

Line. Along the Georgetown Branch right-of-way, MTA would include sufficient right-of-way for the trail as part of the design of the project, and would design the transitway to be compatible with the trail. Construction of the trail itself would be funded by Montgomery County. The cost of construction of the trail is not included as part of the \$2.2 billion cost estimate of the project. Funding for the trail is in Montgomery County's approved Capital Improvements Program. The Green Trail along Wayne Avenue is not part of the Purple Line and also would be funded separately by Montgomery County, but likely would be built with the Purple Line.

It is assumed that the use of roadway rights-of-way controlled by the state, counties, and local jurisdictions, including those on the UMD campus and at Metrorail stations, would be granted to the project at no cost, except for construction of new facilities and replacement or repair of existing facilities and utilities.

Operations and Maintenance Costs

MTA is assumed to be responsible for operation and maintenance of the Purple Line services and associated costs. This annual cost is estimated to be \$38 million (2012 dollars). MTA, WMATA, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, UMD, and other transit operators in the corridor and the region would continue to be responsible for operations and maintenance of their bus and rail transit services and facilities, recognizing that some adjustments to service levels and routing bus

services may result from implementation of the project.

The cost of operating and maintaining the Capital Crescent Trail would be the responsibility of Montgomery County.

Preferred Alternative Implementation Schedule

The schedule for the Purple Line anticipates major construction beginning in July 2015 and revenue service beginning in December 2020.

6.3.2 Refinements since the AA/DEIS and Preliminary Section 4(f) Evaluation

The AA/DEIS and Preliminary Section 4(f) Evaluation identified a number of properties that would potentially be affected by one or more of the numerous alternatives considered in the AA/DEIS within a 500-foot-wide study area centered on the alignment for the build alternatives. See AA/DEIS, Section 4.4.2; see also *Preliminary Section 4(f) Evaluation Technical Report* (Sept. 2008), Table 4-1. Between the AA/DEIS and the FEIS, the Preferred Alternative was chosen and has been refined through public involvement and agency outreach resulting in a reduction in the number and extent of potential uses of Section 4(f) properties (see 2012 *Draft Environmental Impact Statement Re-evaluation*). Table 6-4 lists properties that were identified by FTA as potential uses in the Preliminary Section 4(f) Evaluation, but would not be used by the Preferred Alternative. As no Section 4(f) use would occur, these properties are not included in this evaluation.

Table 6-4. Section 4(f) Properties Identified in the AA/DEIS Not Used by the Preferred Alternative

Property Name	Classification	Reason for Exclusion
Georgetown Branch Interim Trail	Shared-use trail	The Georgetown Branch Interim Trail—that is, the temporary recreational trail that currently exists within the Georgetown Branch right-of-way—is not a Section 4(f) property. In a letter dated February 22, 1995, FTA informed the County that Section 4(f) “does not apply to land that has been temporarily used for recreational or park purposes if the State or local government with jurisdiction over the land officially indicated prior to allowing the temporary park or recreational use, that the land was intended for a transportation use.” The Montgomery County Council adopted a resolution on August 1, 1995 authorizing the establishment of an interim hiker/biker trail in the Georgetown Branch right-of-way. The resolution stated that “the section between Bethesda and Silver Spring remains designated as a transportation corridor in which an interim trail is permitted until the master planned transit and trail facility is approved and funded consistent with the master plan.” After that resolution was adopted, the County removed the then-existing freight rail tracks and established an unpaved recreational trail in the Georgetown Branch right-of-way. That unpaved trail remains in existence today. ¹

¹Based on these facts, FTA confirms its previous determination that the unpaved hiker/biker trail in the Georgetown Branch right-of-way is not a Section 4(f) property, because it was constructed as a temporary facility with an explicit understanding that the right-of-way was reserved for a transportation purpose. The determination is consistent with 23 CFR 774.11(h), which provides that Section 4(f) does not apply when a property that has been formally reserved for a future transportation facility temporarily functions for park or recreation purposes. This determination also is consistent with 23 CFR 774.11(i), which provides that Section 4(f) does not apply when a park or recreational area and a transportation facility are jointly planned.

Table 6-4. Section 4(f) Properties Identified in the AA/DEIS Not Used (continued)

Property Name	Classification	Reason for Exclusion
Taylor Site (18M0243)	Archeological Site	No direct use, properties are outside the project limits of disturbance
Bethesda Elementary School	Public School	
Leland Neighborhood Park	Local Park	No constructive use of properties; project noise, vibration, and visual effects would not impair the activities, features or attributes of these properties
Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School	Public School	
Preston Place	Historic Property	
Woodside Historic District	Historic Property	
Old Silver Spring Post Office	Historic Property	
First Baptist Church of Silver Spring	Historic Property	
Montgomery Blair High School	Historic Property/ Public School	
East-West Highway Neighborhood Conservation Area	Conservation Area	
Lynnbrook Local Park	Local Park	
North Chevy Chase Local Park	Local Park	
North Chevy Chase Elementary School	Public School	
Clean Drinking Water Manor Site (18M0030)	Archeological Site	
Rosemary Hills Elementary School	Public School	Recreational facilities within the boundaries of the school are not open to the public and, therefore, are not protected by Section 4(f); also, they are located outside the proposed limits of disturbance.
Metro Urban Park	Local Park	Property no longer exists; it was removed as part of construction of the Silver Spring Transit Center.
Silver Spring International School	School	Recreational facilities within the boundaries of the school are not open to the public and, therefore, are not protected by Section 4(f).
East Silver Spring Elementary School	Public School	No direct use, properties are outside the project limits of disturbance
Sligo Cabin Site (18M0)	Archeological Site	
Sligo Adventist School	Historic Property/ Religious School	No constructive use of properties; project noise, vibration, and visual effects would not impair the activities, features or attributes of these properties
Nolte Local Park	Local Park	
Dale Drive Neighborhood Park	Local Park	
Flower Avenue Urban Park	Local Park	
Long Branch Arliss Neighborhood Park	Local Park	
New Hampshire Estates Elementary School	Public School	
Carole Highlands Elementary School	Public School	
Paint Branch Stream Valley Park	Park	
Paint Branch Trail	Recreational Trail	
Rosborough Inn	Historic Property	
Old Town College Park	Historic Property	
College Lawn Station	Historic Property	
Indian Creek Park	Park	
Calvert Hills Historic District	Historic Property	
M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation Regional Headquarters	Historic Property	
Calvert Neighborhood Park	Local Park	
Riverdale Community Recreation Center (part of Anacostia River Stream Valley Park)	Recreation Center	
Riverside Drive Park (part of Anacostia River Stream Valley Park)	Local Park	
College Park Airport	Historic Property	No direct use; the Preferred Alternative would be aligned in existing travel lanes on Paint Branch Parkway. The parkway occupies a corner of the historic property, having been built in 1977 subsequent to the National Register listing and historic boundary definition. Paint Branch Parkway is not a contributing element to the historic property. MTA would not acquire the property the Preferred Alternative would occupy. No constructive use of the property; project noise, vibration, and visual effects would not impair the activities, features or attributes of this property (see Section 106 Assessment of Effects for Historic Properties, 2013).
College Park Airport Site (18PR200)	Archeological Site	No direct use, properties are outside the project limits of disturbance
Fire Site (18PR263)	Archeological Site	Eligible portion of site is outside of proposed limits of disturbance.
Area K Domestic Site	Archeological Site	Site is outside of proposed limits of disturbance.
Martins Woods	Historic Property	No direct or constructive use of property
East Pines Neighborhood Recreation Center	Recreation Center	No direct or constructive use of property
Prince George's County's M-NCPPC Park Police Headquarters	Park Police Headquarters	This facility has no recreational facilities. It is not considered a public park or recreational property, is not open to the public, and therefore is not protected by Section 4(f).
M-NCPPC's Northern Area Maintenance Office	Maintenance Facility	This facility has no recreational facilities. It is not considered a public park or recreational property, is not open to the public, and therefore is not protected by Section 4(f).
Glenridge Elementary School	Public School	Recreational facilities within the boundaries of the school are not open to the public and, therefore, are not protected by Section 4(f); also, they are located outside the proposed limits of disturbance.

6.4 Section 4(f) Properties

Fourteen properties protected by Section 4(f) would be used by the Preferred Alternative. Each property was determined to be of national, state, or local significance and is classified as one or both of the following:

- Publicly owned park, recreation area, or refuge
- Publicly or privately owned historic site

Table 6-5 is a comprehensive list of Section 4(f) properties from west to east in the study area that are evaluated in this chapter. Figure 6-15 shows the location of each identified property in relation to the Preferred Alternative. The subsections that follow describe each property and the determinations of the Section 4(f) evaluation.

Table 6-5. Section 4(f) Properties Evaluated in this Chapter

Prop #	Property Name	Classification	Address/Location	Official(s) with Jurisdiction	Features/Attributes
1	Elm Street Urban Park	Park	4600 Elm Street, Bethesda	M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks	Playgrounds, a gazebo, picnic tables, benches, trails, and public art
2	Columbia Country Club (M: 35-140)	Historic Property	7900 Connecticut Avenue, Chevy Chase	MHT	Golf Course
3	Rock Creek Stream Valley Park <i>including:</i>		Olney-Laytonsville Road to Washington DC line	M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks; NCPC	Trails, lakes, historic plantation, athletic fields, playgrounds, and picnic areas
	a) Rock Creek National Recreational Trail	Recreational Trail	Rockville south to Washington DC line		
	b) Rock Creek Park Montgomery County Survey Area (M:36-87)	Historic Property	Montgomery County portion of larger park at Georgetown Branch Interim Trail Crossing		
4	Bridge M-85, Talbot Avenue Bridge (M: 36-30)	Historic Property	Talbot Avenue, Silver Spring	MHT	Historic Bridge
5	Metropolitan Branch, B&O Railroad (M: 37-16)	Historic Property	Union Station, Washington DC to Point of Rocks, Frederick County, MD	MHT	Historic Rail Corridor
6	Falkland Apartments (M: 36-12)	Historic Property	8305 16th Street, Silver Spring	MHT	Historic Apartment Complex; known in the FEIS as the Falkland Chase Apartments
7	Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park <i>including:</i>			M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks; MHT; NCPC	Trail networks, playgrounds, softball fields, tennis courts, natural areas, and picnic amenities
	a) Sligo Creek National Recreational Trail	Recreational Trail	Hermitage Avenue to Montgomery County line		
8	b) Sligo Creek Parkway (M: 32-15; PG: 65-25)	Historic Property	University Boulevard south to New Hampshire Avenue in Takoma Park		Historic parkway
9	Long Branch Local Park	Park	8700 Piney Branch Road, Silver Spring	M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks	Playground, community center, softball field, multi-use field, tennis courts, and picnic area.
10	Long Branch Stream Valley Park <i>including:</i>	Park	9500 Brunett Avenue, Silver Spring	M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks	Playgrounds, athletic facilities, picnic areas, natural areas, and trails
	a) Long Branch Trail	Recreational Trail	Long Branch Local Park to south of Carroll Avenue		
11	New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park	Park	8825 Piney Branch Road, Takoma Park	M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks	Playgrounds, athletic field, picnic area, and aesthetic features
12	Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park <i>including:</i>			M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation; NCPC	Trails, playgrounds, aquatic center, athletic fields and courts, picnic areas, recreational centers, and a duck pond
	a) Northwest Branch Trail	Recreational Trail	Armentrout Drive to south of Capital Beltway along Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River		
13	University of Maryland Historic District (PG: 66-35)	Historic Property	7965 Baltimore Avenue, College Park	MHT	Educational Facility/Campus
14	Anacostia River Stream Valley Park <i>including:</i>	Park	Prince George's County to Washington DC	M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation; NCPC	Playgrounds, athletic fields and courts, community centers, and trails Trails — includes American Discovery Trail and East Coast Greenway
	a) Northeast Branch Trail	Recreational Trail	Lake Artemesia to Anacostia River		
15	Baltimore-Washington Parkway	National Park/ Historic Property	Washington DC line at Tuxedo north to MD 175	NPS; MHT	Historic parkway
16	Glenridge Community Park	Local Park	5070 Flintridge Drive, Hyattsville	M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation	Playground, athletic fields and courts, trails, shelters, and picnic areas
17	West Lanham Hills Neighborhood Recreation Center	Recreation Area	7700 Decatur Road, Landover Hills	M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation	Playground, recreation center, athletic courts, trail, and picnic areas

M-NCPPC: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission; NCPC: National Capital Planning Commission; NPS: National Park Service; MHT: Maryland Historical Trust

Figure 6-15. Section 4(f) Properties within the Study Area

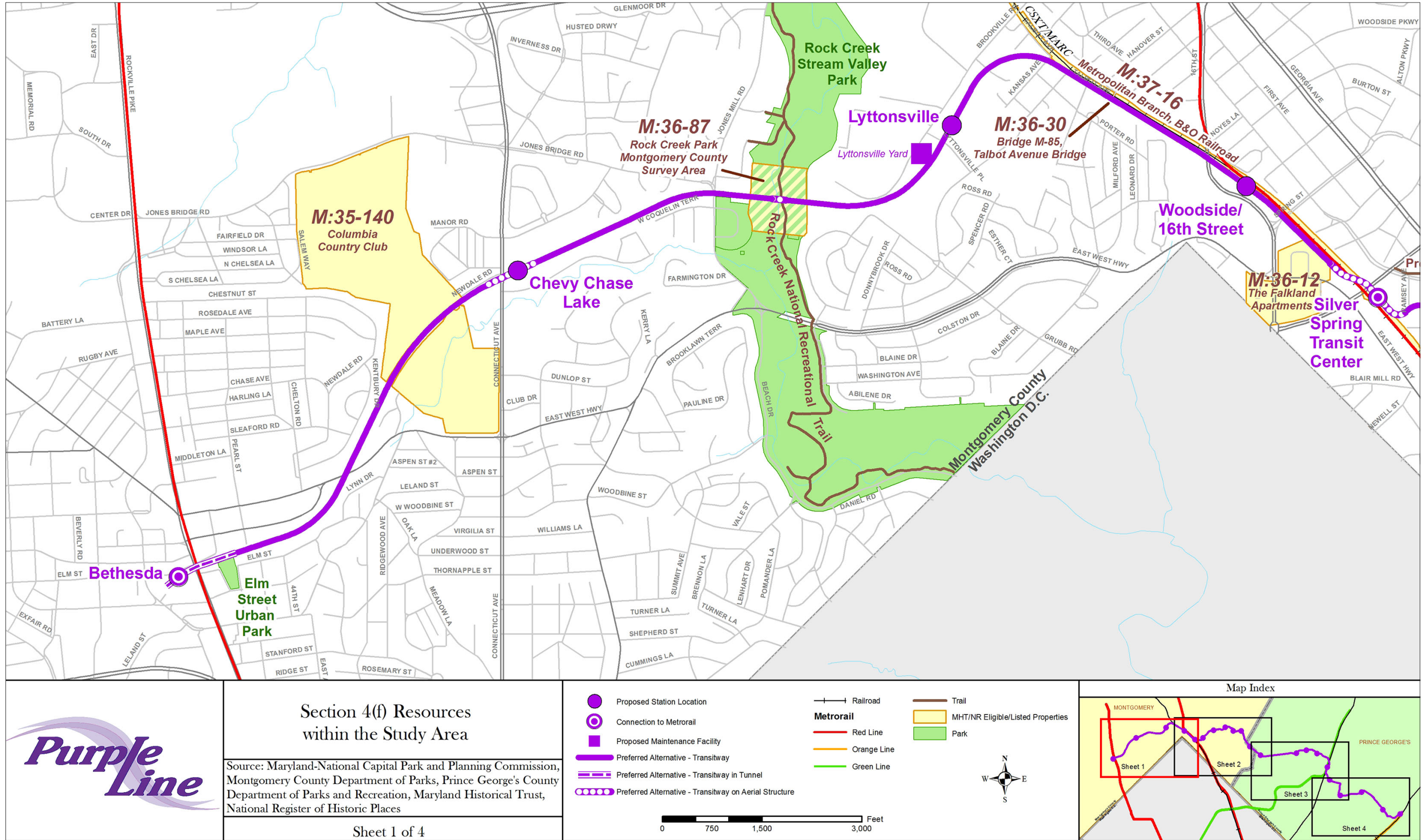


Figure 6-15. Section 4(f) Properties within the Study Area (continued)

