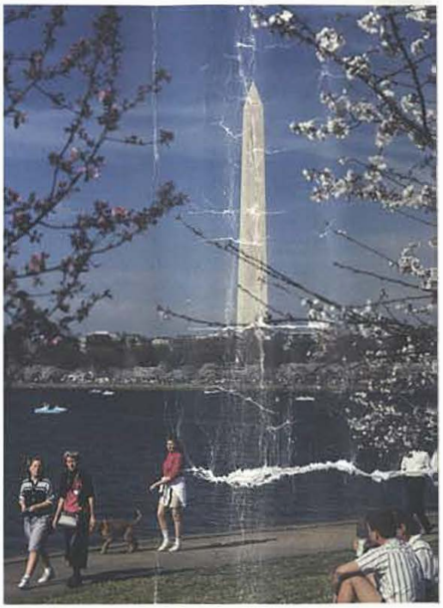
Extending the Legacy

Planning America's Capital for the 21st Century





BOARD OF COMMISSION
CASE NO. 96-3
EXHIBIT NO. 40-A

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Appointed by the
President of the United States

Harvey B. Gantt
Chairman

Robert A. Gaines

Margaret G. Vanderhye

Appointed by the
Mayor of the District of Columbia

Arrington L. Dixon

Dr. Patricia Elwood

Secretary of Defense
Honorable William J. Perry

Secretary of the Interior
Honorable Bruce Babbitt

Administrator of General Services
Honorable Roger W. Johnson

Chairman, Committee on
Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Honorable William V. Roth, Jr.

Chairman, Committee on
Government Reform and Oversight
U.S. House of Representatives
Honorable William F. Clinger

Mayor, District of Columbia
Honorable Marion S. Barry, Jr.

Chairman, Council of the
District of Columbia
Honorable David A. Clarke

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Reginald W. Griffith

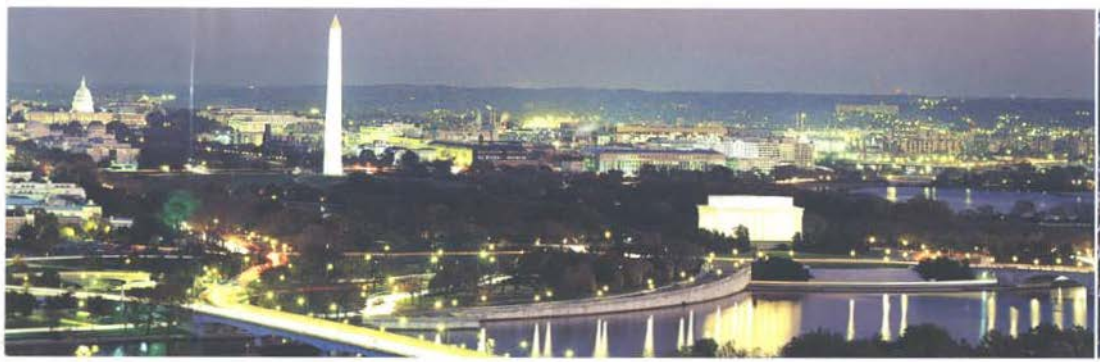
Printed on recycled paper



Extending the Legacy

Planning America's Capital for the 21st Century

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION







The Monumental Core is the hub of Washington and the symbolic heart of the Nation.

This is a draft of the new plan for Washington's Monumental Core, showing what the Mall and surrounding areas could look like in 50 to 100 years. It was prepared by the National Capital Planning Commission, the central planning agency of the federal government in Washington, in collaboration with local governments, federal agencies, community groups and a team of renowned planners and architects. This draft provides an overview of the planning concepts. Two other reports contain detailed information about the history of the plan, design alternatives and practical short-term initiatives. We invite you to comment on this draft plan using the response card in the back.

Washington has been described as "a city of magnificent distances," and few who have seen it would disagree. As much as its grand buildings, what impresses everyone is the city's remarkable openness. Its broad avenues and expansive public spaces are reminders of America's democratic values, symbolizing a government that is accessible to its people and a nation with room to grow.

