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REIMAGINING WASHINGTON

Two Plans Unify the
National Mall and
Monumental Core

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Reimagining Washington

Two Plans Unify the National Mall and Monumental Core

A bold new vision for Washington, D.C. is taking shape with the near-simultaneous rollout of two of the most important federal plans in nearly a decade. Together, the two plans envision a livable, sustainable monumental core with America's civic stage at its center, surrounded by popular destinations and thriving neighborhoods.

The National Park Service's (NPS) *National Mall Plan* provides a future roadmap for the National Mall. A draft is expected later in 2009, but the broad outlines of the plan emerged with the March release of a preliminary preferred alternative. It is the Park Service's recommended approach based on the feedback received during nationwide public outreach; the wide range of uses that have to be accommodated; and the agency's challenges of managing the most visited national park in the country.

Reimagining Washington's Monumental Core: A Framework Plan for Connecting New Destinations with the National Mall offers a clear vision for the monumental core to complement the *National Mall Plan*. The *Framework Plan*—a joint product of the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA)—identifies opportunities to integrate memorials, museums, and other attractions into the urban fabric while revitalizing federal precincts around the National Mall.

“By creating lively areas around the National Mall with amenities and nationally significant museums, memorials, and gathering spaces, we can help the Park Service preserve the Mall and improve the visitor experience,” explains NCPC's Elizabeth Miller, project manager for the *Framework Plan*. “At the same time, the Park Service can help us ensure that the Mall and surrounding areas will meet the needs of those who work and live nearby.”

America's Civic Stage

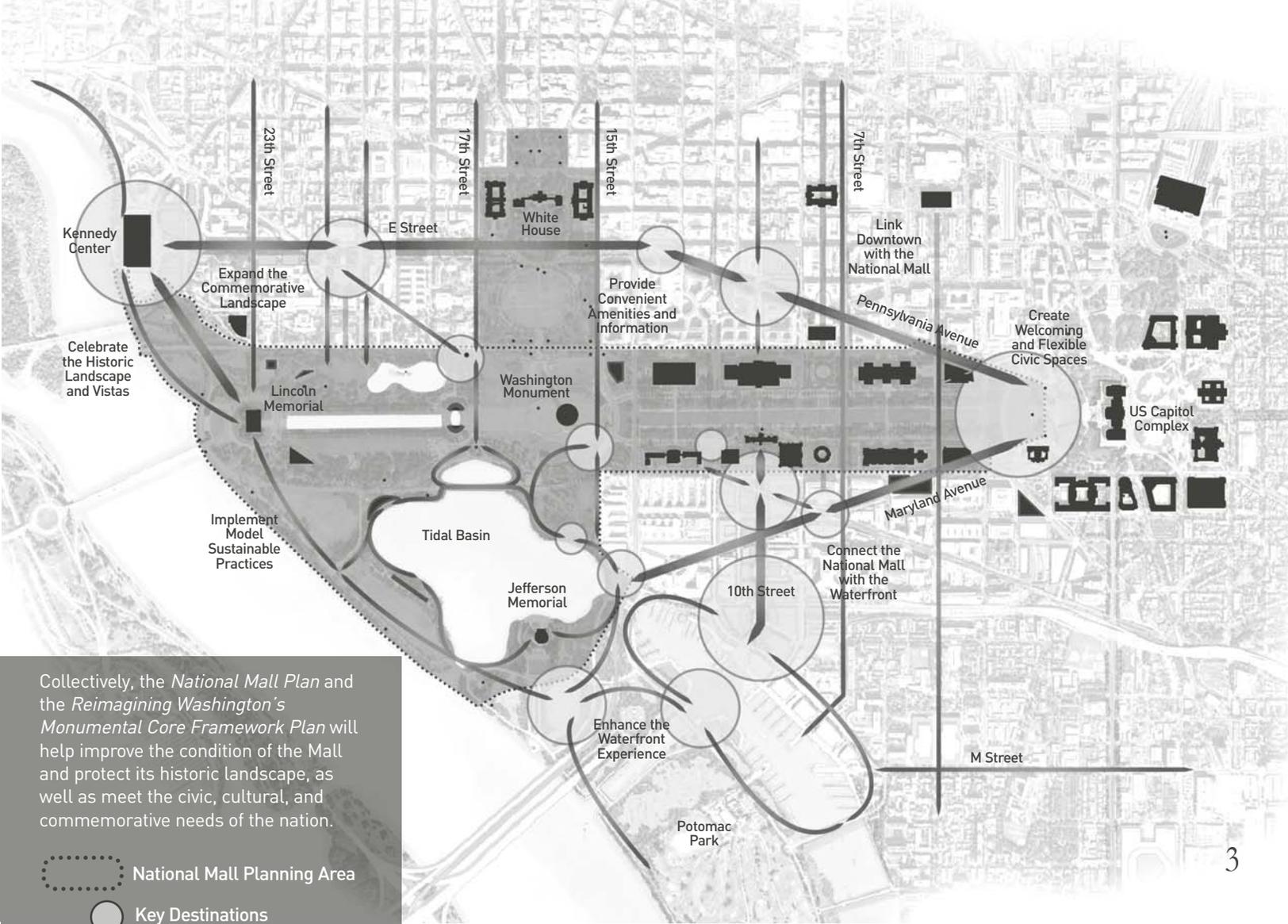
According to Associate Regional Director Peter May for NPS Lands, Resources and Planning, “The *National Mall Plan* seeks to bring back the beauty of the National Mall by improving the historic landscape, reversing soil compaction, and providing better growing conditions. Civic spaces will be designed to welcome and accommodate large crowds while ensuring the National Mall can recover quickly following high levels of use.”

