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**USA TODAY**  
**February 23, 1999, Tuesday, FINAL EDITION**

White House cleaning: A plan for clutter control  
BYLINE: Maria Puente

WASHINGTON -- The White House, say the people who live and work there, is kind of a mess -- and not the political scandal kind.

True, it presents a grand and gorgeous front. It has majestic staterooms, elegant furnishings, priceless artworks, lush gardens, even a bowling alley.

But behind the scenes, it is crowded and chaotic, ridiculously short of storage space and constantly jammed with convoys of delivery trucks.

More than 1 million people a year troop goggle-eyed through the president's house, but most have to wait hours in line, huddled in the rain or cold or drenched in the heat and humidity. Maybe a million visitors more are turned away because there's not enough room for the hordes.

President's Park, the expanse of south lawn and trees that includes the open area known as the Ellipse, should be a breathtaking vista but instead is a parking-lot eyesore. The Ellipse itself is a sorry sight, too: muddy in the spring, a dusty, brown field of dead grass and strewn trash in the summer.

The National Park Service and a platoon of government planners want to fix all that with a proposed \$ 300 million, 20-year renovation.

It would be the first comprehensive overhaul of the White House and its grounds since George Washington laid out the 82-acre area in 1791.

"This is a house that was built 200 years ago, and it wasn't built for the kind of functions we're now asking it to perform," says Ann Bowman Smith, a project manager for the Park Service.

There is no start date for the renovation, and the plan as a whole has not been approved. Congress still must appropriate money for the work in future budgets.

But after nearly two centuries of constant tinkering, rebuilding and redecorating, planners say their newest designs will better suit the White House for its peculiar dual functions: modern executive office and family home.

Among the plans:

-- Building a combination den/gym/entertainment center for the first family underground. The house lacks what millions of ordinary Americans enjoy: a rec room in which to kick back and relax.

-- Expansion of the existing Visitors Center at the nearby Commerce Building to include a museum, theaters and new exhibits on the history of the White House and the American presidency.

-- Construction of an underground moving sidewalk to take visitors from the Visitors Center to a point near the East Entrance start of the White House tour. This would eliminate long waits in inclement

weather.

-- Construction of an 850-car staff parking lot beneath the Ellipse, which would return the area to the pastoral setting it was intended to be. Another 290-car parking garage is planned beneath Pennsylvania Avenue to handle motorcade, diplomatic and senior staff parking.

-- Construction of underground meeting space for White House staff and a large, underground storage space. Trucks would be redirected to new underground loading docks. Small golf cart-like vehicles would make deliveries via underground corridors.

The \$ 300 million cost of the renovation would be borne mostly by taxpayers, although private contributions also would be solicited.

Americans are likely to be generous, judging from the keen interest in the White House they've historically displayed.

When President Truman decided to add a balcony to the second floor of the South Portico in 1948, controversy raged. Now, it's one of the most familiar and popular features of the house.

The public can comment on the renovation plan by visiting the park service's Internet Web site: ([www.nps.gov/planning](http://www.nps.gov/planning)). Comments will be accepted until March 11.

The Park Service has been working on the renovation proposal for six years. Experts who studied how the White House functions say the shortcomings grow more obvious by the year.

For instance, the White House hosts four or five receptions a week, from Easter egg hunts to formal state dinners. Each event requires the hiring of a moving company to transport tables, chairs and stages to the house; set them up; then pack them up afterward and return them to a warehouse until the next event. All of this makes for incredible clutter, as well as security concerns.

"Closets, corridors and driveways overflow with furniture and equipment, as though the staff were having a tag sale," says a Park Service report on the renovation plan.

"No modern hotel would put up with such chaos, yet the White House has been doing it for years because it has no choice."

In general, the renovation plan is being praised, although a few professional designers and architects are critical.

Norman Koonce, president of the American Architectural Foundation, likes the plan but is impatient with its 20-year timeline.

"If this were a corporate headquarters, and it was shown that these changes were needed to operate effectively, it would be done now," he says.

Others complain that the renovation plan is not comprehensive enough and contains a glaring hole: Under orders from Congress, the Park Service did not address what to do about the two-block section of Pennsylvania Avenue on the north side of the house, which President Clinton closed to traffic for security reasons in 1995.

**The Washington Times**  
January 28, 1999, Thursday, Final Edition

BYLINE: THE WASHINGTON TIMES

**WHITE HOUSE RENOVATION FORUM - 9 A.M.** - The National Park Service holds a public forum on plans for White House renovation, the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue, and President's Park. Location: White House Visitor Center, 1450 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, or go to a World Wide Web forum at [www.whistleblower.com](http://www.whistleblower.com). Contact: 202/219-1007.

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House

Get from:

Offe of WH Liaison  
NPS

1100 Ohio Drive SW

DC 20242

**The Boston Globe**  
**December 3, 1998**

**HEADLINE: For White House, more elbow room**

**BYLINE: By Carl Hartman, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON - The presidential family would get a recreation room, and many of the annual 1.2 million White House visitors could get out of the elements, if Congress supports a 20-year renovation plan proposed yesterday.

The estimated \$300 million cost of the National Park Service proposal would be borne mostly by congressional appropriations, but also partly by private contributions. The park service says it was the first comprehensive plan for the White House and its grounds since George Washington designated the area in 1791.

The plan does not address the question of what to do about the two blocks of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House that the Secret Service closed to cars after the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City. Many residents of Washington say those closings have made traffic worse.

The park service has designed a pedestrian mall to replace the broad street, but says it needs congressional approval to make it part of the plan.

The White House spokesman, Joe Lockhart, said he did not know if President Clinton was aware of the proposal's details, but said Clinton has been involved in examining some options. "The president and the first lady have strong feelings about how the building is accessible to the general public," he said.

The park service also proposes moving parked cars in the area near the White House into a proposed underground garage. The proposed recreation room, also underground, would be east of the main portico, and could include a gym and entertainment area.

A pamphlet illustrating the plan noted that the White House is a very formal place that has not had this type of recreational space reserved for the president's family.

A public comment period on the plan ends March 11.

The visitors' center in the nearby Commerce Department building would be enlarged. A moving underground sidewalk would take tours to the East Entrance of the White House.

But Ann Smith of the White House staff, who works with the park service, warned that there would still be long lines outside the fence when visitors come in, especially for occasions such as the Easter Egg Roll.

For the staff, the plan proposes an 850-car garage under the Ellipse behind the White House, and another 290 spaces under Pennsylvania Avenue. Food and

Summary  
of plan

on  
[www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)  
/planning

souvenir vans parked along 15th and 17th streets - the east and west edges of the area - would be moved.

"Although this will cost the District of Columbia and the vendors money," said the park service, "it will reduce the visual clutter and enhance the experience of the President's Park. "

The staff would also get new meeting rooms and storage space.

