



**Executive Director's Recommendation**  
Commission Meeting: January 10, 2013

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**PROJECT**

**SW Ecodistrict Plan**

Southwest Federal Rectangle Area  
Washington, DC

**SUBMITTED BY**

National Capital Planning Commission

**REVIEW AUTHORITY**

**Review and Direct**

per 40 U.S.C. § 8711 (e)(2)

**NCPC FILE NUMBER**

7003

**NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER**

00.00 43600

**APPLICANT'S REQUEST**

Acceptance of the SW Ecodistrict Plan pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8711 et. seq.

**PROPOSED ACTION**

Acceptance as requested

**ACTION ITEM TYPE**

Staff Presentation

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**PROJECT SUMMARY**

The SW Ecodistrict is a comprehensive and forward looking approach to transform an isolated federal precinct in the capital city into a highly sustainable workplace and livable neighborhood. In 2010, the National Capital Planning Commission formed the SW Ecodistrict Task Force, comprised of 17 federal and local partners to prepare the Plan. This initiative builds on the *Monumental Core Framework Plan (Framework Plan)* and *Executive Order 13514: Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy and Economic Performance (EO 13514)*.

The unique premise of an ecodistrict is that planning, implementing, and operating at a neighborhood or district-scale achieves greater environmental and economic results than relying solely on building-scale strategies. The Plan sets out to capture, manage, and reuse a majority of the energy, water, and waste among a group of buildings within a defined area. It also expands transportation capacity, improves mobility, and provides for a mix of uses within a neighborhood of connected parks, plazas and open spaces that provide for a vibrant, green, and walkable community and a national cultural destination.

The SW Ecodistrict Plan integrates district-scale and building-scale strategies to achieve aggressive sustainability and neighborhood development goals. The recommended Development Scenario addresses how a collection of buildings, public spaces, and related infrastructure can function together to:

- reduce energy consumption and move toward zero-net energy in the form of carbon;
- reduce potable water consumption and improve stormwater management;
- protect the National Mall from overuse and expand cultural opportunities beyond the Mall;
- remove visual and physical barriers between the National Mall and the waterfront;
- maximize use of federal land and buildings;
- increase development capacity and the mix of uses, including cultural, housing, retail and open space;

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- improve mobility and walkability and provide an attractive and engaging public realm; and
  - reduce the federal government's operating costs and contribute to the economic health of the city.

The Development Scenario illustrates how to prioritize and phase projects over a 20-year horizon as they are economically viable and align with federal and local investment priorities. The Plan recommends a governance strategy and outlines the funding and legislative tools that can help implement the recommendations, including district-wide improvements that will benefit multiple stakeholders.

### KEY INFORMATION

- The plan will guide future programming, planning, design, and development decisions for federally owned property. NCPC collaborated with federal and local partners to prepare the plan and coordinated with the DC Office of Planning (DCOP) in development of the Maryland Avenue, SW Small Area Plan. Both NCPC and DCOP have hosted public meetings and have sought input from the public and other stakeholders during the development of these plans.
  - The National Capital Planning Commission released the plan for a 60-day public comment period from July 12 – September 10, 2012. Staff then reviewed the comments and updated the plan, as appropriate.
  - The SW Ecodistrict vision transforms the area into a vibrant, well-connected, highly sustainable mixed-use community that will showcase sustainable practices.
  - The proposed Development Scenario, along with key environmental and neighborhood development strategies, exceed the aggressive sustainability targets found in *EO 13514*.
  - Four key focus areas are used to organize recommendations into manageable and related projects. Individually, each of these improvements will address important issues to incrementally help realize the plan; collectively, they will be transformative.
  - The conclusion of the high level economic analysis is encouraging in that the measurable and intrinsic benefits from transforming the Study Area into the SW Ecodistrict will likely exceed the investments required to do so.
  - The Plan requires a strong partnership between the federal government, the District of Columbia, private landowners, and developers.
  - The plan will serve as a guide for federal and local partners to program, plan, and design future development proposals. Federal agencies will be required to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act in the development of proposals to sell, alter, repurpose, or redevelop sites or land in the SW Ecodistrict.
  - The Task Force reviewed and accepted the SW Ecodistrict Plan at their meeting on December 5<sup>th</sup> and agreed to forward it to the Commission.
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## RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

**Accepts** the SW Ecodistrict Plan pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8711 et. seq. and

**Directs** staff to use the SW Ecodistrict Plan to:

- (1) Advise applicants to use the plan as a guide when programming, planning, and designing future development proposals in the study area.
- (2) Evaluate and make recommendations for development proposals in the study area that go beyond the routine maintenance of public buildings, and proposals for improvements to parks, public spaces, and public transportation systems.
- (3) Guide input on federal, local, and private planning studies and reports prepared for properties in the study area.
- (4) Inform future updates of NCPC's Strategic Plan. This document describes the Commission's mission, its values, and its vision, and conveys the agency's goals over a specified time period.
- (5) Develop or amend future NCPC planning studies and reports, including the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements* and the *Federal Capital Improvements Program*.

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## PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

<b>Previous actions</b>	<b>May 3, 2012</b> – Information presentation on the progress of the SW Ecodistrict Initiative. <b>July 12, 2012</b> -- Authorization to circulate the July 12, 2012 <i>SW Ecodistrict Plan</i> for a 60-day public comment period pursuant 40 U.S.C § 8711(e)(2).
<b>Remaining actions</b>	<b>Summer 2013</b> (tentative) – Review and Comment on Concept Plans for the 10 <sup>th</sup> Street, SW Streetscape Alternatives and the Banneker Park Pedestrian Connection.

