



# NEVADA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2020-2022

## MISSION STATEMENT

*To encourage the preservation, documentation, and use/reuse of cultural resources for their economic, educational, spiritual, and intrinsic value.*

The Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (NSHPO) is the state agency statutorily mandated to encourage, plan, and coordinate historic preservation and archaeological activities within the state (NRS 383.021).

A division of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the NSHPO manages federally funded historic preservation programs and connects state government to the federal level through the National Park Service. NSHPO serves as staff for the Commission for Cultural Centers and Historic Preservation that grants state bond proceeds to governments and non-profits for the rehabilitation of cultural resources for use as cultural centers. The Comstock Historic District Commission, mandated to encourage the preservation of one of the nation's largest and most visited historic landmarks, is within NSHPO. NSHPO is responsible for coordinating with property owners and state, local, and Tribal governments to ensure the protection or repatriation of Indian burial sites. Key programs managed by NSHPO are described below (See the NSHPO website for more information on these and other NSHPO programs at [www.shpo.nv.gov](http://www.shpo.nv.gov)).

During this period, the division will reorganize the staffing structure of SHPO/CHDC in place since 1983 to better align staffing and revenue to meet the current and future requirements of the division and the expectations of their federal, state, Tribal government partners and the public. The current organizational structure is over three decades old.

Since 1983, the Division has grown to over 14 employees, has been assigned eight (8) additional legislatively mandated programs to bring the total to 17 programs (8 federally required, 9 state required), has been given additional state review responsibilities, and has experienced an exponential increase in the volume of compliance reviews of federal economic development projects (e.g., infrastructure, mining, fuels reduction and habitat management).

Every two years, the NSHPO updates this strategic plan to include an overview of activities, accomplishments, and goals in each program area and in the division generally.

#### Snapshot of selected NSHPO Program Statistics

- 386 National Register of Historic Places entries with 5300 individual resources
- 160 Nevada State Register of Historic Places entries
- 8 National Historic Landmarks
- 143,500 Cultural resources recorded in NVCRIS
- 6 Certified Local Government communities
- 1,700+ Projects (federal and state) reviewed during the prior period
- 268 Nevada Historical Markers
- 402 Volunteer site stewards monitoring cultural resources



## **Program Area: Review and Compliance**

### **Purpose:**

The NSHPO's Review and Compliance staff work with over 38 federal and state agencies, governmental divisions, municipalities, regional authorities, and private property owners to provide technical review and assist those parties in complying with federal law and regulation, state statutes and, in select instances, with regional planning ordinances.

Most of NSHPO's work assumes the form of consultation and review under the authority of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended. When a project uses federal funds, requires a federal or state permit, federal license, or approval, the NSHPO can comment on the proposed project's potential effects on historic properties. Historic properties are cultural resources (either archaeological, architectural or engineered in the form of buildings, structures, districts, sites, and objects) that are either listed in, or eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places.

Pursuant to the Section 106 project review process, federal agencies, or their designees, are responsible for making all decisions regarding historic properties. The SHPO has no authority to halt, stop, or cancel a project. The SHPO's responsibility as a consulting party involves providing recommendations and comments on a federal agency's determinations of eligibility and potential effects, inventories, reports, and project plans. Inventories and mitigation products that result from the Section 106 review process are incorporated into the NSHPO's statewide cultural resources inventory, NVCRIS.

### **Goals for 2020-2022:**

1. Provide the public with more information about cultural resources laws and how to care for cultural resources.
2. Seek efficiencies in federal and state development review processes through the execution of State-level or project-specific Programmatic Agreements.

### **Tasks for 2020-2022:**

1. Update the NSHPO Review and Compliance webpages to share more information regarding training and Agreement Documents with professionals, government officials, and the interested public. Develop materials and conduct outreach to help facilitate the Section 106 review process.
2. Attend scheduled monthly, bimonthly, and/or quarterly meetings with federal agencies to facilitate review of proposed federal projects and assist in the development and/or updates of Programmatic Agreements to help streamline the Section 106 review process.