News media would continue to occupy the ground floor of the west colonnade. But new space would be built under the adjacent West Wing drive, and for the first time there would be a special room for reporters from outside Washington, and for foreign journalists.

**USA TODAY**  
**December 3, 1998**

**HEADLINE: Planners seek comment on White House upgrade**  
**BYLINE: Paul Leavitt; Maria Puente ; From staff and wire reports**

A \$ 300 million renovation proposal for the White House and adjoining President's Park south of the executive mansion includes an indoor recreation center for the president's family and better facilities for tourists.

The plan, unveiled Wednesday by the National Park Service, calls for a 20-year renovation that includes an 850-car garage under the Ellipse behind the White House and 290 spaces under Pennsylvania Avenue.

The White House visitors center would feature a museum, a gathering space for tour groups and an underground moving sidewalk to take tourists to the White House. Currently, they must wait outside, sometimes for hours in rain or snow or broiling heat.

Not addressed is the controversy over what to do about the two blocks of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House that the Secret Service closed to cars after the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building.

The park service is seeking public comment by March 11. A summary of the plan is to be available today on the Internet at [www.nps.gov/planning](http://www.nps.gov/planning).  
-- Maria Puente

**The Baltimore Sun**  
**December 3, 1998**

**HEADLINE: \$ 300 million White House renovation proposed; Expanded visitors center, parking garages planned; Congress' OK required**

**BYLINE: David L. Greene, SUN NATIONAL STAFF**

WASHINGTON -- The Clinton administration unveiled yesterday a \$ 300 million proposal for renovating the White House and its grounds, including an expanded visitors center, a mammoth underground parking garage and private recreation space for presidents and their families.

The plan, which would take 20 years to complete, was described by National Park Service officials as a much-needed improvement for an architectural treasure that has been badly neglected.

It would be the first comprehensive renovation of the site since George Washington chose the spot for the presidential residence in 1791.

The project might never get beyond the blueprint stage because it must win approval from Congress. The administration proposed that most, if not all, of the money for the renovation come from taxpayers.

"This is a carefully crafted vision," Robert G. Stanton, the park service director, said at a ceremony yesterday morning. The White House, he said, "is a physical link and an emotional link between George Washington's nation and that of the new century, new time and new era. Truly, we shall honor the past and imagine the future."

As the 408-page "Comprehensive Design Plan for the White House and President's Park" landed in Congress yesterday, there was skepticism about the \$ 300 million price tag.

"That's quite a lot of money," said Steve Petersen, an aide to Rep. James V. Hansen, a Utah Republican who is a member of the subcommittee that oversees the park service. "We want to protect facilities and make changes that are necessary, but it ain't going to be the Taj Mahal."

The park service and 10 other agencies, including the District of Columbia, the Executive Office of the President and the Secret Service, began crafting the proposal six years ago.

A centerpiece of the project would be a new visitors center in the Commerce Building, now the site of a small one. Nearly 1.2 million tourists come to the White House each year, as many as 5,000 passing through during each two-hour tour period. Visitors wait for hours in a line that often stretches around the southern end of the White House grounds.

"People get wet, cold, yet they come in any kind of weather," said Ann Smith, a park service official who described the proposal. "The visit is that important to them."

People would be able to wait for tours at the expanded visitors center, which would cost more than \$ 57 million and would include an enlarged museum, four video theaters and interactive exhibits on the history of the presidency. It would be linked to the White House by an underground moving sidewalk.

The plan also calls for two underground garages, one for 290 cars under Pennsylvania Avenue and another for 850 cars beneath the Ellipse, to relieve traffic congestion in President's Park -- the grounds surrounding the White House -- and to offer staff members places to park. Delivery trucks, which often clog the front entrances of the White House, would make their deliveries underground.

The president and his family would get a recreational facility that could include a weight room, a basketball court and a whirlpool. Planners said there has been a lack of private space to unwind or exercise. Expanded space for the news media would also be constructed.

The proposal sidestepped the question of whether to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue to traffic. The Secret Service closed the street in front of the White House in 1995 after the Oklahoma City bombing.

The park service has proposed that Pennsylvania Avenue be formally converted into a pedestrian mall, but several members of Congress blocked funds for that plan last year, saying the famous street must be reopened to traffic if it is to be considered the nation's "Main Street."

The project would mark the first time the White House and its surroundings have been altered as part of a single effort. The building last underwent major renovations under President Harry S. Truman, and the landscaping was last changed under President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Some of the planners involved in the renovation effort said it will be a tough sell on Capitol Hill. David Colby, an official in the District of Columbia Office of Planning who represented the city on the project's executive committee, said any part of the plan approved by Congress will have to be popular to get the lawmakers to continue providing money for the later phases.

"At some point, a plan can go on the shelf and isn't very effective," he said. "It loses its punch."

**Cox News Service  
December 2, 1998**

**HEADLINE: UNDER THE WHITE HOUSE, BIG IMPROVEMENTS ARE PLANNED**

**BYLINE: BOB DART**

Two decades into the new millennium, a moving sidewalk will carry tourists through a tunnel to the White House. Correspondents will question the presidential press secretary in a high-tech underground studio. But the first family will still see softball games on the grassy Ellipse behind their historic home.

At least, that's the "carefully crafted vision" that National Park Service officials sketched Wednesday in an ambitious, 20-year, \$300 million "Comprehensive Design Plan for the White House and President's Park."

The project would accomplish the biggest alteration of the White House complex \_ albeit mostly underground \_ since George Washington approved the original design in 1791.

It will "effectively meet the demands of the 21st century presidency" while protecting historic structures and preserving familiar vistas around 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. , promised Robert Stanton, director of the National Park Service.

The plan has been six years in the making, but still faces scrutiny by Congress and several oversight agencies, as well as a 90-day period of public review, before any construction is begun.

Under the proposal, the current visitor's center, located across 15th Street southeast of the White House, will be expanded underground. Four small theaters and interactive displays will be added to keep tourists busy while they await their White House tours.

Rather than walking across 15th Street, the tourists will ride moving sidewalks beneath it, coming up near the visitor's gate on the sidewalk adjacent to the South Lawn. About 1.2 million tourists visit the White House each year.

Street-level parking would be banned from around the Ellipse behind the South Lawn. White House staffers would instead park in a two-level underground garage constructed beneath the park. The Ellipse is the site of the National Christmas Tree, as well as almost daily softball and soccer games and periodic mass protests such as the annual "Right to Life" anti- abortion march.

A second underground parking lot for senior staffers and motorcade vehicles would be built below the section of Pennsylvania Avenue directly in front of the White House, where traffic has been blocked off since the Oklahoma City bombing raised security concerns.

The Park Service did not include a plan for renovating the street level of this stretch of pavement between the White House and Lafayette Park. A

pedestrian mall has been suggested, but would have to be approved by Congress.