Now imagine the heart of Washington so jammed with tourists that visiting the Capitol, the White House, the Lincoln Memorial and other landmarks that make up the Monumental Core becomes a numbing ordeal. Imagine a city immobilized by cars and trucks, where precious open space is routinely consumed by helter-skelter development. A city sharply divided between a federal precinct for visitors and government workers, and commercial and residential districts for everyone else. These are not alarmist fantasies but a plausible preview of things to come, unless Washington adopts a long-range plan for its Monumental Core.

Such a plan has been prepared by the National Capital Planning Commission. It addresses Washington's future planning challenges with bold proposals for transportation, community revitalization, public buildings and open space, including 11 miles of public waterfront from Georgetown to the National Arboretum.

The broad objective of this new plan is to preserve and enhance Washington's Monumental Core, which extends from the steps of the Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial and Arlington Cemetery, and from the White House to the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers. First envisioned by Pierre L'Enfant, who designed the city in 1791 under George Washington's direction, then refined and amplified by the McMillan Commission in 1901, this is the Washington of postcards and movies and the evening news, the Washington that everyone comes to see.

Over 20 million people visit the Nation's Capital each year, a figure that could more than double by the middle of the next century. Most of them flock to the museums and memorials around the Mall. Yet now that the last Mall site has been committed, locations for a dozen new



The Monumental Core, the heart of our Nation's Capital, could be loved to death without careful planning.



Freeways and overpasses have fractured the Core and severed it from the rest of the city.

museums and as many as 60 new monuments and memorials must be found elsewhere in the city. The plan shows how this can be accomplished.

Even with calls for leaner government, some new buildings, including perhaps a new home for the Supreme Court, will be needed in the coming decades. With a farsighted plan, these buildings can be placed where they will energize the economy and reinforce Washington's historic grandeur, instead of being dropped onto whatever site becomes available.



Railroad tracks slice through the heart of the Monumental Core.

The highway programs of the 1950s and 1960s created a moat around much of central Washington. Freeways have fractured neighborhoods and severed the city from its rivers, while a web of tunnels, bridges and railroad tracks has turned its once-orderly geometry into a daunting maze. Undesirable in any city, such disruptions are intolerable in the Nation's Capital. The new plan calls for removing obsolete freeways, railroads and other barriers that have isolated large parts of the city.



The Monumental Core is the symbolic heart of the Nation and the physical expression of our Constitution with its three separate branches of government. It is also our national gathering place, where citizens go to observe government in action and to appreciate the Nation's cultural and scientific achievements. And it is the economic center of Washington, where hundreds of thousands of people work and live. For all these reasons, protecting and enhancing the Monumental Core is a national responsibility.

Yet this plan does more than preserve what is traditional and familiar. It redefines the Core by creating opportunities for new parks, offices, housing and transit centers in all quadrants of the city, including North, South and East Capitol Streets and Anacostia. It reclaims and reconnects the city's historic waterfront.

This nation has the resources and the imagination to create a more efficient and beautiful capital and to strengthen its position as one of the world's great cities. The Monumental Core Plan can be a key instrument of this transformation.

A FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE

The Monumental Core Plan represents the third act in a heroic planning drama that began over 200 years ago, when George Washington commissioned Pierre L'Enfant to lay out the new capital. Like the L'Enfant and McMillan plans, it looks ahead 50 to 100 years. And like them it offers a framework for future development.

A framework is not a blueprint that renders the future in precise and immutable detail. It is more like a map with a few dramatic highlights, corresponding to the best locations for museums, parks, bridges, transit stations and other public assets. It is both a guide to the big picture and a defense against the myopic quick fix.

This critical distinction was explained nearly a century ago by President Theodore Roosevelt: "What I have said does not mean that we shall go, here in Washington for instance, into immediate and extravagant expenditures on public buildings. All that it means is that whenever hereafter a public building is provided for and erected, it should be erected in accordance with a carefully thought-out plan adopted long before, and that it should be not only beautiful in itself, but fitting in its relation to the whole scheme of public buildings, the parks and the drives of the District."

