

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES & HISTORY**

5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS 2026-2030

## MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES & HISTORY

### **1. Comprehensive Mission Statement:**

#### **Vision**

Empowering people through Mississippi's many stories

#### **Mission**

By preserving Mississippi's diverse historic resources, and sharing them with people around the world, MDAH inspires the discovery of stories that connect our lives and shape our future.

### **2. Philosophy**

Because the knowledge of history enriches life, the Mississippi Department of Archives & History believes that

- the resources we hold in public trust belong to the people and should be made accessible;
- the historical and cultural resources of the state, both public and private, should be protected;
- we must educate the public about Mississippi's history and the value of preserving our historical and cultural resources;
- we must perform our duties with integrity, openness, and respect for all people and cultures; and,
- we must provide quality service and maintain a standard of excellence.

### **3. Relevant Goals and Benchmarks**

Goal #1.: To leverage preservation and heritage tourism as well as other traditional economic tools to revitalize historic areas and promote tourism in Mississippi.

Benchmarks #1.:

- Economic development tools used for historic preservation, including tax credits, grant programs, and the adaptive reuse of existing buildings
- Increased tourism partnerships and opportunities through the promotion of historic preservation and museums as an economic engine
- Visitation to historic sites
- Increased economic development along Mississippi's roadways through the Mississippi Mound Trail and other heritage trails

Goal #2.: To make available the state's rich historic resources for all Mississippians and visitors through education services, free public programs, and preservation and promotion of historic places.

Benchmarks #2.:

- 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>-grade students learning Mississippi history through resources provided by MDAH, such as games, activities, field trips, publications that detail the Mississippi Department of Education frameworks, strands, and competencies addressed in each site's tours and programs, social media, the digital archives, Mississippi History on Loan program for grades 4-12, and Mississippi Hands-on History: Traveling Trunk Program for grades 4-12 as well as online lesson plans and teaching units that meet Department of Education Core Curriculum standards

Goal #3.: To help create an efficient government and an informed and engaged citizenry

Benchmarks #3.:

- Civic engagement through visitation of museums and historic sites and use of archival resources
- Transparency of the records of all state government
- Efficient use of state dollars by providing services online
- Increased volunteerism

#### **4. Overview of the Agency 5-Year Strategic Plan:**

The Mississippi Department of Archives & History (MDAH) strategic plan commits the department to spend the next five years strengthening the relationship between MDAH and the people we serve. We must ensure that our constituents find our resources and services essential, outstanding, and easy to access.

Planning for the next five years is based on the following five goals:

- To expand and improve MDAH services to the public.
- To make MDAH resources more accessible.
- To strengthen the partnerships between MDAH and state and local governments.
- To engage a larger audience using social media.
- To expand MDAH services and engagement by offering more digital content.
- To plan and construct a new visitor's center at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians.
- To plan for the interpretation and restoration of the museum located at Historic Jefferson College.
- To plan for the interpretation and construction of a new visitor's center near the Vicksburg National Military Park.

A critical challenge for the department will be to continue to serve our most important visitor, Mississippi's schoolchildren. MDAH is committed to raising private money to fully fund our education endowment to remove any financial barrier to travel and visit the museums.

Since opening the Two Mississippi Museums, the department has shifted its attention to its other sites. Currently, MDAH's focus is on its sites in southwest Mississippi. The legislature has provided the initial funding to build a new museum and visitors center at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians. Additionally, the legislature has provided the initial funding for the restoration of the buildings at Historic Jefferson College (HJC). At the same time that MDAH is working on the most critical structural issues at HJC, MDAH is also working on expanding the story that is told there. Additionally, the legislature has provided the initial state's portion of the funding for the construction of a visitor's center to be located adjacent to Vicksburg National Military Park to include the acquisition of land. MDAH must tell a comprehensive story of the region, state, and nation that will compel people, who want to understand American history, to visit Natchez, Vicksburg, and the Two Mississippi Museums in Jackson.

