



Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: March 1, 2018

PROJECT Purple Line Light Rail Transit Facility Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park Montgomery County, Maryland	NCPC FILE NUMBER 7949
SUBMITTED BY Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 76.45.02(41.23)44678
REVIEW AUTHORITY Capper Cramton Act Review per 46 Stat. 482	APPLICANT'S REQUEST Approval of preliminary and final site development plans
	PROPOSED ACTION Approve preliminary and final site development plans
	ACTION ITEM TYPE Consent Calendar

PROJECT SUMMARY

On behalf of the Maryland Transit Authority, the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission has requested preliminary and final review of site development plans on Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park property to accommodate the new Purple Line light rail transit facility. The new transit line will cross through the park along Wayne Avenue (within its vehicular traffic lanes), across Sligo Creek via a new (widened) bridge and across the Sligo Creek Parkway. The Purple Line is planned as a 16-mile, regionally-significant, transit facility between Bethesda, Maryland (Montgomery County) and New Carrollton, Maryland (Prince George's County), providing east-west connectivity between the Metrorail's Red, Orange, and Green Lines. Construction will occur between 2018-2021 within the Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park.

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.
- The Purple Line project evolved from several prior transportation planning activities in the study area, which informed the consideration of alternatives in the NEPA process. These included The Potential for Circumferential Transit in the Washington Region (MwCOG Transportation Planning Board, 1993) and the Capital Beltway High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane Study (initiated by the State Highway Authority in 1993), which in 1998 became the Capital Beltway Corridor Transportation Study. The "Georgetown Branch Trolley," a proposed transit line between Bethesda and Silver Spring, was first included as a project in the 2000 update to the region's Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP).

- A group of companies known as the Purple Line Transit Partners will construct, maintain, and operate the Purple Line on behalf of the Maryland Transit Administration as part of a public-private “P3” partnership. The Maryland Transit Administration will own the future Purple Line facility, which is scheduled to start service in 2022.
- The project underwent an Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement analysis (2003-2009) and Final Environmental Impact Statement analysis (2010-2014), jointly led by the Maryland Transit Administration and Federal Transit Administration.
- NCPC approved the Purple Line crossing under Baltimore-Washington Parkway in October 2017, and two additional park crossings (Northwest and Northeast Branch Stream Valley Parks) in February 2018.

RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

Approves the preliminary and final site development plans for improvements to Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park to accommodate the Purple Line light rail transit facility along Wayne Avenue in Montgomery County, Maryland.

PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

Previous actions	None.
Remaining actions (anticipated)	None.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (MNCPPC) has submitted preliminary and final site development plans for the Purple Line light rail transit facility crossing through Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park in Montgomery County. NCPC staff analyzed proposed park improvements to accommodate the new transit line 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 materials, staff finds the proposed parkland improvements (to accommodate the new Purple Line facility) to be valid uses of the property since the Purple Line will improve park access and cross through Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park using an existing

transportation route (Wayne Avenue) to minimize park impacts. The project will improve stormwater management and water quality within Sligo Creek, which will benefit the park environment and setting. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission **approve the preliminary and final site development plans for improvements to Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park to accommodate the Purple Line light rail transit facility in Montgomery County, Maryland.**

Background

Land for Sligo 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 granted to the County through 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 State of Maryland has been planning and developing the Purple Line project over the last 17 years as a much-needed, east-west link in the region’s transportation system, connecting several major activity centers and three Metrorail lines. The project is reflected in the Montgomery County and Prince George’s County Comprehensive Plans, as well as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments *Region Forward Vision Plan*. Purple Line funding is from the State, federal government (Federal Transit Administration), and a consortium of companies known as the Purple Line Transit Partners through a Public Private Partnership (P3). The project design has been refined during three previous planning and development phases – an Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Final Environmental Impact Statement, and final concessionaire (Purple Line Transit Partners) development. The State will own the new service, with final design/development, construction, operation, and maintenance undertaken by the Purple Line Transit Partners under a formal, 36-year agreement.

The Project

The new light rail transit line will cross through Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park along a widened Wayne Avenue and roadway bridge over Sligo Creek. Within the park, the widened Wayne Avenue will accommodate one additional eastbound lane and one additional westbound lane, resulting in a new five-lane cross section on both Wayne Avenue approaches to Sligo Creek Parkway. The new light rail tracks will align within the through travel lanes along Wayne Avenue, across Sligo Creek Parkway.

The Wayne Avenue bridge over Sligo Creek, which is currently 100-feet long and 62-feet wide, will be widened to 78 feet, designed with a single-span over the creek. The current bridge has two spans, finished with a mostly simple concrete façade, and limited areas of stamped stone façades.

The new bridge will be treated with a royalite form liner and fractured granite finish across the length of the bridge, with a smooth finish along the structural span. The new bridge will accommodate an 8.5-foot wide sidewalk along the north-side and a 5-foot wide sidewalk along the south-side of Wayne Avenue.

Park property impacts will include temporary use for construction staging, temporary detour of the Sligo Creek Trail, temporary changes to stormwater management/drainage patterns, and permanent removal of 29 trees and other on-site vegetation. Planned mitigation measures include the following:

- New native trees (41 over-story trees, 4 evergreens, 21 flowering trees) planted on-site and additional off-site trees planted in State-designated replenishment areas;
- New vegetation (18 shrubs) planted on-site; and
- Stream realignment (resulting stabilized stream banks and reduced sedimentation) to the north and south of the Wayne Avenue crossing.

The project will require temporary use of approximately 1.5 acres of park property along the Wayne Avenue right-of-way to widen the roadway, and to construct the new bridge. The project will require permanent use of 0.5 acres of park property. The land will transfer from Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission control to the State via various perpetual easements and fee-simple transactions.

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 steam 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.

In terms of access, the Purple Line will improve access to Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park with two new nearby stations (not on park property), widened sidewalks, and an improved streetscape along Wayne Avenue. The new stations (Dale Drive and Manchester Drive) will be approximately 0.25 miles to the west and east of the park respectively. In addition, the project will widen the sidewalks across the new bridge (over Sligo Creek), with the north-side sidewalk connecting directly to the Silver Spring Green Trail. The Green Trail is a County-funded paved pedestrian/bicycle trail along Wayne Avenue into downtown Silver Spring and to the Paul Sarbanes Transit Center. Lastly, the new Purple Line may supplement existing east-west bus service as well.

From a larger perspective, the new Purple Line will serve an important need for east-west mobility across the Maryland suburbs, with connections between three Metrorail lines and several employment centers. The project will support Montgomery and Prince George's County planning goals for more efficient development patterns concentrated along major transportation corridors

and preservation of open space, agricultural, and park within the jurisdictions. The proposed improvements to the Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park will enable the Purple Line to cross through the park along an existing transportation route.

In terms of stormwater management/water quality, the Purple Line project will improve the overall health of Sligo Creek through a number of features including a new bridge design, more natural drainage patterns, improved stormwater management capacity, new native tree/vegetation planting, and stream re-alignment. Compared to the current Wayne Avenue bridge (with two spans), the new single span design will eliminate the existing pier, which impedes water flow (in Sligo Creek), thereby increasing water turbidity and adversely affecting water quality. The project will stabilize some of the banking along Sligo Creek and re-align the stream channel to improve water conveyance under the new bridge. The project will also improve on-site drainage patterns (slowing runoff velocities) and add additional stormwater capacity (to reduce runoff into Sligo Creek) to improve local water quality as well.

CONFORMANCE TO EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES AND RELATED GUIDANCE

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

The Purple Line's Purpose and Need Statement describes the intent of the new facility as follows:

- Provide faster, more direct, and more reliable east-west transit service connecting the major activity centers in the Purple Line corridor at Bethesda, Silver Spring, Takoma/Langley Park, College Park, and New Carrollton;
- Provide better connections to Metrorail services located in the corridor; and
- Improve connectivity to the communities in the corridor located between the Metrorail lines.

