

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS NO. DC-708

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
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Department of the Interior
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

HABS No. DC-706

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Location: The west end of Pennsylvania Avenue is in Georgetown, one block northwest of Rock Creek. Crossing the creek near 26th and L streets, the avenue heads southeast about nine blocks to the White House Grounds; running due east for three blocks between the White House and Lafayette Square, it continues southeast from 15th Street to First Street, NW, where it is interrupted by the U. S. Capitol Grounds. It resumes again at Second Street, SE, and heads southeast for fourteen blocks to the Anacostia River.

Owner/Manager: The right-of-way spanning from building line to building line is the property of the U.S. government while the paved roadways, sidewalks and the planted areas between are under the jurisdiction of the D.C. Department of Public Works. Most of the reservations along the avenue are maintained by the National Park Service.

Present Use: Major thoroughfare, ceremonial route.

Significance: Called America's Main Street, this avenue appears on both the L'Enfant and Ellicott plans of the city as the symbolic and practical connection between the President's House and the U.S. Capitol Building. It has been used as a ceremonial route for presidential inaugurations, victory parades, and funeral processions since the early 1800s.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of plan: 1791, L'Enfant Plan; 1792, Ellicott Plan.
2. Alterations and additions:
 - ca. 1801: Pennsylvania Avenue cleared of trees and stumps between the White House and Capitol.
 - 1803: Congress appropriated \$13,466.69 for the improvement of Pennsylvania Avenue. Lombardy poplars planted along the avenue between the President's House and Capitol.
 - 1832: The 4,888' segment of the avenue between Third and 14th streets graded and paved with a 45'-wide and 9"-deep macadam roadway; two center rows of trees removed.
 - 1834: Trees of several varieties planted along the avenue.
 - 1836: U.S. Treasury Building erected due east of the President's House in the path of Pennsylvania Avenue.
 - 1837: A line of 4"-diameter pipe laid along the avenue to convey water from the reservoir east of the Capitol to 15th Street. Twenty-one fireplugs installed along the avenue.
 - 1838: Flagstone footways installed across the avenue at almost every intersecting street between Third and 15th streets, NW.

- 1850: Gas pipes laid along both sides of avenue from the Capitol to the White House at a cost of \$7,654. An additional \$10,340.60 allocated to illuminate the avenue with gas lamps.
- 1853: Carriageway graded, paved, and set with curbstones from 17th Street to Rock Creek.
- 1862: Washington and Georgetown Company Streetcar lines laid from Georgetown to Eighth Street, SE. (running north around the White House and South around the Capitol).
- 1872: Avenue paved with wood blocks from Rock Creek to Eighth Street, SE.
- 1897 Library of Congress construction closes the avenue between First and Second streets, SE. The building partially blocks the vista to the Capitol.
- ca. 1900: Medians installed down the center of the right-of-way between Second and 16th streets, SE.
- 1929-37: Federal Triangle project transforms architecture on the south side of the avenue between the Capitol and White House. Arc lamps on this segment of the avenue replaced with electric.
- ca. 1970: Southeast/Southwest freeway extension slices through Barney Circle at the southeast end of the avenue.
- 1972-93: Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation (PADC) oversees new construction and streetscape amenities in the segment between the White House and Capitol.

B. Historical Context:

A yellow-shaded circle in Georgetown, about a block northwest of Rock Creek marks the west end of Pennsylvania Avenue on Pierre L'Enfant's plan for the city. After crossing over the creek, the avenue continues southeast to a large open circle at its intersection with today's K Street and New Hampshire Avenue (See Washington Circle, HABS No. DC-688). Several blocks southeast of the circle is an open square marked with an "E," the site for a "grand cascade." Two blocks south of the cascade, the avenue meets the open area designated for the president's house and park (See Lafayette Square HABS No. DC-676).

L'Enfant intended a grand vista more than a mile long along this avenue between the small hill planned as the site for the President's house and the large hill designated as the site for the Capitol. Along this ceremonial stretch he planned three rectangular open spaces. The northernmost, at the intersection of the avenue with today's 14th Street, would have provided an unbroken vista of the Potomac River to the south. The next, at Eighth Street, was to feature another grand cascade and vistas north to the National Church, northeast to the courthouse, and

southwest to an equestrian monument of George Washington at the apex of the Mall and President's Grounds (See Market Square, HABS No. DC-691). The third open space, at Sixth Street, would have provided vistas north to the city hall and south to the Mall. The canal runs along the south side of the avenue for the remaining block between this last square and the Capitol Grounds.

South of the Capitol Grounds the avenue continues southeast to the Anacostia River, passing several avenue intersections and open spaces. On L'Enfant's plan, North Carolina Avenue extends from this corridor at a yellow-shaded reservation indicated as No. 14 (See Seward Square, HABS No. DC-685). One block south of this, an open space is created by the intersection with South Carolina Avenue (See Eastern Market Metro Station, HABS No. DC-670). L'Enfant placed another yellow-shaded reservation at today's G Street. The avenue intersects today's Potomac Avenue before reaching the open area at the foot of a drawbridge planned to cross the Eastern Branch, or Anacostia River.

On his 1792 revision of L'Enfant's plan, Andrew Ellicott shifted Western Square--the northwesternmost of the open spaces between the White House and Capitol--one block north, eliminated the area designated for the grand cascade, and inserted two smaller squares on the avenue between Washington Circle and the White House.

Ellicott's plan was used to guide the sale of lots, but before the land for the city's streets and avenues was transferred to the federal government, this avenue ran through at least ten different tracts owned by at least eight of the city's original landholders. Fortunately for speculators who purchased land along the avenue in its early years, these properties were some of the first in the city to be developed because of Pennsylvania Avenue's prominence and central location. Thomas Jefferson alluded to its importance in 1791 stating, "The Grand Avenue connecting both the palace and the federal house will be most significant and most convenient."¹ As early as 1796, President Washington established that the executive offices would be clustered around the President's House, since they were the "full-time" offices.

Also in preparation for the 1800 removal of the federal government to the District of Columbia, citizens erected numerous attached brick buildings along Pennsylvania Avenue in anticipation of a population surge. Two groups of simple, yet classically proportioned rowhouses--the "Seven Buildings" at 19th Street and the "Six Buildings" at 21st Street, NW--faced onto Pennsylvania Avenue along the stretch between the populated Georgetown and the site where the President's House was under construction.² After 1800, these dwellings housed some of the city's most prominent statesmen--both American and foreign. Similar federal-style rowhouses were erected along the entire length of Pennsylvania Avenue between the White House and Capitol, filling almost every lot by 1835.³

According to both L'Enfant's and Ellicott's plans, from Sixth Street east to the Capitol the avenue bordered the large federal appropriation known as the Mall. In the 1820s, in response to a change in the route of the canal and to public criticism of the large number of acres set aside as federal land, the Mall was

¹ Cable, introduction.

² Goode, 140-41.

