



THE NATIONAL MALL BELONGS TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE





The Mall is the epitome of our Democracy and Constitution. There never has been a time more appropriate to remind ourselves of that.



National Mall Coalition
formerly National Coalition to Save Our Mall

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search

Quiz: The Lincoln Memorial: A New Birth of Freedom

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

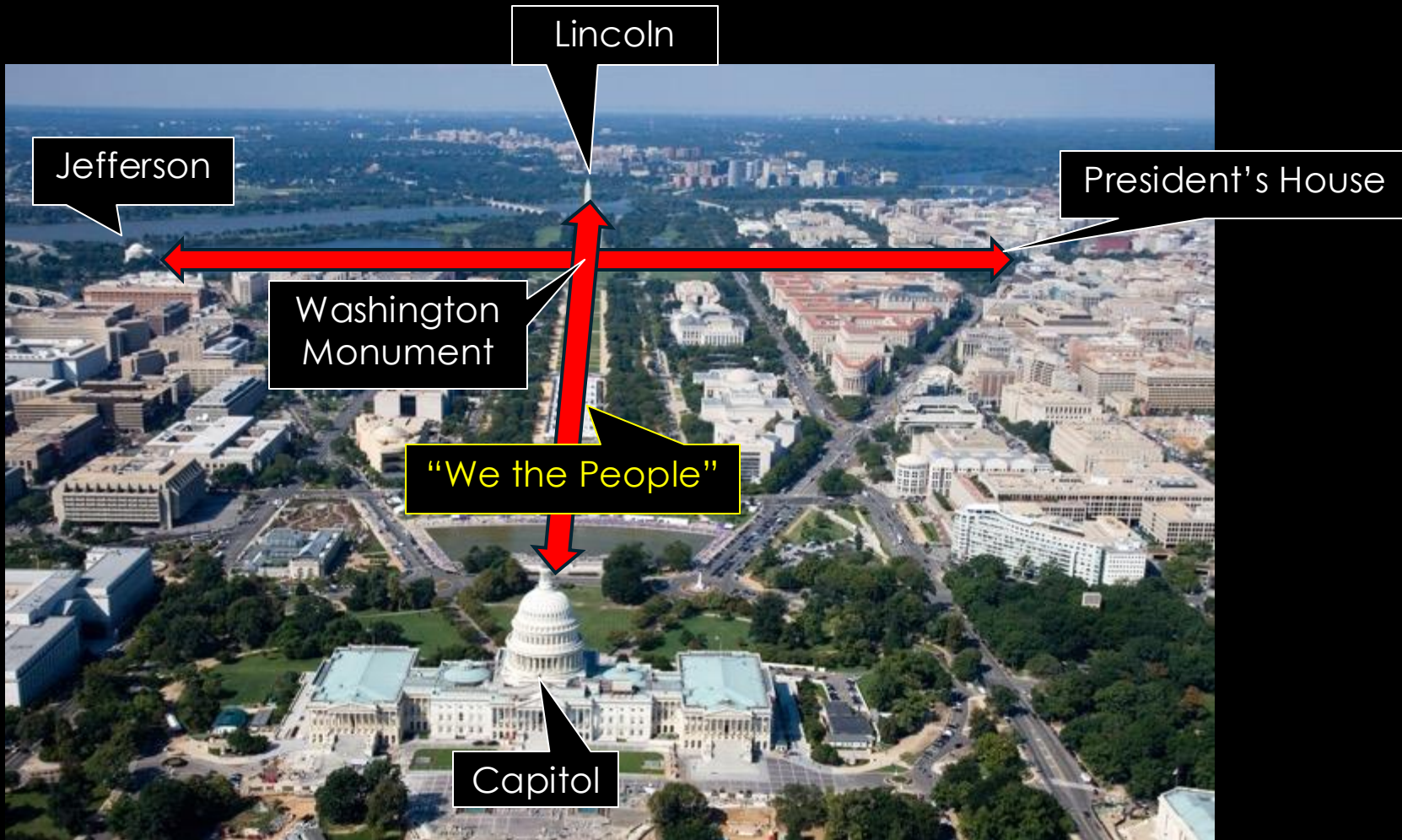
The National Mall is the Stage for American Democracy. It's in need of a new plan and vision for the 3rd Century. Learn more by exploring our website to better understand the legacy of the visionary 1791 L'Enfant and 1902 McMillan plans, as well as the challenges we face and innovative ways we can solve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

The National Mall Coalition appeals to the American people to join our urgent call for the creation of a Commission charged with planning the needed expansion of our National Mall. . .

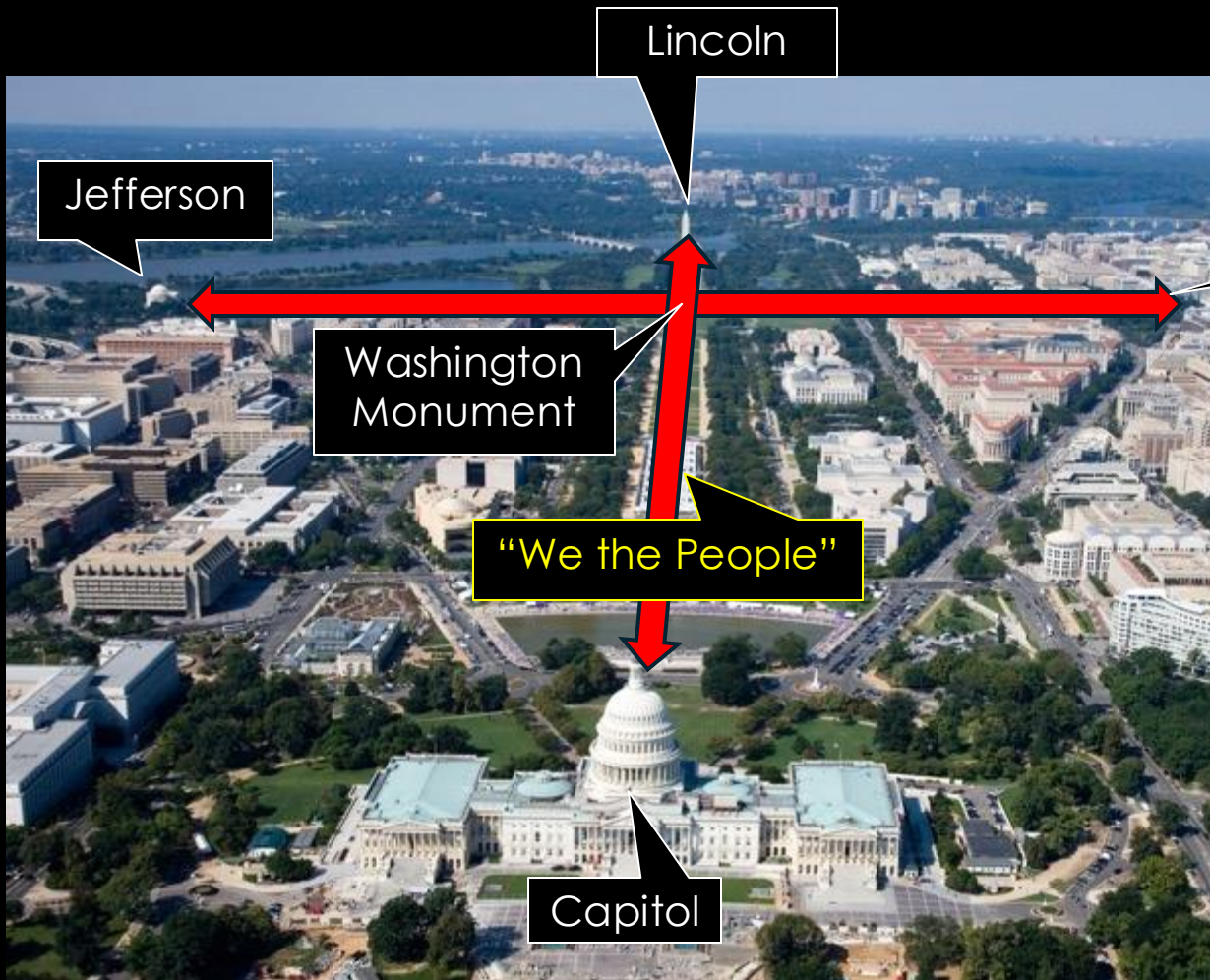


... and leave a legacy, a special gift to future generations, when we celebrate our country's 250th anniversary in July 2026.

Why a Mall Commission?



The Mall design embodies the American Constitution.



1791 L'Enfant Plan



1902 McMillan Plan

It is the brilliant legacy of the visionary
L'Enfant Plan and the expanded McMillan Plan.



"We the People"

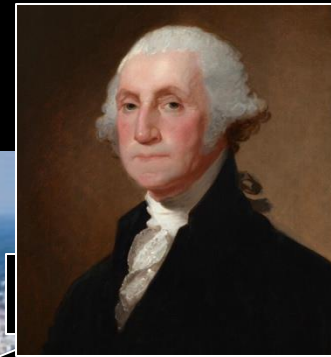


The American people have given the Mall its meaning as the Stage for American Democracy.





The vision originated with President Washington and Peter Charles L'Enfant and was expanded in 1901-2 by top designers, including Daniel Burnham and Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.



Creating an optimistic plan for the future
requires comparable big thinkers today.

Commission of
independent visionary
architects, engineers,
landscape architects, civic
leaders, the public: HOW
CAN THE HISTORICAL MALL
CONTINUE TO TELL MORE
OF THE AMERICAN STORY?

Why now?



