National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site
Long-Range Interpretive Plan

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January, 2008

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National Park Service
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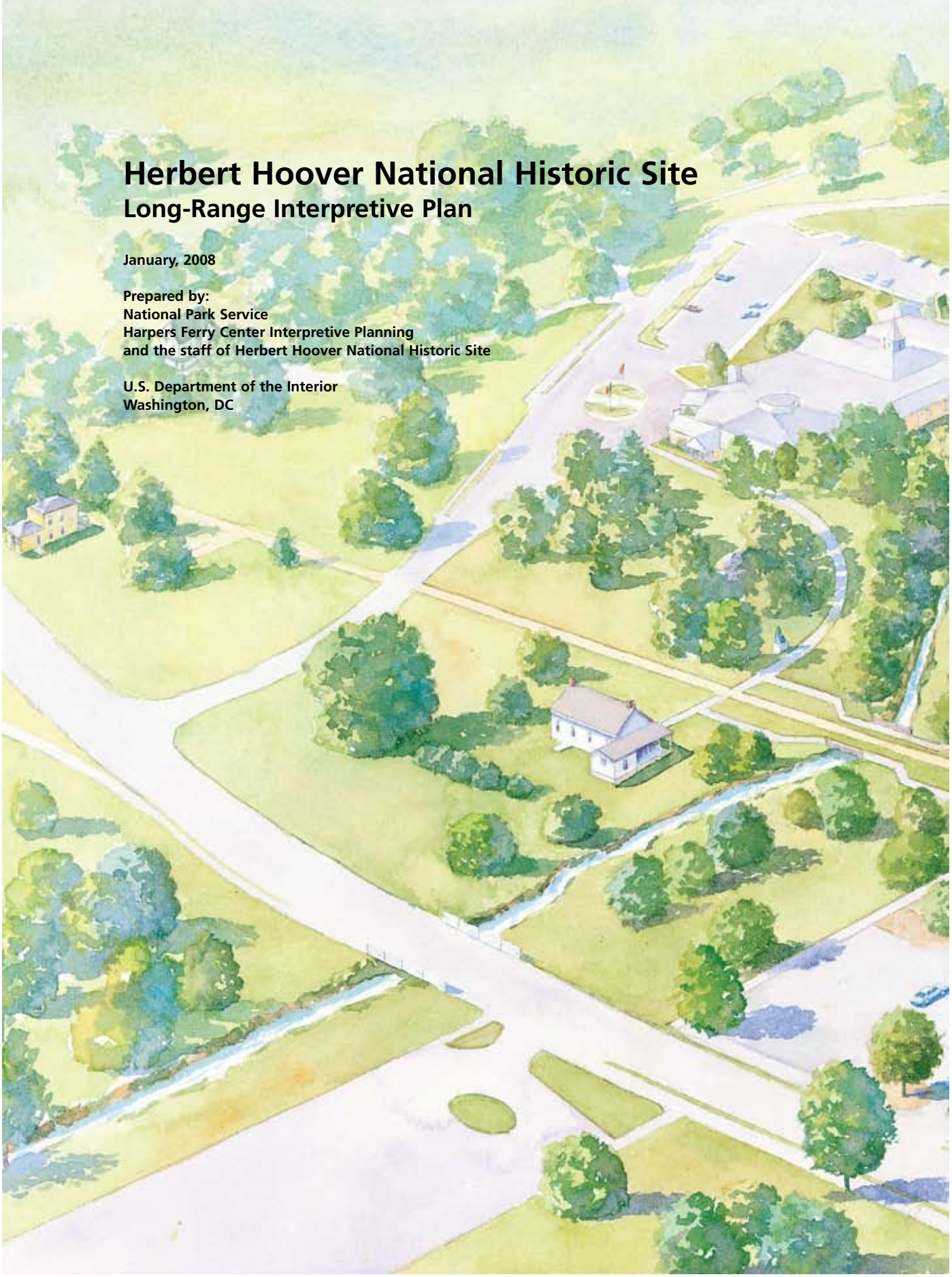
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, DC



The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and intrinsic values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

—NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
MISSION STATEMENT

PHOTO BY DANIEL PETERSON

Right and front cover: The National Park Service preserves and interprets Herbert Hoover's birthplace cottage and other places associated with Hoover's birth and early years in West Branch, Iowa. NPS PHOTO

Inside front cover pages: An oblique-aerial illustration depicts Herbert Hoover National Historic Site and two of its partners—the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, and West Branch Main Street—that help preserve the resources and tell the stories of Herbert Clark Hoover, the thirty-first president of the United States.

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PHOTO FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS AMERICAN MEMORY COLLECTION

Part 1: Foundations

"My country owes me nothing. It gave me, as it gives every boy and girl, a chance. It gave me schooling, independence of action, opportunity for service and honor. In no other land could a boy from a country village, without inheritance or influential friends, look forward with unbounded hope."

—PRESIDENT HERBERT HOOVER

Enabling Legislation

On August 12, 1965, Congress passed Public Law 89-119, establishing Herbert Hoover National Historic Site. The Act reads:

AN ACT

To establish the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site in the State of Iowa.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that, in order to preserve in public ownership historically significant properties associated with the life of Herbert Hoover, the Secretary of Interior may acquire the necessary acres of land or interest in land (including scenic easements) in or near West Branch, Iowa, by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, transfer from a federal agency, or otherwise. Such property shall be known as Herbert Hoover National Historic Site.

Sec 2. The Secretary of the Interior and the Administrator of General Services may enter into agreements which provide for the

(1) transfer of lands and other property, except the Herbert Hoover Library Building, from the administrative control of the Administrator to that of the Secretary without transfer of funds; and

(2) use of the Administrator of portions of facilities constructed by the Secretary.

Sec 3. The secretary shall administer the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site in accordance with the act approved August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535), as amended and supplemented, and the Act approved August 21, 1935 (49 Stat 666).

Sec 4. There are authorized to be appropriated not more than $1,650,000 for land acquisition and development in connection with the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site as provided in this Act.

Approved August 12, 1965.

Almost seven years later, Omnibus Act, P.L. 92-272 (86 Stat. 120; April 11, 1972) authorized an increase in the development and land acquisition ceilings of the site.

NPS PHOTO

Right: Scenic vistas at Herbert Hoover National Historic Site complement the historical elements of the park.

Opposite: 1928 Chicago Daily News Inc. image of Herbert Hoover during his service as U.S. Secretary of Commerce.

Site History

While Herbert Hoover National Historic Site (NHS) was established as a unit of the National Park Service (NPS) in 1965, the story of the development of the site actually begins with Herbert Hoover's 1928 presidential nomination, which sparked public interest in the modest house in West Branch, Iowa, where he had been born 54 years earlier. Shortly after Hoover's nomination, curious people began visiting West Branch to view the candidate's birthplace. Mrs. Jennie Scellars, who owned the birthplace, soon opened the house to tours, eventually charging 10 cents per person and also selling souvenirs. Mrs. Scellars recorded 1,750 visitors in her guest book in the month following Hoover's nomination.

Hoover's election ensured continuing interest in the birthplace, with more than 34,000 visitors having toured the site by mid-1931. Many of the visitors were European tourists who appreciated Hoover's famine relief efforts in World War I.

The Hoovers had expressed interest in purchasing the home from Mrs. Scellars as early as 1928. In 1930 Hoover family friend and well-known *Des Moines Register* cartoonist "Ding" Darling made inquiries into the property on behalf of Mrs. Lou Henry Hoover. Darling reported that the house was "in apple-pie order" and that Mrs. Scellars was doing a good job of conducting tours. However, she was not interested in selling because she enjoyed giving tours as well as the extra income the tours provided.

Following Mrs. Scellars' death in June of 1934, the Hoovers commissioned West Branch resident Fred Albin, a childhood friend of Herbert Hoover's, to purchase the property on their behalf. Mr. Albin completed the purchase in July of 1935 and conveyed the deed to the Hoovers' younger son, Allan, the following October.

In the spring of 1937, the Hoovers arrived in West Branch to begin the process of restoring the home to its 1870s appearance. Mr. Hoover admitted he could remember little about the cottage in which he lived only until shortly before his fifth birthday, adding that "this isn't my idea, but would please Mrs. Hoover, who is the one who wants to have the old home restored." By the following summer, plans were approved and restoration of the cottage began, along with construction of a caretaker's lodge behind the cottage. Much of the restoration was based on Mrs. Hoover's original research. Restoration of the cottage was completed in November 1938, with additional landscaping finished the following year.

On the suggestion of Mrs. Hoover, the Herbert Hoover Birthplace Society was incorporated in 1939, in order to acquire and administer the birthplace cottage on behalf of the Hoover family. Allan Hoover subsequently conveyed the deed to the property to the society and represented the family on the organization's board of directors. The Herbert Hoover Birthplace Foundation was formed in 1954 as a national support group for the Birthplace Society. The two organizations merged in 1958.

In subsequent years, the society purchased several small properties near the cottage. In 1951 a 25-acre tract adjacent to the property was purchased to become Herbert Hoover Park. Part of this land later became the site of the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, built with funds raised by the Birthplace Foundation. The Library and Museum, which opened in 1962, was at that time operated by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA).

In 1964 the Birthplace Foundation deeded 28 acres of land, including the cottage, to GSA. The foundation and its successor organization, the Herbert Hoover Library Association, have continued to support the site through the present day.

Herbert Hoover's death in October of 1964 prompted interest in establishing

National Photo Company image of chief justice William H. Taft administering the oath of office to Herbert Hoover on the east portico of the U.S. Capitol, March 4, 1929.

a national historic site in his honor. An April 1965 National Park Service report, "A Proposed Herbert Hoover Birthplace National Historic Site," concluded that the West Branch site had "unquestionable national significance" and should be added to the National Park System. Public Law 89-119, dated August 12, 1965, authorized the establishment of Herbert Hoover National Historic Site.

In 1966 the NPS produced a master plan brief for the park. This plan proposed converting the area directly north of the birthplace cottage into a representation of an 1880s Iowa village neighborhood, along with other significant property acquisitions. Residents of West Branch strongly objected to this original plan, which they felt seriously eroded the local tax base. An amended brief, which proposed less taking of commercial properties along with the establishment of a "village green" area downtown, was better received. This brief served as a basis for the park's 1970 Master Plan.

The NPS began acquiring additional properties in 1966, and in 1970 GSA opened a combination visitor center and U.S. Post Office building. By 1971 the NPS had acquired approximately 115 acres of land and 35 historic structures. That same year, a transfer of all GSA property, except the Herbert Hoover Library and Museum, to the NPS was completed. In 1975 the NPS negotiated a life estate agreement for the adjacent Thompson Farm property, increasing the park's size to 186.8 acres. The park's Master Plan was amended in 1977, and a new General Management Plan was approved in 2004. GSA turned over the combination visitor center and U.S. Post Office to the National Park Service in 2005.

Park Purpose and Significance

The 2004 Herbert Hoover National Historic Site General Management Plan (GMP) states that natural and cultural resources of the park serve as symbols of significant events that influenced the character and career of Herbert Hoover, and that those resources will be maintained. The purpose of Herbert Hoover National Historic Site, as stated in the GMP, is to:

- Preserve the birthplace cottage, gravesite, and other historically significant properties associated with the life of Herbert Hoover.
- Provide an accessible, dignified, and spacious setting in which visitors can experience the birthplace cottage, gravesite, Presidential Library and Museum, and other resources.
- Commemorate and interpret the life, career, and accomplishments of Herbert Hoover in cooperation with other organizations.

The 2004 GMP also states that the park is significant because:

- Herbert Hoover National Historic Site is the birthplace and site of the formative years that set Herbert Hoover on the road to becoming the nation's thirty-first president and a global humanitarian.
- From his birth to age 11, Herbert Hoover's experiences and associations with his family and the community of West Branch influenced his personality, work ethic, spiritual and moral character, and ambition. These strong traits are evident throughout his public service and private endeavors.
- Herbert Hoover National Historic Site memorializes Herbert Hoover by encompassing his birthplace cottage, gravesite, Presidential Library and Museum, Friends Meetinghouse, blacksmith shop, schoolhouse, statue if Isis, tallgrass prairie, and a branch of the Wapsinonoc Creek in a dignified setting in the town of West Branch, Iowa.
- The involvement of Herbert Hoover, Lou Henry Hoover, their family, friends, and the community was a driving force for the establishment design, and management of Herbert Hoover National Historic Site. In this spirit of cooperation, the NPS facilitates the stewardship of this commemorative site.

NPS PHOTO

Park staff and their partners such as the Herbert Hoover Association interpret the life, career, and accomplishments of Herbert Hoover.

Fundamental Resources and Values

The fundamental resources and values of Herbert Hoover National Historic Site (NHS) are specifically designated resources and values in the foundation for all planning and management at the park. The particular features, systems, processes, experiences, scenes, sounds, smells, etc., that are key to achieving the park's purpose and maintaining its significance constitute its fundamental resources and values. In short, these are the resources and values that—if absent—would cause the historic site not be a unit of the National Park System.

Park staff members are responsible for identifying and defining their park's fundamental resources and values. Although identifying and defining a park's fundamental resources and values has been a routine step early in the development of NPS general management plans since 2004, identification may take place at any time when not specifically included in the park GMP. The 2004 GMP for Herbert Hoover National Historic Site predates the consistent inclusion of a foundation for planning and management that included fundamental resources and values designation. Consequently, the fundamental resources and values for the historic site were developed in 2005 as part of initiating a Resource Stewardship Strategy (RSS) process. These fundamental resources and values will serve the same function for all subsequent park program and implementation plans. The park's fundamental resources and values include the following:

1. Birthplace Cottage and Grounds
The modest birthplace cottage in which Herbert Hoover was born remains a tangible artifact of his humble beginnings.

2. Gravesite
The final resting place of Herbert Hoover and his wife Lou Henry Hoover, chosen by the President, lies on a hillside overlooking the birthplace cottage.

3. Vista
The vista between the cottage and gravesite, originally conceived by President Hoover, illustrates that anyone can start from a simple life and achieve great things.

4. Quaker Meetinghouse
The Quaker Meetinghouse, with its lack of ornamentation in both architecture and décor, provides visitors an opportunity to experience the quiet contemplative space and values that were important in Hoover's life.

NPS PHOTO

One of the park's fundamental resources is the gravesite of Herbert Hoover and his wife, Lou Henry Hoover, at a location selected by the Hoovers to overlook a vista toward Herbert Hoover's birthplace cottage.

NPS PHOTO

The purpose of interpretation is to establish a caring relationship between park visitors—such as these young visitors with a park ranger—and the park's resources so that all of the park's resources can be preserved for future generations.

5. Serene and Simple Setting
The park presents the opportunity for visitors to experience the serenity of the landscape and explore the simplicity of the small town rural character with all of their senses (dynamically). The ability of visitors to immerse themselves in the simplicity of the time and experience the serenity of the place is fundamental.

Although not specifically identified above, the park's fundamental resources and values also include by association archeological resources with a direct connection or co-location to original sites within the park, such as deposits associated with the birthplace cottage. This is also the case for objects on display from the park's museum collection that have an inherent association to the life of President Hoover. The second home of the Hoovers from 1879 to 1884, the House of Maples, was razed in 1923 and an archeological investigation has not been completed on the site. This location has potential for producing significant archeology that could be associated with the fundamental resources and values.

OTHER IMPORTANT RESOURCES AND VALUES

Although fundamental resources and values are those things around which the park is based, other important resources and values not primary to the park's purpose and significance are also important to park management. These other important resources and values include:

- The statue of Isis and associated formal plantings.
- Design of the east façade of the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library.
- The cultural landscape, archeology, and other structures as listed on the National Register of Historic Places and List of Classified Structures.
- Park museum collection objects on display.
- Natural/rural aesthetic of the reconstructed prairie and adjacent open space.
- Reconstructed prairie plant community.
- Stream and riparian community.
- Setting associated with the Thompson Farm.
- Thompson Farm landscape in harmony with adjacent zones.

The fundamental resources and values and other important resources and values are in agreement with the Asset Priority Index (API) within the Facility Management Software System (FMSS). The API affirms the relationship of the park resources to the priorities set in the GMP and reiterated in the RSS, and establishes those priorities within program areas other than resource stewardship.

Interpretive Themes

Themes define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to park visitors about Herbert Hoover National Historic Site. Interpretation strives to establish a caring relationship between a person and the park's resources and stories by provoking understanding, appreciation, and multiple perspectives. The chosen approach for the park's interpretive and educational programs is to offer opportunities for visitors to make their own intellectual and emotional connections to meanings inherent in the park's resources.

TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE CONCEPTS

Tangible resources are objects and places, or people and events that once had a physical presence. Intangible meanings are commonly felt emotions, relationships, or values associated with those tangible resources. Through knowledge or emotions experienced before a visit to Herbert Hoover NHS, visitors are able to connect personal meanings with its resources.

The following table shows some of the park's tangible resources and some intangible meanings that today's visitors may relate to the park's resources. During a planning workshop in February 2007, the staff and partners of Herbert Hoover National Historic Site brainstormed this list as first step in creating the park interpretive theme statements detailed on the following pages. The park's interpreters, partners, and media specialists should use this list and the interpretive theme statements as a starting point when developing personal services programs, educational programs, and interpretive media for the park's visitors.

INTERPRETIVE THEME STATEMENTS

Themes define the park's most important ideas to be communicated to the public. They convey the tangible/intangible meanings and universal concepts inherent in the park's resources.

1. Simple Beginnings

Theme statement: "In no other land could a boy from a country village, without inheritance or influential friends, look forward with unbounded hope."

—Herbert Hoover

Tangible Resources	Intangible Meanings
Birthplace Cottage	Family, home, simplicity, humble beginnings, difficult, potential
Cradle and Highchair	Birth, childhood, authentic, useful, craftsmanship
Gravesite	Death, love, dignity, simplicity, "connection" to the birthplace
Flagpole	National identity, accomplishment, achievement
Vista/Grounds	Long life, coming "full circle" back to early years at West Branch
Friends Meetinghouse	Faith, spirituality, values, religion, equality
Blacksmith Shop	Opportunities, technology, work ethic, livelihood, craftsmanship
Schoolhouse	Education, learning, knowledge, childhood, memories
Historic Homes	Community, neighbors, comfort, security, mobility, nostalgia
Trails/Boardwalks	Setting, connection to the past
Downtown West Branch	Opportunity, small town life, neighbors
Statue of Isis	Symbolism, gratitude, art, power, idolatry
Creek	Fishing, discovery, restoration, natural processes, stewardship
Prairie	Rebirth, reconstruction, nature, conservation, beauty, destruction
HH Library	Legacy, elevation (of elected officials)
HH Museum	Revelation, fulfillment, accomplishment, life potential
Picnic Shelter	Leisure, development of youth (the scouts built this shelter…)
Thompson Farm	Farming, work ethic

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Portrait of Mrs. Herbert Hoover (Lou Henry Hoover) taken between 1928 and 1933.

Sub-themes (Specific themes that can be the basis of a personal services program or media product):

- Born into a family of modest means, a person has a life of unlimited potential in the United States.
- Parental beliefs and lifestyles influence their children's lives and have a lasting impression, even if the time they all live together is short.
- It takes a family and a community to raise a child: parents, aunts, uncles, neighbors and friends with like beliefs to guide a child to adulthood.
- Hulda Hoover's belief in her Quaker faith, family, and higher education gave her children a foundation and direction to their lives after her death.
- Hoover rose to greatness, despite humble beginnings.

2. Family and Fellowship

Theme statement: Growing up in West Branch, Herbert Hoover saw his parents, family, and others in leadership roles, which instilled in him a drive to become a leader and a success.

Sub-themes (Specific themes that can be the basis of a personal services program or media product):

- Hoover's childhood in a well-educated Quaker community, where members demonstrated leadership and a strong work ethic, coupled with a series of life experiences, developed a man of vision and ambition, capable of unprecedented achievement.
- Childhood and family influences, as demonstrated symbolically by cultural resources on site, affected Hoover's character and public accomplishments.
- Hoover observed that every member of a community has the responsibility to give back to that community, be it a town, a nation, or the world.

3. Triumphs and Tragedies

Theme statement: A child that grows up in a life of adversity takes a path that requires personal endurance and perseverance.

