



WELCOME!

Comprehensive Trails Plan / Environmental Assessment

January 21, 2016

PURPOSE OF TONIGHT'S PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

- ✓ Present the NPS proposal to develop a Comprehensive Trails Plan and the ideas and strategies currently being considered to improve the trail network.
- ✓ Gain public feedback to inform the development of the Comprehensive Trails Plan.
- ✓ Identify any significant issues or concerns regarding the proposed project that should be addressed during the planning process.



West Confederate Avenue near the North Carolina Memorial

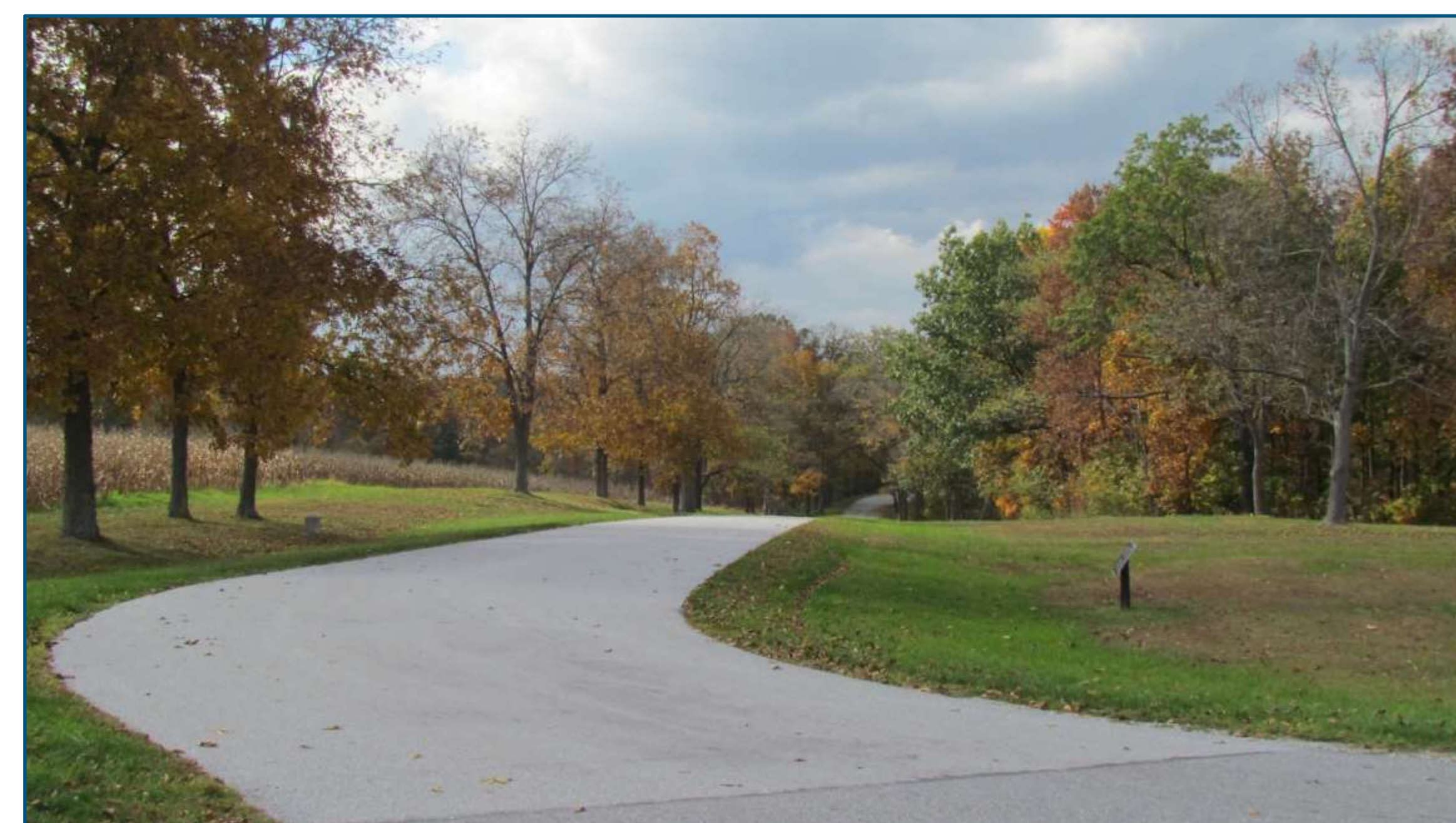


PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The National Park Service (NPS) is proposing to develop a Comprehensive Trails Plan for Gettysburg National Military Park (NMP) and Eisenhower National Historic Site (NHS).

