

MOUNT VERNON PLANNING DISTRICT

Overview and Character

The Mount Vernon Planning District is located in southeastern Fairfax County and almost completely in the Mount Vernon Supervisory District with a small portion in the Lee Supervisory District. Mount Vernon is located in Park Authority Maintenance Area 3.

The District has a predominantly single-family residential character in the middle and southern portions. Higher density residential developments, including townhouses, duplexes, garden apartments, high-rise apartments and mobile home parks are located along Richmond Highway and sometimes provide transitions between low density residential neighborhoods and commercial areas. Commercial development is primarily highway-oriented retail, services and shopping centers along Richmond Highway.



The Huntington Metro Station is located in the northern portion of the District near Cameron Run and I-95. Historic Mount Vernon is located on the Potomac River in the southern portion of the District. Fort Belvoir is located at the southern end of the District. The District is bisected and served by Richmond Highway as the major north-south highway which serves local and through traffic. The George Washington Memorial Highway extends from Alexandria to Mount Vernon along the Potomac and serves numerous residential areas in between.

Mount Vernon has a relatively high population density, 7.5 persons per acre, as shown on Table 1. It has an above County average rate of households with children. It has one of the highest projected population increases over the next twenty years.

Table 1: Demographic Indicators for Mount Vernon

Mount Vernon Demographic Data			
	Mt. Vernon	Fairfax County	District Rank
Total Population			
1980 Population	79,533	596,901	1 of 14
2005 Population	91,555	1,041,242	4 of 14
2004 Population Density	7.5	4.5 per acre	4 of 14
Median Market Housing Value	\$ 296,582	\$349,000	12 of 14
Housing Units 2005	37,687	384,683	4 of 14
Nonresidential Structure Gross Floor Area 2004	9,186,395	229,527,736	10 of 14
2000 Households (HH)	35,089	348,714	4 of 14
w/o Children	71%	63%	12 of 14
w Children under 18	29%	37%	2 of 14
Total Population in 2000	86,944	969,749	4 of 14
White	62.0%	69.9%	10 of 14
Black	21.0%	8.6%	3 of 14
Asian & Pacific Islander	6	13.1%	13 of 14
Other or Two or More	11	8.5%	4 of 14
Hispanic (can be of any race)	14	11.0%	4 of 14

Major roadways in the Mount Vernon Planning District include the Capital Beltway (I-495), I-95, Richmond Highway, Fort Hunt Road, George Washington Parkway, and Kings Highway. Richmond Highway and Fort Hunt Road provide access to the Capital Beltway and I-95. The [George Washington Parkway](#) is a limited access, scenic highway located along the eastern border of the district. Huntington Metro Station is located between Huntington Avenue and North Kings Highway and provides access to the Metro rail transit system. Woodlawn Road, which provided access to the district through Fort Belvoir, was closed for base security reasons after September 11, 2001. The completion of the Fairfax County Parkway segment connecting to Route 1 has increased the regions accessibility to I-95.

Mount Vernon's eastern edge is characterized by extensive amounts of natural resources and the Potomac River. One of the nation's most important historic resources, [Mount Vernon](#), George Washington's home, is located in the District. The Mount Vernon District is bounded on the north by Cameron Run. A large percentage of land in this district serves as floodplain for these two

waterways. This is reflected in the low elevation and coastal plain character of the natural resource areas in the district.

The Mount Vernon Planning District spans five watersheds: Belle Haven, Cameron Run, Dogue Creek, Four Mile Run, and Little Hunting Creek. The Park Authority land area is mostly split within the Belle Haven (16%), Dogue Creek (42%) and Little Hunting Creek (37%) watersheds. Several of these watersheds, such as Four Mile Run and Little Hunting Creek, have an almost urban watershed with few to no stormwater controls and severe degradation from excessive runoff, despite the relatively diffuse development of the planning district.

Park System Overview

The Mount Vernon Planning District has eight community planning sectors and a total of 11,982 acres. The Park Authority owns and maintains 598 acres, which is 5.5 percent of the total land area. Other jurisdictions own and maintain 1,500 acres of public parkland in the Mount Vernon District. Therefore, the total public parkland in the District is 17.7 percent of the total acreage. There are two private golf courses, several historic sites and two National Park Service sites within the district. Map 1 shows the parks in the district.

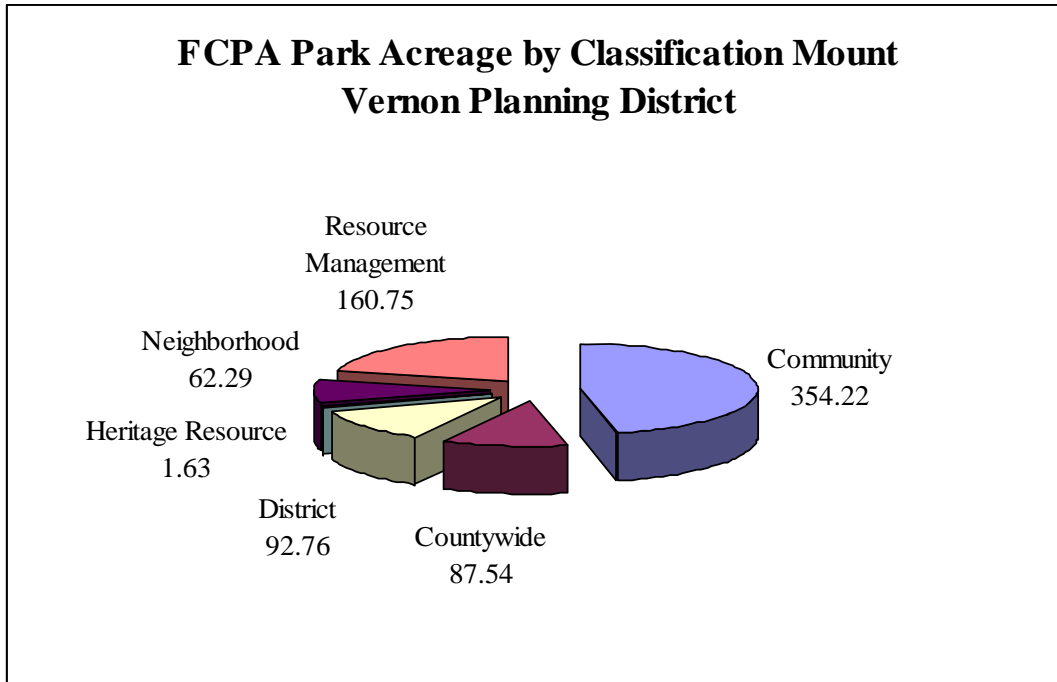
Mount Vernon has 40 County public parks. Thirty-four of these are neighborhood and community parks with various recreational facilities. Three parks are classified as district parks that serve the District as a whole with a variety of facilities and natural resources. There are two RECenters: Mount Vernon and George Washington. There are also historic sites, natural resource parks and multiple resource parks.

The Mount Vernon District contains a broad variety of park, recreation and cultural resources. A network of well-distributed neighborhood and community parks reflects the long established residential character of the district. These parks are primarily small to medium sized parks with casual play facilities and natural area fragments.

District parks, such as Grist Mill Park and Mount Vernon Park, have dog parks, RECenters, community gardens and athletic fields, as well as extensive natural areas. Map 2 shows the District parks by classification. Table 2 lists all the public parks with their acreage, classification and master plan approval date, if any, by community planning sector.

A number of the small to medium parks are undeveloped with no recreational facilities. These sites lend to the suburban residential character for most of the district as well as protect important natural resources.

As a result of Mount Vernon's extensive residential development in 1950's, 1960's and 1970's, many of the smaller local parks were developed before organized sports were prevalent and do not adequately provide currently needed facility types for athletic group use. Fairfax County Schools supplement facility needs with ball fields that are available for community use in Mount Vernon.