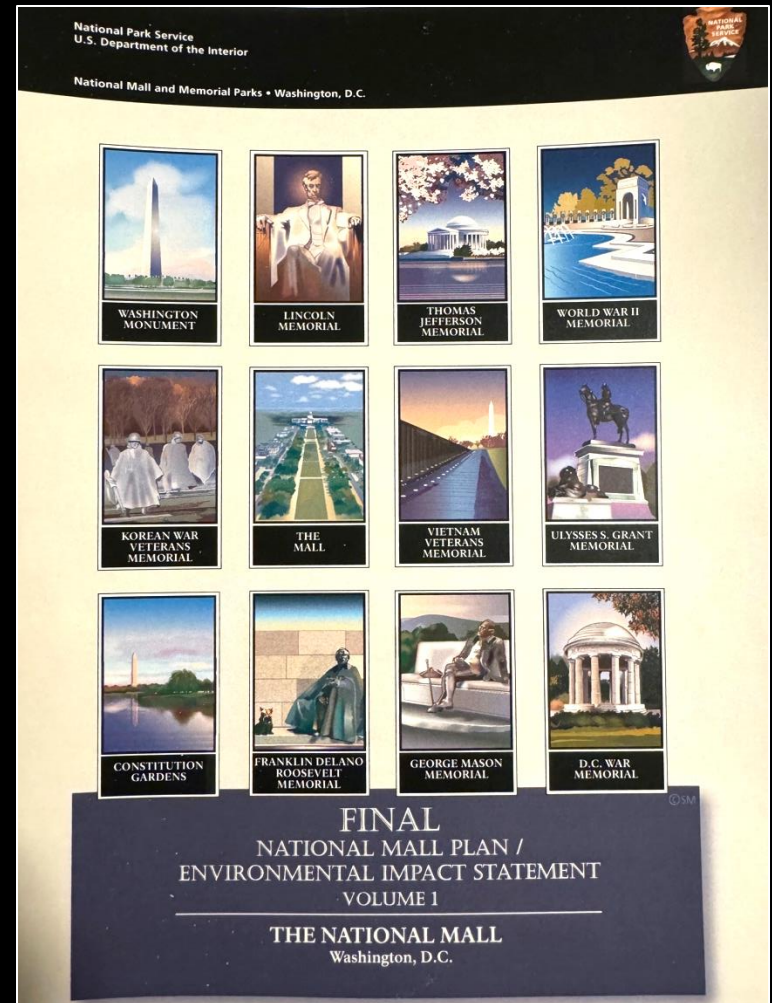
Who's in charge of the Mall? No one. Each entity plans for its own needs.



Fourteen committees in Congress share oversight on Mall matters.

The National Park Service's 2010 Mall Plan starts from the premise that the Mall is complete:

“Congress declared [the National Mall] to be ‘a substantially completed work of civic art’ in 2003”



NPS National Mall Plan (2010)



Future Approved Memorials:

- ❖ Global War on Terror Memorial
- ❖ Fallen Journalists Memorial
- ❖ National Medal of Honor Memorial
- ❖ Women's Suffrage

Approved Museums:

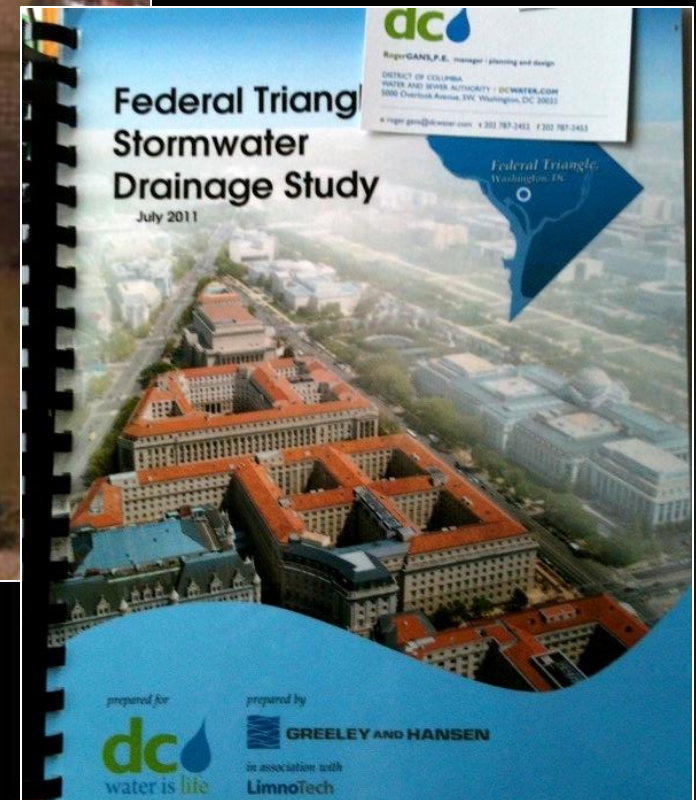
- ❖ Women's History
- ❖ American Latino

But Congress continues to approve new projects for the Mall.



June 2006

Flooding that threatens our national treasures remains unresolved.



2011



SILVER JACKETS

Many Partners, One Team

[HOME](#)

[STATE TEAMS](#)

[RES](#)

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Federal

- [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers \(USACE\), Baltimore District](#)
- [U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\), Region III](#)
- [National Park Service \(NPS\)](#)
- [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service \(NOAA/NWS\)](#)
- [U.S. Geological Survey \(USGS\)](#)
- [U.S. Army, Military District of Washington \(MDW\)](#)
- [U.S. Navy, Naval District Washington \(NDW\)](#)
- [U.S. Navy, Joint Base Anacostia/Bolling \(JBAB\)](#)
- [General Services Administration \(GSA\)](#)
- [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#)
- [National Capital Planning Commission \(NCPC\)](#)
- [District of Columbia National Guard](#)

District of Columbia

- [Department of Energy and Environment \(DOEE\)](#)
- [DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency \(HSEMA\)](#)
- [DC Office of Planning \(OP\)](#)
- [Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice](#)
- [Department of Public Works \(DPW\)](#)
- [Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs \(DCRA\)](#)
- [District Department of Transportation \(DDOT\)](#)
- [Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking \(DISB\)](#)

Regional

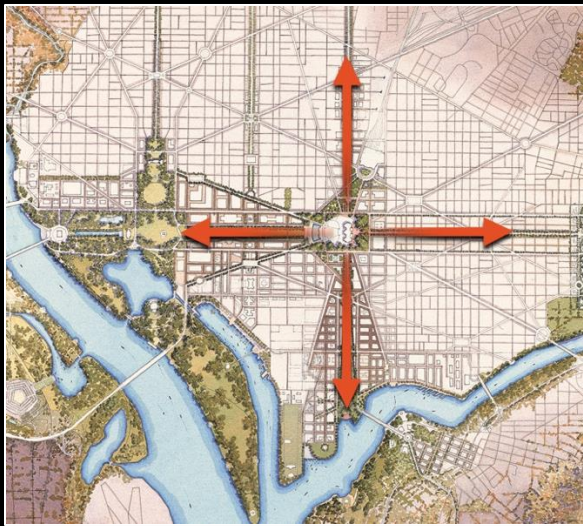
- [DC Water and Sewer Authority \(DC WATER\)](#)
- [Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority \(WMATA\)](#)
- [Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments \(MWCOCG\)](#)

Academia

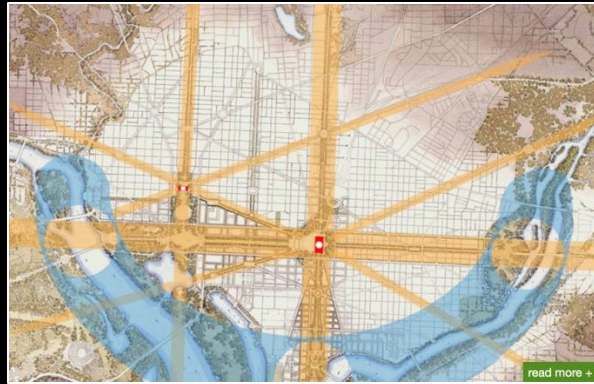


After years of study, results are “inconclusive.”

National Capital Planning Commission Plans?



NCPC 1997 Extending the Legacy Plan



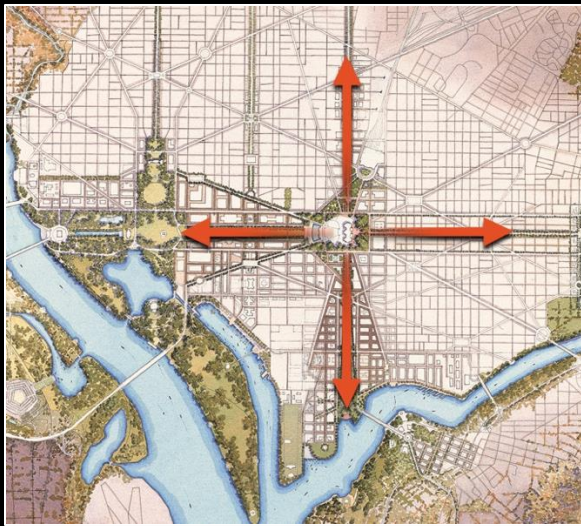
NCPC's 2001 Memorials & Museums Master Plan



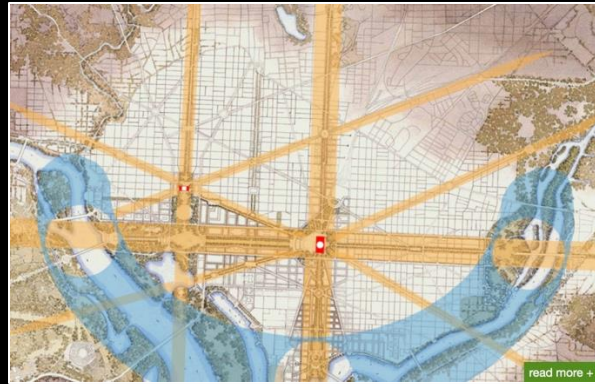
NCPC's 2013 SW Ecodistrict Plan



NCPC has proposed useful plans to make other areas more “Mall-like” . . .



