



News Release

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Civil Rights Grant Awarded to Charleston County Planning Department

Department of the Interior and National Park Service Awards African American Civil Rights Grant to fund oral history project

The [Charleston County Zoning and Planning Department](#) has been awarded an [African American Civil Rights Grant](#) from the [U.S. Department of the Interior](#) and the [National Park Service](#). The grant will fund *A Journey to Equal Education: Stories from Historic African-American Communities*, an oral history project that will share the experiences of students on the cusp of desegregation of public schools in the 1950s and 1960s. The Department will be hiring a cultural resources consultant through a request for proposals process to carry out the project work, which will include interviewing alumni from South Carolina Equalization Schools in Charleston County. The project will focus on conversations with alumni from W. Gresham Meggett High School, an equalization school that was recently listed on the [National Register of Historic Places](#). Once a consultant is hired, the Zoning and Planning Department will hold a public meeting to hear from community members and share more details about the project with citizens. To assist with outreach, the county will be partnering with the Heritage Community Development Corporation, a local non-profit organization. The grant work will begin immediately and will conclude in April 2020.

For project updates and information about other historic preservation initiatives, visit this webpage: <https://www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/zoning-planning/projects-hpc.php>.

What was the South Carolina Equalization School Program?

South Carolina lawmakers passed a general sales tax in 1951 to fund a statewide school construction program. The intent of the program was to demonstrate schools were “separate but equal” by constructing new African American elementary and high schools across the state. For more information about this program, visit this website: <http://www.scequalizationschools.org/equalization-schools.html>.

This project is funded by the African American Civil Rights program of the Historic Preservation Fund, National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material do not constitute endorsement or necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior or U.S. Government.

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- written by the Public Information Office-