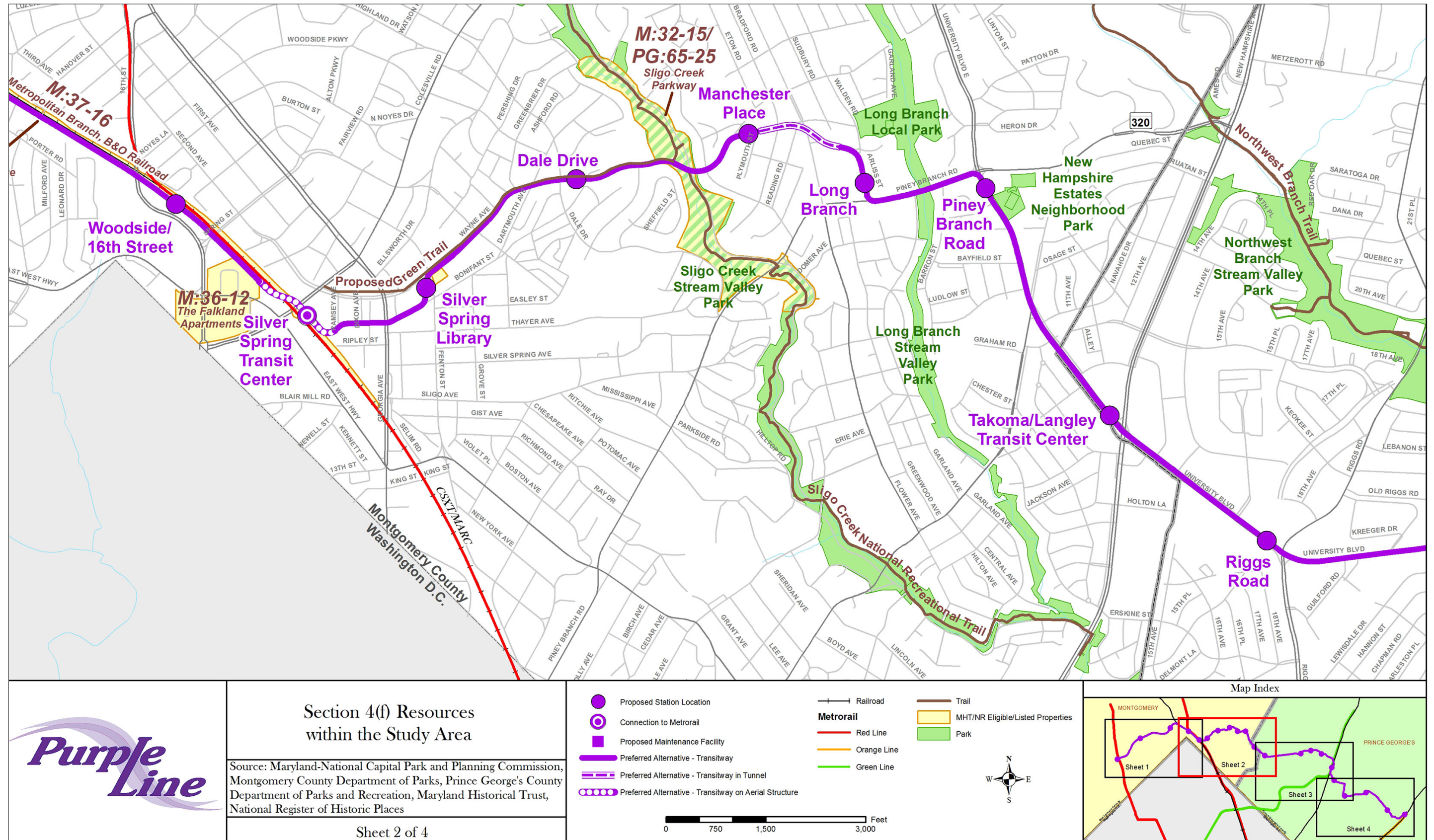


Figure 6-15. Section 4(f) Properties within the Study Area (continued)

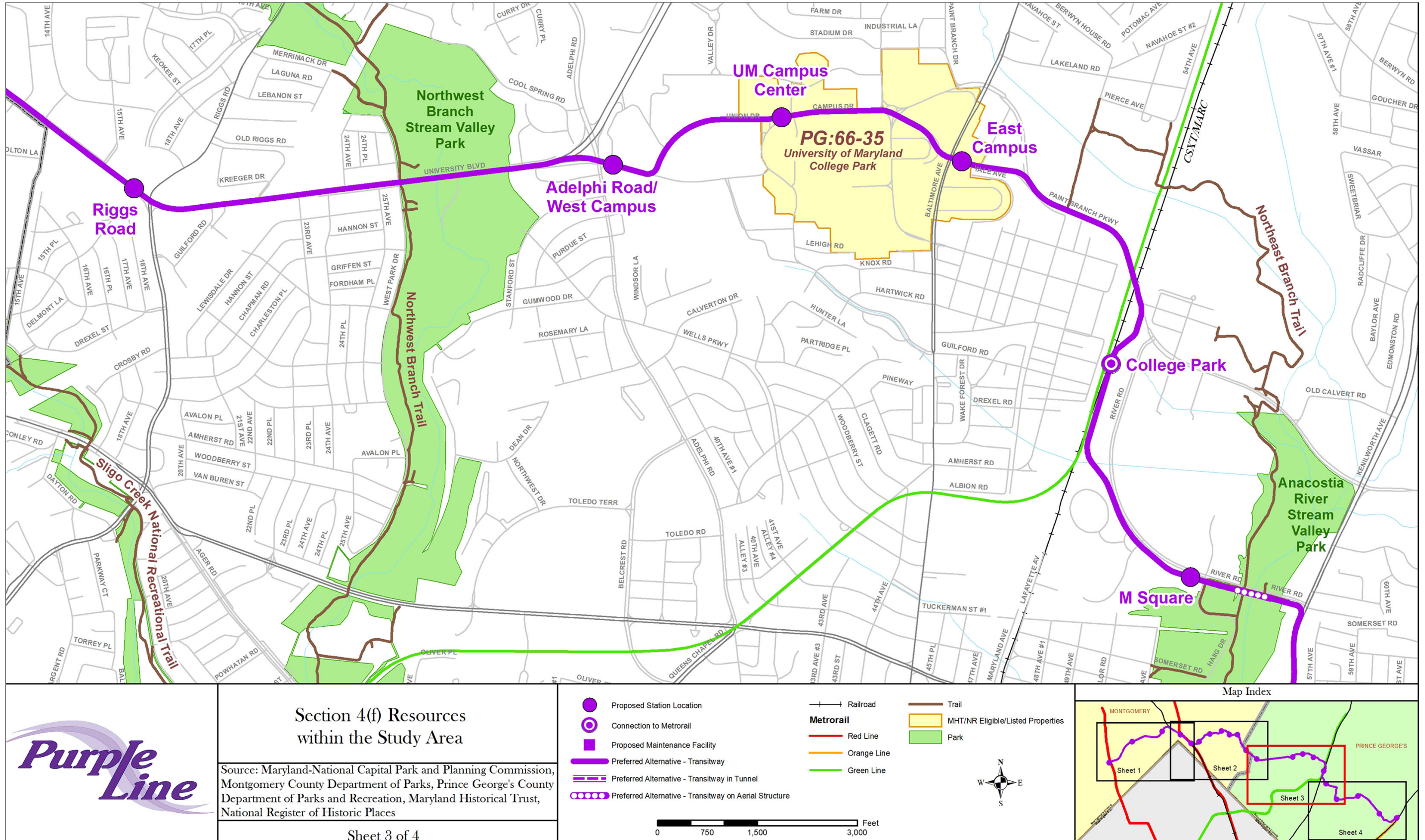
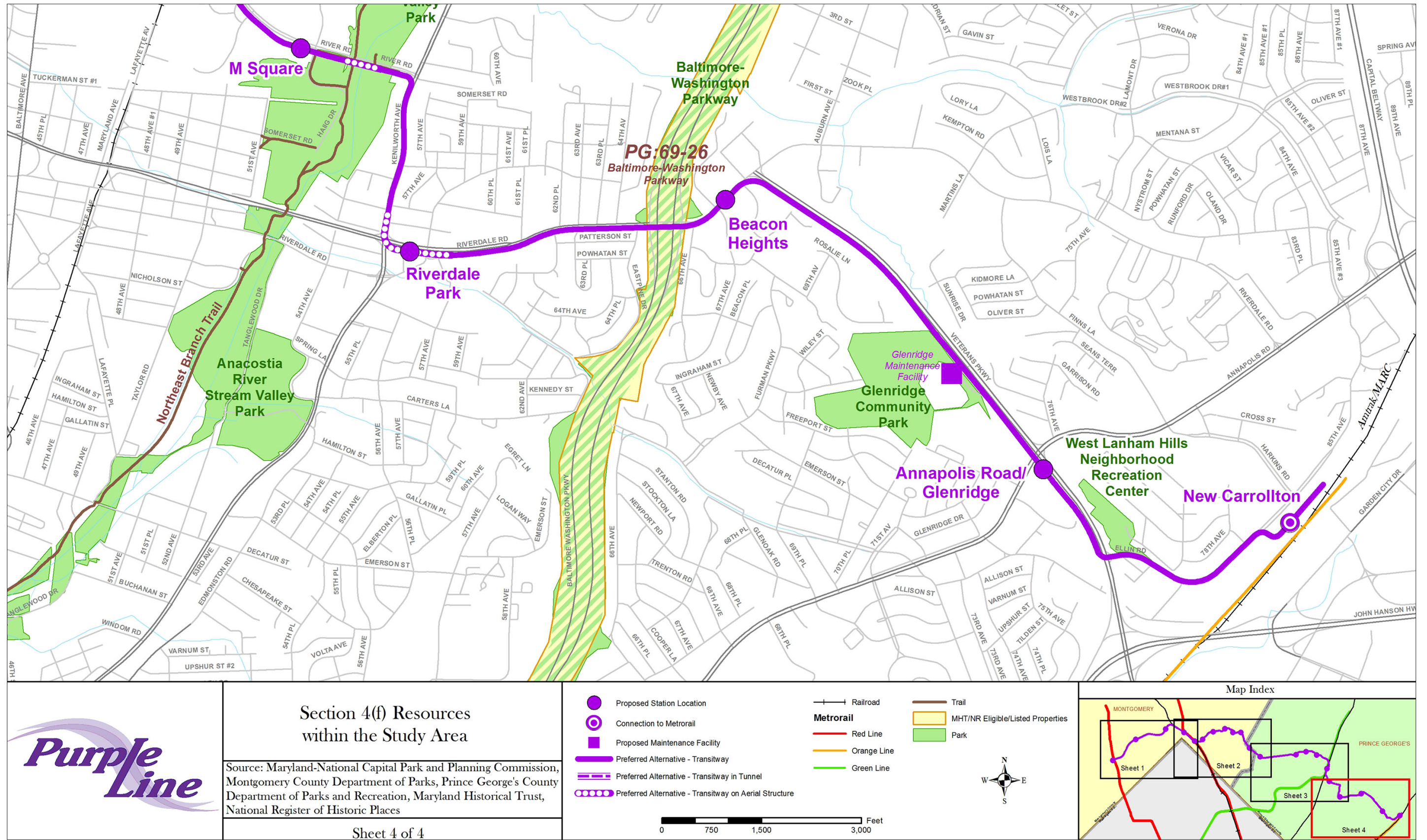


Figure 6-15. Section 4(f) Properties within the Study Area (continued)



6.4.1 Publicly Owned Parks and Recreational Areas

The Preferred Alternative would use portions of eight parks and recreational areas. Of these eight properties, a permanent use would occur at two properties and FTA is proposing *de minimis* use determinations for six properties. The Preferred Alternative would occupy portions of three parks and recreation areas during construction in a manner that meets the Section 4(f) exception criteria for temporary occupancy.

The results of the FEIS assessment (Chapter 4.0) conclude that the Preferred Alternative would not cause noise, vibration, or visual effects on parks protected by Section 4(f) that would constitute a constructive use; the Preferred Alternative would not substantially impair the activities, features or attributes that qualify each park for protection under Section 4(f).

Table 6-6 summarizes the proposed uses. Supporting discussions of each park and recreational area are provided below.

Elm Street Urban Park

Section 4(f) Property Description

Elm Street Urban Park is 2.1 acres in size and is located in the Town of Chevy Chase. This park is bounded by the Georgetown Branch Interim Trail to the north, 47th Street to the west, Willow Lane to the south, and 46th Street to the east. The park includes playgrounds, a gazebo, several picnic tables, benches, trails, and public art (Figure 6-16). The park is owned and maintained by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC)-Montgomery County Department of Parks, which plans to reconstruct the entire park within the next few years as a requirement of a nearby development. Although the schedule is currently uncertain, these improvements are being designed in coordination with Bethesda, M-NCPPC's Montgomery County Department of Parks, and the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC). The park is accessible by the roadways previously mentioned, as well as from the Georgetown Branch Interim Trail.

Table 6-6. Summary of Preferred Alternative Park Uses/Impacts

Section 4(f) Property	Permanent Use, Not <i>De minimis</i>	Permanent Use, <i>De minimis</i>	No Use	Existing Property Acreage	Permanent Use Acreage	Percent of Property Permanently Used
Elm Street Urban Park			•	2.1	0.00	0.00
Rock Creek Stream Valley Park and Rock Creek National Recreational Trail			•	3,960.0	0.00	0.00
Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park and Sligo Creek National Recreational Trail		•		543.0	0.25 (0.03*)	0.05
Long Branch Local Park	•			14.0	0.02	0.14
Long Branch Stream Valley Park and Long Branch Trail		•		41.0	0.11	0.27
New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park		•		4.7	0.20	6.81
Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park and Northwest Branch Trail		•		510.0	0.80	0.11
Anacostia River Stream Valley Park and Northeast Branch Trail		•		794.0	1.36	0.15
Baltimore-Washington Parkway		•		1,353.0	0.61	0.04
Glenridge Community Park	•			53.5	5.32 (2.04*)	6.13
West Lanham Hills Neighborhood Recreation Center			•	9.0	0.00	0.00

Figure 6-16. Elm Street Urban Park Playground

Temporary Occupancy Exception

The Preferred Alternative transitway would be aligned under the Air Rights Building, located directly to the north of Elm Street Urban Park (Figure 6-17). The existing connection between Elm Street Urban Park and Georgetown Branch Interim Trail would be reconstructed to provide access to the proposed Capital Crescent Trail. The trail connection would include a bridge over the transitway. As designed in coordination with the M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks, MTA would construct the Capital Crescent Trail connection with Elm Street Urban Park, using approximately 0.02 acres of temporary construction easements on a pathway within the park. The construction of the access connection as part of Preferred Alternative would not adversely affect the activities, features or attributes—playgrounds, gazebo, picnic tables, benches, trails and public art—of the park in its existing or proposed future configuration. Memoranda of MTA meetings with M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks and NCPC are provided in Appendix I.

FTA proposes a temporary occupancy exception determination for the construction easements, as they satisfy the five criteria for temporary occupancy set forth in 23 CFR 774.13(d), as discussed in Section 6.1.1. Specifically, (1) the duration of the proposed work is temporary, less than the overall project construction period and no change in

property ownership would occur; (2) the work is confined to a small area of the park and would result in minimal changes to the park; (3) no permanent adverse impacts to the park and no interference with the protected activities, features, or attributes of the park would occur; (4) the disturbed land would be fully restored to at least as good condition; and (5) the officials with jurisdiction are providing documented agreement to these findings. As such, the temporary construction easements do not constitute a use of Elm Street Urban Park.

The Preferred Alternative would not permanently use any part of Elm Street Urban Park. The FEIS Chapter 4.0 assessment of effects indicates that the Preferred Alternative would not cause noise, vibration, or visual effects on Elm Street Urban Park that would constitute a constructive use; no substantial impairment of the activities, features or attributes—playgrounds, gazebo, picnic tables, benches, trails and public art—that qualify the park for protection under Section 4(f) would occur.

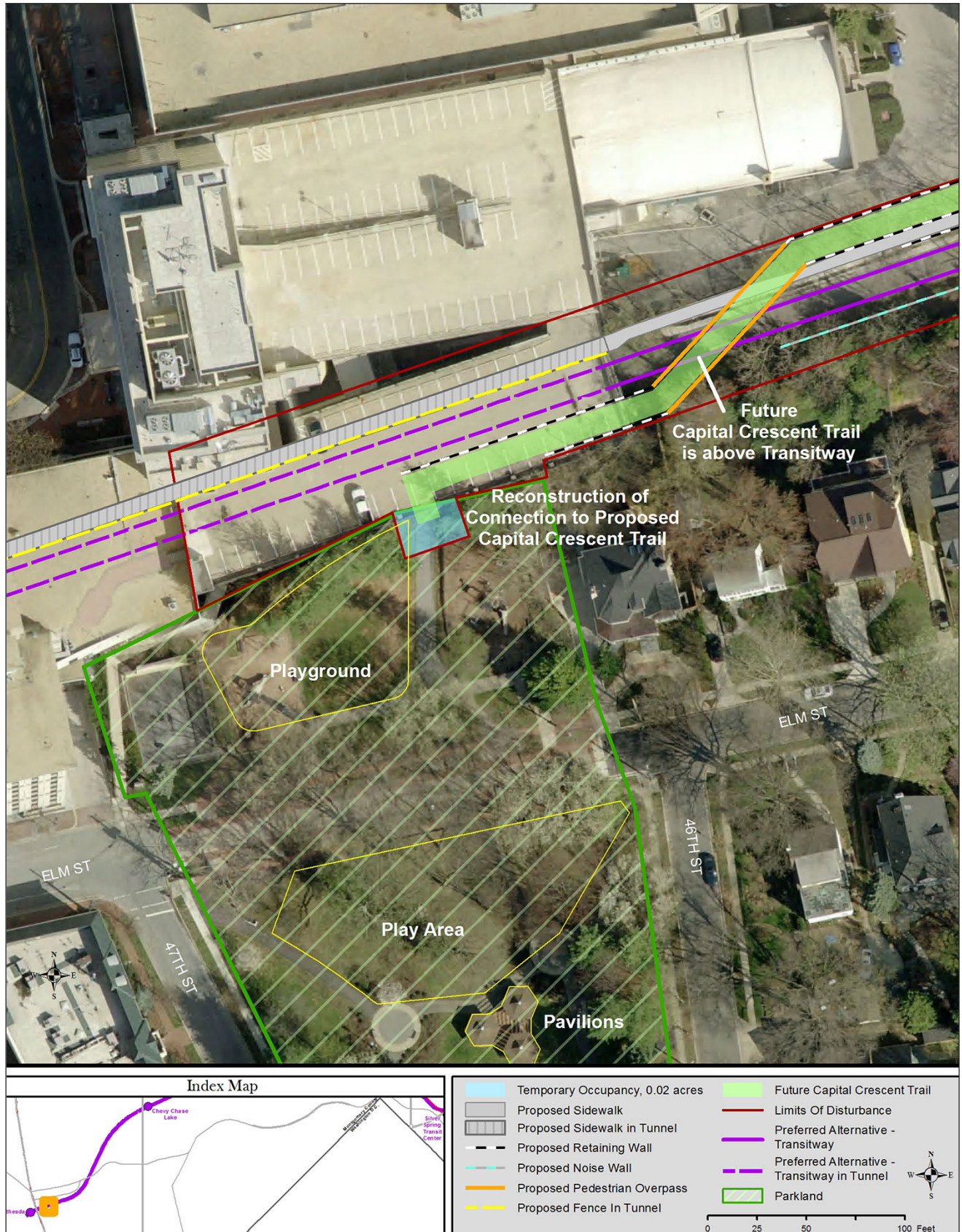
Rock Creek Stream Valley Park and Rock Creek National Recreational Trail

Section 4(f) Property Description

Rock Creek Stream Valley Park is a natural stream valley park along Rock Creek. The park is approximately 3,960 acres in size, extending from Olney-Laytonsville Road (MD 108) in Montgomery County to the Washington DC boundary. The park follows the length of Rock Creek. Rock Creek Stream Valley Park amenities include trails, lakes, a historic plantation, boating and a ropes course, an interpretive area in the farm park, numerous athletic fields, a scenic parkway road, playgrounds, and picnic areas. This park is owned and maintained by M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks, funded in part by Maryland Program Open Space funds.

