

Historical Society

Projects Summary

(\$ in thousands)

Project Title	Priority Ranking	Funding Source	Project Requests for State Funds		
			2016	2018	2020
Historic Fort Snelling Visitor Center	1	GO	\$ 34,000	\$ 0	\$ 0
Historic Sites Asset Preservation	2	GO	\$ 5,755	\$ 4,290	\$ 3,865
County and Local Historic Preservation Grants	3	GO	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
Historic Fort Snelling Master Plan Phase 2 - Campus Enhancements	4	GO	\$ 0	\$ 13,600	\$ 0
Historic Fort Snelling Master Plan Phase 3 - Bldg 30 Stable Renovation	5	GO	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 11,200
Minnesota History Center - Predesign/Design	6	GO	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 3,000
Total Project Requests			\$ 41,255	\$ 19,390	\$ 19,565
General Obligation Bonds (GO) Total			\$ 41,255	\$ 19,390	\$ 19,565

Historic Fort Snelling Visitor Center

AT A GLANCE

2016 Request Amount: \$34,000

Priority Ranking: 1

Project Summary: The Minnesota Historical Society is requesting funding to design and construct a visitor center facility within a historic 1904 cavalry barracks building adjacent to Historic Fort Snelling. This facility will provide opportunities for the Fort’s rich stories to be shared through a dynamic, inclusive visitor experience featuring new exhibits with innovative interpretive techniques.

Project Description

Funding for design and construction of an improved visitor center will provide improved facilities and services for Fort Snelling’s many visitors. The goal of the project is to improve public service, interpretation, and operations at this nationally significant site in order to increase access, services, use of current assets, and visitors.

Information from a recently completed master plan for the site and adjacent area will inform the planning for the project. The first step will be predesign, which is taking place in 2015 with funding from the 2015 Capital Budget bill.

It is currently anticipated that the facility will be approximately 50,000 gross square feet within a historic structure, and will include visitor services including classrooms, restrooms, museum exhibits and other visitor amenities. Funding will support demolition of the existing deteriorating visitor center and improved landscaping, parking, and wayfinding. Further details will be determined during the upcoming predesign process.

Programming will range from special events and living history to films, exhibits and guided and self-guided experiences that allow visitors to examine differing perspectives and many aspects of the site’s stories.

In the recently completed Master Plan for Historic Fort Snelling, the Minnesota Historical Society has outlined a four phase plan for the Historic Fort: In this first phase, one cavalry barracks building will be renovated into a visitor center, with a limited group of upgrades to the physical landscape in order to improve visitor navigation. The second phase, anticipated for a 2018 request, will feature additional landscape improvements to create a park-like setting featuring the magnificent views of the Mississippi and Minnesota River confluence, as well as improvements to building 22, in order to better serve visitors. A third phase, anticipated for a 2020 request, will upgrade building 30, the stable / mule barn, to provide improved visitor services, with potential revenue streams for the site. And, a fourth phase will improve the second cavalry barracks building for a compatible use on the historic campus. For this phase, MNHS will explore the possibility of enter into a partnership with another organization that could assist with the cost of improving this structure. This phased approach will provide for an orderly plan of improvements to this nationally significant historic campus, while maximizing the possibility for non-state sources to extend the impact of state dollars.

Project Rationale

Historic Fort Snelling is one of the most significant historic places in the state--Minnesota's first National Historic Landmark has been a crossroads for the many peoples who have lived in Minnesota and is therefore an appropriate platform for telling important stories of American Indian history, westward expansion, societal changes, and global conflict. This project will provide modern facilities to replace current deteriorating visitor facilities so visitors can explore our history, while preserving a highly significant historic structure.

As Fort Snelling approaches its bicentennial in the year 2020, Minnesotans will want to learn more about the many diverse stories of this historic place's rich history.

Since the Fort is well-known and beloved by many Minnesotans, the Minnesota Historical Society believes that there is capacity for private funding for this project, thus leveraging state funding to attract significant non-state funding. It is important for the state, therefore, to make a commitment so that additional donors can help to make the Fort a dynamic educational experience.

Other Considerations

MNHS has made great strides in the interpretive program at the site in recent years. After a comprehensive study of visitors and non-visitors to the site, we now have an excellent grasp of what Minnesotans want and need from Historic Fort Snelling. There is widespread appreciation for what we are doing now, but also a hunger for more stories to be told, more amenities to improve a visit, a community-based gathering place, and better orientation & wayfinding.