NCPC 1997 Extending the Legacy Plan



NCPC's 2001 Memorials & Museums Master Plan



NCPC's 2013 SW Ecodistrict Plan

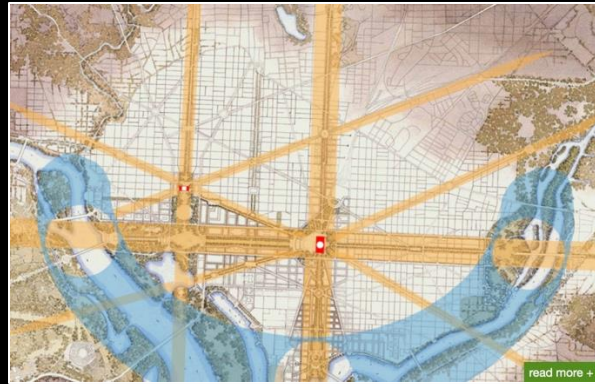
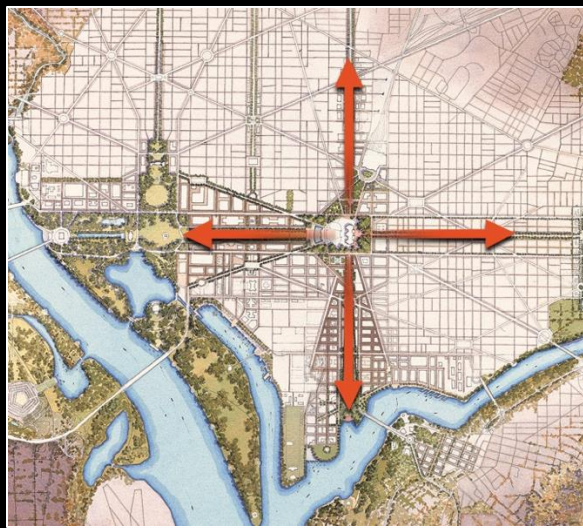


Pa Ave Initiative



Kennedy Center-Foggy Bottom Study

... including the recent Pennsylvania Avenue and Kennedy Center initiatives.

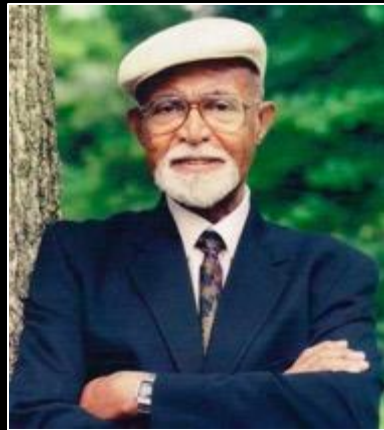
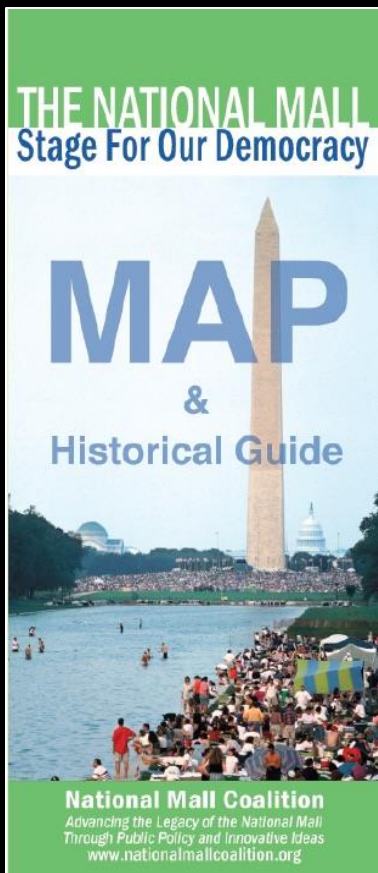


Future plans are proposed for everywhere but the Mall.



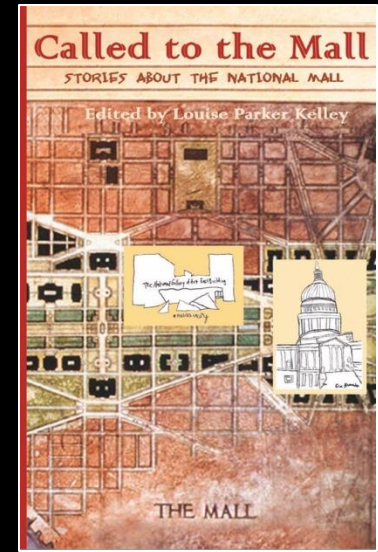
There's no unifying vision to knit separate plans into a cohesive whole.

What is the National Mall Coalition?

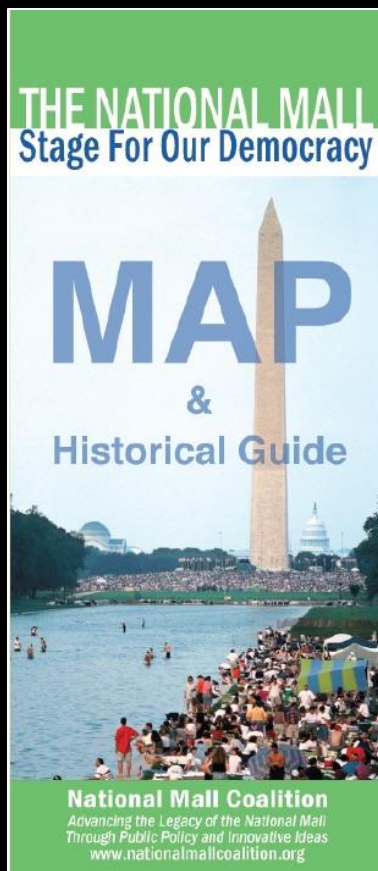


Since our founding in 2000 by Washington-area architects, planners, historians, and other citizens eager to advocate visionary planning for our National Mall for the 21st century, . . .





... the non-profit National Mall Coalition has created public exhibitions on Mall history; invited the public to propose ideas for a livelier Washington Monument landscape; collaborated with schools –



– and distributed to over a million Mall visitors our free National Mall map that shows all the monuments and museums and tells the story of the Mall's origins and evolution into the Stage For Our Democracy.

THE NATIONAL MALL Stage For Our Democracy

When You Set Foot On The National Mall, The Founding Fathers Speak To You.

1 Suffragists Parade on Pennsylvania Avenue, 1913
2 Children with sailboats at the Reflecting Pool, 1920s
3 Bonus veterans at the U.S. Capitol, Bonus March, 1932
4 Marian Anderson on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Easter Sunday, 1939
5 Reflecting Pool with Navy temporary buildings, 1945
6 Martin Luther King Jr. on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, 1963
7 Inauguration of Ronald Reagan on the west front of the U.S. Capitol, January 20, 1981

the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitor Center, and the Museum of African American History and Culture.

The moratorium is a promise that will be very difficult to keep. There can be no moratorium on history. Future generations will want their place "on the Mall."

What, then, is the future of the National Mall?

The National Coalition to Save Our Mall, a collaboration of citizens dedicated to safeguarding the integrity and meaning of the Mall, believes that history holds the answer.

The time has come for the Mall to expand again, as it did with the McMillan Plan a century ago, to provide space for the full expression of our evolving democracy. The next major memorial or museum could launch this new expansion...a grand THIRD CENTURY MALL.

For more information about the Third Century Mall concept go to: <http://www.savethemall.org>

© 2008 National Coalition to Save Our Mall. 3rd Edition.

THE MALL TODAY

Security concerns have changed the Mall. Access is limited and beautiful vistas are interrupted by security barriers and construction fences. Visitors to public buildings are required to undergo security screening. More construction lies ahead, as permanent security barriers are put in place around museums and memorials.

When you set foot on the National Mall, the Founding Fathers speak to you. From their marble monuments, and across the centuries, they tell of the ideals that gave birth to our government...of the people, by the people, for the people...

Whether you are here to celebrate, petition, relax in the beautiful setting, or to reflect, you are part of a long tradition of our democracy in action.

The First Century Mall

In 1791, President George Washington chose Pierre L'Enfant—soldier, architect and engineer—to plan the new capital. The Mall was to be the symbolic heart of the city and the newly founded nation. L'Enfant called the Mall "public walks" and a "place of general resort" lined by theaters, academies, foreign chanceries, and "all such sort of places as may be attractive to the learned and afford diversion..."

By the mid-nineteenth century, you could have explored the new Smithsonian "Castle," marveled at animals in the zoo, and meandered through paths of romantic gardens on the Mall. During the Civil War, you could have chatted with soldiers encamped there. Later, you might have even boarded a train for Richmond or Baltimore.

But there were serious problems. Where L'Enfant saw a grand public space with promenades along refreshing pools, the Mall had instead become fragmented by chaotic, congested development. Industrial smoke was belching in the shadow of the Capitol. Unhealthily, malarial marshes stretched beyond the Washington Monument.

Meanwhile, the capital city was growing dramatically, as was the

nation. Sites were needed for new memorials, public buildings, and parkland.

The Second Century Mall

In 1901 Congress established the McMillan Commission to renew L'Enfant's vision.

The McMillan Plan proposed a great formal public park in the spirit of Versailles and the Tuileries in Paris. It more than doubled the size of the Mall to the west and south on land dredged from the Potomac by the Army Corps of Engineers, giving us the Tidal Basin and sites for the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, as well as an expanded plan for the future of the Mall.

The McMillan Plan guided development for over seventy years. The clutter east of the Washington Monument gave way to the open green promenade lined with Smithsonian museums and the National Gallery of Art. With the removal of World War I and II "temporary" buildings along the

Lincoln Memorial's Reflecting Pool, in the early 1970s, the majestic Mall finally emerged as America's premier civic public space.

But the National Mall developed as more than a public open space. It became a great stage for expression of our democratic ideals.

