



We Need Your Comments on a Preliminary Preferred Alternative

The National Park Service Looks at Another Alternative to Refurbish and Protect the Historic Landscape, Accommodate High Use, and Meet Visitor Expectations

A Draft Vision for the National Mall — Enriching Your American Experience

The National Mall — the great swath of green in the middle of our capital city and stretching from the foot of the United States Capitol to the Potomac River — is America's civic stage. This historic open space with its planned views provides an inspiring setting for national memorials, many of them symbols of our democracy. It also provides a visual connection between the branches of government, and a backdrop for government buildings and the great cultural institutions of our nation. For more than 200 years it has symbolized our nation and its democratic values, which have inspired the world. "We the People" come here to demonstrate our rights and celebrate our freedoms, our history and culture, our unity and diversity, and our way of life.

Newsletter 3, which was released in December 2007, described three preliminary action alternatives for the National Mall plus a no-action alternative. Public comments were invited, and after those comments were analyzed, all the alternatives were refined, and a new alternative was developed at a series of cooperating agency workshops. This new alternative is the National Park Service's direction for a preferred alternative at this point in the planning process, and it is summarized in this newsletter.

An NPS goal has been to seek broad public input in the planning process. Your comments on the preliminary preferred alternative are invited, just as they were on the other preliminary alternatives. Please go to www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan to provide your comments or mail them to the address on page 8.

Earlier newsletters have always jointly addressed the National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue. Planning for both of these areas is continuing, but the issues facing them are somewhat different. So as not to lose focus on the importance of Pennsylvania Avenue, a separate environmental document will be prepared for it. Comments that have already been received on Pennsylvania Avenue will be considered during that planning process.

All of the alternatives will be analyzed in the draft environmental impact statement. Your comments and suggestions on the preliminary preferred alternative will be considered during the preparation of the draft environmental impact statement.

A PRELIMINARY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

As the premier civic space for our nation, the National Mall would be refurbished so that very high levels of use could be perpetuated and the needs of visitors could be met in an energy-efficient and sustainable manner. Its treasured memorials and landscapes would be protected, with large areas of unprogrammed open space as defining features of the historic landscape. The intent would be to establish a sense of place and an overall identity

for the National Mall, creating a rich, coherent pedestrian environment that would complement and balance the natural environment, the combination of formal and informal features, and national commemorative works. The National Mall would be emphasized as a year-round destination where the beauty and variety of every season would enhance the visitor experience.

Uses of the National Mall for First Amendment demonstrations, commemorations, and national celebrations and ceremonies would be emphasized. All visitors would be made to feel welcome through helpful wayfinding signs, knowledgeable staff, and high-quality and accessible facilities. Diverse opportunities would be offered for public enjoyment, including educational, cultural, and musical programs, as well as recreational activities.

Eminent professionals would be engaged to design high-quality solutions to unify the National Mall and to address new visions for specific sites. The National Park Service would ensure timeless and enduring high-quality design, plus the highest facility maintenance standards, to create a sense of place that would reinforce the civic, historic, and symbolic role of the National Mall to our nation.

PARKWIDE ACTIONS

Cultural Resources

Memorials, related statuary, and places of commemoration would continue to be preserved. The health and appearance of the historic landscape would be improved, but its use would

continue to evolve, and its value over time would change, reflecting significant national events. Planned views and vistas would be improved and perpetuated, including large areas of open space that define features of the historic landscape.

Natural Resources

Natural resource conditions would be improved for tree and turf areas. Soil conditions would be enhanced or reengineered to reduce the effects of compaction. Irrigation systems would be installed or replaced in a manner that would protect them from damage during events. Driving or parking on grass near trees would be prohibited.

Water quality problems in designed water features would continue to be addressed. Sustainable water management strategies would include reducing water use, reusing water, and developing nonpotable water sources for large water features. Sustainable water strategies would also address flooding from urban drainage.

The National Park Service would continue to cooperate with the Army Corps of Engineers to maintain the flood control system (the Potomac Park levee), to erect temporary flood barriers, and to comprehensively examine and undertake permanent solutions to hydrology and flood control.

Regional coordination on urban wildlife issues would be continued with other national park system units as well as other federal and city agencies.

First Amendment Demonstration Rights Will Not Change under Any Alternative

The National Mall has a special role in our nation's history for the expression of First Amendment rights of freedom of speech and assembly. This is the premier site for citizens to come and fully express those rights. **This vital and essential role will not change under any alternative being considered for the National Mall plan. A primary, fundamental purpose of the National Mall will always be to provide a venue for First Amendment demonstrations.**

Last winter when people commented about the draft alternatives in newsletter 3, the National Park Service received nearly 16,500 comments that pertained to First Amendment rights. There was a widespread misunderstanding that the National Mall plan would change these fundamental rights. **These First Amendment rights will not change.**

The National Mall will remain the preeminent civic space in our nation. First Amendment demonstrations will continue to be permitted consistent with federal regulations, as they are today.

Facilities and Infrastructure for Demonstrations and Special Events Would Be Improved

Better facilities and infrastructure would be provided for demonstrations and special events, which would have a positive effect on site resources, as well as logistics and operations. The alternatives look at ways to

- accommodate more people for demonstrations and special events
- improve pedestrian and transportation access to and from locations used most frequently for demonstrations and special events
- improve space for logistics and operational access for stages, portable toilets, and other temporary facilities that may be proposed by organizers
- provide additional useful information about venue sizes and nearby proposed permanent visitor amenities, such as toilets and food service
- improve media ability to cover demonstrations and special events
- provide utilities and communication lines that will make it easier to hold demonstrations and special events
- provide surfaces that can recover more quickly from demonstrations and special events

The preliminary preferred alternative described in this newsletter summarizes the types of infrastructure changes that would improve both First Amendment demonstrations and special events.

Demonstrations, special events, and national celebrations are defined differently in the *Code of Federal Regulations*; see the text box on page 2 for the definitions.



