

# Cover Page



## 2016 Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan

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## Policy Statement

The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), an independent executive branch agency, defines and protects the federal government's interests in the development of the National Capital Region. We are guided by the National Capital Planning Act; the National Historic Preservation Act; the National Environmental Policy Act; and environmental and energy statutes, regulations, and executive orders. Through planning, policymaking, and project plan review, we protect the broad and multifaceted interests of the federal government. These interests include federal land, buildings and operations, including sustainability and open space; and the form, character and experience of the nation's capital.

Many of the agency's priorities and significant efforts for the upcoming year will continue to support the goals and requirements of Executive Order 13693, *Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade* (E.O. 13693). Additionally, the NCPC is moving forward with implementation of Executive Order 13653, *Preparing the United States for the Impacts of Climate Change* (E.O. 13653), which builds on the foundation of E.O. 13693.

A brief summary of these activities include:

- Updating and expanding elements of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital* (Comprehensive Plan) to respond to new policies, regulations, current data, and executive orders. This includes policies and descriptions in the Comprehensive Plan that promote a sustainable capital city and support federal initiatives in areas like climate change mitigation and adaptation, green buildings, sustainable water practices, energy efficiency, and low impact development.
- Coordinating with federal agencies in the region to identify opportunities for introducing sustainable practices as facilities and master plans are built and updated.
- Facilitating implementation of the recommendations for the SW Ecodistrict Initiative, a vision and plan that identifies development scenarios, urban design, and environmental strategies to transform 110-acres of primarily federal office space in Washington, DC into a sustainability showcase.
- Working closely with local and federal agencies to coordinate multiple climate adaptation efforts in the National Capital Region, and develop appropriate policies for the Comprehensive Plan that reflect the guidance of E.O. 13653.
- Collaborating with local, national, and international communities on climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.

With regard to the agency's Greenhouse Gas Inventory, the NCPC is only able to measure Scope 3 emissions (business and commuter travel) and part of Scope 1 emissions (wastewater). The NCPC saw a slight increase in FY 2015 emissions due to increases in air travel and employee commuting. Through our agency operations and our initiatives, the NCPC is committed to making the federal government a sustainability leader in the National Capital Region.

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Marcel C. Acosta  
Executive Director / Chief Sustainability Officer  
National Capital Planning Commission

# Executive Summary

## VISION

Sustainability is critical to the NCPC's mission to protect and enhance the extraordinary historic, cultural, and natural resources of the National Capital Region. The sustainability goals in Executive Order 13693 (E.O. 13693) support the NCPC's mission and strategic goals. These guide the development of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital* (Comprehensive Plan) and other long-range planning work. Each year the NCPC evaluates how to fully meet E.O. 13693's intent through its work plan.

Several of the goals and requirements in E.O. 13693 already exist in the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*. Pursuant to Section 4(a) of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. §8721(a)), the NCPC is responsible for the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan's Federal Elements, which address matters related to federal properties and interests in the National Capital Region. The Comprehensive Plan includes goals and policies for sustainably siting federal facilities, supporting transportation management and sustainable development patterns, and creating and preserving parks and open space. The Comprehensive Plan is currently being updated to reflect the goals of Executive Order 13653, *Preparing the United States for the Impacts of Climate Change* (E.O. 13653).

## LEADERSHIP

The NCPC is led by a twelve-member Commission that reviews and acts on the Comprehensive Plan, various agency-prepared plans and studies, federal projects, and a range of other projects and plans. Planning responsibilities within the District of Columbia are shared: in 1973, the District of Columbia Home Rule Act established the Mayor as the chief planner for private development in the District of Columbia but maintained that all development proposals on public land in the National Capital Region would still be reviewed by the NCPC. For proposals on federal land in the District of Columbia, the Commission has review and approval authority in lieu of zoning approval. These authorities allow the Commission to monitor and promote compliance with E.O. 13693 requirements. The NCPC uses sustainability policies on a regular basis through its plan review process, which includes review of site designs for every federal facility being planned and constructed in the National Capital Region. The NCPC's mission to protect the region's natural and cultural resources also makes sustainability a focus of our long-term planning initiatives.

The agency's Executive Director is the designated Chief Sustainability Officer. The agency has also appointed a lead sustainability planner to manage the agency's efforts in meeting the goals and requirements of E.O. 13693. Sustainability is an extremely important matter for the NCPC as an organization. Daily decisions such as taking public transit to meetings, encouraging digital distribution of information instead of traditional hard-copy documents, promoting web-based training, and recycling demonstrate how employees pursue a more sustainable future.

