

# LEGISLATIVE TRACKING FORM

Filing for Council Meeting Date: 05/05/26

Resolution  Ordinance

Contact/Prepared By: Caroline Eller, Executive Director

Date Prepared: 04/06/26

Title (Caption): Study of Historic African American Cemeteries 26-27 Application

Submitted to Planning Commission?  N/A  Yes-Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Proposal No: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposing Department: Metro Historical Commission Requested By: Scarlett Miles, former Interim Director

Affected Department(s): Metro Historical Commission Affected Council District(s): all

**Legislative Category (check one):**

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bonds                | <input type="checkbox"/> Contract Approval            | <input type="checkbox"/> Intergovernmental Agreement   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budget - Pay Plan    | <input type="checkbox"/> Donation                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Lease                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budget - 4%          | <input type="checkbox"/> Easement Abandonment         | <input type="checkbox"/> Maps                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Improvements | <input type="checkbox"/> Easement Accept/Acquisition  | <input type="checkbox"/> Master List A&E               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Outlay Notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Grant                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Settlement of Claims/Lawsuits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Code Amendment       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grant Application | <input type="checkbox"/> Street/Highway Improvements   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Condemnation         | <input type="checkbox"/> Improvement Acc.             | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                  |

<b>FINANCE</b> Amount +/-: \$ <u>\$ 110,000.00</u> <b>Funding Source:</b> Capital Improvement Budget Capital Outlay Notes Departmental/Agency Budget Funds to Metro General Obligation Bonds Grant Increased Revenue Sources	<b>Match: \$</b> <u>\$ 5,800.00</u> Judgments and Losses Local Government Investment Project Revenue Bonds Self-Insured Liability Solid Waste Reserve Unappropriated Fund Balance 4% Fund Other: _____ Date to Finance Director's Office: _____ <b>APPROVED BY</b> <b>FINANCE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE:</b> _____
Approved by OMB: <u>Arion Pratt</u> Approved by Finance/Accounts: _____ Approved by Div Grants Coordination: <u>Juanita Paulsen</u>	

<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	
Council District Member Sponsors:	_____
Council Committee Chair Sponsors:	_____
<b>Approved by Administration:</b>	<b>Date:</b> _____

<b>DEPARTMENT OF LAW</b>	
Date to Dept. of Law: _____	Approved by Department of Law: _____
<b>Settlement Resolution/Memorandum Approved by:</b> _____	
Date to Council: _____	For Council Meeting: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> E-mailed Clerk
<input type="checkbox"/> All Dept. Signatures <input type="checkbox"/> Copies <input type="checkbox"/> Backing <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative Summary <input type="checkbox"/> Settlement Memo <input type="checkbox"/> Clerk Letter <input type="checkbox"/> Ready to File	

---

## GRANT APPLICATION SUMMARY SHEET

---

**Grant Name:** Study of Historic African American Cemeteries 27-28  
**Department:** HISTORIAL COMMISSION  
**Grantor:** NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
**Pass-Through Grantor (If applicable):**  
**Total Applied For** \$110,000.00  
**Metro Cash Match:** \$5,800.00  
**Department Contact:** Caroline Eller, Executive Director  
862-7970  
**Status:** NEW

**Program Description:**

This project will complete a study of Nashville & Davidson County, Tennessee's historical African American cemeteries. Building off of a 4-year, countywide cemetery survey (funded by the Tennessee Historical Commission), the requested grant funds will enable the Metro Historical Commission (MHC) and community stakeholders to gain and record a deeper understanding of burial sites related to Black history via identification and documentation of burial practices. Request includes \$100,000 project costs plus \$10,000 indirect costs (max allowed), for a total funding request of \$110,000.

**Plan for continuation of services upon grant expiration:**

N/A

**APPROVED AS TO AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS:**

**APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:**

Jenneen Reed/mjr  
**Director of Finance**

4/17/2026 | 11:36 AM CDT  
**Date**

Hannah Zeitlin  
**Metropolitan Attorney**

4/21/2026 | 9:13 AM CDT  
**Date**

**APPROVED AS TO RISK AND INSURANCE:**

Balagun Cobb  
**Director of Risk Management Services**

4/21/2026 | 9:00 AM CDT  
**Date**

### Grants Tracking Form

Part One

<input type="radio"/> Pre-Application		<input checked="" type="radio"/> Application		<input type="radio"/> Award Acceptance		<input type="radio"/> Contract Amendment	
Department	Dept. No.	Contact				Phone	Fax
HISTORICAL COMMISSION	011	Caroline Eller, Executive Director				862-7970	
<b>Grant Name:</b>		Study of Historic African American Cemeteries 27-28					
<b>Grantor:</b>		NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION				<b>Other:</b>	
<b>Grant Period From:</b>		(applications only) <b>Anticipated Application Date:</b>		05/05/26			
<b>Grant Period To:</b>		(applications only) <b>Application Deadline:</b>		05/05/26			
<b>Funding Type:</b>	OTHER	<b>Multi-Department Grant</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<b>If yes, list below.</b>	
<b>Pass-Thru:</b>		<b>Outside Consultant Project:</b>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Award Type:</b>	COMPETITIVE	<b>Total Award:</b>		\$110,000.00			
<b>Status:</b>	NEW	<b>Metro Cash Match:</b>		\$5,800.00			
<b>Metro Category:</b>	New Initiative	<b>Metro In-Kind Match:</b>		\$0.00			
<b>CFDA #</b>	N/A	<b>Is Council approval required?</b>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Project Description:</b>		<b>Applic. Submitted Electronically?</b>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<p>This project will complete a study of Nashville &amp; Davidson County, Tennessee's historical African American cemeteries. Building off of a 4-year, countywide cemetery survey (funded by the Tennessee Historical Commission), the requested grant funds will enable the Metro Historical Commission (MHC) and community stakeholders to gain and record a deeper understanding of burial sites related to Black history via identification and documentation of burial practices; cemetery and marker types; site locations and impacts from city growth or other threats, with limited ground penetrating radar and field survey; social histories and development patterns of plantations and African American communities; and genealogical profiles. This will be the capstone phase of the cemetery survey project prior to initiating development of the first county-level cemetery preservation plan in TN. Request includes \$100,000 project costs plus \$10,000 indirect costs (max allowed), for a total funding amount of \$110,000.</p>							
<b>Plan for continuation of service after expiration of grant/Budgetary Impact:</b>							
N/A							
<b>How is Match Determined?</b>							
<b>Fixed Amount of \$</b>		\$5,800.00	or	<b>% of Grant</b>		<b>Other:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Explanation for "Other" means of determining match:</b>							
MHC has budgeted 100 hours of staff time for this project (to include administration, community engagement, reporting and grant management tasks)							
<b>For this Metro FY, how much of the required local Metro cash match:</b>							
<b>Is already in department budget?</b>		\$5,800.00		<b>Fund</b>	10101	<b>Business Unit</b>	11105100
<b>Is not budgeted?</b>		\$0.00		<b>Proposed Source of Match:</b>		staff time	
<b>(Indicate Match Amount &amp; Source for Remaining Grant Years in Budget Below)</b>							
<b>Other:</b>							
<b>Number of FTEs the grant will fund:</b>		0.00	<b>Actual number of positions added:</b>		0.00		
<b>Departmental Indirect Cost Rate</b>		17.39%	<b>Indirect Cost of Grant to Metro:</b>		\$20,137.62		
<b>*Indirect Costs allowed?</b> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No		<b>% Allow.</b>	10.00%	<b>Ind. Cost Requested from Grantor:</b>		\$10,000	<b>in budget</b>
<b>Draw down allowable?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
<b>Metro or Community-based Partners:</b>							

Part Two

Grant Budget

Budget Year	Metro Fiscal Year	Federal Grantor	State Grantor	Other Grantor	Local Match Cash	Match Source (Fund, BU)	Local Match In-Kind	Total Grant Each Year	Indirect Cost to Metro	Ind. Cost Neg. from Grantor
Yr 1	FY27	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$55,000.00	\$2,900.00	10101; 11105100	\$0.00	\$57,900.00	\$10,068.81	\$5,000.00
Yr 2	FY28	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$55,000.00	\$2,900.00	10101; 11105100	\$0.00	\$57,900.00	\$10,068.81	\$5,000.00
Yr 3	FY__									
Yr 4	FY__									
Yr 5	FY__									
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$110,000.00</b>	<b>\$5,800.00</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$115,800.00</b>	<b>\$20,137.62</b>	<b>\$10,000.00</b>
<b>Date Awarded:</b>				<b>Tot. Awarded:</b>		<b>Contract#:</b>				
(or) <b>Date Denied:</b>				<b>Reason:</b>						
(or) <b>Date Withdrawn:</b>				<b>Reason:</b>						

[juanita.paulsen@nashville.gov](mailto:juanita.paulsen@nashville.gov)

Contact: [vaughn.wilson@nashville.gov](mailto:vaughn.wilson@nashville.gov)



Resolution No. RS2026-\_\_\_\_

A resolution approving an application for an African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund grant from National Trust for Historic Preservation to the Metropolitan Government, acting by and through the Metropolitan Historical Commission, to complete a study of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee's historical African American cemeteries.

WHEREAS, National Trust for Historic Preservation is accepting applications for an African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund grant with an award of \$110,000 and a required cash match of \$5,800; and,

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Government is eligible to participate in this grant program; and,

WHEREAS, it is to the benefit of the citizens of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County that the grant application be approved and submitted.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the application for an African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund grant, with an award of \$110,000, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated herein, is hereby approved, and the Metropolitan Historical Commission is authorized to submit said application to National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Section 2. That this resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

APPROVED AS TO AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS:

Jenneen Reed/mjr  
Jenneen Reed, Director  
Finance Department

INTRODUCED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Member(s) of Council

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

Hannah Britlin  
Assistant Metropolitan Attorney



***Metro Historical Commission***

1113 Kirkwood Avenue  
Nashville, TN 37204

# Form

---

## *Application Instructions*

Grants from the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund (AACHAF), a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, advance ongoing preservation activities for historic sites, museums, and landscape projects representing African American cultural heritage. Under the National Grant Program, the AACHAF supports Capital Projects, Organizational Capacity Building, Project Planning, and Programming and Interpretation.

