



Public Scoping Newsletter

Dear Friends and Visitors,

As called for in the General Management Plan (November 2009), available at http://parkplanning.nps.gov/jeff_gmp, an international design competition was conducted in 2010 to revitalize Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (the park) by improving connections to downtown St. Louis and expanding programming, facilities and partnerships, while enhancing the visitor experience. The competition winner, Michael Van Valkenburg Associates (MVVA) of New York, was selected by a jury from a field of five finalists in September 2010. MVVA presented updated information about the winning design to the public in January 2011 and has been refining their concept design through a series of discussions with the National Park Service (NPS).

This project is part of a broader initiative known as CityArchRiver 2015, and is a unique and important opportunity to integrate the Gateway Arch and the park

surrounding it into the fabric of the city. Construction is targeted to be complete by October 28, 2015—the 50th anniversary of the construction of the Gateway Arch.

As part of this effort, the NPS is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for an evaluation of alternatives to revitalize the park. The proposed action involves physical changes to the park and facilities as a method for improving visitor access and experience, while better integrating the park into downtown St. Louis.

This newsletter initiates a public scoping process as part of the EA being prepared by the NPS to evaluate the proposed changes to the park. We invite the public, government agencies and other interested persons and organizations to provide comments.

I encourage you to become involved in the future of Jefferson National

Expansion Memorial by providing us with your thoughts. You are welcome to comment by visiting the park's Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website at http://parkplanning.nps.gov/jeff_ea_newsletter, or by sending us a letter. Please see the "Public Scoping Period and How to Comment" section of this newsletter for more details. Additional information will also be made available at www.nps.gov/jeff.

Thank you for your continued interest and involvement with Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. Public communication, collaboration and cooperation are essential to implementing a successful project which will revitalize the Memorial. We look forward to hearing from you.

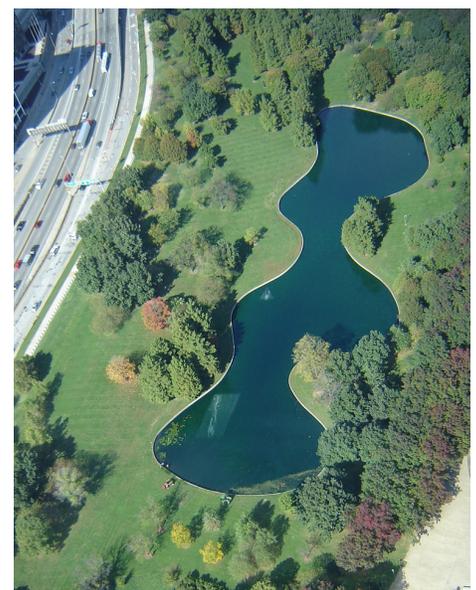
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Bradley".

Tom Bradley, Superintendent



The Gateway Arch



North reflecting pond



Pond conditions vary from season to season, and often feature algal blooms and fluctuating water levels



I-70 disconnects the Arch Grounds from downtown

Purpose and Need

The purpose and need statements developed for this project answer the questions of what the NPS intends to accomplish by taking action and why the NPS is taking action at this time.

The purpose of this project is to fulfill the goal of revitalizing Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, as called for by the selected alternative in the November 2009 Record of Decision for the park’s General Management Plan (GMP). While the GMP provided direction on the type of projects that could be implemented, the selected alternative called for the NPS, in close coordination with its partners, to initiate a design competition that would provide a wide breadth of ideas on how to meet this goal, and, ultimately, form the basis for the design of more specific projects.

The design competition began in December 2009 and the winning team and design was selected in September 2010. The NPS now needs to evaluate the physical changes to the park grounds proposed by the winning team to meet the GMP’s revitalization goal, so that project components on park property may be finished in time for the 50th anniversary of completion of the Gateway Arch (October 28, 2015).

Objectives

Objectives are more specific statements of purpose that provide additional basis for comparing the effectiveness of alternatives in achieving a desired outcome. Many of the objectives developed incorporate or reflect the goals of the design competition relevant to those project components being considered in this EA.

General

- Ensure revitalization of the park reflects the iconic status of the Gateway Arch and embraces the Mississippi River, but does not violate requirements in the NPS Organic Act or NPS Management Policies 2006.
- Working with partners, catalyze increased vitality in the St. Louis region and create attractors to promote extended visitation to the Arch, the city, and the river.

Cultural Resources

- Ensure that the revitalization of the park preserves the integrity and honors the character defining elements of the National Historic Landmark and National Register Historic District.
- Avoid unacceptable impacts on the cultural landscapes, historic resources, and archeological resources as a result of revitalizing the park.

Visitor Use and Experience

- Ensure that revitalization of the park improves connections between the city and the park and from the city and the park to the river, while enhancing the visitor experience and reducing the impacts from adjacent transportation systems.
- Ensure that revitalization of the park improves visitor safety and accessibility for people with disabilities and enhances the visitor experience by creating a welcoming and accessible environment.

Interpretation/Education

- Improve visitor understanding of the purpose of the park, including the story of St. Louis as the gateway to American westward expansion.

Park Management and Operations

- Incorporate sustainable methods into park management and operations while minimizing impacts of revitalization on financial resources, staffing requirements, and long-term maintenance requirements.

