



Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: April 5, 2018

PROJECT

Beach Drive Bridge Replacement

Rock Creek Stream Valley Park

Beach Drive over Silver Creek

Kensington, Maryland

NCPC FILE NUMBER

7970

NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER

76.23.03(48.00)44721

SUBMITTED BY

Maryland National Capital Park and Planning
Commission (Montgomery County)

APPLICANT'S REQUEST

Approval of preliminary and final
site development plans

REVIEW AUTHORITY

Capper Cramton Act Review
per 46 Stat. 482

PROPOSED ACTION

Approve preliminary and final site
development plans

ACTION ITEM TYPE

Consent Calendar

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission proposes to replace the existing Beach Drive bridge (over Silver Creek), which is damaged and structurally-deficient. In addition, the State will improve other nearby park features including: realigning a section of an adjacent hiker/biker trail; constructing a new bridge for the trail over Silver Creek; removing an unnecessary vehicular turn lane; re-sodding an informal gravel parking area; constructing a new paved lot (6 spaces); and stabilizing/restoring a section of Silver Creek. The project will improve park access, usability, and setting.

KEY INFORMATION

- NCPC has approval authority of the project since the site is located on property acquired with federal funding appropriated under the 1930 Capper Cramton Act. The Act was intended to provide for the acquisition of lands in Maryland and Virginia to develop a comprehensive park, parkway, and playground system in the National Capital.
 - Although the project is located within Rock Creek Park, which is owned and managed by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, the project is being managed by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation based on the project's transportation-related focus.
 - The project is on a fast-track, to be completed before the start of the 2018/19 school-year. At the request of M-NCPPC, a full detour will be in effect during construction, which has a pre-determined duration of the summer break of the public school year.
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RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

Approves the preliminary and final site development plans for replacement of the Beach Drive bridge over Silver Creek and other nearby access and environmental improvements including realignment of the Rock Creek Trail, new trail bridge (over Silver Creek), removal of hard surface areas, new parking area, turf and stream restoration, and guard rail extension, in Rock Creek Stream Valley Park, located in Kensington, Maryland.

PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

Previous actions	None.
Remaining actions (anticipated)	None.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission has submitted preliminary and final site development plans for a bridge replacement and other nearby improvements to Rock Creek Stream Valley Park in Montgomery County. NCPC staff analyzed the proposed improvements in accordance with the 1930 Capper-Cramton Act and subsequent 1931 agreement between NCPC and MNCPPC, which grants NCPC approval over plans for park-related development. NCPC's review focuses on protecting the character and setting of the parks, and ensuring that any improvements are for park purposes. Based on project submission, staff finds the proposal to be beneficial to the park environment and setting and thus, valid uses of park property. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission approve the preliminary and final site development plans for the Beach Drive bridge replacement and other nearby improvements, located in Kensington, Maryland.

Background

Land for Rock Creek Stream Valley Park was acquired with federal funding appropriated under the 1930 Capper-Cramton Act, which gives NCPC approval authority over park projects. Although the Act vested property ownership to the State of Maryland, with administrative jurisdiction by the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission. Congress enacted the 1930 Act to provide for the acquisition of lands in Maryland and Virginia for development of a comprehensive park, parkway, and playground system in the National Capital. A subsequent 1931 Agreement between NCPC and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission prohibits "in whole or in part, conveyance, sale, lease, exchange or use or development of lands acquired with Capper Crampton funds for other than park purposes; and requires Capper-Crampton lands to be developed in accordance with plans approved by the NCPC."

The Project

The project will replace a structurally-deficient, damaged roadway bridge along Beach Drive (over Silver Creek) in Rock Creek Stream Valley Park. The current bridge has three arches (each 9 feet wide), made of stone, with a length of 47-feet and width of 37-feet. The new bridge will be a single span, with a length of 47-feet and approximately the same 37-foot width to accommodate two 11-foot wide vehicular travel lanes and shoulders along the outside of each travel lane. The new bridge will re-use stone from the existing bridge in the new bridge façade to the extent possible, and supplement any additional need with similar new stone.