Prepared by Diane Sullivan  
12/14/12

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## I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Site

The study area comprises about 110 acres and is bounded by Independence Avenue to the north, Maine Avenue to the south, 12<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, and 4<sup>th</sup> Street to the east. The 15 blocks include eight federal buildings, two federal parks, and eight private buildings. Approximately 56% of the land is federally owned, 26% is private, and the remainder is devoted to streets, freeways, and rail lines under the jurisdiction of the District of Columbia, the Federal Highway Administration, or CSX Railroad.

This site was included as part of the larger Southwest Rectangle proposal found in *The Monumental Core Framework Plan*.

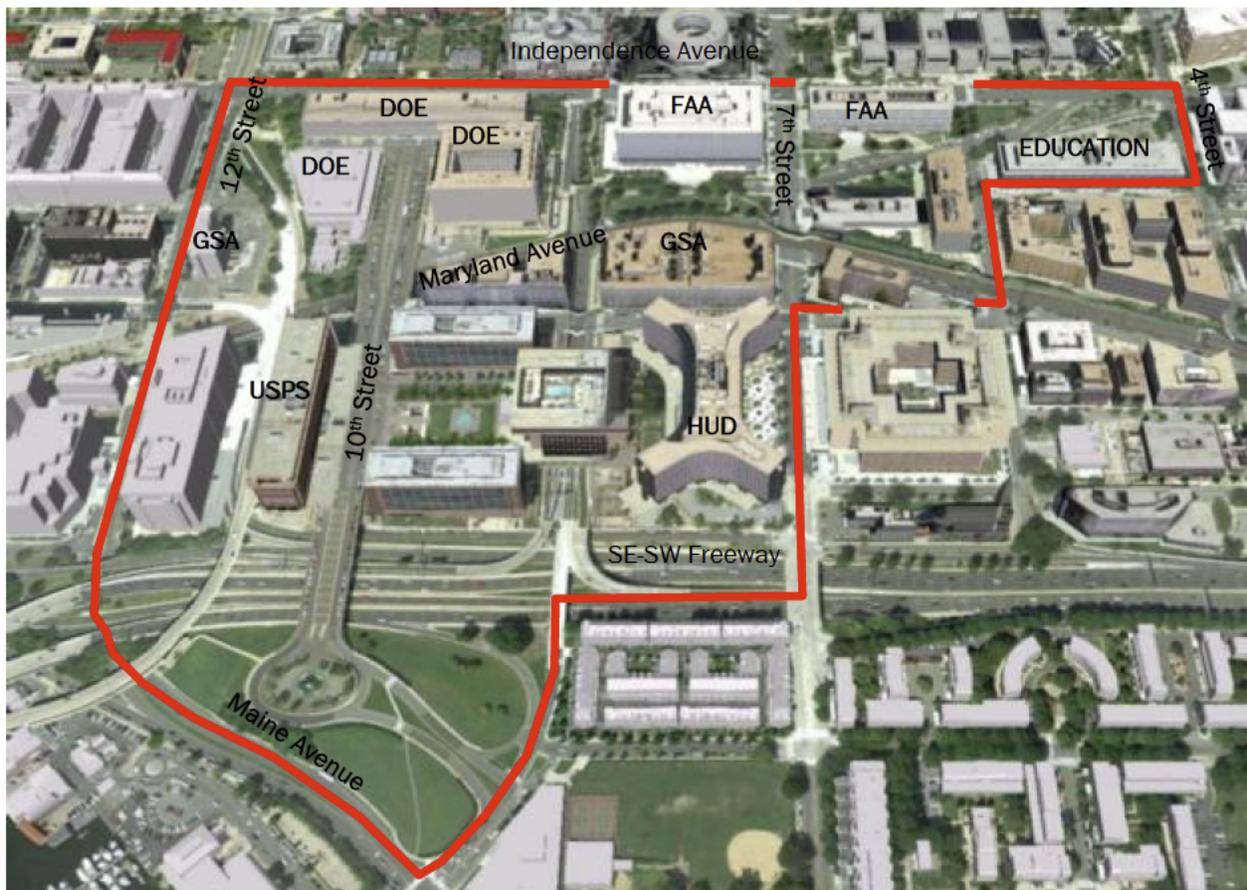


Figure 1: SW Ecodistrict Study Area.

## **Background**

Tenth Street, more commonly known as L'Enfant Promenade, is the central spine of this office precinct. Flanked by large modern office buildings, the street was constructed over the train tracks and new freeway to terminate in a circular park overlooking the Potomac River. The area is characterized by superblocks and single-use office buildings with large setbacks and no ground floor uses.

Crossing the railroad and highway require multiple levels of streets, ramps, and stairs that make it difficult to get around. The streetscape is barren with little vegetation and minimal amenities to serve the daily needs and comfort of pedestrians. Together, the building forms, infrastructure, and minimal public realm cause the area to seem isolated and undesirable for improvement or investment.



*Figure 2: Existing Conditions at Maryland Avenue (left) and 10th Street (right)*

A combination of proposed development, new federal planning initiatives, and market/economic forces is bringing significant change to the area. The Wharf, a multi-billion dollar waterfront development project will break ground in 2013; L'Enfant Plaza is expanding and recently completed renovations to the underground shopping center; museum and memorial sponsors are considering the area for development; and the National Park Service is making improvements to the National Mall. In addition, the federal government is re-examining its property to meet aggressive sustainability targets, create a more efficient workplace for a modern federal workforce, and reduce its operating costs.

## **Methodology**

To help identify goals and targets, the team researched ecodistrict projects from around the world, as well as local and federal policies and precedent plans. The team conducted a planning level inventory and assessment of existing physical, social, and environmental conditions derived from a range of planning sources. The existing conditions, reports, maps, and other resources are being compiled in a technical report. The inventory included:

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- The area's physical and social history, including historic, cultural, and geological resources.
  - The area's land use, development activity, and socio-economic features.
  - Transportation related data and a feasibility assessment of the possible vertical and horizontal connections to reconnect the street grid.
  - Environmental conditions, such air quality, noise, flora and fauna, and hydrology, including the energy and water use and waste generated by the federal and private buildings.
  - An assessment of the projected real estate market and baseline development program.

