

GAO

Report to the Chairman, Committee on
Government Reform, House of
Representatives

June 2005

NATIONAL MALL

Steps Identified by Stakeholders Facilitate Design and Approval of Security Enhancements



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Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-05-518](#), a report to the Chairman, Committee on Government Reform, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

The National Mall in Washington, D.C., encompasses some of our country's most treasured icons and serves as a public gathering place for millions of visitors each year. The National Air and Space Museum, for example, was the most visited museum worldwide in 2003, hosting 9.4 million visitors. Federal agencies with facilities on the National Mall have begun implementing physical security enhancements to protect their facilities and the visiting public.

This report responds to your interest in the efforts and expenditures pertaining to these security enhancements and discusses (1) the physical security enhancements that have been implemented on the National Mall since September 11, 2001, the additional enhancements planned, and the costs of these enhancements; (2) the considerations given to incorporating access and aesthetics into the design and approval of these security enhancements, and how issues of access and aesthetics are perceived by visitors in relation to these enhancements; and (3) examples of how federal agencies are using key practices to implement the enhancements, and any challenges the agencies are experiencing in using these key practices.

In commenting on a draft of this report, the Smithsonian Institution, Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture, and National Gallery of Art provided clarifying and technical comments, which were incorporated into this report where appropriate.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-05-518.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Mark L. Goldstein at (202) 512-2834 or goldsteinm@gao.gov.

NATIONAL MALL

Steps Identified by Stakeholders Facilitate Design and Approval of Security Enhancements

What GAO Found

Since September 11, 2001, federal agencies on the National Mall have obligated about \$132 million for physical security enhancements, with the National Park Service and the Smithsonian accounting for about 75 percent of the total obligations. Security enhancements include additional security personnel, facility upgrades, and equipment and technology. Planned enhancements include the installation of permanent security barriers to protect against vehicle bombs.

Public access and aesthetic considerations are integral to the design and approval of security enhancements on the National Mall. Federal agencies must coordinate with reviewing organizations, such as the National Capital Planning Commission, and consider aesthetics, historic preservation, urban design, urban planning, and environmental effects when implementing security enhancements. Although federal agencies reported that the review process can be time-consuming, review organizations noted that early and frequent consultation with them helps to ensure a smoother, more efficient, and expeditious review process. GAO's survey of about 300 visitors to the National Mall, and reports from federal agencies, indicate that visitors value access to and the appearance of the National Mall and generally find the current level of security enhancements acceptable. GAO's survey results also suggest that visitors regard access and aesthetics as important priorities when adding security enhancements to the National Mall.

Federal agencies on the National Mall reported using five of the six key practices identified by GAO—allocating resources using risk management, leveraging technology, information-sharing and coordination, performance management and testing, and strategic management of human capital—in implementing physical security enhancements. However, none of the federal agencies on the National Mall reported using the key practice of aligning assets to mission in implementing security measures because they believe they do not have excess or underutilized facilities or consider the practice applicable to property under their jurisdiction. Agencies identified balancing ongoing mission priorities with the need for security as a common challenge in using key practices to implement physical security enhancements.

Current and Proposed Security Enhancements at the National Museum of Natural History



Source: National Capital Planning Commission.

Current security measures at the National Museum of Natural History (left). Planned perimeter security improvements as depicted in the artistic rendering (right).

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Abbreviations

ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
CFA	U.S. Commission of Fine Arts
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
HVAC	heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning
NCPC	National Capital Planning Commission
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NM&I	National Monuments and Icons Assessment Methodology
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
USBG	U.S. Botanic Garden
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture

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United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

June 14, 2005

The Honorable Tom Davis
Chairman, Committee on Government Reform
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, increased attention has been given to protecting our nation's key assets, whose destruction could result not only in the loss of life, but in the loss of irreplaceable items from American history and of structures that have come to symbolize America worldwide. The National Mall in Washington, D.C., encompasses some of our country's most treasured icons and serves as a public gathering place for millions of visitors each year. The National Air and Space Museum, for example, was the world's most frequently visited museum in 2003, with 9.4 million visitors. As such, federal agencies and entities¹ with facilities on the National Mall²—the National Park Service, Smithsonian Institution, National Gallery of Art, Department of Agriculture, and U.S. Botanic Garden—have implemented and are continuing to implement physical security enhancements to protect their facilities, employees, and the visiting public. To assist in financing the anticipated costs of designing and implementing new security enhancements, Congress provided supplemental appropriations to most of these federal agencies in fiscal year 2002.³ In addition, the agencies have funded security enhancements from their annual appropriations acts.

¹For the purposes of this report, we are using the term "agency" to refer to all five federal entities noted.

²For the purposes of this report, the National Mall has been designated as the area extending from the foot of the U.S. Capitol grounds west to the Washington Monument, proceeding west to the Lincoln Memorial, and continuing southeast to the Jefferson Memorial. It also includes the area between Constitution and Independence Avenues between 1st and 14th Streets.

³P.L. 107-117, 115 Stat. 2230 (2002).

We have issued several reports on the physical security of federal facilities. For example, in November 2004, we identified a set of key practices that can provide a framework for guiding federal agencies' facility protection efforts.⁴ To assist the Committee in its oversight role, this report discusses (1) the physical security enhancements that have been implemented on the National Mall since September 11, the additional enhancements planned, and the costs of these enhancements; (2) the considerations given to incorporating access and aesthetics in designing and approving physical security enhancements on the National Mall, and how issues of access and aesthetics are perceived by visitors in relation to these enhancements; and (3) examples of how federal agencies are using key practices to implement physical security enhancements on the National Mall, and any challenges the agencies are experiencing in using these key practices.

To accomplish all of these objectives, we reviewed historical plans for the design, expansion, and maintenance of the National Mall; appropriations acts and accompanying legislative material; statutory and regulatory provisions related to security enhancements of the National Mall grounds; and federal agency proposals for implementing physical security enhancements on the National Mall. We also received information about obligations and costs associated with physical security enhancements on the National Mall since the terrorist attacks of September 11. We interviewed officials of the National Park Service, U.S. Park Police, Smithsonian Institution, National Gallery of Art, Department of Agriculture, U.S. Botanic Garden, U.S. Capitol Police, National Capital Planning Commission, U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, Advisory Council for Historic Preservation, District of Columbia's Historic Preservation Office, Department of Homeland Security, and National Coalition to Save Our Mall. Furthermore, we surveyed about 300 visitors to the National Mall on 5 days in October and November 2004 to obtain reactions about security enhancements. We performed our work from August 2004 through May 2005 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. (See app. I for a more detailed discussion of the report's scope and methodology; also see app. II for the results of our National Mall Visitor Survey.)

⁴GAO, *Homeland Security: Further Actions Needed to Coordinate Federal Agencies' Facility Protection Efforts and Promote Key Practices*, GAO-05-49 (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 30, 2004).

Results in Brief

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, federal agencies on the National Mall have obligated about \$132 million for physical security enhancements, with two agencies accounting for about three-quarters of the obligations incurred. Specifically, the National Park Service accounted for about \$57 million, or 43 percent of the total obligations, and the Smithsonian Institution accounted for an additional 32 percent of the total obligations. Security enhancements implemented by these federal agencies include additional security personnel, facility upgrades, and equipment and technology. Additional security enhancements planned by these federal agencies include the installation of permanent perimeter security barriers to protect against vehicle bombs and of technological upgrades to improve surveillance and monitor access into facilities. However, the implementation of physical security enhancements on the National Mall is shaped, in part, by the availability of funds and the costs of enhancements. Federal agencies typically adjust their security plans on the basis of available funding.

Public access and aesthetic considerations are integral to the design and approval of security enhancements on the National Mall. Federal agencies are required to coordinate with review organizations, such as the National Capital Planning Commission, and consider aesthetics, historic preservation, urban design, urban planning, and environmental impacts when implementing physical security enhancements. Although federal agencies told us the review process can be time-consuming, review organizations noted that early and frequent consultation with review organizations helps to ensure a smoother, more efficient, and expeditious review process. These officials also noted that informal consultations should occur during the project's preliminary design phase and continue throughout the design of the security project. For example, the Smithsonian Institution consulted with all of the review organizations before developing a concept design for its perimeter security projects and, as a result, received favorable reviews from all stakeholders on its preliminary design. Finally, our survey results and reports from federal agencies indicate that visitors value access to and the appearance of the National Mall, and that they generally find the current level of security enhancements acceptable. Our survey results further suggest that visitors regard access and aesthetics as important priorities when adding security enhancements to the National Mall.

In past work, we identified six key practices that have emerged from the increased attention to facilities protection that, collectively, could provide

a framework for guiding federal agencies' ongoing facility protection efforts. These key practices are allocating resources using risk management, leveraging security technology, information-sharing and coordination, performance management and testing, strategic management of human capital, and aligning assets to mission. Federal agencies on the National Mall reported using five of these six key practices in implementing physical security enhancements. For example, agencies told us they use risk assessments to efficiently allocate resources to mitigate areas of greatest risk first. In addition, agencies reported integrating new technologies to extend the capabilities of security staff and to improve their facilities' overall operating efficiencies. Agencies also reported sharing information through periodic meetings, including performance measures in their strategic plans, and providing new training programs for security personnel. However, none of the federal agencies on the National Mall reported using the key practice of aligning assets to mission, which involves the reduction of underutilized or excess facilities in order to reduce vulnerabilities, in implementing security measures on the National Mall. Agencies reported that they do not believe that they have any excess or underutilized facilities on the National Mall or elsewhere or do not consider this practice applicable to property under their jurisdiction. For example, one agency reported that all of its facilities are needed to execute its mission of increasing and diffusing knowledge, and that the closure of any of its facilities would therefore be inconsistent with its mission. Federal agencies identified balancing ongoing mission priorities with security needs as a common challenge in using key practices to implement physical security enhancements.

In commenting on a draft of this report, the Smithsonian Institution, Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture, and National Gallery of Art provided clarifying and technical comments, which we incorporated into this report where appropriate.

Background

The National Mall in Washington, D.C., traces its history in part to plans developed by Pierre Charles L'Enfant and the U.S. Senate's Park Commission of the District of Columbia—commonly known as the McMillan Commission. The L'Enfant Plan of 1791 envisioned the National Mall as a grand avenue beginning at the U.S. Capitol and extending west to the current site of the Washington Monument. The McMillan Commission Plan of 1901-1902 extended the National Mall further west and south to the future sites of the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials. Multiple geographic definitions of the National Mall exist. For example, the narrowest definition of the National Mall encompasses the area between 1st and 14th Streets and Constitution and Independence Avenues. Broader definitions of the National Mall extend its boundaries to include the grounds of the Washington Monument and the grounds of the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, while other definitions also include the U.S. Capitol, the White House, the Ellipse, and West Potomac Park. For the purposes of our report, we defined the National Mall as the area extending from the foot of the U.S. Capitol grounds west to the Washington Monument and proceeding further west and southeast to include the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials. It also includes the area between Constitution and Independence Avenues between 1st and 14th Streets (see fig. 1).⁵

⁵We did not include the White House or U.S. Capitol Building because security enhancements for these buildings fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Capitol Police, respectively.

Figure 1: The National Mall in Washington, D.C.



Source: Department of the Interior's National Park Service.

The open spaces of the National Mall, along with the Washington Monument, the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, and other memorials,⁶ are (1) administered and maintained by the National Capital Parks unit of the National Park Service (Park Service), which is within the Department of the Interior (Interior), and (2) patrolled by the U.S. Park Police. In addition, other federal agencies control and maintain various facilities located on the National Mall, as described below:

- *Smithsonian Institution (Smithsonian)*: Created as a trust instrumentality of the United States by an act of Congress in 1846,⁷ the Smithsonian is considered the world's largest museum and research complex, featuring 11 facilities on the National Mall—that is, the

⁶The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and World War II Memorial are also located on the National Mall.