Rock Creek Stream Valley Park includes an extensive trail system. Rock Creek National Recreational Trail is a 19-mile, paved surface, shared use trail. The trail includes numerous natural-surface spur trails and paved connector trails and numerous natural areas.

Figure 6-17. Elm Street Urban Park



Use of Section 4(f) Property

The Preferred Alternative would be aligned completely within the Georgetown Branch right-of-way through Rock Creek Stream Valley Park (Figure 6-18). As currently designed, the project would remove the existing bridge that currently carries the Georgetown Branch Interim Trail over Rock Creek and the Rock Creek National Recreational Trail. MTA, working in consultation with M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks and the NCPC, proposes to build two new bridges in the same area for the Purple Line project, one for the transitway and one for the Capital Crescent Trail. Memoranda of MTA meetings with M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks and NCPC are provided in Appendix I.

Temporary Occupancy Exception

During construction of the bridges, the portion of Rock Creek National Recreational Trail in the immediate vicinity of the bridges would be temporarily detoured for short periods of time. When trail detours occur, the detour route would begin to the north of the proposed project area and use Susanna Lane to Jones Mill Road, south to East-West Highway, then east to Meadowbrook Lane, where the Rock Creek National Recreational Trail would be accessed to the south of the proposed project area.

The Preferred Alternative would improve connections to the Rock Creek National Recreational Trail as the Capital Crescent Trail bridge would lead to a ramp to the existing trail. Memoranda of MTA meetings with M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks and NCPC are provided in Appendix I. The Preferred Alternative would not adversely affect activities, features or attributes—trails, lakes, historic plantation, athletic fields, playgrounds and picnic areas—of the park.

Tree removal would be required within the Montgomery County right-of-way for the construction of the proposed transitway and trail structures. Since all tree removal would be completely within Montgomery County right-of-way and would not encroach onto park property,

these activities would not be a use of a Section 4(f) property.

FTA proposes a temporary occupancy exception determination for the trail detour, as it satisfies the five criteria for temporary occupancy exception set forth in 23 CFR 774.13(d), as discussed in Section 6.1.1 above. Specifically, (1) the duration of the proposed work is temporary, less than the overall project construction period and no change in property ownership would occur; (2) the work is confined to a small area of the park and would result in minimal changes to the park; (3) no permanent adverse impacts to the park and no interference with the protected activities, features or attributes of the park would occur; (4) the disturbed land would be fully restored to at least as good condition; and (5) the officials with jurisdiction are providing documented agreement to these findings. As such, the temporary construction easements do not constitute a use of Rock Creek Stream Valley Park and Rock Creek National Recreational Trail.

Constructive Use

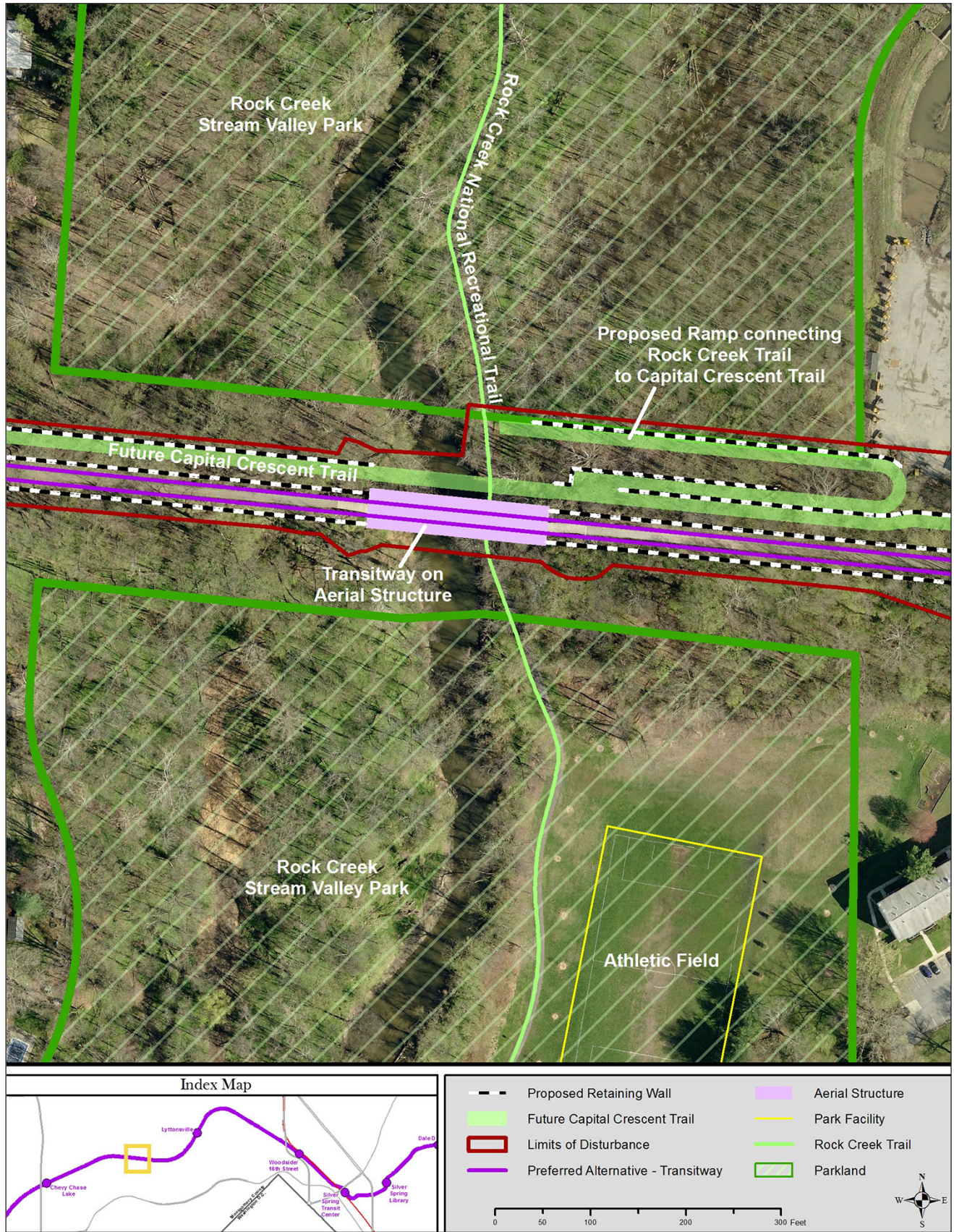
The Preferred Alternative would not permanently use any part of Rock Creek Stream Valley Park and Rock Creek National Recreational Trail. The FEIS Chapter 4.0 assessment of effects indicates that the Preferred Alternative would not cause noise, vibration, or visual effects on Rock Creek Stream Valley Park and Rock Creek National Recreational Trail. Therefore, the Preferred Alternative would not substantially impair the activities, features, or attributes—trails, lake, interpretive area, athletic fields, playgrounds and picnic areas—that qualify the park for protection under Section 4(f); no constructive use would occur.

Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park and Sligo Creek National Recreation Trail

Section 4(f) Property Description

Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park is 543 acres in size, consists of seven different units, and encompasses the Sligo Creek floodplain. Units 1 and 2 of the park are within the project study area. Unit 1 is 36.7 acres in size and extends from Chaney Drive northwest to Piney Branch Road in Takoma Park. Unit 2 is 39.4 acres in size and extends from Piney Branch

Figure 6-18. Rock Creek Stream Valley Park and Rock Creek National Recreational Trail



Road northwest to MD 29 in Four Corners. It includes Sligo Cabin Neighborhood Park, which is located directly north of Dale Drive. Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park was acquired in 1932 and is one of the oldest parks owned and maintained by M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks. This park includes playgrounds, softball fields, tennis courts, a picnic area, natural areas, and the Sligo Creek National Recreational Trail (Figure 6-19).

Figure 6-19. Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park Playground



Sligo Creek National Recreational Trail is a paved shared use trail that follows the Sligo Creek floodplain through Prince George's and Montgomery Counties. The trail is approximately 10 miles long and is one of the oldest in Montgomery County. The trail is connected to a countywide trail system. The trail is the most heavily used facility within Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park system. To the south the trail terminates at the Northwest Branch Trail.

The Sligo Creek National Recreational Trail is part of Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park and was purchased using Capper-Cramton Act funding. Within the project area, the trail parallels the north side of Wayne Avenue for approximately 200 feet before crossing over Wayne to continue south-bound between Sligo Creek and the Parkway.

Use of Section 4(f) Property — *De minimis* Use

The Preferred Alternative would share the two center lanes of Wayne Avenue where the roadway crosses Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park (Figure 6-20).

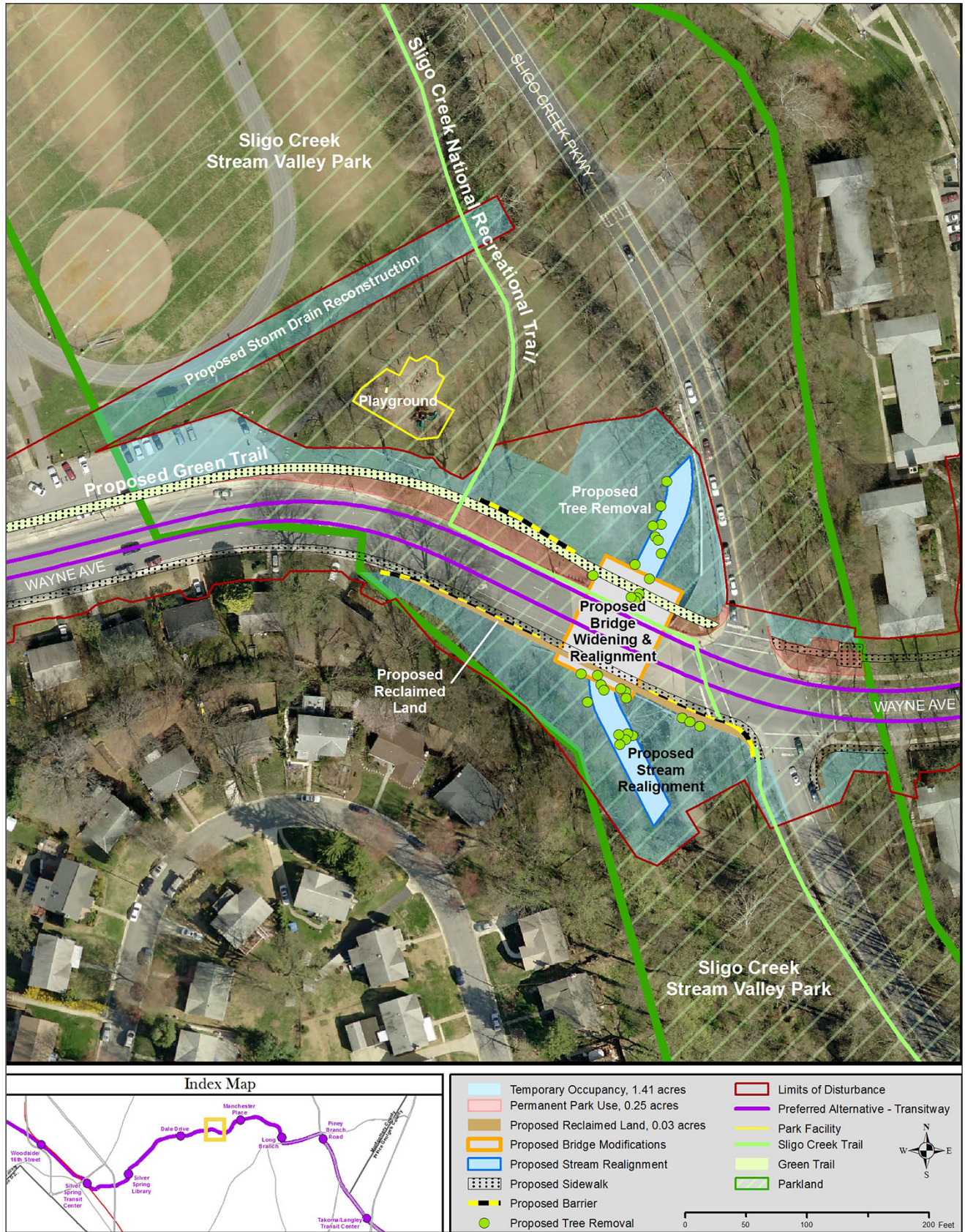
MTA would replace the existing Wayne Avenue bridge with a wider, single span structure to accommodate the transitway. As part of the Purple Line project and in coordination with the M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks and NCPC, MTA would make stream channel and floodplain improvements in the immediate vicinity of the bridge to alleviate the existing tendency for flooding and overtopping the roadway at the crossing.

Specifically, the Sligo Creek stream channel would be realigned to provide a more perpendicular crossing at the roadway. This change, in conjunction with removing the existing, skewed bridge pier, would eliminate existing constrictions to creek water flow. As part of this work, a portion of an existing drainage pipe currently conveying stormwater from Wayne Avenue in the vicinity of Silver Spring International Middle School to Sligo Creek would be replaced with a new, larger pipe to increase drainage capacity in the immediate area. The floodplain in the bridge area would be re-graded to improve its ability to manage flood water volume, stabilize slopes, and install permanent vegetation.

MTA would permanently use 0.25 acre of park property to implement these project-related elements. The Preferred Alternative would not use or affect other developed recreational facilities associated with the park or affect the retaining walls along Sligo Creek Parkway. No use of the Sligo Creek National Recreational Trail would occur.

MTA is coordinating with the M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks to develop plans that minimize harm to the park and trail. The decision to operate the transitway in mixed-traffic lanes on Wayne Avenue was done to minimize impacts to the community, including the use of park property. Further, as part of the project, MTA will address pre-existing drainage issues associated with Sligo Creek. MTA has also committed a number of other strategies to minimize park impacts. These include constructing retaining walls to limit the land area required for grading and vegetation removal, selective tree clearing to minimize tree loss, and stream bank stabilization. Memoranda of MTA meetings with

Figure 6-20. Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park and Sligo Creek National Recreational Trail



M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks are provided in Appendix I. MTA will work with M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks as the project moves forward to identify significant or champion trees in the construction area. Trees to be preserved will be marked with protective fencing to avoid impacts or removal during construction.

While MTA intends to minimize tree removal during construction and implement selective clearing techniques, trees within the proposed work area would be impacted. Trees will be planted within Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park, where practical, to mitigate tree loss that occurs as a result of the proposed project. Upon completion of the Purple Line, approximately 0.03 acre of property currently owned by Montgomery County Department of Public Works will be conveyed to M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks for inclusion in the park. The property to be conveyed to M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks (shown on Figure 6-20 as “reclaimed land”) is located directly south of Wayne Avenue within the existing roadway right-of-way and is currently used for transportation purposes; it is not Section 4(f)-protected property. Memoranda of MTA meetings with M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks are provided in Appendix I.

MTA will also replace guardrail, signs, and any other existing structures in areas it disturbs with new structures designed to match the existing elements throughout the park. Likewise, MTA will restore plantings in cleared areas.

During construction, MTA would temporarily use 1.41 acres of Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park for equipment access, drainage upgrades, and work area. The temporarily used park land is primarily grassy or wooded and undeveloped. Approximately three of 25 parking spaces in the park parking lot west of the stream would be temporarily used by MTA for access and staging. Wayne Avenue would remain open to traffic during construction; no change in park access would occur.

FTA is proposing a *de minimis* use determination for the Preferred Alternative at the Sligo Creek

Stream Valley Park and Sligo Creek National Recreational Trail. The proposed permanent and temporary uses by the proposed project would not adversely affect the features, attributes or activities—trails, playgrounds, ball fields, tennis courts, natural areas and picnic amenities—that qualify Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park and Sligo Creek National Recreational Trail for Section 4(f) protection.

