SHPO ARCHAEOLOGY

Backed by a federal mandate, state law, and Michigan Executive Orders, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is an established entity overseeing cultural resource interests in Michigan, including archaeology. SHPO provides the foremost archaeological expertise within the State of Michigan, including site consultation, data management, and artifact collections, and has worked diligently for decades to establish respectful, collaborative, and inclusive relationships with the public, practitioners, universities, government agencies (local, state, and federal), and Tribes across Michigan.

Michigan’s Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) is a part of the State Historic Preservation Office.

- SHPO is established under federal law (National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended [NHPA]), and there are counterparts in every state. SHPO’s mission is to identify, document, evaluate, protect, and promote Michigan’s historic built environment and archaeological sites.

- The functions and duties of the OSA were integrated into SHPO by Executive Order 2009-36 and reiterated in Executive Order 2019-13.

- All files, data, and collections overseen by the OSA are integrated into SHPO and are under SHPO management per Executive Orders 2009-36 and 2019-13.

- SHPO archaeologists represent Michigan in the National Association of State Archaeologists.

Over 90% of archaeology that occurs today is entwined with SHPO’s federally mandated programs.

- Federal criteria are the basis for nearly all archaeology in the United States, and archaeology is an essential part of SHPO’s federal responsibilities related to Section 106, site protection, the National Register of Historic Places, community support and education, and more.

- SHPO is responsible for and manages all site inventory and related collections within Michigan, including the archaeological site file. This is a requirement of SHPO’s federal-enabling legislation and Executive Order 2007-53.

- SHPO is a mandatory consulting party with federal agencies and Tribal governments under federal law and works closely with agency leadership as well as Tribal Historic Preservation Officers and cultural resource specialists.

SHPO is a strong partner in archaeology, working with a variety of stakeholders across the state.

- SHPO is the source of Michigan archaeological expertise within state government and fields hundreds of inquiries annually from government agencies, universities, consultants, Tribes, and the public.

- SHPO collaborates effectively with State Government departments and supports a thriving archaeology program throughout the State of Michigan.

- SHPO places a high priority on working collaboratively with Tribes while ensuring respect for and awareness of Tribal Sovereignty. SHPO’s responsibilities toward and relationships with Tribes are supported in federal and state law.

Archaeology by the Numbers

3,000+ SECTION 106 REVIEWS COMPLETED ANNUALLY

SHPO works with federal agencies and their partners to efficiently complete more than 3,000 environmental/Section 106 reviews annually, including for archaeological impacts. SHPO’s ability to work collaboratively and effectively with project partners is critical to the success of community and economic development across the state.

25,000+ SITE RECORDS ARE MANAGED BY SHPO

SHPO archaeologists maintain the state archaeological site file, which includes more than 25,000 records covering nearly 14,000 years of human history and activity in Michigan. This data is critical to the work of state and federal agencies, universities, Tribes, and the cultural resource management industry.

18 PROFESSIONALS OVERSEE SHPO PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

SHPO employs 3 professional archaeologists as well as a data manager to oversee the archaeology program. They are supported by 15 other professionals who oversee complementary SHPO programming across the state.

Learn more about SHPO’s archaeology program at michigan.gov/archaeology