



Foundation Document Overview

National Mall and Memorial Parks

District of Columbia



Contact Information

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Description



National Mall and Memorial Parks administers more than 1,000 acres of park land within the District of Columbia, including 14 units of the national park system (Belmont-Paul Women’s Equality National Monument, Constitution Gardens, Ford’s Theatre National Historic Site, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial,

Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site, the Mall, Thomas Jefferson Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington Monument, World War I Memorial, and World War II Memorial), as well as more than 150 reservations, circles, fountains, squares, triangles, and park spaces. National Mall and Memorial Parks was authorized by the Act of June 10, 1933 (effective August 10, 1933), which transferred jurisdiction from the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital to the National Park Service as part of Executive Order 6166.

National Mall and Memorial Parks’ origins are as old as the capital city itself. The open spaces and parklands envisioned by Pierre L’Enfant’s plan (commissioned by President George Washington) created an ideal stage for national expressions of remembrance, observance, celebration, and First Amendment rights. The park cares for numerous federal park reservations that serve as welcoming gateways for visitors entering the historic fabric of the original 1791 Federal City. Some of the reservations now provide homes for commemorative additions to the landscape of the nation’s capital. With everything from iconic monuments and memorials to commemorative gardens, from presidential inaugurations to civil rights demonstrations, National Mall and Memorial Parks hosts history in the making. The park continues to evolve as Americans seek new ways to recognize their heritage.

More than 3,000 public gatherings, First Amendment activities, and special events are permitted each year in the National Capital Region. As many as 70% of these events take place within the park, and more than half of the permits relate to First Amendment activities. Events range from annual national celebrations such as the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Smithsonian Folklife Festival, and Independence Day to First Amendment demonstrations related to freedom of religion, speech, press, and the rights of people to peaceably assemble. National Mall and Memorial Parks has identified vigil sites for small First Amendment demonstrations on the Mall and near the Lincoln, Korean War Veterans, and Vietnam Veterans Memorials. Recreation events include walks, runs, and marathons.

Park resources include the 2,000 American elms that line the Mall and nearly 4,000 internationally renowned Japanese cherry trees that brighten springtime in Washington, DC. Gardens display thousands of tulips, pansies, and annuals in more than 170 flower beds. In addition, the park manages many historic resources; the List of Classified Structures includes 271 sites; there are 13 cultural landscape inventories; and there are more than 100 statues or bas-reliefs. The park also manages more than 46 miles of roads and more than three dozen constructed pools, lakes, water features, and water displays. This impressive mingling of natural and cultural resources has made our nation’s capital one of the more heavily visited and photographed places in the world.

Recreational opportunities, including ballfields, jogging, biking, picnicking, golf, swimming, tennis, paddleboating, and fishing are enjoyed by residents and visitors. Visitor services include bookstores and retail facilities, food services, restrooms, recreation rentals, and transit-related facilities.

National Mall—The National Mall includes three areas—the Mall, Washington Monument and grounds, and West Potomac Park area. The National Mall extends west from the U.S. Capitol grounds to the Potomac River and south from Constitution Avenue NW to Independence Avenue SW and west of 15th Street around the Tidal Basin to the 14th Street Bridge.

The National Mall symbolizes our nation to the world and contains iconic memorials to Presidents Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln, in addition to many other well-known and not-so-well-known commemorative features. It is a designed historic landscape that includes historic districts and cultural landscapes. The National Mall offers visitors the opportunity to understand and appreciate American heritage, ideas, values, and culture.



Description



- **The Mall**—The Mall, at the eastern end of the National Mall between the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument, is a formal landscape composed of turf panels bordered by rows of elm trees and wide walks with historic seating and lighting.

- **Washington Monument**—The iconic Washington Monument, an obelisk more than 555 feet tall near the center of the National Mall, is visible from miles away, and its windows offer incredible views.



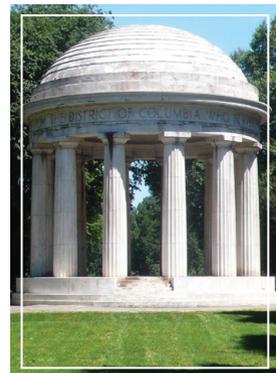
- **West Potomac Park Area**—Almost 400 acres in size, the West Potomac Park area provides the setting for nationally recognized memorials and landscape features.



