3.3 HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Tier I Final EIS evaluated the potential for the massing alternatives to create adverse effects to historic resources, including buildings, views, and landscapes. It was determined that the massing alternatives would create short-term adverse effects with the disruption of the NMAAHC site during construction. Long-term adverse effects were identified relating to the loss or alteration of character-defining features that contribute to the historic significance of features located within the Washington Monument Grounds and historic resources in proximity to the NMAAHC site. Further, it was determined that any new above-grade structure on the NMAAHC site would significantly alter the character-defining features of multiple historic resources contained within the area of potential effect (APE) (Smithsonian Institution, 2008a).

This section identifies the historic resources that are present on the project site, as well as within the surrounding area, and defines the APE in accordance with regulations for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act relating to the identification of historic properties (36 CFR § 800.4) and the assessment of adverse effects (36 CFR § 800.5). The APE and the inventory of historic resources potentially affected by the proposed action have been carried over from the Tier I Final EIS issued June 2008 (Smithsonian Institution, 2008a). A summary of Section 6.1 Cultural Resources from the Tier I Final EIS follows (see pages 99-119 of the Tier I Final EIS, which can be viewed at http://www.nmaahceis.com/tier-i-eis).

3.3.1 What is the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the proposed action?

The project site sits in the northeast corner of the Washington Monument Grounds, which is defined by 17th Street to the west, 14th Street to the east, Constitution Avenue to the north, and the Tidal Basin to the south. Due to the prominent location of the project site, a broad APE was defined to identify the historic resources potentially affected by the proposed action. The APE was developed through research and analysis, site visits, photographic studies, and discussions with consulting parties as part of the Tier I EIS process. At the beginning of the Tier II EIS process, the Section 106 consulting parties confirmed that the Tier I APE is appropriate for this Tier II EIS. Figure 3.3.1 shows the boundaries for the APE.

The historically significant resources contained within the APE include buildings, streets, historic districts, landscape features, monuments and memorials, and elements of the L’Enfant and McMillan plans, as identified by the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the National Historic Landmarks Program, and the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites. Resources consulted in the identification process included NRHP nominations and determinations of eligibility (DOE) for properties within the APE, Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) documentation, cultural resource plans produced for the White House Precinct, cultural landscape inventories and cultural landscape reports for the historic Mall (hereafter referred to as the Mall) and the Washington Monument.
Grounds that were produced by National Park Service (NPS), and multiple other records (Smithsonian Institution, 2008a).¹

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¹ As defined by the National Mall Plan, the historic Mall is bound by Constitution and Pennsylvania avenues on the north, 1st Street on the east, Independence and Maryland avenues on the south, and 14th Street on the west.
As previously determined by the Smithsonian Institution, and agreed upon by District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (DCHPO) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the proposed action would cause adverse effects on certain historically significant properties, districts, and city plans (Smithsonian, 2008a). The historic structures, buildings, monuments, and districts potentially affected by the proposed action are illustrated in a series of three maps: “Plan of the City of Washington: Contributing Streets, Reservations, and Appropriations,” “Historic Districts and Contributing Properties,” and “Individually Listed Historic Properties” (see Figures 3.3.2 through 3.3.4).

Figure 3.3.2 relies on the draft National Historic Landmark nomination “The Plan of the City of Washington,” which is currently held at the DCHPO. This document provides the current definitions for the significance of the historic plan of the city of Washington as it took physical shape during the period of significance (1791-1942). The original comprehensive plan of Washington was designed by Peter (Pierre) Charles L’Enfant in 1791 as the site of the Federal City. It was developed throughout the nineteenth century and substantially amplified in 1901-02 by the McMillan Commission (officially, the Senate Park Commission). Original appropriations and reservations were delineated in both the L’Enfant and McMillan Commission Plans as defining characteristics of the city and retain significance as major features of the city plan. Streets and diagonal avenues are also identified as significant resources and serve as important axes, cross axes, and boundaries within the plans (Smithsonian Institution, 2008a).

Figure 3.3.3 identifies historic districts within the APE and the contributing properties therein as determined by the NRHP, the National Historic Landmark Program, and the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites. The historic districts within the APE include:

- National Mall Historic District [NR, DC Inventory];
- Northwest Rectangle Historic District [Determined Eligible for NR];
- Seventeenth Street Historic District [DC Inventory];
- Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site [NHS, DC Inventory];
- Federal Triangle Historic District [DC Inventory, within the Pennsylvania Avenue NHS];
- West Potomac Park Historic District [NR, DC Inventory]; and
- East Potomac Park Historic District [NR, DC Inventory].

Figure 3.3.4 depicts the resources that are individually listed in or eligible for the NRHP, designated as National Historic Landmarks, or listed in the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites. Currently, the Washington Monument is listed as an individual National Register property with boundaries encompassing the entire Grounds. Some of the most prominent resources include the Mall, Federal Triangle (including the Herbert C. Hoover Commerce building that is adjacent to the NMAAHC site), the White House Precinct, and the Ellipse (Smithsonian Institution, 2008a).

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2 Due to the large number of contributing resources within the Pennsylvania Avenue NHS (over 100), only those contributing features that were considered within reasonable proximity to the NMAAHC site were included in this study.
Figure 3.3.2 Plan of the City of Washington: Contributing Streets, Reservations, and Appropriations
Source: Tier I Final EIS (Smithsonian Institution, 2008a)
Plan of the City of Washington: Contributing Streets, Reservations, and Appropriations

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Henry Bacon Drive</td>
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<td>Daniel French Drive</td>
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<th>Appropriations and Reservations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reservation No. 1: President's Park (Original Appropriation No. 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reservation No. 2: Washington Monument Grounds (Original Appropriation No. 3, Reservation No. 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reservation Nos. 3, 3B, 4, 5, 6, and 6A: National Mall (Part of Original Appropriation No. 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reservation No. 332: West Potomac Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reservation No. 333: East Potomac Park</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Potential Effect</th>
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Figure 3.3.3 Historic Districts and Contributing Properties
Source: Tier I Final EIS (Smithsonian Institution, 2008a)
**National Mall Historic District**
[National Register, October 15, 1966; DC Landmark, November 8, 1964]

**Northwest Rectangle Historic District**
[Determined Eligible for the National Register]

**Seventeenth Street Historic District**
[DC Inventory, March 7, 1968]

**Area of Potential Effect**

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**Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site***
[NHS, October 15, 1966; DC Inventory, June 19, 1973]

24. Department of Treasury
25. Department of Commerce, Federal Triangle
26. District Building, Federal Triangle
27. Federal Trade Commission, Federal Triangle
28. Internal Revenue Service Building, Federal Triangle
29. Department of Justice, Federal Triangle
30. Labor Department, Interstate Commerce and Departmental Auditorium, Federal Triangle
31. National Archives, Federal Triangle
32. Old Post Office Building, Federal Triangle
33. U.S. Post Office Building, Federal Triangle
34. Sherman Statue, Sherman Park
35. Benjamin Franklin Statue, Pennsylvania & 12th St
36. Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, Market Sq Park
37. General George C. Meade Memorial, Meade Plaza
38. Peace Monument, Pennsylvania Avenue & 1st Street
39. Captain Nathan Hale Statue, Department of Justice
40. Andrew W. Mellon Memorial Fountain, Mellon Park

**Federal Triangle Historic District**
[DC Inventory, March 7, 1968; within Pennsylvania Avenue NHS]

25. Department of Commerce
26. District Building (see individual listing)
27. Federal Trade Commission
28. Internal Revenue Service
29. Department of Justice
30. Labor Department, ICC, & Departmental Auditorium
31. National Archives (see individual listing)
32. Old Post Office Building (see individual listing)
33. U.S. Post Office Department (Ariel Rios)
39. Captain Nathan Hale Statue

**West Potomac Park Historic District**
[National Register, November 30, 1973 (revised November 11, 2001); DC Inventory, November 8, 1964]

41. Lock Keeper's House (see individual listing)
42. Tidal Basin
43. Number 4 Fountain
44. John Paul Jones Monument
45. Japanese Cherry Trees and Statuary
46. Lincoln Memorial Grounds (see individual memorial listing)
47. John Ericsson Monument
48. DC WWI Memorial
49. Kutz Bridge & Independence Avenue Extension
50. Jefferson Memorial Grounds (see individual memorial listing)
51. Constitution Gardens
52. 56 Signers Memorial
53. Vietnam Veterans Memorial (see individual memorial listing)
54. Vietnam Women's Memorial
55. Korean War Memorial (see individual memorial listing)
56. Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial (see individual memorial listing)
57. Reflecting Pool
58. Stone Seawalls
59. Independence Avenue Extension

**East Potomac Park Historic District**
[DC Inventory, November 8, 1964]

61. U.S. Engineers Storehouse (900 Ohio Drive, SW)
62. Field House, Golf Course, Mini Golf Course
63. Ohio Drive, SW

* The Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site contains approximately 111 contributing sites, buildings, structures, and objects. For reasons of clarity, the only historic resources that will be noted in this list and on corresponding maps will be those that could be significantly impacted by the area of potential affect.
Figure 3.3.4 Individually Listed Historic Properties
Source: Tier I Final EIS (Smithsonian Institution, 2008a)
**Individually Listed Historic Properties**

[NHL] National Historic Landmark  
[NR] National Register of Historic Places  
[DC] District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>American National Red Cross</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>American Pharmaceutical Institute</td>
<td>[NR, DC]</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Arlington Memorial Bridge</td>
<td>[NR, DC]</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Arts and Industries Building</td>
<td>[NHL, NR, DC]</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Bartholdi Fountain</td>
<td>[NR Exempt, DC]</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Bulfinch Gatehouse and Gateposts</td>
<td>[NR, DC]</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Constitution Hall (DAR)</td>
<td>[NHL, NR, DC]</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Corcoran Gallery of Art</td>
<td>[NHL, NR, DC]</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>DAR Memorial Continental Hall</td>
<td>[NHL, NR, DC]</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>District of Columbia District Building</td>
<td>[NR, DC]</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>The Ellipse (President's Park South)</td>
<td>[NR]</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Jefferson Memorial Bridge</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Federal Reserve Board Building</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Freer Gallery of Art</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Korean War Veterans Memorial</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Lincoln Memorial</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Lock Keeper's House</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>National Academy of Science and Engineering</td>
<td>[NR, DC]</td>
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<td>National Archives</td>
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<td>National Gallery of Art West Building</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Old Post Office Building</td>
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<td>Pan American Union</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>Smithsonian Institution Building (Castle)</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>U.S. Botanic Gardens</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing</td>
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<td>28.</td>
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<td>29.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>U.S. Department of Agriculture South Building</td>
<td>[NR Eligible]</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>U.S. Department of the Interior (New Interior Bldg)</td>
<td>[NR, DC]</td>
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<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>U.S. Department of the Interior Offices</td>
<td>[NR]</td>
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<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>U.S. Department of the Interior South Building</td>
<td>[NR Eligible]</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>U.S. Department of the Treasury Building</td>
<td>[NHL]</td>
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<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>U.S. State, War, and Navy Building</td>
<td>[NHL, NR, DC]</td>
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<td>36.</td>
<td>Van Ness House Stables</td>
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<td>37.</td>
<td>Vietnam Veterans Memorial</td>
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<td>38.</td>
<td>Washington Monument and Grounds</td>
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<td>39.</td>
<td>White House and Grounds</td>
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<td>40.</td>
<td>WWII Memorial</td>
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<td>41.</td>
<td>The Mall</td>
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Additionally, as part of the Tier I EIS process, the Smithsonian Institution consulted with interested parties, including NCPC, CFA, DCHPO, and ACHP to identify and analyze the character of cultural and historic properties on and near the project site. As a result of this consultation, a set of design principles (see Appendix A) was established to summarize the design character of the project site, the Washington Monument Grounds, the National Mall, and the surrounding urban context and to articulate parameters for avoiding or minimizing the adverse effects of the alternatives.3

