



# Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: July 13, 2017

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<b>PROJECT</b> <b>Lincoln Memorial Restoration</b> Lincoln Memorial 2 Lincoln Memorial Circle, NW Washington, DC	<b>NCPC FILE NUMBER</b> 7866
	<b>NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER</b> 1.43(73.10)44522
<b>SUBMITTED BY</b> United States Department of the Interior National Park Service	<b>APPLICANT'S REQUEST</b> Approval of comments on concept design
<b>REVIEW AUTHORITY</b> Federal Projects in the District per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)	<b>PROPOSED ACTION</b> Approve with comments on concept design
	<b>ACTION ITEM TYPE</b> Staff Presentation

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## PROJECT SUMMARY

The National Park Service (NPS) is seeking comments on a concept design for the widening of existing door widths at the Lincoln Memorial, as part of a larger rehabilitation project in the memorial undercroft and the memorial chamber. The Lincoln Memorial is located in West Potomac Park on the western end of the National Mall. The two existing doors are on the east façade of the Lincoln Memorial, at the ground terrace level, flanking the center stairs of the approach way leading to the memorial chamber. The south door provides public access to the current visitor services space in the undercroft, including restrooms, an exhibit space, and the only elevator to the memorial chamber. The north door does not have public access.

The concept design proposes to improve the visitor's experience at the Lincoln Memorial by providing enhanced functional and Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ABAAS) compliant entrances to the visitor services space located in the memorial undercroft by widening the two existing doors at the ground terrace level. NPS has submitted three design options of varying door widths for Commission comment.

## KEY INFORMATION

- Designed to honor the 16<sup>th</sup> president of the United States of America, Abraham Lincoln, the Lincoln Memorial was constructed starting in 1914, and completed and dedicated in 1922. Architect Henry Bacon designed the memorial to resemble a classical Greek temple, with 36 fluted Doric columns encircling the exterior, and a main chamber for the sculpture of President Lincoln. The Lincoln Memorial was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1966.
  - The Lincoln Memorial receives eight million visitors a year, with each year surpassing the previous in number of visitors.
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- The current restroom facilities and exhibit space located within the undercroft are insufficient to meet the needs of visitors. Only one elevator currently provides access to the chamber from the undercroft visitor services area.
  - In 2016, NPS received an \$18.5 million donation from a local philanthropist to assist in the rehabilitation efforts at the Lincoln Memorial, focusing on improving the interpretive experience for the memorial's visitors.
  - Much of the rehabilitation work will occur in the memorial undercroft, consisting of increasing the restroom capacity and a secondary elevator to the chamber, expanded exhibition space, and providing visual access to the undercroft, and relocating the bookstore and retail space from the chamber to the undercroft.
  - NPS has submitted three design options for consideration by the Commission for increasing the two door widths to improve compliance with ABAAS to the memorial undercroft visitor services space. The first option increases the width to 36 inches clearance, with a single door. The second option increases the width to 50 inches, with two paired doors. A third option increases the width to 72 inches with two paired doors.
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## RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

**Supports** the applicant's proposal to increase the existing door widths at the ground terrace level of the Lincoln Memorial's east elevation, to allow increased accessibility and functionality to the rehabilitated and expanded visitor services areas located in the memorial undercroft.

**Notes** the existing doors were not original to the design and added in 1927, with the south door altered in 1977 to its current width of three feet nine inches, with a clearance of two feet nine and half inches. The north door has a width of three feet, with a clearance of two feet five and a half inches.

**Notes** the south door currently provides the single source of public entry to the visitor services area located in the memorial undercroft and does not meet accessibility requirements.

**Finds** the 50 inch concept option achieves the desired accessibility and functional program requirements of the NPS, while minimalizing loss of historic fabric and visual impacts.

**Finds** the 50 inch concept option would allow two visitors to simultaneously use the expanded doors to the visitor service area in the memorial undercroft.

**Recommends** the applicant continue to explore the benefits and challenges of widening the two doors to 50 inches while minimizing loss of the surrounding historic fabric, and minimal changes to the visual impact to the Lincoln Memorial.

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## PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

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Remaining actions (anticipated)	Review of preliminary and final site development plans for the door alterations.
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## PROJECT ANALYSIS

### Executive Summary

Staff has evaluated the concept proposal for the widening of the two existing doors to the Lincoln Memorial undercroft by determining its consistency with the relevant policies within the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital* and *the National Mall Plan*. Staff has found the proposed improvements are consistent with the Plans and the Act and will improve the visitor experience at the memorial. Therefore, staff recommends the **Commission supports the applicant's proposal to increase the existing door widths at the ground level of the Lincoln Memorial, to allow increased accessibility and functionality to the rehabilitated and expanded visitor services areas located in the memorial undercroft.** Further staff suggests the **Commission recommend the applicant continue to explore the benefits and challenges of widening the two doors to 50 inches in a manner resulting in the minimal loss of the surrounding historic fabric, and minimal changes to the visual impact to the Lincoln Memorial.**

### Analysis

As indicated previously, NPS seeks to increase the widths of the two existing ground level door entrances to the Lincoln Memorial undercroft, in order to meet accessibility requirements and improve the function of the rehabilitated visitor services area housed in the memorial undercroft. The rehabilitated memorial undercroft will include expanded restroom facilities, and an expanded exhibit space consisting of a viewing area into the undercroft, a secondary elevator to the memorial chamber, and the relocated bookstore, moved from the chamber. The expanded visitor services area in the undercroft is envisioned to have an occupancy of up to five hundred people. In order to accommodate the expected occupancy numbers, wider doors are needed to meet egress requirements. As such, staff recommends the Commission note the existing single entrance into the current visitor services area does not meet accessibility requirements and is functionally challenging.

The current door openings at the ground level were added in 1927 at the base of the Lincoln Memorial in the terrace wall, flanking the approach way to the memorial chamber, when restroom facilities were added in the undercroft. Bronze doors were installed in the openings, which were shielded by vegetation. In 1974, the south door was altered to become wider, and shorter than the north door. Today, the south door has a clearance width of 2 feet 9 inches, while the north door retains its 1927 width of 2 feet 5 inches. Only the south door provides access to the visitor services area. The north door provides access to a vestibule area then to a mezzanine level encircling the upper part of the undercroft. This is not accessible to the public.

NPS has submitted three design options for consideration to increase the width of the door openings. All three concepts include installing bronze doors in the increased openings, similar to the existing bronze doors. The first option increases the width to 36 inches clearance, with a single door. The second option increases the width to 50 inches, with two paired doors. A third option increases the width to 72 inches with two paired doors. All three approaches expand the width away from the approach way and require the removal of original historic stone material. Under all three approaches, the new openings will be treated more like "gates" into a vestibule area, adjacent to the rehabilitated undercroft space, and will remain opened during the visitor services area operational hours.

Balancing the programmatic needs of NPS, particularly for the rehabilitated undercroft area, with the need to minimize any loss of historic fabric and character, including visual impacts, the three concept options result in varying degrees of appropriateness. As part of the submittal package, NPS provided renderings showing the visual impact of the increased opening width as visitors approach the memorial and the stairs to the chamber. While all three options will necessitate the removal of original historic stone cladding in the terrace wall in order to expand the width, the visual impact of the expanded door widths may result in a greater alteration of the visual character of the memorial, especially as the doors will remain open during operating hours for visitors, creating a different relationship of solids to voids. In terms of the three options, the third option of a 72 inch width more than doubles the current approximately 32 inch widths of the doors. This change has the potential to make the openings much more visually intrusive due to the size and the creation of a large void in the terrace wall, and alters the visual character of the approach way. While the 36 inch width option results in less removal of historic fabric and visual impact, it does not successfully address the issues of accessibility and functionality desired by NPS.

Based upon staff's analysis, the applicant's proposal of increasing the door widths to 50 inches addresses the desire for accessibility and functionality improvements for the visitor experience to the Lincoln Memorial undercroft. Therefore, staff recommends the **Commission supports the applicant's proposal to increase the existing door widths at the ground level of the Lincoln Memorial, to allow increased accessibility and functionality to the rehabilitated and expanded visitor services areas located in the memorial undercroft.** Further staff suggests the **Commission recommend the applicant continue to explore the benefits and challenges of widening the two doors to 50 inches in a manner resulting in the minimal loss of the surrounding historic fabric, and minimal changes to the visual impact to the Lincoln Memorial.**

## **CONFORMANCE TO EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES AND RELATED GUIDANCE**

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

Staff finds that the proposed concept design is consistent with policies in the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital (2016) and in particular, those policies contained in the Historic Preservation and the Visitors and Commemoration Element. These policies encourage the federal government to preserve and protect historic properties while also accommodating visitors and balancing the needs of security and accessibility.

Among the policies in the Historic Preservation and Visitors and Commemoration Elements that the proposed concept is consistent include the following:

- Sustain exemplary standards of historic property stewardship.
- Ensure the continued preservation of federal historic properties through ongoing maintenance.
- Ensure that sites and settings for federally owned historic assets in the region are preserved and maintained as integral parts of the National Capital Region's historic character.
- Develop and maintain a safe, comfortable and pleasant environment that offers a range and distribution of amenities, services, and access throughout the area (e.g. lighting, accessible restrooms, concessions, and information).
- Ensure that any supporting facilities such as restrooms or concession stands do not detract from the aesthetics or accessibility of the commemorative element and its grounds.

### **National Mall Plan**

The National Mall Plan seeks to rehabilitate and refurbish the National Mall so that very high levels of use can be accommodated and the needs of all visitors and users can be met in an attractive, high-quality, energy-efficient, and sustainable manner. The National Mall Plan establishes a framework to protect memorials and landscapes while maintaining large areas of unprogrammed open space. The plan seeks to balance contemporary uses while respecting the planned historic landscapes of the L'Enfant and McMillan plans. The proposed concept design appears to be in keeping with the National Mall Plan.

### **National Historic Preservation Act**

The Commission does not require the conclusion of Section 106 process at the concept review phase.

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## **National Environmental Policy Act**

The Commission does not require National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review to be complete at the concept review phase.

## **CONSULTATION**

### **Coordinating Committee**

The Coordinating Committee reviewed the proposal at its June 21, 2017 meeting. The Committee forwarded the proposed concept review to the Commission with the statement that the proposal has been coordinated with all participating agencies. The participating agencies were: NCPC; the District of Columbia Office of Planning; the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Officer the District Department of Transportation; the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Officer; the National Park Service; the General Services Administration and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. The DCSHPO noted that all Section 106 review process requirements would need to be completed.

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

The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) will review the project at its July 20, 2017 meeting.

## **ONLINE REFERENCE**

The following supporting documents for this project are available online:

