



STATE OF THE PARK REPORT

Maggie Walker National Historic Site
Virginia
February 2015

On the cover: The primary resource of the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site is Ms. Walker's home of 30 years, pictured here in present day. It is restored to its ca. 1930 appearance and rooms furnished with the objects that were in use by the Walker family.

Disclaimer. This State of the Park report summarizes the current condition of park resources, visitor experience, and park infrastructure as assessed by a combination of available factual information and the expert opinion and professional judgment of park staff and subject matter experts. The [internet version](#) of this report provides the associated workshop summary report and additional details and sources of information about the findings summarized in the report, including references, accounts on the origin and quality of the data, and the methods and analytic approaches used in data collection and assessments of condition. This report provides evaluations of status and trends based on interpretation by NPS scientists and managers of both quantitative and non-quantitative assessments and observations. Future condition ratings may differ from findings in this report as new data and knowledge become available. The park superintendent approved the publication of this report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mission of the National Park Service is to preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of national parks for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. NPS Management Policies (2006) state that “The Service will also strive to ensure that park resources and values are passed on to future generations in a condition that is as good as, or better than, the conditions that exist today.” As part of the stewardship of national parks for the American people, the NPS has begun to develop State of the Park reports to assess the overall status and trends of each park’s resources. The NPS will use this information to improve park priority setting and to synthesize and communicate complex park condition information to the public in a clear and simple way.

The purpose of this State of the Park report is to:

- Provide to visitors and the American public a snapshot of the status and trend in the condition of a park’s priority resources and values;
- Summarize and communicate complex scientific, scholarly, and park operations factual information and expert opinion using non-technical language and a visual format;
- Highlight park stewardship activities and accomplishments to maintain or improve the State of the Park;
- Identify key issues and challenges facing the park to help inform park management planning.

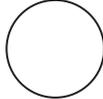
The Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site commemorates the life of a progressive and talented African American woman. Despite many adversities in post-Civil War Richmond, Virginia, Maggie Lena Walker achieved national acclaim as a fraternal leader, civil rights activist, and entrepreneur. As a fraternal leader, Walker led the Independent Order of St. Luke, creating a network of 100,000 members nationwide. She also served in critical leadership roles with the NAACP, the Urban League, and the National Association of Colored Women, among others. In 1903, Walker became the first African American woman in the United States to charter and serve as president of a bank when she founded the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank. Due to her visionary leadership and sound business principles, Walker’s bank survived the Great Depression, and ultimately thrived as Consolidated Bank & Trust – the nation’s longest running black-owned bank. Through her local and national leadership, Walker fostered race pride, gender equality, and economic empowerment for a ravaged but resilient community during the depths of Jim Crow.

The site consists of six structures and covers 1/3 of a city block. The primary resource is Mrs. Walker’s home of 30 years and a visitor center detailing her life and the Jackson Ward community in which she lived and worked. The park was established in 1978 and since then the Walker home has been restored to its ca: 1930 appearance and rooms are 95% furnished with original pieces. The other 5 structures have been rehabilitated and adaptively reused for various uses including the park’s Visitor Center, museum exhibit, curatorial storage, and offices.

The summary table, below, and the supporting information that follows, provide an overall assessment of the condition of priority resources and values at Maggie L Walker National Historic Site based on scientific and scholarly studies and expert opinion. The internet version of this report,

available at <http://www.nps.gov/stateoftheparks/mawa/>, provides additional detail and sources of information about the resources summarized in this report, including references, accounts on the origin and quality of the data, and the methods and analytical approaches used in the assessments. Reference conditions that represent “healthy” ecosystem parameters, and regulatory standards (such as those related to air or water quality) provide the rationale to describe current resource status. In coming years, rapidly evolving information regarding climate change and associated effects will inform our goals for managing park resources, and may alter how we measure the trend in condition of park resources. Thus, reference conditions, regulatory standards, and/or our judgment about resource status or trend may evolve as the rate of climate change accelerates and we respond to novel conditions. In this context, the status and trends documented here provide a useful point-in-time baseline to inform our understanding of emerging change, as well as a synthesis to share as we build broader climate change response strategies with partners.

The Status and Trend symbols used in the summary table below and throughout this report are summarized in the following key. The background color represents the current condition status, the direction of the arrow summarizes the trend in condition, and the thickness of the outside line

Condition Status		Trend in Condition		Confidence in Assessment	
	Warrants Significant Concern		Condition is Improving		High
	Warrants Moderate Concern		Condition is Unchanging		Medium
	Resource is in Good Condition		Condition is Deteriorating		Low

State of the Park Summary Table

Priority Resource or Value	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Cultural Resources		web
Archeological Resources		All archeological collections for the site—including 22,000 items from five distinct projects—are completely curated and catalogued to NPS standards and are housed in a facility that provides climate control and security protection.
Cultural Anthropology		The park recently finished the process of making an old series of oral history interviews accessible and plans to extend that project to embrace surviving individuals who have a longtime affiliation with the site or with its development as a cultural landmark in the historic Jackson Ward district.
Cultural Landscapes		The cultural landscape at the park consists of the urban setting of the Maggie Walker house itself, and more than a half-dozen adjacent buildings connected to Mrs. Walker's life and era. The courtyard behind the various buildings has been improved to provide a more park-like setting, and the streetscapes on both 2nd Street and East Leigh Street have evolved in recent years into an appearance more appropriate for this particular cultural landscape.
Historic Structures		At present Mrs. Walker's house, 110½ East Leigh Street, remains the primary visitor destination, in tandem with the 600–600½–602 North Second Street complex, which now serves as the site's visitor center. The other buildings have mixed functions, including offices, a classroom, exhibit hall, and controlled storage for the curatorial collections. There are 13 sites recorded in the List of Classified Structures, all of them evaluated in "good" condition.
History		Maggie L. Walker NHS lacks parkwide National Register documentation, and is therefore considered an undocumented park. Site-specific documentation is nearly forty years old and incomplete.
Museum Collections		Newly renovated climate controlled storage spaces ensure collections are protected for future generations. A recently launched virtual tour of the Maggie L. Walker house gives visitors a glimpse into Mrs. Walker's life through digital images of photographs, papers and ephemera, and objects in the collection, as well as the architecture and furnishings of the house.
Visitor Experience		web
Number of Visitors		The park received 8,276 visitors in 2012, which was 14% lower than the 5-year average of 9,671 visitors for 2007–2011.
Visitor Satisfaction		100% of visitors to the park in 2012 were satisfied with their visit, compared to the 5-year average of 98.8%.
Interpretive and Education Programs – Talks, Tours, and Special Events		Schools participating in the site's education program repeated express high satisfaction with program quality. The site has greatly expanded types of talks and tours in addition to ranger guided house tours, and is a long-standing participant in numerous community special events.
Interpretive Media – Brochures, Exhibits, Sign, and Website		Waysides need updating and replacement; Offsite directional signs don't exist within a 2 mile radius of the site; Although the house exhibit is in excellent condition, other exhibits need updating; Print media and the webpage are up to date and well-maintained; however, an audio iPod tour of the neighborhood and the site film both need updating.
Sense of Place		Revitalization and restoration of privately owned homes, properties, and museums in the surrounding blocks in Jackson Ward National Historic District, such as the Black History Museum and Hippodrome Theater, are in progress. All park-owned buildings have been restored to good condition to give a sense of Jackson Ward during Mrs. Walker's era.

Priority Resource or Value	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Accessibility		The visitor center, exhibit hall and the first floor of the house are accessible. The orientation film has Audio Assist software and is closed-captioned. Public transportation is readily available and accessible. The site has no material that is available in multiple languages.
Safety		The park works to quickly identify and mitigate potential hazards, and the number of accidents is very low. Operational Leadership training has been completed by staff.
Partnerships, Community, Volunteers		The park is steadily building up a cadre of volunteers who assist long term throughout the year. The park has developed a program partnership with the Maggie L. Walker Governor School and the National Park Foundation. These have resulted in the highly successful Maggie L. Walker Summer Youth Leadership Institute held each year which engages 12–14 local teenagers each year.
Park Infrastructure web		
Overall Facility Condition Index		The overall Facility Condition Index in 2012 for the 8 buildings and the waysides and exhibits is 0.023, which is Good based on industry and NPS standards. Improvements to the facilities have been made during the past five years.
Energy Consumption		Energy usage (BTUs per gross square footage of buildings) at the park in 2013 was 22% lower than the average for the previous 4 years.
Water Consumption		Water consumption at the park in 2013 was 24% higher than the 4-year average for 2009–2012.

represents the degree of confidence in the assessment. In some cases, the arrow is omitted because data are not sufficient for calculating a trend (e.g., data from a one-time inventory or insufficient sample size).