Sub-themes (Specific themes that can be the basis of a personal services program or media product):

- Though Herbert Hoover was separated from his older brother, Theodore, and younger sister, Mary, at an early age, their "family connection" was never broken. As they grew to adulthood, they became an extended family with additions of husband, wives, and children.
- Herbert Hoover's life in Oregon with his uncle's strict and structured lifestyle gave Herbert perseverance and strength to pursue his dreams and succeed in life.
- A person never knows what path their life will take them down and how that one life can make a difference in the world.

4. Adversity Leads to Opportunity

Theme statement: Herbert Hoover's loss of his parents in early childhood influenced his self-reliant character and his future concern for the physical and social well-being of the youth of all nations.

Sub-themes (Specific themes that can be the basis of a personal services program or media product):

- The Second Hoover Home (the "House of Maples") represented the hopes and successes of the young Hoover family, but the deaths of Jesse and Hulda Hoover and the separation of the Hoover children set Herbert on a new course that provided him with even greater opportunities.
- Hulda Hoover used her talent, determination, endurance, and enterprise to raise and support three children, to become a Quaker spiritual leader, and to champion temperance and women's suffrage; she provided a model of self-reliance that Herbert later emulated and promoted.
- The tragedies and upheavals of Herbert Hoover's childhood years in West Branch influenced his desire to meet personal adversity and massive global tragedies and turn them into great personal triumphs despite tremendous obstacles.
- Herbert Hoover's greatest assets—strongly held ideals of individual initiative and private responsibility—proved to be a weakness during his presidency, when the profound

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Portrait of Mr. Herbert Hoover taken around 1928.

challenges of the Great Depression overwhelmed his policies and actions.

- Because of his early experiences as a child, Herbert Hoover expressed his empathy and concern for the welfare of children around the world, as represented by the statue of Isis and the exhibits of the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum.

5. Faith, Hope, Charity, and Love

Theme statement: Herbert Hoover's Quaker beliefs in the equality of all people and in helping others in times of crisis or need led to his becoming one of the world's great humanitarians.

Sub-themes (Specific themes that can be the basis of a personal services program or media product):

- Herbert Hoover was influenced greatly by the Quaker belief in the equality of all people, regardless of race, gender, or creed, which was illustrated by equality within the Quaker community and exemplified by Hoover's remarkable relief efforts.
- Hoover's famine relief efforts during World War I and World War II, and his work with the Boy's Club and other charitable organizations, reflect the Quaker belief in humanitarian selflessness that Herbert learned as a child.
- The Quaker community stepped forward to assist the Hoovers after the loss of Jesse, and again at Hulda's death, demonstrating the importance of a strong foundation in faith and family during times of crisis.

6. Nature and Stewardship

Theme statement: Herbert Hoover's experience living in a rural environment in early childhood shaped his interest in the natural world, which influenced his choice of career and the recreational activities he pursued throughout his life.

Sub-themes (Specific themes that can be the basis of a personal services program or media product):

- Quaker values and beliefs recognize "God's creation" as beauty, demonstrated on site through the cultural landscape features and the proximity of the prairie to the gravesite.
- Living the philosophy of "waste not, want not," the rural town lifestyle required the wise use of resources at hand.
- Humble beginnings created in Hoover a connection to nature and natural resources, which influenced his choice of career and recreation, and made him look to the natural processes for solutions to poverty and hunger (e.g., Victory Gardens).
- Herbert Hoover's boyhood activities and natural pursuits led to a lifelong appreciation of outdoor recreation and conservation. During his presidency, Hoover added three million acres to the National Park Service (expanding the NPS by 40 percent), oversaw the National Park Service reorganization of 1933, and added 2.3 million acres to the U.S. Forest Service.

7. A Memorial and a Legacy

Theme statement: The influence of Herbert Hoover, Lou Henry Hoover, and their family shaped the development of the presidential memorial area in order for the public to gain a fuller understanding of Hoover's life.

Sub-themes (Specific themes that can be the basis of a personal services program or media product):

- The site's memorial landscape and its elements symbolize American ideals of religion, education, hard work, community, and entrepreneurship as Herbert Hoover saw them and lived them.
- The landscape design and historic furnishings are a deliberate effort to commemorate and celebrate Herbert Hoover's accomplishments and ideals, rather than an attempt to fully recreate the setting of his youth.
- The landscape and historic furnishings reflect the wishes and direct involvement of the Hoover family, and especially Lou Henry Hoover, as they expressed them during the site's development from 1935 to 1966.
- As additions to the historic landscape, the gravesite, the statue of Isis, and the Presidential Library and Museum connect Herbert Hoover's early childhood to his later accomplishments.

Goals

Goals describe management's intent in offering interpretive and educational programs and services. This section may also contain objectives that define specific outcomes for interpretive and educational programs (DO-6, page 8).

MANAGEMENT GOALS

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), enacted in 1993, requires federal agencies to establish standards for measuring performance and effectiveness. The law requires federal agencies to develop strategic plans describing their overall goals and objectives, annual performance plans containing quantifiable measures of their progress, and performance reports describing their success in meeting those standards and measures.

The following long-term goals were prepared as part of the planning process required by GPRA. Annual Performance Plans prepared by the park staff establish future benchmarks for visitor satisfaction and visitor understanding. Attainment of these benchmarks is measured with annual park visitor surveys.

Long-term Goal IIa1a: By September 30, 2011, 95 percent of visitors to Herbert Hoover NHS are satisfied with the appropriate park facilities, services, and recreational opportunities.

Long-term Goal IIb1: By September 30, 2011, 89 percent of Herbert Hoover NHS visitors understand the significance of the park.

Long-term Goal IIb2: By September 30, 2011, 96 percent of Herbert Hoover NHS visitors are satisfied with facilitated programs in the park.

ACCESSIBILITY GOALS

The following acts and their amendments are the laws that apply to the federal government.

1. The Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-480) requires all buildings and facilities built or renovated in whole or in part with federal funds to be accessible to, and usable by, physically disabled persons. Since 1968 official standards for making buildings accessible have been developed and the U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board has been created to monitor and enforce compliance with the law.

2. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112), as amended, is more encompassing than the Architectural Barriers Act. While the Architectural Barriers Act requires physical access to buildings and facilities, Section 504 requires program accessibility in all services provided with federal dollars. The act itself is very brief. It states:

"No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by Federal Financial Assistance or by any Executive Agency."

Further, National Park Service (NPS) policy mandates that interpretive programming be developed in accordance with NPS Director's Orders 42, and that interpretive media be developed within the NPS Accessibility Guidelines for Interpretive Media (which can be accessed through this website: http://www.nps.gov/hfc/accessibility).

Visitor Experience Goals

Visitor Experience Goals describe opportunities for the public and suggest how interpretation may change the way visitors will think, feel, or act as a result of their park experience (DO-6, page 9).

The desired outcome of Herbert Hoover NHS operations is to manage visitor-resource interactions so that the resources will remain unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations while ensuring that opportunities exist for the widest variety of current visitors to forge meaningful connections with those resources. The park's facilities, interpretive media, website, personal services, and education programs provide visitors with information as well as interpretive, educational, and recreational opportunities.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE GOALS FOR ALL PARK VISITORS

All park visitors should have the opportunity to:

- Easily find orientation information on Hoover-related websites, outside the park, and within the park at both Herbert Hoover NHS and the Presidential Library and Museum.
- Receive information about attractions and services in West Branch and nearby towns.
- Interact with paid staff and volunteers who are professional and courteous, leaving a positive impression of the park and the National Park Service.
- Understand that Herbert Hoover NHS is a unit of the National Park System, and part of the overall Herbert Hoover experience in West Branch, Iowa.
- Access the park facilities and programs given the full range of visitor abilities and disabilities.
- Enjoy a variety of recreational activities that do not interfere with other people and do not adversely impact the park's resources.
- Safely enjoy their visit by learning about and following safety guidelines and park rules and regulations.
- Use all their senses during their park experience.
- Find opportunities for solitude and personal discovery.
- Gain an appreciation and understanding of Herbert Hoover NHS by learning about the park's natural and cultural heritage.
- Discover their own personal connections to the meanings and significance inherent in the natural and cultural resources of Herbert Hoover NHS.
- Receive balanced and accurate information that includes multiple perspectives.

NPS PHOTO

One of the basic visitor experience goals of the park is for all visitors to, not only find their way around the park, but to discover their own personal connections to the meanings and significance inherent in the park's resources.

During the spring and fall each year, more than 10,000 students—as many as seven school groups per day—visit Herbert Hoover NHS and the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum.

NPS PHOTO

- Purchase publications and educational materials through the park's cooperating association and Presidential Library bookstore that will enhance their experience, and extend the impact of their visit.
- Demonstrate stewardship by enjoying park resources in a manner that protects and enhances the natural and cultural resources.
- Contribute to the stewardship of Herbert Hoover National Historic Site.
- Understand how Herbert Hoover NHS works in partnership with the Presidential Library and Museum, the Hoover Association, and the local community; and that visitors have an opportunity to support these entities by joining the Hoover Association.
- Have a seamless experience provided by the National Park Service, the Presidential Library and Museum, the Hoover Association, and the local community.

EDUCATION EXPERIENCE GOALS

Visitors within educational groups should have the opportunity to:

- Participate in curriculum-based education programs that include pre-visit and post-visit activities.
- Use the park as an outdoor classroom and conduct educational activities on their own.
- Participate in a coordinated, teacher-directed educational experience using materials provided by the National Park Service and the Presidential Library and Museum.
- Participate in educational experiences that provide opportunities for intellectual and emotional connections to resource meanings.
- Safely enjoy their visit by learning about and following safety guidelines and park rules and regulations.
- Demonstrate stewardship by using park resources in a manner that protects and enhances the natural and cultural resources.
- Contribute to the stewardship of Herbert Hoover NHS.

VIRTUAL VISITOR EXPERIENCE GOALS

Visitors who access information about Herbert Hoover NHS through its website on the internet should have the opportunity to:

- Easily navigate the park's website to plan a visit and/or to learn about the park's natural and cultural resources.
- Gain an appreciation and understanding of Herbert Hoover NHS by learning about the park's natural and cultural heritage.
- Find interpretive opportunities for intellectual and emotional connections to resource meanings.
- Print the park map, download forms, and print photos.
- Contact the park through an e-mail link.
- Link to the Presidential Library and Museum's website and other appropriate websites.

Visitor Profiles

This broad description of park audiences includes both actual and potential audiences—in-park, out-of-park, and education audiences (DO-6, page 9).

Herbert Hoover NHS Annual Visitation Figures, 2001-2006			
2001	183,640	**2004**	182,545
2002	191,812	**2005**	152,214
2003	183,364	**2006**	127,859

Average visitation from 2001 to 2006 was 170,239.

Herbert Hoover NHS Monthly Visitation Figures, 2006							
January	5,422	**April**	9,398	**July**	13,894	**October**	9,075
February	3,867	**May**	15,070	**August**	17,333	**November**	7,415
March	4,505	**June**	9,863	**September**	10,175	**December**	21,042

Total visits (from Monthly Public Use Reports) for 2006 was 127,859.

SEASONAL TRENDS

Spring: By late March, visitation from the general public increases on most weekends, depending on weather conditions. On weekdays from the first week in April through mid-June, about seven or eight school groups from public schools, private schools, and home schools from the region (i.e., Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, the "Quad Cities," and many smaller towns) take field trips to Herbert Hoover NHS and the Presidential Library and Museum. Most of the groups are fourth and fifth grade classes who are learning an "Iowa Pioneer History unit." High school classes at the Advance Placement (AP) level also visit the park and Library and Museum for educational programs.

Summer: Once schools close in mid-June, the park may be busy daily with national visitors on vacation or regional visitors on day trips. Summer visitation peaks in August, highlighted by "HooverFest"—a one-day event that often draws between 5,000 and 8,000 visitors.

Autumn: After schools reopen in September, school groups return to the park on weekdays with about four to five groups per day from just after Labor Day through the end of October. Weekends may remain quite busy with local and regional visitors. Visitation often spikes on federal holiday weekends such as Columbus Day, Veterans Day, and Thanksgiving.

Winter: Visitation on winter weekdays drops considerably, and weekend visitation from local and regional visitors depends on the severity of the weather. However, the month of December is one of the highest visitation months of the entire year because of holiday-related visitors and two special programs: "Christmas Past," a three-day event that can draw 3,000 to 5,000 visitors; and a Library and Museum event primarily for pre-school children that can draw 2,000 or more. After these special events and the holidays pass, remaining winter visitation is typically low.

ANALYSIS OF VISITOR GROUP TYPES (as observed by Herbert Hoover NHS staff)

West Branch Neighbors (about 2 percent of total visitors)

Characteristics: Park neighbors who live in West Branch and the nearby vicinity.

Use of Herbert Hoover NHS: Park neighbors rarely visit the park for its historic resources; most come simply to walk their dogs, use

NPS PHOTO

All of the contemporary and historic buildings at Herbert Hoover NHS, such as the schoolhouse with its ramp, are accessible to visitors in wheelchairs. The park is working to assure that all interpretive media and programs are accessible to all visitors who have a wide range of abilities and disabilities.

the picnic shelter, or walk the prairie trail or loop road. The town of West Branch sometimes uses the (NPS-owned) Village Green for local celebrations.
Issues: Many local visitors think of Herbert Hoover NHS as a village park, not a national historic site that is a unit of the National Park System; most do not pay their park entrance fee.

Local Users (about 50 percent of total visitors)
Characteristics: Local users who live in Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, the "Quad Cities," and many nearby small towns and villages.
Use of Herbert Hoover NHS: Many of the local users are "repeat visitors" who come to the park for special events and special exhibits. Most of these local visitors first came to the park when they were children on school bus trips.
Issues: Most local users know the park story, respect its resources, and pay their entrance fees.

Regional Users (about 25 percent of total visitors)
Characteristics: People who live in Iowa (outside of those areas described above), Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Missouri.
Use of Herbert Hoover NHS: Residents of these states are closest to Interstate 80 (going east-west, and Interstate 35 (going north-south). Most of these visitors are first-time visitors.
Issues: Most regional visitors are not aware that Herbert Hoover National Historic Site is a unit of the National Park System; many have heard about or seen signs for the new "Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Corridor" (that includes Herbert Hoover NHS), but do not understand this "corridor."

National/International Vacationers (about 15 percent of total visitors)
Characteristics: Visitors from the United States (other than those states listed above), and a small percentage of international visitors (mostly from Asia and Russia).
Use of Herbert Hoover NHS: Most are on a summer vacation. Many use the park as a rest stop while driving along Interstate 80. Many have little or no knowledge of the site before their visit.
Issues: Visitation for this group is decreasing, possibly because fewer families drive cross-country on their vacations which may be due to high gas prices. Many "fly over" the Midwest instead.

Education Groups (about 8 percent of total visitors*)
(** this is the NPS percentage; the figure for the Presidential Library and Museum is 20 percent, which is 10,000 students out of their 50,000 annual visitors.*)
Characteristics: Schools and other groups from cities and counties within a one-hour drive.
Issues: During these students' 3.75-hour experience, students typically spend most of their time at the Presidential Library and Museum, and the historic site experience is at the end of their visit. With the staff at the Library and Museum scheduling about seven school groups each weekday during the spring (and four or five groups per day on autumn weekdays), the interpretive staff at Herbert Hoover National Historic Site is challenged to keep up with their end of each groups' visit. Also, these school visits are more similar to traditional "field trips," rather than "educational program" opportunities.

"Virtual" Visitors (not "counted" in the park's visitation data)
Characteristics: Local, national, and international visitors who "visit" the park through computers in their homes or offices via the park's website.
Use of Herbert Hoover NHS: These "virtual" visitors have no impact on the park's tangible resources. However, they do impact park staff in the time required to create, update, and maintain the park website.
Issues: The number of virtual visitors continues to increase each year; as these numbers rise, the importance of the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site website increases correspondingly. The park website can provide useful visitor orientation to visitors that might encourage comprehensive visits to all the Hoover-related sites in West Branch, including the downtown area.

2007 GPRA VISITOR SURVEY

Each summer, Herbert Hoover National Historic Site distributes visitor survey cards to selected visitors for one month, and the data is compiled by the University of Idaho as a report for the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993. Each year's survey reflects visitor opinion about park facilities, services, and recreational opportunities. The results of the 2007 GPRA Visitor Survey are summarized below (the GPRA Visitor Survey results from 1998 through 2007, are available at www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.profile):

2007 Overall Quality of Facilities, Services, and Recreational Opportunities		
Very good:	82%	
Good:	16%	(98% satisfaction: combined Very Good and Good)
Average:	2%	
Poor:	0%	
Very Poor	0%	

2007 Specific Ratings of Facilities, Services, and Recreational Opportunities					
Category	**Approval Ratings**				
Park Facilities	**Very Good**	**Good**	**Average**	**Poor**	**Very Poor**
Visitor Centers	82%	16%	2%	0%	0%
Exhibits	81%	17%	2%	0%	0%
Restrooms	76%	20%	4%	0%	0%
Walkways, Trails, Roads	81%	17%	2%	0%	0%
Camp/Picnic Areas	72%	23%	3%	2%	0%
Combined Facilities:	79%	18%	2%	0%	0%
Visitor Services	**Very Good**	**Good**	**Average**	**Poor**	**Very Poor**
Employee Assistance	85%	10%	4%	1%	0%
Interpretive Programs	78%	20%	2%	0%	0%
Park Map or Brochure	78%	19%	3%	0%	0%
Value for Entrance Fee Paid	70%	23%	7%	0%	0%
Combined Visitor Services:	78%	18%	4%	0%	0%
Recreational Opportunities	**Very Good**	**Good**	**Average**	**Poor**	**Very Poor**
Learning About Nature, History, etc.	69%	27%	3%	0%	0%
Outdoor Recreation (and Sightseeing)	58%	38%	4%	0%	0%
Combined Recreational Opportunities:	66%	30%	4%	0%	0%

COMMENTS ON VISITOR SURVEYS, 2006

Within the GPRA Visitor Survey in 2006, these selected comments are samples of what some visitors wrote in response to the following: **This park was established because of its significance to the nation. In your opinion, what is the national significance of this park?**

"It makes me know the great work of Herbert Hoover and what he did for this country."

"The home town and life of an American President. Sharing how a very small life became very big."

"To preserve President Hoover's boyhood home and his presidential legacy and that period of history."

"To connect with Hoover's childhood environment and to follow his path to becoming the 31st President."

"To honor the memory of President Hoover and to show appreciation for his service to the nation with the Hoover Commission and the world with Belgian relief."

"Boyhood of President Hoover and its effect on his presidency."

Virtual park visits are on the rise, increasing the importance of the park website.

NPS PHOTO

Once schools close in mid-June, the park may be busy daily with national visitors on vacation or regional visitors on day trips.

"He illustrates the community and life that a future president had lived in. . . . a farming town in the 1870s."

"Recognition of a U.S. President—his early years and impact upon our country."

"To help people realize that even the president is just a common citizen with family roots."

"Very important. As a foreigner, it was interesting to learn about one of USA's presidents."

"It is . . . a historic site showing the lifestyle of the people. The Quaker church was very interesting, too."

"Help show us about Herbert Hoover and what made him great. I am so proud of our national parks."

"It increased my knowledge of President Hoover and his life and the culture of the early- to mid-century."

"Extremely important to provide positive role models for children to preserve our history for our citizens."

"Showing how someone of more humble beginnings can make a good name for themselves."

"Background on Herbert Hoover and why he wasn't that bad of a president. He was a victim of bad timing with little congressional support."

"Serenity of the park—Quaker feel. Beautiful open area. It explained Herbert Hoover's life outside his Presidency. His World War I and World War II efforts on famine."

"Helps to understand the man when you understand his beginnings and background."

"Its educational value: Hoover is a largely misunderstood man who was much maligned. This park helps correct that misreading."

"A beautiful, well-kept park . . . essential to the enjoyment, learning, and accessibility for families."

"Hoover was a great philanthropist who contributed greatly to the needs of the world."

"We enjoyed the Birthplace. The rangers were very helpful."

2006 VISITOR SURVEY BY THE HOOVER PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

In 2006 the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum (the park's primary partner) conducted a Visitor Survey through the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Office of Presidential Libraries. Using group interviews, the survey yielded the following key findings:

- Most non-visitors . . . might be more inclined to visit if they knew the museum was more about the times and the context of the presidency and not solely about the individual.

- Many feel the museum itself is static and "doesn't change," although there is interest in knowing what temporary exhibits are there.

