

CHESAPEAKE & OHIO CANAL

NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

A CONCEPT PLAN FOR GEORGETOWN

JUNE 2017

Prepared for



GEORGETOWN
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT



Prepared by

JAMES
CORNER
FIELD
OPERATIONS

- 
1. INTRODUCTION
 2. PRESENTATION
 3. BREAKOUT SESSION
 4. CONVERSATIONS & DIALOGUE

KEVIN BRANDT

National Park Service

C & O Canal National Historical Park Superintendent



**Chesapeake &
Ohio Canal
National
Historical Park**

- » Established on January 8, 1971 mandating the NPS to *“preserve and interpret the historic and scenic features of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and to develop the potential of the canal for public recreation...”*
- » 184.5 miles from Georgetown to Cumberland Maryland



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE C&O CANAL NHP

- » **Canal transportation and engineering technology.**
- » **Cultural and social history of the Potomac River basin.**
- » **Most heavily used trails in the nation.**
- » **Three physiographic provinces; a unique riparian ecosystem.**
- » **Inspired a generation of conservationists.**
- » **Interpretive and educational efforts -- 4.8 million annual visitors.**

*2016 NPS Visitor Use
Statistics



VISION FOR THE CANAL IN GEORGETOWN

- » **Celebrate and respect the park's historic character and sense of place.**
- » **Provide multiple active and passive recreational opportunities, essential services, events and programs.**
- » **Designed as a sustainable, maintainable, ecologically sensitive, safe and accessible urban place that serves a diverse group of users.**



The National Park Service (NPS), in partnership with Georgetown Heritage, the District Office of Planning and the Georgetown Business Improvement District is engaged in comprehensive planning and design for revitalizing the one-mile section of the C&O Canal National Historical Park (NHP) in Georgetown. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the NPS is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the potential impacts to the natural and human environment as a result of the action. Concurrently, the NPS is conducting consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended to assess effects on significant cultural resources.

Purpose

The purpose of the proposed action is to develop a plan to enhance the one-mile portion of the C&O Canal NHP in Georgetown, from the Zero-mile marker to the Alexandria Aqueduct. The plan will focus on addressing deferred maintenance issues and related safety and accessibility concerns associated with the towpath; improving connections between Georgetown and the C&O Canal towpath; enhancing visitor experience through increased signage and optimizing underutilized areas. The plan will be developed in a manner that addresses the identified needs, while also preserving the historic character and cultural significance of the C&O Canal NHP and the Georgetown Historic District (DC Landmark, National Register of Historic Places, National Historic Landmark).

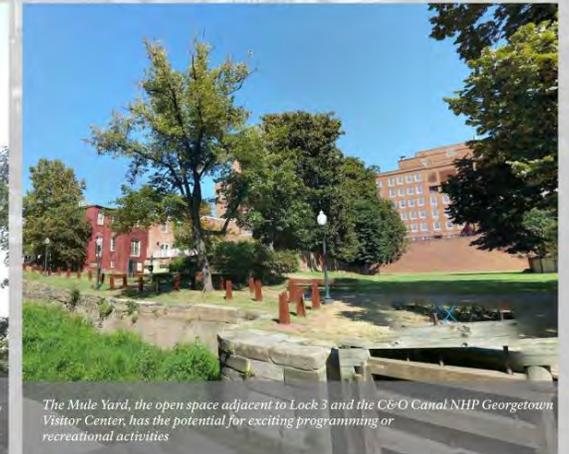
Need

The Georgetown Canal plan is needed to provide a coordinated approach to address the following concerns:

- Portions of the towpath are uneven, narrow, and poorly lit, creating potential safety hazards;
- Visitors with limited mobility can only access the towpath from Grace Street, NW (south of the canal). All other access points are not compliant with the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ABAAS);
- Many access points to the towpath are not readily visible or unknown due to lack of signage;
- The park desires to expand opportunities for interpretation, education, and cultural programming;
- The park has limited amenities and facilities for visitor comfort such as seating, drinking fountains, and rest rooms; and
- Several plazas along the canal are underutilized and could be developed to provide additional recreational activities.



