

Poplar Point Master Plan

Anacostia Riverfront, Ward 8 · Southeast Washington, DC

COMMISSION MEETING	SUBMITTED BY	IN COORDINATION WITH	APPLICANT REQUEST
July 10, 2025	National Park Service (DOI)	DC DMPED & Office of Planning	Approve comments on revised concept plan

The NPS, with the District of Columbia, submitted a **revised concept master plan** for Poplar Point—a 110-acre site on the eastern edge of the Anacostia River. The plan establishes a land use framework, a required step toward transferring the property from the NPS to the District under the **2006 DC Lands Act**. A prior April 2025 review evaluated three alternatives; this submission advances a **single preferred alternative**.

110 ac TOTAL SITE AREA	70 ac OPEN SPACE & PARK (MIN. REQUIRED)	40 ac DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE	130 ft MAX HEIGHT, NEAR METRORAIL	4–6 M sf DENSITY RANGE FOR EA ANALYSIS
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THE SITE

A 110-acre site adjacent to Historic Anacostia, bordered by the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge (west), the Anacostia River (north), Anacostia Park (east), and the Bridge District, Metrorail parking garage, and I-295 (south).

- Almost entirely within the **100- and 500-year floodplains**; flat, with a high water table and ~5.7 acres of scattered wetlands.
- Contains the WMATA Green Line tunnel, Anacostia River Tunnel, and Stickfoot Branch storm drain.
- Three NPS facilities—Park Police Operations and Aviation facilities and National Capital Parks-East HQ—**must be relocated**.
- Potential views to the U.S. Capitol, Washington Monument, and Cedar Hill (the Frederick Douglass home).

STATUTORY DRIVER — DC LANDS ACT

- Reserve **no fewer than 70 acres** on site, including wetlands, for park purposes.
- Identify and relocate existing NPS facilities.
- Designate at least **two sites for commemorative works**, conveyed back to NPS for future federal memorials.
- Stay consistent with the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative Framework Plan.

KEY CHANGES SINCE APRIL 2025

- Protected Capitol and Washington Monument viewsheds; eliminated development between the wetlands and the river.
- Relocated the anchor use inland, closer to the community; moved Anacostia Drive inland to open the waterfront.
- Added a flood-mitigation approach using gentle terraces, plus detail on height, density, and massing.

THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

A connected system of riverfront open space, expanded wetlands, memorial and cultural sites, and mixed-use development concentrated near the Anacostia Metrorail station. The 70 acres of open space break down as **~25 ac waterfront park**, **~10 ac community parks & plazas**, and **~35 ac nature park** including wetlands.

- Consistent **250-foot minimum setback** from the water, carrying the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail and park activation.
- An **anchor use of ~15 acres** near the station serves as a regional destination; if unrealized, it folds into the development grid.
- Development steps down from ~130 ft near transit toward the river; overall residential focus with commercial, hotel, retail, and office uses.
- Daylighting of the piped Stickfoot Branch; two commemorative sites, one at the Point on the New Jersey Avenue axis.

SEVEN PLANNING PRINCIPLES

- Expand the Wetlands
- Celebrate the Point
- Rediscover the Shoreline
- Build Upon Adjacent Projects
- Focus on Metrorail Access
- Connect with Anacostia
- Establish a Primary Corridor

RECOMMENDATION & NEXT STEPS

Staff recommends the Commission **approve comments commending** the applicant and supporting the project goals. The plan remains in development: the applicant will prepare an **Environmental Assessment under NEPA** (NCPC a cooperating agency) and conduct **NHPA Section 106** historic review (NCPC a consulting party), with draft and final master plans returning for Commission review.