



## Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: March 1, 2012

---

<b>PROJECT</b> <b>Installation of Five Capital Bikeshare Stations</b> The National Mall Washington, D.C.	<b>NCPC FILE NUMBER</b> 7147F
<b>SUBMITTED BY</b> United States Department of the Interior National Park Service	<b>NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER</b> 1.41(40.00)43523
	<b>APPLICANT'S REQUEST</b> Preliminary and final approval of site development plans
	<b>PROPOSED ACTION</b> Approve with comments
	<b>REVIEW AUTHORITY</b> Approval per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)

---

### PROJECT SUMMARY

The National Park Service (NPS) has submitted a proposal to install five Capital Bikeshare stations on the National Mall. The Capital Bikeshare program is a collaborative effort between the District of Columbia and Arlington County governments to provide alternative transportation for workers, visitors, and residents within their jurisdictions. According to the Capital Bikeshare website the system currently consists of 140 stations. Each station is a modular, portable bicycle renting system (BIXI Public Bicycle System) that does not require excavation or other infrastructure in order to operate. The proposed locations were selected based on their proximity to major visitor destinations on the National Mall; access to compatible modes of transportation such as Metro and bicycle paths; and proximity to other Capital Bikeshare stations.

### KEY INFORMATION

- The project will install the first Capital Bikeshare stations on the National Mall.
- The Commission has previously approved Capital Bikeshare stations at the Ronald Reagan Building; in President's Park (on the White House grounds); and at the Office of Personnel Management.
- The project is consistent with many local and federal plans and policies related to mobility, sustainability, transportation, and visitors.

### RECOMMENDATION

**Approves** the preliminary and final site development plans for the installation of five Capital Bikeshare stations near the following locations on the National Mall: Smithsonian Metrorail Station; the Washington Monument; the Jefferson Memorial; the Lincoln Memorial; and the

---

Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial / Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, as shown in NCPC Map File No. 1.41(40.00)43523.

**Commends** the National Park Service for its efforts to extend the Capital Bikeshare program to the National Mall in order to expand the range of available transportation alternatives on the National Mall and increase the convenience of bike sharing as a viable mode of transportation for visitors, workers, and residents, both in the District of Columbia and in parts of the National Capital Region.

**Encourages** the National Park Service to work with the District of Columbia Department of Transportation to monitor the demand for bicycles at the new bikeshare stations; identify how the stations could be expanded and their positioning optimized in the future; and determine where additional stations could be located in East Potomac Park and elsewhere on the National Mall.

#### PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

<b>Previous actions</b>	<b>September, 2010</b> – Approval of Capital Bikeshare stations in 87 locations throughout Washington, D.C, including one at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Building and one within President's Park.  <b>January, 2011</b> – Approval of a Capital Bikeshare station at the Ronald Reagan Building.
<b>Remaining actions</b> (anticipated)	None

Prepared by M. Weil  
February 22, 2012

## I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Site

The National Mall is shown in Figure 1, covering 684 acres and receiving approximately 22-25 million visits each year. The Mall generally extends from the foot of the U.S. Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial; and from Constitution Avenue to the Jefferson Memorial. The project will install bike share stations at five different locations on the National Mall, which are described in greater detail in the "Proposal" section of this report.

