

January 13, 2026

To: Waterfront Commission

From: Louise Roseman

Re: Possible National Park Service Improvements to the Mt Vernon Trail and Waterfront

The National Park Service (NPS) made an on-line presentation January 12 on proposed GW Parkway and Mt Vernon Trail improvements. The following are some of the points made during the Zoom call that relate to the waterfront and Mt Vernon Trail. (The PowerPoint presentation is attached.)

1. Enhance access to Mt Vernon Trail and Potomac River for bikers and pedestrians from the PRGS site.
2. Provide new overlook(s) and bench(s) along the trail to enhance views and improve visitor experience.
3. Add personal non-motorized watercraft launch to improve public access and recreation. Temporary storage of watercraft is being considered. A comment was made that there is a need for debris removal to allow unimpeded use of the floating dock.
4. Replace the metal cage adjacent to the PRGS pump house with a boardwalk to improve sight lines (currently, there are several angles that make it difficult to see what is ahead and pose a safety issue) and improve visitor experience.
5. Perform emergency stabilization of the trail immediately south of the metal cage beginning this winter or spring.

There is no projection at this point of when the other projects will be undertaken and when/how long the Mt Vernon Trail will be closed (because HRP hasn't yet finalized its construction timeline). NPS is working on a plan to have an alternate route to provide continued north/south access when this portion of the trail is closed for construction.

The NRS has invited written comments, which must be submitted by February 12. Of relevance to the Waterfront Commission, NPS is interested in issues or opportunities that should be evaluated related to the Mt Vernon Trail, Potomac River waterfront, and integration of existing and new open space, and any additional thoughts commenters want to share with the project team. We can discuss at next week's meeting whether the Waterfront Commission should submit a comment letter, and if so, what topics we should address in the letter.

Attachment



George Washington Memorial Parkway and Mount Vernon Trail Improvements

Old Town North Environmental Assessment
Public Scoping Meeting

January 12, 2026



INTRODUCTIONS & MEETING LOGISTICS

Welcome!

- This meeting is being recorded, and slides will be shared online.
- As an attendee, you will be in listen-only mode (on mute).
 - If you're calling in by phone, please make sure you're on mute.
- Type your questions in Q&A at any time during the meeting.
- Questions will be answered at the end of the presentation, as time allows.



INTRODUCTIONS & MEETING LOGISTICS

Your participation is important to us. Your comments will help shape this project!

- Questions or comments submitted as part of this meeting will *not* be considered formal comments on the project.
- We require written comments.
- To submit comments online, visit the project website:
parkplanning.nps.gov/oldtownnorth
- Send written comments by U.S. Mail to:

Superintendent

Attn: Old Town North Improvements EA

700 George Washington Memorial Parkway

McLean, VA 22101

IMPORTANT!

Comments must be submitted
online or postmarked by
February 12, 2026.

MEETING AGENDA

1. Meeting Goals
2. NEPA & NHPA Process
3. Project Background
4. Schedule
5. Purpose and Need
6. Proposed Action
7. Questions & Comments





MEETING GOALS

- Review the federal regulations governing this planning process (NEPA, Section 106)
- Provide overview of proposal and why the NPS believes it is needed
- Present proposed action
- Review issue topics identified by NPS for the environmental assessment (EA)
- Discuss next steps in the compliance process
- Provide you with an opportunity to ask questions

WHAT IS “SCOPING”?

Today we’re introducing the project and explaining the scope or extent of what we’re planning to analyze during the environmental assessment (EA).

Scoping gives the public and various agencies the chance to weigh in on what should be part of the EA.

We’re NOT presenting the findings of the EA right now. That will happen later, and you will have the chance to give feedback on that as well.

WHAT IS NEPA?



The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is part of a federal planning and decision-making process.

- Federal projects (or projects on federal land), funding, permits, etc., require compliance with NEPA to ensure informed decision-making.
- NEPA requires federal agencies to:
 - Analyze the environmental impacts of actions, and
 - Engage the public as part of project planning
- To comply with NEPA, NPS will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to document and disclose potential environmental impacts that may occur if the Project is completed.



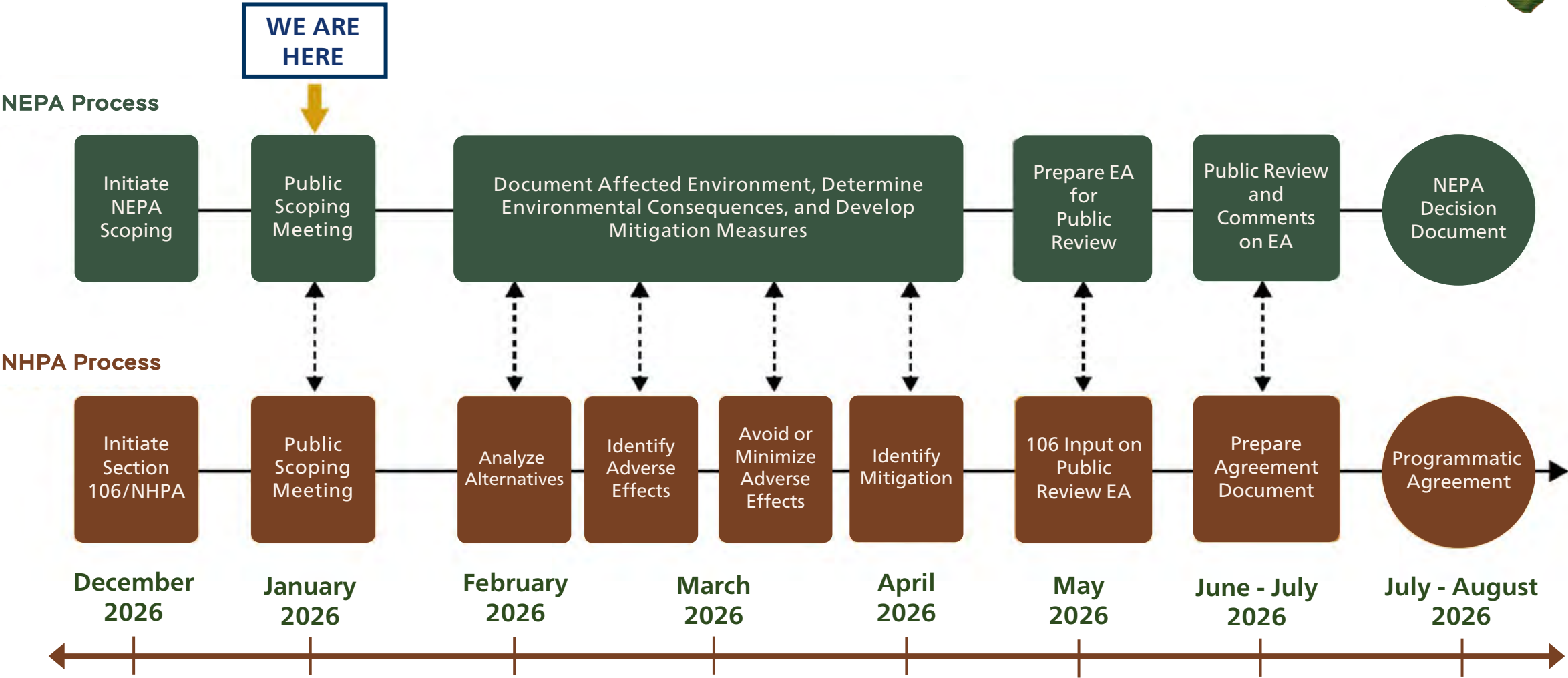
WHAT IS NHPA/SECTION 106?

