



# Foundation Document

## Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site

New York

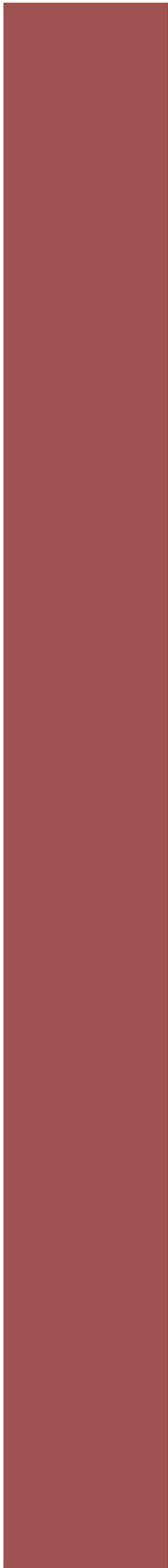
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## Mission of the National Park Service

The National Park Service (NPS) preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

The NPS core values are a framework in which the National Park Service accomplishes its mission. They express the manner in which, both individually and collectively, the National Park Service pursues its mission. The NPS core values are:

- **Shared stewardship:** We share a commitment to resource stewardship with the global preservation community.
- **Excellence:** We strive continually to learn and improve so that we may achieve the highest ideals of public service.
- **Integrity:** We deal honestly and fairly with the public and one another.
- **Tradition:** We are proud of it; we learn from it; we are not bound by it.
- **Respect:** We embrace each other's differences so that we may enrich the well-being of everyone.

The National Park Service is a bureau within the Department of the Interior. While numerous national park system units were created prior to 1916, it was not until August 25, 1916, that President Woodrow Wilson signed the National Park Service Organic Act formally establishing the National Park Service.

The national park system continues to grow and comprises more than 400 park units covering more than 84 million acres in every state, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. These units include, but are not limited to, national parks, monuments, battlefields, military parks, historical parks, historic sites, lakeshores, seashores, recreation areas, scenic rivers and trails, and the White House. The variety and diversity of park units throughout the nation require a strong commitment to resource stewardship and management to ensure both the protection and enjoyment of these resources for future generations.



*The arrowhead was authorized as the official National Park Service emblem by the Secretary of the Interior on July 20, 1951. The sequoia tree and bison represent vegetation and wildlife, the mountains and water represent scenic and recreational values, and the arrowhead represents historical and archeological values.*

## Introduction

Every unit of the national park system will have a foundational document to provide basic guidance for planning and management decisions—a foundation for planning and management. The core components of a foundation document include a brief description of the park as well as the park’s purpose, significance, fundamental resources and values, other important resources and values, and interpretive themes. The foundation document also includes special mandates and administrative commitments, an assessment of planning and data needs that identifies planning issues, planning products to be developed, and the associated studies and data required for park planning. Along with the core components, the assessment provides a focus for park planning activities and establishes a baseline from which planning documents are developed.

A primary benefit of developing a foundation document is the opportunity to integrate and coordinate all kinds and levels of planning from a single, shared understanding of what is most important about the park. The process of developing a foundation document begins with gathering and integrating information about the park. Next, this information is refined and focused to determine what the most important attributes of the park are. The process of preparing a foundation document aids park managers, staff, and the public in identifying and clearly stating in one document the essential information that is necessary for park management to consider when determining future planning efforts, outlining key planning issues, and protecting resources and values that are integral to park purpose and identity.

While not included in this document, a park atlas is also part of a foundation project. The atlas is a series of maps compiled from available geographic information system (GIS) data on natural and cultural resources, visitor use patterns, facilities, and other topics. It serves as a GIS-based support tool for planning and park operations. The atlas is published as a (hard copy) paper product and as geospatial data for use in a web mapping environment. The park atlas for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site can be accessed online at: <http://insideparkatlas.nps.gov/>.



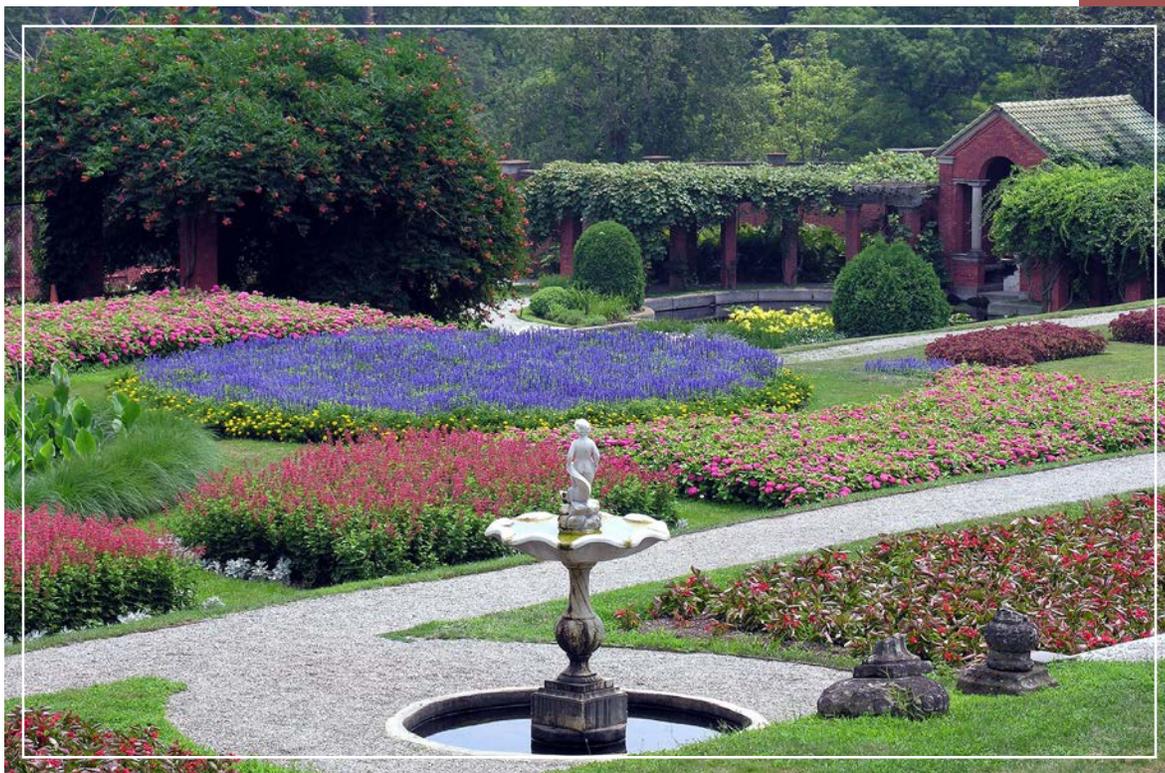
## Part 1: Core Components

The core components of a foundation document include a brief description of the park, park purpose, significance statements, fundamental resources and values, other important resources and values, and interpretive themes. These components are core because they typically do not change over time. Core components are expected to be used in future planning and management efforts.

### Brief Description of the Park

Historically known as Hyde Park, Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site is one of the region's oldest Hudson River estates. For nearly two centuries, it has been home to socially prominent New Yorkers. A superb example of its type, Hyde Park represents the domestic ideal of the elite class in the late 19th-century America. It provides a glimpse of estate life, the social stratification of the period, and the world of the American millionaire during the era historians refer to as the Gilded Age. The National Park Service preserves over 200 acres of the original property, including historic buildings, original furnishings, manicured landscapes, natural woodlands, formal gardens, and associated documents.

