

The Future of The National Mall



THE NATIONAL MALL CONSERVANCY INITIATIVE

www.themallconservancy.org

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This project is sponsored by:
The National Coalition to Save Our Mall
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**National Coalition to
Save Our Mall**
Preserving Our Monument to Democracy



Acknowledgement

This report is a collaborative effort sponsored by the National Coalition to Save Our Mall. It is the natural progression of our concern for the wise stewardship and future of the National Mall. In our 2002 State of the Mall Report, we drew public attention to threats to the Mall and raised questions about divided management and the future of the Mall. Read the report at www.savethemall.org. This report seeks to answer those questions.

The Coalition thanks the citizens and representatives of government agencies who contributed creative ideas to this exploration of how we can ensure a vibrant future for the National Mall. Special appreciation goes to officials from the Central Park Conservancy in New York City, the Golden Gate National Parks, People for a Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and the Van Alen Institute who shared their invaluable experiences at the opening public forum in January. We are grateful to the moderators of the workshops who brought their professional expertise and love of the city to the discussions that form the basis of the report's findings and proposals for action.

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This Report, and a full illustrated history of the Mall, is available on the National Mall Conservancy Initiative website, www.themallconservancy.org.

Cover photo: © Tom Wachs

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Back Cover: Evolution of the Mall's Growth

1. The Mall – Then and Now

In the two centuries since L'Enfant gave us a plan for the grand concept of “public walks” that we call the National Mall, it has become center stage not just for monuments, celebrations, and varied public uses, but for social movements that have shaped our history. In 1901, Congress ordered the McMillan Commission to reaffirm the L'Enfant vision and to expand the Mall. As the nation grew, so did the Mall. Today, it has become a metaphor for our burgeoning democracy, but not

without controversy. So great is the demand for this prime real estate, that the very essence of the Mall -- its planned open spaces and public access -- is at risk. Congress has attempted to stem over-building with the Commemorative Works Act (Public Law 99-652) and recent amendments to it. But history never stops, and neither, it seems, does the pressure to echo that history with new monuments, museums and visitors centers. Security measures since 9/11 have only exacerbated the problem. ■

2. A Troubled Ground – Sources of the Problem

In 2003, in the wake of the World War II Memorial controversy and construction of the American Indian Museum on the last officially designated museum site, Congress issued a moratorium on further building, and declared the Mall a “substantially completed work of civic art” (Public Law 108-126). At the same time it exempted a Vietnam Memorial Visitor Center. Why this contradiction? Does our apparent need for projects and programs to express our evolving democracy make current policy unworkable?

In truth, there is no overall policy for the entire Mall, and no coordinated

management. At least seven separate government agencies have jurisdiction over parts of the Mall, each with its own agenda and priorities (see Mall Facts at a Glance, p. 7). This divided control is mirrored in Congress, where oversight is assigned to various separate committees. There is no joint purpose and joint management, and little opportunity for meaningful public participation or scrutiny of the planning process. Even the geographical boundaries of the Mall are in dispute. The Mall has many parents, but from a management standpoint, it is an orphan. ■

3. In Search of a Solution -- The Early Workshops

Management problems aren't new to the Mall. One hundred years ago

Congress formed the McMillan Commission to rationalize Mall

building policy. Now, new questions have arisen. Why did the controversial siting of the WWII Memorial and the NFL's crass extravaganza in 2003 stir up such a fuss? Who is looking after the physical and cultural health of the Mall? Why is it so difficult for Congress to fulfill its role as steward of the Mall?

In late 2003, a group of informed citizens met to address such questions. The Mall Conservancy Initiative group (organized by the National Coalition to Save Our Mall) hosted a public

forum in January 2004, followed in May by three workshops. Participants included citizens and students as well as representatives of the government agencies that share stewardship of the Mall. The workshops focused on the visitor experience, monument policy, security, constituency building, events, modern usage of this grand space, and more. Their probing, coupled with a reexamination of the history of the Mall, led to profound insights into the problem as well as a possible solution. ■

4. Rethinking the Problem – Back to the Future

What did we learn from the workshops?

THE MALL AS A CIVIC EXPERIENCE: There is a huge gap in the way the public perceives the Mall and the way it is managed. In the past fifty years, the public has come to see and use the Mall as more than monuments and green space. It has finally become what it was always meant to be – the people's place --, where we not only celebrate our history but live it. Its vitality comes from the public uses that continually revitalize its core message. But this validation of our democracy is threatened. Maintenance and security concerns have begun to take priority over the deeper meaning of the Mall. We are heading toward a kind of "Disneyland" on the Potomac, where tourists move from monument to monument by tour bus. If this vision is allowed to prevail, America will have lost a great opportunity.

THE MALL AS A VISITOR EXPERIENCE: Workshop participants found much that they liked about the Mall -- the beauty of the grand open vistas, the profound sense of American identity and ideals, the mix of people strolling, jogging, touring the museums and memorials. What they found missing – amenities, such as drinking fountains, benches, parking, convenient restrooms, restaurants, signage, historical text, a visitor center, even a brochure about the Mall – were so obvious that their lack could only be explained by the divided and uncoordinated stewardship of the Mall. DC residents felt disconnected from the Mall which functions more as a tourist destination than as a part of the total life of the city.

THE MALL AS A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT: The physical health of the Mall also suffers from divided management. While the monuments may be well cared for, no agency is taking responsibility for the

sustainability of the Mall as a whole. There are no annual quality assessments of the soil, the health of the trees, the effect of toxic waste. There is a desperate need for strategies to meet stresses of overuse, to ensure that this fragile ecosystem can continue to thrive as a vital public space. The National Park Service does the best it can, but its jurisdiction is proscribed and there is no dedicated funding for an indispensable scientific approach to Mall management.

THE MALL AS AN IDEA: In declaring a moratorium on further construction on the Mall, Congress rightly put an end to more buildings and memorials on this hallowed ground. And in declaring the Mall a “completed work of civic art,” Congress recognized the need to preserve the historic and inspired McMillan design that is the basis of the Mall as we know it today. Current policy speaks to the past and the need for preservation, but it is silent about the crucial question of the Mall’s future vitality.

Today neither the L’Enfant vision nor the McMillan Plan speaks fully to the Mall that evolved in the twentieth century. The public has come to respect the Mall as a unique public open space – an inspiring place for meeting, learning, celebrating founding principles, and petitioning the government for a redress of grievances. Its power, we learned in the workshops, is in its emotional content – the ideas, memories, and associations people continually bring to it, celebrate on it, and carry away from it. In essence, the Mall today is much more than a historic concept or a sublime landscape design. It is an idea, a grand idea, or as L’Enfant saw

it, an embodiment of an America yet to come.

What, then, is the future of the Mall? Will the Mall continue to evolve with our evolving democracy? How can we supplement current preservation policy with proactive policies that support and encourage an even more lively, exciting, inspiring Mall?

While remaining true to the L’Enfant vision, as well as to Congress’ wish to put an end to additional monumental clutter, the Mall can evolve, even grow, in many ways. We need not stop history in its tracks.

- *We can find new uses for the Mall.* L’Enfant could not have foreseen the AIDS Quilts that stretched from the Washington Monument to the Capitol, but he surely would have approved of this creative use of the space. Folk fairs, fireworks, public art, protests are all latter day uses of the Mall one could not have envisioned two centuries ago.
- *We can add layers of meaning.* No doubt Abraham Lincoln would have smiled on the inscription honoring Martin Luther King Jr. emplaced on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial some eighty-one years after its dedication.
- *We can enlarge the Mall physically beyond its current boundaries,* as the McMillan Commission did in response to similar needs 100 years ago. Already, the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Park Service have identified contiguous land that

could become part of an extended “Mall.” We will never run out of “giants” to honor.

The existing Mall has continued to outgrow the 100-year-old McMillan Plan, a sure sign that there is a need for a new vision for the next 100 years. A century ago, faced with a similar dilemma, Congress turned to an ad hoc group of professionals to make

order out of chaos. We have the McMillan Plan to thank for our inspired Lincoln and Jefferson memorials set in vast new public parkland. Today, we can be no less creative. There is still usable space around the Mall for expansion (see inside back cover), and new ways to revitalize the existing memorials and open space. We are limited only by our imagination. ■

5. A National Mall Conservancy Initiative – Wise Use and Stewardship

If the Mall is more than the sum of its parts, then the Initiative is the idea that makes the synergy work. The Initiative would provide the means for all the agencies with a stake and interest in the Mall to talk to each other, work together, and achieve larger goals they cannot achieve alone. The Initiative would give Congress the information and conceptual thinking it needs to oversee and budget for the physical and cultural health of the Mall as a whole. As with the

McMillan Plan, the Conservancy would give Congress a long-term vision for the Mall, providing context for decision-making about future memorials and other projects. The Initiative would build a national constituency for the Mall and present a great history lesson for visitors from all over the world. In filling these needs, the Initiative would provide help for the Congress in asserting its role as the ultimate steward of the Mall. ■

6. A National Mall Conservancy Initiative – First Steps

The Initiative, under the auspices of the National Coalition to Save Our Mall, has identified three projects that we see as a first step towards the long-term objective of wise use and stewardship. These citizen-based projects are dedicated to enhancing the vitality of the nation’s premier place for people to relax and recreate, meet, learn, and celebrate. Work already has begun in identifying resources and volunteers and in

securing private funding for the following:

1. *Communicating the Heritage:* Creating Mall Heritage guidebooks, brochures, maps and other materials that will raise public awareness of the evolution of the Mall in the formation of American democracy.

2. *Strengthening the ties between City and Mall:* Building bridges between city government and Mall stewards and the public so as to enhance the use of the Mall as a national urban park.

visitors and the metropolitan area on a 24-hour basis.

These first steps can lead to long-range programs and projects, including:

3. *Improving Visitor Orientation:* Establishing new electronic (web-based and other) modes for communicating up-to-date information about current Mall programs and activities to

- A landscape sustainability program
- A national constituency
- National Mall Day(s)
- A welcome center on the Mall.

This is only the beginning. As in times past, the future of the Mall holds as much promise as the future of our democracy.



APPENDIX

Mall Facts at a Glance

The National Mall, our nation's premier civic space and public forum in the heart of Washington, D.C., is a testament to a grand idea that has endured through two centuries of growth and change.

Peter (Pierre) L'Enfant's Plan of 1791 (see the plan inside the report's back cover) envisioned the Mall as a "place of general resort" and "public walks" in the heart of the new nation's capital. The 400-foot-wide tree-lined "Grand Avenue" connected, physically and symbolically, the Capitol to the Washington Monument and to the White House and President's Park. The L'Enfant Plan expressed the optimistic spirit and endless possibility of the young democracy.

Over a century later, the renowned architects of the **McMillan Plan of 1901-1902** (back cover) revitalized the L'Enfant concept and transformed it physically and conceptually. The kite-shaped plan extended the Mall over former river beds to create sites for the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials. It reconceived the Mall as a civic and cultural center, an embodiment of growing American government and democracy at the turn of the twentieth century.

The 100-year-old McMillan Plan is the basis of the Mall as we know it today. In 2003, Congress defined the Mall as **extending "from the United States Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial, and from the White House to the Jefferson Memorial."** (Title II of Public Law 108-126).

The twentieth century brought yet another evolution and layer of meaning to the Mall. Public activities -- the March on Washington, the Million Mom March, the July 4th fireworks -- truly made the Mall the people's place. **An updated and revitalized one hundred year Mall concept will, of necessity, build upon that modern realization.**

Stewardship of the Mall resides in Congress. Congress passed the 1986 **Commemorative Works Act** (Public Law 99-652) to bring restraint and order to memorial building on the Mall, but achieved limited success. Since then, the Korean Veterans Memorial and the World War II Memorial have been built, while several others are in development, including a memorial to Martin Luther King Jr. at the Tidal Basin.

Finally, in 2003, with the construction of the National Museum of the American Indian on the last officially designated building site of the McMillan Plan, **Congress declared the Mall "a substantially completed work of civic art."** It imposed a **moratorium** on any future memorials, museums, or visitors centers on the **"Reserve"** area of the Mall (Title II of P.L.108-126). Future memorials would be restricted to Area I or Area II (see the map inside the back cover). To satisfy the need for future sites, the National Capital Planning Commission identified 100 off-Mall sites in its 2001 **Memorials and Museums Master Plan** (www.ncpc.gov).

Day-to-day management of the Mall is divided among several different government agencies, including: the National Park Service (monuments, memorials, and parkland), the Smithsonian Institution (eleven separate museums), the Architect of the Capitol (including the Botanical Garden), the General Services Administration (the Agriculture Building), DC Government (the cross streets), the National Gallery of Art, and the American Battle Monuments Commission (WWII Memorial). **That divided management is mirrored by a profusion of oversight committees within Congress.**

Planning for the Mall's future will require collaboration among the Mall's stewards.

For a full illustrated history of the Mall, go to www.themallconservancy.org.

A Synopsis of the Proceedings of the Public Forum

THE NATIONAL MALL: THE NEXT 100 YEARS AN INITIATIVE FOR A MALL CONSERVANCY

January 28, 2004

This public forum was convened at The George Washington University by a group of private citizens dedicated to conserving the concepts and values of the National Mall established by the President in 1791 through the L'Enfant Plan and revived by the Congress in 1901 in the McMillan Plan, and to renewing the vitality of this great national space and consummate work of public art through creative planning for a third millennium.

LISA BENTON-SHORT, Director of GWU's Center for Environmental Research offered a context for the Forum.

The Mall belongs to all of us. It stands for what it means to be an American -- to gather, to celebrate, and to protest. In recent years it has been under pressure to accommodate many new memorials and museums. Often there has been inadequate public discussion.

JUDY SCOTT FELDMAN, President, The National Coalition to Save Our Mall, provided a brief history of the development of the Mall during the past two centuries.

Photographs of the Mall taken during the 1980s show the Mall as a wide open space and parkland stretching from the Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial and from the White House to the Jefferson Memorial, with the Washington Monument at its center. In 1791 L'Enfant had created a city plan for the capital, a complex grid of streets and avenues which embodied the government principles of the then new Constitution with the Capitol on the high ground, the White House a mile away, and a monument to George Washington located in a wide Mall at the intersection of

the axis of both the Capitol and the White House. The Mall was conceived as a pedestrian grand avenue. But by the end of the 19th Century it was filled with structures.

The McMillan plan of 1901-1902 attempted to restore much of the L'Enfant vision. It extended the Mall westward and southward to incorporate the new memorials to Lincoln and Jefferson and the adjacent parkland. The National Park Service's 1976 Master Plan, prepared by Skidmore Owings Merrill architects, represented the McMillan Plan as it was actually realized in the Mall of the 1970s.

In 2000 the National Capital Planning Commission prepared the Legacy Plan for the Capital City, which attempted to restore the L'Enfant concept of the Capitol as the center of the city. The Legacy Plan directed any new development away from the Mall and, instead, to the North, South, and East Capitol Street axes. Supplementing the Legacy Plan, NCPC's Memorials and Museums Master Plan, which called the Mall a completed work of art, identified 100 new sites throughout the city where future memorials and museums could be located. These recent plans were

helpful in that they furthered protection of the Mall.

Despite these plans, preservation of the Mall has foundered. The Congress has continued to authorize new memorials until recently (November 2003) when, while authorizing yet another addition (a Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitor Center), it amended the Commemorative Works Act of 1986 to declare a moratorium on any future memorials, museums, or visitor centers on the Mall.

MODERATOR RAY GASTIL, Director of the Van Alen Institute, and contributing author to The Mall in Washington (ed. R. Longstreth, 1993) introduced the question which the forum wished to explore: What can we learn from officials of two of the most successful independent initiatives in the country -- the Central Park Conservancy and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area -- about how an independent or public-private organization can help develop a more effective public voice in the planning and long-term management of the National Mall?

From the East Coast, representatives of New York's Central Park Conservancy:

- REGINA PERUGGI, President
- DOUG BLONSKY, Chief Operating Officer and Central Park Administrator

From the West Coast:

- WILLIAM WHALEN, founding Superintendent, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), and former Director of the National Park Service
- AMY MEYER, founding co-chair of the People for a GGNRA, and long-term member of the GGNRA Advisory Commission.

THE CENTRAL PARK CONSERVANCY of New York City is a remarkable success story. The Conservancy was established in 1980 as a

means of conserving the original Olmsted plan of 1858 which embodied 858 acres of then open land, now surrounded by the city. It started as an independent group of citizens who set out to raise private money in behalf of conserving the park. At the start the city, lacking the funds to properly maintain the park, let the Conservancy do the work. Success did not come overnight and it was 18 years before the city and the Conservancy became partners. A critical element in this story is that Parks Commissioner Davis put the good of the park before the hubris of his agency and gave the Conservancy free reign to conserve Central Park.

Regina Peruggi and Doug Blonsky gave the Forum an overview of the evolution and operation of the Conservancy.

In 1998 the Conservancy assumed responsibility for capital projects and the management of main events in addition to its maintenance role. Today the Conservancy works closely for and with the Commissioner of Parks as a full partner with 300 employees and an operating budget of 20 million dollars, 85% of which is raised privately. The Parks Commissioner sits on the Conservancy Board.

The first step in the restoration process was the development of a master plan, and then a series of strategic plans. This took 4 years, during which the conservancy undertook a series of small projects which demonstrated their expertise and ability to handle the overall restoration effort. This Master Plan was directed to all the communities that live around the park. It was important to the ultimate success in that it provided enough information about what was to be done that a number of local organizations decided to back the Conservancy.

In the beginning the Conservancy found that when restoration projects were completed, if they didn't maintain them, the restoration

would soon fall into disrepair. Now, on-going maintenance is a part of every project.

In order to facilitate accountability, the park has been divided into 49 zones, each with an accountable manager.

While the Conservancy remains true to the original Olmsted concepts, it tries to keep the park feeling “fresh”. At the entrances the visitors are “wowed” with beauty and educated with information as to what’s going on. Members are invited to openings. Useful projects are given wide publicity. There is an active membership program, and credit is given to all the “movers.” Let them take the credit while making sure the public knows that the Conservancy is doing a great job.. Sharing the limelight lets people take ownership.

There’s always a tension about large events. In making program decisions the management tries to apply a consistent message as to what the park stands for. They have a rule to never leave the Commissioner, or any legislator, in the lurch.

A number of advocacy groups: dog walkers, joggers, woodlands interests, etc., are sponsored by the Conservancy. These groups enable them to stay in close touch with users. One problem is the continuing need for increasing the local constituency. It’s a challenge to get to the daily visitors, who benefit the most from what the Conservancy does, to become active members and financial supporters.

GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

The public advocacy group that Amy Meyer co-founded in 1970, and which remains in operation today, is the People for a Golden Gate National Recreation Area. From a modest government proposal for turning over a few military properties for park use, today’s Golden Gate National Recreation Area incorporates 75,000 acres of former military sites, coastline, and multiple types of public and formerly private properties. Key to the

process was having both strong public leadership, exemplified by its first superintendent, Bill Whalen, but also an independent advocacy group that never stopped expanding the vision of what the recreation area could be.

Amy Meyer and William Whalen then discussed the evolution and operation of the park.

In the 1960’s there was a federal program for disposing of excess military bases, including several at the Golden Gate which are now all part of the park. People for the GGNRA won the endorsement of 70 organizations, most in the San Francisco Bay Area but including national groups such as the Sierra Club and the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA). Support was built from the local to the national level and developed in a variety of ways, including an advertising campaign.

When the GG National Recreation Area came into being as a National Park in 1972, it was a new kind of park for the National Park Service, one of the first major parks in and next to a city. The organizers were pushed to start operations rapidly, before public input could take place. Bill Whalen, the first Director, realized the importance of broad based public support and the need for visionary people to make it happen.

His first step was to organize meetings for groups with slide shows and information. The organizers solicited ideas as to what people wanted in the new park. Many of these ideas were incorporated into the first master plan. After these meetings and several small visitor programs, people started getting interested and involved in the park. The role of the GG National Parks Conservancy, which is a park auxiliary organization, is different from that in Central Park. The GG Conservancy does not manage the park. It collaborates with the National Park Service on capital projects and funds them, and is the focal point for private fundraising. They have found that private citizens won’t give for infrastructure

improvement. Citizens expect the government to do that work. They prefer to give both capital and operating expenses for specific programs and facilities.

The Conservancy expects its gifts to be maintained by the National Park Service but sometimes makes funding available to help.

COMMENTS ABOUT BUILDING A CONSTITUENCY

The Speakers directed their own experience to the challenges facing the Mall in Washington, D.C.

A new Conservancy for the National Mall will need to rapidly build a constituency, a base of involved, supportive citizens. The constituency needs a broad national base, and local citizens are also important.

A key perception, which needs changing, is that the Mall is known for its memorials and museums, but not for itself -- the open space. Building up a broad perception of the iconic nature of the Mall should start at once. We need to clearly convey what this open space means to our democracy.

This constituency can be built through a public relations campaign but also through programs that carry the message and attract both local citizens as well as people across the country.

The National Mall needs to become a national icon as well known as Independence Hall, the Statue of Liberty, and the Golden Gate. Right now, the Mall is not known as a landscape masterpiece like Central Park.

The Conservancy needs to make a clear statement of its purposes and what citizens are being asked to support.

The speakers suggested some basic constituency building concepts:

- Get people from every Congressional district to care about the Mall, to have a stake in the mall;

- People from organizations in DC have to realize that they have a stake in the Mall;
- Develop a list of well-known potential advocates.

In order to make this happen:

- Build up the national perception that the Mall is a place to celebrate the nation's history as well as to share grievances;
- Develop a program for courting major institutional stakeholders and a program to invite their active participation;
- Get environmental, civic, and historic preservation organizations involved;
- Involve the Mayor, the Council and regional officials. Share the limelight whenever possible, particularly with elected officials;
- Involve school children locally and nationally -- ownership comes from being active;
- Constantly let the public know what's happening in the park. Get citizens to take ownership by becoming involved.

COMMENTS ABOUT LONG RANGE MASTER PLANNING.

The first thing the Central Park Conservancy did was to develop a 20 year master plan which looked back to the Original Olmsted and Vaux plan as a model. This reassured the nearby small stakeholders about what the Conservancy was going to do. It allowed them to find a place in the action. (Actually the first step was to raise the money to do the master plan). Showing completed projects, early on, also helped.

At Golden Gate, the National Park Service was pushed to start operating before planning. At that time the NPS had little experience involving the public in planning. Bill Whalen knew the value of public involvement. He reached out to the public through 100 organization meetings and, with the Parks Advisory Commission, took 4 years to evolve

a 20 year plan. That plan has held for over two decades.

The city of Washington, citizens and officials, needs to be involved in the planning for the Mall. This plan needs to be a plan “to stir our blood.”

COMMENTS ABOUT STRATEGY

- Step one: Create a grand vision. Make this planning highly public, go to schools and community centers. Hold a charrette. Encourage design submissions, involve kids. Get the Mayor involved. Then write up the plan. Don't rush it. It might well take several years.
- Step two: Build a constituency for the Mall across the country and in the city of Washington.
- Step three: Request a Congressional resolution backing the plan.
- Step four: Implement the plan through managing a series of 2-5 year strategic plans and publicize the projects to build additional support.

COMMENTS CONCERNING PUBLIC EDUCATION ABOUT THE MALL

The Mall needs definition as an iconic park. Some mistake it for a shopping center! It is not just a space filled with museums and memorials. A public service ad campaign and other methods could be undertaken to inform the public of the true nature of the Mall. Understand that the general public does not see the Mall as a landmark public space. Involve groups which are capable of carrying the message to the rest of the nation. Find a way to involve national and local government representatives. Allow them to take credit and ownership.

COMMENTS ABOUT RAISING MONEY

Central Park and Golden Gate both use public and private funding. The National Mall will also need both. Maintenance requires a consistent flow of funds so a reliable government source is desirable. But, full dependence on government maintenance funding can lead to low quality maintenance, as this item seems to be the first element to be cut.

A means of insuring an adequate flow of federal government funds is to develop an effective lobby to all the members of the Congress. Amy Meyer suggested developing a base of support in every congressional district. Congress needs to be convinced that the Conservancy is a reliable partner. Transferring power has to be viewed in a positive light.

Private funding can't be normally be used for infrastructure improvements. The best solution is to make long term maintenance funding a basic component of each gift. Some donors like to have projects names for themselves and naming capital structures or projects needs careful control.

On January 26, two days before the forum was held, the National Park Service announced creation of the Trust for the National Mall, a private group that has signed a partnership agreement with the Park Service to raise money for maintenance of the Mall. Proposed projects to be funded by the Trust include restoration of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool and of the pond at Constitution Gardens. The Trust is dedicated solely to fund-raising for the Park Service. We welcome their efforts to help care for the Mall.

The Mall Conservancy Initiative is different from the Trust because it is a planning and advocacy initiative. Fundraising may only become a goal at the end of the process, once a comprehensive plan is in place; national and local constituencies have been developed; and Congress has passed any necessary legislation for the Mall's protection.

CONCLUSION

As the forum ended, the audience was reminded of the follow-up public workshops that have been planned for the coming months: (in Feb. 2004 an additional workshop was added as #4 – The Mall and a National Constituency; Stewardship became #5)

- Workshop 1: Design and Planning
- Workshop 2: The Mall as Part of the City of Washington

- Workshop 3: The Mall and the Visitor
- Workshop 4: Stewardship

Attendees at the forum included representatives of the National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution, the Architect of the Capitol, the National Capital Planning Commission, the Commission of Fine Arts, the federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the former Secretary of Resources for the State of California.

This synopsis was assembled by W. Kent Cooper from notes taken by him, George Peabody, Courtney Lyons-Garcia, and Judy Scott Feldman, and edited by the panelists.

THE NATIONAL MALL CONSERVANCY INITIATIVE

Workshop #1 The Mall: Planning and Design Monday, May 3, 2004

Don Hawkins AIA (architect and historian) and Catherine Nagel (Executive Director, City Parks Alliance and National Association for Olmsted Parks) were the moderators of this event.

The workshop began with an abbreviated PowerPoint chronology of the development of the Mall, the Evolving “Sacred Precinct.”

While the Mall as we know it today seems to be molded in a tradition of Renaissance formality, there remains a strong humanistic underpinning originally given it by Pierre L’Enfant in his 1791 plan for the nation’s capital. L’Enfant celebrated the newly formed constitutional structure of a separated Executive and Legislature, and set the city gracefully in a bowl tipped towards the Potomac River surrounded by low hills which formed visual boundaries for the new city. At the core of L’Enfant’s plan was the location of the Capitol on the high ground, a mile-long broad avenue tying it to the President’s House, and two lineal open spaces, one opening west from the Capitol, and the second opening to the south from the President’s House. At the intersection of these two vistas, he placed a memorial to the first President, for whom the city was named. Today’s Mall is the descendent of the L’Enfant concept of a tree-lined pedestrian boulevard framed by cultural and diplomatic structures.

The McMillan plan of 1901-02 converted the Mall -- which by the turn of the century had been developed in the romantic landscape tradition -- into a formal Beaux Arts composition, a complete work of art and an idea which rapidly captured the national enthusiasm for grandeur. The length of the Mall was doubled by incorporating part of the reclaimed tidal flats of the Potomac. The

ideas for improving the north-south cross axis never fully materialized.

But the Mall we know today did not develop easily, or without significant changes. The terminal feature at the west end, envisioned at one time by architect Daniel Burnham as the memorial to General/President Grant, became the Lincoln Memorial, and the terminal feature at the south end, envisioned as a memorial to heroes of the Revolution or to Theodore Roosevelt, languished and eventually became the Jefferson Memorial. Many of the landscape features proposed by the McMillan design team also fell by the wayside, particularly the elaborate garden setting for the Washington Monument. Nonetheless, the McMillan Plan guided the development for close to a century, a testimony to its design excellence and political timeliness.

While throughout the 19th and early 20th Centuries the Mall was occasionally used as the site for major exhibitions and protests, in the mid 20th century it became the focal point for the civil rights and anti-war movements. The Lincoln Memorial, originally dedicated to the preservation of the union took on an additional layer of meaning as the shrine of the Great Emancipator, the site for major civil rights events.

In 1965 the NPS retained SOM (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill) to prepare an updated Master Plan for the Mall. This plan attempted to guide development and restore the Mall’s formal monumentality, while also attempting to lessen the impact of increasing automobile traffic congestion by burying some of the Mall’s cross streets. The 1997 NCPC Legacy Plan -- which started out as an effort to locate sites for new memorials -- tried to extend the monumentality of the Mall into the city by re-

envisioning North and South Capitol Streets as grand avenues. One of the criticisms of this plan is that it did not deal adequately with the reality of the Capital City at the end of the 20th Century.

During the 1980's another phenomena was burgeoning, an era of new memorials unleashed by the construction and success of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and rapidly followed by the FDR Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, and finally the WWII Memorial. At the end of the 20th Century, NCPC proposed, and Congress endorsed, the creation of a "Reserve" for the core area of the Mall, and declared a moratorium on any new memorial, museum, or visitor centers. Congress, following NCPC, declared the Mall a substantially "completed work of civic art". Thus the increasingly crowded, but vibrant, Mall -- "the peoples front lawn" -- was destined to become a museum. Lost in this act was the basic concept of continuous adaptation which had marked the Mall's first two centuries.

With this preamble, the participants in the workshop began their discussion of the implications of this planning history for meeting today's problems.

I. WHAT DOES THE MALL MEAN TO AMERICANS?

The Mall means many things: vistas and openness, places for recreation and education, sites for gatherings and protests, memorializing and remembering. But the more fundamental purpose of the Mall is to express in landscape, our ideals, freedom, and the institutions of democracy. The recent development of a series of veterans and war memorials has moved the balance of meaning towards signifying war as the core purpose of our democracy. War memorials are intransigent, but as generations pass, their relevance fades unless they somehow speak to core values. To be suitable for placement on the Mall, a new project must reach to express the fundamental purposes of the core

It is public usage, not physical planning, that has endowed the Mall with the strong emotional content which is so keenly felt today. The McMillan Plan, inspired by Versailles and other European models, has been Americanized. Visitors often feel that they 'own' the Mall. In peoples' minds, the Mall includes the surrounding buildings, not just the open green allée. The museums add a sense of being 'America's Attic'; the adjacent government bureaus and departments are tangible evidence of the sometimes faceless federal bureaucracy, our democracy at work.

The Mall can never be a "completed work of civic art". Our democracy will continue to change, to evolve. The Mall will continue to be the gathering place for Americans to meet, celebrate and protest. It will change too in response to its usage.

2. HAS THE TIME COME TO EXPAND THE PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE MALL?

The design premise of the original Mall was to express, in landscape, the core principles, as well as the grandeur, of our democracy. The McMillan Plan expanded the original vision by enlarging the Mall's boundaries as well as the history told there, while also increasing the parkland dedicated to recreation. The major change in the meaning of the Mall in the 20th century has been the evolution from openness and grandeur to collective emotional content.

If the Mall is to grow beyond its existing borders, the obvious places for physical expansion are East and West Potomac Park. How can the Mall's emotional charge be put into these areas? Perhaps other areas -- North and South Capitol Streets, or the Anacostia Waterfront -- could participate meaningfully in projecting these core principles.

3. HOW IS THE MALL TO BE USED?

Workshop participants responded to the explosion of memorials on the Mall in recent years with many strong comments about how they have cluttered the physical landscape, affected public uses of the open space. They questioned whether the Mall should be used for future memorials. “We’ve moved from celebrating our values to memorializing war.” noted one person. This is the underlying cause for the Congressional moratorium. Do we wish to stop all memorials or should we re-frame them, creating criteria or guidelines that would put existing and future memorials, and their programs, in a context of the larger core principles?

Some questioned how existing memorials could be “redeemed” to allow more interaction and not be isolated objects in the landscape. How could we designate their public use? This has already happened with some memorials. The Lincoln Memorial, for example, memorializes a person who united the country to preserve the union, but it also has become an icon for the civil rights movement. It has served as a stage for innumerable gatherings. The temple form, and the grand flight of stairs, seems to work well for both uses.

And there is the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which points to the larger issue of the tragic fracture of credibility between our nation’s leaders and our youth, but which has, to date, been used largely as a funerary experience. Current Park Service policy is to erect chain fences to mark off the “sacred” zone around this Memorial (and other veterans memorials) and restrict public access and movement. However, this large amphitheater shaped open space might be used selectively and appropriately for occasional services, concerts or ceremonies that could broaden the memorial’s meaning and use. In the process, a variety of public uses could refresh the honor and memory due to those who fell in that tragic conflict. Policy shifts to permit – and even encourage – such uses would allow us to realize the potential of each memorial for living activity.

The suggestion was made of another way of controlling clutter: designating portions of the open space for specific uses -- think of Hyde Park corner in London. An example of such thinking might be to consider the secondary axis of the Mall system, the north-south vista from the White House. The original designation of the area adjoining the White House grounds on the south was “the President’s Park.” Now known as the Ellipse, this area has in recent years served mainly as a discrete parking area for government employees, and a site for the annual National Christmas Tree and pageant.

This space might be re-designated as a memorial to the Presidency and made the site for future presidential memorials (perhaps solving a recurrent problem). A new kind of design control might be developed for this area to prevent “project inflation” of individual presidential memorials. At the same time, an underground garage in the center of the Ellipse could replace the lost street parking, and add some spaces for visitors.

4. HOW SHOULD WE MEASURE THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OF THE MALL?

The workshop discussion of this question centered on the idea of environmental sustainability. Using this framework, we would explore the Mall’s capacity: how much activity can it sustain. There was a suggestion to study the Mall resources scientifically and set measurable standards for both physical space and ideology. To do this would require thinking about how we would like to Mall to function in future generations, and to set standards that would permit long term health. For example, one could measure the recovery rate from repeated users -- how much the soil and turf was being compacted. This approach could set the basis for future decision-making and avoiding fights by competing interests. It was noted that Congress is not looking to fill up the space, but rather for management guidance, and that

this approach might prove to be a useful role for the Conservancy.

5. HOW TO DEAL WITH SECURITY ISSUES

It was agreed that security measures should be part of a master planning effort and not implemented as a separate action.

6. WHAT KIND OF MASTER PLAN SHOULD BE DEVELOPED?

The discussion focused on the use of incremental policy changes regarding public uses rather than on major physical changes (such as the McMillan Plan used) to shape the future. These revised policies could become the core concepts for a new Master Plan for the Mall.

7. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A CONSERVANCY?

At this time there is not a single entity responsible for the future planning and maintenance of the Mall as a whole. The conservancy could:

- Oversee the preparation of a master plan, working closely with the many stakeholders involved in the Mall;
- Keep the plan updated in meeting new needs and challenges;
- Involve citizens -- both local and nationwide -- in understanding the role of the National Mall in maintaining the health of our democracy.

THE NATIONAL MALL CONSERVANCY INITIATIVE

Workshop #2 The Mall and the City of Washington Monday, May 10, 2004

Marshall Purnell FAIA (architect and planner) and Laura Richards (attorney and community activist) were moderators of this event.

The discussion is collected and edited here into five broad themes and concludes with a list of likes and dislikes. The term “DC Residents” as used here includes residents of the entire metropolitan region.

1. HOW DC RESIDENTS VIEW THE MALL, ITS USES, AND ITS PURPOSE

DC residents don’t go to the Mall very often. Difficulty getting to the Mall, and the lack of parking there, are hindering usage. Very few bike trails are linked to the Mall. Dropping off family members by car is an option, but there’s no place to park and wait, have a cup of coffee, read a book. There ought to be a large parking lot under the Mall. When there is an important event -- fireworks, protests -- residents go knowing that it’s going to be a hassle.

Many DC residents don’t feel connected; it isn’t ‘their’ Mall. It’s a place for other people -- especially tourists -- to enjoy. The Mall is a democratic place of Americana. Visitors go there to experience that feeling or to learn. Events of local interest don’t often take place on the Mall. The perception is that the museums are static, very little changes or is different from week to week. You hear people saying “been there, done that.”

But many people who use the Mall as a park on weekends -- for recreational sports, sitting on the grass, baseball -- must be locals, even though the it isn’t within easy walking distance from residential areas. It’s the locals

who need the parking, the tourists expect to use tour buses and transit.

It’s very hard to have a good time on the Mall when it rains. Shelter is difficult to find. In the winter, the Mall can be forbidding. The damp wind off the Potomac River is piercing. In the summer, even on humid days, it is hot, and dry, and dusty. The open Mall landscape lacks shade; the shady side panels lack places to sit and rest. And there is a formality about the Mall that is overbearing. It’s not like Haines Point or Rock Creek where we feel like we can fire-up a grill. We seldom make a spontaneous visit to the Mall. The parking is just too difficult. But sometimes we ask ourselves if we are missing opportunities to participate in our nation’s history by not visiting the Mall more often.

2. LACK OF COORDINATION BETWEEN LOCAL AND FEDERAL INTERESTS

Why hasn’t the City taken more ownership of the Mall? The City is missing a good bet on capturing tourists, and keeping tourist dollars in town. The City doesn’t promote either Mall events to its residents, or DC events and opportunities to tourists. We definitely need a better partnership between the City and federal planning offices to initiate projects that will encourage local use of the Mall in new and different ways.

In part, the coordination problem stems from the fact that each museum has its own administration and there is no policy for coordinating or reconciling differences in usage, or for spreading the word about what is going on. The museums are fortress-like bastions with little connection to the out-of-

doors. Few facilities in the open spaces of the Mall are designed to attract people. The riverfront is not well developed. Perhaps most important is the need for the City of Washington to take initiative about the Mall.

3. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ISSUES

Looking at a colored map of DC clearly demonstrates the enormous importance of the “green” spaces, those under National Park Service control. But this federal agency – the official steward of the Mall -- is struggling to maintain the parks under its mandate. It is under-funded and under-staffed. NPS policy is aimed more at using available resources to support the tourist visitor than to support the needs and interests of local residents. Often it adopts strategies that are not fully consistent making the Mall an educational and comfortable visitor experience. Increased funding would probably ameliorate some of these problems, but might not change NPS policy geared toward tourism.

Of course, there isn’t a single organization having the authority, resources, and dedication to make the Mall an outstanding visitor experience for all categories of visitors. Is this a role the Conservancy might play?

4. SECURITY ISSUES

The beauty and accessibility of the Mall is rapidly being ruined by security efforts aimed at protecting our high-profile areas. Threat analysis seems to be driven by persons who fail to realize that planning for all terrorism threats is impossible. Most visitors are not staying away from the Mall because of concerns about security. But long lines form at museum checkpoints, damaging the value of the experience and the openness and beauty of the Mall. Security systems should not be imposed just because we can’t think of what else to do, yet feel compelled to do something in order to feel more “secure.”

5. NEW VISIONS FOR THE MALL

We need to re-imagine the Mall. During the 20th century, the temporary buildings came down and the Mall was finally opened up. Now there is room for a million citizens. Where else can we stand and be reminded so clearly what it means to be an American, and that our democracy is alive and well? At all costs we must preserve this openness. We must resist more WWII memorials.

One of the more interesting things that has happened recently is the MLK plaque being placed on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, on the spot where Dr. King stood for his I Have a Dream speech. A little gesture like this adds layers of history without contributing to the clutter of the grand space.

Nighttime events such as the Memorial Day concerts and the Fourth of July celebrations show how popular evening use can be, particularly during the summer months. We need to develop more such events. Could Metro be free for local citizens on such occasions? Could museums take turns staying open into the evening hours?

There is no place in the city where a Mall visitor -- local resident or tourist -- can go to get the big picture. A Mall visitors center is needed. (The possible role of the new City Museum was not discussed, nor is it clear that the City Museum is set up to fill that role.) The now-vacant Arts and Industries Building, a remnant of America's first centennial, could become a visitors center for the Mall, a place to meet, be oriented, and find shelter. Its location is central enough to tie into the route of the Downtown Circulator, which could connect to remote parking.

We need the Mall to be visionary in spirit, exciting and hopeful. We must make certain that it is a broad and collective vision. We could probably expand the Mall geographically to include adjacent land – for example, East and West Potomac Park, or

even the Anacostia Waterfront – and add monuments and attractions that reinforced the vision of democracy. Could this be done without diluting the Mall’s core meaning? Allowing for expansion would alleviate pressures for overbuilding on the existing open space.

6. LIKES AND DISLIKES ABOUT THE MALL.

The workshop ended with a summary of likes and dislikes:

I like...

- The beauty of the grand open vistas, with monumental focal points and museums, and open spaces teeming with people
- The mix of people enjoying the Mall as tourists, residents, workers, on a day-to-day basis
- The profound sense of being an American and the ideals of American

identity that being on the Mall conjures up

- The open spaces used for large events like the Folk-Life Festival, Boy Scouts, Black family reunions, and of course the Fourth of July celebration and the “marches”
- The opportunities to learn about our history, and sometimes even participate in making it
- And everything is free.

I dislike...

- The lack of convenient parking, restrooms, shelter, informal places to gather and interesting places to eat
- The poor maintenance, dead grass, snow fences, ugly security barriers, and anything remotely like retail
- Blocked vistas and endless construction
- The NFL Day on the Mall
- The long lines of tour buses, often with motors idling.

THE NATIONAL MALL CONSERVANCY INITIATIVE

Workshop #3 The Mall and the Visitor Monday, May 19, 2004

Theresa Belpulsi (DC Convention and Tourism Corp.) and Tom Philipose (Guild of Professional Tour Guides) were the moderators for this workshop.

Washington, D.C. is the destination of approximately 17 million visitors each year. The primary activity of these visitors is visiting historic places and museums. Approximately 6 million out-of-town visitors will come to the Mall. To this total must be added the tens of thousands local residents who visit the Mall numerous times during the year for education, celebration, recreation, or protest.

The Workshop focused on discussing two basic questions:

- How to make the Mall visitor friendly for all visitors;
- How best to educate international visitors about our history.

The discussion is organized here into seven topical areas.

1. MAKING THE OPEN SPACES MORE USER FRIENDLY

The Mall itself, the open space, lacks development as a user-friendly place. The National Park Service doesn't plan for ways of capturing visitor interest about the Mall, but rather concentrates on interpreting memorials and also on recreation. The east end of the Mall lacks interpretation by the Smithsonian and the Architect of the Capitol. There seems to be little coordinating among the various government agencies about how to plan for public use and enliven the Mall space between the museums.

The open spaces are not developed with adequate restrooms, weather shelters, shady arbors, or interesting places to eat. The Mall is seen as being too formal. A better balance between visitor amenities and flexible wide-open space for important mega events needs to be developed.

Security concerns are restricting the use of visitor facilities located within each of the museums. A system of small kiosks needs to be developed to provide the missing restrooms, weather shelters, perhaps security personnel, and food service. These might be multi-use facilities. They could be spread out throughout the open spaces. Small kiosks would provide better service and be less obtrusive. They might operate seasonally.

Who would develop and operate such structures? Who would pay for the pageants, mimes, or evening activities which would add life and interest to the Mall? Is this something that a Conservancy could undertake? It will take strong programs such as these to humanize the Mall, and to enrich its landscape features.

2. SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS ON THE MALL

Security seems to be here to stay. Long waiting lines at museums call for the development of educational and amusement activities for those periods of waiting. This is in the tradition of Worlds' Fairs. Another device might be to issue timed entrance tickets for major attractions. This would need a central control point, perhaps a central visitors' center. A greater degree of central planning and control is warranted in order to lessen the negative features of long security

lines. We need to be careful that security doesn't become a reflection of collective fear, or a lack of nerve.

3. CENTRAL PLANNING AND FINANCING OPTIONS

The need for increased central management is required to help the Mall serve the general public more effectively. A private organization may be the most effective means of achieving this goal since it would not be encumbered by a past history of involvement with the Mall.

The NPS has recently formed a partnership with a new organization known as the Trust for the National Mall. This organization is chartered to raise funds for a variety of major maintenance projects. However this organization was never intended to undertake planning and/or management functions.

There are two other functional areas for which new policy initiatives are needed: How to properly acknowledge sponsorship, particularly involving large gifts, and how to control advertising.

4. VISITOR ORIENTATION ON THE MALL

Visitor orientation is intended to make visits to the Mall more educational and inspirational. The Workshop addressed this issue with a number of suggestions.

- First of all, orientation ought to focus on the Mall itself, the open space, not simply the memorials and museums
- A new series of printed guidebooks is needed- highly flexible, available in several foreign languages, and prioritized for a variety of visit lengths: half day, whole day, several days, perhaps with options for special interests such as design, social history, human interest (pivotal personalities), and suitable for different age groups. These probably would be sold, or coupled with a hotel reservation etc.

Who would undertake the task of designing and publishing these? A Conservancy could take on this project.

- But printed guidebooks remain static, and the Mall is an ever-changing environment. How can daily or weekly changes in the Mall, its programs and sites be best transmitted to visitors? Central Park, New York, uses signboards at the entrances. The Mall, however, is a porous environment with no discrete entrances. A suggestion was made that a daily feature in the Washington Post or on the WEB, or a dial-up answering machine (with program options) might be utilized to provide visitors with up-to-date information. New wireless technologies could be effective means of reaching visitors.
- Another category of printed material is a series of lesson plans for use by teachers, chaperons and guides before bringing a group to the Mall. This material should focus on what it is that a visit to the Mall might produce in the minds and memories of visitors.
- More information is needed about what visitors are interested in as well as what they got out of a Mall visit. Perhaps university students might undertake such surveys as a class project.
- In the past, NPS has taken the position that sponsorship -- let alone advertising -- on printed material to be handed out on the Mall, is forbidden. Perhaps this policy could be reviewed with the objective of making more material readily available to visitors

5. TRANSPORTATION ON AND TO THE MALL

The Downtown BID (Business Improvement District) has purchased 27 buses to start operating, at five-minute intervals, on three routes which traverse the Mall. These routes

connect the Mall to the Convention Center, Downtown, and to the SW Waterfront area. They do not provide interpretive information, and thus do not compete with the Tourmobile which circles the Mall. Area. The fare for riding the Circulator will be 50-75 cents (as opposed to \$15-\$20 for a day-long Tourmobile pass). More routes will follow.

6. BUILDING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORT

The need for a single coordinating organization to take responsibility for the planning and operations on Mall was mentioned on several occasions during the Workshop. In particular public involvement through a well-organized and financed organization was seen as the appropriate solution to many current problems.

NPS's Trust for the National Mall does not satisfy that need, since its purpose is solely to raise funds for maintenance. It was not intended to have a role in building and coordinating public participation.

Two areas where public participation in developing new policies might prove very beneficial to the future functioning of the Mall are: How to properly acknowledge sponsorship and if and/or how to use and control commercial advertising effectively. These are both issues that a single publicly organized group, such as a Conservancy, could address.

7. THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

American history is a frequent subject in secondary and higher education classes, but one properly interpreted visit to the National Mall could be worth, or reinforce, a year's worth of "book learning." The majesty of the Mall's concept of our democracy, as can be readily observed on the Mall, coupled with well-placed visits to museums, memorials and monuments offers an opportunity for a rich learning experience. But the key is the quality of the interpretation. An untutored tourist can walk through a forest without sensing the complex ecology which lies all around. An untutored trip through the Mall, likewise, can leave a visitor unimpressed, and perhaps frustrated rather than excited and inspired.

So we need strategies designed to open the eyes and minds of even the most casual visitor. While trips may last from a half to several days, the most important lesson to be learned is that the Mall is our nation's primary, set-aside place for experiencing our democracy, for meeting, learning, celebrating and protesting. One can experience these things without waiting in a single security line at a museum. It is critically important that we find the means to enrich this out-of-doors visitor experience and to provide the learning tools we will need.



Evolution of the Mall's Growth



In the **L'Enfant Plan of 1791** (above left), the Mall (in yellow and red) extended from the U.S. Capitol to the Washington Monument at what was, at the time, the banks of the Potomac River. The 400-foot-wide tree-lined "Grand Avenue" connected, physically and symbolically, the Capitol to the Washington Monument and the White House and President's Park. The kite-shaped **McMillan Plan of 1901-1902** (above right) extended the Mall westward and southward over former riverbeds to create new public parkland and sites for the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials.



Congress amended the Commemorative Works Act in 2003 (Title II of P.L. 108-26) and imposed a **moratorium** in the "**Reserve**" portion of the Mall (outlined in red in the official map, above left). The Reserve includes the White House, Lincoln Memorial, and Jefferson Memorial, areas under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, but not other parts of the Mall -- the Capitol or the Smithsonian museums and lands -- outside NPS control. Future memorials or museums will be permitted in Area I, adjacent to the Mall, or Area II, the rest of the city.

But the Mall can also continue to evolve and grow beyond its current boundaries, as it did 100 years ago. The McMillan Plan expanded the L'Enfant Mall (in red, above right) to more than double its size (orange). Today, contiguous land (yellow) could be considered for an extended "Mall": the area encompassed in "Area I;" the South Capitol Street corridor already under study for revitalization by the National Capital Planning Commission; and East Potomac Park and Haines Point southeast of the Jefferson Memorial.

NATIONAL MALL CONSERVANCY INITIATIVE

The National Coalition to Save Our Mall is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) citizens education organization founded in 2000 and supported by contributions from hundreds of citizens from across the country.

For more information about the Coalition and about the National Mall Conservancy Initiative, contact:

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