



Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: July 9, 2020

PROJECT George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center Building B 4000 Arlington Boulevard Arlington, Virginia	NCPC FILE NUMBER 8192
	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 2101.10(38.00)45158
SUBMITTED BY United States General Services Administration	APPLICANT'S REQUEST Approval of preliminary building plans
REVIEW AUTHORITY Federal Projects in the Environs per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)	PROPOSED ACTION Approve preliminary building plans with conditions
	ACTION ITEM TYPE Consent Calendar

PROJECT SUMMARY

The United States General Services Administration (GSA), on behalf of the United States Department of State (DOS), has submitted preliminary buildings plans for Building B at the George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center (NFATC). The approximately 71-acre NFATC campus is located in Arlington, Virginia, and serves as the home of the DOS Foreign Service Institute (FSI), which is intended to provide high-quality, cost-effective training for foreign service officers from across the federal government. It sits at the intersection of US Route 50 (Arlington Boulevard) and South George Mason Drive, and is divided into two parcels—the main campus (~65 acres) and the west parcel (~7 acres). The National Guard Bureau sits between these parcels. Surrounding development is primarily lower-density residential, with an Arlington County park (Alcova Heights Park) to the south. Arlington County also maintains recreational space on the NFATC west parcel, which is open to the public. The current site is located at the southwest corner of the central area of the site, adjacent to the main ring road to the south, the existing visitors center to the east and the historic gymnasium to the north. There is an existing surface parking lot to the south across the ring road.

The Commission approved the campus master plan in June 2017. The plan primarily responded to changes in federal security requirements and shifts in educational methodologies by improving physical security and providing more flexible classroom space to accommodate modern training methods. The master plan identified projects, such as additions to existing Buildings F (instruction/office/support) and K (instruction/office/support), and construction of the proposed Building B (instruction/office/support). During the review of the master plan in 2017, there was extensive discussion regarding the siting of Building B, parking, and transportation management strategies.

KEY INFORMATION

- The master plan proposed the construction of a new Building B to provide more flexible classroom space and enhance office and support functions.
- The proposed location of Building B is shifted further south away from the historic gymnasium in response to the Commission's comments from the master plan review.
- The architecture and materials proposed for Building B are similar and compatible with nearby existing non-historic buildings including the Visitors Center and the Cafeteria.
- The siting, massing, and exterior appearance of Building B will be further refined as part of the Section 106 consultation process, which is currently under review at 65%.
- The campus has regular fluctuations in student and faculty/staff populations based on demand for foreign training across the federal government. GSA estimates a current daily average population of 3,218, and a projected population of 3,868 in 2023.
- The construction of Building B will not eliminate or include any parking, but with an increase in students and staff on site the parking ratio increases from 1:1.9 to 1:2.3 parking spaces per employees.
- During the master plan review the Commission accepted the NFATC parking ratio goal timeline of 1:3 in 10 years, and 1:4 in 20 years.
- The transportation management plan (TMP) submitted with the master plan included strategies to reduce parking demand to meet 1:4, but there were no actions aligned with milestones to reduce parking and single occupant drivers. The Commission requested that the applicant submit a transportation progress report in 2019 and the applicant has included an update with this submittal that addresses some of the Commission's request.

RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

Approves the preliminary site and building plans for the George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center Building B, located in Arlington, Virginia.

Finds that the applicant has generally addressed the Commission's comments from the approval of the master plan regarding the location of Building B and its relationship to the historic gymnasium and historic quad.

Finds the siting of the building successfully uses the change in grade on the site to achieve the desired program while maintaining an appropriate scale for the quad and distance from the historic gym.

Requests additional tree replacement and landscape plan details for the final review.

Notes that Building B will not reduce or increase parking on the campus but that the additional employees and students will improve the existing parking ratio from 1:1.9 to 1:2.3 by 2023.

Notes the applicant submitted a TMP with their master plan in 2017, committing to a 1:3 parking ratio goal by 2027 and 1:4 by 2037, but no specific strategies to achieve these goals were included and the Commission requested the information in progress reports in 2019 and 2022.

Notes the applicant has submitted the requested progress report, that they plan to meet the parking goal, but that it should be accompanied by specific TMP strategies for reducing parking and reliance on single occupancy vehicles.

Requests that for the final submission, the applicant include specific TMP strategies, and milestones for the next 20 years.

PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

Previous actions	June 1, 2017 – Approval of the master plan
Remaining actions (anticipated)	– Approval of master plan amendment and final site and building plans

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

In general, NCPC staff finds that Building B at the NFATC location addresses the Commission's concerns about its proximity and negative impact to the historic quad and gymnasium and that the proposed materials coordinate appropriately with adjacent non-historic buildings. While the applicant has provided the transportation update requested by the Commission, it does not fully address the request for actionable TMP strategies and milestones.

