



## Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: November 2, 2017

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**PROJECT**

**Consolidated Communications Center**

Joint Base Andrews  
Camp Springs, Maryland

**NCPC FILE NUMBER**

7902

**NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER**

3207.00(38.00)44592

**SUBMITTED BY**

United States Department of Defense  
Department of the Navy

**APPLICANT'S REQUEST**

Approve comments on concept design

**REVIEW AUTHORITY**

Federal Projects in the Environs  
per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)

**PROPOSED ACTION**

Approve comments as requested

**ACTION ITEM TYPE**

Staff Presentation

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### PROJECT SUMMARY

The United States Department of Defense proposes to construct a new 98,684 square foot, two-level building on a previously-developed site on Joint Base Andrews (JBA). The new building will serve as a Consolidated Communications Center (CCC) for the Air Force's 89th, 744th, and 844th Squadrons, supporting communications for the Air Force, White House, and other federal organizations. After construction of the new center, the Air Force will demolish Buildings 1539 and 1558, which currently house the communications functions, as well as remove surface parking adjacent to the buildings.

Joint Base Andrews spans 4,436 acres in central Prince George's County, bordered by Allentown Road on the west, Pennsylvania Avenue (Route 4) on the east, and Suitland Parkway to the north. The main installation has a daytime worker population of approximately 17,000, residential population of approximately 2,600, and is home to various commands from the Department of Defense, Maryland National Guard, Maryland State Police, and District National Guard.

### KEY INFORMATION

- The Department of the Navy has submitted the proposed project on behalf of the Air Force.
- The Consolidated Communication Center will consolidate two existing communication facilities located elsewhere on the campus onto a single site. It will not increase employment as it is simply a relocation and consolidation of facilities.
- The selected project site is located near Buildings 1539 and 1558 to reuse existing underground infrastructure, which would be expensive to extend to other possible sites located further away on JBA.

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- The Consolidated Communications Center is included in the current draft JBA master plan, scheduled for NCPC review in December 2017. The last time the Commission reviewed a master plan for Joint Base Andrews was in 1990.
  - Staff reviewed the Consolidated Communications Center project in accordance with Comprehensive Plan policies and applicable planning strategies from the 2012 Department of Defense Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) – Installation Master Planning Manual, in lieu of a recent JBA master plan. Applicable policies/strategies include those related to: sustainability, transportation, land use, and network planning.
  - The Department of Defense Unified Facilities Criteria for installation master plans provides planning guidance regarding visioning, sustainable development, and area and transportation planning.
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## RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

**Finds** the proposed Consolidated Communications Center concept plan is very difficult to analyze without an up-to-date master plan for the installation.

**Requests** that the Air Force submit the following information with the next submission so that the Commission can better understand the larger context of the proposed project:

- A draft master plan that provides the framework, goals, and objectives for future development on the campus;
- A high-level street and block plan for the area surrounding the Consolidated Communications Center;
- A plan of the surrounding area street network, with future street cross sections, bus transit stops, and bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements;
- Current and future parking facilities to help identify shared-parking opportunities; and
- A landscape plan for the surrounding area that reflects installation stormwater management goals and NCPC policies related to trees and vegetation.

**Finds** the Consolidated Communications Center concept plan is generally inconsistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and strategies outlined in the Unified Facilities Criteria Manual for installation master plans, particularly those related to encouraging more compact, low-impact, pedestrian-oriented development, and structured parking.

**Requests** that the Navy submit a revised site plan that reconciles the proposed site and design of the Consolidated Communications Center with Comprehensive Plan policies and the Unified Facilities strategies and consider the following:

- Using existing nearby parking facilities to accommodate the project's parking requirements or locating parking in a structure on the south-side of the building to allow better project integration with future development;
- Designing the site with smaller building set-backs in light of the project's location on a secure installation;
- Providing on-site bicycle racks in a convenient sheltered location and provide showering/locker-room facilities inside the building to support bicycling;
- Identifying reserved on-site carpool/vanpool parking in a favorable location to encourage multi-occupant vehicle use;
- Locating the driveway area near the building front entrance so it can be used as a potential bus transit stop; and
- Designing the project to prevent any adverse water quality impacts to Meetinghouse Branch stream pursuant to referral comments from Prince George's County.

### PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

<b>Previous actions</b>	<b>None.</b>
<b>Remaining actions</b> (anticipated)	<b>February, 2018</b> – Approval of preliminary site and building plans <b>July, 2018</b> – Approval of final site and building plans

### PROJECT ANALYSIS

#### Executive Summary

NCPC staff has reviewed the project and recognizes that consolidation of Air Force and other federal communication missions into a single building results in a more efficient operation and use of building space. However, without an up-to-date master plan, it is very difficult for staff to review the project in the appropriate context. Therefore, staff is requesting that the Air Force submit a draft master plan, information related to the larger roadway/circulation network, future development locations in the area, and information related to parking, building design, landscaping, and stormwater management in the preliminary project submission. Based on the submission, the project appears to be generally inconsistent with several Comprehensive Plan policies and Unified Facilities Criteria strategies regarding more compact, low-impact, pedestrian oriented development. The 2012 UFC for Installation Master Planning sets policies for military installation master plans throughout the United States as an integrated framework. The document includes planning guidance pertaining to stakeholder involvement, vision planning, sustainable development (including compact, transit-oriented, mixed-use development), area development and transportation planning.

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## Analysis

The proposed Consolidated Communications Center (CCC) will consolidate multiple communication missions at the Joint Base Andrews installation. Currently, the missions operate out of two separate buildings – Building 1539 and Building 1558 (Slide 4). Both buildings are dated and do not comply with current energy efficiency standards. The intent of the project is to consolidate the different missions into a single building, designed with two levels and approximately 100,000 square feet of interior space. The new CCC building will comply with installation design standards, with a brick façade, concrete bordering, and metallic roof, in compliance with modern-day energy efficient standards (Slide 5).

As part of Phase 1, the Air Force will construct the CCC on a new site, which is currently occupied with various dated buildings that previously housed maintenance uses. During Phase 2, the older buildings (1539 and 1558), associated surface parking, and access drives will be demolished and the sites converted into open green space. The new CCC building site is located near existing Buildings 1539 and 1558 to benefit from existing underground utilities, which would be expensive to relocate or extend to a further-away site on the installation. The CCC will be set back from all adjacent parking and roadways by 82-feet pursuant to Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) standards. Other ancillary site improvements include perimeter security fencing, a mechanical yard, fire/emergency access drive, loading dock/service area, and maintenance/service vehicle parking (Slides 6, 7).

Without an up-to-date master plan, it is very difficult for staff to assess the project in the context of the surrounding environment. The submission shows a new alignment for D Street and Alabama Avenue but it is unclear how these streets might fit within the larger street network for the installation (Slide 8). It also makes it difficult to assess the location of future development and its orientation in relation to the CCC. The project will reduce total impervious area within the project limits from approximately 15 acres (60% of the site) to 6 acres (24% of the site) with the removal of the existing buildings (Slide 9); however a stormwater management and landscape plan are needed to assess how new pervious areas will relate and function with nearby land uses. The project will construct 278 spaces for employees per Air Force regulations related to administrative uses, which limits the number of employee spaces to no more than 60% of a building's total employment population. In addition, twenty-two spaces are proposed for government vehicles, visitors, and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) parking, totaling 300 on-site spaces overall. Overall, the project will reduce total area parking by 256 spaces once existing spaces for Buildings 1539 and 1558 are demolished (in Phase 2); however it is difficult to analyze this reduction without a more comprehensive understanding of parking for the entire installation.

While the concept submission consolidates two building footprints on an infill site, outside of the floodplain, the proposed site improvements and building design appear to be inconsistent with Comprehensive Plan policies and UFC strategies related to encouraging compact, low-impact, pedestrian-oriented development and maximizing land use compatibility. The orientation of the building to D Street, its overall setbacks, and the large number of surface parking spaces demonstrate a much more suburban-type of development. As such, staff needs to better understand the rationale for the proposed site configuration.

