

**Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site
Long-Range Interpretive Plan**

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan

December 2011

Prepared by:

Harpers Ferry Center Interpretive Planning, and
Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site staff and partners

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Front cover:

Photo of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Ebenezer Baptist Church, donated by Corbis/Photographer Flip Schulke;
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MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service
 Martin Luther King, Jr.
 National Historic Site
 450 Auburn Avenue, NE
 Atlanta, Georgia 30312



December, 2011

Greetings,

It is an honor and a privilege to present the Long-Range Interpretive Plan for the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. The process of creating this important planning document allowed the park and its partners the opportunity to evaluate existing conditions and offer recommendations to improve the park's interpretive efforts. The plan provides clearly defined and up-to-date interpretive themes and visitor experience goals which will be used to build upon and enhance the park's interpretive programming. The Long-Range Interpretive Plan will serve as an effective tool in providing focused and strategic direction for future interpretation, education, and visitor experience opportunities at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site.

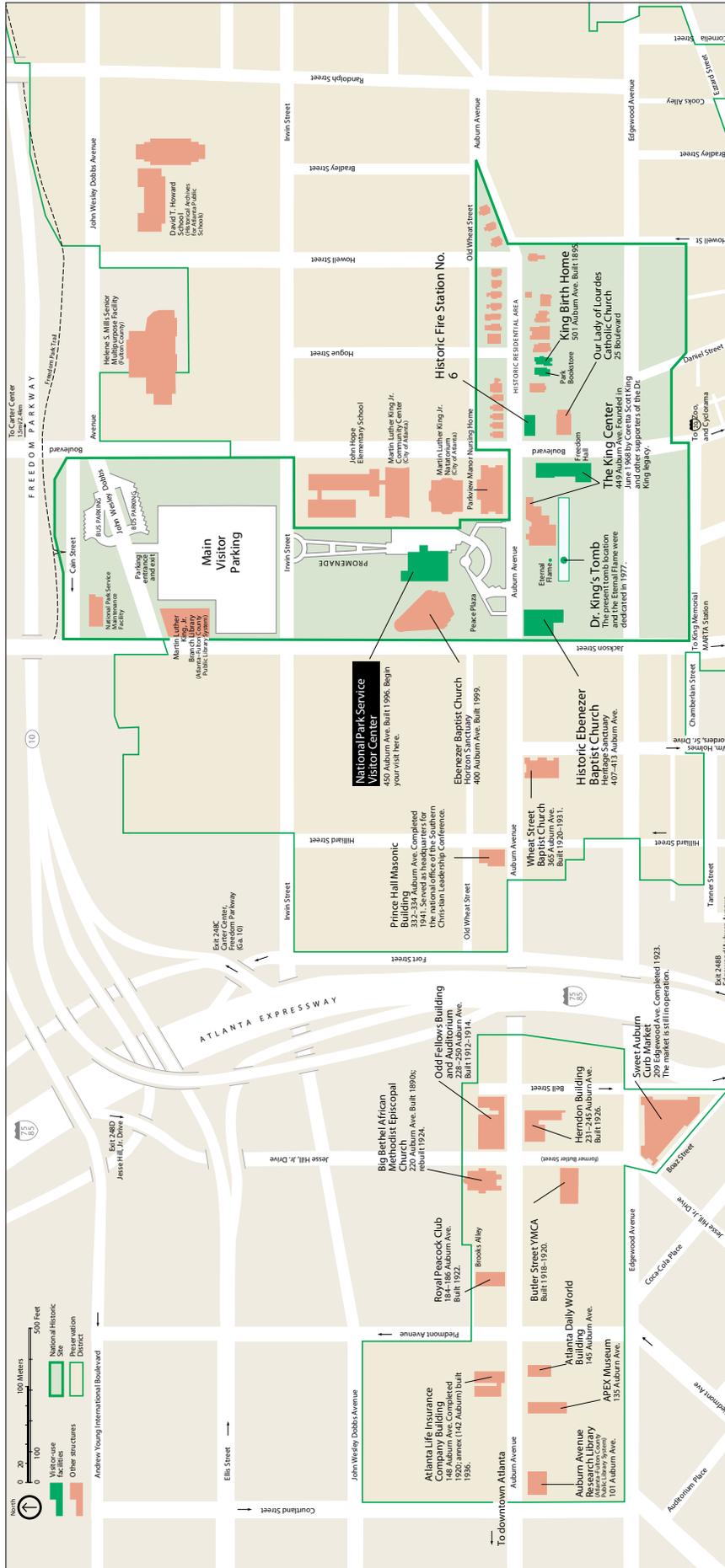
The development of this Long-Range Interpretive Plan was made possible through the hard work and dedication of park staff, volunteers, partners, and community members; likewise, the successful implementation of this plan will depend on the continued diligence and support of these invaluable individuals. I now encourage current park staff and their successors to take on the awesome challenge of attaining the goals of the Long-Range Interpretive Plan through the implementation of recommendations offered throughout this publication. In doing so, the park is sure to provide excellence in interpretation to visitors from around the world, and to achieve the ultimate goal of interpretation: to help visitors make meaningful and memorable connections to the values inherent in the park's unique resources.

On behalf of the entire staff, volunteers, partners, and community of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, I present this Long-Range Interpretive Plan as a framework to guide interpretive programming for the benefit, education, and inspiration of present and future generations.

Sincerely,

Judy Forte
 Superintendent





Map of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, showing current park boundaries. (Credit: NPS HFC, 2010)

Introduction

Martin Luther King, Jr. is best known nationally and internationally for his leadership of the modern American Civil Rights Movement and his subsequent efforts to promote world peace and economic equality. The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, located in the Atlanta, Georgia community where Dr. King was reared and to which he later returned in the height of his activism, commemorates Dr. King's lifetime achievements. The site preserves the King Birth Home and the historically African American neighborhood where Dr. King spent his youth. The larger Sweet Auburn community, which served as the economic, cultural, and religious center for Atlanta's segregated African American population from 1910 through the 1960s, greatly influenced Dr. King both as a youth and as an adult.

On January 15, 1929, Martin Luther King, Jr. was born in Atlanta at 501 Auburn Avenue within a prosperous African American commercial and residential district. He lived in this house with his maternal grandparents, mother, father, sister, brother, extended family members, and occasional boarders until he was twelve years old. Dr. King attended public schools nearby and walked to services at Ebenezer Baptist Church where his maternal grandfather and father served as pastors. In 1941, the family moved to another house within the Sweet Auburn community, and Dr. King began attending the Laboratory High School of Atlanta University and Booker T. Washington High School. At the age of fifteen, after having skipped both the ninth and twelfth grades, Dr. King entered Morehouse College and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology.

Dr. King left Atlanta to attend Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania in the fall of 1948. In 1951, he graduated from Crozer with a Bachelor of Divinity degree, and continued his education at Boston University's School of Theology, earning a Doctorate of Philosophy in Systematic Theology in 1955. It was in Boston, Massachusetts where Dr. King met Coretta Scott, who was attending the New England Conservatory of Music. They were married on June 18, 1953, in Marion, Alabama. In 1954, Dr. King accepted the pastorate at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. Dr. King began to emerge as a leader of the modern American Civil Rights Movement after being elected President of the Montgomery Improvement Association, the organization which was responsible for the successful 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott.

In November 1959, Dr. King resigned as pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church and by February 1960, he and his family moved back to Atlanta. From 1960 until his death in 1968, he was co-pastor with his father at Ebenezer Baptist Church and President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), an organization dedicated to defeating all forms of racial segregation through the use of nonviolent direct action, including drives for the registration of all eligible African American voters in the South. While campaigning on behalf of sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee, Dr. King was assassinated while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel on April 4, 1968.

During the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, Dr. King reset the moral compass of the nation with his “I Have a Dream” speech. This speech became a landmark of the modern American Civil Rights Movement and facilitated the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, major legislative victories for the Movement. Dr. King was the unique American voice that redefined the American promise to include all citizens. His charismatic and visionary leadership changed the course of American history, garnering him international distinction; Dr. King received numerous awards, including the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize, in recognition of his nonviolent civil rights work.

Following her husband’s assassination, Mrs. Coretta Scott King established The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc. (originally named The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center) in 1968 as the official living memorial dedicated to advancing the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Mrs. King later advocated for the establishment of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, a unit of the National Park Service.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site annually hosts more than 700,000 national and international visitors. A 38-acre area in the City of Atlanta, Georgia, the site was listed as a National Historic Landmark on May 5, 1977, and was made a National Historic Site on October 10, 1980, with the passage of Public Law 96-428.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site includes:

- 501 Auburn Avenue, the home where Martin Luther King, Jr. (“M.L.”) was born on January 15, 1929, to Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr. and Mrs. Alberta Christine Williams King. Dr. King lived here until age twelve with his sister, Willie Christine, and his brother, Alfred Daniel (“A.D.”).
- Ebenezer Baptist Church, Dr. King’s spiritual home. It is where he preached his first sermon at the age of 17 and where he co-pastored with his father from 1960-1968.
- The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc., commonly referred to as “The King Center.” This organization is currently managed by direct descendants of Dr. King and Mrs. Coretta Scott King to promote the life and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- The Birth Home Block, portions of the historically African American Sweet Auburn residential community, which was, by law, a racially segregated community during Dr. King’s childhood.
- Historic Fire Station No. 6, historically where white firefighters operated within the predominantly African American Sweet Auburn community; it was one of the first racially integrated fire stations in Atlanta.
- A Preservation District links Dr. King’s career to the African American businesses, religious, social, and political organizations that flourished along Auburn Avenue and Edgewood Avenue prior to and during Dr. King’s lifetime.

Of notable interest, Prince Hall Masonic Lodge at 332 Auburn Avenue is where Dr. King established the headquarters of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). The SCLC was dedicated to defeating all forms of segregation, including a drive for the registration of all African American voters in the South, through the use of nonviolent direct action and collaboration with African American churches and many other organizations.

In 2009, the park requested and received the assistance of the National Park Service’s Interpretive Planning and Design Center, commonly referred to as Harpers Ferry Center (HFC) to initiate comprehensive interpretive planning through the development of a Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP). The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site LRIP is the direct result of two planning workshops held in December 2009 and April 2010 with park staff, historians, HFC media specialists, and partners. The intended audience for this plan includes National Park Service staff, partners, stakeholders, interested visitors, and future contractors. The plan is concurrent with all park planning documents.

The Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) is both a visionary and pragmatic document that outlines cost-effective recommendations to guide the planning and delivery of the park visitor experience and to assist with resource preservation for the next decade. Due to the scope of the recommendations to improve interpretive facilities and media, and the commensurate funding required, the park acknowledges fulfillment of this plan may take 10-15 years. Recommendations address personal services, media, and partnerships that assist with the delivery of the interpretive program. The LRIP is divided into five major sections:

1. The Introduction provides important context for readers of this LRIP and includes a description of the National Park Service’s Comprehensive Interpretive Planning Process.
2. The Foundation for Planning section includes the park’s purpose and significance statements, interpretive themes and supporting interpretive concepts, and visitor experience goals. These key sections were developed during the December 2009 workshop.
3. The Existing Conditions section includes a description and evaluation of existing park facilities, media, visitor profiles, and “interpretive issues,” which summarizes the challenges park staff face with regards to the delivery of the interpretive program. The Existing Conditions section was developed by the interpretive staff prior to the workshops and refined during both group workshops.
4. The Recommendations section synthesizes recommendations discussed during both workshops. It begins with core principles that will guide the delivery of the present and future interpretive program. This section presents parkwide recommendations and is followed by detailed site specific recommendations. It outlines short and long-term recommendations.
5. The Appendices provide supporting information that will be helpful to park staff in the planning and delivery of the park’s program for interpretation, education, and visitor services, as well as for training of new park staff. The LRIP implementation plan is located in Appendix A.

At the introduction of the first workshop, Superintendent Judy Forte quoted Dr. King, challenging participants to give their best efforts in the development of the LRIP:

“All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance
and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

In the spirit of Dr. King’s aforementioned quotation, the goal of this Long-Range Interpretive Plan is to promote park resource values through strategically planned visitor experiences and excellence in interpretation. Realization of this vision requires new funding to implement the recommendations, strong internal collaboration, and external partnering.

The Planning Process

The goal of the interpretive planning process is not simply the creation of a plan. Long-Range Interpretive Plans (LRIPs) provide a vision for future interpretation, education, and visitor experience opportunities. LRIPs identify and analyze interpretation, education, and visitor experience goals and issues. They recommend the most effective, efficient, and practical ways to address those goals and issues. LRIPs address both non-personal services (interpretive media and facilities) and personal services (programs and personal contacts). Plans match interpretive media to messages to make sure they work well individually and collectively. The interpretive planning process is sensitive to which park resource experiences should be made accessible to visitors. Negative impacts on resources are minimized, and active stewardship is encouraged. The LRIP is one component of a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP); two other components are an Annual Implementation Plan and an Interpretive Database.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) recommends actions that should occur over the next ten to fifteen years. It identifies park themes, describes visitor experience goals, and recommends a wide array of interpretive services, media, programs, and outreach activities to communicate the park's mission, significance, themes, and values. It will join the park-produced Annual Implementation Plan and Interpretive Database to make up the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan.

The planning foundation expressed in this LRIP – purpose, significance, themes, and visitor experience goals – will remain constant over the life of this plan, barring legislative changes or major new research. Specific recommendations about media and programs may require updating as staffing, funding, technology, or resource conditions change. Further design documents will need to be prepared to implement some of the goals and recommendations in this plan.

Legislative History

National Park Service units are created by Congressional legislation, Presidential proclamation, or through an Order of Designation by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior by the authority of the 1935 Historic Sites Act. Excerpts from several documents summarize the legislative history of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site.

The park has three pieces of legislation that have guided park preservation, management, and facility development. The park's *2006-2011 Strategic Plan* briefly summarized each law:

- Public Law 96-428 established Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site on October 10, 1980. This legislation established the original boundary of the National Historic Site (NHS). The boundary generally centered on a portion of Auburn Avenue that includes Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthplace, Ebenezer Baptist Church, and the immediate neighborhood.
- Public Law 102-575 (1992) modified the boundary of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District. The additional land acquisitions authorized by the 1992 legislation have largely been completed, and visitor facilities have been constructed.
- Public Law 108-314 (2004) expanded the boundary to enhance emergency street access to the National Historic Site Visitor Center and Museum. The act authorized the Secretary to exchange a vacant lot on Edgewood Avenue (comprising three small tracts) for property owned by the City of Atlanta immediately adjacent to the Visitor Center and Museum.

Enabling Legislation

Following the establishment of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center in 1968, millions of national and international visitors came to the site; the influx of tourists deeply affected The King Center staff's ability to maintain its broad mission. Mrs. King, aware of the National Park Service's preservation and heritage education mission, sought help through the assistance of fellow Georgian, President Jimmy Carter. On October 10, 1980, the ninety-sixth Congress passed Public Law 96-428, establishing Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, in order to:

...protect and interpret for the benefit, inspiration and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Junior, was born, where he lived, worked, and worshipped, and where he is buried...

The legislation also designated a Preservation District that extended protection beyond the immediate neighborhood surrounding Dr. King's birthplace and Ebenezer Baptist Church to include the broader Sweet Auburn community's commercial district.

A detailed map showing the boundaries of the National Historic Site and Preservation District accompanied the legislation. The core of this new national park – legislatively named a National Historic Site (NHS) – included the sites owned by The King Center, Ebenezer Baptist Church, and properties (lands and structures) owned privately or by the City of Atlanta. The enabling legislation (attached in Appendix B) charts a complex Federal/private partnership to be administered by the NPS through a variety of cooperative agreements. It also authorized, within the boundary of the historic site, the acquisition of property through purchase or leasing with private residents and through land exchanges with the City of Atlanta.



In the Oval Office of the White House, Mrs. Coretta Scott King and other supporters observe President Jimmy Carter signing Public Law 96-248, which established the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. *(Credit: Courtesy, Jimmy Carter Library)*

Provisions specific to interpretation, education, and visitor services:

- The National Park Service (NPS) is authorized to restore historic properties within the National Historic Site and to “mark, interpret, improve, restore and provide technical assistance” to private property owners within the National Historic Site and Preservation District through cooperative agreements. The NPS shall also have “the right of access at reasonable times to the public portions of the property for interpretive or other purposes; and that no changes or alterations shall be made in the property except by mutual agreement.”
- “Structural space requirements for the NPS to meet its administrative, operational, and interpretive functions for the National Historic Site and the preservation district shall, to the maximum extent feasible without displacing residents, be met within the district through the adaptive use of existing structures.”
- “. . .take only such actions within and upon the grounds of Ebenezer Baptist Church as will directly support appropriate public visitation to and within the church in accordance of the purposes of this Act.”
- “Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, no fees shall be charged for entrance or admission to the National Historic Site or the preservation district established by this Act.”
- “. . .any lands or interests therein which are owned wholly or in part, by the widow of Martin Luther King, Jr., or by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change, shall be acquired only with consent of the owner. . .”
- Allows for future acquisition of the property located at 234 Sunset Avenue, which was the home of Dr. King at the time of his death and Mrs. King’s home until shortly before her death.
- Gives “first preference to the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc. with respect to any contract for a concessions to sell books, postcards, tapes, or similar types of appropriate mementos related to the purposes of this Act, on facilities operated and maintained by the Secretary within the historic site: Provided that the agreement can be reached on terms and conditions acceptable to the Secretary.”
- “. . .in cooperation with the Georgia Department of Transportation, is hereby directed to insure that any design and reconstruction of the Interstate 85 and Interstate 75 Expressway over Auburn and Edgewood Avenues in the city of Atlanta, Georgia, the interchange at Edgewood Avenue, shall minimize the adverse impacts on the preservation district.”
- “Complete a comprehensive general management plan for the historic site and preservation district,” within three years from the effective date of this Act.

Historical Background

“What is past is prologue.”

William Shakespeare

On January 15, 1969, the fortieth birthday of slain civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., his widow, Mrs. Coretta Scott King, announced the founding of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center in Atlanta, Georgia (now called the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc. or “The King Center”). Speaking on behalf of the King Family, Mrs. King (founder of The King Center) described the institution as a “living memorial” that would:

- Design and establish a final resting place for Dr. King’s Tomb.
- Establish a permanent archive for researchers. The future library’s holdings would include Dr. King’s writings and memorabilia related to his leadership of the modern American Civil Rights Movement.
- Protect two sites holding deep personal meaning to Dr. King – his birthplace and childhood home, and Ebenezer Baptist Church, his “spiritual home.”
- Launch an Institute for Nonviolent Social Change to continue teaching Dr. King’s philosophy and practices of how to create constructive social change that benefits all members of society.
- Plan for the development of Freedom Hall, where all could come and learn about the history of the modern American Civil Rights Movement during Martin Luther King, Jr.’s leadership.

Mrs. King stated, “. . .it is my privilege and pleasure to announce today the creation of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center here in Atlanta. I do this with pride because we as members of the family are convinced that this newly established center will seek with integrity to extend Martin Luther King’s best hopes and deeds.”

Mrs. Coretta Scott King worked closely with fellow Atlantans to preserve the immediate Sweet Auburn neighborhood surrounding Dr. King’s birthplace and to assist neighborhood residents with the care of their properties through community grants. From the 1930s to 1950s, Sweet Auburn was known as one of the most influential and most financially successful streets in “Black America.”

This community included a large, successful business district that extended towards downtown Atlanta. By the 1960s, Atlanta’s transition to integrated businesses and neighborhoods brought economic decline to Sweet Auburn, and integration prevented the creation of a new center of African American businesses and social life within the Sweet Auburn community and commercial district.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 and was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1977. The 1980 Martin Luther King, Jr. Preservation District, established by the site’s enabling legislation, includes all property listed in the 1974 Historic District. The Sweet Auburn Historic District was made a National Historic Landmark in 1976. In addition, the City of Atlanta, through the Atlanta Urban Design Commission, established the Martin Luther King, Jr. Landmark District in 1989, consolidating two existing city Preservation Districts. Most of these districts overlap within the site, providing protection through federal programs and local zoning ordinances.

Park Mission

A park mission statement serves a dual role: it articulates the philosophical direction underlying the daily operation of a park and serves as a measure to evaluate whether actions planned and taken by staff members and partners are consistent with the park's purpose and significance. The ongoing planning efforts conducted at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site have resulted in a shared understanding of the reason the park was established and the identification of the park's significant resources and values to be protected. During an earlier planning effort, the park staff and partners expanded the park's mission and vision, elaborating on verbiage established in the enabling legislation:

“...to preserve, protect, and interpret for the benefit, inspiration, and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Jr. was born, where he lived, worked, and worshiped, and where he is buried, while also interpreting the life experiences and significance of one of the most influential Americans in the twentieth century.”

Park Vision

The Martin L. King, Jr. National Historic Site is a world treasure embracing humanity in an environment that inspires peace, justice, and equality.

Planning Documents Significant To Interpretation

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) is concurrent with all park planning documents. In addition to the park legislation, the park primary documents guiding LRIP development include:

- *The 1986 Martin Luther King, Jr. General Management Plan/Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment (GMP)* was updated and amended in June 1994 to address the large increases in annual visitation and the lack of adequate facilities to serve park visitors and provide for basic park operations. The timing of this update was crucial to plan for the additional crush of visitors expected for the Summer Olympics, scheduled to be held in Atlanta, Georgia in 1996. The purpose, scope, and conceptual design for specific elements of the park's current visitor support facilities were outlined in the 1994 GMP amendment. The official document title of the amended GMP is *1994 Martin Luther King, Jr. General Management Plan/Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment*.
- *The 2006-2011 Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Strategic Plan* provides broad guidance over a five-year period and establishes measurable performance objectives for all aspects of park operations.
- The 1994 Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Historic Resource Study provides guidance to park management about the historic values embodied in this unit of the national park system.

For Future Planning Purposes

The park's *2006 – 2011 Strategic Plan* notes that the authorized boundary does not include the adjacent property also owned by the King Family at 220 Sunset Avenue. In the future, if the National Park Service (NPS) in partnership with the King Family provides public access to Dr. and Mrs. King's residence at 234 Sunset Avenue, the adjacent property might be very useful in staging visitor use and for administrative purposes.

The Prince Hall Masonic Lodge, former headquarters of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) during Dr. King's tenure as founding President, is located at 332 Auburn Avenue. A significant part of the park's story, the SCLC began at the Alexander Building on Auburn Avenue in 1957 and moved to the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge in 1960. Besides housing the offices of the SCLC, the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge was home to WERD, the first African American-owned radio station in the United States.

Park Purpose and Significance Statements

Park Purpose

Park purpose statements summarize the reasons a park is included in the National Park System. They are derived from the legislation that created both the National Park Service and a specific park. Purpose statements provide the foundation for park management and use.

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Purpose Statement

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, located in the city of Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia, was established on October 10, 1980 to preserve, protect, and interpret the places where Dr. King was born, where he lived, worked, worshipped, and is buried. The park is managed for memorial and preservation purposes.

Park Significance

Statements of significance describe a park's distinctive natural, cultural, and recreational resources and values. These statements are the factual rationale for national recognition of the site; they provide the foundation for park management and use; and describe the park's distinctiveness to help place the park in its regional, national, and international contexts. Statements of significance are the basis for the development of the park's primary interpretive themes and programs.

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Statements of Significance

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site represents the lives and legacies of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his wife, Mrs. Coretta Scott King. Contributing features include Dr. King's birthplace and childhood home at 501 Auburn Avenue; a portion of the surrounding neighborhood, including an 1894 Fire Station, The King Center complex, the entombment of Dr. and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Ebenezer Baptist Church (circa 1922). The significance of each contributing feature is briefly summarized below:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. (“M.L.”) was born and raised at 501 Auburn Avenue, where his family lived until M.L. was 12 years old. Reared in a strong, Christian, multigenerational family that valued education and hard work, he was afforded love, security, discipline, and both educational and social opportunities. His childhood experiences, in conjunction with a developing awareness of racism and injustice, laid the foundation for his answering the call to leadership during the modern American Civil Rights Movement.
- Ebenezer Baptist Church was Dr. King’s spiritual home where, during his childhood, he observed his maternal grandfather, Reverend Adam Daniel Williams, and his father, Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr. preach about love, equality, and righteousness. Dr. King was baptized and ordained in Ebenezer Baptist Church. He returned to Ebenezer to serve as co-pastor with his father in 1960; he utilized the pulpit to preach social change grounded in Christian values, and promoted his vision for “the beloved community.” After he was slain, Dr. King’s body was brought home to Ebenezer Baptist Church, where family, friends, and distinguished guests gathered to attend his funeral services.
- The park protects a significant portion of the Sweet Auburn community, in Atlanta, Georgia. In addition to the Birth Home and church, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site contains additional elements related to M.L.’s childhood, including the original Historic Fire Station No. 6 and the historic residences immediately surrounding the Birth Home. The Preservation District protects the remnants and surviving core elements of the Sweet Auburn community’s commercial district. While serving as the first co-pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church with his father, Dr. King maintained the Presidential leadership of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), whose headquarters were relocated from the Alexander Building to the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge, within the heart of Sweet Auburn’s business district.

Sweet Auburn was known as one of the most prosperous and influential streets in segregated “Black America,” from 1910 to 1960. It included thriving businesses and educational institutions, a diversity of churches, and all classes of people. There were groups within the Sweet Auburn community that were very active in the modern American Civil Rights Movement – the National Negro Business League, the National Negro Chamber of Commerce, and the Atlanta Daily World Newspaper. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and many other prominent and influential Atlanta community leaders came from this unique environment of African American independence, pride, and progress.

- The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc., commonly referred to as “The King Center,” preserves and operates the Freedom Hall Complex and The King Center Administrative, Library, and Archives Facility. The Freedom Hall Complex includes Freedom Hall (and associated exhibit areas), the Tomb of Dr. and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., Reflecting Pool, Eternal Flame, Freedom Walkway, and Screening Room. The King Center Administrative, Library, and Archives Facility holds the largest collection of documents, photographs, personal effects, and memorabilia related to Dr. and Mrs. King’s involvement in the modern American Civil Rights Movement.

The physical structures, features, and character of the National Historic Site and Preservation District are vital to the expression of the idea that global change can be effected by the transformative power of love and peace.



Martin Luther King, Jr. delivers his "I Have a Dream" speech during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, 1963. (Credit: National Archives photo no. 306-SSM-4D(107)8)

Interpretive Themes

Primary interpretive themes are those ideas or concepts that every visitor should have the opportunity to understand. They are the key ideas through which the park's nationally significant resource meanings and values are conveyed to the public. These themes provide the foundation for planned park experiences, including interpretive programs, interpretive media, and partnerships that support the delivery of the interpretive program. The themes do not include everything interpreted at the park, but rather the ideas that are critical to a visitor's understanding of the park's significance. Interpretive efforts should relate to one or more of the themes, and each theme should be addressed in the overall interpretive program. These themes will provide more detailed information for the interpretive staff when developing future programs and interpretive media, and will guide partnerships that work to support the delivery of the interpretive program.

