



MEDIA RELEASE

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Framework Plan and National Mall Plan Reimagine Washington *The Commission Unanimously Adopts Plan to Revitalize the Monumental Core*

Washington, DC – At the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) meeting today, staff from NCPC and the National Park Service (NPS) explained how their new long-range plans will work together to benefit the National Mall and surrounding areas.

Staff from the National Park Service gave an informational presentation on their recently unveiled preliminary preferred alternative for the *National Mall Plan*, a 50-year vision for the sustainable use and management of the country's preeminent gathering place.

NCPC staff then presented *The Monumental Core Framework Plan: Connecting New Destinations with the National Mall*, a joint product of NCPC and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), which the Commission unanimously adopted today. The *Framework Plan* is an ambitious effort to revitalize areas near the Mall. Adoption of the plan enables staff to move from ideas toward reality.

“The National Mall is an iconic space valued by visitors and residents,” said NCPC Executive Director Marcel Acosta. “By creating vibrant new locations that extend beyond this essential landmark, we can help preserve the Mall while also helping the District realize its vision of a greatly revitalized center city.”

Planning efforts for the *Framework Plan* were officially launched in 2006, the same year the Park Service embarked on its efforts with the *National Mall Plan*.

“We are in an exceptional time of cooperation among federal and local partners,” said NCPC Chairman John V. Cogbill, III. “The plans that are being put forth today are the result of unparalleled coordination that will help us ensure that all of America benefits from a lively, celebrated national capital.”

“Together we are creating a cohesive vision for the symbolic heart of a vibrant, distinguished capital city,” said Dr. Stephanie Toothman, the acting superintendent for the National Mall. “Americans deserve a premiere civic space and capital city that are world-class. This collaborative effort will help define the National Mall and the city's monumental core in a manner that is commensurate of a world-class capital.”

“The excellent NCPC-NPS partnership, represented by the much-anticipated plans of the agencies, is the signal I've been waiting for to move H.R. 146, the Mall Designation and Revitalization Act, which incorporates the NCPC Framework Plan,” said Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC).

The *National Mall Plan* aims to improve the visitor experience as well as accommodate the needs of local residents for active recreation and open space. It includes improvements to the landscape and infrastructure that sustains it, the addition of amenities such as restrooms and food vendors, and the installation of a comprehensive wayfinding system.

“Civic spaces will be designed to welcome and accommodate large crowds while ensuring the National Mall can recover quickly following high levels of use,” explained Associate Regional Director Peter May for the Park Service's Lands, Resources and Planning division.

—More—

According to the Park Service, the plan calls for redesigning and improving the landscape and providing upgrades and additional services. “We received more than 27,000 comments,” said project executive Susan Spain. “Many of the ideas are included in the Park Service’s alternatives, including requests for additional bathrooms, improved landscaping, bike paths, and metered parking.”

NCPC and CFA’s *Framework Plan* also benefited greatly from public comment. “At last there is a plan that integrates areas of the constituent and federal city with the central core,” wrote Michael Bednar, professor of architecture at the University of Virginia. “This is what L’Enfant had intended in his visionary plan of 1791, a network of neighborhood open spaces connected to the Mall. It [The Framework Plan] has been superbly conceived as the next logical plan in the evolution of Washington urban design plans.”

“Not since the McMillan Plan 100 years ago and the Pennsylvania Avenue Plan going on 50 years ago have we seen such real and realistic urban planning for the Federal heart of Washington: real in suggesting what should be built and rebuilt, realistic in suggesting what can be done in short order, and urban in emphasizing lively, welcoming environments,” said Robert A. Peck, former commissioner of the Public Buildings Service at GSA, former president of the Greater Washington Board of Trade, and former member of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts.

“The theme of making connections and removing barriers between the different areas of the Mall and adjacent areas is spot on,” said Arlington resident Brian Gallagher. “I urge the Commission, Congress, and DC government to begin the necessary planning processes to start to realize the Framework Plan.”

“To strengthen Pennsylvania Avenue as “America’s Main Street,” and to create a high quality federal workplace featuring a mix of amenities for both workers and visitors—are worthy goals that, if achieved, could help integrate the commercial center of the city to the Mall and add to the liveliness of both the Mall and the city,” wrote Judy Scott Feldman, chair of the National Coalition to Save Our Mall.

Staff at NCPC and CFA envisions the development of popular destinations close to existing attractions near the Mall. New development could include areas for memorials, museums, and gathering places, along with revitalized federal precincts and new private development. These vibrant areas should both draw people from the Mall to the city and the waterfront, as well as provide new opportunities for celebration, commemoration, and recreation.

