

National Capital Planning Commission 2020 Sustainability Report and Implementation Plan

Executive Summary

POLICY STATEMENT

The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), an independent executive branch agency, defines and protects the federal government's interests in the development of the National Capital Region. We are guided by the National Capital Planning Act; the National Historic Preservation Act; the National Environmental Policy Act; and environmental and energy statutes, regulations, and executive orders. Through planning, policymaking, and project plan review, we protect the broad and multifaceted interests related to federal land; buildings and operations; parks and open space; and the form, character, and experience of the nation's capital.

VISION

The NCPC's mission is to protect capital investments and enhance the extraordinary historic, cultural, and natural resources of the National Capital Region in a cost-effective manner. Pursuant to Section 4(a) of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. §8721(a)), the NCPC is responsible for the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan's Federal Elements, which address matters related to federal properties and interests in the National Capital Region. The NCPC's mission and strategic goals are consistent with and advance the goals in Executive Order 13834, *Executive Order Regarding Efficient Federal Operations* (E.O. 13834). Through the annual sustainability planning and reporting process, the NCPC evaluates how to incorporate E.O. 13834's intent in its work plan in the areas of policymaking, physical planning, project plan review, and agency operations.

The *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital* (Comprehensive Plan) supports several of the goals and requirements in E.O. 13834. The Comprehensive Plan includes goals and policies for effectively siting federal facilities, supporting transportation management and sustainable development patterns, creating and preserving parks and open space, and flood risk mitigation to provide an efficient workforce and public use, protection, and enhancement of federal assets. The NCPC's long-range planning work and development review promote efficient energy and water use, enhanced environmental performance, and waste reduction.

LEADERSHIP

A Commission of twelve federal and local members leads the NCPC and reviews and acts on the Comprehensive Plan, agency-prepared plans and studies, federal projects, and a range of other projects and plans. The NCPC and the District of Columbia share planning responsibilities: in 1973, the District of Columbia Home Rule Act established the Mayor as the chief planner for private development in the District of Columbia; however, the NCPC retained review authority for all development proposals on public land in the National Capital Region. For proposals on federal land in the District of Columbia, the Commission has review and approval authority in lieu of zoning approval. These authorities allow the Commission to monitor and promote compliance with E.O. 13834 requirements. The NCPC applies sustainability policies on a regular basis when reviewing development plans, which includes all federal facilities planned and constructed in the National Capital Region. The NCPC also incorporates sustainable development practices in our long-term planning initiatives to support the agency's mission to protect the region's cultural and natural resources.

The agency's Executive Director is the designated Chief Sustainability Officer. The agency also appointed a lead sustainability planner to manage the agency's operations in meeting the goals and requirements of E.O. 13834. Daily decisions such as taking public transit to meetings, encouraging digital distribution of information instead of traditional hard-copy documents, promoting web-based training, and recycling demonstrate some ways employees reduce costs and increase efficiency.

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2020 PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

In March 2020, in response to COVID-19 federal guidance on gatherings, the NCPC transitioned most agency business, including its monthly Commission meetings, consultation meetings, and interagency working group meetings, to an online format and increased staff telework participation to nearly 100%. This transition accelerated implementation of FY19 and FY20 strategic priorities including streamlining, digitizing and electronically distributing materials for the Commission review process, and adopting communication and information sharing methods such as Microsoft Teams, limiting paper and printed material use, reducing staff and visitor commutes and in-office energy use.

Other recently implemented strategic priorities from FY20 include:

- Approval and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan’s Transportation Element which provides guidance on reducing single-occupant vehicle use, increasing transit use, and promoting sustainability in transportation and development for federal properties in the National Capital Region.
- Reducing the number of on-site copiers and fax machines in cooperation with the General Services Administration (GSA).
- Initiating a process to digitally archive project documents and plans, to support a reduction in leased workspace.

FY 2021-2022 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Each NCPC division plans and implements strategic priorities differently to meet the overall goals of using agency resources effectively, coordinating and promoting efficient decision-making in compliance with federal policies and regulations, and updating plans and policies that promote efficient and sustainable development in the National Capital Region.

The NCPC’s top strategic priorities for fiscal year 2021-2022 are:

- Complete cooperative work with GSA to finalize a newly negotiated occupancy agreement that will reduce the NCPC’s leased space by approximately 30%; procure ENERGY STAR and Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP) designated electronics; and reduce the number of on-site copiers and fax machines.
- Work with three interagency committees comprising up to thirteen federal and local agencies on the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative, Monumental Core Streetscape Guide and Manual, and Independence Avenue Streetscape Project to improve coordination and align goals, efforts, and resources to eliminate redundancy, streamline processes, and advance smart technologies, environmental best practices, and economic vitality of shared interests within the capital city.
- Ensure compliance with federal requirements to minimize stormwater runoff and deforestation and promote reductions in emissions by minimizing the need for single-occupancy vehicles through the review of development projects and master plans within the Washington, DC region.
- Facilitate stakeholder coordination and exchange of information on flood mitigation and stormwater infrastructure in the National Capital Region to align efforts among local and federal agencies to protect assets within the capital city, including coordination towards a comprehensive flood risk management strategy for the Federal Triangle area.
- Streamline and update current policies and plans to include revising the Comprehensive Plan’s Workplace Element to improve guidance on land use and federal workplace issues; collaborating with the District of

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Columbia on the Comprehensive Plan's District Element updates; updating the Memorials and Museums Master Plan to include strategies to efficiently use federal land and identify local-national memorial and museum sites; and complete the annual Federal Capital Improvement Program (FCIP) review of federal capital investments.

In summary, through our agency operations, initiatives, planning, and policymaking, the NCPC is committed to efficient operations and advancing resilient infrastructure and development in the National Capital Region.



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National Capital Planning Commission