



# Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: April 4, 2019

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<b>PROJECT</b> <b>E Street Security Improvements</b> President's Park 15th, 17th and E Streets, NW Washington, DC	<b>NCPC FILE NUMBER</b> 8058
	<b>NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER</b> 1.31(38.00)44900
<b>SUBMITTED BY</b> United States Department of the Interior National Park Service	<b>APPLICANT'S REQUEST</b> Approval of preliminary site development plans
<b>REVIEW AUTHORITY</b> Federal Projects in the District per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)	<b>PROPOSED ACTION</b> Approve preliminary site development plans with comments
	<b>ACTION ITEM TYPE</b> Consent

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## PROJECT SUMMARY

The National Park Service (NPS), on behalf of the United States Secret Service (USSS), has submitted preliminary site development plans for the replacement of temporary security improvements at the two primary vehicle access points for the White House within President's Park, at 15<sup>th</sup> and E Street, NW, and 17<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, NW. President's Park includes the grounds of the White House, Lafayette Square, Sherman Park, the Ellipse, and the First Division Monument. The Ellipse comprises most of President's Park South, below the White House lawn fence, and is defined by a circular street within the park area. Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the USSS closed E Street through President's Park as a through street and erected two security access points at 15<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, NW, and 17<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, NW for screened vehicular access to the White House, including temporary security elements and associated infrastructure. The NPS and USSS have had ongoing discussions regarding a more permanent design solution and will continue to work together to develop a permanent plan to close E Street south of the White House and install durable, more aesthetically pleasing security elements to replace all the temporary elements currently in place in this area. The future permanent improvements to E Street are only part of a larger President's Park South project to create a comprehensive park environment with security measures integrated to meet the demand of numerous pedestrians, vehicle, and special events that occur regularly on the park space south of the White House complex. The current temporary security elements were installed following approval by the Commission on May 7, 2015, for a two-year period, to replace the elements that had existed for fourteen years, after September 11, 2001.

The purpose of the project is to improve the function and overall appearance of the temporary security measures, by reducing the clutter, marking these two entrances to President's Park, at 15<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, NW, and 17<sup>th</sup> and E Street, NW. The USSS will replace the existing portable, plate vehicle barriers with new fixed, "reduced maintenance" vehicle barrier systems and make minor

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adjustments to the vehicle barrier and office booth locations at 15th and E Streets, NW, and 17th and E Street, NW. These changes will increase the durability and efficiency of the security screening equipment and processes for the facility. In addition, the existing bike racks and concrete barriers currently used as pedestrian barriers at the two locations will be removed and replaced with fixed vehicle rated bollards to increase safety for officers working the security checkpoints and provide more visually appropriate pedestrian barriers in President's Park. Repaving and striping portions of the asphalt roadways impacted by this work will occur, to increase informational cues to drivers at the two locations.

## KEY INFORMATION

- President's Park includes the grounds of the White House, Lafayette Square, Sherman Park, the Ellipse, and the First Division Monument.
- Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the USSS closed E Street through President's Park as a through street and erected two security access points at 15<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, NW, and 17<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, NW for screened vehicular access to the White House, including temporary security elements and associated infrastructure.
- The NPS and USSS have had ongoing discussions regarding a more permanent design solution and will continue to work together to develop a permanent plan to close E Street south of the White House and install durable, more aesthetically pleasing security elements to replace all the temporary elements currently in place in this area. The future permanent improvements to E Street are only part of a larger President's Park South project to create a comprehensive park environment with security measures integrated to meet the demand of numerous pedestrians, vehicle, and special events that occur regularly on the park space south of the White House complex.
- The Commission approved the existing temporary security elements at vehicle access point on the Ellipse at 15<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, NW, and 17<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, NW, on May 7, 2015.

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## RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

**Approves** the preliminary site development plans for temporary security improvements to vehicle access points for President's Park at 15<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, and 17<sup>th</sup> and E Streets.

**Notes** that while still temporary, the proposed bollard and post and chain security measures are a significant improvement to the existing conditions.

**Notes** that staff will work with NPS and USSS to identify a new fixed vehicular barrier, that is as un-obtrusive as possible, in keeping with the setting of President's Park, to be submitted as part of the final review.

### PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

<b>Previous actions</b>	<b>May 7, 2015</b> - Approved temporary site development plans
<b>Remaining actions (anticipated)</b>	<b>Final</b> - Approval of temporary site development plans

### PROJECT ANALYSIS

The National Park Service (NPS), on behalf of the United States Secret Service (USSS), is proposing the replacement of temporary security improvements to vehicle access points on the Ellipse in President's Park. These improvements will be made at the following two locations: 15<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, NW, and 17<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, NW.