In addition, M-NCPPC will use the project as an opportunity to make several other nearby improvements including:

- Separating the existing hiker/biker trail crossing from the Beach Drive bridge to a separate bridged crossing over Silver Creek, approximately 90 feet north of the Beach Drive bridge. The new pedestrian/bicyclist bridge will be a pre-fabricated truss bridge with a design that is similar to other pedestrian/bicycle bridges within the park.
- Removing a southbound right-turn only lane (along Kensington Parkway) at the nearby Beach Drive/Kensington Parkway intersection, which would create a single combined southbound approach for left-turn, thru, and right-turning traffic. The right-turn lane removal will eliminate 5,476 square feet of impervious surface area.
- Constructing a paved, six-space, visitor parking lot along the north-side of Beach Drive (east of the Silver Creek bridge) to provide easier access to the Rock Creek Trail and nearby fitness station. In conjunction, the existing informal gravel parking area (4,130 square feet) along the south-side of Beach Drive will be re-sodded, and an existing roadway guard rail extended by approximately 100-feet to prevent further parking in the re-sodded area.
- Stabilizing/restoring 250-feet of Silver Creek (125-feet to the north and south of the Beach Drive bridge replacement) to improve water conveyance and strengthen the stream banks.

Thirty-one trees will be removed in the project area to enable the realigned Rock Creek Trail to cross Silver Creek to the north of Beach Drive, with nine new shade trees planted within the project area, and payment to the County's tree replenishment fund for 81 new trees as mitigation. The new trees will be planted in special County-designated "receiving" areas.

Analysis

Pursuant to the 1930 Capper-Cramton Act, NCPC's review focuses on protecting the character and setting of the parks and ensuring that any improvements are for park-related purposes. Projects that provide public benefits such as improving the water quality of streams along with improving park accessibility and park resources are encouraged. Examples of park-related improvements include adding wetlands & meadow areas to a stream valley park, adding a hiker-biker trail section to improve the regional trail network, or adding a foot-bridge and connector trail to improve access to an existing park.

Each project element will improve park conditions with removal of the current unplanned gravel parking area (along the south-side of Beach Drive), removal of the unnecessary right-turn only

lane along Kensington Parkway, and repair of a damaged 250-foot section of Silver Creek. The project will enhance park facilities by separating a section of the Rock Creek Trail from Beach Drive (which will improve pedestrian/bicyclist conditions), constructing a new parking area for six spaces adjacent to the trail and nearby fitness station (for easier access), and repairing the Beach Drive bridge, which is damaged and structurally-deficient. The improvements will enhance park facilities and setting, and therefore, are valid uses of park property under the 1931 implementing agreement between the State and NCPC.

CONFORMANCE TO EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES AND RELATED GUIDANCE

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

The plans for the project generally adhere to the policies contained in the Federal Environment and Parks & Open Space Elements through the enhancement of the park facilities and setting.

National Historic Preservation Act

The project has been reviewed by the Maryland Historic Trust, which determined that there would be no adverse effect on historic properties. Based on the project information provided, NCPC concurs with MHT's "no adverse effect" finding, which satisfies the Commission's Section 106 review responsibility for the project.

National Environmental Policy Act

In compliance with the 2017 Programmatic Agreement for the Processing of Certain Categorical Exclusion (PCE) Actions between the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the project has been classified as a PCE. Based on environmental analyses, the applicant determined that no significant environmental impacts would occur. NCPC also has a NEPA responsibility for its review of Capper Cramton projects. Since NCPC does not have a categorical exclusion for this project, the development team prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) in coordination with NCPC. The EA reviews potential project impacts to the natural and manmade environment. NCPC posted the EA for public comment on its website for 10 days (ending April 5, 2018) to solicit public feedback on the project. NCPC did not receive any public comments regarding the project. Based on NCPC staff analysis of the project (including the project's EA and Programmatic Categorical Exclusion documentation) and NCPC's public comment period, staff has drafted a Finding of Significant Impact (FONSI), to be signed by NCPC's Executive Director after potential approval by the Commission. The issuance of the signed FONSI will complete NCPC's review responsibility of the project under NEPA.

CONSULTATION

Letters dated June 13, 2017 were sent to the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue, Montgomery County Public Schools, and the Montgomery County Police Department requesting concurrence for the road closure and detour plan. A letter dated July 5, 2017 from the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service concurred with the road detour plan and a letter dated August 3, 2017 from the Montgomery County Public Schools also concurred with the road detour plan. In addition, the

detour route was coordinated with the M-NCPPC Park Police, Montgomery County Police, and Montgomery County Fire and Rescue in a meeting held August 24, 2017, with no objections offered by department representatives.

A public meeting was held on May 31, 2016 to discuss this bridge replacement project, design considerations, and the proposed detour route. There were three members of the public in attendance, with no comments offered.