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Interpretive Themes and Supporting Concepts

The interpretive themes are numbered below, but not in any priority order.

1. Segregation and Struggle

The life of Martin Luther King, Jr. and his death were central to the transformation of America's segregated past and the promise of equality and justice for all citizens.

Supporting Interpretive Concepts

- The United States of America was founded on the constitutional law of life, liberty, and justice for all. However, by the late nineteenth century, the United States was a segregated society with little hope of resolving the contradictions between the national creed and practice. Jim Crow laws established a legal precedence that codified the social climate of racial discrimination.
- Riding the legal nomenclature created by landmark judicial decisions outlawing segregation, Dr. King utilized nonviolent direct action to challenge the practices of a deeply segregated South.
- Dr. King's commitment to, and the success of, nonviolent direct action beginning in Montgomery, Alabama and spreading nationally to the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom resulted in a method of social reform that is emulated nationally and internationally.
- Dr. King's leadership of the modern American Civil Rights Movement transformed the American Dream of promise and hope to include all people.
- Dr. King's commitment to the modern American Civil Rights Movement necessitated many personal sacrifices. For example, due to extensive travel, he gave up a typical family life. Conflicting philosophies resulted in his not being embraced by all segments of the African American community. In the end, he made the ultimate sacrifice – he died in the pursuit of unmitigated freedom, justice, and equal rights for all people.
- Dr. King was aware that his life was in jeopardy and once said publicly “it was a cause worth dying for.” Dr. King made the choice to continue, even though he knew his life was continuously threatened.



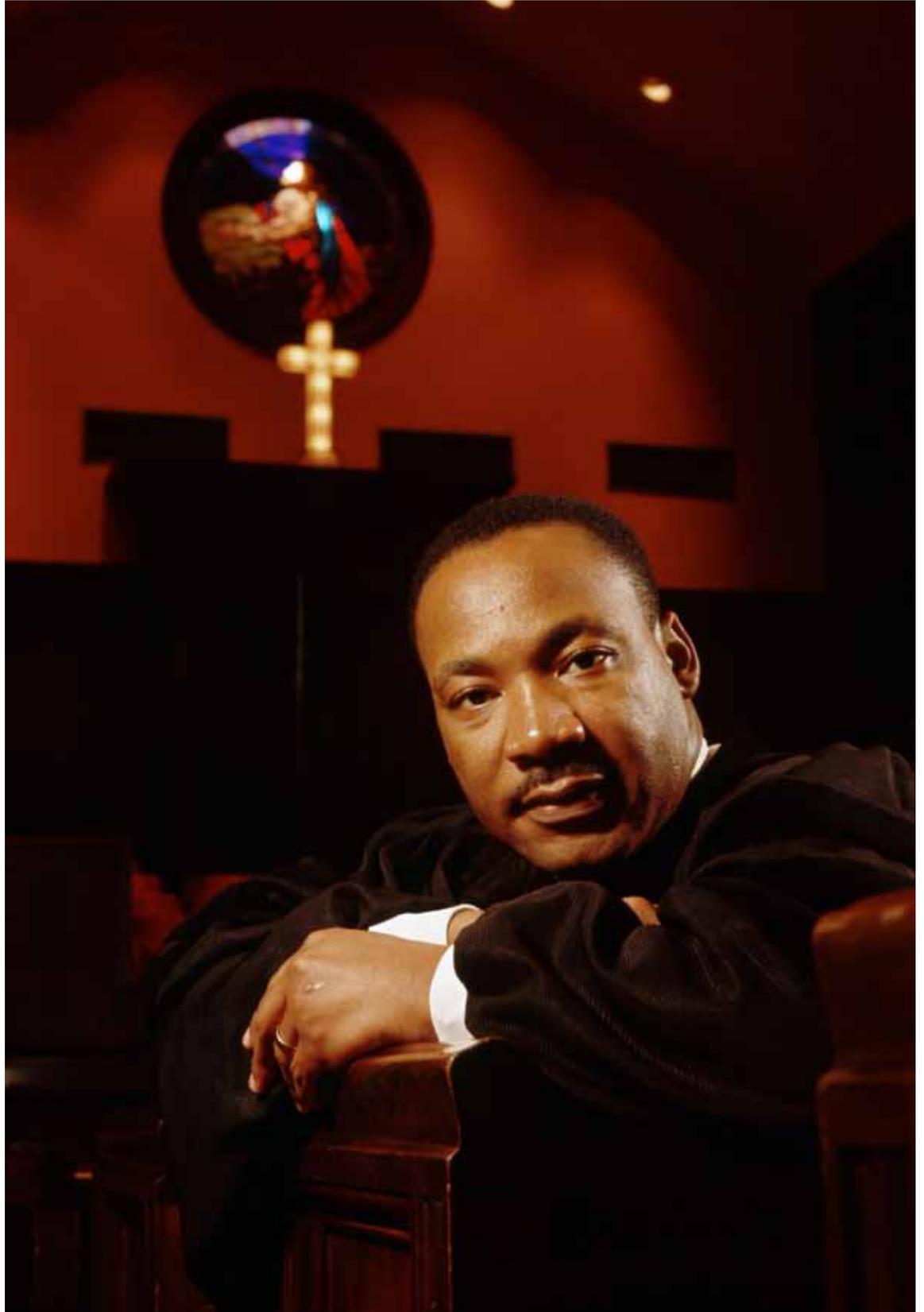
King Family photo, 1939. Standing from left to right: Mrs. Alberta Williams King (mother), Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr. (father), Mrs. Jennie Williams (maternal grandmother); seated from left to right: Alfred Daniel King (brother), Willie Christine King (sister), Martin Luther King, Jr. (age 10).
(Credit: The King Center)

2. Childhood and Character

The development of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s character was the result of a solid family structure and spiritual commitment that began in the home and was influenced by the Sweet Auburn community.

Supporting Interpretive Concepts

- Martin Luther King, Jr. grew up in an Atlanta neighborhood that was racially segregated; childhood incidents helped to develop his awareness of the effects/impact of Jim Crow laws and practices on people of color.
- Affectionately known as “Daddy King” later in life, Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr.’s leadership regarding intolerance to injustice inspired his son to become an activist.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. was raised in a solid, close, and supportive multigenerational family with strong family values and bonds of love.
- On a daily basis, the King Family practiced family unity in which togetherness, respect, and responsibility were stressed, shared, and learned in every aspect of home, church, and neighborhood.
- A multigenerational Christian heritage focusing on spirituality, family ministry, and service began in Dr. King’s childhood and continued throughout his life.
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was raised in a family and community that valued and nurtured education.
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was raised in the Sweet Auburn community, where he experienced both the support of the “beloved community” and the sting of racism.
- The Sweet Auburn community was where Dr. King experienced a unique environment of independence, pride, progress, and opportunities, generally not available in mainstream American society for African Americans.



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Ebenezer Baptist Church.
(Credit: Donated by Corbis/Photographer Flip Schulke)

3. Church and Community

Ebenezer Baptist Church and the Sweet Auburn community embodied the persona, spirituality, passion, and career of Dr. King.

Supporting Interpretive Concepts

Ebenezer Baptist Church

- Ebenezer Baptist Church was the Christian foundation of Dr. King’s spirituality, values, philosophy, and social activism.
- The Heritage Sanctuary of Ebenezer Baptist Church is where Dr. King preached and delivered several of his most important sermons and speeches.
- Dr. King was a Baptist minister from a multigenerational heritage of ministry leaders; his father and grandfather collectively led Ebenezer Baptist Church for more than 80 years.
- Ebenezer Baptist Church serves as an example of many churches during America’s long Civil Rights Movement that were actively involved in “social and political activism.” Through the pastor’s leadership, the pulpit was used to convince members of the church community to work to change laws that denied voting rights or imposed segregation based on the color of one’s skin through peaceful, nonviolent direct action.
- Ebenezer Baptist Church served as a sanctuary for the King Family during times of happiness, tragedy, and loss.

Sweet Auburn Community

- The Sweet Auburn community was where Dr. King’s family brought him to his final resting place.
- The Sweet Auburn community fostered many organizations and businesses that actively supported the modern American Civil Rights Movement.
- The Sweet Auburn community was a self-sufficient African American community nurturing all classes of people, thriving businesses, educational institutions, and diverse religious affiliations.
- The Sweet Auburn community was the “beloved community” where Dr. King grew up; this community embodied both the American Dream and the obstacles to the fulfillment of that dream.
- Historic Fire Station No. 6 was a station where white firefighters operated within the predominantly African American Sweet Auburn community, and it was one of the first racially integrated fire stations in Atlanta.
- The role the churches played in the Sweet Auburn community helped the community to thrive.
- Dr. King returned home to the Sweet Auburn community in 1960 and continued to pursue his religious ministry as co-pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church and his civil rights ministry as President of the SCLC.

4. Leadership and Legacy

Dr. King’s visionary leadership of the modern American Civil Rights Movement, as shown through his philosophy, words, and works, changed the course of American history and redefined the American promise to include all citizens, and continues to have national and international influence today.

Supporting Interpretive Concepts

- Under Dr. King’s leadership, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) used churches to teach nonviolent direct action methods and to plan and strategize for mass meetings, marches, sit-ins, and other protests. Sometimes, the churches were safe havens for taking refuge. As a result, many churches were burned and bombed, and innocent lives destroyed.
- Dr. King, through the SCLC, strategized with other religious leaders to promote equality, freedom, and justice using nonviolent principles of direct action.
- Dr. King’s work gave hope to people in pursuit of the American Dream – including civil and human rights that embraced freedom, equality, and justice for all.
- Dr. King was inspired and influenced by Christian principles and the writings of many philosophers and theologians: Mahatma Gandhi, Henry David Thoreau, Howard Thurman, Benjamin E. Mays, and others. Dr. King embraced many concepts from these great thinkers, integrating their ideas in his stirring sermons.
- Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, delivered as a part of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, electrified mainstream America and changed hearts, turning the tide to slowly gain sympathy and support across racial, cultural, religious, and economic lines for the modern American Civil Rights Movement. In time, this movement was embraced by mainstream clergy and the American public.
- Dr. King played a prominent role in American and world activism by “speaking truth to power,” which is emulated today.
- Kingian philosophy of social change through nonviolent direct action has been embraced and practiced in the United States as well as in other countries.
- Dr. King was a visionary. His charismatic leadership fostered the economic transformation of the South from an economically deprived region to a successful, competitive, and thriving business economy – known today as the “Sunbelt.”
- Dr. King’s efforts continue to encourage many others to work for civil and human rights in the United States and abroad.
- Mrs. Coretta Scott King, widow of Martin Luther King, Jr., envisioned preserving the works and philosophies of Dr. King. She founded the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc. and later advocated for the creation of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site.
- As partners, The King Center, Ebenezer Baptist Church, the City of Atlanta, the National Park Service, and other organizations preserve the historic and cultural resources that document the life, works, and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. within the National Historic Site legislative boundary.

Visitor Experience Goals

Visitor experience goals describe what opportunities for physical, intellectual, emotional, and sensory experiences should be available for visitors to the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. These experiences will be available to visitors of all abilities, including those with visual, auditory, mobility, or cognitive impairments.

Visitors will have opportunities to:

- Have a memorable and meaningful visitor experience—in the words of Dr. King, a “mountaintop” experience—at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site.
- Be inspired to more fully appreciate the nation’s history in the context of the life and contributions of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Gain a better understanding of the history of segregation and race relations during Dr. King’s lifetime (1929-1968).
- Effectively navigate throughout the park.
- Have their necessary comfort needs met.
- Contemplate, relax, and enjoy park resources in a safe environment.
- Acquire accurate and current information and material to learn about themes before, during, and after their visit, and have the ability to obtain this information in a variety of formats, including personal services and interpretive media (includes electronic media), and through partner services developed in support of the interpretive program appropriate to their age, ability, and experience.
- Receive translated, printed pre-visit information and on-site basic information and orientation in the language of the primary international audience groups that visit the site.
- Obtain visitor experience recommendations regarding how to plan their on-site experience if they have one, two, or three hours to spend that day.
- Have a Birth Home experience. The carrying capacity of the historic structure limits the number of people able to visit the Birth Home. In addition to the Birth Home Orientation Film, the park will explore alternatives for a more interactive and satisfying alternate experience.
- Relate to Dr. King’s life experiences, and be inspired to share this information with others.
- Have an Ebenezer Baptist Church experience, to meditate and reflect.
- Learn about and experience the Sweet Auburn community.
- Experience the park resources, regardless of physical ability.
- Interact with the park staff informally and formally, in a way that respects their personal and civil rights and their expectation to receive courteous treatment and factual information.
- Recognize that Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site is a national park. Learn the mission of the NPS and have the opportunity to become engaged in the preservation of the park through a variety of stewardship projects.
- Find out about the unique partnership between the National Park Service, The King Center, and Ebenezer Baptist Church—a collaborative effort that makes the park visitor experience possible—and discover ways they can contribute to each organization’s mission.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Visitor Profiles

For future planning needs, this section of the document includes three sources of information, in the following order: a visitor profile, developed from staff and partner observations; monthly visitor statistics collected over the past ten years; and the 1997 visitor survey conducted by the Cooperative Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho. Although dated, the 1997 visitor survey provides some interesting insights on park visitors. The planning team acknowledges the importance of continuing to seek visitor opinions regarding their park experience; this information will inform management decisions relative to improvements to facilities, interpretive media, and programs. The information in this section will be used to guide the visitor survey focus group scheduled for fiscal year 2012; future visitor surveys should similarly reference this information.

Staff and Partner Observations

- Most visitors do not know about the variety of opportunities available at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site.
- The experience at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site can be emotionally overwhelming.
- Most visitors come to Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site for education rather than recreation.
- Large numbers of church groups have an interest in the religious aspect of the park.

- Weather conditions/season and distance between park facilities impact visitors' motivation to visit multiple locations in the park.
- Visitors represent diverse socioeconomic demographics.
- When staff members converse with visitors and ask—"Why are you visiting the site?"—these are the kinds of responses they typically receive:
 - To pay respect—they consider Dr. King an icon, an American hero, and/or a renowned civil and human rights leader
 - As a pilgrimage—they always wanted to come
 - To seek hope or encouragement
 - To learn about (or more about) Dr. King
 - To learn about the direct nonviolent social teachings of Dr. King
 - To connect Dr. King's story to their daily experiences (relevancy)
 - Because of a personal connection to the modern American Civil Rights Movement
 - To see the places where Dr. King was born, where he worked, and where he is buried
 - To see where Dr. King preached—for many, visiting Ebenezer Baptist Church "is a very spiritual experience"
 - The National King Holiday (King Week)
 - Because "It's free"

Visitor Expectations

The staff also identified expectations common to most visitors:

- Pre-visit information
- Availability of public transportation to the park
- Easy wayfinding throughout the park and a companion guide/handbook to refer to that provides more detailed information than the park Unigrid brochure
- A reservation system or the ability to make a reservation to tour the Birth Home
- A guided tour of the Birth Home or of the historic site
- Accessible facilities and ease of access at primary features
- Information on nearby places to have lunch
- Park orientation film
- Restrooms, water, and a gift shop
- A visit to Dr. and Mrs. King's Tomb
- A safe visit (visitors often comment they feel safe because the site is a national park; this can be problematic because of the urban environment)

Visitor Categories

Visitors to the park can be grouped into the following categories; this next section also notes any unique visitor planning needs for a particular group:

Adult Groups

Organized adult groups include commercial tour groups, church groups, family reunions, education groups, and international groups. Although the season or time of year seems to be a little less important to these groups when visiting the park, a lot of these groups come in the spring and fall. Often, the adult groups will tour the park from a bus and/or request an indoor talk on a particular aspect of the site's history; thus, weather is less of a factor in the visit.

Conventioners

Atlanta is a city that hosts many conventions. Many conventions provide time for their participants to visit the site. Others do not, but their participants will manage to find time to visit the site. Because this group usually has such limited time, they seek portable information, such as free handouts and souvenirs for purchase, so they can learn more about the park at their leisure.

Sometimes, the park is contacted by convention organizers with a special request to use a park facility as part of the convention experience. In other instances, the convention organizer may also request the park to partner with the convention and provide a visitor experience for attendees.

Dignitaries

A large number of Southeast Regional Consulate General offices (foreign governments) are located in Atlanta; the park receives many requests from these offices to provide tours of the site. The park provides tours to dignitaries who are interested in the life, works, and legacy of Dr. King. These groups sometimes require special security details.

International Visitors

According to the 1997 visitor survey, international visitors account for ten percent of park visitation; these visitors come from all over the world. Many of these visitors have some knowledge of English; others require a translator or some other type of assistance. Because of Dr. King's international renown, most individuals in these groups expect to find information and orientation in their native language (either a publication or an interpreter/translator). Many international visitors travel with their luggage; they expect to find a place on site to store it while they tour the park. Some international groups stage commemorative moments in the park – in some instances spontaneous, in others as part of the park's education or special permit program. The park has printed material in a variety of other languages, though these are outdated.

Local Residents

Many local residents bring out-of-town guests for a special visit. Some people state they have known about the park for years, but today was the day to stop by for a visit. All workshop participants agreed that this audience needs special attention. It was expressed several times during the workshop that “many local residents are not coming due to concerns about the neighborhood the park is located in, and its safety.” One participant stated, “The park is surrounded by vacant and unused buildings and there are many homeless people that panhandle park visitors – this is part of the current arrival experience and while this affects all visitors' perceptions, this perception is strong enough to keep local residents away.” All workshop participants confirmed this assessment.

Military Groups

This represents a special audience that is especially interested in Dr. King's life, Kingian nonviolence, and participate in educational tours. Approximately fifteen groups come annually. These groups usually represent active duty and reserve components of the United States Army, Air Force, and Navy. The officer classes often will have students from nearly thirty different countries in each group. Many times, these groups need an English/Spanish interpretation.

Subject Matter Enthusiasts and Repeat Visitors

Each year, a significant number of people visit Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site because they are particularly interested in the site's history. These subject matter experts and enthusiasts are often times professionals researching for books and articles; however, most are simply individuals with a strong desire to learn or experience history.

School Groups

School groups are the most numerous organized group visiting the park. Annually, they account for one-half of all park groups. School groups visiting the park range from preschool to college groups. Home-school groups also visit. Most teachers bring students to meet curriculum standards and expect to have an educational experience on site; at minimum, they expect a staff-led orientation talk, followed by a teacher-led park activity. Most school groups expect to pay an entrance fee or program fee. Many teachers have requested the park staff to develop activity sheets they can utilize. There are activity sheets on the website. Some school groups look for a place to have lunch in the park, when students bring their lunches. All school groups want to visit the Birth Home.

Organized Sporting Groups

Each year collegiate teams of Bowl Games, hosted by Atlanta, visit the park. Middle schools, high schools, colleges and sports professionals participating in various metro-area competitions visit the park throughout the year.

Virtual Visitors

Virtual visitors may or may not ever physically visit the park; however, they are a substantial park audience. Since 2007, the park website has received an average of thirty thousand visits each year. People look at the park website in order to help plan a visit or to gain information about the park's historical themes.

Who's Not Coming and Why?

- School groups without school transportation funds.
- “Generation Y” (the demographic cohort following “Generation X”) – they lack knowledge of the modern American Civil Rights Movement. They were not part of the struggle.
- Individuals who lack an appreciation for Dr. King's leadership and legacy.
- Local residents and suburban Atlantans: familiarity of the historical significance of the site and the perception of unsafe area, being in an urban environment.

Monthly Visitor Statistics, 2000 - 2009

MONTH	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
January	81,946	103,671	107,402	105,347	103,525
February	38,952	35,399	36,013	33,045	37,001
March	40,652	42,365	46,951	50,020	48,618
April	50,202	55,015	52,638	33,994	37,463
May	47,443	50,805	63,750	61,113	57,410
June	69,873	69,131	66,504	87,292	57,820
July	107,894	86,773	94,168	98,395	63,002
August	53,072	56,992	64,475	70,073	46,497
September	35,811	21,859	26,131	23,685	25,111
October	33,143	26,899	38,050	40,071	32,978
November	31,108	28,378	27,248	30,823	32,292
December	21,969	23,815	31,359	32,327	38,540
TOTAL	612,065	601,102	654,689	666,185	580,257

MONTH	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
January	106,510	107,810	105,588	99,102	89,877
February	42,015	192,854	51,864	51,469	49,331
March	52,632	60,375	64,431	65,672	57,965
April	54,594	57,650	64,461	64,523	65,806
May	61,525	57,405	60,527	62,038	63,308
June	63,848	69,371	66,529	67,339	68,315
July	62,693	70,915	76,177	74,107	74,720
August	44,410	45,441	48,626	49,940	48,955
September	25,976	24,432	24,440	27,011	29,022
October	31,537	25,376	24,940	26,433	27,848
November	35,076	36,905	26,328	31,191	32,546
December	44,032	43,083	39,456	40,048	42,576
TOTAL	624,848	791,617	653,367	658,873	650,269

Yearlong Snapshot and Assessment

First-time visitors normally spend from thirty minutes to two hours experiencing the park. After their first visit, most visitors found they needed more time to see everything in the park. Most school groups come ill-prepared for their visit and need park staff to enhance it. Most visitors are also visiting several other attractions in Atlanta on the same day. Most family reunion groups come in the summertime. The size of reunion groups ranges from thirty to three hundred. Saturday is the most-visited day of the week; most visitors arrive in the afternoon. The second-most-visited day of the week is Friday, a favorite school trip day. School groups make heavy use of the park from January through April. As many as five hundred schoolchildren may visit the park in a single day. On Fridays and Saturdays, the park may have as many as ten buses unloading at the same time. During a typical year, early December is the period of lowest visitation, while June through July is the period of highest visitation. The majority of visitors to Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site are from out of town. International visitors account for approximately ten percent.

The 1997 Visitor Survey

The most-recent visitor survey was conducted in 1997. This *Visitors Services Project* conducted a visitor study at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site during the week of April 13-19, 1997. A total of 473 questionnaires were distributed, and 286 were returned, for a response rate of 61%. Some of the study's summary findings are:

- Forty-three percent of the visitor groups were family groups. Thirty-seven percent of visitor groups were groups of two. Forty-one percent of visitors were aged 26-45 years.
- Eighty-two percent of visitors were making their first visit to Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. Forty-four percent of the visitor groups spent two hours at the park, while 25% spent one hour, and 20% spent three hours.
- US visitors were from Georgia (24%), New York (8%), California (7%), Florida (6%), 40 other states, and the District of Columbia. International visitors (13% of total visitation) were from France (28%), Germany (28%), England (13%), and twelve other countries.
- On each respondent's visit, the most common activities were viewing Visitor Center exhibits (97%), visiting Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Tomb (89%), and watching the Visitor Center video (73%).

- Travel guides and tour books (31%) and friends or relatives (28%) were the most-used sources of information by visitor groups; 20% of the groups received no information prior to their visits.
- Eighty-six percent of visitor groups indicated that learning more about Martin Luther King, Jr. was a primary reason for visiting the park. Another 70% reported that seeing the area where Dr. King grew up was a primary reason for visiting the park. Thirty-six percent of visitor groups indicated that the park was the primary destination on this visit. Other Atlanta area attractions visited by groups included Underground Atlanta (65%), Stone Mountain (41%), and CNN Center (35%).
- Sixty-one percent of visitor groups had members with a special interest in African American history. Other civil rights sites visited in the past by groups included the Civil Rights Monument in Montgomery, AL (35%) and the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, TN (35%).
- Twenty percent of visitor groups reported that there were things they had hoped to do or see at the park but which they were unable to do. Included in this category were visiting Ebenezer Baptist Church and touring Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birth Home.
- In regard to the use, importance, and quality of services, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The services that were most used by 247 respondents were Visitor Center exhibits (78%), the park brochure/map (66%), and the Visitor Center video program (65%). According to visitors, the most important services were Visitor Center exhibits (91% of 184 respondents), the Visitor Center video (85% of 157 respondents), and restrooms (85% of 130 respondents). The highest-quality services were Visitor Center exhibits (93% of 177 respondents) and the Visitor Center video (93% of 154 respondents).
- Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups want to learn more about the life and teachings of Dr. King on a future visit, and 61% want to learn more about the modern American Civil Rights Movement.
- Ninety-one percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site as "very good" or "good." None of the groups rated services as "very poor."

Interpretive Facilities and Sites

The national historic site is comprised of facilities and venues operated by the National Park Service and the King Center.

National Historic Site Facilities Operated by the National Park Service

Visitor Center

The Visitor Center opened in 1996, during the International Summer Olympic Games. The exhibits are adequate and very effective. Wording in the exhibit may be a little small, and visitors do not know that the quotes etched onto the glass panels are from Dr. King's sermons and speeches. There are small blue panels that were installed to reach the young children. There is an interpretive marker, but it is not in viewing sight.

The "Children of Courage" exhibit located in the center of the atrium is an interactive exhibit that reaches all age groups and demographics. It has been quite successful and frequently needs repairs due to heavy visitor use.

The films (*Children of Courage* and *New Time, New Voice*) are also very effective. The Freedom Road exhibit is adequate and very popular, but maintenance and upkeep can be costly. The mannequins were designed to be touched, and receive heavy public use. An interpretive message is needed to share with the visitor what the exhibit's significance is to the modern American Civil Rights Movement.

The information desk includes:

- Monitoring security system
- Film playback monitor
- Public address system (broadcast format)

Challenges: Orientation is needed at every location in the park. Visitors do not necessarily stop at the Visitor Center first. Many visitors do not park in the official visitor parking lot, one and a half blocks from the Visitor Center.

Another concern is that visitors think that only the Visitor Center is the Historic Site, not the two-block area surrounding the building. The exterior of the building has the name of the park on both sides in large letters, with "Visitor Center" in smaller font.

At times, there are conflicting demands on the Visitor Center. The Visitor Center is also used by special permit user groups.



Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Visitor Center.
(Credit: NPS Photographer Gary Tarleton)

Atrium (Lobby)

Includes the following features:

Wall graphics:

- A color map of the National Park System, located behind the front desk.
- Black-and-white photograph of President Jimmy Carter signing Public Law 96-428, establishing the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, located on the rear wall near the Theater.
- Before and after photographs of the restoration work performed on historic structures located in the National Historic Site.
- Large black-and-white portrait of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Orientation monitor: a 48” flat-screened monitor that displays available visitor resources and current program information.

Interactive Interpretive Stations

- A virtual Birth Home Tour
- The International Civil Rights Walk of Fame (This walk is located outside of the Visitor Center, and described later in this section of the document.)

Courage to Lead Exhibit

This is the primary exhibit in the Visitor Center; it opened in 1996. Six circular exhibit pods contain vertical wooden cases with glass-front panels, contents of reproduced historic graphics, supporting texts, etched quotes of Dr. King to “tell the story,” dioramas, and audiovisual components. Professional rehabilitation for this exhibit has been completed. Each exhibit has audiovisual components, including: a 40” Samsung flat-screen monitor, memory card disc player, and speaker system. All components were upgraded in 2011, except for the speaker system. Exhibit 9: Freedom Road components are the same ones originally installed in 1996.