- More specifically, [the brochure] should let visitors know that the library will give them a sense of the man holding the office, the context of the experience and the long-term impact of his actions and decisions while in office—beyond what they may know from headlines and history books. They want to know:
  (1) The man. What was he like? What made him tick? How was he like me?
  (2) The family. What was his upbringing? Was it like mine? What was his route to the White House? How did his community influence him? How did his family experience his presidency?
  (3) The times. What were the times like? How did the times affect the president? How did the president affect the times? What were the times like for people like me?

  For many respondents, this detail makes visiting a presidential library more appealing because it personalizes things. By learning and seeing that this person, who led our country, had a wife and kids, too, makes it easier to have some connection beyond him being just a historical figure.

Comments from some of the focus group participants included the following:

"It's a personal connection to the past. You saw the house and everything. They made it more real, I guess."

"There are all these exhibits of all these old things. Things of Hoover, and you think 'Geez, he lived here. This stuff really belonged to him.'"

". . . I find that the Hoover exhibits were actually considerably informative, because I knew almost nothing."

"I took my son and I thought it was very educational for him. To know that there is something like this close out here in the boondocks of Iowa. He thought it was pretty cool, too."

". . . the pride that you get about seeing Hoover here in Iowa and there's a museum here in Iowa . . ."

In reference to the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum being on the grounds of the national historic site, some said:

"It's well built, it's well planned out."

". . . It's well maintained. It's really a work of art."

For more information on this visitor survey, contact the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum.

Issues and Influences Affecting Interpretation

This section includes influences and opportunities inside and outside the park that affect interpretation and education (DO-6, page 9).

There are issues and influences, both inside and outside the park, that affect the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site interpretation and education programs. Many of these are issues that the park's interpretive efforts can help park managers to solve or mitigate. Others are issues that may influence the park interpretive programs, and park managers need to consider these when planning the park's future.

EXTERNAL: ISSUES AND INFLUENCES FROM OUTSIDE HERBERT HOOVER NHS

National Economy

During difficult economic times, people are likely to cut back on the money they spend on travel and recreation, resulting in fewer vacations, vacations spent close to home, or both. Conversely, in a strong economy, people have more money to spend on travel and recreation. Changes in gasoline prices and other travel-related costs also influence how people spend their vacation and leisure time. This issue affects the site's interpretive efforts in the decrease in visitation to Herbert Hoover NHS noted from 2004 through 2006 when annual visitation dropped from 182,545 (in 2004) to 152,214 (in 2005) to 127,859 (in 2006).

Homeland Security

One of the delicate challenges facing Herbert Hoover National Historic Site and the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum in the twenty-first century is maintaining the proper balance between homeland security and customer service. All federal employees—indeed all citizens—accept the need for effective protection against a multitude of potential threats to life and property. Terrorism can strike anywhere at anytime, even in a small town in a rural state. Although historic sites and museums are open invitations to large numbers of visitors, barriers to admission or security checkpoints are rare in most historic sites and museums. Management at both Herbert Hoover NHS and the Presidential Library and Museum continue to wrestle with this issue of how to achieve effective security without creating barriers to visitation.

Related to this issue, the need for effective security within historic sites and museums has increased the requirement for background checks for all staff members and volunteers. Staff members have come to accept these measures as part of their employment. The cost to the park to process background checks affects the budget, programming, and staffing. If background checks are applied to the park's volunteers, this might limit the volunteer pool because many potential volunteers probably feel this is an unwanted intrusion into their life.

World Wide Web

The World Wide Web is an important outreach tool considering the national and worldwide increase in use of websites. The National Park Service's content management system (CMS) for all NPS areas is administered from Washington, D.C., and organizes all NPS websites' main educational components (the History and Culture and Nature and Science sub-sites) into one-size-fits-all categories. The park staff would prefer to have more flexibility to organize these sub-sites along its own interpretive themes.

Decreasing Museum Visitation

Statistics tell the story. Visitation to museums and historic sites in the United States increased steadily from 1932 to 1987—more than half a century—without any indication that there was trouble on the horizon. But beginning in the late 1980s—and more precipitously after 2001—attendance at museums in general, and history museums and historic sites in particular, has decreased. For example, after a successful opening year, the new Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois, has experienced declining visitation; however, the Ronald Reagan Presidential

Library and Museum in Simi Valley, California, as well as many NPS sites are examples to the contrary. But overall, visitation is dropping and that is a cause for concern.

The possible causes for this decrease in visitation to historic sites and museums over the past two decades are numerous. Without question, there is a greater demand on the time of contemporary families. Organized sports and related activities, the nature of blended and single parent households, the impact of interactive technology such as video gaming, all have contributed to the decline in interest. Surveys by Harris Interactive and other forms indicate that only about 60 percent of the nation has any interest in visiting a historical museum, and only half of that number will visit historical museums more than once in their lifetime. Therefore, the nation's historic sites and museums are competing for the attention of a relative small percentage of the American population.

Midwest Population

Although Herbert Hoover had no control over the location of his hometown or his birthplace, that location has affected visitation. Quite simply, Herbert Hoover National Historic Site and the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum are located in a rural county of fewer than 20,000 individuals. Although the neighboring county to the west, Johnson County, has a population close to 100,000 and is growing, the overall number of individuals living within a 50-mile driving radius of West Branch is relatively small to support a presidential museum and historic site. To supplement local visitation, West Branch and the Hoover-related sites need additional visitors from neighboring states. Visitation from people through the Midwest and throughout the United States (even though the park is just off I-80, which presents the site with a large pool of potential visitors) has traditionally been low, perhaps because Iowa fares poorly as a "vacation destination."

Also, like many Midwest states, Iowa faces the challenge of sustaining a steady population base. For more than forty years, the state has been deeply and vocally concerned about the exodus of talented young Iowans who graduate from local colleges and universities but are unable to find jobs in the state. As Iowa's population declines, the potential local visitation to West Branch's Hoover-related sites also declines. This issue cannot be solved locally. It simply needs to be noted when forecasting visitor expectation levels and resource allocation.

Many of the local residents of West Branch live in this community and commute and work in the Iowa City and Cedar Rapids area. Many residents enjoy living in a rural community and the accessibility to their work within a reasonable commuting distance.

The industrial area on the south side of Interstate 80 provides employment for West Branch residents as well as commuters from a 50-mile radius. More industry is being developed, including a wind turbine manufacturing facility in the industrial park.

Regional Competition

West Branch is located within 50 miles of larger population centers that promote several attractions, including more than 20 museums. As a result, the level of competition for attracting visitors is extremely high. This issue is compounded by the small budgets for advertising by West Branch and its Hoover-related sites. However, this issue can also pose many opportunities for West Branch to promote more locally, building relationships with the communities and businesses surrounding the town that can help out with their support.

Public Perception

As the public drives along Iowa's roadways and sees miles and miles of corn and soy bean fields, the lasting impression of the state is that it is strictly an agricultural state with no cultural history. This impression often does not encourage motorists to leave Interstate 80 to visit and learn about the history and culture of Iowa. This public perception impacts the potential visitation to West Branch and the interpretation they receive at the Hoover sites.

Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area (NHA)

Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area—which encompasses 37 counties in northeast Iowa—has become the most well-known NPS entity in Iowa since the NHA was established as an affiliated NPS area in 1996. Iowa has only two other NPS units, Herbert Hoover NHS and Effigy Mounds National Monument (NM), both located in eastern Iowa. These two NPS units are not well known to most visitors. Silos and Smokestacks NHA, due to the nature of their large geographical coverage and the visible presence of their "NPS arrowhead" entry signs on major highways, have become the most "visible" presence of the NPS in Iowa.

As the two traditional NPS units within Silos and Smokestacks NHA, Herbert Hoover and Effigy Mounds would be well served by partnering more with the NHA. Perhaps staffing and funding at these NPS entities could be used to enhance the mission of all three and increase the overall public awareness of the National Park Service within the state of Iowa. Also, the "branding" of the NPS units in Iowa could be enhanced if all three NPS units partner more closely.

West Branch

Although the relationship of Herbert Hoover National Historic Site and the city of West Branch is improving, many local residents view the NPS presence in their community as an obstacle to fully utilizing the community's resources, in particular, its park settings. Many residents also resent that the potential tourism and commercial activity brought into West Branch by the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum and Herbert Hoover National Historic Site stays at the two primary Hoover sites (i.e., most park visitors go to the library and museum and/or the historic site and then get back into their vehicles without seeing other community sites.) However, other residents attribute the lack of tourism and commercial traffic flowing from the Hoover sites to the community as a reflection of the lack of amenities the community has to offer.

Present-day West Branch needs to reflect the bustling town of Hoover's youth. As a step in that direction, the community of West Branch was recently accepted into Main Street Iowa, an economic development program design to encourage business growth through historic preservation and rehabilitation. Main Street West Branch intends to capitalize on the Hoover sites' heritage tourism when developing its niche market.

"Branding" of West Branch and the Hoover sites

The Hoover Association is interested in helping the Hoover-related entities "brand" their sites. Not only should the public have a better perception of the national importance and designations of the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum and Herbert Hoover NHS, they should also connect the city of West Branch with them. Marketing them together—but at the same time separately—will help promote all the West Branch opportunities to visitors.

An effective partnership between the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, Herbert Hoover NHS, and historic West Branch would improve the experience for all visitors as this partnership would create a seamless visit from the library and museum to the historic site and then to the businesses downtown. By creating a seamless visit, visitors can very easily view West Branch as one historic attraction.

INTERNAL: ISSUES AND INFLUENCES FROM WITHIN HERBERT HOOVER NHS

Staffing

Herbert Hoover NHS has three interpretive staffing issues. The first issue is whether or not the park will continue to post an interpreter at the birthplace cottage during the spring, summer, and fall. Posting an interpreter at the cottage provides opportunities for informal interpretation there, but severely limits the interpretive staff's flexibility in offering guided tours or informal interpretation in other locations in the park. The second issue is how to best use the time of the park's two permanent interpreters. These two interpreters have

NPS PHOTO

These signs direct visitors driving along Parkside Drive to parking opportunities at Herbert Hoover NHS, the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, and on Main Street in the city of West Branch. A comprehensive sign plan is needed to coordinate the future signs that will lead visitors who are driving to the park and then direct them while walking within the park.

numerous support duties (e.g., payroll, fee deposits, bookstore, volunteer management, website maintenance, special event planning, purchasing) as well as their core duties of planning, developing, and presenting formal programs; updating in-house publications and other media; and improving the interpretive skills of themselves and the seasonal employees. The third issue is the park's low level of interpretive staffing in the spring and early fall, when large school groups come to the site for guided tours of the park grounds in conjunction with their visit to the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum. If the park sets limits on these school groups tours, it will limit one of the park's biggest sources of visitor attendance.

Budget

Based upon the park's current "Living Within Our Means – 85 Percent Plan," the park will be fully staffed after the subject-to-furlough gardener position is hired in 2007. However, based upon the park's Budget Cost Project Model for the next five years, there will be fewer opportunities to hire or retain the current staffing levels of seasonal employees (unless the National Park Centennial Challenge provides increased funding in Fiscal Year 2008 and beyond, or if the Fiscal Year 2008 Seasonal Initiative provides funds to hire additional seasonal employees). According to an Operations Evaluation in January 2007, the park's permanent staff members "wear too many hats" and it is difficult for them to address the many collateral duties of permanent employees at a smaller park such as Herbert Hoover NHS.

Core Analysis

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site is currently scheduled for a Core Operations Analysis in Fiscal Year 2008. The purpose of a Core Operations Analysis is to identify

each park's essential operational functions and create the most efficient organization and necessary staffing levels to operate the park at a safe and professional level. The park is currently operating within the approved "Living Within Our Means – 85 Percent Plan." These processes apply to the staffing concerns shared throughout.

Park Sign System

The recommendations from the Operations Evaluation in January 2007 included "the park's outdoor interpretive signs do not follow the standards of the NPS Graphic Identity Program; Highway directional signs leading off of Interstate 80 and on Parkside Drive do not appear functional or adequate." The park's 2004 General Management Plan recommended that the park develop a sign system working together with the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum and city of West Branch officials to resolve signage issues leading to and within the park.

Volunteers

Proper coordination and supervision of volunteers is time-consuming. There is an expectation that the volunteer coordinator is the de-facto volunteer supervisor for every division who will recruit, refer for placement, schedule, train, and supervise all volunteers.

Birthplace Cottage

There are concerns related to placement of waysides near the birthplace cottage. However, through careful planning and compliance, there should be an opportunity to explore the appropriate placement of waysides to enhance non-personnel services for park visitors.

Prairie

The prairie was reconstructed from land that had been row cropped since before Herbert Hoover's birth and represents a land cover that was quickly disappearing during Hoover's childhood. Although it serves a practical purpose (erosion and water control), the prairie is not a functioning ecosystem nor does it have historical integrity associated with the period of significance.

Accessibility

Historic structures present challenges when dealing with accessibility (e.g., trying to maintain the integrity while providing wheelchair accessibility). Also, the park's current cultural landscape has a number of issues with grades and surfaces. The park is trying to address these issues with PMIS funding requests to mitigate these accessibility concerns.

Fee Collection

Because Herbert Hoover NHS cannot practically maintain an entrance "gate" collection station, a large percentage of the park's visitors evade paying the park's entrance fee—either purposefully or unknowingly. Enforcement of getting non-compliant visitors to pay their fee would be time-consuming, expensive, and a significant public relations concern. The NPS's increasing focus on generating fee revenues throughout the National Park System creates a hardship on sites such as Herbert Hoover NHS because federal fees remittance and accountability require a great deal of time. Visitors pay fees either at the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum or Herbert Hoover NHS, but one payment covers the fees at both sites, as agreed upon with a memorandum of agreement between the two Hoover sites. There is also a challenge in assuring that fee collection costs are reasonable relative to gross fees collected.

CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES WITHIN HERBERT HOOVER NHS

Landscape Management Plan

There are several areas in the park that require landscaping attention. The area around the visitor center and post office has not been addressed with any type of landscape management plan. Those areas lack an attractive, as well as manageable, landscape. The demonstration prairie garden is appealing to visitors and an attractive addition to the visitor center parking area; however, the area surrounding the parking lot and post office require better landscape planning. The trees in front of the visitor center create shade during the summer, but block the NPS Arrowhead and signage on the building.

NPS PHOTO

Herbert Hoover Creek meanders through the verdant spring landscape at Herbert Hoover NHS.

The plantings around the park's historic structures and residences would be more attractive if there was a landscape management plan developed for plantings and maintenance of the vegetation around the houses utilized as offices.

Museum Collections and Sharing Resources

The NPS museum collections are currently stored in four different locations. Garvin Cottage, the principal storage area, does not meet all NPS standards for museum storage, and is overcrowded. The other areas are severely deficient as artifact storage spaces. The NPS Midwest Region Museum Collection Curatorial Facilities Implementation Strategy advises that items should be stored at the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum or at other nearby institutions. The park will be storing park-generated archival materials and a few artifacts at the library, and has inquired about museum storage space at other institutions.

Museum artifacts displayed in the four historic structures which contain artifacts are constantly subject to unacceptable temperature, light, and humidity levels. Correcting these conditions would be costly and would raise issues with National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) compliance as well as aesthetic and procedural issues (e.g., leaving building doors open during the day).

Grants and External Funding

There are several grant opportunities available to the Hoover-related sites in West Branch, but few grant writers on staff at the Hoover Association, the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, or the historic site to coordinate the effort. Many grant opportunities pass because of limited staff resources and skill sets to develop applications. Consequently, possible grant revenue totaling several thousands of dollars remains unrealized for the Hoover sites.

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES WITHIN HERBERT HOOVER NHS

Staffing

Herbert Hoover NHS does not have a natural resource manager. Instead, a biologist funded by the Midwest Regional Office is duty-stationed at the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site and is available to consult on the park's resource management issues on a part-time basis. Interpretation of the park's natural resources would be more effective with a permanent natural resource manager at the historic site.

Volunteers

People who ask for one-shot or short-term volunteer projects often ask for resource management work. Although most of the volunteer work in the prairie (e.g., pulling out white sweet clover, removing woody shrubs, collecting seeds, etc.) would not require much training or supervision, the park staff still does not have anyone to oversee those projects. Also, the anticipated arrival of background checks for all volunteers who use government computers may hinder volunteer recruitment; it will certainly slow down the program's administration.

Special Events

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site has come to depend on special emphasis days such as Public Lands Day to address some of the park's natural resource management needs using volunteers. Although special events are popular, they require a large amount of staff time and resources to plan and manage.

Hoover Creek

Herbert Hoover NHS has a stream running through the park known as "Hoover Creek." A "Stream Restoration Project" for Hoover Creek is the park's highest priority for projects and it is listed as a line-item construction project. The magnitude and the costs of this project are not well understood by the local community and by some Hoover Association trustees. This project is complex and necessary to protect significant resources within the park and the local community.

Heartland Network

Herbert Hoover NHS is part of the Heartland Network Inventory and Monitoring Program, which is an

NPS PHOTO

Yellow coneflowers bloom in the tallgrass prairie with the red barn of the Isaac Miles farmstead in the distance. Although the park includes 80 acres of restored prairie, this resource is not a functioning ecosystem and it is not historically associated with the park's period of significance.

opportunity for the park to reach educators throughout Iowa. Although the Heartland Network has a good communication plan, the information is not being applied to optimal interpretive use. The park/regional biologist has provided guidance and assistance on the interpretive products, but much of it does not get implemented once it leaves this individual's hands.

Exotic Species

Exotic (invasive) species became a major issue when the restored prairie was created at this park where much of the cultural landscape has manicured lawns. Although a strain on the park's staffing and budget resources, the prairie and its native and invasive species is a great educational tool for public awareness because invasive plants are such well-known issues.

Prairie Burning

The park's prescribed fires on the prairie are opportunities for interpretive and educational programs with the local community and school groups. The prescribed fire program and associated costs are not well understood by the local community even after repeated efforts to explain this practice. Also, the prairie signs should be changed from "Native Prairie" to "Restored Prairie" or "Reconstructed Prairie."

Balance of Natural and Historical Programs

The "restored prairie" in Herbert Hoover National Historic Site does not serve as a functioning ecosystem, nor is it a historical feature that is associated with the early years of Herbert Hoover; also the park's existing creek is different today than in Hoover's boyhood years because of local development. Because these natural resources are not historically significant to the Hoover story, the question has been raised, "How much time and effort should be devoted to interpreting these natural resources?" Perhaps one answer to that question is that natural history programs allow park interpreters to expand beyond the Hoover story and include some interpretation of the mission of the National Park Service—as long as these secondary stories stay in balance with the primary Hoover stories.

Existing Conditions

This brief summary and evaluation establishes a point of departure for future personal services, media development, and facility proposals. The park's existing media should be inventoried and updated in the Media Inventory Database System (MIDS) (DO-6, page 9).

FACILITIES

Visitor Center

The visitor center for Herbert Hoover National Historic Site is within a 9,150-square-foot building that also features office space for the park's interpretive staff, storage space for cooperating association sales stock, and other interpretive program needs. This building was built in 1970 by the General Services Administration (GSA) and leased to the National Park Service and the U.S. Post Office for 35 years. GSA transferred the building to the NPS in 2005; the NPS now leases the back end of the building to the U.S. Post Office for their West Branch office.

The visitor center portion of this building has approximately 5,250 square feet that includes, a lobby and information desk, restrooms, an exhibit room (for traveling exhibits), an audiovisual room, and a sales space for Eastern National (EN), the park's cooperating association.

INTERPRETIVE MEDIA

Media Inventory Database System Summary

Media conditions for all NPS areas are now listed in the Servicewide Media Inventory Database System (MIDS); the listing of media conditions for Herbert Hoover NHS is listed in MIDS under "HEHO" in the Midwest Region. The park's MIDS summary reflects the center's current media conditions. As of 2006 there were 42 records for interpretive media at Herbert Hoover NHS: four for historically furnished areas; eight for audiovisual programs; one for a planning document (a GMP); one for an exhibit area (the park visitor center); one for a publications record (for the park's unigrid brochure); and 26 for wayside exhibits. To supplement the MIDS information, the following brief sections summarize the park's current interpretive media conditions.

