

National Park Service
US Department of the Interior

National Mall and Memorial Parks
District of Columbia



Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan Environmental Assessment

January 2026



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**US Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Mall and Memorial Parks**

**Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan
Environmental Assessment**

January 2026

The National Park Service (NPS) is undertaking a planning project to create a Development Concept Plan (the plan) for the Tidal Basin area of the National Mall and Memorial Parks. The purpose of this planning effort is to provide direction for the long-term management and rehabilitation of the Tidal Basin area based on the vision of the 2010 National Mall Plan and other planning documents. This project is part of the stipulations agreed upon by the NPS, the DC Historic Preservation Office, and the National Capital Planning Commission in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to resolve the adverse effects resulting from a separate project for the Rehabilitation of Tidal Basin and West Potomac Park Seawalls (seawalls project).

This environmental assessment (EA) evaluates two alternatives: the no action alternative and the proposed action (the plan). Under the no action alternative, the Tidal Basin area would continue to operate in its current condition, with improvements made as funding allows. Under the proposed action, future development of the Tidal Basin area would be guided by the plan, with different options available for implementation.

This EA analyzes the potential impacts these alternatives would have on the natural, historic, and human environment. This EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 United States Code [USC] 4332[2] [C])¹; the 2025 Department of the Interior NEPA regulations (43 CFR Part 46); and NPS Director's Order #12: *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis and Decision-Making* (NPS 2011) and the accompanying NEPA Handbook (NPS 2015).

¹ Executive Order 14154, *Unleashing American Energy* (Jan. 20, 2025), and a Presidential Memorandum, *Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity* (Jan. 21, 2025), require the Department to strictly adhere to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 et seq. Further, such Order and Memorandum repeal Executive Orders 12898 (Feb. 11, 1994) and 14096 (Apr. 21, 2023). Because Executive Orders 12898 and 14096 have been repealed, complying with such Orders is a legal impossibility. The National Park Service verifies that it has complied with the requirements of NEPA, including the Department's regulations and procedures implementing NEPA at 43 C.F.R. Part 46 and Part 516 of the Departmental Manual, consistent with the President's January 2025 Order and Memorandum. The National Park Service has also voluntarily considered the Council on Environmental Quality's rescinded regulations implementing NEPA, previously found at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500–1508, as guidance to the extent appropriate and consistent with the requirements of NEPA and Executive Order 14154.

Note to Reviewers and Respondents:

This EA will be on formal public and agency review for 30 days from the release date. If you wish to comment, please provide comments on the NPS Planning, Environment & Public Comment (PEPC) website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/tidalbasinDCP> or by mailing to the name and address below. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Superintendent
National Mall and Memorial Parks
RE: Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan/EA
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CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Purpose and Need.....	1
Introduction	1
Purpose of and Need for Action	3
Project Area Location and Description	4
Issues and Impact Topics Retained for Detailed Analysis	5
Impact Topics Dismissed from Further Analysis	5
Chapter 2: Alternatives	8
Project Area Zones	8
Alternative 1: No Action	14
Alternative 2: Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan.....	16
Chapter 3: Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences	31
Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes	31
Circulation: Traffic and Transportation.....	48
Visitor Use and Experience	60
Chapter 4: Consultation and Coordination	66
Public involvement.....	66
Agency Consultation and Coordination	66
Public Review	67
References.....	68

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Project Location.....	2
Figure 2. Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan Zones.....	9
Figure 3. Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan Zones - Northeast Zone.....	10
Figure 4. Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan Zones - Southeast Zone.....	11
Figure 5. Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan Zones - Southwest Zone.....	12
Figure 6. Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan Zones - Northwest Zone.....	13
Figure 7. Preferred Alternative Conceptual Map.....	17
Figure 8. Existing Conditions and Preferred Alternative – Northeast Zone.....	19
Figure 9. Existing Conditions and Preferred Alternative – Southeast Zone.....	23
Figure 10. Jefferson Memorial Security Elements	26
Figure 11. Existing Conditions and Preferred Alternative – Southwest Zone.....	29
Figure 12. Existing Conditions and Preferred Alternative – Northwest Zone.....	30
Figure 13. Area of Potential Effect on Historic Properties.....	33
Figure 14. Walking Trails within the Park.....	50
Figure 15. Existing Bike and Scooter Circulation around Tidal Basin.....	51
Figure 16. Proposed Pedestrian Circulation.....	56
Figure 17. Proposed Bike/Scooter Circulation	57
Figure 18. Proposed Vehicular Circulation	59
Figure 19. Visitor Attractions	62

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Summary of Zones.....	8
Table 2. Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes within the APE.....	31

CHAPTER 1: PURPOSE AND NEED

INTRODUCTION

The National Park Service (NPS) has developed this environmental assessment (EA) to create and evaluate a Development Concept Plan (the plan) for the Tidal Basin area of the National Mall and Memorial Parks (the park). The purpose of this planning effort is to provide direction for the long-term management and rehabilitation of the Tidal Basin area based on the vision of the 2010 National Mall Plan (NPS 2010) and other planning documents.

This project is part of the stipulations agreed upon by the NPS, the DC Historic Preservation Office, and the National Capital Planning Commission in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to resolve the adverse effects resulting from a separate project for the Rehabilitation of Tidal Basin and West Potomac Park Seawalls (seawalls project). The seawalls project, currently underway, is rehabilitating approximately 6,800 linear feet of seawall along West Potomac Park and portions of the Tidal Basin. Implementing this plan is dependent upon completion of the seawalls project; therefore, the actions proposed in this EA assume that the seawalls and Tidal Basin edge are at an elevation of 4.75 feet as proposed in the seawalls project.

The area of focus for the plan includes the Tidal Basin and surrounding land located within West Potomac Park in Washington, DC. It includes iconic memorials such as the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial (FDR Memorial), the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial (MLK Jr. Memorial), the Thomas Jefferson Memorial (Jefferson Memorial), and the Japanese cherry tree plantings. The project area location is shown on figure 1. The NPS would also include the preliminary design for an anti-vehicle security barrier system around the Jefferson Memorial as part of the plan.

The Tidal Basin is a 19th century hydrological engineering achievement and an integral part of the West Potomac Park landscape which has evolved into an iconic, significant, and beloved public cultural landscape and commemorative space. It is estimated that 36 million people from all over the globe visit the National Mall annually to experience the Tidal Basin and surrounding monuments and memorials; more than 1.5 million people visit during the approximate three-week National Cherry Blossom Festival to enjoy the stunning display of more than 3,700 cherry trees in bloom around the waters of the Tidal Basin.

In recent years, several factors have contributed to wear and tear on the Tidal Basin area, including record crowds that visit year-round to enjoy its scenery, monuments, and recreational opportunities. In addition to growing visitation, the escalating maintenance costs have left the NPS unable to keep pace with needed repairs at the Tidal Basin. The iconic cherry trees are under constant threat from trampled, compacted soils and the twice-daily tidal inundation of brackish (a mix of fresh and salt) water in some areas. Furthermore, a permanent design solution for site security is needed around the Jefferson Memorial. As a globally recognized American icon, the memorial is at an elevated risk due to its symbolic value and is currently protected by temporary concrete barriers (also known as “Jersey” barriers), which do not offer effective protection for the site.



FIGURE 1

Project Location

Tidal Basin | Development Concept Plan and Environmental Assessment
 National Mall and Memorial Parks | Washington, DC
 United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

With the plan, the NPS aims to enhance the circulation, hydrology, cultural and natural resource protection, event management, visitor facilities, and recreational opportunities at the Tidal Basin, while also integrating security improvements to ensure adequate protection for the Jefferson Memorial.

This EA considers two alternatives: the no action alternative and the proposed action (the plan). Under the no action alternative, the NPS would continue to manage the Tidal Basin area and Jefferson Memorial security in their current condition under existing management plans. The NPS would make minor improvements and repairs on an as-needed basis. Under the proposed action, the plan would provide direction for the long-term management and rehabilitation of the Tidal Basin cultural landscape, including enhanced security features at the Jefferson Memorial. These alternatives are further described in detail in “Chapter 2: Alternatives.”

The NPS has prepared this EA to assess the potential environmental impacts of implementing this plan in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 United States Code [USC] 4332[2] [C]); the 2025 Department of the Interior NEPA regulations (43 CFR Part 46); and NPS Director’s Order #12: *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis and Decision-Making* (NPS 2011) and the accompanying NEPA Handbook (NPS 2015).

PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

The purpose of this planning effort is to provide direction for the long-term management and rehabilitation of the Tidal Basin cultural landscape based upon the vision of the National Mall Plan and other planning documents.

The project will address:

- Multi-modal circulation and transportation
- Connectivity (including physical and visual connections)
- Conservation
- Landscape rehabilitation
- Infrastructure
- Protection of memorials and cultural landscape features
- Security
- Visitor experience, recreation, and services
- Seawall solutions and facilities
- Flexible public spaces

The existing conditions of the project area are representative of a landscape that faces overlapping challenges. The project is needed to address the following key issues:

- The National Mall accommodates approximately 36 million visitors annually, with more than 1.5 million visiting the Tidal Basin during the approximate three-week National Cherry Blossom Festival alone.
- The crowds result in compacted soils, lack of consistent ground cover, and exposed tree roots around the edge of the Tidal Basin.
- Tidal fluctuations flood portions of the land that edges the Tidal Basin twice daily, often leaving standing water and sediment on pedestrian walkways.

- The cherry trees around the edge of the Tidal Basin do not thrive due to compacted soils and the twice daily tidal flooding of brackish water.
- Water inundation during flooding and tree roots have damaged the existing seawalls and sidewalks, creating additional hazards for visitors.
- The memorials and surrounding infrastructure were designed to the existing seawall height. The increase in elevation of the seawall proposed by the seawalls project requires a comprehensive design solution for continuity and accessibility.
- The site security around the Jefferson Memorial remains a series of temporary Jersey barriers and requires a permanent design solution that is more compatible with the historic character of the designed landscape.
- Connections from the Tidal Basin area to adjacent areas of the District of Columbia are often lacking in terms of crosswalks and associated traffic signals and/or are insufficient and unsafe for the volume of pedestrian traffic.
- Heavy public use, ecological issues, and the area's physical connection to the surrounding city have altered the landscape from its original design intent.
- Growing visitation, escalating costs, and the lack of consistent federal funding has left the NPS unable to keep pace with needed repairs at the Tidal Basin.



Photo 1. Poor condition of one of the cherry trees along the Tidal Basin edge (photo by GWWO)



Photo 2. Temporary Jersey barriers at Jefferson Memorial (photo by Land Collective)

PROJECT AREA LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Included as part of West Potomac Park, the Tidal Basin lies within the southwest quadrant of Washington, DC, and is located just south of the National Mall and southwest of the White House. The project area is over 250 acres and includes the Tidal Basin itself as well as the memorials and landscapes immediately surrounding it, including the Jefferson Memorial. The project area is bounded to the west by the Potomac River and to the east by Raoul Wallenberg Place SW. See figure 1 above for a map of the project vicinity.

ISSUES AND IMPACT TOPICS RETAINED FOR DETAILED ANALYSIS

During the planning process, the NPS identified specific impact topics as critical to this project area. Impact topics are a means of organizing the discussion of issues and analysis of impacts. In the context of NEPA reviews, issues can be problems, concerns, conflicts, obstacles, or benefits that would result if the proposed action or alternatives, including the no action alternative, are implemented. During the scoping process, impact topics were either retained for further analysis or dismissed from further consideration. This section provides an overview of the impact topics that were retained for analysis. A topic was retained for analysis if it met one or more of the following conditions:

- the environmental impacts associated with the issue are central to the proposal are of critical importance;
- a detailed analysis of environmental impacts related to the issue is necessary to make a reasoned choice between alternatives;
- the environmental impacts associated with the issue are a point of contention among the public or other agencies; or
- there are potentially significant impacts to resources associated with the issue.

Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes – The Tidal Basin Landscape is a component landscape of the National Mall Historic District as well as the East and West Potomac Parks Historic District, both of which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). This landscape includes several contributing features such as monuments, memorials, markers, vegetation, circulation elements, and views/viewsheds. The Thomas Jefferson Memorial and Landscape also exists within the project area and is similarly listed in the NRHP. The proposed action has the potential to reconfigure some of these elements and modify the historic districts, cultural landscapes, memorials, and individual resources listed in the NRHP, resulting in short-term adverse and long-term beneficial effects to historic resources and cultural landscapes. Therefore, the potential impacts are analyzed in detail in chapter 3 in the “Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes” section.

Visitor Use and Experience – The proposed action would change aspects of the visitor experience within the Tidal Basin area and result in long-term beneficial impacts and short-term adverse impacts on visitor safety, circulation, viewsheds, and enjoyment. The potential impacts to visitor use and experience are described in detail in chapter 3 in the “Visitor Use and Experience” section.

Circulation: Traffic and Transportation – The proposed action would alter roads, parking, and circulation routes within the project area resulting in both short- and long-term impacts. Specifically, some roads would be removed altogether, and parking lots and vehicle, bicycle/scooter (multi-modal) and pedestrian circulations patterns would be considerably modified around the Tidal Basin and Jefferson Memorial. The potential impacts on circulation are described in detail in chapter 3 in the “Circulation: Traffic and Transportation” section.

IMPACT TOPICS DISMISSED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS

The NPS has dismissed the following issues and associated impact topics from detailed analysis for the reasons provided below. An impact topic was initially considered but dismissed from detailed analysis if it did not contribute to the factors outlined above.

Archeological Resources – No archeological sites are known to occur within the project area. Furthermore, the project area consists of fill dredged from the Potomac River by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to create East and West Potomac Parks. The man-made land was also largely disturbed through the development of existing memorials and visitor amenities. Therefore, the potential to impact archeological resources is low.

If an unanticipated discovery takes place, the NPS would reinitiate Section 106 consultation. For these reasons, the proposed action is not expected to affect these sites. Therefore, the NPS has dismissed archeology from further analysis.

Special Status Species, Wildlife, and Wildlife Habitat – The following species are known to occur in the project area:

- Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*): federally endangered
- Tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*): proposed endangered
- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus Plexippus*): proposed threatened
- Shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*): federally endangered
- Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*) – all five Distinct Population Sections (DPS):
 - o New York Bight, Chesapeake Bay, South Atlantic and Carolina DPSs: federally endangered
 - o Gulf of Maine DPS: federally threatened

Although sturgeon and designated critical habitat exist in the project area, it is not possible for them to access the Tidal Basin and therefore an analysis of this species is not necessary to make a reasoned choice between alternatives. Measures to avoid impacts on bat species and the monarch butterfly would be developed through the future design process for implementation-level projects.

Adverse impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat are unlikely given that the wildlife species found in this area have largely adapted to the urbanized setting of the project area. Construction activities and removal of some vegetation may temporarily displace some wildlife that use habitat in the project area, but it is expected they would relocate temporarily and return to the area once the project was complete. Therefore, the NPS has dismissed Special Status Species, Wildlife, and Wildlife Habitat from further analysis.

Floodplains – The project area is within the regulated one-percent annual chance floodplain (i.e., 100-year floodplain) of the Potomac River. The proposed action could result in disturbances during construction and may also add minor amounts of fill within the regulated floodplain. However, any floodplain encroachments would be minimal in relation to the overall area of the floodplain. The proposed action would not increase floodplain elevations or velocities upstream or downstream or encourage occupancy of the floodplain. Although elements of the proposed action would include adding new structures to the floodplain (e.g., pedestrian bridges), these structures would conform to floodproofing/flood protection measures per Executive Order 11988. Furthermore, NPS Procedural Manual #77-2, which guides NPS floodplain protection and management actions, excepts actions that apply to “certain park functions that are often located near water for the enjoyment of visitors but require little physical development and do not involve overnight occupation” (NPS 2002). Based on these considerations, the proposed

project would not negatively impact human health, capital investment, or natural and beneficial floodplain values. Therefore, this plan would conform to the requirements of Executive Order 11988 and NPS DO #77-2 and is dismissed from further analysis.

Wetlands and Waters of the US – Executive Order 11990, “Protection of Wetlands,” and NPS DO #77-1: *Wetland Protection* define the NPS goal to maintain and preserve wetland areas. Small wetlands that had formed in the project area behind the seawalls where surface water ponded were designated as incidental by the NPS and addressed by the seawalls project. The seawalls project will fill behind the seawalls to establish positive drainage and discourage ponding of water, thereby removing them from the analysis. Furthermore, upon implementation of the elements described in this plan, the NPS would adhere to Sections 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, would obtain all necessary federal and state permits for proposed actions occurring in wetlands, and adhere to applicable requirements set forth in the permits. Adherence to the requirements of NPS Procedural Manual #77-1 and applicable federal and local permits and regulations would ensure that the proposed action would avoid wetlands and minimize unavoidable wetland impacts to the maximum extent practicable. Due to the lack of impacts expected to wetlands and waters of the US associated with the proposed action, the NPS dismissed this topic from further analysis.

Water Quality – Soil and sediment erosion best practices would be in place during future construction activities to prevent increased sediment from entering the water. If the NPS determines during future project design that construction activities would be required within the Tidal Basin or Potomac River, additional measures may be developed to avoid and mitigate any impacts on water quality. Therefore, an analysis of water quality is not necessary to make a reasoned choice between alternatives, and this topic has been dismissed from further analysis.

Vegetation – Vegetation in the project area is primarily composed of a mix of landscaped trees, shrubs, and lawns. While impacts on the cherry trees and other vegetation of the formal organized landscape would occur under the proposed action, these impacts are not central to the proposal. The key issue is vegetation as part of the cultural landscape, rather than as a stand-alone natural resource. As such, the impacts of the project on vegetation, including cherry trees, within the project area are analyzed as part of the cultural landscape under the impact topic of Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes in chapter 3.

The proposed tidal shelf planted with low-maintenance native species in the north lobe of the Tidal Basin would provide a minor benefit to vegetation resources but would not substantially increase the ecological value of the area. Other impacts to vegetation resources would be minor and construction-related. Therefore, the NPS has dismissed the impact topic of vegetation from further analysis.

CHAPTER 2: ALTERNATIVES

This section of the EA describes the alternatives considered for the Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan project. It also includes a brief discussion of the rationale for eliminating other alternative elements that were not considered in detail. This EA evaluates two alternatives: “Alternative 1: No Action” and “Alternative 2: Proposed Action.” The proposed action is the adoption of a Development Concept Plan, which is a conceptual design-level action. If the plan is ultimately selected for implementation, additional feasibility studies, more detailed design and planning work, and additional environmental documentation may be needed before any specific elements of the plan can be carried out. Thus, full execution of the approved plan could occur many years in the future.

The elements of these alternatives are described in the following sections. Impacts associated with the alternatives are described in “Chapter 3: Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences.”

PROJECT AREA ZONES

For the purposes of this plan and for ease of reader comprehension, the project area is divided into four cardinal zones ordered in a clockwise direction around the Tidal Basin. Their locations are summarized in table 1 below. Figure 2 provides an overview of all zones within the project area and figures 3-6 show a detailed view of each specific zone.

TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF ZONES

Zone	Zone Description	Key Existing Areas within Zone
Northeast Zone	North lobe to the Outlet Bridge	• Floral Library • Food kiosk • Paddle boat dock • Rugby Field • Kutz Bridge
Southeast Zone	From the Outlet Bridge to the Inlet Bridge	• Thomas Jefferson Memorial • Food kiosk • Inlet and Outlet Bridges
Southwest Zone	Inlet Bridge to West Basin Drive SW	• Japanese Pagoda • Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial • Ballfields
Northwest Zone	West Basin Drive SW and West Potomac Park Drive SW to Kutz Bridge	• Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial • Japanese Lantern • Recreational fields

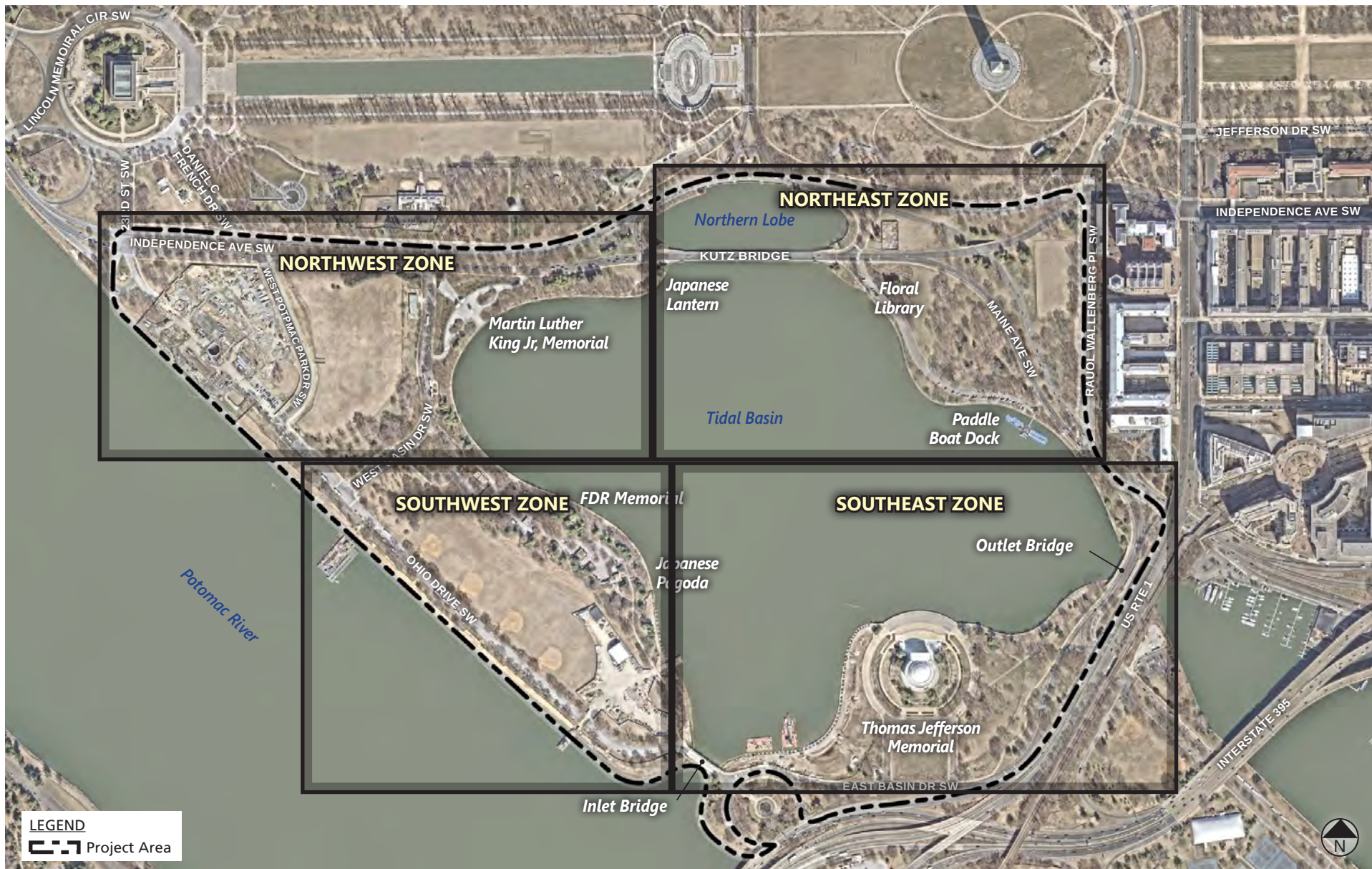


FIGURE 2

Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan Zones

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Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan Zones - Northeast Zone

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FIGURE 4

Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan Zones - Southeast Zone

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FIGURE 5

Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan Zones - Southwest Zone

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FIGURE 6

Tidal Basin Development Concept Plan Zones - Northwest Zone

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ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

The no action alternative represents a continuation of the current management operations and conditions of the Tidal Basin and Jefferson Memorial within the park. The no action alternative provides a basis for comparing the management direction and environmental consequences of the proposed action.

Under the no action alternative, the NPS would continue managing the Tidal Basin in accordance with existing plans and maintenance routines, with repairs to the Tidal Basin area being made as funding allows. The Jefferson Memorial would continue to be secured by temporary Jersey barriers. Under the no action alternative, the NPS would not satisfy the MOA requirement of resolving adverse effects resulting from the project for the Rehabilitation of Tidal Basin and West Potomac Park Seawalls. The NPS is undertaking a separate project to replace existing comfort stations throughout the park. Several of these replaced comfort stations would be located within the project area.

The following descriptions represent the baseline conditions which would be maintained or retained under the no action alternative in each zone.

Northeast Zone

In the Northeast Zone, existing features would remain in their current locations. The existing parking lot would stay situated along the northeastern edge of the Tidal Basin, limiting open space and pedestrian movement within this zone, and within the vista between the White House and the Jefferson Memorial. The Floral Library would remain just south of the existing walkway and bounded to the east by Maine Avenue SW, limiting its connectivity to the rest of the Tidal Basin area and its prominence to visitors. The number of cherry trees would not be increased, and they would continue to experience root trampling and brackish water inundation from the Tidal Basin. Pedestrian pathways would remain unchanged, limiting open movement through various elements of the landscape. Bicycle and pedestrian paths to adjacent areas from the northeast zone would remain disconnected or insufficient for the current traffic volume. The configuration of Maine Avenue SW would remain in its current form and new bike lanes and pedestrian walkways would not be added. The Kutz Bridge roadways and sidewalks would not be realigned, and a new parallel pedestrian-only bridge would not be added to cross the northern lobe. The northern lobe would maintain its existing bathymetry and no tidal shelf would be created in this area. Pedestrian connections and bike lane connections would not be added to the existing transportation network here.

Southeast Zone

Under the no action alternative, pedestrian congestion, safety, and Jefferson Memorial security issues would continue to pose challenges in this zone. Pathway networks would remain limited so that pedestrians would have to continue crossing the Inlet and Outlet bridges via a narrow sidewalk also shared with cyclists. There would continue to be a lack of new pathway networks and limited connectivity between the basin edge, crosswalks at Ohio Drive SW, and the Jefferson Memorial lawn panel. Without the planting of a landscape buffer, views and noises from the adjacent Route 1 corridor would be present in this zone. The number of cherry trees would remain the same and new evergreen trees would not be planted.

Security and access around the Jefferson Memorial would remain the same, with the temporary Jersey barriers serving as the primary security element and not in compliance with standards established by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), a division of the US Department of Homeland Security whose mission is to reduce security risks to physical infrastructure. The bus drop-off configuration would also remain in place to the west of the memorial on East Basin Drive. The existing bike lane on East Basin Drive SW would remain in place and would continue to have limited connections to Hains Point and the western side of the Tidal Basin. A new comfort station would still be replaced as part of a separate project and would remain in the same location.

Southwest Zone

In the southwest zone, pedestrian and bicycle paths would remain in their current layout with no new paths added, and connections to the broader transportation network in the area would remain limited. The surrounding recreational fields would continue to be accessed via existing channels, with no new pedestrian or bike paths leading to these areas. The Japanese Pagoda would remain in its current location, slightly removed from key pedestrian routes and in a location that experiences regular flooding. The cherry tree canopy would not be expanded to extend beyond the FDR Memorial. The existing plaza would not be relocated at the base of the stairs near the FDR Memorial. Visitor features such as a formalized overlook adjacent to the Inlet Bridge with views up Maryland Avenue towards the US Capitol Building would not be added, and planting along the Potomac River would not occur.

Northwest Zone

Under the no action alternative, existing connections and roadways would remain in their existing layouts. No new bike paths would be added, and crosswalks would remain in their current locations. The arrangement of multipurpose fields would not be modified, and the new parking area would not be added. A comfort station would still be added in this zone as part of a separate project. Parking along West Basin Drive SW would remain in place so that no new rideshare drop-off is created. No flexible use plaza would be added and the NPS would continue to stage events using existing spaces available in this area. Similarly, no new pedestrian paths would be added to connect features in this area so that access and routes to memorials would be retained in their existing configuration. No new cherry trees would be planted, and the existing canopy would be maintained in its current form.

ALTERNATIVE 2: TIDAL BASIN DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN (PROPOSED ACTION AND THE NPS PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE)

The proposed action is the result of an iterative planning process through which a range of options for the design elements were considered. These options were organized in the form of three concepts, each guided by a central theme, which were presented to the public during the scoping process and considered by the interdisciplinary team. The themes of the three concepts were related to 1) expanding connectivity, 2) enhancing the visitor experience and cultural resources, and 3) managing ecological impacts and visitors' interactions with the water's edge. The NPS then considered all public and internal scoping comments on these concepts to develop the proposed action. The proposed action described below includes a combination of various elements from the initial concepts considered that the NPS believes best meet the purpose of and need for the project.

The proposed action is the adoption of a Development Concept Plan for the Tidal Basin area of the park. This plan would fulfill the stipulations of the MOA to resolve the adverse effects resulting from the separate project for the Rehabilitation of Tidal Basin and West Potomac Park Seawalls. The plan would provide direction for the long-term management and rehabilitation of the Tidal Basin cultural landscape, focusing on five primary elements: multi-modal circulation and transportation; vegetation rehabilitation; protection of memorials and cultural landscape features; security; and visitor experience, recreation, and services. A summary of the overall elements included in the proposed action is below, followed by descriptions of the specific actions that would occur in each project area zone (see also figure 7 for a conceptual layout).

Overview of Elements

Under the proposed action, the NPS would expand the connectivity of multi-modal circulation, transportation, and infrastructure throughout the project area. Improving pedestrian circulation and connectivity would be prioritized by increasing the number of pathways around the Tidal Basin edge and within interior landscapes. Pathway widths would vary throughout the project area between 6 and 12 feet, depending on location. Areas of open circulation, including grassy areas and plazas, would be included throughout the project area. The NPS would, after conducting traffic studies and interagency coordination, also modify existing roadway crosswalks and add new crosswalks to provide more direct access to highly desirable locations within the Tidal Basin. The NPS would also increase the amount of dedicated bicycle lanes throughout the project area as well as increase the connection points around the site with bicycle parking and bicycle/scooter access.

Current vehicle parking capacities within the project area would be maintained by relocating surface lots and maintaining the current parallel parking or street adjacent parking stalls that comply with Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standard (ABAAS) requirements. Parking lot locations would be relocated to facilitate views, provide more direct access to destination points around the Tidal Basin used by the public, and create flexible space for use by the NPS during programmed events such as the National Cherry Blossom Festival.

LEGEND

1. TIDAL BASIN (WATER)
2. FLORAL LIBRARY
3. CHERRY TREES (THROUGHOUT)
4. COMFORT STATION
5. PADDLE BOAT DOCK
6. TIERED SEATING
7. BIKE PATH
8. PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY
9. PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
10. PARKING
11. DROP-OFF
12. MULTI-USE FIELD (5 TOTAL)
13. SOFTBALL FIELD (8 TOTAL)
14. RUGBY FIELD
15. CRICKET FIELD
16. TIDAL LANDSCAPE
17. ROADWAY ADJUSTMENT

- PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION
- BIKE/SCOOTER CIRCULATION



FIGURE 7

Preferred Alternative Conceptual Map

Tidal Basin | Development Concept Plan and Environmental Assessment
 National Mall and Memorial Parks | Washington, DC
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Under the proposed action, the extent of cherry tree plantings would be expanded beyond its existing presence along the north shore, roadways, and clusters along the Tidal Basin's edge, into adjacent park spaces and across roadways. This would increase the overhead tree canopy and spread the concentration of cherry trees outward. Expanding the ring of cherry trees outward would introduce new groupings that are located further away from the Tidal Basin edge and thus not exposed to twice-daily inundation by brackish water, like the existing trees in this area. This frequent flooding is harmful to trees as the salt content found in brackish water inhibits the roots' ability to extract water from the soil (USDA NRCS 2009), which can lead to dehydration. Under the proposed action, some cherry trees would also be removed to accommodate modifications to the layout of pathways in the project area. However, tree removal would be minimized as much as possible, and the oldest, most mature trees (such as those near the Japanese Lantern) would be preserved. In addition, cherry trees would be added beyond the number removed, along with other native evergreen and deciduous species, expanding the overhead tree canopy throughout the Tidal Basin area.

Under the proposed action, the number of flexible public spaces would increase to accommodate a wide variety of national celebrations, First Amendment gatherings, recreational uses, and other permitted activities. The number of existing sports fields would be maintained, though some fields would be relocated to support other site improvements such as pedestrian circulation and roadway adjustments. Due to the limited area available for recreation, some fields would be designed as multipurpose to accommodate different sports within the same field. Additionally, the arrangement of pedestrian paths and overhead tree canopy would create outdoor spaces that can be used for gathering and picnicking both proximate to the memorial landscapes and within secluded areas removed from typical tourist destinations.

The NPS is undertaking a separate project to replace existing comfort stations throughout the park and the new comfort stations would be incorporated into the design of the development concept plan elements. Specific locations within the project area are discussed in the zone descriptions below.

Northeast Zone Elements

In the northeast zone, the existing parking lot along the Tidal Basin edge would be removed and replaced with waterfront open space with a terraced seating element adjacent to the paddle boat dock. The existing comfort station and plaza would be replaced, and the paddle boat dock would be reconfigured. To maintain parking capacity, event staging space, and curbside access, a new surface lot would be added parallel to Maine Avenue SW, which would also include a vehicular drop-off area. See figure 8 for additional detail about proposed elements in this zone. Parking areas and roads would be screened, in part, through grading and plantings.

More cherry trees would be planted between the Tidal Basin edge and Raoul Wallenberg Place SW, expanding the canopy of cherry blossoms. Additional pedestrian pathways would allow open movement within a mown lawn and through the new cherry blossom canopy. Trees would be planted to showcase views of the Tidal Basin and surrounding memorials while also incorporating design characteristics from the original planting design. Tree planting would avoid the established 150-foot-wide viewshed corridor between the Jefferson Memorial and the White House. Land would be graded to create a high point for overlooking the Tidal Basin and screen the proposed parking lot from waterfront paths.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE



LEGEND

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. TIDAL BASIN (WATER) | 8. PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY | 15. CRICKET FIELD |
| 2. FLORAL LIBRARY | 9. PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE | 16. TIDAL LANDSCAPE |
| 3. CHERRY TREES (THROUGHOUT) | 10. PARKING | 17. ROADWAY ADJUSTMENT |
| 4. COMFORT STATION | 11. DROP-OFF | PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION |
| 5. PADDLE BOAT DOCK | 12. MULTI-USE FIELD (5 TOTAL) | BIKE/SCOOTER CIRCULATION |
| 6. TIERED SEATING | 13. SOFTBALL FIELD (8 TOTAL) | |
| 7. BIKE PATH | 14. RUGBY FIELD | |

FIGURE 8

Existing Conditions and Preferred Alternative - Northeast Zone

Tidal Basin | Development Concept Plan and Environmental Assessment
National Mall and Memorial Parks | Washington, DC
United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

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The existing Floral Library would be better integrated into the pathway system by shifting the planting beds roughly 50 to 100 feet and reconfiguring them to bridge either side of a main path within the viewshed of the Jefferson Memorial, increasing visitor awareness and connectivity to the larger space. The vegetated median along Maine Avenue SW at the Raoul Wallenberg Place SW traffic signal would be removed, resulting in a singular crosswalk that could be crossed in one traffic light cycle. The existing rugby field would remain in place along with the existing sidewalk and bike lane along the western edge of Raoul Wallenberg Place SW. Additional bicycle racks, bikeshare stations, and micromobility (which includes small low-speed vehicles such as electric scooters) corrals would be placed around the comfort station as a key bicycle parking feature for the site. The intersection of Maine Avenue SW and Ohio Drive SW would be reconfigured to remove the vehicular through-lane and create one signalized intersection. The through-lane and associated medians would instead be recaptured for bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways.

The roadway and sidewalks on the Kutz Bridge would be realigned to shift all existing sidewalk space to the south. This would allow the continuation of a bicycle lane along Independence Avenue SW eastbound to connect with Raoul Wallenberg Place SW beyond. Pedestrian access would be facilitated by a new pedestrian-only bridge that runs parallel to but separate from the Kutz Bridge to the south. This bridge would sit lower than the Kutz Bridge to minimize visual impacts and allow visitors to get closer to the water. Within the north lobe, a tidal shelf would be created to bring back the look of the historic tidal flats and to manage stormwater from outlet pipes along the north edge of the Tidal Basin. The tidal shelf would be planted with native, flood tolerant plants that require minimal maintenance. Where the Kutz Bridge connects to the northeast corner, the existing pedestrian path towards the Washington Monument would remain, and a new bicycle lane would connect the existing network north of Independence Avenue SW to the Tidal Basin Loop Trail, which circles the perimeter of the Tidal Basin.

Optional Elements of the Northeast Zone

The NPS may also consider alternative options to some of the proposed action elements designed for this zone. These areas would require additional future study for the NPS to determine preferred elements and are described below.

Maine Avenue SW Connection

In addition to removing the vegetated median along Maine Avenue SW, the NPS would remove the section of Maine Avenue SW between Independence Avenue SW and Raoul Wallenberg Place SW. Removal of this roadway would increase the amount of space dedicated to the pedestrian experience and bicycle lane connection around the Tidal Basin. Additional parking spaces could be added, or existing parking could be configured more effectively for use during programmed events. The area dedicated to pedestrian plazas would also be increased with this added space, while the existing rugby field would remain in place. This option would also provide additional space for rideshare drop-off, bus drop-off, and/or a potential city bus stop in the future. If the NPS pursued this option, it would be necessary to undertake a traffic study of the area to explore vehicle conflicts, roadway configuration, and access, prior to implementation.

Tidal Landscape

Rather than reintroduce a vegetated tidal shelf in the northern lobe, this area would be left as is and the existing bathymetry of the Tidal Basin would remain unchanged.

Southeast Zone Elements

In the southeast zone (figure 9) increased pathway connections around the Jefferson Memorial Landscape and the addition of pedestrian-only bridges adjacent to both the Inlet and Outlet bridges would address pedestrian congestion. Pedestrian bridges would be lower in elevation than the existing vehicular bridges. Existing pedestrian space along the vehicular bridge would be dedicated to bicycle circulation. The pathway networks under the proposed action would increase connectivity along the basin edge to key locations such as crosswalks at Ohio Drive SW, the replaced comfort station, and towards the Jefferson Memorial lawn panel.

Additional cherry trees would be planted throughout this zone in clusters (also known as “glades”) that would increase the overall canopy while maintaining and framing viewsheds. A landscape buffer of evergreen and deciduous trees would be planted along the southern border of this space to mitigate the view and noise from the nearby Route 1 highway corridor and rail corridor. Views into the Jefferson Memorial from the adjacent landscape spaces would be maintained and the planting of evergreen trees within the memorial itself would reinforce the intentional framing of the memorial. At the Jefferson Memorial, vehicular access around the lawn panel would be narrowed from 40 feet to the minimum width of 20 feet required for emergency vehicles, which would create an increased lawn panel size for visitor use.