- **Constitution Gardens**—The gently rolling landscape for recreation and event use includes a seven-acre manmade lake, the historic Lockkeeper's House, and a memorial to the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence.



- **District of Columbia War Memorial**—The District of Columbia War Memorial was designed to be a memorial and a bandstand, such that each concert would be a tribute to those District of Columbia residents who served and sacrificed in World War I.

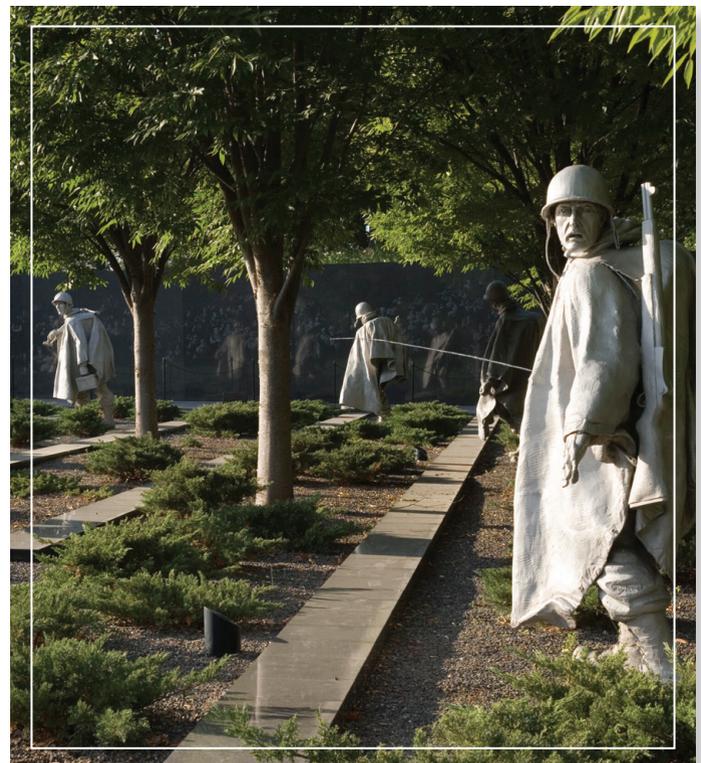


- **Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial**—The informal character of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial expanded the concept of commemoration and the ability to display complex stories within a memorial.

- **George Mason Memorial**—Southwest of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial in West Potomac Park, the memorial commemorates the contributions of an important founding father.



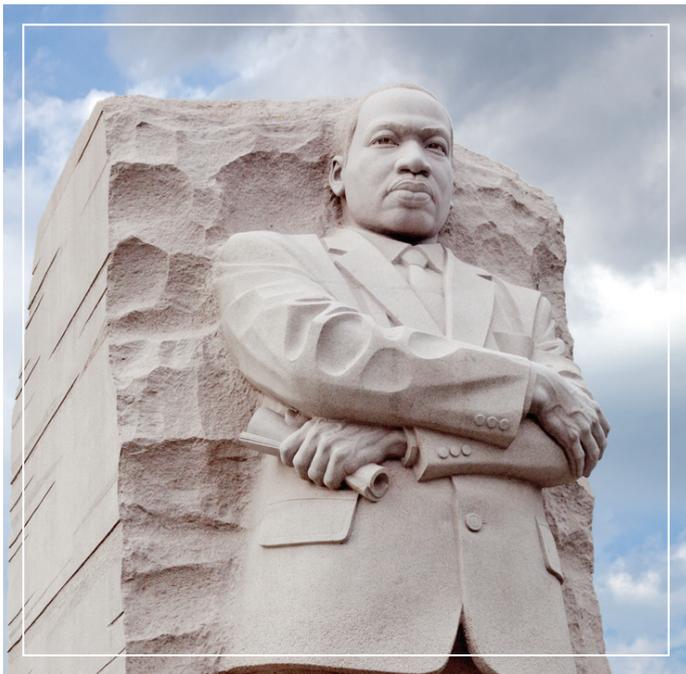
- **Korean War Veterans Memorial**—The memorial includes a wall of remembrance and 19 stainless steel statues commemorating the sacrifices of the millions of Americans and allied partners who fought during the Korean War.