Exhibits

The park does not have any permanent exhibits. Within the 797-square-foot lobby, there are three large exhibit boards with park-made exhibits (with titles, photographs, and captions) that interpret the prairie and Herbert Hoover's early life in West Branch. Just beyond the octagonal information desk in the middle of the lobby are Plexiglas exhibit cases with a scale model replica of Hoover's birthplace cottage and blacksmith shop and another with two modern Hoover balls (i.e., medicine balls) and photographs of U.S. soldiers who still play Hoover ball in Iraq. (A combination of tennis, volleyball and medicine ball, Hoover-ball was invented by a White House physician to keep Hoover physically fit.) The lobby also contains an information board on the park's fees and a donation box.

Through a short hall and door beyond the lobby is a 639-square-foot exhibit room (approximately 20 by 30 feet). This room is used for traveling and temporary exhibits that the park staff arranges to be changed two or three times a year. The room has two "false fireplaces" that were made for a temporary exhibit, track lighting on the ceiling, and outlets in the floor and on all four walls.

Audiovisual Programs

The park's primary audiovisual program is shown in the visitor center's 23-seat theater that is located down a short hallway behind the lobby's information desk. The 12-minute videotape program (in a DVD format), titled "Adventure and Great Undertakings: Herbert Hoover's Childhood in West Branch," was produced in 1998 by Odyssey Productions of Portland, Oregon, with funds provided by the Hoover Association, Association of Partners for Public Lands, and a National Park Service Challenge Cost

NPS PHOTO

The park's visitor center, which has approximately 5,000 square feet for visitor use, is small compared to the 44,500-square-foot Hoover Presidential Library and Museum.

Share Grant. This audiovisual program is played using a DVD player system on a 10- by 6 -foot screen that has a caption board underneath.

The park has a second audiovisual program that is available to school groups on request. This 24-minute program (which was originally a slide/sound program from the 1980s that was converted to videotape) is titled "An Introduction to the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site and the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum."

The park also has seven audio stations that are played via push button in or near six of the park's historic structures (birthplace cottage, blacksmith shop, schoolhouse, Friends Meetinghouse, gravesite/prairie, and the Isis statue) and the park orientation wayside next to the visitor center parking lot. These audio tracks are played through standalone sound systems, and operated by push buttons—most of which are next to aluminum interpretive signs. The birthplace cottage audio station does not include an interpretive sign.

Wayside Exhibits

The park's one low-profile, 36- by 24-inch wayside exhibit is located at the southwest corner of the visitor center's parking lot along the walkway that leads from the visitor center and/or parking lot toward the park's historic structures. This orientation panel, titled "Herbert Hoover," was produced in 2000 and uses the same aerial-oblique art that was done for the park folder as its primary graphic; it also has four photographs that show some of the park's primary resources.

There are also 22 small interpretive etched-and-anodized aluminum interpretive signs located throughout the park. These 22 panels are considered "interpretive signs" because they only contain words and do not have graphics; therefore, they are not technically "wayside exhibits." The largest of the interpretive signs are in the park's prairie area and are 24 by 18 inches and 17 by 11 inches. Most of the interpretive signs are in the historic district and these are 11 by 8 inches and 8 by 6 inches. All of the etched-and-anodized interpretive signs were produced and installed in 1990 an 1991.

The park also has three bulletin board/cases. One (that was within the park's Village Green area until 2006) is currently in storage; the other two bulletin cases are located at one of the picnic pavilions and in the visitor center hallway next to the restrooms.

Wayfinding Signs

Herbert Hoover NHS has the following Vehicular Signs:

There are three signs along Interstate-80 (I-80) near exit 254. The first sign that motorists see on I-80 about 4 miles west of exit 254 has four lines and reads "Exit 254 Herbert Hoover National Historic Site Presidential Museum Exit 4 Miles." The second sign on I-80 is for the radio station with visitor information and reads "Hoover Historic Site Visitor Information Tune Radio To 690 AM;" this sign is close to Exit 254. The last sign motorists encounter on I-80 near exit 254 states "Herbert Hoover National Historic Site Presidential Museum Exit 254." These signs do not have the NPS arrowhead logo on them which would help motorists understand that Herbert Hoover NHS is a unit of the National Park System; nor do these signs have the logo/seal associated with the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum which would help motorists distinguish the difference between the two primary Hoover-related sites in West Branch, Iowa.

The end of the ramp on exit 254 on I-80 has a small sign that reads "West Branch, Hoover Museum" with arrows pointing toward the town's main street. This sign does not indicate that the "Hoover Museum" is the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, nor does it indicate that Herbert Hoover NHS (which surrounds the Presidential Library and Museum) is also nearby.

The secondary visitor access to West Branch is the Herbert Hoover Highway. Motorists

NPS PHOTO

The park currently contains 22 etched-and-anodized aluminum "interpretive signs" (i.e., similar to wayside exhibits, but containing only text) like this one attached to the white picket fence outside Herbert Hoover's birthplace cottage.

may already be traveling on this highway or may have embarked on this route unintentionally from I-80. Signs to the park are located east of West Branch, west of town, and at the intersection of U.S. Hwy. 6 and Downey Road. Along the Herbert Hoover Highway, a sign that reads "Visitor Center" is located at the intersection of Parkside Drive and Main Street/Herbert Hoover Highway that directs motorists to the NPS visitor center. The sign has a small NPS arrowhead logo (a faded decal), but does not indicate that the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum is also nearby.

The National Park Service visitor center is located off of Parkside Drive. Whether motorists come from Herbert Hoover Highway or I-80, they all are directed to this road. Parkside Drive is short, so motorists have little time to decide where to go to (and park their vehicles) whether they are going to the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, the NPS visitor center, or to West Branch's Main Street. These three locations are close together and motorists need clear and understandable directional signs to help make their decisions.

The first sign most motorists see along Parkside Drive is the park entrance sign that reads "Herbert Hoover National Historic Site and Presidential Library and Museum." This painted brown wooden sign is on a stone base which has the NPS arrowhead logo and the Presidential Library logo mounted on the stone side column. There is a large grassy area in front of this sign, but no pull-off or shoulder for motorists to stop to take a picture of the sign.

A secondary group of signs for motorists coming from I-80 down Parkside Drive help direct visitors to the Library and Museum, the National Historic Site, and West Branch's Main Street. The directional signs to the Library and Museum and NPS visitor center are directly across from their respective entrances, giving motorists little time to decide where to go. The NPS visitor center has a parking lot designated only for cars. Across the road, a second parking lot is designated for recreational vehicles (RVs), buses, and commuter parking but can be used for overflow parking for cars. There are no international parking symbols on these signs.

For motorists taking a right turn onto Parkside Drive from Herbert Hoover Highway, a sign to turn in to the NPS visitor center parking lot is directly across the street from the entrance to the parking lot; this gives motorists little warning before this turn.

Most of the signs along Parkside Drive seemed to have been made at different times, as they have different fonts, some feature all upper-case letters, and the text is aligned differently. Most of the signs along Parkside Drive have old style NPS arrowhead logos placed on them.

Once motorists park their vehicles in the parking lot across from the NPS visitor center, there are some directional signs that are similar in size and design as the road guide signs on Parkside Drive. The parking lot's directional signs are very low to the ground, so if a car or person is standing in front of the sign, it could be easily missed. However, most visitors easily find their way to the NPS visitor center next to the parking lot or the park orientation wayside exhibit off the southwest corner of the parking lot.

The visitor center for Herbert Hoover National Historic Site is a brick building on the corner of Parkside Drive and Main Street. The NPS owns this building and shares part of the building space with the U.S. Post Office facility for West Branch.

The visitor center has an aluminum NPS arrowhead logo and the site's name on the building. The name and arrowhead help to identify Herbert Hoover NHS as a unit of the National Park System. However, the NPS arrowhead is the old style logo and needs to be replaced. There is also a recently produced and installed identity sign for the visitor center to the right of the building's entrance. This sign has the new NPS arrowhead and has been designed using the new NPS UniGuide Standards. However, because this sign is very close to

the building and partly hidden, it is easily missed by motorists passing the visitor center on Parkside Drive coming from I-80 and not seen at all by motorists coming from Herbert Hoover Highway. For those visitors who see this sign, many of them (especially those who missed the large entrance sign on Parkside Drive) have their picture taken next to this NPS facility identity sign. Inside the visitor center is the park's entrance fee sign (which is the same fee sign as the Library and Museum).

The main orientation to the park is the orientation wayside exhibit near the southwest corner of the parking lot. This is the only orientation for visitors who arrive after the visitor center closes. As visitors walk through the historic core, there is a safety sign that reads "Caution: Walks Slippery When Wet or Icy" and a few directional trail guide signs. The lack of signs within the park's historic core purposefully avoids placing any unnecessary intrusions on the landscape.

There are few other signs currently within the historic core area. Small, routed plastic signs that read "Push Button For Program" (with Braille strips above them) are hidden within the barrels and wood boxes that hold and hide interpretive audiotape speakers, and these signs fit in nicely with the surroundings so that they are not too noticeable. Besides the seven audio stations, approximately a dozen interpretive signs provide basic information about the park's historic structures.

Website

The Herbert Hoover NHS website (www.nps.gov/heho) is linked to the National Park Service (NPS) ParkNet website. In 2005 and 2006, the NPS created uniform in-depth websites for all NPS areas using a program called Common Spot. The Herbert Hoover NHS website currently has these features:

- **Homepage**
- **Plan your visit**
  (1) Directions (by car, air, train, bus; driving distances from nearby cities; GPS locations)
  Maps (link to HFC's cartographic page with NPS maps)
  Traffic and Travel Tips (include parking info)
  Bicycling Information (with link to state bicycle route map)
  (2) Operating hours and seasons
  (3) Fees and reservations
  Permits (regulations, procedures, and permit applications)
  Picnic Shelters (regulations and reservations forms)
  (4) Things to do
  Outdoor Activities
  Indoor Activities
  For Kids
  Guided Tours
  Schedule of Events (searchable calendar)
  Nearby Attractions
  (5) Things to know before you come
  Getting Around
  Your Safety
  Weather
  Pets (extensive regulations and safety tips)
  Accessibility
  Goods and Services (links to area services for visitors)
- **Photos and Multimedia**
  (1) Photo gallery (one album of approximately 30 scenic photos)
  (2) Virtual tour (about 10 pages of photographs and text of grounds and buildings)
- **History and Culture** (links to other Hoover sites, link to HSR on NPS History page)
- **Nature and Science** (content carried over from old Natural Resources Profile Pages)
  (1) Animals
  Birds
  Fish
  Mammals
  Reptiles
  (2) Plants
  Grasses
  Trees and Shrubs
  Wildflowers
  (3) Environmental Factors
  Fire Regime
  Hydrologic Activity
  Nonnative Species
  Water Quality

(4) Natural Features and Ecosystems
Prairies and Grasslands
Rivers and Streams
Soils

- **For Teachers**
  (1) Plan A Field Trip (almost the same information found on HHPLM site)
  (2) Materials (downloadable PDFs of three curriculum guides; links to HHPLM curricula)
- **For Kids**
  (1) Be a Junior Ranger
- **News**
  (1) News Releases
  (2) Archive of old and out-of-date news releases
- **Management**
  (1) Laws and Policies (summary of regulations, downloadable PDF of CFR and Compendium)
  (2) Park Planning (link to PEPC, plus downloadable PDFs of GMP, Prairie MP, Fire MP, Hoover Creek Stream Mgt. EIS)
  (3) Jobs (links to USAJOBS, Volunteer.gov; downloadable employment forms, posting of vacant positions)
- **Support Your Park**
  (1) Bookstore (w/link to EN online bookstore)
  (2) Join Our Friends (link to HHPLA)
  (3) Volunteer (volunteer opportunity data from Volunteer.gov)
  (4) National Public Lands Day
  (5) Artist-in-Residence Program
- **Site Index**
- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**
- **Bookstore**
- **Contact Us**
- **Did You Know?** (10 vignettes displayed one at a time on the bottom of each page)

The Herbert Hoover National Historic Site website is ranked seventh on a Google search of "Herbert Hoover" websites. However, the first six websites (e.g., WhiteHouse.gov, Wikipedia, and the Presidential Library sites) emphasize Hoover's presidency, while the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site website emphasizes its particular resources: the birthplace cottage, historic core, gravesite, and its commemorative landscape.

Publications

The park's official brochure began as a 16-panel mini-folder in 1968. In 1980 Harpers Ferry Center (HFC) developed a "unigrid brochure" for Herbert Hoover NHS in a "B-3" size and printed it in a four-color format. In 1999 HFC redesigned the brochure to an "A-6" format and added new text and images. In 2006 HFC shipped to the park a supply of 35,000 brochures, which is the park's allotment for two years.

The front of the current park brochure features a piece of color art of the Hoover birthplace cottage at the top and a series of historic photographs of Hoover and his family descending down the right side. The bottom of the front side has text blocks with photographs of Hoover's "Life of Public Service" and his "Uncommon Partnership" with his wife, Lou Henry Hoover. The brochure's back side contains an aerial oblique piece of the site's historic core area at the top with a text block describing a "Walking Tour" in the center. At the bottom of the brochure's back side is a simple park map and a section on "Information for the Visitor and Researcher."

The park staff has also written, designed, and printed (using in-house resources) a series of site ulletins that provide a summary of specific park topics. These site bulletins include topics such as "Quaker Heritage," "The Painting" (that interprets Hoover's presidential portrait painted in 1929), "Lawn/Prairie Conversion," "Furnishings from the Birthplace Cottage," "Fascination With Stone" (that interprets the scale model in the visitor center of Hoover's Birthplace Cottage that is made entirely of small pieces of lapidated stone), and "Volunteer Opportunities." These site bulletins are available at the visitor center's information desk.

Other free-of-charge, park-produced publications include rack cards on the park's living history events, the park's Junior Ranger program booklet, a self-guiding folder for the park's Prairie Trail, and publications on the other NPS areas in Iowa—Effigy Mounds National Monument and Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Corridor.

NPS PHOTO

Historic furnishings from the late 1800s in the schoolhouse interior include students' desks, a teacher's desk, books, and other items typically found in a school during Hoover's early life in West Branch.

The park also distributes free publications that are printed by the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, the Hoover Library Association.

A large number of Hoover-related educational publications are offered for sale to visitors through Eastern National (EN), the park's not-for-profit cooperating association. Sales items can also be purchased on-line through the EN bookstore's website that is linked to the park's website. A percentage of the sales through EN's bookstore are donated back to the park's interpretive division for publications, blacksmith supplies, and traveling/temporary exhibits.

Historic Furnishings

Herbert Hoover's birthplace cottage has a number of original and period pieces of historic furniture and objects in its two rooms and summer kitchen area. Prominent among these objects are the birthplace cradle and highchair.

The Quaker Friends Meetinghouse has more than two dozen period benches and two stoves. The attached cry room also contains rocking chairs and cradles.

The blacksmith shop has mostly reproduction items along with a few period pieces. Most of the iron stock is supplied by EN for the blacksmith/demonstrator to shape into horseshoes, hooks, and other implements as part of his historic demonstrations. With this amount of stock and implements, this area sometimes appears more like a storage area than a working operation.

The schoolhouse has period furnishings that include student desks, a teachers desk, a stove, blackboards, a wash table, bookshelves, and presidential images of Washington and Lincoln.

STAFFING, PERSONAL SERVICES, AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The table below shows the interpretive positions at Herbert Hoover National Historic Site in Fiscal Year 2007.

Personal Services

Interpretive employees listed below make informal visitor contacts and present formal interpretive programs year-round at a variety of locations throughout the park. These locations include:

Information Desk – most park informal contacts occur at the visitor center desk.

Roving Contacts – most of the park's roving contacts along the park's trails and boardwalks occur during the summer months when staffing is at its peak.

Guided Tours – these are offered to school groups in the spring and fall, and to all summer visitors. Herbert Hoover National Historic Site staff presents seven guided tours each day.

2007 Herbert Hoover National Historic Site Interpretive Division Staff

Position Title	Status	Grade	FTE*
Chief of Visitor Services	Permanent	GS-12	1.0
Lead Park Ranger (Interpretation)	Permanent	GS-9	1.0
Park Ranger (Interpretation)	Permanent	GS-9	1.0
Park Ranger (Demonstrator)	Intermittent	GS-5	0.4
Park Guide (Seasonal)	Seasonal	GS-4	0.5
Park Guide (Seasonal)	Seasonal	GS-4	0.5
Park Guide (Intermittent)	Intermittent	GS-4	0.3
Park Guide (Intermittent)	Intermittent	GS-4	0.3
Park Guide (Intermittent)	Intermittent	GS-4	0.2
Park Guide (Intermittent)	Intermittent	GS-4	0.2
		Total FTEs:	**5.4**

* FTE stands for Full-Time Equivalency (one work-year: 2,080 hours). Plus, in FY 2006, about 70 volunteers (Volunteers-In-Parks) donated 2,215 hours to the park. Most of these volunteer hours (1,960) were for Interpretive programs and the rest were spread among the Administration, Maintenance, Cultural Resources, and Natural Resources Divisions.

Blacksmith Demonstrations – these are offered throughout the spring, summer, and fall seasons by a park ranger-demonstrator in the blacksmith shop.

Artists-in-Residence – this summer program includes interpretation and formal presentations.

Special Events – annual special events include Hooverfest (a one-day event held during the first weekend in August) and Christmas Past (a West Branch-wide event held on a Friday evening, Saturday evening, and Sunday afternoon on the first weekend of December).

Children's Programs – the park staff offers a Junior Ranger program year-round and tours to school groups April through mid-June and from Labor Day through October each year.

Education Programs

Ranger-led Programs – as described previously, school tour programs are offered in the spring and fall months. Typically, the park staff will present seven to eight school tours each spring weekday, and four to five school tours each fall weekday.

Off-site Programs – are not currently offered by the park staff. However, remote learning opportunities can be arranged through the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum and the Iowa Communication Network, whose equipment is in a nearby house owned by the Library Association.

Curriculum Materials and Lesson Guides – the park has two versions of the "Parks As Classroom" binders with park background and activities, as well as "Teaching With Historic Places" lesson guides. The park also has a Tallgrass Prairie curriculum and self-guided (stapled) activity sheets for school groups.

PARTNERSHIPS

Individuals

Volunteers in Parks (VIP): The park's paid staff is supplemented though the "Volunteers in Parks" (VIP) program which provides volunteers to all park divisions. Volunteers are recruited through word of mouth, local partner organizations and publications, and NPS websites.

Institutions

Herbert Hoover NHS staff members work closely with the following park partners:

Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum: The Library and Museum is one of the park's primary partners, as the Library and Museum pre-dates the establishment of the national historic site in the 1960s and is located within the park's boundary. The entrance fees paid at the Library and Museum or the park covers both, as most visitors combine some elements of each during their visit to West Branch, Iowa. The Library and Museum's goal is to inspire, educate, and entertain visitors. The exhibits in the Library and Museum, such as the Humanitarian and Enterprise galleries, complement those of the National Park Service in interpreting this uncommon man. Tours of the exhibit galleries provide visitors with in-depth information of the life and accomplishments of Herbert Hoover. The Library and Museum also has a large auditorium which enables their staff to show films and sponsor special events and presentations.

Herbert Hoover Library Association: The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library Association is one of the park's other primary partners. The purpose of this Association is to foster the collection, interpretation, and preservation of historical resources relating to the life, ideas, values, and times of Herbert Hoover; and to promote public education about and appreciation for Herbert Hoover, support the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum and the National Historic Site at West Branch, Iowa. The offices for the Association are located in a 1903 historic house within Herbert Hoover NHS and across the driveway from the Library and Museum. The Association sponsors its own programs and activities, and provides program and financial support for the Library and Museum and

NPS PHOTO

Main Street in West Branch is adjacent to the park and is part of the Main Street Iowa program designed to encourage economic development and historic preservation.

Right: In the 1930's, President and Mrs. Hoover purchased and restored the birthplace cottage, which Hoover said was "physical proof of the unbounded opportunity of American life."

Herbert Hoover NHS. The Association has recruited volunteers for the costumed interpreter program and has hired living history scripted actors to assist with on-site interpretation to enhance the experience of our visitors to the site under the guidance of the park's interpretation division.

West Branch – Main Street Iowa Program: In June 2006 West Branch was selected as one of 37 Iowa communities to participate in Main Street Iowa, a program that encourages downtown economic development through historic preservation. The park is building a partnership with this group to improve the connection between the park and the downtown area adjacent to it. Main Street West Branch contributes to the interpretation and promotion of Herbert Hoover NHS through special events that are co-sponsored with the park and its primary partners. Many of the park's volunteers are also volunteers on one of the Main Street committees.

PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER LIGHT

Part 2: Future Interpretive Program

This part of the long-range interpretive plan describes the mix of facilities and services, both non-personal (media) and personal (programs), that are necessary to communicate park themes and facilitate identified visitor experiences (DO-6, page 9).

The Comprehensive Interpretive Planning Process at Herbert Hoover National Historic Site

The Comprehensive Interpretive Planning process is not a recipe, but a guide to effective, goal-driven planning. The LRIP defines the overall vision and long-term (5 to 10 years) interpretive goals of the park (DO-6, page 6).

In developing this Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) as part of the Comprehensive Interpretive Planning (CIP) process, an individualized planning process was devised that collected input from employees from all the park's divisions and representatives from the park's three primary partners: the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, the Hoover Library Association, and West Branch – Main Street.

First, because Herbert Hoover National Historic Site recently approved a new General Management Plan (GMP) in 2004, park management decided to use some sections of the GMP as a beginning point for this LRIP. During a three-day LRIP Foundations Workshop in February 2007, the participants revisited and revised some of those foundation sections (e.g., the theme statements were expanded to three levels) and other foundation sections (e.g., visitor profiles , issues and influences, and existing conditions) were discussed during the workshop and sections drafted later by the HFC interpretive planner, park staff members, and partners.

Second, a three-day Long-Range Interpretive Planning Recommendations Workshop was held in March 2007 to develop ideas to improve the visitor experience for Herbert Hoover National Historic Site visitors through the park's personal services programs and interpretive media. This workshop also included input from a variety of park partners.

The recommendations from the March 2007 workshop are summarized on the following pages along with a strategy to accomplish them over the next 5 to 10 years. Later in the CIP process, the staff from Herbert Hoover National Historic Site will devise a series of Implementation Plans that will be based on this LRIP.

NPS PHOTO

On February 13-15, 2007, and March 27-29, 2007, Herbert Hoover NHS held Comprehensive Interpretive Planning workshops in West Branch, Iowa, where park staff and about a dozen representatives from park partners and outside NPS offices discussed and proposed the recommendations that are contained within this Long-Range Interpretive Plan.

Facilities

FACILITIES

The potential use of facilities or media for education purposes should be explored here (DO-6, page 9).

A "Seamless" Hoover Experience in West Branch, Iowa

As a result of the LRIP workshops in 2007, the park staff used the CIP process to make choices that will enhance the park's future visitors' experiences as they interact with the park's and partners' facilities, their interpretive media, their personal services opportunities, and their education programs.

Throughout the workshops, participants allowed themselves the opportunity to consider the entire "West Branch visitor experience" from the time visitors leave Interstate 80 and enter the city of West Branch, approach the entrance road to the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, and reach the visitor center and parking lots for Herbert Hoover National Historic Site. Although the workshop did not result in any recommendations to change the buildings or facilities of the National Park Service, the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, or the city of West Branch, the emphasis of all the workshop participants' input was to create a "seamless" Hoover-related experience for every visitor to West Branch, Iowa.

The following pages of this document present recommendations for creating this seamless experience.

The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum is one of Herbert Hoover NHS's major partners in telling the stories of Herbert Clark Hoover, the thirty-first president of the United States, and provide a "seamless" Hoover experience in West Branch for its visitors.

NPS PHOTO

Interpretive Media (Non-Personal Services)

This section assesses the need for interpretive media which includes exhibits, waysides, signs, publications, audiovisual programs, historically furnished areas, mass and/or electronic media (DO-6, page 9).

WEBSITE

An ever-increasing percentage of park visitors are web users who visit the park's website (www.nps.gov/heho) to access pre-visit information. Many of these "virtual visitors" never actually come to the park, but have their needs met solely through the park's website. Other visitors contact the park via telephone or mail to ask for basic park information and orientation materials. The objective of all pre-visit contacts is the same: to help visitors make informed choices before they leave home.

To satisfy the information needs of visitors who contact the park before they visit, park staff will continue to answer phone calls and mail requests in a courteous and timely manner.

To satisfy the basic and in-depth needs of those who visit the park's website, the staff will implement the following recommendations:

- Maintain the upgraded website for Herbert Hoover NHS and assess the amount and kind of content it contains—especially how the website will increase its interpretive opportunities.

- Develop a formal comprehensive website plan that can be referred to for consistency and direction, particularly in the case of staff turnover.

- Place a counter on the website so that park staff knows how many hits it receives. These figures may be used in the future to justify further web-development and future funding.

- Place links on the web that take users to the other relevant sites within and outside of the National Park Service.

- In the short-term, put the Hoover family tree on the park's website. In the long-term, work with the Hoover Library Association to scan their published book on Hoover's genealogy. This should include securing all permissions for use and to post it on the web.

- Continue to advertise events at the park. For special events, place them in a prominent location since the "Things to Do" and "Events" sections are within several layers of the site.

- Partner with the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum to create teacher lesson plans for the park's website as well as the Library and Museum's Orientation DVD.

- Produce a new virtual tour of the park on its website based on the on-site portable audio tour for this web-based tour. Building upon the initial layer of the on-site portable audio tour, this web-based tour could have multiple layers that visitors can select. Topics of these layers should have consistent design and be based on interest. For example, relevant quotes or sound bites from the Presidential Library and Museum's archive could be included as a layer, and segments from subject-matter experts can be included as another layer.

- Post the digital renderings of the park's primary artifacts and exhibits, studies, and reports. The historic studies and reports can be put online by the NPS Historian when this employee sends updates of recent additions to the NPS online library and when photo-documenting the park's artifact collection (as will be done in conjunction with new visitor center exhibits).

- Other potential website improvements include:
  (1) Populate the History and Culture site (i.e., publish the People, Places, and Stories pages).

NPS PHOTO

Signs along Interstate 80 should be replaced with new signs that represent both organizations with their full names—Herbert Hoover National Historic Site and the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum—and their agencies' respective logos to show their shared partnership.

(2) Link repetitive elements so that it must be updated only once (e.g., accessibility information where it appears on the accessibility page and pages describing facilities and buildings).
(3) Improve the virtual tour with full-page photos of structures, and links to in-depth interpretation.
(4) Update the FAQs by linking each question to the web page with the question's answer.
(5) Add maps links to the directions page (routes to airport, train station, from nearby cities).
(6) Add PDFs of Junior Ranger booklet (when revision is complete), all historical studies (to History and Culture site), and all park management plans and documents (to Park Management site). Also, add annual budget information, interpretation of HTLN's I&M data, photo gallery and virtual tour of selected items in the museum collection, and online editions of any new interpretive media (e.g., exhibits, waysides, site bulletins).

IDENTITY AND ORIENTATION SIGNS

Before visitors can enjoy a meaningful park experience, they need to find their way to the park, determine where the experience begins, and take care of their basic necessities. These visitor experience issues such as agency identity, wayfinding, and orientation must be addressed before interpretation can be effective. Effective highway and road guide signs, as well as pedestrian orientation and information, are the first steps toward providing basic visitor experience needs.

Identity and orientation signs will address several visitor experience goals. Adding the NPS arrowhead logo to highway signs will help visitors understand that Herbert Hoover NHS is a unit of the National Park System. Road guide signs will allow visitors to easily find and access the park's facilities and enjoy a full range of recreational activities. Coordinating signs for all entities involved in the visitor experience will allow visitors to have a seamless experience provided by Herbert Hoover NHS, the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, the Hoover Association, and the West Branch Historic District. Signs within the park will help visitors safely enjoy their visit by learning about and following safety guidelines and park rules and regulations.

Overall Recommendations

- Design a parkwide sign plan that identifies the park as a unit of the National Park System and provides orientation for all visitors, whether they enter the park in a vehicle or on foot.

- Secure funding and implement the parkwide sign plan as described in the National Park Service UniGuide Sign Standards. The standards include park identity, motorist guidance, and visitor information signs. All NPS arrowhead logos should be updated to the new style.

Highway and Road Sign Recommendations

- Replace all park-related signs on both I-80 and the Herbert Hoover Highway. Signs should state the full name of the historic site (Herbert Hoover National Historic Site) and the full name of the Library (Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum). These signs should represent both organizations with their respective logos and show they share a partnership.

- Assure that road guide signs meet Cap Heights of the UniGuide Sign Standards. Cap Heights of text on road guide signs are determined by the speed limit. Also, all available parking areas should be clearly stated on the signs and include international parking symbols.

- Use the NPS arrowhead logo on all signs outside park boundary, or where park boundaries are unclear, to help identify that Herbert Hoover NHS is part of the National Park Service.

- Assure consistency from highway guide signs on I-80 and Parkside Drive signs leading to Herbert Hoover National Historic Site; assure consistency in the

names used on all exterior and interior signs. Starting at the end of the I-80 exits and continuing on Parkside Drive, the directional signs need to include the Main Street Historic District of West Branch.

- Update signs along I-80 to conform to the UniGuide Sign Standards. These standards have been approved by Federal Highway Administration. The first Hoover-related signs on I-80 should be placed farther from West Branch for visitors traveling long distances. This first sign should be located on I-80 before the Herbert Hoover Highway exit to let motorists know to stay on I-80 and leave on exit 254.

- For motorists who decide to exit off I-80 to the Herbert Hoover Highway, directional signs to the park should start soon after the I-80 exit and continue down into West Branch's Main Street. Signs further out should give mileage to let visitors know how far they need to travel. Signs that direct motorists through West Branch should include both Hoover-related sites and logos. Signs should be placed before the intersection of Main Street and Parkside Drive to forewarn motorists. Include street names on the signs (e.g., Right on Parkside Drive).

- Keep the identity sign along Parkside Drive that includes both the historic site and library. Update this identity sign to the UniGuide Sign Standards and include the two agency logos to reflect that these two Hoover-related sites are separate but share a partnership.

- Create a vehicle pull-off with five parking spaces along Parkside Drive near the identity sign, as recommended in the park's 2004 General Management Plan. Create an orientation kiosk at the identity sign at the pull-off along Parkside Drive. This kiosk should have three panels, each one to represent one of the partners. These panels and their map(s) will orient visitors to the Hoover-related sites in West Branch.

- Create two small identity signs for the entrances to the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum and Herbert Hoover National Historic Site just beyond the primary identity sign. Move the current NPS UniGuide Standard visitor center sign closer to Parkside Drive. Replace the outdated NPS arrowhead logo next to the visitor center's wall-mounted letters.

Parking and Visitor Center Recommendations

- There are two National Park Service parking lots: one next to the visitor center and the other across Parkside Drive. The one next to the visitor center is for cars only; trailers, RVs, and buses must park in the larger parking lot across Parkside Drive. The signs should direct visitors to the cars-only lot first, followed by the lot for buses and RVs. Directional signs and pedestrian crossing signs should be created using small brown-and-white trail guide signs. All signs must be mounted at standard height above grade level.

- Update the park's entrance fee panel (just inside the visitor center) to reflect the current UniGuide Sign Standards and the standardized text from the Washington Fee Office.

- Create a kiosk near the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site visitor center that would include panels that address time-related options, safety, regulations, and directions to the Library and Museum and West Branch.

- Update trail guide signs around the historic site and Library and Museum that meet UniGuide Sign Standards. Include NPS arrowhead logos if they are near the edge of the park boundary to allow the visitor to know when they are entering and leaving the park.

- Create signs that provide safety warnings, accessibility information, and park regulations for each of the park entry points so that the signs do not intrude on the park's historic core area.

WAYSIDE EXHIBITS

Orientation Waysides at the Park Entry Points

After visitors arrive at Herbert Hoover NHS, take care of their basic needs, and perhaps enter the visitor center to view the film and exhibits, most walk to experience the park. Visitors start their park experience from one of three locations: the Herbert Hoover NHS visitor center parking lot, the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum's parking lot, or from West Branch's Main Street. Upright orientation panels should be located where visitors enter the park from these three primary parking locations.

These orientation panels should emphasize the experience from where the visitors begin their visit and allow them to easily find additional orientation information at Herbert Hoover NHS, the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, and near West Branch's Main Street. The map used on the orientation panels should be the same used on (or, at least a map that complements) the park's unigrid brochure. This same map should be used on a (future) indoor exhibit inside the visitor center, and on a (future) publication that will supplement a (future) audio tour guide.

These orientation panels will briefly introduce the site to visitors who have not yet had an indoor experience (at either the NPS visitor center or the Presidential Library and Museum) and will provide an abbreviated version of what visitors can do in limited amounts of time (e.g., less than one hour, two to four hours, and more than four hours). The information provided on these orientation panels will be provided in more detail on (future) indoor exhibits in the visitor center and library-museum, and perhaps on a (future) free handout.

Interpretive Waysides in the Core Historic Area

Experiencing the park's historic core area along Downey Street is the highlight for most visitors to Herbert Hoover NHS. It is here where visitors interact with the primary resources in the park's commemorative setting.

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site was designed as a commemorative landscape. The site was designed primarily by Herbert Hoover and his wife, Lou Henry Hoover, in the 1930s. The Hoover family made a number of decisions that created a more meaningful experience than might not have otherwise been here. These decisions are addressed in Theme #7 – A Memorial and a Legacy: *The influence of Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover and their family shaped the development of the presidential memorial area in order for the public to gain a fuller understanding of Hoover's life*.

The Hoovers and the early park planners did not intend to restore the site to its appearance in the mid- to late 1800s, but to provide a glimpse of historic West Branch when Downey Street had horse drawn wagons and foot traffic. The birthplace cottage is where Jesse and Hulda Hoover and their family lived, and spent much of their time outdoors as did other families on Downey Street. Jesse's blacksmith shop was a prosperous business here. Quakers built the schoolhouse in 1853 and used it as an interim Friends Meetinghouse until the larger Friends Meetinghouse—the center of this predominantly Quaker town—was built in 1857.

Wayside exhibits should be used judiciously along Downey Street, so as to not intrude visually on this historic scene. Where wayside exhibits are employed to interpret an important site-specific story, the wayside's base and panel should be placed in a setting that allows it to blend in with the scenery. The park staff will experiment with ways to achieve this delicate balance.

When wayside exhibits are used, one of their strengths is showing visitors what they cannot see today. In the case of Herbert Hoover NHS, what cannot be seen today are the people who lived in West Branch and the ways they spent their time. Wayside exhibits provide an opportunity to develop original illustrations (or use historic photographs) to bring these landscapes to life.

For example, an illustration of the birthplace cottage could show a summer

day where Hulda Hoover is hanging laundry near the garden she tends. Herbert Hoover's sister Mary might be nearby, while "Bert" and brother Tad are playing stickball in the yard or heading off to the blacksmith shop. When developing new illustrations, it is important that the pieces of art make visitors feel as if they are standing just beyond the scene. Also, historic photographs might show wagons along Downey Street to help interpret life in a bustling town like West Branch.

Sites that should be considered for low-profile, interpretive wayside exhibits include:

- birthplace cottage
- blacksmith shop
- schoolhouse
- Friends Meetinghouse
- Downey Street
- Second Hoover Home ("House of the Maples")

Wayside exhibits in these locations can not only address the site-specific stories at each locations, but also support the park's primary interpretive themes such as Theme #1 – Simple Beginnings: *"In no other land could a boy from a country village without inheritance or influential friends, look forward with unbound hope."*, and Theme #2 – Family and Fellowship: *Growing up in West Branch, Herbert Hoover saw his parents, family, and others in leadership roles, which instilled in him a drive to become a leader and a success.* By depicting the Hoover family's simple lifestyle, service to the community, commitment to education, and strong Quaker faith, these low-profile interpretive wayside exhibits can be both site-specific and thematic. These wayside exhibits can also be part of a complete visitor experience by complementing a (future) publication and a (future) audio tour guide.

Wayside Exhibits in West Branch

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site staff should work with the City of West Branch to help them develop wayside exhibits near Hoover-related historic sites in the city including the railroad station, cemetery, the second Friends Meetinghouse, and various downtown businesses.

Wayside Exhibit Considerations

The recommended panel material for wayside exhibits for Herbert Hoover is porcelain enamel. This material is the best for long-term investment—even though the initial outlay is more expensive than other materials. Porcelain enamel has a life span of about 25 to 30 years or more. However, porcelain enamel should not be used in areas where vandalism may occur. The other materials—inkjet prints embedded in fiberglass and high-pressure laminate—are less expensive for the initial outlay but require periodic replacement. The cost of replacing panels produced in either of these materials will need to be included in the park's regular maintenance plan. The selection of panel material should be made before a funding request is submitted for fabrication.

Panel Material Recommendations

Core area—porcelain enamel—since this area is nearest the visitor center and park operations, and it is more easily overseen by park staff. Included in this category is the Hoover gravesite.

Orientation panels, panels outside of the core area, along the loop road and panels within the town of West Branch—inkjet embedded fiberglass or high pressure laminate—as these areas are outside of daily park operations and get more after-hours visitation.

Wayside Exhibit Recommendations

During the next five to 10 years, the park staff should work on the following tasks:

- Request funding and for a parkwide wayside exhibit proposal (that lists and describes the agreed-upon wayside exhibits that will be produced), a wayside exhibit plan (that includes final text and layout designs for each wayside exhibit), and production (that will produce the final panels and bases, as well as create any art or maps that may be recommended).

- Once funding is secured for the wayside proposal stage, arrange for the interpretive specialist from the Midwest

NPS PHOTO

The birthplace cottage may be entered only through the front door. There are three entrance steps to the front door. An audio station is available inside the front door. A photograph book showing the interior is available both at the cottage and the visitor center information desk.

Regional Office (and/or wayside exhibit specialists from HFC) to visit the park and—along with the park staff—develop a parkwide wayside exhibit proposal.

- Once funding is secured for the wayside planning stage, let a contract through HFC to plan, design, and prepare production-ready files for all the proposed wayside exhibits.

- Once funding is secured for the wayside production stage, let a contract through HFC to produce and ship the final panels and bases to the park (for park maintenance to install).

EXHIBITS

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site and the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum

Most visitors to Herbert Hoover NHS start their visit by entering either the NPS visitor center or the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum. As this Long-Range Interpretive Plan guides Herbert Hoover NHS toward its future interpretive media and programs, the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum is beginning a major rehabilitation of their exhibits.

The staffs of the Historic Site and the Library should communicate and collaborate with each other as planning progresses on these two exhibit programs to assure that the exhibit experiences are complementary. The 500-square-foot NPS visitor center should emphasize the interpretive themes of this LRIP related to Hoover's boyhood and the commemorative nature of the historic site. The much-larger 3,000-square-foot Presidential Library and Museum should emphasize the themes of Hoover's years as student, businessman, humanitarian, politician, president, and statesman. However, each facility should introduce visitors to the broad outlines of Hoover's life so that people visiting only one facility will still have an opportunity to experience an accurate portrayal of the man.

The LRIP team believes the Library and Herbert Hoover National Historic Site together offer visitors a rich and complete experience—one that neither alone could provide. The fact that the two areas are administered by two different agencies can make it difficult to coordinate the services offered to visitors. The areas have separate infrastructures, budgets, staffs, facilities, and administrative concerns. However, they are united in their desire to interpret and preserve the legacy of Herbert Hoover, and visitors who come with a desire to learn and be inspired will want to enjoy experiences at both sites.

In terms of exhibit development, it is recommended that the staffs responsible for exhibits, and interpretation in general, establish ongoing communication and collaboration in all activities related to exhibit development. Where possible, the areas can share resources and eliminate unnecessary duplication of effort. Perhaps a standing committee comprised of staff from both areas could meet quarterly to discuss issues and initiatives related to exhibits and other interpretive media or services. The Superintendent could appoint a designated lead interpreter to serve as liaison to the Library for media-related issues. The park should collaborate with the Library on the design of exhibits on Hoover's life in West Branch as part of the Library's major rehabilitation of their exhibits. Advice from technical media specialists at Harpers Ferry Center could be made available to the Library if requested for activities such as evaluations of existing media, brainstorming on exhibit plans, or selection of contractors for future work.

The Library exhibits contain a rich array of artifacts and supporting exhibit materials, and many successful exhibit techniques are employed. Some of the exhibits are in need of rehabilitation, and the team did note issues related to readability of text and lighting.

These LRIP recommendations are based on the assumption that the ideal visit to the park includes a visit to the Library—and vice versa. It also makes sense to avoid duplicating exhibits in the park that already exist at the Library. If the park sees the

Library exhibits as an extension of its own exhibits, then the park can better utilize its own limited exhibit space to treat its primary themes.