Summary of Stewardship Activities and Key Accomplishments to Maintain or Improve Priority Resource Condition:

The list below provides examples of stewardship activities and accomplishments by park staff and partners to maintain or improve the condition of priority park resources and values for this and future generations:

Cultural Resources

- The Walker home was additionally furnished with several period pieces and reproductions including a sofa, candlesticks and drinking glasses.
- Collections were securely housed in new state of the art storage areas and oral histories were safely archived and digitized.
- Community engagement led to appropriate/sensitive development in the historic district.

Visitor Experience

- Community Outreach and building partnerships – park participated in community events such as Go Discover Richmond and Richmond Ballet’s Minds in Motion, raising the profile of the park with community groups and with the public.
- MAWA Leadership Institute, conducted each June for two weeks is a strong example of community engagement.
- Virtual Museum tour – increased access of public to the resource via the web and social media.
- Maggie Walker birthdate identified. Worked with scholars to keep up and find and present the latest scholarship.

Park Infrastructure

- Performed Structural and Cosmetic Repairs on Maggie Walker House, and other associated structures in the MAWA complex, such as HVAC systems, awning replacements and historic windows on Mrs. Walker’s Home.

Key Issues and Challenges for Consideration in Management Planning

House Exhibit

When Maggie Walker’s descendants deeded the house to the National Park Service, they also sold with it *all* of the furnishings, art work, and household items that the family had diligently kept since Walker’s death in 1934. Having such a comprehensive collection of artifacts has allowed the NPS an unparalleled opportunity to furnish the house museum with approximately 95% original pieces. But even with consistent environmental monitoring, an Integrated Pest Management Plan, and a site-specific housekeeping schedule, the museum artifacts are still susceptible to the long-term risks associated with static display. The park has recently submitted a PMIS project statement that would replace the museum’s ultra light-sensitive photographs and prints with high-resolution reproductions, but other creative strategies need to be considered if the site is to preserve the house furnishings for generations in the distant future.

Neighborhood and boundary limitations

MAWA is situated within the Jackson Ward National Historic Landmark District—the largest such district devoted to African American history. However, the site sits right outside the boundary of the *local* Jackson Ward City Old and Historic District—a district with much stricter guidelines for architectural renovation and development. In the past decade, Jackson Ward, especially the 2nd Street corridor has experienced a steady growth in revitalization and development. However, without the strict guidance of the local historic district, such new development threatens the historic integrity of the park’s extended cultural landscape.

Visitation

The Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site has statistically suffered from a high operating cost-to-visitor ratio. While no formal analysis has been conducted to compare the site’s attendance with other similarly themed national parks or local museums, the approximate annual visitation of 10,000–12,000 is notably low. This trend may be the result of a number of factors, chiefly poor

national “name recognition”; logistical constraints; and consequently, limited visitor opportunities.

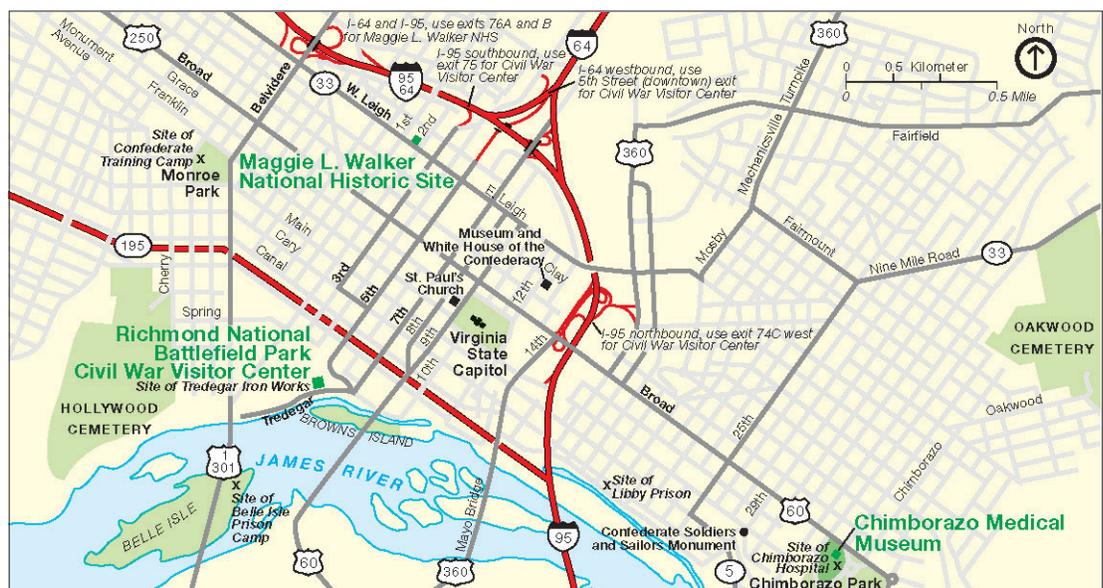
The park has augmented its daily guided tour programs with special events such as the annual Black History Month film series, Martin Luther King Day guest speakers, Maggie L. Walker Birthday Celebration, 2nd Street Festival, and small temporary exhibits held in the park’s visitor center throughout the year. As vital as the house museum is to the park and its interpretive mission, it is the special programming that will continue to attract *repeat* visitors who have already seen the house but who wish to return for more offerings. Therefore the site must strive to present original, relevant programming to continually entice *new* local visitors, but it also to make available special programming that fosters greater relevance and contemporary community connections.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this State of the Park report for Maggie L Walker National Historic Site is to assess the overall condition of the park's priority resources and values, to communicate complex park condition information to visitors and the American public in a clear and simple way, and to inform visitors and other stakeholders about stewardship actions being taken by park staff to maintain or improve the condition of priority park resources for future generations. The State of the Park report uses a standardized approach to focus attention on the priority resources and values of the park based on the park's purpose and significance, as described in the park's Foundation Document or General Management Plan. The report:

- Provides to visitors and the American public a snapshot of the status and trend in the condition of a park's priority resources and values.
- Summarizes and communicates complex scientific, scholarly, and park operations factual information and expert opinion using non-technical language and a visual format.
- Highlights park stewardship activities and accomplishments to maintain or improve the state of the park.
- Identifies key issues and challenges facing the park to inform park management planning.

The process of identifying priority park resources by park staff and partners, tracking their condition, organizing and synthesizing data and information, and communicating the results will be closely coordinated with the park planning process, including natural and cultural resource condition assessments and Resource Stewardship Strategy development. The term "priority resources" is used to identify the fundamental and other important resources and values for the park, based on a park's purpose and significance within the National Park System, as documented in the park's foundation document and other planning documents. This report summarizes and communicates



Map of the Park

the overall condition of priority park resources and values based on the available scientific and scholarly information and expert opinion, irrespective of the ability of the park superintendent or the National Park Service to influence it.

The Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site commemorates the life of a progressive and talented African American woman. Despite many adversities in post-Civil War Richmond, Virginia, Maggie Lena Walker achieved national acclaim as a fraternal leader, civil rights activist, and entrepreneur. As a fraternal leader, Walker led the Independent Order of St. Luke, creating a network of 100,000 members nationwide. She also served in critical leadership roles with the NAACP, the Urban League, and the National Association of Colored Women, among others. In 1903, Walker became the first African American woman in the United States to charter and serve as president of a bank when she founded the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank. Due to her visionary leadership and sound business principles, Walker's bank survived the Great Depression, and ultimately thrived as Consolidated Bank & Trust – the nation's longest running black-owned bank. Through her local and national leadership, Walker fostered race pride, gender equality, and economic empowerment for a ravaged but resilient community during the depths of Jim Crow. The site includes her residence of 30 years and a visitor center detailing her life and the Jackson Ward community in which she lived and worked. The house is restored to its 1930s appearance with original Walker family pieces.

CHAPTER 2. STATE OF THE PARK

The State of the Park is summarized below for three categories—Cultural Resources, Visitor Experience, and Park Infrastructure—based on a synthesis of the park’s monitoring, evaluation, management, and information programs, and expert opinion. Brief resource summaries are provided below for a selection of the priority resources and values of the park. Clicking on the [web ►](#) symbol found in the tables and resource briefs below will take you to the internet site that contains content associated with specific topics in the report.

The scientific and scholarly reports, publications, datasets, methodologies, and other information that were used as the basis for the assessments of resource condition are referenced and linked throughout the report and through the [internet version of this report](#) that is linked to the NPS [IRMA data system](#) (Integrated Resource Management Applications). The internet version of each report, and the associated workshop summary report available from the internet site, provide additional detail and sources of information about the findings summarized in the report, including references, accounts on the origin and quality of the data, and the methods and analytical approaches used in data collection and the assessments of condition. Resource condition assessments reported in this State of the Park report involve expert opinion and the professional judgment of park staff and subject matter experts involved in developing the report. This expert opinion and professional judgment derive from the in-depth knowledge and expertise of park and regional staff gained from their being involved in the day-to-day practice of all aspects of park stewardship and from the professional experience of the participating subject matter experts. This expert opinion and professional judgment utilized available factual information for the analyses and conclusions presented in this report. This State of the Park report was developed in a park-convened workshop.