Long Branch Local Park

Section 4(f) Property Description

Long Branch Local Park is located on the north side of Piney Branch Road in Silver Spring. The park is approximately 14 acres in size and includes the Long Branch Community Center, a playground, softball field, multi-use field, tennis courts, pool, and a picnic area (Figure 6-21). It was acquired by Montgomery County in 1948. The park is owned and maintained by M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks, funded in part by Maryland Program Open Space funds.

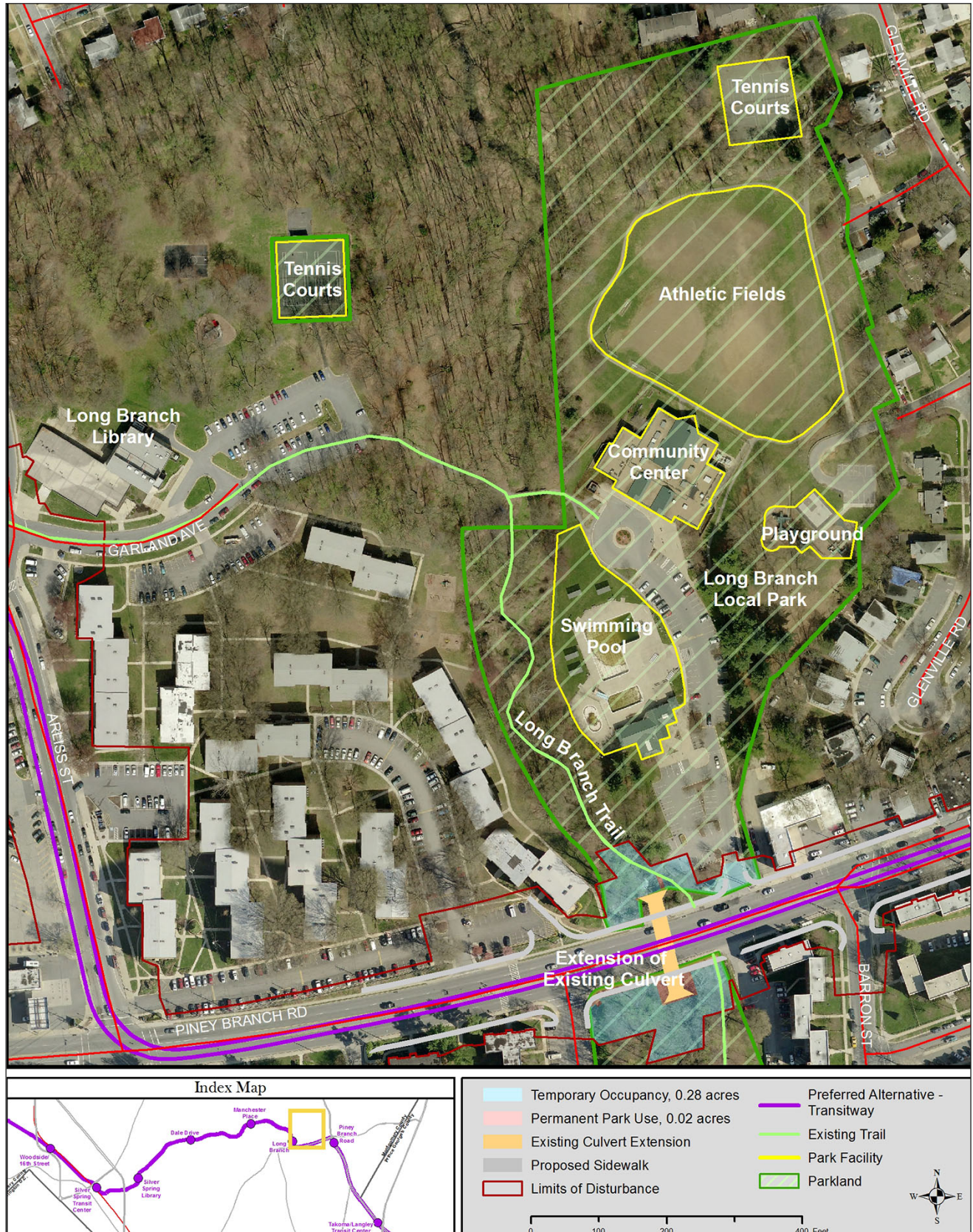
Figure 6-21: Long Branch Community Center



Use of Section 4(f) Property — Permanent Use, Not *De minimis*

The Preferred Alternative transitway would be located in the median of Piney Branch Road, which abuts Long Branch Local Park to the south (Figure 6-22). The MTA would widen Piney Branch Road to accommodate two additional lanes for the transitway, extending the culvert that conveys Long

Figure 6-22. Long Branch Local Park



Branch Stream under Piney Branch Road, and adding a parallel drainage pipe adjacent to the culvert to address flooding in the area. The proposed roadway cross section would include two dedicated lanes for the transitway, an 11-foot wide vehicle lane and a 16-foot wide mixed-traffic lane for vehicle and bicycle use in each direction, and five-foot wide sidewalks on both sides of Piney Branch Road.

MTA would permanently use approximately 0.02 acre of Long Branch Local Park property to extend the culvert and reconstruct the sidewalk. The land where the culvert would be located is undeveloped and wooded; the proposed sidewalk area is a vegetated strip of land immediately north of the existing sidewalk along Piney Branch Road. In coordination with M-NCPPC, MTA determined that its activities would not result in the closure of Long Branch Local Park at any time during or after construction.

During construction, approximately 0.28 acre of temporary construction easements would be required within Long Branch Local Park to grade the land around the existing and proposed culvert and roadway, as well as provide access during construction. The land encompassed by temporary construction easements includes the existing wooded land around the proposed culvert location, the park entrance driveway, which is needed for access, and approximately two of 92 parking spaces in the park parking lot. Long Branch Local Park would remain open throughout construction.

Existing left-turn access to and from the park at Piney Branch Road would be eliminated by the Preferred Alternative as traffic cannot cross the transitway at an unsignalized intersection. As presently designed, park access would be limited to right turns into and out of the park. Patrons traveling to the community center from the west would make a U-turn at University Boulevard to access the community center. Eastbound patrons leaving the community center would turn right onto Piney Branch Road and make a U-turn at Arliss Street to proceed eastbound on Piney Branch Road.

Coordination is on-going between MTA and M-NCPPC regarding anticipated impacts to Long

Branch Local Park that would result from implementing the Preferred Alternative. Memoranda of MTA meetings with M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks are provided in Appendix I. The Preferred Alternative would not adversely affect the features, attributes or activities—playground, community center, ball fields, tennis courts and picnic areas—that qualify the park for protection under Section 4(f). FTA proposes a *de minimis* use determination for impacts to Long Branch Local Park. However, M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks stated that they would not concur with a determination of *de minimis* use because while access would be maintained to the park and Long Branch Community Center, it would be modified to right-in/right out movements only. Since the agency with jurisdiction will not concur with a *de minimis* use determination, FTA proposes a use of Long Branch Local Park.

Avoidance Alternatives

Several avoidance options and alternatives were considered, including the potential for a transitway alignment on a new location, two sets of tunnel options (“A” and “B”), a surface alignment along Colesville Road, and the No Build Alternative. Each is described below. The transportation system management (TSM) alternative examined in the AA/DEIS was not considered to be a prudent avoidance alternative as it compromises the project to a degree that it is unreasonable to proceed with the project in light of its stated purpose and need (23 CFR 774.17(3)(i)).

New Alignment Location

Long Branch Local Park extends from just south of Pickwick Village Terrace, approximately 0.25 mile north of the proposed project area, to Piney Branch Road. There are several contiguous parks immediately north of Long Branch Local Park along the Long Branch stream valley including Long Branch-Arliss Neighborhood Park, Long Branch-Wayne Local Park, and Long Branch Stream Valley Park. A portion of Long Branch Stream Valley Park is located immediately south of Piney Branch Road and continues approximately one and a half miles southeast of the project area, ending at New Hampshire Avenue. Overall, Long Branch Local

Park and the contiguous parks form a nearly two-and-a-half mile stream valley park system that is nearly perpendicular to Piney Branch Road.

The long, linear nature of the Long Branch stream valley and associated park system, which is aligned from north to south, precludes a surface alignment that passes around and avoids the park. As shown on Figure 6-15, the University Boulevard corridor cannot be accessed from the Long Branch/Arliss area without crossing one of the Long Branch stream valley parks. All of the build alternatives evaluated in the AA/DEIS would have been aligned along Piney Branch Road, directly to the south of Long Branch Local Park. All of the build alternatives would have resulted in permanent and temporary uses of land within Long Branch Local Park, as they would all have added dedicated transit lanes in each direction.

The transportation system management (TSM) alternative examined in the AA/DEIS was not considered to be a prudent avoidance alternative as it compromises the project to a degree that it is unreasonable to proceed with the project in light of its stated purpose and need (23 CFR 774.17(3)(i)).

Tunnel—“A” Options

Two tunnel options “A” extended from Sligo Avenue near Piney Branch Road to Anne Street at University Boulevard just west of the planned Takoma/Langley Transit Center. The “A” options are shown on Figure 6-23. Both options would have been at grade along Sligo Avenue from downtown Silver Spring to Piney Branch Road. From there, they would enter a tunnel, resurfacing at the intersection of Anne Street and University Boulevard, where they would resurface and continuing eastbound on University Boulevard at grade.

One “A” option roughly followed in the direction of Park Valley Road and curved towards Anne Street staying under existing roadway rights-of-way as much as possible. The second “A” option would have tunneled in a straight line under the residential neighborhoods to reduce tunnel length, and therefore cost. The tunnels were approximately 0.8 mile long; tunnel profiles were deep enough to pass below Sligo Creek and Long Branch. A third tunnel option “A” was a variation of the longer tunnel

option. The tunnel would begin in downtown Silver Spring, west of Georgia Avenue, run below Sligo Avenue, passing under Sligo Creek and Long Branch Stream and would surface on University Boulevard near the Takoma Langley Transit Center.

Each tunnel “A” option would bypass proposed stations at Manchester Place, Long Branch, and Piney Branch. The longer options would have a station near Columbia Union College and Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park. The tunnel “A” options were dropped because they do not support the County Master Plans for economic redevelopment of the Long Branch/Flower Avenue station area, and they would be extraordinarily costly. There was little public support for a station near the college and the hospital.

While the tunnel “A” options would have avoided use of Long Branch Local Park and are considered feasible, none is considered prudent as each involves multiple factors in 23 CFR 774.17(3)(i) through 23 CFR 774.17(3)(vi), that while individually minor, cumulatively cause unique problems or impacts of extraordinary magnitude: weak performance in meeting purpose and need by not providing connections to communities between activity centers; environmental impacts by not supporting local plans for economic and community revitalization of the Long Branch/Piney Branch commercial areas; and additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs of an extraordinary magnitude. In addition, the tunnel “A” options were not supported by the public.

Tunnel—“B” Options

The tunnel “B” options evaluated would have provided longer tunnels connecting to Piney Branch Road. The tunnel “B” options are shown on Figure 6-23. The tunnel “B” options included a long tunnel under Wayne Avenue. It would start in downtown Silver Spring, travel under Wayne Avenue, under Sligo Creek, continue generally below Manchester Road and Piney Branch Road, under Long Branch, and would surface near the intersection of Piney Branch Road and Barron Street. The tunnel “B” options were approximately two miles long and the tunnel profiles were deep enough to pass under both Sligo Creek and Long

Branch. The tunnel “B” options would not have served the Long Branch neighborhood due to the cost of an underground station.

While the tunnel “B” options would have avoided use of Long Branch Local Park and are considered feasible, neither is considered prudent as each involves multiple factors in 23 CFR 774.17(3)(i) through 23 CFR 774.17(3)(vi), that while individually minor, cumulatively cause unique problems or impacts of extraordinary magnitude: weak performance in meeting purpose and need by not providing connections to communities between activity centers; environmental impacts by not supporting local plans for economic and community revitalization of the Long Branch/Piney Branch commercial areas; and additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs of an extraordinary magnitude. In addition, the tunnel “A” options were not supported by the public.

Surface Alignment—Colesville Road

A surface alignment option using Colesville Road from the Silver Spring Transit Center to University Boulevard was considered early in the project. This surface alignment would join University Boulevard in Four Corners and turn south to Takoma/Langley Crossroads at New Hampshire Avenue. Colesville Road is six lanes wide with a reversible center lane. It is a heavily used major arterial. Surrounding land uses are generally single-family residential except in downtown Silver Spring. University Boulevard is likewise a major arterial and a six-lane roadway. The extremely heavy traffic on Colesville Road would make it very difficult to implement dedicated or exclusive lanes for transit (Figure 6-24).

In April 1996 the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) conducted a feasibility study for a busway on US 29². After this study, both the Montgomery County Council and M-NCPPC - Montgomery County Department of Parks recommended that US 29 not be considered for either a busway or light rail route because of the extremely high traffic volume and lack of ability to add capacity. The surface alignment was not supported by the public or local jurisdiction for the

reasons above. Because the surface alignment extends north outside the general Purple Line corridor and then comes south again, it adds travel distance to the Purple Line alignment and, therefore, lengthens the trip time. The alignment would also add cost as well as potential environmental and community impacts associated with accommodating a corridor along Colesville Road.

While the surface alignment would have avoided use of Long Branch Local Park and is considered feasible, it is not considered prudent by a combination of the Section 4(f) criteria: it compromises the project to a degree that it is unreasonable to proceed with the project in light of its stated purpose and need (23 CFR 774.17(3)(i)); and it involves multiple factors, that while individually minor, cumulatively cause unique problems or impacts of extraordinary magnitude (23 CFR 774.17(3)(vi)).

No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative is an avoidance alternative considered in this Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation. The No Build Alternative would cause no use of the park. However, the No Build Alternative compromises the project to a degree that it is unreasonable to proceed with the project in light of its stated purpose and need. Therefore, while the No Build Alternative is feasible, it is not prudent (23 CFR 774.17(3)(i)).

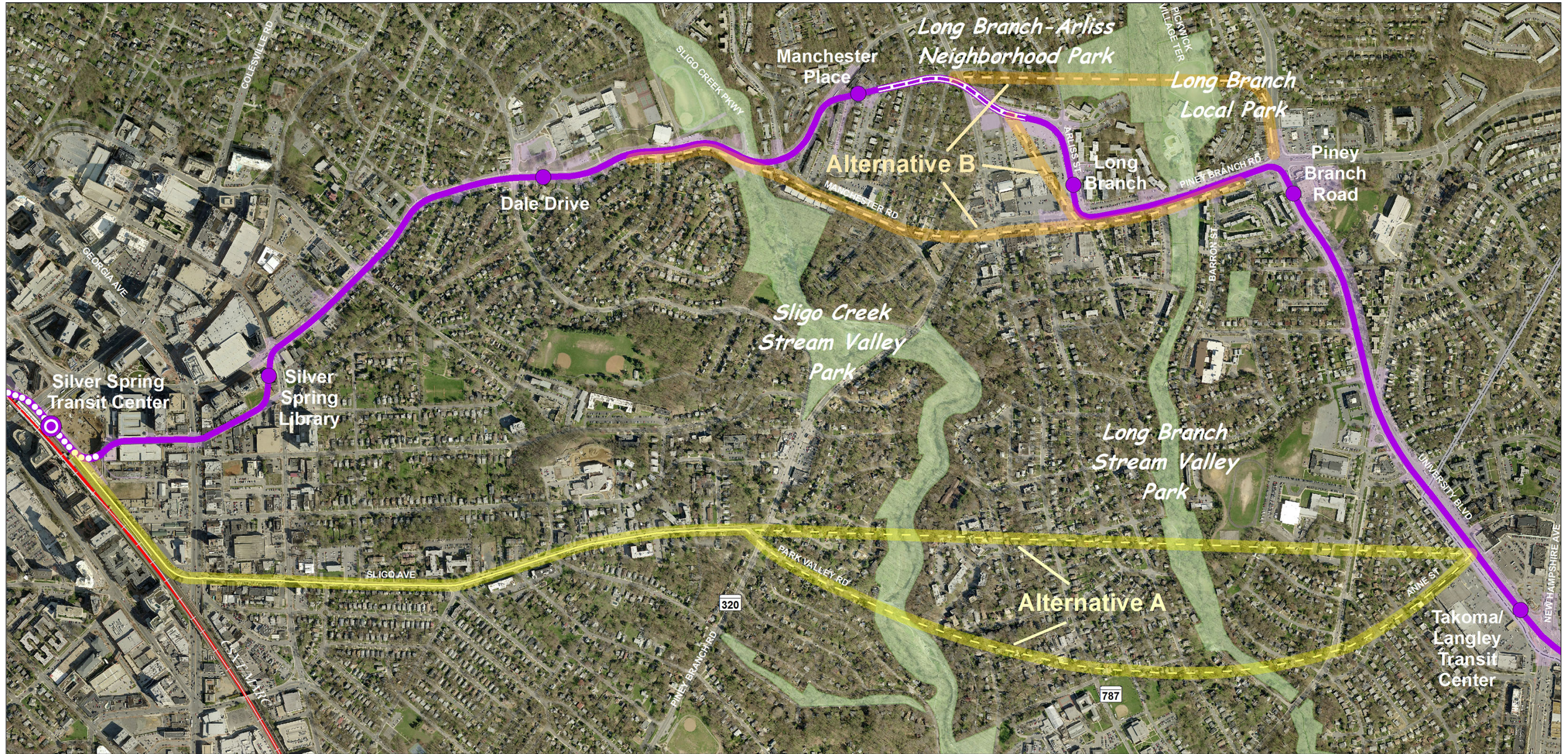
Property-specific Least Overall Harm Analysis

FTA applied the Section 4(f) criteria to determine the build alternative with the least overall harm to Long Branch Local Park. In this analysis, the Preferred Alternative and each of the build alternatives in the AA/DEIS were evaluated. In addition, the ability to provide left-turn lanes at the signalized intersection of the park was examined.