In addition, earlier planning efforts developed technical studies to assess future ridership, social effects and land use planning, and economic effects. The studies support the Purple Line as a higher-quality link in the regional transit system compared to local east-west bus service, which is often slow and unreliable due to existing roadway congestion. As links in the future Purple Line, this project is consistent with the following NCPC planning policies from the Transportation Element:

- Capacity and service expansion of the regional Metrorail and Metrobus systems and other regional and local transit services, particularly where these services will support existing or planned federal facilities;
- Encourage ridesharing, biking, walking, transit, and other non-SOV modes of transportation for federal commuters and visitors;
- Support multimodal connections and transportation alternatives in the regional system;
- Extend the transit system's reach into developed, but underserved areas of the region.

National Historic Preservation Act

Sligo Creek Parkway is listed on the National Register of Historic Places due to its design as an early parkway within the Region. Designed in the 1920s, the parkway consists of a two-lane road and access to several recreational sites including a golf course, playgrounds, pedestrian paths, and Sligo Creek.

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, NCPC designated the Federal Transit Agency as lead federal agency pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(a)(2) to fulfill its Section 106 responsibilities for the design and construction of the Purple Line project via letter dated January 6, 2014. As indicated in the project's Section 106 Assessment of Effect for Historic Properties report (August 2013), the new facility will be along the center of Wayne Avenue, an existing transportation corridor, which intersects Sligo Creek Parkway. As such, the Federal Transit Administration determined that the Purple Line project would have no adverse effects on Sligo Creek Parkway, and the Maryland Historical Trust concurred with that determination on November 6 2013. Upon independent review, NCPC agrees with the findings of the Section 106 Assessment of Effect for Historic Properties report and concurs that the Purple Line Project will have no adverse effects on Sligo Creek Parkway.

National Environmental Policy Act

The Federal Transit Administration developed an Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Final Environmental Impact Statement for the project, issuing a Record of Decision on March 19, 2014 to conclude its review responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act. Based on the EIS and additional supplementary information provided by the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission, NCPC has issued its own Record of Decision for project improvements to the Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park, acquired with federal funding appropriated through the 1930 Capper-Cramton Act. Mitigation and minimization measures specified in the NCPC Record of Decision focus on park access and stormwater management/water quality to improve the park environment and setting.

CONSULTATION

The project underwent extensive consultation with multiple neighborhood groups, federal agencies, state agencies, county agencies, and interest groups as part of the project's Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Final Environmental Impact Statement, Section 106, and Section 4(f) reviews. From the initiation of the Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement process through the Final Environmental Impact Statement, which culminated in a Federal Transit Administration Record of Decision, public involvement had an essential role in the design and planning of the Purple Line. NCPC actively participated as a cooperating agency during the Final Environmental Impact Statement process in accordance with its agency implementing procedures in accordance with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR 1501.6).

ONLINE REFERENCE

The following supporting documents for this project are available online:

- Submission Letter for the Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park segment
- NCPC Project Synopsis

Prepared by Michael Weil
02/21/2018

POWERPOINT (ATTACHED)

Project # 7949

Purple Line Light Rail Transit Facility

Montgomery County (Silver Spring), Maryland

Submitted by the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

Preliminary and Final Development Plans

Project Synopsis

Commission meeting date: March, 2018

NCPCC review authority: Approval – Modification to General Development Plans for Sligo Creek (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

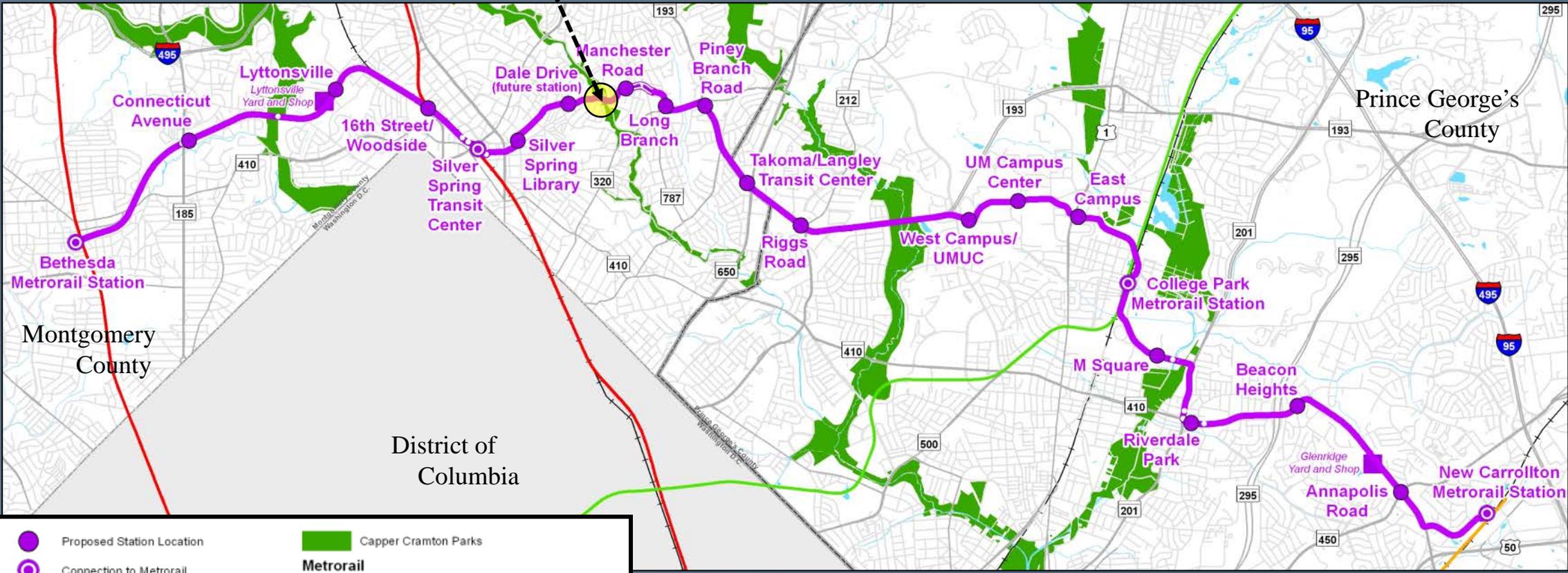
NCPCC File number: 7949

Project Summary:

On behalf of the Maryland Transit Authority (MTA), the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (Montgomery County) has requested approval to modify the General Development Plan for Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park to reflect preliminary and final Purple Line light rail transit (LRT) facility plans. The Purple Line will cross through the Stream Valley Park along Wayne Avenue, via a new widened bridge (shared with traffic and pedestrians), within a general traffic lane. The new transit line will cross Sligo Creek Parkway, which intersects Wayne Avenue on the east-side of Sligo Creek, immediately adjacent to the Wayne Avenue bridge. Sligo Creek SVP is the western-most of the three Capper-Cramton Park crossings.