⁷The Smithsonian Institution was created in accordance with the terms of a bequest made by James Smithson of England to form “an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men.” In total, the Smithsonian consists of 18 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, and 10 science centers.

Smithsonian Castle, Arts and Industries Building, Freer Gallery of Art, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, National Air and Space Museum, National Museum of African Art, National Museum of American History, National Museum of the American Indian, National Museum of Natural History, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, and S. Dillon Ripley Center.

- *National Gallery of Art (National Gallery)*: With the gift of Andrew W. Mellon's collection of paintings and works of sculptures, the National Gallery was created by a joint resolution of Congress in 1937. Located at the northeast corner of the National Mall, the National Gallery today maintains two buildings—the West and East Buildings, opened in 1941 and 1978, respectively—and an outdoor Sculpture Garden, opened to the public in 1999.
- *Department of Agriculture (USDA)*: The only cabinet-level agency building located on the National Mall is the USDA's Whitten Building.⁸ In 1995, this building was named for former U.S. Representative Jamie L. Whitten.
- *U.S. Botanic Garden (USBG)*: Tracing its origins as far back as 1816, USBG is managed under the direction of the Joint Committee on the Library, with the Architect of the Capitol responsible for the garden's operations and maintenance. USBG's Conservatory and the adjacent outdoor National Garden (currently under construction) are situated on the southeast corner of the National Mall. Security for USBG is provided by the U.S. Capitol Police.

Along with the federal agencies that manage facilities on the National Mall, several governmental and other entities have an oversight, advisory, or advocacy role related to the construction, renovation, or modification of facilities, including the implementation of security enhancements, on the National Mall and throughout Washington, D.C. These entities include the following:

- *National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)*: NCPC, which is the federal government's central planning agency for the National Capital

⁸The headquarters complex of the Department of Agriculture also includes the South and Yates Buildings and the Cotton Annex; however, these buildings are not located directly on the National Mall.

Region, provides planning guidance for the development of federal land and buildings in the city. NCPC and federal agencies must comply with both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). These laws require that federal agencies consider the effects of their undertakings on environmental quality and historic properties, respectively, and allow for public participation and comment. NCPC's policies and procedures are meant to ensure compliance with these laws during its review process. NCPC also reviews the design of federal construction projects, oversees long-range planning for development, and monitors capital investment by federal agencies.

- *Commission of Fine Arts (CFA)*: CFA provides advice to federal and D.C. government agencies on matters of art and architecture that affect the appearance of the capital city.
- *D.C. State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)*: Federal agencies that undertake the construction or renovation of properties in Washington, D.C., are required by law to assess whether there may be effects to designated historic properties, engage in consultation with the SHPO⁹ on effects to historic properties, and provide ACHP with an opportunity to comment. ACHP promotes the preservation, enhancement, and productive use of the nation's historic resources and reviews federal programs and policies to promote effectiveness, coordination, and consistency with national preservation policies.
- *National Coalition to Save Our Mall*: Founded in 2000, the coalition is made up of professional and civic organizations and concerned artists, historians, and citizens to provide a national constituency dedicated to the protection and preservation of the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The coalition's mission is to "defend our national gathering place and symbol of Constitutional principles against threats posed by recent and ongoing proposals—for new memorials, security barriers, service buildings and roads—that would encroach on the Mall's historical and cultural integrity, its open spaces and sweeping vistas, and its significance in American public life."

⁹The State Historic Preservation Officer is appointed by the Mayor of Washington, D.C.

The physical security of federal facilities, including those on the National Mall, has been a more urgent governmentwide concern since the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The vulnerability of our nation's infrastructure was further highlighted after the terrorist attacks of September 11. Since the September 11 attacks, actions have been taken to better protect our critical infrastructure and key assets from future attacks of terrorism. In 2002, the Administration's Office of Homeland Security issued *The National Strategy for Homeland Security*, which recognized the potential for attacks on national monuments and icons and identified Interior as the lead federal agency with jurisdiction over these key assets.¹⁰ The Administration outlined actions that Interior should take to protect national icons and monuments in *The National Strategy for the Physical Protection of Critical Infrastructures and Key Assets* in 2003.¹¹ Furthermore, the Administration issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive 7 in December 2003, establishing a national policy for federal agencies to identify and prioritize U.S. critical infrastructure and key resources and to protect them from terrorist attacks.¹²

¹⁰Office of Homeland Security, *The National Strategy for Homeland Security*, July 2002.

¹¹Office of Homeland Security, *The National Strategy for the Physical Protection of Critical Infrastructures and Key Assets*, February 2003. *The National Strategy* directs Interior to take the lead on the following initiatives to protect national icons and monuments: define critical criteria for national monuments, icons, and symbols; conduct threat and vulnerability assessments; retain a quality security force; conduct security-focused public outreach and awareness programs; collaborate with state and local governments and private foundations to ensure the protection of symbols and icons outside the federal domain; evaluate innovative technologies; and make provisions for extra security during high-profile events.

¹²Homeland Security Presidential Directive Number 7, *Critical Infrastructure Identification, Prioritization, and Protection*, December 17, 2003.

In response to the effects of what were viewed as makeshift security measures that affected the historic design and streetscape of Washington, D.C., NCPC's Interagency Task Force issued a report in October 2001—*Designing for Security in the Nation's Capital*—identifying design strategies to improve mobility and aesthetic conditions throughout Washington, D.C.¹³ The following year, NCPC released a design framework and implementation strategy for Washington's "monumental core" and downtown area, *National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan*, which provided a summary of building perimeter security considerations; streetscape design concepts that incorporate security components; and an implementation strategy for the design, construction, funding, maintenance, and operations of security installations in Washington, D.C.¹⁴ (See the bibliography for additional reports related to this topic.)

Likewise, improving the physical security of federal facilities has been the subject of several GAO reports, including our November 2004 report.¹⁵ In that report, we assessed the actions of the federal government's Interagency Security Committee in coordinating federal facility protection efforts and delineated a set of six key practices emerging from the collective practices of federal agencies to provide a framework for guiding agencies' facility protection efforts (see fig. 2). As previously mentioned, these key practices are allocating resources using risk management, leveraging technology, information-sharing and coordination, performance measurement and testing, aligning assets to mission, and strategic management of human capital.

¹³NCPC, *Designing for Security in the Nation's Capital*, October 2001. The Interagency Task Force included representatives from the Departments of the Interior, State, the Treasury, Defense, and Justice; the General Services Administration, Central Intelligence Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Secret Service, National Park Service, Federal Highway Administration, Architect of the Capitol, and U.S. Capitol Police; the House Committee on Government Reform and Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs; various D.C. government agencies; and other interested parties.

¹⁴NCPC, *National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan*, October 2002.

¹⁵[GAO-05-49](#).

Figure 2: Key Practices in Facility Protection

<p>Allocating resources using risk management</p> <p>Identify threats, assess vulnerabilities, and determine critical assets to protect and use information on these and other elements to allocate resources as conditions change.</p>	<p>Leveraging technology</p> <p>Leverage technologies to enhance facility security through methods like access control, detection, and surveillance systems.</p>	<p>Information-sharing and coordination</p> <p>Establish means of coordinating and sharing security and threat information with other government entities and the private sector.</p>
<p>Performance measurement and testing</p> <p>Use metrics to ensure accountability for achieving program goals and improved security at facilities.</p>	<p>Aligning assets to mission</p> <p>Align assets to mission and relocate staff to reduce vulnerabilities, to the extent agencies have excess and/or underutilized facilities.</p>	<p>Strategic management of human capital</p> <p>Strategically manage human capital to maximize government performance and ensure accountability in facility protection.</p>

Source: GAO.

Federal Agencies Have Obligated about \$132 Million for Physical Security Enhancements on the National Mall since September 11, and Additional Measures Are Planned

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, about \$132 million has been obligated for physical security enhancements by federal agencies for facilities on the National Mall. Overall, the Park Service and the Smithsonian have incurred higher levels of obligations for physical security enhancements than other agencies because they manage most of the facilities on the National Mall (see table 1). Federal agencies obligated funds for physical security enhancements from funds made available through annual and supplemental appropriations.

Table 1: Total Obligations for Physical Security Enhancements on the National Mall, Fiscal Years 2002 through 2004

Dollars in millions

Fiscal year	Park Service	Smithsonian	National Gallery	USDA	USBG
2002	\$19.0	\$17.1 ^a	\$1.4	\$8.5	\$0
2003	14.4	17.3	2.1	9.5	0.6
2004	24.0	7.2	3.7	7.1	0
Total	\$57.4^b	\$41.6^c	\$7.2^d	\$25.1^e	\$0.6^f

Sources: Department of the Interior's National Park Service, Smithsonian Institution, National Gallery of Art, Department of Agriculture, and U.S. Botanic Garden.

^aObligation includes \$2.25 million for temporary security barriers.

^bPark Service obligations include \$24.5 million for Park Police security personnel, including some overtime, and equipment.

^cSecurity personnel costs are included in the obligation totals for each fiscal year.

^dObligations for security personnel are not included because no additional security personnel were hired after September 11.

^eSome obligations made for the entire headquarters complex of USDA are included.

^fObligations at USBG have been made by the U.S. Capitol Police since 2003. The U.S. Capitol Police did not incur any obligations for physical security enhancements at USBG in fiscal year 2004. No obligations were incurred in fiscal year 2002.

The implementation of physical security enhancements on the National Mall is shaped, in part, by the availability of funds and the costs of enhancements. Federal agencies often adjust their security plans on the basis of available funding. The remaining text in this section describes the physical security enhancements for which these agencies told us they have obligated funds, as well as some of the costs associated with implementing these enhancements. Additional planned physical security enhancements for each of the agencies are also discussed.

National Park Service and U.S. Park Police

The Park Service and the Park Police told us they obligated over \$57 million for physical security enhancements, including security personnel, on the National Mall during fiscal years 2002 through 2004, primarily at the Washington Monument and the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials.¹⁶ For each of these monuments and memorials, the Park Service incurred such

¹⁶The Park Service has not obligated funds at any of its other memorials on the National Mall, such as the World War II Memorial, for vehicle barrier systems. Funds have been obligated for closed-circuit television systems at various locations on the National Mall.

obligations to conduct site surveys; develop security proposals; comply with environmental, historical, and design guidelines; hire construction managers; and replace temporary security measures with permanent security enhancements. Perimeter security construction was under way at both the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial during our review, while designs for perimeter security at the Jefferson Memorial have not been finalized. The following text provides some examples of perimeter security enhancements implemented and planned at each of these national icons.

- *The Washington Monument:* After September 11, the Park Service installed closed-circuit television cameras, in addition to temporary security measures, such as a ring of jersey barriers and a visitor screening facility at the Washington Monument. During our review, the Monument was closed to the public because of construction to replace these temporary security features with permanent security enhancements. The Monument reopened in April 2005, and the grounds are expected to reopen in early summer. The grounds will be regraded, and 30-inch retaining walls, serving as both vehicle barriers and visitor seating, will surround the Monument. In addition, pedestrian pathways, upgraded lighting, and seating benches are expected to be installed on the Monument grounds. The total cost of constructing these permanent physical security enhancements is estimated at \$12.2 million. The Park Service also told us it is considering the installation of a remote visitor screening facility; however, implementation of this security enhancement had not been approved or scheduled.¹⁷

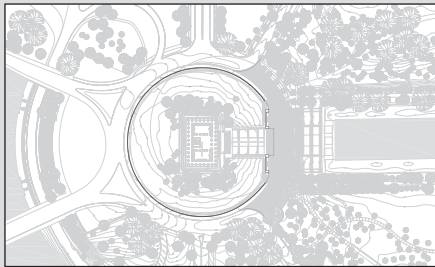
¹⁷The Park Service initially had plans for an underground visitor screening facility.

