

**For more information contact:**

Ann Cejka

Program Coordinator, Ushers Ferry Historic Village, Parks & Recreation Dept.

Office: (319) 286-5763

Email address: [a.cejka@cedar-rapids.org](mailto:a.cejka@cedar-rapids.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 05, 2008, 11:03 AM

**Ushers Ferry Historic Village Selected to Participate in  
National Museum Assessment Program**

CEDAR RAPIDS, IA – December 05, 2008 – Ushers Ferry Historic Village has been selected to participate in the Museum Assessment Program (MAP). Through guided self-study and on-site consultation with a museum professional, participation in MAP will empower Ushers Ferry to better serve the citizens of Cedar Rapids by facilitating its meeting and exceeding the highest professional standards of the museum field.

Administered by the American Association of Museums (AAM) through a cooperative agreement with the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), MAP is an entirely self-motivated program; application to and participation in MAP is initiated by each local institution, and those accepted from among the dozens of annual applicants invest considerable human and institutional resources into the assessment. Of America's estimated 17,500 museums, less than one-half of one percent participates in MAP each year.

Ushers Ferry Historic Village, an open living history facility featuring thirty-six major exhibit buildings located on ten acres adjacent to Seminole Valley Park has been closed to the public since the June flood swept through the site causing much damage and destruction.

Ushers Ferry staff members consider themselves very fortunate to have been selected to participate in this program as the MAP process has provided them with valuable tools and guidance while they consider the future of the village.

“We actually had applied for this grant last winter, before the flood,” said Ann Cejka, Ushers Ferry Program Coordinator, “but we didn’t receive word that we had actually been accepted into the program until several weeks after the flood had happened. When we contacted the representatives at AMM and informed them of our situation, they strongly encouraged us to proceed with the MAP assessment by using it to evaluate our situation and plan how we might rebuild. It sounded like great advice to us, so that is exactly what we are doing.”

Since receiving the MAP award last August, Ushers Ferry representatives have been working with critical members of their staff, volunteers, local government and other community leaders to develop a new vision and plan for Ushers Ferry. “It is our hope,” Cejka said, “that by working through this process Ushers Ferry will emerge from this disaster stronger and more vibrant than it was before.”

MAP is a confidential process of self-study, peer review and implementation. Museums use the assessment process to strengthen operations, build capacity, and enhance communication throughout the organization and in response to community needs. Participant museums choose one of four categories for its assessment: collections management, governance, institutional, and public dimension. Ushers Ferry will take part in the institutional assessment process. Museums of all types, including art, history, science and technology, children’s, natural history, historic houses, nature centers, botanical gardens, and zoos participate in the program.

“Choosing to be part of the MAP program is indicative of the commitment to civic involvement, public service and overall excellence on the part of Ushers Ferry,” said Ford W. Bell, president of AAM. “Studies have shown America’s museums to be among the country’s most trusted and valued institutions. MAP is designed to make them even better.”

Since its creation in 1981, the MAP program has provided over 5,000 assessments for 3,500 museums. Museums representing 37 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands have been accepted into the program this year.

“The objective of the Museum Assessment Program is improvement. Participant museums discover ways to improve all aspects of their operations.” said Dr. Anne-Imelda M. Radice,

director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. "The ultimate beneficiaries, of course, are the people and communities these museums serve."

MAP is supported through a cooperative agreement with IMLS. For more information, including a complete list of museums participating in MAP, please visit [www.aam-us.org/map](http://www.aam-us.org/map), call 202/289-9118 or e-mail [map@aam-us.org](mailto:map@aam-us.org).

AAM is the only organization representing the nation's entire museum community and has been dedicated to promoting excellence within the museum field for over 100 years. For more information about AAM, visit [www.aam-us.org](http://www.aam-us.org). The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 122,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. To learn more about the Institute, please visit: <http://www.imls.gov>.

The Ushers Ferry exhibit buildings are currently closed to the public with no set date for reopening. However, office hours and public programs are still being held in the Ushers Ferry Visitor Center and at other locations around town. For more information on Ushers Ferry winter events and programs, visit the Ushers Ferry website at [www.ufhv.com](http://www.ufhv.com) or call 319-286-5763. To register in advance for these programs visit the Cedar Rapids Parks and Recreation Department website at [www.crrec.org](http://www.crrec.org) or call 286-57631.

###