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## The United States Congress Architect of the Capitol

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### ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

#### About the Architect of the Capitol

The first Architect of the Capitol (Architect) was appointed in 1793 by President George Washington and made a permanent office under the legislative branch in 1876. To date, there have been twelve Architects.

The Architect is responsible to the United States Congress for the maintenance, operation, development, and preservation of the United States Capitol complex (Capitol complex), which includes the Capitol, the congressional office buildings, the Library of Congress buildings and grounds, the Supreme Court building and grounds, the U.S Botanic Garden, the Capitol Power Plant, Capitol Grounds and Arboretum, and other facilities. The Architect oversees approximately 18.5 million square feet of space across 36 structures. The agency is comprised of approximately 2,400 employees and has a more than \$1,000,000,000 annual budget.



#### About the Organizational Structure

The historic and high-profile use of the buildings under the Architect's care creates a complex environment. All employees work to meet the needs of multiple stakeholders, including members of Congress, committees, congressional leadership and staff, the visiting public, and other clients.

The Architect supervises five executives whose offices oversee the day-to-day operations of the organization and staff: Office of the Chief Administrator, Office of the Chief Engineer, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Office of the Chief of Operations, and Office of the Chief Security Officer. These operations include the mechanical, electrical, structural, and maintenance needs of the buildings and grounds, security infrastructure and necessary enhancements, as well as curatorial and procurement efforts. A host of electricians, plumbers, upholsterers, carpenters, painters, masons, and other skilled craftspeople repair, maintain, and preserve the historic buildings and furnishings within the complex.

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#### Washington, DC

**Location:**

3hrs 50min / 231.9 mi. SW of New York, NY 2hrs 27min / 145.5 mi. S of Philadelphia, PA 8min

**Website:** [www.dc.gov](http://www.dc.gov)

**Population:** Washington Metro Area – 6.4M (2019)

**Median Income:** \$95,158 (household 2010)

**Cost of Living Index:** 146.2 (US avg. = 100)

**Public Education:** 167 Public Schools and 52 Public Charter Schools.

**Private Education:** There are 83 private schools including 10 large high schools and 10 large PK-8 schools.

**Higher Education:** Some of the best-known colleges/universities in Washington include George Washington University, Georgetown University, Howard University, American University and Strayer University to name a few.

**Overview:**

This position is located in Washington, DC and open to U.S. citizens. Many employees of the area live as far east as Prince George County, Md, and as far west as Loudoun County, VA. There is a strong regional transportation network which includes Metro Bus, Rail and bike-to-work options. The region is not only the home to our federal government, but it is also a cosmopolitan area with a variety of opportunities that attract residents and visitors from around the world.

The region also hosts a National Center for the Arts, the Arlington National Cemetery, and the Pentagon. The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is home to the National Symphony Orchestra, the Washington National Opera, and the Washington Ballet.

**Major Businesses in the area:**

US Government;  
AOL Time Warner; Lockheed Martin; Marriott International; General Dynamics

**Notables:**

Washington is one of 12 cities in the US with teams from all four major professional men's sports and is home to one major professional women's team. In addition, the District's four NCAA Division I teams have a broad following.

Innumerable historical/cultural sites in the area including the Smithsonian Institution, the National Mall, and the National Archives.

Washington, DC is a prominent center for national and international media.

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#### POSITION SUMMARY:

The Architect of the Capitol leads a 2,400-person organization with their efforts to maintain, preserve, secure, enhance, and improve the grounds and complex of the United States Capitol. A true national treasure, the complex includes some of the most architecturally significant facilities in the nation. In addition to the maintenance and upkeep of the facilities, the Architect is also responsible for improving physical security of the Capitol complex.

The scope of responsibility of the Architect is broad and the complexity of operations and member relations should not be underestimated. The Architect reports to the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, and the Committee on House Administration, and consults with House and Senate leadership office to execute a specific strategy to provide enhanced services that will increase the level of service to the Capitol complex community and provide transparency of operations to that community.



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#### DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Office of the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) has the daily responsibility of preserving, maintaining, securing, and improving the national treasures that make up the United States Capitol complex – the Capitol Building, the House and Senate office buildings, the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, the U.S. Botanic Garden, Capitol Grounds and Arboretum, the Library of Congress buildings, the Supreme Court building, the Capitol Power Plant, and various other support facilities.

Throughout the years, legislation has placed additional buildings and grounds under the Architect's jurisdiction. Today, the team is responsible for the maintenance, new construction, and renovation of more than three dozen buildings representing nearly 18.5 million square feet of space and maintains more than 570 acres of land.

In addition to functioning as a working office building, the U.S. Capitol is a favorite destination for millions of visitors each year. Accordingly, a challenge exists to accommodate the needs of the United States Congress while serving the public. Overall, as an agent of Congress, the Architect of the Capitol is responsible for the following jurisdictions and activities:

- **Capital Construction and Operations.** Central Office functions and the management and operations of the activities, programs, and projects that affect all jurisdictions: Architecture and Engineering Services; Safety, Fire and Environmental Management; Financial Management; General Counsel; Security; Communications; Information Systems; Human Resources; and Procurement.
- **Capitol Building.** Maintenance, preservation, and structural and mechanical care of the Capitol building and Capitol Visitor Center and planning with the proper authorities for ceremonies held in the building and on the grounds, as well as the care and repair of works of art that are integral to the Capitol.
- **Capitol Police.** Buildings and grounds maintenance, care, and operation of the U.S. Capitol Police buildings and grounds. The Architect works closely with the Capitol Police in supporting their security functions on the Capitol complex, as well as one of the three voting members of the Capitol Police Board.
- **Senate and House Office Buildings.** Maintenance, preservation, structural, and mechanical care of the Senate and House office buildings, including the maintenance and operation of the mechanical, electrical, and electronic equipment and the Senate and House subways, as well as the maintenance of the Senate and House garages and the Senate restaurants.
- **Capitol Power Plant.** Maintenance, preservation, and structural and mechanical care and operation of the Capitol Power Plant, which supplies steam and chilled water necessary for temperature control and humidity of the buildings throughout the Capitol complex. Facilities serviced include: the Capitol, the House and Senate office buildings, the Library of Congress, the Supreme Court, the

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Thurgood Marshall Federal Judiciary Building, Union Station, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Government Publishing Office, and the Postal Square Building.

- **Library of Congress Buildings and Grounds.** Maintenance, repair, and structural and mechanical care of the buildings and grounds maintenance of approximately 24 acres. Additionally, responsible for 100 acres and numerous facilities at Fort Meade, MD and Culpeper, VA, for long-term storage needs of the Congress.
- **Capitol Grounds and Arboretum.** Care, maintenance, and improvement of the Capitol grounds, including approximately 222 acres of landscaping, parks, streets and parking facilities.
- **U.S. Botanic Garden.** The Architect serves as the Acting Director, under the supervision of the Joint Committee on the Library; providing maintenance, care, and operations of the U.S. Botanic Garden Conservatory, growing facilities located at DC village, buildings, and grounds.
- **Capitol Visitor Center.** Responsible for all facets of the Capitol Visitor Center, which welcomes more than 3 million visitors per year.
- The Architect also serves as a member of **several governing or advisory bodies:** U.S. Capitol Police Board, Congressional Accessibility Services Board, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, National Capital Memorial Commission, District of Columbia Zoning Commission, District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment, and the Art Advisory Committee to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. He/she is also an ex officio member of the United States Capitol Preservation Commission and the National Building Museum.

#### Specific responsibilities include:

- Serves as one of three voting members of the U.S. Capitol Police Board.  
  
Oversees the culture and competence of the Office of the Architect of the Capitol responsible for the physical environment and operating infrastructure of the Capitol complex that includes the U.S. Capitol building, House and Senate Office buildings, Library of Congress building, Supreme Court building and the Capitol Power Plant.
- Oversees visitor services, tours and educational programming for the Capitol Visitor Center and U.S. Botanic Garden.
- Plans and implements historic preservation efforts.
- Preserves and cares for the art in the United States Capitol and other buildings.
- Acquires and leases space on behalf of the Congress.

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- Develops and implements a master plan for future development of the Capitol complex.
- Responsible for the implementation of the Congressional Accountability Act for workers under his/her jurisdiction.
- Administers a broad range of contracts including for building, engineering, and design services.
- In coordination with the U.S. Capitol Police, responsible for the installation and implementation of building security and life-safety projects.
- Supervises and manages Senate and Capitol Visitor Center restaurants.
- Responsible for Senate and House health service facilities and fitness centers.
- Responsible for the design and construction of security enhancements.
- Responsible for the design and construction of the presidential inaugural stands on the West Front of the Capitol and the bicameral congressional moves.
- Plays an essential role in all Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Continuity of Government (COG) activities for the Congress.

#### THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:

The ideal candidate will have a minimum of ten years of experience as a facilities management executive in a demanding environment. A candidate with architectural or engineering training is highly desired. Exposure to unique and historically significant facilities is highly desirable. He/she will have demonstrated impressive success in improving operational excellence in businesses with major capital infrastructures, large-scale unionized workforces, and significant government regulation and oversight. Candidates should possess an undergraduate degree with a concentration in architecture, engineering, urban planning, business administration or a related field. A graduate level degree in business or a technical field is a decided plus.

- Ability to operate, preserve, improve, and manage multiple facilities and grounds.
- Understanding of, or experience with, historic preservation methods and procedures.
- Proven business management skills.
- Experience with security issues.
- Proven ability to prepare and manage a large budget subject to Federal oversight.
- Proven leadership skills.

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- Proven supervisory skills.
- Commitment to quality and excellence.
- Commitment to customer service.
- Knowledge of life safety and environmental compliance issues.
- Procurement experience.
- Contract and construction management experience.
- Understanding of the structure and function of Congress and the Legislative Branch.

#### Personal Characteristics

The successful candidate will ideally be able to grasp the complexity of serving the United States Congress and have an appropriate service orientation to serve the Capitol complex community. The new Architect will have a proven ability to lead complex operations in a political and media-saturated context. This person will have a strong sense of public service, a commitment to partnership with support agencies and Federal oversight, and a style that is committed to restoring the confidence of the agency. The new architect will commit to transparency, adhering to government processes, and listening to constituent inputs.

#### Competency Based Assessments

We will focus on the following priorities as we assess candidate competencies for this key assignment:

**Leadership:** We seek a candidate that possesses clear achievement orientation and tenacity in leading and executing. The ideal person will demonstrate the ability to use a broad network of influence and decision-making relationships to sustain and improve the Capitol complex community. In an environment where interested and influential parties will flood our new executive with their view of priorities and policies, he/she will exercise a firm and focused hand in guiding the strategic and operational efforts of the Capitol complex and will set the tone for the agency with regular, open, clear, and transparent communications to agency employees and federal partners.

**Functional & Subject Matter Know-How:** Our candidate will need to possess or have access to a broad range of technical knowledge and expertise including, but not limited to, facilities management, customer services, historic preservation, physical security, art maintenance and preservation, long-range facilities planning, tourism, law enforcement, design, construction, and many others. While it will be critical that the Architect possess expertise in some of these disciplines, equally important will be his/her ability to assess what tools and expertise are necessary to achieve positive results. He/she will possess all the tools to operate and improve the Capitol complex and will be an energetic partner with its oversight committees and Senate and House leadership to execute new strategies and initiatives. This executive will be equally



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comfortable partnering with Congressional leaders, unions, employees, and the broader Capitol complex community.

**Operational Excellence – Setting Standards & Getting Results:** Our successful candidate will have an impressive record of leading significant improvement in complex organizations with a demanding customer base:

- Capital-intensive structure
- Large-scale daily operations with direct customer interface and high expectations
- An organization with associated workforce, expertise, equipment, and facility requirements and issues
- An unwavering focus on quality
- Significant government oversight

He/she will achieve this operational excellence through a broad but intense focus on safety, service, quality, cost, and schedule, as opposed to a narrow “cost-cutting” mentality. The new Architect will demonstrate a highly empowered approach to gaining this performance improvement across the Architect of the Capitol organization.

**Managing Direct Reports:** Given the complexity of the role and the scale of the area of responsibility, the Architect will need to have strong capabilities in managing a large and diverse workforce. The successful candidate will have demonstrated in previous positions the ability to lead and drive significant organizational improvement that is measurable. Additionally, the candidate will have built and sustained management teams that deliver at a high level. The ability of the candidate to choose his/her direct reports and successfully leverage the organization through those direct reports is a key criterion.

We will of course assess all other competencies (**Strategic Thinking & Planning and Managing Self**), but the four outlined above are at the heart of the search.



#### HOW TO APPLY:


**Expression of Interest:** If you wish to learn more about this opportunity, please submit your interest to Marshall Reffett at:  
[marshall@reffettassociates.com](mailto:marshall@reffettassociates.com)

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About Our Organization

Reffett Associates is a nationally recognized, retained executive search practice founded on the underlying principle that all productive relationships must be built on trust. Our level of professionalism and experience is invaluable - we believe that it makes the difference between a search that fills a slot and one that moves your organization closer to fulfilling its goals.

Offices in the metropolitan areas surrounding Seattle, WA; Washington, DC; Metro, NY; and Dallas, TX.




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