Map 1: Park and Recreation Lands in the Mount Vernon Planning District



Map 2: Parkland Classification in the Mount Vernon Planning District

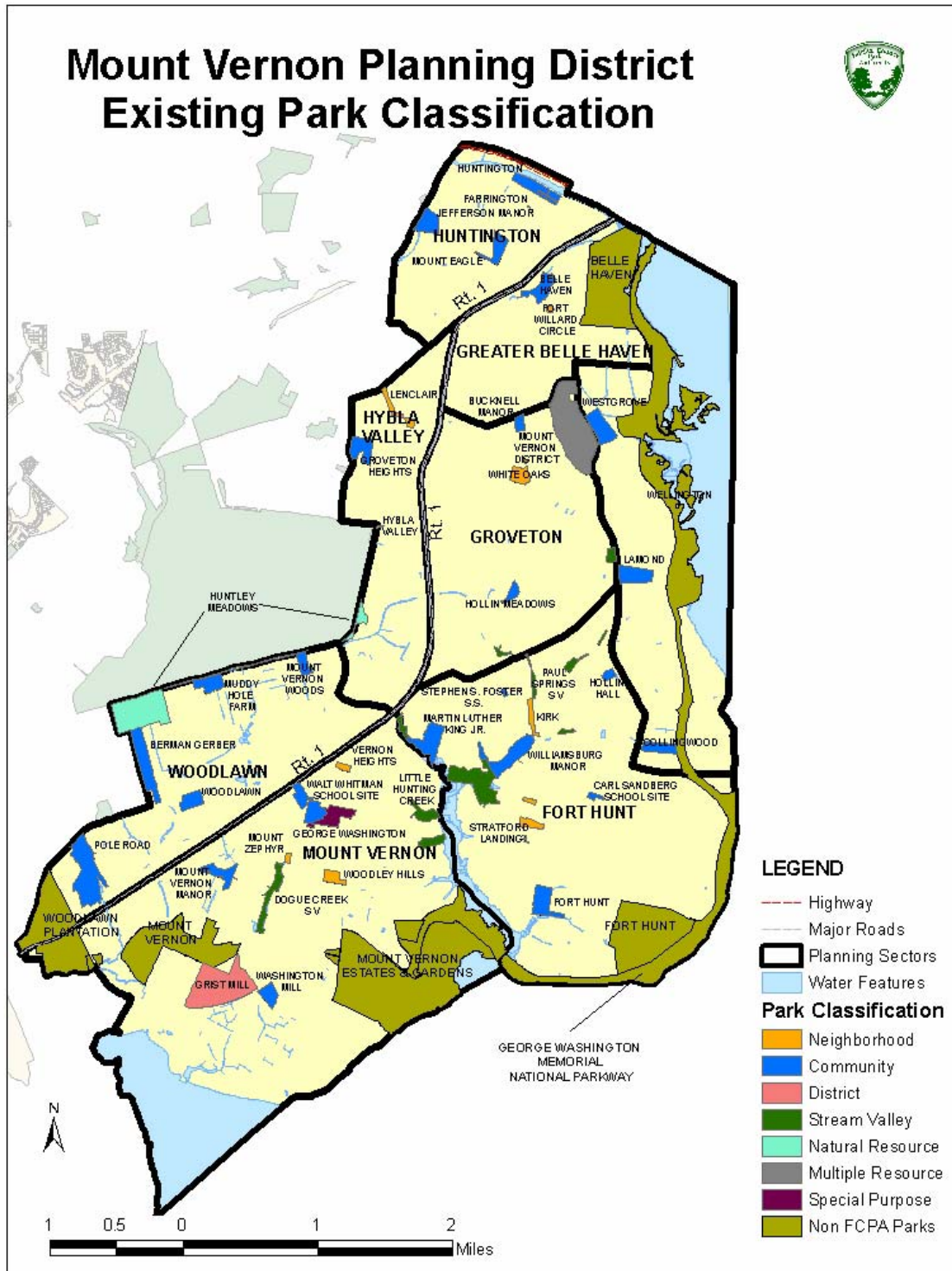


Table 2: Parks by Planning Sector in the Mount Vernon District

SECTOR	PARK NAME	PARK CLASS	ACREAGE	CURRENT MASTER PLAN APPROVAL DATE
MV 1 HUNTINGTON	FARRINGTON	Neighborhood	0.13	
	HUNTINGTON	Community	16.69	1974
	JEFFERSON MANOR	Community	14.39	1963
	MOUNT EAGLE	Community	12.98	1979
MV 2 HYBLA VALLEY	CREIGHTON SQUARE	Community	0.68	
	GROVETON HEIGHTS	Community	15.76	1965
	HUNTLEY MEADOWS	Natural Resource	7.11	
	HYBLA VALLEY	Neighborhood	2.29	1979
	LENCLAIR	Neighborhood	7.69	
MV 3 GREATER BELLE HAVEN	BELLE HAVEN	Community	15.60	
	FORT WILLARD HISTORIC SITE	Heritage Resource	1.63	2006
MV 4 WELLINGTON	COLLINGWOOD	Community	11.99	1979
	LAMOND	Community	17.95	2002
	WESTGROVE	Community	20.51	
MV 5 GROVETON	BUCKNELL MANOR	Neighborhood	4.93	1979
	HOLLIN MEADOWS	Neighborhood	5.43	1975
	MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT	Community	87.54	1972
	PAUL SPRINGS STREAM VALLEY	Stream Valley	6.62	
	WHITE OAKS	Neighborhood	10.11	1975
MV 6 FORT HUNT	FORT HUNT	Community	19.15	1969
	HOLLIN HALL	Community	4.04	1987
	KIRK	Community	6.27	
	LITTLE HUNTING CREEK	Stream Valley	42.94	
	MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.	Community	22.85	1967
	PAUL SPRINGS STREAM VALLEY	Stream Valley	10.51	
	STEPHEN S. FOSTER INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL SITE	Community	1.50	1975

	STRATFORD LANDING	Neighborhood	8.29	1967
	WALT WHITMAN SCHOOL SITE	Community	21.08	
	WILLIAMSBURG MANOR	Community	27.73	1970
	DOGUE CREEK STREAM VALLEY	Stream Valley	16.02	
MV 7 MOUNT VERNON	GEORGE WASHINGTON	District	17.71	1981
	GRIST MILL	District	75.05	2002
	LITTLE HUNTING CREEK	Stream Valley	18.59	
	MOUNT VERNON MANOR	Community	13.83	1970
	MOUNT ZEPHYR	Neighborhood	1.88	1982
	VERNON HEIGHTS	Neighborhood	2.89	
