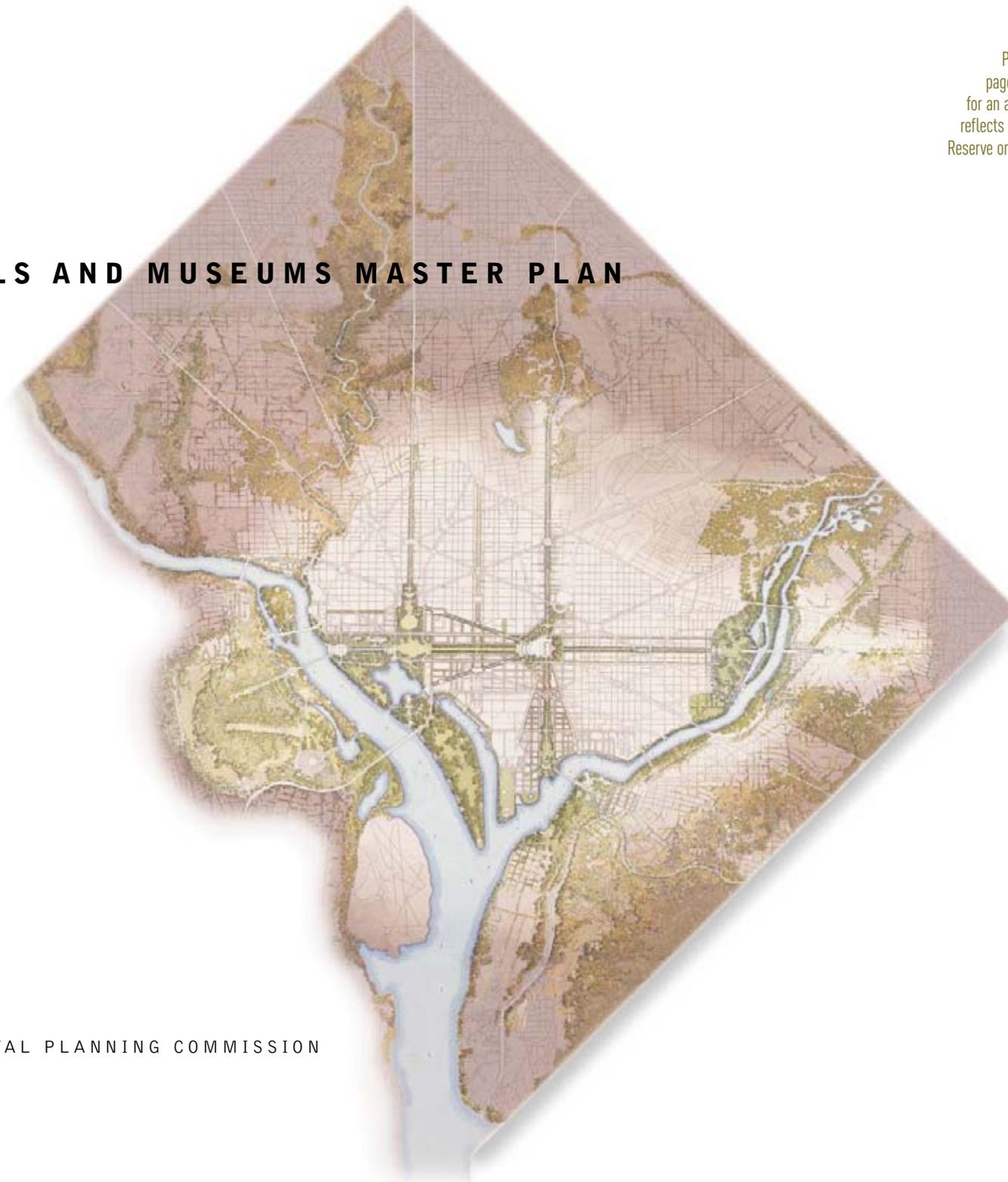


Please see  
pages 21 and 23  
for an amendment that  
reflects the adoption of a  
Reserve on the National Mall.