## PERFORMANCE SUMMARY REVIEW

The NCPC's FY 2016 work plan includes projects and initiatives that support E.O. 13693 goals. These are highlighted below.

### Comprehensive Planning

- Commission adoption of updates to all *Federal Elements* of the Comprehensive Plan in FY 2016 except for the update to the *Parks and Open Space Element*, which will occur after completion of the National Park Service (NPS) and the NCPC *Small Parks Management Plan* in FY 2017.
- Commission approval and adoption of a new *Urban Design Element* to the Comprehensive Plan in FY 2016. The *Urban Design Element* earned the Federal Planning Division award from the American Planning Association (APA) and the Committee of 100 on the Federal City Vision award.
- Develop staff draft of the NPS and the NCPC joint *Small Parks Management Plan* that includes an inventory of the parcels under the NPS ownership; identification of purpose and significance of each site; identification of fundamental cultural and natural resources; development of a Cultural Landscape Inventory of each site; definition of appropriate uses for each site; and the development of management mechanisms and partnership opportunities.
- In partnership with the NPS, initiate the *Memorials for the Future* design competition which includes commemorative thematic proposals addressing climate change and sustainability and seeks to increase awareness about more sustainable ways to efficiently use land and resources for commemorative purposes. Select finalists for the competition and host a speaker event on the topic.
- Prepare and submit staff comments to the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) on the NCPC's Ecosystem Services work plan.
- Review, analyze, and complete the *Federal Capital Improvements Program* (FCIP) for FY 2016-2021. The NCPC evaluates the federal capital projects with policies in the *Federal Elements* of the Comprehensive Plan, including sustainability policies.
- Continue providing timely comments to local jurisdictions on their Capital Improvement Programs (CIP) and various planning documents regarding federal interest issues, including related to sustainability.
- Collaborate with the District Government on the "100 Resilient Cities" initiative and the addition of a Resilience Element to the *District Elements* of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Continue working with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and other stakeholders on the *Smart Cities* initiative to correlate their efforts around the development of Washington DC as a "Smart City" pilot. The pilot/demonstration project plans to address sensor applications to parking, maintenance, security, energy, the environment, public space planning, wayfinding, and visitor centers.

### Project and Plan Review

- Review and analyze local and federal projects and their components to ensure compliance with federal requirements to minimize stormwater runoff and deforestation, and promote reductions in Scope 3 emissions by minimizing the need for single-occupancy vehicles.
- Review project submission guidelines to evaluate current guidance on sustainability goals and identify areas for revisions.
- Integrate E.O. 13653, *Preparing the United States for the Impacts of Climate Change*, guidance into the project review process.

## Physical Planning

- Continue collaboration with federal agencies and the District of Columbia on implementing the SW Ecodistrict Plan. This includes working in partnership to advance plans for improved access and pedestrian connections through Banneker Park, a National Park Service (NPS) property.
- Lead the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative to improve sustainable operations and maintenance of the Avenue between the White House and the Capitol.
- Collaborate with federal agencies and the District of Columbia to create new development guidelines for the J. Edgar Hoover building site, a large-scale urban transit-oriented redevelopment area. Coordinate recommendations and guidelines with the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative.
- Continue to participate in the District's Smarter DC Challenge, to supplement measuring progress towards sustainable practices and to facilitate our understanding of the NCPC's performance relative to other federal agencies and private offices in leased space.

## Public Engagement

- Continue to participate in and as appropriate, serve as convener of regional interagency groups including the Monumental Core Climate Adaptation Working Group (MCCA), the DC Flood Risk Management Team (DC Silver Jackets), the NASA Interagency Forum on Climate Change Impacts, and the Federal Adaptation Community of Practice.
- Coordinate with federal agencies and convene task groups to develop region-specific flood risk resources for use by federal agencies and others in applying E.O. 13690, *Establishing a Federal Flood Management Standard*.
- Participate in Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's (MWCOG) Climate, Energy, and Environment Committee and their Multi-Sector Working Group to reduce Green House Gases.
- Represent federal interests with regard to the District Department of Energy and Environment's Climate Adaptation Plan.
- Engage stakeholders on flood mitigation for the National Capital Region's infrastructure, including the 17<sup>th</sup> street levee closure. Share the NCPC's work at national conferences and with local audiences.
- Continue to provide public outreach and engagement on the NCPC initiatives related to regional and local sustainability, including the SW Ecodistrict Initiative.

