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**Contact: Bruce Milhans
(202) 606-8513
bmilhans@achp.gov**

Preserving America's Heritage

APPLICANT TOOLKIT IMPROVES FEDERAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION REGULATORY PROCESS

Washington, D.C.—In order to improve historic preservation outcomes and avoid potential delays in the federal historic preservation review process, it is vitally important that private organizations and individuals understand the legal obligations federal agencies have in regard to historic properties.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires federal agencies to consider the impacts of their undertakings on historic properties before they commence and provide the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) the opportunity to comment on these undertakings. Federal undertakings include actions carried out by the federal government as well as the issuance of federal permits, funding, and approvals for non-federal projects.

The Section 106 process has been instrumental in preserving the nation's special historic places by assuring that local citizens and interested parties have a voice in determining the fate of historic properties affected by federal actions. It also provides those carrying out projects subject to federal approval or assistance the opportunity to participate in the consideration of how best to address historic preservation issues.

To explain this regulatory process for those not already familiar with the NHPA, the ACHP has created a Section 106 Applicant Toolkit designed to provide tips and guidance especially for applicants. Given the significant role applicants have to support federal agency compliance with Section 106, it is important that project proponents have an effective working knowledge of the process.

The toolkit provides step-by-step advice to applicants. It includes an overview of the requirements of Section 106 and detailed guidance on supporting federal agencies in consulting with states and Indian tribes, engaging stakeholders including local governments, and avoiding inadvertent activities that may harm historic properties and delay projects. The toolkit addresses the challenges most frequently encountered in the Section 106 process and clarifies the roles and responsibilities that applicants may assume in the consultation process. In accordance with the Administration's focus on modernizing and improving federal environmental reviews, this toolkit provides timely assistance to those entities that routinely inform and influence federal decision making.

The toolkit can be accessed at <http://www.achp.gov/apptoolkit.html>. The ACHP encourages organizations to share this toolkit with interested parties and contact the ACHP with any questions. In addition, please check periodically the ACHP's Web site at <http://www.achp.gov/training.html> to learn more about Section 106 online training opportunities regarding the role of applicants in the Section 106 process that will be scheduled in the future.

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ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 803 • Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202-606-8503 • Fax: 202-606-8647 • achp@achp.gov • www.achp.gov