In response to public demand, we have changed the interpretive program incrementally, year by year, within the limitations of the current facilities. Broader stories are now told, including:

- The history of the first inhabitants of the site, the Dakota Indians, including pre-European contact, the era of treaties and statehood, and the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862.
- The fascinating history of African-Americans in early Minnesota is now coming to light for Minnesotans, as they learn about the existence of slavery in this free territory. Dred and Harriet Scott used their residence at Fort Snelling to champion their freedom in a landmark Supreme Court decision, one of the sparks for the Civil War.
- A more recent story unknown to most Minnesotans is the experience of Japanese language interpreters who worked at Fort Snelling during WWII.

In order for this history and more to be properly interpreted, dramatic investment is needed.

Fort Snelling enjoys a 99 percent awareness rate among all Minnesotans. Its central location within minutes of the airport and the Mall of America puts it within the reach of tourists from around the world. At its peak in the 1970s, the site served over 150,000 visitors annually. If the site's full potential is realized, these visitation numbers from 40 years ago should be a bare minimum base from which to build.

Significant momentum is also building on development projects in the greater Fort Snelling district, adjacent to the historic fort, at the Upper Post and beyond: a base camp facility built by the Boy Scouts; light rail-driven development in the area of the federal Whipple Building, including a new veterans housing facility opening this year; and further development opportunities are being pursued by the Department of Natural Resources, assisted by an interagency Joint Powers Agreement. A sense of synergy is finally being created to make the Fort Snelling district a full-fledged destination for many types of activities. An attractive and functional **Historic** Fort Snelling should and will be the hub of this activity.

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

Further information about operating costs will be explored in the predesign process. Our approach will be that, similar to other work we have done in recent years, the planning assumption is that operating cost increases should be minimized as much as possible, and any unavoidable increases should be covered with earned revenue rather than state appropriations.

Description of Previous Appropriations

Funding has been provided for various asset preservation project to preserve historic structures on this National Historic Landmark site.

In the 2015 Capital Budget, funding was appropriated for predesign for a visitor center for Historic Fort Snelling.

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Historic Sites Asset Preservation

AT A GLANCE

2016 Request Amount: \$5,755

Priority Ranking: 2

Project Summary: The Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) is requesting \$5.8 million in 2016 for the preservation and restoration of historic structures, landscapes and building systems in the State Historic Sites Network and for monuments located statewide.

Project Description

Funding for the Minnesota Historical Society’s Historic Sites Asset Preservation request will help to preserve some of the state’s most significant historic structures, which are preserved for the education and enjoyment of our citizens. Over the past three decades more than 21 million students, families, and tourists have visited the 141 landmark buildings, trails and museums of the State Historic Sites Network. MNHS is committed to keeping these extraordinary properties open and accessible to the public now and for future generations. Although many of the historic structures are now more than one hundred years old and holding up remarkably well, age and modern visitation do take their toll. While keeping pace with the impacts of visitor traffic and continuous aging of the historic structures is always one of our chief concerns, we also must keep up with changes in life/safety systems, environmental issues, security, infrastructure upgrades and renovations necessary to support building use. In addition to the necessary work on historic structures, many of the modern visitor centers erected 30 to 40 years ago are now in need of renewal or are reaching the end of their useful life. The asset preservation investment for such a vast network of varied structures is an indispensable complement to the Society’s repair and replacement funding in the operating budget.

In recognition of the integral part that these buildings and landscapes play in public education, the people of Minnesota have invested significantly in the State Historic Sites Network. Maintaining these resources is expensive, but it is a good cost-benefit ratio for the people of Minnesota and the nearly 600,000 visitors each year. As non-renewable social and cultural resources, historic buildings require a high standard of care. The skills of specially qualified architects, engineers and contractors are required to assess, design and implement repairs, maintenance, and systems improvements. The cost of high-quality materials increases every year. The investment is well rewarded by the educational benefits and public appreciation for preserving the state’s precious heritage.

The Historic Sites Network also serves as a showcase for the principles and techniques of historic preservation, setting a standard for the state. These structures are learning resources used by students of Minnesota history, by students and practitioners of architecture, and by the traditional building trades. Preservation of historic structures, by definition, meets the state’s goal of funding sustainable, high-performance buildings, since historic structures preserve previous energy and financial investments. It has been said that “the greenest building is the one that is already built.”

