

For Immediate Release
May 9, 2011

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NCPC Selects Five Firms for President's Park South Design Competition

One of the most visited locations in the Nation's Capital

Washington, DC –The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) has invited five of the country's leading architecture and landscape design firms to develop proposals to beautify and improve the visitor experience at President's Park South, the area immediately south of the White House. President's Park South is one of the most visited locations in the nation's capital, and represents a unique design challenge that requires sensitive integration of security requirements into a landscape of extraordinary cultural and historic significance. The area includes Sherman Park, the First Division Monument, the Ellipse and its side panels, as well as the associated roadways in the area, including E Street, NW, which has been closed to automobile traffic for the past decade.

Twenty-three firms responded to NCPC's call for qualifications, the initial stage of a national design competition begun in March. Based on the review and recommendations of NCPC's selection committee, and with support from the Interagency Security Task Force, NCPC invited five firms to advance to the design phase of the competition.

The selected firms are:

- Hood Design Studio in San Francisco, CA;
- Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates in New York City, NY
- Reed Hilderbrand Landscape Architects in Watertown, MA;
- Rogers Marvel Architects in New York City, NY; and
- SASAKI in Watertown, MA.

"We believe this talented, well-respected group of designers will offer a set of innovative proposals that will transform the security elements in President's Park South restoring this historic landscape and creating a more beautiful, distinguished place for the millions who visit annually," said NCPC Chairman L. Preston Bryant, Jr. "The competition is a natural progression of NCPC's work, beginning with the re-design of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. The transformation of this corridor became an early example of successfully integrating security elements to create a welcoming public space."

The National Park Service-led interagency *Comprehensive Design Plan for the White House and President's Park* (2000) set the vision for this important historic public space. The results of the NCPC-sponsored design competition will inform the development of alternatives for President's Park South that will be undertaken by the National Park Service and the United States Secret Service. These alternatives will be examined through a federal and local review and approval process, including a NEPA Environmental Assessment, over the course of the next year.

"Security measures have become an unfortunate but now necessary feature of urban life," said Alex Krieger, NCPC's design competition advisor. "We hope this competition will advance creative solutions that achieve security objectives and exceptional urban design reflecting both the history and significance of this important place."

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Beginning June 21, 2011, the public will be invited to view the designs submitted by the five project teams, both online and in person. The competition culminates with a public forum to be held on June 28, 2011 where project designers will present their ideas. Following public input, NCPC's Interagency Security Task Force will rank the finalists and announce the competition winner on July 7, 2011.

Members of the Interagency Security Task Force include Chairman L. Preston Bryant, Jr. and representatives from federal and District agencies. The Task Force works to develop comprehensive solutions to balance security needs with protecting the beauty, access and spirit of public spaces throughout the Nation's Capital.

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 projects and memorials, oversees long-range planning for future development, and monitors capital investment by federal agencies.

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