

July 14, 2017

Brendan Wilson
National Park Service National Capital Region
1100 Ohio Drive SW
Washington, DC 20242

Re: Public Scoping on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park

Dear Mr. Wilson,

Casey Trees is a Washington, DC-based nonprofit, with a mission “to restore, enhance, and protect the tree canopy of the nation’s capital.” To fulfill this mission, we plant trees; monitor the city’s tree canopy; and work with local decision-makers, developers, and residents to prioritize trees. We are committed to helping the District achieve its 40 percent tree canopy goal by 2032. Therefore, we appreciate the opportunity to share our vision for the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal Park).

Our city’s parks provide a wide array of benefits to people and wildlife. Green spaces offer a sense of place and essential life-enhancing qualities that contribute to community and individual well-being. The preservation and restoration of C&O Canal Park is a tremendous opportunity to transform an underused park into a prized community amenity. We want to ensure that the future C&O Canal Park maintains its historic natural landscape and grows tree canopy, so residents can enjoy a shady, tree-lined canal for many generations.

After analyzing the site, we urge the National Park Service to consider the following:


- 1. Preserve all healthy trees:** Preserve the mature trees currently growing in the Aqueduct, Walls, Grove, Locks, and Rock Creek Confluence character zones to complement Georgetown Heritage’s goal of preserving the canal’s history (Figure 1). These mature trees will also continue to provide important ecosystem services before, during, and after restoration.
- 2. Adopt a 35% tree canopy goal:** Plant new trees along the canal to achieve James Corner Field Operations’ goal to create a “garden from end to end.” Our analysis shows that there is potential to expand tree canopy to cover approximately 35% of the park by planting trees in underutilized green space (Figure 2). A more continuous tree canopy will offer numerous environmental benefits for the neighborhood, including stormwater infiltration and flood mitigation.
- 3. Prevent the spread of invasive plants.** Create an invasive plant management plan to remove invasive plants currently growing along the canal, and to prevent the establishment of invasive plants in the future. Once invasive trees and plants have been removed, reforest to achieve a 35% tree canopy.

Adopting these recommendations will contribute to a revitalized waterfront, a more robust habitat for



wildlife, and a forested park for District residents of all ages to explore. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have questions, feel free to contact me at ktaddei@caseytrees.org or 202-349-1892.

Sincerely,



Kristin D. Taddei
Planning Advocate



Figure 1. James Corner Field Operations' base map modified by Casey Trees to show the location of mature trees in character zones along the C&O Canal.*

Chesapeake & Ohio Canal: Tree Canopy Analysis

Washington, DC 20007
July 14, 2017

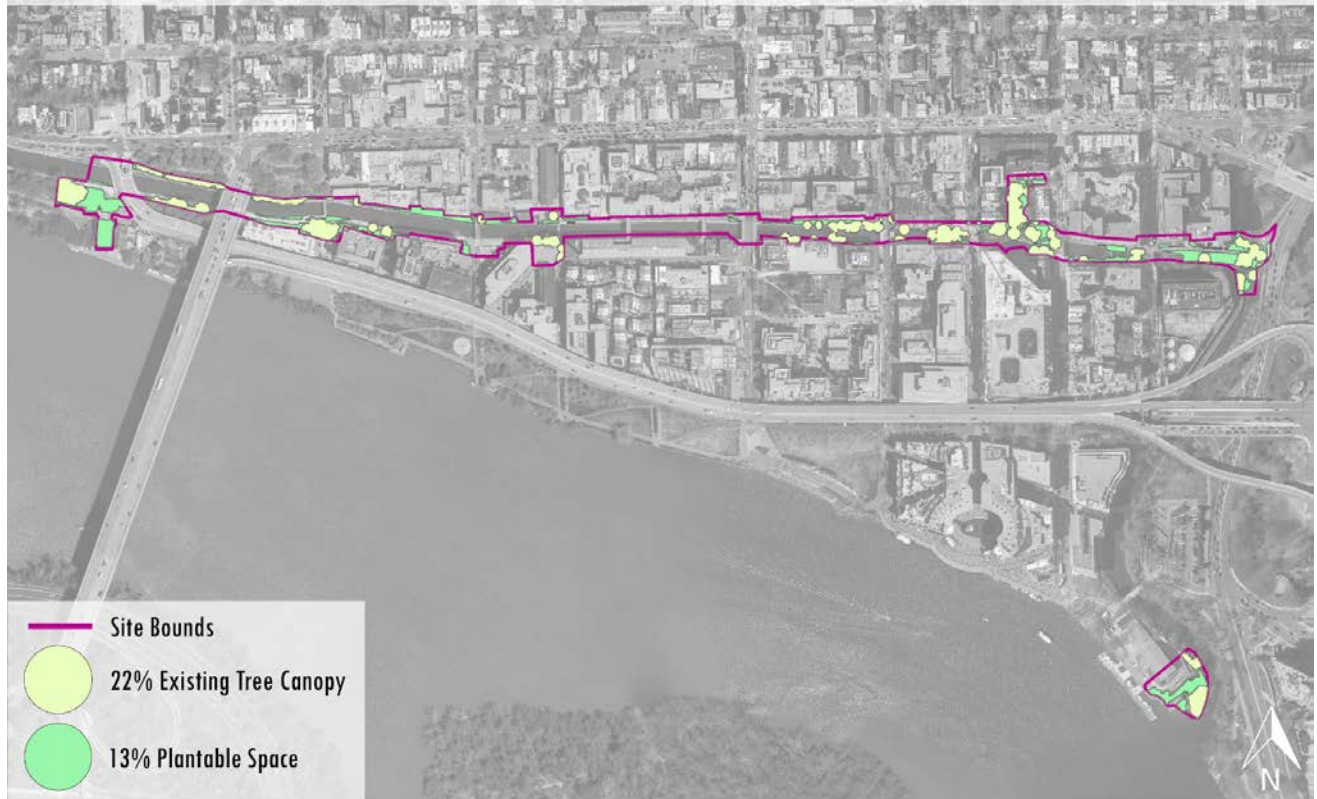


Figure 2. If trees are planted in available green space, tree canopy could cover approximately 35% of C&O Canal Park.*

*Existing tree canopy may include invasive trees. Once invasive trees have been removed, reforest to achieve a 35% tree canopy.