The centerpiece of the estate is the mansion, which was designed for Frederick and Louise Vanderbilt by the preeminent architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White. Frederick Vanderbilt was a grandson of transportation tycoon Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt and a railroad magnate in his own right, and his tremendous wealth enabled him to build this grand estate. The fully furnished 50-room house rivals the most stately North American homes of the period in the quality of its design, interiors, and decoration. More than 7,000 historic objects connected with the estate, featuring European fine art, American and European decorative arts and furnishings, and carriages and automobiles, are vital in portraying the lifestyle of the Vanderbilts. To the north of the mansion is the Pavilion, a neoclassical-style guest house, also designed by McKim, Mead, and White. Other dependencies include the Queen Anne-style Coach House, Tool House, Gardener's Cottage, Main Gate House, Lower Gate House, and Power House.





The park’s designed grounds reflect the evolution of Hudson River landscape design over some 200 years. The Vanderbilts retained much of the landscape as it was planned after 1828 by the Belgian landscape designer Andre Parmentier. They modified the formal Italian garden and added a rose garden and classically inspired support structures. Below the formal gardens is Crum Elbow Creek valley, a naturalistic landscape that forms the southern end of the park. An overlook from the mansion provides a dramatic vista up the Hudson Valley with the Catskill Mountains in the distance, a view that has become emblematic of the great Hudson Valley estates.

President Franklin Roosevelt directed designation of the Vanderbilt Mansion as a national historic site in 1940, after the death of Frederick Vanderbilt, to preserve one of the leading examples of Gilded Age country estates, which had become difficult to maintain in the years after World War I. Visitation at Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site was 431,961 in 2015.

Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site is one of three national historic sites in Hyde Park, New York, along with Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site. The three sites are combined into a single administrative unit under one superintendent and operated by one staff. Although each site was established by separate legislation and has its own purpose and significance, they have intertwined stories and share many of the same resources.

### **Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area**

Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Sites are central attractions within the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. They provide NPS liaison and technical assistance to the heritage area, including the educational initiative, “Teaching the Hudson Valley,” which serves schools throughout the region.

The Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area was designated by Congress in 1996 to recognize the importance of the history and the resources of the Hudson River Valley to the nation. The Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area includes 250 communities in 10 counties bordering the Hudson River between New York City and Albany. The Hudson River Valley resources represent themes of the Corridor of Commerce; Freedom and Dignity; Art, Artists, and the Hudson River School; Landscapes and Gardens; Revolutionary War; and the Environment.

## Park Purpose

The purpose statement identifies the specific reason(s) for establishment of a particular park. The purpose statement for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site was drafted through a careful analysis of its enabling legislation and the legislative history that influenced its development. The park was established when the enabling legislation adopted by Congress was signed into law on December 18, 1940 (see appendix A for enabling legislation). The purpose statement lays the foundation for understanding what is most important about the park.

*The purpose of VANDERBILT  
MANSION NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
is to preserve and interpret the  
estate of Frederick W. and Louise  
Vanderbilt as a premier example  
of an “American country place,”  
illustrating important economic,  
social, and cultural developments  
during America’s Gilded Age.*



## Park Significance

Significance statements express why a park’s resources and values are important enough to merit designation as a unit of the national park system. These statements are linked to the purpose of Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Statements of significance describe the distinctive nature of the park and why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. They focus on the most important resources and values that will assist in park planning and management.

The following significance statements have been identified for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site. (Please note that the sequence of the statements does not reflect the level of significance.)

- The Vanderbilt Mansion is an especially intact example of “American country place” design. The 50-room Beaux-Arts-style mansion, designed by the prominent architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White, is an architectural masterpiece surrounded by an outstanding designed Hudson River estate landscape.
- Built by Frederick William Vanderbilt (1856–1938), an heir to one of the country’s great industrial fortunes, the country place represents the domestic ideal of the upper class in late 19th-century and early 20th-century America.
- President Franklin D. Roosevelt directed designation of the Vanderbilt Mansion as a national historic site in 1940.

## Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values (FRVs) are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to warrant primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance. Fundamental resources and values are closely related to a park’s legislative purpose and are more specific than significance statements.

Fundamental resources and values help focus planning and management efforts on what is truly significant about the park. One of the most important responsibilities of NPS managers is to ensure the conservation and public enjoyment of those qualities that are essential (fundamental) to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance. If fundamental resources and values are allowed to deteriorate, the park purpose and/or significance could be jeopardized.

The following fundamental resources and values have been identified for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site:

- **Mansion and Dependencies**
- **Vanderbilt Landscape, including Scenic Views**
- **Museum and Archival Collections**

## Other Important Resources and Values

Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site contains other resources and values that are not fundamental to the purpose of the park and may be unrelated to its significance, but are important to consider in planning processes. These are referred to as “other important resources and values” (OIRV). These resources and values have been selected because they are important in the operation and management of the park and warrant special consideration in park planning.

The following other important resources and values have been identified for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site:

- **Natural Resources**

## Related Resources

Related resources are not owned by the park. They may be part of the broader context or setting in which park resources exist, represent a thematic connection that would enhance the experience of visitors, or have close associations with park fundamental resources and the purpose of the park. The related resource represents a connection with the park that often reflects an area of mutual benefit or interest, and collaboration, between the park and owner/stakeholder.

The following related resources have been identified for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site:

- **Vanderbilt Farm.** Vestiges of the Vanderbilt farmlands remain across New York Route 9 from the current park lands. They include farm buildings clustered along a narrow, stone wall-lined lane that aligns with the park's north gate.
- **Wales House.** Just outside the park boundary on its southeastern corner is the Wales House, built for a classmate of Frederick Vanderbilt. Originally part of the Vanderbilt estate, it was designed by McKim, Mead, and White and is now a private residence.
- **Howard House.** Howard House was designed by McKim, Mead, and White and built for a niece of Louise Vanderbilt. With its Carriage House, Howard House is east of New York Route 9 and is a private residence.
- **Other Frederick Vanderbilt Estates.** In addition to Hyde Park, Frederick Vanderbilt maintained residences in New York City, Bar Harbor, Upper St. Regis Lake in the Adirondacks, and at "Rough Point" in Newport, Rhode Island.
- **Other Vanderbilt Family Estates.** Other Vanderbilt family estates in the United States are preserved and open to the public. Among the most noted are Biltmore in Asheville, North Carolina, and The Breakers in Newport, Rhode Island.
- **Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites.** Located 3 miles south of Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site are the family homes of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt. Bellefield, the administrative headquarters for Vanderbilt Mansion, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites is located within Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site.



## Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from, and should reflect, park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all park significance statements and fundamental and other important resources and values.

Interpretive themes are an organizational tool that reveal and clarify meaning, concepts, contexts, and values represented by park resources. Sound themes are accurate and reflect current scholarship and science. They encourage exploration of the context in which events or natural processes occurred and the effects of those events and processes. Interpretive themes go beyond a mere description of the event or process to foster multiple opportunities to experience and consider the park and its resources. These themes help explain why a park story is relevant to people who may otherwise be unaware of connections they have to an event, time, or place associated with the park.

The following interpretive themes have been identified for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site:

- **Wealth and Society in the Industrial Age.** The Vanderbilt family was at the vanguard of American transportation and real estate development, amassing the first great American fortune that provided them opportunity to live like modern “merchant princes” during the Gilded Age—a period that exacerbated a stratified class system and prompted political responses that ultimately undercut the power of industrial wealth.
- **A Hudson River Great Estate.** The Vanderbilt Mansion and its grounds reflect the rarefied domestic ideal of the elite industrialist class in late 19th-century and early 20th-century America.



