

# SURVIVING SECURITY

Building Federal/Local  
Partnerships in the Region

## WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS

November 4, 2004

Sponsored by

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The Greater Washington  
Board of Trade



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Council of Governments



**NCPC**  
The National Capital  
Planning Commission

### PURPOSE

The September 11, 2001 terror attacks ushered in a new era of security precautions in the National Capital Region (NCR). Recognizing the continuing need to engage senior federal and local government officials and private sector leaders in discussions about the broader implications of the region's response to security, the National Capital Planning Commission, the Greater Washington Board of Trade, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, and the National Academy's Federal Facilities Council sponsored a one-day workshop to assess the impacts of security measures on local economic development, urban design, and transportation systems in the NCR.

The varied and cumulative security responses to terrorism risk since September 11 are having a profound impact on the region. Each of the symposium partners has been developing policy frameworks that addressed different aspects of the security challenge. This symposium, however, was designed to be the first step in bringing together local and federal officials as well as key transportation, development, design, and tourism leaders to discuss holistic strategies that sustain economic and community vitality.

### PROGRAM

The workshop took place on November 8, 2004 at the National Academy of Sciences. In a series of presentations and moderated panel discussions, workshop participants sought to think broadly about the effects of escalating risk assessments, the current impact of security measures on the Washington region, and their implications for the future economic vitality of the region and the quality of life of its residents.

Stephen Fuller, Director of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University, set the stage for the conference with a brief presentation highlighting the strength of the regional economy and the large contribution of the federal government to the economic life of the National Capital Region. In three panel discussions, participants examined: (1) leasing and location choices in a secure environment; (2) the challenge of developing vibrant and secure communities, and (3) how to coordinate regional mobility. A concluding panel sought to discuss and identify future directions for security planning.

## **SETTING THE STAGE: The Federal Presence in the Region**

Stephen Fuller commenced the symposium by illustrating the growth and major drivers of the regional economy. Fuller noted that Washington's gross regional product has outpaced growth of the U.S.'s gross domestic product for the past seven years. Federal employment and procurement, which drove the region's growth, increased 9.5% and 12.5% respectively in 2004. The combined federal spending, including salaries and procurement, was \$41.2 billion in 2003, the last year for which data is available. Within the region, approximately half of the combined federal spending, or \$22.2 billion was concentrated in Northern Virginia. The largest driver behind this concentration in Northern Virginia has been the Department of Defense (DOD), which accounted for the most procurement spending of any federal agency (except the Department of Homeland Security, which had not yet been aggregated). Fuller concluded that not only is the federal government the biggest component of the region's economy, it drives the economy in key sectors including scientific research, management and technology services.

## **PANEL 1: Leasing and Location Choices in a Secure Environment**

A reoccurring theme during the first panel discussion was the evolving threat environment that in some cases cannot be successfully addressed within existing design and policy frameworks. As an example, although participants credited NCPC's National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan with leading the nation in improving security design, the plan focused on truck and car bombs as the main threat. Increasingly, federal security managers are seeking protection against other threats such as chemical, biological, and pedestrian suicide attacks.

Panelists noted that since the 1995 bombing in Oklahoma City, there have been several federal efforts to develop security criteria for government facilities. In the immediate aftermath of the Oklahoma City attack, the

Department of Justice issued standards based on the square footage and number of employees in a given building. Two years later the General Services Administration (GSA) sought to refine this relatively rough demographic approach with more performance-based standards reflecting the mission of the facility. In 2001 the Interagency Security Committee, which includes both GSA and DHS, issued criteria for security in new federal buildings. Most recently, the DOD established significantly more rigorous security standards for both owned and leased DOD space, including significant setbacks. As the DOD standards are primarily prescriptive, rather than performance-based, concerns have been raised about whether existing and new buildings in urban settings will be able to meet these standards.

Local government participants expressed particular concern that none of the DOD-leased space in the region currently complies with the new DOD standards, even though all leased or owned DOD buildings will have to comply with these higher standards by the end of fiscal year 2009. Recognizing the importance of federal facilities to their economies, panelists feared what would happen if the standards drove DOD and contractor facilities to different locations in the region, or more critically, out of the region or onto military bases. Panelists cautioned that the impending round of BRAC closings could also magnify a DOD shift away from urban locations in the region. Furthermore, the ripple effect on private developers was equally disconcerting. Private developers on the panel noted that some property owners preferred to develop properties that will meet the security needs of a variety of tenants, including DOD and defense contractors, and consequently the DOD standards would influence private construction. By investing in properties that meet the security needs of the federal government, these properties can be marketed to both public and private tenants. Unfortunately, incorporating federal security standards often means facilities will have higher financial costs, and will be shifted to locations outside of urban cores, where setbacks are easier to achieve. In some cases, panelists

indicated, agencies may locate outside of the Washington area, creating concerns about the future economic vitality of the entire region. While security provisions are a principal factor in choosing a location for a Defense facility, the DOD representative on the panel acknowledged that the ultimate costs of facilities often determine where facilities are located. Panelists also remarked that the DOD standards were issued without the benefit of public comment.

Representatives from the GSA pointed out they have taken a different approach, seeking to apply security standards more flexibly and to balance the mission of their client agencies with security requirements and other criteria. Whenever possible, GSA is pursuing operational solutions such as guard checkpoints, camera surveillance, and smart technology. The GSA acknowledged that agencies with high security demands may have to locate outside of urban centers, although more often they find their client agencies abandoning some of those demands in order to remain within the Beltway or near the Metro. Furthermore, the GSA has been moving away from building-by-building perimeter security standards because substantial building setbacks are difficult to achieve in urban settings and often disrupt the public realm.

A related issue raised in this and the following panel was the variety of security expectations and measures. In addition to standards set by the Department of Justice, ISC, and DOD standards, the GSA's Federal Protective Service also recommends a set of security measures for every client agency. However, they find that these standards are often viewed as a minimum, and individual agencies can, and in many cases do, incorporate additional security precautions. In light of this, panelists recommended developing a standard basis that promotes greater uniformity among prevailing security standards.

The economic impact of restrictive security standards is not limited to federal buildings. One of the workshop participants reported that internationally, attacks on business facilities far outnumbered those on government facilities between 1997 and 2002. In spite of this, panelists noted that non-government tenants and

landlords seem less preoccupied with security measures. Nevertheless, private sector developers and property owners often mimic the real estate, leasing, and location practices of the federal government, and security provision has not been an exception. Additionally, panelists suggested that strong federal security practices shift the risk to private buildings; fortifying one facility only serves to make an adjacent building more vulnerable. There was also the concern that public funding of extensive security for federal employees results in a two-tier system with government institutions and workers more protected than their private sector counterparts.

## **P A N E L 2 :** **The Challenge of Developing Vibrant and Secure Communities**

Many of the panels' comments converged on the direct costs to the community. Panelists were particularly concerned with the implicit and explicit costs of the federal emphasis on site-by-site perimeter security. One GSA representative noted the cost of security screening at the Ronald Reagan Building is \$1.5 million a month. Several panelists emphasized that planning security responses should consider the appropriate scale: site, neighborhood or precinct. Rather than focusing on one building, they reasoned it would be more effective to focus on the security and vibrancy of neighborhoods or districts. Panelists cited the groundbreaking district-level approach of the Smithsonian Institution's plan for Mall-wide security installations around the museums.

A representative from the tourism industry expressed his concern that security will eventually affect the health of the tourism industry. He noted that Washington's unique civic and community assets have been compromised by perimeter security and security-related construction.

Aside from the monetary costs, the panelists emphasized that successful communities need mixed-use development, accessible public buildings, compact development, minimal street setbacks, and convenient transit. Unfortunately, several years of designing and implementing security measures have taught us that prevailing security measures push us away from precisely

this kind of development. The new 9-foot tall security fence at the National Institutes of Health's Bethesda campus, which hindered neighborhood access to a nearby Metro station, embodies the tension between providing security and building vibrant communities. Furthermore, decisions are often made independent of input from affected agencies or communities. Panelists reiterated an urgent need for collaborative efforts. Decision-making, they advised, should be holistic, rather than narrowly focused.

### **PANEL 3: Coordinating Regional Mobility**

The panel focusing on transportation noted the numerous federal, local and private sector stakeholders need to coordinate their efforts to achieve a cohesive security program. The Office of National Capital Region Coordination, a regional group created post-9/11 and located in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), has made significant steps in improving the area's ability to respond to emergencies. Similarly, emergency coordination efforts through the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) have played a critical role in transportation management. One major activity has been the efforts to coordinate communication between first responders. However, panelists acknowledged a need to communicate emergency procedures better with the public. They reiterated a need to reduce the demand on transportation systems during emergencies by better communicating the "shelter in place" strategy to the public. The "shelter in place" strategy recognizes that in many emergencies, the public is safer remaining at their current location. Furthermore, this strategy ensures that the transportation system is best able to serve emergency vehicles.

Much of the dialogue called for strategic investments in the transportation system. Increased demand on roads and transit for emergency evacuation necessitates additional reliability, and capacity improvements. Panelists emphasized a need for redundancy in our transportation network, particularly for Metro. Furthermore, they noted, transportation investments will also improve security.

## **MOVING FORWARD**

Participants agreed that security design in Washington has come a long way since 9/11. They pointed out that multi-agency committees have successfully laid the groundwork for enhanced regional mobility and emergency response. They cited the redesign of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, the Department of Transportation's new headquarters, and several other new developments for integrating security into individual sites. Over the past three years, however, the security threat has evolved, and these changes need to be incorporated into new designs and policies.

There was agreement among participants about the need for public discussions regarding acceptable levels of risk. One panelist noted that regional leaders already have had discussions about risks and resource allocation on public health and environmental issues - Americans recognize an important balance exists between securing personal safety from manmade threats such as pollution and the associated costs of preventive measures. Similarly, we need to develop a balanced system to assess terrorism risk.

Recognizing the implicit and explicit costs of security, federal security planners have become more sensitive to the impacts of their installations on their neighbors. They acknowledged that what made sense in assessing risk in Oklahoma City does not work in the National Capital Region's dense and target-rich environment. The cumulative effect of conventional perimeter security responses will erode the vitality of the urban area by impeding commerce and economic vitality. Together, the panelists agreed, regional leaders need to focus on what is truly security-worthy, rather than attempt to devote our scarce resources to uniformly fortifying our built environment. The panels also demonstrated a growing consensus that the best ideas for making our communities secure may not yet be on the table. Considering the rapid development of technological solutions, we need to develop and support an adaptable security framework.

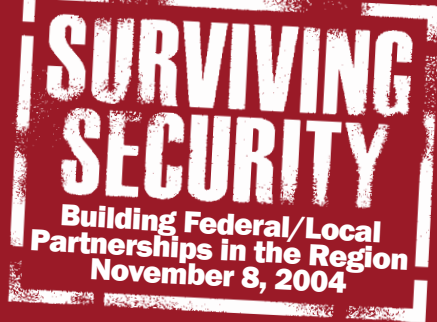
Throughout the conference, panelists reiterated the importance of comprehensive security solutions that strategically employ appropriate techniques, technology, and institutions. As an example of one strategy, a panelist suggested concentrating mission-critical agency activities and programs towards the rear of buildings, while program components that are not mission-critical can be accommodated closer to the public street. This approach maintains setback requirements, yet allows for more active use of building areas next to public spaces.

## NEXT STEPS

To survive security in the future, an assortment of policies, working groups, and research was suggested during the symposium.

### Recommended strategies include:

- Continue a regional partnership between federal, local and civic organizations to address security responses, and include representatives from different disciplines in the discussion.
- Convene roundtables to discuss specific issues and identify mutually beneficial solutions that respond to shared security and community goals. For example, establish a roundtable to coordinate DOD and local community interests regarding the impacts and concerns generated by the new security standards.
- Develop public discussions about the trade-off between security and economic vitality.
- Publicize personal response strategies for emergencies-such as the “stay-in-place” procedure-that maximize our transportation and communication infrastructures.
- Expand research and policy frameworks to identify and address the challenges associated with perimeter security, particularly those unique to the National Capital Region. These efforts should incorporate:
  - Solutions that successfully address the cumulative effects of security in high profile areas.
  - Security efforts that are consistent, consider what is mission-critical in establishing security responses, and respond to changing conditions and innovations.
  - Transportation capacity, access, and mobility decisions that consider security “Area-wide” security strategies - facility security plans that are developed in the context of entire neighborhoods or precincts.
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  - Security responses such as operational strategies, which do not principally rely on physical design.
- Initiate future workshops with representatives from other cities or other countries to explore new approaches to security.
- Continue individual work on existing initiatives:
  - The **Greater Washington Board of Trade** has been a key participant in public discussions about the impacts of security on the region’s economy and quality of life.
  - The **National Capital Planning Commission** has been refining its security guidance through updates to the National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan, and more detailed policy guidance for security projects.
  - The **Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments** has been organizing regional allocations of DHS funding for security measures, including the regional emergency response coordinating system.



## APPENDIX :

### Workshop Participants

#### SETTING THE STAGE: The Federal Presence in the Region

**Speaker:** **Stephen Fuller**, Director, Center for Regional Analysis, George Mason University

#### PANEL 1. Leasing and Location Choices in a Secure Environment

**Moderator:** **Matt Klein**, President, Akridge

**Anthony Costa**, Deputy Commissioner, *Public Buildings Service, General Services Administration*

**Ralph Newton**, Defense Facilities Directorate, *Washington Headquarters Services, Department of Defense*

**Jay Fiset**, Vice Chairman, *Arlington County Board*

**Robert Pinkard**, Chief Executive Officer, *Cassidy and Pinkard*

#### PANEL 2. The Challenge of Developing Vibrant and Secure Communities

**Moderator:** **Patricia Gallagher**, Executive Director, *National Capital Planning Commission*

**Edward Feiner**, Chief Architect, Public Building Service, *General Services Administration*

**Dennis Carmichael**, FASLA, Principal, *EDAW*

**Richard Cline**, Area Commander, Central District, *Federal Protective Services*

**William Hanbury**, CEO/President, Washington, DC *Convention & Tourism Corporation*

**Toni Griffin**, Deputy Director, Revitalization Planning, *District of Columbia Office of Planning*

#### PANEL 3. Coordinating Regional Mobility

**Moderator:** **John Mason**, former Mayor, City of Fairfax and former chair, *Transportation Planning Board*

**David Snyder**, Council Member, *City of Falls Church*

**Tom Lockwood**, Director, *Office of National Capital Region Coordination, Department of Homeland Security*

**Dan Tangherlini**, Director, *District of Columbia Department of Transportation*

**Richard White**, General Manager and Chief Executive Officer, *Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority*

#### PANEL 4. Forging a Regional Agenda

**Moderator:** **George Vradenburg**, President, *Vradenburg Foundation*

**Tom Lockwood**, Director, *Office of National Capital Region Coordination, Department of Homeland Security*

**David Robertson**, Executive Director, *Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments*

**Patricia Gallagher**, Executive Director, *National Capital Planning Commission*

**Donald Williams**, Regional Administrator, *General Services Administration*

**Ellen McCarthy**, Deputy Director, *Developmental Review and Coordination, District of Columbia Office of Planning*