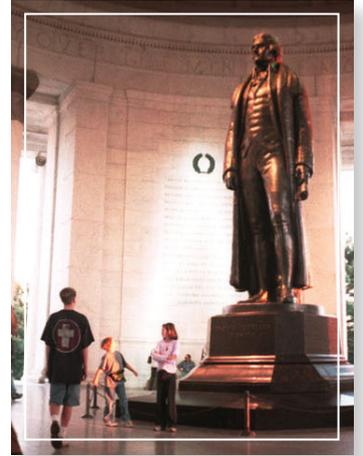
Description



- **Lincoln Memorial**—The Lincoln Memorial anchors the western end of the National Mall in West Potomac Park at the end of the reflecting pool and includes a 175-ton seated marble statue and an inscription of Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address and second inaugural address.
- **Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial**—The memorial is in West Potomac Park on a four-acre parcel along the west side of the Tidal Basin. The memorial honors his legacy and the struggle for freedom, equality, and civil rights.



- **Thomas Jefferson Memorial**—Dedicated by President Franklin Roosevelt on April 13, 1943, the memorial is directly south of the White House along the southern edge of the Tidal Basin in West Potomac Park. The bronze statue of Thomas Jefferson is at the center of the classical domed structure.



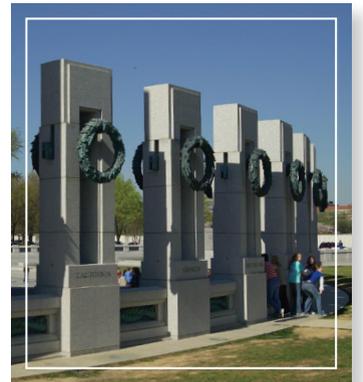
- **Vietnam Veterans Memorial**—Honoring the men and women who served in the controversial Vietnam War, the memorial chronologically lists the names of more than 58,000 Americans who gave their lives in service to their country. The simple memorial was a new type of commemoration.



- **World War I Memorial (formerly Pershing Park)**—The park, redesignated in 2015 as the World War I Memorial, will continue to include commemoration of General John J. Pershing.



- **World War II Memorial**—Through stone architecture and bronze sculptures, the memorial recognizes the ways in which Americans in the Atlantic and Pacific Theaters, as well as the home front, served during the Second World War.



Description

- **Memorial Parks.** National Mall and Memorial Parks contains historic parks and more than 150 reservations in the center of the city of Washington, DC. A number of these park sites also contain commemorative resources such as statues, fountains, and pools, and some are within identified cultural landscapes or historic districts. Many of these memorial parks establish the character of a neighborhood and are prized by local residents for their green space. Resources include Franklin Park, Dupont Circle, Farragut Square, Washington Circle, Benjamin Banneker Park, Logan Circle, and many others. Some memorial park areas are described in more detail below.

- **African American Civil War Memorial**—More than 200,000 African American soldiers and sailors served in the U.S. Army and Navy during the Civil War. The memorial honors their service and sacrifice.



- **American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial**—Dedicated on October 5, 2014, the memorial shines a light on the important lessons of courage, sacrifice, tenacity, loyalty, and honor by bearing witness to the experiences of war heroes who were disabled as a result of military service.



- **Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument**—Home to the National Woman's Party since 1929, this site was the epicenter of the struggle for women's political, social, and economic equality throughout the 20th century. President Barack Obama designated the site as a national monument on April 12, 2016.



- **East Potomac Park**—East Potomac Park is one of the largest recreational spaces in the Washington, DC core, occupying most of Hains Point between the Washington Channel and the Potomac River. It is almost 330 acres in size.

- **Ford's Theatre National Historic Site**—Includes Ford's Theatre, the Petersen House, and the Lincoln museum collection and other associated artifacts. The purpose of the site is to preserve the setting and interpret the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln in April 1865.