It is essential that applicant organizations read the full National Grant Program guidelines. Grants will range from \$50,000 to \$150,000.

If an organization needs a fiscal agent to receive and expend the funds, report on how the funds are being used and how the project is progressing, they must have a written agreement with the fiscal agent, and the fiscal agent must represent the project as the applicant organization. The fiscal agent must also be an eligible organization. See the Eligible Applicant Organizations section of the guidelines for more information.

Grant applications are due **February 6, 2026 by 5:00 pm EST**.

Applicant organizations are strongly encouraged to carefully review the grant opportunity timeline and submit their application early to ensure there are no issues with submission. The week of the deadline is a busy time for the Foundant website. It may be impossible to submit your application on the day of the deadline. Staff capacity to assist with any technical issues will be limited. **Late submissions will not be accepted nor considered regardless of the reason for delay.**

Answers must be provided in the spaces provided. Responses of “see attached” without addressing the question in the field could result in the application being determined ineligible. All character counts include spaces.

An over-reliance on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) is discouraged. We want to hear your voice and get an accurate understanding of the organization’s readiness to implement the project. When using AI, be sure to review the response provided and adapt it to how you would express that idea.

For questions regarding project eligibility, please contact [actionfundgrants@savingplaces.org](mailto:actionfundgrants@savingplaces.org). Please add [administrator@grantinterface.com](mailto:administrator@grantinterface.com) and [actionfundgrants@savingplaces.org](mailto:actionfundgrants@savingplaces.org) to your address book to ensure you receive all email messages related to your grant application.

## *Applicant Information*

### **Applicant Organization Type\***

Is the applicant a nonprofit organization or a public agency?

Federal, state, or local public agency

**Fiscal Agent\***

Is your organization serving as the fiscal agent for this project?

The fiscal agent is the organization that will enter into an agreement with the National Trust should the project be awarded. It is the organization that receives and expends funds for the project. If a fiscal agent is being used for the project, that organization must be the applicant.

Yes

**Previous National Trust Participation\***

Please confirm any recent engagement your organization has had with the National Trust such as participating in trainings, receiving grant funding (National Fund for Sacred Places, Preservation Fund, African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund) or any close collaborations with National Trust staff or programs. Check all that apply.

- Grantee-National Trust Preservation Funds
- Prior Applicant-African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund
- National Trust Trainings
- National Trust Conference

**How did you learn about this grant opportunity?\***

Please check all that apply.

- SavingPlaces.org
- Web search
- Email

***Fiscal Agent Info***

**Contact Information for Organization that Fiscal Agent is Assisting**

If the applicant organization is serving as a fiscal agent, provide contact information for the organization for which the applicant organization is assisting.

<b>Organization Name</b>	n/a
<b>Organization Email Address</b>	n/a
<b>Organization Website</b>	n/a

**Fiscal Agent Agreement\***

Please upload the fiscal agent agreement between the two parties.

2026 AACHAF Grant application - fiscal agent info.docx

## *Project Information*

For this section and throughout the application, “historic resource” refers to the specific property, building, landscape, historic district, neighborhood, etc. that is

- 50 or more years old,
- associated with African American cultural heritage, AND
- the subject of this grant application.

The historic resource may, but is not required to, have an official historic designation. Such a designation is issued by a local municipality or state or national governmental entity. Typical designations are state historic markers, listing in the National Register of Historic Places, or recognition as a National Historic Landmark.

## **Project Name\***

Name the project using the following format: Project Name-Project Type-TwoLetterStateAbbreviation.

The four eligible project types are Capital Project (Cap), Organizational Capacity Building (OC), Programming and Interpretation (PI), and Project Planning (Plng).

Example A: JeshuaRosenwaldSchool-Plng-NC

Example B: ColumbiaHistoryProgram-PI-TX

NashvilleHistoricCemeteries-Ping-TN

## **Project Description\***

Summarize the project and how AACHAF grant funds will be used for the project in three to five sentences. The response must focus on the need for the funds, the project goals, the use of grant funds and intended outcomes. Think about what you would say if you only had 30 seconds to convince a potential donor to fund the project.

This project will focus on a study of Nashville & Davidson County, Tennessee's historical African American cemeteries. Building off of a 4-year, countywide cemetery survey, AACHAF funds will enable the Metro Historical Commission (MHC) and community stakeholders to gain and record a deeper understanding of burial sites related to Black history via identification and documentation of burial practices; cemetery and marker types; site locations and impacts from city growth or other threats, with limited GPR; social histories and development patterns of plantations and African American communities; and genealogical profiles. This will be the capstone phase prior to MHC's development of the first county-level cemetery preservation plan in TN.

**Ownership Information\***

Does the applicant organization own the historic resource(s)?

No

**Third Party Ownership Consent**

If the applicant organization does not own the historic resource, upload a letter of consent or an owner agreement providing the applicant organization permission to pursue this project.

**Historic Resource(s)**

The table below allows for up to five historic resources to be added to the application. Each column is reserved for providing locational information about one historic resource.

For example, if the project includes only one building, then please provide location information for the building in the first column. If the project includes multiple buildings, please provide location information for each additional building in separate columns. For historic resources that do not have a street address, please provide relevant location information.

<b>Name of Historic Resource</b>					
<b>Street Address or Location Description</b>					
<b>City</b>					
<b>State Abbreviation</b>					
<b>Architect/Builder Name (indicate "N/A" if unknown)</b>					
<b>Date of Construction (indicate "N/A" if unknown)</b>					
<b>Official Historic Designation^^</b>					

^^ To learn more about the types of historic designations, visit <https://savingplaces.org/stories/preservation-tips-tools-how-to-save-a-place-apply-for-historic-designation>.

**Historical Significance\***

Why is the historic resource(s) or this project significant to African American cultural heritage?

For context, an historic resource or the project can have a local, regional, or national level of significance. In your answer, be sure to identify each historic resource by name if the project includes more than one historic resource.

The MHC has just completed a 4-year state grant-funded historical cemetery survey for Nashville and Davidson County. Through the course of this project, which included field survey, limited research, and community engagement, we learned that there is a significant knowledge gap related to Nashville's historical African American burial grounds. These sites in some cases may be the only extant resource associated with a community, church, family or other group. Many sites surveyed are known or suspected to have burials for enslaved persons or segregated burial sections. Other cemeteries developed exclusively for African Americans as a result of racial segregation, and these sites are an important physical record of our nation's complex and difficult shared history. Many descendant groups are working to protect these sites where their families and important community members are at rest, while other sites are abandoned, lost, unknown, or undocumented. Comprehensive documentation of these sites will uncover important information about their local, state, or national significance. Founded in 1779, Nashville is one of Tennessee's earliest cities and thus reflects a broad arc of our state's history. For the African American community, cemeteries are particularly sacred spaces that are a physical record of family and complex social histories. In Nashville, some cemeteries exhibit examples of notable artworks or markers, including those carved by iconic Black artist William Edmondson.

### Project Type\*

Please select your project type from the list below. For a description of each, please refer to the guidelines.

Project Planning

### Amount Requested\*

The total amount requested from the National Grant Program of the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund can range from \$50,000 to \$150,000. Grant requests must adhere to the minimum and maximum grant amounts for each project type found in the grant guidelines.

**Applications requesting below \$50,000 or more than the maximum for the selected project type are ineligible and will not be considered for award.**

\$100,000.00

### Total Project Cost\*

Enter the total cost for the project that is the subject of this grant proposal. It may be equal to or more than the Amount Requested provided above.

\$115,800.00

### Project Funds Management\*

This is a reimbursable grant, meaning that costs must be incurred (billed to the grantee) and paid (by the grantee) before payment from the National Trust is made to the applicant organization. The exception to this is the first payment which is made upon execution of the grant agreement, receipt of other necessary documents, and notification of an approved scope of work and budget.

Given this need to be able to cover expenses in order to receive any interim or final payments, and that reimbursements take 30-60 days to be processed from the date of approval of the request, what is the organization's plan to keep the project on schedule and meet contractual financial obligations to the consultants and/or contractors?

The plan must address the timing of funds received and paid out, the sources used to provide those funds, and how payment to all vendors, contractors, and consultants will be done prior to the request for final reimbursement.

MHC will work with the contracted consultant to negotiate efficient invoice timing related to the initial disbursement and associated billing/payment coordination. MHC frequently works with reimbursement grants, most often the preservation grants from the Tennessee Historical Commission, which are provided on a reimbursement basis. MHC accessed and successfully administered these reimbursed grants for the 2021-2025 Davidson County Cemetery Survey project as well as multiple projects in recent previous years. MHC would plan to negotiate a quarterly invoicing schedule with our consultants (rather than monthly) to reduce the amount of payment requests through Metro Finance and reimbursement requests through NTHP.

### *Planning Projects*

Funds support the development of a plan that will guide future growth, activity, or development at the site. See the grant guidelines for more details.