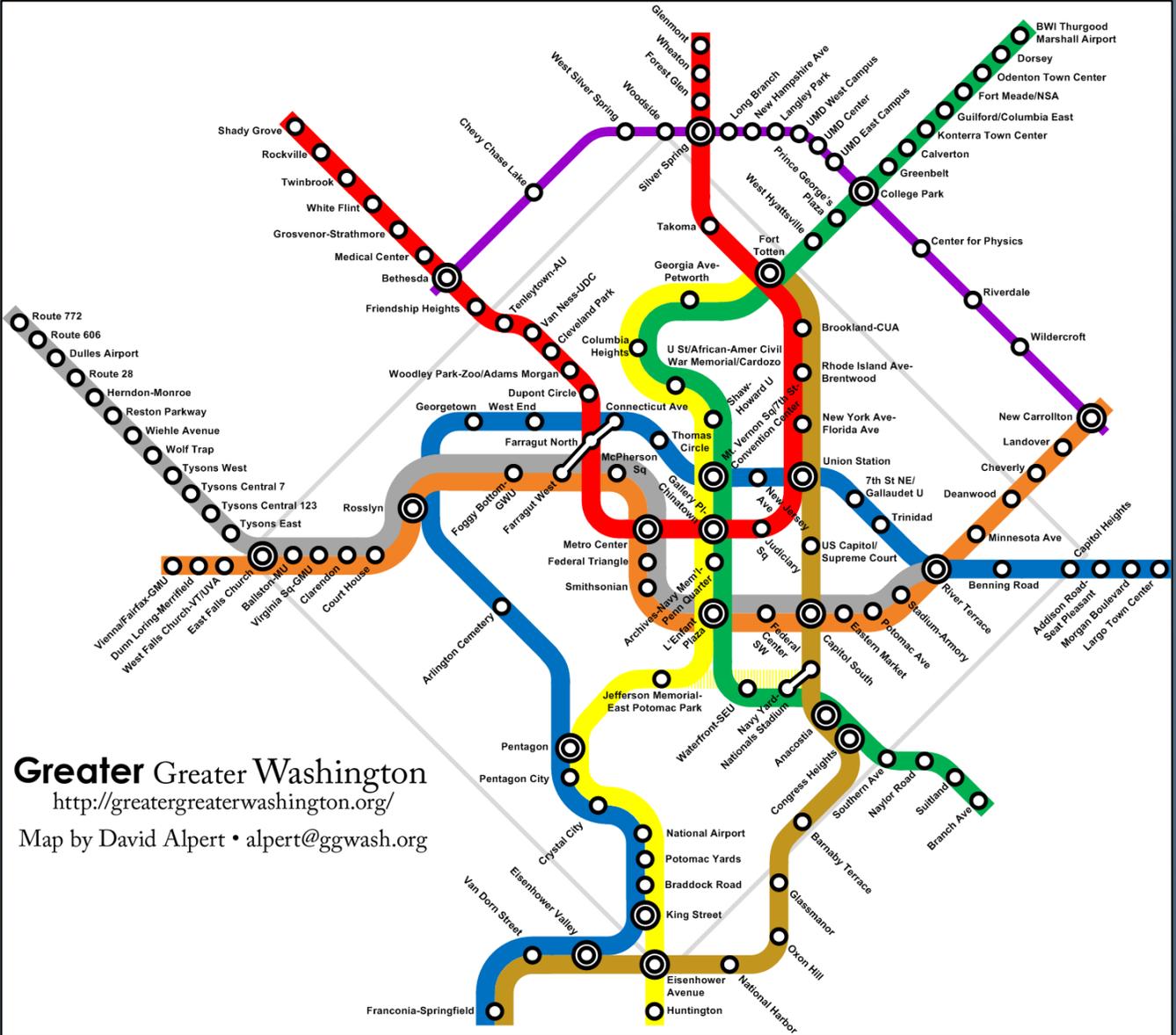
The overall project a 16-mile, regionally-significant, transit facility between Bethesda, Maryland (Montgomery County) and New Carrollton (Prince George's County), providing needed east-west connectivity between the Metrorail's Red, Orange, and Green Lines. On behalf of the MTA, the Purple Line Project Team, a public-private partnership, is managing the construction, maintenance, and operation of the system, in coordination with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPCC), Maryland State Highway Administration, the National Park Service, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County. Project construction is scheduled for 2017-2022, with start of service anticipated in 2022.

Sligo Creek SVP crossing



	Proposed Station Location		Capper Cramton Parks
	Connection to Metrorail	Metrorail	
	Proposed Maintenance Yard & Shop		Red Line
	Preferred Alternative		Orange Line
	Preferred Alternative in Tunnel		Green Line
	Preferred Alternative on Aerial Structure		MARC Commuter Rail

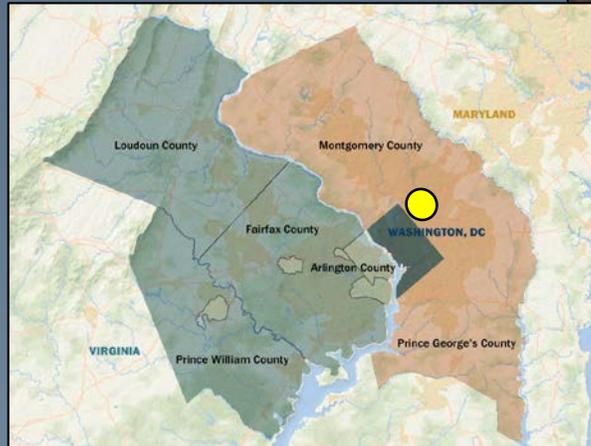
1 in = 5,000 ft



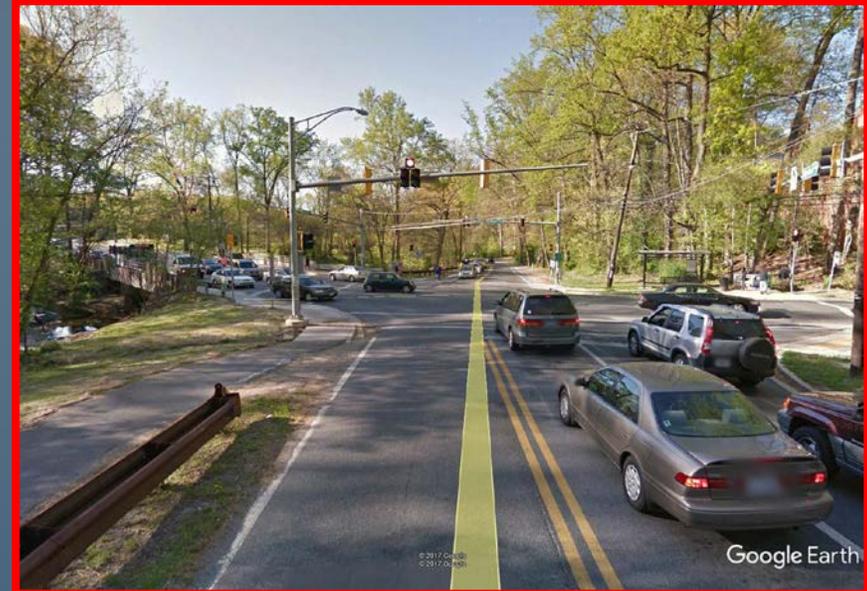
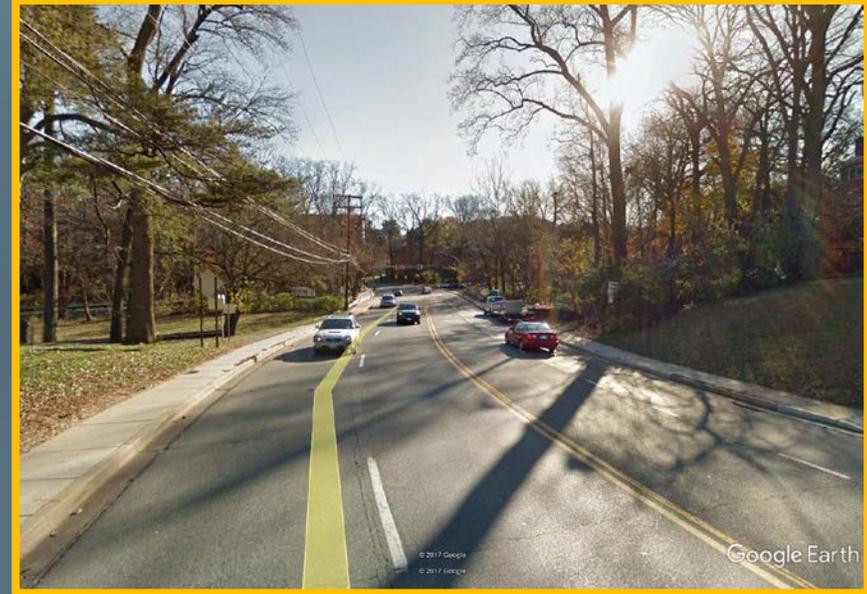