Exhibit 1: Graphic of Dr. King, side profile

Exhibit 2: Temporary Gallery Wall. Large, framed black-and-white graphics displayed along a stretch of wall. This exhibit has been dismantled over the past years due to the Changing Exhibit Program. It is still a viable exhibit.

Exhibit 3: Segregation. Defines segregation and Jim Crow laws.

Exhibit 4: The King Family. Focuses on the family and church influences on Dr. King.

Exhibit 5: Call to Lead. Interprets the beginning of Dr. King’s philosophy and activism.

Exhibit 6: Visiting the Mountain. Discusses Dr. King’s experiences in the Birmingham, Alabama jail, his “I Have a Dream Speech”, and the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Exhibit 7: Expanding the Dream. Focuses on Dr. King’s work in addressing poverty and his antiwar stand.

Exhibit 8: Overcoming Loss. Centers on Dr. King’s assassination and funeral.

Exhibit 9: Freedom Road. The life-size mannequins are positioned on the road. Geographic locations and organizations of the Movement identified on the road surface offer additional interpretation of the modern American Civil Rights Movement. This exhibit includes an audio system for playback of Freedom Songs.

Artifact: The Funeral Wagon. The farm wagon used as a caisson for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s funeral procession on April 9, 1968, was from Cook’s Antique Shop in Atlanta. Pulled by mules Belle and Ada, the wagon led more than 200,000 mourners along 4.3 miles of road from Ebenezer Baptist Church to the campus of Morehouse College, Dr. King’s alma mater. The wagon symbolized Dr. King’s committed work to eliminating poverty. The King Center has permitted the NPS to exhibit this artifact.

Challenges: This artifact has had minimal restoration work.



Freedom Road component of the *Courage to Lead* Exhibit in the National Park Service Visitor Center.
(Credit: NPS)

Testimony & Response Stations:
Were developed to encourage visitors to contribute to the dramatic story of Dr. King’s dream of equality, freedom and hope. It was considered a state-of-the-art digital audio recording and playback technology to enable thousands of visitors to record their personal reflection of the modern American Civil Rights Movement.

The recordings were to eventually form a large oral history database for use by historians, schools, universities, and the general public. However, within two years, the system was malfunctioning, even with technical support. Eventually, the stations were converted into writing stations.

Free exhibit-related publications:
Jim Crow site bulletin and *Courage to Lead* source of quotations.

Children of Courage Exhibit

“Young People and the Struggle for Civil Rights Discovery Center” opened in the atrium in 2000. The park staff took a lead role in planning this exhibition with NPS media planners, designers, and producers at HFC. This exhibit also includes an interactive computer program and movie. Contractors included a writer, artist, exhibit design and fabrication firm, and media and audience evaluation specialist. This exhibit has been very successful because it reaches all age groups, breaks down human barriers, and embraces the opportunity for the visitor to address segregation and other human rights issues in a safe environment.

Exhibit elements include:

1. **Introductory area:** a silent video program to quickly orient visitors to the overall message of this exhibition.
2. **“1930s The Sting of Segregation”:** panels convey actual stories from the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. that help interpret what it was like to experience segregation in the 1930s and 1940s. The Sweet Auburn neighborhood section was accompanied with a take-home map, “Exploring the Neighborhood.” The intent was to encourage visitors to further explore the Sweet Auburn neighborhood on their own. Objects located in discovery drawers interpret segregation, negative stereotypes, and the daily life of this era.
3. **Interactive computer program, “Doors of Opportunity”:** allows visitor to further explore the history of segregation and the modern American Civil Rights Movement. Freedom Songs add richness to the interactive experience; the songs also provide an audio element to the exhibition.
4. **“1950s-60s, Young Soldiers of Freedom”** includes:
 - A discovery drawer with objects to interpret segregation, the modern American Civil Rights Movement, daily life, and the changing times of this era
 - Profiles young students, including Harvey Gantt, Bernice Johnson, Ruby Bridges, Ernest Green, Ezell Blair, Jr., Elizabeth Eckford, and others, who stood up for their rights in nonviolent protests
 - A national map that identifies significant Civil Rights Movement and protest sites
 - Photographs of the movement with thought-provoking questions that allow for the evaluation of one’s belief systems and character
 - Interactive panel that activates audio recording of two young girls singing a protest song. This section has been “out of service” for a while.
5. **Memorial:** This element memorializes the young people who were killed due to racial hatred.
6. **Today:** The contemporary section of the exhibition is a series of stations for people to make personal commitments toward continuing Dr. King’s dream.

Free exhibit-related publications:

Make Dr. King's Dream Come True pledge card; *To Learn More/To Do More* handout and *Jim Crow Laws/What is your life's blueprint?* Handout.

The audiovisual program *Children of Courage* was developed as a companion experience for this exhibit. The film reinforces the themes and stories presented in the exhibit. Historic footage, with audio elements, documents the history of the modern American Civil Rights Movement and the critical role played by students. This film also includes contemporary interviews with young people; this aspect of the film helps younger visitors make a personal connection to Dr. King's life and contributions. Since 2000, this film has been used as one of the standard park films offered on a scheduled basis in the Visitor Center Theater.

Challenges: When a remake or update is pursued, a word spelling ("persistent") at the end of film is needed, along with corrections to the misuse of a hyphen in the words "African American" and "nonviolence."

Length: 15 minutes.

Theater (Auditorium)

Seating capacity: 126. Large groups in excess of 126 cannot be accommodated. The original audiovisual system was installed by Harpers Ferry Center in 1996. The first upgrade occurred in 2000 and included the following elements:

- Installation of front projection screen, ceiling mounted. (Since 1996, the images were projected onto the front wall.)
- A smaller state-of-the-art SONY CRT projector replaced the SHARP LCD projector.
- A new captioning component replaced the wall captioned display.
- Limited track lighting was installed.

The audiovisual system was upgraded again in 2006-2007. Major connectivity problems still exist.

Standard park films:

- Current park films:
 - *New Time, New Voice* serves as the main featured film that relates to Dr. King and his life and involvement in the modern American Civil Rights Movement.
Length: 28 minutes.
 - *Children of Courage* recognizes the young people who played a major role in the modern American Civil Rights Movement.
Length: 15 minutes.

- *Birth Home* interprets the Birth Home story on film. This film serves large groups very well. It is especially useful when the Home Tours are booked for the rest of the day. Length: 18 minutes.
- Popular children’s films shown:
 - *Martin Luther King Day*
Length: 10 minutes.
 - *A Picture Book of Martin Luther King, Jr.*
Length: 9 minutes, 30 seconds.
 - *Our Friend Martin*
Length: 60 minutes.

Note: When the *Courage to Lead* exhibit opened in 1996, two films were developed to support the visitor experience and provide information and orientation: *Sweet Auburn* and *New Time, New Voice*.

- *Sweet Auburn* was the original park film that offered a brief, yet comprehensive history of the residential and business district of the Sweet Auburn community, focusing on the 1930s up through the 1960s. Length: 15 minutes.
- The second film, *New Time, New Voice*, was a newly produced project that supported the Visitor Center’s new exhibit, *Courage to Lead*.

By April of 1999, *New Time, New Voice* became the main interpretive film, and in 2000, the *Sweet Auburn* film was replaced by *Children of Courage*.

D.R.E.A.M. Gallery

The Visitor Center’s temporary exhibit space was intended to be used as a multipurpose room with audiovisual and closed-circuit capability. By 2002, the space had evolved into the D.R.E.A.M. (Developing Racial Equality through Art and Music) Gallery to stage the Changing Exhibit Program. These temporary exhibits are achieved primarily through partnerships and collaborative efforts of academic institutions and archival collections. The space is fully accessible, except for three fixed wooden cases (not accessible to wheelchair users, people short in height, or children).

The Changing Exhibit Program has offered the following exhibits:

- *From Memphis to Atlanta, the Drum Major Returns Home*, displayed annually around the anniversary of when Dr. King was slain on April, 4 1968.
- *Visa for Life: Diplomats Who Rescued Jews*, May 5 – July 25, 2010.
- *Bobby, Martin & John, Once Upon an American Dream*, November 19, 2009 – February 28, 2010.
- *I Have a Dream: International Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*, art exhibition, May –July, 2009.
- *Coalition to Remember, Red Was the Midnight: The 1906 Atlanta Race Riot*, Sept. 15, 2006 – August 31, 2007.
- *Of Ballots Uncast, the African-American Struggle for the Right to Vote*, August 4, 2005 – March 7, 2006.

- *Speak Truth to Power: Human Rights Defenders Who Are Changing Our World*, December 2004 – January 2005.
- *Sweet Auburn: Where the Dream Began*, 2004.
- *Confederate Currency, the Color of Money*, May 15 – December 15, 2003.
- *Without Sanctuary, Lynching Photographing in America*, May 1– December 31, 2002.

Sales Outlet

The King Center has a Gift Shop in the Visitor Center.



From Memphis to Atlanta, the Drum Major Returns Home Exhibit (2011), in the D.R.E.A.M. Gallery of the National Park Service Visitor Center.
(Credit: NPS)

Visitor Center Grounds

“BEHOLD” Monument

This piece of artwork was unveiled on its present site in 1996, commemorating the heroic principles that guided the life and works of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The statue was originally unveiled by Mrs. Coretta Scott King on January 11, 1990, as a tribute to her late husband. The sculptor Patrick Morelli was inspired to create this artwork through an ancient African ritual of lifting a newborn to the heavens and reciting the words, “Behold the only thing greater than yourself.”

“I Have A Dream” International World Peace Rose Garden

The “I Have a Dream” International World Peace Rose Garden is centrally located on the Peace Plaza of the National Park Service Visitor Center grounds and is aligned with the Tomb of Dr. and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr. across Auburn Avenue at The King Center. The starburst design signifies the brilliance of Dr. King’s life and the impact of his ideals on humankind. The pink roses in the garden’s center represent Mrs. Coretta Scott King’s oneness with Dr. King as she continued to carry out his work and legacy. The “I Have a Dream” International World Peace Rose Garden is a joint project of International World Peace Rose Gardens and Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site.

The Gandhi Statue

The bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi (Dr. King’s mentor in nonviolence) was sculpted by Sri Ram Sutar of New Delhi and dedicated by Honorable Andrew Young on January 24, 1998. This sculpture was donated by the Indian American Cultural Association and the National Federation of Indian American Associations. The statue is maintained through a joint partnership between the National Federation of Indian American Associations, Gandhi Foundation USA, and Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site.

International Civil Rights Walk of Fame

This exhibit was created in 2004 to pay homage to the brave foot soldiers of justice who sacrificed and struggled to make equality a reality for all. Located along the promenade leading to the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Visitor Center, the Civil Rights Walk of Fame is represented by a procession of embedded 2’ x 2’ granite markers featuring engraved footsteps of civil and human rights icons such as Rosa Parks, Desmond Tutu, Andrew Young, John Lewis, and others. Inductions occur annually in partnership with the Trumpet Awards Foundation, Inc., founded by Xernona Clayton. The International Civil Rights Walk of Fame is maintained through a joint partnership between the Trumpet Awards Foundation and Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site.

Birth Home of Dr. King

The Birth Home is where Dr. King was born and nurtured until age 12. The National Park Service, through a Memorandum of Agreement with The King Center, maintains the historic house and grounds, and provides public access and interpretive programming.



Birth Home of Martin Luther King, Jr.
(Credit: NPS Photographer Gary Tarleton)

Guided Tours

Emphasis is placed on exceptional visitor services, accuracy of information, and discussion of preservation issues. The Birth Home is special. There is no place like it. Visitors can come and see the place where Dr. King was born and lived for twelve years. Visitors are immersed in the resource.

Tours are currently limited to fifteen visitors per tour. Tours are offered every half hour depending on staffing availability. Only 6% of the park's 600,000+ visitors were able to tour the home in fiscal year 2009.

In addition to the Virtual Birth Home Tour Interactive Interpretive Station in the Visitor Center, a *Birth Home Tour* film is available for viewing upon request in the Visitor Center and in Historic Fire Station No. 6. Also, a photographic exhibit on the Birth Home has been installed in the parlor area of the new Eastern National Bookstore at 497 Auburn Avenue, just next to the Birth Home, to help further educate the public and reach those visitors who may not be able to tour the interior of the Birth Home itself.

Historic Fire Station No. 6

Through an agreement with the City of Atlanta Fire Department, the National Park Service preserves and interprets Historic Fire Station No. 6.

Historic Fire Station No. 6 was built in 1894 and operated within the Sweet Auburn community for nearly 100 years. During Dr. King's childhood, this fire station was segregated, with white firemen serving a predominantly African American community. This was one of Atlanta's first fire stations to racially integrate its staff in the 1960s.

The first floor features the exhibit, "Out of the Ashes: the Birth of Auburn Avenue." This exhibit interprets the history of the Sweet Auburn community from the Reconstruction era through the modern American Civil Rights Movement and incorporates the history of the Atlanta Fire Department and the historic fire station that operated within Dr. King's Sweet Auburn community for 97 years. This exhibit includes some artifacts (the most significant: a restored 1927 American LaFrance fire engine) that helps to tell the story of the 1894 Fire Station and its significance in the Sweet Auburn community.

The rear of the Fire Station is a multipurpose space that includes a television monitor and audiovisual components for screening park films. This space is separated from the main exhibit area by a portable partition, with flexible seating arrangements.

The second floor is not open to the general public, but used for educational programs and special use. Several exhibit panels from the Changing Exhibit Program, "Sweet Auburn..." are on display. In 2006 – 2007, a full audiovisual system was permanently installed in this space.



Historic Fire Station No. 6.
(Credit: NPS Photographer Gary Tarleton)

Historic Ebenezer Baptist Church

The Heritage Sanctuary of Ebenezer Baptist Church is where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. grew up, preached, and delivered several of his most important sermons and speeches. Today, it is no longer used by its congregation for regular worship or baptismal services. The historic period of significance for Ebenezer Baptist Church is from 1960 to 1968, the time when Dr. King was co-pastor. The building exterior and two primary interior spaces—the Heritage Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall—are significant features key to the commemorative historic period.

In cooperation with Ebenezer Baptist Church through a Memorandum of Agreement, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site operates the historic church and provides public access and programming. Across the street, Ebenezer Baptist Church has built a new structure, the Horizon Sanctuary, with seating for 2,000+ in order to accommodate the needs of a twenty-first century church community for all nations.

One long-term goal in the Memorandum of Agreement is to have no contemporary church-related activities in the historic church during daily park hours of operation, so the general public can always have access to this historic site.

Restoration of the Historic Structure

The park re-opened the church in April 2011. In consultation with Ebenezer Baptist Church and through the Memorandum of Agreement, the NPS provides

maintenance and restoration to this important historic structure. In 2002, all major utility systems (heat and air, electrical, fire protection, and fire alarm) were either replaced or installed under Phase I – Restoration of the church. In 2002 and in 2009, the iconic neon sign on Ebenezer Baptist Church was also restored.

Historical note:

The blue neon sign on the front of the church was an improvement made by Martin Luther King, Sr. in 1956; for some members of the church, this sign was a bit of a controversy. In their minds, Martin Luther King, Sr. reflected, that we “put a night club sign in front of the church.” This neon sign is very nontraditional for churches in the South; however, it is a notable feature along Auburn Avenue, in much the same way as the neon cross and “Jesus Saves” sign are on the steeple of the nearby Big Bethel church. Notably, the neon sign on Big Bethel church was installed in 1918, so Martin Luther King, Sr. would have been aware of it when he made the decision to get a similar one made for Ebenezer.

In 2007, the Heritage Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall were closed to restore to their appearances back the 1960s, when Dr. King was co-pastor.

The Sanctuary includes the restoration of the historic pipe organ and its antiphonals, Church pews, stained glass windows, hardwood floors, wall paneling, and balcony theater-seating. The original pulpit furniture and supporting furnishings have been returned to their position

to depict the Sanctuary's 1960's appearance. The choir loft seating is a reproduction. The paint finishes and other architectural elements are recreations of that same time period. The park intends to record an organist playing favorite hymns sung by the congregation during Dr. King's time.

The balcony was closed for many years due to termite damage. It has been repaired and structurally reinforced; the original chairs used during the 1968 period of historical significance have also been restored and reinstalled in the balcony area. This area is not open to the public due to safety concerns relating to the low-profile balcony, but it can be observed from the main level of the Sanctuary.

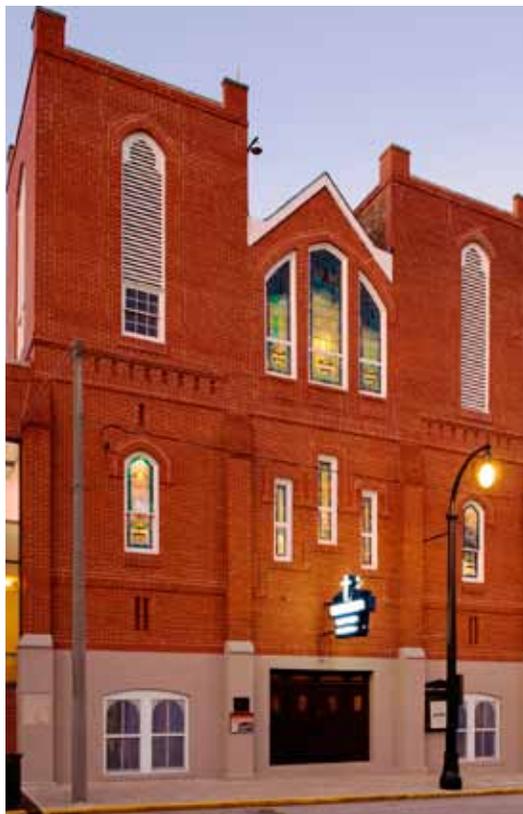
The choir loft (at the front of the church, behind the pulpit) was restored using modern replicas of the same style as the balcony seating; the Baptismal Pool was similarly restored using modern substitutes to recreate the historic appearance.

Fellowship Hall is a multiuse space that includes a stage built in the 1950s after the baptistery was relocated in the Sanctuary. The characteristic green and white checkerboard linoleum that was present in Fellowship Hall during the historic period contained asbestos, and so was replaced with a modern alternative during restoration. While kitchen appliances have been removed owing to fire code regulations, the park will still allow the permitted use of this area, and catered activities will be allowed. Historically, this area was used by the congregation for a variety of educational and social church

activities. This part of the church also has national significance, because under the leadership of Dr. King, SCLC would hold many of its planning and strategy meetings here in this space.

In 2011, the Historic Heritage Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall was made accessible for the visiting public according to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Wheelchair access for the mobility impaired is provided through a ground floor entrance into Fellowship Hall from Jackson Street. Visitors with mobility impairments will gain access to Heritage Sanctuary from Fellowship Hall through the use of a wheel-chair accessible lift.

On April 15, 2011 Historic Ebenezer Baptist Church Heritage Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall were officially reopened for visitor use.



Historic Ebenezer Baptist Church Heritage Sanctuary.
(Credit: NPS Photographer Gary Tarleton)

Interpretive Media Elements

Interpretive media elements include the audio recordings of Dr. King's sermons and speeches, gospel and spiritual songs by members of Ebenezer, Mahalia Jackson, Freedom Songs, and recordings of music from the church organ.

For special events, additional sound equipment and audiovisual systems may be required; these would be loaded in and removed after the event.

Fellowship Hall has been furnished with two exhibit cases and numerous exhibit panels that interpret the historical significance of Ebenezer Baptist Church and the restoration efforts by the National Park Service. It has also been equipped with a television monitor that currently displays an oral history provided by Dr. Christine King Farris, Dr. King's sister, on the significance of the church to the King Family.

An Ebenezer Baptist Church (EBC) rack card that focuses on its history is available.

Interpretive Program

The interpretive program includes formal and informal ranger talks about Dr. King and the church. Visitors come to the church to see the place where Dr. King and his father, "Daddy King," preached. Visitors also come to meditate and reflect. Visitors proceed directly to the Sanctuary to listen to sermons of Dr. King and enter Fellowship Hall for a brief talk by an interpreter.

Program strengths:

- The park has excellent audio recordings of sermons and speeches.
- The Heritage Sanctuary is now restored back to the correct time period.
- Family members and church associates connected to Dr. King are still alive and can help the park preserve important history.
- Reverend Joseph L. Roberts, Jr. (former Ebenezer Baptist Church pastor, 1975 – 2005) and other long-time church members are resources related to topics on Baptist ministry and civil rights.
- Visitors are really interested in Ebenezer Baptist Church and Dr. King's work here, and how it relates to the modern American Civil Rights Movement.
- Ebenezer Baptist Church is still an active, growing church with a world view. It is known internationally.

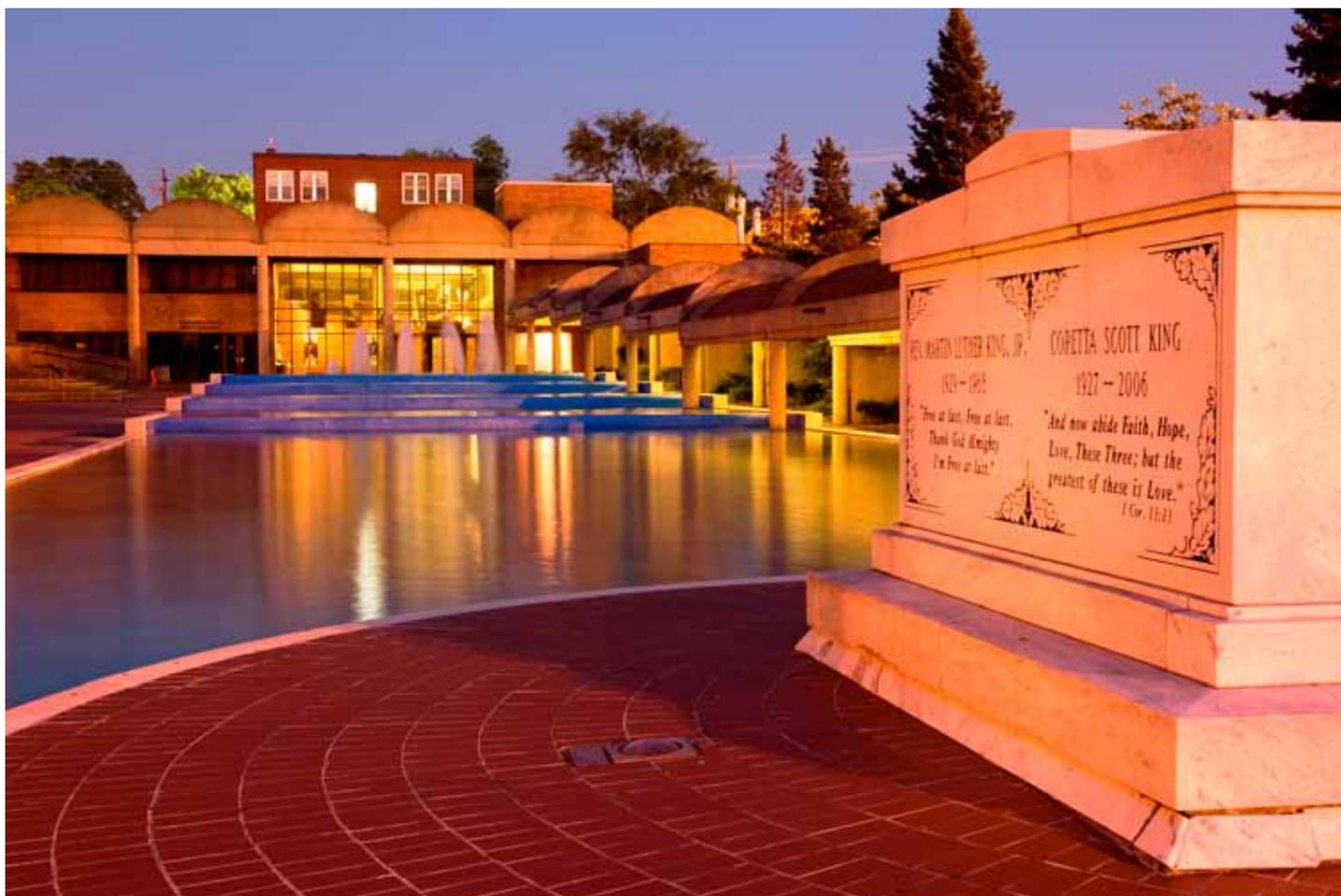
Program weaknesses:

- Volunteers are needed to help meet, greet, and direct the flow of visitors into the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall.
- There is a lack of staff and funds to support expanded interpretive opportunities.
- The partnership with the Ebenezer Baptist Church community should be strengthened.
- Capturing the oral histories of church members, clergymen, and civil rights activists connected with Dr. King is an urgent need.

National Historic Site Facilities Operated by The King Center

The facilities owned and operated by the King Center are commonly referred to as the “Freedom Hall Complex”. The complex is comprised of two structures, Freedom Hall, and The King Center Administrative Office, Library and Archives Facility; and, several site features including:

- The Tomb of Dr. and Mrs. King,
- The Eternal Flame,
- The Reflecting Pool,
- A Screening Room;
- The International Chapel of All Faiths, and
- Freedom Walkway.



The King Center's Freedom Hall Complex.
(Credit: NPS Photographer Gary Tarleton)

Freedom Hall

The National Park Service currently utilizes Freedom Hall to conduct the Birth Home Tour registration and ticket distribution operation. A ranger provides visitors information, orientation, and interpretation.

This visitor facility features artwork and artifacts from The King Center Collection on the first and second floor.

- On the first floor in the atrium are various pieces of original artwork; they illustrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Some of Dr. King's powerful quotes are displayed on vertical banners throughout the atrium's ceiling.
- On the second floor are three exhibit rooms. One is for Dr. and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr.; the second is for Mahatma Gandhi, and the third is for Mrs. Rosa Parks. There are photographic timelines, historic photographs, text panels, and numerous personal artifacts that help tell their personal stories as global leaders of nonviolence.

In May 1996, the NPS conducted extensive exhibit rehabilitation for the King and Gandhi exhibit rooms. The design, planning, development, and installation of these exhibits were the responsibility of the National Park Service. All of the artifacts came from The King Center Collection; other graphics panels and text panels were developed and produced by National Park Service. The Rosa Parks exhibit was not on the rehabilitation schedule.

In June 2010, the park received the assistance of Harpers Ferry Center's Museum Conservation Service to assist The King Center with a condition assessment of artifacts, cases, and exhibits on display in Freedom Hall.

The King Center's main Resource Center and Bookstore are located in Freedom Hall.

The Tomb of Dr. and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In 1972, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was laid to rest in a single Tomb in The King Center's Reflecting Pool. The entombment of both Dr. and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr. was unveiled in November of 2006. Throughout the year, memorial events, such as wreath-layings, are held at the Tomb to commemorate the lives and legacies of Dr. and Mrs. King.

The Reflecting Pool and fountains received maintenance rehabilitation in 2009. A new Eternal Flame was installed in 2009.