Impact Topics

Impact topics are the lens the NPS uses to assess the effects of a project. They are not categories that try to capture the nature of the project, but rather the park resources that would be affected by the project. These topics in the EA are used to assess the impacts of proposed alternatives. This list can change as the NPS gets more information during scoping. It is not looking at the merits of the project but looking at the impacts holistically.

Cultural Resources

- Historic Buildings, Structures, Sites, Objects, and Districts
- Cultural Landscapes
- Archeological Resources
- Curatorial Resources and Museum Collections

Natural Resources

- Vegetation
- Wildlife
- Soundscape
- Soils
- Water Quality/Water Resources /Stormwater Management

Energy Requirements and Conservation/Sustainability

Transportation and Access

- Vehicular Traffic
- Public Transportation
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation
- Parking
- Accessibility

Socioeconomics

- Land Use

Public Health and Safety

- Security

NPS Operations and Partnerships

Visitor Opportunities and Use

Scope of the NPS EA

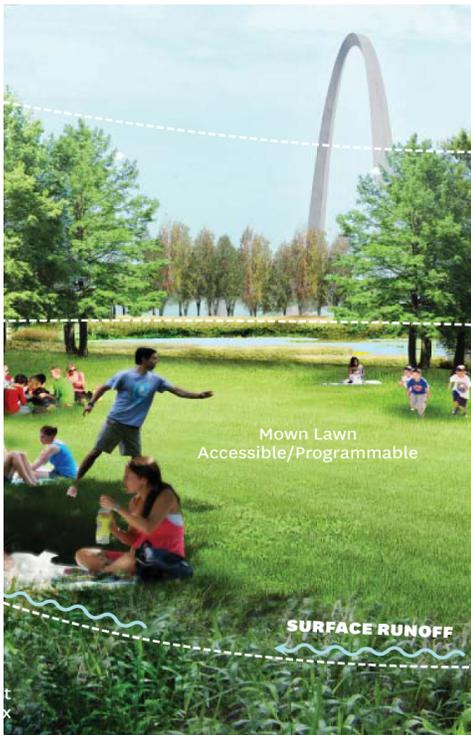
This EA will take under consideration all proposed changes within the NPS boundary on the Missouri side of the Mississippi River - Leonor K. Sullivan Boulevard on the east, Poplar Street on the south, Washington Avenue on the north, and Memorial Drive on the west, including Luther Ely Smith Square and the Old Courthouse between Chestnut and Market Streets. Expansion of the park to the east side of the river is under consideration by the NPS, but is outside the scope of this EA.

The major components of the project currently under consideration include:

- a landscaped “lid” over the depressed lanes of I-70 between the Gateway Arch grounds and downtown;
- renovation of the underground museum and a new entrance;
- accessibility improvements and new exhibits in the Old Courthouse;
- development of accessible trails to the riverfront; and
- expanded visitor programming and amenities on the Gateway Arch grounds.
- improvements to the sustainability of the landscape at the park

In addition to this NPS EA, the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) and the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) are initiating a concurrent EA to assess the effects of proposed changes to I-70 and Memorial Drive, including the potential for construction of a landscape lid over I-70 as well as changes to the freeway’s ramp system. The NPS, MoDOT, and FHWA will continue to work together to ensure the necessary compliance for these project elements are completed.

The CityArch River 2015 design competition included properties outside of the NPS boundary as well. Proposed changes to non-NPS properties, such as Kiener Plaza, are not part of this EA. Information on the design competition and the concepts presented in January 2011 can be accessed at http://park-planning.nps.gov/jeff_design_concept.



Illustrative View of Proposed Changes (MVVA)

Section 106 Consultation

The scope of the EA includes consultation under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In January of 2010, the NPS resumed section 106 consultation with the Missouri and Illinois State Historic Preservation Officers, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, tribal governments, and other consulting parties and sponsored a series of discussions on different components of the winning design to identify major issues affecting the park’s NHL and National Register Historic District. We are now integrating the Section 106 consultation with this EA for the development of the schematic design.

Public Scoping Period and How to Comment

The Superintendent has announced a public scoping period to solicit comments on the scope of the project. During this scoping period, the public and all interested parties are invited to comment on the project, concerns or issues related to the project’s impact on historic structures, cultural landscapes, and archeological resources. Let us know what you think about the project’s effect on the Arch and its historic grounds, the Old Courthouse, or any other historic properties like Laclede’s Landing, the Eads Bridge, and the Old Cathedral.

Questions to consider:

Do the purpose, need and objectives reflect what you think the NPS needs to accomplish with this project?

If not, what else do you think needs to be accomplished?

What concerns or do you have about the potential impacts of the project to revitalize the park?

How do you think these concerns could be addressed?



Submitting Comments

Comments can be submitted electronically at the National Park Service’s PEPC website: http://parkplanning.nps.gov/jeff_ea_newsletter. Written comments may be mailed or hand-delivered to:

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial
Superintendent
11 North Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63102

To be most helpful to the planning process, NPS requests that you submit your comments within 30 days of receiving this letter.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Project Milestones

Milestone	Date
Public Scoping Period Begins	July 2011
End of Public Scoping Period	August 2011
Begin Preparation of EA	September 2011
EA Available for Public Review	November/December 2011
Public Meeting	December 2011
Preparation of Decision Document	January 2012

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