The Lincoln Memorial



Source: GAO.

The Lincoln Memorial is currently surrounded by temporary security enhancements that were installed shortly after September 11, 2001. These enhancements include the placement of jersey barriers along the circumference of the circular roadway surrounding the memorial. The chain-link fence shown in the above photograph has since been removed.



Source: Department of the Interior's National Park Service.

The Park Service currently proposes to connect the approved and under construction retaining wall that will protect the north, west, and south sides of the Lincoln Memorial with a line of bollards on the inner curb of the east side of the circular roadway. These bollards will be at the foot of the steps leading from the memorial to the circular roadway. The choice of materials, metal or stone, as well as the design, has not been finalized.

- *The Lincoln Memorial*: After September 11, concrete jersey barriers and planters were installed around the Lincoln Memorial ring and the circular drive east of the memorial was closed to all traffic. Construction is expected to be completed in spring 2006, at which time a 35-inch retaining wall will serve as a perimeter vehicle barrier around the north, west, and south sides of the memorial.¹⁸ In addition, bollards (short posts) will be installed on the east side of the circle to complete the vehicle barrier system. Construction costs for the vehicle barrier system are estimated at \$5.1 million.

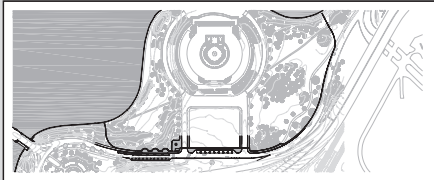
¹⁸The Park Service has not yet completed security designs for the east side of the Lincoln Memorial.

The Jefferson Memorial



Source: GAO.

The Jefferson Memorial is currently surrounded by temporary security enhancements that were installed shortly after September 11, 2001. These enhancements include the placement of jersey barriers along the park road to the south of the memorial, with the barriers curving up to end at the Tidal Basin. The snow fence shown in the above photograph has since been removed.



Source: Department of the Interior's National Park Service.

The proposed security barrier around the Jefferson Memorial consists of a combination of freestanding walls, reinforced decorative fencing, and bollards. Where possible, the barrier system will run along the park road to the south of the memorial. Thirty percent of the parking lost with the closure of the existing parking lot will be added just outside the barrier system, and an additional 200 parking spaces are available within 600 yards of the memorial.

- *The Jefferson Memorial:* Since the September 11 terrorist attacks, temporary concrete jersey barriers have been in place around the Jefferson Memorial, and the U-shaped drive on the south side of the memorial has been closed to traffic. In addition, the parking lot adjacent to the memorial has been closed to the public. The construction of a permanent vehicle barrier system, still in the design stage, is expected to begin in the winter of 2005 and to be completed in the winter of 2006 at an estimated cost of \$4.1 million.

In addition to funds specifically obligated at these national icons, the Park Service obligated funds in fiscal year 2002 for closed-circuit television cameras at various memorials located within the National Mall. Furthermore, the Park Police obligated funds during this time for security personnel and equipment support, such as X-ray machines, body armor, and vehicles. The Park Service told us the completion of permanent vehicle barriers and the installation of equipment and technology upgrades, such as permanent security cameras at each monument and memorial, were the only additional physical security enhancements planned on the National Mall at the time of our review.

Smithsonian Institution

In fiscal years 2002 through 2004, the Smithsonian obligated approximately \$42 million for numerous physical security enhancements, such as additional security personnel, periodic risk assessments, perimeter vehicle barriers, blast mitigation film, closed-circuit television cameras, emergency voice systems, and electronic screening of the public and mail at its National Mall facilities. Some of these security enhancements were already completed at the time of our review. In other cases, enhancements already existed in a facility or are planned to be implemented during future renovations. Smithsonian officials noted that they have established priorities for the implementation of physical security enhancements, identifying as their top priorities the installation of perimeter security barriers and of blast protection film on their facilities' windows. The Smithsonian plans to obligate an additional \$72 million to implement these and other security enhancements between fiscal years 2006 through 2012.¹⁹

- *Perimeter vehicle barriers:* Permanent barriers around the exterior of each of the Smithsonian's National Mall facilities will replace existing temporary barriers to provide protection from vehicle bombs. According to the Smithsonian, this security measure, which is to be implemented in three phases, is one of its highest priorities. The first phase, the construction of a perimeter barrier around the National Air and Space Museum, has already begun and is expected to be completed in February 2006.²⁰ The second phase, the construction of perimeter barriers around the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and National Museum of Natural History is expected to begin in July 2006 and to be completed in June 2008. The final phase, addressing perimeter security for the remaining Smithsonian facilities on the National Mall, will be implemented between April 2008 and April 2010. Smithsonian officials told us that \$11 million was obligated for this project in fiscal years 2002 and 2003, and that an additional \$24.7 million is planned for obligation through fiscal year 2008.
- *Blast-resistant window system enhancement:* For this enhancement, which is designed to prevent or reduce the number of deaths or injuries from flying glass, the Smithsonian obligated a total of \$1.8 million in

¹⁹The Smithsonian's planned obligations do not include security personnel.

²⁰Due to delays in obtaining the required stone, this project has been delayed from its original completion date of October 2005.

fiscal years 2003 and 2004 and plans to obligate an additional \$44.9 million through fiscal year 2012 to implement this measure.

- *Perimeter closed-circuit television cameras:* Providing surveillance of the grounds adjacent to the Smithsonian's National Mall facilities to detect suspicious activities, this enhancement has been implemented by the Smithsonian at 3 of its facilities on the National Mall,²¹ resulting in obligations totaling \$660,000 in fiscal year 2002. The Smithsonian canceled the implementation of this security enhancement at some of its other National Mall facilities but plans to implement the measure during future security upgrades or capital renovation projects.
- *Emergency voice systems:* This enhancement, intended to enable emergency response staff to broadcast disaster- or emergency-related information to affected Smithsonian staff and visitors, was in place at three museums on the National Mall prior to September 11. To implement this enhancement at the remainder of its facilities, the Smithsonian obligated \$2.9 million in fiscal year 2002.
- *Electronic screening of the public and mail:* According to the Smithsonian, this enhancement is designed to prevent a terrorist from carrying an explosive device or firearm into a Smithsonian facility, or to mitigate the effects of such a weapon's use. The enhancement also is designed to detect explosives or biological agents delivered through the mail system. Although lack of space for screening equipment will limit the use of this security enhancement at its National Mall facilities, the Smithsonian does plan to implement this measure at some of its facilities. However, in some cases, renovations are required to install an adequate number of screening stations. The Smithsonian has deferred renovations to fully implement this measure until it can address higher priority security enhancements. In the meantime, several facilities have received full magnetometer screening and bag searches to limit the potential for explosive devices or firearms to enter a Smithsonian facility. The Smithsonian obligated \$2.2 million in fiscal year 2002 for this enhancement.

²¹The Smithsonian installed closed-circuit television cameras at the National Museum of American History, National Museum of Natural History, and National Air and Space Museum.

Besides funding the enhancements previously identified, the Smithsonian obligated about \$20 million for additional security personnel and \$1 million for risk assessments for its facilities during fiscal years 2002 through 2004. Furthermore, the Smithsonian has requested \$700,000 for electronic access control measures and \$2 million to deter, detect, or prevent the introduction of chemical, biological, or radiological agents into air intakes at its National Mall facilities.

National Gallery of Art

Officials from the National Gallery told us it has obligated over \$7 million to implement physical security enhancements at its East and West Buildings and Sculpture Garden since September 11. Funds have been obligated at both the East and West Buildings and for equipment and technology, such as magnetometers, X-ray machines, closed-circuit television cameras, and body armor. In addition, the National Gallery installed streetscape and landscape barriers, such as trees and boulders, along the exterior of the East Building; constructed a security guardhouse and modified the service entrance at the West Building; and deployed temporary barricades to be used during heightened security alerts. Finally, the National Gallery has obligated funds for an Integrated Security Management System, the review of its disaster management plan, and the review of vulnerability assessments for security against explosive devices. Although implementation of future security enhancements is subject to available funding, the following text describes some examples of security enhancements planned by the National Gallery:

- The National Gallery plans to conduct additional studies to evaluate its camera system and the need for an Emergency Operations Center (EOC). By determining the number and location of cameras currently in use throughout the National Gallery, this study will provide the gallery with the most comprehensive surveillance system possible. The EOC study will determine the National Gallery's need for an off-site space to conduct security operations in the event of a large-scale emergency affecting the National Mall. The estimated cost of the studies is \$350,000.
- The National Gallery plans to upgrade perimeter security through additional protections against explosions and hazardous agents. These measures include erecting bollards and retractable steel plates around the perimeter of the East and West Buildings and Sculpture Garden to protect against unauthorized vehicles, adding window film to windows in the entire East Building and part of the West Building, and installing air intake protection sensors in the West Building to protect against

biological agents or other materials. The estimated cost of implementing these enhancements is \$1.4 million.

- The National Gallery plans to install additional equipment and technology, such as improved access controls and biometrics, perimeter cameras, and screening devices. For example, new employee identification badges (smart cards) will be authenticated and electronically tracked through the National Gallery's Integrated Security Management System to protect against fraud. In addition, the National Gallery intends to improve security and access controls through the use of biometric systems. Additional external cameras will improve surveillance of the East and West Buildings and Sculpture Garden. Finally, X-ray machines and magnetometers that are already in use at some public entrances will be added at closed entrances at the West Building to improve visitor access during heightened security. The estimated cost of implementing these enhancements is \$580,000.

Department of Agriculture

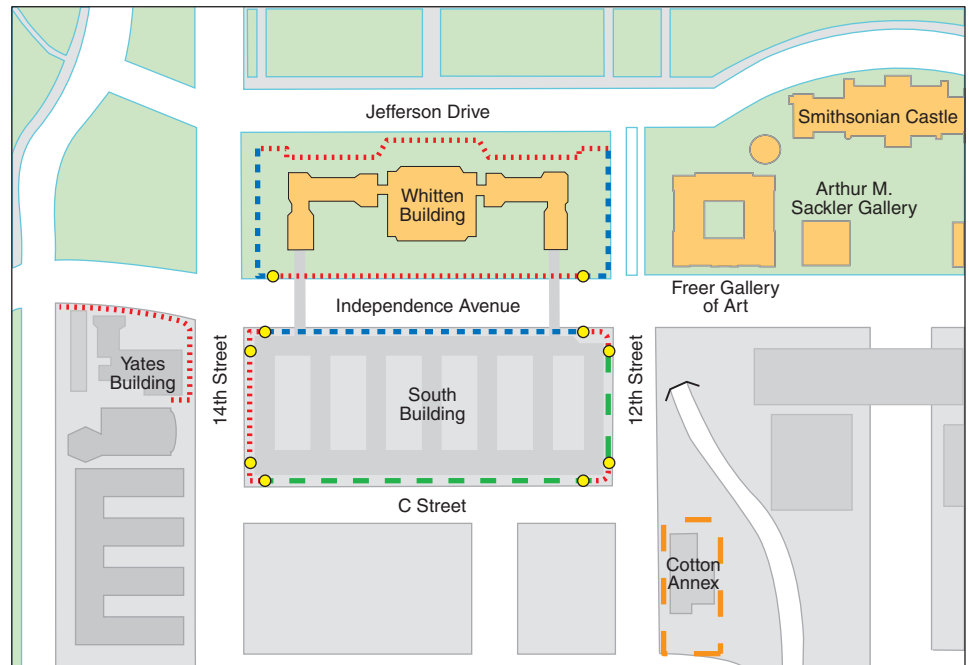
USDA has obligated about \$25 million for physical security enhancements for its facilities on or adjacent to the National Mall since September 11.²² USDA conducted blast assessment studies, hired additional security personnel, and began installing window protection measures and a public address system at each of its Washington, D.C., facilities, in addition to developing a perimeter streetscape security master plan for the four-building headquarters complex. USDA also obligated funds for a situation room and a heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) air intake study at the Whitten Building located on the National Mall.