- Submission Package
- Project Summary

Prepared by Lee Webb  
06/26/2017

## **POWERPOINT (ATTACHED)**

**NCPC File #: 7866**  
**Lincoln Memorial Rehabilitation**  
Washington, DC

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**National Park Service**

**Concept Review**

**Commission meeting date:** July 13, 2017

**NCPC review authority:** 40 U.S.C. §8722(b)(1) and (d)

**Applicant request:** Approval of comments on concept design

**Delegated / consent / open / executive session:** Open

**NCPC Review Officer:** Webb

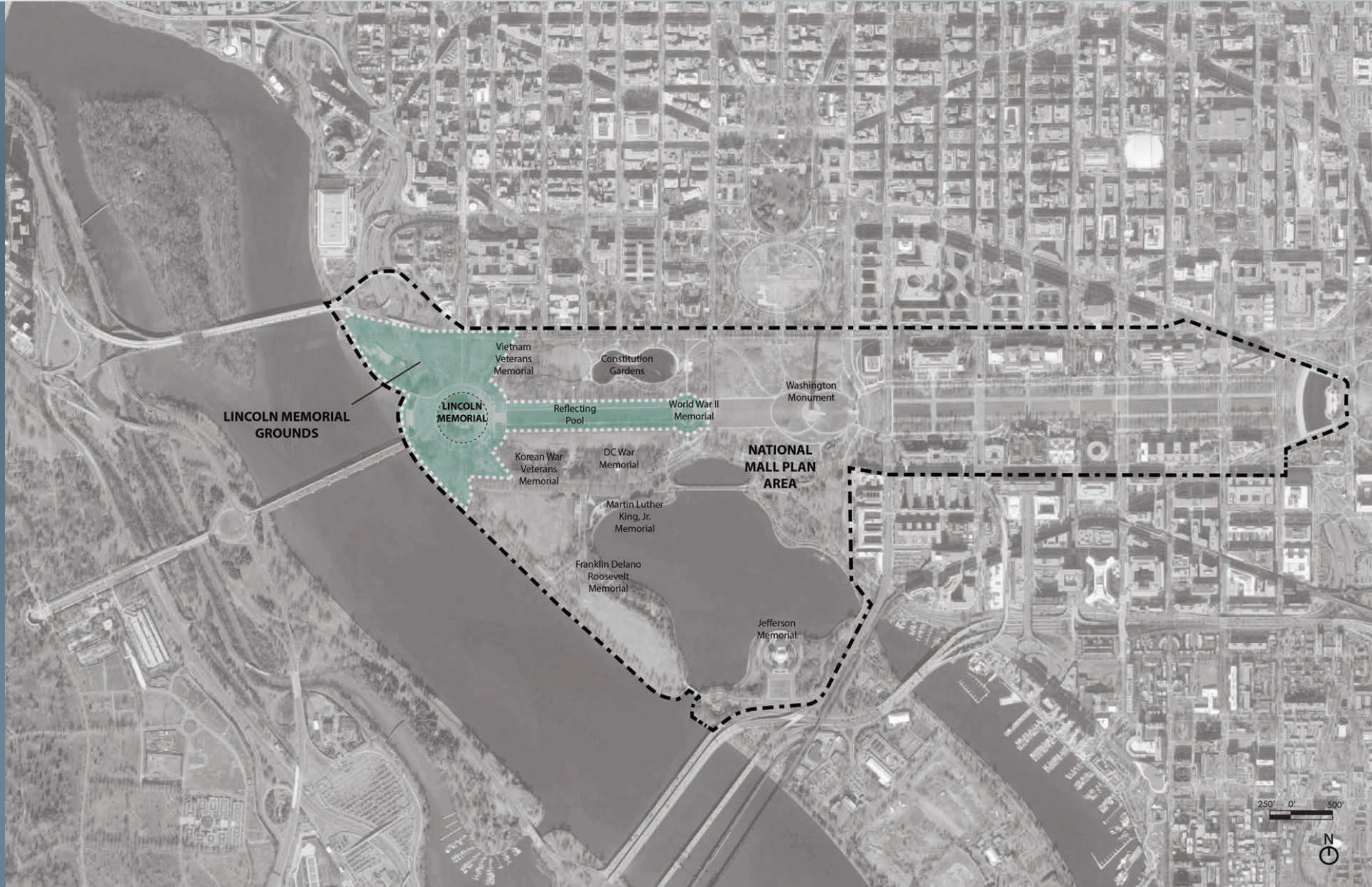
**NCPC File number:** 7866

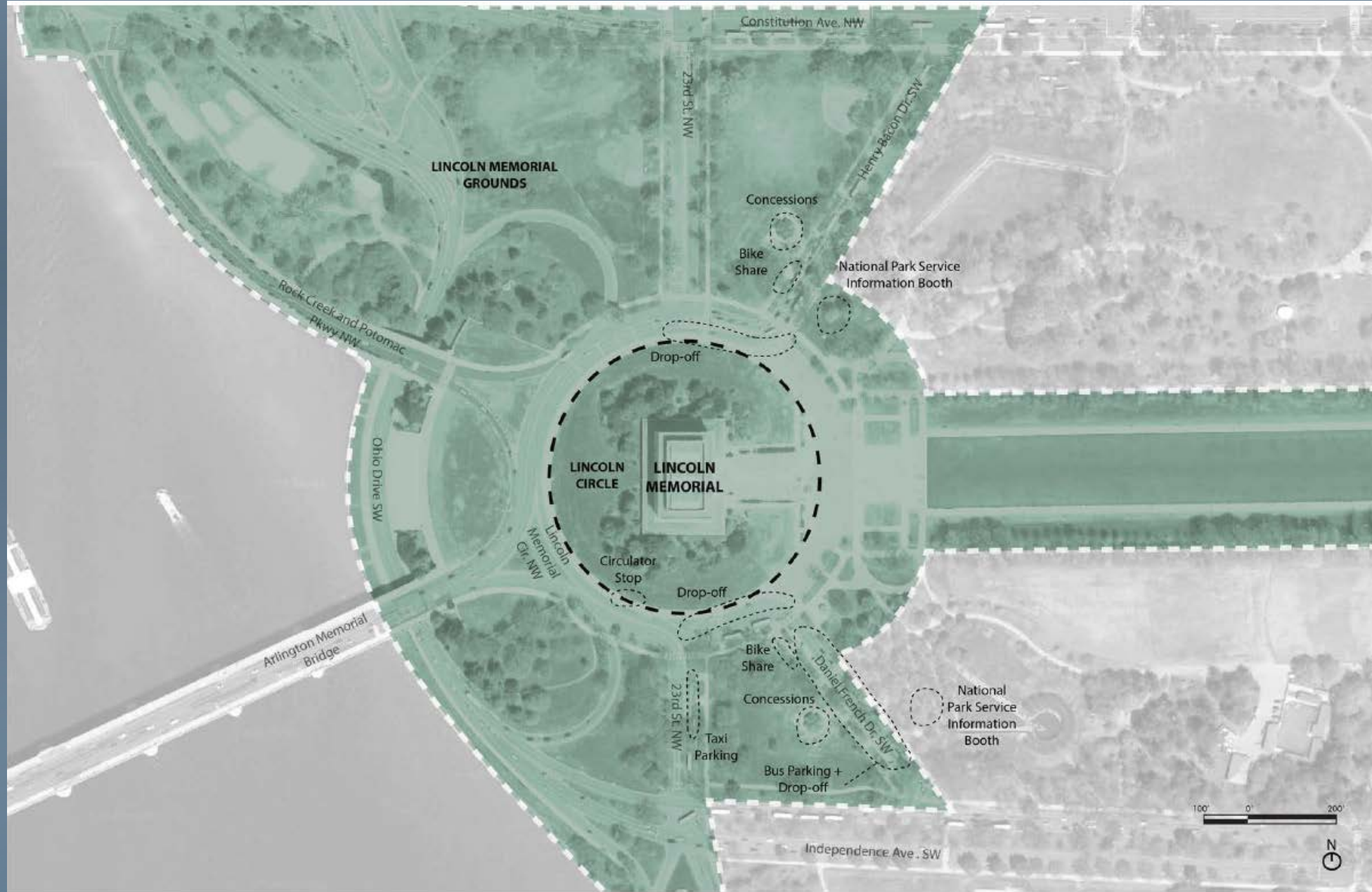
**Project summary:**

The National Park Service (NPS) seeks approval of comments on a concept design for the rehabilitation of the Lincoln Memorial, located in West Potomac Park of the National Mall. The Lincoln Memorial has approximately 8 million visitors each year. The visitation to the Memorial continues to increase each year.

The project will enlarge the doorways on the east façade of the Memorial, at the ground level, which flank the center stairs, leading to the main Memorial chamber. The widened doorways will enable improved and expanded visitor services to be built out in the undercroft of the Memorial. In addition, the wider doors will correct code deficiencies in this area, improve universal accessibility, expand and improve restrooms, and provide new interpretative opportunities for visitors. It will also allow for the relocation of incompatible uses, such as the bookstore and various support spaces, out of the chamber, thereby helping to restore the intended solemnity of the monumental space.

The existing door opening on the south side of the east elevation is approximately 2' 9 ½" wide, while the existing door opening on the north side of the east elevation is approximately 2' 5 ½" wide. For review and comments, NPS has submitted three options of varying widths to increase the openings: 36", 50", and 72".



