

National Mall Coalition

www.nationalmallcoalition.org



2021 Annual Report

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

Dear Friends of the National Mall,

December 2021

2021 was a difficult and challenging year for the National Mall, for all Americans, and for the National Mall Coalition. The Mall, the “**Stage for American Democracy**,” came under attack. And sadly we lost two esteemed members of our Board of Directors as well as a champion at *The Washington Post*.

The Capitol building became the site of a terrifying attack on American democracy. On January 6th, thousands of enraged citizens attacked the Capitol in an attempt to prevent Congress from officially confirming the results of the 2020 election. The “Temple of Democracy” became a scene of violence and desecration. Metal fencing erected soon thereafter closed off the entire Capitol precinct to the public.

A different kind of attack on the vitality of the Mall came from Covid-19. The virus, which already had forced the closure of the Smithsonian and other museums in 2020, continued to wreak havoc. Mall activities, from sports to First Amendment activities, were limited or canceled. And now with the rise of the omicron version of Covid, restrictions and museum closures are once again causing disruptions as we move into the new year.

Despite the year of trauma and shut-downs, the National Mall Coalition has continued our work, participating in Mall-related public consultations from home via Zoom. We’ve been actively involved in virtual meetings and hearings for proposed new museums, renovations of Smithsonian museum buildings, new memorials, and our National Mall Underground flood control project. Our website became more than ever the focus of our outreach to the public, the media, and Congress.

We continue to advocate for an updated comprehensive, long-term plan for the Mall – the 3rd Century Mall – to advance the brilliant legacy of the 1791 L’Enfant Plan and 1901-2 McMillan Commission Plan into the 21st century.

As we have in the past, we welcome your ideas and suggestions, and your support.

Sincerely,



Judy Scott Feldman, Ph.D.
Founding Member and Chair
jfeldman@nationalmallcoalition.org

Public Outreach

National Mall Coalition
formerly National Coalition to Save Our Mall

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

The National Mall is the Stage for American Democracy. It's in need of a new plan and vision for the 3rd Century. Learn more by exploring our website to better understand the legacy of the visionary 1791 L'Enfant and 1902 McMillan plans, as well as the challenges we face and innovative ways we can solve them.

On the National Mall we celebrate who we are as Americans, our nation's founding ideals, and our civic responsibility to understand and champion the principles that sustain our democracy. Yet over the past decade, we've increasingly seen the visionary plans that created this iconic space trampled, the public's use restricted, and hopes for a resilient future denied by inadequate planning. The National Mall Coalition is dedicated to reversing this trend through historical education, programming for the people, and cultivating ideas that will ensure the Mall's vitality for future generations. We advocate for a new comprehensive plan for the National Mall, the stage for our democracy, in its 3rd century — the 3rd Century Mall.

www.nationalmallcoalition.org



www.facebook.com/NationalMallCoalition/

Our National Mall Coalition website educates the public about the planning legacy for this Stage for American Democracy: the 1791 L'Enfant Plan for the nation's capital and the Mall, and that plan's renewal in the 1901-2 McMillan Commission Plan. It tells of the Coalition's active involvement in Mall projects from new monuments and museums to policies governing public access and use of the Mall. And here we propose innovative ideas to solve problems and ensure the Mall's vitality through the 21st century, ideas that include the 3rd Century Mall plan to expand the Mall boundaries and our National Mall Underground flood reservoir project. Our [Facebook page](#) links to Mall news.

Citizen Advocacy

Coalition Deplores Attack on Capitol, Calls for Thoughtful Discourse

The January 6th, 2021 assault on the Capitol, our Temple of Democracy crowning the east end of the National Mall, shocked and horrified the American public across the political spectrum. The task ahead is to understand why and how this attack could happen, to evaluate security lapses, and to rededicate ourselves to upholding the Constitutional principles for which our country – and the National Mall – stands.

Members of the Coalition Board and Advisors offered some observations and thoughts in a series of opinions on the Coalition's [blog](#); the security fence finally came down in July:



- ❖ [“Keep Out: No Trespassing on the National Mall”](#) by Louise Parker Kelley
- ❖ [“Who is in Charge of National Mall Security?”](#) by Judy Scott Feldman
- ❖ [“The National Mall Has Gone Dark: What Happened to Thoughtful Discourse in America?”](#) by Tom King
- ❖ [“The U.S. Capitol and National Mall in the Shadow of Security”](#) by Lisa Benton-Short
- ❖ [“The Capitol Fence Comes Down”](#)

