

DRAFT

# Request for Expressions of Interest

Gateway National Recreation Area  
Sandy Hook Unit  
Monmouth County, New Jersey



Release date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Submission date: \_\_\_\_\_



Dear Friends:

The National Park Service is pleased to announce this invitation seeking ideas from individuals, governmental agencies, for profit, and not-for-profit organizations to utilize 36 historic structures located at Fort Hancock in the Sandy Hook Unit of Gateway National Recreation Area.

**Comment [GG1]:** Is this the correct number since 102 is off the list?

Fort Hancock and the Sandy Hook Peninsula is a beautiful resource, steeped in rich history, and awaiting a new future. Unfortunately, tax dollars, allocated through the federal budget, are not sufficient to restore and maintain these buildings, nor may full federal investment and maintenance be the best method of preserving these registered historic structures. Such buildings are best preserved when put to an economically productive use.

In March, 2012, the Secretary of the Interior established the Fort Hancock 21<sup>st</sup> Century Federal Advisory Committee and charged its 20 members to advise the Secretary on "...the development of a reuse plan and on matters relating to future uses of the Fort Hancock Historic District of Gateway National Recreation Area". The National Park Service charged the Committee to look at the full range of possibilities for Fort Hancock – from leaving the buildings untouched and deteriorating to uses that will preserve the buildings and perhaps provide new visitor service opportunities that the NPS alone could not provide. This document is intended to convey the sense of the Committee that every effort should be made to fully utilize these structures and to realize the potential they have in supporting a thriving, vibrant and productive community.

Limited federal resources are available for the long term preservation of these structures. The National Park Service is searching for partners to secure the private investment necessary to support their economically productive reuse. We hope that you choose to be involved in this historic opportunity and we look forward to receiving your creative ideas.

Sincerely,

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## Introduction

This Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) is being issued by the National Park Service with the support of [the Fort Hancock 21<sup>st</sup> Century Federal Advisory Committee](#). It seeks proposals from individuals, governmental agencies, not-for-profit and for profit organizations to submit ideas for the re-use of 36 historic buildings in the Gateway National Recreation Area ([www.nps.gov/gate](http://www.nps.gov/gate)) Sandy Hook Unit.

Gateway's three units comprise 26,000 acres in Monmouth County, New Jersey and three boroughs of New York City: Staten Island, Brooklyn and Queens. Nearly nine million people visit Gateway each year and more than two million of them visit Sandy Hook. Gateway is one of 10 National Park sites within the New York Harbor Parks (<http://www.nps.gov/npnh>) system featuring twenty-three unique destinations.

The [36 buildings](#) considered in this RFEI are located at Fort Hancock, a National Historic Landmark District, in Highlands, Monmouth County, New Jersey. The buildings overlook the Sandy Hook Bay and are among 110 significant buildings reflecting Fort Hancock's history as a US Military Reservation, vital to the defense of New York City from 1895 through the 1950s and the Cold War Era until 1974.

The Sandy Hook Unit contains five guarded beaches for swimming, as well as a seven-mile Multi-Use Pathway (MUP) shared by runners, walkers, bicyclists and in-line skaters, which starts



at the park entrance and extends to the northernmost tip of the Sandy Hook Peninsula. The site also offers hiking, birding, kitesurfing, surf fishing, and camping, as well as access to some of the region's most ecologically sensitive and culturally rich resources. The structures offered for re-use through this solicitation are located at the main post area of the Fort and offer spectacular access to Sandy Hook Bay and the Atlantic Ocean with stunning views of the New York City skyline. The

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**Comment [GG2]:** Verify the correct number of buildings

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Sandy Hook Unit is readily accessible by road and has parking for about [???] vehicles. The park is also served by high-speed ferry service from midtown and lower Manhattan.

**Comment [GG3]:** Please insert approximate number of parking spaces here

## Vision Statement<sup>1</sup>

**Comment [GG4]:** This should be included in its entirety and cited as a product of the advisory committee. It can be inserted as a text box or similar callout on or near this page.

The National Park Service has released this Request for Expressions of Interest for the development of the Fort Hancock Historic District of Sandy Hook, New Jersey. A broad range of developers, nonprofits, institutions and other interested groups are invited to submit visionary ideas and offers for this historic and truly unique property. The National Park Service welcomes commercial, educational and cultural uses that take advantage of the unmatched potential of Fort Hancock Historic District and make a meaningful contribution to its future.

### Background

Gateway National Recreation Area was created by Congress in 1972 "In order to preserve and protect for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations an area possessing outstanding natural and recreational features." This legislation included the "Sandy Hook unit - the entire area between Highway 36 Bridge and the northeastern point of the peninsula." The entire area was known as Fort Hancock prior to the transfer of the installation from the U.S. Army to the National Park Service in 1976.

