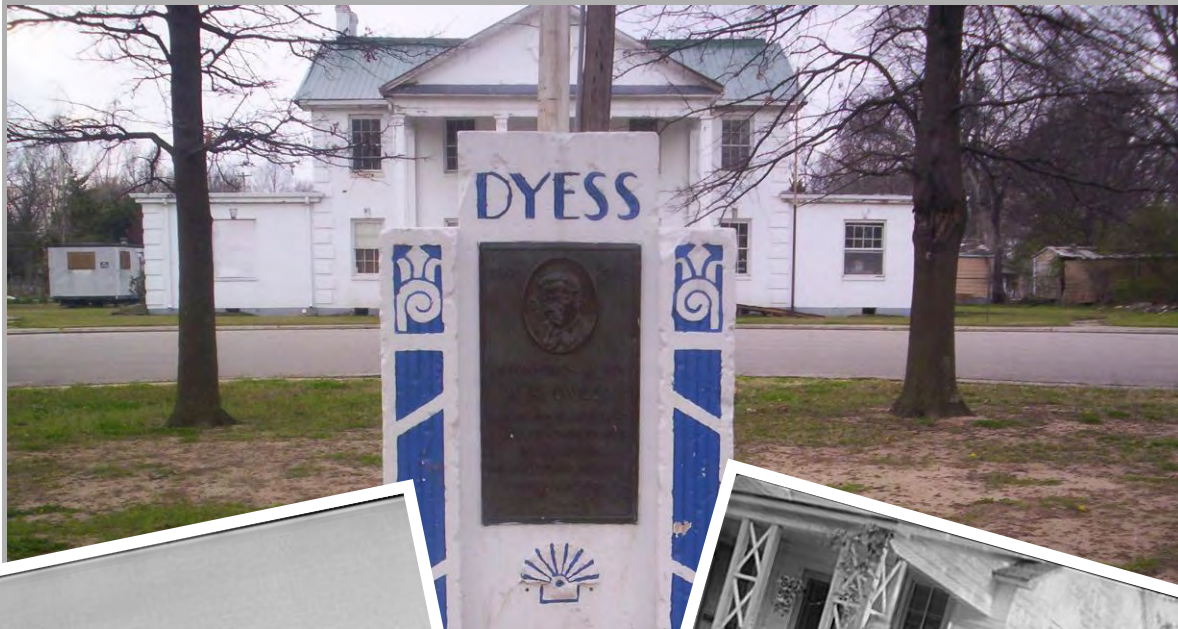


DYESS COLONY REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN



Prepared for:
Arkansas State University
Jonesboro, Arkansas

March 2010

Submitted by:

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DYESS COLONY REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN Dyess, Arkansas

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Photos shown on the cover of this document, from left to right include: Dyess Colony House (National Archives), Dyess Monument with Historic Administration Building in Background (JMA, Inc.), Johnny Cash (Arkansas State University); Dyess Colony Family (National Archives).

Table of Contents

Part 1 - Statement of Findings	1.1
Part 2 - History & Interpretive Contexts	
<i>The Sunken Lands</i>	2.1
<i>Farming the Delta</i>	2.3
<i>The Hardest of Times</i>	2.6
<i>Dyess Colony and the New Deal</i>	2.9
<i>Promised Land for the Cash Family</i>	2.16
Part 3 – Assessment of Conditions	
<i>The Material Culture of Dyess</i>	3.1
<i>Dyess Center National Register Historic District</i>	3.4
<i>Integrity of the Historic District</i>	3.6
<i>Local Conditions and Compatible Infill</i>	3.8
<i>Conditions at the Cash House</i>	3.15
Part 4 – Plan of Action	
<i>General Parameters</i>	4.1
<i>Implementation Strategy for The Dyess Community</i>	4.3
<i>Implementation Strategy for The Dyess Town Circle</i>	4.6
<i>Implementation Strategy for The Dyess Farms Cultural Landscape</i>	4.12
Part 5 - Appendices	
<i>Appendix A – Historic Preservation Guidelines</i>	5.1
<i>Appendix B – Components of a Historic Structures Report</i>	5.2
<i>Appendix C – List of Preservation Briefs</i>	5.4
<i>Appendix D – Preliminary Brand Platform</i>	5.7

Statement of Findings

The Works Progress Administration, Rural Resettlement Program provided a sense of hope and renewal for farming families of the Arkansas Delta whose lives were devastated by the natural and economic disasters of the early 20th century. Springing forth from 16,000 acres of forested swamp bottomland drained and cut for the new community, an army of workers constructed the 28-block town with 500 small farms surrounding it. In town, historically referred to as Dyess Center, several residences were constructed along with a hospital, school, churches, commissary, canning plant, and administration building. After a rigorous interview, the first families selected were set up with a 20-acre farmstead complete with house, barn, smokehouse and mule. Built on the fundamental values of “achievement through hard work” and “neighbor-helping-neighbor” under laid by the institutions necessary to form a social safety net for those in need, the Dyess Colony became an incubator for success and optimism.

Since its incorporation in the 1960s as a small city independent of federal support and control, it is apparent that the town has seen some hard times. The city council has had to contend with a range of serious issues including depopulation, loss of businesses and tax base, needed upgrade of infrastructure, and lax code enforcement. However, the tight-knit sense of community lives on and with respect to Dyess’ recent misfortunes, in the words heard recently from one of the older residents, “this too shall pass.”

The findings of the JMA consulting team encourage **Arkansas State University** to participate and invest in the further development of the Dyess Colony Project. The potential is high for developing an authentic heritage attraction that will tell the compelling story of the founding of the Dyess Colony as part of the Rural Resettlement Program of the Works Progress Administration. The Dyess Colony Project will strongly complement the other historic sites and museums operated by the university, will further preservation-based economic development objectives established for the Rural Heritage Development Initiative, and relates well to the regional context and storyline for the Arkansas Delta. The other heritage attractions operated by the university are:

- The Southern Tenant Farmers Museum in Tyronza,
- The Hemingway-Pfeiffer Museum and Educational Center in Piggott,
- Lakeport Plantation in Lake Village, and
- The Arkansas State University Museum in Jonesboro.

It is important to note, however, this is not a project for the University to take on by itself. A successful outcome will depend on the forging of several key partnerships. First and foremost,

it is critical that the **City of Dyess** lend its ongoing support and commitment. Secondly, a coalition of interests must join forces to form the **Dyess Colony Partnership**. This collaborative effort requires participation from the following interests:

- **The Arkansas Delta Byways** regional tourism promotion association including the Arkansas Great River Road and Crowley's Ridge Parkway, both designated as National Scenic Byways;
- **The Sunken Lands Regional Chamber of Commerce;**
- Certain **property owners** in the Dyess community;
- Representatives from the **House of Cash** and Johnny Cash's trust and estate; and
- **Mississippi County, Arkansas**

Also if this plan is to be fully implemented other types of organizations and interests will be needed that have not yet been specifically identified including:

- Financial Institutions – to provide the necessary capital financing for development;
- Community-based Land Trusts – to hold title to property acquired for preservation purposes and/or enforce possible conservation easements;
- Representatives from the Memphis Metropolitan Region – the close proximity of Dyess to this major Tennessee city requires sufficient recognition and coordination;
- Representatives of the Entertainment Industry – to assist in promoting the amazing musical legacy in Dyess and throughout the Arkansas Delta; and
- Special Interest Groups – exploiting social media opportunities will broadcast intentions and efforts to a variety of individuals and organizations to support the cause.

The plan of action (outlined in detail in a separate section of this report) focuses on these four key areas of development:

1. Recognizing the extended **Dyess Community** through documentation and celebration;
2. Establishing and rehabilitating the **Dyess Farms Cultural Landscape** to recreate a sense of the historical rural surroundings;
3. Redeveloping the **Dyess Town Circle** as the heart and hub of the city;
4. Supporting the city in its efforts to maintain and enhance the **Dyess Center Historic District;**

A Brief History & Contexts for Interpretation

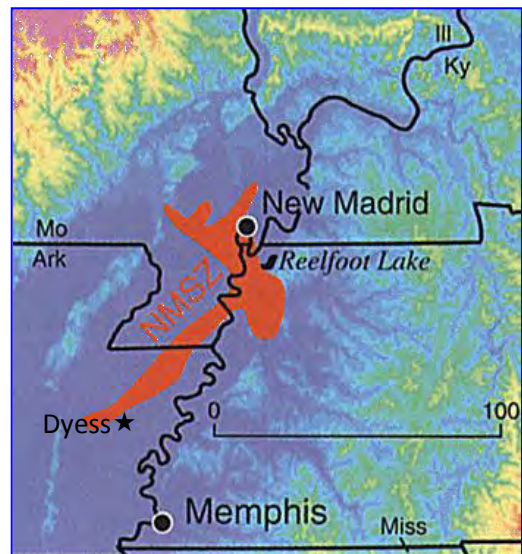
Dyess, Arkansas was founded by the United States government as an experimental cooperative settlement to help Arkansas farmers impoverished by the Great Depression. Established on natural swampland, it gave its first residents a fresh start, but also replicated the American pioneer experience of taming the wilderness and creating new farms and livelihoods.

Dyess also left an indelible mark on American music culture as the town that produced singer and songwriter Johnny Cash. Its influence is particularly evident in Cash's music and lyrics, many of which reference his family's experiences as cotton farmers in Dyess.

The Sunken Lands

Dyess stands within a land area known as the "Sunken Lands," a swath covering portions of three Arkansas counties--Craighead, Mississippi, and Poinsett--that was permanently altered by a series of earthquakes in 1811 and 1812. Before the New Madrid earthquakes, this portion of the Missouri Territory was wooded uplands and home to plentiful game. Settlement by white farmers had begun, but the area was still sparsely populated. Beginning in December 1811 and continuing into March of 1812, a series of earthquakes shifted and rolled the ground, causing the land to sink as much as 50 feet in places. As sections of land dropped below the surrounding vicinity, water flooded into these massive sinks. Forests and fields were submerged, and large fissures opened in the ground, leading to the creation of new lakes and turning much of the landscape into swampland, tangled vegetation, and thick, unstable soil known as "gumbo" or "buckshot" (Hendricks 2009).

Characterized by the U. S. Geological Survey as "10 times larger than that of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake," it is estimated that the epicenter was located near present-day Blytheville, Arkansas—just 30 miles northeast of Dyess. Witnesses reported huge waves on the Mississippi River, reversing its flow temporarily. Boats on the river were either capsized or thrown on to shore. Huge pieces of high bluffs



The New Madrid Seismic Zone, USGS

slid into the river and entire islands emerged or disappeared. On land, “sand volcanoes” also referred to as “blows” spewed huge plumes of soil into the air burying everything in sight. Most buildings in the seismic zone either collapsed or were swallowed up. After six weeks of continued seismic activity, most settlers in the region abandoned their devastated towns and flooded farms for other areas.

During this time the federal government encouraged settlement of the region. The U.S. military was recruiting soldiers for the War of 1812 offering the prospect of future land grants in territories west of the Mississippi River as an enticement. However, the only survey maps of the area showed the land as it had been before the earthquakes. Veterans, having met their service obligations later arrived only to find that their prospective farms were under swamps and lakes. While many moved on to more hospitable landscapes, some stayed and attempted to drain the swampland for planting.

*Objectives for **The Sunken Lands** interpretive theme*

- Create a shared interpretive resource for all heritage attractions affiliated with the Sunken Lands Chamber of Commerce to use that describe *The Sunken Lands* area and how it was formed.
- Content ideas for the shared interpretive resource:
 - A map of the eastern United States that shows the extent of impact for the New Madrid earthquakes (e.g. reference to sidewalks cracking in Charleston, SC?)
 - A virtual model rendered in three dimensions that shows the Sunken Lands within the New Madrid Seismic Zone before, during and after the earthquakes.
 - A cross-section of the formation of a sand volcano and its effects.
 - Excerpts from eye witness accounts of the earthquakes.
 - Provide answers to the question “what if it happens again?”
- Provide an exhibit portal at each heritage attraction for the shared interpretive resource to be used and displayed.
- In addition to the shared interpretive resource, each heritage attraction should also feature information on stories of the Sunken Lands that are specific to their community.
- The Dyess Colony Project should join forces with the Sunken Lands Chamber and include one of the exhibit portals for the shared interpretive resource as part of the design of its Phase 1 program.

Farming the Delta

The Arkansas Territory was established in 1819, and a territorial legislature seated to improve law enforcement further promoting settlement of the region. Such efforts included the passage of the Married Woman's Property Law in 1835, the first law in the nation giving a married woman the right to hold property in her own name. Along the Mississippi River the rich alluvial soils of the Arkansas Delta facilitated the rapid development of agriculture, from modest farms to large plantations. What started as a single county for the entire delta region was divided into eight separate counties by the time Arkansas entered the union as a state in 1836.

Mississippi County, the northernmost county in Arkansas located along the river of the same name, was created in 1833. Although this corner of the state was slow to repopulate after the earthquakes, by the time of the 1840 census the county had 1,410 residents—900 whites and 510 slaves. Like other areas of the delta, farming was the obvious occupation and overflow from the Mississippi was an ongoing problem. Some built small levees to protect their crops, but the structures were often overwhelmed during larger floods. With the passage of the federal Swamp Land Grant Act of 1850, the state was granted swamp and “overflowed land” to sell. Revenue generated from land sales went towards the construction of levees and drainage canals. Documented in the 1852 surveyor general's report, Mississippi County had the largest quantity of wetlands and floodplain for counties in Arkansas.

Several large plantations emerged in the southern portion of the county near the river associated with the MacGavock, Grider, Driver, and Fletcher families. Serving as the main stay of the local economy, the county's population more than doubled to 3,895 by 1860. This number did not likely include any “free blacks” residing in the county because of a law approved by the Arkansas legislature the previous year. The Free Negro Expulsion Act of 1859 made it illegal for any African-American or individual of mixed race who was not a slave to live in the state. Signed into law under the fear that these individuals would lead uprisings, no one was ever prosecuted under its provisions. Estimates show that only 700 people in the state were directly affected by it. Most who were targeted left the state never to return.

With the collapse of the plantation economy after the Civil War the county's population dropped to 3,633. Soon, however, attention was focused on the virgin forests of the region. Attracting the interest of Northern lumber companies, timber harvest operations and sawmills became commonplace in the county. By the 1880 census the county's population doubled to 7,332. During the early years of the timber boom lumber was shipped to northern destinations by river barge until regional railroad connections were made around 1900. With the arrival of the trains, lumber production was sustained as a major part of the local economy until about

1920. Census figures reflect this growth period with a county population of 16,384 in 1900 and 47,320 by 1920.

During the sustained growth of the late 19th and early 20th centuries the issues of flooding and drainage did not disappear. Lands cleared of timber became available for crop cultivation. The exposed, fertile soil was excellent for raising cotton and soybeans. In Mississippi County the Wilson family, who initially had interests in the timber industry, saw the value in clear-cut acreage and eventually assembled ownership for over 65,000 acres of timber and farmland. But the inherent problem of these “overflowed lands” remained. Under continuous pressure from large land owners in Arkansas’ delta counties the state took action in 1893 by establishing drainage districts. Using this authority hefty taxes were imposed on land owners to fund the building of levees and drainage ditches. Smaller farmers, who were often “land rich and money poor”, were hit especially hard by the new tax. Also larger land owners frequently asserted riparian rights to adjacent submerged tracts which often resulted in land disputes with smaller farmers. As often is the case, political and legal outcomes tended to favor larger landowners who amassed substantial tracts of property.

