

South Carolina Department of Archives and History Report
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The overall mission of the Department of Archives and History is to preserve and promote South Carolina's rich history. Our state's citizens are perhaps more passionate about their history than those of any other state, and we work diligently to connect South Carolinians with their past. The agency's three legislatively-mandated functions are as follows:

- 1) Operation of the State Archives and Research Room, where the agency preserves and houses nearly 30,000 linear feet of the state's most valuable historic documents and makes them available to the public for research purposes at the Archives and History Center on Parklane Road,
- 2) Operation of the State Records Management Program, which entails the agency working with state agencies and local governments to properly manage their records and identify and preserve for public access those of historical/archival value. This function includes operation of the State Records Center on Laurel Street, which saves the state over \$500,000 annually by storing, free of charge, 71,000 linear feet of non-permanent records for over fifty state agencies and commissions, and,
- 3) Operation of the State Historic Preservation Office, which encourages and facilitates the preservation of South Carolina's irreplaceable historic and prehistoric places and manages the National Register of Historic Places and other federally-mandated preservation programs.

During the past fiscal year alone, Archives and History's budget was reduced by 29%, which necessitated the RIF of eleven (11) full-time employees and the loss of six (6) other full-time employees through voluntary separation programs and early retirement. The agency now has 36 full-time employees, compared to the 120 full-time employees that it had during the 1980s. It continues to pursue its legislatively-mandated mission with a budget of slightly more than \$2.3 million annually.

The creation of a state Office of Cultural Affairs could have both positive and negative affects upon the agency and its mission depending upon the structure and intent of any proposed office. Regardless of any restructuring scenario, the agency's three legislatively-mandated missions should remain intact.

The one positive aspect of the creation of an Office of Cultural Affairs similar to North Carolina would be that each cultural agency could maintain the core mission(s) for which it was established. For the Department of Archives and History that would mean that the

Archives and Research Room, the Records Management Program, and the State Historic Preservation Office would continue to operate. There also could be an opportunity for savings through the consolidation of finance, human resources, IT, and other administrative functions for each cultural agency.

The effort to combine the administrative functions of cultural agencies, however, is already occurring and can continue to occur without restructuring. For example, Archives and History and the Arts Commission share a finance director. Other cultural organizations share similar administrative functions.

Other issues make consolidation problematic. The Department of Archives and History is housed in a fairly new (1997), purpose-built structure that preserves nearly 30,000 linear feet of the state's most important documents in precisely climate-controlled conditions. No other available building in state government has the capacity to store that many historic documents under such conditions adjacent to a research room where the documents are made available to the public.

In addition, the Department of Archives and History has a surplus of office space that the agency has marketed to tenants in state government in order to cut agency expenses. On July 1 the entire Office of Human Resources (OHR) moved to our building. By housing OHR, the agency has decreased its overall building rent, while increasing agency revenue through frequent classroom and auditorium rentals to OHR. This arrangement not only has allowed Archives and History to generate much-needed revenue, but it also has saved the state government from spending considerably more on commercial rental space to house OHR.

In conclusion, cost savings associated with the creation of an Office of Cultural Affairs would be minimized due to the factors listed above and the dramatic cuts that the Department of Archives and History and other cultural agencies have sustained during the economic downturn. The only substantive cost savings would be through further consolidation of administrative (finance, human resources, procurement, etc.) functions among the four cultural organizations.