Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan
2022 Progress Report

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Introduction

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 comprehensive planning, project and plan review, and special long-range planning initiatives, 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.

Over the past few years, NCPC has integrated climate change adaptation into its programs, policies, and operations. NCPC is committed to advancing climate change adaptation and resiliency planning to support sustainable infrastructure and development in the National Capital Region. In its 2021 Climate Action Plan, NCPC identified near-term, long-term, and ongoing opportunities to incorporate climate adaptation goals and policies in its four core activities:

> Comprehensive Planning: 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 promoting flood risk mitigation to provide an efficient workforce and protect, and enhance the public use of federal assets. NCPC will use Comprehensive Plan goals and policies to encourage federal adaptation actions that enable the federal government to manage climate change risks in the National Capital Region.
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> Federal Capital Improvements Program (FCIP): Capital improvement plans link the visions articulated by project plans with annual capital expenditure budgets, allow for a systematic evaluation of potential projects, and facilitate coordination among the units of government that are responsible for project implementation. Through review of capital improvement plans by regional jurisdictions and FCIP reporting, NCPC coordinates capital improvement planning at federal and local levels. NCPC will use the FCIP process to encourage agencies to identify climate adaptation strategies in their project submissions.
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> Project and Plan Review: NCPC works directly with federal agencies through the planning and design review process to identify climate change risks and describe adaptation measures considered in the projects and plans submitted to NCPC for review. Early engagement provides opportunities to integrate climate adaptation goals early and influence project outcomes.
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> Special Initiatives: NCPC's long-range planning work promotes efficient energy and water use and enhanced environmental performance and resilience. NCPC will include climate adaptation strategies when preparing plans and initiatives that address current planning needs of the federal government in the National Capital. Current work includes the Monumental Core Streetscape Guide, the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative, and Independence Avenue Urban Design and Streetscape Plan.

The climate reporting process is an opportunity to reflect on how NCPC's work addresses current climate change risks, aligns with other federal, regional, and local adaptation efforts, and complements other initiatives. NCPC is coordinating its efforts regarding resilience, climate adaptation, flood risk, sustainability, and equity.

SECTION 1: Updates on Priority Actions

Priority Action Item 1: Comprehensive Plan Updates

Updates to the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan are opportunities to incorporate adaptation strategies into planning and decision-making guidance and increase awareness of current climate change risks.

NCPC is updating the Federal Workplace Element to include policies that encourage agencies to include resilience planning and adaptation strategies in their projects and long-term planning efforts. NCPC is also working to better understand the long-term implications, accelerated by the pandemic, on workplace locations and transportation choices, which will have sustainability implications. An upcoming update to the Federal Environment Element will reflect updated federal sustainability and adaptation planning guidance, strengthen policy language related to resiliency and aging infrastructure, and include policies to address environmental justice.

Current Status: In progress

Estimated date of Completion: Federal Workplace update complete (2023-2024), Environment Element update initiated (2023)

Brief Description of Progress: NCPC's Policy and Research Division (PRD) in partnership with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments will explore scenario planning to better understand the cumulative impacts of federal telework and hybrid workplaces on the region. This Federal Workplace study will identify future scenarios and analyze how they may impact office demand, federal footprint, the transportation network, and federal procurement. This study will inform NCPC's update to the policies in the Federal Workplace Element update. PRD is beginning to identify opportunities to strengthen policy language related to resiliency and adaptation, aging infrastructure, and environmental justice to be included in the Environment Element update.

Priority Action Item 2: Federal Capital Improvements Program Review Process Updates

The annual FCIP review provides an opportunity to use the solicitation process to collect information and the reporting process to document agencies commitment to incorporating federal sustainability, adaptation, and resilience planning goals. The FCIP may report on how projects meet certain resiliency goals as defined by E.O. 14008, E.O. 14057, and other federal sustainability guidance**.** Each summer, NCPC submits the FCIP to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for use in its preparation of the President's annual budget. Through the FCIP, NCPC provides OMB with its planning and funding recommendations for federal public works over a six-year period.

During FCIP review, NCPC engages federal agencies for the submission of capital improvement projects in early stages of project development. NCPC can use the FCIP solicitation process to ask how federal agencies are integrating renewable energy, resilience, and climate readiness in their projects, and help guide applicants to consider climate adaptation and resilience early in their planning process.