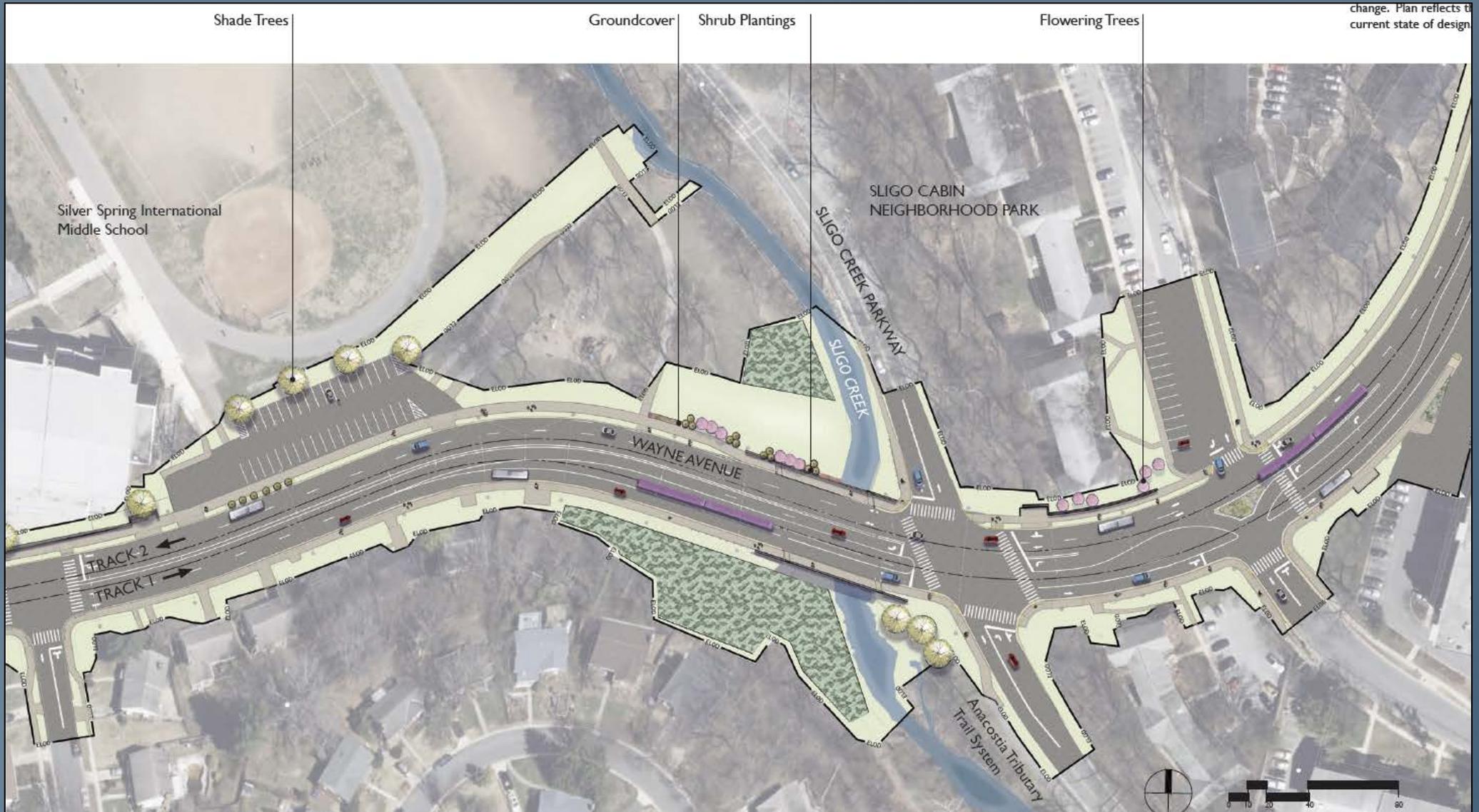
Selected Purple Line Renderings (not related to NCPC review)

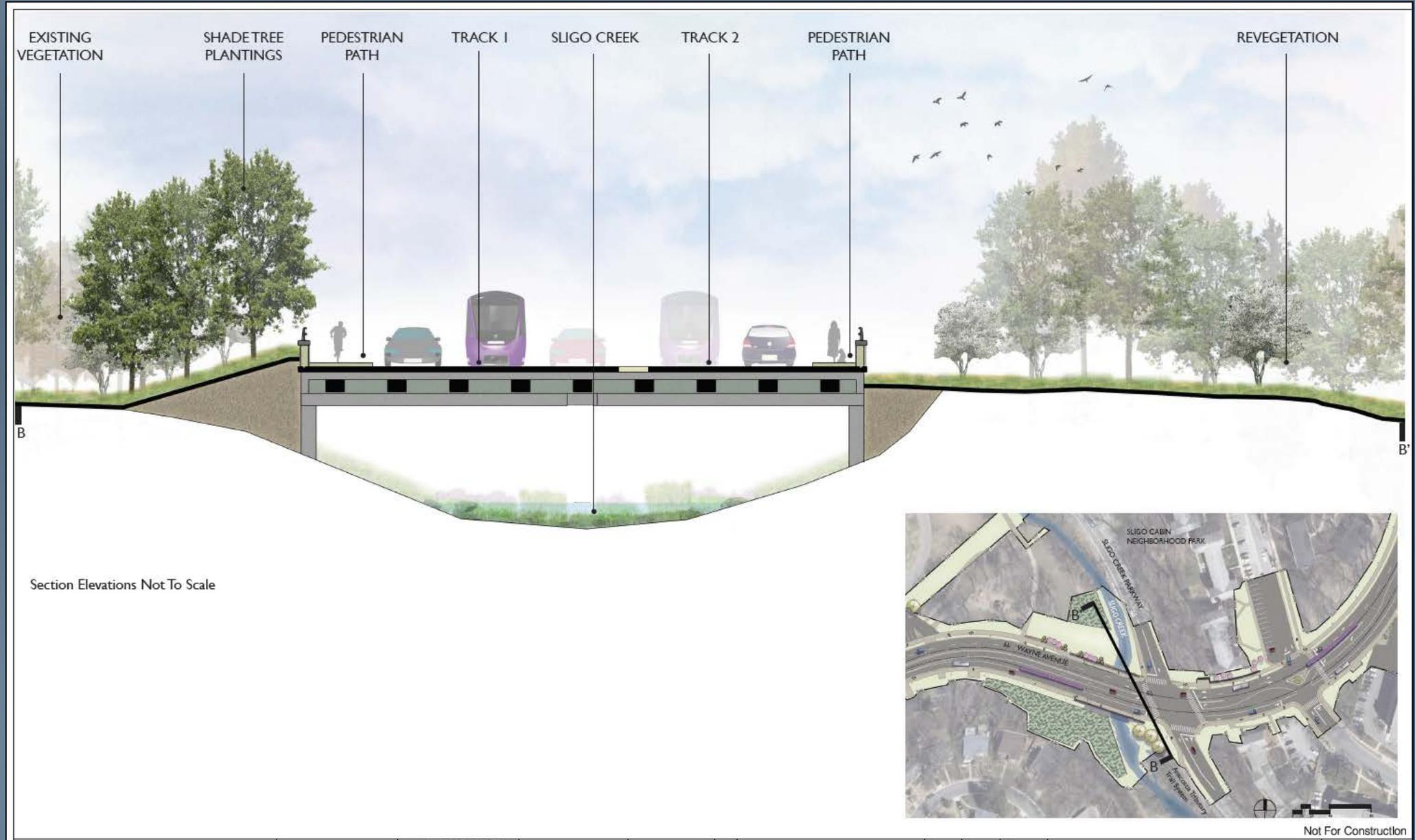


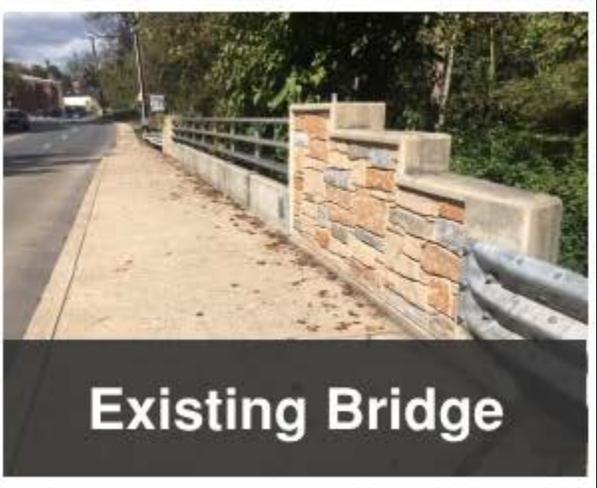
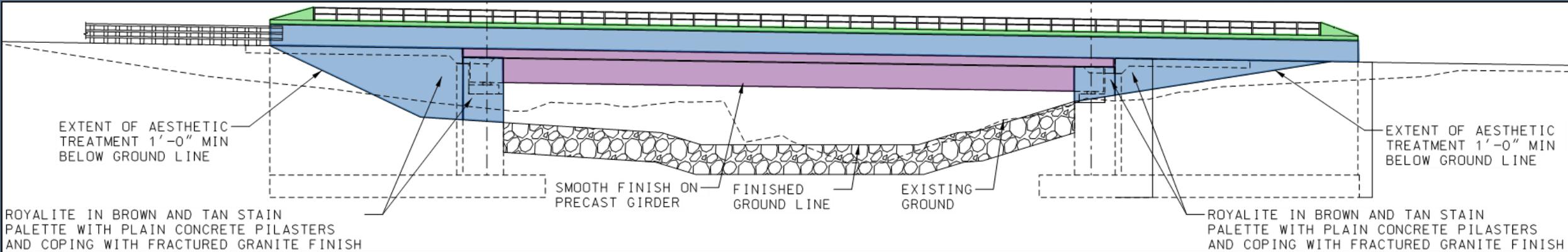