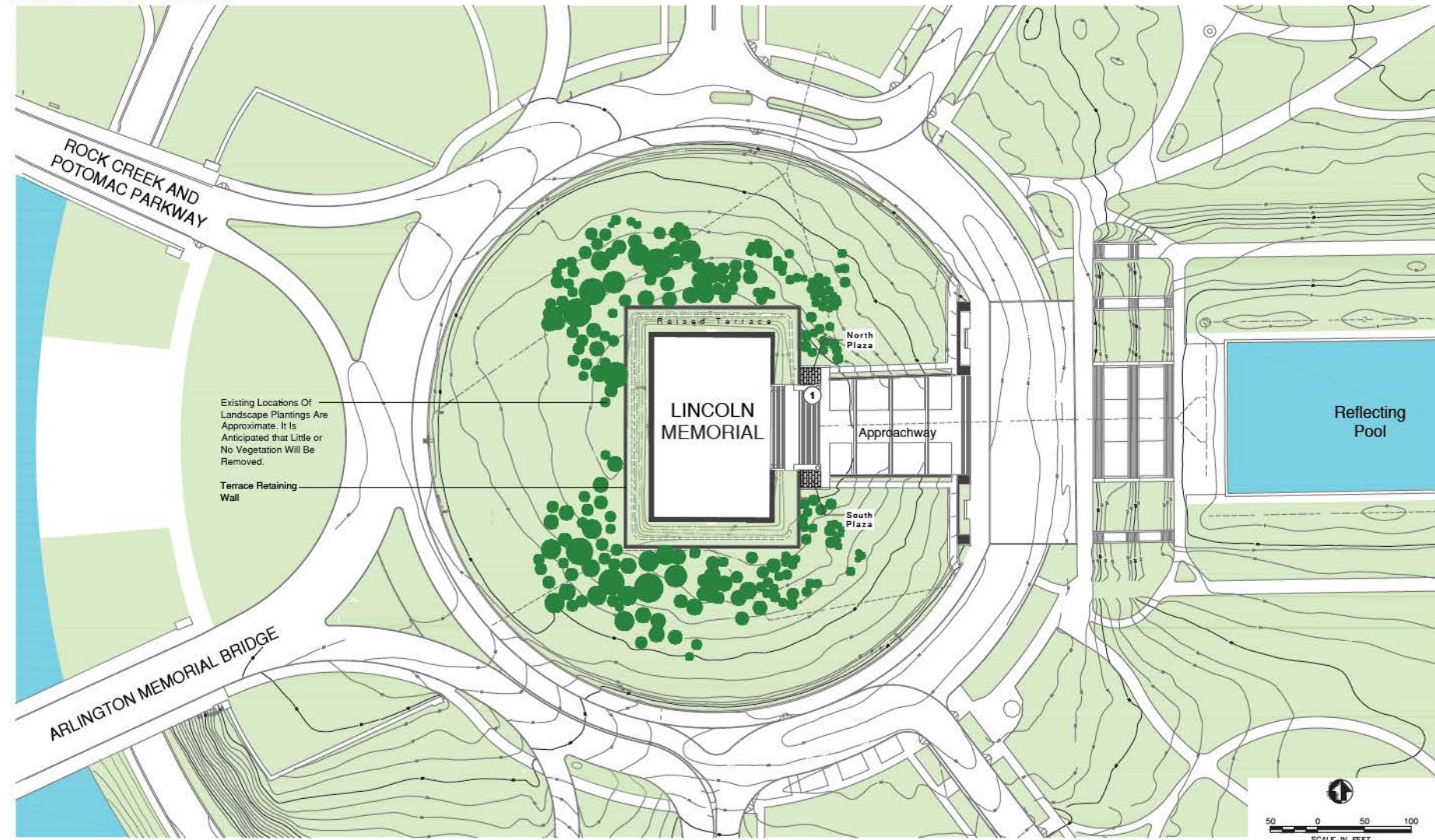


## SITE PLAN

Lincoln Memorial Rehabilitation



### LANDSCAPE PLAN



## LINCOLN MEMORIAL GROUNDS



1 - NORTH CONCESSIONS



2 - VIEW OF THE REFLECTING POOL AND WASHINGTON MONUMENT



3 - PARKS SERVICE INFO BOOTH

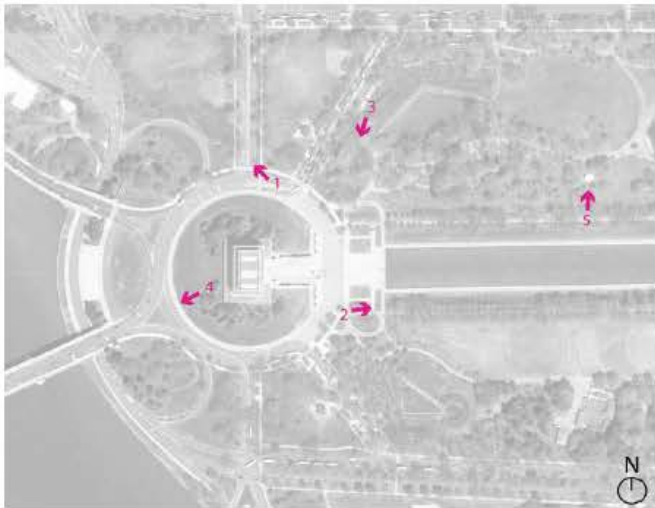


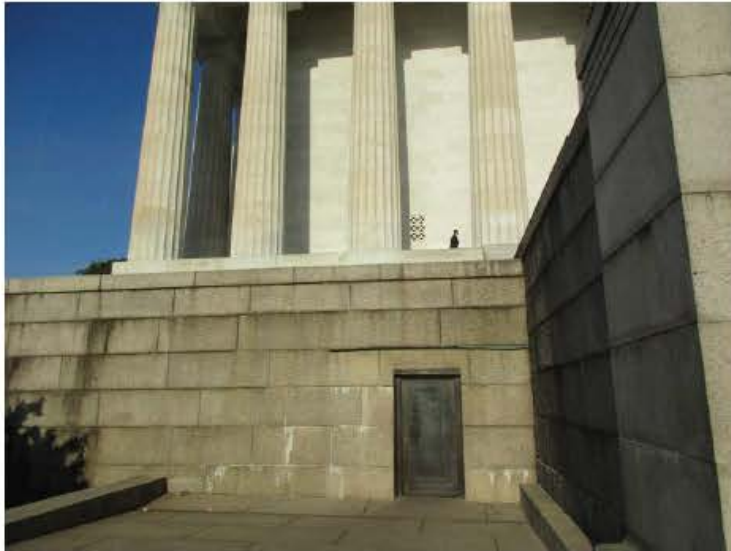
PHOTO KEY PLAN



4 - ARLINGTON MEMORIAL BRIDGE



5 - CLOSEST PUBLIC RESTROOM



1 - SOUTH UNDERCROFT DOOR



2 - NORTH UNDERCROFT DOOR



3 - VIEW FROM APPROACHWAY

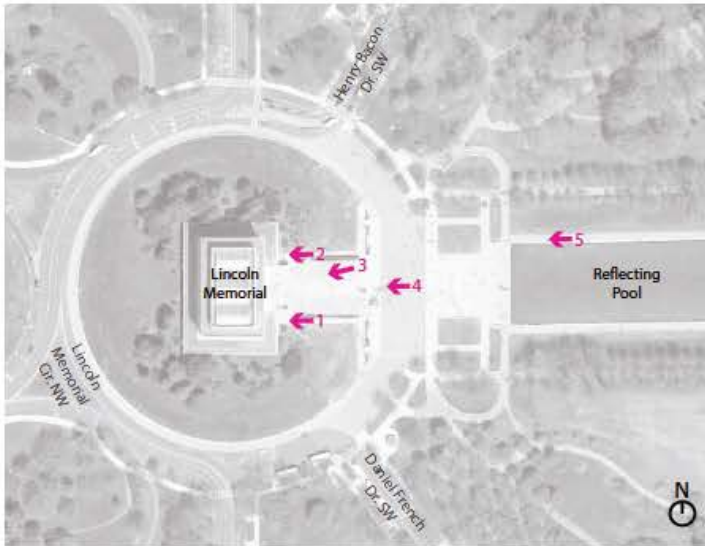


PHOTO KEY PLAN



4 - VIEW FROM MEMORIAL CIRCLE



5- VIEW FROM REFLECTING POOL



1 - PANORAMA - LINCOLN STATUE, SECOND INAUGURAL NORTH WALL, BOOKSTORE

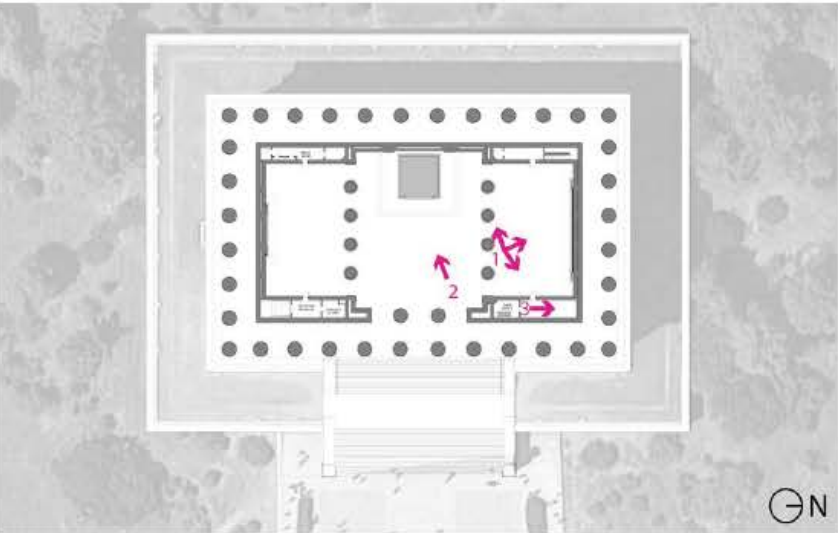


PHOTO KEY PLAN



2 - STATUARY CHAMBER



3 - BOOKSTORE



1 - VIEW OF THE EXHIBIT



2 - EXIT/ENTRANCE AT THE SOUTH DOOR



3 - ELEVATOR TO THE CHAMBER LEVEL



4 - STATUARY CHAMBER UNDERCROFT COLUMNS FROM THE GROUND



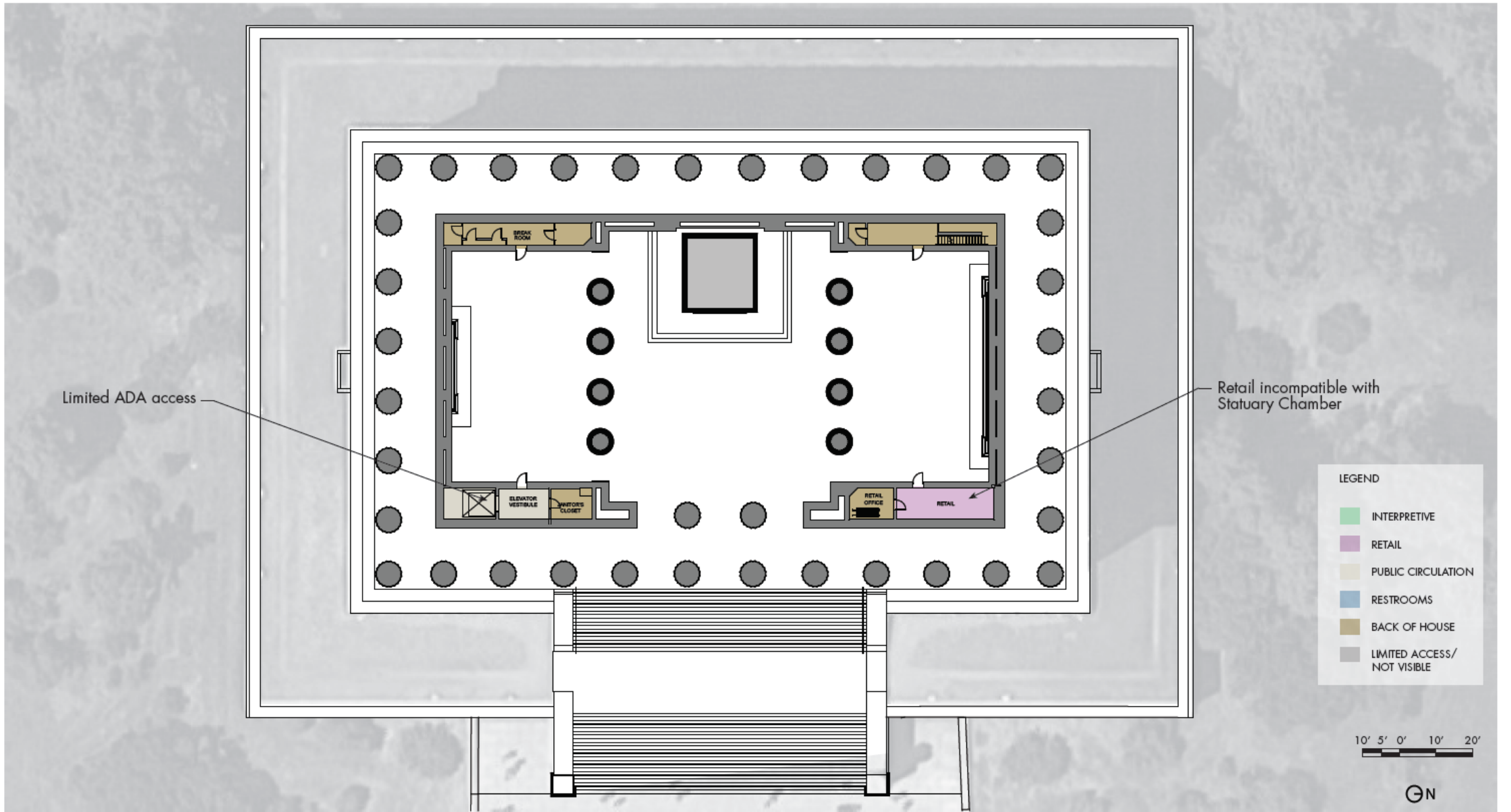
PHOTO KEY PLAN



5 - VIEW INTO THE STATUARY CHAMBER UNDERCROFT FROM THE MEZZANINE



6 - VIEW OF THE RAISED TERRACE UNDERCROFT

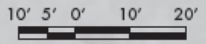


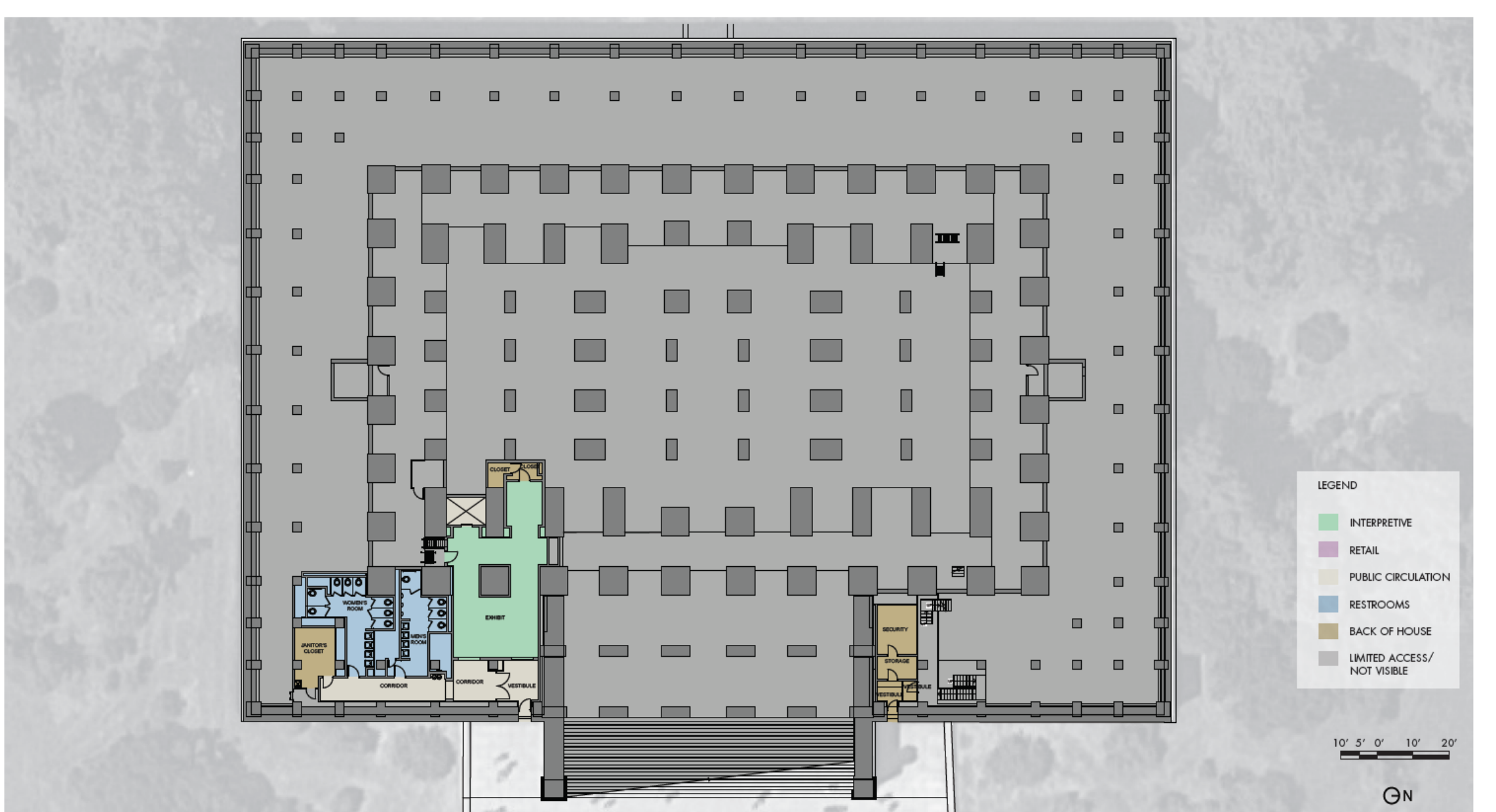
Limited ADA access

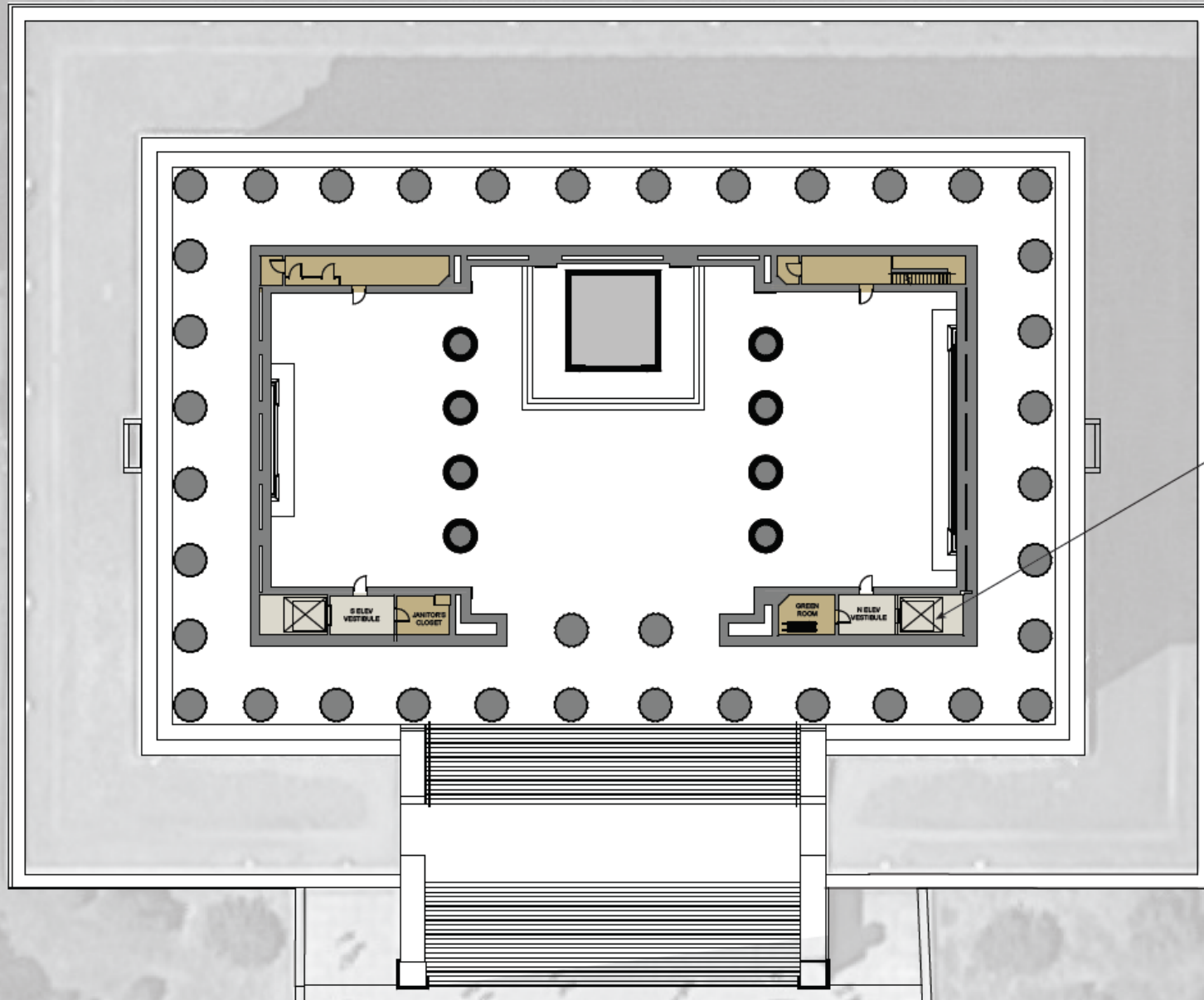
Retail incompatible with Statuary Chamber

LEGEND

- INTERPRETIVE
- RETAIL
- PUBLIC CIRCULATION
- RESTROOMS
- BACK OF HOUSE
- LIMITED ACCESS/NOT VISIBLE







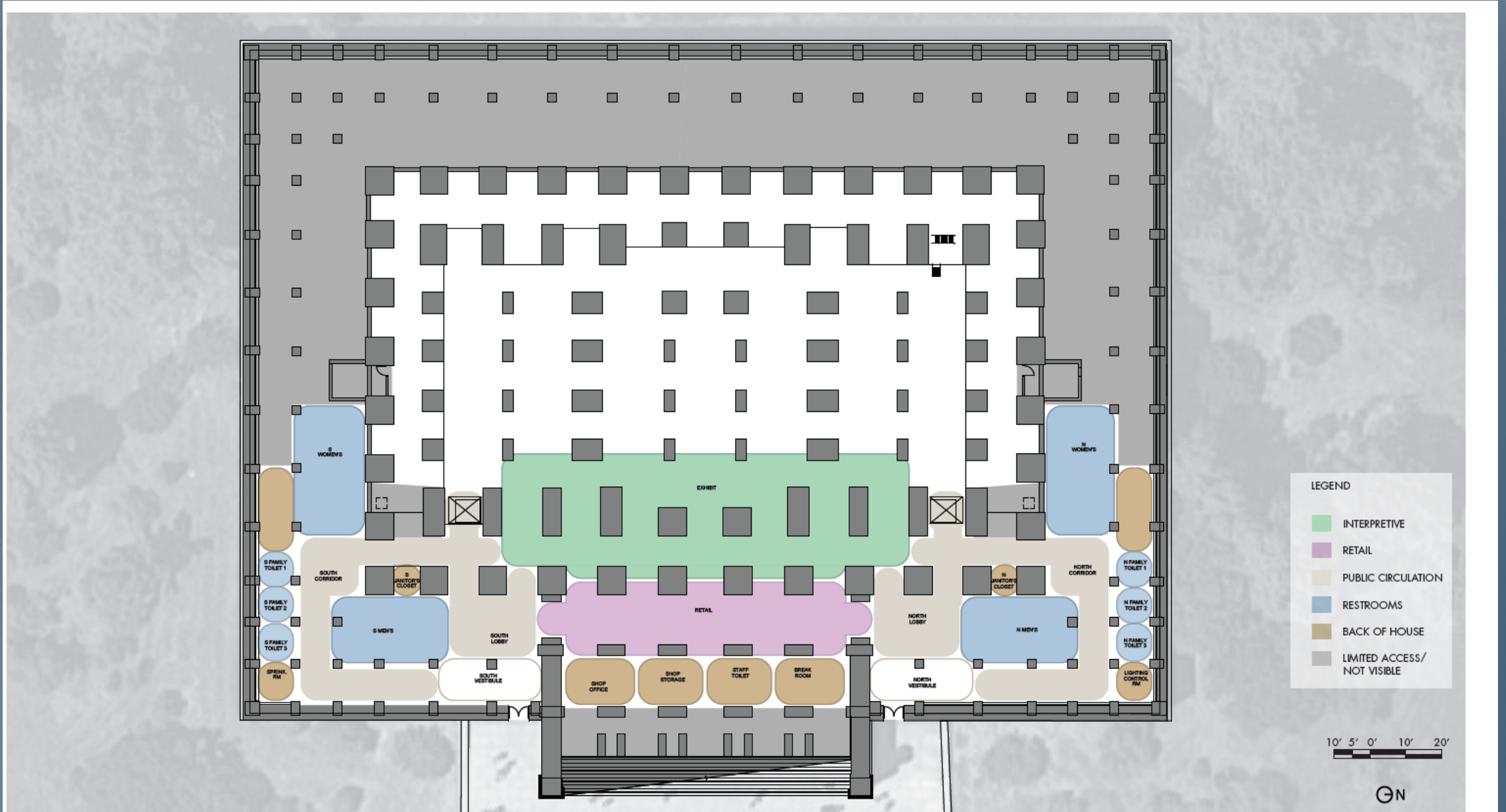
Second elevator provided from Undercroft (grade level) to Chamber.

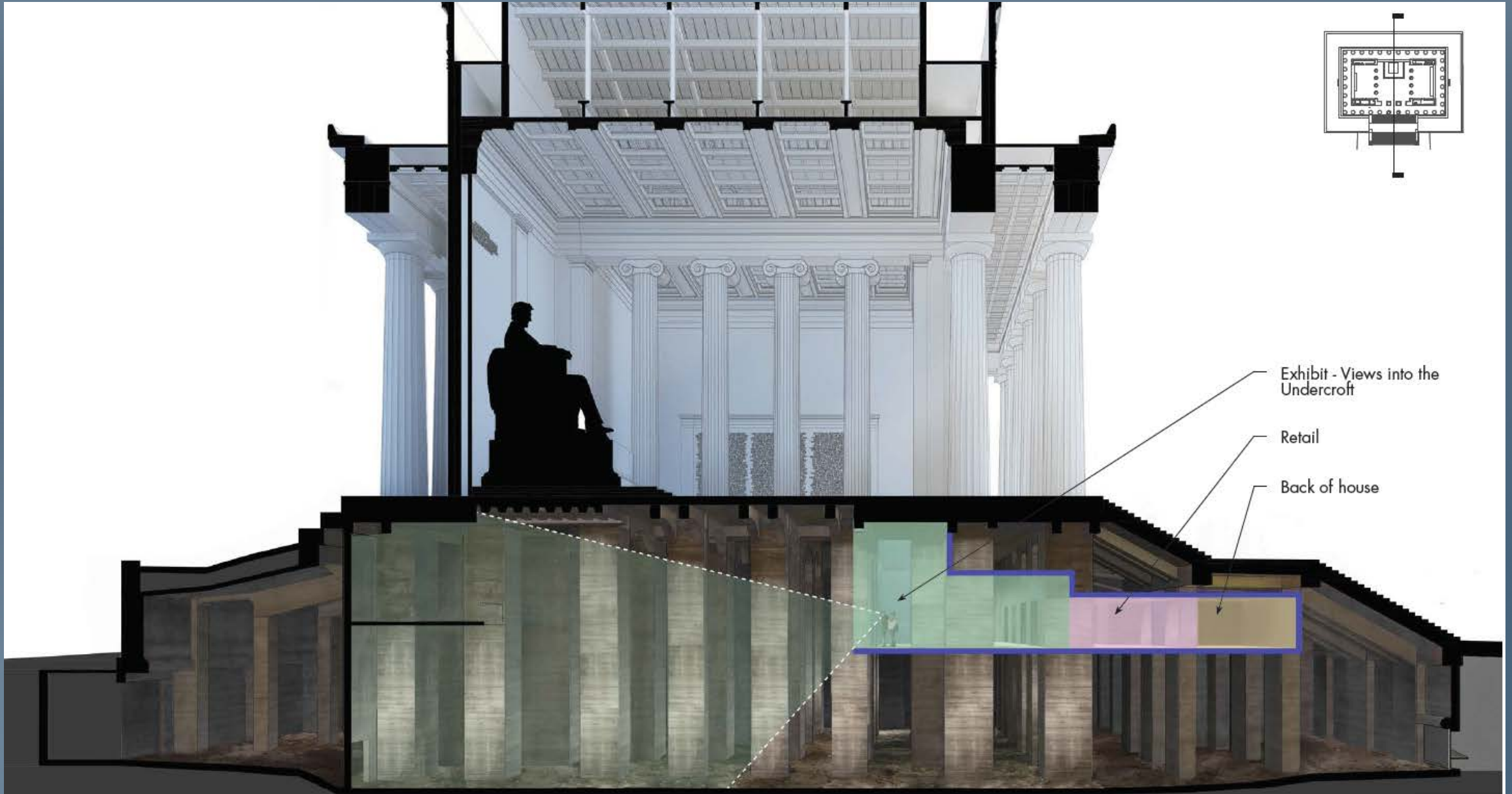
LEGEND

- INTERPRETIVE
- RETAIL
- PUBLIC CIRCULATION
- RESTROOMS
- BACK OF HOUSE
- LIMITED ACCESS/  
NOT VISIBLE

10' 5' 0' 10' 20'

GN





## CONCEPTUAL PRECEDENTS



Concept View into the Statuary Chamber Undercroft



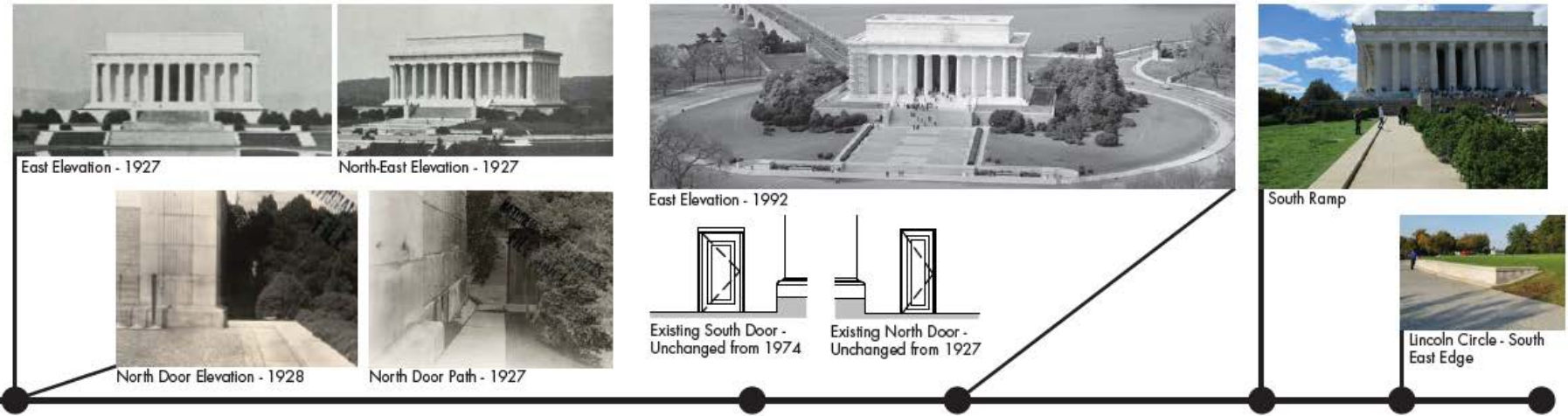
Crypt dedicated to Poper John XXIII, Italy, 2012 by PBEB Architetti



Hedmark Museum, Norway, 1971 by Sverre Fehn

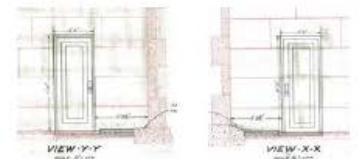


Castelvecchio, Italy, 1958 - 1974 by Carlo Scarpa



**1922 Memorial Dedication**

1927-1928 Installation of two **Comfort Stations**, on either side of the stairs, designed by Bacon with the creation of two new openings in the terrace wall. The bronze doors are installed. The vegetation in front of the doors is maintained, shielding the doors.



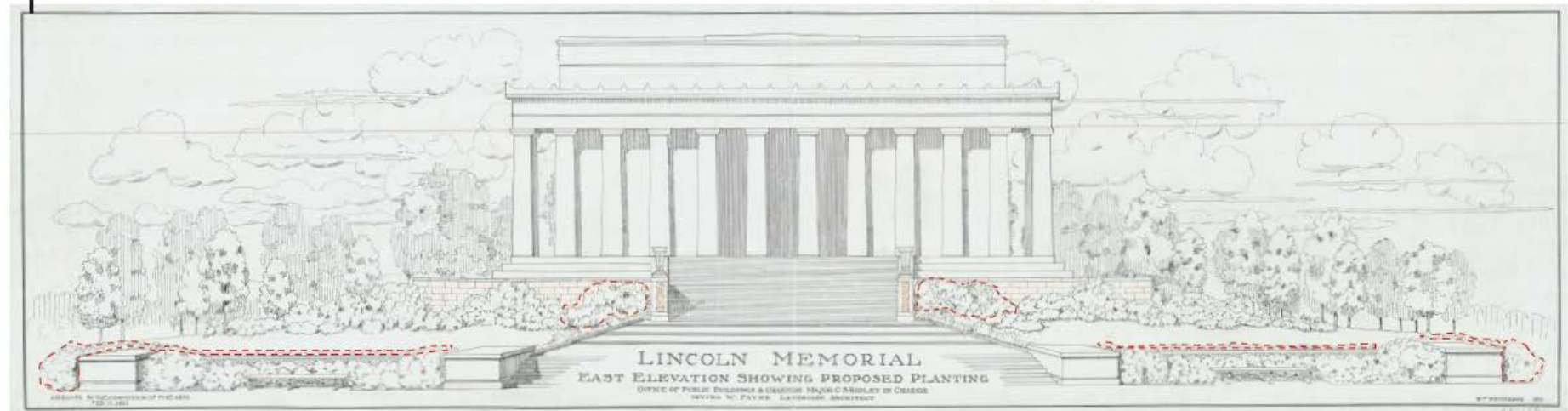
1927 Drawings for Comfort Stations - South and North Door

1966 Recommendations are made to redesign the sidewalks to the restroom, the walk is too narrow and the black slate slippery when wet, in addition to inadequate drainage.

1974-1976 **Modifications are made for accessibility.** Extending the upper plazas and installing 6' wide ramps along the approachway on the other side of the Yew vegetation. The South bronze door is widened, shortened and replaced. The North door is no longer accessible to the public. The introduction of the upper plazas means the removal of the existing vegetation, making the doors more visible.

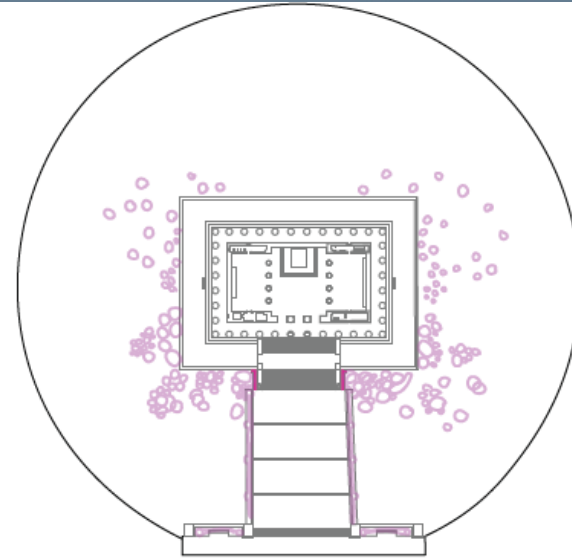
1995 The **ramps**, added in 1974, are altered to comply with ADA requirements. They are also widened from 6' to 9'.

2002 The **Lincoln Circle stone edge** is added to the North, South and West perimeter of the circle and the road at the East is pedestrianized.

