

Aurora Hills

Aurora Hills is neighborhood near Crystal City and Pentagon City. Ball fields, ball courts, a very short trail, and a combination Library/Fire Station are the central pieces of a recreation center there. The area is convenient to those working in the nearby Crystal City high rises. Also nearby, are a growing number of enjoyable restaurants. Aurora Hills is in Arlington but close enough to Alexandria, to use not only the Four Mile Run Trail, but also the Wayne F. Anderson Trail, which parallels on the other side of Four Mile Run. It's also close to National Airport and the Pentagon so that loops involving the Mt. Vernon Trail can be made.

Getting There

From Northern Fairfax County, VA or Montgomery County, MD

Exit the Capital Beltway onto Rte. I-66, headed east. If you're coming from Montgomery County or the northernmost parts of Fairfax County, you will have to use the Washington and Dulles Access Expressway for 2.7 miles to get onto Rte. I-66; it's a left exit off the beltway. After 9.8 or 7.7 miles on Rte. I-66 respectively, just after the tunnel at Rosslyn and before crossing into Washington D.C., exit right, onto Rte. 110. Turn right after 2.2 miles at the I-395 interchange as if you were taking I-395 north into D.C. While still on the cloverleaf, bear left onto Army Navy Dr. After only 0.35 miles, turn left onto Hayes St. After passing the Fashion Center Mall on your right, and after passing 15th Street, turn right into the Aurora Hills Library and Recreation Center parking lot. Turn right and park near the paved trail head on the left.

From Southern Fairfax County, VA

Exit the Capitol Beltway, I-95, northbound onto Henry G. Shirley Highway (I-395). After approximately 7.5 miles, exit toward Rte. 27. Stay in the right most lanes following signs to Pentagon City and Hayes St. At the end of the exit ramp, go straight at the stop light. Pass the Fashion Center Mall on your right, and then 15th Street. Turn right into the Aurora Hills Library and Recreation Center parking lot. Turn right and park near the paved trail head on the left.

From Prince Georges County, MD

Use the Capital Beltway (I-95), to get to Rte. 50 west or I-295 north. From either, take the westbound Southeast Freeway (I-395) after 11 miles or approximately 6 miles respectively. Follow the Southeast Freeway across the river into Virginia. Do not use the express lanes. Stay in the left lane on the bridge over the Potomac River. After the bridge, make the left exit to Rte. 1, into Crystal City. Exit the Rte. 1 freeway on the right at 15th Street, turning right at the stop light. After three blocks, turn left on 15th Street. Turn right into the Aurora Hills Library and Recreation Center parking lot. Turn right and park near the paved trail head on the left.

By Metro Rail

Ride metro rail's Blue or Yellow lines to the Pentagon City station. Exit onto Hayes Street and head south toward 15th Street. As you cross 15th Street, walk through the parking lot on the right until you see the paved trail head on the right. The distance from the station is 0.23 miles.

Area Routes

Around Aurora Hills (7.15 or 7.55 miles, VI)

This circumnavigation of the Crystal City and Pentagon City takes advantage of several trails including the Mt. Vernon Trail and the Four Mile Run Trail. Begin by going through the park. The short trail ends after less than a quarter mile. Start the loop using Army Navy Dr. to go around Arlington Ridge (a hill). Army Navy Dr. is not very aesthetically pleasing. It parallels I-395, passes an entrance to Army Navy Country Club, but then connects with another short trail that parallels Long Branch (a creek). After the trail, you must cross S. Glebe Rd. at a traffic light, but shortly after reaching the Four Mile Run Trail, you have an option to cross into Alexandria and use the Wayne F. Anderson Trail, on the other side of Four Mile Run. Both trails parallel Four Mile Run and join near Jefferson Davis Hwy, Rte 1. The Wayne F. Anderson Trail passes a small wetland area and some ball fields. The Four Mile Run Trail stays closer to the water, but passes a water treatment plant. After both routes are joined, cross under the bridges for the highway, the railroads, the metro, and the George Washington Parkway before reaching the Mt. Vernon Trail. People often fish under the bridges and foot or bicycle traffic is frequent on weekends, but you may feel the need to go under the bridges with others for safety reasons. On the Mt. Vernon Trail, you can see some of the jets in the airport at first but as you head north, paralleling the George Washington Parkway, the airport terminal and a hill obstruct the view. Carefully cross a few exit ramps before turning off on a side trail to return to Crystal City. In the year 2000, new bridges were added over the worst of the airport exit/entrance ramps. On the side trail, a short tunnel takes you from the airport under the roads and railroad, putting you on Crystal Dr., near the Virginia Railway Express commuter railway station. Follow along Crystal Dr. through Crystal City, passing the water park, and complete the loop on Army Navy Dr.

