



# Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: July 9, 2015

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<b>PROJECT</b> <b>Final Master Plan</b> Arlington National Cemetery  Arlington County, Virginia	<b>NCPC FILE NUMBER</b> MP45  <b>NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER</b> 1.61(05.00)44034
<b>SUBMITTED BY</b> United States Department of Defense Department of the Army	<b>APPLICANT'S REQUEST</b> Approval of final master plan
<b>REVIEW AUTHORITY</b> Advisory per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(a) and (b)(1)	<b>PROPOSED ACTION</b> Approve as requested
	<b>ACTION ITEM TYPE</b> Consent Calendar

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## PROJECT SUMMARY

The Department of the Army submitted a Final Real Property Master Plan for Arlington National Cemetery (ANC). ANC is a 624-acre cemetery located in Arlington County, Virginia surrounded by major roadways, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall (JBM-HH), the Pentagon Reservation, developed areas of Arlington County, and lands under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. According to the Army, the ANC will exhaust the remaining capacity for interments for eligible veterans within ten years without any expansion. This Final Master Plan contains a number of major initiatives, including a major expansion, to extend the burial capacity of ANC beyond the 2037 planning horizon.

## KEY INFORMATION

- Established in 1864, Arlington National Cemeteries is one of the oldest military cemeteries in the country.
- In 2013, ANC expanded with the addition of the Navy Annex site, which is now known as the Southern Expansion. This site is bounded on the south by Interstate 395, on the north by Southgate Road, on the west by the Foxcroft Heights neighborhood and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Maintenance Yard, and on the east by Route 27.
- If the Navy Annex site had not been added to Arlington National Cemetery, the remaining capacity for interments for eligible veterans would be exhausted for niche spaces by 2024 and 2025 for in-ground spaces.
- The Army and Arlington County Government have been in discussions for several years concerning a land transfer involving the Southern Expansion and Southgate Road.
- In July 2013, the Commission approved the Millennium Expansion project, a 27-acre site that will add 27,000 interment spaces to the cemetery. The Southern Expansion will add over 60,000 spaces.

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- There are currently 27-30 interments daily.
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## RECOMMENDATION

**Approves** the Final Real Property Master Plan for Arlington National Cemetery, which is a comprehensive 25-year framework, as a guide for future reviews of individual site and building projects at Arlington National Cemetery.

## PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

<b>Previous actions</b>	<b>April 2015</b> – comments on final master plan
<b>Remaining actions</b> (anticipated)	<b>None</b>

Prepared by Carlton Hart  
6/30/15

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## I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Site

Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) is adjacent to George Washington Memorial Parkway and the Potomac River in the northeastern corner of Arlington County, Virginia (Figure 1). ANC is situated less than one mile west of Washington, D.C. at the western terminus of Memorial Avenue, directly across the Arlington Memorial Bridge from the Lincoln Memorial. ANC is ringed by regional highways including: Interstate 395, Virginia Highway 110 (the Jefferson Davis Highway), the George Washington Memorial Parkway, and Virginia Highway 27 (Washington Boulevard - 9/11 Heroes Memorial Highway). Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall (JBM-HH) borders the northern and western boundaries of ANC. The Pentagon is located to the southeast of ANC. The George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP) adjoins the northeastern edge of ANC. The main ceremonial entrance to ANC is from the Arlington Memorial Bridge and GWMP via Memorial Avenue. The properties that adjoin ANC are under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service (NPS) include Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial, and associated grounds (Figure 2). The Marine Corps War Memorial, another property administered by NPS, is located immediately to the north of ANC.

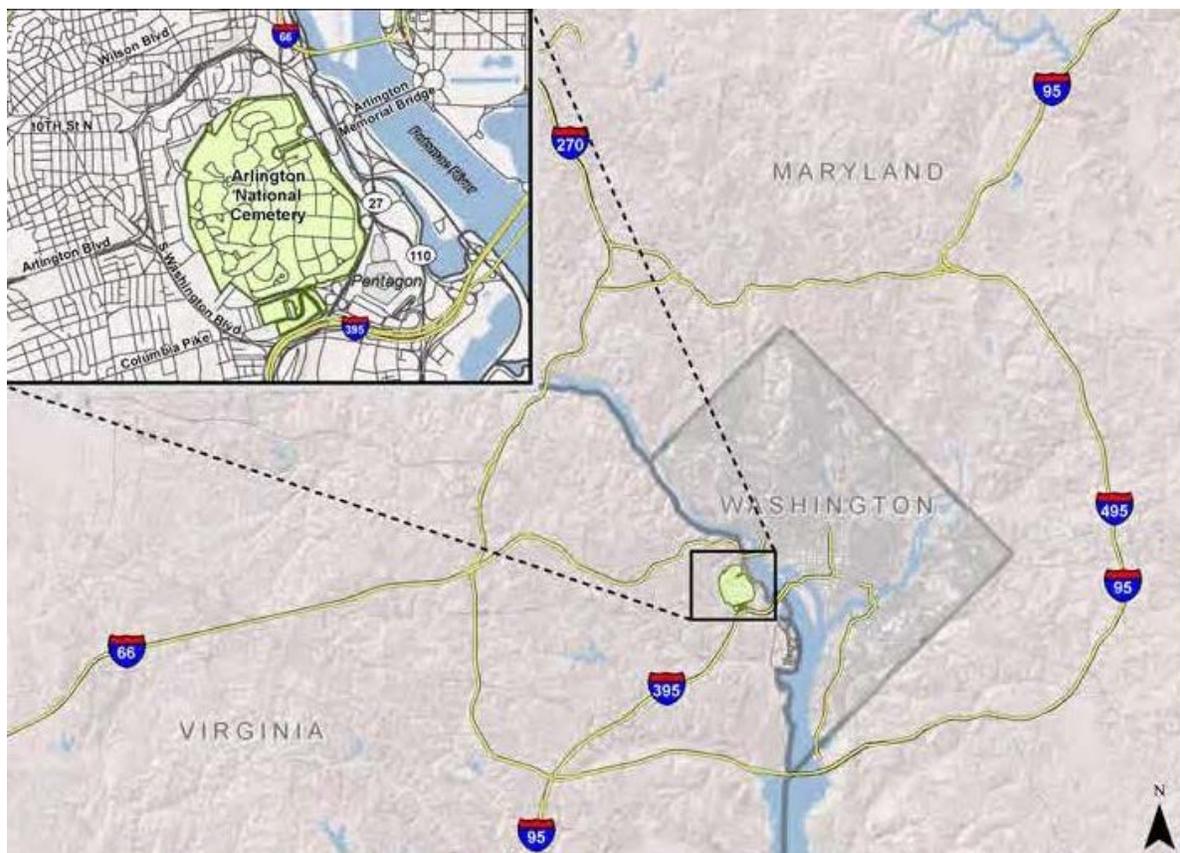


Figure 1: Regional Location Map

In 2013, ANC expanded with the addition of the Navy Annex site, which is now known as the Southern Expansion. This site is divided into several parcels which are bounded on the south by Interstate 395, on the north by Southgate Road, on the west by the Foxcroft Heights neighborhood and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Maintenance Yard, and on the east by the ramps connecting Columbia Pike to VA Highway 27. Columbia Pike divides the parcels in the Southern Expansion site and traverses through the site in a general west to east manner. Joyce Street further subdivides the parcels at the eastern edge of the area. Joyce Street intersects Columbia Pike and Southgate Road and then progresses southward to Pentagon City.

