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Historic Preservation Planning Program

Cultural Resources National Park Service

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Statewide Preservation Planning

As required by the National Historic Preservation Act, each State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) periodically develops a statewide historic preservation plan. These statewide plans are meant to encourage broad public participation in planning for cultural resources, meet challenges unique to each state, influence historic preservation policy in state and local governments, and empower local communities, organizations, and individuals to action. The key features of this approach to historic preservation planning are:

- The planning process has a statewide focus. The SHPO looks at the conditions of sets of historic resources across the state. It actively works to engage communities, large and small, urban and rural, throughout the state.
- The public helps identify issues about historic preservation that may need to be addressed in the statewide plan. Public viewpoints also inform a vision for the future and planning goals and objectives.
- Working with its partners, the SHPO gathers and analyzes information about social, economic, political, legal, and environmental trends that affect historic resources and influence preservation practice.
- The SHPO ensures that the statewide preservation plan is informed by other federal, state, and local planning efforts, such as transportation master plans, emergency management plans, recreation plans, tourism and economic development plans, and local land use plans (to name a only a few).
- The final plan addresses the range of historic and cultural resources that represent the breadth and depth of a state's prehistory, history, and culture. These usually include buildings, structures, objects, archaeological sites, landscapes, traditional cultural places, and underwater resources. Plans may also address cultural practices such as folklore, folk life activities, language, and traditional music and dance.

As statements of public policy, statewide plans serve as a general guides for decision-making. While the SHPOs take the lead in developing the plan, it is a result of collaboration. Everyone involved in the planning process can and should adopt and implement the goals and objectives of the plan, so that preservation challenges can be met and overcome at the community and state level.

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