³ Goode, 142-43.

narrowed at its east end, and four new city squares were created. Two of these new blocks faced onto the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue between Third and Sixth streets. Due to the prime location near the Capitol and the market between Seventh and Ninth streets, these blocks developed quickly and soon contained a variety of privately owned structures.

Although early visitors and residents complained about the condition of Pennsylvania Avenue for decades, it received better maintenance than any other road in Washington since it connected two of the nation's most important buildings. As early as 1803, Thomas Jefferson oversaw the planting of four rows of Lombardy poplars along the expanse between the White House and Capitol Grounds. Jefferson also initiated the ceremonial use of the avenue when he rode his horse from the Capitol to the White House on his second presidential inauguration March 4, 1805. The most celebrated procession on the early avenue, however, was October 12, 1824, in honor of the Marquis de Lafayette during his visit to the United States. The avenue had been extended along the north side of the White House to separate the president's grounds from the large open common to the north. This public square, then surrounded by only a few elegant homes, was landscaped in preparation for Lafayette's visit. From that time on, Washingtonians referred to the common as Lafayette Park.

Despite attempts to grade and pave the avenue throughout the early nineteenth century, the wide right-of-way was often more like an open field than a road. Because of its extraordinary width, many people complained that the two sides of the street were too far apart, and the wide gulf between was dusty in dry weather and muddy when it rained. In 1832, Congress allocated funds for the improvement of Pennsylvania Avenue, and a 50'-wide center carriageway was "macadamized," but the job was halted by a cholera epidemic that killed many of the primarily Irish-immigrant laborers. Flagstone crosswalks were laid at most of the intersections between the White House and Capitol in 1838 for the convenience of the city's many pedestrians. Cobblestones replaced the deteriorated macadam in another improvement project in 1855. Prior to the installation of trolley tracks in 1862, frequent horse-drawn omnibuses taxed the road surface. The roadway suffered further abuse during the Civil War when the commissioner in charge of the public buildings and grounds complained that the "constant running of heavy army wagons . . . completed [the avenue's] demolition in many places."⁴

The search for durable paving materials vexed city commissioners. One of them, Benjamin B. French, researched various paving methods and materials by writing to mayors of other cities and to paving engineers such as the inventor of the Nicholson wood pavement. In 1860, the commissioners tested a road material used widely in Europe by laying 1,000 square yards of Belgian pavement at the city's busiest intersection at Seventh Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. The rest of the avenue was paved with round stones that were "easily started from their beds by the momentum of the heavy vehicles that run over them."⁵

As the roadway was gradually improved, many of the open spaces created by the superimposition of diagonal avenues over the grid system were enclosed with fencing and embellished with ornamental plantings. When Ellicott numbered the city squares for sale and development, these circles, triangles, squares, and

⁴ Report of the Commissioner of Public Buildings . . ., 1864, 682.

⁵ Report of the Commissioner of Public Buildings . . ., 1857, 720.

trapezoids remained federal property and were gradually recognized and landscaped as the city developed. Lafayette Square had been more or less maintained since its first improvement in the 1820s, and in 1853, Washington Circle, on the northern reaches of Pennsylvania Avenue, was selected as the site for a statue to honor George Washington. In preparation for the statue, the park was graded and planted with grass, trees, and shrubs, and paths were laid on axis with the intersecting streets. Soon thereafter, Congress allocated \$5,112 for "embellishing the triangle spaces at Pennsylvania Avenue between 13th and 14th streets." Referring to the project in 1855, Commissioner of Public Buildings and Grounds Benjamin B. French wrote:

There is perhaps no way in which the city of Washington can be so much improved in appearance, by like expenditures, as by the enclosing and improvement of the triangular and circular spaces so wisely reserved to the United States in the laying out of this city. Two of them, on Pennsylvania Avenue are now enclosed with iron fences and beautifully improved; and they are, indeed, oases in the desert of dusty streets, and brick pavements that surround them.⁶

Despite the fact that the avenue featured at least four landscaped parks along it by the 1860s, mud and dust caused by inadequate paving remained a problem, as did other nuisances, such as the Center Market and the city canal. A thriving market had been located along the avenue between Seventh and Ninth streets, NW, since the end of the eighteenth century. A proper market building replaced the makeshift sheds in 1802, but within decades this structure was joined by a variety of unsightly additions. Furthermore, merchants who could not afford stalls sold goods from wagons that cluttered nearby streets. Although sheds were erected behind the market in 1857 in an effort to clear parked vehicles from the roadway, the intersection had a reputation as an eyesore until after the Civil War. Likewise, the canal running along the north side of the Mall resembled an open sewer. It frequently flooded over, was often impassible due to heavy silting, and its stench was known to waft over the avenue along the blocks between Seventh Street and the Capitol.

Despite these annoyances, the central stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue was a bustling thoroughfare throughout the nineteenth century. At first a largely residential street, throughout the early 1800s it evolved into a vibrant commercial corridor. Many of the federal residences were converted to commercial uses, but eventually, most were razed and replaced by larger commercial and government structures. Although once lined by an estimated 500 federal-style homes, almost two centuries of development have left few in place today.⁷

To serve the transient population that flooded the city when Congress was in session, Pennsylvania Avenue became a convenient location for hotels, restaurants, and saloons. The National Hotel, established in 1826 in a row of buildings near the Center Market, was immortalized in the colorful description by

⁶ Report of the Commissioner of Public Buildings . . ., 1854, 8.

⁷ Goode, 142-43.

Charles Dickens during his visit to the city in 1841.⁸ Across the street, another prominent hostelry was known at different times as Browns' Hotel, the Indian Queen Hotel, and the Metropolitan Hotel.⁹ Closer to the Capitol, the St. Charles Hotel, built in 1820 at the corner of Third Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, was known for its elaborate "slave pens" where human chattel was confined before and after many slave auctions held in the antebellum city.¹⁰ Nearer to the White House, the Willard Hotel was established in seven rowhouses between 14th and 15th streets; Julia Ward Howe wrote "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" during her stay there in 1861.¹¹

A map compiled between 1857-61 shows that the avenue was lined with buildings between the White House and Capitol. The roadway was almost completely flanked by buildings northwest of the White House, although several lots between Washington Circle and Georgetown remained vacant. Despite the fact that the roadway featured many reputable businesses, the region south of the avenue, along the banks of the sewer-like canal and the unimproved Mall, was known for its high crime rate; part of it was nicknamed "Murder Bay."

Southeast of the Capitol Grounds, Pennsylvania Avenue was less developed, although it was used as a route to the Navy Yard and Congressional Cemetery. In 1855, B. B. French requested \$8,000 to cover the sewers on this stretch, which he described as "offensive to the senses and dangerous to health." By 1858, the avenue was graveled east of the Capitol, but the map compiled between 1857-61 shows sparse development facing the avenue.

