

STAFF RECOMMENDATION



Witherell

NCPC File No. 7060

THE NATIONAL MALL DRAFT NATIONAL MALL PLAN

The National Mall
Washington, DC

Submitted by the National Park Service

February 25, 2010

Abstract

The National Park Service has submitted a draft plan for the management and stewardship of the land in its jurisdiction on the National Mall. The plan is a framework for future decision-making and implementation of physical improvements for the protection of the National Mall's renowned natural and cultural resources, new visitor amenities and services, additional accommodations for First Amendment demonstrations and special events, better-linked circulation in a range of modes, accessibility throughout the Mall, additional opportunities for active and passive recreation, and improved visitor information and education. The National Park Service's goal for the National Mall is that it be a model in sustainable urban park development, resource protection, and management.

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

Approval of comments on the draft National Mall Plan, pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)).

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

Comments favorably on the draft National Mall Plan as a well-considered plan that balances equally important requirements for this nationally preeminent public place: the stewardship of the natural and cultural resources of the symbolic, historic landscape; and the encouragement and accommodation of public access and use; as shown on NCPC Map File No. 1.41(00.00)42987.

Commends the National Park Service for meeting the planning and management objectives for the National Mall within the broader planning context of Washington, and for complementing and reinforcing the Monumental Core Framework Plan, which protects the historic landscape of the National Mall by extending some of its qualities to adjacent areas and by creating linkages with the National Mall.

Supports:

- Conservation of the National Mall's nationally significant natural resources through the implementation of best practices for the improvement and long-term protection of the turf lawn and trees, including management of the intensity, duration, and location of special events.
- Development of a visitor transportation system for the National Mall that offers optional interpretation and that is well-linked with transit service and has a coordinated fare structure.
- Improvements in the appearance, number, and variety of visitor amenities and services through the redevelopment of appropriate sites with multi-purpose facilities dispersed throughout the National Mall.
- Improvements to the National Mall as a civic stage to include the redevelopment of the Capitol Reflecting Pool as Union Square, with a comprehensive, high-caliber landscape plan that will connect the National Mall and the U.S. Capitol.
- Provision of full accessibility throughout the National Mall.
- Expansion and separation of the bicycle path system for recreation and circulation, and the rehabilitation of athletic fields to increase capacity, flexibility, and durability.
- Development of new infrastructure so that the National Mall becomes a sustainable urban park.

Recommends that the National Park Service, in the development of the final National Mall Plan:

- Add and update the maps and analysis with the projects now in development by the National Park Service, including the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitors Center, the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool Rehabilitation, and the Potomac Park Levee.
- Prioritize short-term and long-term projects to support progress in the implementation of the Plan.
- Incorporate findings of the current National Mall Turf Study to support the proposed protection of vegetation that defines the historic plan and vistas of the National Mall.

- Amplify the discussion of objectives and strategies for improving sustainable resource management and for meeting the requirements and goals of Executive Order 13514, Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance.

Further recommends that the National Park Service:

- Resume planning and development of the proposed visitor transportation system with its partners.
- Implement the 2003 Olin landscape plan for the Washington Monument Grounds, revising it as warranted in concert with the Smithsonian Institution's development of the National Museum of African American History and Culture and with other anticipated development on the Grounds.

* * *

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Site

The National Mall Plan Area is shown in Figure 1. The National Mall covers 684 acres and received 22.3 million visits in 2008. The Plan Area extends from the foot of the U.S. Capitol— at the Grant Memorial – to the Potomac River west of the Lincoln Memorial; and from Constitution Avenue to Independence Avenue, 15th Street, and the highway bridges south of the Jefferson Memorial.

Much of the open space and commemorative landscape of the National Mall is under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service (NPS), but many government agencies and entities have jurisdiction over lands and roads within and adjacent to the National Mall, including the Architect of the Capitol, the National Gallery of Art, the Smithsonian Institution, the Department of Agriculture, the General Services Administration, the District of Columbia, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. In addition, federal and District of Columbia agencies, including the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), have review and approval authority for planning, historic preservation, commemorative works, and design.

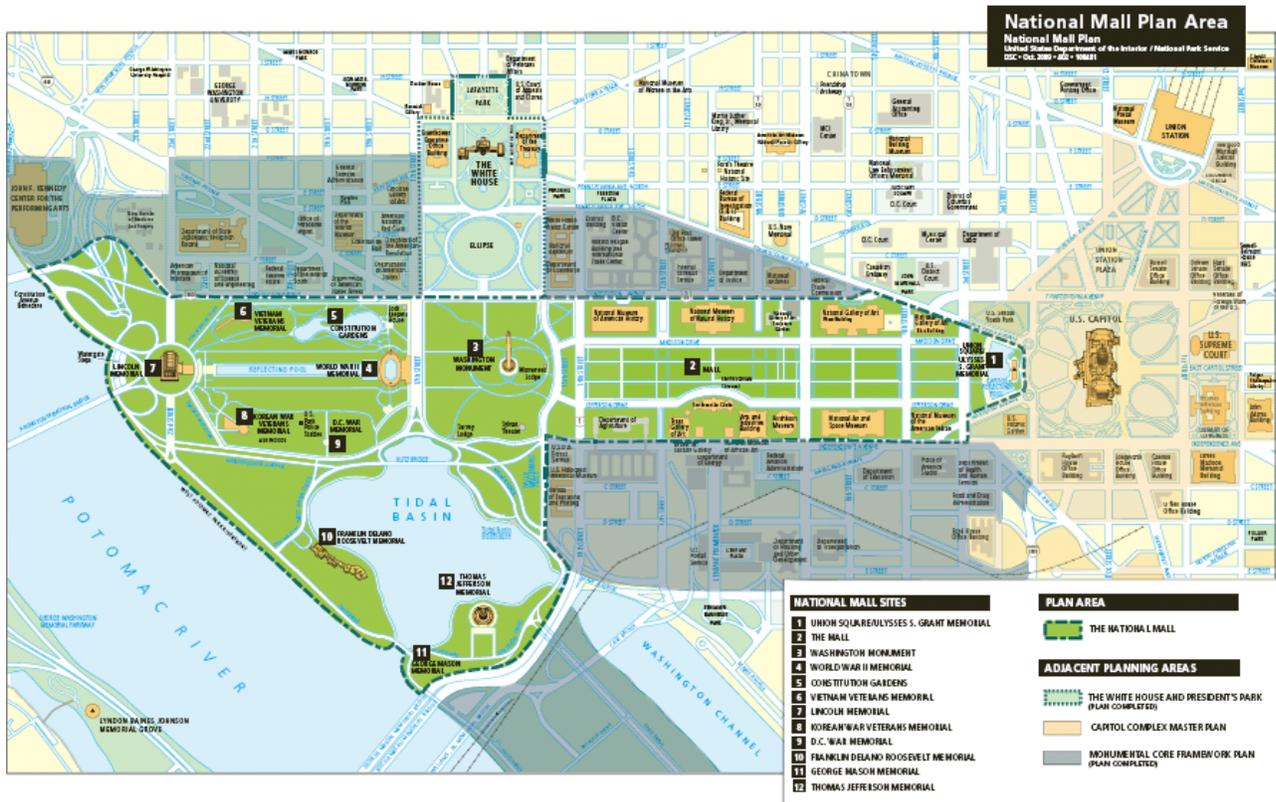


FIGURE 1: National Mall Plan Area

Planning Background and Context

The National Mall is the heart of Washington’s Monumental Core. It is a place of inspiration, contemplation, pilgrimage, education, and recreation. It is a busy hub of local and national activities. It is open greenspace in the heart of Washington. It has been the subject of seminal plans by L’Enfant and the McMillan Commission, as well as significant landscape plans by Andrew J. Downing, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., Skidmore, Owens, and Merrill (SOM), and Laurie Olin, among others. National museums and memorials have reframed and reshaped the appearance and symbolic character of the Mall since the founding of the capital city. This evolutionary growth continues today with a new memorial under construction and sites for a new memorial visitor center and a new national museum selected.

The National Mall is a destination for millions of visitors and thousands of events and activities annually, and is serviced by a range of transportation modes. Ancillary buildings serving the needs of visitors have been a part of the Mall since the nineteenth century and include the historic Monument and Survey Lodges, the Sylvan Theater, and more contemporary restrooms and food kiosks.

NCPC's 1997 *Legacy Plan* is a vision plan for integrating the Monumental Core in the life of the city and extending the qualities and uses of the National Mall throughout the Core and Washington. The 2001 *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* furthers Legacy's goals for the protection of the National Mall's open space. It also advances the public discussion of how to accommodate the continued desire by many Americans to memorialize events and people deemed important to the nation. It recommends attractive and meaningful sites throughout the city, envisioning our capital city as the nation's premier commemorative landscape.

The National Mall Plan observes Congress's establishment of the Reserve in 2003. NPS and NCPC are currently embarked on a joint study entitled *Washington as Commemoration*, which will guide future planning for national commemoration. The current study provides an inventory of the subjects and themes in Washington's commemorative landscape and investigates the commemorative policies and practices of other American and international capital cities.

The *Monumental Core Framework Plan*, completed by NCPC and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) in April 2009, creates the framework for continued implementation of Legacy goals and concepts in three precincts surrounding the National Mall. It articulates specific planning objectives for extending some of the Mall's symbolic qualities and uses throughout the Monumental Core and creating and enhancing physical and visual connections between the National Mall and the surrounding city.

