



Fort Ward Park Playground Accessibility Project Community Meeting #5

Virtual Meeting Agenda
May 11, 2023
7:00 p.m.

1. Welcome

2. Presentation

- Playground Concept Study Sites B and D (Judy Lo)
 - Site Summary
 - Community Feedback Summary
 - Staff Recommendation
- Playground Project Schedule

3. Questions and Comments



Meeting Purpose

- To provide a summary of the community feedback received since the release of the playground concept study on February 17, 2023
- To discuss the recommendation for the final playground location based on community feedback, and to address concerns related to the playground location
- To provide an updated project schedule, including future opportunities for engagement



Community Engagement

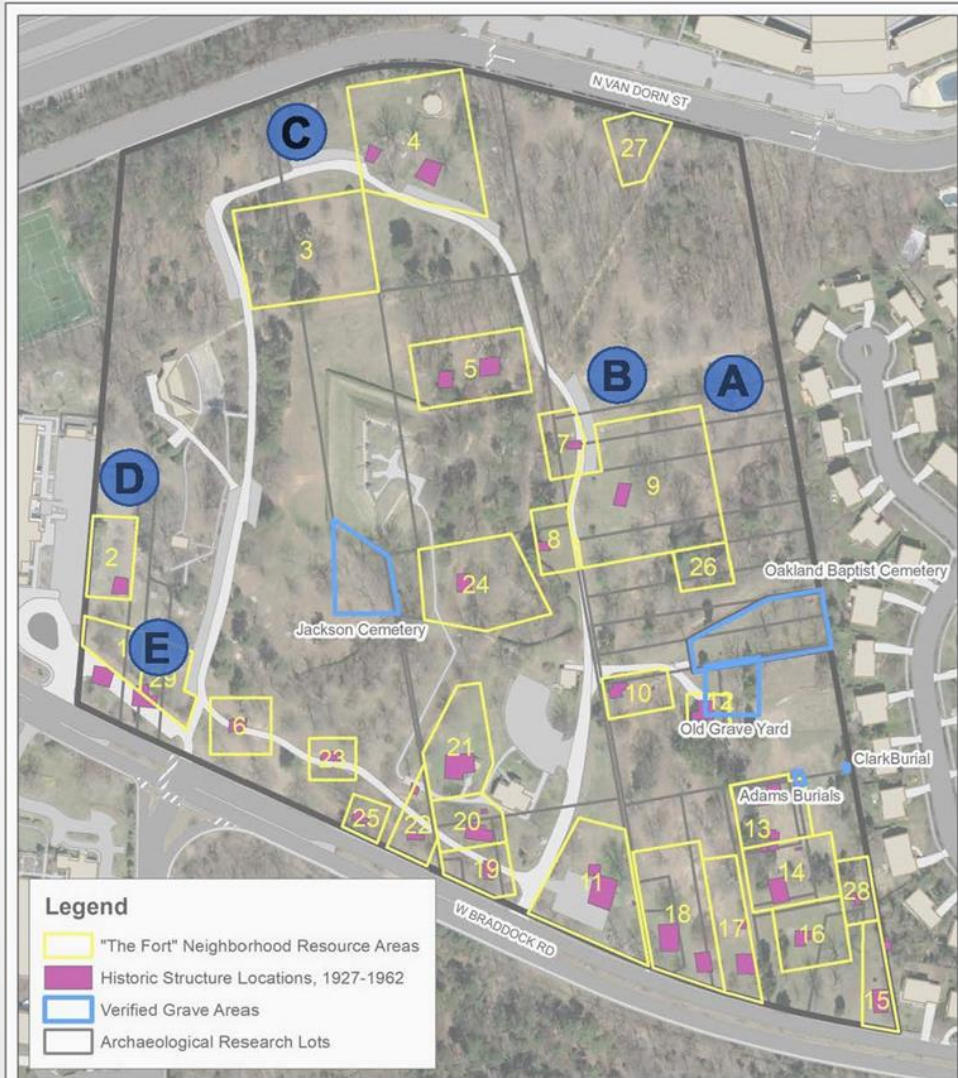
2022

- **January 22, 2022:** Community Meeting #1 Fort Ward Projects (virtual)
- **May 21, 2022:** Playground Community Meeting #2/Site Walk
- **June 22, 2022:** Playground Community Meeting #3 (virtual)

