



MEDIA RELEASE

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NCPC Disapproves National Institutes of Health Final Master Plan
*Commission also provides comments on Arlington National Cemetery and
U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home Cemetery Draft Master Plans*

Washington, DC - At its monthly meeting on Thursday, April 2, 2015, the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) disapproved the final master plan for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Main Campus located on Rockville Pike in Bethesda, Maryland. The master plan, which updates the 2003 master plan, is intended to guide future development on this 310-acre campus over the next 20 years.

In its disapproval the Commission noted that NIH's current employee parking supply exceeds the 2004 Comprehensive Plan's 1:3 ratio (one parking space per three employees) for the campus by 2,129 parking spaces. The draft final master plan would increase employee parking by 1,000 spaces resulting in a long-term ratio of 1:2.4. NCPC also noted that NIH has not demonstrated why it is unable to comply with the Comp Plan's parking ratio. The Commission requested that NIH revise its master plan and Transportation Management Plan to comply with the 1:3 parking ratio, and noted that it would not approve any future roadway, entrance, or parking projects until this was done. Also noted was that NCPC discourages the use of bollards for security purposes given the numerous other forms of perimeter security options available.

The NIH Master Plan would provide for a consolidation of the campus into clusters and shift new development closer to the campus's east side, near the Medical Center Metro station adjacent to its campus. Through a four-phase implementation process the campus would see a maximum increase of 3,000 employees (new population of 23,594), 1.6 million square feet of new research space, 775,000 square feet of new administrative/support space, and 1,000 net new parking spaces.

The Commission next provided comments on two draft master plans submitted jointly by the Department of the Army. NCPC supported the draft master plan for the 16-acre U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home Cemetery located north of the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Northwest Washington, DC, and requested that the Army undertake further study to determine the effects on historic and archeological resources of removing a north/south roadway.

Established in 1861 and containing more than 14,000 graves, the cemetery primarily serves the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Components of the master plan include renovation of the historic Montgomery Meigs-designed Superintendent's Lodge, creation of additional interment space by the removal of north/south roadway, and various infrastructure projects.

The second master plan was for Arlington National Cemetery. This 25-year framework seeks to increase interment capacity, improve family & visitor amenities, and provide administrative space. NCPC supported the draft master plan and requested that the Army undertake several steps as it continues developing it. These include exploring a transit accessible site for a new administrative building; coordinating planning for a proposed interpretive center with planning for the proposed Air Force Memorial Visitor Center and the Pentagon Memorial Fund Visitor Education Center; and developing an interim bus parking plan while developing concepts for a new transportation center.

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Established in 1864, Arlington National Cemetery is the country's premier national cemetery, where 400,000 service people and two presidents are buried, and is visited annually by three million people. The master plan addresses 661 acres of land, including the existing cemetery plus the Millennium Project (adjacent to Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall) and the Southern Expansion (land formerly occupied by the Navy Annex adjacent to the Air Force Memorial). The plan includes short term, mid-term (5-10 years), and long-term (10+ years) components. Short-term highlights include projects that will provide better accommodations for families and veterans, and enhance the visitor experience. Mid-term plans include concepts for a new transportation center near the existing parking deck. Long-term plans include a new administrative building and creation of an Arlington National Cemetery Interpretive Center. Development of the Southern Expansion site occurs in all phases.

Before adjourning the Commission heard two information presentations. In the first they were updated by NCPC staff on the status of the new Urban Design Element currently under development as part of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*. NCPC staff plans to ask the Commission to release this draft element for a 60-day public comment period later this spring.

Lastly, staff from the Arlington County Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development presented the *Envision Courthouse Square Plan*, an effort to reimagine Arlington's civic center. They seek to present the plan to the Arlington County Board for adoption in fall/winter. Courthouse is located within the east-west axis of the National Mall and is an important contributor to the monumental core's character and setting. No action was taken on these information presentations.

This month's agenda included one consent calendar item (no presentation was given):

- Naval Research Laboratory Final Master Plan (MP47)

In addition, the Executive Director approved five items under authority delegated by the Commission. Staff recommendations and other information are available on [NCPC's website](#).

The National Capital Planning Commission is the federal government's central planning agency in the District of Columbia and surrounding counties of Maryland and Virginia. The Commission provides overall guidance for federal land and buildings in the region. It also reviews the design of federal projects and memorials, oversees long-range planning for future development, and monitors capital investment by federal agencies.

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