Screening Room

The Screening Room is a multi-purpose space used for King Center events. The National Park Service has utilized this area in the past for some of their interpretive programs.

The King Center Administrative, Library, and Archives Facility

This building serves as the administrative facility and houses the King Library and Archives, and is the largest repository of primary source materials on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Library and Archives are available by appointment only.



The Tomb of Dr. and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr.
(Credit: NPS Photographer Gary Tarleton)

Martin Luther King, Jr. Preservation District ("Preservation District")

The Preservation District was established in the 1980 enabling legislation and adjoins the historic site on the east, north, and west. The western park boundary for the historic site is at Jackson Street. From there, the Preservation District begins at Jackson Street and moves west along Auburn Avenue to Courtland Street (the western boundary of the Preservation District). This district embraces the larger Auburn Avenue African American community in which Dr. King grew up. The Preservation District links Dr. King to the African American businesses and the religious, social, and political organizations that flourished along Auburn Avenue prior to and during Dr. King's lifetime.

Important African American businesses and institutions operated along Auburn Avenue between Jackson Street and Piedmont Avenue, including Prince Hall Masonic Lodge, the Royal Peacock Club, the Rib Shack, the Atlanta Daily World, WERD Radio, the Butler Street YMCA, the Odd Fellows Building, Haugabrooks Funeral Home, and Cox Brothers Funeral Home.

Following the success of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) was established in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1957 by Dr. King and other civil rights leaders to coordinate the action of local protest groups throughout the South to defeat all forms of segregation through the use of nonviolent direct action techniques, such as marches, strikes, and sit-ins. In 1960, SCLC decided to rent office space from the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge, at 332 Auburn Avenue. The Masonic Lodge building is named in honor of Prince Hall, an African American Revolutionary patriot, civic leader, and founder of the first free African American Masonic Lodge in Boston, Massachusetts.

Dr. King's office was located on the first floor of Prince Hall Masonic Lodge. His office had a separate entrance with space for a receptionist/secretary in front of the separate office he maintained. Immediately above Dr. King's office was the radio station WERD—the first African American-owned radio station in the country. The radio station broadcast some of Dr. King's sermons. The establishment of SCLC headquarters at 332 Auburn Avenue enabled Dr. King to continue leading the modern American Civil Rights Movement and serve as a co-pastor at Ebenezer Baptist Church; both of these organizations were critically important to him.

The Masonic Lodge has provided the NPS access to the building and assisted the park with several studies. The NPS has conducted a structural assessment and has measured drawings of what was Dr. King's office space. The NPS also has in its collections several original SCLC items that could be considered for exhibit.

Visitors are informed about the Auburn Avenue commercial district in the following ways:

- Formal and informal interpretive talks—many well-documented events in Dr. King's life occurred in this area. These stories are often shared with park visitors.
- Wayside exhibits are placed at several key structures along the commercial district of Auburn Avenue. However, some of the waysides are vandalized and need to be replaced.
- The park experimented with conducting guided trolley tours during August of 2009; these tours were well-received by park visitors.

The park's role along Auburn Avenue's commercial district is limited to providing technical assistance to interested property owners desiring to maintain and/or interpret surviving historic structures connected to the historic period of Dr. King's life (1929 – 1968). Short and long-term recommendations for interpretation, education, and visitor services are located in the "Expanding the Visitor Experience" section of this document.



Martin Luther King, Jr. in front of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (S.C.L.C.) Headquarters, Prince Masonic Lodge.
(Credit: Courtesy, Benedict J. Fernandez)

National Park Service Interpretive Programming

The current permanent interpretive staff is composed of a GS 12 Chief of Interpretation, a GS 11 Lead Park Ranger, four GS 9 Park Rangers, one GS 7 Park Guide, and several GS 5 Park Guides. The park currently has one GS 7 Museum Technician with a not-to-exceed two-year appointment. The number of Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) student hires varies.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site also has a very active Volunteer-In-Parks (V.I.P.) Program. Volunteers support park staff in a variety of functions, especially with daily Interpretive operations.

Personal Services

The park staff offers a variety of interpretive services on a daily basis. Park interpreters are always stationed at the Visitor Center information desk in order to provide informal interpretation and site orientation to park visitors. The park provides visitors with a number of formal, educational, and outreach programs, such as the Junior Ranger program. The following interpretive program summary comes from the summer 2009 program description on the park website.



Interpretive Services
(Credit: NPS)

On Site Programs

- **Birth Home Tours – Daily**

Tour the home that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lived in from birth to age twelve. Explore the community and family life that guided this future Civil Rights leader. Thirty-minute tours are available on a first-come, first-serve basis every hour beginning at 10:00 a.m. Reservations must be made in person the day of the tour. Tours fill up quickly, and it is advised that visitors arrive early in the day. Obtain your free Birth Home tickets at The King Center’s Freedom Hall.
- **Encounter History Presentations – Daily**

Discover the history that shaped the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during this free thirty-minute ranger-led program. Information about Ebenezer Baptist Church, the Sweet Auburn neighborhood, The King Center, Dr. King and Mrs. Coretta Scott King’s Tomb, the Birth Home, and Historic Fire Station No. 6 will be presented.
- **King for Kids: Live Like a King – Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays (summer), 10:00 a.m.**

Youth ages 6 – 11 explore the childhood life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through hands-on activities. Learn about the games played, books read, clothes worn, chores done, and music listened to in the 1930s that developed Dr. King’s character. Meet on second floor of Historic Fire Station No. 6 for this free program.
- **Sweet Auburn Trolley Tours – Wednesday through Sunday, July 1 – 5, 11:00 a.m., 2:00 or 4:00 p.m.**

Board a replica historic trolley for a cruise along Sweet Auburn with a park ranger. Explore the history of Dr. King’s boyhood neighborhood and the business district that comprised one of the most influential African American communities during the 1930s.
- **D.R.E.A.M. Film Series – Every third Thursday evening (fall, winter, spring), 7:30 p.m.**

Films are presented in the Visitor Center Theater under the umbrella of the park’s Developing Racial Equality through Art and Music (D.R.E.A.M.) Series. Films address national and international issues of racial, economic, and social injustices with a focus on civil and human rights.
- **Mondays, February 2, 9, 16, and 23 – Lessons of a King – 10:00 a.m.**

Children ages pre-K through third grade can join storyteller Mama Koku as she weaves animal stories into lessons taught by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- **Tuesdays and Thursdays, February 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, and 26 – A Dream Shared By Two – 10:00 a.m.**

Children ages pre-K through third grade can join Uncle Jessie and Malcolm as they tell tales of Dr. King’s boyhood and the importance of celebrating his birthday during this 30 minute puppet show.

- **Sweet Auburn Neighborhood Walking Tours**

Available in advance by reservation for groups wishing a guided experience of the site. Explore the history of Dr. King's boyhood neighborhood and the business district that was one of the most influential African American communities during the 1930s.

Annual Special Events

The park has built a tradition of including several special events into their annual Interpretive Programming calendar; they are listed here in calendar order.

- **Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday Celebration ("King Week")**

Every year, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site commemorates Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (the federal holiday marking Dr. King's birthday) with several days of activities. Commonly referred to as "King Week," the park receives its

highest public visitation of the year during this one week in January surrounding the federal holiday. The park's primary partner, The King Center, spearheads local King Week celebrations that inspire similar events across the nation. Each year the park lends its support to The King Center to help facilitate the numerous activities held within park boundaries. One of the park's signature King Week programs is the children's birthday party honoring Dr. King, during which Dr. Christine King Farris, Dr. King's sister, reads to school children from her book *My Brother Martin*.

Various other King Week activities include increased tours of the Birth Home and Historic Site, workshops and seminars, a march and rally, the annual Salute to Greatness Dinner, and the nationally televised Commemorative Service at Ebenezer Baptist Church Horizon Sanctuary.

- **International Civil Rights Walk of Fame Ceremony**

Each year following the King Week activities in January, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site partners with the Trumpet Awards Foundation, Inc. (founded by Xernona Clayton) to present the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame Ceremony. This program features an induction ceremony for the year's distinguished honorees, as well as an unveiling of the honoree's granite footstep markers, and the exhibition of the actual shoes of the honorees used to create the footsteps.



Dr. Christine King Farris, Dr. King's sister, reading to school children from her book *My Brother Martin*, during the annual King Week celebration. (Credit: NPS)

- **Day of Remembrance**

The park annually commemorates April 4, the date of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., with a “Day of Remembrance.” This event has taken many forms over the years; activities have included Silent Walk-through tours of the Birth Home, a Saturday Concert Series in the Heritage Sanctuary, panelist discussions, and screenings of *At the River I Stand*, a film that reconstructs the two eventful months in the spring of 1968 which led to the tragic death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Audio recordings of Dr. King’s “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” and “Drum Major Instinct” sermons, as well as video footage of the funeral procession have also frequently been presented at various locations during the annual Day of Remembrance. Most recently, the Day of Remembrance was commemorated with the laying of a wreath on the exterior of Historic Ebenezer Baptist Church Heritage Sanctuary similar to the one that was placed there during Dr. King’s funeral in 1968.

- **“I Have a Dream” International World Peace Rose Garden Program**

Each year in May, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site partners with International World Peace Rose Gardens to present the “I Have a Dream” International World Peace Rose Garden Program. The event recognizes winners of the annual Inspirational Messages of Peace Contest, which invites youths from around the world to present

written messages that reflect their own unique thoughts on Dr. and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s universal messages of peace, love, nonviolence, and service. The winning messages, along with each student’s name, school, and grade, are engraved on individual plaques in the Rose Garden and unveiled during the annual program. The number of participants and participating countries has steadily increased over the years; in 2011, more than 3,300 students participated in the contest from the United States, China, and Gaza Strip.



Annual “I Have a Dream” International World Peach Rose Garden Ceremony.
(Credit: NPS)

- **National Public Lands Day**

National Public Lands Day (September 29) is a nation-wide service event that celebrates volunteerism and the importance of recreation and public lands to community health. It is the largest single-day effort for public lands in the United States. In celebration of National Public Lands Day each year, more than 100,000 volunteers (including several hundred at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site) visit their favorite parks, beaches, wildlife preserves or forests to chip in to help improve these treasured places. National Public Lands Day volunteer activities at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site vary annually, and have included projects such as painting historic houses, weeding, and mulching within the park.

- **March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom Anniversary (August 28)**

The National Park Service frequently serves as a co-host with The King Center and Southern Christian Leadership Conference to commemorate the anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom with programs and events that vary annually. Video and audio recordings of Dr. King delivering his “I Have a Dream” speech are typically presented in various locations throughout the park each year on August 28.

- **Park Anniversary**

Approximately every five years, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site celebrates its Founder’s Day, October 10, the date that the park’s enabling legislation was signed. For its 30th Anniversary in 2010, the park held a community celebration on the Birth Home Block with a 1930s theme to honor the time period when Dr. King was a child growing up in this neighborhood. The streetscape included participants dressed in 1930s period attire including paperboys delivering event-themed newspapers, a long-time community resident telling stories from the porch of one of the historic homes on the block, dancers demonstrating the moves of the era, and a uniformed Fireman explaining the significance of Historic Fire Station No. 6. Vintage automobiles lined the streets and 1930s music filled the air. A children’s pavilion gave older members of the community an opportunity to teach children the games they played growing up, such as marbles, jacks, and Double Dutch. Featured speakers included two of Dr. King’s children: Martin Luther King, III and Elder Bernice King, and one of the key highlights of the event was a book signing with Dr. King’s sister, Dr. Christine Farris, and her daughter, Angela Farris-Watkins, on the porch of the home in which Dr. King and his siblings were born.

Off-Site Programs

- **Personal Services:**

Park staff provides off-site programs for schools and community organizations within twenty miles of the park. The programs are tailored to the groups' requests and include standard talks on the life of Dr. King and the modern American Civil Rights Movement. The park establishes and operates informational booths at family reunion trade fairs, historic fairs, and conventions.

- **Non-Personal Services:**

Current Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site outreach media includes a traveling trunk. This includes copies of the park's two films, books, posters, etc.

Interpretive Publications

- Park brochure
- Rack cards:
 - KING
 - Capture The Dream
 - Ebenezer Baptist Church, 2008
 - International Rack Cards: Spanish, Japanese, German, French, Swahili, 1996
- Booklets:
 - Queens of Sweet Auburn, 1995
 - Courage to Lead, source of quotations, 2009
 - Junior Ranger, revised 2007
- Site bulletin: Jim Crow Laws
- NPS publications from other NPS units in the State of Georgia, other National Historic Sites, additional sites connected with civil and human rights themes and African American themes, Southeast Region Parks publications, National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Passes, and non-NPS publications such as the State of Georgia Historic and Natural Parks, and local points of interests.

Issues and Influences

During the Foundation and Recommendation Workshops, the park staff and stakeholders discussed challenges affecting the park and its interpretive program. The following topic summaries are written in a question format to focus attention on the specific topics park staff felt was the most important areas to address. These topic summaries were used to guide the development of the short and long term parkwide recommendations defined under the Recommendations section of this document.

Birth Home

Define/describe a future universally accessible Birth Home experience, from arrival to conclusion. Consider how to create a memorable experience while moving people from the ticket pickup point through the house tour and the conclusion in the back yard of the site. Identify what's working well now and what changes are needed to create the desired Birth Home experience.

Ninety-five percent of park visitors can't visit the inside the Birth Home; in addition to viewing the Birth Home film at the Visitor Center, are there other visitor experience opportunities the park might consider through other interpretive media?

Sweet Auburn Avenue

“The Birth Home Block”: A portion of Sweet Auburn’s residential section, commonly known as “the Birth Home Block,” is preserved. Here, as a child, Dr. King experienced

the beloved community—where families of different incomes and races lived side by side and supported each other—in spite of the sting of racism often confronted beyond the community. Describe the desired future visitor experience. Assess what's working well now and identify what changes are needed to create the desired visitor experience.

Historic Fire Station No. 6 is very important to the historic Sweet Auburn community and the park interpretively. The park has a unique opportunity to re-explore the future visitor experience at the Fire Station, once the bookstore moves to the historic house next to the Birth Home. Consider how best to use this space interpretively. Describe the desired visitor experience to be provided. What theme and critical stories should be addressed? The second floor of this facility is used for education programs and as an “after-hours,” by permit, community meeting space. Will these uses continue or be accommodated elsewhere in the park?

Sweet Auburn’s commercial district: The park would like to expand the visitor experience to include Sweet Auburn’s commercial district, including the original site of the SCLC. Describe the components of the ideal visitor experience, from pre-arrival to post-visit. Discuss the role of interpretive media, personal services, and partnerships. Assess what the park is doing well now and identify what improvements should be undertaken to fulfill the desired visitor experience. Identify specific recommendations, where appropriate.



Birth Home Block.
(Credit: NPS)

Ebenezer Baptist Church

Discuss the future desired visitor experience for the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church. Address how personal services, interpretive media, and partnerships will work together to provide a memorable and meaningful visitor experience, from arrival through post-visit. Provide a description of what visitors should experience in each area and why, including the entry vestibule, Heritage Sanctuary, choir loft, Fellowship Hall, and gift shop. Address what is working well now, what is not, and what changes need to occur to support the desired visitor experience.

In addition to wanting to learn more about Dr. King and his ministry at Ebenezer Baptist Church, many visitors are curious about the modern/twenty-first century Ebenezer Baptist Church community. How should the NPS partner with Ebenezer Baptist Church's twenty-first century faith community in order to provide some level of visitor access to the Horizon Sanctuary?

The “Uncomfortable” Topics

How does “separation of church and state” affect the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site interpretive program? What guidance would the group provide future interpreters to gain a comfort level in talking with visitors about Dr. King’s religion and his strong faith in God?

In light of the fact that a significant park feature is Dr. King’s church, what background information and reading does the group recommend all Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site interpreters receive to accurately reflect the Baptist faith—including beliefs and common church practices, Sunday services, et cetera, when speaking about Dr. King’s faith and role as co-pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church?

Dr. King and his family experienced many tragedies: his funeral was held at Ebenezer Baptist Church; his brother A.D.’s funeral also occurred here after his tragic drowning at home; later, his mother, “Mama King,” was gunned down while serving as the music director during Sunday services. These tragedies can be hard to talk about, yet most visitors want to learn more about the circumstances that affected this family and occurred here at the church. Please provide the future interpretive staff guidance regarding how to sensitively address these topics. What interpretive techniques are recommended to meet the visitor expectations described above, and at the same time lead visitors to the larger story—Dr. King’s experiences at Ebenezer Baptist Church in

connection with his youth, his ministerial duties while co-pastor at Ebenezer Baptist Church, and his civil rights leadership?

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Christian, a Baptist minister, and a civil rights leader. He used the pulpit at Ebenezer Baptist Church to encourage all church community members to live their lives by following God’s commandments. Dr. King also used the pulpit to preach how to achieve social change grounded in Christian values. Dr. King’s faith in God kept him centered and strong during times of great adversity. How should the future desired visitor experience support the following topics: Dr. King as a religious leader, Dr. King leading the modern American Civil Rights Movement through Ebenezer Baptist Church, and the role the church played in nurturing Dr. King as a child, as well as other members of the community?

National Park Service – The King Center Partnership and The King Center Facilities

During the next fifteen years, what improvements to the Freedom Hall visitor experience is The King Center considering? What elements of this experience work well, and which areas need improvement. Can the NPS be of any assistance in helping The King Center meet its long-range visitor experience goals?

Dr. and Mrs. King’s Tomb and along the Reflecting Pool and Plaza: Describe the desired universally accessible visitor

experience. What is working well, and what needs improvement?

Please address recommendations where appropriate. What kinds of interpretive opportunities should be facilitated here in the future?

Dr. and Mrs. King's Sunset Avenue property is identified for future inclusion in the park boundary. Please outline the King Family's long-range plans for this property. If timely and appropriate, describe planning needs and identify areas where the NPS can assist with preservation, research, or preparing the site as a future visitor experience.

How involved should the NPS and The King Center partnership be in the development of curriculum/curriculum-based programs and outreach to school groups?

- What innovative ways should we consider using?
- Is there an appropriate target audience, and if so, how should we reach them?

How should the National Park Service and The King Center partnership interact to provide a high-quality visitor experience? Topics to address include resources, facilities, program, and funding.

The Visitor Center

Describe the desired visitor experience; identify what's working well and what is not. How can the NPS keep the exhibits fresh and engaging? Make recommendations to improve the overall visitor experience. Include in your assessment the arrival experience from the Interstate, the parking lot, and Plaza to Auburn Avenue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Guiding Principles for Recommendations

The following principles will guide the delivery of the present and future interpretive, educational, and visitor services programs at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site:

- Interpretive messaging must go beyond race and the improvements made in the lives of African Americans to include other key points that evolved out of Dr. King’s work and philosophies, such as social, political, economic, gender, and other civil and human rights issues that affect all people. Interpretive focus: Dr. King was a visionary who led the country to a new South and a new Nation—he improved the country for all Americans. His visionary leadership changed the course of American history, garnering him international distinction; Dr. King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in December 1964.

In light of the interpretive focus: Promote the National Historic Site as an important American destination and a national park. The NPS, in its language and outreach, needs to make sure that the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site is interpreted as a park for all people. Members of the planning team all agreed that it is important that all groups know and understand that the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site is a unit of the National Park Service because Dr. King is *nationally* significant.

- The park will work collaboratively with its primary partners—The King Center, Ebenezer Baptist Church, and City of Atlanta—to provide visitors a meaningful, memorable, and safe experience. The park environment has layers of complexity that can be confusing to park visitors. The park is comprised of two districts: the National Historic Site and the Preservation District, each with differing management authorities that affect the planning and delivery of park programs and media. In addition to park facilities, The King Center, Ebenezer Baptist Church, and City of Atlanta own structures and operate features that impact the visitor experience and affect visitor access and understanding of Dr. King’s life and contributions. Further, the park’s location in urban Atlanta presents another challenge: panhandling, car clouting, and the potential for other crimes common in United States cities can impact the park visitor experience.
- The parkwide visitor experience will be emphasized in all communications with park visitors. The park will be treated as a campus, where all features are valued as equally important to understand the life and contributions of Dr. King. While visitors will always be encouraged to start at the Visitor Center, many do not. Park signage, basic information, orientation, and visitor experience planning recommendations will be

provided at all major site destinations. Currently, the interpretive emphasis focuses primarily on how to visit the Birth Home because of the very limited number of visitors that can tour the house due to structural preservation requirements, rather than providing an overview of the full range of park experiences that reflect where Dr. King “was born, where he lived, worked, and worshipped, and where he is buried.” Future on-site orientation locations, the park website “Planning Your Visit” page, press releases, and promotional tourism marketing will reflect this new programmatic emphasis.

- The park will explore a variety of methods to provide a more universally accessible visitor experience for visitors with sensory or mobility impairments. For example, the current park visitor experience requires a lot of walking between site features. The staff has observed that many visitors are elderly and have difficulty with the two-block walk from the Visitor Center parking lot to the Visitor Center. Dr. and Mrs. King’s Tomb is the park feature closest to the Visitor Center. While the park has available loaner wheelchairs, when large senior citizen tours groups arrive, all cannot be accommodated. After the long walk to the Visitor Center, for some the walk to the Tomb is a hardship endured; for others, it is, regrettably, a missed opportunity.
- The ability to provide basic information and interpretation in multiple languages is key to expanding the site’s ability to communicate with all visitors. Martin Luther King, Jr. was not only a leader of the modern American Civil Rights Movement, but also a world leader in the advocacy of peace. Today, the park is visited by people of all nations. The park will determine which language groups are the most common and work to provide updated language-specific interpretive materials in print and electronic media.
- The park will continue to reach out to youth, particularly underserved audiences, because most people from “Generation X,” “Generation Y,” and younger generations do not perceive that they have a personal connection to Martin Luther King, Jr.’s story. The entire planning team agreed that the interpretive program should include a strong educational component.
- As twenty-first century American and international visitors continue to become more technologically competent, the park interpretive program will explore and utilize new technology in a setting that interprets the historic period 1929 – 1968, in order to increase visitor access and understanding of Dr. King’s universal message of hope and equal rights for all, and to foster support for this park and the NPS.

- All park programs will highlight longstanding efforts to preserve the Birth Home Block and portions of Dr. King’s Sweet Auburn neighborhood by Mrs. Coretta Scott King and fellow Atlantans; the NPS will invite visitors to join the staff and partners of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site in the ongoing stewardship of the park.

This next section of the document is divided into three major sections:

1. Parkwide Recommendations
2. Site-Specific Recommendations
3. Expanding the Park Visitor Experience

Parkwide Recommendations

Organizational Effectiveness

Short-term Recommendations:

- Modify the park’s current mission statement in all park documents to reflect that Dr. King was one of the most influential Americans in the twentieth century:

To preserve, protect, and interpret for the benefit, inspiration, and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Jr. was born, where he lived, worked, and worshiped, and where he is buried, while also interpreting the life experiences and significance of one of the most influential African-Americans in the twentieth century.

- Incorporate in all new staff training, across divisions, instruction regarding how to handle crucial conversations with park visitors regarding race or viewpoints expressed about Dr. King’s beliefs and actions. Meanings are in people, not in words alone. Visitors bring to the park diverse points of view shaped by their life experiences. All staff must be trained in how to tactfully handle questions or statements about “hot-button” topics by responding courteously and factually, in a manner that respects an individual’s personal and civil rights. Proposed training can be accomplished in a variety of ways—through a printed “Frequently Asked Questions,” utilizing the National

Park Service’s Interpretive Development Program module “Informal Contacts,” or through the development of park topic-specific training sessions that include role playing. Veteran staff members will be especially helpful in developing this training module. The park might consider creating training videos that capture the veteran staff in action, to help model the desired interpretive behavior of new staff members.

Long-term Recommendations:

- Work with Southeast Regional Office staff to pursue writing a nomination to have the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site recognized by the United Nations’ Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization as a “World Heritage Site.”
- Initiate a planning discussion with the Southeast Regional Office regarding working with the National Park Service’s legislative office to expand the boundary—at minimum, to include the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge at 332 Auburn Avenue, the second location of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) office on the building’s first floor. The planning team feels that this location meets the legislative criteria of national significance in relation to the reason the park was established to honor Dr. King. It is here where Dr. King and his associates “worked” (referencing the park’s legislative mission statement) to organize African American churches throughout the South to defeat all forms of segregation through the

use of nonviolent direct action techniques, such as marches, strikes, and sit-ins. (For more details, see section “Expanding the Park Visitor Experience.”)

- Request funding for a park-specific visitor survey; the last survey done was in 1997, by the National Park Service’s cooperative park studies unit at the University of Idaho. A visitor survey focus group is scheduled for fiscal year 2012.

Pre-Visit

- Encourage all visitors to the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site to experience the Visitor Center first before exploring other parts of the park. Doing so helps provide both physical orientation and an interpretive overview that allows the rest of the park to be experienced in context. For visitors travelling by car, the location of the Visitor Center parking lot helps to achieve this goal.
- Continue to provide park information by telephone, mail, and the internet.
- Keep the park website accurate and up-to-date; provide consistent, up-to-date visitor trip planning information; and, where possible, include theme-related programs offered by primary park partners—The King Center and Ebenezer Baptist Church. The website is the first place most visitors go before coming to a park. A professional look, clear and concise trip planning information, up-to-date content, and exciting features

all help engage the audience in their first park experience. See website recommendations in the “Interpretive Media” section.

- Research the possibility of implementing a reservation system to meet the twenty-first century visitor expectation of advanced reservations, and improve the handling of large groups.

Explore the possibility of having a percentage of the daily tours of the Birth Home available by advance reservation. Consult with other national parks with high-volume visitation to see how they are handling reservations and large groups; how do the National Mall and Memorial Parks handle visits to the Washington Monument? Currently, they offer advanced reservations through a vendor, and on-site same-day reservations.

Part of this research would include checking with the Solicitor’s office to determine if the reservation service fee charged by a vendor is in keeping with the provision in the park’s enabling legislation that “. . . no fees shall be charged for entrance or admission to the National Historic Site or preservation district set up by this Act.”

The park could conduct value analysis to determine whether it would be cost effective to cover the cost of the ticketing service with operating funds. If so, it might prove worthwhile to move in this direction toward meeting the frequently expressed visitor goal to make advanced reservations to see the Birth Home.

Arrival Experience

Short-term Recommendations:

- Update/replace current outdoor park orientation and wayfinding panels; many are vandalized, many are not strategically placed, and some are not location-specific. “You are here” orienting maps are needed.
- Institute visitor experience planning. Identify by half-hour, one, two, and three-hour intervals what visitors can experience in the park based on the time they have available. Convey this information in multiple formats: the park website and at future information kiosks or orientation panels at key destinations and site entry points.
- Replace, repair, or remove broken elements in the promenade from the parking lot to the Visitor Center. The promenade from parking lot to Visitor Center and the Visitor Center Plaza are impressive landscape elements. However, some parts of these features have degraded over time, and others never worked as intended.
 - Waysides are deteriorating and have graffiti. The orientation wayside at the parking lot exit includes a map that is oriented the wrong way and needs to be replaced.
 - Etched granite waysides are unreadable; lettering should be filled with a contrasting color. Some lighting along the promenade needs to be repaired.