The bus drop-off area would be moved to the east side of the memorial, giving buses direct access to the Route 1 entrance ramp. The relocated drop-off would be approximately 200 feet long and over 30 feet wide—large enough for three 55-foot-long buses, with room to navigate around each other. A curb would separate the drop-off area from the roadway.

The existing comfort station at the Jefferson Memorial would be replaced with a new comfort station, to be located between the bus drop-off and the lawn panel. The space west of the memorial currently used as the bus drop-off area would be converted to permit parking or a stop for city and sightseeing buses.

The existing bike lane in this area would be moved off the roadway, with a road crossing to connect the existing bike network across the Potomac River including the Mount Vernon Trail. Bicycle parking, bikeshare stations, and micromobility corrals would be located adjacent to the comfort station, with added bicycle parking also provided closer to the Jefferson Memorial itself.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE



LEGEND

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. TIDAL BASIN (WATER) | 8. PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY | 15. CRICKET FIELD |
| 2. FLORAL LIBRARY | 9. PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE | 16. TIDAL LANDSCAPE |
| 3. CHERRY TREES (THROUGHOUT) | 10. PARKING | 17. ROADWAY ADJUSTMENT |
| 4. COMFORT STATION | 11. DROP-OFF | PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION |
| 5. PADDLE BOAT DOCK | 12. MULTI-USE FIELD (5 TOTAL) | BIKE/SCOOTER CIRCULATION |
| 6. TIERED SEATING | 13. SOFTBALL FIELD (8 TOTAL) | |
| 7. BIKE PATH | 14. RUGBY FIELD | |

FIGURE 9

Existing Conditions and Preferred Alternative - Southeast Zone

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National Mall and Memorial Parks | Washington, DC
United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

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Jefferson Memorial Security

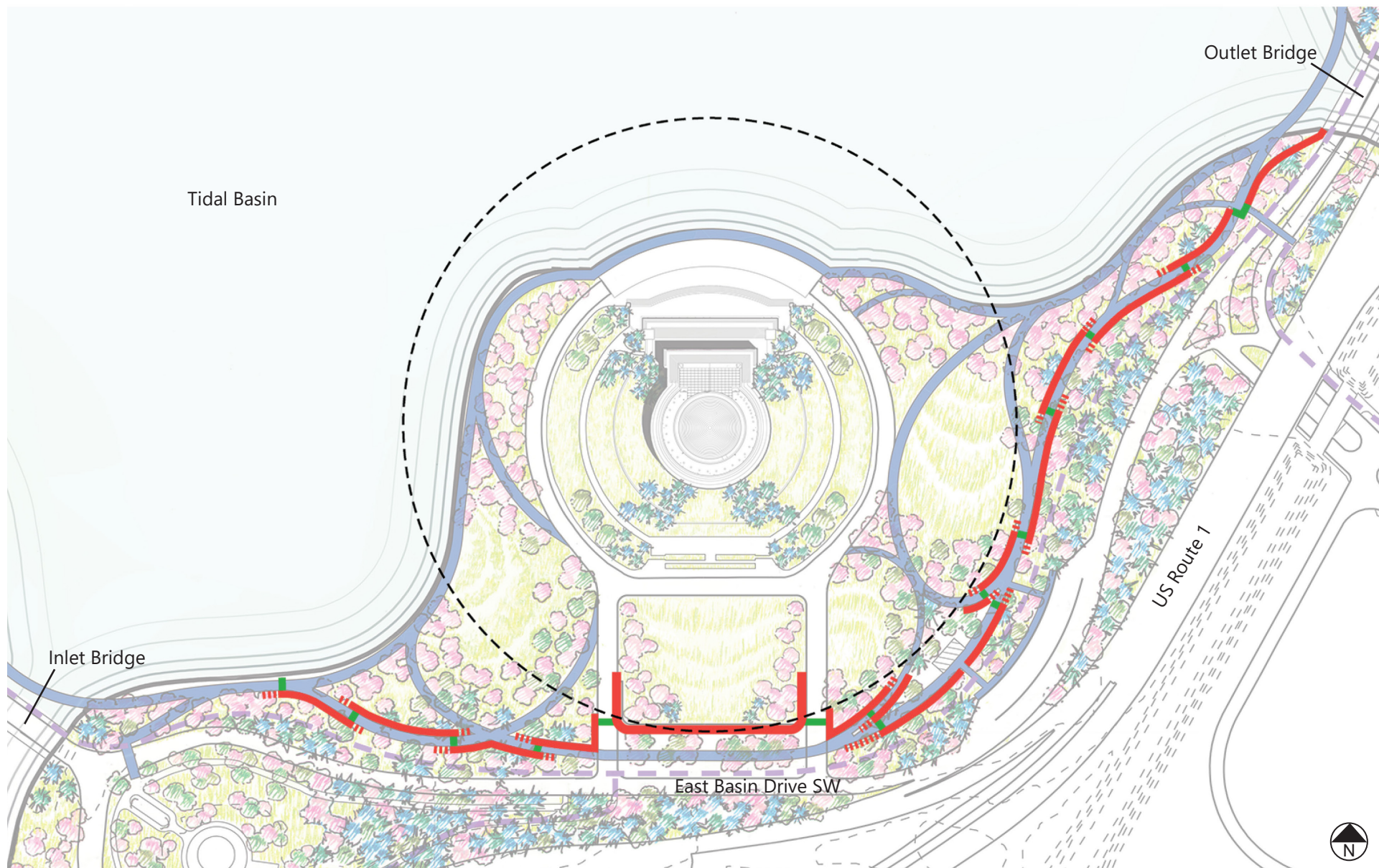
Landscape changes discussed above are closely tied to the Jefferson Memorial security elements (figure 10). Under the proposed action, the temporary Jersey barriers that currently surround the southern half of the Jefferson Memorial would be removed and replaced with permanent protective features.

A system of security walls and removable bollards would be integrated with the pedestrian pathways and site grading to form a continuous 2.5-foot-high barrier between the Outlet Bridge guardrail and the Tidal Basin edge west of the Jefferson Memorial, roughly parallel to East Basin Drive SW. Each security wall section would be gradually tapered at either end to allow gaps wide enough for maintenance vehicles, with removable bollards spaced no more than 4 feet apart to prevent unauthorized entry. Integrating the site walls with the pedestrian pathways would allow for an accessible path to extend throughout the site. Grading would create a layered effect that allows multiple access points to either side of the barrier. The site walls would slope inward from bottom to top (or battered) to minimize their visual impact.

At the southern lawn panel, a reinforced wall approximately 3.5-feet high would serve as both a secure edge and seat wall, angled to direct views back to the Jefferson Memorial. Removable bollards would be added to close the gap at the access drives around the lawn. The perimeter of the proposed wall boundary would meet the minimum 400-foot protection radius required for the site. All protective elements would be integrated with the existing landscape and designed to meet current standards established by CISA. To reduce maintenance needs and focus the landscape on the visitor experience, areas north of the secured edge would remain in a mown lawn condition, while the areas south of the secured edge would be planted as a native meadow.

Optional Elements of the Southeast Zone

The NPS may also consider an alternative option to shifting the bus drop-off area as proposed above. Instead of shifting the drop-off area to the east of the Jefferson Memorial, the existing drop-off configuration would be maintained west of the Jefferson Memorial at East Basin Drive SW in its current condition, along with ABAAS and permit parking. The bicycle lane would remain adjacent to the roadway, with pedestrian connections to the Jefferson Memorial Landscape beyond. Under this option, and in the absence of shifting the bus drop-off to the east, the pathway network, security walls, and bicycle lane would utilize this space on the eastern side of the memorial. The proposed new comfort station would remain in its existing location on the west side of the memorial, proximate to both the drop-off point and gathering space. If this option was pursued, the NPS would complete a study to analyze vehicular and bicycle traffic impacts, considering the existing congestion and safety concerns in this area.



- 2'-6" SECURITY WALL
- SECURITY BOLLARDS
- - - - - TAPERED SECURITY WALL
- - - - - MIN. SECURITY SETBACK

FIGURE 10

Jefferson Memorial Security Elements

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 United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

Southwest Zone Elements

In the southwest zone, (figure 11) a formalized overlook with a plaza and seating would be added adjacent to the Inlet Bridge to emphasize the viewshed up Maryland Avenue SW to the US Capitol Building. New pedestrian paths would be incorporated southwest of the FDR Memorial designed to take advantage of available views and establish overlook points towards the Potomac River. Existing plazas at the base of the FDR path would be raised in elevation to match the height of the first stair landing so they are level with the ground, which will be higher from the seawalls project. By shifting these plazas back to meet the existing stair, there would be space to widen the Tidal Basin edge path. Due to frequent flooding, the Japanese Pagoda would be moved away from the Tidal Basin edge to a location featured along the primary pedestrian pathway.

The cherry tree canopy would be increased beyond the FDR Memorial to the southwest to extend along the Potomac River and expand the Tidal Basin experience. New plantings along the full extent of the Potomac River would include cherry trees as well as deciduous and evergreen trees arranged into small groupings designed to provide both shaded areas and open lawns for picnicking and other recreational activities.

The six existing ballfields along Ohio Drive SW would remain but would be reconfigured to accommodate multipurpose sport use and new pedestrian paths and bicycle routes to the fields. A sidewalk measuring 6 to 8 feet in width would be added along Ohio Drive SW, while the existing walking path would be shifted to the edge of the river and bicycle lane would remain along the road.

Northwest Zone Elements

In the northwest zone (see figure 12), the portion of Ohio Drive SW between its intersections with West Potomac Park Drive SW and Independence Avenue SW would be removed. Ohio Drive SW would be realigned along with West Potomac Park Drive SW to create a single vehicular connection to Independence Avenue SW, aligned with Daniel French Street SW, and more open recreational space between the roadway and the Potomac River.

This area would contain two ballfields and five multipurpose fields, with four of the fields arranged within a larger rectangle east of West Potomac Park Drive SW. A parking area south of the multiuse fields would provide vehicular spots that would compensate for the proposed removal of existing parking lots in other areas. This new parking lot could also be utilized as a staging area for programmed events. A comfort station would also be added south of these multipurpose fields. The realigned roadway just north of the comfort station could include a city bus stop arranged adjacent to the comfort station crosswalk, details of which would be determined during a future design phase of the project.

Along West Basin Drive SW, a vehicle pull-off would be included for rideshare drop-off, providing more direct access to the MLK Jr. Memorial. The pull-off would be created by removing the parallel parking spots in this area and relocating but retaining parking capacity in the proposed new surface parking lot. A flexible-use plaza would be added next to the rideshare drop-off to increase the ability of the NPS to stage events in this area. Pedestrian pathways would be added to navigate through the space and allow access to the nearby rideshare drop-off and the MLK Jr. Memorial, while also providing a direct connection to the Tidal Basin edge between the FDR and MLK Jr. Memorials. Pathways would be realigned beyond the MLK Jr.

Memorial, so that the Japanese Lantern and First Cherry Trees plaque would be better incorporated into the new pathway network. This realignment would take place with only slight modifications to minimize impacts to the older cherry trees in this zone.

A new bicycle path would be constructed between the Potomac River and the proposed baseball fields, connecting across Independence Avenue SW at the previous intersection of Ohio Drive SW. A bicycle lane would be added on the south side of Independence Avenue SW, made possible by narrowing the existing median by 10 feet.

The existing pedestrian crosswalks across Independence Avenue SW at the MLK Jr. Memorial would remain, but the crosswalks next to the Kutz Bridge would be relocated to the east to connect directly to the existing pedestrian path along the Tidal Basin, reducing the distance pedestrians need to cross. The eastbound turn lane at Independence Avenue SW would be shifted east to create additional space for pedestrian walkways while still maintaining vehicular access. Additional crosswalks would be included at the north edge of the Tidal Basin to give direct access to the World War II Memorial drop-off area and create a clear pathway towards the Washington Monument.

At the MLK Jr. Memorial, the NPS would consider ways to construct a new pedestrian pathway after implementation of the seawalls project that would avoid or minimize physical changes to the memorial as well as the Tidal Basin edge. The NPS would undertake additional planning, study, design, and consultation regarding ways to continue the pedestrian walkway, including as a potential cantilever over the Tidal Basin edge.

Similar to other zones, additional cherry trees would be planted to expand the canopy ring.

Optional Elements of the Northwest Zone

Multipurpose Fields Area

The NPS may consider retaining the existing configuration of the multipurpose fields in the northwest zone that are bounded by Independence Avenue SW on the north, East Basin Drive SW on the east, and the proposed realignment of West Potomac Park Drive SW on the west. Under this option, the multipurpose fields would not be reconfigured and the parking lot and drop-off areas proposed above would not be constructed to allow for a more flexible future use of the area.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE



LEGEND

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. TIDAL BASIN (WATER) | 8. PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY | 15. CRICKET FIELD |
| 2. FLORAL LIBRARY | 9. PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE | 16. TIDAL LANDSCAPE |
| 3. CHERRY TREES (THROUGHOUT) | 10. PARKING | 17. ROADWAY ADJUSTMENT |
| 4. COMFORT STATION | 11. DROP-OFF | PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION |
| 5. PADDLE BOAT DOCK | 12. MULTI-USE FIELD (5 TOTAL) | BIKE/SCOOTER CIRCULATION |
| 6. TIERED SEATING | 13. SOFTBALL FIELD (8 TOTAL) | |
| 7. BIKE PATH | 14. RUGBY FIELD | |

FIGURE 11

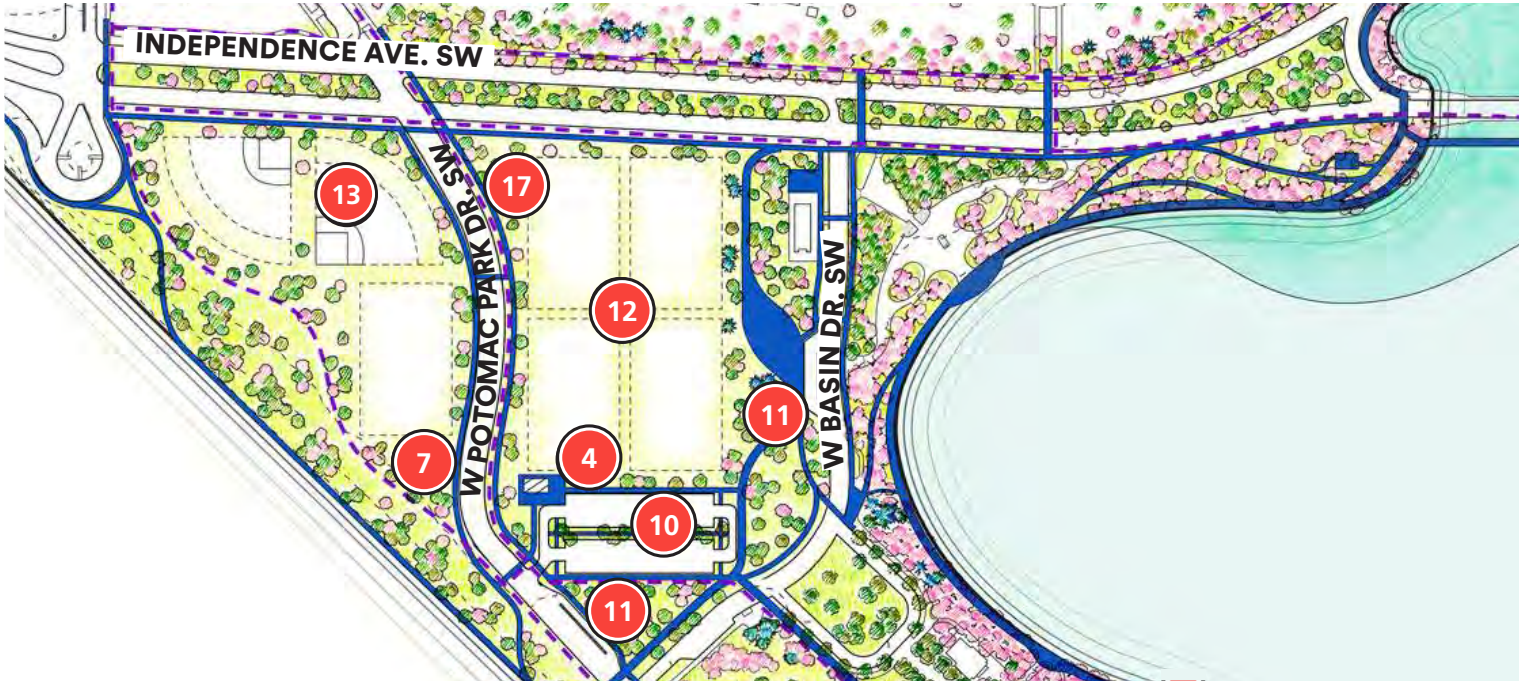
Existing Conditions and Preferred Alternative - Southwest Zone

Tidal Basin | Development Concept Plan and Environmental Assessment
National Mall and Memorial Parks | Washington, DC
United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

EXISTING CONDITIONS



PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE



LEGEND

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. TIDAL BASIN (WATER) | 8. PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY | 15. CRICKET FIELD |
| 2. FLORAL LIBRARY | 9. PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE | 16. TIDAL LANDSCAPE |
| 3. CHERRY TREES (THROUGHOUT) | 10. PARKING | 17. ROADWAY ADJUSTMENT |
| 4. COMFORT STATION | 11. DROP-OFF | — PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION |
| 5. PADDLE BOAT DOCK | 12. MULTI-USE FIELD (5 TOTAL) | - - - BIKE/SCOOTER CIRCULATION |
| 6. TIERED SEATING | 13. SOFTBALL FIELD (8 TOTAL) | |
| 7. BIKE PATH | 14. RUGBY FIELD | |

FIGURE 12

Existing Conditions and Preferred Alternative - Northwest Zone

Tidal Basin | Development Concept Plan and Environmental Assessment
National Mall and Memorial Parks | Washington, DC
United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

CHAPTER 3: AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter describes the current environmental conditions in and surrounding the Tidal Basin as they relate to each impact topic retained for analysis, as outlined in chapter 1. These conditions serve as a baseline for understanding the resources that could be impacted by implementing the plan. Reasonably foreseeable environmental trends were determined for each impact topic. This chapter then analyzes the beneficial and adverse impacts that would result from implementing any of the alternatives considered in this EA.

HISTORIC RESOURCES AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Affected Environment

The study area for historic resources and cultural landscapes includes the entire project area (the area where physical changes would occur) plus the area from which the proposed changes would be visible. This overall study area is referred to as the Area of Potential Effect (APE) and is shown on figure 13 below.

The APE contains numerous overlapping historic districts and cultural landscapes, and many resources within these boundaries contribute to the significance of multiple properties. Figure 13 shows an overview map of these properties within the APE, and table 2 provides a list of historic properties within the APE and their status as individually listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP and/or contributing to a historic district or landscape. A description of the historic resources and cultural landscapes considered in this EA is presented below, with a focus on relevant elements of those properties that may be affected by the project. The discussion starts with the resources located, either fully or partially, within the project area where physical changes proposed for the undertaking would occur. A summary of resources within the APE but outside of the project area follows.