The department will continue to process the enormous amount of materials in our collection. Staff members across the department are working on this challenge, as the completion of this objective is critical to another significant objective: expanding online access to state records, and collections, and ensuring that all other state agencies meet their responsibility to preserve their records, both paper and electronic.

Preservation of historic resources across the state will remain a priority as the department has revised archaeology guidelines and continues the initiative to promote the preservation of historic schools and courthouses and expands the certified local government program.

## **5. Agency's External/Internal Assessment**

- 1) MDAH has experienced an increase in the demand for services since the opening of the Museum of Mississippi History and the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum in December 2017
- 2) Changes in technology could allow improvements in the quality of historic preservation and museum management.
- 3) Many projects are reliant upon federal, corporate, or other funding for support.
- 4) The increased availability of records and other resources online will change the way the public accesses resources.
- 5) Decreases in field trips for school students affect visitation.
- 6) MDAH expects increased demand for local government records assistance across the state and increases in the volume of born-digital records.
- 7) MDAH will have to monitor its visitation and how it continues to be impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Through quarterly reports and meetings, the Department determines how well the needs of Mississippians have been met and monitors progress toward meeting the goals of the agency's five-year strategic plan. Annual priorities are developed for specific program areas and the statistical data is used to monitor how well priorities are being met. Management policies are in place to monitor productivity and address any deficiencies. Budgetary constraints are considered when new or expanded projects are requested. Periodic programmatic audits are conducted by the National Park Service to verify and document performance. The comprehensive, professional requirements for participating in the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Accreditation Program serve to strengthen internal management at museum sites. Through regular contact with local and regional school systems, MDAH monitors the effectiveness of educational programs.

**6. Agency Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Measures by Program for FY 2026 through FY 2030:**

**Program 1: Administration**

**GOAL A: Provide administrative assistance, finance, human resources, and IT to service the other programs of MDAH.** (Miss. Code Ann. § 25-59-1)

**OBJECTIVE A.1.** Effectively manage the department's resources and provide department-wide administrative services

*Outcome:* Maintain supportive services at 20% or less of the Department's total appropriation.

**A.1.1. STRATEGY:** Safeguard and manage public funds by preparing and entering data that accurately reflects the financial activity for MDAH, ensuring the integrity of transactions entered into the general ledger, monitoring established control procedures, completing bank reconciliations, and ensuring that internal controls and the security of department funds are maintained.

*Output:* Number of financial transactions processed

*Efficiency:* Average cost per financial transaction

**A.1.2. STRATEGY:** Provide and support the mission of MDAH by performing the personnel functions in an effective and efficient manner.

*Output:* Number of personnel transactions processed

*Efficiency:* Average cost per personnel transaction

**Program 2: Programs and Communication**

**GOAL A: To promote the resources and services of the department and strengthen the relationship between the agency and its patrons (Miss. Code Ann. § 25-59-1)**

**OBJECTIVE A.1.** To increase public awareness and access to agency programs, the state archives, and MDAH museums and historical sites.

*Outcome:* Increase the percentage of people reached through marketing who use MDAH services and programs.

**A.1.1. STRATEGY:** Enhance MDAH's presence through social media and a user-friendly website as well as traditional media outlets and publications.

*Output:* Total number of news releases, publications, social media postings, and online visitors

*Efficiency:* Average cost per news release, publication, social media post, cost per online visitor

**A.1.2. STRATEGY:** Promote public events, exhibits, and programs

*Output:* Total number paid advertisements.

*Efficiency:* Cost per advertisement

### **Program 3: Archives and Records Management**

**GOAL A: Acquire, manage, preserve, and provide access to the records of the State of Mississippi and other materials documenting the State's history and culture that are of enduring value to its citizens (Miss. Code Ann. §§ 19-5-3, 25-59-1, 25-59-3, 25-59-9, 25-59-29, 25-60-1, 29-60-5, 25-61-7(1), 39-3-1, 39-3-303, 39-3-309, 39-3-365, 39-5-1)**

**OBJECTIVE A.1.** Acquire, process, preserve, and provide enhanced access to state records and collections of historical value

*Outcome:* Increased volume of archival records available to the public

**A.1.1. STRATEGY:** Acquire, appraise, organize, describe, catalog, and preserve materials in all formats relating to the history and culture of Mississippi, including records from state agencies and public officials

*Output:* Number of cataloging transactions

*Efficiency:* Cost per transaction

**A.1.2. STRATEGY:** Reformat, digitize, re-house, and preserve materials, as needed, to ensure long-term preservation and /or provide enhanced access.