In its review of the master plan in June of 2017, NCPC identified historic preservation and transportation issues, which were defined in the Executive Director's Recommendation and reflected in the Commission action. These issues related to the placement of Building B close to a historic structure, and a lack of actionable measures to achieve the NCPC parking ratio goal of 1:4.

While the location of Building B has been moved away from the historic gymnasium and quad, and the height and scale of the buildings as viewed from these areas is lower and more in keeping with the historic design aesthetic, the transportation issues remain unresolved. Staff has outlined recommendations for the applicant to resolve at the final review of Building B and staff recommends that the **Commission approves the preliminary site and building plans for the George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center Building B** with additional provisions outlined below.

Analysis

The NFATC site began as Arlington Hall Junior College (1924-1942), which operated first as a girls' finishing school, and later as a college preparatory school. The Department of the Army acquired the site in 1942, and it served as headquarters for the U.S. Signal Intelligence Service through World War II and beyond. Army intelligence functions remained on-site until they were relocated to Fort Belvoir in 1989. The NFATC campus was determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988 as part of the Arlington Hall Station Historic District, which includes the adjacent land administered by the National Guard Bureau. The site was determined eligible because of its local architectural and educational importance and for its nationally significant role in American military intelligence operations during World War II. The property was transferred from the Department of the Army to the Department of State in 1985 and GSA was given custody and jurisdiction of the site.

Staff reviewed the preliminary submittal of Building B and associated transportation status update to ensure that it has adequately addressed Commission comments from the master plan review and for conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. The previous Commission actions are summarized below, along with a staff analysis that describes the issue, and how any concerns were addressed.

The entirety of the NFATC campus was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988 as part of the Arlington Hall Station Historic District, which includes the adjacent property currently under the administration of the National Guard Bureau. The determination of eligibility for the site notes that all buildings, structures, and landscape features constructed before 1946 contribute to the district. While none of the temporary or permanent Army structures from those years remain, the four existing structures from its years as a junior college are still intact and house FSI instruction and support functions. Two of the historic buildings—Old Main and the gymnasium—along with the non-historic cafeteria, serve to frame the historic quad that is preserved near the center of campus.

Site Location

The proposal for Building B includes the construction of a 221,792-gross-square-foot, four-story building, which would house instruction, office, and support uses. During review of the master plan, the Commission recommended that the visual impacts of Building B on the historic gymnasium and larger historic context should be minimized to the extent practicable, in consultation with the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and other stakeholders. To address Commission comments, Building B has been pulled back, to the extent that topography and security allowed, and now sits 136' to the south and 66' to the east of the historic gymnasium. The height of Building B has also been lowered below the ridgeline of the gymnasium, and its rooftop mechanical units have been set back to mitigate visibility from the historic district. The massing on the north of Building B has been broken up and partially recessed to address the scale of the adjacent historic structure. The location Building B has a change in grade of 17 feet from north to south, and when combined with the lowered height and changes in massing now reads as less of a monolithic structure and more of a series of smaller pavilions that acknowledge the scale of the gymnasium. NCPC staff feels that these actions address the concerns of the Commission, and recommends that the Commission **finds that the applicant has generally addressed the Commission's comments from the approval of the master plan regarding the location of Building B and its relationship to the historic gymnasium and historic quad.**

The west side of the Building B has been pulled back to reveal the historic structure, frame the historic quad, as well as facilitate views toward and from the historic gymnasium. The new footprint preserves the axial alignment between historic structures E and D and the landscape in between, and it ensures the new structure reads as part of the contemporary campus, separate from the historic district. Generally, staff recommends that the Commission **finds the siting of the building successfully uses the change in grade on the site to achieve the desired program while maintaining an appropriate scale for the quad and distance from the historic gym.**

The applicant has begun the consultation process under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) with the SHPO and developed a PA to guide development of building details. It is clear in the PA that consulting parties, which include NCPC, would review siting, massing, and exterior appearance of buildings during the consultation process, and that these factors can be discussed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to the historic character of the site.

Stormwater and Landscape Design

The design of the building incorporates a variety of sustainability strategies including a green roof, visible from building offices, and flow-through planters to manage stormwater. Much of the quantity of stormwater will be managed through existing stormwater catch basins and infrastructure. The design intent is to use the new stormwater features to address EPA Section 438, Arlington County and Virginia State regulations for water quality.

