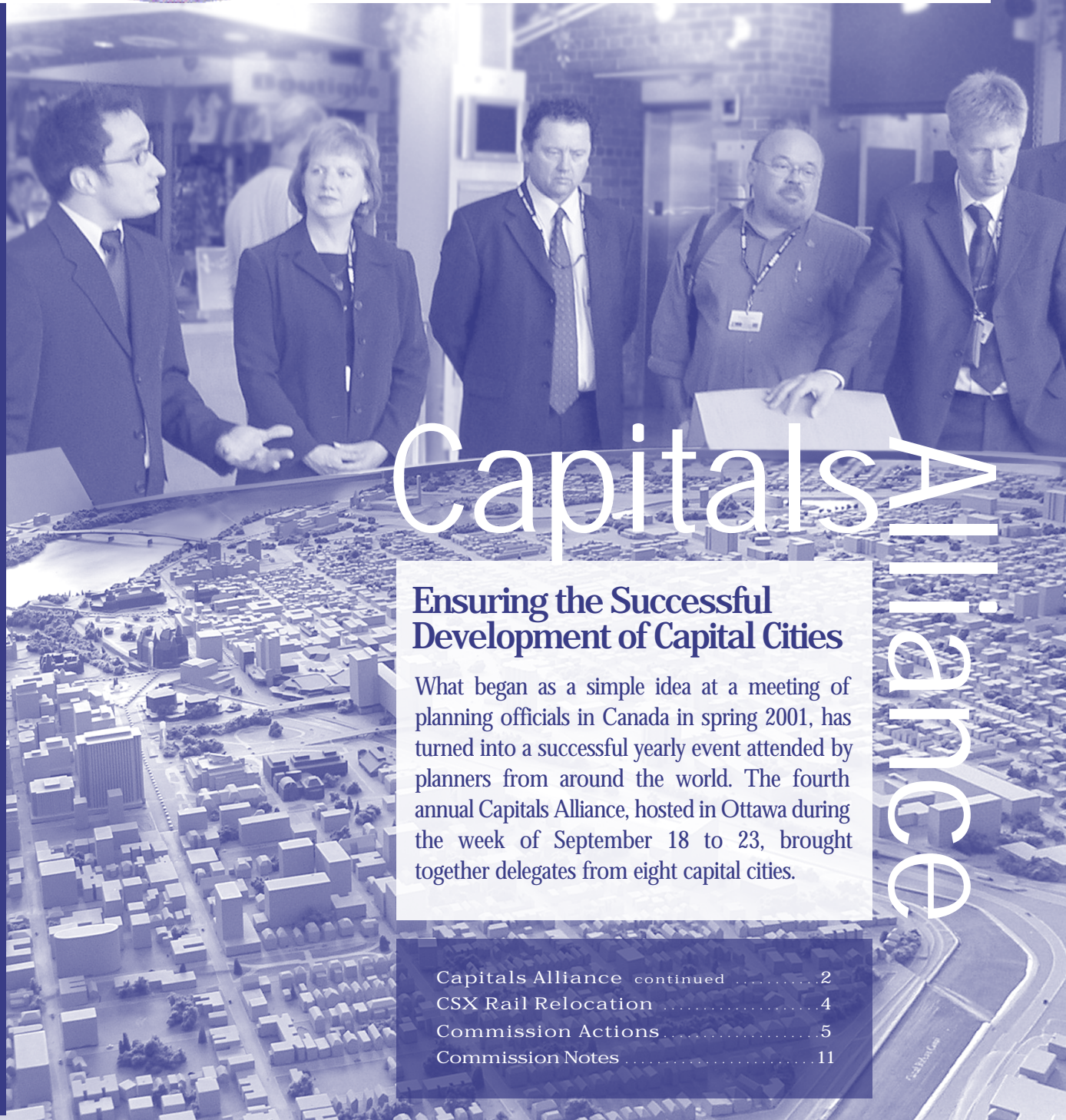


# QUARTERLY

JULY | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | 2005

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION



## Capitals Alliance

### Ensuring the Successful Development of Capital Cities

What began as a simple idea at a meeting of planning officials in Canada in spring 2001, has turned into a successful yearly event attended by planners from around the world. The fourth annual Capitals Alliance, hosted in Ottawa during the week of September 18 to 23, brought together delegates from eight capital cities.

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ALLIANCE

# Alliance

# Capitals

## Ensuring the Successful Development of Capital Cities



2

NCPC joined representatives from the national capitals of Australia, Brazil, Canada, England, France, Russia, and South Africa for Capitals Alliance 2005. Although each of the capitals is managed by organizations that have different mandates, there are many similarities that unite the cities and enable them to learn from each other. What they do share in common is planning a major urban center that is also the seat of national government, one that represents the cultural expression of the country and its citizens.

