

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

Environmental Assessment for Mount Vernon Circle Parking and Trail Improvements George Washington Memorial Parkway Fairfax County, Virginia

The National Park Service and the Federal Highway Administration are pleased to announce the availability of the *Environmental Assessment for Mount Vernon Circle Parking and Trail Improvements, George Washington Memorial Parkway*, Mount Vernon, Fairfax County, Virginia. The Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division of the Federal Highway Administration has prepared this document in cooperation with the National Park Service, George Washington Memorial Parkway in order to provide guidance in determining the appropriate actions needed to provide required additional parking and trail improvements. The Environmental Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality.

Preferred Alternative: The Preferred Parking Alternative would provide 150 additional parking spaces in an expanded West Parking Lot and an additional 140-space overflow parking lot behind the wall on Mount Vernon property south of Route 235 west. Although the proposed Preferred Alternative will accommodate visitors a majority of the time, remote parking with shuttles will continue to be used on days with significantly higher visitation. The parking lots are proposed to be built in two phases. The West Lot expansion will be constructed first in order to alleviate parking on the circle. The overflow lot behind the wall will be constructed when necessary, as determined by Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.

The Preferred Trail Alternative provides a new bike trail beginning at the south end of the existing Mount Vernon Trail on the north end of the existing East Parking Lot, and connects with the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail on the north side of the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. The trail will be paved, with a highly-textured surface along the circle to force cyclists to walk their bikes on this portion of the trail. In addition, the crosswalks across the circle and Route 235 will be textured. The signs will be installed on both ends of the circle advising cyclists to walk their bikes. The existing crosswalks would need to be rehabilitated. Additional intelligent crosswalk technologies that enhance pedestrian and bicyclist detection may also be employed at this intersection to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

Public Review:

The Environmental Assessment will be available for public review on the Federal Highway Website at <http://www.efl.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/nepa/index.htm>, National Park Service Website, and at the following locations:

Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306

Mount Vernon District Supervisor's Office, 2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306

National Park Service, George Washington Memorial Parkway, 700 George Washington Memorial Pkwy c/o Turkey Run Park, McLean, VA 22101

Federal Highway Administration, Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division, 21400 Ridgetop Circle, Sterling, VA 20166

The Federal Highway Administration and the National Park Service considers public involvement to be an important component to a successful planning process and we invite you to furnish written comments to the address below:

**Jack Van Dop
Environmental Compliance Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
21400 Ridgetop Circle
Sterling, VA 20166**

If you have any additional questions concerning this announcement, please contact Mr. Satvinder Sandhu, Environmental Compliance Engineer, Eastern Federal Land Highway Division at (571) 434-1542.

Please submit all comments by the closing of the comment period on March 31, 2004.