



Delegated Action of the Executive Director

PROJECT Food and Drug Administration Covered Walkways, Buildings 21-1-31 Food and Drug Administration Headquarters, White Oak Campus 10903 New Hampshire Avenue White Oak, Maryland	NCPC FILE NUMBER 8213 NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 3104.10(00.00)45194 ACTION TAKEN Approved as requested
SUBMITTED BY United States General Services Administration	REVIEW AUTHORITY Approval Per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) has submitted preliminary and final site development plans for the proposed installation of two new canopies to cover existing walkways between Building One (B1) and Building 21 (B21), and B1 and Building 31 (B31) at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) White Oak Campus (Campus) located in White Oak, Maryland. The proposed canopies will provide covered passage for up to 400 visitors per day who utilize the exterior connection between B1 and B31, and to the campus employees and escorted visitors that use the exterior connection between B1 and B21. While the remainder of the campus core has below-grade or second-floor bridge transitions between buildings, the transitions between B21, B1, and B31 are the only at-grade exposed connections in the campus core. The project consists of two parts: 1) the installation of a canopy over the publicly accessible path between B1 and B31, which includes the removal and replacement of the existing security fence and gate that borders the pathway, and 2) the installation of a canopy over the secure pathway between B1 and B21. For the purposes of this project publicly accessible refers to visitors who are screened but unescorted. Both parts of the project will require some removal and replacement of existing walkway surfaces, but no changes to the existing grade are proposed. No existing trees will be impacted by the project and all existing plantings will be protected or restored.

B1, 21 and 31 are visible from the Campus' main entrance on Mahan Road accessed from New Hampshire Avenue. B1 is centered on the entry's prominent traffic circle and bordered by B21 to the north and B31 to the south. Collectively, the buildings create a U-shape framing the east, north, and south sides of the traffic circle and landscaped grounds. B1 is a contributing resource in the White Oak Naval Ordnance Laboratory (NOL) Historic District which is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed canopies are designed to approach B1 without touching or disturbing the existing building, and the canopies will be set back from the traffic circle with the existing security fence, walls, and plantings in the foreground to obscure their view from the main entrance and maintain B1's historic significance.

The proposed canopies will follow the existing, asymmetric footprints of the pathways that connect the building entrances between B1 and B21, and B1 and B31. A public event space, located in B31, is known as the "Great Room." It is FDA's conference center where meetings, symposiums, conferences, and other events are held and attended by the public, stakeholders, industry professionals, the media, dignitaries, and others. Due to the Great Room's frequent activities, the pathway between B1 and B31 is used by up to 400 visitors per day. This pathway requires a security fence and gate along its eastern edge to allow screened, but unescorted persons to access the Great Room in B31 and maintain secure access to the main campus.

The project includes replacing the existing eight-foot height security fence and gate in-kind and shifting its location slightly to provide better access for landscape maintenance. No similar public event space exists in B21 and only FDA employees and escorted visitors are permitted to transition between B1 and B21; therefore, an interior security fence is not necessary along this pathway.

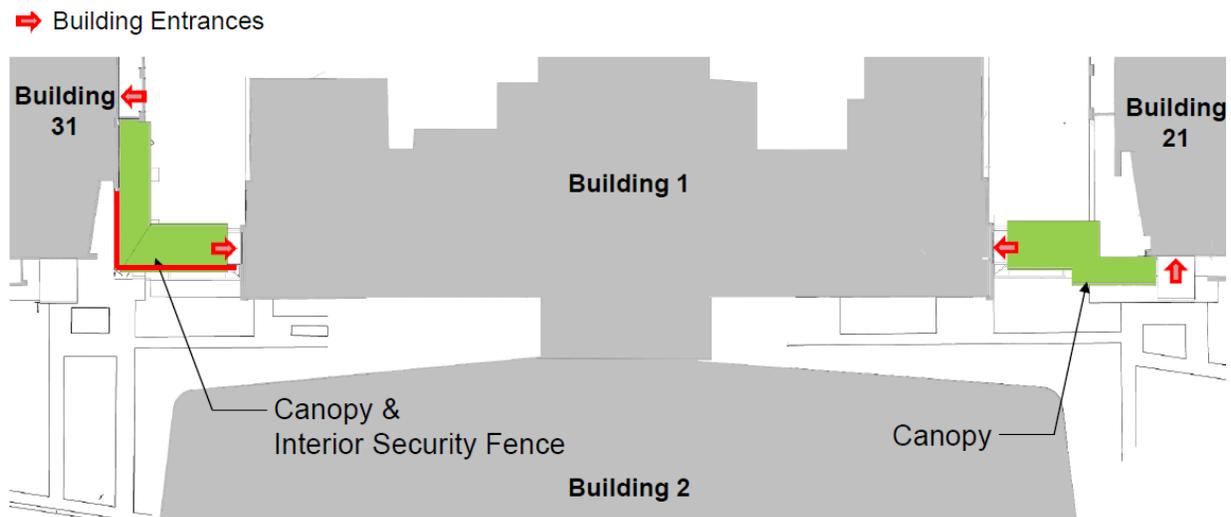


Figure 1- Proposed Site Plan

The applicant worked diligently with NCPC staff to lessen the visual impacts of the proposed canopies. GSA has significantly reduced the profile of the canopies and the width and quantity of columns since the initial pre-submission coordination meeting with staff. As a result, the proposed canopies are designed with a slender horizontal profile that measures 14 inches in depth with 10-inch diameter columns to support the overhead structure. The canopies will also include recessed downlights to light the pathways between the buildings without obstructing views.



Figure 2 - Initial Concept Elevations

The materials, finish, and color of the proposed canopies and columns will be similar to the entry fascia and ceiling panels found throughout the Campus. The canopy fascia and ceiling panels will consist of smooth texture aluminum panels with a light gray finish to match other aluminum paneling on the Campus. The canopy columns will be constructed of hot dipped galvanized steel and painted a light gray color. The security fence and gate located between B1 and B31 will also be constructed of hot dipped galvanized steel and painted a medium gray color to help it recede from view.



Figure 3 - Proposed Canopy between B1 and B21, and B1 and B31

The 2018 Master Plan for the consolidation of the FDA Headquarters and the Federal Research Center (FRC) at White Oak (Master Plan) was approved by NCPC in December 2018. The proposed project is not identified in the Master Plan; however, the project does not conflict with any proposed improvements included in the Master Plan. The proposed project is also consistent with the *Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan* with regard to urban design, environmental, workplace, and historic preservation policies.

GSA coordinated the proposal with state and local agencies prior to submitting the plans to NCPC. Coordination included the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT), and the Montgomery County Planning Department. Since the project will disturb less than 5,000 square feet of land area, the proposal is exempt from MDE’s stormwater management requirements. In addition, MHT concurred with GSA’s determination that this project will have “no adverse effect” on historic properties.

NCPC does not have an individual responsibility to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) or Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for projects located in the environs. To satisfy its NEPA responsibility, GSA has determined that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exclusion (CATEX), citing Category (j); “Repair and alteration of projects involving, but not adversely affecting, properties listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, when there is no evidence of community controversy or other environmental issues...”

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Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on October 3, 1996 and per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d), I approve the preliminary and final site development plans for the Food and Drug Administration Covered Walkways, Buildings 21-1-31 at the Food and Drug Administration Campus in White Oak, Maryland.



Marcel Acosta
Executive Director

9/25/20

Date