Deliveries to the White House would also be made underground, with an entrance located near the New Executive Office Building, located two blocks northwest of the White House. Tunnels would run to an underground storage facility beneath Pennsylvania Avenue.

An underground addition would be made to the present press room, which is located between the West Wing and the main White House building. The press briefing room would be moved into this new facility.

An underground recreational room for the first family would be added just north of the existing executive mansion, and an underground conference room would be located beneath Executive Avenue, between the West Wing and Old Executive Office Building.

The Park Service plan had input from a dozen other agencies, ranging from the Secret Service to the Commission on Fine Arts. It concludes that past White House planning has been "piecemeal" and resulted in an assortment of problems. There is no room to store furniture, for instance, and no place for many White House staffers to park their cars.

"For the most part, Americans are unaware of these problems," the report said. "On the evening news or the front page of the morning paper, the white columns still gleam, the chandeliers still sparkle and the lawns and shrubs remain impeccably groomed."

The changes will ensure that the White House continues to run efficiently, Stanton said at a press conference where the plan was announced.

"The plan seeks to protect the historic site while making site operations over the next two decades smoother and more efficient," he said.

Congress would have to appropriate most of the \$300 million cost of the renovations, but the Park Service said some would come from private donations.

The Park Service's report is available on the Internet (<http://www.nps.gov/planning>).

To: Hillary Rodham Clinton  
From: Ellen McCulloch Lovell  
Re: Comprehensive Design Plan for the White House  
and President's Park  
Date: May 24, 1997

## **The Opportunity**

Since 1992, the National Park Service has been developing the most comprehensive plan for the continued preservation and functioning of the White House and the President's Park area since 1791, when George Washington designated the site for the residence of the President. During the planning process, the Department of the Treasury closed Pennsylvania Avenue due to security concerns. Thus in September, 1995, active planning for the redesign of Pennsylvania Avenue began, also spearheaded by the Park Service. The Comprehensive Design Plan and the Pennsylvania Avenue Design Project are two different, but intertwined projects. Together they represent an historic opportunity to improve the setting, interpretation and aesthetics of the most important historic house and grounds in America.

Both plans are reaching critical times in their approval processes. If they move ahead, you have the opportunity to provide the leadership that is needed to gain the support of the many participants, the public and Congress, so that the comprehensive plan is well under way by the year 2000, and the momentum for this historic initiative is not lost. Since 2000 also marks the 200th anniversary of continuous residence of American Presidents and their families in the White House, the implementation of these plans may be the best way to both commemorate and conserve our nation's most important cultural icon.

This memo will describe the goals of the plans, the agencies and organizations involved, the timetable and the potential risks. It also proposes potential leadership roles for the First Lady.

## **Goals of the Proposed Plans**

The Comprehensive Design Plan for the White House and President's Park has three main purposes: to identify the needs and functions for the site over the next 20 years; to determine the best ways to protect the resources on the site; and to solve the logistical and management problems that have developed.

Over the years the lack of a comprehensive plan has meant a piecemeal approach to solving problems. Urban pressures are encroaching on President's Park and threaten its dignity and character; traffic corridors surround and cut through the site, the needs of the Executive Residence and the Office of the President are not being met, and visitors are not having the highest quality experience. The goals of the Comprehensive Plan are to: respect the historic elements and character of the site, continue its use as a "ceremonial landscape for state events,"

reorient the Park areas as pedestrian spaces, improve the visitor experience and improve the efficiency of the offices and events. The Plan proposes to use existing buildings where possible; locate many new facilities and functions to underground structures. The design elements are to be integrated, so that through paving, planting, lighting, decorative elements and signage, any one entering the area realizes this is respected civic space. Safety, of course, must be a major consideration.

Among the major recommendations in the Plan are: (see Appendix 1 for detailed summary)

- \* underground facilities for meetings, media facilities, staff corridors, parking and storage - all in or near the White House complex;
- \* expanded Visitors' Center beneath the Commerce Building, with theaters, a museum, and a staging area for a new below-ground corridor to the southeast White House fence where tours would begin;
- \* roadways on the Ellipse closed, vendors moved, and present roadways used as pathways to gardens; E Street would remain open for one-way, two-lane traffic but be closed during mid-day to allow pedestrians easy and safe access.

The Pennsylvania Avenue Design Project was to produce a pleasing design that restricted public vehicular traffic while keeping access for official government uses, such as motorcades and diplomatic arrivals; it also had to accommodate inaugural parades and pedestrian traffic. Although the closure was brought on by security concerns, it also posed several opportunities. The redesign can: remove the traffic that separated the people from the White House and reduce noise, air pollution and sidewalk congestion; upgrade the appearance of the site and reintegrate it with the city and Lafayette Park; protect the site's historic character; provide a safer, more pleasing environment, with welcoming walkways.

Of the four design alternatives which were developed, the Preferred Alternative contains the following elements:

- \* narrows Pennsylvania Avenue, while keeping the elements of L'Enfant's original plan - wide footpaths, tree plantings and a grand avenue approaching the White House;
- \* curves the Avenue in front of the White House, echoing Thomas Jefferson's design and the curvilinear features of the site;
- \* enhances the connection between the White House and President's Park and the area and the rest of the city; improves the sight lines to and around the White House;
- \* address security, service and ceremonial functions in ways consistent with the dignity and significance of the site.

(See Appendix 2 for cost estimates for both plans.)

## **The Participants**

The National Park Service is responsible for both design plans. The Comprehensive Design Plan is guided by the cooperating agencies that form the Executive Committee for the process: Executive Office of the President; Executive Residence at the White House; White House

Military Office, U.S. Department of Treasury, U.S. Secret Service, General Services Administration, National Park Service, District of Columbia, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, National Capital Planning Commission, Fine Arts Commission, and Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation (until 1996.)

After Treasury recommended closing the Avenue, the Park Service also took on that Design Project. Both plans consulted numerous outside experts. The Pennsylvania Avenue plan included a design charette in December, 1995 with thirteen nationally-known design, art, history and museum professionals. Both plans have been submitted to extensive public comment and have, or will, publish environmental assessments which explore their effects on the environment, economy and preservation. (See Timetable for specific steps.)

At this stage of the process the following players are **influential for the Comprehensive Plan:**

- \* the Executive Committee (see above) - it must comment on the plan by May 30, 1997. The cooperating agencies can object, but are also charged with helping to solve the problem.
- \* National Capital Planning Commission, (NCPC), Reginald W. Griffith, Executive Director and Harvey Gantt, Chairman - this Commission, created by Congress, has a complex oversight role for the District of Columbia and the Federal agencies on land-use and structural planning. NCPC has the authority to accept or reject the plan. In June of 1996, they tabled the Pennsylvania Avenue Plan and took no action on the Comprehensive Plan, pending an Environmental Assessment by the Treasury Department on its decision to close the Avenue.
- \* Congress - implementing the plan depends on appropriations to the Park Service, GSA and other agencies on the executive committee. The most important of the appropriations sub-committees that control the flow of support are: Interior; Treasury, Postal and General Government; and D.C.
- \* The Executive Office of the President - if the President or the First Lady object to elements of the plan, their ideas will not only be taken into consideration by the Executive Committee but could potentially influence the willingness of Congress to fund implementation.