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Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission **find that the proposed Consolidated Communications Center concept plan is very difficult to analyze without an up-to-date master plan for the installation.**

Staff recommends that the Commission **request the following information from the Air Force as part of its preliminary project submission:**

- A draft master plan that provides the framework, goals, and objectives for future development on the campus;
- A high-level street and block plan for the area surrounding the Consolidated Communications Center;
- A plan of the surrounding area street network, with future street cross sections, bus transit stops, and bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements;
- Current and future parking facilities to help identify shared-parking opportunities; and
- A landscape plan for the surrounding area that reflects installation stormwater management goals and NCPC policies related to trees and vegetation.

Staff also recommends that the Commission **finds the Consolidated Communications Center concept plan is generally inconsistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and strategies outlined in the Unified Facilities Criteria Manual for installation master plans, particularly those related to encouraging more compact, low-impact, pedestrian-oriented development, and structured parking.**

**Requests that the Air Force submit a revised site plan that reconciles the proposed site and design of the Consolidated Communications Center with Comprehensive Plan policies and the Unified Facilities strategies and consider the following:**

- Using existing nearby parking facilities to accommodate the project's parking requirements or locating parking in a structure on the south-side of the building to allow better project integration with future development;
- Designing the site with smaller building set-backs in light of the project's location on a secure installation;
- Providing on-site bicycle racks in a convenient sheltered location and provide showering/locker-room facilities inside the building to support bicycling;
- Identifying reserved on-site carpool/vanpool parking in a favorable location to encourage multi-occupant vehicle use;
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- Designing the project to prevent any adverse water quality impacts to Meetinghouse Branch stream pursuant to referral comments from Prince George's County.

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

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

While the proposed project is consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies related to consolidation of office space and building outside of the floodplain, the project appears generally inconsistent with policies related to compact, low-impact development, structured parking, landscaping, and transportation. The project will provide parking at 60% of the employee population, which is more stringent than the 1:1.5 (67%) Comprehensive Plan goal for Joint Base Andrews, but this is difficult to analyze without a more complete understanding of parking for the entire installation.

### **National Historic Preservation Act**

The submission states that there are no historic or archaeological resources within the project boundaries. Section 106 documentation will be included in subsequent submissions to NCPC. For projects outside of the District of Columbia, NCPC does not have a formal Section 106 review responsibility.

### **National Environmental Policy Act**

The project is included in a multiple projects Environmental Assessment (EA) that pertains to projects within the first five years of the JBA Installation Development Plan. The Final EA will be provided to NCPC as part of the project's final review submission in late spring or early summer 2018. For projects outside of the District of Columbia, NCPC does not have a formal review responsibility under the National Environmental Policy Act.

## **CONSULTATION**

NCPC referred the project out to the Maryland Department of Planning's project referral clearinghouse, which transmitted the submission to the following agencies: Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of Transportation, Maryland Department of the Environment, Maryland Military Department, Prince George's County, Maryland Department of Planning, and the Maryland Historical Trust. There were no substantive comments transmitted back from any of the State agencies. In addition, NCPC also referred the project directly to the Prince George's division of the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), which provided one substantive comment related to designing the project to prevent any adverse water quality impacts to Meetinghouse Branch (stream). The comment is reflected in the proposed recommendation.

## **ONLINE REFERENCE**

The following supporting documents for this project are available online:

- Project Synopsis
- Illustrative Site Plan
- Project Drawings
- Project Narrative

- Submission Letter

Prepared by Michael Weil  
10/27/2017

**POWERPOINT (ATTACHED)**

# Joint Base Andrews

New Consolidated Communications Center (P-3003)

Camp Springs, Prince George's County, Maryland

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Submitted by the United States Department of Defense, Department of the Navy

Concept Review

Project Synopsis













