

Strategic Plan  
(2012-2014 Version 1)

Gunston Hall (417)  
Agency Plan

Mission Statement

Gunston Hall preserves, interprets, and promotes this 18th-century historic site in order to educate the public about the international significance of its owner, George Mason, for his unique contribution to the universal cause of human rights.

Vision Statement

To ensure that both George Mason and Gunston Hall achieve broader national recognition: George Mason, for the significance of his unique contribution to the universal cause of human rights, and Gunston Hall, as one of the premier historic sites interpreting plantation life in eighteenth-century America.

Information Technology

**Current Operational IT Investments**

Physical location and availability of some services prevent Gunston from being able to take advantage of all Commonwealth systems.

**Factors Impacting the Current Agency IT**

Reduced funding and location impact the agency's ability to take advantage of some Commonwealth systems.

**Proposed IT Solutions**

The Gunston Hall website will be redeveloped.

Financial Overview

Due to the current economic conditions, the budget of Gunston Hall has been drastically reduced. Staffing levels have fallen and a variety of projects have been delayed; initiatives have been reduced and/or removed entirely. To supplement state allotments, Gunston Hall presents special events and seeks grants and donations.

Budget Component	2013 GF	2013 NGF	2014 GF	2014 NGF
Base	489,039	264,699	489,039	264,699
Changes to Base	5,324	696	5,353	696
<b>Total</b>	<b>494,363</b>	<b>265,395</b>	<b>494,392</b>	<b>265,395</b>

Agency Goals

- Educate the public about George Mason and life in 18th-century Virginia.

*Goal Summary and Alignment*

Provide tours to all visitors which educate about George Mason, the man, his contributions to our current way of life, the architectural history of Gunston Hall, and 18th-century life in the Chesapeake region. Educate school children by directly connecting George Mason's contributions to the required Standards of Learning in Virginia.

*Long Term Goal*

Elevate the levels of educational preparedness and attainment of our citizens.

*Societal Indicator:* Lifelong Learning

*Objectives for this Agency Goal*

**Objective**

Educate Virginians and the world about George Mason, Gunston Hall, and 18th-century life.

*Description*

Provide tours, seminars, and special events to educate the visiting public which highlight the life of George Mason, Gunston Hall and 18th-century life.

*Objective Strategies*

- Offer school tours at multiple grade levels and learning levels through outreach and promotion.
- Offer tours to the public on multiple levels highlighting Gunston Hall and George Mason.

*Measures*

- Increase visitation by five percent per year.

Measure Class **Agency Key** Measure Type **Outcome** Preferred Trend **Increase** Frequency **Annually**

Data Source and Calculation

Daily visitation logs.

- Provide administrative support necessary to maintain the structures and accommodate visitation.

*Goal Summary and Alignment*

Work with the Board and the Commonwealth to provide the administrative support necessary to operate and maintain the facilities in a manner appropriate for presentation to the visiting public. This support includes visitor services, administrative and financial services, development and public relations, and maintenance of the structures and landscape.

*Long Term Goal*

Protect, conserve and wisely develop our natural, historical and cultural resources.

*Societal Indicator:* Historic Resources

*Objectives for this Agency Goal*

**Objective**

Preserve and maintain the site for the enjoyment of the citizens of Virginia.

*Description*

Provide administrative and maintenance services necessary to preserve the site in a manner appropriate for presentation to and education of the citizens of Virginia, and all visitors, while conforming to the policies, procedures and laws of the Commonwealth.

*Objective Strategies*

- Employ professionals in fields that have relevance to our mission and values.