	WALT WHITMAN SCHOOL SITE	Community	21.08	
	WASHINGTON MILL	Community	10.09	1968
	WOODLEY HILLS	Neighborhood	7.80	1971
	BERMAN GERBER	Community	28.16	
MV 8 WOODLAWN	HUNTLEY MEADOWS	Natural Resource	91.48	
	MOUNT VERNON WOODS	Neighborhood	7.97	1965
	MUDDY HOLE FARM	Community	13.60	1978
	POLE ROAD	Community	48.85	1988
	WOODLAWN	Community	11.60	1969
				810.99
TOTAL				

Residents in the Mount Vernon District are served by the [Huntley Meadows Park](#) and [Lee District Park](#), which are located in the Rose Hill District to the northwest. Huntley Meadows is a 1,530 acres nature preserve with a nature/vistor center, trails, picnicking and observation tower. Lee District Park has numerous indoor and outdoor recreational facilities including a RECenter, athletic fields and courts, playground, amphitheatre, picnic areas and a carousel.

Major Parks and Facilities

Park Authority Sites

The only ice rink owned and operated by the Park Authority is in Mount Vernon District Park. Other major park features include Grist Mill Park, Civil War era sites, such as Fort Willard and Mount Eagle and two RECenters, Mount Vernon and George Washington. Table 3 lists the recreation facilities in each public park.

Mount Vernon District Park with 87 acres is the largest Park Authority site in Mount Vernon. The [Mount Vernon RECenter](#) is located on the site and has a 25-meter heated indoor pool with poolside spa; a beach area with play features; locker rooms with showers; and sauna; [Fitness Center](#) with Cybex VR2 equipment; a pro shop; a dance room; multi-purpose rooms and a year-round 200 x 85-foot indoor [Ice Arena](#). The park also contains lighted tennis courts, picnic areas and extensive trails throughout the natural area. The site is bounded on the east by Fort Hunt Road and on the west by a single family residential area. It contains a large mature canopy forested natural area and a stream across the middle of the site.