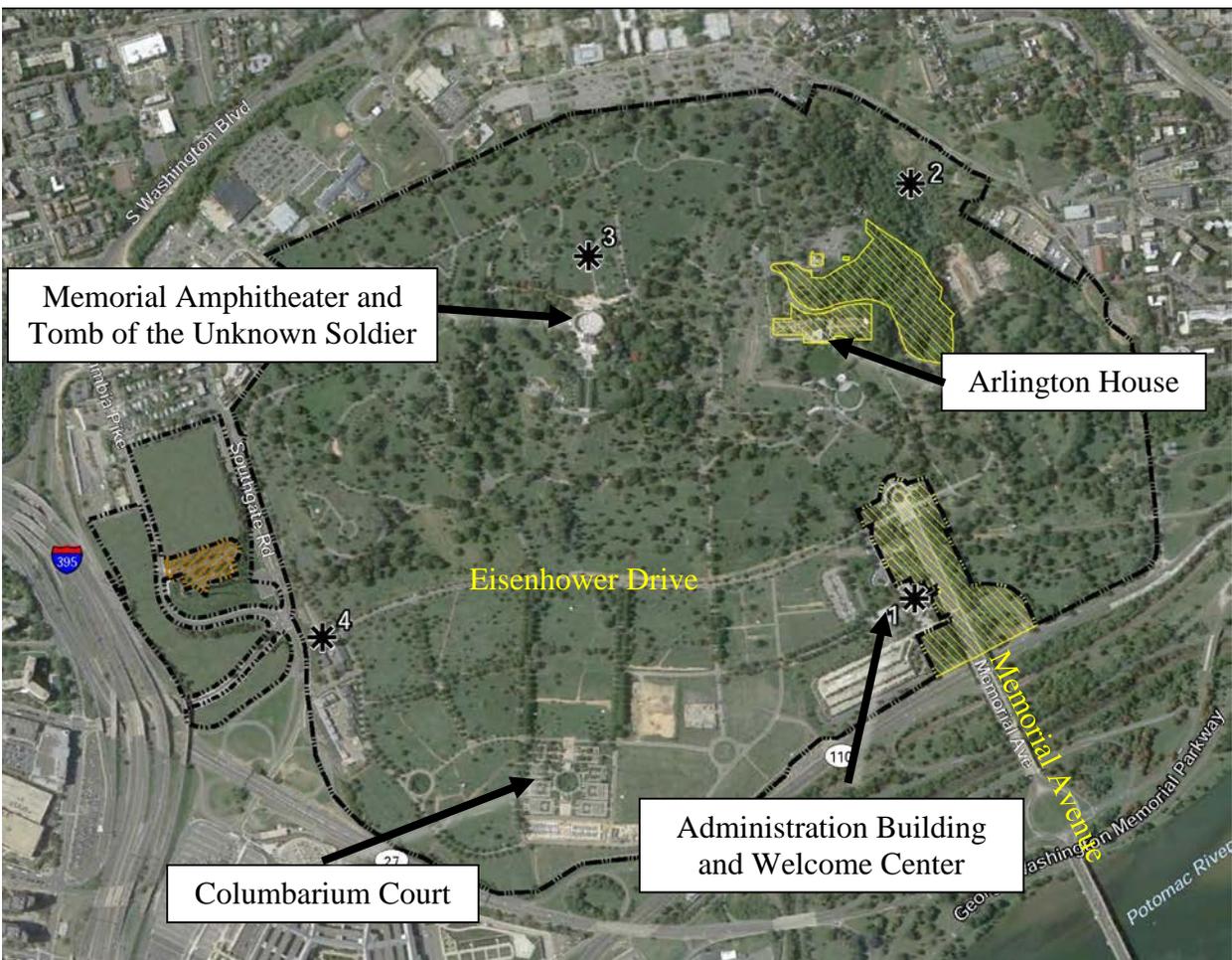


Figure 2: Arlington National Cemetery

### **Background**

ANC was officially founded on the grounds of Arlington House. The Robert E. Lee Memorial was turned into a military cemetery in 1864 by Brigadier General Montgomery C. Meigs, Quartermaster General of the U.S. Army. Brigadier General Meigs appropriated the grounds on June 15, 1864 for use as a military cemetery, and his intention was to render the house

uninhabitable should the Lee family ever attempt to return.<sup>1</sup> In May of 1864, Union Soldier Private William Christman, a member of the 67th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, became the first service member interred at what was to become the military cemetery in an area now known as Section 27 of ANC.<sup>2</sup> A stone and masonry burial vault, the Tomb of the Unknown Civil War Soldier, was among the first monuments to Union dead erected at ANC under Meigs' orders.

The Tomb was erected in the rose garden of Arlington House. The Tomb contains the remains of some 2,111 individuals from Civil War battles at Bull Run and the Route to the Rappahannock.<sup>3</sup> The remains were found scattered across the battlefields or in trenches and brought to ANC. This monument was the first memorial at Arlington to be dedicated to soldiers who had died in battle, and who later could not be identified.<sup>4</sup>



Figure 3: Arlington House

Confederal General Robert E. Lee and his wife, Mary Anna Custis Lee lived at Arlington House (Figure 3) until 1861, when Virginia ratified an alliance with the Confederacy and seceded from the Union. Between 1841 and 1857, General Lee was away from Arlington House for several extended periods. Although under the terms of her father's will, Mary Anna Custis Lee was given the right to inhabit and control the house for the rest of her life, the property was confiscated by the federal government when property taxes levied against Arlington estate were

not paid in person by Mrs. Lee. The property at Arlington House was offered for public sale on January 11, 1864, and was purchased by a tax commissioner for "government use, for war, military, charitable and educational purposes."<sup>5</sup> A portion of this land was given to freed slaves and became a Freedman's Village.

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<sup>1</sup> *History of Arlington Cemetery*, Arlington House. (n.d.). This information was taken directly from <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/History/Facts/ArlingtonHouse.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> *History of Arlington Cemetery*, Facts About Section 27. (n.d.). This information was taken directly from <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/History/Facts/AncSec27.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> *History of Arlington Cemetery*, Arlington House. (n.d.). This information was taken directly from <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/History/Facts/ArlingtonHouse.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> *Visitor Information, Exploring the Cemetery, Monuments and Memorials*, Civil War Unknowns Monument. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/VisitorInformation/MonumentMemorials/CivilWar.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> *History of Arlington Cemetery*, Arlington House. (n.d.). This information was taken directly from <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/History/Facts/ArlingtonHouse.aspx>

After the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the federal government had confiscated the land without due process, the federal government purchased the land outright in 1883. The federal government turned the land into a military installation and removed the Freedman's Village.