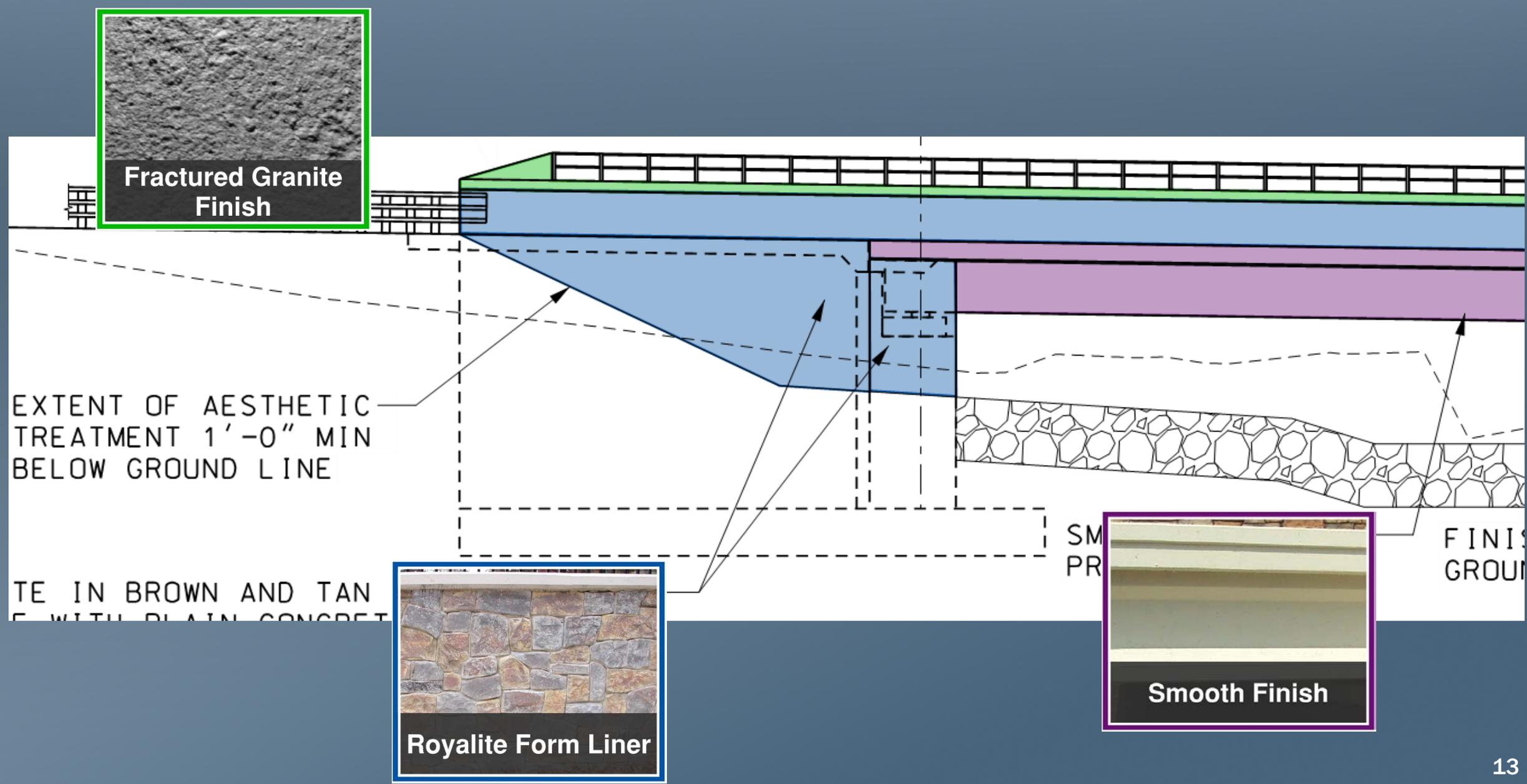










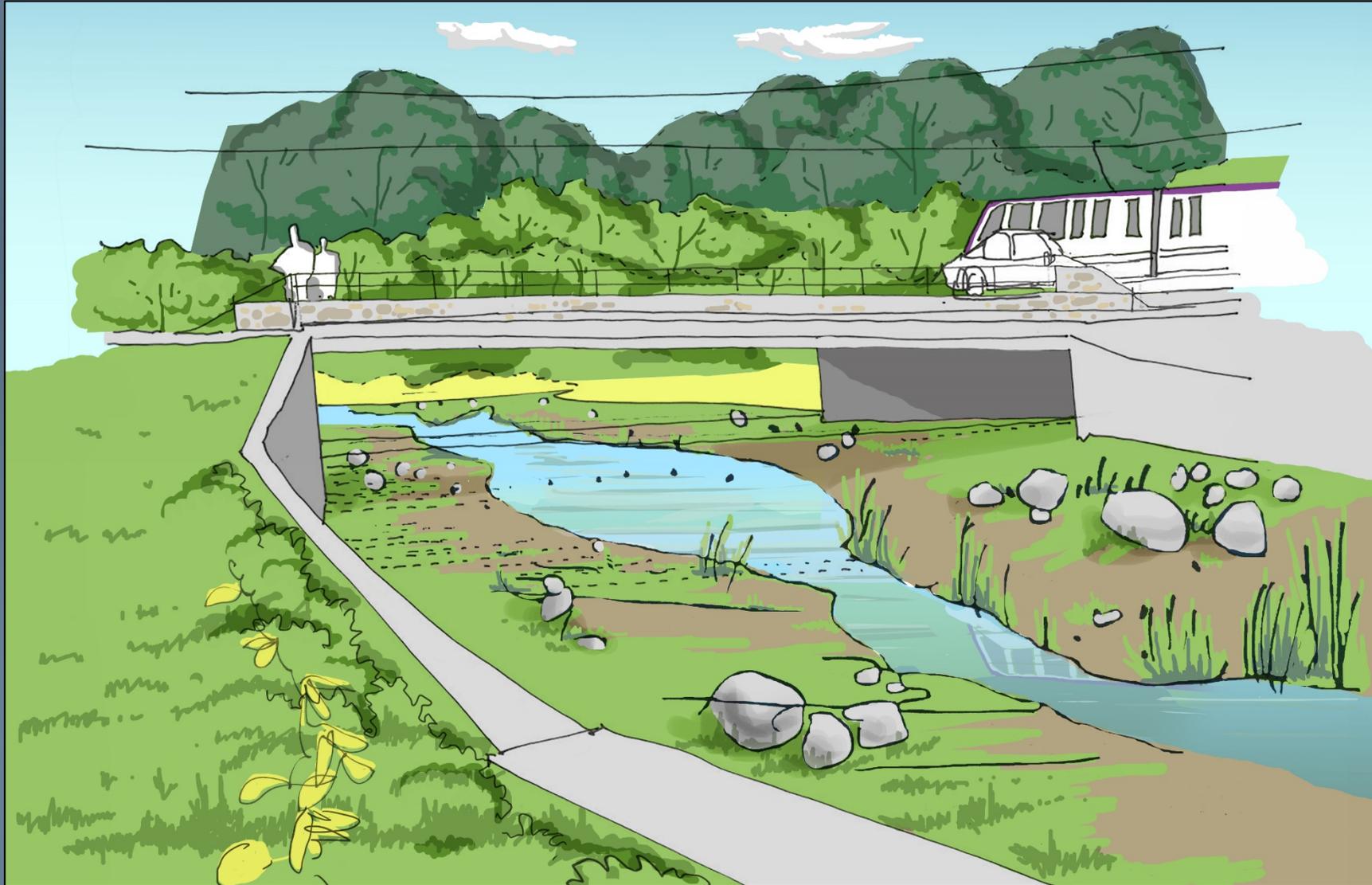


EXTENT OF AESTHETIC TREATMENT 1'-0" MIN BELOW GROUND LINE

ROYALITE FORM LINER IN BROWN AND TAN COLORS WITH PLAIN CONCRETE

SMOOTH FINISH GROUP

FINISH GROUP

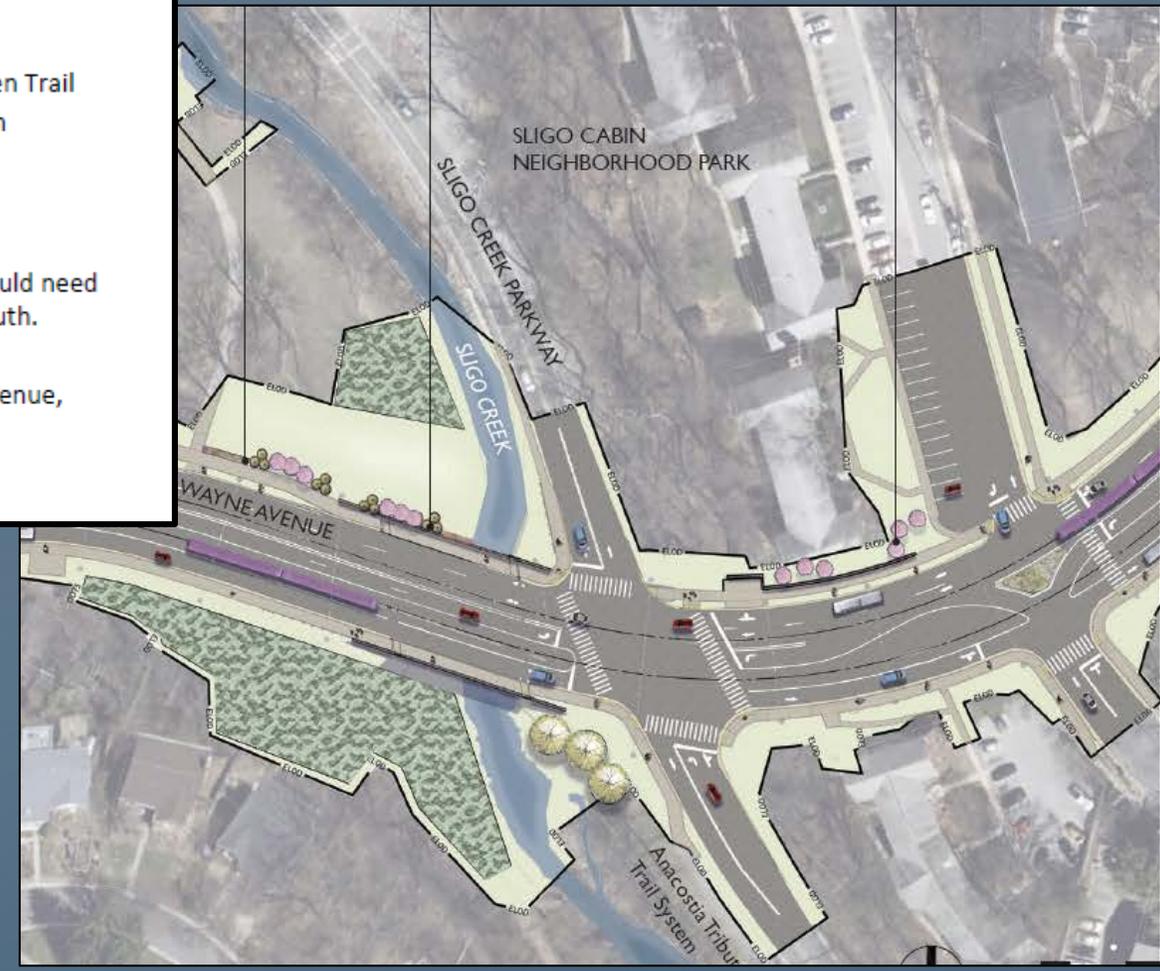




Anticipated Park Impacts

- A total of 1.48 acre and 0.25 acre of parkland would be temporarily and permanently impacted, respectively.
- 0.09 acre of the permanent impacts to parkland would be a result of extending the proposed Green Trail from Colesville Road to Sligo Creek Parkway. The remaining permanent impacts would result from roadway widening and sidewalk reconstruction along Wayne Avenue.
- Temporary impacts would result from the stream realignment, bridge reconstruction, and utility relocation.
- Based on recent field reconnaissance and aerial photography, no more than a total of 29 trees would need to be removed. This would include 13 trees to the north of Wayne Avenue and 16 trees to the south.
- would be along an existing utility easement, minimizing the need for tree removal.
- Utility relocation would occur primarily within the existing roadway and to the south of Wayne Avenue, while grading would occur both north and south of Wayne Avenue.
- Roadway tie-ins on Sligo Creek Parkway are as shown within the limit of disturbance.

• Existing Park Size:	543 acres
• Temporary Impacts:	1.48 acre
• Permanent Impacts:	0.25 acre
○ Green Trail:	0.09 acre
○ Roadway Widening:	0.16 acre
• Percentage of Park Permanently Impacted:	0.05%