## Part 2: Dynamic Components

The dynamic components of a foundation document include special mandates and administrative commitments and an assessment of planning and data needs. These components are dynamic because they will change over time. New special mandates can be established and new administrative commitments made. As conditions and trends of fundamental and other important resources and values change over time, the analysis of planning and data needs will need to be revisited and revised, along with key issues. Therefore, this part of the foundation document will be updated accordingly.

### Special Mandates and Administrative Commitments

Many management decisions for a park unit are directed or influenced by special mandates and administrative commitments with other federal agencies, state and local governments, utility companies, partnering organizations, and other entities. Special mandates are requirements specific to a park that must be fulfilled. Mandates can be expressed in enabling legislation, in separate legislation following the establishment of the park, or through a judicial process. They may expand on park purpose or introduce elements unrelated to the purpose of the park. Administrative commitments are, in general, agreements that have been reached through formal, documented processes, often through memorandums of agreement. Examples include easements, rights-of-way, arrangements for emergency service responses, etc. Special mandates and administrative commitments can support, in many cases, a network of partnerships that help fulfill the objectives of the park and facilitate working relationships with other organizations. They are an essential component of managing and planning for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site.

#### Special Mandates

There are no special mandates for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site.

#### Administrative Commitments

Agreements with park partners, such as the FDR Presidential Library (administered by National Archives and Records Administration), Roosevelt-Vanderbilt Historical Association, Roosevelt Institute, and Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kill Partnership, authorizing various programming activities and physical improvements at the site.

### Assessment of Planning and Data Needs

Once the core components of part 1 of the foundation document have been identified, it is important to gather and evaluate existing information about the park's fundamental and other important resources and values, and develop a full assessment of the park's planning and data needs. The assessment of planning and data needs section presents planning issues, the planning projects that will address these issues, and the associated information requirements for planning, such as resource inventories and data collection, including GIS data.

There are three sections in the assessment of planning and data needs:

1. analysis of fundamental and other important resources and values
2. identification of key issues and associated planning and data needs
3. identification of planning and data needs (including spatial mapping activities or GIS maps)

The analysis of fundamental and other important resources and values and identification of key issues leads up to and supports the identification of planning and data collection needs.

## Analysis of Fundamental Resources and Values

The fundamental resource or value analysis table includes current conditions, potential threats and opportunities, planning and data needs, and selected laws and NPS policies related to management of the identified resource or value.

Fundamental Resource or Value	Mansion and Dependencies
<p><b>Related Significance Statements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Vanderbilt Mansion is an especially intact example of “American country place” design. The 50-room Beaux-Arts–style mansion, designed by the prominent architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White, is an architectural masterpiece surrounded by an outstanding designed Hudson River estate landscape.</li> <li>Built by Frederick William Vanderbilt (1856–1938), an heir to one of the country’s great industrial fortunes, the country place represents the domestic ideal of the upper class in late 19th-century and early 20th-century America.</li> <li>President Franklin D. Roosevelt directed designation of the Vanderbilt Mansion as a national historic site in 1940.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Current Conditions and Trends</b></p>	<p><b>Conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The centerpiece of this country place is the Beaux Arts-style mansion (1895–1899) designed for Frederick William Vanderbilt by McKim, Mead, and White, one of the foremost architectural firms of the era. The fully furnished 50-room house rivals the most stately North American homes of the period in the quality of its design, interiors, and decoration. Modern for its day, the mansion was framed in steel, with concrete beneath the limestone facing.</li> <li>Several important structures associated with the mansion expand depiction of the estate operation: the Pavilion (neoclassical-style guest house), Coach House (brick Queen Anne-style structure), Power House (1897), and two gatehouses. The Pavilion (1895), a neoclassical-style guesthouse, was designed by McKim, Mead, and White and was inhabited by the Vanderbilt family while the mansion was being constructed. It was later used for overflow guests and during the winter months. Today it is used as a visitor center. The Coach House (1897) is a brick Queen Anne-style structure. The Power House (1897), a one-story cobblestone building built in a rustic style, was one of the first private electric power houses built and is one of few extant today. The Main and Lower Gate Houses (1898) were designed by McKim, Mead, and White and are park residences today. The Tool House (1878) was built for the owners previous to the Vanderbilts. It serves in maintaining the historic gardens.</li> <li>The Vanderbilt Mansion has an API of 87 and an FCI of 0.06 (good). The Pavilion has an API of 100 and an FCI of 0.082 (good). The Coach House has an API of 82 and an FCI of 0.06 (good). The Tool House has an API of 75 and an FCI of 0.22 (poor). The Power House has an API of 43 and an FCI of 0.253 (poor). The Main and Lower Gate Houses have APIs of 75 and 66 and FCIs of 0.104 (good) and 0.212 (poor), respectively.</li> </ul> <p><b>Trends</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2010, the National Park Service completed a general management plan for the national historic site that currently guides the park’s management.</li> <li>Rehabilitation of the Vanderbilt Mansion exterior and porticoes began in 2016.</li> <li>The Roosevelt Vanderbilt Historical Association operates the bookstore at the park.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Threats and Opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the absence of a centralized maintenance facility, the Coach House is used for that purpose; however, it is inadequate for maintenance purposes and such use threatens the long-term survival of this nationally significant structure.</li> <li>Climate change could have damaging impacts on cultural resources in the park. These potential impacts are not clearly understood and should be researched.</li> </ul>

Fundamental Resource or Value	Mansion and Dependencies
Threats and Opportunities	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With much new scholarship in recent years, a new long-range interpretive plan would enhance and make more relevant the visitor experience.</li> <li>• There are partnership opportunities for preserving the historic site and enhancing the visitor experience. Important partners include the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt Historical Association (the parks' cooperating association), Roosevelt-Vanderbilt Conservancy, and Hudson River National Heritage Area. Other potential partners include local colleges such as Bard College, Vassar College, State University of New York–New Paltz, Marist College, and Dutchess Community College.</li> <li>• The park could attract new audiences with arts programs, especially because the Vanderbilt family had a strong orientation to the arts.</li> <li>• Solar panels could be installed on some of the park's buildings, and hydropower could be developed using the historic hydropower facility.</li> <li>• Exhibits could be designed for rooms in the mansion, such as the service areas, that currently do not have exhibits.</li> </ul>
Data and/or GIS Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated national register documentation.</li> </ul>
Planning Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic structure reports for Vanderbilt Mansion, Pavilion, Coach House, Gardener's Cottage.</li> <li>• Long-range interpretive plan.</li> <li>• Maintenance facilities plan.</li> <li>• Arts programming plan.</li> <li>• Restoration and repurposing plan for Coach House.</li> <li>• Climate adaptation plan.</li> </ul>
Laws, Executive Orders, and Regulations That Apply to the FRV, and NPS Policy-level Guidance	<p><b>Laws, Executive Orders, and Regulations That Apply to the FRV</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974</li> <li>• Historic Sites Act of 1935</li> <li>• National Environmental Policy Act of 1969</li> <li>• National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended</li> <li>• Executive Order 11593, "Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment"</li> <li>• Executive Order 13287, "Preserve America"</li> <li>• "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR 800)</li> <li>• Secretarial Order 3289, "Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change on America's Water, Land, and Other Natural and Cultural Resources"</li> </ul> <p><b>NPS Policy-level Guidance (NPS Management Policies 2006 and Director's Orders)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPS <i>Management Policies 2006</i> (§1.4.6) "What Constitutes Park Resources and Values"</li> <li>• NPS <i>Management Policies 2006</i> (§1.6) "Cooperative Conservation Beyond Park Boundaries"</li> <li>• NPS <i>Management Policies 2006</i> (chapter 5) "Cultural Resource Management"</li> <li>• Director's Order 28: <i>Cultural Resource Management</i></li> <li>• <i>The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation</i></li> <li>• <i>The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation &amp; Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings</i></li> <li>• <i>The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes</i></li> </ul>