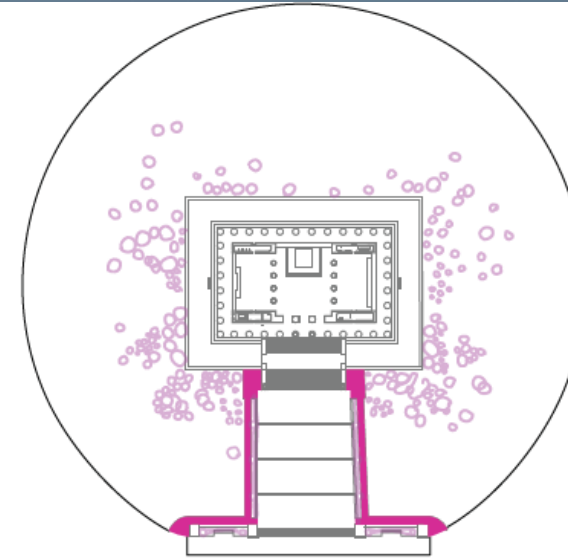


1921 Approved Planting Proposal

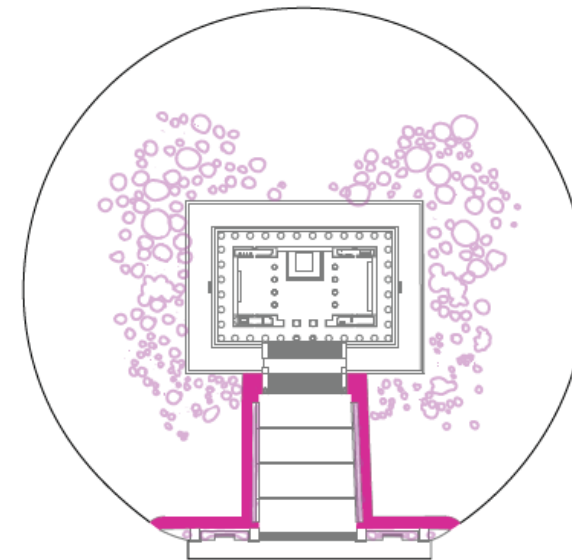
--- Vegetation removed due to modifications to the East exteriors, 1974 onward



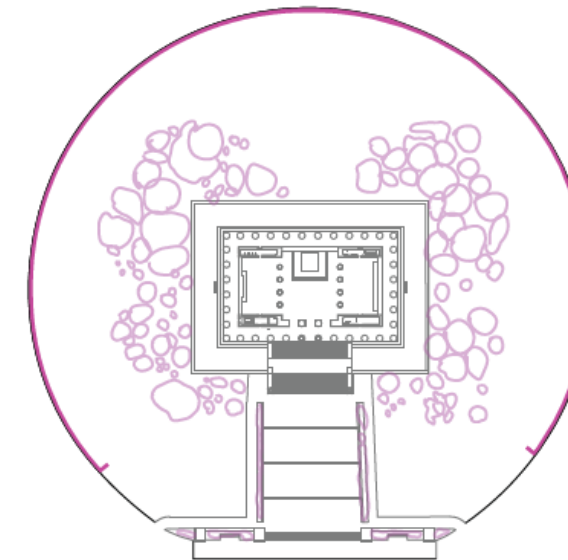
1927



1976



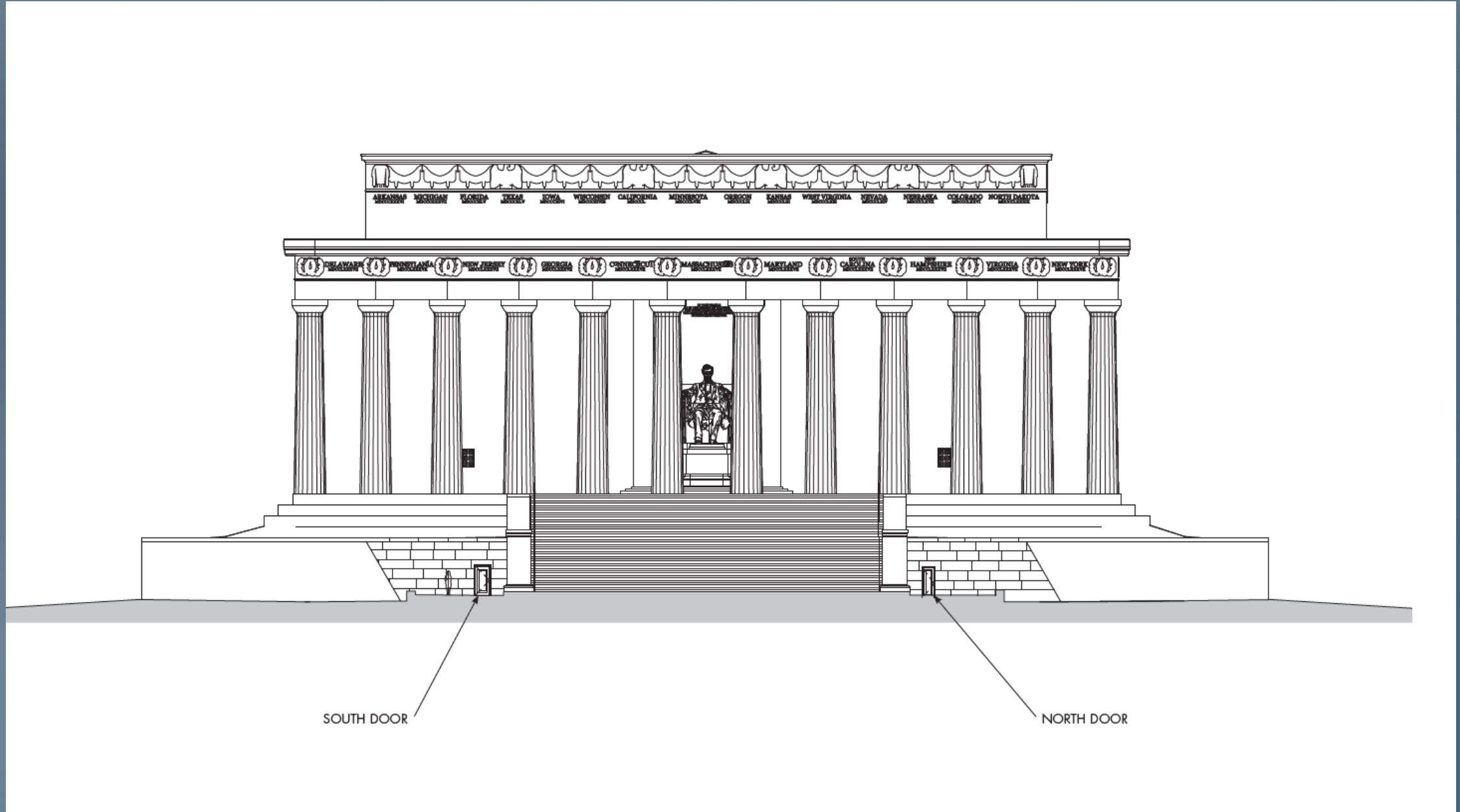
1995



2002

- Approximate location of vegetation based off planting diagrams, site plans and aerial photographs
- Changes to the hardscape within the Lincoln Circle



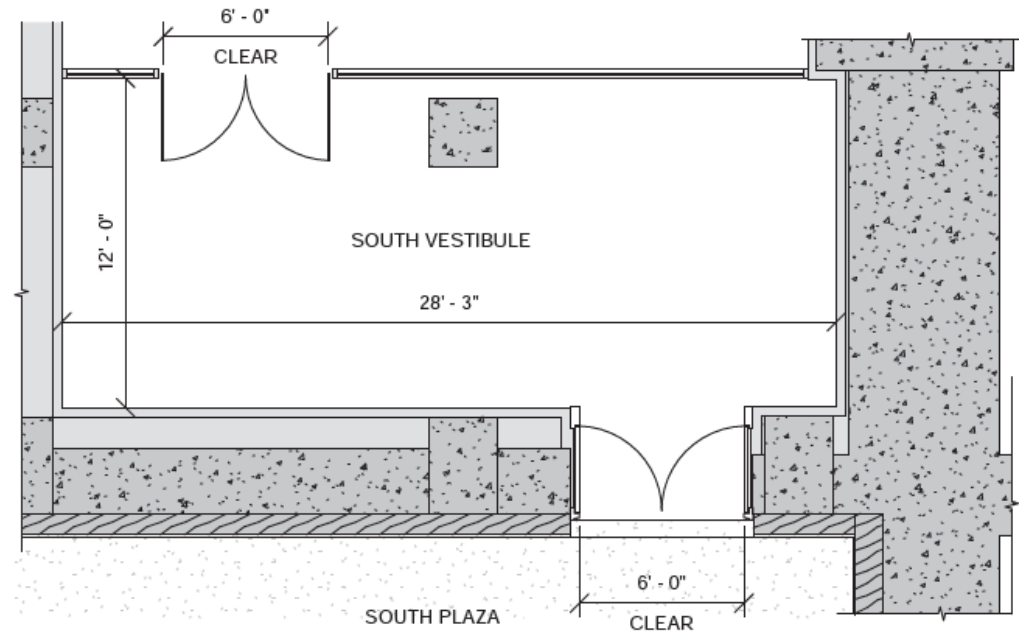


## EGRESS REQUIREMENTS

		South Entry	North Entry
	Occupancy Range	Clear Width of Exit	Clear Width of Exit
1 door	1-50	36"	n/a
2 door	51-360	36"	36"
2 door	361-500	50" minimum*	50" minimum*

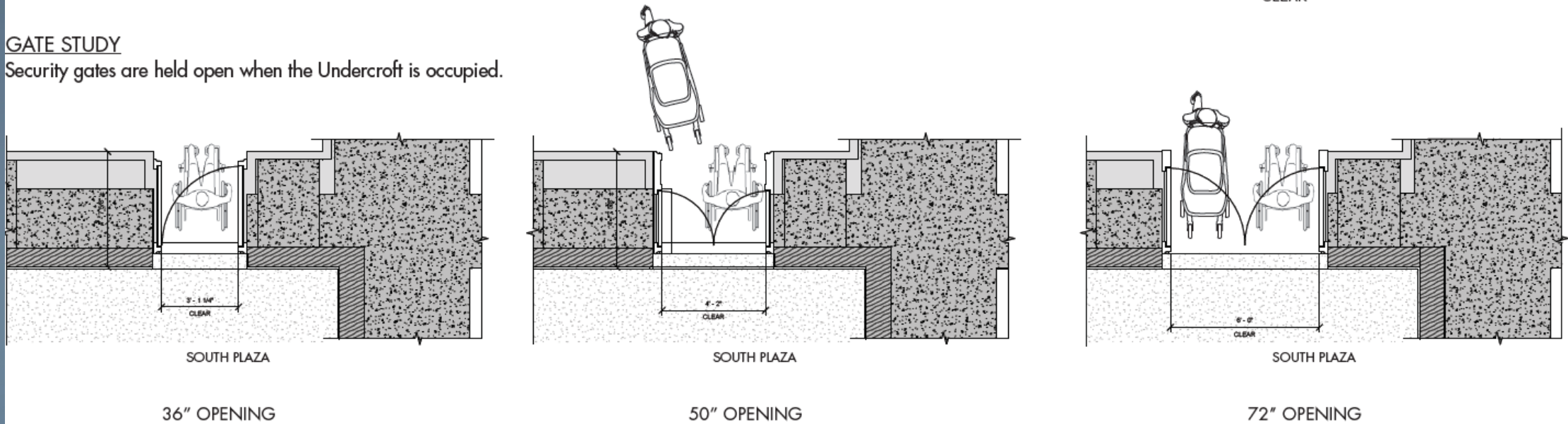
\*Though a 50" clear door meets the minimum code requirements, it still limits the number of occupants who can simultaneously utilize the entry/exit. A 72" clear door allows for two occupants to simultaneously use the passage and provides greater capacity for emergency egress.

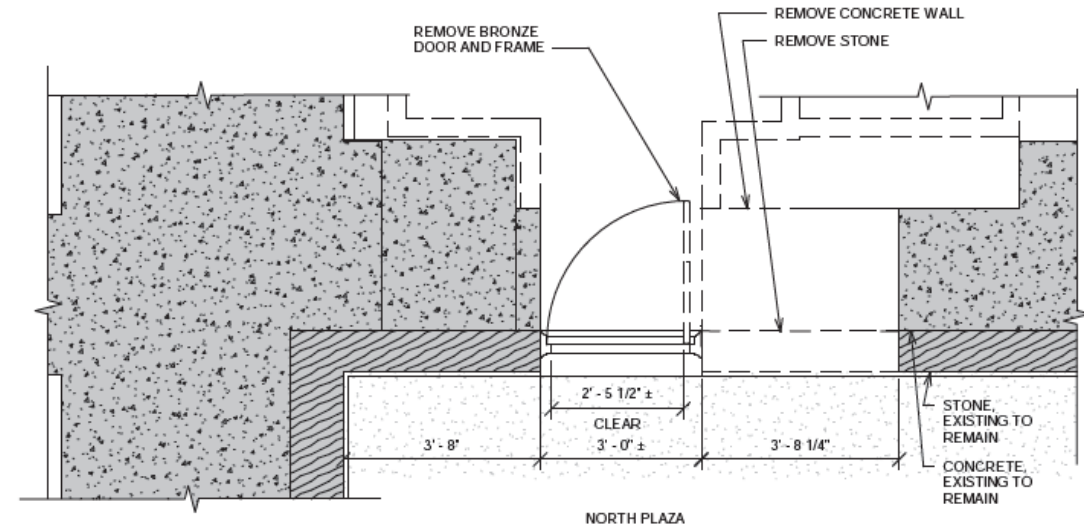
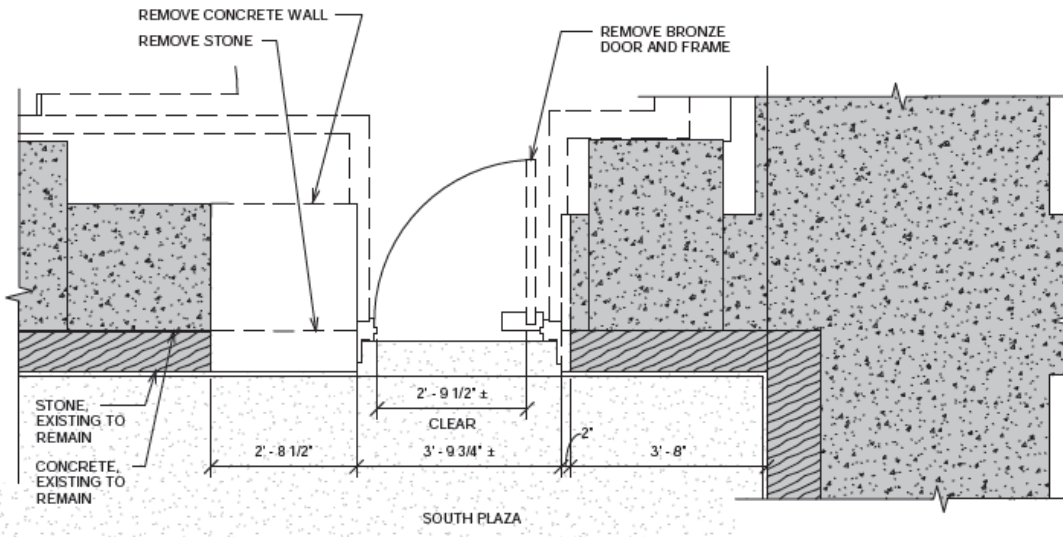
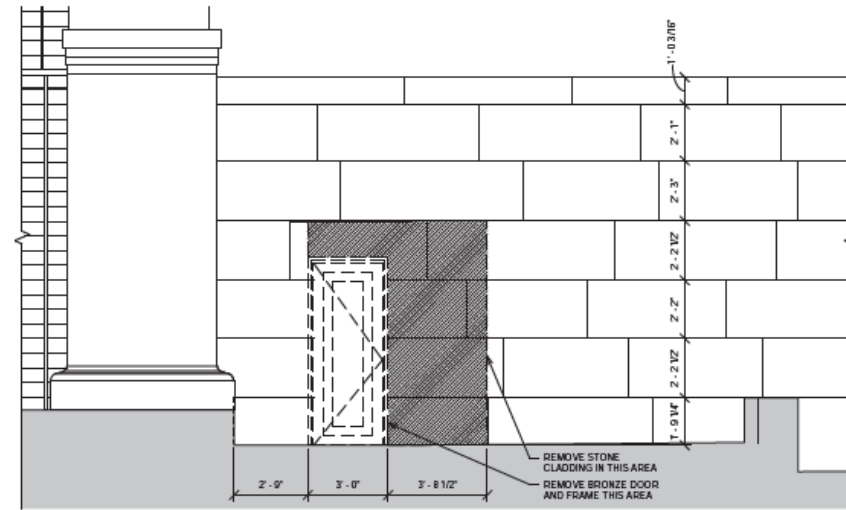
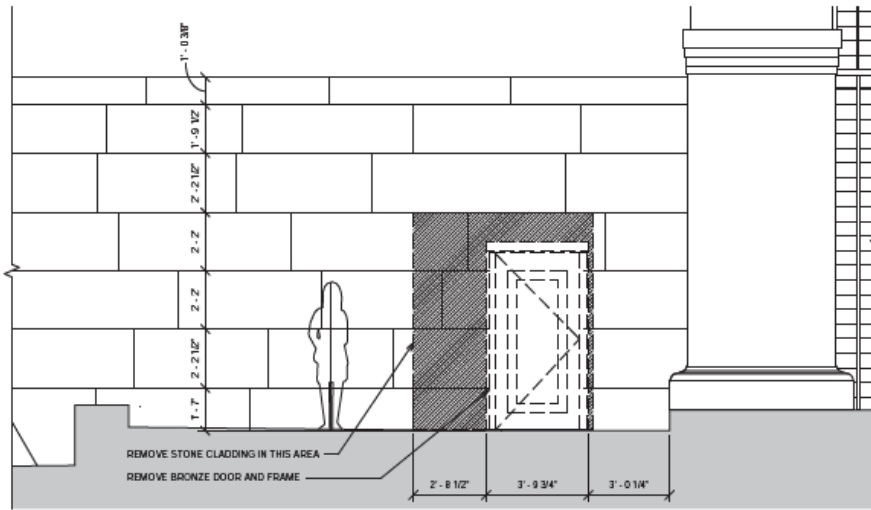
## VESTIBULE PLAN