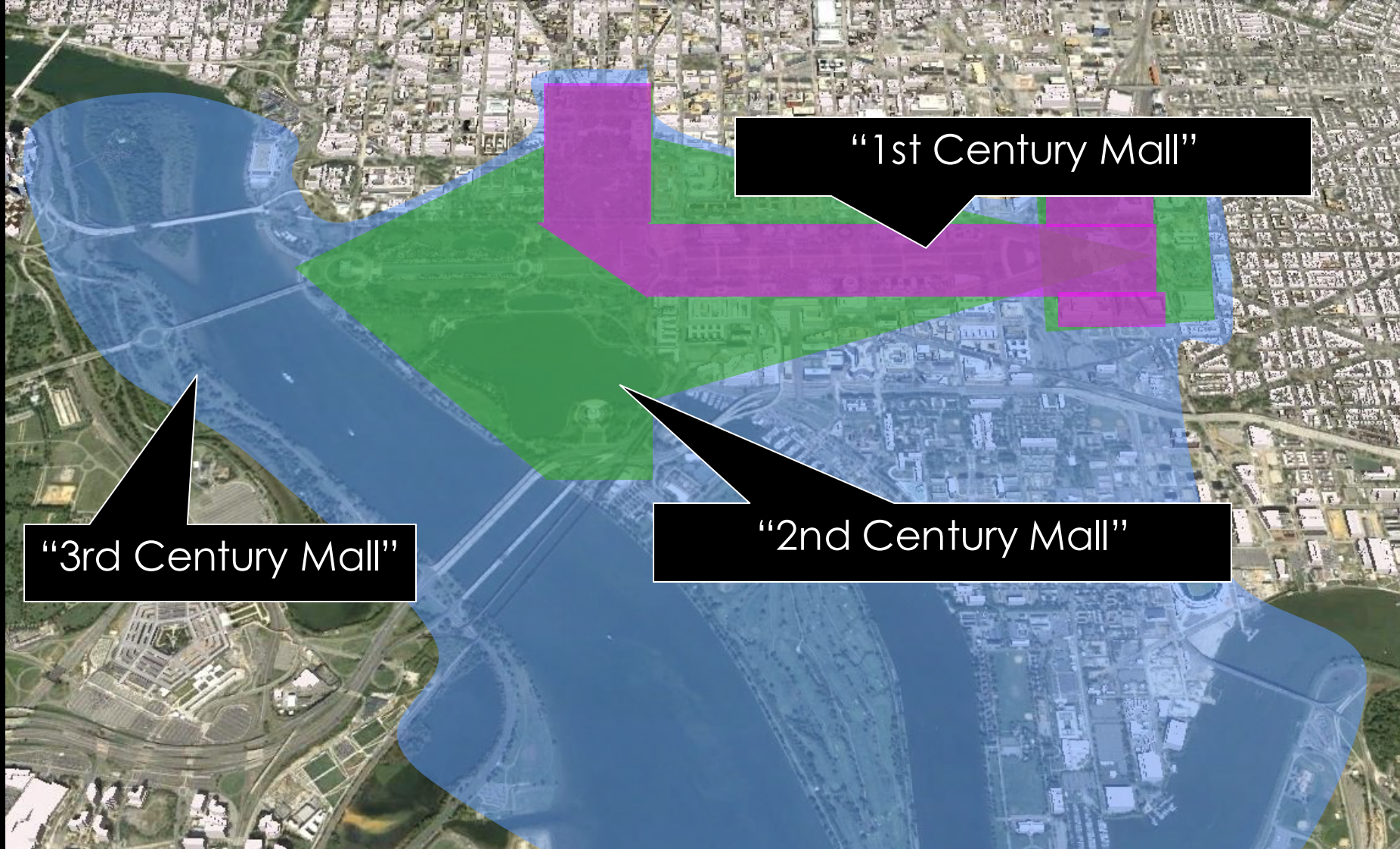
In 1894, for the first time, ordinary citizens organized a "march on Washington" to petition their elected leaders directly. "Coxey's Army" of unemployed workers converged on the Capitol seeking relief from a severe economic depression. In 1932, the Suffragists' demand for women's rights proved that Washington demonstrations could be dramatic, dignified, and effective. Nineteen years later, "Bonus March" veterans called on Congress to honor its promise of a bonus for their service in World War I.

The Mall also became the nation's world-renowned site for declaring and demonstrating that all Americans are entitled to equal rights. In 1939

African-American opera singer Marian Anderson, denied access to Constitution Hall because of her race, sang "My Country, 'Tis Of Thee" on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. A quarter century later, on those same steps, Martin Luther King Jr. proclaimed, "I have a dream..." invoking the words of the Founders enshrined nearby.

The Mall had become democracy's stage. Millions of Americans came each year to protest, petition, honor, as well as to celebrate and enjoy our nation's heritage. The world has seen: glorious July 4 fireworks, the Farmers' Protest, the AIDS Quilt, anti-war demonstrations, a grand Bicentennial celebration, the Million Man March, Annual Folklife and Kite Festivals, Presidential Inaugurations, Memorial Day concerts, and more.

Toward the end of the 20th century, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial triggered a new era of memorial building: the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the FDR Memorial, and the new World War II Memorial.

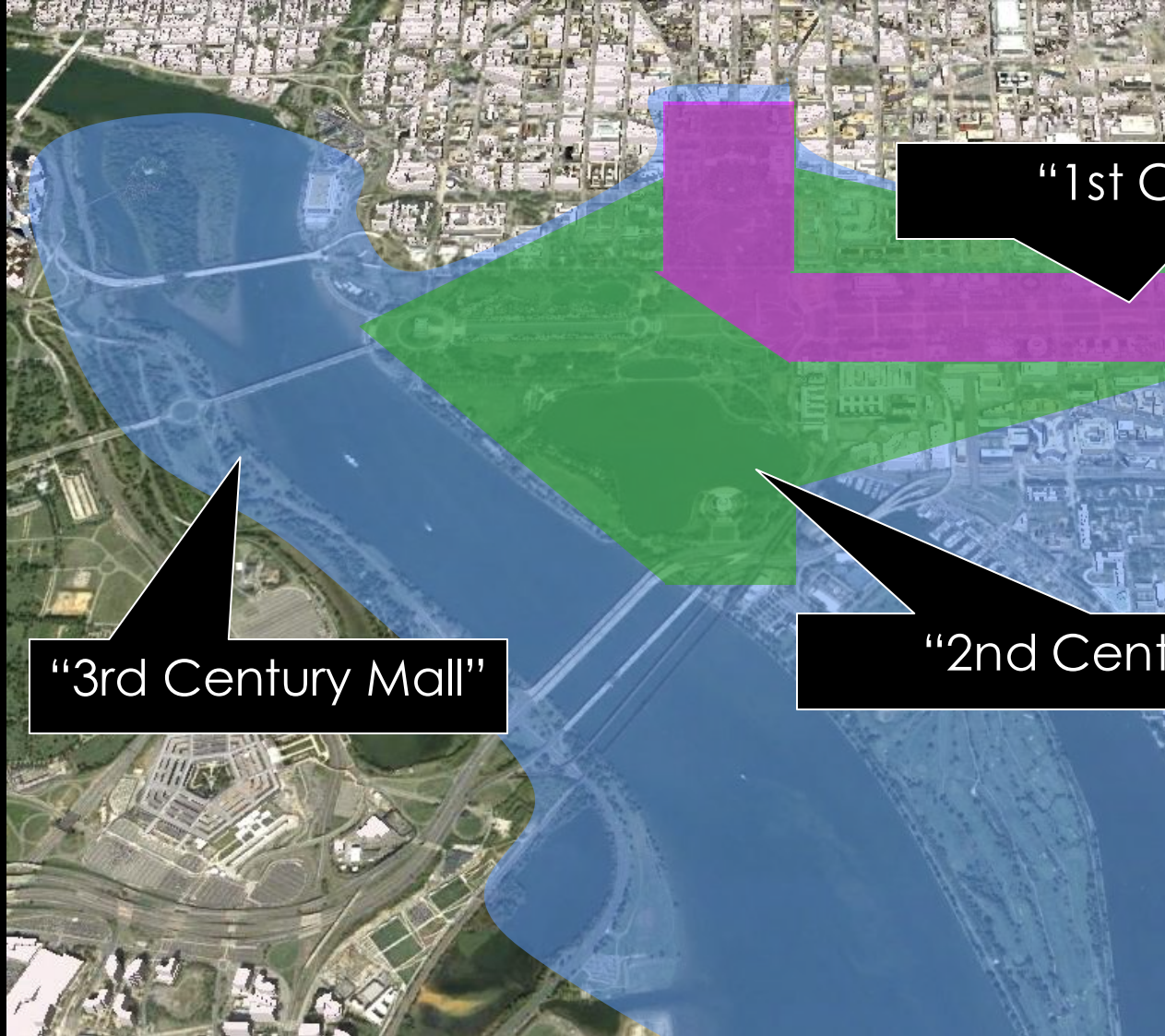


"1st Century Mall"

"3rd Century Mall"

"2nd Century Mall"

To give the Mall space to grow with our evolving Democracy, the Coalition has proposed expanding the Mall boundaries onto contiguous public lands, in a thoughtful way that . . .