USDA plans to continue installing blast resistant windows for the South Building under its overall modernization project and safety drapes in additional locations in the four-building headquarters complex; it also plans to undertake major HVAC improvements against bioterrorism. However, the implementation of these measures is dependent on available funding and the priority given to these measures by USDA. In some cases, the security enhancements will be coordinated with major renovations of its facilities. Beginning in fiscal year 2006, USDA also plans to improve security around its facilities by implementing perimeter security barriers that it developed for the Whitten Building and adjacent facilities. USDA

²²USDA's Whitten Building is located on the National Mall, whereas the South and Yates Buildings and the Cotton Annex are located adjacent to the National Mall.

plans to implement this project in four phases based on funding availability and USDA's assessment of each building's location, vulnerability, and other factors (see fig. 3). Each phase can be subdivided and adjusted according to funding availability. The proposed security elements include a combination of bollards, fences, planters, tree well enclosures, and retaining and freestanding walls located primarily at the buildings' roadways, curbs, and driveways. Specifically, at the Whitten Building facing the National Mall, USDA plans to install a combination of bollards and planters to create a 50-foot stand-off distance from the facility. The overall estimated cost of implementing these perimeter security enhancements is between \$13 million and \$14 million.

Figure 3: Phased Implementation of USDA Physical Security Enhancements



- Temporary Security Planters
- Phase 1 **Whitten Building:** Bollard fence, curbside bollards, and planter walls
Yates Building: Streetscape bollards, bollard fences, hardened site wall, hardened lights, and realigned curb
South Building: Streetscape and bollard fences
- - - Phase 2 **Whitten Building:** Landscape bollards located behind new evergreen hedges
South Building: Streetscape and bollard fences
- - - Phase 3 **South Building:** Streetscape bollards, tree well enclosures, removable bollards, and connection of existing retractable bollards
- - - Phase 4 **Cotton Annex:** Series of bollards, tree panel enclosures, and hardened fence

Source: GAO analysis of information provided by the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior's National Park Service.

U.S. Botanic Garden

The U.S. Capitol Police is responsible for security at USBG. The physical security enhancements implemented at USBG include a visitor screening facility at the entrance of the Conservatory to detect weapons and explosives, security cameras, card readers throughout the Conservatory, an alarm system, and the addition of four security officers when the Conservatory is open to the public. The U.S. Capitol Police obligated

\$600,000 in fiscal year 2003 to implement these enhancements. U.S. Capitol Police officials told us they do not anticipate a need for additional funding for security enhancements at USBG.

Security Enhancements Have Incorporated Considerations of Public Access and Aesthetics and Have Been Generally Accepted by Visitors

Public access and aesthetics are vital to the design and approval of physical security enhancements to sites on the National Mall. Agencies are required to coordinate with reviewing organizations and consider aesthetics, historic preservation, urban design, urban planning, and environmental impacts when implementing physical security enhancements. Reports from federal agencies, along with responses to our own survey of National Mall visitors, indicate that visitors have found the current level of public access and the aesthetics of temporary and permanent physical security enhancements acceptable. The majority of survey respondents also indicated that aesthetics and public access should be given high priorities when adding security enhancements to the National Mall.

Access and Aesthetics Are Critical to the Design and Approval of Physical Security Enhancements on the National Mall

Agency officials told us that they consider public access and aesthetics in developing and designing physical security enhancements for their facilities on the National Mall. These officials noted that maintaining the cultural and historic character of their facilities is important, and that providing visitors with access to their facilities is fundamental to their educational and commemorative missions. For example, officials of the Smithsonian and National Gallery stated the importance of ensuring the public's access to their collections and exhibits when implementing security enhancements. Park Service officials noted that they want visitors to be able to access the monuments and memorials as they did before security enhancements were implemented. Similarly, in terms of aesthetics, officials of the Smithsonian and National Gallery told us that in designing smaller security projects, they use exhibit and design specialists to ensure that the security projects are implemented according to consistent standards throughout their facilities. For larger security projects, they also work with security consultants, design specialists, and architecture and engineering firms to ensure that aesthetics are incorporated into their security designs. USBG works with the U.S. Capitol Police to incorporate aesthetics into security enhancements.²³ For example, additional

²³The U.S. Capitol Police coordinates with the Architect of the Capitol on the design and implementation of security enhancements for the Capitol Complex.

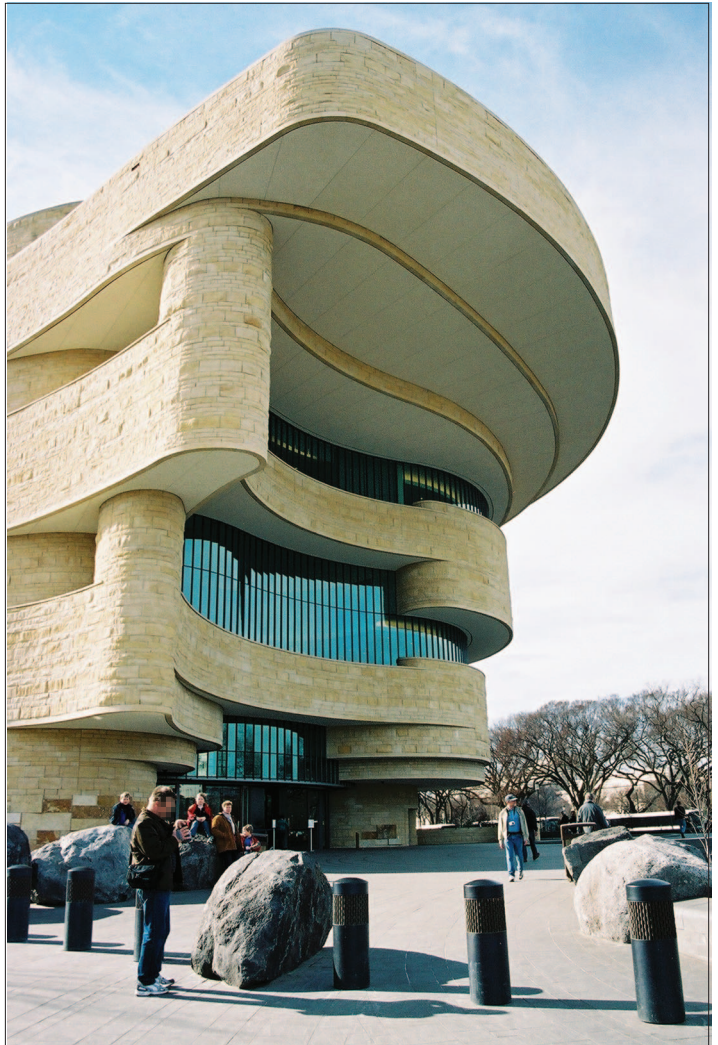
surveillance cameras were reinstalled in less visible sites, while maintaining their overall security function.

In the case of a facility that is under construction, such as the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian,²⁴ security features can be integrated directly into the design of the structure without the need for the subsequent installation of potentially more conspicuous and obtrusive features (see fig. 4). After September 11, the Smithsonian altered the landscaping plan for the National Museum of the American Indian to integrate additional security enhancements into the design of the facility. Specifically, four substantial "grandfather rocks"²⁵ were repositioned to locations where they could serve as a vehicle barrier, while maintaining the cultural and aesthetic significance of these objects.

²⁴The National Museum of the American Indian was under construction during our review and opened to the public in September 2004.

²⁵The "grandfather rocks" serve as reminders of the longevity of Native peoples' relationships to the environment and carry the message and cultural memory of past generations to future generations.

Figure 4: Incorporation of Physical Security Enhancements in the National Museum of the American Indian



Source: GAO.

The National Museum of the American Indian features bollards that integrate into the design structure (left) and grandfather rocks that are culturally significant and act as vehicle barriers (right).

In most cases, however, agencies have had to develop and design physical security enhancements for facilities already in place on the National Mall. Still, officials of these agencies told us that public access and aesthetics are critical elements in the design of security enhancements. For example, officials of the Smithsonian noted that the perimeter vehicle barriers that

will be constructed around each of its museums on the National Mall have been designed with an eye toward integrating the architectural design and characteristics of the museums into the barriers. In addition, they noted that the height of the barriers will be adjusted in certain locations to achieve a better appearance and scale, improve pedestrian movement and accessibility, and provide space for visitors to sit on the barriers themselves. Similarly, the physical security enhancements to the Washington Monument that were under construction during our review were designed to ensure consistency in the historical landscaping of the grounds and in the spaces for visitors' recreation. Although the Park Service developed alternative design proposals, including the one depicted in the figure below (right), the selected design includes a regrading of the Monument grounds and the construction of retaining walls that are intended to disappear into the landscape (see fig. 5).

Figure 5: Modifications to Physical Security Enhancements of the Washington Monument



Top left: The Park Service put jersey barriers around the Washington Monument as a temporary perimeter barrier.

Right: The Park Service initially proposed using several hundred bollards that would have been placed in a circular pattern around the monument as a perimeter barrier.



Bottom left: The Park Service settled on this final design, incorporating the regrading of the Washington Monument grounds with providing retaining walls that follow the outer curvilinear pathway.

Sources: Department of the Interior's National Park Service and National Capital Planning Commission.

Multiple Organizations Work with National Mall Agencies to Design and Review Security Enhancements

Several organizations work with the agencies that have facilities on the National Mall to ensure that security enhancements reflect access and aesthetic concerns. Specifically, the SHPO and ACHP, as well as NCPC and CFA, coordinate with the agencies that have facilities on the National Mall. Such coordination is designed to ensure that architecture, urban design, urban planning, aesthetics, historic preservation, and environmental impacts are considered when implementing physical security enhancements.

For example, federal agencies²⁶ must prepare an environmental assessment to determine the effects of proposed security enhancements on the human environment as part of the NEPA process.²⁷ In addition, because security enhancements may affect the historic character of properties on the National Mall, federal agencies are required to follow the NHPA's Section 106 review process. This process has federal agencies consider the effects of their actions on historic property and address "adverse effects" that could diminish the integrity of the property. Federal agencies are responsible for initiating the review process and for consulting with the SHPO on measures to deal with any adverse effects. In addition, ACHP is given a reasonable opportunity to comment as part of the NHPA process. Federal agencies are also required to solicit public input as part of both the NEPA and NHPA review processes.