Programs and Service Areas for Agency

- 14501: Collections Management and Curatorial Services
- 14503: Education and Extension Services
- 14507: Operational and Support Services

Customers

Pre-Defined Customer Group	User Specified Customer Group	Customers Served Annually	Potential Annual Customers	Projected Trend in # of Customers
Adult	Adult visitors	8,823	25,000	Increase
Student	Local School Students -- off site	350	4,000	Increase
Student	Local and National School Students -- on site	7,327	12,000	Increase
Child	Children -- walk-in	1,748	10,000	Increase
Student	Adult Scholars and students	569	1,000	Increase
Student	Researchers -- off site via internet or mail	250	500	Increase
Adult	Pre-scheduled tours	565	10,000	Increase
Adult	Special events -- includes all ages	946	5,600	Increase

Key Risk Factors

Among the challenges Gunston Hall faces in attracting visitors is the competition in the Metropolitan Washington area where many sites have no admission fee and are accessible by public transportation. Gunston Hall is located outside the public transportation routes of Northern Virginia and does have an admission fee, although lower than some similar sites.

Name recognition is a specific challenge which we constantly address; George Mason was one of the leaders of Colonial America, but he was a very private person. His contributions to the founding of this country are great, but his name is not readily recognized.

A limited budget does not allow the agency to have the size staff needed to physically maintain the site in optimum condition or to engage in a marketing campaign to attract the desired number of visitors.

Products and Services

Gunston Hall is the colonial home of George Mason, the primary author of the Virginia Constitution and the Virginia Declaration of Rights. The Virginia Declaration of Rights is the basis of the Federal Bill of Rights. The preservation of George Mason's home, the 18th-century artifacts it contains, and the surrounding landscape, and the education of the visiting public on the collections, the contributions of George Mason to human rights, and 18th-century history are the mission of Gunston Hall. Educational tours and special events are the major products presented to the public. Gunston Hall is working with other historic properties and the Library of Virginia to make its collections and archives available on-line.

#### Trends

##### Rankings & Customer Trends

Gunston Hall's adult visitation and visitation of school children, on and off site, exhibited a moderate decrease during the last fiscal year. Working with the Commonwealth and the Board of Regents, it is Gunston Hall's goal is to increase the number of visitors educated about Gunston Hall and the contributions of George Mason to our current way of life, while preserving the Commonwealth's assets.

During fiscal year 2013, there was an increase in the number of adult visitors to the site. There was also an increase in the number of special events and use of the site by local groups such as the Boy Scouts.

Trend Name	Trend Area
Expand overall visitation	Increase

#### Performance Highlights: Service Performance & Productivity Initiatives

Preservation and restoration of the historic site, security of the property, and maintenance of the modern facilities are the focus of Gunston Hall, with a goal of educating the visiting public about Gunston Hall, George Mason's contributions to the founding of our country, and 18th-century life.

Gunston Hall provides daily tours for walk-in visitors and prescheduled groups. Visitors come from all walks of life and many locations. School students constitute one of the main components of our audience and their tours concentrate on the Standards of Learning of the Commonwealth. A high percentage of visitors express satisfaction with the site and its presentation.

Research is ongoing and enables continual updating of tour content and public programming.

Gunston Hall currently serves between 22,000 and 30,000 individuals yearly. A limited staff with a small budget provides a premier product to the visiting public. Research is revealing information about George Mason and how the site was utilized during his lifetime and this information is communicated to the visitor in the form of verbal tour content and visual presentation such as archaeological excavation. Educational seminars, lectures and other public programs are presented throughout the year. Research facilities include a library and archival collection in addition to the home of George Mason and its surrounding landscape. Information concerning Gunston Hall's history and its collections is being made available on-line.

#### Management Discussion & Analysis

##### Future Direction, Expectations, and Priorities

Gunston Hall's expectation in the foreseeable future is to continue research into the life of George Mason and the plantation where he lived and to present this information to the public while preserving his home and the surrounding property and historic resources, and expanding the number of people who visit and who are aware of Mr. Mason's contributions to the way of life we all enjoy. In addition to increasing the number of visitors who view the property, it is Gunston's goal to increase the number of researchers who use our library and archives.

In furtherance of these goals maintenance of both the historic and modern facilities and landscape is of paramount importance.

**14501: Collections Management and Curatorial Services**

**Description**

We will preserve and maintain the historic home of George Mason, a national historic landmark, the collection of fine and decorative arts which illustrate his life, and the 550-acre parcel of his original colonial plantation. The presentation of the site enables us to demonstrate to the public what life was like in 18th-century Virginia.