### **Accomplishments from 2018-2020:**

NSHPO has negotiated over 36 Agreement Documents pursuant to Section 106 during this period. Programmatic Agreements (PA) are most helpful in streamlining the Section 106 review process especially where historic properties have yet to be identified or potential future projects may be phased. For example, the Nevada National Security Site



(NNSS) developed a comprehensive PA in consultation with the NSHPO to guide their modernization and operational maintenance efforts within the Mercury Historic District. This PA helps to streamline the agency's work by exempting certain activities from required review with the NSHPO, establishing review procedures with the NSHPO for non-exempt activities, and outlining the process for mitigation for adverse effects.



## **Program Area: State and National Registers**

### Purpose:

Every SHPO is required, under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), to identify and nominate eligible properties to the [National Register of Historic Places](#) and to otherwise administer applications for listing historic properties on the National Register (54 U.S.C § 302303).

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. Listing in the National Register is the first step towards eligibility for National Park Service-administered federal preservation tax credits and other preservation benefits and incentives. Nevada has more than 380 properties listed in the National Register.

The NSHPO is also responsible for preparing and maintaining the [Nevada State Register of Historic Places](#), which was created by the Nevada Legislature in 1979 (NRS 383.085).

The Nevada State Register is a list that recognizes places in the state that have significance to our past. These resources reflect the history, architecture, archaeology, and culture that are important to Nevadans. There are currently 160 properties listed in the State Register.

### Goals for 2020-2022:

1. Encourage Main Street communities and building owners to list commercial properties in the National Register as a first step toward obtaining federal preservation tax credits.
2. Encourage federal agencies to mitigate the adverse effects of their projects through National Register nominations.
3. Encourage National or State Register listings for properties that are significant to traditionally underrepresented groups.

### Tasks for 2020-2022:

1. NSHPO will work with the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) to offer outreach and training to new and potential Main Street communities regarding the benefits of National Register listing.
2. NSHPO will consult with federal agencies regarding mitigation for adverse effects to historic properties and will identify possible properties that may be mitigated through National Register listings.
3. NSHPO will encourage property owners to pursue State or National Register designations for properties identified as significant during the current development of our office's two grant-funded historic contexts: an historic context on the African American experience in Nevada, and a historic context that focuses on women's history in Nevada.

### Accomplishments from 2018-2020:



NSHPO spent the last two years helping rural communities identify their historic resources that might be eligible for National Register listing. Our office conducted reconnaissance-level surveys of downtown commercial districts in numerous communities, including Battle Mountain, Wells, Winnemucca, Carlin, Eureka, and more. Along with the surveys, outreach was conducted in each community to educate local leaders on the benefits of National Register listing, such as the possibility of obtaining federal tax credits for rehabilitating the income-producing properties. During the last two years, two properties were listed in the National Register (Fallon's Maine Street Historic District and the Lund Grade School). Our office also provided support for several additional National Register nominations that are still in progress.



## **Program Area: Historic Preservation Tax Credits**

### Purpose:

Every SHPO is required, under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), to administer the state program of federal assistance for historic preservation within the state (54 U.S.C § 302303). That federal assistance includes the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program outlined in 26 U.S.C. § 47.

The [Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives](#) program is administered by the National Park Service and the Internal Revenue Service in partnership with the NSHPO. The program offers a 20% income tax credit for the rehabilitation of income-producing buildings that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The tax credit promotes the preservation or adaptive reuse of historic buildings, especially in cities' downtown commercial districts. Nationwide, the program has leveraged over \$96.87 billion in private investment.

### Goal for 2020-2022:

Broaden public awareness of the historic tax credit program and encourage more Nevada building owners to pursue the credits.

### Task for 2020-2022:

NSHPO will increase public awareness of the tax credit program by giving presentations in the Certified Local Government communities and during statewide events such as the Main Street workshops offered by the Governor's Office of Economic Development.

