

# National Mall Coalition

[www.nationalmallcoalition.org](http://www.nationalmallcoalition.org)

## 2023 Annual Report

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



# Dear Friends of the National Mall,

January 2024

In 2023, the National Mall Coalition continued our efforts to educate the public about the significance of the National Mall, advocate forward-looking policies to support the role of the Mall as the Stage for American Democracy, and develop creative programs and ideas to ensure the Mall remains lively and resilient in the 21st century and beyond.

We invite you to read this year's Annual Report for a recap of topics and news in 2023.



*Judy Scott Feldman*

Judy Scott Feldman, Ph.D.  
Founding Member and Chair  
[jfeldman@nationalmallcoalition.org](mailto:jfeldman@nationalmallcoalition.org)

# Public Outreach

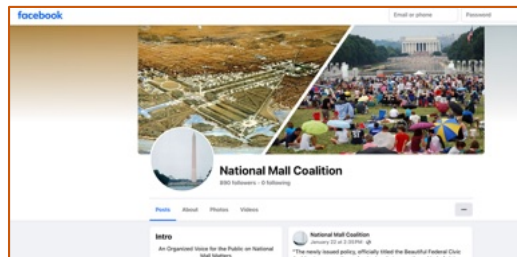
The National Mall Coalition continues our outreach to enhance the public's understanding, appreciation, and experience of the Mall.

**OUR WEBSITE AND OUR FACEBOOK PAGE** inform the public about the fascinating and constantly-evolving history of the Mall and about current events, including government review of proposed museums and monuments.

Our free **NATIONAL MALL: STAGE FOR OUR DEMOCRACY MINI-MAP AND HISTORICAL GUIDE** continues to be a big hit with visitors from all over the country and the world, with over 40,000 maps distributed each year at local airports and hotels.



[www.nationalmallcoalition.org](http://www.nationalmallcoalition.org)



[www.facebook.com/NationalMallCoalition/](http://www.facebook.com/NationalMallCoalition/)



# Public Outreach

## Public Presentations

Coalition Chair and art historian Judy Scott Feldman continues, as she has for over 20 years, to present her popular talk about **MALL HISTORY, CURRENT TOPICS, AND PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS** to visitors and educational and civic groups. Do you know where the idea for the National Mall came from? How the Mall has evolved over 200 years? How our national monuments and Smithsonian museums were, and are, created? What lies in the future for this majestic Stage for American Democracy?



*This video of her Zoom presentation to the FDR Memorial Legacy Committee answers these questions and more: the patriotic ideals embedded in the Mall's layout, how Washington's topography and vast expanses of landfill explain centuries of flooding, why Congress declared the Mall a "substantially completed work of civic art" in 2003 (but continued to approve new monuments and museums), and how the brilliant legacy that gave us the Mall can find renewed life with a creative and problem-solving vision for the Mall in its third century – the 3rd Century Mall.*



# Citizen Advocacy

## A Visionary Plan for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century Mall

The Coalition continues our strong advocacy for creation – by Congress or the President – of a **3<sup>RD</sup> CENTURY MALL COMMISSION** to create the much-needed comprehensive plan for the entire Mall, building on the legacy of the visionary 1791 L'Enfant and 1902 McMillan Commission plans.

Why a commission? The last plan is over 120 years old, memorial and museum projects continue

to be proposed and approved for sites on the already full Mall, and no one entity has authority to plan for the Mall as a unified whole. Instead, government agencies each plan for their separate lands and museums and monuments. A McMillan-type commission composed of architects, landscape architects, engineers, educators, and civic leaders can envision a forward-looking vision to show how the Mall can continue to grow with our evolving democracy.



*Who's in charge of the Mall? Nobody – and everybody. Without a comprehensive, unified, forward-looking vision, the Mall is threatened with further loss of its precious public open space and its welcoming role as Stage for American Democracy.*

# Citizen Advocacy

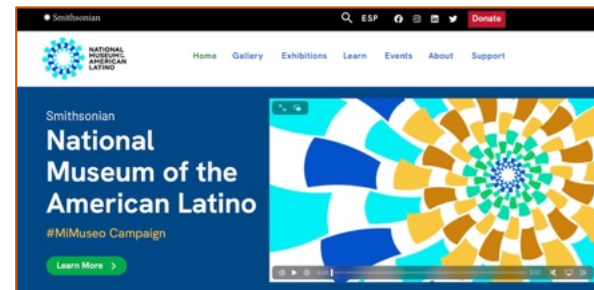
## Challenges and Opportunities for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century Mall Commission

Congress declared the Mall a “substantially completed work of art” in 2003. But since then – twenty years ago – Congress has continued to approve museums and monuments for the Mall.

Among the proposed or approved projects for the Mall are:

- Smithsonian National Museum of Women’s History
- Smithsonian National Museum of the American Latino
- Global War on Terrorism Memorial
- Fallen Journalists Memorial
- Women’s Suffrage Memorial

**CLEARLY, THE MALL – AND AMERICAN HISTORY – IS NOT COMPLETE.** A 3<sup>rd</sup> Century Mall Commission can show how these and other additions to the American story can continue to enhance the Mall’s role as civic stage.



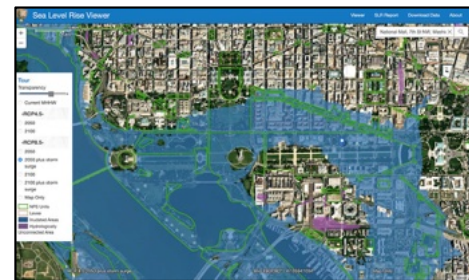
# Innovative Proposals

## Mall Expansion / Mall Underground Flood Cistern

In the face of piecemeal, agency by agency plans for parts of the Mall, the Coalition continues to seek comprehensive, long-range solutions to several Mall-wide problems – solutions that consolidate the needs of the public and Mall stewards while also reducing cost and disruption of Mall activities.

Increasingly, the Coalition's concept of Mall expansion has been gaining ground among members of Congress and government agencies concerned with overcrowding of monuments and museums on the Mall.

The Coalition continues to advocate implementation of what we call the National Mall Underground – a large multi-purpose facility that includes a flood water cistern as well as bus parking, a Mall visitors center, and other visitor amenities.



*The threat of flooding on the Mall (areas in blue) remains urgent, with no solutions yet identified by government managers.*

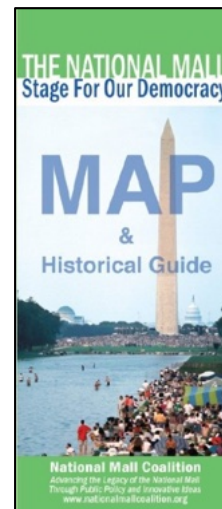
# Civics Education

## Presentations on Mall's History and Role in American Democracy

The Coalition continues, as we have for 20 years, to **present Mall history talks** to schoolchildren, Elderhostel and Road Scholar visitors to the capital, and design professional groups. We explore the design of the capital and the Mall at its heart as an architectural embodiment of the U.S. Constitution. We trace the evolution of the Mall as a grand stage for American democracy, and examine the issues and controversies that swirl around Mall development of new museums and monuments.

Visit our website to **test your knowledge of National Mall history** –

<https://www.nationalmallcoalition.org/2020/08/take-the-ultimate-washington-monument-quiz/>



**Our National Mall: Stage for Our Democracy mini-map** goes hand-in-hand with our Mall history talks. It provides the history of the Mall as Stage for Our Democracy as well as practical information about locations of memorials, and where to grab a bite, find rest facilities, or rent a bicycle.



# In Memoriam

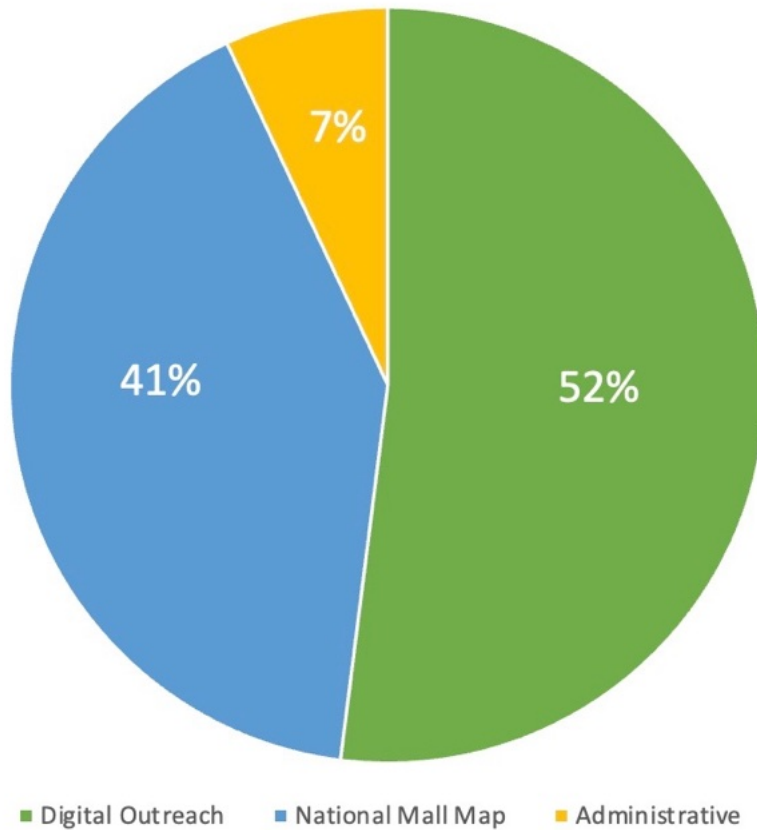


The National Mall Coalition mourns the death on December 25, 2023 of **GEORGE H.F. OBERLANDER**, long-time Board member and Vice Chair, and good friend.

George was the Coalition's urban planning expert. The Coalition Board and I take comfort in believing that his 31 years guiding wise planning at the NCPC and effective advocacy for over 20 years at the Coalition helped make our beautiful capital and the Mall at its heart a more welcoming, lively, and well-planned stage for American democracy.

The Coalition, the city of Washington, and the country have lost a true champion for our beautiful capital city.

# 2023 National Mall Coalition 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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Director

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Director

## *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 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

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

## *Contact:*

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