The site designed focused on preserving existing trees to the extent possible given the other constraints. Much of the preserved trees are along the perimeter and adjacent to the gymnasium and other area buildings. The applicant has identified five (5) key trees that will be transplanted elsewhere on the campus. The proposed planting plan includes five different planting zones: native wildflower meadow; stormwater treatment; green roof; ornamental; and tree preservation. The plan identifies a monkey puzzle tree, considered a tree of special importance, that will be transplanted to a suitable location due to its location within the area of disturbance. For the final review, staff requests additional details on the tree replacement and planting details to ensure compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. As such, staff recommends the Commission **request additional tree replacement and landscape plan details for the final review.**

Building Design

The architectural design and massing of Building B relates to the historic gym. The north facade of Building B is set back from the gym 66 ft to Building B and 62 ft to the fence gate, maintaining the gym's central prominence on the historic quad and opens views from the gym to east campus zones. The four-level south wing of Building B steps 43 ft back from the historic gym's west end. The setback opens views to the historic gym and district. The south facade of Building B incorporates a three-floor projecting classroom element and lower floor base element to reduce scale and relate to the visitor center and gym. The west facade of Building B is broken into three parts, reducing building mass and scale around the historic gym. The two wings extend beyond the recessed central connection with the four-floor south wing and terrace 20 ft lower and 136 ft from the historic gym.

The new Building B is located at a highly visible, and busy campus crossroads. It is tied to the main campus entry - a distinct feature of the original campus design, and adjacent the historic gym and district. It is also connected by a service tunnel to Building C, at the center of campus, which houses the campus cafeteria with east and west dining terraces facing the Historic Quad and Central Meadow. The new building has five entrances, two facing the street and entry court, and three accessible to the campus and historic quad via walkways. The building has been designed to relate to the varying campus building scales, styles, and materials to create a sense of campus continuity and unity.

The proposed materials are intended to be durable and relate to existing campus conditions. The materials include cast-in-place and precast concrete paving to relate to existing paving, facade brick to closely match existing campus buildings, precast concrete panels and sills to create a base for exterior brick and glazing, metal panels, canopies, and mullions which relate to existing building metal panels and historic building window mullions, and high-performance gray toned glazing coupled with sun shading at the major east and west glazing exposures.

Transportation and Parking

The NFATC campus is a collection of historic buildings surrounding the historic quad and new buildings surrounding an internal open space network. These newer buildings are flanked by large parking lots that DOS has indicated act as security stand off from their secure perimeter. To accommodate students, faculty, and staff that drive to campus, 1,690 parking spaces are provided on campus. Based on a total population of 3,218 and 1,690 parking spaces, the current parking ratio is 1:1.9. Building B is proposed in an undeveloped area and will not eliminate or add any new parking. With no changes in travel behaviors, the future population of 3,868 with the addition of Building B would result in a parking ratio of 1:2.3 by 2023 and staff recommends the Commission **notes that Building B will not reduce or increase parking on the campus but that the additional employees will improve the existing parking ratio from 1:1.9 to 1:2.3.**

The 2017 master plan and accompanying Transportation Management Plan (TMP) indicated that students, faculty, and staff use a range of modes to access the NFATC campus, though it was evident from periodic surveys of the campus population that driving was the preferred travel mode choice. Approximately 65% of faculty/staff and nearly 27% of students drove alone to campus in 2016. Despite the high proportion of single-occupant trips, a variety of access options are available to commuters, including carpools, shuttles, public transit, or bicycling. The campus is slightly over a mile from two Metrorail stations (Ballston and Virginia Square) and is severed by several bus lines. Shuttles to campus are also provided from certain student housing locations and from the Rosslyn Metrorail station. While the Rosslyn shuttle option is feasible for students, agency policy continues to prevent faculty or staff from using this shuttle for commuting purposes.

The *Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element* indicated that the campus must meet a 1:4 parking ratio at the time of the master plan approval, but the Commission acknowledged that the site was more than a mile away from the nearest metro stations. The applicant was still encouraged to focus on parking reductions and developing a robust TMP. The Commission approved the applicants requested time extension to achieve the parking ratio goal, which meant

that the applicant would have 10 years to achieve the parking ratio goal of 1:3 and 20 years to achieve 1:4.