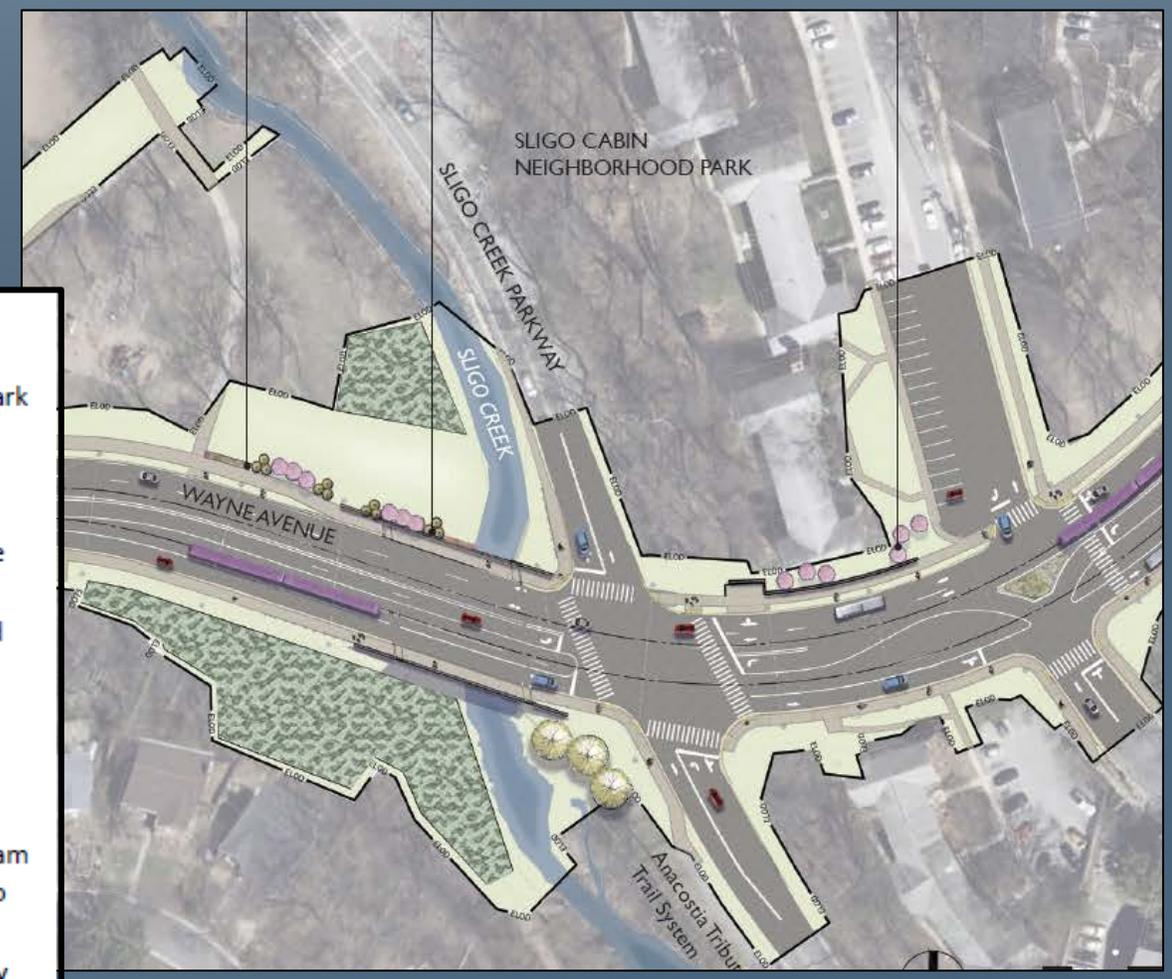


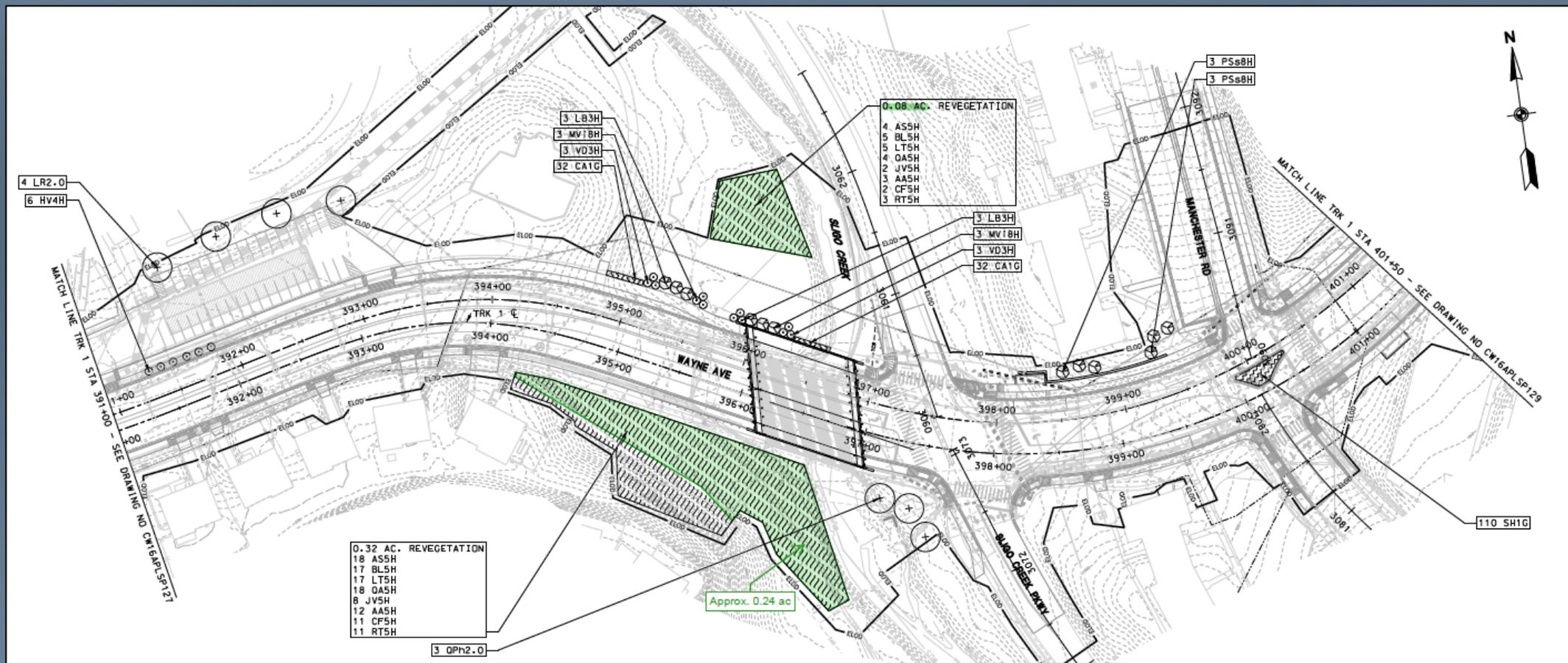
Minimization Measures

- Follows Wayne Avenue along existing roadway and bridge crossing through Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park
- Width of proposed roadway widening minimized
- Addressing pre-existing drainage issues to reduce future flooding within Sligo Creek
- Construction access road would follow existing utility easement to minimize tree removal
- Selective tree clearing and identification of significant or champion trees, where applicable. Trees to be preserved would be marked with protective fencing to avoid impacts or removal during construction.
- If culvert under track is to be replaced, it would be done during the summer time when track is not used as heavily. Track would be restored to pre-existing or better conditions upon completion of culvert replacement.

Mitigation Measures

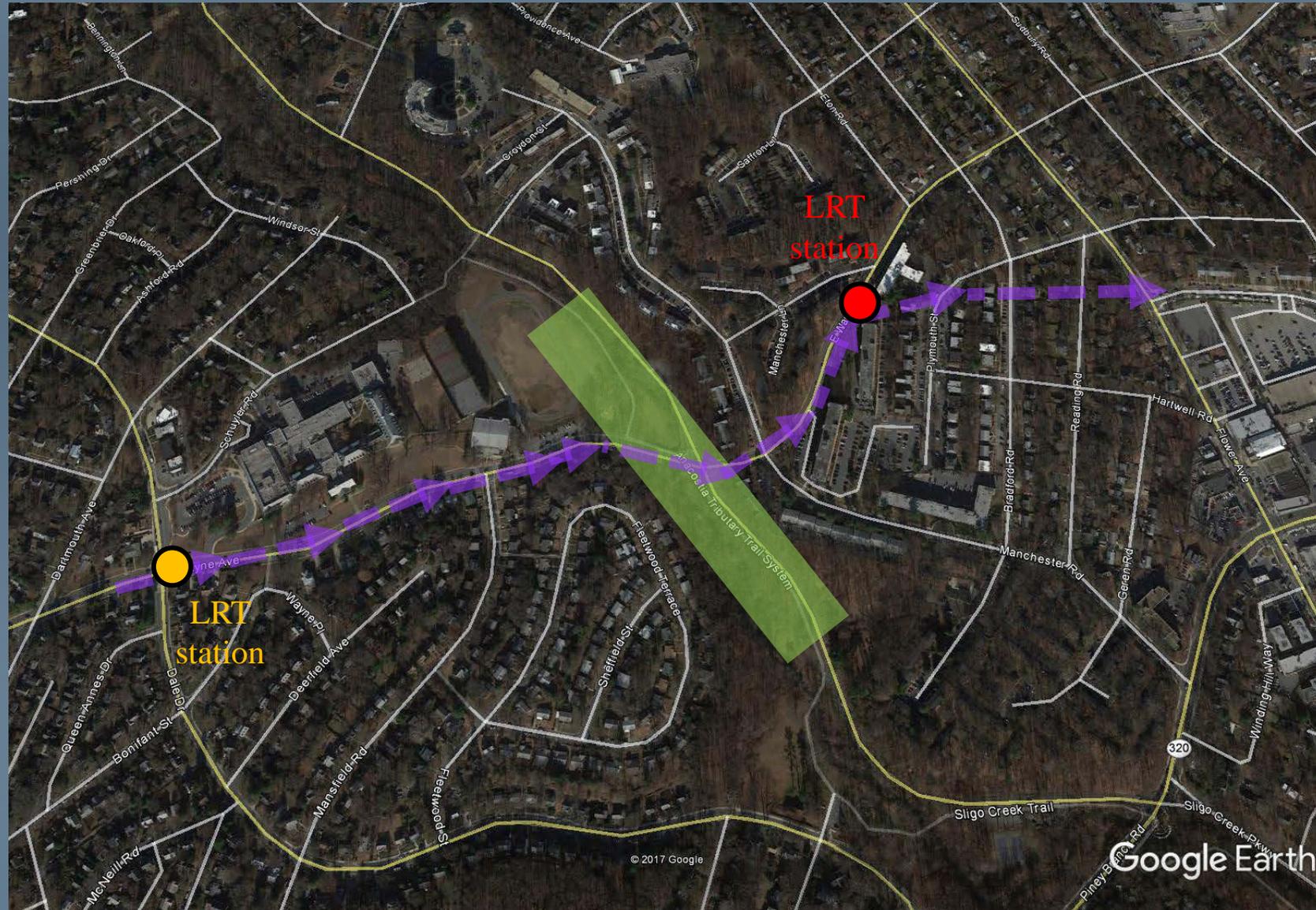
- Tree planting would occur within the immediate vicinity of the proposed project within Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park to mitigate for tree removal. Replanting and restoration would occur within cleared areas to the maximum extent practicable.
- Approximately 0.03 acre of land to the south of Wayne Avenue currently owned by Montgomery County and used for transportation would be conveyed to M-NCPPC for use as park.
- Guardrails, signs, and other existing structures on Wayne Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway would be replaced with new structures, where appropriate. Any new structures would match existing elements throughout the park.

