



## Comprehensive Cultural Survey

Executive Summary  
November 2012

The CCHE's enabling legislation included the requirement that the CCHE undertake a comprehensive survey of the state of cultural and historical preservation, accessibility, and interpretation in California, and report to the Governor and the Legislature. The survey included eight components, the requirements and responses to which are detailed below. Complete reports are available on the CCHE website. The survey results were shared at a statewide cultural summit held in October of 2012 in Long Beach. Proceedings from the summit are also available on the CCHE's website.

### COMPONENTS 1 & 2:

**Requirement:** *Survey of elements in CA and recommendations for steps to be taken to fill in the missing or underrepresented elements identified.*

**Response:** *The Legacy of California's Landmarks* report by Donna Graves with these nine recommendations:

1. **California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) and the National Park Service (NPS) can sponsor an update** to the *Five Views* project that investigates sites associated with additional underrepresented communities and supports communities in their designation, preservation and interpretation.
2. **OHP can work with communities in the Certified Local Government program** to strengthen the diversity of California landmarks in several ways. The Office already adds extra points to funding applications that focus on diverse resources. They might also encourage and add extra points to Certified Local Government grant applications that support historic context statements, surveys and nominations that include intangible, as well as physical resources, and surveys conducted in partnership with community-based organizations.
3. **OHP and NPS cultural resource staff can convene meeting with individuals** who participated in Community Conversations for this report, the Asian/Pacific Islander American Historic Preservation Forums, and others to discuss issues associated with diverse sites and integrity, as well as possibilities for a more flexible and community-friendly survey and designation process.
4. **The California Preservation Foundation (CPF) can sponsor webinars** and incorporate panels into their annual conference that strengthen understanding of these issues in the field including: best practices for collaboration between academics and communities, case studies on innovative ways to interpret historic resources, and broaden understandings of integrity and significance. The 2011 CPF Conference in Oakland had a five hour "Local Government Forum" with OHP staff. A similar forum led by OHP staff and leaders in the field could help representatives of Certified Local Governments, Main Street communities and Preserve America communities with training and discussion about new strategies for making their programs more inclusive.





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5. Preservation leaders at OHP, CPF and the California Historical Society can explore possibilities for partnership with California History-Social Science Project to integrate place-based learning about history and geography, and more awareness of the values of historic and cultural resource stewardship in K-12 education.
6. California's graduate programs in historic preservation and public history can partner with local preservation organizations and agencies to support communities in identifying, documenting, and designating sites associated with underrepresented aspects of California history.
7. Cities can post landmark nominations, historic context statements and surveys in readily accessible webpages and distribute them in hard copy to local libraries, with the goal of informing on-going interpretation and education about their historic resources. There may be an important role for the California State Library and OHP in bringing this effort to the statewide scale.
8. Los Angeles' Office of Historic Resources and OHP can make the tools and strategies used in SurveyLA widely available after assessment of their success in the field.
9. OHP can engage Cal Humanities and the California Arts Council in discussion about ways to leverage previously-funded projects that convey stories about underrepresented communities and place, and the potential for a new collaborative initiative that supports interpretive projects about historic sites.

## COMPONENT 3

**Requirement:** *Recommendations for the manner of transferring OHP to the CCHE*

**Response:** *Transferring OHP to the CCHE report by Mimi Morris and this recommendation:*

1. Government Code Sections 12080 to 12081.2 address the issues of reorganization of governmental units and would need to be followed to transfer OHP to the CCHE. However, the CCHE does not recommend that OHP be transferred to the CCHE given that CCHE lacks an ongoing funding source and is reducing staff as its administrative responsibilities wind down.





COMPONENT 4:

**Requirement:** *Recommendations for steps to be taken to more effectively administer cultural heritage resources in California state government.*

**Response:** *Improving California's Cultural Heritage report by Mimi Morris and these six recommendations:*

1. **State Parks is the largest state entity with cultural heritage resources** under its responsibility so it should be designated as the lead agency, but it needs some major revamping of its approach in order to be more effective.
2. **State Parks should approach its cultural heritage resources as true museum collections** and follow the lead of many other states by creating a separate museum system within State Parks with a museum management system complete with professional level training and development so that Parks' extensive collections are appropriately curated, catalogued, safeguarded, and shared with museum visitors.
3. **State Parks, State Archives, and the State Library** all exist within three city blocks of each other and all have extensive collections which need to be digitized in order to be shared through current technology. All three organizations lack sufficient resources to adequately staff and equip digital laboratories to convert traditional collection items to digital formats. Collaborating to combine resources would result in a lab with better equipment and more staff to attend to the monumental tasks at hand of digitizing collections.
4. **The California Travel and Tourism Commission** receives its budget through the self-imposed travel assessment authorized from the 1995 CA Tourism Marketing Act. The CTTC's budget of \$50 million per year, roughly, seems to be a success, with travel expenditures last year exceeding \$102 billion in CA. However, little of this seems to reach the cultural heritage markets. Closer collaboration between State Parks and the CTTC to showcase the cultural heritage travel opportunities that other states seem to leverage so well should be explored.
5. **The California Register** now exists as a resource maintained by 12 regional entities. It is not online and Californians cannot easily access information about sites that are historically significant. Information is maintained locally by the 12 regions and for detailed information individuals need to pay one of the 12 regional leads. Concerns about the safety of archaeological sites are cited as reasons for not putting up the information online. A better approach should be developed in conjunction with one of California's leading technology companies to make this information available to citizens while preserving the funding stream that it represents to local stewards and protecting sensitive archaeological sites.
6. **Improving the Nomination Process for the National Register** would help to democratize the Register. The Office of Historic Preservation could establish a more community-based nomination process that would have different requirements and different evaluations than what is now in place. The goal would be to facilitate landmark designation status for important sites that have significant documentation hurdles that impede their nomination and designation.





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## COMPONENTS 5 & 6

**Requirement:** *A survey of the capacities of entities that provide cultural heritage services in CA and Recommendations for future financing.*

**Response:** *Capacity Survey and Financing Report by Mimi Morris and these two recommendations:*

1. Add a check box on the State Income Tax Form to allow Californians to contribute \$1 to support museums, cultural centers, and historical sites, with administration of the resources to be managed by the CCHE.
2. Fund more preservation projects with another general obligation bond issue.

## COMPONENT 7

**Requirement:** *Recommend programs to incentivize historic preservation*

**Response:** *Supporting Historic Preservation in CA report by Donna Graves and these three recommendations:*

1. Create a California Historic Tax Credit
2. Add Historic Preservation as a Required Element of the General Plan
3. Create a Historic Preservation Revolving Loan Fund

## COMPONENT 8

**Requirement:** *Prepare a Study of the Economic Impact of Historic Preservation*

**Response:** *Economic Impact of Historic Preservation Report by Mimi Morris*



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