In the *National Mall Plan*, visitors will continue to be inspired with vistas and memorials that are symbols of our nation. They also will have well-dispersed, comfortable and convenient facilities for education, services, and enjoyment. In addition, park operations will be improved by incorporating best practices in sustainability.

Our primary challenge is that the historic landscape was never designed to be a civic space or to accommodate the enormous volume of visitors.

Steve Lorenzetti, Deputy Superintendent
National Mall and Memorial Parks





Collectively, the *National Mall Plan* and the *Reimagining Washington's Monumental Core Framework Plan* will help improve the condition of the Mall and protect its historic landscape, as well as meet the civic, cultural, and commemorative needs of the nation.

-  National Mall Planning Area
-  Key Destinations
-  Key Connections

The First Amendment has guaranteed the right to peaceful assembly for more than 200 years, but in the last half-century demonstrations have become more frequent. Neither Pierre L'Enfant, who envisioned the National Mall as a ceremonial promenade, nor the McMillan Commission, which resurrected the idea, could have imagined how many people from across the country would gather on the Mall to make their voices heard.

"The National Mall is America's civic stage," explains Deputy Superintendent for the National Mall and Memorial Parks, Steve Lorenzetti. "Our primary challenge is that the historic landscape was never designed to be a civic space or to accommodate the enormous volume of visitors."

Annually, an estimated 25 million people visit the memorials and museums on the National Mall, which hosts a number of national celebrations such as the 4th of July gathering as well as other special events. Additionally, the National Mall is valued by local residents for active recreation space and relaxation. Altogether, the National Park Service issues permits for approximately 3,000 events each year.

The challenges that accompany such extensive use were brought to widespread public attention following January 2009, when nearly 3 million people gathered on the National Mall over a four-day period to witness and participate in a historic presidential inauguration. Television and newspapers showed images of obliterated lawns, blowing dust and around 100 tons of trash.

"The National Mall provides the place for public gatherings of all types and forms, from demonstrations and rallies to events of national significance," says Chief Perry Wheelock of Resource Management on the National Mall. "As our country has grown, this premier public space has evolved to meet the modern needs of our citizens and visitors. Today we are faced with the challenge of once again adapting its design to meet contemporary conditions while continuing to respect our democratic ideals and preserve its landscape and historic architectural elements."

To address these issues, the *National Mall Plan* incorporates several approaches, says Susan Spain, project executive for the *National Mall Plan*. "First, it calls for improved landscape condition, appearance, and health; and second, it proposes



redesigning several areas so they can better host and recover from national celebrations and public gatherings. For example, the redesign of Union Square as a flexible civic space can help protect the historic landscape as well as provide a lively destination that better accommodates public activities. Thirdly, the plan upgrades walkways, furniture, facilities, and other services such as more restrooms, places to eat, and navigational signs to improve the visitor experience.”

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NCPC staff reviewed the ideas and proposals in the *National Mall Plan*. Nancy Witherell, who led the staff’s involvement, noted that there are challenges in meeting the public’s high expectations for the National Mall.

“One of the challenges is how to accommodate a wide range of activities for local residents of all ages as well as visitors from across the country and around the world,” said Ms. Witherell, NCPC’s historic preservation officer.

New Destinations

Even with the possible conversion of Union Square and other areas into improved civic gathering spaces, many additional sites will still be required to accommodate new commemorative works, museums, and public events. NCPC and CFA’s *Framework Plan* provides a solution for this problem by reimagining areas around the National Mall as more desirable destinations, each with its own distinct character, all enlivened with a mixture of daytime and evening activities within a pleasant public realm.

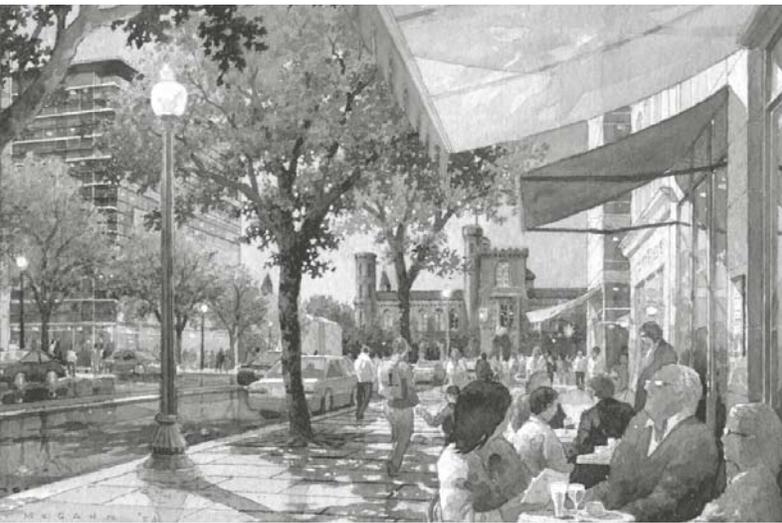
“There are limits to what the Park Service can do on its own to preserve the Mall,” says NCPC Executive Director Marcel Acosta. “We need to pull people—entice them, really—to other places in the city. By doing that, not only do we help protect the Mall, we also help realize the District’s vision of a greatly revitalized center city just beyond America’s front yard.”