3.3.2 How are historic resources evaluated?

In order to evaluate the effects of the proposed action on the Washington Monument Grounds and on surrounding historic resources, it is necessary to understand the primary character-defining features of these resources. As discussed in the Tier I Final EIS (Smithsonian Institution, 2008a), the NPS's Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques (1999), organizes character-defining features into seven main categories that include, but are not limited to:

- **Views and Vistas**: Features that create or allow a range of vision which can be natural or designed and controlled.
- **Spatial Organization**: The arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces.
- **Land Use**: Organization, form, and shape the landscape in response to land use.
- **Circulation**: Spaces, features, and materials that constitute systems of movement.
- **Topography**: Three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features and orientation.
- **Vegetation**: Indigenous or introduced trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous materials.
- **Buildings and Structures**: Three-dimensional constructs such as houses, barns, garages, stables, bridges, and memorials.

Descriptions of the character-defining features of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Mall, and the project site’s surrounding urban context are provided below.

**Views and Vistas**

A defining aspect of the Washington Monument Grounds is the relationship between the Washington Monument and its surrounding historic buildings and sites, and the views and vistas to and from these sites and structures.

The creation of planned views and vistas (“reciprocity of site”) between and among notable sites was an important design principle of both the L’Enfant and McMillan Commission Plans. Important views and vistas of the plans include vistas within the National Mall, distant views from higher locations to the monumental core, panoramic views that open and widen on the approach to the...
The Mall is defined by the grand vista between the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument. The buildings, walks, and gardens along the Mall reinforce this visual corridor. The vista was an integral component of L'Enfant's Plan for a grand avenue connecting the U.S. Capitol with the planned monument to George Washington. The McMillan Commission Plan retained the axial promenade and east-west vista and reinforced the visual corridor through landscaping – primarily the lawn panels and rows of elm trees – and the symmetrical placement of institutional buildings on either side of the central corridor of space. In addition to the vista from the U.S. Capitol to the Washington Monument, significant views within the Mall include views to the elms from the walks and grass panels, views to the building facades from the Mall, views up cross streets, and views from the Mall to Union Square.

Character-defining views and vistas of the Washington Monument Grounds include: views from within the Federal Triangle, the city, and from the surrounding region to the Monument; views from the top of the Monument to the surrounding city and its important sites; vistas from the Washington Monument Grounds to the Lincoln Memorial, White House, Thomas Jefferson Memorial, and the U.S. Capitol; vistas of the Washington Monument from the Lincoln Memorial, White House, Thomas Jefferson Memorial, and the U.S. Capitol; screened views of Washington Monument Grounds features; and axial views through the Jefferson Pier to the White House and Thomas Jefferson Memorial.

Additional important views and vistas potentially affected by the proposed action were identified through the Section 106 consultation process. These views include: 1) pedestrian-level view from the Washington Monument Grounds to the NMAAHC site looking northeast toward the Federal Triangle; 2) pedestrian-level view across the site looking southwest from the Federal Triangle (at the northeast corner of 14th Street and Constitution Avenue) to the Washington Monument; 3) pedestrian level view to the NMAAHC site from the Ellipse on the north side of Constitution Avenue looking east; 4) pedestrian-level view from the Mall on Madison Drive in front of NMAH looking west toward the NMAAHC site; 5) aerial view from the top of the Washington Monument looking northeast across the NMAAHC site; 6) aerial view to the site and the Washington Monument Grounds from the Old Post Office Tower; and 7) vista to the Washington Monument Grounds from the center panel of the Mall at 12th Street looking west. Figure 3.3.5 shows the locations of the key views. The existing view and the photo simulations are shown in Section 3.3.8.
Figure 3.3.5 Locations of Key Views

Source: AECOM, 2010

Legend
1) View from the Washington Monument Grounds looking northeast
2) View from the Federal Triangle at 14th Street and Constitution Ave looking southwest
3) View from the Ellipse at Constitution Ave looking east
4) View from the Mall on Madison Drive looking west
5) View from the top of the Washington Monument looking northeast
6) View from the top of the Old Post Office Tower looking southwest
7) View from the Mall looking west
Spatial Organization

The spatial organization of the Plan of the City of Washington is defined by a Baroque structure of radiating avenues superimposed on a grid of orthogonal streets. This meeting of diagonal and orthogonal thoroughfares creates a system of parks, streets, avenues, open spaces, and vistas that give physical shape to the design of the National Capital.

The spatial organization of the Mall is defined by the channel of space between the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument, which is framed by lines of elm trees. This main spatial volume opens up and expands at both ends, into Union Square on the east and the Washington Monument Grounds on the west.

The Washington Monument provides the central focus for the spatial organization of the Washington Monument Grounds, which itself serves as the center point of the cross-axis of Washington’s monumental core.

Land Use

The land uses most significant to the Washington Monument Grounds and the Mall are commemorative, public gathering, recreation, and visitor service. These uses reflect the central importance of the Mall in the civic and daily life of the Nation’s Capital.

Circulation

Important circulation features of the historic L’Enfant and McMillan Commission Plans include all of the streets within the L’Enfant city (i.e. the portion of the city laid out by L’Enfant) that were specifically planned by, or grew directly out of, the historic plans.

The circulation features that contribute to the significance of the Mall include Jefferson Drive, Madison Drive, 3rd Street, 4th Street, 7th Street, 14th Street, the North Vista Walk (formerly Washington Drive), the South Vista Walk (formerly Adams Drive), the sidewalks along Madison Drive and Jefferson Drive, and the cross-axial walks.

Significant circulation features of the Washington Monument Grounds include: perimeter road corridors, including Constitution Avenue and 14th Street; Independence Avenue; Maine Avenue; and the walks along perimeter roads and the Tidal Basin. Although the existing pedestrian walks through the Washington Monument Grounds do not contribute to the significance of the Grounds, they are compatible with the curvilinear configuration of historic circulation.

Topography

The plan of the historic city of Washington was laid out in a shallow topographic bowl at the confluence of the Potomac and Anacostia rivers. The riverbanks defined the southeastern and southwestern edges of the city; on the northeast and northwest, a man-made boundary tracked the irregular contour at the base of a natural escarpment.
The topography of the Mall is generally level. The west end slopes down to 14th Street and is particularly steep at the northwest corner. The land north of Madison Drive slopes steeply down to Constitution Avenue, and NMAH and NMNH are built into the slope. A similar grade change characterizes the northeast corner of the Washington Monument Grounds.

The topography of the Washington Monument Grounds is defined by the mound, or knoll, upon which the Washington Monument stands. Other character-defining features of the Washington Monument Grounds include the peripheral "flats" of the north Monument Grounds, the flood control levee of the northwest Monument Grounds, the berm east of the Monument Lodge, and the Potomac Flats of the south Monument Grounds.

Vegetation

The vegetation of the Mall is primarily comprised of open lawns, American elm trees – many of which date from the original planting of the elms in 1935 – and several bald cypress trees, retained from the Mall’s earlier picturesque landscape. The center lawn panels, framed by the elms, create the Mall vista. These elements – the grass panels, the tree panels, and the elms – are contributing elements of the Mall landscape.

The most significant vegetative features of the Washington Monument Grounds are the open lawns that define the ground plane, the street trees that delineate the perimeter, and the groves of cherry and other canopy trees that are generally located in the corners of the Grounds.

Buildings and Structures

Significant buildings and structures in the vicinity of the project site include the White House, the museums along the Mall, and the Federal Triangle buildings. The Federal Triangle is an area with a distinct architectural image characterized by relatively uniform massing, building height, and other features. The Federal Triangle’s assemblage of buildings creates a strongly defined architectural edge and backdrop along the north side of Constitution Avenue. The Herbert C. Hoover Commerce building is the closest Federal Triangle building to the site.

The buildings and structures integral to the significance of the Washington Monument Grounds include the Washington Monument, the Monument Lodge, the Survey Lodge, and the Jefferson Pier. Other structures that contribute to the integrity of the Washington Monument Grounds include the Bulfinch Gateposts, which flank the 15th Street entrance to the Grounds, and the Independence Avenue overpass bridge. The gatepost on the southeast corner of 15th Street and Constitution Avenue is located within the project site.

Section 106 Consultation

The analysis of concept alternatives and their effect on cultural resources used a matrix format which will lead to the identification of a culturally preferred alternative. The matrix, a product of the Section 106 Consultation Parties, is found in Appendix 9.3.
3.3.3 How would the historic resources within the APE be affected?

This section analyzes the potential effects of the proposed action on historic resources within the APE and evaluated in terms both short-term (lasting through construction or less than one year) and long-term (lasting more than one year) effects. In the short term, the effects would be related to construction activity, while long-term effects would relate directly to loss or alteration of the character-defining features addressed in the following analysis.

The thresholds used for analyzing the intensity of effects are defined as follows:4

**No Effect:** The proposed action would not affect overall integrity or affect the character-defining feature(s) of a National Register, National Historic Landmark, or District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites eligible/listed property within the APE.

**Minor Effect or No Significant Effect:** The effect would be minor if the proposed action does not substantially alter primary character-defining feature(s) of a National Register eligible/listed property, including but not limited to views and vistas, spatial organization, land use, circulation, topography, vegetation, and buildings and structures. The effect would be minor if it alters character-defining features in a limited way. By nature, an accumulation of many minor effects would be adverse.

**Moderate Significant Effect:** The effect would be apparent and would diminish overall integrity or would alter a character-defining feature(s) of a National Register, National Historic Landmark, or District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites eligible/listed property.

**Major Significant Effect:** The effect would be serious and would greatly diminish overall integrity or would greatly alter a character-defining feature(s) of a National Register, National Historic Landmark, or District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites eligible/listed property.