<b>Fundamental Resource or Value</b>	<b>Vanderbilt Landscape, including Scenic Views</b>
<b>Related Significance Statements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Vanderbilt Mansion is an especially intact example of “American country place” design. The 50-room Beaux-Arts–style mansion, designed by the prominent architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White, is an architectural masterpiece surrounded by an outstanding designed Hudson River estate landscape.</li> <li>• Built by Frederick William Vanderbilt (1856–1938), an heir to one of the country’s great industrial fortunes, the country place represents the domestic ideal of the upper class in late 19th-century and early 20th-century America.</li> <li>• President Franklin D. Roosevelt directed designation of the Vanderbilt Mansion as a national historic site in 1940.</li> </ul>
<b>Current Conditions and Trends</b>	<p><b>Conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The park is one of the best remaining designed Hudson River landscapes. The grounds reflect the organization of the picturesque landscape as designed by Andre Parmentier in 1829–1830. Two forest plantations remain—a small Norway spruce plantation and a white pine plantation.</li> <li>• There are archeological features relating to previous owners of the property, the Sexton family, as well as several trash dumps.</li> <li>• An overlook along the northern end of the drive provides a dramatic view up the Hudson Valley, with the Catskill Mountains in the distance. This view was central to the pre-Vanderbilt designed picturesque landscape and is emblematic of the great estates of the Hudson Valley.</li> <li>• Numerous structures were erected to support and enhance the estate’s vast gardening operation and embellish the designed landscape. The national register nomination for the park specifically notes the Tool House (1903), Loggia Garden (1910), Pergola (1903), and White Bridge (1897). The White Bridge is one of the early and surviving Melan arch bridges in the United States.</li> <li>• The Vanderbilt Mansion grounds have an API of 100 and an FCI of 0.008 (good). The trails have an API of 93 and an FCI of 0.000 (good). The Italian Gardens have an API of 80 and an FCI of 0.339 (poor). The Loggia has an API of 80 and an FCI of 0.064 (good)</li> <li>• The five missing greenhouses alter the original massing and scale of the garden.</li> </ul> <p><b>Trends</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Roosevelt-Vanderbilt Conservancy works to restore the historic gardens, landscapes, and forests, protect the Hudson River viewshed, and interpret these places for visitors.</li> <li>• The Frederick W. Vanderbilt Garden Association has refurbished and maintains the formal gardens.</li> <li>• Demand for access to and interpretation of the river is growing.</li> <li>• Outdoor recreational use of the Vanderbilt grounds is increasing.</li> </ul>
<b>Threats and Opportunities</b>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The view of the Hudson River remains but has been reduced by encroaching vegetation since the time of the Vanderbilts.</li> <li>• Although views across the river to Ulster County remain mostly uncluttered by modern development, growing development pressure could undermine long-term protection of the viewshed.</li> <li>• Scenic views are susceptible to air pollution-caused haze. Coal-fired power plants, vehicle exhaust, and agriculture are contributors to air quality impacts regionally. Significant reductions in power plant and vehicle exhaust emissions in the past decade have reduced ozone and fine particles, which has improved air quality at the historic sites.</li> <li>• Aspects of the designed landscape are seriously deteriorated due to the loss of specimens and inadequate maintenance. Restoration of the pine buffer along New York Route 9 is underway and will require continued maintenance.</li> <li>• Landscape features such as the perimeter wall and the wrought iron fence along the railroad are decaying.</li> </ul>

Fundamental Resource or Value	Vanderbilt Landscape, including Scenic Views
Threats and Opportunities	<p><b>Threats (continued)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive spring bulb plantings, including masses of naturalized daffodils that once appeared on open banks of Crum Elbow Creek, have almost disappeared.</li> <li>• Invasive species are a problem at various locations.</li> <li>• Garden masonry and support structures are in deteriorating condition.</li> <li>• The rural atmosphere of the Vanderbilt Estate is impacted by congested motor traffic on the abutting New York Route 9.</li> <li>• Projected climate change may affect the landscape and viewsheds by increasing the threat of erosion, increasing invasive species, shifting species phenology, and driving northward shifts in species ranges.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The visitor experience in the Vanderbilt Mansion landscape could be enhanced by increasing interpretive tours.</li> <li>• More contextual research connected to the role of the Vanderbilts in the Mid-Hudson Valley is needed, including research on other wealthy families in the area and ties to the local community.</li> <li>• Limited vehicular access to Bard Rock is a frustration for visitors.</li> <li>• Cultural and natural landscapes could be enhanced by noise reduction. Opportunities to reduce noise could include changing equipment and reducing crowding.</li> </ul>
Data and/or GIS Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic resource study on the Vanderbilt Mansion's community context.</li> <li>• Visual resource inventory.</li> </ul>
Planning Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual resource management plan.</li> <li>• Recreational uses plan.</li> </ul>
Laws, Executive Orders, and Regulations That Apply to the FRV, and NPS Policy-level Guidance	<p><b>Laws, Executive Orders, and Regulations That Apply to the FRV</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979</li> <li>• Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974</li> <li>• Clean Air Act of 1977</li> <li>• Historic Sites Act of 1935</li> <li>• National Environmental Policy Act of 1969</li> <li>• National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended</li> <li>• Executive Order 11593, "Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment"</li> <li>• "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR 800)</li> <li>• Secretarial Order 3289, "Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change on America's Water, Land, and Other Natural and Cultural Resources"</li> </ul> <p><b>NPS Policy-level Guidance (NPS Management Policies 2006 and Director's Orders)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPS Management Policies 2006 (§4.9) "Soundscape Management"</li> <li>• NPS Management Policies 2006 (chapter 5) "Cultural Resource Management"</li> <li>• NPS Management Policies 2006 (§5.3.1.7) "Cultural Soundscape Management"</li> <li>• Director's Order 28: <i>Cultural Resource Management</i></li> <li>• Director's Order 28A: <i>Archeology</i></li> <li>• Director's Order 47: <i>Soundscape Preservation and Noise Management</i></li> <li>• <i>The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation</i></li> <li>• <i>The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes</i></li> <li>• The national historic site is within New York State's designated coastal zone management area, and all proposed activities for the park must be consistent with the state's coastal zone management program policies.</li> </ul>



Fundamental Resource or Value	Museum and Archival Collections
<p><b>Related Significance Statements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Vanderbilt Mansion is an especially intact example of “American country place” design. The 50-room Beaux-Arts–style mansion, designed by the prominent architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White, is an architectural masterpiece surrounded by an outstanding designed Hudson River estate landscape.</li> <li>• Built by Frederick William Vanderbilt (1856–1938), an heir to one of the country’s great industrial fortunes, the country place represents the domestic ideal of the upper class in late 19th-century and early 20th-century America.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Current Conditions and Trends</b></p>	<p><b>Conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The significance of the Vanderbilt collection is based mostly on its integrity as a single collection from one owner representing late 19th- and early 20th-century tastes in architecture, landscape, and interior design. It also is notable for the prominence of the designers responsible for the interiors, the intrinsic and artistic value of the individual art and decorative objects, and the designed interiors as a whole.</li> <li>• The mansion collections include many important examples of European fine art and American and European decorative arts and furnishings from the 16th to the early 20th centuries. The park’s collections include more than 6,500 historic objects, approximately 4,000 of which are on display in the mansion.</li> <li>• Approximately 90% of the original furnishings for the mansion survive in the collection. In addition to objects displayed in the main public rooms, the collection includes most of the original fabric furnishings, many too fragile for display, and domestic equipment and furnishings associated with the kitchens, laundry, and other basement work areas.</li> <li>• The textiles are among the finest examples of the period in any collection.</li> <li>• Vanderbilt-associated carriages, sleighs, and automobiles, stored in the Coach House, form part of the collection.</li> <li>• Historic archival material includes a remarkably complete resource on Vanderbilt estate management.</li> <li>• The collection includes a rich NPS-produced oral history collection documenting particularly the work of estate employees.</li> <li>• The collection includes numerous archeological objects.</li> <li>• More than 78% of the museum collection is cataloged but not to registration level standards.</li> <li>• Current planning documents include a collection management report (2015), historic furnishings report (2015), scope of collection statement (2013), and housekeeping plan (draft).</li> </ul> <p><b>Trends</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Park Service has a new museum services facility (2008), which improves the condition of selected stored collections for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site, Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site, and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site.</li> </ul>