**The influential participants in the Pennsylvania Avenue Project are:**

- \* Executive Committee - formed by the Park Service to develop a planning process and review its results. It included Federal representatives: Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (a federal body,) Commission of Fine Arts, Executive Office of the President, Executive Residence at the White House, White House Military Office, General Services Administration, National Capital Planning Commission, Pennsylvania Avenue Corporation, and the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Interior - National Park Service, Transportation - Federal Highway Administration, Treasury - U.S. Secret Service; also Washington, D.C. representatives: Department of Public Works and Office of Planning; and Congressional Representatives: U.S. Senator Patrick Moynihan, Representatives Ralph Regula and Tom Davis and U.S. Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton.
- \* U.S. Department of Treasury - its security concerns must be met by the plan. Also, by June 2, 1997, it will issue an environmental assessment. If Treasury finds there are "major impacts" then that finding will necessitate a full environmental impact statement. If not - as is expected - then

the study triggers another review by the National Capital Planning Commission.

- \* National Capital Planning Commission - will review the Pennsylvania Avenue plan again, once the Treasury Department's environmental assessment is out. It could then approve the project, or ask for a full environmental impact statement. This could be a high-profile event, providing a forum for D.C. representatives to air their concerns. Eleanor Holmes Norton has recently reiterated her concerns about access to the Avenue by tourists and the disabled and about the economic impact of the closure.

- \* Fine Arts Commission - serves on the executive committee and has an active role in advising on design elements. Carter Brown strongly supports the curve in the Avenue and the entire Comprehensive Plan.

- \* D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board - is advisory only but according to Park Service guidelines, the Park Service must enter into an agreement with the State Historic Preservation Officer, Hampton Cross, who is advised by the Board and at present objects to the curve on Pennsylvania Avenue in the Preferred Plan. The Park Service is now exploring what authority this body has, and whether it could hold up the plan. The Review Board's opinions could affect the National Capital Planning Commission.

- \* Congress - as with the Comprehensive Plan, Congress holds the purse strings.

## **Timetable**

The Fine Arts Commission had long been concerned that improvements to the White House and President's Park were being conceived and presented in piecemeal fashion; it pushed for a comprehensive approach. In 1989, the National Park Service proposed a planning process and in 1992 Congress provided funding to begin the Comprehensive Plan. During 1993, the Park Service conducted workshops with experts and agency representatives to develop guiding principles for a 20-year vision for the site. By 1995 the Park Service released planning alternatives to the public for an extensive review and comment phase. But on May 20, 1995, Treasury closed Pennsylvania Avenue and the Park Service began studying design alternatives. In May of 1996, the Park Service released an environmental assessment and four different design plans for public comment, including the Preferred Plan. In June, the NCPC tabled the Pennsylvania Avenue plan, although aesthetic improvements continued under an interim plan. Meanwhile the U.S. Department of Treasury, as the agency which took the initial action, was required by NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) to document its decision-making process and assess the impact on the environment, economy and historic preservation. This environmental assessment is expected to be released on June 2, 1997.

The most important dates pending in the timetable for the Comprehensive Plan are:

- \* May 30 - Executive Committee agencies' comments due.

- \* June 16 - Executive Committee meets to discuss implementation strategy.

- \* September, 1997 - Plan released for public review for 45 to 90 day period; Executive Committee addresses comments. During or after review, the Comprehensive Plan goes before the National Capital Planning Commission again for approval.

- \* early 1998 - the Final Plan is released for a 30-day comment period. After this, and approval

by NCPC, the plan can be implemented if funding is provided.

Key dates for the Pennsylvania Avenue plan are:

- \* June 2 - Treasury environmental assessment is expected, and released for public comment.
- \* July (tentative) - final Treasury environmental assessment ready.
- \* Fall - the National Capital Planning Commission reacts to the plan and either approves it or asks for more study.
- \* Fall - the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board Advises the State Historic Preservation Officer whether or not to enter into an agreement with the National Park Service to approve the design. Its opinion does not have the force of law but is still influential. What authority it has and whether the District of Columbia needs to be a party to the agreement is being studied.
- \* January, 1998 - National Park Service requests funding for Pennsylvania Avenue plan in FY1999 budget. NPS completes construction design and detailed planning in 1998 and, if funding is approved, begins construction in 1999.

### **Potential Role of the First Lady**

You have begun to influence the Comprehensive Plan by raising some questions during the March, 1996 briefing with the National Park Service. The Executive Committee is already discussing your concerns about park safety, the timed closing of E Street, the proposed family recreation center and the relocation of the press and briefing rooms. Other concerns may be raised, but would need to be done fairly quickly, ideally before the September public review.

If you agree with the major design and improvement proposals and see this as an historic opportunity to preserve and enhance the site, you could provide leadership in the following ways:

- \* raise public awareness about the needs of the site and the ways the plan addresses them by a high-visibility tour of the site, speech, and convening of interested parties;
- \* emphasize the bipartisan nature of the planning by meeting with involved members of both parties and by visiting the Capitol to show interest in its historic preservation and improvement needs. (In 1981 Congress developed a master plan for the Capitol that included underground delivery and service facilities and a three-level visitors' center. Mindful of the fiscal climate, Congress has not approved funding for its own plan. Perhaps both the White House and Capitol plans could be advocated as a Millennium project and legacy the government leaves to the American people.)
- \* discuss the importance of preserving and improving the White House, President's Park and Pennsylvania Avenue in your column, press interviews, op-eds and other appearances.
- \* hold a White House event on the plan, including a White House lecture, to build bipartisan support.

There will be many opportunities for leadership as these plans develop. First we must thoroughly understand the procedures, the risks and the possibilities for leaving a lasting legacy by actively supporting the plans, or elements of them.

The alternative would be to let the Park Service take the lead, offer quiet support and take an incremental approach to Congressional funding. Which action to pursue will depend on our analysis over the next month and our assessment of whether it is possible to marshal public and Congressional support for a far-reaching plan at a time of some disillusionment about government and of fiscal austerity.

# Letter to William Thomas

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**United States Department of the Interior**  
**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**  
National Capital Region  
1100 Ohio Drive, SW.  
Washington, D.C. 20242

March 20, 1995  
D22(NCR-WHL)

Mr. William Thomas  
P.O. Box 27217  
Washington, D.C. 20038

Dear Mr. Thomas:

I want to take this opportunity to bring you up-to-date on the process to develop the Comprehensive Design Plan for the White House. In 1993, during the early phases of planning, many individuals and groups joined with us in identifying the problems facing the site. The generous and enthusiastic sharing of what people and agencies saw happening at the White House and President's Park provided much of the base for this planning.