*Output:* Number of items reformatted

*Efficiency:* Cost per item

**A.1.3. STRATEGY:** Develop a repository for the permanent and long-term preservation of and access to digital assets.

*Output:* Quantity of electronic assets processed (gigabytes)

*Efficiency:* Cost per gigabyte

**OBJECTIVE A.2.** Offer high quality, efficient, and equitable services to citizens, state officials and agencies, and other researchers; and promote the use of archival resources by Mississippi citizens, so that they will become more informed and engaged

*Outcome:* Maintain or expand user transactions

*Outcome:* Maintain or expand attendance at public programs

**A.2.1. STRATEGY:** Provide assistance to onsite researchers and patrons with reference requests

*Output:* Number of onsite transactions

*Efficiency:* Average cost per transaction

**A.2.2. STRATEGY:** Respond to reference inquiries initiated off-site

*Output:* Number of off-site inquiries answered

*Efficiency:* Average cost per inquiry

**A.2.3. STRATEGY:** Educate citizens about their history and heritage through expanded outreach activities, particularly to underserved communities, and students and teachers

*Output:* Number of attendees at public programs

*Efficiency:* Average cost per attendee

**GOAL B: Support efficient and transparent administration of state government by administering the records management program** (Miss. Code Ann. §§25-59-1, 25-59-3, 25-59-9, 25-59-29, 25-60-1, 25-61-1)

**OBJECTIVE B.1.** Provide cost-efficient, ready access to administrative records and information of state government by assisting state agencies and public officials in the management of records

*Outcome:* Expanded participation in the state records management program

**B.1.1. STRATEGY:** Provide records management services to state agencies

*Output:* Number of agencies served

*Efficiency:* Average cost per agency

**B.1.2. STRATEGY:** Operate the State Records Center for the storage of inactive records, short-term reference transactions, and destruction of temporary records.

*Output:* Number of transactions

*Efficiency:* Cost per transaction

**B.1.3. STRATEGY:** Provide off-site storage of computer backup tapes for agencies

*Output:* Number of transactions

*Efficiency:* Cost per transaction

#### **Program 4: Museum and Historical Site Management**

**GOAL A: Carry out the primary function of educating the public in Mississippi history by preserving, researching, and interpreting its collections and historic sites through programming and professional services (Miss. Code Ann. §§ 25-59-1, 29-5-131, 39-5-1, 39-5-6, 39-5-17, 39-5-21, 39-7-1, 39-19-1)**

**OBJECTIVE A.1.** Create historically accurate environment at each site to generate and promote visitation

*Outcome:* Maintain or expand on-site visitation

*Outcome:* Maintain or expand number of guided tours

**A.1.1. STRATEGY:** Provide access to exhibits, grounds, and buildings specific to each site's history and purpose

*Output:* Number of visitors

*Efficiency:* Average cost per visitor

**A.1.2. STRATEGY:** Provide guided tours for student and adult groups

*Output:* Number of guided tours

*Efficiency:* Average cost per tour

*Explanatory:* Alternate visitor choices as well as changes in academic regulations affecting purpose, frequency, and financing of field trips for students can affect visitation

**OBJECTIVE A.2.** Provide quality on-site and off-site public programming to visitors, students, teachers, and the general public

*Outcome:* Maintain or expand number of on-site/off-site programs

*Outcome:* Maintain or expand number of outreach audience

**A.2.1. STRATEGY:** Create educational materials, activities, exhibits, and presentations through research and interpretation of collections, historic sites, and Mississippi's history in general.



