

National Coalition to Save Our Mall



an organized voice for the public on Mall matters

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Coalition Action Plan Charts New Vision for National Mall

Expanding the role of public use drives a new vision for the Mall's future

Washington, DC – The National Coalition to Save Our Mall, which has been calling on the Administration and Congress to create a McMillan-type Commission to undertake visionary planning for the National Mall, says it is time to implement the idea. The Coalition's report, just released, jump-starts the process with an outline of the basic elements of the vision plus a series of steps the Coalition plans to take to advance the future planning process.

Renewing American Democracy on the 3rd Century Mall, informed by five years of public discussion, is a prescription for improving the educational, cultural, and civic role of the most popular tourist destination in America.

"Our concerns go beyond infrastructure," said Judy Scott Feldman, PhD, who chairs the Coalition. "We are looking at the Mall from the public perspective. What is the purpose of the Mall? How can it better serve the needs of 25 million visitors annually? How can it better tell the American story?" Feldman says these issues cannot be dealt with piecemeal. "A grand vision requires a grand collaboration of government and citizens that recognizes that the Mall has evolved from an historic landscape to a living Stage for Our Democracy."

"With stimulus money flowing to Mall projects for repairs to the Reflecting Pool and seawalls at the Tidal Basin, a long-range vision is more urgent than ever to avoid costly mistakes we may regret. Decisions we make today need to anticipate the needs of the American public for the next 50 years," said Feldman.

In asking for a new "McMillan" Commission, the Coalition is seeking a modern reprise of the august body of planners and thinkers that rescued the Mall a century ago from an earlier period of disrepair and unclear purpose and gave us the Mall's majestic vistas and immensely popular and meaningful Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials.

In addition, the Coalition is launching five new initiatives to raise public consciousness of the Mall's potential. The first initiative – an "ideas competition" for the Washington Monument grounds – is indeed an idea whose time has come. Though the McMillan Commission considered the Monument grounds the "gem of the Mall system," a century later this concept remains unrealized. Opening a public dialogue about this Mall centerpiece will be an opportunity to open up the process of rethinking the future of the entire Mall.

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The table of contents, listed below, provides an overview of the 16-page report.

The report can be downloaded on the Coalition website: <http://www.savethemall.org>. Requests for copies of the report can be made to Kay Murphy at kay@savethemall.org or 800-618-3166.

For more information about the National Coalition to Save Our Mall, visit <http://www.savethemall.org>

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