The staff review of the master plan noted the amount of surface parking provided on-site and acknowledged that Arlington County and the Virginia Department of Transportation expressed concerns with NFATC impacts on traffic flow along adjacent roadways. At the final review, the Commission had requested the applicant develop an action plan that outlines a phased approach to the reduction of on-site parking to meet parking ratios and mode split goals proposed in the TMP, which would also minimize impacts on traffic flow but the information was not submitted. While the applicant proposed strong transportation demand management (TDM) strategies to reduce parking demand, the TDM strategies, are not tied to a reduction in physical parking spaces that would reduce drive-alone mode share and ultimately improve the parking ratio. The Commission requested that the *“the Department of State, in cooperation with the General Services Administration, submits transportation progress reports in two years (2019), in conjunction with a planned commuter survey update, and again in five years (2023), aligned with the short-term measures of success in the TMP. The progress updates should:*

- *Provide the Commission with a status update on the implementation of TDM strategies presented as objectives in the TMP;*
- *Include an updated commuter survey that demonstrates progress towards reaching mode split goals described in the TMP; and*
- *Outline a gradual approach to reducing surface parking on campus that is tied to a decrease in parking demand over time.”*

DOS and GSA submitted a progress report and draft commuter survey questions as part of the Building B submission. The progress report includes information on the existing and future parking ratio, and some general information on the TDM strategies, but there are no specifics on how the campus will gradually reduce parking spaces. Staff recommends the Commission **notes the applicant has submitted the requested progress report, that they plan to meet the parking goal, but that it should be accompanied by specific TMP strategies for reducing parking and reliance on single occupancy vehicles** and recommends the Commission **requests that for the final submission, the applicant include specific TMP strategies and milestones for the next 20 years.**

CONFORMANCE TO EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES AND RELATED GUIDANCE

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

The project is generally consistent with the policies included in the *Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan*, particularly the Federal Workplace, Historic Preservation, and Transportation Elements. Specifically, the location and design of Building B is done with sensitivity to existing historic resources and *“ensures that new construction is compatible with the qualities and character of historic buildings and their settings, in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the treatment of Historic Properties..”* In addition, the location of

Building B protects the setting, viewsheds, greenspaces and historic trees of the historic quad and gymnasium as they are integral parts of the campus's historic character.

National Historic Preservation Act

GSA submitted the 35% submission to the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in 2018 and submitted the revised 65% submission concurrently with this review. While NCPC was identified as a consulting party in the Section 106 process, NCPC does not have an individual responsibility to comply with NHPA for Building B since its authority in the environs is advisory.

National Environmental Policy Act

GSA issued a Finding of No Significant Impact as part of the 2017 master plan review. As part of the Building B project review, GSA has discussed the sites stormwater needs and regulatory requirements with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. Because its authority in the environs is advisory, NCPC does not have an individual responsibility to comply with NEPA for Building B.

ONLINE REFERENCE

The following supporting documents for this project are available online at www.ncpc.gov:

- Submission Package

Prepared by Jamie Herr
06/19/2020

POWERPOINT (ATTACHED)

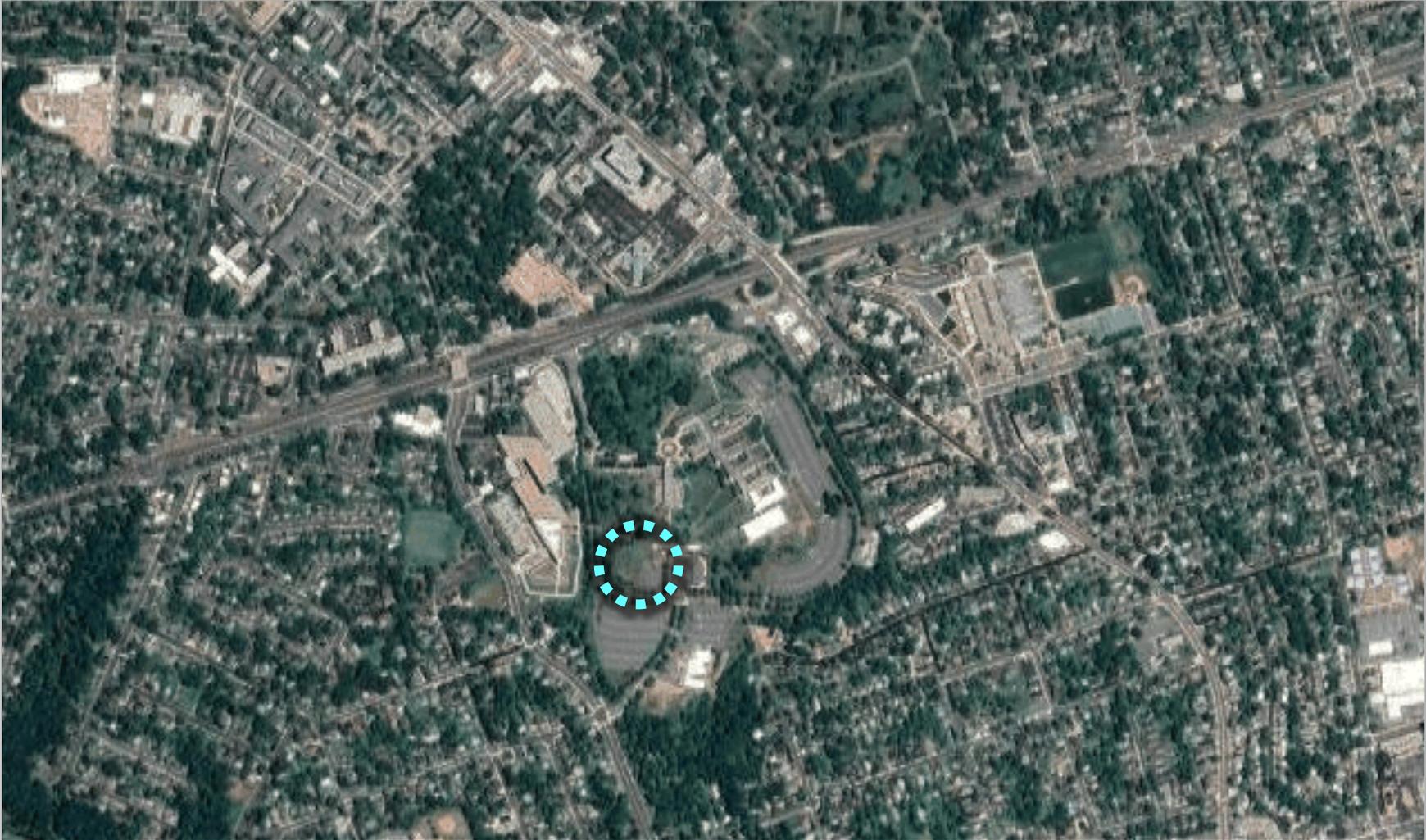
National Foreign Affairs Training Center Building B