As the federal agency charged with preserving the historic resources of Washington—one of the most admired planned capitals in the world—NCPC is recognized as an important planning partner in the Alliance. The Commission was present at its 2001 inception along with Brasilia, Canberra, and Ottawa, and it hosted the second annual conference in Washington, D.C. in 2003.

This year, Executive Director Patti Gallagher and Public Affairs Director Lisa MacSpadden represented the agency in Ottawa. Washington discussed how capitals must focus on innovative ways of bringing resources and players together to ensure the successful development of capital cities, from public-private partnerships to joint initiatives by public agencies. True to the American way of life, one of the most important aspects of planning is public input and participation, and NCPC's delegates were pleased to have the opportunity to present on the role citizens and partners play in shaping development in the nation's capital.

Delegates also discussed the importance of green capitals and healthy living, and through on-site visits, they discovered how Ottawa's vast system of pathways, parkways, urban parks, and greenbelts contribute to the quality of life in the Canadian city.

Another engaging topic focused on the challenges of managing rapidly growing cities. Brasilia in particular described how it recently has expanded its infrastructure, including building new roads around the outskirts of the capital to accommodate the city's incredible growth.


London's delegates focused on how security issues since September 11, particularly in the wake of train bombings this past summer, are impacting plans for development in the historic city. As in Washington, planning with security in mind has become a way of life for London's citizens.

Ottawa's vast system of pathways, parkways, urban parks, and greenbelts contribute to the quality of life in the Canadian city



Before convening the week's activities, the senior delegates from each of the capital cities agreed to promote the following principles and actions:

- Focus on the challenges world capitals face related to planning, programming, transportation, security, and social issues so that national capitals can serve as models for cities in their countries as well as communities around the world.
- Ensure that the principles of sustainable development, healthy communities, and smart growth become central to the actions of Capitals Alliance participants.
- Hold regular meetings in Alliance capitals and maintain regular contact among members. Encourage new capitals to adopt and support the objectives of the network.
- Provide a forum for the exchange of information and experiences and promote the story of the past, the present, and the future of Alliance capitals.



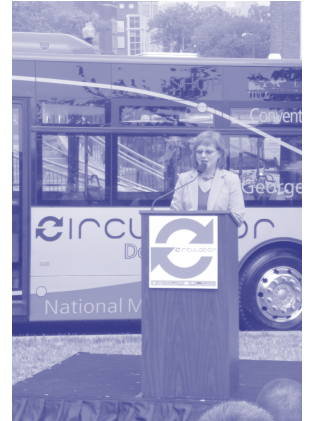
The next meeting of the Alliance will be held in early 2007 in Canberra, Australia.



## Working Together

### CSX Rail Line Relocation

The District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) and NCPC have signed a Memorandum of Agreement for the Railroad Alternative Alignment Feasibility Study, establishing each agency's roles and responsibilities for the study's management. A Request for Proposals is expected to be issued this fall with a 30-day window before the proposals are due. DDOT and NCPC will hold an informational meeting to answer questions from potential contractors. NCPC staff anticipates the nine-month-long study will start in December 2005. The project is being funded by Homeland Security's 2005 Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI). UASI funds are used to address the unique planning challenges of high-risk urban areas and to assist in preventing or recovering from threats or acts of terrorism. The study will look at relocation alternatives for a rail line that currently divides the city and transports hazardous materials through the District of Columbia.



## The Circulator is Rolling

More than two months after the debut of the Circulator, easy-to-spot red buses are carrying tourists, residents, and workers around town. The buses, first conceived in NCPC's 1997 *Legacy Plan*, run on two routes in the nation's capital: a north-south route from the Convention Center to the Southwest Waterfront, and an east-west route from Georgetown to Union Station.

The Circulator is an important part of NCPC's *Legacy Plan*, combining transportation with access to important historic structures, retail, and places of work throughout the monumental core. Since the bus made its debut on July 10, ridership has been steadily increasing.

Weekday ridership increased nearly 30 percent between July and August and was on track to increase another 12 percent in September. This represents an increase from 2,594 average daily weekday riders in July to 3,745 in September.

"We are quite pleased with the early response to the Circulator, and we are eager to move forward with exploratory plans to launch a route that will serve tourists along the National Mall," said Patti Gallagher, executive director at NCPC.

**The goal is for the Circulator to carry up to 11,000 daily passengers by 2008**

The District government anticipates major increases in ridership in the coming year as more convention-goers are targeted. The goal is for the Circulator to carry up to 11,000 daily passengers by 2008.

The service is the result of a joint effort among the National Capital Planning Commission, the District Department of Transportation, the Downtown Business Improvement District, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.



## Canopy Enclosure and Courtyard Replacement Planned for Patent Office Building

Final site and building plans for a glass canopy enclosing the historic courtyard of the Patent Office Building received the approval of the Commission in September. The 12-member commission also reviewed a concept design proposal for the courtyard landscape. The structure—built in the 1800s and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1965—houses the National Museum of American Art and the National Portrait Gallery. Both are scheduled to reopen to the public in July 2006, following extensive renovations.

Staff at the Smithsonian Institution worked with NCPC planners on a revised design during the summer, after the Commission disapproved the canopy in June. At that time, the Commission concluded that the Smithsonian had not taken the necessary steps to mitigate adverse harm to the historic building and setting. The Smithsonian had already demolished the historic courtyard and poured the footings and part of the columns that would support the canopy. It had also terminated the Section 106 historic preservation review, preempting efforts to mitigate the negative impacts on the historic structure.

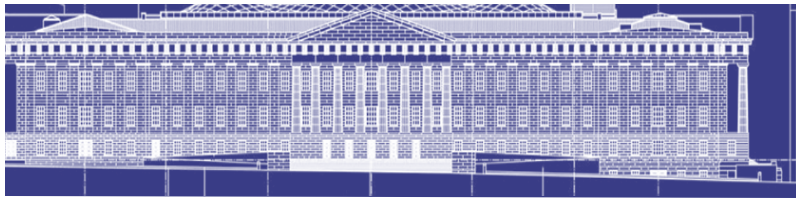
The Patent Office, due to its age, style, and design is considered to be one of the most historically significant buildings in Washington. It occupies a key site in the L'Enfant Plan and is considered to be one of the best examples of Greek Revival architecture in the country. The revised proposal, while it does not reverse the loss of the building's integrity, does mitigate the impact of the canopy and restore numerous elements to the building that have been changed over time.

"We are pleased that Smithsonian officials agreed to mitigation measures that enabled us to move forward with the project," said NCPC Executive Director Patricia Gallagher. "We believe the measures we've worked to put in place preserve the historic values of the Patent Office to the extent possible."

CONTINUED



The revised proposal for the Patent Office Building will restore numerous elements that have been changed over time.



The Smithsonian's revised plan uses low-iron glazing to reduce the greenish tint to the canopy glass, thus reducing its visual impact on the historic view shed. Further, the Smithsonian committed to a number of significant measures to mitigate the adverse effects of losing the historic courtyard and its landscape as well as the vista. These measures include:

- Reconstructing the F Street staircase to restore the architectural integrity of the portico on the building's south façade.
- Implementing a landscape and streetscape plan for the Patent Office reservation that will restore its stature and character in the L'Enfant Plan.
- Restoring and re-installing two original courtyard fountains.
- Reconstructing the courtyard through new courtyard landscaping commensurate with the building's historic design character.
- Designing and installing exterior lighting for the historic facades.

In addition, the Commission is requiring the Smithsonian to complete all of the mitigating measures in an expedited manner, concurrent with the construction of the courtyard enclosure project. The Smithsonian must also submit regular progress reports to the Commission for the duration of the project.

In addition to the revised canopy, the Commission is conceptually in favor of the proposed contemporary courtyard landscape design that will allow it to serve as an active place for visitors during and after museum hours. The planned design will return to the historic setting some of the courtyard's original elements: water, plants, trees, and open circulation. The Commission is not, however, supporting other proposed design elements and recommends they be removed from the plan: a large glass and metal balcony; alteration of a historic window opening; and vines that would cover the ground floor of the south courtyard façade, which is the last remaining example of unaltered Aquia sandstone in Washington.

NCPC looks forward to working with the Smithsonian in the coming months as it refines its plans for a courtyard landscape design and moves forward with its renovation project.

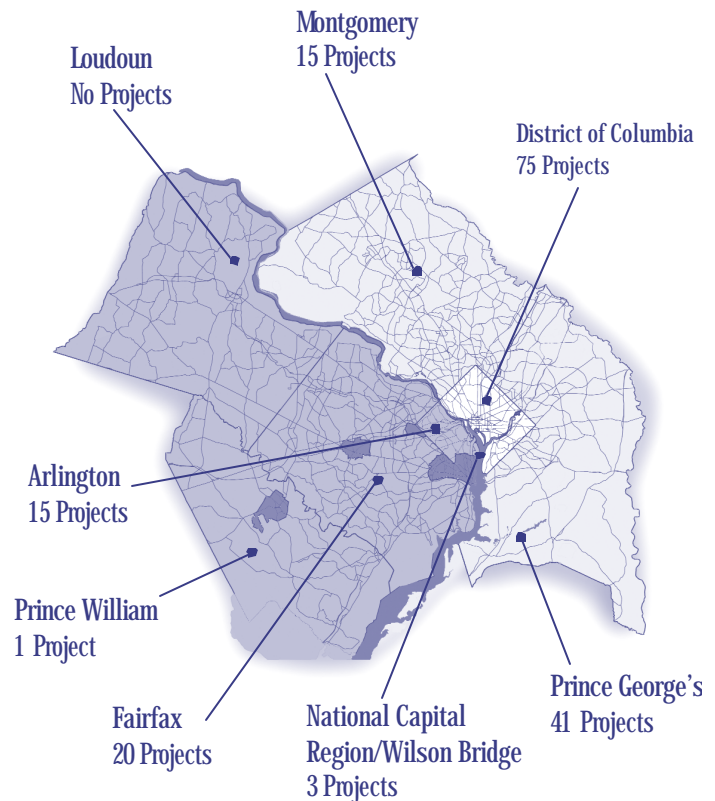
## NCPC Adopts Federal Capital Improvements Program

Two hundred ten projects, including 170 from federal agencies and another 40 projects put forth by NCPC, comprise the most recent Federal Capital Improvements Program (FCIP) adopted by the Commission. The FCIP for the National Capital Region covers FY 2006 to 2011 and the federal submissions total \$7.3 billion.

Under the National Capital Planning Act and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations, federal agencies are required to submit planned capital improvements to NCPC. The Commission evaluates the projects for conformity with its own Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements, federal agency master plans, and other important federal policies.

Projects are categorized as Recommended and Strongly Endorsed; Recommended; Recommended for Program Purposes Only; Recommended for Deferral; and Not Recommended. The Commission's recommendations and comments do not represent approval or denial of proposed projects; rather OMB uses NCPC's recommendations to make budgetary decisions on these projects.

Because of the recent Base Realignment and Closure recommendations, Department of Defense submissions in this year's FCIP are limited or subject to change.



### American Pharmacists Association Addition

The historic American Pharmacists Association Building, designed by noted architect John Russell Pope, won Commission approval for the final site and building plans for an office building addition.

The project land is adjacent to C Street and is across from the U.S. Department of State. NCP staff determined that the final plans for the addition appropriately reflect a neo-classical balance while conveying a modern office building. The final plans also moved a garage entrance so that the terraces—designed to enhance the Pope building—will dominate the view.

This approval is pursuant to the Deed for Exchange of Lands in Square 62 in the District, which is dated December 30, 1958.

### Federal Office Building To Be Modernized

The Commission commented favorably on the concept plans for the modernization of Federal Office Building 8, located at 200 C Street, SW. The project calls for converting the primary building use from laboratory to office space; replacing the existing façade with a glass curtain wall; and transforming a surface parking area to a public plaza. Once complete, the building may house one or more federal agencies.

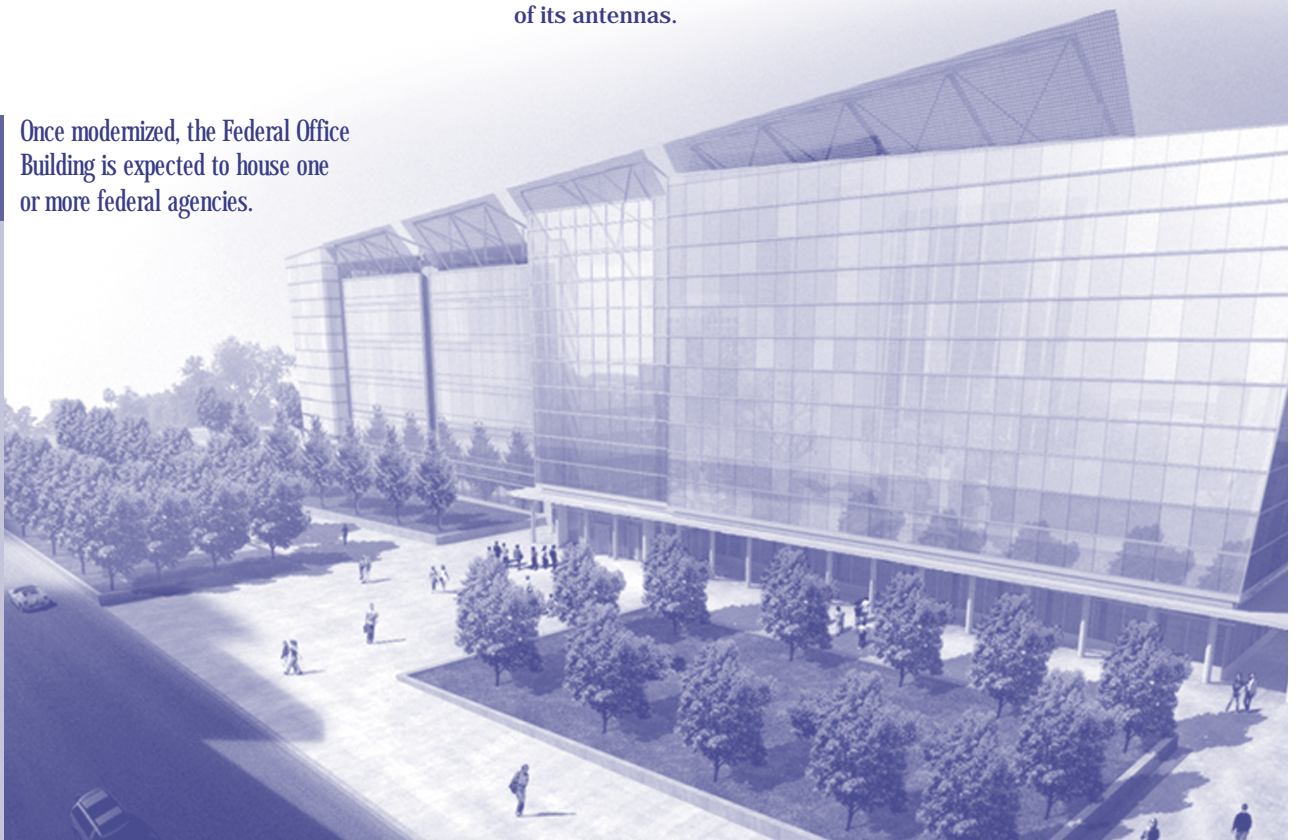
Once modernized, the Federal Office Building is expected to house one or more federal agencies.