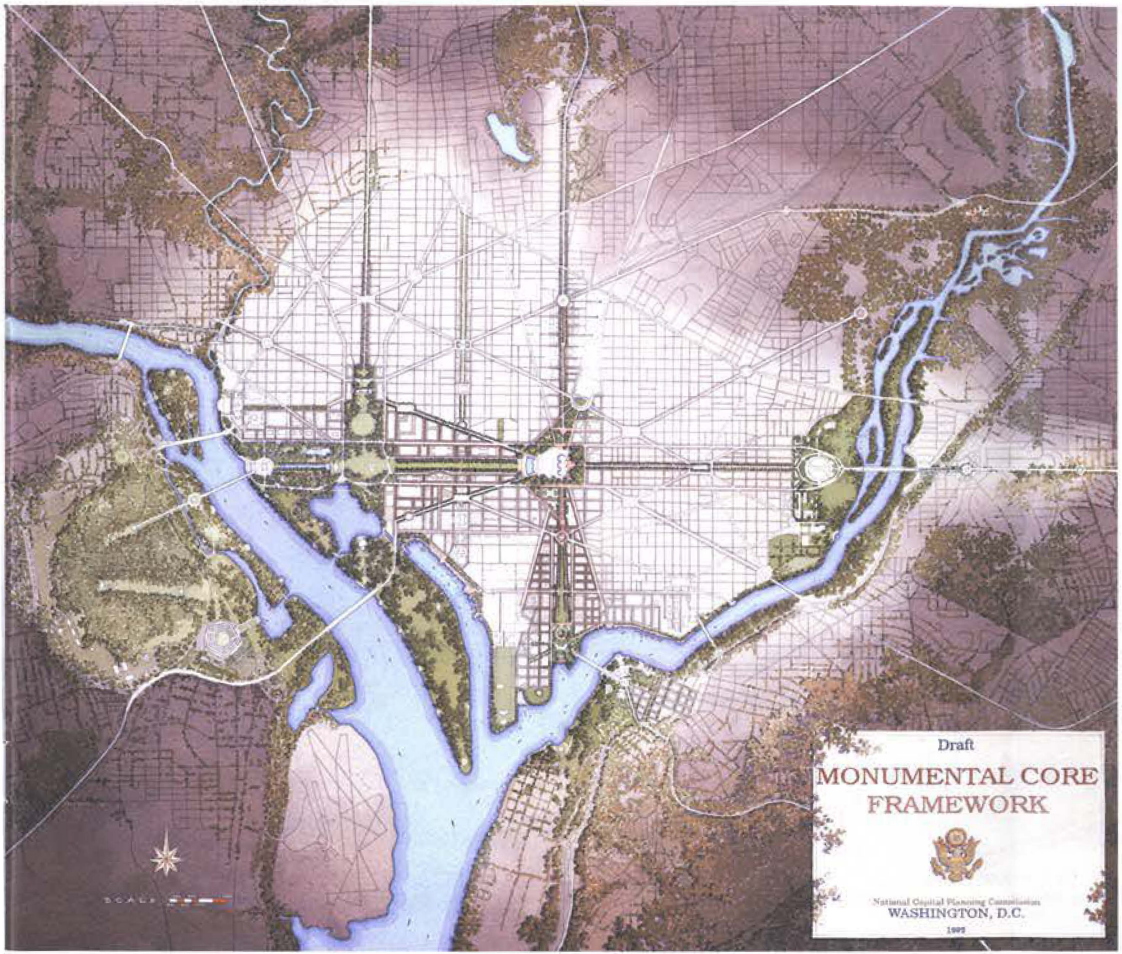
THE MONUMENTAL CORE PLAN RESTS ON FIVE KEY IDEAS:

1. Building on the legacy of the historic L'Enfant and McMillan plans, which are the foundation of modern Washington.
2. Unifying the city and the Core, with the Capitol as the center.
3. Using new memorials, museums and other public buildings to stimulate economic development.
4. Integrating the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers into the city's public life, and protecting the Mall and its historic landscape from future building.
5. Developing a comprehensive, flexible and convenient transportation system that eliminates barriers and eases movement within the city.



The L'Enfant Plan of 1791 laid the foundation for modern Washington.

The new Monumental Core framework extends the legacy of L'Enfant and McMillan into the 21st century.


