The former Schmidt Brewery, St. Paul, MN. After combining $30.09 million in Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, $21.1 million in State Historic Tax Credits, and $21.1 million in Federal Historic Tax Credits, the Schmidt Artists Lofts now provides 260 affordable housing units.

PHOTO COURTESY DOMINIUM

HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND

State Historic Preservation Officers

State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) administer federal historic preservation programs at the state and local level, as well as administer their own state programs. These programs help communities identify, evaluate, preserve, and revitalize their historic, archaeological, and cultural resources.

Background

The National Park Service distributes Historic Preservation Fund grants to SHPOs by apportionment formula, with states and territories required to match 40% of the funding they receive.

SHPO responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Reviewing federal historic rehabilitation tax credit projects
  
  In FY 2017, the federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program leveraged $6.5 billion in private investment and created 107,000 jobs

- Reviewing federal projects for their impact on historic resources (Section 106 review)

  Working under 30-day deadlines, SHPOs reviewed and commented on nearly 100,000 federal undertakings in 2017

- Locating, surveying, and recording historic and cultural resources
  
  In 2016, SHPOs and consultants surveyed more than 15 million acres for cultural resources

- Facilitating nominations to the National Register of Historic Places
  
  SHPOs, in coordination with the National Park Service, added 1,111 new listings to the National Register of Historic Places in 2017

- Supporting local historic preservation programs through the Certified Local Government (CLG) program

FY 2020 Appropriations Request

Please support $60 million for State Historic Preservation Officers in the FY 2020 Interior Appropriations bill.

APPROPRIATIONS BILL: Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

AGENCY: National Park Service

ACCOUNT: Historic Preservation Fund

ACTIVITY: Grants to States

Recent Funding History:

- FY 2017 Enacted Funding: $47.925 million
- FY 2018 Enacted Funding: $48.925 million
- FY 2019 Enacted Funding: $49.675 million
- FY 2020 President Budget Request: $26.934 million
- FY 2020 NTHP Recommendation: $60 million

JUSTIFICATION: SHPOs are essential to the implementation of the nation’s historic preservation programs. For years, they have received relatively level funding while SHPO responsibilities and pressure to speed up the Section 106 review process have increased. Additional funding will allow SHPOs to maximize efficiencies in the federal project review process and better carry out their duties under the National Historic Preservation Act.
The Permian Basin Programmatic Agreement

In New Mexico, the Permian Basin is well known for its rich oil and gas reserves, including 2 million acres managed by the Pecos District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The area is also known for its rich Native American history dating back to 5,000 BC. By 2003, more than 300,000 acres had been surveyed for oil and gas projects and more than 8,000 archaeological sites had been identified and recorded. Processing thousands of oil-and-gas drilling applications per year strained BLM's ability to protect historic resources in the area.

BLM and the New Mexico SHPO worked together to build common ground among archaeologists, tribes, and the oil-and-gas industry to create a more collaborative and balanced approach to energy development and archaeology in the region. The result was a Section 106 agreement that encompassed 1,700 square miles with the most active oil and gas areas. Operating under the agreement remains voluntary—but if a company accepts the agreement procedures, it contributes to a mitigation pool that, in part, covers the cost of archaeological survey.

Since 2008, the oil industry has contributed nearly $11 million to the mitigation pool. This has allowed for a comprehensive field program with all archaeological resources managed through a Geographic Information System integrated with the New Mexico Cultural Resource Information System. Use of the agreement procedures gives the oil-and-gas industry predictability and control over schedules and budgets needed to operate efficiently while also highlighting and protecting the area's extensive cultural resources.

The Simon Theater, Brenham, TX

Completed in 1925, the Simon Theater served as a cultural and entertainment center from Vaudeville to “Talkies” to “B-movies” before it was finally shuttered in the early 1980s. In 2003, a nonprofit formed to preserve the architectural history of the National Register District and recognized the potential adaptive reuse of the Simon Theater. Brenham Main Street Historic Preservation, Inc. embarked on a $9.75 million development project, utilizing $1.52 million in Federal Historic Tax Credits, $1.9 million in State Historic Tax Credits, and $5.4 million in community donations to restore this building. Through the project, approximately 188 rehabilitation jobs were created. The Barnhill Center at Historic Simon Theater opened in February 2016 as a multi-use conference center and event facility.

Built in 1925, the Simon Theater in the main street community of Brenham, TX, gained new life through the Historic Tax Credit and now serves as a multi-use conference center and event facility. PHOTO BY KATHLYN DRAGNA

Select Preservation Success Stories

One of the core duties of State Historic Preservation Officers is to work with federal agencies to review federal projects for their impact on historic resources, determine whether and how such resources may be affected, and mitigate adverse effects. Below are successful examples of a Section 106 project and also an Historic Tax Credit project.