



# Monumental Core Framework Plan

## Connecting New Destinations with the National Mall

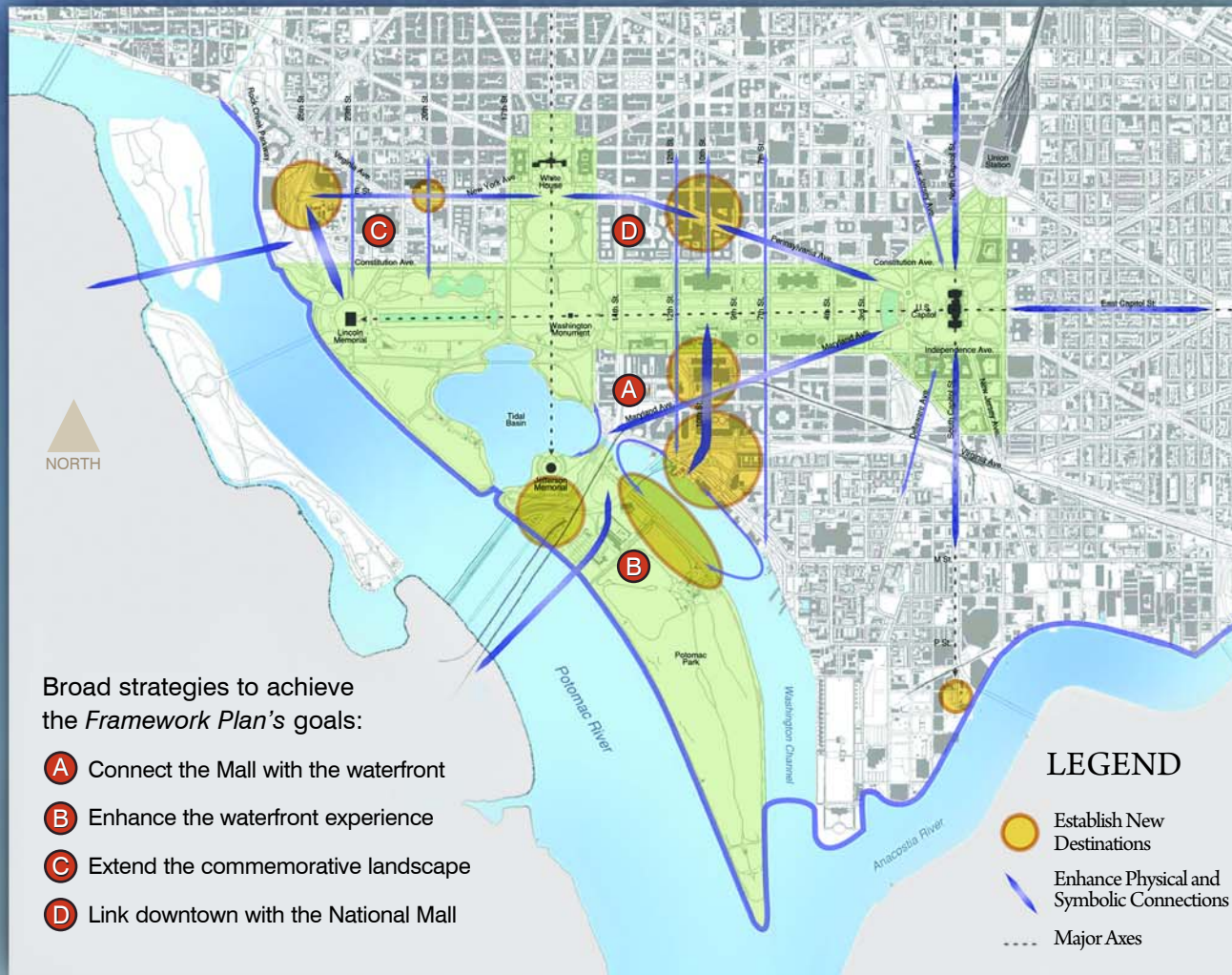
April 2009



## A 21st Century Framework for the Nation's Capital

The *Monumental Core Framework Plan: Connecting New Destinations with the National Mall* builds upon the extraordinary assets of Washington, DC to address social, cultural, economic, and environmental needs of the 21st century. The overall goal is to infuse the civic qualities of the National Mall and the vibrancy of the city throughout the monumental core to transform how visitors, workers, and residents experience the capital city. The *Framework Plan* extends the image of the nation's

capital beyond the National Mall and its environs by reimagining nearby federal precincts as new mixed-use destinations linked with the Mall, the waterfront, and the city's urban fabric. The plan proposes improvements to sites and corridors to create prominent locations for memorials, museums, and cultural events. It also provides specific guidance on creating opportunities for new civic spaces, federal office expansion, private development, and a more attractive and engaging public realm.



### Goals:

- Protect the National Mall from overuse
- Create distinctive settings for memorials and museums
- Improve connections between the National Mall, the city, and the waterfront
- Transform the monumental core into a more vibrant and sustainable place to visit, work, and live

*How do we enliven federal districts?*



# How do we help protect the National Mall?

## Symbolism and Cultural Expression

The city of Washington was conceived, planned, and built as the urban expression of our nation's identity and democratic principles that were first embodied in the historic L'Enfant Plan. The *Framework Plan* respects the fundamental principles of Washington's rich planning history while responding to important contemporary issues within the context of Washington's expanding downtown.

The *Framework Plan* recognizes that the location of buildings, memorials, and important civic spaces must contribute to the organizing principles of our city, our democracy, and our evolving national narrative. The plan proposes to create new visual and physical connections by enhancing views and symbolic relationships; restoring historic squares and streets; dedicating prominent development sites for preeminent civic uses; improving access to the waterfront; and establishing a continuous and walkable public realm. It promotes sustainable strategies that combine excellence in urban design with sound environmental practice.

## Livability and Sustainability

The *Framework Plan's* proposals create mixed-use destinations supported by a comprehensive transit system and linked by a network of beautiful parks, plazas, and streets. These strategies will maximize development capacity and encourage transit use, walking, and bicycling in the monumental core.

The plan improves environmental quality by integrating natural elements into every scale of design and restoring the urban tree canopy, the natural shoreline, and native habitats. The plan promotes conservation and energy efficiency by investing in high-performance buildings; upgrading aging infrastructure with green technologies; improving stormwater management; and promoting the use of renewable energy technologies and energy efficient transportation.

## How do we make the monumental core more sustainable?

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New pedestrian bridges across the channel will connect the park to the city's southern neighborhoods. Reclaiming wetlands can help improve water quality, mitigate flooding, and offer areas for reconnecting with nature.



## National Capital Planning Commission

The National Capital Planning Commission is the federal government's central planning agency in the District of Columbia and surrounding counties in Maryland and Virginia. The Commission provides overall planning guidance for federal land and buildings in the region. It also reviews the design of federal construction projects, oversees long-range planning for future development, and monitors investment by federal agencies.

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## U.S. Commission of Fine Arts

The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts advises the federal and District of Columbia governments on matters of art and architecture that affect the appearance of the nation's capital. The primary role of the presidentially appointed Commission is to advise on proposed public building projects and to review private buildings adjacent to public buildings and grounds of special importance. CFA also advises on the design of coins and medals and the design of national war memorials.

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The *Monumental Core Framework Plan* is a joint effort by the National Capital Planning Commission and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts in cooperation with 15 federal and local agencies, working groups, and the public. Numerous agency consultations, public meetings, regulatory review, academic symposia, and professional panels were conducted to provide input on issues such as urban ecology, planning, design, engineering, public policy, history, and commemoration. The two sponsoring federal review commissions adopted the plan in the spring of 2009.

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Michael McCann

Although the federal precincts surrounding the National Mall each have a distinct character and pose a unique set of challenges; the objectives to transform these areas are similar. The *Framework Plan* identifies specific planning, urban design, and programming strategies to promote places with unique identities that together form a unified vision linking vibrant destinations and enhancing the sustainability of Washington's monumental core.

## A **SOUTHWEST RECTANGLE** **CONNECT THE MALL** **WITH THE WATERFRONT**

The Southwest Rectangle will be transformed into a quality place to work, visit, and live by redefining 10th Street, SW as an attractive and green mixed-use corridor and restoring Maryland Avenue as a grand urban boulevard. This will be accomplished by restoring important viewsheds; re-establishing the street grid; building within large setbacks and over depressed highways and rail lines; increasing the variety of uses and introducing retail; establishing a multimodal transit center; and enhancing the public realm. These improvements will extend the honorific landscape of the Mall toward the waterfront creating prominent locations for nationally significant cultural destinations.



Michael McCann

## B **POTOMAC PARK** **ENHANCE THE** **WATERFRONT EXPERIENCE**

Potomac Park will become an extraordinary recreational resource easily accessible from the heart of the city. Necessary actions include consolidating and tunneling a portion of the highway and rail line; programming the park for a variety of recreational activities and amenities; repairing the shoreline; and providing multiple modes of access, including a new transit station, foot-bridges, and a maritime canal. These improvements will establish an appropriate setting for the Jefferson Memorial; help relieve pressure for recreation and gatherings on the Mall; provide new access to Metro; and contribute to a more sustainable city.





## **C** *NORTHWEST RECTANGLE* **EXTEND THE COMMEMORATIVE LANDSCAPE**

The Northwest Rectangle will become a distinctive center for diplomacy and the arts by extending the qualities of the National Mall into the fabric of the city. Steps to move this vision forward include decking and building over depressed highways to restore key streets; providing new areas for development to increase the area's mix of uses; and significantly enhance the quality of the public realm. This urban yet green environment will physically link the Kennedy Center with the Lincoln Memorial, the White House, and President's Park with an interconnected system of commemorative parks and green streets that will improve the pedestrian environment.



## **D** *FEDERAL TRIANGLE* **LINK DOWNTOWN WITH THE NATIONAL MALL**

The connection between federal precincts and downtown must be strengthened, particularly at the Federal Triangle and along Pennsylvania Avenue, America's preeminent ceremonial boulevard. This will be achieved by concentrating a mix of uses between 9th and 12th Streets; increasing access to transit; and improving the quality and programming of interconnected public spaces. These improvements will enhance the venue to celebrate America's democracy, blur the perceived boundaries between downtown and the National Mall, and foster a more appealing and walkable environment for workers and visitors.



# Linking Symbol and City

The *Framework Plan* balances the symbolism of the nation's capital with the needs of a contemporary city by addressing the paramount planning issues of our time: urban livability and environmental, economic, and social sustainability. The plan capitalizes on physical development and programming opportunities that link land use, transportation, and urban ecology strategies with specific proposals to establish places with distinct identities. Collectively, these proposals construct a unified vision for linking vibrant destinations and enhancing the sustainability of the monumental core by providing opportunities for new commemorative sites, mixed-use development, and public space; and improving walkability and transit access.



of multi-purpose parks and plazas.



## Walkability

Increase walkability and bicycle usage by improving 37 miles of new bike lanes, dedicated paths, and pedestrian-oriented corridors.



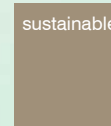
## Transit Access

Improve mobility and transit use by adding a new Metrorail station and two new Metrorail entrances to underserved areas; expanding transit routes to connect both recognized and emerging destinations; and establishing two multi-modal transit centers.



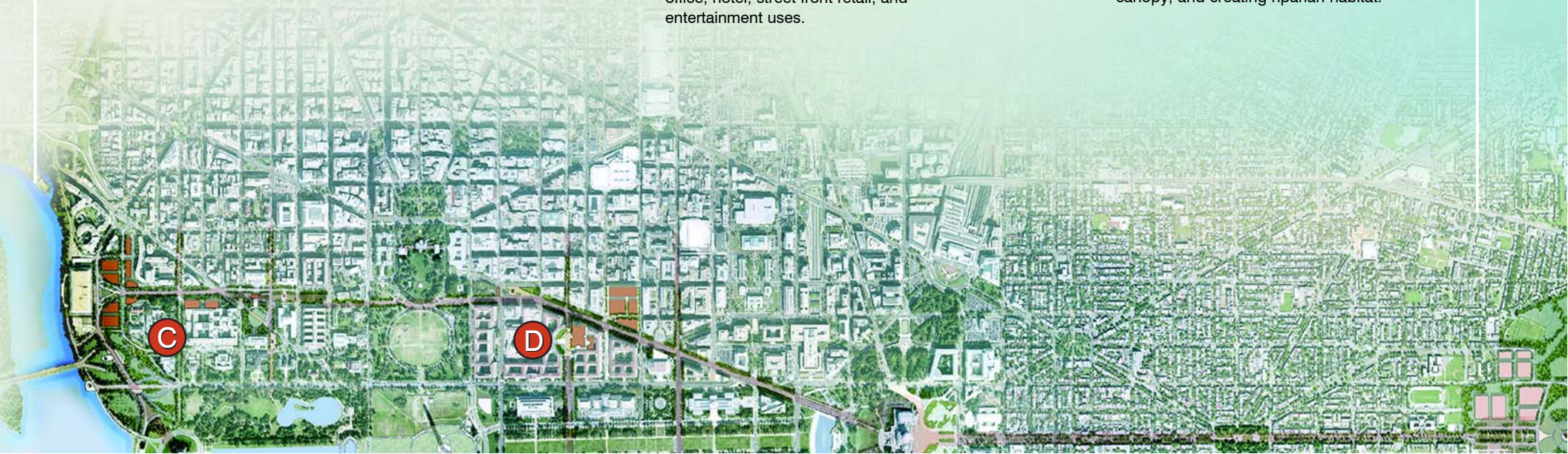
## Mixed-Use Development

Build more than 5 million square feet of mixed-use development, including approximately 3 million square feet for museums and federal office space and over 2 million square feet of private development for residential, office, hotel, street-front retail, and entertainment uses.



## Sustainability

Create a more sustainable urban ecology by efficiently using land and resources; reusing existing structures; improving water and waste management; developing local renewable energy sources and reducing energy consumption; increasing the urban tree canopy; and creating riparian habitat.







## Making it Happen

The *Framework Plan* is a flexible tool to guide planning, development, and investment decisions over the next thirty years. It identifies immediate and long-term opportunities to coordinate land use, urban design, public space, and transportation improvements, and to advance environmental management. The plan includes an action agenda with a series of next steps to move the vision closer to reality. Some actions will be easily achieved in the next few years, while others will require further study and refinement prior to implementation.

## Action Agenda Priorities

- 10th Street, SW development
- Maryland Avenue, SW development
- Potomac Park access and shoreline restoration
- Federal Triangle Cultural Heritage Trail development
- Old Post Office reuse
- J. Edgar Hoover Building (FBI) site development