ONLINE REFERENCE

The following supporting documents for this project are available online:

- Submission Letter
- Project Environmental Assessment Report (including plans)
- Draft Project Environmental Assessment Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
- Project Plans
- Site Photos

Prepared by Michael Weil
03/29/2018

POWERPOINT (ATTACHED)

Project # 7970

Beach Drive Bridge Replacement

Rock Creek Stream Valley Park (Silver Creek)
Kensington, Maryland

Submitted by the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

Preliminary and Final Site Development Plans

Project Synopsis

Commission meeting date: April 5, 2018

NCPCC review authority: Approval – Modification to General Development Plan for NW Branch (per the 1930 Capper-Cramton Act)

Applicant request: Preliminary and final approval of site development plans

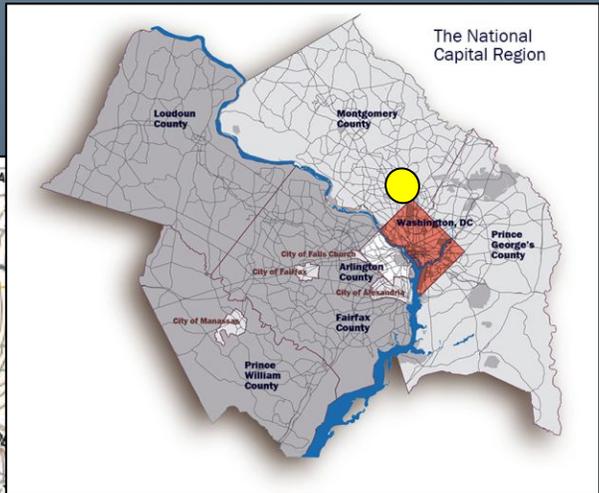
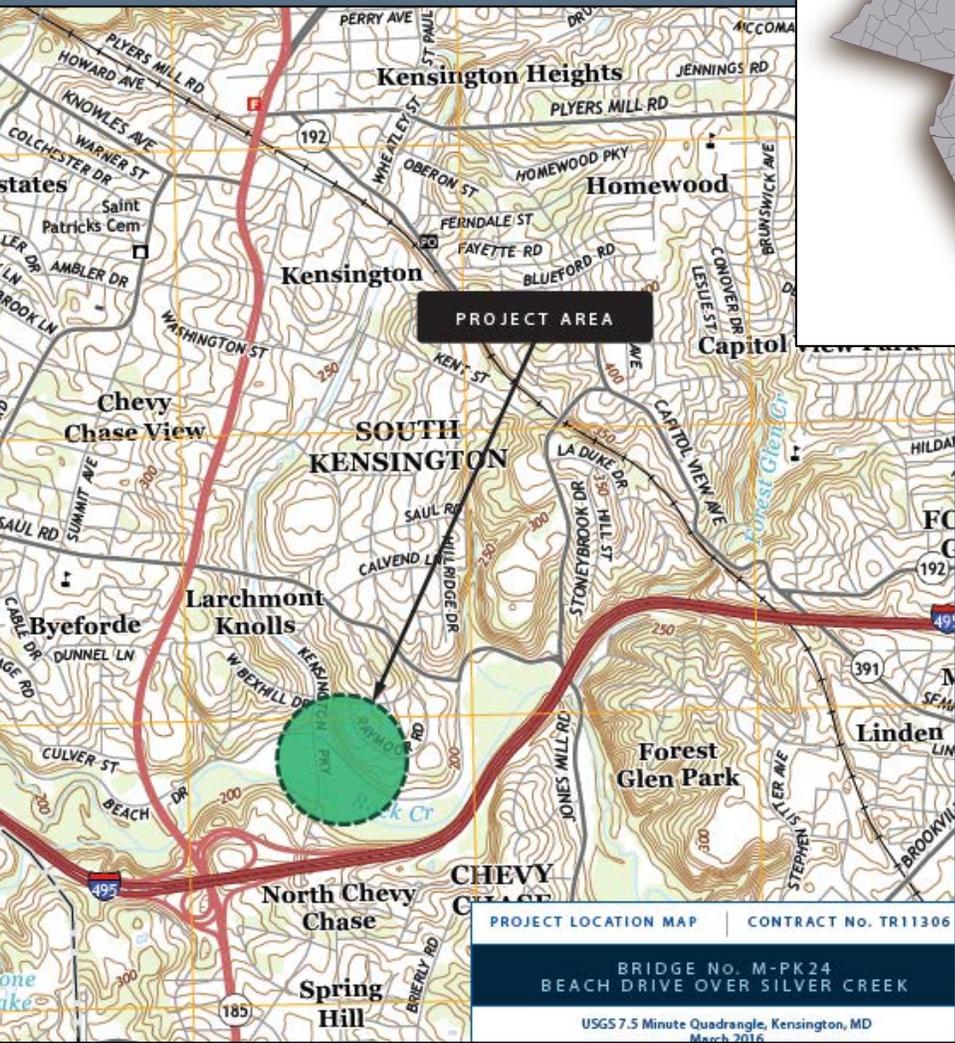
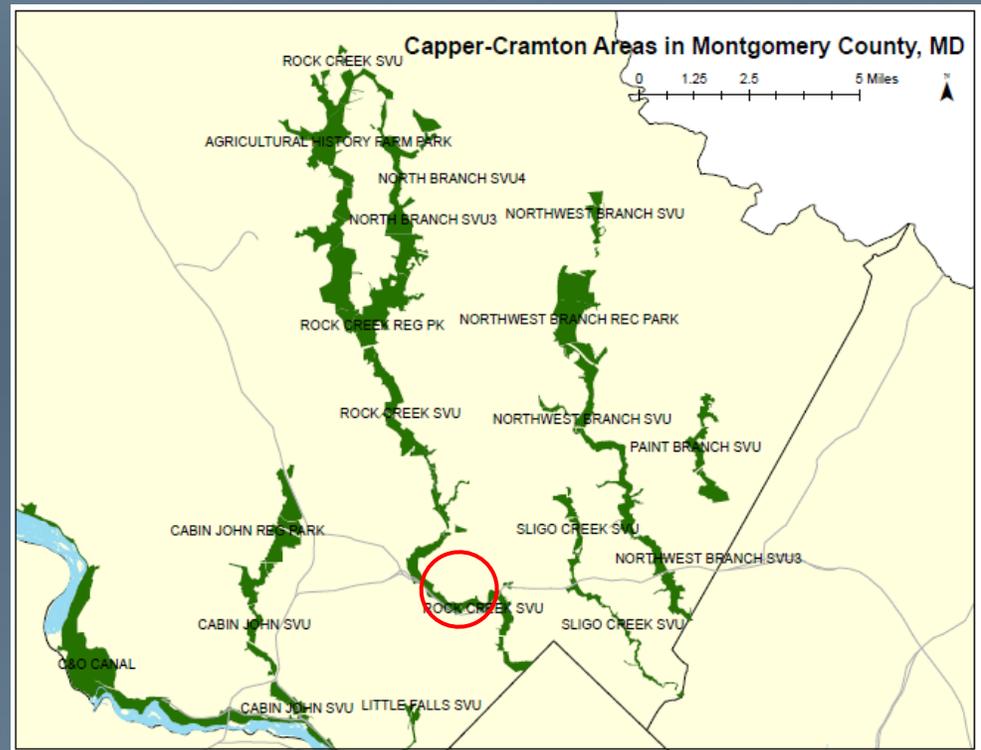
Delegated / consent / open / executive session: Consent Calendar

