

National Mall Coalition

(formerly National Coalition to Save Our Mall)

www.nationalmallcoalition.org

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Advancing the Legacy of the National Mall through Public Policy and Innovative Ideas

The National Mall speaks of who we are as a people; it tells the ever-evolving American story and is a living national treasure for the people that will never be complete. The National Mall Coalition (formerly

2015 Annual Report

National Mall Coalition

*"Advancing the legacy of the National Mall
through public policy and innovative ideas"*

March 2016

Dear Friends of the National Mall:

This past year was a pivotal year for us as we celebrated our 15th anniversary and put in place the groundwork for our next 15 years. We changed our name to National Mall Coalition – from National Coalition to Save Our Mall -- to better reflect our collaborative work and priorities for enhancing the Mall, not just saving it.

In addition to our name change, the Board of the Coalition reaffirmed our focus on three main goals.

- First, "Advancing the legacy of the National Mall" means we will continue to educate the public, the media, and Congress about the need to protect the brilliant legacy of the 1791 L'Enfant Plan and 1901-1902 McMillan Commission Plan and to create a new visionary plan to meet modern needs and allow the Mall to continue to perform as the stage for American democracy throughout the 21st century.
- Second, we collaborate with individuals, other nonprofit and civic groups, and government entities to promote thoughtful planning and public use policies that ensure the Mall's continued vitality.
- Third, we continue to take the initiative to engage the public to develop innovative ideas that fill gaps and show how comprehensive, forward-looking planning can lead to exciting and resilient solutions to the needs of the American public on the Mall for generations to come.

We designed our new website – nationalmallcoalition.org – to emphasize these themes and show how we are putting these goals into action. This streamlined website is the basis for our 2015 annual report.

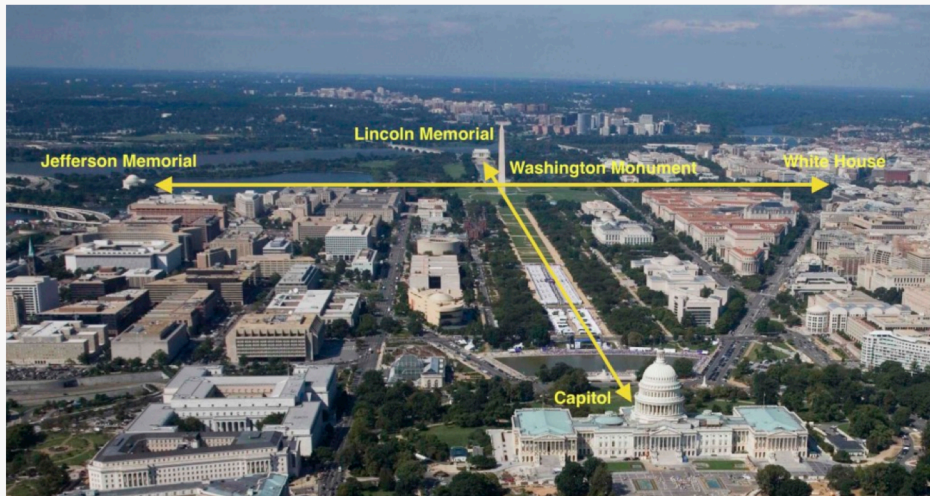
Sincerely,



Judy Scott Feldman, Ph.D.
Founding Member and Chair

“ADVANCING THE LEGACY”

Legacy



The majestic symbolic landscape of the National Mall, a harmonious marriage of architecture, landscape, and public open space, is the legacy of two visionary plans

A Visionary Planning Legacy

The National Mall in Washington, DC, is the legacy of two brilliant visionary plans that have stood the test of time: **the 1791 L'Enfant Plan and the 1901-1902 McMillan Commission Plan**. The underlying **planning principles of the L'Enfant and McMillan legacy** are embodied in the geometry of the Mall symbolic axis (click on diagram to enlarge).

