



# Caneel Bay Area Redevelopment and Management Plan

February 2022

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## Civic Engagement Presentation



Aerial image of the Caneel Bay Area





# Agenda

- Background
- Purpose and Need
- Preliminary Alternatives
- Environmental Issues
- How to Comment



Overlook looking down to Caneel Bay





# Significance



Taino zemi pottery artifact found on St. John



Sugar cane tool



Traditional West Indian fish trap



Post-colonial era cup found on St. John



A Moko Jumbie dancer (traditional African stilt dancer), Annaberg Plantation



Protected coral at Virgin Islands NP





# Background

- 1983** Caneel Bay Resort 150-acres donated subject to a Retained Use Estate Indenture Agreement (RUE) through September 30, 2023
- 2010** Public Law 11-261 allows NPS to enter into a long-term lease with current operators of the RUE with stipulations
- 2012** Caneel Bay Historic District – draft nomination completed with 109 contributing buildings/structures
- 2012** Level 1 Environmental Site Assessment – due diligence survey performed which identified concerns



Children Riding Native Burros at Caneel Bay Plantation, St. John, Virgin Islands, U.S.A.

Hibbs Photo



Caneel Bay plantation ruins with visitors

Ruins at Caneel Bay





Photo Credit: AB Force News Collection/Alamy Stock Photo  
Aerial photographs of buildings damaged by the 2017 hurricanes at Caneel Bay.



Photo Credit: AB Force News Collection/Alamy Stock Photo  
Aerial photographs of buildings damaged by the 2017 hurricanes at Caneel Bay

# Background

- 2013** Environmental Assessment – Preferred Alternatives: relinquishment of the remaining RUE term and award long-term lease to RUE owner under P.L. 111-261
- 2014** Level 2 Environmental Site Assessment – initial soil and groundwater samples analyzed
- 2017** Removal Site Evaluation Report – confirmed hazardous substances posed a potential threat and removal action was warranted
- 2017** Hurricane Irma and Maria – resort suffered severe damage from two Category 5 hurricanes





# Public Feedback in April-May 2021

## WHAT WE ASKED

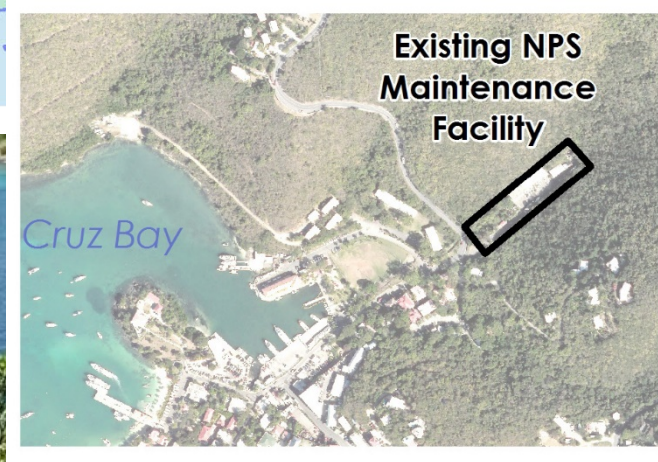
1. What type of connection have you had with Caneel Bay?
2. What are your thoughts on preserving the history and culture of Caneel Bay and St. John?
3. What have been its greatest challenges?
4. How can the National Park Service improve operations at Caneel Bay for the 21st century?

## WHAT WE HEARD

- The cultural significance of the area
- The importance of access by residents and visitors
- The deep affection for the Caneel Bay area
- Caneel Bay's contributions to the local economy
- Community stewardship
- Rebuilding using sustainable and resilient practices
- Protection of the resources



# Study Area







# Purpose

To identify a sustainable and resilient redevelopment strategy for the Caneel Bay area that preserves and protects its significant cultural and natural resources, while providing a range of visitor experiences, including overnight and day use opportunities, and promotes economic activities that integrate the values and history of the community of St. John.



A photograph of visitors swimming and kayaking at Honeymoon Beach.





# Purpose

To identify a **sustainable** and **resilient** redevelopment strategy for the Caneel Bay area that preserves and protects its significant **cultural and natural resources**, while providing a range of **visitor experiences**, including overnight and day use opportunities, and promotes **economic activities** that integrate the **values and history of the community of St. John**.



A photograph of visitors swimming and kayaking at Honeymoon Beach.





# Need

- To address ongoing cultural and natural resource impacts associated with Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017
- To integrate Caneel Bay into the overall management of Virgin Islands National Park
- Make the area accessible and welcoming to the local community, guests, and visitors once the RUE expires in September 2023.







# Objectives

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- Establish a NPS experience
- Provide for economic opportunities
- Preserve and protect natural, cultural, and marine resources while blending with the landscape as envisioned by Laurance Rockefeller
- Integrate the current RUE footprint into the park



Caneel Bay showing green vegetation with sun setting in the background.





# Preliminary Alternatives

Noncommercial vs Commercial

- No-Action
- Alternative A- Preliminary Proposed Action
- Alternative B
- Alternative C







# No-Action Alternative

- No issuance of any lease or concession contract
- Minimally restore the site to allow for safe access by visitors through existing roads and trails, including safe access to beaches
- Identify a management approach (such as stabilization of historic resources) to address the damage to resources from the 2017 hurricanes and deferred maintenance
- Monitor natural and cultural resources such as sea turtles, shorebirds, coral, historic ruins, and archeological sites, as necessary and required by law







Artifacts from Turtle Point, St John



Photograph at dusk of sailboats along the beach of Caneel Bay

## Elements Common to Action Alternatives

- Greater Public Access
- Cultural and Natural Resources Protection
- Context Sensitive Redevelopment
- Resort Guest Experience Commensurate with the Site History

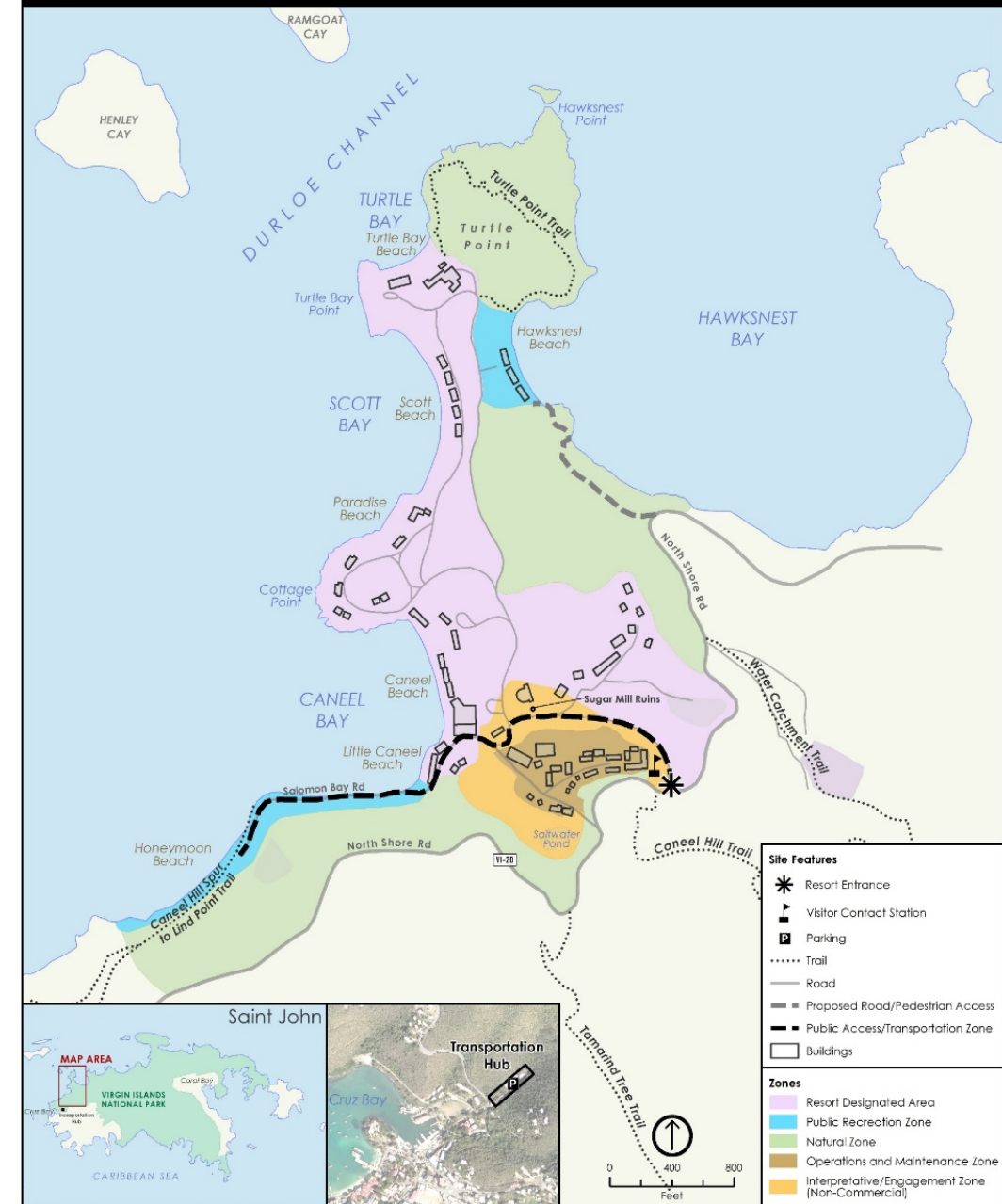




# Alternative A- Preliminary Proposed Action

## The Resort Designated Zone

- Caneel Bay Beach, Scott Beach, Paradise Beach, and Turtle Point Beach would be designated for resort guest use and guest services would be the responsibility of the resort developer/operator at these beaches
- Scott Beach cottages would be removed or redesigned due to their location in the floodplain. Guest rooms may be relocated to a more resilient location within the existing disturbed footprint of the resort
- The existing pier at Caneel Bay would be available for resort use as well as NPS use



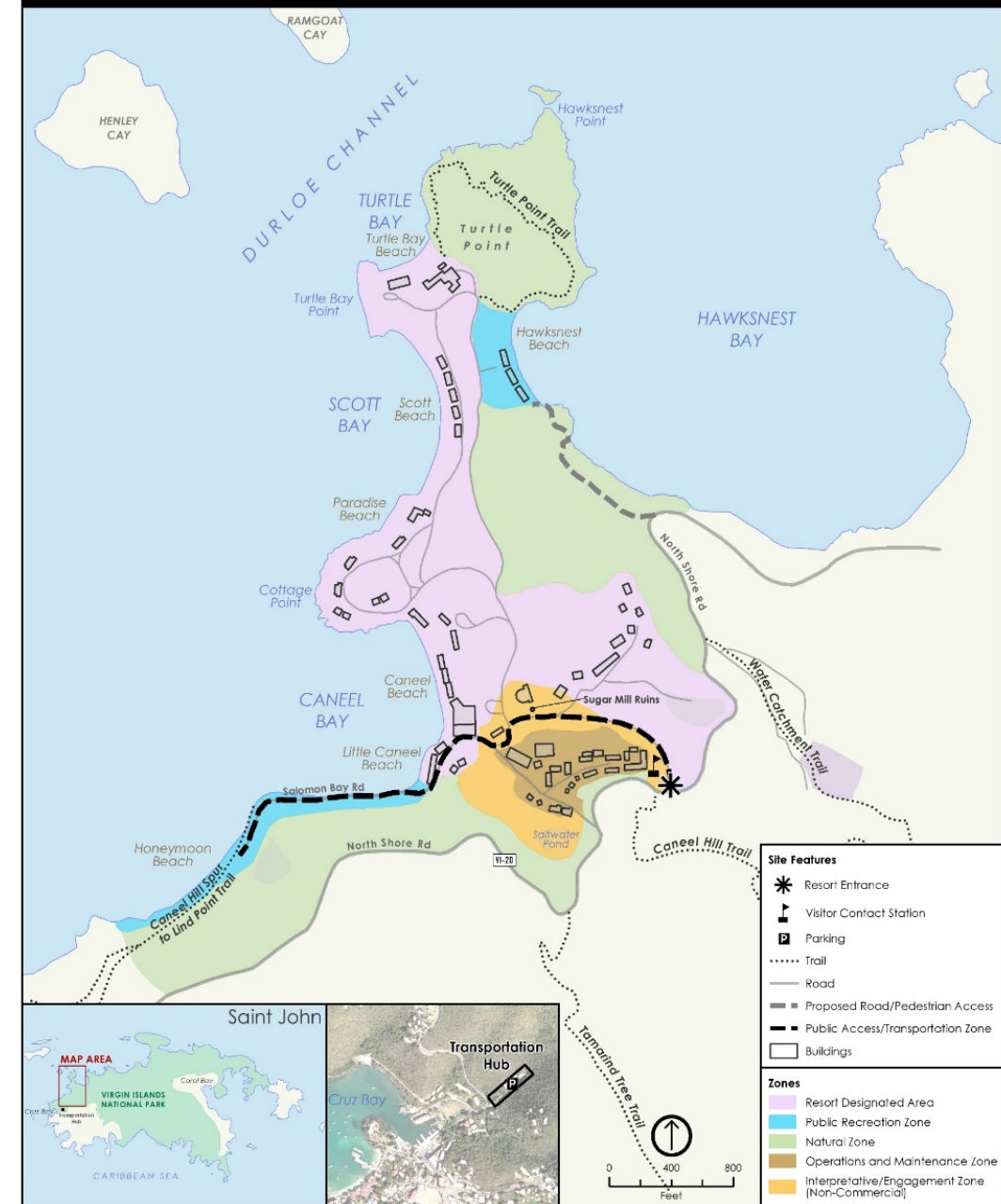




# Alternative A

## Public Recreation Zone

- Honeymoon and Hawksnest Beaches would be available for public use and each area would have opportunities for added visitor services
- The NPS would provide a mid-range overnight experience at Hawksnest Beach
- The NPS would connect trail systems to allow visitors to access the Caneel Bay area from Cruz Bay and other areas







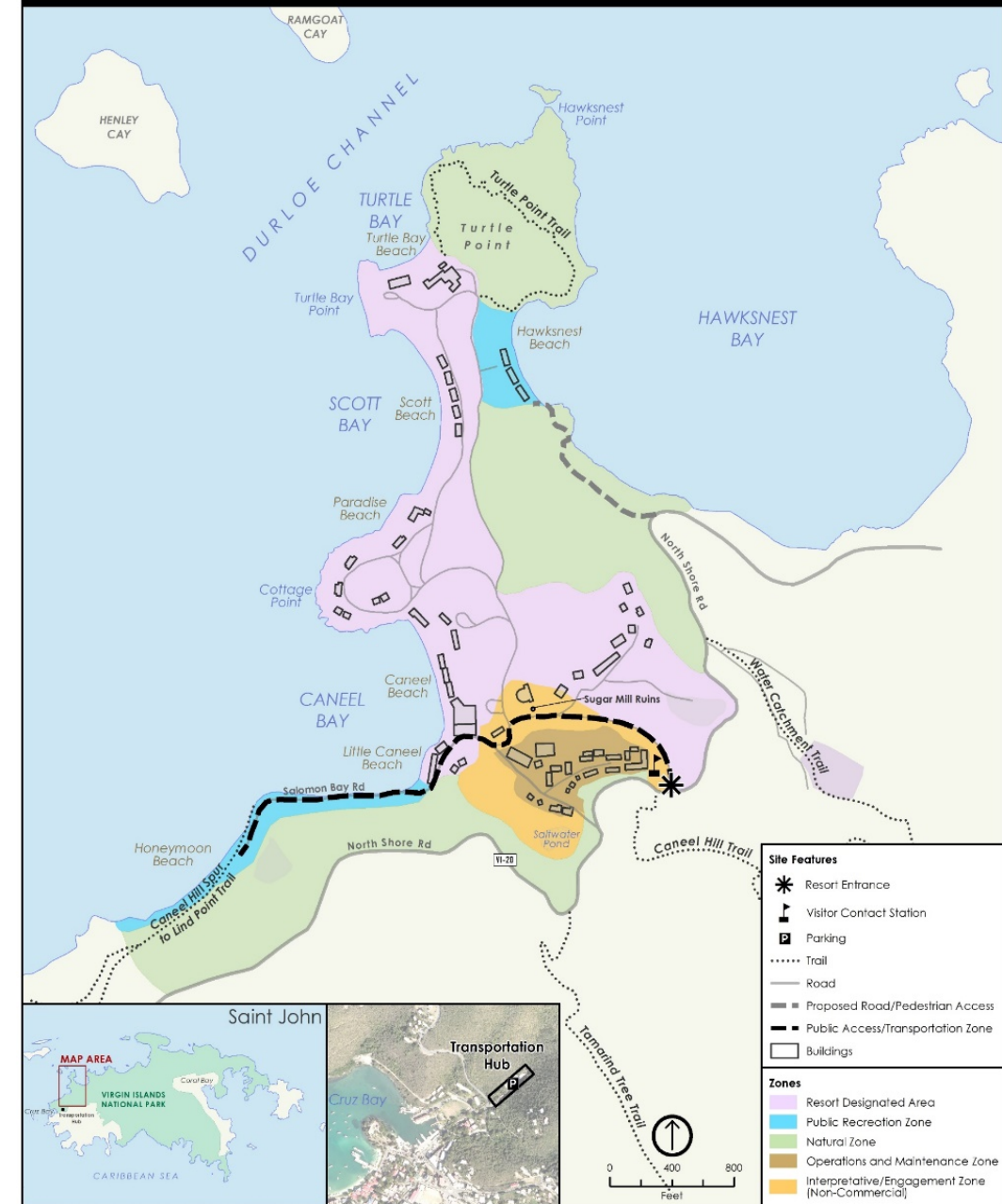
# Alternative A

## Natural Zone

- Undeveloped, remains in its natural state
- Trail and Access maintenance

## Operations and Maintenance Zone

- New Park maintenance facility at Caneel Bay
- Centralized location for park operations and offers efficiencies
- Existing NPS maintenance facility would be repurposed as a transportation hub



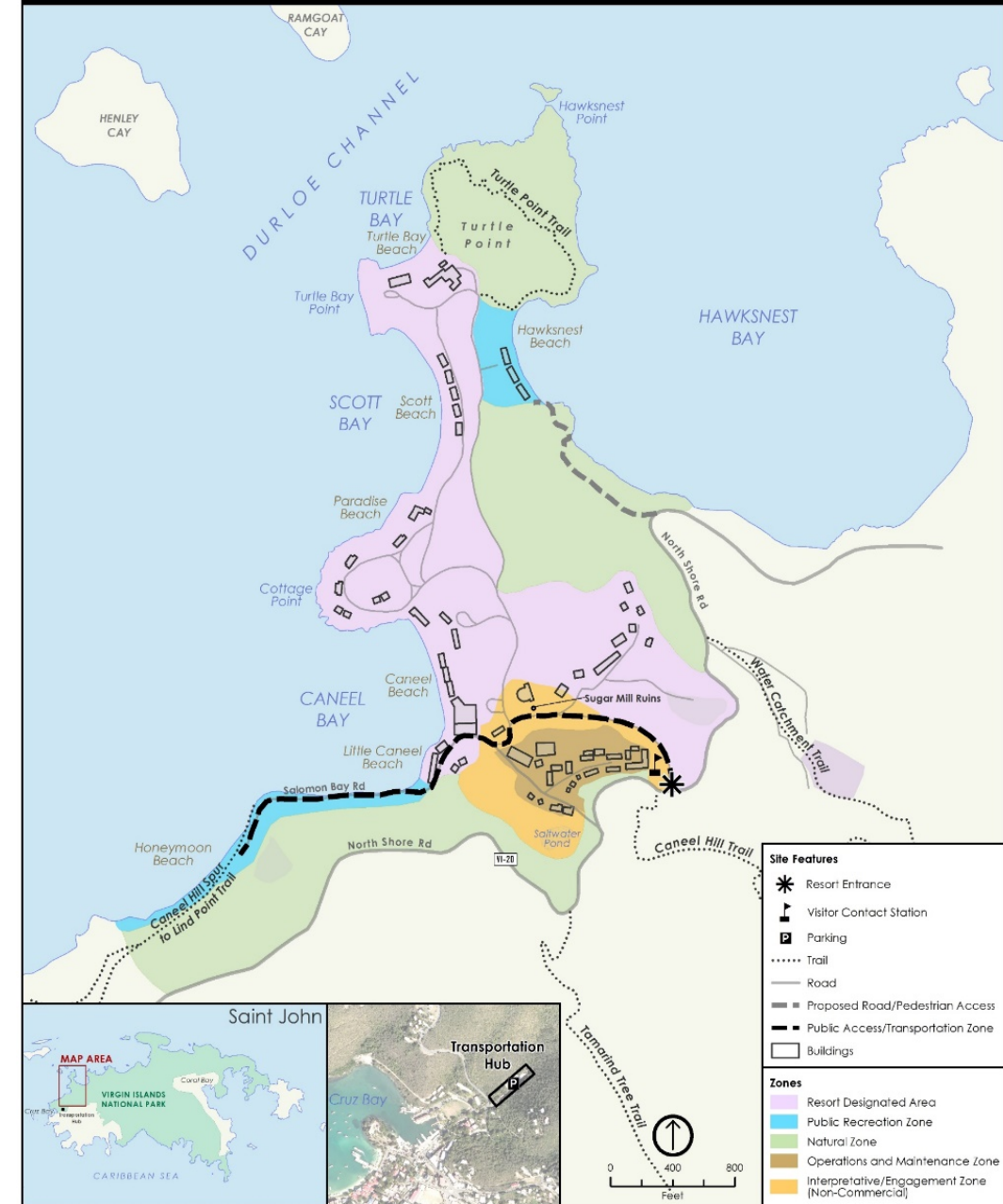




# Alternative A

## Interpretative and Engagement Zone

- Interpretive experience for visitors at sites such as the Sugar Mill ruins and other known archeological resources
- Potential for NPS Contact Station on site
- Allows space for an organization to design, fund, construct, maintain and manage a community space such as an amphitheater, museum, or cultural center

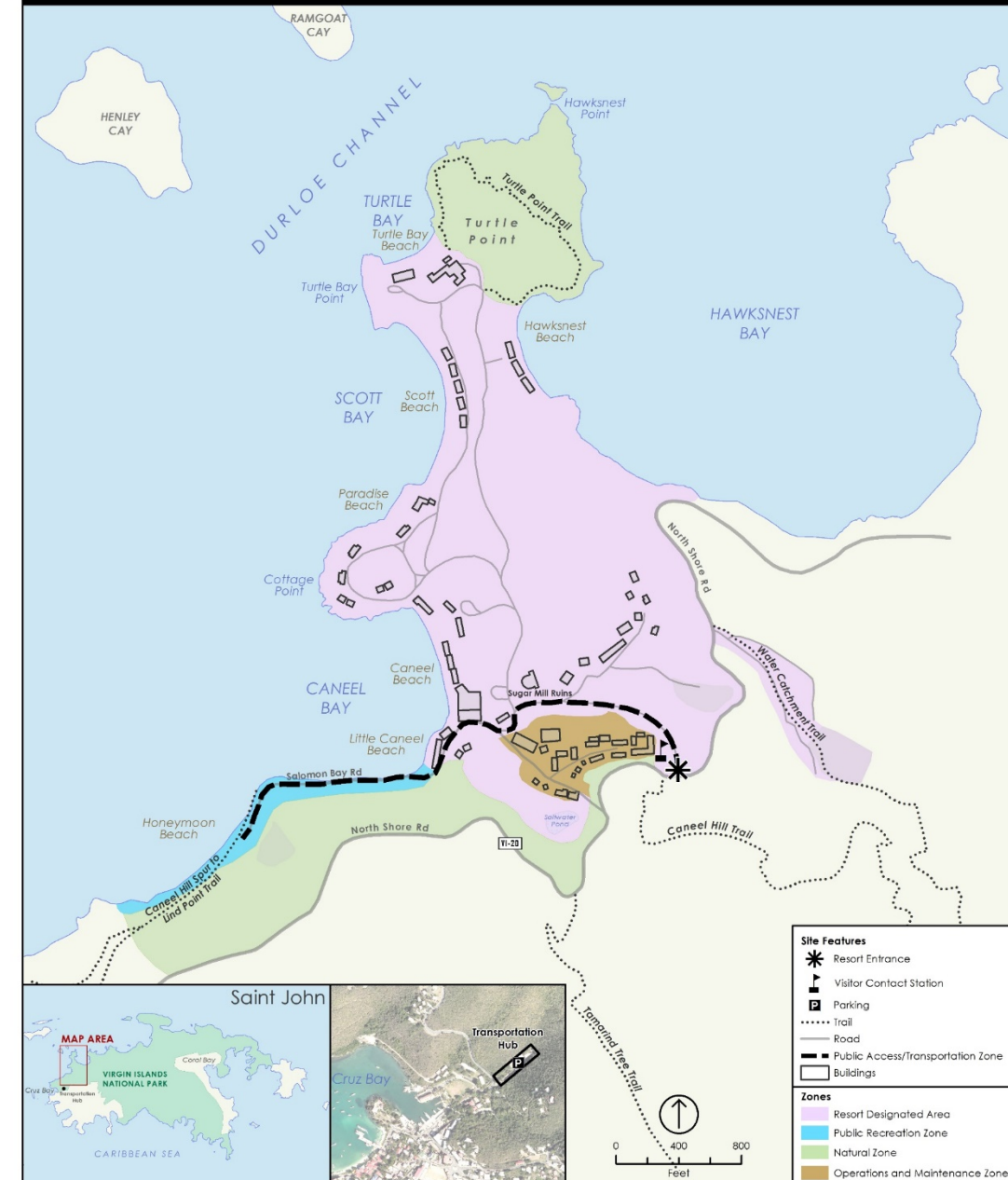






# Alternative B

- Similar management approach to Alternative A, except the area for the resort would be expanded
- Resort developer/operator would be responsible for the management of Hawksnest Beach area, including the Hawksnest Beach cottages, and access to the site would be provided through the resort in lieu of a new road
- NPS may construct a new maintenance area as described in Alternative A
- Allows space for a community space

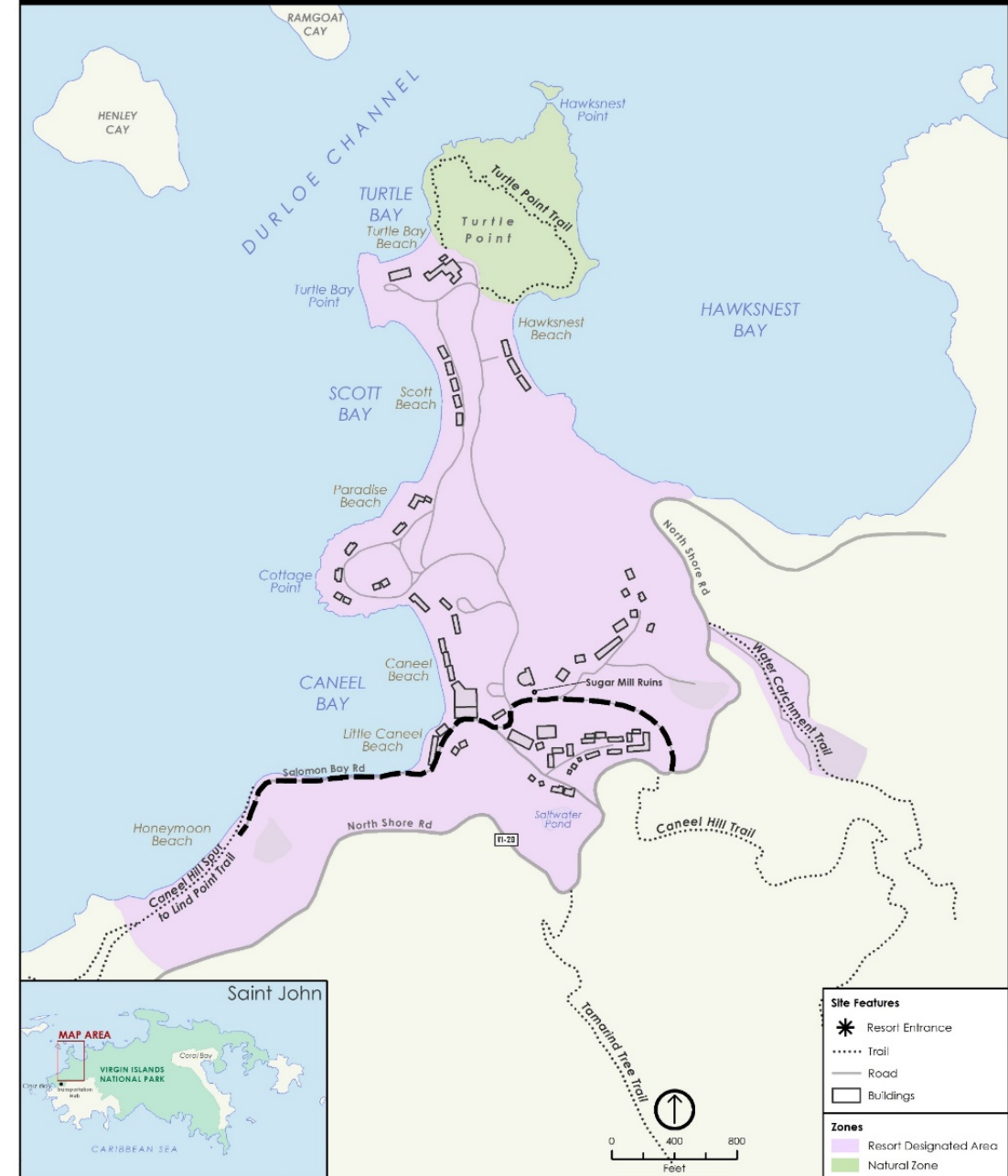






# Alternative C

- Resort designated area would be similar to the historic boundaries of the RUE and would include all resort zone elements identified in Alternative A.
- A new maintenance facility and new transportation hub would be separate from the Caneel Bay area redevelopment planning.
- The NPS would not provide a community space at the Caneel Bay area.







# Potential Environmental Issues








# What Is Expected In 3-5 Years

**Today**



Planning Land Use Alternatives

**Winter 2022**




Evaluating Impacts of Alternatives and Decision on Action or No Action

**Winter 2022- Summer 2023**




Request for Proposals on Lease and/or Concessions, if Action Alternative is Selected

**Fall 2023-Summer 2024**



Design of Resort and Other Visitor Services

**Winter 2024- 2026**



Construction and Operation of Facilities





# Next Steps

## CANEEL BAY REDEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE

■ Redevelopment and Management Plan Civic Engagement/Comment Period Begins	January 18, 2022
■ Redevelopment and Management Plan Virtual Public Meeting	February 8, 2022
■ Redevelopment and Management Plan Comment Period Closes	February 17, 2022
■ EE/CA Addendum Report-- 45 Day Public Comment Period	April/ May 2022
■ EE/CA Addendum Final Report	July 2022
■ EE/CA NPS Action Memorandum	September 2022
■ Redevelopment and Management Plan/EA Release – 30 Day Public Comment Period	Fall 2022
■ Redevelopment and Management Plan Finding of No Significant Impact	Winter 2022





As you prepare your comments, consider:



The clarity of our purpose, need, and objectives



Feedback on our conceptual range of alternatives



What experiences, activities, and services should be available at the site



Feedback on the list of significant issues we plan to analyze







# How to Comment?



Submit comments electronically at:

<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/CaneelBayRedevelopment>



Mail or hand-deliver written comments to the park headquarters:

Caneel Bay Redevelopment/Management Plan  
Superintendent  
1300 Cruz Bay Creek  
St. John, VI 00830

**Comments must be received no later than February 17, 2022**





# How to Comment?

At <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/CaneelBayRedevelopment>

Step 1- Click 'Open for Comment'

Step 2- Click the newsletter

Step 3- Click 'Comment Now'

Step 4- Comment!



Thank You!