Using this information, a series of development, transportation, and environmental strategies were identified. Environmental strategies were tested using formulas based on the performance of similar building typologies, as well as a Building Information Modeling process. The models helped to eliminate strategies that would not help fulfill the ecodistrict goals and identify those strategies that would help meet or exceed the goals.

The Development Scenario was refined as the strategies were applied and tested to evaluate performance and how the results compared to the project goals and targets. Using the Development Scenario, an initial high level economic study was prepared to assess the costs and benefits and how district-scale strategies would yield results over time. This assessment help the Task Force determine if additional planning work would be worthwhile and how to think about the priorities, funding mechanisms, and the partnerships necessary to move the plan's recommendations forward.

### **Plan Overview**

The SW Ecodistrict's vision sets out to achieve a revitalized, well-connected, mixed-use community and cultural destination, as well as a high performing environmental showcase. Redevelopment will be led by an economically successful partnership, resulting in prudent use of public funds as well as numerous intrinsic environmental and social benefits.

To achieve the vision, neighborhood development and environmental strategeis work together to inform the Develoment Scenario and the specific parcel and street recommendations.

The neighborhood development strategies applied to the SW Ecodistrict will transform the Study Area into a revitalized mixed-use and well-connected neighborhood.

- **Civic Realm strategies** enhance and create a variety of public spaces, offering attractive settings for cultural destinations.
- **Land Use Development strategies** accommodate existing federal office space and provide for new residential, retail, and cultural uses.



**Transportation strategies** build on the existing road, rail, and bus infrastructure to enhance transit capacity, improve bike and pedestrian systems, and better connect all modes of travel. They re-establish and improve rights of way to promote active, walkable streets and provide connections within the Study Area and between the National Mall and the Southwest Waterfront.

The recommendations are organized into manageable and related project areas, each of which will act as a catalyst to transform the area. They include:

- **Independence Quarter** (Independence to Maine Avenues between 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets). The key recommendation is to redevelop the Forrestal Complex to include a new sustainable state-of-the-art Department of Energy Headquarters, as well as new places to live, work, and visit in a manner befitting the monumental core.
- **10<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor and Banneker Park**. The key recommendation is to redefine 10<sup>th</sup> Street as a vibrant mixed-use corridor and establish Banneker Park as a premier national cultural destination.
- **Maryland Avenue and 7<sup>th</sup> Street corridors**. The key recommendation is to realign the railroad to increase freight and commuter capacity and deck the rail corridor to establish Maryland Avenue as a mixed use urban boulevard centered on a new signature urban park and an expanded L'Enfant Station intermodal center.
- **Southwest Freeway**. The key recommendation is to use the air-rights to develop over a decked Southwest Freeway for private, mixed-use development and to accommodate a solar canopy to increase the renewable energy source for the ecodistrict.

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To establish the SW Ecodistrict as a high performance environmental showcase, key environmental strategies include improvements to energy, water, waste, and green infrastructure.

**Energy strategies include:**

- **Rehabilitate and redevelop buildings:** Lightly rehabilitate buildings by upgrading fixtures and mechanical systems, fully rehabilitate buildings by also improving building fenestration and skins, and develop new buildings to LEED Platinum standards.
- **Solar energy:** Use solar thermal panels on new and rehabilitated buildings, over a portion of the freeway, and over a new train station.
- **Ground source heat:** Use ground source (geothermal) heat for buildings that sit on grade.
- **Sewer-mining:** Mine the heat from wastewater to heat nearby new residential and cultural buildings.
- **Central Utility Plant:** Modernize the central utility plant, expand it to serves additional uses to balance loads between day and evening use, and convert the natural gas fuel source to a non-carbonized energy source as emerging technologies are available.
- **Shade and reflective structures:** Maximize tree planting, shade structures, and reflective surfaces to reduce the heat island effect.

**Water strategies include:**

- **Potable water conservation:** Retrofit buildings with water conservation fixtures.
- **Water reuse:** Collect, clean, treat, and store stormwater or gray water from building rooftops, streets and plazas and reuse for non-potable purposes. Maximize use of rain gardens and bio retention areas to treat stormwater.

**Waste strategies include:**

- **Waste water:** Convey waste water to the Blue Plains Waste Water Treatment Plant to generate methane gas through anaerobic digestion.
- **Solid waste recycling:** Design buildings to maximize composting and recycling operations.
- **Construction waste:** Set targets to recycle building materials and require use of reusable or recycled materials.

**Green Infrastructure strategies include:** Integrate native vegetation into buildings, parks, plazas, streetscapes and bio-retention features such as rain gardens to improve water quality and visual aesthetics, lower energy/water consumption, and promote mid-Atlantic ecology.

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## Results

Combined, the SW Ecodistrict strategies and recommendations yield greater results from district-scale strategies. Results include:

### Use mix:

- Retain and improve efficiency of 7.9 million square feet of federal office space that will accommodate up to 19,000 additional employees.
- Create an additional 1 million square feet of office space for private or federal office purposes, and 1.8 million square feet for residential and hotel use.
- Develop 100,000 square feet of neighborhood-serving retail space.
- Establish four to six sites for up to 1.2 million square feet of cultural development area and several memorial sites.
- Create 14 acres of new and improved parks and plazas.

### Mobility:

- Reconnect the street grid and create 16 new intersections for easy accessibility.
- Expand the rail corridor and the L'Enfant Station to increase commuter transit capacity in the region.
- Establish a grand connection between the National Mall and the waterfront.

