historic property owners.
- Federal and state agencies whose programs and projects have substantial or consistent impacts (good or bad) on historic resources in your state.
- Universities, colleges, and school systems.
- Underserved communities. In this regard, "community" may be a place or a cultural group. Identify places and populations have not been engaged in previous preservation planning efforts or that have not been the focus of preservation work (especially survey, inventory, registration, and investment) in the past. Target these communities in your public engagement strategy especially.
- Federal and state emergency management agencies.
- Elected officials at the state and local levels (not just those that represent CLGs).
- Local planning offices and regional planning organizations.
- The business community and the real estate development community.

It can be a daunting task to truly engage and receive constructive feedback from a broad range of public and professional stakeholders. Limited budgets and travel restrictions exacerbate the challenges. Be creative in your approach to ensure that the planning process is robust and will deliver meaningful, measurable feedback about historic resources and preservation priorities in your state. Public opinion questionnaires often are used in conjunction with other types of outreach. Here are a few ideas.

- Invite key stakeholders to guide the statewide planning process from start to finish (i.e., assemble a state plan advisory committee with members who have diverse perspectives about historic properties and preservation).

- Enlist the support and involvement of local partners (CLGs, design review commissions, Main Streets) to promote public opinion surveys locally, host state planning meetings in their communities, or present information in local forums about the state plan. If SHPO staff can attend these local events in person or via video link or conference call, all the better.
- To cut costs, “piggy-back” presentations and discussions about the state plan at already scheduled events. Try to find both preservation venues (e.g., meetings of professional archeologists) and non-preservation venues (e.g., meetings of county administrators).
- Conduct community leadership interviews. Ask local preservation commission members to interview their community's leaders about preservation issues. In North Carolina, this approach not only generated useful information for the state plan revision, it also raised the preservation awareness of local leaders and established or strengthened local preservation networks. Questions included the following:
 - What are the strengths/weaknesses of your community?
 - If money were no object, what would you do to improve your community?
 - What would it take to accomplish this?
 - Do you see a place for historic preservation in your community?
 - What do you feel is the role of the local preservation commission in improving your community?
 - What role do you see for the State Historic Preservation Office in your community?

If you choose to employ this type of interview technique, try to develop questions that lead to discussions about the full range of historic and cultural resources in the community.

- Conduct executive interviews with leaders of the historic preservation community, cultural communities, and business and development communities. These sessions can garner more in-depth feedback from those leaders than public survey tools usually allow.
- Use the internet, social media, and other technologies aggressively during the planning process. With travel budgets cut in so many states, video-conferencing, a state plan web site, webinars, blogs, and social media postings are critical for broad and successful public engagement.

NPS Review of State Plans

An NPS-approved state plan must be in place at the end of your previous state plan's planning cycle. If you need to extend the life cycle of your current approved plan, advise the NPS in writing of your decision to extend the planning cycle and explain why such action is necessary. Upon hearing from you, the NPS will either request additional information or concur and extend the approved status of the plan to an agreed upon date.

SHPOs that do not have a NPS-approved state plan in place at the end of their last plan's planning cycle will be required to submit additional documents in their HPF Annual Grant application and End-of-Year Report submissions (*HPF Grants Manual*, Chapter 7, Section C.1.j. & k. and Chapter 25, Section D.6). The NPS may take additional action if a state plan has lapsed for a significant period.

New or revised state plans need to be approved by the NPS no later than December 31 of the calendar year of the current state plan's planning cycle. For example, if your current planning cycle is 2010-2015, a new or revised state plan needs to be approved by NPS by December 31, 2015. Bear in mind that the NPS requires 45 days to complete its review of a draft state plan and to provide comments, approval, or both to the SHPO (*HPF Grants Manual*, Chapter 6, Section G.2.c.4). We therefore encourage SHPOs to submit a final draft state plan to us for formal review and approval no later than **November 15** of the applicable calendar year (2015 in the above example). Of course, if your new or revised state plan is ready before November, please send it as soon as possible!

Once the NPS approves a state plan, the SHPO must enter the new plan's goals and objectives into the HPF Online database. This administrative action helps ensure that your state's next Annual Grant application and End-of-Year Report cross-reference and apply to the new statewide goals and objectives (*HPF Grants Manual*, Chapter 7, Section C.1.h., and Chapter 25, Exhibit 25-B).

NPS staff is available to assist SHPOs during the planning process. We encourage SHPO staff to contact us with questions or concerns early in the planning process. Early, informal consultation is the best way to resolve any issues that may bear on the plan's ability to meet the NPS requirements.



Questions?

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<http://www.nps.gov/preservation-planning/>