Approach to the NPS Visitor Center

Exhibits in the NPS visitor center will not be effective if visitors do not enter the visitor center. First-time visitors approaching the visitor center from Interstate 80 may find difficulty in determining the right place to go. The team recommends that sign planning be done to insure that directions are as clear as possible, and that visitors are able to understand the choices they will be making in turning into the Library versus the NPS visitor center. Because trails connect the two areas, it is possible to see both sites from either entrance road. Visitors may park at one site and walk to the other.

As visitors approach the visitor center parking lot entrance on Parkside Drive, there are several factors which may affect their impression of the site and their decision to stop. The visitor center is small and adjoins a post office. The parking lot resembles a post office lot. Trees partially screen the building from the street. The historic grounds and walkways near the birth cottage—which might attract visitors—are not clearly visible from the street. There are no large features that might associate the site with Herbert Hoover. The team recommends that the park consider developments that might remedy this such as a larger park identification sign, a statue of Hoover, or a banner(s) with a large graphic of Hoover and imagery reflecting his presidency. The building may not be large enough to accommodate a banner effectively, but consideration might be given to installing one or more standards near the street that could carry the banners and attract visitors to the park entrance. Any artwork or graphics would need to be tastefully done and sited. If not, they could detract from the site.

Visitor Center Lobby

The information desk in the lobby serves an important function and should remain. The desk itself is relatively new and may be retained. Modifications to the desk or its storage areas should be made to make the desk function better for staff and visitors. As part of any new exhibit planning project in the visitor center, all of the functions operating in the space should be analyzed to determine which are necessary and which may be eliminated. In addition to the desk, it is assumed that the park should retain a passport stamp station and a donation box. Items like these are often produced at different times and do not always present a coordinated look. A comprehensive redesign of the space could provide for a coherent location for functions and a professional look.

Orientation to the Hoover sites—both the park and the Library—should be available in the lobby area in the form of brochures and maps, and also in an exhibit format that would allow visitors to see at a large scale the visitor facilities, historic structures, monuments, roads and trails, and their relationship to the town and highway. An orientation exhibit would assist groups in planning their visit, and could be used as a visual aid by rangers.

The team recommends that exhibits and waysides suggest proposed tour routes of the Hoover sites, and that this information be reflected in the park brochure. The visitor center lobby can be one of the portal locations for starting walking tours; other portals would be in the town of West Branch, and at the Library. The tour should make sense starting from either the Library, the town, or the visitor center.

In addition to the information desk and orientation functions, the team recommends that the lobby be used to present a powerful and engaging impression of Herbert Hoover. The painting of Hoover currently displayed in that space is not in a central location, and is partially obscured by reflections on the picture frame glass.

As visitors enter the lobby currently, the view they face is of doors leading to other spaces, a donation box, and the book store nook. Below the Hoover painting on the right are cased models of the birth cottage

NPS PHOTO

The people of Belgium gave the bronze statue of Isis, ancient Egyptian goddess of life, to Herbert Hoover for his work on their behalf during the First World War. At the start of the war, Hoover organized and directed the Commission for Relief in Belgium, which helped feed millions of people in Belgium and northern France and saved countless lives.

and blacksmith shop. The painted cinder block walls give the space a utilitarian look. In a new exhibit design it may be possible to create an exhibit wall which introduces Herbert Hoover, and which partially screens the bookstore and the block walls.

The exhibit in this room should feature large images, perhaps high-resolution photos of Hoover at several periods of his life, and perhaps using a few powerful quotations which reflect the park's primary themes. These exhibits would not contain detailed content, but would convey in a concise way to all visitors entering the site the principal significance of Hoover and the historic site. Visitors would quickly learn that Hoover was a United States President (1929-1933), that he was born here, that he is buried here, and that his life and legacy are commemorated here. As is done at the Library, there should be an impression of memorialization in the room, with some exhibit elements being interpretive and informational, and others commemorative. At the Library there is a presidential seal engraved on the glass doors at the main entrance. Something similar could be displayed at the entrance to the NPS visitor center—and reinforce a link between the two sites.

In general, the team believes that Herbert Hoover the man—his images and words—should be more present in the visitors' park entry experience. The national historic site's theater program is effective in this respect, but some will not see the film. If visitors do not quickly take an interest in Herbert Hoover, they will not be drawn to see his birthplace, grave, artifacts, papers, and hometown.

It is recommended that the team include in any new exhibits identification of the park as a unit of the National Park System, and perhaps identify other NPS sites which interpret and commemorate United States presidents. It might make sense to locate this function near the National Park Service passport station. All NPS arrowheads should be properly scaled and placed, and should conform to the new graphic identity standards.

The team recommends that the lobby not be used for temporary exhibits, especially graphic exhibits posted in a bulletin-board style. The team believes that the larger gallery spaces at the Library might be a more suitable location for display of changing exhibits featuring Hoover-related works of art, artifacts, or professionally designed traveling exhibitions. If smaller temporary exhibits are needed at the park, cases, frames, and templates for them can be designed in conjunction with the design of new exhibits. Space for these will be limited.

Exhibit Room

It is recommended that the main exhibit room in the visitor center be devoted to permanent exhibits that focus on the principal themes of the park, and that are not fully interpreted in the Presidential Library exhibit galleries. The exhibits here would be an extension of the lobby exhibits introducing Herbert Hoover. Topics might include (1) the birth and boyhood experience of Hoover; (2) the commemoration of Hoover in West Branch; and (3) an introduction to the specific buildings, sites, monuments, and resources in the park, the town, and at the Library where visitors can walk in the footsteps of Hoover, and see artifacts and documents associated with his life.

The park's exhibit planning team will make the final decisions about exhibit content, but the LRIP team recommends that exhibits in the visitor center be closely related to the park and town landscape. The Library exhibits will provide more coverage of Hoover's various careers and his specific involvement in many aspects of American and world history. The park's emphasis is more site-specific, enabling visitors to find deeper meaning at places such as the birth cottage, the statue if Isis, and the Hoover graves.

The models of the birth cottage and the blacksmith shop currently displayed in the lobby are well done, and could be adapted to help tell the story of the commemorative landscape in the exhibit room. The exhibit room could also contain a conservation-quality case that could display artifacts

related to Hoover on loan from the Presidential Library, the National Archives, the Hoover family, or other sources. These display objects could be linked to specific themes or anniversary celebrations, and interpretive events could be promoted to coincide with the installation of the objects.

This plan recommends that some structures in the park be interpreted through historic furnishings exhibits. In most instances reproduction furnishings objects will be used in order to protect original objects from theft, damage, or environmental conditions that would damage the objects. The team believes it is important for visitors to see original Hoover objects, especially those from the park collection.

Hoover's highchair and cradle have specifically been mentioned as good candidates to be displayed in the exhibit room where they can be protected, and where the effects of light, accretions, temperature, and humidity can be controlled. Original objects can serve as major icons of Hoover's life in West Branch. If the proper environmental conditions cannot be controlled throughout the room, then the team recommends that cases with original Hoover artifacts be actively or passively controlled within the cases.

Determining the provenance of Hoover items may need to be done before decisions are made to display them. The intent will be to allow visitors to see authentic items, and not just reproductions. If the park does not currently have a collection that will provide good interpretive opportunities, then the park might consider acquiring or borrowing items for use in new exhibits.

The team recommends that the exhibit room not be burdened with telling all the stories and covering all the interpretive themes in any detail. As in the lobby, there should be ample circulation space, and a number of neutral spaces in the room to avoid a crowded feeling. The use of a few low-tech electronic displays could help reduce the clutter of scores of small pictures and text blocks. Lighting should be controlled to highlight exhibit features of importance. Certain artifacts can be showcased by offering walk-around viewing, and jewel-case lighting. Illumination of light-sensitive objects can be intermittent, controlled by proximity sensors.

If the planning team represents the commemorative landscape in the exhibit room through any kind of map, model, or interactive program, we recommend that there be some form of tactile element that would be accessible to those with visual impairments. Every major exhibit should be paired with some kind of device to provide audio description of the exhibit and its interpretive or informational content. All audio experiences should be accompanied by captions for those with hearing impairments.

All exhibit elements should be physically accessible to those with mobility impairments.

If the exhibits in the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site visitor center are effective, they will succeed in encouraging more visitors to see the many historic sites in the park's commemorative landscape and at the partner sites.

Bookstore

The planning team believes that the bookstore should provide a level of interpretation and information that is vital to the interpretive program, and which can not be delivered as well through any other medium. The selection of books and related items need to be relevant to the park and the National Park System. While a "book-on-a-wall" exhibit can be a bad thing, a book in hand can be a great way for visitors to learn more about Hoover and the park, and to take the park's stories home with them. Bookstore items can help visitors share their park knowledge and experiences with their families and friends.

The current association sale area has shelves and walls of light colors—whites and grays—which do not show the books to the best advantage. In addition, the recessed lights with bright flood lamps fill the entire area with a diffused light. It is recommended

NPS PHOTO

The antique furnishings of the birthplace cottage commemorate the simple lifestyle of the young Hoover family.

that the design of the bookstore shelving, finishes, and lighting be incorporated into the next redesign of the visitor center exhibits. An intermediate action would be to replace the standard can fixtures with adjustable cans that can be aimed at the books, and replace the flood lamps with smaller, halogen clear-lens spot lamps.

West Branch Exhibit Opportunities

The team recommends that the town of West Branch be encouraged to develop an exhibit interpreting the booming spirit of the town at the time of Hoover, wayside exhibits and/or an interior exhibit in one of the downtown buildings, and perhaps replicate the interior of the farm implement store.

The National Park Service visitor center and its exhibits are envisioned as providing a hub for experiencing the Hoover story at a variety of locations in the immediate area. The intent is to prepare visitors for an enjoyable visit to the historic site and resources beyond the visitor center.

During the next five to 10 years, the park staff should address the following recommendations:

National Historic Site-related Exhibit Recommendations

- Develop a striking entry experience near the entrance to (or just inside the) Herbert Hoover NHS visitor center that would focus attention on Herbert Hoover with an image of Hoover using an artistic medium such as a painting, a mural, an indoor sculpture, or an outside statue.

- Research and develop permanent exhibits in the park visitor center that concentrate on Hoover's boyhood in West Branch and also cover the commemorative and preservation aspects of the park. Include Hoover's original cradle and highchair in these exhibits.

Presidential Library-related Exhibit Recommendations

- Collaborate with the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum on the content and design of their new exhibits during the facility's major rehabilitation of their museum exhibits. Request that an NPS representative participate in the museum's exhibit planning and design process.

- Rely primarily on the Library and Museum for special exhibits through collaboration and joint-sponsorship between the NPS and the Library staff. This would provide more space for permanent exhibits in the NPS visitor center using the space presently used for special exhibits.

Presidential Library and National Historic Site Exhibit Recommendations

- Develop an orientation exhibit (either indoor or outdoor) at both the Library and Museum and the NPS visitor center. One purpose of this exhibit will be to recommend what visitors can do if their visit is less than one hour, or if it is one to four hours, or if it is more than four hours.

West Branch-related Exhibit Recommendations

- Encourage West Branch to interpret the town's prospering spirit of the 1870s and 1880s, either using wayside exhibits or an interior exhibit in one of the downtown buildings; perhaps West Branch could replicate an interior of Jesse Hoover's farm implement store (using his inventory) as case study of a local entrepreneur switching from blacksmithing to farm implement retailing.

HISTORIC FURNISHINGS (AND SMALL EXHIBITS)

Visitor Center and NPS Exhibit Space

As described in the previous section on Exhibits Recommendations, the focus of the larger, future exhibits in the NPS visitor center will be the early childhood of Herbert Hoover, and the Hoover family's role in preserving and commemorating his boyhood years in West Branch. The new exhibits will use the expertise of a Historic Furnishings specialist for the following roles:

- Conduct new research upon which to base the visitor center's new exhibits as an early step during the planning process. The content, graphics, and artifacts found during the research should help determine the content of the new exhibits.

- Contract to make replicas of the original cradle and highchair (that would then be displayed in the birthplace cottage), and move the original cradle and highchair to the visitor center to be displayed as the primary iconic artifacts in the new visitor center exhibits.

- Research the Hoovers' commemorative efforts and restoration approach of the 1930s and 1940s, and the NPS planning documents of the 1960s.

Historic furnishings research could also be helpful in developing an interactive computer game (with a title such as "If You Were Lou, What Would You Do?") to encourage visitors to consider the decision-making choices made by Hoovers' wife, Lou Henry Hoover, in the 1930s. This interactive computer game could also be placed on the park's website and/or be a component of the park's future education program.

Hoover Birthplace Cottage

- Review, consolidate, and assess the park's information the Hoover birthplace cottage in the Historic Structures Report, the Historic Furnishings Report, and structure-related memos and studies done since the Historic Structures Report including:
  (1) "Condition Survey and Treatment Recommendations" by Alan O'Bright and Bill Harlow, December 1989. (draft only?)
  (2) July 22, 1992 memo from NARO Building Conservation Branch regarding the Birthplace Cottage's wallpaper and paint samples.
  (3) June 8, 1992 "Second Paint Analysis" by David Arbogast.

- Prepare a cost estimate (and Scope of Work) with HFC for a Historic Furnishings Report (HFR) for the Hoover Birthplace Cottage including:
  (1) Original (manuscript) probate inventories, 1880 and 1884.
  (2) Review Ketchum (1972) and Davidson (1974) Historic Furnishings Report sections.
  (3) Research at the Hoover Presidential Library and possibly at Stanford.
  (4) Stanford University Archives for the Hoover family and Maud Stratton's papers related to the restoration of Herbert Hoover NHS, etc.

- Submit a PMIS request for funds to produce a Historic Furnishings Report for the birthplace cottage that is based on an accurate cost estimate.

- Conduct a Historic Furnishings Report with the 1930s-1940s as the period of interpretation.

The Historic Furnishings Report should include a recommendation to produce replicas of the original highchair and cradle for the birthplace cottage's historically furnished interior. Because the cottage does not have its historic color on the exterior, lacks its historic ceiling, and lacks wallpaper, the interior furnishings of the Hoover birthplace cottage should take a commemorative approach, and not attempt to portray the furnishings as historically correct.

- Develop a small interior exhibit or a wayside exhibit (and perhaps the park's website) to show the historically correct appearance of the exterior and/or interior of the cottage. If a wayside exhibit is developed for this site, consider using a foreshortened photograph of the vista from the Hoover gravesite to the birthplace cottage to emphasize the commemorative nature of the site and the care taken to keep trees from compromising this viewscape.

- If personal interpretive services are halted at the birthplace cottage, consider reworking its exhibit and historic furnishings to improve access and allow more space inside for visitors. The current year-round restricted access reduces the quality of park visitors'

NPS PHOTO

The Friends Meetinghouse—where Hoover and his family worshiped in the late 1800s—may need a new Historic Furnishings Plan to, among other reasons, assess the potential replacement of the 1870s benches with reproduction benches.

experiences. (Although there are barriers in the other core buildings, they are not quite as obstructive.)

Friends Meetinghouse

- Review and assess the old Historic Furnishings Report (Heather Huyck, 1973 and Betsy Duncan-Clark, 1977) for the Friends Meetinghouse. Also, review and assess the park's files and historic structure materials on the Friends Meetinghouse and cry room, and determine if an update of the structure's paint and finishes is needed.

If above assessments indicate a new Historic Furnishings Report is needed, obtain cost estimate from HFC and prepare a PMIS request to conduct a Historic Furnishings Report for the Friends Meetinghouse and cry room. If such a report is not necessary, address the following items individually:

(1) Assess need for stoveboards.
(2) Cry house furnishings need to be improved and completed.
(3) Assess and possibly replace the historic benches with reproduction benches designed to represent the style of the 1870s in terms of finish, date, and style.

- Develop portable interior panels (and a complementary wayside exhibit outdoors) to provide a minimum amount of interpretation while maintaining a quiet experience within the historically stark appearance of the structure's interior.

- Explore potential for providing interpretation here (and throughout the park's historic core area) through a menu of programs available via "Guide by Cell" *(see AV recommendations)*.

Blacksmith Shop and Woodcrafting Shop

- Review and assess the blacksmith shop's outdated Historic Furnishings Report (Ed Bearss, 1973). If this assessment indicates that a new Historic Furnishings Report is needed, get an accurate cost estimate from Harpers Ferry Center and prepare a PMIS request for funds to conduct a Historic Furnishings Report for the blacksmith shop and woodcrafting shop.

- Develop portable interior panels (and a complementary wayside exhibit outdoors) to interpret Jesse Hoover's blacksmithing business and the commemorative role of the blacksmith shop and woodcrafting shop reconstruction in 1957.

- Transform the blacksmith shop's appearance from a store room to a working area to avoid the current "over-furnishing problem" of the Blacksmith Shop that has an open storage of non-furnishings blacksmithing items that have "accumulated" in the shop over this years. Review and continue interpretation of Jesse Hoover as a blacksmith and this late 1950s reconstruction of his blacksmith shop. These larger interpretive messages should include stories of the Hoover family, Jesse as a business man, a brief history of blacksmithing in West Branch, and the archeological findings at the site of Jesse's original blacksmith shop.

Schoolhouse

- Assess the schoolhouse's Historic Furnishings Reports (Ed Bearss, 1973, Heather Huyck, 1973 and Betsy Duncan-Clark, 1977) to determine if an updated Historic Furnishings Report is needed (or if just a List of Recommended Furnishings will suffice). A research base is needed before determining a need for a new Historic Furnishings Report, a list of Recommended Furnishings revisions, or any interpretive media is developed. Research is especially needed to find out more about Herbert Hoover and his teachers because historic newspaper articles with teachers interviewed were not available in the 1970s when the previous Historic Furnishings Reports were done. Also, research is needed to determine if this was a Quaker school, or Quaker-influenced in some way; if so, this information needs to come through in all interpretive media, possibly including furnishings.

- Research the schoolhouse (not through a full Historic Resource Study, but something close to it) to learn about how the Schoolhouse was used as a community center and religious meeting location. (HFC could do this if the park does not have time.)

- Based on the findings of the bulleted recommendations above, priorities can be set and an informed decision made on how to interpret the schoolhouse. Should it be all historically furnished or partially historically furnished, and what content(s) should be emphasized? Also, this decision might include portable interior exhibit panels (and a complementary wayside exhibit outdoors to interpret the building's commemorative role) to interpret the role and importance of education to the Hoover family, the community, and the nation. These exhibits might also interpret its historic functions as a community center and a place for religious meetings. Exhibits in the schoolhouse might also consider including a reader rail, an audio feature with quotations from Hoover, and a video showing a teacher working in the school during the 1880s period when Hoover lived in West Branch.

P.T. Smith House

- Consider using the first floor of the P.T. Smith house to have unstaffed interpretive exhibits related to the Hoover family's life in the "childhood home" (the "House of the Maples").

- As an alternative, consider developing the P.T. Smith's first floor as classroom exhibit rooms with educational exhibits that would be open as an unstaffed area (similar to the approach used at the

George Washington Carver Discovery Center in its classroom exhibit rooms).

AUDIOVISUAL PROGRAMS

Since the park's first visitor facilities were established in the early 1970s, Herbert Hoover NHS has utilized numerous audiovisual (AV) products to interpret the site's stories. The freestanding audio stations were installed at specific sites in the 1980s, and the park's current AV program shown in the visitor center auditorium was produced in 1998. In 2006 the park staff submitted Project Management Information System (PMIS) statements to request funding to revise some of these AV programs and some work has begun. The list below and on the following pages list these proposed revisions to existing AV programs and products, proposed PMIS funding requests, and additional AV element recommendations.

Freestanding Audio Stations

There are currently seven audio stations on the park's grounds. While exploring the site, visitors may push the buttons on these audio stations to start any of these audio-only programs. The park submitted a PMIS statement for funding to upgrade and revise all seven of these audio stations. However, based on the discussions and decisions made during the LRIP workshop in March 2007, the PMIS statement is being revised to address the following recommendations:

- Revise the audio programs at the visitor center parking lot and gravesite. These revisions include writing new scripts and producing new programs, as well as the evaluation and recommendations for equipment upgrades and their eventual purchase and installation.

- Develop and produce a third new audio program for the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum's parking lot. This message shall be similar to the audio station at the visitor center parking lot. This includes script development and production of the program as well as recommendations and the purchase of equipment and eventual installation.

- Remove the audio stations at the birthplace cottage, the Blacksmith Shop, the Schoolhouse, the Friends Meetinghouse, and the Isis statue and replace them with a portable audio tour (described on the following page). The existing outdoor audio stations are not reliable, difficult to locate, awkward in their presentation, and/or take too much space.