The purpose of the Comprehensive Trails Plan is to improve visitor access, convenience, safety, and opportunities for understanding and appreciation of the historic battlefield and the landscape of the Eisenhower site. This project is needed because:

- opportunities to interpret the park landscape more intimately (i.e. outside of a vehicle) should be expanded to improve the visitor experience and understanding of the history of the parks.
- during peak visitation there is considerable traffic and tour bus related congestion on the self-guided tour route.
- there are safety concerns due to a lack of designated separation between vehicles and pedestrians along paved roadways.
- a lack of clearly defined trails and pathways in the park leads to “social trailing” that often results in erosion and degradation of cultural resources.
- there is a lack of connections for visitors to access park sites by modes other than vehicles or motorized tours.
- visitors experience wayfinding challenges due to fragmented trail segments, poorly identified pedestrian routes.
- conflicts exist on trails (i.e. equestrian trails) authorized for multiple user groups.
- physical degradation of the parks’ existing trails results in accessibility challenges to persons with disabilities.
- the lack of wayfinding and poor delineation of trails limits the ability to enforce temporary trail closures needed for maintenance or resource management.



**Meredith Avenue near Auto Tour Stop #1
on Reynolds Avenue**



**Pedestrian path behind the Gettysburg NMP Museum
and Visitor Center**



PROJECT BACKGROUND

The NPS initiated work on a Comprehensive Trail System Study in 2014 for both Gettysburg NMP and Eisenhower NHS. The study evaluated potential trail networks for park visitors, including the following user groups:

1. Pedestrians, with accessible options
2. Cyclists
3. Equestrians
4. Motorists (cars, Segway's, scooters, etc.)
5. Transit Systems Users



Auto Tour Stop #1 on Reynolds Avenue

The study began with an inventory and analysis of existing trails, amenities, and roadways within the park as well as links between the park and regional trails. This study also identified locations for potential new trail alignments, focusing primarily in areas where trail access could improve interpretation of the Battle of Gettysburg or Eisenhower's legacy. Potential trail alignments were studied looking at missing 1863 circulation routes (farm lanes), non-extant commemorative avenues, 1863 troop movement patterns, and 1863 wall, fence, and tree lines. The NPS also looked at the potential to close social trails that are damaging to cultural or natural resources.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding principles have been developed to help establish guidelines for the development of the project. Trail alignments will be evaluated based on criteria related to the following :

1. Visitor Experience
2. Access and Connectivity
3. Resource Protection and Sustainability



Pedestrian path near the Monument to Major General George Meade off of Hancock Avenue

The trail options/connections on display tonight (see Boards #5 – 8) are just a few examples of projects that could potentially be included in the Comprehensive Trails Plan. These projects were identified during the development of the Comprehensive Trail System Study in 2014 and 2015.



THE NPS PROPOSAL

This project has been initiated to broaden the availability of multi-modal experiences available to park visitors and because visitors to both Gettysburg NMP and Eisenhower NHS have been seeking alternative ways (e.g. hiking, cycling, horseback riding) to experience park resources in addition to the parks' traditional auto tour and limited formal trail options. As the Comprehensive Trails Plan is being developed, the NPS will consider the following general concept strategies to enhance the existing trail system within Gettysburg NMP and to improve access to Eisenhower NHS:

Expand the Pedestrian Trail Network so visitors can experience more of the battlefield without vehicles.

- Provide improved multi-modal access to the battlefield from the Gettysburg NMP Museum and Visitor Center.
- Establish new context-sensitive trail segments in parts of the battlefield where trails do not currently exist.
- Provide formal connections to existing and planned community and regional trail systems.
- Provide select amenities to support the pedestrian trail network, including benches, interpretive signage, and wayfinding signage, as well as additional opportunities to interpret the daily life of the Eisenhower's at the farm.
- Carefully locate/construct trail segments, waysides, and parking to provide universal access to significant destinations in the park landscape while telling the story of the 3-day battle.
- Provide an additional level of visitor experience by establishing interpretive trailheads.

