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### Collective Costs; D.C. Street Closings To Snarl Business; [FINAL Edition]

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**Full Text** (1372 words)

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The massive shutdown of downtown arteries for the presidential inauguration has prompted a slew of logistical challenges for people who live, work and entertain in the 100-square-block area affected.

At the National Museum of American History, a daunting problem is ensuring that the food and drink arrive at an inaugural ball well before closed streets deprive the 3,000 guests of the necessary wares for partying.

Elizabeth Little, the museum's director of special events, arranged for thousands of plates, glasses, silverware and chairs to be delivered early Wednesday, nearly 36 hours before Michigan's state ball is to begin. The 100 beef tenderloins, 400 pounds of salmon and 500 duck breasts will arrive late that afternoon and will be parked in two refrigerated trucks in the museum's lot until a few hours before the party.

And the 6,000 pounds of ice to cool the guests' drinks?

That delivery also will arrive Wednesday, and it will rest on a loading dock beneath thermal insulation until the following afternoon. "We've always had street closing, but this time everyone seems intimidated about the possibility of it being much tougher to move," Little said from her museum office. "We're just being a little more cautious."

Presidential inaugurations draw sprawling throngs and inspire soaring rhetoric. But for the hometown crowd -- the people who live, work and party in the heart of downtown -- the pageantry is a blessing that is decidedly mixed. In exchange for ringside perches at a historic moment, they must contend with a plethora of headaches, more so this year with the Secret Service closing roughly 100 square blocks of downtown, restricting parking and starting the shutdown earlier than usual.

Lawyers, lobbyists and residents with offices and apartments overlooking Pennsylvania Avenue are inviting guests to watch the parade from windows and balconies with choice views, as they have done for many such events. But security measures for the inauguration, the first since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, are forcing everyone from hosts to guests to caterers to choreograph their movements with care. They will need photo identification and official invitations to ensure that they can clear 22 security checkpoints and traverse a downtown from which cars will be barred, in large part, starting Wednesday night.

"I can tell you that all over town, people are scratching their heads over how they will get anywhere," said Carolyn Peachey, an event planner who is organizing three parties.

In some cases, business owners are shutting down because the street closings will make it difficult for customers to reach them. The owner of A.V. Ristorante Italiano, on New York Avenue NW, a scant block from the Washington Convention Center, the site of six inaugural balls, is giving his staff the day off because parking will be banned on his street after 10 a.m. Thursday.

"We don't have any choice," said John Dibari, standing in his dimly lighted dining room as the luncheon crowd filled tables covered in red-checked cloths. "I don't know how my employees will

get here, let alone my customers."

Around the corner, Jim Carr, manager of Alpersteins Furniture Store, also is planning to close, and he grouched about a day of lost business. "Who's going to be downtown shopping?" he asked. "Why open when all the streets around us are closed?"

In other cases, proprietors are planning to remain open, although they acknowledge that they are unsure what to expect. Teresa Yurt, owner of the Toka Salon in the heart of the no-drive zone at 801 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, said she does not know how her clients will arrive in time to get their hair styled for parties that night. More important, she asked, how will they protect their new coifs once they leave if they're required to walk several blocks before getting a ride?

"It's a great day for America," Yurt said, "but not such a great day for business."

The heightened security is forcing residents of the condominium apartments above the salon to submit guest lists to the building's management if they are hosting parties that afternoon. Mark Sakaley, president of the condo association at 801 Pennsylvania, said he planned to write letters for each of his eight guests, even though he has not made a final decision about whether to have a gathering.

Sakaley, who uses a wheelchair, said he is concerned that it will be impossible to drive his car out of the building that day and then return. "It does have its irritations," he said of the security. "You have to schedule your life so that you either remain home or remain out for the duration of the festivities."

Still, he said, most residents understand the need for precautions and are taking the inconveniences "in good stead."

Eric Michael, co-owner of Occasions, a District-based catering company that is serving 10 parties Thursday, including the gala at the American History museum, said inaugural preparations typically are complicated by security measures and street closings.

But, he said, the challenge is more formidable this time. While he was able to deliver food to the American History museum in the pre-dawn hours before the inauguration in 2001, he has had to move up the drop-off time by 12 hours this year to make sure that his trucks are not blocked from reaching the building at 14th Street and Constitution Avenue NW.

Michael said it would have helped if the Secret Service had announced closures sooner, although he said he understands "that we live in a different world" following the 9/11 attacks.

"We have had to reorganize all our deliveries and schedules for 400 staff because things have to be brought in early and partially set up in advance," he said. "We're all for security. It would just be helpful if there was information more than seven business days out. It didn't give us much time to react."

Officer Junis Fletcher, a D.C. police spokesman, said the street closings were announced once the District received a list from the Secret Service. "We understand the concern, and we apologize for any inconvenience," Fletcher said. "We're doing the very best we can."

Federal officials announced the street closings Tuesday afternoon, at a news conference at which Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge was surrounded by federal law enforcement officers, military personnel and local police chiefs.

While acknowledging that federal authorities have received no recent information that would justify raising the national terror threat level, Ridge said that the government needs to remain vigilant. As part of the security precautions, D.C. police released a sheaf of street closings that cover zones that include the White House, the Capitol and the Convention Center.

The restrictions are causing at least day-long disruptions for everyone from sidewalk vendors to restaurant managers to employees trying to get to their offices. The approaching shutdown prompted the federal government, whose local employees are off for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday tomorrow and for the inauguration Thursday, to suggest workers take Wednesday off as well.

Berhan Adenay, a hot dog vendor who has worked at Pennsylvania Avenue and 10th Street NW for the past 12 years, said she was told she cannot open at the location on Inauguration Day.

During previous inaugurations, Adenay said, she could work at different spots along the parade route. She said that no such opportunity exists this year. "I'm not happy about it, but if they say no, they say no. I have to be understanding," she said, estimating that the day off would cost her as much as \$350 in gross sales.

Karen Sierpina, an associate director at F/S Capitol Consulting LLC, said she plans to go to her office on the ninth floor at 601 Pennsylvania Ave., although she will be helping to host a party for hundreds of friends and clients.

At first, the firm had planned on a small gathering, but the guest list kept growing. Sierpina said she plans to e-mail instructions to guests Tuesday and advise them to print out the invitation and bring it with them.

"We're telling people you can't drive, you can't take a cab," she said, adding that she does not believe that the inconvenience will quash interest. "People know that nothing is easy anymore when you come to D.C."

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