Like the Preferred Alternative, each of the AA/DEIS alternatives would be aligned in the median of Piney Branch Road and would require widening the roadway to accommodate the transitway. Each of the alternatives would require two dedicated travel lanes, one in each direction. The amount of widening would be the same among the alternatives, and the reasons for widening to the south would be the same among the alternatives.

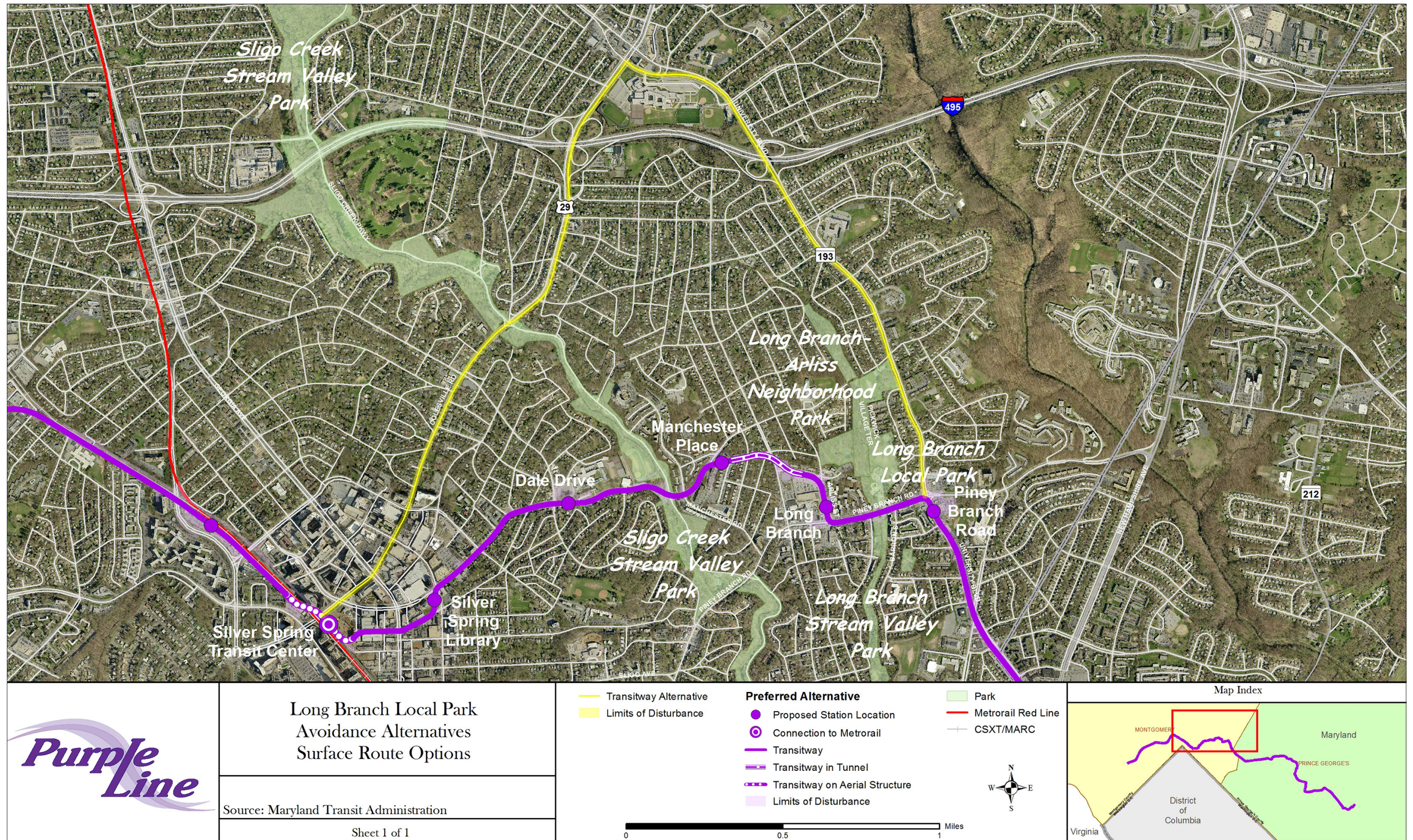
² US 29 Busway Feasibility Study, Montgomery County Department of Transportation, April 1996

Figure 6-23. Long Branch Local Park Avoidance Alternatives—Tunnel Options



	<p>Long Branch Local Park Avoidance Alternatives Tunnel Options</p>	<p>Alternative A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transitway Transitway in Tunnel Limits of Disturbance 	<p>Preferred Alternative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed Station Location Connection to Metrorail Transitway Transitway in Tunnel Transitway on Aerial Structure Limits of Disturbance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park Metrorail Red Line CSXT/MARC 	<p>Map Index</p>
	<p>Source: Maryland Transit Administration</p> <p>Sheet 1 of 1</p>	<p>Alternative B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transitway in Tunnel Limits of Disturbance 	<p>Scale: 0, 500, 1,000, 2,000 Feet</p>		

Figure 6-24. Long Branch Local Park Avoidance Alternatives—Surface Option



The amount and location of Long Branch Local Park use would be the same for each alternative, the ability of MTA to mitigate adverse impacts to the property, and the relative severity of the remaining harm to the property after mitigation are the same (23 CFR 774.3(c)(1)(i) and (ii)). Among the alternatives, the Preferred Alternative most strongly meets the project purpose and need (23 CFR 774.3(c)(1)(v)). The magnitude of adverse impacts to properties not protected by Section 4(f) is similar among the alternatives (23 CFR 774.3(c)(1)(vi)).

The feasibility of providing left-turn lanes at a signalized park intersection with Piney Branch Road was considered. Providing left-turn lanes on Piney Branch Road would necessitate acquiring additional right-of-way and widening the road to provide sufficient room for the lanes. Roadway widening would use more Long Branch Local Park land as well as land from Long Branch Stream Valley Park across the roadway.

For these reasons, and despite the Preferred Alternative being more costly than all but the High Investment LRT Alternative (23 CFR 774.3(c)(1)(vii)), the Preferred Alternative is the alternative with the least overall harm to parks protected by Section 4(f).

Section 6.4.3 presents a corridor-wide least overall harm analysis that considers all Section 4(f) properties.

All Possible Planning to Minimize Harm

As defined in 23 CFR 774.17, FTA and MTA are coordinating with the officials with jurisdiction to evaluate and incorporate into the Preferred Alternative all possible planning to minimize harm. In terms of design, the primary means of minimizing park use is aligning the Preferred Alternative on Piney Branch Road, an existing road and bridge crossing the park. MTA minimized the width of proposed roadway widening to that which is needed to accommodate the Preferred Alternative, the roadway cross section, and the drainage improvements. Other strategies MTA has incorporated into the Preferred Alternative design to minimize park use include retaining walls to limit the area of grading and vegetation removal, selective tree clearing to minimize tree loss, and stream bank stabilization.

Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle connections to the park are included in the Preferred Alternative design. The design of Piney Branch Road includes bicycle lanes enhancing bike access to Long Branch Local Park and facilities, as well as the Long Branch Trail. In addition, there is a proposed new traffic signal with a pedestrian phase at Garland Avenue. The signal will facilitate safe crossing for people traveling between the Long Branch Trail, Long Branch Local Park and local trail/path systems. Improved pedestrian crossings would also be provided on Piney Branch Road at Barron Street.

In addition, as part of the proposed roadway widening, sidewalks on both the north and south sides of Piney Branch Road would be reconstructed. The *Draft Long Branch Sector Plan* (December 2012) indicates that wider sidewalks are proposed throughout the area to provide pedestrian-friendly development that would increase community connectivity. Along Piney Branch Road, the Long Branch Sector Plan ultimately proposes 15-foot wide sidewalks. The Preferred Alternative includes the replacement of the existing five-foot wide sidewalks; however the proposed extension/expansion of the existing culvert under Piney Branch Road is being designed with a higher head-wall so that when wider sidewalks are implemented in the future by Montgomery County there is sufficient space and no additional structural modifications of the culvert would be required at Long Branch Stream.

While the proposed project would not restrict pedestrian and bicycle access to Long Branch Local Park and amenities located within the park, as currently designed, the Preferred Alternative would modify vehicular access to the park, as described above. Since maintaining full vehicular access to the Long Branch Community Center is a priority of M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks, MTA is committed to continue to evaluate options to allow left turns and/or facilitate more convenient access to the site.

During construction, potential use of park land would be minimized by MTA's commitment to complete as much construction as possible from the Piney Branch Road right-of-way rather than using park property. Prior to the start of construction,

MTA will work with M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks to identify significant or champion trees in the construction area. Trees to be preserved will be marked with protective fencing to avoid impacts or removal during construction. While MTA intends to minimize tree removal during construction and implement selective clearing techniques, tree removal cannot be avoided completely. To compensate for tree loss, new trees will be planted within Long Branch Local Park, particularly along the stream if appropriate. Long Branch Local Park currently has problems with invasive vegetation species. Within the immediate project area, MTA will remove invasive species and replant the disturbed area with native species. In addition, MTA will restore all areas it has cleared along the Long Branch Stream as a result of its construction activities.

MTA will also replace guardrail, signs, and other existing structures disturbed or removed within its construction area with new structures designed to match the existing elements throughout the park.

Long Branch Stream Valley Park

Section 4(f) Property Description

Long Branch Stream Valley Park is approximately 41 acres in size. The park extends from Franklin Avenue to the confluence with Sligo Creek near the Montgomery County-Prince George's County Line north to Piney Branch Road along Long Branch stream. Amenities within Long Branch Stream Valley Park include playgrounds, athletic fields, athletic courts, picnic areas, natural areas, and a paved recreational/commuter trail. The park is owned and maintained by M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks, funded in part by Maryland Program Open Space funds. Within the project study area, the park is an undeveloped forested area that includes the Long Branch Trail.

Use of Section 4(f) Property — *De minimis* Use

The Preferred Alternative would be aligned within the median of Piney Branch Road between Long Branch Stream Valley Park to the south and Long Branch Local Park to the north (Figure 6-25). In its coordination with the M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks, MTA determined it would use approximately 0.11 acre of property from

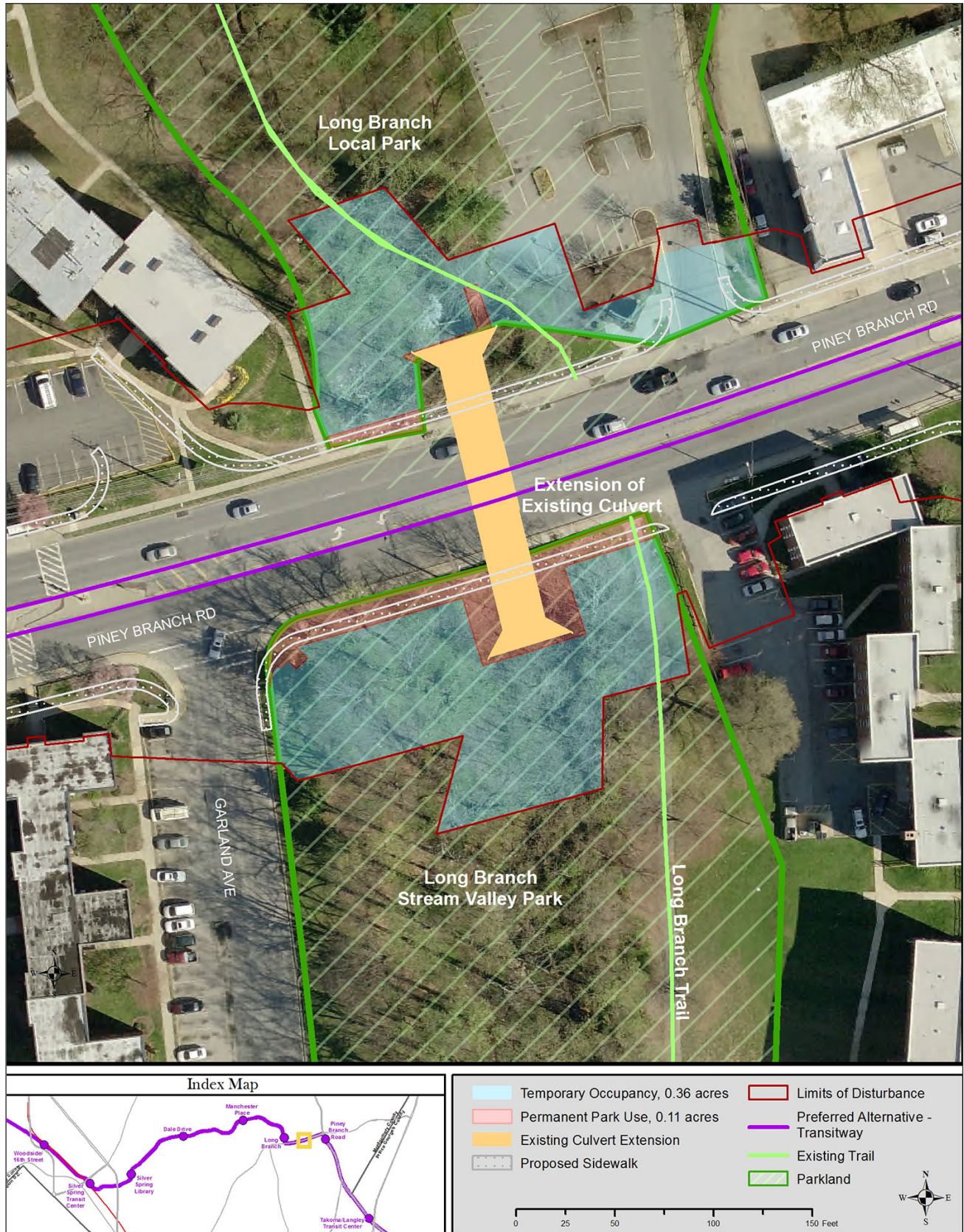
Long Branch Stream Valley Park to widen Piney Branch Road to accommodate the Preferred Alternative, lengthen the existing culvert conveying Long Branch under Piney Branch Road and reconstruct sidewalks along the roadway. The road cross section would include two dedicated lanes for the transitway, one in each direction, an 11-foot wide vehicle lane and a 16-foot wide mixed-traffic lane for vehicle and bicycle use in each direction. Five-foot wide sidewalks would be provided on both north and south sides of Piney Branch Road. The Preferred Alternative would include improved signalized pedestrian crossings along Piney Branch Road, which would benefit trail users wanting to cross Piney Branch Road.

During construction, approximately 0.36 acre of temporary construction easements would be required for access to the work area along Piney Branch Road. Specifically, the work area is needed to enable construction of the widened roadway and culvert extension. The area of proposed temporary easements is currently wooded and undeveloped. Long Branch Stream Valley Park and Long Branch Trail would remain open throughout construction.

MTA is coordinating closely with the M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks, the officials with jurisdiction over the park, to minimize use of park property. Specifically, roadway widening is primarily to the south to minimize impacts to the access driveway of Long Branch Local Park to the north, the portion of the Long Branch Trail within the park, and the businesses east and west of the park. The portion of the park to be permanently used is undeveloped and wooded. Memoranda of MTA meetings with M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks are provided in Appendix I.

The proposed permanent and temporary uses by the Preferred Alternative would not adversely affect the features, attributes or activities—playgrounds athletic fields, picnic areas, natural areas and trails—that qualify the park for Section 4(f) protection. FTA is proposing a *de minimis* use determination for the Preferred Alternative at Long Branch Stream Valley Park.

Figure 6-25. Long Branch Stream Valley and Long Branch Local Parks



New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park

Section 4(f) Property Description

New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park is located along University Boulevard near Piney Branch Road. The property was purchased in 1976 by M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks for use as a park (Figure 6-26). The park is 4.7 acres in size and features two playgrounds, a football/soccer field, and a picnic area. The park is owned and maintained by M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks, funded in part by Maryland Program Open Space funds. M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks is planning to redevelop the park in the future.

Figure 6-26. New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park Playground



Use of Section 4(f) Property — *De minimis* Use

The Preferred Alternative would be aligned through the median of Piney Branch Road, turning southeast into the median of University Boulevard (Figure 6-27). The proposed Piney Branch Road Station would be located on University Boulevard directly south of the intersection with Piney Branch Road. University Boulevard would be widened to accommodate the dedicated transitway and station, while maintaining two lanes of traffic in each direction, as well as turn lanes, and sidewalks.