### Environment:

- Reduce the area's greenhouse gas emissions by 51%.
- Allow for the capture and reuse of all the rainwater in the SW Ecodistrict.
- Reduce potable water use by 70%.
- Increase the amount of waste diverted from the landfill from 35% to 80%.
- Transform the federally-owned cogeneration plant into a highly efficient and financially successful energy provider.

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### **Plan Applicability**

The *SW Ecodistrict Plan* will serve as a flexible tool for federal, District, and private entities to inform future facility and infrastructure planning and development decisions.

- The Plan is not a prescriptive master plan; it identifies flexible opportunities to coordinate development, public space, infrastructure, and transportation improvements.
- The strategies, guidelines, recommendations, illustrations, and diagrams are intended to communicate planning and design principles to guide future development proposals and infrastructure projects that will advance the Ecodistrict goals.
- The plan will guide future programming, planning, design, and development decisions for federally owned property under the jurisdiction of individual federal agencies, such as the General Services Administration or the National Park Service.
- The Plan is not applicable to District-owned or privately-owned land. However if implemented, some recommendations may result in privatizing land, therefore participation by the District and the private property owners is vital to achieve the goals of the plan.
- Some initiatives will only be considered when the useful life of a facility or infrastructure system is near its end, although they may warrant detailed feasibility studies to begin sooner.
- The near- and long-term project recommendations will require additional detailed planning, evaluation, and design to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and other requirements.
- Projects can be pursued as funding becomes available either through public-private partnerships or congressional appropriations, particularly for those recommendations that have far-reaching public benefits.

The plan identifies the potential partnerships necessary to carry the projects out, as well as the possible legislative tools and governance approaches that may help move the projects toward implementation.

### **Plan Update**

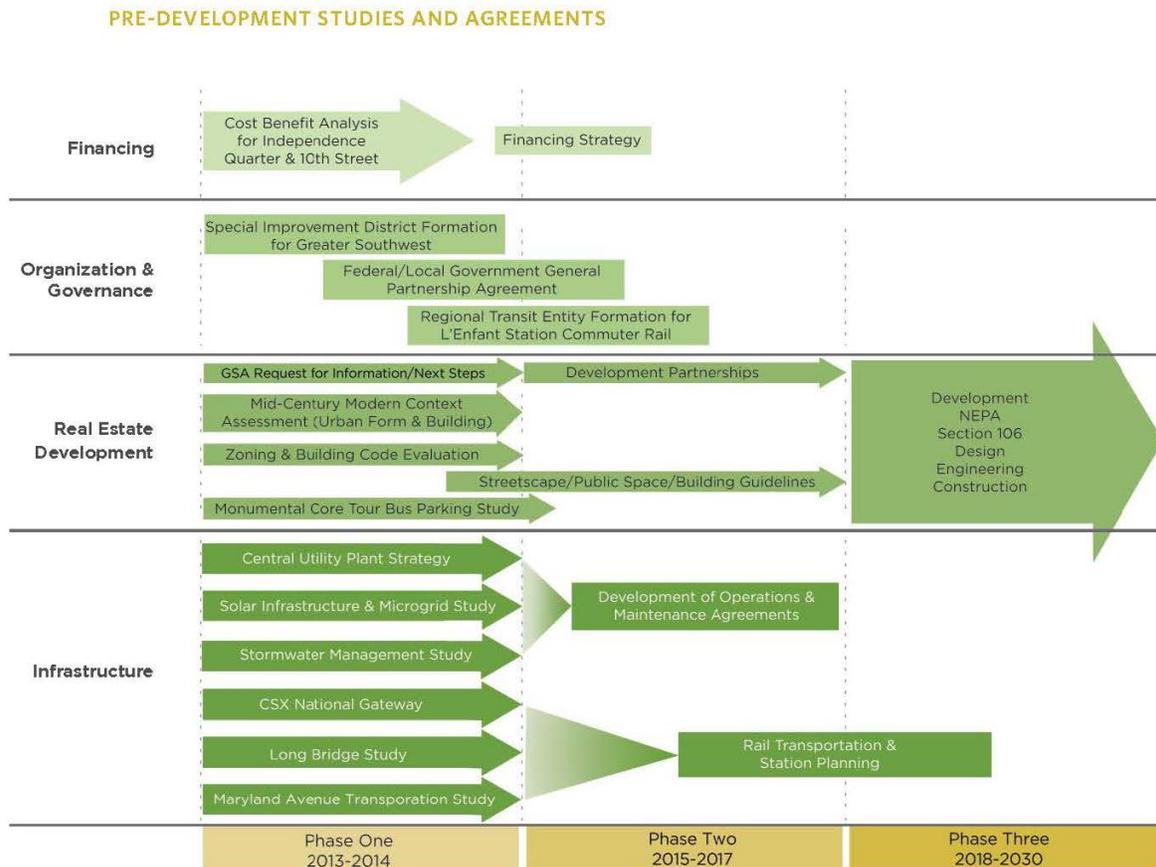
Since the last plan submission to the Commission, the staff advertised a public comment period from July 12 through September 10, 2012. A number of comments were submitted. The plan was also reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the SW Ecodistrict Task Force, representing their respective agencies. In summary, there was strong support for the plan, with particular support for:

- Development over the freeway
- Restoration of the L'Enfant Grid/Maryland Avenue
- Removal of the Forrestal Building over 10<sup>th</sup> Street
- Pedestrian and bicycle improvements
- Enhanced open spaces
- Energy and water strategies

Below is a chart of the concerns expressed from the public and Task Force, along with the resolution of the concern as expressed in the updated plan language:

Concern	Resolution
Solar panels over the freeway	Clearer designs are provided in Chapter 4 that shows buffering and landscaping. Updated language acknowledges that it will need further study.
Repurposing of the US Postal Service building and impacts of development surrounding the building.	New language in the plan reads  <i>“Accommodate street-level retail, educational, and cultural uses along the USPS building’s 10<sup>th</sup> Street frontage without impacting the lobby on the ground floor. Rehabilitate the building to improve space and energy efficiency. When Maryland Avenue is constructed, incorporate a civic use at the intersection of 10<sup>th</sup> and Maryland Avenue without impacting USPS building operations or security. If the USPS ever relocates its headquarters, consider repurposing the building.”</i>
Need for a security discussion within the plan.	This is now addressed in Chapter 2 on page 12.
Recognition of needed flexibility for redevelopment opportunities.	This is now shown throughout the Introduction and Chapter 5.
Acknowledgement of costs and limited funds, and a need for an implementation strategy.	The Overview (pg. iii) and Chapter 5 (pg. 88) now acknowledge that resources such as congressional appropriations may not be readily available in the future. The findings of the high-level cost benefits analysis are discussed on pg. 86. More detailed costs will be discussed in the follow-up studies currently underway. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The economic analysis for the area bounded by GSA’s Federal Triangle South boundary;</li> <li>- The technical and financial analysis on the stormwater infrastructure system; and</li> <li>- The interim streetscape design for the 10<sup>th</sup> Street corridor and the Banneker connection.</li> </ul>

In addition to the changes recommended by the public, OMB, and the Task Force, the team added a significant amount of detail to the Implementation section of the plan (Chapter 5). This section now outlines all of the next steps that need to be coordinated prior to any future development. These include pre-development agreements and studies pertaining to financing, organization and governance, real estate development, and infrastructure (see diagram below).



**Moving Forward**

The Task Force will continue to play a major part in the development of the SW Ecodistrict, using their institutional knowledge from the planning phase of the project to advise staff on next steps. They will meet as needed, which traditionally is 3-4 times per year. Roles and responsibilities include:

- Provide direction on follow-up studies
- Help coordinate the work of respective agencies within the Ecodistrict
- Guide development of implementation tools and entities
- Designate the technical staff to participate in working groups as needed

In addition, the Task Force and staff have commenced three new studies that will inform the implementation of the ecodistrict and the scoping that GSA has begun for their buildings within the ecodistrict. These studies include:

- The Economic Analysis - this study will look at the costs and benefits of the development analysis disaggregated by stakeholder.
- The Stormwater Infrastructure Study – this study will further analyze the technical and financial feasibility of the stormwater infrastructure system and how it might be phased.
- The Interim Streetscape for 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Banneker Connection – this study will develop three concept alternatives for the design of 10<sup>h</sup> Street, including determining the new right-of-way width needed to accommodate the program criteria for the street. It also includes concept design for a temporary pedestrian connection between Banneker Park and the Maine Avenue.

## II. PROJECT ANALYSIS/CONFORMANCE

### Executive Summary

This project is the direct result of two major federal initiatives: *The Monumental Core Framework Plan*, and *Executive Order 13514: Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy and Economic Performance*. Both documents have provided specific guidance on the goals and targets found in the Plan.

The plan's path to sustainability requires improving building systems, maximizing the use of urban land, upgrading utility and road infrastructure, and investing in open space and transit. These improvements will meet the ecodistrict goals, create investment, and save money over the next 20 years.

The SW Ecodistrict Plan incorporates multiple development strategies, including rehabilitating, repurposing, infilling with new development, and redeveloping federal buildings and sites. Without displacing federal agencies, these actions can occur as federal space needs change; buildings are modernized, or as opportunities arise to leverage federal, local, and private funds.

While rehabilitating existing buildings will dramatically decrease energy and water use and improve efficiency of interior space, it is the repurposing, infill, redevelopment, and infrastructure improvements that will be catalytic in transforming the SW Ecodistrict into a highly sustainable and mixed-use community.

### Compliance with Federal Policies and Plans

The SW Ecodistrict Plan builds on federal and local plans and policies to showcase best practices in sustainable neighborhood development. A summary of how the SW Ecodistrict furthers these plans and policies is provided in this section.

### Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

The SW Ecodistrict builds on the policies contained in both the Federal Elements and District of Columbia Elements, striving to advance goals in a way that meets the community's collective aspirations. Although the District Elements do not apply to federal lands, it is important to

understand how it guides development of nearby private property and how it may affect conveyed lands under the city's jurisdiction. The DC Land Use and Central Washington Elements include general and site specific policies to enhance the livability of federally dominated precincts in the Southwest Rectangle.

The SW Ecodistrict Plan complies with the *Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan*, and illustrates best practices for a number of the Elements.

*Federal Workplace: Location, Impact and the Community*

The Federal Workplace Element promotes thoughtful location of federal facilities to strengthen economic ties with the local community, enhance efficiency and productivity of the federal workforce, and emphasize Washington's distinction as "the seat of the national government."

The SW Ecodistrict Plan builds on the following *Comprehensive Plan* policies:

- Maintain and reinforce the preeminence of the monumental core by attracting and retaining federal employment through modernizing, repairing, and rehabilitating existing federal workplaces in the monumental core.
- Maintain and reinforce the preeminence of the monumental core by supporting the implementation of the other planning initiatives within the Legacy Plan, including transportation, infrastructure, and other development projects.
- Support regional and local agency objectives that encourage compact forms of growth and development when locating federal workplaces.

The Plan increases the space efficiency of federal facilities and seeks to retain federal headquarters in the Study Area, accommodate agencies' evolving missions, and provide a modern work place for the next generation of federal workers. Benefits include reducing operating costs for the federal government, and providing the opportunity for new, private development that will provide a balanced mix of uses for a sustainable, active community. The plan also supports the 2010 Telework Enhancement Act and GSA's Mobility and Telework Policy, which outline when and how employees may work remotely.