- The Gandhi statue should have an interpretive wayside and also requires minor repairs.
- At the Visitor Center Plaza, temporary signs that detract from the experience should be improved or removed.

Long-term Recommendations:

- Seek Servicewide funding to undertake a sign plan. Work collaboratively with Ebenezer Baptist Church and The King Center to address wayfinding and site identification for park visitors and exterior signage that support each organization’s operating needs. See “Wayfinding” in the “Interpretive Media” recommendations section that follows.
- Create an electronic kiosk or touch screen for all arrival destinations that provides information, orientation, and timing of current activities in multiple languages and integrates theme-related visitor program offerings by the NPS, King Center, and Ebenezer Baptist Church. Another alternative to consider is to staff an arrival kiosk in the Visitor Center parking lot closer to Irwin Street rather than John Wesley Dobbs Avenue.
- Seek funding to support the cost of conducting a Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) assessment project with the Denver Service Center. The TAG project should explore the feasibility of providing a shuttle service from the Visitor Center

parking to points of interest within the historic site for the mobility impaired; determine whether a future transportation service would improve visitor access, safety, and congestion within the National Historic Site and Preservation District; and consider early planning needs for a future satellite service to Dr. and Mrs. King's Sunset Avenue residence, if the King Family's long-range plans include providing future access to this site within the park's legislative boundary.

- Consult with the Southeast Regional Transportation Planner to develop the Project Management Information System (PMIS) funding request. Transportation is the gateway experience into many NPS units, creating a lasting impression on park visitors. Within the unique framework of National Park Service's mission, a Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) provides short-term assistance to park and regional staff who are considering transportation planning, design, and construction activities. TAG members assess background information (plans, previous funding requests, etc.) and then visit the park to explore current conditions and examine the scope and extent of transportation-related problems. Site visits typically involve field work with park staff as well as park/partner workshops to gain a better understanding of potential transportation needs. Following the site visit,

TAGs document existing park transportation conditions and develop findings and recommendations that are reviewed by park and regional staff for concurrence.

- Explore moving the current bus drop-off on Auburn Avenue to Irwin Street. The frequent loading and unloading of buses in front of Dr. King's Tomb detracts from the park experience. Relocation of this function to Irwin Street will give all visitors the same entry experience and provide for a more contemplative atmosphere around the Reflecting Pool, Tomb, and Eternal Flame. Moving the bus drop off will also restore the vista from inside the Visitor Center exhibit to the Tomb.
- Work with the City of Atlanta, local tourism industry, or a concessionaire to provide safe transportation from downtown Atlanta to the park.
- Work with City of Atlanta officials to remove panhandlers from the site. Discuss their presence on the website in the visitor safety section. While there are signs in the park, the website is silent on panhandlers and other visitor safety concerns.
- Explore developing a concession operation/opportunity, since storage of luggage while visiting the historic site is a frequently voiced need for international travelers. The future service would require security elements. In addition to serving visitors, this concession would create an economic opportunity in the community.

Interpretive Media

Please note: Additional audiovisual recommendations are discussed in the “Visitor Center” and “Birth Home of Dr. King” sections of the document.

Cell Phone Tour

- Expand 24/7 interpretive coverage through the development of cell phone tours based on different themes. Example topics include a tour of the Birth Home Block, a tour of the greater Sweet Auburn community, a tour of the churches in the neighborhood, or an overall site tour.

Cell phone tours have a similar function to standard audio tour “wands”: The listener enters a number that corresponds to a location/artifact/exhibit and hears information relating to the location/artifact/exhibit. However, in order to use an audio tour, the listener has to be physically present at the site, rent or check out a device, and learn how to use the device. Equipment rental also limits the access to the information to people who can visit the site or specific part of a site.

A cell phone tour frees a visitor to use a device they are comfortable with; they can access the tour at any time, 24/7, not just when the devices are available, and it enables the visitor to use any accessible listening technology they have in a comfortable, reliable way. A simple brochure or sheet is usually provided to guide visitors through the tour. A text version of the tour could also be available to those who are hard of

hearing or those who prefer text. Note: The cost to visitors for cell phone tours is dependent on the individual’s phone service plan.

During the product development phase, if the park retains the use rights, the content created for a cell phone tour could also be released on the web as a downloadable audio tour for use on iPods and other MP3 player devices, used in future smart phone applications, and available as a first step in creating audio description for other media. Translated cell phone tours could also be developed in the languages of the park’s primary international visitor groups to expand desired interpretive opportunities for international visitors.

Publications

Short-term Recommendations:

- Update the Unigrid brochure when necessary.
- Replace the existing foreign language brochures to reflect the current visitor experience and new scholarship.

Long-term Recommendations:

- Seek funding to translate and produce the park’s Unigrid brochure in the most predominant languages of the park’s visitor groups and in large-print and Braille formats for visitors with visual impairments.

- Work with Eastern National to develop a historic site handbook (interpretive sales item) that includes information about all points of interest—The King Center, National Park Service Visitor Center, Ebenezer Baptist Church, Historic Fire Station No. 6, and the Sweet Auburn community—for on-site use to expand self-guiding interpretive and educational opportunities. This item can be a neat take-away souvenir, too. The park should also discuss with the Association the possibility of making this publication available in the most predominant languages of visitor groups.
- Develop the ability to print free multiple language brochures, publications, and interpretive information on demand. With the advent of digital publishing, parks now have the ability to print publications one at a time, when requested (print on demand). Once key publications are translated into multiple languages; they can be stored digitally at the Visitor Center desk and then printed when needed.

Wayfinding

- Seek funding to develop a wayfinding/sign master plan for the park. Contact HFC for assistance to develop a cost estimate that includes the development of (1) a wayfinding assessment and (2) a wayfinding master plan. Note: A future scope of work should include a request for a wayfinding assessment with options for the development of a future signage/wayfinding master plan.
 - The wayfinding assessment will document all the signs in use and make recommendations for updating the signs to conform to the new National Park Service UniGuide Sign Standards.
 - The master plan will recommend the specific signs needed that reflect new sign standards for Park and Facility Identity, Road Guide and Trailblazer Signs, Visitor Information Signs, Regulatory Signs, and will include directional signs. The master plan defines specifically what signs are needed and where they should go, and includes construction drawings and specifications and a replacement/demolition plan. The master plan also addresses plausible methods for sign replacement based on funding criteria or park-specific project needs. For example, while the park may seek PMIS funding to replace

parkwide signs in one project year, the master plan could also address replacement of signs based upon the availability of cyclic sign replacement funds.

- Following the development of the master plan with prioritized sign replacement schedules and estimated costs, develop Project Management Information System (PMIS) funding requests to fabricate and install signs.

Note: HFC manages the Servicewide Sign Program. Servicewide planning needs have exceeded the capacity of HFC. The HFC Sign Program Manager/Office of Strategic Initiatives and the HFC Contracting Office work with selected vendors that will develop wayfinding assessments and master plans according to Servicewide sign standards. Future HFC wayfinding projects will be handled by HFC contractors, with an HFC Sign Program staff member assigned to serve as a Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR) to provide guidance, support, and project oversight for the park. Or, if the park has the resources, they can contract directly with the HFC-recommended vendors for these services and products.

Website

Short-term Recommendations:

- Keep the management of the park website under the Superintendent's Office until a position has been designated and/or funded under the interpretive program. The park website is one of the primary communications tools available to the park and the interpretive staff. Often in parks, the administration of the website fell to the division that was the most "computer savvy"; it is now time to seek the necessary funding support to transition this important communications tool to the interpretive program.
- Institute an annual review of the website to weed out dated materials and develop a priority list of changes to be made to the website. Create a cross-divisional park team to review the content of the website; a team review would facilitate seeing the historic site from multiple perspectives. Consider using experienced volunteers on this team.
- Add all partner-provided, theme-related visitor programs to the park events calendar.
- Adjust photos in headers, footers, and placed on pages to correct aspect ratio. Many photos are compressed vertically.
- Develop new directions for using public transportation and add the parking lot address for visitors who use online mapping services.

Long-term Recommendations:

- Identify the interpretive position and/or seek funding for the position that will have the responsibility for keeping the park website accurate, up-to-date, and exciting. Provide requisite training for this staff member and then transfer the management of the website to the Chief of Interpretation, who will coordinate parkwide communications needs with all other Division Chiefs and the Superintendent's Office.
- Implement the use of more photos of Dr. King on the homepage and other parts of the website by obtaining permission and rights. Work with partners on the use rights.
- Provide web access to all previously produced published interpretive material, such as bulletins, brochures, and historical research.
- Improve website to incorporate new media elements, including web features, videos, and audio.
- Develop a new Birth Home virtual tour on the web and kiosk in Visitor Center to incorporate new multimedia techniques and accessibility standards. The virtual tour could also better illustrate the Birth Home, using full screen panoramas and walk-through-style navigation, instead of the current map style. The inclusion of videos and historical photos would also enhance the virtual tour experience.
- Improve education curriculum tie-ins and web features for teachers and students. Web features for before and after park visits by teachers and students could be developed to enhance and reinforce a park experience tied to curriculum.
- Expand the park website to include multiple languages of predominant visitor groups; currently, the website is available in English and Spanish.

Other future website interpretive opportunities:

Blogging

- Develop a blog strategy to engage the community. Using the blogging feature in the nps.gov content management system, parks can have fully a capable blog to talk about park news, interpretive themes, restoration efforts, and historical writings.
- Develop additional online content for youth using blogging, videos, and social media links.

Podcasts

- Develop multiple podcasts to build on the story of the park and adjacent Preservation District. A podcast is a series of shows in either audio or video format that are released episodically and that users can subscribe to that are then downloaded to a media player or viewed directly on a computer or television. Podcast shows generally have a specific theme that a series would follow over the season. Some topics were discussed during the LRIP workshops, such as the SCLC, Dr. and Mrs. King's Sunset Avenue home, the greater Sweet Auburn community outside the park,

and rebroadcasting excerpts from the WERD Radio shows that were produced in the SCLC building and featured Dr. King as a speaker. A podcast series can focus on specific parts of a park's story that are not told with exhibits, tours, or through other park media.

Many units of the National Park Service are currently producing podcasts with great success. The podcasts are being used by visitors before a visit or during a visit (walking tour), or they subscribe after a visit to stay connected with the park. Some podcast episodes are also being used individually as web videos for use by educators and as special pieces on a park's website. Developing the ability to produce podcasts in a park also enables the park to create special videos for the web and for use by the media.

Social Media

- Develop a social media strategy to engage the greater community surrounding the Martin Luther King, Jr. and Civil Rights story. The online social media landscape continues to evolve, and nowhere is this more evident than among a growing number of parks that are embracing social media and engaging with users online. As they expand their online presences, these parks are recognizing how social media furthers the development of online and offline engagement with the public. With the proliferation of social media sites, the Internet continues to

advance as a truly participatory communication medium, creating opportunities for new dialogues between parks and citizens.

- Develop a microblogging (e.g., Twitter) strategy for announcing news, events, programs, web features, restoration efforts, and openings/closings. Just like it sounds, microblogging is a shorter form of a blog—but instead of details, parks give brief updates that allow them to quickly and succinctly connect to followers. Microblogging is more than just random short bursts of text; it's better characterized as short conversations in which users listen to and share ideas. Twitter is one of the most utilized microblogging tools and currently is not blocked by the Department of the Interior. Many sites start Twitter feeds to keep park followers updated with events, news, programs, web features, and openings/closings. Parks also “live tweet” events as they happen, sending a large burst of tweets over the day of the event.

Personal Services

The LRIP planning team did not have sufficient time to address recommended staffing levels or types of positions needed to support the park's desired future interpretive program. In order to be successful over the next fifteen years, it will be critical to address this program need through a different planning endeavor. Recommendations in this section will address:

- General staffing recommendations
- Strategies for expanding the park's current education program
- New program ideas brainstormed during the LRIP workshop
- Research needs documented during workshop
- How to deal with “the difficult topics”?

General Staffing Recommendations

- Prepare to conduct an in-house organizational review of the Interpretation and Cultural Resources Division regarding how well parkwide and division specific annual organizational goals are achieved with current staff levels. This program review could be conducted independently or in tandem with the following additional assessments.
 - Consult with other urban National Park Service areas with a similar organizational format; the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site's Interpretive Program is

responsible for interpretation, education, visitor services, special use permits, and collections care. Jefferson National Expansion Memorial has a similar structure. There are probably others; the Washington Office of Interpretation can help determine what other parks to consult. Find out how these parks structure their positions, including types of positions, grade level, and number of staff in comparison to the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. This comparative research may give the park management team new insight regarding how to make the most of limited staff funding and broad organizational responsibilities.

- Seek funding to support an operations evaluation, now currently referred to in NPS language as a “T-MAP,” to document and validate park assessments. Data gained from the T-MAP exercise can be used to support future requests for positions.

These assessments will help the management team determine specifically what types of future position descriptions should be written, classified, and funded to support mission critical activities. Rationale:

- The same staff that serves the visitors during the day is also tasked to work during the evenings to provide security and

information/orientation services to groups that are permitted use of the facilities after hours.

- This Division takes care of the historic objects on display and their related curatorial records.
- Interpretive staff members conduct research projects to respond to visitor requests, support other division-specific research needs, and help with parkwide project needs.

The LRIP planning team observed that the staff does a wonderful job serving park visitors on a day-to-day basis. However, they are frequently stretched beyond capacity to make headway with new programs and projects requiring research or attention to detail. It should be noted that many LRIP recommendations call for new media and interpretive programs; these future projects will be time-consuming and costly. It is critical that the proper staff is in place to ensure successful results.

Education Program

- Start with existing materials the park has already invested time in developing. Make the commitment to collaboratively update and pilot-test these educational materials with teachers to help to ensure effectiveness and that the materials meet Georgia Performance Standards.
- Reach out to District level teachers and principals to assist the staff with this project.
 - Determine whether there are associated teacher-training needs that the park needs to accommodate through the development of a teacher resource packet. If necessary, create instructional guides for educators.
 - One suggestion was to use teacher workshops to train teachers to use instructional materials. When planning future teacher workshops, utilize a ranger/teacher team program approach. Provide concrete examples of classroom and on-site, teacher-led student experiences; modeling is a very helpful and supportive method of instruction.
 - Another suggestion was to create a downloadable demonstration podcast showing how student and teacher materials can be used in the classroom and on site.
 - Continue to use the park website to advertise educational materials available and to inform group expectations prior to their arrival.
 - Consider hiring a GS 9 Education Specialist to enhance the park's overall Education Program.

New Program Ideas

- Have school contests, for example, reenacting Dr. King’s speeches.
- Create a slower-paced, more hands-on experience somewhere else in the park besides the Birth Home, so visitors get a better sense of what M.L.’s childhood was like in the 1930s. While there are many collection items that demonstrate M.L.’s childhood and family life (games, etc.) on exhibit in the Birth Home, it is very hard for visitors to have anything but the briefest impressions of daily life or to observe the period pieces that demonstrate Dr. King’s character development, childhood personality, and interaction with other family members due to the tour’s length.
- Develop curriculum to enhance the visitor experience for students in Ebenezer Baptist Church.
- Create a speaker’s series for Ebenezer Baptist Church.
- Develop a program called “A day in the life of Dr. King.” There could be one program that focuses on his life as a child and another focusing on when he served as co-pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church and President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). The second proposed program topic could provide an opportunity to give insight to visitors regarding Dr. King as a father of four and his life with Mrs. Coretta Scott King; Dr. King was a young husband and father when he returned to Atlanta and served at the church and SCLC.
- The park has also identified the importance of increasing the emphasis on the interpretation of the life and legacy of Mrs. Coretta Scott King.
- Work with Eastern National to create an interactive video and board game for people of all ages about strategies used by Dr. King during the Movement.
- If the park decides it wishes to expand its commitment to delivering education programs, determine the amount of staff time that can realistically be devoted to this endeavor. See Appendix B for guidance in new educational programming development.

Research Needs Documented During the Workshop

- Review NPS oral history collection, as well as other repositories, in order to determine where best to capture future oral history efforts. The core historic site partners—the National Park Service, Ebenezer Baptist Church, The King Center, and the City of Atlanta—need to sit down and review what has been done, define what needs to be done, and develop a coordinated approach. What is known at this writing:
 - Fifteen years ago, the NPS sponsored an oral history project; this collection is now housed at Morehouse College.
 - Ebenezer Baptist Church has an oral history project underway.

- The King Center conducted some oral histories in the 1970s.
- The team also noted that, while the Carter Center did an oral history with Andrew Young, it is important to review that history, develop targeted questions, and interview Young again, in reference to his memories of Dr. King while working with him during the modern American Civil Rights Movement.
- Develop a list of relevant individuals who should be asked to participate in an oral history interview.

How to Deal With the Difficult Topics?

How will the park prepare its staff to interpret difficult concepts such as religion?

- Provide training on the mission of the National Park Service, the park's 1980 enabling legislation; and the First Amendment. Incorporate this training as a standard and refresher element in the park's orientation program for all employees, in every division. Recommend that the park collaborate with the Southeast Regional Office of Interpretation and Office of Human Resources to develop this training module.
 - Every employee should receive a personal copy of the legislation and be able to quote the most important element from the park's enabling legislation that describes the purpose of the park

“...to preserve, protect, and interpret for the benefit, inspiration and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Jr. was born, where he lived, worked, and worshiped, and where he is buried...”

in order to help each employee develop a comfort level in discussing why the National Park Service preserves and interprets Ebenezer Baptist Church.

- Employees should also be aware of the Memorandum of Agreement in place between the park and the church, and how this agreement facilitates the National Park Service to preserve the church, and provide interpretation and visitor services.
- Develop a standard form letter to address this topic and have it reviewed by an NPS solicitor prior to use. If visitor questions or concerns are not alleviated, offer to take their name and address, and let them know the park Superintendent will be happy to send them a letter explaining National Park Service policy and guidelines regarding use of government funds for the restoration of Ebenezer Baptist Church's Heritage Sanctuary and the interpretive program operated by the park at the church.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site employees must have a clear

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

- Excerpt, United States Constitution

understanding of how the First Amendment relates to their role as a Federal employee who works at the national park that preserves one of the places where Dr. King “worked” and “worshipped”: the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church. They need to have a clear understanding of what the United States Constitution prohibits and allows. In addition, all employees must also have a clear understanding of appropriate remarks and conversations with visitors while on the clock as a National Park Service employee (especially in uniform), versus what is allowable as a citizen practicing free speech during off-duty hours.

- It is important to remember that a portion of the interpretive program is presented in Ebenezer Baptist Church; by legislation, the park commemorates the life and accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the great civil rights leader—who was a Baptist minister. It’s crucially important that all NPS staff members are clear on their roles and responsibilities as Federal employees and very comfortable answering questions about the National Park Service’s work here, because many individuals in the public are confused or express concerns about First Amendment issues and ask questions regarding the separation of church and state.

Specifically, employees may be asked why the NPS is involved in preserving and interpreting Ebenezer Baptist Church.

It should be clear to all employees, especially when providing interpretive services to visitors, that it is not the employee’s job to promote the Baptist faith. Instead, their job is to describe, explain, or provide basic information to accurately reflect Dr. King’s faith life.

Guidance—interpreting Dr. King’s religion and his strong faith in God

- Use direct quotes from Dr. King’s sermons and speeches to illustrate interpretive messages and/or answer visitor questions. Know the source cited; specifically, be able to state when and where Dr. King said or wrote what the interpreter has quoted.
 - The planning team outlined some key elements that can be shared / explained regarding the Baptist Church:
 - The Baptist religion is a Christian Protestant tradition.
 - Each Baptist church is a “free church.” There is no hierarchy above the pastor. The pastor is answerable to the congregation/faith community.
 - Interpretive discussions also can address why, in times of discord, pastors of churches in the segregated African American community were sought out by leaders

of the white community. Many well-documented examples provide insight in both Reverend King, Sr. and Dr. King's interactions with Atlanta community leaders.

- To become a Baptist, one must be baptized by immersion in water.
- Dr. King was raised in a family with a strong theological tradition and became a fourth-generation minister.
- The Baptist Church plays a strong and traditional role in the life of many African Americans, and Ebenezer Baptist Church is part of this theological family. The Baptist Church theological tradition has a heavy emphasis on social justice.

Recommended reading

- The planning team recommends the following background reading to accurately reflect the Baptist faith, Ebenezer Baptist Church, and the restoration of the church:
 - Baldwin, Lewis V. *The Voice of Conscience*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
 - Frazier, E. Franklin, and Lincoln, C. Eric. *The Negro Church in America/The Black Church Since Frazier (Sourcebooks in Negro History)*. New York: Schocken Books, 1974.

- National Park Service. *Ebenezer Baptist Church Historic Structure Report, 2001*.
- Ridgeway, Benjamin C. *Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church (Images of America)*. Mt. Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2009.

Interpretive topics to address regarding Dr. King, his faith, and Ebenezer Baptist Church

- Describe the influence of “the church” on Dr. King. Dr. King was actively involved in church activities as a child. He attended Morehouse, Crozier Theological Seminary, and Boston University. He became a fourth-generation minister.
- Dr. King's career as a minister:
 - As a student minister coming home to preach at Ebenezer Baptist Church
 - His time as senior pastor at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, 1954-1960
 - His life as a co-pastor at Ebenezer Baptist Church and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference ministry, 1960-1968
- Dr. King's funeral at the church; in addition to a description of the event, include a discussion of the number of national and international dignitaries that attended.

- Be prepared to answer the *question* “Why didn’t Dr. King have a state funeral?” Today, many visitors do not realize that Dr. King never held a public office. The world did not see him then, as most Americans see him now. *Answer:* Dr. King was a minister; he worked to help people. He was a private citizen who led the country toward change. Because of his civilian status, his funeral was held at Ebenezer Baptist Church. If during that period there were some who sought to honor Dr. King with a state funeral, the personal experiences Dr. King had with Georgia Governor Lester Maddox regarding the desegregation of restaurants and other public facilities, and the political climate in 1968, made utilization of the Georgia State Capitol for Dr. King’s wake and funeral a political impossibility.
- The role of Ebenezer Baptist Church and church members in the Civil Rights Movement. Reverend King, Sr. played a strong leadership role in using this church to seek social justice. (See: King, Martin Luther, and Riley, Clayton. *Daddy King: An Autobiography*. Morrow, 1980.)
- The role of the church as the social center of the Sweet Auburn community. It is also important to mention that there were four major African American churches in this community: First Congregational; Big Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, which is the oldest African American church in Atlanta; Wheat Street Baptist Church; and Ebenezer Baptist Church. These churches were

connected to many other African American fraternal organizations and businesses that supported and were interconnected within the segregated African American community.

Addressing the “sensitive” and tragic occurrences associated with Dr. King’s Family and Ebenezer Baptist Church

Specifically, Dr. King’s funeral; the 1974 murder of Dr. King’s mother Mrs. Alberta Williams King and Deacon Edward Boykin, and the wounding of three others in the Sanctuary; and the tragic death of Dr. King’s brother A.D. in 1969.

- Know the facts and train the staff to share them in a straightforward manner when questioned. Answer these questions when they come up, but don’t focus on the murders and funerals. Emphasize that in difficult times, the church is a source of stability for the community.
- Remember that tragedy, death, and funerals are all universally understood concepts. For the members of Ebenezer Baptist Church, the church is at the center and a vital part of the community. People look to the church to gather and support them in times of sadness and joy (weddings and baptisms) and other church-related social occasions.

Partnerships

- Have quarterly meetings at the chief executive office level between the National Park Service, Ebenezer Baptist Church, The King Center, and the City of Atlanta to discuss long-range planning needs and joint opportunities.
- Each organization may have access to unique funding sources that can be applied to projects that improve the visitor experience, programming, park preservation, and outreach. Define shared priorities and look strategically at funding sources.
- Work to improve internal communications regarding projects, programs, and new information / research discovered that all partner staff should be aware of in order to better serve the public, in whatever capacity they work.
- Develop a single calendar of visitor activities for the general public that features programs offered by each partner and available to all interested visitors.
- Seek funding for an economic impact study to demonstrate to the community what the NPS and The King Center bring to the community.
- Develop a single sign system for all three entities; see arrival experience and interpretive media recommendations.
- From the visitor experience perspective, the historic site is one campus with many different features. There is an interpretive opportunity to help visitors understand the unique partnership at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site by interpreting Mrs. Coretta Scott King's role in establishing the Center and her desire to have the National Park Service assist with providing support for programs and services for the general public. While most visitors come with a focus to learn about the life and contributions of Dr. King and his message of hope for equal rights for all, many also have an interest in Mrs. King and would be interested in discovering her role in the park's establishment.
- Undertake new joint programming and projects.

Site-Specific Recommendations

Visitor Center

Summary Visitor Center Exhibit Recommendations:

The Visitor Center’s main exhibit, *Courage to Lead*, was installed in 1996. Ideally, a major exhibit should be replaced after approximately 20 to 25 years (2016 – 2021). In that timeframe, physical structures deteriorate, and equipment (lighting and AV) becomes obsolete. Equally as important, with the passage of time, the interpretive focus may need to shift due to changes in twenty-first century America and as visitor understanding of 1960s history changes. New exhibits will be informed by subsequent events, including the 2008 election of Barack Obama, the first African American President of the United States, and by the analysis of a new generation of historians studying the impact of Dr. King’s work.

- Short-term recommendations: The current exhibit still has some useful life and will be in place for several more years. This is long enough to justify rehabilitation of elements that need repair or updates. A detailed summary of short-term repair/rehabilitation elements for the Visitor Center lobby; the main exhibit, *Courage to Lead*; and the children’s exhibit, *Children of Courage*, is listed below. Contact Harpers Ferry Center (HFC) to assist with the development of a cost estimate for submittal in the PMIS funding request system.

- Long-term recommendations: Seek HFC assistance to prepare a cost estimate for development of a high-quality exhibit with AV and three-dimensional elements. The cost estimate would include planning, design, construction, installation, and contingencies. The replacement exhibit should be designed to appeal to the widest possible audience, including children, and will need to meet all accessibility requirements in effect at the time of development.

Request these cost estimates at the same time, so the data can be integrated into the Servicewide Facility Management Software System (FMSS). This data management system will help the park determine whether or not it would be more cost-effective to update the current exhibit; then, submit later the funding request for a design/build contract to replace the exhibit sometime between 2016 and 2021. Or, if more cost effective, move forward with the funding request for a new exhibit.

Note: if it is determined that making the short-term repairs first is the best next step, HFC can help develop a repair/rehabilitation strategy based on anticipated funding. The short-term repairs could be addressed as part of one funding package or divided into smaller funding packages with similar elements.