“Collectively, these two plans can help people experience the nation’s capital that extends beyond the National Mall,” said Harriet Tregoning, director of the District of Columbia Office of Planning. “There are ceremonial functions and symbolic spaces of the federal city including the National Mall. But there is also the economic, social, and cultural life of this international metropolis and for visitors and residents alike, they enhance and benefit one another.”

With the removal of highway and other infrastructure barriers, several areas near the Mall including the Federal Triangle, Southwest Rectangle, Northwest Rectangle, and East Potomac Park present an opportunity to provide sites for new cultural facilities and public gatherings.

Currently, many visitors to the capital rarely get to these areas because they are either unappealing or have little to offer and are difficult to access. As a result, the available sites may seem undesirable to museum and memorial sponsors and event organizers. While commemorative works and museums can attract their own visitors, thoughtful planning is required to transform these locations into rich concentrations of attractive destinations.





To unlock the potential of the areas adjacent to the National Mall and create viable sites for gathering and commemoration, the *Framework Plan* recommends a variety of changes that will facilitate the development of lively mixed-use neighborhoods with street-level retail and a mixture of office, commercial, and hospitality uses. In Southwest, for example, improvements to 10th Street and the surrounding federal precinct will help the District realize the vision of its *Center City Action Agenda* to reposition the National Mall as the heart of urban life, rather than the southern boundary of downtown.

New Connections

Creating places where people will want to be is only half the challenge addressed in the *Framework Plan*. People also need to feel that new destinations are convenient to the places they already visit. Intriguing destinations may be within blocks of each other, but if people do not perceive them as easily accessible connected places in the capital city, they will not venture to them.

“People walk from the U.S. Capitol to the Washington Monument without thinking twice about it,” says CFA Secretary Thomas Luebke. “They do it because they feel like the two locations are part of the same general place. But that’s actually twice as far as the walk from the Mall to the Southwest Waterfront.”

Reducing perceived distances—creating a sense that places are connected to each other—requires a dense mix of uses, the addition of wayfinding systems, and the improvement of streetscapes to make walking between destinations more desirable. People are more likely to want to go through a lively area that is easy to navigate, with places to eat, stores to browse, and public art to admire than corridors of impersonal buildings that are void of street-level activity. Opening sightlines among destinations can also bring them closer together in people’s minds.

Collectively, these two plans can help people experience the nation’s capital that extends beyond the National Mall.

Harriet Tregoning, Director
District Office of Planning

“Imagine if a prominent public building or commemorative work at the 10th Street Overlook were visible from the Smithsonian Castle,” says Mr. Luebke. “It would draw people toward the waterfront like a beacon.”

In some cases, the problem is more than one of perception; physical impediments restrict free movement from one destination to another. The *Framework Plan* envisions a variety of ways to improve connections among new destinations and the National Mall by creating sidewalks and bike paths, removing barriers such as freeway interchanges, and making places more accessible with the addition of Metro stations and other mass transit options.

More Core, Less Monumental

The *Framework Plan* continues NCPC’s long-term effort to use federal land throughout the city for memorials and museums, thus spurring economic development in all quadrants of the city and reducing demand for new construction on the National Mall.

“Planning strategies of the past have shown us that a stark separation between federal and local land uses has undesirable consequences,” explains William Dowd, project director for the *Framework Plan*. “We need to find as many ways as possible to integrate federal and local activities so that each benefits the other.”

With the grand scale of its landscape, dramatic views, iconic memorials and combination of formal and informal spaces, the National Mall projects an awe-inspiring monumentality, and it is precisely this characteristic that needs to be preserved. However, a monumental scale everywhere would feel dehumanizing and cold. Both plans want welcoming, attractive public spaces.

“We can still have magnificent public architecture and awe-inspiring buildings,” says NCPC Chairman John V. Cogbill, III. “But they should also fit into the city and satisfy the need for more intimate, human-scaled spaces.”

The *Framework Plan* takes a 21st century approach to urban commemoration, showing how to create space for new monuments without blanketing the city with more monumentality. Instead, memorials and museums can be agents of change that make the center of the city a “core” in the truest sense—the vital, pulsing heart of the nation’s capital.

NEWSMAKER Q&A

An Interview with Dr. Stephanie Toothman

Acting Superintendent, National Mall and Memorial Parks

1. Why do we need a National Mall Plan now?

In 2005 Congress requested that the National Park Service prepare a plan to protect this essential American public space for use by current and future generations, a task we embarked on in 2006. Given the popularity of the National Mall, as witnessed throughout the world during President Obama's inaugural ceremonies, there is no better time than now to be planning for our country's most visible civic space.

The National Mall truly serves as an urban local park for residents as well as an iconic place that is revered by those at home as well as abroad. There are almost as many ways to enjoy the Mall as there are people who visit it each year, so we need to ensure that we protect and preserve this treasured land while also anticipating and planning for future needs.