As the Civil War raged between 1861 and 1864, Washington was converted into the home base for the Union forces. Civic improvements were halted and federal reservations intended for park-like "oases" became handy encampment sites for soldiers mustered to protect the capital city. Troops camped in Lafayette Park in front of the White House; the Capitol, undergoing enlargement at the time, was used as a military hospital. Although the recently improved Washington Circle remained a park during the war, soldiers billeted in the army barracks lining 23rd Street south of the circle allowed their horses and cattle to graze in the green enclosed circle.

The most significant change to Pennsylvania Avenue during the war was the laying of streetcar tracks from Georgetown to Eighth Street, SE. Since the 1840s, a horse-drawn stagecoach line had used the road as a regular transit route between Georgetown and the Navy Yard. In 1862, Congress allowed the Washington and Georgetown Streetcar Company to lay tracks along the route with a proviso that they could be used in an emergency to transport war materials. The tracks were laid down the center of the right-of-way, and the northbound and southbound tracks encircled Washington Circle. The tracks were also detoured around the north side of the White House Grounds and the south side of the Capitol Grounds. Lincoln's somber funeral procession from the White House to the Capitol in 1865 began yet another tradition on the avenue. In 1881 the assassinated

⁸ Goode, 168-70.

⁹ Goode, 173-75.

¹⁰ Goode, 164-66.

¹¹ Goode, 170-73.

President Garfield would be carried down the avenue in the same manner, only four months after his elaborate inaugural procession, which passed under thirty-nine archways erected temporarily over the avenue for the occasion.¹²

The population surge brought on by the war prompted the need for infrastructural improvements in the 1870s. A territorial government was installed between 1871-74, and the Board of Public Works--with Alexander Shepherd at the helm--oversaw the paving and grading of miles of previously unimproved city streets. Pennsylvania Avenue was one of the board's proudest efforts, as it was paved with wood blocks from Rock Creek to Eighth Street, SE. This new pavement, which would be completely rotted within several years, was christened at a grand block party on February 20, 1871. The market that had created an eyesore between Seventh and Ninth streets, was replaced in 1872 with a new sanitary structure designed by Washington architect Adolph Cluss. The air in the vicinity of the market also improved in 1872 when the canal diverted into a culvert, and a roadway was formed along its former path.

In 1867, responsibility for the federal reservations in the city was transferred from the Department of Interior to the Department of War, under the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers, Office of Public Buildings and Grounds (OPB&G). During the whirlwind of public works overseen by the Board of Public Works, OPB&G Chief Col. O. E. Babcock worked in tandem with his friend Shepherd to identify and improve the federal land in the growing regions of the city.¹³ He identified nine reservations on Pennsylvania Avenue; all seven identified in the northwest quadrant had already been enclosed with iron or picket fencing. By the time he left office in 1876, Babcock had seen to the embellishment of Reservation No. 23, three of the four triangles between the White House and Washington Circle (Reservation Nos. 28, 30, and 31), and Reservation No. 36, in the vicinity of the new Center Market.¹⁴ All of these spaces, indicated as rectangular openings on the Ellicott Plan, were divided by Pennsylvania Avenue into paired triangles to allow traffic on the avenue and the streetcar tracks to run through them uninterrupted.

Improvements to the parks continued at a steady pace over the next decade, and in the early 1880s, the OPB&G began landscaping parks in the region southeast of the Capitol. By 1884 all twenty-five reservations on Pennsylvania Avenue west of Ninth Street, SE, were enclosed by either wrought-iron or post-and-chain fences, and many featured fountains, flowerbeds, or ornamental vases.¹⁵ The roadway was lined in the northwest quadrant with a variety of street trees, and east of the Capitol, with a double row of maples. East of Eleventh Street, SE, however, the roadway was still unpaved, and none of the ten reservations identified east of Ninth Street, SE, had any improvements.

¹² Goode, 436-38.

¹³ The 1872 Annual Report of the Chief Engineer in Charge of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds listed ninety federal properties, described by shape and location, comprising 340 acres and 1,489 square feet.

¹⁴ Annual Report . . ., 1877, 13.

¹⁵ The OPB&G assigned all Pennsylvania Avenue reservations with numbers between 20 and 55 in 1884. By 1894, however, fifty-five more parcels in the city were identified as federal property so to maintain the consecutive numbering system along the avenues, the OPB&G published a new map and list in 1894 renumbering the parks with the numbers still used today from 22 to 56.

Development of the southeast segment of the avenue continued throughout the 1880s, and in 1887 initial improvements were made in the three reservations (Reservation Nos. 48, 49, and 50) near the new Eastern Market built to serve the growing population east of the Capitol. In the 1880s, three city squares flanking Pennsylvania Avenue between Second and Third streets, SE, were selected as the site for the new Library of Congress building. When the enormous structure was erected in the 1890s, it eliminated two of the city's reservations and blocked the vista intended along the avenue from the Capitol to the Anacostia River. Southeast of the new library building, the avenue featured wide tree-lined medians that separated the double line of streetcar tracks from the roadway. Around the turn of the century, the streetcar tracks were extended the remaining distance to an open circle at the Anacostia River.¹⁶ An underslung truss bridge had been built in 1892 to carry the avenue over the river. Pin Oaks planted at the same time along this new stretch were described in 1911 as some of the finest street trees in the city.¹⁷

Meanwhile, northwest of the Capitol, the avenue continued to support thriving business and trade. Center Market, acclaimed as the largest and most modern food market in the country, attracted thousands of customers each day. An observer described its atmosphere around 1889: "The daily business in and around this splendid structure is enormous. During the morning hours there are throngs of buyers of all classes of society--fashionable women of the West End, accompanied by negro servants, mingling with people of less opulent sections, all busily engaged in selecting the days household supplies."¹⁸ The market attracted other businesses to the area, and the commercial core that grew up around it included merchants who would be successful retailers for years to come, such as Woodward and Lothrop, Kahn and Sons, and Saks Fifth Avenue. It was also in the 1880s that several Chinese immigrant families moved to the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue in the two squares formed in the 1820s between Third and Sixth streets. By the turn of the century they occupied almost a dozen buildings in this region, which became known as Chinatown, and featured typical Chinese businesses--restaurants and laundries.¹⁹

As commerce thrived on the avenue, the OPB&G further embellished its parks. In the 1880s, a curious fountain donated to the city by a San Francisco teetotaler was placed in the reservation near the market to encourage citizens to quench their thirst with water rather than alcohol. The fountain was soon joined by an equestrian statue of Civil and Mexican war hero Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock, erected in Reservation No. 36. Every major Washington official, including President Grover Cleveland, his vice president, diplomats, and military leaders attended the grand dedication ceremony May 12, 1896.²⁰ The park itself

¹⁶ Annual Report . . . , 1903, 3914. The medians along Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, were identified and numbered in 1903, although the majority were in place since the 1880s. Rather than renumbering the entire system, the OPB&G numbered them according to the nearest numbered reservation with the addition of the letter A or B.

¹⁷ Solotaroff, 28-29.

