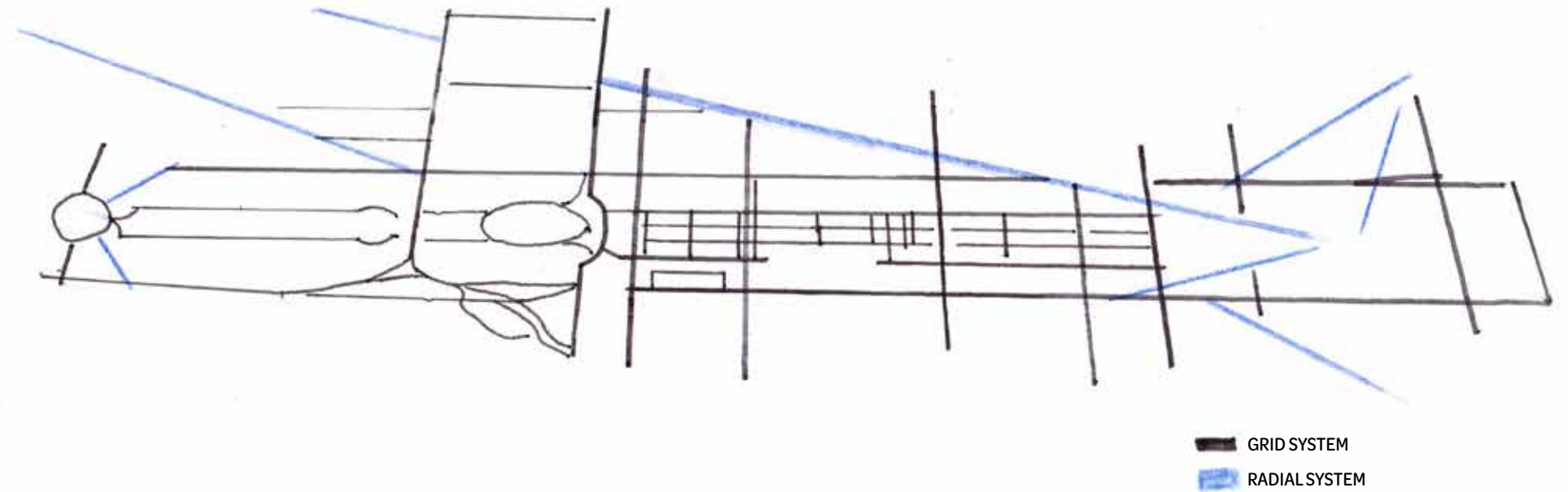
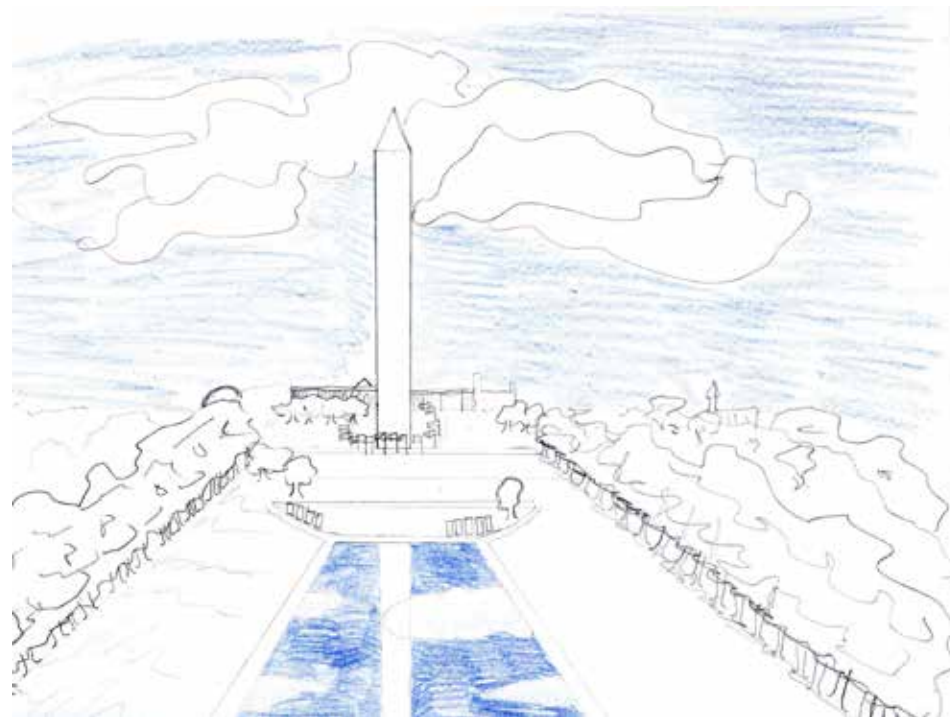