The Society’s Facilities and Risk Management Department is responsible for all 141 of the structures in the Historic Sites Network. Every year the staff typically manages five or six large projects totaling over \$1 million and dozens of small projects scattered across the state. Staff prioritizes work projects

based upon long-range planning, building analysis, and structural conditions. Working in consultation with preservation architects and specialty engineers, cost estimates are prepared for appropriation requests. Each of the projects named below are part of the State Historic Sites Network, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, 138.661, and have strong local and regional support from the areas in which they are located, since historic sites are an important component of our state's tourism economy. Local citizens, businesses, and support group members have assisted these sites with volunteer hours, in-kind contributions, and grass-roots leadership. Minnesotans are rightfully proud of the sites.

The historic buildings, artifacts, and landscapes within the State Historic Sites Network are of national and state significance. They fulfill the mission given by the Territorial Legislature to the Society to collect and preserve evidence of human culture in the state, and to teach Minnesota history in all its academic, technological, and social diversity. Failure to maintain these cultural treasures will result in irreversible loss of material and intellectual culture.

Project Rationale

This request is for work that is critical to the preservation and maintenance of important historic resources, which are a state responsibility under Minnesota Statutes 138.661, the authorizing statute for the State Historic Sites Network. Preservation of historic structures, by definition, meets the state's goal of funding sustainable, high performance buildings, since historic structures preserve previous energy and financial investments.

Other Considerations

Specific Elements of the Asset Preservation request include:

2016 Asset Preservation Requests

Historic Fort Snelling

Building 17 - Interior stabilization, foundation and structural repairs., \$ 1,000,000

Mill City Museum

Mill Ruins Preservation, \$ 750,000

Grand Mound

Site/Structure/Trails projects, \$ 500,000

Historic Forestville

Building Exterior repair &refinishing, including barn, \$ 500,000

Statewide

Security &Fire Control &Monitoring System Replacement, \$ 450,000

Historic Fort Snelling,

Commandant's House - Interior Preservation / Drainage Improvements, \$ 275,000

Lindbergh House,

Visitor Center - HVAC upgrade from electrical heat coils to natural gas boiler heating plant, or other, \$ 175,000

Lindbergh House,

Visitor Center drainage improvements, civil work, re-waterproofing of theater wall, \$ 275,000

Historic Forestville,

Interior Restoration, Residence, \$ 350,000

Historic Fort Snelling,

Bluff retaining wall preservation, \$ 400,000

Marine Mill,

Ruins stabilization and trail rehab, \$ 500,000

Statewide,

Design for Future Asset Preservation Projects, \$ 430,000

Statewide,

Monument/Markers, \$ 150,000

Total \$5,755,000

2018 Asset Preservation Requests

Folsom House,

Site Landscape Preservation, \$ 250,000

Historic Fort Snelling,

Building 30 - Exterior Rehabilitation, \$ 350,000

Split Rock Lighthouse,

Facilities and Enhancements, interpretive areas and rebuild barn, \$ 1,400,000

James J. Hill House,

Gatehouse Restoration - Interior Preservation, \$ 350,000

Forest History Center,

Rehab of Gun Club Building including Storage, new HVAC, New Roof, \$ 150,000

Statewide,

Trail and interpretive markers: Birch Coulee, Kelley, Laq Qui Parle, Forestville, Lower Sioux Agency, \$ 150,000

Oliver Kelley Farm,

Farmhouse Interior Restorations, \$ 250,000

Lower Sioux Agency,

Landscape Preservation, \$ 250,000

Lac Qui Parle,

Landscape Preservation, \$ 250,000

Lindbergh House,

"Upper" landscape preservation, \$ 350,000

Statewide,

Design for Future Asset Preservation Projects, \$ 390,000

Statewide,

Monument/Markers, \$ 150,000

Total \$4,290,000

2020 Asset Preservation Requests

James J. Hill House,

Site Landscape Preservation & Site Feature Restoration, \$ 350,000

James J. Hill House,

House - Air Conditioning, \$ 3,000,000

North West Company Fur Post ,

Roof replacements – Visitor Center, \$ 165,000

Harkin Store,

Exterior preservation, upgrade HVAC & plumbing system in House for efficiency & safety, \$ 200,000

Statewide,

Design for Future Asset Preservation Projects, TBD

Statewide,

Monument/Markers, \$ 150,000

Total \$3,865,000

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

Generally, not applicable. There may be some minor savings from energy efficiencies.