Draft
MONUMENTAL CORE
FRAMEWORK
National Capital Planning Commission
WASHINGTON, D.C.
1997

BUILDING ON THE PAST

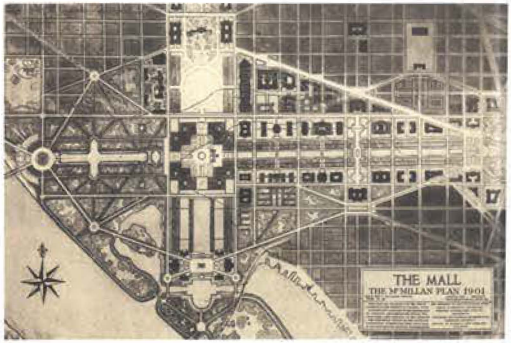
Washington's dramatic openness is the legacy of Pierre L'Enfant, the French engineer who with Benjamin Banneker laid out the city in 1791. L'Enfant designed a city of broad avenues and imposing public spaces that radiate outward from the "President's House" and the "Congress House" like spokes on a wheel. But he also knew that grandeur is never enough. Where his sweeping boulevards intersected the grid of local streets, he proposed monuments and statues that symbolized the joining of federal and state interests. He also recommended that settlements be distributed throughout the city and had no problem mixing big and little, grand and ordinary.

The Monumental Core Plan expands this legacy by distributing federal investment to all quadrants of the city. It also increases public access to the waterfront, a key feature of L'Enfant's plan, by creating a new network of parks, plazas, trails, marinas and other attractions that enrich urban life.

By removing the Southeast/Southwest Freeway near the Mall and relocating the railroad tracks from Maryland and Virginia Avenues, the plan encourages the restoration of major L'Enfant thoroughfares, including Maryland, Virginia and Delaware Avenues and South Capitol Street.

The L'Enfant Plan laid the foundation of modern Washington. Yet in the decades that followed its adoption, many of its bold ideas were ignored or subverted. The new Treasury Building blocked the view of the White House from Capitol Hill. Railroad tracks sliced across the Mall near the present National Gallery of Art. The Mall itself became a hodgepodge of informal gardens and walkways that blocked the path from the Capitol to the Washington Monument.

The McMillan Plan of 1901 corrected many of these problems. It created the Mall as we know it today, as well as the monumental Memorial Bridge to the West. This crossing was symbolic as well as physical, uniting Washington and Virginia, North and South, to mark the end of the Civil War. By reclaiming the Anacostia River and reconnecting it to the heart of the city, the Monumental Core Plan will build on the McMillan Plan's example.



The McMillan Plan of 1901 created the Mall as we know it today.



Washington's largely inaccessible waterfront could come alive with cafés, parks and boating.

UNIFYING THE CITY AND THE MONUMENTAL CORE

Unifying the city and the Monumental Core will begin by developing North and South Capitol Streets as civic gateways and making East Capitol Street a key link between the Monumental Core and the Anacostia River.

Untangled from its maze of freeways and railroad tracks, South Capitol Street will serve as a southern gateway, at the scale of Pennsylvania Avenue, with a lively mix of shopping, housing and offices. If the Supreme Court decides to move, it should be located on South Capitol Street at the river. This would be consistent with the Architect of the Capitol's recommendation that a special site for the Supreme Court be found in the Monumental Core that symbolizes the separation of the three branches of government. A riverside location for the Supreme Court would also be a magnet for visitors and a catalyst for museums, offices, housing and cultural events. The evolving Southeast Federal Center and renovated Navy Yard, with 30,000 employees, should reinforce this surge of activity.

South Capitol Street's urban energy will flow across the Anacostia to Poplar Point. In addition to museums and restaurants along the water's edge, this underused federal land will be developed with parks, housing, shops and offices. These activities will complement the historic scale of the Old Anacostia neighborhood, which can be reconnected to its waterfront once the Anacostia Freeway is depressed.



South Capitol Street today is cut off and isolated.



The Capitol dome is a stunning backdrop for night life on the new South Capitol Street.



With the expressway removed, South Capitol Street can become another Pennsylvania Avenue with an enticing mix of shops, housing and museums.

This dramatic site where South Capitol Street meets the water is ideal for a major civic building, such as the Supreme Court.



North Capitol Street will become a tree-lined boulevard of museums, residences and offices, with the Capitol as its dramatic focal point. Special landscaping will enhance the street's character and make it a memorable introduction to the Monumental Core.

East Capitol Street will connect the Monumental Core to the Anacostia River. While the existing neighborhood of quiet streets and historic row houses will remain intact, the riverfront will be transformed into a lively civic playground with festivals, concerts, marinas and hike-and-bike trails. The area now occupied by Robert E Kennedy (RFK) Stadium and its surrounding parking lots will become a new eastern gateway, featuring museums, memorials, parks and educational centers extending to the riverfront. Larger institutions will be concentrated to the south, near the present jail and hospital, while smaller cultural and commercial buildings will be woven into the existing fabric of neighborhoods to the north. A new recreation and entertainment complex will complete the transformation of this area. In addition to track, soccer, swimming, baseball and football, this new facility will host major concerts and cultural events.



A revitalized North Capitol Street can become a lively urban boulevard combining public and private development.



North Capitol Street today is a river of cars and concrete.

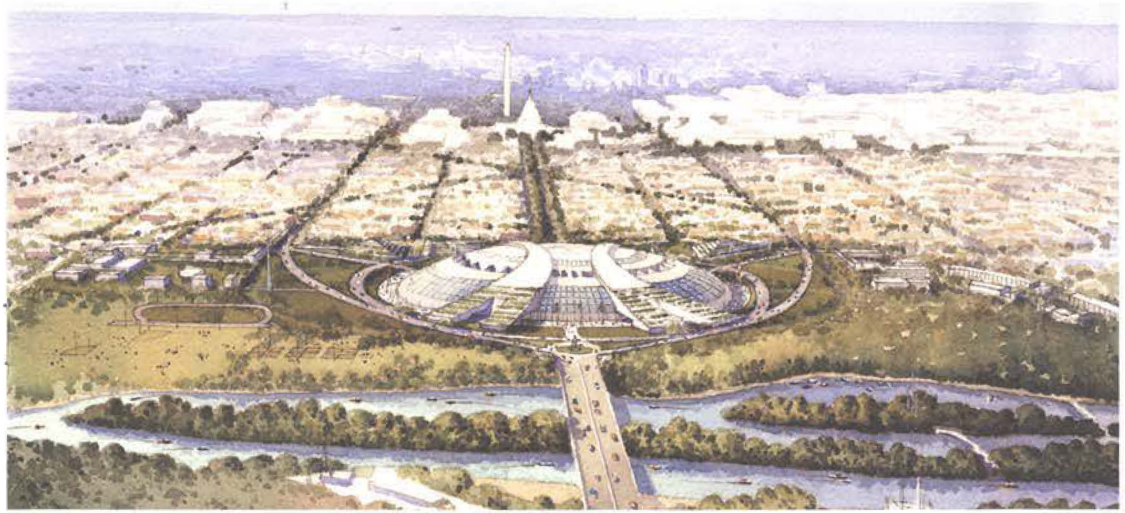




The edge of East Capitol Street today with precious riverfront consumed by parking lots.

The new plan will preserve the residential character of East Capitol Street.

The Anacostia waterfront could become a dramatic center for recreation, entertainment and learning.



















1. Create a lively corridor along North Capitol Street, mixing federal and private development.

2. Improve access to Anacostia Waterfront.

3. Replace unsightly cluster of bridges with a single, beautiful span.

4. Bring the waterfront into the life of the city.

5. Knit the city back together by removing the Southeast/ Southwest Freeway and nearby railroad tracks.

6. Reinforce the connection between the Capitol and the Anacostia River by beautifying East Capitol Street.

7. Improve recreational opportunities by linking waterfront areas from the National Arboretum to Georgetown.

8. Create an economically vital South Capitol Street, mixing parks, museums, offices and residences.

AMERICA'S CAPITAL IN THE 21ST CENTURY


1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

With the opening of the National Museum of the American Indian in 2001, the McMillan Plan for the Mall will be essentially complete. Yet if the Monumental Core is to be a national gathering place, and at the same time preserve its historic landscape, appropriate sites for new museums and some 60 new memorials and monuments must be found. With the Mall full, the focus must shift to avenues, waterfronts and neighborhoods, many of which are eager for investment and for some sign from government that they are part of the Nation's Capital.

Museums and memorials will be prominent features of the redesigned North and South Capitol Streets, attracting visitors who might not go there otherwise. They will likely spark investment in shops, restaurants and hotels and become sources of community pride and identity.

East Potomac Park, which extends south from the Jefferson Memorial, is an ideal site for smaller memorials. With its open space preserved, it can become a significant ceremonial and recreation space for the capital.

