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For Immediate Release



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Preserving America's Heritage

Historic Post Office Disposal Report Issued to Congress

Washington, DC – Responding to a specific requirement placed upon the agency by the 2014 congressional appropriations bill, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) today issued *PRESERVING HISTORIC POST OFFICES: A Report to Congress*. The report finds that significant improvements to United States Postal Service (USPS) planning and compliance for its historic preservation and disposal programs are needed.

The report results from congressional concerns that the USPS may not be fully meeting the requirements of Section 106 and other sections of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) when closing and disposing of historic post offices. Section 106 requires all federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions or undertakings on historic properties and seek ways to avoid, lessen, or mitigate any potential adverse effects.

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA, chairman of the ACHP, notes that in preparing the report the agency found that "...the preservation community and the public have significant concerns about the potential closure of these historic facilities, including the loss of public use of the buildings, the risk posed to the integrity of historic buildings and the artwork they contain, and the potential loss of public access. The limited consideration of the historic values of these iconic buildings along with the lack of transparency in Section 106 consultation further exacerbates these problems."

The ACHP, which has a long history of working with the USPS as well as other federal agencies, makes 15 findings in the report and provides recommendations for addressing each of them. Notable among them are the following:

- Congress should clarify that the NHPA and its implementing regulations apply to all programs of the USPS, in order to remove any doubt that the USPS is legally obligated to comply with Sections 106, 110, and 111 of the NHPA.
- The USPS should suspend any further actions to relocate services out of historic postal facilities and dispose of these historic facilities until such time as it fully implements the recommendations of this report.
- The USPS should initiate Section 106 consultation at the time relocation or cessation of services at a historic postal facility is considered, rather than waiting until disposal is proposed.
- The USPS should expand and reorganize its historic preservation program.

To view all of the recommendations and comprehensive information on the USPS disposal of historic post offices, the full report can be accessed at www.achp.gov.

About the ACHP: *An independent federal agency, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation promotes the preservation, enhancement, and sustainable use of our nation's diverse historic resources, and advises the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy. It also provides a forum for influencing federal activities, programs, and policies that affect historic properties. For more information, please visit www.achp.gov.*

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