An amphitheater was constructed at ANC in 1873 to celebrate what is now known as Memorial Day. As more visitors began arriving at ANC toward the end of the 1800's, Congress authorized the construction of a new, larger amphitheater, which opened in 1920. While many ceremonies are conducted throughout the country, the Army notes many people consider the services at Arlington's Memorial Amphitheater to be the nation's official ceremony to honor all American service members who served to keep the United States free.<sup>6</sup>

The Tomb of the Unknowns at ANC was first established on March 4, 1921 when Congress approved the burial of an unidentified American soldier from World War I in the plaza of the new Memorial Amphitheater. The Tomb structure was later placed above the grave of the Unknown Soldier of World War I. The crypts of unknowns from World War II, Korea and Vietnam were later established to the west of the tomb structure. However, the remains of the Vietnam Unknown were exhumed in 1998 and the remains were identified. The Army notes the crypt that once contained the remains of the Vietnam Unknown will remain vacant.<sup>7</sup>



Figure 4: Tomb of the Unknown

There are two U.S. presidents buried at Arlington National Cemetery: William Howard Taft, who died in 1930, and President John F. Kennedy, who was assassinated on November 22, 1963. The interment of President Kennedy at ANC became a turning point in the cemetery's history, as visitors increased from approximately two million persons annually in 1962 to more than seven million during the twelve months following President Kennedy's death. The burial plot of President John F. Kennedy and family remains the most visited site at ANC.<sup>8</sup>

The last major expansion of ANC occurred as a result of prior master planning efforts, namely the 1967 ANC Master Plan. This plan, as later modified in 1976, called for the expansion of ANC to

<sup>6</sup> *Visitor Information, Exploring the Cemetery, Memorial Amphitheater.* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/VisitorInformation/Amphitheater.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> *Visitor Information, Exploring the Cemetery, The Tomb of the Unknowns, The Unknown of Vietnam.* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/VisitorInformation/TombofUnknowns.aspx>

<sup>8</sup> *Visitor Information, Exploring the Cemetery, Monuments and Memorials, President John Fitzgerald Kennedy Gravesite.* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/VisitorInformation/MonumentMemorials/JFK.aspx>

the east of Eisenhower Drive onto the former 200-acre site of South Post, Fort Myer. The plan included:

- a new administration building,
- a Welcome Center,
- a visitor parking garage,
- consolidation of maintenance and service facilities,
- the development of new in-ground interment sections east of Eisenhower Drive and
- the Columbarium Complex, which are a series of courts designed for the inurnment of cremains.<sup>9</sup>

The ANC master plan was last approved by the Commission in March 1998. At that time the Commission approved the master plan except for the eight acres in Section 29 (part of what is now known as the Millennium Expansion site), which was owned by the National Park Service (NPS) and had not been transferred to the Army. The 1998 ANC master plan also included the addition of columbarium walls and a court in the southeastern portion of the cemetery. Since 1998, the columbarium court and niche wall projects have been submitted and approved by the Commission. These projects have been constructed.

In 1995, Public Law 104-201 directed the Secretary of the Interior to transfer to the Secretary of Army jurisdiction a portion of the 24-acre parcel of land referred to as Section 29. Section 29 is known as Arlington House Woods, as it is the setting for Arlington House. At that time, Section 29 was divided into two parcels, the Robert E. Lee Preservation Zone and the Arlington National Cemetery Interment Zone. Public Law 107-107, dated December 28, 2001, clarified the area to be transferred and directed the Secretary of the Army to develop the Interment Zone for in-ground burial sites and columbarium structures that were designed to be integrated into the natural slopes of the topography. The Preservation Zone was not transferred and remains under NPS management. The 12 acres of land was formally transferred from NPS to ANC in January 2002. In 2004, the portion of the property owned by Fort Myer was transferred to ANC.

In July 2013, the Commission approved the Millennium Expansion project, a 27-acre site that will increase interment and inurnment space at Arlington National Cemetery. Construction consists of casket burial sections, in-ground sites for cremated remains, and both columbarium niche courts and walls for approximately 27,000 spaces. The site would include two assembly areas for service participants, including Committal Service Shelters. Supporting facilities include restrooms, storage areas, water features, stream restoration, landscaping, retaining walls, perimeter fencing, vehicle and pedestrian access roads and walkways.

The Commission reviewed the draft ANC Master Plan at its April 2015 meeting and provided several comments regarding the following: constructing a new transportation center; possibly relocating administrative staff; siting for a new interpretive center; and coordinating with the Air

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<sup>9</sup> *Arlington National Cemetery Master Plan*. 1998. USACE Baltimore District and Rhodeside and Harwell Incorporated.

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Force regarding the Air Force Memorial. These will be further discussed in the staff analysis section of this report.

### **Proposal**

The Army has submitted a Final Real Property Master Plan for Arlington National Cemetery for Commission review. The Army notes this cemetery is the nation's premier national cemetery as it has the following mission:

*“On behalf of the American people, we lay to rest those who have served our Nation with dignity and honor, treating their families with respect and compassion, and connecting guests to the rich tapestry of the cemetery's living history, while maintaining these hallowed grounds and the iconic image of Arlington befitting the sacrifice of all those who rest here in quiet repose.”<sup>10</sup>*

The final Real Property Master Plan for Arlington National Cemetery (Final ANC Master Plan) and U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery (SAHNC) is a synchronized, comprehensive document that outlines how the two cemeteries will address future development, sustainment, and operations across all lines of effort. These final master plans enable the two cemeteries to better communicate and coordinate across internal directorates, partner organizations and other stakeholders. The SAHNC Real Property Master Plan is being addressed in a separate staff report.

The Final ANC Master Plan addresses approximately 661 acres of land, which includes the cemetery's existing 70 interments sections plus the Millennium Project site which totals 624 acres, and the Southern Expansion site which is three parcels of land that total approximately 37 acres.

The Final ANC Master Plan includes seven overarching goals to guide the development process and assess costs and benefits of options:

1. Cultivate Key Attributes - Preserve the serenity, beauty, iconic image, and tranquility in the existing cemetery and promote these qualities in new development areas;
2. Integrate Core Mission Requirements - Facilitate and support cemetery mission and operations;
3. Provide a Safe and Accessible Environment - Provide for a safe, secure and accessible environment for staff, family members and general visitors;
4. Enhance Experiences - Enhance the learning and visiting experience for family members and general visitors;
5. Minimize Logistical and Circulation Conflicts - Minimize conflicts between key users and organize traffic flows for pedestrians and vehicles to reduce conflicts;
6. Provide New Interment Capacity - Extend the active life of the cemetery by developing new interment areas that complement the cemetery's image and majestic character; and
7. Use Resources Wisely - Employ sustainability initiatives and design approaches throughout all cemetery activities achieving a net zero impact when possible.

