



## Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: October 3, 2019

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**PROJECT**

**National Gallery of Art East Building  
Exterior Improvements**

6th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC

**NCPC FILE NUMBER**

8111

**NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER**

1.41(38.00)45002

**SUBMITTED BY**

National Gallery of Art

**APPLICANT'S REQUEST**

Approval of preliminary and final  
site and building plans

**REVIEW AUTHORITY**

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

**PROPOSED ACTION**

Approve preliminary and final site  
and building plans as requested

**ACTION ITEM TYPE**

Consent Calendar

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### PROJECT SUMMARY

The National Gallery of Art has submitted preliminary and final site and building plans for exterior improvements at the East Building, consisting of the following items:

1. Replacement of the Main Atrium skylight
2. Improvements to the 4th Street Entrances
3. New Boiler Heating Plant Vents
4. New Site Security System Poles

The National Gallery of Art's East Building is bounded by Pennsylvania Avenue to the north, Third Street, NW, to the east, Madison Drive to the south, and Fourth Street, NW, to the west. The East Building is located on the National Mall, and is a contributing building within the National Mall Historic District and is adjacent to the Pennsylvania Avenue Historic District.

The scope of work proposed for this review is part of the ongoing Master Facilities Plan for the National Gallery of Art. The work will be carried out while the building and its galleries remain open and available to the public.

### KEY INFORMATION

- The National Gallery of Art is one of the world's leading art museums, with a significant collection of American and European masterworks.
- The mission of the Gallery is to serve the country by preserving, collecting, exhibiting, and fostering understanding of works of art for the American public.

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- The National Gallery of Art's West Building was designed by John Russell Pope and completed in 1941.
  - The East Building, and the connecting link, was designed by I. M. Pei, and opened to the public in 1978.
  - The East Building houses and protects modern collections of paintings, works on paper, sculpture, textiles, and decorative-arts. In addition to the public galleries, the East Building incorporates the Study Center, a major national art research center serving the Gallery's staff and visiting scholars.
  - The East Building is located on the National Mall, and is a contributing building within the National Mall Historic District and is adjacent to the Pennsylvania Avenue Historic District.
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## RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

**Approves** preliminary and final site and building plans for the National Gallery of Art's East Building exterior improvements and alterations, including replacement of the main atrium skylight, improvements to the 4th street entrances, new boiler heating plant vents, and new site security system poles.

**Finds** that the National Gallery of Art's East Building exterior improvements are compatible with their historic context on the National Mall.

**Notes** that any improvements in public space will require a public space permit and coordination with the District of Columbia Department of Transportation Office of Public Space.

## PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

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<b>Previous actions</b>	<b>None.</b>
<b>Remaining actions (anticipated)</b>	– None.

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## PROJECT ANALYSIS

The National Gallery of Art has submitted for review preliminary and final site and building plans for exterior improvements at the East Building. Staff analyzed this project using guidance in the Comprehensive Plan, particularly those related to visitor experience and historic preservation.

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### Main Atrium Skylight

The Main Atrium skylight is original to the building's construction and the glazing system is well beyond its anticipated lifespan. While the superstructure is robust, the glazing systems with its gasketing is failing. The original design with horizontal and vertical snap covers on the purlins has allowed water to be trapped against the glass. With freezing and thawing, the gaskets have deteriorated allowing water to be trapped between the panes of glass causing fogging and mineral deposits within the glazing assembly.

The proposed replacement skylight system will retain all of the original structure as well as the hips, ridges and purlin patterns of the original skylight design. On the exterior, snap covers will be retained on the vertical joints with a butt-joint of silicone sealant in the horizontal direction at the purlins. This will allow water to sheet down the glazing to the gutters without being trapped against the glass. The glass will match the recently replaced curtainwall glazing installed in 2013 as part of the East Building Exterior Stone Restoration project. The original interior framed aluminum sun screens will be replaced in kind to retain the shadow patterns that are a character defining feature of the building.

Based on the proposed approach for the skylight replacement, there will be minimal noticeable difference after the work is completed, and the other character-defining aspects of the Main Atrium Skylight will be retained.

### Improvements to the 4<sup>th</sup> Street Entrances including:

The renovated Main Entrance will include a fully custom structural-silicon-glazed unitized system for the Main Entrance window wall, utilizing the same glazing assembly as the adjacent curtainwall glazing. New framed-glass ADA entrance door will also serve as egress doors from the Main Atrium. The existing revolving doors will be refurbished as part of this undertaking. A new handrail will be added to the existing ramp adjacent to Tower 2 to improve accessibility.

At the Study Center Entrance, an existing window wall panel will be converted into an ADA entrance to serve as the temporary public entrance during the Main Entrance renovation. This door will also serve as emergency egress. A pedestal with actuator will be added to allow visitors to enter the building. Adjacent to the Study Center Entrance, new concealed exit doors, clad in the original stone for a seamless appearance, provide egress at grade from a new exit stair in Tower 3.

The improvements to the 4<sup>th</sup> Street Entrances will have minimal visual impact as the proposed changes have been designed in such a manner as to blend in with their context and surroundings.

### New Boiler Heating Plant:

A new gas meter and heating hot water boiler plant will be installed in a vault below the South Lawn. At the surface, small vents for the gas meter will be installed pursuant to the requirements of Washington Gas. The vents will be similar in size and color to those that currently exist in the South Lawn for the underground storage tank for the emergency generator located in the same vault. As such, the new vents will have minimal visual impact as they will mimic those that already exist on the site.

New Site Security System:

The Gallery proposes to install new custom site poles including structural footings to accommodate new surveillance cameras, radar detectors, notification horns, and security illumination fixtures around the site. The proposed color of the poles will match the existing PADC lighting poles on Pennsylvania Avenue. Although the proposed security system improvements will introduce eight new, twelve-foot poles into the East Wing's lawns, the new elements containing security camera and lights will be painted in a muted color similar to the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation (PADC) streetlights along Pennsylvania Avenue in order to reduce their visual impact. The new poles will also replace the sixteen-foot security poles currently on the grounds.

Overall, the project components are needed in order to replace failing skylight structural systems or improve ADA and security requirements. As such, staff recommends the **Commission approves preliminary and final site and building plans for the National Gallery of Art's East Building exterior improvements and alterations, including replacement of the main atrium skylight, improvements to the 4th street entrances, new boiler heating plant vents, and new site security system poles; finds that the National Gallery of Art's East Building exterior improvements are compatible with their historic context on the National Mall; and notes that any improvements in public space will require a public space permit and coordination with the District of Columbia Department of Transportation Office of Public Space.**

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

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

Staff has reviewed policies from the Urban Design, Historic Preservation, and Visitors & Commemoration Elements, and the analysis and recommendations are intended to support consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

### **National Historic Preservation Act**

Both the National Gallery of Art (NGA) and NCPC initiated Section 106 consultation independently with the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Officer (DC SHPO) and recommended that the proposed exterior improvements at the East Building of the National Gallery of Art would not cause adverse effect to historic resources. The DC SHPO concurred with the determinations of no adverse effect by both NGA and NCPC in writing on September 4, 2019.

### **National Environmental Policy Act**

The National Gallery of Art does not have a NEPA responsibility for this proposed work, however, NCPC does have an independent NEPA compliance responsibility. NCPC staff has determined that the proposed exterior improvements at the East Building of the National Gallery of Art meet the criteria for Categorical Exclusions under NCPC's NEPA regulations, particularly (3) relating

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to the installation or restoration of minor site building elements, including windows, doors, etc. and (6) improvements to existing facilities...

## **CONSULTATION**

### **Coordinating Committee**

The Coordinating Committee reviewed the final design at its September 11, 2019 meeting. Without objection, the Committee forwarded the proposed final site development plans 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 Department of Transportation; the District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment; the General Services Administration; the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office; the National Park Service; and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. DDOT noted they should be contacted regarding the need for any public space permitting.

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

The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts approved the exterior improvements at the East Building of the National Gallery of Art on its September 19, 2019 Consent Agenda.