Fundamental Resource or Value	Museum and Archival Collections
Threats and Opportunities	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A significant part of the collections has been on display since the mansion was opened to the public, and many objects, particularly books, textiles and complex structural décor, suffer from deferred conservation.</li> <li>• The mansion is severely infested with museum pests that are causing substantial ongoing damage to collections. It also has a chronic decades-long problem with soot deposition associated with its heating and ventilation system.</li> <li>• Gilded elements are becoming dislodged from furnishings.</li> <li>• Exhibited collections and complex interior décor continue to be damaged by deposits of soot; investigations are currently underway to identify the ongoing source.</li> <li>• Exhibited textiles including tapestries, upholstery, fabric wallcoverings, and carpets are experiencing damage due to long exposure to inadequate climate control, soot, light, and improper support.</li> <li>• Major furnishings, such as the grand orreries and furniture joinery, require conservation due to inadequate climate control.</li> <li>• There is a danger of the theft of historic objects during house tours.</li> <li>• Collections associated with the Coach House, primarily horse-drawn and motor vehicles are housed there with no climate or pest control.</li> <li>• Only 10%–15% of park management records of permanent value have been retired to the park archives and processed. The large body of resource management records in the files of several park divisions needs to be archivally processed and made available for broader staff and research use and selected records retired to the National Archives and Records Administration as appropriate.</li> <li>• Historic vehicles stored in the Coach House require restoration work.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New exhibits in the mansion's service areas could help tell some as yet untold stories of the Vanderbilt Mansion.</li> <li>• Recent technology has broadened opportunities to use the extensive oral history collection in visitor programs and social media.</li> <li>• Retiring and processing park management records could be completed.</li> </ul>
Data and/or GIS Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve quality of catalog records to park and NPS cataloging standards.</li> <li>• Conservation condition surveys for paintings, prints, clocks, and horse-drawn carriages.</li> </ul>
Planning Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collection management plan (update).</li> <li>• Roosevelt-Vanderbilt records management file plan (update).</li> <li>• Integrated pest management plan and interior pesticide use plan.</li> <li>• Preservation climate control plan for carriage wing of Coach House.</li> </ul>
Laws, Executive Orders, and Regulations That Apply to the FRV, and NPS Policy-level Guidance	<p><b>Laws, Executive Orders, and Regulations That Apply to the FRV</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979</li> <li>• Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974</li> <li>• Historic Sites Act of 1935</li> <li>• National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended</li> <li>• "Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections" (36 CFR 79)</li> <li>• "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR 800)</li> </ul> <p><b>NPS Policy-level Guidance (NPS Management Policies 2006 and Director's Orders)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPS <i>Management Policies 2006</i> (chapter 5) "Cultural Resource Management"</li> <li>• Director's Order 24: <i>NPS Museum Collections Management</i></li> <li>• Director's Order 28: <i>Cultural Resource Management</i></li> <li>• Director's Order 28A: <i>Archeology</i></li> <li>• NPS <i>Museum Handbook</i>, parts I, II, and III</li> </ul>

## Analysis of Other Important Resources and Values

Other Important Resource or Value	Natural Resources
<p><b>Current Conditions and Trends</b></p>	<p><b>Conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural resources of the park include wetlands and other aquatic resources, several natural communities considered rare and/or significant within New York State, forest lands, and prime agricultural lands.</li> <li>Aquatic resources include two perennial streams, one ephemeral stream, an intermittent stream, three permanent ponds, and five wetland areas.</li> <li>The park contains an impressive example of a mature oak/tulip tree forest community more than 60 acres in size, with a 40-acre core of very mature trees. Part of this community is considered “old growth.” This community is defined by large oaks, beeches, and tulip trees, and at least 24 oaks average one meter diameter at breast height. Embedded within this community is a Norway spruce plantation.</li> <li>The park contains some prime agricultural lands best suited to producing food, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. Within the park there are two categories of prime agricultural lands: prime farmland soil (2 acres) and soils of statewide significance (3 acres).</li> <li>A diverse array of animal species is present in the park, in part due to the large areas of wetland and forest. The park has documented the presence of the northern long-eared bat (<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>), a federal threatened species. The park is within the summer range of the Indiana bat (<i>Myotis sodalis</i>), which is on the federal list of endangered species, but the presence of this species has not been verified. Several turtle species (spotted, wood, and box) and salamander species (Jefferson’s, blue-spotted, and marbled) have been identified as species of special concern in New York State and are known to occur in the park. The presence of several birds on federal or state lists of species of concern, including the bald eagle and red-shouldered hawk, has been documented, but there is little reliable long-term data.</li> </ul> <p><b>Trends</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The freshwater tidal marsh is mostly dependent on the flushing action of tidal flows through culverts under the embankment, which have diminished over the years.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Threats and Opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A growing deer population is having negative impacts on the park’s natural resources.</li> <li>Soil stability, vegetation, species composition, vernal pools, forest types, and habitat diversity may be affected by projected increases in temperature, overall precipitation, and frequency/intensity of storms due to ongoing and accelerating climate change.</li> <li>Natural resources in the park are at risk for harmful effects from air pollution, including nutrient enrichment and acidification from excess deposition of nitrogen and sulfur air pollutants. Nitrogen deposition levels are above critical loads for lichen and forest vegetation. Wetlands are sensitive to nutrient enrichment effects of excess nitrogen from deposition, which can help invasive plant species to grow faster and out-compete native vegetation adapted to lower nitrogen conditions. Sugar maple and red spruce trees are especially sensitive to effects of acidification. Also, airborne toxics, including mercury and pesticides, deposited with rain or snow can accumulate in park wildlife, resulting in reduced foraging efficiency, survival, and reproductive success.</li> <li>Soil stability, vegetation, species composition, vernal pools, forest types, and habitat diversity may be affected by projected increases in temperature, overall precipitation, and frequency/intensity of storms due to ongoing climate change.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The park is a member of the NPS Northeast Temperate Network and benefits from a number of inventory and monitoring efforts including the collection of long-term bird, water quality, and forest health data to help inform park management decisions. Opportunities exist to obtain technical assistance for addressing natural resources issues at the parks, particularly forest management.</li> </ul>