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<sup>10</sup> United States Army. (12 January 2012). *The Army National Cemeteries Program Campaign Plan Key Components, Structure and Highlights*.

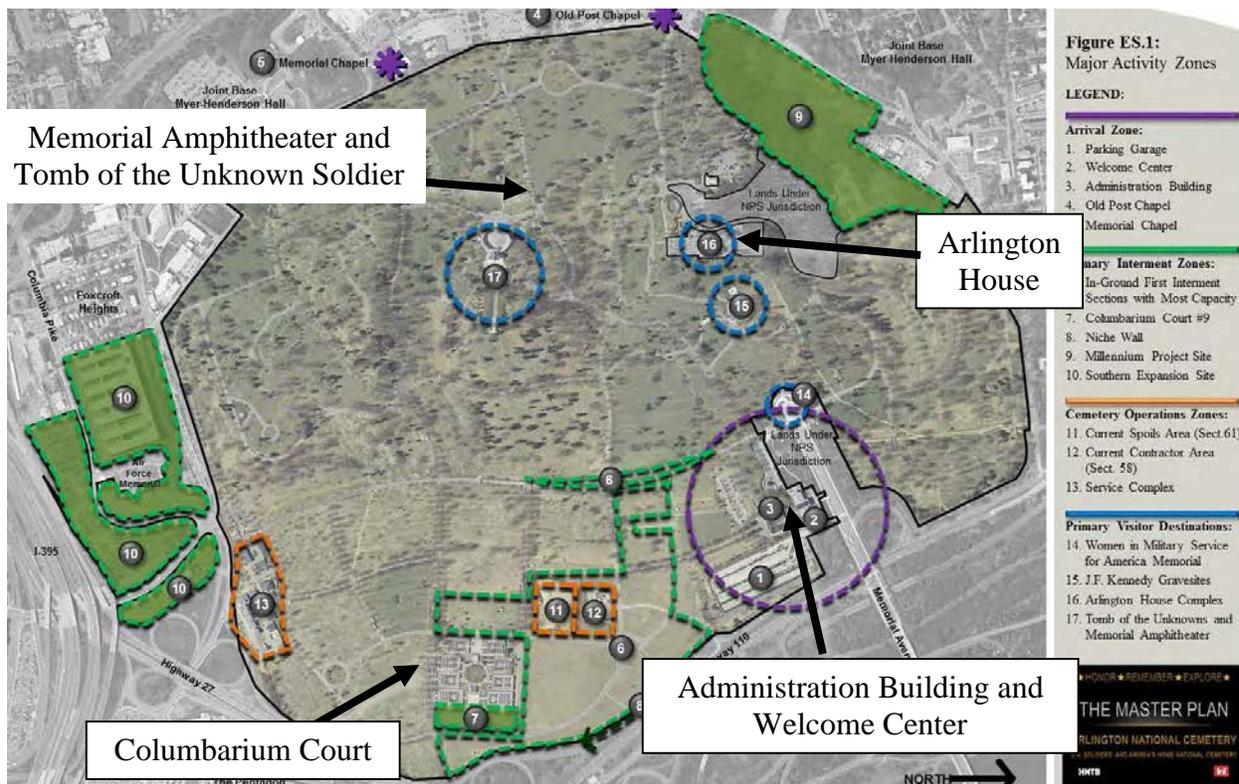


Figure 5: Major Activity Zones

Existing Conditions

This Final ANC Master Plan includes documentation of the existing conditions for the following: land use, transportation/circulation, history, views and exposure, topography, vegetative cover, utilities and regional agency planning considerations.

**Land Use**

The Army characterizes ANC as a large, serene cemetery environment that is punctuated by a number of different land uses with a few major activity centers. These activity centers include: interment areas, well-frequented visitor attractions, administration staff functions, general cemetery operation functions, and new development areas.

The Army notes that current pattern of land use at ANC has evolved over time as the cemetery has expanded and matured. Memorial Avenue has been the historic and ceremonial entrance to ANC and is a focal point of activity today. ANC intends to maintain this historic entrance as the primary entrance and focal point of activity at least through the mid-term horizon.

According to the Army, there are approximately 30 committal services occurring daily. Families and friends attending committal services gather at the Administration Building prior to the service. A significant amount of activity occurs at the Administration Building daily with administrative staff, ANC representatives and families and friends using it simultaneously.

There are over three million visitors to ANC annually. Well-frequented visitor attractions are concentrated along Memorial Avenue and west of Eisenhower Drive. These include the Welcome Center, Women in Military Service for America Memorial, a visitor parking garage located along Memorial Avenue, the President John F. Kennedy Gravesite, the Memorial Amphitheater, Tomb of the Unknowns, and Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial located west of Eisenhower Drive. Other significant monuments and memorials are located across the cemetery. As new office space has not been constructed and there has been an increase in the amount of staff over the past few years, administrative staff are located in both the Administration Building and Welcome Center located south of Memorial Avenue. In addition, some staff have moved to Building 123 located in the Service Complex at the southern end of the cemetery. Cemetery operation functions occur across the cemetery. Areas primarily used for daily cemetery operations are clustered in the following locations: the Service Complex, a spoils area (currently located in Section 61) and a contractor lay down area (currently located in Section 58) that was relocated from the Millennium Project site in the fall 2013.

