

Veterans Park at Balls Bluff Project Update

Residential Traffic Commission Meeting

May 6, 2024



Tom Brandon

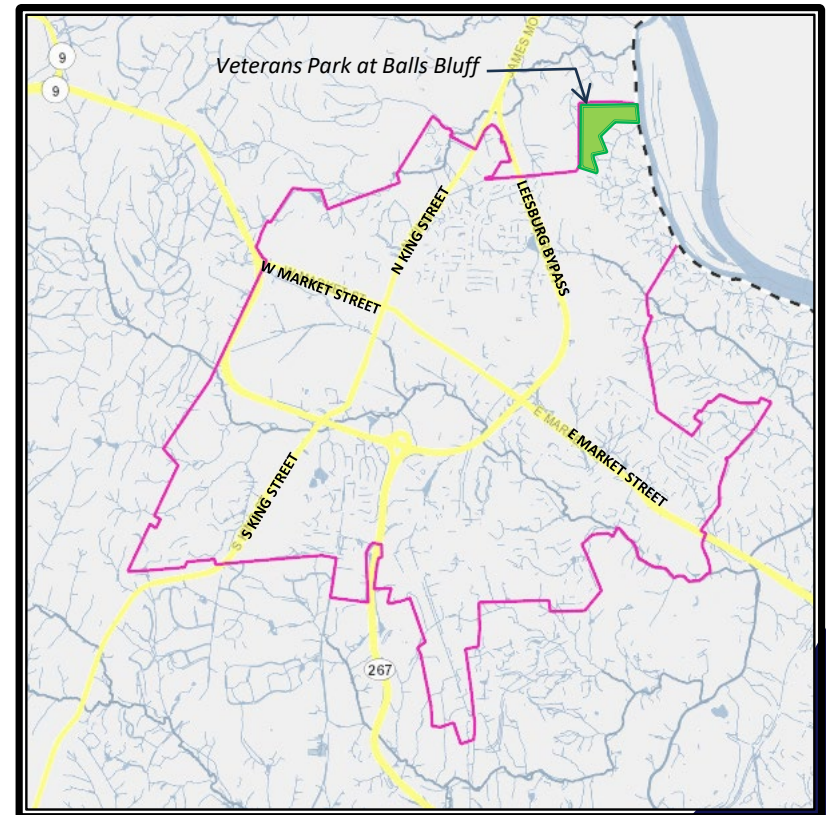
Department of Public Works & Capital Projects

Project Background

- ▶ 86 acres acquired in 2000 on Potomac River north of Balls Bluff Battlefield Regional Park
- ▶ Park Master Plan approved in 2002, updated in 2012
- ▶ Loudoun County programmed \$4 million capital contribution for FY 21, and another \$2 million approved this year for FY 29

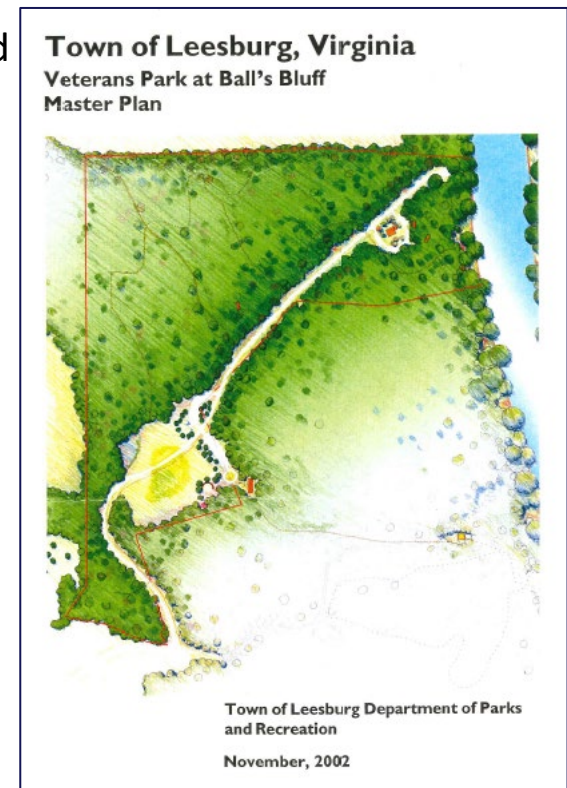
Project Goals

- ▶ Provide Town's first public access to the Potomac River
- ▶ Provide venues for hiking, picnicking, and other passive recreation pursuits
- ▶ Complement adjacent Northern Virginia Regional Park facilities at Balls Bluff Battlefield Regional Park and the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail

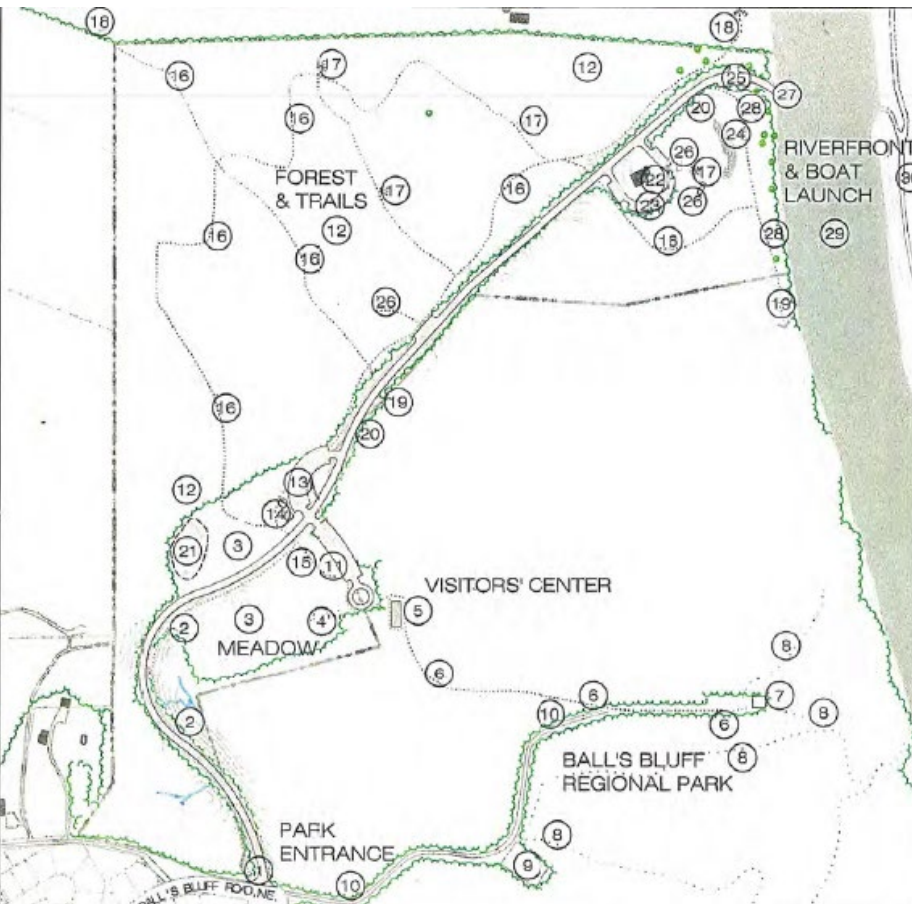


2002 Veterans Park at Balls Bluff Master Plan

- Study begun by Town in 2001, soon after property acquired in December 2000) using a park planning consultant
- Long-range, high-level planning
- Agency coordination with NVRPA
- Public Input
 - Two Public Meetings
 - Questionnaires
- Three Alternatives Developed / Preferred Alternative incorporated elements from each
- Studies
 - Cultural Resources (Archaeological & Historical) Assessment
 - Traffic Study
 - Soils Report
 - Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species Site Assessment
- Master Plan approved by Town Council September 24, 2002