Finally, agencies must submit those designs that fall under the NCPC and CFA statutory authorities to these review organizations before security enhancements can be implemented. NCPC officials told us that they examine security projects comprehensively from a broad design and urban planning perspective to ensure the project's consistency with the commission's comprehensive urban design and planning documents, such as the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital* and the *Urban Design and Security Plan*. NCPC must give approval before a security enhancement project can be implemented. CFA officials told us they focus on visual appearance and on how security enhancements can be physically integrated into the urban environment. Although agencies must submit security designs to CFA, the commission plays an advisory role in reviewing security projects and cannot enforce agencies to implement its recommendations. Projects are generally submitted to NCPC and CFA after the completion of most, if not all, of the NEPA and NHPA processes. These processes must be completed before NCPC approves the final design.

²⁶For purposes of certain laws, such as NEPA and NHPA, the Smithsonian is treated as a federal agency.

²⁷42 U.S.C. § 4332.

National Mall Agencies and Review Organizations Identified Challenges in Designing and Approving Security Enhancements

Although aesthetic and public access considerations are seen as critical elements in the design and approval of physical security enhancements to facilities on the National Mall, agency officials also told us that the process applicable to all construction and renovation projects in Washington, D.C.—requiring consultation, review, and approval with multiple review organizations—adds to project costs and can be both time-consuming and inefficient. Of particular concern, officials of these agencies noted the seeming overlap in consultations and reviews of projects required among the review organizations. For example, Park Service officials told us that in submitting a security proposal, one review organization might request a particular change to the design, and another organization might request an entirely different change. Sometimes, consensus on the design of a security project had been reached at the staff level within a review organization, but the commissioners within that organization then had different ideas about the project’s design. For example, designs for security enhancements for the eastern portion of the Lincoln Memorial have gone before the CFA’s commissioners several times for their review.²⁸ Furthermore, some agency officials noted that the commissioners from CFA and NCPC might disagree on a particular security design. According to officials from the Park Service, there is currently no guidance available to assist agencies in moving forward on proposals that receive contradictory direction. These officials suggested that in such cases, commissioners, rather than staff, from both review organizations should consult with one another to resolve their differences and provide guidance to the agency on moving forward. While CFA officials acknowledged that there is no formal process for resolving disagreements between commissions, they noted several options for reconciling such differences. For example, in some cases, agencies may be able to circulate revised drawings to the commissions in between formal meetings, or the commissions might delegate approval authority to the staff level, pending modifications. Finally, the public can comment on security proposals affecting the National Mall. As a result of competing stakeholder interests, it can take months or even years to go through the review process.

²⁸According to Park Service officials, they are continuing to work with both NCPC and CFA to develop a solution for the eastern portion of the Lincoln Memorial.

The perimeter security designs for the Washington Monument illustrate the effects multiple stakeholders can have on a proposed security project's design and schedule. Officials from the Park Service told us that a preliminary design for the Washington Monument was selected in December 2001. The design consisted primarily of landscape barriers that would provide perimeter security and an underground visitor screening facility. The Park Service submitted its design to CFA at this time, and, according to both parties, CFA approved the vehicular barrier portion of the design with only minor changes.²⁹ In addition, Park Service officials told us that they submitted the security design to NCPC in January 2002 and received final approval for the perimeter security portion of the design in June 2003. Park Service officials noted the approval process for the Washington Monument design was relatively quick. However, the design for the underground screening facility did not receive final approval from CFA and received only preliminary approval from NCPC before the underground screening facility project was canceled. According to CFA officials, the screening facility as planned would have drastically changed how visitors accessed the Monument, and it was not an effective security proposal. CFA officials told us they proposed a number of alternatives for this portion of the project, but the Park Service rejected them. According to CFA officials, they have not recently discussed this project with the Park Service. Park Service officials told us that the concept for the underground screening facility was abandoned because of significant resistance from a number of stakeholders and because Congress never approved funding for the measure. Park Service officials told us the temporary screening facility that was in place before the Washington Monument was under construction will be put back until a permanent screening facility is designed.

Review organizations also identified challenges in the review process for implementing security enhancements on the National Mall. Review organizations said they have concerns about their budgets and staff resources. Officials from these organizations told us that the number of security projects submitted for their review has greatly increased since the September 11 terrorist attacks. However, officials noted that they have not received additional funding or staff to respond to the increase in proposals. In addition, officials from CFA and NCPC noted that some agencies do not always justify the need for a particular security enhancement or identify

²⁹In a letter dated March 5, 2002, CFA stated "the Commission...have concluded with their unanimous approval, that Mr. Olin's preliminary scheme, as presented, is an appropriate design solution to improve the Monument's physical perimeter security."

the threat that the agency is trying to protect against. Officials from CFA noted that this type of information is helpful in developing a design that meets the needs of both the agency and the review organization. Furthermore, officials from CFA also noted that when applicants come to them after a project already has been designed, the applicant is often reluctant to make any changes or consider alternative approaches because of the time and money already invested. Finally, both federal agencies and the review organizations noted that the limited number of security designs available to secure facilities in an urban environment presents a challenge in implementing security enhancements. Park Service officials noted that the technology available for perimeter security consists primarily of vehicle barrier systems (e.g., bollards, walls, and strengthened street furniture). However, these officials noted that the review organizations often do not approve security designs that exclusively consist of bollards.

National Mall Agencies and Review Organizations Identified Steps That Can Make the Review Process More Efficient

Several agency officials, along with the review organizations, stated that early and frequent consultation helps to ensure a smoother, more efficient review process. Both the agencies and the review organizations noted that informal consultations between all parties should continue throughout the design of the security project. Informal consultations can begin before “putting pen to paper” and should occur during the project’s preliminary design phase. According to these officials, security proposals, in particular, benefit from these early consultations because of their importance and sensitivity. Both the review organizations and the federal agencies identified the following additional actions that could lead to a more efficient review process:

- *Consult early and frequently with all relevant stakeholders:* Consulting with all of the review organizations that play a role in the design and approval of security enhancements at the same time not only facilitates a more efficient review process, but doing so can also improve relations between agencies and review organizations over time. In addition, consulting with all stakeholders allows for the expression of everyone’s views and concerns up front. Moreover, consultation with the staff and, in some cases with the commissioners of the review organizations, allows them to react informally to a proposed design, thereby giving agencies the opportunity to incorporate their opinions into the proposal. Officials from NCPD told us that their commissioners and CFA’s commissioners might disagree on a design proposal because they are providing a first reaction to a design that was not previously discussed during informal consultations. In such cases, agencies may have to go

back through the review process to meet everyone's needs, which can take several additional months or even years, in addition to costing the agency financial and staff resources. However, officials from the review organizations noted that disagreements between the two commissions occur infrequently, perhaps once a year. According to the Park Service, disagreements between the two commissions seem to occur more often with security projects that include some of our nation's memorials. For example, Park Service officials noted that they have received different direction from the two commissions on the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, and Jefferson Memorial security projects.

In considering a design for its perimeter security projects, the Smithsonian consulted with all of the review organizations before developing a concept design. The parties discussed different design options, and the Smithsonian was able to incorporate the review organizations' comments and suggestions into its proposal. According to CFA, the Smithsonian also selected a designer that considered the needs of the agency and the balance between security and access and urban design. Smithsonian officials believe that the success of their efforts hinged on bringing to the table experts from their offices of Protection Services; Historic Preservation; and Engineering, Design, and Construction who were willing to engage in dialogue and answer questions from the review organizations. As a result, the Smithsonian received favorable reviews of their preliminary design for security enhancements from all of the stakeholders. According to Smithsonian officials, the Smithsonian continues to consult with the SHPO, NCPC, and CFA during the ongoing development of its final perimeter security designs.

- *Be flexible and open to the review process and possible changes:* Officials from some of the agencies and the review organizations discussed the importance of being open and flexible to alternatives throughout the design process for security enhancements. In particular, some officials stressed the importance of taking time to develop a security solution built on the opinions and consensus of all stakeholders. According to these officials, this approach will ultimately result in stronger working relationships and a design solution that takes both security and urban design issues into consideration.

Officials from CFA told us that the Departments of Energy and Education developed successful security designs because they consulted early and were open to considering alternative proposals. For

example, according to CFA, Energy's ideas for security designs at one of its Washington, D.C., facilities were not appropriate for an urban environment. However, through consultations with the review organizations, Energy was able to design a better security project that will be less costly than the one it originally designed. Similarly, Education developed a proposal for renovating its plaza but did not incorporate any security enhancements into the design. However, because Education consulted with the review organizations before going too far in the design process, it was able to incorporate security features into the design. As a result, Education avoided later costly revisions to the project.

- *Consult urban planning documents such as NCPC's submission guidelines and Urban Design and Security Plan:* Agencies submitting project proposals to NCPC for review and approval are required to follow NCPC's submission guidelines. The guidelines include NCPC's requirements for various phases of project proposals as well as NCPC's environmental and historic preservation procedures. The submission guidelines also outline suggestions for coordinating stages of the review process. For example, agencies can initiate the NEPA and NHPA review processes simultaneously and plan their public participation, analysis, and review so as to meet the purposes and requirements of both statutes in a timely and efficient manner. The *Security Plan* provides a framework for planning, designing, and implementing security enhancements and focuses exclusively on incorporating perimeter security measures into existing streetscape or landscape features. The *Security Plan* also identifies security design solutions that are appropriate to the character of areas within the Monumental Core,³⁰ including the National Mall and the Washington Monument and Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials.

³⁰The Monumental Core includes the Capitol Grounds, the Mall and Mall Complex, the Southwest Federal Center, the Federal Triangle, the White House and President's Park, the Northwest Rectangle, Arlington Cemetery, the Pentagon, Fort Meyer, and Henderson Hall.

Several of the agencies on the National Mall told us they actively participated in the development of the *Security Plan*, and they are using the plan to help them balance perimeter security issues with considerations of aesthetics and access to the National Mall. For example, Park Service officials told us they used the plan to develop concept designs for the Washington Monument as well as the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials.³¹ Similarly, the Smithsonian developed plans to replace planter pots, industrial-looking vehicle barriers, and other temporary security measures with custom-designed elements, including benches, light poles, urns, and bollards, that complement the historic surroundings of the National Mall (see fig. 6). Smithsonian officials noted that the *Security Plan* provides constructive ideas for what NCPC does and does not look for in designs for security enhancements. As a result, NCPC has praised the Smithsonian on its efforts to balance necessary security enhancements with public access and aesthetics.

³¹According to Park Service officials, following the *Security Plan* can sometimes lead to delay in the approval process for security projects. Park Service officials stated that their submission for a security project for the Lincoln Memorial, which followed the *Security Plan* recommendation, was rejected by NCPC in favor of an alternative plan that was designed by NCPC staff.

Figure 6: Current and Proposed Security Enhancements at the National Museum of Natural History



Source: National Capital Planning Commission.

Current security measures at the National Museum of Natural History (left). Planned perimeter security improvements as depicted in the artistic rendering (right).

Furthermore, according to USDA, its proposed security project was designed to address both minimum USDA perimeter security requirements and the goals of the NCPC plan. Proposed security enhancements for the Whitten Building include landscape bollards that sit well within the generous “front lawn” of the building, and that are designed to respect the significant and historic open character of the National Mall.