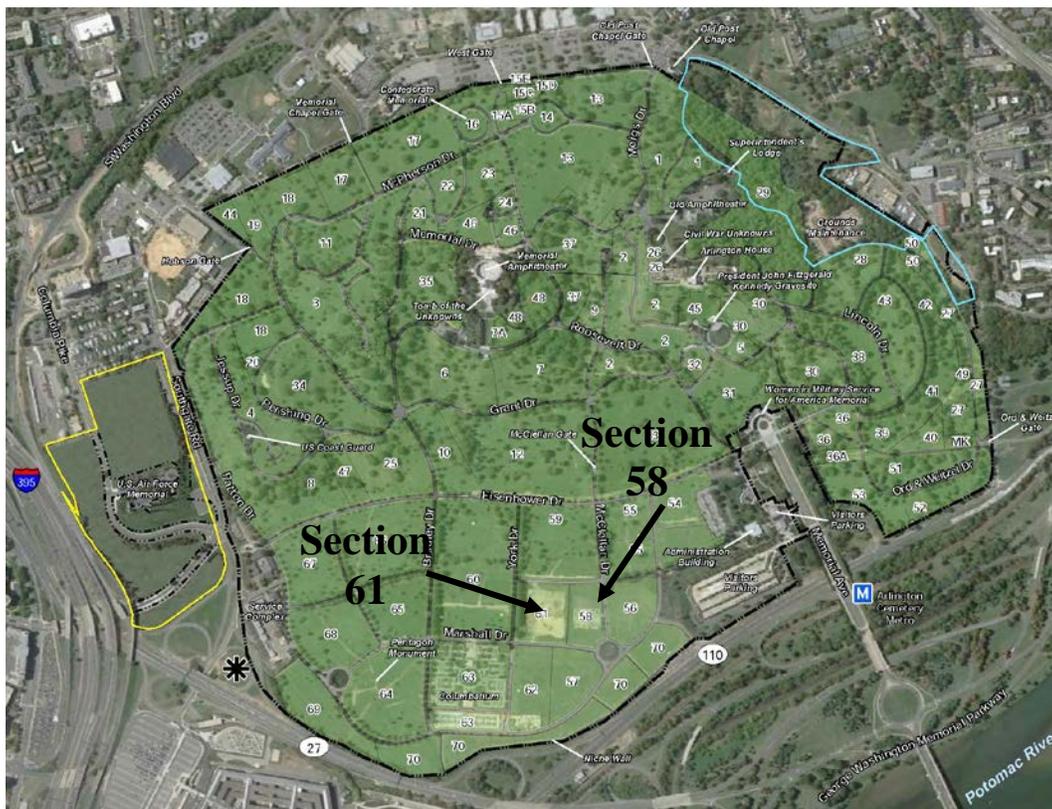


Figure 6: Arlington National Cemetery – Interment Areas

As part of the final master planning process, ANC identified two land use factors it needs to address to better complete ANC's mission. First, additional office space is needed to accommodate ANC's authorized workforce, 213 civilians and military personnel. Second, as available first interment areas shift to the far northern and southern reaches of the cemetery (Millennium Project site and

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Southern Expansion site respectively) some activities may better serve veterans and families if they are also relocated closer to these interment areas.

The majority of ANC administration staff currently work in the Administration Building and in the Welcome Center. The majority of cemetery operations staff work in the Service Complex in Building 123. The Army notes that the office space in the Administration Building and Welcome Center are overcrowded and is not adequate to serve mission requirements.

ANC is addressing the office space shortage in the short-term, although additional space would improve ANC's ability to support families and inform visitors of ANC's rich history and traditions. To improve the situation in the short term, ANC is in the process of renovating the entire Welcome Center basement to significantly increase available office space for staff.

Once the Welcome Center renovations have been completed, those ANC administration staff not directly assisting or conducting committal services can be relocated out of the Administration Building. This action could allow the building to be repurposed or reprogrammed as a "Family Support Services" building to better complete ANC's mission. Shortcomings include the need for increased and improved spaces to accommodate families attending committal services and the ANC Chaplains supporting these families.

In the longer-term, ANC may also consider relocating the family services functions to the Southern Expansion site once the site becomes the only active first-interment area.

### **Circulation**

ANC is generally a walking experience daily visitors with parking facilities available near the Welcome Center. Visitors may also use the available tour mobiles that transport people from the Welcome Center to Memorial Amphitheater and Arlington House and other sites. The Cemetery is also accessible regionally via the WMATA Metrorail Station serviced by the Blue Line. For families attending a committal service they may use their personal vehicles, park and meet an ANC representative who will be providing them assistance and direction at the Administration Building. There are a few main committal procession routes at ANC and these are identified in Figure 7.

Dedicated pedestrian walkways are available along Memorial Avenue and Eisenhower Drive. Roosevelt Drive is primarily used by pedestrians to access the President John F. Kennedy Gravesite, the Tomb of the Unknowns and Memorial Amphitheater, and Arlington House.

The Army states that bicycle use in the cemetery is generally prohibited. One-way bicycle traffic from JBM-HH to Memorial Avenue is permitted only along a single designated route known as the "White Line Road" route. This route is comprised of Meigs Drive to Sherman Drive to Schley Drive and features a painted white center line to indicate the route.

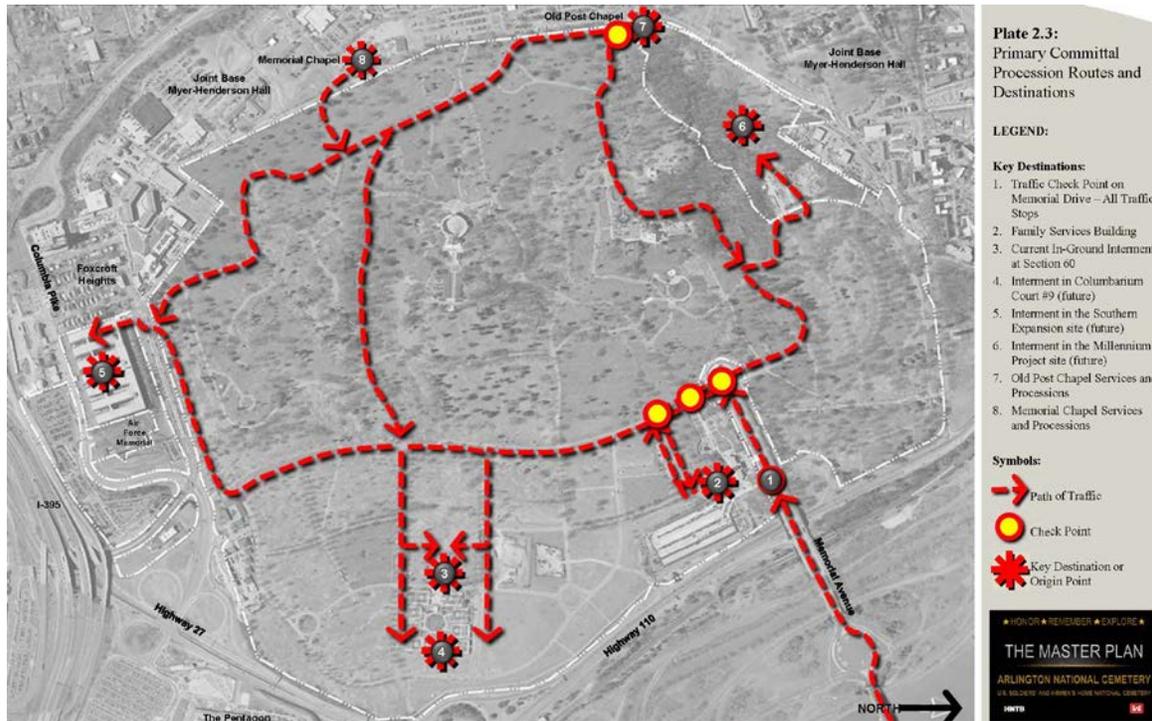


Figure 7: Committal Procession Routes

**Views and Exposure**

ANC property includes a topographic change consisting of a ridgeline along its western border that it shares with Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall. This ridgeline rises to 215 feet above sea level along the western side of the cemetery from a level of 20 feet above sea level along the eastern side. The topographic changes allow for a number of prominent views both to and from ANC. The high points are identified in Figure 8.

Long range views from the cemetery to Washington, D.C. are available from the Arlington House plateau, Pershing Drive, Section 34, and from the Southern Expansion site in the vicinity of the Air Force Memorial.