Portable Audio Tour

The PMIS revision for the current audio station project will include this recommendation:

- Develop and produce a portable audio tour (approximately 30 minutes long) that can also be re-purposed for other interpretive uses. This audio tour should cover theme 1 (Simple Beginnings), theme 2 (Family and Fellowship) and theme 7 (A Memorial and a Legacy).

Equipment for this audio tour is a part of this PMIS statement and is currently proposed as traditional handheld devices with headphones and touch pads. However, before this project gets underway, the park staff should discuss this with the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum to determine if this is the best method to play back the audio tour considering distribution logistics at both locations. Also, if the public is offered listening devices, the devices must have assistive listening capabilities for visitors who have hearing loss. Potential audio tour systems to be considered for this audio tour include "Guide by Cell," Ipods, and MP3 players.

Audio Description of the Audio Tour

Once the portable audio tour described above is produced, it is recommended that the park:

- Develop a second audio tour that includes audio description for people with low vision or who are blind. Also, to provide the same content as the portable audio tour, this second audio tour will include navigational instruction as well as descriptions of what the buildings look like and what can be seen within them.

Audio Tour Brochure and Map
Along with the development of a portable audio tour, it is also recommended that the park develop the following:

- To supplement the audio tour, develop an audio tour brochure that includes a map *(see this recommendation in the Publications section)*.

If a new map is developed for the park's unigrid brochure, the ability to utilize or augment this map for multiple purposes should be considered for consistency. This map may also be used as the foundation for the web-based virtual tour discussed below.

Primary Audiovisual Program Shown in the Visitor Center's Auditorium
"Adventures in Great Undertakings," produced in 1998, is an effective program that is currently shown in the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site visitor center in a separate auditorium. It is recommended that the park:

- Evaluate this current audiovisual program for its effectiveness in about 2012; and
- Consider replacing it by 2015. If so, submit a PMIS statement and cost estimate in 2012.

Recently, the park submitted a PMIS statement as a response to NPS Director Mary Bomar's memo of October 20, 2006, on the "Audiovisual Accessibility Initiative for Visitors with Disabilities." If this PMIS statement garners funds, the money will be spent to ensure that the park's current audiovisual program and auditorium are meeting accessibility requirements. The funding from this PMIS, if approved, will cover the following improvements:

- Display captions on the caption board at all times.
- Audio describe the audiovisual program.
- Provide equipment for assistive listening and audio description upon request.
- Advertise available accessibility features in multiple formats, including at the front desk, on the web, and in any future park newspapers and/or site bulletins. Universal symbols for accessibility features may be accessed at www.nps.gov/hfc/carto/map-symbols.htm.
- Produce a script for visitors to use upon request for pre-visit preparation or while

NPS PHOTO

Park management recently submitted a funding request to upgrade the park's current audiovisual program and auditorium to insure they meet current accessibility requirements including caption board upgrades, an audio description of the audiovisual program, and assisted listening equipment

on site. (Note: providing a script is not considered an alternative to displaying captions at all times.)

- Provide regular staff training to ensure that they can operate all accessibility features and equipment and can provide appropriate guidance to visitors requesting these features.

Orientation Video from Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum

The Presidential Library and Museum currently sends a videotape about Herbert Hoover NHS to school groups that have scheduled an on-site visit to West Branch. This current videotape is outdated and does not meet the needs of park staff, teachers, or students. Therefore, it is recommended that the park:

- Discuss with Library and Museum staff the goals and funding related to producing a new pre-visit, student-focused AV program that would increase the students' interest in visiting the park (rather than simply provide a video tour of the site). This AV program should cover specific park themes (to be discussed by both staffs and decided on later). This program could be produced in a DVD format that would have the primary theme-focused program followed by chapters that could also promote the park's secondary stories (e.g., the restored prairie), provide lesson plans, and include other interpretive opportunities.

Radio Station

The current Traveler Information System (TIS) radio station at 690 AM provides information about the site, but it is long and the reception uneven. A new script, narrated by a professional, is being written in 2007. Before this new script is finished, it is recommended that:

- The Traveler Information System should be evaluated to find out what percentage of visitors use it, to help determine its effectiveness, and help decide if Herbert Hoover National Historic Site should continue using the TIS radio station system.
- If it is decided to continue to use this TIS, ensure that the script be short and succinct in order for visitors to hear the message at least once in its entirety before they reach the site.
- As technology improves, obtain a new TIS system to improve reception.

Promotion of the Park

The park can utilize AV products and technology in numerous ways to promote the park as well as provide off-site access to a wider audience. For this effort, creating a comprehensive promotion plan that can be referred to by current and future staff is recommended in order to more formally document past, current, and future activities and goals as well as defined partner relationships and activities. The following specific promotional activities are recommended:

- Produce an off-season Winter Film Festival (when visitation is low and staff has time to coordinate this event), based on themes related to the site and/or Hoover, such as fishing, the prairie, and presidential topics. (Copyright issues should be researched and considered.) Also, consider coordinating with Effigy Mounds NM when advertising this event since this park's staff has experience in conducting film festivals.
- Contact local broadcasting affiliates to aide in the promotion of "Hooverfest" and other park special events and activities.
- Decide on the park's future use of the Iowa Communication Network (ICN), which utilizes older technology that enables the park staff to have video conferencing with school groups.
- Develop relationships with tourism boards throughout the state of Iowa and provide audiovisual material appropriate for the promotion of the park throughout the state.
- Develop relationships with other potential partners including the

Kirkwood local cable access channel and local colleges with communications, film, video, and/or broadcast departments whose students might be willing to develop audiovisual products for the park. This may include videotaping presentations and special events with edited introductions for broadcast on the local access network.

Audiovisual Materials within New Exhibits
It is recommended that audiovisual exhibit elements be considered during the exhibit planning and design phase for new permanent exhibits at the visitor center. All audiovisual elements must meet Section 508 compliance, be captioned and audio described, and make assistive listening equipment available. These recommendations include the following:

- Because the Quakers are an important part of Hoover's experience story, a three- to five-minute video introducing the Quakers, their values, and beliefs may be produced. However, it is important not to idealize the Quakers, but show a candid portrait and their context within the overall history of Christianity.

- Produce a short video about the blacksmith shop and blacksmithing.

- Produce a continuous loop of a montage of West Branch. Using selected historic photographs, contemporary images should be photographed at that same angle and distance so that the old image can dissolve into the new image, giving visitors a comparison of what the town looked like during Hoover's time and today.

- Either through an interactive program or at individual sound stations, produce sound bites and dramatic readings of quotes as they relate to Hoover growing up in West Branch.

Additional Audio Features at the Schoolhouse and Quaker Meetinghouse
As the portable audio tour is being developed, it is also recommended that the park:

- Consider developing standalone audio stations (similar to the current stations, but with updated audio technology) at the schoolhouse and the Quaker Meetinghouse.

If this idea is considered, it is recommended that these audio stations be evaluated after the portable audio tour has been produced to evaluate (1) how effectively the audio tour interprets these sites; and (2) if these standalone stations "compete" with the portable audio tour.

PUBLICATIONS
Visitors typically use publications in two ways: for information and orientation during their visit, and for in-depth interpretation following their visit. The majority of on-site publications are free-of-charge, with the primary one being the park's NPS unigrid brochure. To help upgrade the park's free publications program, the interpretive staff should take the following actions:

- Request that HFC redesign the park's NPS unigrid brochure (and possibly expand the brochure from its current "A-6" format to a larger "B-4" or "B-6" format) so that the brochure includes a self-guided tour of the national historic site and the West Branch Historic District. This self-guided portion of the brochure should include all the park's outdoor interpretive locations in a coherent sequence, and then lead visitors into historic West Branch to the historic business district, the site of Jesse Hoover's farm implement store, the site of the historic railroad station, and the cemetery. The tour should make sense whether visitors start their self-guiding tour from the NPS visitor center or the Library and Museum.

- Develop a new map for the park's unigrid brochure that does not use the aerial-oblique art approach. This new map should be expanded to include more of historic West Branch and more of the park's prairie and "House of the Maples" site. This map should be produced in a digital form that can be

re-purposed on the park's website and in-house park publications.

- Consider combining the park's site bulletins into a small park newspaper (one folded sheet of four pages). If done, this newspaper might become a joint venture with the National Park Service, Hoover Library, Hoover Association, and the City of West Branch to support the seamless visitor experience that would promote all Hoover-related attractions in West Branch. This newspaper could include historic and contemporary photographs, safety reminders, articles on resource management issues, and a welcome from head officials of the park, the Library and Museum, the Hoover Association, and the City of West Branch. This newspaper would be printed only once a year, but inserts could be printed two or three times through the year to update program schedules and special event announcements.

- Schedule an annual meeting each winter with park partner representatives (who have the primary responsibility for their organization's in-house publications) to review each partner's current publications and proposed updates, redesigns, and reprinting plans.

- Design a brand identity for combined publications among the four principal partners.

- Develop an in-house park brochure that includes a map to supplement the audio tour *(see recommendation in the Audiovisual section)*. This brochure could provide the user with the numbers and locations of each audio tour stop and some brief information about each stop. Also, the park should develop an in-depth brochure for visitors who are hearing impaired so that they can receive the same information that is heard within the interpretive audio tour.

The National Historic Site planted or preserved most of the trees and shrubs as part of the cultural landscape that commemorates Herbert Hoover. Placement of trees and shrubs tend to enhance the character-defining features of the park.

PHOTO BY DANIEL PETERSON

Personal Services

INTERPRETIVE STAFF

The interpretive staff at Herbert Hoover NHS essentially consists of two full-time permanent park rangers (interpreters), one intermittent cultural demonstrator (blacksmith), and six park guides (seasonals); all are under the direction of the park's chief ranger who also supervises the park's law enforcement and resource management programs. These employees present interpretive programs, provide roving contacts, staff the information desk, plan and support special events, and perform a myriad of other interpretive duties. A recommendation from a Midwest Regional Operations Evaluation in January 2007 stated that "the park should consider ways to enable the permanent park ranger-interpreters to spend more of their November to April time on full performance work." Toward this goal, it is recommended that the park:

- Collect data for permanent and seasonal interpretive staff's time use and compile a time use analysis. Use the analysis to assist decision making about allocating scarce hours for the two permanent interpreters, as well as the efficient use of the park's seasonal employees.

- Consider hiring a Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) employee/s from an area university or college (at a GS-3 or GS-4 level). Use the STEP interpreter/s to lead walking tours from the National Historic Site into West Branch Historic District. Ask local partners to assist with funding by adding funds through the park donation account. STEP interpreter/s could also be considered to help staff the birthplace cottage.

- Request an increase the park's budget for interpretive seasonal staff to provide personal interpretive services at the birthplace cottage and the historic core around Downey Street.

- Shift a seasonal interpreter from the summer to the winter to relieve the two permanent interpreters from staffing the information desk (so they can plan interpretive events, etc.).

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS AND PERSONAL SERVICES

- Provide interpretation at the birthplace cottage and historic core area with a roving interpreter during the summer and other busy visitor times. Without an interpreter stationed at the birthplace cottage, no one will be available to answer visitor questions and encourage visitor consideration of the personal meanings reflected by the cottage. The roving interpreter at this duty station should remain in the vicinity of the cottage to provide an opportunity for that employee to accompany visitors inside the cottage. (As an alternative, the park could use a STEP interpreter or continue using the park's law enforcement ranger/s and/or maintenance worker/s who attend to the historic grounds to provide interpretation. Also, keep a supply of the park's brochures in each maintenance vehicle and patrol car.)

- If park management decides not to continue staffing the birthplace cottage, then revise the exhibit and historic furnishings to improve access and allow more space inside for visitors.

- Incorporate the commemorative layout of the site into all park interpretive talks.

- Each winter, plan the park's interpretive program schedules for the spring, summer, and fall.

- Publish and promote the annual interpretive program schedule and post the daily schedule at the visitor center and Hoover Presidential Library and Museum.

- Schedule ranger-led programs to start soon after the 12-minute AV program (shown on the hour) concludes at the visitor center; lead a 30- to 40-minute

NPS PHOTO

A reconstructed Blacksmith Shop—similar to the shop that Herbert Hoover's father, Jesse, operated in the 1870s—is located within the park and offers blacksmith demonstrations by a park ranger in period dress through the spring, summer, and fall.

guided tour of the grounds; conclude the tour at the Library and Museum in time for visitors to watch the 22-minute film that starts every hour on the hour at the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum's theater.

- Lead tours to the West Branch Historic District on Main Street during the summer or other high visitation times.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The park's education program has not had a formal curriculum-based approach since the park's education specialist transferred in 2005 and that position was abolished. Without an education specialist to champion and guide its development, this program cannot be fully accomplished. To move the park back on track in its education program, it is recommended that the park:

- Request Parks-as-Classrooms (PAC) funds through the Midwest Regional Office to help refine old and develop new educational programs, and organize a workshop with local teachers to coordinate/implement educational materials.

- Continue to use current, as well as new and emerging technologies, for distance learning and outreach to schools. Build upon existing program outlines.

- Convene an education meeting with Herbert Hoover National Historic Site's primary partners to develop a realistic education proposal within staffing limits that will improve the combined education experience at the park, the Library and Museum, and downtown West Branch. The park should collaborate with its partners—especially the education specialist at the Library and Museum —to develop a seamless educational experience at all Hoover-related attractions.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- Complement the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum's special events (scheduled on Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, or other times) with NPS ranger-guided tours that start from the Presidential Library and Museum.

- Continue and adapt the park's role in Hooverfest, Prairie Heritage Day, A Christmas Past, Uncommon Student, Living History, and other special events.

- Assist and advise the Hoover Library Association on its tour script and approach to living history events. Continue training living history volunteers to assure quality interpretation.

Parkwide Interpretive Themes/Personal Services/Media Matrix

THEME	PERSONAL SERVICES	WAYSIDE EXHIBITS	EXHIBITS
1. Simple Beginnings "In no other land could a boy from a country village, without inheritance or influential friends, look forward with unbounded hope." —Herbert Hoover.	Guided Tours, Roving Contacts, Education Group Programs/Children's Programs, Living History Programs, "Christmas Past" Special Event	Birthplace Cottage (core area WE)	NPS-VC Exhibits (increase emphasis) HHPLM Exhibits (reduce emphasis)
2. Family and Fellowship Growing up in West Branch, Herbert Hoover saw his parents, family, and others in leadership roles, which instilled in him a drive to become a leader and a success.	Guided Tours, Roving Contacts, Education Group, Programs/Children's Programs, Blacksmith Shop Demonstrations	Blacksmith Shop (core area WE), Schoolhouse (core area WE), Downey Street (core area WE), West Branch (WE project with city?)	NPS-VC Exhibits (increase emphasis) HHPLM Exhibits (reduce emphasis)
3. Triumphs and Tragedies A child that grows up in a life of adversity takes a path that requires personal endurance and perseverance.	Guided Tours, Roving Contacts, Education Group Programs/Children's Programs	Second Hoover Home (core area WE??)	NPS-VC Exhibits (reduce emphasis HHPLM Exhibits (increase emphasis) P.T. Smith House First Floor Exhibits
4. Adversity Leads to Opportunity Herbert Hoover's loss of his parents in early childhood influenced his self-reliant character and his future concern for the physical and social well-being of the youth of all nations.	Guided Tours, Roving Contacts, Education Group Programs/Children's Programs		NPS-VC Exhibits (reduce emphasis) HHPLM Exhibits (increase emphasis)
5. Faith, Hope, Charity, and Love Herbert Hoover's Quaker beliefs in the equality of all people and in helping others in times of crisis or need led to his becoming one of the world's great humanitarians.	Guided Tours, Roving Contacts, Education Group Programs/Children's Programs	Quaker Meetinghouse (core area WE)	NPS-VC Exhibits (reduce emphasis) HHPLM exhibits (increase emphasis)
6. Nature and Stewardship Herbert Hoover's experience living in a rural environment in early childhood shaped his interest in the natural world which influenced his choice of career and the recreational activities he pursued throughout his life.	Guided Tours, Roving Education Group Programs/Children's Programs, "Hooverfest" Special Event, "Prairie Heritage Days", "National Public Lands Day"	Prairie Trailhead (upright WE??) Prairie Trail (trailside WEs??)	NPS-VC Exhibits (reduce emphasis) HHPLM Exhibits (reduce emphasis)
7. A Memorial and a Legacy The influence of Herbert Hoover, Lou Henry Hoover, and their family shaped the development of the presidential memorial area in order for the public to gain a fuller understanding of Hoover's life.	Guided Tours "Artists-in-Residence" Special Programs	Hoover Gravesite (core area WE??)	NPS-VC Exhibits (increase emphasis) HHPLM Exhibits (reduce emphasis)
Safety, Orientation, and National Park Service Messages While not primary themes, these message are key to all visitors.	Guided Tours Information Desk Roving Contacts	Herbert Hoover upright/B. cases at VC parking lot, outside HHPLM, and Main Street; Signs on highways	NPS-VC Exhibits (orientation and NPS emphasis)

Parkwide Interpretive Themes/Personal Services/Media Matrix

THEME	HISTORIC FURNISHINGS	AV/DIGITAL/WEB	PUBLICATIONS
1. Simple Beginnings "In no other land could a boy from a country village, without inheritance or influential friends, look forward with unbounded hope." —Herbert Hoover.	Birthplace Cottage furnishings (and small interior exhibit panel?)	Birthplace Cottage Audio Station (part of future Audio Tour?); VC Auditorium "Film"; AV in Future Exhibits; in HEHO's Website	Unigrid Brochure Site Bulletin; maybe (future) Newspaper for Park and Partners Audio Tour Publication
2. Family and Fellowship Growing up in West Branch, Herbert Hoover saw his parents, family, and others in leadership roles, which instilled in him a drive to become a leader and a success.	Blacksmith Shop Furnishings and Demonstration Area (and small exhibit?) Schoolhouse and Meetinghouse Furnishings (and exhibit panels?)	Blacksmith Shop and Schoolhouse Audio Stations (part of the future Audio Tour?); VC Auditorium "Film"; AV in Future Exhibits; in HEHO's Website	Unigrid brochure Audio Tour Publication Jr. Ranger Booklet EN Sales Items
3. Triumphs and Tragedies A child that grows up in a life of adversity takes a path that requires personal endurance and perseverance.		(Part of the park's future Audio Tour?); VC Auditorium "Film"; AV in Future Exhibits; in HEHO's Website; HHPLM VC "Film"	Unigrid brochure Audio Tour Publication Jr. Ranger Booklet EN Sales Items
4. Adversity Leads to Opportunity Herbert Hoover's loss of his parents in early childhood influenced his self-reliant character and his future concern for the physical and social well-being of the youth of all nations.		Statue of Isis Audio Station (part of Audio Tour?); VC Auditorium "Film"; AV in future Exhibits; in HEHO's Website; HHPLM VC "Film"	Unigrid brochure Audio Tour Publication Jr. Ranger Booklet EN Sales Items
5. Faith, Hope, Charity, and Love Herbert Hoover's Quaker beliefs in the equality of all people and in helping others in times of crisis or need led to his becoming one of the world's great humanitarians.	Quaker Meetinghouse Furnishings (and small portable exhibit panels?)	Quaker Meetinghouse Audio Station (part of Future Audio Tour?); VC Auditorium "Film"; AV in Future Exhibits; in HEHO's Website	Unigrid Brochure Site Bulletin; maybe (future) Newspaper for Park and Partners Audio Tour Publication
6. Nature and Stewardship Herbert Hoover's experience living in a rural environment in early childhood shaped his interest in the natural world which influenced his choice of career and the recreational activities he pursued throughout his life.		(Part of the park's future Audio Tour?); VC Auditorium "Film"; in HEHO's Website	Unigrid Brochure Site Bulletin; maybe (future) Newspaper for Park and Partners Audio Tour Publication
7. A Memorial and a Legacy The influence of Herbert Hoover, Lou Henry Hoover, and their family shaped the development of the presidential memorial area in order for the public to gain a fuller understanding of Hoover's life.		Gravesite/Prairie audio station (part of future Audio Tour?); VC Auditorium "Film"; AV in future exhibits; in HEHO's Website	Unigrid Brochure Site Bulletin; maybe (future) Newspaper for Park and Partners Audio Tour Publication
Safety, Orientation, and National Park Service Messages While not primary themes, these message are key to all visitors.		VC Parking Lot Wayside Audio Station (part of future Audio Tour?); HHPLM Orientation Video; TIS Radio Station; in HEHO's Website	Unigrid Brochure Site Bulletin; maybe (future) Newspaper for Park and Partners; Volks March Guide

Partnerships

EASTERN NATIONAL COOPERATING ASSOCIATION

Eastern National (EN) has been Herbert Hoover National Historic Site's officially recognized cooperating association since August 10, 1973. The association's purpose is "assisting or advancing historical, scientific, educational or interpretive work. . . ." The association will continue to sell a variety of publications and other educational items, support the park's cultural demonstrator (by buying supplies for the blacksmith shop operation), and sell items produced by the cultural demonstrator. The park intends to pursue a scope of sales statement and work more closely with EN in the future on sales items.