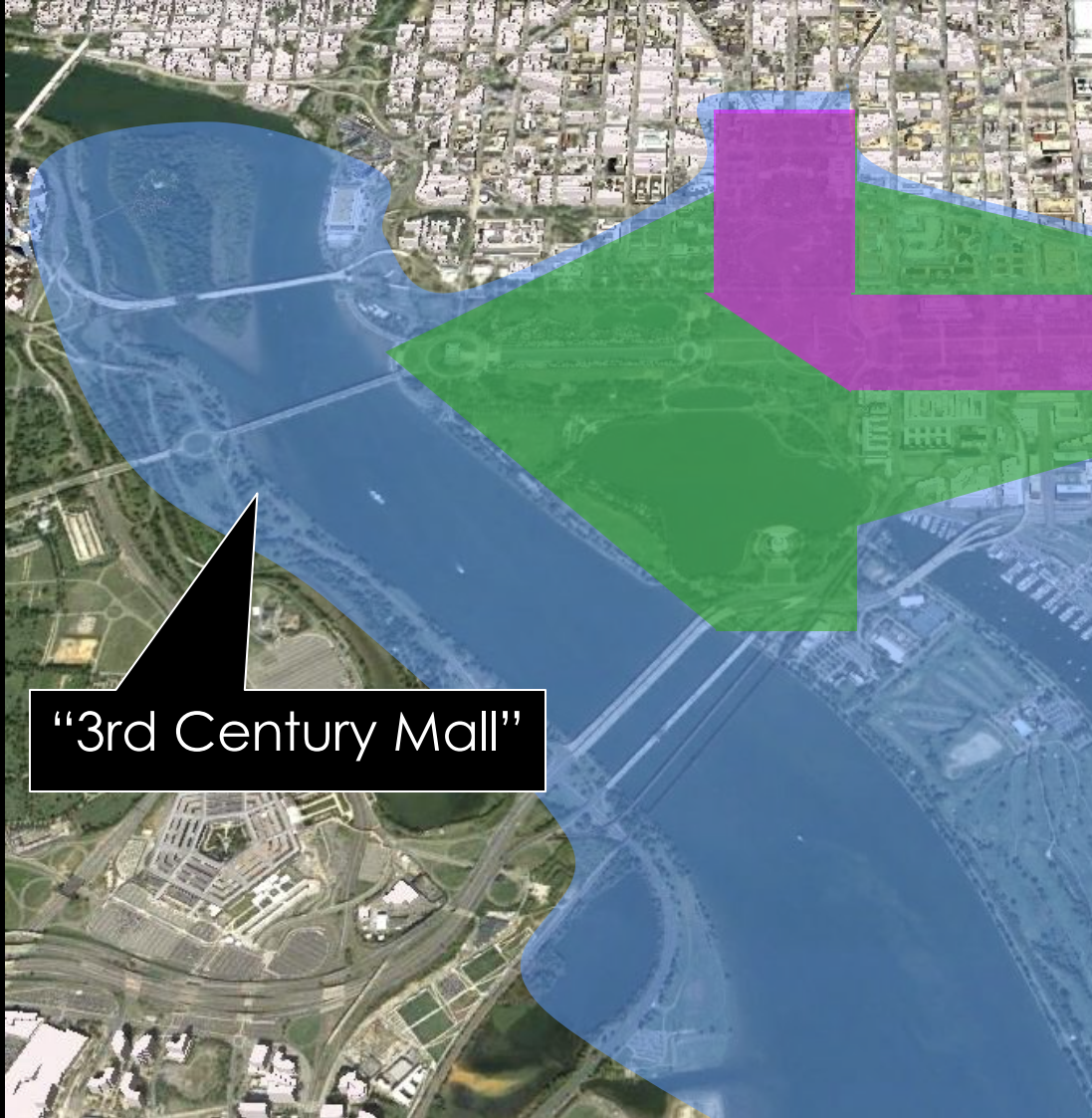


1791 L'Enfant Plan



1902 McMillan Plan

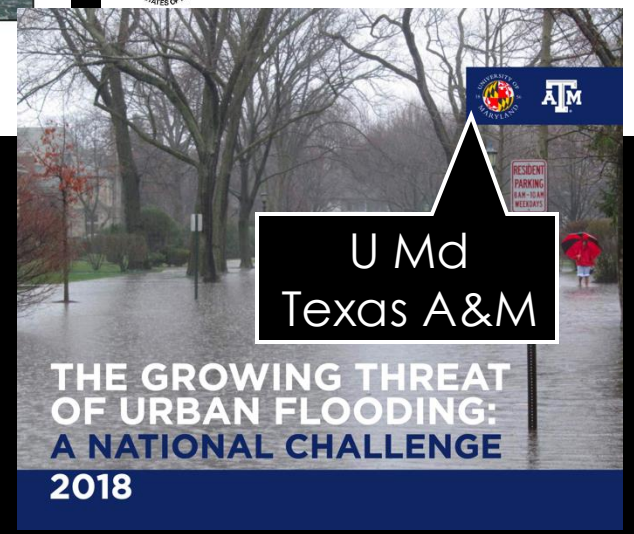
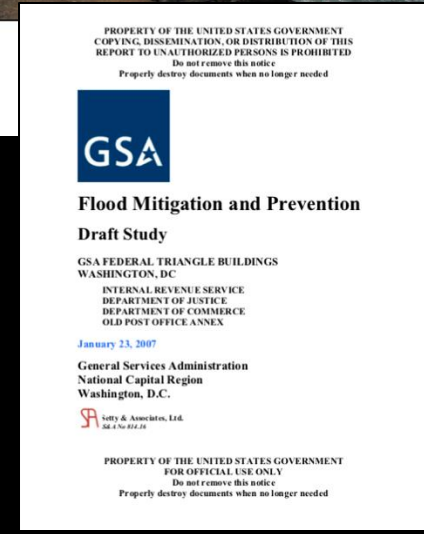
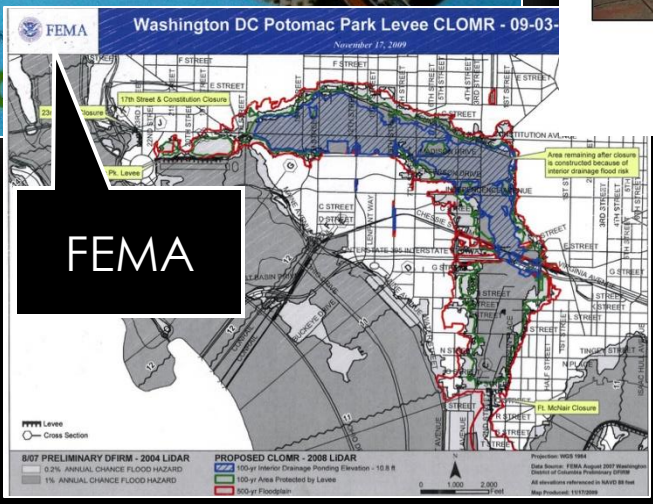
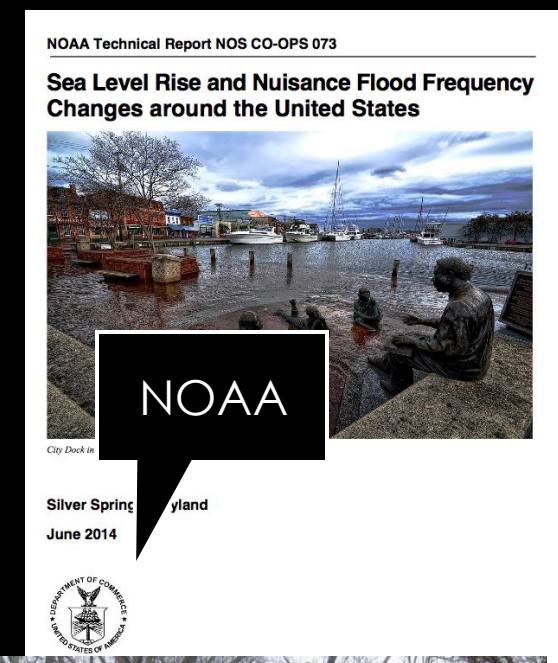
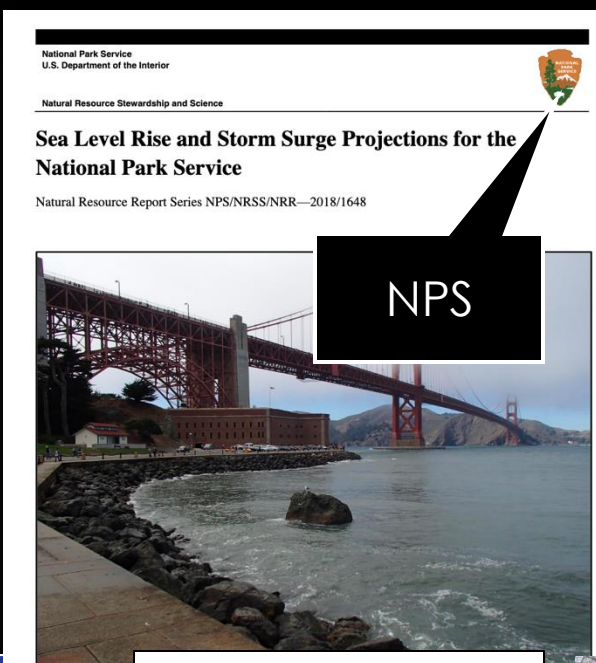
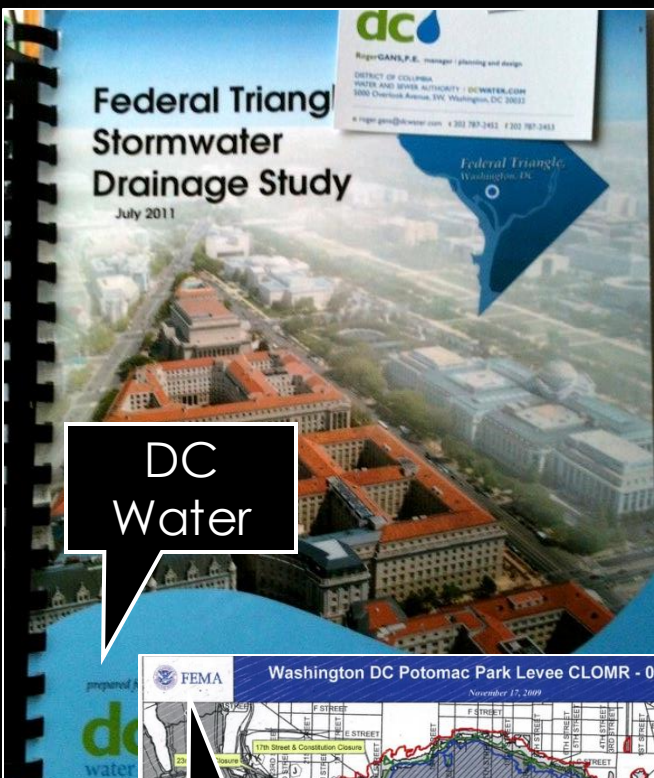
... advances the brilliant legacy of the historical plans and ...