Other Important Resource or Value	Natural Resources
Data and/or GIS Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor federal and state threatened and endangered species.</li> <li>• Investigate air pollution impacts on sensitive park ecosystems.</li> </ul>
Planning Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deer management plan.</li> <li>• Climate adaptation plan.</li> </ul>
Laws, Executive Orders, and Regulations That Apply to the OIRV, and NPS Policy-level Guidance	<p><b>Laws, Executive Orders, and Regulations That Apply to the OIRV</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act</li> <li>• Clean Air Act of 1977</li> <li>• Clean Water Act</li> <li>• Endangered Species Act of 1973</li> <li>• Migratory Bird Treaty Act</li> <li>• National Environmental Policy Act of 1969</li> <li>• National Invasive Species Act</li> <li>• Executive Order 11514, "Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality"</li> <li>• Executive Order 13112, "Invasive Species"</li> <li>• Secretarial Order 3289, "Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change on America's Water, Land, and Other Natural and Cultural Resources"</li> </ul> <p><b>NPS Policy-level Guidance (NPS Management Policies 2006 and Director's Orders)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPS <i>Management Policies 2006</i> (§1.6) "Cooperative Conservation Beyond Park Boundaries"</li> <li>• NPS <i>Management Policies 2006</i> (chapter 4) "Natural Resource Management"</li> <li>• NPS <i>Natural Resource Management Reference Manual 77</i></li> </ul>



## Identification of Key Issues and Associated Planning and Data Needs

This section considers key issues to be addressed in planning and management and therefore takes a broader view over the primary focus of part 1. A key issue focuses on a question that is important for a park. Key issues often raise questions regarding park purpose and significance and fundamental and other important resources and values. For example, a key issue may pertain to the potential for a fundamental or other important resource or value in a park to be detrimentally affected by discretionary management decisions. A key issue may also address crucial questions that are not directly related to purpose and significance, but that still affect them indirectly. Usually, a key issue is one that a future planning effort or data collection needs to address and requires a decision by NPS managers.

The following are key issues for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site and the associated planning and data needs to address them:

- **Updated Historic Structures Documentation.** There is a lack of up-to-date historical documentation for a number of structures in the park.
  - *Associated planning and data needs:* Historic structure reports for the Vanderbilt Mansion, Pavilion, Coach House, and Gardener’s Cottage
- **Backlog of Preservation Projects.** Many fundamental resources in the park are in poor or serious condition. Threatened resources include historic structures, designed landscapes, and museum objects.
  - *Associated planning and data needs:* Restoration and repurposing plan for Coach House
- **Long-Range Interpretive Plan.** Abundant recent research and thinking about historic interpretation and the visitor experience at the park underscore the need for a new combined long-range interpretive plan, especially designed to thematically link the park with Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites. To develop interpretive content, the park staff need to complete important background research through updated national register documentation.
  - *Associated planning and data needs:* Long-range interpretive plan; updated national register documentation; historic structure reports for the Vanderbilt Mansion, Pavilion, Coach House, and Gardener’s Cottage; historic resource study on the community context of Vanderbilt Mansion
- **Visitation.** Visitation at Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site has increased over the last few years. With more emphases on outdoor recreational use and trail use, the Vanderbilt Mansion grounds have become a magnet for these activities.

There is a sense that, because visitors with personal knowledge/experience of park history are aging and the stories of the Vanderbilts are further away in time, new approaches and new audiences need to be developed for the park. The park has strengthened its social media program and expanded programs. Park staff are putting more emphasis on outreach programs to schools and expanding programs, such as art programs, for the park.

- *Associated planning and data needs:* Long-range interpretive plan; recreational uses plan; visitor profiles; arts programming plan
- **Records and Archival Management.** There is a backlog of work cataloging and organizing records and archives for the park. Park staff need guidance from the NPS Northeast Region, particularly regarding storage and retrieval of digital records and archiving the park’s resource management records.
  - *Associated planning and data needs:* Improve quality of catalog records to park and NPS cataloging standards



- **Natural Resources Management.** Some of the important issues facing the park include a growing deer population, better management of forest resources, and removal of trees that interfere with important viewsheds.
  - *Associated planning and data needs:* Deer management plan; visual resource management plan; visual resource inventory
- **Maintenance Facilities.** Maintenance facilities are housed in historic structures at Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Sites and are inadequate for accommodating machinery. In addition, maintenance activities adversely impact the fabric of the historic structures.
  - *Associated planning and data needs:* Maintenance facilities plan
- **Park Boundary Survey.** The park does not have an accurate boundary survey.
  - *Associated planning and data needs:* Park boundary survey
- **Information Technology Infrastructure and Support.** Information technology infrastructure and support is needed to facilitate park operations and enhance the visitor experience at the park.
  - *Associated planning and data needs:* Information technology infrastructure and support plan

## Planning and Data Needs

To maintain connection to the core elements of the foundation and the importance of these core foundation elements, the planning and data needs listed here are directly related to protecting fundamental resources and values, park significance, and park purpose, as well as addressing key issues. To successfully undertake a planning effort, information from sources such as inventories, studies, research activities, and analyses may be required to provide adequate knowledge of park resources and visitor information. Such information sources have been identified as data needs. Geospatial mapping tasks and products are included in data needs.

Items considered of the utmost importance were identified as high priority, and other items identified, but not rising to the level of high priority, were listed as either medium- or low-priority needs. These priorities inform park management efforts to secure funding and support for planning projects.

Planning Needs – Where A Decision-Making Process Is Needed			
Related to an FRV, OIRV, or Key Issue?	Planning Needs	Priority (H,M,L)	Notes
FRV, Key Issue	Long-range interpretive plan	H	Should include Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Sites. Would include an education plan.
OIRV, Key Issue	Deer management plan	H	Should include Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites.
FRV, OIRV	Climate adaptation plan	H	Should include Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites.
FRV, Key Issue	Maintenance facilities plan	H	Maintenance facilities are also located at Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site.
FRV, Key Issues	Historic structure reports for Vanderbilt Mansion, Pavilion, Coach House, and Gardener's Cottage	H	
FRV	Collection management plan (update)	M	Should include Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites.
FRV	Integrated pest management plan and interior pesticide use plan	M	Should include Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites.
FRV, Key Issue	Arts programming plan	M	
FRV, Key Issue	Restoration and repurposing plan for Coach House	M	
Key Issue	Information technology infrastructure and support plan	M	Should include Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites.
FRV, Key Issue	Recreational uses plan	M	Should include Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site.
FRV, Key Issue	Visual resource management plan	M	Plan would use the visual resource inventory as a baseline and identify goals and strategies to protect important views. Should include Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites.
FRV	Preservation climate control plan for carriage wing of Coach House	M	Plan for providing minimal level of preservation climate control for carriage wing of Coach House
FRV	Roosevelt-Vanderbilt records management file plan (update)	L	Should include Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites.

<b>Data Needs – Where Information Is Needed Before Decisions Can Be Made</b>			
<b>Related to an FRV, OIRV, or Key Issue?</b>	<b>Data Needs</b>	<b>Priority (H,M,L)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
FRV, Key Issue	National register documentation (update)	H	Existing documentation dates from 1966.
FRV, Key Issue	Historic resource study on the community context of the Vanderbilt Mansion	H	Need to understand cultural context of sites.
Key Issue	Park boundary survey	H	
FRV, Key Issue	Improve quality of catalog records to park and NPS cataloging standards	H	Should include Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites.
Key Issue	Visitor profiles	M	Should include Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites.
OIRV	Investigate air pollution impacts on sensitive park ecosystems	M	Include potential impact of mercury and other toxics on biota in the park such as bird, bat, insect, and fish species.
FRV, Key Issue	Visual resource inventory	M	Identify scenic quality and NPS/visitor values for important views and support protection of cultural landscape.
FRV	Conservation condition surveys for paintings, prints, clocks, and horse-drawn carriages	M	Large collection requires condition survey.
OIRV	Monitoring of federal and state threatened and endangered species	L	Should include northern long-eared and Indiana bats, Blanding's turtle, and other turtle, salamander, and bird species.