E Street south of the White House has been closed since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Immediately after the street closure, the USSS installed temporary security elements and associated infrastructure to secure E Street and the Ellipse as well as restrict vehicle traffic on E Street between 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets on the Ellipse roadways. The current temporary security elements were installed following approval by the Commission on May 7, 2015. The current plate vehicle barriers are portable, and inefficient and nondurable.

The purpose of the project is to replace the existing portable, plate vehicle barriers with new fixed, "reduced maintenance" vehicle barrier systems and make minor adjustments to the vehicle barrier and office booth locations at 15th and E Streets, NW, and 17th and E Street, NW. These changes will increase the durability and efficiency of the security screening equipment and processes for the facility. In addition, the existing bike racks and concrete barriers currently used as pedestrian barriers at the two locations will be removed and replaced with fixed vehicle rated bollards to increase safety for officers working the security checkpoints and provide more visually appropriate pedestrian barriers in President's Park. Repaving and striping portions of the asphalt roadways impacted by this work will occur, to increase informational cues to drivers at the two locations.

At 15<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, NW, the existing guard booth location in the center of E Street will be slightly adjusted but in the same general location. The portable vehicle barriers will be removed and replaced with fixed vehicle barriers and placed to the north and south of this guard booth. The inspection canopy will remain. As it functions today, vehicles will be able to enter an area where they will be screened prior to moving through a second set of vehicle delta barriers. Two-way traffic will be allowed in this area so that vehicles will also exit E Street in this location. The existing bike racks and concrete planters and jersey barriers will be removed and replaced with fixed vehicle rated bollards with removable chains. The existing jersey barriers currently placed

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across the sidewalk on the north side of E Street will be removed and replaced with post and chains to retain pedestrian control.

At 17<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, NW, the existing guard booth located in the center of E Street will be slightly adjusted but in the same general location. The existing portable vehicle barriers will be replaced with fixed vehicle barriers, to the north and south of this guard booth. As it functions today, vehicles will be able to enter an area where they will be screened prior to moving through a second set of vehicle delta barriers. Two-way traffic will be allowed in this area so that vehicles will be able to exit E Street. The existing bike rakes and concrete planters and jersey barriers will be removed and replaced with fixed vehicle rated bollards with removable chains, to retain pedestrian control.

The applicant has provided four options for the fixed wedge vehicle barriers, that range from solid barriers to more transparent, as well as incorporating stripes and "STOP", to provide visual cues to vehicle drivers that they are entering a secured area.

While these proposed security improvements remain temporary in nature, NPS and USSS have indicated they have continued to work together to develop a permanent plan to close E Street south of the White House and install durable, more aesthetically pleasing security elements to replace all the temporary elements currently in place in this area. The future permanent improvements to E Street are only part of a larger President's Park South project to create a comprehensive park environment with security measures integrated to meet the demand of numerous pedestrians, vehicle, and special events that occur regularly on the park space south of the White House complex. NPS and the USSS have been working over the past several years to address the security needs and improve the appearance of E Street and President's Park. In 2008, NPS, USSS, and NCPC convened a task force to address the appearance and conditions of the area. A few years later, in 2011, NCPC hosted a design competition to generate ideas on what should be the long terms solution for President's Park that would be commensurate with the its location within the monumental core. The winning designer was Rogers Partners.

Staff understands the need to replace the existing temporary security improvements to the vehicle access points at E Street, to provide fixed and more durable equipment. The temporary improvements will improve the appearance of the area while NPS and USSS work to develop a permanent solution for President's Park, by removing the existing clutter composed of concrete barriers and bike rakes that are not appropriate for this area. The proposed replacement security improvements, while not a permanent solution, will improve the aesthetics of the area, improve access and circulation, and address the security needs of President's Park. Staff will work with NPS and the USSS to identify a new fixed vehicular barrier, that is as un-obtrusive as possible, in keeping with the setting of President's Park, to be submitted as part of the final review.

**Therefore, staff recommends the Commission approve the preliminary site development plans for temporary security improvements to vehicle access points for President's Park at 15<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, and 17<sup>th</sup> and E Streets, noting that while still temporary, the proposed bollard and post and chain security measures are a significant improvement to the existing condition, and noting that staff will work with NPS and USSS to identify a new fixed**

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vehicular barrier, that is as un-obtrusive as possible, in keeping with the setting of President's Park, to be submitted as part of the final review.

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

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

Staff finds that the project is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital (Comprehensive Plan). Specific policies contained within the Parks and Open Space, Visitors, and Preservation and Historic Features Elements of the Comprehensive Plan support the goals of the proposed project. These policies recommend that the federal government should preserve historic parks and treat them appropriately; balance security needs with visitor accessibility; and plan for compatible design that respects the character of historic properties.