### Accomplishments from 2018-2020:

Over the last two years, NSHPO helped three different property owners begin the process of obtaining federal preservation tax credits. In addition, NSHPO gave several presentations about the benefits of the program at events including Travel Nevada's Rural Roundup, and assisted property owners across the state who inquired about the program.



## **Program Area: Certified Local Governments**

### Purpose:

Every SHPO is required, under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), cooperate with local governments in the development of local historic preservation programs and assist local governments in becoming certified to the Certification of Local Governments chapter (54 U.S.C § 302303).

The [Certified Local Government](#) (CLG) program is designed to help local governments strengthen their local historic preservation programs through a three-way partnership between the National Park Service, the NSHPO, and the local government. To become certified as a CLG, a community must establish a historic preservation program that includes a preservation ordinance and a preservation commission. Once certified, the community can receive training and technical assistance from the NSHPO and is eligible to apply for certain federal preservation grants. Nevada currently has six active CLGs.

### Goals for 2020-2022:

1. Promote and expand participation in Nevada's CLG program.
2. Offer training to existing CLGs and support the incorporation of historic resources into local planning per NRS 278.160.

### Tasks for 2020-2022:

1. NSHPO will conduct outreach to local government leaders and planning staff during community site visits and at events such as Main Street workshops offered by Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED).
2. The NSHPO will award Historic Preservation Fund grants to CLGs to attend FORUM, a national training conference offered by the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions. In addition, the NSHPO CLG Coordinator will offer trainings to CLG commissions.

### Accomplishments from 2018-2020:

During the last two years, two new CLGs were certified, City of Boulder City and the City of Winnemucca. The NSHPO provided technical assistance to those communities during the certification process and offered trainings to their new preservation commissions about the procedures and opportunities related to the CLG program. In addition, outreach regarding the CLG program was conducted via presentations in several Nevada communities and at events such as Travel Nevada's Rural Roundup and GOED's Main Street workshop.



## **Program Area: Nevada Site Stewardship Program (NSSP)**

### Purpose:

In 2005, the Nevada Legislature tasked NSHPO to create a stewardship program where Nevada citizens could volunteer to play an active role in the preservation of Nevada's cultural heritage. Preservation is accomplished through educating volunteer site stewards to assist federal, state, and local government land managers in monitoring archaeological, historic, and paleontological resources across the state. These stewards are tasked with reporting the vandalism, degradation, or destruction of sites through regularly scheduled site visits. Currently the NSSP is a state-wide program with over 402 active volunteers monitoring 342 archaeological sites for five federal agencies, two state agencies, two counties, and one city.

### Goals for 2020-2022:

1. Broaden state and local government participation in NSSP by integrating agencies who have received land from federal transfers.
2. Update and upgrade stewardship data management systems to accommodate the increased volume of data from the land transfer additions.

### Tasks for 2020-2022:

1. As required by several agreement documents, federal lands transferred to state and local governments, including Nevada State Parks, need regular monitoring through the NSSP. Over the next two years the NSSP will develop stewarding programs that are tailored to each agencies' management structure, conduct site condition assessments of all resources, and create individual training programs.
2. The NSSP will work to update and modernize the NSSP database and archiving system to handle the additional volume of data created by adding state and local government agencies to the program. This will include a redesign of the NSSP database to accommodate new management structures, but also on-line access to a photo management database which will grant land managers and law enforcement immediate access to photo archives in the event of illegal activity.

### Accomplishments from 2018-2020:

The NSSP has spent the last two years, working on two Lincoln County Archaeological Initiative Grants. The first was a three-year grant to promote stewardship in Lincoln County, Nevada. NSSP was able to create posters, comics, coloring books, placemats, a board game, and an Archaeology Junior Ranger Book. All these materials promoted the program and provided ways for the public to report impacts. Additional community outreach was achieved through workshops and booths at major events.

The second grant is still on-going. It was awarded to develop a stewardship program for Nevada State Parks. Thus far the NSSP has completed condition assessments for sites to be monitored, worked with State Park's management to define roles and responsibilities, developed trainings for State Park staff to be able to recognize and monitor their sites, and created a folding map for park staff and the public that teaches preservation and the history of Lincoln County.