*Transportation*

The *Transportation Element* encourages use of a variety of transportation modes to improve regional mobility and improve the environment. The SW Ecodistrict Plan builds on the following *Comprehensive Plan* policies:

- Expand capacity and service of the regional Metrorail and Metrobus systems, and other local and regional transit services.
- Expand levels of service for commuter rail between the District of Columbia and the states of Maryland and Virginia.
- Support the design and implementation of new, expanded, and innovative transit services that supplement existing transit and fill unmet transit needs (e.g., Downtown Circulator, Busway, Bus Rapid Transit projects, light rail, trolley).
- Develop intermodal transit centers that provide greater transit access and improved interconnectivity for federal commuters.
- Encourage ridesharing, biking, walking, and other non-single-occupant vehicle modes of transportation for federal commuters.

The SW Ecodistrict Plan will substantially improve mobility to, from, and within the area. The plan reconnects the street grid, expands transit capacity, and enhances intermodal connections

by accommodating multiple transportation options, including pedestrian and bike infrastructure. Improvements will help reduce roadway congestion and air pollution, lessens dependence on fossil fuels, increases public health and business productivity, and makes it easier to access jobs that contribute to the local and regional economy.

#### *Parks and Open Space*

The Parks and Open Space Element protects the region's open space, conserving habitat and recreational opportunities. The SW Ecodistrict Plan builds on the following *Comprehensive Plan* policies:

- Enhance parks and preserve open green space for future generations.
- Maintain and conserve federal open space as a means of shaping and enhancing urban areas.
- Plan, complete and maintain connection between public parks and open space.
- Restore, protect and enhance historic designed landscape parks (squares, circles, and triangles) associated with the L'Enfant City.
- Maintain small urban parks primarily as historic parks and designed landscapes with fountains, monuments, memorials, tree cover and other features of civic art.
- Use monumental parks and landscapes to provide settings for public buildings, monuments, and memorials, and to create special environments for limited activities.
- Site memorials in monumental and designed landscape parks in compliance with the *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*.
- Avoid physical barriers to the waterfront, and long, unbroken stretches of buildings or walls along waterfronts.

The plan seeks to establish an interconnected system of diverse public places that connect the National Mall and the waterfront, and strengthen the civic realm by improving the setting for new public spaces and cultural destinations.

There is a limited amount of urban park land within the Study Area. The Plan proposes to retain and improve approximately 14 acres. The publicly accessible parks will be linked by green corridors of bioretention elements, tree canopy, green roofs and living walls. 10<sup>th</sup> Street is proposed to be redesigned as an urban park that extends the civic decorum of the National Mall to the waterfront, and Maryland Avenue would be restored as a green boulevard that strengthens the linkage of the Ecodistrict to the U.S. Capitol.

While Banneker Park is proposed to retain its civic prominence, the Plan proposes to develop part of the park as a nationally significant memorial or museum, as recommended in NCPC's *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*. Reservation 113 will be a signature urban park, a destination for workers, residents, and visitors throughout the year.

#### *Federal Environment*

The *Federal Environment Element* encourages agencies to "preserve, protect and enhance" the mid-Atlantic ecosystem of the National Capital Region. The SW Ecodistrict Plan builds on the following *Comprehensive Plan* policies:

- Mobile sources of air pollutants should be reduced by encouraging federal, state, and local governments and private employers to support improvements to and use of the public transportation systems.
- Stationary sources of air pollutants should be reduced by:

- Minimizing power generation requirements, by using best available “green” building systems and technologies.
- Using non-polluting sources of energy (e.g., solar energy).
- Encouraging the development and use of alternative energy sources to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels.
- Use pervious surfaces and retention ponds to reduce stormwater runoff and impacts on off-site water quality.
- Encourage the use of innovative and environmentally friendly “Best Management Practices” in site and building design and construction practice, such as green roofs, rain gardens, and permeable surface walkways, to reduce erosion and avoid pollution of surface waters.
- Require wastewater reduction through conservation and reuse in all new federal buildings and major federal renovation projects.
- Promote water conservation programs and the use of new water-saving technologies that conserve and monitor water consumption in all federal facilities.
- Encourage the implementation of water reclamation programs at federal facilities for landscape irrigation purposes and other appropriate uses.
- Incorporate new trees and vegetation to moderate temperatures, minimize energy consumption, and mitigate stormwater runoff.
- Encourage the use of native plant species, where appropriate.

*E.O. 13514* requires all federal agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, manage stormwater, and reduce water use and waste – a challenge for buildings in urban areas. It also requires agencies to prepare for the effects of climate change through climate adaptation.

The U.S. Climate Change Science Program examined the potential effects of climate change in the National Capital Region in 2009. Washington, DC is particularly vulnerable to threats associated with sea-level rise in low lying areas. The SW Ecodistrict is located outside of the floodplain. Because of topography, it is substantially elevated from the Washington Channel, providing it protection from near-term impacts with regard to sea-level rise.

Through district-scale planning, the Study Area can transform a resource-intensive environment into one that is able to capture, manage and reuse a majority of its resources. This means that through district, block, and building strategies, the Ecodistrict will create energy from renewable sources, capture and use rainwater for its non-potable water needs and divert a majority of its waste from landfills. It can also support connected, living corridors of green infrastructure, with green roofs and walls, streetscape and tree plantings, and open spaces contributing to improved human health and urban biodiversity. These strategies will provide cost savings over the next 20 years, and enable federal agencies to exceed the goals and requirements of *E.O. 13514*.

### **Federal Capital Improvements Program (FCIP)**

As federal agencies begin to implement the recommendation over time, the FCIP will be updated to reflect these projects. The Applicability Section on p. 10 outlines how the plan will be used.

### **National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan Objectives and Policies**

While the Urban Design and Security Plan proposes solutions to seamlessly integrate building

perimeter security into the historic urban fabric of the monumental core, these temporary and permanent perimeter security measures foster the perception of an inaccessible and defensive bureaucracy.