[George Washington RECenter](#) has a heated indoor 25 meter pool with a poolside spa, beach and wading area, saunas, showers and fully equipped locker rooms. The fitness area includes a treadmill, and one recumbent bicycle. This facility also features newly resurfaced lighted tennis courts.



Grist Mill Park is a 75-acre site with natural resource protection areas, three diamond fields, two rectangle fields, two multi purpose courts, an historic barn structure and a large playground area. There is a large pond on the northern portion of the site and a stream and mature canopy forest on the eastern portion. The park also contains a dog park and garden plots. The eastern half of the site contains a stream and mature canopy forest and the approved master plan designates portion of the park as the resource management area of this site.

Table 3: Park Facilities provided by Park Authority in Mount Vernon District

PARK NAME	Restrooms	GOLF	Mini Golf	TRAILS	PICNIC SHELTERS	Picnic Tables	PLAYGROUNDS	RECTANGLE FIELDS	DIAMOND FIELDS	Sand Volleyball Courts	TENNIS	MULTI-USE COURTS	RECenter	Garden Plots	HISTORIC FEATURE	WATER ACTIVITIES	Nature Center	Dog Park	SPECIALTY FEATURES
BELLE HAVEN																			
BERMAN GERBER																			
BUCKNELL MANOR				●		●	●	●	●		●	●							
CARL SANDBERG SCHOOL SITE									●		●								
COLLINGWOOD							●	●	●		●	P							
CREIGHTON SQUARE																			
DOGUE CREEK STREAM VALLEY																			
FARRINGTON							●												
FORT HUNT				●			P		●		●					●			
FORT WILLARD HISTORIC SITE				●												●			
GEORGE WASHINGTON	●			●				●	P		●		●						
GRIST MILL	P			●	P	●	●	●	●		P	●		●	●			●	
GROVETON HEIGHTS				●		●	●	●	●		●	●							
HOLLIN HALL						●	●	P	●	●		●							
HOLLIN MEADOWS																			
HUNTINGTON				●			●		●			●							
HYBLA VALLEY				●		P	P				●	P							
JEFFERSON MANOR	●			●	●	●	●		●		P	●			●				
KIRK				●															
LAMOND	P					P	●				P					●			P
LENCLAIR							●												
LITTLE HUNTING CREEK				●		●	●				●					●			
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.	●			●		●	●	●	●		●								
MOUNT EAGLE				●		●	P			●	P	P				●			
MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT	●			●	P	●	●				●		●						●
MOUNT VERNON MANOR				●		●	●		●		●	●							
MOUNT VERNON WOODS				●	●	●	●		●		●								
MOUNT ZEPHYR				P			●												
MUDDY HOLE FARM				●		●	●	●	●		●								
PAUL SPRINGS STREAM VALLEY				●															
POLE ROAD				P		P	P				●	P							
STEPHEN S. FOSTER INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL SITE									P		●								
STRATFORD LANDING				●	P		●				●	P							
VERNON HEIGHTS				●			●												
WALT WHITMAN SCHOOL SITE																			
WASHINGTON MILL				●		P	●												
WESTGROVE																			
WHITE OAKS				●												●			
WILLIAMSBURG MANOR				●		●	●					●							
WOODLAWN	P			●	P	●	●				●	●							
WOODLEY HILLS				●	P	●	●		●		●								

Facilities Exist ●
Facilities Planned P

Other Providers

Other jurisdictions and public agencies own and maintain parkland and recreational facilities in the Mount Vernon Planning District. Table 4 lists these and briefly describes their facilities and activities.

There are several sites of national historic importance in Mount Vernon. Mount Vernon, itself, and the Woodlawn Plantation are owned and operated privately. The George Washington Memorial Parkway is owned and maintained by the National Park Service.

National Park Service Facilities

- **The George Washington Memorial Parkway** is a scenic byway that extends along the eastern edge of the district parallel to the Potomac River from Alexandria to the Mount Vernon historic site. The George Washington Memorial Parkway is an extensive highway-park facility. The associated parkland that functions as a linear park protecting view sheds and sensitive environmental wetland areas along the Potomac River. There is a regional trail along the highway for biking, walking and other recreational activities.
- **Fort Hunt** is a picnic and natural area adjacent to the George Washington Memorial Parkway that is administered by the National Park Service. Fort Hunt Park is a regional recreational site with large picnic areas and playing fields. Another interesting feature at Fort Hunt Park is the Dyke Marsh, a distinctive, large, freshwater wetland on the Potomac River.