NCPCC Review Officer: Michael Weil

NCPCC File number: 7970

Project Summary:

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) proposes to replace the existing roadway bridge for Beach Drive (over Silver Creek) and construct other nearby site improvements to enhance park access and improve the condition of Silver Creek. The project site is situated to the north of the Capital Beltway (I-495), within Rock Creek Park in Kensington, MD. The roadway bridge is currently structurally deficient, with illegal parking nearby (along the south-side of Beach Drive), and an excess right-turn lane (ramp) at the nearby Beach Drive/Kensington Parkway intersection. The project will reconstruct the Beach Drive bridge; improve the nearby pedestrian/bicycle trail (Rock Creek Trail) by realigning the trail and constructing a separate Silver Creek trail crossing (90 feet to the north of the roadway bridge); remove the illegal parking area (re-sodding the area and extending the south-side Beach Drive guard rail to prevent future parking); construct a new 6-space parking area along the north-side of Beach Drive (near an existing fitness station area); and remove the unnecessary right-turn lane on the southbound approach of Kensington Parkway. In addition, the project will also stabilize the banking and conveyance of Silver Creek beneath the new Beach Drive bridge, as well as 100-feet to the north and south of Beach Drive.



PROJECT LOCATION MAP | CONTRACT No. TR11306

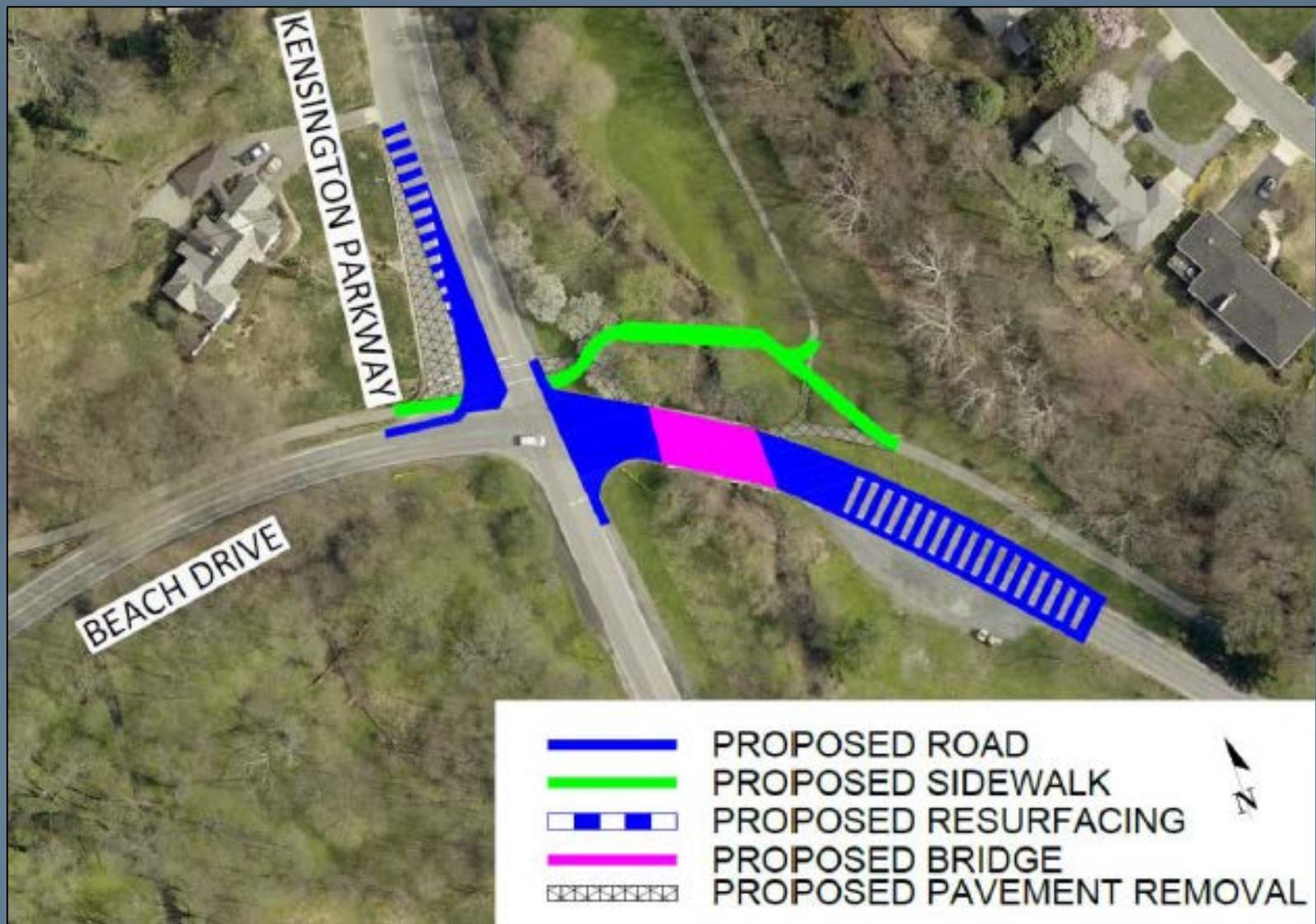
BRIDGE No. M-PK24
BEACH DRIVE OVER SILVER CREEK

USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle, Kensington, MD
March 2015







