



## Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: June 4, 2020

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<b>PROJECT</b> <b>District of Columbia Capital Improvements Plan FY 2021-2026</b> Washington, DC	<b>NCPC FILE NUMBER</b> 0348
<b>SUBMITTED BY</b> Mayor of the District of Columbia	<b>NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER</b> 00.00(00.00)44735
<b>REVIEW AUTHORITY</b> Advisory per 40 U.S.C. § 8723(b)	<b>APPLICANT'S REQUEST</b> Approval of comments to the Mayor of the District of Columbia
	<b>PROPOSED ACTION</b> Approve comments as requested
	<b>ACTION ITEM TYPE</b> Consent Calendar

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### PROJECT SUMMARY

The Mayor of the District of Columbia has submitted the District's Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 – FY 2026 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) for the National Capital Planning Commission's review and comment. The CIP is part of the District of Columbia's FY 2021 Proposed Budget and Financial Plan. The CIP includes 20 new projects along with 234 ongoing projects carried forward from the previous CIP. The total six-year proposed project spending is \$7.91 billion; the FY 2021 appropriated budget authority request is \$1.44 billion. A portion of the District's capital projects is separately funded through the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). The total proposed FY 2021 – FY 2026 HTF is \$1.35 billion; the FY 2021 budget totals \$220 million. The CIP also includes information on the District's water distribution system and sanitary and combined sewage systems operated by the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water), an independent agency. DC Water's board approved and adopted its FY 2020 – FY 2029 CIP with a Ten-Year disbursement of \$5.45 billion and the related lifetime budget of \$12.4 billion. DC Water's FY 2021 capital authority request is \$5.00 billion.

### KEY INFORMATION

- Pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8723(b): "By February 1 of each year, the Mayor of the District of Columbia shall submit to the Commission a copy of the multiyear capital improvements plan for the District of Columbia that the Mayor develops under Section 444 of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act (Public Law 93–198, 87 Stat. 800). The Commission has 30 days in which to comment on the plan but may not change or disapprove of the plan."
- The Commission's review of its capital improvements program is intended to facilitate effective coordination and ensure capital improvements within the District are consistent with the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.

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- On May 18, the Mayor proposed a \$7.91 billion FY 2021 – FY 2026 CIP. Reflecting reduced revenue forecasts, in part due to the COVID pandemic, this proposal is approximately 6.5 percent lower than the prior year's proposal.
  - The FY 2021 – FY 2026 proposal encompasses 212 ongoing projects and 38 new projects for District agencies. The proposal advances NCPC-DC partnerships, including those focused on South Capitol Street, K Street NW, small parks, and flood mitigation.
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## RECOMMENDATION

### The Commission:

**Commends** the District of Columbia on the inclusion of projects that support federal interests, in particular those that advance earlier joint NCPC-DC planning work. As set forth in the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital* (Comprehensive Plan), federal interests are characterized by one of the following general types:

- Public space improvements that respect the historic character and significance of the L'Enfant and McMillan Plans;
- Transportation systems that provide safe, reliable, and sustainable mobility options for the region;
- Infrastructure improvements of the highest design quality;
- Preservation, enhancement, and development of parks and open space to accommodate a range of users, uses, and programming;
- Development projects that protect the environment, and balances accessibility and security needs; and
- Construction and rehabilitation of public buildings that reflect the image of the nation's capital.

**Requests** that the District of Columbia government agencies coordinate with NCPC and affected federal agencies to identify submission requirements, schedules, and potential planning issues prior to formal review of projects and studies.

**Finds** that the following projects and studies may significantly affect federal interest and require coordination with NCPC and affected federal agencies:

- South Capitol Street Corridor (KA0-AW000) and South Capitol Street Bridge – GARVEE (KA0-SCG19) – These ongoing projects fund the replacement of the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge and improvements to South Capitol Street intersections with the Suitland Parkway and Anacostia Freeway. NCPC approved the final landscaping design in February 2019. Future land use and design issues are critical to transforming this area into a prime gateway to the nation's capital.
- K Street Transitway (KA0-LMC02), Street Car (KA0-LMTCE), Streetcar-Benning Extension (KA0-SA394), and Project Development (KE0-TOP02) – These ongoing projects fund the planning and infrastructure for mass transit systems. NCPC welcomes these projects, which are

expected to improve east-west connections between Washington Circle, Union Station and the Benning Road Metrorail station. Continued coordination with the Commission during future phases will help address potential impacts to federal interests, including federal properties and important viewsheds within the L'Enfant City.

- H Street Bridge (KA0-BR005) – This ongoing project funds the full replacement of the H Street “Hopscotch” Bridge. The bridge spans over 1st Street NE and 2nd Street NE; Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) tracks; and Amtrak tracks and platforms at Union Station. NCPC is coordinating with the Federal Railroad Administration on the Washington Union Station Expansion Project. To date, the Commission most recently reviewed the concept plans for the Expansion Project in January 2020. The private air rights located behind Union Station on either side of the bridge will also be developed in the future, as the Commission recently heard in a May 2020 information presentation. As such, replacement of infrastructure and the redevelopment of the Union Station area requires continued coordination with the Commission and other parties to resolve these complex planning, design, and land use concerns.

**Notes** the following additional projects and studies are potentially of federal interest and may require future coordination with NCPC:

#### Revitalization

- McMillan Site Redevelopment (EB0-AMS11) – This ongoing project funds the site's redevelopment into a mixed-use area, while retaining many of its historic features. The Commission reviewed the redevelopment of the former federal property in 2014 and 2016. Given the master planning and redevelopment activities of the nearby Armed Forces Retirement Home and Veterans Administration Hospital, we encourage consideration of opportunities for enhanced NCPC-DC Office of Planning coordination.
- Walter Reed Pool (AM0-W4PLC) and Children's National (EB0-CHN19) – These ongoing projects are part of the redevelopment of the former military facility into a mixed-use development. Continued coordination is anticipated, as this portion of the campus is adjacent to federal property being developed into a Foreign Mission Center.
- Hill East (EB0-EB422) – This ongoing project redevelops Hill East, also known as U.S. Government Reservation 13. Specifically, it would support multiple investments on the site, including design and construction of new roads, utility infrastructure, green space, and rehabilitation of the historic building and easements.

#### Transportation and Mobility

- 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge (KA0-HTF00) and 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park (KA0-ED0D5) – These ongoing projects fund an enhanced transportation corridor for cars, pedestrians, bicycles, and the DC Streetcar. They create an elevated park; replace functionally deficient and structurally obsolete infrastructure; provide an additional alternate evacuation route from the nation's capital; and support the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative. The Commission approved a final design for the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridges project in February 2011 and preliminary design for the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park in April 2020.
- Transportation Mitigation (KA0-LMMIT) and Travel Demand Management (KA0-ZU000) – These ongoing projects will support transportation management and mitigation such as

pedestrian area improvements, bicycling infrastructure, and intermodal facilities. These improvements help federal facilities meet NCPC's automobile parking ratio policies.

- Streetscapes and Beautification (KA0-LMBSS) – This ongoing project funds streetscape improvements and beautification efforts. It includes the East Capitol Street corridor, which is an important gateway to the National Capital.

#### Building Enhancement and Modernization

- Archives (AM0-AB102) – This ongoing project funds the construction of a purpose-built facility for the District of Columbia Archives that would improve the preservation of and public access to archival records of federal interest.
- Daly Building Rehabilitation (AM0-DLY19) – This reprogrammed project funds the design and modernization of the Daly Building, which is adjacent to John Marshall Memorial Park, U.S. Department of Labor Headquarters, and the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.
- General Renovation (AM0-CGN02-CTF) – This reprogrammed project funds upgrades to the current DC Jail, which has been a primary use of Hill East/U. S. Reservation 13. The project also funds the initial design of a new correctional facility.
- Renovation of University Facilities (GF0-UG706) – This ongoing project will renovate the University of the District of Columbia Van Ness campus and other facilities. In December 2011 the Commission approved plans for the project and requested the applicant coordinate with NCPC staff and the Department of State due to potential impacts of the proposed student housing adjacent to the International Chancery Center.

#### Parks and Open Space

- Eastern Market Metro Park (AM0-EST01) – This ongoing project funds modifications to the public space surrounding the Eastern Market Metro Station and along the Pennsylvania Avenue SE corridor, both federal reservations. The Commission approved this project at its February 2020 meeting.
- Kingman Island Education Center (KG0-KINGI) – This ongoing project provides funds for educational and recreational improvements at Kingman & Heritage Islands, including outdoor classrooms, bathrooms, accessible routes, and pathways. The Commission approved an improved entrance to the Islands in November 2007.
- Franklin Square Park (AM0-QN751) – This ongoing project funds improvements to Franklin Park, a federally-owned park. The Commission reviewed and approved final plans for this project in April 2019.