Detailed Short-term Exhibit Recommendations:

Visitor Center Lobby

- Relocate the *Children of Courage* exhibit from the Visitor Center lobby. The Visitor Center lobby works best as a large, open space. The Children of Courage exhibit located here dominates the space and blocks sight lines. One option is to dismantle the exhibit from its current circular configuration and install the various exhibit components on the walls of the Visitor Center lobby. Another option would be to relocate the exhibit to the space vacated by Eastern National in Historic Fire Station No. 6. This venue has audiovisual capabilities, and the showing of the companion *Children of Courage* movie could move to this location as well.
- The *Children of Courage* exhibit was designed to be temporary; to remain useful, it will need frequent rehabilitation and eventual replacement. When new permanent exhibits are developed to replace the main *Courage to Lead* exhibit, elements engaging for young people should be integrated so that a separate children's exhibit is not necessary.
- Add seating for visitors within the main exhibit and in the lobby.
- Consider the addition of a bronze statue of Martin Luther King, Jr. to the center of the lobby. At one time, a life-sized photo cutout of Dr. King was located in the exhibit area. It was very popular with visitors; many had their picture taken in this spot. A new, artistic sculpture in the lobby would be a permanent, high-quality version of this concept, providing an appropriate welcome to visitors. New custom benches formed in a semi-circle around the statue would give visitors a place to rest, wait for other members of their party, and view the statue.
- Improve acoustics in the Visitor Center lobby. The lobby is filled with hard surfaces; lobby acoustics are not conducive to conversation, thought, or study. Control of sound spill coming from the exhibit hall would help somewhat. For best results, sound-absorbing banners and panels should be added on lobby walls and ceiling; these could also be used for graphic purposes—for example, quotes from Dr. King's speeches. In addition the lobby could be partially carpeted, similar to the way the *Children of Courage* exhibit area is now treated.

Courage to Lead Exhibit

- Improve the lighting, sound, video placement, and exhibit accessibility elements. Recommended changes would make the exhibit pods more inviting and take on some characteristics of a mini-theater. A seat or small bench in each pod should be provided for visitors who want to spend more time. Other recommended changes include:
 - Improve exhibit accessibility by
 - Increasing the font sizes of some exhibit text
 - Adding an audio description system for the visually impaired
 - Providing assistive listening for those with hearing impairments
 - Request HFC to evaluate the audio delivery system in the *Courage to Lead* exhibit. The goal: to improve the experience for all visitors—not just those with hearing impairments. Multiple audio sources interfere with one another, and the existing directional speakers are not effective. The competing sound from exhibit pods makes it difficult to listen and concentrate on the compelling audio content presented. An HFC audiovisual technician can assess problems and potential solutions with exhibit sound. The goal should be to isolate the sound in individual exhibit pods and reduce overall noise to a fraction of its current level in the exhibit.
 - Request HFC to evaluate the current status of copyright permissions on the *Courage to Lead* exhibit, which may need to be updated.
 - Improve exhibit lighting treatment. The exhibit pod lighting system is ineffective. Focused straight down, the lights do not illuminate the graphic panels well. These lights were meant to edge light the glass panels so that etched text on the glass would glow and be readable. Unfortunately, the black metal frame on the top edge of the glass panels defeats this goal. A system using LED strip lights should be considered for the exhibit pods. This change would improve the illumination of the graphics and energy efficiency.
 - Improve the interpretation and evaluate the placement of the original funeral wagon in the main exhibit. Short-term solutions need to be developed for preservation and security of this important artifact. If the wagon is going to remain on display permanently, its place in any new permanent exhibit will need to be carefully considered.

- Retain the flexibility of the D.R.E.A.M. Gallery space for temporary exhibits or as meeting space. The D.R.E.A.M. Gallery is currently used for temporary exhibits. It was originally designed as a classroom/multipurpose space. This space gives the park flexibility in responding to unanticipated future needs, whether for a meeting space, temporary displays, or other kinds of complementary programming.

Permanently adding this area to the main exhibit hall is not recommended. The current exhibit area is appropriately sized and already contains media that takes two to three hours to view in its entirety. A larger, permanent exhibit would contribute to visitor fatigue and take time away from other activities throughout the park that may provide a more varied experience.

Long-term Exhibit Recommendations:

- Toward the end of the fifteen years this LRIP is designed to address; request a new exhibit to replace the *Courage to Lead* exhibit. Seek an HFC cost estimate for replacement. The replacement exhibit should be designed to appeal to the widest possible audience, including children, and will need to meet all accessibility requirements in effect at the time of development.

Visitor Center Theater and Audiovisual Programs

Theater

Short-term Recommendations:

- Continue cyclic maintenance and repair of audiovisual equipment. The Visitor Center Theater is overall in good condition. The lighting, sound, and video systems are in working order but need to be upgraded. Additional track lighting is needed to illuminate the space. The speaker system in the Theater has never been upgraded since its installation in 1996.
- Improve the Theater signage. It needs to be more prominent in the Visitor Center lobby. This sign could take on the look of Auburn Avenue's historic Royal Peacock Club.

Long-term Recommendations:

- Upgrade current Theater in the Visitor Center to include a new 16:9 HD projection screen, high-definition video projection equipment, new pathway lighting, surround sound, and entry signage into Theater.
 - The current screen is a small 4:3 retractable screen with a caption board below. In the future, the screen should be enlarged to a new permanent 16:9 screen with no caption board, since all new films are now open captioned.
 - Lighting in Theater during films is adequate but relies on small residential home night lights plugged into wall for pathway lighting; this should be upgraded to a permanent lighting solution.
- The drop ceiling is white and reflects light from projection; in the future, the ceiling could be painted a flat black or raised.
- The speakers seem to be adequate for current stereo sound productions, but as new films are created in the future, an upgrade to a surround sound system will be needed.

Audiovisual Programs

Short-term Recommendations:

- Create multiple language subtitles for the three films used in visitor orientation: *New Time*, *New Voice*; *Children of Courage*; and the *Birth Home Tour* video. These films should be available with subtitles for any language that has a significant visitor population.
- Change current audiovisual programming in the Visitor Center Theater.
 - Use *New Time*, *New Voice* exclusively as the primary orientation film in the Visitor Center; this film provides excellent contextual information on Dr. King's contributions and the need for the Civil Rights Movement.
 - Seek other venues to show the *Birth Home Tour* video and *Children of Courage*.
 - Start showing the *Birth Home Tour* film only at the time when tickets to the actual Birth Home Tour are not available and until the

recommended new venue for this film is established.

- With only 5% of visitors having access to the Birth Home, it is imperative that visitors have an alternative experience that includes a film. In the future, the current *Birth Home Tour* film should be shown regularly near the Birth Home in an adjacent house or other facility to help offset the need for the film to be shown in the Visitor Center once tours are filled for the day.
- Currently, several films on different aspects of Dr. King and the modern American Civil Rights story are shown daily at the park Visitor Center auditorium. This plan recommends using *New Time, New Voice* exclusively as the primary orientation film in the Visitor Center, rather than cycling all of the available films through the Visitor Center Theater. Other park venues should be established. In the future, the *Birth Home Tour* film, for example, would be available in the Birth Home orientation and interpretation center described later in the Birth Home recommendations section.
- and full of mischievous tricks the boys played on the family. (See site-specific Birth Home recommendations.)
- Evaluate the orientation film *New Time, New Voice* at the time the park is preparing the final cost estimates to replace the *Courage to Lead* exhibit. Evaluators should consider whether the film is dated due to new scholarship and technology. If a decision is made to move forward and develop a companion exhibit/parkwide orientation film, the future film should:
 - Be inspirational in its approach, highlighting Dr. King’s leadership of the civil rights movement and his contributions to the nation. Inclusion of historical context is critical.
 - Focus on the community he loved—“where he was born, where he lived, worked, and worshipped and where he is buried.”
 - Be at most 20 minutes in length, so that during the park’s busy season, it is possible to show the film every half hour and move visitors easily in and out of the Theater.

Long-term Recommendations:

- Develop a new Birth Home film, as part of the new Birth Home orientation and interpretive center. The new film should include living history actors, an historical street scene of Auburn Avenue, and “a day in the life of M.L.” The daily life of the King Family was dynamic, exciting,

Birth Home of Dr. King Recommendations

The planning team defined the vision of the future Birth Home experience. Every visitor will be able to:

- Identify where the Birth Home is located.
- Get clear information through signage and pre-arrival information on its location and how to get tours.
- Understand the significance of family in Dr. King’s life and the experiences that occurred at this residence.
- Understand preservation issues.
- Tour the home no matter their physical capabilities.
- Tour the Birth Home virtually and use the most up-to-date electronic media to enhance the virtual tour experience.
- Get information in the most common international languages, including Braille.
- Get information if hearing impaired.
- Participate in a universally accessible group tour.
- Always have the opportunity for personal interaction with a live ranger in the Birth Home.
- Have a safe experience (i.e., without fears of traffic and panhandling).
- Negotiate the ticket process with ease. (It is very confusing to the visitor now.)
- Have the ability to make advance reservations.
- Receive paperless or electronic tickets.

Background

As the park moves to establish a broader Birth Home experience through the use of additional supporting interpretive facilities in historic structures next to the Birth Home and along the Birth Home Block, where possible, these aforementioned goals will be integrated.

It is the long-term goal of the park to expand the Birth Home Tour beyond a stand-alone tour. There are several unoccupied historic homes nearby, where a Birth Home orientation film could be shown; they include space for expanded exhibits on Dr. King’s childhood, family, and neighborhood. These future exhibits could potentially provide an opportunity to exhibit other original artifacts connected to his childhood. For example, during the workshop it was learned that the archives of the local Boy Scout Council include records showing that M.L. was a scout and his father, “Daddy King,” a scout master.

The Birth Home Tour is one of the most popular visitor experiences at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. The park currently allows a maximum of 15 visitors per Birth Home Tour. Group size is limited for Birth Home Tours due to confined spaces, to enable tour guides to maintain contact with all individuals on a tour, to reduce the likelihood of separated parties, accidents, or resource damage, and to provide for a high quality visitor experience. In the future, the park will need to establish appropriate carrying capacities for the Birth

Home according to applicable preservation and protection standards for both the historic home and the museum collections on display.

Currently, during peak visitor season, due to the visitor use limit, only about 5% of those coming to the park actually tour its interior. The percentage of visitors who want to tour the house but cannot be accommodated is unknown, but is certainly much higher than 5%. Alternatives for satisfying this demand include increasing the capacity of the house and/or providing alternative but related visitor experiences.

Increasing the house capacity for tours is a complex issue involving park operations and preservation. Future studies could, in fact, conclude that the use of the house for tours should be reduced rather than increased. However, several points that arose during the LRIP recommendations workshop are included in this report for consideration in subsequent studies.

- There is likely a trade-off between the quality of experience and the number of people who can be accommodated in the Birth Home.
- As with most historic structures, physical accessibility is an issue. In 2011, a wheelchair-accessible lift was added to the rear of the Birth Home to allow access to the second floor for individuals with limited mobility.

- More people could experience the house if the tour were shortened and limited to the first floor. Tours would still need to be time-ticketed and organized into discrete groups, since climate control of the house must be maintained.
- Eliminating visitor access to the second floor would alleviate some of the preservation and accessibility issues. The major disadvantage is losing the birth room as part of the tour.

In any conceivable scenario, not all visitors who want to tour the home can be accommodated. However, all visitors should have the opportunity for a meaningful Birth Home experience. A combination of interpretive media and improvements to the Birth Home Block can accomplish this goal.

Short-term Recommendations:

- Review engineering reports to determine appropriate carrying capacity level for year-round use.
- Experiment with tour variations—for instance, provide short first-floor tours most of the day, occasionally interspersed with longer, more in-depth, tours at various intervals. To supplement a shorter experience within the house, tours should be accompanied by exhibits and/or AV, as described below.
- Develop a print-out of a Birth Home Tour in Braille and the other most common languages reflecting predominant international visitor use.

- Experiment with expanding the seasonal interpretive Trolley Tours along Sweet Auburn’s commercial district to the Birth Home Block.
- Continue to show *Birth Home Tour* video when tickets run out. Seek to screen the *Birth Home Tour* film in a new venue located in an adjacent house to the Birth Home or other facility. With only 5% of visitors having access to the Birth Home, it is imperative that visitors have an alternative experience that includes a film. In the future, the current *Birth Home Tour* film should be shown regularly near the Birth Home, in an adjacent house or other facility, to help offset the need for the film to be shown in the Visitor Center. As of 2011, the *Birth Home Tour* film is now offered in Historic Fire Station No. 6.

Long-term Recommendations:

- Establish a visitor orientation and interpretation center very close to the Birth Home. Tickets for the Birth Home Tour would be distributed here (advance tickets could also be available online, especially for more in-depth tours). Visitors would be encouraged to stop here first for an introduction to gain an understanding of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s boyhood and family, and how the surrounding neighborhood influenced him. The existing house at 491 Auburn Avenue could be used for this. Alternatively, a new structure could be built across the street, similar in appearance to the store that once stood at that location; or the nearby double shotgun

houses could be considered for this use as well. Other suggestions include:

- Construct new exhibits in the proposed Birth Home orientation and interpretation center to provide background information and relate some of the stories now presented on the tour. This would help prepare tour participants for what they see in the house, and would also be valuable for non-tour-goers.
- Build a dollhouse-sized cut-away model of the home. This would help orient tour and non-tour-goers alike to the physical layout of the house.
- Create other exhibits describing the family and family life in more detail. These exhibits could include oral histories from the King Family or those who knew them at the time. The existing Birth Home Tour video and the interactive computer program could also be available at this location for those who do not tour the house.

Audiovisual Needs

- Develop a short orientation film focused on the King Family in the 1930s to complement the desired Birth Home experience the site is currently planning. Use living history actors and an historical street scene of Auburn Avenue, and explore “a day in the life of M.L.” The current film for the Birth Home replicates a walk-through tour of the home, lacking the use of actors or ranger guides. The daily life of the King Family was dynamic, exciting, and full of mischievous tricks the boys played on the family. This film should introduce M.L. during his childhood and the family that shaped his early life, and prepare visitors to experience the house.
- During the Birth Home Experience exhibit design process, determine what location near the Birth Home is the best venue to show the *Birth Home Tour* video when tour tickets run out. Options would include one of the nearby historic structures or a mini-theater within the historic structure that will house the Birth Home exhibits.
- By augmenting the guided tour with additional interpretive media focused on Martin Luther King, Jr.’s early years at 501 Auburn Avenue and the Sweet Auburn neighborhood, some pressure is removed from the house, while providing greater context to the story. Interpretation associated with these years should also be expanded within the Birth Home Block.

Birth Home Block Recommendations

Short-term Recommendations:

- Use the Birth Home Block as an interpretive extension of the Birth Home story. Recreate the vibrancy of the Birth Home Block by
 - Utilizing streetscape elements (brick street, cars, clothes lines, bicycle on a porch, etc.)
 - Providing costumed interpretive tours and roving interpretation during the busiest seasons and special events. Build upon the costumed interpretive tours experimented with on the 30th Anniversary community celebration.

These elements would combine to impart the flavor of 1930s Sweet Auburn. In addition, improving the street scene would provide a backdrop for ranger-led neighborhood tours, adding another alternative to the Birth Home tour for visitors.

- Evaluate current waysides to determine whether any additional interpretive waysides are needed to address important concepts discussed in themes: “Segregation and Struggle;” “Childhood and Character;” and “Church and Community.”
- Institute Birth Home Block tours as a means of providing a guided tour experience for large groups—particularly family reunions that come to the site during the summer months and desire a ranger-led Birth Home Tour. It is important to remember that, owing to preservation needs and the NPS mission,

the NPS will never be able to accommodate all who desire to enter the historic house. Although the tour would only pass by Dr. King’s childhood home, and perhaps spend some time in the site’s backyard, this tour would help to alleviate a public relations challenge. An important part of this walk would be to discuss Dr. King’s childhood and the influence the Sweet Auburn community had on Dr. King throughout his life.

Long-term Recommendations:

- Work with Atlanta city officials to greatly reduce or eliminate through-traffic from the Birth Home Block, both for safety and experiential reasons.
- Review the existing Cultural Landscape Report, Birth Home Historic Structure Report, related oral histories, and other archives; there may be some elements that could be restored that would add additional visitor interest in the backyard of the Birth Home.
- Restore, furnish, and staff the interior of one or more shotgun homes, so visitors have the opportunity to visit another restored residence in Dr. King’s childhood neighborhood.
 - During the limited time visitors spent in the Birth Home, it is difficult to absorb what everyday life was like for M.L. growing up in the 1930s. A restored historic house museum/shotgun house, open to all visitors without tickets, would provide

expanded opportunities for interpretation in a more relaxed setting.

- Another exhibit idea discussed: During Dr. King's childhood, the shotgun houses were occupied by poorer families. Dr. King's childhood exposure to the impact of poverty led him to dedicate his life both to civil and human rights. One interesting topic to explore in a future shotgun house exhibit would be Dr. King's SCLC work to help the poor through the Poor People's Campaign—the 1968 effort to improve economic conditions. Earlier, in 1966 he moved his family temporarily to Chicago. They lived in the community on the West Side of Chicago and rented an apartment in a neighborhood commonly referred to as a “ghetto slum.” During this year in Chicago, Dr. King and many others worked together to improve housing, wages, and job opportunities for Chicago's African American residents. This was the first time Dr. King took the focus of the Movement into a city in the northern section of the United States. Dr. King's later experiences in Mississippi further increased his commitment to working to eliminate poverty.

A critical interpretive link for this type of exhibit would be to help visitors make the connection that an important part of Dr. King's childhood was his early exposure to poverty and the impact made on young M.L. regarding how members of the Sweet Auburn community; his father, Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr.; and the Ebenezer Baptist Church community reached out to alleviate the sufferings of neighbors.

Historic Fire Station No. 6 Recommendations

Historic Fire Station No. 6, at the corner of Auburn Avenue and Boulevard, is located in the Birth Home Block. The park has a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Atlanta, which outlines how the NPS will interpret the integrated Fire Station and the relationship between the African American community and white firefighters in a segregated community. This structure currently houses exhibits on the first floor and serves as the starting point for tours of the Birth Home. The second floor is currently used as a multipurpose space for special uses, meetings, and park educational activities.

The planning team outlined the future desired visitor experience:

- Utilize the first floor as interpretive space to tell the story of the Fire Station's significance in the neighborhood and how its role has changed through a mix of exhibits and scheduled interpretive programming.
- Continue to use the second floor as a large meeting space for NPS and community use.
- Improve visitor understanding of the historical importance of this Fire Station to the Sweet Auburn community. It was critical to the infrastructure of the community. The Fire Station was an attractive place for M.L. and his friends to visit and "hang out" as children.
- Explain what firefighters did during the period of Dr. King's childhood and then move to interpret how the racial composition of Fire Station employees changed due to the modern American Civil Rights Movement and Dr. King's influence.
- Discuss how fire stations have evolved over the years and the role they continue to play in communities.

Short-term Recommendations:

- Raise the profile of the Fire Station at the sidewalk and front building façade by developing an exterior wayside, placed nearby to interpret and help draw visitors to the historic structure. The future wayside would also provide basic interpretation after hours.
- Experiment with scheduled programs in the downstairs exhibit space. Programs could range from informal station interpretation in period costume, during which a staff member or volunteer would discuss the role of the Fire Station in the community, or as the starting point for tours of the Birth Home Block.
- Continue using the second-floor area for scheduled children's programs, as a large meeting space for park and community use, and as storage space for props and other interpretive materials. During the workshop, some future programming ideas discussed included:
 - Use as a lunchtime program area where families can join a ranger for an interpretive program.

- Use as a location to stage lecture series related to the community and talks by key figures (e.g., descendants), and for theme-related book signings.
- Offer NPS-sponsored career events, such as how to prepare a résumé to apply for federal jobs and interviewing skills. Collaborate with local colleges and universities.

Long-term Recommendations:

- Seek funding for new exhibits for the Fire Station.
 - Provide glassed-in exhibit access to view the 1927 American LaFrance fire engine currently on exhibit. During operating hours, the historic arched wooden Fire Station doors should remain open. The entryway would be glassed in (and include glass doors), to allow a view from the street and sidewalk inside. Visual access would encourage visitation.
 - Exhibit features should include the stories of firemen who worked at the station over time. This approach could form the basis of a storyline for exhibits, highlighting the 1930s, when a young M.L. interacted with the white firemen who worked in the segregated Fire Station, and the modern American Civil Rights era of the 1960s, when the station became one of the first in Atlanta to be integrated.
 - Consult with the Metropolitan Firefighters Association as a partner to create an accurate depiction of a 1960s period fire station with appropriate memorabilia.
- Contact firefighters and descendants of firefighters. They may have personal histories or historic items of interest.
- Note: There is a children’s book in the bookstore that explains the Fire Station experience for neighborhood kids in the 1950s. Use this book as a resource or interpretive tool.
- Children are especially attracted to the activities around a fire station, so this would be another good opportunity to target exhibits to young people. Objects like the fire bell, fire pole, and hose-drying area could be incorporated into the design of the exhibits. The 1927 American LaFrance fire engine is an impressive object that would draw visitors into the space, especially if visible from outside, through the glassed-in doorway. It also fits well with the 1930s era story of young M.L. in the neighborhood.

Ebenezer Baptist Church Recommendations

During the recommendations workshop, ideas were explored about possible theatrical or exhibit media elements, such as using a hologram of Dr. King within the Sanctuary. However, following a discussion with Harpers Ferry Center media specialists regarding the space and amount of equipment required for these types of presentations, all workshop participants agreed that the aforementioned type of use would preclude other uses and activities that are more in keeping with the historic use of the Sanctuary. The LRIP team unanimously agreed that the most appropriate and effective uses of the Heritage Sanctuary include:

- Staff-provided programs that address interpretive theme three, Church and Community, and three supporting concepts under interpretive theme four, Leadership and Legacy.
- As an auditorium space for live programs, such as concerts and lectures.
- To hear audio recordings of church music and Dr. King's sermons and speeches, especially those that were recorded in the Sanctuary.
- As a place where visitors can reflect and draw personal meaning from the life and accomplishments of Dr. King and contemplate the historic events that took place there.

Interpretive Themes to Address at Ebenezer Baptist Church

Theme Three: Church and Community

Ebenezer Baptist Church and the Sweet Auburn community embodied the persona, spirituality, passion, and career of Dr. King.

Supporting Interpretive Concepts:

- Ebenezer Baptist Church was the Christian foundation of Dr. King's spirituality, values, philosophy, and social activism.
- The Heritage Sanctuary of Ebenezer Baptist Church is where Dr. King preached and delivered several of his most important sermons and speeches.
- Dr. King was a Baptist minister from a multigenerational heritage of ministry leaders; his father and grandfather collectively led Ebenezer Baptist Church for more than 80 years.
- Ebenezer Baptist Church serves as an example of many churches during America's long Civil Rights Movement that were actively involved in social and political activism. Through the pastor's leadership, the pulpit was used to convince members of the church community to work to change laws that denied voting rights or imposed segregation based on the color of one's skin through peaceful, nonviolent direct action.
- Ebenezer Baptist Church served as a sanctuary for the King Family during times of happiness, tragedy, and loss.

Theme Four: Leadership and Legacy

Supporting Interpretive Concepts:

- Under Dr. King’s leadership, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) used churches to teach nonviolent direct action methods and to plan and strategize for mass meetings, marches, sit-ins, and other protests. Sometimes, the churches were safe havens for taking refuge. As a result, many churches were burned and bombed, and innocent lives destroyed.
- Dr. King was inspired and influenced by Christian principles and the writings of many philosophers and theologians: Mahatma Gandhi, Henry David Thoreau, Howard Thurman, Benjamin E. Mays, and others. Dr. King embraced many concepts from these great thinkers, integrating their ideas in his stirring sermons.
- Dr. King played a prominent role in American and world activism by “speaking truth to power” that is emulated today.

Summary: Future Visitor Experience at Ebenezer Baptist Church

Continue to provide open public access to the church, without the need for a timed, ticketed entry. Many visitors find it very appealing to have at least one venue (original building connected to Dr. King) in the park that is available immediately. The church offers an opportunity for broader connections to visitors, because it accommodates larger groups.

Personal Services

The length of ranger-provided interpretive talks in the church will vary depending on the time of year and number of visitors.

There may be times when the park will advertise the opportunity to hear Dr. King’s speech or sermon in its entirety—particularly on important historical anniversaries. In this instance, the ranger may provide the appropriate historical context prior to turning on the audio program, inform the audience regarding the length of Dr. King’s speech, and then be available for questions and informal interpretation following the broadcasted speech.

There may also be periods of use where station interpretation is the more effective interpretive technique, particularly when visitors are pressed for time and site visitation is high. When this happens, visitors can choose to move through the Sanctuary, just to see and enjoy it, or to chat informally with the staff member present about Dr. King’s life and contributions, the historic church, or any other questions they may have.

Provisions should be made for visitors who are deaf by captioning the audio programming. Relatively simple graphic panels could be located in the vestibule outside of the Sanctuary to interpret its history and importance.

Short-term Recommendations:

Personal Services

- Develop an operations plan for the entire facility.
 - Develop thematic, scheduled ranger programs—determine topics, program length.
 - Plan and implement a viable and effective orientation set-up for the vestibule.
 - Prepare a visitor access plan that addresses traffic flow, accessibility, capacity, and safety.
 - Address how to handle falls and visitor injuries.
 - Include how to handle large groups and visitor use seasonally.
- Work to establish a strong volunteer program at the church with members of the church and the local community. Consider using high school students as volunteers, as part of their high school service project credits. Use of student volunteers at the church is especially appropriate, as young M.L. gave his first trial sermon here at the age of 17.
- Continue to provide permitted evening special use for events at Fellowship Hall to organizations through proper NPS protocol.
- Collaborate with the staff of Ebenezer Baptist Church to obtain copies of its ongoing oral history project with other older church members who were involved in the church during Dr. King’s period as co-pastor.
- Since many visitors express an interest in the twenty-first century

Ebenezer Baptist Church, the planning team was asked to address how the NPS might help visitors make this connection, considering the park’s ongoing partnership with the active congregation. Recommendations regarding this topic will be addressed in the separate section, “Expanding the Park Visitor Experience”.

Media

- Possibly provide a video monitor with daily programs and other important visitor information in the church. The vestibule will be used primarily for orientation. A ranger will greet visitors here, setting the tone for their visit, while the monitor will provide informational back-up during periods of heavy visitation or if the ranger becomes involved with providing lengthier visitor assistance.
- Caption the audio programming of Dr. King’s speeches and sermons presented in the Sanctuary.
- Create graphic panels to be located in the vestibule outside of the Sanctuary to interpret its history and importance.
- Work collaboratively with Ebenezer Baptist Church to develop and place a wayside exhibit near the Horizon Sanctuary and explain its relationship with the park and the historic church across the street. The new Horizon Sanctuary of Ebenezer Baptist Church is located within the boundary of

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. This is adjacent to the Visitor Center and across the street from the historic church.