**No Action Alternative**

With the No Action Alternative, the proposed action would not take place. There would be no new construction on the project site and the site would remain open space as part of the Washington Monument Grounds. No short- or long-term adverse effect on historic resources would occur because there would be no changes to the site. (The concession trailer, trees, and walkways would remain.)

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4 The thresholds and definitions used for assessing effects follows the methodology used in the NMAAHC Tier I Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).
Action Alternative 1: Plinth Concept

The Plinth Alternative would feature a cantilevered rectilinear "plinth" element below a two-tiered Corona. The Plinth Alternative would be positioned north of the setback established by the McMillan Plan. The Corona would align with the primary mass of NMAH, while the south edge of the cantilevered plinth would align with the lower level elements of other museums on the north side of the Mall. The exterior skin of the Corona would consist of bronze-clad panels while the plinth would be faced with stone and the base would be glazed. The Plinth Alternative would have a footprint area of 85,804 square feet and measure, from a future average site elevation of 13 feet, approximately 118 feet msl to the top of the Corona and 134 feet 6 inches msl to the top of the penthouse. The landscape treatment of the Plinth Alternative would include a planted water feature and two sunken courtyards at the north entry, a pedestrian path along 15th Street, and a terraced amphitheater and shallow reflecting pool at the south (primary) entrance. Exterior building illumination would consist of lighting for outdoor gathering and circulation spaces, underwater light fixtures for water elements, and accent lighting for special pool surfaces and architectural features.

Short-Term Effects

Short-term effects on the project site within the Washington Monument Grounds would include the loss of the existing turf and most of the existing trees. Additional short-term effects would include excavation, materials stockpiling, construction staging, and other construction activities. Short-term effects on the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds would include the loss of physical and visual access from and through the project site. Some construction-related activity would be disruptive to activities on adjacent destinations including the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds. Overall, the Plinth Alternative would have moderate, significant, adverse short-term effects on the Washington Monument Grounds and the Mall.

Long-Term Effects

A new above-grade structure on the project site would impact the multiple historic resources on and within proximity to the Washington Monument Grounds. The long-term effects of the Plinth Alternative are discussed below.

Views and Vistas

As stated in the Tier I Final EIS, “significant effects on the character-defining features of historic resources within the APE would result from obstructed or altered views and vistas” (Smithsonian Institution, 2008a). The views and vistas identified in this section as significant to the historic character of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Mall, the surrounding historic buildings and districts, as well historic L’Enfant and McMillan plans, were compiled and amended through a series of Section 106 consultation meetings and with the input from NCPC and CFA staff.

The height and massing of the Plinth Alternative would obstruct or impede key views to and from the Washington Monument. The Plinth Alternative would also restrict key views of surrounding urban features, such as the Federal Triangle. The Plinth Alternative would bring the existing row of museums on the north side of the Mall closer to the Washington Monument, thereby diminishing the monument’s visual prominence as a central organizing feature.
within its setting. Primary threshold views within the Washington Monument Grounds were identified through the Section 106 consultation process. These include both pedestrian-level and aerial views, as discussed below.

- The location and mass of the Plinth Alternative would alter multi-directional, long, panoramic views within the Washington Monument Grounds. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on long views within the Washington Monument Grounds.

- The Plinth Alternative would obstruct views of several historic buildings within the Federal Triangle including the Old Post Office Tower, the Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters (formerly the Labor Building and the Interstate Commerce Commission Building), and the Mellon Auditorium. The southern extension of the plinth would conceal a portion of the west facade of NMAH. The perceived distance to the row of museum buildings along the Mall would be reduced, with the Plinth Alternative becoming the closest building to the Washington Monument in this direction. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on pedestrian-level views from the Washington Monument Grounds looking northeast (see Figure 3.3.6).

- From the eastern edge of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Plinth Alternative would block views of the south elevation of the Herbert C. Hoover Commerce building including its distinctive portico and tile roof. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the view looking north along 15th Street.

Figure 3.3.6 Plinth Alternative: View from the Washington Monument Grounds Looking Northeast
In addition to the views from within the Washington Monument Grounds, the Plinth Alternative would affect the multi-directional panorama views from historic resources in the project vicinity.

- The location and massing of the Plinth Alternative would block views of the lower half and base of the Washington Monument and a large portion of the Washington Monument Grounds when viewed from the Federal Triangle at the corner of 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, which is widely perceived as a “gateway” view. The Plinth Alternative would block views of the Mall from Constitution Avenue near 15th Street adjacent to the north edge of the Washington Monument Grounds. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on important non-cardinal views from principal corner street crossings adjacent to historic resources (see Figure 3.3.7 and Figure 3.3.8).

- The Plinth Alternative would eliminate a significant portion of the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and constrict the wide-angle panoramic view of the Grounds that opens up from the Mall. The Plinth Alternative, however, would have advantage over the Plaza and Refined Pavilion Alternatives in that the Corona would not project as far south on the site; therefore, there would be less of an adverse effect on the panoramic views from the Mall. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the panoramic view that opens and widens on the approach to the Washington Monument Grounds from the Mall.

Figure 3.3.7 Plinth Alternative: View from the Federal Triangle at 14th Street and Constitution Avenue Looking Southwest
• Although the Plinth Alternative would appear distant as viewed from the Ellipse (see Figure 3.3.8), the oblique angle of view would create a wide frontage within the panoramic view and would be seen in direct relation to the Washington Monument, thereby diminishing its prominence. The height of the structure would also project vertically above the predominant tree line. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the panoramic view that opens and widens on the approach to the Washington Monument Grounds from the Ellipse.

Figure 3.3.8 Plinth Alternative: View from the Ellipse at Constitution Avenue Looking East
- The Plinth Alternative would intrude into the pedestrian-level views of the Washington Monument Grounds from pathways along the western end of the Mall and would be seen in direct relation to the Washington Monument, thereby diminishing its prominence. The location of the Plinth Alternative would alter the established end point of the row of museum buildings along the Mall. The height of the Plinth Alternative would project vertically above the predominant tree line defining the eastern edge of the Washington Monument Grounds. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on important non-cardinal views from historic Mall pathways (Figure 3.3.9).

Figure 3.3.9 Plinth Alternative: View from the Mall on Madison Drive Looking West
The Plinth Alternative would also affect long views and vistas to and from Washington Monument Grounds and the surrounding historic buildings and features:

- Viewed from the top of the Washington Monument and from the air, the Plinth Alternative would be a prominent new feature on the landscape. Located along Constitution Avenue between 14th and 15th Streets, the Plinth Alternative would eliminate a significant portion of the historic open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and would alter the visual boundaries of the northeast corner of the Grounds. Additionally, the formal, rectilinear approach to the landscape design and the scale and character of water elements within it would depart from the informality and picturesque quality of the Washington Monument Grounds. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on distant views of the Washington Monument Grounds from locations such as the top of Washington Monument and the air (see Figure 3.3.10).

Figure 3.3.10 Plinth Alternative: View from the Top of the Washington Monument Looking Northeast
• The height of the Plinth Alternative would position the roofline above the visible point at which the base of the Washington Monument meets the ground, altering the existing view from the Old Post Office Tower of the entire Monument. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on distant views from the Old Post Office Tower (see Figure 3.3.11).

Figure 3.3.11 Plinth Alternative: View from the Top of the Old Post Office Tower Looking Southwest
- The location of the Plinth Alternative within the site and the massing of the Corona and plinth would not substantially alter the key vistas looking east to west along the Mall from the center panels. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on long and mid-range vistas down the Mall looking west (see Figure 3.3.12).

- Viewed from Arlington Cemetery, the distinction between the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds would be difficult to distinguish, and the Plinth Alternative would appear as a part of the general building massing in the area. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have no effect on distant views from Arlington Cemetery.

Although the exterior night lighting of the Plinth Alternative would be designed to complement and not compete with nearby landmarks, the lighting – including exterior lighting of outdoor gathering and circulation spaces, water elements, pool surfaces, and architectural features – would illuminate a portion of the Washington Monument Grounds previously unlit at night (except for perimeter street lights). This would alter multiple nighttime views of the Washington Monument Grounds and detract from the prominence of the Washington Monument. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on views of the Washington Monument Grounds at night.
Spatial Organization

Due to the location, height, and massing of the structure, the Plinth Alternative would have the following effects on the spatial organization of the Washington Monument Grounds and the Mall:

- The Plinth Alternative would eliminate a significant portion of the historic open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and diminish the prominence of the Washington Monument as the central organizing feature of the Grounds. The Plinth Alternative would also alter the spatial conception of the historic boundaries of the Washington Monument Grounds by extending the existing row of museums along the Mall into the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the spatial organization of the Washington Monument Grounds (Reservation No. 2).

- Although located outside the formal boundaries of the Mall, the project site would be perceived as an extension of the museum buildings located along its north side and would serve to reinforce the channel of space and the vista between the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument. The Plinth Alternative, which would be one-dimensional and directional (axial north-south), would be inconsistent with the existing east-west axial arrangement of the museum buildings along the north side of the Mall and would not recognize the Mall’s spatial organization. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the spatial organization of the Mall (Reservation Nos. 3, 3B, 4, 5, 6, and 6A).

Due to the location, height, and massing of the structure, the Plinth Alternative would have the following effects on the spatial organization of the monumental core:

- The Plinth Alternative would be located within a "hinge" site where the surrounding frame of buildings along the Mall and within the surrounding urban context of the Federal Triangle reaches its closest approach to the Washington Monument Grounds. The directional (north-south) massing of the Plinth Alternative, caused by the extensions of the plinth, would not respond to this "hinge" site and would alter the character of the Washington Monument Grounds within the larger composition of the monumental core. Thus, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the spatial conception of the monumental core.

- The Plinth Alternative would alter the perceived boundaries of the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds by extending the existing row of museums into the Grounds, modifying the cross-axial spatial organization of the monumental core. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the cross-axial spatial organization of the monumental core, which is marked by the Washington Monument and its Grounds at the crossing.

- The location of the structure would cause a loss of symmetry of the open space elements designed to flank the Ellipse (President’s Park South). As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the spatial organization of the Ellipse.
In addition, the Plinth Alternative would introduce a new element into the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds (Reservation No. 2). As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the spatial organization of features that contribute to the historic significance of the city plan.

**Land Use**

The Plinth Alternative’s large footprint would occupy a significant portion of the site, reducing the amount of public gathering and recreational space within the Washington Monument Grounds. As part of the Smithsonian Institution, NPS permitted activities would not be allowed on the NMAAHC grounds, constituting a change in the historic use of the land for expression of First Amendment freedoms. In addition, the landscape design would introduce formalized spaces and alter the traditional informal setting of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the established land uses of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Plinth Alternative would have no effect on the land use of the Mall or the surrounding urban context of the Federal Triangle.