4000 Arlington Boulevard, Arlington Virginia

Approval of Preliminary Building Plans

United States General Services Administration

Site Location



Location Map

NFATC Campus



LEGEND

Residential - Low (R-20, R-10, R-10T, R-8, R-6, R-5)	Semi Public (S-3A, S-D)
Residential - Low (R2-7, R15-30T)	Government and Community Facilities (P-S, S-D, S-3A)
Residential - Low - Medium (R15-30T, RA14-26, RAB-18)	High - Medium Residential Mixed Use (R-C)
Service Commercial (C-1-R, C-1, C-1-O, C-2, C-O-1.0)	NFATC Site Boundary
Public (S-3A, S-D)	Columbia Pike Planning Corridor

PROJECT LOCATION: LAND USE



LEGEND

Area of Potential Effects (APE)	Contributing Buildings of the Arlington Hall Station Historic District (2018 rev.)	Campus Buildings
Historic Resources within the APE	Contributing Sites of the Arlington Hall Station Historic District (2018 rev.)	Building B Project Site (Ground Disturbance)
Alcoa Heights Historic District (NR Eligible)	D Gymnasium	Visitor Center
Arlington Hall Station Historic District (NR Eligible, 2018 boundary revision)	E Old Main	Classroom Building
1988 Arlington Hall Station Historic District boundary	H, I Cottages	Central Plant
Arlington Heights Historic District (NR Listed)	Contributing Sites of the Arlington Hall Station Historic District (2018 rev.)	Facilities Management
Barcroft Historic District (NR Eligible)	1 Quadrangle	Classroom Building
Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington (NR Listed)	2 Grove	Child Care Center
		Other
		National Guard Bureau Property (Modern)