2023

- **February 22, 2023:** Playground Community Meeting #4 (virtual)
- **March 4 and 11, 2023:** Playground Community Open Houses
- **February 17 - March 31, 2023:** Community Comment
- **April/May, 2023:** Playground Community Meeting #5 (virtual); Determine final playground location
- **June/July 2023:** Begin design development and permitting process for selected location

Fort Ward Park Playground Accessibility



Fort Ward Museum & Historic Site
"The Fort" Community

0 200 400 800 Feet



Playground Concept Study Purpose and Objectives

- To recognize and respect Fort Ward resources, especially sensitive cultural resources which have significant value to the Fort Community descendants
- To evaluate relocation of the playground to Site B (near the existing playground) and Site D (near the amphitheater); and its potential impacts to cultural resources and natural resources; and to evaluate potential mitigation measures
- To engage the community including the Fort Community descendants, in determining a new playground location



FORT WARD PARK ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

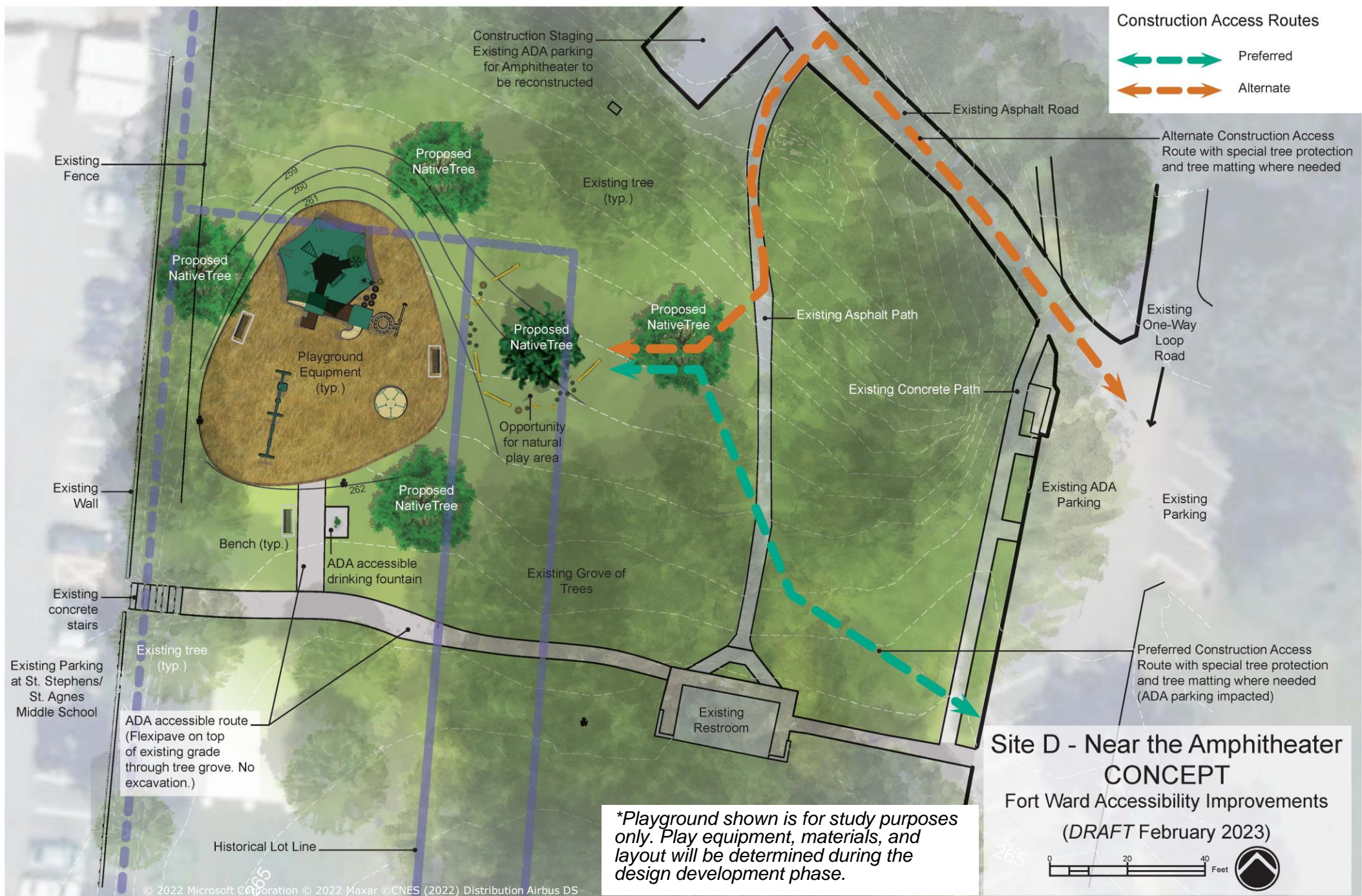
Playground Relocation - Site D, Near the Amphitheater



https://alexandria.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=29&coa_view_id=29&coa_clip_id=5532