After the end of the slave-based plantation economy, agricultural land in the South was often cultivated under a different arrangement—farm tenancy. The typical tenant farmer would lease a tract of land, usually up to 40 acres, from a landowner with payment in the form of a share of the harvest. The tenant was responsible for seed, equipment,



Tenant farmers in the early 20th century, National Archives

production supplies and the labor to plant, cultivate and harvest the crop. If the tenant did not possess the necessary amenities the landowner would provide them, often including a residence, for a greater share of the harvest. This latter form of tenancy is commonly referred to as ‘sharecropping’. Frequently the landowner would hold title to the entire crop denying the tenant the opportunity to negotiate the best price for the crop. Many larger planting companies also required a sharecropping tenant to purchase goods and supplies from a company commissary using only proprietary script. Abusive business practices such as inflated prices and perpetual debt were common and often created tension between tenant and owner. Such conditions resulted in the formation of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union in nearby Tyronza, Arkansas in 1934.

*Objectives for **Farming the Delta** interpretive theme*

- Create a shared interpretive resource for the heritage attractions operated by Arkansas State University that provides an overview of the plantation economy and the institution of farm tenancy in the delta region to be used and featured at each location including the Dyess Colony Project.
- Provide an exhibit portal at each heritage attraction operated by Arkansas State University for the shared interpretive resource to be used and displayed.
- In addition to the shared interpretive resource, each heritage attraction operated by Arkansas State University should also feature additional exhibits on the *Farming the Delta* theme that are specific to the respective site including the Dyess Colony Project.
- Coordinate with other heritage attractions affiliated with the ASU's Heritage SITES Program, Arkansas Delta Byways, and the Rural Heritage Development Initiative in developing an interpretive plan for the *Farming the Delta* theme. Attention should be given to establishing subthemes and important storylines; avoiding contradiction and duplication; providing a variety of visitor experiences; and uniting the attractions under a regional special event or festival.
- Conduct further research on the timber storyline to determine the extent of relevance in the Arkansas Delta. (Was the industry mostly centered in Mississippi County or was it a major industry for the entire delta region?) Also determine which heritage attraction in the delta region should be the primary storyteller.

The Hardest of Times

Despite all efforts to drain the land, construct levees and control water flows, a devastating flood struck the region in 1927. The most costly and destructive flood in Arkansas' history and among the worst nationally, the Great Flood of 1927 resulted in 36 of 75 Arkansas counties being covered in floodwaters up to 30 feet deep. The Mississippi River and its tributaries were already swollen from an early snowmelt and heavy rains in the Midwest. This, coupled with a record rainfall in Arkansas for the month of April, created conditions for disaster. With no place to go, water in the Mississippi River and its tributaries backed up. In some locations along the Mississippi the river was sixty miles wide. The flow of the White River is reported to have run in the reverse direction. Levees failed, allowing water to rush into previously protected towns and farmland. Official numbers reported 246 dead and 750,000 in need of some form of aid. One hundred fifty four refugee camps were set up by the Red Cross, 80 in Arkansas alone. The Mississippi River remained at flood stage for a record 153 days. Floodwaters did not entirely recede until late summer bringing the agricultural economy of Arkansas to a screeching halt.



Lake Village, Arkansas during the Great Flood of 1927, The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture

Perhaps a silver lining amidst the suffering was the seeds that were sown for a fundamental shift in how the federal government addresses natural disasters and the popular social programs of the New Deal. Although under Calvin Coolidge's administration not a single federal dollar went towards providing direct assistance to flood victims, then Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover was appointed to oversee voluntary relief operations. Deeply moved by what he saw he referred to the event during the 1928 presidential campaign as "America's greatest peacetime disaster." After his successful election in 1928 Hoover authorized funding for flood relief and saw an opportunity to reform the farm tenancy system. With many large land owners forced into bankruptcy, huge tracts of land lay dormant. In secrecy, Hoover proposed that the federal government acquire large tracts of property through a resettlement corporation. Former tenant farmers and sharecroppers without land to farm would purchase 20-acre farms through the resettlement corporation becoming land owners. Even though Hoover's attempt never led to success, it laid the groundwork for the 1934 Rural Resettlement Program implemented as part of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal and the creation of the Dyess Colony.

Unfortunately, yet another disaster was to plague the farmers of the Arkansas Delta. Just three years after the fertile farmlands of the delta region were drowned in the greatest flood on record--they turned to dust in the greatest drought on record. In the summer of 1930 the lowest rainfall totals in Arkansas for the months of June and July were recorded. During the month of August temperatures peaked at 113 degrees after several successive 110 degree days. Crops dried up in the fields under the intense heat described as a "complete crop failure" with the season's harvest predicted at a mere 50% of the previous year's production. Serious concern was expressed for farming families who could not meet their own needs in food production, let alone bring crops to market. The Red Cross returned to implement relief programs and did not leave the Delta region until March 1931. To top it all off cotton prices plummeted with the onset of the Great Depression. The cost of production per pound far exceeded market price. These successive disasters within a five-year period spelled economic ruin and personal devastation for hundreds of farming families in the Sunken Lands and across the state during the early 1930s (Hendricks 2009).

*Objectives for **The Hardest of Times** interpretive theme*

- Create a shared interpretive resource for all heritage attractions affiliated with ASU's Heritage SITES Program, Arkansas Delta Byways, and the Rural Heritage Development Initiative that describe the natural and economic conditions that led to the 'perfect storm' of disasters and devastation impacting the people of the Delta region.

- Content ideas for the shared interpretive resource:
 - A virtual map of the entire Mississippi River drainage basin that shows the cumulative impact of early snowmelt, storms in the Midwest, and record rainfall in Arkansas that led to the Great Flood of 1927.
 - A virtual map of states affected by the drought of 1930 that shows areas of high temperatures and low rainfall that led to the creation of the Dust Bowl.
 - An overlay map combining the cumulative effect of flood and drought on the Arkansas Delta.
 - Graphic representation of statistical data for the flood and drought including comprehensive information for the overall area of impact and detailed information specific to the Arkansas Delta.
 - Photographs and excerpts from eye witness accounts of the flood and drought specific to the Arkansas Delta.
 - A summary, including photos and text, of relief efforts in the Arkansas Delta for the flood and drought.
 - Provide answers to the question “what if it happens again?”
 - A description, including photos and text, of local economic factors and conditions in the Delta’s agricultural economy within the larger context of the Great Depression.
- Provide an exhibit portal at each heritage attraction for the shared interpretive resource to be used and displayed.
- In addition to the shared interpretive resource, each heritage attraction should also feature information on stories of the flood, drought and economic depression that are specific to their community.
- The Dyess Colony Project should join forces with ASU’s Heritage SITES Program, Arkansas Delta Byways, and the Rural Heritage Development Initiative and include one of the exhibit portals for the shared interpretive resource as part of the design of its Phase 1 program.

Dyess Colony and the New Deal

The nationwide economic woes and bank failures of the Great Depression hit especially hard in the rural South. The earliest ripples of the pending economic disaster were felt by thousands of farmers who lost their land and were facing poverty well before the stock market crash. By 1930, as many as two-thirds of Arkansas farmers who owned their own land had lost their farms with many turning to sharecropping as a last resort (Hendricks 2008).

With Franklin D. Roosevelt's landslide presidential victory in 1932, he immediately set out to revive the national economy and aid the poor and unemployed. Roosevelt's New Deal created new government agencies tasked with creating jobs and providing relief for the destitute, including impoverished farmers. Among the agencies and programs included were the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) (Hendricks 2008).

In 1933, William R. (W.R.) Dyess, who lived in southern Mississippi County, became the first FERA administrator for the state of Arkansas. Believing that the rich 'gumbo' soils of the Sunken Lands could prove viable for farming, he proposed the creation of a new government-sponsored cooperative agricultural community for displaced Arkansas farmers. His plans called for purchasing a large, swampy tract of the Sunken Lands, which would be drained and cleared for farming. The land would be used as a colony where 500 displaced farm families could settle and become self-sustaining. Each colonist family would receive an advance for a farmstead, buildings, mule, cow, and basic supplies for a good start, with the expectation that they would clear and farm their land and eventually repay the government. Cooperative marketing of harvested crops would benefit the community, and businesses set up in the colony would provide jobs and profits if successful (Hendricks 2008; Pittman 1970:313-314; 323).

In early 1934, W. R. Dyess submitted his proposal to Harry L. Hopkins, the FERA administrator and an advisor to President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Funding for the \$3 million project was subsequently approved. The Arkansas Rehabilitation Program, the statewide organization created to represent FERA, established the Arkansas Rural Rehabilitation Corporation to administer the colony (Hendricks 2008; Istre and Istre 2009:3; Kirk 1975).

The land W. R. Dyess chose for the project was 16,000 acres of wooded marsh and swamps held by three owners: the Creamery Package Company, Lee Wilson and Company, and Drainage District No. 9. The government paid \$136,994 for the land. From the beginning, the colony's location and W. R. Dyess' involvement in the project were controversial and became a hot topic among Arkansas politicians. Lee Wilson was a friend of Dyess' son and the government purchase of what was considered to be worthless land netted him a handsome profit. Also,

nearby roads to be improved as part of the colony project crossed some of Dyess' own land, benefiting his own farming operations (Gambrell 2009; Holley 1973:205-207; Kirk 1975; Pittman 1970:314).

The new colonists were carefully chosen through an application process. Applicants had to be healthy, able-bodied, experienced farmers who had lost their farms and descended to the lowest level of poverty due to the Depression. They had to demonstrate that they could perform the hard work of clearing land and establishing farm operations. The applicants also had to be white Arkansas residents of "good moral background" (Hendricks 2008; Pittman 1970:320-321).



Colonist family in front of their home, National Archives

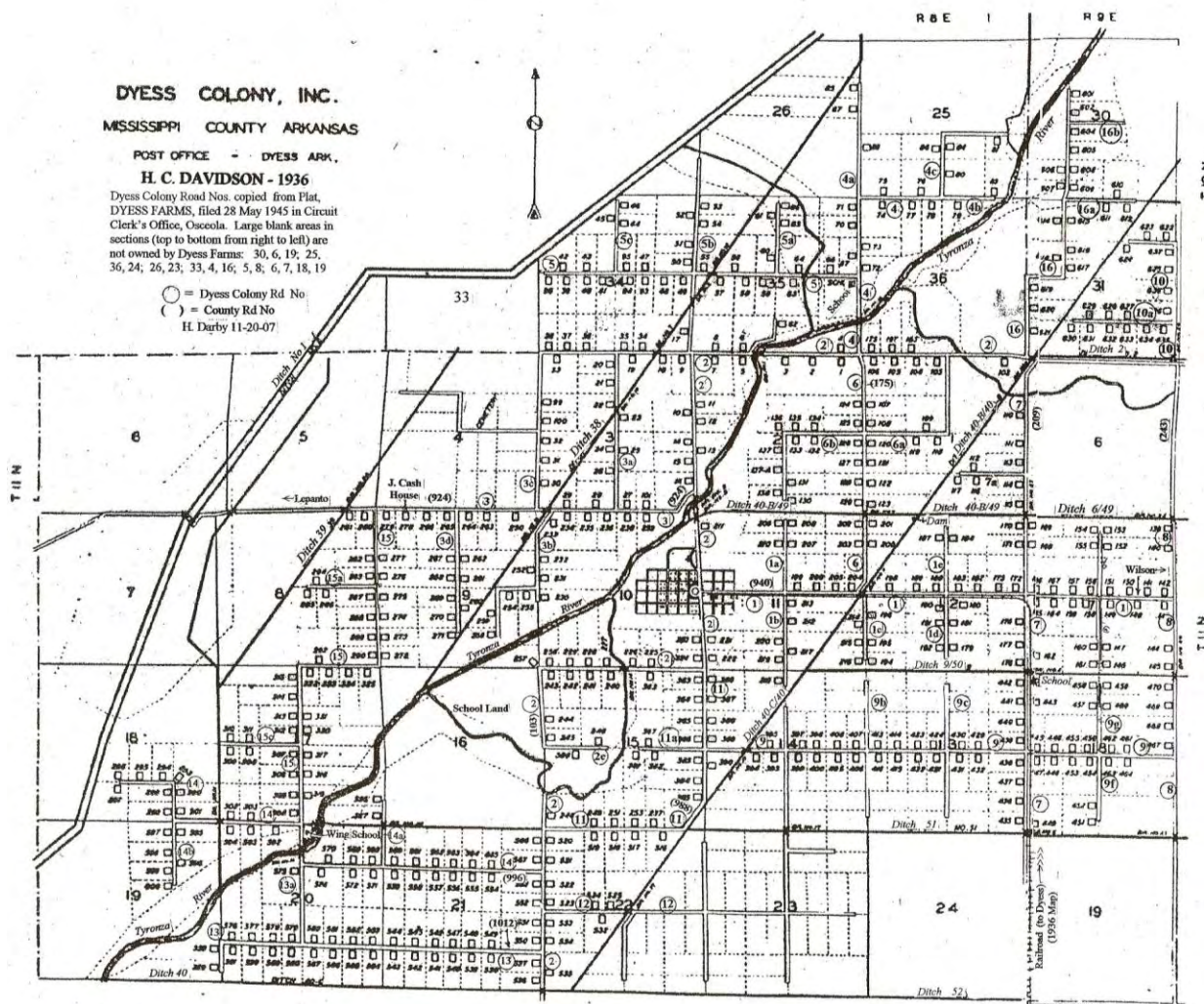
In May 1934, construction began at the new colony, initially known as Colonization Project No. 1. Well before it was ready for the farm colonists, the colony was providing jobs for hundreds of unemployed Arkansas residents during its construction. It was constructed by approximately 1,300 laborers, all hired from the state relief program. While some workers lived nearby and commuted to work, others lived at the job site in an army-style camp with barracks, a kitchen, and a dining hall, plus sawmills and other infrastructure. Most of the timber needed for the construction of colony buildings came from the land itself, where it was cut and harvested by the workers and processed in several onsite sawmills. By 1938, the colony had produced 12 million board feet of lumber (Kirk 1975; Pittman 1970:316-317).



Colony farm in 1938, Courtesy of Jole Mitchell Clifton

The colony was laid out with a small, grid-plan town center surrounded by a larger grid of square sections, with sections delineated by straight roads lined with farmsteads. The Tyrnosa River and several drainage ditches ran parallel to one another on a northeast-southwest angle through the colony. The laborers cleared and graded the colony's network of gravel and dirt roads and dug the drainage ditches. The roads were given numbers instead of names, and wooden bridges were built to carry the roads across streams and drainage ditches. Eventually, the colony had 60 miles of roads and 90 miles of drainage ditches (Pittman 1970:317-320).

Most of the colony's land area was rural, divided into numbered farms ranging from 20 to 40 acres. Each farmstead came equipped with a house, barn, chicken house, and well. Aside from these improvements, the farms remained in a wooded state and were not ready to be planted when the first occupants arrived. Clearing the land for crops was the first responsibility of the new farmers (Gambrell 2009; Hendricks 2008).

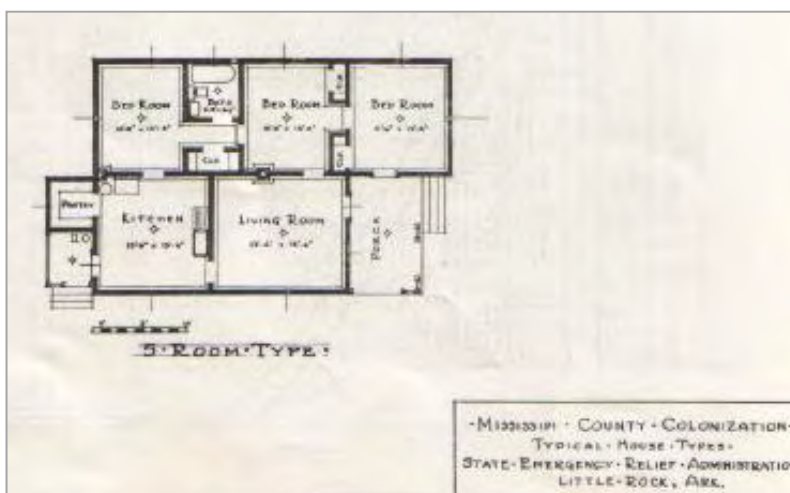


1936 Map of Dyess Colony, Courtesy of Everett Henson

Former resident Johnny Cash vividly described the original conditions on his family's farm, which was undoubtedly similar to other colonists' land:

It was jungle – I mean, real jungle. Cottonwood and ash and hickory as well as scrub oak and cypress, the trees and vines and bushes tangled up so thick in places that you couldn't get through, some of it underwater, some of it pure gumbo – but Daddy could see its potential....The land was awfully hard to clear, but Daddy and my oldest brother Roy, then almost fourteen, went at it from dawn until nighttime six days a week, starting on the highest ground and working their way downward foot by foot, cutting with saws and axes and Kaiser blades – long handled machetes – and then dynamiting and burning out the stumps. By planting season the first year, they had three acres ready (Cash and Carr 1997:21).

Unlike most company towns and government facility housing areas, the colony houses were sited on the individual farm lots rather than clustered together. Construction of the 500 houses began in July 1934, 347 were completed by May 1935, and all 500 were finished by May 1936. The one-story, wood-frame colony houses were designed by Howard Eichenbaum, a Little Rock architect. There were three basic models: three, four, or five-room houses, but variations to the basic plans resulted in twenty different designs overall. The two larger house models made up 80% of the overall stock, while 20% were of the three-room model. In most families' cases, the simple Dyess farmhouses were a significant improvement over their prior living arrangements (Cash and Carr 1997:20; Gambrell 2009; Kirk 1975; Pittman 1970:317-319,322).

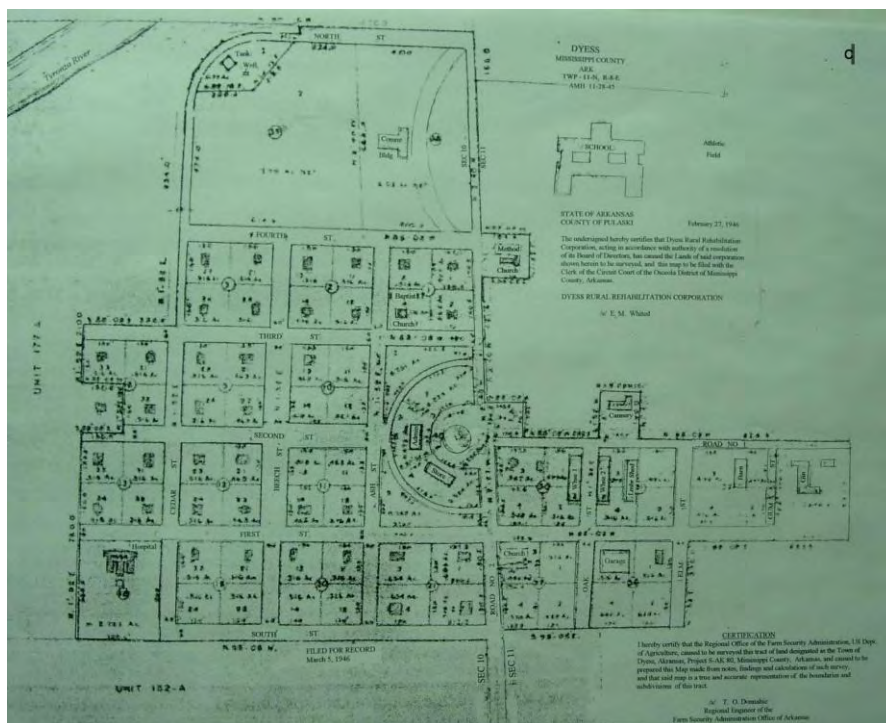


Floor Plan for 5-Room Colony House, Arkansas State University

Every colonist family spent its first year at the colony on a trial basis, following which their progress was evaluated by the colony's farm agent, Harold Spicer, and home economist, Fern Salyers. Those who had made good progress were allowed to stay and keep working toward ownership. While some families failed the test or left on their own accord, the majority successfully passed and continued onward. By the time the colony was completed in January

1938, 115 families had purchased their farms and 330 additional families had passed the trial year (Pittman 1970:321).

Dyess Center functioned as the core of the community, and was laid out much as any small town. At its peak, it had over twenty square blocks and several public buildings: an administration building, bank, barbershop, cooperative colony store, café, post office, hospital, elementary and high schools, warehouses, cotton gin, feed mill, cannery, garage, shoe shop, movie theater, and community center. Three churches were established at the Center, and a weekly newspaper, the *Colony Herald*, began soon after the founding. A spur of the Frisco Railroad provided transportation and shipping for the colony, and a water tower and municipal sewer system served the buildings in the Center. The two-story brick Greek Revival-style administration building, where colony affairs were managed, stood at the west end of a central circle, flanked by the large co-op store on the left and the café building on the right. The café building housed the Dyess Café, a bank, the town newspaper, and a craft shop before it burned down in the late 1940s and was replaced by the town movie theater and a café known as the Pop Shop. The co-op store burned down in 1956 and was not rebuilt. The blocks within the Center also contained several rental houses owned by the government. Many of the town's cooperative amenities, including the gin, hospital, cooperative store, and café, became self-sustaining very quickly, and the WPA absorbed the cost of constructing the roads and school. Dyess Circle was a social hub for the community and a favorite gathering spot for teenagers, who attended movies at the theater and ate at the Dyess Café or the Pop Shop (Istre and Istre 2009:1-2 and notes on Dyess Circle buildings; Pittman 1970:318-322).



1946 subdivision map of Dyess Center, Courtesy of Everett Henson

On January 14, 1936, as the colony construction went on and new settlers continued to arrive, W.R. Dyess was killed in a plane crash. High turnover of farmers, complaints about high land prices, and mounting administrative problems with the colony were inherited by Floyd Sharp, Dyess' successor as head of the WPA in Arkansas. Sharp reorganized the administrative body of the colony as Dyess Colony Incorporated, and set up a system of formal contracts with the colonists to codify their obligations and the process by which they repaid their loans and took title (Holley 1973:208-209).



The Dyess Memorial, JMA, Inc.

On May 22, 1936, the colony was officially dedicated and renamed Dyess Colony in honor of its founder, W.R. Dyess. A memorial stone was placed in front of the administration building. A few weeks later, on June 9th, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt paid a visit to Dyess, where she gave a laudatory speech at the administration building, shook hands with hundreds of residents, and ate dinner at the Dyess Café on the Circle. The colony soon reached 3,000 residents and its infrastructure was complete by January 1938 (Holley 1973:204; Istre and Istre 2009:2; Pittman 1970:319).

Further political turmoil resulted in Arkansas Governor Carl Bailey dissolving Dyess Colony, Inc. in early 1939 over a franchise tax issue. Sharp immediately set up the Dyess Rural Rehabilitation Corporation as a nonprofit replacement administrator. By this time, the WPA was anxious to end its involvement with Dyess and similar colony projects, and Sharp felt that his own involvement made the colony a target of the governor. In November 1939, the federal Farm Security Administration assumed control of the Dyess Colony Corporation (Holley 1973:214-215).

Following building completion in the colony, outside recruitment of new colonists slowed. The remaining vacant farms were either combined into 40-acre tracts for newcomers or acquired by existing colony families in an effort to expand their operations. As more and more families repaid their loans and obtained title to their farms, government control of the colony slowly eased, and World War II drew government attention elsewhere. During the war, many residents left Dyess to join the military or take defense jobs, often because their farm fields were worn out and production had dropped. The population never returned to its pre-war level. During the 1940s, the remaining government interests in Dyess and other New Deal communities were liquidated and Dyess became an autonomous community. In 1964, it was incorporated as a municipality governed by a mayor and board of aldermen (Hendricks 2008).

By the time of the 2000 census, there were only 515 residents remaining in Dyess, down from the 3,000 who lived there at its peak. The institutions and town businesses founded by the government are long gone, with most of the original public buildings in Dyess Center lost to fire, demolition, or decay. Corporate interests have taken over much of the farmland, and soybeans are grown in addition to cotton. Still, a sense of the town's remarkable history lives on. Dyess Center was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976 in recognition of the colony's national importance in the history of the New Deal. The town draws a number of tourists wanting to see the place where Johnny Cash grew up, and annual Dyess reunions bring many former residents and their descendants back to town (Gambrell 2009; Hendricks 2008; Pittman 326; Reyes 2005).

Dyess was the first and probably best known of several Arkansas colonies founded and funded by the federal government. At the time it was established, it was the only agricultural resettlement program in the country, and functioned as a model for others that followed. It is significant as an experiment in resettlement, community organization, communal economics, and rehabilitation of farmers who had the potential to succeed but were mired in poverty. The formation of Dyess clearly reflects New Deal optimism that government programs could rehabilitate the social and economic ills of American life. While it helped only a small percentage of Arkansans in need and its successes were clouded somewhat by the political controversies among its administrators, Dyess nonetheless provided hundreds of farm families with a chance to reclaim their livelihoods. Many of these families successfully attained stable, self-sustaining farming operations in Dyess.

*Objectives for Phase 1 of the **Dyess Colony and the New Deal** interpretive theme*

- One of the goals of the Dyess Colony Project is to rehabilitate the historic WPA era administration building on the town circle as offices for the City of Dyess. A portion of interior space should be reserved for the installation of an exhibit on the Dyess Colony.
- The exhibit should be designed specifically to fit into the reserved space and in a manner that is durable, movable, and easy to maintain.
- Exhibit content should include photos and text that highlight the story outlined in this report along with a secured display of significant artifacts associated with the WPA story, if available.
- Include as part of the exhibit, portals for shared interpretive resources to be developed for *The Sunken Lands* interpretive theme (sponsored by The Sunken Lands Chamber of Commerce), *Farming the Delta* interpretive theme (sponsored by Arkansas State University), and *The Hardest of Times* interpretive theme (sponsored by Arkansas Delta Byways).

Promised Land for the Cash Family

While its history as an agricultural and socioeconomic experiment is significant, Dyess is perhaps best known as the hometown of musician Johnny Cash, who moved to a Dyess Colony farmstead with his family at age three and grew up there. In 1936, the Cashes were one of five impoverished Cleveland County farm families chosen to join the colony in Dyess (Hendricks 2008). At the time they made application to live in the colony, Ray and Carrie Cash and their five children lived in a three-room shotgun shack next to a railroad line in Kingsland, Arkansas. The family arrived at Dyess in 1936, after a rainy, two-day, 250-mile journey from Kingsland in a government truck. To the struggling young family, Dyess Colony was the “promised land”: a chance to own a farm, make a decent living, and live in a brand-new house. The truck brought them to their new home, a five-room house on Farm Number 266, off Road 3 about two-and-one-half miles from Dyess Center (Cash and Carr 1997:19; Hendricks 2008).

At the time of the move, the Cash family included five children: Roy, Louise, Jack, J.R. (later known professionally as Johnny), and Reba. Two more children, Joanne and Tommy, were born in Dyess (Cash and Carr 1997:6). Upon arrival, Ray and Roy Cash worked to clear the “jungle” on their land by cutting the trees and vines and dynamiting and burning the stumps. Once the fields were cleared, Delta Pine cotton was planted and both parents and children tended and picked the crop. The family also raised its own vegetables, hay, and alfalfa for their cow and mule. J.R. Cash began helping in the fields at the age of five, carrying water to his parents and older siblings. At age eight, he began picking cotton himself. Planting began in April, and cotton picking began in October and extended into December. In between were months of continuous and grueling farm work. A flood in 1937 and a scourge of army worms destroyed crops, but the Cashes were able to pay off their loans and eventually took over the farm next door (Cash and Carr 1997:21-28).

Tragedy struck the family on Saturday, May 12, 1944. While twelve-year-old J.R. went fishing, his older brother Jack Cash went to his weekend job cutting fenceposts at the high school wood shop and was severely injured in an accident with a circular saw. Following surgery, he lingered for a week in the Dyess hospital, and then passed away with his family at his side. Within two days of Jack’s death, his funeral had been held and the family was back to work in the cotton fields. J.R. was haunted by his mother’s anguish as she spent the worst days of her life chopping cotton, because there was no resting from the constant cycle of farm work. Jack was J.R.’s best friend and protector, and this devastating loss was a powerful influence throughout his life (Cash and Carr 1997:30-39).

J. R. Cash was vice president of his senior class at Dyess High School, and joined classmates on a senior trip to the Grand Ole Opry. He graduated in 1950 and joined the Air Force, where he

took on the name John R. Cash and organized his first band while serving in Landsberg, Germany. While his family remained at their Dyess farm for a time, Cash never lived there again, though he came back several times for visits and played a homecoming concert at Dyess High School in 1968 (Hendricks 2008).

Music was part of Cash's life from his early childhood. Some of the government loan money from the move to Dyess was used to buy the family a Sears & Roebuck radio, which opened a new world to the young boy and his siblings. When storms came or arduous days of work in the fields were over, he found solace in the farmhouse, listening to pop, blues, and gospel music on the radio. He and his mother and siblings frequently sang as they worked, and his musical talent was evident by his teenage years. His friend Pete Barnhill taught him to play the guitar and he sang in public for the first time in high school. Among his first performances was singing "Drink to Me Only With Thine Eyes" at the Dyess High School commencement for the class of 1949, and "The Whiffenpoof Song" at his own commencement in 1950 (Cash and Carr 1997:65-73; Istre and Istre 2009:7-8).

Cash's experiences growing up in Dyess were revisited often in his music. The genres of music accessible to him in Dyess formed the foundation of his songwriting and performing (Cash and Carr 1997:65-73). His song lyrics recalled details of his family's home life in Dyess, such as the flood of 1937 ("Five Feet High and Rising"), financial struggles, rural life, picking cotton, raising vegetables, making do, and celebrating a meager but joyful family Christmas (Istre and Istre 2009:7, 16-20). Of all the places where Cash lived during his lifetime, Dyess is preeminent as the hometown that shaped his talents and pointed him toward an unforgettable career as a songwriter and performer.



Detail from Dyess High School Class of 1950 photo mural

*Objectives for the **Promised Land for the Cash Family** interpretive theme*

- A temporary audio/visual exhibit for this interpretive theme should be established as part of the rehabilitation of the historic WPA Administration Building (see objectives for previous interpretive theme).
- No additional plans for interpretation can be implemented until the former Cash residence and related properties are secured (see Plan of Action section of this report).

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Assessment of Conditions

The Material Culture of Dyess

Although the remaining historic buildings in Dyess Center and the surrounding environs make up a limited portion of the community's current landscape, they represent a major part of the extant "material" that is available to tell the story of Dyess Colony. While the history of Dyess may be documented in written records, articles, and books, and conveyed through personal photographs, family artifacts, and similar items, there is no substitute for building-scale historic resources that give one a real sense of place. In fact, because the community began as a major effort to construct a new model town, the story is as much about the design and character of that one grand place as it is about facts and archives, historical analysis, or any one family's collection of memorabilia or famous son. Without the survival of some portion of the community's tangent buildings and the real place they occupy, where the events themselves unfolded, the story of the colony would be little more than the cherished memories of a few older citizens. The regional and national context of Dyess would also be reduced to an abstract and much less accessible chapter in American history. Therefore, it is important to examine and define the physical materials that remain from the original construction of the colony and include significant changes to the community over time. Because it is a living community, it is important to find the right way to preserve the material culture with the interests of residents and property owners in mind while preserving the historic resources in a manner that capture the attention of a broader, outside audience.

While one may be tempted to discuss the material culture of Dyess beginning with the key landmark buildings, such as those on the town circle, where the centrality and significance are undeniable, it is more appropriate to start a discussion about the typical methods and scale of construction with the community's ordinary houses. The scattered examples of original Dyess Colony houses represent the true fabric of the historic district. Once the distribution, rhythm and scale, building materials, and character-defining features of these houses are understood, the importance of the generally larger landmark buildings on the circle will become more apparent.

The fabric of the Dyess Colony historic district has, as its main building block, one of the most common models for frame vernacular residential architecture found throughout the Deep South: small, one-story, 3-to-5-room, balloon frame buildings with gable roofs, constructed on masonry piers over a narrow crawl space. Each house had a front porch. The houses were

constructed of ordinary and affordable materials, available locally and common for the time period.

Stylistically, the choice of building forms, exterior materials, and decorative features used at Dyess reflects a simplified distillation of the Colonial Revival style. The houses and some other buildings were sided with clapboard-style wood siding with very little added detail, as was typical of the exterior finishes of Colonial Revival style houses built after 1930. Dyess was created at the beginning of a stylistic period in American architectural history sometimes called the “*Late*” Colonial Revival. In general, the Colonial Revival, which began in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, represents an effort to simplify architectural styles by drawing on Colonial-era examples. The Late Colonial Revival was a time of increasing simplification, particularly in brick and frame houses when architectural proportions were simultaneously changing to accommodate new lifestyle patterns, modern amenities, and emerging new building materials. Some of the stylistic characteristics found in the 1930s houses at Dyess did not become typical nationally until the 1950s. For example, Dyess houses often have low roof pitches accented in a subtle way at the edges by thin barge boards and very small eave returns, characteristics that became the rule in the design of small houses by the mid-1950s.

The houses were constructed with a variety of roof forms and types. Although most had gable roofs, one model had a hipped roof. The gable-roofed houses often had an “L” or “T” floor plan, or the appearance of such a plan. An example is seen at the Cash House where a gabled pavilion projects forward next to the front porch. Another model had a pair of symmetrically placed front-facing gabled projections arranged so that the middle portion of the side-gabled section is roughly equal in width to the two front-gabled projections it bridges.



Early photographs of Dyess Colony houses showing original porch configurations with column and railing details

Some of the characteristics at Dyess may represent a regional approach to traditional residential construction techniques. From the point of view of architectural history, the houses appear to be consistent with the Colonial Revival style as it appears in the area. An example is the tall double hung window units that were originally used in the houses. In old photographs, most of the windows appear to be double hung, 4/4 sash, a window type that is still found in one or two of the most intact surviving examples. The windows are typical of glass sizes and window fabrication techniques as found throughout the United States in the 1880s and 1890s. In the late nineteenth century, they are found in association with several other styles but not usually the Colonial Revival. However, the 4/4 pattern lingered longer in Arkansas, probably because of the availability and affordability of smaller glass sizes.¹ Apparently, the most common double hung window unit used in the original buildings at Dyess, the basic unit of this style of fenestration consisted of a sash pair (top and bottom) in an opening that was at least twice as tall as it was wide. At some doorways, the units were placed symmetrically flanking the door, and in many key elevations, two units were installed side-by-side as a pair, especially in street-facing gable ends.

The fenestration pattern and plantings around the house appear to have been driven by a need for cool breezes in the summer, in the days before air-conditioning. It is clear from the exterior and from limited documentation of the floor plans that has survived that some rooms have one window per wall, while others have two. Many have windows on two perpendicular walls to take advantage of cross breezes. The photographs also show that the houses often had two front doors leading onto the porch. From the surviving floor plans of two model units, the second door led into a bedroom, apparently the master bedroom. The purpose may have been to provide more ventilation by placing a doorway with a screen door (providing a larger screened area than a window would have), shaded by the porch, usually alongside a window. Trees were planted (or left standing) in a dispersed pattern that often included a shade tree located uncomfortably close to the porch. Frequently, they are off-center in relation to the house façade in what appears to be a random location. The fact that the houses and porches had no below-grade foundations eliminated much of the damage that the roots of a large tree typically does, allowing trees that were planted closer than usual to the houses to grow to maturity.

¹ Previous research was conducted by JMA on the 4/4 window type for a Historic Property Report on the Drennen-Scott House in Van Buren, AR. The Drennen-Scott House has 4/4 windows in a wing dating to about 1905. The research for that project revealed a number of examples of 4/4 windows in National-Register-listed frame buildings built after 1900 in Arkansas.

The low pitch of many of the porch roofs represents an interesting contrast with the tall windows, since the windows emphasize verticality and make it apparent that each house is divided into about three rooms. The roof forms and building mass of most houses, on the other hand, along with the clapboard-style siding, emphasize the horizontal. The horizontal emphasis of the roof pitches and of the facades in general is typical of new architectural styles and trends that were emerging in the 1930s, the same decade that streamlined variations of the Art Deco and Art Moderne styles were first seen on the facades of buildings along highways and in urban settings. The appearance of Colonial Revival designs with more horizontal emphasis than at any time in the past was a sign of evolving fashion pointing toward things to come. It was also a sign that Dyess, one of the larger residential construction projects of its era, was on the cutting edge of emerging trends. Most other communities have few if any Colonial Revival style houses from the mid 1930s because construction had ground to a halt as a result of the Great Depression and remained slow in general until the end of the Second World War. By the 1950s, the building shapes and siding type found in Dyess in the 1930s (such as clapboard-style siding sometimes fitted at the corners to eliminate the need for vertical corner boards) were typical of residential construction across the country in the boom that followed the war.

Construction in Dyess appears to have slowed down after the initial push to build the community. As the Dyess Colony project officially ended in 1939 because it had lost too much money to continue, the community and the buildings remained, but apparently with few changes. Only two years later, the United States entered World War II. Construction around the country remained slow during the War. As the national economy recovered at the end of the war, Modern architecture, or the International style, was becoming the dominant trend in urban and progressive areas and mass-produced housing was the main topic of discussion for areas where large numbers of new houses at affordable prices were needed.



Surviving Colony houses. The house on the left is a hip-roofed example. Although the porch has been closed-in, the original porch columns are still intact within the enclosure. The house on the right, an example of an “L”-shaped house, has high integrity with the exception of replacement windows and missing porch posts and railing.

The trend toward suburbanization that followed the war produced many private residential development projects that resembled Dyess in style and density. At the same time, new housing types became available. Prefabricated houses arrived on the scene at a large scale after the war. Architectural characteristics of the Late Colonial Revival continued to become more simplified, and in time, they were combined with some toned down elements of the International style, creating new stylistic trends such as Ranch type homes. While the early prefabricated houses and Ranch type houses were often built in large new suburban developments around the country, individual examples did appear in small communities, including a few at Dyess. The examples in Dyess represent a second generation of houses. They do not look very different from the original houses. Like the Dyess houses of the 1930s, they are one story frame buildings with gable roofs. Unlike the older Dyess houses, they generally have side-gable roofs and small areas of brick used as siding in the lower half of the façade wall. Wider, lower window openings and a slightly lower roof pitch, combined with a lack of other roof features (such as dormers or cross-gables), all combine to reinforce the horizontal emphasis of the form. Most of the houses have no porch, and the only things emphasizing any focal points are the placement of the door at the center of the façade, interrupting the band of brick facing.

Very few of the original “Colony” houses that remain have their original surface materials. At minimum, most have altered windows. Some windows were replaced to fit existing openings. The examples where that is the case have 2/2 pane patterns with horizontal panes and dividing muntins. In the other examples, though, the move away from the tall, narrow sash unit to wider and lower new units also meant alterations to the siding on the house when windows were updated.

Dyess Center National Register Historic District

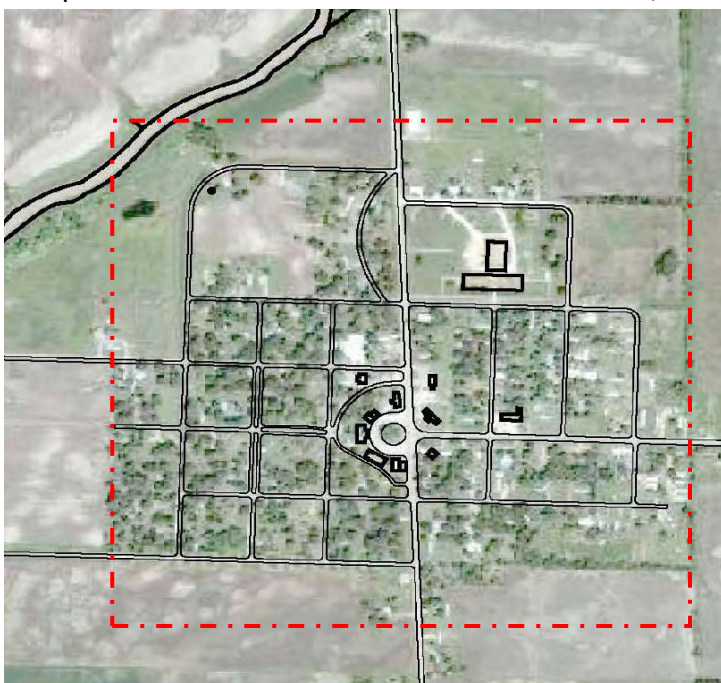
The Dyess Center National Register Historic District was nominated in 1975 and accepted and listed by the National Park Service in 1976 (NPS 2010). One hundred sixty eight (168) acres in size, the boundary includes most of the current incorporated area of the City of Dyess and contains the entire original town plan. The figure below shows the boundary of the historic district overlaid on an aerial photo and drawing of the town plan. It is important to note that at the time of its nomination, the historic district was recognized for its national significance and all contributing resources were less than 50 years of age. Ordinarily, properties under 50 years of age are not considered eligible for listing on the National Register unless it can be demonstrated that they are of “exceptional importance” (NPS 2002).

At the time that the National Register application was prepared there was no requirement to list all contributing resources in a historic district, although this is currently part of nomination procedure. Photos of prominent architecture, such as the administration building and community center, along with a representative sample of typical in-town Colony houses, were provided. But a total count of contributing historic resources that existed in 1975 is not available.

The period of significance for the historic district is identified as 1925-49 (NPS 2010). For the purposes of this study the historic period has been extended to 1950 to integrate the entire boyhood story of Johnny Cash. The 1946 subdivision plat for Dyess Center shown in the previous chapter shows a majority of the original town plan along with footprints of buildings and structures that stood at the time. It appears that 56-58 extant buildings and structures are shown on the 1946 plat; however, other than the school and two dwellings, nothing is accounted for in the northeast quadrant. A detailed historic architectural survey was not part of the scope for this report; however, a windshield survey conducted during a field visit to Dyess reveals that roughly half of the buildings and structures accounted for on the 1946 plat remain.

The portion of the windshield survey that focused on the northeast quadrant revealed that some of the homes in the vicinity were likely constructed during the period of historic significance although possibly subdivided and developed after 1946. Additional research will be needed to verify dates of the subdivision plat and associated construction. For now, it is assumed that the northeast quadrant was developed as a separate subdivision but includes buildings that should be considered as contributing resources in the historic district.

Of the 22 standing buildings and structures in the northeast quadrant (excluding mobile homes), only three to five may qualify as contributing resources. Although incomplete, this is the best information available to establish a baseline for the number of buildings and structures that once existed within the town plan.



Boundary for the Dyess Center National Register Historic District.

Integrity of the Historic District

To be a viable historic district, effort must be made to retain the integrity of contributing resources associated with the Dyess Center National Register Historic District. Furthermore, attention must be given to the physical appearance of properties to maintain presence of the characteristics that make it a historic place. Integrity has already been compromised as the result of the loss of many of the community's original buildings. Also the addition of distracting new buildings between original Colony houses, as well as debris, industrial land uses, and similar conditions draw attention away from the historic district and the larger rural landscape. With the continued loss of historic resources, qualities of the historic district are becoming difficult to see in certain locations. When a large enough number of the resources that made up the original fabric of the community are missing, it will be difficult to imagine what the community looked like in its heyday. The level of eroded integrity exhibited at Dyess makes the conditions of the remaining buildings very important. Future efforts must focus on rehabilitation of the buildings that are still in place, as well as accurate reconstruction of some that are missing, and use all other design opportunities to reinforce the historic integrity and appearance of the community as a whole.

As a general statement, some of the historic houses in Dyess are in good condition and a majority of the dwellings are repairable. The exception may be some of the abandoned houses, a few of which are standing out of plumb with broken windows, doors wide open, and roofs that are either already leaking or about to fail. In most cases, the houses that have been abandoned appear to be in this state as a result of long-term, chronic problems such as shifting soil, lack of maintenance and lack of modern amenities — all reasons that have led families to move into newer and better homes. Some families who left older houses behind appear to have relocated to trailers or other site-built houses on the same or adjacent lot. Without major work, the abandoned houses may never be suitable again for residential occupancy. The good news, however, is that most of the abandoned historic houses were built with such simple construction methods that it should be possible to



One of the older abandoned and dilapidated houses in Dyess.

repair them, making them weather-tight, and conserving them for some other use, such as storage, visitor lodging, or for interpretive/museum use. As a worst-case-scenario, materials could be salvaged for use in restoration of other residences when viable.

Although the house once occupied by Johnny Cash's family was the only dwelling that the project team entered during work in the field, it is likely typical of others in the community. Albeit in poor condition, the remaining original construction materials provide a clue about what may be found in other historic houses leaving the possibility that there is a great deal of historic interior material still in place. Ironically, the most intact houses may not be best suited for modern residential use. As seen at the Cash House, the interior walls were constructed of wood boards nailed to studs in place of plaster. The boards do not appear to be tongue-and-groove, a situation that is likely to leak air and invite pests. Also such conditions

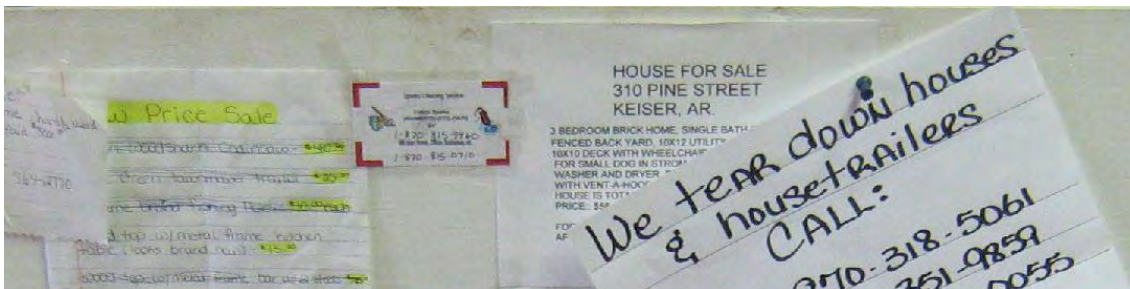


Interior of the Cash House.

are not efficient for the operation of air conditioning units or forced-air central heating systems. The majority of the original interior wood wall treatments survived at the Cash House because other later materials, specifically sheets of simulated wood paneling, covered the walls. These materials have recently been removed exposing the original wall surfaces.

Local Conditions and Compatible Infill

It is a sad fact that many of the original houses built when Dyess was created have been demolished. The loss of a considerable amount of the historic fabric of the community makes the overall resource a little difficult to “read” in the landscape. While it may have been inevitable that some houses and other buildings would be demolished as jobs disappeared and the population declined, it is even more troubling that many of the families who continue to



A notice posted at the convenience store in Dyess. Unfortunately, a sign of the times for owners of historic and non-historic residences in the community.

live in Dyess have abandoned their historic homes, sometimes leaving them in disarray next to a newer house, or otherwise tearing them down to re-use the site.

A number of the original homes have now been replaced by modern residences. In some instances, the replacement houses are mobile homes, representing the various forms that these kind of pre-manufactured residential units take. While every effort should be made to preserve the remaining houses that date from the early days of the Colony, the issue of what kind of houses might be used where the historic buildings are now missing deserves a careful analysis. Property owners today who make the decision to insert new houses into the physical setting of the Dyess Historic District are facing many of the same socio-economic issues that the first participants in Dyess Colony faced. They are looking for affordable housing in order to remain a part of the community. Those who are replacing houses that have become damaged as a result of shifting foundations are also dealing with what they have learned about the mechanics of the local soil type. From an engineering standpoint, replacing typical local frame houses with ones that are built on a chassis supported on wheels actually provides an excellent solution to the structural problems of building on Dyess's soil type. This does not necessarily mean that the houses should look like typical trailer homes or "double-wides."



Mobile Homes and trailers at the edge of the core area in Dyess.

From a preservation point of view, the kind of loss of historic fabric that Dyess has been experiencing is typically compounded when the newer buildings that are placed within the older built fabric of the town plan conflict architecturally with the historic character of the community. Most of the buildings currently found within the village grid of Dyess follow the rhythms established by the mid-1930s lot lines, and they also reflect the height and mass of the original house designs. However, on closer inspection, over 50% of the buildings now seen within the grid do not resemble the original houses in terms of style, exterior materials, or

detailing. In the surrounding area, where hundreds of farm houses once marked the locations of Dyess Colony's 20 and 40-acre farms in an otherwise vast agricultural landscape, there are now so few buildings left on the land that it is difficult to imagine what the outer areas of the community originally looked like. Many of the buildings that currently dot the farmland, like those within the core area, differ considerably from the original design models that characterized the colony when it was first created. Both inside the core areas and beyond it, one has to survey the landscape carefully to find those few remaining fragments of what was once a much larger community, built all at once, and composed of architecturally similar buildings.

Inexpensive ways to build new housing become available from time to time, such as the simplified ranch-style houses that appeared in Dyess by the 1960s, the pre-fabricated houses that have been available in various forms since World War II, or the more recent iteration of the prefabricated house type — residences that can be brought in on wheels, including mobile homes, or “trailers.” The modular variation on mobile home construction that arrived on the scene about thirty years ago, the “double-wide,” has been especially popular in rural areas of the United States. As a result, pre-fabricated mobile housing has emerged as a substantial trend and is having a noticeable impact on rural areas of the country in particular.

Part of what makes pre-manufactured replacement houses seem less desirable in any historic community is that they (especially the mobile homes) are manufactured as complete packages and designed to look that way. As innovative as they are, they are also unlikely to address the specific design issues of most sites. Rather than adjusting the design to the community's character or to the special circumstances of individual sites, they are designed around an iconic



In some areas, mobile homes appear side-by-side with similar-sized Colony houses in the context of older trees and landscape features. This is much less intrusive than those instances where they are lined up with other mobile homes and surrounded by only grass.

appearance that is generic in character yet clearly recognizable. Among housing types that are available on the open market, the readily recognized form that accompanies pre-manufactured designs is part of the corporate strategy for selling this type of home. The image not only serves the marketing purposes of the manufacturers, but it also comes with distinct design motifs derived from a least-common-denominator approach to emulating American architectural traditions. In other words, they are often vaguely reminiscent of the appearance of buildings found in other places, but the models are usually far from the communities where the units are ultimately placed.

The pre-manufactured dwelling unit is symbolic of, and associated with, both industry and commerce. While the marketing image works as something tangible for the targeted audience, the references to traditional architecture, in a simplified form blended with elements of modern design, may be lost on most people. More poignantly, instead of the general public seeing the homes as design products with traditional architectural elements, they begin to associate the manufactured image with negative stereotypes, connecting them, for instance, to particular socio-economic classes. As a result, when trailers and other pre-manufactured houses are inserted into a historic area like Dyess, the sense that the community is already losing its historic houses is compounded by fears fueled by the negative socio-economic stereotypes that often come with these units, while the architectural design elements of the dwelling units are too generic and too vague to be appreciated. Economic decline leads to demolition of buildings that have become neglected, dilapidated, or merely unneeded. These patterns are found in many communities — vacant properties, whether buildings or lots, erode community fabric and confidence.

For the preservation-minded individual, it is easy to carry one's frustrations from other historic settings into a specific setting like Dyess. The intrusive insertion of mobile homes, trailers, or "double-wide" modular homes in rural landscapes is a common worry for preservationists focused on rural areas in many parts of the United States. In Dyess, however, they have been inserted into a unique landscape under unique circumstances. If the form itself is separated from the negative symbolism, the marketing imagery, and the watered down references to traditional and modern architecture, the underlying concept of inexpensive, pre-manufactured homes for people of moderate means relates very closely to Dyess's historic context.

Some of the socio-economic factors that are playing out in Dyess today would not be unfamiliar to the town's founders because they are parallel to the conditions that led to Dyess's creation and characterized its early development. The town was created rapidly as an unusually large self-help community that was expected to have the power to improve the lot of impoverished families by helping them achieve agricultural self-sufficiency. The program came with a house

type, and the houses were designed for extremely expedient construction and easy repair using the most commonly available and inexpensive building materials of the time. Plain wood boards, for instance, were used in place of plaster as the finish for interior walls. Everything about the style of the houses was traditional in character yet combined with an up-to-date touch that gave them a modern appearance in photographs from the period. They were built so quickly and the community was developed at such a grand scale that one could argue that part of the historic significance of Dyess is the way it epitomizes progress in the construction industry, in the movement toward more modern manufacturing at the dawn of the economic upswing that followed the Great Depression. Dyess was a harbinger of what was to come in the so-called “cookie cutter” suburbs of the 1950s, the pre-manufactured housing types, or “pre-fabs,” that followed the Second World War, government-funded housing projects across the country during and after the war, and other trends that ultimately led toward the development of the mobile home industry of today.

The first wave of replacement houses built in Dyess, beginning in the 1950s, exhibit the use of readily available, affordable materials, and design schemes that are commonsensical simplifications of architectural trends that were taking root across the country. Many of the new insertions reflect economic progress on the part of Dyess residents, as some families who could afford to do so built new homes of a bigger or better design, a typical socio-economic



These two examples of ca. 1960 Ranch type homes illustrate several of the pros and cons of progress, when faced with the difficulties of a specific situation. The advantage of cladding the lower part of the front wall with a single layer of brick is part of the aesthetic of the early 1960s. It keeps moisture from splashing onto wood and causing deterioration, allowing the house to be lower to the ground and more horizontal in its dominant design lines. The biological growth seen on the house on the right shows that the moisture can rise into the area where wood would be if the brick were not there. However, the application of a thin layer of brick put together with hard mortar makes it less structural than it may look to the untrained eye. Essentially, the brick is behaving like large monolithic sheets of siding. As the soil shifted, the brick moved with it contributing to the structural disfiguration of the facades. This problem, which would not have been likely in most other areas where this style of house was built, makes the modern materials look silly as they fail in response to local soil mechanics.

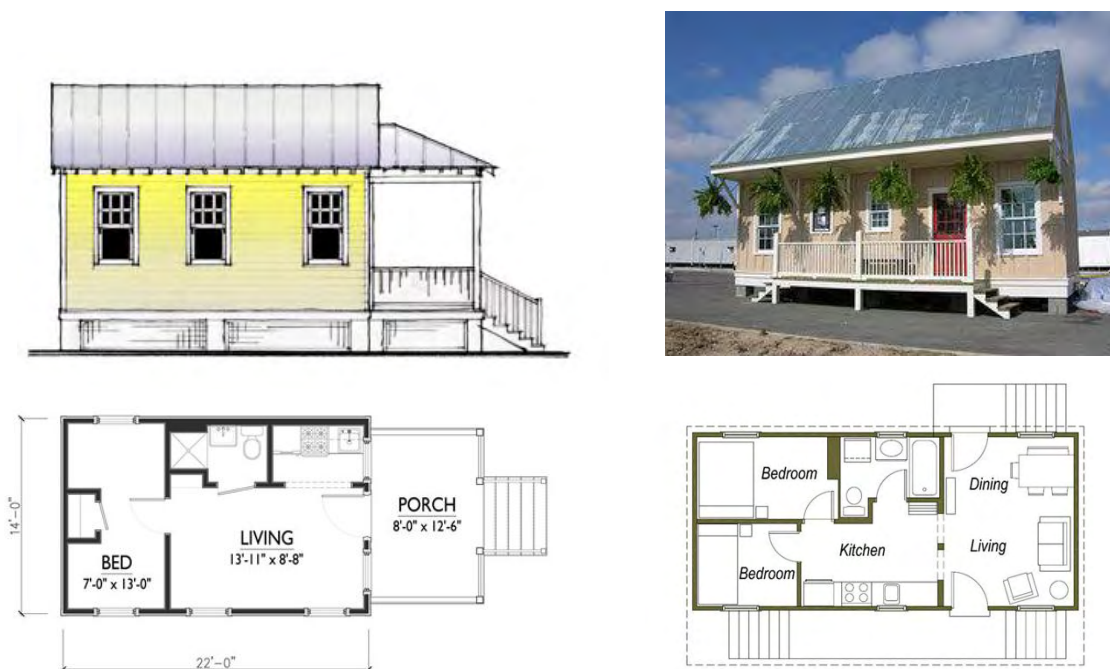
pattern in American communities. There is a clue, though, in the current condition of some of the ranch type homes from around 1960 indicating that the logic of upgrading ones residence this way did not work as well as the first individual families to undertake a rebuild project expected. The clue is that the destructive impact of the local soil type on the foundations and construction of the older homes is readily apparent. In fact, it is at least as apparent in the first wave of modern homes, where the design uses manufactured products that are difficult to repair, such as pressed brick facings, factory-finished moldings, and certain kinds of factory-made windows. In some of the Ranch type homes of the 1960s with these kinds of materials, the damage done by the soil is more obvious than it is in the older, more easily repaired homes.

A major factor in the decision to rebuild residences in Dyess is the mechanics of the soil type on which the houses must rest, specifically the ways the soil affects the houses structurally. Many of the rebuilding projects appear to have occurred to address damage caused by the unpredictable movement. Numerous informants in Dyess have made it clear that heaving of the soil is a constant worry to local property owners. Locally called “gumbo,” the kind of soil that characterizes the upper layers of the terrain throughout Dyess is a combination of river silt from the Mississippi and other rivers blended with other residues from the land volcanoes that occurred during the New Madrid Earthquakes. Prior to the creation of Dyess, the area was underwater, part of a large expanse of swamp land. While it is rich in the nutrients needed for agriculture, it also has a high clay content which leads to unpredictable shifting when it becomes wet and dries out over a sustained period of time. Shifting occurs not only because the soil itself moves when it is wet, but also as a result of large cracks that often open up in the surface as it dries. From property to property, the effect on local buildings varies according to a wide range of factors, such as how much vegetation and shade there is on a given parcel, how well the property drains, and similar conditions. However, the result is that cracked walls, walls that are out of plumb and/or out of square, and uneven foundation materials are readily apparent conditions at many Dyess properties.

The solution represented by the insertion of pre-manufactured units into the Dyess plan may have come about by accident, as families of modest means sought affordable ways to replace houses that had suffered structural damage. Now that they are in place, the mobile homes that have been brought to Dyess are likely to outlast the “stick-built” houses, not only the historic ones but also the more recent ones.

While the importation of mobile homes into the Dyess plan provides a good way to solve engineering problems, the aesthetic design of the units would not be inappropriate. If steps can be taken first to retain and restore the original houses that have survived within the plan, the solution to the architectural and preservation issues for the parcels where original homes

Katrina Cottages: An Attractive and Affordable Alternative



The redevelopment of residential areas in Dyess could easily incorporate the method proposed by the Mississippi Renewal Forum for providing relief housing after Hurricane Katrina. Popularly referred to as “Katrina Cottages”, the inexpensive, prefabricated units shown here are designed using historic prototypes found throughout the lower Mississippi Valley and Gulf Coast. The examples shown above, left and below, left, are now being manufactured and sold as a kit nationwide by Lowe’s Home Improvement Stores much like the larger catalog homes sold by Sears and Aladdin over 80 years ago. Although the houses shown here are not appropriate in appearance for use in Dyess, the concept can be readily adapted to contemporary manufactured housing units using the designs of the Colony’s original model homes.



Credits from top, left: Lowe’s ©; katrinacottagehousing.org; Consumer Media LLC; Stephen A. Mouzon, AIA; New Urban Guild LLC

have not survived may simply be to design a more appropriate residential form from the chassis up for a mobile home type of construction. Dyess could do this several possible ways: by encouraging a mobile home manufacturing facility to design a special model that is more suitable in the community, by finding an affordable way to stick-build houses on chassis frames, or by requiring architectural modifications to make the houses as suitable as possible to the local setting.

Asking a manufacturing company to design a home based on the architecture of Dyess would not be without precedent. Companies that make streetscape materials such as light fixtures, for instance, often base their models on specific communities that ask for either a special new design or the recreation of a historic design. The companies then market the newly developed model to other communities looking for that kind of product. The process is used in developing modern fixtures as well as reproductions based on historic prototypes, and the designs often continue to evolve from application to application. For example, Sentry Lighting developed special fixtures for Central Park in Manhattan, New York City. When an appropriate fixture was needed for the historic area of downtown St. Louis, Sentry modified the Central Park fixture, creating a similar design named for the Missouri city.



In form, some of the older houses in Dyess are very similar to the more recent modular “double-wide” trailers that have been brought to the community. While the double-wides do not match or harmonize with the historic components of the community, they could be modified architecturally to be more in keeping with the character of Dyess. The raised base seen on the double-wide (right) is actually part of the raised chassis construction that makes the units suitable for the gumbo soil. Although it looks out of place in the way that it is finished, screened-off with metal sheeting pressed with a pattern to resemble masonry, this could be remedied easily by using more traditional materials, such as concrete block piers and wood lattice. Siding could be extended down as long as it remains at least six inches above the soil line (to avoid moisture retention and wood-eating pests such as termites). A porch could be added by extending the roof, and windows could be used with the proportions and pane patterns traditionally used in Dyess. Although the decorative shutters on the house on the left are not functional and merely architectural “kitsch,” at least they reflect an earlier era (1950s) and are more in keeping with Dyess houses than the more run-of-the mill the vinyl shutters with false louvers used on the double-wide. Historic images of Dyess houses show similar decorative shutters, although they are wider, to match the sash width, and contain whimsical crescent moon-shaped cutouts.

Developing an affordable model for new stick-built houses constructed on chassis frames (mounted on wheels) might be an attractive project for a special program of an architectural school, such as Auburn University's Rural Studio. The initial design challenge would be to find a frame module that would result in the most appropriate house form. The designers would then find affordable ways to build houses on the frames that fit in with the original historic houses of Dyess. Such a project should include a creative element, but should be guided by Standard #9 of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, which reads: "New work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment."