#### Environment and Infrastructure

- Powerline Undergrounding (KA0-LMGGR) – This ongoing project focuses on undergrounding electrical feeders most vulnerable to outages during storm conditions. It may enable reduced reliance on overhead propulsion infrastructure for the streetcar system.
- Streetlight Management (KA0-LMLIG), Core Infrast[tructure] Network Upgrade (TO0-CNU00-MP), and Infrastructure and Security – DPR (TO0-NPR15-IT) – These ongoing projects fund rehabilitation and expansion of the District's streetlight portfolio and the addition of Wi-Fi in public spaces. NCPC, on behalf of the National Mall Road Interagency Working Group released the concept Monumental Core Streetscape Project Urban Design

Streetscape Framework and Lighting Policy in November 2019 to coordinate street light improvements with DDOT and the District of Columbia Office of Public-Private Partnerships (OP3).

- Stormwater and Flood Mitigation (KA0-LMWWM) and Integrated Flood Modeling (KG0-IFM20) – These ongoing projects support stormwater management; flood modeling and mitigation; and stream, wetland, and waterway restoration. NCPC coordinates with other federal and local agencies to improve water management; recently approving multiple components of the DC Clean Rivers Project, and in partnership with the DC Silver Jackets, released the Flood Risk Resource Guide.
- Combined Sewer Overflow Service Area – This ongoing DC Water project funds large-scale green infrastructure installations and a series of deep diversion facilities to capture combined sewer overflow and route it to the Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Facility. NCPC has reviewed several portions of this project and will continue coordinating with partner agencies such as NPS when federal lands may be impacted.
- Washington Aqueduct Authority – This ongoing DC Water project supports water distribution to the federal government through federal legislation enacted and a memorandum of understanding executed in 1997.

**Notes** that while an unusually high level of projects would be reprogrammed due unforeseeable budgetary pressures, NCPC understands that important projects -- such as the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park – will be funded as soon as possible.

**Notes** the statutory requirement mandating the District's submission for Commission review of a number of CIP projects, such as:

- Acquisition or disposition of land or buildings by the District of Columbia government (40 U.S.C. § 8722 (b) (1) and § 8734 (a)); and
- Development projects undertaken by the District of Columbia government that affect District of Columbia public buildings and grounds, including parks (40 U.S.C. §8722 (b) (1) and § 8722(e).

## PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

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

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## PROJECT ANALYSIS

### Executive Summary

Many of the CIP projects outlined in the District's proposal support federal interests as outlined in the Federal Elements of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital* (Comprehensive Plan) and other NCPC planning documents. None of the proposed projects appear to have any adverse impact on federal interests. **Therefore staff recommends that the Commission commend the District of Columbia on the inclusion of projects that support federal interests described in the Comprehensive Plan and other planning documents; request that the District of Columbia coordinate projects as appropriate with the Commission and federal agencies and regional agencies; and notes the District is required to submit for Commission review of a number of CIP projects, such as acquisition or disposition of land or buildings by the District of Columbia and development projects undertaken by the District of Columbia government that affect District of Columbia public buildings and grounds, including parks.**

### Background

District of Columbia capital improvement projects are part of the Mayor's FY 2021 Proposed Budget and Financial Plan that is sent to the Council of the District of Columbia for review and adoption. NCPC reviews the District CIP pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8723(b), which specifies: "By February 1 of each year, the Mayor of the District of Columbia shall submit to the Commission a copy of the multiyear capital improvements plan for the District of Columbia that the Mayor develops under Section 444 of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act (Public Law 93-198, 87 Stat. 800). The Commission has 30 days in which to comment on the plan but may not change or disapprove of the plan."

The Commission's review of its capital improvements program may provide the District with valuable feedback about proposed developments and projects long before they move forward. This is intended to facilitate effective cooperation between the District and NCPC and improve Commission review of specified projects under the Commission's normal project-by-project review procedures.

As described in the District's CIP document, the CIP consists of the appropriated budget authority request for the upcoming six-year period and an expenditure plan with projected funding over the next six years. The CIP is used as the basis for formulating the District's annual capital budget. The program includes renovation, major repair, and maintenance of existing facilities; new construction and equipment; building and land purchases; long-range planning studies; transportation projects; and various technology and database projects.

Approximately 199 of the District's bridges and 400 miles of District streets and highways are eligible for federal aid. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) administers the Federal-aid Highway Program, which provides funding for construction, reconstruction, and improvements on eligible routes and for other eligible programs and projects. The FHWA reimburses the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) for eligible expenditures related to approved highway projects according to cost-sharing formulas that are established in authorizing statutes. In most cases, the federal share

of the costs for approved projects is about 84 percent. The District's share of eligible project costs is funded with the local Highway Trust Fund (HTF).