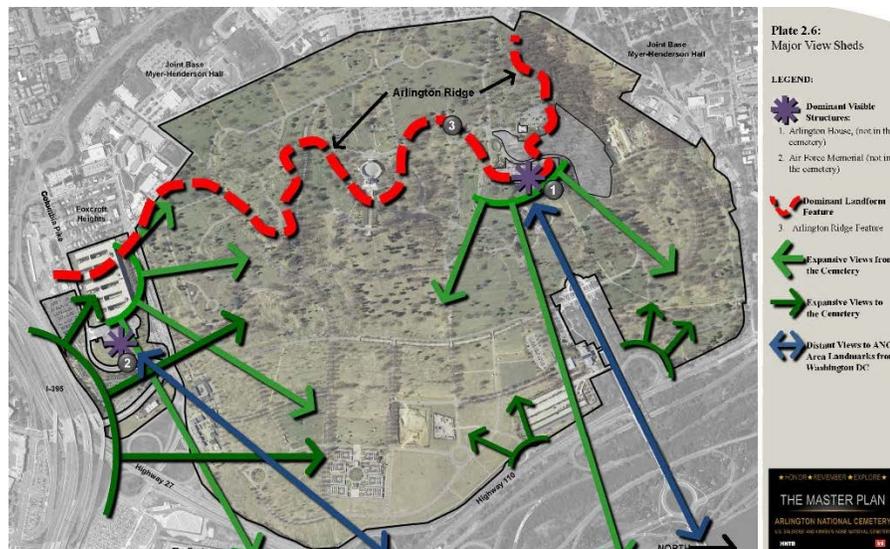


Figure 8: Views

From these vantage points there are long range views to the National Mall and prominent structures of Washington D.C., as well as views into the cemetery below. Hilltops and valleys planted with mature trees along the Arlington Ridge that run south to north in the western third of the cemetery are the prominent visual element of ANC from the east. Prominent landmarks in the vicinity of ANC that are visible from distant vantage points to the east include Arlington House and the Air Force Memorial.

Arlington Memorial Bridge and Memorial Avenue provide a significant ceremonial entry vista to the cemetery and Arlington House. There are also broad, long range views of the cemetery from the Arlington Memorial Bridge.

### Vegetative Cover

There are approximately 8,400 trees at Arlington National Cemetery. There are about 300 varieties of trees, including a population of very large and ancient canopy trees. The State Champion Pin Oak is in Section 35 and is considered the largest specimen in the Pin Oak species in the state of Virginia.<sup>11</sup>

East of Eisenhower Drive is a newer development area, in which trees were planted predominantly in a formal manner lining the roadway. Clusters of trees and solitary specimen trees interspersed across the landscape are an important part of the ANC image. Mature tree stands and specimen trees can be found in the older sections of the cemetery west of Eisenhower Drive. Hillsides and valleys in this area have the largest concentrations of tree cover. Some tree plantings have also been made within the interment sections and along the perimeter niche wall, but this area has much newer and fewer trees than in older interment sections within the cemetery.



Figure 9: Vegetation

Trees that are dying or fall down during storms are replaced as needed. The largest forested area surrounds Arlington House and this land is managed by NPS.

<sup>11</sup> *Exploring the Cemetery, the Grounds at Arlington Cemetery.* (n.d.). This information was taken from <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/VisitorInformation/Grounds.aspx>

Proposed Master Plan Projects

The Final ANC Master Plan is a 25-year action plan for ANC and SAHNC (Figure 10). There are specific projects that have been phased in five year increments from the present through 2037.

The Final ANC Master Plan's major initiatives for ANC are:

1. Cemetery Operations, Grounds Maintenance and Interment Spoils -
2. Accommodations for Families and Veterans
3. Staff Accommodations
4. Visitor Experience
5. New Interment Area Development

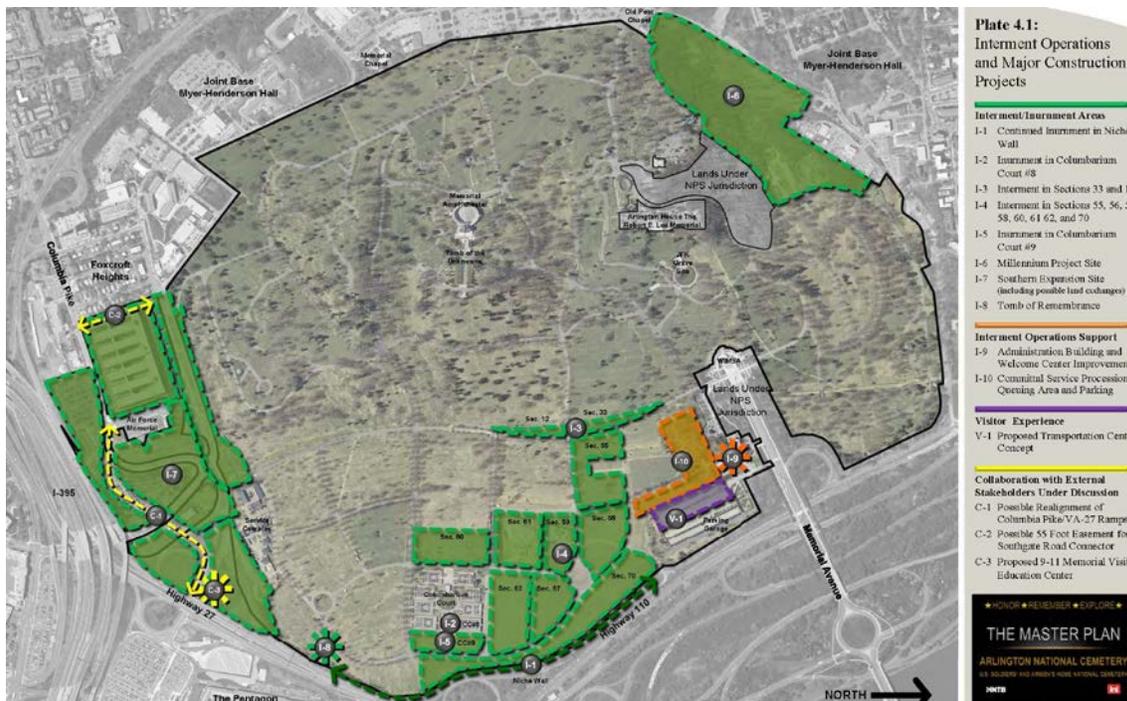


Figure 10: Master Plan Diagram

The individual projects in the short term (within 5 years) that are being considered are as follows:

1. Millennium Project - Undertake construction of approximately 27 acres for future interment at the northwest corner of ANC consisting of ANC property as well as property transferred to ANC from NPS and JBM-HH. [NOTE: This project was approved by the Commission at its July 2013 meeting. It is currently under construction.]
2. Proposed Committal Service Procession Queuing Concept – Design and construct a dedicated queuing area east of Halsey Drive for queuing of vehicles for committal service processions. [NOTE: This project was approved by the Commission at its January 2015 meeting.]

