



Dear Preservationist and/or Conference Planner:

The National Alliance of Preservation Commissions ([NAPC](#)) is calling for proposals to host our fifteenth biennial [FORUM](#) in the summer of 2026. Previous FORUMs have been held in Cincinnati, At Home (virtual event featuring Tacoma), Des Moines, Mobile, Philadelphia, Norfolk, Grand Rapids, New Orleans, Baltimore, Indianapolis, San Antonio, Pittsburg, and Denver. FORUM 2024 will be held in West Palm Beach, FL. Our most successful FORUM attracted nearly 800 participants and filled approximately 1,000 hotel room nights. Hosting FORUM is a fantastic way to showcase your city to a national audience.

Why Host?

- **Dedicated to local historic preservation issues:** the goal of FORUM is to highlight innovative approaches to challenging local preservation issues and provide an interactive learning environment for historic preservation commissioners, commission staff, elected officials, and other preservation professionals and volunteers.
- **Robust education and networking:** FORUM is a national conference designed to enable attendees to learn from their colleagues, as well as from experts in the field. Commissioners are typically not preservation professionals and rely on FORUM for the training they need to build strong local preservation programs and administer preservation laws.
- **Showcase your city:** FORUM blends traditional educational sessions with dynamic discussion panels, mobile workshops, and tours to explore and learn from the host location. Participants will come from local governments across the country as well as from federal, national, state and local preservation agencies and organizations.

Selection, Criteria, Process

NAPC seeks potential conference sites that are attractive to prospective participants, have a strong preservation ethic, good community support, and a substantial fundraising commitment. It is critical that the local public preservation agency, private nonprofit preservation organizations, and Convention & Visitors Bureau work together, along with the State Historic Preservation Office and statewide nonprofit organization, to present a case for hosting FORUM 2026. FORUM's success depends on the host city, and we depend on our local partners to help create a dynamic program with tours and mobile workshops highlighting the preservation issues facing your community. We also depend on a cadre of local volunteers to help manage registration tables, social events, etc. The preservation partners must commit to raise \$40,000 locally to help keep the conference affordable for participants.

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In an effort to reach a wider audience, NAPC encourages submissions from all regions of the country, in particular regions that have not been host to a past FORUM. Once a site is selected, NAPC commits significant staff and board resources to assist the host organizations with planning, marketing, and execution.

NAPC is a national nonprofit organization representing the more than 3,500 local historic district commissions and architectural review boards across the country, including over 2,000 Certified Local Governments (CLGs). Our mission is *helping to build strong local preservation programs and leaders through education, training, and advocacy*. In addition to convening FORUM, NAPC publishes [The Alliance Review](#) quarterly journal, provides training workshops known as [CAMP](#) (Commission Assistance & Mentoring Program) around the country, and hosts online training opportunities on a variety of topics in local preservation throughout the year. NAPC also maintains an information resource center and serves as a voice for local commissions in Washington, D.C.

Programs from previous FORUMs can be found on the NAPC website at <https://www.napcommissions.org/forum>. We encourage you to contact Stephanie Paul, NAPC Executive Director, at director@napcommissions.org for additional information. The proposal deadline is Monday, November 30, 2023. The public announcement of the 2026 FORUM site will take place during the 2024 FORUM in West Palm Beach, FL, August 3, 2024.

Thank you for your support and assistance, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Paula A. Mohr
Chair, NAPC Board of Directors

Selection Criteria for FORUM 2026

- A. Location and Available Dates: The host city should be a destination that is attractive to FORUM participants. The conference usually begins with pre-conference activities on Wednesday at noon and continues through Sunday at noon. Proposed conference dates should be in July (after the July 4th holiday) through early August.
- B. Historic and Cultural Resources: The city and surrounding region should have a strong historic preservation ethic, including a local preservation ordinance and an active commission. An important part of FORUM is highlighting the work of the host city. The city and region should be able to illustrate preservation at work, including challenges, successes, and some failures, and its benefits to the community at large. Respondents to this RFP should also demonstrate how they have made their preservation practice more accessible and relevant to a wider range of people, including but not limited to programs that highlight the history of historically marginalized communities, cultural landscapes, or archaeological resources.

Tours and mobile workshops highlighting historic resources and preservation activities are an important component of FORUM. A successful proposal will include a variety of experiences, including full-day tours, half day tours or mobile workshops, and walking tours offered through the conference. Please note on the proposal if your city is located near a World Heritage Site as well.

- C. Fundraising and Community Support: Financial support from the host city and/or the State Historic Preservation Office is essential. State and local conference underwriting is essential to keep conference registration rates affordable for volunteer commissioners, staff and community preservationists from across the country. Local partners are expected to provide a minimum of \$40,000 in local sponsorship. Additional financial support from the State Historic Preservation Office and or statewide nonprofit preservation organization is also strongly encouraged. Proposals that offer firm financial commitments from identified sources will rank higher in the selection criteria than those that do not. Support from other organizations and agencies within the city willing to provide logistical assistance and approximately 25 volunteers is also an important consideration. Host cities are expected to have a local planning committee that will work closely with NAPC staff to plan and execute the conference including session and tour development and logistics.
- D. Cost and Convenience to Attendees: Hotel, meal and travel costs for conference attendees are a major selection factor. Many travel on limited state and local budgets

and follow strict per diem rates. In the past, a third of attendees have driven to FORUM, so the number of likely attendees within driving distance is a consideration. The accessibility of the airport serving the host city is also a factor, including the number of major airlines/flights, whether the airport is a hub, and the proximity and accessibility of the conference facilities to the airport.