While the new church is not a visitor-use facility, its size, architecture, and location make it a prominent feature of the campus, prompting much visitor interest and questions.

- Keep a visitor comment log in Fellowship Hall and document visitor interactions with temporary panel exhibits. This information will be useful when undertaking the planning for permanent three-dimensional exhibits for Fellowship Hall.

Long-term Recommendations:

Personal Services

- Undertake an education outreach program focused on Dr. King's work connected with Ebenezer Baptist Church. Work with educators to develop curriculum to enhance the visitor experience at Ebenezer Baptist Church for students.

Media

- Identify a location within the church for a small exhibit of artifacts directly related to Dr. King's role as co-pastor. Here, conservation-grade cases with controlled lighting and humidity would display personal items, such as Dr. King's robes, Bible, and ordination certificate.
- Convert the Fellowship Hall area into a permanent exhibit space and a mini-theater. Request HFC to assist with the development of

a cost estimate for the planning, design, and installation of a universally accessible exhibit for Ebenezer Baptist Church.

- Future exhibits will present the church's role as witness to many of the central events of the modern American Civil Rights Movement. There is an opportunity here to engage visitors with both meaningful and dramatic stories of Dr. King's life. Oral histories of church members will help bring these stories to life. Fellowship Hall exhibits will also address the role of Daddy King and other King Family members in church life and as supporters of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s work, and the founding of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference here. Temporary exhibits planned for this space may provide an opportunity to refine the story and techniques that will be used in the permanent exhibits.
- Request HFC to provide cost estimates for both the conservation-grade exhibit case with lighting for the Sanctuary and the new three-dimensional exhibits for Fellowship Hall. These projects can be pursued independently of each other or jointly, depending on the funding available.

Expanding the Park Visitor Experience

During the LRIP Recommendations Workshop, the planning team was asked to consider the possible expansion of the interpretive program in four locations:

- Dr. and Mrs. King’s residence on Sunset Avenue;
- Along Auburn Avenue’s commercial district, within the park’s Preservation District;
- 332 Auburn Avenue, the location of the SCLC office in the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge;
- Connecting with Ebenezer Baptist Church’s Horizon Sanctuary.

Each location has different management authorities and requirements; site recommendations proceed in the order listed above.

Sunset Avenue Residence Recommendations

In 1965, Dr. King and his family moved to a residence at 234 Sunset Avenue in Atlanta. This property is currently owned by the King Family. The planning team was tasked to do the following:

Dr. and Mrs. King’s Sunset Avenue Property is identified for future inclusion in the park boundary. Please outline the King Family’s long-range plans for this property. If timely and appropriate, describe planning needs and identify areas where the NPS can assist with preservation, research, and/or preparing the site as a future visitor destination.

The first step in determining whether to expand the visitor experience to the Sunset property is to have this discussion with the King Family. When this conversation with the King Family occurs, the information below identifies important items to address. From the NPS perspective, it is critical that research and planning documents are completed before the site is opened to the public.

Interpretive Focus

The following statements highlight the significance of this site and can serve as a future source for the development of interpretive themes, during a site-specific interpretive planning effort:

- This was the final residence of Dr. King and where Dr. King sought refuge and enjoyed time with his family.
- Dr. King also conducted Southern Christian Leadership Conference business from this home.
- Mrs. Coretta Scott King received visitors here the day after her husband was killed, and she continued to live here until shortly before her death.

Short-term Recommendations:

- Initiate discussions with the King Family regarding long-range plans for the property. Discuss and identify areas where the NPS can assist with preservation of the historic structure and landscape, conservation of historic objects, research, or preparation of the site as a future visitor destination.
 - If NPS assistance is requested, determine the level of assistance and then prepare appropriate funding requests.
 - Determine if the King Family is open to the National Park Service's sharing historical information about this site through its interpretive media.
- Installation of a climate control (heating and air conditioning) system
 - Rectification of existing artifacts with the inventory conducted by the NPS with Mrs. King
 - Documentation of the extent of conservation, stabilization, and, in some instances, restoration required for the 2,500 objects listed in the original inventory
 - Determination of whether additional museum storage space is needed for collection items not exhibited in the residence

Long-term Recommendations:

- If, within the life of this LRIP, the King Family decides to initiate planning for public access at the Sunset Avenue residence, the planning team noted there is a significant amount of research that should be conducted to guide future preservation, restoration, and interpretive efforts, including:
 - A Historic Structure Report
 - A Historic Furnishings Report
 - A Cultural Landscape Report
 - Oral history interviews
 - Paint and wall treatment analysis
 - An Integrated Pest Management Plan
 - A Fire and Security Protection Plan
- If the King Family hopes to open this area for public access in the future and seeks NPS assistance, there are many long-range planning needs to discuss, including:
 - Visitor safety: The residence is in an area of the City that has a very high crime rate.
 - Evaluation of whether all visitor services can be conducted and supported within the house and property, or whether purchase of nearby additional property will be needed.
 - Determination of whether or how visitor parking will be provided, and/or whether transportation will be provided to and from the National Historic Site. Evaluation of the feasibility of a trolley and guided tour reservation system. The residence is approximately 4 miles from the historic site.

- The planning team noted that if a future trolley tour is developed to provide public access, a future planning team should consider a trolley tour that includes a drive past the residences of other important African Americans who lived in this area—for example, Julian Bond and the African Methodist Episcopal Bishop Morris Brown. In addition, an extended cultural tour could also be offered that includes a visit to Washington Heights, Morehouse University, and Reverend Ralph David Abernathy’s home and church.
- Develop a separate, site-specific LRIP document to determine the mix of interpretive techniques to employ, including personal services, exhibits, and self-guided experiences. The home is small; if it is historically furnished, a nearby visitor staging area with interpretive exhibit may be required. The park’s Strategic Plan notes that the adjacent property might be very useful in staging visitor use and for administrative purposes.

Recommendations for the Park Preservation District: Auburn Avenue’s Commercial District

The Sweet Auburn neighborhood is a key thread running through the park’s “Childhood and Character” and “Church and Community” interpretive themes. The neighborhood’s social structure and physical configuration shaped and supported Dr. King and his work throughout his lifetime. Sweet Auburn already plays a prominent role in the interpretation of the Birth Home and Birth Home Block, Historic Fire Station No. 6, and Ebenezer Baptist Church, all of which are within the boundary of the National Historic Site. However, there are also important stories to tell about the western, commercial, part of the neighborhood. This area is within the boundary of the Preservation District but privately held. NPS interpretation is most effective when it is site-specific—events being interpreted at the place where they happened. In the commercial district, this will require the cooperation and approval of property owners and the city.

The location of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) office is within the park’s Preservation District, at 332 Auburn Avenue in the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge. Site-specific recommendations for Prince Hall Masonic Lodge will follow the recommendations for the Preservation District.

Interpretive Focus

The interpretive focus along Auburn Avenue’s commercial district should illustrate the three lives of this area: (1) daytime (business

people), (2) family activities and use, and (3) nightlife—what kinds of fun attractions were there—and some of the interesting characters. Interpretation should convey the following aspects of Dr. King’s extended neighborhood:

- the 1930s, when M.L. was growing up;
- the 1960s, when Dr. King returns to Atlanta as co-pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church and co-founding President of SCLC;
- the dynamic of how the neighborhood changed from the 1930s to the 1960s, where possible.

Use interpretive themes two, three, and four and their related site-specific supporting interpretive concepts to guide future programming (personal services, media, and partnerships that support the delivery of interpretation) in the Preservation District.

Theme 2: Childhood and Character

The development of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s character was the result of a solid family structure and spiritual commitment that began in the home and was influenced by the Sweet Auburn community.

Supporting Interpretive Concepts

- Martin Luther King, Jr. grew up in an Atlanta neighborhood that was racially segregated; childhood incidents helped to develop his

awareness of the effects/impact of Jim Crow laws and practices on people of color.

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was raised in a family and community that valued and nurtured education.
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was raised in the Sweet Auburn community, where he experienced both the support of the “beloved community” and the sting of racism.
- The Sweet Auburn community was where Dr. King experienced a unique environment of independence, pride, progress, and opportunities, generally not available in mainstream American society for African Americans.

Theme Three: Church and Community

Ebenezer Baptist Church and the Sweet Auburn community embodied the persona, spirituality, passion, and career of Dr. King.

Supporting Interpretive Concepts

Sweet Auburn Community:

- The Sweet Auburn community fostered many organizations and businesses that actively supported the Civil Rights Movement.
- The Sweet Auburn community was a self-sufficient community nurturing all classes of people, thriving businesses, educational institutions, and diverse religious affiliations.
- The Sweet Auburn community was the “beloved community” where Dr. King grew up; this community embodied both

the American Dream and the obstacles to the fulfillment of that dream.

- The role the churches played in the Sweet Auburn community helped the community to thrive.
- Dr. King returned home to the Sweet Auburn community in 1960 and continued to pursue his religious ministry as co-pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church and his civil rights ministry as President of the SCLC.

Short-term Recommendations:

- Continue the trolley tours piloted in fiscal year 2009; add the SCLC story as one stop on the bus.
- Expand interpretation of the area on the website and through the development of webcasts, and include the area in the future cell phone tour.
- Replace damaged and missing waysides installed in the commercial district.
- Work with the City of Atlanta to rehabilitate the metal sculpture on Boulevard and Freedom that interprets seeing Sweet Auburn through Dr. King’s eyes; it is in terrible condition. The park staff receives many complaints about the sculpture, because visitors believe it belongs to the NPS and the NPS is not maintaining it. Unfortunately, the sculpture is now a symbol of decay, rather than an uplifting artwork, as it was originally meant to be.
- Research and develop resource packets on the commercial zone of Auburn Avenue (within the preservation zone) and SCLC.

Gather materials in advance to be ready for future media development.

- Research and interpret the groups and organizations within the Sweet Auburn community that were very active in the Civil Rights Movement—i.e., the National Negro Business League, the National Negro Chamber of Commerce, and the Atlanta Daily World Newspaper. The park needs to footnote their importance and interpret and remember them.
- Interpret the role the churches played in the Sweet Auburn community. These churches helped the community to thrive.

Long-term Recommendations:

During the April 2010 Recommendations Workshop, the planning team observed that urban renewal from the downtown area is beginning to touch this area. Currently, the park's role in Auburn Avenue's commercial district (Park Preservation District) is limited to providing technical assistance to interested property owners desiring technical assistance in maintaining the historic ambiance of the community during Dr. King's day. A boundary change would broaden future interpretive opportunities. It would provide the NPS with the legal authority to initiate discussions with the Prince Hall Masons regarding a future Memorandum of Agreement to provide public access to a restored exhibit featuring what SCLC Headquarters looked like when Dr. King was President. While this recommendation would present budget issues, this recommendation

is timely to consider as urban renewal continues and buildings exchange hands.

- Seek funding for a wayside proposal to identify the appropriate locations and interpretive messages for future panels in this area.
- Reach out to other organizations that share an interest in interpreting Auburn Avenue's history and its continued commercial success. Conduct listening sessions regarding how to improve interpreting this area through an expansion of current NPS activities. Potential groups to target include the SCLC, Historic District Development Corporation (HDDC), Auburn Avenue Research Library, Butler Street YMCA, City of Atlanta, APEX Museum, Management of Odd Fellows building, other local churches, Neighborhood Planning Unit, and the Sweet Auburn Business Association.
- Consider constructing a bronze map/model of the Avenue, and/or historic images for use as an outdoor exhibit under the expressway overpass. However, arrangements for security and maintenance of outdoor interpretive media would need to be addressed before a commitment is made to move forward with any of these projects. Considering the use of this area for expanded interpretation of Auburn Avenue's commercial district is especially important if Prince Hall Masonic Lodge does not become available for NPS use as a site for expanded interpretation.

- Initiate a planning discussion with the Southeast Regional Office regarding working with the National Park Service’s legislative office to expand the boundary—at a minimum, to include the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge at 332 Auburn Avenue, where Dr. King established the SCLC office on the building’s first floor. The planning team feels that this location meets the legislative criteria of national significance in relation to the reason the park was established to honor Dr. King. It is here where Dr. King and his associates “worked” (again, referencing the park’s enabling legislation) to organize African American churches throughout the South to defeat all forms of segregation through the use of nonviolent direct action techniques, such as marches, strikes, and sit-ins.

An important discussion with Southeast Regional planners should also include a discussion regarding whether the historic site should be extended along Auburn Avenue to Piedmont Street. It is important to note that, during the era of segregation, the block from Piedmont to Courtland was the historical fence line/transition zone, where the African American community ended and the white community began.

Prince Hall Masonic Lodge (Headquarters of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference)

Interpretive Focus

Theme four: Dr. King's visionary leadership of the modern American Civil Rights Movement, as shown through his philosophic words and works, changed the course of American history and redefined the American promise to include all citizens, and continues to have national and international influence today.

Supporting Interpretive Concepts

- Under Dr. King's leadership, the SCLC used churches to teach nonviolent direct action methods and to plan and strategize for mass meetings, marches, sit-ins and other protests. Sometimes, the churches were safe havens for taking refuge. As a result, many churches were burned and bombed, and innocent lives destroyed.
- Dr. King, through the SCLC, strategized with other Christian leaders to promote equality, freedom, and justice using nonviolent principles of direct action.

Short-term Recommendations:

- Provide at minimum intellectual access to this site and discuss this important aspect of Dr. King's work on the park website. Discuss the significance of this site in relationship to Dr. King's work. Clarify the site's location and provide directions to it, including parking and other important logistical information, so visitors

can have a safe and enjoyable experience.

- The SCLC office is a great example of where the use of podcasts or a web video can be very effective. This future program could show an historic view and how the space looks now—illustrating the need for restoration. In addition, use of podcasts will enable visitors to have interpretation on site if they walked there or visited electronically.
- Develop a site bulletin or a rack card.
- Create a wayside located outside Prince Hall Masonic Lodge that interprets the facility's former first floor use as SCLC headquarters during Dr. King's leadership.
- Create a special exhibit in the D.R.E.A.M. Gallery to interpret Dr. King's role in the SCLC, thus raising awareness. Include a model or vignette of Dr. King's office there.
 - Research the location of original office items in the event a future exhibit of Dr. King's SCLC office is undertaken. Original and period artifacts will better facilitate visitor connections to Dr. King work. The park owns several related items, such as one of the original SCLC signs; however, the park should work to locate other items of significance. The park is particularly interested in relocating the original SCLC and WERD call letter signs if

they still exist, or reproducing them for interpretive purposes. Review photos from the period.

- Review oral history repositories to determine what oral histories exist related to Dr. King and his years with the SCLC. Conduct additional oral history interviews of people who worked with Dr. King.
- Utilize interpretive theme four, Leadership and Legacy, and the related supporting interpretive concepts, in all future programming for this site. Note: The planning team felt that when future programming is developed—whether personal services or media—it is important to emphasize that Dr. King was a leader of all people who redefined the American promise to include all people. Do not narrowly define Dr. King as “a Black leader.”

Long-term Recommendations:

If the Prince Hall Masons receive funding to undertake planning for the development of an exhibit on the former SCLC office and desire to consult with the NPS, or, if the historic site is expanded to include Prince Hall Masonic Lodge, either circumstance would facilitate a future Memorandum of Agreement with the Masonic Lodge to expand NPS interpretation to this area. The planning team discussed and documented the following ideas to guide future interpretation at this site:

- Seek funding to restore and interpret Dr. King’s SCLC office. Note: The NPS has conducted a structural assessment and has measured drawings of what was Dr. King’s office space.
- Include in the funding request, additional money to develop an orientation film on Dr. King’s



Prince Hall Masonic Lodge.
 (Credit: NPS Photographer Gary Tarleton)

creation and leadership of the SCLC; this is a largely unknown and untold story.

model/diorama and a mini-theater presentation of the business district.

Exhibit Ideas

- Utilize the coming home to Sweet Auburn supporting interpretive concept to launch an exhibit on the Sweet Auburn community. Discuss Dr. King’s leadership role of the modern American Civil Rights Movement through the SCLC. Explain the national significance of SCLC in the modern American Civil Rights Movement. Make the connection between Dr. King’s “calling” and his life’s work as both a Baptist minister and as the leader of the modern American Civil Rights Movement.
- A videotape exists of Dr. King’s birthday party held at SCLC; play it on a loop within the exhibit.
- Develop a vignette/diorama of the SCLC workers. Include historic footage of SCLC Nonviolent Training Sessions (conducted before a march or protest) as part of the exhibit. If footage does not exist, include a filmed re-enactment illustrating these sessions.
- Provide TV clips and newspaper articles of Dr. King and the SCLC.
- Incorporate a list of SCLC members as part of the exhibit.
- While the primary focus of Prince Hall Masonic Lodge exhibits should be the SCLC story, an area could be set aside for orientation and interpretive elements for Sweet Auburn’s commercial district, including a

The interpretive focus for future exhibits should illustrate the three lives of the commercial district: (1) daytime, focusing on business people; (2) early evening, with families strolling on the Avenue; and (3) nightlife, at local establishments like the Royal Peacock Club. Significant time periods to interpret include the 1930s, when Martin Luther King Jr. was growing up, and the 1960s, when Dr. King returned as co-pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church and President of the SCLC.

- Other future exhibit ideas for Sweet Auburn’s commercial district:
 - Evaluate the existing Sweet Auburn film for use here.
 - Share oral histories of other African American businesses and institutions.
 - Include photographs that illustrate the Auburn Avenue business district street life.
 - Interpret King’s work with radio station WERD and share that the radio station broadcast some of Dr. King’s sermons.
 - Play WERD radio recordings as part of this exhibit. Note: WERD is nationally significant; it held the first radio license for an African American station in the United States.
 - Interpret the Royal Peacock Club. Use the WOW factor and describe all of the celebrities who used to come here.

Connecting with Ebenezer Baptist Church's Horizon Sanctuary

Ebenezer Baptist Church is an active faith community. The church owns two properties along Auburn Avenue:

1. The church building that Dr. King was associated with during his entire life;
2. The modern church facility.

Ebenezer Baptist Church distinguishes each Sanctuary by name. The historic church is referred to as the Heritage Sanctuary, and the modern church as the Horizon Sanctuary. The National Park Service, through a Memorandum of Agreement with Ebenezer Baptist Church, preserves the historic structure and operates the park interpretive program at the historic church under the authority of its enabling legislation to:

“...preserve, protect and interpret for the benefit, inspiration and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Jr. was born, where he lived, worked, and worshiped, and where he is buried...”

Many visitors are curious about the church community following Dr. King's assassination; specifically, whether it survived as a faith community. Others see the Horizon Sanctuary across the street from the historic church and ask park staff if out-of-town visitors are welcome to attend Sunday services. Some visitors, who came to the park during the 1996 Olympics, remember the tours of the Horizon Sanctuary led by church volunteers; these visitors ask if this program is still available. Tours

are no longer offered by the church. Since there is a strong interest in the twenty-first century church, the park asked the LRIP planning team how best to answer these frequently asked visitor questions and visitor experience expectations.

Personal Services

- Provide a simple, informative response, so as not to give the impression the NPS endorses a specific faith. In this instance, an interpreter can respond thusly:

The church is still an active faith community where all are welcome to attend Sunday services at 8:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. The church respectfully asks guests to remember, if they decide to attend, Sunday service is for worship, not a sightseeing destination. And, if you don't have the time to attend this visit, the church has a website that features some of the sermons preached by its current pastor, Pastor Warnock.

This response will help the twenty-first century church by providing basic information and may help to frame respectful visitor behavior for those expressing a desire to see the Horizon Sanctuary or experience a Baptist service.

- Reach out to twenty-first century Ebenezer Baptist Church members to join the park's Volunteer-In-Parks program during periods of recruitment and training. Ask Ebenezer Baptist Church to inform members of the

congregation through its bulletin and other church media. This NPS volunteer opportunity may be particularly attractive to new church members who are not well acquainted with the church's long history.

- Inform the pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church of the public's frequently expressed interest in viewing the Horizon Sanctuary. Express that if the church decides to meet this visitor request through regularly scheduled tours, then the NPS will inform the public of this additional visitor opportunity. It is not recommended that the NPS offer this tour as part of the park's interpretive program, as it is beyond the scope of the park.

Interpretive Media

- Provide information in two ways:
 1. On the website's Most Asked Questions page, develop a similar written response to the one described above, in Personal Services. As a courtesy, since the statement is in writing, consult with the church to ensure that they are comfortable with the language and image the NPS projects through its response to this visitor query.
 2. Provide a link to the church's website, with a clear notification that if electronic visitors follow it, they are leaving nps.gov. This message will make a clear distinction between the park's website and the church's.



Ebenezer Baptist Church Horizon Sanctuary.
(Credit: NPS Photographer Gary Tarleton)

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Implementation Plan For The Long-Range Interpretive Plan

National parks develop an annual parkwide operating plan based on known funding, staff, and special project money. This Implementation Plan highlights key Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) recommendations to be implemented over the next fifteen years, based on the park's defined vision for interpretation, education, and visitor services. Implementation Plan headings are identified as first steps corresponding to years 1 – 3; second steps paralleling years 4 – 6; and third steps in years 7 – 15, the last years of this LRIP.

Each year, when the interpretive staff develops its Annual LRIP Implementation Plan, Appendix A (this section of the document) can be used as a tool to guide future staff discussions, whether establishing priorities within the park or within the Division of Interpretation, Education, and Cultural Resource Management. It is expected that yearly adjustments to the Implementation Plan will be made due to changes in staffing, budget, special project money, new research, and any other unplanned opportunities or emergencies.

It is also expected that priorities may change, based on a variety of factors or new opportunities; for example, what was first conceived as happening in the later years, might be undertaken during years 1 – 3. It is recommended that this implementation plan be utilized as a consulting tool when the park formulates its operating plan each year.

First Steps: Years 1 – 3

Park – General

- Modify Mission Statement.
- Develop training module for all park staff regarding how to handle crucial conversations with visitors on race and Dr. King's beliefs, actions, and legacy.
- Seek funding or a partner to conduct a visitor survey.
- Work with Southeast Regional Office to:
 - Develop a training module on interpreting the site in light of First-Amendment concerns.
 - Discuss with legislative affairs boundary expansion to include 332 Prince Hall Masonic Lodge.
 - Obtain funding for a T-Map (operations evaluation); consult with parks with a similar organizational structure regarding position structure and grade levels; define results of comparative studies and analysis in new Operations Formulation System (OFS) requests to support desired future staffing to support delivery of interpretive program.
 - Regarding assistance with intra-site transportation services, develop a Project Management Information System (PMIS) request for a Transportation Advisory Group study, and coordinate with the Regional Transportation Coordinator.
 - Discuss in-house desired streetscape elements the park is interested in adding to the Birth Home Block. Put in the appropriate funding request if necessary.

Harpers Ferry Center

- Request Harpers Ferry Center (HFC) assistance to develop cost estimates on the following LRIP recommended media projects. Coordinate with HFC Southeast Regional Project Manager regarding funding receipt of media projects, so HFC and the park can have the benefit of the full fiscal year funding cycle to plan and contract future media projects:
 - Develop a PMIS request to create subtitles in the major languages of international visitors for the three movies shown to the general public: *New Time, New Voice*; *Children of Courage*; and the *Birth Home Tour* video; and a second request if additional equipment is needed to support the use of the subtitles.
 - Develop a PMIS request for short-term and long-term exhibit repair needs at the Visitor Center and for a new exhibit to replace the *Courage to Lead* main exhibit. Ask the Center to prepare estimates at the same time, so the park can input this data in the Facility Management Software System (FMSS) to evaluate the most cost-effective way to update this very important exhibit with necessary repairs and meet accessibility requirements.
 - Seek HFC estimate for a wayfinding assessment and master sign plan for the historic site campus (National Park Service [NPS], Ebenezer Baptist Church, and King Center).
 - Seek HFC assistance for an estimate to develop a multi-language cell/smart phone tour.
 - Develop a PMIS request for a new screen, projection equipment, lighting, and sound system for the Visitor Center Theater.
 - Develop a PMIS request for new interactive exhibits for the extended Birth Home Visitor Experience in a nearby shotgun residence; venue will include a staging area for viewing a new introductory film as part of the Birth Home Experience, and the ability to see the Birth Home Tour video once all tickets are reserved for the day.
 - Develop PMIS statement for a companion introductory film for the Birth Home extended visitor experience that highlights Dr. King's childhood with family and neighbors in Sweet Auburn.
 - Develop a PMIS request for an interpretive kiosk or touch screen for all major site arrival points/destinations that includes basic information and orientation and a campus activities calendar, and is available in the predominant languages of visitors who come to the site.
 - Develop a PMIS request for new Historic Fire Station No. 6 exhibits; the request should also include installation of exhibit glass behind the Fire Station doors, which are to be kept open during operating hours, so visitors will see the American LaFrance fire engine as they pass the facility and be aware this facility is now an exhibit.
 - Check to see if there are any exhibit type of streetscape elements the park is interested in adding to the Birth Home Block; if so, develop a cost estimate so the park can write a PMIS request.
- Identify the appropriate park staff member to input requests in the Servicewide Facility Management Software System (FMSS).

Personal Services

- Develop an OFS request to fund an interpretive position responsible for the development of the park website and future electronic and printed media, and social media applications.
- Consult with urban parks to see how interpretation, historian, and curatorial positions are structured and graded to inform future position management.
- Birth Home:
 - Review engineering reports to confirm carrying capacity limitations.
 - Experiment with tour patterns.
 - Research the development of a ticket reservation system for a portion of the Birth Home Tours.
 - Establish a by-reservation Birth Home Block Tour to take pressure off house during busy season for reunion groups seeking a ranger-led experience.
- Ebenezer Baptist Church:
 - Establish a visitor comment log regarding the overall historic church visitor experience and the new temporary exhibits located in Fellowship Hall. Comments can be used to inform future permanent exhibits as well as the facility operating plan.
 - Establish an NPS volunteer program for the church; recruit Ebenezer Baptist Church members.
 - Provide a website link to the Ebenezer Baptist Church in the Most Asked Questions page; be sure to add notification that the electronic user is leaving the NPS website.
 - Develop graphics panels for the church entrance summarizing Dr. King’s connection to the church and visitor experience options, in order to provide a back-up for the ranger greeting visitors—especially when they are involved in a conversation or providing visitor assistance.
 - Coordinate with church and develop a wayside interpreting “What is Ebenezer Baptist Church’s Horizon Sanctuary?”—a frequently asked on-site visitor question.
 - Identify core Dr. King speeches to be utilized as part of the Ebenezer Baptist Church interpretive program:
 - Develop printed handouts for visitors with hearing impairments.
 - Seek HFC assistance for recommended equipment and cost estimate to use for closed captioning that is also sensitive in its presentation to the setting of the Sanctuary.
- Update current education program materials—trunks and posted curriculum—utilizing a staff/teacher team:
 - Develop a pilot Teach the Teacher training session regarding how to use materials.
 - If necessary, create an instructional guide for educators.
 - Conduct internal discussions regarding desire to expand theme-related educational programming for a variety of student/youth groups. Determine, based on funding, staff and capacity issues, what the ideal future program looks like. Is it (1) Developing new curriculum for different ages on different topics to be used independently in the classroom, or on-site by teachers and students; or (2) Will the park staff and volunteers conduct a portion of a program—perhaps it is a special welcome and introduction to Dr. King and the park, or a staff-facilitated hands-on experience; or (3) A mix of all three types of programming. Once direction is determined, put in appropriate funding requests.

