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## Introduction

Michael L. Gregg and Fern E. Swenson  
2008

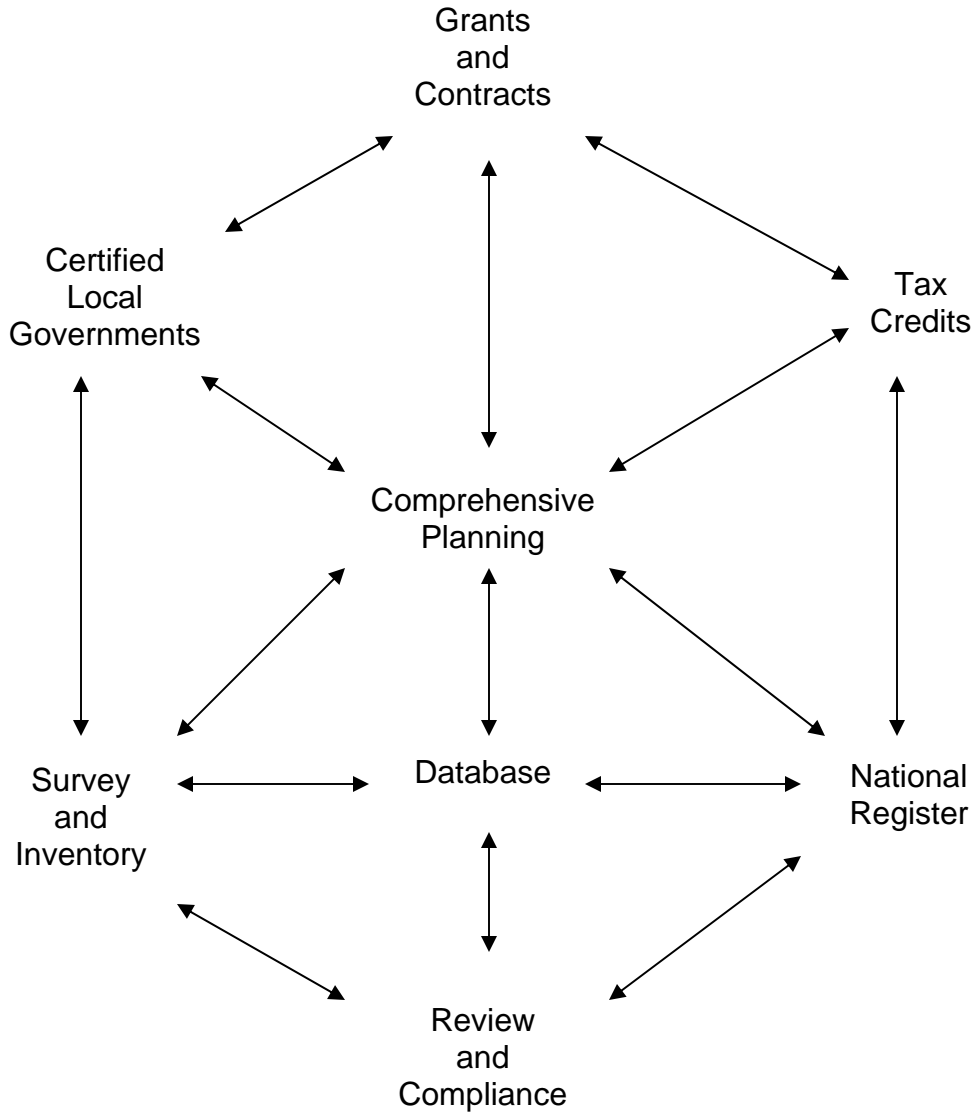
The document entitled *Historic Preservation in North Dakota, II: A Statewide Comprehensive Plan*—also referred to as the Comprehensive Plan, the State Plan, or simply the Plan—accounts for a major portion of the planning activities in the North Dakota Historic Preservation Program. It is available for download at <http://www.nd.gov/hist/hp/hpIndex.htm> under Historic Preservation Planning. The Historic Preservation Program is administered by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in the Archeology and Historic Preservation Division (A&HPD) of the State Historical Society of North Dakota (SHSND). The SHPO's office is in Bismarck at the North Dakota Heritage Center. Planning and the other primary activities of the Program are illustrated in Figure A.1.