## **Program Area: Nevada Cultural Resource Information System (NVCRIS)**

### Purpose:

According to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (54 U.S.C § 302303 (b)(1)), and NRS 383.021, the NSHPO is required to direct, conduct, and maintain a comprehensive statewide inventory of historic properties and compliance activities. NVCRIS is the program that manages this process and the product where this data is stored. NVCRIS is a collection of online Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database services, which represent over 6.6 million acres of cultural resource inventories and contain over 140,000 recordings of archaeological and architectural resources. The data, available through a paid subscription, is used as a planning tool for federal, state, and local agencies to assess and avoid impacts to cultural resources.

### Goals for 2020-2022:

1. Establish a post-bachelor's, year-long, paid position for NVCRIS data entry.
2. Develop NVCRIS Guidelines to improve the quality of NVCRIS data.

### Tasks for 2020-2022:

1. Post-bachelor's data entry position.
  - a. With partners such as the BLM or the Great Basin Institute, explore and establish a recruitment process for NVCRIS data entry candidates for the post-bachelor program.
  - b. Secure regular financial support for data entry position.
2. Develop NVCRIS guidelines.
  - a. NVCRIS will create required submission standards to facilitate and normalize the quality of data submitted for inclusion in the system.
  - b. The guidelines will also clarify the purpose of NVCRIS, the type of data carried in NVCRIS, and key behind-the-scenes processes for NVCRIS data, so that users may better understand how and when data goes into NVCRIS.

### Accomplishments from 2018-2020

*NVCRIS User Survey.* To collect feedback from NVCRIS users, a survey was sent to all users in the fall of 2018. In addition to providing a forum for comments on current services, the survey was also designed for users to provide input on additional data layers for NVCRIS as well as future data clean-up projects.

*Ongoing spatial data clean-up with the Elko BLM office.* By utilizing check-in/check-out replication, NVCRIS and the Elko BLM have been collaborating on a long-term GIS clean-up project. The Elko BLM and NVCRIS began planning for the clean-up project in the summer of 2017 with BLM hiring contractors in late 2017. Contractors worked with a replica from NVCRIS to verify the location and attribute information for both archaeological sites and inventories within the Elko district boundary. The data was checked back into NVCRIS once a week, reviewed by the NVCRIS Manager, then incorporated into the main NVCRIS dataset. Over 5,000 sites and 800 surveys were reviewed and updated. The project is estimated to be complete by 2020.

## **Program Area: Historic Preservation Planning**

### Purpose:

Every SHPO is required, under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), to prepare and implement a comprehensive statewide historic preservation plan (54 U.S.C § 302303).

Historic preservation planning is the process by which the NSHPO, other state agencies and local and Tribal governments, preservation advocates, and the public collaborate to develop a vision, goals, and priorities for the preservation of Nevada's cultural resources. Nevada's statewide historic preservation plan encourages broad public participation in planning for cultural resources, meets challenges unique to Nevada, influences historic preservation policy in state and local governments, and empowers local communities, organizations, and individuals to action.

In Nevada, the historic preservation plan has an eight-year life cycle. The current plan will expire in 2028.

### Goals for 2020-2022:

1. Broaden public, non-profit, local, and Tribal government participation in the implementation of tasks in the 2020-2028 preservation plan.
2. Encourage incorporation of preservation planning tasks into local and state agency strategic plans.

### Tasks for 2020-2022:

1. Create and update a NSHPO webpage devoted exclusively to highlighting preservation successes that meet the goals of the preservation plan. NSHPO will solicit examples from state, local, and Tribal governments, non-profits, and the public during Historic Preservation and Archaeological Awareness Month (May) and will develop press releases to highlight successes as appropriate.
2. NSHPO will create a training module and collaborate with local and tribal governments and non-profits to encourage the development of opportunities to educate the public about historic preservation planning and its importance to broader planning goals at a local and state level.