### EEOB Wing to be Modernized

The General Services Administration won preliminary and final site plan approval from the Commission for a modernization plan for the State Place side of the EEOB, which continues modernization activities started in phase I, approved by the Commission in October 2003. Some of the new upgrades include removing window box A/C units; replacing the electrical distribution system; abating and containing HAZMAT; replacing existing windows with secure ones; returning the interior offices to their original historic layout; restoring damaged historical materials; and upgrading handicapped-accessible components.

### Veterans Affairs Medical Center Gets Antennas

In an effort to provide better cell phone service for Washingtonians, 12 Verizon Wireless telecommunication antennas will be sited on top of the Department of Veteran Affairs Medical Center on Irving Street, NW in the District. The Commission approved preliminary and final building plans for the receiving and transmitting antennas for 10 years or less. This proposal conforms to the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and a presidential memorandum encouraging the placement of commercial antennas on federal property. By using the latest technology, Verizon has worked to minimize the visual impact of its antennas.



### Judiciary Square Master Plan

Questions involving parking and passenger drop-off areas are resolved in the final Master Plan for Judiciary Square. Much of the plan had been approved in May, but the Commission required the applicant to return with a plan to address issues impacting the realignment of the south curb line of E Street, NW, between 4th and 5th Streets; the design, placement, and use of lay-bys on E Street; and the use of F Street, NW for bus loading and unloading. The Commission also asked the applicant, the D.C. Courts, to address the issue of sharing the 4th Street loading dock facilities with the National Law Enforcement Museum. The approved final plan coordinates the reorganization of the D.C. Court facilities with the revitalization of Judiciary Square.

NCPC staff is working hard with District officials to help re-establish the character of Judiciary Square and will continue to work closely with the D.C. Courts and the National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial Fund to ensure all aspects of the projects are compatible with the historic nature of the area.

### Washington National Records Center Additions

The complex that provides records management services to both headquarters and field offices of federal agencies in the national capital area, along with Armed Forces Worldwide, is growing.

The Commission approved the General Services Administration (GSA) submission of preliminary and final site and building plans for small building additions to each end of the existing Washington National Records Center (WNRC) building at the Suitland Federal Center (SFC) in Prince George's County, Maryland.

The building additions, at the north and south sides of the main structure, would house new air handling equipment that is being upgraded to match capacities and capabilities of the approved Chiller Building, which was reviewed by the Commission in April 2004.

SFC is a 226-acre federal employment center with the following tenants: U.S. Census Bureau, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the WNRC. Although not a tenant of GSA, the National Maritime Intelligence Center is also in the Suitland Federal Center.

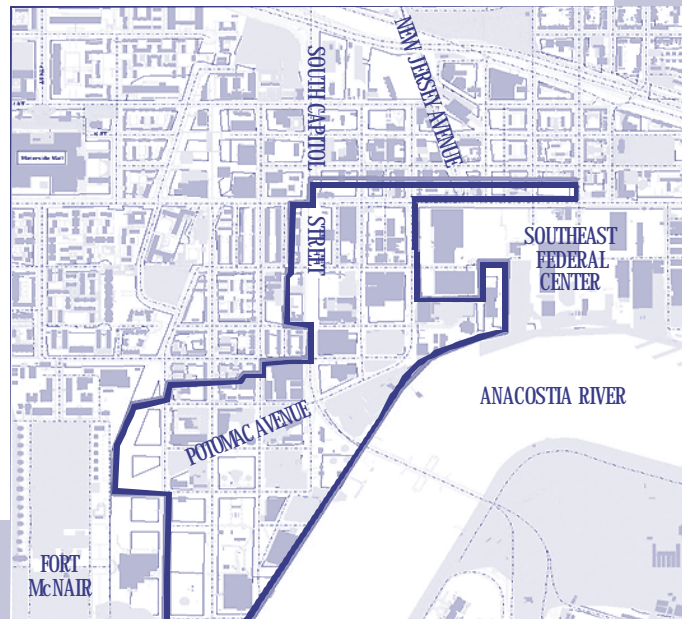
### G Street Accessible Ramps at the Patent Office Building

Construction plans for a pair of handicapped-accessible ramps for the north façade of the Patent Office Building are underway. The Commission approved preliminary and final site plans for the new ramps on the G Street side of the building. While the old ramps didn't meet full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the new ramps adhere to the important ADA regulations, making the museum accessible to a greater number of people.

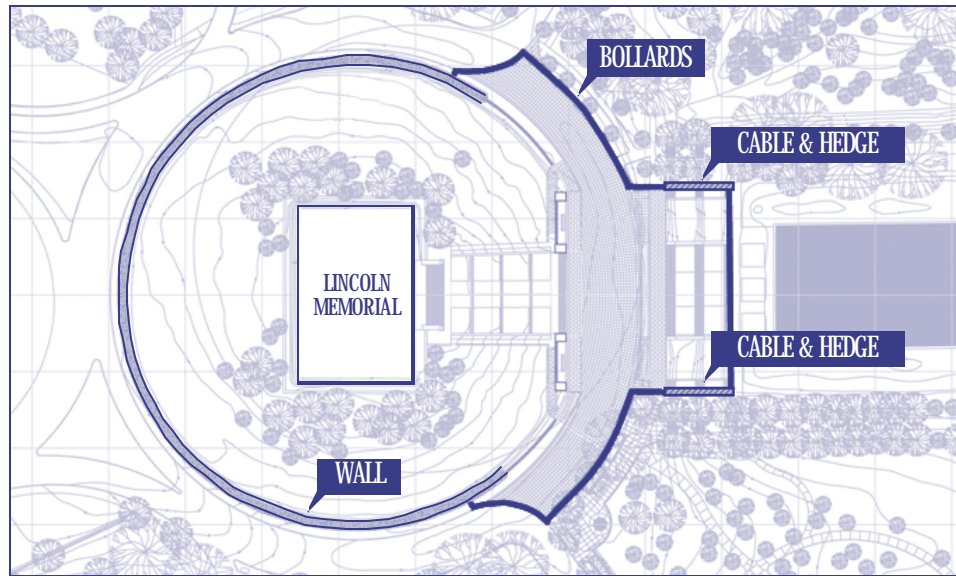
### Text Amendment for Zoning Regulations for D.C. Ballpark in Overlay District

Playing ball in the District is getting easier. The Commission commented favorably on a proposed text amendment to District zoning regulations to modify the Capital Gateway Overlay District to define "ballpark" and also to allow ballpark use. This affects the Overlay District in squares 702, 703, 704, 705, and 706 and in Reservation 247. This action establishes a Zoning Commission review and approval process along with design guidelines for a ballpark and associated uses. Also, all ballpark structures would require Zoning Commission approval, and nothing would be permitted as a matter of right in the Overlay District. As part of its comments to the D.C. Zoning Commission, NCPC made recommendations pertaining to building height, lighting, and signage. NCPC also recommended that ballpark parking be limited to Major League Baseball's minimum requirement of 1,225 spaces for a 41,000-seat stadium. All parking would be built below ground. Finally, the Commission recommended that a higher percentage of the façade facing South Capitol Street be devoted to retail use to help create a lively urban boulevard.

Zoning changes bring baseball closer to reality in Washington.







## Lincoln Memorial Circle Security Improvements

The Commission approved a revised concept plan from the National Park Service (NPS) for a security barrier line at the Lincoln Memorial that crosses Memorial Circle at Bacon and French Drives and descends the lower stairs to the level of the Reflecting Pool. NCPC provided several recommendations to NPS as it works on final designs, including:

- Using a cable fence or other barrier enclosed by paired hedges running parallel to the lower stairs.