3. Southern Expansion Site Planning and Design – Prepare planning and design studies for the development of the Southern Expansion site and begin construction of initial development phases.
4. Information Centers (Phase I Rollout) - Install information center stations for accessing ANC Explorer at select locations across ANC.
5. Infrastructure Repair Projects - Continue ANC's comprehensive program to address infrastructure and facilities maintenance backlog including: water line replacement, road rebuilding and repaving, survey and modernization of underground utilities, parking garage repairs, general building repairs, accessibility improvements, and stonework/masonry and flagstone repairs.
6. Relocate Administration Staff - Move staff not directly working with committal services from the Administration Building to newly renovated space in the basement of the Welcome Center.
7. Proposed Administration Building Improvements – Repurpose and remodel the Administration Building to improve facilities for families and veterans attending committal services and to support the Chaplains' Office.
8. Improve Committal Service Queuing Circulation - Install signs to direct traffic in a counter-clockwise manner using Eisenhower, Leahy, Halsey and King Drives to help organize committal processing queuing traffic.
9. ANC Site Elements Improvements - Execute a program of improvements to site elements such as signs, bollards, benches, recycling bins, and flower bins across ANC.
10. Joint Studies for Circulation Improvements - Inter-agency studies between ANC and NPS to address vehicular and pedestrian circulation conflicts and congestion along Memorial Avenue and in vicinity of Eisenhower Drive and Roosevelt Drive.
11. Electronic Security System (ESS) Project - Provide ANC with an integrated physical security program.

The proposed mid-term (5 to 10 years) projects are:

1. Southern Expansion Site Development - Continue construction of interment spaces as part of the development at the Southern Expansion site.
2. Proposed Transportation Center Concept - Design and construct a new transportation center in the existing tour bus parking area to include restrooms, tour vehicle ticket sales and a covered waiting and bus boarding area.

Finally, the proposed long-term projects (greater than 10 year) are as follows:

1. Relocate Grounds Maintenance and Spoils Areas - Relocate the cemetery contractor grounds maintenance area and spoils areas out of Sections 61 and 58 to a new location at the Southern Expansion site. An interim and/or ultimate location is to be determined during the planning and design of the Southern Expansion site.
2. Continued Development of the Southern Expansion Site - Execute final development of remaining lands as required for interment and other cemetery uses including: an ultimate location for cemetery grounds maintenance contractors area and spoils area, and other cemetery support uses as planned.

3. ANC Interpretive Center - Consider construction of an Interpretive Center at the Southern Expansion site as either an independent project or as a joint-use facility, such as with the proposed Pentagon Memorial Interpretive Center and the Freedman's Village museum.

## II. PROJECT ANALYSIS/CONFORMANCE

### Executive Summary

Staff has reviewed the submitted materials and has determined that this final master plan for Arlington National Cemetery is a comprehensive analysis of the issues facing this iconic cemetery over the next 25 years. The Army identifies issues pertaining to the three groups coming to the cemetery: family for committal services, visitors, and staff assigned to this facility. The Army raises issues that include insufficient interment space, funeral parking and queuing conflicts, an often overcrowded Welcome Center, and insufficient space for administrative staff. With this master plan, the Army has identified how it plans to extend the capacity of the cemetery past the year 2037 with the development of the Southern Expansion. According to the Army, the Southern Expansion will increase the number of interment spaces by 60,000. At the April 2105 meeting the Commission provided a few comments regarding constructing a new transportation center, possibly relocating administrative staff, siting for a new interpretive center and coordinating with the Air Force regarding the Air Force Memorial. The Army provided acceptable responses for each of these comments and therefore staff recommends the Commission **approve the Final Arlington National Cemetery Real Property Master Plan, which is a comprehensive 25-year framework, as a guide for future reviews of individual site and building projects at Arlington National Cemetery.**

### Analysis

The Final ANC Master Plan provides staff with a comprehensive plan of the future development for the cemetery over the next 25 years. The Army has included in the final ANC Master Plan five main planning options that identified to be addressed for future development:

- Cemetery Operations – grounds maintenance, interment prep and interment spoils
- Accommodation for veterans, families, and chaplains attending committal services.
- ANC admin staff accommodations
- General Visitor Experience
- New interment area development

Staff is supportive of many of these proposed project as they will enhance the cemetery experience and provide additional interment space for many years to come. Centralizing the cemetery maintenance and operations into one location will provide the best use of the available lands.

At its April 2015 meeting, the Commission provided several comments on the draft ANC Master Plan. These comments are as follows:

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Requests the Army undertake the following as it continues to develop the master plan:

- Previous Commission Comment (April 2015): Develop an interim plan for bus parking during planning for the new transportation center.

Staff Comment: The Army proposed a transportation center within the existing bus parking area. This project is to alleviate overcrowding that currently occurs at the Welcome Center as visitors are waiting for the tour buses. Staff is supportive of this project as it will improve visitor facilities by allowing them to have access to a restroom, purchase tour mobile tickets or wait for their tour bus to depart. Construction of the transportation center may impact the tour bus parking area as a portion of it would likely have to be closed during construction. In April 2015, the Commission Action recommended the Army develop an interim plan for bus parking during planning for the new transportation center. In a letter to the Commission dated May 7, 2015 the Army responded that it will develop this interim plan and include it with the other background documents when it submits the transportation center project for review.

- Previous Commission Comment (April 2015): Explore alternative sites for the Administration Building that are transit accessible.

Staff Comment: The ANC is considering relocating the Administration Building to the Southern Expansion area as a long-term project due to an inadequate existing facility and projected staff increases over the next 10 years. However, one key advantage of the existing site is its close proximity to the Arlington National Cemetery Metrorail Blue Line Station. To meet transportation and environmental goals, NCPC strongly encourages the use of alternative modes of commuting rather than single occupancy vehicles. The Army acknowledges that it will use proximity to transit as it decides the location of a new administrative facility, if one is deemed necessary.

- Previous Commission Comment (April 2015): Coordinate planning for the ANC interpretive center with planning for the Air Force Memorial visitor's center and the Pentagon Memorial Fund's Visitor Education Center.

Staff Comment: While the not the sponsor of the project, the Army has described a possible joint project with the Pentagon Memorial Visitor's Education Center for an Interpretive Center for visitors to ANC. This site is currently being considered on land within the northwestern cloverleaf interchange of Routes 244 and 27. In addition, since the Air Force Memorial is in close proximity to the site and does not have a visitor's center, the April 2015 Commission Action recommended the Army coordinate planning for the ANC interpretive center with planning for the Air Force Memorial visitor's center and the Pentagon Memorial Fund's Visitor Education Center. The Army has confirmed that it will coordinate with other stakeholders if it decides to move forward with an interpretive center.

- Previous Commission Comment (April 2015): Coordinate with the Air Force on the location and character of the fence surrounding the Air Force Memorial.

Staff Comment: The Air Force Memorial site is surrounded by ANC on three sides. The design and placement of the proposed fence separating the memorial from ANC should be coordinated to appropriately address aesthetic concerns which might diminish the memorial experience for visitors. In order to more comprehensively plan for the future design of this entire area, the April 2015 Commission Action recommend the Army coordinate with the Air Force on the location and character of the fence surrounding the Air Force Memorial. The Army notes that it will coordinate with the Air Force on the location and character of the fence surrounding the Air Force Memorial as part of the planning and design of the Southern Expansion site.

### **Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital**

Staff determined the final ANC Master Plan is not inconsistent with policies contained within the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. Staff is supportive of the major initiatives identified in the final Master Plan which are as follows:

- Cemetery Operations – grounds maintenance, interment prep and interment spoils
- Accommodation for veterans, families, and chaplains attending committal services
- ANC admin staff accommodations
- General Visitor Experience
- New interment area development

While cemetery operations is not topic specifically identified in the Comprehensive Plan, the policies in the Federal Workplace Element support the reuse of existing federal land and the minimization of development on open space. This master plan includes the reuse of existing ANC land for cemetery operations. The master plan discusses the further consolidation of these facilities as the new interment sites become available for use.

Regarding the master plan recommendations for improving accommodations for veterans, families, and chaplains attending committal services, staff has determined that the Comprehensive Plan does not address these directly, but staff is supportive of these proposals as they will provide a more orderly experience. The proposal to improve the Administration Building by relocating ANC staff that are not essential for committal services and to reconfigure queuing in the parking lot will help to provide better accommodations and reduce confusion for those attending committal services.

Staff finds the initiative to provide an appropriate level of space for administrative staff at the cemetery is supported by several policies in the Federal Workplace Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The policies support the repair and rehabilitation of existing facilities, which is included in the Army's short term plan. The Army is proposing the possible relocation of the Administration Building in the long term to the Southern Expansion site. Staff finds that this long term proposal should be explored further because policies contained within the Federal Work place Element

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support the development of federal facilities within close proximity of transit facilities like VRE, Metrorail and light rail. Since the Arlington County Board removed funding for the Columbia Pike Streetcar project, it is unclear if or when this project will be reinitiated. With this change, the Southern Expansion site will not be as transit accessible as the current site which is close to the Arlington Cemetery Metrorail Station.

Policies within the Visitors Element of the Comprehensive Plan support the proposal to improve visitor amenities like adding information kiosks, improving the transportation center and developing an interpretive center. These policies encourage the use of federal facilities by the public, the inclusion of information kiosks at federal facilities, and the development of tour bus parking at federal facilities.

Finally, staff finds that while the ANC expansions are not specifically described in the Comprehensive Plan, the expansions conform to the policy about reusing existing federal land as the Millennium Expansion and the Southern Expansion are both federally-owned sites.

### **Relevant Federal Facility Master Plan**

The previous Arlington National Cemetery Master Plan was approved by the Commission in March 1998. At that time the major projects were the Section 29 expansion (now referred to as the Millennium Expansion), the Columbarium Court and the niche wall along Route 110. These were all projects providing additional interment space at the cemetery. The Navy Annex was also identified as possible expansion space in the future.

While the Commission approved the master plan it did not approve the portion of the Section 29 owned by the National Park Service. Since this master plan approval, the Army and NPS developed an agreement for the use of the Section 29 for interments. This parcel was included as part of the Millennium Expansion project approved by the Commission in July 2013. The Commission also established an employment ceiling at 380 persons, which was 130 permanent staff and 200-250 seasonal employees. There is no employment ceiling being proposed at this time.

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

Pursuant to its responsibility under the National Environmental Policy Act, the Army developed a programmatic environmental assessment to evaluate the impacts associated with the project included in this master plan. The Army plans on developing project specific master plans for individual project in the future as they are proposed.

The Army considered several alternative in the Programmatic EA it developed for this master plan. The following was included in the FONSI submitted for this project:

The No-Action Alternative was considered as one alternative in the master plan. The No-Action Alternative represents the cemetery without the implementation of the Proposed Action. Four Action Alternatives were considered in the EA:

- Alternative 1 - ANC Including the Southern Expansion Site;

- Alternative 2 - ANC Including the Southern Expansion Site and Southgate Road;
- Alternative 3 - ANC Including the Southern Expansion Site, Southgate Road and Easement; and
- Alternative 4 - ANC Including the Southern Expansion Site with Realigned Roadways.

Based on the analyses contained in the Programmatic EA the Army determined that all the Action Alternatives would result in minor short-term adverse impacts to air quality, noise, water resources, socioeconomics, solid waste, and hazardous waste due to construction. In addition, the Army determined that traffic impacts with Alternatives 1 and 2 would not exceed the threshold of significance.

Based on the information currently available, the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 for the final ANC MP, are not anticipated to result in significant impacts to the human and natural environments. As noted in the analysis the effects on several resource categories, such as cultural resources and noise, will require further project level consultation and/or NEPA analysis. Additionally, in the event a specific configuration of a Columbia Pike realignment and real estate exchange proposal are developed, the potential traffic impacts associated with Alternative 4 will be further analyzed, including analyzing cumulative impacts.

Based on the information and analyses contained in the Programmatic EA that the project would result in minor impacts the Executive Director of Arlington National Cemetery made a finding of no significant impact which was signed on December 22, 2014. NCPC does not have an independent NEPA responsibility for master plans.

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

Consistent with the requirements of National Environmental Policy Act, in the development of the above discussed Programmatic Environmental Assessment, the Department of the Army consulted on the Joint Base Real Property Master Plan with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR), as the State Historic Preservation Office. However, consistent with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regulations which allow agencies to conduct nondestructive project planning activities before completing compliance with Section 106, the Army intends to conduct Section 106 at the time of project design and implementation. NCPC does not have an independent Section 106 responsibility for master plans.

## **III. CONSULTATION**

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

The Commission of Fine Arts reviewed and approved the Arlington National Cemetery Master Plan at its January 22, 2015 meeting. In correspondence to the Army, the Commission members "...expressed their support for the principles and goals of the plan that will guide the Army in its major initiatives to create and develop new interment areas; to improve the accommodations for families, staff, and veterans; and to enhance the visitor experience. Considering the limited land

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available to the cemeteries for future expansion and the ongoing need for gravesites, they recommended minimizing the allocation of land for purposes unrelated to cemetery use.”

**Coordination with local agencies**

On January 16, 2015 NCPC referred the Arlington National Cemetery Master Plan for review and comment to the following public agencies in Virginia: Arlington County Managers Office; Arlington County Department of Environmental Services; Arlington County Department of Environmental Services; Northern Virginia Regional Commission; Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments; Northern Virginia Transportation Commission; Virginia Department of Transportation; Virginia Department of Environmental Quality; and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

NCPC did not receive any comments from these agencies on the master plan.