Establish Additional Bike Routes to improve accessibility.

- Allow bicycle access on select pathways currently authorized for pedestrian use only.
- Allow bicycle-use on select newly constructed pathways.

Consider Multi-Modal Uses of Commemorative Park Avenues to improve safety and accessibility.

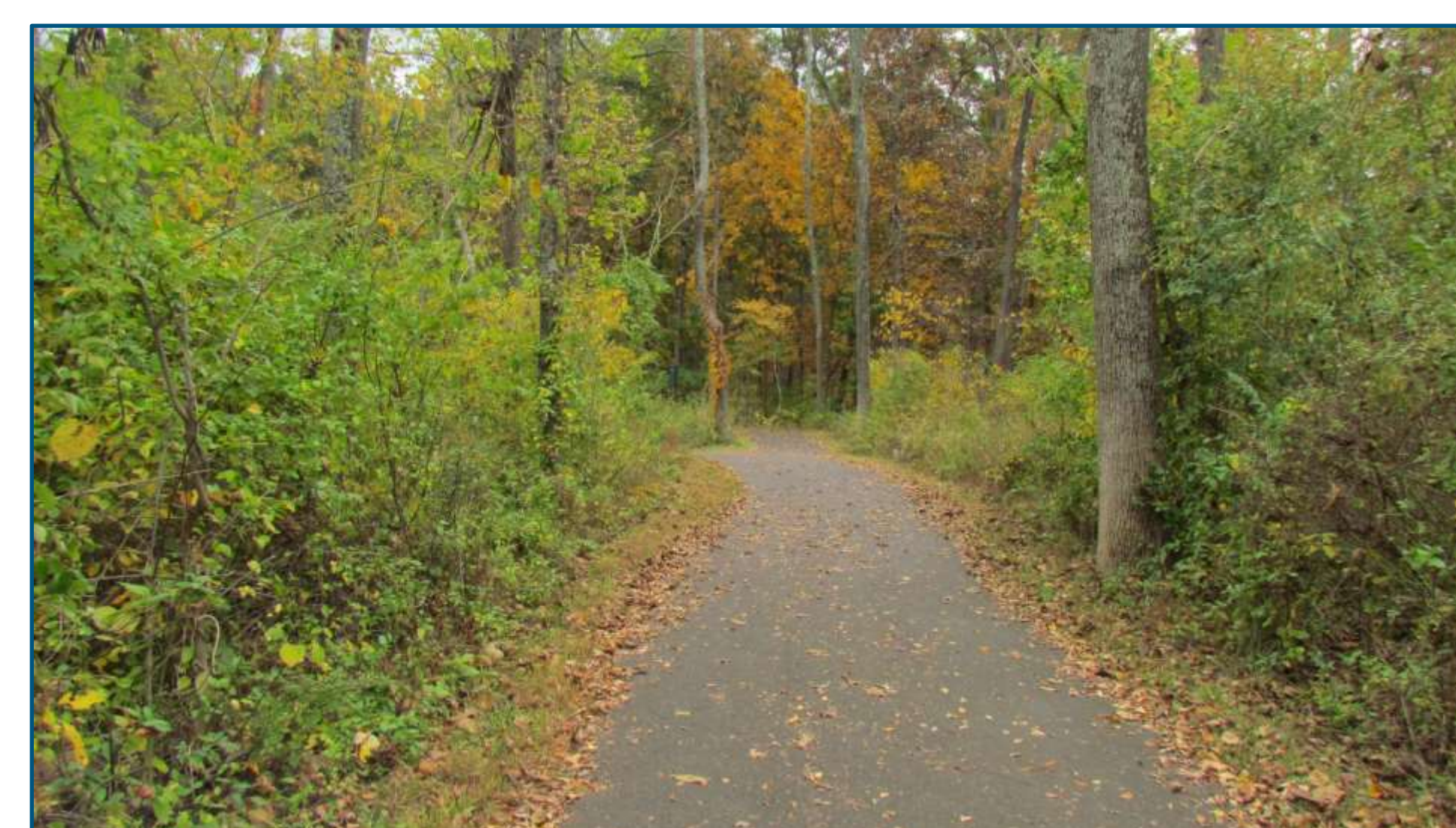
- Improve safety on park avenues by establishing pedestrian-only lanes and combining bicyclists and vehicles into one shared-use lane.
- Convert select two-way park avenues to one-way to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Reverse existing traffic flow on select one-way avenues.
- Close select avenues to vehicle traffic.