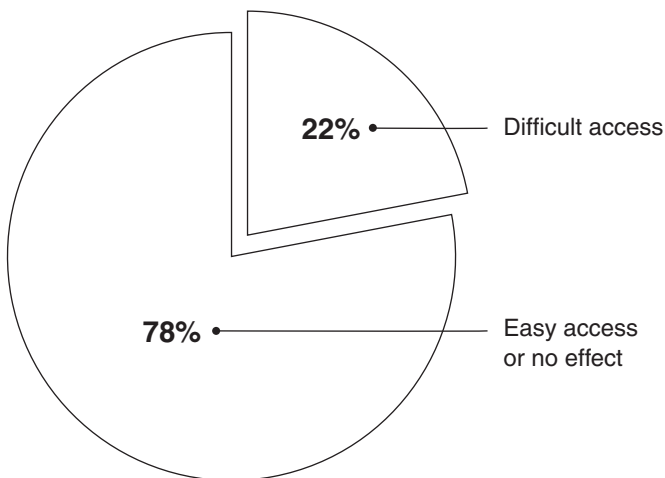
Effects of Enhancements on Access and Appearance Are Generally Acceptable to Visitors

Visitors value access to and the appearance of the National Mall and generally find security enhancements acceptable. A number of agencies on the National Mall told us that they have received very few complaints about difficulty in accessing sites on the National Mall. Officials from the Smithsonian further told us that a survey they conducted of visitors to their museums in fiscal year 2002 suggests that visitors do not consider the time standing in line to pass security checkpoints at museum entrances problematic, provided the wait is less than 15 minutes. Moreover, some agencies we interviewed also reported very few complaints about the appearance of sites that are being or have been modified to accommodate physical security enhancements.

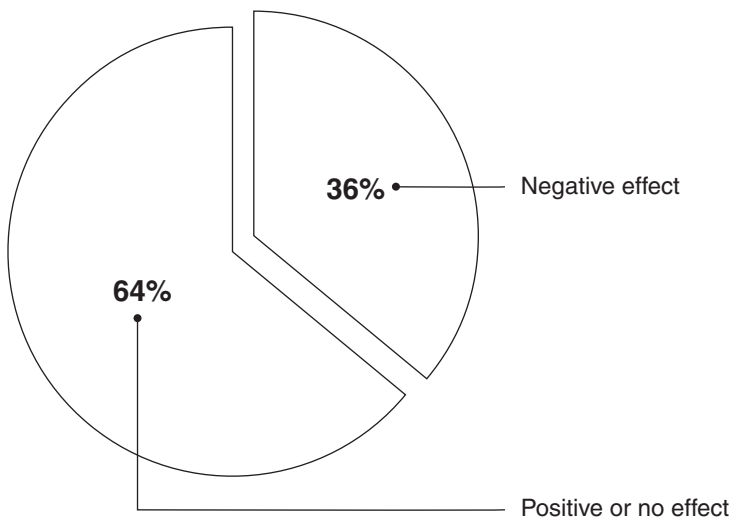
Our survey of about 300 visitors to the National Mall found that these visitors did not view the security enhancements on the National Mall, which included both temporary and permanent enhancements, as having unacceptable effects on access or appearance.³² Seventy-eight percent of respondents indicated that security enhancements had no effect on public access to sites on the National Mall, or made access easier. In addition, 64 percent of those surveyed said the security enhancements had no effect or a positive effect on the appearance of the National Mall (see fig. 7).

Figure 7: Visitor Survey Results on Access to and Appearance of the National Mall

Security enhancements: Effect on access to sites on the National Mall



Security enhancements: Effect on overall appearance of the National Mall



Source: GAO.

The majority of survey respondents also said the security enhancements they encountered would have no effect on whether they will return for a visit. However, results differed between residents of the Washington, D.C.,

³²A total of 308 surveys were conducted on 5 days in late October and early November 2004 at various locations on the National Mall. Although we took measures to avoid sample bias, our survey sample is a nonprobability sample. Results from nonprobability samples cannot be used to make inferences about a population because in a nonprobability sample, some elements of the population being studied have no chance or an unknown chance of being selected as part of the sample.

metropolitan area and those who reside in other areas. Washington, D.C., metropolitan-area residents were almost twice as likely as U.S. residents from outside the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area to report that security measures have had a negative effect on access to and appearance of sites on the National Mall. Furthermore, although visitors reported that current levels of public access and appearance are satisfactory, the survey results also suggest that visitors regard access and aesthetics as important priorities when adding security measures to the National Mall. The majority of respondents (85 percent) said both access and aesthetics should be considered a medium to high priority when implementing additional security enhancements. Overall, these results suggest that in terms of public access and aesthetics, visitors to the National Mall find the existing temporary and permanent security enhancements acceptable.

Federal Agencies Report Using Most Key Practices, but Balancing Mission Priorities with the Need for Physical Security Enhancements Poses Common Challenge

Agencies Report Using Most Key Practices to Implement Physical Security Enhancements

In our November 2004 report,³³ we identified six key practices that have emerged from the increased attention to facilities protection given by federal agencies in recent years. We noted that, collectively, these key practices could provide a framework for guiding federal agencies' ongoing facility protection efforts. These practices are allocating resources using risk management; leveraging security technology; sharing information and coordinating protection efforts with other stakeholders; measuring program performance and testing security initiatives; implementing

³³GAO-05-49.

strategic human capital management to ensure that agencies are well-equipped to recruit and retain high-performing security professionals; and aligning assets to mission, thereby reducing vulnerabilities.

Throughout our review, agencies with facilities on the National Mall reported using all but one of these key practices when implementing security enhancements. For example, the Smithsonian told us it leverages technology by using closed-circuit television cameras to extend the capabilities of its security staff. Closed-circuit television cameras enable security staff to quickly identify and respond to a security incident for investigative purposes. In addition, the Smithsonian told us it conducts periodic risk assessments of all its properties to determine how to allocate resources to mitigate the greatest risks first. The Park Service told us that it is including performance measures in its draft strategic plan, and that it conducts regular security inspections of national icons. The Park Service also told us that it is providing new training programs for security personnel, including in-service training for officers of the Park Police. To attract a more qualified pool of applicants for security positions, the National Gallery reported strengthening its recruitment process and reported a new emphasis on antiterrorism training for its security personnel. The National Gallery also told us it has implemented, or plans to implement, a number of advanced security technologies to provide a more comprehensive security assessment of its facilities. Finally, federal agencies also reported meeting periodically to discuss upcoming events, intelligence information, and criminal activities. However, none of the federal agencies reported using one key practice—aligning assets to mission—to implement physical security enhancements because they do not believe that they have excess or underutilized facilities on the National Mall or elsewhere or consider the practice applicable to properties under their jurisdiction.³⁴

Allocating Resources Using Risk Management

Allocating resources using risk management entails the systematic and analytical process of considering the likelihood that a threat will endanger an asset—that is, a structure, individual, or function—and identifying actions that can reduce the risk and mitigate the consequences. As part of its Disaster Management Program, the Smithsonian performs risk assessments of all its properties every 3 to 5 years to determine the need

³⁴The key practice of aligning assets to mission encourages agencies to release excess or underutilized property, so that they no longer incur costs to maintain and secure such property.

for security enhancements. Smithsonian officials told us that their last risk assessment was performed in fiscal year 2002, but another multihazard risk assessment—addressing both man-made and natural disasters—was occurring during our review. According to Smithsonian officials, the current effort will update the last risk assessment and provide a ranked listing of risks, with proposed mitigation actions and costs, across the entire portfolio of the Smithsonian’s facilities. In accordance with the intent of this key practice, Smithsonian officials said the updated risk assessment will allow the institution to use resources more efficiently to mitigate the greatest risks first.

Park Service officials also told us that risk management is a key practice used to determine the need for physical security enhancements to their facilities on the National Mall. They noted that risk assessments were completed in the late 1990s by three outside entities, and internal reviews were performed by Park Police and Park Service officials. After September 11, the Park Service worked with a private security firm to assess the risk of terrorist attacks at monuments on the National Mall. This assessment examined potential threats—including the distance from which explosives could potentially destroy any of the National Mall’s structures—and alternative methods of both prevention and protection. Additionally, the Park Service identified specific protection criteria and designated key areas with the highest vulnerability as priorities, including areas of the National Mall. The Park Service told us it has used the security firm’s report findings to determine where to allocate appropriated funds and implement security upgrades for high-risk structures. Park Service officials also told us that they rely on risk assessments as well as intelligence assessments, reviews of latest terror trends, visitor needs, and reviews of criminal and service incidents to allocate resources to respond to identified risks.

Since June 2004, Interior has applied its National Monuments and Icons Assessment Methodology (NM&I Methodology) to assets that fall under the purview of the Park Service. The NM&I Methodology provides a uniform risk assessment and ranking methodology and was developed in response to the Homeland Security Presidential Directive 7's requirement that Interior formulate a plan for identifying, assessing, prioritizing, and developing protective programs for critical assets within the national icons and monuments sector. According to information from Interior, the NM&I Methodology is specifically designed to quantify risk, identify needed security enhancements, and measure risk-reduction benefits at icon and monument assets.³⁵

National Gallery officials told us that it assesses potential risks to the physical security of its facilities through the use of technical consultants with specialized experience in security areas, such as blast analysis. The National Gallery uses the results of such studies to form a basis for developing specific projects or operational policies to mitigate the identified risks. For example, National Gallery officials told us that targeted risk assessments, such as the blast analysis on the exterior wall of the East Building, identified the need for window security film and various types of physical barriers.

Leveraging Security Technology

By efficiently using technology to supplement and reinforce other security measures, agencies can more effectively apply the appropriate countermeasures to vulnerabilities identified through the risk management process. Our previous work reported that prior to a significant investment in a project, a detailed analysis should be conducted to determine whether the benefits of a technology outweigh its costs. In addition, we reported that agencies should decide how a technology will be used and whether to use a technology at all to address vulnerabilities before implementation. The implementation costs of technologies in facilities protection can be high, particularly if infrastructure modifications are necessary. Therefore, in some cases, a lesser technological solution may be more effective and less costly than more advanced technologies.

³⁵The NM&I Methodology has two phases, a consequence assessment phase and a risk assessment phase. During the consequence phase, each asset's iconic significance is subjectively determined and specific attack scenarios are used to evaluate security at each asset. The risk assessment phase is used to determine the effectiveness of existing security systems for preventing or mitigating the specified attack scenarios.

Several of the agency officials we spoke with identified steps they have taken to make efficient use of technology to supplement and reinforce other security enhancements. For example, the Smithsonian uses closed-circuit television cameras in several of its museums on the National Mall. These cameras are low-cost security technologies that extend the capabilities of the Smithsonian's security staff by providing an immediate assessment of information for investigative purposes. The Smithsonian also identified the need for electronic screening facilities at some of its facilities on the National Mall. However, because the museums would need to undergo costly renovations to make enough space for the screening equipment, these museums are using magnetometer screening and bag searches until other, higher priority security enhancements have been implemented.

The National Gallery has also implemented, and plans to implement, a number of security technologies at its facilities on the National Mall. Currently, the National Gallery uses magnetometers, X-ray machines, and closed-circuit television cameras to improve its perimeter protection. The National Gallery plans to undertake a risk analysis of its security camera configuration to determine whether the number of cameras currently in use provides the most comprehensive surveillance system possible. In addition, the National Gallery plans to improve its access control through new employee identification badges that can be rapidly authenticated and tracked electronically through an Integrated Security Management System. According to the National Gallery, comprehensively integrating a number of new technologies provides more complete security for its facilities and improves its operating efficiencies.

Finally, Park Service officials stated that closed-circuit television cameras are in extensive use at the national icons on the National Mall and are a critical component to the security of the area. Park Service officials also noted that they are constantly reviewing developing security technologies to determine the most cost-effective methods for upgrades.

