



The National Mall: Rethinking Washington's Monumental Core

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The National Mall in Washington, D.C., has held an important place in the American psyche since the early nineteenth century. Home to monuments and museums dedicated to the ideals upon which the United States rests, the Mall serves as a gathering place for public protest and celebration. But as the nation ages and the population diversifies, demands for additional structures and uses have sparked debates over the Mall's future and the necessity of preserving its legacy and the vision of its designers.

The National Mall addresses these issues with a novel and compelling collection of essays, the work of leading design professionals, historians, and social scientists. Supplemented by eye-catching illustrations and photographs, this cross-disciplinary examination follows the discussion over the Mall's design and use, from its conceptual origins as part of Pierre Charles L'Enfant's vision for the capital to the 1902 McMillan Plan to the present day and beyond. It assesses how architectural, societal, and political changes have altered the park-like space between the Capitol and the Lincoln Memorial and explores the influence that disparate interest groups and creeping corporatism have already had on—and are likely to exert upon—America's public square.

The National Mall presents an overarching account of how a democratic society plans, creates, and expands a national ceremonial space, opening the way for a broadly based inquiry into the Mall as it was, is, and will become. Urban planners, architectural and design historians, and engaged citizens will be challenged and well served by the thoughtful essays collected by Nathan Glazer and Cynthia R. Field.

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