**Circulation**

The Plinth Alternative would remove open circulation on a portion of the Washington Monument Grounds. The formal character of the landscape design of the Plinth Alternative would be a departure from the curvilinear configuration of historic circulation within the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the distinctive circulation features of the Washington Monument Grounds.

The landscape design of the Plinth Alternative, which would feature a planted water feature and a bridge-like crossing over two sunken courtyards on the north side of the site, would not be consistent with the existing setbacks along Constitution Avenue, thereby altering its character. In addition, the service entrance along 14th Street would alter the existing character of the street. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the circulation features of the historic L’Enfant and McMillan Commission Plans. The Plinth Alternative would have no effect on the circulation features of the Mall.

**Topography**

The location of the Plinth Alternative would eliminate a portion of the peripheral flats of the Washington Monument Grounds. The rectilinear treatment of the Plinth Alternative and the formal treatment of the landscape design would conflict with the naturalistic topography of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the naturalistic topography of the Washington Monument Grounds and the distinct characteristics of this historic environment, including the "flats" and central mound. The Plinth Alternative would have no effect on the topography of the Mall or the surrounding urban context.

**Vegetation**

The ground-floor footprint of the Plinth Alternative would eliminate a large portion of the open lawn that defines the ground plane of the Washington Monument Grounds, and the landscape design would feature water elements and hardscape areas that would occupy additional areas of open lawn. The Plinth Alternative would also
diminish the visual impact of the street trees that delineate the perimeter of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the significant vegetative features of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Plinth Alternative would have no effect on the grass panels, tree panels, or the elms of the Mall.

**Buildings and Structures**

The Plinth Alternative would have the following effects on the buildings and structures within the Washington Monument Grounds:

- The height, massing, and location of the Plinth Alternative would diminish the visual impact of the Washington Monument by competing for its prominence within the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the Washington Monument.

- The location of the Plinth Alternative within the Washington Monument Grounds would alter the setting of the gatepost located on the southeast corner of 15th Street and Constitution Avenue. The northern extension of the plinth element and the ground-level build out at the northwest corner of the structure would reduce setbacks from the gatepost, further impacting its setting. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the Bulfinch Gateposts.

- The height and massing of the Plinth Alternative would diminish the visual impact of the Monument Lodge within the setting of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the Monument Lodge.

The Plinth Alternative would have the following effects on the buildings and structures in proximity to the NMAAHC site:

- The metal skin of the Corona would have an atypical visual character that would divert attention from and alter the setting of the buildings and structures in the vicinity of the project site. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the buildings and structures within the Washington Monument Grounds, Federal Triangle, and the Mall.

- The Plinth Alternative would intrude upon the setting of the Federal Triangle buildings by altering their relationship with the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and obstructing clear views of the series of buildings that comprise the Federal Triangle. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the visual impact of the Federal Triangle buildings from the Washington Monument Grounds.

- The Plinth Alternative would alter the setting of NMAH as the end piece of the row of museums along the Mall and the relationship of NMAH with the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Plinth Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the visual impact of the museum buildings along the Mall.
**Action Alternative 2: Plaza Concept**

The Plaza Alternative would feature a two-building configuration surrounding an outdoor plaza, including a three-tiered Corona and the northern building. The northern building would align with the Herbert C. Hoover Commerce Building, while the Corona would be positioned to the south and east. The exterior skin of the Corona would consist of bronze panels while the northern building would be faced with a minimally detailed curtain wall. The Plaza Alternative would have a footprint area of 80,559 square feet, including both structures.

The Plaza Alternative would measure, from a future average site elevation of 13 feet, approximately 118 feet above sea level to the top of the Corona and 132 feet 6 inches above sea level to the top of the penthouse. The northern building would comprise three stories with a total height of 56 feet above sea level. The landscape treatment of the Plaza Alternative would create a “frame” along the northern and eastern edges of the site, directing visitor movements and views through and toward the Washington Monument Grounds. The landscape plan would include two water features, one adjacent to Madison Drive and another adjacent to Constitution Avenue, and a hardscaped outdoor public space that would bisect the two structures. Exterior building illumination would consist of lighting for outdoor gathering and circulation spaces, underwater light fixtures for water elements, and accent lighting for special pool surfaces and architectural features.

**Short-Term Effects**

Short-term effects to the project site within the Washington Monument Grounds would include the loss of the existing turf and most of the existing trees. Additional short-term effects would include excavation, materials stockpiling, construction staging, and other construction activities. Short-term effects on the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds would include the loss of physical and visual access from and through the project site. Some construction-related activity would be disruptive to activities on adjacent destinations including the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds. Overall, the Plaza Alternative would have moderate, significant, adverse short-term effects on the Washington Monument Grounds and the Mall.

**Long-Term Effects**

A new above-grade structure on the project site would impact the multiple historic resources on and within proximity to the Washington Monument Grounds. The long-term effects of the Plaza Alternative are discussed below.

**Views and Vistas**

The height and massing of the Plaza Alternative would obstruct or impede key views to and from the Washington Monument. The Plaza Alternative would also restrict key views of surrounding urban features, such as the Federal Triangle. The Plaza Alternative would bring the existing row of museums on the north side of the Mall closer to the Washington Monument, thereby diminishing the monument’s visual prominence as a central organizing feature within its setting.
Primary threshold views within the Washington Monument Grounds were identified through the Section 106 consultation process. These include both pedestrian-level and aerial views, as discussed below.

- The location and mass of the Plaza Alternative would alter multi-directional, long, panoramic views within the Washington Monument Grounds. Thus, the Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on long views within the Washington Monument Grounds.

- The Plaza Alternative would obstruct views of several historic buildings within the Federal Triangle including the Old Post Office Tower, the Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters (formerly the Labor Building and the Interstate Commerce Commission Building), and the Mellon Auditorium. The Plaza Alternative would have advantage over the other Plinth Alternative and the Pavilion Alternative in that it would open up the most views of the Federal Triangle. The Corona would conceal most of the west facade of NMAH. The facade of the northern building, visible from the Washington Monument Grounds, would be a significant departure from the picturesque character of the grounds. The perceived distance to the row of museum buildings along the Mall would be reduced, with the Plaza Alternative becoming the closest building to the Washington Monument in this direction. Thus, the Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on pedestrian-level views from the Washington Monument Grounds looking northeast (see Figure 3.3.13).

- The Plaza Alternative would have major, significant, adverse effect on the view looking north along 15th Street.

Figure 3.3.13 Plaza Alternative: View from the Washington Monument Grounds Looking Northeast
In addition to the views from within the Washington Monument Grounds, the Plaza Alternative would affect the multi-directional panoramic views from historic resources in the project vicinity.

- The location and massing of the Plaza Alternative would block views of the lower half and base of the Washington Monument when viewed from the Federal Triangle at the corner of 14th Street and Constitution Avenue; this is widely perceived as a “gateway” view. Although the landscape design of the Plaza Alternative would feature a public plaza between the support building and the Corona, the “gateway” view of the Washington Monument from 14th Street and Constitution would remain obstructed. The Plaza Alternative would block views of the Mall from Constitution Avenue near 15th Street adjacent to the north edge of the Washington Monument Grounds. Thus, the Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on important non-cardinal views from principal corner street crossings adjacent to historic resources (see Figure 3.3.14).
The Plaza Alternative would eliminate a significant portion of the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and constrict the wide-angle panoramic view of the Grounds that opens up from the Mall. Of the four alternatives, the Plaza Alternative would have the greatest adverse effect on the wide-angle panoramic view of the Washington Monument Grounds that opens up from the Mall because the Corona would be located the farthest south on the site. Thus, the Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the panoramic view that opens and widens on the approach to the Washington Monument Grounds from the Mall.

Although the Plaza Alternative would appear distant as viewed from the Ellipse (see Figure 3.3.15), the oblique angle of view would create a wide frontage within the panoramic view and would be seen in direct relation to the Washington Monument, thereby diminishing its prominence. The height of the structure would also project vertically above the predominant tree line. Thus, the Plaza Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the panoramic view that opens and widens on the approach to the Washington Monument Grounds from the Ellipse.

Figure 3.3.15 Plaza Alternative: View from the Ellipse at Constitution Avenue Looking East
• The Plaza Alternative would intrude into the pedestrian-level views of the Washington Monument Grounds from pathways along the western end of the Mall (see Figure 3.3.16) and would be seen in direct relation to the Washington Monument, thereby diminishing its prominence. The location of the Plaza Alternative would alter the established end point of the row of museum buildings along the Mall. The height of the Plaza Alternative would project vertically above the predominant tree line defining the eastern edge of the Washington Monument Grounds. Thus, the Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on important non-cardinal views from historic Mall pathways.

Figure 3.3.16 Plaza Alternative: View from the Mall on Madison Drive Looking West
The Plaza Alternative would also affect long views and vistas to and from Washington Monument Grounds and the surrounding historic buildings and features:

- Viewed from the top of the Washington Monument and from the air, the Plaza Alternative would be a prominent new feature on the landscape. Located along Constitution Avenue between 14th and 15th Streets, the Plaza Alternative would eliminate a significant portion of the historic open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and would alter the visual boundaries of the northeast corner of the Grounds. The Plaza Alternative would have the greatest footprint of all the alternatives, and, from a distance, the Corona and the support structure would read as a single mass. The formal, rectilinear approach to the landscape design and the scale and character of water elements within it would depart from the informality and picturesque quality of the Washington Monument Grounds, further altering the view from these locations. Additionally, the landscape design of the Plaza Alternative features the most hardscape of all the alternatives. Thus, the Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on distant views of the Washington Monument Grounds from locations such as the top of Washington Monument and the air (see Figure 3.3.17).

Figure 3.3.17 Plaza Alternative: View from the top of the Washington Monument Looking Northeast
The height of the Plaza Alternative would position the rooftop above the visible point at which the base of the Washington Monument meets the ground, altering the existing view from the Old Post Office Tower of the entire Monument. Thus, the Plaza Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on distant views from the Old Post Office Tower (see Figure 3.3.18).

Figure 3.3.18 Plaza Alternative: View from the top of the Old Post Office Tower Looking Southwest
• The location of the Plaza Alternative within the site and the massing of the Corona would not substantially alter the key vistas looking east to west along the Mall from the center panels. Thus, the Plaza Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on long- and mid-range vistas down the Mall looking west (see Figure 3.3.19).

• Viewed from Arlington Cemetery, the distinction between the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds would be difficult to distinguish, and the Plaza Alternative would appear as a part of the general building massing in the area. Thus, the Plaza Alternative would have no effect on distant views from Arlington Cemetery.

Although the exterior night lighting of the Plaza Alternative would be designed to complement and not compete with nearby landmarks, the lighting – including exterior lighting of outdoor gathering and circulation spaces, water elements, pool surfaces, and architectural features – would illuminate a portion of the Washington Monument Grounds previously unlit at night (except for perimeter street lights). This would alter multiple nighttime views of the Washington Monument Grounds and detract from the prominence of the Washington Monument. The Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on views of the Washington Monument Grounds at night.

