

NEVADA COMMISSION FOR CULTURAL AFFAIRS  
10-Year Plan  
Adopted - March 6, 1992

Preamble

In 1986 the directors of several public cultural agencies in Nevada began a series of meetings out of which grew a long-lasting alliance, the Inter-Governmental Group, or I-Gov. Nevada's Department of Museums and History, the Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology, the State Council on the Arts and the Nevada Humanities Committee have met regularly since then to sponsor conferences, design and implement coordinated programs, and to form a comprehensive long-range cultural plan for our state.

From the outset, I-Gov recognized two priority cultural needs voiced by constituents statewide: To preserve and maintain Nevada's historic buildings, and to develop a series of cultural facilities for arts and humanities programming. Both needs have an element of urgency. Old buildings were deteriorating and in some cases, have been destroyed; in the meantime, Nevada's population was booming, but had only limited access to cultural programs, often because few community facilities or organizations existed locally.

It was obvious that the two needs could be met simultaneously and that, in fact, turning historic sites into cultural centers could insure their maintenance. (It is the unused historical structures that fall into disrepair, not the active ones.) This idea was confirmed in 1988 by the Interim Legislative Study on the Preservation and Promotion of Nevada's Cultural Resources. AB590, the authorizing legislation of the Nevada Commission for Cultural Affairs, stemmed from that study and provided a ten-year public grant program to meet those two needs.

It is the intent of the Commission to preserve, maintain and promote historic sites by encouraging and supporting cultural activities within and associated with those sites so they may become active, vital cultural centers for the benefit of Nevada's citizens and visitors. The Commission's funds may be used to plan and implement the renovation of historic structures, adaptive reuse for cultural facilities (such as Theatres), and programming which will assist in the promotion and maintenance of those sites as part of a statewide network of cultural centers.

Mandate

NRS 233C.210 requires the following of the Nevada Commission for Cultural Affairs:

1. The Commission for cultural affairs shall establish within 1 year after its formation, and revise every 2 years thereafter, a 10-year plan to:

(a) Preserve and Promote Nevada's Cultural Resources;  
and

(b) Develop a network of cultural centers and activities in this state.

2. The plan must include:

(a) A description of the means by which a statewide network of cultural centers and activities is to be developed;

(b) A program for awarding financial assistance to develop a network of cultural centers and activities;  
and

(c) A detailed list of the initial projects to be undertaken.

In addition, NRS 233C.210 mandates that the plan be submitted to the Governor, the Legislative Commission and the State Board of Examiners.

## Related Planning Efforts

The Plan of the Nevada Commission for Cultural Affairs represents a unique opportunity to create a comprehensive plan for cultural places, activities and concerns in the state, to accomplish that task for a ten year period, and to fortify the planning effort with substantial financial support. The planning effort must not, however, be taken out of context. Instead, it should build upon previous planning efforts. The agencies represented by the Commission have all been involved in planning in one form or another. In addition, the Nevada State Legislature and the Department of Administration have mandated planning efforts. The following is a summary of existing plans followed by a means to integrate this valuable body of material.

### State Arts Council Plan

The Nevada State Council on the Arts (NSCA) conducts a cyclical five-year planning process which is updated annually. Based on a triangular model of distribution (artists, who produce art; organizations, which distribute art; and audiences, which consume art), statewide needs assessments are conducted through public meetings on a regular basis. All three of the planning model's groups have indicated since 1985 that facilities for arts events and access to quality programming are the highest priorities statewide.

### Nevada Comprehensive Preservation Plan

Previous preservation plans have been developed in Nevada, but this document supersedes all others. The Commission for Cultural Affairs should rely on this Plan for information on the state's approach to preservation. The Plan was originally published in 1989. A second edition was issued in 1991. The Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology continues work on the Plan and anticipates a third edition by 1993. Mandated by the National Park Service, the Plan follows a format prescribed on a national level and is intended to provide contexts for evaluation of cultural resources, a comprehensive thematic inventory of resources, and a comprehensive approach to the management of those resources.

### Preservation and Promotion of Nevada's Cultural Resources: Bulletin No. 89-5

Authored by the Legislative Commission, this important document was an early attempt by the State of Nevada to

provide comprehensive planning for cultural resources in the state. A.B. 590 which created the Nevada Commission for Cultural Affairs is largely an out-growth of this document, and, consequently, it should be used as the planning bedrock which it represents.