The National Park Service's (NPS) draft National Mall Plan contributes significantly to these planning efforts. In addition to the *Monumental Core Framework Plan (Framework Plan)*, the draft National Mall Plan also complements NPS's 2000 *White House and President's Park Plan*; the District of Columbia's 2008 *Center City Action Agenda*, which redefines central Washington with the Mall as its centerpiece and advances Washington's identity as a waterfront city; and the *Capitol Complex Master Plan*, now in development by the Architect of the Capitol.

The development of the draft Plan has been, in part, a response to increasing public and congressional concern in recent years for the physical appearance and uses of the Mall, awareness of and interest in commemorative works, and debate about the presence and appearance of security barriers.

On April 12, 2005, former NCPC Chairman John Cogbill testified at the invitation of Senator Craig Thomas before the Senate Subcommittee on Natural Parks of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Senator Thomas's interest was planning for future development and growth on the National Mall while "maintaining the National Mall as a place of national significance." Mr. Cogbill emphasized that the *Legacy Plan* is the guiding visionary plan for the next 50 - 100 years and noted Congress's creation of the Reserve on the cross-axis of the Mall in the 2003 reauthorization of the Commemorative Works Act. Mr. Cogbill also testified, "A new Mall master plan would be a valuable tool in preserving its historic landscapes, managing its physical development, and improving its maintenance and services for visitors and residents alike."

NPS introduced the prospective development of the plan for the National Mall to the public in the fall of 2006 with a week-long public symposium in Washington and media events and

interest nationwide. NPS established a website and developed newsletters to inform the public and solicit suggestions and comments. The website now contains a great deal of information about past and current planning and management of the National Mall, including documents describing the historic memorials, features, and landscapes of the Mall; studies and findings on transportation planning, the condition of the elms, and visitor habits and preferences; and public correspondence and comments posted over the past three years.

While developing the draft Plan, NPS staff has met with dozens of school, community, civic, business, and professional organizations, soliciting feedback and answering questions. The public process has been extensive and the public comments far-ranging, from the need for more restrooms and better food options to concern for the physical appearance of the landscape; and from the importance of First Amendment demonstrations on the Mall to the need for full visitor access.

The draft National Mall Plan is contained within a 600-page draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that is currently being read and commented on by the public, government agencies, and organizations during a 90-day comment period. The Commission's discussion and comments occur within this 90-day period and will be considered by NPS as it completes its EIS and final National Mall Plan. NCPC is a cooperating agency for purposes of the National Environmental Policy Act.

NPS is also conducting historic preservation review and consultation under the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act. Section 106 consultation has taken place during each phase of the Plan's development, most intensively and specifically in the spring of 2009, when a regular series of meetings was held to consider the potential effects of possible new structures and landscape alterations to the historic fabric and character of the National Mall. NPS anticipates that the historic preservation review will conclude this summer with the execution of a Programmatic Agreement drafted with the assistance of the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

NPS anticipates returning to the Commission for review of the final National Mall Plan in September 2010.

The National Mall Plan, once it is reviewed and approved, will be implemented with site-specific projects to achieve the Plan's objectives. Additional compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act will be conducted for individual projects. NPS anticipates a multiyear and multidisciplinary planning and design effort. Certain actions may require congressional authorization or revision of federal or park regulations.

Planning Goals - National Mall Plan

The National Mall must function efficiently and flexibly at many levels: as the physical and symbolic setting for our nation's government; as part of Washington's park and open space system; as an integral component of Washington's circulation and transportation networks; as the

setting for many of the nation's most admired memorials and museums; and as a stage for First Amendment demonstrations, national celebrations, and national and regional special events.

The public has expressed concern in recent years for the worn condition and deteriorated appearance of the Mall turf lawn, the stewardship of the natural and cultural resources of the Mall, the sometimes-shabby conditions of visitor facilities, the limited offerings of basic visitor amenities, less-than-full accessibility to and on the Mall, the lack of signs or the cluttered appearance of signs, and some current conditions that don't allow for more sustainable management practices. Current facilities can become overwhelmed by use. Vegetation cannot easily recover, and areas of lawn may be worn to the ground and soils heavily compacted, which in turn adversely affects the vigor of trees and other vegetation. Many walks are not wide enough for current levels of use, and adjacent lawn and trees may be damaged as a result.

The National Mall Plan is intended to provide a comprehensive vision and framework to protect the historic character of the National Mall, to restore the health and beauty of its natural resources, to improve its function as our nation's premier civic space, and to meet the needs of local, national, and international visitors for enjoyment, education, and recreation.

The completed Plan will facilitate the ability of National Mall and Memorial Parks to seek funding for the design and construction of projects; however, completing the Plan does not ensure that all actions will be funded or take place. As the Plan is implemented, most of the proposed projects will provide additional opportunities for public involvement and will undergo agency consultation and review. Some projects might require congressional action or changes in federal or park regulations.

The National Mall Plan is a *framework* for future stewardship, development, design, and implementation. It is akin to the Monumental Core Framework Plan in that it provides a foundation of guidance for the planning and design of an individual project or sector, but within a framework that seeks to balance comprehensive stewardship and the requirements of intensive public use for national and local purposes.

In the implementation of future projects, NPS intends to work with well-respected firms with design expertise commensurate with the national significance of the setting. One example is the work currently underway for the rehabilitation of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool and its surrounding setting. As another example, NPS has suggested that the proposed redevelopment of the Capitol Reflecting Pool at the east end of the Mall to create a new Union Square would be appropriate for a national design competition. The project will require a comprehensive consideration of desired and appropriate uses and will involve the Architect of the Capitol as well as other agencies and organizations. The project will be the subject of broad public consultation, as well.

The draft National Mall calls for refurbishment of the Mall's resources so that (1) its memorials and historic landscapes can be preserved, (2) very high levels of use can be sustained in designated areas, and (3) the needs of visitors can be met.

NPS's stated goals are to:

- Improve resource conditions; establish a standard of quality that invites respect and generates stewardship; and raise the standard of care and maintenance;
- Prepare for intensive levels of use for First Amendment demonstrations, national celebrations, and special events;
- Provide desired experiences, such as opportunities for education, contemplation, rest relaxation, recreation, entertainment, and social experiences;
- Address user capacity, which for this plan is defined as the type and level of visitor use that can be accommodated while sustaining desired resource conditions and visitor experiences on the National Mall;
- Provide for the physical needs, enjoyment, and convenience of visitors and park users, including information, restrooms, food, retail, drinking water, and access.

Other Projects on the National Mall

NPS and the Smithsonian Institution are both proceeding this year with projects funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

NPS is repairing a portion of the Tidal Basin seawall in front of the Jefferson Memorial. NPS is also rehabilitating the District of Columbia War Memorial, returning the memorial to its original function as a concert bandstand. The Commission favorably reviewed the concept plans for the memorial in October 2009.

NPS's largest Recovery Act project is the comprehensive rehabilitation of the Reflecting Pool and the lower approachway to the Lincoln Memorial, including the provision of full accessibility and vehicle barriers on the east side of the memorial. The source and quality of the water in the Reflecting Pool will be addressed. The project will rehabilitate the Elm Walks and improve lighting. The Commission reviewed the concept design for this comprehensive project at its September 2009 meeting and commented favorably. NPS anticipates returning to the Commission in April for further review. All of these projects were designed in concert with the development of the National Mall Plan and reflect the Plan's goals.

Construction is underway for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in West Potomac Park. The draft National Mall Plan recommends reviewing circulation and visitor use near the Tidal Basin after the memorial opens to assess if adjustments in access and visitor amenities are necessary. The potential location of another restroom facility near the Roosevelt Memorial and Ohio Drive is indicated in the draft Plan, since this part of West Potomac Park is expected to have greater visitation due to the memorials as well as increased recreational activity.

NPS will install a comprehensive sign and wayfinding program for Mall and off-Mall destinations this spring and summer. The project is funded by the Centennial Fund, matched by

funds raised by the Trust for the National Mall. Comprehensive wayfinding is a component of all alternatives in the Mall Plan's draft EIS.

In 2009, the Commission approved plans for the reconstruction of a portion of the levee in West Potomac Park and its extension eastward across 17th Street, NW onto the Washington Monument Grounds. The approved site plan includes the opportunity to redesign circulation and landscape in the area between Constitution Gardens Lake and 17th Street, NW, and for programming the now-vacant Lockkeeper's House with some of the visitor amenities proposed for this area in the draft National Mall Plan. The draft Plan recommends constructing a multi-purpose building (similar to the National Gallery of Art's Sculpture Garden restaurant pavilion) for dining, recreation, relaxation, and entertainment on the plaza at the east end of the lake.

NPS is proceeding with design development, consultation, and review of the proposed Vietnam Memorial Visitors Center, to be located on a site west of Bacon Drive.

The Smithsonian Institution (SI) is using ARRA funds this year for necessary repairs to the Arts and Industries Building, including proposed replacement of the (non-original) roof and windows, and repair of exterior and interior building fabric. SI is considering possible future uses for the now-vacant building. The National Museum of the American Latino Community Commission Act was signed into law in 2008. The commission is assessing the building as a possible location for a new national museum.

The Hirshhorn Museum has proposed a seasonal pavilion and enhanced programming of its courtyard during two months of every year.