Information-Sharing and Coordination

All agencies said they obtain and share information on potential threats to facilities to better understand risks and more effectively determine preventive measures. Among the agencies with facilities on the National Mall, meetings are held quarterly to discuss upcoming events, intelligence information, and criminal activities. Numerous other forums of information-sharing and coordination also occur:

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- Park Service officials told us that Park Police officers are assigned to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Joint Task Force and participate in meetings with the U.S. Attorneys, the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, and their own intelligence unit. In addition, we were told that the Park Service relies on information gathered from officers and rangers assigned to the National Mall area, who relay such information to other entities as appropriate; and that coordination routinely occurs between the Park Police and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).
 - Smithsonian officials said that they meet with the Park Police twice per month to discuss security issues, and again monthly to receive crime and terrorism intelligence from the Park Police, and on a daily basis to coordinate police activities on the National Mall. In addition, Smithsonian security officials meet and coordinate with the FBI and receive daily general information on terrorist and other disaster-related activity from DHS.
 - According to officials of the National Gallery, they attend meetings and briefings with the FBI, the Mayor's Special Events Task Group, and the U.S. Park Police. Further, National Gallery officials said they coordinate regularly with these entities, as well as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, DHS, U.S. Attorneys Office, U.S. Secret Service, Smithsonian, Library of Congress, National Archives, Federal Trade Commission, Federal Protective Service, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.
 - USDA officials noted they share information and coordinate with the Smithsonian, their immediate neighbor on the National Mall. USDA officials also told us they coordinate with the Federal Protective Service and the Park Police for general physical security and law enforcement activities. In addition, USDA officials noted they coordinate matters pertaining to national security, threats and emergency response directly with DHS, FEMA, the FBI, and the U.S. Secret Service, as applicable. Dignitary protection and the security of high-risk personnel are coordinated with the U.S. Secret Service and the Department of State. Finally, USDA officials told us they participate on the Southeast Area Security Chiefs Council and other forums to exchange and develop information pertaining to security and law enforcement.

As previously noted, another source of coordination on physical security enhancements occurred through the NCPC Interagency Security Task Force. Made up of representatives of 75 stakeholder agencies, the task force's efforts resulted in two reports that have guided agencies throughout the city in devising and implementing physical security enhancements. Both the Smithsonian and USDA's perimeter security projects relied heavily on the task force's *National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan*.

Performance Measurement and Testing

This key practice encompasses two components to ensure the effectiveness of physical security enhancements implemented by agencies: linking security goals to broader agency mission goals, and inspecting and assessing physical security enhancements. Park Service officials indicated that they use both parts of this key practice because they (1) include performance measures in the U.S. Park Police's draft strategic plan and (2) conduct regular and frequent inspections of the national icons by the Park Police and routinely update and discuss security issues with Park Police officials. Smithsonian officials also told us they use both parts of this key practice in performing risk assessments of their facilities; implementing risk assessment recommendations for facility upgrades, adding staff, adding equipment, and using operational procedures as performance metrics; and including physical security measures in the Smithsonian's broader performance measurements. USDA also said it uses both parts of this key practice by linking security goals to the broader agency goal of providing a safe and functional workplace to support staff in carrying out their public service missions and through an established program to inspect and periodically reassess the physical security stature of all USDA properties, including the properties near the National Mall, and to effect corrective actions as appropriate.

Strategic Human Capital Management

Strategic management of human capital involves implementing strategies to help individuals maximize their full potential, having the capability to recruit and retain high-performing security and law enforcement professionals, and ensuring that personnel are well exercised and exhibit good judgment in following security procedures. We found that most of the agencies on the National Mall are implementing this key practice primarily by offering new training programs for security personnel. Specifically, Park Service officials told us that they have sponsored training for employees of all affected parks as well as in-service training for officers of the Park Police. Similarly, the Smithsonian has instituted training courses on terrorism awareness, emergency procedure, and shelter-in-place procedures, among others, for its security staff. The National Gallery has also focused its efforts on training, with particular emphasis on

antiterrorism training, such as shelter-in-place and evacuation drills. In addition, to attract a more qualified pool of applicants for security positions, the National Gallery reported strengthening its recruitment process. USDA constructed an emergency operations center, which is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to monitor and respond to emergencies.

Aligning Assets to Mission

Aligning assets to mission involves the reduction of underutilized or excess property at federal agencies in order to better reflect agencies' missions and reduce vulnerabilities by decreasing the number of assets that need to be protected. Our previous work reported that to the extent that agencies are expending resources to maintain and protect facilities that are not needed, funds available to protect critical assets may be lessened. In addition, we noted that funds no longer spent securing and maintaining excess property could be put to other uses, such as enhancing protection at critical assets that are tied to agencies' missions. For example, we reported in January 2003 that the Department of Defense estimates it is spending \$3 billion to \$4 billion each year maintaining facilities that are not needed. In another example, costs associated with excess Energy facilities, primarily for security and maintenance, were estimated by Energy's Office of the Inspector General in April 2002 to exceed \$70 million annually.³⁶ One building that illustrates this problem is the former Chicago main post office. In October 2003, we testified that this building, a massive 2.5 million square foot structure located near the Sears Tower, is vacant and costing USPS \$2 million annually in holding costs.³⁷ It is likely that agencies that continue to hold excess or underutilized property are also incurring significant holdings costs for services, including security and maintenance. Finally, we recently recommended that the Chair of the Interagency Security Committee consider our work as a starting point for establishing a framework of key practices that could guide agencies' efforts in the facility protection area.³⁸

None of the federal agencies reported using this key practice to implement physical security enhancements on the National Mall because they do not

³⁶Department of Energy, Office of the Inspector General, *Disposition of the Department's Excess Facilities*, DOE/IG-0550 (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 3, 2002).

³⁷GAO, *Federal Real Property: Actions Needed to Address Long-standing and Complex Problems*, GAO-04-119T (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 1, 2003).

³⁸GAO-05-49.

believe that they have excess or underutilized facilities or consider this practice applicable to property under their jurisdiction. For example, Smithsonian officials told us that they do not have any excess property on the National Mall or elsewhere. Officials stated that all of the Smithsonian's facilities, including its gardens, are needed for research, education, and exhibition purposes to execute its mission of increasing and diffusing knowledge. The Smithsonian believes that any closures of its facilities would therefore be inconsistent with its mission. Similarly, according to the Park Service, land reserved or dedicated for national park purposes, including land under its jurisdiction, by law is not considered excess or underutilized property.³⁹

Balancing Mission Priorities with the Need for Physical Security Enhancements Poses Common Challenge

Although we found that agencies on the National Mall are using most of the key practices we identified for the protection of facilities, officials from most of these agencies identified a common challenge in using these practices and, in fact, in implementing all types of physical security enhancements. That common challenge is balancing their ongoing mission priorities with the emergent need to implement physical security enhancements. Some officials described the challenge as inadequate funding for security enhancements, or as competition for limited resources between any new requirements for security enhancements and more traditional functions and operations. Officials described the challenge as a more subtle need to ensure that physical security enhancements are not inconsistent with the agencies' mission. For example, one official told us that planning for security enhancements necessitates the involvement of key facilities personnel to ensure that part of the agency's mission—public access—is maintained. Another official we spoke with noted that careful planning and coordination for implementing physical security enhancements is essential to avoid compromising both programs and public access. Similarly, some officials suggested that the multiple levels of consultation and review required for projects that involve construction or renovation on federal property could be an obstacle to the use of key practices. Finally, officials from one agency noted that a lack of reliable, quantitative risk assessment data and little consistency in interpreting

³⁹The general practice of disposing of "excess or underutilized property" does not apply to Park Service property that is reserved or dedicated for national park purposes because the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended, specifically excludes this. 40 U.S.C. § 102(9)(A)(ii).

information and intelligence obtained from various sources create a challenge in using key practices to implement security measures.

Concluding Observations

The security of our nation's critical infrastructure remains a heightened concern in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks. On the National Mall, federal agencies are in the early stages of designing and implementing permanent perimeter security barriers to protect their facilities and the visiting public. In doing so, agencies have coordinated with a number of review organizations that consider the impact of proposed security designs on the urban environment and the symbolic nature of the National Mall, its icons, and its museums. Multiple stakeholder viewpoints on the design of security enhancements present a challenge for an efficient review process. In some cases, agencies involved stakeholders after investing time and resources in a particular security design. As a result, these agencies sometimes had to go through multiple iterations of the review process, which can strain the already limited financial and staff resources of all stakeholders.

As agencies continue developing security proposals for their facilities on the National Mall, several steps, such as early and frequent consultation with all stakeholders, can result in a more efficient review process. Specifically, consultation in the preliminary design phase allows for the consideration of multiple viewpoints and alternative design solutions, thereby mitigating the potential for later costly and time-consuming revisions. Such early consultation could also expedite the implementation of security enhancements to protect facilities and visitors on the National Mall.

Key practices, such as allocating resources using risk management, coordinating protection efforts with other stakeholders, and aligning assets to mission, have clear implications for the facility protection area. As we have recently recommended, it is important that agencies give attention to these practices and consider them collectively as a framework for guiding their ongoing efforts in implementing security measures on the National Mall and in their overall facility protection areas.

Agency Comments

We provided draft copies of this report to the Smithsonian, Interior, USDA, and National Gallery for their review and comment. USDA officials generally agreed with the report's findings and concluding observations

and provided clarifying comments. Officials from the other agencies also provided clarifying and technical comments, which we incorporated into this report where appropriate.

As agreed with your office, unless you publicly announce the contents of this report earlier, we plan no further distribution until 30 days from the report date. At that time, we will send copies of this report to other interested congressional committees; the Secretaries of Agriculture, the Interior, and Smithsonian; and the Director of the National Gallery. We will also make copies available to others upon request. In addition, the report will be available at no charge on the GAO Web site at <http://www.gao.gov>.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact me on (202) 512-2834 or at goldsteinm@gao.gov or Susan Fleming, Assistant Director, on (202) 512-4431 or at flemings@gao.gov.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Goldstein', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark L. Goldstein
Director, Physical Infrastructure Issues

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Our objectives were to assess (1) physical security enhancements that have been implemented on the National Mall since September 11, 2001, the additional enhancements planned, and the costs of these enhancements; (2) the considerations given to incorporating access and aesthetics in designing and approving physical security enhancements on the National Mall, and how issues of access and aesthetics are perceived by visitors in relation to these enhancements; and (3) examples of how federal agencies are using key practices to implement physical security enhancements on the National Mall, and any challenges the agencies are experiencing in using these key practices.

For all of these objectives, we researched historical plans for the design, expansion, and maintenance of the National Mall; appropriations acts and accompanying legislative material; statutory and regulatory provisions related to security enhancements of the National Mall grounds; and proposals for implementing physical security enhancements on the National Mall. We also interviewed officials of the National Park Service (Park Service), U.S. Park Police, Smithsonian Institution (Smithsonian), National Gallery of Art (National Gallery), Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Botanic Garden (USBG), U.S. Capitol Police, National Capital Planning Commission, U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, Advisory Council for Historic Preservation, District of Columbia's Historic Preservation Office, Department of Homeland Security, and National Coalition to Save Our Mall.

While multiple geographic definitions of the National Mall exist, we defined the area of the National Mall, for purposes of our report, as extending from the foot of the U.S. Capitol grounds west to the Washington Monument and proceeding farther west and southeast to include the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials. It also includes the area between Constitution and Independence Avenues between 1st and 14th Streets. We did not include the White House or the U.S. Capitol Building because security enhancements for these buildings fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Capitol Police, respectively.