PROJECT LOCATION: HISTORIC CONTEXT

NFATC Existing Facilities



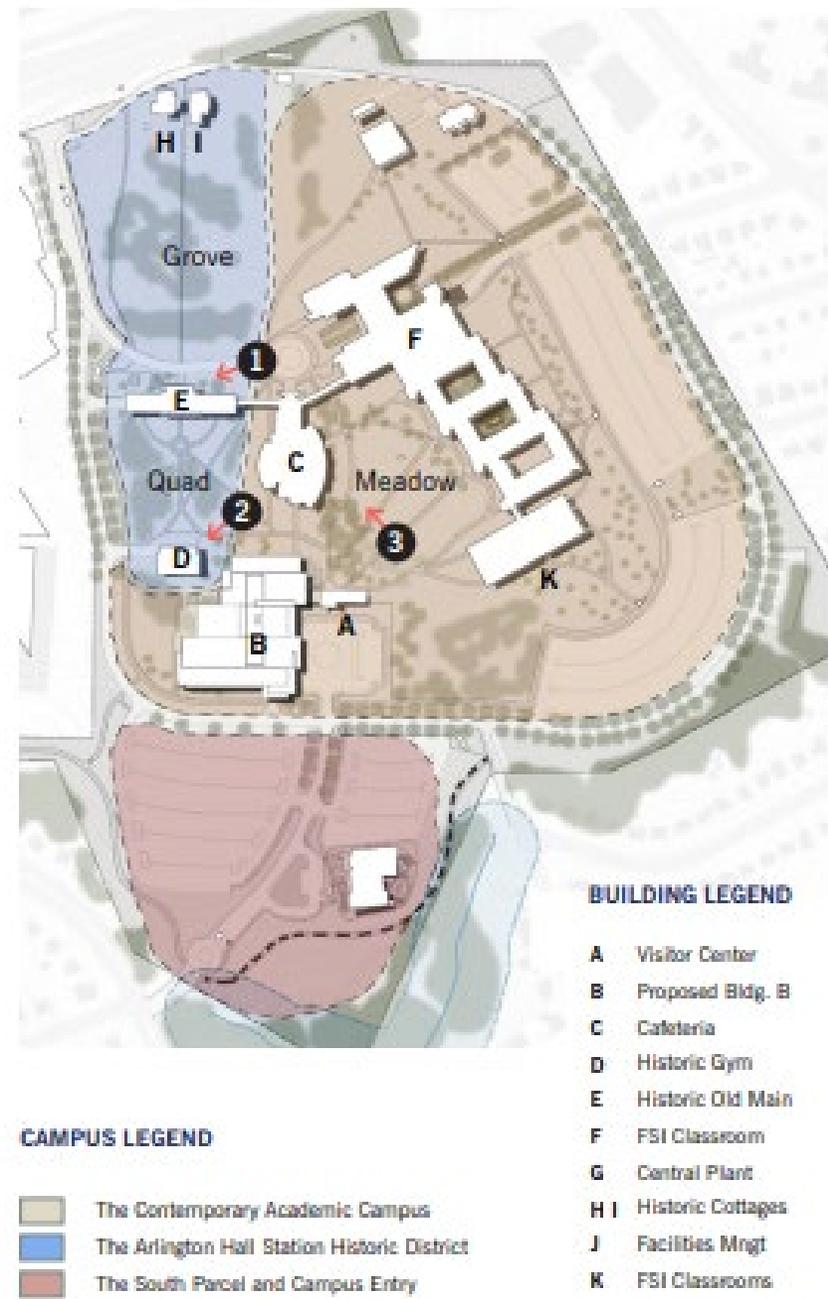
1. Building E View from Building F Entry Court