# MEMORIALS AND MUSEUMS MASTER PLAN



NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
DECEMBER 2001

**T**he National Capital Planning Commission, the Commission of Fine Arts, and the National Capital Memorial Commission are the three federal agencies responsible for approving the location and design of new commemorative works on federal land. Since 1997 these three agencies have worked together as a joint task force to explore the issues affecting future memorials and museums. Congress has directed the National Capital Planning Commission to develop this master plan in consultation with the other two review bodies. A team of nationally recognized planning and design professionals has assisted in this effort. The master plan was issued in draft form in December 2000 and widely circulated for public comments. The task force carefully considered those comments in the preparation of this final plan. Supplemental and technical master plan material can be found at [www.ncpc.gov](http://www.ncpc.gov).

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*West Potomac Park near the Lincoln Memorial and Memorial Bridge offers an appropriate setting for small scale future memorial features and potential water shuttle landing areas.*

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

The memorials and museums that define Washington's Monumental Core express America's connections to its past and aspirations for its future. They help us understand what it means to be an American. However, as the demand for new memorials and museums in the National Capital continues to grow, there are concerns that the unabated construction of these attractions will overwhelm the historic open space on the National Mall and surrounding area. The National Capital Planning Commission, in cooperation with the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Memorial Commission, has prepared this Memorials and Museums Master Plan to guide the location and development of future commemorative and cultural facilities in the District of Columbia and its environs. The master plan preserves the capital's open space, ensures that future generations of Americans will have an abundant supply of preeminent sites for their own museums and memorials, and reflects public consensus on where those sites should be.

The master plan extends the vision for Washington's Monumental Core as expressed in *Extending the Legacy: Planning America's Capital for the 21st Century*, a long-range planning framework released by the National Capital Planning Commission in 1997. In the *Legacy* vision, new museums, memorials, and other public buildings, strategically distributed to all quadrants of the city, can help generate local investment and contribute to community renewal. This master plan builds on Washington's great urban design traditions of the L'Enfant and McMillan Plans and recognizes that the symbolic city can enrich the economic, social, and cultural life of those who live and work in it.

This master plan identifies 100 potential sites for future memorials and museums and provides general guidelines for their development. Through this plan, the review agencies responsible for public land and federal commemorative policies have taken a broad look to identify good locations for future facilities. The plan does not suggest which individuals or historic events are suitable subjects for commemoration. Nor does it propose specific memorial designs or recommend

funding strategies. Authorizing commemorative works is the responsibility of Congress. Design and funding are usually carried out by private sponsoring organizations.

The plan is intended to be a flexible, "living" document that can and should be revised as development opportunities and commemorative needs change. Some of the proposed sites are available now for new construction; others require significant infrastructure changes before they will be ready for new development. The sites in the plan's sensitive Area I are stipulated; however, the sites in Area II are simply recommended. For development proposals in Area I, the review commissions will consider only the 18 sites identified in this master plan. While the plan's sites in Area II are strongly suggested, memorial and museum sponsors are free to explore additional locations, although all sites are subject to final approval by the review bodies under the provisions of the Commemorative Works Act.

While the majority of master plan sites are located on federal land, some are on District or private land. The master plan calls for, and the commissions are committed to, full and timely consultation with all stakeholders—local residents, business and civic groups, and federal and city government agencies—as development proposals are considered. The master plan envisions future memorials taking many forms—gardens, plazas, cultural centers—all serving as city amenities for the enjoyment of visitors and residents.

The Memorials and Museums Master Plan is an effort to balance the need to protect the beauty and openness of Washington's Monumental Core with the desire of memorial and museum proponents to locate their attractions on prominent sites in the Nation's Capital. The plan offers a new landscape of commemoration that will strengthen and enhance Washington's unique character.