*Output:* Number of on-site/off-site public programs

*Efficiency:* Cost per public program

*Output:* Number of off-site outreach audience

*Efficiency:* Average cost per person off-site

*Explanatory:* Any loss of anticipated federal, corporate, or private funding would have an adverse impact; failure to obtain or upgrade equipment can slow or interrupt program implementation; inadequate security places at stake the safety of staff, visitors, sites, and collections and could cause suspension of some programming

**OBJECTIVE A.3.** Provide professional assistance to researchers, teachers, other professionals, organizations, museums, and the general public throughout the U.S.

*Outcome:* Maintain the department's status as an authority in the museum field, thereby enhancing the department's local and national image

**A.3.1. STRATEGY:** Respond to professional assistance requests and inquiries in a timely manner via the phone, mail, or email as well as by conducting or participating in meetings/conferences in- and out-of state.

*Output:* Number of professional assistance requests

*Efficiency:* Cost per professional assistance request

*Explanatory:* Loss of staff would diminish service

**OBJECTIVE A.4:** Manage, care for, and expand collections

*Outcome:* Maintain professional museum standards and make collections readily available to the public

**A.4.1 STRATEGY:** Provide proper artifact housing and climate controlled storage; accession, research, and catalog artifacts; monitor handling and display conditions of artifacts on public view; oversee artifact conservation and loan process; cultivate donors; and provide public access.

*Output:* Number of collections management transactions

*Efficiency:* Cost per collections management transaction

## **Program 5: Historic Preservation Management**

**GOAL A: Identify and inventory Mississippi's historic and cultural resources and assist individuals, state and local governments and other agencies to protect and preserve the state's significant historic structures, archaeological sites and other historic places** (Miss. Code Ann. §§ 25-1-17, 25-41-1, 25-59-1, 39-5-1, 39-7-1, 39-7-3, 39-7-4, 39-7-5, 39-7-11, 39-7-13, 39-7-15, 39-7-19, 39-7-22, 39-7-31, 39-13-3, 39-13-5, 39-13-7, 39-13-9, 39-59-1)

**OBJECTIVE A.1:** Maintain a comprehensive inventory of significant historic properties and resources and nominate eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

*Outcome:* Increased information for public use and research

*Outcome:* Effective management of Historic Resources Inventory

**A.1 STRATEGY:** Conduct and evaluate comprehensive surveys of properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places

*Output:* Number of National Register nominations approved per year

*Output:* Total number of historic sites added to inventory per year

*Efficiency:* Cost per National Register nomination

**OBJECTIVE A.2:** Apply preservation rehabilitation standards to ensure quality, sustainable economic development of historic properties

*Outcome:* Successful adaptive reuse of existing public resources

*Outcome:* Effective management of historic preservation grants program

*Outcome:* Increased public and private investment in historic preservation

**A.2 STRATEGY:** Provide technical assistance reviews for public construction projects, preservation grants and private investment through qualified historic preservation tax credits

*Output:* Number of technical assistance reviews per year

*Output:* Number of completed grant projects

*Output:* Number of approved tax credit applications

*Efficiency:* Cost per technical assistance review

**OBJECTIVE A.3:** Promote historic preservation through public education and training

*Outcome:* Increased awareness of the benefits of historic preservation to individuals and local communities through education and outreach

**A.3 STRATEGY:** Provide educational programs and interpretation to the public on historic preservation and training and guidance through the Certified Local Government Program

*Output:* Number of public outreach and educational events per year

*Output:* Number of training and local government consultations per year

*Efficiency:* Cost per public program / educational event

**OBJECTIVE A.4:** Collect and manage Mississippi's prehistoric and historic archaeological resources

*Outcome:* Provide a secure repository for archaeological collections

**A.4 STRATEGY:** Maintain curation facility in accordance with federal curation standards

*Output:* Total amount collections per year in linear feet

*Efficiency:* Total amount collected from curation fees per linear feet per year

**OBJECTIVE A.5:** Conduct cultural resource reviews for publicly funded, licensed and permitted projects

*Outcome:* Provide oversight to protect Mississippi's cultural resources

**A.5 STRATEGY:** Review and comment on federally funded projects in accordance with standards

*Output:* Total number of cultural resource reviews conducted per year

*Efficiency:* Cost per cultural resources review