



## Historic Fort Snelling Revitalization Project / Lower Post PPU Amendment FAQs

### ***What is the undertaking?***

The Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) is proposing a revitalization project at Historic Fort Snelling at Bdote. This portion of Fort Snelling is also referred to as the Lower Post. The project is expected to entail changes to historic and non-historic structures as well as to the landscape at the site. When the Lower Post was transferred from the Federal Government to the State of Minnesota through the Historic Monuments Program in the 1960s, a Program of Preservation and Utilization (PPU) was attached to the deed to guide how the site would be used and preserved into the future. MNHS is seeking to amend this PPU to accommodate the proposed project. Because amending the PPU requires National Park Service (NPS) approval, it constitutes an undertaking, as defined by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Therefore, both the amendment to the PPU and the proposed revitalization project are included in the undertaking. More information on the MNHS's revitalization project is available at <http://www.mnhs.org/hfs2020>.

### ***Where will the undertaking occur?***

The PPU pertains to approximately 22 acres under State of Minnesota ownership and MNHS management around Historic Fort Snelling at Bdote. The parcel is on the north side of Highway 55 and is situated on the bluff above the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. It includes the reconstructed 1820s fort, 1880s ordnance building, 1904 cavalry barracks, 1904 cavalry stable, and 1970s underground visitor center. The revitalization project is proposed to occur entirely within this parcel. While ground disturbance and direct effects are expected to be limited to the project area, the initial determination of the Area of Potential Effects (APE) acknowledges that the area of indirect effects (e.g. visual) could be larger. The parcel is within and part of the Fort Snelling National Register Historic District and the Fort Snelling National Historic Landmark.

### ***When will the undertaking occur?***

MNHS is proposing to begin schematic design in late 2017 and to complete the revitalization project in 2020.

### ***Why is there a Section 106 process for a Minnesota Historical Society project on state land?***

MNHS is seeking to amend the PPU for the site, which requires NPS approval. This constitutes a Federal action with the potential to cause effects on historic properties. As such, the undertaking must be reviewed pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

### ***What is the purpose of the Section 106 process?***

Section 106 requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. The process provides for consultation with federally recognized American Indian tribes, other interested parties, and the public to inform the agency's efforts to identify historic properties potentially affected by the undertaking, assess its effects and seek ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate any adverse effects on historic properties.

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***Is this a visioning process for the future of Historic Fort Snelling and a way to provide design input into the revitalization project?***

The Section 106 process will likely influence the project design but will only do so on the basis of the project's effects on historic properties and adherence to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archeology and Historic Preservation ([https://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch\\_stnds\\_0.htm](https://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_0.htm)). Interest in design issues not related to effects on historic properties is best expressed directly to MNHS outside of the Section 106 process.

***Why does work at Historic Fort Snelling need to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archeology and Historic Preservation?***

Recipients of land through the Historic Monuments Program agree to preserve these historic places into the future. Adherence to the Secretary's Standards ensures a quality of stewardship commensurate with the significance of the site.

***Why is a Programmatic Agreement (PA) being developed for this undertaking versus a simple Memorandum of Agreement?***

When a project is complex and the effects of an undertaking on historic properties cannot be fully determined prior to the approval of an undertaking, Section 106 allows for the agency to negotiate a PA to programmatically facilitate the project's implementation.

***What is the difference between the PPU and the PA?***

The Program of Preservation and Utilization (PPU) is a covenant to the deed for the parcel and is an enduring document that guides how the site will be used and preserved into the future. The Programmatic Agreement (PA) will be developed to help facilitate the Section 106 process for this undertaking and will expire when the project is done or after a certain number of years.

***If I am interested in participating in the development of future exhibits, interpretation, and programming at Historic Fort Snelling, is the Section 106 process or the PA a good way to be involved in those?***

Exhibits, interpretation, or programming will not be a focus of the Section 106 process or the PA. These actions would have to affect the site's historic character to be covered in the Section 106 process. Input on these aspects of the project is best expressed directly to MNHS separate from the Section 106 process.

***Will ownership of the Lower Post change as a result of the PPU amendment or the PA?***

The State of Minnesota has owned the Lower Post since the 1960s and will continue to own the property after the PPU is amended and the PA executed.

***If I have already participated in meetings or open houses hosted by the Minnesota Historical Society about this project, how is this process different?***

MNHS has been doing outreach to inform various aspects of the project and to educate interested parties and the public about the project. Consultation pursuant to Section 106 is specifically focused on taking into account the effects of the undertaking on historic properties.