The Comprehensive Plan is the central document in the state's Historic Preservation Program. It summarizes background information about the state's archeological, historic, and architectural properties. It identifies gaps in the existing data. And it enumerates current research questions. It thereby facilitates the identification of "historic properties," i.e., cultural sites or properties that are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Plan also identifies current historic preservation goals and priorities.

The Plan is directly related to the Survey Program because much of the summary information in the Plan is drawn from the North Dakota Cultural Resources Survey (NDCRS) site files. Critical data gaps and research questions that are noted in the Plan are often targeted by the Historic Preservation Fund Grants Program for special attention. Review and Compliance activities rely on the background information in the Plan to assess the adequacy of cultural resource projects that involve identifying, evaluating, and treating cultural properties. The background information, data gaps, and historic preservation goals and priorities laid out in the Plan are intended to aid in developing strategies for treating historic properties consistently and in ways that enhance the understanding and appreciation of the state's cultural heritage.

There are two major parts of the North Dakota Comprehensive Plan: (1) the Archeological Component deals with prehistoric and protohistoric properties, nearly all of which relate to Native American Indian activities and (2) the Historic and Architectural Component deals with historic archeological sites and historic sites with standing structures. Most of the information in both components is summarized in terms of historic contexts.

Figure A.1: The place of comprehensive planning in the Historic Preservation Program.



## Historic Contexts

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation state that the identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment of historic properties should be conducted with reference to sets of background information termed "historic contexts" (*Federal Register*, Vol. 48, No. 198, September 1983). Historic context statements are the portions of the state's Comprehensive Plan that summarize information concerning historic and prehistoric cultural resources (or properties) by place, time, and theme. Place, time, and theme are terminologically equivalent to geographical area, chronological period, and research topic. Historic contexts describe the different sorts of prehistoric and historic districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are known from various times in the past in different parts of the state. They provide the comparative background information needed for the enlightened management of cultural resources.

Historic contexts identify baseline data, data gaps, research questions, and other considerations that bear upon the process of evaluating the eligibility of cultural properties for listing in the NR. Eligible and listed properties must satisfy at least one of the NR eligibility criteria, and the statement of significance in the registration form must be developed from a historic contextual perspective (USDI, NFS 1986:6, 71-73). The documentation process must minimally consider the potential importance of the property with reference to a specific research topic, a distinct time in the past, and a particular region.

The fundamental purpose for the preparation of historic context documents is to aid federal agencies, the SHPO, and cultural resources contractors to expedite the Section 106 process and guarantee that the results of the process will contribute to the state's prehistory and history. Comprehensive, statewide historic context documentation renders the identification of historic properties more objective. It also sets forth information that can be employed to formulate data recovery plans and mitigation plans. Another purpose is to identify directions for other historic preservation and research activities of the A&HPD, the SHSND, and hopefully federal agencies and independent researchers as well.

### Place

"Place" is dealt with in the State Plan in terms of spatial units termed Study Units. These are geographic subdivisions of the state. The purpose of defining Study Units is to enable more detailed and precise considerations of prehistory or history than would be possible if most problems were approached from a statewide perspective. For example, the success of prehistoric gardening in North Dakota was dependent in part upon frost-free growing season, soils, and precipitation. Therefore, gardening success sometimes varied in response to different environmental conditions in different parts of the state. Studies of North Dakota aboriginal horticulture are more fruitful when geographic diversity is taken into consideration.

Study Units are defined differently for the two components of the Plan. The Archeological Component uses drainage basins. The Historic and Architectural Component uses physiographic areas. The units are considered in detail in the introductory sections of the two components.

## Time

The prehistoric and historic time scales are subdivided into periods in both components of the Plan. These temporal frameworks tend to become more precise and more detailed as research progresses. Also, there is typically variation in the precision of different portions of most temporal frameworks. For example, prehistoric chronologies tend to be more refined for the later portions of prehistory than for earlier times because late sites are better represented in the archeological record than early sites, and late sites have received more research attention.

The temporal aspect of a historic context may be as precise as the problem warrants. For example, one researcher might focus on attempting to identify the archeological evidence for the 1781 epidemics in the Mandan villages in the Heart River-Missouri River confluence locality. Another might consider changes in community health among Plains Villagers in the Southern Missouri River Study Unit throughout the Plains Village period.

## Research Topics

General research topics (sometimes called themes) and specific research questions are the third aspect of a historic context. Research topics or themes are stipulated in all historic contexts in order to identify kinds of important information that eligible properties possess. Research topics and questions are ever changing. New topics are added and issues that are more refined are addressed as the historical record is elaborated and as the archeological record is recurrently tested and interpreted. The research topics in the Archeological Component of the Plan differ from those of the Historic and Architectural Component.

## Review and Updating of the Comprehensive Plan

The Archeological Component and the Historic and Architectural Component are distinct and separately bound documents.

The original *Archeological Component of the North Dakota Comprehensive Plan for Historic Preservation* was prepared from 1990 to 1993. A list of authors and publication dates follow (Table A.1).

**Table A.1: Author(s) and Publication Dates of Chapters in the Original State Plan.**

Chapter	Year	Author(s)
Introduction	1990	Michael L. Gregg
Archeological Component of the State Plan	1990	Michael L. Gregg
The Little Missouri River Study Unit	1990	Michael L. Gregg
The Cannonball River Study Unit	1990	Michael L. Gregg
The Knife River Study Unit	1990	Michael L. Gregg
The Heart River Study Unit	1990	Michael L. Gregg
The Southern Missouri River Study Unit	1990	Michael L. Gregg
The Garrison Study Unit	1990	Michael L. Gregg
The James River Study Unit	1993	Fern E. Swenson
The Grand River Study Unit	1990	Michael L. Gregg
The Red River Study Unit	1991	Paul R. Picha and Michael L. Gregg
The Southern Red River Study Unit	1991	Paul R. Picha and Michael L. Gregg
The Souris River Study Unit	1990	Paul R. Picha and Michael L. Gregg
The Sheyenne River Study Unit	1993	Fern E. Swenson
The Yellowstone River Study Unit	1990	Michael L. Gregg

Future revisions to the Archeological Component of the Plan are intended to be on a five year schedule. The updated versions will be posted on the SHSND webpage or available in hardcopy by writing:

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Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0830

2008 Document Organization

**Table A.2: Organization of the 2008 Archeological Component of the State Plan.**

Chapter	Author(s)
Introduction (Appendix A)	Michael L. Gregg and Fern E. Swenson
Archeological Component (Appendix B)	Michael L. Gregg, Paul R. Picha, Fern E. Swenson, Amy Bleier
Little Missouri River Study Unit	Michael L. Gregg and Amy Bleier
Cannonball River Study Unit	Michael L. Gregg and Amy Bleier
Knife River Study Unit	Michael L. Gregg and Amy Bleier
Heart River Study Unit	Michael L. Gregg and Amy Bleier
Southern Missouri River Study Unit	Michael L. Gregg, Amy Bleier, Fern E. Swenson
Garrison Study Unit	Michael L. Gregg and Amy Bleier
James River Study Unit	Fern E. Swenson and Amy Bleier
Grand River Study Unit	Michael L. Gregg and Amy Bleier
Northern Red River Study Unit	Paul R. Picha, Michael L. Gregg, and Amy Bleier
Southern Red River Study Unit	Paul R. Picha, Michael L. Gregg, and Timothy A. Reed
Souris River Study Unit	Paul R. Picha, Michael L. Gregg, and Amy Bleier
Sheyenne River Study Unit	Fern E. Swenson and Amy Bleier
Yellowstone River Study Unit	Michael L. Gregg and Amy Bleier
Cited and Selected References	Michael L. Gregg, Amy Bleier, Paul R. Picha, and Fern E. Swenson