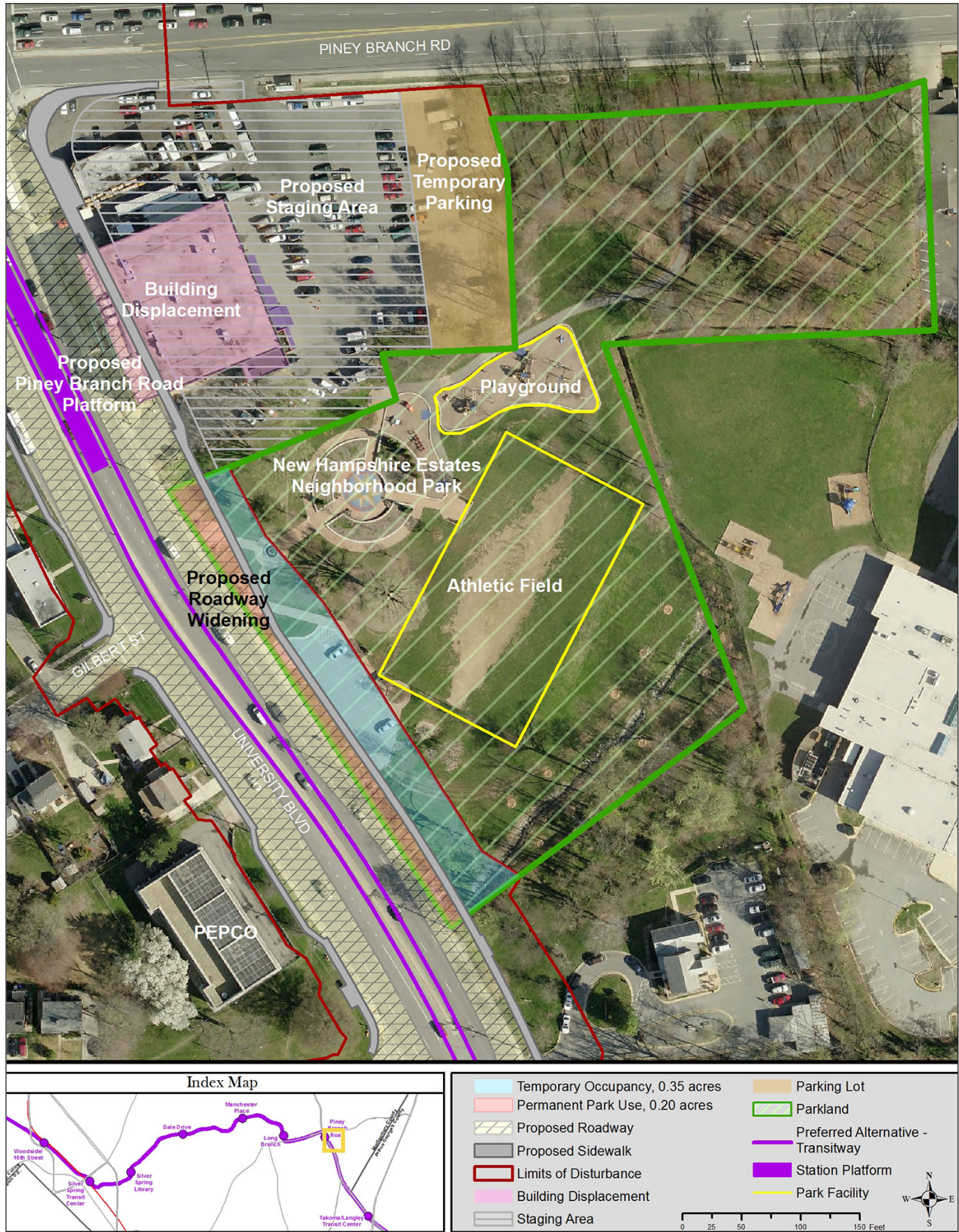
Initially, MTA considered widening University Boulevard toward and/or away from the park. However, widening away from the park would result in substantial residential and business displacements. In addition, it would require the displacement of an existing Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco) station located along University

Boulevard, directly west of the southern portion of New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park. For these reasons and the substantially high impacts of the relocations, particularly the Pepco station, MTA aligned the transitway in the median of University Boulevard, and initiated discussions with M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks regarding potential use of a portion of the park if acceptable minimization and mitigation strategies could be provided. Widening University Boulevard would result in the permanent use of 0.20 acre of New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park, directly adjacent to University Boulevard. Park amenities affected by the use would include some sitting and grassy areas, landscaped structures, artwork, decorative brick paving adjacent to University Boulevard, and an existing parking lot.

In coordination with the M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks regarding measures to minimize harm to the park, MTA agreed to eliminate the space between the expanded roadway curb and sidewalk and implement a closed drainage system. In addition, MTA would address a drainage issue on the eastern edge of the park by upgrading an existing stormwater culvert and grading the associated stream for a short distance. Memoranda of MTA meetings with M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks are provided in Appendix I.

As mitigation for its use of park property, MTA will provide replacement land on property it would acquire adjacent to New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park. The land would be used by MTA during Purple Line construction for temporary parking and construction staging, then provided to the park as permanent replacement land after construction is completed. M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks would accommodate the replacement land in their future redevelopment plan for the park. MTA will continue to coordinate with the M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks as the Purple Line project advances regarding the replacement property as well as additional minimization and mitigation strategies, particularly related to the affected park amenities.

Figure 6-27. New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park



During construction, MTA would temporarily use 0.35 acre of the park to undertake the roadway widening, and stream and culvert upgrades. The park land used temporarily includes grassy and landscaped areas, paved walkways, and an existing parking lot. However, MTA would provide temporary parking, and would not adversely affect most activities, features or attributes of the park—playgrounds, athletic field, picnic area, and aesthetic features. MTA will coordinate with the M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks as the Purple Line project advances regarding temporary construction effects.

FTA is proposing a *de minimis* use determination for the Preferred Alternative at the New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park. The proposed permanent and temporary uses of the Preferred Alternative would not adversely affect activities or features, attributes or activities—playgrounds, athletic field, picnic areas and aesthetic features—that qualify the New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park for Section 4(f) protection.

Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park and Northwest Branch Trail

Section 4(f) Property Description

Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park is 510 acres in size and is located along the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River, north and south of University Boulevard (MD 193), between Riggs Road and Adelphi Road in Prince George's County. The park was purchased in part using Capper-Cramton Act funding. In the vicinity of the Preferred Alternative, the park also includes Lane Manor Community Recreation and Aquatic Center, Adelphi Manor Community Recreation Center, and University Hills Neighborhood Park. Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park and all of the related facilities are owned and maintained by M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation, funded in part by Maryland Program Open Space funds.

Northwest Branch Trail (Figure 6-28) is located in southeastern Montgomery County and northeastern Prince George's County. It is 16 miles in length and extends north and south of the Capital Beltway. North of the Capital Beltway,

approximately ten miles of the trail's surface is natural surface. The hard surface portion of the trail is part of the Prince George's County's Anacostia Tributary Trail System, while the natural surface portion is used for hiking and extends to Wheaton Regional Park. Heading southeast, the trail

Figure 6-28. Northwest Branch Trail

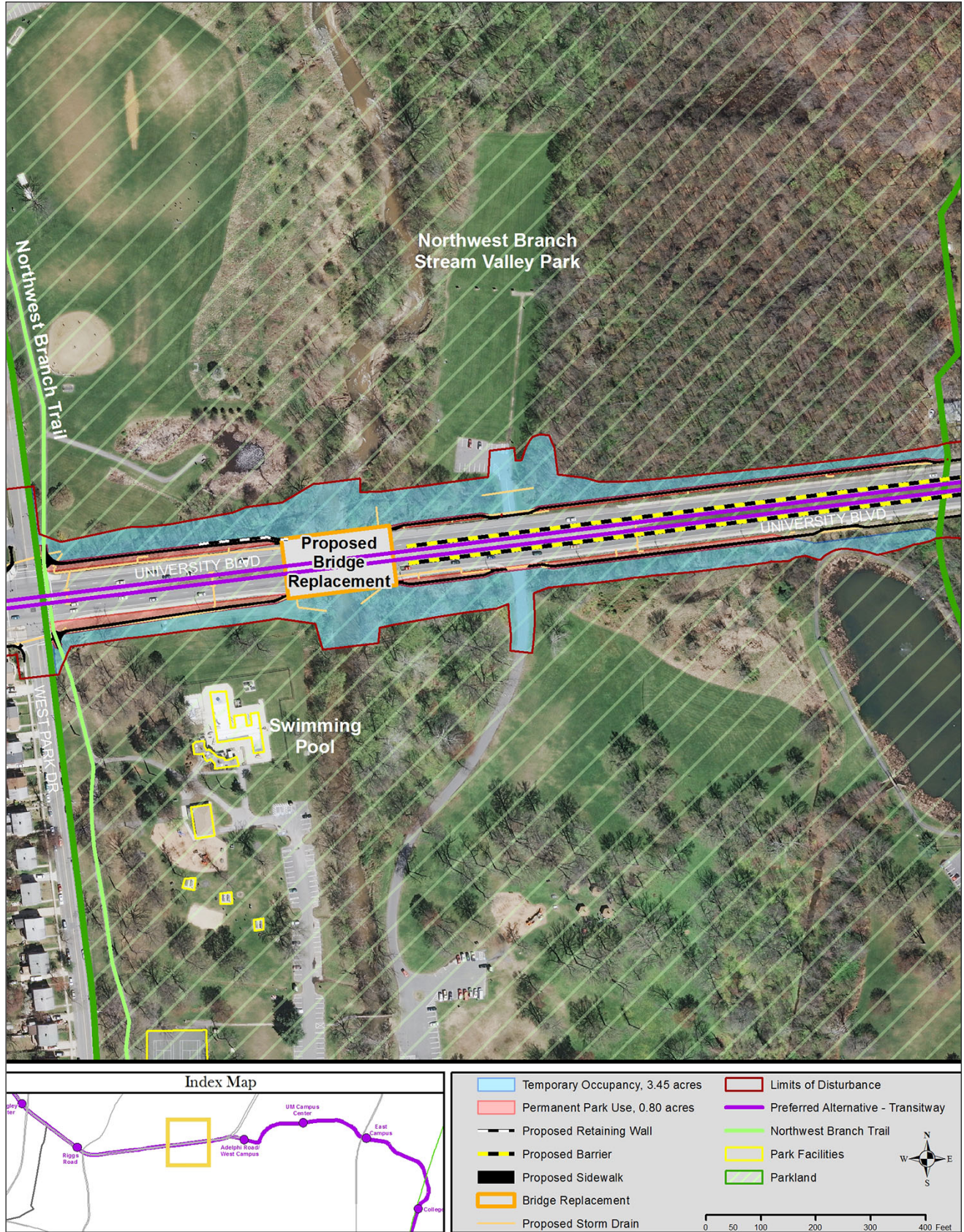


extends into Prince George's County, ending at the confluence of the Northwest and Northeast branches of the Anacostia River in Hyattsville. The trail has a paved asphalt surface at University Boulevard and in the immediate vicinity.

Use of Section 4(f) Property — *De minimis* Use

The Preferred Alternative transitway would be aligned through the median of University Boulevard, which crosses Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park perpendicularly (Figure 6-29). The Preferred Alternative includes widening University Boulevard to accommodate the proposed Purple Line and replacing the existing bridge over the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River with a new, wider bridge to match the wider roadway. MTA would permanently use approximately 0.80 acre of property from Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park. The parkland to be used is grassy or wooded and undeveloped. MTA would not permanently use any facilities associated with Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park.

Figure 6-29. Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park and Northwest Branch Trail



In consultation with the M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation and NCPC on measures to minimize harm, MTA has agreed to address several drainage and water quality issues along University Boulevard. Taking this action would require additional temporary construction easements; however, land used for upgrading the existing drainage system would be returned to the park upon completion of the construction of the project. In particular, both north and south of University Boulevard, between West Park Drive and Temple Street, the existing drainage ditches directly adjacent to University Boulevard would be relocated to convey discharge toward the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River. A retaining wall would be constructed near the eastern end of an existing drainage ditch located directly east of West Park Drive to maintain the ditch and avoid disturbing the embankment that supports the existing pond, located to the north of the proposed wall.

Access to the park would change with the permanent closure of the median on University Boulevard between West Park Drive and Adelphi Road, eliminating left-turning movements. The median closure is necessitated by the Purple Line using the median and the prohibition of unsignalized turns across the transitway. Vehicles traveling west on University Boulevard would have to make a U-turn at West Park Drive to access the existing playground within Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park, east of Lane Manor Community Recreation and Aquatic Center. Eastbound vehicles would have to make a U-turn at Adelphi Road to access the archery range located to the north of University Boulevard and west of Temple Street. Memoranda of MTA meetings with M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks Recreation and NCPC are provided in Appendix I.

MTA would temporarily use approximately 3.45 acres of Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park during construction to access work areas and address drainage issues. The Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River would be temporarily impacted approximately 125 feet upstream to 125 feet

downstream of University Boulevard to temporarily divert the stream while the new University Boulevard Bridge is built and grading refinements are made to the stream channel north of University Boulevard. These refinements would provide positive drainage to the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River and the existing swale that conveys stormwater from University Boulevard to the stream. These activities are intended to improve the water quality of and drainage flows to the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River. The temporarily used park lands would be returned to M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation when construction is complete. The Northwest Branch Trail would be temporarily relocated from the eastern side to the western side of West Park Drive during construction. Full access to the trail and park facilities would be maintained during construction.

In coordination with M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation and NCPC, MTA determined that the Preferred Alternative would not adversely affect the features, attributes or activities—trails, playgrounds, aquatic center, athletic fields and courts, picnic and recreational areas and a duck pond—that qualify the park for Section 4(f) protection. FTA is proposing a *de minimis* use determination for the Preferred Alternative at Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park.

Anacostia River Stream Valley Park and Northeast Branch Trail

Section 4(f) Property Description

Anacostia River Stream Valley Park encompasses 794 acres of land and includes the following features and attributes: playgrounds, athletic fields, community centers, various courts, and trails (Figure 6-30). The park is owned and maintained by M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation, funded in part by Maryland Program Open Space funds. In the vicinity of the Preferred Alternative, the park was purchased in part using Capper-Cramton Act Funding. Two national bicycle routes, the American Discovery Trail and the East Coast Greenway, converge on the Northeast Branch Trail in the proposed project area and cross the Preferred Alternative alignment.

The Northeast Branch Trail is part of the Anacostia Tributary Trail system. It is owned and maintained by M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation. The Northeast Branch Trail is 3.4 miles in length and runs northeast from near US 1 in Hyattsville to Lake Artemesia. Several disconnected sections of trail were constructed prior to the 1990s. Beginning in the early 1990s additional sections were constructed to form one continuous trail.

Figure 6-30. Anacostia River Stream Valley Park



Use of Section 4(f) Property — *De minimis* Use

MTA, in coordination with M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation and NCPC, determined that the Preferred Alternative transitway would be aligned parallel to and immediately south of River Road on Anacostia River Stream Valley Park land. Whereas MTA initially considered an alignment within River Road, design factors led MTA to pursue the Preferred Alternative alignment. First, the roadway curve at the M Square station location does not meet design requirements which prescribe a 300 foot straight section. Second, MTA would have had to widen River Road to accommodate the transitway, thereby using park property and incur additional project cost.

The transitway would cross Northeast Branch Trail perpendicularly. The transitway would be built on a permanent embankment for most of its length through the park, while it would be on its own structure over Northeast Branch Trail, the Northeast Branch of the Anacostia River, and the unnamed trail connection to Kenilworth Avenue (Figure 6-31). The transitway would be at approxi-

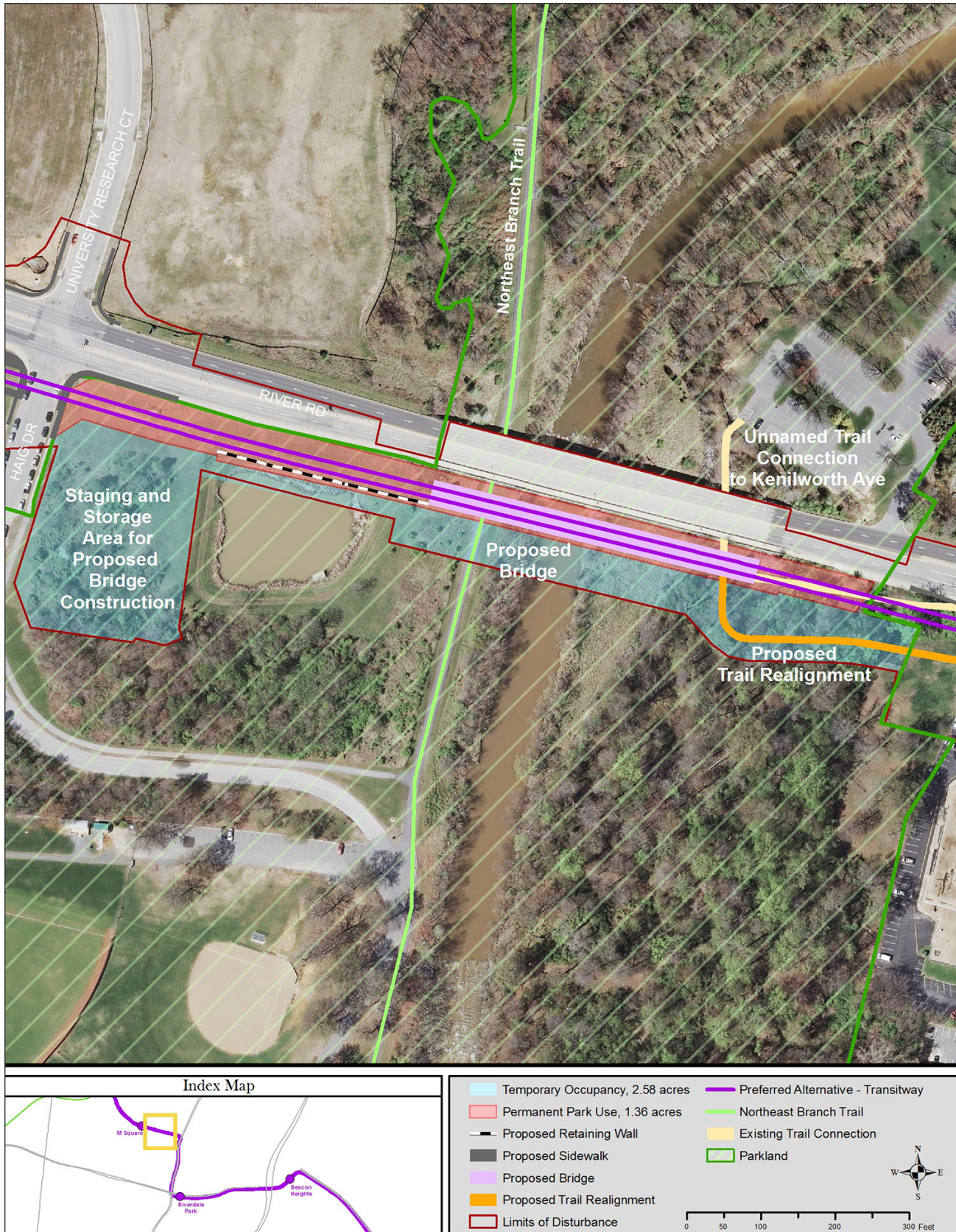
mately the same elevation as River Road. The portions of the park that would be temporarily used are grassy or wooded and undeveloped.