HERBERT HOOVER PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

The partnership with the Library and Museum will continue to expand as we work together through the Comprehensive Interpretive Planning process to ensure that we are complementing each other's efforts to promote the life and ideals of President Herbert Hoover. Opportunities to enhance visitors experience to the area through partnering will continue. School tours, interpretive programs and special events, including "Hooverfest" and Naturalization Ceremonies, are just a few of the activities that promote the seamless experience to Herbert Hoover National Historic Site.

THE HOOVER LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The Hoover Association promotes the Hoover-related sites and will continue to partner with the national historic site, the Library and Museum, Main Street West Branch, and the local community to enhance the opportunities available to attract visitors to the site and the local community. The Hoover Association will also be expanding fundraising efforts to be able to further assist the park and the Library and Museum with programs and projects for the future. Numerous programs and projects have already been identified as needs of the park and Library and Museum. The partnership will continue to develop and expand in the future.

MAIN STREET WEST BRANCH

The partnership with Main Street West Branch will further grow and develop as the vision for Main Street continues to be implemented by the board of directors and their four committees' focus through organization, business improvement, design, and promotions. There will continue to be opportunities to expand involvement, as well as the other entities at the Hoover site. Ways to collaborate and work together to attract visitors to the Hoover site and West Branch, Iowa, will be sought. Special events that continue to attract visitors will be improved upon, such as "Hometown Days," "Hooverfest," and "A Christmas Past."

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS AMERICAN MEMORY COLLECTION PHOTO

Chicago Daily News, Inc. photo of U.S. Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover on a 1928 visit to a corn field. Hoover's humanitarian efforts during and after World War I and service as Secretary of Commerce made him a highly respected figure. He easily won the presidency in 1928, but the bright prospect of his administration was soon overshadowed by economic disaster.

Library Needs

The park's library consists of approximately 8,000 volumes of hard-bound books, with other material in the form of periodicals, bound and unbound reports, binders of other papers and reports, and a host of other reference materials. Plans to get the entire library cataloged in 2009 with the cooperation of the NPS Library Program will begin in 2008. In support of this effort, a library scope of collection has been drafted. In addition to park staff, a volunteer may assist with the cataloging. It is recommended that park staff take the following steps to upgrade the library:

- Recruit a Volunteer-In-Park to receive NPS Library cataloging training and begin the process of finalizing the cataloging of the entire Herbert Hoover National Historic Site library.
- Finalize a library scope of collection.
- Acquire a broader base of reference material including new information on area's pioneer and homestead history, city of West Branch history, and update other reference materials.
- Digitize all Herbert Hoover National Historic Site library materials to make them more accessible to park staff and researchers, and to save room in the park library.

Collection Needs

The park has more than100,000 objects in its museum collection, including specimens, archives, objects, images, and artwork. While about 32,000 objects are kept at the Midwest Archeological Center, and an additional 1,800 archeological specimens currently are stored at the University of Iowa, the park retains possession and curatorial/storage responsibility for most of the collection.

The collection facilities do not have sufficient environmental controls to maintain the optimum environmental conditions (temperature, humidity, and light). The chief storage area, Garvin Cottage, is heated and air conditioned but does not always meet temperature and relative humidity standards. The storage space is also quite overcrowded. The other three structures used for curatorial storage fall far short of meeting museum standards.

Environmental conditions in the four historic buildings are deficient. None of the structures has air conditioning or humidity control equipment; only the birthplace cottage has a heating system. In addition, doors to these structures are left open during the day. None of these structures meet standards for temperature, humidity, or light levels. While the visitor center has heat and air conditioning, humidity levels are not within curatorial standards based on the limited monitoring done. Light levels in the lobby area also exceed museum standards.

The Midwest Region Museum Collections Curatorial Facilities Implementation Strategy calls for HEHO collections to be moved to the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum or to a university in the region. While the Hoover Library and Museum has agreed to store the park's archival records and possibly a few artifacts, it cannot store the whole collection. Inquiries into using storage facilities at other institutions have been unsuccessful. The park is considering moving curatorial storage to the Thompson Farm when that facility becomes available.

Harpers Ferry Center's Media Assets Workgroup is developing a digital imaging project. Herbert Hoover National Historic Site staff members are planning on submitting a PMIS statement for this project in the fall of 2007. Some of these images could be posted on the park's website.

Research Needs

The superintendent and historian at Herbert Hoover National Hitoric Site suggest the following research needs:

HISTORICAL RESEARCH

- Complete a park Administrative History (PMIS statement has been entered).
- Conduct more research on historic furnishings, especially at the Hoover birthplace cottage and the Friends Meetinghouse's benches.
- Complete a Historic Resource Study (PMIS statement has been entered); include commemorative work of Lou Hoover and others.
- Conduct research into Herbert Hoover's personal finances to shed more light on his early years and his personal philanthropy.

NATURAL RESOURCE RESEARCH

Conduct research to better understand the following:

- The historical vegetation and potential native vegetation.
- Future impacts of agricultural and urban development on hydrology and water quality.
- Potential impacts of global climate change on local flora and fauna.
- Effects of light and sound pollution on the park's resources and visitor experience.
- Impact of development of nearby industrial area on the park (pollution, traffic patterns, etc.).

SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

- Complete a more in-depth visitor use survey through the NPS Visitor Services Project (VSP).
- Impact of park visitation on West Branch's economy and the availability of visitor services in the community.

NPS PHOTO

A volunteer collect grass and flower seeds from the prairie on National Public Lands Day. The seeds are planted in other parts of the prairie later, including after a prescribed fire.

Implementation Plan

Actions, divided into annual, achievable steps are reproduced in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) (DO-6, page 6).

The measure of success of any plan is the extent to which it is implemented. Initial implementation of strategies needs to be both realistic and flexible. The charts on the following pages outline an initial blueprint for the park's interpretive programs. Because funding opportunities and priorities often change, park management may need to adjust the implementation strategies to adapt to changing conditions.

The park interpretive staff and key park partners should meet each year to draft an Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) for each new fiscal year based on funding opportunities and coordination with other projects.

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site Interpretive Media – Non-Personal Services

	Short-Term		Long-Term			Out Years (6 & 7)	
Tasks	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**20144**
Emphasis of Facilities, Interpretive Media, Personal Services Create a "seamless" Hoover-related experience for every visitor to West Branch, Iowa.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Website Maintain the upgraded website and assess the amount and kind of content it contains.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Develop a comprehensive website plan as a staff reference for future consistency and direction.	XXX						
Place a counter on the park website so that park staff knows how many hits the website receives.	XXX						
Place links on the website that take users to the other relevant sites within and outside the NPS.		XXX					
Put the Hoover family tree (and perhaps the Hoover genealogy book) on the park's website.		XXX					
Continue to advertise the park's special events on the website in a prominent location.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Create teacher lesson plans with the Hoover Library and Museum and place on the park website.			XXX	XXX	XXX		
Create an Orientation DVD with the Hoover Library and Museum and place on the park website.			XXX	XXX	XXX		
Produce a virtual tour of the park that is based on the on-site portable audio tour and post it.						XXX	XXX
Post the digital renderings of the park's primary artifacts and exhibits, studies, and reports.			XXX	XXX			
Identity/Orientation Signs Design a parkwide Sign Plan that identifies the Herbert Hoover NHS as a unit of the NPS.		XXX					
Get funds to implement a parkwide Sign Plan as described in the NPS UniGuide Sign Standards.			XXX	XXX	XXX		
Wayside Exhibits Prepare a PMIS project statement to request funds for a Wayside Exhibit Proposal, a Wayside Exhibit Plan, and Plan Production.	XXX						
Once funding is secured for the Wayside Exhibit Proposal, arrange for the Interpretive Specialist from MWRO (and/or an HFC specialist) to work with the park staff to develop the proposal.		XXX					
Once funding is secured for the Wayside Exhibit Plan, let a contract through HFC to plan, design, and prepare production-ready files for all the proposed wayside exhibits.			XXX	XXX			

Cost estimates for interpretive media can be provided by Harpers Ferry Center in a separate document; call (304) 535-5050 to request estimates.

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site Interpretive Media – Non-Personal Services							
	Short-Term		Long-Term			Out Years (6 & 7)	
Tasks	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**20144**
Wayside Exhibits (continued) Once funding is secured for Wayside Exhibit Production, let a contract through HFC to produce and ship the final panels and bases to the park (for park maintenance to install).					XXX	XXX	XXX
Exhibits Develop Exhibit Project Research Package that includes information on artifacts, graphics, caption data, and documents based on primary source research.	XXX	XXX					
Prepare a PMIS project statement for request funds for research and develop new exhibits in the park visitor center that concentrate on Hoover's boyhood in West Branch and also cover the park's commemorative and preservation aspects.		XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX		
Develop a striking entry experience near the entrance to (or just inside the) Herbert Hoover NHS visitor center that would focus attention on Herbert Hoover with an image of Hoover using an artistic medium such as a painting, a mural, an indoor sculpture, or an outside statue.		XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX		
Develop an orientation exhibit (either indoor or outdoor) to help visitors make choices on how to spend their time at both the Hoover Library and Museum and the NPS visitor center.		XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX		
Collaborate with the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum on the content and design of their new exhibits during the facility's major rehabilitation of their museum exhibits.	XXX	XXX	XXX				
Rely primarily on the Hoover Library and Museum for special exhibits through collaboration and sponsorship between the National Park Service and the Hoover Library and Museum staff.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Encourage West Branch to interpret the town's booming spirit of the 1870s and 1880s, either using wayside exhibits or an interior exhibit in one of the downtown buildings.					XXX	XXX	XXX
Research the Hoovers' commemorative efforts and restoration approach of the 1930s and 1940s, and the NPS planning documents of the 1960s.			XXX	XXX			
Contract to make replicas of the original cradle and highchair (to be displayed in the Birthplace Cottage), and move the original cradle and highchair to the visitor center's new exhibits.			XXX	XXX			
Historic Furnishing (and Small Exhibits)							
Hoover Birthplace Cottage Review, consolidate, and assess the park's information the Hoover Birthplace Cottage in the Historic Structures Report, the Historic Furnishings Report, and structure-related memos.	XXX						
Prepare a cost estimate (and Scope of Work) with HFC for a Historic Furnishings Report (HFR)		XXX					
Submit a PMIS request for funds for a Historic Furnishings Report for the Birthplace Cottage.		XXX					
Conduct a Historic Furnishings Report with the 1930s-1940s as the period of interpretation.			XXX	XXX			
Develop a small interior exhibit or a wayside exhibit (and perhaps a place on the park website) to show the historically correct appearance of the exterior and/or interior of the cottage.				XXX	XXX	XXX	
Friends Meetinghouse Review and assess the old Historic Furnishings Report for the Friends Meetinghouse and review and assess the park's files and Historic Structure materials on the Meetinghouse and Cry Room.	XXX						

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Herbert Hoover National Historic Site Interpretive Media – Non-Personal Services							
	Short-Term		Long-Term			Out Years (6 & 7)	
Tasks	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**20144**
Friends Meetinghouse (continued) If a new Historic Furnishings Report is needed, get cost estimate from HFC and prepare a PMIS request to conduct a Historic Furnishings Report for the Friends Meetinghouse and Cry Room.		XXX					
Develop portable interior panels (and a complementary wayside exhibit outdoors) to provide a minimum amount of interpretation while maintaining a quiet experience within this resource.			XXX	XXX	XXX		
Explore potential for providing interpretation here (and throughout the park's historic core area) through a menu of programs available via "Guide by Cell" (see AV recommendations).			XXX	XXX	XXX		
Blacksmith Shop and Woodcrafting Shop Review and assess the Blacksmith Shop's outdated Historic Furnishings Report.	XXX						
If a new Historic Furnishings Report is needed, get cost estimate from HFC and prepare a PMIS request for a Historic Furnishings Report for the Blacksmith Shop and Woodcrafting Shop.		XXX					
Develop portable interior panels (and a complementary wayside exhibit outdoors) to interpret Jesse Hoover's blacksmithing business and the commemorative role of the Blacksmith Shop.			XXX	XXX	XXX		
Transform the Blacksmith Shop's appearance from a store room to a working area to avoid the current "over-furnishing problem" of the Blacksmith Shop and Woodcrafting Shop.			XXX	XXX	XXX		
Schoolhouse Review and assess the Schoolhouse's outdated Historic Furnishings Report.	XXX						
Develop portable interior panels (and a complementary wayside exhibit) to interpret the role and importance of education to the Hoover family, the community, and the nation.			XXX XXX	XXX XXX	XXX XXX		
P.T. Smith House Consider using the first floor of the P.T. Smith house to have unstaffed interpretive exhibits related to the Hoover family's life in the "Childhood Home" (the "house of the maples"). As an alternative, consider developing the P.T. Smith's first floor as classroom exhibit rooms with educational exhibits that would be open as an unstaffed area.						XXX	XXX
Audiovisual Programs Revise the audio messages and stations at the Visitor Center parking lot and Hoover Gravesite.			XXX	XXX	XXX		
Produce a new orientation audio station for the Hoover Library and Museum's parking lot.			XXX	XXX	XXX		
Remove the six audio stations at the Birthplace Cottage, Blacksmith Shop, Schoolhouse, Friends Meetinghouse, Isis Statue, and the Second Hoover Home); replace with a portable Audio Tour.			XXX	XXX	XXX		
Develop and produce a portable Audio Tour (approximately 30 minutes long) that can also be re-purposed for the park's website and other potential interpretive uses.			XXX	XXX	XXX		
Develop a second Audio Tour that includes audio description for people with low vision or who are blind. The second audio tour will include navigational instruction and building descriptions.						XXX	XXX
Develop an Audio Tour brochure that includes a map (see Publications recommendations).				XXX	XXX		

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Herbert Hoover National Historic Site Interpretive Media – Non-Personal Services							
	Short-Term		Long-Term			Out Years (6 & 7)	
Tasks	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**20144**
Audiovisual Programs							
Ensure that the current feature film in the visitor center meets accessibility requirements.	XXX						
Evaluate this current feature film in the visitor center for its effectiveness in about 2012, and consider replacing it by 2015. If so, submit a PMIS statement and cost estimate in 2012.					XXX		
Produce a new pre-visit AV program in a DVD format to increase the school students' interest in visiting the park (rather than simply provide a video tour of the site like the VHS program).						XXX	XXX
As the new TIS script is being written in 2007, evaluate its effectiveness to help decide its future. As technology improves, take advantage of a new TIS system to improve its reception.	XXX						
Produce an off-season Winter Film Festival based on themes related to Herbert Hoover NHS.						XXX	XXX
Contact local broadcasting affiliates to help promote Hooverfest and other special events.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Evaluate the park's continued use of the Iowa Communication Network (ICN), which enables video conferencing to schools to provide education programs to off-site audiences.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Develop relationships with tourism boards throughout the state of Iowa and provide audiovisual material appropriate for the promotion of the park throughout the state.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Develop relationships with other potential partners including the Kirkwood local cable access channel and local colleges with communications, film, video, and/or broadcast departments.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Produce audiovisual exhibit elements for the new permanent exhibits at the visitor center. Examples include: a three- to five-minute video introducing the Quakers; a short video about the blacksmith shop; a continuous loop of 1880s West Branch images.		XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX		
Publications							
Request that HFC redesign the park's NPS unigrid brochure (and possibly expand the brochure from its current A-6 format to a larger B-4 or B-6 format) so that the brochure includes a self-guided tour of the national historic site and the West Branch historic district. The oblique art/map should be revised and expanded to include more of historic West Branch and more of the park's prairie and "house of the Maples" site. This map should be produced in a digital form that can be re-purposed on the park's website and other interpretive media.	XXX	XXX	XXX				
Combine the park's site bulletins into a small park newspaper (1 folded sheet of 4 pages). This park newspaper could include the map used in the redesigned NPS unigrid brochure (perhaps using the map in a larger format) and include more self-guided tour information than offered in the park's NPS unigrid brochure. The newspaper will be printed only once a year, but inserts may be printed two or three times through the year that have summer program schedules, etc. This newspaper might become a joint venture with the National Park Service, Hoover Library, Hoover Association, and the City of West Branch to support the seamless visitor experience that would promote all the Hoover-related attractions in West Branch.			XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Schedule an annual meeting each winter with park partner representatives (who have the primary responsibility for their organization's in-house publications) to review each partner's current publications and proposed updates, redesigns, and reprinting plans.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Design a brand identity for combined publications among the four principal partners.	XXX	XXX					

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Herbert Hoover National Historic Site Interpretive Media – Non-Personal Services							
	Short-Term		Long-Term			Out Years (6 & 7)	
Tasks	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**20144**
Publications (continued) Develop an in-house park brochure that includes a map to supplement the audio tour (see recommendation in the Audiovisual section). This brochure could provide the user with the numbers and locations of each audio tour stop and some brief information about each stop.			XXX	XXX	XXX		

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site Interpretive Media – Personal Services							
	Short-Term		Long-Term			Out Years (6 & 7)	
Tasks	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**20144**
Interpretive Staffing Collect data for the permanent and seasonal interpretive staff's time use and compile a time use analysis to help decide how to allocating hours for permanent and seasonal interpreters.	XXX						
Consider hiring a Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) employee/s from an area school to lead walking tours from the National Historic Site into West Branch's Main Street.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Request an increase the park's budget for interpretive seasonal staff to provide personal interpretive services at the Birthplace Cottage and the historic core around Downey Street.		XXX					
Shift a seasonal interpreter from the summer to the winter to relieve the two permanent interpreters from staffing the information desk (so they can plan interpretive events, etc.).	XXX						
Interpretive Programs Provide interpretation at the Birthplace Cottage and historic core area with a roving interpreter (or STEP employee or ranger or maintenance worker) during the summer and other busy times.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Each winter, plan the park's interpretive program schedules for the spring, summer, and fall.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Publish and promote the annual interpretive program schedule and post the daily schedule at the park's visitor center and Hoover Presidential Library and Museum.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Schedule ranger-led programs to start soon after the 12-minute AV program (shown on the hour) concludes at the visitor center, and lead a 30- to 40-minute guided tour of the grounds.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Lead tours to West Branch's Historic District during the summer or other high visitation times.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Education Program Request Parks-as-Classrooms (PAC) money through the Midwest Regional Office to help refine old and develop new educational programs, and organize a workshop with local teachers to coordinate /implement the educational materials.	XXX						
Continue to use current, new, and emerging technologies for distance learning and outreach.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Convene an education meeting with the park's primary partners to improve the combined education experience at the park, the Library and Museum, and downtown West Branch.	XXX						
Special Events Complement the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum's special events (scheduled on Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, or other times) with NPS ranger-guided tours.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Continue and adapt the park's role in special events.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Assist and advise the Hoover Library Association on its tour script and approach to living history events. Continue training living history volunteers to assure quality interpretation.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX

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Planning Team

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site

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Mari Mathews	Administration Officer

Midwest Region

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Roberta Wendel	Interpretive Specialist, Midwest Regional Office
Ken Block	Chief of Interpretation, Effigy Mounds National Monument

Harpers Ferry Interpretive Design Center

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Michele Hartley	Audiovisual Producer-Director
Lauren Morrison	Sign Specialist
Sarah Heald	Curator and Historic Furnishings Specialist

Park Partners

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Acknowledgements

This Long-Range Interpretive Plan was made possible through a donation from the estate of Harriet A. Stevens through the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library Association.

"Every generation has the right to build its own world out of the materials of the past, cemented by the hopes of the future."

—PRESIDENT HERBERT HOOVER

NPS PHOTO

Hanging herbs and corn adorn the back porch of the Herbert Hoover birthplace cottage.

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U.S. Department of the Interior

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