TABLE 2. HISTORIC RESOURCES AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPES WITHIN THE APE

Resource	Within Project Area	Individually Listed or Eligible for NRHP	National Mall HD	East and West Potomac Parks HD	Arlington National Cemetery HD	GW Parkway / MVMH HD
East and West Potomac Parks HD	X	X		X		
National Mall HD	X	X	X			
Washington Monument and Grounds HD	X	X	X			
West Potomac Park (Reservation No. 332)	X		X	X		
East Potomac Park (Reservation No. 333)			X	X		
The Plan of the City of Washington	X	X				
Tidal Basin and Landscape	X		X	X		
Thomas Jefferson Memorial and Grounds	X	X	X	X		
Japanese Cherry Trees	X		X	X		
First Cherry Tree Planting Plaque	X		X			
Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial	X	X	X	X		

Resource	Within Project Area	Individually Listed or Eligible for NRHP	National Mall HD	East and West Potomac Parks HD	Arlington National Cemetery HD	GW Parkway / MVMH HD
Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial	X	X	X	X		
John Ericsson Memorial	X		X	X		
Japanese Lantern	X		X	X		
Japanese Pagoda	X		X	X		
John Paul Jones Memorial	X		X	X		
Floral Library	X		X	X		
Kutz Bridge and Independence Ave Ext.	X		X	X		
Maine Avenue SW	X		X	X		
Raoul Wallenberg Place SW			X	X		
East Basin Drive SW	X		X	X		
West Basin Drive SW	X		X	X		
Ohio Drive SW	X		X	X		
Inlet Bridge	X	X	X	X		
Outlet Bridge	X	X	X	X		
Stone Seawalls	X		X	X		
Views around Tidal Basin between monuments, memorials, and significant buildings	X		X	X		
The Washington Monument		X	X	X		
Cuban Friendship Urn		X	X	X		
George Mason Memorial			X	X		
Lincoln Memorial		X	X	X		
Korean War Veterans Memorial		X	X	X		
World War II Memorial			X	X		
Baltimore & Potomac Railroad		X		X		
Long Bridge (Potomac Railroad Bridge)				X		
Auditor's Building Complex		X				
Bureau of Engraving and Printing		X				
Liberty Loan Federal Building		X				
US Department of Agriculture Building		X				
USDA Admin Building		X	X			
Arlington House Historic District		X			X	
Arlington Memorial Bridge		X			X	
Arlington National Cemetery HD		X				
Tomb of the Unknown Soldier					X	
George Washington Memorial Parkway		X				X
Mount Vernon Memorial Highway HD		X				X
Lady Bird Johnson Park		X				X
Lyndon B. Johnson Memorial Grove		X				X
Navy and Marine Memorial						X
The Pentagon		X				
The White House		X				

LEGEND

-  PROJECT AREA
-  PRELIMINARY AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS
-  EAST AND WEST POTOMAC PARKS HISTORIC DISTRICT
-  WASHINGTON MONUMENT GROUNDS HISTORIC DISTRICT
-  MOUNT VERNON MEMORIAL HIGHWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT
-  NATIONAL MALL HISTORIC DISTRICT
-  ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY HISTORIC DISTRICT
-  GEORGE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL PARKWAY

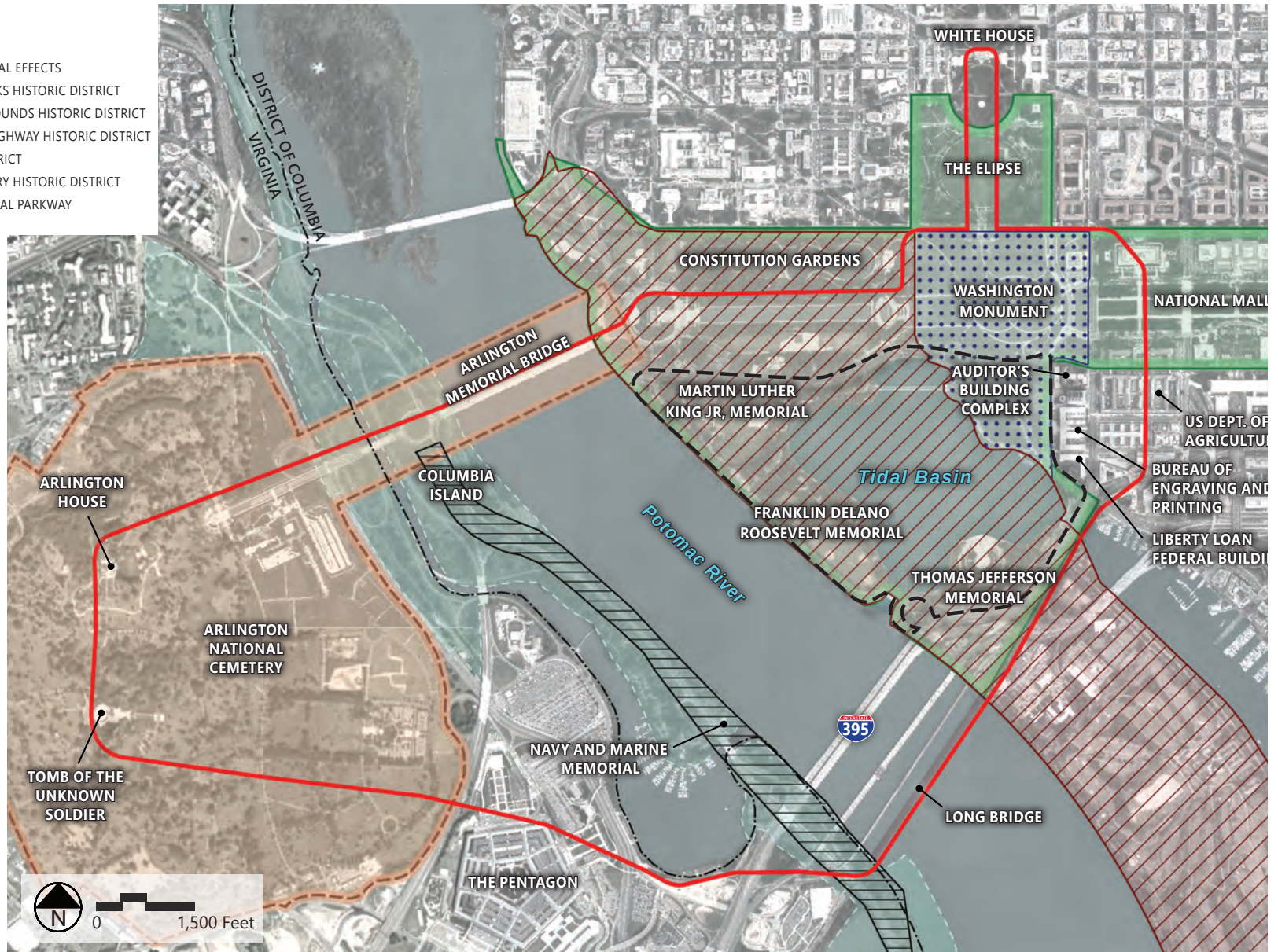


FIGURE 13

Area of Potential Effect on Historic Properties

Tidal Basin | Development Concept Plan and Environmental Assessment
National Mall and Memorial Parks | Washington, DC
United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

Tidal Basin Landscape

The Tidal Basin and its designed landscape are considered a component landscape of the National Mall Historic District as well as of the East and West Potomac Parks Historic District, both of which are described under their respective headings below. Because this project focuses on changes within the Tidal Basin Landscape, a separate discussion of this resource and its contributing elements is warranted.

The Tidal Basin, constructed in the late 1800s to flush silt and sediment from the Washington Channel, is an irregularly shaped body of water averaging 10 feet in depth with a series of structural seawalls forming the basin. The Tidal Basin is associated with the efforts by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to reclaim the Potomac Flats by dredging the Potomac River and creating the land that is now East and West Potomac Parks. That land reclamation project is considered one of the most important projects undertaken by the USACE in the late 19th century (NPS 2000). The NPS documented the Tidal Basin and its landscape in a 2017 Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) report and a 2020 cultural landscape report, which identified elements that contribute to the Tidal Basin's NRHP significance.

The land surrounding the Tidal Basin was created as part of West Potomac Park to be used as a public park for recreation for the people (NPS 2000). Today, pedestrian paths wind around the entirety of the Tidal Basin, connecting the numerous commemorative sites. Paddle boat rentals are located on the east side of the basin, and baseball fields are located along the southwest side. The Tidal Basin Landscape retains a historic balance of recreation and commemorative landmarks.

One of the most notable features and a major character-defining component of the Tidal Basin Landscape is the assemblage of cherry trees planted along its banks. Three thousand cherry trees were donated to the District of Columbia by the mayor of Tokyo and planted around the Tidal Basin in 1912 (NPS 1996). First Lady Helen Taft was known to observe the traditional Japanese custom of *hanami*, or "flower watching," in which the transient beauty of flowers is enjoyed (NPS 2018). She introduced *hanami* to the national capital by overseeing the cherry tree planting around the Tidal Basin from 1913 to 1920, along with Charles Henlock, head gardener of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds (NPS 2017). Additional trees were planted in 1965 based on a gift from the Japanese government to First Lady, Lady Bird Johnson, and other new trees were planted between 1986 and 1988 to restore the number of trees to the original amount. These Japanese cherry trees bring in millions of visitors annually to the National Cherry Blossom Festival, first held in 1935 (NPS 2020).

Key elements that contribute to the Tidal Basin Landscape that may be affected by the proposed action are described below.

Thomas Jefferson Memorial and Grounds. The Thomas Jefferson Memorial was dedicated on April 13, 1943, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Construction began in December 1938, but the bronze statue of Jefferson was not installed until after World War II, in 1947. The Thomas Jefferson Memorial is listed in the NRHP both individually and as a contributing resource to the East and West Potomac Parks Historic District. It is listed under Criterion A for its association with the McMillan Plan and the development of the monumental core of Washington, DC, under Criterion C as an original adaptation of Neoclassical architecture, and under Criterion Consideration F as America's foremost memorial to its third president. Contributing resources

within the project area include the memorial, the stylobate and terrace walls, pedestrian circulation routes, and much of the vegetation (NPS 1981 and 2000). More detailed information is under the separate heading, “Thomas Jefferson Memorial and Grounds” below.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. Located in the northwest zone on the edge of the Tidal Basin, this granite memorial was dedicated in 2011 and honors Martin Luther King Jr.’s legacy and the struggle for freedom, equality, and justice. A prominent leader in the modern civil rights movement, Dr. King was a tireless advocate for racial equality, working class, and the oppressed around the world. Dr. King is the first African American honored with a memorial on the National Mall (NPS 2020).

Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. The FDR Memorial is located in the southwest zone of the Tidal Basin area, sited in a vegetated area on a higher elevation than the Tidal Basin edge, accessed via flights of stairs or ramps. Designed by Lawrence Halprin, Robert Marquis, and various sculptors, this memorial tells the life story of the thirty-second president of the United States through five open rooms featuring statues, engravings, and water features (NPS 2020).

Japanese Pagoda. Located along the Tidal Basin edge in the southwest zone south of the FDR Memorial, the Japanese Pagoda is an antique nine-tiered carved stone sculpture that was donated by the Mayor of Yokohama, Japan in 1958 in commemoration of the Treaty of Kanagawa (NPS 2020).

Japanese Lantern. The Japanese Lantern is located along the Tidal Basin in the northwest zone, adjacent to Kutz Bridge and the original planting location of the cherry trees. The lantern was presented to the city of Washington in 1954 by the then-Japanese ambassador to the United States, Sadao Iguchi. The lantern commemorated the one-hundredth anniversary of Commodore Matthew Perry’s arrival in Japan and the establishment of trade between the United States and Japan (NPS 2017).

Floral Library. The Floral Library is located in the northeast zone of the Tidal Basin, just south of Independence Avenue SW. It was designed in 1969 as part of the Lady Bird Johnson Beautification Program. It consists of a curvilinear garden of 95 mulched beds interspersed with paths for visitors. The library showcases numerous varieties of flowers that are planted over months, including tulips and other summer annuals, with signage so visitors can identify and learn about each of the plants. The Floral Library was previously documented as a non-contributing element as it had not yet acquired an age of 50 years, but the 2020 cultural landscape report recommended it as contributing for its association with the Beautification Program (NPS 2020).

Stone Seawalls. The land surrounding the Tidal Basin was filled with dredge material from the Potomac River and retained by a system of seawalls constructed by the USACE during the major late-19th-century land reclamation project. The seawalls were generally constructed of stone masonry, though sections have been replaced or repaired with riprap and other fill such as concrete or asphalt. Portions of the original seawalls were replaced during periods of modification of the Tidal Basin, such as the construction of the Independence Avenue Extension and the Jefferson Memorial in the 1940s. A project is currently ongoing to replace the seawalls throughout the Tidal Basin and raise them to a higher elevation to address the tidal flooding (NPS 2022a).

Independence Avenue Extension and the Kutz Bridge. Independence Avenue was extended over the Tidal Basin in the early 1940s via a new road with a bridge (known as the Kutz Bridge) designed by Philadelphia architect Paul Philippe Cret. The Kutz Bridge was an integral part of the Independence Avenue Extension project. The bridge was constructed in 1943 to carry eastbound Independence Avenue SW, over the north bay of the Tidal Basin; and a separate roadway immediately north of this bay was planned to carry westbound traffic. Just south of the Washington Monument Grounds an overpass was built and a connection constructed to Maine Avenue SW, south of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. The design required a change in the shape of the northern lobe of the Tidal Basin. The original rounded shape of the shoreline was flattened, and new seawalls were built around the new shape.

Maine Avenue SW. Maine Avenue SW runs through the northeast zone of the Tidal Basin Landscape, extending between Independence Avenue SW to the north and continuing southeast under the Route 1 overpass. It is a wide, divided, multi-lane road and is considered a major park road in the National Mall Streetscape Manual. Maine Avenue SW is a contributing circulation element to the Tidal Basin Landscape (NPS 2020).

Ohio Drive SW. Ohio Drive SW is a two-way multi-lane road that generally follows the shoreline along East and West Potomac Parks from the north side of the Outlet Bridge, running parallel to the Washington Channel to Haines Point in East Potomac Park, then following the Potomac River north-northwest across the Inlet Bridge before continuing west of the Lincoln Memorial. Two segments of the road are within the APE, one in the southeast zone crossing the Outlet Bridge, and another crossing the Inlet Bridge following the Potomac River to the northwest. Ohio Drive SW is a contributing circulation element to the Tidal Basin Landscape (NPS 2020).

Inlet Bridge. The Tidal Reservoir Inlet Bridge was constructed in 1908-09 spanning the inlet to the Tidal Basin along Ohio Drive, SW. The bridge was designed to act as a tidal gate, controlling and regulating the water entering from the Potomac River. The construction of this and the Outlet Bridge (discussed below) provided a complete vehicular circulation pattern around the Tidal Basin by 1910. The bridge is constructed of reinforced concrete with ornamental details including gargoyles and integral bronze fountains. In 1926, the bridge was widened to 32 feet and steel I-beams were placed underneath the roadbed for reinforcement. Between 1969 and 1971, the tidal gate spans were removed and replaced; a removable lock span was permanently removed and replaced with a fixed, reinforced concrete span during a major repair from 1985-86.

Outlet Bridge. The Tidal Reservoir Outlet Bridge was built in 1888-89 by the USACE as the primary tidal gate for the Tidal Basin and one of the earliest completed features of the basin. The need for a tidal gate at the Tidal Basin's outlet became apparent as the basin was dredged, when tremendous amounts of water flowed from the basin into the channel. The Outlet Bridge was designed to regulate the flow of water from the Washington Channel through the Tidal Basin into the Potomac River. Located where East Basin Drive SW crosses the Washington Channel, the setting of the Outlet Bridge has changed dramatically since its completion by the construction of several bridges in its immediate vicinity. Today, the Outlet Bridge is located between the 14th Street and the 15th Street Bridges which mostly obscure the Outlet Bridge from view from within the Tidal Basin area.

Parking. Existing street parking throughout the Tidal Basin Landscape is compatible with the designed cultural landscape, as documented in the 2020 cultural landscape report. The paved

asphalt parking lot along the northeast bank of the Tidal Basin, south of Maine Avenue SW, was constructed in the 1940s. Its placement was informed by the alignment of the former Riverside Drive that historically ran through this area between the Tidal Basin and the nursery created by the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds in the early 1910s (NPS 2017). The 2020 cultural landscape report noted that while this parking lot dates to the period of significance for the Tidal Basin, and is a contributing circulation element, vehicular parking in this area is not compatible with the designed vista between the Jefferson Memorial and the White House (NPS 2020).

Views and Viewsheds. Numerous important views and viewsheds contribute to the character of the Tidal Basin Landscape. As stated in the 2020 cultural landscape report “designed vistas across the landscape visually and thematically connect many of the National Mall’s key commemorative and governmental buildings” (NPS 2020). These views include the visual connections between the Thomas Jefferson Memorial and the White House, as well as to the US Capitol and the Lincoln, FDR, and MLK Jr. Memorials; views of the Washington Monument from various points around the Tidal Basin; the vista northeast along Maryland Avenue toward the US Capitol; informal panoramic views across the Tidal Basin; views of the Washington Monument; and the visual prominence of the Jefferson Memorial at the edge of the basin. Finally, reflections in the water of the cherry trees in bloom are a defining visual characteristic (NPS 2020).



Photo 3. View across the Tidal Basin from the vicinity of the Inlet Bridge looking northeast; the US Capitol Building is visible in the background vista along Maryland Avenue at left, and the Jefferson Memorial is prominent on the Tidal Basin edge at the right (photo by Land Collective).

Thomas Jefferson Memorial and Landscape

The Thomas Jefferson Memorial, which was dedicated in 1943, is listed in the NRHP individually and as a contributing resource to the Tidal Basin Landscape and East and West Potomac Parks Historic District (NPS 1981, 2000, 2020). It is significant under Criterion A for its association with the McMillan Plan and the development of the monumental core of Washington, DC, under Criterion C as an original adaptation of Neoclassical architecture, and

under Criterion Consideration F as America's foremost memorial to its third president. Contributing resources within the project area include the memorial itself, the stylobate and terrace walls, pedestrian circulation routes, and much of the vegetation.

The memorial is a circular, open-air limestone monument with a shallow dome and circular Ionic colonnade modeled after the Roman Pantheon, which inspired Jefferson's own iconic architectural designs. It sits on a series of granite stepped terraces with stylobate and terrace walls that create circular pedestrian walkways. A flight of granite steps and platforms leads from the memorial portico to the Tidal Basin Plaza. The interior of the statuary chamber is finished in Georgia marble and is dominated by Rudolph Evans' bronze statue of Thomas Jefferson, which stands in the center.

The Jefferson Memorial Landscape, which surrounds the domed memorial, was designed by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., who was also involved in designing and planning for the city as part of the McMillan Plan. The landscape is dominated by the Memorial itself with other contributing features including the terrace walls that create circular levels and walkways surrounding the Memorial. The vegetation within the landscape has been altered several times throughout the decades since the original 1938 design (and subsequent 1941 design update) by Olmsted Jr. (NPS 2017); however, more recent landscape rehabilitation efforts have restored some vegetation to the original design (NPS 2004).

Circulation throughout the site is facilitated by the walkways from the Tidal Basin to the east and west, the former roadway to the south, the circular roadway (now a pedestrian walkway), and terrace walkways around the memorial. Pedestrian circulation patterns have remained relatively the same since construction; contemporary accessible routes from the Tidal Basin Plaza to the memorial interior installed in 2025 were carefully designed and constructed to be compatible with the historic character. Vehicular circulation patterns were changed when the circular roadway and parking area south of the memorial were closed to vehicles. (NPS 2004).



Photo 4. Accessible walkways on west side of the Jefferson Memorial, installed in 2025 (photo by Land Collective)

Views and vistas to and from the memorial are important aspects of the cultural landscape and were considered as part of the original McMillan Plan and design for the memorial grounds. The vistas that retain integrity include those between the memorial and the White House, Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, and across the Tidal Basin. The view from the memorial southward, however, has been impacted by the elevated corridors of Interstate 395 and the 14th Street Bridge (NPS 2004).

