

# Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization

## Draft Assessment of Effects on Historic Resources

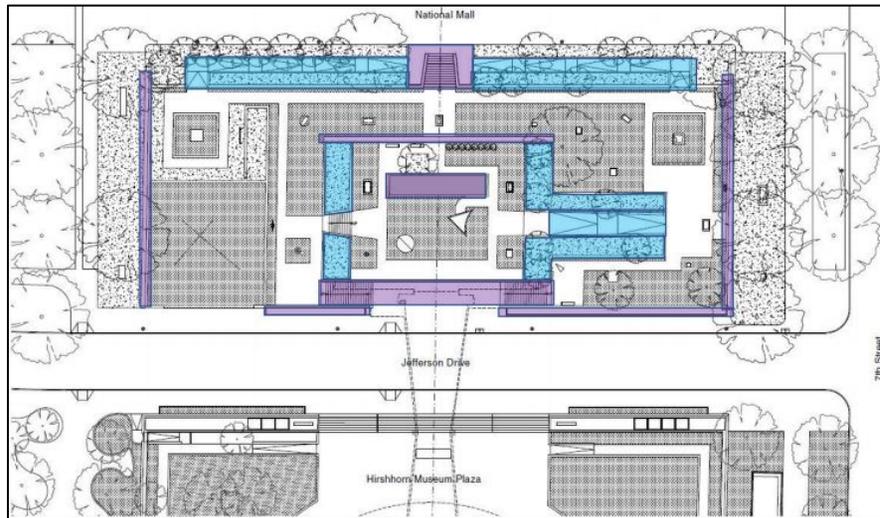
### Criteria of Adverse Effect

This document provides an assessment of effects on historic resources associated with the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization. Effect assessments are based on the criteria of adverse effect as defined in the implementing regulations of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR Part 800). The criteria of adverse effect are defined as follows:

An adverse effect is found when an undertaking may alter, directly or indirectly, any of the characteristics of a historic property that qualify the property for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places in a manner that would diminish the integrity of the property’s location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. Consideration shall be given to all qualifying characteristics of a historic property, including those that may have been identified subsequent to the original evaluation of the property’s eligibility for the National Register. Adverse effects may include reasonably foreseeable effects caused by the undertaking that may occur later in time, be farther removed in distance or be cumulative (36 CFR § 800.5(a)(1)).

### Character Defining Features

The table below identifies character defining features of the Hirshhorn Museum Sculpture Garden. These features individually and collectively contribute to the character of the Sculpture Garden. Character defining features were present in the Sculpture Garden during the period of significance (1974, 1981) and have retained integrity to that period.



1974, 1981 Period of Significance Character Defining Features:
Setting for Rotating Display of Sculpture*
Recessed Grade Below the National Mall*
Concrete Walls (Perimeter and Inner Partition)*
Reflecting Pool*
South Stairs*
North Stair*
Hardscape Paving
Garden “Rooms”
Lateral North Ramps
Intermediate East Ramp
* Based on Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden Determination of Eligibility

1974 Features
  1981 Features
 \*Recessed Grade, Setting for Display of Sculpture, and Hardscape Paving are not annotated for clarity.

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The following table provides an assessment of effects of each feature or action of the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization. An effect determination is proposed based on the criteria of adverse effect, with additional information or comments provided as applicable. Adverse effect determinations are noted in the following chart with .

Feature/Action	Proposed Effect Determination	Comments/Additional Information
Site Plan	Maintains 1974, 1981 plan with layout organized around the 8 <sup>th</sup> Street axis and reintroduces north/south stairs at the lowest level. No adverse effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Re-establishes the north-south axial organization of the 1974 design.</li> <li>- Maintains the spatial complexity of the 1981 design with expanded garden rooms, walls, and plantings.</li> </ul>
Setting for Display of Sculpture	Program and use consistent. Sculpture Garden continues to function and fulfill its mission as a setting for sculpture. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Setting for sculpture is a character defining feature and retains high integrity.</li> <li>- Project goals include showing the historically significant sculpture collection to strongest effect, while providing flexible open space to support programming and contemporary art.</li> </ul>
Recessed Grade Below the National Mall	Sculpture Garden maintains a recessed elevation below the National Mall, with terraced topography. Proposed changes include 10'8" grade change at the southwest corner, and approximately 2'4" grade change on the east side. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recessed topography is a character defining feature and retains high integrity.</li> <li>- No impacts to contributing views identified in the amended National Mall Historic District.</li> <li>- Lowering the grade at the southwest corner after the burr oak tree died increases programmable space.</li> <li>- Lowering the grade at the east side improves spatial organization and display of the modern collection.</li> </ul>
Concrete Walls - Perimeter	Walls will be replaced in-kind, with minor height increase to meet code requirements. Height increase varies between 6 and 12 inches due to grade changes. North walls raised from a low retaining wall to 3'6" in height. Walls proposed to enclose the southwest corner currently open to Jefferson Drive. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concrete perimeter walls are a character defining feature and retain high integrity.</li> <li>- Replacement in-kind is required due to irreparable alkali silica reaction inherent in the concrete mixture.</li> <li>- Aesthetic appearance of aggregate concrete poured-in-place walls will be maintained, using the historic Swenson Pink (Millennium) granite as the basis of design.</li> <li>- North walls remain obscured behind plantings.</li> <li>- Perimeter of aggregate concrete walls will be maintained. Minor alterations at the northwest and southwest corners of the perimeter walls to provide universal accessibility.</li> </ul>

