The original documents are located in Box C1, folder "Presidential Handwriting, 8/27/1974 (2)" of the Presidential Handwriting File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 27, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ANNE ARMSTRONG

SUBJECT: FEDERAL PROPERTY COUNCIL IN FY 1975

Executive Order 11724 of June 25, 1973, (copy attached) established within the Executive Office of the President, the Federal Property Council, which replaced the old Property Review Board. The Council, which I chair, was established to continue the administration of the Legacy of Parks program, as well as to recommend to the President necessary modifications in Federal real property policies. Other members have been: Roy Ash, Dean Burch, Fred Buzhardt, Russ Peterson, Ken Rush, Herb Stein, and Bill Timmons.

The Legacy of Parks program has been very successful in transferring surplus Federal properties to state and local governments for park and recreation use. It has reflected great credit on the White House. Also, many Senators, Congressmen, and State and local officials have commented favorably on the program and have participated in conveyance ceremonies. In less than three and one-half years, 440 Legacy of Parks properties have been made available in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. Approximately 70% of those parks are in or near metropolitan areas, and annual visits are expected to eventually reach 58 million.

During FY 1973, the Council's operations were funded by the Office of Emergency Preparedness, while in FY 1974 expenses were met by the President's Emergency Fund. In an earlier memorandum, which has been circulated among your staff, I favored White House support for the Federal Property Council staff operations this year, which would cost about $270,000. Now, however, in view of the need to reduce the size and scope of the White House Staff, I have explored alternatives to White House funding.

There are three basic options:

Option 1:   Place the Council's staff functions in other agencies,
            such as GSA, OMB, and the Department of the Interior,
            while retaining the Council to coordinate activities
            and advise the President.

Option 2:   Place the Council's staff functions in other agencies,
            and abolish the Council.

Option 3:   Abolish the Council and its functions.

My belief is that the functions of the Council definitely need to be
continued. The Legacy of Parks program, in particular, has emerged
as a concrete example of our determination to return resources and
decision-making to State and local governments.

It is possible to continue the Legacy of Parks program, as well as
the policy review and case arbitration functions, by placing the
staff in other agencies. However, a high Presidential profile for
the Legacy of Parks program would be enhanced by maintaining the
Federal Property Council (perhaps with membership changes) as a
coordinating and advisory body within the White House.

RECOMMENDATION: That you approve Option 1, and direct me to proceed
                  with implementation, including preparation of a new
                  Executive Order.

_____ Agree, implement Option 1.

_____ Disagree, implement Option 2.

_____ Disagree, implement Option 3.

_____ See me.

Attachment