### Accomplishment from 2018-2020:

NSHPO spent the last two years gathering public comment about important cultural resources, their threats, and challenges, as well as public preservation goals to prepare the 2020-2028 plan. NSHPO created two online surveys and participated in six (6) public meetings held around the state to gather this information. The draft preservation plan was available for public comment from October 1- November 12, 2019. NSHPO received comments from federal and state agencies, private non-profit corporations, Tribal governments, and the public. NSHPO staff synthesized this information into a draft final plan submitted to the National Park Service on February 1, 2020. The final preservation plan was approved by the National Park Service on August 12, 2020.



## **Program Area: Commission for Cultural Centers and Historic Preservation (CCCHP) staff**

### Purpose:

NSHPO is staff to the CCCHP that is established in NRS 383.500 to advise the Department on matters pertaining to the preservation and promotion of Nevada's cultural resources. The CCCHP is composed of representatives of the Nevada Humanities Committee, the Board of Museums and History, the Nevada Arts Council, the State Council on Libraries and Literacy, and the tourism industry.

The CCCHP awards financial assistance, made possible through the State's bonding program, to governmental entities and nonprofit organizations conducting projects that preserve and protect historic buildings, structures, objects, and archaeological sites used to develop a network of cultural centers and activities. The CCCHP and its predecessor, the Commission for Cultural Affairs, have awarded over \$41 million to 94 cultural resources since 1993.

The Commission is required to maintain a ten-year plan to preserve and promote Nevada's cultural resources and develop a network of cultural centers. Due to the recent recession, funding for the Commission has been limited and the initiation of the required update to the current ten-year plan has been postponed until 2020.

### Goals for 2020-2022:

1. Ensure that planning for the CCCHP is consistent with statutory requirements.
2. Improve monitoring of buildings with existing covenants to ensure compliance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and to inform and educate grantees of those requirements.

### Tasks for 2020-2022:

1. Initiate an updated ten-year plan for the CCCHP by conducting online and in-person interviews with existing and previous grantees by the end of 2021.
2. Draft 10-year plan by the end of 2022.
3. Increase the frequency of project and covenant inspections by at least 10 buildings per year.

### Accomplishment from 2018-2020:

The CCCHP awarded grants to fifteen (15) projects in the last grant cycle (2017-2018). Five (5) of those grantees were new to the program with buildings from the City of Wells to the historically African American West Side of Las Vegas. Expansion of the program into additional rural communities and populations previously underserved by preservation grants represents positive accomplishments as the funding gradually returns to pre-recession levels. The CCCHP awarded grants to 25 projects in the current grant cycle (2019-2020) which supports the expansion trend into the next biennium.



## **Program Area: Comstock Historic District Commission/Comstock History Center**

### Purpose:

The Comstock Historic District Commission was created in 1969 to regulate the built environment of the Virginia City National Historic Landmark and environs. The Commission regulates all aspects of the exterior appearance of all structures within the district boundaries--encompassing some 10,000 plus acres in portions of Storey and Lyon Counties. Since 2005, the Commission has also managed the Comstock History Center (CHC), a museum and research facility located in Virginia City open to the visiting public.

### Goals for 2020-2022:

1. Continue to expand general visitorship, school field trips, and exhibit offerings at the CHC.
2. Address both ongoing and deferred maintenance issues at the CHC.
3. Begin the process of updating the historic structures inventory for the landmark.

### Tasks for 2020-2022:

1. Secure an exhibit hanging system in the multipurpose room for the CHC primary exhibit hall.
2. Secure a CHC continuing building maintenance line item in the FY 22-23 biennial budget.
3. Secure deferred maintenance funding in the FY 22-23 biennial budget to address previously identified CHC deferred maintenance issues.
4. Explore possible funding sources for an updated reconnaissance level inventory of structures within the boundary of the historic district with SHPO and Storey and Lyon Counties.

### Accomplishments from 2018-2020:

1. Support staff hours were expanded from half to three quarter time.
2. Museum visiting hours were expanded to an additional day per week.
3. Grant funding was secured to install a new exhibit hanging system in the CHC multipurpose room.



