



# Anacostia Park and Community Collaborative

## Wishes for 2017

The Anacostia Park and Community Collaborative, a broad coalition of nonprofit organizations from diverse sectors, envisions a community-led, equitable revitalization of the Anacostia River parks and adjacent neighborhoods in Wards 7 and 8, as well as a thorough cleanup of the Anacostia River. Through this process, we will foster the growth of a thriving, diverse, and sustainable community that actively accepts and takes ownership of the challenges and opportunities along this cherished water source to improve the lives and livelihoods of both current and future residents.

To get it done, APACC wants to work closely with our partners at the National Park Service and the District government, which have the primary responsibility to clean up and make key improvements in Anacostia Park, the Anacostia River, and the surrounding communities.

We will find the right mix of being persistent advocates, facilitators, and supporters when good things happen. We are confident that, working together, we can make our wishes for 2017 come true.

<h3>APACC'S WISHES FOR 2017</h3> <p>Web: <a href="http://www.anacostiaparkcommunity.org/">www.anacostiaparkcommunity.org/</a> Twitter: @anacostiarivpk</p>		
		<p><b>1</b></p> <p>The National Park Service and the District complete the toxic cleanup of Kenilworth Park.</p>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Robust park programs for east of the river children, youth, and adults are designed and implemented in Kenilworth Park.</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>DC government builds the Nature Center for kids on Kingman Island.</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>DC government cleans up the toxic chemicals on the bottom and along the shore of the Anacostia River.</p>
<p><b>5</b></p> <p>DC Council passes and Mayor signs legislation to stop bottles and other trash in the Anacostia River.</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>DC government, NPS, and the community improve access to Anacostia Park and Anacostia River.</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>DC government and NPS expand programming on the river and create a river economy.</p>

## Wishes for Kenilworth Park and Kingman Island

1. **The National Park Service and the District complete the toxic cleanup of Kenilworth Park.** Ward 7 and Ward 8 are blessed with an incredible resource in hundreds of acres of riverfront parkland managed by the National Park Service, but for 75 years they have had to put up with a toxic mess in its front yard. It is long past time to get the toxics cleaned up and the land into productive community use.
2. **Robust park programs for east of the river children, youth, and adults are designed and implemented in Kenilworth Park.** Cities around the world have created great educational, environmental, economic development, recreational, cultural, and training programs in urban parks for residents. We need to be aware of those, and encourage implementation of the best ones, in close consultation with the people who live in Wards 7 and 8. The National Park Service and the DC government must facilitate programming partnerships in the park to make this green space accessible to all #eotr residents, other DC residents, and visitors.
3. **DC government builds the Nature Center for kids on Kingman Island.** DC has controlled Kingman Island since 1998, but little has happened. Since 2005 we've been looking at giant billboards with beautiful designs for a children's Nature Center on the island, which could be a great benefit to #eotr kids. It is time to get on with it.

### Background: Kenilworth and Anacostia Park

Anacostia Park was largely built by the US Army Corps of Engineers out of Anacostia River mud, and was defined and named by Congress in 1918. The park is more than 1,200 acres, encompassing Kenilworth Park, Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, Langston Golf Course, the RFK Stadium site, ballfields, basketball and tennis courts, the skating pavilion and the Anacostia outdoor pool. Kingman Island used to be part of Anacostia Park, but was transferred to DC in 1998. Anacostia Park is a major asset in Ward 7 and Ward 8, but it is toxic in many places, and underinvested throughout. It is often described as an "urban oasis," a "breath of fresh air and a space to unwind amid a bustling city." (<https://www.nps.gov/anac/>) Unfortunately, that is not entirely accurate.

**Kenilworth Park is vacant and unused because of toxics.** In the 1930s, the Corps of Engineers built a recreational lake for east of the river residents adjacent to today's Parkside neighborhood. But in 1942, the DC government began operating a landfill and burning dump on the site, which

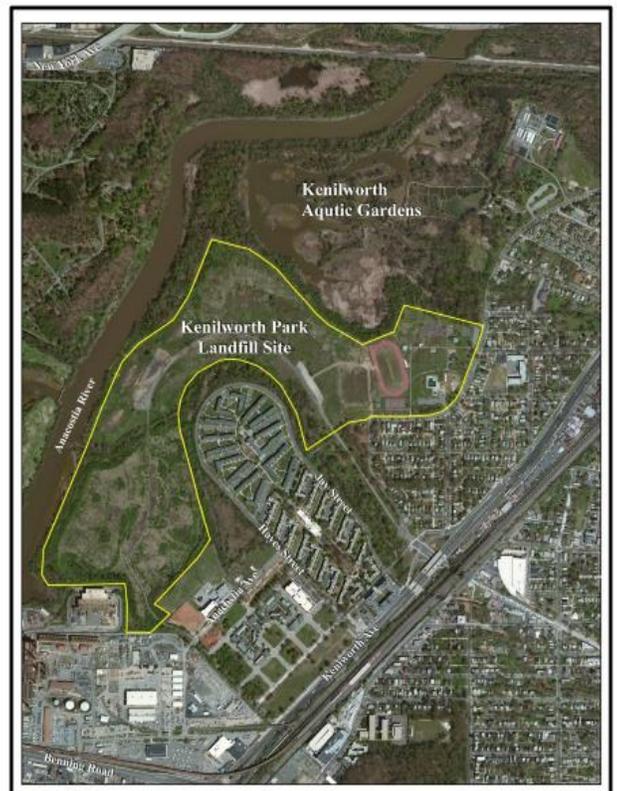


Image: National Park Service, [https://www.nps.gov/nace/parkmgmt/upload/Kenilworth-Fact-Sheet\\_August-2013\\_final.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/nace/parkmgmt/upload/Kenilworth-Fact-Sheet_August-2013_final.pdf)

endured until 7-year-old Kelvin Mock burned to death playing in the area in 1968. The dump was "capped" with two feet of soil in 1970 and planted with grass. It then became available for recreational use, including the Kenilworth-Parkside Recreation Center which closed in 2010 amid concerns that the 1970 soil cap is not enough. After years of investigations, a decision to cover the site with another two feet of soil was reached in 2013. But no action has been taken.

**Kingman Island was built by the Army Corps of Engineers in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.** For the past two decades it has been designated as National Children's Island. In 2005, Studios Architecture and Lee and Associates won a District-sponsored competition to build a state of the art Nature Center there, but the money was never allocated.

## **Wishes for Anacostia Park and Anacostia River**

4. **DC government and the National Park Service clean up the toxic chemicals on the bottom and along the shore of the Anacostia River.** The people of Ward 7 cannot have a healthy and safe river until cancer-causing and other unhealthy chemicals are removed from the river. DC is spending millions to understand exactly what is there and formulate a plan, which by law must be released by June 2018. Then under the "polluter pays" principle, those responsible for putting the toxics there have to pay to for the cleanup. They can't be allowed to stall. Similar plans are underway for shoreline toxics.
5. **DC Council passes and Mayor signs legislation to stop bottles and other trash in the Anacostia River.** Cleaning up the bottom toxics and riverside areas is necessary but not enough. The river shouldn't look like a trash transfer station. We have made progress stopping illegal dumping of trash and stopping pollution from plastic bags and Styrofoam containers. Now it is time to get the plastic and glass bottles out. DC, Montgomery, and Prince Georges Counties should pass bottle laws.
6. **DC government, NPS, and the community improve access to Anacostia Park and River.** The Anacostia adjacent to Ward 7 is a wonderland of nature. But not many Ward 7 residents ever get to see it. To achieve a vision of a welcoming, green, and thriving waterfront, communities and government together must demonstrate the benefits of the river and welcome all Ward 7 residents to visit. Great waterfront parks promote healthy lifestyles, improving mental health and encouraging exercise.
7. **DC government and NPS expand training and education on and around the river and create a river economy.** All around the world, rivers enhance education and help economies to prosper. The Anacostia could help the economy of Wards 7 and 8 by attracting visitors and creating jobs but it could also be a site for training in the new green economy for those who need jobs most.

## Background on Anacostia Park and Anacostia River

The Anacostia, its 15 miles of shoreline and adjoining 1,200 acres of green space, are polluted and underutilized.

The Anacostia River actually is an estuary: a place where fresh water and salt water (coming up on the tide all the way from the Atlantic Ocean) mix. It is six and a half miles long in DC. The river corridor within the District is comprised of more than 15 miles of shoreline, 1,200 acres of green space, some remaining institutional uses and a string of 10 adjacent neighborhoods on the river's east side in Wards 7 and 8. The Anacostia River watershed – the area that contributes fresh water and pollution to the Anacostia – encompasses 176 square miles in the District and Prince Georges and Montgomery Counties in Maryland. Only about one-sixth of the watershed is in DC.

The Anacostia used to be deep, healthy, and beautiful. Native Americans lived in villages along the river in what are now Wards 7 and 8 for thousands of years. But we have allowed it to get polluted from neglect. Now many people are so used to it being polluted that they can't imagine it any other way. But it doesn't have to be like that. It can again become a healthy, beautiful place for the people of this region – but it takes individuals to envision and work for it.



Images: Krista Schlyer, <https://kristaschlyer.com/>

## Help make the wishes come true

You can help make these wishes come true. Get involved with APACC:

- Follow us on Twitter ([@anacostiarivpk](https://twitter.com/anacostiarivpk))
- Sign up for our free newsletter featuring regular blog posts ([sign up for the blog newsletter here](#))
- Sign up for the free weekly capacity building email ([sign up for the capacity building newsletter here](#))
- Learn more about the issues and how you can take action; invite us to a community meeting. Email Susie Cambria, [susie.cambria@gmail.com](mailto:susie.cambria@gmail.com).



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