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Concrete Walls – Inner Partition	Wall will be re-built in the same location in stacked stone. The wall be lowered by approximately 18” to a total height of 8’3”. Adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concrete inner partition wall is a character defining feature.</li> <li>- Adverse effect on the National Mall Historic District minimized with limited visibility from the Sculpture Garden’s north overlook, and from the Mall paths.</li> <li>- Partition wall lowered to improve interior views and vistas, and limit visibility from the National Mall of the material change. Aggregate concrete walls will be the first material visible from the exterior of the Garden.</li> <li>- Wall constructed in an arranged composition of Swenson Pink and other complementary toned granite.</li> <li>- Adverse effect on the Hirshhorn is minimized by maintaining the width of the wall, reconstructing the wall in the same location to continue to articulate the lower and upper portions of the Garden, and use of Swenson Pink granite.</li> </ul>
Stacked Stone Walls	Height of new walls will be recessed below the concrete perimeter walls and detailed with a reveal adjacent to the aggregate concrete walls. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Differentiating the new walls, with a complementary granite material and color palette, is consistent with the <i>Secretary of the Interior’s Standards</i>.</li> <li>- National Mall Historic District features varied architectural styles and material palette including precedents for granite site walls.</li> </ul>
Reflecting Pool	Historic pool dimensions integrated into an enlarged water feature, remains central within the Garden. Adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reflecting pool east/west dimension aligned with the original width of the north stairs at 60 feet.</li> <li>- Reflecting pool is a character defining feature and retains high integrity.</li> <li>- Adverse effect is minimized by retaining a dimensional memory of the pool within the enlarged water feature.</li> </ul>
South Stairs	Granite stairs reconstructed after structural work and aggregate concrete replaced in-kind. Height of reconstructed balustrade increased to meet code requirements. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lateral south stairs are a character defining feature and retain high integrity.</li> <li>- No change is proposed to stair composition.</li> <li>- Minimal design changes to balustrade height to meet code requirements.</li> </ul>

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North Stair and Lateral North Ramps	Overlook and lateral stairs are introduced. Axial north stair and lateral ramps removed. Adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- North stairs and lateral north ramps are character defining features and retain high integrity.</li> <li>- Overlook reintroduces 1974 wide north entry at 50 feet, improves views, and emphasizes the 8<sup>th</sup> Street axis.</li> <li>-Proposed overlook similar to Collins’s original unrealized plan for the north entrance. Aggregate concrete walls will be the first material visible from the exterior of the Garden.</li> <li>- Adverse effect minimized by maintaining a similar lateral arrangement to the 1981 design and use of historic salvaged Swenson Pink stair treads.</li> </ul>
Accessibility	New ramps on the west side with access from the north and south. Modifies the existing intermediate level ramp on the east side to make two shorter ramps. Adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- East ramp is a character defining feature and retains high integrity.</li> <li>- Maintains 1981 project goal of improved accessibility.</li> <li>- 1981 north ramps only permit access from the north along a gravel path that is not accessible.</li> <li>- New ramps provide direct accessible path to the Museum Plaza, Jefferson Drive, and paved Mall pathway.</li> <li>- Adverse effect minimized by maintaining intermediate ramp on the east side in the same location as the 1981 condition and maintaining the east side of the Garden as a transitional area for accessibility.</li> </ul>
Underground Passage and Historic Stairs	Passage will be reopened, and historic stairs restored. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Historic Swenson Pink granite stair treads and aggregate concrete railings are present within the passage.</li> <li>- Underground passage was previously identified as non-contributing and was assessed as a character defining feature.</li> <li>- Excavation for utilities and support spaces adjacent to the underground passage will have no effect on the passage.</li> <li>- Restores link between the Mall, Sculpture Garden, Plaza, and Museum building.</li> <li>- Significant restoration work required, including concrete patching and cleaning, and granite cleaning.</li> </ul>