MTA would permanently use approximately 1.20 acres of Anacostia River Stream Valley Park owned by M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation. Property that would be permanently used abuts River Road to the south and extends from Haig Drive to the end of M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation property, just west of Kenilworth Avenue and east of the Northeast Branch of the Anacostia River. The land to be permanently used is partly grassy and partly wooded and undeveloped.

In consultation with the M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation and NCPC on measures to minimize harm, MTA has agreed to permanently relocate the unnamed trail connection to Kenilworth Avenue that is currently located east of the stream on the south side of River Road. Specifically, the trail would be shifted to the south, outside of the transitway alignment. In addition, where Haig Drive and University Research Court intersect with River Road, MTA would remove the traffic circle and replace it with a signalized intersection prior to construction to allow for safe pedestrian access and vehicular traffic crossing the Preferred Alternative transitway. The replacement of the traffic circle with a signalized intersection would also serve to avoid the queuing of traffic when trains are moving through. Memoranda of MTA meetings with M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks Recreation and NCPC are provided in Appendix I.

Overall, MTA would temporarily use approximately 2.58 acres of the Anacostia River Stream Valley Park during construction. Construction activities would occur primarily to the south of River Road for the proposed transitway, and relocation of the unnamed trail connection to Kenilworth Avenue, including a staging and storage area for bridge construction. MTA would use a currently undeveloped parcel of park land at the southeast

Figure 6-31. Anacostia River Stream Valley Park and Northeast Branch Trail



quadrant of the River Road-Haig Drive/University Research Court intersection as the temporary construction staging area. MTA is coordinating with M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation regarding the long-term use of this parcel. Upon completion of construction, MTA will clear and grade the parcel, enabling M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation to construct a futsal³ court on the site at a later date. Full access to the park would be maintained during construction.

The Northeast Branch Trail would be temporarily detoured to Haig Drive during Preferred Alternative construction. The detoured trail would cross River Road at grade to University Research Court, and through the M Square property, where it would reconnect to Northeast Branch Trail. Full access to the trail would be maintained during construction. Upon completion of the project, the trail would be returned to its existing configuration.

The proposed permanent and temporary uses by the Preferred Alternative would not adversely affect the features, attributes or activities—playgrounds, athletic fields, and courts, community centers and trails—that qualify the park for Section 4(f) protection. FTA is proposing a *de minimis* use determination for the Preferred Alternative at Anacostia River Stream Valley Park. No permanent use of Northeast Branch Trail or the unnamed trail connection to Kenilworth Avenue would occur.

Baltimore-Washington Parkway

Section 4(f) Property Description

The Baltimore-Washington Parkway (MD 295) (PG: 69-26) was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1991. The Baltimore-Washington Parkway (Gladys Noon Spellman Parkway) is a 32-mile divided highway that extends from the US 50/MD 201 interchange at the Washington DC border, north to I-95 in Baltimore (Figure 6-32). For most of its length the roadway is four lanes wide. Built between 1950 and 1954 and opened in 1954, the parkway has a variable-width median and is bounded by a buffer of natural forest and

cultivated vegetation. The roadway follows gently rolling terrain and has modest vistas. The median varies between 15 to 200 feet wide and the right-of-way ranges from 400 to 800 feet wide. The median vegetation ranges from mown grass to dense woodland. In the study area, the parkway passes over Riverdale Road on two bridges separated by a wide median. The land around the bridges consists of sparsely treed and grassed slopes within the interchange, with a denser, forested median to the north and south of the interchange and denser forests along the eastern and western boundaries of the parkway to the north of Riverdale Road. Denser forests exist along the eastern and western boundaries of the parkway to the south of Riverdale Road with residential development abutting both sides of the park property.

Figure 6-32. Baltimore-Washington Parkway Bridge



The parkway was originally designed as a defense highway and alternate commuter route. Nineteen miles of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway are owned and maintained by the National Park Service (NPS). The NPS-owned portion of the parkway extends from the eastern border of Washington DC northeast through Prince George's County and into Anne Arundel County to the MD 175 (Jessup Road) interchange, where the SHA jurisdictional boundary begins. The parkway's appended name commemorates Gladys Noon Spellman, a local educator and former congresswoman who died in 1988. The portion of the parkway in the study area is owned by the US government and operated by the NPS.

³ Futsal is a variant of soccer that is played on a smaller hard surface pitch.

Use of Section 4(f) Property — *De minimis* Use

The Preferred Alternative would be aligned directly south of Riverdale Road (MD 410) on two dedicated transitway lanes (Figure 6-33). As the existing parkway bridges over Riverdale Road are insufficiently long to span Riverdale Road and the new transitway, MTA would replace the existing Baltimore-Washington Parkway bridges with longer bridge spans.

The alignment of the Preferred Alternative along the southern side of Riverdale Road would require permanent use of approximately 0.61 acre of property from the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. MTA has coordinated closely with the NPS during refinement of the Preferred Alternative, including the application of strategies to minimize harm to the parkway. Prior to selecting the southern alignment of the transitway, MTA considered several alignment options that would not cause bridge impacts and replacement, and would minimize the amount of new right-of-way needed. Among these, single track options and mixed-traffic lanes on Riverdale Road proved to cause undesirable conflicts with traffic movements to and from the parkway ramps. In both cases, these options would share lanes on Riverdale Road, resulting in substantial traffic delays and queuing on Riverdale Road as well as on the parkway ramps. A tunnel option was determined to be infeasible due to the terrain, the bridge foundations, and community impacts.

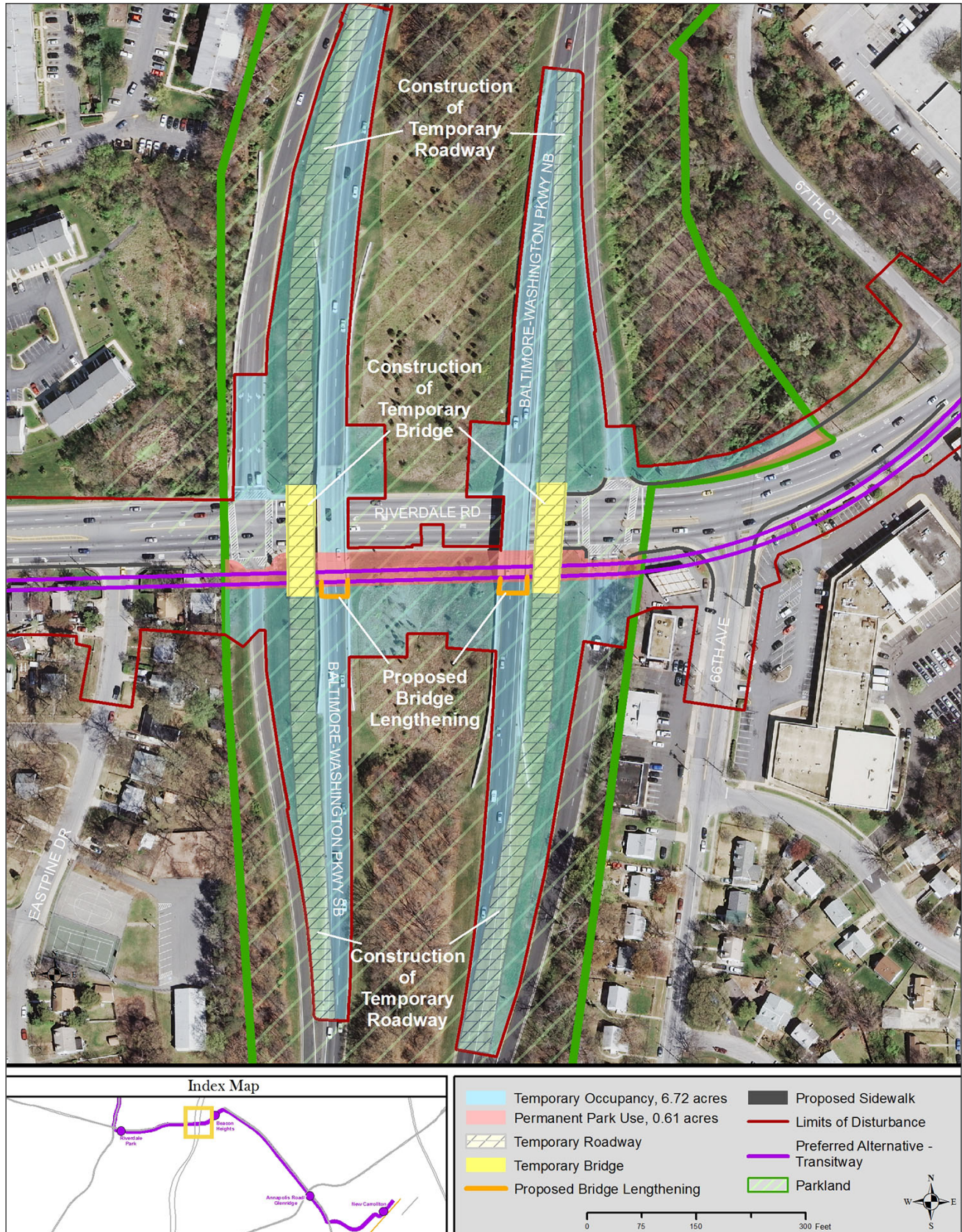
Other strategies MTA has applied to minimize harm to the parkway include aligning the Preferred Alternative along the existing alignment of Riverdale Road at the parkway as opposed to a new alignment. MTA developed and evaluated numerous construction staging and maintenance of traffic concepts in consultation with the NPS. Ultimately, the selected option aligns two two-lane temporary parkway bridges and approaches to the outside of the existing bridges to avoid impacts to the forested areas and an archeological site located within the median. The bridges would enable normal traffic operations on the parkway during construction. MTA evaluated the traffic effects and determined that traffic would not back up onto the parkway ramps during project construction or operation.

MTA developed the new, permanent bridge design in consultation with the NPS. The design complements the appearance of the existing bridges along the parkway by incorporating the gentle arch span. The new structures would be located along the same horizontal alignment as the existing parkway roadways and would be the same width as the existing bridges. During construction, MTA will dismantle the stone façade of the existing bridge abutments and reuse the material on the new, permanent bridges to ensure consistency of materials. If additional stone is required, it would come from the same source, if possible, or would be selected in consultation with NPS to complement the existing stone.

MTA also developed overhead contact wire shielding in consultation with the NPS that would be integrated into the new, permanent bridge structures to have a low visual impact to views of and from the parkway. The design of the shields would match the arch of the existing bridge structure, blending in visually as vehicles approach on Riverdale Road. The shields would not extend above the bridge railings so as to maintain view from the parkway to the adjacent landscape. The overhead contact wires would be attached to the bridges to minimize the number of poles used.

MTA would require a temporary easement on the park property of approximately 6.72 acres to provide contractor access and work area. The construction phase of the Preferred Alternative would not require the closure of Baltimore-Washington Parkway at any time during or after construction. Prior to construction, MTA will identify features, such as trees and archeological sites, outside the work area to protect them during construction. Resources would be identified and marked. MTA is coordinating with the NPS to develop landscape plans using native and approved species. Sidewalks in the immediate vicinity of the parkway would be improved to address ADA requirements. Memoranda of MTA meetings with NPS are provided in Appendix I.

Figure 6-33. Baltimore-Washington Parkway Park Use



MTA would require approximately 6.72 acres of temporary construction easements on parkway property to install the temporary bridges, realign the parkway approaches to the temporary bridges, construct the new bridges, and construct the transitway. Approximately 4.26 acres of park property and 2.60 acres of parkway roadway would be temporarily used by MTA to build the Preferred Alternative. The park land that would be temporarily used is grassy with scattered trees or wooded areas. Throughout the duration of bridge construction, full access to the Baltimore-Washington Parkway from Riverdale Road would be maintained.

Through coordination with NPS, FTA determined that the proposed permanent and temporary uses by the Preferred Alternative would not adversely affect the features, attributes or activities—historic parkway—that qualify the Baltimore-Washington Parkway for Section 4(f) protection. FTA is proposing a *de minimis* use determination for the Preferred Alternative at the Baltimore-Washington Parkway because of the mitigation measures proposed and the coordination undertaken with NPS to minimize harm.

Glenridge Community Park

Section 4(f) Property Description

Glenridge Community Park is located directly southwest of MD 410 (Veterans Parkway), the Northern Area Maintenance Glenridge Service Center, and Glenridge Elementary School, north of Freeport Avenue, east of Trinidad and Greenland Streets, and south of Rosalie Lane in Glenridge, Prince George's County (Figure 6-34). The M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation owns 62 acres of land, of which the park encompasses approximately 53.5 acres and the remaining 8.5 acres of land is the Northern Area Maintenance Glenridge Service Center. The park was funded in part with Maryland Program Open Space funds. The service center has no recreational facilities, is not part of Glenridge Community Park and is not open to the public. For these reasons, the Service Center property is not considered a Section 4(f) property and is not evaluated in this chapter.

Figure 6-34. Glenridge Community Park Picnic Area



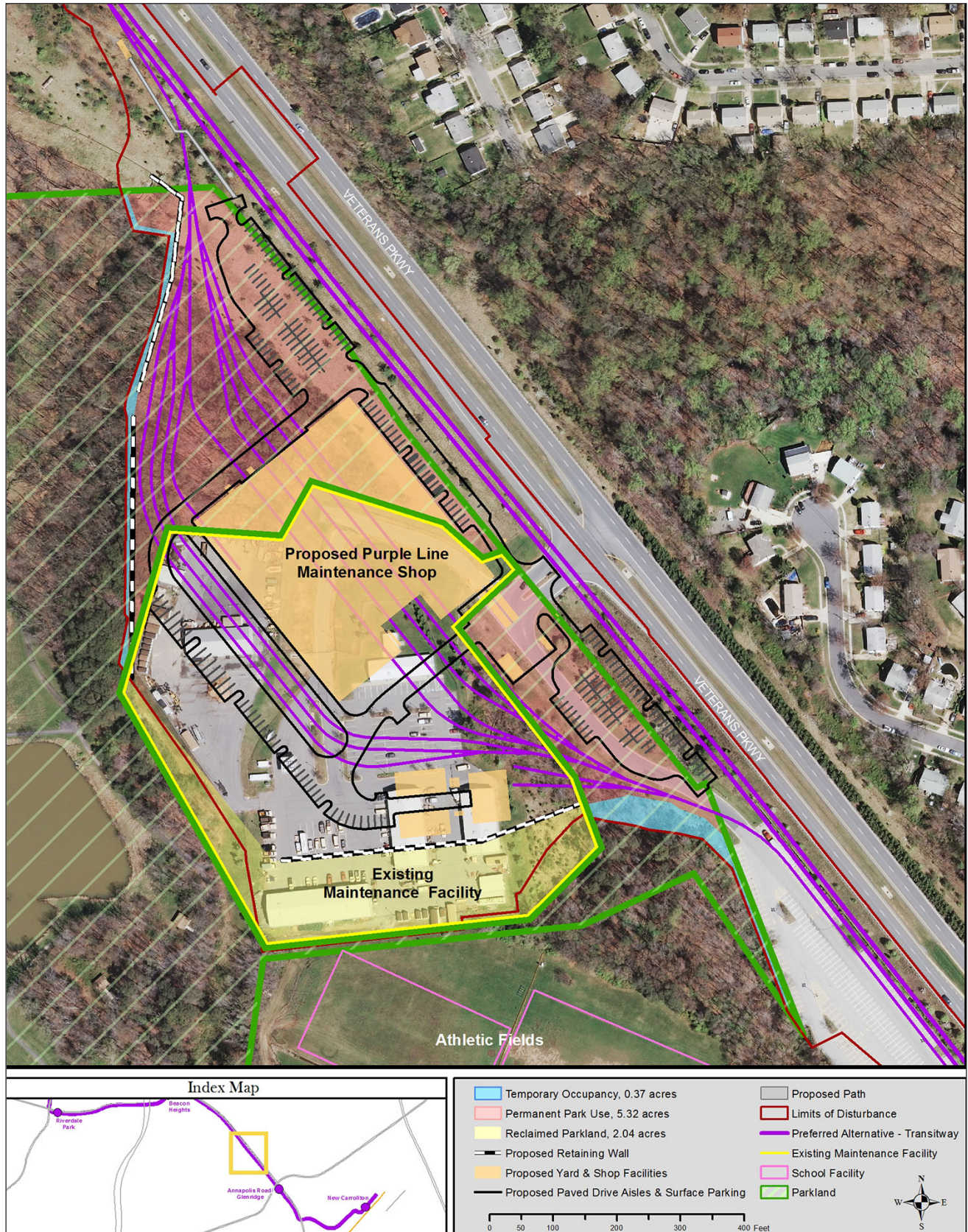
Facilities at the park include a playground, athletic fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, a trail network, shelters, picnic areas, and parking. All of the recreational facilities within the park are located within the western half of the park. The remaining park property is wooded, undeveloped, and designated a Woodland Conservation Area by M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation according to their ordinance and Maryland's Forest Conservation Act.