The status and trends documented in Chapter 2 provide a useful point-in-time baseline measured against reference conditions that represent “healthy” ecosystem parameters, or regulatory standards (such as those related to air or water quality). We also note that climate change adaptation requires us to continue to learn from the past, but attempting to manage for conditions based on our understanding of the historical “natural” range of variation will be increasingly futile in many locations. Thus, these reference conditions, and/or our judgment about resource condition or trend may evolve as the rate of climate change accelerates and we respond to novel conditions. Our management must be even more “forward looking,” to anticipate plausible but unprecedented conditions, also recognizing there will be surprises. In this context, we will incorporate climate considerations in our decision processes and management planning as we consider adaptation options that may deviate from traditional practices.

2.1. Cultural Resources

Archeological Resources

Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site (MAWA) is located within the Jackson Ward Historic District, once one of the most prosperous black communities in the United States. The Jackson Ward Historic District is known as the birthplace of African-American entrepreneurship and is one of the largest (42 city blocks) National Historic Landmark Districts associated with black history and culture. MAWA was designated as a National Park unit in 1978 to honor Walker’s leadership

in business. Mrs. Walker chartered the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank, the first banking institution founded by a black woman. Currently the park manages and administers roughly one quarter of a city block located on 2nd and East Leigh Streets in Richmond, Virginia. The main feature of the property is the Italianate style Maggie Walker house which has been rehabilitated to its 1928 appearance. Intensive archeological work has been performed at the park beginning in 1994 and continuing to the present day. The archeological work has been in response to several projects focused on providing better visitor use, ADA accessibility, and in maintaining the structures' appearance and integrity. These archeological investigations have identified intact primary archeological refuse deposits associated with the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century occupation of the Maggie L. Walker house and the adjacent park administered buildings. These deposits contain valuable information concerning the material culture of middle and working class black families that occupied these buildings and are considered eligible under Criterion D of the National Register of Historic Places.

Cultural Anthropology

The traditional meaning of this section does not have any direct application to the Maggie L. Walker NHS, but the park is active in expanding the definition to apply to interested cultural groups in the greater Jackson Ward area. Specific groups still in operation from the Walker era, or otherwise connected to the establishment of the NHS, are viewed as important elements in the site's development and sustained role as the primary historical site in Jackson Ward.

The park recently finished the process of making an old series of oral history interviews accessible (see Museum Collections and Archives section below), and intends to extend that project to embrace surviving individuals who have a longtime affiliation with the site or with its development as a cultural landmark in the historic Jackson Ward district.



Historic image of Maggie L. Walker with neighborhood children, circa 1917

Archeological Resources			web
Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Knowledge	Percent of sites with known date ranges associated with a research theme		100% of archeological sites are associated with specific research themes. Archeological contexts are well developed for MAWA and are incorporated into archeological investigative reports.
Documentation	Percentage of known sites with adequate National Register documentation.		100% of archeological sites registered in ASMIS are listed in the National Register.
	Percentage of records documenting archeological resource conservation, cataloging and storage maintained as a part of the archeological collection.		100% of archeological materials are catalogued.
Condition	Percentage of archeological resources in good condition		100% (6 of 6) ASMIS registered sites are in good condition.

Cultural Anthropology			web
Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Knowledge	Sufficient research exists to understand the relationship of the park's ethnographic resources and the historic contexts		Unknown—some oral histories have been completed, but it is unknown whether the full context of the site and neighborhood it is situated in is understood.

Resource Brief: Oral Histories

The most recent accomplishment of the park curatorial program is the completion of an archival project that processed and stored the vast collection of oral histories conducted by park staff over the past 30 years. In the early 1980s, before the site opened, local and regional NPS staff began interviewing Mrs. Walker's descendants, her neighbors, friends, and employees.

An initial grouping of five primary interviews were transcribed, printed, and bound, and became the backbone of anecdotal evidence of the Walker home, its furnishings, and the family dynamics. The remaining interviews, conducted piecemeal until as recently as 2010, were never transcribed or grouped as a single collection, making it difficult for staff to significantly benefit from their content. With meticulous assistance from two curatorial interns, park staff assembled all extant media and associated documentation from these various oral history efforts. The scattered collection was inventoried and organized, then re-housed in stable, archival folders and containers. In some cases parts of the collection were digitized. Now that the collection is assembled and stored in the park's archives, staff and researchers can systematically access these interviews in order to glean first-hand knowledge of Walker's life and times.



MAWA intern digitizing oral history tapes.



Processed oral history collection in MAWA Archives.

Cultural Landscapes			web
Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Knowledge	Adequate research exists to document and preserve the cultural landscape's physical attributes, biotic systems and uses when those uses contribute to historical significance.		Yes. A CLI for the Maggie L. Walker/Jackson Ward landscape has not been completed but the landscape was addressed in the 1982 Historic Structures Report for the Maggie L. Walker House.
Inventory	Percentage of landscapes eligible for the National Register with accurate, complete, and reliable Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) data.		0%: A CLI for the park has not yet been completed.
Condition	Research results are disseminated to park managers, planners, interpreters, and other NPS specialists and incorporated into appropriate park planning documents.		Yes, research results are disseminated.

Cultural Landscapes

The cultural landscape at the park consists of the urban setting of the Maggie Walker house itself, and more than a half-dozen adjacent buildings connected to Mrs. Walker's life and era. The park has given particular attention to the appearance and setting of the backs of the various buildings, as that area (unlike the street fronts) is within the park's control.

The courtyard behind the various buildings has been improved to provide a more park-like setting, and the streetscapes on both 2nd Street and East Leigh Street have evolved in recent years into an appearance more appropriate for this particular cultural landscape. The fencing and street frontage within the park's reach are documented in the appropriate places and maintained in accordance with the approved 1996 Resource Management Plan and 1982 Historic Structures Report. The resulting landscape is greatly improved from previous years, and is holding steady in a desirable condition.



Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site complex as seen from E. Leigh Street.

Resource Brief: Shaping the Community

Since its establishment as a national park in 1978, the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site has been a positive force in influencing private and public development and *re-development* of its surrounding neighborhood. The park site is uniquely positioned as the only staffed NPS location within the Jackson Ward National Historic Landmark District—the largest district in the country devoted to recognizing an historic African American neighborhood. Park staff spent nearly three decades restoring street-facing buildings to their turn of the century appearance. Maintaining a key presence in a neighborhood that—while federally recognized—is mostly at the developmental behest of private landowners, Maggie L. Walker NHS’s site complex has served as a shining example of preservation, adaptive reuse, and historic integrity. The site has been more than just a passive inspiration to its immediate neighbors, however; it has been a vocal agent for positive change in the community. The park successfully advocated for the demolition of a derelict hotel that flanked the park’s visitor center. The park also lobbied for the demolition of a defunct filling station that greatly compromised the integrity of the streetscape at 2nd and Leigh Streets—the historic nexus of Black Wall Street and Quality Row. Park leadership helped shape the blueprints of the city’s sprawling convention center, which initially proposed aligning its backside to the eastern border of Jackson Ward. At the insistence of the NPS, the convention center instead built an inviting entrance *facing* Jackson Ward. Due to the park’s active and passive influences, the Jackson Ward of the 21st century now more closely resembles the Jackson Ward of Maggie Walker’s lifetime—a neighborhood proud to have been dubbed the “Harlem of the South.”



The main colored business section—North Second Street, looking from Leigh Residence of Mr. O. B. S. Forrester on right

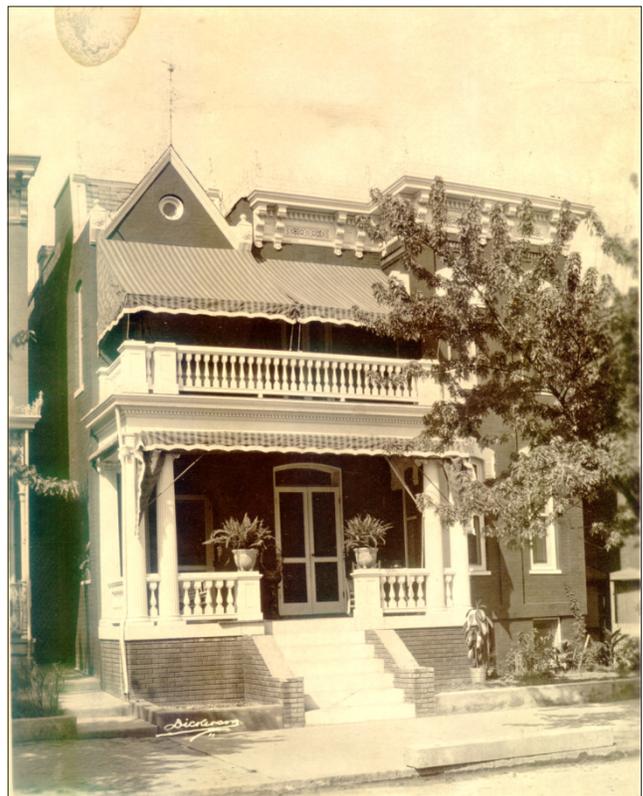
The intersection of 2nd and E. Leigh Streets from 1907 publication, *Souvenir Views: Negro Enterprises & Residences*, Richmond, Virginia.