¹⁸ Moore, 260.

¹⁹ Lim, 25.

²⁰ Goode, 361.

was embellished soon after with evergreens, yucca plants, weeping mulberries, magnolias, weeping elms, and English ivy.²¹ Unfortunately, crowds who gathered for President McKinley's inaugural parade later that year, trampled the new plantings.

New construction continued throughout the 1890s, as the small-scale federal-style buildings were gradually replaced with massive new Victorian structures. In 1888, the State War and Navy Building (now the Old Executive Office Building) was completed on the south side of the avenue west of the White House. The ten-story Evening Star building, erected on the north side of the avenue at Eleventh Street in 1898, was rivaled a year later by an enlargement of the Southern Railroad Building at 13th Street. Both buildings were dwarfed by the 315'-tall belltower of the National Post Office built across the street a year later. The Raleigh Hotel, built on the northeast corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Twelfth Street in 1898, was so successful that it was enlarged in 1905 and again in 1911, finally reaching a height of fourteen stories.²² Several blocks to the northwest, the flourishing Willard Hotel was rebuilt to grand proportions in 1901, and the Beaux-Arts-style District Building was erected across the street in 1908. A portrait statue of Alexander Shepherd was erected in front of the District Building in 1909, and in 1910, an equestrian statue of Revolutionary War hero Count Casimir Pulaski was erected across the avenue in Reservation No. 33.

Toward the turn of the century, the new buildings on Pennsylvania Avenue began to exhibit the ideals of classicism and grandeur reasserted by the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. At the suggestion of Michigan Senator James McMillan, several of the world renowned masterminds of the Chicago Fair were appointed to examine the city of Washington and make plans for its beautification and embellishment as the capital city of a world power. The final report of the Senate Park Commission, published in 1902, would have a permanent impact on Washington as a whole, as well as on its major thoroughfare, Pennsylvania Avenue. The far-reaching plan recommended clearing the old jumble of commercial, industrial, and residential buildings that cluttered the triangle formed by Pennsylvania Avenue, the Mall, and the President's Grounds. In place of the small structures lining the nine-or-so streets that criss-crossed the area, the commission proposed a complex of enormous Neoclassically styled federal office buildings. While the scheme remained a plan on paper for almost three more decades, the designs of several minor embellishments to the avenue, such as the Stephenson Grand Army of the Republic Memorial erected in Reservation No. 36A in 1909, and the comfort station built in front of Center Market in 1910, reflected the Neoclassical ideals inspired by the McMillan Plan.

Under the leadership of Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon, the Federal Triangle project began in earnest in the late 1920s. After numerous revisions, many made during the progress of construction, seven buildings designed by seven prominent architects, were completed on the 70-acre site between Pennsylvania and Constitution avenues. Despite the efforts of the Commission of Fine Arts to create unified facades on Pennsylvania Avenue, after the initial construction effort ceased around 1937, the south side of the avenue presented only a ragged hypotenuse of the intended right triangle. At the southeast end of the

²¹ Annual Report . . ., 1897 4045.

²² Goode, 186-87.

complex, the Apex Building that housed the Federal Trade Commission followed the line of the avenue, but the rectangular National Archives, built in place of Center Market, was oriented to Constitution Avenue to the south. The Justice Department between Ninth and Tenth streets and the northern tip of the Internal Revenue Service between Tenth and Eleventh streets were also aligned with Pennsylvania Avenue, but the Old Post Office, spared from the wreckers ball only when funding grew sparse, was oriented to D Street. Between Twelfth and Fourteenth streets the line of the avenue was interrupted by the 1908 District Building facing E Street, since Congress would not agree to its demolition. Although the north side of the Post Office Department (now the Customs Services Building) was aligned with Pennsylvania Avenue, the Great Plaza planned at the center of the multi-block complex was not completed, and the open space served as a great parking lot in full view of America's Main Street. Finally, at the west end of the complex, the Department of Commerce extended north only to E Street, leaving the triangle's northwest corner undefined.

In addition to the Federal Triangle project, the city beautification efforts of the 1930s included the expansion of the Mall to its original dimensions. At the same time structures in the old Murder Bay were being demolished, in 1928-34 hundreds of buildings were cleared in the two city squares south of the avenue between Third and Sixth streets. Known for its saloons and other depravities, this region--called "hash row"--also included Washington's Chinatown, which then moved to its present site along H Street, NW. After the area was cleared, Works Progress Administration laborers landscaped the Mall according to the McMillan vision, creating grassy panels along the south side of the avenue from Sixth Street to the U. S. Capitol. Part of this land was selected as the site of John Russell Pope's National Gallery to house Andrew Mellon's extensive art collection. The museum was erected in 1941 between Fourth and Seventh streets on axis with Constitution Avenue. The open space to the north between Constitution and Pennsylvania avenues was embellished with yet another triangular park furnished with the Mellon Fountain. Other embellishments included in the redevelopment program was the conversion of the arc lamps lining the avenue to incandescent in 1933.

By the 1940s, the segment of Pennsylvania Avenue between the White House and Capitol had been drastically altered. Hundreds of small-scale structures had been replaced with high-style buildings rich with ornamentation, and acres of open park land. Meanwhile, on the north side of the avenue, businesses were beginning to fail as improved transportation provided access to the growing suburbs and allowed consumers to avoid the crime, parking shortages, and traffic congestion of the inner city. The transformation of the avenue was greeted with mixed reactions, including architectural critic, Elbert Peets' bitter criticism in 1937:

Poor old Pennsylvania Avenue . . . A vast open space, largely to remain open, weakens its eastern end; Constitution Avenue crashed across it; the plaza at Eighth Street is maimed; vast walls of stone weigh down one side of the avenue, while parking lots cut gaps on the other . . . finally, the plaza between Thirteenth and Fourteenth Streets has been ruined by an open space yawning wide toward the west.²³

²³ Spreiregen, 71.

With due respect to its planners, many of the new Pennsylvania Avenue's shortcomings were related to the fact that the Federal Triangle project was never completed. Despite repeated attempts throughout the mid twentieth century, for instance, the Great Plaza that may have humanized the bulky buildings, remained a parking lot. The Federal Triangle buildings themselves only partially met the government's ever-increasing need for office space, but since they were filled with commuting workers during the day, the area was deserted at night. The buildings were criticized as a barrier between downtown and the Mall, while the buildings on the north side of the avenue continued to deteriorate.

As John Fitzgerald Kennedy rode in his inaugural parade along the same route taken by every president since Thomas Jefferson, instead of a magnificent thoroughfare worthy of a world power, he saw a run-down and derelict main street. Reacting to this observation, he initiated a study of the avenue and appointed an advisory council to oversee its improvement. Before his plans were implemented, however, Kennedy's body was carried back down the avenue after his assassination in 1963, in a funeral procession modeled after Lincoln's almost one hundred years before. President Lyndon Johnson followed his predecessor's lead and established the President's Temporary Commission of Pennsylvania Avenue in 1965, with Nathaniel Owings as chairman.