In addition, for our first objective, we reviewed federal appropriations law and accompanying legislative materials, budget reports, and federal agencies' and entities' budget submissions related to physical security enhancements on the National Mall; we also received information about obligations and costs associated with physical security enhancements on the National Mall since the terrorist attacks of September 11. Agencies on the National Mall provided us with obligation data only for their facilities located on the National Mall, where possible. In some cases, obligations

incurred for facilities on the National Mall could not be separated from obligations incurred for an agency's facilities located adjacent to the National Mall. To assess the reliability of the obligation and cost data received by these agencies, we developed a template for agencies on the National Mall to obtain consistency in the data provided by each of the agencies; interviewed knowledgeable agency officials to clarify any questions; provided the agencies with a spreadsheet we developed that organized obligations for security enhancements by fiscal year to make sure that we accurately used the data provided and asked agencies to identify the source of the obligations incurred; and further clarified any discrepancies in these data. From this assessment, we determined that these data are sufficiently reliable for purposes of this report.

For our second objective, we also reviewed the law, planning and review criteria, reports, and documentation related to specific proposals for physical security enhancements on the National Mall. In addition, we conducted a 3-minute intercept survey of visitors to the National Mall to determine (1) the extent to which visitors to the National Mall feel that security measures on the National Mall affect access to sites on the National Mall and the appearance of the National Mall; (2) the extent to which visitors to the National Mall feel that additional security measures are needed; (3) the priority that National Mall visitors would assign access to the National Mall and the appearance of the National Mall, in the event that additional security measures are added; and (4) whether security measures affect the likelihood that National Mall visitors will return.

To develop the questions for the 3-minute survey, we identified the key information necessary to gain a general understanding of (1) how visitors to the National Mall assess the effects of security measures on access to and the appearance of the National Mall and (2) the priority that visitors assign to the National Mall's accessibility and appearance. After initially developing, reviewing, and modifying the survey questions, we conducted a total of nine pretests—four cognitive pretests with GAO employees who were not associated with this review and five with visitors to the National Mall.

We provided GAO employee pretest participants (internal participants) with an overview of the engagement and the intercept survey methodology to be utilized. Subsequently, we showed internal participants the map of the National Mall and then asked them to respond to the survey questions. Upon completion of the survey, we asked for specific comments on each question and encouraged participants to share their thoughts and ideas

regarding the structure of the survey and the extent to which the questions seemed clear and easy to answer.

The five external pretests were conducted by GAO team members on the National Mall, near the Smithsonian Metro Station. Following the intercept survey protocol, our interviewers approached respondents asking if they would like to answer a short survey on physical security measures on the National Mall area. Five out of 15 potential respondents approached participated in the survey. Nonrespondents consisted of those unwilling to participate, those who had not yet seen anything on the National Mall because they had just arrived, and those unable to speak the English language. Respondents were first shown the map of the National Mall and then were asked to respond to the survey questions. Interviewers noted questions, comments, and any lack of clarity to the questions on the part of external pretest respondents. The final changes to the survey were made on the basis of the combined observations from the pretests with GAO employees and pretests with visitors to the National Mall.

The population for the survey was National Mall visitors. We chose survey sites to cover the geographic range of the National Mall and conducted interviews between 1:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Monday, October 18; Monday, October 25; Tuesday, October 26; Friday, November 5; and Sunday, November 7, 2004. We chose to interview National Mall visitors during these hours for two reasons: (1) to make it more likely that visitors stopped for the survey had been on the National Mall long enough to visit one or more sites on the National Mall and (2) to reduce the chances of surveying government employees on the National Mall during their lunch break.

We identified 300 as the target size for our sample, on the basis of balancing the advantages and costs associated with a larger sample size, considering that a sample of this size allows for some analysis of subgroups but is small enough to limit survey costs. We stratified the sample by choosing survey sites to cover the geographic range of the National Mall. To avoid any bias by gender, ethnicity, or other individual differences, we systematically approached the fifth person who passed by a particular landmark (e.g., a park bench, tree, or light pole); first, from the time interviewing commenced and, thereafter, immediately following the completion of an interview.

In counting potential respondents, we excluded several types of individuals as out of scope. Specifically, we excluded persons who did not speak English, who appeared to be younger than 18 years old, who were

exercising on the National Mall, who were talking on a cell phone, who were leading a group of people on the National Mall, or who had just arrived on the National Mall and had not yet visited any sites. Of 667 National Mall visitors approached and asked to complete the survey, 537 were found to be in scope. Of these 537 visitors, 229 declined to complete the survey, yielding a 57 percent response rate.

Although we took measures to avoid sample bias, our survey sample is a nonprobability sample. Results from nonprobability samples cannot be used to make inferences about a population because in a nonprobability sample, some elements of the population being studied have no chance or an unknown chance of being selected as part of the sample.

GAO employees conducted the interviews. A GAO employee showed respondents a map of the National Mall, asked the survey questions, and marked responses on the survey. The survey first asked respondents to specify which sites and what types of security measures they had seen in their visit to the National Mall. To help with site identification, the map that the respondents received clearly labeled the museums and monuments. The survey then posed a series of questions about the effects of the security measures on access to National Mall sites and the appearance of the National Mall, the extent to which additional security is needed on the National Mall, and the priority respondents would assign to the accessibility and appearance of National Mall sites, in the event that further security measures are added. The survey concluded by asking whether the security measures affect respondents' likelihood of returning to visit the National Mall.

For our third objective, we also reviewed and analyzed GAO and other governmental reports on the protection of federal facilities and homeland security. We also developed a structured interview guide with questions about the key practices for implementing security enhancements and sent the guide to the Smithsonian, Park Service, USDA, and National Gallery. We then incorporated their responses into the report without independent verification.

We conducted our review from August 2004 through May 2005 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Federal agency officials provided much of the data and other information used in this report. Overall, we found no discrepancies with these data and, therefore, determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purpose of this report. We requested official comments on this report from

Appendix I
Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

the Smithsonian, the Department of the Interior, USDA, and the National Gallery.

Results of National Mall Visitor Survey

National Mall Survey Questions

I'm _____ from the GAO. Would you have a few minutes today to answer a short survey for Congress about security measures at the National Mall? (IF NEEDED: This survey asks for your thoughts about whether security measures put in place since 9/11 have affected the mall's appearance or your ability to access buildings, monuments, memorials, and public places.)



1. Looking at this map of the National Mall, which monuments, museums, or other parts of the Mall have you visited today or recently?

	Yes
Washington Monument	24% (73)
Lincoln Memorial	39% (119)
Jefferson Memorial	16% (48)
FDR Memorial	16% (48)
Korean War Memorial	28% (85)
Vietnam War Memorial	29% (88)
WWII War Memorial	53% (163)
National Museum American History	21% (66)
National Museum of Natural History	25% (78)
American Indian Museum	24% (75)
Department of Agriculture	4% (11)
Air and Space Museum	29% (88)

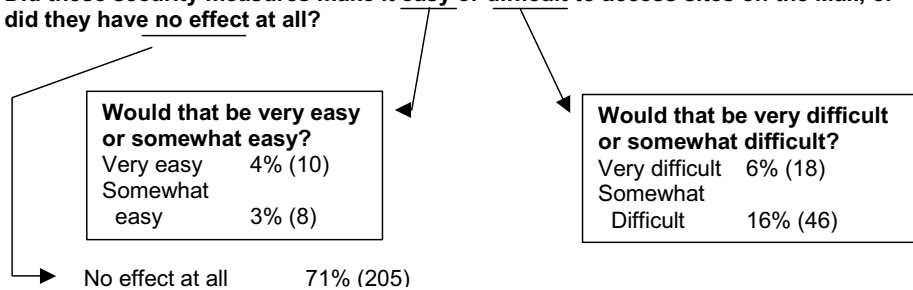
	Yes
Smithsonian Castle	14% (44)
Hirshhorn	6% (18)
Sackler	5% (16)
Freer	5% (16)
African Art	3% (8)
National Gallery of Art-West	14% (44)
National Gallery of Art-East	11% (35)
U.S. Botanic Gardens	5% (16)
Mall – Green spaces	8% (26)
Other (SPECIFY)	8% (23)

**Appendix II
Results of National Mall Visitor Survey**

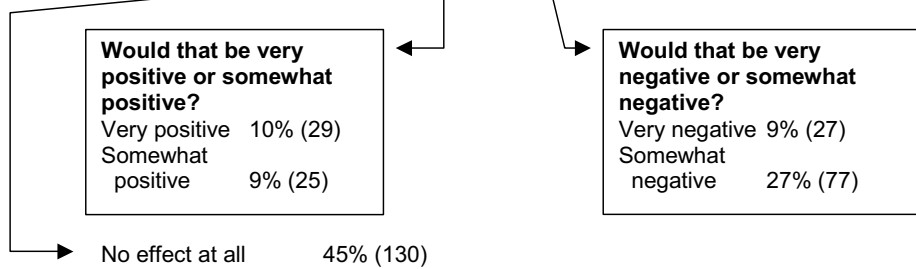
2. I'm going to read through a list of security measures that you may or may not have encountered or seen today or recently. For each measure, please answer yes or no, as to whether or not you encountered these measures.

	Yes	No	Don't Remember
A) Fences that limited access	69% (212)	31% (94)	1% (2)
B) Concrete barriers	69% (213)	29% (89)	2% (6)
C) Security personnel	84% (259)	16% (48)	<1% (1)
D) Metal detectors	61% (189)	39% (117)	1% (2)
E) Guard dogs	11% (34)	89% (273)	<1% (1)
F) Bag search	59% (183)	41% (125)	0% (0)
2a. Did you see any other types of security measures, anything that's not on our list?			
Other (SPECIFY) _____	8% (26)	92% (282)	0% (0)

3. Did these security measures make it easy or difficult to access sites on the Mall, or did they have no effect at all?



4. Did these security measures have a positive or negative effect on the overall appearance of the National Mall, or did they have no effect at all?



5. Overall, do you think additional security measures on the National Mall . . .

- are definitely needed 11% (29)
- may be needed 37% (101)
- may not be needed 31% (84)
- are definitely not needed? 22% (60)

(Note to interviewer: if respondent asks "compared to what," say "compared to what you've encountered"):

6. If additional security measures are added to the National Mall, what priority - low medium or high - would you give the following:

	<u>Low</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>High</u>
A) Overall public access to the National Mall	16% (47)	27% (82)	58% (175)
B) Overall appearance of the National Mall	15% (45)	31% (93)	54% (162)

7. Do you currently live in the Washington metropolitan area, another state, or another country?

- Washington D.C. area 21% (65)
- Another state, please list: 72% (221)
- Another country, please list: 7% (22)

Appendix II
Results of National Mall Visitor Survey

8. Would you say that the security measures you encountered today make it less likely that you will return for a visit, more likely that you will return for a visit, or do they have no effect at all?

- Less likely to return for a visit 5% (15)
- More likely to return for a visit 12% (38)
- No effect at all 83% (255)

END: Thank you so much for participating.

Interview Date:	10/18/2004	23% (70)
	10/25/2004	20% (61)
	10/26/2004	17% (53)
	11/5/2004	14% (42)
	11/7/2004	27% (82)

Survey Location:	Museum of Natural History /Museum of American History	14% (44)
	Lincoln/Vietnam Memorials	23% (70)
	Air and Space /American Indian Museums	23% (72)
	WWII Memorial	23% (72)
	Art West/Art East	11% (33)
	Jefferson Memorial	6% (17)

Note: Percentage represents the portion of 308 possible responses. Percentages may not total 100 because each percentage is rounded to the nearest whole number. The number of respondents for each question is in parentheses. The number for each question may not total to 308, based on respondents who did not answer, or were not asked, a given question. Questions 3 and 4 were only asked of respondents who encountered security measures.

GAO Contacts and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contacts

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Staff Acknowledgments

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