## Part 3: Contributors

### Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Sites

Larry Turk, Superintendent

Sarah Olson, Superintendent (former)

David Hayes, Chief of Facilities and Resource Management

Dave Bullock, Chief of Administration

Anne Jordan, Chief of Museum Services

Michael Riegle, Chief of Maintenance

Scott Rector, Chief of Interpretation

Allan Dailey, Supervisory Ranger, Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site and Top Cottage

Franceska Macsali-Urbin, Supervisory Ranger, Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites

Michele Ballos, Collection Manager

Frank Futral, Curator/Visual Information Specialist

### NPS Northeast Region

Brian Strack, Associate Regional Director, Planning, Facilities and Conservation Assistance

Allen Cooper, Program Lead, Park Planning and Special Studies

James C. O'Connell, Project Manager and Planner (retired)

Amanda Jones, Community Planner

Joanne Blacoe, Interpretive Planner

Eric Breitreutz, Chief of Historic Structure Research and Documentation

Bethany Serafine, Historian

Adam Kozlowski, Data Manager, Northeast Temperate Network

### Other NPS Staff

Melody Bentfield, Contract Librarian (former), Denver Service Center, Planning Division

Ken Bingenheimer, Contract Editor (former), Denver Service Center, Planning Division

Pam Holtman, Quality Assurance Coordinator, WASO Park Planning and Special Studies

John Paul Jones, Visual Information Specialist, Denver Service Center, Planning Division

Nancy Shock, Foundation Coordinator, Denver Service Center, Planning Division

Judith Stoesser, Contract Editor, Denver Service Center, Planning Division

Philip Viray, Publications Chief, Denver Service Center, Planning Division

# Appendixes

## Appendix A: Enabling Legislation for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site

5282

FEDERAL REGISTER, Tuesday, December 31, 1940

TITLE 36—PARKS AND FORESTS  
CHAPTER 1—NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PART 1—AREAS ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
ORDER DESIGNATING THE VANDERBILT MANSION NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, NEW YORK<sup>1</sup>

Whereas the Congress of the United States has declared it to be a national policy to preserve for the public use historic sites, buildings, and objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States, and

Whereas certain lands and structures in the town of Hyde Park, New York, part of the estate of the late Frederick W. Vanderbilt, have been declared by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments to be representative and illustrative of their period and hence of national significance in the economic, sociological, and cultural history of the United States, and

Whereas title to the above-mentioned lands and structures is vested in the United States, having been donated by Margaret Louise Van Alen for preservation as a memorial to her uncle, the late Frederick W. Vanderbilt, from whom she inherited the property by will:

Now, therefore, I, Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, under and by virtue of the authority conferred upon the Secretary of the Interior by Section 2 of the act of Congress approved August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666), do hereby designate the following-described lands, with the structures thereon, to be a national historic site, having the name "Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site":

All those pieces or parcels of land, together with the structures thereon, situ-

ated in the Town of Hyde Park, County of Dutchess, State of New York, conveyed to the United States of America by Margaret Louise Van Alen by deed dated May 21, 1940, and recorded in the County Clerk's office, Dutchess County, in book number 583 of deeds at page 323, and more particularly bounded and described as follows:

*Parcel 1.* Beginning at the north-easterly corner of a stone post in a corner of walls in the westerly line of the Albany Post Road, and in the southerly line of lands of the Huyler Estate, and running thence along the easterly face of the wall, the westerly line of said Post Road, south 21°00'30" west 33.65 feet; south 22°51'10" west 140.32 feet; south 21°30'50" west 396.97 feet; south 15°07'20" west 42.81 feet; south 9°51'40" west 206.21 feet; south 9°45'00" west 231.40 feet; south 8°38'50" west 873.49 feet; south 7°15'30" west 193.15 feet; south 1°45'40" west 37.14 feet; south 1°00'50" east 68.41 feet; south 2°30'40" east 170.55 feet; south 4°20'10" east 100.16 feet; south 5°57'20" east 142.63 feet; south 12°55'11" east 68.20 feet; south 19°26'40" east 34.40 feet; south 22°03'40" east 39.58 feet; south 25°33'50" east 32.47 feet; south 27°35'20" east 206.71 feet; south 25°23'50" east 143.02 feet; south 25°57'40" east 77.08 feet; south 24°39'30" east 305.01 feet; south 25°04'50" east 122.08 feet; south 22°00'00" east 115.39 feet; south 20°24'20" east 226.52 feet to a crow'sfoot cut in the easterly wall; thence leaving the Albany Post Road south 75°53'20" west 213.84 feet to the southeastern corner of the Old Stoutenburgh Cemetery; thence following the boundary wall of said Cemetery north 19°08'30" west 130.72 feet; south 77°56'05" west 108.95 feet; south 11°37'28" east 134.28 feet; thence leaving said wall and following along a board fence at the end of Doty Avenue south 77°05'01" west 11.97 feet to a corner; thence leaving said fence south 75°45'23" west 267.06 feet to a post; thence south 13°40'33" west 820.27 feet to a crow'sfoot cut in the top of the stone wall along the northerly line of West Market Street; thence following along said stone wall south 44°40'02" west 10.95 feet; south 40°33'30" west 43.20 feet; south 35°08'40" west 203.25 feet; south 34°28'20" west 32.94 feet; south 50°37'10" west 23.63 feet; south 57°39'40" west 25.53 feet; south 62°40'00" west 38.32 feet; south 68°36'10" west 305.06 feet; south 68°13'40" west 16.44 feet; south 62°55'30" west 19.28 feet; south 58°24'40" west 420.71 feet; south 62°53'20" west 27.41 feet; south 68°09'40" west 110.01 feet; south 78°03'45" west 31.73 feet; south 85°08'00" west 132.14 feet to an angle in said wall where it leaves said street; thence south 57°30'10" west 10.54 feet to a point, being a corner of lands of the New York Central Railroad Company; thence along the same north

60°40'40" west 160.90 feet; north 59°22'40" west 28.95 feet; south 43°23'20" west 5.67 feet; and north 59°36'40" west about 8.10 feet to a point in the westerly bank of Crum Elbow Creek; thence down and along the same to a point distant south 44°14'10" west about 215.95 feet from the last above-described point; thence leaving said creek and still along the lands of said railroad company north 51°35'50" west about 40 feet to a rail monument; thence on the same course 39.86 feet to another rail monument; north 83°02'40" west 43.38 feet; north 1°30'20" east 138.45 feet; and north 36°30'50" west 69.81 feet to the southerly end of the fence; thence along the easterly face of said fence north 1°08'50" east 65.66 feet; north 6°44'50" east 406.07 feet; north 9°09'40" east 276.67 feet; north 7°43'50" east 334.57 feet; north 3°55'00" east 199.07 feet; north 13°02'30" east 272.14 feet; north 12°42'20" east 240.24 feet; north 11°16'00" east 61.08 feet; north 9°03'40" east 172.43 feet; north 6°51'00" east 94.61 feet; north 5°45'00" east 50.94 feet; north 3°07'30" east 238.42 feet; and north 2°33'30" east 1095.27 feet to a concrete post at the end of the fence in the southerly line of lands of the Huyler Estate; thence along the same, a wire fence south 44°27'50" east 93.57 feet; south 67°20'20" east 69.38 feet; north 69°44'20" east 132.07 feet; north 23°26'50" east 24.90 feet to the westerly end of a wall; thence along said wall south 74°46'00" east 234.67 feet; south 82°22'40" east 234.00 feet; south 60°17'00" east 578.04 feet; south 60°35'50" east 176.17 feet; and south 61°01'40" east 85.38 feet to the point or place of beginning. Containing 201.086 acres.