#### Cultural Resources Policy Study

This planning effort was mandated by the Department of Administration as part of its Critical Issues Study, itself a monumental attempt at comprehensive planning for the state. The Cultural Resources Policy Study was initiated in 1990 and is due to be published in June 1992. Much of what that planning effort develops will be applicable and useful to the Nevada Commission for Cultural Affairs.

The plan mandated by NRS 233C.210 for the Nevada Commission for Cultural Affairs must rely on other planning efforts so that it is coordinated with and benefits from previous and concurrent work. It will, therefore, regard plans for cultural affairs adopted by its agencies and by the Department of Administration and the Legislative Council Bureau as appendices and as resources of critical importance to its own planning.

Initially, the Plan for the Commission on Cultural Affairs can be little more than a summary of previous planning efforts. Because there is an urgency to initiate projects with funding provided by NRS 233C.200, the Commission will adopt a two-stage approach: the first step will be to adopt a plan in Fiscal Year 1992 which will outline the comprehensive planning effort and which will draw heavily on previous plans; the second phase will be on-going over the ten-year existence of the Commission and will include integration of other plans as they are developed and the modification of its own plan in reaction to changing needs and increased information.

A.B. 590 is of far-reaching importance because of the funds it provides to cultural centers and because of the stress it places on planning. The language in that legislation clearly emphasizes the importance of planning for applicants for funding as well. The Commission, therefore, seeks applications which will reinforce and complement the statewide planning process by providing well-considered proposals with concisely described visions of how the cultural center is to survive, meet goals and satisfy needs in the future. The process of application for funding from the Commission should in itself foster planning on a local level, and these plans, in the form of applications, will represent an important augmentation to this document.

## Goals and Priorities

It is the goal of the Nevada Commission for Cultural Affairs to encourage the development of cultural resources in the state. The Commission adopts this goal because of the importance these resources have for the improvement of quality of life, because of the critical role such resources can represent in education, and because of the important role such resources can play in the economy, particularly through tourism.

In view of this goal, the Commission will strive to provide a well-planned, cooperative program of project coordination and funding. Its priorities, therefore, are as follows:

1. Create a Plan for the management and development of Cultural Resources.

2. Create a network of cultural activities and centers associated with historic sites in the state and foster a means of improved communication between the agencies and individuals involved in such programs.

3. Provide funding for projects which will improve the quality of life, play a role in education, and/or increase tourism. (See section on priorities for funding for specific criteria.)

## Method

NRS 233C.200 calls for a means to preserve and promote Nevada's cultural resources. The four agencies which act as staff to the Commission for Cultural Affairs, the Nevada State Council on the Arts, the Nevada Humanities Committee, the Nevada Department of Museums and History, and the Nevada Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology, approach this objective in specialized ways according to their specific mandates. The language of NRS 233C.200 addresses the need for a coordinated approach and it is with this in mind that the Commission will function and this plan is adopted.

One of the most effective ways to achieve the goal of cooperation and coordination is to improve communication and to exchange information among the four agencies which constitute the Commission staff. To encourage this goal, the Commission mandates:

1. Meetings of the staff of the Commission with a summary memo forwarded to members of the Commission at least once every two months.

2. The development of lists of historic sites and of cultural centers and activities in the state (see below).

3. The biennial review and revision of this Plan.

In addition NRS 233C.200 provides for an effective tool to promote a coordinated network of cultural resources, activities and events. To encourage this goal, the Commission will develop an annual procedure for the distribution of funds.

Planning is a dynamic process which should incorporate needs, issues and considerations as they arise. The first edition of the Plan of the Commission for Cultural Affairs is intended to provide the basis for further planning. While it is clear that the sort of funding and coordination described in NRS 233C.200 is needed in the State of Nevada, far-ranged planning, in-depth cooperation, and imaginative solutions to the problems which promoters of cultural resources face is equally needed. Therefore, the Commission, by the mechanism of this plan, mandates its staff to engage in a dialogue which will produce a second edition of this plan in fiscal year 1993, which begins to address the broader issues and concerns which face the cultural community, and which establishes goals and objectives for future action.

## Developing a Network

NRS 233C.200 calls specifically for the Plan of the Commission for Cultural Affairs to develop a network of cultural centers and activities. The Commission will employ two means to achieve this goal.