- **Hispanic Heroes on Virginia Avenue, NW**—Along Virginia Avenue NW, from Constitution Avenue NW to New Hampshire Avenue NW, statues in small parks honor Hispanic liberators José Gervasio Artigas, Simón Bolívar, José de San Martín, Bernardo de Gálvez, and Benito Juárez.



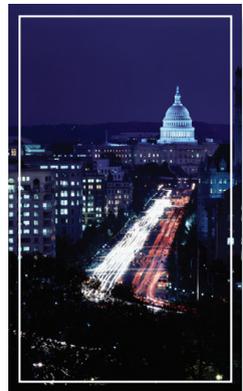
- **Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism during World War II**—The memorial reflects on the legacy of Japanese internment camps in the United States during World War II.



- **National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial**—The memorial honors fallen law enforcement officers.



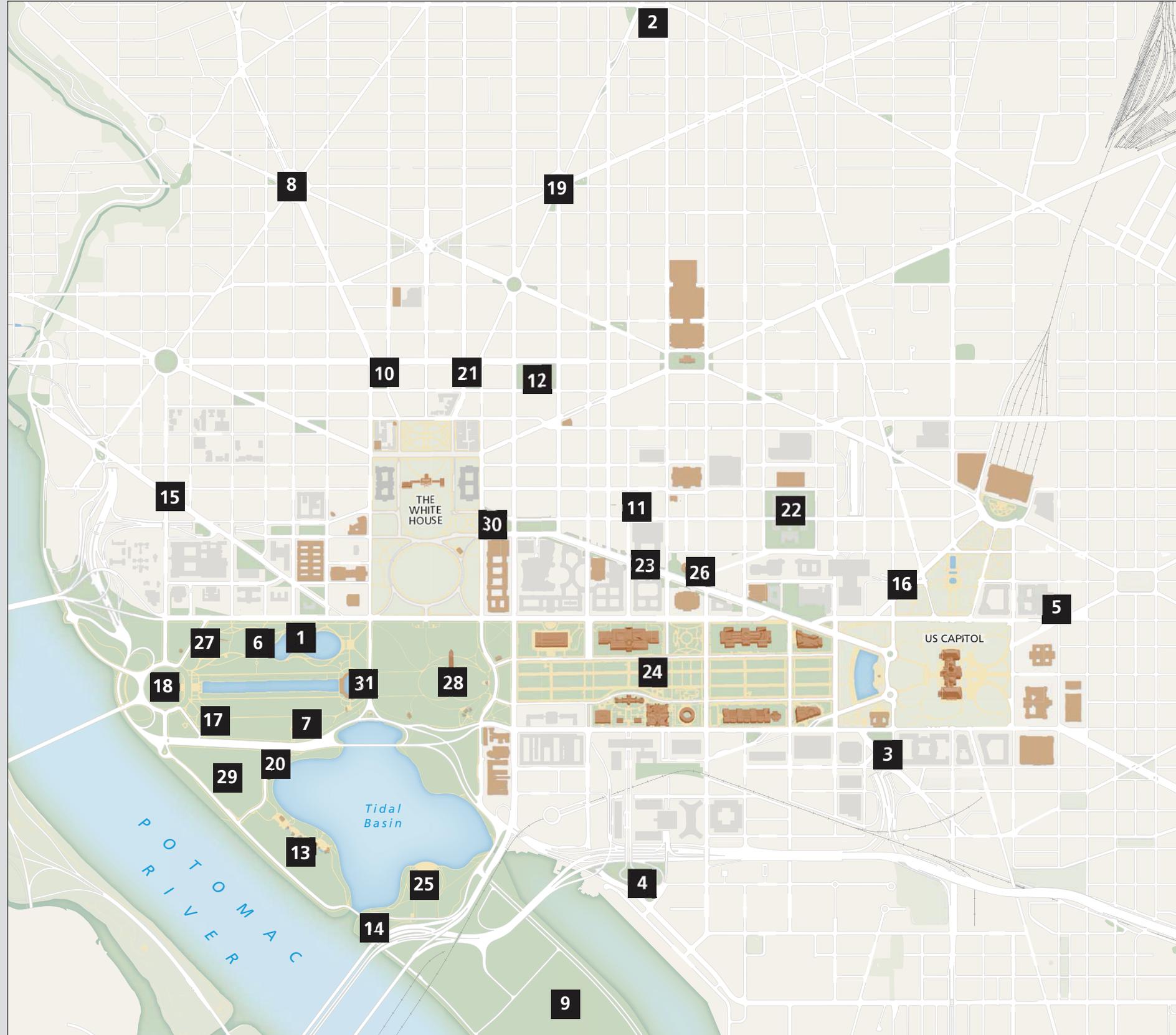
- **Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site**—The site extends from the U.S. Capitol grounds to 15th Street NW near the east side of the White House and consists of most of the sidewalks, plazas, and parks along Pennsylvania Avenue. Spectacular views of the U.S. Capitol are available at the southeast end of Pennsylvania Avenue along a view corridor that dates back to the 1791 plan for Washington, DC, by Pierre L'Enfant.



