

### **Background:**

Established in response to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the American Samoa Historic Preservation Office (ASHPO) identifies, evaluates, registers, interprets and protects American Samoa's historic and cultural properties, from star mounds to shipwrecked vessels. The ASHPO provides communities and preservation organizations with a variety of services, and maintains an inventory of historic properties. It also reviews nominations to the National Register of Historic Places and oversees sites on that register. Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the ASHPO reviews all Federal undertakings for impacts on historic properties.

### **Mission Statement:**

It is the responsibility of the American Samoa Historic Preservation Officer to administer the Territorial Historic Preservation Program. American Samoa's strong indigenous culture and traditional system of communal land ownership impose special conditions of cultural sensitivity upon such an endeavor. A primary concern of the ASHPO is to fulfill its responsibilities in a manner that recognizes and honors these inherent cultural conditions.

In addition, the ASHPO sees itself as a service organization, working in partnership with Federal and Territorial agencies, village and district councils, private organizations and individuals to assist in compliance with applicable Federal and Territorial historic preservation laws and to raise the community's consciousness about historic preservation and its role in cultural maintenance. Specific areas of responsibility in the administration of the Territorial Historic Preservation Program include:

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*conducting an on-going comprehensive site identification of historic properties in the Territory and maintaining an inventory of such properties;*

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*identifying and nominating eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places;*

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*advising and assisting Federal and Territorial agencies in carrying out their historic preservation responsibilities;*

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*consulting with appropriate Federal agencies on all undertakings that may affect historic properties in order to protect, manage, reduce or mitigate harm to such properties;*

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*ensuring that historic properties are taken into consideration at all levels of planning and development;*

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*providing public information, education and training, and technical assistance in historic preservation.*

In order to fulfill these mandates in a manner appropriate to the special conditions with which we are faced here in American Samoa, a comprehensive historic preservation plan has been designed to address individual problem areas within the Program and to set specific objectives toward the goal of alleviating those problems. Input from the American Samoa Historical Commission and from the public garnered from annual public meetings have been incorporated into the plan. A realistic time frame for meeting those objectives inside a five-year planning cycle is provided with the plan. The plan is available to the public upon request.

The [Director and her staff](#) welcome your contributions to the upkeep of Samoa's historic buildings and cultural sites.

### DISCLAIMER

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