Historic Structures			web
Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Knowledge	Documentary research and physical examination are sufficient to support treatment.		Yes, a Historic Structures Report was done for the Maggie L. Walker House in 1982.
Inventory	Percentage of structures eligible for the National Register with accurate, complete and reliable List of Classified Structures (LCS) data.		100% of structures on the LCS were certified in 2008 or 2009.
Documentation	Percentage of historic structures with adequate National Register documentation.		25% (2 of 8) of the historic structures considered eligible for the National Register have adequate NR documentation. The remaining 6 eligible properties have SHPO concurrence on DOEs. (5 structures at the site are considered non-contributing).
Condition	Percentage of historic structures in good condition		100% of historic structures are listed as being in good condition in the LCS.

Historic Structures

Maggie L. Walker NHS is comprised of Walker’s residence for thirty years at 110½ East Leigh Street, in Richmond, Virginia, and many additional buildings that are within the park boundary, though not specifically named in the park’s authorizing legislation: 112, 114, 116 and 118 East Leigh Street, and 600, 600½ and 602 North Second Street, plus the carriage house for 110½ East Leigh Street. The site boundaries encompass the area extending east from the western boundary of the Maggie L. Walker House at 110½ East Leigh Street to North Second Street and extending north from East Leigh Street to the north side of North Alley.

The Historic Structures Report completed in 1982 is an important guide in documenting the history of the various buildings. The ensuing 25 years witnessed the rehabilitation of the structures, and in some cases their adaptation for different purposes. At present Mrs. Walker’s house, 110½ East Leigh Street, remains the pri-



Maggie L. Walker’s home on E. Leigh Street, circa 1922.

mary visitor destination, in tandem with the 600–600½–602 North Second Street complex, which now serves as the site’s visitor center. The other buildings have mixed functions, including offices, a classroom, exhibit hall, and controlled storage for the curatorial collections of both MAWA and RICH.

There are 13 sites at MAWA recorded in the List of Classified Structures, all of them evaluated in “good” condition. Those assessments are due for an update in 2013–2014.

History

Though an historical area of the NPS, Maggie L. Walker NHS has not been assigned a specific National Register identification number, lacks parkwide National Register documentation, and is therefore considered an undocumented park. Site-specific documentation, detailed below, is nearly forty years old and incomplete.

Maggie L. Walker House was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places on May 12, 1975. Areas of significance given on the form include architecture, commerce, social/humanitarian and Black History. On May 15, 1975, the property was designated a National Historic Landmark. The park also is included within the boundary of the Jackson Ward National Historic Landmark District, designated in 1978. Although the Maggie Walker House was listed as a contributing resource in the district’s Landmark nomination, none of the associated buildings within the park were described.

In a letter dated February 18, 2005, the Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer confirmed that the buildings at 112, 114, and 116 East Leigh Street, the garage at 110½ East Leigh Street and the



The Maggie L. Walker house at 10½ East Leigh Street.

History  web			
Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Knowledge	Sufficient research is conducted to establish the reasons for park creation and site history.		No. The park lacks coherent administrative record (oral histories should be evaluated for use; period of park establishment/ community activism is important and this history will be difficult to document without access to informants), and analysis of ethnohistorical potential.
Inventory	Percentage of cultural resources listed in appropriate Servicewide inventories, including the National Register.		100% of resources are documented in the LCS or ASMIS. However, the park lacks a Cultural Landscapes Inventory and updated National Register documentation. NHL documentation for site and district dates to 1975.
Documentation	Percentage of historic properties with adequate Nat'l Register documentation or with Determinations of Eligibility.		100% of resources are documented either through NHL or SHPO concurrence; however NHL documentation for site and district is more than 20 years old.

buildings at 600–602 North Second Street contribute to the historic character of the Jackson Ward Historic District.

The park would benefit from an historic resource study to identify and explicate relevant historic themes and contexts and to incorporate recent and relevant historical research, including analysis of documentary sources currently undertaken by students and affiliated faculty at the College of William and Mary. A comprehensive research and resource management strategy would also benefit from an administrative history that documents park formation, community relations, and management decisions that have shaped, and continue to shape, park resources and operations.

Museum Collections

The museum collection of the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site consists of close to 90,000 individual items ranging from historic furnishings, art work, historic and administrative archives, and archaeological artifacts.

The bulk of the collection consists of belongings from Maggie L. Walker and her family that Walker’s descendants donated to the park in a single accession dated July 15, 1979. From exquisite furnishings and decorative arts to commonplace, daily life articles, these pieces offer a nearly complete view of Walker and her family as exemplars of upper middle-class African American life in the early 20th-century south. Many of these personal items are on display in the Walker home—the furnished house museum that, since the park opened in 1985, has served as the centerpiece of the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site. Since this initial accession, the park has enhanced its historic museum collection with pieces from private donors including the now defunct black fraternal order, the Independent Order of St. Luke (IOSL) which Walker led as its chief officer, the Right Worthy Grand Secretary-Treasurer from 1899 until her death in 1934. The IOSL, through its own representatives—and, following bankruptcy, through the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Bureau of Insurance—donated a wide range of St. Luke ephemera including office equipment, art work, fraternal regalia, and records.

Museum Collections			web
Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Inventory	Percentage of objects accessioned and cataloged		100% of archeological collection is catalogued. 100% of history objects are catalogued. Archival survey needed to determine backlog of archives.
Documentation	Furnishings in historic structures are documented in a historic furnishings report.		Yes, a Historic Furnishings Report was completed in 2004.
	Research results are disseminated to park managers, planners, interpreters, and other NPS specialists and incorporated into appropriate park planning documents.		Yes. Dissemination of research results is accomplished through increased visibility and web presence.

The records from the IOSL (currently unprocessed), coupled with the park’s administrative records and the Walker Family Papers comprise the park’s archival and manuscript collection. The highlight of this collection is the Walker Family Papers which consists of 20.5 linear feet containing Walker’s correspondence, public addresses, diaries, and photographs.

The site’s archeology, archives, and history collections that are not displayed in the furnished house museum or in the adjacent exhibit hall are professionally housed in climate-controlled storage onsite in a space shared with the collections of Richmond National Battlefield Park.

The museum collection at the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site has proved to be a keystone



Custom-built compact storage for MAWA artifacts and archives.

in the public's understanding of Maggie L. Walker. Whether through the exhibit spaces, the archival reading room, or the newly launched Maggie L. Walker Virtual Exhibit, the museum collection intimately reveals Walker's private life as well as her contributions to black capitalism, civic engagement, and civil rights advancement.

Resource Brief: Maggie L. Walker Virtual Exhibit

After three years of planning, researching, writing, photography, and web design, the National Park Service launched the [Maggie L. Walker Virtual Exhibit](#) in October 2011. The exhibit is the product of a joint effort between the curatorial, interpretive, and educational staffs at Maggie L. Walker NHS and the NPS Museum Management program in Washington, DC. Visitors to the website are invited to explore images and text relating to various aspects of Mrs. Walker's life, including her home and family life, civil rights activism, tactics for economic empowerment, and her contributions to civic leadership. Photographed by internationally renowned photographer Carol M. Highsmith, some 200 objects from the site's museum and archival collections are featured in the exhibit. Visitors can also explore Mrs. Walker's house from anywhere in the world through a [virtual tour](#) complete with panoramic views of each room and the ability to zoom in to examine the furnished rooms in greater detail. A lesson plan for educators, "[Teaching with Museum collections](#)" is also available as part of the project. Although the virtual exhibit isn't a substitute for actually visiting the site, more people around the world are able to learn about Mrs. Walker, her home, and her contributions to the community, regardless of where they are.

