

Introduction

On August 18, 2013, the Board of Directors of the New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance (NMHPA) convened to identify elements of a new vision for the organization and its role in preserving historic, cultural other heritage assets in New Mexico. Stakeholders from the public and private sector participated in the planning event; nearly twenty representatives from state and local government, non-profit organizations, private consultancies and educational institutions attended.

The rationale behind the re-visioning workshop included lack of a clear direction and goals for 2013 (and beyond), decreasing membership and conference attendance, waning energy among long-standing members, and an influx of new members looking to for new opportunities and entry points to support heritage preservation in the state.

The planning session opened with a review of the historical “purpose” statements (including those from recent strategic planning documents) and a discussion of the current status of the organization and its stage of development. The NMHPA was established in 1995 and granted 501c3 tax-exempt status by the IRS in 1996. The original application for tax-exempt status identified a number of activities of the NMHPA purpose, summarized here:

- Setting statewide priorities for the preservation of endangered sites.
- Assist local preservation efforts in planning and implementing programs.
- Serves as an information clearinghouse on preservation issues, programs, projects, and sources of funding.
- Reviews and advocates federal, state, and local preservation legislation in response to requests from the NM Congressional delegation, state legislators and local officials...to strengthen legal protection of such sites.
- Hold cultural properties and cultural preservation easements.
- To raise, hold and disburse funds for the acquisition, preservation and protection of endangered properties.
- Communicates with its organizational and individual members with respect to legislation...of interest...
- Draft model...heritage preservation statutes...
- To respond to requests from legislative bodies for technical advice and assistance...
- To respond to requests from public bodies for the formulation of heritage preservation enactments.

Participants of the August 18 re-visioning workshop considered historical contexts and current needs in developing a clear and unifying vision for the organization. Additionally, strategies and actions for realizing the new organizational vision were identified. These will be used to set short-term priorities for 2013-2014. A summary of the results is provided herein.

Purpose

The New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance exists to preserve and protect the historic and cultural assets, values and heritage of New Mexico through: 1) state and local advocacy, 2) development of partnerships and preservation networks, 3) education and programming, 4) stewardship activities, and, 5) by acknowledging, celebrating, and recognizing heritage preservation efforts around the state.

Strategic Goals

- I. **Advance a statewide presence** and organization with adequate human and financial resources devoted to heritage preservation, with clear linkages to tourism and economic development efforts in New Mexico.
- II. **Engage in research** efforts to examine the congruence of state standards and benchmarks for preservation with current preservation needs.
- III. **Develop partnerships** with individuals, organizations and institutions to ensure cross-sector coordination or preservation efforts and deliver preservation-based programming throughout the state.
- IV. **Provide programming and services** that include preservation initiatives, outreach activities, education efforts and local/statewide conferences to support the NMHPA vision and mission.
- V. Engage in local and statewide **advocacy** activities to ensure that New Mexico's historical, cultural and heritage assets and values are preserved and protected.
- VI. **Implement communications** to support the mission and the goals of the organization.
- VII. Recognize, acknowledge and **celebrate achievements** of local and statewide preservation efforts in New Mexico.

Priority Areas

- Focus initial efforts on organizational leadership and board operations, operational structure, staff capacity, partnerships, programming and membership.
- Re-establish the annual conference as a premiere educational and capacity-building initiative in support of heritage preservation.
- Monitor state and local policy activities that may enhance or negatively impact preservation activities in New Mexico. Mobilize advocacy efforts as needed.
- Enhance communications, public relations, outreach and messaging efforts around the NMHPA mission, goals, plans, priorities, and ongoing activities.