## **ONLINE REFERENCE**

Prepared by Lee Webb  
09/10/2019

## **POWERPOINT (ATTACHED)**

# National Gallery of Art East Building Exterior Improvements

6th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington DC

Approval of Preliminary and Final Site and Building Plans

National Gallery of Art

# Project Summary

**Commission Meeting Date:** October 3, 2019

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

**Applicant Request:** Approval of Preliminary and Final Site and Building Plans

**Session:** Consent Calendar

**NCPC Review Officer:** Lee Webb

**NCPC File Number:** 8111

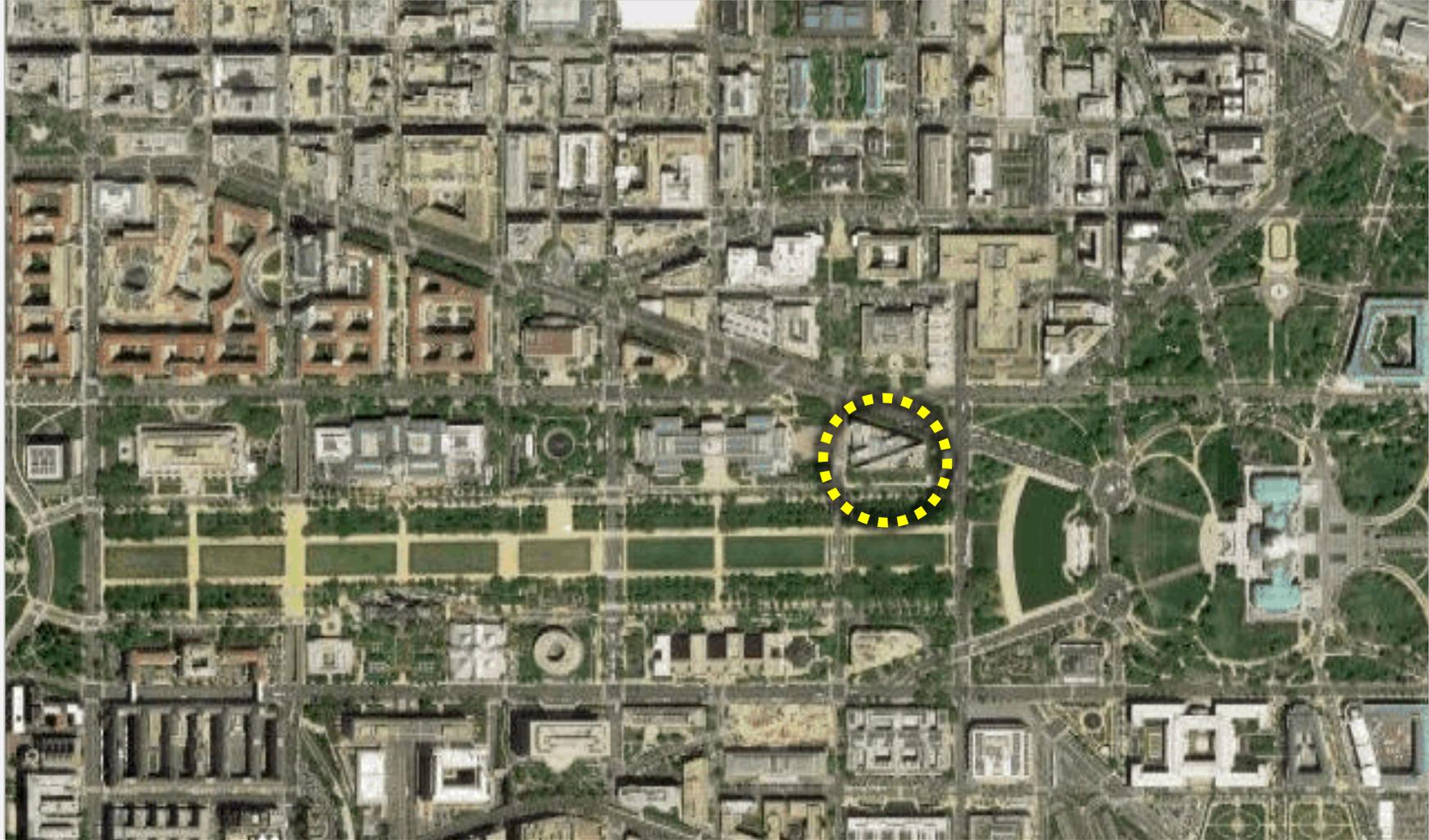
## Project Summary:

The National Gallery of Art has submitted for review preliminary and final site and building plans for work at the East Building, consisting of the following:

1. Replacement of the Main Atrium skylight
2. Improvements to the 4<sup>th</sup> Street Entrances
3. New Boiler Heating Plant Vents
4. New Site Security System Poles

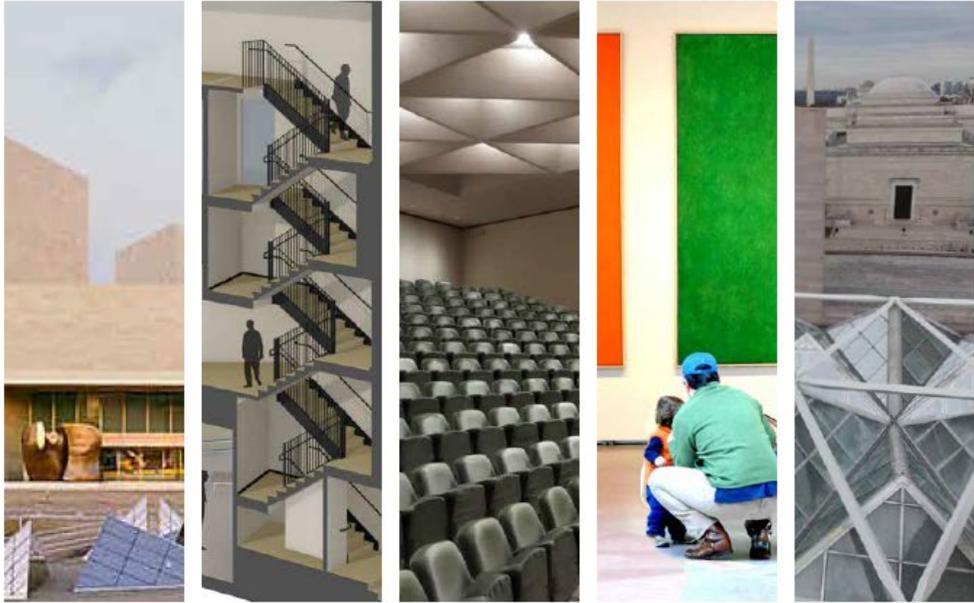
The National Gallery of Art's East Building is a contributing building within the National Mall Historic District and adjacent to the Pennsylvania Avenue Historic District.