The commission concluded that despite special programs for paving and planting street trees, the avenue had never reached its potential as a grand boulevard. This was due in part to intrusions such as the Treasury Building blocking the vista to the White House and the market between Seventh and Ninth streets that cluttered the avenue with carts and refuse from 1802 until 1931. Fault also lay with the interpretation of the plan. No grand circles or squares punctuated the stretch between the White House and the Capitol as they did on Massachusetts or Connecticut avenues. Pennsylvania Avenue's planned squares had been fragmented into small triangular reservations since the streetcar tracks were laid down its center in 1862, allowing traffic to flow uninterrupted between the two landmark buildings.

The temporary commission published a preliminary report in 1964 defining project objectives and introducing ideas for the improvement of the avenue and its immediate neighborhood. In support of the effort, this segment of Pennsylvania Avenue and some of the neighboring streets were designated a National Historic Site in 1965.²⁴ In 1966, Congress determined that it was "in the national interest that Pennsylvania Avenue and the area adjacent to it between the Capitol and the White House be developed, used, and maintained in a manner suitable to its ceremonial, historical, and physical relationship to the executive and legislative branches of the government." A revised scheme published in 1967 further honed the project's goals, summarized as follows:

Nearly half a century after the building of the impressively unified facades of the Federal Triangle, a more varied but equally unified north side of Pennsylvania Avenue will look south into the sunlight of a new day. Ornamental paving, special street furniture and lighting, street graphics, fountains and sculpture, arcaded buildings of uniform setback and height

²⁴ This designation was made under the general authority of the Historic Sites, Buildings and Antiquities act of 1935, which has as its policy the preservation for public use of historic sites, buildings and objects of national significance, for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States.

but for varying purposes announced in their architectures--these will create a richly designed special street whose excitement will be communicated as a strong image even to those who may never see it.²⁵

The major emphasis of the plan was to encourage pedestrian use of the avenue and the Mall by controlling "the automobile traffic that has degraded the capital for either efficient or pleasurable use by people."²⁶ Like the Federal Triangle project of the 1920-30s and redevelopment programs in other parts of the city in the 1940-50s, the report proposed significant changes to L'Enfant's street plan. It recommended an underpass at Constitution Avenue and the construction of a sunken E Street expressway that would link to the inner-loop freeway. A raised pedestrian shelf above the expressway would assign "different levels to separate the various uses now competing for a single space: walking, driving, parking and shopping."²⁷

As with the Federal Triangle project, numerous revisions were made to the effort while it was in progress. In 1964, in the project's early stage, the massive Hoover Building of the Federal Bureau of Investigation erected on the north side of the avenue between Ninth and Eleventh streets eliminated the 900 block of D Street. Meanwhile, at the foot of the Capitol, a large reflecting pool was built over the tunnelled center leg of the inner-loop freeway intended as a high-speed circuit through the historic city. It was perhaps the demolitions necessitated by these early efforts, as well as a growing respect for historic buildings and neighborhoods, that the public resisted several aspects of the 1968 revised plan for the avenue. This version still called for the demolition of the Old Post Office Building--with the exception of its bell tower, which would be left in place as an observation deck--in order to complete the original 1930s plan for Federal Triangle. The plan also included demolition of the historic Willard and Washington hotels in order to merge the block upon which they stood with two adjacent blocks and the open space between 13th and 14th streets to form National Square. This large plaza was planned with patterned paving and fountains to form a grand northwest terminus for the avenue.

In its review of the design, the Commission of Fine Arts objected to the demolition of the hotels and to the large, unrelieved expanse of concrete. In view of these objections, as well as the fact that the presidentially initiated plan lacked the sanction of Congress or the District of Columbia, Congress enacted a law in 1972 creating the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation (PADC).²⁸ A corporation wholly owned by the federal government, PADC continues to oversee public and private development along this historic corridor.

Further support for the historic structures came from Washington residents who formed Don't Tear It Down (now the D.C. Preservation League) to save the Post Office from demolition in 1973. Renovation of the building was included in a future revision of the PADC program, and the massive stone structure was

²⁵ Pennsylvania Avenue, 1967, 7.

²⁶ Ibid., 1967, 9.

²⁷ Ibid., 1967, 22.

²⁸ Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, 1986, x.

converted into a space for offices, shops, and restaurants and opened to the public in 1983. Likewise, the Willard Hotel, closed since 1968, was expanded and renovated and reopened in 1986.

Across from the Willard, the controversial National Square was scaled down and two smaller parks were created in the two blocks southeast of the White House and Treasury. Pershing Park, featuring a monument to World War I Gen. John Pershing and a pool that doubles as a skating rink in winter, fills the trapezoid between 14th and 15th streets north of the Department of Commerce. Western Plaza, between 13th and 14th streets, merged the small triangular parks and traffic islands in the intersection into a large rectangular plaza. This park features a raised terrace that replicates L'Enfant's plan for Pennsylvania Avenue in patterned stone with grassy panels representing the Mall and the Ellipse; floor plans of the White House and Capitol are rendered at their respective sites in inlaid brass, and thirty-nine quotations made by prominent people about Washington are engraved in the stone floor. The Pulaski statue still stands in the northeast corner of the intersection near its original site, while a large new pool planted with ornamental grasses completes the plaza's west side.

The most recent project overseen by PADC is near the site of the old Center Market, north of the National Archives. Renamed Pennsylvania Quarter, this is the section of the avenue where PADC has attempted to reintroduce the most vital element of the historic avenue--its residents. In place of the department stores that once faced the space, a massive complex of mixed use--residential, commercial, and office--structures were erected to lure residents back to the inner city. The centerpiece of the old market site is the U. S. Navy Memorial, built in the spirit of Western Plaza--with public art underfoot. The central terrace of the memorial shows a 100'-diameter engraved map of the Earth that invites visitors to walk across the continents and seas. In addition to the Navy Memorial, the several parcels within the intersection still incorporate three historic monuments--the nineteenth-century Temperance Fountain, the GAR memorial, and the Hancock statue--as well as the escalators and elevators leading to the subway built underneath the space in the 1970s.

By the end of 1991, \$1.4 billion in private money had been invested in the redevelopment of the segment of the avenue between the White House and the Capitol, and twenty-three buildings had been constructed or reconstructed.²⁹ Twentieth century alterations were somewhat less drastic on the remaining two-thirds of the avenue--the segments northwest of the White House and southeast of the Capitol. Northwest of the White House, the businesses lining the roadway did not suffer like those farther to the south, since they were nearer to the thriving office district spanning between H and M streets, NW. Instead, throughout the 1940s, 50s and 60s, the historic buildings along this stretch were gradually replaced by large, economically built office buildings. Toward Washington Circle, the Foggy Bottom neighborhood was increasingly encompassed by George Washington University, and now includes two large hospitals. Congestion in this area led to the construction of an underpass at Washington Circle in 1961 to carry K Street traffic beneath the eight-point intersection.