CHING - APPROACH

At 544', The Washington Monument is the world's tallest obelisk and predominantly stone structure. Although its construction did not resemble the original design drafted by architect Robert Mills. A restriction to new building heights as stated by The Heights of Buildings Act of 1910 has allowed a view of its apex from large portion of the city to prevail. Every time I've visited Washington D.C., the moment I can see the Washington Monument gives me the feeling that I've arrived. Every type of approach articulated by Ching is integrated into its accessible pathways. The spiral approach is often experienced by the pedestrian along a American flag lined path encircling the monument. An oblique approach occurs from any of the paths along Constitution Ave, Independence Ave, Madison Drive and Jefferson Drive by vehicle, bicycle, or foot. A frontal approach (as shown below) occurs along a straight, axial line of sight across the reflecting pool extending between the Lincoln and WWII Memorials. It is this particular approach I

feel "prepared to see, experience, and use the spaces within [the] building." (Ching, pg 254) "The approach to a building and its entrance may vary in duration from a few paces through a compressed space to a lengthy circuitous route." (Ching, 254) One observation not considered by Ching is an aerial approach. When traveling to cities by airplane, visitors and residents often experience a sense of arrival as they glide through the airspace over a city. As soon as many passengers can see the Washington Monument, you can anticipate where you are going. If you're flying into Reagan International Airport, Air traffic patterns sometimes can also enable a spiral approach from the plane. Pilots often circle over South Washington D.C. and National Mall when runways are congested. Arriving in the evening of the Fourth of July as firework displays explode over the city under the plane is by far the best way to experience this.



CHING - GRID + RADIAL ORGANIZATION

Although not truly implemented until the 1900s under the MacMillan Commission, preliminary plans for the new capitol of United States or what is now known as, Washington D.C., were contrived by Pierre L'Enfant and commissioned by George Washington in 1791. It's primary organization system is a grid with superimposed radial avenues extending to specific elements or features within the city. L'Enfant envisioned the site to become a "great public walk." East-West streets are arranged and named in progression of the

English alphabet. North-South streets advance numerically. Broader diagonal avenues would intersect the streets and radiate from circular or rectangular plazas intended for monuments and open space. Avenues were intended to be wide, lined with trees, and visually link important structures situated on ideal topographic sites. Pennsylvania Ave would specifically connect The White House and Capitol Building. As Ching explains on pg 243, the purpose of the grid system as a base organizational element "establishes a stable set or field of reference points... although similar in size, form, or

function, can share a common relationship." Not only has this organization allowed for the articulation of spaces and hierarchy of circulation, but over time it also acquiesces manipulation for modernization such as the incorporation of the National Mall, The Tidal Basin, and other future additions. Grids can tolerate transformation while still maintaining its identity. The MacMillan Plan ultimately enhanced L'Enfant's original plan that terminated where the Washington Monument currently stands and envelops the extension now containing the Lincoln, Jefferson, and Vietnam War Memorials.

DEE - FORMS OF SPACES

Dee lists the following 8 methods employed by designers to create and articulate forms. The architects of The McMillan Plan interpreted the plan proposed by L'Enfant and put forth their own analysis in the Report of the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia on the Improvement of the Park System of the District of Columbia in 1902.

INTERPRETATION OF EXISTING SITE FORMS: The location of Capitol Hill was previously a mound known as 'Jenkins Hill.' L'Enfant described the location as a "pedestal waiting for a monument."

GEOMETRY: Rectangles are simple, complex forms. The form and proportions within this greater grid system are forms of a 'macro' structure are repeated in the rectangle or 'micro' structure form.

METAPHOR: The big idea behind L'Enfant's design was "A Public Walk." This vision of uninterrupted green space was egalitarian at the time.

SYMBOLISM: The National Mall and Washington D.C. is literally our Federal City and symbol of Democracy.

ABSTRACTION AND USE OF NATURAL FORMS: The American Elms that line most of the streets and avenues along The National Mall have shaped the vertical plane and reducing the scale of the site. Cherry Blossoms gifted by Japan in 1912 that line the meandering path along The Tidal Basin guide users along a contemplative path that leads you to the Jefferson Memorial.

DEE - SPACE RELATIONSHIPS

Dee suggests the design of spaces should always be informed by understanding different people's needs, activities, and experiences of the landscape. Overall, it is evident that L'Enfant and the architects of McMillan Plan strongly considered the user experience when organizing the space and the interior relationships. Overtime, the activities in the area have evolved, but The National Mall has supported the transformation of our culture. Pathways were originally designed for use as a promenade or an opportunity for social recreation. They have since been expanded to support opportunities for commerce, cultural aesthetics, and ecological purposes.

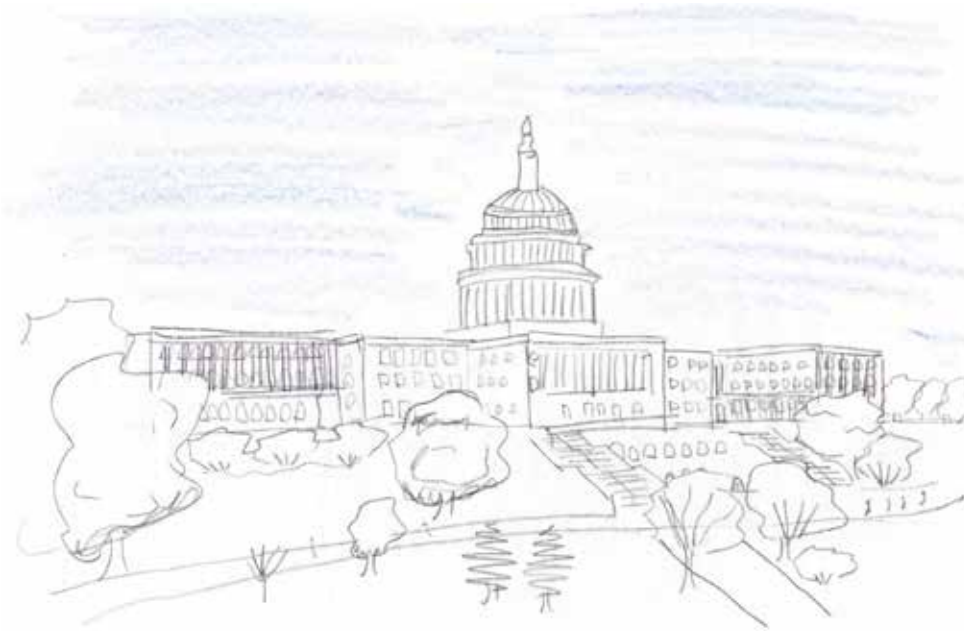
The topography of Washington D.C. is not flat, making topographic space relationships

ARCHETYPES: Most of the original existing architecture in surrounding The National Mall is Romanesque or Baroque/Beaux Arts styled. Baroque was a particular style advocated by The City Beautiful Movement for civic architecture in America.

HISTORIC PARADIGMS: Many ideas incorporated into L'Enfant's grand design were based on

elements used by Andre Le'Notre in France. The Champs-Élysées in Paris is 160' wide, the same width planned for Pennsylvania Ave.

VERNACULAR: The architects of The McMillan Plan did not possess the knowledge to manage ecosystems or tidal pools. Flooding caused by deterioration of the Tidal Basin is causing the area to sink.



Compare/Contrast Two Aspects: Chinatown

The grid organization of The National Mall can also be observed in Chinatown. There was also careful consideration given to the scale of spaces like the Central Plaza and the user experience as they progress through the district. Foci are thoughtfully placed that honor the culture and history of Chinatown as monuments and memorials sit in plazas or nodes in the path network. There is also a historical significance that is symbolic of American ideals to both that are worthy of preservation. While The National Mall is a beacon of Democracy, Chinatown is symbolic of "A Nation of Immigrants." As a historic immigrant corridor of Los Angeles with a diverse populous, it supports John F. Kennedy when he said: "The interaction of disparate cultures, the vehemence of the ideals that led the immigrants here, the opportunity offered by a new life, all gave America a flavor and a character that make it as unmistakable and as remarkable to people today as it was to Alexis de Tocqueville in the early part of the nineteenth century."

The most obvious contrast in these spaces is the ratio of built environment to green space. Chinatown is extremely park poor, while The National Mall is an uninterrupted green space.

What Would Jacobs Say?

Jacobs would have a favorable opinion of most of Washington D.C., but The National Mall is currently not as flexible as most parks and urban centers. Once you're inside The Mall, there are not much opportunities to acquire food or beverages aside from the kiosks and museum cafeterias. The closest restaurants are at least a half mile walk outside of The Mall and often offer pricey menus.

Most of the buildings are old, but they are museums or prestigious institutions that are expected to endure and tell our nation's story into the future. I don't know that they offer flexibility if their purpose changes, but the rest of D.C. has recycled most of its buildings and infrastructure. Creative economies definitely thrive in older, mixed-use neighborhoods. Nightlife is most alive on some of the older streets with a diverse range of building areas.

The "sidewalk ballet" can absolutely be observed from The National Mall. Students on field trips will drop candy wrappers, tourists will lead their kids to galleries, and vendors will sell T-shirts, and residents will play with their dogs on the lawn.

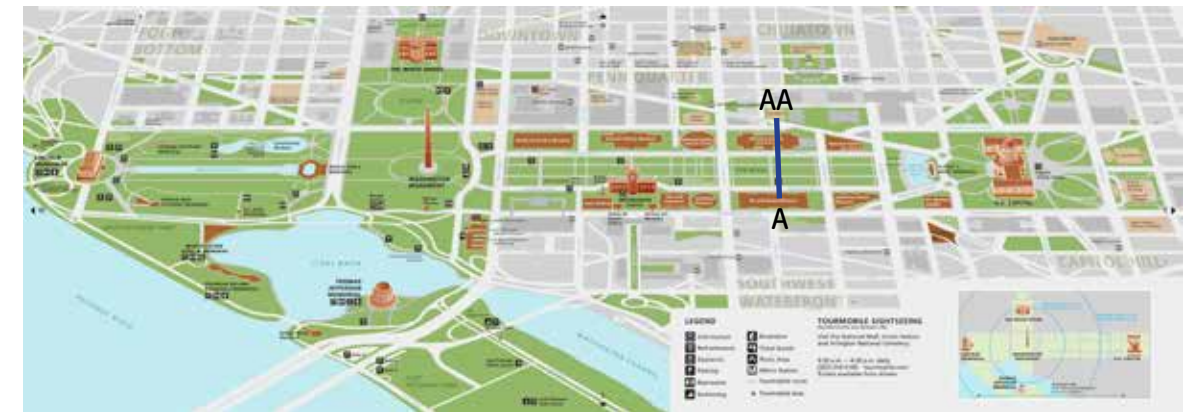
What Changes Would I Make?

The walk along The Mall between museums and monuments can be arduous. Because the city was constructed over a swamp, during the Summer, Washington D.C. can get very hot and humid. For parents with small children, the elderly, or disabled traveling between the Lincoln Memorial and the Smithsonian would be uncomfortable. The trees that line The Mall do provide some shade, but crowds during periods of heavy tourism or protests limit access.

It is possible to use the metro system to travel between some attractions in The Mall, but a street car or hop on/off shuttle would benefit many users.

Vehicle activity on Independence Ave and Constitution Ave also create unsafe crossing conditions. Restricting access to cars and only allowing tour buses or deliveries would increase safety and security measures for the area.

There are a few annual events that take place on the The Mall, but more pop up festivals and events would bring more repeat users to the space and not just tourists and lawmakers.



Section A-AA

