

Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism, Preservation Planning, and Exhibit Development

Cherokee Nation, Oklahoma



The 106 Group worked closely with the Cherokee Nation to develop a cultural tourism program for their fourteen-county jurisdictional area. Oklahoma was the terminal point of the Trail of Tears and the setting for reestablishing the nation both physically and in spirit. The 106 Group created a strategic plan for developing a sustainable cultural tourism program based on Cherokee culture and history and emphasizing the synergistic balance of economic development, community outreach, interpretation, resource management, site planning, and marketing.

Parallel to strategic planning efforts, the 106 Group, in partnership with the project architect, prepared a historic structures report (HSR) for the Cherokee Nation Supreme Court, a symbolic structure in Tahlequah, the capitol of the Cherokee Nation. As part of this project, the 106 Group served as the liaison between the Cherokee Nation, the project architect, and the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office. In tandem with the HSR, the 106 Group led efforts to plan interpretive exhibits at the Supreme Court. The exhibits were designed to convey messages about the building's use as both a Supreme Court and later as a press office for the Cherokee Nation's newspaper, the *Cherokee Phoenix*. Authenticity was a guiding principle in exhibit development, which involved balancing new exhibits with the preservation of the historic structure.