Potential location for a new multi-modal path between the Lutheran Theological Seminary and Auto Tour Stop #1 on Reynolds Avenue



Pedestrian path along Taneytown Road



Pedestrian path between the Gettysburg NMP Museum and Visitor Center and Taneytown Road



...PROPOSAL CONTINUED

Assess the Expansion of Equestrian Trails within areas of the park where inclusion of horses is appropriate to the story of the battle and where resources would not be impacted.

- Authorize equestrian use on select existing pedestrian trails.
- Strategically plan new equestrian trails to connect to existing equestrian trail network to improve accessibility.
- Provide additional interpretive opportunities on equestrian trails.



Existing horse trail between Slyder Farm and South Confederate Avenue at Big Round Top



Pedestrian path between the Leister House and the National Cemetery parking area



Barn proposed for reconstruction at the Eisenhower NHS

Expand Opportunities for Visitor Access to Eisenhower NHS in addition to the park shuttle from the Gettysburg NMP Museum and Visitor Center.

- Authorize bicycle access to Eisenhower NHS using the main entrance off of Millerstown Road.
- Provide new multi-modal pathway from Gettysburg NMP to Eisenhower NHS via West Confederate Avenue and/or Eisenhower Farm Road.

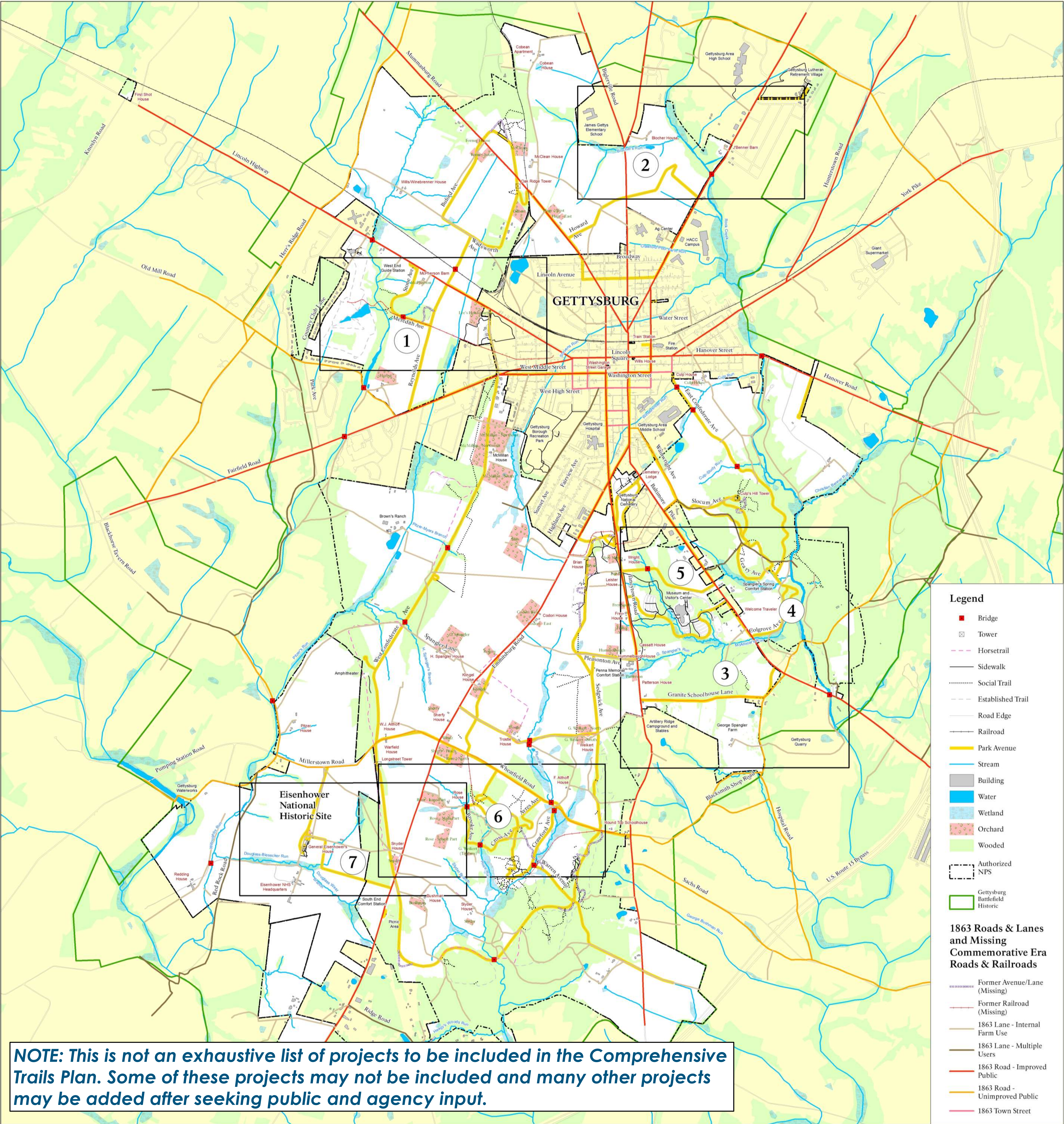
Evaluate Hiker/Biker Shuttle Opportunities to key areas on the battlefield and Eisenhower NHS.

