

Smaller Lake Accotink Preservation Feasibility Study Community Engagement Plan



February 2025 – V2

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1. Document purpose

This Community Engagement Plan (CEP) describes the goals, objectives, outreach tools, and communications strategies of stakeholder and public engagement efforts related to the Smaller Lake Accotink Preservation Feasibility Study (the Study). It also provides important historical context on previous public involvement efforts, and defines milestones at which to engage, inform, and/or involve stakeholders and the public during current and future community outreach activities.

This plan will serve as a *three-year roadmap (through 2027)* for how the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) communicates about this study, including when to build broad support or re-engage with the public and impacted stakeholders.

This plan was originally developed in August 2024. This is an updated version which includes feedback received from the online public survey conducted between September 19 and October 30, 2024. This plan will be a living document as the Study team continuously incorporates lessons learned and adjusts to needs as identified through ongoing public engagement activities. Therefore, DPWES and its outreach and community engagement consultant will periodically review this plan and update as necessary.

1.1 Implementing meaningful engagement

The core community outreach principle is to implement meaningful and equitable engagement with the public. Historically, in projects across the country, people whose voices are loudest are not necessarily representative of all those impacted by a project. Fairfax County seeks to actively increase public participation to ensure the Study aligns with local needs and leverages community expertise. The CEP aligns technical milestones as part of the Study with focused public engagement periods so that Fairfax County is providing relevant information and gathering input from the public to meet Study objectives.

This plan also addresses strategies and tactics for how the County can mitigate past concerns elevated by specific community groups who have been actively involved and vocal in prior County studies. It will be essential to the success of the County's community engagement efforts to rebuild trust with community members and stakeholders and shift the narrative to a sustainable, affordable solution for the lake. As with all meaningful engagement, we must balance the expectations of community members and stakeholders with what is realistic for the County within potential environmental impact expectations, disruption to adjacent communities, and budgetary constraints.

2. Background

Lake Accotink was created after a dam was constructed, first in 1918 and then rebuilt in 1943, to provide a source of drinking water for Ft. Belvoir. Lake Accotink is no longer a drinking water source but provides valuable recreational opportunities to Fairfax County residents and supports a variety of wildlife. Lake Accotink and its adjacent park are important to people from different cultures and backgrounds, for many reasons. However, due to the large, developed area upstream, continuing to dredge sediment from the lake to maintain its original size and depth, may be too expensive, too impactful on natural resources, or too disruptive to adjacent communities.

The Study is an effort to maintain a smaller lake in a most sustainable, equitable, and cost-effective manner. In late 2023, the Task Force on the Future of Lake Accotink reported its findings that a smaller lake, 20 to 40 acres, 4 to 8 feet deep may be the best option to preserve an open water feature. The work of the Task Force also revealed the need for additional study and analysis of various actions necessary. These include:

- Preservation Feasibility Study – to assess the feasibility of preserving various smaller lake options, 20 to 40 acres, 4 to 8 feet deep, and determine the best management methods, planning level costs, regulatory and permitting challenges, maintenance dredging intervals, permanent infrastructure needs, on-site reuse potential, implementation timeline, and staff needs.
- Sedimentation Rate Study - to better understand the amount of sediment transported to Lake Accotink and how much escapes (or is exiting) the lake downstream.
- Lake Accotink Dam Assessment – to determine the improvements and maintenance needs and ensure long-term regulatory compliance and safe functioning of the Lake Accotink Dam.

2.1 Previous public involvement efforts

Public input has played a key role in developing a vision for Lake Accotink. To understand community needs and desires, Fairfax County DPWES and the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) started a public engagement process in March 2016 and, since that time, has held multiple meetings with the neighboring community, park users, and key stakeholders. These meetings have given staff a chance to engage with community members and listen to a range of ideas and aspirations envisioned for the lake and its adjacent park. Key meetings included:

- March 2016 Public Meeting to Present Lake Accotink Master Plan Revision
- April 2018 Public Meeting to Present Lake Management Options Community Discussion
- March 2019 Public Meeting to Present Lake Management Options
- December 2020 Public Meeting to Present Lake Accotink Dredging Project Overview
- April 2021 Field Investigations Complete
- July 2021 Alternatives Analysis Report Posted for Public Comment
- July/August 2021 Public Meetings to Present Alternatives Analysis Results
- Fall 2021 Evaluation of Additional Alternatives
- Feb 2022 Public Meeting to Present Updated Alternatives Analysis Results

- February/March 2023 Lake Accotink Dredging Public Survey

Despite the County’s efforts to build support for the project with a variety of stakeholder groups, we anticipate there may be new or different stakeholders, varying levels of awareness of the Study, and a range of perspectives about plans for the lake. This community engagement plan addresses key stakeholders, and their interests and concerns based on what we know now and will be updated as we learn more about community and stakeholder perspectives.