A number of individuals also identified the way in which the study area should be functioning 20 years in the future - by the year 2015. With both the problems and the visions for the site identified, we were then able to develop alternative concepts for the future operation of the White House and President's Park. Those concepts are about to begin public review.

During the month of April 1995, we invite you to join with us in a public dialogue about the alternative concepts for the study area.

We welcome and encourage your continued participation in this planning process. It is only through the exchange of perspectives about this site's future that together we can identify the best courses of action.

Within the next week or so you will be receiving a newsletter which describes the alternative concepts and asks for your response in a number of areas. Please feel free to expand your comments beyond those questions included in the response form enclosed with the newsletter.

On Monday, April 10, a public forum will be held from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the new White House Visitors Center, Baldrige Hall, Department of Commerce, 1450 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230.

During this informal day of discussion, members of the planning team will be available to discuss elements of the alternative concepts. We hope to see you at the forum both to discuss the concepts and so you can see this wonderful new space and the exhibits now available for visitors to the White House.

In addition, members of the planning team also will be available on April 11, from 12 noon to 4 p.m. in their offices in Room 3360, Main Interior Building, 1849 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20240. If you would be interested in talking with members of the planning team during that afternoon, please call our offices at (202) 219-1007. Appointments will aid your entrance to the building and ensure that there is adequate space for everyone to see the concept graphics and talk to team members that afternoon.

When public review of the alternative concepts is complete, our next step will be to develop a draft plan for the site. We expect the draft plan to be available for public review late this fall.

We remain grateful for your participation in this process which seeks to serve the Presidency and the people while ensuring the continued protection of those incomparable historic resources which comprise the site.

If you have any questions, please call me or Ann Bowman Smith, Project Coordinator, Comprehensive Design Plan for the White House, at (202) 219-1007.

Thank you. We look forward to seeing or hearing from you.  
Sincerely,

Regional Director, National Capital Region

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**Pennsylvania Ave. Closure || Peace Park**

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# **A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR SOLVING TODAY'S PROBLEMS AND MEETING TOMORROW'S CHALLENGES**

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The White House and President's Park are being affected by uses and demands that were never anticipated by our forebearers. To address current problems and concerns, and to take advantage of opportunities for the future, a comprehensive design plan is being prepared by the National Park Service in cooperation with 11 other agencies that have stewardship responsibilities within President's Park.

## **WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS?**

Numerous concerns have been identified at President's Park. Among them are the following:

Automobiles are everywhere.

E Street and Pennsylvania Avenue bisect the area, creating hazards for pedestrians and infringing on the site's integrity.

Presidential security is a constant concern.

Visitor facilities and educational programs are inadequate.

The support facilities needed to operate a modern-day presidency are lacking.

The north grounds do not adequately support current media operations without impact on the historic landscape.

The Ellipse grounds never have time to recover between special events.

President's Park is not clearly distinguished from its surroundings, diminishing its significance.

A long-range plan has never been done to deal with these concerns, and it is time to act.

## **WHAT WILL THE PLAN DO?**

A comprehensive design plan for the White House will analyze these concerns and propose solutions to be implemented in stages over the next 20 years. Over the long run the plan will offset its costs by preventing short-term solutions that do not fully address needs at the site.

## **WHAT ARE THE PLANNING GOALS?**

Three primary goals have been defined for a plan. The plan needs to balance all three:

the demands of today's presidency

public demands for access to one of the symbols of our democracy

the preservation of the cultural and natural resources of the White House and the surrounding landscape

## **WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?**

The wide-ranging concerns facing the site today were identified through a series of 26 workshops between April and October 1993. Over 70 agencies and organizations were invited to attend. To solicit

comments from the public, a tent on the Elolipse was set up for four days in the spirng of 1993. This provided an open forum for international, national, and local visitors to contribute their ideas.

The planning team has developed three conceptual approaches to address cons\cerns now and in the future. Those concepts are described in this news letter, and they are organized around four topics:

Home and Office of the President

Resource Protection and Site Character

Visitor Use

Access and Transportation

In addition, several actions are proposed regardless of which conceptual approach is selected. Referred to as actions common to all, these proposals are described on the next page.

This newsletter is your opportunity to learn about and comment on the three concepts being considered. Once the public review has been completed, a draft plan and a draft environmental impact statement will be prepared. These documents are scheduled for public review in the fall of 1995.

As a symbol of our free and democratic nation, President's Park deserves to have its dignity, respect, and functinal capabilities restored and renewed for the future.

#### **ACTIONS COMMON TO ALL CONCEPTS HOME AND OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

Multiple security screening facilities will be available.

There will be multiple entry points to the site for guest at official functions as well as business visitors. >Delivery facilities, meeting space, reception areas, and staff and business circulation corridors will be provided for the Executive Office and support functions.

News media facilities and building utilities will be upgraded.

Indoor recreation and storage space will be provided for the Executive Residence.

#### **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND SITE CHARACTER**

President's Park will continue to be an open area that is visually linked to the National Mall; the traditional vistas to and from the north and south will be maintained.

The important elements of past significant landscape designs will be respected.

All memorials established by legislation will be retained no new memorials will be encouraged.

Archeological resources will become a part of resource management concerns.

Design guidelines will be adopted to ensure that future facility designs are compatible with the overall site character.

All programs and facilities will be s\designed and managed in an environmentally sound manner.

#### **VISITOR USE AND SERVICES**

A White House visitor center will be provided to facilitate and complement the White House tour

Free public tour tickets will be available year-round. 25% of the tickets will be available

nationwide in advance.

First Amendment activities in areas now protected by law.

All special events and their infrastructure will be in keeping with the dignity and significance of the site.

### **ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION**

Vehicle parking will be removed from the Ellipse roadways and the curb lanes surrounding President's Park -- 15th Street, 17th Street, Constitution Avenue, and H Street.

State, Hamilton, Jackson and Madison Places will be closed to vehicular traffic and redesigned for pedestrian use.

E Street vehicular traffic patterns will be modified.

West Executive Avenue will remain closed to the public, but it will be redesigned to resemble East Executive Avenue

No public visitor parking will be available in President's Park.

### **THE NEXT STEPS**

April 28, 1995: Deadline for the questionnaire on the conceptual approaches to be mailed back to the National Park Service planning team.

Fall 1995: Distribution of the draft plan and environmental impact statement for public review. At this stage a concept will be identified as the preferred action, which may be a combination of elements from the various conceptual approaches. Spring 1996: Scheduled completion of the final plan and environmental impact statement.

### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

If you want to receive future information about the comprehensive design plan for the White House and President's Park, please contact the planning team:

National Park Service

Comprehensive Design Plan for the White House 1100 Ohio Drive SW

Washington, D.C. 20242

(202) 619-6344 FAX (202) 619-6353

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### **WHY IS THE WHITE HOUSE A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM?**

President's Park -- the area encompassing the White House, its grounds, the Ellipse, and Lafayette Park -- is integral to Pierre Charles L'Enfant's 1791 design for the nation's capital. The White House has been the residence and Office of every U.S. president and his family since John Adams moved in on November 1, 1800. Its endurance for 200 years reflects the stability of our free and democratic nation. In 1961 Congress asked the National Park Service to administer the White House and its grounds as a unit of the national park system.

In addition to being historically significant, President's Park possesses valuable open space in the center of a densely urban environment -- space that is available for use by the president and the first

family, as well as the public.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The following agencies form the executive committee which is helping guide the development of the comprehensive design plan for the White House and President's Park.

Executive Office of the President  
Executive Residence at the White House  
White House Military Office U.S. Department of the Treasury  
U.S. Secret Service  
General Services Administration  
National Park Service  
District of Columbia  
commission of Fine Arts  
National Capital Planning Commission  
Advisory Council of Historic Preservation  
Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation

## **CONCEPT 1**

The focus of concept 1 is to make the site work well for the presidency and to interpret that focus to the public. This concept would respect traditional use patterns and site relationships. Operations would be improved, simplified, and retained onsite whenever possible. Activities allowed at the site would be directly related to the presidency, and visitors would have opportunities for in-depth educational experiences related to the presidency.

## **HOME AND OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

1. West side - belowground delivery, staging, and staff parking; State Place closed.
- 2 East side - belowground delivery, staging and staff parking, Hamilton Place closed.
3. Meeting space - belowground
4. New media facility - belowground

## **RESOURCE AND PROTECTION AND SITE CHARACTER**

5. Ellipse - pedestrian walk and formal gardens in side pannels
6. East Executive Avenue continue as a pedestrian street.

## **VISITOR USE**

7. White House visitor center - belowground, with a belowground connection to the visitor entrance building. Visitors enter through the East Wing of the White House.

## **ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION**

8. E street - opened to two-way traffic across the site, with timed closures during the day.
9. Jackson Place - pedestrian underpass
10. Pennsylvania Avenue - open
11. belowground parking for staff and maintenance.

## CONCEPT 2

The focus of concept 2 is to meet the needs of the various people who use the site, with convenient access to the White House, the resources of PResident's Park, and transportation services. Areas adjacent to President's Park and the White House would be used to accommodate the needs of the presidency and visitors without compromising the site's resources.

### HOME AND OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

1. West side - belowground delivery, staging, and staff parking; State Place closed.
- 2 East side - belowground delivery, staging and staff parking, Hamilton Place closed.
3. Meeting space - belowground
4. New media facility - upgraded in existing space

### RESOURCE AND PROTECTION AND SITE CHARACTER

5. Ellipse - pedestrian walk and formal gardens in side pannels
6. East Executive Avenue continue as a pedestrian street.
7. Events plaza - permanent infrastructure

### VISITOR USE

8. White House visitor center - in the Treasury Annex or Main Treasury Building, with a belowground connection to the visitor entrance building. Visitors enter through the North Portico or East Wing of the White House.

### ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION

9. Visitor gateway (TO LAFAYETTE PARK) -- clearly articulated entrance to the site.
  10. E Street - tunneled and redesigned for pedestrian use.
  11. Pennsylvania Avenue -- tunneled or closed and redesigned for pedestrian use. (JACKSON AND MADISON PLACES CLOSED)
- NOTE: Staff parking accommodated at offsite locations.

## CONCEPT 3

The focus of concept 3 is on preserving the site's historical significance and its relationship to the presidency. Wherever feasible, operations and support facilities would be reduced in scale, decentralized, and dispersed offsite. Only those operations that strengthen the integrity and purpose of President's Park and the White House would remain. Minimal infrastructure would reduce impacts on the character of the site, although it would continue to meet the needs of the presidency and visitors.

### HOME AND OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

1. Meeting space -- Old Executive Office Building north courtyard.
  2. New media facility -- Old Executive Office Building north courtyard.
- NOTE: West side - delivery, staging, and staff parking; accommodated at office locations, State Place closed.  
East side - delivery, staging and staff parking; accommodated at office locations, Hamilton Place closed.

## **RESOURCE AND PROTECTION AND SITE CHARACTER**

3. Ellipse - pedestrian walk and informal gardens in side pannels
4. East Executive Avenue continue as a pedestrian street.

## **VISITOR USE**

8. White House visitor center - in Baldrige Hall, with a belowground connection to the visitor entrance building. Visitors enter through the East Wing of the White House.

## **ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION**

9. Visitor gateway (TO LAFAYETTE PARK) -- clearly articulated entrance to the site.
  10. E Street - closed and redesigned for pedestrian use.
  11. Pennsylvania Avenue -- open.
- NOTE: Staff parking accommodated at offsite locations.

# No Elbow Room at the White House

## Park Service Plans \$300 Million Overhaul to Ease Congestion

By STEPHEN C. FEHR  
Washington Post Staff Writer

A walk through the White House begins in the wood-paneled East Wing lobby and continues on to the elegant Ground Floor Corridor, with its vaulted ceiling, bronze-and-crystal chandeliers, marble walls and floors, portraits of first ladies and bronze busts of famous Americans.

"This is sort of the good view of the White House," said Ann Smith, a National Park Service planner. "It looks very formal, very special."

But open a nearby door that's off-limits and you come to a narrow, crowded corridor through which everyone and everything must pass to go between the East and West wings.

On any given day, up to 3,000 people work at the White House complex, attending hundreds of meetings, delivering mail and packages and picking up food or supplies that require them to navigate the 11-foot-wide hall a floor below the North Portico. As many as 600 deliveries a week are made to the White House, and many

cross at this spot. "Everything converges here," said Gary J. Walters, chief usher at the White House.

Worsening congestion and strain are evident at the president's home, office and 82-acre grounds, the Park Service says, and that has prompted the agency to propose a 20-year, \$300 million overhaul of the 200-year-old complex.

In a rare, two-hour backstage tour last week, the Park Service presented its view of the depth of

See WHITE HOUSE, A4, Col. 1

# At the White House, Planning to Expand

WHITE HOUSE, From A1

the problems. Storage space is so scarce that items for holiday decorations and the yearly Easter egg roll are kept elsewhere. And the China Room, where the presidential china is on display, doubles as a coat room for state dinners.

The White House is more to Washington than a symbol of the power of the presidency. Part residence, museum, office building and park, what happens there has a direct impact on the surrounding neighborhood, especially on traffic circulation and downtown parking. Any renovation also would affect the 5,000 tourists who come there every day and who make the White House the most visited home in America.

Though not always visible to people on those tours, the building's needs aren't being met, the Park Service says, even as the number of meetings and events there increases. The historic state rooms are now being used for business meetings because there's no space elsewhere. Parking is so tight that cars are parked next to fire hydrants and in crosswalks. Heightened security demands longer and more frequent motorcades, which tie up traffic on outside streets and inside the gate.