### **Architectural Significance\***

Please describe the architectural significance of the building(s), including any features of particular significance. Include the following information, if known:

- Building style
- Architect or builder
- Role of craftspeople
- Source of building materials
- Overall contributions/significance to American architecture
- Building alterations

Our project will focus on a study of historical African American cemeteries, so we will research and record both the historical and physical characteristics of these sites. Physical features include the forms and styles of markers (i.e. headstones, footstones, formal monuments); historical fencing; landscape design; spatial arrangements of rows, family plots, and other site characteristics (i.e. coping, signage). Where appropriate, documentation will also record historical vegetation like boundary trees and other plantings (i.e. cedars, yucca). Most African American cemeteries documented thus far are vernacular family or community sites of both small and large sizes, respectively. Renowned African American sculptor William Edmondson's works are found in some of Nashville's historically Black cemeteries and documentation of those pieces and locations are of

particular interest. To date, MHC has also recorded several examples scattered throughout Davidson County of hand-inscribed fieldstones, though these designs need to be studied in greater detail. (The recent 4-year survey was a broad field survey effort that recorded over 500 cemeteries, so did not include intensive documentation at the individual marker level.) MHC will also document growth patterns at Nashville's historically Black corporate cemeteries, including some that have experienced urban encroachment and/or burial relocations. Most African American cemeteries surveyed are in unrecognizable, poor or fair condition.

### Planning Project Description\*

This is a space to expand on your Project Description (summary) provided in the Project Information section. Be sure to address ALL the following bullet points in your response.

- o Provide information regarding the current condition of the historic resource and the urgency of the proposed project. For example, is the building or site facing any time-sensitive threats such as water infiltration, structural issues, demolition, or is there a time constraint with the use of other pledged or secured funding sources?
- o Describe the planning work (scope of work) to be undertaken and why it is the best approach to meeting the historic resource's preservation needs.
- o What type of consultants and/or vendors will be procured as part of the planning process?
- o Include details on any prior planning or capital work undertaken within the last 10 years. Planning work includes Preservation Plans, Stewardship Plans, Historic Structures Reports, Environmental/Engineering Studies, etc. Note the type of capital work done and the year (e.g., window repair - 2020, brick repointing on the south façade - 2019).

Nashville and Davidson County's historic African American cemeteries are various condition states, though the sites that have been documented over the previous 4-year survey effort are generally in unrecognizable, poor, and fair condition. Historic landscapes, markers, and in some depressions are difficult to discern or have not been documented at a level that would provide MHC, the Nashville community, and our preservation partners and stakeholders with a complete understanding of these resources. Nashville continues to experience explosive growth, not only in urban areas but noticeably in rural areas of Davidson County, which threatens the continuity and stability of these fragile sites. In recent years, MHC has been involved in multiple projects and the development of preservation solutions for developments that have impacted African American family and community cemeteries in particular. There is an urgent need to not only record the full history and physical nature of these resources before preservation threats arise, but also to use this information to inform broader imminent planning efforts, including development of the first countywide cemetery preservation plan in Tennessee and an updated Historic Preservation Plan for Nashville/Davidson County. This project is a critical need that will be a capstone phase to the survey work and would enable a significantly more informed and effective countywide cemetery preservation plan. MHC proposes the employment of various strategic methods of obtaining information on these resources, including community outreach/engagement, limited field survey (unrecorded sites), limited Ground Penetrating Radar survey (GPR) to document spatial characteristics (i.e. enslaved or segregated burial sections)/burial counts/impacts of encroachment and other threats, historical research (archival, genealogical), photography, and mapping. MHC anticipates

creating documentation utilizing a balance between research and community-sourced information, with the latter being a high priority in our project approach. MHC will need to go through the standard Metro RFQ-required procurement process, but hopes to continue our work with the firm who provided services under the DCCS grant project (2021-2025) and compiled a supplemental memo on African American burial grounds. This consultant is a woman-owned cultural resource management firm with extensive archaeological and cemetery-related experience. See app supplement for project planning.

### Planning Project Budget Form\*

The maximum grant award for planning projects is \$75,000.

This includes a 10% cap on indirect costs and a 5% cap on project administration expenses. The caps apply as a percentage of the grant award not the total project cost if it exceeds the amount of the grant award. For more information on project administration and indirect costs, see the grant guidelines.

Download the AACHAF Planning Project Budget Template, complete it and then upload it here. Please be sure to note if sources of income are secured or anticipated in the appropriate column. Watch this tutorial to learn more about how to complete the form and the budget narrative below.

**NOTE: You must use the budget template provided to be considered for funding. Attaching any other budget form makes the application ineligible for funding.**

NGPBudgetForm-Planning ce.xlsx

### Planning Project Budget Narrative\*

Explain in a clear and concise manner the costs that make up the amount entered for each budget line item. For example, you will want to list what is included in the Indirect Costs line item. Without this explanation, there is no way to evaluate this aspect of the budget.

Our project consultants for the DCCS grant project provided a verbal estimate of \$75,000 to develop a study on Nashville and Davidson County's historic African American cemeteries. We are also proposing a \$25,000 expense for limited Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) to be used on a few high priority sites where we need to develop a deeper understanding of burial patterns, burial counts and extents, and document impacts of preservation threats. MHC staff will provide project support of 100 hours at a rate of \$58/hour that will primarily support community outreach/engagement and any needed field survey of previously unrecorded sites, at a total of \$5800. We are also requesting the maximum indirect costs of \$10,000.

### Planning Project Expenses\*

How were the project expenses determined? Does your organization have proposals with cost estimates from qualified firms or are the project expenses general estimates?

Consultant provided verbal estimate for plan development and in discussion with MHC, we determined that an additional expense of \$25,000 for limited GPR efforts was also necessary and justifiable based on the pre-planning work. Staff rate sourced from MHC finance officer.

### Planning Project Expenses Supporting Documentation

If you have received project proposals with cost estimates, upload the proposals here.

### Secured Funding Sources for a Planning Project

Please attach letters of commitment as one file for the sources of funding identified as secured in your budget.

### Planning Project Timeline\*

Provide a timeline for the proposed project. If the project description mentions hiring a consultant, then time should be set aside in the timeline for completion of that activity.

At a minimum, the timeline should include start and end dates and what will be accomplished by the midpoint and end of the project and the dates by which these are anticipated to occur. All projects must be completed within 12 months from the first disbursement date.

Please use months or quarters to indicate dates. For example, month 1 – solicit and secure a consultant.

**NOTE: Grant funds cannot be used for work that has already occurred so the timeline should not include activities that occur before the start date.**

MHC proposes a two-year timeline for the proposed project. Procurement through Metro can take up to 6 months and the proposed initiative involves a significant amount of community engagement and research that are factored into this timeline. Field survey, while expected to be limited to sites not previously recorded by the DCCS, can also take several weeks or months for coordination and requires additional time considerations. Our anticipated timeline would be: months 1-2, finalize NTHP grant agreement, secure Metro Council/mayoral approvals; months 3-9, Metro procurement (RFQ and consultant contract process)/initiate community stakeholder and preservation partners engagement efforts; months 10-20, research, limited field survey and GPR, continued community engagement; months 18-20, draft study; months 21-23 review draft study; month 24 finalize study and public presentation of findings

### Future Plans for Project Planning Efforts\*

Describe future plans for the historic resource(s) beyond the scope of this grant proposal. Address each of the bullet points in your response.

- How will the applicant organization utilize planning documents?
- How will the historic resource(s) be used?

This study will provide a critically informative source of information that MHC will use to develop the first county-level cemetery preservation plan in Tennessee (after completion of the proposed project). Additionally, the study will inform the development of an updated countywide Historic Preservation Plan, which is currently outdated by over 20 years. Owners and descendants or groups associated with cemeteries documented through the proposed project will have the benefit of information gleaned in this study to aid in their own site-specific preservation efforts. MHC also hopes that an AAHGS-funded phase, like the overarching DCCS project, will act as a model to other municipal and preservation organizations in Tennessee and beyond who want to develop more comprehensive cemetery records and plans.

## *Letters of Support*

### **Letters of Support**

Upload up to three letters of endorsement that express support for the project and/or the applicant organization's ability to carry out the project. Mailed letters or letters sent by email will NOT be considered.

**\*Please do not have letters mailed to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Nor should letters be emailed to the AACHAF. Letters of support must be uploaded in the spaces below.**

Letters of endorsement can be addressed to:

Ms. Alaska McInnis

Director, National Grants Program, AACHAF National Trust for Historic Preservation

600 14th Street NW, Suite 500

Washington, DC 20005

### **Letter of Support 1**

NHF support letter - signed.pdf

### **Letter of Support 2**

PSN support letter - 2026 AACHAF app - DG Signed.pdf

### **Letter of Support 3**

HNI support letter - signed.pdf

## *Photographs*

Please upload four to six photos of your project below. Photos must include high quality exterior and interior images of the property or historic resource that is the focus of the grant application. Please include at least one overall view of the property or historic resource. Also, provide historic images, if applicable. Professional photos are not required.

For Capital Projects, in addition to at least one exterior photo, be sure to include photos documenting the damage to be repaired or the areas where the proposed work will be undertaken.

If your project does not involve a site, please upload images that reflect your organization and its work.

Horizontal (landscape) photos are preferred. Photos need to have a minimum resolution of 1028 pixels x 400 pixels or 300 dpi.

\*Please submit all photos in JPG or JPEG format and name using the following format:

ApplicantOrganizationName-ProjectName-ProjectType-Two-letterStateAbbreviation-Number or NumberBriefDescription.

Example A: CabbotvilleHistoricalSociety-CabbotHome-Planning-TX-1

Example B: CabbotvilleHistoricalSociety-CabbotHome-Planning-TX-1Exterior

**PLEASE NOTE: WE RECOMMEND SAVING A DRAFT OF THE APPLICATION BEFORE UPLOADING PHOTOS.** Click the "Save as Draft" button at the bottom of this page to save the application draft.

**Photo 1\***

For projects involving a building or site, please upload a current photo of the overall exterior view.

Bryant Town cem 9-9-24.jpg

**Photo 2\***

Adams Kimball cem 6-2-23.jpg

**Photo 3\***

Evans Hill cem 2-26-25.jpg

**Photo 4\***

Mt Gilliam MBC cem 5-2-23.jpg

**Photo 5**

**Photo 6**

**Photo Credits**

Provide the information requested on each of the photos uploaded.