- **United States Navy Memorial**—The memorial honors those who have served or are currently serving in the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine.

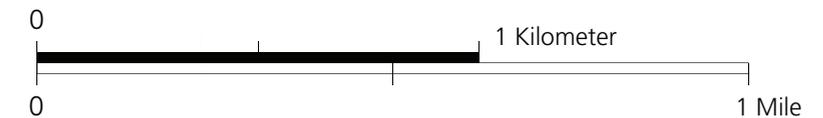


Park Map



NATIONAL MALL AND MEMORIAL PARKS

- 1 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence Memorial
- 2 African American Civil War Memorial
- 3 American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial
- 4 Benjamin Banneker Park
- 5 Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument
- 6 Constitution Gardens
- 7 District of Columbia War Memorial
- 8 Dupont Circle
- 9 East Potomac Park
- 10 Farragut Square
- 11 Ford's Theatre National Historic Site
- 12 Franklin Park
- 13 Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial
- 14 George Mason Memorial
- 15 Hispanic Heroes on Virginia Avenue, NW
- 16 Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism in World War II
- 17 Korean War Veterans Memorial
- 18 Lincoln Memorial
- 19 Logan Circle
- 20 Martin Luther King, Jr Memorial
- 21 McPherson Square
- 22 National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial
- 23 Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site
- 24 The Mall
- 25 Thomas Jefferson Memorial
- 26 United States Navy Memorial
- 27 Vietnam Veterans Memorial
- 28 Washington Monument
- 29 West Potomac Park
- 30 World War I Memorial (formerly Pershing Park)
- 31 World War II Memorial



Purpose



NATIONAL MALL AND MEMORIAL PARKS preserves, protects, and interprets symbolic, monumental, and dignified civic spaces and commemorative works in the center of the nation's capital that honor American ideals and values, distinguished public figures, events, and military and civilian sacrifices and contributions. National Mall and Memorial Parks serves as a public park and open space for First Amendment gatherings, national celebrations, active civic and cultural engagement, recreation, and public enjoyment.



Significance

Significance statements express why National Mall and Memorial Parks resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

- **Stage of Democracy.** National Mall and Memorial Parks contains the nation's foremost public spaces and the primary settings for First Amendment activities, presidential inaugurations, civic engagement, and national celebrations. Citizens from throughout the country and around the world come here to participate in American democracy, celebrate freedom, and experience our nation's history and culture.
- **Commemorating History and Values.** The monuments, memorials, and sites in National Mall and Memorial Parks connect visitors directly with American history and values, cultural heritage, and the sacrifices of so many, supporting our national identity as well as individual connections to the larger national and international experience.
- **Views, Symbolism, and Character.** The capital city, with its symbolic, visual representation of U.S. democracy and government, includes some of the first federal public spaces in the United States and establishes the character of National Mall and Memorial Parks. National Mall and Memorial Parks protects a variety of planned vistas, parks, and urban open spaces originating from the landmark L'Enfant and McMillan plans.
- **America's Front Yard.** As America's front yard and local residents' backyard, National Mall and Memorial Parks protects the valuable urban green space that accommodates a variety of passive and active recreational activities for a diverse population.

