



The Bennington Battle Monument: Survey Results & Updates

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

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The Creative Discourse Group

Susan McCormack

Bennington Battle Monument State Historic Site Team

Marylou Chicote – Bennington Monument Site Administrator

Joshua Bell – Director of State Historic Sites

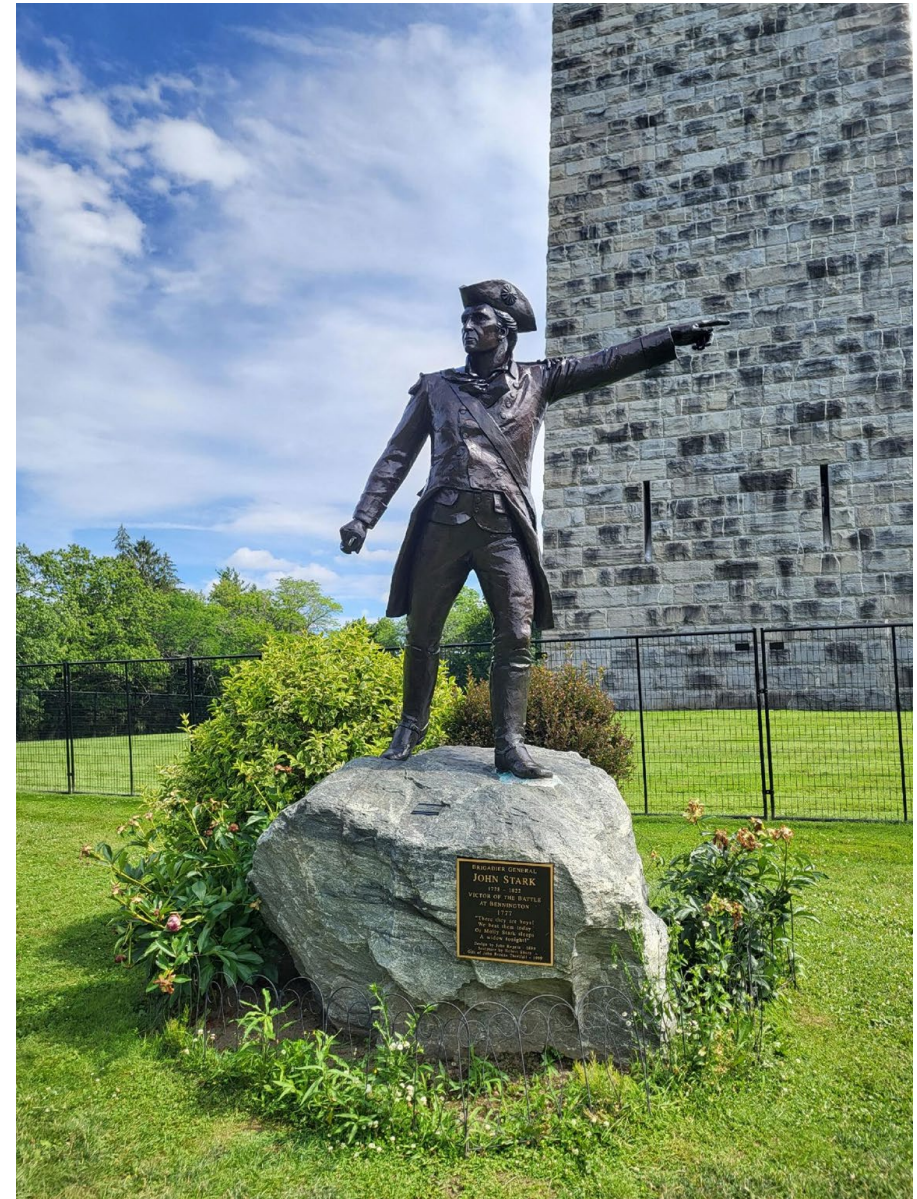
Jamie Duggan – Director of Preservation

Jess Robinson – State Archaeologist

Laura V. Trieschmann – State Historic Preservation Officer

Tonight's Forum

1. Review Community Survey Results
2. Monument Updates
3. Small Group Discussion
4. Closing & Next Steps



Community Input



In-Person Community Forum

Community members shared priorities and questions following an update about the monument.



Held in April 2026
in Bennington, VT



Virtual Community Forum

Participants from across Vermont and beyond joined to hear an update and share their input.



Held in May 2026



Online Survey

A broader audience shared their perspectives through an online survey.

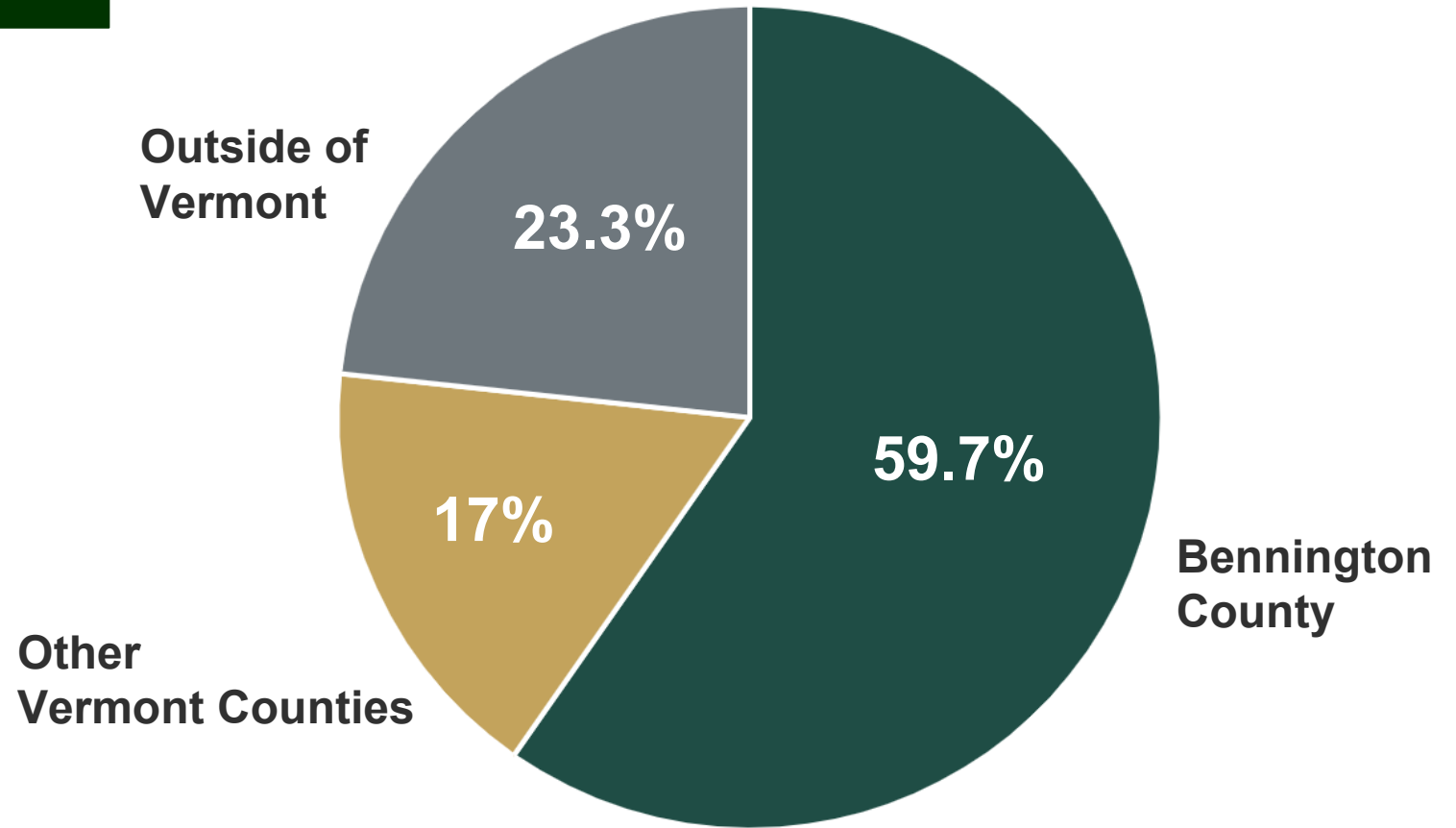


Open May through
August 2026

Survey Results

**912
respondents**

Location of Survey Respondents

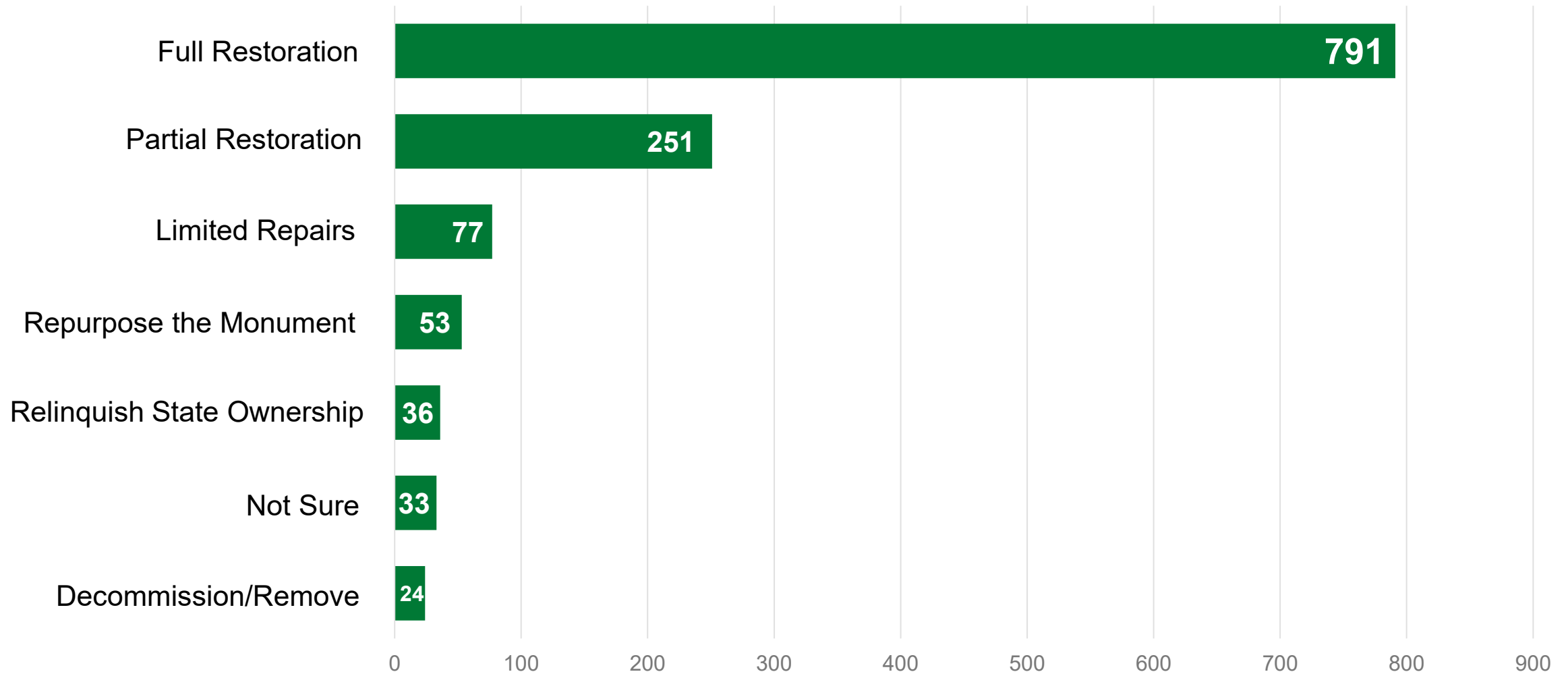


n=896; excludes respondents outside of the U.S. and those who did not provide a location

Theme 1

Preserve the Monument and its Historic Significance

Responses When Asked About Future Paths for the Monument



Survey respondents were able to select more than one answer. 912 people answered this question.

Theme 2

**Promote the Monument's Value
as a Public and Economic Asset**

“

The monument is a key cultural and economic pillar for Bennington and the State.

“

I think the project needs to be holistic in how the site would be used in the future if restored ... it can support the local economy through tourism, economic development, and community engagement.

”

Theme 3

Establish a Sustainable and Responsible Path Forward

Respondents express strong support for comprehensive restoration and a sense of urgency about access.

“

**“Do it properly,
do it right.”**

“

**“Obviously, the cost is
the big question.
Community (private) and
state funding should be
considered as well as
federal or state historic
grants.”**

“

**“Fix the
elevator.”**

Ideas from Survey Respondents



Ideas Already Underway

- *Working with Friends of Bennington Monument [Old Bennington, and community partners] to promote the site and additional activities.*
- *Obtain additional expert opinions/assessments on the monument's condition and possible restoration approaches.*
- *Continue transparent public engagement and regular communication as planning and decision-making move forward.*
- *Pursue federal historic-preservation funding and involve Vermont's congressional delegation.*
- *Piloted interpretive programs this season about the battle and the monument.*

Our Shared Ideas

- *Explore a more holistic plan for the monument site, connecting restoration to tourism, economic development, arts/cultural activities, and redevelopment happening in Bennington.*
- *Use the restoration as an educational opportunity.*
- *Launch a comprehensive statewide or national public fundraising campaign driven by professional fundraising, marketing, and public relations expertise.*
- *Restore the elevator and observation experience.*
- *Consider if the monument could be fully preserved without elevator/interior access.*

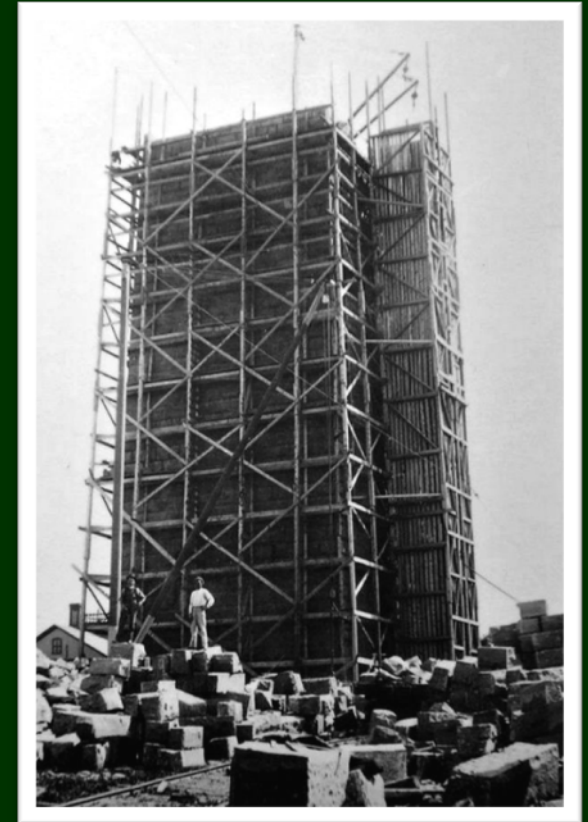
Monument Updates

October 2026

Pathway to Restoration

Summary of Known Facts

- Building is structurally sound and is not in danger of collapse
- Building has over 100% humidity, fluctuating with seasons and weather conditions
- Drying out the interior and exterior stone is a priority before any repairs and new equipment installation (except maybe elevator?)
- Phased restoration approach drives deliberate and effective planning, which in turn secures steady funding



Monument under construction, c. 1889

Pathway to Restoration

Effective Planning and Funding Phases To Date:

1. & 2. Physical Study and Assessment of Monument Existing Conditions

15 expert consultants and subcontractors

COMPLETED 2025

\$1,072,124.47 state funding

3. Monitoring and Archaeology Investigations

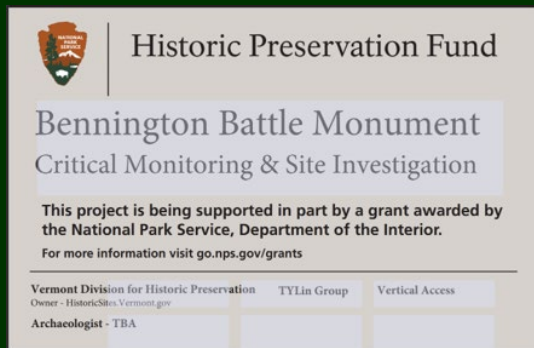
5 expert consultants and archaeologists

ONGOING 2025 through 2028

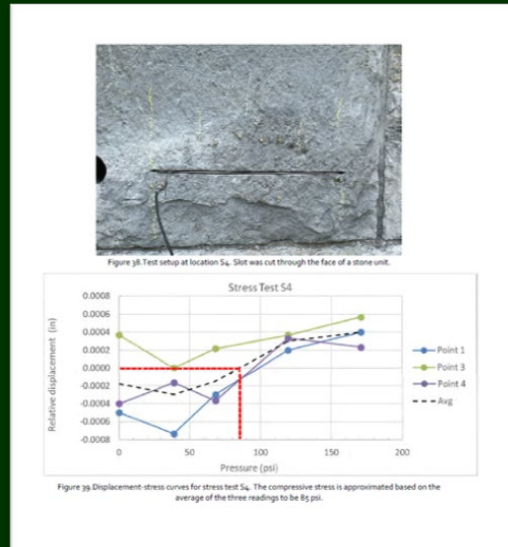
\$500,000 federal funding (in hand)

Phase 3: Monitoring & Archaeological Investigations

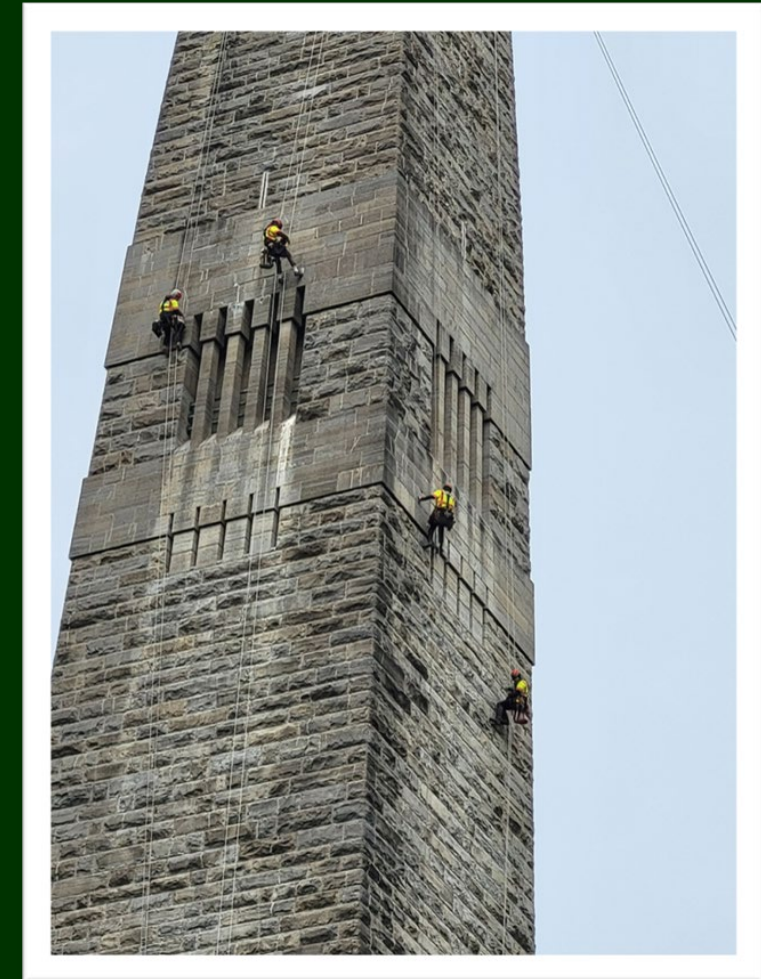
- High-rope safety inspections and loose stone removal
- Seismic evaluations
- Monitoring of temperature/humidity
- Tilt meters and crack monitors
- Archaeological investigation



Federal funding signage

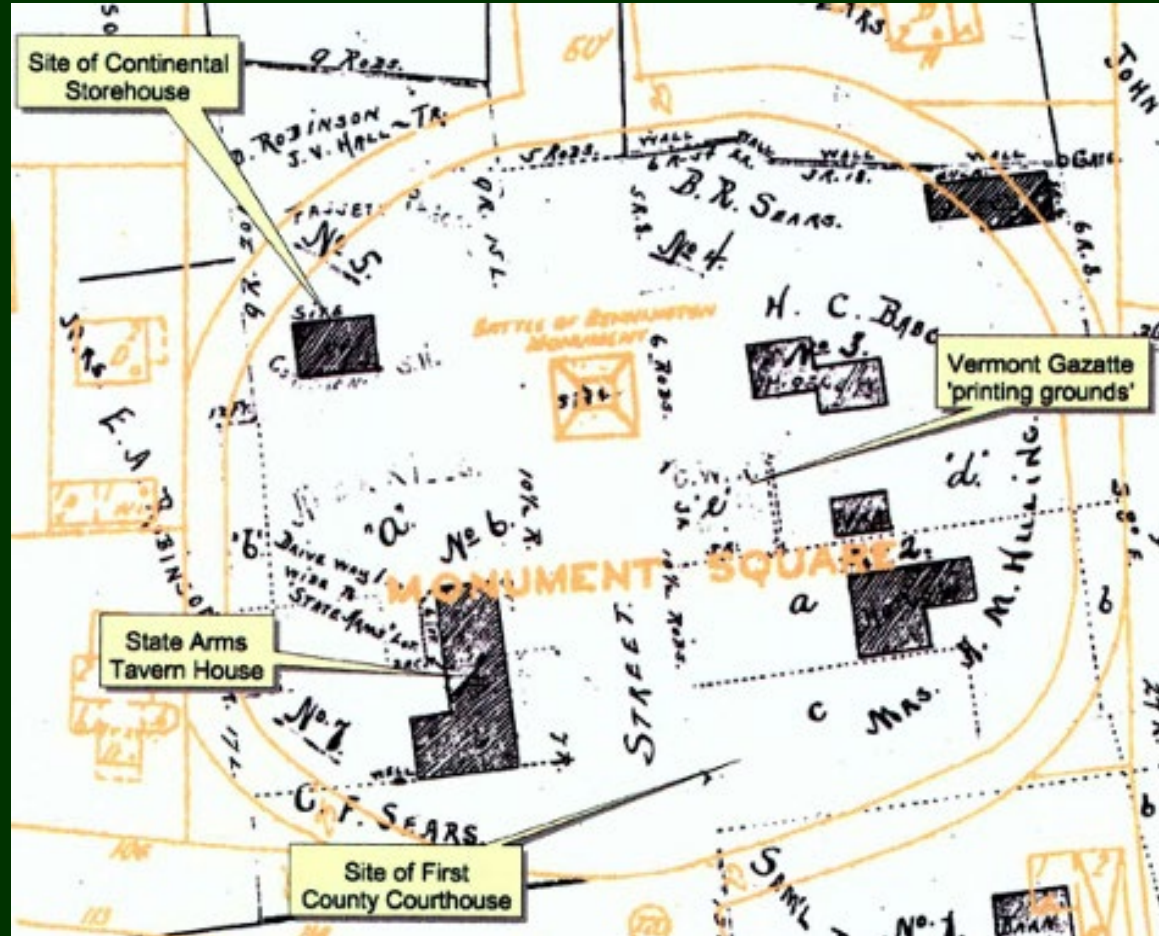


Stress test Monitoring



Exterior safety inspection

Archaeology Investigations



October 2026



Bennington Museum Collection

Pathway to Restoration

Effective Planning Phases and Funding Needs For Future:

4. Enclosure and Moisture Mitigation Design

a. Comprehensive Design: Finalize structural engineering for enclosure and scaffolding; design interim mechanical systems to reduce moisture

b. Geotechnical and Site Prep: Assess soil stabilization for structural loads

Estimated Cost: \$500,000

Funding in Hand: \$400,000*

c. Enclosure & Environmental Control: Erect water-tight enclosure and activate interim mechanical systems to reduce moisture

Estimated Cost: \$5 million to \$10 million

Pathway to Restoration

Effective Planning Phases and Funding Needs For Future:

5. Schematic and Design Development of Restoration

While the building is drying out:

- a. Permanent Systems Engineering:** Design permanent mechanical systems to ensure long-term continuous moisture reduction
- b. Conservation Testing:** Perform exterior preservation and mock-ups post-drying to establish restoration standards
- c. Infrastructure Modernization:** Explore options and design elevator replacement and stair rehabilitation

Estimated Cost: \$2 million to 2.5 million

Restoration Phase

Effective Planning Phases and Funding Needs For Future:

6. Stone Restoration

a. Stone Restoration

b. Infrastructure Modernizations: Elevator, stairs, lighting, observatory windows, FAA lighting/lightning rod, security, cameras, etc.

c. Cyclical Maintenance Plan

Estimated Cost: Determined through Phase 5

Elevator Challenges

Elevator Lifespan: 20-30 years

critical active parts: replace 15-30 years

Bennington Monument Elevator: 70 years old

installed 1955-56

equipment upgrade 2015



Elevator Impacts

SEASON	VISITATION	ADMISSION INCOME	GIFT SHOP SALES
2024 with Elevator	17,411	\$101,838 (\$8 adult)	\$159,792
2025 without Elevator	8,676	\$29,465 (\$2 adult)	\$169,501
2026 without Elevator (10.1.2026)	7,497	\$13,674 (\$2 adult)	\$114,163

Elevator Repair and Replace

OPTIONS	COSTS	PROCUREMENT TIMELINE	CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE	TOTAL SCHEDULE
Option 1: Replace operational parts and 1955 Otis motor	\$550,000	20 weeks	15 weeks	9 months
Option 2: New conventional traction elevator	\$650,000	22 weeks	18 weeks	9 months
Option 3: New machine-room-less technology elevator	\$485,000	20 weeks	20 weeks	9 months
Option 4: New elevator	\$1.5 m to \$4 m	24-52 weeks	16-32 weeks	10-20 months

ELEVATOR PARADOX



OPTION A: PARTIAL REPAIR



\$485,000 to \$650,000



9 Months to Complete



8-10 Years of Operations



\$400,000 DESIGN FUNDS
REALLOCATED+

**SHORT-TERM SOLUTION,
IMMEDIATE COST**

Vs



OPTION B: FULL REPLACEMENT



\$1.5 to \$4 Million



2 Years to Complete



30 Years of Operations



REQUIRES FUNDRAISING

**LONG-TERM INVESTMENT,
HIGH COST & EFFORT**

SECURED ALLOCATIONS & FUNDING GAPS

✓ SECURED ALLOCATIONS

1 FEDERAL FUNDING (CDS)

↑ **\$500,000**

- Phase 3 Monitoring
- Archaeological Investigations

2 STATE FUNDING (FY26)

↗ **\$400,000**

- Phase 4a-b Enclosure
- Moisture Mitigation Design

⚠ CRITICAL FUNDING GAPS

CURRENT SECURED FUNDING IS NOT SUFFICIENT FOR:

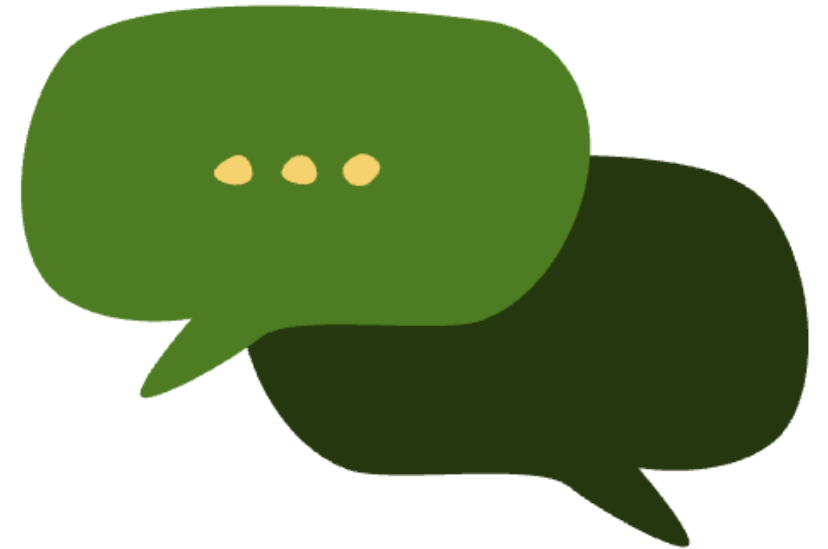
- ✗ **ELEVATOR REPAIRS & REPLACEMENT**
 - (Immediate needs and long-term solution)
- ✗ **PHASE 4 COMPLETION**
 - (Major shortfalls to finish)
- ✗ **PHASE 5 EXECUTION**
 - (No funding allocated to begin)

Small Group Discussion

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Opportunities for grassroots action

- Build Awareness
- Raise Revenue
- Advocacy



Next Steps

What's Next?

Share Survey Summary and Semi-Annual Updates
HistoricSites.Vermont.gov

Community Feedback
ACCD.BenningtonBattleMonument@Vermont.gov



To Stay Connected



OR

<https://historicsites.vermont.gov/bennington-monument>