

MPD 7D HQ Design Narrative

April 10, 2026

The design of the new headquarters adapted the horizontal architectural language found in the brick and siding on the homes within the surrounding neighborhood. With that idea in mind, we've chosen an elongated brick size to accentuate horizontality and imparted the technique of brick corbelling to express texture and shadows which create depth. The textured brick is clad from the 2nd floor to the roof while a more polished, smooth brick clads the walls from the 2nd floor to grade. The lower volume is recessed inwards around the building to create a shadow line and a distinction between the two volumes. The lower portion walls near the entry points are slightly angled, guiding you toward the entry and act as welcoming gesture as you enter the building. This subtle angled wall accent can be found at the windows along the façade to express movement. This creates a modern, dynamic look and feel as pedestrians traverse the site. The office spaces are expressed as shallow horizontal ribbon window openings around the building that reinforce that notion of horizontality. Our glazing to wall ratio had to stay low to meet our thermal performance goals. The horizontal language is broken up large vertical curtain wall openings that signify public or social spaces within the building. The main three being the main entrance at the northwest corner, the 2000 square foot community space along Alabama avenue, and the double height staff lounge at the southwest corner. The main entrance is expressed as a glazed curtain wall clad with a perforated metal mesh screen to protect the glazed curtain wall from potential projectiles thrown at the building while allowing light to flow into the space. The secure entrance at the south will act as the main entrance for police officers. It was important that we strike a balance between an inviting, community friendly design and a safe, secure police headquarters.

The entire site is a secure compound with high speed bi-folding security gates at each vehicular entrance. There is a one-way vehicle entry to the vanport off Hartford Street. This entrance is dedicated to police transport of detainees only. The two main officer vehicle entry points are from Alabama avenue on the west and Knox street on the east. The vehicle entrance off James M. McGee Jr. street shall serve the dedicated parking spaces for public use during community related activities at the police headquarters.

MPD currently has 394 personnel on staff with a 20-year projection of that staff increasing to 466 personnel. Twenty-two percent of the 394 staff currently reside with the District of Columbia. The existing surface parking lot accommodates approximately 100 parking spaces. MPD has 106 patrol vehicles on hand and has a need for an additional 270 personal vehicles, vans, motorcycles, etc. The proposed 4-story parking structure is designed to accommodate approximately 225 parking spaces which will alleviate on street parking of police and personal vehicles in the surrounding neighborhood. The parking structure was designed to address a few problems. First, we wanted to access the site from

James McGhee Jr. street. We have 3 ramp entry points from the north end of the parking garage. The ramp on the west side of the structure is a shallow slope parking ramp that specifically slopes up to meet the grade at James McGhee Jr. street. This also solves the problem of providing a separate, secure parking area for the community to use during scheduled community events. We've designed elements to separate the public side from the secure compound and provided a separate pedestrian exit/entry for the public that exits onto a sidewalk that takes them to Alabama avenue. The police can use this access point during regular business days. The middle ramp is the steeper ramp that takes the vehicles to the upper parking levels. We have a 10' floor to floor height for the upper levels which gives us a 7'-6" clear vehicular height and allows for the roof height to be comparable with the surrounding neighborhood buildings and the proposed MPD building. The ramp on the east is a shallow slope parking ramp that terminates at the vehicle maintenance operation workshop/storage space. We had to replace the workshop building; and the first level of the parking garage is the best location because it offers a higher clear height for taller vehicles and offers easy access, being located adjacent to the site entry points from Alabama and Knox streets.

The parking structure is clad in textured precast concrete, and an architectural metal mesh screen, at the first level, meant to be used as a facilitator for vegetation growth as well as a visual aesthetic. The vegetation aims to soften the edge of the parking structure, act as a visual buffer, help control stormwater runoff, contribute to our GAR score, and mitigates the scale of the parking structure. Bio retention planters will be located on the east side of the parking structure to aid in stormwater management and GAR. Solar panels are clad on the south façade and there are solar panel canopies on the roof level as part of the sustainability plan. The precast panels on the upper levels are designed with angular geometries that are more playful and intended to be more aesthetically pleasing to the community. The various textures and patterns on the precast provide more depth and shadows along the façade. The pedestrian bridge will provide convenient access from the parking structure to the police building. The bridge structure is a steel truss structure clad in metal mesh. The police will access the bridge on the 2nd level of the parking garage and will connect to the 3rd level of the police building. The garage perimeter walls meet the property line on the south and west sides. This allows us to maximize the number of parking spaces with an efficient parking plan. The parking spaces on the typical level are double loaded on the east and west sides and single loaded on the north and south. Both the police building and parking garage will share similar light cream tones in the masonry and precast which will add to the cohesiveness of the overall project.

The site surrounding the police headquarters building will be supplemented with a mixture of shade trees and understory trees that relate to the scale of the site and building, and provide a pleasant, shaded pedestrian experience for those using all areas of the site, buildings, and surrounding public streetscape. The understory plantings will be primarily native to impart a sense of place and soften the spaces between the street and buildings. The scale of these selections is well suited to a safe and comfortable pedestrian experience and have been coordinated with the height and location of building windows. The main

entrance to the building features an appropriately sized entry plaza complete with enhanced paving treatments, tasteful area lighting, and a mixture of plantings to enhance the pedestrian experience into the building.