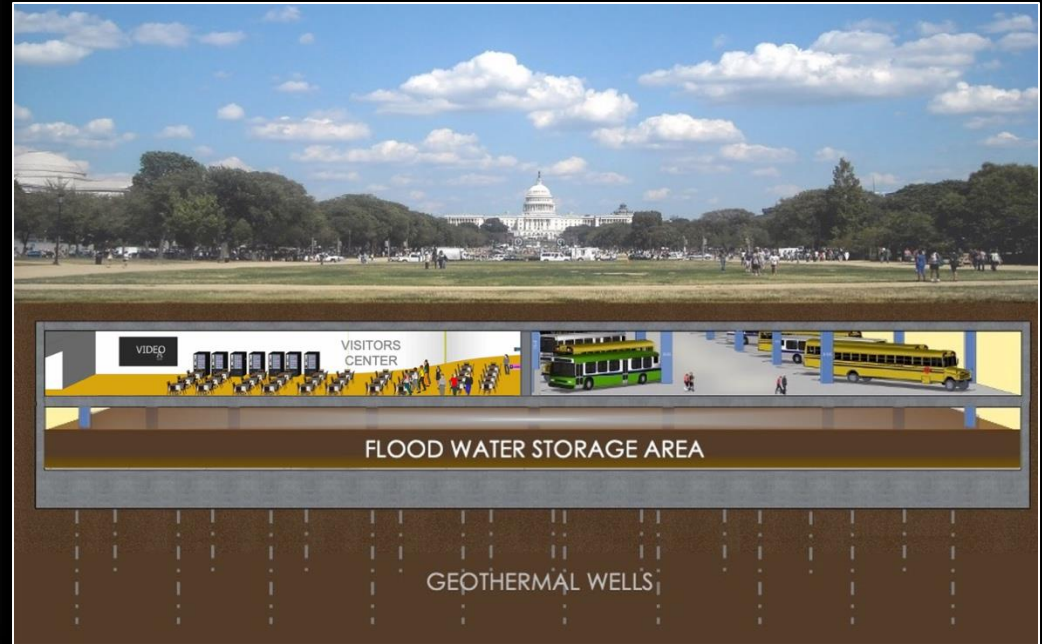
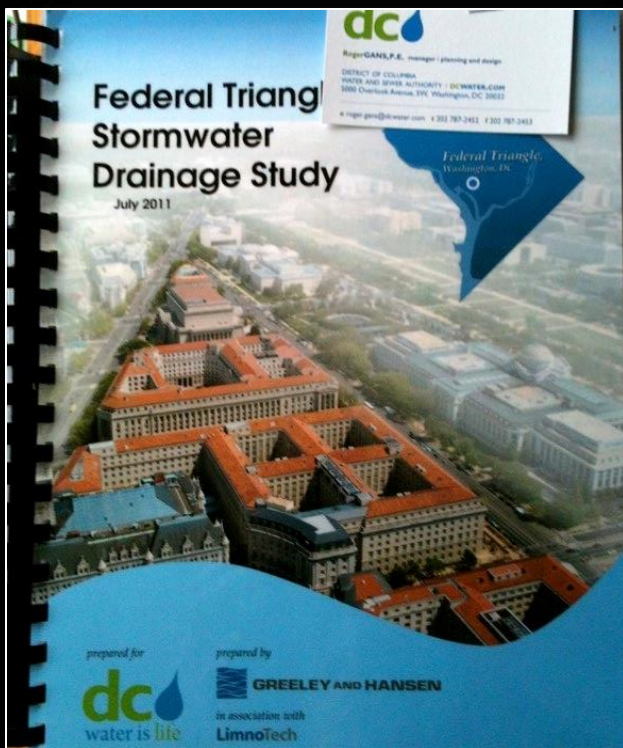
"3rd Century Mall"



. . . offers new venues for public monuments, museums, and events to create an even livelier civic stage.



In the face of flooding, a well understood existential threat to the Mall but with no solutions forthcoming from government, we have proposed. . .



... a “National Mall Underground” multi-purpose facility with much-needed public amenities:

- Flood reservoir
- Geothermal clean energy
- Mall welcome center
- Bus parking.

NATIONAL MALL UNDERGROUND USACE TECHNICAL REVIEW



*Sectional view represents an early stage concept from 2014. The revised 2017 concept reviewed by USACE has two stories: the upper story for cars would not be flooded; the lower bus level would be used for stormwater storage.

Prepared for: National Mall Coalition

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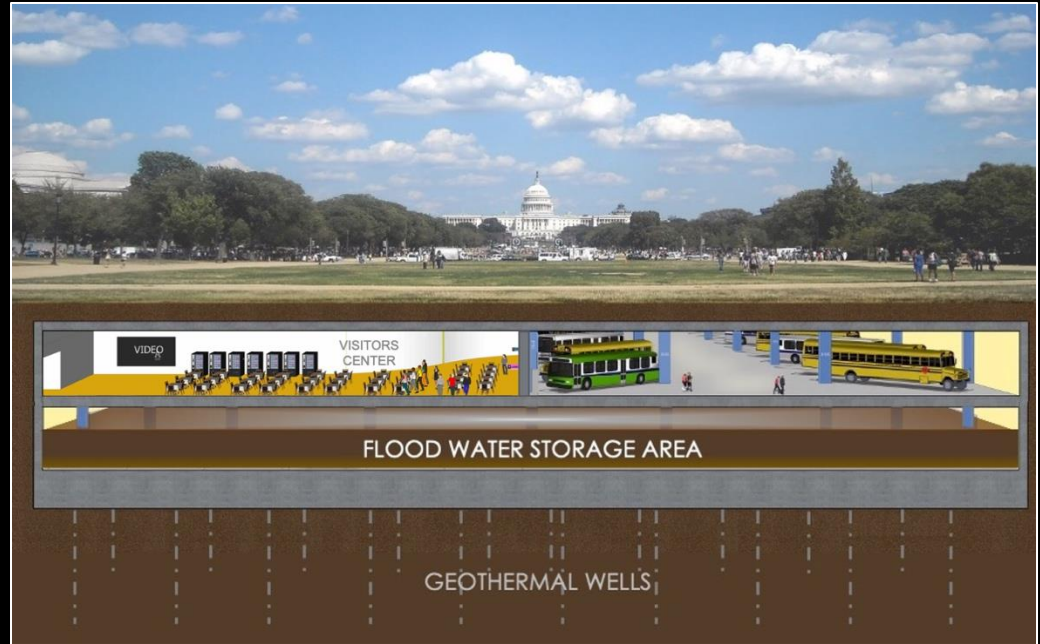
Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 4709
Rockville, MD 20849

Prepared by: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District

2 Hopkins Plaza
Baltimore, MD 21201

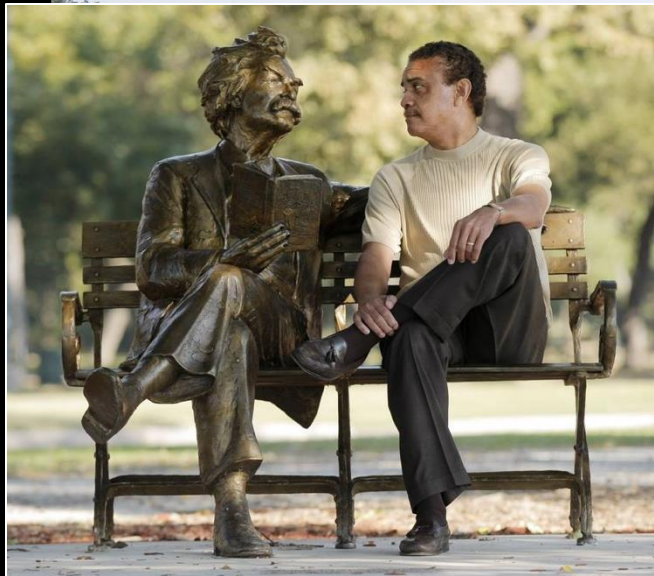
FINAL SEPTEMBER 2018



The US Army Corps of Engineers' 2018 report found that "Flood risk . . . could be reduced significantly . . . by implementation of the Underground."

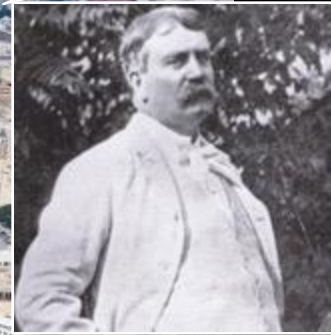
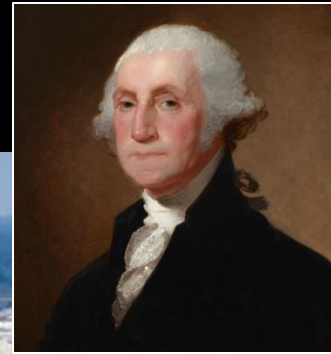


We have proposed improving the Mall's role in civics education. The long promenade could be enlivened as a kind of Statuary Hall on the Mall . . .



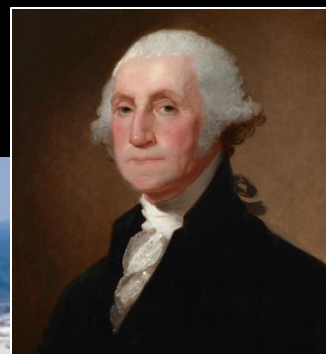
... populated with significant figures from American history.

It's time to take the long view . . .



It took leadership and vision to launch the 1st and 2nd Century Mall. The 3rd Century Mall plan is past due. We can make it happen!

A 3rd Century Mall
Commission of
independent visionary
architects, engineers,
landscape architects,
civic leaders, the public.



What will a Commission entail?

- 7 – 11 Commission members
- \$2 million budget
- 18 months duration
- Report (or progress report) announced on July 4th, 2026

A 3rd Century Mall

Commission of independent visionary architects, engineers, landscape architects, civic leaders, the public.



