This aerial photograph of Jamestown Island was taken on August 3, 1999.

JAMESTOWN DISCOVERY CENTER PROJECT AREA

This aerial photograph shows the existing Jamestown Island development. The view is looking south with the James River in the background. The original 1607 Jamestown Fort site is located at the river's edge in the vicinity of the white dome. The master plan would remove the existing Visitor Center (the large flat roof building) and the existing access bridge. The natural landscape and the wetlands in that area would be restored. The parking area in the immediate foreground would continue to serve the Island but in a much reduced area. The proposed new Jamestown Discovery Center would generally occupy the site designated by the dot.

ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

Neck of Land Gateway to Jamestown

1. Access road off of the Parkway to the parking area.
2. Permanent parking area serves as an overlook in the off season.
3. Overflow parking area, designed for peak use and constructed of permeable surface that will allow grass to grow.
4. Walkways and trails to access the boat landing facility, restroom, and other special features.
5. Trailhead and boat landing facilities including restrooms and gateway office.
6. Boat landing facility dock on Back River to allow the docking of at least two Jamestown Island excursion shuttles.

Old Jamestown Road Marsh Walk (Pedestrian/Bicycle)

1. Recycle the old Jamestown Road trace as a pedestrian/bicycle trail that connects Neck of Land to the Back River bicycle ferry crossing.
2. The marsh walk occupies the existing paved areas of Old Jamestown Road. In some areas the marsh walk will be elevated over low wetland areas but always in the alignment of Old Jamestown Road.
3. Four marshes overlook along the trail between Neck of Land and the Back River pedestrian/bicycle ferry.
4. Small ferry dock trail terminates and overlooks Back River opposite the Jamestown Island boat landing.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail – Neck of Land Gateway to Jamestown Settlement and Jamestown Island

1. Build a bicycle trail connecting Jamestown Settlement and Jamestown Island that generally follows the Colonial Parkway right of way.
2. Separate the trail from the Colonial Parkway roadway, with design features that encourage slow speeds and appreciation of the natural and cultural resources.
3. Build bridges to accommodate the bicycle trail as it crosses Powhatan Creek and the Sandy Bay outlet into the James River.
4. The bicycle trail will comply with the current AASHTO and FHWA standards for bicycle trail design.
5. Locate the bicycle/pedestrian trail so that it can be easily linked to other trail systems that would provide access to other important historical sites such as Mainland Farm and Greenspring Plantation. Reinforce the regional planning concept to provide special "greenway" routes that would support the interpretation of the early westward movements out of Jamestown. Connect the trail to the trail along the Neck of Land Road proposed in the Historic Triangle Regional Bicycle Plan.

Entrance to Jamestown Settlement

1. Modify the existing exit from the Colonial Parkway to allow for improved access to Jamestown Settlement.
2. Provide new entrance signage and upgrade the connection with new composition of the visual landscape.

Jamestown Island Parking Area

1. Reduce the existing parking area.
2. Reorganize the remaining pavements to improve circulation pattern.
3. Create a more direct and efficient circulation for buses and recreational vehicles.
4. Preserve existing trees and create new buffers to protect viewsheds from moving and parked cars.

Boat Landing on Jamestown Island

1. Build a boat landing on Jamestown Island in the vicinity of the Old Jamestown Road trace. Allow for the new wooden dock to accommodate two excursion tour boats. Provide restrooms and a dock master's office there.
2. Provide for a simple hand operated ferry to cross at this location to carry bicycles and pedestrians between Jamestown Island and the Old Jamestown Road marsh walk terminus on Back River.
3. Construct an elevated walkway from the Jamestown Island boat landing across the wetlands and directly to the new main entrance of the Jamestown Island Discovery Center.