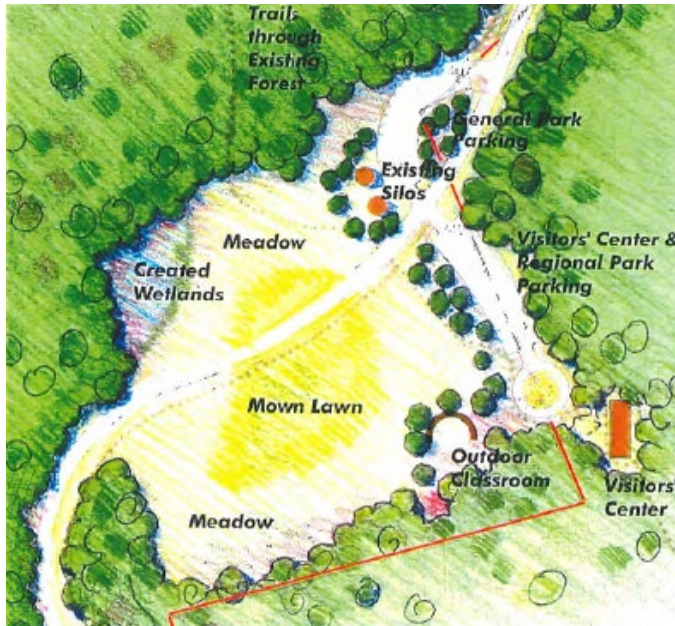
2002 Veterans Park at Balls Bluff Master Plan



1. Access road from Ball's Bluff Road into park
2. Trail along access road
3. Meadow
4. Outdoor classroom
5. Nature center, Civil War cemetery visitors center
6. Trail connection between Ball's Bluff Regional Park and Veterans Park at Ball's Bluff
7. Existing Civil War cemetery
8. Existing unpaved trails to remain in Ball's Bluff Regional Park
9. Existing parking to be removed by NVRPA in Ball's Bluff Regional Park
10. Existing road to be limited to maintenance traffic by NVRPA in Ball's Bluff Regional Park
11. Parking for forty (40) cars and access to nature center and Civil War cemetery visitors center
12. Existing forest to remain and to be protected
13. Parking for thirty (30) cars for general park access
14. Existing silos to remain and to be converted to restroom facilities
15. Trail connection between nature center / visitors center and Veterans Park at Balls Bluff
16. Unpaved trails
17. Interpretive area / scenic viewpoint along trail
18. Potential trail connection to Loudoun County trail system and Potomac Heritage Trail
19. Potential trail connection to Ball's Bluff Regional Park and Potomac Heritage Trail
20. Access road along approximate alignment of existing road through property
21. Created wetlands
22. Existing barn to be stabilized and rehabilitated for park uses
23. Parking for boat ramp & picnic pavilion activities, including parking for up to thirty (30) vehicles
24. Existing rock outcropping to be preserved
25. Improved access to boat ramp
26. Picnic pavilion, covered shelter with three to eight (3 – 8) picnic tables
27. Existing boat ramp to be enhanced for public use. Access to be limited to non-motorized boats
28. Existing floodplain area, including significant trees, to be preserved
29. Potomac River
30. Harrison Island, Maryland