3. Study timeline

As mentioned previously, the County is embarking on a three-year *preservation (feasibility) study* which will be supported by a **sediment study**, and a Lake Accotink **Dam assessment**. Public input is critical to ensuring the study adequately addresses public questions and concerns and to building lines of communication for collecting public feedback as the Study progresses.

4. Study audiences

Key audiences for the Study include the following community stakeholders.

- Neighborhoods surrounding Lake Accotink Park (within a 2 to 5-mile radius of the lake)
- Users of the lake and Lake Accotink Park
- Other lake and park interest groups (specific stakeholders listed in Table 1)

4.1 Study stakeholders

The following table identifies a list of key stakeholder groups and key focus areas noted from the County’s prior engagement efforts. Given that stakeholders and perspectives may have evolved and changed since the County last engaged, the County will use various methods of communication to engage stakeholders.

Table 1. Project Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Stakeholder Group
Neighborhood Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ravensworth Farm Civic Assn. • Springfield Civic Association • North Springfield Civic Association • West Springfield Civic Association • HOA Communities (in the vicinity of neighborhoods surrounding the lake) like Fairfax Hills • Rental Communities (ReNew Springfield, Eagle Rock Apartments, The Residences at Springfield Station, Springfield Gardens, etc.)
Environmental Advocacy Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends of Lake Accotink Park (FLAP) • Friends of Accotink Creek • Save Lake Accotink • Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley • Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District (NVSWCD)
Govt. agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation (VDCR)
County (Internal stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Fairfax County Planning Commission Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) Fairfax County Park Foundation Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA)

4.2 Community concerns

- Maintaining Lake Accotink primarily for recreational opportunities, community health, and environmental benefits.
- Mitigating the effects of wetlands loss in other areas.
- Anger and distrust over whether the benefits of dredging outweigh the costs.
- The lake is a valuable sediment control resource. However, concerns about transporting dredge sediment by trucks through adjacent neighborhoods for disposal to a nearby dewatering location.
- Most, if not all, of the dredge spoils in an initial dredge should remain on-site in Lake Accotink Park to the maximum extent feasible.
- A perceived lack of progress and the need for better communication and transparency from the County and Park Authority.
- Engagement preferred BEFORE feasibility study begins. This includes input and feedback via the website and participation in community events.
- Flooding impacts of the lake resulting from increased sediment deposits because Lake Accotink was not originally designed as a stormwater facility.
- Wetland management and healthy preservation of the long-term ecosystem and wildlife habitat.
- Concerns about water quality being impacted by sediment deposits.
- Questions about reducing the size of the lake and how to prevent a smaller lake from receiving the same amount of sediment and filling faster.

