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Preserving America's Heritage

CEQ AND ACHP CREATE HANDBOOK FOR INTEGRATING NEPA AND SECTION 106

Washington, D.C. – The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) and White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) today released a handbook designed to help coordinate required review processes under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

“This is a wonderful example of agencies coming together to reduce regulatory barriers and work more efficiently for the benefit of the American people,” said Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA, ACHP chairman. “The ACHP is delighted that this challenge has been successfully met. This creates a means to ensure statutory requirements of two important laws are met while strengthening the coordination of two similar but separate processes that frequently should proceed in tandem.”

“*NEPA and NHPA: A Handbook for Integrating NEPA and Section 106*” was created through a collaborative and productive process. The handbook contains information that will assist government agencies, project applicants, and consultants to successfully manage the two required processes effectively. Further, the handbook will help stakeholders and the public better understand the opportunities for input and participation in federal decision making. The handbook explains how to align the independent statutory obligations of NEPA and the NHPA for maximum efficiency and effective public involvement.

Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the impacts of their actions on historic properties, whether the federal involvement is directly carrying out a project, granting a federal permit to an applicant to construct a project, or providing financial assistance for a project. NEPA requires broader environmental review of proposed federal agency actions. Many federal efforts require adherence to both statutes from the earliest project planning phases.

For example, review of a project under NEPA would include consideration of the broad range of environmental impacts, ranging from wildlife to air and water quality and including historic and cultural resources. Section 106 of the NHPA would require consideration of how the project might affect the historic resources, such as historic buildings and districts, archaeological sites, and cultural landscapes. The handbook is designed to guide users in coordinating the two mandated reviews to improve efficiency and informed decision making.

“We are excited that this new handbook will improve federal planning, decision making, and public involvement in historic preservation and environmental protection,” Donaldson said.

The ACHP and CEQ will offer training on how to coordinate the processes.

View the handbook at www.achp.gov.

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