

# Fort Snelling State Park Military Reserve Area

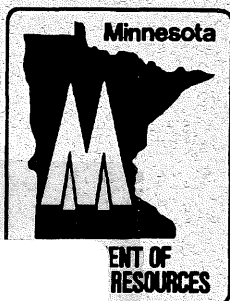
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## FUTURE USE STUDY MARCH, 1992

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**FORT SNELLING STATE PARK  
MILITARY RESERVE AREA USE STUDY**

**(MARCH, 1992)**



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## ADDITIONAL PHASE 1 APPENDICES (AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST):

- UPPER BLUFF BUILDING INVENTORY
- 1971 UTILIZATION PLAN  
(AS AMENDED THROUGH JULY, 1991)
- QUITCLAIM DEED  
(AUGUST 17, 1971)
- OFFICERS' ROW REHABILITATION  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (SEPTEMBER 23, 1977)
- OFFICERS' ROW CORPORATION'S CONCESSION AGREEMENT  
(AS AMENDED THROUGH JULY, 1991)
- OFFICERS' ROW CORPORATION'S 1979 GOLF COURSE  
CONCESSION AGREEMENT  
(APRIL 27, 1979)
- PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO OFFICER ROWS' CORPORATION'S  
CONCESSION AGREEMENT  
(JUNE 15, 1990)



## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**





The military reserve area of Fort Snelling State Park consists of approximately 141 acres of land on the bluff overlooking the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers between Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN. This land was conveyed to the State of Minnesota by the United States Department of Interior in 1971. The deed conveying the area requires that the land be managed for public recreational purposes. The military reserve area has been an important component of Fort Snelling State Park since 1971. The military reserve area consists of four interrelated sections; Area J, Officers' Row, a nine hole Golf Course and a large area of open athletic fields known as the Polo Grounds. Although DNR owns the property, operational management of the four sections of the military reserve area has been divided between the State of Minnesota, the U.S. Army and private concessionaires since 1971.

Three recent events have prompted the Department of Natural Resources to complete this study of the future management options for the military reserve area:

- Expiration of a condition of the deed conveying the property to the State that allowed for military use of Area J through August 17, 1991;
- Expiration of a deadline established in Laws of 1985, Chapter 164 for completion of restoration of the Officers' Row buildings, and;
- A mandate in Laws of 1991, Chapter 275, Section 4 for the completion of a study addressing the viability of continued inclusion of the military buildings within Fort Snelling State Park.

To implement the planning process, the DNR developed a historical background document during the summer and fall, 1991. This Phase 1 document was distributed in November, 1991 to over 50 governmental agencies and persons who have historically expressed an interest in the management of the military reserve area. Recipients of this document were invited to suggest potential alternative uses for the military reserve area. Over 30 suggestions were received in December, 1991 from seven different respondents. The suggestions were organized into the following major categories and evaluated in terms of their short-term and long-term potentials:

- Develop the military reserve area as an open recreation complex that provides a variety of recreational opportunities, and;
- Continue military occupancy of some or all of Area J and provide for recreational use of the remainder of the military reserve area.

To complement these categories, DNR explored two additional alternatives:

- Continue the current military reserve area management structure, and;
- Allow non-recreational use of some or all of the military reserve area.

Between December, 1991 and March, 1992 a short-term and long-term vision for the military reserve area were developed by the DNR based on these responses and the evaluation criteria identified in section 4. The analysis of the four alternative categories is presented in the sections that follow. DNR recommends that the short-term plan presented in section 3 be adopted as an initial stage leading to full implementation of the long-term vision for management of the military reserve area as an open recreation complex (alternative use category 1). The proposed long-term vision is explored in section 4.

The decision to divide the future plans for the military reserve area into short-term and long-term visions was based on:

- Projected rehabilitation costs for the buildings and the need to generate funds for improvement and planning for potential rehabilitation;
- Use restrictions in the 1971 Deed requiring long-term public recreational use of the area;
- An August, 1991 decision to extend the military's use of Area J for up to four years and;
- Instructions concerning the future management of the Golf Course and Officers' Row buildings given to DNR on September 11, 1991 by the Executive Council, and;
- Uncertainty surrounding the potential airport expansion plans for the Minneapolis - St. Paul International Airport until at least 1996.

The DNR recommends that the short-term plan for the military reserve area involve continuation of the military use of Area J for up to four years per the agreement negotiated during the summer, 1991. The second component of the short-term plan is solicitation of a concessionaire for management of the Golf Course, Officers' Row buildings and Polo Grounds. During the short-term agreement, the Officers' Row buildings would be partially stabilized to mitigate deterioration. Rehabilitation or restoration of these buildings is not envisioned during this period. The Area J buildings would be partially stabilized as the U.S. Army withdraws from these buildings over the next four years. In addition to development of a short-term agreement, the DNR recommends that the payments to the state received from the proposed concession agreement be deposited in a special account to be used for planning, operations, maintenance and potential rehabilitation of the buildings and grounds on the military reserve area.

This short-term plan allows for continued use of the Golf Course and Polo Grounds for public recreation purposes. Continued use and maintenance of the Area J buildings and grounds is also ensured by this short-term plan. Some preventive maintenance would be accomplished on the Officers' Row buildings. Finally, some investment resources would be accumulated for implementation of the long-term vision for the area developed in section 4. This short-term plan

also avoids making long-term commitments for use of the military reserve area that may conflict with future airport expansion plans that may be developed by the Metropolitan Airport Commission during the next 5 years.

The long-term vision for the military area encompasses expansion of the open recreation use concept initiated by the short-term agreement to the entire military reserve area. Implementation of the long-term vision would involve solicitation of a long-term concession agreement for management of the military reserve area buildings and grounds as an open recreation complex. The restoration and rehabilitation of a representative sample of the existing buildings for adaptive re-use is an important component of this vision. It does not appear to be feasible financially to restore or rehabilitate all of the existing buildings given the limitations as to use and the projected costs of restoration and rehabilitation. The buildings not financially or structurally suitable for adaptive re-use would be demolished and the land converted to open recreation purposes. This enhancement of open recreation opportunities could involve expansion of the Polo Grounds and the Golf Course.

The combination of the short-term and long-term approaches suggested for use of the military reserve area allows for open recreation to occur on the site and maximizes the possibility that some financial resources will be available for eventual restoration or rehabilitation of a representative sample of the existing buildings. At the same time, the state retains sufficient flexibility in management of the area to allow for the Metropolitan Airport Commission planning process assessing potential expansion of the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.



## **SECTION 1 - HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**



Fort Snelling State park is located between Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers. The park, virtually in the heart of the 7-county metropolitan area, provides habitat for over 220 species of wildlife, swimming, picnicking, biking, hiking, fishing, skiing, interpretive programming and an increasing array of other recreational opportunities in the midst of commercial air traffic, highways, freeways, river barge traffic, and high-voltage power lines. In addition, the site on which Fort Snelling State Park is located remains a historical landmark that pre-dates the non-Indian settlement of Minnesota. In more recent history, Fort Snelling was the site of Indian trading settlements and has continued to be an important part of Minnesota's history. Within the confines of the park are interpretive facilities and cultural resources that preserve the rich historical heritage of Fort Snelling and vicinity.

The military reserve area of Fort Snelling State Park consists of approximately 141 acres of land on the bluff overlooking the two rivers and is generally bounded on the north by highway 55; on the east by Highway 5; on the south by the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and on the west by Bloomington Road. One-third of the property contains buildings constructed from approximately 1870 to 1925 for military purposes associated with Fort Snelling. The remaining two-thirds of the property contains a 9-hole Golf Course, several buildings that were constructed as officer's quarters and former parade fields currently used primarily for athletic events such as polo, rugby, softball and soccer. Many of the buildings constructed during the fort's history have been removed. Slightly more than one-half of the existing buildings are occupied by the 88th Army Reserve Unit of the United States Army. The remaining buildings have been vacant for several years.

The property was transferred to the State of Minnesota in 1971 by the United States Department of Interior's Bureau of Outdoor Recreation under authority granted through the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 and in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Department of the Interior. The August 17, 1971 quitclaim deed stipulated that the property was to be used in perpetuity for public recreation purposes with one major exception; approximately 35 acres east of Taylor Avenue (Area J) could be used for military purposes for up to twenty years following the signature date of the lease, or until August 17, 1991. Following this initial period, Area J would be subjected to the same use restrictions affecting the remaining acreage conveyed in the 1971 deed. The period of military use has recently been extended by agreement between the DNR and the U.S. Army with the approval of the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, for four years.

Transfer of the property to the State of Minnesota was the result of several years of efforts from park supporters and the Department of Natural Resources. Beginning in the early 1960s efforts were made to acquire the area as surplus property from the federal government for inclusion in Fort

Snelling State Park. The 1961 statutory boundary establishing Fort Snelling State Park included the military reserve area in anticipation that this area would eventually become part of the park.

A request for acquisition of the military reserve area was included in a 1968 DNR request to the federal government for acquisition of the historic fort, memorial chapel and military reserve area for inclusion in Fort Snelling State Park. The historic fort and memorial chapel were transferred to the state as a result of this 1968 application, but, the military reserve area remained in federal ownership until 1971. The historic fort was transferred to the Minnesota Historical Society for restoration and administration in 1975.