- Expand the Gold Line Shuttle service to include areas such as West Confederate Avenue and Big and Little Round Top.

POTENTIAL PROJECTS IN THE INITIAL PROPOSAL

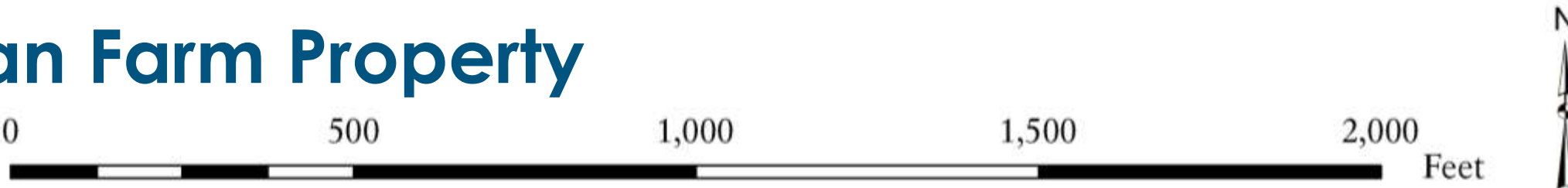
The general location of several projects that have been identified for potential inclusion in the Comprehensive Trails Plan are provided on the park map (Board #5) and drawn conceptually on Boards #6 - 8.

NOTE: This is not an exhaustive list of projects to be included in the Comprehensive Trails Plan. Some of these projects may not be included and many other projects may be added after seeking public and agency input.





Project #1: Proposed Multi-modal Path between the Seminary and the Harman Farm Property
Opportunity provided: Further interpretation of Day 1 of the Battle of Gettysburg.



Project #2: Proposed Multi-modal Path between the Blocher House and Benner Farm
Opportunity provided: Further interpretation of Day 1 of the Battle of Gettysburg.



