

ELEMENTS OF AN INTERPRETIVE PROSPECTUS

I INTRODUCTION/SITE SIGNIFICANCE:

Provide basic background information relevant to the Interpretive Prospectus, including: a brief description of the resource; discussion of the site significance, legislative history, development ceiling (if any); relationship of IP to other planning documents (e.g. GMP, DCP, earlier IP); and other unusual factors affecting interpretation such as cooperative agreements with other governmental and private organizations.

II EXISTING CONDITIONS:

Briefly describe existing interpretive programs and facilities. This information can be used as a point of departure when discussing proposals recommended in the Interpretive Prospectus.

III VISITOR USE:

Briefly describe existing and projected visitor use if data is available.

IV INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES:

State concisely what is expected to be accomplished through the interpretive program. This section establishes the general philosophy and goals of the interpretive program, based on existing planning documents (Statement for Management, GMP, DCP) and team discussions. This statement can be expanded to describe how visitor's behavior, interest, and understanding will or should change as a result of the interpretive program.

V INTERPRETIVE THEMES:

A brief summary of the primary and secondary messages or "stories" to be communicated to park visitors.

VI INTERPRETIVE PROPOSALS -- THE PLAN:

This is the essence of the Interpretive Prospectus. This section is basically a media prescription from which interpretive hardware is produced. It identifies how interpretive themes and objectives are to be communicated and presented through specific media--exhibits, waysides, furnishings, audiovisual programs, publications, and personal services. The suitability of media to the proposed task and the availability of necessary information, graphics and artifacts should be considered.

VII SPECIAL POPULATIONS:

NPS guidelines consider the following groups as special populations: minorities, international visitors; handicapped citizens; senior citizens; and children. The needs of these groups and programs designed for their benefit should be considered where applicable.

VIII RESEARCH NEEDS:

Identify any research needed to implement the Interpretive Prospectus or research that might have a bearing on the interpretive program. Examples include Historic Resource studies and Furnishing studies.

IX COST ESTIMATES:

The Interpretive Prospectus provides cost estimates to be used as the basis for project programming. These estimates should be developed by the media specialists of the Harpers Ferry Center.

X BIBLIOGRAPHY:

All Interpretive Prospectuses should contain a working Bibliography, including major reference materials, relevant periodical literature and all park planning documents. This need not be a definitive work, but should reflect the materials used in preparing the prospectus and those needed to guide future media planning.

XI PLANNING TEAM MEMBERS:

List names, titles, and office of all team members and consultants.

XII LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE:

A statement certifying compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act and Executive Order 11953 must be included in every Interpretive Prospectus.

OPTIONAL TOPICS

MEDIA SUMMARY:

Aids in summarizing proposals, especially complex projects with a number of buildings or districts. The proposals might be prioritized, especially if their implementation will require a long period of time.

STAFFING:

Especially appropriate when new facilities or other proposals will require additions to the existing interpretive staff.

SALES:

The objectives and operating details might be discussed when new facilities are proposed. Any essential design elements (e.g., architectural compatibility, tour staging function) should be mentioned.

SCOPE OF COLLECTION STATEMENT:

This document should normally be prepared by the park or the regional office. It can be included in the Interpretive Prospectus when acquisition, furnishings or exhibit emphasis is changed or outdated by IP proposals.

SPECIAL PROGRAM AND SPECIAL EVENTS:

Occasionally, special events such as craft or folk festivals, Christmas pageant, birthday celebrations and the like, are integral aspects of the interpretive program. These intermittent events, as well as more permanent programs such as "living farms" and craft demonstrations, should be discussed.

OFF-SITE INTERPRETATION:

Frequently the need arises for off-site slide shows, publications, and pre-visit packages. They should be discussed in the Interpretive Prospectus where relevant.