For example, we must accommodate high levels of use as America's civic stage; refurbish and protect the historic landscape; and provide a greater variety of informational tools to an increasingly diverse audience. We also have to meet the public's request for more bathrooms and food services. We all deserve a National Mall we can be proud of and the Park Service is committed to making America's front yard the best that it can be.

2. Was the public involved in developing the plan? If so, how did public participation shape the Park Service's preliminary preferred alternative?

More than 27,000 comments have helped shape what is included in the Park Service alternatives, such as requests for additional bathrooms, improved landscaping, bike paths, and metered parking. Public input also helped eliminate some ideas, such as filling in the north bay of the Tidal Basin or adding pedestrian tunnels. Currently, the *National Mall Plan* has a preliminary preferred alternative out for a third round of public comment, which is open until April 20. There also will be many more opportunities throughout the year to give feedback. A newsletter and public comment site are online at www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan.

3. Can you give us an example of a proposal that will improve the look and use of the National Mall?

Our proposal for redeveloping the area of the Capitol Reflecting Pool as a vibrant and active public gathering place is a great example. With improved surface area and infrastructure to accommodate big activities, this site at the foot of the U.S. Capitol could become a principal destination for events of all kinds, including celebrations and demonstrations. It is easily accessible by

public transit and close to many of the areas highlighted in the *Framework Plan* and the District's *Center City Action Agenda*. It would help alleviate stress on other areas of the Mall and in turn provide a great location in which to create a more flexible public gathering place, one that could incorporate a new water feature and sustainable design.

4. What is your view on calls by a citizens group to expand the boundaries of the National Mall?

The National Mall was expanded at the beginning of the 20th century by the McMillan Commission after new landfill presented an unparalleled opportunity for what was then an enormous swath of undeveloped space. That same opportunity doesn't exist today; the Mall is now surrounded by federal, local, and private development. Also, unlike the early 1900s, the public now has a pretty fixed image of the National Mall. We believe it makes sense to work with a symbolic landscape that has matured over the past 100 years.

We recognize, as do our partners, that we need more suitable space for commemorative works, cultural attractions, and public events. Creating new destinations and enhancing the ones that already exist, is a key objective of the federal government's *Reimagining Washington's Monumental Core Framework Plan*. This plan, along with the District's *Center City Action Agenda*, will weave together the federal and local characteristics of the city and complement the objectives outlined in our plan.

5. Do you think there is appropriate coordination among the agencies that plan for the Mall and its surrounding areas or do you think there should be a new oversight agency?

I believe overlapping jurisdictions and shared oversight yield better outcomes. Each agency has its own area of expertise, and we all bring strengths to the table. By our working in tandem and closely coordinating with one another day to day, the public benefits from our collective expertise. For example, as a result of its collaboration with many partners, including the public, the Park Service implemented a beautiful landscape security solution for the grounds of the Washington Monument. More recently we are teaming with District and federal partners to ensure that an improved levee on the National Mall will protect the monumental core from flooding.

While a new entity may seem like a streamlined solution, it would actually require a new layer of coordination. Many of the tasks now required would still remain and a new agency would still have to consult with existing agencies to be effective. The fact is, we are in an unprecedented era of coordination and cooperation among local and federal partners. The respective plans by the Park Service, NCP, CFA, and the District government reflect this. I am proud that together we are creating a cohesive vision for the symbolic heart of a vibrant, distinguished capital city.



Makeover Options are Explored for North Capitol Street

The District government, NCPC, and the architectural firm of Ehrenkrantz, Eckstut, and Kuhn (EE&K) are teaming up on potential designs to transform North Capitol Street, a key gateway to the city. Options include removing a cloverleaf—a dated relic from the ill-fated days of urban renewal—and turning the intersection of North Capitol and Irving Street into a community gathering spot.

In December 2008, the District's Office of Planning and its Department of Transportation, in conjunction with NCPC, commissioned EE&K to study the section of North Capitol Street from Michigan Avenue to Hawaii Avenue, NE. The study includes an area approximately one half of a mile in length and four blocks in width.

District officials say their goal is to "develop strategies to improve the gateway qualities of North Capitol Street, explore alternative intersection configurations to replace the cloverleaf at Irving and North Capitol Streets, and to develop recommendations for improving transportation choices, operations, safety, and connectivity within the public realm."

The neighborhood adjacent to the cloverleaf is already slated for major development projects, including the nearby Armed Forces Retirement Home project approved in 2008 by NCPC.

Community outreach efforts to solicit public comments about the North Capitol Street project are ongoing. "We've held a series of public meetings to get the public involved early in this study," says NCPC architect, Kenny Walton. "We are hosting several workshops to allow planners the opportunity to explain our goals and to provide community residents with a means to share their thoughts or concerns."

Possibilities are beginning to be shaped by the preliminary results of the study, which were discussed with the public during a kick-off meeting in January.

Traffic volumes on North Capitol Street are comparable with heavily-traveled sections of Connecticut and Massachusetts Avenues. But what's really spurring the imagination of planners is the sheer physical size of the cloverleaf of roadways ringing the intersection of North

We've held a series of public meetings to get the public involved early in this study.

Ken Walton, Architect
National Capital Planning Commission



Capitol and Irving Streets. The intersecting loops of pavement dwarf the amount of space occupied by Dupont Circle.

