

Adjacent Lands

North and south of the Lincoln Memorial grounds are several other designed landscapes. Two contemporary memorials dedicated to the veterans of the Vietnam and Korean Wars are located northeast and southeast of the circular drive. A naturalistic park landscape called Constitution Gardens lies north of the Reflecting Pool, beyond the flood control embankment. These landscapes have changed the formal geometric character that the McMillan Commission and the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission intended for this portion of West Potomac Park. While both the Vietnam and Korean War memorials were designed to have a direct and symbolic relationship with the Lincoln Memorial building, they have little association with the park's historic landscape. The concept for Constitution Gardens contrasts even more with the original formal arrangement. On the other hand, the design of the District of Columbia War Memorial, which was constructed in 1931 on a site southeast of the Reflecting Pool, was developed according to many of the principles that relate to the design of the Lincoln Memorial grounds.

From 1913 to 1918 a row of tennis courts lay east of 17th Street and north of the area proposed for the Reflecting Pool. The courts were removed in 1918 when temporary buildings were constructed on this location for the government's war effort. To protect these structures and the other buildings along Constitution Avenue from periodic flooding, the National Park Service installed an earthen berm in 1938. The berm was located just north of the outer row of elms lining the walkway on the north side of the Reflecting Pool. Approximately 8 feet high, the berm effectively blocked views and access from the Reflecting Pool area to the north. This negative impact also changed the open character of the park. In 1970 the war buildings were removed. The "Downingesque-inspired" landscape for Constitution Gardens (1976) replaced the war buildings. The curvilinear design of the gardens deviated from the character and feel of the design originally conceived for this space by the McMillan Commission and the planning commissions of the 1920s and 1930s. When the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was installed just west of Constitution Gardens in 1982, it further compromised the original plans. The asymmetrical design of this memorial contrasted with the surrounding grounds but had a visual relationship with both the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial.

The area south of the Reflecting Pool developed in a different manner. The upper part of the space remained open, while the lower portion, flanked by an old road, was maintained as a tree grove. Even though there was no specified use for this area, its relationship to the design of Reflecting Pool area was important. Both the McMillan Commission and the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission emphasized the juxtaposition of open areas (grass fields) and enclosed areas (tree groves) in their plans. Within the trees, a classical pavilion was constructed to honor D.C. citizens killed in World War I. The area remained in this state until 1942 when the government built temporary buildings on the open land. In 1964 these "tempo" were removed and the area was once again an open grassy field. After 1964 the open field was used for special events and active recreation. Subsequent changes did not occur until 1995 with the installation of the Korean War Veterans Memorial on the western portion of the open field. As with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial had a symbolic relationship

with the Lincoln Memorial and Jefferson Memorial, but the layout of features conflicted with the historic design of the Lincoln Memorial grounds.



Figure 38 - Aerial view of the Korean War Memorial and its impact on the open grassy area south of the Reflecting Pool, April 1996. LINC 3-32.

Although the Vietnam and Korean memorials and Constitution Gardens are known for their distinct designs and cultural value, these were developed independently of the historic Lincoln Memorial grounds. In addition, the change in land use from passive to active recreation on the south side of the Reflecting Pool detracts from the original design planned for this area. See Map 9 *Overall Landscape - Land Use* for delineation of adjacent use areas.

Views and Vistas

As defined in the 1791 L'Enfant plan and subsequent McMillan Commission Plan of 1901, the most important designed vista is the main mall axis, from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial east to the Washington Monument and then from the Capitol to the Washington Monument to the Lincoln. To help frame the view and provide an unobstructed vista, double rows of elms were planted on either side of the Reflecting Pool. The vista narrowed at 17th Street where the street trees (American elm) framed the view to a controlled 160-foot opening (the same width of the Reflecting Pool). A continuation of this axis went from the west side of the Lincoln Memorial to the Watergate steps and across to the Virginia shoreline. Two other sight lines radiated from the rear side, or west side, of the Lincoln Memorial to maintain the symmetry of the design. One was to the southwest across the Potomac River to Arlington Cemetery and Arlington House, and the other was to the northwest to Parkway Drive. The fan-shaped view zone to the west is framed by white pines and elms, planted on the outside edge of the bridge and parkway approaches to Lincoln Circle. Views from the Ericsson Memorial, south of the Lincoln and along 23rd Street NW to the north provide secondary views to the Lincoln Memorial. All of these significant view zones are evident today in various degrees. However, the foundation plantings around the Lincoln Memorial are encroaching upon the openings at the base of the raised terrace wall on the north and south facades. This is more evident on the center of the north side of the memorial where the branches of hollies are arching over lower, horizontal-growing yews. After the completion of the Lincoln Memorial grounds in the 1930s, additional views from subsequent memorials to the Lincoln Memorial were emphasized based on their relationship to the Lincoln. This is evident from the Jefferson, Vietnam Veterans, and Korean War Veterans Memorials. Since these offsite views do not relate to the original design intent of the Lincoln Memorial grounds, they are noncontributing features to the overall



Figure 39 - Main mall axis view from the raised terrace of the Lincoln Memorial to the Washington Monument, October 27, 1922. MRC 3-2.



Figure 40 - View from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial, c. 1930. Trees along 17th Street left an opening for the main mall axis view. MRC 3-26.

landscape. See Map 10 *Overall Landscape - Views and Vistas* for graphic representation of contributing views.

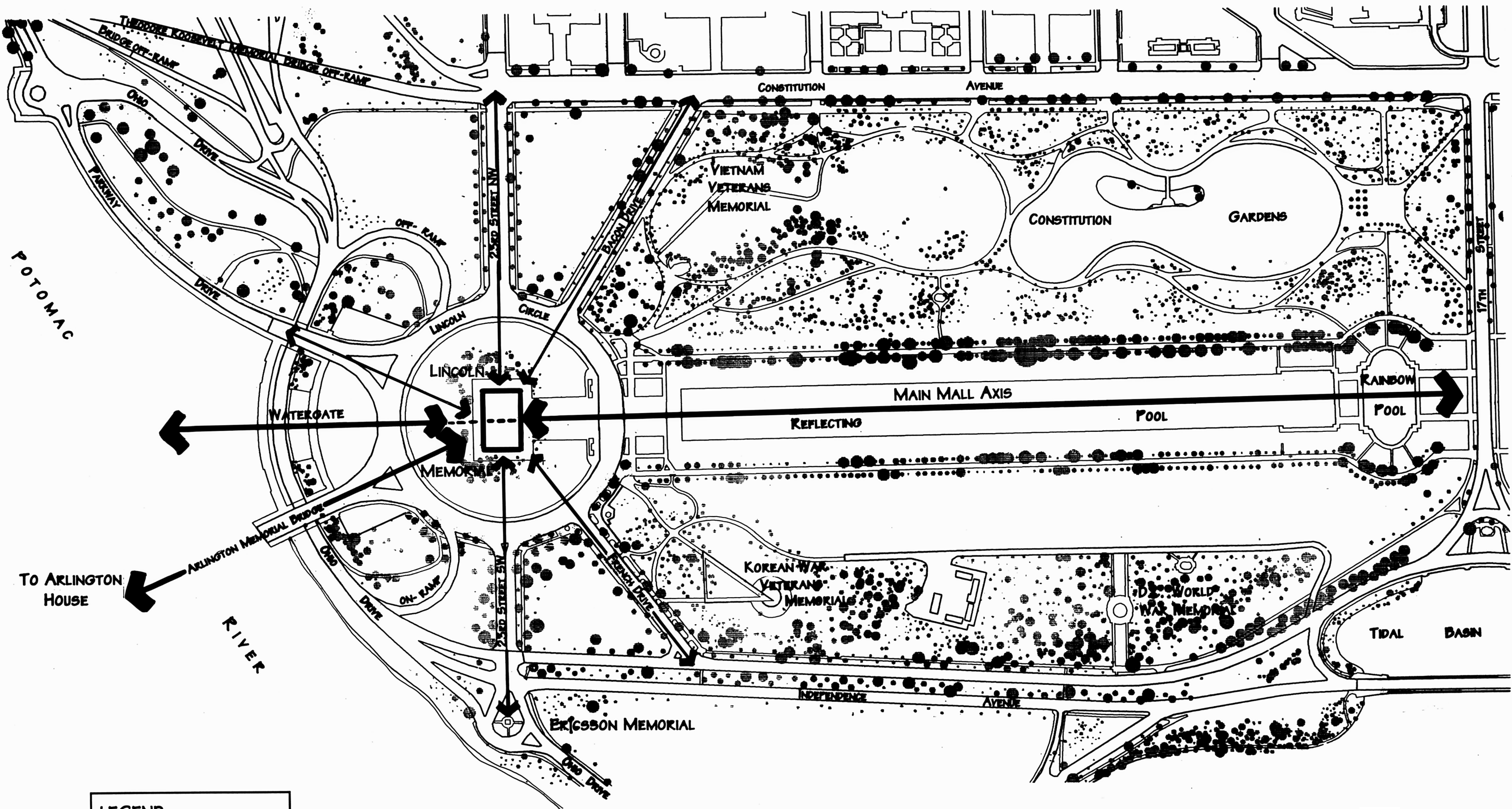


Figure 41 - View from roof of Lincoln Memorial to the Virginia shoreline, March 11, 1996. LINC 6-22.





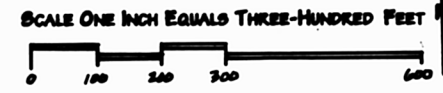
Figure 42 - Limited view of Lincoln Memorial from the Ericsson Memorial, June 1996. LINC 9-7.

<p>Contributing Features</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mall axis vista from and to the Lincoln Memorial to Washington Monument to U.S. Capitol.2. Vista from the Lincoln Memorial to Arlington House across Arlington Memorial Bridge (also opposing view back from Arlington House to the Lincoln Memorial)3. Vista from and to Parkway Drive4. Vista from radial roads to Lincoln Memorial and along radial roads from the Lincoln Memorial5. Vista from the Lincoln Memorial raised terrace south to the Ericsson Memorial and north to Constitution Avenue, along 23rd Street, NW axis (also opposing view from the Ericsson Memorial and Constitution Avenue to the Lincoln Memorial)6. Fan-shape vista from Lincoln Memorial west to the Virginia shoreline (also opposite view from the shoreline to the Lincoln Memorial)	<p>Noncontributing Features</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. View from and to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to the Lincoln Memorial2. View from and to the Korean War Veterans Memorial
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LEGEND

 MAJOR VISTA
 MINOR VISTA



- SOURCES:**
- U.S. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, NACC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, LIVETREE DATABASE, 10/86.
 - FIELD INVESTIGATIONS, 1986.
 - HISTORIC PHOTO DOCUMENTATION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, MAR8
 - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MAP FILES, SEE BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR MAP LISTING.

Map 10

VIEWS & VISTAS

OVERALL LANDSCAPE

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

LINCOLN MEMORIAL GROUNDS

PREPARED BY: M. JOSEPH DATE: OCTOBER 1986

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