John Cogbill III
National Capital Planning Commission

David Childs
Commission of Fine Arts

Kent Cooper FAIA
National Mall Coalition

John Parsons
National Park Service

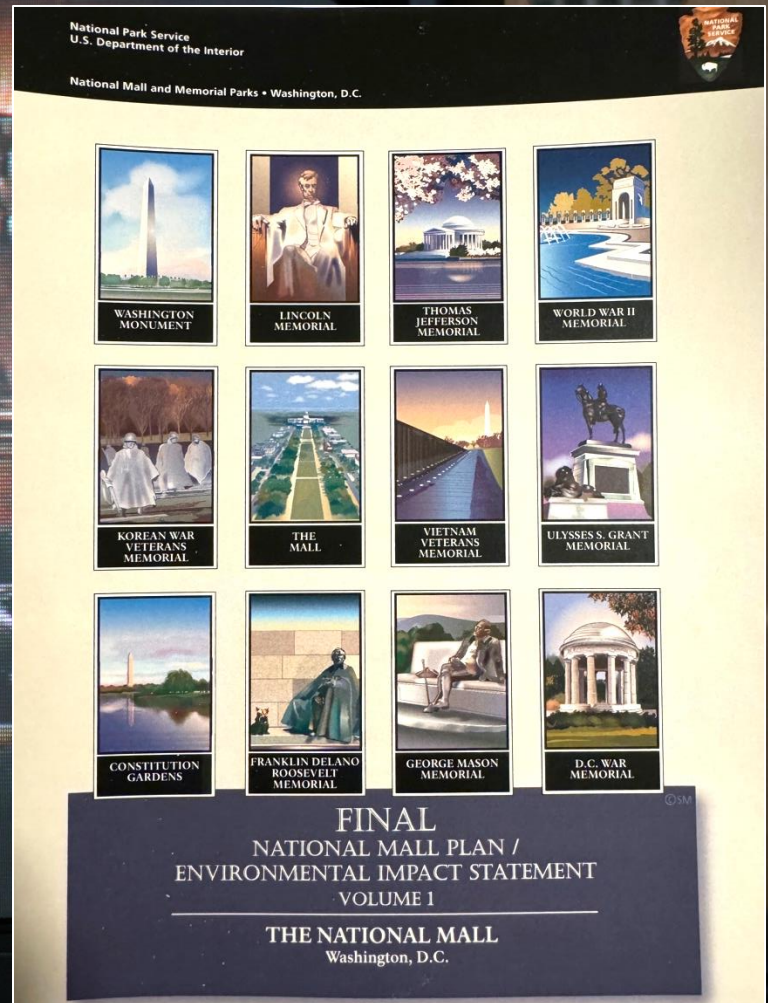
**Future Development &
Security on National Mall**

CSPAN 3

Already in 2005, government representatives said they would work together on a new vision for the Mall during testimony before the Senate Energy Committee chaired by Sen. Craig Thomas (R-WY).



Symphonic



But the resulting NPS 2010 plan is a maintenance plan for a “completed” Mall, not an optimistic vision for the future.

MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2005



The Mall is close to full. The next would-be stakeholder, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, should and probably will find a choice spot. But no one believes there won't be more museums and monuments clamoring for space. As history unspools, Americans will want to commemorate it, and the Mall will be their first choice.

This dilemma may seem to have only two outcomes, both undesirable. More and more structures could be crammed onto the Mall, to its detriment. Or worthy projects could be forced to accept what their proponents consider second-class addresses.

There is another way, however: The Mall could grow. If this sounds outlandish, re-

member that it's happened before. The I used to end at the Washington Monument. In 1901-02, the McMillan Plan called for tending the Mall south and west by filling part of the river. Doubters predicted that one would venture into the new swampland. But over the century the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials, Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Constitution Gardens have proved the "new" Mall reasonably popular.

The National Mall Third Century Initiative, a program of the National Coalition Save Our Mall, a nonprofit advocacy group, says the Mall could grow again for the 21st century — this time by reengineering the riverbank but our concept of the Mall. Let it swing around through East Potomac Park.

SUNDAY, MAY 25, 2008

The historic ground is a victim of both popularity and official neglect. What to do?

A LOT OF grand words were used last week to describe the Mall: "iconic landscape," "the people's place," "great swath of green," "hallowed ground," "America's civic stage" and—in the vernacular of its famed designer—"the vast esplanade." Unfortunately, though, the most accurate description heard was "disgrace." Conditions are so bad that a lot more than words are needed if this special place is to be saved.

Crumbling walkways, dead grass, dirty pools and sinking seawalls were some of the problems highlighted at a congressional oversight hearing. The Mall has neither proper amenities nor appropriate educational programs to serve the 25 million people who visit each year. Overuse and delayed maintenance are the culprits. Members of Congress who now ts-k-tsk about park conditions have failed for years to give the National Park Service the money to do its job. Recent budgets for the Mall and memorial parks have barely kept pace with inflation, even as the demands have grown.

So it's a good thing that the private sector is stepping forward with a willingness to help raise money. Congress is not off the hook, but we applaud the efforts of the Trust for the National Mall, a nonprofit founded by a D.C. businessman who became appalled by mall conditions during his daily jogs. John E. "Chip" Akridge proposes to raise \$500 million via a partnership with the National Park Service

modeled after the successful Central Park Conservancy in New York. It held its national launch this month, attracting 500 supporters and raising more than \$600,000. On other fronts, the park service is developing a blueprint for action, Mayor Adrian M. Renty's administration is interested in taking a more active role and Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) is pushing legislation to expand the Mall.

These efforts would help solve some of the maintenance and management issues, but questions about the Mall's future remain unresolved. The challenges of today simply didn't exist when Pierre L'Enfant laid out the expanse of open space. He could not have envisioned the need for annual appropriations for public art, the need for a gathering place for protesters, from howling protesters to plays for hurricane victims to war protests. How to deal with these constant and myriad demands for public use, what to do about flooding, how to better connect the Mall to the city center—all are among the questions that need to be answered. The responsibility for the Mall is fragmented among at least eight different oversight or oversight-like bodies, at least eight congressional committees. The last comprehensive look at the Mall was in 1902 by the McMillan Commission. So there is much merit to the National Coalition to Save Our Mall's proposal that Congress charter a commission to devise a plan and then implement a vision for the coming decades.

AL is for anyone who has
the Mall, looking for a place to
has been irritated by all the
rcling the Mall, looking for
ho has breathed fumes of
ar the Mall, or had a perfect
e idling buses. Or who has
e family to the Mall and
use it would be impossible

out?
o's been stuck on the Mall
a.
ivic-minded nonprofit or-
onal Coalition to Save the
hat sounds like a pretty
rking under the Mall. The
up suggests might stretch
trets NW, would serve a
ling on its bottom level
inwater and groundwater
r to capture water in the

event of major floods. The water could help keep the Mall's grass green, and the extra capacity could save Constitution Avenue and its buildings from damage in an era of increasingly severe weather.

Officials have recognized the need for such a flood-control facility, but an estimated \$400 million cost has put off serious consideration. Over a long period (say, 30 years), parking fees, primarily from buses and out-of-town tourists, could pay for the construction.

And why stop there? Promoters of the idea, who include the philanthropic president of Southern Engineering Corp., Albert H. Small; the architect Arthur Cotton Moore; and coalition chair Judy Scott Feldman, point out that such an underground space could include washrooms for tourists, shower facilities for tour bus drivers and underground connections among the museums and Metro. Fees and parking hours would have to be thought out carefully. But if the internal roads of the Mall could be freed up for pedestrians and cyclists, maybe along with a Circulator bus, the

visiting experience would be more pleasant for everyone.

So far the idea is in the early stages, with plenty of financial and engineering challenges no doubt to come. But as always on the Mall, the biggest challenge may be political: So many local, regional and federal agencies have overlapping claims to the territory that it's hard to get anything done.

The promoters have taken the idea to many of these stakeholders and, so far, have received encouragement. Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) told us that a great deal of "due diligence" obviously would be needed but that she liked the coalition's idea of a public-private partnership and the principle of going underground.

Pedro Ribeiro, spokesman for Mayor Vincent C. Gray (D), told us that the absence of tour-bus parking is a particular problem for managing traffic around the Mall. City officials think the idea is intriguing and worth further exploration, Mr. Ribeiro said.

We think so too.

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

EDITORIALS

SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 2013

The solution to congestion at the Mall could also address some added benefits.

The Washington Post has been our big-ideas champion all along.

Washington Post architecture critic Benjamin Forgey in 2009 criticized the latest DC OP and NCPC and NPS plans for the city and Mall that *“lack the courage and boldness needed for an enlightened 21st century”* and said of the Coalition’s call for a commission *“I bet the response would be terrific. I bet a great majority of Americans would say, yes, we want only the very best for our capital.”*

(<http://www.bizjournals.com/washington/stories/2009/08/17/tidbits6.html?page=all>)

The Washington Post editorialized in 2008: *“The last comprehensive look at the Mall was in 1902 by the McMillan Commission. So there is much merit to the National Coalition to Save Our Mall’s proposal that Congress charter a commission to devise – and then implement – a vision for the coming decades.”* (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/05/24/AR2008052401612.html>)

The Post’s “Shaping the City” columnist Roger Lewis in 2008 praised the Coalition’s idea that *“would bring forth a new, visionary plan.”* (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/12/05/AR2008120501626.html>)