On the day a reporter and photographer glimpsed the White House underbelly, President Clinton was welcoming Argentine President Carlos Menem for the first state visit of 1999, adding to the foot traffic inside and vehicles

In the corridor between the East and West wings, White House staffers carried lattes and muffins from the cafeteria to their offices, outside visitors came and went to meetings and Secret Service personnel moved about. The Coke man pushed a dolly stacked with cases of beverages. A carpenter passed by carrying a bucket of sawdust headed for the trash.

Meantime, the White House florist, Nancy Clarke, was nervous because the shipment of flowers she needed for the state dinner hadn't arrived. When they were delivered, "that's when we really have a problem because there's very little space for us to work," Clarke said.

The florists were forced to open boxes of flowers on a table set up in the corridor.

The hallway also doubles as an open storage closet for tablecloths, wall coverings, choral risers, tables and chairs used for special events. The ice machines are there, too.

And when storage space is scarce inside, materials sometimes are taken outside to the service drives on either side of the North Portico, an eyesore hidden from tourists that includes construction work space and the White House recycling bins. Walters pointed out three rented racks for food tray storage sitting outside in the cold "because we don't have any place to store them."

Most items for special events—Christmas decorations and Easter egg rolls—must be packed and stored at a warehouse in the College Park area, then brought back each season, each time going through a complicated security check. For diplomatic receptions, which can number five a week, the Park Service has to set up and take down the tables, chairs and stages, all of which come from the warehouse.

The items not put up in the warehouse are tucked into every available space in the White House, much like anyone's crowded family basement or garage. Even the president's basement bowling alley—a single lane, flanked by walls—is used for storage. If someone wants to play, the clutter has to be removed.

That collection of problems drove the Park Service to recommend changes to the complex. "Inadequate storage space requires frequent deliveries, often within view of those working at, coming to or visiting the site," the Park Service said in a report. "The result is traffic congestion, delays, unsafe conditions . . . and an incompatible visual setting."

Walters, who has worked in the White House since 1970, said there has been a noticeable rise in the number of functions at the White House, spurred in part by security concern about having the president leave the grounds too frequently.

The arrival of a limousine carrying Vice President Gore demonstrated how congested the White House confines can become, particularly on days when there are multiple events.

The New York Times

## Tentative Bid To Succeed Moynihan

### Lowey, a Democrat, Is Gauging Support

By ADAM NAGOURNEY

Amid growing concern among New York Democrats over finding a candidate to run for the Senate in 2000, Representative Nita M. Lowey of Westchester said yesterday that she was considering a race for the seat and that she had begun calling Democrats and contributors to measure potential support.

As things now stand, Ms. Lowey, 61, would have the field essentially to herself if she sought the job held by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, even though she is barely known statewide. Many Democrats said yesterday that the thin ranks of potential candidates pointed to a troubling weakness in the party as it approached the 2000 election.

Several prospective candidates — including the State Comptroller, H. Carl McCall, and Andrew M. Cuomo, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development — have ruled out the contest, leaving Democratic leaders worried that potential candidates are being scared off by the possible Republican candidacy of Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York.

Some state Democratic leaders have urged Hillary Rodham Clinton, the First Lady, to move to New York next year and run for the Senate. Ms. Lowey said yesterday she would immediately abandon her prospective campaign if Ms. Clinton ran. Mrs. Clinton has not publicly ruled out the idea, although her friends describe it as highly unlikely.

In an interview yesterday, Ms. Lowey said she had spent the day calling Democratic leaders and contributors to measure how well she would do in lining up support. She also said she would spend the next few months traveling the state to discuss her prospective candidacy.

"I'm seriously, actively exploring the Senate race," she said. "I'm going to make a definitive decision in the spring."

Mr. Moynihan's decision not to seek a fifth term in 2000, which he announced three days after the election of Charles E. Schumer, a Democrat and former Representative, to the Senate, has underlined the absence of formidable statewide candidates in the party.

The party's inability to recruit a strong

candidate has been chilled as well by the prospective candidacy of Mr. Giuliani. The two-term Mayor presumably would have no trouble drawing Democratic votes in New York City and raising the money needed for the contest.

But the vacuum in the Democratic Party has, it seems, created an opportunity for Ms. Lowey, a five-term member of Congress who is barely known outside her district, which includes parts of Westchester, the Bronx and Queens. Several Democrats said that she would, if by default, be the front-runner if she decided to run.

Ms. Lowey's aides said yesterday that she had \$800,000 in her campaign account that could go toward the race. Ms. Lowey said that a Senate race would be expensive, but she said she did not believe she would have any difficulty financing a campaign. "You have to raise a huge amount of money, and I think I can do it — I think between \$15 million and \$20 million," she said.

The main promoter of a Clinton candidacy in New York, Representative Charles B. Rangel of Manhattan, said yesterday he would welcome Ms. Lowey into the race if Mrs. Clinton ultimately decided not to run.

"I think outside of Clinton, she would be the most outstanding candidate that we have," Mr. Rangel said. "If Hillary Clinton doesn't run, I cannot think of any candidate who has a better chance to win, who is better qualified, than Nita Lowey."

Mr. Schumer also said he believed that Ms. Lowey would be "a strong candidate" and that "she has a strong record in Congress." The new Democratic Senator said he did not believe that Mr. Giuliani was necessarily as a fearsome political force as many Democrats have suggested.

"Giuliani is not a pushover," Mr. Schumer said. "But we're a long way away from the election. I had 1 percent in the polls at about this time, and no one thought I could win the primary, let alone beat D'Amato."

If Ms. Lowey decides against running, the field as of now would include Representative Carolyn B. Maloney and the Rev. Al Sharpton.



Nita M. Lowey  
of Westchester

The limo pulled up on West Executive Avenue, a main street serving the White House that also serves as a parking lot for staff, a delivery drive for trucks, a pedestrian crossing between the Old Executive Office Building and the West Wing and a staging area for motorcades. Vehicles often double-park, and there isn't much room for motorcades to turn around.

"The number of functions along West Executive Drive has maxed out," Smith said.

Closer to the North Portico, delivery trucks could not pull up to unload for the state dinner because the driveway was blocked by TV reporters giving live reports about the president's impeachment trial.

Gore was on his way to the arrival ceremony for Menem, which had to be moved indoors because of chilly weather—creating another logistical demand. Risers, chairs, a canopy and other materials that had been brought in by truck and set up on the South Lawn had to be removed or brought inside to the north entrance, and then a stage had to be built there.

"In many ways, this building is like a theater, with the sets changing all the time depending on the event," said James L. McDaniel, the Park Service's liaison to the White House.

Walters considers himself the choreographer, arranging the movements of the staff and outsiders as precisely as possible so they don't collide. But there can be near misses.