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Our new website explains the significance of the visionary plans -- the 1791 L'Enfant Plan and 1901-1902 McMillan Commission Plan -- that established the purpose, design geometry, and symbolism that are the basis of the beauty and identity of the National Mall as a symbol of America's democracy.

To protect that legacy while also allowing the Mall to continue to evolve, we continue to advocate formation of a new McMillan-type commission to create a **new visionary plan for the Mall in the 21st century, a plan that recognizes the Mall's modern role as a stage for democracy** in the life of the country and the capital.

“THROUGH PUBLIC POLICY”

A Unified Plan

The Need for a 3rd Century Mall Plan



Architect of the Capitol, and other Mall managers plan only for their own jurisdictions, not for the Mall as the unified landscape it was intended to be.



Who's in charge of the Mall? Eight different agencies manage different parts of the Mall, leading to piecemeal development. [CLICK to enlarge.](#)

In its clean, majestic sweep from the U.S. Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial and from the White House to the Jefferson Memorial, the **National Mall celebrates the democratic ideals on which our nation was founded**, and has been a gathering place for We the People for more than 200 years. Yet since Congress declared the National Mall a “substantially completed work of civic art” in 2003, it has endured piecemeal growth and environmental effects that threaten the vitality and sustainability of this national treasure. The Smithsonian, the National Park Service, the

To protect the integrity of the Mall and ensure its capacity to grow intelligently with our ever-evolving democracy, **we need a new, comprehensive long-term plan for the “3rd Century Mall,”** building on the visionary tradition of the original 1791 L'Enfant Plan (1st Century Mall) and the 1901-1902 McMillan Commission Plan (2nd Century Mall).

The National Mall Coalition has asked Congress to **establish an independent, McMillan-type commission** that will bring all Mall constituencies to the table to create a unified plan for the **Mall in its 3rd Century**.

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Is the Mall a “completed work of civic art,” as Congress declared in 2003? Serious environmental problems including flooding threaten our national museums and public buildings but there is no unified policy or plan to address these matters. What happens when eight different federal agencies plan for the Mall but no one entity coordinates? These questions go to two of a host of policy matters that inhibit forward-looking, comprehensive planning for the Mall and need to be reconsidered and corrected to ensure the Mall continues to thrive in the 21st century.

In 2015 we continued to work to improve and strengthen public policies by participating in the public consultation process for projects including the Smithsonian’s controversial South Mall Campus Plan, which calls for destroying the popular Enid Haupt Garden next to the Smithsonian Castle, which we, along with preservation groups and Mall lovers, think is a grave mistake and should be reconsidered.

“AND INNOVATIVE IDEAS”

Innovation

Engaging the Public in Developing Creative Solutions

The Mall faces **serious challenges that require creative and comprehensive solutions**: improving resilience; connecting the Mall to the surrounding community; creating new space for future museums and modern mega-events such as the National Book Festival; flood control to protect the museums and cultural resources; improving visitor amenities and circulation. These problems are not addressed in any serious or comprehensive way by the Smithsonian, the National Park Service, and other Mall management entities.

The National Mall Coalition has been working to fill this gap in long-range planning by **engaging the public in brainstorming and proposing innovation solutions**. Read more **here**.



This June 2006 rainstorm caused devastating flooding to Mall area museums and public buildings. The threat is predicted to increase and intensify with climate change. But government is not responding, so the National Mall Coalition proposed a creative solution with the National Mall Underground.

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With at least 8 federal and DC agencies managing different portions of the Mall but no one entity to bring together all constituencies to plan for the Mall as a unified whole, serious Mall-wide threats such as flooding receive little attention. This is a gap the National Mall Coalition has attempted to fill.

