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**ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION
EQUITY ACTION PLAN
January 20, 2022**

This plan was developed in accordance with Executive Order 13985, “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government.”

(1) Executive summary

Agency name and mission

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)

The ACHP promotes the preservation, enhancement, and sustainable use of the nation’s diverse historic resources, and advises the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy.

Summary of Action Plan

As detailed below, the ACHP’s plan is to enhance agency expertise on equity issues, further develop its “Building a More Inclusive Preservation Program” (BAMIPP) initiative, continue its Native American Program, and design, market, and provide Section 106 training to nontribal, underserved communities.

Enhancing the agency’s expertise on equity issues would allow the ACHP to take a knowledgeable look at all of its programs and operations and devise effective ways to advance equity within its mission and statutory authorities. This expertise would also be critical to the success of the other proposed actions. The ACHP would gain such expertise by creating a full time, permanent equity officer position. This person would provide expert advice and assistance regarding existing ACHP programs that are focused on underserved communities and would be responsible for providing expert advice on equity matters in general, assisting with the establishment of new initiatives addressing underserved communities, and ensuring the pool of applicants for ACHP jobs and internships is expanded.

Backed by such expertise, the ACHP will continue and expand its long-standing BAMIPP initiative. Through it, the ACHP will continue to educate communities about historic preservation programs, foster connections with local and national organizations, create new partnerships and programs to advance public participation in historic preservation, and communicate the importance of historic preservation to all Americans.

The ACHP’s Native American Program has advanced equity goals with regard to Native Americans for years. The ACHP would continue, expand, and enhance this program to support and assist tribes and Native Hawaiian Organizations in more effectively exercising their rights to protect their sacred places. Lastly, the ACHP will design, market, and provide training to nontribal, underserved communities about the historic preservation review process under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The training will foster greater and more effective participation of underserved communities in the Section

106 process so they can more effectively advocate for and protect historic properties of significance to them.

Section 106 is a federal law that requires all federal agencies to take into account the effects of projects they carry out, license, or assist on historic properties, and attempt to resolve adverse effects to such properties. Federal agencies must do this prior to making a final decision on such projects. The Section 106 process is a consultative process that provides numerous opportunities for public involvement as consulting parties. Consulting parties are kept informed about how the project may affect historic properties; given an opportunity to provide their views to the federal agency regarding whether and how the project may affect historic properties; and allowed to participate in the negotiation of a binding agreement on how adverse effects to such historic properties may be avoided, minimized or mitigated. Section 106 provides a critical vehicle for the public to protect historic properties of significance to them.

(2) Summary of early accomplishments

- Advised SUNY/New York, Harambee, and the African Burial Ground on Pine Street on opportunities to engage students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU);
- Created webinars on the importance of recognizing/preserving African American historic places at HBCUs and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs);
- Engaged students at HBCUs and MSIs in conversations about the work of the ACHP;
- Worked with White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Black Americans on Federal HBCU Competitiveness Strategy Framework; offered sessions at the HBCU annual conference;
- Created podcasts with Tuskegee University and Latinos in Heritage Conservation (LHC);
- Supported LHC in upcoming conference, sponsored two Latino students to attend conference;
- Maintained website about the BAMIPP initiative;
- Used social media to share information about the work of the ACHP that related specifically to underserved communities;
- Provided funding and sponsorships to organizations such as Association for the Study of African American Life and History and LHC;
- Organized students at HBCUs to be featured in video for the 400th Year African American History Commission called STEMulating Freedom and the Future;
- Continued Preservation in Practice (PIP), which provides students from HBCUs with hands-on experience in historic preservation;
- Encouraged recognition of contributions of all Americans and historic places, via website, social media, special campaigns; Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Native American Heritage Month, and Women's History Month;
- Hosted a seminar on Section 106 agreements for Indian tribes during the "To Bridge A Gap" Conference;
- Published an information paper about indigenous traditional knowledge (TK) in the Section 106 process;
- Launched a free, online, on-demand Section 106 course for Indian tribes to help build capacity;
- Developed a plan to address climate change impacts to places of religious and cultural importance to Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations (NHO);
- Hosted an intern from Salish Kootenai College (SKC) from June to August under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the ACHP, SKC, and the ACHP Foundation;
- Co-hosted with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), two webinars on TK as part of EPA's Environmental Justice webinar series for Indian tribes and other indigenous peoples;
- Hosted a day-long historic preservation workshop with the National Park Service (NPS) for Indian tribes in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming, and students at SKC; and
- Provided training for ACHP staff on working respectfully and effectively with Indian tribes and NHOs.

(3) Equity action plan

I. Enhance Agency Expertise on Equity Issues

The ACHP has made progress toward ensuring all Americans benefit equally from the agency's policies, actions, and regulatory oversight, notably through its Native American Program and BAMIPP initiative, which are both aimed at direct engagement and interaction with various constituencies. However, additional expertise in equity issues to more directly reach underserved communities is needed at the ACHP to enhance and expand upon these programs and to assist the agency to improve its own operations. This could include training to guard against any improper unconscious biases in the staff and leadership and developing measures to further expand the pool of applicants for its positions and internships.

A. Barrier to Equitable Outcome(s)

No ACHP staff members are specialists in equity issues. This hinders the agency's ability to fully assess ACHP operations; its general work; and its existing programs related to underserved communities, and to be confident that new initiatives will be effective and reach the communities they need to serve. To date, the agency's funding level has been the principal obstacle to hiring a specialist in equity issues.

All underserved communities would benefit from expert equity knowledge at the ACHP, with nontribal communities currently being the least effectively reached and thus potentially benefiting the most. The ACHP already has expertise on Native American issues both on staff and from the membership of the ACHP itself, which includes (by statute) a member of an Indian tribe or NHO and the chairman of the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers. For the ACHP's work with other underserved communities, in-house Section 106 training and expert guidance regarding the full range of underserved community issues and modes of engagement would be extremely beneficial.

B. Action and Intended Impact on Barrier

In its FY 2023 budget estimate, the ACHP requested funding to hire an equity officer. Such an officer would provide expert advice and assistance regarding existing ACHP programs that are focused on underserved communities, and substantially compliment the expertise already present on Native American issues. The equity officer also would be responsible for providing expert advice on equity matters in general; recommending and assisting with the establishment of new initiatives addressing underserved communities; and helping expand the pool of applicants for ACHP jobs and internships. Training an existing ACHP staff person in equity issues was considered in lieu of hiring an equity officer, but that alternative was rejected given limited staffing, existing workload levels, and the importance of obtaining in-depth expertise in the subject. Hiring an equity officer was deemed the most effective way to ensure equity considerations are expertly and quickly integrated into all aspects of the ACHP's work.

Staffing this proposed position also would help the ACHP in creating, marketing, and teaching Section 106 courses to all underserved communities; achieving more effective participation of underserved communities in the preservation of historic properties of significance to them; assisting other federal agencies with expanding the involvement of diverse audiences in Section 106 reviews and their own historic preservation programs; commenting on preservation-related legislation to ensure underserved communities have a more meaningful role in the overall federal preservation program; and training staff and the ACHP membership on an ongoing basis to improve how they communicate with, and serve, underserved communities.

C. Tracking Progress

The launch and maintenance of a training program on Section 106 review for nontribal, underserved communities would be the principal measure of success in the near term.

Indicators of longer-term success would include creation of collaborative efforts with other federal agencies to assist them in developing training and/or guidance for their staff on Section 106 and underserved communities, and contributions to the continued enhancement of the ACHP's Native American Program and BAMIPP initiative.

D. Accountability

Hiring of an equity officer as proposed will be dependent upon FY 2023 funding levels. Once hired, the work of the equity officer will align with a cross-cutting objective of the ACHP Strategic Plan to strive to ensure the national historic preservation program reflects the full American story and engages all constituencies. Having an equity officer on staff will help the ACHP determine how to effectively share resulting equity-related progress with stakeholders. This will assist greatly in determining how best to tailor the agency's usual outreach avenues – published reports, website, and social media – to communicate progress and foster continued engagement.