## **Program Area: Nevada Historical Markers**

### Purpose:

Since its establishment in 1977, NSHPO has been responsible for the Nevada Historical Marker Program (NRS 383.091). The Legislature initiated the marker program to commemorate events, people, and locations as diverse as the Old Spanish Trail through Southern Nevada, Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins on the Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation, African Americans in Virginia City, and the great train robbery in Verdi.

There are currently 268 historic markers located on or near roadways around Nevada. While a substantial majority of the markers are composed of a steel mesh stanchion in the shape of the state with a blue painted finish and an aluminum text plate, additional markers composed of concrete pillars, bronze text plates, and a Chinese pagoda are also in the inventory.

There is currently no general fund support for program and NSHPO is prohibited from using its Historic Preservation Fund federal grant or match general fund appropriations for any marker installation, maintenance, or product.

### Goals for 2020-2022:

1. Establish a reliable maintenance program for the existing historic markers that will ensure that the existing markers are present and legible for the travelling public.
2. Develop new markers to celebrate the diversity of Nevada's history and culture not already interpreted for the public.
3. Seek general fund support for this legislatively mandated program.

### Tasks for 2020-2022:

1. Initiate consultation with state agencies, local governments, and private non-profit organizations to assist in the development of new markers.
2. Consult with the Nevada Department of Transportation to reassess the efficiency of the existing marker maintenance enhancement grant and consider other options for maintaining the markers.
3. Update, reprint, and distribute the popular historical marker booklet to raise the profile of the program.

### Accomplishments from 2018-2020:

With the support of Travel Nevada, a PSA titled "[266 Signs your #Nvroadtrip Is Sure to Satisfy](#)" was developed for the 2019 Nevada Historic Preservation and Archaeological Awareness Month campaign to highlight the historic markers. Despite on-going maintenance issues and the expiration of the existing contract to maintain the markers, NSHPO was able to reinstall some of the missing markers bring the total of markers not currently installed to approximately 15 of the 268 in the inventory. Most importantly, the markers recognizing the 12 Mile House on the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California reservation and Cave Rock at Lake Tahoe were reinstalled.



## **Program Area: Burial Law Program**

### Purpose:

Laws protecting Native American burials (NRS 383.150 to 383.190, as amended) that are located on private and public land is included in the portion of the NRS that covers the NSHPO. Specifically, NSHPO duties are outlined in NRS 383.160, as amended.

The NSHPO program is limited to Indian burials that are discovered when there is no permit issued pursuant to NRS 381.196; when there is no existing agreement between the person who disturbed the burial and the closest culturally affiliated Indian tribe; or when there is no agreement pursuant to federal law that relates to the discovered Indian burial. The NSHPO is responsible for the facilitation of the treatment and disposition of an Indian burial site between a property owner and the closest culturally affiliated Indian tribe to the discovered Indian burial. The protection of Indian burials includes any associated artifacts and human remain.

### Goals for 2020-2022:

1. Develop broad outreach and educational materials for law enforcement and state agencies on the amendments to NRS 383.150 to 383.180, which are effective starting July 1, 2018.
2. Began the process to develop regulations on the updated Nevada Revised Statutes 383.150 to 383.180 pursuant to NRS 383.440.2.

### Tasks for 2020-2022:

1. Edit existing training material (e.g., PowerPoints and handouts) on Native American burials to reflect to amendments to NRS.
2. Arrange for in person consultation with Indian tribes on the development of regulations pursuant to NRS 383.440.2 as requested by the Indian tribes.
3. As funding permits, develop a scope of work to contract for the development of regulations pursuant to NRS 383.440.2

### Accomplishments from 2018-2020:

NSHPO created a NSHPO webpage devoted exclusively for the Protection of Indian Burial Sites. The NSHPO has met several times with the Nevada Indian Commission to engage in consultation with Indian tribes on the amended statutes, which have informed the NSHPO goals and tasks for this program. The SHPO developed Procedures for the Protection of Indian Burial Sites.

