

Independence National Historical Park Centennial Vision Statement

As a national park located in the heart of one of our nation's largest cities, Independence National Historical Park (INHP) has come to mean many things to many people. A walk through the park reveals local office workers taking a lunch break in the shade of Independence Square, schoolchildren at play in Washington Square, and tour groups gathering to learn about Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell and the history of our great nation. Our challenge lies in engaging these visitors with the park. The goal of our centennial projects is to reach out to our visitors, neighbors and partners, to engage and inspire the involvement of all Americans.

INHP wants to reconnect with all our visitors: to enable local businesses to develop a shared interest in the preservation of park resources; to help children in urban Philadelphia not only play in Washington Square, but learn about its history and symbolic importance; to reinforce to all our visitors that this is their national park, which teaches the history of their nation, and that it is a history still being written and in which they have an active role to play. Since its founding, INHP has had a profound influence on our urban environment, helping to develop local neighborhoods, bringing in tourism dollars, and educating our visitors and neighbors about cultural resource management. We plan to build on this strong history of partnership to help prepare the park and the city for the changing demographics of the 21st Century.

Through our focus on stewardship and the preservation of our many priceless resources, we will connect our visitors with our nation's past. With our environmental leadership program, INHP will take the lead in protecting our natural resources through the use of renewable energy sources. Using educational programs, we will reconnect our city's youth with our park. By building on and improving employee development programs, we will ensure that INHP has the workforce necessary to implement these plans.

Our vision for INHP at the centennial of the National Park Service is one in which education, stewardship, recreation, environmental leadership and professional excellence are used to reach out to all park visitors, to engage them in our mission and our history. We have developed a plan of action that will give our visitors the opportunity to make meaningful contributions to our park. Together, we will all be authors of the developing history of our nation and our national parks.