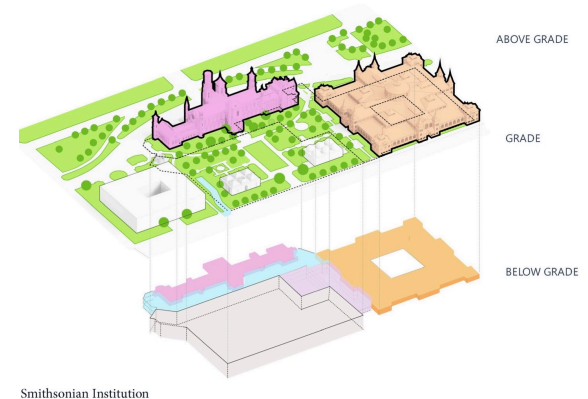
Citizen Advocacy

Infrastructure Upgrades can be a Positive Turning Point for the National Mall

Smithsonian museums are aging and in need of repair and upgrades – witness the “Castle’s” crumbling stone walls, obsolete heating and air conditioning systems, stormwater flooding, and inadequate space for facilities, exhibitions, and visitor amenities.

The Coalition supports the Smithsonian’s goals. But we have been urging the Smithsonian, as well as the plan review agencies (Commission of Fine Arts and National Capital Planning Commission) not to move forward with this kind of piecemeal, agency-by-agency project **until there is an over-arching, comprehensive upgrade plan for all Mall facilities.**

Why? The **Smithsonian is not alone.** The National Gallery of Art and the US Department of Agriculture also face clean energy and flood needs. A comprehensive clean energy and flood program that encompasses all Mall facilities, not just Smithsonian, means a more intelligent approach to resiliency planning, fewer individual construction projects with the resulting cost savings to the American public, and less disruption to public use of the Mall.



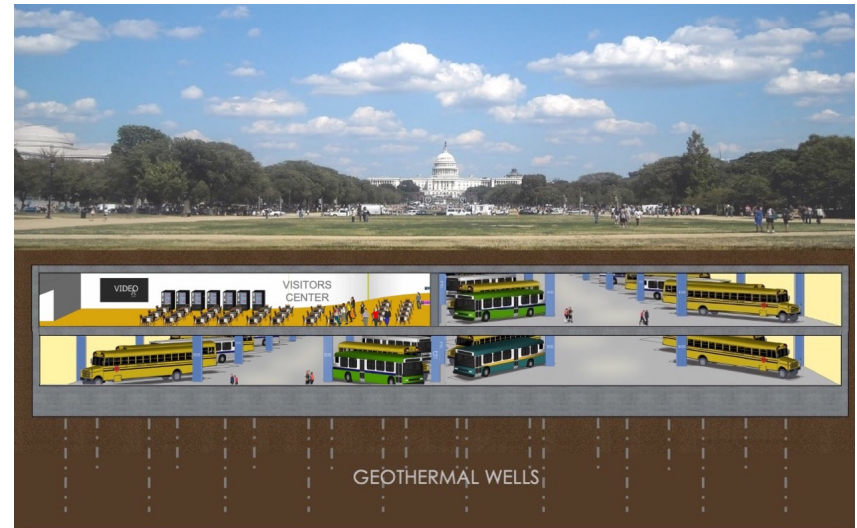
Learn about the Smithsonian’s plan that includes excavating beneath the “Castle” at: https://www.sifacilities.si.edu/sites/default/files/Files/ROHC/si_rohc_day_2_cup_ct_gardens_and_ground_ncpc_cfa_presentation.pdf

Innovative Ideas and Projects

National Mall Underground Alternative A

The National Park Service and some other government agencies have been unwilling to seriously consider the Coalition's National Mall Underground stormwater reservoir-geothermal energy-bus and car parking project because it includes car parking. They say that parking for visitors to the nation's capital and the Mall is contrary to agency policies, which discourage cars and encourage the use of public transportation.

To accommodate these concerns, the National Mall Coalition has proposed an alternative design, “**Alternative A**” which replaces the car parking on the upper level with more bus parking. Otherwise, the project continues to include a large stormwater reservoir able to hold more than 24 million gallons of floodwater – the amount during a 200-year flood like that in 2006 – and the field of 1,000 geothermal rods.



NATIONAL MALL UNDERGROUND
“Alternative A” Concept

The Coalition presented the Underground to the US Commission of Fine Arts in July. Read more here: <https://www.nationalmallcoalition.org/2021/11/coalition-presents-national-mall-underground-to-commission-of-fine-arts/>

Civics Education

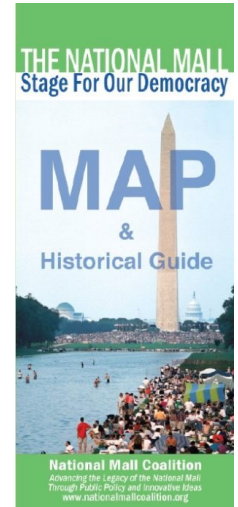
Ultimate Washington Monument Quiz



Visit our website to **test your knowledge of National Mall history** in our collection of quizzes, including this 14-question multiple-choice quiz to learn about the history of one of the United States' most recognizable monuments on the National Mall – <https://www.nationalmallcoalition.org/2020/08/take-the-ultimate-washington-monument-quiz/>

National Mall: Stage For Our Democracy

Map & Historical Guide



Are you planning a visit to the National Mall? Do you want to know the Mall's history? Where the monuments and museums are located? Where to grab a bite, find rest facilities, rent a bicycle?

Since 2005 the National Mall Coalition has been offering our **Mall mini-map at Washington Reagan National Airport and Dulles Airport**. Pick up your free copy of this pocket-size map at the airports' Travelers' Aid desks.

In Memoriam



Charles Cassell: [Our tribute](#)



Albert Small: [Our tribute](#)

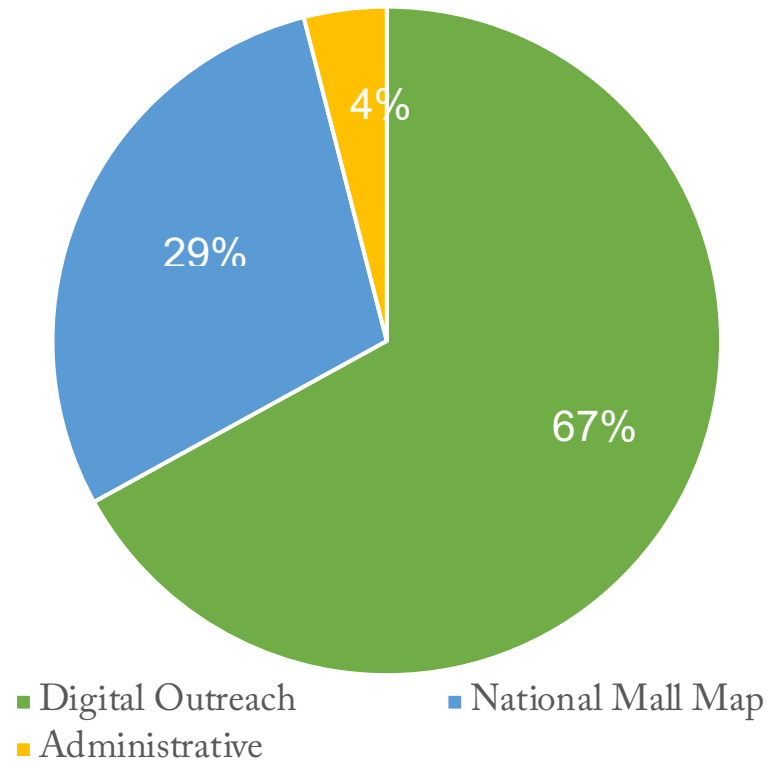


Fred Hiatt: [Our tribute](#)

The Coalition mourns the loss of three visionary friends in 2021. We miss their genius and their enthusiasm for our Stage for American Democracy.

- ❖ Board member and architect Charles Cassell, a founding member of the National Mall Coalition in 2000, was a staunch advocate for the Mall's historic plans and its vital role in American democracy.
- ❖ Board member Albert H. Small came to the Coalition with the germ of the idea for the National Mall Underground and enthusiastically supported the Coalition's advocacy for the public interest on the Mall.
- ❖ Fred Hiatt, Editorial Page Editor of The Washington Post, wrote editorials and opinion pieces supporting Coalition ideas, from expanding the Mall to our long-standing call for a new McMillan-type Commission to plan the future of the Mall.

2021 Expenses



The National Mall Coalition, an all-volunteer organization including members of the Board of Directors, is sustained financially by tax-deductible donations from individuals who support our goals and advocacy. Major expenses include our free Mall map, part-time administrative help, and management and maintenance of our website and Facebook public education and outreach.

Board of Directors

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Advisors

Gordon Binder
Senior Fellow
World Wildlife Fund

Thomas F. King, PhD

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.

Contact:

National Mall Coalition
www.nationalmallcoalition.org
P.O. Box 4709
Rockville, MD 20849
301-335-8490
jfeldman@nationalmallcoalition.org