By far the most significant construction project by the Smithsonian Institution on the National Mall is the National Museum of African American History and Culture, to be constructed on the Washington Monument Grounds between Constitution Avenue and Madison Drive, and 14th and 15th Streets. The Smithsonian and NCPC are co-lead agencies in the development of an Environmental Impact Statement for the project, and SI has engaged many consulting parties and agencies in the ongoing historic preservation review.

Proposal – The Draft National Mall Plan

The nation's premier civic space will be refurbished so that high levels of use can be perpetuated and the needs of visitors met in an energy-efficient and sustainable manner. Its memorials and large areas of open space will be protected. The designed historic landscape will be protected and will continue to support significant national events and accommodate contemporary visitor needs and uses. A more coherent pedestrian environment within the park will be created.

NPS will emphasize the National Mall as a year-round destination. The draft Plan addresses improvements in conditions and facilities for First Amendment demonstrations and special events. Individuals and families will find better access to the Mall's open space through better circulation and transportation modes. Visitors will be better informed by a comprehensive system of wayfinding and signs, and made to feel more welcome with additional, improved, and

accessible restrooms, food service, and information. The draft Plan envisions more diverse opportunities for public enjoyment, including educational, cultural, and musical programs, as well as active and passive recreation.

The draft National Mall Plan’s proposals are illustrated in a series of maps that will be referred to throughout this report. Because the draft document is also being used in fulfillment of NPS’s obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act, the composite map illustrating the overall framework for the Plan’s proposals is labeled “Preferred Alternative” and is shown as Figure 2 in this report.

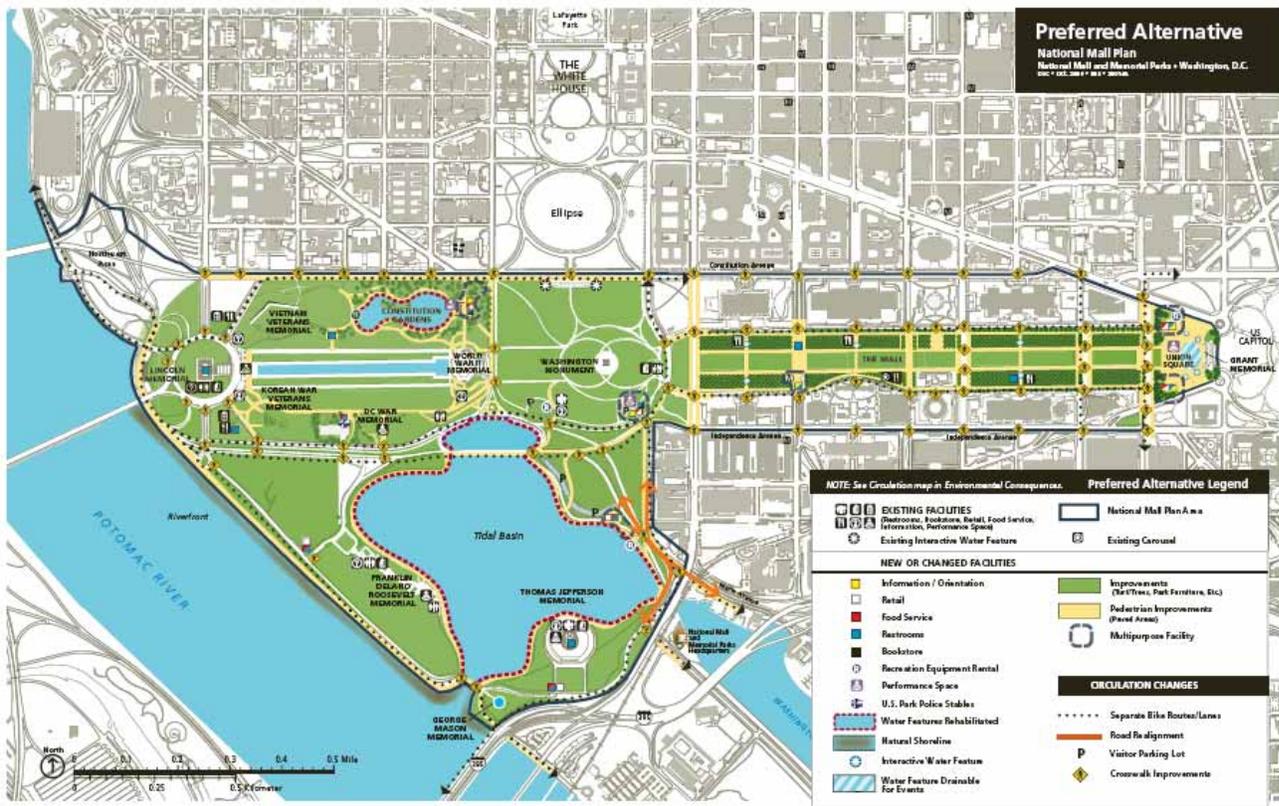


FIGURE 2: Draft National Mall Plan (also referred to as the Preferred Alternative)

Below, through page 13 of this report, is a summary of the proposals by area (east to west, and then north to south). Additional maps in the draft Plan follow. Discussion of the major proposals of the draft Plan, which are illustrated in Figure 2, follows in the “Analysis” section of this report, beginning on page 19.

The Mall

Union Square (the Capitol Reflecting Pool)

- Restore the Grant Memorial as the focal point of a symmetrical, formally laid out civic square.

- Create a popular, active, and dignified day and evening destination
- Design it so it can be easily transformed into a larger venue for First Amendment demonstrations and events.
- Provide infrastructure for demonstrations and events
- Determine the location, size and character of visitor amenities through a comprehensive design plan.
- Consider a smaller reflecting pool to make the space more suited to various uses and reduce water use.
- Consider shade structures for visitor comfort and relaxation.
- Provide facilities (located outside view corridors) such as restrooms, drinking water and recreation equipment rentals.

The Mall

- Improve and protect the turf lawns and elm trees.
- Remove compacted soils and replace with engineered soils capable of withstanding intensive use.
- No longer make the elm tree panels available for temporary event facilities, such as tents, temporary structures, and vehicles.
- Redesign areas in the 8th Street and 12th Street axes for higher levels of use and to support event logistical, operational, and temporary facilities.
- Design a welcome area at the head of the Metro escalators at 12th Street and Jefferson Drive, SW, to include a visitor contact station, high-capacity public restrooms, multiple orientation maps, and a tactile model or pavement map of the National Mall, along with shaded seating.
- Pave gravel pathways as part of a coordinated paving plan for the National Mall; the new surface (to be determined) should be a low-maintenance, sustainable, and universally accessible material to improve circulation, facilitate events, and maintain improved landscape conditions.
- Widen some north-south sidewalks to accommodate demonstrations, events, visitor amenities, or recreation.
- Design subtle grading of the turf panels to maintain the appearance of continuous turf in long views.

Washington Monument Grounds

- Reopen the Washington Monument to visitors in the evening.
- Replace the Sylvan Theater with a multipurpose facility on the Washington Monument Grounds at the northwest corner of 15th Street and Independence Avenue, SW, in the swale below the level of adjacent roads.
- Offer food service, retail, information, education, integrated exhibits, restrooms, and performance space in the new facility.
- Protect and improve views of the Washington Monument and the north-south vista between the Thomas Jefferson Memorial and the White House by removing the current visitor facilities buildings at the Tidal Basin.

- Provide utility infrastructure on the grounds for First Amendment demonstrations and special events.
- Improve pedestrian circulation to areas north and south of Independence Avenue, including access to the southwest waterfront and East Potomac Park.
- Construct a system of separate dedicated bike trails.
- Adapt the historic Survey Lodge for services and parking for visitors with disabilities.
- Provide bicycle and recreation equipment rentals.
- Continue to provide visitor information and restrooms at the Monument Lodge.

West Potomac Park

Constitution Gardens

- Construct a multipurpose visitor destination on the paved plaza at the east end of the lake.
- Provide food service, restrooms, education, retail, recreation equipment rentals (model boats, portable lawn chairs), and space for partner activities
- Provide a flexible performance space, stage, or gazebo.
- Rebuild the lake to be self-sustainable, with a non-potable, sustainable water source.
- Offer urban recreational activities, such as fishing and model boating.
- Relocate the historic canal lockkeeper's house away from the corner of 17th and Constitution Avenue NW.
- Adapt the lockkeeper's house to serve some of the amenities envisioned for this area, in concert with the proposed multi-purpose building. .

Vietnam Veterans Memorial

- Provide additional seating in the vicinity of the memorial for contemplation and rest.

Lincoln Memorial and Grounds

- Expand the restrooms within the Lincoln Memorial.
- Develop a ceremonial use for the Watergate steps.
- Construct a restroom in the vicinity of the south refreshment stand on French Drive.

Korean War Veterans Memorial.

- Widen the walks on the west side of the memorial to accommodate changing circulation patterns and group visitation.

Ash Woods

- Rebuild the U.S. Park Police stables and redesign the area to be compatible with the historic character and quality of the National Mall.
- Make the paddocks part of the visitor experience, with educational exhibits about the Park Police and horse patrols.
- Replace the Ash Woods restrooms with a new restroom building nearer the stables.
- Provide food service near the new restroom, if warranted by increased visitation.