Current Status: In progress

Estimated date of Completion: 2024-2025

Brief Description of Progress: NCPC made changes to this year's FCIP program in response to NCPC's efforts to address climate change and equity. Per the guidance of OMB, NCPC used the FCIP solicitation process to ask how applicant agencies are incorporating renewable energy, resiliency, climate readiness, and equity into planning for their capital projects. These changes include using the FCIP as a tool to engage with federal applicant agencies during the submission of projects to seek information and resources on how they are considering climate change and resiliency as well as equity in the planning process for their capital improvement projects.

As part of a phased approach, initial questions were developed and incorporated into this year's solicitation process. As the second phase, following this year's FCIP cycle, NCPC will reevaluate the questions after receiving feedback from agency representatives. NCPC will work with OMB and the Commission to refine the questions as necessary prior to the next FCIP cycle. Responses to these questions will be utilized to score projects in upcoming years.

Priority Action Item 3: Project and Plan Review Process Updates

The project and plan review process provides an opportunity to encourage applicant agencies to meet federal sustainability, adaptation, and resilience planning goals.

During the project and plan review process, NCPC generally engages federal agencies early in their planning and design process regarding plans and projects that will be submitted for Commission review. NCPC can use the consultation process to initiate discussion regarding relevant topics such as renewable energy, resilience, and climate literacy. Early discussions can provide opportunities to influence project development in ways that can help align with climate action goals.

Current Status: In progress

Estimated date of Completion: This is an ongoing process that will develop over time in response to project submissions and future federal guidance.

Brief Description of Progress: NCPC's Urban Design and Plan Review Division (UDPRD) started addressing climate action by including discussions on renewable energy, resilience, climate literacy, and compliance with federal guidance in conversations with applicants as it relates to their project and masterplan submissions. UDPRD is noting these topics and considerations in the Executive Director's Recommendations (EDRs). EDRs are transmitted to the Commission to assist in their deliberation regarding projects and master plans. This effort will develop over time in response to project submissions and future federal guidance.

Priority Action Item 4: Monumental Core Streetscape Project – Guide and Manual Update

Updating the Streetscape Manual is an opportunity to address identified climate risks and showcase and standardize sustainable design and resiliency planning best practices.

NCPC, in collaboration with an Interagency Working Group, is updating the 1992 *National Mall Streetscape Manual*. New principles and guidelines for streets within the project boundary are

intended to: (1) unify the capital city; (2) incorporate sustainable best practices; and (3) improve coordination among numerous federal and local jurisdictions.

Current Status: In progress

Estimated date of Completion: 2023-2024

Brief Description of Progress: NCPC's Physical Planning Division (PPD) is: (1) preparing the final draft of the vertical and surface elements, including tree canopy and stormwater management for Commission review in late 2022; and (2) developing the small-scale element guidelines which will include electric vehicle charging stations, through late 2023.

Priority Action Item 5: Flood Risk Management

NCPC's work on flooding is an ongoing interagency effort that provides opportunities to assess and update current risks and formalize information exchange.

NCPC participates in an interagency working group led by the District of Columbia (DC) Silver Jackets[1] that is working towards a comprehensive flood risk management strategy for the Federal Triangle area. In addition, NCPC participates in various working groups that aim to align efforts among local and federal agencies to protect assets within the National Capital Region, including coordination and exchange of information on flood mitigation guidance.

Current Status: in progress

Estimated date of Completion: Commission adoption of updated flooding risk management standards implementation plan (2023)

Brief Description of Progress: NCPC's Office of Public Engagement (OPE) leads the agency's flooding and resilience efforts which includes responding to EO 14030 by working with federal partners to develop guidance that incorporates the new federal flood risk management standards. New guidelines and an approach for using these guidelines in the plan and project review process will be presented to the Commission for adoption in 2023.

SECTION 2: Updates on Other Initial Plan Topics

Climate Risk Reduction

A. NCPC's mission and agency operations are generally not immediately or significantly impaired by climate-related hazards. NCPC operates out of a leased space and does not manage procurement, real property, public lands and waters, fund capital projects, or have implementation authority. As such, we generally do not undertake a structured method of assessing operating risk related to climate-related hazards. However, NCPC does identify information technology (IT) system risks, reviews new IT systems in accordance with National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards which include physical and environmental controls related to climate hazards and performs contingency testing to evaluate the IT system's resilience in the

1 The D.C. Silver Jackets is an interagency team comprised of members from federal, District of Columbia and regional agencies, as well as academia. This team leverages resources to identify and implement comprehensive, resilient, and sustainable solutions to reduce flood risk around the District and to assist local communities.

event of a human or natural disaster.