Seth Garland, project manager for EE&K says, "The cloverleaf intersection is a traffic configuration more appropriate to a highway and thus serves as a barrier between surrounding neighborhoods. Trying to cross the interchange by bicycle or on foot is daunting to neighbors and leads to increased car use and a loss of connections between the surrounding communities."

According to EE&K, the study is on track to be completed in May, and preliminary design options are already sparking interest from stakeholders. The proposed alternatives for the intersection hinge on using a grade change between the major streets to frame a central green space. Recommended medium-term improvements for the study area include creating bike lanes, improving neighborhood bus stops, and making key intersections on Michigan Avenue function more efficiently for cars and pedestrians.

In addition to the public meeting held on January 13, a public workshop took place on March 14 at Catholic University. Both meetings allowed the public the opportunity to weigh in on the preliminary design considerations for the street. Another public session is planned for mid-April.

Next steps include providing an implementation strategy for the design options that the public finds most appealing. To learn more on this initiative, visit www.planning.dc.gov.



Circulator Adds New Routes

The popular Circulator transit service recently expanded its reach with two new routes that began operation March 29. The Circulator now connects Woodley Park and McPherson Square via Adams Morgan, Columbia Heights, and U Street. A second new route provides service between Union Station and the Southeast Waterfront via the Capitol Visitor Center (CVC) and the 8th Street, SE/Barracks Row area. In addition, the Smithsonian/National Gallery Loop is expanding its weekend service to include the CVC. The Circulator, a concept introduced in NCPC's 1997 plan, *Extending the Legacy*, first began operating in summer 2005. During 2008, monthly ridership averaged 230,000.





Toward a Sustainable Future

Now more than ever, communities are striving to create greener and more sustainable living environments for their workers, residents, and tourists. In 2008, the National Capital Planning Commission undertook several initiatives related to sustainable urban life. You can read about them, as well as many other activities, in our 2008 annual report, *Toward a Sustainable Future*. Learn about NCPC's work to develop new sustainability policies that will guide the review of federal projects; how NCPC is incorporating sustainable practices into its own plans; and how the agency is working with other national capitals to ensure we do our part to create a greener planet for future generations. You can access the annual report online at www.ncpc.gov or request a hard copy by emailing info@ncpc.gov.

Greening the World's Capital Cities

The summary report for NCPC's September 2008 Capitals Alliance conference, *Greening the World's Capital Cities* is now available online and in hard copy. The document summarizes the sixth gathering of the Alliance, launched in 2001 by NCPC and its sister agencies in Brasilia, Canberra, and Ottawa. The report outlines the steps capital cities from around the world are taking to help create a greener and more sustainable world. It also details consensus on a number of sustainability issues that were explored by representatives of the 15 national capitals in attendance. To view a copy online, please visit www.CapitalsAlliance.org.



**STAFF REPORTS
NOW ONLINE**

NCPC's staff recommendations to the Commission, known as Executive Director's Recommendations (EDRs), are now available online prior to each Commission meeting. Staff will post the EDRs as Adobe Acrobat pdfs by noon on the Monday prior to the meeting.

If you are interested in a project, please visit www.ncpc.gov/meetings and click on the final agenda to view the full reports.

March

March 5, 2009

Text Amendment to the Zoning Regulations to Locate Firearm Retail Sales Establishments

File Number Z.C. 08-20

The National Capital Planning Commission commented favorably on a zoning text amendment submitted by the District of Columbia Zoning Commission to allow firearm retail sales establishments in several commercial and industrial zoning districts in Washington, DC. NCPC's review determined that the project is not inconsistent with federal interests or with the federal elements of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*. The amendment would allow firearm retail sales establishments as a matter-of-right use in specified medium and high-density, commercial areas, but not allow them to locate within 300 feet of a residential district, special purpose district, church, school, library, or playground.

MARCH INFORMATION PRESENTATION

New Signage for the National Mall

The National Park Service provided an informational presentation to the Commission on proposed new signage for the National Mall and neighboring memorial parks. According to the National Park Service, the current signage on the National Mall is in poor condition, inadequate, and lacks uniformity. All signs will therefore be replaced.

The proposed new signage will follow the Park Service's UniGuide Sign Standards that establish standards for the planning, design, fabrication, installation, inventory, and maintenance for outdoor signs at all National Park Service locations in the United States. It is being funded as part of the NPS Centennial Initiative, a challenge grant program of economic stimulus projects to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the founding of the National Park Service. It will be paid for through a 50/50 partnership between the NPS and the Trust for the National Mall.

Signs will be added in phases. During phase one, signage will be replaced around the Lincoln Memorial and parts of Constitution and Independence Avenues. In phase two, signs will be replaced in East and West Potomac Parks and on the Washington Monument grounds. Phase three will add signs east of the Washington Monument and near the plaza located in front of the Grant Memorial.



February

February 5, 2009



National Naval Medical Center Master Plan Update

File Number MP059

The National Capital Planning Commission approved a proposal by the United States Department of the Navy to update the Master Plan for the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) located in Bethesda, Maryland. Per the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) action, the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC will close. Military medical services in the National Capital Area will therefore be split between the National Naval Medical Center and a new hospital at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

The approved NNMC Master Plan will guide long-term development of the approximately 245-acre campus located on Rockville Pike in Bethesda. It is anticipated that by 2016 annual patients and visitors will nearly double and building square footage will increase from 4.7 million gross square feet to 6.35 million gross square feet.

