

Proposed Green Corridor Pilot

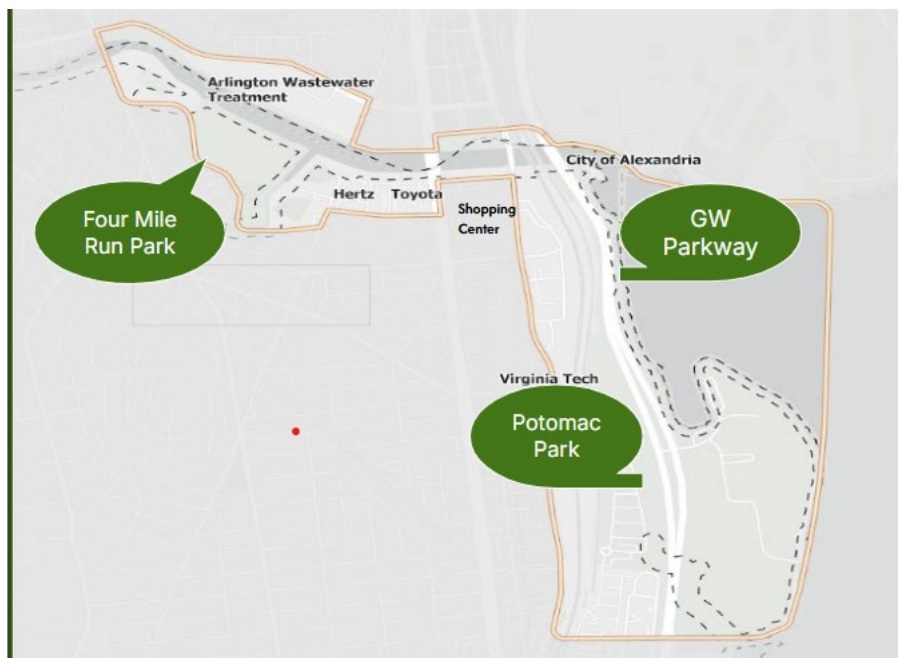
The northern edge of Alexandria (the City), particularly the area around Potomac Yard, is experiencing rapid development. This area also contains substantial natural resources, including Four Mile Run Park, North Potomac Park, and the George Washington Memorial Parkway. While these features are geographically close, they are currently managed as separate parcels.

The Beautification Commission recommends that the City establish a **Potomac River-Four Mile Run Green Corridor** (informally *the Green Corridor*) as a **pilot initiative**. The Green Corridor would support restoration across City-owned land and better connect these natural areas with adjacent areas within the corridor to improve ecological connectivity, support water quality, climate resilience, and enhance natural beautification.

The City has a near-term opportunity to align restoration, stewardship, and capital planning with the Dominion Energy substation electric lines moving underground, the Potomac Yard Metro station area agreement with JBG, and the Commonwealth-Ashby-Glebe stormwater project.

Approximately 85% of the Four Mile Run Watershed's land area has already been developed, with nearly 40% covered by impervious surfaces. The *Green Corridor* provides a cost-effective way to use small parcels of undesigned land to connect parks and expand natural open space for public health, environmental resilience, and beautification, as imagined by the City's Open Space Plan.

The proposed Green Corridor is a time-limited pilot (2–3 years).



Benefits

The Green Corridor pilot would:

- **Advance existing City commitments** to protect the Chesapeake Bay watershed, meet Resource Protection Area (RPA) requirements regulated by [City Ordinance No. 5458, December 2022](#), and enhance climate resilience strategies.
- **Improve flood resilience, reduce long-term stormwater management**, and complement the City's Commonwealth-Ashby-Glebe \$30M stormwater project.
- **Aligns with adopted City plans and policies**, supporting the City's environmental, stormwater, and open space goals in the [Four Mile Run Restoration Master Plan](#), [North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan](#), and the [Open Space Plan](#). This pilot is intentionally scoped to align with existing departmental priorities and to leverage future capital planning, minimizing new resource demands while demonstrating impact.
- **Reduce park fragmentation** by connecting existing parkland into a more cohesive system that **protects clean drinking water and promotes biodiversity**, while expanding natural space for residents, businesses, and wildlife.
- The Commission and its partner organizations (Arlington Regional Master Naturalists, Tree Stewards, Northern Virginia Bird Alliance, Master Gardeners, Four Mile Run Conservatory Foundation) can **provide substantial in-kind support through volunteer labor, monitoring, and outreach**—reducing implementation costs while strengthening long-term stewardship and community ownership.

Recommendations

The Alexandria Beautification Commission respectfully recommends that City Council:

1. **Authorize the establishment of the Potomac River–Four Mile Run Green Corridor Pilot** focused on ecological connectivity, water quality improvement, and natural beautification.
 2. **Direct City RCPA and T&ES to coordinate restoration activities** on City-owned parcels (approximately nine acres) within the corridor, with the Commission serving in a supporting role through volunteer coordination, outreach, and stewardship.
- *Request best practices* such as invasive removal, native planting, and multi-year maintenance.
 - Request City staff to identify opportunities to integrate *the Green Corridor* pilot into existing work programs and future Capital Improvement Program (CIP) updates.

- Provide GIS and technical support to define corridor boundaries and develop maps to guide planning and implementation.
3. **Endorse Commission outreach to private landowners** within the corridor to encourage adoption of stormwater best management practices consistent with the City's Stormwater Management Program, potentially including correspondence and joint Commission–City staff meetings with landowners. Some of the landowners, including Virginia Tech, are recent Commission award winners.

Success of *the Green Corridor* pilot would be demonstrated by coordinated restoration across multiple City-owned parcels, measurable improvements in vegetation cover and invasive species reduction, strengthened interdepartmental coordination, and an engaged network of resident volunteers and adjacent landowners. Lessons learned would inform future capital planning and potential expansion of the approach.