Figure 3.3.19 Plaza Alternative: View from the Mall Looking West
*Source: Freelon Adjaye Bond/SmithGroup in association with Robinson & Associates, 2010*
Spatial Organization

Due to the location, height, and massing of the structure, the Plaza Alternative would have the following effects on the spatial organization of the Washington Monument Grounds and the Mall:

- Located along Constitution Avenue between 14th and 15th Streets, the Plaza Alternative would eliminate a significant portion of the historic open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and would diminish the prominence of the Washington Monument as the central organizing feature of the Grounds. The Plaza Alternative would also alter the spatial conception of the historic boundaries of the Washington Monument Grounds by extending the existing row of museums along the Mall into the Washington Monument Grounds. The Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the spatial organization of the Washington Monument Grounds (Reservation No. 2).

- Although located outside the formal boundaries of the Mall, the Plaza Alternative would be perceived as an extension of the row of museum buildings located along the north side of the Mall. Additionally, the Corona would be located in the southern portion of the NMAAHC site beyond the existing setbacks of the museum buildings along the Mall, which would be inconsistent with the Mall’s spatial organization. The Plaza Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the larger spatial organization of the Mall (Reservation Nos. 3, 3B, 4, 5, 6 and 6A).

Due to the location, height, and massing of the structure, the Plaza Alternative would have the following effects on the spatial organization of the monumental core:

- The Plaza Alternative would be located within a “hinge” site where the surrounding frame of buildings along the Mall and the surrounding urban context of the Federal Triangle reaches its closest approach to the Washington Monument Grounds. The Corona, which is located south on the NMAAHC site beyond the existing setbacks of the museum buildings along the Mall, would not respond to this “hinge” site and would alter the character of the Washington Monument Grounds within the spatial conception of the monumental core. In the Plaza Alternative, however, the plaza element of the landscape design would provide a transitional space indicative of the site’s role as a “hinge.” Thus, the Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the “hinge” site within the larger composition of the monumental core.

- The Plaza Alternative would alter the perceived boundaries of the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds by extending the existing row of museums into the Grounds, modifying the cross-axial spatial organization of the monumental core. As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the cross-axial spatial organization of the monumental core, which is marked by the Washington Monument and its Grounds at the crossing.
• The location of the structure would cause a loss of symmetry of the open space elements designed to flank the Ellipse (President’s Park South). As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the spatial organization of the Ellipse.

In addition, the Plaza Alternative would introduce a new element into the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds (Reservation No. 2). As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the spatial organization of features that contribute to the historic significance of the city plan.

Land Use

The Plaza Alternative’s large footprint would occupy a significant portion of the site, reducing the amount of public gathering and recreational space within the Washington Monument Grounds. As part of the Smithsonian Institution, NPS permitted activities would not be allowed on the NMAAHC grounds, constituting a change in the historic use of the land for expression of First Amendment freedoms. In addition, the landscape design would introduce formalized spaces and alter the traditional informal setting of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Plaza Alternative, however, would have an advantage over the Plinth Alternative and the Pavilion Alternative in that the plaza element between the northern building and the Corona would have the potential to create an active public outdoor space and special event area. The Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the established land uses of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Plaza Alternative would have no effect on the land use of the Mall or the surrounding urban context of the Federal Triangle.

Circulation

The Plaza Alternative would remove open circulation on a portion of the Washington Monument Grounds. The formal character of the landscape design of the Plaza Alternative would be a departure from the curvilinear configuration of historic circulations within the Washington Monument Grounds. The Plaza Alternative, however, would have an advantage over the Plinth Alternative and the Pavilion Alternative in that the two building configuration and plaza element would acknowledge the existing diagonal pedestrian movement through the site. As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the distinctive circulation features of the Washington Monument Grounds.

The support building of the Plaza Alternative would alter the established setbacks and building edge character along Constitution Avenue, and the water element at its periphery would introduce a new landscape element within the urban context. In addition, the service entrance along 14th Street would alter the street's existing character. As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the circulation features of the historic L'Enfant and McMillan Commission Plans. The Plaza Alternative would have no effect on the circulation features of the Mall.
The location of the Plaza Alternative would eliminate a portion of the peripheral flats of the Washington Monument Grounds. The rectilinear treatment of the Plaza Alternative and the formal treatment of the landscape design would conflict with the naturalistic topography of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Plaza Alternative would have the greatest impact on the topography of the Washington Monument Grounds because it would occupy the largest footprint of all the alternatives. As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the naturalistic topography of the Washington Monument Grounds and the distinct characteristics of this historic environment, including the "flats" and central mound. The Plaza Alternative would have no effect on the topography of the Mall or the surrounding urban context.

Vegetation

The ground-floor footprint of the Plaza Alternative would eliminate a large portion of the open lawn that defines the ground plane of the Washington Monument Grounds; the landscape design would feature water elements and hardscape areas that would occupy additional areas of open lawn. The Plaza Alternative would also diminish the visual impact of the street trees that delineate the perimeter of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Plaza Alternative would have the greatest footprint of all the alternatives, and the landscape design for this alternative features the most hardscape. As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the significant vegetative features of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Plaza Alternative would have no effect on the grass panels, tree panels, or the elms of the Mall.

Buildings and Structures

The Plaza Alternative would have the following effects on the buildings and structures within the Washington Monument Grounds:

- The height, massing, and location of the Plaza Alternative would diminish the visual impact of the Washington Monument by competing for its prominence within the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the Washington Monument.

- The support structure for the Plaza Alternative would be located at the north edge of the site directly adjacent to the gatepost located on the southeast corner of 15th Street and Constitution Avenue significantly impacting its historic setting. As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the Bulfinch Gateposts.

- The height and massing of the Plaza Alternative would diminish the visual impact of the Monument Lodge within the setting of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Plaza Alternative would have the greatest impact on the Monument Lodge because it would be located the farthest south on the NMAAHC site of all the alternatives. As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the Monument Lodge.
The Plaza Alternative would have the following effects on the buildings and structures in proximity to the NMAAHNC site:

- The metal skin of the Corona would have an atypical visual character that would divert attention from and alter the setting of the buildings and structures in the vicinity of the project site. Additionally, the facade of the support building, composed of a minimally detailed curtain wall, would contrast with the structures of the Federal Triangle, the Mall, and the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the buildings and structures within the Washington Monument Grounds, Federal Triangle, and the Mall.

- The Plaza Alternative would intrude upon the setting of the Federal Triangle buildings by altering their relationship with the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the visual impact of the Federal Triangle buildings from the Washington Monument Grounds.

- The Plaza Alternative would alter the setting of NMAH as the end piece of the row of museums along the Mall and the relationship of NMAH with the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Plaza Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the visual impact of the museum buildings along the Mall.
**Action Alternative 3: Pavilion Concept**

The Pavilion Alternative would feature a singular building element – a three-tiered Corona. The Pavilion Alternative would be positioned north of the setback established by the McMillan Plan, and the Corona would align with the primary building mass of NMAH. Bronze-clad panels would comprise the exterior skin of the Corona, which would rest on a glazed base. The Pavilion Alternative would have a footprint area of 60,229 square feet and would measure, from a future average site elevation of 15 feet, approximately 118 feet msl to the top of the Corona and 132 feet 6 inches msl to the top of the penthouse.

The landscape treatment of the Pavilion Alternative would situate the Corona as an object in a field surrounded by open grounds. The landscape plan would feature informal garden seating areas and a planted water feature on the north, open lawn to the west, and a hardscape plaza, reflecting pool, and terraced lawn at the south (primary) entry. Exterior building illumination would consist of lighting for outdoor gathering and circulation spaces, underwater light fixtures for water elements, and accent lighting for special pool surfaces and architectural features.

**Short-Term Effects**

Short-term effects on the project site within the Washington Monument Grounds would include the loss of the existing turf and most of the existing trees. Additional short-term effects would include excavation, materials stockpiling, construction staging, and other construction activity. Overall, the Pavilion Alternative would have moderate, significant, adverse short-term effects on the Washington Monument Grounds and the Mall.

Short-term effects on the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds would include the loss of physical and visual access from and through the project site. Some construction-related activity would be disruptive to activities on adjacent destinations including the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds.

**Long-Term Effects**

Any new above-grade structure on the project site would impact the multiple historic resources on and within proximity to the Washington Monument Grounds. The long-term effects of the Pavilion Alternative are discussed below.

**Views and Vistas**

The height and massing of the Pavilion Alternative would obstruct or impede key views to and from the Washington Monument. The Pavilion Alternative would also restrict key views of surrounding urban features, such as the Federal Triangle. The Pavilion Alternative would bring the existing row of museums on the north side of the Mall closer to the Washington Monument, thereby diminishing the monument’s visual prominence as a central organizing feature within its setting.

Primary threshold views within the Washington Monument Grounds were identified through the Section 106 consultation process. These include both pedestrian-level and aerial views, as discussed below.

- The location and mass of the Pavilion Alternative would alter multi-directional, long, panoramic views within the Washington Monument Grounds. Thus, the Pavilion...
Alternative would have major, significant, adverse effects on long views within the Washington Monument Grounds.

- The Pavilion Alternative would obstruct views of several historic buildings within the Federal Triangle including the Old Post Office Tower, the Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters (formerly the Labor Building and the Interstate Commerce Commission Building), and the Mellon Auditorium. The Herbert C. Hoover Commerce building, however, would remain visible. The perceived distance to the row of museum buildings along the Mall would be reduced, with the Pavilion Alternative becoming the closest building to the Washington Monument in this direction. Thus, the Pavilion Alternative would have major, significant, adverse effects on pedestrian-level views looking northeast from the Washington Monument Grounds (see Figure 3.3.20).

- From the eastern edge of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Pavilion Alternative would block views of the south elevation of the Herbert C. Hoover Commerce building including its distinctive portico and tile roof. Thus, the Pavilion Alternative would have major, significant, adverse effect on the view looking north along 15th Street.

Figure 3.3.20 Pavilion Alternative: View from the Washington Monument Grounds Looking Northeast
In addition to the views from within the Washington Monument Grounds, the Pavilion Alternative would affect the multi-directional panoramic views from historic resources in the project vicinity.

- The location and massing of the Pavilion Alternative would block views of the lower half and base of the Washington Monument and a large portion of the Washington Monument Grounds when viewed from the Federal Triangle at the corner of 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, widely perceived as a “gateway” view. The Pavilion Alternative would block views of the Mall from Constitution Avenue near 15th Street adjacent to the north edge of the Washington Monument Grounds. Thus, the Pavilion Alternative would have major, significant, adverse effect on important non-cardinal views from principal corner street crossings adjacent to historic resources (see Figure 3.3.21).