**Mission Alignment and Authority**

The preservation of the site is the agency's mission.

**Customers for this Service Area**

*Anticipated Changes to Customers Base*

The customer base is increasing in the Northern Virginia area and is becoming much more diverse. We anticipate serving a larger number of people and expect them to be coming from a more varied background.

We anticipate the aging population, retirees in particular, to be an increasing part of our visitation.

*Current Customer Base*

Pre-Defined Customer Group	User Specified Customer Group	Customers Served Annually	Potential Annual Customers	Projected Trend in # of Customers
Adult	Adults	8,823	25,000	Increase
Student	School Children off site	350	4,000	Increase
Student	School Children	7,327	12,000	Increase
Child	Children	1,748	11,000	Increase
Student	Adult scholars and students	569	1,000	Increase

**Partners for this Service Area**

Partner	Description
<i>No partners currently entered in plan</i>	

**Products and Services**

**Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services**

**Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services**

**Listing of Products and / or Services**

Preserve and enhance the historic home of George Mason and present it to the general public as an educational opportunity.

Provide an on-line database of Gunston Hall's collections.

Tours, special events, school outreach, community education.

**Financial Overview**

Budget Component	2013 GF	2013 NGF	2014 GF	2014 NGF
Base	68,729	0	68,729	0
Changes to Base	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	68,729	0	68,729	0

**Objectives for this Service Area**

*Objectives for this Service Area*

**Objective**

Preserve and maintain this national historic landmark.

*Description*

Preservation of Gunston Hall and the surrounding property in order to present information on George Mason, Gunston Hall and the 18th century to the visiting public

*Objective Strategies*

- Monitor the condition of the house and its contents. Perform appropriate conservation, preservation and maintenance.

*Alignment to Agency Goals*  
*No Agency Goals for this Objective*

**Objective**

Expand the collection of historically significant objects relating to George Mason and other historic artifacts from this era, by purchase, loan or gift.

*Description*

Expand the collection of related objects, books and manuscripts to improve the interpretation of the site to the visiting public.

*Objective Strategies*

- Contact family members to request the donation or loan of family objects. Express the interest of the agency in purchasing documented family objects which may not be available for loan or gift.
- Research auction catalogs for appropriate objects for purchase.
- Research the collections of other institutions and request loans or copies of appropriate objects or documents.
- Work with Library of Virginia staff to implement on line resources

*Alignment to Agency Goals*

*No Agency Goals for this Objective*

*Measures*

- Expand the collection.

Measure Class  Measure Type  Preferred Trend  Frequency

Data Source and Calculation

Maintain acquisition records documenting all collection purchases, loans and gifts. Increase the collection by at least one item per year.

**Objective**

Make available on line an electronic catalog of Gunston Hall's collections.

*Description*

Catalog the agency's collections on a collection management database and make it available on line. Participate with other libraries and organizations in on line databases of available manuscript and archival collections.

*Objective Strategies*

- Work with other historic sites and the Library of Virginia to make resources available on line.

*Alignment to Agency Goals*

*No Agency Goals for this Objective*

**14503: Education and Extension Services**

**Description**

We will educate the visiting public about Gunston Hall and George Mason through the use of guided tours, lectures, seminars and written documentation.

**Mission Alignment and Authority**

The education of the visiting public, adults and students, from all backgrounds about George Mason, his contributions to the cause of human rights and 18th-century life in Virginia.

**Customers for this Service Area**

*Anticipated Changes to Customers Base*

The customer base is increasing in the Northern Virginia area and is becoming much more diverse. We anticipate serving a larger number of people and expect them to be coming from a more varied background.

Tour content will be geared to the aging population expected to visit Gunston Hall.

*Current Customer Base*

Pre-Defined Customer Group	User Specified Customer Group	Customers Served Annually	Potential Annual Customers	Projected Trend in # of Customers
Adult	Adults	8,823	25,000	Increase
Student	School children off site	350	4,000	Increase
Student	School Children	7,327	12,000	Increase
Child	Children	1,748	11,000	Increase
Student	Adult scholars and students	569	1,000	Increase

**Partners for this Service Area**

Partner	Description
No partners currently entered in plan	

**Products and Services**

**Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services**

Budget cuts have affected all governmental agencies; some local schools may not be able to participate in school field trips.

**Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services**

**Listing of Products and / or Services**

Tours, special events, school outreach and community outreach.

**Financial Overview**

Budget Component	2013 GF	2013 NGF	2014 GF	2014 NGF
Base	94,350	63,077	94,350	63,077
Changes to Base	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>94,350</b>	<b>63,077</b>	<b>94,350</b>	<b>63,077</b>

**Objectives for this Service Area**

*Objectives for this Service Area*

**Objective**

Educate the public about the importance of George Mason and his contributions to the formation of American democracy.

*Description*

Expand the public's awareness of the contributions of George Mason to the formation of American government.

*Objective Strategies*

- Contact group tour leaders and promote Gunston's tours and special events.
- Contact retirement communities and promote Gunston's tours and special events.

Alignment to Agency Goals  
No Agency Goals for this Objective

**Objective**

Educate school children by directly connecting George Mason's contributions to the Required Standards of Learning in Virginia.

*Description*

Educate school children in Virginia through both on-site and off-site presentations regarding George Mason's contributions to the founding of this country and 18th-century life in Virginia.

*Objective Strategies*

- Work with social studies teachers and local school boards to encourage on-site student visits.

*Alignment to Agency Goals*

No Agency Goals for this Objective

*Measures*

- Improve quality of school tours and increase by five percent the number of students visiting Gunston Hall.

Measure Class  Measure Type  Preferred Trend  Frequency

Data Source and Calculation

Maintain records of children served and the type of information distributed.

**14507: Operational and Support Services**

Description

We will work with the Board and the Commonwealth to provide administrative support and maintenance of all facilities and grounds of Gunston Hall.

Mission Alignment and Authority

Administrative support is provided by the director, administrative and visitors services staff, public relations and development staff, and building and grounds maintenance staff. These staff members perform administrative, clerical, fund-raising, public relations and maintenance duties and oversee staff and contractors performing these duties which allow the curatorial and educational staff to present George Mason's story to the visiting public.

Customers for this Service Area

*Anticipated Changes to Customers Base*

*Current Customer Base*

Pre-Defined Customer Group	User Specified Customer Group	Customers Served Annually	Potential Annual Customers	Projected Trend in # of Customers
----------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------------------

Partners for this Service Area

Partner	Description
No partners currently entered in plan	

Products and Services

**Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services**

**Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services**

**Listing of Products and / or Services**

Administration, preservation and maintenance of the site to enable the provision of tours, special events, school outreach, and community education to the citizens of Virginia and all visitors while protecting the property of the Commonwealth.

Financial Overview

Budget Component	2013 GF	2013 NGF	2014 GF	2014 NGF
Base	325,960	201,622	325,960	201,622
Changes to Base	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>325,960</b>	<b>201,622</b>	<b>325,960</b>	<b>201,622</b>

Objectives for this Service Area

*Objectives for this Service Area*

**Objective**  
Efficient and effective use of resources.

*Description*  
Maintain the buildings and grounds of Gunston Hall in a manner appropriate for presentation to the visiting public. Perform administrative duties necessary to manage the site in accordance with governmental regulations and Board directives.

*Objective Strategies*

- Work with the Board and the Commonwealth to effectively and efficiently manage the site in accordance with governing regulations while ensuring the safety of the Commonwealth's property.

*Alignment to Agency Goals*  
No Agency Goals for this Objective

*Measures*

- Follow all appropriate policies and procedures of the commonwealth.

Measure Class  Measure Type  Preferred Trend  Frequency

Data Source and Calculation

Compliance with appropriate Board and Commonwealth policies, procedures, and regulations, resulting in appropriate results in state and private reviews

and audits.