

draft development concept plan /
environmental assessment

AUGUST 1982

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARKS
EAST POTOMAC PARK

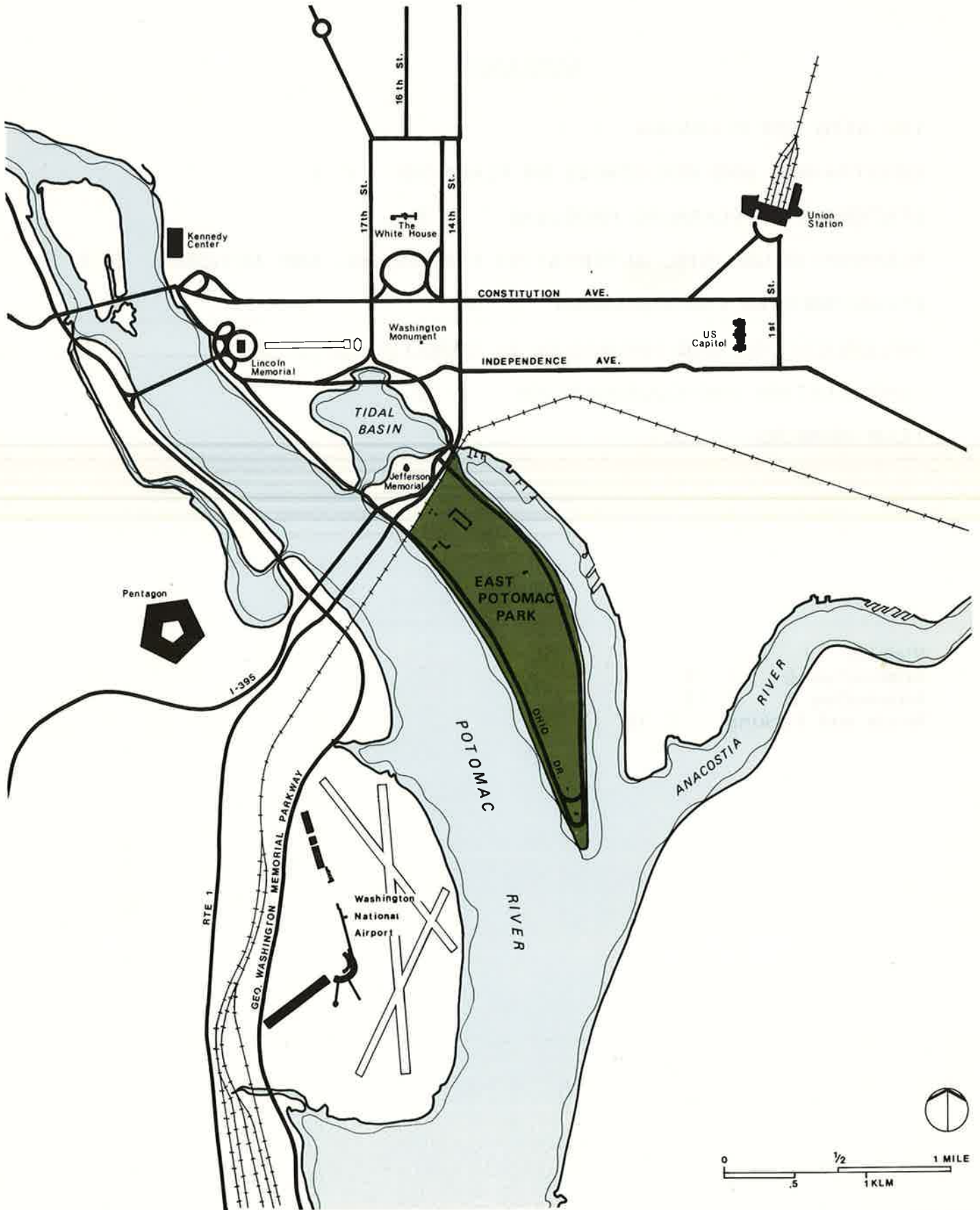


WASHINGTON, D.C.

DRAFT DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

East Potomac Park
National Capital Parks
Washington, D.C.

Denver Service Center
National Park Service
United States Department of the Interior



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vicinity map
EAST POTOMAC PARK

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

THE NEED FOR PLANNING

East Potomac Park experiences severe crowding from April through October during weekends, holidays, and special events. There is heavy vehicular traffic congestion, as well as lack of space for picnicking, field play, and other recreational activities. These general pressures for more ballfields and open space exist throughout the downtown area and are most apparent in both East and West Potomac Parks. In addition to a lack of space, visitor services such as water and sewer facilities are not adequately developed to accommodate peak crowds. Thus, the scope of this planning effort is to determine what adjustments to the total space available in East Potomac Park are necessary and appropriate to accommodate some of the more severe demands that occur. This includes determination of opportunities and potentials for additional circulation and general recreational space. Given the rapid change in our society's preference for recreational pursuits, a ten-year time frame will be used for planning purposes, which will minimize the requirements for extensive capital investment and allow an easy transition to other recreational needs. The long-range resolution of the problems found in East Potomac Park may lie in the development of similar recreational parks in the National Capital Region, such as those along the Anacostia River corridor.

In addressing the various problems that occur, the planning recommendations will be guided by the ends to be achieved in the park. These ends are defined by the legislative purpose, the goals and objectives which support that purpose, and the ideas presented by the public, organizations, and agencies concerned with the future of East Potomac Park. Throughout this planning effort, formal and informal meetings with these groups have provided insights into how the public views East Potomac Park. Generally, the visitor to the park desires an increase in basic services, such as restrooms, picnic tables, and parking; the golfing public expressed concern over reducing the playability of the course, making the course more attractive and improving the level of course maintenance. In a recently published study of several areas within Washington, the Federal City Council suggested an alteration of East Potomac Park, including increased parking, a championship-type 18-hole golf course, increased recreational and open space, a substantial marina along the channel side, and a pedestrian bridge linking East Potomac Park with Maine Avenue and the Washington Channel waterfront parks.

East Potomac Park was designated by the 54th Congress on March 3, 1897, to be a "public park for the recreation and [enjoyment] of the people."

Inherent in this legislative purpose is the park's goal:

Provide open space and facilities for outdoor recreational activities in a setting that exemplifies the scenic qualities of this gateway park

The objectives that define and support this goal are as follows:

Maintain and upgrade the scenic qualities of the park

Provide land and water settings for outdoor recreational activities for groups and individuals

Improve traffic circulation

Maintain effective visitor safety

CONSTRAINTS AND INFLUENCES ON PLANNING

Certain conditions that will not be altered or affected during the ten-year operational period of the plan serve to constrain and influence planning:

The peninsular shape and the general recreational open space purpose of the park will be retained.

The existing National Park Service administration and maintenance facilities will remain, as they provide support for both park and regional activities.