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Underground Passage Art Installation	Installation obscures and requires attachment to historic fabric. Installation removes portions of concrete walls and coffered ceiling at the north access point to the Sculpture Garden. Adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Majority of the 1974 aggregate concrete walls and concrete coffered ceiling will remain behind the installation.</li> <li>- Installation will bring light and luminosity improving the light levels of the historically dark underground passage condition, creating a safer environment for visitors.</li> <li>- Enlarging the north access point enhances visibility and connection between the Sculpture Garden and the underground passage.</li> </ul>
Underground Passage – Plaza Access, Alternative A	Restores size of the opening. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plaza access was covered over in 1993, and the balustrade was removed.</li> <li>- Original dimensions of the opening imparted a dark entrance to the underground passage that visitors reportedly found unwelcoming.</li> <li>- Original dimensions created a restricted head height clearance at the stair landing, and restricted daylight to the underground passage.</li> </ul>
Underground Passage – Plaza Access, Alternative B (Preferred)	Enlarged opening for improved daylighting to the base of the historic stairs. Adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plaza access was covered over in 1993, and the balustrade was removed.</li> <li>- Adverse effect minimized by maintaining the monumental Plaza stairs and installing a code compliant “Bunshaft style” aggregate concrete balustrade.</li> <li>- Alternative provides daylighting to the base of the stairs and improves head height clearance for a welcoming entry.</li> </ul>
Underground Passage – Plaza Access, Alternative C	Historic opening maintained with walkable skylights to facilitate daylight to the base of the historic stairs. Adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plaza access was covered over in 1993, and the balustrade was removed.</li> <li>- Alternative maintains the restricted height for access to the passage.</li> <li>- Alternative introduces glass close to the reconstructed concrete balustrade and restored historic stair and may have an adverse effect on the historic materials palette.</li> <li>- Walkable skylights pose waterproofing challenges, and visitors reportedly find glass a disorienting walking surface at other Institution facilities.</li> </ul>

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Garden Rooms	Garden rooms kept in east garden and builds on the 1981 modifications. Presence of garden rooms maintained. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Garden rooms subdivide the larger open space of the Sculpture Garden to create intimate settings for sculpture viewing.</li> <li>- 1974 design used hedges to create garden rooms.</li> <li>- Garden rooms created with ramps, planters, and vertical plantings are a character defining feature, and retains moderate integrity.</li> <li>- Maintains 1981 project goal of improving sculpture viewing.</li> <li>- Proposed garden rooms formed with ramps, planters, vertical plantings, and new stacked stone walls to improve the display of the modern collection.</li> </ul>
Planting Plan	Planting plan includes trees and ground cover consistent with or similar to the 1981 condition. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1981 shade conditions will be improved, with species planted suitable to the climate.</li> <li>- Concept of garden rooms and screened views from the 1981 landscape maintained.</li> <li>- Cherry trees along National Mall to be replaced with similar species.</li> <li>- Plantings will emphasize the central garden room space of the Garden consistent with 1981.</li> <li>- Tree plantings will maintain the 8<sup>th</sup> Street axis.</li> </ul>
Planters and Benches	Integral benches in keeping with the 1981 composition and visitor comfort. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Benches integrated into planters constructed from historic salvaged Swenson Pink granite stair treads or Swenson Pink granite consistent with the 1981 bench design.</li> <li>- Benches flanking the reflecting pool consistent with the spatial arrangement of the stairs from the 1974 design and constructed from historic salvaged Swenson Pink granite stair treads or new Swenson Pink granite.</li> </ul>
Paving	Removal of small brick hardscape paving and replacement with large granite pavers. Adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Large granite pavers in keeping with Collins’s unrealized hardscape design which featured gray flagstone.</li> <li>- Granite pavers complement the aggregate concrete and Museum plaza paving in terms of color, and the bond pattern of the existing hardscape.</li> <li>- Potential use of historic salvaged Swenson Pink stair treads for paving in certain locations.</li> <li>- Paving maintains a choreographed circulation similar to 1981.</li> </ul>

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Aprons	Historic elm tree layout restored, with improved visitor access. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visitor access to aprons and to overlook the Sculpture Garden are currently blocked. Shaded seating provided.</li> <li>- Elm tree at southeast corner in the public right of way removed.</li> <li>- Aprons programmed to better connect the Sculpture Garden to the surrounding context.</li> </ul>
Security Gates	Bronze swinging security gates at Sculpture Garden entry points integral with the concrete perimeter walls. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gates to be the same height as the perimeter walls.</li> <li>- Gate design will be simply detailed in bronze in keeping with the existing material palette.</li> </ul>
Security Guard Booth	Guard booth located at southwest corner in the apron outside the Sculpture Garden perimeter walls. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relocates prominent guard booth currently on the north overlook.</li> <li>- Guard booth will be unobtrusively designed and clad in materials consistent with the existing material palette.</li> </ul>
Lighting	Fixtures integral and housed under benches and handrails. Minimal sculpture and tree lighting proposed with minimally visible fixtures. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sculpture Garden has always featured lighting in a variety of configurations.</li> </ul>
Signage	Integral to perimeter concrete walls. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existing signage features granite panels inset into the concrete perimeter walls with incised letters.</li> </ul>
Stormwater Management	Non-visible cisterns and bioretention planters located outside of the Sculpture Garden perimeter. No adverse effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stormwater management is currently not provided, and flooding is a regular occurrence due to failed storm drains.</li> <li>- Stormwater management will have no visual impact on the National Mall.</li> </ul>

**Cumulative Effects**

This project proposes changes to multiple character defining features, which results in cumulative adverse effects. Cumulative adverse effects are limited to impacts to the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. Adverse effects are contained within the secluded and recessed space of the Sculpture Garden, and therefore there are no cumulative adverse effects to the National Mall Historic District.

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Area of Potential Effects