<b>Photo Number</b>	<b>Date Taken</b>	<b>Brief Description of Photo (ex: front and right side of Evans Road Lodge)</b>	<b>Photo Credit (Taken by)</b>
1	09/09/2024	Bryant Town Cemetery - monuments	Caroline Eller, Metro Historical Commission
2	06/02/2023	Adams-Kimball Cemetery - overview	Caroline Eller, Metro Historical Commission
3	02/26/2025	Evans Hills Cemetery - storm damage	New South Consultants
4	05/02/2023	Mt. Gilliam Missionary Baptist Church Cemetery -	New South Associates

		overview and monuments	
5			
6			

### *Social Media*

#### **Social Media Platform Participation**

On which social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, etc.), if any, is your organization active? Please list the handle/website of any platforms your organization utilizes.

For example, for the National Trust this would be:

Website: <https://savingplaces.org/action-fund-grants>

Instagram: @SavingPlaces

Twitter: @SavingPlaces

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NationalTrustforHistoricPreservation>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/metrohistoric>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/metrohistoricalnashville/>

Newsletter: <https://www.nashville.gov/departments/historic-preservation/boards/historical-commission/newsletter>

### *Additional Supporting Documentation*

Attach up to two additional supporting documents that you feel will enhance a reviewer's understanding of your project. If you are attaching additional photos, please use the file naming format described in the Photographs section. For all other types of documentation, please use the following format: ProjectName-BriefFileDescription-Two-letterStateAbbreviation -YYMMDD.

Example A (Document): Jeshua Rosenwald School-HistoricStructuresReport-NC-230519

Example B (Photograph): CabbotvilleHistoricalSociety.CabbotHome.Planning-TX-1Exterior

#### **Additional Supporting Documentation 1**

DCCS\_Supplemental\_Memo\_AA\_Cems\_9.30.25\_FINAL\_website\_.pdf

#### **Additional Supporting Documentation 2**

2026 AACHAF app supplement.docx

## *Certification*

Provide the name and title of the authorized official submitting this application for an African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund grant. The authorized official must be a representative of the applicant organization who has the authority to sign legally binding documents on behalf of the organization (e.g., an executive board officer (i.e., board chair) or an executive staff member with signatory authority (i.e., President or CFO)).

By entering their name below, the authorized official gives the National Trust for Historic Preservation (Funder) the absolute and unqualified right to use in whole or in part, in whatever manner the National Trust for Historic Preservation may desire, including (but not limited to) use for publicity, audio-visual presentation, and/or promotion, all photographs, video, and other materials submitted as part of this grant application, and certifies that the information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of their knowledge.

By submitting photographs, films, or recordings (works) to the Funder you agree to the following terms and conditions:

1. You retain the copyright to all work(s) submitted to the Funder.
2. You grant to the Funder a perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free, fully transferable, unconditional, non-exclusive, worldwide right to reproduce all or a portion of the work(s) an unlimited number of times in any and all media for any editorial, commercial, promotional, trade, or other corporate purposes.
3. You hereby waive your right to inspect or approved any copy that is used in connection with the work(s) in any existing or subsequently developed medium, and you agree to release and discharge the Funder, including their affiliates and licensees, from any and all claims arising out of such use for the purposes described above, including any claims for libel and invasion of privacy.
4. You represent and warrant that:
  - a. you are the sole owner of, or otherwise have the authority to grant, all rights herein granted to the Funder; and
  - b. the work(s) submitted does not infringe upon any copyright, trademark, or other proprietary right, violate any right of privacy, or contain libelous, scandalous, or unlawful material.

### **Applicant Certification\***

Are you a duly authorized representative of the applicant?

Yes

### **Name\***

Caroline Eller

### **Title\***

Historic Preservationist, Metropolitan Historical Commission

## File Attachment Summary

---

### *Applicant File Uploads*

- 2026 AACHAF Grant application - fiscal agent info.docx
- NGPBudgetForm-Planning ce.xlsx
- NHF support letter - signed.pdf
- PSN support letter - 2026 AACHAF app - DG Signed.pdf
- HNI support letter - signed.pdf
- Bryant Town cem 9-9-24.jpg
- Adams Kimball cem 6-2-23.jpg
- Evans Hill cem 2-26-25.jpg
- Mt Gilliam MBC cem 5-2-23.jpg
- DCCS\_Supplemental\_Memo\_AA\_Cems\_9.30.25\_FINAL\_website\_.pdf
- 2026 AACHAF app supplement.docx

**2026 AACHAF Grant application**

**Metro Historical Commission**

**Study for Nashville's African American Cemeteries**

The Metropolitan Historical Commission (MHC) will execute the grant agreement with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. MHC will be responsible for all fiscal and programmatic management and has in-house staff for both operations, in addition to access to Metro Finance staff. MHC is a department of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee.

## African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund Planning Budget Request Form

**Please read these instructions before filling out this form.**

The purpose of this workbook is to provide an opportunity for the applicant to indicate how AACHAF funds will be used to support the project and indicate how any matching funds will be used. The goal of this form is for the applicant and grant reviewer to have a clear understanding of what each source of funding will support by budget line item. This will enable better communication about AACHAF uses and expense eligibility.

Blue highlighted boxes (or cells) are editable. Please type over any text you see in these boxes with the appropriate response. All other cells are locked and cannot be changed. For a description of items in Column A, hover over the purple triangle found in certain cells.

On row 25, columns C through F are where the applicant can enter the names of other funding sources. Column B is reserved for listing expenses that the applicant would like the AACHAF grant to cover.

On row 26, if there are additional sources of funds entered on row 25, indicate whether these sources are secured. The response options available are 'Yes', 'No', and 'Anticipated'. 'Anticipated' means that a request of a funder has been made and the applicant is either awaiting a response or is in discussions for funding. For sources indicated as "Secured", the applicant will need to upload letters with the application that confirm those funds are available for this project.

Enter the expenses in the rows corresponding to the appropriate funding source(s). For expenses proposed to be covered by AACHAF funds, be sure to consult the guidelines to confirm the expense's eligibility. If the project includes costs the applicant considers to be eligible that are not detailed on this form, type in the expense description in the appropriate blue box in column A (i.e., blue boxes that have phrases beginning with "[Enter Other...]") and enter the expense under the appropriate funding source(s) in columns B through F.

Row 45 provides the total cost per funding source as well as overall project cost. Please make sure that these amounts match what is provided in the application.

An **example budget** is provided on the following labeled tab.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the applicable grant opportunity guidelines and eligible expenses at <https://savingplaces.org/action-fund-grants>. If you have any questions, contact us at [actionfundgrants@savingplaces.org](mailto:actionfundgrants@savingplaces.org).

Applicant Name: Metro Historical Commission

Project Name: Study of Nashville's Historic African American Cemeteries

Project Type: Project Planning

ITEMS	AACHAF Funds	MHC staff time (100 hours @	[Enter Fund Source Name 2]	[Enter Fund Source Name 3]	[Enter Fund Source Name 4]	Total Project Cost
Source Secured?	Requested					
Conditions Assessment Report						\$ -
Historic Structures Report						\$ -
Architectural Study/Plan	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 5,800.00				\$ 80,800.00
Engineering Study/Plan						\$ -
Business and Organizational Development Plans						\$ -
Architectural Feasibility Study						\$ -
Market Feasibility Study						\$ -
Property Survey						\$ -
Archaeological Services / Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) / LIDAR	\$ 25,000.00					\$ 25,000.00
Historic Designations and Marker Installations						\$ -
Fundraising and Sustainability Plans						\$ -
Legal Services						\$ -
Indirect Costs (capped at 10% of grant award)	\$ 10,000.00					\$ 10,000.00
Project Administration (capped at 5% of grant award)						\$ -
[Enter Other Planning Cost 1]						\$ -
[Enter Other Planning Cost 2]						\$ -
[Enter Other Planning Cost 3]						\$ -
<b>Total Planning Project Costs</b>	<b>\$ 110,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 5,800.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 115,800.00</b>

## African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund Planning Budget Request Form

**Please read these instructions before filling out this form.**

The purpose of this workbook is to provide an opportunity for the applicant to indicate how AACHAF funds will be used to support the project and indicate how any matching funds will be used. The goal of this form is for the applicant and grant reviewer to have a clear understanding of what each source of funding will support by budget line item. This will enable better communication about AACHAF uses and expense eligibility.

Blue highlighted boxes (or cells) are editable. Please type over any text you see in these boxes with the appropriate response. All other cells are locked and cannot be changed. For a description of items in Column A, hover over the purple triangle found in certain cells.

On row 25, columns C through F are where the applicant can enter the names of other funding sources. Column B is reserved for listing expenses that the applicant would like the AACHAF grant to cover.

On row 26, if there are additional sources of funds entered on row 25, indicate whether these sources are secured. The response options available are 'Yes', 'No', and 'Anticipated'. 'Anticipated' means that a request of a funder has been made and the applicant is either awaiting a response or is in discussions for funding. For sources indicated as "Secured", the applicant will need to upload letters with the application that confirm those funds are available for this project.

Enter the expenses in the rows corresponding to the appropriate funding source(s). For expenses proposed to be covered by AACHAF funds, be sure to consult the guidelines to confirm the expense's eligibility. If the project includes costs the applicant considers to be eligible that are not detailed on this form, type in the expense description in the appropriate blue box in column A (i.e., blue boxes that have phrases beginning with "[Enter Other...]") and enter the expense under the appropriate funding source(s) in columns B through F.

Row 45 provides the total cost per funding source as well as overall project cost. Please make sure that these amounts match what is provided in the application.