Although the entire military reserve area is currently owned by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources as part of Fort Snelling State Park, the day to day operational management of the area is divided into four interrelated sections:

- 1) Area J
- 2) Officers' Row
- 3) The Golf Course
- 4) The Polo Grounds

**Area J** is located east of Taylor Avenue and includes the majority of the remaining buildings on the military reserve area. This section of the property became the fort's headquarters, hospital and administrative offices before Fort Snelling was decommissioned in 1946. This area currently is used by the 88th Army Reserve unit for offices and training facilities.

**Officers' Row** is a series of buildings immediately west of Taylor Avenue and adjacent to Area J that were built as officer's quarters at the same time that Area J was constructed. These buildings were used as living quarters for military and hospital personnel after the fort was decommissioned and until the final building was vacated in 1973. Since 1973, the buildings have been vacant. Between 1971 and 1979 these buildings were included in the sections of the military reserve area under the direct operational management of the DNR. Since 1979, these buildings have been in moth balled condition and operationally managed under a 40-year concession agreement between the DNR and Officers' Row Corporation.<sup>1</sup>

**The Golf Course** section was constructed in its current location when airport construction forced relocation of the original Golf Course. Located on a former parade field, the facility was built to provide recreational opportunities for the military stationed at Fort Snelling and the

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<sup>1</sup> Officers' Row Corporation subsequently assigned all of its rights and responsibilities under the original agreement to Restoresorts of Minnesota, Inc. in 1979.



Veterans Administration Hospital staff. The Veterans Administration was responsible for the Golf Course as a subsection of the military reserve area from 1946-1971. From 1948-1971, the Fort Snelling Federal Employees' Association operated the Golf Course under a lease agreement with the Veterans Administration. From 1971-1979 the Golf Course facility was managed under a concession agreement between the State of Minnesota and the Fort Snelling Federal Employees' Association. Since 1979, management of the Golf Course has been included in the same concession agreement between the state and Officers' Row Corporation that governs the Officers' Row buildings.

The Polo Grounds were originally constructed as parade and athletic fields to serve soldiers stationed at Fort Snelling. Management of the fields shifted to the Veteran's Administration in 1946 with the remainder of the military reserve area. The fields have been managed by Fort Snelling State Park as open recreational fields since 1971. Fees are charged for use of the fields and all reservations and other arrangements for their use are made through the state park office.

Figure 1 (Military Reserve Area Management History 1805 - Present) generally identifies the major organizations who have had management responsibility for some, or all, of the military reserve area since 1805.

**\*MILITARY RESERVE AREA MANAGEMENT HISTORY  
1805 - PRESENT  
(FIGURE 1)**

SECTION	1805-1946	1946-1971	1971-1979	1979- PRESENT
AREA J	U.S. ARMY/ FEDERAL GOV'T OFFICES	VETERAN'S ADMIN/ U.S. ARMY RESERVE	MN DNR/U.S ARMY RESERVE	MN DNR/U.S ARMY RESERVE
OFFICERS' ROW	U.S. ARMY	VETERAN'S ADMIN	MN DNR	MN DNR/ OFFICERS' ROW CORP.
GOLF COURSE	U.S. ARMY/ FEDERAL GOV'T.	VETERAN'S ADMIN **	MN DNR/FORT SNELLING EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION	MN DNR/ OFFICERS' ROW CORP.
POLO GROUNDS	U.S. ARMY FEDERAL GOV'T STRUCTURES	VETERAN'S ADMIN	MN DNR	MN DNR

**\*NOTE: DOES NOT INCLUDE HISTORIC FORT OR MEMORIAL CHAPEL**

**\*\*NOTE: THE FORT SNELLING FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION OPERATED THE GOLF COURSE UNDER CONTRACT WITH THE VETERAN'S ADMINISTRATION FROM 1948 - 1971**

Several recent events affecting the operational management structure identified in figure 1 have surfaced a need for the state to examine future management options for the military reserve area.

Among these events are:

- 1) The August 17, 1991 expiration of the provision in the 1971 deed which allowed the military continued use of Area J for twenty years.
- 2) Expiration on December 31, 1990 of a 1985 state law's extension of Officers' Row Corporation's initial deadline for the rehabilitation of the Officers' Row buildings.
- 3) Passage of a 1991 state law requiring DNR to study the viability of continued inclusion of Area J and Officers' Row within Fort Snelling State Park (Laws of 1991, Chapter 275, Section 4).

#### **1) EXPIRATION OF THE DEED CONDITION ALLOWING MILITARY USE OF AREA J:**

The 88th Army Reserve's authority for continued use of Area J granted in the 1971 deed expired on August 17, 1991. The State of Minnesota's Department of Natural Resources (DNR), with approval from the Department of Interior, National Park Service has extended the U.S. Army's use of Area J for a period of four years beyond the August 17, 1991 expiration date.

To facilitate this extension, the 1991 Minnesota legislature passed, and Governor Arne Carlson signed, legislation granting the Department of Natural Resources authority to enter into a lease agreement with the military for the Area J buildings beyond August 17, 1991 (Laws of 1991, Chapter 275, Section 4).

#### **2) EXPIRATION OF THE DEADLINE FOR OFFICERS' ROW REHABILITATION:**

The original 1979 concession agreement with Officers' Row Corporation contained a clause that required Officer's Row Corporation to substantially complete rehabilitation of the Officers' Row buildings within 3 years of the agreement or be considered to be proceeding with building restoration in an untimely manner. If this condition was not met, the concessionaire was given up to 5 years from the date of the original agreement to reach a supplemental agreement with the state identifying a building restoration plan or the concession agreement would terminate. Because Officers' Row Corporation's was unable to secure adequate financing for the project and begin construction during the agreement's initial three years, an amendment to the original concession agreement was executed in 1982 extending the deadline for substantially completing building restoration to December 31, 1985. The 1985 legislature provided a second extension of the deadline through December 31, 1990 in Laws of 1985, Chapter 164.

In anticipation of the expiration of the 1985 extension and in view of the fact that restoration of the Officers' Row buildings would not be completed by December 31, 1990, the state and Officers' Row Corporation negotiated a proposed amendment to the original concession agreement. This amendment was submitted to the State of Minnesota's Executive Council in January, 1991 and

would have absolved Officers' Row Corporation from any rights or responsibilities over the Officers' Row buildings while charging the concessionaire a fee of more than ten times the rate set by the legislature for previous years. In March, 1991, the Executive Council discussed the proposed amendment and tabled it pending resolution of some key issues regarding the terms and conditions of the proposed amendment. This proposed amendment to the agreement was never executed.

At its September 11, 1991 meeting, the Executive Council instructed DNR to issue a "Request for Proposals" (RFP) for a new Golf Course and Officers' Row concession agreement beginning with the 1993 operating season. An amendment to the existing concession agreement has been executed and approved which provides that the 1979 agreement terminates when a responder to this RFP is chosen by DNR and approved by the Executive Council.

### **3) 1991 LAW MANDATING STUDY OF AREA J AND OFFICERS' ROW FUTURE:**

The 1991 law granting the DNR authority to negotiate a lease with the military for extending occupation of Area J also required the DNR to study the feasibility of continued inclusion of the Area J buildings and the Officers' Row buildings west of Taylor Avenue within Fort Snelling State Park. This law contains the following language:

(b) The commissioner of natural resources shall examine whether the continued inclusion in Fort Snelling state park of the property described in paragraph (a)[Area J], together with that portion of land conveyed in the same deed that lies west of Taylor avenue and is commonly known as officers row, which contains 10.5 acres, more or less, is appropriate. The examination must include recommendations on the appropriate use of the area and an analysis of the options available to the state for use of the area under the 1971 conveyance agreement. The commissioner shall report the findings to the legislature by January 15, 1992 (Laws of 1991, Chapter 275, Section 4).

In response to these three events, the Department of Natural Resources conducted this study of future use options for Fort Snelling State Park's military reserve area. This section of the study has identified the historical background for the study. Section 2 identifies the methodology used to complete the study. Section 3 discusses the short-term plan for continued inclusion of the Area J and Officers' Row buildings within Fort Snelling State Park. Section 4 analyzes the alternative uses considered during the analysis and presents a long-range vision for the future management of Fort Snelling State Park's military reserve area.



## **SECTION 2 - STUDY METHODOLOGY**



## **A) PARAMETERS OF STUDY:**

The language in Laws of 1991, Chapter 275, section 4 mandating this study clearly established two parameters for the study; to conduct a feasibility analysis for continued inclusion of the Area J and Officers' Row buildings within Fort Snelling State Park and to explore possible alternative uses for these same buildings consistent with the 1971 deed restrictions. These two components of the required study are addressed in sections 3 and 4.

The DNR Division of Parks and Recreation expanded the scope of the study beyond these required components to include the Golf Course and Polo Grounds sections of the park. This decision recognizes that any meaningful analysis of management options for Area J and Officers' Row is inextricably linked to a discussion of management options for the Golf Course and Polo Grounds. The Golf Course and the Polo Grounds provide the major access points and the revenue generation potential that make redevelopment of either Area J or Officers' Row as recreational use sites financially viable. Exclusion of these two subsets of the military reserve area from the study severely limits the potential reuse options.

The DNR conducted the feasibility analysis portion of the study internally. Examination of alternative uses involved solicitation and evaluation of input from interested persons and agencies outside of the DNR. The alternative use portion of the study was also divided into two phases:

- Phase 1: Historical Background.

- Phase 2: Issue Identification and Analysis of Management Options.

## **B) SOLICITATION OF PUBLIC INPUT AND RESPONSES:**

A phase 1 document and appendices were published in November, 1991 that provided the historical background presented in section 1 of this analysis and identified the process that was used for completion of this final study.