- The Pavilion Alternative would eliminate a significant portion of the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and constrict the wide-angle panoramic view of the Grounds that opens up from the Mall. The Pavilion Alternative, however, would have advantage over the Plinth Alternative, the Plaza Alternative, and the Refined Pavilion Alternative in that it would not project as far south on the site. Therefore there would be less of an adverse effect on the panoramic view that opens on approach to the Washington Monument Grounds. The Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the panoramic view that opens and widens on the approach to the Washington Monument Grounds from the Mall.

Figure 3.3.21 Pavilion Alternative: View from the Federal Triangle at 14th Street and Constitution Avenue Looking Southwest
• Although the Pavilion Alternative would appear distant as viewed from the Ellipse, the oblique angle of view would create a wide frontage within the panoramic view and would be seen in direct relation to the Washington Monument, thereby diminishing its prominence. The height of the Pavilion Alternative would project vertically above the predominant tree line. Thus, the Pavilion Alternative would have moderate, significant, adverse effect on the panoramic view that opens and widens on the approach to the Washington Monument Grounds from the Ellipse (see Figure 3.3.22).

Figure 3.3.22 Pavilion Alternative: View from the Ellipse at Constitution Avenue Looking East
The Pavilion Alternative would intrude into the pedestrian-level view of the Washington Monument Grounds from pathways along the western end of the Mall and would be seen in direct relation to the Washington Monument, thereby diminishing its prominence. The location of the Pavilion Alternative would alter the established end point of the row of museum buildings along the Mall. The height of the Pavilion Alternative would project vertically above the predominant tree line defining the eastern edge of the Washington Monument Grounds. Thus, the Pavilion Alternative would have moderate, significant, adverse effects on important non-cardinal views from historic Mall pathways (see Figure 3.3.23).

Figure 3.3.23 Pavilion Alternative: View from the Mall at Madison Drive Looking West
The Pavilion Alternative would also affect long views and vistas to and from the Washington Monument Grounds and surrounding historic buildings and features:

- Viewed from the top of the Washington Monument and from the air, the Pavilion Alternative would be a prominent new feature on the landscape. Located along Constitution Avenue between 14th and 15th Streets, the Pavilion Alternative would eliminate a significant portion of the historic open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and alter the visual boundaries of the northeast corner of the Grounds. The formal, rectilinear approach to the landscape design on the south side of the Pavilion Alternative and the scale and character of water elements within it would depart from the informality and picturesque quality of the Washington Monument Grounds, further altering the view from the top of the Washington Monument and from the air. The Pavilion Alternative would, however, have advantage over the Plinth Alternative and the Plaza Alternative in that the landscape plan would reference the Washington Monument Grounds by treating the structure as an object in a field surrounded by open grounds. Additionally, the landscape elements north of the Pavilion Alternative – a gentle sloping topography featuring a curvilinear path and informal seating areas – would be less formal than those in the Plinth Alternative or the Plaza Alternative. Thus, the Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on distant views of the Washington Monument Grounds from locations such as the top of the Washington Monument and the air (see Figure 3.3.24).
The height of the Pavilion Alternative would position the roofline above the visible point at which the base of the Washington Monument meets the ground, altering the existing view from the Old Post Office Tower of the entire Monument. Thus, the Pavilion Alternative would have moderate, significant, adverse effect on distant views from the Old Post Office Tower (see Figure 3.3.25).

Figure 3.3.25 Pavilion Alternative: View from the Top of the Old Post Office Tower Looking Southwest
• The location and massing of the Pavilion Alternative within the project site would not substantially alter the key vistas looking east to west along the Mall from the center panels. Thus, the Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on long and mid-range vistas looking down the Mall looking west (see Figure 3.3.26).

• Viewed from Arlington Cemetery, the distinction between the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds is difficult to distinguish, and the Pavilion Alternative would appear as part of the general building massing in the area. Thus, the Pavilion Alternative would have no effect on distant views from Arlington Cemetery.

Although the exterior night lighting for the Pavilion Alternative and the site would complement and not compete with nearby landmarks, the lighting – including exterior lighting of outdoor gathering and circulation spaces, water elements, pool surfaces, and architectural features – would illuminate a portion of the Washington Monument Grounds previously unlit at night (except for perimeter street lights). This would alter multiple nighttime views of the Washington Monument Grounds and detract from the prominence of the Washington Monument. The Pavilion Alternative would have major, significant, adverse effect on views of the Washington Monument Grounds at night.

Figure 3.3.26 Pavilion Alternative: View from the Mall Looking West
Spatial Organization

Due to the location, height, and massing of the structure, the Pavilion Alternative would have the following effects on the spatial organization of the Washington Monument Grounds and the Mall:

- Located along Constitution Avenue between 14th and 15th Streets, the Pavilion Alternative would eliminate a significant portion of the historic open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and diminish the prominence of the Washington Monument as the central organizing feature of the Grounds. The Pavilion Alternative would also alter the spatial conception of the historic boundaries of the Washington Monument Grounds by extending the existing row of museums along the Mall into the Grounds. The Pavilion Alternative would have advantage over the Plinth Alternative and the Plaza Alternative in that it would have primary frontages on the north, south, and west facades, creating a multi-directional condition on the project site that would respond to its position within the Washington Monument Grounds. The Pavilion Alternative would have major, significant, adverse effect on the spatial organization of the Washington Monument Grounds (Reservation No. 2).

- Although located outside the formal boundaries of the Mall, the site would be perceived as an extension of the museum buildings located along the north side of the Mall, which serve to reinforce the channel of space and vista between the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument. As a result, the Pavilion Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the larger spatial organization of the Mall (Reservation Nos. 3, 3B, 4, 5, 6, and 6A).

Due to the location, height, and massing of the structure, the Pavilion Alternative would have the following effects on the spatial organization of the monumental core:

- The Pavilion Alternative would be located within a "hinge" site where the surrounding frame of buildings along the Mall and the surrounding urban context of the Federal Triangle reaches its closest approach to the Washington Monument Grounds. The Pavilion Alternative, however, would have advantage over the Plinth Alternative, the Plaza Alternative, and the Refined Pavilion Alternative in that it would not project as far south into the project site. The Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the spatial organization of the monumental core.

- The Pavilion Alternative would alter the perceived boundaries of the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds by extending the existing row of museum buildings into the Grounds, modifying the cross-axial spatial organization of the monumental core. Thus, the Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the cross-axial spatial organization of the monumental core, which is marked by the Washington Monument and its Grounds at the crossing.

- The location of the Pavilion Alternative would cause a loss of symmetry of the open space elements designed to flank the Ellipse (President's Park South) – now open space on
the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Pavilion Alternative would have moderate, significant, adverse effect on the spatial organization of the Ellipse.

The Pavilion Alternative would introduce a new element into the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds (Reservation No. 2). As a result, the Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the spatial organization of features that contribute to the historic significance of the city plan.

**Land Use**

The footprint of the Pavilion Alternative would occupy a significant portion of the site, reducing the amount of public gathering and recreational space within the Washington Monument Grounds. As part of the Smithsonian Institution, NPS permitted activities would not be allowed on the NMAMHC grounds, constituting a change in the historic use of the land for expression of First Amendment freedoms. The Pavilion Alternative, however, would have advantage over the Plinth Alternative and the Plaza Alternative in that it would have less site coverage. The landscape design would introduce formalized spaces south of the Corona, altering the traditional informal setting of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the established land uses of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Pavilion Alternative would have no effect on the land use of the Mall or the surrounding urban context.

**Circulation**

The Pavilion Alternative would remove open circulation on a portion of the Washington Monument Grounds. The formal character of the landscape design south of the Pavilion Alternative would be a departure from the curvilinear configuration of historic circulation within the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Pavilion Alternative would have moderate, significant, adverse effect on the distinctive circulation features of the Washington Monument Grounds.

The service entrance along 14th Street would alter the existing character of the street. As a result, the Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the circulation features of the historic L’Enfant and McMillan Commission Plans. The Pavilion Alternative would have no effect on the circulation features of the Mall.

**Topography**

The location of the Pavilion Alternative would eliminate a portion of the peripheral flats of the Washington Monument Grounds. The rectilinear treatment of the Pavilion Alternative and the formal treatment of the landscape design south of the Corona would conflict with the naturalistic topography of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Pavilion Alternative, however, would have advantage over the Plinth Alternative and the Plaza Alternative in that it would allow for the equal treatment of open space on the north and south sides of the site and would feature a curved path and informal seating areas on the north and open lawn on the west that would be harmonious with the informal character of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the naturalistic topography of the Washington Monument Grounds and the distinct characteristics of this historic environment, including the "flats" and
central mound. The Pavilion Alternative would have no effect on the
topography of the Mall or the surrounding urban context.

Vegetation

The ground-floor footprint of the Pavilion Alternative would
eliminate a large portion of the open lawn that defines the ground
plane of the Washington Monument Grounds, and the landscape
design would feature water elements and hardscape areas that
would occupy additional areas of open lawn. The Pavilion
Alternative, however, would have advantage over the Plinth
Alternative and the Plaza Alternative in that it would have less site
coverage. The Pavilion Alternative would diminish the visual impact
of the street trees that delineate the perimeter of the Washington
Monument Grounds. As a result, the Pavilion Alternative would
have a major, significant, adverse effect on the significant vegetative
features of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Pavilion
Alternative would have no effect on the grass panels, tree panels, or
the elms of the Mall.

Buildings and Structures

The Pavilion Alternative would have the following effects on the
buildings and structures within the Washington Monument
Grounds:

- The height, massing, and location of the Pavilion Alternative
  would diminish the visual impact of the Washington
  Monument by competing for its prominence within the
  Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Pavilion
  Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect
  on the Washington Monument.

- The location of the Pavilion Alternative within the
  Washington Monument Grounds would alter the setting of
  the gatepost located on the southeast corner of 15th Street
  and Constitution Avenue. The Pavilion Alternative, however,
  would have advantage over the Plinth Alternative and the
  Plaza Alternative in that it would be located in the center of
  the site within the established setbacks of the adjacent
  buildings along Constitution Avenue and farther from the
gatepost. As a result, the Pavilion Alternative would have a
  moderate, significant, adverse effect on the Bulfinch
  Gateposts.

- The height and massing of the Pavilion Alternative would
diminish the visual impact of the Monument Lodge within
the setting of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a
result, the Pavilion Alternative would have moderate,
significant, adverse effect on the Monument Lodge.

The Pavilion Alternative would have the following effects on the
buildings and structures in direct proximity to the NMAAHC site:

- The metal skin of the Corona would have an atypical visual
  character that would divert attention from and alter the
  setting of the buildings and structures in the vicinity of the
  project site. As a result, the Pavilion Alternative would have
  a minor adverse effect on the buildings and structures
  within the Washington Monument Grounds, Federal
  Triangle, and the Mall.
- The Pavilion Alternative would intrude upon the setting of the Federal Triangle buildings by altering their relationship with the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and obstructing views of the series of buildings that comprise the Federal Triangle. As a result, the Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the visual impact of the Federal Triangle buildings from the Washington Monument Grounds.