II. Further develop the Building a More Inclusive Preservation Program Initiative

The ACHP will continue to expand and implement the different aspects of this initiative in 2022 and beyond. For example, the ACHP has just started working on a new program in partnership with the US Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to bring students at HBCUs and in the future, tribal youth, into the U.S. Forest System and through the Pathways Program into careers in the Forest Service. The program will take place in the summer of 2022. By continuing to engage with students of color, and tribal youth, the ACHP hopes to diversify the field of historic preservation and other related fields and bring students into careers in the federal government. By growing these programs and continuing to reach out to and engage all Americans in historic preservation, the ACHP joins a long-overdue national movement to preserve the history of all Americans. Additionally, by communicating the importance of the participation of all Americans as stakeholders in the Section 106 review process, the agency will influence federal agencies as they better understand their responsibilities under Section 106.

A. Barrier to Equitable Outcome(s)

Barriers include a lack of education about the Section 106 review process and about historic preservation in general. For example, there are communities of color in which individuals do not speak English, or do not have access to the Internet, therefore presenting substantial barriers to their ability to learn about tools they can use to preserve a place of significance to them. Additionally, as our nation has moved more to STEM programs for students, many colleges and universities have dramatically reduced education about history and the arts, limiting students' knowledge and awareness about federal careers in these areas. Federal agencies themselves can sometimes inadvertently create barriers to the inclusion of underserved communities in Section 106 consultations by limiting their efforts to identify consulting parties only to those with whom they already have a working relationship.

The populations that are most impacted by this barrier are communities of color, including, but not limited to Hispanic and Latino; Black and African American; Native American; Alaska Native and Indigenous peoples; Asian American; Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander; and Middle Eastern, as well as individuals with limited English proficiency, as well as young people.

B. Action and Intended Impact on Barrier

The ACHP will continue to both grow and develop this initiative in as many ways as possible, given limited human resources and funding. This will include outreach to organizations that we already work with and to those organizations' partners. The ACHP will continue to market these programs via known venues such as educational outreach, connections with local and national organizations, and the creation of new partnerships. The ACHP will also look at other areas of outreach, including considering holding online listening sessions to reach a more diverse audience, participating in programs and conferences, creating and delivering written communications to reach those without internet access, and continuing to communicate the importance of historic preservation to all Americans.

The ACHP prioritized these actions because they are critical to the future of our country.

Building and growing these programs will allow more underserved communities to participate more fully in managing sites of historic significance to all peoples. These kinds of programs will allow U.S. citizens to better recognize, memorialize, and fully tell the true story of the history of the United States. Spreading the word about the work of the ACHP specifically related to the Section 106 review process will allow all stakeholders to better participate in federal decision making related to historic preservation.

C. Tracking Progress

It may be challenging to assess the true success of programs like this, but the ACHP is aware of some metrics that allow it to know these efforts are succeeding. For example, after the second year of PIP, a third of the participants had received internships or jobs with the partners.

Success could also be measured by the ability to bring even more students of color into these careers and more stakeholders of color into the Section 106 review process. For example, only 0.3 percent of architects are Black women, according to architecture magazine *Curbed*.

D. Accountability

The ACHP's strategic plan identifies these priorities specifically: "Foster broader appreciation for and knowledge of historic preservation, history, and the work of the ACHP among diverse audiences," and "communicate the value and benefits of preserving historic resources." ACHP staff uses those strategic plan goals to guide their work.

The ACHP will continue to implement and hopefully expand all facets of BAMIPP and the success of this initiative will be measured by the number of participants in these programs as well as the number of new platforms that can be used. We will also track speaking engagements and participation in conferences where these programs can be related to others.

The ACHP prioritized these actions because they are a priority, not only to U.S. citizens but to the federal government.

Building and growing these programs will allow underserved communities to participate more fully in the management of sites of historic significance to all peoples. These kinds of programs will allow U.S. citizens to fully recognize, memorialize and tell the true story of the history of the United States. Sharing information about the ACHP and the Section 106 review process will allow and better prepare all stakeholders to participate fully in federal decision making related to historic preservation.

III. Continue Native American Program

The ACHP will continue to implement this program as part of its obligations to Indian tribes and NHOs under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its trust responsibility to Indian tribes. It will also strive to expand and improve the program to better address challenges that Native American communities experience in attempting to protect historic properties of significance to them.

The ACHP's constant interactions through e-mail, teleconferences, and in-person and remote meetings with Indian tribes and NHOs over the past 25 years has led to the understanding that capacity building and direct assistance are needed to ensure tribes and NHOs are afforded their rights under the NHPA, and their sacred places are protected. Additionally, there remain challenges in Indian tribes and NHOs being afforded their rights to participate in the Section 106 review process by federal agencies that still do not fully understand their consultation responsibilities. Accordingly, the goals of the program are to continue, expand, and improve support for Indian tribes and NHOs, and prepare federal agencies to interact and consult with them in meaningful and respectful ways.

A. Barrier to Equitable Outcome(s)

Barriers include the lack of adequate consultation by federal agencies and subsequent access for Indian tribes and NHOs to the Section 106 review process; insufficient or no funding for Indian tribes and NHOs; and lack of administrative structures for NHOs that makes it difficult for federal agencies to identify the NHOs with which to consult.

The NHPA does not provide adequate funding for tribes and no funding at all for NHOs. Therefore, many do not have the resources to participate effectively or at all, when invited to consult. Federal agency understanding of the consultation requirements in the Section 106 review process greatly contributes to the challenges Indian tribes and NHOs face in participating in the review process.

The populations that are most impacted by this barrier are federally recognized Indian tribes, which includes Alaska Native Villages and Regional and Village Corporations, and NHOs.

The ACHP has overseen the Section 106 process for 55 years and observed the impact of these barriers to appropriate and meaningful participation of Indian tribes and NHOs in the Section 106 review process. In this oversight role, as noted above, the ACHP has learned directly from Indian tribes and NHOs of the challenges and what is needed to address them.

B. Action and Intended Impact on Barrier

The ACHP will continue, expand, and improve the program including offering training, guidance, and direct assistance to Indian tribes, NHOs, and federal agencies.

These priorities have been identified by Indian tribes and NHOs and are within the ACHP's authority. Continuing to build the capacity for Indian tribes and NHOs to participate effectively in the Section 106 process will allow them to influence federal decision making when historic properties of religious and cultural significance to them are threatened by proposed federal actions. Having this voice will give them the opportunity to protect their cultural heritage for present and future generations. Preparing federal agencies to consult more effectively and respectfully with Indian tribes and NHOs may result in better preservation outcomes.

C. Tracking Progress

It would be extremely difficult to measure the actual impact, but the ACHP will continue to interact with tribal, Native Hawaiian, and other indigenous partners to ascertain how else the ACHP can assist.

Tribes, NHOs and other indigenous peoples typically request assistance from the ACHP when they have serious concerns regarding how federal agencies are consulting them; however, such requests for ACHP assistance frequently occur prior to the agency's Federal Preservation Officer or other decision-makers participating in the consultation. Near-term success might be indicated by a reduction in the number of requests from tribes, NHOs, and other indigenous peoples for ACHP assistance prior to seeking assistance from the appropriate agency Federal Preservation Officer responsible for each agency's compliance with the NHPA including any required tribal consultation. Ultimately, long-term success would be realized when federal agencies automatically involve and meaningfully consult with Indian tribes, NHOs, and other indigenous peoples when planning projects.

D. Accountability

Since the program was established in 1998, the Office of Native American Affairs (ONAA) has used annual work plans to ensure initiatives stay on track. ONAA will continue to operate with annual work plans, seek and respond to the views of Indian tribes and NHOs, and operate under the general oversight of the ACHP Committee on Native American Affairs (which includes a tribal or NHO member and the Chairman of the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers).

IV. Develop, Market, and Provide Training Regarding Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for Nontribal Underserved Communities

Section 106 of the NHPA (Section 106) requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of projects they carry out, license, or financially assist on historic properties and attempt to resolve adverse effects to such properties. Section 106 is the preeminent forum for the public to influence federal decisions that may impact historic properties of significance to them. In this process, consulting parties are kept informed about how the project may affect historic properties; given an opportunity to provide their views to the federal agency regarding whether and how the project may affect historic properties; and allowed to participate in the negotiation of a binding agreement on how adverse effects to such historic properties may be avoided, minimized or mitigated.

Underserved communities may not be aware of Section 106 or how to effectively participate in the process.

This action would not cover training for Indian tribes or NHOs, which is already carried out by the ACHP. Also, this action is very likely to be most effective if the ACHP gains expertise in equity issues as described in Action I, above.

A. Barrier to Equitable Outcome(s)

A significant barrier at present remains a lack of expertise in equity issues as it relates to training, and lack of funding to obtain such expertise and implement changes (see Action I addressing this particular barrier). Such expertise would allow the ACHP to better design its Section 106 courses (e.g., language, teaching tools, and examples used), and effectively attract underserved communities to such courses. Such training would better ensure they take advantage of the opportunities presented by the Section 106 review of projects that may impact historic sites of significance to them. The current Section 106 courses have mostly been designed for (and attended by) historic preservation professionals, rather than underserved communities.

Since all communities have historic properties of significance to them that may be affected by federally implemented, licensed, or assisted projects, all communities can be impacted. However, the preservation of historic sites has largely been dominated by those with professional expertise in related subject matter such as archaeologists, anthropologists, architects, community planners, specialized attorneys, and architectural historians. The Section 106 courses taught by the ACHP have been mostly attended, and geared toward, these professionals. However, many underserved communities are not well represented in such professions. The ACHP has a *Citizens Guide*, and a related course, that is geared toward a broader audience. However, the ACHP wants to reach out to an even broader group of communities.

B. Action and Intended Impact on Barrier

The ACHP will design, market, and provide Section 106 courses, specifically geared toward underserved communities, about how the Section 106 process works and how best to participate in it to influence federal decisions.

The courses will be designed to, among other things: ensure that the examples and hypothetical exercises used are familiar and relatable to the particular underserved community; use varying teaching methodologies that are more effective with such communities; and ensure that plain language (as opposed to overly technical terms) is used as much as possible and prior knowledge is not assumed.

The courses will be marketed through media that is more likely to be read, seen, or heard by the particular underserved communities targeted. For instance, in some cases getting the word out through local community-based organizations, radio spots or local newsletters, rather than social media, may be a more effective method to market the courses. Similarly, the methods of conducting the courses will be more likely to be easily accessible by some underserved communities (e.g., in person training as opposed to solely training that requires internet access and computer skills).

The ACHP decided to make this a priority area since, as explained above, Section 106 is the preeminent process by which the public is engaged in federal decisions that can impact historic sites of significance to them. The entire process is based on consultation with various parties that have an interest in the projects and the historic properties they may impact. These courses would heighten underserved communities' awareness of the Section 106 process, how it works, and how to effectively engage in it. This should lead to greater and more effective participation in the Section 106 process, which in turn should increase the chances that historic properties of significance to them are considered by federal agencies, preserved, and are treated the way these underserved communities would want. An overarching goal is to ensure historic properties of significance to all Americans are recognized and preserved and that all communities can come to the table and have a larger say on the preservation of such properties of significance to them. This way, the full story of the United States can be told, experienced, and learned by all. The loss of historic properties of significance to underserved communities is a national loss. It negatively affects the ability of such communities to preserve their heritage and results in a skewed and incomplete record of the story of the United States.

C. Tracking Progress

The Section 106 process requires consideration of effects of projects on historic properties, and an attempt to resolve adverse ones, but does not mandate preservation. So, tracking would focus more on how many more persons from, or entities representing, underserved communities participated in Section 106 reviews after the new Section 106 courses are launched; the opinions from such participants as to whether they thought their viewpoints were considered; and how many persons from underserved communities attended these Section 106 courses. As always, the ACHP would track student ratings of the courses.

Increasing numbers of (a) underserved community participation in Section 106 reviews and courses, and (b) positive opinions about being heard could indicate success.

It should be noted, however, that while the ACHP oversees the Section 106 review process, it only gets directly engaged in a small subset of the 110,000 or so reviews that are carried out every year. Most Section 106 reviews take place among the relevant federal agency, State or Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, and other consulting parties. So reliably tracking progress will be difficult without the collaboration of other federal agencies. The ACHP therefore plans to set up meetings with federal agencies to attempt to come up with a concerted way in which they can collectively track underserved community participation in Section 106 reviews over time.

D. Accountability

Training as outlined above is covered by the ACHP's current Strategic Plan. Strategic Objective 1.A. is to: "Enhance the awareness, knowledge, and capabilities of participants in Section 106 reviews to better carry out their roles in the process, and to improve communication among these parties." The ACHP's training specialist and future equity officer (see Action I) would be directly responsible for implementing this action. Lastly, at the end of each course, the students would be specifically asked to provide feedback to the ACHP regarding the effectiveness of the training itself and their community participation in Section 106 reviews.