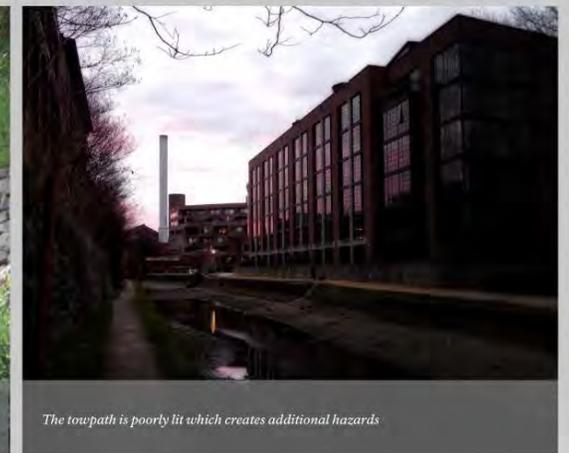
Entrances to the towpath are not well known and visitors with limited mobility can only access the towpath at one entrance (Grace Street, NW)



The Mule Yard, the open space adjacent to Lock 3 and the C&O Canal NHP Georgetown Visitor Center, has the potential for exciting programming or recreational activities

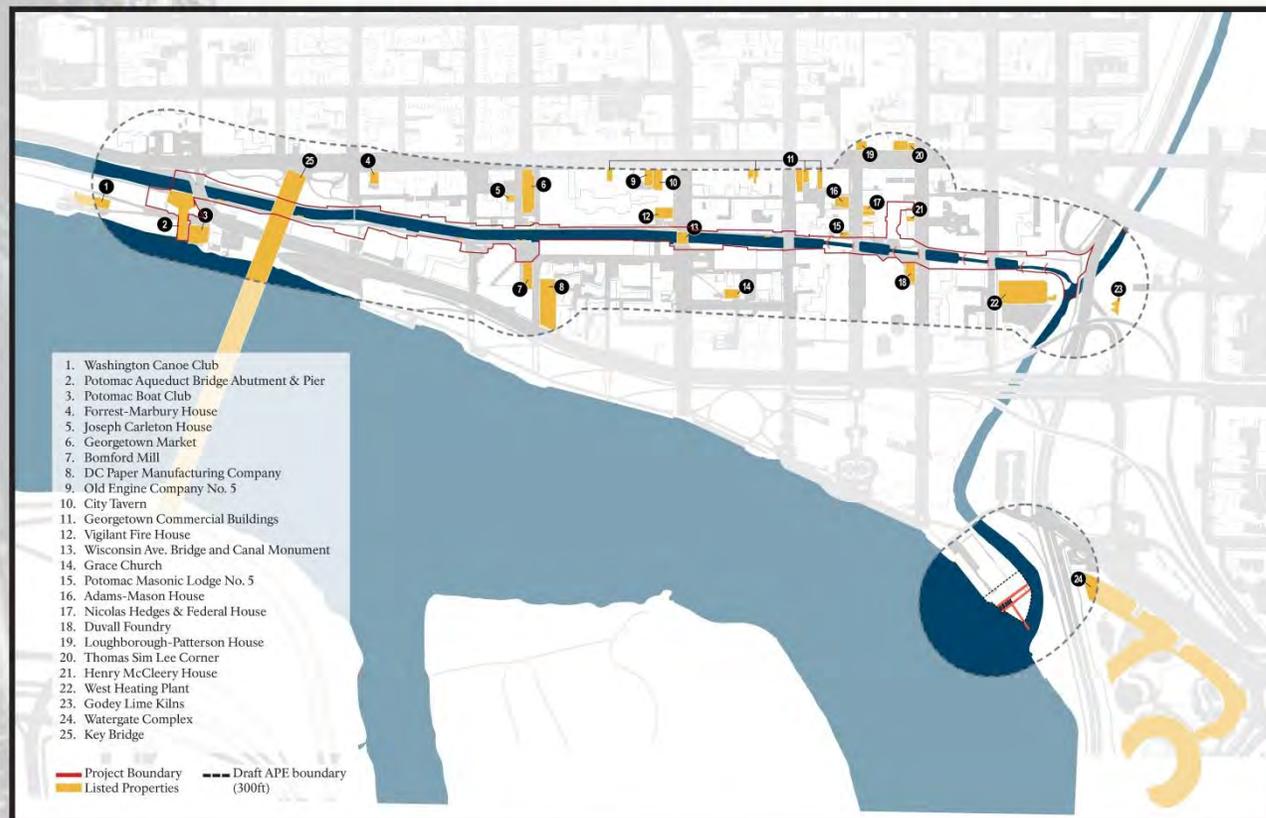


The towpath is very narrow in certain areas which creates conflicts of use



The towpath is poorly lit which creates additional hazards

Project Area and Draft Area of Potential Effect



NEPA and Section 106 Processes

We Are Here!