Pentagon (5.4 miles, IV)

A lot of Washington area runners work in the Department of Defense. The Marine Corps Marathon and the Army Ten-Miler (open to all) are two of the areas most popular races. Small crowds can be seen filling the trails before, during, and after work hours around the Pentagon. On weekends, the Pentagon's North Parking Lot is an informal gathering place for runners cyclists and in-line skaters.

This route takes the Mt. Vernon Trail past Gravelly Point where commercial jets roar only 200-300 feet overhead as they land or take-off at National Airport. Passing under the 14th Street Bridges along the Potomac River, follow the Mt. Vernon Trail over another bridge onto Columbia Island (actually part of the District of Columbia) to the Navy Merchant Marine Memorial in Lady Bird Johnson Park. Cross the George Washington Parkway (difficult during commuting hours) to the Lyndon B. Johnson Memorial Grove. Pine trees and azaleas grace the grounds before a bridge allows you to cross back over the Boundary Channel into Virginia at the Pentagon North Parking Lot. Go up to the River Entrance of the Pentagon, then counter-clockwise around it. Upon reaching the South Parking lot, circle around the lot, similar to the route of the Marine Corp Marathon, but turn right to go through the tunnel (no cycling in the tunnel) under Shirley Highway, Rte. I-395. Return on Hayes St. to the parking at Aurora Hills.

Nearby and Connecting Zones

Iwo Jima Memorial
Thomas Jefferson Community Center
Daingerfield Island

Cameron Run Regional Park
East Potomac Park & The Mall

What to do Afterward

Food and Drink

Portofino's - 703 979-8200
Café Italia - 703 521-2565
Top Thai Restaurant - 703 521-1305
Cha Cha's Seafood Bistro - 703 979-7676

Entertainment and Edification

Arlington Historical Society - 1805 S Arlington Ridge Rd. - 703 892-4204
Gunston Theatres One and Two - 703 228-6960
Birchmere - live folk music just over the Alexandria border - 703 549-5919
Washington Shakespeare Company - 703 418-4807
Gravelly Point - view the airplanes take-off and land at the airport