Southeast of the Capitol the avenue retained much of its late nineteenth-century residential quality, although the buildings along this stretch began to deteriorate along with much of the inner city in the 1940-50s. Since the area was

²⁹ Conroy, 9-11.

depressed and far from the White House and executive offices, it was largely bypassed by the commercial high-rises that overran much of the city's northwest quadrant in the 1950-60s. Avenue traffic crossed the Anacostia River on the 1892 bridge until it was replaced by the John Philip Sousa Bridge in 1938-40. The large circle at the foot of the bridge, included on the L'Enfant/Ellicott plan and named for Commodore Joshua Barney in 1911, was never developed as a circular park. Since the streetcar lines ran along the avenue and turned around at this point, it served as bus and streetcar transfer station; the circle was finally sliced to bits when the Southeast/Southwest freeway was extended between the Navy Yard and Pennsylvania Avenue in 1971. Throughout the 1950s, the city's streetcar lines were converted to buses, and the tracks down the center of the avenue were removed from the wide grassy medians.

Although the segment of the avenue from about Eighth Street west to the Capitol became largely commercial, enough of the historic fabric was intact for inclusion of the blocks between Second and 13th streets in the National Register's Capitol Hill Historic District in 1976. Also in the 1970s, the three major intersections on this roadway at North Carolina, South Carolina, and Potomac Avenues became construction sites while the Metrorail subway was built beneath the avenue. The intersection of Potomac and Pennsylvania avenues became the site for the Potomac Avenue Metro station, while the large reservation at the intersection of Pennsylvania and South Carolina avenues became the Eastern Market station, named after the nineteenth-century market several blocks to the north.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. Overall dimensions:

1. Width: From Rock Creek to 17th Street, Pennsylvania Avenue is 130' wide from building line to building line. The right-of-way between 15th Street and the U. S. Capitol was originally 160' wide, but PADC redevelopment created an additional setback on the north side, widening the corridor by about another 30'. The only building violating this new setback line is the nineteenth century Evening Star building. From Second Street southeast to the Anacostia River the avenue is 160' wide from building line to building line.
2. Length within city limits: Although the avenue extends beyond the original boundaries to the southeast, within the historic city it is approximately 4.3 miles long.

B. Elements within the right-of-way:

1. Roadway: The avenue supports four lanes of traffic each way almost its entire length. The block between 14th and 15th streets was narrowed as part of the PADC plan and through traffic on the avenue is routed along 15th and E streets around the south and west sides of Pershing Park. Between the White House and Capitol, long panels down the center of the roadway paved with Belgian blocks divide northbound and southbound traffic, define turning lanes, and contain traffic lights. Four rows of angle parking for U. S. Capitol staff have been established in the block between

First and Third streets, NW. Wide grassy medians originally planted with two rows of oak trees extend from Second Street, SE, to the Anacostia River.³⁰ A double row of saucer magnolias have recently been planted in the medians northwest of Sixth Street, SE. Since the subway runs underneath the avenue, several medians contain subway air grates.

2. Sidewalks and street trees: North of the White House, the wide sidewalks extend the entire width between the roadbed and building lines. They feature a somewhat inconsistent scheme of street trees in tree cuts and highway lamps. Between the White House and Capitol, the sidewalks also extend the entire width between the road and building lines. Since the setbacks were increased on the north side of the avenue, this paved area is very wide and is embellished with street furniture, kiosks, and multiple rows of street trees in grated openings. Ornamental paving has been employed on both sides of the street along this stretch. Lighting is also varied, including highway lamps illuminating the roadway, as well as smaller scale Washington globe lamps with eagle finials and double-arm lamps unique to this segment of the avenue. South of the Capitol the sidewalks extend from the roadway to the building lines, for the most part, except for some residences that have very shallow front yards. Trees are planted somewhat inconsistently in cutouts near the curb, and highway lamps extend out over the roadway.
3. Large reservations:
 - a. At its intersection with 23rd and K streets and New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Pennsylvania Avenue is diverted around Washington Circle, Reservation No. 26, and flanking islands, Reservation Nos. 25 and 27. (See HABS No. DC-688).
 - b. Between 17th and 15th streets, NW, the avenue runs between the White House Grounds, Reservation No. 1, and Lafayette Square, Reservation No. 10 (See HABS No. DC-676).
 - c. Between 15th and 14th streets, NW, the avenue runs along the north side of trapezoidal-shaped Pershing Park, Reservation No. 617 (See HABS No. DC-695).
 - d. Between 14th and 13th streets, NW, the avenue is diverted around the rectangular Western Plaza, previously the site of Reservation Nos. 32 and 33 (See HABS No. DC-696).
 - e. Between Ninth and Seventh streets, NW, the avenue runs through Market Square, a rectangular space featuring several monuments in Reservation Nos. 34, 35, 36, and 36a (See HABS No. DC-691).
 - f. Between First Street, NW, and Second Street, SE, the avenue is

³⁰ These medians were assigned numbers in 1903 that correspond to nearby reservations. Between Second and 16th streets, SE, they are Reservation Nos. 37A, 37B, 38A, 41A, 41B, 44A, 47A, 47B, 50A, 51A, 52A, 53A/54D, 54A, and 54B.

interrupted by the U. S. Capitol Grounds and the Library of Congress.

- g. Between Fourth and Sixth streets, SE, the avenue continues through a group of triangular and trapezoidal parcels--Reservation Nos. 38, 38A, 39, 40, 41, 41A, 42, and 43--called Seward Square (See HABS No. DC-685).
 - h. Between Seventh and Ninth streets, the avenue continues through a group of triangular and trapezoidal parcels, Reservation Nos. 44, 44A, 45, 46, 47, 47A, 48, and 49, now the site of the Eastern Market Metrorail Station (See HABS No. DC-670).
 - i. At the southeastern end of the avenue are Reservation Nos. 55 and 56. Officially named Comm. Barney Circle in 1911, in honor of Joshua Barney who defended the city against the British invasion in 1814, little remains of the circle. Although it was set aside as a park, it was used throughout the early twentieth century as a streetcar and bus terminal. In 1971, the construction of Interstate 295 fragmented the circle into a group of grassy medians between various lanes of high-speed traffic. The reservations were transferred to the jurisdiction of the District of Columbia on March 21, 1969.
4. Smaller reservations: The following list describes the locations of the reservations identified along this avenue by 1894, the date they were first recognized as federal property, the date of transfer, the date of first improvement (if known), and a description of historical and current appearance as of summer 1990. Unless otherwise indicated, the reservations are under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service.
- a. Reservation No. 22: North of the avenue, east of 29th Street, south of M Street, NW. Initially a triangle, this is the only original reservation located west of Rock Creek. By 1884 it was enclosed with a post-and-pipe fence and featured a fountain, and by 1887 it contained a "handsome iron vase." It has been "channelized" into three pieces; the west section is entirely paved and contains several traffic signs. The east section abuts a lot occupied by a service station and features a semi-circular terrace paved with a patterned mix of brick and Belgian blocks surrounded by concrete-base wood-slat benches. A metal picket fence runs along the outside of a hedge planted along the north side of the reservation. Between these segments is the third piece, a small sodded triangular island with a mature oak tree.
 - b. Reservation No. 23: South of the avenue, east of 26th Street, north of L Street, NW. First improved during the tenure of O. E. Babcock between 1870-76, this reservation was enclosed with a light wrought-iron ornamental railing and planted with flowering trees and shrubs. Today, this sodded triangle is delineated from the concrete paver perimeter sidewalk by quarter-round coping. It is

asymmetrically landscaped with a concrete path through the southwest corner. Behind the two backless concrete benches north of the path is an approximately 2'-tall concrete wall retaining the elevated center of the park. A low concrete wall defines a bed in the northwest corner of the reservation where a single holly tree is planted. Four large holly trees are planted in an arc near the south side of the park, and planted north of them, but within the arc, is a flowerbed set off from the grass by railroad ties.

- c. Reservation No. 24: North of the avenue, east of 25th Street, south of L Street, NW. This triangular reservation was enclosed with a cast-iron post-and-chain fence by 1884 but was not landscaped until around the turn of the century. Today the asymmetrically landscaped park features asphalt paths running parallel to Pennsylvania Avenue and the west border of the park that divide the park into three sodded areas. Eight metal-frame wood-backed benches face into the park along the two paths. The sodded areas are delineated from the concrete-paver perimeter sidewalks by quarter-round coping, and ornamental iron urn-finial fencing runs along the north and west sodded strips, which feature magnolia and holly trees. The large triangular sodded area along Pennsylvania Avenue features a large flowerbed.
- d. Reservation No. 25: South of the avenue, east of 24th Street, north of K Street, NW. This trapezoidal traffic island is adjacent to Washington Circle (See HABS No. DC-688). It was transferred to the District of Columbia on July 17, 1962.
- e. Reservation No. 27: North of the avenue, west of 22nd Street, south of K Street, NW. This trapezoidal traffic island is adjacent to Washington Circle (See HABS No. DC-688). It was transferred to the District of Columbia on July 17, 1962.
- f. Reservation No. 28: South of the avenue, north of I Street between 21st and 20th streets, NW. This triangle, along with Reservation No. 29, shares an open rectangular space created by the diversion of I Street at its intersection with Pennsylvania Avenue between 20th and 21st streets. Highly improved in the 1870s, this reservation featured gravel and concrete walks, a drinking fountain, and a fountain basin constructed of brick and lined with Portland cement. It was inclosed with a post-and-chain fence partly supported by four lampposts. "This," wrote Orville Babcock in his annual report, "combined with the general effect produced by well-kept lawns, ornamental shrubs, and flowering plants, makes this small park an attractive place of resort for neighboring inhabitants and pedestrians. . . Ornamental iron vases placed in this park would have an additional attraction."³¹

Today the path plan in the reservation remains much the

³¹ Annual Report . . ., 1877, 16.

same as it has been for more than six decades. A curving concrete path loops through the triangle with two entrances onto Pennsylvania Avenue and another near the corner of I and 21st streets. Steps near this last entry compensate for the park's uneven topography. Concrete-base wood-slat benches face onto the path and shrub massing runs along the west side of the park and at the east corner. Young trees are planted throughout.

- g. Reservation No. 29: James Monroe Park. North of the avenue, south of I Street between 21st and 20th streets, NW. First enclosed with a fence in the 1850s, this park was described in 1877 as: "inclosed with an iron railing set in a heavy granite coping. The lawns are below grade and in bad condition and have no paths through them, and the trees are of unsuitable character, and too thickly planted. It militates against the attractiveness of the opposite reservation, and should be improved to correspond to it, and thrown open to the public."³²

By 1884, it was fully improved with gas lamps, a drinking fountain, and a rose-jet fountain. It was thickly planted with trees by 1887 and featured summer flowerbeds by the 1890s. It was redesigned in 1917 and a new display fountain was installed in 1918. The path plan now in place, with a large paved area in the center around the fountain approached by paths originating near each corner, probably dates to that time. An ornamental iron urn-finial fence runs along the north side of the park and young trees are planted throughout.

- h. Reservation No. 30: South of the avenue, north of H Street between 18th and 19th streets, NW. This triangle, along with Reservation No. 31, shares an open rectangular space created by the diversion of H Street at its intersection with Pennsylvania Avenue between 18th and 19th streets. Partially improved before the Civil War, in 1873 walks were laid out and covered with asphalt and a fountain was erected, the rim and centerpiece of which was made of ornamental rock work around which various plants were set.³³ By 1884, it featured a large "Warwick" iron vase that was planted with flowers in the summer. The current path layout--roughly a cruciform, with paths from each side and the east corner meeting at a circle in the center--has been in place for more than sixty years. A paved circle in the center of the park features three cylindrical planters that date to the 1960s. An ornamental iron urn-finial fence runs along the south side of the park, and metal-frame wood-slat benches face onto the paths. A mixture of young and mature trees, including saucer magnolias, sycamores, and oaks are planted throughout.
- i. Reservation No. 31: North of the avenue, south of H Street

³² Annual Report . . ., 1877, 16.

³³ Annual Report . . ., 1873, 8.

between 18th and 19th streets, NW. This open rectangle is created by the diversion of H Street at its intersection with Pennsylvania Avenue between 18th and 19th streets. Old wood-frame buildings formerly used by the U. S. Medical Department occupied this site until they were demolished in 1873. This park was embellished to resemble Reservation No. 30, with a Warwick iron vase installed in 1876. A circular space was set aside at this time for the rustic fountain with a rose jet that was in place by 1884.

The current path plan has been in place more than sixty years and features two straight paths running along the north and east sides. Thick shrubs are planted between the paths and the north and east sides of the park. Metal-frame wood-slat benches facing onto the paths are interspersed with cylindrical concrete planters probably dating to the 1960s. In 1979 the park was named in honor of reporter Edward R. Murrow since it was within view of his office at the U. S. Information Agency building. The park was completely refurbished in 1991-92 to eliminate rat infestation.