An **example budget** is provided on the following labeled tab.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the applicable grant opportunity guidelines and eligible expenses at <https://savingplaces.org/action-fund-grants>. If you have any questions, contact us at [actionfundgrants@savingplaces.org](mailto:actionfundgrants@savingplaces.org).

Applicant Name: **Committed Community Neighborhood Alliance**

Project Name: **Committed Community Neighborhood Alliance - Planning**

Project Type: **Project Planning**

ITEMS	AACHAF Funds	Local Community Foundation	Heart Charities	[Enter Fund Source Name 3]	[Enter Fund Source Name 4]	Total Project Cost
Source Secured?	Requested	Yes	Yes			
Conditions Assessment Report						\$ -
Historic Structures Report	\$ 10,000.00					\$ 10,000.00
Architectural Study/Plan						\$ -
Engineering Study/Plan						\$ -
Business and Organizational Development Plans		\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00			\$ 30,000.00
Architectural Feasibility Study	\$ 52,000.00					\$ 52,000.00
Market Feasibility Study						\$ -
Property Survey						\$ -
Archaeological Services / Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) / LIDAR						\$ -
Historic Designations and Marker Installations						\$ -
Fundraising and Sustainability Plans						\$ -
Legal Services	\$ 2,000.00					\$ 2,000.00
Indirect Costs - see application for more info (capped at 10% of grant award)	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 12,000.00				\$ 19,500.00
Limited Capital of \$45,000 Maximum Request (for Emergency Rapid Response Grants Only)						\$ -
ADA Accessibility Plan	\$ 3,500.00					\$ 3,500.00
Community Engagement, Research and Programming		\$ 53,000.00	\$ 5,000.00			\$ 58,000.00
Structural Reinforcement		\$ 20,000.00				\$ 20,000.00
<b>Total Planning Project Costs</b>	<b>\$ 75,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 100,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 20,000.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 195,000.00</b>



# Nashville Historical Foundation

Ms. Alaska McInnis  
Director, National Grants Program  
AACHAF National Trust for Historic Preservation  
600 14th Street NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20005

February 6, 2026

Dear Ms. McInnis,

As the president of the Nashville Historical Foundation, I am writing to express my strong support for a 2026 application to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund to support a countywide study of historic African American cemeteries in Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee. This application is being submitted by the Metropolitan Historical Commission (MHC), the municipal historic preservation agency for Nashville and Davidson County and one of our community partners.

As a key organization leading historic preservation efforts in Nashville, the Metropolitan Historical Commission has just completed a four-year, phased Davidson County Cemetery Survey (DCCS) with grant funding provided by the Tennessee Historical Commission, the State Historic Preservation Office. At the end of Phase 4 of the DCCS (completed in September 2025), the MHC directly funded a supplemental memo on African American cemeteries that had been documented during this effort. While that memo provides an excellent snapshot of the African American cemeteries that are part of the DCCS records, it also calls for a more comprehensive study that would help our community and preservation partners understand how, where, and why Nashville's African American cemeteries developed and how they are being impacted by the city's growth or lack of access to cemetery preservation resources. Since most of the surveyed African American cemeteries date to the New South era (1880-1930), local preservationists recognize that we

lack information on earlier burial sites and practices. MHC and community stakeholders recognize that not all local Black historical cemeteries may be known, documented, surveyed, extant, maintained or protected. While there is much documentation related to the DCCS in general, there remain significant knowledge gaps about the historical development of Nashville's historic Black burial sites. There also exist some known historical African American burial grounds that would benefit greatly from more intensive survey documentation and preservation planning efforts. These include sites like the Bryant Town and Mount Ararat community cemeteries; the Mount Gilliam Baptist and Evans Hill church cemeteries; Benevolent Cemetery #2; or the family (and perhaps community) burial ground, Adams-Kimball Cemetery, which is surrounded by modern homes in an affluent Nashville suburb. Many other historically Black family burial grounds of varying size, age, complexity and scale would also benefit from deeper research and contextualization in the historical record.

MHC has expressed its desire to complete a standalone phase dedicated to the study and documentation of historic African American cemeteries prior to initiating the final DCCS project phase, development of a cemetery preservation plan for Nashville and Davidson County. The countywide plan would be the first of its kind developed in Tennessee. The overarching DCCS project and a standalone phase that dedicates additional resources to documenting underrepresented histories and endangered African American burial sites such as these would provide an excellent model to other municipalities across both the state and country. Additionally, the MHC is well-positioned to work with descendants, community groups, elected officials, preservation organizations, property owners and other stakeholders to bring attention to this need and ensure that historic Black cemeteries are prioritized in Nashville and Davidson County's preservation planning efforts.

Nashville Historical Foundation is very supportive of this grant application and we believe this project is an excellent and important step to take in anticipation of the creation of a countywide cemetery preservation plan. I hope that you will give this application your full consideration for funding under the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund grant program.

Sincerely,

*Jill F. Meese*

President, Nashville Historical Foundation

[www.nashvillehistoricalfoundation.org](http://www.nashvillehistoricalfoundation.org)



Ms. Alaska McInnis  
Director, National Grants Program  
AACHAF National Trust for Historic Preservation  
600 14th Street NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20005

February 6, 2026

Dear Ms. McInnis,

As the Executive Director of the of Preservation Society of Nashville and on behalf of our Board of Directors, we are writing to express our strong support for a 2026 application to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund to support a countywide study of historic African American cemeteries in Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee. This application is being submitted by the Metropolitan Historical Commission (MHC), the municipal historic preservation agency for Nashville and Davidson County and one of our community partners.

As a key organization leading historic preservation efforts in Nashville, the Metropolitan Historical Commission has just completed a four-year, phased Davidson County Cemetery Survey (DCCS) with grant funding provided by the Tennessee Historical Commission, the State Historic Preservation Office. At the end of Phase 4 of the DCCS (completed in September 2025), the MHC directly funded a supplemental memo on African American cemeteries that had been documented during this effort. While that memo provides an excellent snapshot of the African American cemeteries that are part of the DCCS records, it also calls for a more comprehensive study that would help our community and preservation partners understand how, where, and why Nashville's African American cemeteries developed and how they are being impacted by the city's growth or lack of access to cemetery preservation resources. Since most of the surveyed African American cemeteries date to the New South era (1880-1930), local preservationists recognize that we lack information on earlier burial sites and practices. MHC and community stakeholders recognize that not all local Black historical cemeteries may be known, documented, surveyed, extant, maintained or protected. While there is much documentation related to the DCCS in general, there remain significant knowledge gaps about the historical development of Nashville's historic Black burial sites. There also exist some known

historical African American burial grounds that would benefit greatly from more intensive survey documentation and preservation planning efforts. These include sites like the Bryant Town and Mount Ararat community cemeteries; the Mount Gilliam Baptist and Evans Hill church cemeteries; Benevolent Cemetery #2; or the family (and perhaps community) burial ground, Adams-Kimball Cemetery, which is surrounded by modern homes in an affluent Nashville suburb. Many other historically Black family burial grounds of varying size, age, complexity and scale would also benefit from deeper research and contextualization in the historical record.

MHC has expressed its desire to complete a standalone phase dedicated to the study and documentation of historic African American cemeteries prior to initiating the final DCCS project phase, development of a cemetery preservation plan for Nashville and Davidson County. The countywide plan would be the first of its kind developed in Tennessee. The overarching DCCS project and a standalone phase that dedicates additional resources to documenting underrepresented histories and endangered African American burial sites such as these would provide an excellent model to other municipalities across both the state and country. Additionally, the MHC is well-positioned to work with descendants, community groups, elected officials, preservation organizations, property owners and other stakeholders to bring attention to this need and ensure that historic Black cemeteries are prioritized in Nashville and Davidson County's preservation planning efforts.

The Preservation Society of Nashville is very supportive of this grant application and we believe this project is an excellent and important step to take in anticipation of the creation of a countywide cemetery preservation plan. We hope that you will give this application your full consideration for funding under the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund grant program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Greider". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Greider

Executive Director

Preservation Society of Nashville

david@preservenashville.com



Ms. Alaska McInnis  
Director, National Grants Program  
AACHAF National Trust for Historic Preservation  
600 14th Street NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20005

February 6, 2026

Dear Ms. McInnis,

As the president of Historic Nashville, Inc., I am writing to express my strong support for a 2026 application to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund to support a countywide study of historic African American cemeteries in Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee. This application is being submitted by the Metropolitan Historical Commission (MHC), the municipal historic preservation agency for Nashville and Davidson County and one of our community partners.

As a key organization leading historic preservation efforts in Nashville, the Metropolitan Historical Commission has just completed a four-year, phased Davidson County Cemetery Survey (DCCS) with grant funding provided by the Tennessee Historical Commission, the State Historic Preservation Office. At the end of Phase 4 of the DCCS (completed in September 2025), the MHC directly funded a supplemental memo on African American cemeteries that had been documented during this effort. While that memo provides an excellent snapshot of the African American cemeteries that are part of the DCCS records, it also calls for a more comprehensive study that would help our community and preservation partners understand how, where, and why Nashville's African American cemeteries developed and how they are being impacted by the city's growth or lack of access to cemetery preservation resources. Since most of the surveyed African American cemeteries date to the New South era (1880-1930), local preservationists recognize that we lack information on earlier burial sites and practices. MHC and community stakeholders recognize that not all local Black historical cemeteries may be known, documented, surveyed, extant, maintained or protected. While there is much documentation related to

the DCCS in general, there remain significant knowledge gaps about the historical development of Nashville's historic Black burial sites. There also exist some known historical African American burial grounds that would benefit greatly from more intensive survey documentation and preservation planning efforts. These include sites like the Bryant Town and Mount Ararat community cemeteries; the Mount Gilliam Baptist and Evans Hill church cemeteries; Benevolent Cemetery #2; or the family (and perhaps community) burial ground, Adams-Kimball Cemetery, which is surrounded by modern homes in an affluent Nashville suburb. Many other historically Black family burial grounds of varying size, age, complexity and scale would also benefit from deeper research and contextualization in the historical record.