**The Master Plan  
recognizes that the  
symbolic city can enrich  
the economic, social, and  
cultural life of those who  
live and work in it.**



*Aerial view of the Mall, looking east from above Lincoln Memorial toward the U.S. Capitol, with Constitution Gardens at left, the Reflecting Pool at center, and the Tidal Basin at right.*

## A CALL TO ACTION

### Background

From 1900 to 2000, an average of one new memorial was dedicated in the Nation's Capital each year. Presently, there are twelve memorials authorized by Congress under the Commemorative Works Act (CWA) that are in various stages of development. Four new memorial proposals were introduced in the 106th session of Congress. And, with each passing year, more and more new ideas surface for commemorative works in the city. In the past 20 years, Congress has authorized 21 new memorials, 7 of which have been built near the Mall. If past trends continue, there could be more than 50 additional memorials in the heart of the Nation's Capital by 2050. Interest seems to be growing as well among sponsors of new museums and cultural centers aimed at recognizing and displaying the contributions, traditions, and artifacts of American society.

Over the last several years, ideas for new museums representing such familiar aspects of American everyday life as health and medicine, sports, music, and news, and vocations such as law enforcement and military service have been promoted for sites in the close-in portions of the District of Columbia. With the completion of construction of the National Museum of the American Indian at 3rd Street and Maryland Avenue, SW, the McMillan Plan for the Mall will be complete. No undeveloped sites for major new museums within the area between 3rd and 14th Streets remain. Nevertheless, as evidenced by current proposals, efforts to establish new storehouses of our nation's treasures abound.

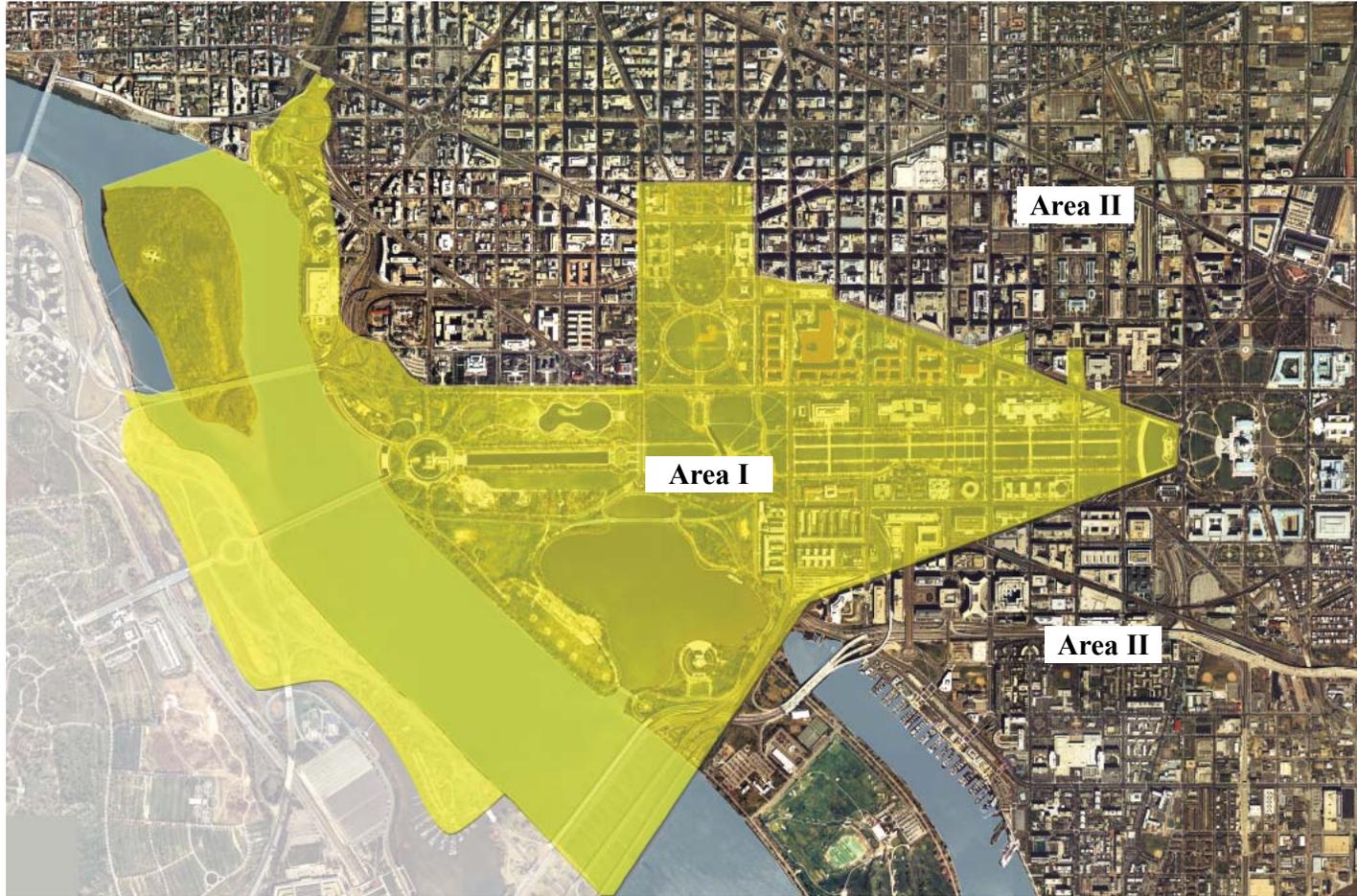
Demands are increasing for prime locations in the heart of the Nation's Capital for new memorials and museums. At the same time, many people believe that the Monumental Core may soon surpass its capacity to accommodate these activities. Some believe we are encroaching on the settings of existing memorials, threatening the loss of the historic designed landscapes and features that make the Mall and its adjacent areas special places for residents and visitors alike.