- j. Reservation No. 202A: Intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and First Street at the foot of the Capitol. This circular reservation was added to the park system after the turn of the century. The Peace Monument of the Navy erected in honor of the naval defenders killed in the Civil War was officially transferred to the OPB&G in 1904. Today the reservation and statue are under the jurisdiction of the Architect of the Capitol.
- k. Reservation No. 37: North of the avenue, west of Third Street, south of Independence Avenue, SE. This reservation was enclosed with a post-and-chain fence by 1884, and by 1887 was planted with grass and embellished with a flowerbed. A roadway was built through this park in 1959 dividing the single triangle into two smaller sodded triangles. Both segments feature brick sidewalks parallel to Pennsylvania Avenue with benches facing onto them and worn paths along the interior roadway. Two metal-frame wood-slat benches face onto the concrete-paver sidewalk along Independence Avenue in the west segment. A similar bench faces onto the path along Third Street, SE, in the east segment. Quarter-round concrete coping runs between the sodded areas and sidewalks in both parks. There is a large shrub bed in the west corner of the west segment and in the east corner of the east segment.
- l. Reservation No. 50: South of the avenue, east of Tenth Street, north of E Street, SE. Although this reservation was recognized as federal property as early as 1872, it was not improved until 1886 when it was graded, planted with grass, and supplied with water. By 1894 it was enclosed with a post-and-chain fence and featured a central flowerbed. Currently, quarter-round coping delineates this sodded triangle from the brick perimeter sidewalks. Three metal-frame wood-slat benches face east onto a concrete and asphalt path running along the west side of the park and a deciduous hedge runs along the E Street side.

- m. Reservation No. 51: North of the avenue, west of Twelfth Street, south of E Street, SE. Although this reservation was recognized as federal property as early as 1872, it remained vacant and unimproved until after 1887. By 1894, it was enclosed with a post-and-chain fence and planted with grass. Today this sodded triangle is surrounded by a brick perimeter sidewalk. West of the reservation is a triangular concrete traffic divider with curb cuts for crossing.
 - n. Reservation No. 52: South of the avenue, west of 13th Street, north of G Street, SE. This reservation abutting City Square No. 1019 remained vacant and unimproved until 1913. Today, this triangle is surrounded by a deciduous hedge, concrete coping, and a brick perimeter sidewalk. Two paths have been worn through the sodding where bushes have died. The park features several shade and ornamental trees and shares a block with a three-story rowhouse. Across the street is a District-owned nursing home.
 - o. Reservation No. 53: North of the avenue, east of 13th Street, south of G Street, SE. This reservation was probably not improved until after the turn of the century. Today, this sodded triangle is surrounded by concrete sidewalks and abuts a lot occupied by a Mexican restaurant. Along the north side, a concrete rectangle is inserted in the triangle to house a large subway grating. Concrete coping outlines the sodded areas. Young trees are planted in the three corners.
 - p. Reservation No. 54: Intersection of Pennsylvania and Potomac avenues. This reservation was originally rectangular. It was divided into two triangles by trolley tracks after the turn-of-the-century before its first improvement in 1913. Parts of the reservation were transferred in 1921 and again in 1941. The boundaries of the original reservation are now difficult to ascertain since the intersection now features a roughly ovoid shape divided into three parcels by the two Pennsylvania Avenue roadways. The southwest portion is sodded with a walk along Pennsylvania Avenue. The center section fits into the median scheme along the avenue with grass and a double row of trees. The northeast section, built over the Potomac Avenue subway station, is almost entirely paved with brick with a hedge along the north side, delineated with a metal picket fence, and trees planted in grated circular cutouts.
- 5. Buildings: Four buildings have been constructed within the original Pennsylvania Avenue right-of-way: the White House, U.S. Capitol, U.S. Treasury, and Library of Congress.
 - 6. Front yards: For the most part, the entire right-of-way between Rock Creek and the U. S. Capitol is now public space. Some residences along the avenue east of about Ninth Street, SE, have shallow enclosed front yards.
- C. Framing elements: From Georgetown southeast to the White House, the right-of-

way is defined mostly by the tall, flat facades of high-rise office buildings, hospitals, hotels, and apartment buildings. The stretch between the White House and Fourth Street, NW, is framed on the south side by the Federal Triangle buildings and on the north side by buildings either restored or built as part of the PADC plan. Between Fourth Street and the Capitol, the avenue is flanked by open park land. Southeast of the Library of Congress, the right-of-way is framed by a variety of three- to six-story residences, offices, and commercial establishments--many dating to the nineteenth century.

D. Vistas:

- a. A vista southeast to the equestrian statue in Washington Circle is visible during the approach from Georgetown.
- b. A vista northwest from Washington Circle includes the Potomac River and the Francis Scott Key Bridge.
- c. Although the White House is not visible in the view southeast from Washington Circle, the vista includes the Old Post Office tower and the Old Executive Office Building.
- d. A vista northwest to the equestrian statue in Washington Circle is visible on the approach on Pennsylvania Avenue.
- e. Southeast from the Treasury is the famous vista to the Capitol.
- f. Although the White House is not visible in the vista northwest from the steps of the Capitol, the facade of the Treasury terminates this famous view.
- g. The intended vista along the avenue southeast from the Capitol has been blocked by the Library of Congress.
- h. Although the Library of Congress partially blocks the view of the Capitol, the Capitol dome is visible from all points along the avenue in the southeast quadrant.

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B. Early Views:

- 1848: Daguerreotype of view from the Capitol to the White House (Seale, 87).
- 1853: Lithograph showing proposal for a tree-lined pedestrian walk between the White House and Capitol (Goode, 170).
- 1874: View from Pennsylvania Avenue down Eleventh Street to the Mall and the Smithsonian Institution (Historical Society of Washington).
- 1885: View southeast on the avenue from the U. S. Treasury (King, frontispiece).
- ca. 1889: Etching of Market Square (Moore).
- 1896: Vista southeast from the U.S. Treasury with trolley cars (King, 20).
- ca. 1899: View of Reservation No. 32 with Pennsylvania Avenue in background (Goode, 337).
- 1911: View of pin oaks along median from 13th Street, SE (Solotaroff, 29).
- 1927-29: Survey photographs of each reservation (photographs of reservations under National Park Service jurisdiction are in the NCR Reservation Files; those of reservations transferred to the District of Columbia are in the HSW Reservations Collection).
- 1929: View southeast from U.S. Treasury (King, 132).
- ca. 1931. Color aerial photograph from above the White House looking to the Capitol (Grosvenor, 608).

ca. 1931 Color aerial photograph from above the Capitol looking to the
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PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION:

The Plan of Washington, D.C., project was carried out from 1990-93 by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) Division, Robert J. Kapsch, chief. The project sponsors were the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation Inc. of Washington, D.C.; the Historic Preservation Division, District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, which provided Historic Preservation Fund monies; the National Capital Region and its White House Liaison office, NPS; and the National Park Foundation Inc.

HABS historian Sara Amy Leach was the project leader and Elizabeth J. Barthold was project historian. Architectural delineators were: Robert Arzola, HABS; Julianne Jorgensen, University of Maryland; Robert Juskevich, Catholic University of America; Sandra M. E. Leiva, US/ICOMOS-Argentina; and Tomasz Zweich, US/ICOMOS-Poland, Board of Historical Gardens and Palace Conservation. Katherine Grandine served as a data collector. The photographs are by John McWilliams, Atlanta, except for the aerial views, which are by Jack E. Boucher, HABS, courtesy of the U.S. Park Police - Aviation Division.