The District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority ("DC Water") is an independent agency that maintains and operates the District of Columbia's water distribution system; its sanitary and combined sewage systems; and Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Facility. DC Water is governed by a Board of Directors composed of six District of Columbia representatives, two each from Montgomery and Prince George's counties in Maryland, and one from Fairfax County in Virginia. The District of Columbia Mayor appoints, and the District of Columbia Council confirms, all six District Board members and alternates, including the Chairman. In addition, the District Mayor appoints the five principal and alternate members who represent the surrounding jurisdictions based on executive submissions from those jurisdictions.

### *Proposal*

The District's CIP includes 234 ongoing projects and 20 new projects for District government agencies. The total six-year proposed project spending is \$7.90 billion. The FY 2021 appropriated budget authority request is \$1.44 billion.

In contrast, FY 2020's budget contained 212 ongoing projects and 38 new projects. The total six-year proposed project spending was approximately 6.5 percent higher than the proposed 2021 program. The FY 2020 appropriated budget request was approximately 28 percent higher than the 2021 authority request.

The reduced year-over-year funding levels reflects a loss of revenue due to the prevailing coronavirus pandemic. The proposed FY 2021 CIP removes and/or shifts timelines for a limited number of projects. In one of the most significant impacts of interest to the Commission, the proposal delays planned District funding for the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park.

The proposed FY 2021 – FY 2026 HTF Budget total is \$1.35 billion. The FY 2021 budget totals \$219 million. It is anticipated that FHWA will make \$190 million of federal aid available for HTF projects. The proposed local match HTF budget of \$30 million is based on estimates of local HTF revenues and anticipated local match requirements.

DC Water's board approved and adopted its FY 2020 - FY 2029 CIP with a Ten-Year Disbursement of \$5.45 billion and the related lifetime budget of \$12.4 billion. The lifetime budget is the full budgeted amount for projects, which are active within DC Water's ten-year CIP, including expended and anticipated amounts to complete the projects. The capital disbursement plan is mainly an estimate of cash flows or actual spending on projects. DC Water's FY 2021 Congressional capital authority request of \$5.00 billion includes projects that increased in the FY 2020 revised budget, as well as the FY 2021 - FY 2029 planning period.

The District's CIP includes hundreds of capital initiatives. Highlighted FY 2021 projects include:

- \$516.8 million for DDOT, to include \$42.0 million for the Circulator, \$41.2 million for the expansion of the Streetcar line, \$39.2 million for PEPCO Utility Lines Undergrounding,

\$25.4 million for Streetscapes and Beautification, \$18.7 million for the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park, and \$18.6 million for improvements to the South Capitol Street corridor;

- \$252.9 million for D.C. Public Schools (DCPS);
- \$144.9 million for the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, to include \$69.7 million for the Saint Elizabeths East Campus redevelopment, \$19.8 million for McMillan Site Renovations, and \$9.4 million for infrastructure at Hill East; and
- \$86.5 million for the Department of Parks and Recreation, to include \$59.3 million for recreation and community centers, \$13.5 million for pools, and \$3.1 million for playgrounds and athletic fields.

Additional major investments proposed for FY 2021 that affect federal interests include \$323.5 million for WMATA as the District's contributions to its capital program, to include \$274 million for the inter-jurisdictional Capital Funding Agreement and \$49.5 million for the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act Funding Agreement.

Staff has analyzed the proposed projects in the District's CIP and determined that many support federal interests as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan and other NCPC planning documents. Staff did not find that any proposed projects appear to have adverse impacts on the federal interest.

A large number of CIP projects involve the rehabilitation and improvement of District public buildings and public spaces throughout the District of Columbia. Many of these projects are in prominent locations, where such improvements have the opportunity to enhance the overall image of the National Capital. Many of these facilities were originally constructed by the federal government and thereby extend the legacy of federal involvement in the development of the District of Columbia. Examples (noted by the relevant District agencies) include buildings within networks of facilities that define the civic character of the Capital City:

- Schools (DCPS)
- Libraries (DCPL)
- Transportation facilities (DDOT)
- Firehouses (Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department)

The CIP includes enhancements to the capital's image through investments in public art (DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities) and the maintenance and planting of street trees (DDOT). The District government's continued investment in these capital projects is consistent with many NCPC initiatives and helps to benefit the city's image, and thus support the federal interest.

Many of the rehabilitation projects outlined in the CIP involve historic structures. To further both District and federal interests, it is important that the District respect and enhance these historic buildings as these projects move forward. Projects for improving accessibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in historic structures should be carefully designed to accommodate both ADA requirements and historic preservation goals.

Several projects relate to buildings and structures that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or are located within recognized historic districts. The continued investment in these properties helps to preserve and promote their recognized significance.