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) is also part of the federal planning and decision-making process.

- Federal projects (or projects on federal land), funding, permits, etc., require compliance with Section 106 of NHPA.
- NHPA requires federal agencies to:
 - Conduct formal review before any construction, repair, and ground/ visual disturbances to any historic or eligible properties, and
 - Engage the public as part of project planning
- NHPA limits the amount and type of physical changes that can be made to unique places and cultural resources.



NEPA & NHPA Process



PROJECT LOCATION

- George Washington Memorial Parkway
- Waterfront/Mount Vernon Trail



GEORGE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL PARKWAY



- Opened in 1932 to:
 - Honor legacy of George Washington
 - Provide recreational opportunities and transportation
 - Preserve views and vistas
 - Connect historic sites, scenic overlooks, memorials, monuments, stories, and people
- Built for 'auto touring,' with slower speeds for a unique, memorable recreational driving experience
- Semi-limited access, designed landscapes, medians, broad rights of way, and curving roadway
- Listed in National Register of Historic Places



MOUNT VERNON TRAIL



- Over 1 million pedestrians and bicyclists a year
- MVT north of Alexandria is one of the most heavily used multi-use trails in US
- Constructed in 1970s and 1980s when there were no design standards for multi-use trails
- Growing use of trail, particularly during commuting periods, contributes to safety concerns



MOUNT VERNON TRAIL

Trail Safety Concerns:

- Trail crowding, high speeds, poor sightlines, and mix of users increase likelihood of crashes
- Averages 9 ft wide: makes passing difficult and contributes to conflicts
- Lack of consistent signage and markings on trail and intersecting roadways
- Poor trail pavement & bridge conditions in places present safety hazards



PURPOSE AND NEED

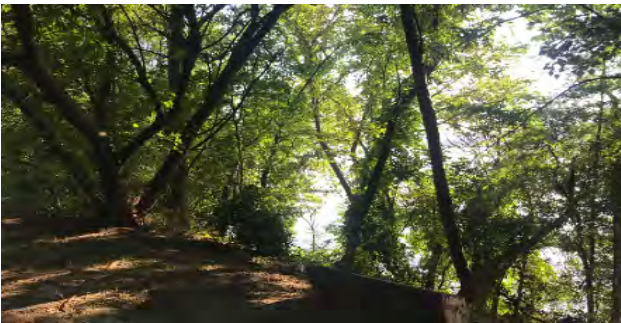


PURPOSE

Consistent with NPS planning:

- Enhance access to Mount Vernon Trail and Potomac River from PRGS site
- Maintain & improve operations for Mount Vernon Trail and GW Parkway users
- Reduce risks and conflicts along Mount Vernon Trail and GW Parkway
- Provide greater access to and opportunities for waterfront for active and passive recreation
- Protect & enhance native vegetation and landscape
- Coordinate exchange of easements between redeveloped property and pumphouse

PURPOSE AND NEED



NEED

- Changing environment and growing demands on Mount Vernon Trail and GW Parkway
- Age and geometry of cantilevered trail section
- Limited public access to, and views of, the Potomac River
- Overgrown, invasive vegetation
- Discrepancies between redeveloped property use and existing easements

EXISTING CONDITIONS



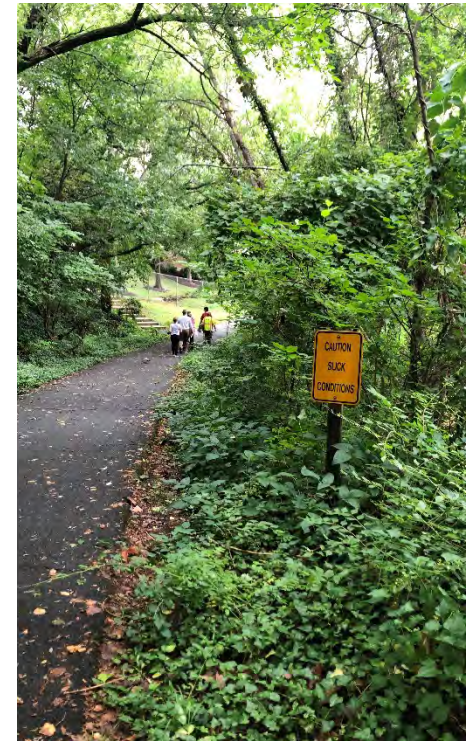
Parkway

- Heavy commuter volumes and high travel speeds create challenges for vehicular traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists
- Crosswalk markings, signage, turn lanes and median widths vary
- E and W Abingdon Drives run parallel and can create confusion
- No dedicated southbound turn lanes at Slaters Lane