STEP 1 — SCOPING

*Initiate Section 106 Process
 Identify Historic Properties
 Gather Information on Existing Conditions
 Identify Issues to evaluate in Planning Process*

STEP 2 — DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES

*Develop Viable Project Alternatives that Meet Purpose and Need
 Identify and Assess Impacts on Significant Cultural Resources
 Determine Environmental Impacts*

STEP 3 — CONSULTING PARTIES MEETINGS

*Evaluate Adverse Effects
 Develop Resolution Strategies for Adverse Effects*

STEP 4 — PREPARE EA

*EA will Evaluate Environmental and Cultural Impacts and
 Outline Mitigation Strategies
 Release EA to Public for a 30-Day Comment Period*

STEP 5 — CONCLUSION

*Review and Respond to Public Comments
 Prepare NEPA Decision Document (FONSI or NOI)
 Conclude Section 106 process (MOA or PA)*

Give Us Your Feedback!

NPS welcomes comments regarding potential issues and concerns that should be considered during the planning process

Tonight

Take a moment to write down your comments on the forms provided and drop them in the comment box

Online

Submit written suggestions, comments, and concerns regarding the project online at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/georgetowncanalplan>

Mail

Mail written comments to:

C&O Canal National Historical Park Headquarters Office
 1850 Dual Highway
 Suite 100
 Hagerstown, MD 21740

**Comments are due
By July 7, 2017**

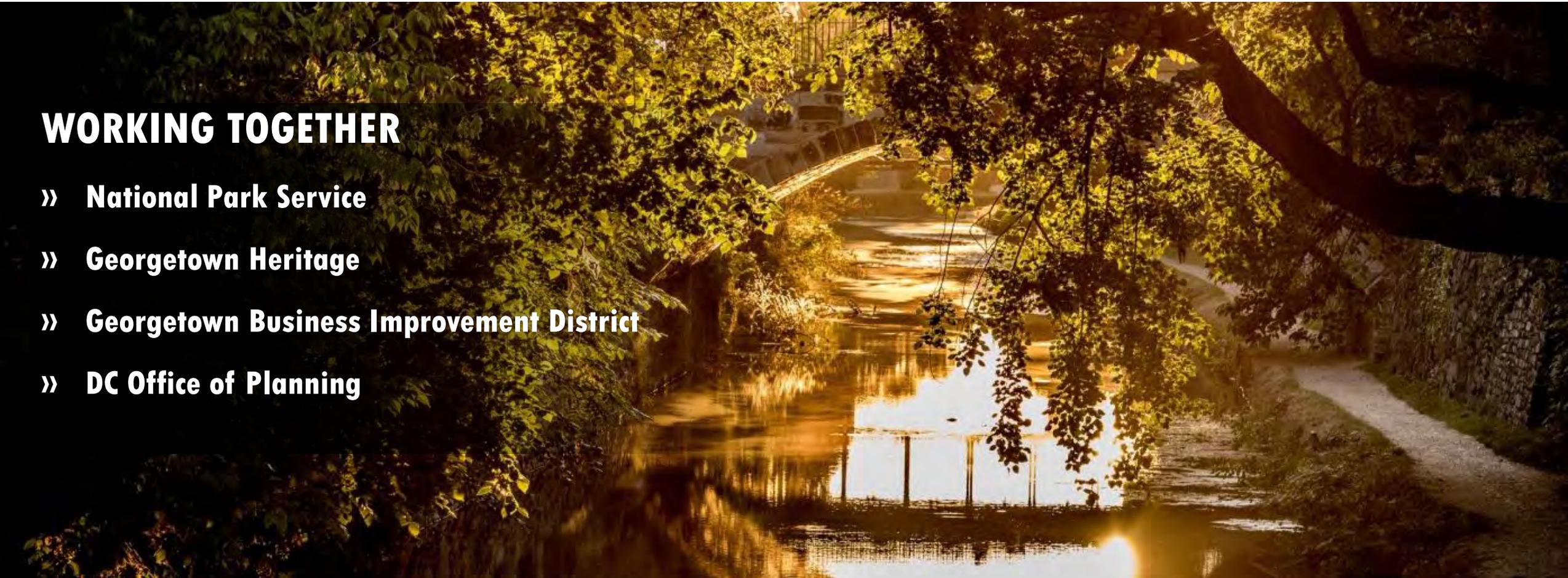
GEORGETOWN CANAL PLAN

A Concept Design & Partnership

*Restore, revitalize, and reimagine the
one-mile section of the C&O Canal in Georgetown*

WORKING TOGETHER

- » National Park Service
- » Georgetown Heritage
- » Georgetown Business Improvement District
- » DC Office of Planning



ALISON GREENBERG

Georgetown Heritage
Executive Director

GEORGETOWN HERITAGE

- » **Canal Plan** - Design Concept Phase
- » Roadmap to the Canal's Future
- » Vision into Reality
- » James Corner Field Operations
 - Reveal the essence of the canal through protection, repair, & revitalization

You are a part of Georgetown Heritage!