The federal government's approach to perimeter security is evolving. The Interagency Security Committee's *Risk Management Process for Federal Facilities* encourages a customized, flexible, and balanced approach to assessing building security needs with integrated counter measures that respect the openness and accessibility of the public realm.

The Plan recommends hardening structural and architectural features of buildings; limiting perimeter security in the public space or building yards; and minimizing perimeter security and making it indistinguishable from the landscape.

### **Monumental Core Framework Plan**

The SW Ecodistrict Plan is derived directly from the *Framework Plan's* proposal for the Southwest Rectangle. As its cornerstone strategy, the Framework Plan's goal for this area is to extend the civic qualities of the National Mall, connect the Mall to the waterfront, retain federal headquarters and improve the federal workplace, and restore the urban fabric in a manner that enhances the sustainability of the monumental core. The Framework Plan's primary strategies are:

- Redefine 10<sup>th</sup> Street, SW into a dynamic, mixed-use corridor and improve the setting of Banneker Park to create a nationally significant cultural destination.
- Establish Maryland Avenue as a grand boulevard between the U.S. Capitol and the Jefferson Memorial.

The SW Ecodistrict Plan focuses on the next level of detailed planning necessary to move the Framework Plan's recommendations toward implementation.

### **The Memorials and Museums Master Plan**

The *Memorials and Museums Master Plan (2M)* guides the location and development of future commemorative works and cultural facilities, and calls for a "Reserve" on the National Mall to protect it from overbuilding, as legislated by Congress in the amended *Commemorative Works Act*. The 2M Plan identifies 20 prime sites, those of the highest order appropriate for pre-eminent commemorative works or cultural facilities of national importance. Three of these sites are located in the study area: (1) the intersection of Maryland and Independence Avenues between 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets, the location of the proposed Eisenhower Memorial; (2) Banneker Park at the terminus of 10<sup>th</sup> Street; and (3) Reservation 113 at the intersection of Maryland and Virginia Avenues. Although directly adjacent to the National Mall and Smithsonian Institution, sponsors of national cultural facilities have passed over Banneker Park and Reservation 113 because of the area's current isolated conditions, inadequate public-realm, and poor visitation potential.

To establish the SW Ecodistrict as a livable community and new national cultural destination, the plan recommends an interconnected system of diverse public places that connect the National Mall and the waterfront. It also strengthens the civic realm by improving the setting for new public spaces and cultural destinations. To achieve this, the plan:

- Creates new cultural destinations by concentrating museums, memorials, and civic

institutions, in signature parks, plazas, landscapes, and building that reinforce symbolic relationships among existing and new nationally important places.

- Strengthens the relationship between new and existing important public buildings, monuments, memorials, and public spaces by retaining or restoring the historic view corridors and establishing walkable and memorable public spaces that reflect a civic quality befitting the nation's capital.
- Sites new museum, memorials, and civic institutions on axis with or in proximity to symbolically important public buildings and places.

### **Extending the Legacy: Planning America's Capital for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

The *Extending the Legacy plan* aligns L'Enfant Plan with modern smart growth and sustainable planning principles. It calls for unifying Washington's monumental core with the local city; encouraging a mix of federal and private activity in all quadrants of the city; protecting the historic landscape of the National Mall from future building; reintegrating the rivers into public life; and using public buildings and other facilities to stimulate economic development.

In Southwest, *Legacy*-related strategies focus on the 10<sup>th</sup> Street corridor and Maryland Avenue, calling for the repair of the urban fabric by restoring the street grid, building over highways, and redeveloping superblocks for a more livable and sustainable community. The SW Ecodistrict Plan provides specific design strategies to realize the vision of the *Legacy Plan*, including:

- Redeveloping and infilling parcel to recreate the street grid.
- Use the city's physical framework of major axes, street grid, prominent termini, reservations, and scenic overlooks to site cultural facilities.
- Use reciprocal views along corridors to create focal points that establish symbolic connections extend the civic character of the National Mall into the Study Area.
- Design buildings and landscape elements to define public spaces, frame vistas, establish pedestrian orientation and ordered movement through the Study Area.
- Enhance avenues, streets, and public spaces with fountains, public art, and landscape and other pedestrian amenities.
- Improve street tree canopy to strengthen axial views and extend the park-like character of the National Mall into the Study Area.
- Orient building entrances and plazas to create usable and engaging places for pedestrians.

### **CapitalSpace**

The CapitalSpace Initiative envisions a beautiful, high-quality, unified park system for the nation's capital centered around six Big Ideas. Of these ideas, the SW Ecodistrict directly supports three:

- *Enhance urban natural areas and better connect residents to encourage urban stewardship for natural resource.*
- *Enhance Center City parks and open space to support a vibrant downtown.*

- *Transform small parks into successful public spaces, forming a cohesive network of green spaces.*

The SW Ecodistrict Plan contributes to implementing CapitalSpace by improving 14 acres of parks and plazas. The Plan improves the civic realm (*Federal Comprehensive Plan – Parks and Open Space*, p. 14) and incorporates contiguous green infrastructure elements into the Study Area (a system of landscaped elements, such as parks, living walls, green roofs, streetscape plantings, bio-retention such as rain gardens, and mature tree canopies). The most successful systems seamlessly blend these elements into energy, water, and waste infrastructure, and enhance the built environment for improved human connections with nature.

Integrating a green infrastructure system into the buildings, sites, and utility infrastructure will result in cost-effective improvements through a living system that:

- Cleans the air and stormwater to enhance urban ecology and improve human health.
- Cools the overall temperature of the area, reducing the heat island effect, decreasing energy costs, and improving habitat and pedestrian comfort.
- Connects contiguous green spaces along the ground, up living walls, and over green roofs, creating diverse habitat opportunities and connecting people to nature.

