



Memorial Trends & Practice in Washington, DC

Prepared by the National Capital Planning Commission
in consultation with the National Park Service
and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts

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Executive Summary

As more than 25 years have passed since the enactment of the Commemorative Works Act of 1986 (CWA) – which serves as the basis for making decisions on memorial authorization, siting, and design – it is appropriate to take stock of the current commemorative landscape in Washington, DC and its environs. The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), in consultation with the National Park Service (NPS) and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), developed this report to summarize findings from a study of the commemorative planning process in the nation’s capital.

The report includes:

- ◆ A summary of major plans shaping commemoration in Washington
- ◆ Roles of various agencies in the commemorative process
- ◆ Key historical trends, current conditions, and analyses of the city’s existing commemorative works
- ◆ Information from the practices of other capital cities
- ◆ An exploration of issues facing future commemorative proposals, including ideas for next steps by the involved agencies

The study, conducted over the course of two years, included a compilation of the publicly accessible 113 memorials on land administered by the NPS, classified by attributes such as theme, key dates and location (Appendix B)¹. In addition, it included research on commemoration planning in other capital cities around the world.

The detailed research and findings underpinning this report are available online at www.ncpc.gov/commemoration.

This research enabled a structured way of identifying how memorial content and locations changed over time and highlights trends such as:

- ◆ A concentration of memorials in the core of the city.
- ◆ A shift from commemoration of individuals towards the commemoration of groups and shared experiences and events.
- ◆ The expansion of the size and scope of memorial landscapes.
- ◆ An emphasis on military and political themes, such as statesman and founding fathers.

1) Lands owned by the U.S. Government and administered by the National Park Service.

Key Findings

The CWA provides a framework for establishing memorials in Washington, DC.

While no changes in the underlying legislation are recommended, several opportunities for the participating agencies to improve and clarify the existing process under the CWA were identified, including:

- ◆ Expand the current “24 Steps to Establishing a Memorial” guide into a more user-friendly manual that clearly explains the memorial process and agency roles and expectations.
- ◆ Develop siting guidance for international gifts from foreign countries in updates to the 2002 *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* and/or the Federal Elements of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*.
- ◆ Identify opportunities other than permanent commemoration for sponsors to explore subjects of interest, such as commemorative coins, exhibits for lobbies or cultural facilities, and events or temporary commemorative programs.
- ◆ Continue to improve agency guidance on memorial content and the historical significance of proposed memorials to sponsors and lawmakers through the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission (NCMAC).

Additionally, the study identified trends associated with the subject matter themes of commemorative works in the nation’s capital. However, only Congress, and not the federal agencies, has the authority to approve memorial subject matter under the CWA.



The 1901 McMillan Commission Plan conceived the National Mall as we know it today, extending it from the Capitol to the Potomac River and complementing it with a system of parks that extend into and beyond the city.



NCPC's 1997 *Extending the Legacy* called for expanding the commemorative landscape and encouraged the distribution of new museums and memorials to all quadrants of the city.



The 2001 *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*, a collaborative effort by NCPC, CFA, and NCMAC, identified 100 candidate memorial site locations and successfully guided six recent projects to locations off of the National Mall.

The McMillan Commission Plan, *Extending the Legacy Plan*, and *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* all represent interpretations and extensions of Pierre L'Enfant's ideas.

A Legacy of Memorial Planning

The Evolution of Memorial Planning in Washington, DC

Pierre L'Enfant conceived of Washington as a symbolic landscape that would simultaneously serve as “the capital of this vast empire” and a physical example of the new democratic experiment underway in America. He laid a traditional street grid over a network of sweeping ceremonial boulevards that expressed the nation’s openness and grand aspirations. Where the two intersected, he proposed circles, squares, and other public spaces to serve as focal points of civic and community life.

The joint NCPC and CFA 2009 *Monumental Core Framework Plan* identified specific redevelopment strategies to bring *Extending the Legacy* to reality. The *Monumental Core Framework Plan* emphasizes that the city of Washington was conceived, planned, and built as the urban expression of the nation’s identity. The plan recognizes that the location of memorials and important civic spaces must contribute to the organizing principles of the city. It proposes to create new visual and physical connections by enhancing views and symbolic relationships and promoting strategies that combine sustainability and excellence in urban design.

Today, memorial planning in Washington continues to build on this legacy, while responding to the challenges and opportunities posed by a new generation of commemorative projects. The research contained in this report builds on the site-focused assessments of the *Memorials and Museum Master Plan* and the *Monumental Core Framework Plan* and, for the first time, provides an opportunity to look closely at trends related to memorial content. In addition, to develop a more comprehensive picture of memorial placement and design, research included case studies of practices in other state and national capitals. Several of these cities developed strategies to guide memorial content and related location policies.



Figure 1.

NCPC’s catalog shows that the core of the city has traditionally been a popular place to site memorials. The *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* envisions a broader distribution throughout the city.

- Existing memorials
- The location of candidate sites from NCPC’s *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*

Snapshot: Memorials Process Over Time

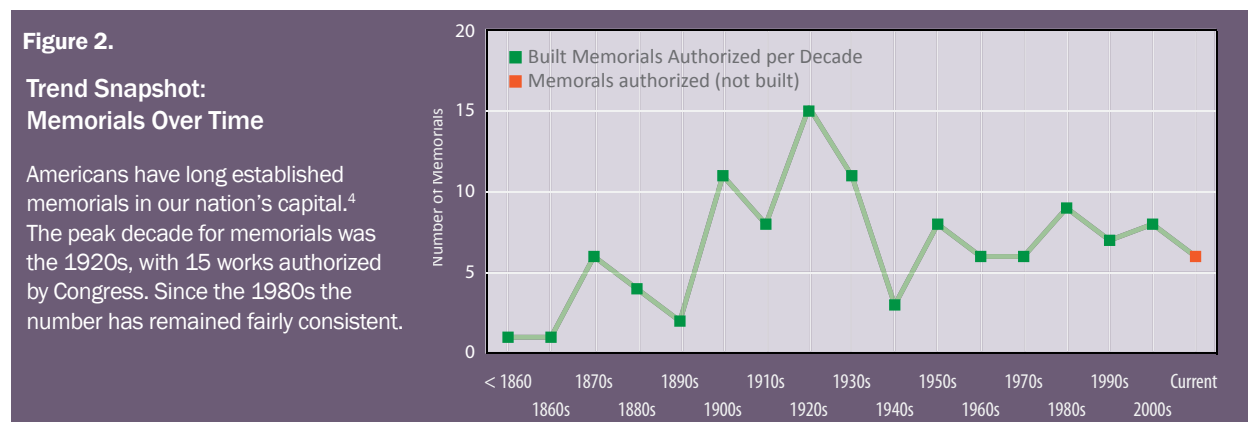
Prior to 1910, Congress appointed temporary commissions, primarily composed of laypersons, to oversee the development of new monuments and memorials.² In 1910, CFA was created with a board of architects, landscape architects, sculptors, and painters to review the location and design of proposed works. In 1952, NCPC joined in this review.

The Commemorative Works Act of 1986 formalized the process for the review of proposed commemorations by CFA, NCPC, and the National Capital Memorial Commission (since renamed the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission or NCMAC) and gave the CFA and NCPC authority to approve memorial sites and designs.

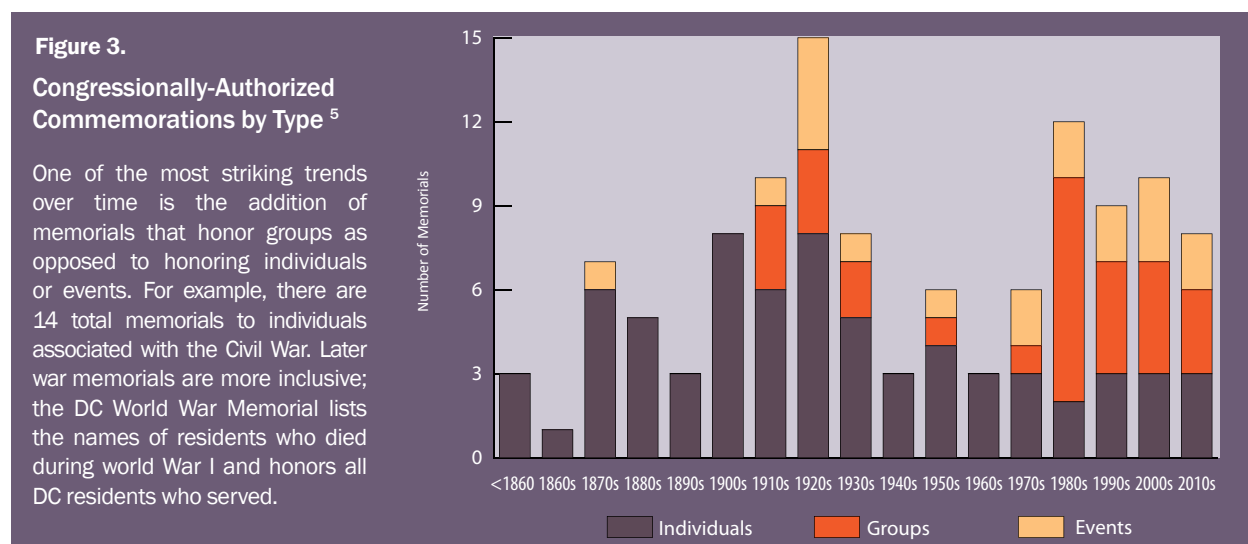
Commemorative works on NPS land encompass a broad array of sizes, types, and forms, and the memorials completed since passage of the CWA are no exception. These include plaques and/or additions to memorials in Area I and two gifts from foreign countries—the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial and the President Tomas G. Masaryk Memorial. These were also completed relatively quickly, at two and four years respectively. Overall, the median time interval between authorization and dedication is five years.³

2) Kohler, Sue A. (1996). *The Commission of Fine Arts: A Brief History, 1910-1995*. Washington: Government Printing Office, p. 1.

3) A “median” time interval reference is used instead of “mean,” or “average,” since the “average” time would be skewed by a few memorials that have taken an unusually long time due to exceptional circumstances. For example, the Peter Muhlenberg Memorial, authorized in 1928, was not completed until 1980. The longest time-frame to complete a work was for the Washington Monument. Authorized in 1783, it took 102 years to build.



4) This chart does not include works located on NPS lands but not authorized by Congress. These include: the Temperance Fountain, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (located at the National Archives), the First Airmail Flight Marker, and the Fort Stevens Markers.



5) Note: memorials may be counted in more than one category

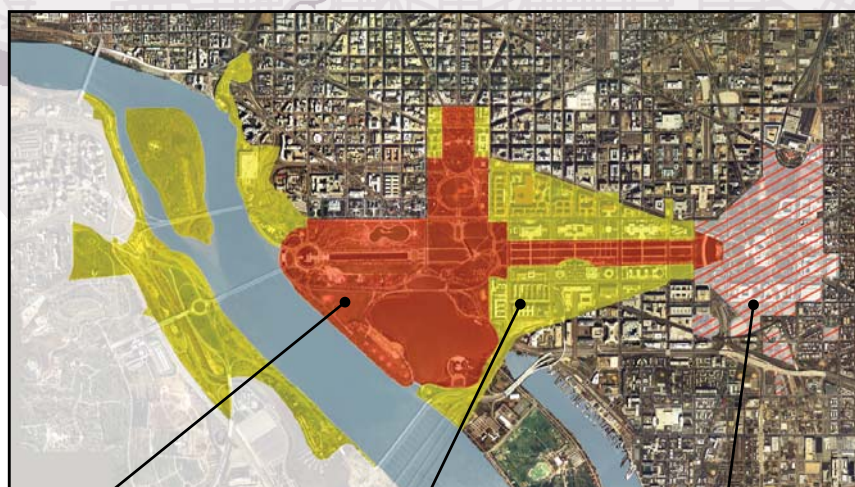
Authorities and Agency Roles

The Commemorative Works Act of 1986 (40 U.S.C. §§8901 et seq.) governs the process for establishing commemorative works on NPS and U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) lands in the District of Columbia and environs. The CWA assigned responsibility for approving and coordinating design, issuing construction permits, and conducting longterm maintenance to the Secretary of the Interior or the Administrator of GSA, and review and approval roles to NCPC and CFA. NCMAC maintains a consultation role during authorization, site selection and design.

In summary, the CWA:

- ◆ Defines what is a commemorative work for the purposes of the Act.
- ◆ Provides guidelines for the content of commemorative works and precludes memorials that do not reflect lasting national significance to the American experience.
- ◆ Requires Congress to authorize each new commemorative work by separate law.
- ◆ Separates the legislative authorization process from the site selection and design approval process.
- ◆ Requires separate Congressional authorization to locate commemorations in a defined Area I.
- ◆ Establishes a Reserve, an area that Congress determined is “a completed work of civic art” and where no new commemorative works may be constructed.
- ◆ Establishes NCMAC, which advises the Secretary of the Interior, Congress, and sponsors on topics related to commemoration.
- ◆ Precludes the acknowledgement of donors on the sites of commemorative works.

Commemorative works on lands under the jurisdiction of the District of Columbia and other federal agencies, such as the Department of Defense, are not subject to the CWA.



The Reserve



Area I



Jurisdiction of the Architect of the Capitol

Figure 4.
Commemorative Area

In November 2003, the U.S. Congress passed amendments to the Commemorative Works Act which established a Reserve on the cross-axis of the National Mall where no new commemorative works can be located (shown in red at left). Area I (shown in yellow) was designated for a limited number of memorials. The area under the jurisdiction of the Architect of the Capitol area is not subject to the CWA.

Responsibilities of Federal Agencies as Outlined by the CWA

National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission

NCMAC serves as a consultation focal point for those seeking to establish memorials on federal land that is subject to the CWA in the nation's capital. NCMAC was originally established as a Federal Advisory Committee of the Department of Interior. The CWA reestablished the Committee as the NCMAC and directed it to report to Congress as well as the Secretary of the Interior and the GSA Administrator on matters relating to commemoration in the District of Columbia and its environs when federal property administered by NPS or GSA is used. The purpose of NCMAC is:

- ♦ To prepare and recommend to the Secretary or the Administrator criteria, guidelines, and policies and procedures for memorializing persons and events.
- ♦ To examine each memorial proposal for adequacy and appropriateness.
- ♦ To make recommendations to Congress in conformance with the CWA.
- ♦ To make recommendations to the Secretary or the Administrator with respect to site locations on federal land in the District of Columbia and its environs that are under the provisions of the CWA.
- ♦ To consider each memorial proposal seeking a site within Area I for appropriateness, and make recommendations to the Secretary or the Administrator with respect to preeminent and lasting historical significance to the nation.

Membership of NCMAC is designated within the CWA and is composed of eight ex-officio members. The Chairman is the Secretary of Interior (or his/her appointee). The other members include representatives from:

- ♦ The Architect of the Capitol
- ♦ The Chairman of the American Battle Monuments Commission
- ♦ The Chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission
- ♦ The Chairman of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts
- ♦ The Commissioner of Public Buildings Service, General Services Administration
- ♦ The Mayor of the District of Columbia
- ♦ The Secretary of Defense

Department of the Interior (through the National Park Service)

Although in the District of Columbia memorials are typically proposed and paid for by private groups, once built, memorial sites are generally maintained and interpreted in perpetuity by The National Park Service. NPS coordinates memorial proposals and drafts of legislation for memorials in the District of Columbia and environs. NPS reviews and approves sites and designs and issues construction permits.

U.S. General Services Administration

GSA is the landlord for the civilian federal government. It provides leadership, policy direction, and standards in the areas of architecture, engineering, fine arts, historic preservation, construction services, and project management. The Commissioner of the Public Building Service sits on NCMAC, and in the District of Columbia, GSA lands may be considered for commemorative works under the CWA.

National Capital Planning Commission

NCPC provides planning guidance for federal land and buildings in the National Capital Region, which includes the District of Columbia. The 12-member Commission includes three Presidential appointees, and representatives from Congress, federal agencies, and the District of Columbia. With respect to commemorative works, NCPC is authorized to approve sites and designs for new memorial projects and is represented on NCMAC.

U.S. Commission of Fine Arts

CFA was established to advise the government on matters of aesthetics and design, including the location and design of statues, memorials, and public buildings erected by the federal and District governments in the nation's capital. The President appoints seven members to serve a four-year term on the commission. CFA is authorized to approve sites and designs for new commemorative works and is represented on NCMAC.

The Complexity of Commemoration

Today's memorials—like those of the past—are usually sponsored by non-profits groups or motivated citizens organizations. Most projects are constructed with private funds. One striking departure from past projects is the growing complexity of memorial designs and programs. Although some recent memorials continue the tradition of a modest statue or marker situated in a green, a number of recent projects are site specific and include multiple commemorative elements in a landscape design. Complex memorial proposals generally require more funds and land. Because many are located in historically or culturally significant parklands, the process includes careful design review and public consultation.



World War II Memorial, dedicated 2004

The Challenges of Commemoration

A. Memorial Themes and Content

Washington's memorial process is consistent with the aspects of American political life. Congress authorizes each new memorial subject by separate law, usually in response to a request by a committed citizens group organized to honor an event or individual. Only Congress – not federal agencies – authorizes new memorials and memorial content.

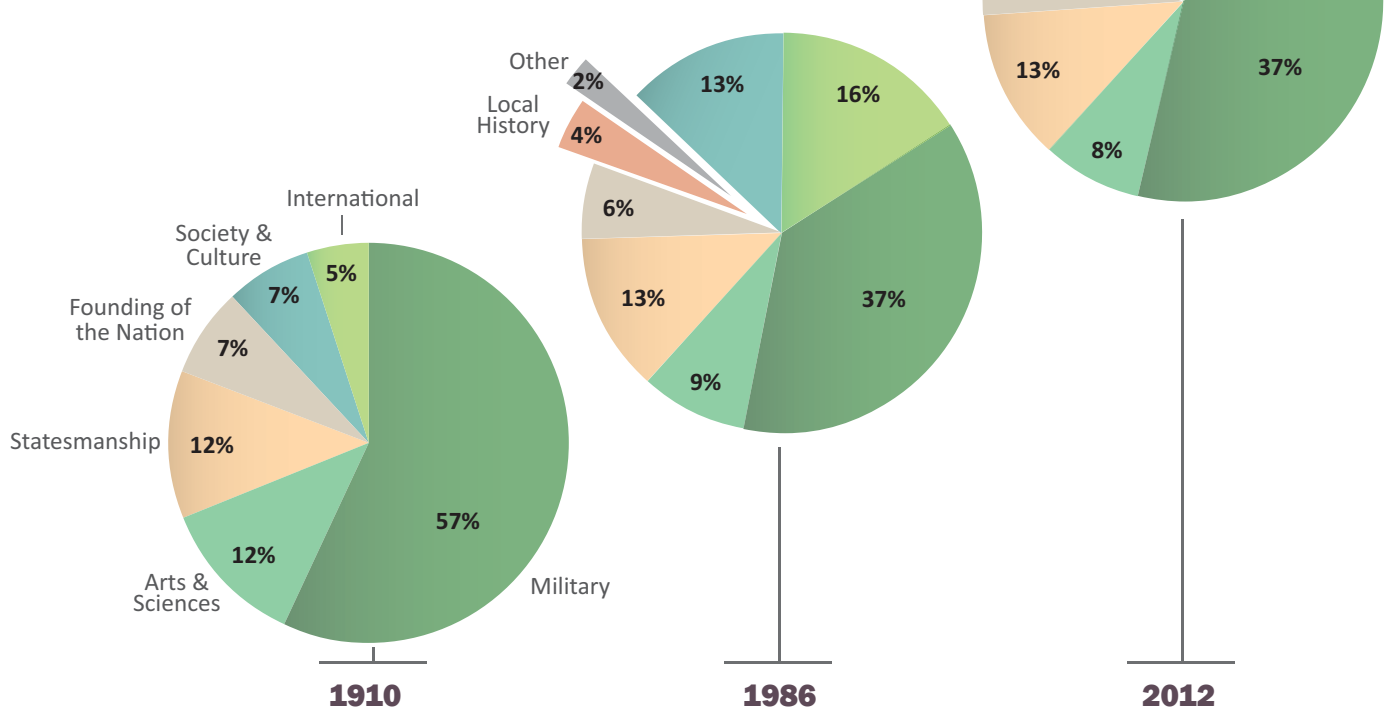
This project by project approach encourages pluralistic, “bottom up” initiatives, and each proposed subject is weighed individually for compliance with the provisions of the Commemorative Works Act. This process is much different from the way a librarian or a curator builds a collection or archive, which generally requires that each proposed work be reviewed both on its own merits and how well it complements or strengthens the existing collection. Also, new additions to the collection might be simultaneously weighed against other candidates prior to selection.

In practice, the CWA does not promote this “broader collections” perspective. For example, new proposals are not required by law to preclude subjects that are already reflected in the existing memorial landscape nor is there incentive to authorize memorials to new or under-represented subjects.

Memorial content can be explored from the finest grain to the broadest context. As a first step to better understanding Washington's existing memorial content, the research developed for this report took a snapshot of the broadest existing themes. Future work may include a much more detailed subject matter analysis. See Appendix B (online at www.npc.gov) for more information about the full catalog of memorials.

Figure 5. Memorials by Broadest Theme on NPS land in Washington, DC

The graphs below illustrate the composition of authorized and built memorials by theme through the three different development eras – prior to 1910, between 1910 and 1986, and since the passage of the CWA in 1986. In the earliest period, military themed memorials were more predominant. In later periods, an increasing number of memorials touched on themes related to society and culture as well as international issues.



Thematic Distribution of Memorials on NPS land

There are a 113 commemorative works on NPS land representing a range of themes. Overall, military works are reflected in nearly half of these memorials, more than twice the percentage of any other theme. However, its comparative share has diminished over time as shown in Figure 5. Thirty-six memorials, or nearly one third of the total, commemorate some aspect of the American Revolutionary or Civil Wars.

Although the narratives of an increasingly diverse set of Americans have been documented in historical scholarship and museum interpretation over the last 50 years, preliminary analysis of the research suggests some important gaps in our commemorative landscape. For example, of the 113 completed memorials under study, approximately 6% prominently feature women. Two American women have been individually commemorated on NPS land: Washington, DC activist Sarah Rittenhouse (dedicated in 1953) and educator and civil rights leader Mary McLeod Bethune (1960). Other examples include: a foreign gift, Joan of Arc (1922), Nuns of the Battlefield (1918), Women Who Served in Vietnam (1988), and Women in Military Service for America Memorial (1997). First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt is featured in the memorial to President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1997). Finally, a grove once known as Columbia Island was renamed in honor of Lady Bird Johnson and her campaign to beautify Washington D.C. The site, chosen by Mrs. Johnson, is a location where the Johnsons often stopped to admire the city.⁶

What We Learned From Other Capital Cities



A strategic planning tool for some capital cities is a catalog organized by subject matter or theme, similar to the one developed by NCPC (see Appendix B). For example, memorial information catalogued by agencies in Ottawa, Canada and Canberra, Australia helps them locate new works near related institutions and encourages clustering of commemorations with similar subject matter.

The catalog is also used to support those two capitals' prohibitions on new projects that duplicate themes of existing works. Ottawa's analysis revealed that a majority of commemorative works fell into only two categories – political life and security/peace. Memorial planners then sought to “ensure a more balanced representation” by identifying and encouraging several under-represented themes by using this as one factor in assessing the national symbolic importance of proposed projects. Overall, these catalogs can be useful ways to reveal trends and make data about both historical works and works in progress more publicly accessible.



National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II, 2000

⁶ The sponsor of the National Adams Family Memorial, authorized in 2001 but not yet built, intends to honor Abigail Adams and Louise Adams along with their respective husbands Presidents John Adams and John Quincy Adams.

Ideas for Future Directions

Congress established the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission to provide guidance regarding a proposed memorial's purpose and its significance in American history and culture in a public forum. Recommendations in this report focus on improvements that NCMAC may make to ensure that the agencies are providing the best possible input to new proposals and inviting the public to comment on those proposals. Under the CWA, only Congress – not federal agencies – may authorize new memorials or may directly address questions of under-representation in Washington's memorial landscape.

- ◆ ***Where appropriate, invite a historian or historians to provide comments to NCMAC regarding the historical significance of proposed commemorative works.*** The National Historic Landmark designation program utilizes a panel of historians to help evaluate new entries to the program and to ensure that each project meets a threshold of significance.⁷ Each new memorial merits a high level of scrutiny because of its symbolic significance, lasting place within the capital's iconic landscape, and the limited federal open space in Washington. NCMAC follows the guidelines of the Federal Advisory Committee Act which provides that the Chairman of NCMAC may convene a subcommittee of subject matter experts to advise NCMAC on any matter under its jurisdiction. NCMAC could avail itself of this opportunity to research or address the question of "significance" for the subject or theme of each commemorative work, and to advise also on Area I considerations when NCMAC considers findings and recommendations of proposals to be located in that precinct relating to the project's "lasting historic significance" and "pre-eminent and lasting historic significance."

To supplement the analysis, sponsors may be required to complete a study demonstrating their subject's national significance and submit it for consideration by lawmakers. This process could be modeled on existing procedures required for additions to the National Park system, in which NPS picks an independent panel of experts to assess whether or not the site merits inclusion in the system.

- ◆ ***Develop formal theme studies of existing and potential memorials.*** The memorial catalog developed for this report is the first step of a more rigorous thematic analysis. The National Historic Landmarks nominations process uses "theme studies," which help determine which stories or themes are already well represented among landmarks and where additions might be needed. Though in practice under CWA the government responds to proposals brought forward by citizens rather than dictating memorial subjects, a theme study might be a useful resource for review agencies and lawmakers when asked to support proposed legislation.
- ◆ ***Improve public engagement regarding memorial subjects.*** The American public is interested in the content of national memorials. NCMAC should provide the public forum where citizens can provide their views on new memorials. It should develop a web site and expand its outreach.

7) For more information, see <http://www.nps.gov/history/nhl/tutorial/Workshop9/presenting2.htm> and <http://www.nps.gov/nhl/ADVBRD.htm>

B. Memorial Location

Memorials are often built within some of Washington's most historically significant settings, and the agencies carefully consider sites for new memorials that meet the sponsor's goals as well as planning and design considerations. Thus, the site selection process is rigorous, requiring consultations and approvals, as well as environmental and historic preservation compliance. It also requires the active involvement of several agencies and organizations, including NCMAC, CFA, and NCPC. The agencies and memorial sponsors generally consider several criteria when evaluating potential locations for new memorials:

- ◆ **Nexus.** The CWA states that “to the maximum extent possible, a commemorative work shall be located in surroundings that are relevant to the subject of the work.”
- ◆ **Encroachment.** The CWA states that new memorials cannot encroach upon an existing memorial.
- ◆ **Planning, Historic Preservation, and Design Issues.** Depending on the scale, location, and project type, a range of planning and design issues will be considered during review. These include impacts to open space, historic views, and other infrastructure, and how well the project meets the surrounding community's goals.

A short guide prepared by the NPS called “24 Steps to Establishing a Memorial” explains the process, including site selection. Research and public comments suggest a more descriptive manual that includes the responsibilities and interests of the agencies involved in the process would help sponsors anticipate the key issues that will be explored during site selection and design.

In addition to project-specific review work, NCPC and its agency partners develop studies designed to support site selection. One of the central themes of NCPC's work has been to protect the National Mall from overbuilding, which may diminish the distinctive openness of this symbolic place. In response to concerns to protect the Mall's unique urban design character and its existing memorial landscape, NCPC in coordination with CFA and NPS developed the *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* in 2001.

The *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* achieved two important goals. First, it identified a Reserve area where no new memorials may be built. Congress codified the Reserve, (See graphic, page 5) which includes the great cross-axis of the Mall, in the 2003 Commemorative Works Clarification

and Revision Act. NCPC strongly supports the Reserve, which maintains the Mall's open spaces and existing memorial landscapes that are admired and enjoyed by Americans today.

The Master Plan also identified 100 potential sites for future memorials and museums throughout Washington. This strategy protects the Mall, helps sponsors visualize opportunities for their projects, and introduces cultural destinations to neighborhoods in all four quadrants of the city. The master plan helped successfully guide six projects to superb locations outside of the Reserve, including memorials honoring President Eisenhower, the U.S. Air Force, Czechoslovakian President Tomas Masaryk, the Victims of Communism, Victims of the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide of 1932-1933, and American Veterans Disabled for Life.

Although the master plan has had success, there is a long way to go towards introducing memorials to all quadrants of the city. Figure 1 shows the spatial concentration of the memorials on NPS land in the four quadrants of Washington, DC. The majority of the memorials—77 percent—are in the Northwest quadrant. 18 percent of the memorials are located in Southwest Washington (most around the Monumental Core), and the remaining 5 percent of memorials are in the Northeast and Southeast quadrants combined.

Nexus

The CWA states that “to the maximum extent possible, a commemorative work shall be located in surroundings that are relevant to the subject of the work.” Although linking the subject of a memorial to its surroundings can reinforce and strengthen the meaning of a memorial, in practice the process of establishing nexus is challenging. What characteristics should be considered when determining whether a proposed memorial has a subject that is relevant to a particular site? Possibilities include the history, use, and significance of a site, or historic buildings, parks, or other memorials located nearby.

A strong documented relationship between subject and site should be an important influence during site selection consultation. However, there are other considerations that are also important – including whether the memorial program and scale fit the location. Sponsors and review agencies should consider all these issues when evaluating sites to ensure that a proposed memorial can meet sponsors' goals while also fitting into the context of Washington's unique urban landscape.

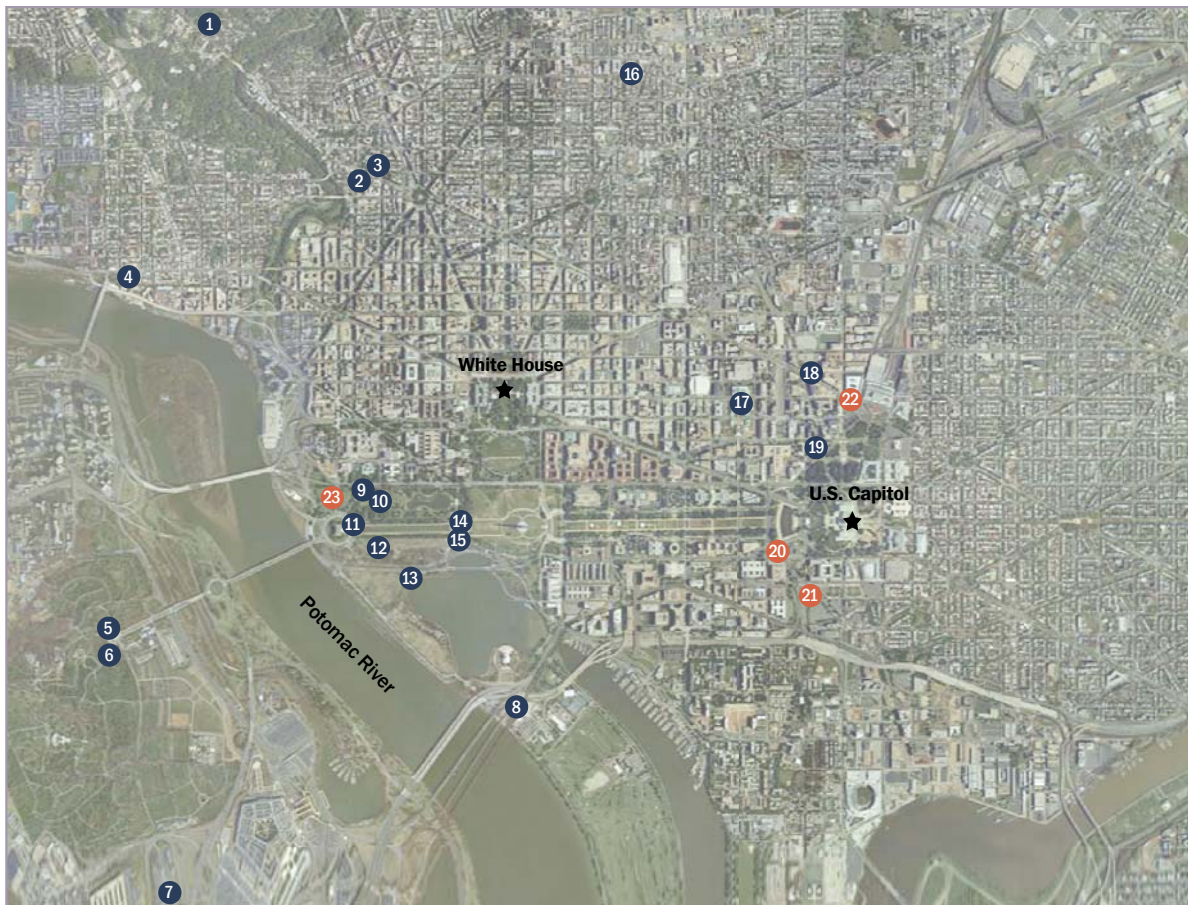


Figure 6.

Most Recent Commemorative Works Authorized by Public Law (most constructed under CWA, see liner notes below)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Kahlil Gibran Memorial (1) | 11. "I Have a Dream" Plaque at Lincoln Memorial (3) |
| 2. Tomas Masaryk Memorial | 12. Korean War Veterans Memorial |
| 3. Mahatma Gandhi Memorial | 13. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial |
| 4. Francis Scott Key Memorial | 14. National World War II Memorial |
| 5. Memorial to Women in Military Service for America | 15. "Senator Robert Dole" Plaque at the World War II Memorial (3) |
| 6. American Armored Forces Memorial | 16. Memorial to African Americans in Union Forces (2) |
| 7. U.S. Air Force Memorial (2) | 17. National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial (1) (2) |
| 8. George Mason Memorial | 18. Memorial to Victims of Communism |
| 9. "In Memory" Plaque at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (3) | 19. Memorial to Japanese American Patriotism in World War II |
| 10. Memorial to Honor Women who Served in Vietnam | |

Commemorative Works Authorized by Public Law not yet constructed (as of 2012)

- 20. President Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial
- 21. Memorial to American Veterans Disabled for Life
- 22. Victims of the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide of 1932-1933
- 23. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitor Center (3) (4)
- 24. General Francis Marion Memorial (site is not selected)
- 25. President John Adams Memorial (site is not selected)

(1) 1984 authorities which predate CWA but contain review and sunset provisions similar to CWA.
 (2) Not authorized on parkland.
 (3) Located in Area I by exemption to CWA.
 (4) Not a memorial but required to conform to provisions of CWA.

Sponsors should consider a range of locations during site consultation. The following questions exemplify the kinds of issues sponsors should consider during site consultation, depending on the project's complexity and scale.

Geographic Context:

- ◆ What are the physical attributes of each location?
- ◆ Does the physical geography influence the design and planning?
- ◆ What is the surrounding context of each site under consideration? (Neighborhood setting, business district, etc.)
- ◆ Is there a connection between the memorial's subject and each location under consideration?
- ◆ What is the site's historic significance?

Theme:

- ◆ To what national historical time period was the commemorative event or person related—is there an associated National Register area of significance?
- ◆ What themes are associated with these areas of significance?
- ◆ How are these themes visible within the landscape and current site design features of the locations under consideration?

Ideas for Future Directions

◆ *Publish a Memorial Process Manual.*

This manual will provide detailed information about the memorial process, including the areas of interest and submission requirements for participating agencies. The manual should be designed to help memorial sponsors anticipate the range of planning and design issues that may be considered during project review. The guide should also inform the site studies and the environmental documentation required during site consultation and approval.

◆ *Update the Memorials and Museums Master Plan.*

The *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* should be updated periodically to reflect current planning guidance as found in the *Monumental Core Framework Plan* and other efforts, and to remove candidate sites as they become occupied. More detailed guidance regarding potential planning and design considerations may be appropriate for selected sites.

The memorial to Czechoslovakian founding father Tomas G. Masaryk, located near Dupont Circle, demonstrates the positive visual and thematic contributions an international gift can make to a diplomatic district. The work complements and gains resonance from the surrounding foreign missions and the nearby Mahatma Gandhi Memorial erected by the government of India. It also contributes to a corridor of statues and international institutions that have developed along Massachusetts Avenue, NW.



Tomas G. Masaryk Memorial



Mahatma Gandhi Memorial

What We Learned From Other Capital Cities



Each capital city developed policies to address the challenges inherent in accepting foreign gifts or establishing memorials to international subjects. Ottawa, Canberra, and London each take an active role in ensuring that foreign memorial subjects demonstrate a strong historical tie to the host country and/or the specific memorial location. Canberra, Australia has developed strategies regarding the potential of foreign gifts to enhance the national capital; in some cases it has worked with embassies to develop commemorative gifts that fulfill an identified infrastructure need, such as a dance square proposed by several Latin American countries.



C. International Gifts and Subjects

As a global diplomatic center, Washington, DC hosts the diplomatic missions of more than 180 countries (out of the world's 191). This diplomatic presence lends unique prestige and vibrant character to the capital city. Washington has a long history of accepting memorial gifts from other countries that honor foreign distinguished persons and significant events.

Some international gifts—though not all—are sited and designed as commemorative works. A subject matter nexus between memorial and site is not always clear in the case of a foreign gift. An area for further study is the feasibility of developing a zone or zones dedicated to honoring distinguished subjects with an international theme. Defining what federal land is most suitable for international commemoration purposes, and establishing provisions applicable to memorial gifts from foreign governments, would provide guidance where none presently exists.

Ideas for Future Directions

- ◆ ***Develop siting guidance for international gifts in an update to the Memorials and Museums Master Plan and/or the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.***

Although sponsors of international gifts may consider any site under the jurisdiction of the CWA by law, sponsors should be encouraged to actively consider locations in and around related embassies and cultural institutions, where a clear subject matter nexus exists. The agencies may also explore identifying a single site or several locations that would be appropriate for foreign gifts and subject matter.

In addition, visually or culturally prominent sites, including the Prime Sites of the *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* and sites along Pennsylvania Avenue, should be reserved for significant memorials of American history and culture.

- ◆ ***Identify opportunities other than permanent commemoration for sponsors of international gifts to explore subjects of interest.*** These include commemorative coins, exhibits for lobbies or cultural facilities, and events or temporary commemorative programs.

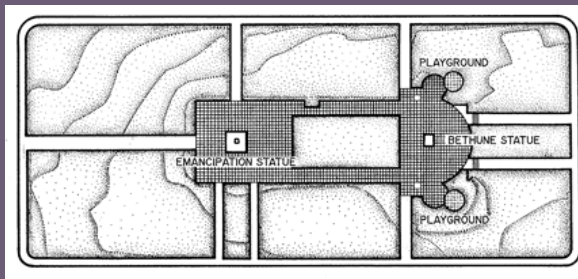
D. Balancing Memorial and Park Uses

Washington's historic federal parks—from the National Mall to the Fort Circle Parks—are a unique collection of urban, neighborhood, and monumental spaces. Unlike a cemetery or national historic site designed to function primarily as a commemorative or interpretive setting, Washington's parks serve many dynamic uses such as demonstration, celebration, education, and recreation. Indeed, Congress introduced the CWA in part to strike a balance between commemoration on public lands throughout the District of Columbia and the various activities enjoyed by residents and tourists.⁸

The CWA requires new projects throughout the capital to avoid, to the extent possible, encroaching on open space, existing public uses, and cultural and natural resources. In addition to retaining space for a diversity of uses, all of Washington's parks should retain an ambiance conducive to enjoying our existing memorials and room for the memorials of future generations.

Size and Scope of Commemorative Projects

Several highly publicized and admired projects inspired a “new paradigm” of memorial design, in which landscape and hardscape encompassing much of the site work together to convey the commemorative message. In contrast to some of the more intimate and multi-functional memorial sites of decades past, many sponsors now consider large and elaborately landscaped settings to be the most appropriate way to commemorate their subject. Works of this nature may involve multiple acres of land. These sizable projects require extensive fundraising campaigns (which can result in the need to seek reauthorization due to passage of time) and maintenance costs.



Lincoln Park 1974 Reconstruction Plan

Lincoln Park is one mile east of the U.S. Capitol within the National Register's Capitol Hill Historic District. Today this historic park functions on many levels, including commemoration, recreation, and passive activities. It includes two small memorials, two small playground areas, a large panel, and seating.

Increased Interest in Visitor Amenities and Interpretive Programs

In recent years, some larger memorial projects have included bookstores, restrooms and other visitor amenities. While these elements can support the visitor experience, they also require more land and must be integrated in a manner that is not visually or functionally obtrusive to the commemorative work itself. Furthermore, the 2003 amendments to the CWA prohibited visitor centers in the Reserve. An alternative strategy to providing visitor amenities on the site of a memorial is to locate such facilities in existing nearby buildings. The Navy Memorial is an excellent example of an urban commemorative project that includes a heritage center located in a building adjacent to the memorial. This center provides an opportunity to learn more through exhibits and programming, while ensuring that the commemorative elements can be the focus of the visitor experience. Where there are several commemorative works or visitor destinations, such as the National Mall, current plans encourage consolidated visitor amenities that can serve multiple locations.

An interesting area for further study would be learning from the many museums and historic sites that employ new media in their interpretive strategies. Tools such as online museums, audio tours, digital kiosks and smart phone applications could allow sponsors to enrich and modify their narratives without expanding their impact on the built environment.

Ideas for Future Directions

- ◆ ***Update the Memorials and Museums Master Plan and the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital to provide guidance on the CWA restrictions regarding bookstores, visitor, or education centers.***
Policies should promote the intent of the CWA and direct sponsors to utilize surrounding amenities when considering ancillary features.
- ◆ ***Develop an online tool kit that showcases alternatives to permanent interpretive exhibits.***
The tool kit should provide examples of new media, web-based, or other electronic interpretive opportunities.

8) See CRS Report *Commemorative Works in the District of Columbia: Background and Practice*, February 25, 2011, pp. 7-8. According to the CRS Report, on March 11, 1986, Rep. William Hughes introduced H.R. 4378 “a bill to govern the establishment of commemorative works within the National Capital Region of the National Park System.” The committee’s report indicated that legislation was necessary because of the “numerous groups” seeking to place additional commemorative works in the District of Columbia and the need to strike a balance between different uses of park land. The report also indicated that “[b]alance needs to be achieved between commemorative works on National Park land and the myriad of activities that occur there.”

What We Learned From Other Capital Cities



Each national capital reported intense pressure to develop memorials in its most highly symbolic spaces. Like Washington, DC, London has passed a moratorium on new projects in its most prominent locations and Canberra and Ottawa have also taken measures to promote locations outside their traditional core areas. Ottawa has the most formal procedures for matching subject to site, with a three-tier hierarchy of available sites with specific parameters outlined for the scale and scope of memorials in each category.

In addition, some national and state capitals have developed interesting opportunities for commemoration that go beyond the typical statue. These alternative strategies may allow sponsors a more expedient and affordable method of commemoration and can also support place-making and other community planning goals. In London, for example, sponsors are encouraged to consider honoring their subjects through trees, gardens and even non-physical options such as events or memorial endowments.

Both London, United Kingdom and St. Paul, Minnesota, offer an option of small plaques in designated honorary zones. As part of its policy on commemoration, Salt Lake City, Utah has developed a list of public assets, such as parks and recreational amenities, which may be named after subjects or events considered appropriate.



Beyond Granite: Exploring Alternative Forms of Commemoration

In a city well known for grand works of stone and mortar honoring subjects long past, the AIDS Memorial Quilt is a stunning reminder of alternative but equally powerful approaches to remembrance.

The AIDS Memorial Quilt is a dynamic memorial, sewn by hand and designed to incorporate the many voices affected by HIV/AIDS. In addition to challenging notions of the types of materials used in commemorative display, the Quilt also expands the understanding of how people experience memorials. The Quilt has been displayed in over 25,000 different locations around the world. Combined with a strong online component, the Quilt's ability to travel enables visitors to access it in a way that is distinct from traditional permanent artworks.



The United States Navy Memorial (dedicated in 1987) is a model of a commemorative work that does not stand apart from its urban context. Designed to be a "living park," the site is heavily used and flexible, providing a venue for formal ceremony, social engagement, and simple relaxation.

One memorial sponsor, the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, scaled back its original plans for a museum in favor of a modest statue and a complementary virtual online museum available through the internet and mobile technology.



Looking Ahead

The National Capital Planning Commission prepared this report as part of its mission as the central planning agency for the federal government in the National Capital Region. Staff developed this study in cooperation with the National Park Service and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts. These agencies work together to protect and enhance the extraordinary historic, natural, and symbolic resources – including commemorative works – of the nation’s capital.

This report is designed to support an ongoing dialog with the public about Washington’s commemorative works. Memorials contribute to the civic life of the nation, honor important topics of American history, and function as a central design element in the form of the nation’s capital. Millions of Americans visit Washington’s memorials each year. As part of NCPC’s commitment to an open government, it is dedicated to providing research and information to the public about all aspects of the planning process in the nation’s capital, including commemorative works.

Moving forward, NCPC will incorporate report recommendations into the Federal Elements of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital* and will continue to collaborate with other agencies involved in the memorial process to further explore identification, siting, and design of future memorial projects.

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