Museum Collections
MAGGIE L. WALKER
National Historic Site

Museum Management Program
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

OVERVIEW LIFE AT HOME HOUSE VIRTUAL TOUR SOCIAL ACTIVISM ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT LEGACY ALL IMAGE GALLERY

Life at Home House Virtual Tour Social Activism Economic Empowerment Legacy All Image Gallery

Overview

This exhibit explores the life and legacy of Maggie L. Walker (1864-1934), civil rights activist and trailblazing entrepreneur. The beloved African American community leader devoted her life to defeating racism, sexism, and economic oppression. Mrs. Walker chartered a bank, a newspaper, and a store 17 years before American women had the right to vote, and fostered Black entrepreneurship when Jim Crow laws threatened African American progress.

From 1905 until her death in 1934, Walker's "urban mansion" in Richmond, Virginia served as a social hub and family sanctuary to four generations. This exhibit provides an intimate view of Mrs. Walker's personal and professional life, her home, belongings, and writings, as well as her formidable energy and devotion to family and the economic empowerment of African Americans.

Museum Collections
MAGGIE L. WALKER
National Historic Site

Museum Management Program
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

OVERVIEW LIFE AT HOME HOUSE VIRTUAL TOUR SOCIAL ACTIVISM ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT LEGACY ALL IMAGE GALLERY

Dining Room

Accessed from three sides through the hallway, kitchen, and garden, the dining room was the setting for Mrs. Walker's many formal dinners, luncheons, and tea parties. The Walkers proudly showcased their silver, crystal, and fine china, with mirrors amplifying the limited natural light in the six-foot-six dining room.

Such esteemed guests as Langston Hughes, W. E. B. DuBois and Mary McLeod Bethune dined here at the circular dinner table. Mrs. Walker adorned the dining room ceiling with pressed-on panels, a decorative embellishment often used in public spaces such as theaters, hotels, and restaurants. A similar ceiling graces the inside of Mrs. Walker's St. Luke Hall office building a few blocks away from her home.

Web pages from the Maggie L. Walker Virtual Exhibit.

2.2. Visitor Experience

Resource Brief: Maggie L. Walker Summer Youth Leadership Institute

In 2012, the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site celebrated the graduates of its Third Annual Youth Summer Leadership Institute. Each year, up to 14 local high-school students are selected to participate in the two-week Institute. Through discussions, lectures, and field trips, the students examine traits of effective leadership. They discussed how to become leaders in their own community, and in the process earned community service hours as NPS volunteers.

“My learning experience was great,” said 2012 Institute Graduate Rakeem Morris. “I learned to communicate with my peers and others. I also learned that it’s okay to stick out from the crowd. I knew before I started that Maggie L. Walker was a famous banker, but I didn’t know that she was an inspiration to the Jackson Ward community. A lot of people looked up to her, including me.”

Maggie Lena Walker was born in Richmond, Virginia on July 15, 1864, during the final year of the American Civil War and became a strong leader in her community. As a member of countless national organizations, including the NAACP, Walker became a national activist for economic independence, educational opportunities, and civil rights, particularly for women and children in the African American community. Walker’s devotion to youth is the inspiration for the Youth Summer Leadership Institute. The Institute memorializes Maggie Walker’s legacy by endeavoring to create leaders among children and young people.

The graduation was held at the historic Hippodrome Theater, an entertainment venue familiar to Walker in her day, just around the corner from her home. Now carefully restored, it was a fitting place for the ceremony.



Summer Leadership Institute students visited the Virginia State Capitol.

Resource Brief: Fourth-graders learn—and perform—the story of Maggie L. Walker

In May 2012, the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site partnered with the Richmond Ballet to engage school-aged children in an innovative arts program, *Minds in Motion*, which used performing arts to communicate the story of Walker’s life and legacy. Through *Minds in Motion*, the Ballet worked with 4th grade students in 18 Richmond area schools, teaching them some of Walker’s most important traits: discipline, dedication, and self-awareness.

The students were led through a series of choreographic movements to deliver a unique ballet program entitled “Banking on a Dream: The Maggie L. Walker Story.” As part of the partnership, the students took field trips to the park and toured Mrs. Walker’s home to connect with the resources there in a personal way. The culminating event was a final performance at the Arthur Ashe Center on May 5th and 6th. Approximately 1,400 students participated in the program over the two days and 10,000 audience members attended.



Visitor Numbers and Visitor Satisfaction [web](#)

Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Number of Visitors	Number of visitors per year		The park received 8,276 visitors in 2012, which was 14% lower than the 5-year average of 9,671 visitors for 2007–2011.
Visitor Satisfaction	Percent of visitors who were satisfied with their visit		100% of visitors to the park in 2012 were satisfied with their visit, compared to the 5-year average of 98.8%.

Interpretive and Education Programs [web](#)

Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Education Programs	Number and quality of programs, and number of participants		The number of students participating in education programs in 2012 was 1157, down from 2928 in 2011 when the park had a transportation grant that brought fourth grade students throughout Henrico County to visit the site. At the same time, many schools are repeat visitors, and expressed high satisfaction with the quality of the programs, particularly after the education programs were revised in 2010.
Ranger Programs	Number and quality of programs and attendance		The park has been aggressive about looking at the wider aspects of the history of Jackson Ward, Jim Crow, and black entrepreneurship. Expanded the types of formal talks and tours to include ranger-developed presentations in addition to formal tours of the historic homes. All house tours are ranger guided.
Junior Ranger Programs	Number of programs and attendance		In 2012, the park awarded 200 Junior Ranger patches and badges. The site is reaching out to grow the program through marketing to youth groups such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts in addition to the family groups.
Special Events	Variety and longevity of events, community involvement		The park is a longstanding participant in community special events such as Second Street Festival, Civil War and Emancipation Day, and was a major stop in newer events such as Go Discover Richmond!, a citywide event. The park offered special programming during African American History month—“Matinees with Miss Maggie”—and the annual birthday celebration focused on Civil Rights.

Interpretive Media – Brochures, Exhibits, Signs, and Website



[web](#)

Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Wayside Signs	Condition and currency of signs		Onsite waysides need to be updated from the current focus on pure factual description to include context about neighborhood. Signs are faded and in poor condition and need to be updated to the Service's current standard in wayside signage.
Park Directional Signs (off-site)	Usefulness, quantity, and placement		Directional signs to the site are practically non-existent. Signs will lead off the interstate but drop off in all directions within a two-block radius of the site.
Exhibits	Visitor Center		Visitor center exhibits panels are attractive but need to be updated to reflect newly discovered information such as revised birthdate.
	Exhibit Hall		The exhibit hall was designed originally as a self-guided tour—with extensive written text—but is now used in interpretation as part of a guided tour. It could use more interactives and artifacts to help connect in more ways with more learners.
	Furnished historic home		The home is in excellent condition as a collective. Over the last five years progress has been made toward completely furnishing the rooms to give visitors a sense of life and activities in the home.
Print Media	Accuracy and availability of primary park publications		Unigrad publication was revised in 2013. Rack card revisions are complete but not printed.
Audio-visual Media	Orientation Films		The film is effective at conveying overall understanding for visitors, but information has become dated as new research has emerged since the film was produced in 1991. Interpreters follow the film with corrections once the film is over.
	Other AV material – iPod tour of Jackson Ward		An iPod walking tour of Jackson Ward is available onsite and through the park website. Since it was produced in 2009, neighborhood development has changed some of the areas around the tour stops, which necessitates either revision of the route or a revision of the narrative.
Websites	Currency and scope of website		Well-maintained, current, and in compliance with website standards for NPS. The new virtual tour lives on the website.

Sense of Place  web			
Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Resource contributes to visitor understanding	Sufficient areas associated with Maggie L. Walker's life and work retain their historic character and features such that they convey meaning.		All park-owned buildings have been restored to good condition to give a sense of Jackson Ward during Mrs. Walker's era. Revitalization and restoration of privately owned homes, properties, and museums in the surrounding blocks in Jackson Ward National Historic District, such as the Black History Museum and Hippodrome Theater, are in progress. Yet there are two sites in the neighborhood, the Consolidated Bank and Trust, and the St. Luke Headquarters Building that are not owned by the park. The bank no longer emphasizes its connection to Mrs. Walker since it was acquired by Premier Bank in 2011, and the St. Luke Building is in advanced disrepair and access is cut-off from the site by the Interstate 95. That is a concern—that key sites in her story may be lost.

Accessibility  web			
Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Mobility	ADA compliance		Visitor Center is accessible, as is the Exhibit Hall. Historic home is accessible on the first floor only. Park has developed a photo book that shows the second floor for those who cannot make it up the stairs.
Visual Accommodation	ADA compliance		Audio description and audio assist equipment available in park theater for orientation film. Tours of the museum exhibits and the historic house are all ranger-led, and staff can include enhanced descriptions of items during those tours.
Auditory Accommodation	ADA compliance		The orientation film is closed-captioned. A photobook of the historic home with descriptions for each main room is available. Interpretive text and artifacts in the exhibit Hall are ADA compliant.
Public Transportation	Access to park via public transportation		Public transportation is readily available through the Greater Richmond Transit system and has a bus stop in front of the Visitor Center and in the next block, offering an excellent way to get to the park. Buses are accessible.
Multi-lingual resources	Audio and print materials in multiple languages Bi-lingual staff		The park does not have any materials in multiple languages and no one on staff is bilingual. The ratio of non-English speaking visitors to English speaking visitors to the site is relatively low, so the demand for multi-lingual audio and print materials has been low.