- Developing a barrier design for the base of the lower stairs to preserve the integrity of the grass terraces next to the stairs.
- Terminating the retaining wall (now under construction around Memorial Circle) at a point east of Bacon and French Drives but before the access ramps.
- Studying a pavement pattern that combines a radial layout of 4-foot by 4-foot pavers around the eastern portion of Memorial Circle and an orthogonal pattern in the central axis.

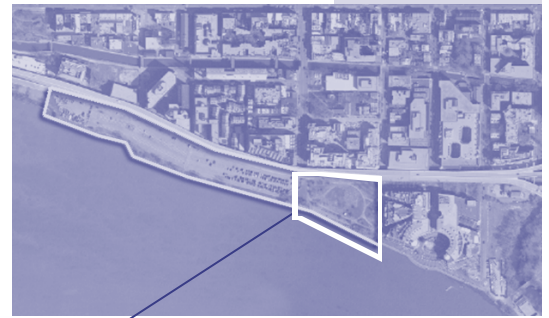
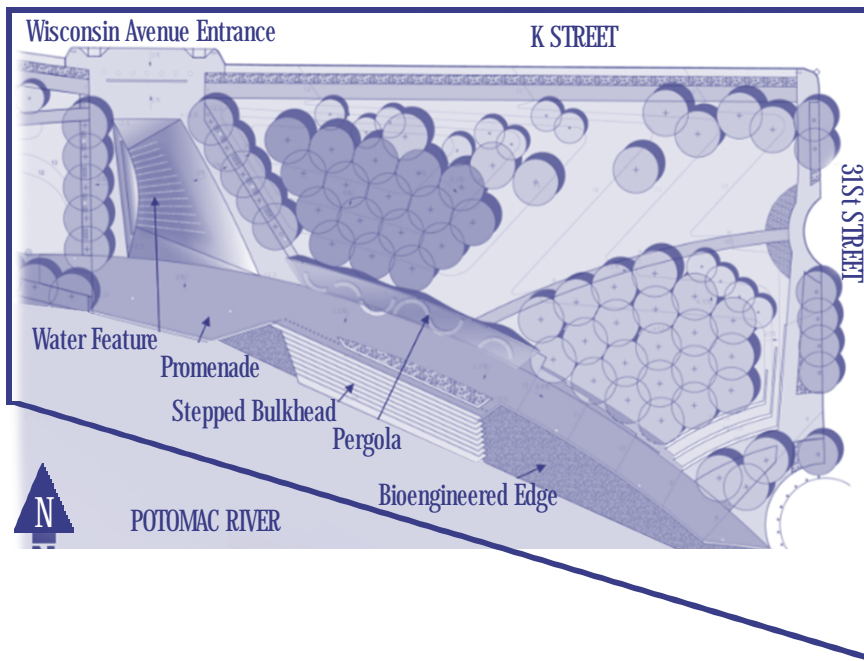
- Developing and field-testing a bollard design for the approved barrier location that is appropriate for the setting—austere in design, in a dark color or finish.

This proposal is different from the one submitted and approved in April 2005. Now all of the lower steps are inside the barrier line. The Commission staff consulted with staff of NPS, the Commission of Fine Arts, the D.C. State Historic Preservation Office, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation prior to offering its recommendations on the NPS design solution.

In addition, before any subsequent submission of the plan to the Commission, NCPC has asked NPS to respond to any substantive comments from the public on the environmental effects of the proposal and accomplish a completed National Environmental Policy Act review of the revised proposal in conformance with the Commission's requirements.

## Washington Dulles International Airport: Signature/Landow Complex

Preliminary and final site and building plans for a new hangar at Dulles International Airport received favorable comments from the Commission. The proposed Signature/Landow Complex at Dulles features four aircraft storage hangars with administrative and support functions, aircraft apron surfaces, an access roadway, employee parking area, and plans for a future office building. Dulles is an extremely busy airport, serving 23 million domestic and international passengers a year on three runways. The property, buffered from surrounding development by a landscape greenbelt, provides parking for 25,000 vehicles. The main terminal, designed by Eero Saarinen, was completed in 1962 and won the American Institute of Architects' First Honor Award in 1966.



The Georgetown Waterfront Park will sit on 2.3 acres near the Whitehurst Freeway above K Street.

**Georgetown Waterfront Park:  
Waterfront Terminus**

Re-invigorating pedestrian use of parkland on the Potomac Waterfront in Georgetown, while preserving the vista, are the goals of a proposal from the National Park Service for the Georgetown Waterfront Park. The park will be located at the waterfront near the Whitehurst Freeway above K Street. Sitting on 2.3 acres, the park's preliminary site development plans were approved with the following exceptions:

- The proposed design of the pergola structure and seating. NCPC was not able to evaluate this aspect of the project without detailed information from the National Park Service on the structures' material composition and layout.
- The pedestrian sidewalk north extension at Wisconsin Avenue. The Commission finds it should either be designed further into a designated entry point or eliminated from the design.
- The use of multiple lamps, called Washington Globes, at the Wisconsin Avenue park entrance.

**Shaw School Urban Renewal Plan Fosters  
Low Density Development**

The Commission adopted a resolution to modify the Urban Renewal Plan for the Shaw School Urban Renewal Area. The modifications allow the surrounding community and the District of Columbia to achieve lower density residential and mixed-use projects on several lots near the school. The Commission determined that the proposed modifications will not adversely affect the Shaw and Greater 14th Street Historic Districts.

**D.C. Capital Improvements Plan:  
Highway Trust Fund**

If you drive in the nation's capital, you know congested roads are a top concern for visitors and residents alike. NCPC kept this and its own transportation policies in mind when it reviewed the District of Columbia's "Capital Improvements Plan: Highway Trust Fund Fiscal Years 2006-2011."

This plan includes many projects that will improve the efficiency, safety, and reliability of the transportation system and promote improved air quality for the entire region. In its review, NCPC commented on several road projects around the area, many of which will involve coordination with NCPC, the Federal Highway Administration, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

## STAFF CHANGES



Lois Schiffer

An expert in environmental law has joined NCPC as the agency's new general counsel. Lois Schiffer is a former partner at the Washington law firm of Baach Robinson & Lewis. She has taught at Georgetown University as an adjunct professor of environmental law for the

past 20 years and is the recipient of the Charles Fahy Distinguished Adjunct Professor Award. Ms. Schiffer is a former assistant attorney general at the U.S. Department of Justice, serving with distinction in the Environmental and Natural Resources Division. She has argued before the U.S. Supreme Court.

"We are honored to welcome an attorney of such distinction to our staff," says NCPC Executive Director Patti Gallagher. "Ms. Schiffer's experience will be of great benefit to NCPC as we fulfill our mission to preserve and protect the nation's treasured resources."

Ms. Schiffer, a native Washingtonian, serves on the boards of several local organizations and has written many articles on environmental law. She is a graduate of Harvard University Law School and Radcliffe College.

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Community Planner Tony Simon will depart NCPC after more than 13 years of service. Mr. Simon made many valuable contributions during his tenure at NCPC, including participating in the development of NCPC's visionary 1997 Legacy Plan, its 2001 Memorials and Museums Master Plan, and the agency's award-winning 2004 Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements. He will begin his new position with the Commission of Fine Arts on October 17.

## TALKING ABOUT IT ...

NCPC hosts many visitors seeking information on planning in the nation's capital. In July, the agency hosted an international delegation from the Republic of Georgia. They visited NCPC's offices to learn about historic preservation in a federal city. One of NCPC's experts on historic preservation, Nancy Witherell, explained how NCPC preserves and protects these national treasures and also talked about the management of historic sites. As the federal agency charged with overseeing and preserving some of the most important buildings in the United States, staff is happy to share its unique experience with visitors from around the world, as well as around the country.

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As a guest speaker at the D.C. Rotary Club on August 24, NCPC Executive Director Patti Gallagher gave an overview of the role NCPC plays in preserving and protecting the national historic treasures in the Washington area.

A lively audience of more than 150 people engaged Ms. Gallagher in a discussion of how NCPC conducts planning activities. The talk focused on several of NCPC's key projects, including plans for South Capitol Street and the agency's ongoing efforts to preserve the National Mall.

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On September 16, Ms. Gallagher traveled to the Philadelphia Planning Commission to participate in an expert panel reviewing the pilot phase of the city's open space plan. Ms. Gallagher has an extensive background in riverfront development and open space issues from her time in Chicago, where she was the Assistant Commissioner for Open Space Planning and later Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Planning.

At NCPC, Ms. Gallagher is working on parks and open space in Washington, D.C. through the CapitalSpace initiative, a joint project of NCPC, the National Park Service, the D.C. Office of Planning, and the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation. CapitalSpace will develop a coordinated planning framework for federal and local parks in D.C.

# QUARTERLY

NCPC Quarterly

JULY | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | 2005

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

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Patricia Elwood, Vice Chair, Mayoral Appointee

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Secretary of Defense

The Honorable Gale A. Norton  
Secretary of the Interior

The Honorable Stephen A. Pery  
Administrator of General Services

The Honorable Susan M. Collins  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs

The Honorable Tom Davis  
Chairman, House Committee on Government Reform

The Honorable Anthony A. Williams  
Mayor of the District of Columbia

The Honorable Linda W. Cropp  
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

Executive Director  
Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP



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