National Mall Historic District

The National Mall is one of the most significant public spaces in the United States and its design reflects two of the most significant plans for the Federal City: the 1791 L'Enfant Plan and the 1901-02 McMillan Plan. The National Mall spatially and symbolically links the US Capitol, Lincoln Memorial, Potomac River, White House, and Jefferson Memorial, which are associated with the seats of political power and early statesmen of the republic. The National Mall contains numerous monuments, memorials, and landscapes including the Lincoln Memorial and Grounds, the Korean War Memorial, the Washington Monument and Grounds Historic District, and the Tidal Basin Landscape (NPS 2016).

Key resources within the APE that are listed in the NRHP nomination for the National Mall Historic District include the Tidal Basin, Outlet Bridge, Inlet Bridge, Kutz Bridge, Independence Avenue, Thomas Jefferson Memorial and Grounds, First Cherry Tree Planting Plaque, Japanese Lantern, Japanese Pagoda, FDR Memorial, MLK Jr. Memorial, Ohio Drive SW, and Raoul Wallenberg Plaza SW (NPS 2016). See Table 2 above for a list of additional contributing resources of the National Mall Historic District within the APE.

East and West Potomac Parks Historic District

Encompassing 730 acres of public parkland, East and West Potomac Parks were created by the large USACE reclamation project in the mid- to late 19th century. In 1897, Senate Bill 3307 established that the entire reclaimed area, including the Tidal Basin, was to be used as a public park for recreation of the people. The park's monumental character was shaped by the McMillan Plan, which extended the grand axis of the National Mall westward into West Potomac Park and established formal termini where the Lincoln Memorial and the Jefferson Memorial now stand. The landscape of East and West Potomac Parks is the cumulative effort of a century of work by noted architects, landscape architects, planners, engineers, and artists. It has evolved into a designed landscape with prominent monuments and memorials while retaining space for both passive and active recreation (NPS 2000 and 2004).

The historic district was first listed in the NRHP in 1973 and updated in 2001 with multiple areas of significance including architecture, art, landscape architecture, engineering, transportation, and several other categories of historical importance. Contributing resources within the APE include, but are not limited to, the Japanese cherry trees, seawalls, and the Inlet Bridge. Component landscapes include the Lincoln Memorial Grounds, the Washington Monument and Grounds Historic District, and the Tidal Basin Landscape. See table 2 above for a list of additional contributing resources of the East and West Potomac Parks Historic District within the APE.

The Plan of the City of Washington

The Plan of the City of Washington encompasses the original design elements and design intent of Pierre Charles L'Enfant's 1791 plan for the City of Washington (L'Enfant Plan) as well as the 1901–02 McMillan Commission (McMillan Plan) recommendations. The L'Enfant Plan established a comprehensive baroque city design consisting of a grid crossed by avenues, parks, and vistas radiating from public landmarks. The design, including the McMillan Commission expansion, is regarded as a landmark in urban design and has inspired plans for other capital cities throughout the United States and the world. The Plan of the City of Washington was listed in the NRHP in 1997 as a historic urban landscape. Its contributing resources include tangibles like reservations, parks and parklets, statuary and commemorative structures, and the axial and orthogonal street layouts. Other contributing resources include intangibles like vistas, which are typically part of the airspace above a streetscape, framed by the buildings on either side of the street. Though not initially part of L'Enfant's Plan in 1791, the Tidal Basin and other designed landscapes were part of the McMillan Plan and are included in the NRHP listing. Features within the APE referenced in the L'Enfant Plan NRHP listing include the Tidal Basin, Inlet Bridge, Thomas Jefferson Memorial, Japanese cherry trees, Japanese Lantern and Pagoda, Kutz Bridge, John Paul Jones statue, and other landscape features such as paths, lights, and elaborate plantings.

Properties Within the APE but Outside the Project Area

Portions of the APE that are outside of the project area represent areas where no physical changes or construction activities would occur, but from where the project may alter historic views, viewsheds, or settings of historic properties. This includes parts of the National Mall Historic District to the north and portions of Virginia on the west side of the Potomac River. Historic resources and cultural landscapes within the APE but outside the project area include the following:

- Lincoln Memorial
- Washington Monument
- Korean War Memorial
- World War II Memorial
- Liberty Loan Federal Building
- Auditor's Building Complex
- Bureau of Engraving and Printing Building
- US Department of Agriculture Administration Building
- US Department of Agriculture South Building
- Baltimore & Potomac Railroad
- Arlington National Cemetery Historic District
- Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial
- George Washington Memorial Parkway
- Mount Vernon Memorial Highway
- Lyndon Baines Johnson Memorial Grove
- Navy and Marine Memorial
- The Pentagon
- The White House

Impact Assessment Methodology

Potential impacts on historic resources and cultural landscapes are evaluated based on changes to character-defining features of these resources, which are the characteristics that qualify them for inclusion in the NRHP. This approach is derived from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties, Director's Order #28: *Cultural Resource Management Guidelines*, as well as the regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation implementing the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Character-defining features contribute to a property's integrity, which is composed of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and/or association. The current conditions of historic resources and cultural landscapes (presented under the "Affected Environment" section above) were compared with the alternatives described in chapter 2 to determine the impacts to these resources.

The NPS prepared a separate assessment of effects report under Section 106 of the NHPA for the proposed action concurrently with this EA. The findings from the Section 106 assessment of effects report were considered and incorporated into the impact analysis below; however, the impacts described below are made under NEPA, which calls for the review of effects on historic and cultural resources.

Impact of Alternative 1: No Action

Under the no action alternative, the ongoing impacts related to tidal inundation and heavy visitation would continue. The iconic Japanese cherry trees would continue to decline in health due to the twice daily inundation of brackish water and the soil compaction caused by heavy visitation. In the long term, this would lead to a continued loss of individual cherry trees, particularly around the Tidal Basin edge, which would diminish the appearance and historic character of the Tidal Basin area that contributes to the National Mall Historic District as well as the East and West Potomac Parks Historic District. Loss of a substantial number of cherry trees would result in a notably thinner canopy, which would be a particularly adverse impact during the National Cherry Blossom Festival, which celebrates the blooming of the trees and is a much-celebrated characteristic of the Tidal Basin. Tidal inundation would continue to damage walkways and cherry tree health and may eventually result in damage to historic elements in areas that experience flooding. While the raised elevation of the seawalls implemented for the seawalls project would reduce the frequency and intensity of the tidal flooding, these flooding events are expected to continue to increase in severity, and these impacts are expected to continue, diminishing historic integrity. Overall, the no action alternative would result in long-term adverse impacts related to the degradation of the iconic cherry trees and tidal inundation.

There would be no alterations to the character-defining features of the historic resources and cultural landscapes within the Tidal Basin area, and current impacts would continue to occur under the no action alternative. In the northeast zone, the circa 1940s parking lot along the Tidal Basin would continue to detract from the important vista between the Jefferson Memorial and the White House. In the southeast zone, the ongoing visual and noise intrusion from the highway corridor south of the Jefferson Memorial would continue to detract from the commemorative character of the memorial. The existing Jersey barrier security system around the Jefferson Memorial would continue to be incompatible with the formal, geometric design of the memorial. In the southwest zone, the Japanese Pagoda may continue to experience inundation of brackish

water during tidal flooding; however, the raised elevation of the seawalls that would be implemented as a separate project would reduce the frequency and intensity of that flooding. While existing impacts would continue under the no action alternative, there would be no new impacts on historic resources or cultural landscapes.

Impact of Alternative 2: Proposed Action (Preferred Alternative)

Several impacts would occur throughout the Tidal Basin area under alternative 2 as noted below. Impacts that would occur in specific locations of the project area are described under the zone headings that follow.

The increase in cherry tree canopy and other tree plantings would reinforce the landscape originally designed under the beautification philosophy and would follow the original planting designs. As noted in the Tidal Basin cultural landscape report, the overall assemblage of cherry trees and other plantings is the most important aspect to retain, rather than the individual trees or plants (NPS 2020). Alternative 2 would result in more trees within the Tidal Basin Landscape than originally designed; however, they would be compatible with the historic design intent and philosophy of the beautification of the park land. More cherry trees would be consistent with the *hanami* tradition first introduced by First Lady Helen Taft, and continued by subsequent first ladies in the US, and would allow the public to better practice this tradition of enjoying the beauty of flowers (NPS 2017).

Tree plantings throughout the project area would include a combination of clusters of trees (referred to as glades) and open spaces, which would be compatible with the original planting design of the Tidal Basin Landscape that included open lawns framed by stands of trees. The new tree plantings would be carefully sited to highlight important views, like those across the Tidal Basin, while avoiding obscuring any other important views throughout the cultural landscape. Notably, the significant vista between the Jefferson Memorial and the White House would not be impeded, and the proposed plantings would screen from view the proposed new parking lot in the northeast zone.

Many elements of alternative 2 are designed to reduce heavy foot traffic and trampling of the cherry tree root systems and improve the overall health of the trees. The proposed new pedestrian paths under expanded cherry tree canopies would give visitors more room to spread out, especially during the crowded peak-bloom season. These paths would encourage visitors to explore away from the Tidal Basin edge, helping to minimize the trampling of soils around the cherry trees. In the long term, this would protect the cherry tree root systems and allow the trees to thrive. This would preserve and protect the vegetation that is so significant to the historic integrity and character of the Tidal Basin Landscape.

The proposed new pedestrian walkways throughout the Tidal Basin Landscape would introduce new circulation patterns within the designed landscape. Some of the proposed pedestrian walkways would follow established circulation patterns, such as around the Tidal Basin edge, while others would create formal circulation routes through previously open areas, such as in the northeast zone between the Tidal Basin edge and Maine Avenue SW. The proposed walkways would be curvilinear in design, which is compatible with the original design of the Tidal Basin Landscape. New walkways would provide access to memorials and markers throughout the Tidal Basin area, which would reflect the connection of recreational and commemorative spaces for

which the area was designed. The proposed layout of the walkways would better integrate some sites, such as the First Cherry Tree Planting Marker and the Floral Library, which would allow visitors to better connect with the designed landscape and the tradition of *hanami*.

New and relocated crosswalks throughout the project area would have no impact on the landscape as they would generally be in locations already characterized by contemporary circulation features such as signage, road markings, and traffic lights.

The addition of bicycle lanes throughout the Tidal Basin area would introduce some new circulation patterns but would generally follow established patterns and minimize overall alterations. Final locations and materials of the walkways and bicycle paths would be determined during future design phases but designed to be compatible with the historic character of the landscape.

Proposed changes within the Tidal Basin area would be visible from historic resources and landscapes outside of the project area, though the extent to which the changes are visible would depend on the location and elevation of the resource. Places where the alterations would be most visible would include the nearby buildings along Raoul Wallenberg Place SW, including the Auditor's Building Complex, US Department of Agriculture Building, Bureau of Printing and Engraving Building, and Liberty Loan Federal Building, as well as adjacent areas of the National Mall Historic District such as the Washington Monument and Grounds, the World War II Memorial, and the Lincoln Memorial. Changes from historic properties across the Potomac River (such as Arlington House at the Arlington National Cemetery and points along the George Washington Memorial Parkway) would be somewhat visible, but the change would not impact any important or character-defining views from these locations. All proposed plantings would be carefully planned to ensure key views and vistas are maintained and thus would have no adverse impacts on resources outside of the project area.

The designed spatial organization and landscape of the Tidal Basin area is evident when seen from aerial viewsheds such as from airplanes taking off and landing at nearby Reagan Washington National Airport, or from high points such as the top of the Washington Monument. Implementation of alternative 2 would result in a somewhat different appearance of the Tidal Basin area from these aerial views. The increase in cherry tree canopy would be notable from these views, particularly when the trees are in bloom and the pink color expands throughout the area. The change in circulation, including realignment of Ohio Drive SW and Maine Avenue SW as well as the addition of pedestrian bridges adjacent to the Kutz Bridge, the Inlet Bridge, and the Outlet Bridge, would potentially be visible from aerial vistas; however, these changes would be small compared to the overall historic spatial organization of the Tidal Basin area and would not detract from the experience of the vista. The pedestrian bridges would be in alignment with existing bridges, serving to minimize their impact on the visual appearance of the spatial organization and circulation patterns.

Northeast Zone

In the northeast zone, removal of the circa 1940s parking lot along the northeast edge of the Tidal Basin would alter a contributing element of the Tidal Basin Landscape. However, removal of this parking lot would also restore the vista between the Jefferson Memorial and the White House to the north by removing the view of contemporary vehicles that detract from the vista. Creation of a new parking lot parallel to Maine Avenue SW would alter the circulation patterns,

but its visual impacts would be minimized due to its location adjacent to an existing roadway and the proposed vegetative screening.

The new comfort station, terraced seating element, and reconfigured paddle boat dock would not result in any impacts on the Tidal Basin Landscape. New facilities would be replaced in a manner that is compatible with the designed landscape. Since the existing comfort station and paddle boat dock are not contributing elements to the Tidal Basin Landscape, their removal would not result in a loss of historic resources (NPS 2020). The new comfort station is currently under planning and design as part of a separate project, for which separate consultation and analysis is ongoing. Future phases for this project will consider the final design and layout of the new comfort station to ensure compatibility of elements.

Reconfiguring the Floral Library to ensure its integration into the proposed pathways would alter the existing layout of the resource that contributes to the Tidal Basin but retain its function as a changing floral display for the enjoyment of visitors. Because the Floral Library was originally designed to educate the public about different flower species and followed the tradition of *hanami*, the relocation to either side of a pathway would fulfill that original intent by improving access and encouraging more people to visit the displays. The specific layout of the relocated Floral Library would be determined during future design phases. It is anticipated that potential adverse impacts can be avoided or minimized if the design retains the characteristic curvilinear planting beds.

Realignment of the vehicular lanes and sidewalk on the Kutz Bridge would not result in any adverse impacts on the resource, as the alignment, use, and appearance would not be altered. Pedestrian circulation would be shifted from the Kutz Bridge sidewalk to the new pedestrian bridge, which would maintain the overall circulation pattern. Construction of a new pedestrian bridge immediately adjacent to the Kutz Bridge may detract from the historic appearance of the Kutz Bridge by partially obscuring long-views from the Tidal Basin edge. These impacts would be minimized by creating a pedestrian bridge that is lower to the water than the Kutz Bridge, reducing its visual impact. Additionally, the pedestrian bridge would be parallel to, but separate from the Kutz Bridge, thus avoiding any physical changes to the historic bridge. The new pedestrian bridge would provide new opportunities to view the architectural detail of the Kutz Bridge from up close. Additional design details, including aesthetic treatment of the pedestrian bridge, would be developed during future design phases and would include ways to avoid or minimize adverse impacts on the Kutz Bridge.

The reconfiguration of Maine Avenue SW would alter the vehicular circulation patterns around the Tidal Basin, and would require drivers to stop at the intersection with Raoul Wallenberg Place SW before turning and continuing along Maine Avenue SW. This would change the experience from the existing continuous, curvilinear vehicular circulation pattern along the east side of the basin, which is a contributing element of the Tidal Basin Landscape. The proposed new pedestrian and bicycle lane would utilize the former location of Maine Avenue SW, which would somewhat minimize the impact by retaining the overall circulation pattern, though it would be shifted from vehicular to pedestrian/bicycle circulation. Installation of contemporary bicycle and micromobility infrastructure, such as bicycle racks and corrals, would be limited to areas with existing or proposed contemporary infrastructure, such as the comfort station, which would minimize locations of contemporary intrusions into the landscape.

The creation of a tidal shelf in the northern lobe of the Tidal Basin (also known as the lagoon), would alter the appearance of the Tidal Basin, which is identified as a contributing element, though the full extent of the impacts would be determined in the future based on additional studies and design to identify the specific changes that would occur. The general potential impacts are discussed here; additional analysis and development of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures may be required during a future project phase. The proposed tidal shelf would alter the contributing lagoon by creating a shallower water feature than the existing, which averages 10 feet in depth. Plantings within the lagoon would introduce new vegetation in the Tidal Basin that was not part of the historic planting plan. Depending on the ultimate design of the water depth and plantings within the lagoon, these changes may limit the reflective nature of the surface water, which would diminish the views of reflections in the water of key features such as cherry trees, which are identified as a contributing element of the Tidal Basin Landscape. As mentioned above, additional study and design in consultation with the DC SHPO and other consulting parties is required to fully develop the proposal for the tidal shelf and determine the impacts it would have on the landscape and other historic resources.

Optional Element: Maine Avenue SW Connection

If the option to remove the connection of Maine Avenue SW and Independence Avenue SW in the northeast zone is implemented, it would result in a substantial alteration to the historic circulation pattern of Maine Avenue SW that contributes to the Tidal Basin Landscape. Removing the portion of Maine Avenue SW in this location would remove the continuous, curvilinear road along the eastern side of the Tidal Basin that allows for full circumnavigation of the basin. The irregular shape of the Tidal Basin and the Potomac River resulted in a curvilinear circulation system that deviated from the axial street grid designed as part of the Plan of the City of Washington (NPS 2020). Removal of part of this circulation system would diminish integrity of design and association of the circulation system, which would be an adverse impact on the Tidal Basin Landscape. The adverse impact would be somewhat mitigated by proposed tree plantings and improvements to the recreational fields, bicycle paths, pedestrian walkways, which would be consistent with and enhance the diverse recreational character of this portion of West Potomac Park.

Optional Element: Tidal Landscape

If the tidal shelf is not introduced in the northern lobe, there would be no impact on the Tidal Basin Landscape or other historic properties, as it would not alter the existing spatial organization, vegetation, or other contributing elements.

Southeast Zone

In the southeast zone, planting evergreen and deciduous trees as a landscape buffer south of the Jefferson Memorial would improve and preserve the historic setting and feeling of the memorial as well as the Tidal Basin Landscape. The landscape screening would obscure views and dampen noise from the nearby highway and railroad corridor to the south, minimizing detracting sights and sounds and keeping focus on the Jefferson Memorial and Tidal Basin. Proposed plantings would be informed by and consistent with the design intent of historic planting plans such as Olmsted, Jr.'s design as part of the McMillan Plan, which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts on the Jefferson Memorial or Tidal Basin Landscape.

Under alternative 2, the proposed new pedestrian bridges adjacent to the Inlet and Outlet Bridges would introduce contemporary structures to the Tidal Basin edge and would partially obscure the historic Inlet Bridge from view. The Outlet Bridge would be less affected because its surroundings have already been substantially altered by the addition of nearby bridges, including the contemporary Route 1 bridge. The NPS will study, design, and consult further to explore options for pedestrian bridge character and materials that would minimize adverse impacts on the Inlet and Outlet Bridges as well as the Tidal Basin Landscape. Depending on the final design, location, and appearance of the proposed pedestrian bridges, impacts could range from physical damage to the historic bridges to diminished integrity of design, setting, and feeling. Additional analysis would be required to determine the extent of the impacts during a future phase of this project.