Safety			web
Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Visitor Safety	Recordable incidents		The safety of visitors is a park priority. The park works to quickly identify and mitigate potential hazards, and the number of accidents is very low.
Staff Safety and Training	Number of staff trained		Operational Leadership Training has been completed by park staff, and CPR, First Aid, and AED training are offered to staff on a space available basis. Job Hazard Analysis is conducted before jobs throughout the park. Regular safety messages are given and distributed to staff members.

Partnerships, Community, Volunteers			web
Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Volunteers	Number and hours contributed		Volunteers support visitor service operations as information desk greeters, special event assistants, and recently in 2013, as tour guides and interns. The park is steadily building up a cadre of volunteers who assist long term throughout the year.
Partnerships	Number and quality of official and unofficial partnerships.		Though the park's long-term partnership with the Maggie L. Walker historic Foundation is not as strong as it once was, other partners are coming on board. The park has developed a program partnership with The Girl Scouts of the Commonwealth of Virginia to promote the Junior Ranger program. Partnerships with the Maggie L. Walker Governor School and the National Park Foundation have resulted in the highly successful Maggie L. Walker Summer Youth Leadership Institute held each year.
Community Relationships	Number of community events and groups that the park participates in.		The park is working to strengthen its connections to its surrounding community, deepening a sense of investment by one in the other. Staff attends Historic Jackson Ward Association programs and meetings. The Richmond Ballet worked with the park to offer its "Minds in Motion 2012" focusing on Maggie Walker.
Cooperating Association (EN)	Maintain positive working relationships with cooperating associations		Park staff has been working actively with Eastern National to improve selections available in the bookstore, which is leading to an improvement in sales.
Civic Engagement	Programs and events that the park hosts or participates in that foster civic engagement.		The park's annual Leadership Institute engages 12-14 teenagers each summer in a two week experiential workshop, teaching them the tenets of leadership and exploring their own concepts of community involvement and how they can be more engaged. Each February, the park offers a Saturday film series exploring elements of African American history and its relevancy in our communities today.

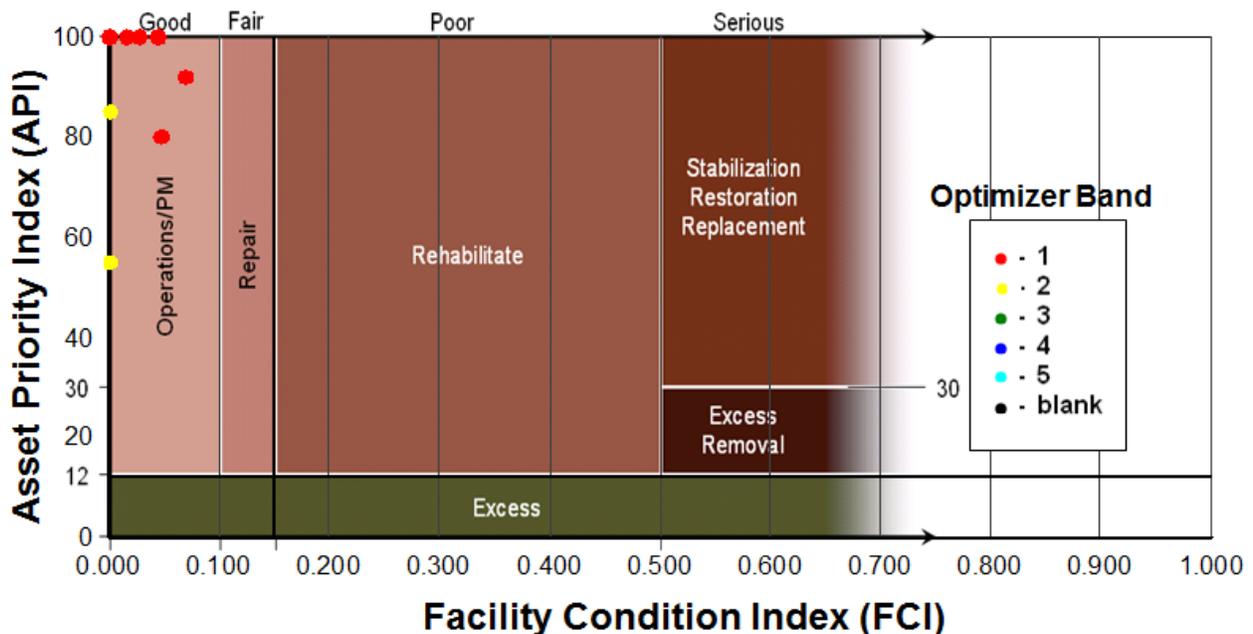
2.3. Park Infrastructure

Facility Condition Index

The National Park Service uses a facility condition index (FCI) to indicate the condition of its facilities and infrastructure. FCI is the cost of repairing an asset, such as a building, road, trail, or water system, divided by the cost of replacing it. The lower the FCI number, the better the condition of the asset. The condition of the buildings and other infrastructure assets at each park is determined by regular facility inspections, or “condition assessments”, including daily informal inspections and formal yearly inspections. Deficiencies identified from these assessments are documented in the NPS Facility Management Software System and the cost for each repair determined. Repairs that cannot be completed within the year count against the condition of a structure. The total cost of these deferred repairs divided by the total cost to replace the structure results in the FCI, with values between 0 and 1 (the lower the decimal number, the better the condition). The FCI is assigned a condition category of Good, Fair, Poor, or Serious based on industry and NPS standards. Deferred maintenance projects that require additional funding are identified based on FCI. Planned preventive maintenance on critical components occurs during the year, using a park’s base budget. For additional information about how park managers use information about the condition of facilities and infrastructure to make decisions about the efficient use of funding for maintenance and restoration activities at the park, [Click Here](#).

Another important facilities management planning tool used at a park is the Asset Priority Index (API). It identifies the importance of the various infrastructure components at a park. The API is determined using five criteria, and is calculated out of 100 possible points. The criteria are weighted based on their importance to NPS core priorities. They are distinct to ensure that each aspect of the asset is measured independently. As a result, most assets will not rate high in every category.

The scatterplot (below) for 2012 shows the FCI for each of the infrastructure asset types at Maggie L Walker National Historic Site. It plots buildings, trails, roads, parking areas, and other infrastructure assets against its Asset Priority Index (API). Park managers and maintenance staff use the FCI



Overall Facility Condition Index		 web		
Asset Category	Number of Assets 2008 / 2012	FCI 2008 / 2012	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Buildings	8 / 8	0.037 / 0.023		The 8 building components at the park are in Good condition overall and have improved during the past five years.
All Others	1 / 1	0.000 / 0.000		The park waysides and exhibits are in good condition.

and API data for each park asset to focus on preventive maintenance and repairs to facilities that are most critical to their parks.

Optimizer bands—the color of the dots in the scatterplot—are assigned to each facility or asset as a tool to prioritize use of limited funding to maintain park infrastructure. Optimizer Band 1 includes those assets with the highest maintenance priorities. These assets are most important to the park—often linked to the park’s enabling legislation or have high visitor use—and usually are in the best condition. Band 1 assets receive the highest percentage of base funding for routine operations, preventive maintenance, and recurring maintenance to keep them in good condition with proactive, planned maintenance. These assets are important to park operations, but because fewer park base dollars are available after maintaining Band 1 assets, Band 2 assets receive a lesser percentage of remaining funds. Assets in the lower priority bands may only receive preventive maintenance for the most critical components or may require special projects or partner funding to maintain them. For additional information about optimizer bands and how park managers use them to make decisions about the efficient use of funding for maintenance and restoration activities at the park, [Click Here](#).