Hotel room cost is also important. Nightly room rates at the conference hotel should ideally be in the \$150-\$175 range (before taxes). We anticipate a national audience of at least 500-700 people. An adequate number of hotel rooms (historic hotels are preferred) should be available in close proximity to the conference facilities in or within walking distance to a downtown area with restaurants, nightlife, shopping, and sightseeing opportunities, including historic sites. It is important that the hotel is within walking distance to quick dining options so conference participants can grab breakfast or lunch in between conference sessions, tours and other events.

- E. **Meeting Facilities:** A minimum of 10,000 square feet of meeting space is required for the various sessions, preferably located in the conference hotel. If multiple buildings are required to meet the space requirement, they must be in close proximity so participants can walk to them quickly between sessions. The meeting spaces must also be accessible for those with mobility issues. Meetings occur throughout the five days of the conference, but concurrent sessions on Friday, Saturday and Sunday will require theater seating for 500-700 split between five to six rooms. Costs for room set-ups, catering needs, and audio-visual equipment are a consideration. Something else to consider with audio-visual equipment is providing interpretive features or resources for those with hearing and visual impairments.

At minimum, NAPC has the following space needs:

- Registration and exhibition hall area open from Wednesday through Sunday with approximately 2000-3000 square feet of exhibit space.
- A locked office space for staff starting the Monday before the conference opens through the following Monday.
- Wednesday: Four (4) meeting rooms with capacity to seat 50-75 people classroom style [short course, CLG coordinators meeting, affiliate meetings] and two (2) meeting rooms to accommodate 30-50 people boardroom style.
- Thursday: Four (4) meeting rooms with capacity to seat 50-75 people classroom style [short course, CLG coordinators meeting, affiliate meetings] and two (2) meeting rooms to accommodate 30 people boardroom style.
- Friday: Four (4) meeting rooms with capacity to seat at least 150 people theatre style [concurrent educational sessions] and one (1) meeting room with capacity

to seat at least 150-300.

- One room with capacity to seat 600 people theater-style for plenary. Locations for plenary and reception could be offsite, but the proposal should address how far these locations are from the hotel and how organizers propose moving attendees from one location to another.
- Saturday: Four (4) meeting rooms with capacity to seat at least 150 people theatre style and one (1) meeting room with capacity to seat 150-300. Additional space with capacity to hold 100-150 people banquet style for plated luncheon with speaker.
- Sunday: Four (4) meeting rooms with capacity to seat at least 150 people theatre style and one (1) meeting room with capacity to seat 150-300.

As conference planning develops, additional spaces may be needed to accommodate additional educational settings and affinity events and receptions.

Additional Requirements:

- As part of the selection process, NAPC will visit the most viable communities in person. Potential hosts will assist with securing hotels and travel support for up to three FORUM 2026 Selection Committee members. This visit typically includes two hotel nights and three days. Host cities will prepare an itinerary for the Selection Committee to tour the hotel and potential event spaces, visit historic neighborhoods and sites, and potential tour routes.
- Once selected as the host for FORUM 2026, representatives of the city, state, and/or CVB will attend FORUM 2024 in West Palm Beach, FL for the announcement of the selection and staff a table on the final day of the conference.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

Each proposal MUST include:

- A completed proposal form (submitted using the Google Form linked below) that addresses the aforementioned selection criteria.
- A complete Additional Fundraising and Community Support document (linked in the Google Form). This should be submitted as part of the Supplemental documentation.
- Supplemental documentation to support information in the proposal form. This information should be sent to director@napcommissions.org via Google Drive, DropBox, or another FTP (File Transfer Protocol) site. Title the file: FORUM 2026 Proposal Your City, Your State

Required Supplemental Documentation includes:

1. Support letters from the relevant state and local preservation agencies. These may include indications of financial or in-kind support for FORUM.
2. Support letters from organizations and other groups that offer significant support for FORUM at the proposed site. These may include indications of financial or in-kind support for FORUM.
3. A clear indication of commitments that make up the \$40,000 local fund-raising goal. *If solid commitments are not available, please indicate the local sources that would be approached and the likelihood of a positive response. Please indicate whether prospects have already been contacted.*
4. Additional information addressing each of the selection criteria which may include a narrative, photos and other relevant attachments.
5. A visitor map or city marketing materials indicating hotels, sites of interest, and historic sites.
6. Marketing materials for historic sites.
7. Marketing materials for all proposed hotels.
8. Site maps, rental and set-up rate sheets for all hotels/venues at which meeting space is proposed.
9. Rate sheets for audio-visual equipment rental/usage for all proposed venues.
10. Food and beverage service/catering rate sheets for all catering and proposed venues, including service fees/percentages. Suggested menus are optional.

SUBMISSION TIMELINE

Monday, November 30, 2023: The proposal form must be completed and supplemental materials sent to NAPC.

December-January, 2023: The FORUM 2026 Location Selection Committee will review proposals and reach out with any clarifying questions.

Mid-January, 2024: Notifications will go out to a short list of selected communities.

Mid-Late January 2024: NAPC Staff will work with potential communities to schedule site visits for NAPC Staff and members of the FORUM 2026 Selection Committee.

February-Early March, 2024: Site visits will take place.

March, 2024: The FORUM 2026 Selection Committee will make a recommendation to the NAPC Board for approval of the FORUM 2026 site.

Late March 2024: Notification of FORUM 2026 site selection

August 3, 2024: Announcement of the FORUM 2026 site will be made at FORUM 2024 in West Palm Beach, FL.

If you are considering submitting a proposal to host FORUM but would like to talk through more details, please contact NAPC at director@napcommissions.org or call (757) 802-4141.

SUBMIT PROPOSAL [HERE](#)

Proposals must be submitted using the online form linked above by November 30, 2023 at 11:59 PM EST to be considered.

To preview the Proposal Form before making an official submission, please refer to the [FORUM 2026 Host City Planning Worksheet](#).

We look forward to receiving your submission!