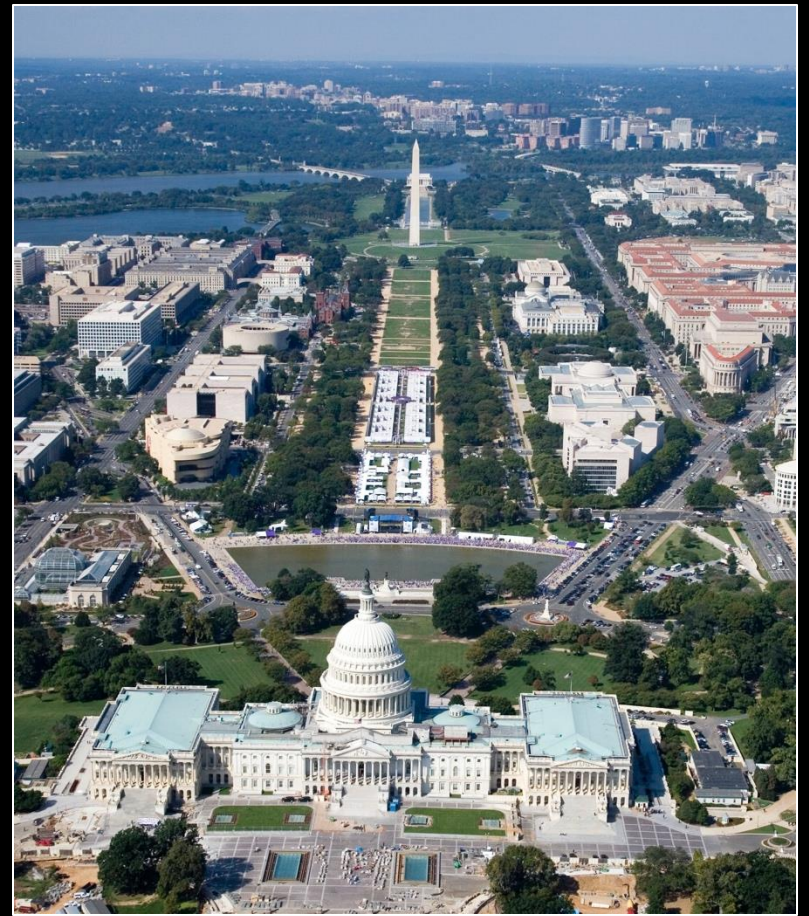
Senior editor Andrew Ferguson of the conservative Weekly Standard stated in 2006: *“It’s a long and honorable line of visionaries Feldman and her friends invite us to join, stretching back through Moore to Downing, and beyond him to the great L’Enfant himself, who had the imagination and pluck to look out on a mess and dare to see a mall.”*

(<http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/005/933yvhs.asp?nopager=1>)

Other thoughtful critics have expressed enthusiasm for a Commission.



Athenian Acropolis

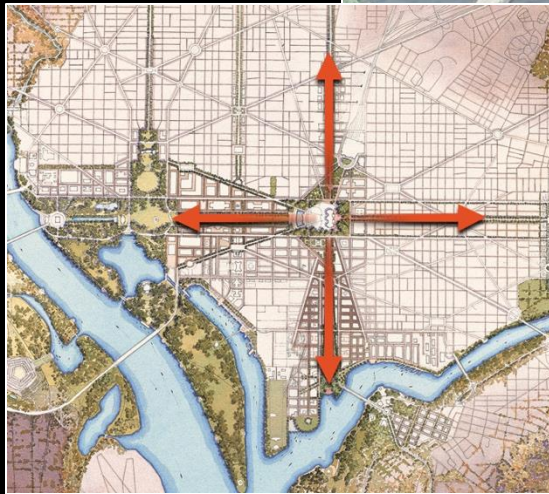


American Acropolis

The Mall is our American Acropolis, symbol of American Democracy — of who we are as a country and people, and who we aspire to be.



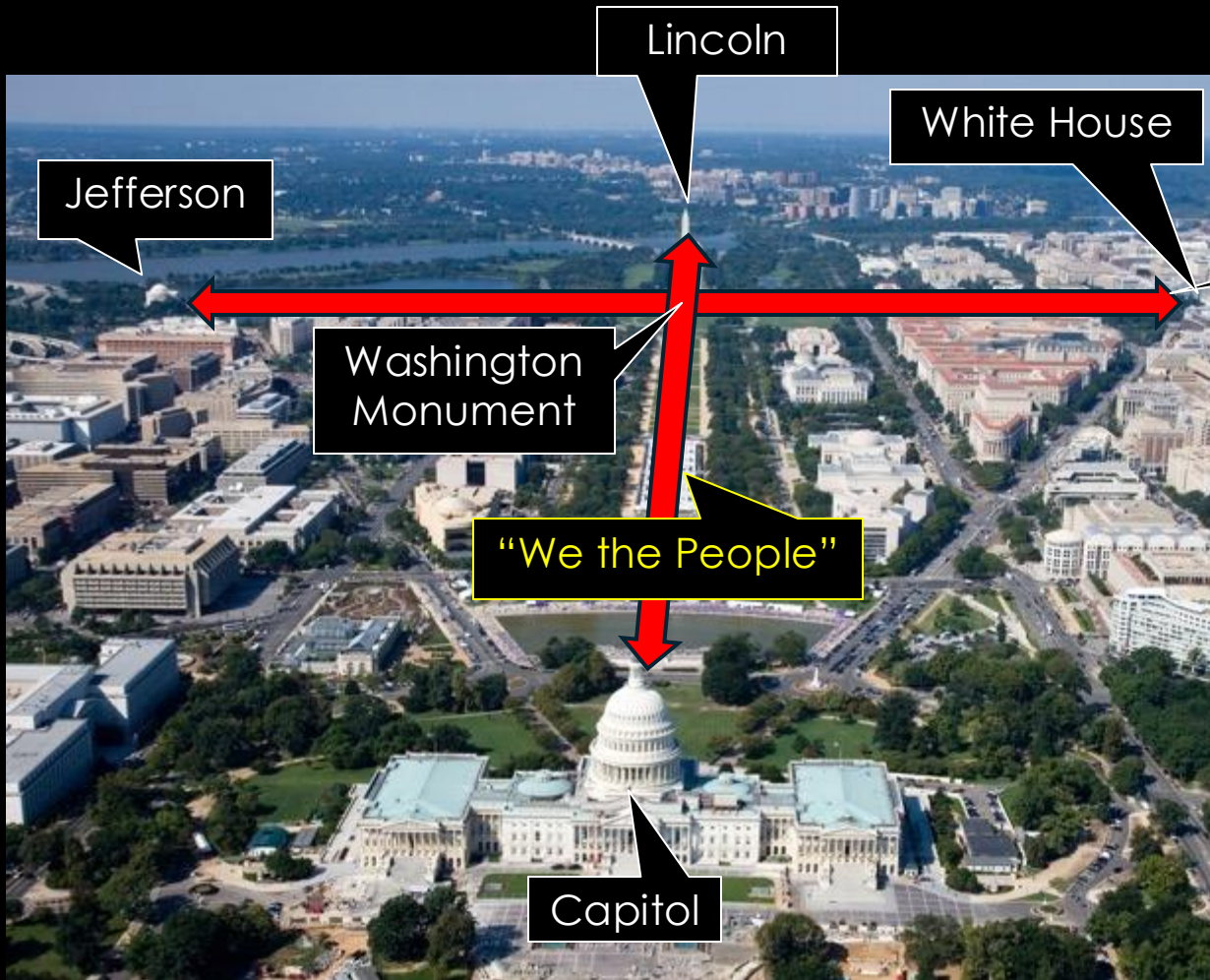
“Completed”?
History never ends.



A COVER OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE
A PROVIDING A NEW VISION CENTER AND METRO STATION
RELOCATES THE SUPREME COURT TO A MORE SYMBOLIC
LOCATION CORRESPONDING WITH ITS IMPORTANCE
BY ARTHUR COTTON MOORE



Instead, a unifying vision for the Mall
in its (and our) 3rd century. . .



1791 L'Enfant Plan



1902 McMillan Plan

... that advances the visionary legacy ...



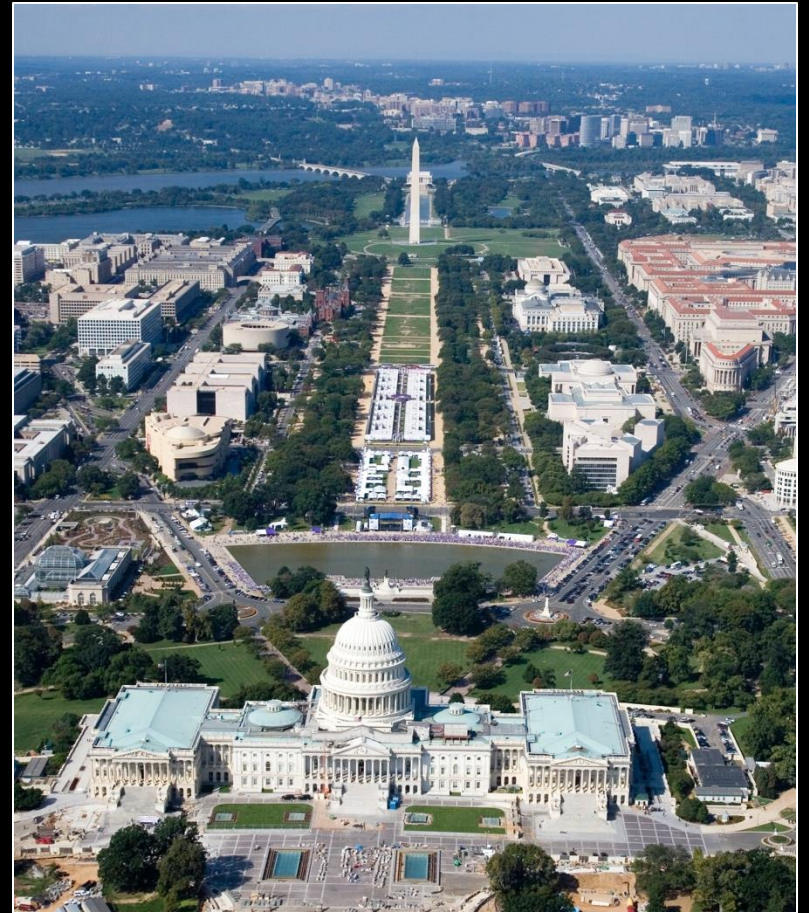
... and keeps the American people at the center of this Stage for American Democracy.



America is going through a traumatic moment in our history. The Mall's ability to educate the public has been overlooked.



The Mall can be our greatest civics teacher to the millions of people who visit the Mall each year, especially students from across the country visiting Washington.



Imagine the Future of American Democracy
with the 3rd Century Mall

National Mall Coalition

www.nationalmallcoalition.org

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