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Waterfront/Mount Vernon Trail

- Trail and bridge widths vary
- Lack of water access, views often blocked
- Proposed improvements based on trail conditions, safety concerns, and user & management needs analyzed in Mount Vernon Trail Corridor Study (2020)



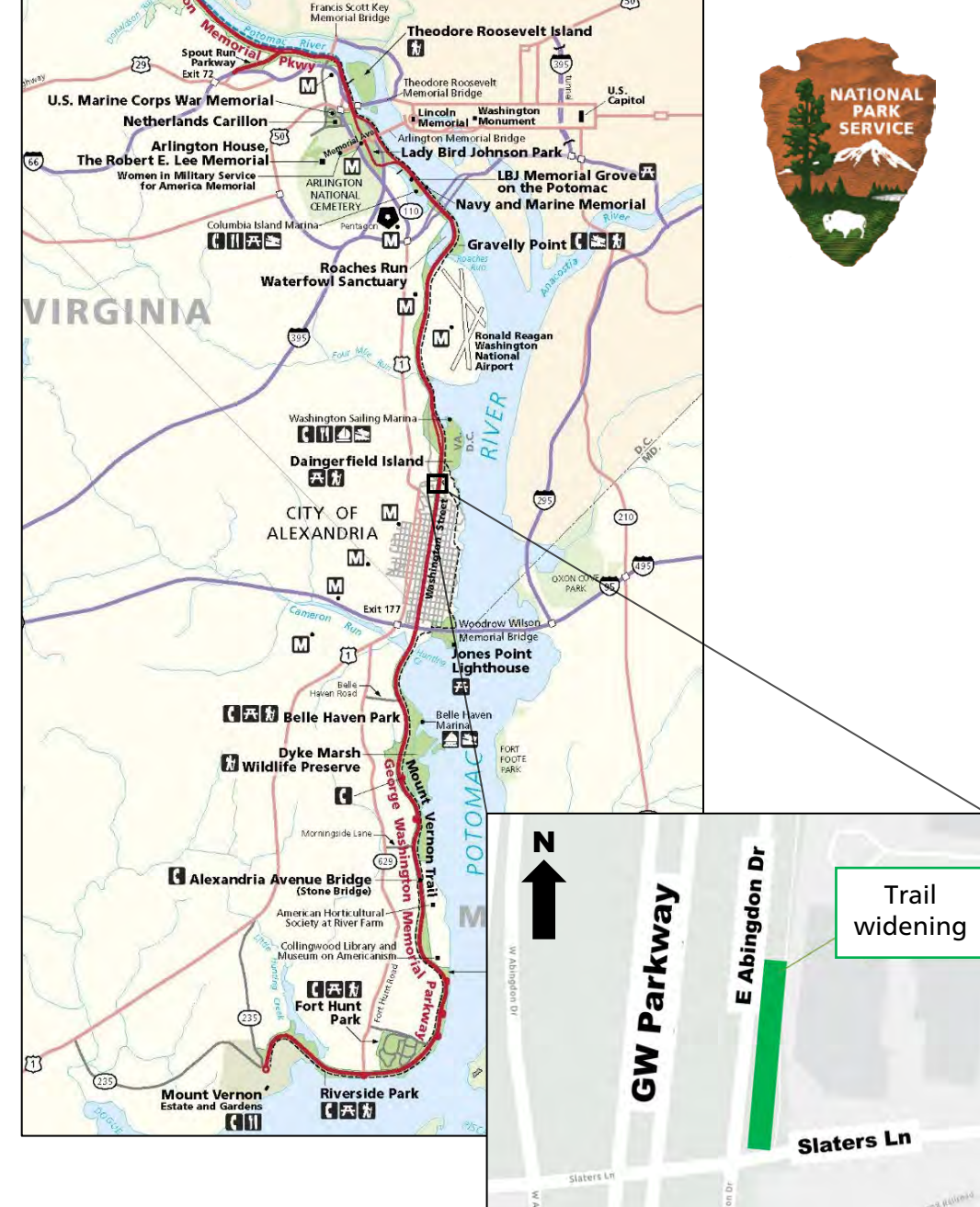
NEARBY PROJECTS

NPS Projects

- GWMP South Section and MVT Improvements Plan (upper map)
- Separate project: widening/improvements along whole stretch of MVT from Roosevelt Island to Mt Vernon, excluding PRGS section

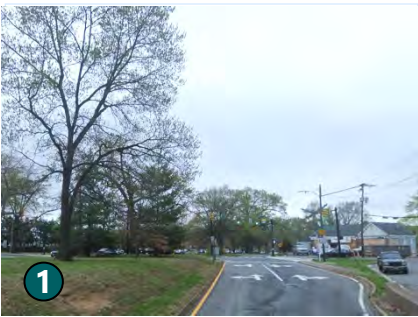
City of Alexandria Projects

- Mount Vernon Trail Improvements at E Abingdon Drive just north of Slaters Lane (lower map)





PROPOSED ACTION - PARKWAY



Adjust curb and widen road slightly to add southbound left turn lane at Slaters Lane intersection for traffic flow management



Refresh crosswalks and striping at Slaters Lane intersection to improve safety



Add bike lane markings on Slaters Lane and make signal changes to improve safety and traffic flow management



Refresh crosswalks and striping at Bashford Lane to improve safety



Make signal changes at Bashford Lane intersection for traffic flow management



PROPOSED ACTION - PARKWAY

Adjust curb and widen road slightly to add southbound left turn lane at Slaters Lane intersection for traffic flow management



Image looking south on W. Abingdon Drive towards Slaters Lane.