The CIP includes funding for plans and studies that the District proposes to undertake. NCPC and the District have coordinated planning initiatives that have resulted in capital projects that successfully address federal and local interests. Therefore, NCPC supports the inclusion of funds for planning in the CIP, and looks forward to continued cooperation and coordination with the District and other federal agencies on planning and zoning studies within the District.

### **Analysis**

Several projects in the CIP are of special interest to federal planning efforts. NCPC requests that the District coordinate with NCPC and other federal agencies, and notes that some projects may be subject to NCPC review. Projects of special federal interest include:

- Park and Open Space (DPR and DCPS): NCPC recently updated its Comprehensive Plan Parks and Open Space Element. Building on the Small Parks Management Strategies report, CapitalSpace Plan, the National Park Service's Paved Trail Study, and an internal review of adapting designed landscapes and sensitive lighting of the region's parks, the Element protects and enhances the National Capital Region's parks and open space system: for recreation; for commemorative social, civic, and celebratory space; and for environmental and educational benefits. While protection of the park and open space system is an overarching goal, the Element recognizes that improvements and change are required to maintain high levels of use. Staff looks forward to continued coordination with District agencies to identify and implement strategies to improve the park system.
- Intermodal Transportation (DDOT): NCPC has drafted an updated Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element. The Element is structured around four new guiding principles. The principles support the development and maintenance of a multimodal transportation system that meets the needs of federal workers, residents, and visitors, while improving regional mobility, transportation access, and environmental quality. The CIP features several large projects that support intermodal transit facilities, including WMATA's capital program. This funding area supports the rehabilitation of the Metrorail system and bus facilities; and new developments such as bike share, pedestrian improvements, and other multi-modal improvements. These ongoing investments are consistent with the federal interest in using transit to help meet the region's mobility demands, particularly of federal workers, visitors, and special events.
- Streetcars (DDOT): NCPC supports the expansion of transportation options that will benefit residents, workers, and visitors. However, the potential visual impact of streetcars propelled via wires over defining features of the L'Enfant Plan represents a significant federal interest. Staff recognizes DDOT's continued efforts to explore propulsion alternatives. NCPC applauded the 2017 Assessment of Propulsion Technology Study, completed by DDOT to meet the first triennial report requirement on wireless propulsion technology mandated by the District of Columbia Transportation Infrastructure Amendment Act of 2010. Staff has appreciated

participating in planning studies for streetcar segments including segments extending to Georgetown and the Benning Road Metrorail Station.

- Street Lighting and Communications (DDOT, DPR and Office of the Chief Technology Officer): NCPC supports the District's conversion to energy-saving light-emitting-diode (LED) technology. However, LED street lighting is anticipated to change the city's nighttime visual character and light quality, affecting federal streets and properties, particularly in the vicinity of the National Mall. NCPC, on behalf of the National Mall Roads Interagency Working Group continues to develop the Monumental Core Streetscape Project Urban Design Streetscape Framework and Lighting Policy to guide future lighting enhancements and LED performance criteria addressing streetlight color temperatures, brightness, and light distribution. Staff looks forward to continued collaboration with District agencies to coordinate federal and local streetlight guidance and standards.

Finally, staff notes that certain projects outlined in the CIP must, by law, be reviewed by NCPC. In these instances, staff urges District agencies to work early and cooperatively with NCPC staff to facilitate that review, which serves the interests of both the District and the federal government. The projects should be submitted to the Commission at the appropriate stage of siting and design work. NCPC's authority regarding District government projects includes review of: acquisition or disposition of land or buildings; land and building development projects (including park projects); and projects that affect District of Columbia public buildings and grounds, including parks. District agencies should consult with the Commission staff to determine the submission requirements for particular projects.

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

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

Overall, the CIP is generally consistent with the goals outlined in the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*. Many of the CIP capital projects focus on sustainability, livability, job creation, economic development, and transportation infrastructure. These focal areas are consistent with goals of the Federal Workplace, Transportation, Parks & Open Space, Federal Environment, Historic Preservation, and Visitors & Commemoration Elements.

### **National Historic Preservation Act**

The National Historic Preservation Act is not applicable to NCPC's review of this submission, because the Commission does not approve the District CIP.

### **National Environmental Policy Act**

The National Environmental Policy Act is not applicable to NCPC's review of this submission, because the Commission does not approve the District CIP.

## **CONSULTATION**

### **Coordinating Committee**

Without objection, the Committee forwarded the proposed comments to the Council of the District of Columbia to the Commission with the statement that the proposal has been coordinated with all participating agencies.

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

The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts review is not applicable to NCPC's review of this submission, because the Commission does not approve the District CIP.

Prepared by Kael Anderson  
05/28/2020