The legislation further directed that " In the Sandy Hook Unit, the National Park Service shall inventory and evaluate all sites and structures having present and potential historical, cultural or architectural significance and shall provide for appropriate programs for the preservation, restoration, appreciation, interpretation, and utilization of them."

This RFEI presents the opportunity for other entities to work in partnership with the National Park Service to preserve, interpret and appropriately utilize the lands and buildings within the historic district.

### Site Description

The Fort Hancock Historic District includes 36 buildings and associated property in the northern portion of what the Army called Fort Hancock and is currently known as Sandy Hook. The entire area provides opportunities to:

- enhance visitor experiences through additional opportunities for extended stays and food services
- expose visitors to the key aspects of American history, technology and the defenses of New York Harbor
- provide opportunities for cultural and educational enrichment
- promote recreational activities including hiking, biking, swimming, boating, surfing, and other park resource based activities

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Fort Hancock 21st Century Advisory Committee  
May 16, 2013

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- provide business opportunities that are within the scope of National Park Service purposes

## Opportunity

In recent planning documents, the National Park Service has determined that Gateway National Recreation Area provides a unique National Park experience for national and international visitors by being a destination park. It also serves an important role of introducing people from the metropolitan area to the National Park Service and the National Park System. Because of its location adjacent to a large number of people, unlike the once in a life time visit to Yellowstone, people from the local community are able to come back regularly for repeat visits and can be introduced to new things and learn new skills to appreciate and explore the outdoors and America's rich cultural heritage.

As Gateway moves forward to achieve its mandate to bring the National Park experience to the people of the metropolitan area, it needs to find practical, long-term solutions to preserve the Fort Hancock Historic District without impairing the serenity of Sandy Hook. This should be accomplished without detracting from its pivotal role as an ecological oasis and as a prime recreational destination for millions of visitors. These buildings and their historic landscape not only reveal the social and defense aspects of the garrison that defended New York Harbor from Fort Hancock throughout a turbulent century, but also provide adaptive opportunities for utilization which can benefit local communities with employment opportunities as well as educational, scientific and cultural experiences.

The National Park Service seeks expertise and advice from all concerned citizens to create a vital future for the buildings and grounds within the Fort Hancock Historic District where historic preservation, interpretation, community and visitor opportunities work hand in hand.

In summary, this RFEI presents an extraordinary opportunity for anyone with an interest in the future of the Fort Hancock Historic District. With this RFEI the National Park Service seeks individual, nonprofit, corporate, institutional or governmental entities that can articulate and realize a vision for new uses for the Fort Hancock Historic District worthy of this unique site and sustainable for the future.

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## About Fort Hancock

Since colonial days, ships entered New York Harbor through the Sandy Hook Channel, just off the tip of Sandy Hook. In 1764, the Sandy Hook Lighthouse was built to assist navigation. The Hook served British and Loyalist forces during the American Revolution. Off and on through the nation's history, forts were built at the Hook to defend New York Harbor. The



Military Reservation of Sandy Hook was named "Fort Hancock" by War Department General Order in 1895 and served as a strategic military location through two world wars and into the nuclear age,

when Nike missiles could be fired from shore. When Congress established Gateway in 1972, the Park's enabling legislation specifically charged Gateway with preserving Fort Hancock's historic structures.



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## The Opportunity

The NPS has a long history of public private partnerships - from the hotels, gift shops and restaurants at Grand Canyon and Yellowstone to creative partnerships established to preserve groups of historic structures such as Cavallo Point at Golden Gate National Recreation Area in California and the bathhouses at Hot Springs National Park in Arkansas.

A number of partnership arrangements may be suitable to accomplish the re-use of Fort Hancock's structures. Proposals may identify use of a single building or contemplate reuse of all or part of 36 structures. Concepts for re-use are encouraged from individuals, not-for-profit or for profit organizations. Creative responses to this solicitation could accommodate a single management entity or multiple organizations seeking re-use of one or more buildings. It is anticipated that proposals will articulate the financial sustainability of the model proposed.

The NPS welcomes the submission of proposals for all types of business opportunities consistent with the terms of this RFEI and all applicable law and regulation. The main post area of Fort Hancock could be redeveloped as a campus environment, similar to Cavallo Point. Alternatively, it could take on a new life with facilities redeveloped as individual residences. Many other uses could be considered, limited only by offerers creativity and imagination.