MHC has expressed its desire to complete a standalone phase dedicated to the study and documentation of historic African American cemeteries prior to initiating the final DCCS project phase, development of a cemetery preservation plan for Nashville and Davidson County. The countywide plan would be the first of its kind developed in Tennessee. The overarching DCCS project and a standalone phase that dedicates additional resources to documenting underrepresented histories and endangered African American burial sites such as these would provide an excellent model to other municipalities across both the state and country. Additionally, the MHC is well-positioned to work with descendants, community groups, elected officials, preservation organizations, property owners and other stakeholders to bring attention to this need and ensure that historic Black cemeteries are prioritized in Nashville and Davidson County's preservation planning efforts.

Historic Nashville, Inc. is very supportive of this grant application and we believe this project is an excellent and important step to take in anticipation of the creation of a countywide cemetery preservation plan. I hope that you will give this application your full consideration for funding under the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund grant program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ellen Dement Hurd".

Ellen Dement Hurd

President, Historic Nashville, Inc.











# NEW SOUTH ASSOCIATES

ARCHAEOLOGISTS • HISTORIANS

a women-owned small business

September 30, 2025

W. Tim Walker, Executive Director  
Metro Historical Commission  
1113 Kirkwood Ave  
Nashville, TN 37204

## Re: DCCS Supplement on African American Burial Grounds

Dear Mr. Walker:

New South Associates (NSA) has completed four phases of cemetery survey toward building the data to create a county-wide cemetery preservation plan. As a supplement to the survey data and management summaries previously submitted, we would like to provide you with a snapshot of the current state of African American burying grounds and our existing knowledge of them. We also hope to provide a broader context for understanding African American cemeteries and burying grounds in Middle Tennessee based on scholarly literature and existing comparable projects.

During the four completed phases of the Davidson County Cemetery Survey (DCCS) from 2021-2025, NSA and Metro Historical Commission (MHC) have documented 531 total cemeteries county-wide. Forty-three (43) of those documented so far are known to have been used exclusively by African American families, churches, or communities. An additional 20 cemeteries are known or believed to include African American burials based on community knowledge. These include nineteenth century white cemeteries that are known and believed to include enslaved burials; adjacent, related African American and white burying grounds; and post-segregation cemeteries. Notably, many other cemeteries generally classified as white dating to the nineteenth century may have adjacent or nearby burials belonging to enslaved populations, especially those associated with large landowning families. While researching the exact number of those is beyond the scope of this memo, it would be an appropriate line of inquiry for a phase dedicated to the exploration of African American burial grounds in Davidson County. An additional 50 cemeteries throughout the county are of unknown affiliation and require additional research.

### CONDITIONS

All cemeteries surveyed fell into one of five general usage categories: family, community, corporate, institutional and religious/church affiliated. Family cemeteries represented the largest grouping of usage type with 15 surveyed, all of which were vernacular or informal in nature. Community cemeteries, which included multiple families but were not associated with a church or other institution, and church cemeteries were each represented by 10 surveyed sites. Three (3) of the surveyed cemeteries were

**GEORGIA**  
HEADQUARTERS  
6150 East Ponce de Leon Ave  
Stone Mountain, GA 30083  
770-498-4155

**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
1819 Hampton St.  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-771-7083

**NORTH CAROLINA**  
1006 Yanceyville St.  
Greensboro, NC 27405  
336-379-0433

**TENNESSEE**  
1629 Fatherland St.  
Nashville, TN 37206  
615-262-4326

**VIRGINIA**  
3975 University Dr., Suite 120.  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
703-219-8301

565 North Millidge Ave  
Athens, GA 30601  
770-498-4155

[www.newsouthassoc.com](http://www.newsouthassoc.com)

Founding Member of the American Cultural Resources Association

[www.acra-crm.org](http://www.acra-crm.org)

associated with an institution or non-church entity, including the Old Central State Hospital Cemetery (Segregated African American) and cemeteries associated with benevolent organizations (Benevolent Society #16 and #79). One cemetery, Greenwood, is under corporate or for-profit management, and an additional three cemeteries are of unknown association due to lack of information. Community cemeteries included those that may have been associated with an enslaved community, such as Edmondson Cemetery in Antioch and the Hermitage enslaved cemetery at Andrew Jackson's Hermitage.

When compared to cemeteries associated with Anglo-American or white families, communities, and churches, African American cemeteries in Davidson County were generally disproportionately displayed lack of maintenance and disrepair based on data gathered during survey. All of the African American cemeteries visited were recorded as in need of repairs. In five cases, cemeteries either previously known to the DCCS or identified for survey by community members were found to be unrecognizable at the time of survey. In some cases, like that of the Old Central State Hospital cemetery, those cemeteries recorded as unrecognizable were preserved in state, but lacked any identifiable grave markings or depressions. In other cases, such as the Edmondson Cemetery in Antioch, the location of the cemetery was known to community members but due to its unrecognizable status may be endangered by future development.

In addition to those that were classified as unrecognizable, 13 African American cemeteries surveyed were found to be in poor condition, with heavy vegetative overgrowth, extensive damage, and deferred maintenance issues such as sunken stones. Sixteen (16) cemeteries are considered to be in fair condition. For instance Bryanttown Cemetery (Donelson vicinity) includes an area of active burial activity that is well maintained, while the historical sections of the cemetery, including the monument for community namesake Sherrod Bryant, who died in 1854, and dozens of graves marked by fieldstones, is engulfed in heavy vegetative overgrowth, which extends to the right-of-way for Interstate 40.

Of the African American cemeteries surveyed, seven (7) were actively maintained at the time of survey. Apart from the Watson Family Cemetery (African American) in the Antioch vicinity, those in the best condition were associated with an active organization with the ability to fundraise and/or provide maintenance collectively, such as a church or benevolent organization, or are under management of a for-profit entity, such as Greenwood Cemetery. The issues facing African American family cemeteries in Davidson County share much in common with those affecting white cemeteries, but the region's history of racial economic inequality and the impacts thereof contribute to additional pressures on available maintenance resources.

## **HISTORY AND RESEARCH DESIGN**

Davidson County's African American population is historically connected to the institution of slavery in the region, with the earliest burying grounds representing a predominantly enslaved population of African-descended people. By 1860, Davidson County's enslaved population reached nearly 15,000, while its free Black population was just over 1,200. Nashville City Cemetery's records indicate that in the city's early days, both white and African American residents were buried within the same cemetery in separate areas of the site. However, outside of Nashville, it is unknown where most of Davidson County's African American residents were buried prior to the end of slavery, and the only known cemetery documented by the DCCS to include pre-emancipation free African American burials is Bryanttown. Bryanttown is associated with free Black slaveholder Sherrod Bryant, whose property holdings included 22 enslaved people in 1850. In 1854, he died and was buried on his property, marked with an inscribed obelisk, in what is now Bryanttown Cemetery.

Considering the number of African American people known to have historically lived in Davidson County during and after slavery, the number of known early African American cemeteries included in the survey is statistically low. Further research and community engagement is needed in order to gain a greater understanding of where additional African American burial grounds may have been and whether any additional cemeteries can be located and targeted for preservation efforts. A starting place for research could include an examination of cemeteries identified as white but dating to the antebellum and Reconstruction eras. Using census records, researchers would identify cemeteries associated with wealthy slaveholding families and using the known record of existing enslaved cemeteries, including the recently discovered burial ground at Andrew Jackson's Hermitage (National Historic Landmark, 1960), attempt to build a model of where a cemetery for the enslaved community of a known plantation site might be located. Additionally, some previously surveyed white cemeteries surveyed are known or believed to include enslaved burials either mixed in with or adjacent to family burying grounds, such as the John G. Briley Cemetery in Cane Ridge. Further research on individual free African Americans of antebellum Davidson County and their residence locations or church affiliations would be needed in order to estimate where associated burial grounds might be located.

After Emancipation took effect in Middle Tennessee following the Civil War, African Americans began forming communities, often centered around churches and/or schools. The DCCS has already identified at least six (6) cemeteries known or believed to have been established during the first two decades following emancipation. An additional 13 African American cemeteries surveyed do not have definitive known use dates or starting dates and require additional research. For both of the above cases, it is possible that they include pre-Emancipation interments, as African American oral tradition indicates high levels of continuity of association in the initial years following the Civil War.

Based on known earliest interments, the preponderance of surveyed African American cemeteries were founded between 1880 and 1930, during the New South era of Davidson County's history. The New South era represented a time when the African American population underwent a local and national shift, with African Americans moving out of the rural southern countryside into cities in both the South and the North. As the Great Migration of the twentieth century took place, communities gradually eroded, leaving few remaining residents to tend to the cemeteries left behind or to carry on their memory. Similar to Reconstruction-era cemeteries, the earliest known interments may not be the oldest burials within the cemetery grounds, as a high number of burials were marked with temporary or organic markers. While churches and other organizations charged with the care of historic cemeteries may have the benefit of some level of historical record-keeping to provide a higher level of certainty about a cemetery's active usage period, the majority of African American family and community cemeteries are more informal in nature with no single source of public records to provide further insight into their use. A combination of newspaper research, comprehensive historic map review, property records, death listings and certificates in state and county vital records, and community outreach is needed in order to learn more about the cemeteries of both the Reconstruction and New South eras. Maps dating to the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century provide indications of African American churches and schools, which can help narrow down potential locations of additional research. Combined with community outreach and other records, these maps can help provide a geospatial basis for understanding African American cemeteries as traces of historical communities in Davidson County.