B. NCPC has limited opportunities to influence local climate-resilient investments due to our statutory authority; as such, we generally do not assess fiscal risk exposure due to climate-related hazards.

C. In FY22, NCPC migrated most of its on-premises services and applications to a cloud-based system to reduce its physical hardware footprint and increase energy efficiency. To minimize risk in the event of a regional disaster at one of the cloud facilities, NCPC selected an alternate processing center in a different region to serve as a backup. NCPC will continue to look for ways to increase agency energy efficiency and mitigate climate related financial risks.

Climate Vulnerability Assessments

A. NCPC updated its climate vulnerability assessment as part of its 2021 Climate Action Plan. NCPC's mission and agency operations are generally not immediately or significantly impaired by the climate change related risks identified in the vulnerability assessment. NCPC operates out of a leased space and does not manage procurement, real property, public lands and waters, fund capital projects, or have implementation authority. However, the risks identified can impact federal development projects that NCPC reviews. While applicant agencies are responsible for their specific project plans, NCPC has the authority to review the project to ensure that it is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's goals and objectives, including policies that encourage applicant agencies to include risk assessments, adaptation strategies, resilience planning, and emergency preparedness in their projects and long-term planning efforts. NCPC also incorporates climate change risks into its own long-range planning projects and special initiatives.

Climate Literacy

A. NCPC encourages climate literacy and supports climate and resilience related training opportunities for staff to further their understanding and expertise. NCPC will continue to engage with local and regional organizations and agencies (such as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the District of Columbia government, the Urban Land Institute, academic organizations, and federal agencies) to stay informed and exchange information.

B. NCPC continues to lead and facilitate interagency coordination and collaboration efforts to address climate adaptation in the National Capital Region. NCPC will continue to incorporate climate change adaptation, resiliency planning, and environmental justice best practices in its operations and work on the Comprehensive Plan, FCIP, the agency's project and plan review process, and its long-range planning activities.

C. Through its review authority over federal projects, NCPC's process requires applicants to coordinate with other federal agencies and local communities on issues that affect external stakeholders, including transportation management, urban design, environmental conservation, climate change adaptation, resiliency planning, and environmental justice.

Tribal Engagement

A. NCPC does not own real property, manage fleets, fund capital projects, or have implementation authority. However, NCPC has an opportunity to consider impacts to tribal lands and Tribal Treaty Rights through our National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 responsibilities during the project review process.

These responsibilities apply to those projects where NCPC has an approval authority. NCPC has identified tribal communities in the region and contacted them to be included in outreach efforts.

B. NCPC does not own real property, manage fleets, fund capital projects, or have implementation authority. However, NCPC has an opportunity to consider Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge through our National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 responsibilities during the project review process. These responsibilities apply to those projects where NCPC has an approval authority.

Environmental Justice

A. NCPC released its Equity Action Plan in April 2022. Four action items in the plan closely align with the Climate Plan's priority actions: Comprehensive Plan updates, Federal Capital Improvement Program updates, Project and Plan Review updates, and Public Outreach. Work toward implementing these actions will be coordinated to address environmental justice and climate change. Environmental Justice is a key consideration as the agency carries out its' mission, such as: (1) updating the Comprehensive Plan, including a new introduction, equity crosswalk[2], and strengthening policies; (2) integrating questions into the FCIP solicitation process; and (3) on-going discussions with project and plan review applicants. To advance equity and environmental justice, NCPC is researching engagement practices to make planning processes and meetings more accessible and identify opportunities to engage with underserved communities.

Partnerships

A. In FY22, NCPC expanded its existing partnerships related to flooding to include: (1) participating in a Military Installation Resilience Review study led by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG); (2) coordinating with the US Army Corps of Engineers and MWCOG on NEPA regulatory process related to their coastal flood risk study that aims to support resilient communities in Northern Virginia: (3) coordinating with District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment Flood Task Force to identify policies and projects to bolster flood readiness while equitably protecting the District's resident and economy, including the District's efforts to develop an integrated flood risk management model; and (4) partnering with MWCOG to explore scenario planning to better understand the cumulative impacts of federal telework and hybrid workplaces on the region, including implications for climate goals.