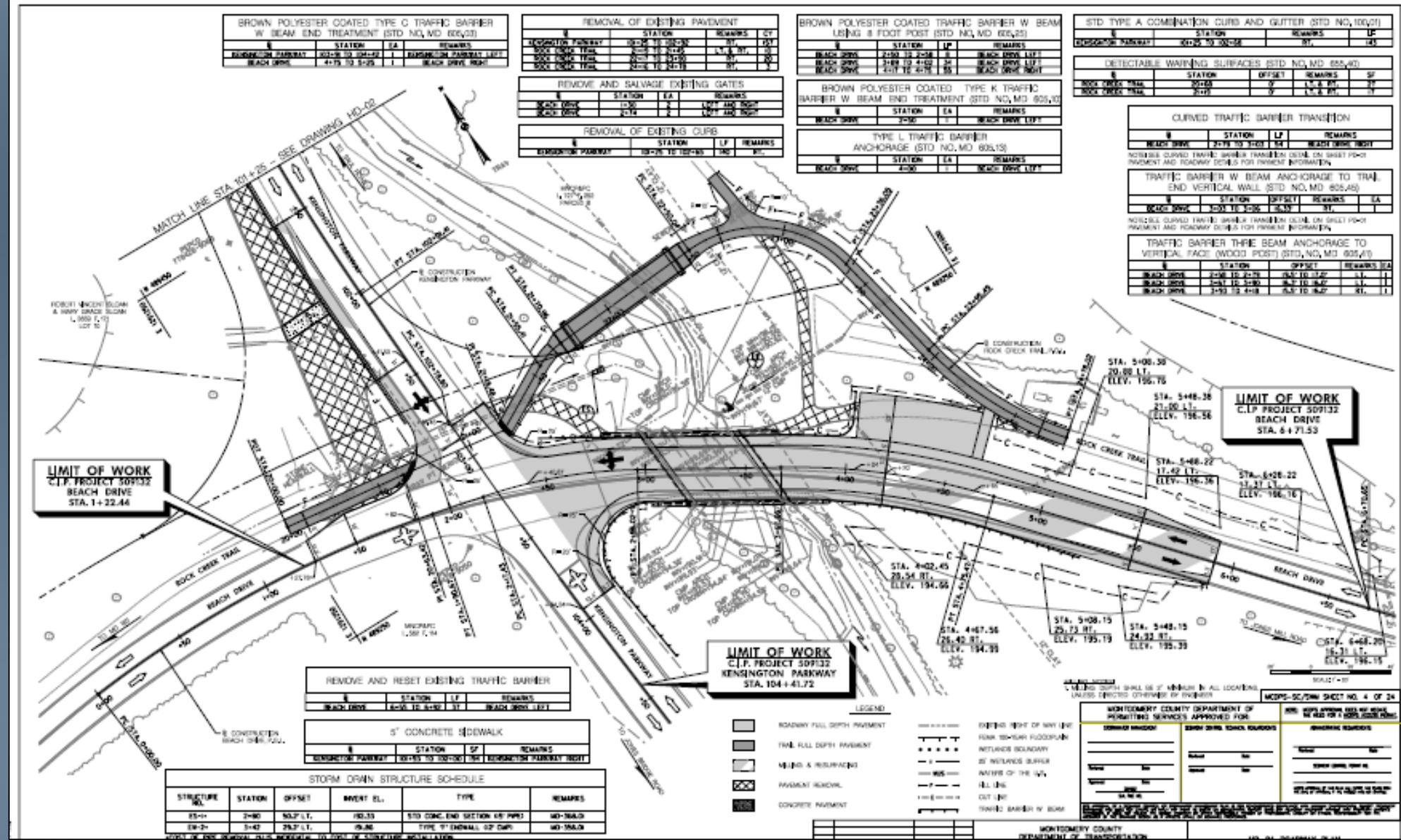


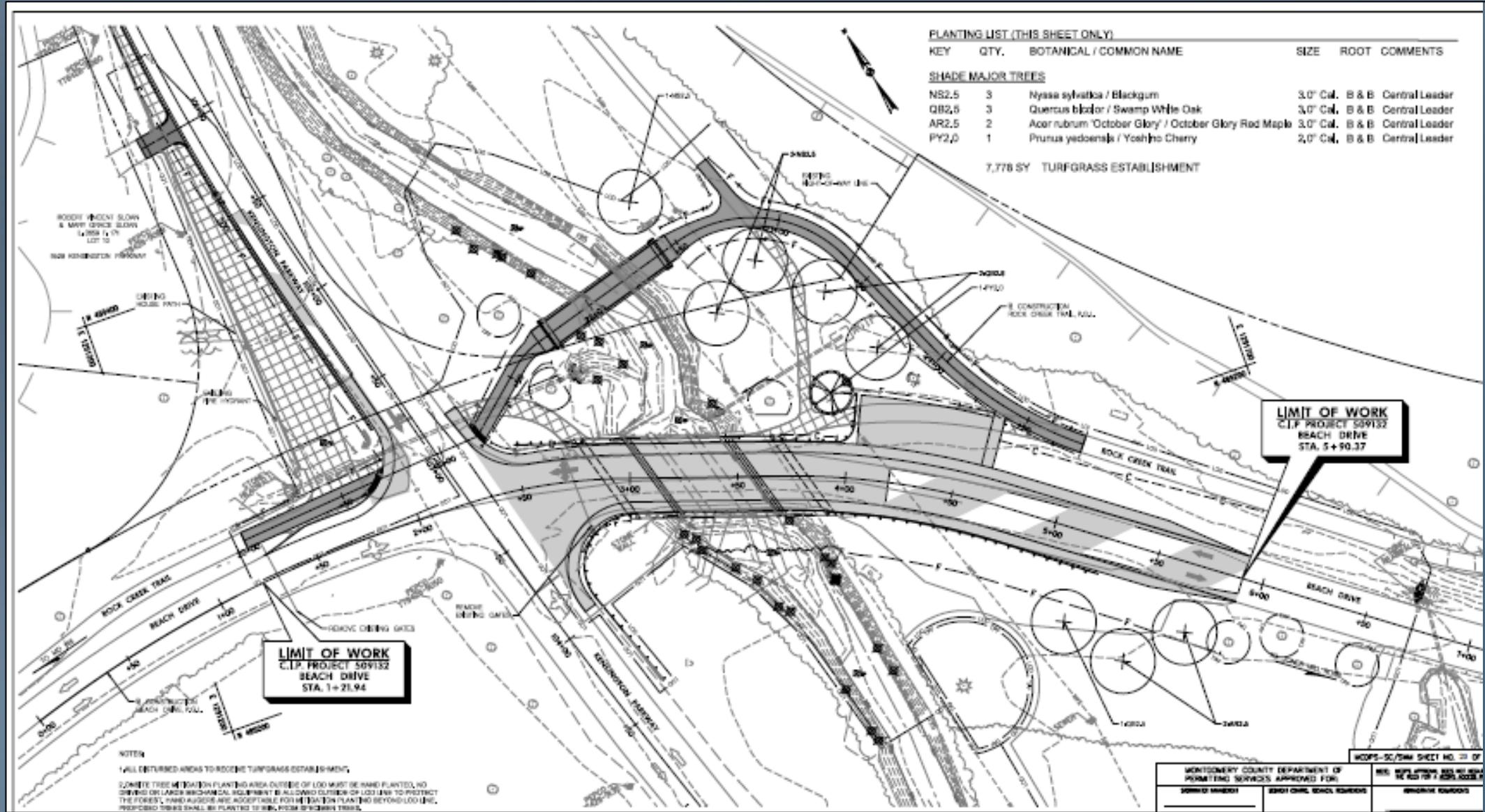
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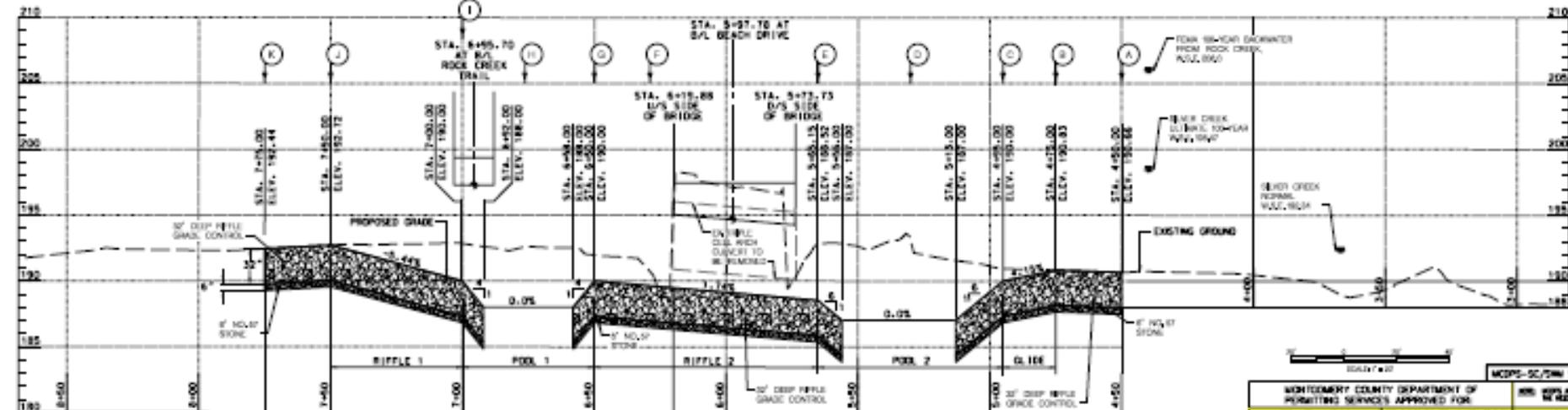
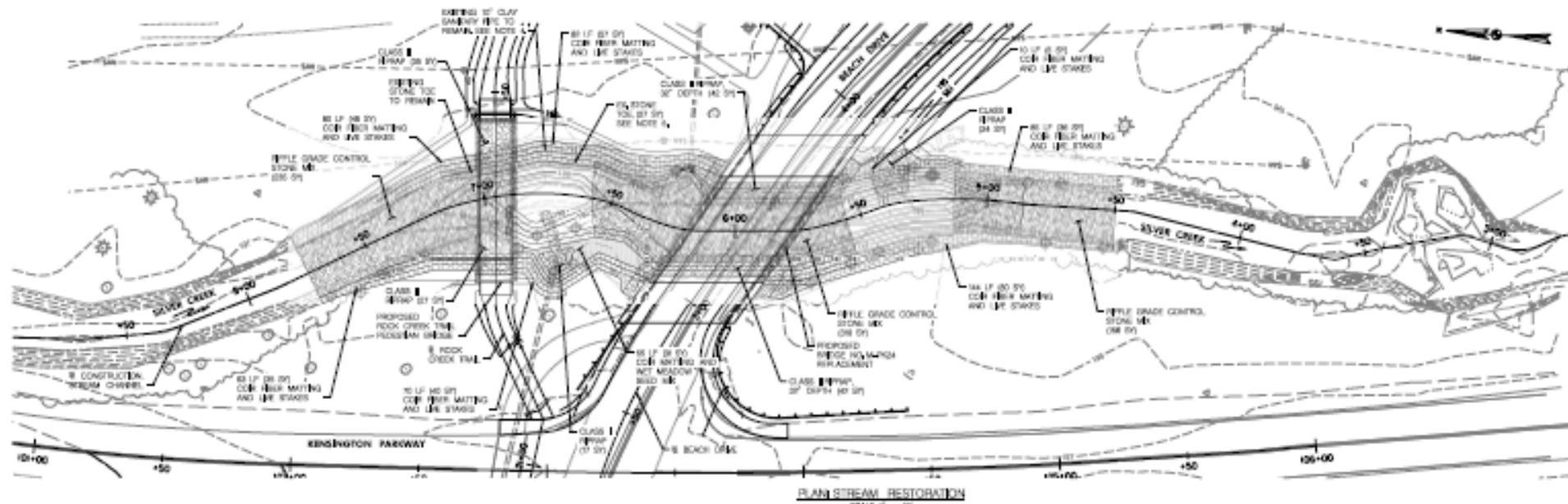


6000'









NOTES: 1. SEE PROPOSED CROSS SECTION ON SHEET NO. 14 AND 15.

MONTEREY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS SERVICES APPROVED FOR

DATE: 08/15/10

SCALE: 1" = 20'

MCPS-SC/TM/SHEET NO.

MCDOT Project No. 509132
MSHA Contract No. MO144ZM1
Replacement of Br. No. M-PK24
Beach Drive over Silver Creek

PROJECT SITE PHOTOS



Figure 1 - Existing Roadway and Trail Through Bridge



Figure 2 - Existing Bridge North Elevation View

MCDOT Project No. 509132
MSHA Contract No. MO144ZM1
Replacement of Br. No. M-PK24
Beach Drive over Silver Creek

PROJECT SITE PHOTOS



Figure 3 - Proposed Relocated Trail Area East of Silver Creek



Figure 4 - Proposed Relocated Trail Area West of Silver Creek

MCDOT Project No. 509132
MSHA Contract No. MO144ZM1
Replacement of Br. No. M-PK24
Beach Drive over Silver Creek

PROJECT SITE PHOTOS



Figure 5 - Site Conditions Following WSSC Stream and Utility Work



This is an artistic rendering; the image may not represent the final design

Figure 6 - Proposed Project Rendering