Square 101, Lot 874, 2013 H Street, NW Zoning Map Amendment

File Number Z.C. 08-19

The Commission advised the Zoning Commission that a proposed map amendment to change the zoning for Square 101, Lot 874 located on H Street, NW between 20th and 21st Streets in Washington, DC would not be inconsistent with the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital* nor adversely affect any other identified federal interests. The map amendment would allow for an increase in allowable density on the site and remove a maximum lot occupancy requirement. The site's existing use would be expanded with a seven-story addition constructed next to an existing three-story building and carriage house.



Marriott Marquis Hotel Consolidated Planned Unit Development and Map Amendment

File Number Z.C. 08-13

The Commission advised the Zoning Commission that a consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) and related map amendment to construct the Marriott Marquis Hotel on Square 370 at the corner of 9th Street and Massachusetts Avenue, NW in the District would not be inconsistent with the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital* nor adversely affect any other identified federal interests. The PUD would allow for increased height. The map amendment would change the current split zoning.

The proposed convention center hotel would be located on an 82,888 square-foot site that would be connected to the Washington Convention Center by an underground tunnel. An existing seven-story office building would be renovated and incorporated into the project as a boutique hotel.

BRAC 133 Project Mark Center Development

File Number 6903

The Commission approved the location and the preliminary and final building foundation plans for the new DoD Washington Headquarters Services complex, part of a BRAC-related item submitted by the Department of the Army for the BRAC 133 Project Mark Center Development. As part of the action, the Commission also commented favorably on the concept site and building plans for the project.

Per BRAC requirements, the Army is required to relocate offices and personnel to secure locations by 2011. As part of this effort, they propose moving 6,409 personnel from the Washington Headquarters Service and related support personnel to two new buildings on a secure 15.9 acre site in the Mark Center in Alexandria, Virginia. The Mark Center, an existing office complex, is located at the intersection of Seminary Road and I-395.

The Commission recommended that the Army include planning for the location of a slip-ramp to I-395 from the south parking garage for federal employee traffic; conduct further design coordination with the city of Alexandria; complete the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 process for the north garage; submit a revised land use plan as part of the updated Fort Belvoir master plan; and continue to coordinate with the public.

St. Elizabeths Master Plan

The National Capital Planning Commission approved a proposal by the General Services Administration (GSA) for a final master plan for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) headquarters at St. Elizabeths, located in Southeast Washington, D.C. The Commission approved the West Campus portion of the final master plan and commented favorably on the transportation improvements and the East Campus portion of the plan.

The master plan will guide redevelopment of the 176-acre West Campus and a portion of the 280-acre East Campus and provide a secure federal site for executive leadership of the 22 agencies that make up the Department of Homeland Security.

The master plan seeks to maintain the historic character of the West Campus, preserve the natural context of the site to the extent possible, and promote sustainable development by achieving a Silver LEED rating. It includes the reuse of many of the existing buildings, and locates new development to respect the historic resources on the site.

NCPC's approval is contingent upon several factors including the construction by GSA of a west access road through the Shepherd Parkway; submission to NCPC by





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GSA of an Amendment to the Final Master Plan for Interchange/Access Road Improvements; and submission to NCPC by GSA of an Amendment to the Final Master Plan for the East Campus portion.

When completed, the DHS headquarters will include approximately 4.5 million gross square feet of office space plus 1.5 million gross square feet of parking. Approximately 14,000 DHS employees will ultimately be housed at St. Elizabeths, beginning with the United States Coast Guard. The project is expected to be implemented in three phases over an eight year period.

Potomac Park Levee

The Commission commented favorably on a design concept for improvements to the Potomac Park levee located on the National Mall near the intersection of Constitution Avenue and 17th Street, NW.

The plan addresses new requirements by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that a more reliable and effective means of flood protection be implemented on the site.

The concept design calls for construction of a new section of the existing levee system across 17th Street, NW that will utilize concrete and stone retaining walls

combined with a post and panel flood wall. The first phase will include the post and panel system, concrete walls, and a vault for storage of the post and panel system when it is not in use. The second phase will construct permanent earthwork, surface treatments, and landscaping. This first phase of improvements is required by FEMA to be in place by November 2009.

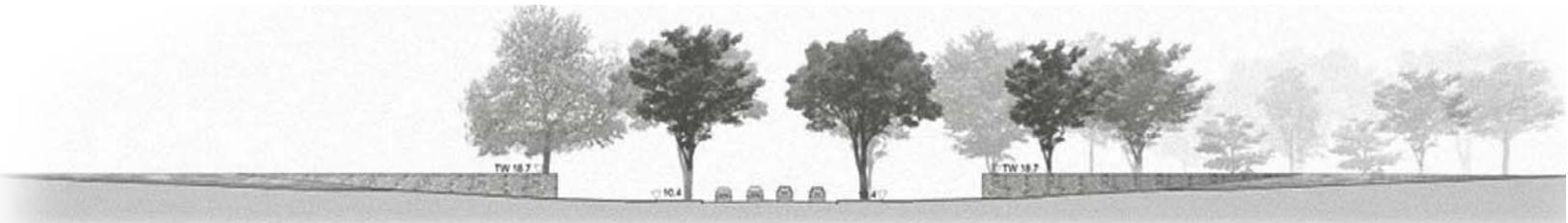
In providing its comments to the applicant, the Commission recommended that the Park Service develop a landscape plan that minimizes encroachment on the World War II Memorial and respects the intent of the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill 1976 Constitution Gardens plan and the Olin Partnership's 2003 plan for the Washington Monument grounds.



