



## II. DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2008-2012 MONTANA HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

The current state planning process began when the previous effort concluded in 2003 with the adoption and release of *Working Together to PRESERVE MONTANA: The Montana Historic Preservation Plan 2003-2007*. Current plan development occurred and was facilitated over the past five years through a continuous feedback process. Comments on the previous Plan, annual MTSHPPO review of its implementation, input solicitation towards a new Plan through questionnaires, discussions and stakeholder meetings, review of recent studies and planning documents, and updating resulted in a revised Plan. It continues into the next cycle with a return to comments and feedback on the current revised plan.

### 2003-2007 STATE PLAN FEEDBACK

The process of developing the current Montana State Plan began with the completion and approval of the previous State Plan in 2003. Feedback on the 2003-2007 Plan – both negative and positive - was welcomed by MTSHPPO staff and routinely discussed. Each copy of the distributed 2003-2007 Plan was accompanied by an invitation to provide MTSHPPO with comment. The 2003-2007 Plan

was also posted on the MTSHPPO website where it was frequently referenced and referred to by others. These comments, provided sporadically over a number of years, were important in formulating a strategy for replacing or revising the Plan in 2008.

**ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION** Annually between 2003 and 2007, MTSHPPO staff also reviewed and evaluated the goals and objectives of the 2003-2007 State Plan as part of the office's application for and report of federal funding through the national Historic Preservation Fund. As required by National Park Service guidelines, annual workplans of activities developed for the various MTSHPPO programs must establish their foundation in the goals and objectives identified in the State Plan. MTSHPPO's success in accomplishing annual activities and meeting goals was made available to the public and interested parties for comment. These included the Governor-appointed nine-member Montana Historic Preservation Review Board, charged with providing MTSHPPO advice and guidance in historic preservation planning. Among MTSHPPO staff, the annual application of previous goals and objectives established in

the 2003-2007 Plan proved to be an excellent opportunity for evaluation and contributed to revisions made in the present plan to make it more applicable and responsive to current issues, needs and opportunities.

**QUESTIONNAIRES, DISCUSSIONS AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT** Throughout 2007, MTSHPPO circulated a preservation planning questionnaire designed to gather information on historic preservation issues, goals and priorities most important to Montanans. The questionnaire was distributed widely in hardcopy and posted on the MTSHPPO website. In conversations, meetings and other forums throughout the current planning process, open two-way communication with the public and interested parties was also stressed. Special efforts in this regard were made to engage the 15 local preservation officers of the Montana Certified Local Government (CLG) program. Montana's community preservation officers are recognized as experts in local public opinion regarding historic preservation matters, and especially those issues existing outside the narrow confines of federal and state preservation law. Input from CLG representatives forms the basis of many significant insights into local public needs and concerns. MTSHPPO also met individually in discussions with other primary stakeholders including the State Historic Preservation Review Board, the Board of the non-profit statewide Montana Preservation Alliance (MPA), the National Trust for Historic

Preservation, and federal and state agencies. All groups provided insights to prominent issues and support for revised goals and objectives.

**RECENT STUDIES AND PLANNING DOCUMENTS** Several recent efforts have taken place that contribute significantly to development of the 2008-2012 Montana Historic Preservation Plan. Most notable among these is the *Montana Governor's Council On Historic And Cultural Properties Report to the 60<sup>th</sup> Legislature 2007*, documenting recommendations for the State's policies on the preservation of publically-owned historic buildings and identifying opportunities for communities to use historic preservation as an economic development tool. With its increased recognition of the role of heritage tourism, the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012* also provides valuable interface with this State Preservation Plan. At the national level, the 2006 *Preserve America Summit* brought together federal agencies, organizations and individuals to examine the national preservation program and produce recommendations to guide historic preservation over the next ten years leading to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act in 2016. No less stimulating, the work of other states in developing their State Preservation Plans, the 2007-2009 Strategic Plan of the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers

(NCSHPO), and the 2006-2008 grassroots' polls and legislative agendas established by the national Preservation Action movement, are relevant and serve to inform Montana's 2008-2012 State Plan.

**PLAN UPDATE AND REVISION** With consideration of feedback and experience gained through 2003-2007 Plan implementation combined with input from the public, stakeholders, and recent studies, MTSHPPO staff concluded that the Montana Historic Preservation Plan merited updating and revision, rather than a major reformulation. Specifically, MTSHPPO staff recognized continuing concern with many of the same preservation issues identified five years ago yet overall satisfaction and optimism with the various local and state preservation programs, suggesting the need to adjust, rather than reinvent, Montana's preservation goals and objectives to make them more current and perhaps more effective. The current document, *PRESERVE MONTANA: The Montana Historic Preservation Plan 2008-2012*, is the product of this update.

**REVISED 2008-2012 PLAN REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION** With the completion of *PRESERVE MONTANA: The Montana Historic Preservation Plan 2008-2012*, the planning process does not end, but returns to the beginning to repeat itself in the comments received on this product. In keeping with

revised goals, this planning cycle MTSHPPO will again post the State Plan on its website under [www.montanahistoricalociety.org/shpo](http://www.montanahistoricalociety.org/shpo).

Pending funds (not made available for the 2003-2007 State Plan), MTSHPPO will also endeavor to produce a summary pamphlet that will draw greater attention to the complete State Plan. The 4 or 6 page brochure - illustrated with photographs, charts and graphs - will summarize the conclusions of the State Plan while also outlining its adopted goals and objectives and how these are reflected in MTSHPPO and other programs in the state. This format should find a larger audience and engender greater awareness and use as well as response to Montana's State Plan for historic preservation.