# Site Location



Location Map

# NGA East Building Exterior Improvements



## EAST BUILDING WORK AREA 9.3 EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART  
National Capital Planning Commission

August 30, 2019

# NGA East Building Exterior Improvements



## THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

The National Gallery of Art is one of the world's leading art museums with a significant collection of American and European masterworks. Maintaining high standards of excellence, achievement, and service to the nation continues to be the National Gallery's highest priority. The mission of the Gallery is to serve the country by preserving, collecting, exhibiting, and fostering understanding of works of art for the American public.

The buildings on the National Mall housing the National Gallery of Art are significant works of timeless architecture. Both iconic and monumental, the buildings are befitting of the institution they serve. The West Building, designed by John Russell Pope, was completed in 1941. The East Building (and Connecting Link), opened to the public in 1978 and designed by I.M. Pei, houses and protects modern collections of paintings, works on paper, sculpture, textiles, and decorative arts. In addition to public galleries, the East Building incorporates the Study Center, a major national art research center serving the Gallery's staff, members of the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, visiting scholars, and the scholarly community at large.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov)



Excavation for the East Building, c. 1971

## HISTORIC CONTEXT

The East Building of the National Gallery of Art is bounded by Pennsylvania Avenue to the north, Third Street, NW to the east, Madison Drive to the south and Fourth Street, NW to the west. The East Building is a contributing building within the National Mall Historic District and adjacent to the Pennsylvania Avenue Historic District.

## ARCHAEOLOGY

This site was completely excavated during the original construction in the 1970s, and the depth of the proposed excavation does not extend below the previously disturbed depth.

## SCHEDULE AND FUNDING

Construction is planned to begin in the Summer of 2019 with construction completion anticipated in the Fall of 2021. The project is funded as part of the Gallery's ongoing renovation budget.

## GALLERY CONTACT PERSON AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Susan Wertheim, Chief Architect and Deputy Administrator for Capital Projects

National Gallery of Art, Washington

(202) 842-6673 | [s-wertheim@nga.gov](mailto:s-wertheim@nga.gov)

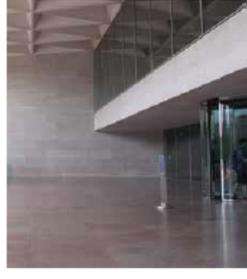
# NGA East Building Exterior Improvement



Main Atrium Skylight



Main Entrance Window wall Modernization



Main Entrance Terrace



Study Center Entrance



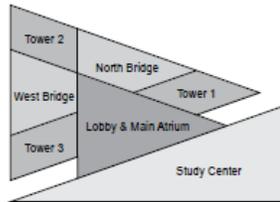
Site Security System

## SCOPE OF WORK

Work Area 9 is a major renovation of the East Building public spaces and is part of an ongoing Master Facilities Plan for the National Gallery of Art. The public portion of the building is essentially the large isosceles triangle forming the northern and western-most portion of the building. The remaining right triangle to the South is the Study Center and is not part of this work area. The isosceles triangle includes the three corner towers (Towers 1, 2, and 3), the Main Atrium and Lobby, and the Concourse galleries and auditoria. WA9.1/9.2 renovated Tower 1 and Tower 2 along with the North Bridge.

Diagrammatically, the basic footprint of the WA9.3 project includes the combined areas of the Main Atrium, Tower 3, and the West Bridge. The project focuses on replacing the Main Atrium Skylight, improvements to the 4th Street entrances, and electronic security improvements on the East Building grounds.

The key challenge of this project that distinguishes from most other major renovations is that it will be executed in an occupied museum. In this context, the project must be carried out inconspicuously with as little disruption as possible. Not only will galleries be kept open and available to the public, but maintaining the NGA's stringent security and climate control requirements is of paramount importance.



East Building Diagram

## Replacement of Main Atrium Skylight:

The Main Atrium skylight is original to the building's construction and the glazing system is well beyond its anticipated lifespan. While the superstructure is robust, the glazing systems with its gasketing is failing. The original design with horizontal and vertical snap covers on the purlins has allowed water to be trapped against the glass. With freezing and thawing, the gaskets have deteriorated allowing water to be trapped between the panes of glass causing fogging and mineral deposits within the glazing assembly.