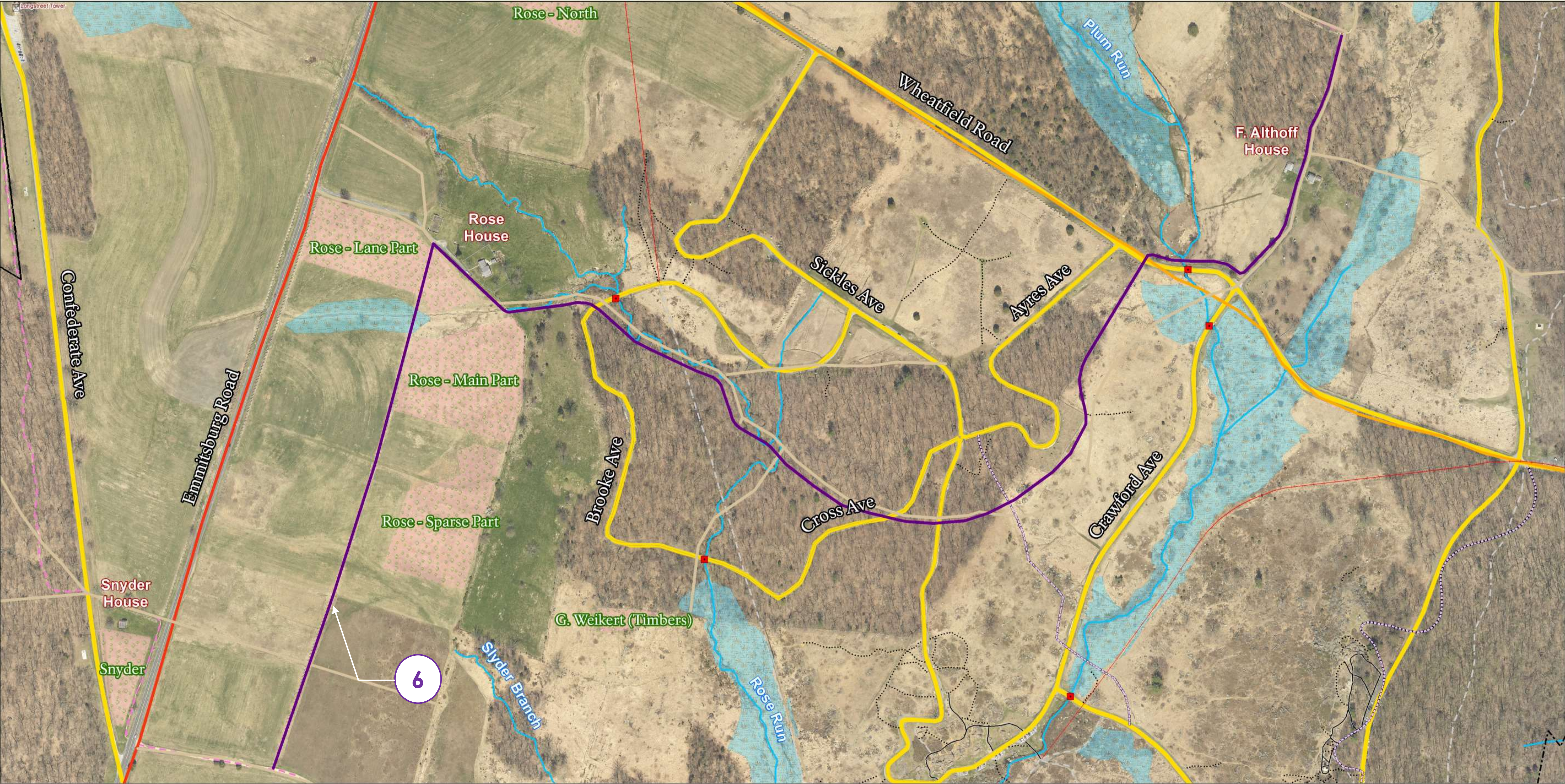


Project #3: Proposed Multi-modal Path from the Museum and Visitor Center to Powers Hill and the Spangler Farm
Opportunity provided: Additional opportunities to visit and experience other Battlefield sites.

Project #4: Proposed Multi-modal Path from the Museum and Visitor Center to Spangler's Spring
Opportunity provided: Improve access to important Day 2 interpretative experiences for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Project #5: Proposed Multi-modal Path from the Museum and Visitor Center to Hunt Avenue
Opportunity provided: Safe and separated exit/entry for bicyclists accessible from Baltimore Pike and Taneytown Road.





Project #6: Create New Equestrian Trail following Historic Alignments to Provide Access to Interpretive Experiences in the Area of the Snyder Farm, Rose Farm, and Trostle Farm

Opportunity provided: Expanded recreational opportunities within the park.