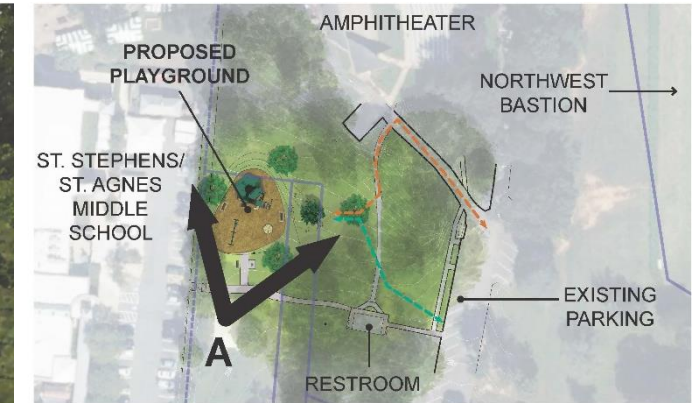
Site D, Near the Amphitheater Conceptual Study



FORT WARD PARK ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Playground Relocation - Site D, Near the Amphitheater

Conceptual Study – Perspective A



SECTION LOCATION - PLAN VIEW 

A - Northeast view



FORT WARD PARK ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Community Feedback Summary

Playground Relocation - Site D, Near the Amphitheater

Concerns

- ❖ Location is on land formerly owned by the Peters and Jackson families
- ❖ Construction access
- ❖ Impacts to trees from construction
- ❖ Playground is less visible from the park road and parking is located further away

Opportunities

- ❖ Park restrooms are located within the area
- ❖ Existing water source
- ❖ Proximity to amphitheater and picnic areas
- ❖ Parking availability

FORT WARD PARK ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Playground Relocation - Site B, Near the Existing Playground

