

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION TRANSCRIPTION

DECEMBER 2, 2010 - RELATED TO THE NATIONAL MALL PLAN

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ACTION ITEMS

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Moving to the action items, Agenda Item No. 5 is the National Mall Plan. This is obviously a very significant item on today's agenda. We have from NCPC staff Nancy Witherall.

ITEM 5A - EDR FOR NATIONAL MALL

MS. WITHERELL: Good afternoon. The Park Service is presenting today the final master plan, Mall Plan that it has been working on publicly for four years, and has anticipated, been anticipating for longer than that. The Commission will recall that you saw and commented on the draft plan at your March meeting, and the Park Service has now concluded its environmental impact statement, and has updated the plan with further information, particularly updating some environmental information that EPS APA requested from the draft, and it has now completed its environmental and historic preservation work, and is now submitting a final plan for your review and approval.

The Mall is a magnificent landscape and is beloved by many people around the world, as well as in this country. It will always be beautiful. But as we know, it does show some wear, and particularly when we're at ground level, and particularly in certain seasons.

The Park Service is charge with being the steward of this place, but also managing many activities at a very high level of intensity on this landscape, which the Park Service believes is the most intensively used landscape in the world.

It's not been able to find another example where so many people come to this place, and particularly since most of it is softscape, not hardscape. Here's a photo that indicates the kind of wear and tear that can occur on the Mall, especially in the summer months when there have been long use of temporary structures in particular on the center panel at the Mall.

So the Park Service, following a Congressional hearing in 2005, but also as a culmination of many years of concern on the part of many people for the condition of the Mall, and funding for the Mall, introduced in the fall of 2006 the beginning of planning for the National Mall, which now we see in this document.

The major goals for the plan are stewardship of the Mall, as the nation's preeminent civic landscape, conservation of its natural and cultural resources, developing the Mall, thinking of it as an urban park, which it is, and implementing measures so that it can be developed and managed to be sustainable.

Other goals include making improvements to infrastructure, infrastructure of all types, circulation, transportation, infrastructure for visitors, for First Amendment events, such as we see at the Capitol Reflecting Pool in the upper left corner, for just average tourists, people who use the Mall for recreation.

Current conditions include a lack of utilities that allow for easy hookups for events. So that's why we see temporary generators on the Mall, and there are also various choke points or other circulation problems, and one particular choke point is on the Kutz Bridge. As you're all very familiar with that very narrow sidewalk there as it crosses the Tidal Basin.

Also the Mall is not now universally accessible, although the Park Service has certainly been making strides on that in recent decades, but more needs to be done.

It's very important to the Park Service that the Mall be as welcoming as possible and for all visitors, and so they're planning to have additional and improved facilities for food and restrooms in particular, information, comfort, being able to get out of the hot sun when necessary.

It's very important that those amenities be well-dispersed, and that's what you see in this plan. It's also important to improve pedestrian safety and to provide access to and around the Mall for bicycles for circulation. So the proposal calls for separating pedestrian and bicycle paths. The Mall is also seen by many people as a place to play, and it's very important to improve the quality of the athletic fields and to make them more durable, so therefore they can be used more frequently.

Then most fundamentally, it's important that the National Mall be integrated within the monumental core itself, and in the life of the city, through improved wayfinding, access, circulation and transit.

This is the area of the National Mall Plan, and it's sort of shown in green and highlighted with this order. You'll note that that includes land managed by the Park Service and also includes land that is not managed by the Park Service, notably the -- particularly, but not exclusively, the Smithsonian museums, the National Gallery of Art and the Department of Agriculture.

The Park Service has been working very closely with all of these related agencies and many others, including OAS and the Federal Reserve, Holocaust Museum and so forth, all in this broad area, in the development of this plan over four years, and certainly continues, intends to continue to do so as the plan is implemented.

And as you know, we're in a fortuitous moment where various agencies are planning, including planning together, and this includes primarily the commissions and the Commission of Fine Art's framework plan, which indeed continues our legacy of planning throughout the history of this Commission in the monumental core, most memorably, perhaps, with our legacy plan of 1997. This is another implementation of that.

So from the very beginning, this Commission envisions that our framework plan will work very closely with the Mall plans, so that we can be planning for the entire monumental core.

In addition, as you know, the District of Columbia has concluded its Center City action agenda and is beginning to implement that, and the Architect of the Capitol is still continuing to work on its master plan, which is still in draft, and is not released to the public, as it was last spring.

This diagram is meant to show opportunities for how the boundaries of the Mall can be more porous, and how activities that are on the Mall can be placed within the larger context of the monumental core, particularly to areas that are more sustainable, areas that have hardscape, areas that have amenities, areas that have utilities. So that the kind of functions that the American public really demands for the Mall can be shared in this broader area more sustainably.

The Mall plan has also been completed in the context of ongoing work, and the Commission has seen many projects over the past four years for projects on the Mall, and some of the most notable ones include the levy and certainly memorials, some of which have just been having ground broken, but also ones that are now nearing completion, such as Martin Luther King.

The Commission just two months ago saw a concept for perimeter security at the Jefferson, and certainly you are aware with the work this past year under the Stimulus Act for the World War I Memorial and particularly for work at the Lincoln Memorial. This is the composite of, shown graphically, of all of the ideas in the Mall plan, and I spent quite a bit of time talking about this at the March meeting. I know that not all commissioners were at that March meeting, and I'm happy to answer any individual questions if you like.

But it's a little hard to explain everything from here. So I'm going to show a series of some of the maps that show, by scene, that show some of the details for what's on the Mall plan.

Park Service has for the first time tried conservation zoning of the Mall, to make some of the points of the Mall plan be very clear. The red areas are the memorial areas,

which received the highest level of protection from use,  
and the character protection areas are areas such as  
Constitution Lake and the elm panels, where the Park  
Service right now does permit some special events, but in  
the future would like

to direct those sponsors to other areas that are more sustainable.

Either the turf, which will be improved, as you know, or to hardscape areas. So the elms will be protected more comprehensively.

The yellow is the high use areas. So as you know, the center panels of the Mall, and particularly areas around the Washington Monument ground, or areas around the Reflecting Pool and the hockey fields, and then also, of course, the playing fields in West Potomac Park. You'll notice that where there are yellow areas, there are blue areas. Those are the multi-purpose areas, and this will allow for the provision of additional amenities, restrooms, food, utilities and hardscape, including multi-purpose buildings that will serve these functions, and will help to orient and provide information to visitors. As you know, one of the proposals is to replace the Sylvan Theater with a more comprehensive facility, and also notably at the east end of Constitution Lake, a multi-purpose building there that will provide amenities for visitors.

Related to that is this map, which indicates how First Amendment rights can be expressed on the Mall, and the provision of places and facilities for that to occur. The one that's received the most comment is the idea to redo Union Square, which is now the Capitol Reflecting Pool at the east end of the Mall, to provide more of a hardscape area, but also to put in amenities for the many people who gather there.

You'll also see, as in the previous map, restrooms and food service. Again, here's Sylvan Theater. New boating and food along the north side of the Tidal Basin, and the survey lodge will be the hub for visitors who are mobility impaired. So there will be a Mall-wide network for visitors who need those services.

Circulation has been a particular interest of this Commission, and this composite map shows a range of things. First of all as you know, the Park Service last spring issued a FONSI or Finding of No Significant Impact for its transportation study, and two routes are shown for a future

Circulator-like system that will provide transit, premium transit.

It will also have an option for interpretation. The Park Service has continued to meet with DDOT and with the bid and CPC and others, and thinking about how that might occur, and trying to plan for that, and the Park Service has suggested that they would like the D.C. Circulator to take on that role. But those plans are still in the early stage of development.

MR. MAY: Nancy? I'm sorry.

MS. WITHERELL: Yes.

MR. MAY: Could you point out where the King Memorial is being constructed, and what its access will be? Okay. So very good.

MS. WITHERELL: There will be, in the future there will be a route to it through a transit route, and I think we'll have bike paths in that area. People will be able to walk certainly, and there also is some handicapped parking at FDR.

This map also shows tour bus parking, which actually is the current condition as well. There are many other things on this map that also shows bike paths along the waterfront and around the city, and it shows an existing seasonal circulator route, which is shown in yellow.

In addition, the Park Service intends to upgrade its fields again, so they can be used more regularly and be in better condition. This shows the existing number of fields. D.C. Rec manages some of them or permits some of them. Park Service permits others.

Park Service would like to move to an online permitting process, which will be easier for users. The Commission had many comments and recommendations on the draft plan last March, and so the staff thought of these as the issues to be addressed for this plan, and they included adding and updating the maps and analysis with the projects now in development by the Park Service, and that has been done.

Prioritizing short-term and long-term projects to support progress in the implementation of the plan, and you have that in your packet. There's an implementation chart with a related map.

The big item, as a short-term but large priority is the development of Union Square from the Capitol Reflecting Pool, and Park Service, working with the Trust for the National Mall, intends to hold a competition in about a year's time to begin that work. The Park Service also, we asked the Park Service and they have done this, to 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, specifically the elm panels, to amplify the discussion of objectives and strategies for improving sustainable resource management and for meeting requirements and goals of the Executive Order 13514, which is the sustainability order.

To resume planning and development of the proposed visitor transportation system with its partners, and that is particularly to think through about how the Circulator might be used for that, and to implement the 2003 Olin landscape plan, which primarily is a tree planting plan for the Washington Monument grounds, revisiting it as warranted, in concert with the Smithsonian and its development of the National Museum of African-American History and Culture, and with other anticipated development on the grounds. That is occurring through the consultation, which includes the Smithsonian and the Park Service for the development of the museum.

The plan is consistent with the comprehensive plan, particularly with the parks and open space element, the environment element, preservation and historic features element, and the transportation element.

The Mall plan supports three major themes of the comprehensive plan: To accommodate federal and National Capitol activities, to reinforce smarter, more coordinated growth, and to support coordination with local and regional governments.



The Park Service has completed a final environmental impact statement, and has determined that the plan will not impair Park resources, values. EPA is satisfied with the document, and Secretary Salazar signed a Record of Decision on November 9th.

The Park Service has also executed a programmatic agreement to fulfill requirements for the National Historic Preservation Act. Our executive director is one of the signatories, one of the invited signatories, as was the Smithsonian, which has signed the programmatic agreement as well.

Stipulations include further documentation and evaluation for Park Service properties on the National Mall, including identifying national historic landmarks. Then working in concert with other agencies to evaluate resources toward a future historic district for the National Mall, or even for a larger area encompassing the monumental core.

This was a specific request for any of the consulting parties, including the Committee of 100, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Coalition to Save Our Mall.

And finally, I just want to remind commissioners that implementation of individual projects in the plan will require future preservation consultation, and may require further NEPA analysis as well. The Commission will see all of these projects as they come individually.

Therefore, it's the executive director's recommendation that the Commission approve the National Mall Plan, noting that the Mall plan is based on the preferred alternative presented and analyzed in the Park Service's final EIS, Record of Decision and its 106 programmatic agreement, that additional compliance with NEPA and NHPA will be required for the development and implementation of many of the Mall plan's proposed projects, and that the siting and design of the individual projects are subject to the Commission's review and approval.

We commend the Park Service for completing a well-considered plan that balances the equally important requirements for stewardship of the national and cultural

resources of the Mall's symbolic historic landscape, and for the encouragement and accommodation of public access and use, and for meeting the planning and management objectives for the National Mall Plan within Washington's broader planning context, 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 linkage with the National Mall.

And for supporting the major goals of the National Mall Plan, including conservation of the Mall's nationally significant natural resources through the use of best practices for the improvement and protection of the turf, lawn and trees, including management of the intensity, duration and location of special events, the development of a visitor transportation system for the Mall that offers optional interpretation, 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, and the continuation of the National Mall as the civic venue for the expression of First Amendment rights; for the provision of universal access throughout the National Mall; for the expansion and separation of the bicycle path system for recreation and circulation, pedestrian safety; and for the rehabilitation of athletic fields to increase capacity, flexibility and durability. For the development of new and improved infrastructures, so that the National Mall becomes a model of sustainable urban park development and management. Finally, we note that the Park Service, in the development of the final environmental impact statement in the National Mall Plan, has responded to the Commission's March 4th, 2010 comments and recommendations on the draft plan. That concludes the presentation. I'm happy to answer questions. We also have a full team from the Park Service here as well.

[INSERT - THE NATIONAL MALL]

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Ms. Witherall.  
What I'd like to do is perhaps hold the bulk of our deliberations until after the public comment. We have a half dozen folks signed up.

That said, however, if there are particular on point questions or clarifications we want to ask Ms. Witherall or the team while she's here and it's fresh in her mind, I would certainly entertain that now.

Any burning questions? Mr. May, you want to hold off, I presume until -- okay. Let's go right to the public comment period. I wanted to hold off, so that when we do deliberate, we will have benefit of what we hear from the public as well.

We have six people signed up. Each person represents an organization, so that entitles each person to have five minutes. You'll notice that there is a clock on the wall that will count down and help you keep track, and at the end there will be a delicate chirp to remind you to wrap up.

[INSERT - LIST OF REGISTERED SPEAKERS]

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Six people. First is Ms. Caroline Cunningham of the Trust for the National Mall, who will be followed by Judy Scott Feldman and third will be Julia Lent.

So Ms. Cunningham, welcome.

MS. CUNNINGHAM: Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, commissioners, Marcel, thank you so much for having me and giving the Trust for the National Mall the opportunity to endorse and wholeheartedly support the National Mall Plan. You know, when Secretary Salazar on November 9th signed the Record of Decision, it took me a day or so to step back and look at this historic moment. There have only been a small handful of plans ever delivered in the design of the National Mall, and the first being 1791, with Pierre L'Enfant handing his plan to George Washington.

So this moment and this decision that you will be making today is very important to our country and the future of the space. It's important for the Trust for the National Mall that this is complete. It will allow our organization to raise the funds necessary to ensure the future of this important space for the country and for the world.

I want to note that the process that the National Park Service created was an inclusive process, with more than 34,000 comments from the public, with hundreds of agencies and organizations involved, looking at the best and best practices from around the world, and that's a very important issue that I think that we should look at in making the decision, the final decision of this plan.

The other thing is that the plan addresses some of the important needs of this park. It preserves the space in a way that we think is important; it creates infrastructure improvements, from not only the crumbling walkways, the waterways that are fouled, a long list of issues that have not been addressed in any effective manner for the last 30 years.

It does it in a way that is sustainable for the long term, and looking at maintenance of this space, so that once areas are taken care of, that they will be maintained in perpetuity, and that importantly, that we engage visitors in an enjoyable in a new fashion that has never been envisioned before, with new technology, bringing the important history of the space to the public in a way

that's never been done before, and making it a more lively space through public performance spaces that have been increased, and other opportunities throughout the park. We're very excited about this plan. The Trust for the National Mall Board of Directors endorses this plan, and I think the other thing that's exciting for us, that we have been able to work with many organizations, including the National Capital Planning Commission, on looking at how do you do temporary commemoration, how do you do temporary urbanism in a way that's exciting for our city and in fact for the world.

So the Trust for the National Mall endorses this plan and we encourage every Commissioner to endorse it, so that we can move forward with this exciting new chapter in the Mall's history. Thank you.

[INSERT - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CAROLINE CUNNINGHAM]

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Ms. Cunningham. Next is Dr. Judy Scott Feldman, with the National Coalition to Save Our Mall. Welcome.

DR. SCOTT FELDMAN: Thank you. Good afternoon Chairman Bryant and commissioners. I'm Judy Scott Feldman, founder and chair of the National Coalition to Save Our Mall. We're marking our 10th anniversary this year as an independent citizens organization, dedicated to educating the public about the national significance of the Mall, and advocating for comprehensive long-range planning to assure that the Mall fulfills its role and its promise as one of our country's iconic landscapes, a gathering place for citizens petitioning their government, and the stage for American democracy in our third century.

Our Coalition welcomes the completion of the National Park Service's National Mall Plan. Every one of us who spent time in the Mall know that it sorely needs the kind of attention and improvements outlined in the plan: refurbished landscape, restoration of Constitution Gardens, improved visitor amenities.

We also welcome the role of the Trust for the Mall, which has established itself as a crucial partner with the Park Service in implementing the plan. The demands are great, and I personally have contributed to the Trust, to help advance its mission.

As grateful as we are for what the Park Service has done though, we should be clear that this plan falls short of what we need if the Mall is in fact to function to fulfill its role and its promise in American life today.

As the NCPC staff report states, this a National Mall Plan focuses solely on management of lands within the Park Service's domain. Let me state what our Coalition believes a true plan for the Mall would address.

What are the Mall's boundaries? Most assuredly, they are broader than Park Service lands. What if the National Gallery, the Smithsonian Museums, the Capitol Grounds. Clearly, any National Mall Plan worthy of that name must include the entire Mall and all constituencies.

The plan asserts that the Mall is a completed work of art, but is it? Congress imposes a moratorium, but meantime has approved the African-American Museum, while the Park Service plan, despite the moratorium, proposes two major visitors centers.

To say the Mall is complete strikes us as essentially saying American history has come to a screeching halt, and none of us believes that. We have a rich history, we will continue to have a rich history as long as America is the land of promise and accomplishment.

More of the story could and should be told. How can we foster telling more of the American experience short of paving over the Mall? I'm encouraged to see NCPC sponsoring a forum "Beyond Granite" on December 8th that explores this very question.

Our Coalition has proposed before and we do so again, that Congress has an opportunity to expand the boundaries to embrace new monuments, new museums and new or relocated activities, such as the Folk Life Festival. There are ample attractive possibilities, some shown in NCPC's new framework plan, such as the L'Enfant Promenade, the Banneker Overlook and across the bridge to East Potomac Park. The Mall is an economic engine for the region, and can be more fully integrated into the fabric of the District, a fabric of the District and the region. Tourmobile offers interpretive services at a cost, but as a mode of transportation it simply is not sufficient. The Circulator is a step in the right direction, but is limited seasonally and does not extend to the Lincoln Memorial. Isn't it long past due to have a truly viable, functioning affordable means of getting around this two-mile expanse? Perhaps most challenging is the question of how the various agencies and entities on the Mall can work together to ensure consistent and compatible planning and development. For that, we need some form of uniformed Mall governing body, and a comprehensive vision for the entire Mall. In conclusion, our Coalition felt a sense of optimism in 2005 during the Senate hearing that launched this Mall planning process, both because the Coalition was invited to testify and because of what was said.

Chairman Craig Thomas spoke of the need for a third century Mall plan, and stated his intention to create a commission like the McMillan Commission of a century ago. Senator Daniel Akaka said it was important to get beyond piecemeal planning to address "the complete vision of what the Mall could be and what it should be."

He spoke enthusiastically about the possibilities of Mall expansion, maybe down South Capitol Street. Senator, and now Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar spoke of the problem of fragmented management, and the need for some kind of Mall entity to coordinate Mall planning and management. Asked to respond, John Parsons of the Park Service, David Childs, then chair of the Commission of Fine Arts, and John Cogbill, then chair of the NCPC, spoke of how they would work together and involve the most talented, visionary designers to create the new McMillan Plan for the 21st century.

Well, that didn't happen. Already in 2006, the Park Service narrowed the Plan's scope and the federal and District review agencies went along.

Our Coalition has long advocated the need for a comprehensive, forward-looking plan to speak to these very basic questions I've outlined in my testimony, and to provide the vision that in our nation's earlier history, which derived from the L'Enfant plan and McMillan plan. We will now redouble our efforts to create that visionary plan, for this needs to be done if we are to realize the most promise in American life into the third century. Thank you. I'd be happy to take any questions.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Next is Julia Lent, and on deck will be Diane Mayhew, followed by Richard Reinhard, and then last, Mr. John Fondersmith. Ms. Lent, welcome.

MS. LENT: Thank you. Chairman Bryant and members of the National Capital Planning Commission, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the National Park Service's National Mall Plan. I'm Julia Lent. I'm Director of Government Affairs for the American Society of Landscape Architects, and today I represent ASLA.



The American Society of Landscape Architect strongly supports the overarching goals and objectives of the National Park Service's National Mall plan. The plan succeeds in rising above the current maintenance challenges to envision not just what the National Mall should be in 2010, but for generations to come.

ASLA supports the proposal to sponsor an international design competition for Union Square. In March 2009, ASLA's multi-disciplinary blue ribbon panel spent much of its time focused on this area, recognizing its current weaknesses but also its inherent potential.

ASLA applauds the National Park Service for its attention to this area, and its collaboration with the other stakeholders at the site to fully integrate the square with the Capitol grounds, and provide natural connectivity to the U.S. Botanic Gardens.

ASLA stands ready to assist in any way to facilitate this competition. ASLA applauds the commitment to sustainability within the plan, particularly the application of the standards defined by the Sustainable Sites initiative. ASLA is one of the founding partners of SITES, along with the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at the University of Texas-Austin, and the U.S. Botanic Garden.

Through the use of sustainable practices for this iconic landscape, the National Mall can be a model of sustainable design that millions of visitors can visit each year. Sustainable approaches to many of the National Mall's natural resources challenges, water, storm water, soils and vegetation, will do more than just conserve resources.

Green infrastructure and sustainable design in the landscape have the power to reap positive benefits, not merely minimize harm. ASLA also supports the plan's emphasis on improving the experience of pedestrians and bicyclists.

The integration of trails throughout the mall will improve the visitor experience and help boost the city's burgeoning reputation as a bike-friendly city. Perhaps most critically, the plan recognizes the linkages between the Mall's circulation patterns, as well as the rest of the city.

Other elements of the plan that deserve particular praise include replacement of the Sylvan Theater with a multi-purpose facility for centralized visitor services, implementation of the landscape plan as part of the Olin Partnership design for the Washington Monument, and elevation of the Constitution Gardens really to its rightful use and purpose. We also do note a few areas of concern. While the paving system for the entire National Mall area needs a redesign, we are concerning about selecting a one-size-fits-all uniform solution for the 26 miles of pedestrian paths. Even as a pallet of options, it may not be compatible with each of the unique landscapes within the National Mall.

We have previously expressed concern regarding paving the gravel pathways, a feature that is permeable, retains little heat and has low reflectivity. The plan speaks to encouraging the use of sustainable materials. This must be a priority.

If the gravel is to be eliminated, the pathways should retain its visual character and serve as a permeable low heat, low reflective surface, that technology is available to provide a durable surface that accommodates all users and functions.

The plan indicates that a central visitors center may be housed in the Arts and Industries Building, which ASLA supports. ASLA hopes the new construction can be avoided that could eventually be redundant to such a use if that were to happen.

Wayfinding strategies must incorporate all available technology, rather than overly rely on signage. While visitor amenities are important, ASLA's particular concern with adding seeding will disturb -- and other amenities that disturb the visual character of a memorial, such as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

We are encouraged that the plan emphasizes the placement of additional seating away from primary vistas. In closing, ASLA appreciates the tremendous amount of energy and dedication that has gone into this plan.

The National Park Service is to be commended for a thorough process, that's brought together American voices from near and far, not merely to respond to the crisis of neglect, but to take the National Mall into the future, a future with renewed and healthy space worthy of being America's front yard.

Project by project, it is critical that repairs and improvements must not be piecemeal, but must proceed as part of a comprehensive vision and design. Thank you for the opportunity to comment and to contribute to the future of the National Mall.

ASLA stands ready to help with the design and the implementation of this plan. Thank you.

[INSERT - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JULIA LENT]

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Ms. Lent. Ms. Diane Mayhew.

Ms. MAYHEW: Good afternoon. My name is Diana Mayhew. I'm the president of the National Cherry Blossom Festival, and I'm happy to be here today. The National Cherry Blossom Festival strongly supports the National Mall Plan. The partnership between the National Park Service and the National Cherry Blossom Festival has evolved over the years. The Park Service's active participation has helped enhance services for those visiting the Tidal Basin and surrounding areas on the Mall, for the nation's greatest springtime celebration.

This plan is the next step towards achieving the best experience possible for the tourists and residents during

the National Cherry Blossom Festival, as well as throughout the year.

Over one million visitors come to Washington, D.C. for the National Cherry Blossom Festival, and this plan addresses their needs in many ways, while targeting the goals of protecting the Mall and its resources, preserving its history and providing the quintessential American experience in the nation's front yard.

Visitor safety and accessibility is extremely important. We encourage the implementation of the Tidal Basin project that would include improving the bridges, especially the Kutz Bridge, to enable pedestrians, strollers, bicycles, those with disabilities to move about safely.

This improved traffic flow is helpful not only during the congested time of the festival but year-round, creating a safe, walking and biking environment for all visitors. Expanded areas will also allow the increase of bike ballet, encouraging alternate ways to access the Mall and making it safe to do so. Each year, the number of people who use those services of the bike ballet increases. Enhancement to the Jefferson Memorial Grounds for tour bus drop will also help alleviate congestion and provide a more positive visitor experience.

The replacement of Sylvan Theater with a high quality multi-purpose facility will greatly impact the visitors who come to see the numerous free performances and programming scheduled on the stage each day. Enhanced seating, restrooms, and flexible space are huge assets, making it more attractive for visitors to come, high caliber performances and improved grounds will encourage people to congregate and linger in a particular area that provides crowd management and add more dedicated areas for waste collection and recycling.

The addition of rowboat and kayak rentals give another exciting way for the public to experience the surrounding beauty. By working closely with the National Park Service, a few years ago we moved the visitor welcome services to the paddle boat parking lot area on the pavement, which reduced the impact to the grounds. We continue to do this practice in future years.

The National Cherry Blossom Festival very much looks forward to the enactment of this plan, as we continue to implement improvements with the National Park Service, especially going forward into the centennial celebration of the gift of Cherry Blossom trees in 2012, when even more visitors are expected to participate, visit and have a once in a lifetime experience on the National Mall. Once again, the National Cherry Blossom Festival endorses this plan, and we thank you very much for the opportunity to give this testimony today.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you Ms. Mayhew very much. Next is Mr. Reinhard, followed by Mr. Fondersmith. Mr. Reinhard, welcome.

MR. REINHARD: Thank you. Mr. Chairman and Commission members, our executive director, Rich Bradley and I, thank you for this opportunity, and the Downtown Business Improvement District reiterates its enthusiastic support of the National Park Service's National Mall Plan. The Downtown BID is a private, non-profit organization. We provide services to help make downtown D.C. a remarkable urban experience for all. Our special district, where property owners have agreed to tax themselves \$10 million annually to fund services encompasses a one square mile area, roughly from Massachusetts Avenue on the north to the National Mall on the south, from Union Station on the east to the White House on the west.

The Downtown BID has been Section 106 consulting party to the National Mall Plan Initiative, and as such, NPS has encouraged us to be involved in this plan every step of the way, and we've participated to the best of our ability. Just like downtown D.C., which has increased its number of employees and residents by 50 percent over the last 14 years, and its number of visitors by more than 100 percent over that some time period, the National Mall is being called upon to host more and more patrons every year. Future growth is expected to be exponential. 25 million annual visitors today, 42 million annual visitors in 20 years. On the one hand, isn't that great, millions more Americans and international visitors learning about the history of our land?

But on the other hand, isn't it just a little bit scary to us all, thinking about how the current National Mall will accommodate these visitors. The development of the Southwest Waterfront, the Capitol Riverfront, the Mount Vernon Triangle and NOMA make it even more critical make smart capital improvements to the National Mall, as the Mall is now at the heart of a robust center city, rather than being at the edge of its downtown.

We'd like to address four ways we think the National Mall Plan readies for action much of what we see as being needed at the National Mall. First, the National Mall plan promotes a world class landscape that will tell in an improved manner the story of America to visitors. The plan protects the historic landscape of the McMillan plan. NPS rightly cites the condition of turf and the viability of the American elm trees to be critical problems, and it identifies corrective measures. The National Mall would become more user friendly, with more restrooms, better facilities for food and drink, better situated range of locations and improved signage. It's our observation that current concession contracts may neither serve the public well, nor serve NPS's need for additional revenues, and we urge NPS to take immediate action to improve the concession contract situation.

Second, the National Mall Plan helps to create a highly quality local green space that serves local residents and workers, and ties together the center city. Ecological improvements would complement the District government's efforts to green the city, and our private developer's efforts to do the same thing, along with the U.S. General Services Administration. In particular, replacing the currently-used potable water in the Reflecting Pool, Constitution Gardens Lake and Union Square pool with Potomac River water is a great ecological Improvement.

Third, the National Mall Plan suggests multiple forms of public transportation, to make various locations around the Mall accessible to the public, including for low income and physically handicapped persons, through frequent, affordable public transit.

It's our understanding that the District Department of Transportation is readying a proposal that would offer D.C. Circulator service to the length of the National Mall, a service that today is prohibited by NPS' interpretation of its own regulations.

Premium visitor services may be a private good, but we think public transportation is a public good. The two have been confused and they shouldn't be confused anymore. The Downtown BID urges NPS to move ahead promptly with improvements to public transportation, as outlined in the plan, and would urge using increased National Mall parking revenues to help pay for such improvements.

We also propose that NPS redouble efforts to partner with the city, to invest in the infrastructure for improved tour bus parking.

Fourth and finally, the National Mall Plans supports special events being held more frequently on lesser-used public spaces, and we urge improvements to the uptown parks, such as McPherson Square, which is undergoing refurbishment.

Although the details of a number of the recommendations undoubtedly can be debated, the many proposed projects and programs are solid. Now is the time to implement them for all of us to work together on funding.

The Downtown BID also comments the efforts of the Trust for the National Mall, and we note that substantial and consistent funding will need to be provided by Congress over the next decade, to implement the plan, so it doesn't become another forsaken list of all of our wishes. Thank you for your attention. We appreciate being here today.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you very much, and finally, Mr. John Fondersmith. Welcome.

MR. FONDERSMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission. I'm John Fondersmith, representing the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, and I should note that Richard Westbrook, the chair of the Planning Subcommittee is here today.

We are pleased to comment on this plan that's now before you. As you know, let me just say the Committee of 100 is one of the consulting parties in the Section 106 process, and we've listed in our testimony numerous comments and testimony we've given, both on various phases of the National Mall Plan, the projects on the National Mall, and the Monumental Core Framework plan that was prepared by this Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts.

We are especially concerned with the connections and linkages between the surrounding city and the monumental core, including the National Mall. Now this phase of the National Mall, this phase of the planning for the National Mall has reached a conclusion.

We note that a number of changes and modifications were made to the draft plan that were recommended by various agencies, organizations and so on, including some of those from the Committee of 100.

We haven't agreed with all the National Park Service proposals, and we still have some continuing concerns, as indicated below. But we do recognize certainly, through the process that we've all been through, the tremendous effort that the Park Service has made, balancing many legal and planning concerns, and dealing with diverse and sometimes competing suggestions.

So we do want to express our appreciation to the Park Service staff and consultants that have worked over the past several years on this plan, and to especially note the work of Susan Spain, the National Mall Plan project executive, in directing and guiding such a long and demanding process.

This is to be a 50-year plan, which means it's in principle extending to 2050, 2060. We realize it will evolve over that time. But in preparing the plan, the Park Service has outlined the entire Mall, of course, but has dealt only in detail with the area that is under Park Service jurisdiction.



We really feel that this is still fragmented planning, or what appears from outside to be incomplete, is not truly sufficient when we're looking ahead for the next 50 years. We understand that the Commission is now poised to approve this National Mall Plan, and again, indeed we're glad to see that done. However, we do recommend that NCPC make clear that additional work is needed to achieve a truly comprehensive and understandable plan for the entire National Mall, not just the area under the jurisdiction of the Park Service.

We've listed some of the major concerns, and we still have major items that we have concerns with. I see by the clock I don't have time really to go through all of those. So what are the next steps after this plan is adopted? They have, the Park Service has indicated additional work that they will do, and there will be many projects moving forward. Perhaps key to this is the plans by other entities associated with the Mall, the Architect of the Capitol, the Smithsonian and the National Gallery of Art, to complete their planning and put it forward, at least into the public view. One of the key suggestions is that the National Register nomination be prepared for the entire National Mall and perhaps some surrounding areas. So what is the kind of key next step?

We recommend, the Committee of 100 recommends that the NCPC now step forward and undertake whatever additional work over the next several years, to bring the still unresolved elements in the National Mall into a true, coordinate framework.

There's one issue that we've mentioned previously to the Park Service, but is really outside their purview, and that's what we call the "view to the west." It involves the view looking west from the Capitol and other locations on the National Mall, that needs attention and hopefully attention from this Commission.

So we look forward to continuing to work with the Park Service, this Commission and other agencies and entities involved. Thank you.

[INSERT - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF 100 ON THE FEDERAL CITY]

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Mr. Fondersmith and thank you to all of our speakers who have come. This has been significant project that has been a long time in coming, in which Ms. Witherall did a very good job of presenting an overview succinctly.

That ends the public comment section, session, and I would like to return, bring it back to the Commission for deliberations, discussion and questions. Mr. May?

MR. MAY: Mr. Chairman, I do have a few things to say, but I would prefer to conclude the discussion, if that's possible, and then be able to make a motion.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Absolutely. Questions or comments about --  
MR. DIXON: Mr. Chairman, for purposes of discussion, should we move this and have it on the table so we can discuss it?

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Let's hold off momentarily, so Mr. May can have the privilege at the appropriate time, given his work.

MR. DIXON: Okay, okay. First of all, I want to share support for the Park Service and what they've been doing. I know there are a lot of folks who still have some tweaks and some additions they want. My major focus and concern would be, and I want to commend them for the tough job; I've been around it for a while, this discussion.

But the Committee of 100's concern for a broader view, that the Commission might want to take on. It seems to be something that makes sense, a lot of sense, and I hope that we will find a way to incorporate that effort, which is probably outside of this discussion, but certainly integrated into it. So I'd like to encourage that.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Other questions or comments?

MR. SIMPSON: Mr. Chair, excuse me. I just want to say that the plan is awesome. The National Park Service National

Mall Plan is something that I admire.

As an advocate and as a consumer, and I consider myself a consumer of the National Park Service, because I'm pretty much down there using the facilities on a daily basis, and as a resident of Washington, D.C., it's something that some of us tend to neglect.

However, there's one thing that I've read through all of this material, and I was like, you know, I was so excited about coming to this Board meeting and reading it. It's the water fountains, and it's like when you bring family in from out of town and you're basically on the Mall from the inauguration, 4th of July celebrations, if you have water bottles and people who are selling them, turn into to be \$5 for a bottle of water.

But if we had more water fountains along the Mall area, it would definitely help. People who have children basically to rehydrate, when you're basically lost in an area where you don't know where you're going.

This is -- this stems from us running from how much we use the National Park, running through Rock Creek Park. We have something called a National Mall Run, and we basically pretty much run through all of the memorials. The only thing that we miss are more water fountains.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you for that very selfish request.  
(Laughter.)

MS. WITHERELL: On behalf of everybody.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you. Mr. Hart, did you have a --

MR. HART: Yes. I think this is a great plan, and it's been long in development, and it's reached out to an awful lot of people, incorporating a lot of input. I compliment the National Park Service in handling that effort, and I recognize that the National Park Service is limited to the properties that it has under its purview.

I agree with Mr. Arrington, that we really need to reach out those other agencies and organizations that have part

of what we all view as the National Mall, in looking to integrate the complete experience.

So I think that there's work ahead of us, and I've heard from, you know, the Committee and the Coalition and their interests, and I second it.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Mr. Miller.

MR. MILLER: Yes. I just wanted to thank the staff and the public speakers for their comments today, and associate myself with the remarks of those who called for integrate planning, and this Commission seems to be in the position that it can do that.

It can fulfill that role of bringing, making sure that there is the coordinated planning with the National Gallery and the Smithsonian properties, and what's going on at East Potomac Park, all of which we consider as the National Mall on the Capitol grounds.

I just had a couple of questions. You mentioned in your presentation, Ms. Witherall, that there's ongoing discussions in the early stages with the D.C. Circulator. What is the time table for getting the Circulator onto the Mall, and providing the low cost public transportation that Downtown Bid and the Coalition and the Committee of 100, all of us have talked about a long time?

MS. WITHERELL: I have not heard that a specific time line has developed, and perhaps Mr. May can respond.

MR. MILLER: Or maybe Ms. Tregoning can address that.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: I was going say, defer to Ms. Tregoning.

MR. MILLER: --since DDOT is involved in that.

MS. TREGONING: Are you -- do you have other remarks?

MR. MILLER: I have other questions, but I think you can answer this one.

MS. TREGONING: This is something that we're working on with the Park Service, and as you are aware, we've recently released a ten year plan for the Circulator, the proposed expansion of the Circulator that includes at least a couple of routes that are very significant, I think, to the National Mall and the ability of the Circulator to provide some of that transit service on the Mall with potentially interpretation.

So we're trying right now to get a little bit better information on the levels of visitation and ridership, so that we can take it to the next step with the proposal.

MR. MILLER: Do you have any estimate of when that could be done?

MS. TREGONING: Soon.

MR. MILLER: Another question was about the, or another reference Ms. Witherall made to the permitting process for the recreation fields, that some fields are District, some are NPS, I guess, and NPS hopes to be going online. I know our CapitalSpace plan I believe talks about better integrating these two permitting functions, maybe, in one central location. Can you just address what's happening on that front?

MR. MAY: I can say that within the Park Service, we are now starting to take some steps to look at the automated or rather online permitting process. We are very interested in continuing discussions with the District about doing, if not a single permitting process, at least a centralized portal, so that it's a little bit clearer and try to make the process easier for the public, easier to understand and more effective generally speaking.

There are a lot of complications to it. It is based on an agreement that goes back to the 1940's, and it's -- the guidance that we have for it is not very clear, and the way we've sort of -- the District and the Park Service have developed certain practices that aren't always in sync on this.

But we're very anxious to get it altogether, and would like to continue that discussion with the District, in the context of, you know, furthering the goals of CapitalSpace.

MR. MILLER: That's good to hear, and I certainly would support those efforts to get our permitting processes in sync. Just the last question, adding parking meters on certain other streets that are controlled by the Park Service. Which streets are those and do you have an estimate of what the revenues you're going to get? Will it be dedicated to the Malls, or it just will go into the big deficit reduction commission?

MR. MAY: I think I'm going to ask Steve Lorenzetti, who's the deputy superintendent of the Mall, to answer that.

MR. LORENZETTI: Yes. That's actually in the alternate transportation plan, which was kind of included with the National Mall Plan, because they both have to go together hand in hand. Right now, we're looking at Madison Drive and Jefferson Drive, as well as sections of Ohio Drive, and the section of Constitution Avenue which is currently not metered that is owned by the Park Service, administered by the Park Service.

We don't have an exact number yet. There is actually issues with doing this in the Park Service. There's a freeze right now on new transportation fees in the Park Service until we're sure we're doing it in an equitable way. When that's lifted, we look to go forward with this.

The goal of our plan is to use the fees from parking to go toward whatever bus system ends up in the park, possibly the Circulator like Peter and Harriet said. We're working with the Circulator right now, so we can bring down any price for our visitors, to make it as reasonable as possible.

MR. MILLER: Are there any plans, this is outside the National Mall, plans for parking meters along East Potomac Park, where lots of commuters, I think, park?

MR. MAY: That's Ohio Drive, which is what Steve referred to.

MR. LORENZETTI: Well, the Ohio Drive part we're looking at is basically in the National Mall, below that. At the moment, there are no plans to put meters in.

MR. MILLER: Yes. I was talking about below that, yes.

MR. LORENZETTI: In what is considered East Potomac Park, we're right now not looking at meters.

MR. MILLER: That may be a potential revenue source for East Potomac Park that needs some work too, or the Mall.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Mr. Miles.

MR. MILES: Just briefly, sir, about the National Park Service and its partners. A very thorough presentation as well as plan. Two questions I have. Just looking at the map, one thing that jumps out at me is an explosion of what is identified as interactive water features.

If we could have background as to what those are? Is it maybe part of sort of a water management treatment, as well as there's a lot going on, and I think we had a couple of really good presentations related to wayfinding, and whether going forward in the next decade is that still a priority, in terms of consistency?

MS. WITHERELL: The interactive water features that Mr. Miles is referring to is on the second page, the full composite preferred alternative in your sort of the addendum, and these have not been fully defined. But the idea is that the Mall gets very hot in the summer, and they could be coolers or jets or something that could be temporary or could come on in the summer, so that children could cool themselves.

So it's that kind of idea, and also the idea of bringing water back to the Mall, which the McMillan plan envisioned. So sort of an update of that idea. I'm sorry. I've forgotten your second question.

MR. MILES: Just remembering wayfinding.

MS. WITHERELL: Oh, wayfinding, I'm sorry. the Commission approved the final wayfinding plan about a year ago, and plans to have signs up, I believe, for the coming tourist season, and that's that sort of 600 sign comprehensive plan that the Commission reviewed last year.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Mr. Provancha, then Mr. Miles.

MR. PROVANCHA: Let me start with commendations to the staff. Outstanding, very comprehensive report as we have come to expect. Also congratulations to the Park Service for a very comprehensive, well thought-out, very well-integrated plan.

I'm particularly pleased to see the increase in amenities. There was recently kind of a tongue in cheek article in the *Washington Post* about the lack of amenities on the Mall, and the few that exist are off the beaten path or not well-known.

The article went on to even rank the best bathrooms and best places to get something to eat around the Mall. So that was very well-received. There's some feedback about the scope of the plan. From our perspective, I think the Park Service fulfilled the scope of their charter. It's always nice to go outside the defined boundaries and parameters. But I think they made a magnificent effort. The staff commended the Park Service on a couple of things. One that was cited in the report but not necessarily in the briefing was the public consultation and the outreach, I think, was also highly commendable.

One of the other things that was cited on Slide 15 of Ms. Witherall's comprehensive presentation was the response. Two things. I think it reflected very well overall on the staff on how comprehensive those six recommendations were, and it also reflects simultaneously very well on the Park Service, for addressing each of those and incorporating those responses at significant additional effort and cost.

A couple of other comments. The staff report specifically supports, commends, concurs with almost all of the recommendations, except for the one on page 22 about redevelopment of the reflecting pool at Union Square. But



my assumption is the staff is supportive of that element of the Park Service plan; is that correct?

MS. WITHERELL: Correct.

MR. PROVANCHA: Okay. A couple of minor questions on some of the plans. On the one that's entitled "The Civic Stage," it shows primary public gathering areas, and it appears to be along the reflecting pool, that the only designated primary gathering areas would be to the south.

Does that mean that the northern portion, the north side of the reflecting pool would not be available or allowed to be used in the future for a primary public gathering area?

MS. WITHERELL: Well, I think we need to underscore the word "primary." But also to the north of the reflecting pool, there is a pretty substantial change in grade with a berm, which is the levy, and then beyond that we're in -- we have Constitution Gardens Lake and also the area of influence of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

MR. PROVANCHA: So it's mostly terrain-driven that changes the elevation? Is that the --

MS. WITHERELL: However, the Park Service is planning to use Constitution Gardens in a much more vital way than it is used now, but have a lot of that attention focused toward the east end. You see the new facility.

MR. PROVANCHA: Okay. Question about the Circulator. It shows that the circulation will go across Arlington Memorial, reflecting the response about what's going on to the west of this zone. What monuments on the west side would be supported? I'm assuming Arlington Cemetery. Would we also have other existing monuments that are either not supported now or under-supported? I'm thinking Iwo Jima, Pentagon Memorial, Air Force Memorial. Is there a possibility of some collaboration to extend the Circulator to those other monuments?

MS. WITHERELL: The specific routes are being planned now, to include that for tourists.

MR. PROVANCHA: Okay. I was very impressed with the scope of this very comprehensive plan. Just a couple of questions. The Kutz Bridge improvements were mentioned a couple of times.

Just for confirmation, High Priority Project No. 11, Tidal Basin area, circulation of bridges. Does that also include some Kutz Bridge upgrades or for circulation?

MS. WITHERELL: That is incorporated in that.

MR. PROVANCHA: Also one of the staff recommendations from the March 4th meeting was rough order of magnitude cost ranges for each of these projects, prioritization for these projects. I think the plan responds very well to those recommendations.

Could we get just a little bit more definition? What, for example, \$3 equals high. Is \$3 equals high, is that a million dollar project, is that a \$100 million project? I'm just trying to get a feel for the scope. Are these total requirements in the range of \$100 million worth of requirements over 50 years, a billion dollars worth of projects?

MS. SPAIN: I'm Susan Spain, and I was the project executive for the National Mall Plan. We're looking at the \$3 symbol painting something that's probably well over 15 to 20 million dollar projects. The \$1 is probably under five million, just in those ranges.

So clearly, as we were looking at things, we did not want to give an exact dollar figure at this point in time.

MR. PROVANCHA: Of course. Very good. That concludes my questions. Thank you and again, kudos to both the staff and the Park Service for an outstanding document.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Ms. Tregoning?

MS. TREGONING: Thank you. I don't want to repeat what many others have said, but I do want to congratulate the Park Service, I think, on a very good plan, a very responsive plan.

I know you've been through several iterations, both with this Commission and with many, many public commenters, and

I very much appreciate how the plan has changed to accommodate those comments and issues.

I particularly want to call out the sustainability practices that are so prominent in this plan, and actually take this opportunity not just to commend the Park Service, but also to show a little love to this particular body, and I don't mean necessarily --

I really want to identify both Marcel Acosta and his leadership as executive director, and the enlightened leadership of the current chair and the previous chair. So Chairman Bryant and before him, Chairman Cogbill, to really I think change in some very fundamental way the way that the National Capital Planning Commission interacts with other agencies and with the District of Columbia. I mean I think for many years, the NCPC kind of acted as the brake or the watch dog, if you will, preventing bad things from happening, you know, on the part of federal agencies and the District. I think the role that you are taking on now, which is to kind to encourage everybody to reach for such objectives, and to collaborate and to really be not just a national model but an international model for best practices.

I mean I think it's exciting for me as a member of the Commission, and I'm very pleased, you know, to see the results of that. This National Mall Plan is one of those examples, but someone mentioned we recently had some success with the Potomac levy, which is another example of that kind of leadership. I would also point to the efforts on St. Elizabeth's, and our efforts planning together for central Washington. I just think it's a great direction that the Commission has been going in, and I'm looking around and seeing the very positive effects on the ground from that kind of interaction. So let me just take a moment to do that. Thank you.

A couple of other comments that I just wanted to make. I'm very pleased, obviously, with how the circulation proposals and the preferred alternative reflect, you know, the

ability and the desirability of having some kind of additional transit service on the Mall.

We have been engaged for a number of months now with the Park Service, and I'm very grateful for their receptivity to that and that potential collaboration. That being said, we have another opportunity, where we have the same kind of issue, and that's our wonderful new bike-sharing program, Capitol Bike Share, which is sort of a two-wheel transit program.

It has the same potential concessionaire conflict that the Tourmobiles seem to have had. I just would urge the Park Service to work together with us to try to overcome that, because it's, you know, an all-day tour versus, you know, the use of these, of a bike-share bike for transportation. I think those are very different things. Just to throw a few stats out there, we already have 5,000 members. It's not even been two full months or three full months of operation yet. 5,000 Capitol Bike Share members. A million minutes of travel on shared bicycles so far since we launched September 20th.

52,000 discrete trips, you know. It's really catching on. We have, between Arlington and the District, we have now just over 100 stations, and you know, we're really excited about it, and think it would be a great addition to the Mall if we can figure out a way to make that work.

Someone else had mentioned tour buses. I think the Commission is aware that in June, Senator Webb sent a letter to the District of Columbia, and I think the Park Service as well, raising concerns about the traffic associated with tour buses, and how dangerous and disruptive and polluting and there things it was.

So one of the glaring missing elements, I think, of this Mall plan is a scheme to address the issue of tour bus circulation. I know goal-wise, there's a desire to try to get people to the Mall in a sustainable fashion.

Transit will help to do that, but I do think that the tour buses, you know, continue to be a problem, that we need to collectively work together to try to manage that and find a place for them that can easily get tourists to the city and to the Mall, but not necessarily turn the Mall into a parking lot in the summer, with all the associated problems.

I'll also just mention a couple more things with respect to something else that we've heard from ASLA. 26 miles of pedestrian paths, fantastic. The fact that they would all be paved the same way, I think maybe not so great. We're talking about having -- all right, Susan's shaking her head that that isn't the case.

Well, let me just encourage you to make those differentiations in materials, because those are subtle signals that bikers and pedestrians very religiously observe. Bikes don't like to be on gravel, you know, because they can slip and slide. So you know, it makes it less likely that bikes would be in conflict with pedestrians, and we do all kinds of different walking in and around the Mall, some of it for a purpose, getting from Point A to Point B. Much of it's strolling and enjoying the scenery, and the different types of walking that people do, I think, really need different types of accommodations.

So I'll just make that final point. I think that's it for me. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you. There was one noteworthy item in terms of wayfinding and transportation is adding "National Mall" to the name of one of the Metro stops. I forget which one it was.

MS. WITHERELL: The Smithsonian stop.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Smithsonian stop, right, and then having it at that Metro stop a visitors center, if you will, will help.

MS. WITHERELL: Welcoming area.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Yeah, information to help. Not a visitors center, but information to help. I thought that was a terrific idea. Other comments before we turn it over to Mr. May of the National Park Service?

MR. MAY: Thank you very much, and thank you everyone for those comments. I'm not going to try to go through any of it sort of point by point, or what was presented by the

public speakers, the members of the public who came to speak today.

I will mention just a couple of small things, responding to the bike share issue in particular, because the Mall plan does include expanded use of bicycles for transportation around the Mall, and there's no reason why that, why we could not be pursuing that jointly within the context of the Capitol Bike Share system, and in fact, we've been asking the District Department of Transportation for information to support those sorts of efforts.

It's been some time coming, but we'd like to get that, because we're interested in trying to pursue that as well. That's actually come to us from a number of different directions from across the city, and we're interested in following up on that and moving that forward.

Tour buses, yes, I agree also is a bigger issue. We did address tour buses in the context of it being an efficient way of moving large groups of people to our sites and allowing for those. But the broader issue of where the buses go has been a long-standing problem for the city, across the city, not just around the Mall, and we'd like to work together on that as well.

A number of other issues we'd like to work together with folks on, and I think, and the broader question of the scope of the plan versus some of the suggestions, that there be a broader planning effort. On a certain level, there have been those broader planning efforts already. The legacy plan certainly is the overarching framework for that.

The framework plan, which followed on, also integrated much of that, and of course in the National Mall planning process, we had extensive consultations with all of the affected agencies, and I would like to thank the Smithsonian, the GSA and several other agencies who were involved in that aspect of the planning process. The resulting plan that we have, we think, is a balanced approach at planning for the Mall. We're trying to deal with something that's both a sacred space, a recreation

space, a public forum and a significant natural resource for the city.

As I said, it fits with earlier plans, not just the more recent plans but also L'Enfant and McMillan, and it's a vision for how the Mall can be preserved and adapted and continue to be all that we want it to be, including a place with more water fountains.

But that's what it is. It's a very personal experience, and we want to be able to be as much for everyone as we can. It has been a tremendous effort. I would like to thank my colleagues in the Park Service, Susan Spain and Steve Lorenzetti, who spoke earlier for their efforts. Of course, this Commission and the staff and Nancy Witherall in particular for their efforts in moving this forward. It has been a Herculean effort, I think, particularly on Nancy's part in working with Susan. The agencies that -- I didn't mean that the way that sounded. (Laughter.)

MR. MAY: I mean to say it was a lot of work. That's all. It's been a big plan, and Susan has been charging forward, with Nancy helping out along the way. So the other agencies, as I mentioned before, Smithsonian, GSA. The Commission on Fine Arts, of course, has been involved in all of our consultations.

All of the groups who have been involved, and those who spoke to us today, Downtown BID, the National Cherry Blossom Festival, the Committee of 100, the ASLA, who didn't just come to speak but also was instrumental in organizing a panel that consulted with us, the Trust of the National Mall and the Coalition to Save Our Mall, of course, as well.

It really has been a tremendous effort, and with that, it is first of all, let me say it is a true honor for me to work for the National Park Service, and it is an honor for me to represent the Secretary of the Interior, and it is especially an honor to move the approval of the EDR for the National Mall Plan.

MR. DIXON: Second.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: It's been moved and seconded that the EDR, as presented --with the executive director's recommendation, as presented, be adopted. All in favor say aye?

(Chorus of ayes.)

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Opposed, no.  
(No response.)

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Unanimous adoption.

MR. DIXON: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make one point. With due respect, also, I want to remember John Parsons, who was here at the beginning of all this, and served very well also, to get some of this going with his views.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Indeed.

MR. PROVANCHA: Also we had six different groups speak today. It's also rare that we see the level of support obviously. Varied from qualified support to full and enthusiastic support. But I think it's very rare that we have the degree of consensus from the supporting organizations that spoke today. So I wanted to make a special note of that.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you. Ms. Witherall, thank you very much.