PROPOSED ACTION - PARKWAY

Refresh crosswalks and striping at Slaters Lane intersection to improve safety

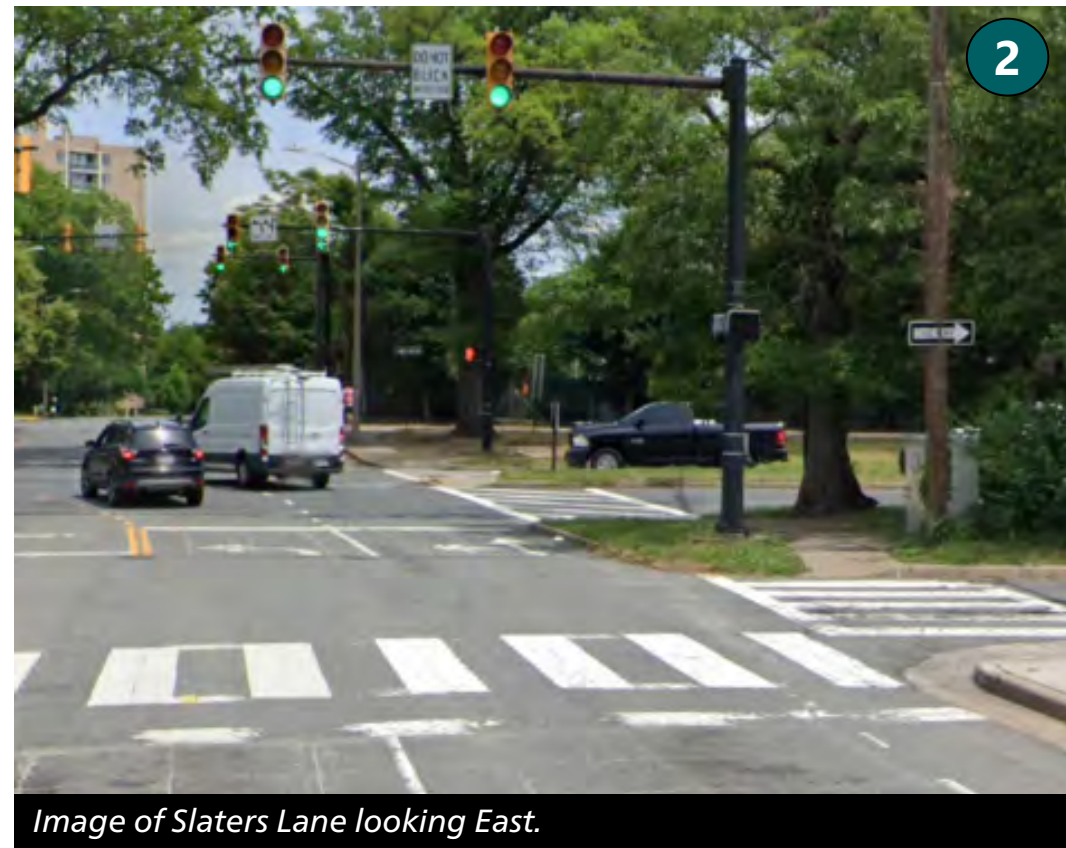
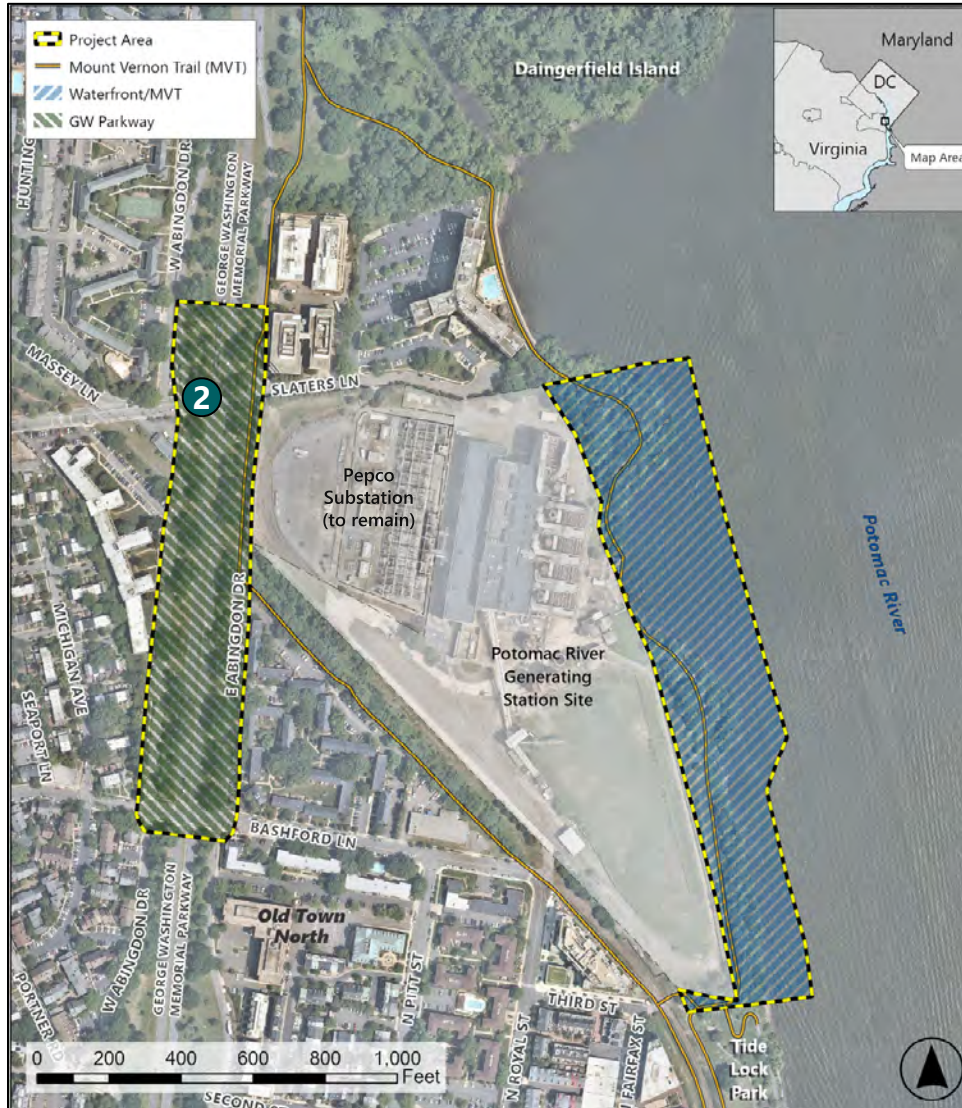


Image of Slaters Lane looking East.



PROPOSED ACTION - PARKWAY

Add bike lane markings on Slaters Lane and make signal changes to improve safety and traffic flow management





PROPOSED ACTION - PARKWAY

Refresh crosswalks and striping at Bashford Lane to improve safety

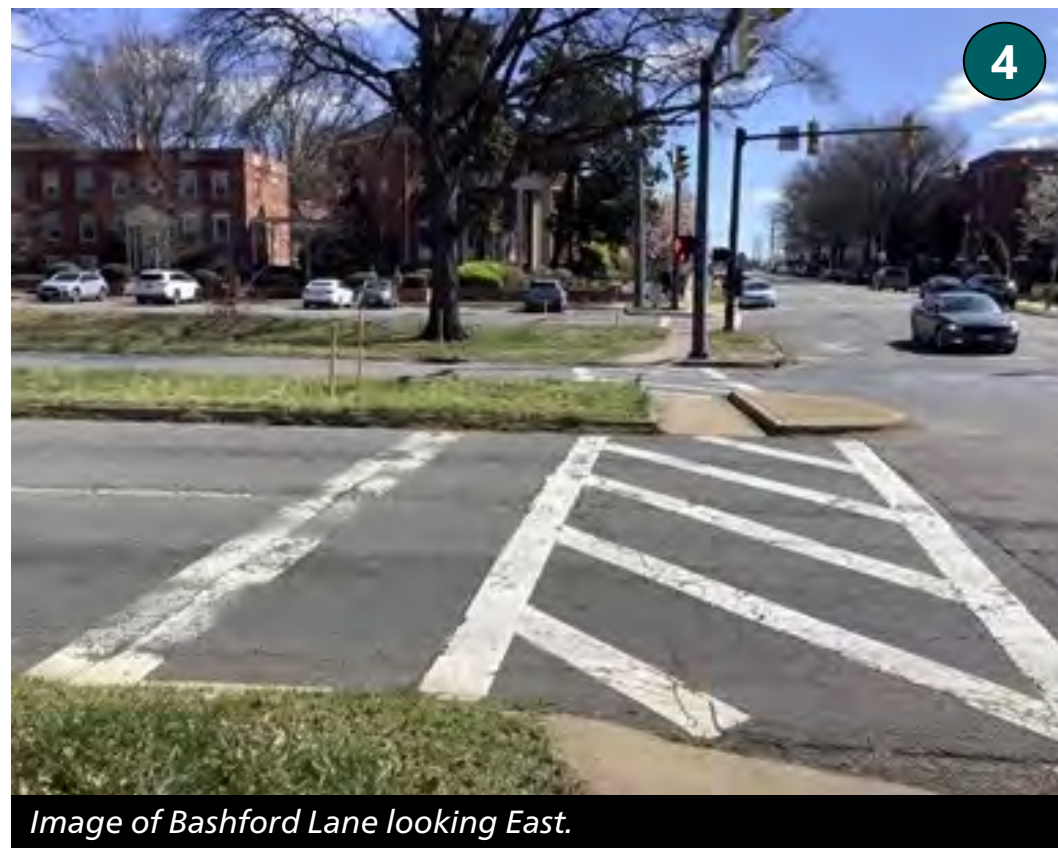
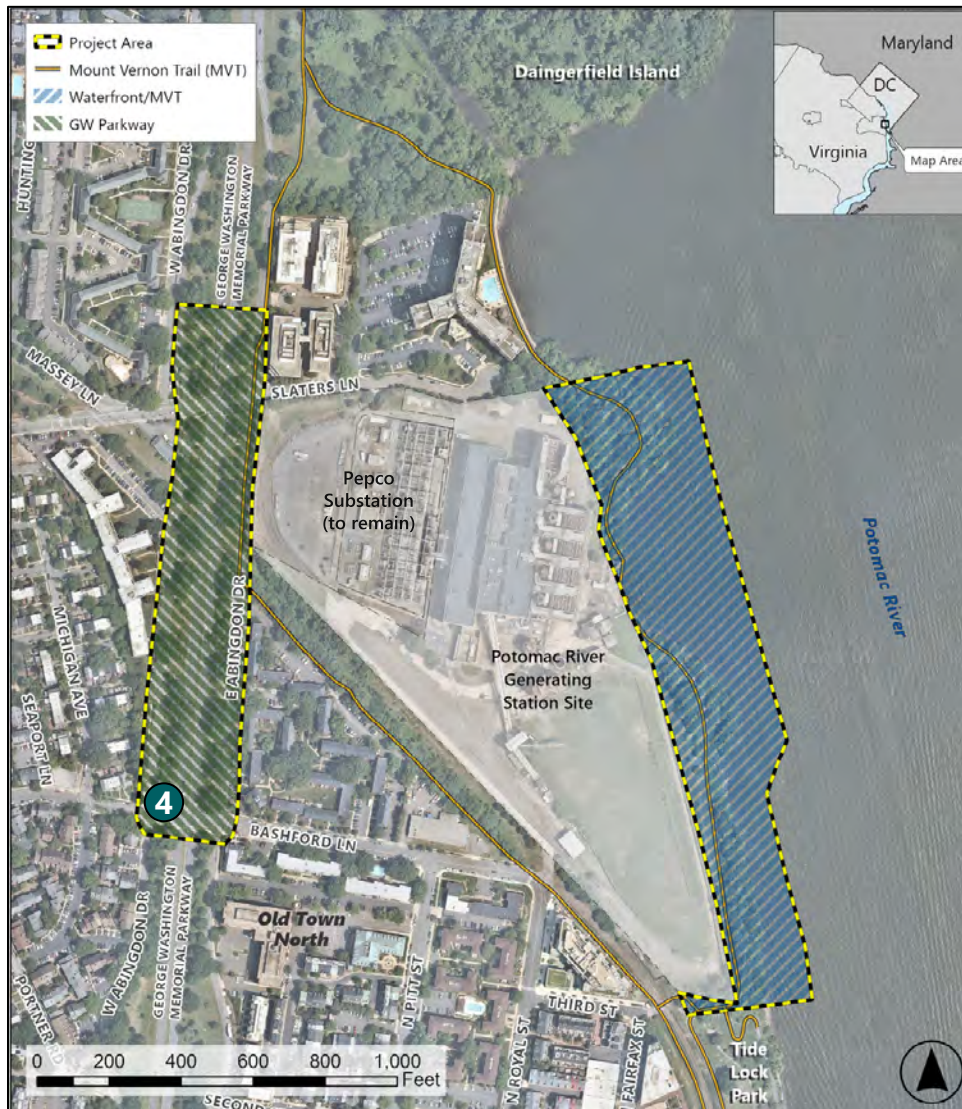


Image of Bashford Lane looking East.



PROPOSED ACTION - PARKWAY

Make signal changes at Bashford Lane intersection for traffic flow management



Image of Bashford Lane looking West.



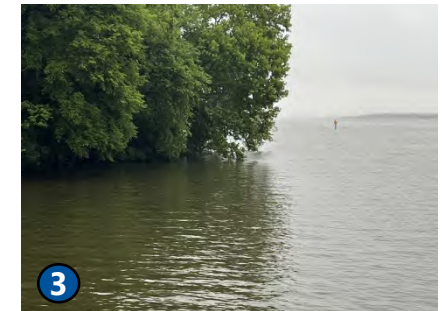
PROPOSED ACTION - WATERFRONT/MVT



Add new Mount Vernon Trail connections and options for bike & ped circulation at different speeds to improve public access and safety



Provide new overlook and bench along trail to enhance views and improve visitor experience



Add personal non-motorized watercraft launch to improve public access and recreation



Replace aging metal cage section with boardwalk to address safety issues and improve visitor experience



Coordinate exchange of easements between redeveloped property and pump house



PROPOSED ACTION - WATERFRONT/MVT

Add new Mount Vernon Trail connections and options for bike & ped circulation at different speeds to improve public access and safety

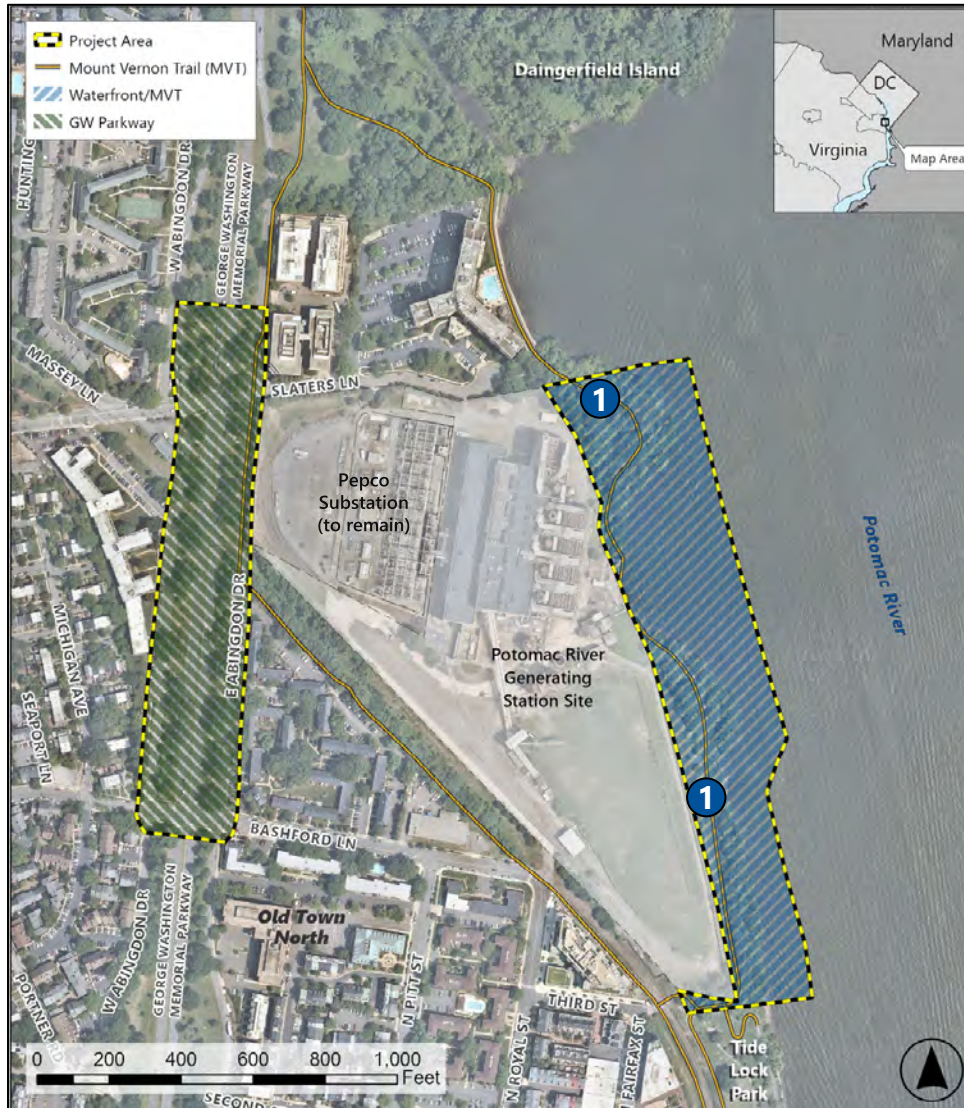


Image of Mount Vernon Trail looking Northwest.



PROPOSED ACTION - WATERFRONT/MVT

Provide new overlook and bench along trail to enhance views and improve visitor experience



Image of Mount Vernon Trail looking East.



PROPOSED ACTION - WATERFRONT/MVT



Add personal non-motorized watercraft launch to improve public access and recreation



Image of Potomac River looking Northeast.



PROPOSED ACTION - WATERFRONT/MVT

Replace aging metal cage section with boardwalk to address safety issues and improve visitor experience

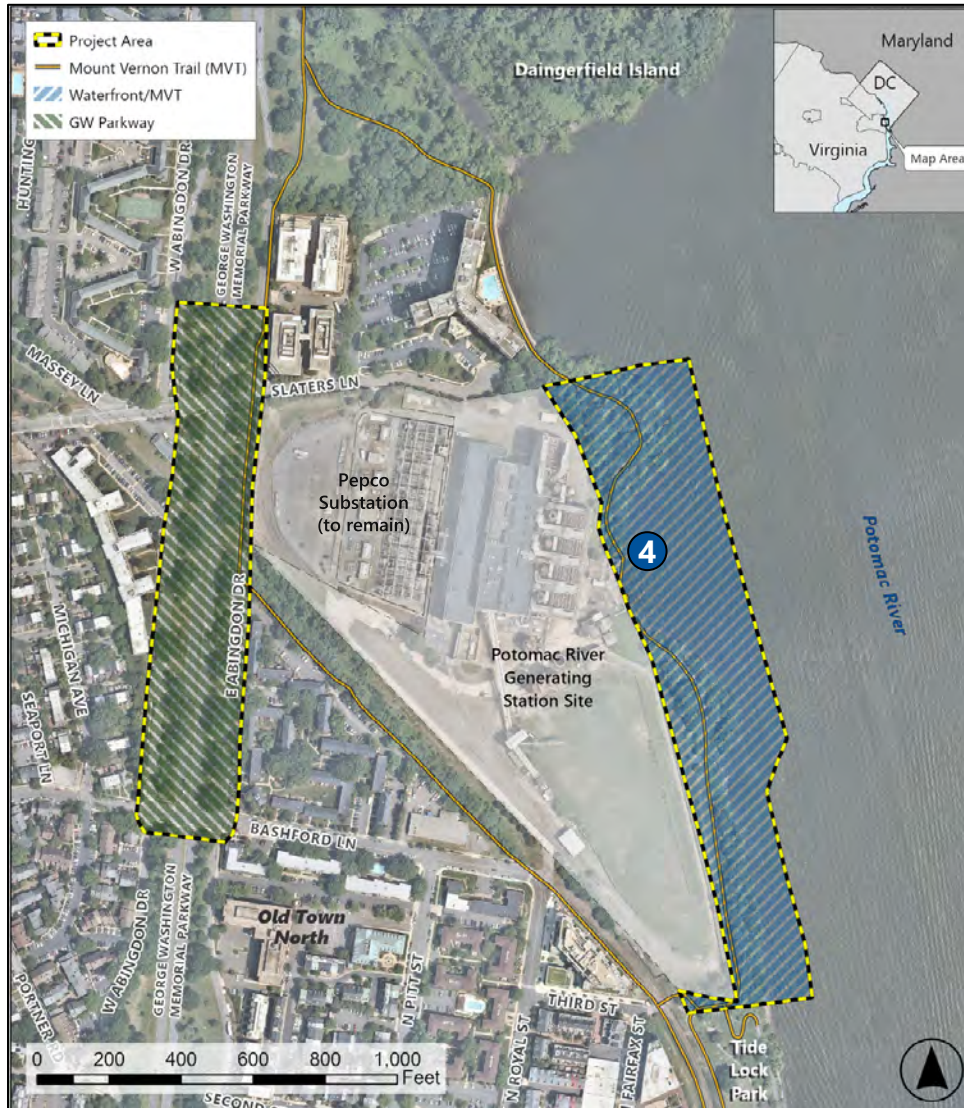


Image of Mount Vernon Trail looking South.



PROPOSED ACTION - WATERFRONT/MVT

Coordinate exchange of easements between redeveloped property and pumphouse

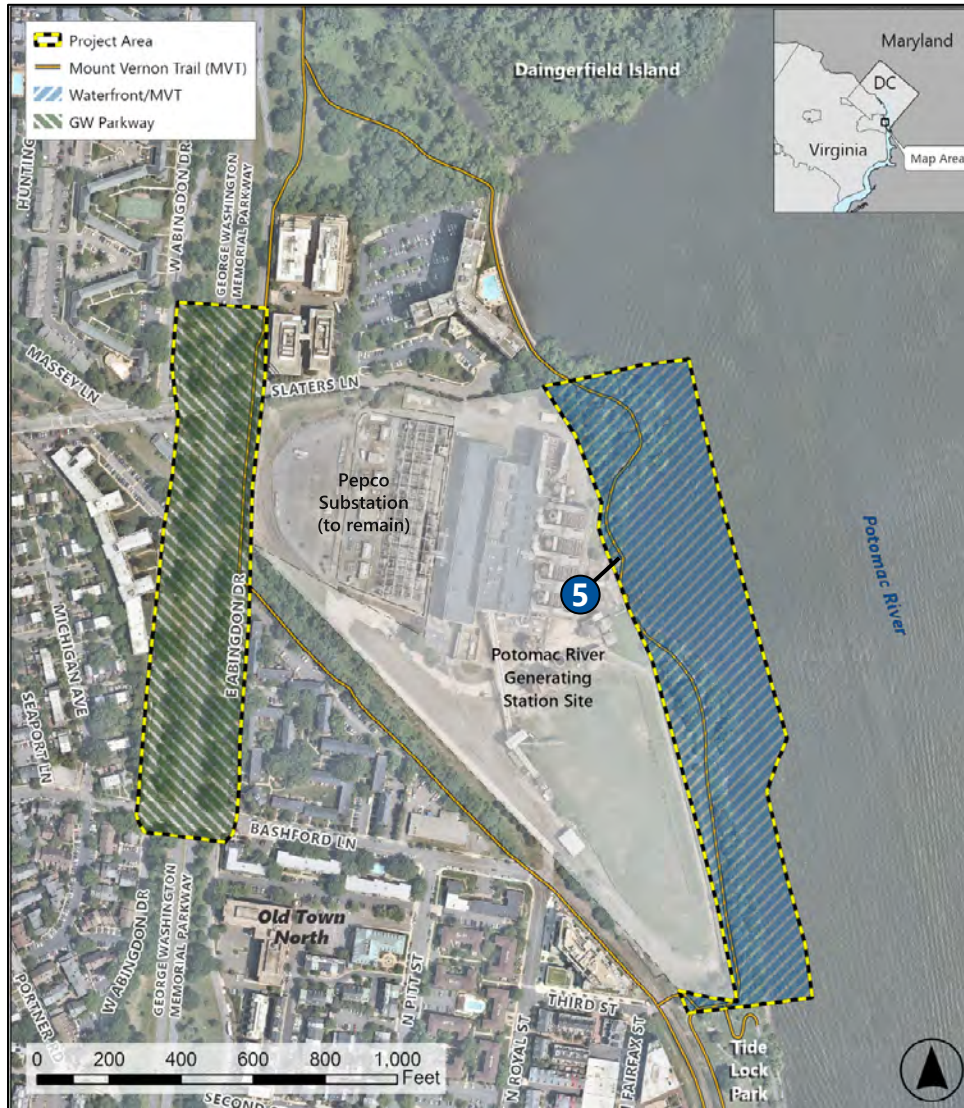


Image looking Northwest towards the pumphouse.



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT TOPICS FOR EA

Potential for Impacts/Detailed Analysis

- Transportation
- Visitor Use, Experience, and Safety
- Wetlands
- Biological Resources (including Threatened & Endangered Species):
 - Aquatic
 - Terrestrial
- Historic and Cultural Resources

No Potential for Impacts/ Dismissed from Consideration

- Socioeconomics
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Geology and Soils



QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Have a question to ask right now?

Computer Attendees:

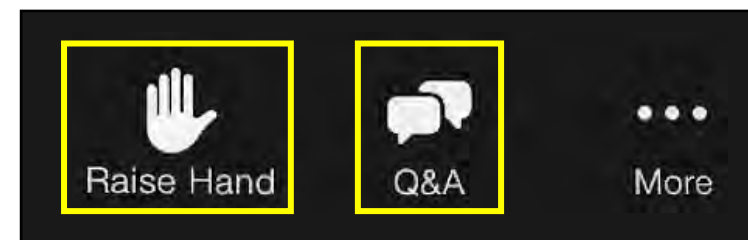
- 1) Click Q&A and type a question, then send!
- 2) Or select **Raise Hand** and we'll unmute you to ask your question (time permitting).

Phone Attendees:

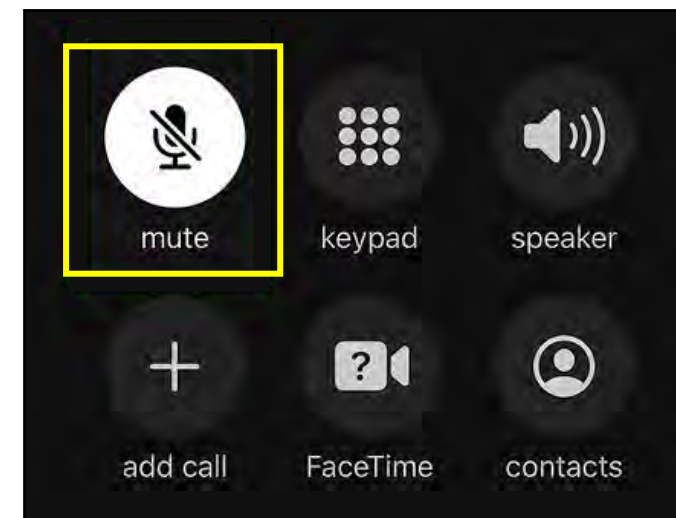
Unmute the microphone on your phone to ask.

Note: Questions or comments submitted as part of this meeting will not be considered formal comments on the project. However, they will be considered as part of public scoping for the EA.

COMPUTER



PHONE



TOPIC QUESTIONS



What issues or opportunities should be evaluated related to transportation and safety upgrades to the GW Parkway at Slaters Lane and Bashford Lane?



What issues or opportunities should be evaluated related to the Mount Vernon Trail, Potomac River waterfront, and integration of existing and new proposed open space?



Do you have any additional thoughts you would like to share with the project team?



QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

- Your participation in this project is important to us. Your comments will help shape this plan!
- **We require written comments.**
- **To submit comments online, visit project website:**
parkplanning.nps.gov/oldtownnorth
- **Or send comments by US Mail to:**

Superintendent

Attn: GWMP South and MVT Plan / EA

700 George Washington Memorial Parkway

McLean, VA 22101

IMPORTANT!

Comments must be submitted online
or postmarked by **February 12, 2026**
to receive consideration.



Thank You for Attending!

Questions or comments about the EA: scan QR code
or visit parkplanning.nps.gov/oldtownnorth

Questions about the power plant redevelopment:
visit hrpalx.com