Private Facilities

- The privately owned 150-acre **Belle Haven Country Club** is located in the northeast corner of the District and has an 18-hole golf course, a clubhouse with fitness center and ballroom; five indoor tennis courts, eight outdoor courts, and a seasonal swimming pool.
- The privately owned 128-acre **Mount Vernon Country Club** is located in the southern portion of the District and has an 18-hole golf course, a clubhouse facility and a 25 meter seasonal pool.

Mount Vernon Estate, George Washington's home, is located on 500 acres along the Potomac River. It is one of the most visited historic sites in the country and it is owned and operated by the Mount Vernon Ladies Association, a private organization established in 1932 specifically to protect Washington's



home. Visitors may tour the mansion house and more than a dozen outbuildings including the slave quarters, kitchen, stables, and greenhouse. The site also includes an extensive visitor's center and museum, four gardens, the Forest Trail and the *George Washington: Pioneer Farmer* site, which is a four-acre working farm that includes a re-creation of Washington's 16-sided trading barn. The remains of George and Martha Washington are entombed on the site and wreath laying ceremonies are held daily. The Slave Memorial and Burial Ground are located nearby.

The seven-acre **George Washington Distillery and**

Grist Mill site is three miles south of Mount Vernon. The Commonwealth of Virginia owns and leases the site to the Mount Vernon Ladies Association, who operates this site in conjunction with Mount Vernon. It is a re-creation of the mill George Washington used to operate his distillery.



Woodlawn Plantation is a 130-acre historic site owned and operated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation located a few miles west of Mount Vernon. It contains the historic Woodlawn Manor House and grounds, home of Martha Custis, Martha Washington's daughter.

The Woodlawn site also has [Frank Lloyd Wright's Pope-Leighey house](#), which was moved to the site from Falls Church when building a major road was going to destroy it. The house represents the Usonian movement architectural style of the early twentieth century.



River Farm is a 25-acre historic site with gardens owned and operated by the American Horticultural Society (AHS). It is the headquarters for the AHS and is open to the public for grounds tours, cultural events and class opportunities.

Table 4: Public Sites provided by other entities in the Mount Vernon Planning District

Agency	Park Name	Acreage	Facilities and Amenities
National Park Service (NPS)	George Washington Parkway	596	Scenic byway and pull-offs along the Potomac, Bike Trail
Private	Mount Vernon	350	Historic House, Museum and Grounds, visitor amenities
Commonwealth of Virginia	George Washington's Grist Mill	7	Historic Structure, visitor amenities
National Park Service (NPS)	Fort Hunt	136	Picnic Areas with shelters, Ball fields, Playgrounds, Restrooms
National Trust for Historic Preservation	Woodlawn Plantation	130	Historic House and Grounds
American Horticultural Society	River Farm	25	Historic House and Grounds

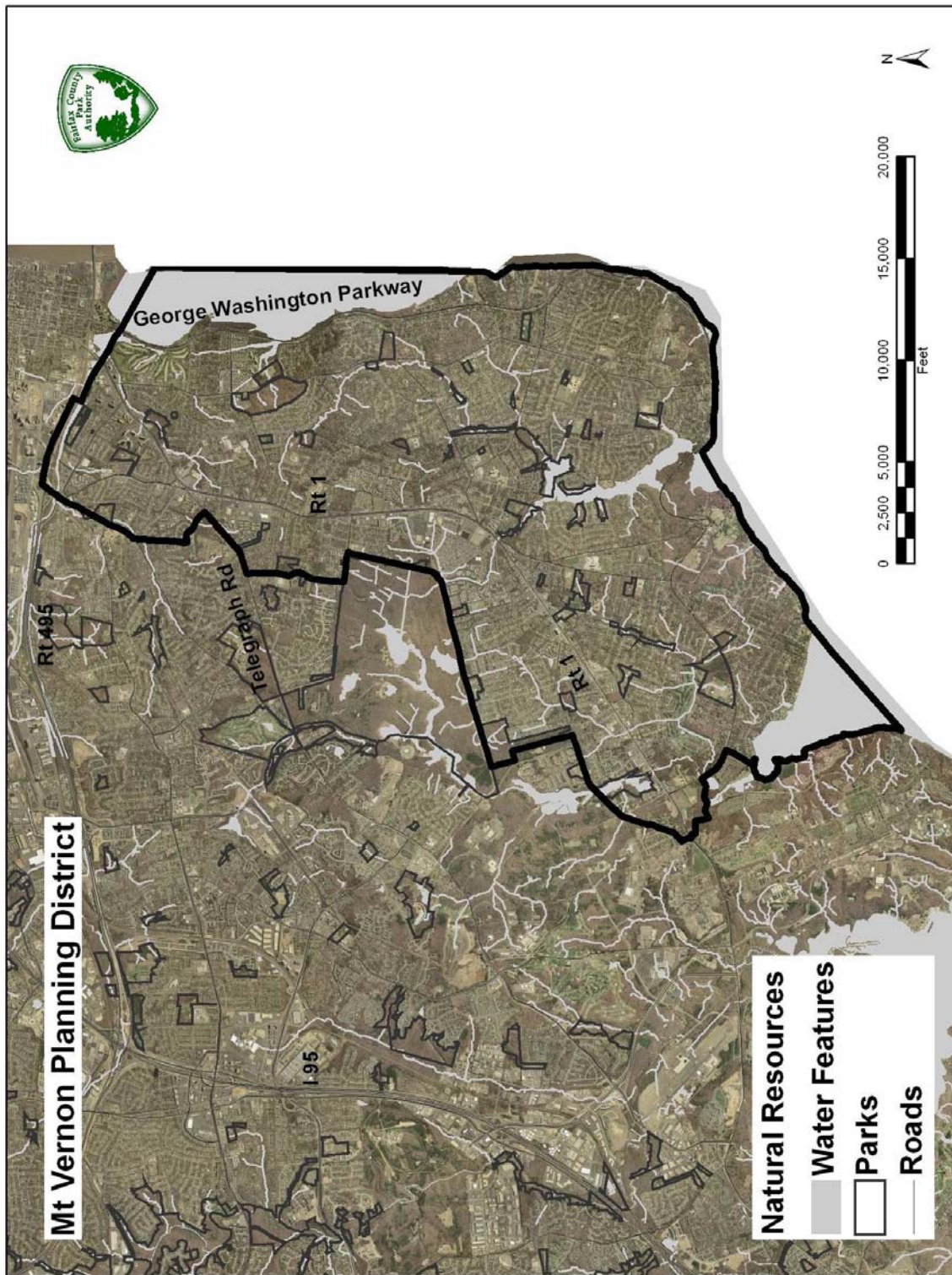
Natural Resources

The district consists of a mixture of narrow swaths of low-lying lands in stream valley corridors and small upland parks. The aerial photo in Map 3 shows the parkland in a landscape context with streams. Natural resource inventories have only been completed at Westgrove and Ft. Willard.

The largest park parcel, Mount Vernon District Park is only 87 acres and somewhat isolated. This site contains some of the most unusual forest communities on parkland. These intact forest remnants are relatively healthy. The small parcels are mostly isolated but contain some high-quality resources that remain under stress due to human activity, invasive plant species and deer herbivory. Other natural resource highlights include:

- Almost all of the tidal wetlands on Park Authority land occur in the Mt. Vernon area in the parks along Little Hunting Creek and at Huntington Park.
- The stream valley corridors on the North Fork of Dogue Creek and the North branch of Little Hunting Creek are valuable wildlife corridors, with regular sightings of hawks, herons and eagles.
- Mosquito activity tends to be very high in the district.

Map 3: Aerial Photo of Mount Vernon Planning District with Streams



Cultural Resources

The Mount Vernon Planning District contains the Huntley Historic Overlay District and a portion of the Woodlawn Historic Overlay District (also located in the Lower Potomac Planning District), and many other important cultural resources. The most important of these are Civil War features, a number of 18th and 19th century mills and domestic sites, World War I and II era sites, as many Native American sites. These Native American sites exist in abundance in the undeveloped portions of our park lands. Site types include Native American campsites, hunting stations and stone quarries. The Native Americans used outcrops of quartz for the manufacture of many types of tools, including spears, knives, arrow points, scrapers, axes and awls. The district contains Native American sites that date from the earliest known occupations in the county, some 12,000 years ago up to European contact.

