

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN FISCAL YEARS 2008-2013

Submitted by the Mayor of the District of Columbia

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Abstract

The Commission is providing comments to the Mayor and Council of the District of Columbia on the District's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) for Fiscal Years (FY) 2008-2013. The Commission's federal-interest recommendations note that: many of the District's proposed and ongoing capital expenditures support federal interests; some projects require further submissions to NCPC or coordination with NCPC and other federal agencies; and more detailed information on many transportation projects is scheduled for later release, and must be submitted to the Commission for further comment.

Commission Action Requested

Approval of comments to the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8723 (b).

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

Commends the inclusion of many projects that support federal interests such as:

- Contributing to the overall image of the nation's capital.
- Preserving the historic features of the built environment as well as historical records.
- Enhancing the transportation system, particularly transit and continued infrastructure investments.
- Undertaking funding for long-term planning efforts linked to important capital projects.
- Investment in park and recreation facilities.

Notes the statutory requirement for Commission review of several categories of District of Columbia projects, including:

- Acquisition or disposition of land or buildings by the District of Columbia government (40 U.S.C. § 8722 (b) (1) and § 8734 (a)).
- Land and building development projects by the District of Columbia government, including park projects and alterations that affect the exterior of a structure or its grounds (40 U.S.C. §8722 (b) (1) and § 8722(e)).
- District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital (40 U.S.C. § 8721).

Requires further coordination with federal agencies on projects involving locations and topics of special shared interest, pursuant to relevant portions of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. § 8722 (b) (1) and/or § 8722 (e)), including:

- St. Elizabeths Hospital (NCPC, General Services Administration (GSA)).
- The area covered by the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative, particularly in the vicinity of South Capitol Street and Reservation 13 (NCPC, GSA, National Park Service (NPS), Department of Defense (DOD)).
- The site of the former Convention Center (NCPC, NPS).
- Projects involving sites currently used or proposed for park, open space, or recreational uses (NCPC, NPS).
- Development of a streetcar system (NCPC).

Requires the submission for Commission review of the Highway Trust Fund Program component of the CIP; capital project for the District of Columbia court system; and capital projects for the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority when they become available, pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8723 (b).

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The CIP is part of the Mayor's FY 2008 Proposed Budget and Financial Plan entitled "Moving Forward Faster", which is sent to the Council of the District of Columbia for review and adoption, and then to Congress for review and enactment through federal legislation. The Commission's review is pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8723 (b), which specifies that "...each year, the Mayor of the District of Columbia must submit to the Commission a copy of the multiyear capital improvements plan for the District of Columbia.... The Commission has 30 days in which to comment on the plan but may not change or disapprove of the plan."

The Commission's review of the CIP is a precursor to the Commission's review of individual projects being implemented by the District of Columbia government. Such projects will be submitted by the appropriate District agency in accordance with the Commission's normal project

review procedures, covering location, program, and site and building plans, as appropriate. The CIP typically describes projects in much broader terms, providing an opportunity for the Commission's comments before projects enter the more detailed stages of implementation.

As described in the document, "(t)he CIP consists of the appropriated budget authority request for the upcoming fiscal year and projected funding ... for the next five years. ... The CIP is used as the basis for formulating the District's annual capital budget." The range of CIP projects includes renovation, major repair, and maintenance of existing facilities; new construction and equipment; building and land purchases; long-range planning studies; and various technology and database projects. The District's building inventory includes approximately 2,800 structures with a gross floor area of 49 million square feet.

The CIP contains 129 ongoing projects and 53 new projects, from agencies throughout the District of Columbia government. The proposed spending for capital projects in FY 2008 is \$581 million (compared to \$662 million budgeted in FY 2007). The total six-year cost is proposed at \$3.24 billion (compared to the previous year's CIP total of \$3.19 billion for FY 2007-2012). Several other funding categories relate to the CIP:

- The capital funds will be significantly supplemented by money from the Highway Trust Fund, administered by the Federal Highway Administration through a program that provides 80 percent federal money to match 20 percent local contributions for transportation projects. The Mayor has not included the Highway Trust Fund Program in the CIP document, but will release this information in the coming months.
- Capital projects for the District of Columbia court system are not part of the CIP.
- Capital projects for the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) are noted in the CIP but not included in the above totals. WASA uses a 10-year capital program, due to the long-term nature of many of its projects. WASA's most recent capital improvement program, for FYs 2006-2015, totals \$2.2 billion. WASA's proposed capital spending in FY 2008 is \$446 million.

The District will need to provide these other capital improvements programs to NCPC for review as they become available this year.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

The CIP projects do not appear to have any adverse impacts on the federal interest. Many projects will serve to promote a variety of federal interests. A number of projects will require coordination with the Commission and the appropriate federal department or agency.

A large portion of the CIP projects involves the rehabilitation and improvement of public buildings and public space throughout the District of Columbia. Many such projects involve prominent locations, where such improvements -- in addition to their local impact -- will also enhance the overall image of the nation's capital. Additionally, many such facilities were originally constructed by the federal government and convey the history of federal involvement in the development of the

District of Columbia. Examples (noted by the relevant District agencies) include several categories of buildings that form networks of facilities that define the civic character of the capital city:

- Schools (District of Columbia Public Schools)
- Libraries (District of Columbia Public Library)
- Park fieldhouses (Department of Parks and Recreation)
- Firehouses (Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department)

Additional enhancements to the capital's image include the investment in public art (Commission on the Arts and Humanities), and the maintenance and planting of street trees (Department of Transportation). The District government's continued investment in these capital projects helps to assure their continued role in defining the capital's image, as well as their local benefits.

Since many of the rehabilitation projects involve historic structures, it is important that their historic character be respected and enhanced as part of the capital investments. The projects for improving accessibility (in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act) should be carefully designed to minimize any harm to the historic character of public facilities.

Several projects relate to particular historic structures that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or are located within federally recognized Historic Districts. The continued investment in these properties helps to preserve and promote their recognized federal significance.

The CIP also includes renovation of the District of Columbia Archives and Recorder of Deeds buildings. These facilities contain records and artifacts that supplement the federally-owned records of the National Archives, Library of Congress, Smithsonian Institution, and other agencies. Collectively, these federal and local archival collections, along with historic structures and landscapes, convey the history of the nation's capital. The District's investment in preserving and protecting its share of these resources is therefore supportive of federal interests.

The Commission supports the District's efforts for several projects in the CIP related to areas of special shared interest for District and federal planning efforts, and requests continued coordination with federal agencies. These include:

- **Renovation of the DC Armory**
The CIP includes renovation improvements for the DC Armory to permit its continued use. Projects in this area must be coordinated with NCPC, and with the federal agencies managing land within this area, including GSA, NPS, and DOD.
- **Public Planning-Initial Project Development**
The CIP includes funding for the planning studies for large-scale capital projects undertaken by the District, and the Office of Planning's effort to rewrite the zoning regulations and implement inclusionary zoning. Federal agency coordination is requested for these studies.

- St. Elizabeths Hospital (Office of Property Management).

The CIP includes the relocation of remaining District of Columbia operations at St. Elizabeths from the West Campus to the East Campus. When the relocation is complete, the West Campus facilities, currently under the control of the District of Columbia, will be transferred to federal control through GSA. The relocation process must be coordinated with GSA to ensure the ongoing maintenance and protection of these facilities, which are part of a National Historic landmark. NCPC is also participating in planning for the future use of the West Campus, so the District must coordinate its plans for the East Campus with the Commission.
- The Anacostia Waterfront Initiative area, and particularly the South Capitol Street corridor.

The Commission, the District of Columbia Office of Planning (DC-OP) and Department of Transportation, and the Anacostia Waterfront Corporation have been cooperating in the planning of this area, and projects in this vicinity must be coordinated with federal and District agencies. Examples include the proposed baseball stadium, the development of Reservation 13 (Office of Property Management), the Anacostia light rail demonstration project (DDOT), and any other transportation projects that may be identified with the Highway Trust Fund Program.
- The site of the former Convention Center (Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development).

The Commission maintains an interest in planning for the redevelopment of the former convention center site, bounded by 9th, 11th, and H Streets and New York Avenue, NW. The Commission continues to expect that the District will re-open 10th and I streets along their historic rights-of-way through the site, as required in the 1995 Memorandum of Agreement for the [Verizon Center] Arena. The signatories include NCPC and the District government. This site also includes a small parcel currently under NPS jurisdiction, so projects on this site must be coordinated with both NPS and NCPC.
- Park and open space projects (Department of Parks and Recreation).

NCPC, in coordination with the District Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Planning, and the National Park Service, has initiated a study of parks and open spaces in the District. Early findings from this study identify the importance of improving the quality of existing parkland and facilities, and note the importance of the District's public schools in providing outdoor active recreational facilities. NCPC notes the capital funding identified for District parks facilities and looks forward to continued coordination with District agencies to identify strategies to improve Washington's park system.

In addition to these projects affecting buildings and open space, several transportation items relate to federal interests:

- Metro (Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA))

The CIP includes \$440 million over six years for the District's local contribution to "Mass Transit". (Operating funds are not included in the CIP.) This will support acquisition of new buses and rail cars, rehabilitation of the Metrorail system, and construction and rehabilitation of bus garage facilities. These ongoing investments in transit are supportive of federal efforts to rely on transit for the effective operation of the region's transportation system, serving the commuting needs of the federal workforce, and additional needs for visitors and major special events. Also included in this CIP are continued investments for expansion of the Circulator service into neighborhoods such as Georgetown and Adams Morgan.

The Arthur Capper/Carrolsburg Hope Roadway Improvements project will improve transportation and quality of life for this District neighborhood. The planned improvements will require coordination with adjacent DOD agencies managing land within this area.

The Anacostia light rail demonstration project will include a connection to Bolling Air Force Base. The improved transit access will be of great benefit to federal workers as well as the wider public. NCPC supports the demonstration light rail project in Anacostia, but has design and legal concerns about future project impacts on corridors in the original L'Enfant City. Projects in this area must be coordinated with NCPC, and with the federal agencies managing land within this area, including GSA, NPS, and DOD.

The Make a Difference Walk Commemorative Pavers project is a streetscape design project to place commemorative markers in sidewalks in the downtown area. The boundaries for this planned project include areas of substantial Federal interest or jurisdiction and may require Commission review, pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 6702 (d) and other relevant legislation.

- Other transportation projects (Department of Transportation)

The projects listed in the CIP are mostly for general improvements to roads, alleys, streetlights, curbs, culverts, street trees, and other parts of the transportation infrastructure. These projects serve federal interests by contributing to the operation and character of the nation's capital and enhancing its historic street system. Many additional projects will be included in the forthcoming Highway Trust Fund Program. The Commission will have the opportunity to review this document for federal interests, as an extension of its CIP review role.

The Commission's authority covers review of many of the projects listed in the CIP, and the appropriate District agencies are required by federal and District of Columbia law to submit these projects to the Commission at the appropriate stage of detailed siting and design work. NCPC's authority for District government projects covers: acquisition or disposition of land or buildings; land and building development projects (including park projects); and alterations affecting parks or the exterior of buildings or their grounds. District agencies should consult with Commission staff to determine the submission requirements for particular projects.

Additionally, the Commission normally reviews the Highway Trust Fund Program as part of the CIP. Although the District is placing this program on a different schedule, it is important that the Commission have an opportunity to review this document for federal interests, along with the capital improvement programs for the District of Columbia court system and the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority, as part of the statutory requirement for submission of the CIP.

PROJECT CONFORMANCE

National Environmental Policy Act

The National Environmental Policy Act is not applicable to NCPC's review of this submission, because it is not an action for review of the Commission.

National Historic Preservation Act

The National Historic Preservation Act is not applicable NCPC's review of this submission, because it is not an action for review of the Commission.