The band for the arrival ceremony, driven indoors, set up in the largest space close to the new ceremony site—which happened to be the State Dining Room, the same place where 150 people would be gathering for dinner that night. That meant the tables and chairs for the dinner couldn't be arranged until the ceremony was over.

"Usually, we'd set up the dining room in the morning, but because the band was there we had to wait," Walters said. "And we had to put up and take down red screens behind the band because we didn't want the guests to see the unkempt dining room."

Nearby, the Family Dining Room had been transformed into a catering and storage area for the state dinner, with some tables set against a marble fireplace under a Louis XVI mirror made in France in the 1770s.

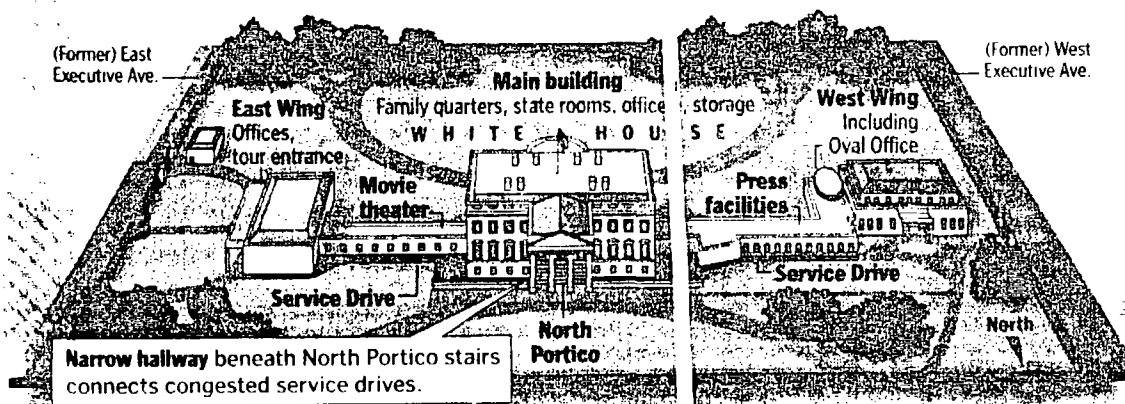
A floor below, White House Executive Chef Walter Scheib was beginning to prepare the dinner in a 30-foot-by-20-foot kitchen, small by professional kitchen standards. Food deliveries to the kitchen are limited—the staff can't shop for a week's groceries at a time—because of the limited storage space. The fish for the state dinner was brought in that day, but the vegetables were delivered a few days earlier.

"We don't really have a wine cellar, either," said Walters, who often has to turn down vintners' recommendations to buy cases of a particularly exquisite wine.

The Park Service plan does not cover everything—the kitchen space can't be expanded, for instance. But if Congress approves the money, the plan would remake the mansion and grounds in a dramatic way.

## Remaking President's Park

Plans by the National Park Service for a \$300 million project to remake parts of the White House grounds and the surrounding 82 acres of parkland known as "President's Park" are being considered to help alleviate some of the crowding and congestion within the house itself.



For the first family, a 3,000-square-foot rec room would be added, directly accessible to the executive residence, providing private space in which to relax. Except for a small theater, the president and his family do not have that now. The congestion on West Executive would be eliminated by building a parking garage under Pennsylvania Avenue, where motorcade staging, staff parking and 2,000 square feet

of storage would be provided.

Separate tunnels for pedestrians and deliveries also would be built, improving foot and vehicle circulation. Deliveries would be made through the New Executive Office Building and distributed by light vehicles traveling in underground service corridors. Meeting space would be carved out beneath West Executive Avenue, and the news media would be housed in larger, subterranean facilities.

Elsewhere, the roadways on the Ellipse would be closed to vehicles; staff vehicles would park in a new garage below the Ellipse. Tourists would start the revamped tour in a roomier visitors' center.

Park Service officials have scheduled a public forum on the plan from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Jan. 27 and 28 at the center, 1450 Pennsylvania Ave. South.

The plan's future is uncertain; a dozen federal and local agencies must clear it before construction can begin. Park Service officials are planning to take lawmakers on similar behind-the-scenes tours in the hope they'll be persuaded.

The Park Service anticipates that the cost of the proposal will raise the strongest objections. The White House has undergone piecemeal renovations before, and the plan does not call for changes that would alter the facade of the mansion. Most additions are underground, and the rec room would be added without changing the house's exterior.

The plan, if fully executed, would be the most comprehensive renovation of the White House in its history.

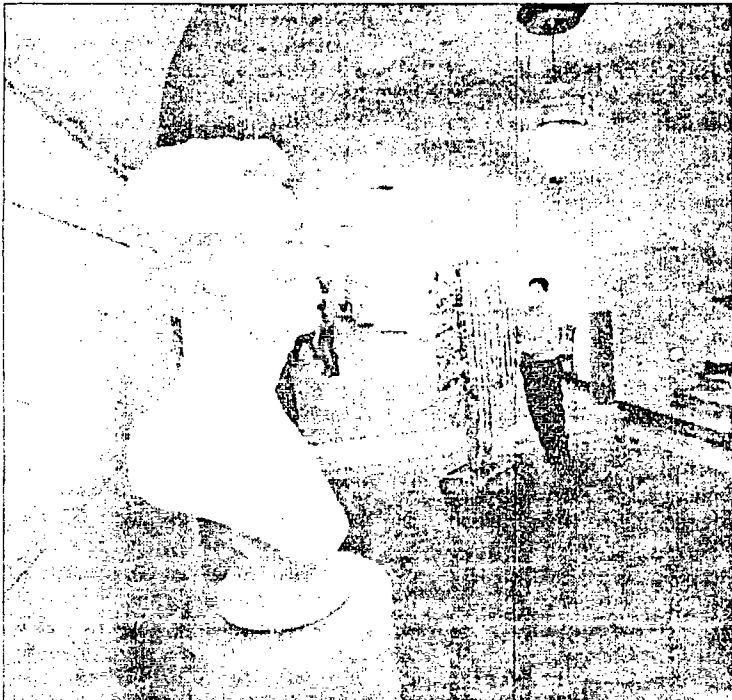
"What I'd hope they'd see is that this is a plan that protects a historical residence while providing the services and facilities needed by both the presidency and the people," Smith said.

BY LAURA STANTON—THE WASHINGTON POST



PHOTOS BY RICK BOWMER — THE WASHINGTON POST

Part-time butlers work in the Family Dining Room, used as a catering and storage area for state dinners because there is no room elsewhere.



A staff person wheels a coat rack outside the China Room, where the presidential china is on display. It doubles as a coat room for state dinners.



Nancy Clarke, White House florist, uses a table set up in a busy corridor to prepare flowers. Clarke said, "There's very little space for us to work."

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**COMPREHENSIVE DESIGN PLAN  
SUMMARY**