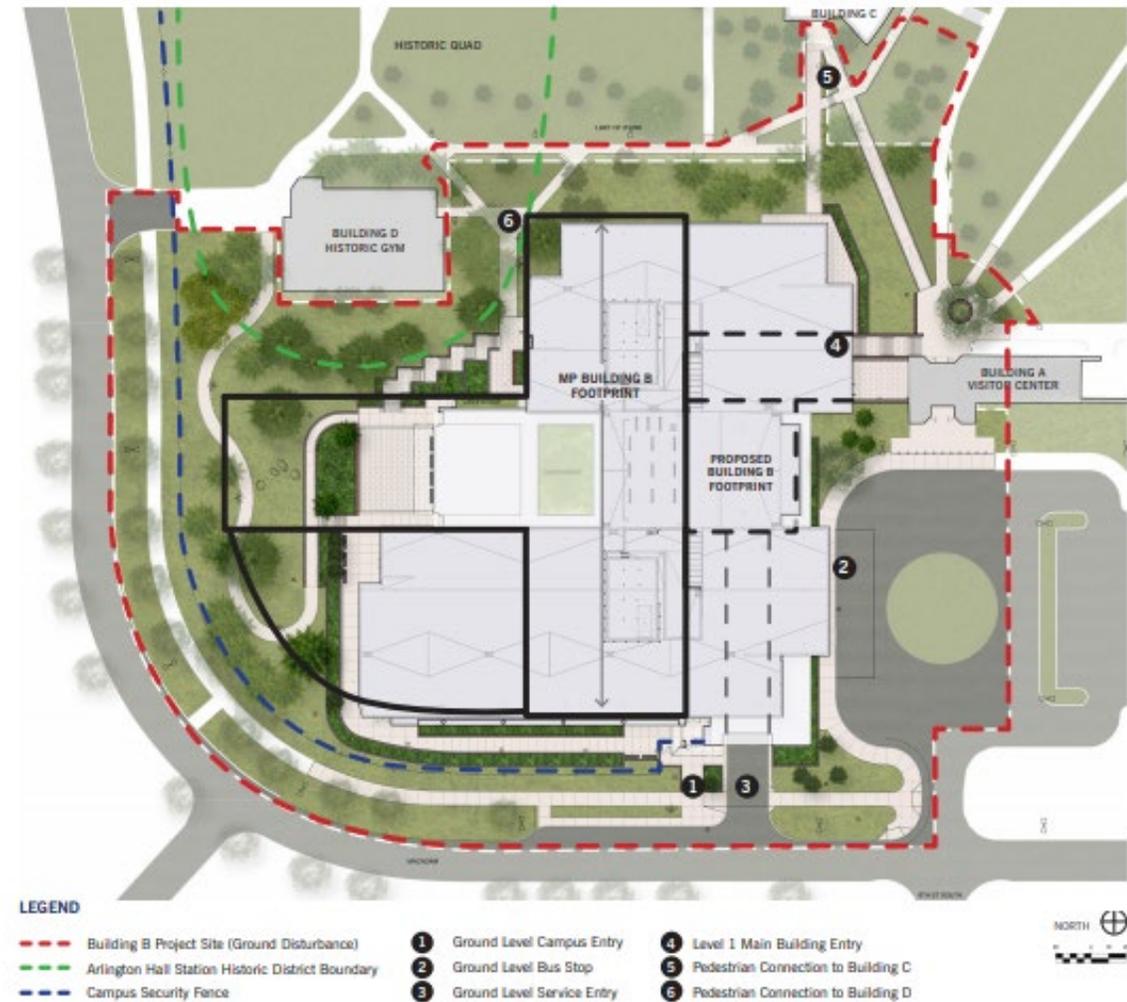
2. Building D View from Northeast



3. Building C View from Campus Meadow

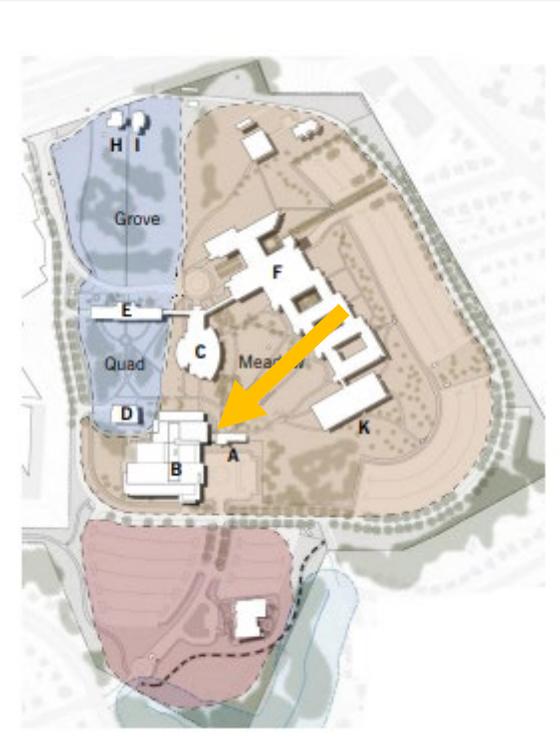


NFATC 2017 Master Plan



Building B Site Plan compared to Master Plan

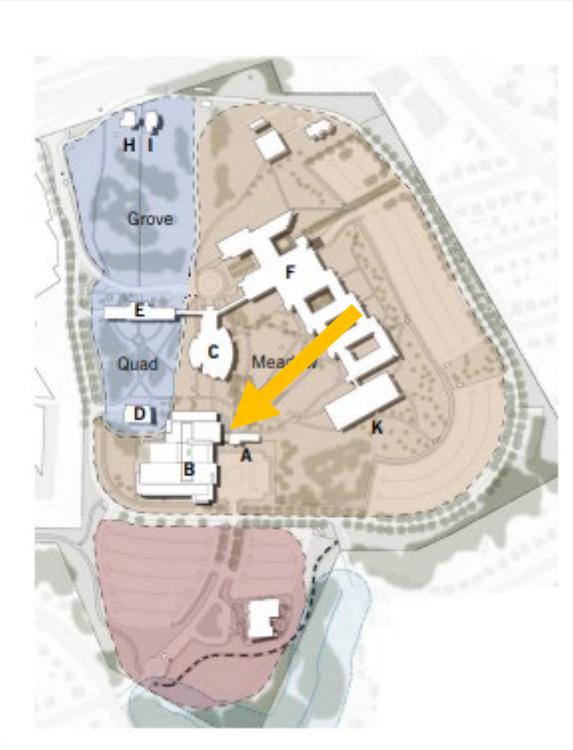
Building B Rendering



VIEW LOOKING WEST FROM CAMPUS MEADOW 1

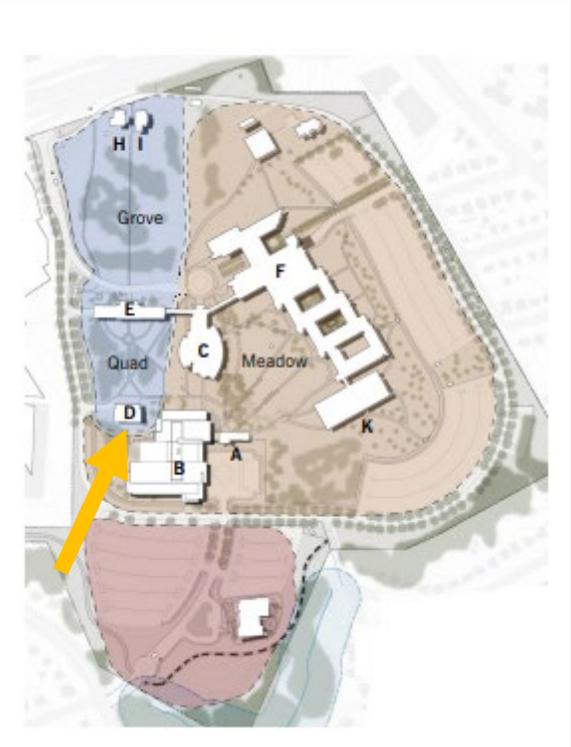
Building B Rendering

VIEW LOOKING WEST FROM CAMPUS MEADOW TO HISTORIC GYM



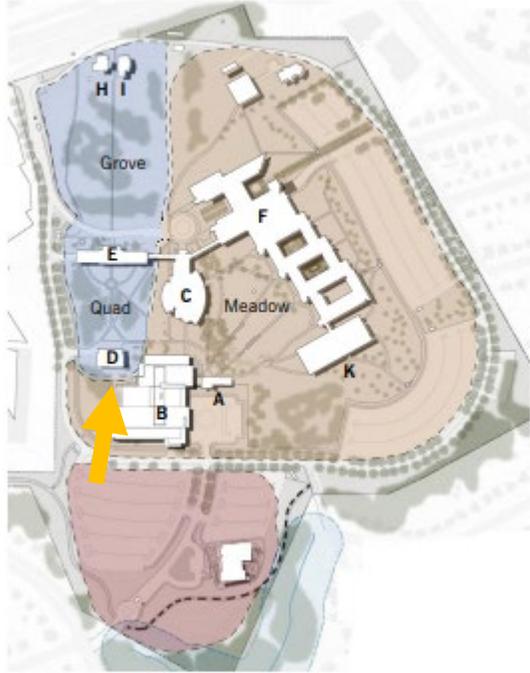
Building B Rendering