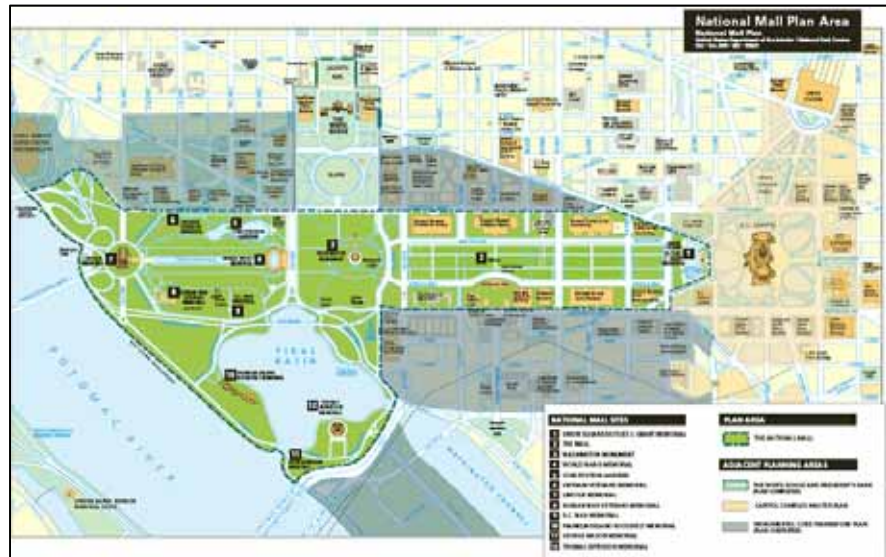


Figure 1: National Mall Plan Map

### Background

In August 2008, the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) launched SmartBike DC as a pilot bicycle-sharing program with 10 sites and 100 bikes. Since then, DDOT has expanded the program using a new system, known as BIXI, and under a new name, Capital Bikeshare. Capital Bikeshare is a cooperative effort between District of Columbia and Arlington County, Virginia governments to establish a joint bicycle rental system.

### Proposal

The project will install five Capital Bikeshare stations in strategic locations on the National Mall as shown in Figure 2. These initial locations were jointly selected by DDOT and the National Park Service (NPS) based on their proximity to major destinations on the National Mall; access to existing and planned transit service / transportation improvements; and proximity to other Capital Bikeshare stations.

The stations are highly portable, requiring no infrastructure improvements or excavation, and can be installed / removed within several hours. Each station module can accommodate a maximum of 11 bicycles; and utilize solar-power and wireless technology to provide Capital Bikeshare members access to the bikes using their membership card. Each bike station also possesses a two-sided display panel that is typically used to display a map of all of the bike station locations, and is currently being considered for display of commercial advertisements (Figure 3). The typical station module measures approximately 6-feet wide and 10-feet long. Individual modules can be combined to provide greater numbers of bikes







Figure 4a: Single-loaded Capital Bikeshare Rental Configuration



Figure 4b: Double-loaded Capital Bikeshare Rental Configuration

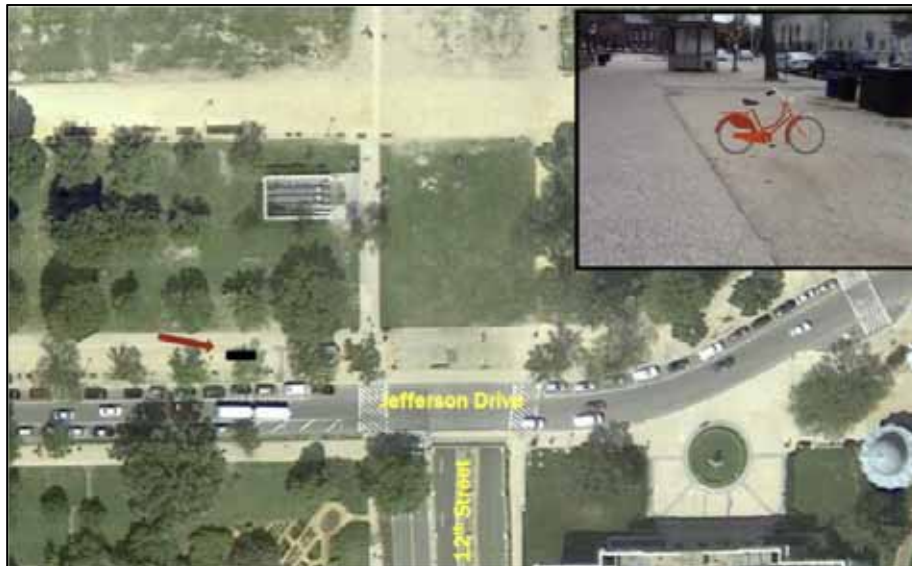


Figure 5: Smithsonian Metrorail Station Entrance Site

The Smithsonian Metrorail Station Entrance site is located along Jefferson Drive, near the Jefferson Drive and 12<sup>th</sup> Street intersection as shown in Figure 5. The site is situated approximately 100 feet to the south of the Metrorail station entrance near the Freer Gallery of Art and the Smithsonian Castle. The station will be installed in a gravel area between the sidewalk and Jefferson Drive. The project submission notes that there is a temporary asphalt walkway for pedestrian access between the sidewalk and Jefferson Drive which will have to be removed prior to the station installation. The proposed station will be configured for single-sided loading and measure 60' long x 6' wide.



Figure 6: Lincoln Memorial site



Figure 7: Jefferson Memorial site

measure 60' long x 6' wide with a single-loaded configuration. The project submission notes that the station may need to be relocated in the future due to security plans for the Jefferson Memorial.

The Lincoln Memorial site is located near the intersection of Lincoln Memorial Circle and Daniel French Drive as shown in Figure 6. The site is situated approximately 200 feet to the southeast of the Lincoln Memorial. The station will be installed on a paved concrete area adjacent to the existing sidewalk. The project submission notes that the site should be repaved and extended to meet the edge of the sidewalk along Daniel French Drive so that the station will be completely contained on the concrete surface. The proposed station will have a double-loaded configuration and measure 32' long x 15' wide.

The Jefferson Memorial site is located near the intersection of East Basin Drive and the Jefferson Memorial access drive as shown in Figure 7. The site is situated approximately 450 feet to the southwest of the Jefferson Memorial, near the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge. The station will be installed on a grassy area and will





Figure 8: Washington Monument Site

The Washington Monument site is located along Jefferson Drive, between 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets as shown in Figure 8. The proposed location is situated on the inside of the existing concrete sidewalk, away from the street and near an existing information kiosk and pull-off formerly used for Tourmobile vehicles. The site is situated approximately 700 feet to the east of the Washington Monument. The project submission notes that existing

benches and trash receptacles will have to be relocated to accommodate the proposed 60' long x 6' wide, single loaded station.

The Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Memorial / Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Memorial site is located along Ohio Drive, near its intersection with West Basin Drive as shown in Figure 9. The proposed location is situated on the inside edge of the existing concrete sidewalk, near an existing information kiosk and pull-off formerly reserved for Tourmobile vehicles. The site is situated approximately 450 feet to the west of the FDR Memorial and approximately 700 feet to the southwest of the MLK Memorial. According to the project submission, existing benches will have to be relocated to accommodate the proposed 60' long x 6' wide single loaded station.



Figure 9: Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial / Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Site

## II. PROJECT ANALYSIS/CONFORMANCE

### Analysis

In a relatively short time period, Capital Bikeshare has become a popular and successful program that is credited with increasing the number of bicyclists throughout downtown Washington, D.C., and there are plans to further expand the program within the District, Arlington, and in some suburban locations. Additionally, bicycling is likely to grow in future importance as Washington is designed increasingly more for intra-city travel by walking, bicycling, and transit. Within this context and with the recent discontinuation of Tourmobile service, more personal travel modes (e.g. walking and bicycling) must be encouraged and accommodated throughout the National Mall. Lastly, the proposed expansion of the Capital Bikeshare program to The Mall is consistent with many local and federal plans and policies as described in further detail in the following sections. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission **approve the preliminary and final site development plans for the installation of five Capital Bikeshare stations near the following locations on the National Mall: Smithsonian Metrorail Station; the Washington Monument; the Jefferson Memorial; the Lincoln Memorial; and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial / Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial.**

Staff notes that this will be the National Park Service's first experience with Capital Bikeshare stations on the Mall and as such, recommends that the Commission **commend the National Park Service for its efforts to extend the Capital Bikeshare program to the National Mall in order to expand the range of available transportation alternatives on the National Mall and increase the convenience of bike sharing as a viable mode of transportation for visitors, workers, and residents, both in the District of Columbia and in parts of the National Capital Region.** Additionally, due to the fact that this is the first expansion of bikeshare on to the National Mall, staff recommends that the Commission **encourage the National Park Service to work with the District of Columbia Department of Transportation to monitor the demand for bicycles at the new bikeshare stations; identify how the stations could be expanded and their positioning optimized in the future; and determine where additional stations could be located in East Potomac Park and elsewhere on the National Mall.**

### Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

Staff finds that the proposed project would not be inconsistent with the 2004 *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements*. In particular, the project is consistent with the following policies of the Transportation, Preservation and Historic Features, and Visitor Elements:

- Support the establishment of multimodal connections in the regional transportation system (*Other Infrastructure and Transportation Services Policies*);
- Create transportation infrastructure that is consistent with the pedestrian character of the L'Enfant City and other historic settings (*National Capital Image Policies*);
- Support supplemental forms of transportation,...,to encourage visitor access to federal visitor attractions located outside of the monumental core (*Visitor Transportation Policies*);



- Encourage increased use of bicycles to access attractions in the region, and provide bicycle racks, information about rental locations, and maps identifying designated bike path locations (*Visitor Transportation Policies*);

### **Monumental Core Framework Plan**

Although the Monumental Core Framework Plan (MCFP) focuses on four federal precincts adjacent to the National Mall rather than the Mall itself, the project complements the Framework Plan since expansion of the Capital Bikeshare network will encourage bicycle usage in the federal precincts, as well as the Mall. Staff notes that the Framework Plan includes the following overarching mobility strategies:

- Support A Multi-Modal Transit System. The supplemental services could include bicycle paths and rentals, walkable corridors, and small-scale transit vehicles that will improve accessibility for all people;
- Promote Bicycle Use to increase mobility and reduce dependence on motor vehicles.



Figure 10: Monumental Core Framework Plan: Public Realm Opportunities Map

Specifically, the Framework Plan recommends providing additional bicycle-sharing locations and linking 27 miles of bicycle lanes and paths throughout downtown, Washington, D.C., as shown in the following graphic. The Framework Plan identifies opportunities for bicycle lanes across the National Mall near several of the proposed Capital Bikeshare expansion sites (indicated by red dots).

### **Relevant Federal Facility Master Plan**

The National Mall Plan seeks to improve access and circulation on the Mall through improved pedestrian conditions; better links to public transit; and bicycle access / facility improvements in conjunction with the city's bicycle master plan and bike-sharing program. The Plan supports biking through the following objectives:

- Public access and circulation are convenient, and visitors are easily able to find their way to all sites on the National Mall (*Access and Circulation Objective*);
- The National Mall is better integrated with and connected to the urban fabric of Washington, D.C. (*Access and Circulation Objective*);

- The National Mall is a role model in sustainable urban park development, resource protection, and management, focusing on six areas: requirements and policy, resource health, water use, circulation, facilities, and park operations (*Park Operations Objective*).

The Plan also cites several “Best Management Practices” (BMPs) for increasing public access to the Mall, which are consistent with the proposed Capital Bikeshare expansion on the Mall, including:

- Promote bicycling through more equitable use of road space by converting some road lanes to bike use;
- Foster bike-sharing rental programs to make bicycling more convenient;
- Increase bicycle use and alternative public transportation as components of sustainable, green urban areas.

The National Mall Plan seeks to implement these objectives and BMPs by identifying existing Mall roads that are appropriate to accommodate future separated bicycle routes or lanes, as



well as parts of the Mall that should have future bicycle rental facilities. The following graphic (Figure 11) shows the future proposed bicycle route/lane network, and staff notes that many of the proposed Capital Bikeshare station sites (indicated by red dots) are located along the future bike routes/lanes.

Figure 11: Proposed National Mall Plan

In addition, the Plan identifies various conservation zoning areas on the Mall as shown in Figure 12. The areas shaded in blue are labeled, “Multipurpose Area”, which are intended to show where amenities (bicycle rental stations) for visitors will be constructed, expanded, or improved in the future. Staff notes that all of the proposed bikeshare sites (identified with white circles) are located within or nearby some of these designated areas.

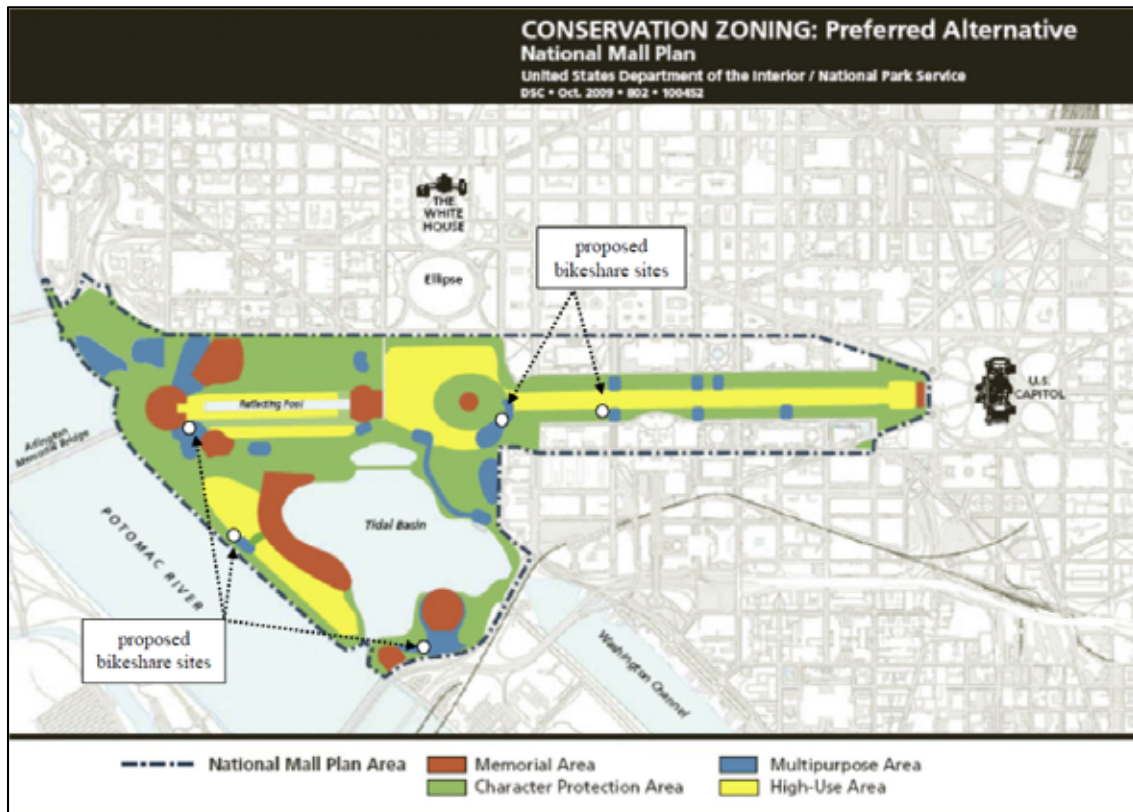


Figure 12: National Mall Plan: Conservation Zoning Map

### **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)**

The NPS has completed its own NEPA review and concluded that the project is a categorical exclusion (CATEX), relying upon its CATEX C.18, which applies to construction of minor structures in previously disturbed or developed areas. Due to its approval authority over the project, staff reviewed the proposal in accordance with NCPC's Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures, and determined that the project can be categorically excluded from further environmental analysis and documentation. The CATEX that staff is relying upon (8.C.2) applies to routine installation of site elements.

### **National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)**

In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Park Service determined, in consultation with the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Officer (DC SHPO), that the project will not have an adverse effect on historic properties. The DC SHPO concurred with NPS's determination on November 22, 2011. Due to its approval authority over the project, NCPC has an independent obligation to carry out the requirements of Section 106 of the NHPA. Staff reviewed the project and concurred with NPS's determination of "no adverse effect".

---

### III. CONSULTATION

#### **Coordinating Committee**

The Coordinating Committee reviewed the proposal at its February 8, 2012 meeting, and forwarded the proposal to the Commission with the statement that the proposal has been coordinated with all participating agencies, except the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). WMATA withheld coordinating until its Office of Adjacent Construction reviews the plans. The participating agencies were NCPC; the District of Columbia Office of Planning; the District Department of Transportation; the National Park Service; and the General Services Administration.

In follow-up to the WMATA request to review the NPS project, NPS forwarded their proposal to WMATA for their review. Upon review, WMATA did not indicate any further concerns with the project.

#### **Coordination with local agencies**

The National Park Service worked extensively with DDOT to develop these proposed locations on the National Mall, as well as determining their positioning and forecasting their capacity needs.