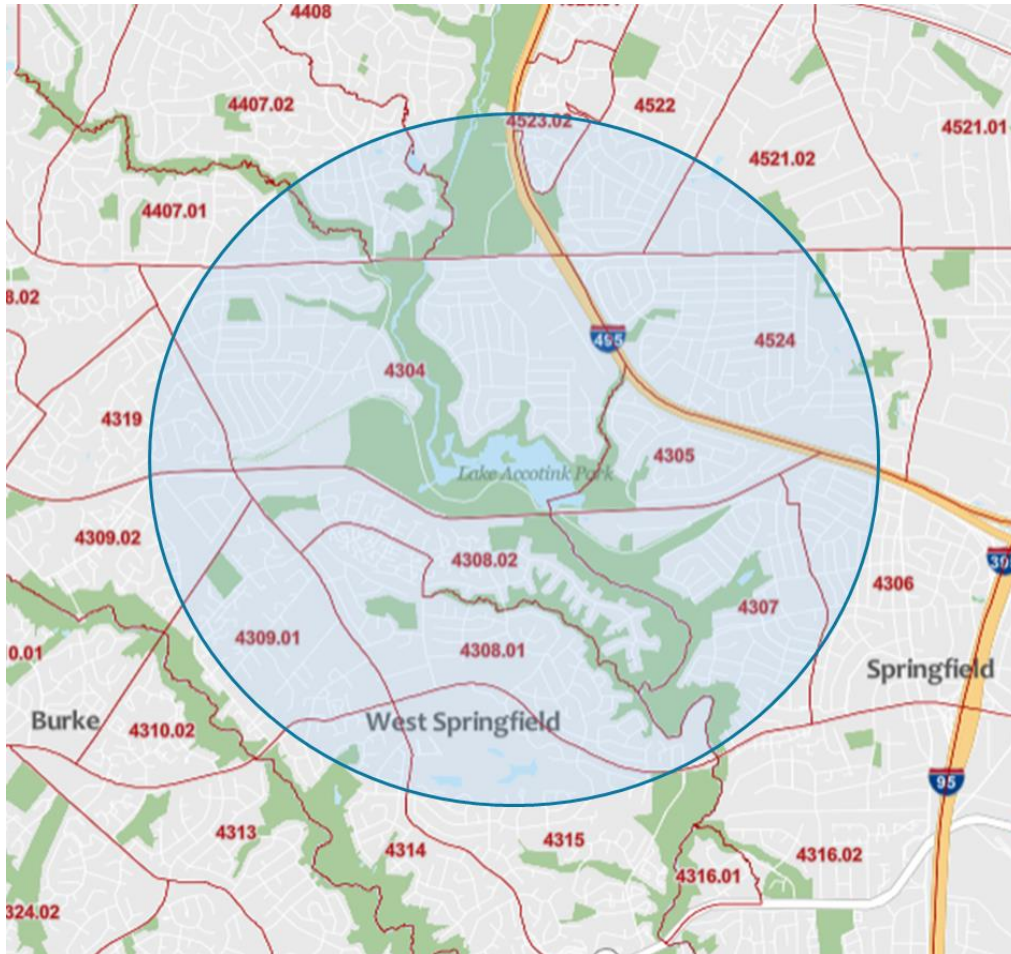
4.3 Demographic analysis

Audience prioritization: [Demographic data](#) for Fairfax County, available through the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) estimates and the Fairfax County Vulnerability Index Census Tract helped identify frequently underrepresented audiences in the Study area. Knowing the audience demographics helps prioritize which groups to engage and how to best reach them in the most equitable way. Table 4 contains a list of community engagement methods.

Fairfax County Vulnerability Index: Several neighborhoods less than a mile from Lake Accotink have a higher number of residences that are reported as economically disadvantaged compared to

the median household within the County. Based on the County’s Vulnerability Index with data on occupation, education, language, income, transportation, health insurance, and housing, the following map shows any census tract which falls at least partly within a two-mile radius of the park.

Figure 1. Demographic Analysis Area



Map showing 2-mile radius (blue circle) of Lake Accotink. Census tracts (outlined/ labeled in red) falling within this radius were included in demographic analysis.

Table 2. Fairfax County Demographics Summary (Source: 2020 Census Data)

Fairfax County ACS Data (American Community Survey)	Population in 2 miles radius	Recommended Engagement Activities
32.7% of households have children under 18. Of these, 4.7% of families report being under the poverty line	38.2% of households have children under 18 in the household	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility and in-language interpreters during meetings, including online and in-person. • Meetings near transit or a major transit hub or encourage taking public transportation to the lake. • Record meetings for those who cannot attend and offer childcare options for those who attend. • Hold community meetings during reasonable hours where caregivers, parents, and families can attend more frequently.
15.21% of population are age 65 or older	16.7% of population is 65 or older	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider accommodation for older residents. • ADA technology for people with hearing disabilities and accessible locations for in-person meetings for mobility concerns. • Record meetings for people who cannot attend. • The County will partner with transit service providers to distribute information to their clients and promote taking transit to meetings or hold meetings near transit locations.
8.20% of population report having a disability, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.20% of residents under the age of 18 • 6.10% of residents between the ages of 19 to 64 • 24.20% of residents aged 65 and older 	7.96% of population report having a disability	<p>Same recommendations as above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County or consultant provides American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters during meetings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% of population reports being Black • 20.40% of population report being Asian, with significant representation of Asian Indian (4.9%), Chinese (3.2%), 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 58.2% White • 25.0% Asian <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 9.7% Vietnamese ○ 3.3% Korean ○ 2.0% Chinese ○ 1.5% Filipino ○ 1.3% Asian Indian ○ 0.2% Japanese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise community open houses in media outlets that focus on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities and utilize these publications in targeted media outreach. • Provide a spokesperson with in-language capabilities for these groups.

<p>Korean (3.5%), and Vietnamese (2.8%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16.80% of population report being Hispanic/Latinx alone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4.4% Other Asian ○ 2.5% in combination of one or more race • 22.0% Hispanic or Latino (of any race) • 9.8% Black or African American • 3.2% Native American or Alaska Native • 0.2% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander • 16.7% Some other Race <p><i>Includes race alone and in combination with other race(s)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize organizations and Hispanic and Asian faith-based groups and churches. • Hold meetings and events in community facilities as well as at Lake and neighboring rec centers, libraries, and similar venues.
<p>37.8% of the population report speaking languages other than English at home, with 13.9% of people speaking</p>	<p>44.8% of households report speaking languages other than English at home.</p> <p>7.7% of households report speaking English less than very well (LEP)</p> <p>Languages Spoken (Household)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 54.6% English Alone • 18% Spanish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3% LEP • 7% Vietnamese <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1.7% LEP • 5.3% Other Indo-European <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1.2% LEP • 3.6% Korean <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1.0% LEP • 2% Asian & Pacific Island <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 0.1% LEP • 1.7% Tagalog <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 0% LEP • 1.6% Chinese <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 0.4% LEP • 1.3% Arabic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 0.1% LEP • 0.9% French, Haitian, Cajun <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 0% LEP • 0.7% German <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 0% LEP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended languages: Spanish, Vietnamese, and Korean • Provide in-language materials and interpreters and/or community engagement staff who speak appropriate languages other than English at meetings/events. • Connect with organizations and churches with large congregations of Spanish, Vietnamese, and Korean people. • Hold pop-up events at local markets and shopping centers and local neighborhood events. • Connect with cultural centers and organizations that provide Limited English Proficiency Programs. • Use social media to share information and promote surveys and engagement events to Hispanic, Korean, and Vietnamese community members. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hispanics: YouTube and WhatsApp; Facebook; Instagram ○ Vietnamese: Facebook; YouTube; Instagram ○ Korean: YouTube; Instagram; Facebook • Partner with a local Hispanic, Vietnamese, or Korean influencer to promote the Study on their social media accounts and potentially host the county at a neighborhood gathering.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.7% Russian, Polish, Slavic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 0% LEP 	
30.70 % of population report being foreign born, with 36.60% of those people reporting as not a U.S. citizen	32.6% of the population in this area is foreign born, with 33.7% of those not a U.S. citizen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold meetings and events in community facilities as well as at Lake Accotink Park and neighboring rec centers. • Distribute information through postcard mailings. • Schedule events at separate times of the day, especially outside of 9am-5pm “business” hours. • Consider weekend meetings and events. • Have information available in the different languages at the park and neighboring rec centers.
10.3% of households have an income of less than \$50,000	14.2% of households have an income less than \$50,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide refreshments at in-person meetings. • Schedule events at times that are outside of 9am-5pm “business” hours. • Consider weekend meetings and events. • Partner with social services and food access orgs. • Post on apartment bulletin boards, newsletters, and websites.
29.7% of population rent their homes and 4.92% of those people are cost burdened	20.7% of housing units renter-occupied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with apartment managers to provide information to tenants on bulletin boards.

5. Community engagement

5.1 Outreach goals

1. **Keep the community informed:** Promote the study’s key milestones and findings by establishing open lines of communication and determining the best means of reaching the community through transparent and accessible communication methods and tools.
2. **Build trust:** Develop strong relationships with stakeholders that enable the project team to effectively leverage their networks and foster collaboration. In turn, these relationships will help enhance the team’s ability to engage the broader public and ensure more diversity of perspectives.
3. **Coordinate with stakeholders:** Build transparent and collaborative partnerships with existing and new stakeholders, recognizing the positive effect this has on community

perception, especially among those traditionally underrepresented, and that it complements other community engagement initiatives.

4. **Gather input and receive feedback:** Facilitate opportunities to gather community input during the Lake Accotink Preservation Feasibility Study and identify questions that are important to the community which have not been previously captured, what lake use options should be prioritized, and how the community would like to assist with the Study to ensure the study is comprehensive, ultimately leading to better decision making.
5. **Use an equity lens:** Intentionally focus engagement efforts on people and organizations with environmental justice concerns who often face systemic barriers to engagement in planning processes, including individuals who are Black, Latino, Asian American, Indigenous and Native American; have low-incomes; and those who have limited English proficiency, as well as geographically dispersed and mobile populations, such as migrant workers in Fairfax County; and other people who are typically marginalized.

5.2 Community engagement approach

Because community involvement leads to stronger decision-making, the community engagement strategy must engage diverse stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement activities and community outreach events will seek to inform and educate audiences about the Study while gathering input to help shape recommendations. The engagement team will use methods to support equitable engagement and increase the number of community voices represented in the decision-making process so that a better understanding of local perspectives to inform the study's recommendations.

5.3 What success looks like

Successful engagement will result in a well-informed and more trusting public due to transparency in decision-making that gives the community a voice. Success for the Study includes:

- Meaningful involvement of community members and stakeholders as measured by interactions between County staff with members of the public or pulse surveys to specific groups.
- Inclusion of unbiased community input and feedback in the study and incorporated into recommendations reported back to the public.
- An increased trust and understanding in the County's decision-making process demonstrated.
- Positive media coverage of the project measured in neutral or positive coverage analysis that creates a shift to a more accurate narrative of the Study options that are in line with environmental and economic realities while narrating the community benefits.
- Website engagement which shows users engaging with content, including those who took the online survey about the preservation feasibility study scope, before leaving the page.

5.4 Message platform

It is essential that everyone who works on the Study—DPWES staff and their consultants—use clear, simple, and consistent messaging about the purpose of and need for the Smaller Lake

Accotink Preservation Feasibility Study. Messages and talking points may change as the Study progresses. The Message Platform (described below) will be updated as the Study progresses. For example, we will use the information we gather from the public survey to refine this message platform. A frequently asked questions (FAQ) document will include additional study information.

Table 3. Message Platform

Smaller Lake Accotink Preservation Study Message Platform (to be updated quarterly by the County and consultants)		
Key Messages		
<p>Lake Accotink provides valuable recreational opportunities to Fairfax County residents and supports a variety of wildlife. Lake Accotink and its adjacent park are important to people from different cultures and backgrounds for many reasons.</p> <p>Lake Accotink’s persistence is at risk due to significant sediment buildup entering the lake from its large, developed drainage basin.</p> <p>Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) initiated a three-year preservation (feasibility) study which will be supported by a Sediment Study and a Lake Accotink Dam Assessment.</p> <p>The goal of the Smaller Lake Accotink Preservation Feasibility Study is to preserve a smaller lake in the most sustainable, equitable, and cost-effective manner.</p> <p>The Preservation Feasibility Study will assess, evaluate, and identify feasible options to preserve Lake Accotink as a smaller 20 to 40 acre, 4 to 8 feet deep lake as well as detail long-term operations and maintenance requirements to ensure its functionality for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>For more information and ongoing Study updates, please visit the Study website. https://publicinput.com/lake-accotink-preservation or Fairfax County website https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/lake-accotink-dredging.</p>		
Supporting messages		
<p>The Task Force on the Future of Lake Accotink, which included community members, environmental groups, nonprofits, FCPA and some of the past elected officials, recommended that preserving a smaller 20 to 40-acre lake could be a viable alternative to preserve this natural resource for generations to come. The work of the Task Force also revealed the need for additional study and analysis. These included a feasibility study for a smaller lake supported by a sediment study and a dam assessment.</p> <p>USGS was chosen to conduct part of the sediment study, due to their experience and two-decade-long partnership with Fairfax County in monitoring local water quality and sediment levels. A joint</p>	<p>The County has also initiated a sedimentation study to understand the amount of sediment that is entering and settling in Lake Accotink, and how much sediment buildup is escaping downstream from the lake.</p> <p>A separate dam assessment is in process which will determine improvements and maintenance needed to ensure long-term regulatory compliance and safe functioning of the dam.</p> <p>Following the completion of the feasibility study, it is recommended that the County and FCPA will resume the Lake Accotink Park Master Planning</p>	<p>DPWES values and respects community opinions and concerns and is committed to engaging with the community and stakeholders to receive feedback on preservation feasibility study for the smaller Lake Accotink.</p> <p>The Lake Accotink team is committed to having a robust and inclusive public outreach and engagement during the Study.</p> <p>The County is committed to transparency. An online survey was launched in September 2024 through the end of October to allow the public to provide feedback on the preservation feasibility study scope, which was informed by community feedback. The results of this survey are shared with the public on the Study website</p>

WSP/LimnoTech team is also under contract for sediment study and modeling efforts for the Study.	Process and develop a long-term plan for the improvement of Lake Accotink Park.	https://publicinput.com/lake-accotink-preservation
The County is in the process of commencing a Feasibility Study for a smaller Lake Accotink in early 2025 that will conclude by mid- 2026.		

5.5 Engagement methods

Corresponds with the Study timeline and with the outreach and engagement activities taking place between 2024-2027. A schedule is included through March 2026 in Section 5.6 below. The consultant team identified in the following table consists of WSP/PRR.

Table 4. Engagement Methods

Communications / Community Engagement Method	Lead	Timing
<p>Brand Identity for the Smaller Lake Accotink Preservation Study (COMPLETED)</p> <p>Develop a brand identity for the Feasibility Study that is aspirational and re-establishes the Study and differentiates the feasibility study from the prior Lake Accotink Dredging studies. The brand identity will encompass Fairfax County DPWES and reflect the messaging supporting the study.</p> <p>It is important to create a unified visual to make the Study easily identifiable to the public. PRR has worked closely with County to develop a brand identity that compliments the County’s brand (and logo). Taglines can be considered as part of the new brand identity to connect the public with the study’s vision. Uses of the brand identity can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study website via PublicInput. • Branded presentation materials: PowerPoint and Word templates. • Marketing materials including Study fact sheet, infographic, press release. • County DPWES Resources e-newsletter, mailers, flyers, social media posts, and digital graphics. • Meeting materials: Study boards, posters, comment cards, sign-in sheets. • Advertising: public meeting notices. <p>The steps involved in this process included:</p>	<p>The Consultant Team (PRR/WSP)</p> <p>DPWES and Communications</p>	<p>August 2024 – November 2024</p>

Communications / Community Engagement Method	Lead	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative brief (creative direction and guidance from the County to PRR). • Development of brand concepts and Study taglines • County DPWES review and approval • Integration into communications and public outreach materials • Unveil via the website, media outreach and marketing in conjunction with finalization of the messaging platform. <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Re-establish the Study for existing and current public users and distinction of the Feasibility Study from other projects and planning processes associated with Lake Accotink.</p>		
<p>Online Survey (COMPLETED) – A statistically valid online public opinion survey will be fielded using the County’s PublicInput tool and will be translated into <i>three</i> languages in addition to English, informed by the demographics. The survey will be promoted using existing County channels including the Study website, social media, in-person intercepts, pop-up tabling events, and 2 postcard mailings. The survey will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate dialog with the community so that they know DPWES is deploying additional studies initiated by the Board of Supervisors early 2024. • Establish open lines of communication and determine the best means of reaching the community (recognizing that it is the intent of the County to utilize the PublicInput platform as the primary means of providing updates, distributing information, and gathering input and feedback). • Build trust by showing that work is moving forward, the County wants to hear from the community in advance, and that the planned scope of work for the preservation (feasibility) study reflects their understanding of what analyses and evaluations need to occur. • Provide a backstop for County staff through the process of vetting the scope of work so that all parties have a mutual understanding of the work to be done before work begins. <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Input captured on what questions are not included in the Smaller Lake Accotink Preservation Study that are important to the community; ways in which the community would like to engage with the Study team; and a better understanding of the value alignments that could</p>	<p>The Consultant Team</p> <p>County DPWES and Communications</p>	<p>Draft Survey: August 2024</p> <p>Promote Survey: September 2024</p> <p>Field Survey: September-October 2024 (before election)</p> <p>Compile and Analyze Survey Results: November-December 2024</p>

Communications / Community Engagement Method	Lead	Timing
inform trade-off decisions for determining the ultimate management of the lake.		
<p>Survey Promotion (COMPLETED) Postcard mailing –Two postcards (one invitation, one reminder) will be mailed to 5,000 households addresses to promote the online survey. The mailings will employ oversampling by census tracts with higher scores on the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) tool, EJ Screen scores indicating areas that are more diverse and less wealthy. This oversampling will allow the County to reach a diverse and representative sample. Social media – Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), NextDoor, Newslink County Web page Banner A-Frames at the park, and government buildings. Posters at libraries, park kiosks, Audrey Moore Rec Center, and local apartment complex bulletin boards. Supervisor newsletters and e-mail notifications. In-person outreach at the park and Ravensworth Farm Fall Festival.</p> <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Increased online survey participation.</p>	<p>The Consultant Team County DPWES and Communications</p>	<p>September 2024</p>
<p>Study Website PublicInput (COMPLETED) The Smaller Lake Accotink Preservation Study PublicInput website will serve as a central hub for project information, public engagement, and community feedback. Promotional materials will be developed with a focus on accessibility and inclusivity, featuring clear messaging and will be posted to the website. The website will have an easy-to-use interface and intuitive design.</p> <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Increased public awareness and understanding of the study; increased opportunity for broad public input and feedback.</p> <p>The consultant team, in coordination with the County, can integrate new brand elements into the County’s existing web page(s) where applicable and allowable to demonstrate the project team’s commitment to sharing information with the public, the Study site may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key messages, FAQ’s, maps, project photos, schedule, and study progress. • The website will be one of the central elements of this program as a portal for information about the project, opportunities for public engagement, and to gather public feedback. 	<p>The Consultant Team County DPWES and Communications</p>	<p>August – September 2024 (Study website updates as deliverables become available)</p>

Communications / Community Engagement Method	Lead	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A visual project timeline to display the Study schedule. The visual timeline can be used in outreach materials and as a media pitching tool. 		
<p>Stakeholder and community contact database The database will include stakeholder and community contact information and document all stakeholder and public correspondence and communications. The contact database will be used to distribute information and engagement opportunities.</p>	County (input from Consultant Team)	October 2024 (quarterly updates)
<p>Social Media The team will partner with the County to develop a social media plan that supports the study and promotes the survey and other community engagement activities throughout the Study. A draft social media calendar with sample posts will accompany the plan for the County to use and post on their social media accounts. Social media is a powerful tool to engage the public in a dialogue with the County and Park Authority and can help drive visits to the Study website on PublicInput.</p> <p>The posting schedule will correspond with the overall Study timeline and community engagement tactics schedule.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of the website and survey (September 2024): Learn more about the Smaller Lake Accotink Preservation Study. Get involved. Provide your input. Take the survey (September-October 2024) Visit us at Lake Accotink Park. <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Increased community understanding of the Study; encourage dialogue with the County and Park Authority; garner public input and feedback.</p>	The Consultant Team & County DPWES and Communications	October 2024-December 2025
<p>Study materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exec summary that tells the story of Lake Accotink (from past to present) FAQs (website) Study poster Survey results (https://publicinput.com/lake-accotink-preservation) <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Easy to read Study materials that are ADA compliant and can be translated into languages other than English and provide audiences with increased access to information and clarification</p>	The Consultant Team County DPWES and Communications	September 2024-December 2025 *Post on Study website

Communications / Community Engagement Method	Lead	Timing
about the Study purpose, schedule, and expected outcomes from the community engagement effort.		
<p>Community Outreach Engage the community at 5 sites for pop-up events from the following options:</p> <p><u>Local community events options</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLAP Trash Off: Highschool Showdown at Lake Accotink Park Marina, September 2024 (attended) • Springfield Fall Fest, October 2024 (attended) • 2025 Spring Lake Accotink 5k/10k, April 2025 • Springfield Town Center Blossom Festival 2025, April 2025 • Taste of Springfield, June 2025 • Ravensworth shopping center events (various) • FLAP Trash Off: High School Showdown at Lake Accotink Park Marina, September 2025 • Springfield Fall Fest, October 2025 • The Annandale Parade, October 2025 • FLAP Lake Accotink Park Monthly Clean-Ups • Other Lake Accotink Park events (various) <p><u>Farmers markets options</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annandale Farmers Market, Mason District Park (May -October, 2025) • Wakefield Farmers Market, Audrey Moore Rec Center (June -October, 2025) • Springfield Mall Farmers Market (beginning May, 2025) • Kingstowne Farmers Market, Kingstowne Towne Center (May -October, 2025) <p><u>Library options</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Park Library • Kingstown Public Library • Richard Byrd Library <p><u>Rec Center options</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audrey Moore Rec Center • Franconia Rec Center <p><u>Shopping centers</u> – all locations have an international market or multiple businesses that are-owned by immigrant populations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ravensworth Shopping Center • Backlick Plaza • Springfield Plaza 	County Staff (support by Consultant Team)	September 2024-December 2025

Communications / Community Engagement Method	Lead	Timing
<p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Increased public awareness and understanding of the study; public feedback received.</p>		
<p>Stakeholder Meetings</p> <p>The County will continue to prioritize meetings with stakeholders who represent diverse communities and who live near or frequently visit or use the lake. Meetings with stakeholders to be timed in accordance with existing stakeholder meetings and can cover topics around Study milestones.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations to Friends of Lake Accotink Park Quarterly General Membership Meetings <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Positive relations with stakeholders; Increased public awareness and understanding of the study; public feedback received.</p>	<p>County Staff (support by Consultant Team)</p>	<p>Quarterly or depending on meeting avail</p>
<p>Community open house meetings (3) – Public meetings organized and facilitated by the County with consultant support will be used to inform the public about the Study and obtain input from communities, particularly those who are directly involved with or impacted by the feasibility study and who frequently use the lake as visitors.</p> <p>To increase participation for those who cannot attend in person, the County’s public communications team may utilize PublicInput to offer virtual opportunities for the community. There is also potential for the County to engage Channel 16 to cover the meetings.</p> <p>Open House Meeting 1 – Conceptual Lake Alternatives Open House Meeting 2 – Interim Feasibility Study progress Open House Meeting 3 - Draft Feasibility Study Report</p> <p>Potential open house meeting location options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ravensworth Elementary School • N. Springfield Elementary School • Kings Glen Elementary School • Kings Park Library • Lake Accotink Park • Audrey Moore Rec Center • North Springfield Elementary School <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Increased attendee awareness, study progress, and information exchange; public feedback received.</p>	<p>County Staff (support by Consultant Team)</p>	<p>First three meetings during Study milestones (2025 and 2026)</p>

Communications / Community Engagement Method	Lead	Timing
<p>Earned Media – Media Relations (PR) One of the most cost-effective ways to inform the public about the Study and shift the narrative is through the media. Study communications can maximize media relations, including use of media releases, and protective media pitching. Stories pitched to the media will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce the Study facts and timeline • Demonstrate transparency • Re-engage the public • Build confidence and excitement • Promote the survey and new Study website • Invitation to media to cover community open house meetings and other key Study milestones <p>Media Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annadale Today • Fairfax Now • Washington Post • Ravensworth Farmer • Connection Newspapers • “Greater Greater Washington” Blog • WJLA <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i> Positive coverage for the Study; website visits; and community open houses.</p>	<p>County Staff / Office of Public Affairs (OPA) (support by Consultant Team)</p>	<p>Ongoing – during study milestones</p>

5.6 Community engagement schedule

Schedule is subject to change based on Study milestones.