Description of Previous Appropriations

Appropriations for asset preservation of the state Historic Sites Network have been made in nearly every capital budget bill since 1990. In 2014, this activity received \$1.440 million, in 2012, it received \$2.5 million, in 2011 it received \$1.9 million, in 2010 it received \$3.4 million; in 2009 it received \$2.165 million; and in 2008 it received \$4 million.

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County and Local Historic Preservation Grants

AT A GLANCE

2016 Request Amount: \$1,500

Priority Ranking: 3

Project Summary: This project provides funding, on a competitive matching basis, for county and local historic preservation projects. This program will allow local communities to preserve their most significant historical resources.

Project Description

The county and local historic preservation program provides grants on a local match basis to preserve historic assets owned by public entities. These properties are historically significant structures, with priority given to those that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This program is one of the most successful of its type, with relatively small amounts of money leveraging local funding and volunteer efforts. Since recipients of county and local preservation grants are required to fully match state funds, this project provides the best possible return on the state’s investment. Funds appropriated between 1994 and 2014 were spread across Minnesota on a competitive grant basis, with requests more than double the funds available.

This project also has the effect of reducing the state’s overall share of investment in preserving historic resources while fulfilling the state’s statutory commitment to preserving elements of the state’s inventory of historic resources (according to M.S. Sec. 138.665). Some states, for example, attempt to preserve 125+ historic sites at the state level. In Minnesota, we have limited the state’s historic sites network to 32 sites, allowing the Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) to concentrate on its mission of interpreting historic sites of statewide significance. Minnesota’s grant-in-aid program, initiated in 1969, encourages local organizations to take on such preservation projects.

Since 1969 more than 2,400 capital and operating grants have been awarded to qualified historical organizations in all 87 counties, resulting in the preservation of the evidence of Minnesota’s past. In recent rounds of grants, 219 grants from the Society’s capital bond-funded grant program have assisted in preserving and making accessible such projects as historic county courthouses (52 grants to 26 different courthouses); historic city halls (29 grants to 17 different city halls); and historic library buildings (20 grants to 16 different libraries). In addition, grants have helped to preserve publicly owned historic structures that provide a unique lens on our state’s history.

Types of historic structures preserved with grants funds include depots, senior and community centers, schools, bridges, theaters, park buildings, museums, water towers, and township halls. Specific examples include Norman County Courthouse Preservation (Norman County); the Andrew Volstead House roof replacement (City of Granite Falls); the Olof Swensson House roof replacement (Chippewa County); the O.G. Anderson and Company Store restoration (City of Minneota); the Anna and Mikko Pyhala Farm Restoration project (Town of Embarrass); the Mahnomen City Hall Restoration; Winona Masonic Hall/Senior Center (City of Winona); the Rensselaer Hubbard House restoration (City of Mankato); Robbinsdale Branch Library restoration (City of Robbinsdale); and the Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery Preservation.

From a financial perspective, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, and

2014 appropriations totaling over \$ 8.5 million have leveraged at least an equal amount in local match funding, as well as countless hours of volunteer effort.

Project Rationale

The county and local historic preservation grants program enables city and county government to fulfill their obligations to preserve historic structures, under MN Statutes 138.665, while sharing the cost with the State of Minnesota.

Other accomplishments and rationale include:

- Grants for historic preservation have stimulated local economies. Local matches used to implement projects have more than doubled the over \$8 million in state funds. Tourists coming to visit these historic resources bring new dollars to Minnesota communities.
- Professional standards and expertise have been increased among staff and volunteers at county and local units of government and historical organizations receiving grants because of the technical assistance that accompanies them.
- Many projects made possible by these grants enabled communities, most commonly through county and local governments and historical organizations, to reach out beyond their traditional constituencies and attract new audiences, including significant new volunteer activities. In summary, this grants program has enabled many organizations throughout the state to preserve significant historic places and other priceless evidence of the past at very modest cost to the state.

Other Considerations

Against a backdrop of economic challenges and heightened concern for the environment, historic preservation has a proven track record in stimulating local economies and revitalizing local communities, large and small.

It has been said: “the greenest building is the one that is already built.” Continuation of funding for this grant program leverages local resources and helps to preserve the built environment, thereby conserving the resources already put into these buildings and further the efforts to contribute to a sustainable future.

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

The funding of this program will not impact operating budgets.

Description of Previous Appropriations

Funds have been appropriated for the County and Local Historic Preservation Grants program in the following bonding bills: 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014

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