During the 17th century, the first permanent non-Indian settlements in the County were most likely established in the District. The relatively undeveloped nature of much of the District has helped preserve important evidence of all periods of the area's history. Undeveloped areas have the potential for the discovery of important cultural resources.

In the Mount Vernon Planning District there are nationally significant historic sites such as Mount Vernon, Gunston Hall, Woodlawn Plantation, including the Frank Lloyd Wright designed Pope-Leighey House and George Washington's Grist Mill. These sites are all owned and operated by private entities. The District contains numerous resources that are listed in the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites, Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places.

The proximity of this district to Alexandria and the District of Columbia during the Civil War allowed for the Union forces to utilize the high ground for the Defense of Washington. This region is rich in Civil War era resources as a result. The County is fortunate to have many civil war era remnants that are protected on park sites.

Park Access and Connectivity

Most of the parks in Mount Vernon were developed in conjunction with modern residential development that occurred from the 1950s to the 1970s. These parks are located within neighborhoods and many have no vehicle access or on-site parking. They are primarily accessible by foot or bike.

The Richmond Highway corridor serves as the main transportation route for the District. There are limited pedestrian trails along this route. The Park Authority has no parks that are directly adjacent to Richmond Highway, but several parks, including Huntley Meadows Park, are within a reasonable walking distance.

Other major roads in the District include the George Washington Memorial Parkway and Fort Hunt Road. The remainder of the road network consists of local neighborhood roads with limited pedestrian facilities (sidewalks).

Major trails in the Mount Vernon District include the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the [Mount Vernon Regional Bike Trail](#). The Mount Vernon Regional Bike Trail extends north-south through the District and along with the George Washington Parkway is a part of the 425-mile [Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail](#). The Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST) connects the notable natural and cultural features along a 700-mile corridor of the Potomac River from the Chesapeake Bay to the Allegheny Highlands. The National Park Service manages this partnership, which has significant investments in funds, time and expertise by individuals, organizations and government agencies.



Mount Vernon Regional Bike Trail Route

Major Anticipated Land Use Changes

During the past twenty years the Mount Vernon District' population has remained fairly stable in numbers because it developed early and since the 1970s and 1980s it has been nearly completely developed. It is anticipated that this District will have a large population increase over the next ten years. This housing growth is anticipated to be primarily in the form of redevelopment of existing housing stock and the subsequent increase of multi-family and high density housing. This potential redevelopment will mean that additional park facilities will have to be considered.

Without increases in stormwater management, control of human activities and encroachments, and population control of white-tailed deer and non-native invasive species, the quality of preserved parkland is threatened.

Table 5: Growth Rates for Mount Vernon Planning District

Mount Vernon Planning District			
	Mount Vernon	Fairfax County	Rank
Total Population			
Forecast 2005	91,555	1,041,242	4 of 14
Forecast 2015	104,445	1,179,258	4 of 14
Growth Rate 1980-2005	15%	74%	13 of 14
Growth Rate 2005-2015	14%	13%	4 of 14
Housing Units			
Forecast 2005	37,687	384,683	4 of 14
Forecast 2015	42,783	436,436	4 of 14
Growth Rate 1980-2005	20%	78%	13 of 14
Growth Rate 2005-2015	14%	13%	4 of 14

Richmond Highway Corridor

County revitalization efforts and planned transportation improvements along the Richmond Highway Corridor will increase the mixture and intensities of land uses. Development of new urban parks in the Community Business Centers should be an integral component of revitalization efforts in Mount Vernon. Neighborhood park facilities are planned in conjunction with new residential development. Expansion of selected existing parks and upgrading of facilities at a number of other park and school sites can help address active recreation needs.

Anticipated changes in Mount Vernon's park system include the potential development of the **North Hill** site along Richmond Highway as a future park in a partnership with the Department of Housing and Community Development.