Tidal Basin

- Create a sense of arrival at the Tidal Basin by redesigning pedestrian circulation and parking.
- Provide recreational experiences for strolling, sightseeing, bicycling, and boating.
- Install pedestrian lighting in a manner that would not affect the ambience of the memorial's lighting.
- Rebuild the Tidal Basin seawalls (based on future engineering recommendations) above tidewater.
- Retain the seawalls' historic appearance while accommodating wider walks and improving bicycling/vehicle circulation and safety.
- Develop a system of separate bicycle lanes or trails.
- Widen and separate walks for pedestrians and bicyclists on or near Inlet, Outlet, and Kutz Bridges.
- Remove the recreation equipment rental and refreshment facilities on northeast side of the Tidal Basin.
- Construct a new structure or structures for these functions and restrooms and seating in same general location, avoiding the north-south axial viewshed.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial

- Assess new visitor use patterns after completion of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial.
- Provide a small food service and restroom facility near Ohio Drive, if warranted by demand.

West Potomac Park Riverfront

- Establish sustainable, vegetated shoreline along the Potomac River.
- Provide areas for seating, fishing, and enjoyment of the river
- Provide nodes for water taxi service or for launching small, hand-carried watercraft (such as canoes or kayaks).
- Develop or separate bicycle lanes, trails, and improve pedestrian walkways along Ohio Drive.

Thomas Jefferson Memorial and Grounds

- Allow no special event stage, roof, or walls to obstruct the view to the White House from the north plaza of the memorial.
- Redesign the parking area south of the memorial for demonstrations and special events; provide utilities.
- Construct bicycle lanes or trails for safer or improved access near the memorial and to the I-395/14th Street bridges.
- Construct perimeter security for the memorial, handicap parking, and tour bus access.
- Rebuild the refreshment stand and provide restrooms, outdoor seating, and tables.

Conservation of the Natural Resources of the National Mall

The Conservation Zoning Map at Figure 3 illustrates how NPS manages its stewardship responsibilities for the natural and cultural resources of the Mall and balances them with accommodation of high intensity First Amendment demonstrations, events, and recreational activities. The draft Plan seeks to accommodate as much activity as possible in the most sustainable manner possible. NPS proposes that, in future, special events be directed to areas of the Mall designated for “High Use”. The soils in these areas will be reengineered and the health of the turf protected through appropriate periods of activity and rest. The center panels of the Mall will continue to be a focus for permitted special events. As distinguished from permits for *special events*, permits for *First Amendment demonstrations* will continue to be issued by NPS for areas throughout the Mall, as requested by demonstration organizers.

The Conservation Zoning map also shows “Character Protection” areas, including the elm panels, collectively one of the most significant compositional elements of the Mall. Conceived by the McMillan Commission, the panels frame the central axial greensward and shape the universally recognized scale and formal qualities of the National Mall. While Dutch elm disease affected stands of elms throughout the country in the past half-century, NPS preserved most of its elms through research and careful treatment. Following removal of the temporary office buildings (the tempos) by the 1970s, the elm panels were finally fully planted. Individual trees are replaced as necessary, but most of the elms are mature and contribute to the landscape composition envisioned by the McMillan Commission.

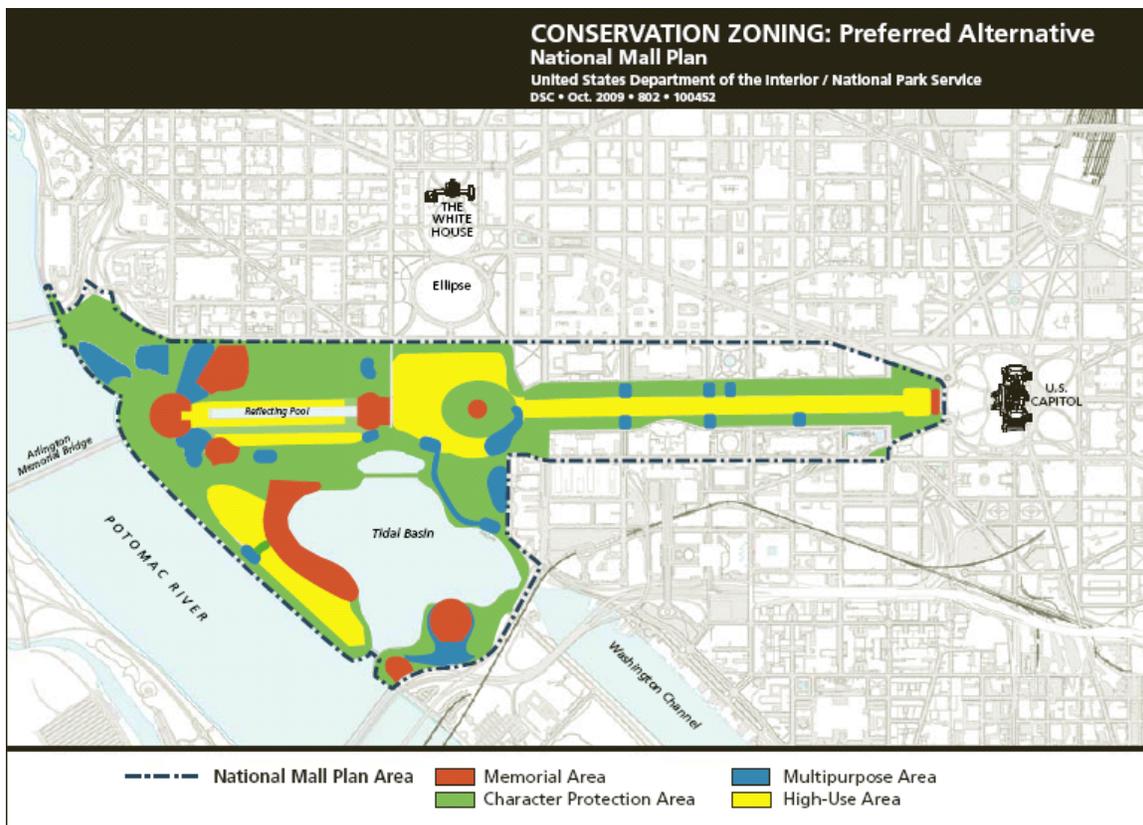


FIGURE 3: Conservation Zoning

The enjoyment of the Elm Panels by individuals or groups of visitors in walking, sitting, and picnicking in the elm panels will be welcomed by the addition of benches and possibly small water features on the north-south paths. The draft Plan proposes that the elm panels no longer be available for temporary facilities for special events, such as tents, temporary structures, and vehicles.

NPS issues permits for temporary *special events* on the Mall, with conditions for use by the events' organizers. Tents, vehicles, and hundreds or thousands of event participants walking to or standing in line at events tents and vehicles (such as for food service) further compact the soil around the elm roots, damage or kill turf underneath the tents if they are covered for a prolonged period, and contribute to the creation of trash in these areas. Temporary utilities are often installed along the ground and covered with matting to prevent tripping, which further damages the grass.

The Center for Urban Ecology, a research center for the National Park Service, has recently published a history and management plan for the elms of the Monumental Core that recommends preferred treatment for the protection of the elms. In addition, NPS has also retained the firm Hellmuth, Obata, and Kassabaum (HOK), in collaboration with nationally noted landscape experts, to research and produce a detailed treatment and protection plan for the turf of the National Mall. The National Mall Turf Study, which NPS considers one of the first and most significant implementation measures of the National Mall Plan, will be completed in the fall of 2010.

“Multipurpose” areas on the map in Figure 3 indicate where amenities for visitors will be constructed, expanded, or improved. The dearth of restrooms on the National Mall has been particularly noted by the public in comments to NPS. Additional locations for food service will be provided, usually in proximity to restrooms. Information for visitors will be more readily available. NPS's strategy is to disperse visitor amenities throughout the Mall, but to aggregate the types of amenities, as appropriate, where they will occur. Multi-purpose facilities are proposed for the east end of the National Mall, for the east end of Constitution Gardens Lake, in a new structure to replace the Sylvan Theater, and in a new building or buildings to replace the paddle boat rental facility at the north side of the Tidal Basin. A small restroom building is proposed near the food kiosk in front of the Air and Space Museum, in an area within the Elm Panel where the trees are less mature and construction can be accommodated.

Circulation

The Circulation Map at Figure 4 graphically summarizes existing, improved, and proposed new routes, modes of circulation, and linkages on and around the National Mall. It includes two proposed visitor transportation routes that are described further in a Finding of No Significant Impact dated February 5, 2010 for NPS's 2006 *Washington, DC Visitor Transportation Study for the National Mall and Surrounding Park Areas*.

The construction of separate, safer paths for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles is a prominent feature of the circulation plan. Routes on Ohio Drive, on Independence Avenue, around the Tidal Basin, on 15th Street, and on Madison Drive will receive particular attention. Unsafe

chokepoints at the Kutz, Inlet, and Outlet Bridges will be altered or redesigned. Bicycle connections between the Jefferson Memorial and the I-395/14th Street bridge corridor will be created or improved.

Crosswalks improvements will provide better pedestrian visibility and safety, especially near the Tidal Basin, Maine Avenue, and 15th Street, NW -- an area where the *Framework Plan* also recommends adding or improving pedestrian connections.

Tidal Basin boat service will be implemented, both for excursions and for drop-offs at various points. A proposed circulation route across the Basin is shown on the map.

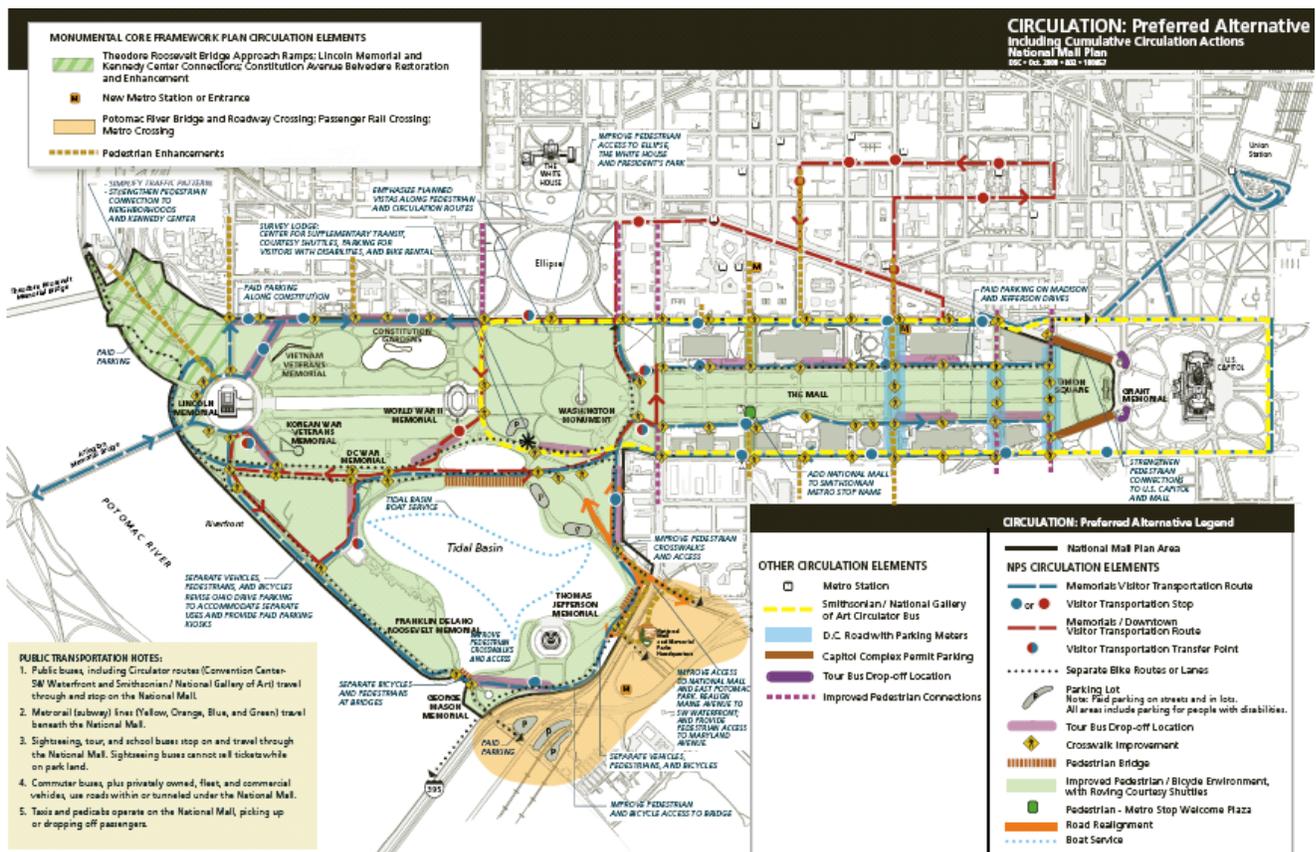


FIGURE 4: Circulation

Parking meters will be added on Madison and Jefferson Drives, on Constitution Avenue, and in all parking lots to encourage alternate means of arrival to the National Mall and to create revenue to subsidize other transportation modes, such as the proposed visitor transportation system. (3rd, 4th, and 7th Streets, NW are District of Columbia roads that already contain parking meters.) The map also designates tour bus drop-off locations.

Visitors with limited mobility will experience welcome improvements in access and services. The Survey Lodge, near the southwest corner of the Washington Monument Grounds, will be dedicated to providing supplementary transit such as electric scooters and courtesy shuttles to sites around the Mall. Handicap parking will be provided at this location, as well as in all parking lots. The repurposing of the Survey Lodge is another example of the improved circulation linkages in the draft Plan; the lodge will become a node that links transit, handicap parking, courtesy shuttles and electric scooters, a bicycle trail, bicycle racks and rental, and tour bus drop-off.

NPS proposes that the name “National Mall” be added to the Smithsonian Metrorail station name. A visitor welcome area with orientation maps, information, and restrooms will be sited and designed near the top of the Metro escalators.

Pennsylvania and Maryland Avenues, NW, adjacent to the Capitol Reflecting Pool, indicated in brown, are used for permit parking for the Capitol Complex. The draft Mall Plan recommends strengthening pedestrian connections to the U.S. Capitol and the Mall in these corridors.

The D.C. Circulator’s seasonal route is shown in yellow on the map. Two proposed visitor transportation routes, with stops, are indicated in red and blue on the map and are described further in the following section of this report.

Transportation Study Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

NPS recently released its Finding for its 2006 *Visitor Transportation Study*. The purpose of the study was to develop a range of convenient transportation services coordinated with long-term transit planning for Washington, DC. NPS found that its preferred alternative best met the purpose of the study by “providing convenient two-way transportation service, maximizing interconnection points, providing choices in level of interpretation, and expanding service to a greater number of desired visitor destinations.”

NPS selected a hybrid solution that offers many of the advantages of public transit with flexible options for interpretation, if desired by visitors. The preferred alternative calls for two proposed new interconnected routes in the Monumental Core. (Service to Arlington National Cemetery will be extended to the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial.) A one-way loop (shown in red in Figure 4) would connect Downtown, the Federal Triangle, the Mall, and West Potomac Park. A two-way route (shown in blue) would connect Union Station with the length and breadth of the National Mall and would extend to sites across Memorial Bridge.

Access will be provided to 39 visitor destinations on and off the Mall. New transit stops will be located within easy walking access of Metrorail destinations. NPS envisions that service will provide basic visitor orientation by drivers or brochures. Riders will have a choice of additional educational or interpretive services through a range of potential audio/electronic options, including handheld devices or headphone plug-ins at each seat.

NPS’s preferred alternative does not preclude some route or stop modifications or the potential for pay-per-ride options. NPS intends to make ticketing options as seamless as possible for visitors through the integration of the SmarTrip card with future services.

Vehicles and interpretive materials will be universally accessible. Additional access will be allowed for Segways and electric scooters along the existing trail system on the Mall, as well as on Ohio Drive, SW and Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. When used as a mobility assistive device, Segways and electric scooters are permitted throughout the Mall, including all facilities, sidewalks, and trails. NPS already has a policy of universal access for bicyclists within the parks; improvements in trails will improve conditions for bicyclists.

Recreation

Permitted activities on athletic fields are shown in Figure 5. NPS issues permits for fields or courts. Under a memorandum of agreement with the District of Columbia government, the District also issues permits for field use. NPS regulations restrict use in case of wet grounds, and activities are permitted at the discretion of the superintendent. Activities include softball, soccer, football, kickball, Frisbee, kite flying, rugby, and catch. The fields are well worn and most lack an irrigation system.

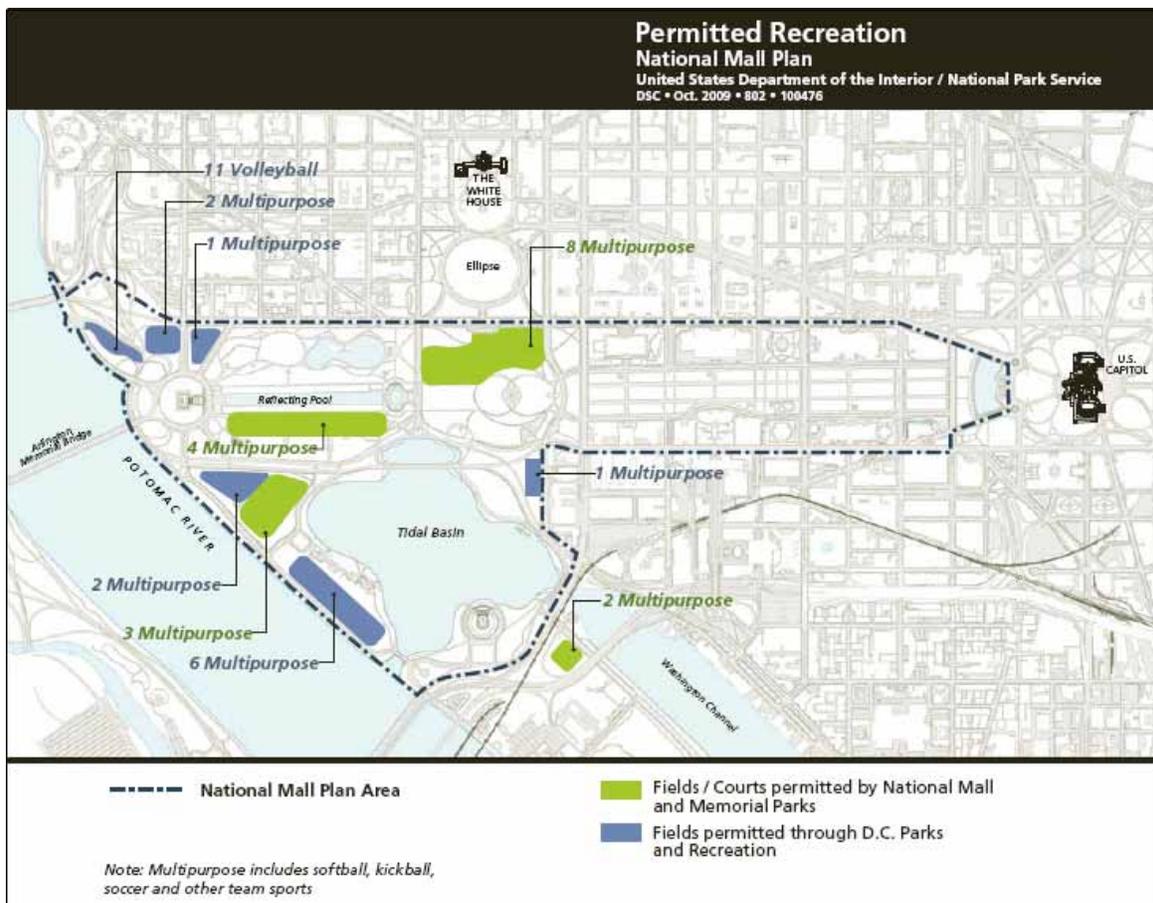


FIGURE 5: Permitted Recreation

The draft Plan proposes improvements to the condition of the soil and turf so that the fields can durably withstand a high intensity of use, thereby increasing capacity for games. The fields are multi-purpose fields, with the intended purpose of allowing flexibility in the scheduling and type of sport played on them. One of the goals of *CapitalSpace* is to increase capacity for athletic fields in federal and District of Columbia open space.

NPS notes that it will continue working with NCPC to mitigate the loss of one multipurpose field for the construction of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitors Center.

For passive and informal recreation, the Circulation map indicates proposed improvements in the addition and type of facilities and recreational opportunities, in improved surfaces and separated paths, in more points of access, and in safer conditions for bicycling, walking, jogging, in-line skating, and boating of various kinds. Equipment rentals (including boats, kites, and bicycles) and bicycle racks are proposed at several locations in West Potomac Park.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

The staff recommends that the Commission comment favorably on the draft National Mall Plan as a well-considered plan that balances equally important requirements for this nationally preeminent public place: the stewardship of the natural and cultural resources of the symbolic, historic landscape and the encouragement and accommodation of public access and use.

The National Mall Plan complements the Monumental Core Framework Plan and is one component in the broader planning initiative for the Monumental Core and surrounding urban precincts.

The draft Plan constitutes a framework plan for the stewardship and management of visitors to the memorials and open space on the National Mall under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. It is a framework for future detailed site planning and subsequent project design and implementation. With an approved National Mall Plan, NPS will be in a position to seek funding to begin the fine-grained programming and design that will lead to improvements in the health of natural resources, the appearance of facilities, and access and circulation to and around the Mall.

Staff commends NPS for a draft Plan that reflects and responds to comments that the staff has heard in meetings or read in correspondence during the past three years. The draft Plan has benefitted greatly from a high level of local and national engagement and public comment.

The National Mall is not only a physical place but a conceptual place, one that Americans respond to with pride and emotion during visits to memorials or participation in demonstrations and events, but also with concern and frustration at the sometimes shabby physical conditions and the dearth of visitor services and amenities of the type that are taken for granted in other public parks or venues.

The Commission's comments and recommendations will assist NPS in further development and refinement of the draft Plan, in the successful and meaningful conclusion of the environmental and historic preservation outcomes, and in the submission of a final National Mall Plan to the Commission that is responsive to recommendations made by the Commission and many others during the current public comment period.

The Project Analysis section of this report provides staff comments in support of major proposals in the draft Plan, in the order in which they appear in the Executive Director's recommendations.

Conservation of Natural Resources

Staff supports the protection of the character-defining natural resources of the National Mall. Even aside from the historic and symbolic qualities of the Mall, the landscape should be a beautiful and welcoming environment. The health and appearance of the trees and turf lawn of the Mall are high priorities for the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior, and for Congress. NPs undertook comprehensive Mall planning in 2005 in response to public and official concern for the worn appearance of the National Mall. Preservation of the turf and trees through appropriate permitting of special events on the Mall is a responsible and reasonable way to manage these significant natural resources and allow them to recover after heavy use.

NPS has long experience in and scientific observation of the care of the elm panels that have led it to recommend that the panels and other parts of the Mall with trees of special status no longer be available for the installation of temporary structures for special events. Special events organizers will continue to use the center panel of the Mall and other "high use" areas such as the Washington Monument Grounds and open space in West Potomac Park (illustrated in the Conservation Zoning Map at Figure 3).

Staff recommends that NPS incorporate the research and recommendations of HOK's National Mall Turf Study in its environmental Record of Decision for the National Mall Plan and in the final National Mall Plan itself.

While supporting the active use of the National Mall for national festivals and large events that bring visitors to the city and to the Mall, staff notes that the Monumental Core Framework Plan envisions other locations near the Mall and in East Potomac Park for holding national celebrations and events. The Framework Plan recommends landscape improvements to the character and quality of the nearby public spaces (such as 10th Street, SW) and associated improvements to pedestrian and transit connections so that these public spaces will be considered by the public to be desirable, convenient, and inspiring locations for special events. The Framework Plan's recommendations are intended to reduce the heavy demand for *special events* on the National Mall and to protect the natural and cultural resources of the Mall's historic landscape.

NPS's practice of reviewing and issuing permits for *First Amendment demonstrations* at locations requested by demonstration organizers will continue.

Visitor Transportation

Staff supports the implementation of visitor transportation routes to and through the National Mall that will replace the current tour system. NPS proposes a transportation system with clean fuel vehicles that will run regular, marked routes with transit stops, and that will be linked to other modes such as the DC Circulator, Metrorail, Metrobus, tour buses (parked at Union Station and elsewhere), and bicycle paths and lanes on and near the Mall. While basic orientation will be provided by the driver and brochures or maps, interpretation will be optional and provided by electronic means. The use of handheld devices or plug-in headphones allows interpretation to be flexibly tailored for content, language, and age group. The staff supports NPS's proposal to install parking meters on several of the park roads to produce revenue that can be used to subsidize the cost of the transportation service.

NPS has released its decision in a Finding. Important details about the vehicles and the costs still must be developed. Staff recommends that NPS resume discussions with its partners to plan the development of the new system. Staff recommends that the new system be well-linked with transit service, that the fare structure be coordinated and include pay-per-ride options, and that ticketing options be as seamless as possible through integration of the SmarTrip card.

Improvements in Visitor Amenities

Insufficient in number, location, type, and quality, current visitor amenities will be overhauled through implementation of the Mall Plan. Staff supports the co-location of food service and restrooms where possible, and the development of multi-purpose facilities at several nodes throughout the National Mall that will provide amenities to visitors and residents. These amenities can include food service, rest rooms, education and information, and entertainment or performances in some venues.

Staff agrees with NPS that dispersal of these amenities throughout the Mall, located and designed appropriately, is the correct approach. Suggestions for the reuse of the Smithsonian's Arts and Industries Building as a visitor center for the Mall have been made. Regardless of the fact that the building is currently vacant or that future ideas for the building will be considered by the Smithsonian Institution, the National Mall is two miles long, and visitors should expect to find well-located restrooms, food service, and information within a reasonable walking distance. The proposed multi-purpose facilities have suggested uses in the draft Plan, including food service, restrooms, education and information, and even entertainment or performances in some venues.

Furthermore, one of the draft Plan's goals – and one of the Monumental Core Framework Plan's goals -- is to increase the number of accepted and well-used entry points to the National Mall and the flow of visitors to, through, and throughout the Mall. The comprehensive wayfinding system has been designed with that object in mind. Dispersed locations for amenities, information, and education will encourage the public to visit and experience all parts of the National Mall.

Staff strongly supports the development of a facility similar to the National Gallery of Art's Sculpture Garden Pavilion at the east end of Constitution Gardens and recommends that NPS make it an implementation priority. Along with additional proposals for small boating on the lake, the east end of Constitution Gardens has the potential to be a significant contribution to the recreational use and enjoyment of the lake by local residents and visitors.

Redevelopment of the Capitol Reflecting Pool as Union Square

Staff considers this draft Plan proposal to be one of the linchpins of the National Mall Plan. The area is now used for both First Amendment demonstrations and permitted special events, but the area is not adequately equipped to support the equipment typically required for large events. The draft Plan proposes providing utilities, public restrooms, food service, and other services so that the east end of the Mall at the foot of the U.S. Capitol can become as attractive in appearance as it is prominent in location. The provision of a public square designed for special events and demonstrations (or designed to be convertible to such uses) will attract groups as well as individual visitors to this prominent location and help reduce wear on the turf and trees of the National Mall.

The McMillan Plan's vision of a formal French garden landscape here was never implemented. Some trees from the later Olmsted, Jr. landscape plan of the 1930s do survive at the periphery. In the early 1970s, following the construction of the Center Leg Freeway, the reflecting pool was built over the highway, but the pool was not integrated through a compelling landscape design with the surrounding land managed by the Architect of the Capitol. The Capitol Reflecting Pool provides a beautiful image of the Capitol dome but the area around it can seem austere, shade is insufficient in the summer, and circulation through the site is peripheral. Although the Grant Memorial draws visitors, as does the U.S. Botanic Garden to the south, visitors usually do not linger once they have taken photographs. The area is not commensurate in quality with other areas on the central axis of the National Mall. .

The site demands the highest achievement in comprehensive landscape planning, programming, and design. The redevelopment must involve the active participation of the Architect of the Capitol, the National Gallery of Art, the Smithsonian Institution, and the General Services Administration, among others. The American public and the nation's most talented and capable designers must be engaged. NPS intends to do just that, and has suggested that a national design competition would be appropriate for this site. When plans for redesign begin, a public discussion of desirable design qualities and uses (such as the degree of formality, type of water features, location and type of visitor amenities, the nature of the programmed uses) will inform the redesign process.

Staff recommends that the redesign and redevelopment of the Capitol Reflecting Pool as Union Square be an early priority and supports a comprehensive design plan of the highest quality, perhaps through a national design competition.

Accessibility

NPS welcomes the opportunity in this Plan to address comprehensively the needs of mobility-impaired visitors to the Mall through the establishment of a convenient central location at the Survey Lodge for courtesy shuttles, electric scooters, and handicap parking. Full accessibility at the west end of West Potomac Park between the Reflecting Pool and the Lincoln Memorial will be provided through the current ARRA-funded rehabilitation project. The draft Plan also recommends paving the gravel paths of the Mall to create a more even and dust-free walking surface. This is a subject that has engaged public opinion and comments for many years. NPS must develop its proposals for the paths in consultation with the public and a range of experts. Staff supports the provision of services and vehicles for visitors needing mobility assistance throughout the Mall, but encourages NPS to fully inform the public as it develops and designs its plans for Mall paths.

Improvements to the Bicycle Path Network and Athletic Fields

The National Mall is located at the center or confluence of a regional network of bicycle routes. The draft Plan recognizes the need to add, improve the condition of, and separate bicycle paths for the region's many bicyclists who ride on the Mall for recreation or who commute across the Mall. Placing bicycle racks throughout the Mall, especially near transit nodes, and developing a program for bicycle rental will significantly improve access to the Mall, reduce the intrusion of paved parking lots, and improve the health and appearance of the Mall's natural resources.

The public's concern for the appearance of the Mall's turf extends to the athletic fields. Local leagues sometimes experience the poor quality of the fields, and NPS and the District experience difficulties in scheduling games. If the soil is re-engineered so that the fields are more durable, the result will be greater capacity for athletic use, since the fields will recover quickly from high-intensity use.

Staff supports the use of the Mall for bicycle circulation on designated and well-designed paths, and the improvement of playing fields so that they will have better appearance and health, and support a greater capacity, which are *CapitalSpace* goals.

The Executive Director noted in his Finding of No Significant Impact for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitor Center that mitigation for the loss of athletic fields on the site of the Center would be required. At the June 4, 2009 meeting, at which the Commission commented on the revised concept design for the Center, the Commission noted that NPS had not yet responded to this requirement. The draft Plan states that NPS will continue to work with NCPC on mitigation.

The National Mall as a Sustainable Urban Park

Staff supports NPS's goal for the National Mall as a model of sustainable urban park development, resource protection, and management. The National Mall should be a healthy and beautiful park as well as a symbolic manifestation of our democratic history. Staff recommends

that the final National Mall Plan be amplified to include more specific information about how NPS intends to meet the requirements and goals of the October 5, 2009 Executive Order 13514, Federal Leadership in Environment, Energy, and Economic Performance.

NPS summarizes its sustainability goals as follows:

Sustainable Water Use – conserve water; reduce use of potable water for large designed water bodies; use non-potable water sources when feasible; capture, store and reuse storm and grey water for irrigation; filter and reuse water; complete the Potomac Park Levee; use a vegetated shoreline for Potomac where feasible, and rely more on natural methods to improve water quality.

Resource Health – implement the Sustainable Sites Initiative ©; restore soils and reverse soil compaction; improve tree health and growing conditions; reduce impacts from high use levels; protect special status trees (elm, cherry, and witness trees); preserve or restore plant biomass; and improve ecosystem health.

Circulation – facilitate pedestrian activities; use clean alternative fuel sources in visitor transportation; maximize use of public transportation; facilitate multi-modal coordination; separate bicycle routes and offer rentals; use sustainable approaches to walk surfacing to facilitate water reuse.

Sustainable Facilities – new facilities should achieve highest LEED standards possible, minimum LEED standard for NPS is silver; reduce energy consumption and seek renewable energy sources; maximize energy efficiency and convert inefficient approaches (LED lighting) facilities; increase recycling, reduce amount of solid waste, and increase use of biodegradable products.

Meeting Requirements and Policy – meet Executive Order 13514 - Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance; meet NPS policy and program goals (Climate Friendly Parks; meet minimum LEED silver standards; achieve NPS goals – reduce energy use; reduce greenhouse gases, maximize energy efficiency, improve building envelopes, mechanical systems and glazing).

The Executive Director's recommendations also include a reference to the approved 2003 Olin landscape plan for the grounds of the Washington Monument (Figure 6). The landscape plan called for the planting of hundreds of additional trees to improve the appearance, health, and shade of the Grounds, to complement the revised circulation pattern, and to frame the Grounds and reinforce viewsheds. With the coming National Museum of African American History and Culture, staff has discussed with both SI and NPS staffs the value of fully integrating landscape planning for the Washington Monument Grounds. In light of additional approved or proposed changes to the Washington Monument Grounds, staff recommends that NPS review the Olin landscape plan for continued compatibility and renew efforts to implement it.



FIGURE 6: Olin Landscape Plan for the Washington Monument Grounds

CONFORMANCE

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements

The Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital (Comprehensive Plan) provides goals and policies that guide the Commission in evaluating and acting on plans and projects in the National Capital. By providing improved stewardship of the cultural and natural resources on the National Mall as our nation's symbolic gathering place; by improving the physical conditions and visitor amenities for permitted and informal activities on the National Mall and for active and casual uses; by offering improved education, interpretation, and wayfinding on and beyond the Mall; by expanding circulation paths and modes on the Mall and improving connections to areas around the Mall; and by improving the sustainability of resources and management practices, the draft National Mall Plan supports the three major themes of the Comprehensive Plan:

1. Accommodate federal and national capital activities
2. Reinforce smarter, more coordinated growth
3. Support coordination with local and regional governments

The staff finds the draft National Mall Plan to be in conformance with the goals and policies of federal elements of the Comprehensive Plan, as follows.

Parks and Open Space Element

The Parks and Open Space Element establishes policies to protect, enhance, and expand the region's parks and open space system. With the adoption of the National Mall Plan, NPS will seek funding for ongoing and future projects to improve amenities, recreation, programs, and access for visitors. Creating paved surfaces and utilities in selected places on the Mall (while an alteration of the current greensward in some locations), and issuing events permits for areas designated for high use, will allow NPS to improve and maintain the health and appearance of the turf lawn and trees. NPS will continue to review and issue permits for First Amendment demonstrations at locations requested by demonstration organizers. The transition to multi-purpose ball fields will allow permitted recreation to continue while maintaining the appearance and unprogrammed use of those areas when ball games are not scheduled.

Environment Element

The Federal Environment Element promotes the federal government as an environmental steward and identifies the Commission's planning policies related to the maintenance, protection, and enhancement of the region's natural environment. The draft National Mall Plan identifies measures for the reduction or elimination of potable water for the pools and lake. NPS anticipates that new structures will incorporate geothermal technology, that new paths will be constructed of more sustainable materials and be more permeable, that reengineered soil will improve the health and appearance of the turf and the elms and that they will be maintained with gentler means. Improved transit and bicycling opportunities and, notably, significant improvement in the provision of a central facility and small vehicles for use by visitors who are disabled, will reduce the current dependency on private automobiles to reach and move around the National Mall.

Preservation and Historic Features Element

The Preservation and Historic Features Element helps to strengthen the significant architectural and planning character that makes our nation's capital a unique place. The institution of best management practices for the protection of the turf lawn and trees will help NPS achieve its stewardship responsibilities for the preeminent historic landscape. The memorials on the National Mall will continue to be protected and their surrounding open space maintained. Proposed facilities are located away from major viewsheds, and must be designed appropriately. The draft Plan also recommends removing buildings that are close to major viewsheds, such as the facilities at the north side of the Tidal Basin.

Transportation Element

The Transportation Element promotes a balanced, multi-pronged strategy to maximize federal employees' and facilities' access to the region's extensive transit system. The continuation and

expansion of a low-cost transportation system to and around the Mall from major transit hubs, improvements in orientation and wayfinding at the Metro station on the Mall and throughout the Mall, and the provision of separate bicycle paths and bicycle rentals on the Mall are encouraged by this element.

National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)

The National Park Service has prepared a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), in which NCPC is participating as a cooperating agency. NCPC is a federal agency with its own NEPA obligations set forth in its Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures.

NPS's planning documents combine park plans with their Environmental Impact Statements (EIS). The two purposes are combined in one document, the draft National Mall Plan. The Commission is currently reviewing and commenting on the draft Plan within a public comment period. The Executive Director will also respond to the National Park Service with additional comments on the draft EIS. NPS anticipates completing its Environmental Impact Statement and a Record of Decision in the summer of 2010, with submission of the final National Mall Plan for review by the Commission at the September meeting.

The draft Plan is referred to as the "Preferred Alternative" in the draft EIS, and is a compilation of proposed actions and focus in the three action alternatives, each of which emphasizes to different degrees the resources and uses of the National Mall. The three alternatives were developed with public input and emphasize focus on: Historic Landscape and Education; Welcoming National Civic Space for Public Gatherings, Events, and High-Level Uses; and Urban Open Space, Urban Ecology, Recreation, and Healthy Lifestyles.

Staff concurs with the National Park Service that the Preferred Alternative achieves a balance between the protection of the natural and cultural resources that have come to symbolize and characterize the National Mall and the adaptation of the National Mall to meet current and future needs of all visitors. These may sometimes appear to be at odds and, in the staff's judgment, the draft Plan has carefully considered the need for facilities and amenities while protecting the Mall's well-known historic resources and landscapes, protecting and improving the vistas, reversing the damage to natural resources and improving the health and appearance of the turf lawn and trees. Visitor transportation options will reduce reliance on automobiles. NPS is also committed to making improvements in the health and appearance of its designed water features, water source management, and the incorporation of sustainable materials and practices in the construction of facilities and in its maintenance operations.

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

The National Park Service has led consultation with agencies, organizations, and individuals pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The National Mall's component landscapes and its memorials have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places over the years, and the most recent comprehensive listing occurred with the designation of the Plan of Washington in 1996 (the L'Enfant Plan). In addition, NPS has produced Cultural

Landscape Inventories or Cultural Landscape Reports for portions of the National Mall. The map at Figure 7, below, indicates Identified Cultural Landscapes within the National Mall Plan area. NPS acknowledges that more research and analysis should be completed as funds become available for that purpose. Completed documents related to the National Register of Historic Places are available to the public on the National Mall Plan website.

Several consulting parties, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, have recommended that a comprehensive National Register nomination for the National Mall be prepared, and NPS is considering this as a future step.

The National Mall, however, is a well-known and well-documented site of preeminent national interest and significance for historic events and persons, landscape, and architecture. It's been the subject of much research and scholarship. Many primary sources are available for research, including records in the holdings of federal and District of Columbia agencies; at repositories such as the Library of Congress and the National Archives; and in library, university, and private collections. The Section 106 consulting parties have benefitted from reviewing historic photos of the National Mall that have illustrated the history of the development of the National Mall and how people have used it and enjoyed it in different eras.



FIGURE 7: Identified Cultural Landscapes within the National Mall Plan

NPS invited approximately 60 organizations with an interest in the National Mall plan or historic preservation to be consulting parties under the National Historic Preservation Act section 106 process. In addition to NCPC, the following organizations and agencies responded that they would like to participate: Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, American Civil Liberties Union of the National Capital Area, American Institute of Architects, American Society of Landscape Architects, U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, Cultural Tourism DC, District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office, D.C. Preservation League, Downtown Business Improvement District, Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission, Equal Honor for All, Friends of the National World War II Memorial, Guest Services, Inc., Guild of Professional Tour Guides, Landmark Services, Inc., Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation, Inc., National Association for Olmsted Parks, National Coalition to Save Our Mall, National Mall Conservancy, National Parks Conservation Association, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Organization of American States, Smithsonian Institution, Society of Architectural Historians–Latrobe Chapter, Trust for the National Mall, Washington DC Convention and Tourism Corporation, and the Willard Hotel.

Beginning in January 2008, consulting parties met with the National Park Service, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the D.C. Historic Preservation Office to examine the ramifications of planning alternatives on cultural landscapes, the NPS List of Classified Structures, historic districts, on sites listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The consultation process is ongoing, and at least 10 meetings or opportunities to participate were held by April 1, 2009. A bus tour was provided in May 2007 to familiarize participants with planning issues. Background materials, maps, and studies were posted on the website and handed out at meetings. Consulting parties provided comments in April 2008 on the range of alternatives, to which NPS responded.

Commission staff has participated in NPS meetings with consulting parties at each phase of the Plan's development, particularly in the spring of 2008 and the spring 2009. Last year NPS introduced a pre-Draft Preferred Alternative, for which consulting parties provided detailed comments on anticipated effects to historic built and landscape features and vistas. Staffs of the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) have participated fully in the meetings and have met with NPS to consider the content of a future Programmatic Agreement that will address the potential for effects to historic resources and how to proceed with further Section 106 consultation in the implementation of individual projects after the draft Plan is revised and finalized later this year.

Staff emphasizes again that the Plan is a long-range framework for potential future improvements and development. NPS will implement the Plan as funding permits in future years. Almost all of the individual projects will be the subject of further Section 106 consultation. It's not possible to determine conclusively at this time if any of the projects will have an adverse effect or not, but the DC SHPO has asked that a Programmatic Agreement be developed to make clear the future public process for consultation on determining effects and how to avoid or minimize them.

Table 41 from the draft Plan, below, lists the many potential projects envisioned in the National Mall Plan and notes where further historic preservation consultation and compliance will likely

be required. This Table is also a useful summary of the projects that may result from implementation of the National Mall Plan.

TABLE 41: ACTIONS REQUIRING ADDITIONAL COMPLIANCE UNDER THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT, SECTION 106

Highlighted areas require additional compliance.

Ongoing NPS Actions	
Rehabilitate Lincoln Reflecting Pool, pave elm walkways, complete security perimeter	Yes, ongoing
Complete Thomas Jefferson security perimeter	Yes, ongoing
Construct Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center	Yes, ongoing
Construct Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial	Yes, ongoing
Replace sign system	Yes, ongoing
Washington Monument security screening	Yes, ongoing
Renovate Lincoln Memorial restrooms, relocate bookstore, and rehabilitate / replace exhibits	No, not needed
Rehabilitate D.C. War Memorial and restore grounds	No, not needed
Correct problems at Thomas Jefferson plaza	No, not needed
National Mall Actions	
Develop coordinated palette of paving materials, crosswalks, and site furnishings*	Yes
Develop bike routes	Yes
Specific Areas	
Union Square	
Redesign Union Square	Yes
Mall	
Develop welcome plaza / 12th Street corridor	Yes
Rehabilitate soil, grass, irrigation for center panels	No
Install curbs, protection for elm tree panels	Yes
Provide restrooms	Yes
Provide civic infrastructure	Yes
Pave walkways, enhance pedestrian environments*	Yes
Provide additional lighting	Yes
Install parking meters / kiosks	Yes
Provide underground parking garage	Yes
Washington Monument	
Construct visitor facility / multipurpose facility	Yes
Provide civic infrastructure (utilities, etc.)	Yes
World War II Memorial	
	No
Constitution Gardens	
Relocate Lockkeeper's House	Yes
Construct multipurpose area or food service facility	Yes

Rehabilitate lake	No
Rehabilitate / redesign walk areas*	Yes
Remove / rehabilitate concession facility	Yes
Vietnam Veterans Memorial	
Rehabilitate existing walkways; provide seating	Yes
Lincoln Memorial	
Add restroom near south concession stand	Yes
Korean War Veterans Memorial	
Revise walks	Yes
Ash Woods	
Replace / relocate restroom	Yes
Replace USPP stables / add new road entry	Yes
Potentially add new concession facility	Yes
Revise road/walks*	Yes
Tidal Basin Area	
Rebuild Tidal Basin walls, widen walks and bridges, and provide pedestrian amenities*	Yes
Install pedestrian lighting	Yes
Provide concession food service / restrooms	Yes
Provide new recreation equipment rental facility	Yes
Provide bike lanes	Yes
West Potomac Park Riverfront Area	
Add bike lanes	Yes
Rehabilitate shoreline	Yes
Redesign parking	Yes
Add walks	Yes
George Mason Memorial	
Rehabilitate Fountain 4	No
Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial	
Potentially provide concession facility	Yes
Improve ballfields	No
Thomas Jefferson Memorial	
Provide civic infrastructure	Yes
Add restroom	Yes
Provide concession facility	Yes

CONSULTATION

Coordinating Committee

NPS, the author of the draft National Mall Plan, is a member of the Coordinating Committee, which coordinated the draft National Mall Plan for the March 4 meeting. All of the other member agencies are either cooperating agencies for purposes of review under the National Environmental Policy Act or have participated in the planning process for the draft Plan. In addition to consulting with federal and District agencies throughout the development of the draft Plan, NPS released hard and electronic copies of the draft Plan to the agencies in December and invited their comments during this 90-day public comment period. The other Coordinating Committee member agencies are: NCPC, the General Services Administration (GSA); the District of Columbia Office of Planning and Department of Transportation; and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Consultation and Coordination with other agencies

In April 2006 the National Park Service invited the following federal and D.C. agencies to cooperate in the preparation of a National Mall Plan: Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Architect of the Capitol, D.C. Department of Transportation, D.C. Office of Planning, D.C. Historic Preservation Office, The Federal Reserve Bank, General Services Administration, National Archives, National Capital Planning Commission, National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing, U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, U.S. Park Police, U.S. Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security, and the Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority.

The agencies contributed to the development of goals and planning principles for the National Mall Plan, which were shared with the public on the project website.

U.S. Commission of Fine Arts

The staff of the Commission (CFA) has participated in public meetings and Section 106 consultation on the draft Plan as it was being developed. CFA commissioners commented favorably on the draft Plan at its February 18, 2010 meeting, asking questions in particular about NPS's plans for improving the sustainability of new facilities on the National Mall. The Commission's letter will be provided after it is made available by CFA.