Fort Dupont Park Land Transfer

The Commission voted to postpone until March a proposal by the National Park Service to transfer the jurisdiction of approximately 15 acres of Fort Dupont Park in Southeast Washington, DC to the District of Columbia.

The District proposes to use the land to build a youth baseball academy and to expand the existing Fort Dupont Ice Arena. Following a presentation by staff and subsequent testimony from members of the public, National Park Service and District officials noted that it would be necessary to renegotiate some of the terms of the land transfer agreement. Therefore, the Commission voted to postpone action on the project in order to allow the National Park Service and the District of Columbia time to resolve outstanding matters and resubmit a revised agreement.



A Conversation with Chairman John V. Cogbill, III



On May 1, John V. Cogbill, III will begin a new role as a judge in one of the circuit courts of Virginia. His last day with the National Capital Planning Commission on April 30 will conclude nearly eight years of service as chairman of NCPCC. As his tenure comes to an end, staff spoke with Mr. Cogbill about his experience at the federal planning agency.

Q. You were first appointed to the Commission by President Bush in 2001, and reappointed to a second term in early 2007. How would you characterize your experience during the past eight years?

A. It has been an honor to serve as the chairman of NCPCC. I learned the importance of service to one's country as a cadet at West Point, and I have been able to see that spirit of service and integrity in the people with whom I have worked with while at the Commission. The United States is well served by its devoted civil servants, volunteers, and citizen advocates who work for the betterment of our country. It has been a real privilege to have worked alongside them and to have learned first hand of their dedication and commitment to the ideals of this country and to the preservation of the history and culture of our National Capital Region.

Q. What do you consider some of the more memorable initiatives that you worked on during your term?

A. During my years at NCPCC I have worked on many wonderful projects, including, the planning and development of commemorative works; balancing security and openness; the adoption of a comprehensive blueprint for the long-term development of our National Capital Region; and the new *Framework Plan* for Washington's monumental core that will help revitalize federal precincts near the National Mall. These projects and the other day to-day tasks of the agency represent a real commitment by NCPCC to make sure the nation's capital remains a world-class destination.

Q. You mentioned balancing security and openness, a challenging issue that led to the development of NCPCC's groundbreaking *National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan*. Has the plan been successful?

A. Absolutely. For nearly a decade, NCPCC has been a leader in developing urban design solutions that protect vulnerable public structures while maintaining the distinctive appearance of the capital. The plan has guided many highly visible projects including the redesign of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House and the award-winning grounds of the Washington Monument. Both examples demonstrate that security can be well

coordinated and blend seamlessly into the landscape. Our goal has always been to identify and promote a comprehensive approach to perimeter security that more fully respects the value of our important public spaces. Openness is a critical feature of Washington's urban design, and we need to preserve that without compromising security.

Q. You've spoken passionately before Congress about protecting and preserving the National Mall. How do you think NCPCC and CFA's new *Framework Plan* and the National Park Service's *National Mall Plan* will benefit America's capital city?

A. Working in unison, these bold new plans have the potential to shape a newly revitalized monumental core and civic stage that will better serve not only the people in the National Capital Region, but also all Americans who deserve a capital city that is vibrant, sustainable, and easy to navigate. The *National Mall Plan* provides a future roadmap for the National Mall. The *Framework Plan* shows how to create space for new memorials, museums, and other attractions that can make the center of the city the true heart of the nation's capital. So not only do we have the opportunity to create lively destinations in federal precincts near the Mall, we also have the chance to preserve the Mall while improving the visitor experience.

Q. Do you have any parting thoughts you would like to share with the Commission members, staff, and constituents you serve?

A. My eight years here have taught me that none of the agency's accomplishments would have been possible without the teamwork, cooperation, and dedication of committed citizens and their government. The countless projects and day to-day tasks of NCPCC represent devotion to an ideal and to a destiny that can only be achieved by a collective group of people who are committed to making a difference. I know I leave NCPCC in good hands, and I will always treasure the people and the experiences that have made this journey so wonderful.

Agency News

NCPC Welcomes John M. Hart

On January 5 John M. Hart began a six-year term as NCPC's commissioner from Maryland. Appointed by President Bush, Mr. Hart is a principal with RTKL Associates' Planning and Urban Design Group in Washington, DC. He serves as a project manager and lead designer for domestic and international master planning and urban design projects. Mr. Hart earned a Bachelor of Architecture from Miami University, and a Master of Architecture and a Master of City Planning from the University of Pennsylvania.



Goodbye to José Galvez



Commissioner José Galvez concluded his six-year term with NCPC on January 1. Throughout his tenure, Mr. Galvez lent his urban design and architecture skills to many initiatives. He served as a member of the Commission's Executive Committee, and as chairman of the South Capitol Street Task Force, where he led the effort to transform the street into a grand

urban boulevard. Mr. Galvez also played a key role in the agency's 2008 Capitals Alliance conference, Greening the World's Capital Cities, during which he helped to lead the Green DC tour.