- Birth Home Block: Experiment with tours for the general public, roving interpretation (uniformed or period dress), and an expansion of the trolley tour system to the block during the summer season.\
- Offer a “lunch with a ranger program” on the second floor of the Fire Station; encourage families/groups to bring a bag lunch and chat informally with a ranger about a variety of park-related topics.

Interpretive Media

Note: Park may decide there are enough wayside exhibit replacement needs and new individual site specific wayside exhibits that it may be more desirable to seek HFC assistance with completion, rather than to pursue development in-house. If HFC assistance is desired with waysides, add this topic area to HFC assistance list for cost estimating.

- Website: Keep up-to-date and prepare to move administration of website to the interpretive division.
 - Implement short-term recommendations outlined in the parkwide media recommendations section.
 - Establish a cross-division annual review of website for content accuracy and to determine what should be posted in the upcoming year.
 - On the Safety page, talk about the problem of panhandling and provide park guidance regarding how to handle.
 - Update the Visitor Experience Planning page—what one can do in a half hour, 1 hour, 2 hours, or 4 or more hours. See HFC posted Vicksburg National Historic Site LRIP for ideas; there’s a section on visitor experience planning.
 - Provide basic information (intellectual access) on Dr. King’s activities with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).
 - Develop capacity to create webcasts.
- Work with Eastern National to develop a cell phone tour in multiple languages.
- Replace vandalized waysides parkwide and fix broken outdoor exhibit elements from the Visitor Center parking lot along the promenade.
- Develop a wayside for the Gandhi statue.
- Develop a wayside that interprets the historical significance of Historic Fire Station No. 6 and its connection to Dr. King.
- Improve visual quality of necessary “temporary signs” that are used at the Visitor Center.
- Identify major languages used by international visitors.
- Research local foreign language translation services available for future media projects; develop a corresponding PMIS request to translate the park website and HFC Unigridd brochure into the most common languages used by international visitors. Also include in this estimate a large-print English-format version.
- Maintain audiovisual equipment in all venues and cyclic repairs to Theater.
- Improve Visitor Center Theater signage.

- Develop a rack card on Dr. King’s founding of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and its home in the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge during his presidency.
- Update existing foreign language brochures created in 1996 for the Olympics.

Primary Partners – General

- Establish quarterly meetings with Chief Executive Officers to discuss long-term planning needs.
- Develop a parkwide calendar of events and activities.
- Plan movement of bus stop from Auburn Avenue to Irwin Street; discuss with partners.
- Review oral history research needs and develop a consolidated approach to achieve with partners. Put in funding request, if appropriate.

The King Center

- Provide technical assistance for historic object preservation and exhibits when requested.
- Discuss with The King Center potential expanded use of auditorium and hosting of the Children of Courage exhibit and film. If not interested, consider relocating to Historic Fire Station No. 6 as a temporary location, until a new Fire Station exhibit is in place.
- If NPS continues to provide an interpretive presence in the building, improve Visitor Center desk appearance and collaboratively develop signage regarding why the NPS is present in the facility. Interpret the historical connection to Mrs. King’s working with President Carter to have the historic site become part of the National Park Service.

City of Atlanta

- Discuss with City the improvement of panhandling situation and other visitor-related safety issues, and explore ways to improve transportation to the site from downtown.

Second Steps: Years 4 – 6

Park – General

- Conduct key oral histories if project is funded.
- Conduct visitor survey if funded.
- Develop a PMIS request for an economic impact study so the historic site can demonstrate to future partners what the national park and its partners bring to the community, to attract other partners and collaborative projects.
- Relocate Visitor Center/Tomb bus stop from Auburn Avenue to Irwin.
- Work with Southeast Regional Office to:
 - Nominate Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site as a recognized United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization “World Heritage Site.”
 - Establish a concession-operated luggage storage service for destination visitors who are carrying luggage.
 - Work with Regional Transportation Coordinator and the Denver Service Center to conduct the recommended and PMIS-funded Transportation Advisory Group regarding intra-historic site transportation needs.

Harpers Ferry Center

- Work collaboratively with HFC on any funded media projects that involve HFC planning, design, and contracting.
- Complete ongoing review and update of the Unigrid brochure.
- Work with HFC to develop a funding request to put permanent exhibits and a mini-theater in Ebenezer Baptist Church's Fellowship Hall. Utilize ranger observations and documentation from visitor log books to inform the funding request and future exhibit.
- Determine if it's time to replace *New Time, New Voice* as the primary introductory film; if so, consult with HFC for a cost estimate to inform the PMIS funding request.

Personal Services

- Update OFS position funding requests.
- Continue to review and update current education program trunks, posted website curriculum, and any companion park provided information—with a staff/teacher team.
- If funded, develop new education program and materials. This would be a good time to begin developing the plan-recommended curriculum for Ebenezer Baptist Church.
- Finalize how park will handle Birth Home Tour operations, scheduling, and reservations. Promote in electronic media and other appropriate venues.
- Conduct research on other important African American groups, businesses, and organizations that helped to make Sweet Auburn thrive during Dr. King's childhood and his return to this neighborhood in 1960 – 1968.
 - Create resource packets to inform the development of a future exhibit(s) on this vibrant community.

Media

- Update annually in PMIS any media project cost estimates provided by HFC by the recommended 4% inflation rate.
- Continue to implement short-term Visitor Center exhibit improvements, if determined to be the most cost-effective approach, until the *Children of Courage* exhibit is replaced.
- Place exhibits and introductory film in nearby historic houses in order to provide the park desired expanded Birth Home experience.
- Install new exhibit in Historic Fire Station No. 6, if funded, including exhibit glass at Fire Station engine doors, so visitors can see the American LaFrance fire engine and building interior when the building is opened.
- Have in place captioning for Dr. King's speeches that are played as part of an interpretive presentation, or a copy of the speech available for hearing impaired visitors.
- Develop a temporary exhibit for the D.R.E.A.M. Gallery on Dr. King's establishment of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC); include a furnishings vignette of the office. Include a visitor comment log. This will be a good opportunity to test this type of exhibit, if ever the NPS has the opportunity in the future to work with the Masons to establish an on-site exhibit. It will also expand interpretation to this currently mostly un-interpreted topic. While the park talks about the marches and sit-ins, and the changes that resulted, there is really no mention of how the

SCLC, through Dr. King’s leadership, worked behind the scenes to make these important activities happen.

- Develop (after this exhibit is completed) detailed resource packets (references to oral histories, photographs, known documents, etc.) to inform the development of a future permanent exhibit on Dr. King’s SCLC work and office, if Prince Hall Masons request technical assistance to create an exhibit; or if the park’s boundary is expanded to include this site.
- Maintain audiovisual equipment in all venues and cyclic repairs to Theater.

Website

- Maintain park website:
 - Keep website up to date.
 - Conduct annual cross-division review of posted materials.
 - Have an active social media presence and webcasts in place.
 - Focus webcast topics on sites associated with Dr. King not currently interpreted, such as SCLC, to develop a website presence.
- Have in place multiple language kiosks for orientation, interpretation, and calendar of events.
- Have in place multi-language subtitling for three key films.
- Implement cell phone tour or conduct annual review of materials posted if in place.
- Work with Eastern National to develop a handbook to be used by visitors throughout the site and as a souvenir to enjoy as part of the post-visit experience.
- Have in place either updated site significance brochures created for the Olympics or the translated version of the HFC Unigrid brochure, in most popular languages common to international visitors.

Partners

- Continue quarterly Chief Executive Officer planning meetings.
- Work with Ebenezer Baptist Church historian to develop a training module on elements of the Baptist faith all interpreters should know, as they relate to Dr. King’s co-pastorship of the church. Explain the typical kinds of duties a co-pastor would share. Target audience: seasonal and new interpretive staff. Once completed, the training video should be evaluated regarding whether it could be repurposed as a webcast.
- Work with Ebenezer Baptist Church and King Center to create within the historic church an exhibit that includes personal items that reflected Dr. King’s life as a minister—perhaps his robes, a Bible, the certificate demonstrating he was an ordained minister, et cetera. These items could be located in a climate-controlled exhibit in an appropriate location in the Sanctuary or as part of the future exhibits in Fellowship Hall.
- Continue to discuss with the City of Atlanta and partners ways to improve visitor safety and resource protection.

Third Steps: Years 7 – 15

Park – General

- Referencing the existing Cultural Landscape Report, Birth Home Historic Structure Report, related oral histories, and other archives, develop a comprehensive proposal for interpretive elements that could be reinstated in the backyard and would add value to the understanding of Dr. King’s life, particularly his childhood experiences with family members at this residence that shaped his character.
- Implement intra-site results from Transportation Advisory Group Report and related follow-up PMIS request.
- Keep all interpretive funding requests up to date in PMIS and OFS.

Work with Southeast Regional Office

- Ongoing; continue with projects not completed in years 4 – 6.

Harpers Ferry Center

- Work with HFC to develop a funding request for a film on Dr. King’s work at SCLC and explain the connection to the modern American Civil Rights Movement; interpret his use of the office in Prince Hall Masonic Lodge in Sweet Auburn. Utilize resource packet developed during years 4 – 6.

Personal Services

- Ongoing; continue with projects not completed in years 4 – 6.
- Continue to review and update current education program’s trunks, posted website curriculum, and any companion park provided information, with a staff teacher team.

Media

- Install new exhibits and film in Fellowship Hall; coordinate with HFC.
- Coordinate planning with HFC for new exhibit for the Visitor Center. The goal is that all Visitor Center exhibits are attractive, accessible, and operational by 2020—the fortieth anniversary of the site’s establishment.
- Ongoing; continue with projects not completed in years 4 – 6.
- If new universal route through church and exhibit is determined during years 4 – 6, and funding received, implement.
- Have in place park website translated in primary language groups.
- Maintain audiovisual equipment in all venues and cyclic repairs to Theater.

Partners

- Conduct quarterly meetings with Chief Executive Officers to coordinate short and long-range planning needs.
- Discuss with the City of Atlanta use of underpass area for interpretive purposes, if crime and graffiti have diminished. This would be a good outdoor area to interpret Sweet Auburn and SCLC headquarters if the park boundary is not expanded to include Prince Hall Masonic Lodge. If the park and City come to an understanding regarding future use of area, develop a Memorandum of Agreement outlining agreed commitments before moving forward to implement an outdoor exhibit plan.
- Ongoing; continue with projects not completed in years 4 – 6.

...And during the course of the next fifteen years, have fun working together as a team—internally and externally—to provide a high-caliber, memorable, and meaningful visitor experience at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site; in the words of Dr. King, a “Mountaintop” experience.

Appendix B: Park Legislation

PUBLIC LAW 96-428—OCT. 10, 1980

94 STAT. 1839

Public Law 96-428

96th Congress

An Act

To establish the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, and for other purposes. [H.R. 7218]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That (a) in order to protect and interpret for the benefit, inspiration, and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Junior, was born, where he lived, worked, and worshipped, and where he is buried, there is hereby established the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia. The national historic site shall consist of that real property in the city of Atlanta, Georgia, within the boundary generally depicted on the map entitled “Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site Boundary Map”, numbered NASM/SERO/20, 109-C, and dated May 1980, together with the property known as 234 Sunset Avenue, Northwest. The map referred to in this subsection shall be on file and available for public inspection in the local and Washington, District of Columbia office of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

(b) In furtherance of the purposes of this Act, there is hereby established the Martin Luther King, Junior, Preservation District, which shall consist of the area identified as “Preservation District” in the map referred to in subsection (a) of this section.

SEC. 2. (a) The Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the “Secretary”) shall administer the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site and Preservation District in accordance with the provisions of this Act, and the provisions of law generally applicable to national historic sites, including the Act of August 25 1916 (39 Stat. 535; 16 U.S.C. 1, 2-4) and the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666; 16 U.S.C. 461–7).

(b)(1) Within the national historic site the Secretary is authorized to acquire by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds transfer, or exchange, lands and interests therein, except that property owned by the State of Georgia or any political subdivision thereof may be acquired only by donation.

(2) Notwithstanding the acquisition authority contained in paragraph (1), any lands or interests therein which are owned wholly or in part, by the widow of Martin Luther King, Junior, or by the Martin Luther King, Junior, Center for Social Change, shall be acquired only with the consent of the owner thereof, except that—(A) the Secretary may acquire such property in accordance with the provisions of this section if he determines that the property is undergoing or is about to undergo a change in use which is inconsistent with the purposes of this Act, and (B) with respect to properties owned by the Center for Social Change, the Secretary shall have the firm right of refusal to purchase such property for a purchase price not exceeding the fair market value of such property on the date its offered for sale.

(3) Property may be acquired pursuant to this section subject to such conditions and reservations as in the judgment of the Secretary are not inconsistent with the purposes of this Act and the administration of the national historic site, including, in the event that the burial site of Martin Luther King, Junior, is acquired, the condition that his widow may be interred therein.

(4) Any and all legal or equitable title, interests, or encumbrances, if any, held by the Department of Housing and Urban Development in the property designated “Parcel A” on the man referenced in section one are hereby conveyed to the Secretary to be administered in accordance with the purposes of this Act.

(5) Structural space requirements of the National Park Service to meet its administrative, operational, and interpretive functions for the national historic site and preservation district shall, to the maximum extent feasible without displacing residents, be met within the district through the adaptive use of existing structures.

SEC. 3. (a) Within the national historic site, the Secretary may convey a freehold or leasehold interest in any property, for such sums as he deems appropriate, and subject to such terms and conditions and reservations as will assure the use of the property in a manner which is, in the judgment of the Secretary, consistent with the purposes of this Act and the administration of the national historic site. The Secretary shall offer the last owner or tenant of record a reasonable opportunity to purchase or lease, as appropriate, the property proposed to be conveyed prior to any conveyance under this subsection, and in the case of a lease to such tenant of record, the initial rental charge shall not be substantially more than the last rent paid by the tenant for that property, with any future increases not to exceed the general escalation of rental rates in the surrounding area.

(b) The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements with the owners of properties of historical or cultural significance as determined by the Secretary, pursuant to which the Secretary may mark, interpret, improve, restore, and provide technical assistance with respect to the preservation and interpretation of such properties. Such agreements shall contain, but need not be limited to, provisions that the Secretary shall have the right of access at reasonable times to public portions of the property for interpretive and other purposes, and that no changes or alterations shall be made in the property except by mutual agreement. The authorities in this subsection shall also be available to the Secretary with respect to properties within the Martin Luther King, Junior, Preservation District.

(c) The Secretary may, in carrying out his authorities with respect to the interpretation of properties within the national historic site and the preservation district, accept the services and assistance, with or without reimbursement therefore, of qualified persons and entities to the extent he deems necessary and appropriate. Funds appropriated for the purposes of this Act may be expended for the improvement, restoration, and maintenance of properties in which the Secretary has acquired a leasehold interest.

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary shall give first preference to the Martin Luther King, Junior, Center for Social Change with respect to any contract for a concession to sell books, postcards, tapes, or similar types of appropriate mementos related to the purposes of this Act, on facilities operated and maintained by the Secretary within the historic site: *Provided*, That agreement can be reached on terms and conditions acceptable to the Secretary.

(e) The Secretary is authorized to take only such actions within and upon the grounds of the Ebenezer Baptist Church as will directly support appropriate public visitation to and within the church in accordance with the purposes of this Act, or which will assist in the maintenance or preservation of those portions of said church which are directly related to the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 4. (a) There is hereby established the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site Advisory Commission (hereinafter referred to in this section as the "Commission"). The Commission shall consist of thirteen members, eleven of whom shall be appointed by the Secretary as follows:

(1) three members appointed for terms of three years from recommendations submitted by the governing body of the Martin Luther King, Junior, Center for Social Change; 2) two members appointed for ten of four years from recommendations submitted by the Governor of the State of Georgia, one of whom shall have professional expertise in historic preservation matters; (3) two members appointed for terms of five years from recommendations submitted by the mayor of the city of Atlanta, Georgia, one of whom shall represent the economic and cultural interests of the Sweet Auburn Historic District; (4) one member appointed for a term of five years from recommendations submitted by the governing body of the Ebenezer Baptist Church; (5) the Chairman of the Atlanta Urban Design Commission and one additional member from the Commission to be chosen by the Commission; and (6) one member, appointed for a term of five years by the Secretary, who shall

chair the Commission. In addition to the foregoing members, Mrs. Coretta Scott King, or such other appropriate family member as may be designated by the immediate family of Martin Luther King, Junior, and the Director of the National Park Service shall be ex officio members of the Commission.

(b) Any vacancy in the membership of the Commission shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made. Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation as such, but the Secretary may pay expenses of Commission members reasonably incurred by them in carrying out their responsibilities under this section upon presentation of vouchers signed by the chair of the Commission. Necessary administrative services and expenses shall be provided to the Commission by the Department of the Interior.

(c) The function of the Commission shall be to:

(1) advise the Secretary with respect to the formulation and execution of plans for and the overall administration of the national historic site and the preservation district, including advice with respect to the consummation of cooperative agreements, and interpretation of properties, and the use and appreciation of the national historic site and the preservation district by the public;

(2) prepare a generalized impact area plan for a one mile radius outside the District which shall examine overall community development goals, plans, and efforts within that area, including historic preservation, transportation, parking, housing, urban revitalization, and parks and recreation functions, in order to maximize beneficial relationships between these goals, plans, and efforts and the district herein established, and

(3) prepare, on the basis of the findings and recommendations of the impact area plan required by the preceding paragraph, a detailed development plan for the neighborhoods and outlying commercial areas immediately outside the district for such development, conservation, preservation, rehabilitation activities and transportation, parking, and land use planning as would complement and enhance the District and the purposes for which the District is established.

(d) The Secretary is directed to provide the appropriate planning agency of the city of Atlanta an amount of the local planning funds authorized by section 6 sufficient for that agency to provide such staff and technical assistance to the Advisory Commission as are required for it to develop the plans required by subsection (c) of this section. Such plans, prepared in full coordination with and opportunities for participation by, all relevant public agencies and private groups, shall be delivered to the Secretary in a timely fashion for use in preparing the general management plan for the district.

(e) The Commission shall terminate ten years from the effective date of this Act.

SEC. 5. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no fees shall be charged for entrance or admission to the national historic site or the preservation district established by this Act.

SEC. 6. Effective October 1, 1980, there are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act, but not to exceed \$1,000,000 for development, \$100,000 for local planning, and \$3,500,000 for the acquisition of lands and interests therein. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, authority to enter into contracts, to incur obligations, or to make payments under this Act shall be effective only to the extent, and in such amounts, as are provided in advance in appropriation Acts.

SEC. 7. (a) In order to better integrate the east and west portions of the Martin Luther King, Junior, Preservation District, the Federal Highway Administration, in cooperation with the Georgia Department of Transportation, is hereby directed to insure that any design and reconstruction of the North Interstate 85 and Interstate 75 Expressway over Auburn and Edgewood Avenues in the city of Atlanta, Georgia, and the interchange at Edgewood Avenue, shall minimize the adverse impacts on the preservation district.

(b) In carrying out the provisions of this subsection, the Federal Highway Administration shall require that, where feasible, and major change required for the Auburn Avenue overpass results in a design which permits a wider distance between overpass support structures and the disposition of understructure development rights for appropriate business or recreation uses.

(c) Plans for the construction, exterior renovation, or demolition of any structure or change in land use within the preservation district by the National Park Service or any Federal agency must be submitted to the Atlanta Urban Design Commission in a timely fashion for its review and comment.

SEC. 8. Within three complete fiscal years from the effective date of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States Senate, a comprehensive general management plan for the park site and the preservation district consistent with the provisions of this Act and pursuant to the provisions of section 12(b) of the Act of August 18, 1970 (84 Stat 825), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1a-1 et seq.). Approved October 10, 1980.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Vol. 126 (1980):

Sept. 9, considered and passed House.

Sept. 26, considered and passed Senate.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS. Vol. 16. No. 42:

Oct. 11, Presidential statement.

PUBLIC LAW 102-575, SECTION 4024
102nd CONGRESS
October 30, 1992

SEC. 4024. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JUNIOR, NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE AND PRESERVATION DISTRICT.

(a) **BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.** - Subsection (a) of the first section of the Act entitled “An Act to establish the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, and for other purposes” (Public Law 96-428; 94 Stat. 1839), establishing the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site and Preservation District, is amended by striking “numbered NASM/SERO/20, 109-C, and dated May 1980” and inserting in lieu thereof “number 489/80,013B, and dated September 1992”.

(b) **LIMITATION ON APPROPRIATIONS.** - Section 6 of Public Law 96-0428 (94 Stat. 1842) is amended by striking “, but not to exceed \$1,000,000 for development, \$100,000 for local planning, and \$3,500,000 for the acquisition of lands and interests therein”.

118 STAT. 1198 PUBLIC LAW 108–314—OCT. 5, 2004
Public Law 108–314
108th Congress

An Act

To authorize the exchange of certain lands within the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site for lands owned by the City of Atlanta, Georgia, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site Land Exchange Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

- (1) Public Law 96–438 established the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site, and allows acquisition, by donation only, of lands owned by the State.
- (2) The National Park Service owns a vacant lot that has no historic significance. The City of Atlanta has expressed interest in acquiring this property to encourage commercial development along Edgewood Avenue.
- (3) The National Historic Site Visitor Center and Museum is land-locked and has no emergency ingress or egress, making it virtually impossible for firefighting equipment to reach.
- (4) The acquisition of city-owned property would enable the National Park Service to establish easy street access to the National Historic Site Visitor Center and Museum, and would benefit the City by exchanging a piece of property that the City could develop.

(b) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of this Act is to authorize the exchange of certain lands within the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site for lands owned by the City of Atlanta, Georgia.

SEC. 3. LAND EXCHANGE.

Section 2(b)(1) of the Act of October 10, 1980 (Public Law 96–428; 94 Stat. 1839; 16 U.S.C. 461 note) is amended by striking the period and inserting “or exchange.”.

Approved October 5, 2004.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 1616:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 108–255 (Comm. on Resources).

SENATE REPORTS: No. 108–332 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Vol. 149 (2003): Oct. 28, considered and passed House.

Vol. 150 (2004): Sept. 15, considered and passed Senate.

Appendix C: Park Planning Team

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site

Linda Byers, Park Ranger-Interpretation
 Andrew Callens, Facility Manager
 Adria Focht, Museum Technician
 Judy Forte, Superintendent
 Mari Hayden, Park Ranger-Interpretation
 Rich Klima, Park Ranger-Interpretation
 Clark W. Moore, Park Ranger-Law Enforcement
 Robert Parker, Chief of Interpretation
 Tanya Perkins-Brown, Administrative Officer
 Dean Rowley, Park Ranger-Interpretation
 Cheryl A Shropshire, IT Specialist
 Marty Smith, Park Ranger-Interpretation
 Tony Stennis, Deputy Superintendent
 Faye Walmsley, Former Chief of Interpretation

National Park Service Staff and Consultants

Don Branch, Harpers Ferry Center, Senior Exhibit Designer
 Melissa English-Rias, Harpers Ferry Center, Southeast Region, Interpretive Specialist-Planner
 John Tobiason, Harpers Ferry Center, New Media Specialist
 Mary Mallen, Harpers Ferry Center, Interpretive Planner-Park Ranger

Park Partners

Jessica Brooks, Atlanta Public Schools
 Becky Burke, Eastern National
 Angelou Ezeilo, Greening Youth Foundation
 James Ezeilo, Greening Youth Foundation
 Isaac Farris, Jr., The King Center
 Mickey Goodson, Volunteer
 Carolyn Hartfield, Lifestyle Management
 Fannie Hoskin, Volunteer
 Del Kittendorf, Volunteer
 Steve Klein, The King Center
 Richard Laub, Georgia State University
 David Lee, Volunteer
 Cynthia Lewis, The King Center
 Audrey Peterman, Earthwise Productions
 Benjamin C. Ridgeway, Ebenezer Baptist Church, Historian
 Clemmie Robinson, Volunteer
 Don Rooney, Atlanta History Center and Atlanta Urban Design Commission
 Hyman Shapiro, Volunteer
 Dr. Larry H. Spruill, Morehouse College
 Eric Tidwell, The King Center

Plan designed by Pond & Company for Harpers Ferry Center

Appendix D: Guidance for Future Education Program Development

- Work with local area schools—teachers and curriculum specialists—to develop a program advisory group specific to the grades the park hopes to target. Form a work team comprised of interested teachers and National Park Service (NPS) staff that will be consistent throughout the program development period. Collaboration with teachers during all phases of program development will create ownership.
 - Use primary park themes to guide curriculum discussions to determine where the primary park stories and park features intersect with curriculum requirements.
 - After determining the program focus—where park themes and curriculum requirements merge—utilize all team assets to develop the pilot program.
 - Have NPS staff scope out on-site program concept. Deliver pilot program to teachers and seek their feedback. Tweak program concept and on-site activities where necessary.
 - Once on-site component is defined, have teachers develop companion pre/post-visit materials. This is their area of expertise, and teachers will be delivering these lesson plans in the classroom. After teachers share the draft pre/post-visit lesson plans, the NPS staff provides feedback, and lesson plans may be edited before they are readied for the pilot program phase.
 - Pilot the program for a full year. Ask each teacher who participates to provide written feedback on the on-site program and pre/post-visit student materials (lesson plans). Consider inviting participating teachers back to Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site at the end of the year for a focus group evaluation session. Use information gained to make program adjustments with the program development team (teachers and park staff).
 - Following program evaluation and adjustments, request the original planning team to look at program and explore how the on-site program could be made available as an outreach program for classes unable to travel to site. Some alternatives include the use of internet broadcasting to extend program reach, the creation of travelling trunks, and posting of lesson plans and copies of original documents on the website.
 - Use NPS staff and teacher advisors to develop a program-specific teacher workshop to get new teachers involved. Seek input from the local school systems regarding the best avenue to achieve this next step. For example, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site could host a City-approved teacher in-service day for however many teachers the site could accommodate during the program year, with the commitment that the teachers who attended the workshop would be assured an on-site Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site program reservation.

Education Program Sustainability

- Seek funding to support teacher stipends to encourage participation in future program development. Explore opportunities through the NPS Parks as Classroom funding initiative, grants through the National Park Foundation, and other similar types of educational philanthropic opportunities.
- Recognize teachers who participate in the program development through appropriate, site-specific, and meaningful recognition—may be an event, or perhaps a memento.
- Work with university partners and public school system(s) to explore the possibility of providing credits hours (towards teacher recertification) for teachers who attend the future teacher workshop to be developed as part of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site curriculum-based education program.

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