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## Improvements to the 4<sup>th</sup> Street Entrances including:

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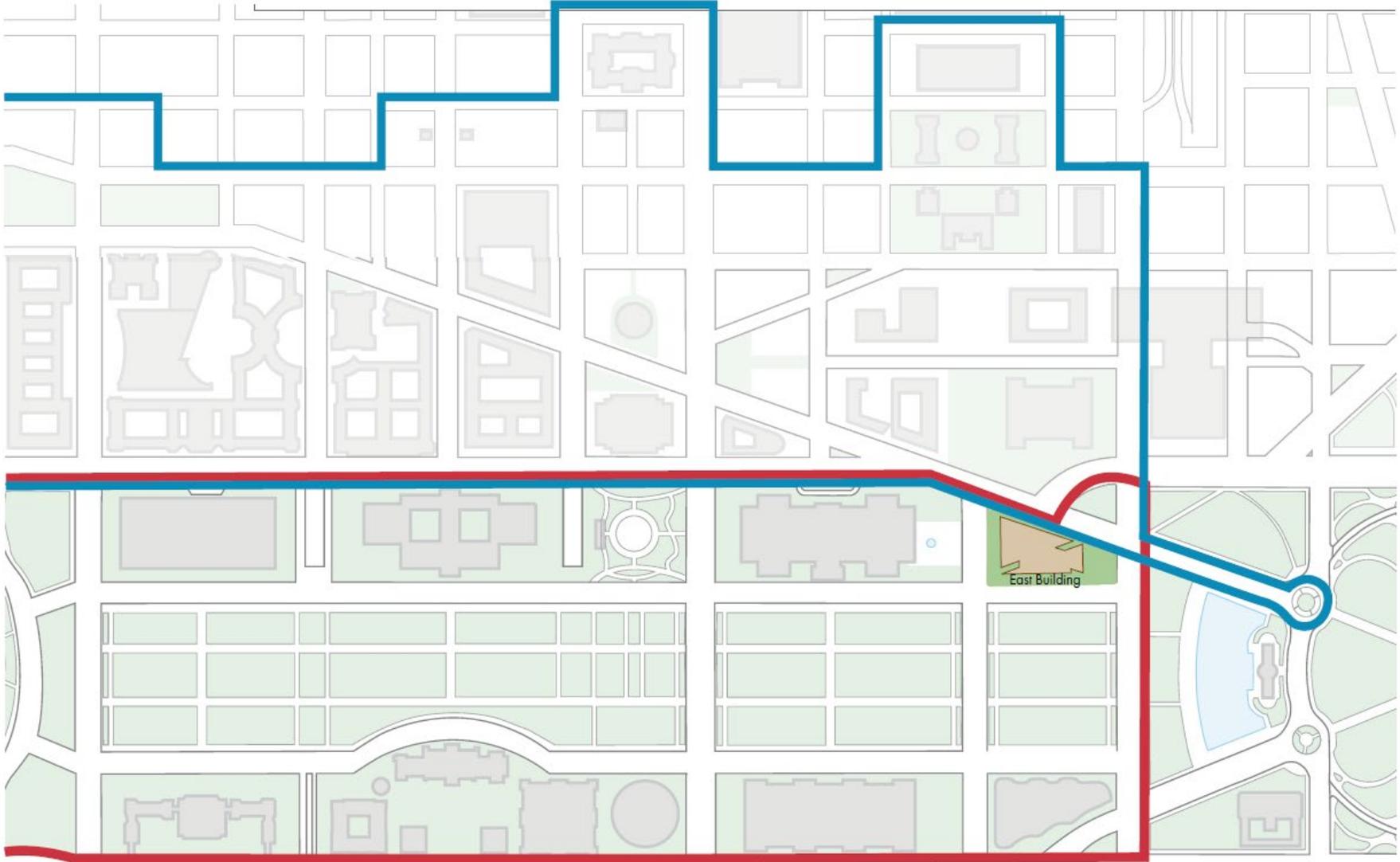
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## New Site Security System:

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# Location in Two Historic Districts

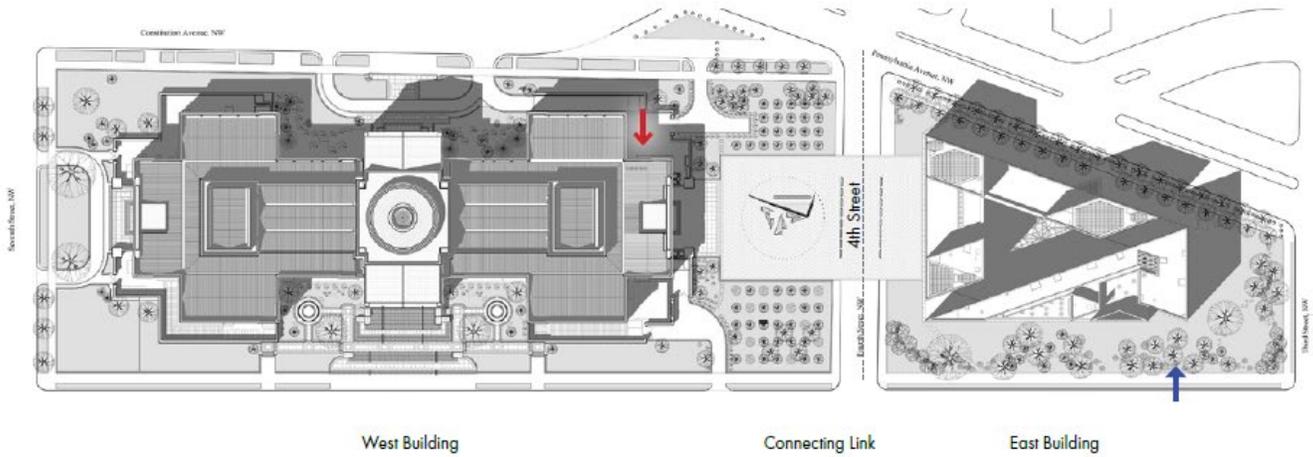


— Pennsylvania Avenue Historic District  
— National Mall Historic District

# Site Plan

## WA 9.3 - SCOPE OF WORK

Site Plan



- ↑ Construction Entrance
- ↑ Security Entrance

# Skylight

## WA 9.3 - SCOPE OF WORK

Skylight



Existing Main Atrium Skylight With Purlin Snap Covers

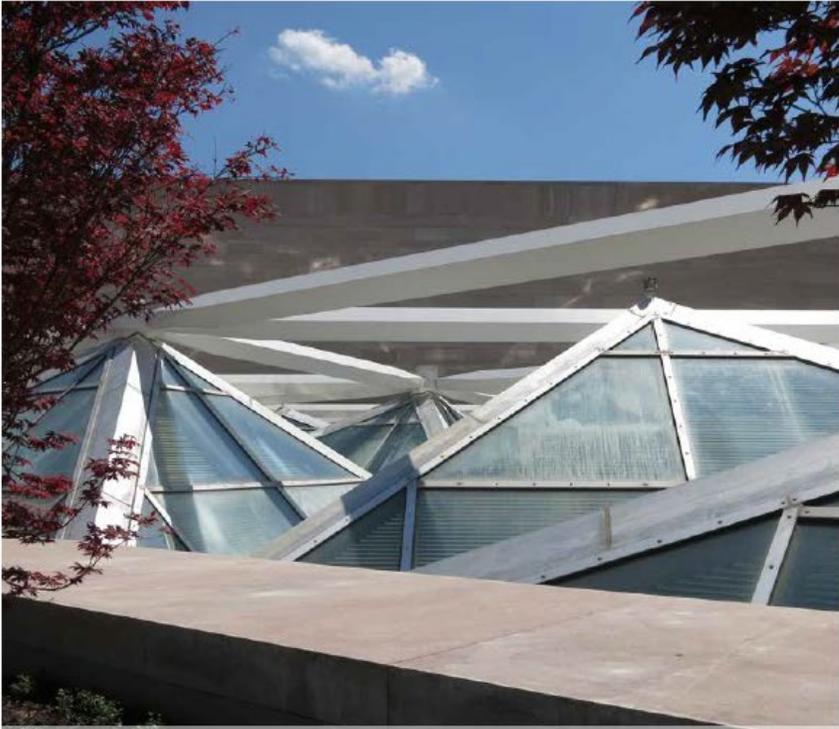


Proposed Main Atrium Skylight Without Purlin Snap Covers

# Skylight

## WA 9.3 - SCOPE OF WORK

Skylight



Existing Main Atrium Skylight With Purlin Snap Covers



Proposed Main Atrium Skylight Without Purlin Snap Covers

# East Building Main Entrance

## WA 9.3 - SCOPE OF WORK

Main Entrance



# Central Heating Plant Vents

## WA 9.3 - SCOPE OF WORK

New Central Heating Plant



# Central Heating Plant Vents

## WA 9.3 - SCOPE OF WORK

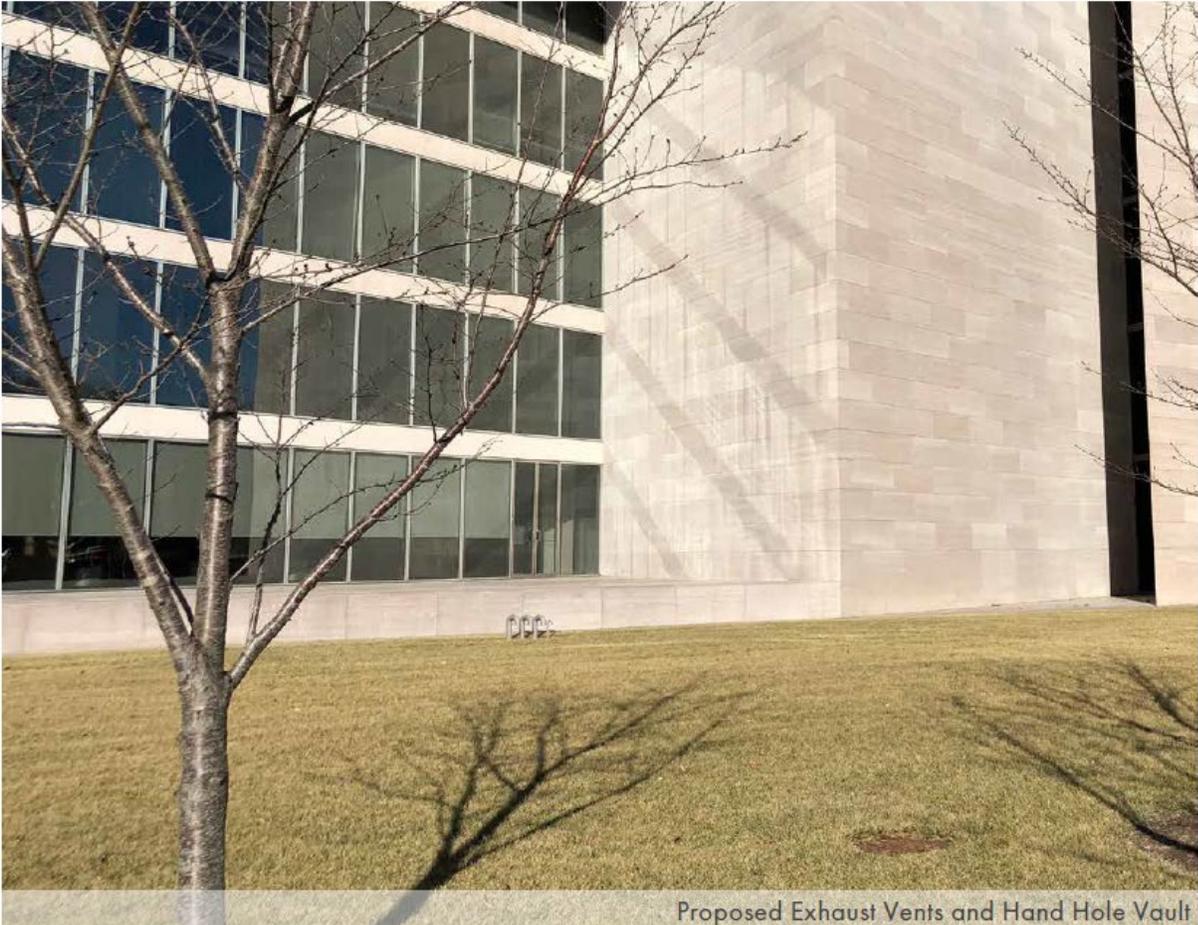
New Central Heating Plant



Existing Exhaust Vents



Proposed Boiler Exhaust Vents

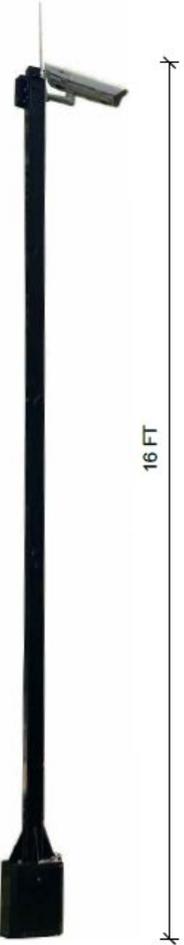


Proposed Exhaust Vents and Hand Hole Vault

# Existing Site Security

## WA 9.3 - SCOPE OF WORK

Site Security



Existing Security Pole at the Southwest Corner

# Proposed Site Security

## WA 9.3 - SCOPE OF WORK

Site Security



# Proposed Site Security

## WA 9.3 - SCOPE OF WORK

Site Security



Rendering of Proposed Security Pole from Madison Drive and 4th Street