The Coalition has stepped into this void since 2013 with our National Mall Underground floodwater cistern/parking garage solution. By marrying the needs and interests of all constituencies into one multi-purpose project, we were able to demonstrate innovative solutions both to the flood threat and to the problem of disjointed, uncoordinated piecemeal Mall planning. Read more at <https://www.nationalmallcoalition.org/innovation/resilience-to-ensure-the-future/>.

We consulted throughout the year with DC and federal agencies to build support for further developing this project.

Washingtonian Magazine featured the National Mall Underground in its April 2015 issue, naming it one of “6 Transportation Projects the Could Change Washington” and “a panacea for parking shortages, bus traffic, fossil-fuel burning, and flooding tucked beneath the Mall.”

MALL VISITOR RESOURCES & EDUCATION

MALL MAP AND GUIDE

Our National Mall: Stage for Our Democracy map and historical guide continues to be a popular resource for thousands of Mall visitors, available at Traveler's Aid desks at Dulles International Airport and Washington Reagan National Airport and some parks and hotels throughout the region. One side maps the entire Mall symbolic cross axis: the Capitol to the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial, and the White House to the Washington Monument and Jefferson Memorial. The other side tells the story of the Mall as the "Stage For Our Democracy" including Presidential Inaugurations and First Amendment events such as the 1963 March on Washington.



We provide this map – which we update with the latest new museums and bike share stations each year – free of charge for the purpose of educating the public about the National Mall and its crucial role in American Democracy and making visitors' tour of the Mall more informative and enjoyable.



In addition to providing numerous copies each year to school groups visiting the Mall, we provide them to businesses, conferences, and individuals seeking to enrich themselves and colleagues about the rich history so many Americans barely know or appreciate.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

NEW NATIONAL MALL COALITION WEBSITE

In 2015, we went online with our new website highlighting our new “National Mall Coalition” name and ongoing activities to advocating visionary planning for the Mall in the 21st century.

Our new website gives renewed emphasis to educating the public about Mall history, to explaining the legacy of the 1791 L’Enfant Plan and 1902 McMillan Commission Plan, and to documenting the threats to the Mall’s integrity as a historical symbolic landscape and public open space.

National Mall History

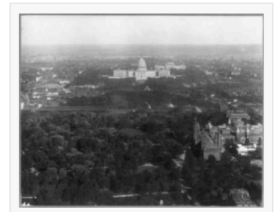
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Landscape Symbol of American Democracy

The history of the National Mall is a story of two brilliant plans that envisioned the Mall as a landscape symbol of American Democracy, of constant change and often neglect, and, in our own time, of the role of American citizens in shaping political and social change. The modern Mall is just the latest chapter in a long history that is in many ways as inspired, unpredictable, and regenerative as our ever-evolving democracy.

Beginnings in the Visionary 1791 L’Enfant Plan

The idea and design for the Mall originated in the 1791 L’Enfant Plan for the nation’s capital. That Plan, together with the 1902 McMillan Plan that updated and enlarged L’Enfant’s vision, remains today the historical blueprint for the capital and its centerpiece, the National Mall. Explore these plans in greater detail in [Resources](#).



This 1900 photo shows the Mall covered in trees and a train (see the white puffs) crossing on tracks in front of the Capitol. The original visionary L’Enfant Plan had been ignored and the new McMillan Plan would soon restore and expand L’Enfant’s vision for the Mall. Photo courtesy Library of Congress [CLICK to enlarge](#)



1791 L’Enfant Plan for the City of Washington. The Mall (green) was the symbolic heart of the L’Enfant’s plan for the capital.

President George Washington in 1791 commissioned Peter (Pierre)* L’Enfant, a Frenchman and engineer who had served under Washington during the American Revolution, to draw up a plan for the new seat of government for the United States. L’Enfant laid out the capital as a geographical embodiment of the newly ratified U.S. Constitution. The Capitol Building would be located on the highest spot, Jenkins Hill. The President’s House would occupy another hill a mile away. The centerpiece of L’Enfant’s vision was the Mall (area in green) connecting the Capitol and White House with a

MALL HISTORY TALKS AND TOURS

Coalition Chair Dr. Judy Scott Feldman continued in 2015 to make free presentations for educational groups and students. These presentations include in-depth discussion of the history of the Mall and current issues as well as ideas for the future developed as part of the Coalition’s 3rd Century initiative for Mall expansion, rejuvenation, and enhancement as a place to build civic awareness and participation.