Project #7: Proposed Multi-modal Path to Eisenhower NHS from Confederate Avenue

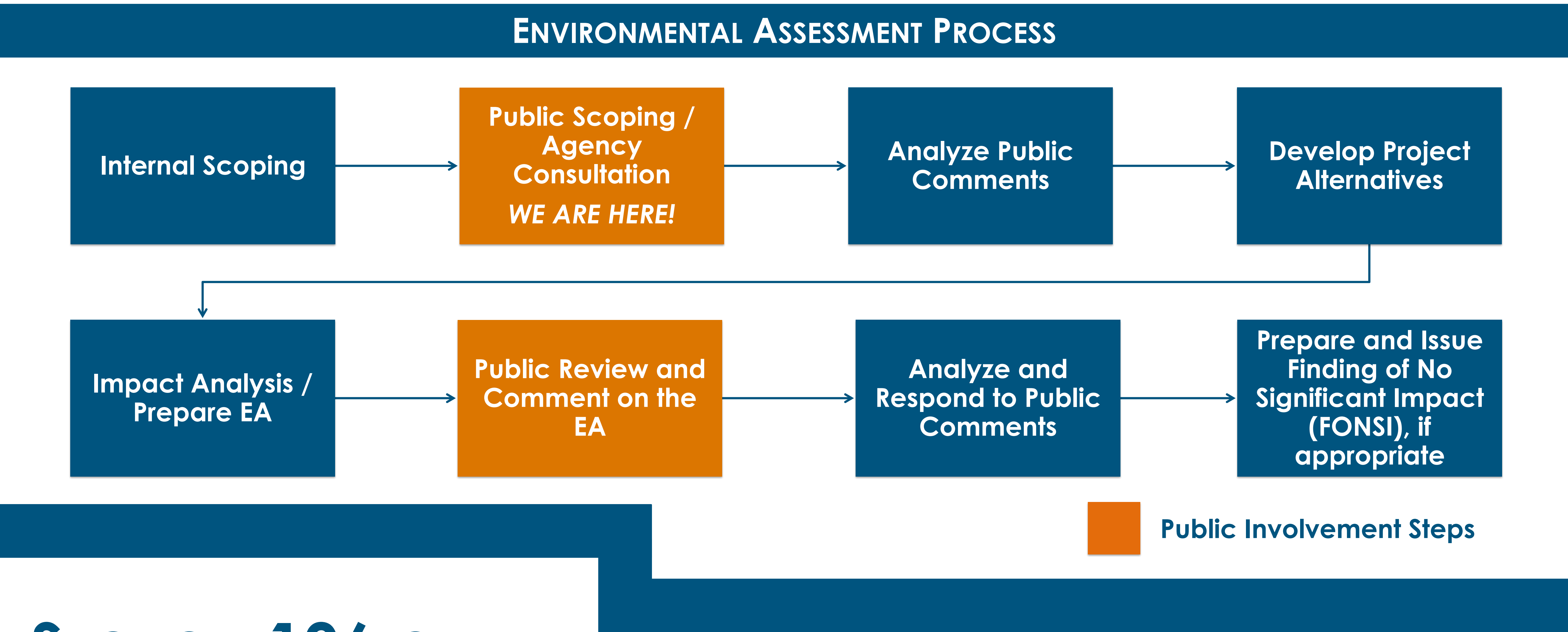
Opportunity provided: Access to Eisenhower NHS for pedestrians and bicyclists.



NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA)

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 was created to ensure federal agencies assess the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and consider alternative ways of accomplishing their missions that are less damaging to, and protective of, the environment.

To comply with NEPA, the NPS will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) document to provide a decision-making framework that (1) analyzes a reasonable range of alternatives for the Comprehensive Trails Plan, and (2) evaluates significant issues (meaning pivotal issues or issues of critical importance) identified during scoping.



SECTION 106 OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT (NHPA)

Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the effects of projects they carry out, approve, or fund on historic properties.

In accordance with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (54 U.S.C. 306108) and its implementing regulations (36 C.F.R. 800), the NPS will consider the effects of this undertaking on historic resources. The NPS intends to use the NEPA process to fulfill its Section 106 responsibilities in accordance with 36 C.F.R. Part 800.8(c).



HOW TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK

The NPS seeks your participation in the planning process for the Comprehensive Trails Plan. Input provided will be used to help further develop project alternatives and identify significant issues for detailed analysis in the EA.

The NPS preferred method for receiving comments is through the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/TrailsPlan>.

We are also accepting written suggestions, comments and concerns regarding the proposal at tonight's public open house. You may write your comments on the form provided and leave it with any staff member, or you may mail your comments to the address provided on the back of the form.

Comments are requested by **January 30, 2016**.

TOPIC QUESTIONS

Consider the following questions when preparing your comments or describing your concerns about the proposed Comprehensive Trails Plan:

- 1. Are there any issues other than what is presented that should be considered during the development of the Comprehensive Trails Plan?**
- 2. Do you have any ideas to improve the trail network, including suggestions for new trails?**
- 3. What are the important impacts to natural and cultural resources that could occur that should be evaluated during the planning process?**