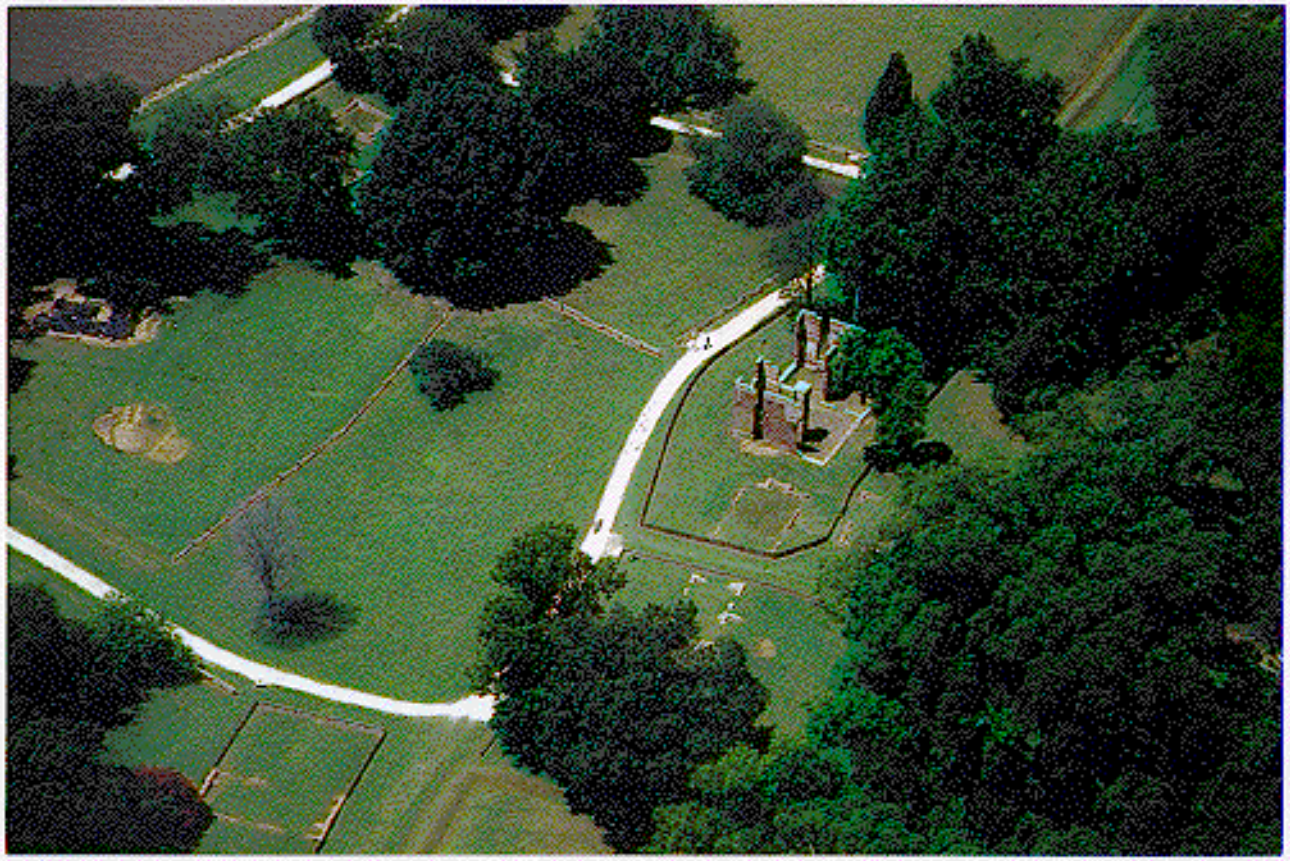
Jamestown Island Discovery Center

1. Build a new visitor facility in the vicinity of the western end of the existing parking area.
2. The new Jamestown Island Discovery Center should provide basic visitor services such as greeting the public, restrooms, the Jamestown Island museum store, interpretive space, and lobby space. The building should also include educational space. The archeological collection of the APVA and NPS will be housed in this structure out of harm's way from flooding.
3. Link the new Jamestown Island Discovery Center to the historic 1607 fort and New Towne site with a new pedestrian bridge that passes over and through the existing wetlands and swamp areas, allowing for places for visitors to pause to understand the adventure and the extreme remoteness of early Jamestown.
4. Coordinate the development of the Jamestown Island Discovery Center with the recently refurbished Yeardley House and construct a new archeological field support facility at the site of the existing shed. The aggregate square footage for the Jamestown Island Discovery Center will be approximately 55,000 square feet.
5. Demolish the existing visitor center, the approach bridge and walkway across the Tar and Pitch swamp.
6. Restore the base and landscape setting of the 1907 monument.

Jamestown Island Interpretation

1. Develop a clear and simple interpretation of the original 1607 Jamestown Fort site, New Towne, the ancient planters farm, and other important sites on the Island.
2. Carefully develop the interpretive concept for Jamestown's new town site and its many layers of cultural landscape. Reconfigure the cultural landscape so that it can be easily read and understood by visitors. The interpretative subjects should include the significant physical changes to the Island's shoreline. The rising waters over four centuries have created new wetlands.
3. Develop interpretive media that reflect current scholarship.
4. Devise a creative system for interpreting the State House sites.

This aerial photograph shows the new town site as it exists today. The large brick ruin is the Ambler House. The master plan envisions a creative on-site interpretation of extensive historic landscape.



Hospitality Triangle

1. Convert the Dale House into a café for serving "lite fare" lunches and refreshments. Utilize the existing porch and river vistas to provide visitors a cool resting place.
2. Provide a simple shelter at the east end of the new town site that can afford a vending location. This could be incorporated on the ground level of a small viewing platform so that the New Towne can be better visualized in its entirety.
3. Include space for a refreshment/vending area in the new Jamestown Island Discovery Center.

The Dale House above commands a beautiful view of the James River and benefits from the prevailing southwest breeze in the summer time.