Engagement Activities*	2024					2025												2026		
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Community Engagement Plan / Demographic analysis		Initial Plan - V1					Updated Plan - V2													
Study Database (quarterly update)																				
Online survey		Open	Close	Report first draft	Final report															
Social media posts		Promote survey																		
Postcard mailings		Promote survey																		
Brand identity development				Final draft																
PublicInput Website*		Website live - Promote survey																		
New Study website development*						Website launch														
Community open house #1 Conceptual Lake Alternatives																				

Engagement Activities*	2024					2025												2026		
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Community open house #2 Interim Feasibility Study Progress																				
Community open house #3 Draft Feasibility Report																				
Community pop ups (5)		Promote survey								Promote community open houses										
Social media posts										Promote community open houses										
Social media graphics										Promote community open houses										

* Website copy and materials translated into three (3) languages in addition to English: Spanish, Korean and Vietnamese

Orange highlighted activities completed as of Q1 2025.

5.7 Risks and opportunities

In any study, we can anticipate risks and identify opportunities to avoid them. While not all risks can be avoided, this exercise serves to minimize overall risk to the study by identifying the most common issues and offering ways to manage them.

Risk 1: Opposing views on the need for the Study.

1. Opportunity: Lead the key audiences through a transparent and collaborative process during the feasibility study.
2. Opportunity: Share content that outlines and summarizes the process that determined the need.
3. Opportunity: Communicate early and often through appropriate channels that will reach specific/key audience groups.

Risk 2: Some stakeholders expect solutions will be immediately implemented when the feasibility study concludes.

1. Opportunity: Clearly communicate implementation timelines for each recommendation to manage expectations.
2. Opportunity: Use consistent messaging across all communication channels to increase understanding and retention of information.

Risk 3: Key audiences do not understand study analysis or recommendations.

1. Opportunity: Use communication channels that are appropriate and tailored to the key audiences that are being pursued.
2. Opportunity: Translate materials, when needed, so they are better understood by key audiences.
3. Opportunity: Create collateral and talking points that use simple, public-friendly terms to communicate complex subjects and remove industry jargon from messaging.

Risk 4: Key audiences mistrust the County and do not believe their input has been considered and incorporated. They feel ignored.

1. Opportunity: Summarize public input and invite key audiences to open house meetings to share how and why certain public input could or could not be incorporated in the Study.

6. Reporting

Once the Study is initiated, PRR will periodically produce a report assessing the effectiveness of community engagement efforts and ensuring accountability. This summary of engagement activities will include both quantitative and qualitative data, lessons learned, and recommendations for areas of improvement.

Following the conclusion of community engagement activities, PRR will draft a *Community Engagement Memorandum* for public viewing. This report will include the following sections:

Executive Summary - providing a high-level overview of the engagement activities, key findings, and outcomes.

Methodology - detailing the methods used for data collection and analysis, including any tools or frameworks employed.

Findings - determined through both quantitative data analyses and qualitative insights.

Insights and Recommendations, including actions based on the data, as well as successes, challenges, and areas for improvement.

6.1 Engagement metrics

Similarly, following the initiation of the Study, performance metrics will be monitored throughout the Study duration, ensuring outreach efforts are successful, and allowing for adjustments as needed, including achieving sufficient participation of target demographic populations and key stakeholder groups. Work will be ongoing with the Study Team to document, analyze, and evaluate the success of community engagement events, as well as website and social media interactions.

6.2 Quantitative metrics

- The number of people who have taken the online study.
- The number of people attending meetings and events.
- The number of people visiting the Study website.
- The number of stakeholder meetings, and the number of people attending.
- The number of people engaging with Study social media posts.

6.3 Qualitative metrics

- Feedback, categorized into key topics (e.g., usage, environmental sustainability, safety, implantation timeline, funding, construction costs) and by tone (positive, neutral, negative).
- Documentation showing how feedback is incorporated into decision-making processes that shape the Study's evolution.
- How well online study participation and each engagement activity achieves Study diversity and inclusivity outreach goals.
- Partnerships formed, by type and strength of relationship, with local stakeholders and community groups.
- Demonstrated public understanding of the Study process and increased trust in County decision-making.