Visitors Learn of the Agency's Work

On February 26 NCPC hosted a delegation of more than thirty senior-level executives participating in the Federal Executive Institute. Plan and Project Implementation Director William Dowd provided an overview of the agency's work. Community planner Shane Dettman then detailed the ambitious *Framework Plan*, a joint effort with the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts to revitalize federal precincts near the National Mall. Planning,



Research, and Policy Division Director Julia Koster later hosted a mini-workshop during which the group examined short and long-term challenges facing the federal government in its efforts to be more sustainable.

On February 11 students from Virginia Tech's Alexandria Center paid a call to NCPC. Chief of Staff Mike Sherman gave them a brief overview, community planner Amy Tarce spoke about CapitalSpace, and Urban Design and Plan Review Director David Levy discussed NCPC's review process. The students then participated in a mock review of a project that the Commission had reviewed (Ukrainian Manmade Famine Memorial of 1932-33). NCPC's Cheryl Kelly presented the project, Lucy Kempf read public testimony, and other staff answered questions and assisted during the process.



On January 9 NCPC hosted a small delegation from the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism. Julia Koster explained NCPC's role as the federal planning agency in the National Capital Region, with a particular focus on the Comprehensive Plan and NCPC's role in producing the plan's federal elements.

E-Newsletter Redesigned

To better serve those interested in the agency's work, NCPC redesigned its monthly e-newsletter in January 2009. First launched in June of 2008 to complement the Quarterly newsletter, the e-newsletter allows the agency to communicate with its constituents in a more timely fashion. As part of a broader agency-wide effort to enhance its outreach materials, the e-newsletter is now more visually appealing and provides a cleaner look to better highlight key NCPC initiatives.

To join NCPC's monthly e-newsletter list, receive the Quarterly newsletter, or obtain the monthly Tentative Agenda Items by email, please contact us at info@ncpc.gov.

Staff Announcements

Architect Ellyn Goldkind departed NCPC to be lead architect in the U.S. Department of State's Design and Construction Division, Office of Real Property Management. Since arriving at NCPC in May 2006, Ms. Goldkind reviewed several notable projects including master planning efforts for the Department of Homeland Security headquarters at St. Elizabeths and the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda.

NCPC also bid farewell to community planner Michelle Desiderio who served as the deputy in the Planning Research and Policy Division. Ms. Desiderio joined the agency in August of 2006. While at NCPC she researched and exposed flooding risks in the monumental core—the results of which were published in an agency report. Ms. Desiderio accepted a job heading up the National Green Building Program at the National Association of Home Builders Research Center.

Community planner Kael Anderson is on a three month detail with the District of Columbia Office of Planning. He will work with city staff on projects including sustainability initiatives, public space programs, and several subarea planning efforts.

Haley Berman joined NCPC as an intern in the Plan and Project Implementation Division for the 2009 spring semester. A junior at Cornell University, the San Antonio, Texas native will assist with the *Framework Plan* and the North Capitol Street Cloverleaf study.

The Quarterly: Digital versus Print?

As an increasing number of organizations and people move toward digital content over paper, NCPC wants to know if you prefer to receive our *Quarterly* newsletter electronically or via hard copy.

The *Quarterly*, which is published four times a year, is currently printed and distributed via direct mail. We also make it available electronically on our website.

To assist us in determining the most effective way to deliver the newsletter, the Office of Public Affairs has prepared a one-question survey. Your input will help ensure that you receive our communications in a format you most desire.

Question:

Would you prefer to receive the *Quarterly* in hard copy via the mail, or electronically?

You can call in your answer to 202-482-7281 or email us at info@ncpc.gov. Or, write to us at: The Quarterly, National Capital Planning Commission, 401 9th Street, NW, Suite 500, Washington DC 20004.

If you aren't currently on our mailing list for the newsletter, but would like to be added, please be sure to let us know! Also, tell us if you'd like to receive NCPC's E-Newsletter, providing current and timely information every four weeks.

To view a sample, visit our publications page at www.ncpc.gov and select "e-newsletter."

QUARTERLY

NCPC SPRING QUARTERLY JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH 2009

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NCPC Mailing List

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Commission Members

John V. Cogbill, III, Chairman, Presidential Appointee

Herbert F. Ames, Presidential Appointee

John M. Hart, Presidential Appointee

Arrington Dixon, Mayoral Appointee

Stacie S. Turner, Mayoral Appointee

The Honorable Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary of the Interior

The Honorable Paul F. Prouty
Acting Administrator of General Services Administration

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
Chairman, Senate Committee on Homeland
Security and Governmental Affairs

The Honorable Edolphus Towns
Chairman, House Committee on Oversight
and Government Reform

The Honorable Adrian M. Fenty
Mayor of the District of Columbia

The Honorable Vincent C. Gray
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

Executive Director
Marcel C. Acosta

The National Capital Planning Commission is the federal government's planning agency in the District of Columbia and surrounding counties in Maryland and Virginia. The Commission provides overall planning guidance for federal land and buildings in the region. It also reviews the design of federal construction projects, oversees long-range planning for future development, and monitors capital investment by federal agencies.

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