From Veterans Parkway (MD 410), Glenridge Community Park is accessible from Annapolis Road to Gallatin Street or Annapolis Road to Greenvale Parkway to 70th Place to Flintridge Drive. Parking for Glenridge Community Park is provided at both the Flintridge Drive and Gallatin Street access points.

Use of Section 4(f) Property — Permanent Use, Not *De minimis*

MTA, through coordination with M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation, determined its Purple Line Glenridge Maintenance Facility would be constructed primarily on the M-NCPPC's Northern Area Maintenance Glenridge Service Center property (Figure 6-35). However, MTA would use a portion of undeveloped and wooded park property, primarily north of the Service Center property. The Preferred Alternative would not impact existing, developed park facilities.

Figure 6-35. Glenridge Community Park



The proposed maintenance facility would include a large maintenance building, rail tracks for access from the mainline transitway as well as on-site vehicle storage, motor vehicle parking and access driveways to Veterans Parkway. MTA would permanently use approximately 5.32 acres of park property, including 4.1 acres within the existing forest conservation area. In addition, MTA would temporarily use approximately 0.37 acre of park land to provide work areas to build the project.

The proposed configuration of the Purple Line Glenridge Maintenance Facility would avoid the adjacent Glenridge Elementary School property and associated fields. The Preferred Alternative would not necessitate closure of Glenridge Community Park at any time during or after construction.

Avoidance Alternatives

The avoidance analysis focuses on alternative locations for the maintenance facility. Early in the planning process, MTA determined that there was no single, suitable site large enough to contain a full storage yard, maintenance facility and operations center for the Purple Line. Therefore, MTA sought two sites, preferably one in each county towards either end of the corridor.

When MTA evaluated potential locations for a storage yard and shop facility, several criteria were considered including the proximity of the site to the transitway, the size of the site, the ability to grade the site to level conditions, the ability to provide vehicular access to the site, existing zoning and land use, and adjacent land uses.

MTA performed a search for sites throughout the Prince George's County portion of the study area and assessed their feasibility. Limitations to finding suitable sites included the developed character of the corridor, the presence of large land areas devoted to stream valley parks and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, land use, and populations. Properties considered include the Pepco utility right-of-way on University Boulevard, three sites south of the College Park Metrorail station, a site near the intersection of Riverdale Road and Veterans Parkway, two sites on the north side of Veterans Parkway, and sites east of the WMATA Orange Line tracks and US 50 in New Carrollton

(Figure 6-36). Ultimately, each site was determined to be not prudent and feasible based on engineering, environmental, suitability, or cost factors as explained below.

Pepco Site

MTA considered the Pepco utility right-of-way on University Boulevard; however, Pepco was concerned about the potential for conflicts between the Preferred Alternative overhead contact system, maintenance facility power system, and the overhead high voltage Pepco transmission lines. Ultimately, Pepco was unwilling to agree to MTA using their right-of-way. For this reason, the Pepco site was determined not prudent (23 CFR 774.17(3)(v)).

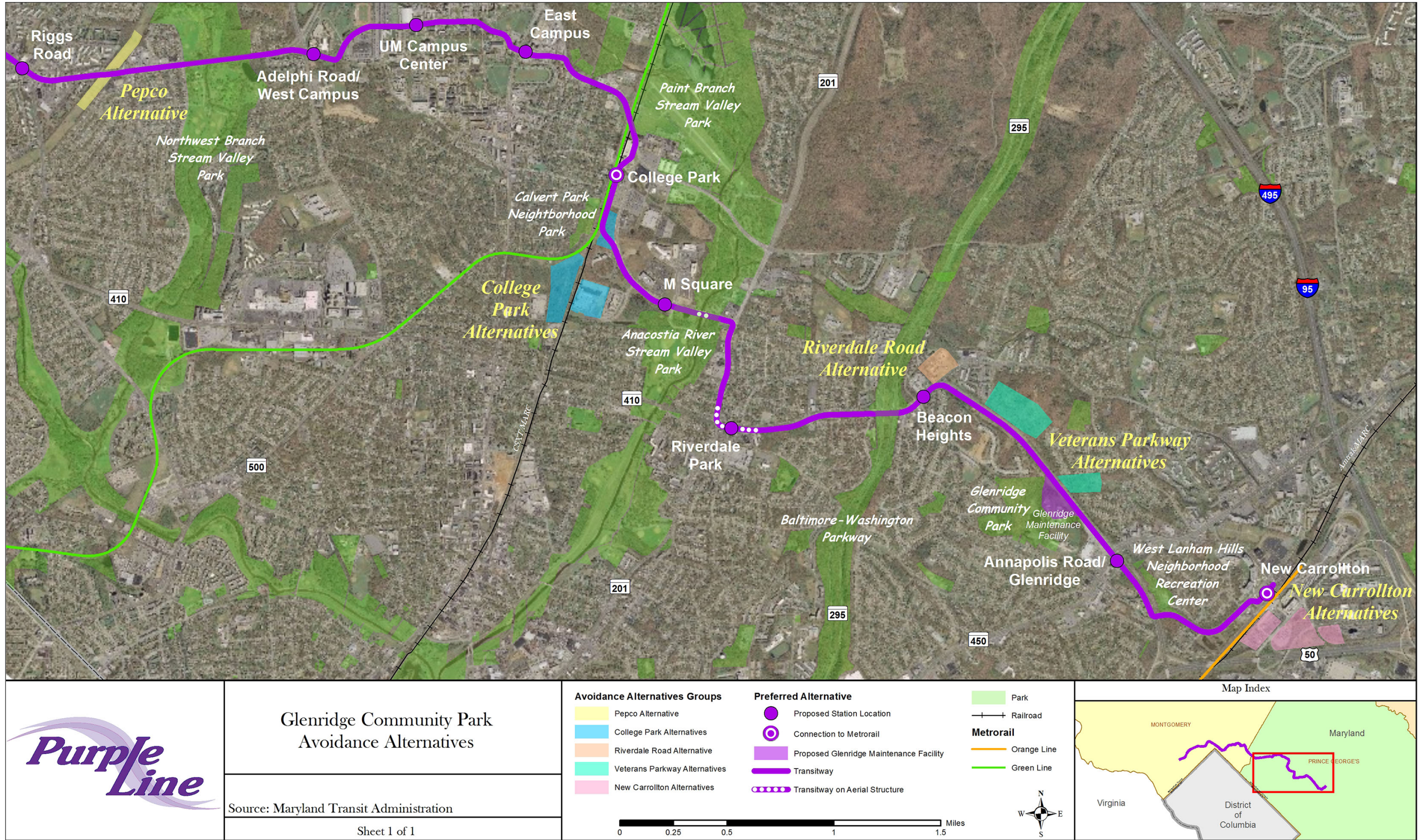
Sites South of College Park Metrorail Station

MTA considered sites south of the College Park Metrorail station, but found each difficult the access through forest and wetland areas. One site was infeasible as it is not large enough for the facility. The second site would result in additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs of an extraordinary magnitude to cross the CSXT tracks. This site is now undergoing rezoning for a major proposed mixed-use development (23 CFR 774.17(3)(iii)(A), (3)(iv), and (3)(vi)). The final site south of the College Park Metrorail station is a federal government-owned property that MTA initially thought was vacant and available. MTA's further investigation determined that using the site would cause severe social, economic, or environmental impacts as it is slated for redevelopment and is unavailable for consideration as a potential location for a maintenance facility (23 CFR 774.17(3)(iii)(A)).

Site Near the Intersection of Riverdale Road and Veterans Parkway

The site near the intersection of Riverdale Road and Veterans Parkway is developed with an apartment and townhouse community. It is surrounded by other residential areas. At the time the site was initially identified, MTA thought that it was underutilized. However, since that time new property managers have made improvements and the complex provides affordable housing for a diverse

Figure 6-36. Glenridge Community Park Avoidance Alternatives



community within a portion of the project area that has a majority of minority population. MTA would displace all residents in the complex and cause disproportionately high and adverse impacts to minority or low income populations if it were to use the site. In terms of Section 4(f), use of the site is not prudent because it would involve multiple factors in 23 CFR 774.17(3)(i) through 23 CFR 774.17(3)(v), that while individually minor, cumulatively cause unique impacts of extraordinary magnitude.

Sites on the North Side of Veterans Parkway

The sites on the north side of Veterans Parkway are densely forested areas with streams, wetlands and steep and uneven topography. These characteristics make the sites difficult to develop, particularly as a nearly level transit vehicle maintenance facility. One site is not prudent as it is not large enough for a maintenance facility, does not meet the purpose and need (23 CFR 774.17(3)(i)).

Sites East of the WMATA Orange Line Tracks and US 50

Finally, the sites east of the WMATA Orange Line and US 50 would require the Purple Line to cross the Amtrak and WMATA tracks as well as US 50. Using the sites would result in additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs of an extraordinary magnitude as it would be a very costly grade-separated crossing on an alignment that is not needed for the project. Further, these parcels are slated for TOD development around the New Carrollton Metrorail station (23 CFR 774.17(3)(iii)(A), (3)(iv) and (3)(vi)).

Using the criteria of Section 4(f), none of the alternative sites considered is a feasible and prudent avoidance alternative site for the Purple Line maintenance facility in Prince George's County.

The No Build Alternative is an avoidance alternative as it would cause no use of the park. However, the No Build Alternative compromises the project to a degree that it is unreasonable to proceed with the project in light of its stated purpose and need. Therefore, while the No Build Alternative is feasible, it is not prudent (23 CFR 774.17(3)(i)).

Property-specific Least Overall Harm Analysis

MTA applied the Section 4(f) criteria to determine the build alternative with the least overall harm to Glenridge Community Park. In this analysis, the Preferred Alternative and each build alternative in the AA/DEIS was evaluated. MTA assumed that the refinements to the facility layout it has done for the Preferred Alternative in consultation with the M-NCPPC would have occurred if any of the other light rail transit build alternatives had been advanced. Regarding the BRT alternatives, a maintenance facility site would be required of similar size although MTA would have greater flexibility in applying the facility layout design criteria. However, for the purposes of the FEIS and Section 4(f) analyses, MTA's facility site evaluation process assumed no difference in site needs.

The amount and location of use of Glenridge Community Park would be the same for each alternative, the ability of MTA to mitigate adverse impacts to the property, and the relative severity of the remaining harm to the property after mitigation are the same (23 CFR 774.3(c)(1)(i) and (ii)). Among the alternatives, the Preferred Alternative most strongly meets the project purpose and need (23 CFR 774.3(c)(1)(v)). The magnitude of adverse impacts to properties not protected by Section 4(f) is similar among the alternatives (23 CFR 774.3(c)(1)(vi)). For these reasons, and despite the Preferred Alternative being more costly than all but the High Investment LRT Alternative (23 CFR 774.3(c)(1)(vii)), the Preferred Alternative is the alternative with the least overall harm to Glenridge Community Park.

Section 6.4.3 presents a corridor-wide least overall harm analysis that considers all Section 4(f) properties.

All Possible Planning to Minimize Harm

At the time of the AA/DEIS, MTA envisioned splitting the fleet as well as the maintenance and operations activities equivalently between the Glenridge and Lyttonsville facilities. The AA/DEIS concept of the Glenridge Yard and Shop would have used portions of Glenridge Community Park and the recreational facilities at the Glenridge Elementary School.

Several factors influenced the design of the maintenance facility at the Glenridge site since the publication of the AA/DEIS. Updated ridership and transit travel time estimates increased the total projected fleet size, increasing Purple Line maintenance and storage needs. While this data indicated the need to enlarge the facility layout to accommodate the increased fleet size, MTA responded by reprogramming use of the Glenridge and Lyttonsville sites to reduce redundant activities, reduce costs, and ultimately reduce the size of the facilities. As currently reprogrammed, the Lyttonsville Yard would be used primarily for storage, daily cleaning/servicing, and the operations center. The Glenridge Maintenance Facility would be used primarily for maintenance activities.

In making this change, MTA also reconsidered the proposed facility layout. During the AA/DEIS, a “loop” configuration was envisioned. As currently reprogrammed, the proposed Glenridge facility would have a linear configuration, which was developed in coordination with the Prince George’s County Parks Department. The linear configuration is better suited to moving trains to and from the main line transitway, as well as through the maintenance facility building, than the loop configuration. While the linear configuration would permanently use approximately two additional acres of park land, it avoids impacts to the developed recreational facilities within the park including the path and pavilions. During MTA’s coordination with the County regarding the park and the maintenance facility property, the County agreed that the linear configuration would have less impact to the recreational properties of the park and school than the AA/DEIS layout and is preferred. Memoranda of MTA meetings with M-NCPPC-Prince George’s County Department of Parks Recreation are provided in Appendix I.

The linear configuration of the current facility design would make approximately 2.04 acres of land from the Glenridge Service Center property available to be transferred to the park and/or school. In consultation with Prince George’s County, this additional land would benefit the park and school by enabling development of a second full size field, drainage improvements, and visual

screening. With this transfer, the net use would be approximately 3.28 acres of protected park/recreational land.

To minimize the overall size of the maintenance facility, underground stormwater management facilities are proposed. Retaining walls will be installed to minimize land area needs and to avoid impacts to an existing stream located on the northwestern side of the proposed maintenance facility. The walls will reduce the area of grading needed, thereby maximizing the land area available for future recreational activities on the expanded Glenridge Elementary School property.

Topographically, the maintenance facility would be at a lower elevation than the school and adjacent park, thereby reducing visual effects. MTA will also plant trees as a mitigation measure to offset tree removal.

Focusing maintenance activities at the Glenridge facility requires a larger maintenance building than envisioned during the AA/DEIS, enabling most maintenance activities at the site to occur indoors. This refinement reduces visual, light, and noise effects to impact adjacent properties.

Coordination between MTA and the M-NCPPC-Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation is ongoing regarding minimization and mitigation strategies at Glenridge Community Park as a result of the Preferred Alternative.

West Lanham Hills Neighborhood Recreation Center

Section 4(f) Property Description

West Lanham Hills Neighborhood Recreation Center is approximately nine acres in size, located in Landover Hills, and owned and maintained by M-NCPPC-Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation, and funded in part by Maryland Program Open Space funds (Figure 6-37). The park is bounded by Veterans Parkway to the west, Ellin Road to the south, Emerson Road and a residential development to the east, and a car dealership to the north. The park includes a playground, recreation center, basketball court, tennis court, trail and a picnic facility.

Figure 6-37. West Lanham Hills Recreational Building

Temporary Occupancy Exception

The Preferred Alternative would be aligned along the west side of Veterans Parkway (Figure 6-38). It would cross Veterans Parkway, onto Ellin Road where the transitway would be in a mixed-use lane. MTA would raise the elevation of Ellin Road approximately one to two feet to meet the transitway design criteria. The sidewalk along Ellin Road would be rebuilt. Due to the change in roadway elevation and the steep slopes alongside Ellin Road, MTA would re-contour the land immediately adjacent to Ellin Road to meet existing grades.

An existing culvert under Ellin Road would be extended to just beyond the re-graded area. As currently designed, MTA would require a temporary easement of 0.08 acre from West Lanham Hills Neighborhood Park to enable construction access to the work area. Through its coordination with M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation, MTA determined that constructing the proposed transitway would not adversely affect activities, features or attributes—playground, recreational center, athletic courts, trail, and picnic areas—of the park. Memoranda of MTA meetings with M-NCPPC-Prince George's County Department of Parks Recreation are provided in Appendix I.

The proposed project would not result in the closure of West Lanham Hills Neighborhood Recreation Center at any time during or after construction. The temporary construction easement

meets the five criteria for temporary occupancy exception set forth in 23 CFR 774.13(d), as discussed in Section 6.1.1 above. Specifically, (1) the duration of the proposed work is temporary, less than the overall project construction period and no change in property ownership would occur; (2) the work is confined to a small area of the park and would result in minimal changes to the park; (3) no permanent adverse impacts to the park and no interference with the protected activities, features or attributes of the park would occur; (4) the disturbed land would be fully restored to at least as good condition; and (5) the officials with jurisdiction are providing documented agreement to these findings. As such, the temporary construction easement does not constitute a use of the West Lanham Hills Neighborhood Recreation Center.

6.4.2 Historic Properties

The Preferred Alternative has the potential to use portions of seven historic properties protected by Section 4(f). Table 6-7 lists these properties and their attributes; an evaluation of each is provided in the sections that follow.

For three historic properties the Preferred Alternative would result in a permanent Section 4(f) use, which would not be *de minimis*. For these three properties, this Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation includes an analysis of avoidance alternatives, minimization measures, and mitigation efforts, as well as coordination with officials having jurisdictional authority.

For the other four historic properties, FTA is proposing a *de minimis* use determination, based on findings of “no adverse effect” for those properties in the Section 106 consultation process. These proposed findings are described below.

MTA and MHT, in coordination with Consulting parties, are preparing a Programmatic Agreement that outlines commitments and mitigations concerning historic properties and archeological sites under Section 106. MTA will implement the project in accordance with the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement. Preliminary Section 106 mitigation concepts include: