



## **SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION BRIEFING:**

# **PROGRAM COMMENT FOR ARMY WARFIGHTING READINESS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE**

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## **I. PROGRAM COMMENT SUMMARY**

**Strategic Impact:** This Army program comment eclipses prior Army program comments in both scope and strategic impact. It redefines the intersection of national defense and historic preservation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Program Comment for Army Warfighting Readiness sets a new benchmark for how federal national security agencies implement the NHPA at scale and in mission-critical environments.

**Military Mission in a Preservation Context:** For the first time, the Army's statutory warfighting readiness mission itself is explicitly recognized in a nationwide National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 compliance context. This Army program comment reframes the preservation conversation to "preserving mission-critical capabilities within historic military landscapes."

**Deep integration with Army Transformation and Modernization:** As the Army transforms and modernizes, it requires a framework that can operate at mission speed. The Program Comment for Army Warfighting Readiness is the framework that enables rapid infrastructure upgrades and mission transformation through integration of preservation with the readiness mission.

**Demonstrates Leadership in Innovation:** This Program Comment represents the next evolution of successful Army preservation strategies, building upon the programmatic efficiencies established by the suite of approved Army Program Comments for historic housing.\* It leverages the established procedures and enhances these earlier successes with historic landscape-scale planning, and standardized Army-wide processes.

**Reduces the subjectivity and bureaucracy in the Section 106 process and provides streamlined, predictable preservation outcomes.**

\* See <https://www.denix.osd.mil/army-cr/army-dod-comments/> for information on Army program comments for historic housing: Program Comment for Army Pre-1919 housing, Program Comment for Army Inter-War Era (1919-1940) housing, Program Comment for Army Capehart Wherry Era housing (1949-1962), and the Program Comment for Army Vietnam War Era (1963-1975) housing.

## II. ARMY SECTION 106 COMPLIANCE CHALLENGES

### Current Section 106 Compliance Challenges Addressed by the Program Comment:

- **Scale Mismatch:**
  - The project-by-project Section 106 review process is not suited for the size, scale, and tempo of the Army's operations and infrastructure.
- **Fragmented Compliance:**
  - The Army currently operates under 115 installation-level Programmatic Agreements (PAs), Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs), and Army Alternate Procedures (AAP), creating a highly complex and inconsistent regulatory environment.
- **Inconsistent / Subjective Application:**
  - SHPOs have required additional mitigation for properties already mitigated under the Programmatic Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Demolition of World War II Temporary Buildings.
  - SHPOs have refused streamlining of the Section 106 process stating they require individual project-by-project, step-by-step review for every Section 106 undertaking.
- **Ineffectual Agreements:**
  - Army PAs necessitate repetitive consultations, even for activities with no adverse effects, and for repetitive actions on standardized property types across the Army.
  - SHPOs have required development of compliance agreements with mitigation requirements for actions that are not adverse and have appropriately applied the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

## **II. ARMY SECTION 106 COMPLIANCE CHALLENGES (cont.)**

- **Overly Restrictive Standards and High-Cost Mitigation:**
  - SHPOs have required application of restrictive museum-level preservation standards for building rehabilitation, use of high-cost historic building materials and specialized craftsmen, resulting in expensive repairs that impact the ability to fully complete scopes of work – contributing to a backlog of deferred maintenance and repair.
  - SHPOs have delayed consultation and execution of Section 106 compliance agreements which have significantly delayed undertakings.
  - SHPO disagreed with a mandated Army undertaking and disagreed on technically and economically feasible mitigation, resulting in a significant delay of the required action.
- **Lack of Standard Guidance and Procedures:**
  - All current Army Section 106 agreements with SHPOs, ACHP, and others lack the following:
    - Systematic Building Material Selection Procedure.
    - Building Design Guidelines.
    - Guideline and Catalog of Applicable Building Materials.
  - Lack of these standard procedures and guidelines leads to highly variable and subjective requirements for many thousands of standardized Army building types, hindering cost-effective maintenance and rehabilitation.

### **III. PROGRAM COMMENT SOLUTION**

#### **Program Comment Aligns Preservation with Mission Readiness**

This program comment recognizes that military readiness and historic preservation can be mutually reinforcing.

- Better integrates Section 106 compliance into ongoing military operations.
- Ensures that Section 106 compliance does not delay or obstruct essential training and force deployment.

#### **Supports Rapid Modernization and Transformation**

As the Army modernizes under Continuous Transformation it needs a Section 106 framework that moves at mission speed.

- Enables rapid upgrades and construction in historic areas without compromising Section 106 compliance.
- Reduces repetitive review burdens.

#### **Builds on a Proven Preservation Model**

This is the next evolution of Army Program Comments.

- Applies programmatic procedures and guidelines and reduces subjectivity, especially for standardized design Army buildings.
- Applies nationwide military landscape-scale planning and elevated NHL review procedures where necessary.

#### **Respects the Historic Military Landscape**

The Program Comment enables the Army to write the next chapter of its history.

- Recognizes the time depth of the Army's warfighting readiness mission and its role in shaping the military landscape.
- Develops context-sensitive treatments where preservation and readiness coexist.

#### **Enhances Tribal Engagement**

This is a more strategic framework for government-to-government consultation and application of Indigenous Knowledge.

- Prioritizes engagement with Tribes and Native Hawaiian Organizations
- Ensures Indigenous Knowledge is addressed regarding properties of traditional religious and cultural importance.

### **III. PROGRAM COMMENT SOLUTION (cont.)**

#### **Army's Strengths Supporting Program Comment Solution:**

- **Established Program:** Army has a long-standing historic preservation program established by policy.
- **Policy and Processes:** AR 200-1 sets internal policy and processes for early coordination and proper identification, planning, and programming for Section 106 requirements.
- **Expertise & Resources:** Professionally qualified Federal Preservation Officer (FPO) and cultural resource managers (CRMs) at all levels. Army CRMs have additional access to qualified professionals through service contracts and agreements for inventory, evaluation, and treatment of historic properties.
- **Proven Successful Innovation:** The Army has a strong record of innovative Section 106 compliance and has received many local, state, and national historic preservation awards.