1963 March on Washington

Demonstrations and Special Events

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution provides for freedom of expression as a right of citizens. The National Mall is the most prominent space in our country for the demonstration of these rights, and that is an essential purpose of the National Mall. Areas where national symbols are prominent backdrops are especially popular locations for demonstrations.

Consistent with the First Amendment and federal regulations, demonstrations will continue to be fully accommodated on a first-come, first-served basis throughout the National Mall. Federal regulations (36 CFR 7.96) define allowable areas and activities at the Lincoln Memorial, Washington

Monument, Thomas Jefferson Memorial, and Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Organizers of large events would be encouraged to schedule their functions during non-peak seasons. Highly visible venues throughout the National Mall would be improved and better designed to facilitate use and provide improved or additional sustainable civic forums and stages for First Amendment demonstrations, special events, and enjoyment.

Space would be planned for temporary facilities (such as portable toilets, trash, recycling, logistical or operational space, media activities, access, and law enforcement), and permanent infrastructure would be developed. The intent would be to protect resources, reduce the impact of annual

events, and make setup and takedown operations for event organizers more efficient.

A new computer-mapping-based reservation system would provide venue and permit information for demonstration and event organizers, as well as a means to schedule maintenance and park projects. The National Park Service would seek to provide more balance in the scheduling and distribution of special events (but not First Amendment demonstrations) in order to more equitably schedule open space for events, recreation, general visitation, and natural resource restoration. Intense post-event recovery procedures would be developed to improve resource conditions, and smaller areas would be set aside more

frequently for rehabilitation so that broader public access and uses could be maintained and sustained.

Sufficient staff would be provided to support national celebrations, events, and demonstrations.

Public Access and Wayfinding

The National Mall would provide a high-quality, enjoyable walking and bicycling environment, while accommodating urban traffic within a park environment. All areas of the National Mall would be connected, and better transitions would be provided into adjacent areas. Access for people with disabilities would be improved.

Better bicycling facilities would include separate bicycle lanes or routes in some areas (undertaken in cooperation with the city) and bike racks. Park managers would also work with the city to implement compatible sections of its *Bicycle Master Plan* and bicycle rental program.

Parking meters would be installed to make parking more available to visitors. While underground parking is still being examined in the plan, the National Park Service also proposes to work with the city and local parking garages to offer visitor parking and weekend rates and to consider providing valet or shuttle service to and from parking garages to designated drop-off and pick-up locations on the National Mall. Some parking areas would be redesigned for more efficient traffic flows.

Supplementary transportation could be provided. Roving health and safety courtesy shuttles could provide service for the elderly, families with small children, and others as needed. The National Park Service could offer rental electric scooters for seniors, the disabled, or those for whom walking long distances is difficult.

Up to a third of the visitors to the National Mall arrive by tour bus, and existing tour bus drop-off and pick-

up locations would remain and would be improved where possible. The National Park Service would continue to work with city agencies to address tour bus parking needs.

The National Park Service would support the long-term vision of the National Capital Planning Commission to (1) relocate the I-395/14th Street bridges (the George Mason, Rochambeau, and Arland D. Williams Jr. bridges, as well as Metro and railroad bridges) in accordance with the *Framework Plan* vision, (2) develop a new Metro station near the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, (3) provide new Metro station entries, (4) establish new midblock crossings on Constitution Avenue, and (5) redesign roads to improve pedestrian access and connections to and from adjacent neighborhoods and the Kennedy Center.

Visitor Information, Education, and Enjoyment

All people would be welcomed through improved orientation, wayfinding, and information services that would reduce visual sign clutter. Orientation / map areas near key pedestrian entries and intersections or corridors leading to the National Mall would be readable at night. Signs and brochures would be offered in multiple languages. In addition, roving rangers would welcome visitors and answer questions, and all park staff, including maintenance staff, would be able to direct visitors to destinations and provide park maps.

Visitor information that is currently provided on-line and in brochures and maps would continue to be upgraded, and park websites would be improved. Park staff would work with professional tour providers to disseminate accurate, engaging information.

Communication networks, mass notification systems, program and activity listings, coordinated information about adjacent museums and visitor destinations, and links to tour-

ist websites would create a seamless visitor experience.

Additional educational waysides would be provided; however, a central visitor center, museum, or auditorium would not be added. Educational programs would be flexible and adaptable to technological innovations, such as digital electronic displays, phone tours, and interpretive boards and activity listings so that people could personalize their visits to the National Mall. The variety of guided tours would be increased, with more multi-season touring opportunities, thematic walking tours, bicycle tours, and multilingual tours.

Opportunities for entertainment at venues such as at the D.C. War Memorial, the lower approachway to the Lincoln Memorial, and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial plaza would be continued, and necessary infrastructure would be added or improved.

Educational Programs Would Seek to Inspire Visitors

The National Mall provides the quintessential American experience where visitors can learn about our core values as a nation by making an educational, emotional, or patriotic connection to the memorials that commemorate our history and the physical design that reflects our democratic form of government.

Educational programs at sites throughout the National Mall would inspire visitors so that they would leave with a new or renewed appreciation of their inalienable rights, the American experience, and our diverse culture. Themes would include civic space and First Amendment demonstrations, commemorative works, the development of the capital city and the National Mall, healthy lifestyles, and sustainability (including the importance of recycling, reducing waste, and reusing items as a stewardship message).

Demonstrations, National Celebrations, and Special Events: What's the Difference?

The *Code of Federal Regulations* (36 CFR 7.96(g)(1)) defines each of these activities for the National Capital Region of the National Park Service as follows:

- **Demonstrations** — The term includes demonstrations, picketing, speechmaking, marching, holding vigils or religious services, and all other like forms of conduct that involve the communication or expression of views or grievances, engaged in by one or more persons, the conduct of which has the effect, intent, or propensity to draw a crowd or onlookers. This term does not include casual park use by visitors or tourists which does not have an intent or propensity to attract a crowd or onlookers.
- **Special events** — The term includes sports events, pageants, celebrations, historical reenactments, regattas, entertainments, exhibitions, parades, fairs, festivals, and similar events (including such events presented by the National Park Service), which are not demonstrations as previously defined, and which are engaged in by one or more persons, the conduct of which has the effect, intent, or propensity to draw a crowd or onlookers. This term also does not include casual park use by visitors or tourists which does not have an intent or propensity to attract a crowd or onlookers.
- **National celebration events** — The term means the recurring special events regularly scheduled by the National Capital Region, including the Lighting of the National Christmas Tree and Christmas Pathway of Peace, Cherry Blossom Festival, Fourth of July celebration, Festival of American Folklife, Columbus Day Commemorative Wreath-Laying, and Inaugural ceremonies.

Pedestrian Circulation

Fully accessible and high-quality pedestrian facilities, with appropriate walking surfaces, seating, lighting, and amenities, would offer visitors comfortable and enjoyable opportunities for reflection, commemoration, celebration, and recreation. The pedestrian circulation system would be improved to better connect all areas on the National Mall, including adjacent destinations such as museums, and to create welcoming and well-connected corridors into the city.

Performances, thematically appropriate entertainment, and educational programs could also be provided at several new visitor food service or multipurpose destinations. Small-scale programs or entertainment could be used as ways to enhance the pedestrian experience.

Recreational activities such as walking, picnicking, reading, sunning, kite flying, Frisbee, volleyball, softball, kickball, and playing would continue throughout the National Mall, along with permitted league sports where authorized. Current commercial recreational activities could be diversified or expanded.

Offsite bike rentals would continue, and connections to other nearby recreation facilities in East Potomac Park, along with trail connections to the waterfront and the Potomac and Anacostia rivers, would be improved.

Visitor Amenities

Coordinated, high-quality, timeless facilities and furnishings would be provided, including trash/recycling containers, curbs, signs, drinking fountains, and restrooms. Designs would be sensitive to the character of the historic landscape and would visually connect different areas of the National Mall to establish a sense of place and an overall identity. Sustainable designs would be incorporated into all new visitor amenities for ease of maintenance and use.

More seating opportunities and locations for visitors to enjoy views or summer shade would be provided, along with seating for groups. Seating options would include benches and the use of site components such as

walls. Additional seating would be considered at some memorials. Seating would be designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

A coordinated paving system for all sidewalks, walkways, and crosswalks on the National Mall would be developed. Low-maintenance, sustainable materials would be used to improve the visitor experience and park operations. Paving would be suitable for pedestrian access and recreational activities, and it would be durable enough for event access, operations, and maintenance.

The National Park Service would work closely with the National Capital Planning Commission, the Commission of Fine Arts, and the Architect of the Capitol to reestablish the lighting task force to develop a comprehensive lighting guideline for the monumental core area. One of the purposes would be to protect the dominant lighting of the five symbolic icons — the Capitol, the White House, the Washington Monument, the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, and the Lincoln Memorial. If financially feasible, several well-located, convenient, attractive, and architecturally significant multipurpose facilities could be developed in certain locations (e.g., Union Square, the Washington Monument grounds, Constitution Gardens, and the Tidal Basin area). These facilities would provide pleasant places for visitors to sit and relax, and infrastructure would be provided for programs, performances, and entertainment. Food service could offer more variety in types of food, and indoor/outdoor seating could be offered. High-quality designs and pleasant surroundings would

encourage visitors to linger. Refreshment stands and mobile carts would also be continued.

More visitor restrooms would be provided in convenient locations. In high-use areas some restrooms would be sized to flexibly accommodate increased demand generated by events, tour buses, or peak-season visitation. The capacity of some existing restrooms would be increased. In some areas automated, self-cleaning restrooms (which sanitize surfaces after use) would be provided.

Drinking fountains would be concentrated near restrooms. They would be designed to reduce the possibility of vandalism and to make it easier to fill reusable water bottles or take care of pet water needs.

A commercial services plan would be developed to assess the feasibility of additional food service, retail, and recreation equipment rentals. If services were found to be both necessary and appropriate, the amount or level and type of such services would be determined.

Health, Public Safety, and Security

Areas would be redesigned to safely differentiate multiple uses (e.g., bicycle lanes to separate riders from vehicles). Measures such as longer street-crossing times, improved crosswalks, special crosswalk paving, midblock crossing points, larger waiting areas, better walkway lighting, and emergency call stations would all enhance pedestrian safety.

Visitor contact with uniformed staff, including horse and bike patrols, would be maximized. Mass notification capability to keep visitors and staff informed of what to do in case of weather or other emergencies would be provided. This system would be coordinated with an upgraded communications network.

To provide opportunities for visitors to cool down in hot weather, some new interactive water features would allow visitors to get wet.

To deal with problems and concerns caused by homeless and transient populations, the National Park Service would work with city agencies, business improvement districts, and Congress to address the causes and impacts of homelessness. Tall shrub beds and areas allowing cover and storage would be reduced or eliminated, in keeping with the original landscape design intent.

Park Operations

The National Mall has a significant backlog of deferred maintenance (repairs) and related capital improvements. Deferred maintenance would be addressed. Some projects would be redefined to improve conditions, to allow more use, to better protect resources, and to upgrade and provide sufficient visitor amenities.

A visual quality team would continue to help prioritize projects and to improve conditions and the appearance of park facilities.

New, high-quality facilities would be designed to generate respect and be vandal-resistant to achieve the highest maintenance standards. Cutting edge sustainable facility and site design measures would be incorporated into all facilities to demonstrate environmental leadership. Recycling and waste management practices would be improved. Durable, easy-to-maintain, and standardized recirculation systems would be installed in water features.

Walkways would be wide enough to accommodate maintenance, staff, and operational vehicles, as well as the public. They would be able to withstand the weight of vehicles used for park operations and event deliveries. Trash removal and restroom cleaning would be increased to cover hours of visitation.

To protect areas during rehabilitation and restoration, an attractive, durable, temporary fence system (in lieu of snow fencing) would be developed. It should be lightweight, not easily

scaled, and simple to store, transport, and install. Alternatively, a system such as the “red flag” system and related signs used in New York City’s Central Park could be established to notify visitors when areas should not be used.

Renewable energy sources would be sought for lighting and pumping systems for water features. Technological advances in monitoring, such as locating burned-out light bulbs, would help improve maintenance.

THE MALL

Union Square (1st to 3rd Streets)

The Grant Memorial would be the focal point of a symmetrical and formally laid out civic square that would be a popular, active, and lively day and evening destination that could be easily transformed into a larger venue for First Amendment demonstrations and events.

The Grant Memorial would be restored. The condition of historic landscape components would be improved and incorporated into a new design, including historic or “witness” trees. The historic east-west views between the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument would be improved and perpetuated, as would view corridors along Pennsylvania and Maryland avenues, terminating in historic statu-

ary near 1st Street. Turf areas would be minimized, eliminated, or redesigned, but low plantings would retain a sense of continuity with the historic landscape that was once home to the U.S. Botanic Garden. Union Square would be visually and physically connected to the present-day U.S. Botanic Garden to the south and the Youth Park to the north, and floral plantings would add color.

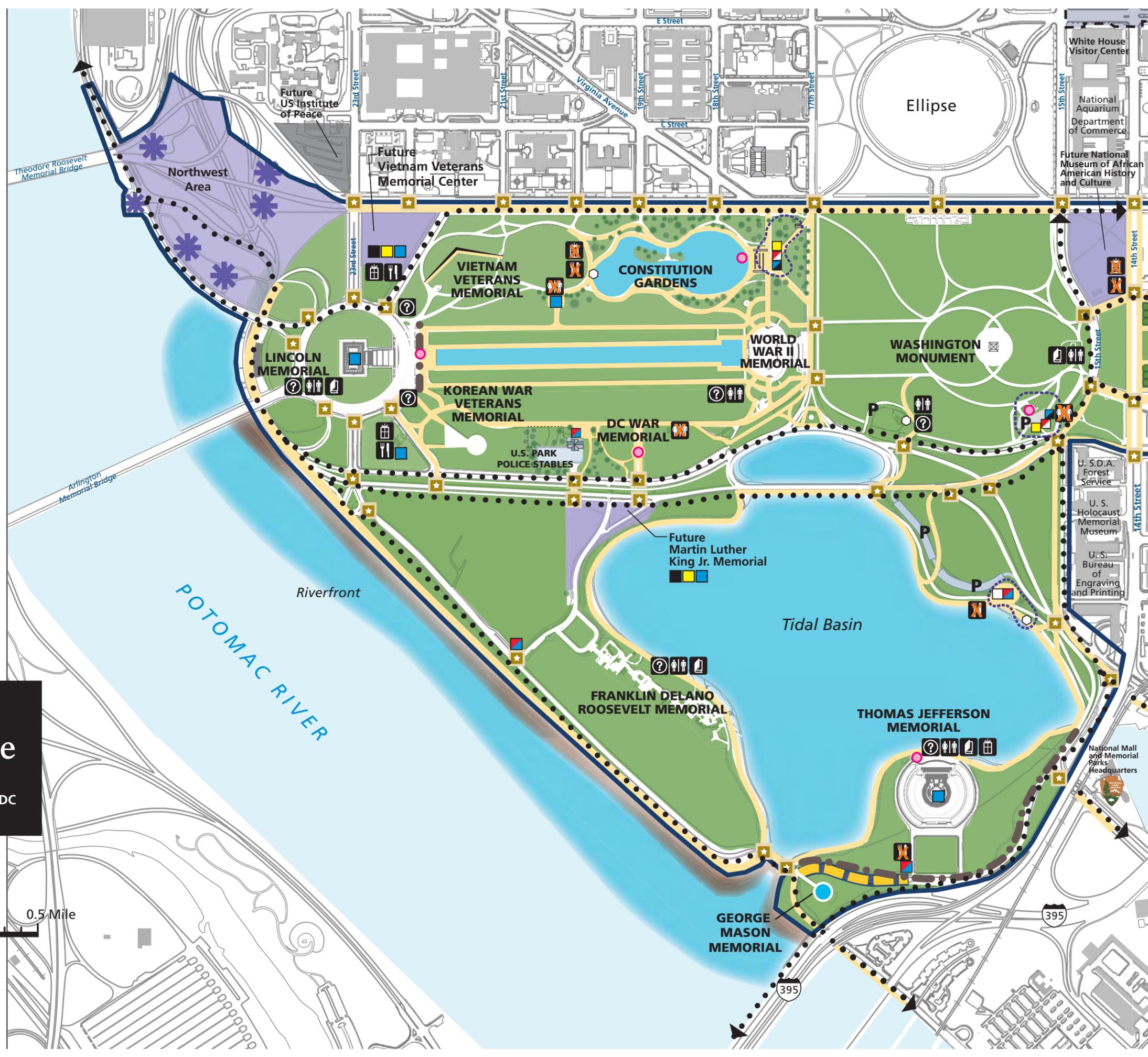
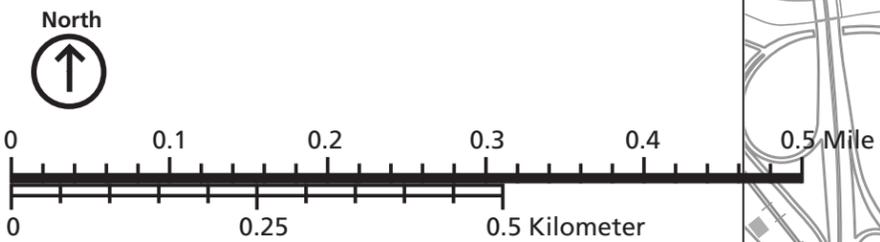
Union Square would highlight sustainable water management practices. The Capitol reflecting pool would be removed, but the Union Square redesign could include reflective and interactive water features (such as a smaller pool or jets to frame views of the U.S. Capitol). The sounds of water would be used to muffle the noise of urban traffic.

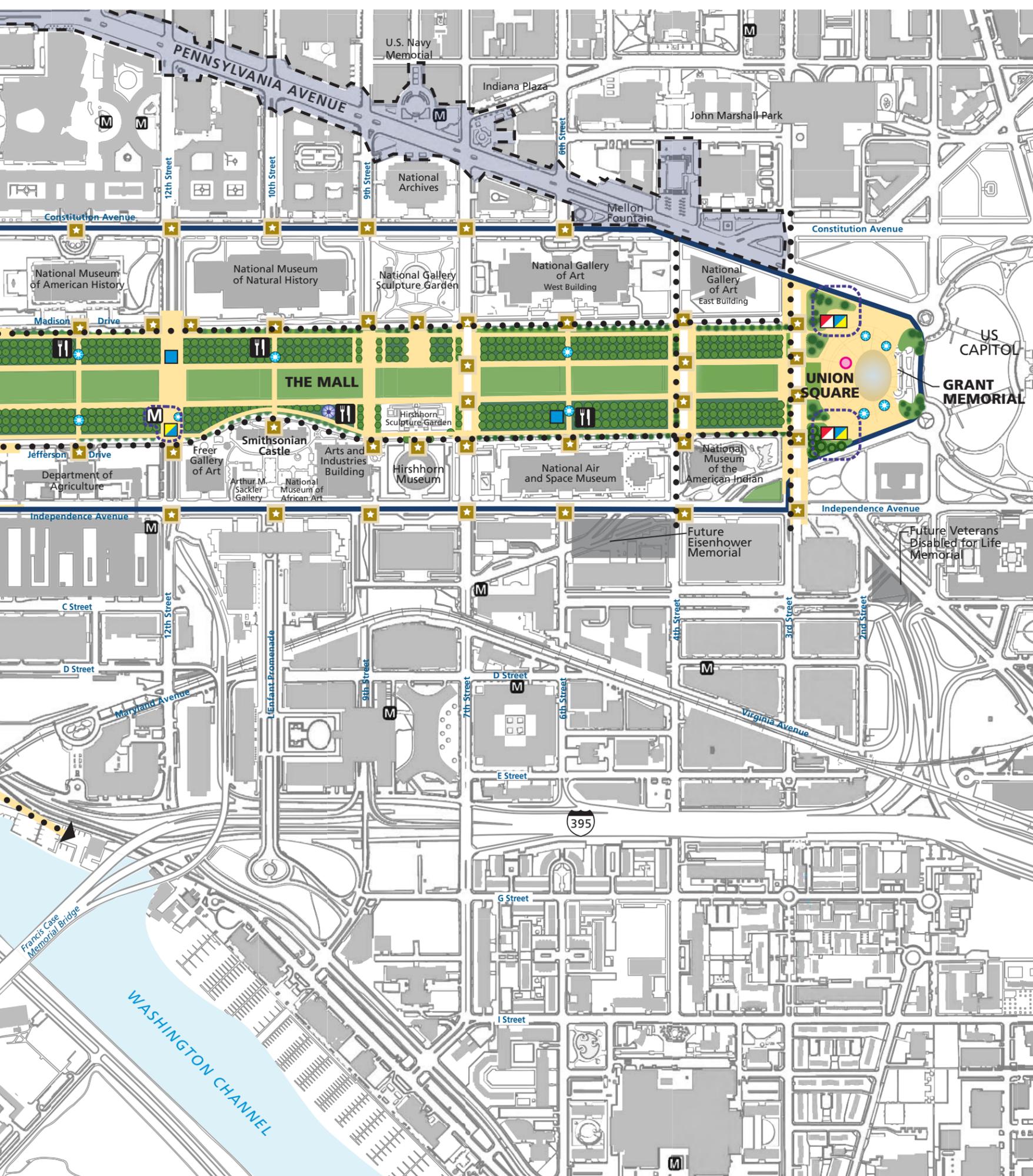
Pedestrian circulation would be improved, along with visual and physical connections and access to the Mall, the U.S. Capitol, and areas north and south of Union Square. Social trails would be eliminated. Crosswalks on 3rd Street would be designed to highlight and continue pedestrian connections and circulation patterns on the Mall. The National Park Service would coordinate with plans by others to redesign the streetscapes between 1st and 3rd streets to enhance views along Maryland and



“Screen on the Green”

 **Preliminary Preferred Alternative**
National Mall Plan
 National Mall and Memorial Parks • Washington, DC
 DSC • Dec. 2008 • 802 • 20014





MAP LEGEND *Note: diagram of facilities not to scale*

-  NATIONAL MALL PLAN LIMITS
-  PROJECTS BY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS
-  SECURITY PERIMETER COMPLETED
-  PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE (now to be covered in a separate plan)
-  EXISTING FACILITIES
-  IDENTIFIED FUTURE MEMORIAL SITE

NEW OR CHANGED FACILITIES RESULTING FROM THE PLAN

-  EXISTING FACILITIES REMOVED
-  WATER FEATURES REHABILITATED
-  INFORMATION/ORIENTATION
-  SUSTAINABLE SHORELINE
-  RETAIL
-  IMPROVEMENTS (TURF/TREES, PARK FURNITURE, ETC.)
Note: Not all trees are shown on map.
-  FOOD SERVICE
-  PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS (PAVED AREAS)
-  RESTROOMS
-  BOOKSTORE
-  RECREATIONAL RENTALS
-  U.S. PARK POLICE STABLES
-  MULTIPURPOSE FACILITIES
-  PERFORMANCE SPACE
-  INTERACTIVE WATER FEATURE
-  CAROUSEL

CIRCULATION CHANGES

-  TOUR BUS DROP-OFF IMPROVEMENTS
-  PARKING LOT
-  BIKE ROUTES / LANES
-  CROSSWALK IMPROVEMENTS

All Visitor Facilities Would Be Compatible with the Character of the National Mall

Facilities would be of high quality and reflect a timeless and enduring character, thus creating a sense of place that reinforces the civic, historic, and symbolic role of the National Mall to our nation.

Some new or rehabilitated visitor service facilities (such as restrooms and refreshment stands) would use a timeless architectural style to make the facilities easily identifiable and to denote that these facilities are secondary to national memorials or multipurpose visitor destinations.