Energy Consumption

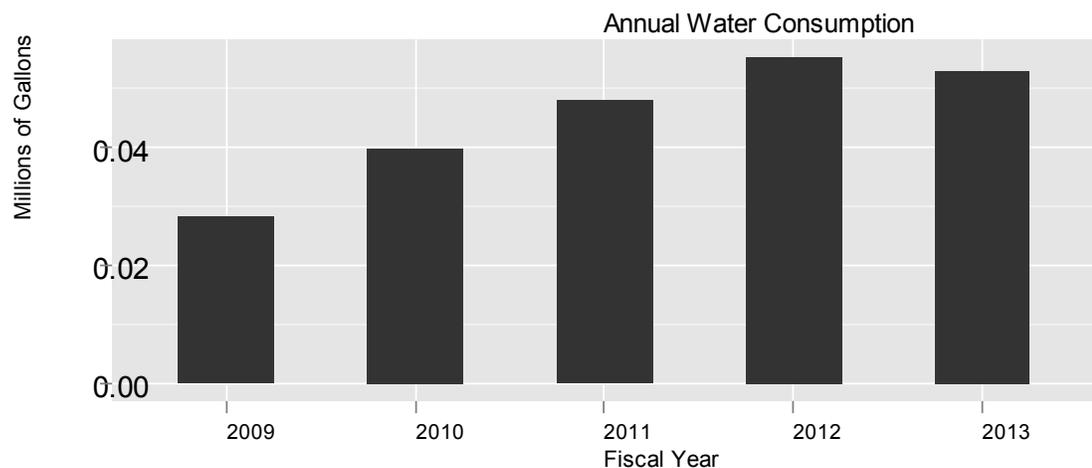
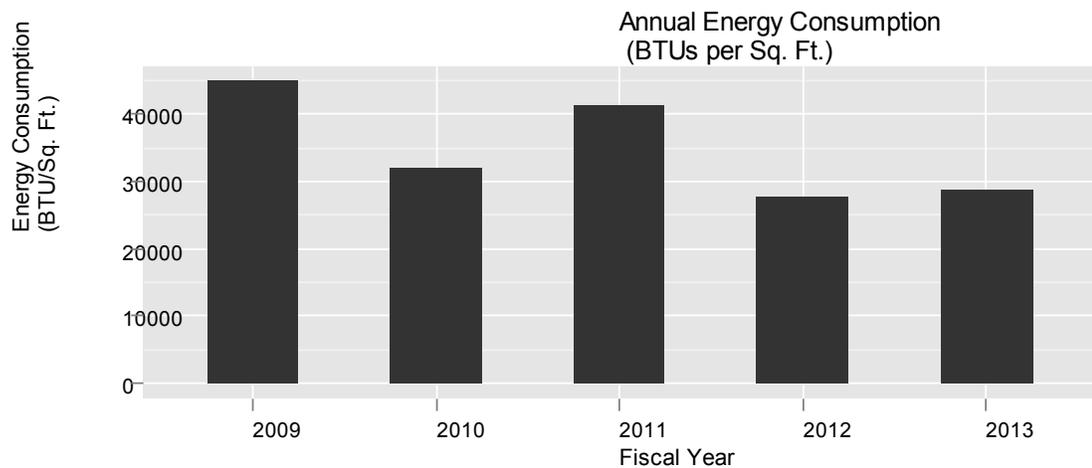
The production of energy to heat, cool, and illuminate buildings and to operate water utility systems is one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. The National Park Service is committed to improving facility energy performance and increasing its reliance on renewable energy sources. The National Park Service has a goal to reduce Servicewide building energy consumption per square foot of building space by 35% by 2016 from the baseline set in 2003 ([NPS Green Parks Plan 2012](#)).

Water Consumption

The national and global supply of fresh water has diminished in recent decades, and this trend is likely to continue due to drought and other climatic changes. To contribute to the responsible use of freshwater supplies, encourage groundwater recharge, and protect water quality, the National Park Service is improving its efforts to conserve water, reuse gray water, and capture rainwater, and has set a goal to reduce non-irrigation potable water use intensity by 30% by 2020 from the baseline set in 2007 ([NPS Green Parks Plan 2012](#)).

Energy Consumption			web
Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Energy Consumption	BTUs per gross square footage of buildings		Energy usage (BTUs per gross square footage of buildings) at the park in 2013 was 22% lower than the average for the previous 4 years (Source: NPS Annual Energy Report).

Water Consumption			web
Indicators of Condition	Specific Measures	Condition Status/Trend	Rationale
Water Consumption	Millions of gallons		Water consumption at the park in 2013 was 24% higher than the 4-year average for 2009–2012 (Source: NPS Annual Energy Report).



CHAPTER 3. SUMMARY OF KEY STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Activities and Accomplishments

The list below provides examples of stewardship activities and accomplishments by park staff and partners to maintain or improve the condition of priority park resources and values for this and future generations:

Cultural Resources

- The MAWA complex was rehabilitated, realizing the 1982 GMP vision for desired conditions.
- Archiving and digitizing oral histories with CR diversity intern.
- The Maggie Walker Home is now 95% furnished based on the Historic Furnishings Report.
- A new Collections Storage facility was installed.
- Pursue completion of wallpaper installation in three rooms (library, dining, and sitting rooms).
- Community engagement leading to appropriate/sensitive development in the historic district:
 - Removal of 1960s hotel and plans for redevelopment.
 - Streetscape improvements and positive impact on neighborhood).
 - Hippodrome and St. Lukes redevelopment (conversations ongoing).
 - Convention Center design of west side has improved relationship of building the surrounding neighborhood.

Visitor Experience

- Community Outreach and building partnerships – park participated in community events such as Go Discover Richmond and Richmond Ballet’s *Minds in Motion*, raising profile of the park with community groups and with the public.
- MAWA Leadership Institute, conducted every June for two weeks, is a strong example of community engagement.
- Virtual Museum tour – increased access of public to the resource via the web and social media.
- Repaired and replaced facilities – good condition. Going from having multiple buildings in condemned condition to restored and rehabbed.
- Completed the digitization of oral histories.
- Maggie Walker birthdate pinned down. Worked with scholars to find and present the

latest scholarship.

Park Infrastructure

- Replaced HVAC systems and components.
- Performed Structural and Cosmetic Repairs, replaced worn awnings and rehabilitated historic windows on Maggie Walker House.

CHAPTER 4. KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR CONSIDERATION IN MANAGEMENT PLANNING

House Exhibit

The Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site is fortunate to have such a high proportion of original artifacts on display, but the exposure associated with such display raises a concern for long-term preservation. When Mrs. Walker's descendants deeded the house to the National Park Service, they also sold with it *all* of the furnishings, art work, and household items that the family had diligently kept since Walker's death in 1934. Having such a comprehensive collection of artifacts has allowed the NPS an unparalleled opportunity to furnish the house museum with approximately 95% original pieces. But even with consistent environmental monitoring, an Integrated Pest Management Plan, and a site-specific housekeeping schedule, the museum artifacts are still susceptible to the long-term risks associated with static display. Light exposure and seasonal humidity variations, in addition to security threats and the risk of visitor handling, present concerns that could be mitigated by rotating artifacts into periods of rest within the more tightly controlled collections storage facility. But taking objects off display presents the problem of an interpretive gap in the museum—a concern that will need to be addressed as the museum approaches its fourth decade of public operation. The park has recently submitted a PMIS project statement that would replace the museum's ultra light-sensitive photographs and prints with high-resolution reproductions, but other creative strategies need to be considered if the site is to preserve the house furnishings for generations in the distant future.

Neighborhood and boundary limitations

MAWA is situated within the Jackson Ward National Historic Landmark District—the largest such district devoted to African American history. However, the site sits right outside the boundary of the *local* Jackson Ward City Old and Historic District—a district with much stricter guidelines for architectural renovation and development. In the past decade, Jackson Ward, especially the 2nd Street corridor has experienced a steady growth in revitalization and development. However, without the strict guidance of the local historic district, such new development threatens the historic integrity of the park's extended cultural landscape. Currently, a large vacant lot sits immediately behind the MAWA site (just outside of the park's congressionally-designated boundary), and this lot, like others close by, is ripe for private development. Coincidentally, the MAWA complex lacks a parking lot. This shortcoming has created a concern from visitors not to mention a logistical hurdle with large groups reliant on school buses and charter buses. A boundary increase could theoretically solve two problems at once—canceling the threat of new development adjacent to the park, while creating a safe and secure parking lot for staff and visitors. In addition to the risk of modern development, another neighborhood threat is the privately-owned house immediately adjacent to the park's chief resource, the fully furnished Maggie L. Walker house museum. This neighboring house is currently for sale and is un-occupied, though there is evidence of unauthorized use by squatters. Even if responsible tenants lived in this house, it would still pose a threat to the park as there is but a mere 30-inch alleyway separating the home from the museum. Should that house collapse or catch fire, there is little to stop it from damaging the Maggie L. Walker house and the artifacts therein. Considering the physical threats to the Walker house, the visual threats to the

cultural landscape, and the need for a parking lot, a boundary increase and property management strategy would greatly benefit the future of the site.

Visitation

The Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site has statistically suffered from a high operating cost-to-visitor ratio. While no formal analysis has been conducted to compare the site's attendance with other similarly themed national parks or local museums, the approximate annual visitation of 10,000–12,000 is notably low. This trend may be the result of a number of factors, chiefly poor national "name recognition"; logistical constraints; and consequently, limited visitor opportunities.