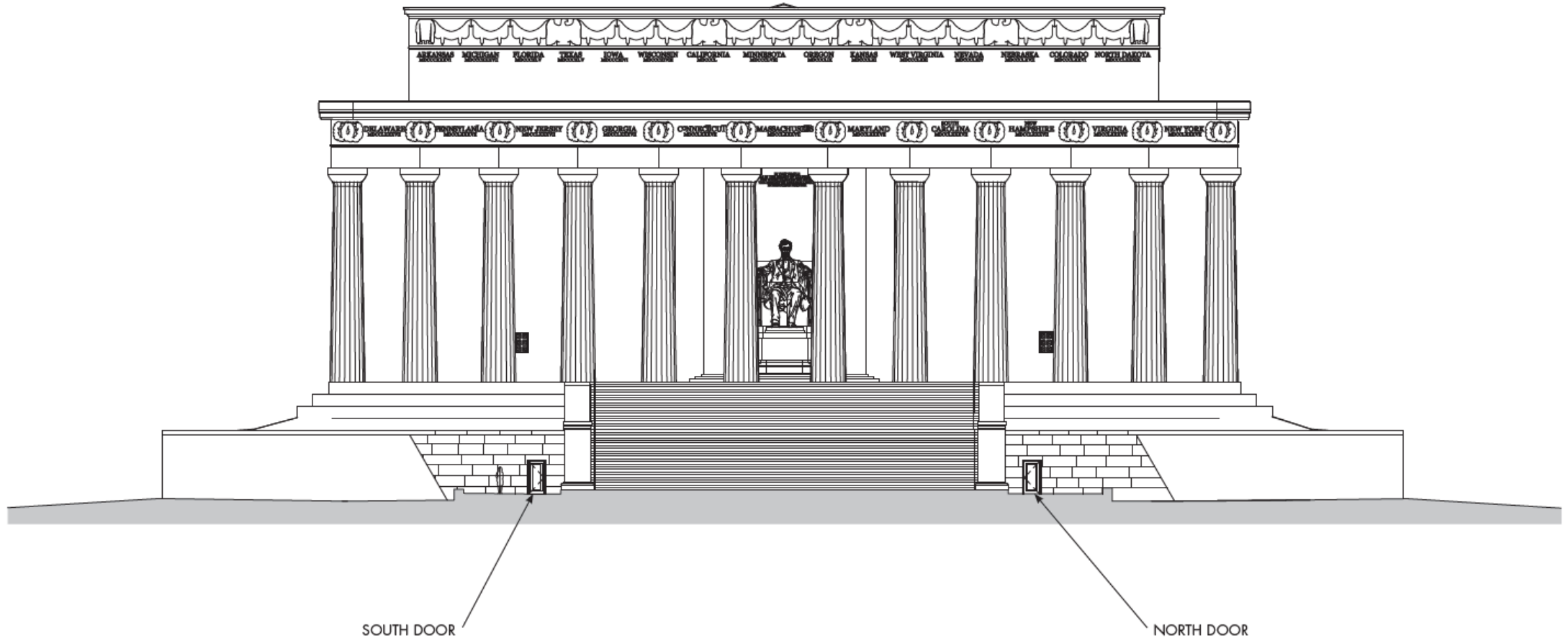


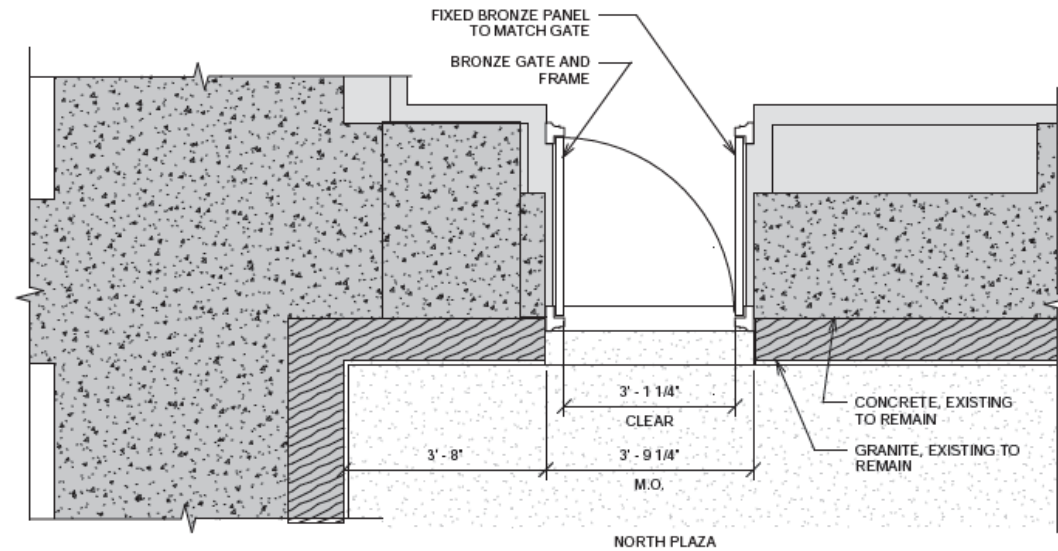
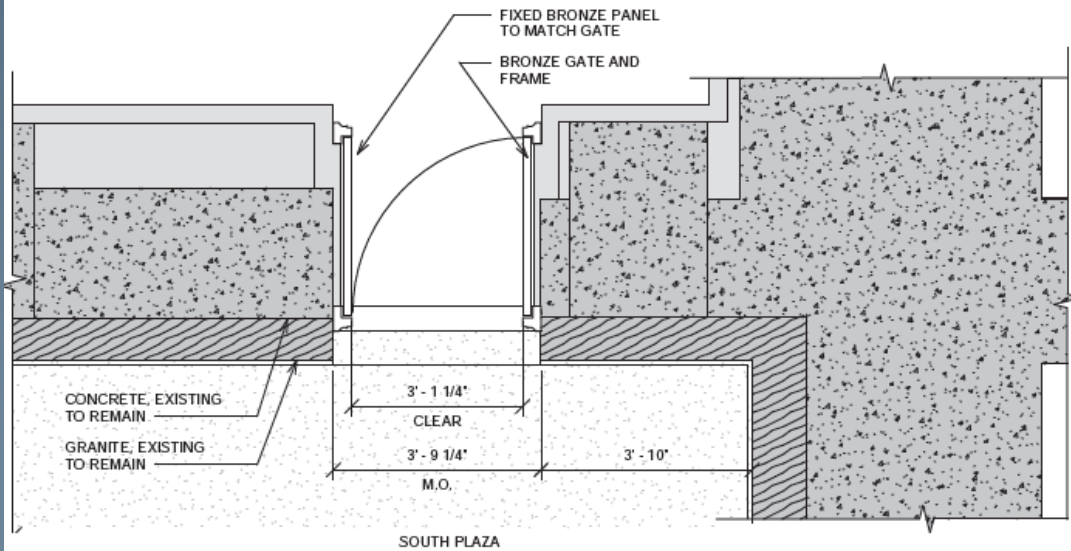
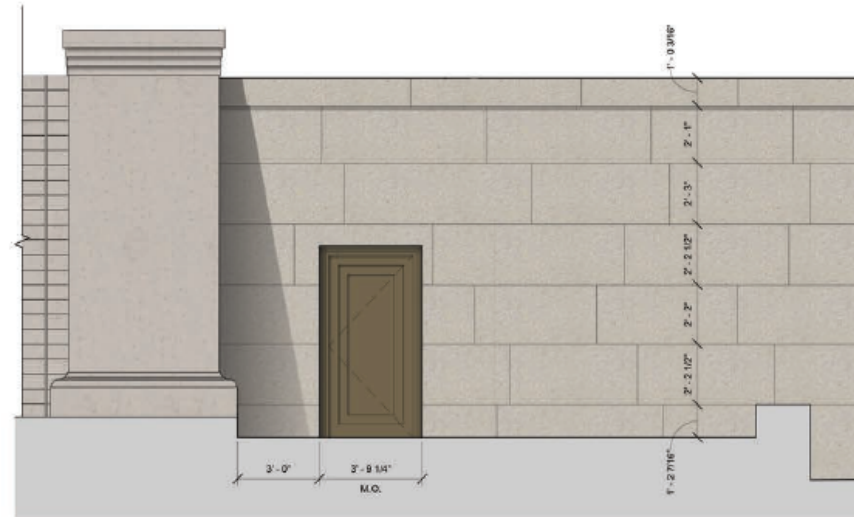
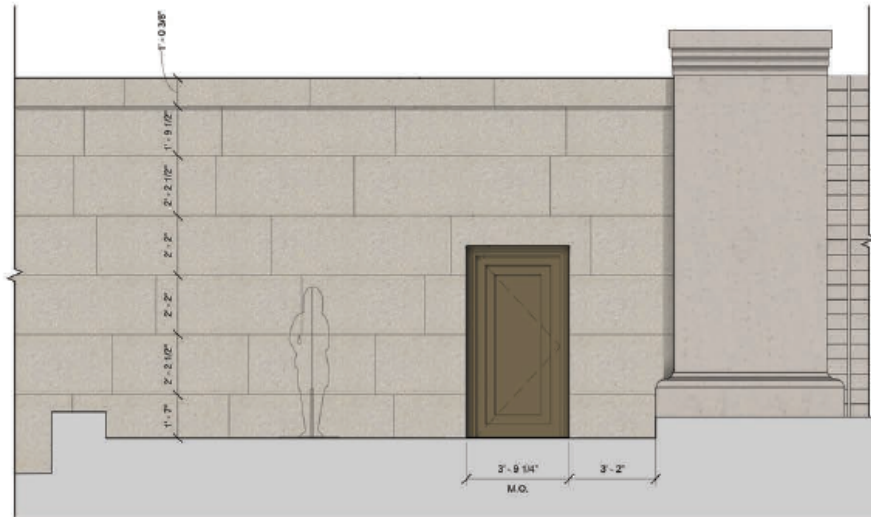
## GATE STUDY