## **PROGRESS ON ADMINISTRATION PRIORITIES**

The NCPC accomplished several projects and initiatives in FY 2015 that will help the agency meet the goals of E.O. 13693. These are highlighted below.

### Comprehensive Planning

- Completed drafts of the *Federal Elements* of the Comprehensive Plan and received approval to circulate for public comment. This included updates to the *Federal Environment Element* which covers new policies and executive orders on sustainability, flooding, and climate adaptation.
- Initiated drafts of the new *Urban Design Element* for the Comprehensive Plan.
- Reviewed 72 federal capital projects in the FCIP FY 2016-2021, which included renovation and modernization of buildings, flood protection, stormwater management systems, and energy efficiency projects.

- Commented on 10 local jurisdictional plans or Capital Improvement Programs (CIP) in the National Capital Region in FY 2015.
- Initiated the *Small Parks Management Plan* study with the NPS in FY 2015.
- Initiated the *Smart Cities Initiative* which includes research on sensor technology to monitor climate and environmental conditions.

### Project and Plan Review

- Reviewed and analyzed 112 plans and development projects to ensure compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other applicable plans and regulations. These reviews include transportation and stormwater management plans; for example, the NCPC approved the Pentagon Reservation Master Plan and the Intelligence Community Campus Bethesda site plan, which included significant stormwater and outfall remediation components.
- Attended meetings and provided comments for projects in the NEPA scoping phase. Staff also reviewed and provided comments on environmental documents.
- Collaborated with the Department of Defense to support facility planning in the National Capital Region that provides more transportation options, improved stormwater and energy management, and better connections to surrounding communities.

### Physical Planning

- Facilitated an urban leadership partnership between the NCPC, GSA, and the District of Columbia to make the SW Ecodistrict Initiative a case study within the National EcoDistrict Organization's Target City Program – a Commitment of the Clinton Global Initiative. Entering the second year of a two-year process, the NCPC and EcoDistricts will manage this partnership to accelerate the district-scale energy and water recommendations for the SW Ecodistrict and create replicable models for next-generation urban revitalization.
- Trained all the NCPC employees on the District Department of Energy and Environment's new stormwater regulations to ensure federal projects are meeting these regulations and the goals of E.O. 13693.
- Participated in the District's Smarter DC Challenge, to supplement measuring progress towards sustainable practices and to facilitate our understanding of the NCPC's performance relative to other federal agencies and private offices in leased space.

### Public Engagement

- Participated in and as appropriate, served as convener of regional interagency groups including the Monumental Core Climate Adaptation Working Group (MCCA), the DC Flood Risk Management Team (DC Silver Jackets), the NASA Interagency Forum on Climate Change Impacts, and the Federal Adaptation Community of Practice.
- Participated as an active member of the DC Silver Jackets, including leading the Interior Flooding Task Group and co-leading the Communications Task Group.
- Participated in Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's (MWCOG) Climate, Energy, and Environment Committee and their Multi Sector Working Group to reduce Green House Gases.
- Represented federal interests with regard to the District Department of Energy and Environment's Climate Adaptation Plan.

- Continued to provide extensive public outreach and engagement on the NCPC initiatives related to regional and local sustainability, including the SW Ecodistrict Initiative.

### Buildings and Operations

The building that the NCPC continues to lease was certified LEED Gold for Existing Buildings in fall 2011.

### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In January 2016, the NCPC submitted its FY 2015 Greenhouse Gas Inventory to the Office of Management and Budget and the Council on Environmental Quality. The NCPC showed a slight increase in greenhouse gasses for FY 2015. The agency went from 41 metric tons in FY 2014 to 49 metric tons in FY 2015. This can be attributed to increases in air travel and employee commuting. The NCPC also operated with three more employees in FY 2015 than in FY 2014. The NCPC is a small agency, so changes by one or two staff affect agency totals.

The agency is confident that through smart practices and daily sustainable choices such as using transit and technology the agency will continue to decrease emissions. Approximately 91 percent of the NCPC employees utilized the transit subsidy program as part of their daily commutes in FY 2015, and the agency is constantly looking at different ways to make greener commuting and business travel choices.