Around Aurora Hills

Distance: 7.15 or 7.55 miles

Rating: VI; paved trails and street sidewalks

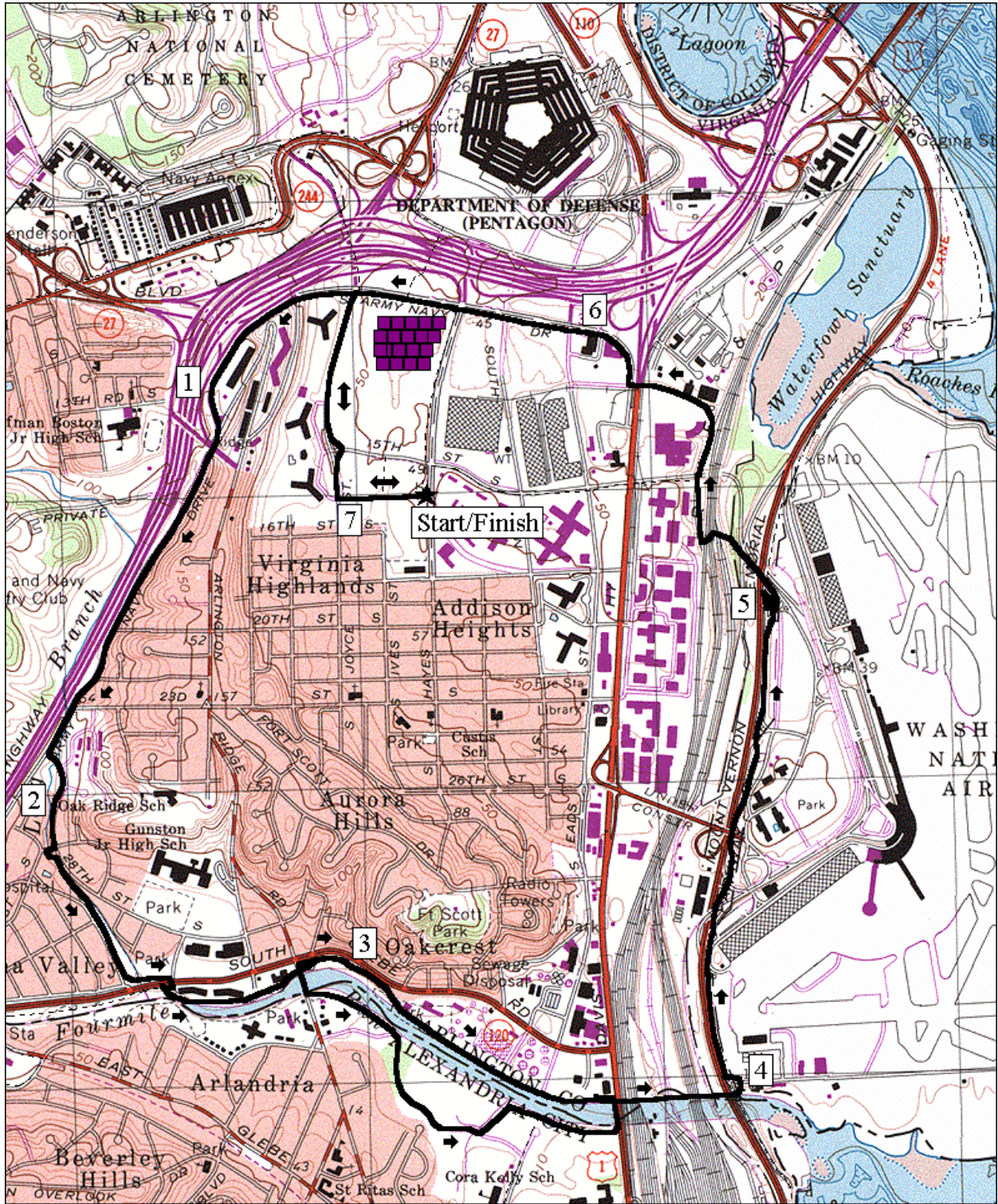
7.15 Mile Route

	BR 2.95 trail X (triangle); after underpass
0.0 take the trail through the park	BR 3.1 at split in trail; L is to S Glebe Rd 3.55 Eads Rd on L
CR 0.2 Joyce St	R 3.65 at T; go under bridges along water >*
BL 0.35 at 15 th St X; to stay on Joyce St	BR 4.0 Mt Vernon Trail
L 0.65 Army Navy Dr (before I-395 underpass)	L 5.05 trail X on L to Crystal City after bridge for trail over entrance ramp
0.8 Lynn St on L	
CL 1.9 unmarked road before Fraser Park; becomes 28 th St	R 5.35 Crystal Dr; Crystal Water Park 5.4 VRE commuter station on R 5.5 15 th St on L
R/L 2.1 R on 26 th St; L into parking for pool after crossing creek; trail at 2.15	5.65 road bends L and becomes 12 th St
L 2.25 Troy St	CR 5.85 Dale St; becomes Army Navy Dr
2.3 trail X to wooden bridge on L	6.3 Hayes St; shopping mall 6.4 trail to tunnel to Pentagon on R
L 2.5 S Glebe Rd; cross creek on bridge	L 6.5 Joyce St
UR 2.55 cross S Glebe Rd at TL for Meade St; R again after crossing	BR 6.85 at 15 th St to stay on Joyce St
UL 2.6 onto the Four Mile Run Trail >*	L 7.0 trail head on L into park 7.15 parking

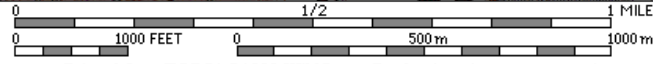
*7.55 Mile Route

	3.75 Commonwealth Ave on R
L 2.95 trail X (triangle); after underpass	L 3.95 Jeff Davis Hwy, Rte 1
L 3.0 Mt Vernon Ave; bridge over creek	L 4.0 trail on L after bridge
L 3.05 Wayne F Anderson Trail head 3.25 trail X on R 3.6 bridge; wildlife sanctuary on L	UL 4.05 Four Mile Run Trail (pickup cues at mile 4.0 on 7.15 mile route)

Around Aurora Hills



MN ↑ TN
10½°



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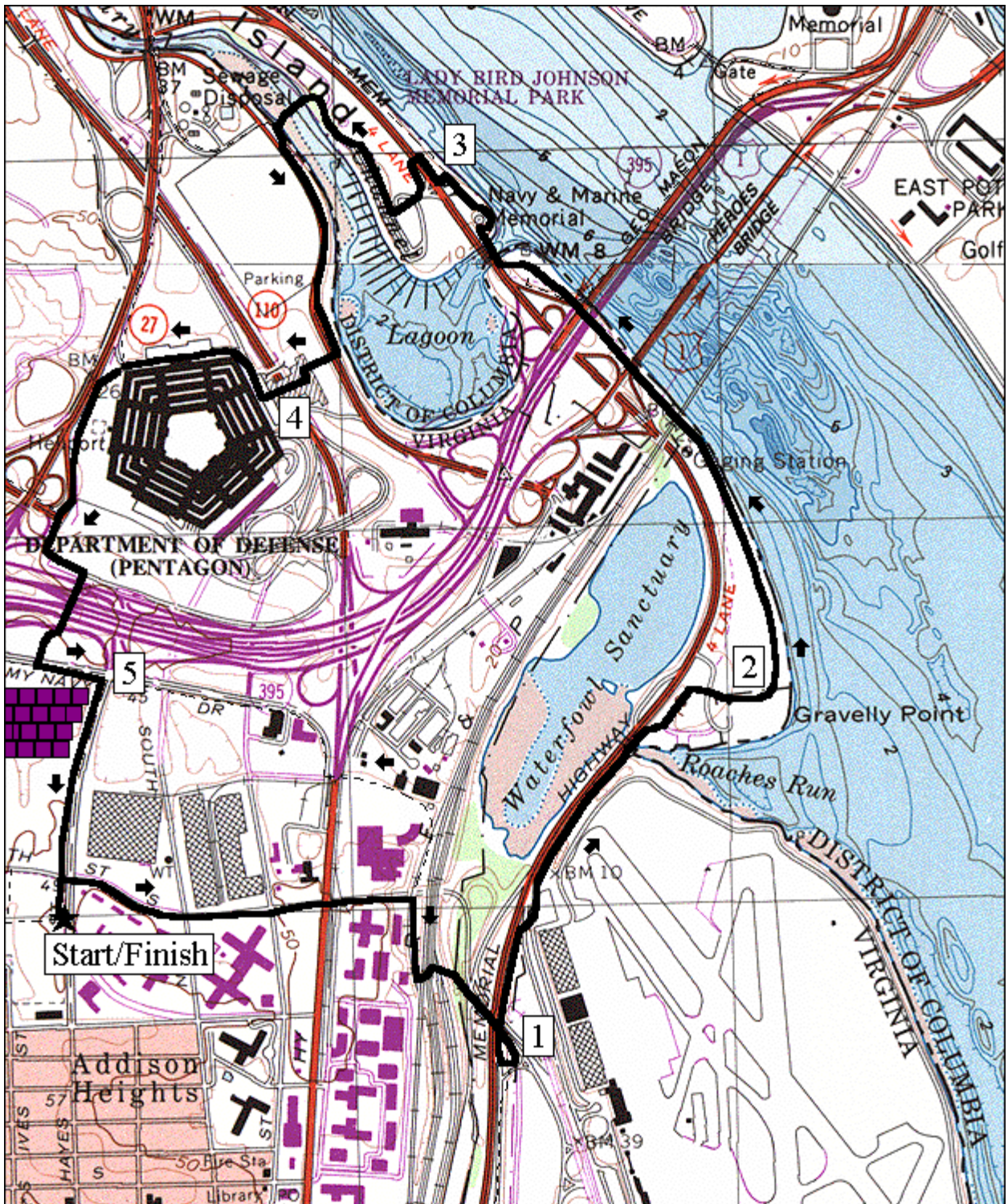
Pentagon

Distance: 5.4 miles

Rating: IV; paved trails and sidewalks and Pentagon parking lots

- | | | | | |
|----------|---|-----|------|---|
| 0.0 | head north through the parking lot toward 15 th St | L | 3.55 | after bridge to Pentagon N Parking; bear L at parking (water); use grass |
| R 0.1 | 15 th St | R | 3.9 | cross road before the flag pole to the stairs; sign Pentagon River Entrance |
| 0.55 | underpass Jeff Davis Hwy, Rte 1 | | | |
| CR 0.7 | Crystal Dr | L/R | 3.95 | up the stairs and across the courtyard |
| 0.75 | VRE commuter station on L | | | |
| L 0.85 | connector trail (tunnel) to the Mt Vernon Trail; Crystal Water Park | R | 4.05 | Pentagon River Entrance; begin counter clockwise around the Pentagon |
| BL 1.1 | Mt Vernon Trail | BL | 4.35 | gate; continue around the Pentagon along Rte 27 |
| 1.35 | Mile Marker 14 on bridge over airport exit ramp | | | |
| 1.85 | entrance driveway for Gravelly Point | R | 4.55 | cross the exit ramp to the sidewalk; go counter-clockwise around the Pentagon South parking lot |
| 2.45 | Mile Marker 15 | | | |
| 2.75 | trail X on L to 14 th St Bridge | | 4.6 | Columbia Pike on R |
| 2.85 | bridge over Boundary Channel; trail X on L (cuts short 0.06 miles) | | | |
| L 3.05 | Navy Merch Marine Mem parking | R | 4.75 | tunnel under I-395; no cycling |
| R/L 3.05 | along GW Parkway to xwalk | BR | 4.85 | after the tunnel to the xwalk & TL |
| L/R 3.1 | cross GW Parkway (!) into Lyndon B Johnson Memorial Grove Park | CL | 4.9 | Army Navy Dr; shopping mall |
| R 3.2 | through parking lot to trail head | R | 5.0 | Hayes St |
| | | | 5.2 | Pentagon City metro station |
| L 3.35 | at T (unmarked)(water at 3.45) | | 5.35 | cross 15 th St into parking lot |
| 3.5 | begin bridge over Boundary Channel | | 5.4 | parking lot trail head on R |

Pentagon



MN ↗ TN
10½°