Again no formal visitation survey has been conducted, but informally, it appears that the bulk of the out of state visitors who come to MAWA arrive with very little background knowledge of Maggie Walker. Outside of Virginia, "Maggie L. Walker" is not a household name, and it seems that most of the out of state or international visitors arrive at the site mainly because of its National Park Service connection and proximity to nationally known historic destinations in Richmond, Washington D.C., and Williamsburg. If those who are visiting the site have little background knowledge of Maggie Walker, it is probably safe to assume the same of those who are *not* visiting the site. In recent years, the park has expanded its online presence with a virtual exhibit and actively maintained [Facebook](#) page. Presumably, the compounded efforts of the site's web presence will in turn lead to greater national recognition which will lead to greater out of state visitation.

The lack of name recognition does not seem to be the root cause of low *local* visitation, being that Maggie L. Walker is a celebrated name in Richmond and in much of Virginia. Mrs. Walker is identified in the state's Standards of Learning and MAWA is a popular destination for school field trips, church groups, and reunions. The problem however, is that MAWA is extremely limited in its on-site public offerings. While the site provides a visitor center, an exhibit hall, and a fully furnished house museum, visitor opportunities are primarily limited to staff-guided experiences. For various reasons including fire code, limited space, and museum security, tour groups cannot exceed 15 visitors per ranger. While groups of 45 can be broken into a maximum of three sub-groups, the site simply cannot accommodate more than 45 visitors at a single time and there have been instances when the park has had to turn away larger groups. This limitation however, may not be nearly as detrimental to visitation as the fact that there is very little a visitor can do by his or herself. All interpretation is offered in a formal setting as rangers and guides follow a regulated tour path. Though such a high level of ranger involvement has unparalleled advantages in terms of visitor connection, the site does not lend itself towards any passive use. There are no self-guided opportunities or outdoor waysides. And unlike a battlefield, for instance, the small, urban setting at MAWA is such that it does not facilitate visitor usage beyond that which is strictly intended—guided tours. In other words, there are no joggers, cyclists, dog-walkers, or bird-watchers who could frequent the park any time during daylight hours the way many battlefield visitors do, regardless of staff presence. The site does not offer a garden, a trail, or picnic table for downtown business-people to take advantage of during their lunch break or for neighbors to enjoy on Sundays and Mondays when the site is closed. In short, a visitor to MAWA is primarily coming for one thing—an hour-long, ranger-guided tour. Such specific use does not lend itself to attracting regular or casual visitors. Once a visitor has attended the site and enjoyed the full, ranger-guided experience, what would bring them back for a repeat visit? The house museum and exhibit hall are static by nature, meaning that management should pay extra consideration to developing special onsite programs to entice returns as well as increasing its outreach efforts. The park has augmented its daily guided tour programs with special events such as the annual Black History Month film series, Martin

Luther King Day guest speakers, Maggie L. Walker Birthday Celebration, 2nd Street Festival, and small temporary exhibits held in the park's visitor center throughout the year. As vital as the house museum is to the park and its interpretive mission, it is the special programming that will continue to attract *repeat* visitors who have already seen the house but who wish to return for more offerings. Furthermore, original, relevant programming can entice *new* local visitors who may be otherwise intimidated by something as formal as a guided tour. Likewise, special programming that expands the borders of the strict historical mission—has the ability to foster greater relevance and contemporary community connections. If the site is revered as a hub for *fostering*—rather than solely *teaching*—the Maggie Walker legacy of civic engagement, economic advancement, and race pride, then perhaps the community will show greater support for the site in terms of visitor numbers, advocacy, and stewardship.

REFERENCES

See the [State of the Park Report for the Park website](#) for a more complete list of references to documents and data sets upon which the assessments in this State of the Park report are based. References for several of the key documents cited in this report are as follows:

[Denker, E. P. 2004](#). Maggie L. Walker House: Historic Furnishings Report, Volume 1 - Historical Data. Historic Furnishing Report. Richmond, Virginia. Published Report-2197738.

National Park Service. 1997. Resource Management Plan, Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site. National Park Service. Richmond, Virginia.

See Also:

[Collection of Cultural Resource-Related References](#)

[Collection of Visitor Experience-Related References](#)

GLOSSARY

See the [State of the Parks home page](#) for a link to a complete glossary of terms used in State of the Park reports. Definitions of key terms used in this report are as follows:

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	Law enacted by the federal government that includes provisions to remove barriers that limit a disabled person’s ability to engage in normal daily activity in the physical, public environment.
Archeological Sites Management Information System (ASMIS)	The National Park Service’s standardized database for the basic registration and management of park prehistoric and historical archeological resources. ASMIS site records contain data on condition, threats and disturbances, site location, date of site discovery and documentation, description, proposed treatments, and management actions for known park archeological sites. It serves as a tool to support improved archeological resources preservation, protection, planning, and decision-making by parks, centers, regional offices, and the national program offices.
Baseline Documentation	Baseline documentation records the physical condition of a structure, object, or landscape at a specific point in time. A baseline provides a starting point against which future changes can be measured.
Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)	A Cultural Landscapes Inventory describes historically significant landscapes within a park. The inventory identifies and documents each landscape’s location, size, physical development, condition, characteristics, and features, as well as other information useful to park management.
Curation	National parks are the stewards of numerous types of objects, field notes, publications, maps, artifacts, photographs, and more. The assemblage of these materials comprises a museum collection. Curation is the process of managing, preserving, and safeguarding a collection according to professional museum and archival practices.
Facility Condition Index (FCI)	FCI is the cost of repairing an asset (e.g., a building, road, bridge, or trail) divided by the cost of replacing it. The lower the FCI number, the better the condition of the resource.
Foundation Document	A park Foundation Document summarizes a park’s purpose, significance, resources and values, primary interpretive themes, and special mandates. The document identifies a park’s unique characteristics and what is most important about a park. The Foundation Document is fundamental to guiding park management and is an important component of a park’s General Management Plan.

Fundamental and Other Important Resources and Values	Fundamental resources and values are the particular systems, processes, experiences, scenery, sounds, and other features that are key to achieving the park's purposes and maintaining its significance. Other important resources and values are those attributes that are determined to be particularly important to park management and planning, although they are not central to the park's purpose and significance. These priority resources are identified in the Park Foundation Document and/or General Management Plan. The short-cut name that will be used for this will be Priority Resources.
Historic Integrity	Historic Integrity is the assemblage of physical values of a site, building, structure or object and is a key element in assessing historical value and significance. The assessment of integrity is required to determine the eligibility of a property for listing in the National Register.
Indicator of Condition	A selected subset of components or elements of a Priority Resource that are particularly "information rich" and that represent or "indicate" the overall condition of the Priority Resource. There may be one or several Indicators of Condition for a particular Priority Resource.
Interpretation	Interpretation is the explanation of the major features and significance of a park to visitors. Interpretation can include field trips, presentations, exhibits, and publications, as well as informal conversations with park visitors. A key feature of successful interpretation is allowing a person to form his or her own personal connection with the meaning and significance inherent in a resource.
List of Classified Structures (LCS)	LCS is an inventory system that records and tracks the condition of the approximately 27,000 historic structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places that are the responsibility of NPS.
Museum Collection	NPS is the steward of the largest network of museums in the United States. NPS museum collections document American, tribal, and ethnic histories; park cultural and natural resources; park histories; and other aspects of human experience. Collections are managed by professionally-trained NPS staff, who ensure long-term maintenance of collections in specialized facilities.

Priority Resource or Value	This term refers to the Fundamental and Other Important Resources and Values of a park. These can include natural, cultural, and historic resources as well as opportunities for learning, discovery and enjoyment. Priority Resources or Values include features that have been identified in park Foundation Documents, as well as other park assets or values that have been developed or recognized over the course of park operations. Priority Resources or Values warrant primary consideration during park planning and management because they are critical to a park’s purpose and significance.
Project Management Information System (PMIS)	A servicewide intranet application within the National Park Service to manage information about requests for project funding. It enables parks and NPS offices to submit project proposals to be reviewed, approved and prioritized at park units, regional directorates, and the Washington Office.
Resource Management	The term “resources” in NPS encompasses the many natural, cultural, historical, or sociological features and assets associated with parks. Resource management includes the knowledge, understanding, and long-term stewardship and preservation of these resources.
Specific Measure of Condition	One or more specific measurements used to quantify or qualitatively evaluate the condition of an Indicator at a particular place and time. There may be one or more Specific Measures of Condition for each Indicator of Condition.
Visitor and Resource Protection (VRP)	VRP includes, among other responsibilities, protecting and preserving park natural and cultural resources, enforcing laws that protect people and the parks, fire management, search and rescue, managing large-scale incidents, and on-the-ground customer service.