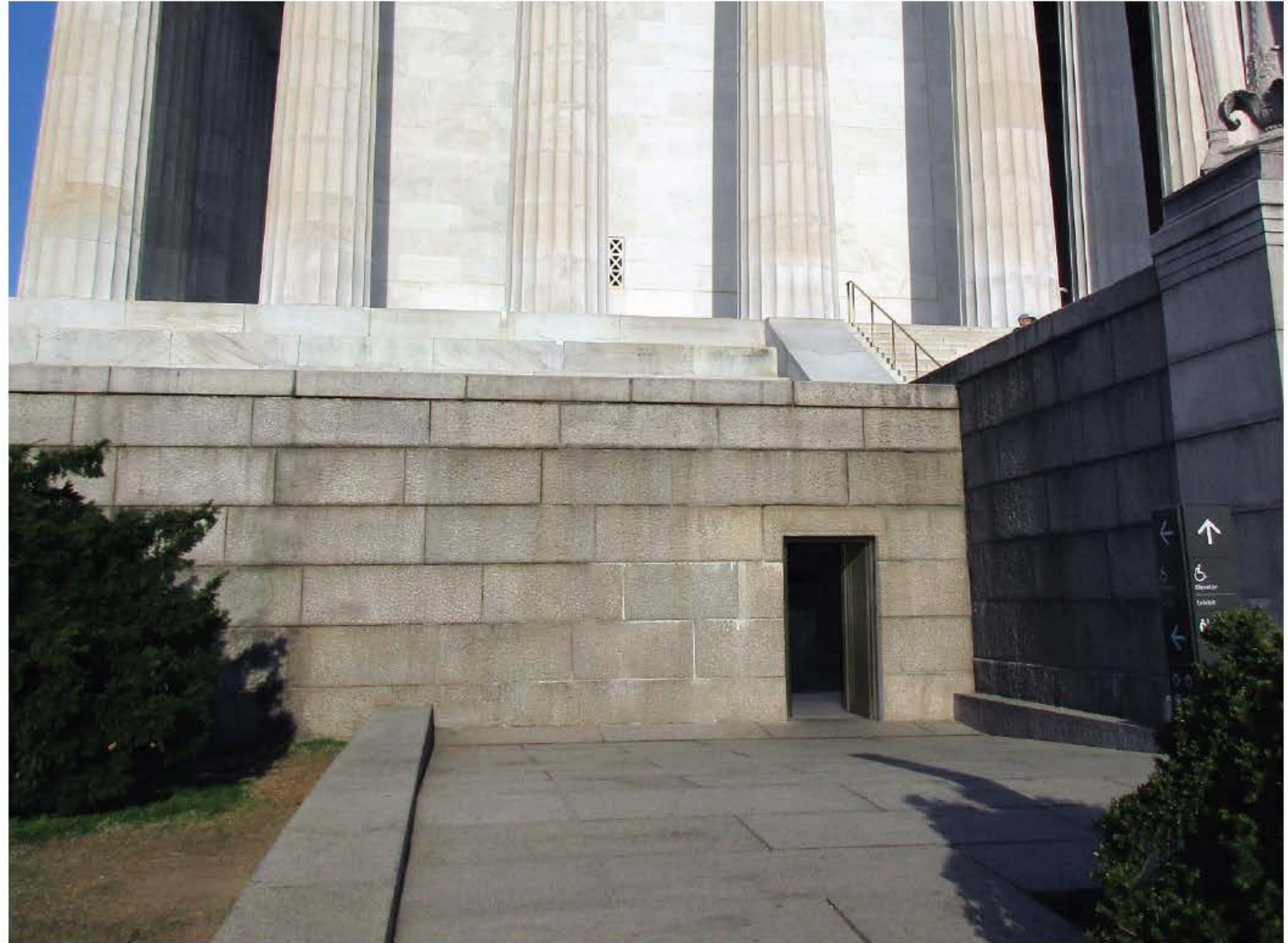
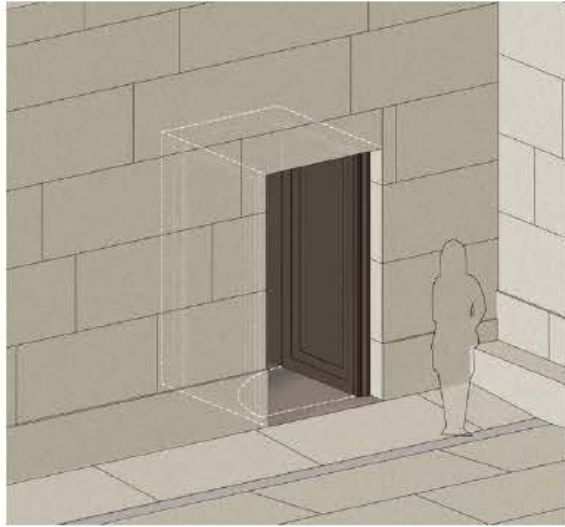
Security gates are held open when the Undercroft is occupied.

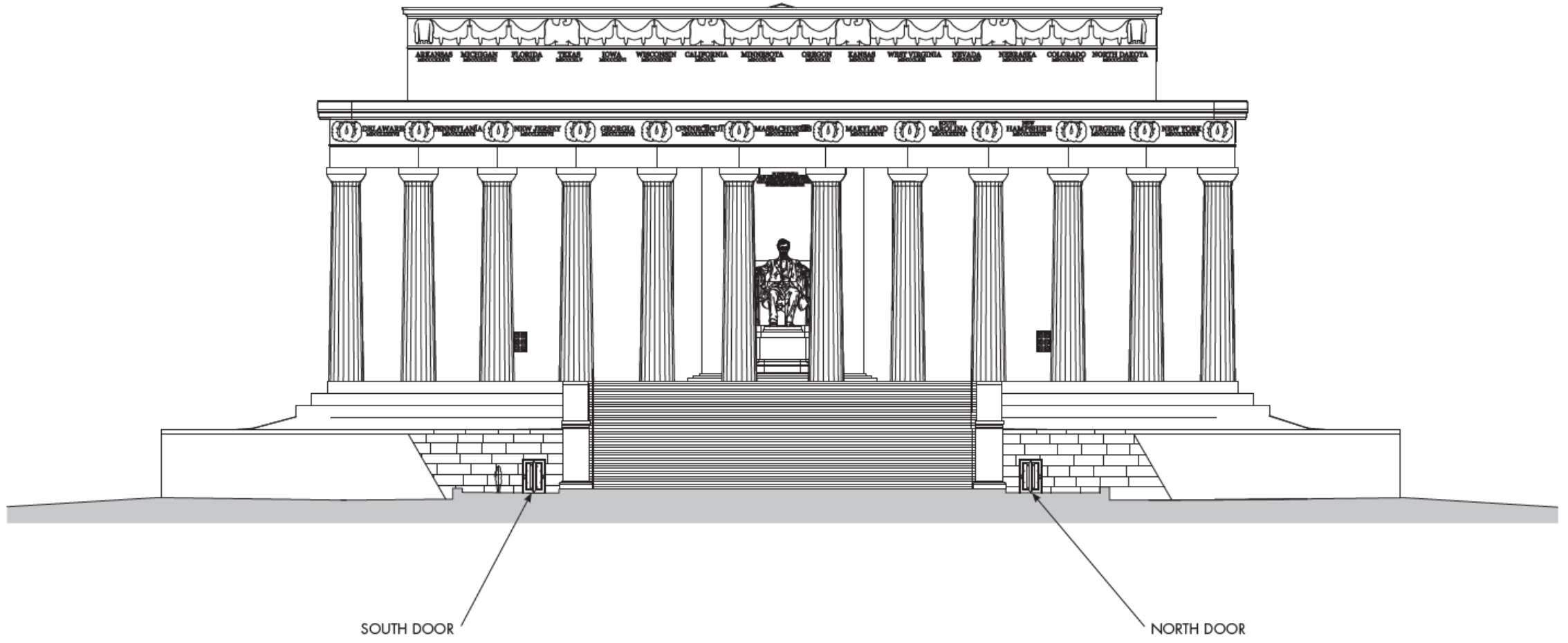


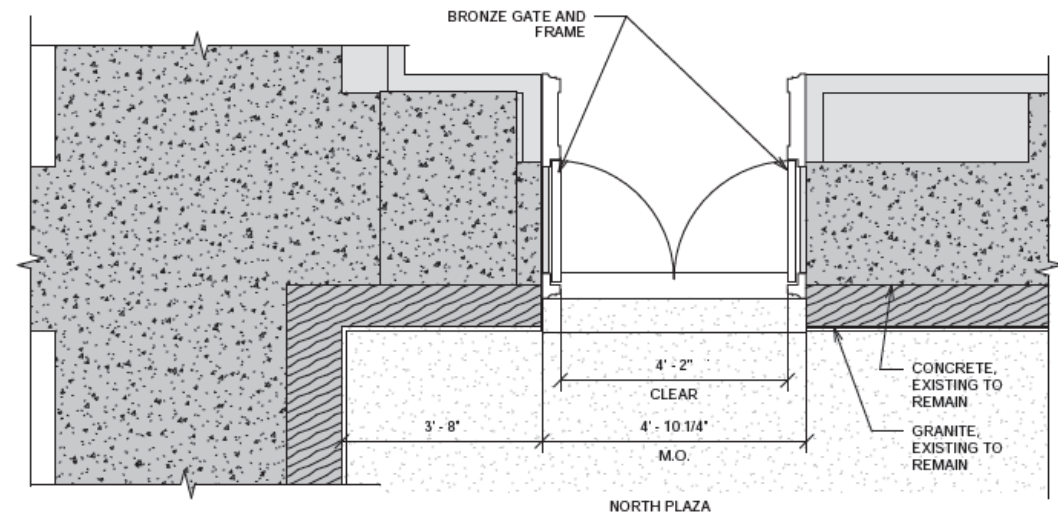
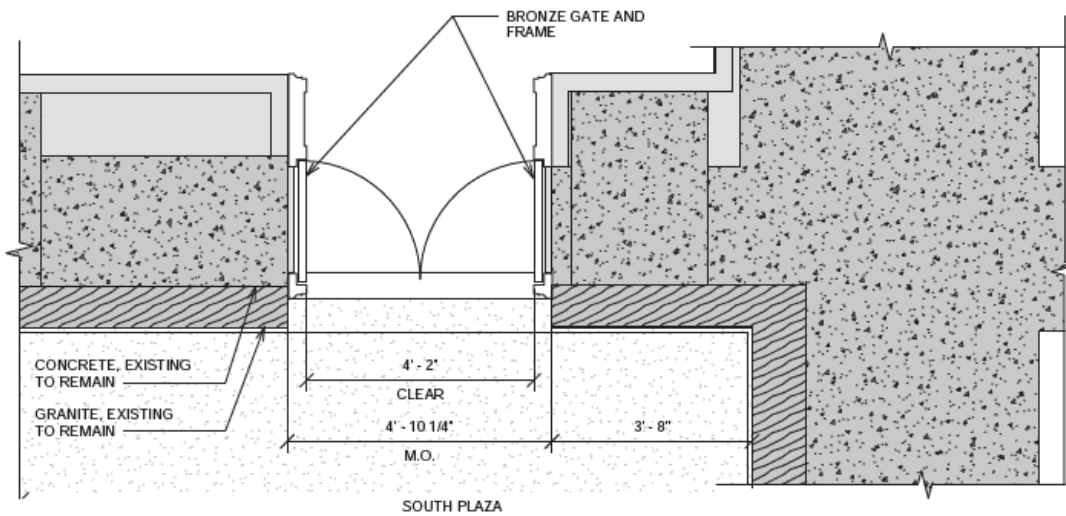
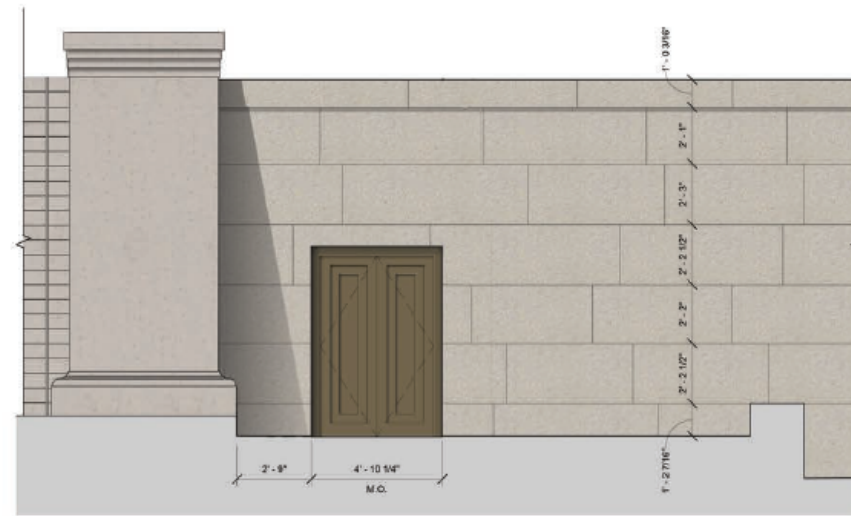
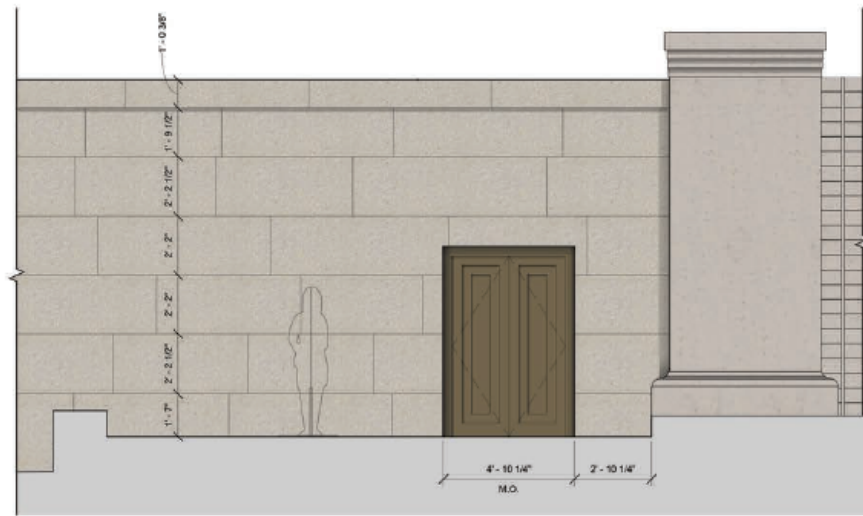