While African American cemeteries of Davidson County share many overlapping characteristics with white cemeteries, some features present in both are more common in African American cemeteries. Fieldstones, for instance, are present in 166 out of 345 white cemeteries, or around 48 percent, while they were noted in 25 out of 43 African American cemeteries surveyed, comprising 58 percent of the total. Fieldstones

were also commonly found in plantation cemeteries (containing both white and African American burials) as they were frequently used to mark enslaved burials.

Notable of Davidson County's African American cemeteries are grave markers carved by renowned Nashville sculptor William Edmondson (1874-1951). Edmondson, whose sculptural talents can be seen in pieces on view at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, is known to have provided funerary carvings for friends and family in Nashville. Several African American cemeteries surveyed included known or likely Edmondson carvings. As previously noted by local nonprofit preservation group Historic Nashville, Inc., Edmondson's work is a recommended subject for systematic identification and targeted preservation efforts. However, Edmondson was not the only master carver whose work can be seen in African American cemeteries. The Collier-Harris Cemetery (AN-45), for instance, is characterized by deeply hand-chiseled limestone fieldstones dating from 1909 through the 1960s. Census records indicate that Andrew Briley, one of the individuals known to be buried at this site, was a stonemason and limestone worker by occupation. Briley died in 1951, well before the last hand-carved stones were placed, so it is unclear whether he was responsible for the carvings within the cemetery, but his occupation as a stonemason and limestone worker provides a path of inquiry into the family and its local connections. Census research, newspapers, and community outreach could be used to gain more knowledge about the artisan responsible for the carvings in the Collier-Harris Cemetery.

## SUMMARY

The topics outlined above are intended to provide an extensive but not exhaustive discussion of the current state of knowledge about African American cemeteries that can be elucidated from the DCCS data set and existing related historical records, as well as suggestions for future lines of inquiry. Future work in this area should focus on primary document research and intensive community outreach and engagement. Due to the diaspora of the southern African American population during and after the Great Migration, community memory of cemetery sites may be limited in some areas of the county, especially in more rural areas, requiring significant supplementary primary resource investigation. However, many known historic local African American communities, such as Lake Providence and Bryanttown, have active community and descendant groups who should be invited to participate in any further research and survey activities as community partners with MHC.

Attached please find a table of identified African American cemeteries (Attachment A), a list of suggested case studies (Attachment B), a list of identified local groups who may be able to provide partnership resources (Attachment C), and an annotated bibliography of relevant studies and similar projects that should be consulted for further understanding of the history and landscape of African American cemeteries (Attachment D).

Sincerely,

NEW SOUTH ASSOCIATES, INC.



Lydia Simpson, PhD

Senior Historian

**Attachment A: African American Cemeteries in the DCCS**

Cemetery Name	Date Range	Type	Est. Burial #	Condition
Benevolent 16	1884-2021	Community	200	Fair
Benevolent 79	1911–2012	Community	100	Fair
Briarville	1884-2021	Community	50	Poor
Bryanttown	1854-2023	Community	500+	Fair
Calhoun	1935-1979	Community	100	Poor
Dry Creek/Sons of Ham	1869-2025	Community	300	Good
Edmondson	Unknown	Community	70	Unrecognizable
Hermitage – Enslaved	Circa 1830	Community	30	Fair
Ingleside and Cleveland Hall	2006*	Community	60	Reinterred
Kidd	Unknown	Community	200+	Fair
Mt. Ararat	1869-1996	Community	14,000	Fair
Vaughn’s Gap	Circa 1900	Community	200+	Fair
White	Pre-1900-2023	Community	20+	Fair
Greenwood (Original)	1887-2025	Corporate	19,000	Good
Greenwood West	1899-2025	Corporate	2,000	Good
Adams-Kimball	1878-1941	Family	20	Poor
Alfred Jackson	1901	Family	1	Good
Aunt Easter’s/Nightingale	Unknown-1962	Family	10	Poor
Benjamin F. Rucker	1923-1980	Family	20	Fair
Collier-Harris	Unknown-2012	Family	20	Fair
Ensley	Unknown	Family	3	Unrecognizable
Gray-Kinnard	1866-1957	Family	6	Poor
Joe E. Brown	1918	Family	5	Unrecognizable
Longnett	1875-Unknown	Family	40+	Poor
Mayes	Unknown-1984	Family	20	Poor
May-Hadley	Unknown	Family	10	Poor
Tolbert-Carney	1864-2024	Family	65	Fair
Watson	1917-2018	Family	20	Good
Webber	Unknown	Family	Unknown	Unrecognizable
Old Central State Hospital	1857-1963	Institutional	140+	Unrecognizable
Benevolent Society Church (Restful Acres)	1940-2021	Religious	35	Fair
Cedar Grove Baptist	1889-2011	Religious	65	Fair
Evans Hill	Unknown	Religious	75	Poor
First Baptist Church Hopewell	1949-2024	Religious	75	Good
Hall Chapel	1889-2016	Religious	50	Good
Maple Grove Church	Circa 1900	Religious	75	Poor
Mt. Gilliam MBC	1952-1975	Religious	50	Poor
Mt. Pisgah UMC	1919-2022	Religious	100	Fair
Olive Branch Baptist Church	1900-1997	Religious	75	Fair
Scott’s Hollow AME	1917-2024	Religious	250	Fair
Stateland	1918-2025	Religious	75	Good
Allen	1927	Unknown	Unknown	Poor
Unknown African American	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unrecognizable

### Attachment B: List of Potential Case Studies

Cemetery Name	Date Range	Type	Est. Burial #	Condition
Bryanttown	1854-2023	Community	500+	Fair
Calhoun	1935-1979	Community	100	Poor
Kidd	Unknown	Community	200+	Fair
Mt. Ararat	1869-1996	Community	14,000	Fair
Adams-Kimball	1878-1951	Family	20	Fair
Benjamin F. Rucker	1923-1980	Family	20	Fair
Collier-Harris	Unkn-2012	Family	20	Fair
Gray-Kinnard	1866-1957	Family	6	Poor
Evans Hill	Unknown	Religious	75	Poor
Scott's Hollow AME	1917-2024	Religious	250	Fair

## **Attachment C: Local Partnership Opportunities**

Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society

[https://www.aahgs.org/content.aspx?page\\_id=22&club\\_id=623005&module\\_id=653817](https://www.aahgs.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=623005&module_id=653817)

Builders and Defenders: Fort Negley Descendants

<https://www.buildersanddefenders.org/descendants>

Jefferson Street Sound Museum

<https://www.jeffersonstreetsound.com/>

North Nashville Heritage Project

<https://www.tnstate.edu/nnhp/>

## Attachment D: Annotated List of African American Cemetery Resources and Projects

### National Initiatives

African American Cultural Heritage Fund, National Trust for Historic Preservation

<https://savingplaces.org/african-american-cultural-heritage>

The National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) created the African American Cultural Heritage Fund in 2017 to help preserve African American cultural heritage sites. Since its launch, the Action fund has supported nearly 400 projects with an investment of over \$44 million.

Black Cemetery Network

<https://blackcemeterynetwork.org/>

The Black Cemetery Network is based out of the University of South Florida's Heritage Research Lab. It serves as an advocacy network to fight the erasure of Black cemeteries.

Black Craftspeople Digital Archives

<https://blackcraftspeople.org/>

The Black Craftspeople Digital Archive is a partnership initiative that builds on the work of Dr. Tiffany Momon, University of the South, on Black craftspeople in the South. The goal of the project is to build a database to recognize Black craftspeople, to build educational initiatives around their work and existence, and connect Black craftspeople to place. The partnership includes support from the Middle Tennessee State University Center for Historic Preservation, the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area, the Decorative Arts Trust, and the Chipstone Foundation.

### Statewide Initiatives

Historic African American Cemetery Project, Maryland

<https://africanamerican.maryland.gov/historic-african-american-cemetery-project/>

In 2021, the Maryland General Assembly passed the *Historic African American Cemeteries Preservation Fund and Study* (HB 1099) requiring a study of the issues facing historic Black cemeteries. The state also created a grant fund to assist with the identification, preservation, and commemoration of historic African American burying grounds. The core study, issued 2022, may provide a model for other governmental entities to follow in preserving historic African American cemeteries.

Saving Tennessee's Black Cemeteries – The Citizenship Project, Nashville Public Television

[https://www.pbs.org/video/last-rites-saving-tennessees-black-cemeteries-iewueo/?\\_gl=1\\*b9g9pm\\*\\_gcl\\_au\\*MTgwMDYzNzEzOS4xNzU4NiQ2NDE5](https://www.pbs.org/video/last-rites-saving-tennessees-black-cemeteries-iewueo/?_gl=1*b9g9pm*_gcl_au*MTgwMDYzNzEzOS4xNzU4NiQ2NDE5)

The Citizenship Project, a Nashville Public Television (NPT) project funded in part by the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area, is a long-running documentary series focused on the fight for inclusive citizenship that took place between the Civil War and the Civil Rights movement. One of the latest installments of the series, *Last Rites: Saving Tennessee's Black Cemeteries* focused on individual efforts throughout the state to preserve cemeteries.

“Discovering African American Communities in the Nashville Globe” in *Trials, Triumphs, and Transformations: Tennesseans’ Search for Citizenship, Community, and Opportunity* – MTSU Center for Historic Preservation and Walker Library

<https://walker.mtsu.edu/trials/dsi.mtsu.edu/trials/globemap.html>

Researchers searched the issues of the African American *Nashville Globe* newspaper, published between 1906 and 1960, in search of community names and locations. The project’s findings are published on a story map housed through the MTSU Walker Library.

Landscape of Liberation, Tennessee Civil War GIS

<https://tnmap.tn.gov/civilwar/freedmen/>

Landscape of Liberation is a partnership project between the Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA), the Fullerton Geospatial Research Lab at MTSU, the State of Tennessee STS-GIS department, and the Tennessee State Museum with funding from the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area. Researchers used primary document resources to geolocate sites of African American activity in Tennessee during and following the Civil War. The results are published as a web-based mapping application hosted by TSLA.

