Unearthing St. Augustine’s Colonial Heritage

An Interactive Digital Collection for the Nation’s Oldest City

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UF and St. Augustine

• Long history of UF working with city (archaeology, architecture/historic preservation, etc.)

• Management of state-owned properties (38 buildings and 23 parcels managed by UF)
Digitization of St. Augustine Holdings

- Given importance of city and research demand, UF has been scanning items over the last 15+ years (mostly internal funding)

- UF Digital Collections (UFDC, http://ufdc.ufl.edu)

- UFDC uses the UF-developed open-source SobekCM software (http://ufdc.ufl.edu/sobekcm)

- 2009 Historic St. Augustine project (http://ufdc.ufl.edu/hsa1) – scanned Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board block/lot files

- Two Grant-Funded Projects:
  - Saving St. Augustine’s Architectural Treasures (2010-2012)
  - Unearthing St. Augustine’s Colonial Heritage (2012-2014)
Project Partners

- University of Florida (UF) George A. Smathers Libraries
- City of St. Augustine Heritage Tourism
- City of St. Augustine Archaeology program
- St. Augustine Historical Society
Collections

• Government House – maps and overlays of the city, architectural drawings of historic structures, etc.

• St. Augustine Historical Society – Spanish Colonial documents, transcriptions and English language translations

• St. Augustine Archaeology Program – records, photographs and site summaries for 100 excavations

• Herschel Shepard Collection (UF Libraries - Architecture Archives) - drawings, photos and documents related to Shepard’s preservation, restoration and reconstruction of colonial buildings

• P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History (UF Libraries) - maps and historical documents.
Supports Diverse Research

- Architecture/historic preservation
- archaeology
- Florida and U.S. history
- Spanish & British colonies
- Native Americans
- slavery
- exploration
- social and economic development
- urban planning
- missionary work
- military defenses and warfare
- etc.
Identifying Structures/Sites

- Structure/site name(s)
- Street address(es)
- Florida Master Site File number, City Archaeology number, Plat book number, etc.
- Lat/Long coordinates
- Township/Range
- Block-Lot number

Example: Segui-Kirby Smith House
aka Segui-Smith House
aka Old Public Library

6 Artillery Lane or 12 Aviles Street

Aviles Street = Hospital Street
Search Elements/Facets

- Archaeological sites (well, building foundation, trash pit, defensive wall, etc.)
- Building’s architectural style
- Building structural system (wood, stone, etc.)
- Dates of construction
- Principal historic period (1st Spanish Colonial, British Colonial, 2nd Spanish, Territorial, etc.)
- Significant renovation/reconstruction dates
- Historical use (residence, worship, government, business)
- Street address
- National Register?

+ PLUS +

- Object-specific metadata (e.g., creator, subject, date, etc.)
Google Map-based searching/browsing
Ability to create/save maps
Overlay Maps/Images
Source: http://www.philaplace.org
Future Directions

• Expanding scope (non-Colonial St. Augustine)

• Crowd-sourcing to generate descriptive content/geospatial metadata

• Investigating new methods allowing researchers to control how they interact with digital resources

• New partnerships (e.g., St. Augustine Historic Preservation & Special Projects Planning – mobile tours)
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http://ufdc.ufl.edu/usach

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What is the long-term significance of these projects?

- More resources available online, of course (and more diverse types too)

- New/better ways for researchers to discover/use/interact with our resources (geographical, temporal, etc.)

- Both projects can serve as models for other cities/regions in Florida/Caribbean/worldwide.

- Not only methodology, but also technology (e.g., open-source SobekCM)
Coral Gables – Virtual Historic City
Unearthing St. Augustine’s Colonial Heritage

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Questions / Comments?