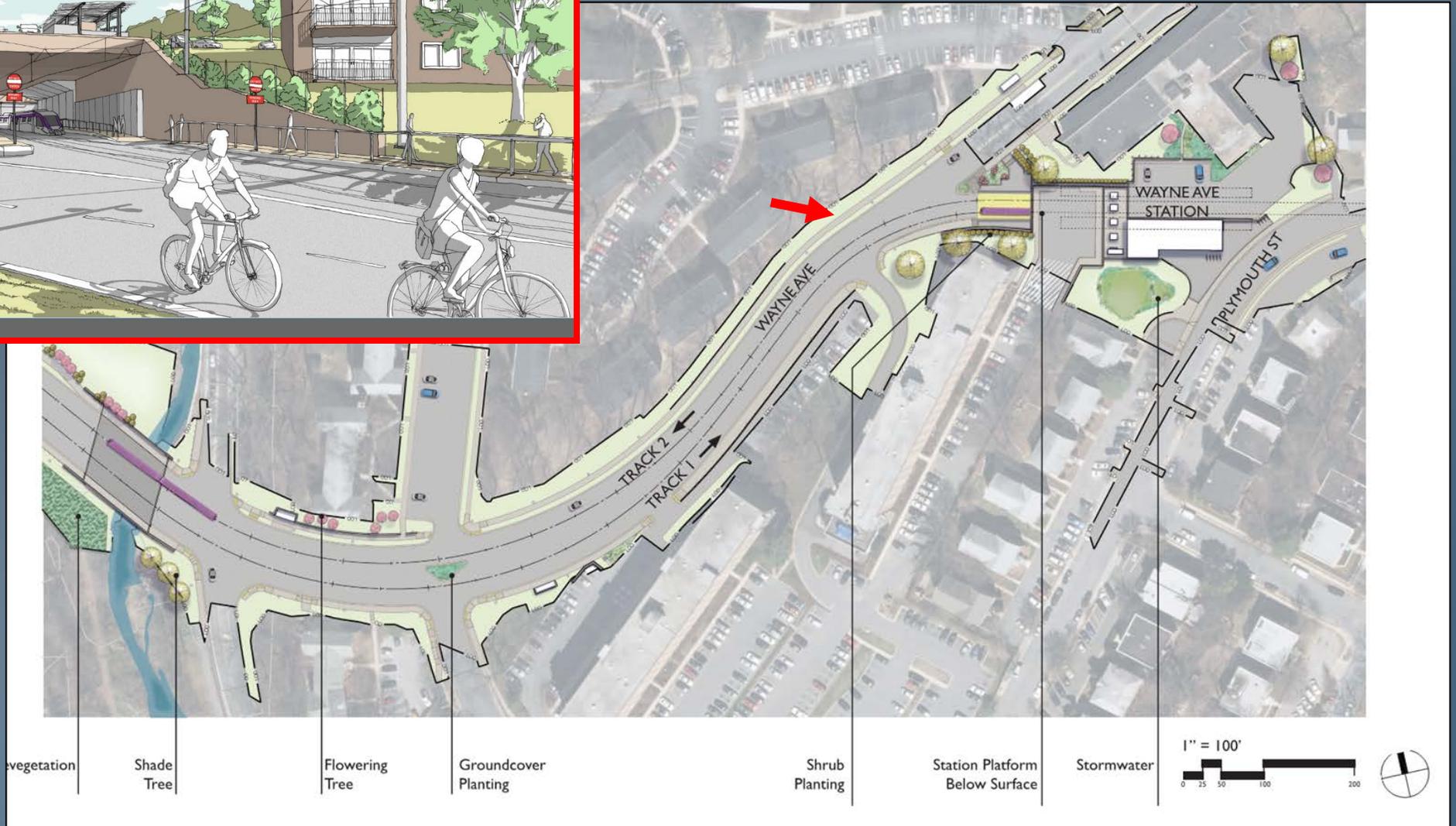




PLANT SCHEDULE (This Sheet Only)						
Key	Qty.	Botanical Name	Common Name	Size	Root	Spacing / Notes
OVERSTORY TREES						
LR2.0	4	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i> 'Rotundiloba'	Rotundiloba Sweetgum	2.0' cal.	B&B	
OPH2.0	3	<i>Quercus phellos</i>	Willow Oak	2.0' cal.	B&B	
FLOWERING TREES						
MV18H	6	<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	Sweetbay Magnolia	8' ht.	CG / B&B	multi-stem min. 3
PSa8H	6	<i>Prunus serrulata</i> 'Snow Goose'	Snow Goose Flowering Cherry	8' ht.	CG / B&B	
SHRUBS						
HV4H	6	<i>Famemalis virginiana</i>	American Witch Hazel	4' ht.	CG / B&B	
LB3H	6	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	Spicebush	3' ht.	CG / B&B	
VD3H	6	<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	Arrowwood Viburnum	3' ht.	CG / B&B	
GROUNDCOVER / PERENNIALS / ORNAMENTAL GRASSES						
CA1G	64	<i>Calamagrostis x acutiflora</i> 'Karl Foerster'	Karl Foerster Feather Reed Grass	#1	CG	2' on center
SH1G	110	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	Prairie Dropseed	#1	CG	2' on center
MISC. ITEMS						
	0.36	Revegetation (Acres)				

REVEGETATION PLANT SCHEDULE (This Sheet Only)						
Key	Qty.	Botanical Name	Common Name	Size	Root	Spacing / Notes
OVERSTORY TREES						
ASSH	22	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	Sugar Maple	5' ht.	CG	
BLSH	22	<i>Betula lenta</i>	Sweet Birch	5' ht.	CG	
LTSH	22	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Tuliptree	5' ht.	CG	
QASH	22	<i>Quercus alba</i>	White Oak	5' ht.	CG	
EVERGREEN TREES						
JVSH	10	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	Eastern Redcedar	5' ht.	CG	
FLOWERING TREES						
AASH	15	<i>Amelanchier arborea</i>	Common Serviceberry	5' ht.	CG	multi-stem min. 3
CF5H	13	<i>Cornus florida</i> 'Appalachian Spring'	Appalachian Spring Flowering	5' ht.	CG	
RT5H	14	<i>Rhus typhina</i>	Staghorn Sumac	5' ht.	CG	multi-stem min. 3









Stormwater Box With Shrub Plantings

Existing Tree

Shade Tree

Groundcover Planting

Shrub Planting

Stormwater Management

Shrub Planting

Shade Tree

Groundcover Planting

Stormwater Box With Shrub Plantings

MATCHLINE: See Next Sheet