# Proposed Site Security

## WA 9.3 - SCOPE OF WORK

Site Security



Rendering of Proposed Security Pole from Pennsylvania Avenue and 4th Street

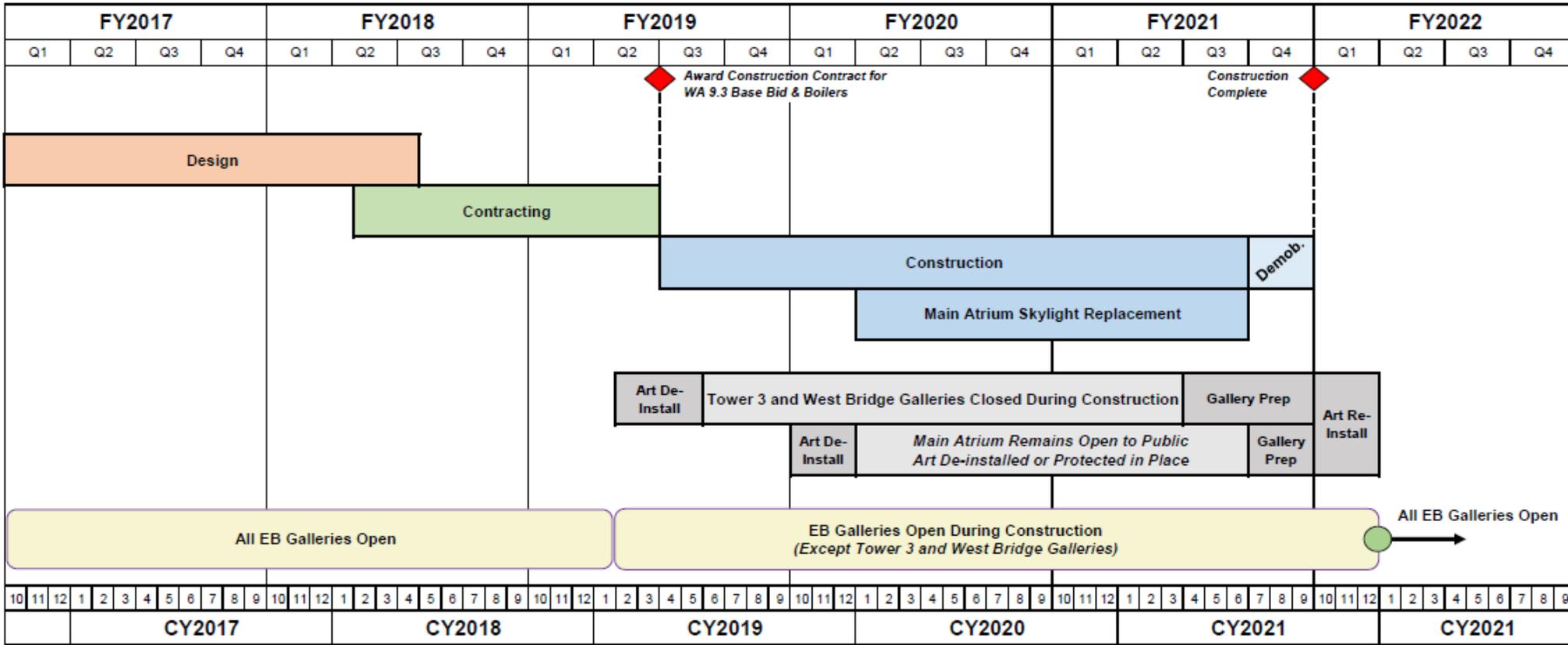
# Atrium Skylight



# Implementation Timeline

# IMPLEMENTATION

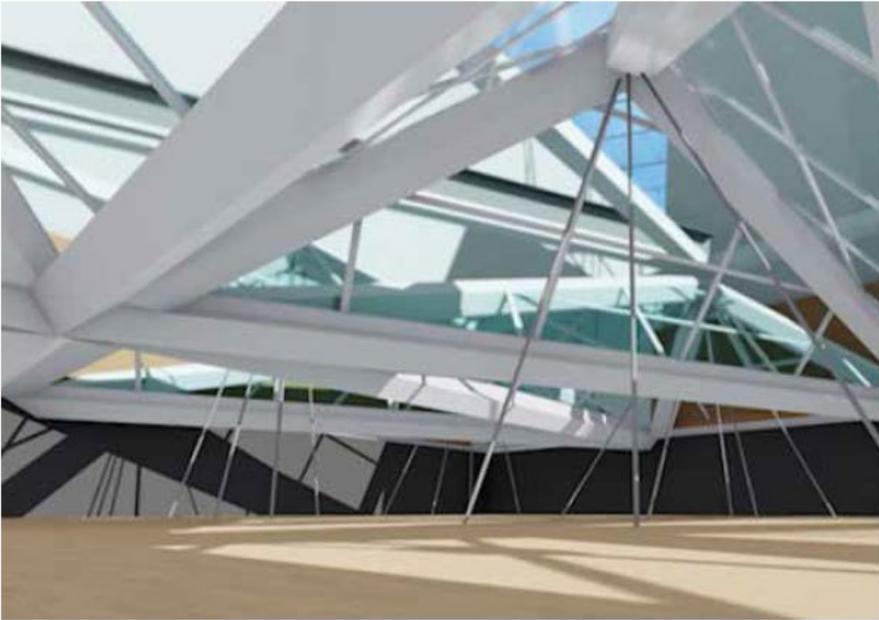
Timeline



# Main Atrium Skylight Implementation

## WA 9.3 - SCOPE OF WORK

Main Atrium Skylight - Implementation



Skylight Temporary Protection



Main Atrium Temporary Protection

# Main Atrium Skylight Implementation

## WA 9.3 - SCOPE OF WORK

Main Atrium Skylight - Implementation



Main Atrium Skylight - Replacement of Frames, Glass, and Sunscreens

# Atrium Interior