At the Jefferson Memorial, narrowing the vehicular access roads around the lawn panel would result in an increase in lawn panel size from the original design; however, the increase in size would be relatively small when considered with the overall size of the lawn panel, and it would not alter the overall spatial organization or geometry of the Jefferson Memorial grounds. The relocation of the bus drop-off area from southwest of the memorial to the east side would shift the contemporary use farther away from the south lawn of the memorial, which would protect the historic character in this area. Noise and view of large tour buses would be screened by existing and proposed vegetation, which would result in a beneficial impact on the landscape. The location of the new bus drop-off area would provide direct access to the highway entrance ramp, which may result in fewer large buses driving along East Basin Drive SW directly in front of the lawn panel and thus minimizing the noise and visual impacts related to large buses that are not compatible with the commemorative character of the memorial and landscape. The new comfort station proposed under a separate project would be located in the vicinity of the proposed new bus drop-off area. This would minimize impacts of these contemporary structures and uses by clustering them into one location that can be screened by vegetation.

Optional Element: Jefferson Bus Drop-Off

Under the optional element of alternative 2, if the NPS retained the bus drop-off in its existing location, the ongoing noise and visual impacts related to idling buses in proximity to the south lawn of the Jefferson Memorial would continue. While this would not relieve any of the current impacts on the setting and character of the Jefferson Memorial Landscape, this option would not introduce any new impacts.

Jefferson Memorial Security

At the Jefferson Memorial on the southern end of the Tidal Basin, improved security features would result in long-term protection of the historic resource. Removal of the existing Jersey barriers would remove contemporary, non-contributing elements from the landscape and restore some historic character. Construction of proposed security walls and removable bollards would introduce contemporary elements to the landscape, but they would be designed in a manner that minimizes visual intrusions and that is compatible with the commemorative and memorial character of the Jefferson Memorial and Tidal Basin Landscapes. The proposed system of security walls on the east and west side of the memorial would be integrated into the curvilinear pedestrian pathways that would respond to the naturalistic design of the Tidal Basin. Each section of wall would gradually taper into the site grading on each end, which would visually blend their appearance into the landscape and minimize visual obstructions and detractions. The

walls would also taper from bottom to top, which would further minimize their visual intrusion on the landscape. Though the walls would more effectively blend into the naturalistic character of the Tidal Basin Landscape than would the existing Jersey barriers, the curvilinear design would not reflect the formal, geometric design of the Jefferson Memorial.

At the south lawn panel, the proposed security wall would be more visually prominent than the walls on the east and west due to its height and location in an open area. The proposed wall would be located near the existing edge of the lawn panel but may truncate the designed geometry of the lawn panel depending on the final location, which would be determined during future design phases. This impact would be somewhat minimized by the tilted seating design of the wall which would direct views to the memorial and away from the wall. The NPS would undertake further study, design, and consultation to identify specific details of the security wall system including materials, alignment, aesthetic treatment, and other potential measures to minimize adverse impacts.

Southwest Zone

In the southwest zone, the proposed overlook and plaza near the Inlet Bridge would emphasize the vista along Maryland Avenue SW to the US Capitol Building, which is one of the contributing vistas of the L'Enfant Plan of the City of Washington. The overlook would result in a beneficial impact by formalizing that vista from the Tidal Basin and protecting it as an important vista in the long term. The specific location and design of the overlook and plaza would be determined during future design phases; decisions on siting and aesthetic treatments would be compatible with the historic and commemorative character of the area.

Relocating the Japanese Pagoda away from the Tidal Basin edge towards the interior landscape would impact its integrity of location and current design, setting, and feeling, but would protect the resource from damage due to exposure to tidal flooding in the long term.

At the FDR Memorial, physical changes to the stair landings and plazas at the base of the memorial would be required to match the increased elevation of seawalls and ground occurring as a result of the separate seawalls project. Raising the grade of the walkways and plazas at the base of the FDR Memorial would somewhat alter the design and setting of the memorial. However, the alterations would be limited to the plazas at the base of the memorial, and there would be no physical alteration to the memorial interior, statues, water features, or other key elements, and there would be no changes to the original design intent. The elevation of the plazas would be raised to the height of the existing first stair landings, which would minimize the removal to only the bottom most stairs. Overall, the memorial would retain its historic integrity and character.

The reconfiguration of the existing ballfields along Ohio Drive SW would not result in any impacts on the cultural landscape as they would remain in the same area as the existing fields and would not be expanded. The area would retain its existing use as recreational fields as well as its role in the overall spatial organization of the Tidal Basin Landscape.

Northwest Zone

In the northwest zone, the realignment of Ohio Drive SW and West Potomac Park Drive SW in the northwest corner of the project area would alter historic vehicular circulation patterns and

would remove a portion of Ohio Drive SW, which contributes to the National Mall Historic District, the East and West Potomac Parks Historic District, and the Tidal Basin Landscape. Loss of this circulation element would diminish the historic integrity of design, setting, and feeling, which would be an adverse impact on the Tidal Basin Landscape. The adverse impact would be somewhat mitigated by proposed tree plantings and improvements to the recreational fields, bicycle paths, pedestrian walkways, and direct water access throughout this area, which would be consistent with and enhance the diverse recreational character of this portion of West Potomac Park.

The proposed parking lot, comfort station, and bus drop-off area in the northwest zone would not result in any adverse impacts on historic resources of the cultural landscape as they would be clustered around existing visitor services and circulation infrastructure such as the existing bus and vehicular drop-off, bookstore, and comfort station. They would also be oriented adjacent to roadways. Proposed tree plantings would visually screen them from key locations such as the nearby FDR Memorial and MLK Jr. Memorial. The proposed recreational fields would be consistent with the current recreational use of the northwest zone.

At the MLK Jr. Memorial, the NPS would consider ways to avoid physical changes to the front of the memorial closest to the Tidal Basin edge while constructing the new pedestrian pathway after completion of the separate project to raise the elevation of the seawalls. The NPS would undertake additional planning, study, design, and consultation regarding ways to continue the pedestrian walkway as a cantilevered system along the Tidal Basin edge without changing the historic alignment of the basin edge. This cantilever may result in visual impacts on the Tidal Basin Landscape, including introduction of a contemporary structure that may be visually prominent along the Tidal Basin edge. A new cantilevered pedestrian route that extends over the Tidal Basin edge would introduce a new circulation pattern around the Tidal Basin because current and historic pedestrian circulation patterns are limited to the edge of the water (with the exception of bridges). Specific impacts to the MLK Jr. Memorial and the Tidal Basin Landscape would be further studied after more details of the proposal are developed.

Optional Element: Multipurpose Fields Area

Under this option, retaining the multipurpose fields in their current configuration without the addition of a parking lot or drop-off area as proposed above, would result in no impact on the Tidal Basin Landscape or other historic properties because there would be no alteration of the existing spatial organization, land use, or other contributing elements.

CIRCULATION: TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

Affected Environment

Circulation patterns within the project area consist of various walking paths, bicycle lanes/pathways, and access points for public transportation that guide visitors to various points of interest throughout the Tidal Basin Landscape. Primary modes of transportation in and around the Tidal Basin include a mix of vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, and micromobility modes. The project area is bound to the north by Independence Avenue SW; Raoul Wallenberg Place SW, Maine Avenue SW, and Ohio Drive SW to the east; East Basin Drive SW to the south, which connects to a ramp that leads to Interstate 395 across the Potomac River; and Ohio Drive SW and West Potomac Park Drive SW to the west.

During a typical weekday morning, travel time associated with traffic and congestion on major roads surrounding the Tidal Basin is generally reliable, with trip times remaining consistent from day to day in comparison to other key routes within the District, according to the District Department of Transportation's (DDOT) Planning Time Index. Maine Avenue SW and Independence Avenue SW had slightly higher variation in trip times than Ohio Drive SW and East Basin Drive SW (DDOT 2021).

Existing pedestrian connections from the project area to other parts of the National Mall and Memorial Park are insufficient in some areas and can be unsafe for the volume of pedestrian traffic that occurs near the Tidal Basin. During popular events, such as the National Cherry Blossom Festival, when pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic is higher than usual, the NPS uses temporary barriers to separate these different modes of traffic at peak use times. High volumes of visitors often lead to crowded walkways near the Tidal Basin edge and at nearby street crossings where there is a limited amount of space to wait safely on the sidewalk. Sometimes flooded parts of the sidewalk further constrict pedestrian circulation and create a congestion point for visitors trying to access the various points of interest around the Tidal Basin. With the development of hotels, housing, and commercial uses along the southwest waterfront, more visitors and residents are travelling to and through the Tidal Basin via Maine Avenue SW.

Numerous walking paths and bicycle trails are also located throughout the project area, with the 2.1-mile Tidal Basin Loop Trail circling the perimeter of the Tidal Basin itself (see figures 14 and 15). Broader networks of bike paths also exist in the greater Washington, DC region, connecting to parts of Maryland and northern Virginia. Other trails in the immediate vicinity include the Hains Point Loop Trail to the south and the Memorial Loop Trail to the north (part of which is integrated with the Tidal Basin Loop Trail) and 15th Street cycle track.

A number of Capital Bikeshare stations (the District of Columbia's bicycle-sharing system company) are also located within the project area and are among the highest used stations in the regional system, as well as rideshare drop-off points and tour bus stops. In addition, electric scooters (via electric scooter sharing systems) are a popular mode of transportation in and around the Tidal Basin. The nearest Metrorail station is Smithsonian/National Mall, which is less than 1 mile to the northeast. Surface parking areas for cars and buses surround the Tidal Basin, with dedicated bus loading/unloading/parking spaces located west of the Jefferson Memorial and directly west of the MLK Jr. Memorial. Buses also frequently utilize the public parking spaces along Ohio Drive SW (NPS 2022b). There are also various tour bus routes within the Tidal Basin vicinity.

Pedestrian and bicycle transportation are becoming increasingly popular throughout the District and one of DDOT's key goals is to provide safe pedestrian and bicyclist access for various skill levels, according to the Multimodal Long-Range Transportation Plan (DDOT 2021). The District is focused on improving pedestrian connectivity as well as increasing the number of dedicated bike lanes throughout the city. Currently, there is a dedicated bike lane on the eastern side of the project area along Raoul Wallenberg Place SW traveling south to Ohio Drive SW and East Basin Drive SW. Bicycles are allowed on paved roads and multi-use walkways in the park but are not allowed in the memorial or monument areas, such as on the walks within the FDR Memorial.

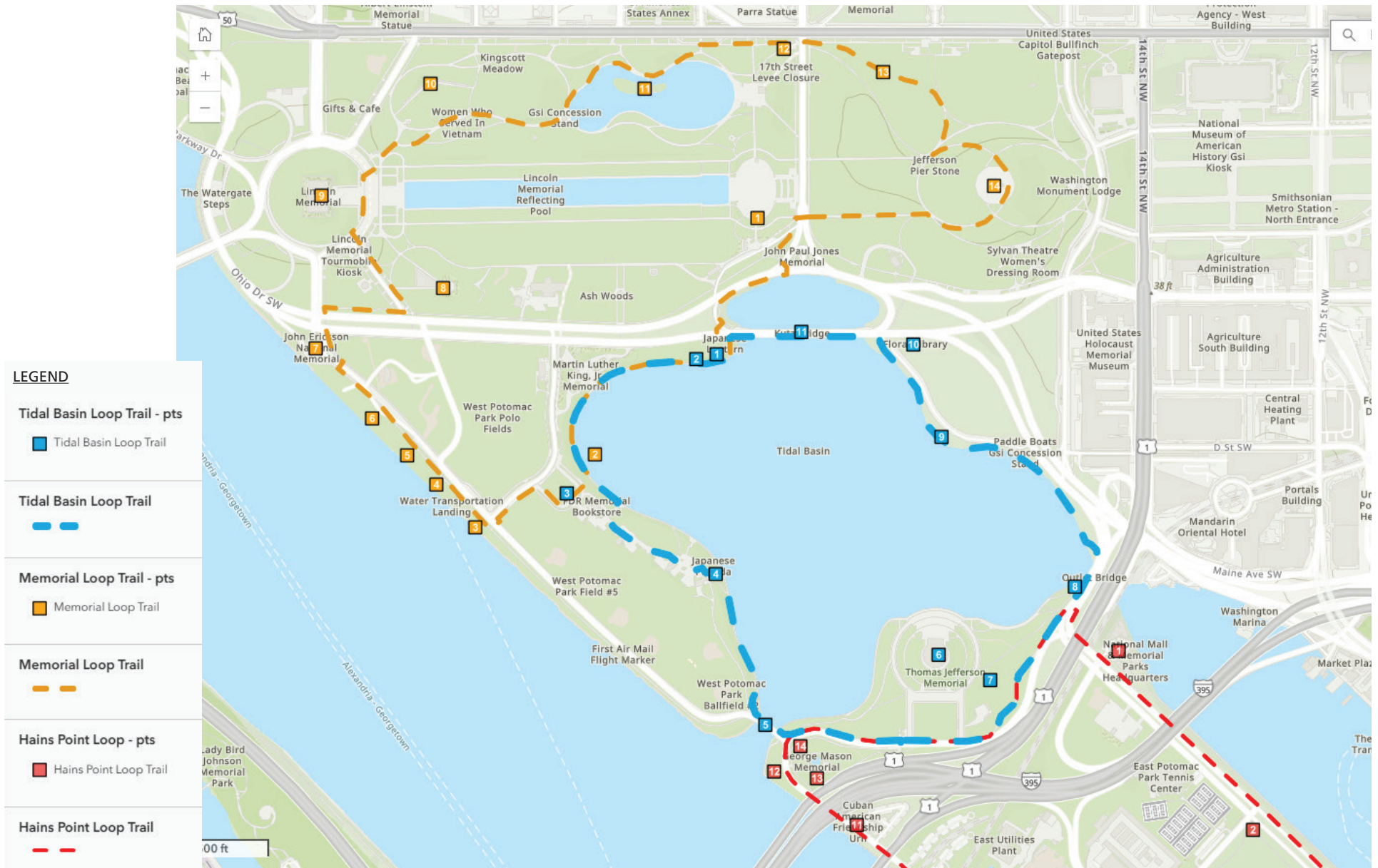


FIGURE 14

Walking Trails within the Park

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LEGEND

-  CAPITAL BIKESHARE
-  BICYCLE/SCOOTER RACKS
-  SHARED ROAD
-  TRAIL/SIDEWALK
-  BIKE LANE

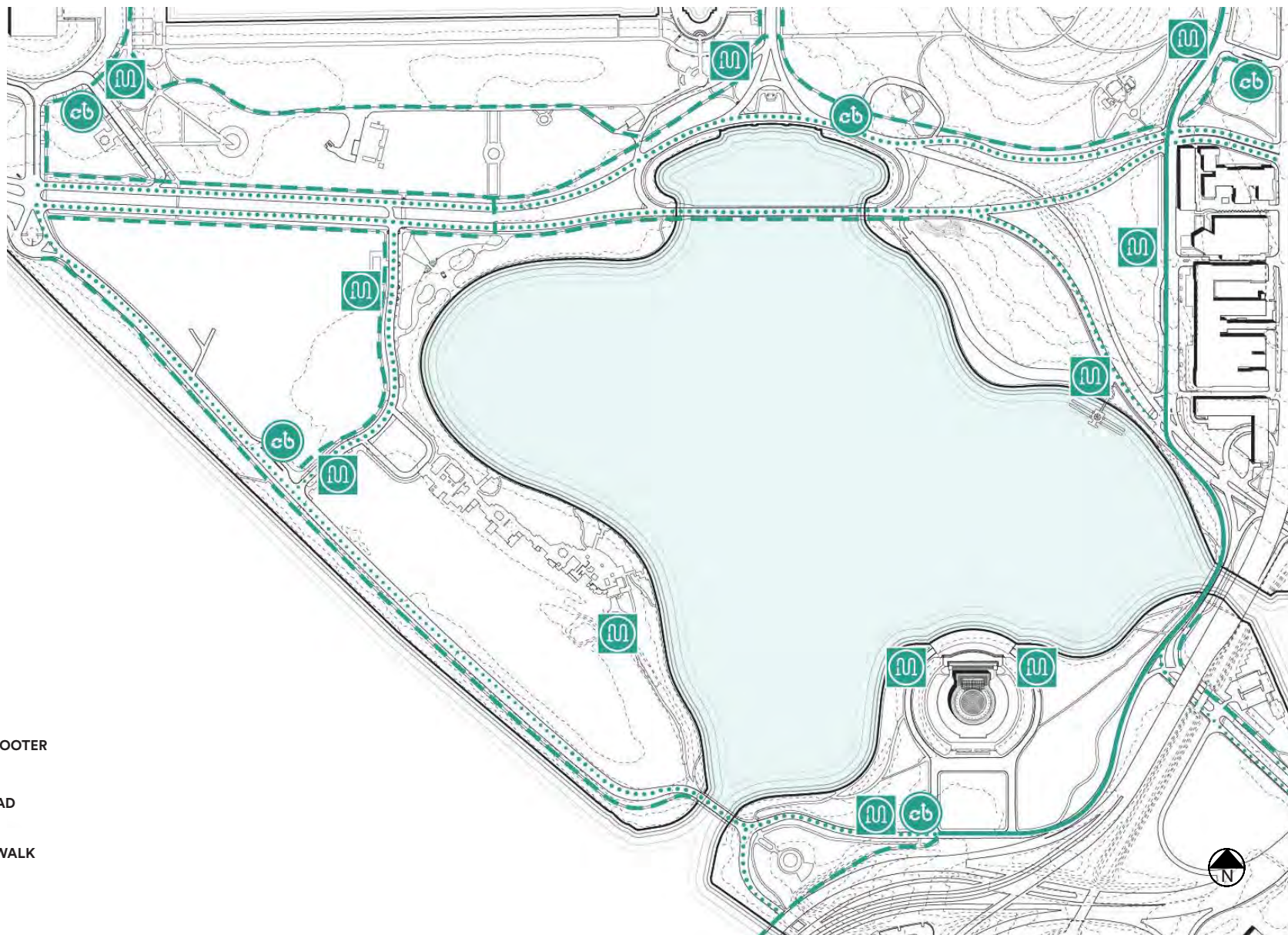


FIGURE 15

Existing Bike and Scooter Circulation around Tidal Basin

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United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

In coming years, DDOT seeks to expand the multimodal network within the District of Columbia and to focus on improving safety and mobility throughout the city. These goals include actions such as improving intersection safety for pedestrians, as well as walkability with more car-free zones and plazas; installing more protected bicycle lanes and dedicated bus lanes; and making transit more accessible to residents and visitors (DDOT 2021). DDOT also projects that the District will add approximately 250,000 more residents by 2045 and that southwestern parts of the city will experience some of the highest increases in employment density (DDOT 2021). In addition, the annual National Cherry Blossom Festival has seen increased attendance rates in the past year, with 2024 drawing approximately 1.6 million visitors over an approximately three-week peak bloom period. This figure exceeds attendance rates prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (DC.gov 2024). Such trends suggest that transportation and circulation within the project area will need to continue to accommodate large volumes of residents and visitors alike, using various modes of transportation.

Impact Assessment Methodology

Potential impacts to traffic are analyzed based on modifications to existing pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle circulation routes within and around the Tidal Basin. Changes to access were also considered, as well as alterations to transportation uses and flow in each zone. The current condition of circulation patterns, traffic, and transportation, as presented under the “Affected Environment” section above, were compared with the alternatives described in chapter 2 to determine the impacts on these resources.

Impacts of Alternative 1: No Action

Under the no action alternative, existing circulation patterns and transportation uses would remain the same. Pedestrian movement within the Tidal Basin area would remain limited and constricted in some areas, with few opportunities for pedestrians to disperse into open spaces. There would be fewer multi-modal connections to the existing transportation network, continuing to pose challenges for visitors trying to navigate to key points of interest within the vicinity and to other parts of the city. Vehicle access points would remain limited and converge near pedestrian and bicycle traffic, which would continue to pose safety concerns. Overall, the no action alternative would result in adverse impacts to circulation systems within the project area and would continue to limit connectivity for visitors utilizing various modes of transport.