The phase 1 document was mailed under the November 15, 1991 cover letter in figure 2 to approximately 50 agencies, legislators and individuals who have historically expressed an interest in the management of Fort Snelling State Park's military reserve area. This letter invited the recipients to submit ideas for potential use of the area and established general guidelines for potential responses to the DNR's invitation for input. These guidelines were deliberately broad to

allow as many alternatives as possible to surface from potential respondents. As indicated in figure 2, responses to the phase 1 invitation were to be submitted by December 9, 1991..

The phase 1 document also stipulated that alternative uses submitted were to meet the following minimal conditions:

- The recommended alternative uses were to be consistent with the terms and conditions of the 1971 quitclaim deed mandating that the area be used for public recreation purposes, or, address how the recommended alternative could be implemented under federal ownership of the property.
- The recommended alternative uses were to be consistent with the area's designation as a site on the National Registry of Historic Places.

These two conditions recognize that the state's authority for management of the property is contingent on the 1971 deed requirements that the area be used for public park or recreational purposes and that the area's historical integrity be preserved. Non-recreational uses would place the state in violation of the deed and cause reversion of the property to the federal government. The state cannot evaluate non-recreational alternative uses. Such an evaluation would be the responsibility of the federal government if the land reverts to federal ownership. In addition, the law mandating this study required DNR to explore those alternatives that were "available to the state for use of the area under the 1971 conveyance agreement." (Laws of 1991, Chapter 275, Section 4).

Seven response letters identifying over 30 alternatives were received from the following agencies and individuals (see Appendix D):

- State of Minnesota, Department of Administration
- City of Richfield
- Metropolitan Council
- Mr. Tony Johnson
- Officers' Row Corporation
- U. S. Department of Interior, National Park Service
- State of Minnesota, Department of Military Affairs

The DNR evaluated these alternatives during December, 1991 and January, 1992. The results of this evaluation and the DNR's recommendations for future management of the area are presented in sections 3 and 4.



**PHASE 1 DOCUMENT COVER LETTER  
(FIGURE 2)**

November 15, 1991

Dear «name»:

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources was mandated by Laws of 1991, Chapter 275 to conduct a study that recommends alternative uses for the Officers' Row and Area J sections of Fort Snelling State Park. The law requires that the study be completed and distributed to the legislature by January 15, 1992.

Since the 1991 legislative session, the DNR Division of Parks and Recreation has decided to expand the scope of the study to include the Golf Course and the polo ground sections. The division also decided to divide the study into two phases:

-Phase 1: Historical Background.

-Phase 2: Issue Identification and Analysis of Management Options.

The attached document represents the conclusion of phase 1 and provides a summary of the historical background for management of the military reserve area. In addition to this document, several supplemental appendices are available as indicated.

In an effort to surface recommended alternative uses from persons with an interest in this area, DNR is inviting you and other interested parties to submit recommended alternative use suggestions for the 141-acre Fort Snelling State Park military reserve area.

Recommended alternative uses submitted for consideration should include the following information for each alternative:

- A clear, but brief description of the recommended alternative that identifies the section(s) of the military reserve area affected by the alternative.
- The name, address and phone number of a contact person in the event further information is required during the evaluation process.

Responses should be as short and succinct as possible and submitted to the DNR no later than Monday December 9, 1991. All recommended alternative use proposals, additional questions or request for additional information should be addressed to:

**Ron Nickerson,  
Minnesota DNR  
Division of Parks and Recreation  
500 Lafayette Rd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
(612) 296-6669.**

Thank you for your cooperation and we anxiously await your creative suggestions.

Sincerely yours,

**William Morrissey, Director,  
DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION**



**SECTION 3 - A SHORT-TERM APPROACH TO THE  
MILITARY RESERVE AREA**



## **A) DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDINGS:**

Area J consists of approximately 16 buildings located on 32.7 acres of land bounded on the east by Highway 55, the west by Taylor Avenue, on the north by Highway 5 and on the south by the Minneapolis - St. Paul International Airport. The parcel of land is a long and narrow strip completely surrounded by airport, freeways and state park property. The only existing access route to this area is through Fort Snelling State Park. Development of a direct access from either highway is not feasible because the area overlooks the major intersection of the two highways and Highway 62 to the north. Likewise, development of an additional access from the airport is impossible because of the area's close proximity to an existing runway.

The 11 Officers' Row buildings (including the larger and adjacent club house) are in a comparable situation. Bounded on the east by Taylor Avenue, the north by Leavenworth Avenue, the south by the Minneapolis - St. Paul International Airport and the west by the Fort Snelling State Park Golf Course complex, these buildings are also only accessible through Fort Snelling State Park property.

Both sets of buildings were constructed during the late 1800s to early 1900s for military purposes. The Area J buildings are much larger buildings used as offices, classrooms, a post hospital and barracks. The Officers' Row buildings, as the name implies, were constructed as officers' quarters. The Area J buildings are currently under management of 88th Army Reserve Unit of the United States Army. The Officers' Row buildings are currently vacant and managed under a concession agreement with a private concessionaire, Officers' Row Corporation.

This section of the study recommends a short-term management solution for the military reserve area buildings and grounds that partially stabilizes the structures, ensures partial use of some of the buildings and establishes the foundation for implementation of the long-term plan presented in section 4. This short-term recommendation is governed by the following factors that are explored in greater detail in the remainder of this section:

- **Projected rehabilitation costs for the buildings;**
- **Restrictions of the 1971 deed;**
- **Extension of the military's use of Area J;**
- **The Executive Council's September, 1991 instructions, and;**
- **Uncertainty surrounding potential airport expansion plans.**

## **B) BUILDING REHABILITATION COSTS:**

The major issue surrounding rehabilitation, restoration or re-use of any or all of these buildings is the costs associated with rehabilitation and maintenance. Although exact figures are not available without more detailed analysis of conceptual drawings for particular re-uses, a 1990 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers study estimated that rehabilitation of 14 of the existing 16 Area J buildings for military classrooms and offices would be approximately \$9 million. A 1991 DNR estimate for rehabilitation of the 11 Officers' Row buildings and club house indicates that rehabilitation of these buildings could be approximately \$2 million. Neither of these analyses address routine maintenance costs for the buildings if they are not rehabilitated. Nor do they suggest potential maintenance costs following rehabilitation.

Three major caveats need to be placed on both the Corps of Engineers and the DNR estimates that could significantly impact the actual costs if rehabilitation were conducted:

- 1) Rehabilitation and restoration costs vary considerably in historical structures according to the projected use;
- 2) These figures do not include any estimates for landscaping or grounds rehabilitation; and
- 3) Routine building and grounds maintenance figures are not included.

## **C) RESTRICTIONS OF THE 1971 DEED:**

Both the Area J and Officers' Row buildings are included in a 141-acre parcel of land which was conveyed from the United States to the State of Minnesota in a quitclaim deed in 1971. The state's options for management and disposal of the land are limited by the deed. The deed clearly stipulates that the entire 141 acres must be used for public park or recreational purposes. The deed also prevents the state from selling, leasing or assigning

... the property except to another eligible governmental agency that the Secretary of the Interior agrees in writing can assure the continued use and maintenance of the property for public park or public recreational purposes... However, nothing in this provision shall preclude the Grantee from providing related recreational facilities and services compatible with the approved application, through concession agreements entered into with third parties, provided prior concurrence to such agreements is obtained in writing from the Secretary of the Interior (Deed, 1971).

Failure to use the land for public park or recreational purposes would place the state in violation of the terms of the deed and could result in reversion of the property to the federal government.

Because the major financial and recreational value of the 141-acre military reserve area is currently with the Golf Course and Polo Grounds, it is not likely that the federal government would seriously consider reversion of only the Area J and Officers' Row buildings if the state were found to be out of compliance with the deed. Ownership of the four components of the military reserve area (Officers' Row, Area J, the Polo Grounds and the Golf Course) are inextricably linked by the deed. The Golf Course and Polo Grounds are both heavily used and meet a strong recreational need in an area of the state where outdoor recreational facilities open to the public are deficient and in constant demand. Loss of this valuable land component of Fort Snelling State Park is not desirable to the Department of Natural Resources nor is it in the best interest of the citizens of the State of Minnesota.

**D) AREA J -- THE NEXT FOUR YEARS:**

The major issues are clearly how the state protects this recreational resource, remains in compliance with the deed and addresses the buildings currently on the site. The 1971 deed allowed the United States Army's continued occupancy of the Area J buildings through August 17, 1991. The State of Minnesota, using the authority granted in Laws 1991, Chapter 275, and the 88th Army Reserve have agreed to an extension of this occupancy for a period not to exceed 4 years or until August, 1995. In addition, the Army has agreed to stabilize the vacant buildings within the Area J and to conduct stabilization procedures for those that are vacated during the extension period. This extension has received approval from the United States Department of Interior, National Parks Service.

During the next four years, therefore, the status quo for the Area J buildings will be maintained. Following this four-year period, management responsibilities for these lands and buildings will return to the State of Minnesota. The Department of Natural Resources is concerned about the potential costs associated with building maintenance and potential rehabilitation that it may be required to incur if the Area J buildings become vacated as the Officers' Row buildings currently stand. To minimize the costs to the state, the Department of Natural Resources recommends that a plan be developed for demolition of several of the Area J buildings and restoration or rehabilitation of a representative sampling of the buildings for adaptive re-use. This plan would also incorporate the Area J land and remaining buildings in the long-term vision for the entire military reserve area discussed in section 4 following the army's withdrawal from the area.

**E) EXECUTIVE COUNCIL DIRECTIVE ON OFFICERS' ROW AND GOLF COURSE:**

The disposition of the Officers' Row buildings presents a situation for the Department of Natural Resources analogous to the disposition of the Area J buildings. As indicated above, the potential

costs for rehabilitation of these buildings are also high. For the long-term, the Department of Natural Resources recommends that these buildings be included in the proposed plan for disposition of the Area J buildings and the long-term vision for use of the military reserve area discussed in section 4.

Minnesota Statutes Section 85.34 requires that any agreement for management of the Golf Course or Officers' Row buildings be approved by the Executive Council before it is finalized. As indicated in section 1, a proposed amendment to the existing concession agreement was presented to the Executive Council in January, 1990. In lieu of approving this proposed amendment, the Executive Council has instructed the DNR to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) that will result in a new concession agreement for the Golf Course and Officers' Row buildings beginning with the 1993 operating season. The instructions to the DNR indicate that the RFP should attempt to connect the revenues from the Golf Course with the eventual disposition of the buildings. To accomplish this goal, an RFP is being developed and will be released shortly.

**F) POTENTIAL FOR AIRPORT EXPANSION:**

Under current state law (M.S. 1990, Sections 473.616-473.619) a plan for relocation or expansion of the Minneapolis - St. Paul International Airport must be prepared and presented to the Minnesota Legislature for consideration at the beginning of the 1996 legislative session. The current search area for possible runway expansion of the present airport is a two mile radius surrounding the existing airport. This search area includes Fort Snelling State Park's military reserve area.

During the summer of 1991, the Metropolitan Airport Commission presented a preliminary plan that identified six possible runway expansion scenarios for the existing airport. Two of the six alternatives include converting the Officers' Row buildings, Golf Course and portions of the Area J to airport facilities. Although the Commission's recommendations to date do not suggest that either of these alternatives be adopted, the Commission and the Metropolitan Council have both asked the DNR not to make a long-term commitment for management of the military reserve area that could be disrupted by potential airport expansion until completion of the 1996 plan. The Department of Natural Resources is in concurrence with the position that it cannot negotiate a long-term concession agreement for the Golf Course or the Officers' Row buildings until after the final airport decision is taken.

**G) RECOMMENDATION FOR THE SHORT TERM:**

The desire to protect the recreational value of this resource, the extension of the military use of Area J, the Executive Council's decision and the pending 1996 airport study make removal of the



Area J and Officers' Row buildings and associated lands from Fort Snelling State Park in the near future unfeasible. A commitment has been made with the Army that will allow continued use of Area J and an RFP is being developed for a short-term concession agreement that would, in part, grant management of the Golf Course and Officers' Row to a concessionaire. These two courses of action provide good short-term solutions to use questions related to the Area J and Officers' Row buildings and lands. They are both alternatives that allow for continued use and maintenance of the buildings, do not risk reversion of the entire 141-acre parcel to the federal government and allow for the completion of the Minneapolis - St. Paul International Airport planning process.

In addition, adoption of these short-term solutions may provide the state with an opportunity to accumulate some capital resources necessary for implementation of the long-term vision for the future presented in section 4. To accomplish this goal the DNR recommends that the revenue generated from the short-term concession agreement be deposited into a special account to be used for the planning, site preparation, grounds maintenance and initial capital investment necessary to implement the long-term vision.

In addition, the DNR has chosen to include management of the Polo Grounds in the short-term agreement. This decision should result in an increase in the amount of revenue generated for later use on the military reserve area and is a logical step toward implementation of the long-term plans for the military reserve area. Inclusion of the Polo Grounds in the short-term agreement will also allow the state park staff to be relieved of the labor intensive responsibility for maintaining a Polo Grounds reservation system and daily administration of the site. Such a readjustment of workload is made even more important during the current times of reduced budgets and decreasing staffing capabilities.



**SECTION 4 - A LONG-TERM PLAN FOR THE FUTURE OF THE  
MILITARY RESERVE AREA**



#### **A) A LONG-TERM INTEREST IN THE MILITARY RESERVE AREA:**

Following the expiration of the four-year extension of the military's use of the Area J, the expiration of the proposed short-term concession agreement, and the presentation of the final airport expansion or relocation plan, the Department of Natural Resources will be faced with an entirely different set of problems associated with management of the Area J and Officers' Row buildings and the 141 acres of land associated with the military reserve area. The DNR has a long-term interest in ensuring that the original intent to use this land for public recreational purposes expressed in the 1971 deed be protected and preserved.

The public recreational opportunities currently offered and the use received indicate a strong need for these types of public facilities in the metropolitan area. As the military vacates the Area J, the potential to enhance the existing recreational opportunities with the addition of approximately 33 acres of land to the Polo Grounds and Golf Course complex is tremendous. This effort can be enhanced if some of the existing buildings can be retained and adaptive re-uses found.

The major difficulty that is faced by the state, or any other managing agency, is the size, number and rehabilitation costs of the existing buildings. The long-term value of this area is the open recreational potential of the land, not the continued management of the large complex of buildings that can be used for limited purposes.

#### **B) SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO PHASE 1 PUBLIC INPUT:**

It was in the spirit of a commitment to public recreational opportunities and adaptive re-use of the buildings consistent with the deed restrictions that the DNR invited over 50 agencies and interested persons to submit suggested use alternatives in November, 1991. As discussed in section 2, the instructions to potential respondents were deliberately broad to allow for as many viable alternatives as possible to surface. The specific responses to the invitation that the DNR received in December, 1991, are included in Appendix D.

Figure 3 lists the general alternatives suggested and identifies the respondent(s) who suggested the alternative. Figure 3 does not reflect any attempt to prioritize the alternatives proposed.

**SUMMARY OF PHASE 1 RESPONSES  
(FIGURE 3)**

ALTERNATIVE	DOA	RICHFIELD	MET	T.J.	ORC	NPS	MA
Expansion of existing rec facilities	X		X			X	
Picnic Area	X						
Camping Area	X						
Historic Interp of buildings	X			X	X	X	
Open space - clear structures	X	X					
"Victory Gardens"	X						
Animal Shelter Area	X						
Native American Center/Grounds	X						
Historic Theme Park	X						
Retain existing Golf Course only		X					
Expand Golf Course to Polo Grounds		X					
Avoid any long-term solution until MAC airport study completed			X				
Leave military in Area J				X			X
Use vacant Area J buildings for dance/drama groups				X			
Increase Golf Course use with special rates for seniors, juniors and beginners				X			
Rehab Officers' Row buildings for arts/crafts				X			
Inflatable dome golf driving range for polo grounds in winter				X			
Adaptive re-use of buildings with Golf Course receipts					X		
Leave Polo Grounds in DNR management				X	X		

**FIGURE 3 ABBREVIATIONS:**

- State of Minnesota, Department of Administration (DOA)
- City of Richfield (RICHFIELD)
- Metropolitan Council (MET)
- Mr. Tony Johnson (T.J.)
- Officers Row Corporation (ORC)
- U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service (NPS)
- State of Minnesota, Department of Military Affairs (MA)

The responses identified in figure 3 can be grouped into two major categories:

- 1) Develop the military reserve area as an open recreation complex that provides a variety of recreational opportunities.**
- 2) Continue military occupancy of some or all of Area J and recreational use of the remainder of the military reserve area.**

In addition to these two categories, the DNR considered two other possibilities in its analysis of alternative uses:

- 3) Continue the current military reserve area management structure.**
- 4) Allow non-recreational use of some or all of the military reserve area.**

### **C) EVALUATION FACTORS FOR THE FOUR ALTERNATIVE USE CATEGORIES:**

The DNR developed the following list of factors to consider in arriving at a long-term vision for future management of the military reserve area:

- 1) The future plans for expansion of the Twin Cities International Airport.
- 2) The Executive Council's September 11, 1991 instructions.
- 3) The continued use of Area J by the U.S. Army for up to four years.
- 4) The potential for the use(s) to generate sufficient revenue such that the alternative(s) could be accomplished at minimal or no cost to the state.
- 5) The alternatives must be in compliance with the 1971 quitclaim deed restrictions.
- 6) The alternatives must maintain or expand the opportunities for public recreational use of the facilities.
- 7) The alternatives must be in compliance with the historical designations for the area.
- 8) The size, condition and number of the existing buildings.

Although the DNR did not assess a priority order to these factors, factors 1-3 clearly determined the department's decision to proceed with differing short-term and long-term approaches to management of the area. The DNR's recommended short-term approach was discussed in section 3. In addition, the need to ensure that sufficient revenue would be generated in the short-term to accomplish the long-term plans at minimal or no cost to the state (factor 4) became important in developing the DNR's recommendation that the legislature create a special account for deposit of the revenues from the short-term concession agreement discussed in section 3 and any compensation the state may receive from the long-term plans recommended in this section .

The DNR's desire to remain in compliance with the 1971 Deed (factor 5) and its commitment to providing public recreational opportunities in this area (factor 6) became overriding considerations in evaluating all of the alternative uses considered. It is clearly not in the State of Minnesota's best interest to risk loss of the 141-acre military reserve area by being in non-compliance with the deed on part of the area. The size, number and condition of the buildings (factor 8) is a significant component of any discussion of possible re-use of the buildings in either Area J or Officers' Row.

### **D) ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF THE ALTERNATIVE USE CATEGORIES:**

When the evaluation factors listed above are applied to the four categories of alternative uses generated by the phase 1 respondents and the DNR, it becomes clear that the following three alternatives are problematic to implement:

- **Continue military occupancy of some or all of Area J and recreational use of the remainder of the military reserve area.**
- **Continue the current military reserve area management structure.**
- **Allow non-recreational use of some or all of the military reserve area.**

At the same time, the suggestion to **develop the military reserve area as an open recreation complex that provides a variety of recreational opportunities** clearly emerges as the only alternative that accommodates all of the evaluation factors identified above and is the most workable within the state's current budgetary difficulties.

The following rationale is provided to support the DNR's evaluations, conclusions and recommendations for each of the four alternative use categories considered in this study:

- **Continue military occupancy of some or all of Area J and recreational use of the remainder of the military reserve area.**

Although this alternative was suggested by some of the respondents, the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service has indicated that they would find it difficult to approve continued United States military occupancy of the area beyond the four-year extension agreed to in August, 1991 under the existing deed restrictions and federal law because military use is non-recreational. Lack of this approval would place the DNR in violation of the 1971 deed and result in reversion of the property to the federal government. In addition, the U.S. Army has indicated that they have no interest at this time in continued use of the facilities beyond the four year extension.

Periodically the State of Minnesota, Department of Military Affairs has expressed an interest in using some of the Area J buildings for training purposes. Although the Department of Military Affairs response to the phase 1 document did not indicate specific plans at this time, the department did request that the option be left open for future consideration. The DNR would require a detailed plan for utilization of the buildings before a final determination can be made concerning the acceptability of the proposed Department of Military Affairs uses. However, use of the buildings by the Department of Military Affairs for similar office and training purposes as the U.S. Army now uses the buildings would be treated as a non-recreational use by the National Parks Service under current deed restrictions and federal law. Use of the buildings by the State of Minnesota's Department of Military Affairs could, therefore, require federal law change authorizing the specified use to occur.

Given the fact that the National Parks Service has indicated it will not approve U.S. Army use of the buildings beyond the four year extension, and the State of Minnesota Department of Military Affairs has not presented a detailed plan for utilization of the buildings to be evaluated, the DNR cannot consider use of the area for military purposes as a viable alternative for the long-term use of the area at this time. The DNR could, however, consider military use of the property to be a viable alternative if the Department of Military Affairs presents a plan for utilization of the buildings in the future.



- **Continue the current military reserve area management structure.**

This alternative would involve allowing the Area J and Officers' Row buildings to remain vacant and deteriorate following the military's surrender of Area J and the expiration of the short-term concession agreement. In addition, it would include continued state management of the Polo Grounds and continued operation of the Golf Course under a concession agreement. This alternative does not generate sufficient revenue to accomplish any building or grounds rehabilitation or restoration without additional state appropriations and it does not provide for use of the buildings. This alternative would not allow for adoption of many of the other alternative uses, such as Golf Course expansion, suggested by the respondents because sufficient revenue would not be generated from this limited use of the area to finance implementation of other alternatives.

In addition to the economic deficiencies inherent to this alternative, it has two other major flaws: it does not protect the buildings and it does not provide for maximum public recreational use of the area. Adoption of this alternative would essentially force closure of the Area J and Officers' Row areas to the public because of public safety concerns and lack of sufficient funds to restore and maintain the buildings. Continued closure of these portions of the military reserve area to the public would raise deed violation questions with the National Park Service and may result in reversion of the entire 141-acre property to the federal government.

- **Allow non-recreational use some or all of the military reserve area.**

Although the specific instructions in the phase 1 document distributed to interested parties indicated that responses needed to provide public recreational opportunities, the DNR considered the implications of using the military reserve area for non-recreational purposes. This alternative was considered because the state periodically receives requests from organizations to use the buildings for a variety of purposes ranging from housing to office space.

Although the building structures and locations may be feasible for some of these potential non-recreational uses, current deed restrictions prevent use of the area for non-recreational purposes. Similar to the consequences of continued military use of the area, allowing non-recreational use could result in reversion of the property to the federal government for non-compliance.

Continued military use of the area, continued management of the area as it is now managed and use of the area for non-recreational purposes all have serious weaknesses that make them unworkable solutions to the long-term management questions related to the military reserve area. The fourth

alternative considered by the DNR is a composite of several different suggestions raised during phase 1 and envisions developing the military reserve area as

- **An open recreational complex that provides a variety of recreational opportunities.**

A variety of other outdoor recreational experiences could be offered in this area and could incorporate some or most of the suggested uses indicated by the phase 1 respondents in Appendix D and figure 3. This alternative also removes the risk of reversion of the entire 141-acre military reserve area to the federal government. This alternative became the central concept used to develop the following vision for future management of the military reserve area:

**DEVELOP THE ENTIRE 141-ACRE MILITARY RESERVE AREA AS AN OPEN RECREATION COMPLEX UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF A SINGLE CONCESSIONAIRE TO PROVIDE A VARIETY OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDING RESTORATION OF REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLES OF EXISTING BUILDINGS, POSSIBLE EXPANSION OF THE GOLF COURSE AND EXPANSION OF OTHER OPEN RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.**

This vision provides the broadest range of possibilities for expanded public use of the military reserve area and adaptive re-use of some of the buildings. Included in this vision could be uses such as open athletic fields, Golf Course expansion, development of picnicking facilities, development of a driving range and development of a shooting range. In addition, this approach would allow for historic interpretation of the area and adaptive re-use of some of the existing buildings.

Finally, this alternative allows the state to shift some of the daily management, routine maintenance and development responsibilities to a private concessionaire. At the same time, the payments received by the state from the concessionaire could be reinvested in the area if the special account recommended in section 3 was created for deposit of receipts. This partnership between state and non-state entities to restore, rehabilitate and maintain this important recreational area is an important dimension to the proposed vision.

One major deterrent to full implementation of this alternative is that the provisions of Minnesota Statutes Section 85.34 exempting visitors from the state park vehicle permit and allowing the sale of intoxicating liquors does not apply to the Polo Grounds. This divided situation causes management problems for potential concessionaires and the State of Minnesota. This situation will be addressed as the long-term plans for use of the military reserve area evolve. Despite this weakness, this alternative is clearly the most feasible long-term alternative presented from consideration and maximizes the number of uses suggested during phase 1.

## **E) RECOMMENDATION FOR THE LONG-TERM:**

A major issue with adoption of any long-range plans for this area is the re-use of the existing buildings. The size, condition, rehabilitation costs, deed restrictions and location of these buildings make rehabilitation of all of the Officers' Row and Area J buildings cost prohibitive. As indicated earlier, exact figures for rehabilitation are not available without detailed analysis of conceptual drawings for the proposed re-uses, but, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and DNR studies indicate that rehabilitation of all of the Area J and Officers' Row buildings could be approximately \$11 million.

With preservation costs of all of the buildings as high as \$11 million, the only feasible alternative following the short-term arrangements discussed in section 3 is demolition of the majority of the buildings and retention of only a representative sample sufficient to preserve the historical integrity of the site. The preserved buildings could be used for a variety of purposes including museum, interpretive, educational, lodging or restaurant facilities that complement the recreational focus of the complex.

To facilitate implementation of this long-term vision and to generate the investment capital necessary to undertake the planning, maintenance and initial development of the area, the DNR has recommended that a short-term concession agreement be negotiated for management of the Golf Course and Officers' Row buildings in compliance with the Executive Council's instructions. In addition, the DNR recommends that this initial agreement be expanded to include management of the Polo Grounds (see section 3).



## **APPENDICES**



## APPENDIX A--RELEVANT LAWS AND STATUTES

### PART 1: FEDERAL LAWS/STATUTES

DATE	LEGAL REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION
1949	63 Stat. 377, Sec 203(K)(2), as amended by PL 91-485, 84 Stat 1084	Federal Property and Admin Services Act
1970	Public Law 91-190, Sec. 101-105	National Environmental Policy
1989	Public Law 101-189, Sec. 2817	Release of reversionary interest to State of Minnesota

### PART 2: STATE LAWS/STATUTES

DATE	LEGAL REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION
1961	Laws of Mn, Chapt 570	Fort Snelling State Park Created
1969	Laws of Mn, Chapt. 524, sec 2	Fort Snelling State Park renamed to Fort Snelling State Historic Park
1969	Laws of Mn, Chapt. 956, Sec 1, Subd. 2	Historic Fort Snelling placed under administrative authority of MHS
1975	Laws of Mn, Chapt 204, Sec 55, Subd. 5	\$75,000 appropriated for Officers' Row rehabilitation.
1975	Laws of Mn, Chapt 204, Sec. 92	Clarifies MHS authority over historic sites administered in State parks
1975	Laws of Mn, Chapt 204, Sec 93	DNR authorized to contract with MHS for Officers' Row rehabilitation
1977	Laws of Mn, Chapt 455, Sec 65	Sale/Lease of Officers' Row and adjacent property authorized
1977	Laws of Mn, Chapt. 455, Sec. 95	Repeals Laws of 1975, Sec 93
1978	Laws of Mn, Chapt 573 (M.S. 85.34)	Clarifies authorization for lease of Officers' Row and adjacent golf course waiving park admission fees and authorizing a liquor license on the leased property.

DATE	LEGAL REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION
1978	Laws of Mn, Chapt 756, Sec 1-3 and Sec 5 (M.S. 273.19, Subd. 1 & M.S. 275.035) Repealed by Laws of Minnesota, 1988, Chapt. 719, Art. 6, Sec 21.	Amends property tax law and limits assessed value of any leased property on the military reservation property to the value of improvements made by lessee.
1985	Laws of Mn, Chapt 164	Establishes lease rates for leases granted under M.S. 85.34 and prevents cancellation of lease in existence at time of enactment until 12/31/90.
1991	Laws of Mn, Chapt 275, Sec 4	Authorization for lease of Area J to military and mandates study of future options for use of the military reservation area.
various	M.S. 138.025	MHS authority to admin historic sites in State parks.



## **APPENDIX B--TIME-LINE OF KEY EVENTS**

### **FALL OF 1961:**

Fort Snelling State Park established (Laws of Mn, 1961, Chapt. 570).

### **OCTOBER 1, 1969:**

Historic Fort and Chapel deeded to State of Minnesota.

### **JANUARY 1, 1970:**

National Environmental Policy Act passed. (Public Law 91-190, Sec. 101-105)

### **SPRING/SUMMER, 1971:**

Original Program of Utilization for Military Reserve Area written by DNR.

### **AUGUST 17, 1971:**

Quitclaim Deed filed making Military Reserve Area part of Fort Snelling State Park.

### **MAY 21, 1977:**

Act for Fort Snelling Officer's Row signed authorizing commissioner of administration to lease/sell buildings and adjacent land (Laws of 1977, Chapter 455, Sec.65).

### **SEPTEMBER 23, 1977:**

Request for Proposal is released to obtain a lessee for Officers' Row buildings.

### **MARCH 23, 1978:**

State law signed authorizing lease of Officers' Row and adjacent golf course, waiving park admission fees and authorizing a liquor license on the leased property (M.S. 85.34).

### **JUNE, 1978:**

Fort Snelling State Park Management Plan Published.

### **MAY 15, 1979:**

Officers' Row Corporation Golf Course Agreement for 1979 season signed.

### **NOVEMBER 15, 1979:**

1971 Utilization Plan amended to allow for proposed restoration of Officers' Row and Area J as identified in pending concession agreement.

### **NOVEMBER 15, 1979:**

Officers' Row Corporation's concession agreement signed for golf course and Officers' Row buildings.

### **JANUARY 1, 1980:**

Officers' Row Corporation's Golf Course Agreement for 1980 season signed.

**DECEMBER 10, 1982:**

Amendment to Officers' Row Corporation's 1979 Concession Agreement is signed.

**MAY 20, 1985:**

State law signed stating Fort Snelling lease rates and extending dates for cancellation of agreement. (Laws of 1985, Chapter 164, Sec. 1).

**JUNE 15, 1990:**

Draft of amendment number 2 to Officers' Row Corporation's 1979 Concession Agreement is delivered to Executive Council for approval.

**JUNE 1, 1991:**

State law signed allowing lease of Area J for military purposes beyond August 17, 1991. This law also mandates a study to examine alternatives and make recommendations for use of the land (Laws of 1991, Chapter 275, Sec. 4 (a), (b)).

**MAY-SEPTEMBER, 1991:**

Ongoing negotiations with the U.S. Army on conditions and terms of extending military occupancy of Area J beyond August, 1991.

**JULY-OCTOBER, 1991:**

Phase 1 (background and scoping) of Fort Snelling study conducted.

**AUGUST 17, 1991:**

Authority for continued military occupation of Area J expired.

**SEPTEMBER 11, 1991:**

Executive Council rejected proposed amendment number 2 to Officers' Row Corporations concession agreement and instructed DNR to issue an RFP for a new concessionaire for the golf course and Officers' Row buildings beginning with the 1993 season.

**DECEMBER, 1991 - MARCH, 1992:**

Phase 2 of Fort Snelling study completed.

## **APPENDIX C--MILITARY RESERVE AREA MAP**



Scale

NORTH

Memorial Chapel

POLO GROUNDS

GOLF COURSE

AIRPORT

LEAVENWORTH ROAD

MINNEHAPPA AVE

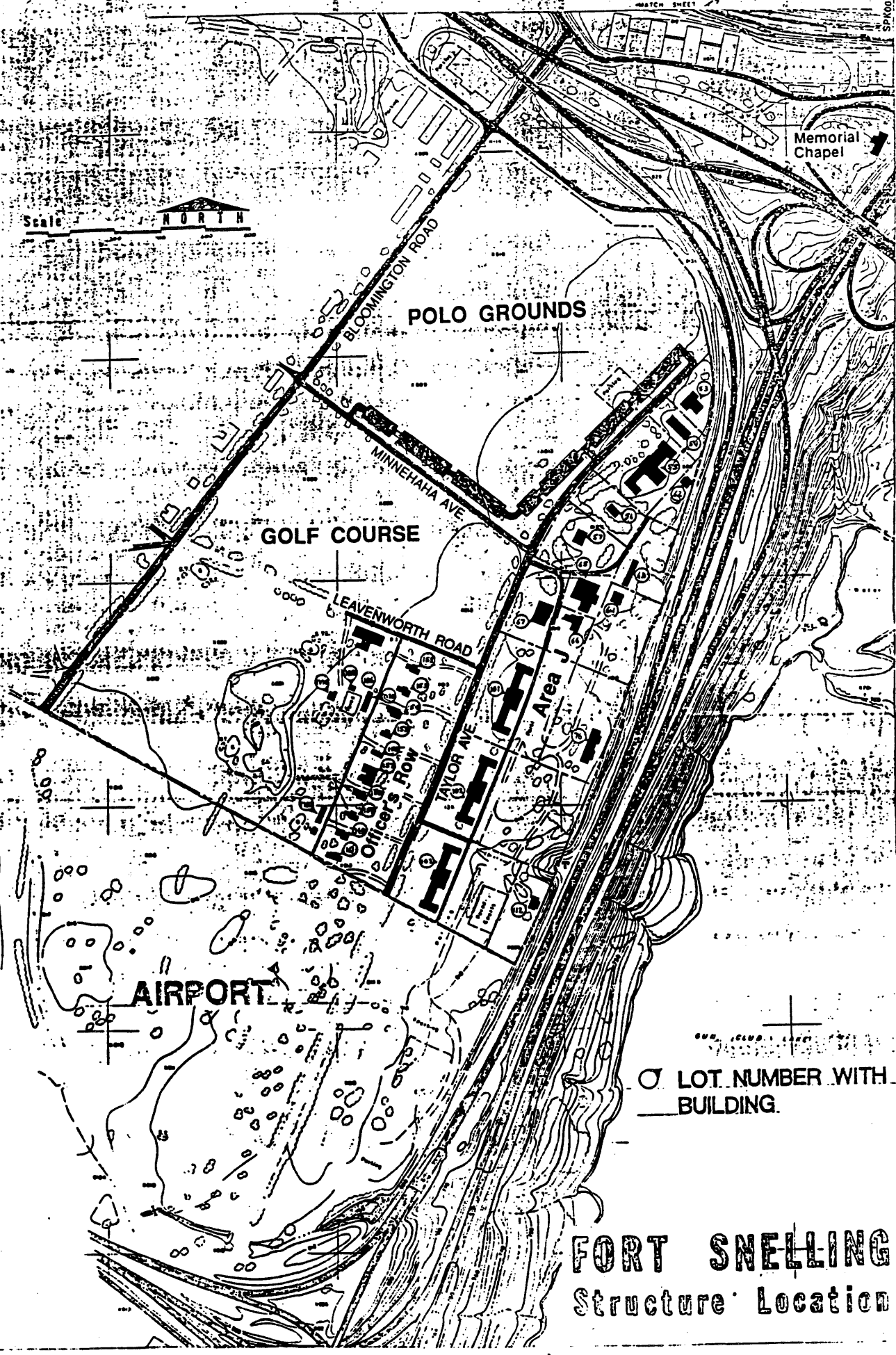
TAYLOR AVE

Officers' Row

Area J

○ LOT NUMBER WITH BUILDING.

FORT SNELLING  
Structure Location





## **APPENDIX D--PHASE 1 RESPONSES**





Department of  
Administration

December 9, 1991



William Morrissey  
Director  
Division of Parks and Recreation  
Department of Natural Resources  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

200 Administration Building  
50 Sherburne Avenue  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155  
(612) 296-3862

Dear Mr. Morrissey:

We have gathered a few recommendations on alternative land uses at Fort Snelling State Park, particularly in the j-area and Officers' Row. The suggested uses are briefly outlined below for your consideration with no specific acreage and no estimate of costs, timing, or management.

However, we do believe that there may be uses other than those contained herein that you may wish to consider for the property that could complement one or more of those listed. Please feel free to contact Assistant Commissioner Dennis Spalla on this matter if you would like to discuss it further. We propose the following.

1. Expansion of golf, polo, soccer, football and baseball fields, driving range, and practice greens.
2. Picnic and camping grounds with simulated historic structures - children's play area.
3. Open space - clear structures and plant/landscape; victory gardens.
4. Animal shelter area - a preserve, not a zoo.
5. Native American Center, grounds.
6. Relocate historic buildings or equipment in a theme park arrangement with interpretive center/services.

We hope this will be helpful to you in finalizing your study of land uses at Fort Snelling.

Sincerely,

Dana B. Badgerow  
Commissioner

DBB:DJS:ns

Architectural Design

Building Code

Building Construction

Contracting

Data Practices

Data Processing

Employee Assistance

Energy Conservation

Fleet Management

Information Management

Inventory Management

Local Government Systems

Management Analysis

Plant Management

Printing &amp; Mailing

Public Documents

Purchasing

Real Estate Management

Records Management

Resource Recycling

State Bookstore

Telecommunications

Volunteer Services



City Manager  
James D. Prosser

Mayor  
Martin Kirsch

Council  
William Bullock  
Ivan Ludeman

Michael Sandahl  
Kristal Stokes

December 6, 1991

Mr. Ron Nickerson  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Parks and Recreation  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Subject: Proposed Alternatives For Use Of The Fort Snelling  
State Park Military Reserve Area

Dear Mr. Nickerson:

The City of Richfield continues its interest in the Fort Snelling State Park Military Reserve Area. When a request for proposals is issued for the alternative use(s) selected from the suggestions currently being offered by interested parties, Richfield hopes to respond with a proposal which will name the City of Richfield the new concessionaire beginning with the 1993 season.

The military reserve area is divided into four interrelated sections: 1) J-area, 2) Officers' row, 3) golf course and 4) polo grounds. Although the site has been designated on the National Registry of Historic Places, it is not totally clear whether all, any or portions of the buildings in these areas must be preserved for historical purposes. There is also some question about impacts on the area by various airport issues and alternatives currently under consideration. Continued military use of J-area, following the recent four year extension, is also not clear, particularly due to the unresolved airport issues. It appears the golf course could produce the greatest revenue although the other sections of the area could produce some limited revenues. Net revenues may depend on whether all, any or portions of these areas are leased or conveyed to the party or parties submitting the successful proposal. In any event, it appears there would not be sufficient revenues from the golf course and other possible on-site sources to totally rehabilitate J-area and/or officers' row.

With these questions and variables in mind, Richfield offers a variety of suggested options. These suggestions are not in any particular order of priority. Richfield suggests that these options, or combinations thereof, be included in the upcoming Request for Proposals process to give a variety of uses for potential concessionaires to consider.

**The Urban Hometown**

Telephone (612) 861-9700  
Fax 861-9749

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Mr. Ron Nickerson  
December 6, 1991  
Page 2

Option One - Golf Course only  
Retain the existing nine hole facility; possible improvements to grounds and clubhouse.

Option Two - Golf Course and Polo Grounds  
Retain nine hole golf course and polo grounds facilities; possible improvements to and expansion of golf grounds and clubhouse.

Option Three - Golf Course, Polo Grounds, J-Area  
Possible demolition of J-area to expand golf course; retain portions of polo grounds for adult, or possible adult/youth combination, athletic complex.

Option Four - Golf Course, Polo Grounds, J-Area, Officers' Row  
Possible major expansion of golf course could include demolition of all or most of J-area and officers' row; possibly maintain a representative example of buildings in J-area, officers' row.

Phasing/Timing - Golf Course, Polo Grounds, J-Area, Officers' Row  
Due to the uncertainties mentioned earlier; i.e., lease versus conveyance, transfer of area use could be done in phases: start with golf course, add polo grounds after designated period of time, add J-area, add officers' row; phasing to depend on resolution of issues and financial arrangements between organization(s) with current management responsibility and successful concessionaire.

Richfield is very interested in exploring each of these options. We are most interested, of course, in the golf course and in the polo grounds. However, we believe there may be ways in which these recreational resources can be preserved and enhanced as a part of the larger, more comprehensive plan which addresses the entire area, including the historic J-Area and Officers' Row.

In the event further information is required during the evaluation process, contact:

Donald A. Fondrick, Community Services Director  
6700 Portland Avenue South  
Richfield, MN 55423  
(612) 861-9797

Sincerely,

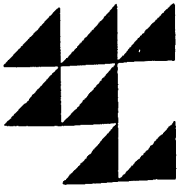


Donald A. Fondrick, Director  
Community Services Department

DAF:sdr

Copy: Representative Edwina Garcia  
Representative Joyce Henry  
Senator Phil Riveness  
City Manager James Prosser





December 10, 1991

Mr. Ron Nickerson  
Department of Natural Resources  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul MN 55155

Dear Mr. Nickerson:

The staff of the Metropolitan Council has reviewed the Fort Snelling State Park Military Reserve Area Use Study report. Phase I consists of the Historical Background of the state involvement in the state park and historical fort.

The staff of the Council has primarily reviewed the report from the vantage point of the existing airport and the possibility for either its expansion or reuse. The staff has also reviewed the report from the vantage point of recreation and the area's status as a state park that is part of the regional system. We recognize that there are many other viewpoints from which the issue of future use of this area can be approached, but we will leave these to others. With these considerations, I will express the Council staff's ideas about the future use of the fort.

#### Recreation

Although owned and operated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Fort Snelling State Park is included in the regional park system to provide protection under the Metropolitan Significance Review regulations and Metropolitan Land Planning Act when applicable.

The Metropolitan Council and the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission have an interest in seeing that uses which are incompatible with the state park are not introduced on this land. The quitclaim deed from the federal government, as we understand, mandates that the area in question be used for public recreation. It seems, however, that with the exception of the golf course, the land being studied is not appropriate for the basic or traditional regional recreation activities of swimming, boating, fishing, picnicking, nature interpretation, camping and trail uses. The golf course and open fields have existing and potential recreation uses. A local recreation agency may be better equipped to manage and program these local uses.





It does not seem possible to address future uses for this land, except in the short-term, until questions about the airport are decided. If the airport remains where it is or expands, this will affect uses. If the land now occupied by the airport is used for something else, then the adjacent recreation and green space become even more important.

## Airports

The Metropolitan Airports Planning Act of 1989 codifies the Major Airport Dual-Track planning process. Track A involves the evaluation of expanding Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP); Track B involves the siting of a potential new major airport. A final decision on which planning track to pursue will be made by the legislature in 1996. Several studies are being prepared as part of this process that could affect the Ft. Snelling state park military reserve area use study.

### Track A

The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) has recommended a plan for MSP that allows for development out to the year 2020. One element of that plan envisions a new north parallel runway that would require moving the U.S.A.F. and Minnesota Air National Guard areas, and taking of most of the remaining officers row and golf course areas in Fort Snelling. In addition, the southeast areas would receive aircraft noise impacts, including the recreational areas in the Minnesota River bottoms of Ft. Snelling state park. This project has been through public hearing and will be submitted to the legislature by January 1, 1992. The Metropolitan Council will formally review this document and make any recommendation that should be considered by the MAC during the final update in 1992/1993.

### Track B

As part of this work effort the Council is responsible to prepare policies on the re-use of MSP. The policies and supporting technical analysis are to be submitted to the legislature by January 1, 1993. The first phase of the study will be completed in February, 1992; phase two work will be essentially complete by early autumn, 1992.

To assist the Council in this project an MSP Re-Use Advisory Task Force has been established; in addition to this policy group, a technical advisory committee will be formed. It is anticipated that invitations to participate will be mailed to prospective technical committee representatives by the end of 1991. The state DNR and Historical Society among many other federal, state and local agencies will be asked to participate.

The Re-Use study has an immediate study area covering all areas within about two miles of the current airport property line. The study will define and evaluate several development



Ron Nickerson  
December 10, 1991  
Page 3, 1991

scenarios/themes for both aviation and non-aviation uses. It is expected that all properties within the airport highway ring-road will be evaluated in detail; this includes the historical Ft. Snelling state park area. Depending upon the mix of potential future land uses, markets, economic and financial feasibility, there could be significant effects upon the type/viability of land use and management options for the military reserve area. Both of the airport planning tracks are affected by and can affect the military reserve area and should be closely coordinated with that process.

If you have any questions regarding this information, contact Richard Thompson, staff planner at 291-6457.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Anderson, Chair

cc.     Sondra Simonson  
         Richard Thompson



8405 Deer Pond Trl. No.  
Lake Elmo, MN 55042  
Dec. 5, 1991

Mr. Ron Nickerson  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Mr. Nickerson:

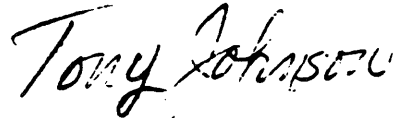
Thank you for the Phase I information sent to me 11/15/91.

For the sake of paper conservation I combined my cover letter and options for each area on one page. Hopefully, that will not cause a problem for you.

The options I am proffering are based on a belief that uses made of various parts of the park should attract more users and a greater variety of users.

The decision of the DNR to expand the scope of its study to include the polo field and the j area concerns me. If it is approved by the legislature and becomes part of the RFP there is a good chance it will negatively affect developer participation.

Sincerely,



Tony Johnson

Tel. 777-6803



J-AREA

THIS AREA SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE OCCUPIED, AT LEAST PARTIALLY, BY THE U.S. ARMY RESERVE. ITS PRESENCE IS A MEANINGFUL TIE WITH FORT SNELLING MILITARY HISTORY.

THE U.S. ARMY RESERVE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED HOWEVER, TO INCREASE ITS VISIBILITY TO THE PUBLIC. DEMONSTRATIONS AND EXHIBITS DEALING WITH THEIR EQUIPMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES COULD PROVIDE VICARIOUS RECREATION FOR PARK VISITORS.

---

LATELY, THE U.S. ARMY HAS NOT BEEN MAKING USE OF THE OLD BARRACKS BUILDINGS (101-103).

CONSIDERING THE LARGE NUMBER OF SQUARE FEET AVAILABLE IN THESE BUILDINGS THEY WOULD SEEM TO BE VERY SUITABLE AS LESSON-PRACTICE FACILITIES FOR DRAMA AND DANCE GROUPS. PERFORMANCES IN THE PARK BY THESE GROUPS WOULD CERTAINLY BE AN ADDED ATTRACTION FOR PARK VISITORS.





## THE GOLF COURSE

THE COURSE SHOULD CONTINUE TO OPERATE AS A PUBLIC ENTITY. IT PROVIDES A FORM OF RECREATION THAT INCLUDES MANY POSITIVES FOR PRACTICALLY ALL PEOPLE e.g., FRESH AIR, EXERCISE, SOCIABILITY, CHALLENGE, AND COMPETITION. AND, ALL OF THIS TAKES PLACE IN PLEASANT SURROUNDINGS.

AN EFFORT COULD BE MADE TO INCREASE USE OF THE GOLF COURSE DURING SLACK DAYS AND TIMES.

---

INITIATE A RATE REDUCTION DURING THESE SLOW DAYS AND TIMES.  
INCLUDE SPECIAL TIMES OR DAYS FOR SENIORS, JUNIORS, BEGINNERS, etc..



## OFFICERS ROW

THE HOME'S EXTERIORS SHOULD FIRST BE PRESERVED. THEN ENOUGH WORK ON THE INTERIOR SHOULD BE DONE TO ACCOMMODATE THE USER (APPROVED BY THE HISTCRICAL SOCIETY).

---

THE DUPLEX LOCATED NEAR THE CENTER OF THE ROW COULD BE USED AS AN 'ALL WARS' HISTORY EXHIBIT BUILDING. THIS PROBABLY WOULD INCLUDE MEMORABILIA FROM THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR UP TO THE PRESENT TIME.

THE OTHER HOMES WOULD MAKE NICE WORK AREAS FOR ARTS AND CRAFTS PEOPLE. THEIR WARES COULD BE EXHIBITED AND SOLD IN THE PARK (PERMITS WOULD HAVE TO BE ARRANGED).



## POLO FIELD

THE POLO FIELD IS ONE OF THE GREAT RECREATIONAL AREAS IN THE TWIN CITIES FOR SEVEN MONTHS OF THE YEAR. THE VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES TAKING PLACE THERE DURING THE WARM MONTHS IS ALMOST UNCOUNTABLE WHEN YOU INCLUDE BOTH THE ORGANIZED AND UNORGANIZED. NO MAJOR CHANGE SHOULD TAKE PLACE WITHOUT A GREAT DEAL OF THOUGHT.

USE DURING THE WINTER MONTHS COULD BE INCREASED.

---

THE POSSIBILITY OF BRINGING IN AN INFLATABLE DOME GOLF DRIVING RANGE FACILITY SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED. IT WOULD HAVE TO BE ONE THAT COULD BE ERECTED AND TAKEN DOWN WITHOUT MAJOR COST (PUT UP IN NOVEMBER AND TAKEN DOWN IN MARCH).

THE PARKING LOT SPACE IS THERE AND THE LOCATION IS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO A LARGE POPULATION BASE.



OFFICERS ROW CORPORATION  
8030 CEDAR AVENUE-SUITE 228  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA  
55425

DEC 04 1991

Mr. Ron Nickerson  
DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
500 Lafayette Rd.  
St. Paul, Minnesota  
55155

PARKS

December 2, 1991

RE: FORT SNELLING MILITARY  
RESERVE AREA

Dear Mr. Nickerson:

As you prepare your report to the 1992 Legislature, we are pleased to register our opinions to assist you in arriving at management options for the 141 Acres conveyed to the State of Minnesota in 1971.

As you know our Company has overcome many hurdles in our attempt to facilitate this development. Sadly, the final funding of the restoration of the Officers Row houses and related property has eluded us.

Our current best suggestions for continued management of this area are based on the following:

The Fort Snelling Public golf course should remain available to all members of the general public.

The Officers Row Houses and many buildings in the "J" area represent invaluable components of Minnesota's history and should be preserved through third-party adaptive re-use.

The overlapping definition of the area as both a National Landmark Historic District and within the boundaries of the Fort Snelling State Park create unique and difficult interpretation requirements.

The Federal Quit Claim deed restriction limiting utilization impacts the adaptive re-use of the area, and thus financing options from outside agencies. Internal financing of restoration and development must accommodate cash flows available from golf course operations.

The area should remain the property of the State of Minnesota. Future priorities of the State's planning for recreation in the metro area would be facilitated by the continued ownership of this area rather than allow it to be reclaimed by the Federal government.

With these "givens" in mind we suggest the following management options:





1. The "J" area should be divided into parcels 1 and 2. Parcel one including all land and area from the "Clocktower" building north and east should remain available to the military for use.

Parcel 2 would include buildings 101, 102, and 103 and land lying east of them to the bluff and south to the airport boundary. These buildings have a prospect of adaptive re-use as does the land lying behind them.

2. The Officers row houses including building 151 should be linked to golf course revenues in a plan that would accomplish restoration on a schedule mutually agreeable to the State and a concessionaire.

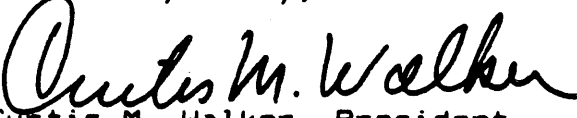
3. The Polo grounds are very successfully administered by the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Parks and Recreation and should remain in their jurisdiction.

An alternative proposal might include the State's building a concession area for food service and choosing a concessionaire to provide labor, reservations services, maintenance, and management of this area.

In either case, the areas should remain managed in their current strict interpretation of public service to a wide variety of casual users for outdoor recreation.

Our Company remains dedicated to finding an answer to the adaptive re-use of the majority of the buildings and maintenance of the area in its original state.

Yours very truly,

  
Curtis M. Walker, President  
OFFICERS ROW CORPORATION





IN REPLY REFER TO:

# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area  
175 East Fifth Street, Suite 418  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101



L70(MISS)

December 9, 1991

Mr. Ron Nickerson  
MN Dept. of Natural Resources  
Division of Parks & Recreation  
500 Lafayette Road  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Mr. Nickerson:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit suggestions for alternative uses of the military reserve area of Fort Snelling. As you may be aware, this area is entirely within the boundaries of the federally designated Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA). This new unit of the national park system was created by Public Law 100-696 to "...preserve, protect, and enhance..." the resources of the Mississippi River corridor within the Twin Cities.

The initial management plan for the MNRRA is being prepared by the National Park Service (NPS), in association with the Mississippi River Coordinating Commission. Planning is now in an alternatives development stage. The approved plan is expected in late 1993.

Since we are still early in our planning process, it is difficult to predict how the military reserve area and its resources may relate to the overall management plan for the MNRRA. Nonetheless, the NPS certainly supports retention of this area for recreational purposes. There are many creative and worthwhile uses for the area. As one example, a building in j-area or officer's row could be converted to a museum that interprets the military history of the fort.

Please keep us informed about the progress of this study. We want to be sure to consider any decisions or developments into our planning process for the MNRRA. You may contact me at 290-4160 if you have questions about the MNRRA, or its relationship to the military reserve area.

Sincerely,

Norman J. Reigle  
Superintendent





STATE OF MINNESOTA, DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS  
**MINNESOTA ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD**  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
Veterans Service Building  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155-2098

December 6, 1991

The Adjutant General - Minnesota

SUBJECT: Fort Snelling State Park, Military Area Use Study

Mr. Ron Nickerson  
Minnesota DNR  
Division of Parks and Recreation  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Mr. Nickerson:

Thank you for providing this opportunity for input in the Fort Snelling State Park, Military Area Use Study. The Department of Military Affairs is encouraged to see that the historic military buildings are receiving increased attention by the Legislature and by the Department of Natural Resources. It is my opinion, however, that the approach being taken by DNR in carrying out the directive of the Legislature will not be helpful in accomplishing reuse of the Military Area.

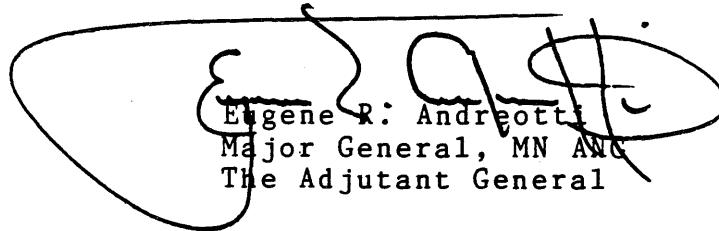
For more than two years, it has been DMA's position that the Department may be interested in using some of the military buildings at Fort Snelling if it is feasible and prudent to do so. Additional information is needed and must be obtained before a decision on the feasibility of any proposal can be made. For example, information concerning the condition and the costs associated with the utilities and other infrastructure is essential for determining the feasibility of any proposed reuse, but that information does not now exist. To forward proposals that are likely to be completely infeasible due to a lack of this kind of hard data does not seem to be a useful endeavor.

In 1990, DMA submitted a proposal to the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources for a study which would, in part, produce the information needed to determine the feasibility of reuse options in the Military Area at Fort Snelling State Park. The proposal was not funded. It was our expectation that DNR would generate the necessary hard data in the study it is now conducting at the direction of the Legislature, but that does not seem to be the case. I remain convinced that reuse cannot be properly evaluated until, at a minimum, additional information on the existing condition of the site and up-to-date restoration cost estimates are available.



I hope that this input will generate discussion among the Parks and Recreation Division staff about how these information needs might be addressed. The Department of Military Affairs continues to maintain its interest in the history of the Military Area and will continue to support your efforts in any way we can.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, enclosed within a large, irregular oval shape. The signature appears to be "Eugene R. Andreotti".

Eugene R. Andreotti  
Major General, MN ANG  
The Adjutant General