CAMPUS VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST TO HISTORIC DISTRICT



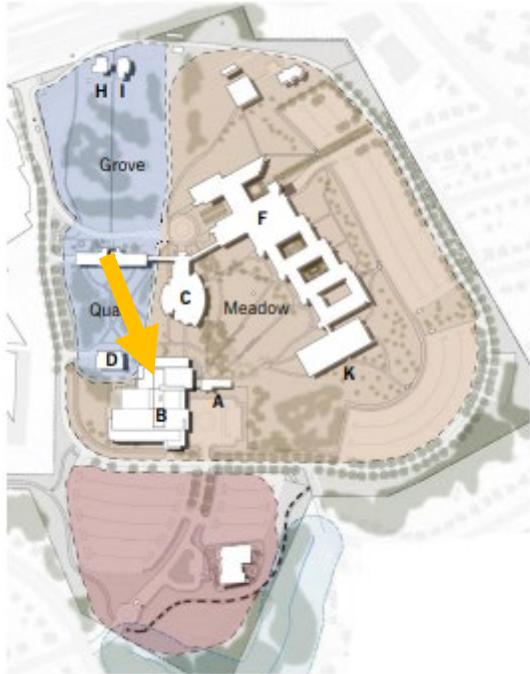
Building B Rendering

VIEW LOOKING NORTH FROM RING ROAD TO HISTORIC DISTRICT



Building B Rendering

VIEW LOOKING SOUTH FROM QUAD TO HISTORIC GYM



Building B Materials



Sun Shades and Glazing



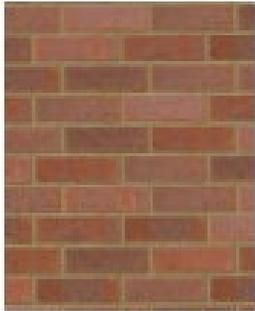
Wood Accents and Soffits



Metal Panels and Mullions



Site and Precast Concrete



Standard Campus Brick



Building B Tree Preservation and Landscape Plans

