

# NATIONAL MALL UNDERGROUND

*“Making the Mall Resilient for America’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Century”*

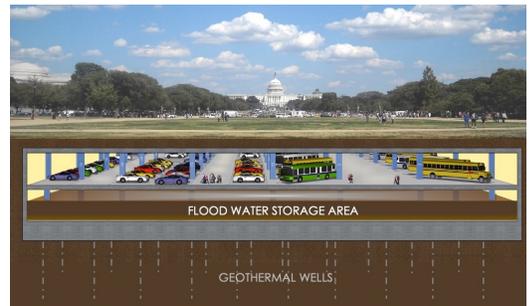
[nationalmallunderground.org](http://nationalmallunderground.org)

The National Mall is subject to devastating stormwater flooding, which in 2006 inundated Smithsonian museums, the National Archives, and Federal Triangle government buildings, threatening the priceless national treasures within them and causing millions of dollars in damage. Despite years of consultations, the multiple Federal and DC government stakeholders have been unable to agree on a solution.<sup>1</sup> **The flood risk remains urgent and unresolved. Congressional action is needed.**



June 2006 flood

The National Mall Coalition proposes to address flooding and make the National Mall more **environmentally sustainable, visitor friendly, and resilient**, in a project known as the National Mall Underground,<sup>2</sup> an underground two-story, multi-purpose flood reservoir/parking facility.



National Mall Underground

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 2018 reviewed the National Mall Underground concept and found: “Flood risk from a storm of the intensity that flooded the Federal Triangle area in 2006 **could be reduced significantly . . . by implementation of the Underground.**”<sup>3</sup>

**Key elements of the multi-purpose project include:** a 30-million-gallon stormwater reservoir; tour bus and car parking for Mall visitors; a welcome center providing visitors to the Mall with an orientation to its history and future as well as the neighboring museums and monuments, and including restrooms, food service, and security and first aid facilities; geothermal wells supplying renewable energy to Smithsonian museums and federal buildings; and rainwater cisterns collecting irrigation water for Mall grass, trees, and gardens.<sup>4</sup>

A preliminary financing plan released in August 2020 **supports the financial feasibility of the project**, based in part on its ability to generate revenue from parking fees, stormwater mitigation payments, and clean energy payments. The financing plan is based upon an assumed project scope and other business and legal assumptions that need to be refined, and therefore the next steps are to refine the project scope and assumptions with the input of key stakeholders, including Congress, the General Services Administration, the National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the District of Columbia, among others. The preliminary financing plan report finds that:

For stakeholders that have been investigating alternative solutions to the costly damage being inflicted on their assets from chronic and recurring flooding, the National Mall Underground can achieve a stormwater mitigation solution at significant cost savings. Of equal value to these federal stakeholders is that the financing plan uses existing federal contracting authorization programs to pay for this stormwater mitigation over time, avoiding the need for upfront appropriated dollars.

The National Mall Coalition presented the concept during a public webinar on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.<sup>5</sup> A shortened 17-minute video of the presentation can be viewed on the National Mall Underground website.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>[https://silverjackets.nfrmp.us/portals/0/doc/dc/FINAL\\_Fed\\_Triangle\\_Flood\\_Workshop\\_Rpt\\_and\\_Appendices\\_Oct2019.pdf](https://silverjackets.nfrmp.us/portals/0/doc/dc/FINAL_Fed_Triangle_Flood_Workshop_Rpt_and_Appendices_Oct2019.pdf)

<sup>2</sup><https://www.nationalmallunderground.org>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.nationalmallcoalition.org/2018/09/army-corps-says-national-mall-coalition-project-solve-mall-flooding/>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.nationalmallcoalition.org/innovation/resilience-to-ensure-the-future/>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.nationalmallunderground.org/exhibit-2/watch-the-flood-resiliency-for-the-national-mall-webinar-hosted-by-aiadc/>

<sup>6</sup><https://www.nationalmallunderground.org/>