



PASSENGER FAST FERRY SERVICE IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

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COG Board of Directors
October 14, 2026



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

Background and Purpose

- Passenger fast ferry service in the National Capital Region has been discussed and studied many times since 2000
- Recent development along the waterfront, as well as technological innovation in watercraft vehicles, have renewed interest in a ferry service in the region, including a current study by the DC Mobility Innovation District
- Purpose of this briefing is to apprise the board on the recent developments including a renewed interest by the private sector in this mode of transportation.

Prior Fast Ferry Studies in the National Capital Region

- Potomac Fast Passenger Ferry Business Plan, Phase 1 and 2 – Northern Virginia Regional Commission - NVRC (2023)
- M-495 Commuter Fast Ferry | Project Development Phase – NVRC (2019)
- Market Analysis for Commuter Ferry Service on the Occoquan, Potomac, & Anacostia Rivers – NVRC (2015)
- Prince William County Service Study and Route Proving Exercise – NVRC (2009)
- Ferry Feasibility Study – VDOT (2000)

Potomac Fast Passenger Ferry Business Plan, Phase 1 and 2 – NVRC (2023)

- A decade-plus history of studies has offered evidence that service is feasible, and a substantial and competitive potential market exists for commuter ferry service in the region
- Private sector is interested but continues to wait for more signs of support from the public sector in the region before moving ahead
- Highlights several key opportunities for the realization of a fast passenger commuter ferry: federal grant funding, recent development along waterfront areas, and public-private partnerships in cooperation with the BIDs
- Barriers to implementing service were wake/speed restrictions (that made ferry a less competitive alternative), public funding for operations and for capital facilities, and having a governance model and public sector champion

DC MOBILITY INNOVATION DISTRICT PRESENTS

Unlocking DC's Waterways

Electric Hydrofoil Water Transit for the Nation's Capital

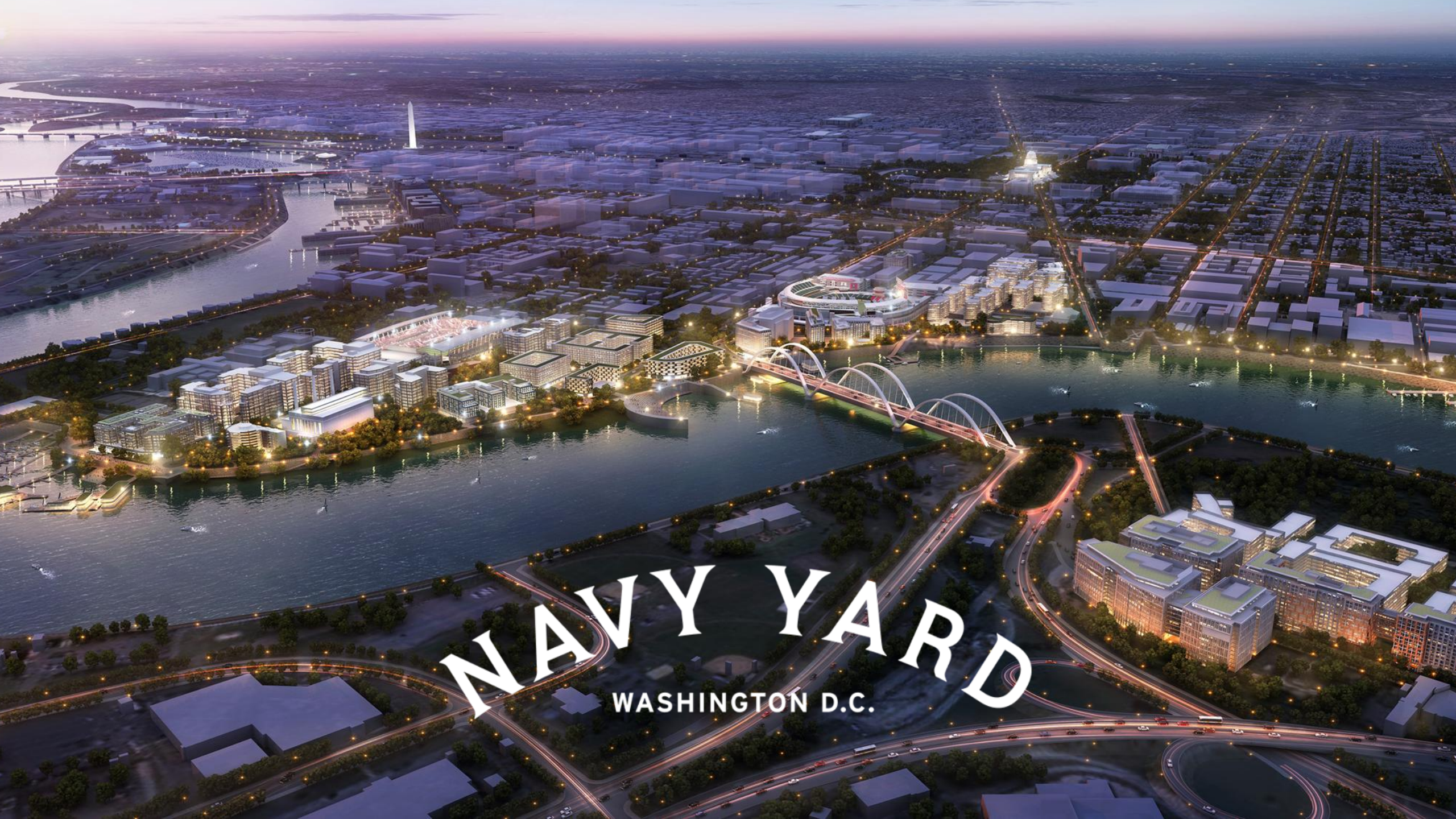
BRIEFING
TO THE
COG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

October 14, 2026



DC MID

The Mobility Innovation District



NAVY YARD

WASHINGTON D.C.



swbid

Southwest
Business
Improvement
District



GEORGETOWN ★ **DC**
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Why bring hydrofoil to the DMV?

Regulations

Large portions of our waterways have “no-wake” zones.

Speed limits

In these zones, powered boats can only travel up to 6 mph.

Exceptions

Electric hydrofoils have a path to exemption from speed restrictions.



A Possible **Solution**

Candela P-12 Water Taxi “Flies Above the Water”



The P-12's computer-controlled hydrofoils lift the vessel above the water, producing virtually no wake even at 25+ knots. This means potential exemption from speed limits—making fast, frequent water transit finally viable.

Already operating commercial routes in Stockholm with proven reliability and passenger satisfaction.

Electric Hydrofoil technology changes everything.

Cuts Travel Time in Half

Georgetown > Wharf > Navy Yard: ~24 minutes vs. 45 minutes traditional

Cost Advantage

~5x less expensive to procure than traditional 150-passenger ferries. Works with simpler floating dock

30

Passenger
Capacity

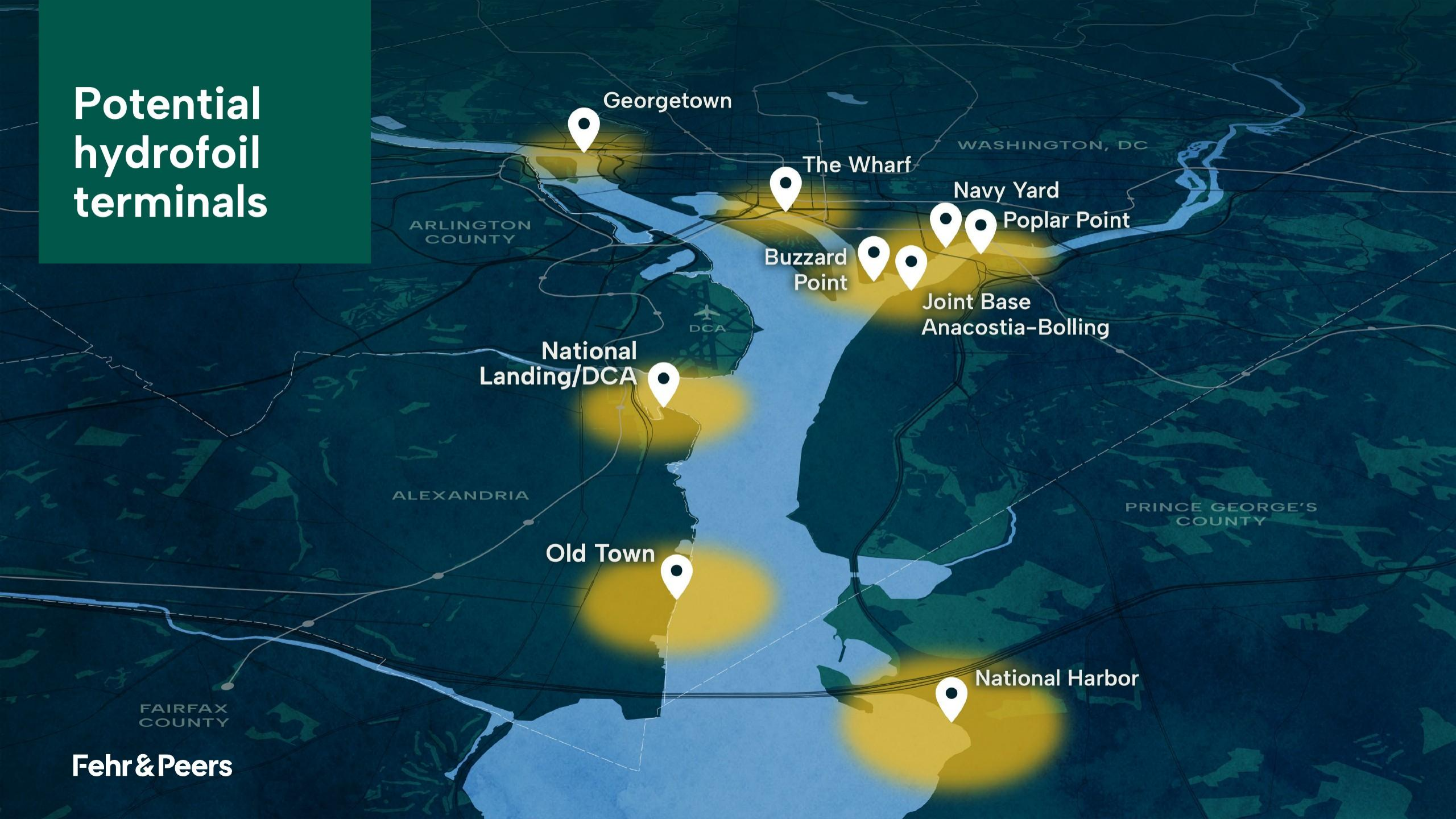
25+

Knots Cruising
Speed

No

Wake

Potential hydrofoil terminals



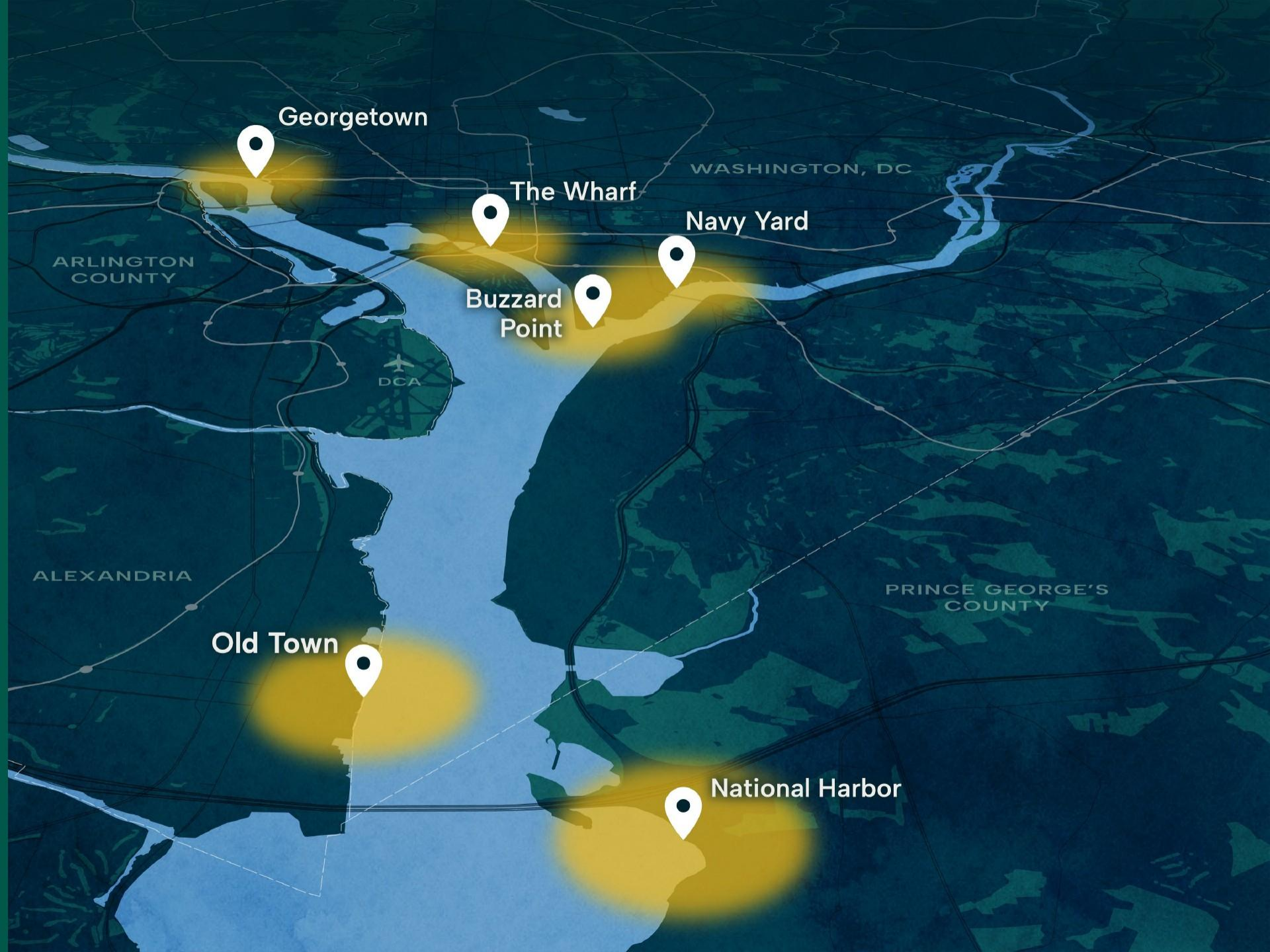
Terminals for further study

✓ Established markets

✓ Distinctive destinations

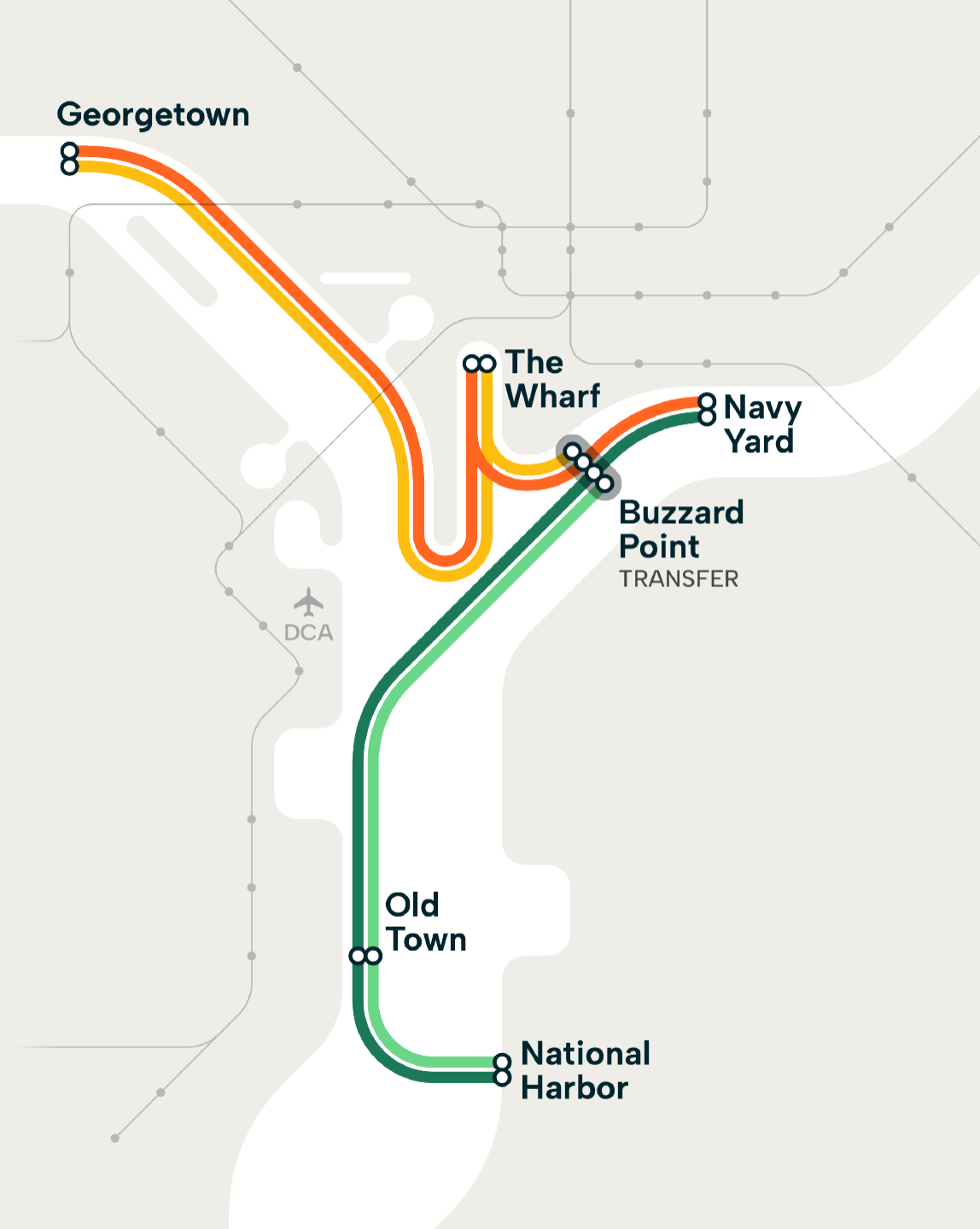
✓ Pilot readiness

Fehr & Peers



Route options

- A North Long**
Georgetown • The Wharf • Buzzard Point • Navy Yard
- B North Short**
Georgetown • The Wharf • Buzzard Point
- C South Long**
National Harbor • Old Town • Buzzard Point • Navy Yard
- D South Short**
National Harbor • Old Town • Buzzard Point



Q1. Is the initial commitment proportionate to a pilot?

The more expensive decision is how often to run, not how far to go.

On a map, extending a route looks like a bigger investment. But doubling frequency requires almost **four times** the additional capital.

Scenario (30-minute frequency)

Extend a route one stop from Buzzard Point to Navy Yard

Additional boats needed



1 boat

Keep the shorter route but run every 15 minutes



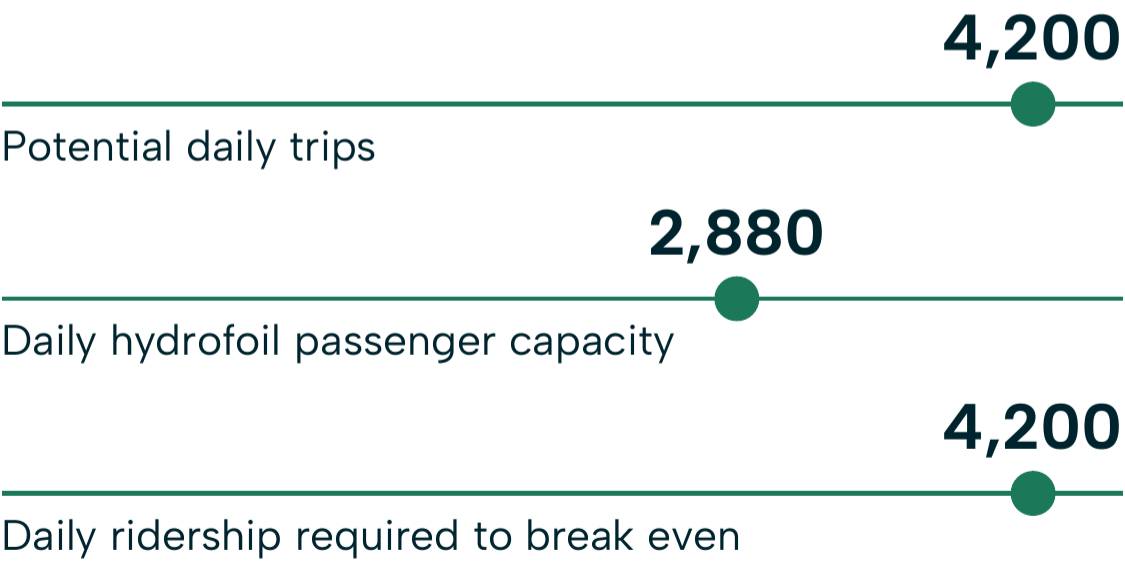
4 boats

Q4. How much needs to go right?

A service can sell every seat and still need some financial support.

For Route B at a \$5 fare and 30-minute frequency, there is enough estimated demand to exceed the route capacity. However, even at capacity, fare revenue would not cover operating and capital costs. Breakeven requires **150% of estimated capacity**.

Route B at \$5 fare and 30-minute frequency



Concepts for future study

A

North Long

\$10 fare • 30-minute frequency
\$20 fare • 45-minute frequency

B

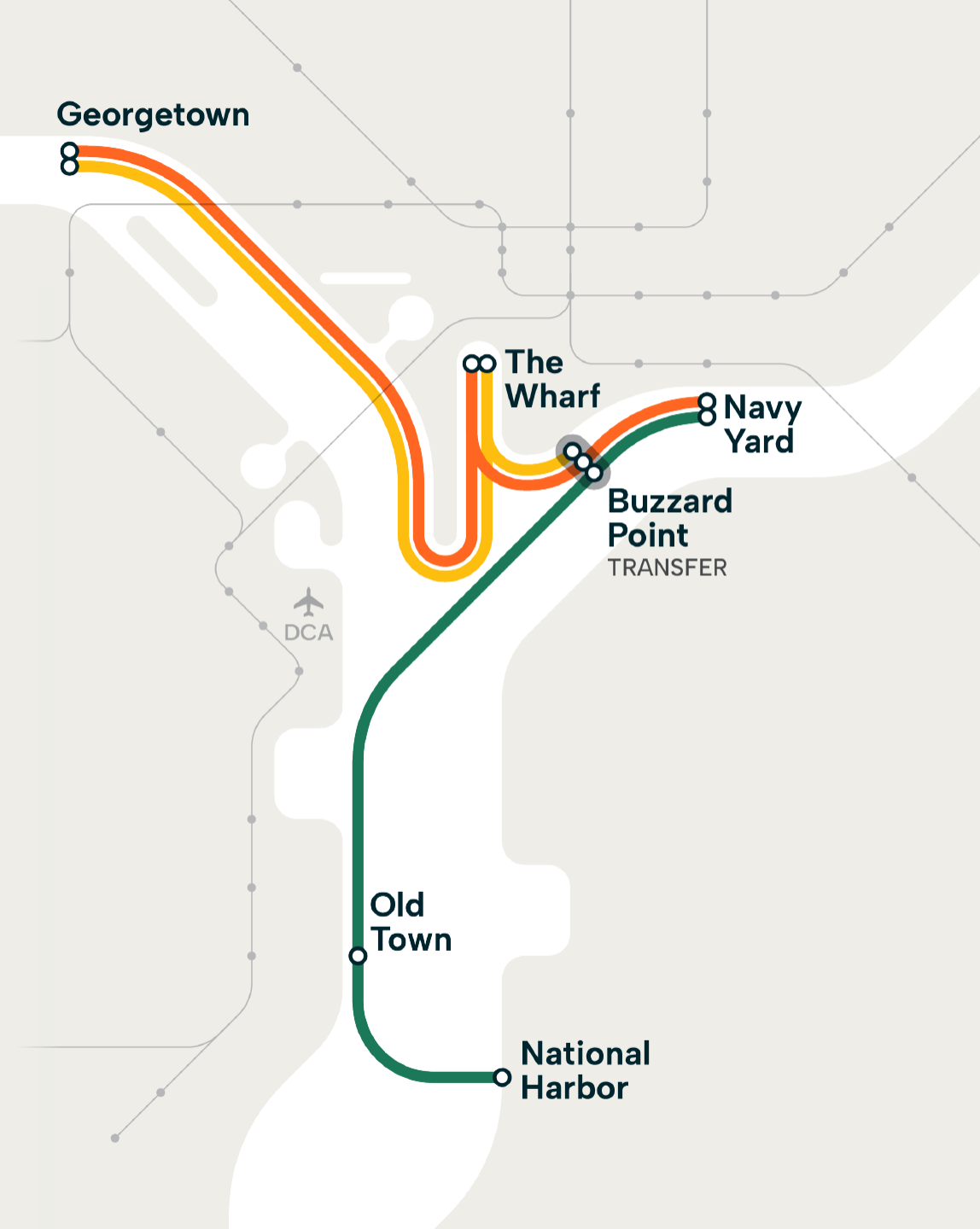
North Short

\$10 fare • 30-minute frequency

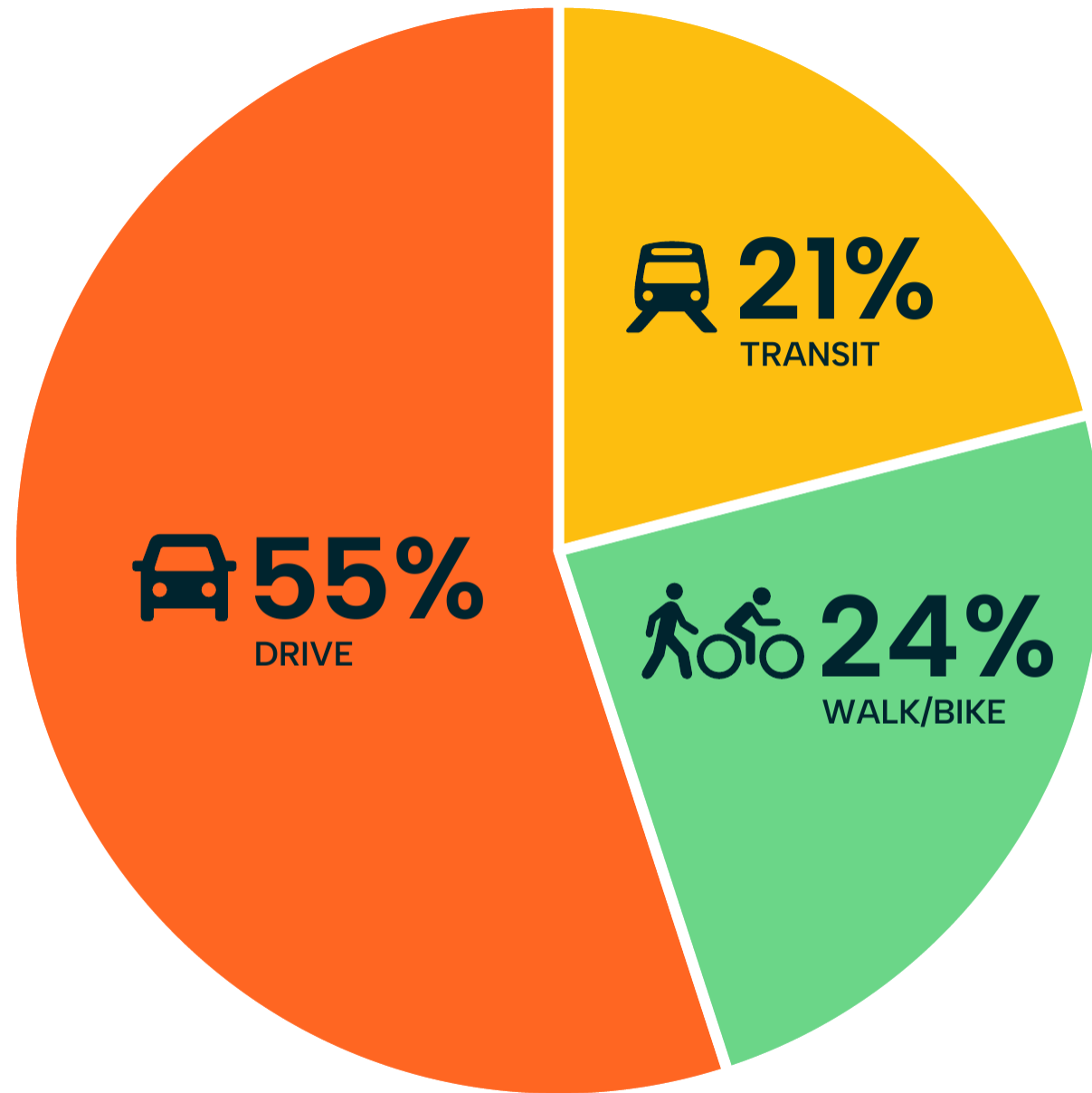
C

South Long

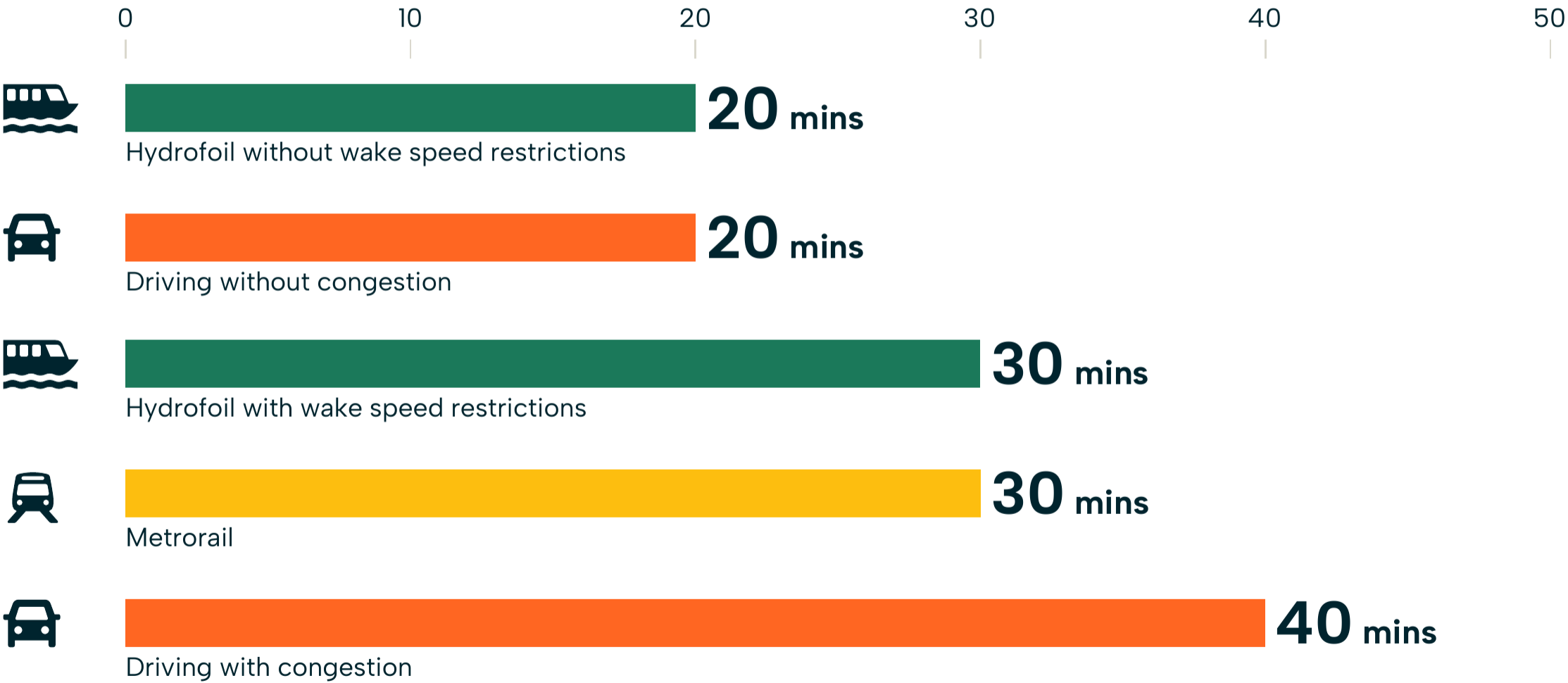
\$20 fare • 45-minute frequency



Where would
hydrofoil
riders shift
from?



Travel time: Old Town – Navy Yard



Next Steps

Where the work goes from here

01

Refine the Pilot Concepts

Carry the three concepts for future study into more detailed analysis of ridership, fleet size, fares, and the operating funding gap.

02

Make the Case for Speed

Collect on-water wake data to support a speed-limit exemption pathway for foiling vessels, building on Stockholm's precedent.

03

Plan the Business & Funding

Develop the operating model, terminal sites, permitting path, and capital and operating funding — the pieces this study phase does not address.

PATH TO A PILOT

- Now: Feasibility study

- Next: Business plan & funding

- Target: Pilot service in ~2–3 years

The Ask

What is being asked of the Transportation Planning Board/Council of Governments?

01

Support Urban Circulator Effort

Provide the DC MID with relevant regional transportation and economic data to support the next phases of analysis and refinement of the feasibility study.

02

Refer Jurisdictional Partners

Interested regional jurisdiction partners should engage with the DC MID to explore targeted analysis of preferred routes, terminals, and service profiles to inform next steps.

03

Explore Regional Network

If there is sufficient interest and consensus, DC MID would welcome TPB's expertise in studying and shepherding the assessment of a regional network, beyond the initial pilot proposal.

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