The goal of the Memorials and Museums Master Plan is to identify and promote new memorial and museum sites outside the Monumental Core—in accordance with *Extending the Legacy*, NCPC's vision for the 21st Century. Dispersing memorials and museums beyond the Monumental Core is seen as a way of protecting the Mall and adjacent areas while at the same time offering new opportunities for commemoration, education, and exhibition that are appealing to sponsors and that enrich the entire city. This master plan builds on the work of the Joint Task Force on Memorials (JTFM), an interagency group comprised of NCPC, the Commission of

Fine Arts (CFA), and the National Capital Memorial Commission (NCMC). This master plan addresses the following issues:

- *Identifying the suitable sites in the Nation's Capital that are available to handle the memorials and museums that the nation will want to accommodate well into the 21st century.*
- *Developing concepts for new memorial and museum sites that reinforce the historic urban design features of the city, do not intrude upon the settings of existing memorials or museums, and result in minimal adverse environmental and transportation impacts and positive economic and other effects on the culture of local neighborhoods.*
- *Finding a way to make memorials and museums "work for a living" while also allowing them to be effective forms of commemoration or important centers of scientific and cultural information.*

The master plan is a planning tool to help guide the location and development of memorials and museums in the Nation's Capital. It identifies appropriate locations and sites for future memorials and museums, comprehensively evaluates potential sites, and offers ideas on specific actions and strategies that NCPC and others should take to achieve the goals of the plan.



*Figure 1-1*  
The 1986 Commemorative Works Act distinguishes between Area I and Area II.



## Commemorative Works Act

The Commemorative Works Act of 1986 (CWA) provides standards for the placement of memorials on certain federal land in the District of Columbia and environs. No such similar legislation exists to guide the establishment of museums in the city, although Congress frequently authorizes national museums on federal lands. The District Government is in the process of reestablishing its review process for memorials on District land. Congress must authorize memorials that are subject to the CWA. The CWA makes a distinction between the close-in portions of the Nation's Capital, where commemorative works of "preeminent historical and lasting significance" to the Nation may locate, and areas outside this zone where works of "lasting historical significance" can be placed. The CWA refers to these two mapped precincts as Area I and Area II. These areas are shown on Figure 1-1.

A number of federal bodies are responsible for memorials in the city, hence their involvement in this master plan study. The CWA established the National Capital Memorial Commission (NCMC) to advise the Secretary of the Interior, the Administrator of the General Services Administration, and Congress on policy and procedures for establishing commemorative works in the District of Columbia and environs. The Director of the National Park Service (NPS) serves as Chairman of the NCMC, which is staffed by NPS personnel. NPS staff assists memorial proponents in the development of their proposals and in the review and construction of memorials once Congressional authorization has been granted. The Act requires that sponsors consult with NCMC in selecting sites and designs for commemorative works. In addition, Congress regularly consults with NPS and NCMC on memorial proposals and initiatives.

Before construction commences, memorials must receive the approval of NCPC, CFA, and either the Secretary of the Interior or the Administrator of the General Services Administration, as appropriate. In considering each memorial's site and design, the approval authorities are required to apply certain criteria, including the memorial's proposed setting, its potential encroachment on existing memorials, and the durability of its proposed materials. There is no such formal process for the establishment of national museums. Regardless, whether authorized by Congress or not, new museums locating on federal land in the District of Columbia must receive approval from NCPC and review by CFA.

## Existing Memorials and Museums

As of June 2001, there were 155 memorials and 74 museums on public land in the District of Columbia and environs. Of the memorials, 59 are located in Area I and 96 in Area II (as shown in Figure 1-1). The vast majority of memorials can be found in the original L'Enfant City, mostly in the Northwest quadrant of the city. Five memorials are located in the Southwest quadrant and five in the Northeast quadrant—there are no memorials in Southeast Washington and, in terms of local political boundaries, there are no memorials in Wards 5, 7, and 8. Ward designations relate to present (2001) boundaries. Some ward boundaries will change in January 2002.

**As of June 2001,  
there were  
155 memorials and  
74 museums on  
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District of Columbia  
and environs.**

Most memorials are sited in open space settings on National Park Service land, though few memorials are located on the Mall. This may be due, in part, to the existing restriction in the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*, prohibiting memorials in the tree panels and greensward of the Mall, which is between 3rd and 14th Streets. In Virginia, there are several memorials within Arlington National Cemetery, along Memorial Avenue leading into the cemetery, and along the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

Many of the existing museums are under the control of the Smithsonian Institution and are located on the Mall. Others are in close-in residential neighborhoods; downtown office districts; and the heart of the city. Museums are not subject to the Commemorative Works Act, but it happens that Area I contains 28 museums—these are mostly located along the Mall, along Constitution Avenue (between 15th and 17th Streets, NW), and near the White House—and Area II contains 48 museums. There are no museums in Wards 5 or 7. The Anacostia Museum is located in Ward 8.

## Joint Task Force on Memorials

In order to examine issues related to memorials in the Nation's Capital, NCPC formed a Memorials Task Force in 1996 and was joined in October 1997 by representatives of CFA and NCMC. Under the provisions of the CWA, these three federal bodies have review authority over memorials in the Nation's Capital. NCPC, which was first established in 1924, is the central planning agency for the federal government in the National Capital Region, which covers the District of Columbia and surrounding cities and counties in Maryland and Virginia. NCPC reviews and approves federal and District of Columbia government master plans and construction proposals, and engages in comprehensive and long-range planning for the federal government in the region. NCPC is responsible for approving memorials and museums on federal land.

CFA, which was established in 1910, is comprised of presidential appointees who review designs and locations of federal and municipal government projects, memorials on public lands, and private construction in the Georgetown area and on lands abutting the Monumental Core of Washington D.C. and Rock Creek Park. It also approves memorials authorized by Congress under the CWA.

NCMC was established in 1986 to assist Congress and the two principal memorial landholding agencies, the Department of the Interior and the General Services Administration (GSA), in implementing the Commemorative Works Act. The NCMC is an advisory board comprised of representatives from:

- *Federal agencies with either jurisdiction over land in the Monumental Core or review responsibilities for memorials placed therein*
- *The Mayor of the District of Columbia*
- *The Architect of the Capitol*
- *The American Battle Monuments Commission*

The NCMC advises Congress, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Administrator of GSA on the appropriateness of subjects for commemoration and on the location and design of memorials on land under their jurisdiction.

Functioning as the Joint Task Force on Memorials, representatives from these three agencies examined a broad range of issues related to memorials, including:

- *Locations and designs of memorials that preserve open space and historic resources in the Monumental Core, while distributing cultural and commemorative resources throughout the city.*
- *Potential changes to the boundaries of Areas I and II in the CWA.*
- *Actions by review and approval bodies to encourage memorial sponsors to locate in Area II.*
- *Consideration of a moratorium on new memorials in Area I—restrictions that would go beyond those already in place, as set forth in the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital, for the area on the Mall between 3rd and 14th Streets.*

The task force, over the past three years, has addressed these issues. It has adopted a Commemorative Zone Policy that establishes a *Reserve* in the central portion of the Monumental Core in which no new memorial sites will be permitted. The task force has also developed ideas for dispersing memorials throughout the city and prepared recommended changes to the CWA aimed at improving the process of establishing national memorials. The task force has invited experts from around the country to share their ideas on how best to accommodate new memorials and museums. It has met with Congressional representatives, relevant committee staff, the Mayor's office, city council members and council staff, Arlington County representatives, and citizen groups and has regularly informed these parties of the task force's work and sought their comments.