- The Pavilion Alternative would alter the setting of NMAH as the end piece of the row of museums along the Mall and the relationship of NMAH within the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the visual impact of the museum buildings along the Mall.
**Action Alternative 4: Refined Pavilion Concept**

The Refined Pavilion Alternative would feature a singular building element – a three-tiered Corona. The porch on the south side of the Corona would extend approximately 30 feet beyond the McMillan setback. Bronze-clad panels would comprise the exterior skin of the Corona, which would rest on a base of clear glass panels. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a footprint area of 53,750 square feet and measure, from a future average site elevation of 16 feet 6 inches, approximately 112 feet 6 inches msl to the top of the Corona and 122 feet 6 inches msl to the top of the penthouse. The landscape treatment of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would situate the museum within the context of the Washington Monument Grounds as an object in a field, drawing the open, pastoral nature of the Washington Monument Grounds through the museum site. The landscape plan would include a water feature at the south (primary) entry, a planted rain garden with a water feature adjacent to Constitution Avenue, two broad sweeping pedestrian circulation paths, and terraces located atop the Corona and south-facing porch. Exterior building illumination would consist of lighting for outdoor gathering and circulation spaces, underwater light fixtures for water elements, and accent lighting for special pool surfaces and architectural features.

**Short-Term Effects**

Short-term effects to the project site within the Washington Monument Grounds would include the loss of the existing turf and most of the existing trees. Additional short-term effects would include excavation, materials stockpiling, construction staging, and other construction activities. Short-term effects on the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds would include the loss of physical and visual access from and through the project site. Some construction-related activity would be disruptive to activities on adjacent destinations including the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds. Overall, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have moderate, significant, adverse short-term effects on the Washington Monument Grounds and the Mall.

**Long-Term Effects**

A new above-grade structure on the project site would impact the multiple historic resources on and within proximity to the Washington Monument Grounds. The long-term effects of the Refined Pavilion Alternative are discussed below.

**Views and Vistas**

The height and massing of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would obstruct or impede key views to and from the Washington Monument. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would also restrict key views of surrounding urban features, such as the Federal Triangle. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would bring the existing row of museums on the north side of the Mall closer to the Washington Monument, thereby diminishing the monument’s visual prominence as a central organizing feature within its setting.

Primary threshold views within the Washington Monument Grounds were identified through the Section 106 consultation process. These include both pedestrian-level and aerial views, as discussed below.

- The location and mass of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would alter multi-directional, long, panoramic views within...
the Washington Monument Grounds. The Refined Pavilion Alternative, however, has an advantage over the Plinth Alternative, the Plaza Alternative, and the Pavilion Alternative in that it is lower and has a smaller volume than the other alternatives and has the least impact on views of the Federal Triangle. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on long views within the Washington Monument Grounds.

- The Refined Pavilion would obstruct views of several historic buildings within the Federal Triangle including the Old Post Office Tower, the Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters (formerly the Labor Building and the Interstate Commerce Commission Building), and the Mellon Auditorium. The Herbert C. Hoover Commerce building, however, would remain visible. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would conceal a portion of the west facade of NMAH. The perceived distance to the row of museum buildings along the Mall would be reduced with the structure becoming the closest building to the Washington Monument in this direction. Since the Refined Pavilion Alternative has a smaller footprint and is lower than the other alternatives, its impact would be slightly less than the Plaza Alternative, the Plinth Alternative, or the Pavilion Alternative. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on pedestrian-level views from the Washington Monument Grounds looking northeast (see Figure 3.3.27).

- The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the view looking north along 15th Street.

Figure 3.3.27 Refined Pavilion Alternative: View from the Washington Monument Grounds Looking Northeast
In addition to the views from within the Washington Monument Grounds, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would affect the multidirectional panoramic views from historic resources in the project vicinity.

- The location and massing of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would block views of the lower half and base of the Washington Monument and a large portion of the Washington Monument Grounds when viewed from the Federal Triangle at the corner of 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, which is widely perceived as a “gateway” view. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have an advantage over the Plinth Alternative, the Plaza Alternative, and the Pavilion Alternative in that it is lower and therefore would block less of the Washington Monument. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would block views of the Mall from Constitution Avenue near 15th Street adjacent to the north edge of the Washington Monument Grounds. Thus, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on important non-cardinal views from principal corner street crossings adjacent to historic resources (see Figure 3.3.28).

- The Refined Pavilion Alternative would eliminate a significant portion of the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and constrict the wide-angle panoramic view of the Grounds that opens up from the Mall. Thus, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the panoramic view that opens and widens on the approach to the Washington Monument Grounds from the Mall.

Figure 3.3.28 Refined Pavilion Alternative: View from the Federal Triangle at 14th Street and Constitution Avenue Looking Southwest
Although the Refined Pavilion Alternative would appear distant as viewed from the Ellipse, the oblique angle of view would create a wide frontage within the panoramic view and would be seen in direct relation to the Washington Monument, thereby diminishing its prominence. The height of the structure would also project vertically above the predominant tree line. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have an advantage over the other alternatives in that its reduced mass and placement on the site reduces its impact on views of the Washington Monument Grounds when approaching from the Ellipse. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the panoramic view that opens and widens on the approach to the Washington Monument Grounds from the Ellipse (see Figure 3.3.29).
The Refined Pavilion Alternative would intrude into the pedestrian-level views of the Washington Monument Grounds from pathways along the western end of the Mall and would be seen in direct relation to the Washington Monument, thereby diminishing its prominence. The location of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would alter the established end point of the row of museum buildings along the Mall. The height of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would project vertically above the predominant tree line defining the eastern edge of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have an advantage over the other alternatives in that both the height and volume would be reduced, thereby lessening the impact on views from the Mall. Thus, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on important non-cardinal views from historic Mall pathways (see Figure 3.3.30).
The Refined Pavilion Alternative would also affect long views and vistas to and from Washington Monument Grounds and the surrounding historic buildings and features:

- Viewed from the top of the Washington Monument and from the air, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would be a prominent new feature on the landscape. Located along Constitution Avenue between 14th and 15th Streets, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would eliminate a significant portion of the historic open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and would alter the visual boundaries of the northeast corner of the Grounds. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have an advantage over the Plinth Alternative, the Plaza Alternative, and the Pavilion Alternative in that it would have the smallest footprint and would occupy the least amount of the Washington Monument Grounds. Additionally, the rolling topography, broadly sweeping paths, and informal, more naturalistic water elements of the landscape plan of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would be compatible with the picturesque character of the Washington Monument Grounds, and the landscape plan references the Washington Monument Grounds by treating the structure as an object in a field surrounded by open ground. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would also have an advantage due to the treatment of the penthouse, which – following the precedent of the other buildings along the Mall – is placed symmetrically on the roof of the Corona. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on distant views of the Washington Monument Grounds from locations such as the top of Washington Monument and the air (see Figure 3.3.31).

Figure 3.3.31 Refined Pavilion Alternative: View from the Top of the Washington Monument Looking Northeast
The height of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would position the roofline above the visible point at which the base of the Washington Monument meets the ground, altering the existing view from the Old Post Office Tower of the entire Monument. Thus, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on distant views from the Old Post Office Tower (see Figure 3.3.32).

Figure 3.3.32 Refined Pavilion Alternative: View from the top of the Old Post Office Tower Looking Southwest
• The location of the Refined Pavilion Alternative within the site and the massing of the Corona would not substantially alter the key vistas looking east to west along the Mall from the center panels. Thus, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on long and mid-range vistas down the Mall looking west (see Figure 3.3.33).

• Viewed from Arlington Cemetery, the distinction between the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds would be difficult to distinguish, and the Refined Pavilion Alternative would appear as a part of the general building massing in the area. Thus, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have no effect on distant views from Arlington Cemetery.

Although the exterior night lighting of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would be designed to complement and not compete with nearby landmarks, the lighting – including exterior lighting of outdoor gathering and circulation spaces, water elements, pool surfaces, and architectural features – would illuminate a portion of the Washington Monument Grounds previously unlit at night (except for perimeter street lights). This would alter multiple nighttime views of the Washington Monument Grounds and detract from the prominence of the Washington Monument. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on views of the Washington Monument Grounds at night.

Figure 3.3.33 Refined Pavilion Alternative: View from the National Mall Looking West
Spatial Organization

Due to the location, height, and massing of the structure, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have the following effects on the spatial organization of the Washington Monument Grounds and the Mall:

- Located along Constitution Avenue between 14th and 15th streets, the structure would eliminate open space from the Washington Monument Grounds and diminish the prominence of the Monument as the central organizing feature of the grounds. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would also alter the spatial conception of the historic boundaries of the Washington Monument Grounds by extending the existing row of museums along the Mall into the grounds. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have an advantage over the Plinth Alternative, the Plaza Alternative, and the Pavilion Alternative in that it would occupy the smallest footprint of all the alternatives and have less impact on the site. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would also have an advantage over the Plinth Alternative and the Plaza Alternative in that it would have primary frontages on the north, south, and west facades, creating a multi-directional condition on the NMAAHC site that responds to its position within the Washington Monument Grounds. Additionally, the rolling topography, broadly sweeping paths, and informal, naturalistic water elements of the landscape plan would be compatible with the picturesque character of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the spatial organization of the Washington Monument Grounds (Reservation No. 2).

- Although located outside the boundaries of the Mall, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would be perceived as an extension of the museum buildings along the north side of the Mall, which would serve to reinforce the channel of space and vista between the Capitol and the Washington Monument. The Refined Pavilion Alternative, which would be located south on the NMAAHC site beyond the existing setbacks of the museum buildings along the Mall, would be inconsistent with the Mall's spatial organization. The porch on the south side of the Corona violates the McMillan Plan setback, established to be 445 feet from the centerline of the Mall. As a result, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the larger spatial organization of the Mall (Reservation Nos. 3, 3B, 4, 5, 6, and 6A).

Due to the location, height, and massing of the structure, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have the following effects on the spatial organization of the monumental core:

- The Refined Pavilion Alternative would be located within a “hinge” site where the surrounding frame of buildings along the Mall and within the surrounding urban context reaches its closest approach to the Washington Monument Grounds. The Refined Pavilion Alternative, which would be located south on the NMAAHC site beyond the existing setbacks of the museum buildings along the Mall, would not respond to this “hinge” site and would alter the character of the Washington Monument Grounds within the spatial conception of the monumental core. Thus, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant,
adverse effect on the “hinge” site within the larger composition of the monumental core.

