

IV. INTERPERTATION PROSPECTUS AND VISITOR FACILITIES

A. GOALS

The primary goal of interpretation at the Newark Earthworks is to inform the public about the site and its builders through a wide variety of media and new technologies (exhibits, multimedia presentations, interpretive signs, etc.) and educational programs. Interpretation will present the Newark Earthworks as a site of world, regional, and local significance that was conceived, built, and used by the Hopewell. Audiences will learn about the Hopewell culture and its relationship to other prehistoric and Native American cultures, the nineteenth and twentieth century history of the earthworks, and the importance of preserving the site for future generations. Sources of information for interpretive exhibits and programs will include archaeological and Native American viewpoints.

B. AUDIENCES

This plan for the Newark Earthworks acknowledges the charge of the Ohio Historical Society's Vision 2000 Plan to provide the widest variety of quality educational experiences to the widest range of audiences. In light of the emphasis in Vision 2000 on primary and secondary school education (K-12), the interpretation/education programs at Newark will pay special attention to the particular needs of these students. At the same time, we acknowledge, and will strive to satisfy, the varied interests and needs of the following groups:

Education Community

In addition to elementary/secondary schools, college and university classes will likely require more extensive and detailed information about the Newark Earthworks. Teachers will benefit from programs showing them how to integrate the Newark Earthworks into their classroom activities.

General Public

The general public includes casual visitors who drop in on the spur of the moment and individuals—from the neighborhood, Licking County, Ohio, other states, other nations—for whom the Newark Earthworks is a specific destination. Family groups, with the varied interests and attention spans of children and adults, may require special activities that engage multiple age groups. Local residents will be especially encouraged to participate in programming which will help them to better appreciate the importance of the earthworks.

Archaeologists

Professional and avocational archaeologists will likely be particularly interested in the results of research projects focused on the Newark Earthworks, as well as on more specialized information about the Hopewell culture

Native Americans

Many Native Americans are connected in deeply spiritual ways to the Newark Earthworks. The interpretive/educational programs will respect these feelings and will include Native American perspectives.

Researchers

Researchers representing a variety of disciplines (archaeology, anthropology, astronomy, history, botany/zoology, etc.) may be conducting specific research projects at the Newark Earthworks. While they will gain information about the site via interpretive programs, those programs can also be enhanced when the results of the research projects are incorporated into them.

C. OBJECTIVES

INTERPRETIVE CENTER AT THE GREAT CIRCLE

This facility, the Ohio Indian Art Museum, currently houses exhibits focused on the artistic accomplishments of the prehistoric Native Americans, with secondary exhibits dealing with the Newark Earthworks. The exhibits are outdated and inadequately interpret the Newark Earthworks and do not reflect the significance of the earthworks and current understanding of them nor do they reflect multiple perspectives, including those of Native Americans or the recent history of the site. Although the building reflected the long-held aspirations for the site when it was built in 1971, it does not fulfill the needs of visitors nor the goals that have been identified for the site. Its restrooms are not large enough to accommodate a busload of school children, nor are they accessible for the handicapped. There is no classroom or meeting space, no space for hands-on activities, nor any office space. Space for retail sales is not adequate. The hard-finish surfaces, although expensive and durable, will make it difficult to install and use new technologies. The architecture of the building does not respond to the style of the depression era buildings on site. The building is not convenient to either parking lot. Finally, the location of the building, sited in the Beaux Arts tradition on axis with the gateway and center of the Great Circle inappropriately dominates the earthworks. It destroys the relationship between the Great Circle and the parallel walls that led away from the site.

Accommodation for new interpretive technologies needs to be provided. For example, installation of hardware and software for an expanded website and distance learning, and training staff to use them effectively, is needed. Use of the software and video developed by John Hancock at the Center for the Electronic Reconstruction of Historic and Archaeological Sites (CERHAS) at the University of Cincinnati needs to be accommodated.

Developing links (electronic and programmatic) to other museums and centers focused on indigenous cultures throughout the world will strengthen programming.

INTERPRETIVE FACILITY AT THE OCTAGON

An exhibit pavilion with graphics and text, coordinated with the interpretation presented at the Great Circle and Wright Earthworks will be developed.

**Short-Term
Priority**

INTERPRETIVE SIGNS/TRAILS

OHS will erect interpretive signs at significant locations at all three components (Great Circle, Octagon, Wright). Locations for the signs that will not be overly obtrusive, disrupt maintenance or adversely affect cultural resources

**Short-Term
Priority**

Walking trails linking the interpretive signs will be developed. Among other things, the signs—and the location of the trails—should encourage respect for the special significance of the earthworks for Native Americans and convey how the public can help preserve the earthworks for future generations, most notably by not walking on or over them.

PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES

Staff will continue to develop a variety of programs tailored to the interests and needs of particular audiences. These programs can include hands-on activities, presentations of oral histories and oral traditions, traditional storytelling and web-based activities. Educational programs and activities will be developed and presented by personnel qualified to present archaeological interpretations and Native American traditions and culture.

**Short-Term
Priority**

17, 20 Public Interpretation and Education Committee – Appendix VII

Exhibits/programs focused on the Newark Earthworks will incorporate information both about the original Hopewell builders and on the more recent history of the site. They will put the site into a regional context, comparing it to other sites in the Ohio Valley and Eastern United States, and into a cultural context, identifying the societies that preceded and followed the Hopewell. Connections between the Hopewells and modern Native Americans will be explored and acknowledged. Programs will explore what is known about the Hopewell and how they lived as well as the environmental conditions that existed while the Newark Earthworks were in use.

6, 9 Public Interpretation and Education Committee – Appendix VII

8 Public Interpretation and Education Committee – Appendix VII

The history of the Newark Earthworks during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries will demonstrate the tensions between development and preservation. Public interpretation in this area can highlight the need for continued preservation of all the remnants of the earthworks complex.

Staff developing exhibits and programs will respect both archaeology and Native American interpretations and oral traditions as the means of learning about the past and as sources of information to be presented to the public.

10 Public Interpretation and Education Committee – Appendix VII

Staff developing exhibits and programs will remain sensitive to Native American concerns about human remains by avoiding display of human burials or photographs of burials; the staff will also remain sensitive to concerns about displaying objects originally found with burials, which is a cultural value issue involving Native American spirituality. These issues will need to be resolved on a Society-wide basis, but discussions at Newark can lead into statewide examination of them.

27 Public Interpretation and Education Committee – Appendix VII

30 Public Interpretation and Education Committee – Appendix VII

Staff will work with college and university educators to develop a program using the Newark Earthworks as a laboratory for training university students in archaeology, education, museums studies, history, or oral history. An integral part of the program will be establishment of internships for student support.

Staff will enhance the Newark Earthworks page of the Society's website (www.ohiohistory.org) to include more detailed information about archaeology, Native American tribes/groups, and other topics relevant to the Newark Earthworks.

25 Public Interpretation and Education Committee – Appendix VII

With the advice and assistance of Native American tribes/groups, the staff will organize Native American craft and art shows and other events.

Cooperation Within OHS

Short-Term Priority

The education/interpretation staff will work with OHS staff responsible for research/preservation and for maintenance to:

- *Identify different areas of the Newark Earthworks where interpretive activities can occur and determine what activities might appropriately occur within the earthworks.*
- *Identify certain locations—“quiet areas”—at the earthworks where visitors can experience the site in their own way.*
- *Try to accommodate requests for special events both during normal visiting hours and after hours*
- *Make provision for picnicking and “passive” recreation*

22 Public Interpretation and Education Committee – Appendix VII

Education staff will also work closely with OHS communications staff to increase public awareness of the Newark Earthworks generally and of specific programs and educational events occurring at the site.

Education staff will cooperate with OHS research/preservation and OHS maintenance staff in installation of additional interpretive signs, walking trails, and the exhibit pavilion at Octagon.

Education staff will work with other OHS educators to develop materials focused on the Newark Earthworks and on Native Americans that will support curriculum standards and objectives.

Partnerships Beyond OHS

5 Resource Identification and Research Committee – Appendix VII

Education/Interpretation staff will work with researchers, both from OHS and from other institutions, to incorporate new information derived from their projects into the programs and activities. When possible, the staff will also provide on-site interpretation for research projects while they are in progress.

11 Community Context and Access Committee – Appendix VII

Education staff will encourage local school boards and teacher organizations to take advantage of the unique educational potential of the Newark Earthworks. Use of the site, especially in winter months, will be encouraged so that students can take advantage of complete access to the Octagon.

12 Resource Identification and Research Committee – Appendix VII

OHS staff will work with the owners of remnants of the Newark Earthworks outside OHS property to explore development of interpretive signs and/or educational programs focused on their portion(s) of the earthworks.

Staff will partner with local organizations to develop walking and driving tours and related educational materials, that will allow visitors to experience the actual extent and complexity of the Newark Earthworks.

Planning

Short-Term Priority

To comprehensively study and evaluate the interpretive needs that have been identified for the site the Society will work to create a site master plan and an interpretive plan. These documents will allow the Society to implement the short-term priorities identified in a logical, consistent manner while anticipating further development of the site.