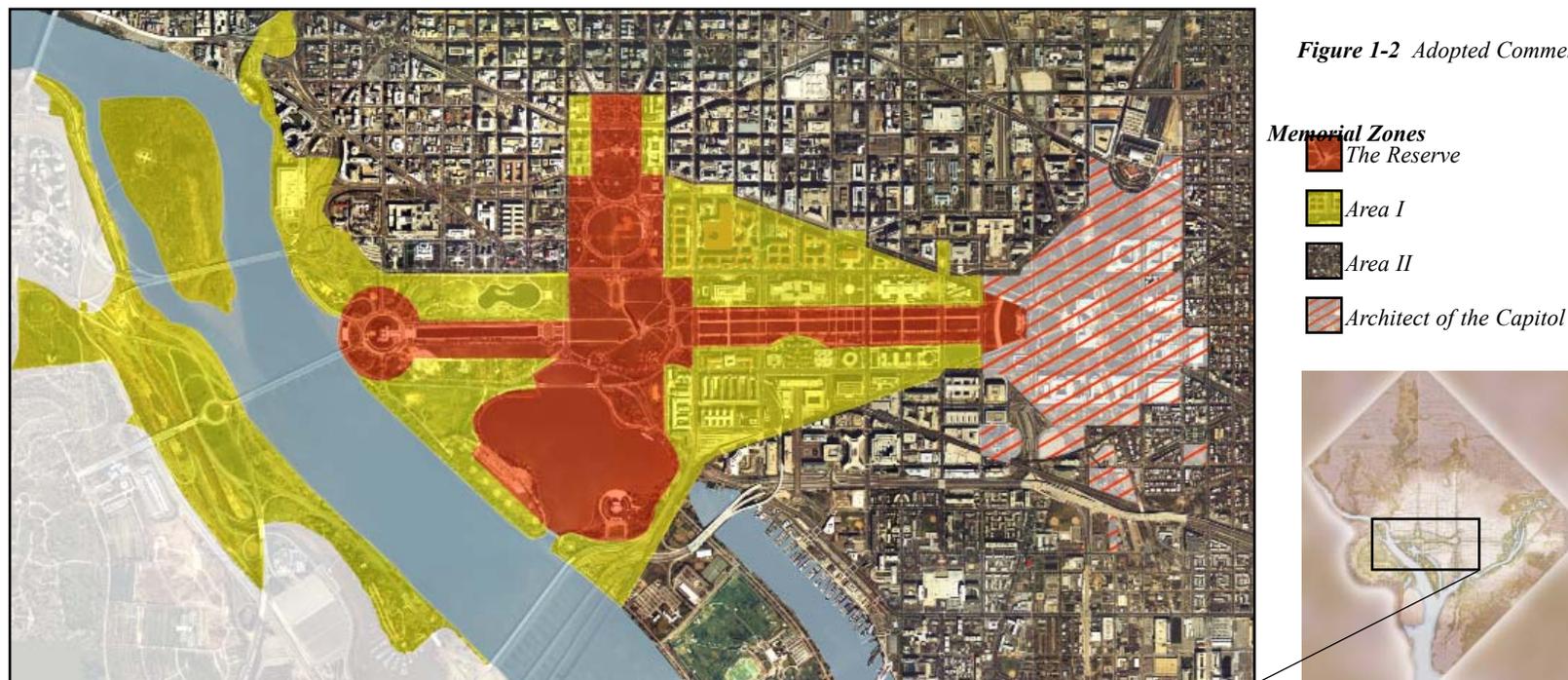


Figure 1-2 Adopted Commemorative Zones

## Commemorative Zone Policy

Based on the recommendations of the task force, NCPC, CFA, and NCMC, in independent actions, adopted a Commemorative Zone Policy in January 2000. The policy reflects input from the public, the District Council, representatives of the D.C. Office of Planning, and members of Congress. The policy does several things:

- *Preserves the integrity of the Monumental Core and its open space, recreation lands, and scenic qualities by limiting memorials in the close-in portions of the Core.*
- *Encourages memorials to locate in all quadrants of the city as a way of enhancing neighborhoods and supporting local revitalization efforts.*
- *Supports ideas in Extending the Legacy which call for increasing the public's use of the city's waterfronts and strengthening the important North, South, and East Capitol Street axes.*

The Commemorative Zone Policy calls for the establishment of an area termed the *Reserve*, which encompasses the central cross axis of the National Mall formed by its primary resources—the U.S. Capitol, Lincoln Memorial, White House, Washington Monument, and Jefferson Memorial. The White House, Washington

Monument, and Jefferson Memorial define the Reserve's north-south axis. (See Figure 1-2). The U.S. Capitol, Washington Monument, and Lincoln Memorial define the east-west axis.

Under the adopted Commemorative Zone Policy, no new memorial or museum sites will be approved for this cross-axial area. The new policy is designed to preserve the urban design integrity of the Nation's Capital and to encourage placement of new memorials and museums in strategic locations throughout the city. The policy does not apply to the grounds of the U.S. Capitol, which are under the jurisdiction of the Congress through the Architect of the Capitol. While these grounds are technically not part of the Reserve, the Commemorative Zone map on the following page recognizes that the Capitol Grounds are an inappropriate location for the construction of monuments or memorials. The policy also delineates an expanded boundary for Area I, which is federally-owned land surrounding the Reserve. Area I generally is bounded by Constitution and Pennsylvania Avenues to the north, the area surrounding the U.S. Capitol that is under the jurisdiction of the Architect of the Capitol to the east, Maryland Avenue and the 14th Street Bridge to the south, and Boundary Channel Drive and Arlington National Cemetery to the west. Area I was first delineated in 1986 in the



*This Potomac River view of the Lincoln Memorial defines the dignity and setting of our nation's prominent memorials, whose purpose can be complemented by future commemorative actions.*

CWA and this plan recommends expansion to the west of the Potomac River.

Area I includes Constitution Gardens, the Smithsonian museums on the Mall, West Potomac Park, the Federal Triangle, Columbia Island, and portions of the Potomac waterfront. In the new policy, Area I is considered to be a sensitive area designated for commemorative works of preeminent historic and national significance. *Area II* encompasses the rest of the city with emphasis on the important North, South, and East Capitol Street axes, as well as circles and squares on major avenues, waterfronts, urban gateways, and scenic overlooks. It is in this area where the task force will encourage development of new commemorative works.

The policy recognizes that although the sponsors of new memorials are generally required to raise private funds for construction, any memorial locating on public land in the Nation's Capital or its environs receives an enormous subsidy in the form of irreplaceable federal property. Furthermore, the value of such land grows immensely as demand for close-in sites increases. Creating incentives for locating memorials on other sites (outside the *Reserve* and beyond *Area I*, where demand may not be as intense as it is for sites in the Core) could require an infusion of public funds to address unique site development issues.

The new policy affects only new memorial proposals, not those that already have received approval by the respective approval bodies. The policy (including the establishment of the *Reserve*) is part of proposed amendments to the CWA that have been transmitted to Congress. The amendments will clarify and strengthen the CWA and provide guidance to those responsible for establishing memorials in the Nation's Capital. In 2000, these amendments passed the Senate in S.311, but were not acted on by the full House of Representatives.

## Purpose of Study

The Memorials and Museums Master Plan, which has been prepared in close cooperation with CFA and NCMC, builds upon the general principles laid out in the Commemorative Zone Policy. This Master Plan has two major purposes. First, federal agencies responsible for memorials and museums in the city have an obligation to ensure that suitable memorial and museum sites are available for future generations. The technical document accompanying this plan contains inventories of existing memorials and museums within the District and its environs and a forecast of future memorial and museum demands.

This plan also contains a recommended framework (based on historic planning influences, urban design considerations, and current planning and development initiatives) for locating future sites. Also included are general guidelines for where and how memorials and museums should be accommodated on key sites in the Nation's Capital over the next 50 years.

The plan's siting criteria, general guidelines, and implementation strategies are intended to serve as tools that federal decision-makers, local officials, community residents, and prospective memorial and museum sponsors can draw upon to help guide the future development of memorials and museums within Washington, D.C. and close-in portions of Arlington County.

The recommendations contained in this plan are directed at national museums and major commemorative works of national significance (e.g., memorials subject to the Commemorative Works Act). Nevertheless, the plan recognizes that there are individuals, groups, and events of local or regional significance that deserve recognition and that Washington, D.C. serves multiple purposes—National Capital, home to over 500,000 city residents, and the center of a growing metropolitan area of 4.5 million residents. While the master plan's focus is on national memorials and museums, the plan's recommendations can also help provide a framework for District of Columbia planning officials to meet local commemoration needs. In addition to the twelve District-controlled sites in this report, the District plans to identify other District sites suitable for local memorials.

Secondly, the master plan is intended to advance the vision for the Monumental Core expressed in *Extending the Legacy: Planning America's Capital for the 21st Century*, released by NCPA in November 1997. The Legacy Plan proposed placing memorials and museums and other federal activities outside the traditional core of the city, in locations that provide not only appropriate settings for commemorative works but also satisfy important local economic and neighborhood objectives. This master plan builds on *Legacy* and treats memorials and museums as more than simply objects or emblems. As important contributing elements within the urban landscape, they can enhance and strengthen civic spaces. A basic premise of this master plan is that memorials and museums, properly placed and sensitively designed, can provide a source of community identity and pride, bolster local neighborhood revitalization efforts, and serve as a means of expanding neighborhood-based tourism.

**memorials and museums,  
properly placed and  
sensitively designed,  
can provide a  
source of community  
identity and pride**

Figure 2-1 L'Enfant Plan for Washington, 1791

