

The New White House Ballroom

November 2025

The White House State Ballroom is a large new ballroom being built at the White House in Washington, D.C. It is part of an expansion project that will replace the East Wing and create a much bigger space for hosting formal events, such as state dinners and celebrations. Right now, the White House often uses smaller rooms or outdoor tents for these gatherings, so this new ballroom is meant to make things more comfortable and impressive.



The project was announced in mid-2025, and construction began that September. The whole building will cover over 8,000 square meters, with the ballroom itself being one part of it. A glass bridge will connect it to the main White House. The project is being paid for mostly through private donations from companies and individuals. The design is described as very fancy, with detailed decorations, chandeliers, and bulletproof glass walls.

Some people are excited about the project, but others are worried. Some historians think tearing down the East Wing could harm the historic character and significance of the White House. Two historic trees have already been removed to make space for construction. Others question whether private donors might have too much influence over a public landmark and whether it's right for wealthy individuals or corporations to fund part of a government building that represents all Americans. Some critics have also wondered whether these donors could gain special favors in return. Surveys have shown that only about one-quarter of Americans support the project.

Comprehension Questions:

1. What is the main idea of the article?
 - a) The White House is being completely torn down and rebuilt.
 - b) The White House is getting a new ballroom, causing both excitement and concern.
 - c) The president wants to hold more parties.
 - d) The new White House ballroom will be the most beautiful room in the world.
2. The ballroom will be used to host formal events. What does "formal" mean?
 - a) Very casual and relaxed
 - b) Open to the general public
 - c) Happening outdoors
 - d) Official and following traditional rules
3. What is a feature of the new ballroom's design?
 - a) Several new and improved tents.
 - b) A floor that lights up like a disco when people dance.
 - c) Detailed decorations and chandeliers.
 - d) A big chair for a king to sit on.

4. What does the article suggest about the purpose of the ballroom?
- a) To be a place where the president lives.
 - b) To make formal events more elegant and comfortable.
 - c) To create more office space for staff.
 - d) To make room for a museum.
5. What is one reason some people don't trust the private donors?
- a) The donors might expect special treatment in return for their money.
 - b) The donors will ask the government to pay back the money.
 - c) Donating money for a building project is against the law.
 - d) The donations will make the construction take much longer.
6. If a company donates a large amount of money, what might people suspect?
- a) The company will set up offices in the White House.
 - b) The company's logo will be painted on the roof of the ballroom.
 - c) The President will have to use the company's product in all his speeches.
 - d) The company might receive favorable treatment from the government.
7. Which of these statements is false?
- a) The ballroom will connect to the White House with a glass bridge.
 - b) The government is paying for the whole project.
 - c) The project will provide a larger space for official events.
 - d) Some people are worried about the influence of private donors.
8. Why are some historians worried about the project?
- a) They think the new ballroom will not be large enough.
 - b) They believe it might change the important history of the White House.
 - c) They are angry that they were not hired to design the new building.
 - d) They think the glass bridge is not strong enough.
9. What might the removal of historic trees symbolize to some critics?
- a) A way to make more space for visitors.
 - b) A plan to plant new trees nearby.
 - c) An effort to make the area safer.
 - d) A loss of respect for history.
10. What would a supporter of the project probably say?
- a) "The East Wing was the most important part of the White House."
 - b) "It is wrong to change anything about a historic building."
 - c) "This new space will help the U.S. host world leaders properly."
 - d) "Private donors should have no role in government buildings."

Speaking and Writing Activities:

- Discuss these questions with a partner or a small group.
 - Choose one topic and write a response to it. Show your writing to a classmate or teacher.
1. Do you think it's okay for private companies or rich people to donate money to government projects?
 2. What is a famous historical building in your city? Should it be changed or expanded?
 3. Do you enjoy attending big, formal events, or do you prefer small, casual gatherings? Why?