Texas Freedom Colonies Project – Texas African American Cemetery Registry

<https://www.thetexasfreedomcoloniesproject.com/cemetery-registry>

The Texas African American Cemetery Registry is a voluntary crowd-sourced database operated by the Texas Freedom Colonies Project, currently affiliated with the University of Virginia. Funded by the NTHP African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, the registry provides a clearinghouse for stewards, visitors, and stakeholders to record data about African American cemeteries of Texas in one place. Users can report on conditions as well as upload photos and documents. The project is Survey123-based and is a component of data collection for the Texas Freedom Colonies Project.

African American Cemeteries and Graves Fund, Virginia Department of Historic Resources

<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/blog-posts/grave-matters-the-african-american-cemetery-graves-fund/>

Virginia’s African American Cemeteries and Graves Fund provides grants to support maintenance and care of African American cemeteries and interments established prior to 1948. The fund accepts applications from property owners, charitable organizations, and local governments. Proof of interments must be provided using headstone inscriptions, vital and church records, newspapers, or other sources, and GPR results are also accepted. The grant provides funding at a rate of \$5 per grave for initial grants. The program is funded at \$400,000 for the 2025-2026 fiscal year and has provided over \$100,000 in grants to date.

## Local Initiatives

East End Cemetery, Richmond, Virginia

<https://eastendcemeteryva.com/>

<https://friendsofeastend.com/>

East End Cemetery is a preservation success story. Following years of neglect due to lack of state resources available for African American cemeteries, a substantial volunteer effort began in 2013 to restore the site and preserve its history.

MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa, Florida (NSA project)

The Tampa Bay History Center notified MacDill Air Force Base of a possibly cemetery on its campus in 2019. The base command worked with the community to identify the location of the cemetery and undertook non-invasive archaeological survey to locate burials. Over 120 probable and possible burials were discovered by 2024.

Rutherford County Cemetery Survey, Rutherford County, Tennessee

<https://rutherfordtnhistory.org/rutherford-county-historic-cemetery-survey/>  
<https://rcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e055c9ad47564cb5a33538346648bb1e>

In 2014, the Rutherford County Archives embarked on an effort to document all of the cemeteries in Rutherford County. The initial effort was based on a twentieth century survey conducted by white members of the Rutherford County Historical Society, which included a limited number of African American cemeteries. In the process of the survey, archives staff engaged in community outreach to identify additional Black cemeteries. To date, through active community input the Rutherford County Cemetery Survey has added 91 African American cemeteries to the 12 previously recorded by earlier surveyors.

Mapping Charleston's Black Burial Grounds, Charleston, South Carolina

<https://www.preservationsociety.org/programs-resources/mapping-charlestons-black-burial-grounds/>

Mapping Charleston's Black Burial Grounds is a multi-partner project with funding support from the National Park Service African American Civil Rights Grant program. Local partners include the Preservation Society of Charleston (PSC), the Anson Street African Burial Ground Project (ASABG), and the City of Charleston Department of Planning & Preservation. Additional support was provided by the International African American Museum. Building on the Chicora Foundation's 2010 report "The Silence of the Dead: Giving Charleston Cemeteries a Voice," Mapping Black Burial Grounds utilized community input gathered between 2022 and 2024 to build a map of known or suspected African American cemetery sites. Research is ongoing.

## Maps

1898 Map of Davidson County, Edwin M. Gardner

<https://teva.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15138coll23/id/10663/>

1900 Map of Davidson County, W.H. Lyle

<https://teva.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15138coll23/id/10814/rec/53>

The 1898 and 1900 maps of Davidson County includes the location of African American schools that were operating at that time. Schools often served as important hubs within African American communities, and researching the areas around those sites might provide valuable information to help locate previously undocumented community and family cemeteries.

## Secondary Sources

Chicora Foundation, Inc. *Grave Matters: The Preservation of African American Cemeteries*. Columbia, South Carolina. Chicora Foundation: 1996.

Gaffney, Austyn. "The Fight to Save America's Black Cemeteries." *National Geographic*. August 19, 2020. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/historic-black-cemeteries-at-risk-can-they-be-preserved/>. Accessed September 23, 2025.

Jones, Diane. "The City of the Dead: The Place of Cultural Identity and Environmental Sustainability in the African-American Cemetery." *Landscape Journal* 30 no. 2. 2011. 226-240.

Rainville, Lynn. *Hidden History: African American Cemeteries in Central Virginia*. Charlottesville, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

**2026 African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund  
Grant Application Supplement  
Metropolitan Historical Commission, Nashville, Tennessee  
Project ID: NashvilleHistoricCemeteries-Ping-TN**

**Davidson County Cemetery Survey (DCCS) info:**

---

- DCCS general info and background:  
<https://www.nashville.gov/departments/historic-preservation/programs/davidson-county-cemetery-survey>
- DCCS grant-funded project and African American cemeteries supplemental memo: <https://www.nashville.gov/departments/historic-preservation/grants-and-special-projects> (posted fall 2025 after Phase 4 completion; see also Phase 4 video which calls out

**Pre-planning efforts:**

---

DCCS grant project: four year, four phase countywide cemetery survey (2021-2025) funded by the Tennessee Historical Commission's preservation grants program; total cost= \$158,042; this was a re-survey based upon original DCCS records (c. 1999-2006) and surveyed several newly-recorded sites

MHC funded African American cems memo – In September 2025 (end of DCCS Phase 4), MHC funded a supplemental memo on DCCS findings for African American cemeteries documented during the survey effort. The goal of the memo was to provide a snapshot of knowledge about these sites as well as detail the knowledge gaps that exist so that MHC could advocate for dedicated funding for a standalone phase on African American cemeteries. Memo cost (MHC directly funded) - \$1000

African American cemeteries coalition – MHC initiated discussions in summer 2025 with SHPO staff (cemetery specialist) and the African American Historical & Genealogical Society of Nashville (AAHGS) to explore potential local Black cemeteries coalition. Through multiple meetings, we engaged with other groups across the state who want to support this work and use Nashville's cemetery documentation efforts as a model for their communities. While the coalition is still in its infancy, MHC and AAHGS hope to grow this effort significantly if MHC receives an AACHAF award.

Developer/property owner guide (2024) – MHC developed a guide for property owners and developers working with historical cemeteries. We would like to expand this guide to address unique aspects of identification for African American burial grounds (fieldstones and depressions, especially). Our goal is to provide guidance to assist with proactive identification, preservation planning, and avoidance/mitigation.

MHC sourced resources/archival items (maps, historical reports, articles) on enslaved communities and cemeteries from Vanderbilt University (July 2025)

**Identified stakeholders:**

---

Descendants/descendant groups, churches, Benevolent Societies, Metro Council members, community groups

Metro Council - Black Caucus

African American Historical & Genealogical Society (AAHGS) – Nashville Branch

NAACP – Nashville Branch

Historically Black Colleges and Universities – American Baptist College, Fisk University, Tennessee State University, Meharry Medical College; opportunities for student engagement, alumni outreach, MHC presentations

Metro stakeholders - Metro Planning, Water Services, Legal, Codes, Nashville DOT

Developers – potential training session and/or develop guidance document

Corporate African American cemeteries – Hills of Calvary Memorial Park, Mt. Ararat, Greenwood, Greenwood West

Preservation partners and nonprofit groups – Nashville Historical Foundation, Historic Nashville, Inc., Preservation Society of Nashville, Tennessee Historical Commission

**Community engagement plans:**

---

Project promotion - MHC Facebook, MHC Instagram, History Gram articles (MHC's monthly e-newsletter), MHC's Grants and Special Projects page, interviews/articles through local media outlets

Community meetings across Davidson County – engage Council representatives, community organizations and churches (host sites); to be held throughout duration of project

Nashville Conference on African American History & Culture (NCAAHC): annual event co-hosted by MHC and Tennessee State University; the African American Historical & Genealogical Society (AAHGS) will staff a vendor table at the 2/13/26 NCAAHC, where they will provide attendees with information on efforts related to building a local African American cemeteries coalition; AAHGS and/or MHC would present additional information and engage attendees at subsequent annual conferences

Project flyers at MHC community/educational events and in office for visitors;  
information provided at other Metro-hosted events

Mailouts – letters/flyers and emails to property owners and other stakeholders

Coordination with groups including AAHGS, Benevolent Societies, churches, State  
Historic Preservation Office, preservation nonprofits (Nashville Historical Foundation,  
Historic Nashville, Inc., Preservation Society of Nashville, Jefferson Street Historical  
Society)

Stakeholder presentations by MHC staff at meetings for AAHGS, HNI, PSN, NHF and  
other supporting groups

Workshop/training – field training event(s) coordinated with the Tennessee Historical  
Commission to educate on identification and repair methods

Potential for historical tours through local preservation nonprofit organizations

**Related efforts to link into and/or model after\*:** \_\_\_\_\_

[Landscape of Liberation](#)

[Fort Negley Builders and Defenders Database](#)

[Mapping Charleston's Black Burial Grounds Project \(MCBBGP\)](#)

[Black Cemetery Network](#)

*\*Mapping efforts would not be included in the current scope of work but are an ongoing initiative; Metro Nashville Government maintains an internal GIS layer of historical cemeteries, and MHC hopes to set up a community reporting form like the MCBBGP as part of the countywide plan development phase.*

**MHC past grants management experience:**

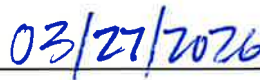
[Grants and Special Projects](#)

**APPLICATION FOR Historic African American Cemeteries Study**

**METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY**



\_\_\_\_\_  
Scarlett C. Miles, Interim Director  
Metro Historical Commission



\_\_\_\_\_  
Date