SECTION 3: New Topics from E.O. 14057

Policy Review

A. NCPC's mission and agency operations are generally not immediately or significantly impaired by climate-related hazards. NCPC operates out of a leased space and does not manage procurement, real property, public lands and waters, fund capital projects, or have implementation authority. As such, we generally do not undertake an internal policy review to remove maladaptive policies and programs and ensure climate-resilient investment. However, we continue to support smarter local and regional climate resiliency investments and policies

[2] *The equity crosswalk is a compilation of all existing Comprehensive Plan policies that focus on advancing equity, including policies that also address climate adaptation and resilience.*

through our direct participation in interagency committees and stakeholder meetings organized by regional and local governments.

Climate Scenario Analysis

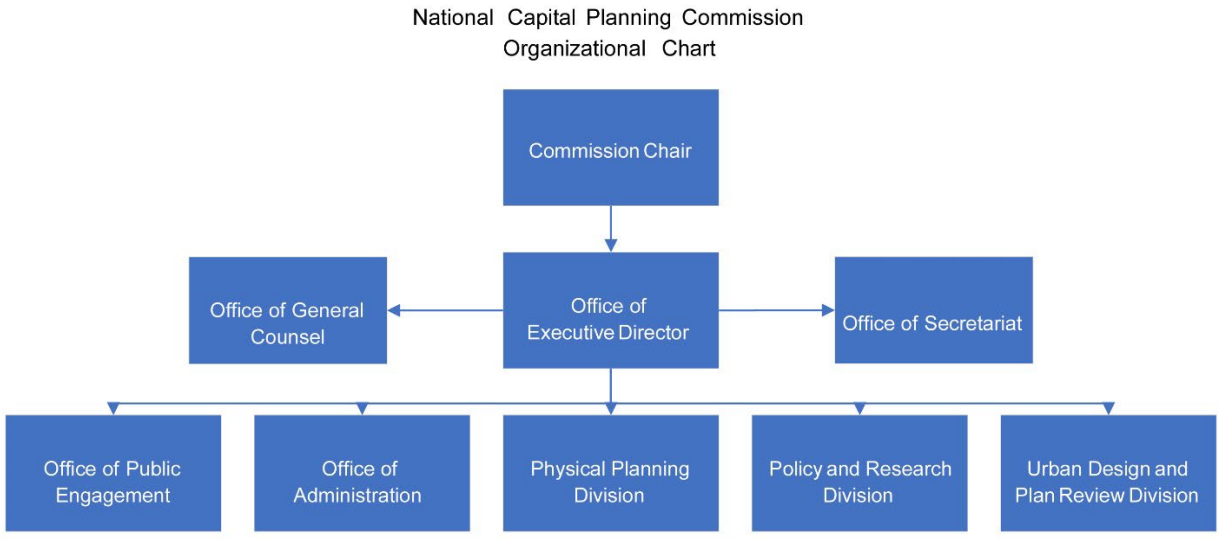
A. NCPC uses climate information and projections to facilitate and encourage other federal agencies to improve their climate resilience by:

- Integrating questions related to federal sustainability, adaptation, and resilience planning goals for applicant agencies to submit during the FCIP solicitation process;
- Using the project and plan review process to encourage agencies to identify and document climate change risks and adaptation opportunities; and
- Using the project and plan review process to support federal projects in the National Capital Region that are included in the agencies' adaptation plan priority action lists

B. NCPC uses a variety of available assessments, reports, plans, and resources to develop its sustainability and climate adaptation response including:

- **NCPC** *2018* Flood Risk Resource Guide
- **Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments** *2020* Metropolitan Washington 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan
- **DC Silver Jackets** *2019* Federal Triangle Flood Workshop Report
- **DC Water** *2011* Federal Triangle Stormwater Drainage Study
- **Executive Office of the Mayor** *2019* Resilient DC
- **District Department of Energy and Environment** *2016* Climate Ready DC and *2021* progress report, and *2016* Sustainable DC and *2021* progress report

C. NCPC is a small agency and climate literacy is critical for management and staff in all divisions. The agency encourages education and training opportunities for staff to further their understanding and expertise.



In summary, through our agency strategic goals and priority adaptation actions, NCPC is committed to advancing climate change adaptation and resiliency planning to support sustainable infrastructure and development in the National Capital Region.

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National Capital Planning Commission