“This plan provides the opportunity to transform Washington into an even greater capital city,” said CFA Chairman Earl A. Powell, III. “By enhancing existing locations and creating new destinations adjacent to the National Mall, we are addressing a national need to identify sites for future memorials and museums of national significance.”

The *Framework Plan* focuses on federal property in four areas—Southwest Rectangle, Potomac Park, Northwest Rectangle, and the Federal Triangle. “Our federal office districts surrounding the Mall are not as vibrant as they could be,” said CFA Secretary Thomas Luebke. “Enlivening them with a diverse mixture of uses will not only benefit Washington’s residents and tourists, but also the more than 100,000 federal employees who work in them.”

The *Framework Plan* continues NCPC’s long-term effort to use federal land throughout the city for memorials and museums, as previously outlined in the agency’s 1997 plan, *Extending the Legacy* and the 2001 *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*. To unlock the potential of the areas adjacent to the Mall, the *Framework Plan* recommends a variety of changes that will facilitate the development of lively mixed-use neighborhoods with street-level retail combined with office, commercial, and hospitality uses. Proposals include creating new sidewalks and bike paths, removing barriers to the waterfront, and making places more accessible with additional public transit.

Following the Commission’s adoption of the *Framework Plan*, NCPC staff will not begin to guide several projects toward realization. “Plans for a heritage trail through Federal Triangle are already underway,” said Bill Dowd, the plan’s project director. “We’ll also start working on feasibility studies for the 10th Street Overlook, which is the crucial element connecting the Mall to the waterfront.”

Testimonials

**Richard Bradley, Executive Director
Downtown Business Improvement District**

“More people are using the city to live, to work, and to enjoy the many cultural and entertainment opportunities. At the same time, there is increasing pressure on the National Mall, our federal amenities, and assets. The Framework Plan and National Mall Plans are a timely, cooperative effort to find ways to accommodate our growth in order to ensure that we can meet future demands, particularly in the heart of our emerging center city.”

**John Fondersmith and Laura Richards
Committee of 100 on the Federal City**

“The Committee of 100 on the Federal City looks forward to continuing to work with the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts, and other involved planning agencies and groups, to refine and implement these important plans for improvement and continued revitalization of Central Washington.”

**Bill Hanbury, President and CEO
Destination DC**

“Together, the Framework and National Mall Plans will play a key step in continuing the District’s growth as a world-class tourism destination. These plans recognize the need for better transit connections to and from the Mall and surrounding areas. Improved transit will enable visitors, residents, and tourists alike to enjoy a diverse sampling of the many worthy destinations our great capital has to offer.”

**Linda Harper, Executive Director
Cultural Tourism DC**

“We are delighted that the plans support the sustainability of our monuments and museums while promoting the city of Washington as a destination for cultural tourism. In the decades ahead, we look forward to seeing our major monuments and attractions meld seamlessly with the capital’s neighborhoods, creating yet more reasons for visitors to come to DC.”

**Don Hawkins
Architect and Historian**

“The Framework Plan is a guide to the maturing of Washington. For over two centuries, the Monumental Core and its surrounding neighborhoods have coexisted without coalescing. The Framework Plan shows us how to better integrate the seemingly disparate elements of this unique city: its detailed refinement of parts of the urban environment is a necessary step in the evolution of the great plan L'Enfant drew. NCPC and CFA have done fine work in bringing together so many ideas for us to think about and to act on.”

**John W. Hill, Chief Executive Officer
Federal City Council**

“We applaud the work that has been done to envision a stronger, more vibrant and connected monumental core, and we believe that it is the right time to think comprehensively about this important cultural space in our city and how we integrate this space with the federal presence and the growth of our downtown and neighborhoods. The Framework Plan is an important step in this process.”

**Jose Miguel Insulza, Secretary General
Organization of American States**

“In 2010, the Organization of American States (OAS) will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of its historic headquarters across Constitution Avenue from the National Mall and within the National Capital’s Northwest Rectangle. We look forward to working with the National Capital Planning Commission and the U.S. Department of Interior in efforts to improve the cityscape for the public; not only by presenting our institution’s history and mission, but also by showcasing the cultural heritage of the Americas to residents and visitors of Washington, DC.”

**Harriet Tregoning, Director
District Office of Planning**

“Collectively, these two plans can help people experience the nation’s capital that extends beyond the National Mall. There are ceremonial functions and symbolic spaces of the federal city including the National Mall. But there is also the economic, social, and cultural life of this international metropolis and for visitors and residents alike, they enhance and benefit one another.”