### **White House and President's Park Comprehensive Design Plan**

NPS completed the White House and President's Park Comprehensive Design Plan in 2000. The current project is consistent with the policies and vision of that plan with respect to transportation, visitor services, and cultural resources. Transportation policies in the plan relate to providing for both pedestrian and vehicular circulation in a safe and efficient manner. Policies related to visitor services indicate that both the White House and President's Park should be open to the public and provide educational and interpretative exhibits. Policies in the plan also encourage high quality care and treatment of cultural and natural resources within President's Park as well as the White House.

### **National Historic Preservation Act**

NCPC and NPS each have an independent responsibility to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). NCPC has designated GSA lead agency for the purposes of compliance with Section 106. NPS initiated consultation with the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO) but has not completed its Section 106 obligations but will prior to submitting for a final review by the Commission.

### **National Environmental Policy Act**

NPS has indicated they intend to fulfill their NEPA obligations through use of a Categorical Exclusion. NCPC intends to apply a categorical exclusion #2, which allows for the approval of minor site elements, such as, but not limited to, identification signs, sidewalks, patios, and fences. Both agencies will complete their NEPA obligations prior to the submission for a final review by the Commission.

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## CONSULTATION

### Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee reviewed the proposal at its March 13, 2019 meeting. Without objection, the Committee forwarded the proposed preliminary site development plans to the Commission with the statement that the proposal was coordinated with all participating agencies. The DC State Historic Preservation Office noted that it has not received any information on this project but is willing to coordinate provided that the National Park Service formally submits the information for Section 106 review. The participating agencies were: NCPC; the District of Columbia Office of Planning; the District of Columbia Department of Transportation, the General Services Administration; the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office; the National Park Service and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

### U.S. Commission of Fine Arts

The U. S. Commission of Fine Arts approved the application on its Consent Agenda for its March 21, 2019 meeting, with no objection to the final design for interim improvements to the vehicular security screening checkpoints on E Street at 15th and 17th Streets, NW, as shown in materials received and dated 7 March 2019 as the project conforms to previously approved installations of security access control and vehicular screening facilities in this area.

## ONLINE REFERENCE

The following supporting documents for this project are available online at [www.ncpc.gov](http://www.ncpc.gov):

- Submission Package

Prepared by Lee Webb  
03/14/2019

## POWERPOINT (ATTACHED)

# E Street Security Improvements

15th, 17th and E Streets, NW, Washington DC

Approval of Preliminary Site Development Plans

United States Department of the Interior

# Project Summary

**Commission Meeting Date:** April 4, 2019

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

**Applicant Request:** Approval of Preliminary Site Development Plans

**Session:** Consent

**NCPC Review Officer:** Lee Webb

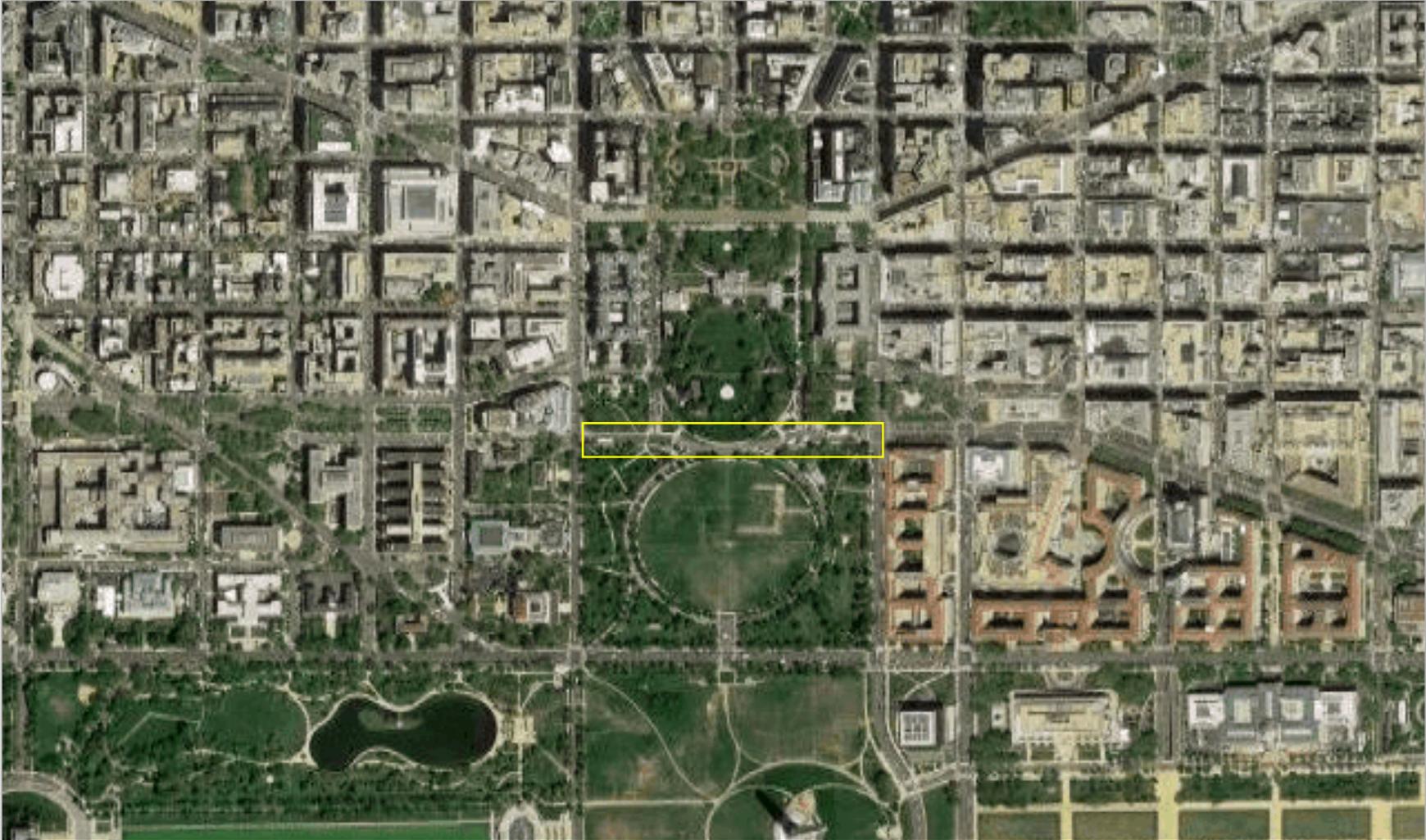
**NCPC File Number:** 8058

## Project Summary:

The National Park Service (NPS), on behalf of the United States Secret Service, is proposing to make temporary security improvements to primary vehicle access points for the White House located at 15<sup>th</sup> Street and E Street, NW, and 17<sup>th</sup> Street and E Street, NW. The primary components of this project include:

- Replacing the existing portable, plate vehicle barrier with new fixed, “reduced maintenance” vehicle barrier systems and making minor adjustments to the vehicle barrier and office booth locations. These changes will increase durability and efficiency of the security screening equipment and processes for the facility.
- Providing fixed vehicle rated bollards at key locations to increase safety for officers working the security checkpoints.
- Providing aesthetically-pleasing, removable pedestrian barriers to replace portable bike rack in strategic locations. This is an effort to blend pedestrian control with “park like features” but still provide proper pedestrian controls from restricted areas.
- Repaving and stripe portions of the asphalt roadway affected by this work in an effort to increase driver information and efficiency of the vehicle access points at 15<sup>th</sup> Street and E Street, NW, and 17<sup>th</sup> Street and E Street, NW.

# Site Location



Location Map

# Project Purpose



## Purpose

The National Park Service (NPS), on behalf of the United States Secret Service (USSS), is proposing to make temporary security improvements to primary vehicle access points for the White House located at 15th Street & E Street NW and 17th Street & E Street NW. The primary components of this project include:

- Replacing the existing portable, plate vehicle barrier with new fixed, “reduced maintenance” vehicle barriers systems and making minor adjustments to the vehicle barrier and office booth locations. These changes will increase the durability and efficiency of the security screening equipment and processes for the facility.
- Providing fixed vehicle rated bollards at key locations to increase safety for officers working the security checkpoints.
- Providing aesthetically-pleasing, removable pedestrian barriers to replace portable bike rack in strategic locations. This is an effort to blend pedestrian control with “park like features” but still provide proper pedestrian control from restricted areas.
- Repaving and stripe the portions of the asphalt roadway affected by this work in an effort to increase driver information and enhance efficiency of the vehicle access points at 15th & E Street NW and 17th & E Street NW.

# 15<sup>th</sup> Street Existing Elevation

 15<sup>th</sup> Street Existing Elevation



Existing Condition- Looking West

# 15<sup>th</sup> Street Proposed Elevation



## 15<sup>th</sup> Street Proposed Elevations



United States  
Secret Service

UNCLASSIFIED

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# 17<sup>th</sup> Street Existing Elevation

 17<sup>th</sup> Street Existing Elevation



Existing Condition- Looking East

# 17<sup>th</sup> Street Proposed Elevation



# Types of Wedge Barriers

 Wedge Barriers