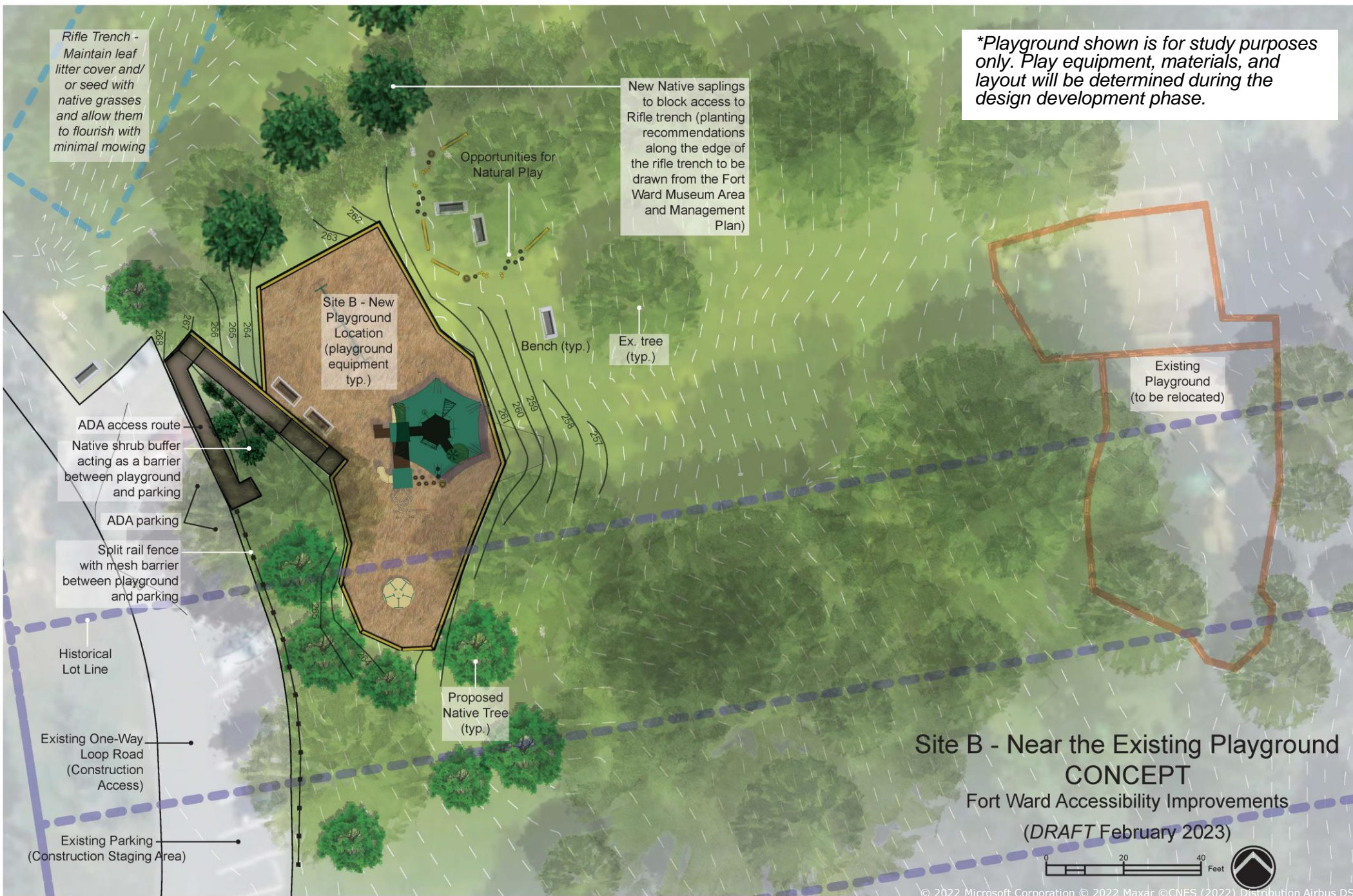


https://alexandria.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=29&coa_view_id=29&coa_clip_id=5530



Site B, Near the Existing Playground Conceptual Study

**Playground shown is for study purposes only. Play equipment, materials, and layout will be determined during the design development phase.*



Rifle Trench - Maintain leaf litter cover and/ or seed with native grasses and allow them to flourish with minimal mowing

New Native saplings to block access to Rifle trench (planting recommendations along the edge of the rifle trench to be drawn from the Fort Ward Museum Area and Management Plan)

Site B - New Playground Location (playground equipment typ.)

Bench (typ.)

Ex. tree (typ.)

Existing Playground (to be relocated)

ADA access route

Native shrub buffer acting as a barrier between playground and parking

ADA parking

Split rail fence with mesh barrier between playground and parking

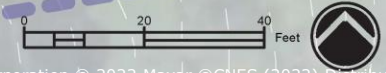
Historical Lot Line

Existing One-Way Loop Road (Construction Access)

Existing Parking (Construction Staging Area)

Proposed Native Tree (typ.)

Site B - Near the Existing Playground
CONCEPT
Fort Ward Accessibility Improvements
(DRAFT February 2023)



FORT WARD PARK ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Playground Relocation - Site B, Near the Existing Playground

Conceptual Study- Perspective B



B - Northeast view

**Playground shown is for study purposes only. Play equipment, materials, and layout will be determined during the design development phase.*

PERSPECTIVE LOCATION - PLAN VIEW 

Community Feedback Summary

Playground Relocation - Site B, Near the Existing Playground



Concerns

- ❖ Location is in the proximity of the rifle trench and road
- ❖ Potential increased erosion of hillside
- ❖ Stormwater management along Marlboro Estates
- ❖ Proximity to Shorts property

Opportunities

- ❖ Research indicates land historically has been vacant and no homes or structure were built in association with the Fort Community
- ❖ Less impacts to natural resources
- ❖ Park restrooms are within walking distance via the park road
- ❖ Existing water source
- ❖ Construction access and reduced disturbance
- ❖ Remediation of former playground site
- ❖ Public familiarity with current site

FORT WARD PARK ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Playground Location Recommendation



- ❖ Based on the community feedback received, staff recommends relocation of the playground to Site B, at the top of the hill from the existing location.
- ❖ Staff will further address the concerns related to the Rifle trench, erosion, and stormwater concurrently with the design development of Site B.