In the northeast zone, a new pedestrian-only bridge would not be added parallel to the Kutz Bridge, so that pedestrians would continue to use the sidewalks along the existing Kutz Bridge which does not offer much room for moving crowds across the northern lobe of the basin. Parking along the Tidal Basin edge would also remain in its existing configuration which would also limit open movement around the basin. The vegetated median along Maine Avenue SW would remain in place as would the connection between Maine Avenue SW and Independence Avenue SW at Raoul Wallenberg Place SW, so that dedicated pedestrian space would be limited along this area with many points of interest for visitors. In the southeast zone, circulation within the Jefferson Memorial area would remain indirect and non-intuitive. Retaining the existing Jersey barriers would not encourage open exploration within this zone and dedicated bicycle paths would be lacking. No dedicated pedestrian paths crossing the Inlet and Outlet vehicle bridges would continue to limit connectivity around the Tidal Basin. In the southwest zone,

existing routes would adversely impact circulation because they limit access to the recreational fields as well as connectivity in and around the fields. The Japanese Pagoda would remain in its existing location, somewhat removed from key pedestrian routes and no new path connections would be created near the FDR Memorial. The existing plaza here would remain in its current location so that the path would maintain its current width, which can be a pedestrian congestion point. Retaining the existing path and roadway configuration in the northwest zone would continue to contribute to congestion in this area as a key arrival point for many visitors to the site, especially during the National Cherry Blossom Festival when West Basin Drive SW serves as the “Tidal Basin Welcome Area.” There would also be no direct connection to the Tidal Basin edge between the FDR and MLK Jr. memorials. Access to the multipurpose fields would remain the same and the portion of Ohio Drive SW between its intersection with West Potomac Park Drive SW and Independence Avenue SW would be maintained, precluding use of the space between the roadway and the Potomac River for recreation.

Impacts of Alternative 2: Proposed Action (Preferred Alternative)

In all zones, actions proposed under this alternative would beneficially impact transportation routes and circulation within and around the Tidal Basin. Proposed changes would help relieve existing congestion, reduce multi-modal conflicts, and improve connectivity within the project area. Such improvements would also better accommodate projected population and visitation increases in future decades and expand the multi-modal network while also improving transportation safety and mobility. Impacts anticipated to occur within each zone are described below.

Northeast Zone

Under the proposed action, the northeast zone will gain more open space and pedestrian and bicycle connections to facilitate freer movement and reduce existing congestion. Adding pedestrian pathways, 6 to 12 feet wide, would improve circulation by integrating new routes with points of interest like the Floral Library and Washington Monument, allowing crowds to disperse more easily during peak times. More space for pedestrians and bicyclists near the Tidal Basin edge and easier access for visitors arriving by vehicle would result by moving the surface parking lot along the Tidal Basin edge and adding a new lot parallel to Maine Avenue SW with a vehicular drop-off area.

The addition of a new pedestrian bridge spanning the north lobe of the Tidal Basin parallel to but separate from the existing Kutz Bridge would give visitors more space to spread out, reduce crowding on the Kutz Bridge, and improve safety by separating pedestrians and bicyclists from vehicular traffic and each other. The existing pedestrian connection at the northeast corner of the Kutz Bridge would remain, keeping a safe and direct path to points of interest like the Washington Monument. A bicycle lane here would also connect the existing bike network north of Independence Avenue SW to the Tidal Basin loop.

The removal of the vegetated median along Maine Avenue SW at the Raoul Wallenberg Place SW traffic signal would beneficially impact site access and pedestrian safety by improving direct access to the site with a singular crosswalk that could be crossed in one light cycle so that visitors do not have to navigate multiple crosswalks at multiple intersections. This would also improve connections from the Tidal Basin to adjacent city features, as well as safety for high

volumes of pedestrian traffic during peak visitation periods. In addition, reconfiguring the intersection of Maine Avenue SW and Ohio Drive SW to remove the vehicular through-lane, creating one signalized intersection, and capturing this space along with the associated medians for bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways would further open up this road to increased modes of mobility and allow for more diverse modes of transit to visit the site. Potential vehicular impacts resulting from this action would be further studied by the NPS before implementing any changes. DDOT also requires that a Traffic Impact Analysis be completed for projects expected to modify roadway capacity or operations (DDOT 2019). The addition of more bicycle racks, bikeshare stations, and micromobility corrals in this zone would also promote utilizing various transportation modes to access the site.

Optional Element: Maine Avenue SW Connection

Under this optional element, in addition to removing the vegetated median on Maine Avenue SW, the NPS would remove the section of Maine Avenue SW between Independence Avenue SW and Raoul Wallenberg Place SW. Removing this roadway would increase dedicated space for pedestrians approaching the Tidal Basin and would further improve bicycle lane connections around the site. This option would also provide additional space for rideshare drop-off, bus drop-off, and/or a potential city bus stop in the future, which would beneficially impact visitors who prefer not to drive personal vehicles and would increase options for various modes of transport.

Southeast Zone

The proposed action would address pedestrian congestion and safety concerns within the southeast zone while also increasing connectivity along the basin edge to key locations such as crosswalks at Ohio Drive SW, the replaced comfort station, and towards the Jefferson Memorial lawn panel. Pedestrian-only bridges would be constructed adjacent to the existing Inlet and Outlet bridges. These new walkways would remove pedestrians from vehicular traffic, enhancing safety and reducing the potential for pedestrian/vehicle conflicts. These new bridges would also improve flow and circulation around the Tidal Basin during high volume periods because the new 12-foot-wide bridges would exceed the width of the existing pedestrian sidewalks on the Inlet and Outlet bridges. The existing sidewalks on the bridges would be transformed into dedicated bicycle lanes, offering a safer route for bicyclists traveling around the Tidal Basin and potentially expanding opportunities for visitors and residents to utilize this mode of transport.

Pathway networks near the Jefferson Memorial would also be expanded, opening up circulation within the lawn panel and improving access to this area. Space in this area would be further increased with the narrowing of the vehicular access route around the lawn panel to the minimum width required for emergency vehicles, creating a larger lawn panel for visitors to disperse and explore the area. Access would also be improved by moving the existing bicycle lane off East Basin Drive SW and adding a road crossing here to facilitate connection to the broader bike network within the city. The addition of bicycle parking, bikeshare stations, and micromobility corrals in this area, as well as bicycle parking closer to the Jefferson Memorial itself, would also improve access and circulation in the southeast zone, which is an important connection point to areas across the Potomac River and West Potomac Park.

Furthermore, relocating the existing bus drop-off area from the west side of the memorial to the east side would allow buses direct access to the Route 1 entrance ramp, no longer forcing traffic around the basin, thus improving vehicular circulation and reducing congestion along the southern

edge. Shifting this drop-off area would also beneficially impact pedestrian safety with the inclusion of a curb separating the drop-off area from the roadway and would open up the space previously used as the bus drop-off area for future permit parking or a city/sightseeing bus stop.

The addition of security walls and removable bollards to improve security at the Jefferson Memorial would be integrated with the proposed pedestrian pathway system, and grading would be such that it creates a layered effect to break up the monotony of a singular wall while allowing multiple access points to either side of the barrier. The reinforced wall at the southern lawn panel would also serve as a seat wall where visitors could rest, reducing congestion on the pathways and redistributing pedestrian crowds during peak visitation times.

Optional Element: Jefferson Bus Drop-off

Under this optional element, the existing bus drop-off configuration would be maintained west of the Jefferson Memorial at East Basin Drive SW in its current condition, along with ABAAS and permit parking, and would not be relocated east of the memorial. The bicycle lane would remain adjacent to the roadway, with pedestrian connections to the Jefferson Memorial Landscape beyond. Under this option, the pathway network, security walls, and bicycle lane would be located in this space on the eastern side of the memorial instead, which could result in continued vehicle and pedestrian congestion on the western side of the memorial where groups tend to gather after being dropped off.

Southwest Zone

Under the proposed action, new multi-modal connections would be added to the southwest zone to improve access to recreational services. A new pedestrian route and bicycle lane would be added surrounding the recreational fields to increase the usability of these spaces (see figures 16 and 17). Pathways measuring 12 feet in width would be added along the edge of the fields closest to the Tidal Basin, as well as in between the fields to facilitate more direct access. Adjacent to these new paths would be space for open circulation. A sidewalk measuring 6 to 8 feet in width would be added along Ohio Drive SW, and the existing walking path would be shifted to the edge of the river and bicycle path would remain along the road. In addition, a new bicycle path would be included surrounding the perimeter of the fields, further expanding the bicycle network throughout the project area.

A formalized Capitol viewshed overlook with a plaza and seating would be added adjacent to the Inlet Bridge which could serve to draw visitors to a new point of interest and help alleviate congestion along this pedestrian path. The incorporation of new pedestrian paths behind the FDR Memorial and raising the elevation of the existing plazas here at the base of the path connections would beneficially impact accessibility at the memorial because the plaza would be on the same level as the first stair of the existing landing. This would also shift the plazas back and subsequently widen the Tidal Basin edge path, which would help alleviate congestion and improve flow around the basin. The Japanese Pagoda would be shifted further from the basin edge and towards the interior landscape, which would better position it along key pedestrian routes and expand connectivity to the existing path network.



FIGURE 16

Proposed Pedestrian Circulation

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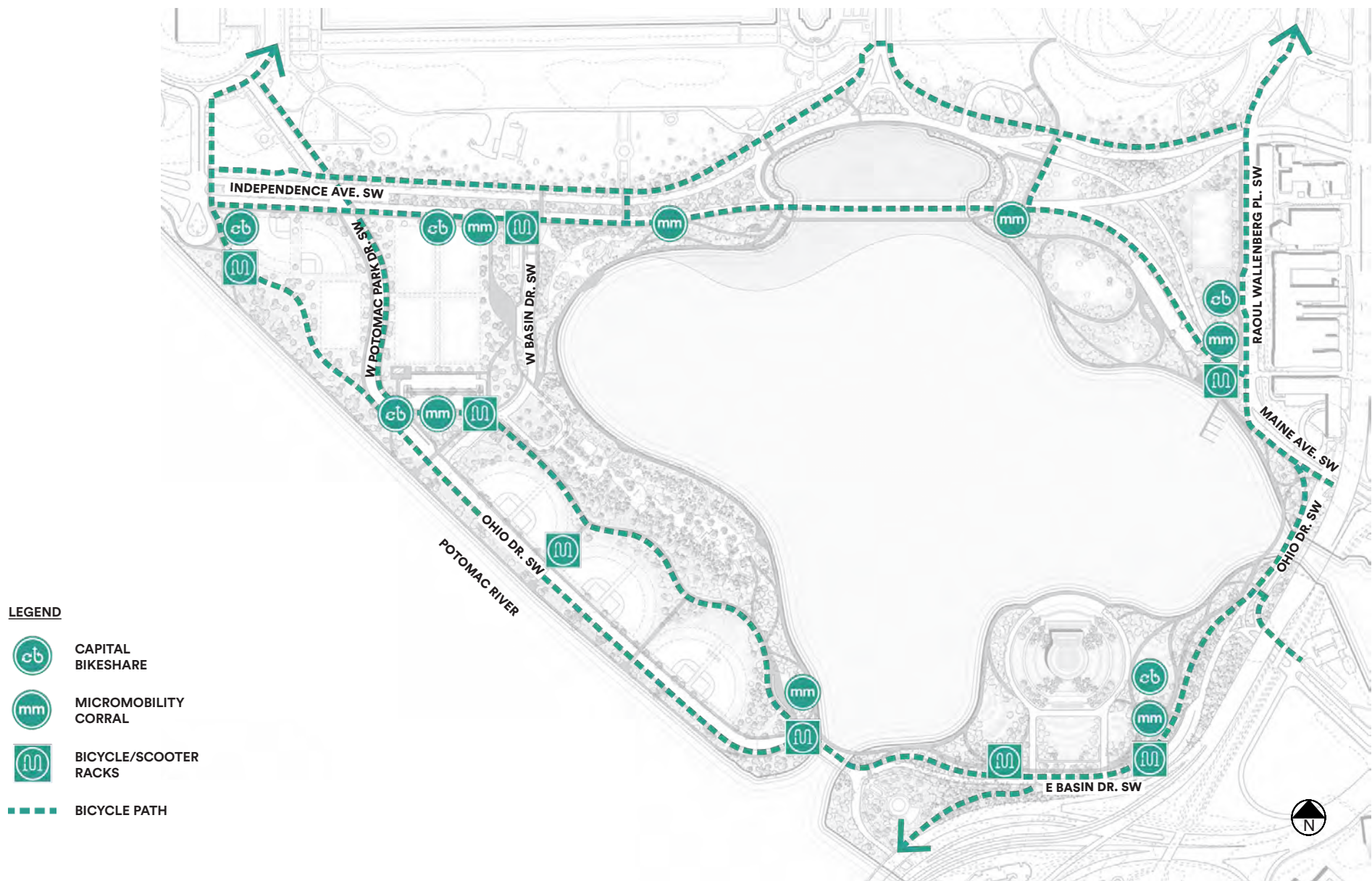


FIGURE 17

Proposed Bike/Scooter Circulation

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Northwest Zone

In the northwest zone, the portion of Ohio Drive SW between its intersection with West Potomac Park Drive SW and with Independence Avenue SW would be removed and Ohio Drive SW would be realigned along with West Potomac Park Drive SW to create a single vehicular connection to Independence Avenue SW and Daniel French Street SW (figure 18). In the future, this realigned roadway could include a city bus stop arranged adjacent to the comfort station crosswalk, details of which would be determined during a future design phase of the project.

In the area occupied by the removed portion of Ohio Drive SW, more open recreational space would be created between the roadway and the Potomac River, improving connection to the water as well as pedestrian access to the John Ericsson Memorial located along the edge of the river. This area would contain two ballfields and five multipurpose fields, with four of the fields arranged within a larger rectangle east of West Potomac Park Drive SW (figure 11 above). This newly created space would be accessed by a new bicycle path constructed between the Potomac River and the proposed ballfields, which would connect across Independence Avenue SW at the previous intersection of Ohio Drive SW. Narrowing the existing median on the south side of Independence Avenue SW would make room for an additional bicycle lane on this roadway, which would further connect it to other areas of the park. Increasing the number of bicycle paths in this zone could open this area up to more multi-modal users and encourage more diverse access to the park. Expanding the bicycle network with additional connections to paths in the southeast zone would facilitate movement between recreational fields within the project area.

Along Independence Avenue SW, crosswalks immediately adjacent to the Kutz Bridge would be relocated to the east and connect directly to the existing pedestrian path along the Tidal Basin edge. This would reduce the amount of roadway that pedestrians would have to cross and improve connectivity to points of interest further north. Doing so would also help improve pedestrian safety in this area where large crowds of visitors congregate at the “Tidal Basin Welcome Area” along West Basin Drive SW during the National Cherry Blossom Festival. Shifting the eastbound turn lane at Independence Avenue SW east would create additional space for pedestrian walkways along this heavily traveled roadway, while still maintaining vehicular access. Additional crosswalks would also be included at the north edge of the Tidal Basin to provide direct access to the World War II Memorial drop-off area (located just north of the northern lobe) and create a pathway connection directed towards the Washington Monument.

Under the proposed action, the existing parallel parking spaces along West Basin Drive SW would be removed and converted into a vehicle pull-off area for rideshare drop-off, enabling visitors quick access to the western part of the Tidal Basin. Providing a rideshare drop-off would utilize this space more efficiently than having only a limited number of cars park; this would instead serve as a point where multiple visitors could arrive and depart without occupying long-term use of the space. Visitors would still be able to park nearby at a proposed parking area south of the multiuse fields that would compensate for the proposed removal of existing parking lots in other areas. Pedestrian pathways would also be added to navigate through this space and allow access to the rideshare drop-off and nearby MLK Jr. Memorial. New pedestrian pathways would also provide direct connection to the Tidal Basin edge between the FDR and MLK Jr. memorials.

LEGEND

-  POTENTIAL FUTURE BUS STOP
-  BUS DROP OFF
-  CAR DROP OFF
-  PARKING LOT
-  ROAD REALIGNMENT

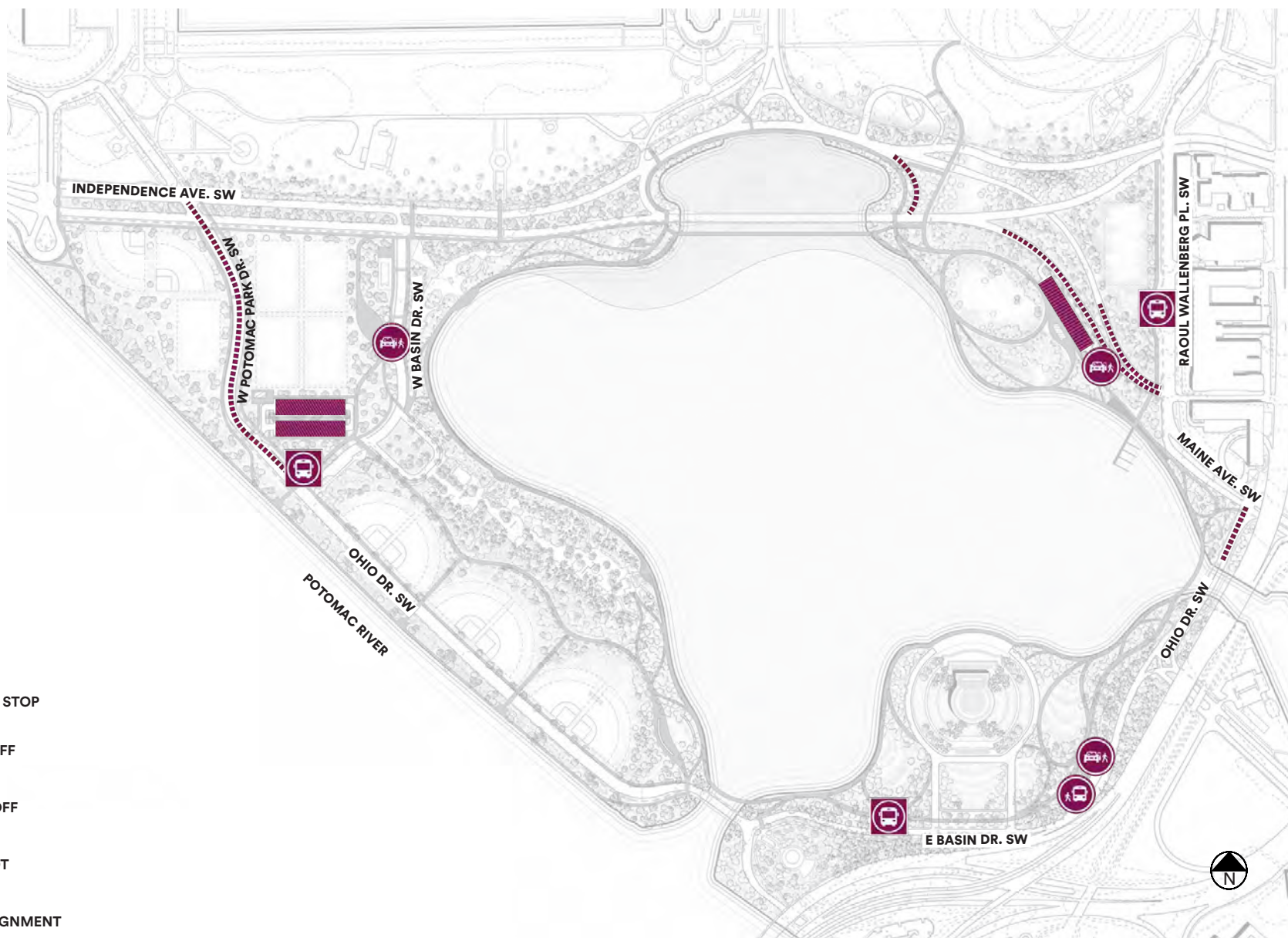


FIGURE 18

Proposed Vehicular Circulation

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These new pathways would not only ease daily circulation between points of interest in this zone but would also allow visitors to more easily disperse from this “Tidal Basin Welcome Area” during the National Cherry Blossom Festival, reducing congestion points and helping to keep pedestrian traffic flowing smoothly. Pathways would be realigned beyond the MLK Jr. Memorial, which would better incorporate the Japanese Lantern and First Cherry Trees plaque into the new pathway network from the locations that are currently farther removed from the existing pathway.