The new units should not detract from the character of the original historic houses, either by clashing with them aesthetically, drawing undue attention to themselves and away from the historic examples, or by copying the original models so closely that one cannot tell which houses are authentic and which are not. The above discussion may be less meaningful if the population of Dyess continues to decline and no more new houses are needed. However, even if the focus is not on new houses, it may be possible to use a set of design guidelines to guide modifications to mobile homes and other houses in Dyess that do not match the original character of the town, and it may also be possible to develop incentives to encourage modifications. A set of design guidelines, coupled with incentives, could be developed in a program that would transform the mobile homes and many of the other non-matching buildings so they reinforce the character of Dyess rather than detracting from it.

Conditions at the Cash House

The Johnny Cash House is owned by the Stegall family and occupied by Willie Stegall and his son. It has been the Stegall family home for over 40 years. For those years, the family has made improvements and adjustments to the house just as many other families who lived in small frame houses did in the same decades. The house is currently in declining condition, in part because of the way many wood elements are exposed to water and other weather-related sources of deterioration. The house has some unpainted wood components, both in places where the paint has failed and in places where the wood was never painted. Like many old houses, it has an imperfect system for roof drainage. The conditions inside and out are less than ideal, but the Stegall family has sought different ways to improve the house at different times with totally different approaches. Like many homeowners, they have done so with limited means.

Around 1960, a new kitchen was installed in the house. Probably a decade or so later, the openings from the kitchen and dining room to the living room were altered. The front windows were also altered. Sheets of simulated wood paneling were placed over the walls, including changing square doorways to round-arched ones, a popular change to make at the time. The wood stove was removed from the center of the living room. At some point, a sliding patio door was added at the back of the living room opening onto a wood deck, a typical remodeling project of the 1970s and 1980s. Many of these changes have since been reversed, so that the paneling has now been removed and a different wood stove has been installed in the original location.

The changes that the Stegall family made in the 1960s and 1970s were logical for the time. An efficient, modern kitchen was installed. The living room was made more livable by moving the front door from the middle of the wall and relocating other doors so there was more wall space for modern furniture. However, if the dwelling is to be restored to its original configuration and appearance, these changes will have to be reversed. Also it is important that any remaining historic materials and architectural features be preserved.



Current condition of the residence formerly occupied by the Cash family, JMA.

Plan of Action

Having established in the Statement of Findings and Assessment of Conditions that the elements for a successful redevelopment project in Dyess exist, this section outlines an action plan. Included are general parameters and a step-by-step approach to implementation. Adhering to this strategy will create the critical mass necessary to sustain local businesses and provide a return on investment for the city and its residents, Arkansas State University, and associated private partners.

General Parameters

A. **Dyess Redevelopment Committee** – Early phases of this plan will be implemented by establishing a partnership consisting of representatives from the City of Dyess, Arkansas State University, the Rural Heritage Development Initiative, and representatives of affected private property owners. The purpose of the partnership will be to:

- (1) Implement the objectives outlined in this plan following established general parameters;
- (2) Address specific issues and problems that arise with the redevelopment of targeted properties; and
- (3) Garner support and secure funding for the proposed projects.

Members need to properly plan before taking action. The partnership should establish a committee of technical advisors comprised of professionals who can assist in providing expertise specific to the actions and endeavors at hand.

B. **Preservation of Existing Buildings** – Key historic buildings have been identified that are associated with the history of Dyess, although the conditions of such vary widely. In order to communicate the community's historic appearance and significance to visitors, it is important that these buildings are preserved and rehabilitated in a manner consistent with standard historic preservation practices (see Appendix A). When restoring a historic building it is important to follow this basic rule -- always consider every reasonable option for the repair of an existing element, detail or feature and replace it only if deteriorated beyond repair. If replacement is necessary, the new component should match the original in size, material, and appearance.

- C. **Land Use** - Properties targeted by this redevelopment master plan should be rehabilitated, reconstructed, and reused to provide much-needed governmental/commercial services while at the same time enhancing the visitor's experience. Proposed uses and associated amenities and infrastructure must be planned and designed for mutual benefit of residents and visitors alike. Certain properties in this plan are targeted for preservation and interpretation while others are slated for development. Other existing land uses are not compatible with issues such as visitor safety or aesthetics and will have to be managed accordingly.
- D. **Compatibility of New Buildings** – Any new construction should follow these design guidelines:
- (1) New buildings should follow existing development patterns and be similar in size, height, and lot placement (setbacks).
 - (2) New construction should complement Dyess' historic commercial and residential architecture in design such as roof form, fenestration, and exterior finishes.
 - (3) The architectural style of new buildings should not create a false sense of history. New construction should be representative of the period of interpretation (1934-1950) within the focused redevelopment area.
- E. **Visitor Experience** – As outlined in the History & Interpretive Contexts section, there is an interesting and compelling story associated with the history of Dyess, and because of the community's association with Johnny Cash, visitors are already arriving. But two major hurdles must be overcome before success is realized. First, tourism is a service industry and support services (lodging, dining, fuel, etc.) are not currently available in Dyess which means no local economic benefit. Second, the presentation of the story is inconsistent and haphazard, if told at all. It is important to focus on authenticity, quality, and consistency when developing visitor amenities. Arkansas State University's Heritage SITES Program has been successful in the preservation and revitalization of several similar sites and communities by focusing on authenticity and with community and economic development as key motivators/drivers.
- F. **Entrepreneurial/ Small Business Opportunities** - Current economic conditions, deteriorated commercial infrastructure, and population demographics of Dyess make it difficult for independent small business startups. One of the primary goals of this plan is to generate opportunity for business and job creation for local residents. Through the Dyess Redevelopment Committee, the rehabilitation of existing and construction of new buildings

should accommodate a mix of commercial, government, and tourism uses serving as a business incubator for local entrepreneurs. Additional opportunities that build on the heritage of Dyess Colony should be explored as well (local produce, canning, music, etc.)

Implementation

Given the established general parameters, this section outlines an implementation strategy for the Dyess Colony Project which focuses on three key areas of redevelopment: the *Dyess Community*, the *Dyess Town Circle*, and the *Dyess Farms Cultural Landscape*.

I. The Dyess Community

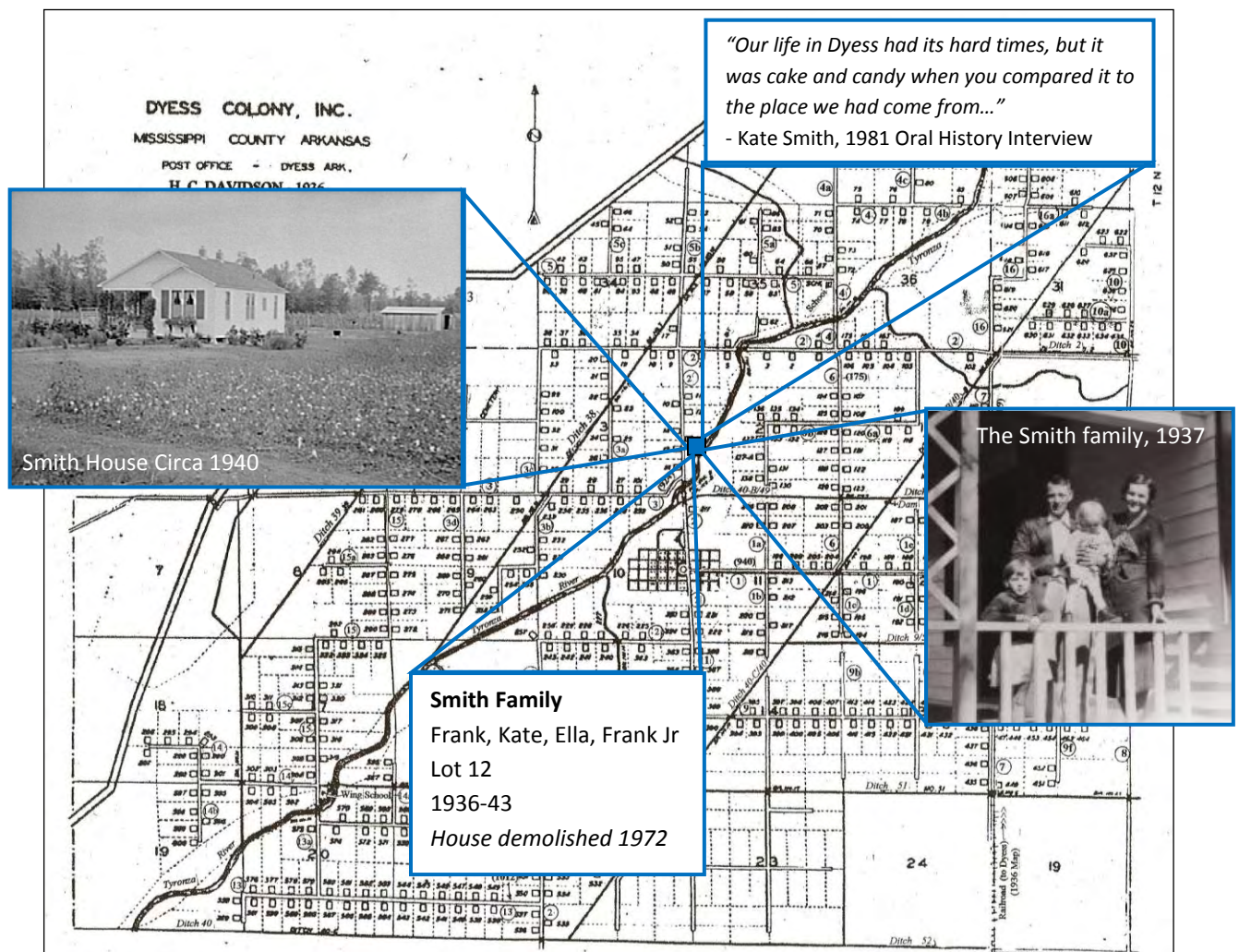
The Big Idea: Revive the sense of hope and renewal for Dyess by strengthening bonds between past and present, town and region, resident and visitor.

The **Dyess Community** should be defined as the group of people, regardless of their location, who share an interest in the history of this special place and interact in a manner that leads to its successful revitalization. Whether an actual Dyess resident who is homebound or a virtual visitor who has never set foot in town, both should feel as though they can participate in the renewal effort in some way and share a mutual sense of pride for having done so. This Plan of Action attempts to define “community” in the broadest manner possible so as to take full advantage of all opportunities.

Strategy:

1. **Dyess Days** – The City of Dyess should continue to hold this annual festival as a reunion, fundraiser, and celebration of Dyess’ heritage. Organizers should use the brand platform developed for the Dyess Community in this report to promote activities and events associated with the festival. At least one day should have activities and events for the general public to attend. In order to enhance interaction between current residents and school alumni or extended family that live in other parts of the country, a “virtual reunion” should be held simultaneous with activities in town. Ceremonies should be broadcast through internet connections for those who are not able to attend. In addition, a sponsor should be found to bring the StoryCorps® MobileBooth (a portable recording studio used as part of a nationwide oral history project) to town.

2. **Dyess Genealogical Website** – This invaluable resource should be continued as the collective portal for family members, relatives, and descendants of those who live and have lived in Dyess. It effectively serves as a forum and archive for the Dyess Community. Sponsors might want to consider starting a Facebook page that would take full advantage of social media technology allowing further communication and participation among those with this shared past and interest.
3. **Historic Dyess Colony Website** – As a beginning point for developing an interpretive program, Arkansas State University should conduct a detailed inventory of remaining historic resources; identify families associated with the original Dyess Colony New Deal program; locate their associated farmsteads or residences; and document their stories. When enough information is collected it should be shared with the general public through a website dedicated to the project.



4. **Volunteer Corps** – As the Dyess Community grows and matures it should be possible to solicit and nurture a corps of volunteers to assist with projects, events and operations. Whether it is an extension of Arkansas State University’s Heritage SITES program or a separate volunteer initiative at the county or city level, a well-coordinated and motivated group of volunteers can achieve great things, aid in building community pride and contribute to the sense of place.

5. **Brand Identity for Dyess** – For marketing purposes, separate brands should be created for the community of Dyess as a place-based destination and for the future Dyess Colony attraction to be developed and operated in partnership with Arkansas State University. The university has already developed an identity/marketing package for the Heritage SITES program and the Dyess Colony project needs to be consistent with this existing brand. The brand for Dyess, Arkansas can be developed as a stand-alone product for the city using “The Boyhood Home of Johnny Cash” tagline. The information in Appendix D outlines a preliminary brand platform for both entities.



Logo for one of ASU’s existing heritage attractions

6. **Regional Tourism Marketing Initiatives** – Both brand identities that will be created as a result of Step 5 above must be integrated into the regional Arkansas Delta brand. The brand was created through the joint efforts of Arkansas Delta Byways, which includes two National Scenic Byways, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Rural Heritage Development Initiative.



Logo for Arkansas Delta Byways

7. **Media Technology** – An effective communication strategy using online social media tools allows even the smallest organization to maximize exposure with their target audience. At the time of the writing of this report, the top three entries in a Google search for “Dyess, Arkansas” revealed an entry in Wikipedia, the www.dyessdays.com webpage, and an article on the resettlement colony in the *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture*. These portals and the information communicated through them are vital to the creation of an online identity and brand—one of the best opportunities to declare what “Dyess, Arkansas” is (both the community and heritage attraction) and what it’s all about. Many organizations reach the point of establishing identity through

a website, but go no further. To fully benefit from social media tools these additional steps must be taken:

- a. Allow Association – It is important to provide supporters who want to be associated with an entity or product an opportunity to “join”. One of the most common online examples is the action of becoming “Friends” on MySpace. The goal is to get the customer to show off the brand/logo in a proud manner. A simple analogy from the music industry is the purchase of a t-shirt by a fan at a rock concert who subsequently wears it for an extended period thus enthusiastically proclaiming association, attendance, and support.
- b. Create Conversations – Consisting of such things as message boards, user groups, and web logs or “blogs”, these tools offer supporters a means of interaction with those who are directly associated with an entity or product. Users have the opportunity to ask a question (which requires a timely response), proclaim their affection, or vent a frustration. Also providers can initiate dialogue to inform users of upcoming actions or solicit input about the entity or product.

II. The Dyess Town Circle

The Big Idea: Reestablish the town circle in Dyess as the center of commerce, social life, and governance for the community and surrounding vicinity.

The original 1936 WPA plan for Dyess Colony and the 1946 subdivision plat for Dyess Center show a traffic circle located at the center of town. This circle was intended as both the symbolic and functional heart of the community. It is positioned at the center of Main Street and as the visual and physical terminus of Second Street for anyone entering town from the east. Buildings central to the operation and administration of this government agricultural experiment were constructed on or adjacent to the circle. For many years it served as the commercial hub and social gathering place as well. In recent times, the circle has diminished in stature since businesses have closed and most vehicular traffic now enters town from the north. This master plan strives to reestablish the **Dyess Town Circle** as the center of community life and focus of redevelopment efforts.



Detail of the Dyess Town Circle taken from a birds-eye view illustration prepared for the Emergency Relief Administration, circa 1935

Strategy:

1. **Dyess Redevelopment Committee Creation** - The City of Dyess shall adopt a resolution creating a Dyess Redevelopment Committee, specifically establishing the committee's purpose, meeting schedule, and membership (per *General Parameter A*).
2. **Rehabilitation Strategy for Historic Administration Building** - The first order of business for the Redevelopment Committee will be to develop a strategy for rehabilitating and reusing the Dyess Colony Administration Building. It is assumed for the immediate future that the building will be used primarily for municipal purposes including administrative offices and meeting rooms. Space in the building will also be



Historic Administration Building

dedicated for the installation of initial exhibits on the history of the Dyess Colony and the Cash family as representative colonists. The rehabilitation strategy should include:

- a. Execution of a partnership agreement between the City of Dyess and Arkansas State University that outlines shared responsibilities and roles of both parties in the rehabilitation and reuse of the building.
- b. Preparation of a simple space utilization study for proposed municipal and secondary uses, along with a cost estimate for design and construction.
- c. Identification of funding sources for preparation of the Historic Structures Report, architectural design documents, and construction work.
- d. Creation of a conceptual design by Arkansas State University for two interpretive exhibits consistent with the History & Interpretive Contexts section of this report. The exhibits will include general information on two stories: the formation of Dyess Colony as part of the Rural Resettlement Program of the New Deal, and the Cash family experience as part of the colony.

3. **Historic Structure Report** – The Historic Administration Building is the most significant and intact historic property associated with the former Dyess Colony. This significance warrants careful research, documentation, planning and design typically associated with the preparation of a Historic Structure Report (HSR). An outline for the content of an HSR is included in Appendix B and follows guidelines prepared by the National Park Service. Related work should be performed by an architectural firm with demonstrated experience in preparing HSRs. Construction specifications should be consistent with the National Park Service's *Preservation Brief* and *Technical Report* series which address best practices for restoration and stewardship of significant historic properties. An annotated list of these series is provided in Appendix C of this report.
4. **Rehabilitation of Historic Administration Building** – When the documentation and design work outlined in the above steps is complete and funding is secured, construction can begin. Because of the significance of the building the use of a general contractor with demonstrated experience in historic restoration projects is highly recommended.



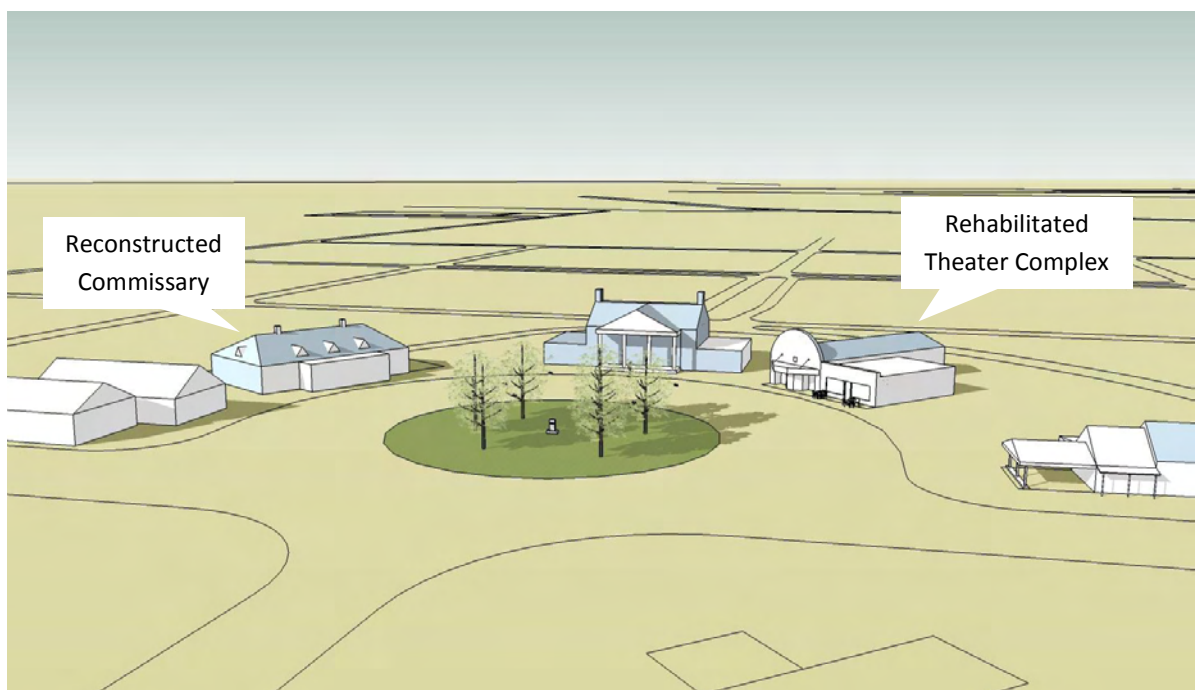
Aerial photo of the Dyess Town Circle with public buildings and historic features identified

5. **Stabilization of Theater & Restaurant Façades** – The façades of the historic *Dyess Theater* (1951) and adjoining *Pop Shop* restaurant (1955) are still standing and should be considered as part of the significant historic fabric of the Dyess Town Circle. Although a majority of both buildings has been demolished, every effort should be made to preserve what remains. It is important to temporarily reinforce, stabilize, cover, and protect the two façades in a manner that prevents further deterioration and addresses public safety. The intent is to “mothball” the building remnants until plans for preservation and reuse are in place, funding is secured, and the façades restored.



Façade of the former Dyess Theater

6. **Documentation of the Commissary** – Unfortunately, the historic commissary building, one of the original structures associated with Dyess Colony, has been lost to fire. Currently in private ownership, the building’s foundation remains. These building remains should be temporarily stabilized, measured, and photo-documented. Although they may ultimately be removed to make way for the proposed reconstruction outlined in #11 below, they can serve an interpretive purpose for the short term.
7. **Preservation of Monument Circle** – The small circular park located in the center of the town circle (referred to as “Monument Circle” in this report) currently contains the Dyess memorial and associated plantings. Although under no immediate threat, it is important for the city, Dyess Redevelopment Committee, and associated partners to recognize its historical significance. The monument was unveiled and dedicated as part of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt’s 1936 visit to Dyess Colony. Monument Circle adds substantially to the historical character of the immediate surroundings and is a contributing resource in the Dyess Center National Register Historic District. Every effort should be made to maintain the memorial in good condition and keep the associated plantings healthy. Any future improvements to Monument Circle should be minor in scale and removable (benches, for example).



Conceptual rendering of the Dyess Town Circle

8. **Architectural Assessment of Old Post Office & City Hall Buildings** – The current building that houses city hall (see the aerial photo on page 4.9), and the old post office building immediately adjacent to it, have substantial structural problems. Since city offices will be moving to the Historic Administration Building, a conditions assessment and cost/benefit study should be conducted by a licensed architect or structural engineer to determine if the buildings are worthy of rehabilitation and reuse. These buildings are not currently recognized as contributing resources in the historic district, so their removal would not result in the loss of historic fabric.
9. **Parking** – As improvements are made; businesses, attractions and offices open; and activities multiply on the Dyess Town Circle, there is inevitably going to be an increase in vehicular traffic. The current practice of parking on the circle and adjacent streets should be maintained. When conditions reach the point that parking capacity in town is exceeded on a regular basis, the pavement should be striped to better organize vehicle position and spacing, and to assist in orienting the driver. Land parcels on or adjacent to the Dyess Town Circle and in the surrounding neighborhood, even if vacant, should never be developed as permanent, off-street parking lots or facilities.
10. **Development of the Johnny Cash Theater & Pop Shop Restaurant** – The stabilized façade of the old Dyess Theater and Pop Shop Restaurant should be incorporated into a new building complex that will house a small auditorium and eating establishment (see conceptual rendering on page 4.10). The theater’s original recessed entrance, ticket booth, and marquee should be reconstructed. The proposed auditorium will seat 100, accommodate a full-size movie screen with projection booth, and the infrastructure necessary for solo live performances. The food service portion of the complex will be designed as a 30-seat restaurant potentially leased as a concession to a local entrepreneur. During preparation of this report there was a consensus among those interviewed that the facility be referred to as the “Johnny Cash Theater” and should feature videotaped productions of his performances and documentaries of his life.
11. **Reconstruction of the Commissary** – As a later phase of the project, the reconstruction of the original Dyess Colony Commissary is proposed (see conceptual rendering on page 4.10). One of two large 2-story buildings that once flanked the Historic Administration Building (see birds-eye view illustration on page 4.7), the building served as a distribution facility for goods and materials promised to the colonists by the federal government as part of the Rural Resettlement Program. The reconstructed building may

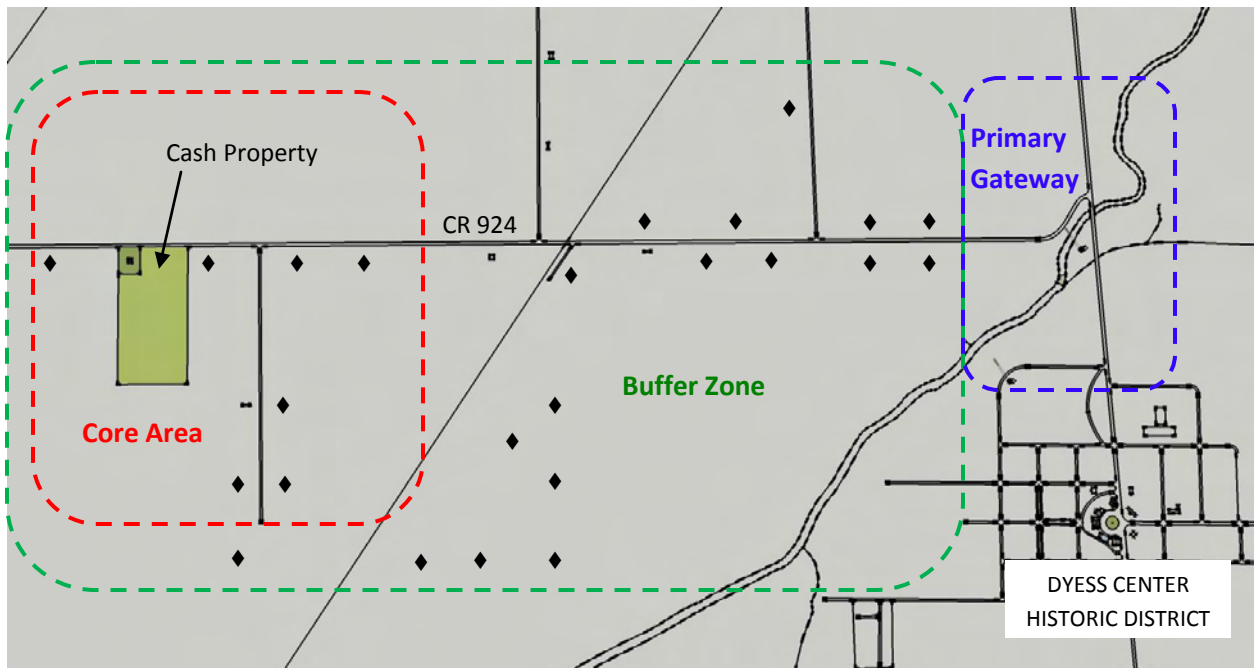
include a visitor center with public restrooms; the second phase of interpretive exhibits relating to the history of the Colony; a gift shop; and leased retail or office space.

- 12. Community Development Corporation** – A Community Development Corporation (CDC) is a non-profit, community-based development organization tasked with the revitalization of a community or neighborhood. Typical projects spearheaded by CDCs include the rehabilitation of dilapidated properties; construction of new housing; and incubation of new small businesses. Frequently, partnerships are established with public planning agencies and private financial interests to further program and project goals and objectives. Many foundations and banks have reinvestment funds set aside specifically for CDCs. Development projects are designed to benefit local residents by providing opportunity for participation, employment, support services, and technical assistance. Any proceeds generated by the organization are reinvested into additional projects and programs. Many of the projects outlined in this plan can conceivably be implemented under the auspices and direction of a CDC.

III. The Dyess Farms Cultural Landscape

The Big Idea: Recreate a sense of rural life and the historic landscape of Dyess Colony in the 1930s by preserving and reconstructing the associated farmsteads and agricultural fields in the vicinity of the Cash family home or a similar historic property.

Much has changed since the 1934 Federal Emergency Relief Administration plan for the 500 farmsteads in Dyess Colony, was laid out. Land parcels have been consolidated and agricultural operations modernized. Many of the original houses and farm buildings are now gone. This master plan proposes recreating the historic rural landscape in a small portion of what was once the 16,000 acre Colony, using the principles outlined in preserving and enhancing cultural landscapes developed by the National Park Service. As shown on the plan below, the proposed cultural landscape is comprised of a core area surrounded by a buffer zone and is contiguous with the town grid of Dyess Center. The preferred location for the project is to the northwest of the City of Dyess in the vicinity of the former Cash family home. Although this is the preferred location, it should be noted that the following goals are general in nature so that it is possible that the cultural landscape could be developed in a different area with a similar historic property in Dyess Colony.



Conceptual Plan for Dyess Farms Cultural Landscape

- = Existing Building
- ◆ = Colony House Site

Strategy:

1. **Inventory Remaining Historic Farmsteads** – A historic architectural survey should be conducted of the entire Dyess Colony site to identify and document the remaining houses once associated with the 500 farmsteads. At a minimum, baseline information should include historic building data required for completing the architectural survey form maintained by the Arkansas State Historic Preservation Office. However, a more detailed inventory should be considered that includes interior floor plan, detailed interior and exterior photographs, and any outbuildings. Also interviews with current occupants and property owners should be conducted to record any available oral history on past ownership, occupants, building alterations and demolition.
2. **Acquire Core Area Properties** – Fee simple title should be acquired for the land parcels within the core area identified with the red dashed line on the above conceptual plan. It should be noted that research is necessary to locate the additional adjacent holdings the Cash family acquired during their time in Dyess. The development intent is to recreate the rural landscape of Dyess Farms for properties on the south side of County Road 924 and to provide support services and infrastructure for operation of the facility on the north side.

3. **Secure Contiguous Acreage for Buffer** – Acquisition of certain land rights in the area within the green dashed line on the conceptual plan above is necessary to establish a protective buffer around the core area and to provide connection with the Dyess Center Historic District and the primary Gateway into the city. This could be achieved either through fee simple purchase, conservation easement, or a combination of both. Development of the buffer zone would be minimal with the exception of plantings, interpretive infrastructure, and a possible pedestrian/bike path. Agricultural operations in the buffer zone may continue only if crops true to the historic period are planted and historic agricultural methods are used.
4. **Prepare Cultural Landscape Report** – When it appears that the location for the Dyess Farms Cultural Landscape has been determined and property will be purchased, a Cultural Landscape Report should be prepared. The National Park Service provides guidelines for the treatment of cultural landscapes as part of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and outlines a step-by-step strategy for planning, documenting and managing a cultural landscape in Preservation Brief #36.
5. **Test and Treat Soils in Proposed Public Areas** – Most of the land within the core area and buffer zone is currently subjected to modern agricultural operations and practices. The commercial production of certain crops requires intensive application of fertilizers and pesticides. Soils on any property targeted for fee simple purchase or public access easement should be tested accordingly and any residual condition mitigated.
6. **Negotiate Drift Easements** – It is important to study prevailing winds by season and the extent of fertilizer and pesticide applications for agricultural operations outside of the core area and buffer zone. In the event that airborne chemicals may occasionally drift over the project site, exposure to staff and visitors is not acceptable. As a matter of prevention, drift easements may need to be purchased to reasonably compensate agricultural interests.
7. **Stabilize Historic Resources** – Regardless of its location, the Core Area of the Dyess Farms Cultural Landscape needs to contain one or more authentic historic resources, i.e. farmhouses that were original to the Dyess Colony. Once acquired, it is important to reinforce, stabilize, cover, and protect the building in a manner that prevents further deterioration, addresses public safety, and secures it until plans for preservation and reuse are in place and funding for restoration is secured.

8. **Provide Caretaker Residence** – As investment is made in purchasing and redeveloping properties associated with the Dyess Farms Cultural Landscape, the need for a resident caretaker will be apparent. The caretaker’s residence should fit into its surroundings, ideally a re-creation of one of the Colony farmstead dwellings in a location where one once stood.

9. **Repopulate Areas with “Ghost” Structures** – Today it is difficult for the visitor to get a sense of how the 20-acre Colony farmsteads were once spread across the landscape. A simple method to spatially recreate the historic feel of the countryside is to erect a series of pole structures at the sites of former dwellings located throughout the Core and Buffer Areas shown in the Conceptual Plan above. These pole structures, similar to the type shown in the adjacent photograph, represent the mass and scale of the former buildings and provide the visitor with a better understanding of the cultural landscape.



*Benjamin Franklin House,
Independence Nat’l Historical Park*

10. **Restore Historic Buildings** – If the Cash House or other historic structure is acquired, it will be imperative to immediately prepare and implement a restoration plan that follows historic preservation best practices such as those provided in the National Park Service’s *Preservation Brief* series (see Appendix C for a listing) and the Secretary of the Interior’s *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. Please note that the focus of a “restoration” is to retain as much building material from the most significant historic period in a property’s history as is reasonably possible, while removing materials from other periods. The focus of “rehabilitation” is the retention and repair of materials from any historic period, with more latitude provided for the use of replacement materials. The intent is for these structures to be restored, not rehabilitated.
11. **Alternative Forms of Transportation** – As attractions are opened and visitation grows, alternative means of transportation between facilities and activity areas will be necessary to avoid vehicular congestion. On a small scale, a network of pathways between the Dyess Town Circle and at the Dyess Farms Cultural Landscape would provide visitors with an alternative to using their vehicles. On a larger scale for special events and peak tourism seasons, planners should consider establishing satellite parking areas well outside of the city limits and providing shuttle service for visitors.

Appendix A – Historic Preservation Guidelines

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Department of Interior regulations, 36 CFR 67) pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior, related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Appendix B - Components of a Historic Structures Report

The following outline incorporates all of the components found in a comprehensive Historic Structures Report. Certain components may not be included depending on the scope and nature of the project.

- I. Historical Overview
 - A. History of the land and its use
 - 1. Chronology of maps and plans
 - 2. Primary source accounts
 - B. History of building construction
 - 1. Evolution of construction events
 - 2. Chronology of historic views
 - 3. Primary source accounts
 - C. History of ownership
 - 1. Deed search
 - 2. List of property owners
 - D. Biography of owner families and other occupants
 - 1. Genealogical charts
 - 2. Family histories
 - E. Oral histories
 - F. Summary of previous research
 - G. Statement of significance
- II. Description of Property
 - A. Current property boundary and physical description of site
 - 1. Boundary survey
 - 2. Tax parcel map
 - B. Physical description of primary building(s)
 - 1. Structural components
 - 2. Exterior building fabric
 - 3. Interior building fabric
 - 4. Room-by-room narrative
 - C. Physical description of outbuildings
 - D. Measured architectural drawings

1. Site Plan
 2. Floor plan(s)
 3. Exterior elevations
 4. Interior elevations of significant rooms
 5. Building cross-sections
 - E. Detail drawings of significant architectural features
 1. Fireplace mantle elevations and profiles
 2. Staircase elevations and profiles
 3. Door and window surrounds
 4. Other moulding and trim profiles
- III. Existing Conditions Assessment and Proposed Preservation Treatments
- A. Evaluation and recommendations for building structure
 1. Roof structures
 2. Fireplace structures
 3. Load bearing walls
 4. Foundation
 - B. Evaluation and recommendations for building exterior envelope
 1. Roofing
 2. Dormers
 3. Chimneys
 4. Cornice and soffits
 5. Exterior wall finishes
 6. Porches
 7. Doors and entrances
 8. Windows and window treatments
 9. Decorative trim
 10. Exposed portion of foundation
 11. Utility service and appurtenances
 - C. Evaluation and recommendations for building interior envelope
 1. Ceilings
 2. Staircases
 3. Partition walls
 4. Interior wall finishes
 5. Hearths and mantles
 6. Trim and surrounds

- 7. Floors
- D. Evaluation and recommendations for building systems
 - 1. Plumbing
 - 2. Electrical
 - 3. Life safety
 - 4. Access for the disabled
 - 5. Fire detection and suppression
 - 6. Security
 - 7. HVAC
 - 8. Other mechanical systems
- E. Evaluation and recommendations for site
 - 1. Fences, walls, and gates
 - 2. Driveways and parking lots
 - 3. Landscaping
 - 4. Other important site features
- IV. Technical Analyses
 - A. Archeological investigations
 - 1. Phase 1, Archeological survey (presence/absence study)
 - 2. Phase 2, Archeological evaluation (National Register eligibility)
 - 3. Phase 3, Data recovery (full scale excavation)
 - B. Hazardous materials assessment
 - C. Mortar analysis
 - D. Paint analysis
 - E. Wallpaper analysis
 - F. Dendrochronology
 - G. Collections management
- V. Adaptive use study
 - A. Appropriate treatment approach
 - B. Stabilization
 - C. Preservation
 - D. Rehabilitation
 - E. Restoration
 - F. Reconstruction

Appendix C

List of Preservation Briefs available through the National Park Service

Preservation Briefs provide guidance on preserving, rehabilitating and restoring historic buildings. Please note that all are available online at no cost at <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>

These publications were prepared by the National Park Service pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, which directs the Secretary of the Interior to develop and make available information concerning responsible preservation treatments for historic properties.

Preservation Brief 1: The Cleaning and Waterproof Coating of Masonry Buildings

Preservation Brief 2: Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings

Preservation Brief 3: Conserving Energy in Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief 4: Roofing for Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief 5: Preservation of Historic Adobe Buildings

Preservation Brief 6: Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief 7: The Preservation of Historic Glazed Architectural Terra-Cotta

Preservation Brief 8: Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief 9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows

Preservation Brief 10: Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork

Preservation Brief 11: Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts

Preservation Brief 12: The Preservation of Historic Pigmented Structural Glass (Vitrolite and Carrara Glass)

Preservation Brief 13: The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows

Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns

Preservation Brief 15: Preservation of Historic Concrete: Problems and General Approaches

Preservation Brief 16: The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors

Preservation Brief 17: Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character

Preservation Brief 18: Rehabilitating Interiors in Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief 19: The Repair and Replacement of Historic Wooden Shingle Roofs

Preservation Brief 20: The Preservation of Historic Barns

Preservation Brief 21: Repairing Historic Flat Plaster -- Walls and Ceilings

Preservation Brief 22: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco

Preservation Brief 23: Preserving Historic Ornamental Plaster

Preservation Brief 24: Heating, Ventilating, and Cooling Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief 25: The Preservation of Historic Signs

Preservation Brief 26: The Preservation of Historic Log Buildings

Preservation Brief 27: The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron

Preservation Brief 28: Painting Historic Interiors

Preservation Brief 29: The Repair, Replacement and Maintenance of Historic Slate Roofs

Preservation Brief 30: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs

Preservation Brief 31: Mothballing Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief 32: Making Historic Properties Accessible

Preservation Brief 33: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stained and Leaded Glass

Preservation Brief 34: Preserving Composition Ornament

Preservation Brief 35: Understanding Old Buildings: The Process of Architectural Investigation

Preservation Brief 36: Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of
Historic Landscapes

Preservation Brief 37: Methods for Reducing Lead-Paint Hazards in Historic Housing

Preservation Brief 38: Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry

Preservation Brief 39: Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief 40: Preserving Historic Ceramic Tile Floors

Preservation Brief 41: Seismic Retrofit of Historic Buildings: Preservation in the Forefront

Preservation Brief 42: The Maintenance, Repair and Replacement of Historic Cast Stone

Preservation Brief 43: The Preparation and Use of Historic Structure Reports

Preservation Brief 44: Awnings on Historic Buildings: Repair, Replacement and New Design

Appendix D – Preliminary Brand Platform

The consultant team reviewed all existing marketing materials associated with the City of Dyess, prospective project sites, partner destinations, and regional initiatives, such as the Arkansas Delta Byways program. This included identification of colors, images, styles, messages, and other relevant elements currently in use. From this material, brand identity, marketing and promotional audits were conducted assessing the look and feel of each as a stand-alone brand and also as a collective offering. Promotional, as well as visual synergies were identified to establish the equity that should be leveraged for both the City of Dyess and the Dyess Colony project.

Gecko Group, as sub-consultant to JMA, has developed a preliminary brand platform that follows this page. The goal in its development is to capture the essence and personality of the Dyess Colony and embody its identity in a manner that is relevant and authentic to the site while at the same time resonating with target audiences. This document serves as the underpinning for future development of a brand logo and support materials by providing the rationale for the brand and encapsulating the brand’s “promise”.

A Brand is a Promise — *A promise to do certain things, be certain things, and reflect those things back onto the people who interact with that brand.*
Dyess Colony doesn’t promise to be a recreation of the original community — Dyess Colony Historic Site promises to be a re-connection to the community’s past of hope and promise.

Dyess Colony Historic Site Brand Platform

Brand Essence

- Hope and Promise

Site Attributes

Dyess Colony is...

- an historical success story.
- an authentic learning environment.
- an unique agricultural landscape.
- the boyhood home of iconic musician, Johnny Cash.
- Influential in the musical roots of Johnny Cash.
- a connected community of past and present members.

Brand Personality

Dyess Colony wants to be perceived as...

- unique
- hardworking
- innovative
- **genuine** / authentic
- resilient
- successful
- **hopeful** / **grateful**
- proud
- hospitable
- engaging / **uplifting**
- **cooperative**
- humble
- reverent
- spiritual
- soulful
- engaging
- entertaining
- gritty

Brand Position

For those who know the Arkansas Delta, there is an accepted truth – the land defines the people. Dyess Colony is an ordinary, ***yet extraordinary***, example of this very reality.

As an important success story in our region’s and nation’s history, Dyess Colony provides an opportunity for visitors to connect with the real life stories of this town and its citizens, and to experience the agricultural landscape that helped shape an American icon, Johnny Cash.

Delta Byways Theme

Soil & Soul

Site Theme Possibilities

Dyess Colony
Delta Dreams

Dyess Colony
Delta-made

Dyess Colony
The Promise Land

Dyess Colony
the Unbroken Circle

Dyess Colony
The Spirit of Renewal

Dyess Colony
*An Enterprise of
Hope & Promise*

Dyess Colony
Land of Hope & Promise

Dyess Colony
Land of Hope & Renewal

Dyess Colony
Raw. Reclaimed. Renewed.

Dyess Colony
Restored Hope

Dyess Colony
Return of Dreams

Dyess Colony
Johnny Cash ~ Voice of the Land

Dyess Colony
Cotton, Community & Johnny Cash

Dyess Colony
Crops, Community & Johnny Cash

Dyess Colony
Crops, Community & Crooners

A Brand is a Promise — A promise to do certain things, be certain things, and reflect those things back onto the people who interact with that brand.
Dyess Colony doesn’t promise to be a recreation of the original community — Dyess Colony promises to be a re-connection to this community’s past of hope and promise.

Dyess, Arkansas Integration with Dyess Colony Brand Platform

Site Attributes	Community Personality	Community Position	Delta Byways Theme	Community Theme
<p><i>Dyess, Arkansas is...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ an historical success story.▪ an authentic learning environment.▪ an unique agricultural landscape.▪ the boyhood home of iconic musician, Johnny Cash.▪ Influential in the musical roots of Johnny Cash.▪ a connected community of past and present members.	<p>Dyess, Arkansas wants to be perceived as...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ unique▪ hardworking▪ innovative▪ genuine / authentic▪ resilient▪ successful▪ hopeful / grateful▪ proud▪ hospitable▪ engaging / uplifting▪ cooperative▪ humble▪ reverent▪ spiritual▪ soulful▪ engaging▪ entertaining▪ gritty	<p>From its inception, Dyess, Arkansas represented a land of opportunity, where destitute farmers came together to realize their American dream. This shared experience created a community of hope and promise, perhaps unlike any other in the Delta.</p> <p>The soul of this unique place is perhaps best depicted in the songs of its native son, Johnny Cash. As his boyhood home, Dyess was a place where he learned about life. It was Johnny Cash’s songs about these experiences and his innovative musical style reflecting sounds from his youth in Dyess that that resonated with audiences, then and now, and made him an American icon.</p> <p>Today, Dyess remains a place for learning about life in the Delta and the spirit of renewal.</p>	<p><i>Soil & Soul</i></p>	<p>Dyess, Arkansas <i>Boyhood Home of Johnny Cash</i></p> <p>Dyess, Arkansas <i>Land of Hope, Promise, and Johnny Cash</i></p>

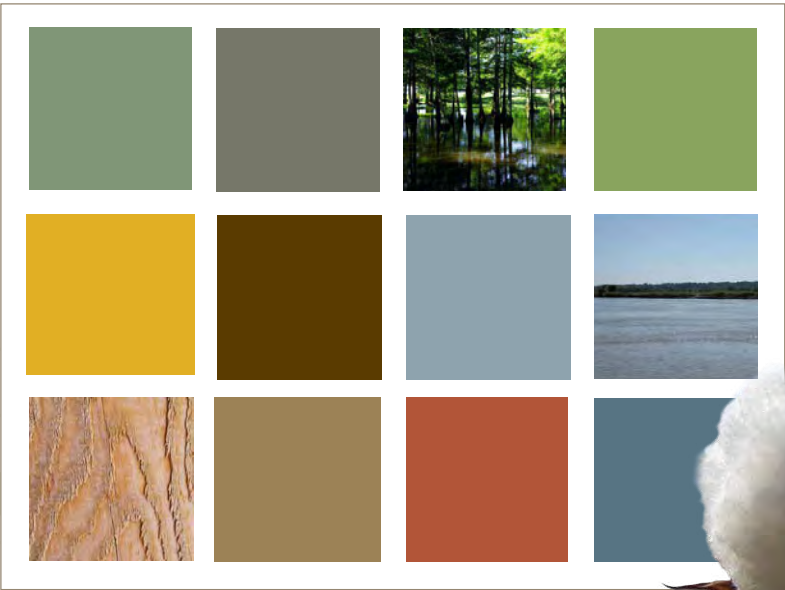
DYESS COLONY

Hope & Promise

Display font for logo or brand collateral should leverage WPA poster style, fonts, or other relevant period feel fonts

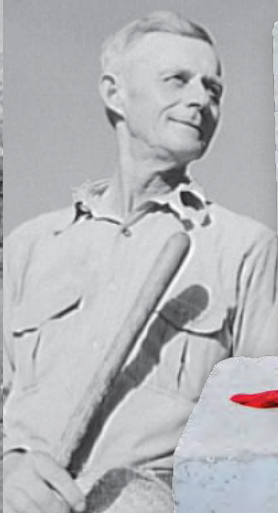
Reflective of natural Delta environment and complimentary with other Delta brands

NATURAL COLOR PALETTE



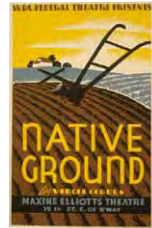
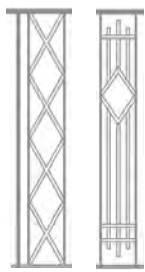
Arkansas

RUGGED TEXTURES



industrious

DESIGN INSPIRATION



TYPE FOR CONSIDERATION

Abcdef
SANS SERIF_1 20th Century Light

Abcdef
SANS SERIF_2 20th Century Bold

Abcdef
SERIF_1 Adobe Caslon Pro Regular

Abcdef
SERIF_2 Adobe Caslon Pro Semibold

Abcdef
SCRIPT DISPLAY Akenaten Normal

hardworking
cooperative
genuine
hospitable
resilient
hopeful
uplifting

Native son, Johnny Cash embodied his boy hood roots in Dyess, which were reflected in his unique musical sound