Pennsylvania avenues, improve pedestrian movements, and fulfill the grand visions of the L'Enfant and McMillan plans.

Educational themes at this site would include the Grant Memorial and the U.S. Capitol.

Union Square would incorporate shade for visitor comfort, and pleasant places for rest and relaxation. Facilities would be located outside view corridors. A small, indoor/outdoor, multipurpose destination refreshment stand (similar in size to the Lincoln Memorial concession stands) would provide a location to enjoy views of the Grant Memorial and the Capitol. There would be space for seating, educational wayside exhibits, and small exhibitions or displays. Infrastructure would be provided for performances.

Flexible, high-capacity restrooms would be designed so that more stalls could be opened during high-use periods, and nearby drinking water and recreation equipment rentals could be provided.

The Mall (3rd to 14th Streets)

The Mall would remain a highly visible landscape that would be renovated to improve conditions and to sustainably accommodate very high levels of use for First Amendment demonstrations, public gatherings, national celebrations, cultural programs, and special events.

The condition of critical elements of the historic landscape, such as lawns and elm trees, would be improved and

protected. The planting plan for all vegetation on the Mall would be updated and would be compatible with contributing features of historic plans. Compacted soils in turf areas would be removed and replaced with engineered soils that could better withstand intense use. Drainage and irrigation systems would be provided. A combination of design elements, paving, edging, and stewardship messages would be used to reduce social trails. To protect the historic landscape, park furniture and interactive water features would be added outside the primary view corridor.

Rows of American elm trees flank the pedestrian promenades and frame views of major national memorials and government buildings. While individuals would still be able to enjoy the shade these trees offer, elm tree areas would no longer be available for temporary event facilities such as tents, walkway surfaces, stages, and restrooms. First Amendment demonstrations would still be able to use these areas.

Event utility infrastructure would be developed to protect resources, to reduce setup and takedown times, and to accommodate media communications. Locations would be identified for temporary portable restrooms and trailers with restrooms so that these facilities would be convenient, easy to service, and not block views.

The 12th Street axis would be redesigned to accommodate high levels of use and the placement of tents, stages, and logistical and operational areas for special events. Additional special event

staging space would be created over the 12th Street tunnel entry north of Madison Drive NW.

The primary pedestrian entrance for the National Mall would be a paved welcome plaza near the Smithsonian Metro entrance. The welcome plaza would include a visitor contact station, restrooms, multiple orientation maps, and a large tactile model or pavement map of the National Mall, along with shaded and group seating. Electronic information and a listing of events and activities would be provided. The National Park Service would work with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority to add the National Mall to the name of the Smithsonian Metro station.

Additional pleasantly shaded seating would be provided along north-south sidewalks within the elm tree panels. This would include some seating areas for groups. Containers with horticultural plantings would add seasonal color and enjoyment.

As part of a coordinated paving plan for the National Mall, gravel on pathways and former roadbeds would be removed. Walks and other areas would be paved with a universally accessible material. Some walks would be widened to enhance the visitor experience by providing room for orientation and space for rest and enjoyment, to facilitate First Amendment demonstrations and special events, and to allow for more efficient park operations. To further enhance the Mall as well as public safety, pedestrian lighting levels along walkways would be increased.

Parking meters would be installed on Madison and Jefferson drives to make parking more available to visitors. Visitor transportation, commercial tour bus drop-offs, bicycles, and other wheeled vehicles would be accommodated on Madison and Jefferson drives over the short- to mid-term (10–15 years). Occasionally access would be restricted to accommodate events and national celebrations (such as the Fourth of July). A long-term goal for

Madison and Jefferson drives would be to improve traffic flow by removing parking for private vehicles to better accommodate bicycling, visitor transit, and pedestrians.

Educational themes would include the Mall as the nation's premier civic space. Existing recreational opportunities would be continued, and the Smithsonian Institution's carousel would remain. Small-scale entertainment would be encouraged, along with programs, educational entertainment, and celebrations at events.

Near all refreshment stands, seating and tables with colorful umbrellas, flower boxes, or display fountains would add to visitor enjoyment and comfort and would encourage lingering. A small, architecturally compatible visitor restroom would be constructed near the Air and Space Museum refreshment stand. An additional higher capacity restroom would be located north of the central grass panel near 12th Street NW.

WASHINGTON MONUMENT AND GROUNDS



Kites at Washington Monument

The Washington Monument would remain the primary visual orientation point for the National Mall. Hours at the monument would be extended to 10 p.m. during the high-use season to allow more people to visit. Views of the monument and north-south views between the Jefferson Memorial and the White House would be protected and improved. The condition of the grounds, trees, and the German-American Friendship Garden would also be improved.

The grounds of the Washington Monument would continue to see high volumes of use, including large demon-

strations and special events. Electrical and communication connections, along with space for operations and the media, would be provided in the northeast, northwest, and southwest corners of the grounds to make the area more sustainable for demonstrations and special events.

Roads and parking, along with bicycle and pedestrian circulation, would be redesigned south of Independence Avenue to reconnect park areas and to enhance safety and recreational opportunities. Pedestrian connections would be improved between the Washington Monument grounds and the Tidal Basin, as well as to the Southwest Waterfront and East Potomac Park. A system of separate dedicated bike trails would be constructed to improve bicycling throughout the National Mall.

Educational themes at this site would include George Washington, the Washington Monument, and the German-American Friendship Garden. Recreational activities would continue and could be expanded. Educational waysides and integrated exhibits would be provided at a new multipurpose facility.

A permanent visitor facility is needed to replace the temporary visitor facility

tent. A new, high-quality, indoor/outdoor, multipurpose facility and performance space would consolidate visitor services and take the place of the Sylvan Theater and the nearby restroom. It would be a pleasant destination and would be constructed below the level of roads and oriented to muffle noise and provide views of the monument. Various daytime programs, events, and performances, plus evening entertainment, would be offered. Audiences of up to 3,000 people could be accommodated on the hillside. In addition to food service, retail, information, educational waysides, integrated exhibits, and restrooms (sized for high use volumes), the facility would include operations space and ranger offices. It would be open from early morning, when visitors queue for monument tickets, until evening. There would be additional parking for visitors with disabilities.

The Survey Lodge would be adaptively reused for services and parking for visitors with disabilities, information, exhibits about the building's history, and possibly recreation equipment rentals (such as bicycles and kites). The lodge's access and visibility would be improved. Monument Lodge would continue to provide ticketing, a bookstore, and restrooms.



Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool at sunset



Ceremony at World War II Memorial

WEST POTOMAC PARK (NORTH OF INDEPENDENCE AVENUE)

World War II Memorial

No major actions are planned for the World War II Memorial. The memorial provides parking and drop-off for visitors with disabilities, and wheelchairs are provided.

Constitution Gardens

Constitution Gardens would be a pleasant place for visitors to relax as they tour the National Mall. It would be a restful, high-quality, multipurpose visitor destination that would provide food service and opportunities for entertainment and enjoyment. The Potomac Park levee would be redesigned and upgraded.

Landscape conditions would be improved, and the pedestrian circulation system would be upgraded with coordinated paving and improved operational access. In addition, some walkways would be widened to create venues for smaller events (exhibits and performances).

Constitution Gardens Lake would be rebuilt to be self-sustainable, and circulating pumps and a filtration system would be installed. A nonpotable, sustainable water source would be explored for filling the lake.

Educational themes at this site would include the history of the area (the Washington Canal and the Lockkeeper's House), land reclamation, flood control, and the role and importance of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution in our country's history.

Urban recreational activities, such as fishing and model boating, would be increased but would not conflict with commemorative experiences at nearby memorials. Children's play opportunities would make use of natural elements, boulders, sculpture or interactive water features, and pavement patterns or educational activities and programs to encourage exploration.

The multipurpose facility would be located in the paved asphalt area at the east end of the lake, as proposed in previous designs. It would provide a unique indoor/outdoor garden character. The historic canal Lockkeeper's House, which would be relocated away from the corner of 17th and Constitution Avenue NW, would be adaptively reused in conjunction with the new facility. The combined facilities could provide visitor services (food service, restrooms), educational waysides, information, a bookstore, retail, recreation equipment rentals

(such as model boats and portable lawn chairs), and space for partner activities.

A flexible performance space, stage, or gazebo would be located in or near the east end of the lake, making it convenient to the multipurpose facility and taking advantage of the nearby rolling terrain to accommodate an audience of several thousand. Utilities would be provided. Sound levels from programs would be controlled so as to respect the reflective experiential qualities at nearby memorials.

Existing restrooms would be replaced with a facility designed to be more sensitive to the surroundings. The existing refreshment stand could be rehabilitated and adaptively reused or removed.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Space would be provided near the memorial wall for seating and contemplation. Educational themes would include the history of the memorial and its role on the National Mall.

Lincoln Memorial and Grounds

The Lincoln Memorial would continue to be the visual western terminus of the National Mall. The exhibit area and restrooms at the memorial would be renovated and expanded, and the bookstore would be expanded in the lower level.

The lower approachway plaza would be rehabilitated, and the security perimeter would be completed. The reflecting pool would be rebuilt to improve water quality, recirculate water, and reduce volume. A nonpotable, sustainable water source would be explored. A paved walk would provide an enjoyable walking environment along the reflecting pool; the walk would be bordered by a soft surface for jogging.

The north and south elm walks would be repaved to reflect the coordinated paving system for the National Mall, and additional seating and educational waysides would be provided. Site fur-

nishings and lighting would be redesigned. Permanent light fixtures would be installed for pedestrian safety; they would be designed so as not to detract from memorial lighting or contribute to light pollution.

Educational themes in this area would include Abraham Lincoln, the memorial's development, the role of the memorial in civil rights and First Amendment demonstrations, the Watergate steps, and the Constitution Avenue belvedere.

Visitor amenities such as information related to the Korean War Veterans and the Vietnam Veterans memorials would continue to be provided on the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial. Both information facilities would be rehabilitated.

Newer concession stands would remain, and an architecturally compatible restroom would be added near the south concession stand. Its placement would respect historic planting patterns.

Future national memorials authorized by Congress would be accommodated in the area north of the Watergate steps outside the Reserve. Road projects and circulation improvements by others would be supported to simplify traffic patterns and to improve pedestrian connections to and from adjacent neighborhoods and the Kennedy Center.

Korean War Veterans Memorial

On the west side of the Korean War Veterans Memorial the walks would be widened to ensure that changing circulation patterns and group visitation could be accommodated. Pedestrian connections between the memorial, the Lincoln Memorial reflecting pool, and Independence Avenue would be improved. Educational themes would focus on the memorial and the Korean War.

D.C. War Memorial

The D.C. War Memorial and grounds would be rehabilitated, and utilities

would be upgraded to continue the memorial's historic use as a bandstand. The adjacent landscape would be rehabilitated for use as a performance area. Educational themes would include the memorial and World War I.

Ash Woods

The U.S. Park Police stables would be rebuilt to be compatible with the historic character and quality of the National Mall. The area would be redesigned so that operational functions would remain fairly inconspicuous on the south side. The paddocks would be made part of the visitor experience, and educational waysides about the U.S. Park Police and horse patrols would be provided.

A new stables parking area and vehicle access road from Independence Avenue would be constructed. The present Ash Woods road would become primarily a pedestrian walk with a secondary function as a service road. Seating and inconspicuous pedestrian lighting would be provided. The recreation fields would remain.

The Ash Woods restroom facility would be demolished. A new restroom in the visitor services architectural style would be provided nearer the U.S. Park Police stables.

Food service could be provided near the new restroom if warranted by future visitation.

WEST POTOMAC PARK (SOUTH OF INDEPENDENCE AVENUE)

Tidal Basin Area

A sense of arrival at the Tidal Basin would be created by redesigning pedestrian circulation and parking. Around the Tidal Basin high-quality

recreational experiences would be provided for strolling/sightseeing, bicycling, and boating. A system of separate bicycle lanes or trails would be developed. Improved circulation patterns, high-quality paving, additional seating, and more pedestrian stopping points would enhance the visitor experience. Pedestrian lighting would be installed so as not to impact the evening lighting ambience of memorials.

Based on engineering recommendations, the Tidal Basin seawalls would be rebuilt above tidewater. The historic appearance would be retained while accommodating wider walks and improving bicycling/vehicular circulation and safety. The Tidal Basin would be slightly smaller, primarily in the southeast area.

Educational themes would include the history of the cherry trees and the Tidal Basin and the development of the Potomac parks.

A Tidal Basin recreational boat service could provide access to the Thomas Jefferson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King Jr. memorials. Rowboat, canoe, or kayak rentals could offer additional recreational opportunities.



D.C. War Memorial

Historic Views Would Be Improved and Perpetuated

The western end of the National Mall is dominated by three prominent memorials — the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial. Views to and from these memorials would be improved and perpetuated.

The Tidal Basin refreshment stand and recreation facilities would be replaced with new facilities that would be compatible with a timeless visitor services architectural style. Outdoor seating (some shaded) and restrooms would be provided.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial

Visitor use patterns would be assessed, and paving would be revised in areas where vegetation is regularly damaged by trampling.

Both the Franklin D. Roosevelt and Martin Luther King Jr. memorials would provide information, restrooms, and bookstores. A small food service facility convenient to both memorials and closer to Ohio Drive could be provided if warranted by future visitation.

West Potomac Park Riverfront

Where feasible, a sustainable, vegetated shoreline would be established along the Potomac River. In other areas stone-faced walls would provide space for seating, fishing, and enjoyment of the river or nodes for water taxi service. Walks would be improved, and additional seating would be provided.

A system of separate bicycle lanes or trails would be developed along Ohio Drive and river walks. Similar levels of visitor parking would be provided, but areas might be reconfigured for more efficient parking. Parking meters



Thomas Jefferson Memorial at dusk

would be installed. The athletic fields would remain.

George Mason Memorial

The historic fountain would be rehabilitated to improve water quality.

Thomas Jefferson Memorial and Grounds

The Thomas Jefferson Memorial would continue to be a historic, character-defining feature and the visual southern terminus for the National Mall. The adjacent seawalls would be restored or rehabilitated, as recommended by engineering studies. The concession stand would be rebuilt, and restrooms, seating, and tables would be provided.

Improved utilities would be provided for special events on the plaza and south of the memorial, but no special event stage, roof, or walls would be allowed to obstruct the historic view to the White House from the plaza.

The tour bus drop-off would be redesigned to improve pedestrian circulation. Bicycle lanes or trails would be provided. Perimeter security and vehicular access would be completed.

Educational themes at this site would include Thomas Jefferson, the memorial's development, and the history of the Tidal Basin.

PLANNING INFORMATION

If you are new to this planning process or would like to review the other alternatives, the previous newsletters and background information are available on-line at the project website, www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Public meetings about the preliminary preferred alternative will be held in Washington, D.C., early in 2009. Please check the project website for meeting locations, dates, and times. Press announcements will also be sent to the media.

If you would like an e-mail notification about meetings or when the draft environmental impact statement is available for public review, please provide your e-mail address on-line at the project website under the "Request E-mail Updates" link.

A Message from the Superintendent



Dear Friends,

This newsletter highlights a new alternative — the National Park Service's initial preferred alternative — for the National Mall plan we are working on. Three preliminary alternatives and the no-action alternative were presented to you in newsletter 3 in December 2007. We received nearly 18,000 comments on these alternatives, making it clear that Americans care tremendously about this civic space in the center of our nation's capital. This newsletter provides another opportunity for you to comment about the alternatives, including the preliminary preferred alternative. Your comments and suggestions will be considered as part of the analysis of the alternatives in the draft environmental impact statement.

The preliminary preferred alternative was developed after your comments on the alternatives in newsletter 3 were analyzed. Those comments helped the planning team, park staff, and cooperating agencies refine the alternatives during a series of workshops in the winter and spring of 2008. Then a preliminary preferred alternative was developed that contains elements of all the other action alternatives and suggestions from you, consulting parties, and cooperating agencies. Ideas have also been incorporated from the ongoing examination of best practices used at other sites and by other organizations.

As part of this planning effort we have also been looking at deferred maintenance needs for the National Mall — repairs and maintenance that have been postponed because of insufficient funding or staffing. This has been an eye-opening experience, and deferred maintenance amounts to more than \$400 million. These needs must be addressed, and they will be incorporated into any plan that is adopted for the National Mall.

The planning team is now preparing the draft environmental impact statement, which will analyze all the alternatives that have been presented to you in newsletter 3 and this newsletter. The draft environmental impact statement is scheduled for public release in 2009, and it will be available for a minimum 60-day comment period. At that time the National Park Service will hold a number of meetings around the nation, along with Internet web seminars or "webinars." We will work with the media to publicize availability of the document and how you can participate in its review. After comments have been analyzed, a final environmental impact statement will be prepared, which will address substantive comments and will be available for comment during a 30-day no-action period. If there are no substantive comments, a record of decision will then be signed and published. At that time the National Mall will have an approved plan that can be implemented.

Earlier newsletters have always jointly addressed the National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue. Planning for both of these areas is continuing, but the issues facing them are somewhat different. So as not to lose focus on the importance of Pennsylvania Avenue, a separate environmental document will be prepared for it. Comments that have already been received on Pennsylvania Avenue will be considered during that planning process.

We look forward to your comments and suggestions on the preliminary preferred alternative. The most efficient and effective way to comment is on the Internet link at www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan. If you want to submit written comments, please send them to

NPS/DSC/Planning — National Mall Plan
12795 W. Alameda Pkwy
Denver, CO 80225

To provide additional opportunities for public comments on the preliminary preferred alternative, we will be holding public meetings in Washington, D.C., after this newsletter has been distributed. Please check the project website for dates, times, and locations.

Thank you.

Dr. Stephanie Toothman, Acting Superintendent
National Mall and Memorial Parks

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