2015 CONTRIBUTORS

The Coalition is deeply grateful to our grassroots supporters whose financial and pro-bono assistance are crucial to our success in 2015. Individual contributors are the backbone of our all-volunteer organization.

The Coalition's all-volunteer Board of Directors donated hundreds of hours of effort as well as financial support to forward our work throughout the year.

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

Gordon Binder

Betsy Bailey

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Mary Kay Murphy

Jim Nathanson

Ray Olson

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Roger Rihm

Ray Saikus

Lisa Scott

Jeremy Shambaugh

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Joseph West

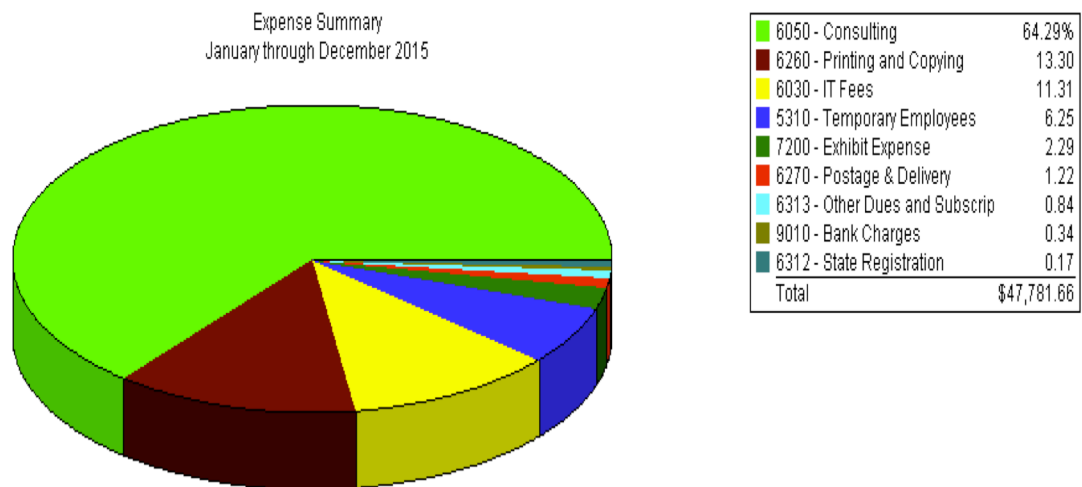
FINANCIAL REPORT

During 2015, the National Mall Coalition's all-volunteer Board focused our major efforts on developing our new website and on further designing and collaborating with government agencies on the National Mall Underground project. A new National Mall: Stage For Our Democracy edition was produced as well.

Costs for "Consulting" include one-time fees for service for Cost-Benefit study, Geothermal analysis, and Wall Street financial evaluation of the National Mall Underground project.

The Coalition spent no funds on fundraising or advertising costs.

Part-time staff include a website developer/manager and one administrative assistant.



National Mall Coalition

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Albert H. Small
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3rd Century Mall Advisors (established April 2006)

Gordon Binder
Senior Fellow
World Wildlife Fund

Amy Meyer
Co-chair, People for A Golden Gate National
Recreation Area

William K. Reilly
Former Administrator, EPA

The National Mall Coalition is grateful to all who have contributed their time, talent, resources, and financial support in 2015.

The National Mall Coalition, an all-volunteer citizens organization, is working to protect the integrity of our nation's premier civic space and stage for democracy and promote comprehensive, visionary planning for the Mall in its 3rd century.

The Coalition is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

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