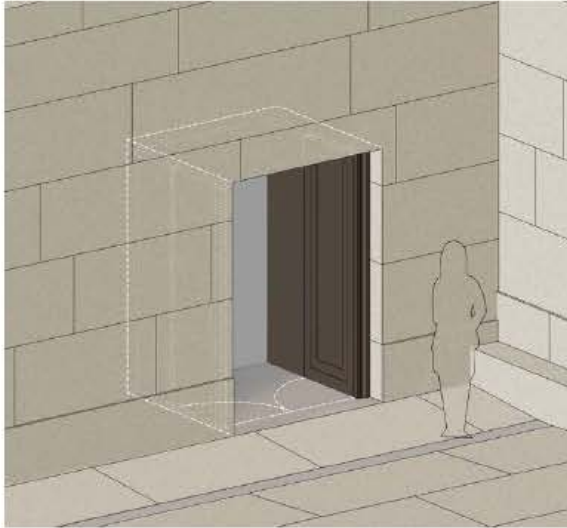


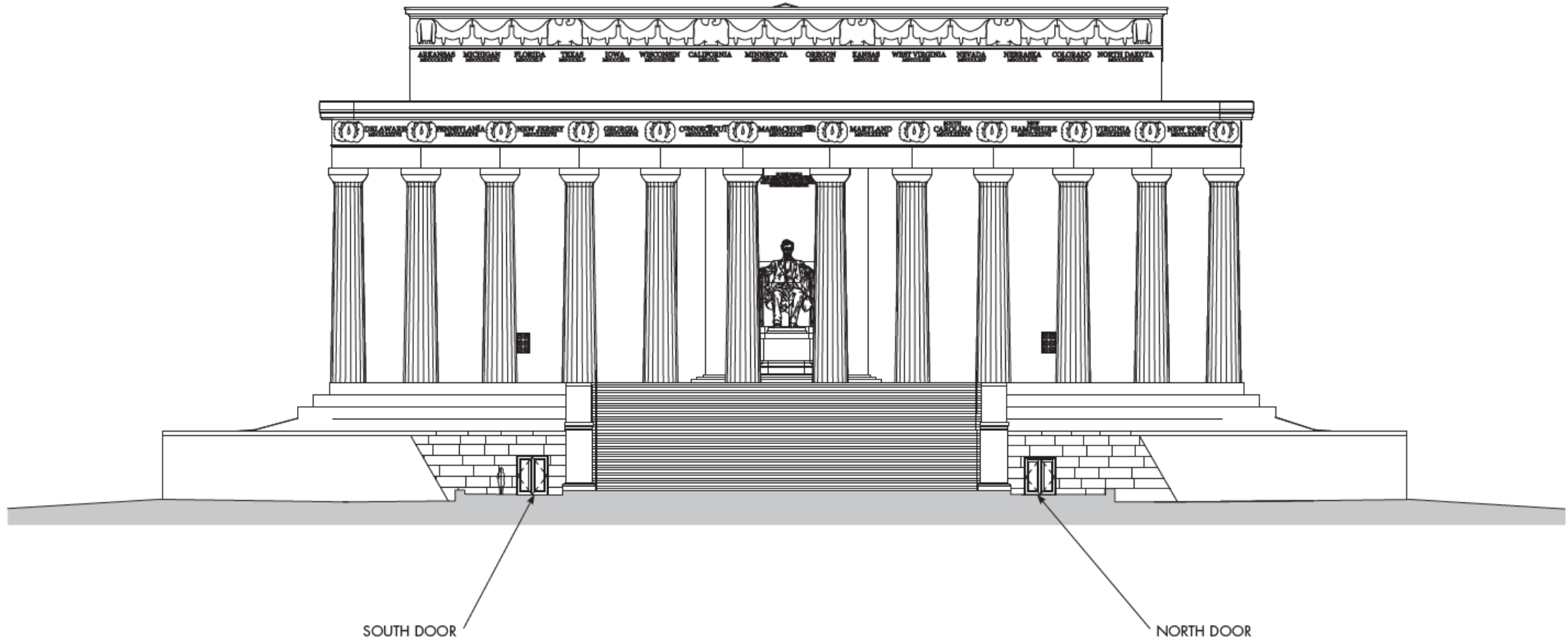


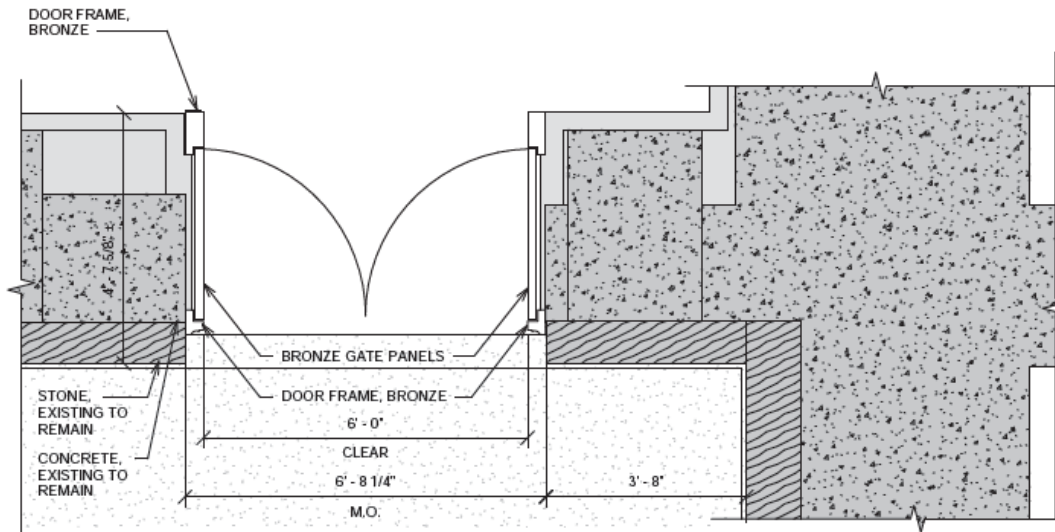
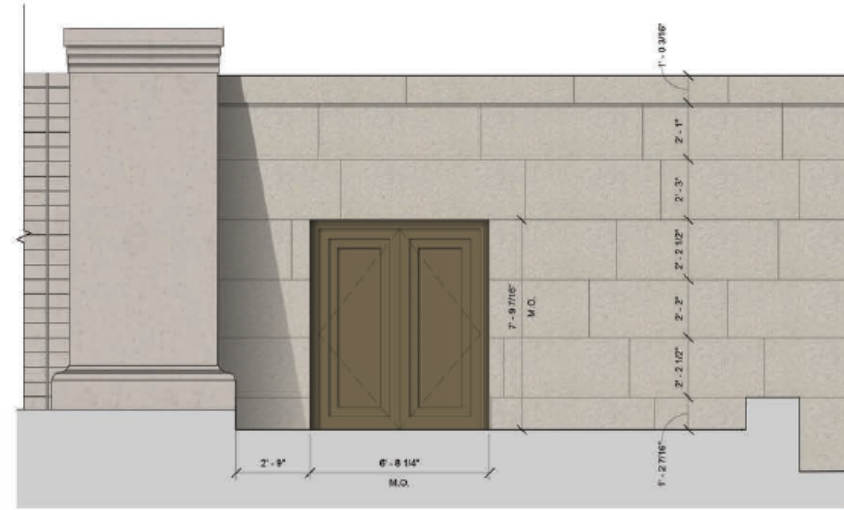
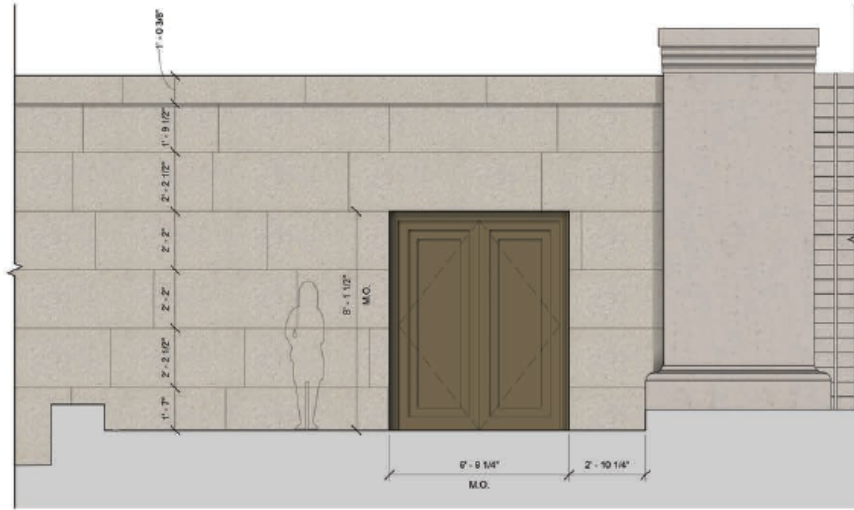




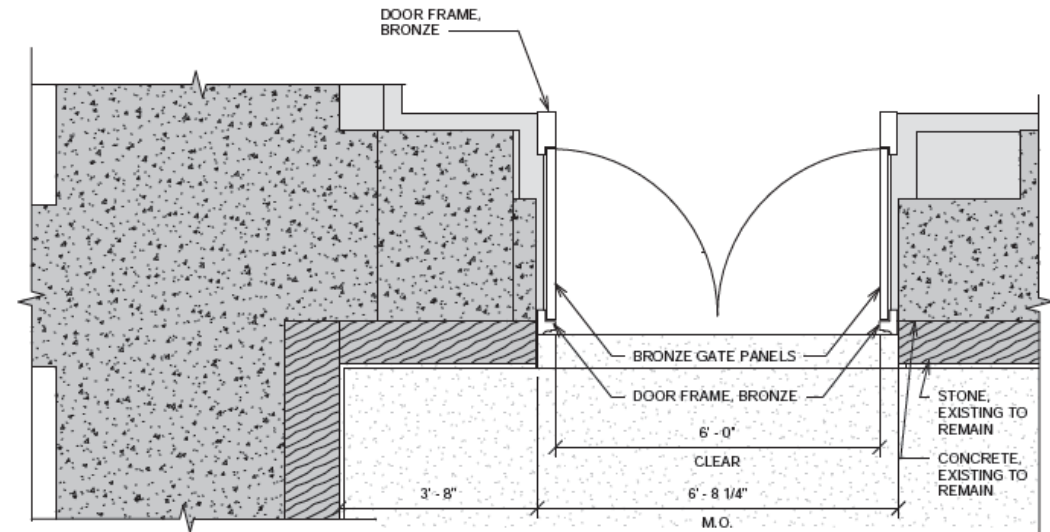




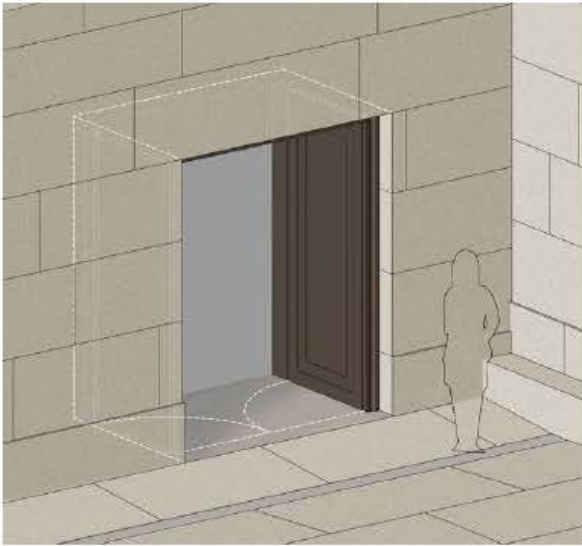


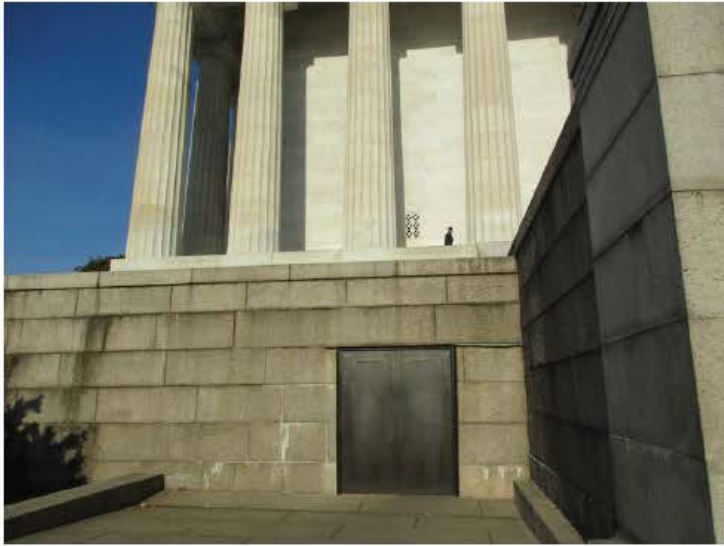


SOUTH PLAZA



NORTH PLAZA





1 - SOUTH UNDERCROFT DOOR



2 - NORTH UNDERCROFT DOOR



3 - VIEW FROM APPROACHWAY

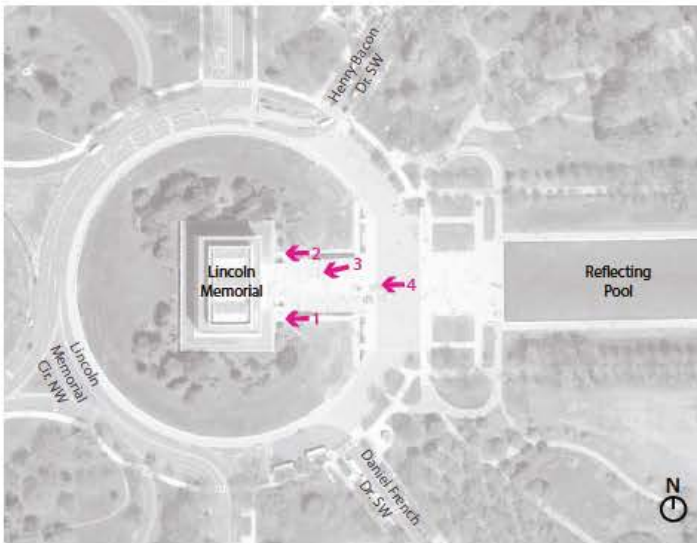


PHOTO KEY PLAN



4 - VIEW FROM MEMORIAL CIRCLE



1 - SOUTH UNDERCROFT DOOR



2 - NORTH UNDERCROFT DOOR



3 - VIEW FROM APPROACHWAY

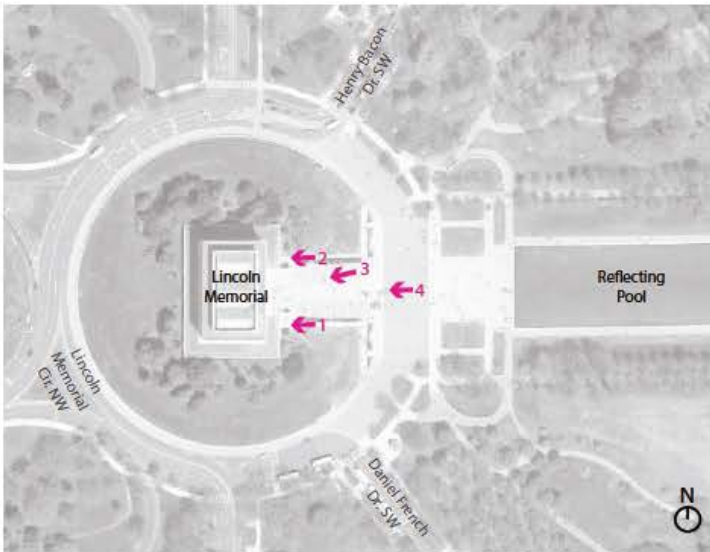


PHOTO KEY PLAN



4 - VIEW FROM MEMORIAL CIRCLE