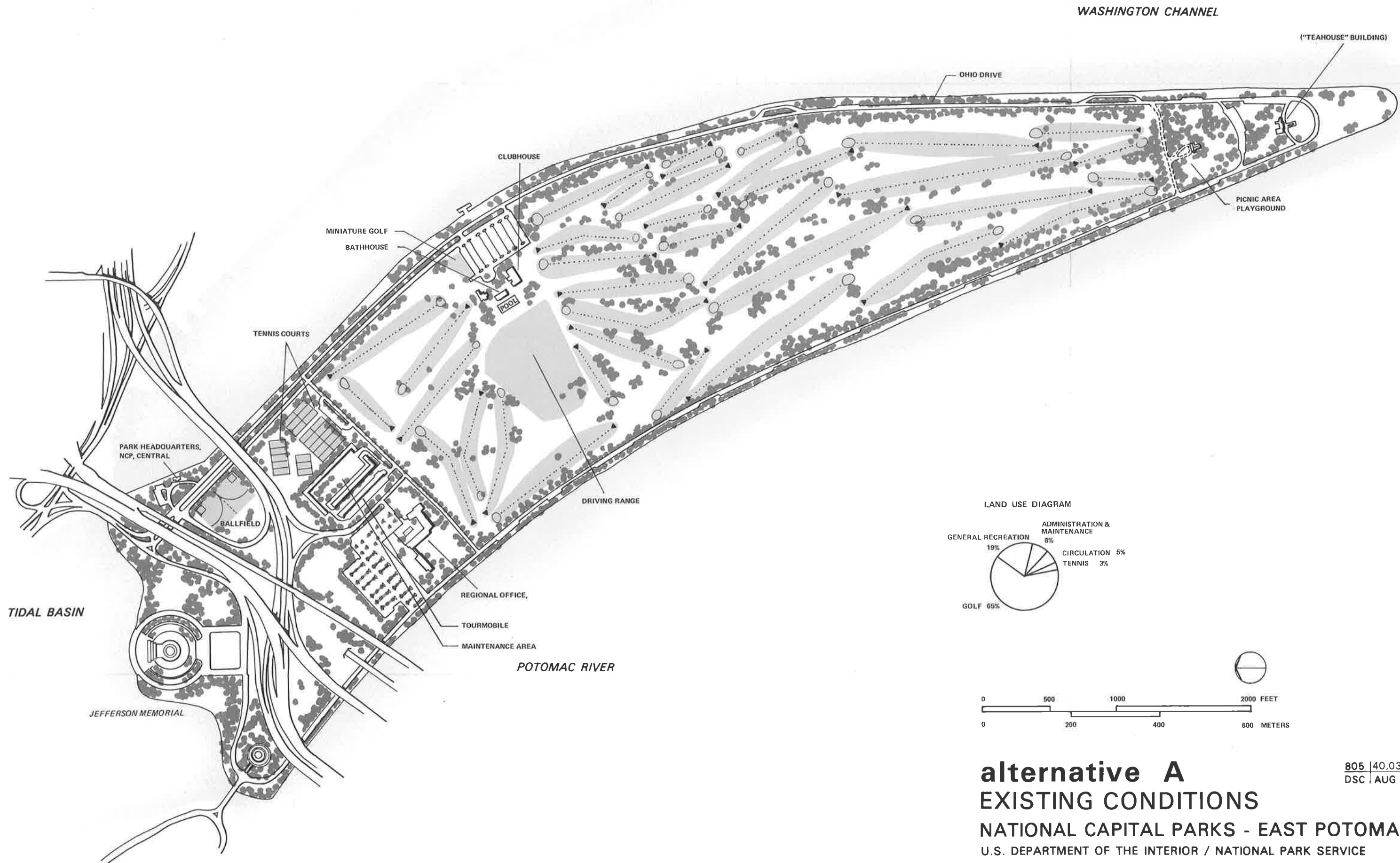
East Potomac Park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its important role in providing both a foreground and a background for viewing the nation's capital and its monuments. Several buildings are on the List of Classified Structures, including the Tea House at Hains Point, the building at 900 Ohio Drive, S.W., the golf clubhouse, and the facility occupied by the U.S. Park Police substation.

The primary access to the park will continue to be by private automobile.

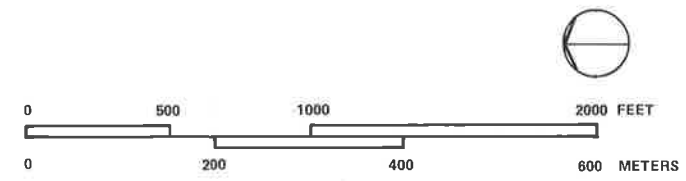
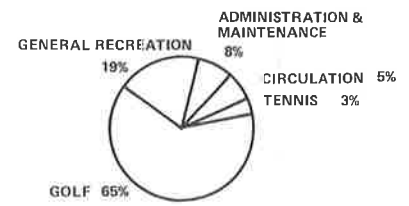
The poor load-bearing properties of the soil south of Buckeye Drive and an elevation laying largely within the 100-year floodplain restrict the development of major structures within East Potomac Park.

According to recent data developed by the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, the water quality of the Potomac River and Washington Channel is improving but is not yet acceptable for direct human contact.

Increased demand for close-to-home recreation is anticipated for the foreseeable future, as can be seen in the 45 percent increase in recreational use of East Potomac Park during 1981-82.

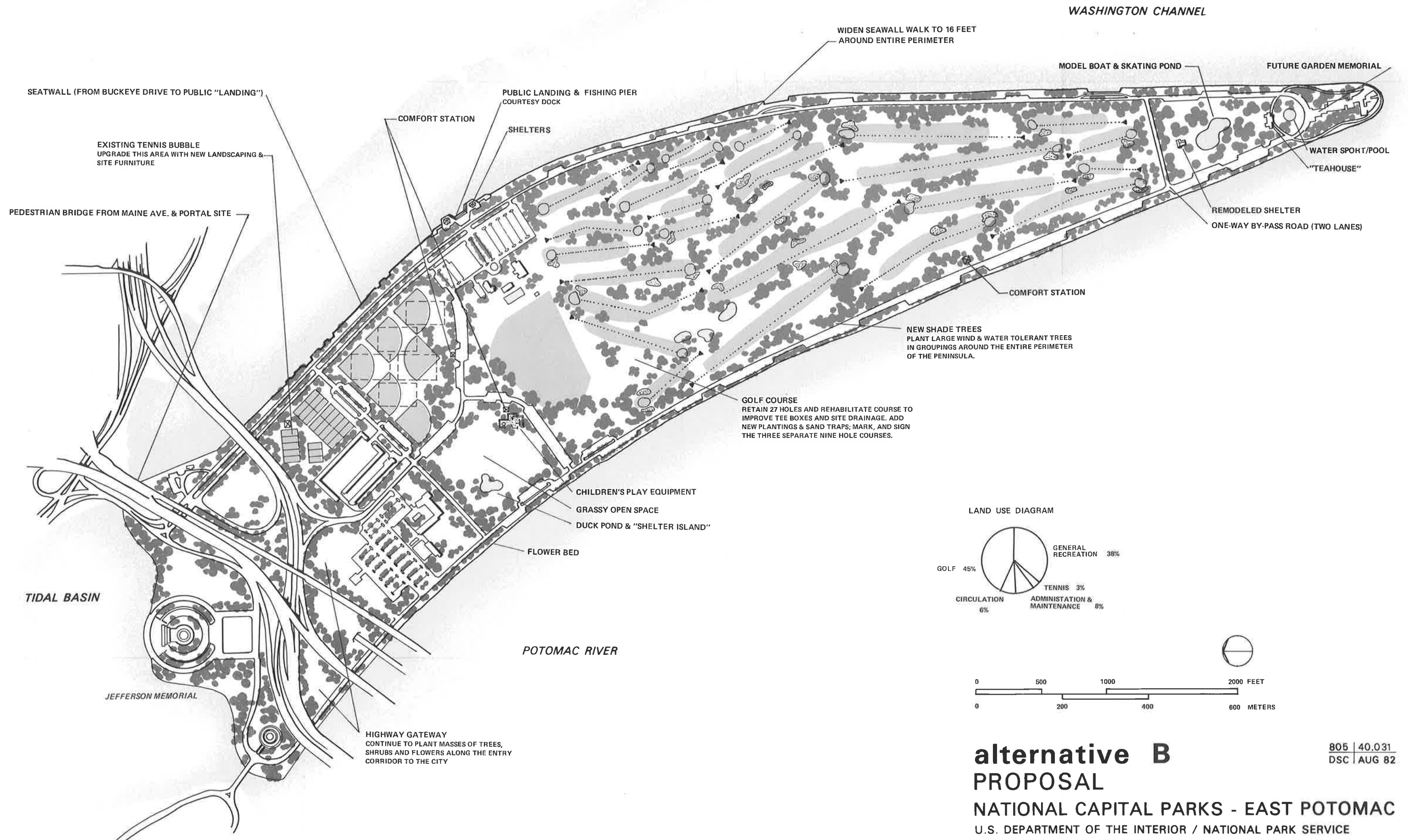


LAND USE DIAGRAM

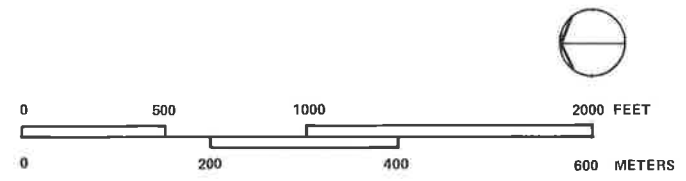
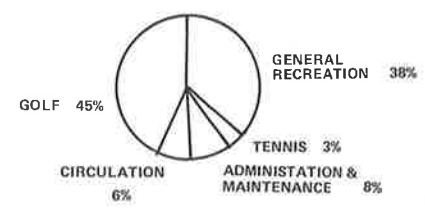


alternative A
EXISTING CONDITIONS
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LAND USE DIAGRAM



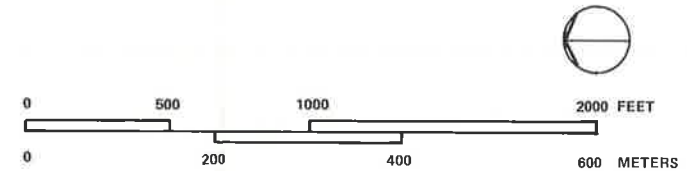
alternative B
PROPOSAL
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WASHINGTON CHANNEL



- EXISTING ROADS AND PARKING
- NEW ROADS
- NEW PARKING AREAS



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ROADS AND PARKING
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