

**Project Name:** Stabilization and Restoration Marks, MS Y&MV Train Depot

**Project Purpose:** Stabilize and restore the Marks old train depot into a downtown farmers' market and community center.

**Project website:** [www.quitmancountymiss.org](http://www.quitmancountymiss.org)

Link: <https://quitmancountymiss.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Marks-Depot-Funding-Assistance-Flyer-1.pdf>

**Project Detail:**

The renovation of the old train depot into a farmers' market and community center will provide a facility and location for local and regional growers and vendors to sell their produce and goods. The depot is neutrally positioned in downtown Main Street in Marks.

On March 15, 2024, the United States Department of the Interior National Park Service (NPS) certified Marks Downtown as a [Historic District](#). The district is approximately 1 square mile and includes 88 buildings. The Marks Downtown Historic District is a cohesive collection of early to mid-20th-century commercial, agricultural, transportation, and governmental buildings comprising the central business district in Marks, which is the county seat of Quitman County, Mississippi.

The old train depot is located in this historic district. It was built in the early 1900s. It is a part of the Yazoo and Mississippi Valley Railroad(Y&MV) that was incorporated in 1882 under the ownership of the Illinois Central Railroad. When the depot closed, it was converted into restaurants, the latest restaurant closed in 2019, leaving it vacant for the past 5 years. Prior and during the closure, the building's interior and exterior deteriorated and the depot is currently in fair to poor structural condition.

Upon the donation of the depot to Quitman County, an assessment of the building was conducted by [Belinda Stewart Architect Firm](#), located in Eupora, MS. This firm was established in 1990, and focuses on preserving and rehabilitating historic structures especially in small rural towns. This architect firm recommended a stabilization phase of the depot to remove non-original building additions and materials and conduct a Historic Structures Report including an assessment of the building by a structural engineer. This phase would also include repair of the existing asphalt shingle roof, foundation repairs, structural stabilization work of the existing foundation and wood structure. The estimated cost of the stabilization phase is \$480,000.

Full restoration of the depot include exterior restoration; including asphalt shingle roof replacement, restoration of the original exterior wood siding, windows, doors, and trim; interior restoration including new interior or partition walls, doors and hardware, wood beadboard wall and ceiling finish repair, wood floor restoration, new ADA restrooms, thermal insulation, and electrical, mechanical, and plumbing replacement; new freight platform, steps, and ADA ramp installation; site improvements including new sidewalks, parking, site lighting, and drainage improvements. A conceptual drawing vividly depicts our vision for the old depot [here](#). The estimated cost for the restoration phase is \$600,000.

[Monica Lackey](#), Jackson State University intern with over 20 years of experience in residential/commercial management, operations, and program compliance and 6 years of farming, will oversee the initial implementation and operations of the project.

This project has the potential to help impact the revitalization of downtown Marks and to attract new businesses and tourism growth. The old depot is located within less than 100 feet from the [Marks Amtrak station](#), which was built in 2018. The local stakeholders and residents of Quitman County are proud to be one of the 500 stops in this country. Since opening the [Marks Amtrak](#) station, it has experienced unprecedented growth with its ridership.

This project will catalyze workforce development and downtown growth opportunities for the hospitality and tourism industries. The proposal for the Depot will include economic growth opportunities in the form of a community center, and will host farmers markets and craft fairs for local farmers and crafters. The restored depot will increase economic opportunities for farmers and vendors alike.

The old train depot is a gem within this small rural community and has a unique story to tell based on the rich train history. Quitman County grew with the help of Yazoo & Mississippi Valley Railroad which built a line to connect Lake Cormorant, in Desoto County, with Tutwiler, in Tallahatchie County. The “Yellow Dog,” as it was called, carried slow freights until 1905 when it began operating passenger trains.

**FY 2025 Budget**

[Amount Requested: \\$1,080,000](#)

**Total Project Cost:** \$1,080,000

- Stabilization Phase: \$480,000
- Restoration Phase: \$600,000

**Location of Activity:**

Marks, Mississippi -Quitman County, MS

**Project Recipient Information:**

Quitman County Board of Supervisors

EIN# 64-6001017

POC: Velma Wilson, Director of Economic Development

Phone: 662.388.1550

Address: Quitman County Board of Supervisors

220 Chestnut Street Suite 2

Marks, MS 38646

Email: [velmajeanwilson@gmail.com](mailto:velmajeanwilson@gmail.com)

