



Enrich your American Experience in Washington, D.C.— Help Us Plan for the Future of the National Mall



Welcome

Welcome to your National Mall! The National Mall is where America and the world come to reflect, honor, celebrate, and recreate. Each year an estimated 25 million visitors come to Washington, D.C., to see where history has been made and continues to be made everyday.

The National Park Service is proud to be the steward of many of the historically significant sites around the National Mall and along Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Park in the heart of our nation's capital. These areas have tremendous meaning to all U.S. citizens, as well as international visitors, regardless of whether they have visited these sites in person, or only seen them in photographs or on television. As the nation's capital, this is the place where monuments and memorials pay tribute not only to the courage, wisdom, and foresight of great American leaders, but also to the ordinary men and women who worked and sacrificed for extraordinary achievements.

Our goal is to enrich and improve the setting for our monuments and memorials so that the National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue can be as beautiful as you expect them to be and so that both of these places can be used and enjoyed into the future. To accomplish this, the National Park Service is developing a plan that will define a long-term vision for how these areas will be used and managed. We need the help of all Americans to protect and improve the qualities that make these treasures so important to us as a nation. To help you identify what is on your National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue, you will find a small poster inside this newsletter highlighting some areas that will be addressed in this planning effort. You will see these graphic images used throughout the planning process and on the website.

We Need Your Help

We need your help because these great public spaces in our nation's capital belong to all Americans. What do these places mean to you? How do they represent the values, history, and culture of our nation? What is important to you about taking care of these places for the future? Our nation's history is celebrated and recorded here. You need to be part of this continuing story, to join with the National Park Service in taking care of the treasures of our national heritage. We can't do it without your help.

What You Can Do

First, learn about what needs to be done. This newsletter kicks off the public dialogue for developing a National Mall plan. For more information about the project visit our planning website at www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan. On the project website you will find additional information about the history of development in the area, the condition of current landscaping and site furnishings, what visitor facilities the National Park Service provides, and challenges to maintaining these places. Many facilities have outlived their useful life, or they may have been designed for far fewer users. On the website you can also look at more photos illustrating what the National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue look like today.

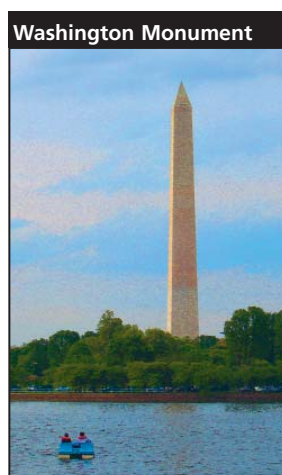
Over the course of the next few weeks we want to hear from you about your expectations for these areas. I encourage you to provide your comments to us online at www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan since it will save you time and make it easier for us to make sure that your input is included in the plan.

Other ways to participate include pointing out what you feel may be obstacles or threats to the enjoyment and use of these public spaces, volunteering to help with a specific planning component, or attending a symposium on November 15 at the Naval Heritage Center.

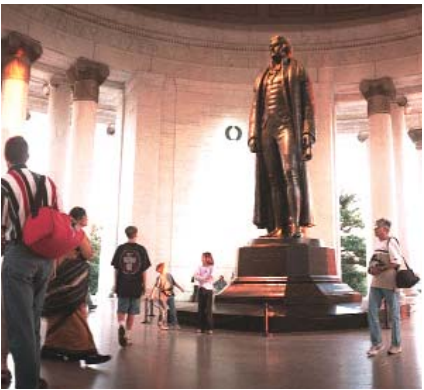
Thank you for making a commitment to this effort and helping us plan for the future of the National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Park. I look forward to reading your comments, and we will make every effort to ensure that the plan addresses your concerns and incorporates as many of your ideas as possible.

Sincerely,

Vikki Keys
Superintendent, National Mall & Memorial Parks



Where are the National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Park?



Top: Fourth of July celebration on the National Mall.

Middle: Thomas Jefferson Memorial.

Bottom: Visitors at the National Cherry Blossom Festival.

THE NATIONAL MALL

The National Mall stretches from the grounds of the United States Capitol west to the Potomac River, and from the Jefferson Memorial north to Constitution Avenue. It is home to the great symbols of our country—national icons such as the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Jefferson Memorial. It also includes the Vietnam Veterans, Korean War Veterans, and World War II memorials, as well as lesser known memorials to American heroes, such as the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, George Mason, and John Paul Jones. The National Mall also boasts beautiful open spaces such as the Tidal Basin, where the blossoming of thousands of cherry trees heralds spring.

The museums and facilities of the National Gallery of Art and the Smithsonian Institution, as well as the U. S. Department of Agriculture, line the eastern end of the National Mall. They are commonly referred to as being on the National Mall. However, they are not managed by the National Park Service; therefore, they will not be addressed by this plan.

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK

Pennsylvania Avenue is America's grand ceremonial avenue, designed to connect the United States Capitol and the White House. America's history has marched, paraded, promenaded, and protested its way up and down the avenue, and the nation celebrates the election of a president every four years with the Inaugural Parade. Pennsylvania Avenue is truly more than just another city street, rather it is the place where the nation comes to commemorate its tragedies and triumphs.

Protecting the National Mall

In 2003 Congress wanted to protect the great public spaces of Washington, D.C., from being overbuilt, so they amended the Commemorative Works Act, which provides standards for the placement of commemorative works on certain federal lands in the District of Columbia and its environs. The amended act designates the Reserve area, which includes the National Mall and the White House. Congress stated that this area is a "substantially completed work of civic art" and that "no commemorative work or visitor center shall be located within the Reserve."

What is a commemorative work? The act defines it as "any statue, monument, sculpture, memorial, plaque, inscription, or other structure or landscape feature, including a garden or memorial grove, designed to perpetuate in a permanent manner the memory of an individual, group, event or other significant element of American history."

Memorials and facilities that Congress had already authorized for placement on the National Mall before the Reserve was designated include the

- Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center
- Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial
- National Museum of African American History and Culture

Authorization for a fourth memorial on the National Mall, the Black Revolutionary War Patriots Memorial, has expired.

The land adjacent to the Reserve, which is called Area I, can accommodate future memorials, including the planned Dwight David Eisenhower Memorial. In addition, the National Capital Planning Commission has identified more than 100 sites throughout the city where future museums and memorials can be located (see the *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*, available at http://www.npcp.gov/publications_press/2m/2Mmp.html).



PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK

- *Pennsylvania Avenue provides a national ceremonial avenue designed to physically connect the legislative and executive branches of government.* Integral to Pierre L'Enfant's plan for Washington, D.C., Pennsylvania Avenue offers vistas of the United States Capitol, and it is the address for the White House, which is just to the west of the national historic park.
- *Pennsylvania Avenue is the centerpiece of a national historic district.* As America's main street, Pennsylvania Avenue is nationally and internationally recognized as the location for presidential inaugural parades, state funerals, and national celebrations. It is home to national monuments, memorials, historic sites, and parks. Space is available for commemorating nationally significant people and events in the future.
- *Pennsylvania Avenue recalls the importance of the 13 original colonies.* The name for the avenue underscores the importance of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to the creation of our nation.

How is the National Mall used?

The National Mall symbolizes our nation and our freedoms—its appearance should reflect its value. An estimated 25 million people use the National Mall each year, more visitors than come to Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Grand Canyon national parks combined. That adds up to a lot of wear and tear, and balancing all types of activities within the limited area of the National Mall presents enormous challenges. That is why our planning effort is so important.

The National Mall must function efficiently and flexibly at many levels—as the highly symbolic visual setting for our government; as part of the city's circulation and transportation network; as the location of the nation's primary memorials and museums; and as the stage for national, regional, and local events and activities. The demands on the National Mall are constant and wide-ranging.

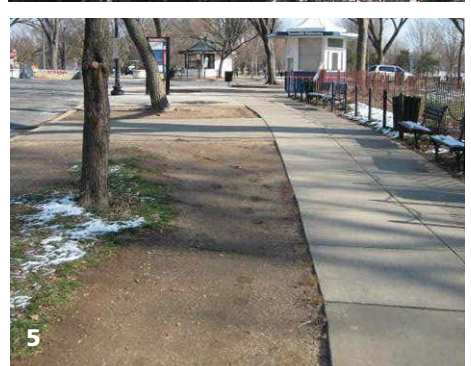
Each year there are over 3,000 applications for public gathering permits, resulting in more than 14,000 event-days. These events include

- public demonstrations in connection with First Amendment rights
- annual celebrations, such as the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, presidential memorial birthday celebrations, the Folklife Festival, Black Family Reunion, and the Fourth of July
- regularly scheduled concerts and cultural programs
- hundreds of events such as solar technology displays, book fairs, public employee recognition events, the laying of commemorative wreaths, re-enlistment ceremonies, weddings, or school group musical performances, as well as one-time events, such as a state funeral or home building for Hurricane Katrina victims
- annual marathons and races benefiting various causes, and hundreds of recreational league team sports

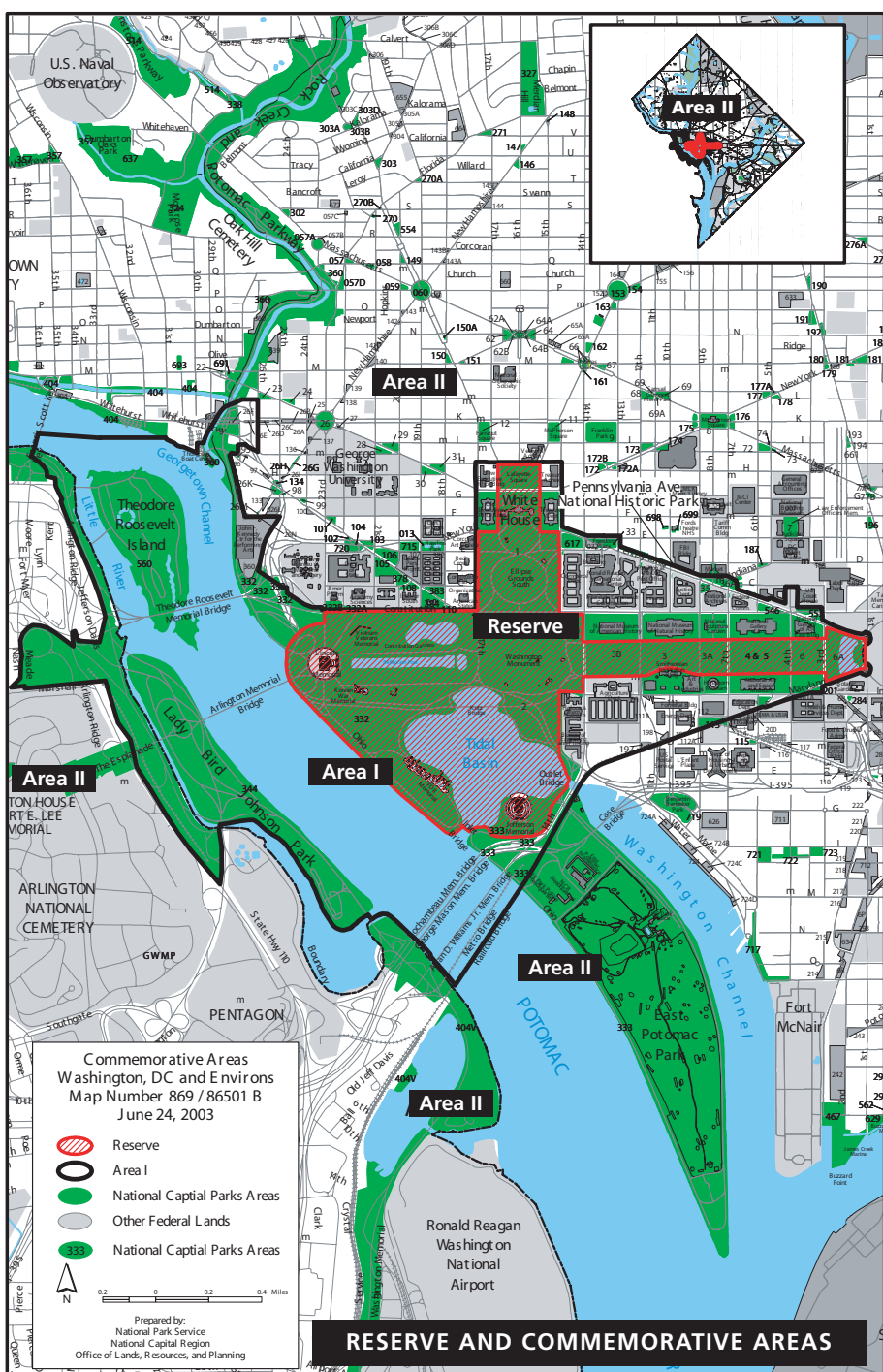
What are the effects of this use?

The wear and tear of concentrated activity affects the landscape and visitor facilities. Facilities can be overwhelmed with use. Vegetation cannot easily recover, lawns may be worn to the ground and soils heavily compacted, adversely affecting root systems and the vigor of trees and lawns. Areas adjacent to sidewalks may be damaged as use spills off walks, as runners and others choose a more direct route, or because the width of walks is inadequate for current levels of use. The combined effects generate heartfelt complaints by visitors about the appearance of the National Mall. Planning will need to address visitor use and needs, while improving landscape health and appearance.

- Photo 1: Program at the World War II Memorial.
- Photo 2: Large event at the Washington Monument.
- Photo 3: Overhead Mall view showing worn turf.
- Photo 4: Visitors during the National Cherry Blossom Festival.
- Photo 5: Obliterated grass from use spilling off walkways.
- Photo 6: Summer visitors at the Reflecting Pool.
- Photo 7: Trampled root systems of cherry trees.



National Mall & Memorial Parks 3



What is important about these places?

At the heart of the National Park Service's planning process is defining the values that contribute to an area's national significance. The following statements are the first efforts to define these important places, and we welcome your comments.

THE NATIONAL MALL

- *The National Mall is the home to the enduring symbols of our country.* It provides an inspiring setting for memorials, the backdrop for the legislative and executive branches of our government, as well as a visual connection between the branches of government, represented by the United States Capitol and the White House. The National Mall's monuments, memorials, statues, and other commemorative works honor important personages, historical events, and the ideals of democracy.
- *The National Mall is the heart of our nation's capital and has endured since the city's original design by Pierre L'Enfant over 200 years ago.* The form and character of our planned national capital still reflect the historic L'Enfant and McMillan plans.
- *The National Mall is an inclusive and open environment where we celebrate our national identity and important events.* The National Mall is the primary location for political demonstrations, First Amendment activities, rallies, parades, and numerous festivals. Visitors of every race, nationality, and faith come to the National Mall to celebrate, commemorate, demonstrate, or just have fun.
- *The National Mall is a preeminent national landscape, and its history and appearance have been enriched by gifts to the United States from other countries.* Various trees and gardens symbolize cultural and diplomatic exchanges and gifts from other nations—such as the cherry trees, pagoda, and lantern from Japan, and the German-American Friendship Garden.
- *The National Mall is the center of our nation's cultural heritage.* The National Mall is surrounded by many of the country's most significant educational and cultural institutions, including the national museums of the Smithsonian Institution and the National Gallery of Art, along with the nearby National Archives, the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.



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NPS D-20

If you would like to comment in writing,
please mail your comments to

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This is just the beginning...



Statue at U.S. Navy Memorial

Please let us know what you think about the National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Park, and what you would like to see done to enrich your experiences when you visit these places. Your comments will help us as we develop a range of alternatives for you to consider in the

future. You will find more information at www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan about how to provide comments. Here are a few things we would like you to think about:

- What is most important to you about the National Mall and about Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Park?
- What, if any, improvements to the appearance of the National Mall are needed?
- What types and amount of facilities do visitors need?
- What should visitor facilities and sidewalk furnishings look like, or what character should they have?
- What programs, activities, and educational opportunities do you want on the National Mall or in Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Park?
- What kinds of information would help you get around more easily?

Thank you!

Symposium on the National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Park

*You are invited on
Wednesday, November 15, 2006,
to the Naval Heritage Center
at the U. S. Navy Memorial
to join in a national discussion
on the future use and management of
the National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue
National Historic Park.*

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Please reserve the date!

Location: 701 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.

The event is free; however, seating is limited.

For more information see the website.
Please indicate your interest in attending online at

www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan