

## BRIGGS CHANEY ROAD INTERCHANGE

The ROD includes a partial interchange at Briggs Chaney Road, which is not included in the Fairland Master Plan. This interchange includes ramps to and from the east along the ICC. A Briggs Chaney Road interchange is needed to provide local business access to and from the east on the ICC because close interchange spacing precludes these connections from occurring via US 29.

### **Bikeway Elements**

In master plans, the Countywide Bike Path is defined as a shared-use, off-road bicycle facility in the highway right-of-way. The SHA Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan defines existing or proposed bicycle facilities—both off-road and on road—that are recommended as alternatives to the Countywide Bike Path to avoid environmentally sensitive areas and parkland impacts. Recognizing that the alternative doesn't implement the master planned facility in the highway right-of-way, the State has committed to work with the local governments to accelerate construction portions of the SHA Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in County master plans. This amendment's revisions to the SHA Plan are expected to provide a continuous shared-use path that meets the needs of novice and experienced bicyclists and pedestrians.

For bikeway issues, the ICCLFMPA subdivided the study area into five subareas:

- A. Needwood Road and Vicinity
- B. Emory Lane/Georgia Avenue and Vicinity
- C. Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park and Vicinity
- D. Upper Paint Branch Stream Valley Park and Vicinity
- E. US 29 and Vicinity

### **Study Area A: Needwood Road and Vicinity (Figures 3 and 4)**

#### ISSUES

- Connecting the ICC pathway west-terminus at Needwood Road with Midcounty Highway:
  - o along the current master plan route via the old ICC right-of-way through the park; or
  - o via new, shared-use paths along Needwood, Muncaster Mill and Shady Grove Roads, perhaps using Applewood Lane to connect Muncaster Mill Road with the future ICC/Midcounty Highway interchange.
- Deciding whether to eliminate the master planned alignment through the park in favor of a parallel route to the master planned highway alignment not selected in the ROD.

#### DISCUSSION

This CBP segment provides a critical pathway connection between the I-270 Corridor and Georgia Avenue communities. The selected alternative highway alignment for this area—Rock Creek Option C—avoids sensitive natural resources but does not accommodate the trail connection, primarily because the highway was designed with

a small footprint to avoid impacts to the Mill Creek communities. A bikeway connection across the Rock Creek Main Stem is needed to link the up-County and down-County bikeway/pathway systems. An independent hard surface trail within the old master plan alignment would add cost and cause the same environmental impacts as the highway and should not be built. As a result, the County must find an alternative route to connect the ICC pathway terminus at Needwood Road with the future shared use path along Midcounty Highway (A on figure 3). Several alternative alignments were studied, including the options shown on figure 4 and described below:

**OPTION 1** is a newly planned shared-use path along the east side of Needwood Road between the ICC and Muncaster Mill Road and along the south side of Muncaster Mill Road between Needwood Road and Shady Grove and Airpark Roads (Applewood Lane to Shady Grove Road currently exists). This option provides access to Montgomery Village via the shared use path SP-55 along Airpark Road that terminates at Muncaster Mill Road.

**OPTION 2** is a newly planned shared-use path along Muncaster Mill Road (briefly following the Option 1 alignment), but connects to Midcounty Highway via an on-road bike route along Applewood Lane, leading to the future location of the ICC/Midcounty Highway interchange, then along the future Midcounty Highway alignment (path SP-70) to Shady Grove Road. This option provides access to Montgomery Village and points north along Midcounty Highway.

**OPTION 3** is a newly planned shared-use path along the new ICC right-of-way between Needwood Road and the eastern Rock Creek Regional Park boundary that connects through the park (and through wetland or along steep slopes) to Muncaster Mill Road and following Options 1 or 2 above. This option would offer trail users a more park like experience by briefly following the new highway alignment to and through Rock Creek Park.

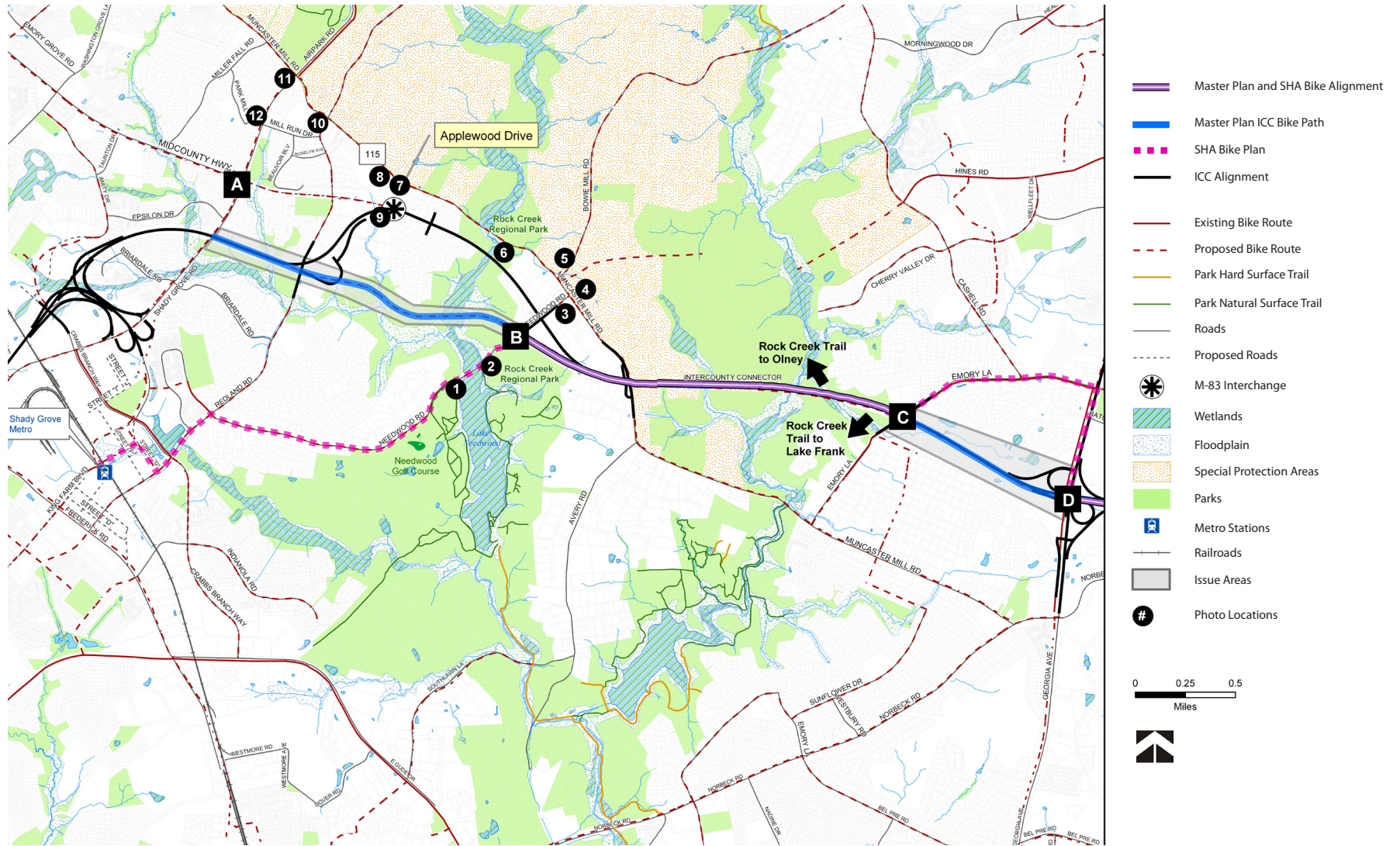
#### ANALYSIS

**OPTION 1** offers the most immediate connection since available right-of-way exists along most of these roads to make this connection possible. Option 2 is desirable, but requires coordination with the location, design, and timing of the future Midcounty Highway extension from Shady Grove Road to the ICC. Option 3 affords too few benefits at the expense of environmental resources and capital costs.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Option 1 is recommended as the new alignment for SP-40.
- Option 2 along Applewood Lane is recommended as a new designation—SP40A.

Figure 3 Needwood Road and Vicinity



# Photographs of Needwood Road and Vicinity

Needwood Road looking east toward Lake Needwood



1

Needwood Road between ICC and Beach Drive



2

Needwood Road looking south from Muncaster Mill Road



3

Muncaster Mill Road looking east from Needwood Road



4

Muncaster Mill road looking northwest from Needwood Road



5

Muncaster Mill Road through Rock Creek Park



6

Muncaster Mill Road looking east from Applewood Lane



7

Muncaster Mill Road looking west from Applewood Lane



8

Applewood Lane terminus



9

Muncaster Mill Road looking east toward Redland Road



10

Shady Grove Road looking south from Muncaster Mill Road



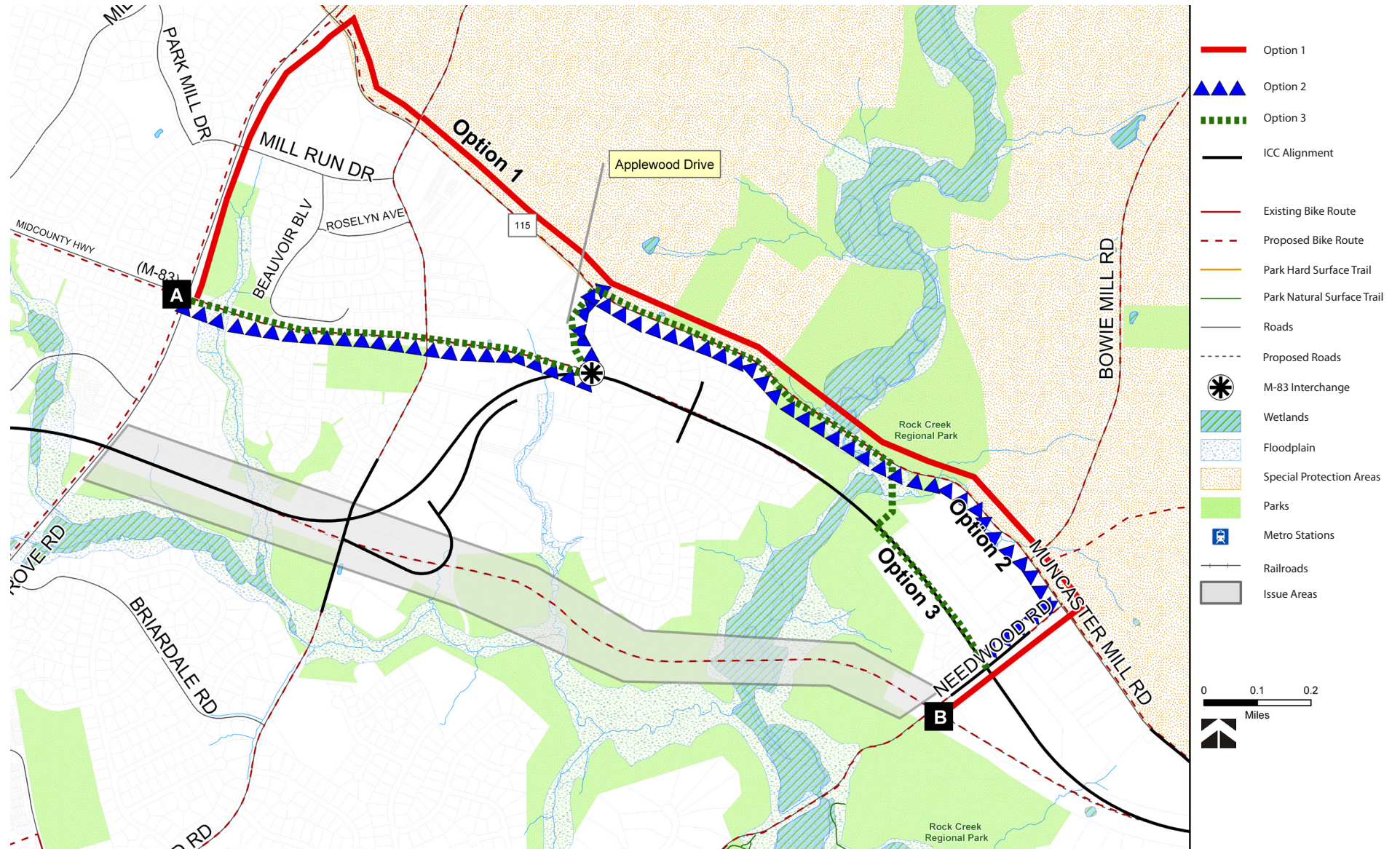
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Muncaster Mill Road looking west from Applewood Lane



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Figure 4 Needwood Road Options



#### PRIOR DECISIONS

In reviewing the DEIS, the Planning Board and the County Council recommended ending the CBP at Needwood Road, routing the pathway along Needwood, Muncaster Mill, and Shady Grove Roads to connect to the master planned Midcounty Highway path. They also recommended enhancements along Needwood Road to connect the CBP terminus at Needwood Road with the Shady Grove Metrorail Station.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Remove the CBP alignment along the old ICC right-of-way between Needwood Road and Shady Grove Road from master plans.
- Pursue Option 1 to connect the CBP with the up-County trail system and connections to the Shady Grove Metro Station via Needwood Road.

#### ROADWAY ANALYSIS

##### NEEDWOOD ROAD (ICC TO MUNCASTER MILL ROAD)

**EXISTING CONDITIONS:** Residential Primary, 70-foot right-of-way, two lanes. Shared use path and/or sidewalk exists in short segments along south side from Redland Road to Needwood Mansion.

**MASTER PLAN GUIDANCE:** The 2004 Upper Rock Creek Master Plan calls for a shared use path and on-road bikeway. The CBFMP recommends a dual bikeway, with both bike lanes and a shared use path (DB-14).

**DISCUSSION:** This segment of Needwood Road connects the CBP with Magruder High School and the future community of Bowie Mill Estates. And because the CBP is no longer planned to continue west through the park, it now also must be part of the bike route that links with the Midcounty Highway path, leading to up-County communities east of I-270. Contract A of the ICC highway project will construct the path along the road within the highway right-of-way only.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Identify the segment between the ICC and Muncaster Mill Road for inclusion in the County's Annual Bikeway Program, and request matching funding from the State for the short connector. Ensure that the crossing of Muncaster Mill Road to the high school meets AASHTO standards for a shared use path.

MUNCASTER MILL ROAD (NEEDWOOD ROAD TO SHADY GROVE ROAD)

**EXISTING CONDITIONS:** Arterial (A-93), 80 to 100-foot right-of-way, two-four lanes. Shared use path and/or sidewalk exists in short segments along both sides, but SHA most recently constructed a shared use path along the south side near Redland Middle School and near the Redland Road intersection.

**MASTER PLAN GUIDANCE:** The Upper Rock Creek Master Plan calls for an on-road bikeway. The CBFMP recommends bike lanes (BL-35) for this segment of Muncaster Mill Road.

**DISCUSSION:** This segment of Muncaster Mill Road connects the Needwood Road path with a future path along Shady Grove Road leading to Midcounty Highway, which is master planned to have a shared use path along its south side. In 2005, SHA reconstructed sections of the road, some with a shared use path and some without, including where the road passes through the park. Therefore, constructing a path through the park will need to be a separate project. The road was a major discussion point during the County Council review of the CBFMP, and ultimately the Council voted for only bike lanes and not the shared use path recommended in the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan. Therefore, receiving County funding for the path may prove difficult without a master plan amendment.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Amend the CBFMP to identify the road as a dual bikeway with both bike lanes and a shared use path along the south side, between Needwood Road and Shady Grove Road.

- Short-term: Pursue the shared use path between Needwood Road and Applewood Lane in a future Capital Improvement Program.
- Long-term: Link to the future Midcounty Highway path via a signed, shared roadway connection along Applewood Lane, immediately after the interchange is built. Ensure the interchange design and the related Midcounty Highway extension to Shady Grove Road includes a shared use path.

SHADY GROVE ROAD (MUNCASTER MILL ROAD TO MIDCOUNTY HIGHWAY)

**EXISTING CONDITIONS:** Major highway (M-42), 120 to 150-foot right-of-way, six lanes divided. Existing five to six foot sidewalk along the entire south side and existing bike lanes.

**MASTER PLAN GUIDANCE:** The 2004 Upper Rock Creek Master Plan doesn't recommend any changes to this configuration. Along with the 2006 Shady Grove Sector Plan and the CBFMP, it recommends bike lanes (BL-30).

**DISCUSSION:** A shared use path would meet the needs of all potential users, but with only 120-feet of right-of-way nearest to Muncaster Mill Road, implementing the path without impacting the bike lanes will be extremely difficult. Implementing the shared use path as part of the future Midcounty Highway connection to the ICC interchange (SP-70) is more likely, connecting via Applewood Lane to the future path and bike lanes along Muncaster Mill Road.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Do not amend the master plans to add a shared use path along the road. Instead, pursue the path connection along Midcounty Highway and through the interchange to Applewood Lane.

## **Study Area B: Emory Lane/Georgia Avenue and Vicinity (Figure 3, C and D)**

### ISSUES

- Providing a connection between CBP terminus at Emory Lane with Lake Frank and the Rock Creek Trail system down-County, including a new shared use path along Emory Lane between the ICC and Muncaster Mill Road, as well as along Muncaster Mill Road between Emory Lane and Meadowside Lane.
- Deciding whether to retain the master planned CBP segment along the ICC right-of-way between Emory Lane and Georgia Avenue.

### DISCUSSION

The connector between the CBP and Lake Frank is technically part of the master planned Rock Creek North Branch Trail. The portion south of Muncaster Mill Road and also north of the ICC in the park is being studied during the Department of Parks' Upper Rock Creek Trail Corridor Master Plan. A portion of the park trail north of the ICC will be built by the developer of Bowie Mill Estates.

A shared use path is planned for the segment along Emory Lane, and a segment has been constructed between Georgia Avenue and Holly Ridge Lane. The remaining segment between Holly Ridge Road and Muncaster Mill Road is unplanned. Bike lanes are master planned for Muncaster Mill Road in this area, so the trail connector along this road between Emory Lane and Meadowside Lane would be a new master plan recommendation, which is assumed to be part of the planned Rock Creek Trail.

The CBP within the ICC right-of-way between Emory Lane and Georgia Avenue was not included in the ICC ROD, but this amendment recommends retaining it in County master plans. Because the highway was not designed with the pathway in this area, the ICC/Georgia Avenue interchange is not designed to provide a grade-separated crossing of Georgia Avenue connecting to the trail on the east side of Georgia Avenue. In the short-term, a controlled crossing is available at Emory Lane. Examining a new crossing is beyond the scope of this master plan amendment and should be the subject of the facility planning study. Even without the grade-separated crossing of Georgia Avenue, the path is valuable. It connects the future shared use path (SP-29) along the Georgia Avenue busway with the Rock Creek Trail system and the CBP heading west. The current shared use path and shared roadway along MD 655 on the west side of Georgia Avenue will be preserved and enhanced as part of ICC Contract A.

### PRIOR DECISIONS

Both the Planning Board and the County Council recommended constructing the CBP with the highway between Emory Lane and Georgia Avenue. There have been no decisions or discussions about how to implement the Rock Creek North Branch Trail between Lake Frank and the ICC Trail.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Retain the CBP between Emory Lane and Georgia Avenue in County master plans, recognizing it may be built within or outside the highway right-of-way. Study the grade-separated crossing of Georgia Avenue in a CIP facility planning study.



- Study the Rock Creek Trail segments north of the ICC and south of Muncaster Mill Road in the Department of Parks CIP.
- Include the park trail connector along Emory Lane and Muncaster Mill Road in a CIP facility planning study to be led by DPWT. Consider coordinating this effort with the park trail connector study identified above. Examine connections to the Meadows Lane and the WSSC access road along the east side of the stream, south of Muncaster Mill. Minimize impacts to the historic mill site adjacent to the stream and south of Muncaster Mill Road.

### **Study Area C: Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park and Vicinity (Figures 5 and 6)**

#### ISSUES

- Connecting the CBP terminus at Notley Road (B on figure 5) with the Matthew Henson Trail through the park, as well as with the CBP terminus at Layhill Road (A on figure 5) through the park or along parallel roads.
- Deciding whether to remove a new trail/bikeway (since it was not built with the highway) parallel to the highway between Notley Road and Alderton Road from County master plans.
- Deciding whether to remove the CBP parallel to the highway—adjoining the Bonifant Woods community—between the future Matthew Henson Trail connector and Bonifant Road (figure 5) from County master plans .
- Studying a new park trail connector that would double as the modified alignment for SP-40 between Bonifant and Layhill roads to and/or through the Trolley Museum site and the future developed park area surrounding it.
- Deciding whether to accept the State’s plan to route the path along parallel roads in conjunction with improvements to these roads that accommodate all user groups.

#### DISCUSSION

The ROD did not include the master planned CBP along the ICC right-of-way between Notley Road and Layhill Road. SHA’s Bike Plan instead recommended an on-road route via existing bikeways along Alderton, Bonifant, and Layhill roads to connect the Matthew Henson Trail with the ICC trail terminus at Layhill Road. It also recommended a future trail connection between Notley Road and Alderton Road (and thus the Matthew Henson Trail heading west) as an area for which the County could partner with the State to study and implement, separate from the highway project.

The bicycle and pedestrian routes along the roadway alternatives are adequate for experienced cyclists, but offer an incomplete, discontinuous, or inadequate route for users of other ability levels, most notably the family cyclist. Therefore, this plan evaluates bicycle and pedestrian accommodation along these roads and recommends master plan amendments.

A new alignment for SP-40 through the Northwest Branch Park between Layhill Road and Bonifant Road, connecting to and through the Trolley Museum site will be studied in more detail during the Northwest Branch Park Master Plan Update. The primary concern about a shared use path in the Northwest Branch and Vicinity are the sensitive environmental resources south of Bonifant Road, particularly between the Matthew Henson Trail and Notley Road. A path through this area should avoid bisecting the biodiversity area and contiguous forest.