The NPS may also consider adding a cantilevered path near the MLK Jr. Memorial, which would help alleviate congestion by increasing the width of the walkway at the Tidal Basin edge in a congested area of the site and provide additional space for crowds during peak visitation.

Optional Element: Multipurpose Fields Area

Under this option, retaining the multipurpose fields in their current configuration without the addition of a parking lot or drop-off area as proposed above would result in fewer available parking spaces for visitors throughout the project area due to the removal of the existing parking lot in the northeast zone. However, street parking would remain available along Ohio Drive SW.

VISITOR USE AND EXPERIENCE

The visitor use and experience analysis includes issues related to park visitor enjoyment, safety, and access to and circulation within the park. For a discussion of views and viewsheds available to visitors in the project area, see the “Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes” section above. For a discussion of roadways, access to and around the project area, and parking facilities, see the “Circulation: Traffic and Transportation” section above.

Affected Environment

While visitation to the memorials around the Tidal Basin, including the Jefferson Memorial, the FDR Memorial, and the MLK Jr. Memorial, each averaged approximately 3 million visitors in 2024, over the past two decades it has ranged from approximately 2 to 4 million visitors. In addition, the National Cherry Blossom Festival brings a large influx of visitors over a three- to four-week period that typically exceeds more than a million visitors to the area in the spring (DC.gov 2024); in 2024, this number was over 1.5 million. An estimated 36 million people visit the larger National Mall area each year. The experience of walking under the cherry tree canopy in the spring is a major element of the visitor experience in the project area.

West Potomac Park is used for permitted events 30-50 times a year, including high volume footraces (marathons and 5ks), private events, and wedding receptions. Temporary support facilities may be required to support permitted use such as temporary restroom facilities, security, tents, stages, sound equipment, and cellular infrastructure.

One of the most popular recreational uses of the project area is walking and jogging on the 8-foot wide, 2-mile-long pedestrian path around the Tidal Basin. Other pedestrian paths in the project area also provide spaces for walking around the monuments, under the cherry trees, and to and through the ballfields. The Rock Creek Park Trail is a 0.85-mile stretch of paved, multi-use path located on the southwest side of Ohio Drive SW and is also used for walking, biking, and jogging, and continues to Georgetown.



Photo 5. Visitors walk along the Tidal Basin edge to enjoy the blooming cherry blossoms (NPS photo)

The ballfields can be reserved on Recreation.gov; common uses are softball, baseball, soccer, kickball, and frisbee. The fields are also still used for occasional polo matches as they have been for over 100 years. Another recreational use in the project area is paddle boating. Visitors can rent paddle boats on site, allowing them to experience the Tidal Basin from the water. Passive recreation activities such as picnicking and photography are also popular.

An integral part of the visitor experience in the Tidal Basin project area is visitation to the memorials. The memorials in the project area are listed below and shown in figure 19.

- Thomas Jefferson Memorial
- Japanese Pagoda
- Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial
- Floral Library
- Food Kiosks
- John Ericsson Memorial
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial
- Japanese Lantern
- Ballfields
- Boathouse

As mentioned above, visits to the major memorials, including Jefferson, FDR, and MLK Jr., average three million people a year each, therefore serving as a significant driver of visitation and providing a key experience for visitors.

The visitor experience at the Jefferson Memorial in particular is a vital part of the Tidal Basin visitation landscape. Anchoring the southeastern end of the Tidal Basin, the Jefferson Memorial with its marble steps, colonnade, and Jefferson statue, is a particularly strong draw for visitors during the National Cherry Blossom Festival. Visitors currently navigate around the temporary Jersey barrier security measures to access the memorial.

The visitor experience at the Tidal Basin in the recent past has been impacted by regular inundation from daily tides that overtopped areas of the seawall, reducing visitor access and impacting safety. Tidal overtopping created pools of standing water, affecting the visitor experience. When the standing water receded, visitors would have to navigate around debris, trash, sediment, and standing water often left behind. With the implementation of the seawalls project, however, the visitor experience is trending in a positive direction. An elevated, rehabilitated wall and wider, 12-foot walkway is being constructed in the southwest corner of the Tidal Basin and along the Potomac River in West Potomac Park. The new wall and walkway is planned to be implemented around the entirety of the Tidal Basin to improve both visitor safety and the visitor experience.

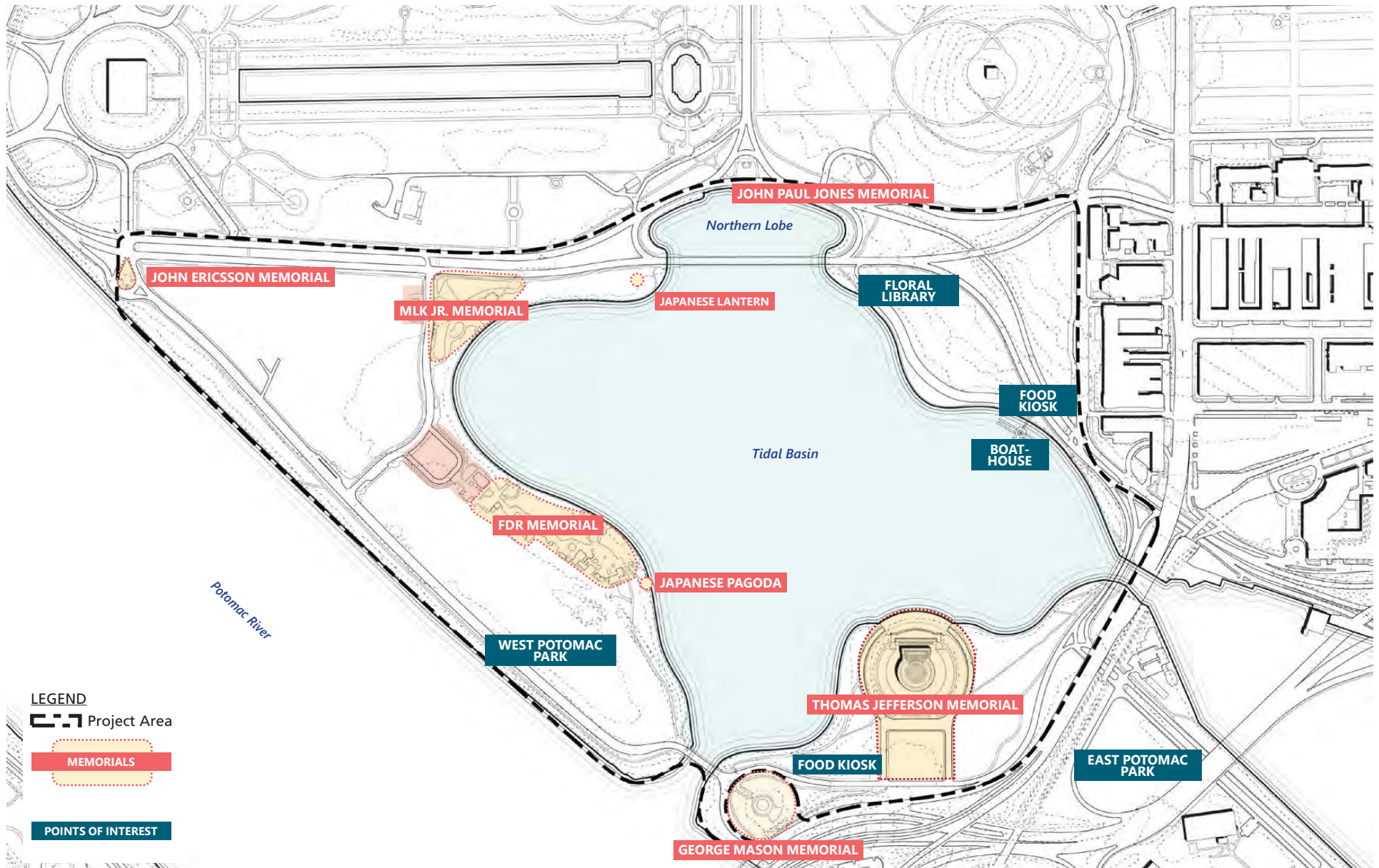


FIGURE 19

Visitor Attractions

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Impact Assessment Methodology

Potential impacts to visitor use and experience are evaluated based on changes to types of visitor experiences, access and circulation, opportunities for recreation, and visitor safety. Past administrative and planning documents provided background on changes to visitor use and experience over time. Anticipated impacts to visitor use and experience were analyzed using information from park staff and previous studies. The potential for changes to visitor use and experience was evaluated by assessing the changes that would occur under each alternative and determining whether the projected changes would affect visitor experience.

Impacts of Alternative 1: No Action

Under the no action alternative, the visitor experience at the Tidal Basin would generally remain the same as under the existing condition. Visitors would continue to access and circulate around the Tidal Basin's visitor attractions via existing pathways and sharing vehicular bridges. Pedestrian pathways and dedicated bridges would not be added, and crowding would continue to be a factor of the visitor experience, particularly during the National Cherry Blossom Festival. Certain pinch points around the Tidal Basin pathway system, such as at the Inlet and Outlet bridges, would continue to cause congestion issues for visitors. The existing playing field resources would remain the same, as would the cherry tree canopy as implemented by the seawalls project. Expansion of the cherry tree canopy would not take place and Cherry Trees would continue to be impacted by the brackish water. The visitor experience at the Jefferson Memorial would continue to be influenced by the minor visual and circulatory impediment of the Jersey barrier temporary security measures. More permanent security measures would not be instituted, and visitors would continue to have to navigate around the Jersey barriers set up around the memorial. Implementation of the no action alternative would result in an overall continuation of the existing visitor use and experience of the Tidal Basin.

Impacts of Alternative 2: Proposed Action (Preferred Alternative)

The discussion of alternative 2's impacts on visitor use and experience is organized in the same manner as presented in chapter 2 above, clockwise by zone.

Northeast Zone

The visitor experience in the northeast zone would be improved by relocating surface parking away from the Tidal Basin edge and creating inviting waterfront open space in its place. Additional cherry trees would also be planted between the basin's edge and Raoul Wallenberg Place SW, expanding the springtime canopy. New pedestrian walkways, a new comfort station and plaza proposed as part of a separate project, and a terraced seating element adjacent to the reconfigured paddle boat dock would support visitation. The parking lot would be rebuilt parallel to Maine Avenue SW. These improvements would reduce crowding by giving visitors more places to gather and enjoy activities like walking and picnicking under the cherry blossom canopy. In this zone, the Floral Library would be shifted to edge both sides of a pedestrian path allowing visitors to see and appreciate this historic resource.

The visitor experience in the northern lobe would also be improved under this alternative. The addition of a pedestrian bridge alongside but lower than the Kutz bridge in this zone would help

alleviate visitor crowding, particularly during the National Cherry Blossom Festival. The height of the pedestrian bridge would allow visitors to get closer to the water level and view the Kutz Bridge. The addition of the pedestrian bridge also allows room for safe and dedicated bicycle access. Furthermore, the creation of a tidal shelf with native plant species in the northern lobe would give visitors a sense of the tidal flats that were historically part of the Tidal Basin.

Optional Element: Tidal Landscape

Optionally, the tidal shelf in the northern lobe would not be implemented and visitors would not experience the sense of the historical tidal flats.

Southeast Zone

The impact of design elements in the southeast zone would be similar to those in the northeast zone. More pedestrian pathways around the Jefferson Memorial, along with a pedestrian bridge at the vehicular Outlet bridge, would reduce visitor crowding, thereby improving both visitor safety and the visitor experience. In addition, narrowing the vehicular access around the lawn panel at the Jefferson Memorial would create more lawn space for visitor use. Additional cherry tree plantings give visitors more opportunities to recreate under the expanded canopy. Under this alternative, evergreen and deciduous trees would be planted along the Route 1 highway and rail corridor, which would help buffer road noise and improve the visitors' visual experience.

Visitor safety would be improved under the proposed action by installing a system of security walls and removable bollards at the Jefferson Memorial, meeting the security standards established by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. As the permanent security wall system would be at the height of a seating wall, it would also provide visitors with places to sit and enjoy views back to the Jefferson Memorial. These security measures would replace the existing Jersey barriers, which currently contribute to congestion on the Tidal Basin side of the Memorial.

Southwest Zone

The impact of design elements in the southwest zone would be similar to those in the southeast and northeast zones. A separate pedestrian bridge adjacent to the Inlet vehicular bridge would reduce visitor crowding, thereby improving both visitor safety and the visitor experience. In addition, a formalized overlook with a plaza and seating would be added adjacent to the Inlet Bridge, providing visitors with a safe place to stop and enjoy views to the US Capitol Building. The visitor connection with the Potomac River would be improved in this zone by adding more pedestrian pathways around the back of the FDR Memorial as well as adding a bicycle lane and pedestrian path around the recreational fields. The design would also shift an existing walking path in the zone to the edge of the river, thereby better orienting visitors towards the river landscape. The cherry tree canopy would also be increased on the river side of the memorial. Together, these design elements would help to further disperse visitor crowds while offering more picnicking opportunities. The existing six ballfields in this zone would remain and have more direct access through new pedestrian and bicycle paths. Plantings along the extent of the Potomac River would include deciduous and evergreen as well as cherry trees and would aim to balance shade with open picnic space. New path connections would also be added and the plaza relocated at the base of the FDR Memorial, intended to create vistas across the Tidal Basin to the

Washington Monument. Finally, the Japanese Pagoda would be shifted towards the interior landscape and be located along key pedestrian routes, facilitating visitor access to the Pagoda.

Northwest Zone

The impact of the proposed action on visitor use in the northwest zone would be similar to those in the other zones. As in other zones, additional cherry trees would be planted to expand the canopy and provide additional spaces for public use and enjoyment. Under the proposed action, a section of Ohio Drive SW would be removed to create more space for recreation along the Potomac River. Four of the five existing multipurpose fields would be rearranged within a larger rectangle to better accommodate activities like polo. The fifth multipurpose field would be located nearby, along with two of the project area's eight ballfields. A new parking lot to the south of the fields would replace parking being removed in the northeast zone and provide staging space for events. A flexible use plaza would also be added alongside West Basin Drive SW, further increasing capacity to host events.

To reduce crowding near the MLK Jr. Memorial, the proposed action would widen the Tidal Basin edge walkway by cantilevering it over the water. This would ease pedestrian congestion without changing the historic extent of the Tidal Basin edge. Like other busy spots around the Tidal Basin, this intersection is often crowded, and the cantilevered path would provide more space for visitors to pause or pass by.

Optional Element: Multipurpose Fields Area

Under this option, retaining the multipurpose fields in their current configuration would result in no impact on visitor use and experience because there would be no alteration to the existing recreational facilities or use of the area. As discussed under "Circulation: Traffic and Transportation" above, this option would result in fewer overall parking spaces in the project area, which may result in an adverse impact on visitor experience if they are unable to find a parking space close to their destination. However, visitors would still be able to utilize street parking along Ohio Drive SW.

CHAPTER 4: CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

The NPS places a high priority on public involvement in the NEPA process and on giving the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed action. Consultation and coordination with federal, state, and local agencies, and American Indian tribes were also conducted to refine the alternatives and identify issues and/or concerns related to environmental impact topics. This section provides a summary of the public involvement, and agency consultation and coordination that occurred during planning.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

As part of the NEPA process and to comply with the requirement of Section 106 of the NHPA, the NPS involved the public in project scoping by holding a 30-day public comment period from February 19, 2025, to March 19, 2025. The external Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) homepage for the project, <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/tidalbasinDCP>, is the primary location where project documents are available for public review. A virtual public scoping meeting was held on February 19, 2025. The NPS communicated project information with the public, agencies, and other relevant stakeholders during scoping by transmitting scoping letters and a press release by email. The scoping letter was distributed by the NPS to the interested parties on February 5, 2025. The presentation used during the virtual public meeting and a recording of the meeting are available on the PEPC project page.

During the public scoping period, comments received covered a wide range of topics, including the project purpose and need; comments on specific concepts and elements; issues related to specific memorials, cultural resources, circulation, wildlife, and visitor use and experience.

AGENCY CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106

Pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA and its implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800) “Protection of Historic Properties,” the NPS initiated Section 106 consultation with the DC State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and other invited consulting parties on September 17, 2024. The following tribes, agencies, and organizations were invited to participate as consulting parties for this project:

- DC State Historic Preservation Office
- DC Preservation League
- Trust for the National Mall
- Historical Society of Washington DC
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Committee of 100 on the Federal City
- FDR Memorial Legacy Committee
- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- US Commission of Fine Arts
- National Capital Planning Commission
- Virginia Department of Historic Resources
- DC Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A01
- Ward 2 of the District of Columbia
- Tribal nations listed below under “Tribal Consultation”

The first Section 106 consulting parties meeting was held virtually on April 24, 2025, and included a presentation of the draft proposed APE, existing conditions, and initial proposed

concepts. A second consulting parties meeting was held virtually on June 4, 2025, to discuss the revised APE and revised concepts.

A separate assessment of effect under Section 106 was prepared concurrently with this EA and will be available for review by the consulting parties concurrent with the public review period. The NPS will continue consultation with the DC SHPO and other relevant consulting parties to develop an agreement document to resolve the potential adverse effects this project would have on historic properties.

Tribal Consultation

Consultation initiation letters were sent to the following tribes on September 17, 2024:

- Delaware Nation
- Cherokee Nation
- Pamunkey Indian Tribe
- Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe
- Rappahannock Tribe
- Nansemond Indian Nation
- Chickahominy Indian Tribe
- Chickahominy Tribe Eastern Division
- Monacan Indian Nation
- Catawba Indian Nation
- Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
- Shawnee Tribe

The NPS received one response from the Shawnee Tribe informing the NPS that the project is out of the Shawnee Tribe's area of interest. No additional responses have been received to date.

Endangered Species Act, Section 7 Consultation

The NPS used the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Consultation database to review information regarding threatened and endangered species that may occur within the project area and determined that the plan-level actions developed for this EA would not result in impacts on these species (see "Impact Topics Dismissed from Further Analysis" in chapter 1 for more information). The NPS anticipates undertaking consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service under Section 7 as individual projects developed from the plan move through the design and implementation process.

PUBLIC REVIEW

The EA was released for formal public and agency review for 30 days and has been distributed to a variety of interested individuals, agencies, and organizations. It also is available on the internet at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/tidalbasinDCP>, and hard copies are available by request.

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- 2019 *Guidance for Comprehensive Transportation Review*. Version 1.0, June 2019.
- 2021 *Move DC 2021 Update: The District of Columbia’s Long-Range Transportation Plan*. December 2021.

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As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibilities for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering wise use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The department also promotes the goals of the Take Pride in America campaign by encouraging stewardship and citizen responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.