The Sandy Hook Unit is currently home to several governmental and not-for-profit organizations that contribute to an active and vibrant park and serve the park's visitors and the region. They include the NPS official Friends group, the Sandy Hook Foundation and additional organizations committed to supporting education, scientific research, and environmental and cultural purposes. They are: the American Littoral Society; Army Ground Forces Association; Clean Ocean Action; Fort Hancock Nike Site NY-56 Volunteers Association; Marine Academy of Science and Technology (MAST); National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's James J. Howard Marine Sciences Laboratory; New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium; Rutgers University; and the Sandy Hook Child Care Center. Respondents to this solicitation are welcome to consider partnerships with one or more of these organizations.

Information about Fort Hancock, including the main post area pictured below, is available at [www.forthancock21stcentury.org](http://www.forthancock21stcentury.org). Building specific information can be found under the Real Property menu tab on this site.

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## Purpose and Goals

The purpose of this RFEI is to solicit proposals from organizations willing to partner in the adaptive reuse of the buildings offered under this RFEI. NPS is seeking proposals which include an adaptive re-use of a single structure, part of a structure or all of the buildings identified here. Proposals for all types of business opportunities consistent with the terms of this RFEI and applicable law and regulation, are encouraged. All proposals should result in self-sustaining and economically viable use, while continuing to maintain the Fort's historic significance.

The information and recommendations obtained from responses to this RFEI may result in the development and issuance of a Request for Proposals ("RFP") for adaptive reuse of Fort Hancock's historic buildings at the sole discretion of the NPS. However, there is no assurance or certainty that the NPS shall or is otherwise required to issue an RFP for the adaptive reuse of Fort Hancock.

## Proposal Guidelines

Applicants should consider the following guidelines in developing proposals pertaining to the Fort Hancock Historic District. The complete NPS Management Policies are available on the NPS website at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)



- Proposals should preserve the peace and serenity of Sandy Hook as a whole. Fort Hancock can flourish without disturbing Sandy Hook's beaches and wildlife habitats. Proposals are expected to describe plans to ensure that areas outside the Fort Hancock Historic District are not adversely affected by suggested adaptive reuse options that are presented.
- Proposals should not require the construction of new buildings. The NPS will consider all legal and compatible uses that consider:
  - Expansion of building footprints
  - Vertical expansion of buildings
  - Demolition of certain buildings
- Little or no NPS money is available for the long term preservation of structures within the historic district. Fort Hancock is dependent on the infrastructure of Sandy Hook. The NPS has requested funds to improve Sandy Hook's infrastructure.
- ADA or other applicable code compliance having an impact on any one historic building, particularly with regard to the exterior of a building, must be uniformly applied to all buildings.
  - Because the main post area of Fort Hancock is a historic district, any alternative use proposed requires conformance with provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act

**Comment [GG5]:** This web address is too general. A more specific url to an NPS site that will provide more detailed guidance

**Comment [GG6]:** How are potential respondents to know which buildings might be slated for demolition?

**Comment [GG7]:** There should be a citation/reference to additional information about specific infrastructure improvements that are under consideration

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## Submission

Proposals should consist of an executive summary suitable for disclosure and be prepared as described in the below proposal outline.

If you believe that a proposal contains trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information that you do not want to be made public, please include the following sentence on the cover page of each copy of the proposal:

*"This proposal contains trade secrets and/or confidential commercial or financial information that the Offeror believes to be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. The Offeror requests that this information not be disclosed to the public, except as may be required by law."*

In addition, you must specifically identify what you consider to be trade secret information or confidential commercial or financial information on the page of the proposal on which it appears, and you must include the following sentence on each such page:

*"This page contains trade secrets, or confidential commercial or financial information that the Offeror believes to be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, and which is subject to the non-disclosure statement on the cover page of this proposal."*

Information so identified will not be made public by NPS except in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.

## Public Executive Summary

All applicants must include an executive summary suitable for disclosure the public. The executive summary should provide a brief overview of the proposal, and be no more than one page in length. Instead of disclosing the contents of each proposal, the executive summary of each proposal will be posted on [www.forthancock21stcentury.com](http://www.forthancock21stcentury.com) for review by the public.

## Proposal Outline

Please provide an overall project description/narrative describing a compelling vision of the proposed redevelopment of Fort Hancock (36) Historic Buildings. The narrative should include information on the following:

### 1) Building Use Proposal

The building use proposal must identify, for each building the repairs and/or improvements proposed, and the time line anticipated for completion of the proposed repairs and/or

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**Comment [GG8]:** Should respondents be asked to submit redacted proposals for public view as well as proposals with proprietary information?

**Comment [GG9]:** This is an item for full committee discussion. Specifically, what constitutes an appropriate level of detail from respondents to this RFEI compared to what would be requested in full proposals resulting from the RFEI process.

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improvements. The proposal should explain how the use(s) is consistent with the preservation, protection, and visitor enjoyment of the Park. It should include, if applicable, facts, information, and data that demonstrate that viable market demand exists for the proposed use.

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## 2) Preservation Maintenance Plan

The preservation maintenance plan must specify the manner by which the applicant intends to carry out the preservation of the interior and exterior of the building(s). The plan shall comprehensively describe any proposed rehabilitation work and outline a detailed schedule for recurring and cyclical maintenance as well as preservation and rehabilitation of the structure.

**Comment [GG10]:** Is this information too much detail for and RFEI? Seems more fitting for a detailed proposal

Applicants should carefully review the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties](#) in this regard.

## 3) Environmental Plan

The environmental plan should describe how the applicant's proposed use(s) will be undertaken in an environmentally sound manner through, among other programs and actions, energy management and conservation, waste reduction, and recycling.

An energy management plan must identify methods and procedures proposed to reduce the amount of energy used by an organization. Energy improvements may include physical improvements to the building to be leased.

Narrative responses should be limited to 10 pages, not including attachments.

**Comment [GG11]:** Need to clarify page length requirements. With these guidelines some responses could run to 10 pages per section.

## 4) Financial and Business Plan

The financial plan should specify the financial means to implement the proposal. The proposal should not presume the availability of any federal funds or the likelihood of philanthropic income from private sources. The following information should be provided in sufficient detail to allow the NPS to make an informed evaluation of the financial plan:

**Comment [GG12]:** Why should philanthropic funds be prohibited?

1. Documentation of the source and availability of the funds necessary to carry out proposed redevelopment.
2. Demonstrate that you have a credible, proven track record of meeting your financial obligations, and that your proposal is financially viable.
3. Documentation supporting estimates proposed for repairs, maintenance, rehabilitation and preservation, operating expenses, and all other startup costs.
4. In addition to the financial plan, submission of a multi-year business plan is recommended. Include all forecast revenue sources and anticipated expenses.

## 5) Statement of Management Qualifications

The statement of management qualifications should detail the management capability of the applicant to carry out its proposal, describing the experience and qualifications for managing both the building rehabilitation and the proposed building use(s). Narrative responses should be limited to 10 pages not including attachments.

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## 6) Statement of Proposed Lease Terms and Conditions & Timeline

State the applicant's expectations as to the term of the lease and state any particular other terms and conditions the applicant seeks. Applicants should make these statements in consideration of the provisions of [36 C.F.R. Part 18](#). Be sure to include a project timeline identifying the stages of any proposed redevelopment and include a project completion date.

### Review Process

#### Q&A

Interested respondents can submit questions regarding this RFEI by email to: **name, email address**. Questions should be submitted no later than 5pm on **Month, date**, 2013. Answers to all questions will be provided by 5pm on **Month, date**, 2013 at **method/location**.

#### Site Visit

Interested parties are invited to attend a site visit on **Month date**, 2013. This visit will not include interior inspections of all 36 buildings, but rather a representative sample of buildings available under the RFEI.

#### Submission logistics

Please submit **four (4)** paper copies and one (1) electronic copy by USB flash drive or CD to **name**, by 5pm on **Month, date**, 2013, at the address noted below. Unless identified otherwise above, submissions should be no longer than **fifteen (15)** pages in length. Information longer than the fifteen-page limit will not be reviewed.

**Address**

**Address**

#### Proposal Review and Selection Process

The Fort Hancock Federal Advisory Board and the NPS will jointly review all submissions and conduct the process of selecting those suitable for further exploration or development. This may or may not result in a formal, advertised public solicitation inviting all qualified candidates to submit formal proposals.

All responsive proposals will be evaluated in response to this RFEI under the following criteria:

- 1) The compatibility of the applicant's proposal with the designation of Fort Hancock as a historic district. The compatibility of multiple proposals in general. The NPS seeks to adaptively reuse the historic buildings in an economic, visual, and programmatically compatible and cohesive manner.
- 2) The financial capability of the applicant to carry out the terms of the proposal and any corresponding lease, including the ability to finance building preservation and intended uses.

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**Comment [GG13]:** These conditions seem too restrictive. Why shouldn't a respondent be able to look at a specific building of interest to them? They could ask ahead of time to tour a particular one.

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- 3) The experience of the applicant and demonstrated managerial capability to carry out the terms of the proposed lease.
- 4) The ability and commitment of the applicant to conduct its activities in the Park in an environmentally enhancing manner through, among other programs and actions, energy conservation, waste reduction, and recycling.
- 5) The benefit to the NPS of the financial and other terms and conditions of the proposal, including, without limitation, the preservation of historic structures, and other favorable lease terms and conditions.
- 6) The compatibility of the proposal with the historic qualities of the building(s) to be leased.

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