2002 Veterans Park at Balls Bluff Master Plan Detail Areas

River Area



Silos Area

2012 Veterans Park at Balls Bluff Master Plan Update



Features

- 1 Abandoned agricultural structures
- 2 Walking Trails
- 3 Potomac River

Future Development

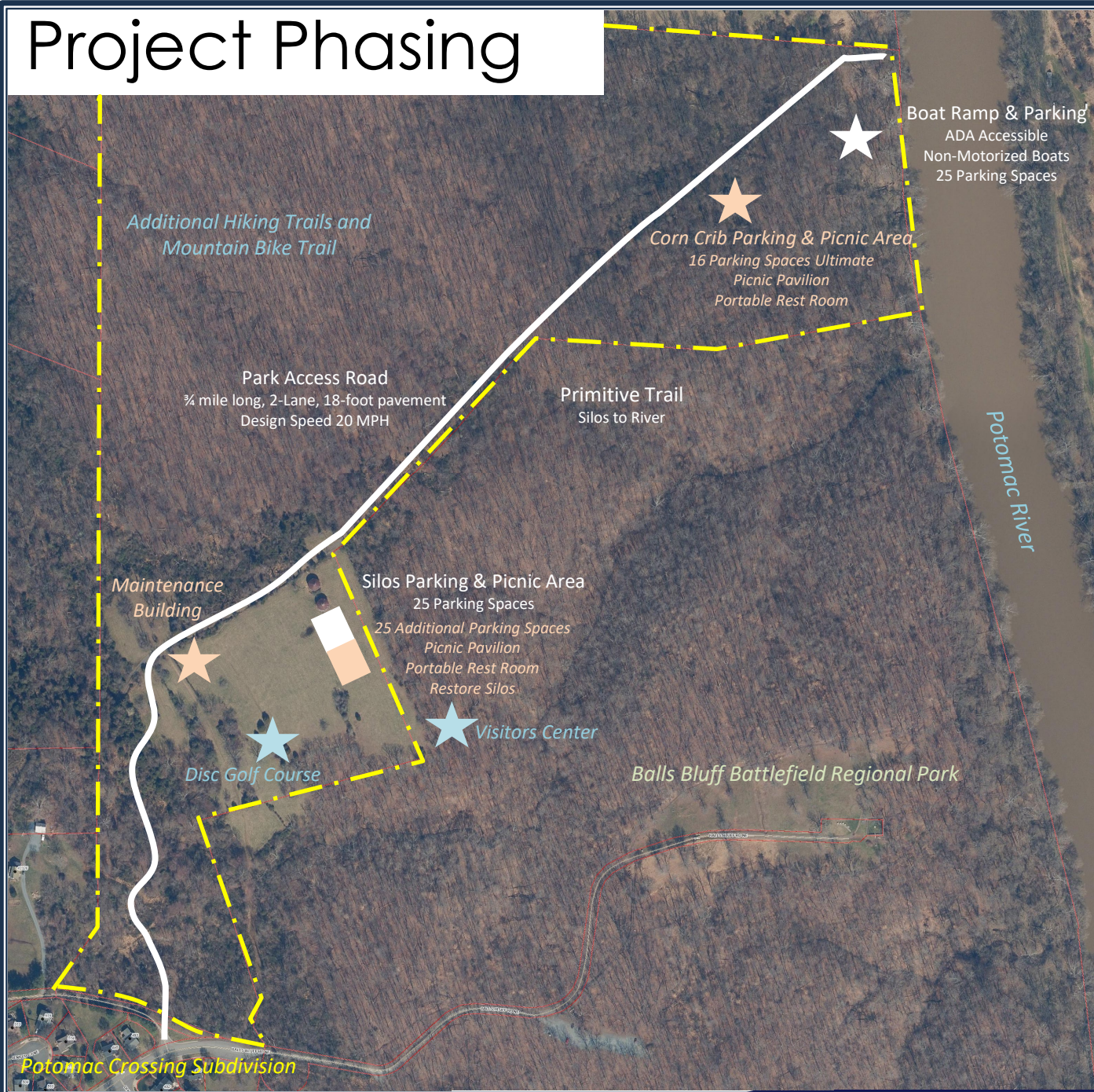
- A. Paved park access road
- B. Parking
- C. Boat launch facility (non-motorized only)
- D. Non-motorized boat storage facility (renovated corn cribs)
- E. Visitors center (possible cooperative development with NVRPA)
- F. Picnic pavilion
- G. Farm silos renovated for adaptive use (possible rest rooms)
- H. Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail
- I. Walking trails
- J. Mountain bike trail
- K. Disc golf course
- L. Open play area / meadow
- M. Created wetlands

Approved by Town Council May 2012

Changes from Original Master Plan

- NOVA Parks will retain existing public entrance road and parking. Veterans Park will have separate entrance with shifted intersection from Balls Bluff Drive at existing curb cut in cul-de-sac
- Added amenities (mountain bike trail and disc golf course)
- Refined locations of picnic pavilions and parking areas
- Deleted outdoor classroom

Project Phasing



Phase I
2024-2025

- Access Road
- Boat Ramp & Parking
- Silos Area Parking
- Primitive Trail

Phase II
2029

- Corn Crib Picnic Area / Parking
- Silos Picnic Area / Additional Parking
- Maintenance Building

Future
Unscheduled

- Additional Hiking Trails
- Mountain Bike Trail
- Disc Golf Course
- Visitors Center

Public Involvement

Resident Concerns

- ▶ Poor Communication with Neighborhood
- ▶ Traffic Impacts on Balls Bluff Road
- ▶ Parking in the Park
- ▶ Speeding within the Park
- ▶ Loss of Trees and Screening between residents and park
- ▶ Environmental Impacts
- ▶ Safety and Security

Moving Forward

- ▶ Monthly Project Updates to Residents
- ▶ Monthly Project Updates to Town Project Web Page
- ▶ Project Sign at Park Entrance with QR Code
- ▶ Landscaping Plan at Park Entrance
- ▶ Residential Traffic Commission Update
- ▶ Pre-Construction Neighborhood Meeting