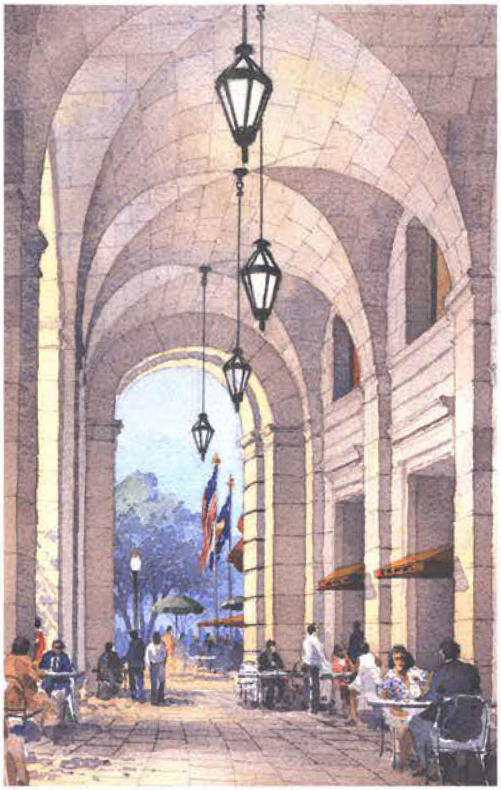
The District and federal governments foresee the 8th Street corridor, from the National Archives north to Mt. Vernon Square, as the heart of the Downtown Arts District. New museums, galleries and theaters would complement the National Portrait Gallery and the National Museum of American Art and broaden the cultural spectrum of downtown Washington.



Eighth Street, part of the Downtown Arts District, will attract galleries, shops and cafés.



Monuments and memorials are enduring attractions for all generations.



Cafés, exhibits and quiet walkways that enrich city life can be incorporated into existing and future federal buildings.

Computers, faxes and fiber optics are revolutionizing the American workplace by allowing more people to work at home and by shrinking the demand for conventional four-walls-and-a-desk office space.

Yet even if the federal government grows smaller, new buildings may still be required for some of its special needs. Changes in the workplace will present an opportunity for a new kind of government building, with a public life and an invigorating street and neighborhood presence.

The Monumental Core Plan therefore recommends that these new buildings be incorporated into mixed-use districts that support a range of public activities, including shopping, dining and entertainment. North and South Capitol Streets will offer many such opportunities, as will proposed developments at Poplar Point and other locations along the waterfront.

Improvements can also be made to existing buildings. The cluster of chilly monoliths known as the Federal Triangle might be animated by first-floor shops, exhibits and other attractions for employees and visitors. Opening the interior courtyards of these buildings would create a Federal Walk from 9th to 15th Streets, connecting the Old Post Office to the new Federal Triangle Office Building and the Ellipse. This network of interior pedestrian streets would complement the city's grand avenues.

WATERFRONTS AND OPEN SPACE

Open space is one of the most memorable features of Washington. "Nature has done much for it," L'Enfant said of the city's rivers and hills, "and with the aid of art it will become the wonder of the world." Now is the time to realize L'Enfant's vision.

Washington's founders saw it as a bustling port and designed it to spread out from its rivers and canals and lagoons, connecting neighborhoods to the waterfront.

Unfortunately, freeways slice across waterfronts, grand vistas are eclipsed by bridges and elevated railroad tracks, and major ceremonial spaces are ground to dust by overuse.

The new plan aims to recapture elements of the founders' vision. The waterfront, most of which is publicly owned, is to become a continuous band of open space from Georgetown to the National Arboretum. Parks, plazas and overlooks will appear where warehouses, oil tanks and power stations now stand, offering residents and visitors the same intimate connection to their rivers as Londoners and Parisians enjoy. A water transportation system, serving both sides of the rivers, will open up comparable panoramic vistas.

On the south bank of the Potomac, heavy commuter traffic can be diverted from the George Washington Memorial Parkway to increase the community's enjoyment of the waterfront parks and the spectacular views of monumental Washington.

Arlington National Cemetery is to remain a place of commemoration for America's heroes and public servants. Its green hills and overlooks will be preserved, while nearby Fort Myer will be enhanced as a setting for parades and other important ceremonies.



The Mall concentrates the symbols of American democracy in a grand and memorable setting that must be protected.



Pedestrian bridges, such as this one over the Washington Channel, will provide access to waterfronts and parks on both sides of the rivers.