- The Refined Pavilion Alternative would alter the perceived boundaries of the Mall and the Washington Monument Grounds by extending the existing row of museums into the Grounds, modifying the cross-axial spatial organization of the monumental core. As a result, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the cross-axial spatial organization of the monumental core, which is marked by the Washington Monument and its Grounds at the crossing.

- The location of the structure would cause a loss of symmetry of the open space elements designed to flank the Ellipse (President’s Park South). As a result, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the spatial organization of the Ellipse.

In addition, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would introduce a new element into the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds (Reservation No. 2). As a result, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the spatial organization of features that contribute to the historic significance of the city plan.

Land Use

The Refined Pavilion Alternative’s footprint would occupy a significant portion of the site, reducing the amount of public gathering and recreational space within the Washington Monument Grounds. As part of the Smithsonian Institute, NPS permitted activities would not be allowed on the NMAAHC grounds, constituting a change in the historic use of the land for expression of First Amendment freedoms. The Refined Pavilion Alternative, however, would have an advantage over the Plinth Alternative, the Plaza Alternative, and the Pavilion Alternative in that it would occupy the smallest footprint of all the alternatives. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the established land uses of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have no effect on the land use of the Mall or the surrounding urban context of the Federal Triangle.

Circulation

The landscape design of the Refined Pavilion Alternative, which would feature a planted rain garden with a water feature adjacent to Constitution Avenue, would not be consistent with the existing setbacks along Constitution Avenue, thereby altering its character of the street. In addition, the service entrance along 14th Street would
alter its existing character. As a result, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the circulation features of the historic L'Enfant and McMillan Plans. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have no effect on the circulation features of the Mall.

**Topography**

The location of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would eliminate a portion of the peripheral flats of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Refined Pavilion Alternative, however, would have an advantage over the Plinth Alternative and the Plaza Alternative in that the landscape plan features a rolling topography, broadly sweeping paths, and informal, naturalistic water elements that would be compatible with the picturesque character of the Washington Monument Grounds. Additionally, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have the least impact on the topography of the Washington Monument Grounds because it would occupy the smallest footprint of all the alternatives. As a result, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the topography of the Washington Monument Grounds and the distinct characteristics of this historic environment, including the "flats" and central mound. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have no effect on the topography of the Mall or the surrounding urban context.

**Vegetation**

The ground-floor footprint of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would eliminate a large portion of the open lawn that defines the ground plane of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Refined Pavilion Alternative, however, would have an advantage over the Plinth Alternative, the Plaza Alternative, and the Pavilion Alternative in that it would occupy the smallest footprint of all the alternatives. The landscape design would feature water elements and hardscape areas that would occupy additional areas of open lawn. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would also diminish the visual impact of the street trees that delineate the perimeter of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the significant vegetative features of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have no effect on the grass panels, tree panels, or the elms of the Mall.

**Buildings and Structures**

The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have the following effects on the buildings and structures within the Washington Monument Grounds:

- The height, massing, and location of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would diminish the visual impact of the Washington Monument by competing for its prominence within the Washington Monument Grounds. The Refined Pavilion Alternative, however, would have an advantage over the Plinth Alternative, the Plaza Alternative, and the Pavilion Alternative in that it would have the smallest footprint and would occupy the least amount of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the Washington Monument.
- The location of the Refined Pavilion Alternative within the Washington Monument Grounds would alter the setting of
the gatepost located on the southeast corner of 15th Street and Constitution Avenue. The Refined Pavilion Alternative, however, would have an advantage over the Plinth Alternative, the Plaza Alternative, and the Pavilion Alternative in that the location and size of the Corona would provide a greater setback from the gateposts. As a result, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a moderate, significant, adverse effect on the Bulfinch Gateposts.

- The height and massing of the Refined Pavilion Alternative would diminish the visual impact of the Monument Lodge within the setting of the Washington Monument Grounds. However, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have an advantage in that the Corona would have the smallest volume and height of all the alternatives and is closest in scale to the Monument Lodge. The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a major, significant, adverse effect on the Monument Lodge.

The Refined Pavilion Alternative would have the following effects on the buildings and structures in proximity to the NMAAHC site:

- The metal skin of the Corona would have an atypical visual character that would divert attention from and alter the setting of the buildings and structures in the vicinity of the project site. As a result, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the buildings and structures within the Washington Monument Grounds, Federal Triangle, and the Mall.

- The Refined Pavilion Alternative would intrude upon the setting of the Federal Triangle buildings by altering their relationship with the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds and obstructing clear views of the series of buildings that comprise the Federal Triangle. As a result, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the visual impact of the Federal Triangle buildings from the Washington Monument Grounds.

- The Refined Pavilion Alternative would alter the setting of NMAH as the end piece of the row of museums along the Mall and the relationship of NMAH with the open space of the Washington Monument Grounds. As a result, the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have a minor adverse effect on the visual impact of the museum buildings along the Mall.
3.3.4 What efforts would be taken to minimize the effects on cultural resources?

**Short-Term Effects**

- Minimize short-term adverse effects of the action alternatives by using concealment screens around the project site during construction. The screens could be used to convey information relating to the background and mission of the NMAAHC. Other actions include protecting the street trees that delineate the perimeter of the site to the maximum extent possible.

**Long-term Effects**

Any new above-grade structures on the project site would impact the multiple historic resources on and within proximity to the Washington Monument Grounds. However, the adverse effects vary for each of the action alternatives. Later design phases could provide opportunity to further minimize some of the adverse effects.

**Plinth Alternative**

**Views and Vistas**

- Minimize adverse effects on distant views of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Mall, and Federal Triangle from locations such as the top of the Washington Monument and from the air by modifying the treatment of the penthouse. As currently designed, the roof of the Plinth Alternative would feature an outdoor terrace/memorial and a penthouse containing VIP space and a café; the penthouse would be located along the north edge of the roof. This asymmetrical placement would be inconsistent with the placement of the penthouse features of the museum buildings along the north side of the Mall. The Smithsonian Institution should minimize adverse effects on distant views by centering the penthouse on the Corona, following the precedent of other buildings along the Mall.

- Minimize adverse effects on distant views of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Mall, and Federal Triangle from locations such as the top of the Washington Monument and from the air by reducing the size of the plinth. Viewed from locations such as the top of the Washington Monument and from the air, the cantilevered plinth would increase the perceived mass of the Plinth Alternative. The Smithsonian Institution should minimize adverse effects by pulling back or reducing the size of the plinth.
Minimize adverse effects on views of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Mall, and Federal Triangle at night by reducing exterior night lighting.

Spatial Organization

Minimize adverse effects on the spatial organization of the Washington Monument Grounds by altering the treatment of the landscape design. As currently designed, the Plinth Alternative would eliminate a significant portion of the historic open space of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Smithsonian Institution should minimize adverse effects by designing a landscape that is more harmonious with the informal, picturesque character of the Washington Monument Grounds. The Smithsonian Institution should include informal landscape elements and water features on the south side of the project site and limit formal landscape elements and water features to the north side of the project site. The Smithsonian should design the landscape with direct views to the Washington Monument.

Land Use

Minimize adverse effects on land use by altering the treatment of the landscape design. The Plinth Alternative currently features formalized spaces and little public gathering or recreational space. The Smithsonian Institution should minimize adverse effects by increasing the opportunity for a publicly accessible landscape and gathering spaces.

Circulation/Topography/Vegetation

Minimize adverse effects on the circulation, topography, and vegetation of Washington Monument Grounds by altering the treatment of the landscape design. The landscape design of the Plinth Alternative is currently formal in character. The Smithsonian Institution should minimize adverse effects by incorporating curvilinear circulation configurations, more open lawn, and less formal water elements to be more compatible with the informal, picturesque character of the Washington Monument Grounds.

Buildings and Structures

Minimize adverse effects on the Washington Monument by reworking the treatment of the west facade. Although the west elevation in the Plinth Alternative would have the biggest exposure to the Washington Monument Grounds, it would read as a side facade, diminishing the prominence of the Washington Monument. The Smithsonian Institution should minimize adverse effects by addressing the treatment of the west facade to better relate to the Washington Monument Grounds without detracting from the idea of the entrance facades.

Minimize adverse effects on the buildings and structures within the Washington Monument Grounds, Federal Triangle, and the Mall. The Smithsonian should refine the skin treatment of the Corona to minimize reflectivity and explore ways to reduce the relative scale of the Plinth Alternative.
Plaza Alternative

Views and Vistas

- Minimize adverse effects on distant views of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Mall, and Federal Triangle from locations such as the top of the Washington Monument and from the air by modifying the treatment of the penthouse. As currently designed, the roof of the Plaza Alternative would feature an outdoor terrace/memorial and a penthouse containing VIP space and a café; the penthouse would be located along the north edge of the roof. This asymmetrical placement would be inconsistent with the placement of the penthouse features of the museum buildings along the north side of the Mall. The Smithsonian Institution should minimize adverse effects on distant views by centering the penthouse on the Corona, following the precedent of the other buildings along the Mall.

- Minimize adverse effects on views of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Mall, and Federal Triangle at night by reducing exterior night lighting.

Spatial Organization/Land Use/Circulation/Topography/Vegetation/Buildings and Structures

Same as the Plinth Alternative.

Pavilion Alternative

Views and Vistas

- Minimize adverse effects on distant views of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Mall, and Federal Triangle from locations such as the top of the Washington Monument and from the air by modifying the treatment of the penthouse. As currently designed, the roof of the Pavilion Alternative would feature an outdoor terrace and a penthouse containing VIP space and a café. The penthouse would be located along the north edge of the roof. This asymmetrical placement would be inconsistent with the placement of the penthouse features of the museum buildings along the north side of the Mall. The Smithsonian Institution should minimize adverse effects by centering the penthouse on the Corona, following the precedent of the other buildings along the Mall.

- Minimize adverse effects on views of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Mall, and Federal Triangle at night by reducing exterior night lighting.

Spatial Organization/Land Use/Circulation/Topography/Vegetation/Buildings and Structures

Same as the Plinth Alternative.
Refined Pavilion Alternative

**Views and Vistas**

- Minimize adverse effects on distant views of the Washington Monument Grounds from locations such as the top of the Washington Monument and from the air by reducing the amount of hardscape in the landscape design.

- Minimize adverse effects on views of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Mall, and Federal Triangle at night by reducing exterior night lighting.

**Spatial Organization/Land Use/Circulation/Topography/Vegetation**

- Same as the Plinth Alternative.

**Building and Structures**

- Minimize adverse effects on the Washington Monument by reworking the treatment of the west facade. Although the west elevation in the Refined Pavilion Alternative would have the biggest exposure to the Washington Monument Grounds, it would read as a side facade, diminishing the prominence of the Washington Monument. The Smithsonian Institution should minimize adverse effects by addressing the treatment of the west facade to better relate to the Washington Monument Grounds without detracting from the idea of the entrance facades.