### **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)**

Throughout the preparation of the SW Ecodistrict Plan, NCPC: (1) sought information from individuals, organizations, and interested federal, state, and local agencies to identify concerns; and (2) documented the existing environmental, historic, and cultural conditions and current planning activities. This information provides the foundation for good decision making, and is compiled in an Existing Conditions Technical Report that may be useful to federal agencies when a future NEPA document is prepared. The SW Ecodistrict Plan clearly states that federal agencies will be required to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act prior to development of proposals to sell, alter, repurpose, or redevelop its resources.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. et seq., requires federal agencies to consider potential environmental impacts of major federal actions. Consideration of environmental impacts must be evaluated prior to decision making and project implementation. While NCPC's policy requires an environmental review to inform its analysis of project proposals for Master Plans, Site Proposals for Commemorative Work, and Preliminary Plans, and Final Plans, it is not required for Concept Plans.

### **National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)**

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Law 16 U.S.C. §470, establishes programs and policies for preserving historic properties throughout the nation. Section 106 of NHPA requires all federal agencies to consider the effects of its decisions on historic properties and to seek input of the public as well as consulting parties on projects that may affect historic properties. While NCPC's policy requires compliance with Section 106 of NHPA to inform its analysis of

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project proposals for Master Plans, Site Proposals for Commemorative Work, and Preliminary Plans, and Final Plans, it is not required for Concept Plans.

The SW Ecodistrict Plan identifies the buildings and properties that have been designated and those that are eligible for designation as well as properties yet to be evaluated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). It also specifies that federal agencies will be required to comply with the NHPA in the development of proposals to sell, alter, repurpose, or redevelop properties in the SW Ecodistrict Study Area.

### III. CONSULTATION

#### Stakeholder Coordination

The SW Ecodistrict Strategic Plan is a partnership initiative led by the National Capital Planning Commission in cooperation with 17 federal and local agencies. NCPC convened the SW Ecodistrict Task Force to guide the development of the plan. Member agencies include:

- National Capital Planning Commission, Chairman and Presidential Appointee\*
- District Office of Planning, Director\*
- District of Columbia Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, Deputy Mayor
- District of Columbia Department of the Environment, Director
- District of Columbia Department of Transportation, Director
- Federal Aviation Administration, Director of Facilities
- National Park Service, Associate Deputy Regional Director for Lands, Resources, and Planning\*
- Smithsonian Institution, Director of Facilities
- U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, Secretary
- U.S. Congress, Architect of the Capitol
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director of Facilities
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Energy, Director of Facilities
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Assistant Administrator, Office of Administration and Resource Management
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Director of Facilities
- U.S. General Services Administration, Public Buildings Deputy Administrator
- U.S. General Services Administration, Director of Planning and Design
- U.S. Postal Service, Director of Facilities

*\* Task Force representative also serves as NCPC Commissioner.*

With input from area stakeholders and the public, the Task Force was instrumental in ensuring that the plan recommendations and proposed development scenario achieved their established goals and targets.

A series of task force meetings were held at the National Capital Planning Commission. The Commission was kept informed of the Task Force's work and the status of the project in 23 Executive Director's reports between September 2009 and June 2012.

<b>Meeting Dates</b>	<b>Meeting Topic</b>
December 15, 2009	Study area introduction; development of project goals
March 3, 2010	Study area context; project challenges and opportunities
June 30, 2010	Transportation infrastructure
September 30, 2010	Transportation infrastructure; work plan and Request for Proposals
March 10, 2011	Maryland Avenue Small Area Plan overview; energy, water and waste systems; urban design
July 6, 2011	Ecodistrict scenario development and analysis
November 4, 2011	Preliminary development capacity; preliminary environmental strategy recommendations; cost and benefit evaluation; governance structures
February 3, 2012	Urban development, design and implementation strategies; plan recommendations
May/June 2012	Draft Plan Review Meetings with Task Force
December 5, 2012	Final changes to the draft; transmittal to the National Capital Planning Commission; next steps

Public input was obtained through NCPC's website and a series of public meetings. To date, over 100 civic groups and members of the public have participated in meetings and provided comments on the plan. The comments have come from a variety of stakeholders, including federal, local, and private sector employees; nearby residents; and visitors to Washington.

<b>Meeting Type</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Public Meeting	February 2, 2010	NCPC – 401 9 <sup>th</sup> Street, NW
Public Meeting	February 17, 2011	USDA – 12 <sup>th</sup> Street and Jefferson Drive, SW
Public Meeting	May 19, 2011	DCOP – 1100 4 <sup>th</sup> Street, SW
Public Meeting	July 26, 2011	DCOP – 1100 4 <sup>th</sup> Street, SW
Public Meeting	July 19, 2012	DCOP – 1100 4 <sup>th</sup> Street, SW

**U.S. Commission of Fine Arts**

The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts is represented on the Task Force and has provided ongoing guidance on the development of the plan and its recommendations. An information presentation to the full Commission was held on July 19, 2012, during the public comment period.

**Coordination with the Government of the District of Columbia**

The DC Office of Planning (DCOP), District Department of the Environment (DDOE), District Department of Transportation (DDOT), and Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development are represented on the Task Force. NCPC coordinated with the District of Columbia Office of Planning (DCOP) on the Maryland Avenue Small Area Plan. This avenue is a critical element of the SW Ecodistrict Plan. The City Council approved the Maryland Avenue Small Area Plan on June 26, 2012. This plan was prepared with input from the public, nearby residents, and an Advisory Committee of private property owners, transit and rail operators. The plan focuses on infrastructure, land use and zoning; it addresses how to reconstruct Maryland Avenue, create a more diverse land use, and improve public space along the corridor. The recommendations from the Small Area Plan are incorporated into the SW Ecodistrict Plan.

**IV. APPENDIX**

*SW Ecodistrict Plan*