The first of these will be to establish a list of historic sites and of cultural centers and activities as they exist. These lists will be made available, including their annual revisions, to the four agencies of the Commission, to the Commission on Tourism, to the Governor and to the Legislature. This will achieve two goals: pertinent agencies will have full information regarding historic sites of recognized significance and concerning existing cultural centers; and second, improved communication and promotion will be encouraged.

The second means of promoting a network of cultural centers and activities will be to use the Bond Issue described in NRS 233C.230 to assist in the development and improvement of historic sites as cultural centers promoting activities in the state. The implementation of this program is described in depth below.

At the heart of the cooperation between the agencies represented by the Commission has been the idea that a comprehensive plan and approach is best when preserving and promoting cultural resources in the state. With this in mind, the agencies have always felt that for a historic resource to be managed properly and most effectively, it is imperative that it not only be sensitively rehabilitated, but that it also be used. In addition, that use must be comprehensively planned and executed so that the resource remains a viable asset to the community. To achieve this objective, the Commission recognizes the importance of technical assistance, the encouragement and training of human resources and the need for effective administration of projects and programs. These factors are extremely important to the development of a network of cultural centers in the state.

### A Program for Awarding Financial Assistance

NRS 233C.200 describes a means to provide funding for cultural centers and activities. The Commission's Rules (see appendix) describes the means for distributing funds at the disposal of the Commission. Here, it is appropriate to point out that it is the goal of the Commission to promote a network of cultural centers and activities and that this network is intended to improve the quality of life in Nevada and to encourage and promote tourism. Priorities for funding are listed below and are in part dictated by NRS 233C.210.

The Commission intends to use its financial assistance program to enhance the network of cultural centers in the state. Constituency demand has consistently indicated that historic sites throughout the state are deteriorating, could have a place in the community, and have considerable local or statewide support for rehabilitation and use. Similarly, there is a clear need and support for local cultural programming. The two needs clearly can clearly be complementary, a coincidence which served to inspire A.B. 590.

It is, therefore, the Commission's highest priority to foster the development of historic sites as cultural centers. It is extremely important that projects supported by the Commission be of the highest quality, executed in the most timely and efficient manner. Early successes of the most impressive type possible are crucial to the on-going success of the Commission of its program. Because of the clear and profound need in the state, this single priority will undoubtedly provide the Commission with ample applications and projects until this plan and additional priorities are re-evaluated in two years.

### A Detailed List of Projects

NRS 233C.210 mandates that the Commission for Cultural Affairs provide the Governor, the Legislative Commission, and the State Board of Examiners with a detailed list of the initial projects to be undertaken. The Commission proposes to submit such a list on an annual basis subsequent to application review and the decisions of the Commission. In the first year of its function, the Commission will set priorities for funding, call for applications for funding, review the applications, and develop a list of initial projects to be undertaken. The annual lists of funded projects will be included in an appendix to the Plan and will be used for future planning to ensure that funds are distributed equitably and in ways which will most efficiently achieve the goal of developing a network of cultural centers and activities.

### Priorities for Funding

NRS 233C.200 describes priorities which must be considered by the Commission when awarding funding of projects. Along these lines consideration will be given based on "the degree to which a proposed project":

1. may become a recurring event without the necessity of future state financial support;
2. will be accessible to the community;
3. will promote tourism in the state;
4. will promote or preserve some historic or prehistoric feature of Nevada;
5. will have multiple uses for many types of cultural organizations;
6. will supplement training in the classroom in the arts and the humanities; and
7. incorporates the various disciplines directly associated with cultural resources.

NRS 233C.220.4 also mandates the Commission to "Give priority to projects of statewide historical, prehistorical or cultural significance which demonstrate an ability to raise and sustain required amounts of financial support from sources other than the State of Nevada, including donations of goods and services. The ability of a project to raise and sustain support must be weighed against the relative means and abilities of the applicants." The Commission will accept the definition of match in the broadest of terms.

In addition, the Commission will use the following priorities for its funding:

1. Funding will be restricted to governmental agencies, tribal governments, and to private organizations.
2. Consideration of geography and demography.
3. The ability of the project to be completed within budget and a reasonable time frame and in a quality manner.
4. The ability of the applicant to manage the grant and project and to account for the expenditure of funds according to the Commission's fiscal requirements.

## Public Comment

Public comment is encouraged in all aspects of the Commission's function including the planning process. The Plan and its revisions will be adopted in public meetings of the Commission, and the Commission will solicit public comment during its meetings and through descriptions of its progress by means of the newsletters of the four agencies which constitute the staff of the Commission.