FORT WARD PARK ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Playground Relocation

Cultural Resources Review Procedures

- Based on past archaeological and historical research, the park is divided into “cultural resource sensitivity areas” that identify both Civil War and Fort Community resources
- Alexandria Archaeology reviews all ground disturbing projects proposed for Fort Ward as outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the park under Guidelines for Ground Disturbance Resources as outlined below:

The Review Steps for Cultural Resources:

1. Notify OHA a minimum of seven (7) days before work is to begin in **Yellow** Shaded and **Red** Shaded areas.
2. Courtesy notification preferred for work to take place in **Green** Shaded areas.
3. OHA will review the proposed work site and, when necessary, clearly work with RPCA and T&ES to mark off areas where ground disturbance may occur in accordance with the Management Plan.
4. All capital projects (i.e., planned site improvements) shall include funding and related resources for archaeology in the project timeline and budget. Regardless of location, all ground disturbers must be made aware of the **Call If Finds** requirement in Section IV—Responsibilities of Ground Disturbers, no matter how small the ground-disturbing activity.
5. There will be no disturbance to identified burial locations; all burials will be protected in place. If evidence of burials is discovered during any ground disturbing activities, OHA will immediately update the map showing levels of ground disturbance to ensure that the area of the burials is shaded red. The newly discovered burials will also be protected in place.



Playground Relocation – Stormwater Management Options



Permeable pavement BMP under construction at the Fort Ward picnic shelter pathway

Stormwater management is required and will be determined when a playground location is chosen. As applicable, recommendations from the Fort Ward Drainage Master Plan will be incorporated into the playground stormwater plan. Stormwater management options include:

- ❖ Pervious surfaces (porous playground surfacing, permeable pavers, Flexi-pave, etc.)
- ❖ Establish and maintain new Forest Conservation areas in the park for native species
- ❖ Install and maintain new bioretention basins/rain gardens
- ❖ Install and maintain level spreaders (in low traffic areas of turf cover)
- ❖ Impacts to trees and cultural resources will be closely evaluated when selecting the stormwater management method

FORT WARD PARK ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Playground Relocation – Tree Preservation Options



Tree mats were used for equipment access during construction of the Fort Ward picnic shelter pathway



Air spading may be used to loosen compacted soil, to expose tree roots, and to keep critical root systems intact. This application was used for construction of a sidewalk at Ewald Park.

Land disturbance can cause soil compaction and adversely affect tree root systems. A variety of tree preservation measures can be used together to protect existing trees from the impacts of construction. A tree preservation plan as required by the City's Landscape Guidelines will be developed when a final playground site is chosen.

- ❖ Use of tree mats to facilitate construction access through tree preservation areas
- ❖ Prune and elevate limbs to remove dead wood and to provide equipment clearance
- ❖ Install and maintain tree protection fencing throughout the duration of construction
- ❖ Limit disturbance such as grading and excavation within structural root zones
- ❖ Conduct root pruning and air spading where recommended
- ❖ In sensitive areas, limit surface excavation, and use bridging techniques or pervious materials to protect surface roots

FORT WARD PARK ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Playground Relocation - Site B, Near the Existing Playground Rifle Trench Existing Conditions



Top of Rifle Trench, south facing view toward park



Top of Rifle Trench; north facing view toward Van Dorn Street

FORT WARD PARK ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Playground Relocation - Site B, Near the Existing Playground

Rifle Trench Preservation and Protection



Develop a plan to protect the rifle trench concurrently with the playground design development. Steps for protection may include:

- Using best practices for protection of earthworks
- Eliminating use of the rifle trench as an informal trail
- Demarcating Rifle Trench with a barrier (using hard and soft measures such as vegetation, fence or rope)
- Evaluate and reconfigure trail connections and access points
- Establish vegetation to control erosion
- Add prominent signage highlighting the significance of rifle trench
- Consider improvements, such as split rail fencing along the Van Dorn Street frontage to unify park street frontages, including controlled access points
- Use of playground fencing at the immediate perimeters of the playground, which can protect the rifle trench and the Shorts property

FORT WARD PARK ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Playground Relocation

Site B Design and Construction Schedule



FORT WARD PARK ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Playground Relocation



Thank you!

Questions and Discussion

[Project Webpage: https://www.alexandriava.gov/parks/fort-ward-park-and-museum-area-management-plan](https://www.alexandriava.gov/parks/fort-ward-park-and-museum-area-management-plan)

Project Manager:

Judy Lo, ASLA, PLA

Principal Planner, Capital Development

Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

judy.lo@alexandriava.gov

703.746.5490