*Parcel 2.* Beginning at a concrete fence post in the westerly line of lands of the New York Central Railroad Company, and on the high water line of the Hudson River, said point being distant north 24°46'00" west 275.62 feet from the northwesterly corner of the above-described Parcel 1, and running thence along the westerly face of the fence, the line of said railroad lands, south 3°00'00" west 1,639.27 feet and south 3°04'40" east 102.20 feet to another point on the high water line of said river; thence up and along said high water line to the point or place of beginning. Containing 10.56 acres.

Together with all rights of the United States in and to the roadway and bridge connecting the above-described parcels over the lands of the New York Central Railroad Company.

The administration, protection, and development of this national historic site shall be exercised by the National Park Service in accordance with the provisions of the act of August 21, 1935, *supra*.

Warning is expressly given to all unauthorized persons not to appropriate,

injure, destroy, deface, or remove any feature of this historic site.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the Department of the Interior to be affixed, in the city of Washington, this 16th day of December 1940.

[SEAL]

HAROLD L. ICEES,  
Secretary of the Interior.

[F. R. Doc 40-5314; Filed, December 31, 1940; 10:67 a. m.]

## Appendix B: Interpretive Themes for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site

### Theme 1: Wealth and Society in the Industrial Age

The Vanderbilt family was at the vanguard of American transportation and real estate development, amassing the first great American fortune, which provided them opportunity to live like modern “merchant princes” during the Gilded Age—a period that exacerbated the stratified class system and prompted political responses that ultimately undercut the power of industrial wealth.

*About this theme:* This theme is about the family, the context in which they lived (the Industrial and Gilded ages), what affected them, and how they influenced society and the nation.

Concepts	Topics and Stories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapid industrialization after the Civil War and a federal government with few regulatory powers allowed the accumulation of great fortunes and created sharpened class differences. The vast majority of American wealth was held by a very small number of citizens who lived as “merchant princes” while most citizens lived at or near the poverty level. While a small and determined middle class emerged, its numbers ebbed and flowed with the volatile economic conditions and waves of immigrants desperate for work.</li> <li>• The Vanderbilts came to fortune in a late 19th century world where one’s standing in society had little to do with wealth and everything to do with lineage. Members of the new wealthy elite failed to meet the criteria of this system and, in turn, used their unprecedented fortunes to craft a society where possessions, accomplishments, and philanthropic interests determined prestige and status. This new approach also bestowed on them a sense of obligation to use their vast wealth to address the societal problems related to poverty, inadequate health care, and unhealthy living conditions.</li> <li>• With no precedent for living a life funded by “new money,” American millionaires turned to Europe and modeled their lifestyle on those of the merchant and noble classes of England, France, and Italy in order to acquire a sense of legitimacy. European tours, children educated in foreign capitals, fashions from Paris, and the marrying of millionaire children to members of royal families for title and fame were important parts of the social strategy.</li> <li>• The rapid rise to social prominence by the “Industrial Elite” was matched only by the precipitous decline of their fortunes and lifestyle. Successive economic crises, WWI, higher taxes, more government oversight, and the growth of unions fostered an environment where an emerging well-educated and socially aware middle class demanded social justice and protection for those living and working on the fringes of society, often in untenable conditions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 400</li> <li>• “Old” and “new” money</li> <li>• Marrying for title and money</li> <li>• Women’s rights, role in the home and the voting rights movement</li> <li>• Social welfare</li> <li>• Life on a country estate</li> <li>• Architects and decorators of the Gilded Age</li> <li>• Social commentary</li> <li>• Destruction of “American castles”</li> </ul>



## Theme 2: A Hudson River “Great Estate”

The Vanderbilt Mansion and its grounds reflect the rarefied domestic ideal of the elite industrialist class in late 19th-century and early 20th-century America.

*About this theme:* This theme is about the estate—the mansion and grounds—the architecture, landscape, gardens and farm, influences for design, the aspirations and motivations for building such an estate, and how the estate influenced tastes both among the Vanderbilts’ class and for others.

Concepts	Topics and Stories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Vanderbilt’s house at Hyde Park is among the largest and latest in a collection to be found in the “Great Estates Region” – a section of the Hudson River Valley famous for 18th and 19th century properties. While successive owners populated the property with buildings that suited them best, all were stewards of the romantic-era landscape created in the late 18th century by Samuel Bard, managing it for consistency and not change.</li> <li>• The Hyde Park landscape is the landscape of the Hudson River School. The estate includes one of the most famous views of the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains beyond. The Overlook was a must-see stop for Europeans on the American tour and an inspiration for countless artists past and present.</li> <li>• The Vanderbilts participated in a centuries-long Hudson Valley tradition of estate life, managing a property requiring the attention and dedication of as many as 60 staff. The relationship between the family and servants was generally more than cordial and in some cases almost familial in nature. This arrangement stands in stark contrast to the often troubled and acerbic relationship that often existed between corporate employers and their laborers in times of wage strikes, unionization efforts, and unsafe working conditions.</li> <li>• The comparison between the Vanderbilt estate and the Roosevelt estate, as well as other aristocratic country places in the Hudson River Valley, reveal important differences in the lifestyles and tastes of the occupants. The Roosevelts’ home was just that, the center of the family’s existence through many births and deaths and complete with the trappings of family life acquired over generations. In contrast, the Vanderbilts’ Hyde Park was their country place sited for easy access to New York City and used in the spring and fall for entertaining guests invited for “country house weekends.” It was made to emulate the homes of landed gentry and was enhanced by the decorator’s acquisition of antiques and treasures from overseas that filled it with the spoils of European churches and palaces. It was less of a familial home and more of a stage.</li> <li>• By the time the property became available in 1938 it was already one of just a handful of surviving examples of a Gilded-Age country place. President Roosevelt accepted the Vanderbilt property into the National Park Service for its arboretum qualities and because it included a landscape developed and adapted over the course of two centuries. Beginning in the 1790s, successive owners conducted horticultural experiments and did extensive gardening in and around Hyde Park. The work of Belgian landscape designer Andre Parmentier (around 1830), who created the picturesque landscape including a system of roads, paths, and scenic vistas, is still remarkably evident. Additionally, Frederick and Louise Vanderbilt enhanced the features and grounds of the estate to include an Italian garden designed by James Greenleaf.</li> <li>• The estate’s gardens and farm produced prize-winning livestock, vegetables, and flowers and was typical of elite country estates in Europe. Though little positive cash flow was derived from the endeavor, the farm did offer employment to dozens of valley residents when there was little other economic opportunity. Additionally, the goods produced allowed the newly arrived millionaires to participate in the valley fairs and flower shows, maintaining traditions that may have otherwise faded sooner.</li> <li>• The Vanderbilt’s Hyde Park Beaux Arts mansion by McKim, Mead, and White is arguably the finest surviving example of the renowned American architectural firm’s country places. Complete with original furnishings and decoration and intact on its original landscaped pleasure grounds, no other home by the firm exists in this condition to illustrate the house type for contemporary visitors and scholars.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The weekend house party</li> <li>• Hudson Valley neighbors</li> <li>• The Gentleman Farmer</li> <li>• Landscape architecture and architects</li> <li>• Staff; permanent, traveling, and seasonal</li> <li>• No time for a personal life: in service 24/7</li> <li>• The decline of the service class in America</li> <li>• Hyde Park as compared to other country places</li> </ul>

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**Northeast Region Foundation Document Recommendation  
Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site**

September 2017

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This Foundation Document has been prepared as a collaborative effort between park and regional staff and is recommended for approval by the Northeast Regional Director.

*9/18/2017*

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*[Signature]*  
RECOMMENDED  
Larry Turk, Superintendent, Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site Date

*9/25/2017*

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*[Signature]*  
APPROVED  
Gay Vietzke, Regional Director, Northeast Region Date



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

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