Traffic Counts and Studies

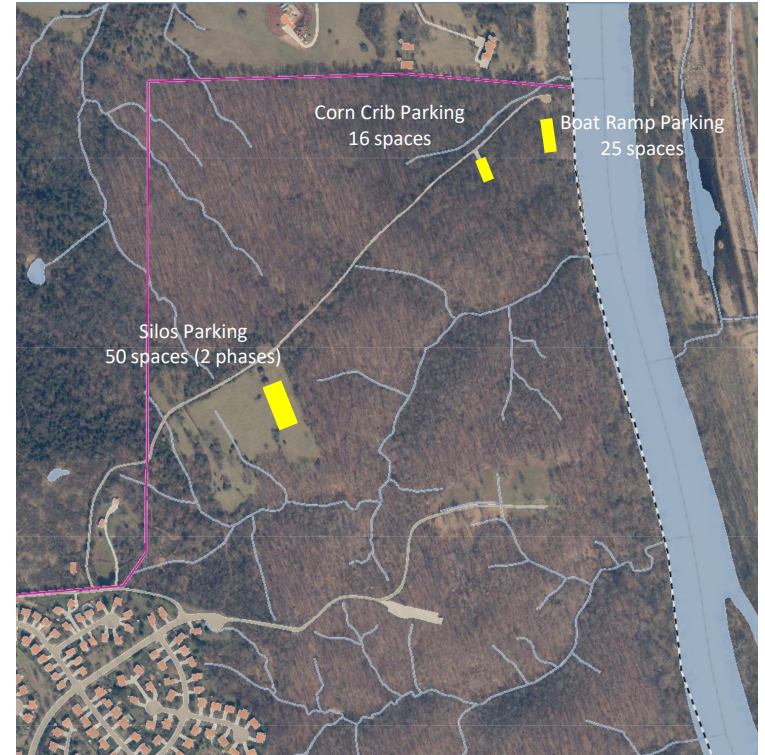
- ▶ Concerns to Potomac Crossing Subdivision residents
- ▶ Three separate evaluations
 - 2002 Veterans Park Master Plan
 - Traffic impacts from park “acceptable and manageable” and would not alter the LOS*
 - 2021 Design Traffic Study
 - Increase in traffic from park would be approximately 144 VPD on weekdays and 170 VPD on weekends*
 - 2024 Traffic Counts
 - Traffic counts consistent with 2021 counts on weekday and lower than 2021 counts on weekend*
- ▶ No indication of excessive volumes or speeding

2021 (Sept / Oct)	Vehicles per Day (VPD)	Average Speed (MPH)	85 th Percentile (MPH)
Thursday	300	26.0	
Friday	341	26.7	
Saturday	426	26.3	
Sunday	468	26.7	
Average	382	26.5	30
2024 (March)	Vehicles per Day (VPD)	Average Speed (MPH)	85 th Percentile (MPH)
Friday	337	23	
Sunday	256	23	
Average	297	23	28



Veterans Park Parking

Phase	Location	Surface	Planned Number of Spaces		
			Regular	Handicap	Total
I	Boat Ramp Area	Paved	23	2	25
	Silos Area	Unpaved	23	2	25
	Total Phase I		46	4	50
II	Silos Area	Unpaved	25	0	25
	Corn Crib Area	Unpaved	15	1	16
	Subtotal Phase II		40	1	41
TOTAL PLANNED SPACES			86	4	91



Traffic Calming within Veterans Park

Roadway Design Elements – Driver Perception

- Posted Speed Limit 15 MPH
- Design Speed - 20 MPH vs. typical 30 MPH for minor streets
- Narrow Lanes - 9' wide vs. typical 10' to 11' wide lanes
- Narrow Shoulders – 2' wide vs. typical 3' wide
- Steep Grades - 11% maximum vs. typical 10% maximum
- Shorter Vertical Curves – less than half the length required for 30 MPH
- Tighter Horizontal Curves – less than half radius required for 30 MPH
- “Park-Like” Features (wooden guardrails, steeper side slopes, etc.)

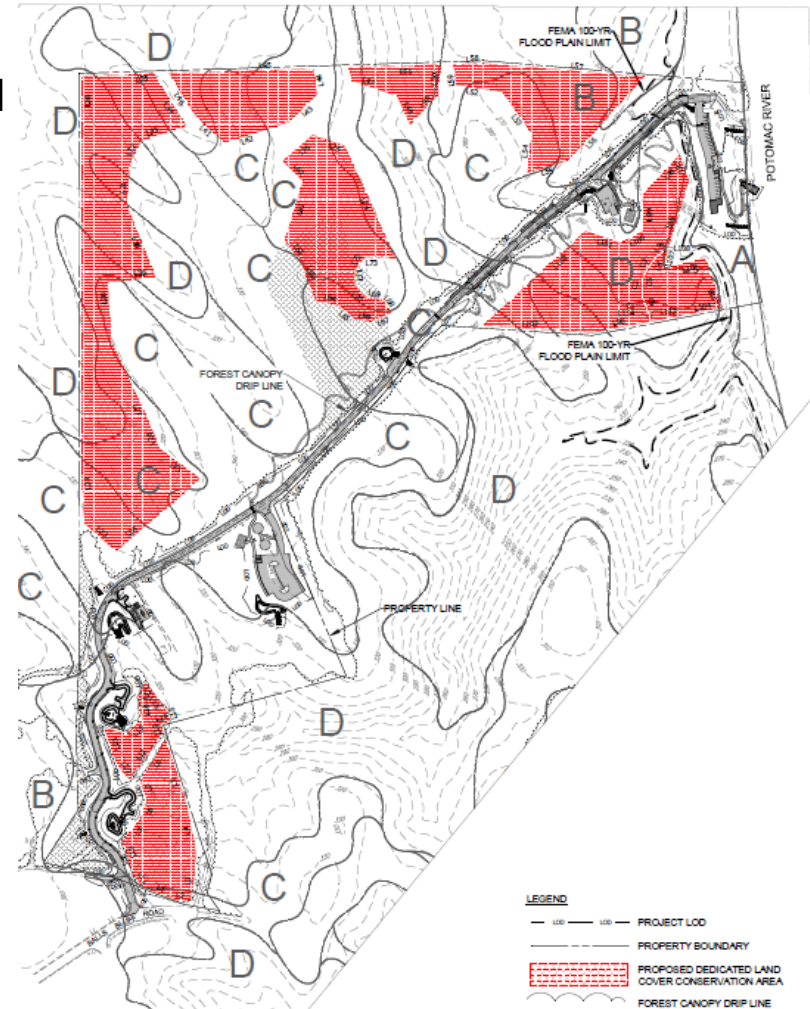
Traffic speeds will be monitored after park is opened. If speeding in park is deemed to be a problem, installation of appropriate traffic calming measures will be evaluated.

Tree Loss Mitigation & Tree Preservation Measures

- Tree Inventory and Condition Survey
- Reduction of Construction Footprint (minimized road width, steeper road grades, etc.)
- Context sensitive siting and configuration of parking lots
- Tree protection during construction (tree protection fencing, root pruning, etc.)
- Design mitigation measures (pavement underdrain systems, etc.)
- Land Conservation Areas (25.5 acres or approx. 30% of site)

Landscaping and Screening

- Landscaping plan is being prepared for area behind homes on Balls Bluff Road (currently being reviewed by residents)
- Landscaping will be provided at parking lots



Project Milestones and Schedule

Milestone	Date
Property Acquired	December 2000
Park Master Plan Approved	September 2002
Master Plan Updated	May 2012
Loudoun County Funding (\$4 million)	2017 (funding in FY 2021)
Project Added to Town CIP	FY 2018 to 2023 (funding in FY 2021)
Design Begun	December 2020
Potomac Crossing HOA Meeting Update	June 2021
Tree Felling	December 2023 to March 2024
Resident Neighborhood Meeting	February 2024
Easement Acquisition Begun	March 2024
Residential Traffic Commission Meeting	February, April & May 2024
Loudoun County Phase 2 Funding	March 2024 (funding in FY 2029)
Traffic Counts – Balls Bluff Road	March 2024
Complete Design	May 2024
Complete Land Acquisition	Summer 2024
Construction Bidding and Construction Contract Award	Summer 2024
Neighborhood Pre-Construction Meeting	Summer 2024
Construction	Summer 2024 to Summer 2025

Questions?

