



# Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: February 6, 2020

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<b>PROJECT</b> <b>Suitland Collections Center Master Plan</b> 4210 Silver Hill Road Suitland, Maryland	<b>NCPC FILE NUMBER</b> MP135
<b>SUBMITTED BY</b> Smithsonian Institution	<b>NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER</b> 3205.11(05.00)45040
<b>REVIEW AUTHORITY</b> Approval of Master Plans for use by the Commission per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(a) and (b)(1)	<b>APPLICANT'S REQUEST</b> Approval of comments on draft master plan
	<b>PROPOSED ACTION</b> Approve comments on draft master plan
	<b>ACTION ITEM TYPE</b> Staff Presentation

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## PROJECT SUMMARY

The Smithsonian Institution (SI) has submitted a draft master plan for the Suitland Collections Center (SCC) in Suitland, Maryland. The SCC occupies 110 acres and is in Prince George's County. The SCC is bounded by Silver Hill Road/MD 458 to the south, Suitland Parkway/MD 337 to the north and east, and Old Silver Hill Road and residential neighborhoods to the west. The eastern most portion of the site is 2,100 feet west of the Suitland Metro Station. The SCC is comprised of a total of 1.3 million square feet in multiple facilities including the Museum Support Center (MSC), the National Museum of the American Indian – Cultural Resource Center (NMAI-CRC), the Smithsonian Gardens Greenhouse (SG), the Osteo Prep Lab, the Fleet Management Building, and the numerous original Garber Buildings. Over the 40-year planning horizon, SI is proposing to increase the SCC to 2.4 million square feet including the construction of a new collection building, relocation of select buildings, and the demolition of outdated facilities. The draft master plan also proposes improvements to the site access, circulation, perimeter fencing, and parking.

- The prior master plan was approved in 1993 and included a more intensive use of the site with a total of three million square feet and buildings ranging in height from 1 to 8 stories. Only four projects of the 1993 Master Plan were developed and include the NMAI-CRC, Pod 5 and future Pod 6 of the MSC, and the SG Greenhouse.
- The Commission previously approved swing space for the renovation of the MSC in 2010, the Fleet Maintenance Building in 2009 and the SG Greenhouse facility in 2008.
- The draft master plan includes 901,650 square feet of buildings that will remain, with a planned addition of 1,539,166 square feet for a total of over 2.4 million square feet.

- The draft master plan proposes that the site occupancy will increase from the current 350 employees and visitors to 550 in 20 years and 910 over 40 years. This estimate incorporates a goal to significantly increase access for visiting researchers and scholars.

## KEY INFORMATION

- The Commission previously approved swing space for the renovation of the MSC in 2010, the Fleet Maintenance Building in 2009 and the SG Greenhouse facility in 2008.
- The draft master plan is based on a 20-year and 40-year planning horizon.
- The anticipated SCC population will increase from the current 300 employees and 50 visitors to 400 employees and 150 visitors in 20 years and to 550 employees and 360 visitors in 40 years.
- The current parking ratio onsite is 1:1.2 with a proposed master plan goal to get to 1:2. The Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element requires a minimum parking ratio of 1:3.
- The site is within walking distance to the Suitland Metro Station, but the physical route is potentially dangerous and requires improvements and coordination with other stakeholders.
- The draft master plan proposes security improvements including new and replacement fencing.

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## RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

**Notes** that the Commission last approved a Master Plan for the Suitland Collections Center (SCC) in 1993 and smaller facilities on the site between 2008-2010, and that the long-term needs of the Smithsonian Institution for the SCC have changed.

**Notes** that the draft Master Plan for the SCC was developed to achieve the following goals:

- Reinforce a singular identity
- Maximize shared amenities
- Foster pan-institutional collaboration
- Create a welcoming and connected campus

### Site Plan

**Supports** the proposed layout of the new warehouse buildings arranged around a common open space that connects with the other administrative buildings on the campus.

**Finds** the site plan meets the Institution's needs for warehousing, docking and loading, while also providing a more human scale design for employees and visitors to enjoy.

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**Notes** the Smithsonian will implement the plan in several phases which are tied to other Smithsonian museum projects over the next few decades.

Security

**Notes** that the SCC is a unique campus of facilities that house important collections to the Smithsonian Institution.

**Notes** the draft Master Plan cites previous issues with thefts and break-ins and that the location of the SCC adjacent to Suitland Parkway with minimal staff is a security and safety challenge.

**Supports** the draft Master Plan proposal to replace the existing chain-link and barbed wire fence along Silver Hill Road with a decorative metal fence that will improve their public street frontage aesthetic. The new fence will be 10 feet in height – the same height as the existing chain-link fence.

**Finds** the height of this fence is on average two feet taller than similar fences at other federal campuses facing a street.

**Notes** that the draft Master Plan also includes approximately 3,750 feet of new fence throughout the woodland area to the north of the campus, in addition to a 25-foot total clearance around the fence, a jeep trail, lighting and video surveillance.

**Finds** that while the clearance area and lighting are similar to other high security federal campuses adjacent to woodlands, the Smithsonian has not submitted a security threat analysis to support the proposed fence. The Commission needs to better understand the threat assessment to see if the environmental impacts are warranted.

**Requests** the Smithsonian submit a security threat analysis with the next submission to address the need for the clearance area and lighting for the woodland fence and the 10-foot fence on Silver Hill Road.

**Requests** the Smithsonian submit additional information regarding tree and vegetation removal and the proposed lighting in the 25-foot clearance zone.

**Requests** that if the clearance zone in the woods and the 10-foot fence on Silver Hill Road are warranted, the Smithsonian submit a robust landscape plan to mitigate for any loss of contiguous habitat in the wooded area and the impacts of the night-time lighting, and to improve the streetscape aesthetic along Silver Hill Road.

Parking and Access

**Notes** that the current parking ratio onsite is 1:1.2 for the 300 employees and that the draft Master Plan commits to achieving a 1:2 parking ratio and reduces the overall number of parking spaces on site over the initial 20-year planning horizon.

**Finds** there are some inconsistencies in the data that need to be clarified in the next submission.

**Notes** the Comprehensive Plan Ratio for the SCC site is 1:3 because of the campus' proximity to the Suitland Metro Station; however, the walk is currently dangerous and potentially unsafe, requiring three slip lane crossings. A large portion of the campus is also up to 1.2 miles from the station.

**Requests** the Smithsonian develop a detailed plan to reduce employee parking with clear milestones and strategies for attaining the 1:3 goal over the next 20 years. The Commission will assess the need for a deviation from the targets on a project by project basis, recognizing a near-term reduction may not be possible given the current infrastructure challenges.

**Requests** that the Smithsonian submit timing information on the bicycle and pedestrian improvements for the portion of Silver Hill Road that is within their jurisdiction.

**Notes** that the Smithsonian has agreed to convene to a meeting with NPS, Maryland State Highway Administration, GSA on the proposed improvements.

## PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

<b>Previous actions</b>	NA
<b>Remaining actions</b> (anticipated)	– Final Master Plan approval

## PROJECT ANALYSIS

### Executive Summary

The draft master plan covers 20 years of development, but also the enhancement of the SCC over a 40-year period. The goal of the master plan is to improve the Smithsonian's stewardship of the collections on site while also addressing the facilities, landscape, sustainability and security. The proposed Master Plan will increase the total square footage of the SCC from 1.3 million to 2.4 million. The draft master plan includes goals to meet the 1:2 parking ratio with several transportation demand management strategies, however, the site is within 2,000 feet of the Suitland Metro Station and must comply with the 1:3 parking ration of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The draft master plan also contains information on improving security for the campus including a 10-foot decorative fence on Silver Hill Road and 10-foot chain-link fence through the woods north of the facility with a 25-foot clearance, jeep trail, lighting, and security cameras.

### Background

The Smithsonian has utilized the SCC for collections storage since the 1950s when the original Garber warehouses were constructed. The Smithsonian added the MSC in 1983 in a Pod format

for ease of expansion and internal space organization. Additional facilities including the NMAI-CRC, SG Greenhouse, the Osteo Prep Lab, and the Fleet Management Building were added later for a total of 1.3 million square feet. The growth of the Smithsonian's collections storage has not kept pace with their collection needs leading to outdated and overcrowded facilities. This situation is anticipated to get increasingly worse without the implementation of this master plan.

The SCC is heavily wooded with a mix of deciduous and evergreen trees on the north, west and portions of the south along Silver Hill Road, creating a dense buffer from adjacent land uses. The site is surrounded by a mix of residential land uses to the north, west and south and commercial land uses to the south and east. Suitland Parkway borders a portion of the site to the northeast, Silver Hill Road borders the site to the south, and Old Silver Hill Road is to the west.

The campus is approximately 1,200 feet from the Suitland Metro Station with service on the Green Line. Several Metro and local bus routes run in the immediate vicinity of the site. The Smithsonian runs a shuttle service from the SCC to the National Mall facilities for employees. The current site has two access points on Silver Hill Road and one on Old Silver Hill Road. The internal site circulation is disjointed and the result of 50+ years of uncoordinated development. The current site has a total of 428 parking spaces scattered in small parking lots and haphazardly along internal access roads.

The proposed Master Plan intends to address the current space needs for quantity and quality, better preserve and broaden access to the collections, consolidate collections and reduce the reliance on leased space. In addition, the master plan outlines goals to establish the SCC as an integrated, welcoming and sustainable campus that reinforces the Institution's singular identity, foster pan-institutional collaboration and maximize the use of shared amenities.

Over the first 20 years, the population of the site is expected to increase from 300 employees and 50 visitors to 400 employees and 150 visitors and to increase over 40 years to 550 employees and 350 visitors. The draft master plan includes strategies for reducing the environmental impact of the campus including stormwater management, water conservation, heat island reduction, energy efficiency, and resiliency measures that define environmental stewardship. The proposed landscape plan intends to create a healthy and inviting outdoor environment with gathering spaces for work and interaction, efficient circulation to each facility, and open spaces and a landscape that promotes nature and the surrounding forest ecology.

## **Analysis**

The draft Master Plan represents a significant improvement to the overall design and function of the site from the current condition, and a marked improvement from the previous 1993 Master Plan. While much of the proposed plan will be a positive change to the campus, some of the parking, access and security elements need further justification and refinement.

### **Site Plan**

The Smithsonian expects that improvements to the site will attract more visiting scholars and researchers. The proposed development for the site includes the eventual removal of all the original

Garber warehouse buildings in phases to accommodate relocated collections. In its place is a Campus Quad scheme that connects the existing MSC and the new complex directly with a continuous interior corridor. Workspaces will face the quad and collections storage will be on the perimeter. The new facility curves around a series of connected outdoor spaces for employees and visitors. The site includes the removal of much of the western parking areas associated with the Garber buildings, but also the construction of new parking lots as the new building is phased in.

The proposed building addition reduces the building height from that approved in the 1993 Master Plan and concentrates the building footprint in the center of the site. This will reduce the visual impact of the new facility on surrounding land uses. The Smithsonian will implement the plan in several phases which are tied to other Smithsonian museum projects over the next few decades. As such, staff recommends that the Commission **supports the proposed layout of the new warehouse buildings arranged around a common open space that connects with the other administrative buildings on the campus and find that the site plan meets the Institution's needs for warehousing, docking and loading, while also providing a more human scale design for employees and visitors to enjoy.**

### Security

According to the draft master plan, the primary security threat to the campus is from crime. The Smithsonian notes that the SCC is a unique campus of facilities that house important collections to the Smithsonian Institution. There have been previous issues with thefts and break-ins and the location of the SCC adjacent to Suitland Parkway with minimal staff is a security and safety challenge. The goal of the plan is to reduce the number of campus entrances, improve the main entry with a guard booth, screening and visitor center, and improve and connect the perimeter security. The existing fencing that separates current areas of the campus will be removed and new fencing around the perimeter of the facilities will be added.

North of the buildings, a 10-foot chain-link security fence is proposed through the wooded area. The fence is approximately 3,750 feet with a 25-foot total clearance around the fence for its entire length to accommodate a jeep trail and prevent scaling. The fence will have attached lighting and video surveillance. Staff finds that while the clearance area and lighting is similar to other high security federal campuses adjacent to woodlands (such as the double 10-foot tall security fence with setbacks at the James J. Rowley Training Center approved by the Commission in 2017), the Smithsonian has not submitted a security threat analysis at this time to substantiate the proposed fence. The Commission needs to better understand the threat assessment to see if the environmental impacts are warranted.

In addition, the Smithsonian will upgrade the existing fencing along Silver Hill Road. They will replace the current mix of 10-foot metal picket fencing and chain-link with barbed wire fencing with a consistent decorative 10-foot metal picket fence. Staff finds that that proposed fence will improve the campus' public street frontage aesthetic; however, the 10-foot fence height is on average two feet taller than similar fences at other federal campuses. Recent fence approvals at other federal campuses generally have not exceeded 8 feet including high security facilities. Examples include the National Zoo, the National Arboretum, Joint Base Myer Henderson Hall, Fort Belvoir and the Level 5 Department of Homeland Security on Nebraska Avenue.

It is unclear from the current submission whether the campus security issues warrant the proposed interventions and a security threat analysis should be submitted. If the two fence areas are approved as presented, additional landscaping and setbacks on Silver Hill Road and low-level lighting and landscaping in the wooded area could mitigate the impact of the fencing. The addition of improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities along Silver Hill Road could both improve the aesthetic of campus frontage and improve access to the site from the Suitland Metro Station.

Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission **requests the Smithsonian submit a security threat analysis with the next submission to address the need for the clearance area and lighting for the woodland fence and the 10-foot fence on Silver Hill Road.** Staff further recommends that the Commission **requests the Smithsonian submit additional information regarding tree and vegetation removal and the proposed lighting in the 25-foot clearance zone. If the clearance zone and 10-foot fence on Silver Hill Road are warranted, the Smithsonian should submit a robust landscape plan to mitigate for any loss of contiguous habitat in the wooded area and the impacts of the night-time lighting, and to improve the streetscape aesthetic along Silver Hill Road.**

#### Parking and Access

While the ultimate planning horizon for the draft master plan is 40 years, the Transportation Management Plan provides strategies for a typical 20-year duration with consideration that new technologies may emerge in the future and the strategies should be updated as needed. The current parking total of 428 spaces is proposed to decrease to 391 including employee, visitor and fleet vehicles. There is some conflicting information between the draft master plan and the TMP regarding the existing and proposed parking breakdown and staff recommends that the Commission **finds that the next submission should clarify these data inconsistencies.** The TMP and draft master plan include a 20-year goal to achieve a parking ratio of 1:2 consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. This goal assumed they were outside the 2,000 radius from the Suitland Metro Station. To achieve the proposed goal, the TMP recommends a variety of strategies including improving the current Smithsonian shuttle route and hours, improving the route from the campus to the Metro in coordination with other applicable stakeholders, and improving employee benefits and programs to encourage more non-auto driver mode share (NADMS).

The current parking ratio target outlined in the Comprehensive Plan is 1:3 for sites within 2,000 feet of a Metro Station. The eastern portion of the site is within this distance threshold while the western two-thirds of the site is outside 2,000 feet. Staff has consistently applied the stricter of two competing requirements for campus master plans given that the parking ratio is a long-term goal appropriate for the 20-year timeframe of a master plan. There are a variety of strategies already included in the draft Master Plan to reduce parking, but the stated 20-year goal is only to increase the NADMS from 47% to 50%. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission **requests the Smithsonian develop a detailed plan to reduce employee parking with clear milestones and strategies for attaining the 1:3 goal over the next 20 years. The Commission will assess the need for a deviation from the targets on a project by project basis, recognizing a near-term reduction may not be possible given the current infrastructure challenges.**

The master plan and TMP recognize the need for a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path on the north side of Silver Hill Road and the need for pedestrian/bicycle improvements connecting to the Suitland Metro Station. These improvements are supported by Prince George's County and consistent with the local "Suitland-Silver Hill Greenway" in the 2014 Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan. The Smithsonian has committed to building the bicycle and pedestrian improvements on the portion of Silver Hill Road under their jurisdiction, but the master plan does not indicate a specific timeframe. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission **requests that the Smithsonian submit timing information on the bicycle and pedestrian improvements for the portion of Silver Hill Road that is within their jurisdiction.** The additional improvements needed to access the metro station will require coordination with the National Park Service and the Maryland State Highway Administration (who own the remaining land). The most unsafe portions of the route are crossing the slip lanes from Suitland Parkway. The Smithsonian has agreed to convene to a meeting with NPS, Maryland State Highway Administration, GSA on the proposed improvements.

## **CONFORMANCE TO EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES AND RELATED GUIDANCE**

### **Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital**

Staff evaluated the draft master plan for compliance with the Transportation, Urban Design and Environmental Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The Transportation Element requires suburban federal facilities within 2,000 feet of a Metrorail station have a parking ratio not to exceed one space for every three employees (1:3). The draft Master Plan states that it must only comply with the ratio of 1:2 as the Smithsonian believes that the site falls outside the 2,000-foot Metro station radius. The purpose of a master plan is to set long-term goals and objectives. The proposed draft includes a variety of strategies, but they are tailored to meet the 1:2 parking ratio and need to be updated to meet the 1:3.

The Urban Design Element recommends federal sites be inviting and accessible, and that security barriers be integrated into the landscape, minimize their visual impact and infringement on the public space, and respect the overall character of the streetscape. The proposed 10-foot fence along Silver Hill Road, the SCC's primary road frontage, does not meet these goals as presented. As previously noted, if the need for a fence at a height of 10 feet is warranted by the security analysis, the visual impact of the fence can be mitigated by setting it back from the road and adding mounding and landscaping where appropriate.

### **National Historic Preservation Act**

SI is not a federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). NCPC exercises an advisory review role for projects in the region and therefore does not have an NHPA responsibility.

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## **National Environmental Policy Act**

The Commission does not have independent responsibility under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for projects in the environs because its authority over these projects is advisory.

### **CONSULTATION**

The draft Master Plan submission was referred out to the Maryland Department of Planning clearinghouse on November 13, 2019, which forwarded the project to the following agencies: Maryland Departments of General Services, Natural Resources, Transportation, and the Environment; Prince George's County Planning Board (PGCPB) ; the Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission – Prince George's County; the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG); and the Maryland Department of Planning, including the Maryland Historical Trust.

The MWCOG found this project to be consistent with their plans, programs, and objectives.

The Maryland Departments of Natural Resources (MDNR), and the Environment (MDE); and the Maryland Department of Planning (MDOP) found this project to be generally consistent with their plans, programs, and objectives.

The PGCPB recommended that the Smithsonian update their master plan to address architectural design guidelines, an improved plant list, and additional information on utility provisions and capacity. They also recommended that Smithsonian make transportation and access improvements including creating a coordinated commuting circulator with other federal agencies in the area, to which Smithsonian clarified the limitations of their SCC population and budget in leading that effort compared to other federal partners. The PGCPB made recommendations regarding roadway and intersection improvements including the addition of a multi-use trail along Silver Hill Road, improving the pedestrian crossings across Suitland Parkway. Smithsonian noted the master plan commits the Smithsonian to making the improvements on the portion of Silver Hill Rd under their jurisdiction. Regarding areas outside of their jurisdiction, the Smithsonian has committed to coordinating with applicable federal and local stakeholders on making improvements to Silver Hill Road and the access to the Suitland Metro station to the extent practicable.

Prior to the formal agency referral review, the project was reviewed multiple times with staff from NCPC, the Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and the Smithsonian between 2016 and 2019.

### **ONLINE REFERENCE**

The following supporting documents for this project are available online at [www.ncpc.gov](http://www.ncpc.gov):

- Submission Package
- Letter from the Maryland Clearing House
- Letter from the Maryland State Highway Administration
- Letter from Prince George's County Planning Board

- Letters from the Smithsonian Institution

Prepared by Jamie Herr  
01/30/2020

**POWERPOINT (ATTACHED)**

Larry Hogan, Governor  
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor



Robert S. McCord, Secretary  
Sandy Schrader, Deputy Secretary

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## Maryland DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

November 15, 2019

Mr. Matthew Flis, AICP-CUD, LEED-AP, Senior Urban Designer  
National Capital Planning Commission  
Urban Design & Plan Review Division  
401 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20004

Ms. Ann Trowbridge, Associate Director for Planning  
Smithsonian Institution  
600 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Suite 5001, MRC  
Washington, DC 20013

### STATE CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW PROCESS

**State Application Identifier:** MD20191113-0915

**Reviewer Comments Due By:** December 17, 2019

**Project Description:** Draft Master Plan: The Suitland Collections Center Draft Master Plan to Improve the Smithsonian Institution's Stewardship of the Collections on the 110-Acre Site, Addressing Facilities, Landscape, Sustainability, and Security for the Next 40 Years

**Project Address:** 4210 Silver Hill Road, Camp Springs, MD 20746

**Project Location:** Prince George's County

**Clearinghouse Contact:** Sylvia Mosser

Dear Mr. Flis and Ms. Trowbridge:

Thank you for submitting your project for intergovernmental review. Participation in the Maryland Intergovernmental Review and Coordination (MIRC) process helps ensure project consistency with plans, programs, and objectives of State agencies and local governments. MIRC enhances opportunities for approval and/or funding and minimizes delays by resolving issues before project implementation.

Maryland Gubernatorial Executive Order 01.01.1998.04, Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Policy, encourages federal agencies to adopt flexible standards that support "Smart Growth." In addition, Federal Executive Order 12072, Federal Space Management, directs federal agencies to locate facilities in urban areas. Consideration of these two Orders should be taken prior to making final site selections. A copy of Maryland

Mr. Matthew Flis, AICP-CUD, LEED AP & Ms. Ann Trowbridge

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State Application Identifier #: MD20191113-0915

Gubernatorial Executive Order 01.01.1998.04, Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Policy is available upon request.

We have forwarded your project to the following agencies and/or jurisdictions for their review and comments: the Maryland Departments of Transportation, the Environment, Natural Resources, and General Services; Prince George's County; the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in Prince George's County; the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments; and the Maryland Department of Planning, including the Maryland Historical Trust. A composite review and recommendation letter will be sent to you by the reply due date. Your project has been assigned a unique State Application Identifier that you should use on all documents and correspondence. Please be assured that we will expeditiously process your project.

If you need assistance or have questions, contact the State Clearinghouse staff noted above at 410-767-4490 or through e-mail at [sylvia.mosser@maryland.gov](mailto:sylvia.mosser@maryland.gov). Thank you for your cooperation with the MIRC process.

Sincerely,



Jason Dubow, Manager  
Resource Conservation and Management

JD:SM

19-0915\_NFP.NEW.docx

December 17, 2019

Ms. Christine Osei  
M-NCPPC, Prince George's County  
6611 Kenilworth Avenue  
Riverdale, MD 20737

Dear Ms. Osei:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the **Traffic Management Plan (TMP)** prepared by **Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.**, dated **November 07, 2019** for the proposed **Smithsonian Suitland Collections Center – 19APPG034XX** located at **MD 458 Silver Hill Road (Mile Point: 0.48)** in **Prince Georges County**, Maryland. The State Highway Administration (SHA) review is complete and we are pleased to respond.

Based on the information provided, please address the following comments in a point-by-point response:

**Regional and Intermodal Planning Division (RIPD) Comments by (Mr. David Rodgers):**

1. The Suitland Collections Center (19APPG034XX) Traffic Management Plan consists of the overarching design elements and principles that accommodate all users, which is consistent with MDOT SHA's guiding principles.
2. There are currently no planned or programmed projects in the vicinity of the subject site.
3. We defer to Travel Forecasting and Analysis, OOTS, and District 3 Traffic for additional comments related to safety and traffic operations.

Thank you for allowing RIPD to review the Suitland Collections Center (19APPG034XX) Traffic Management Plan. Please do not hesitate to contact Mr. David Rodgers, MDOT SHA Regional Planner, Prince George's County, at 410-545-5670 or [DRodgers1@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:DRodgers1@mdot.maryland.gov) if you have any questions.

**Travel Forecasting and Analysis Division (TFAD) Comments by (Mr. Rafey Subhani)**

1. Based on the desire to continue with the high NADMS (~50%) as employee population increases, no further parking need is expected. Periodically assessing parking utilization as SOV trips decline is recommended.
2. The proposed monitoring of traffic counts should include bus trips, walking trips, and bike trips. This monitoring should also separate employees and visitors.
3. While the proposed buffered sidewalk and bike lanes along Silver Hill Road are an improvement that could lead to the desired NADMS, addressing their crossings of the Suitland Parkway interchange ramps is recommended, as current walking trip from Metro Station / bus hub is inhospitable. Bridging Suitland Parkway for peds/cyclists could be a better use of funding. Working with the State, County, and WMATA on a potential ped bridge from Suitland Metro over Suitland Parkway to SCCC is recommended (similar to the New Carrollton Metro ped bridge over Ellin Rd).
4. Construction of internal path connectivity, as proposed, would help with achieving the desired NADMS.
5. The potential for integration of region-wide Capital Bikeshare, not just internal campus bikeshare, should be considered.
6. It is recommended that alternative transportation modes be promoted on the SCCC website, as transportation improvements come online.

**Traffic Development & Support Division (TDSD) Comments by (Mr. Kyle Roberts);**

TDSD has no comments on the TMP for the Suitland Collections Center (19APPG034XX).

TDSD does request to see the driveway design that is selected and to review the traffic impact study when it is completed.

Ms. Christine Osei  
SHA Tracking No.: 19APPG034XX  
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**District 3 Traffic Comments by (Mr. Alex Yelin):**

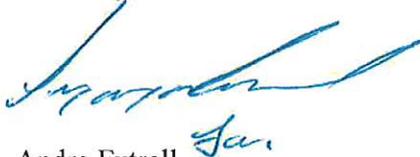
1. Page 17 – Suitland Parkway is only designated as MD 337 for a distance of 0.07 Mi west of MD 4 (Pennsylvania Avenue). Other than this section, Suitland Parkway is not an MDOT SHA maintained roadway.
2. Page 17 – Old Silver Hill Road between MD 458 and Bonita Street is designated as MD 414.
3. Page 33 – At the request of a citizen, MDOT SHA conducted a traffic signal warrant analysis for the entrance opposite Hickory Hill Apartments on MD 458 during spring 2019. This analysis found that the intersection met MD MUTCD signal warrants 1, 2, and 3 when considering mainline U-turns and left turns. However, MDOT SHA decided to not move forward with signalization at that time due to low side street volume, minimal crash history, and low vehicular delay.

**District 3 Engineering Systems Team (EST) Comments by (Ms. Claudine Myers):**

The Engineering Systems Team has received the TMP for Smithsonian Suitland Collections Center and defer to District 3 Traffic for comments on the traffic mitigation requirements.

Please submit a CD containing the traffic impact study, all supporting documentation, and a point-by-point response addressing the comments noted above to the Access Management Division. For electronic submissions create an account with our new online system <https://mdotsha.force.com/accesspermit>. Please reference the SHA tracking number on any future submissions. Please keep in mind that you can view the reviewer and project status via SHA Access Management Division web page at <http://www.roads.maryland.gov/pages/amd.aspx>. If you have any questions, or require additional information, please contact Mr. Kwesi Woodroffe at 301-513-7347, by using our toll-free number in Maryland only at 1-800-876-4742 (x7347) or via email at [kwoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:kwoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov) or [shaamdpermits@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:shaamdpermits@mdot.maryland.gov).

Sincerely,



Andre Futrell,  
District Engineer, District 3, SHA

AF/jwm

Ms. Christine Osei  
SHA Tracking No.: 19APPG034XX  
Page 4 of 4  
December 17, 2019

cc: Mr. Matt Baker, SHA – RIPD  
Ms. Danielle Black, SHA District 3 EST  
Mr. Peter Campanides, SHA District 3 Traffic  
Mr. Adam Catherine, Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.  
Ms. Rola Daher, SHA – TFAD  
Ms. Crystal Hancock, Prince George's M-NCPPC  
Ms. Winstina Hughes, SHA – RIPD  
Ms. Claudine Myers, SHA District 3 EST  
Mr. Kyle Roberts, SHA – TDSD  
Mr. David Rodgers, SHA – RIPD  
Ms. Thomasina Saxon, SHA – RIPD  
Mr. Randall Scott, SHA District 3 Traffic  
Mr. Errol Stoute, SHA – TDSD  
Mr. William Stroud, SHA – TDSD  
Mr. Rafey Subhani, SHA – TFAD  
Ms. Ann Trowbridge, Smithsonian Institution  
Mr. Kwesi Woodroffe, SHA District 3 Regional Engineer  
Mr. Alex Yelin, SHA District 3 Traffic



## Maryland DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

December 19, 2019

Mr. Matthew Flis, AICP, Senior Urban Designer, Urban Design & Plan Review  
National Capital Planning Commission  
401 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20004

### STATE CLEARINGHOUSE RECOMMENDATION

**State Application Identifier:** MD20191113-0915

**Applicant:** National Capital Planning Commission and Smithsonian Institution

**Project Description:** Draft Master Plan: The Suitland Collections Center Draft Master Plan to Improve the Smithsonian Institution's Stewardship of the Collections on the 110-Acre Site, Addressing Facilities, Landscape, Sustainability, and Security for the Next 40 Years

**Project Address:** 4210 Silver Hill Road, Camp Springs, MD 20746

**Project Location:** Prince George's County

**Recommendation:** Consistent with Qualifying Comments and Contingent Upon Certain Actions

Dear Mr. Flis:

In accordance with Presidential Executive Order 12372 and Code of Maryland Regulation 34.02.02.04-.07, the State Clearinghouse has coordinated the intergovernmental review of the referenced project. This letter constitutes the State process review and recommendation.

Review comments were requested from the Maryland Departments of General Services, Natural Resources, Transportation, and the Environment; Prince George's County; the Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission - Prince George's County; the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments; and the Maryland Department of Planning, including the Maryland Historical Trust. The Maryland Department of Transportation and Prince George's County did not provide comments.

The Maryland Department of General Services and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments found this project to be consistent with their plans, programs, and objectives.

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) provided the following comments: "The project is located in a MWCOG Activity Center (Suitland Activity Center). MWCOG Activity Centers are locations that will accommodate the majority of the region's future growth and play a central role in achieving the MWCOG Region Forward Vision's prosperity, sustainability, accessibility, and livability goals."

The Maryland Departments of Natural Resources, and the Environment; and the Maryland Department of Planning found this project to be generally consistent with their plans, programs, and objectives, but included certain qualifying comments summarized below.

The Maryland Department of Planning provided the following qualifying comments: “The proposed master plan could include potential options to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections to and from the Suitland Campus Center and the Suitland Metrorail station as stated in the policy recommendations listed on page 107 of the Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan. The Smithsonian Suitland Collections Center Master Plan could be improved to be consistent with the Sector Plan to provide for frontage improvements along Silver Hill Road including a multi-use, multi-modal trail and greenway facility.”

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources provided the following qualifying comments: “Please address issues raised by other reviewers, especially those related to sustainability, multimodal transportation and resource protection.”

The Maryland Department of the Environment provided the following qualifying comments:

1. “Any above ground or underground petroleum storage tanks, which may be utilized, must be installed and maintained in accordance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations. Underground storage tanks must be registered and the installation must be conducted and performed by a contractor certified to install underground storage tanks by the Land Management Administration in accordance with COMAR 26.10. Contact the Oil Control Program at (410) 537-3442 for additional information.
2. If the proposed project involves demolition – Any above ground or underground petroleum storage tanks that may be on site must have contents and tanks along with any contamination removed. Please contact the Oil Control Program at (410) 537-3442 for additional information.
3. Any solid waste including construction, demolition and land clearing debris, generated from the subject project, must be properly disposed of at a permitted solid waste acceptance facility, or recycled if possible. Contact the Solid Waste Program at (410) 537-3315 for additional information regarding solid waste activities and contact the Waste Diversion and Utilization Program at (410) 537-3314 for additional information regarding recycling activities.
4. The Waste Diversion and Utilization Program should be contacted directly at (410) 537-3314 by those facilities which generate or propose to generate or handle hazardous wastes to ensure these activities are being conducted in compliance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations. The Program should also be contacted prior to construction activities to ensure that the treatment, storage or disposal of hazardous wastes and low-level radioactive wastes at the facility will be conducted in compliance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations.
5. Any contract specifying ‘lead paint abatement’ must comply with Code of Maryland Regulations. If a property was built before 1950 and will be used as rental housing, then compliance with COMAR 26.16.02 is required. Additional guidance regarding projects where lead paint may be encountered can be obtained by contacting the Environmental Lead Division at (410) 537-3825.
6. The proposed project may involve rehabilitation, redevelopment, revitalization, or property acquisition of commercial, industrial property. For specific information about these programs and eligibility, please contact the Land Restoration Program at (410) 537-3437.”

Mr. Matthew Flis, AICP

December 19, 2019

Page 3

State Application Identifier: **MD20191113-0915**

7. Borrow areas used to provide clean earth back fill material may require a surface mine permit. Disposal of excess cut material at a surface mine may require site approval. Contact the Mining Program at (410) 537-3557 for further details.

The Maryland Historical Trust stated that their finding of consistency is contingent upon the applicant's completion of the review process required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as follows: "The Maryland Historical Trust awaits coordination with the Smithsonian Institution to complete the historic preservation review of proposed actions, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act."

The Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission - Prince George's County (M-NCPPC-PGC) did not find the project consistent or inconsistent since they are currently reviewing the project, as follows: "This project is a direct referral to our agency and is being reviewed via the M-NCPPC-PGC Mandatory Referral process. A report with consistency review comments will be provided directly to NCPC in early January 2020. A report will be provided to MDP [the Maryland Department of Planning] when it is published."

The State Application Identifier Number must be placed on any correspondence pertaining to this project.

Please remember, you must comply with all applicable state and local laws and regulations. If you need assistance or have questions, contact the State Clearinghouse staff person noted above at 410-767-4490 or through e-mail at [sylvia.mosser@maryland.gov](mailto:sylvia.mosser@maryland.gov).

Thank you for your cooperation with the MIRC process.

Sincerely,



Myra Barnes, Lead Clearinghouse Coordinator

MB:SM

cc:

Tina Quinichette-MDOT  
Amanda Redmiles-MDE  
Tony Redman-DNR

Wendy Scott-Napier-DGS  
Kathleen Herbert-PGEO  
Jay Mangalvedhe-MNCPPC

Greg Goodwin-MWCOG  
Joseph Griffiths-MDPL  
Beth Cole-MHT

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# Smithsonian Institution

January 8, 2020

Matthew J. Flis, AICP-CUD, LEED-AP  
Senior Urban Designer | Urban Design & Plan Review Division  
National Capital Planning Commission  
401 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 500 North  
Washington DC 20004

RE: State Application Identifier MD20191113-0915

Dear Mr. Flis,

This letter responds to the December 19, 2019, Maryland State Clearinghouse Recommendation to the Smithsonian Institution's Suitland Collections Center Draft Master Plan (State Application Identifier MD20191113-0915). We thank the MD agencies for their review.

In response to comments from the MD Departments of Natural Resources and the Environment, and the MD Department of Planning, we have identified, within the master plan, initiatives to better connect the Smithsonian's Suitland Collection Center to the Suitland Metro station, including a landscaped bicycle/pedestrian trail and shuttle service, as well as bicycle sharing and bicycle facilities. The Smithsonian will coordinate with the National Park Service, MDOT State Highway Authority, and WMATA to encourage the development of these improvements.

The Smithsonian is committed to sustainability and resource protection. The sustainability plan identifies the Smithsonian's goals for greenhouse gas reduction, fleet management, water use reduction and reuse, and robust buildings.

At this time, we are not contemplating affecting any above ground or underground fuel storage tanks. The Smithsonian and its contractors currently follow MDE guidelines and permitting processes for above and underground fuel tanks, hazardous material abatement, waste removal, earth movement, demolition, and construction, and will continue to discuss projects with the MD programs identified as we move forward with design and construction projects in the future.

With regard to the comment of the Maryland Historical Trust, we would like to clarify that the draft Master Plan is not subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

The Smithsonian's status under the NHPA differs from the status of most federal agencies. Though the Smithsonian is considered part of the United States and uses federal appropriations to a large extent, though not exclusively, to carry out its mission, it is not considered an executive branch agency. In the late 1990s there were several court cases clarifying the Smithsonian's unique status within the federal family. One result of these cases was the conclusion of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation that the Smithsonian does not fall within the meaning of "federal agency" for the purposes of the NHPA.

However, many Smithsonian construction projects in Washington, D.C., are subject to review and approval by the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), which is subject to the NHPA. To provide the Smithsonian a mechanism to perform Section 106 review for projects submitted to NCPC, Congress enacted a law providing that, in carrying out "projects in the District of Columbia which are subject to

the review and approval of the National Capital Planning Commission . . . the Smithsonian Institution shall be deemed to be an agency for the purposes of compliance with regulations promulgated by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f).” See Act Aug. 15, 2003, P.L. 108-72, § 3, 117 Stat. 88.

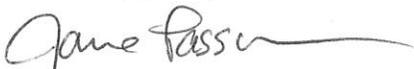
Because the Suitland facility is located outside of the District of Columbia and the draft Master Plan is subject to NCPC’s advisory review (rather than approval authority), the Smithsonian is not required to conduct a formal Section 106 review. In lieu of Section 106 review, the Smithsonian has an internal historic preservation review policy guided by the principles of the NHPA and *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

Pursuant to this policy, the Smithsonian has evaluated the draft Suitland Master Plan, and found a determination of no adverse effect on historic properties. The primary historic resource within proximity to the Suitland Collections Center is the Suitland Parkway listed in the National Register of Historic Places. National Register documentation for the Suitland Parkway describes the resource’s “scenic driving experience” and “rural-like setting”. Under the draft Master Plan, new buildings at the northern portion of the Suitland Collections Center site are located at a significant distance from the Parkway, and will not feature windows or lighting oriented towards the Parkway. No changes are planned to the wooded slopes between the proposed master plan building sites and the Suitland Parkway, therefore there will be no impacts to the vegetation and setting adjacent Suitland Parkway.

Previous correspondence with the Maryland Historical Trust in 1993 regarding an earlier Suitland Collections Center Master Plan requested Phase II archaeological site evaluation of Site 18PR427 (Head Aick/Smith Green Site). Archaeological evaluation was completed in 2008, and Site 18PR427 was recommended ineligible for the National Register due to lack of stratified deposits, significant features, and presence of large-scale disturbance. MHT concurred with this recommendation via letter dated April 17, 2008.

Please advise if we can provide copies of materials referenced in this letter.

Sincerely yours,



Jane Passman  
Senior Facilities Master Planner  
Smithsonian Facilities  
600 Maryland Avenue SW Suite 5001  
PO BOX 37012 MRC 511  
Washington DC 20013-7012

CC Myra Barnes, Lead Clearinghouse Coordinator  
Christine Osei, M-NCPPC

Ann Trowbridge, SI  
Carly Bond, SI

January 16, 2020

Mr. Marcel Acosta, Executive Director  
National Capital Planning Commission  
401 Ninth Street, N.W.  
North Lobby, Suite 500  
Washington, D.C. 20004

**RE: Smithsonian Suitland Collections Center  
Draft Master Plan (MR-1933F)**

Dear Mr. Acosta:

The Prince George's County Planning Board had the opportunity to review the proposed Smithsonian Suitland Collections Center Master Plan during its regular meeting on January 16, 2020 and voted to support staff's recommendations listed below. A copy of the staff report is enclosed for your information.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff review of the Draft Master Plan resulted in the following recommendations:

1. The applicant should incorporate architectural design guidelines into the Master Plan to guide future building design and development.
2. The applicant should take the lead in coordinating a local circulator bus or van service with other government agencies located within the Suitland area such as the United States Census Bureau, and the National Naval Support Facility and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration located approximately one mile north of the subject site.
3. The applicant should revise the Suggested Plant List to include species recommended for planting by the 2010 Prince George's County Landscape Manual in Appendix 3. Multiple species included in the Suggested Plant List are not recommended for general use in Prince George's County. All planting materials should be native species.
4. The applicant should include a discussion in the Master Plan on how the on-site sanitary sewerage will be managed, since the population of the Campus is projected to triple at build-out.
5. The applicant should construct a multi-use trail consistent with the "Suitland-Silver Hill Greenway" in the 2014 *Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan* fronting the SCC site. The applicant should coordinate work with the Maryland State Highway Administration and neighboring property owners to ensure enough right-of-way or necessary easements.
6. The applicant should improve the intersection at Maywood Lane and Silver Hill Road, and the existing entrance to Hickory Hill apartments to be consistent with the 2014 *Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan* to address pedestrian safety.

7. The applicant should coordinate pedestrian crossing improvements along the on-and off-ramps to Suitland Parkway along Silver Hill Road with National Park Service and State Highway Administration.
8. The applicant should "Scope" a Traffic Impact Analysis with M-NCPPC staff to establish parameters for a future traffic study for future development.
9. The applicant should consider incorporating dedicated areas and facilities for supporting the proposed transportation demand management strategies.

If you have any questions, please contact Christine A. Osei at 301-952-3313 or via email at Christine.Osei@ppd.mncppc.org.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth M. Hewlett  
Chairman

Enclosure

- c: Andree Green Checkley, Esq., Planning Director, Office of the Planning Director  
Katina Shoulars, Acting Division Chief, Countywide Planning Division  
Whitney Chellis, Planning Supervisor, Development Review Division  
Crystal Hancock, Acting Planning Supervisor, Countywide Planning Division  
Christine A. Osei, Planner Coordinator, Countywide Planning Division  
Donna J. Brown, Clerk of the Council, Prince George's County Council



Note: Staff reports can be accessed at [www.pgplanning.org/planning.home.htm](http://www.pgplanning.org/planning.home.htm)

## Mandatory Referral

MR-1933F

Application	General Data	
<p><b>Project Name:</b> Smithsonian Suitland Collections Center Draft Master Plan</p> <p><b>Location:</b> 4210 Silver Hill Road Camp Springs, MD 20746</p> <p><b>Applicant/Address:</b> Smithsonian Institute 600 Maryland Avenue, S.W. Suite 5001 Washington, D.C. 20013</p> <p><b>Property Owner:</b> Smithsonian Institute</p>	<b>Planning Board Hearing Date:</b>	01/16/20
	<b>Date Accepted:</b>	11/13/19
	<b>Mandatory Action Timeframe:</b>	60-Day
	<b>Acreage:</b>	110.00
	<b>Zone:</b>	O-S
	<b>Planning Area:</b>	76A
	<b>General Plan Tier:</b>	Established Communities
	<b>Council District:</b>	7
	<b>Municipality:</b>	N/A
	<b>200-Scale Base Map:</b>	

Purpose of Application	Notice Date
Prepare a draft master plan for the 110-acre campus located at 4210 Silver Hill Road. The goal of the master plan is to improve the stewardship of the Smithsonian's collections and address current and future space requirements in a strategic and integrated manner.	<b>Acceptance Mailing:</b> 12/12/19

Staff Recommendation	Staff Reviewer
Transmit Staff Report to: Mr. Marcel Acosta, Executive Director National Capital Planning Commission 401 Ninth Street, N.W. North Lobby, Suite 500 Washington, D.C. 20004	<b>Christine A. Osei</b> , Planner Coordinator <b>Phone Number:</b> 301-952-3313 <b>Email:</b> Christine.Osei@ppd.mncppc.org

Map 1 – Vicinity Map

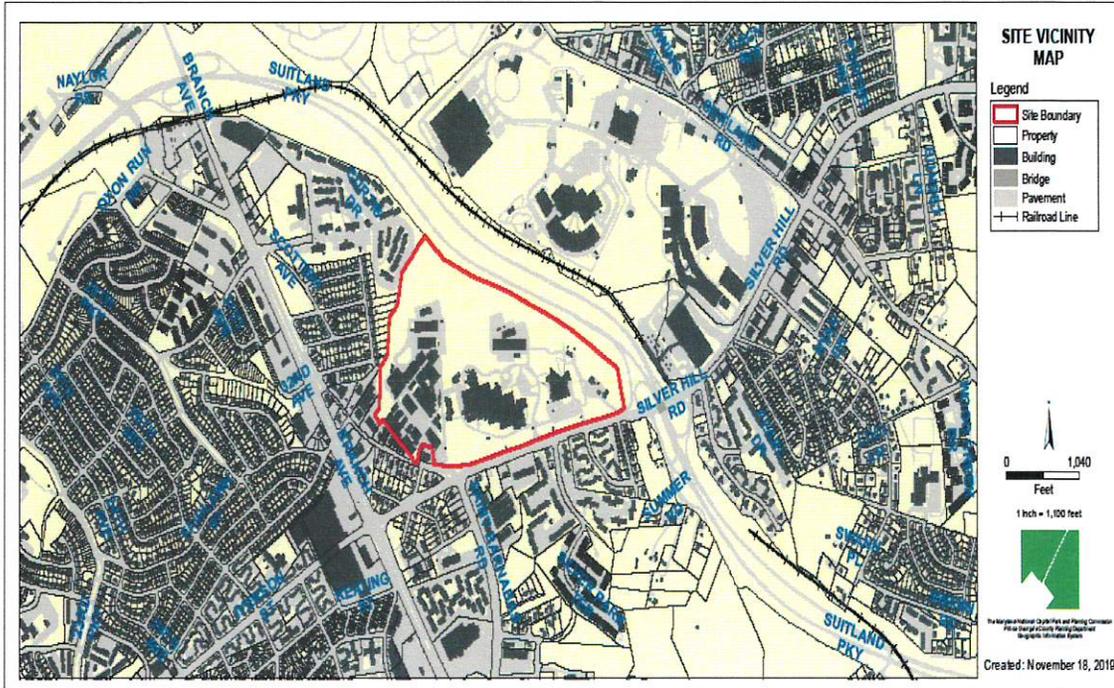
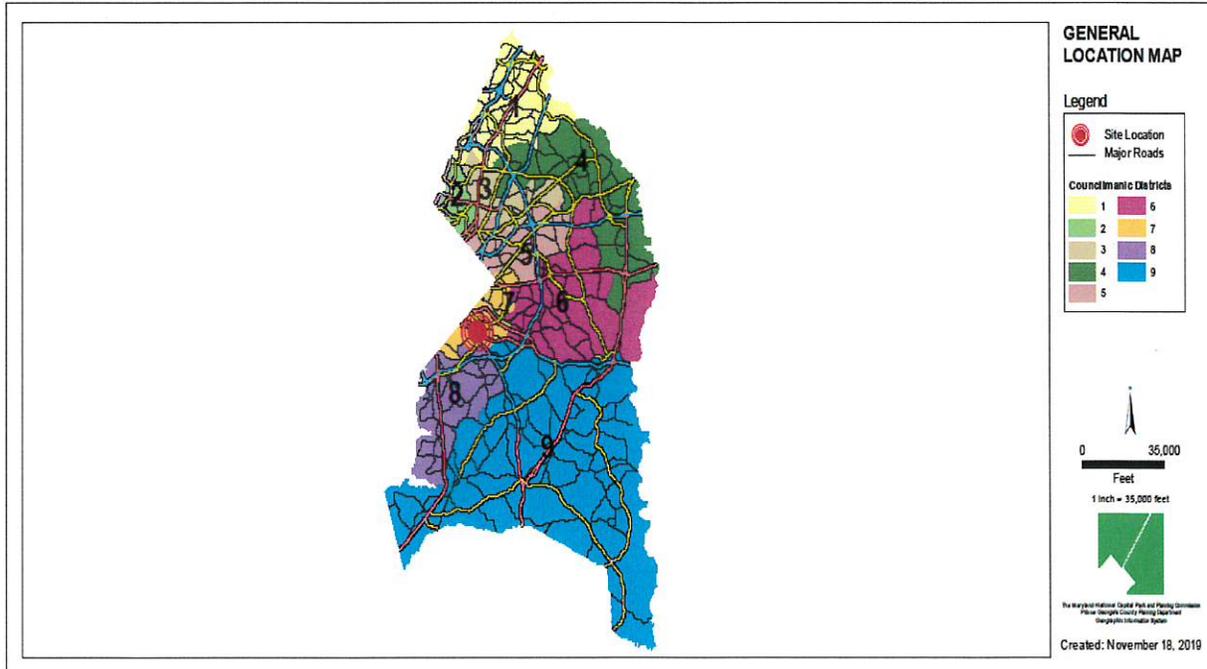


Diagram 2 - General Project Location Map



**The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission**  
**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD**  
**STAFF REPORT**

**Subject: Mandatory Referral (MR-1933F)**  
Smithsonian Suitland Collections Center Draft Master Plan

The subject Draft Master Plan is being reviewed according to the Land Use Article §§20-301 through 305 of the Maryland Annotated Code and Section 27-294 of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance which requires the Planning Board to review public construction projects for all federal, state, county and municipal governments, and publicly and privately-owned utilities through the Mandatory Referral (MR) review process.

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

**SITE DESCRIPTION**

The Smithsonian Suitland Collections Center site contains 110-acres and is zoned O-S (Open Space). The site is located in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Silver Hill Road (MD 458) and Suitland Parkway. It is approximately a quarter of a mile southwest of the Suitland Metro Station. The site is bounded to the north by Suitland Parkway, to the south by Silver Hill Road, to the west by single family lots and multi-family buildings, and to the east by the Suitland Parkway and Silver Hill Road intersection.

The site currently has four vehicular and one pedestrian access points. The pedestrian access also serves access for emergency vehicles. According to PGAtlas.com, most of the northern half of the site is wooded. This same area also contains streams and areas of steep and severe slopes. The existing woodland serves as a buffer between the improved areas of the site, Suitland Parkway, and the existing residential neighborhoods to the west. An existing security fence, that is to remain, prevents pedestrian access to the site from the wooded areas.

The existing facilities on the site include the National Museum of the American Indian – Cultural Resource Center (NMAI-CRC), SG Greenhouse, the Museum Support Center (MSC), Osteo Prep Lab, and a series of storage and facility support buildings collectively known as the Paul E. Garber Facility that are to remain. The site presently serves as a primary storage facility for a wide range of objects and specimens, and also as a research hub to many national and international organizations.

**BACKGROUND**

The Planning Department has no records of previous development applications for this site. The site was acquired in two phases. The first phase (twenty-one acres) was acquired in 1950 by Paul E. Garber, the first curator of the now, National Air and Space Museum (NASM), after whom the site is named. The Smithsonian acquired the second phase of the site from the General Services Administration in the mid-1970s.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Draft Master Plan will update the 1993 Master Plan and provide a vision for campus redevelopment and expansion to improve the stewardship of the Smithsonian's collections over the next forty years. It identifies the construction of new buildings, additions, the renovation of some existing buildings, and improvement of multi-modal access to the Suitland Collections Center (SCC) to accommodate future growth. The Draft Master Plan will also include an improved entrance and circulation within the Campus and surrounding area. It intends to "preserve and broaden" access to collections, address space needs, consolidate collections locations, reduce reliance on leased space, increase campus capacity and improve environmental stewardship.

Three of the four existing vehicular access points will be consolidated to one access point, and the existing pedestrian access point “may” remain, as yet to be determined by the applicant.

The Draft Master Plan includes general design and sustainability guidelines for future development. It also includes an illustrative landscape plan that seeks to create a more cohesive pedestrian circulation system and to provide gathering and functional outdoor spaces for group activities. It will consider incorporating green building techniques, enhancing aesthetic views, promoting sustainable landscaping, improving stormwater management, and generally enhancing the ability of the Campus to function as a critical support facility for the Smithsonian and its partners.

### **PROJECT SCHEDULE/HOURS OF OPERATION**

No development is proposed with this Draft Master Plan at this time. The SCC is a research campus with a current staff population of approximately 350. Access to the facility is by appointment, and the current hours of operation will remain the same (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

#### **Planning Department:**

Notification letters were mailed to adjoining property owners and area civic associations on December 12, 2019. At the writing of the technical staff report, no homeowners or civic associations had contacted staff concerns about this proposed Draft Master Plan.

#### **Applicant:**

The applicant conducted numerous agency staff meetings between 2016 and 2019 to coordinate agency input on a broad range of issues before the preparation of the Draft Master Plan began. Some of the topics discussed by agency staff include the proposed access at Silver Hill Road (Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)/State Highway Administration (SHA)) and trail connections from the Suitland Metro Station to the SCC site National Park Service (NPS), and The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC).

The applicant noted on December 2, 2019, that they would like to reach out to the Suitland Civic Association and members of the Suitland Design Review Committee, to which M-NCPPC staff provided contact information to the Smithsonian Project Team. The applicant has not provided any update in regards to contacting these entities.

## **PROJECT ANALYSIS**

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Prince George’s County Planning Department staff has reviewed the proposed project and provided the following comments:

### **1. CONSISTENCY WITH APPROVED PLANS**

The projected development application is consistent with the 2014 *Plan Prince George’s 2035 Approved General Plan* (Plan 2035), which designates the subject site in the Established Communities and within the Employment policy area. The vision for the Established Communities is to provide context-sensitive infill and low-to-medium density development and to recommend maintaining and enhancing existing public services, facilities, and infrastructure to ensure that the needs of residents will be met.

The 2014 *Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan* recommends institutional land uses on the subject property. The sector plan recommends (pp. 106-107) installing a full multi-use trail along the north side of MD 458 (Silver Hill Road) to facilitate a pedestrian/bicycling connection to the Suitland Metro Station from the east and the west, which staff recommends.

**2. CONSISTENCY WITH DEVELOPMENT/REGULATORY STANDARDS**

The Master Plan provides a strong vision for an ambitious plan for enhancing the SCC over the next forty years. The Sustainable Design Plan element is comprehensive and shows a strong commitment to sustainability. The Phasing and Implementation Plan element provides a clear and logical plan for replacing obsolete facilities and improving the overall function of the site as a main supporting facility for the Smithsonian.

**3. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**Woodland Conservation:** The site is not subject to the Prince George’s County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance (WCO) because it is a federally owned and operated.

**Soils:** The site is in the Oxon Run subwatershed of the Potomac River basin. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (WSS), the predominant soils found to occur on the site are Beltsville silt loam, Beltsville-Urban Land complex, Croom gravelly sandy loam, Croom-Marr complex, Downer-Hammonton complex, Downer-Hammonton-Urban Land complex, Grosstown gravelly silt loam, Grosstown – Urban land complex, Sassafras-Urban land complex, and Urban land – Beltsville complex. This information is provided for the applicants benefit and pose no development limitations at this time.

**4. TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT**

Silver Hill Road is listed in the 2014 *Approved Countywide Master Plan of Transportation* (MPOT) as a master plan arterial facility with a proposed right-of-way of 120 feet and four to six lanes. Suitland Parkway is a master plan freeway facility with a variable right-of-way and four to six lanes. There are structures proposed in the ultimate right-of-way of one road. The applicant will need to coordinate with the SHA regarding any improvements along Silver Hill Road.

The MPOT calls for at least a six-foot-wide sidewalk and designated bike lanes on Silver Hill Road (p. 22). The Green Line Plan recommends the Suitland-Silver Hill Greenway off-street trail, which would cross the frontage of the Smithsonian property. A wide sidewalk and off-road bicycle facility are to be constructed along SCC's frontage of Silver Hill Road. Recommendations to address the bicycle and pedestrian access along the frontage of the site are provided in the last section of this report.

**5. HISTORIC PRESERVATION/ARCHEOLOGY**

No issues

**6. ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT**

The proposed Draft Master Plan will have no financial impact on the County; however, future development may attract additional researchers from the region.

**7. EXISTING PUBLIC FACILITIES**

The site is in Police District IV. The nearest station is located at 5153 Indian Head Highway in Oxon Hill, Maryland. The closest Fire/EMS Station is the Silver Hill VFD Station 829, located at 3900 Old Silver Hill Road, in Silver Hill, Maryland. The northwestern part of the property is in water and sewer category five and the southeastern portion water and sewer category 3, all adequate to serve the site.

**8. PERMITTING AGENCIES**

It should be noted that the Mandatory Referral review process does not exempt any project from the need to meet the requirements of any other entitlement process. If applicable, the subject application will be required to receive approvals from the following agencies, as outlined below, prior to any development on the site. Future development on the site may be subject to the following:

1. Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE):
  - Site Development (Storm Water Management)
  - Wetland Permit

2. Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration
  - Access Permit

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff review of the Draft Master Plan resulted in the following recommendations:

1. The applicant should incorporate architectural design guidelines into the Master Plan to guide future building design and development.
2. The applicant should take the lead in coordinating a local circulator bus or van service with other government agencies located within the Suitland area such as the United States Census Bureau, the National Naval Support Facility and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration located approximately one mile north of the subject site.
3. The applicant should revise the Suggested Plant List to include species recommended for planting by the 2010 Prince George's County Landscape Manual in Appendix 3. Multiple species included in the Suggested Plant List are not recommended for general use in Prince George's County. All planting materials should be native species.
4. The applicant should include a discussion in the Master Plan on how the on-site sanitary sewerage will be managed, since the population of the Campus is projected to triple at build-out.
5. The applicant should construct a multi-use trail consistent with the "Suitland-Silver Hill Greenway" in the 2014 *Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan* fronting the SCC site. The applicant should coordinate work with the Maryland State Highway Administration and neighboring property owners to ensure enough right-of-way or necessary easements.
6. The applicant should improve the intersection at Maywood Lane and Silver Hill Road, and the existing entrance to Hickory Hill apartments to be consistent with the 2014 *Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan* to address pedestrian safety.
7. The applicant should coordinate pedestrian crossing improvements along the on-and off-ramps to Suitland Parkway along Silver Hill Road with National Park Service and State Highway Administration.
8. The applicant should "Scope" a Traffic Impact Analysis with M-NCPPC staff to establish parameters for a future traffic study for future development.
9. The applicant should consider incorporating dedicated areas and facilities for supporting the proposed transportation demand management strategies.



Smithsonian Institution  
Office of Planning, Design and Construction

January 22, 2020

The Honorable Elizabeth M. Hewlett, Chairman  
Prince George's County Planning Board  
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Re: Smithsonian Suitland Collections Center Draft Master Plan Mandatory Review MR-1933F

Dear Madam Chair:

We want to thank the Commission for their support of our project at the January 16<sup>th</sup> hearing and for the assistance provided by Christine Osei and other staff members to the Smithsonian and its consultants in developing the draft plan for the Suitland Collections Center.

We received the staff report and recommendations and wish to respond specifically to these and how we will address them going forward. We have included the M-NCPPC staff recommendations in italics below.

*Staff review of the Draft Master Plan resulted in the following recommendations:*

1. *The applicant should incorporate architectural design guidelines into the Master Plan to guide future building design and development.*

The Smithsonian's Final Master Plan will incorporate language and renderings describing the general character for the future design of projects. The Smithsonian also has extensive architectural and engineering design standards that are provided to Architect/Engineer teams working on all of our museum and research center plans and projects. Individual project guidance for aesthetics and urban design would be provided to the selected AE firms as part of the individual project scope or early design guidance as this will vary among the projects proposed in the master plan depending on the character of adjacent buildings and landscape as well as on the use of the building.

2. *The applicant should take the lead in coordinating a local circulator bus or van service with other government agencies located within the Suitland area such as the United States Census Bureau, the National Naval Support Facility and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration located approximately one mile north of the subject site.*

The Smithsonian will reach out to the above federal agencies to understand the services they currently provide or would like to provide in order to determine if a future shared service could be mutually beneficial in encouraging employee and/or visitor use of transit for purposes of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and traffic congestion. Our site population and transportation budget may be much smaller than those government agencies, so it is unrealistic that the Smithsonian could afford to be the primary provider of shuttle services.

- 3. The applicant should revise the Suggested Plant List to include species recommended for planting by the 2010 Prince George's County Landscape Manual in Appendix 3. Multiple species included in the Suggested Plant List are not recommended for general use in Prince George's County. All planting materials should be native species.*

We have shared the Prince George's County *Suggested Plant List* with the master plan team and with our landscape architect colleagues in Smithsonian Gardens. We will use the list as guidance for developing planting plans for future projects. In some cases, there may be valid reasons to stray from the list, including keeping up with the impacts of climate change on the plants that thrive in our area as well as in selecting plantings to support Native American identities at the National Museum of the American Indian's Cultural Resources Center and to support our plant collection.

- 4. The applicant should include a discussion in the Master Plan on how the on-site sanitary sewerage will be managed, since the population of the Campus is projected to triple at build-out.*

The current system is separated storm and sanitary and connects to off-site systems that we understand to have the necessary capacity for the future increase in population. The Smithsonian complies with codes and coordinates with utilities for projects. We will review the plan and, if needed, add additional information regarding on-site sanitary system management. The site has recently become subject to a small federal site MS 4 permit and will be complying with MDE's requirements going forward.

- 5. The applicant should construct a multi-use trail consistent with the "Suitland-Silver Hill Greenway" in the 2014 Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan fronting the SCC site. The applicant should coordinate work with the Maryland State Highway Administration and neighboring property owners to ensure enough right-of-way or necessary easements.*

Prior to undertaking the design of the proposed multi-use trail, the Smithsonian will convene a meeting of the above stakeholders as well as the National Park Service and GSA to initiate discussion of the trail plan's specific design guidance and coordination of needed right of way adjustments or easements, responsibilities for construction and maintenance, and to ensure continuity of the trail's character and design across jurisdictions.

- 6. The applicant should improve the intersection at Maywood Lane and Silver Hill Road, and the existing entrance to Hickory Hill apartments to be consistent with the 2014 Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan to address pedestrian safety.*

The Maywood lane intersection is beyond the Smithsonian's property and falls adjacent to land and a driveway serving a maintenance facility under National Park Service jurisdiction. As such, we would not take financial or project leadership responsibility for improving that intersection. We support changes that would improve safety for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians, including employees, visitors and neighbors walking to the Suitland Collections Center from the Metro who must now navigate the 100' wide curb cut at the National Park Service drive as well as three on-off ramps for the Suitland Parkway, all but one of the above without even a stop sign for traffic control.

With respect to the Hickory Hill apartment complex entrance drive, the SCC draft master plan calls for relocation of the Smithsonian's campus entrance away from the current MSC gate which is opposite the driveway to the Hickory Hill apartments, eliminating this as a pedestrian and vehicle access point to our campus. We will be improving the intersection at the proposed new main campus entrance to the west of the current entrance.

In the event that the new entrance construction does not occur and interim improvements are warranted at the current campus entrance, we would collaborate in developing the necessary study to suggest specific improvements to the State Highway Administration. Mid-block crossings like this usually need to prove they are warranted by pedestrian volume.

7. *The applicant should coordinate pedestrian crossing improvements along the on-and off-ramps to Suitland Parkway along Silver Hill Road with National Park Service and State Highway Administration.*

The Smithsonian will request that the National Park Service and Maryland State Highway Administration implement improvements but has neither the jurisdiction or the expertise to be the coordinating agency for this. The National Park Service would be more appropriately asked to assume the coordinating role.

8. *The applicant should "Scope" a Traffic Impact Analysis with M-NCPPC staff to establish parameters for a future traffic study for future development.*

This has been done and was included with our TMP submission. The traffic study will be conducted when the project design and construction funding are secured, so that studies reflect then-current conditions.

9. *The applicant should consider incorporating dedicated areas and facilities for supporting the proposed transportation demand management strategies.*

The Draft SCC Master Plan calls for adjustments to the NMAI Cultural Resources Center parking area at the southeast corner of the site to include space for parking shared bicycles, scooters, electric carts etc. that would be used to travel within the campus or to the Suitland Metro. As the campus is expanded, facilities and Smithsonian shuttle stops would be added and adjusted.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the staff recommendations for the Draft Report.

Sincerely,



Ann Trowbridge, AIA  
Associate Director for Planning

cc: Marcel Acosta, Executive Director National Capital Planning Commission  
Christine Osei, Mandatory Referral Project Manager, M-NCPPC, Prince George's County  
Nancy Bechtol, Director, Smithsonian Facilities  
William Tompkins, Director, National Collections Program  
Jane Passman, Senior Facility Master Planner, Smithsonian Facilities

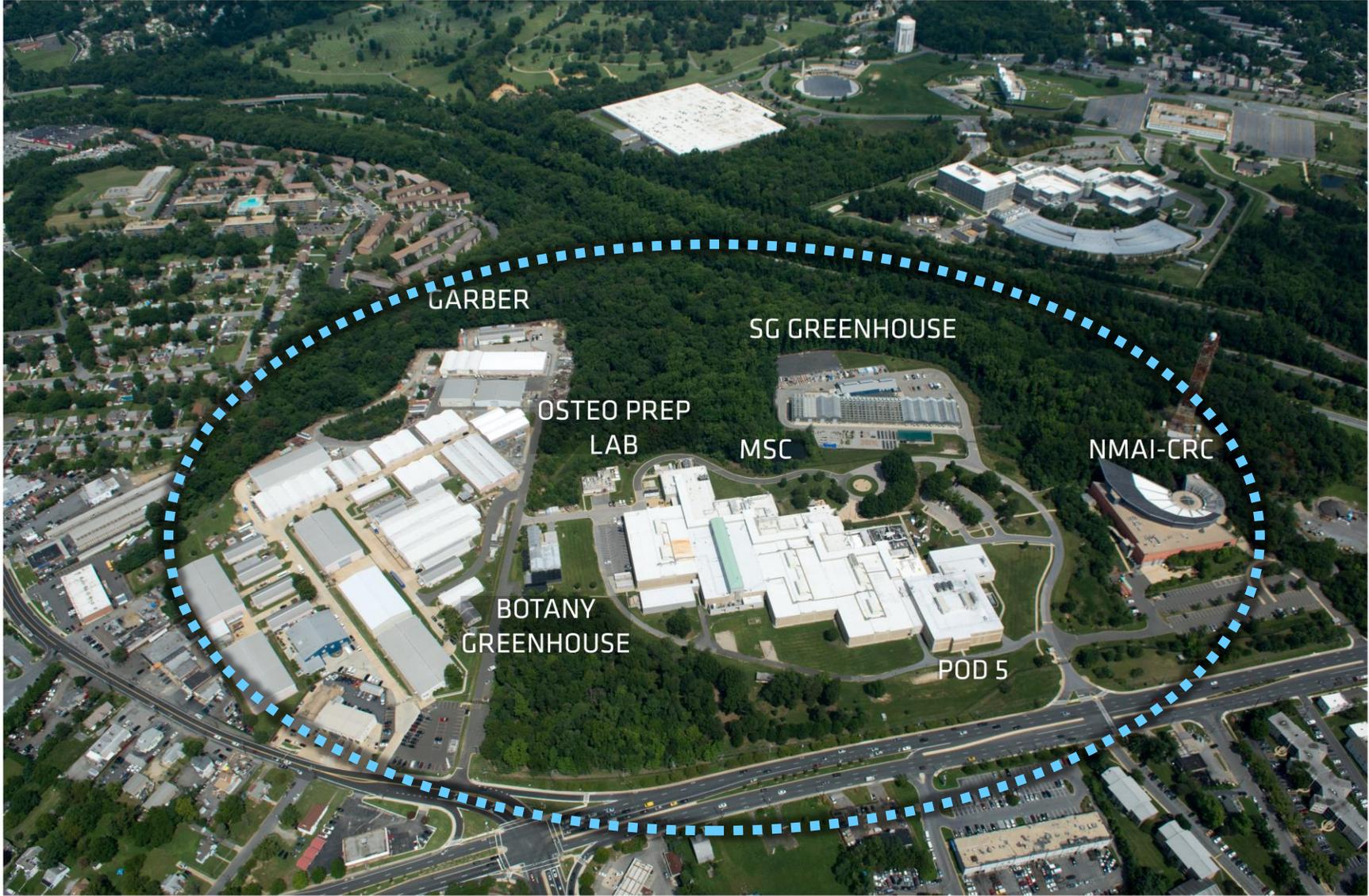
# Suitland Collections Center Master Plan

4210 Silver Hill Road, Suitland, Maryland

Approval of Comments on Draft Master Plan

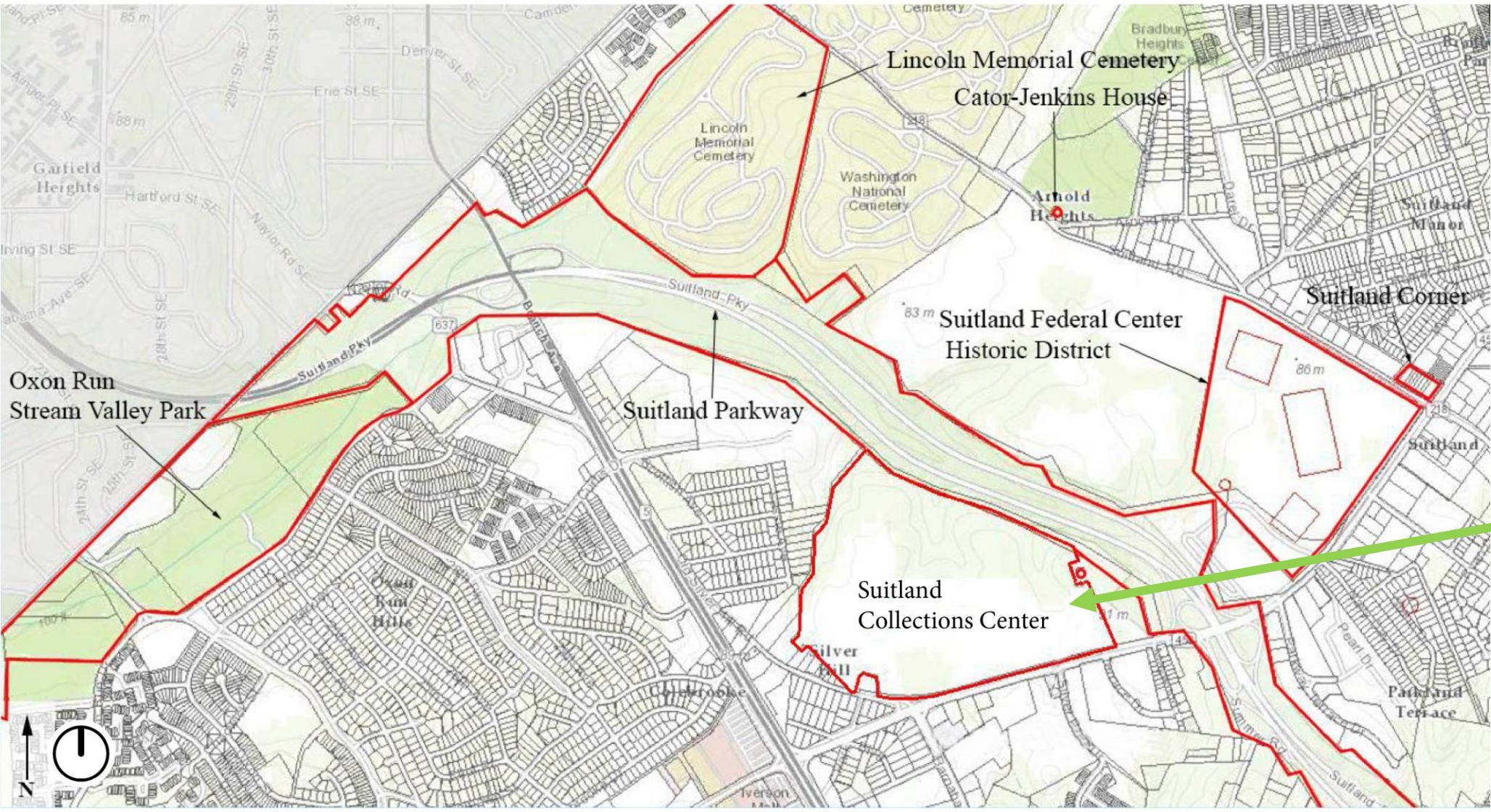
Smithsonian Institution

# Site Location



Location Map

# Site Context

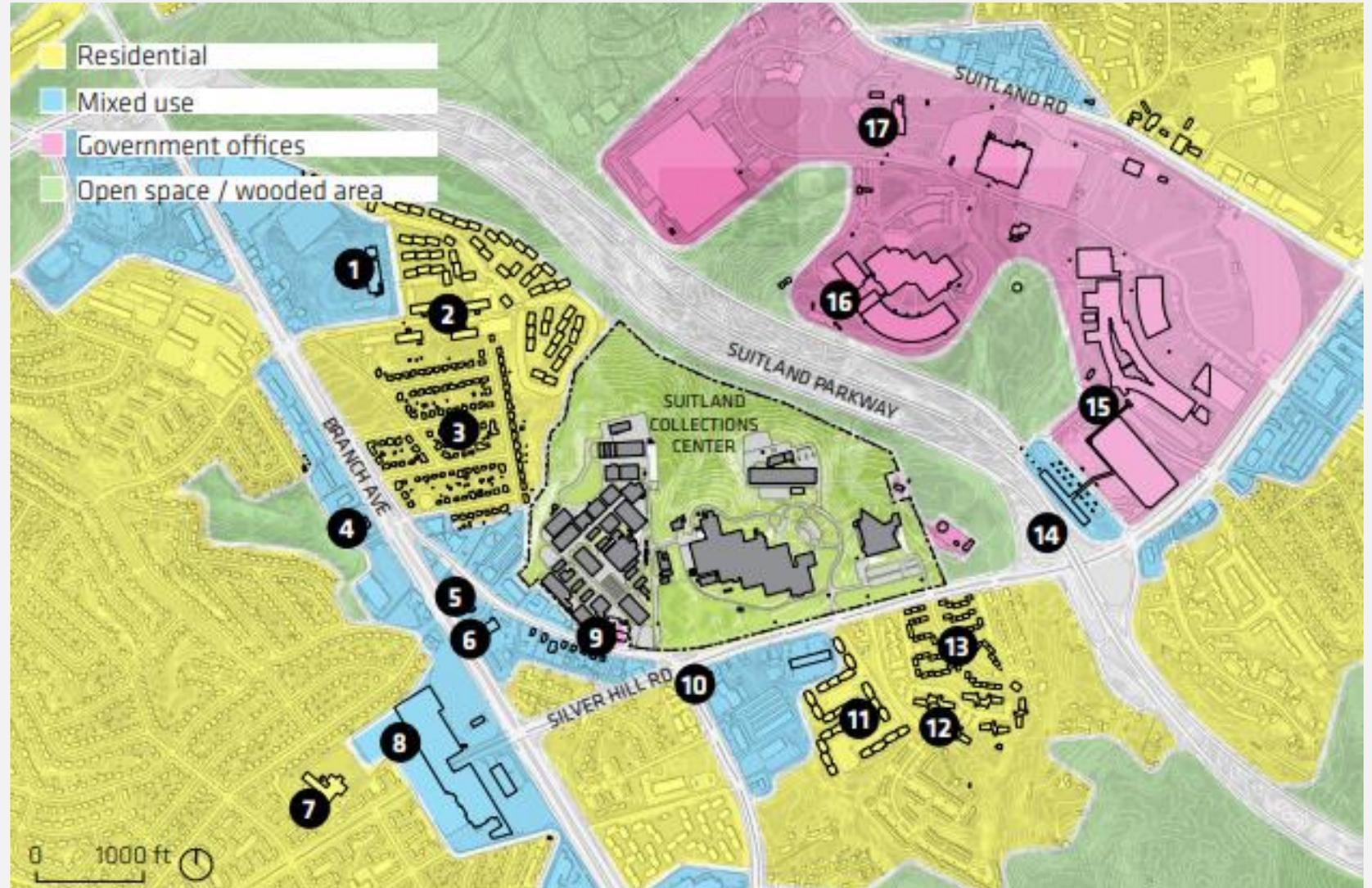


Draft Master Plan site

# Existing Conditions – Surrounding Land Uses

## Neighboring Buildings

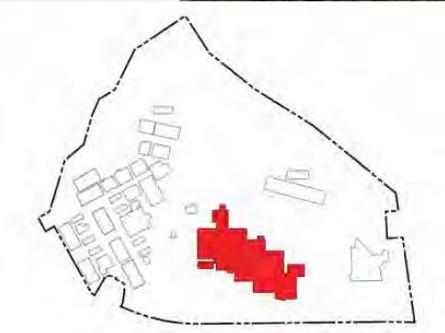
- 1 Overlook Elementary School
- 2 Carriage Hall Residences
- 3 Single Family Homes
- 4 McDonald's
- 5 Wendy's
- 6 CVS
- 7 Jessie B. Mason Regional School
- 8 Iverson Mall
- 9 Silver Hill Volunteer Fire Station
- 10 BP Gas Station
- 11 Hickory Hill Apartments
- 12 Verona at Silver Hill Apartments
- 13 Residences at Silver Hill
- 14 Suitland Metro Stop
- 15 U.S. Census Bureau
- 16 Suitland Federal Center
- 17 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



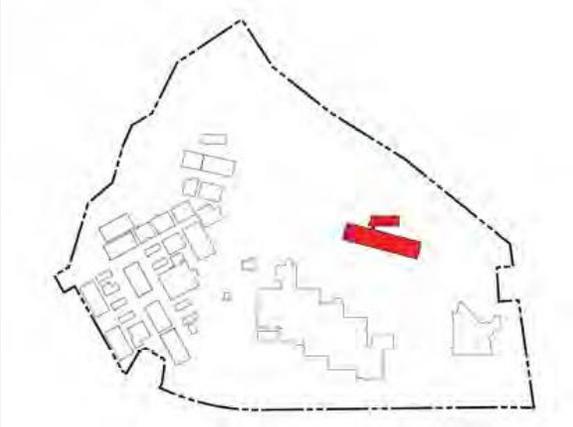
# Existing Building – Garber Buildings



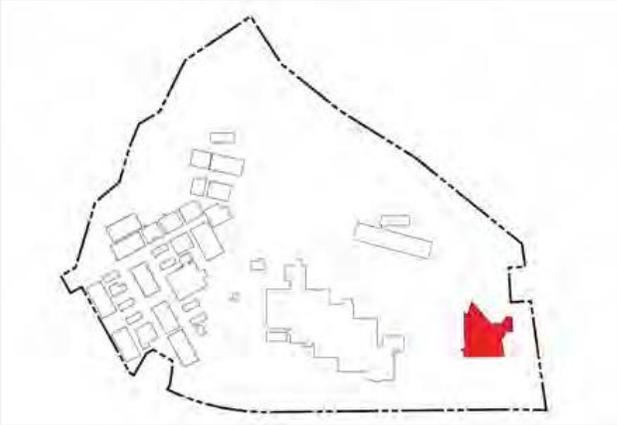
# Existing Buildings - MSC



# Existing Buildings – SG Greenhouse



# Existing Site Components – NMAI-CRC



# Existing Site Components – Fleet Management Building

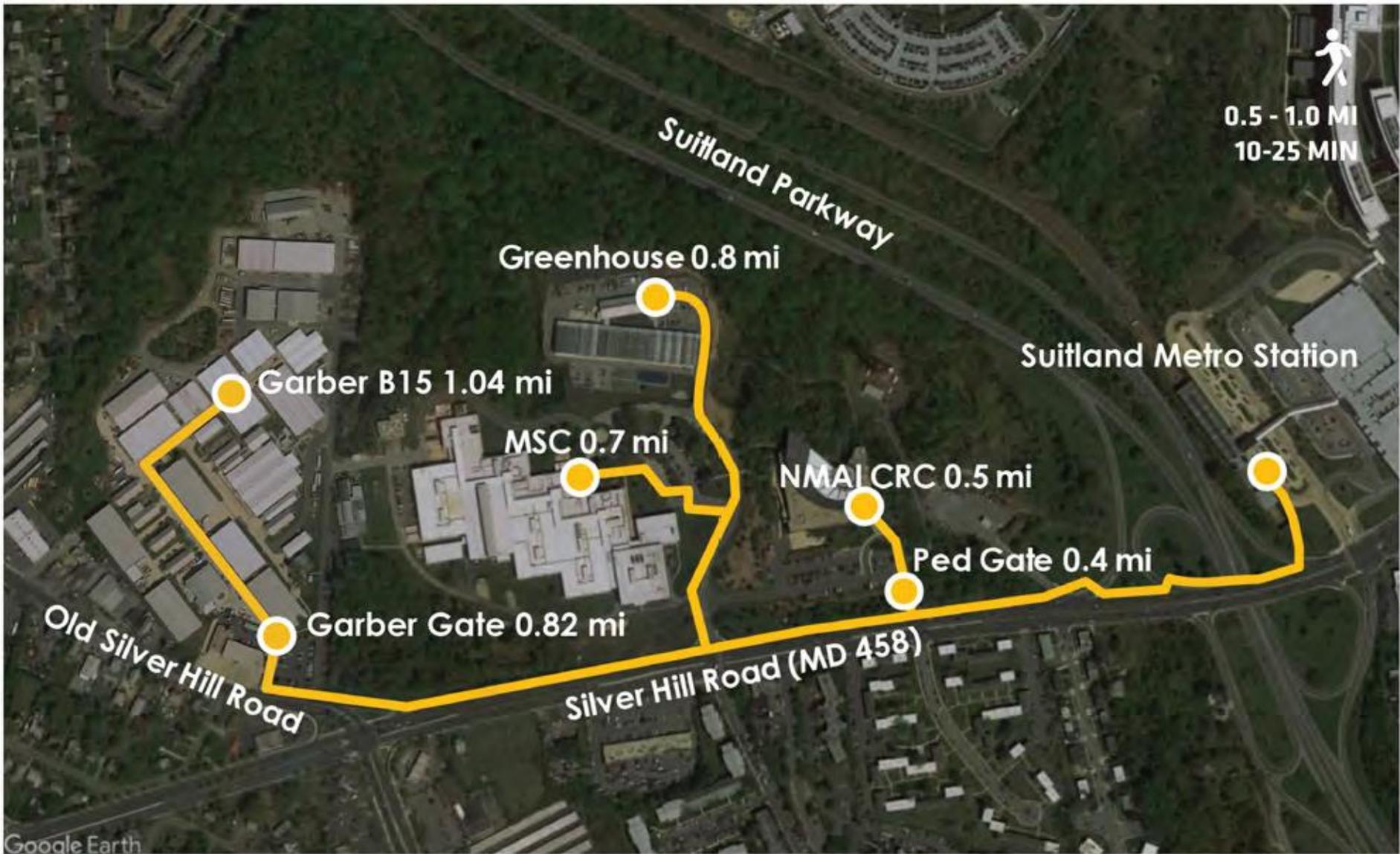


# Existing Site Components – Botany Greenhouse and Osteo Prep Lab



# Site Context – Walking Distances

Approximate walking distances from SCC buildings to Suitland Metro Station

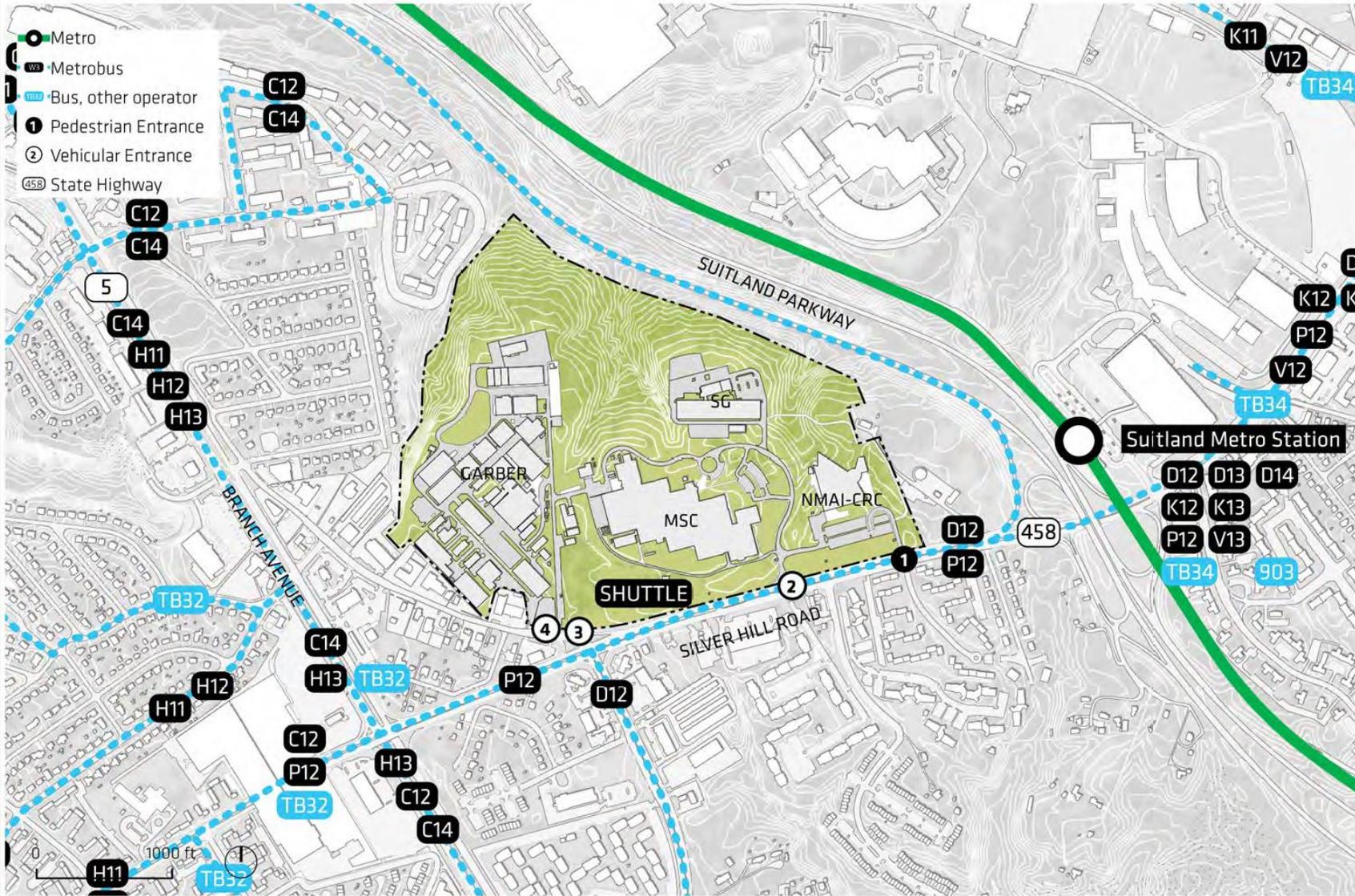


# Site Context – Pedestrian Route

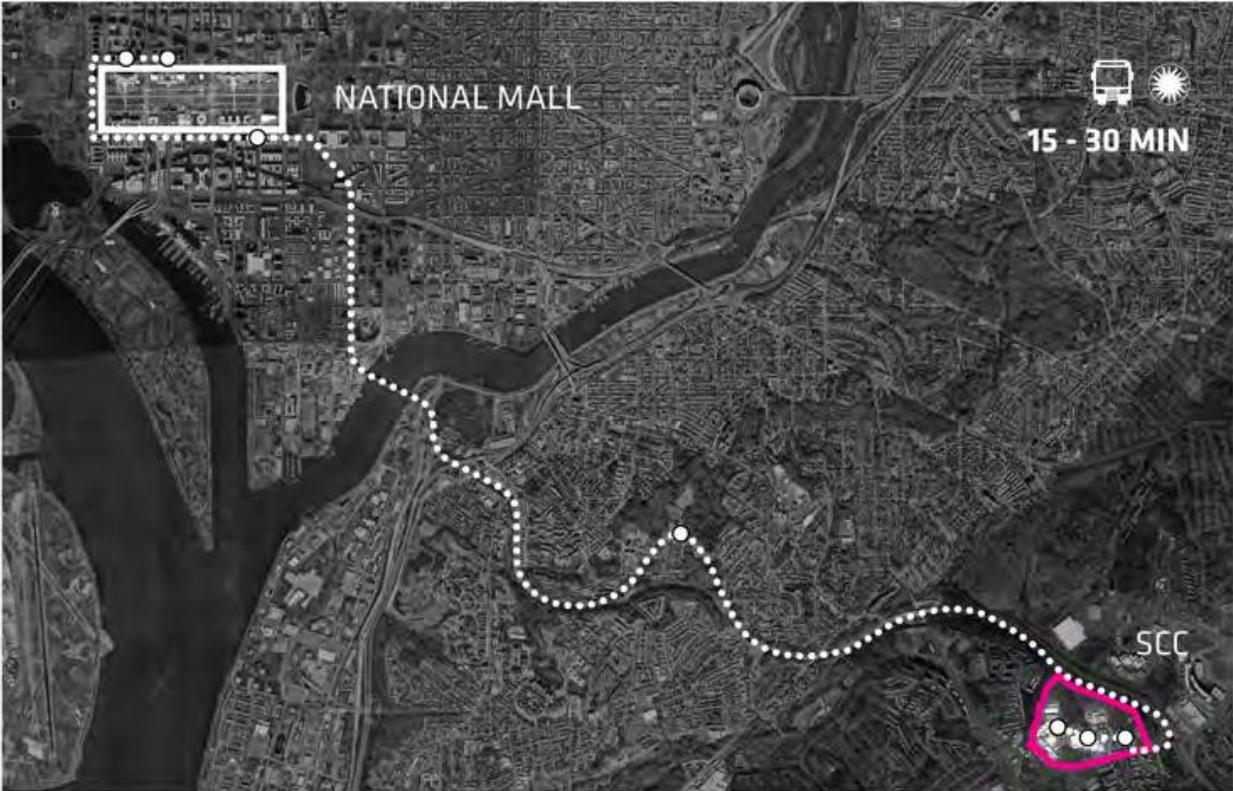
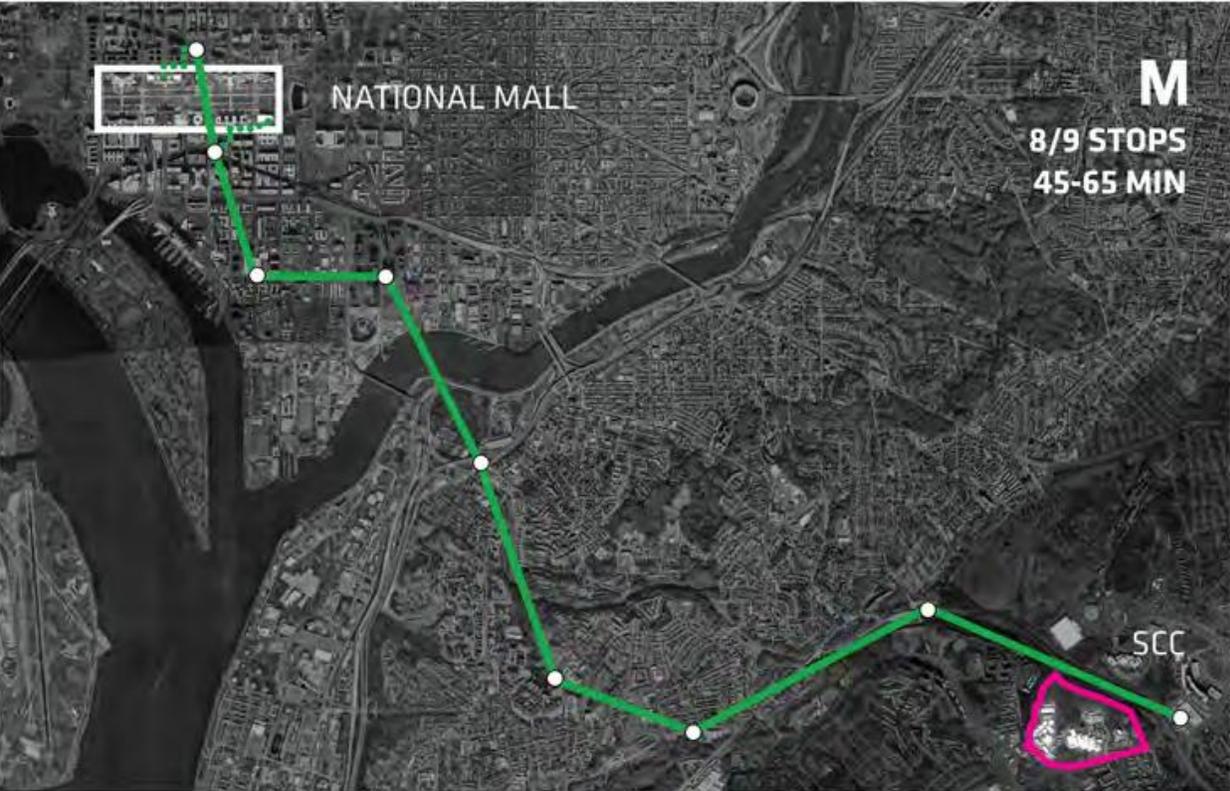


# Site Context – Public Transportation

Existing campus access and public transportation

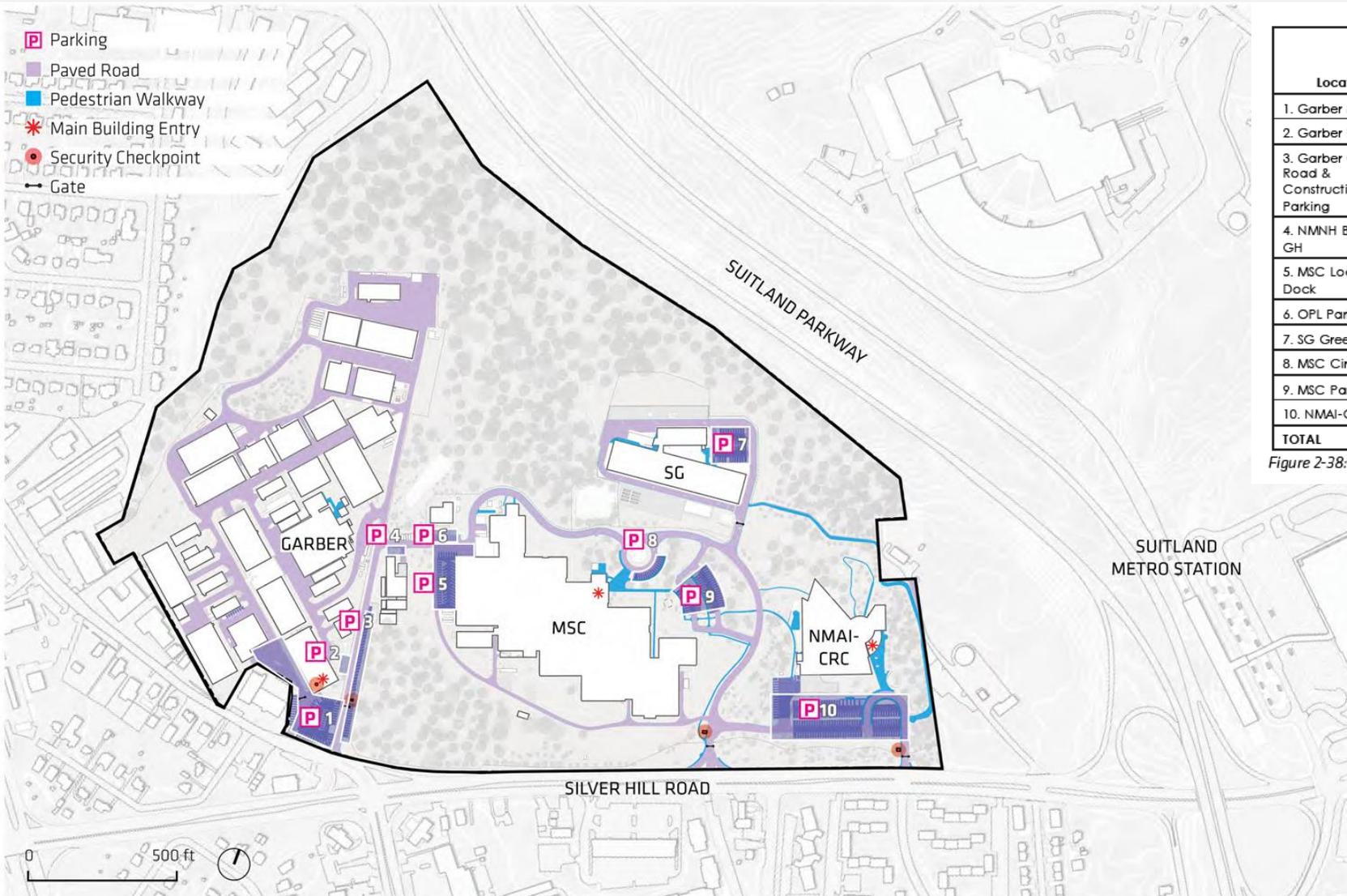


# Site Context – Smithsonian Shuttle vs. Metro Route



Campus access from SI National Mall facilities to SCC via Metro compared to access from the Smithsonian Shuttle Service

# Existing Conditions – Access and Parking



Location	Capacity			Utilization: October 23, 2019			Utilization: October 29, 2019		
	ADA	Emp/ Visitor	SI Veh Only	ADA	Emp/ Visitor	SI Veh	ADA	Emp/ Visitor	SI Veh
1. Garber Main Lot	2	63	2	0	41	17	0	38	18
2. Garber B29	0	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	2
3. Garber Gate Road & Construction Trailer Parking	2	39	0	0	37	1	1	32	0
4. NMNH Botany GH	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	2	0
5. MSC Loading Dock	2	55	1	1	44	4	1	39	3
6. OPL Parking	0	3	4	0	1	4	0	1	3
7. SG Greenhouse	2	42	1	0	14	8	1	16	5
8. MSC Circle	4	8	0	4	8	0	4	8	0
9. MSC Parking	0	56	0	0	66	2	0	64	1
10. NMAI-CRC	6	123	8	0	96	9	1	100	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>41</b>

Figure 2-38: Table: Parking Lot Capacity and Utilization

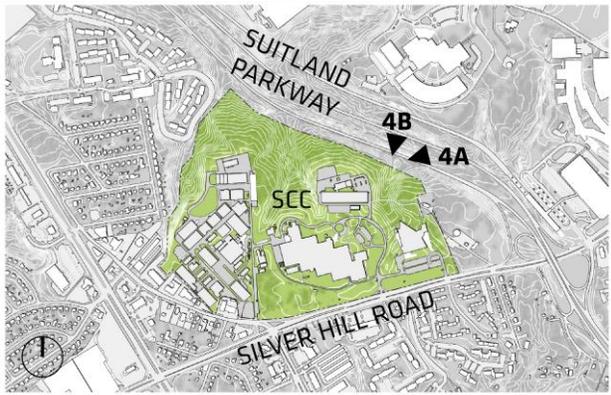
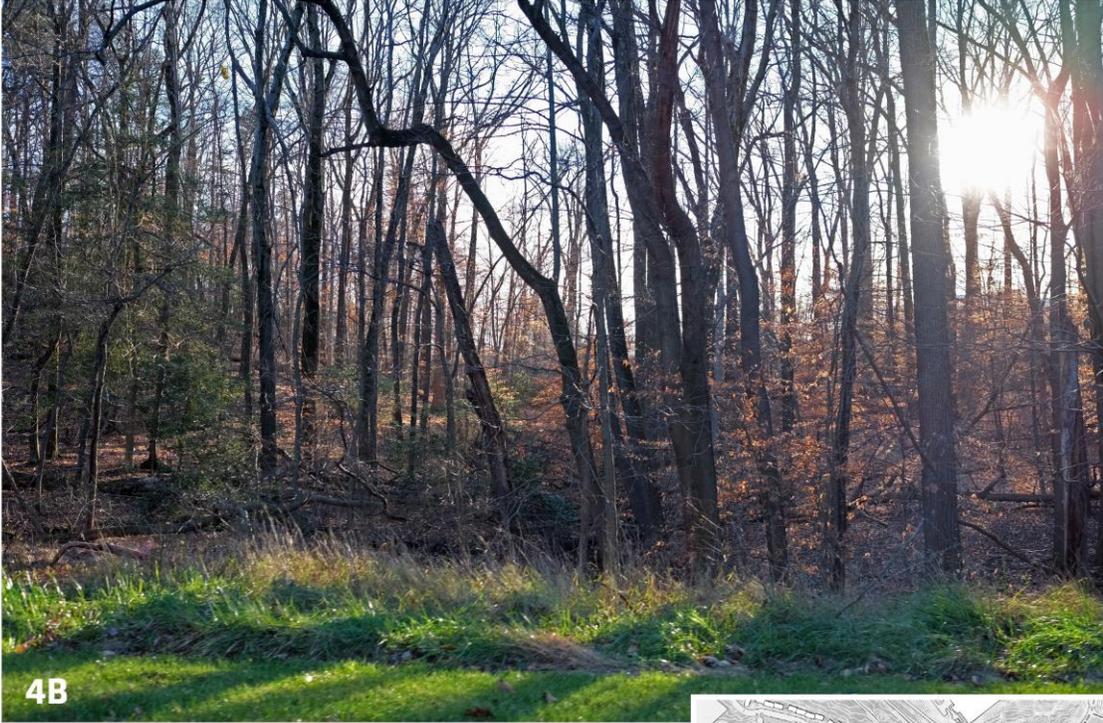
# Existing Conditions – Vegetation and Topography



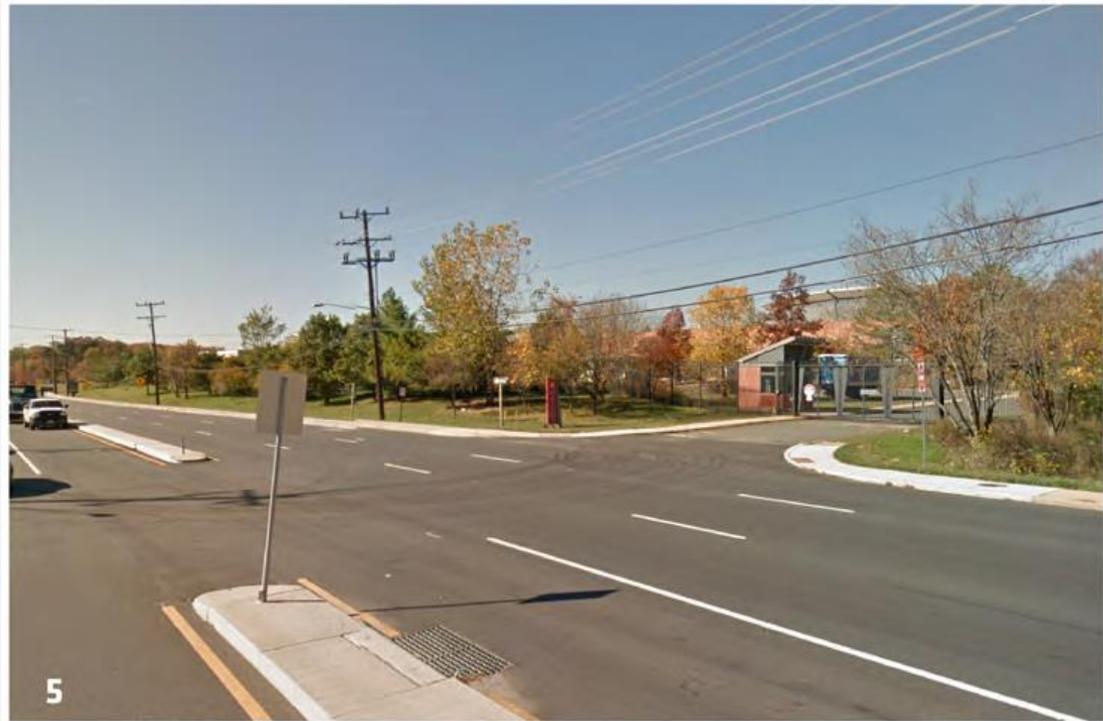
# Existing Conditions – Views



# Existing Conditions – Views



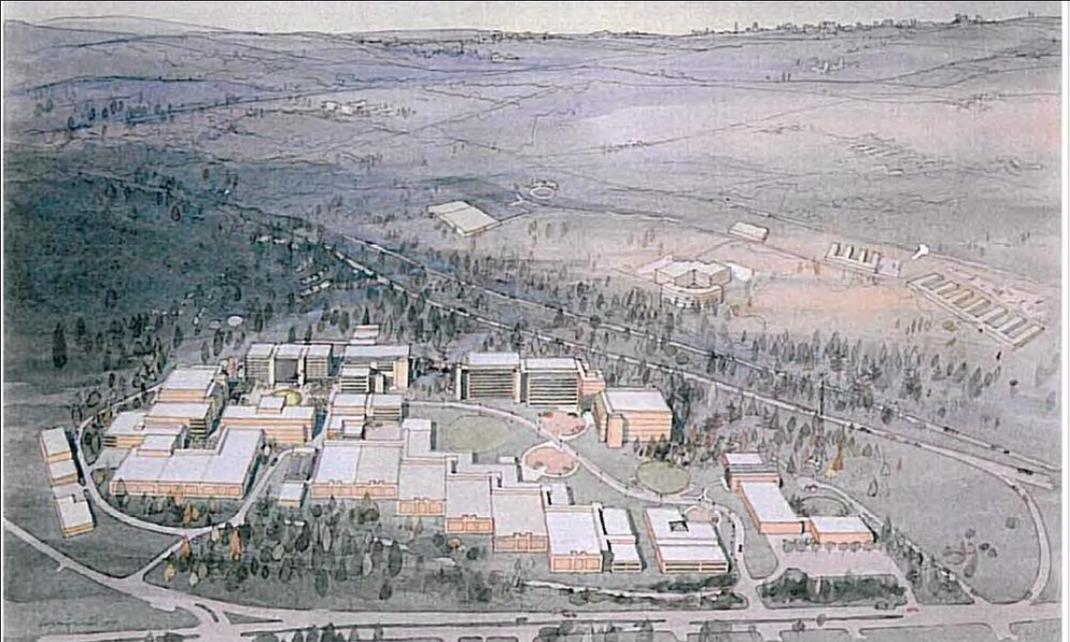
# Existing Conditions – Views



# Existing Conditions – Views



# 1993 Master Plan



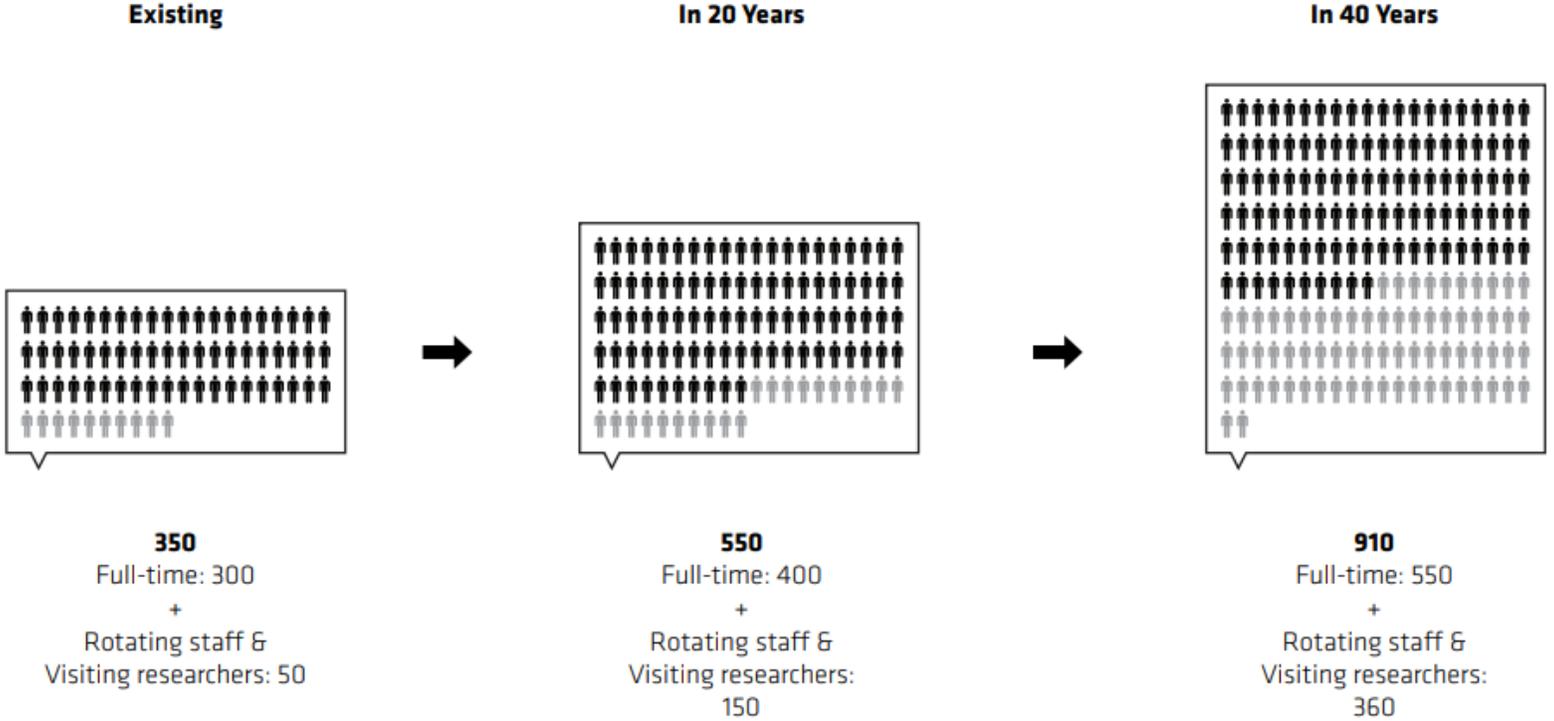
# Draft Master Plan



# Draft Master Plan – 40-Year Development

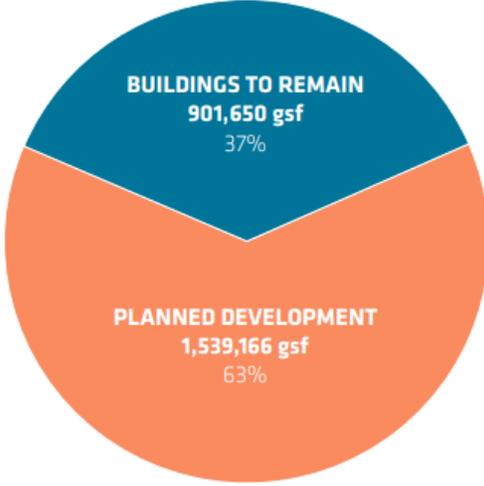
## SCC Campus Population Growth in 40 Years

 Full-time employees assigned to SCC  
 Rotating staff and visiting researchers



## Development at SCC in 40 years 2.4 million gsf

■ Buildings to remain  
■ Planned development



# Draft Master Plan



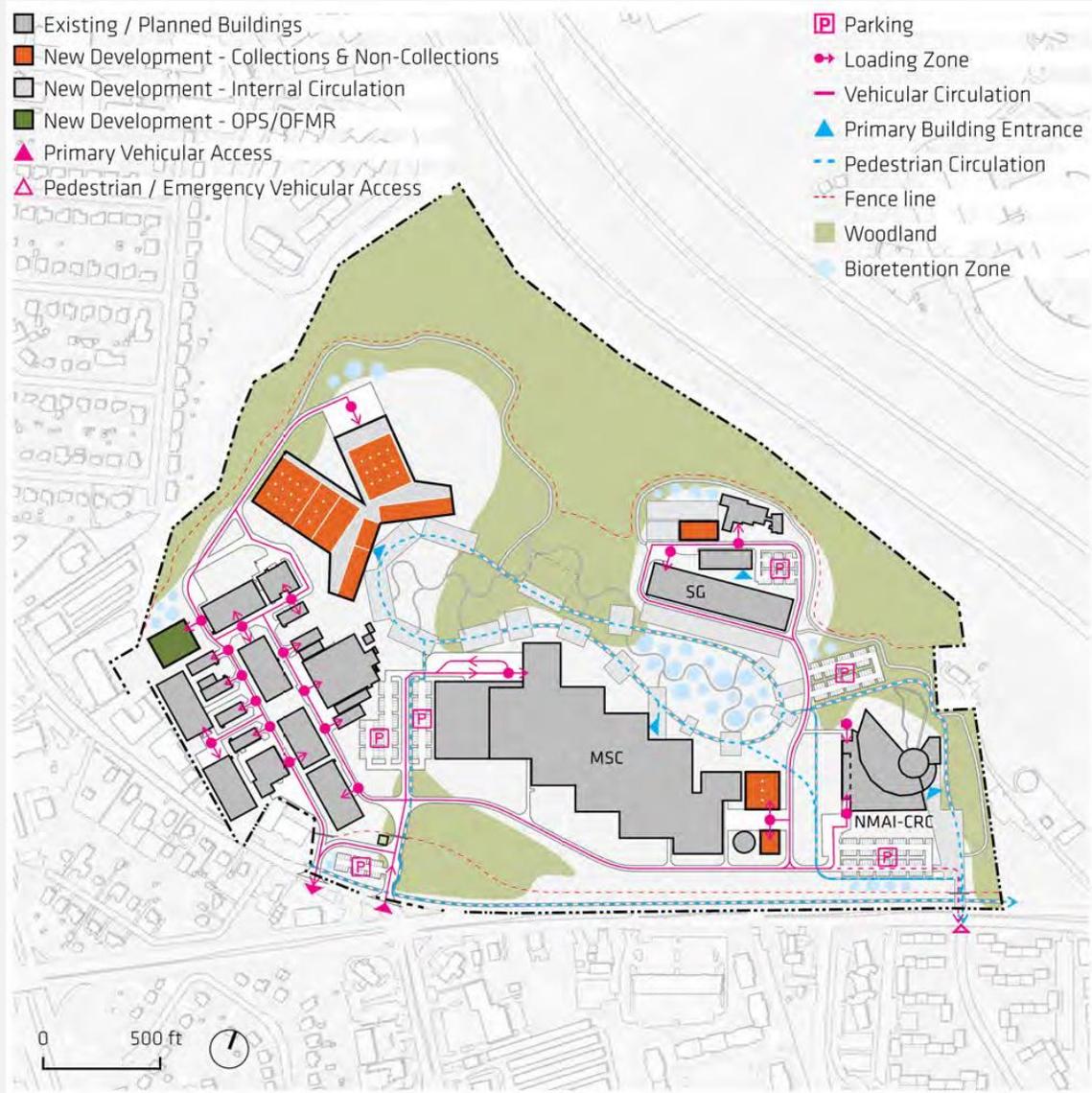
# Draft Master Plan



# Draft Master Plan – Site Organization



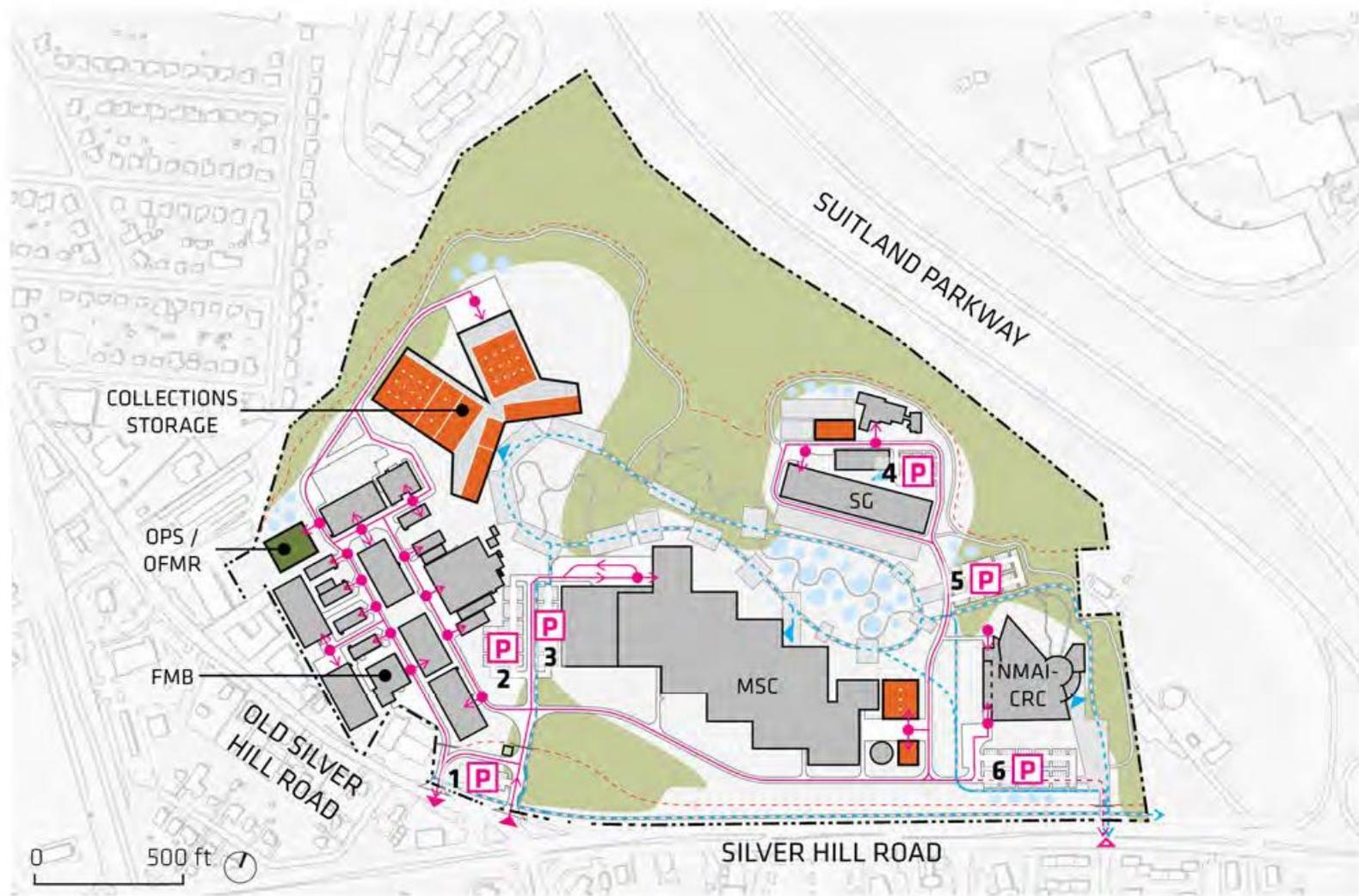
# 20-Year Site Development Plan



# 20-Year Site Development Plan - Parking

- Existing / Planned Buildings
- New Development - Collections / Non-Collections
- New Development - Internal Circulation
- New Development - OPS/OFMR
- Primary Vehicular Access
- Pedestrian / Emergency Vehicular Access
- P Parking
- ↔ Loading Zone
- Vehicular Circulation
- Primary Building Entrance
- Pedestrian Circulation
- Fence line
- Woodland
- Bioretention Zone

#	CAPACITY	TOTAL
1	30	
2	80	
3	50	
4	48	
5	70	
6	104	
<b>PROPOSED PARKING</b>		<b>382</b>



# Campus Circulation

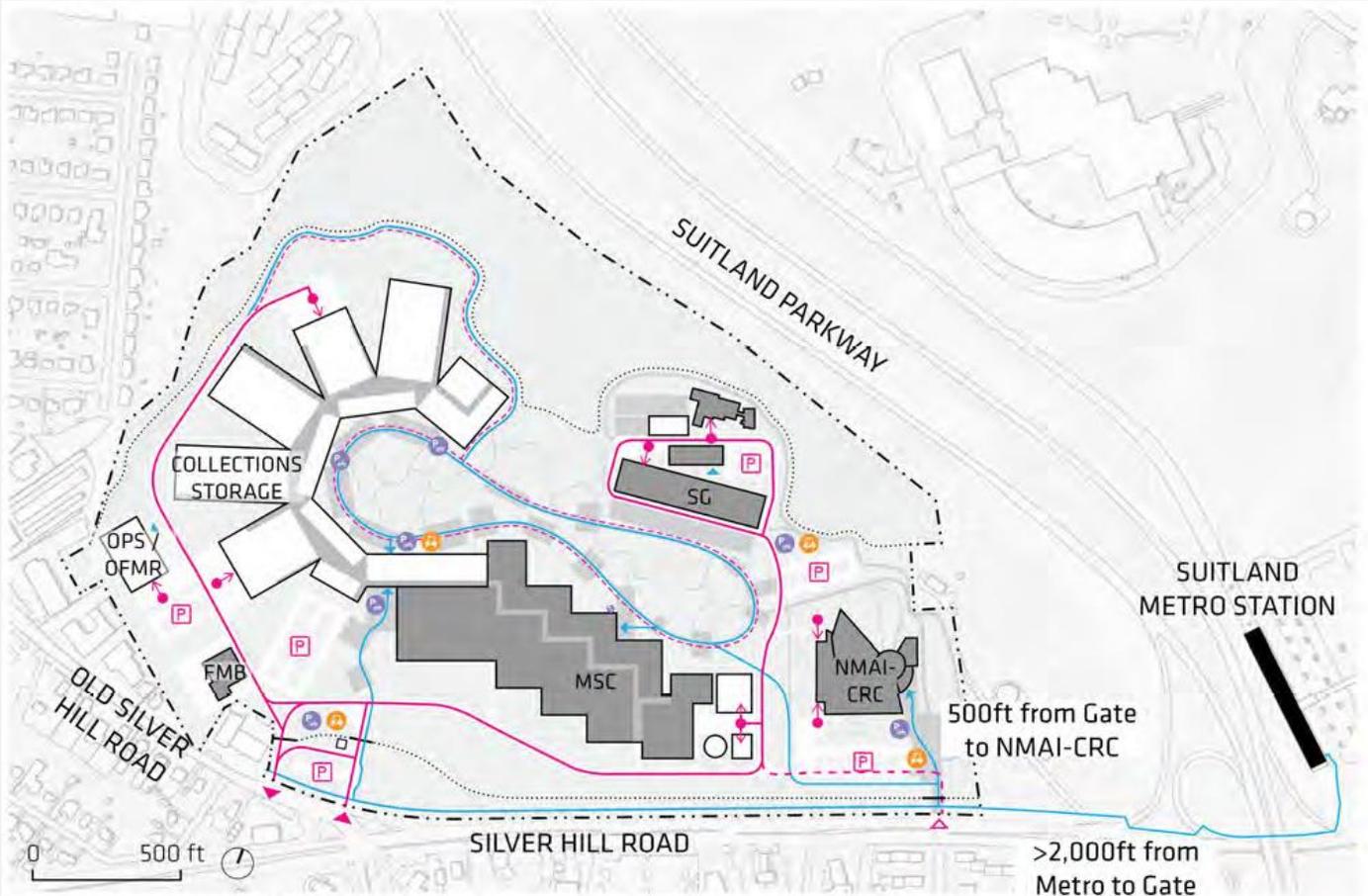
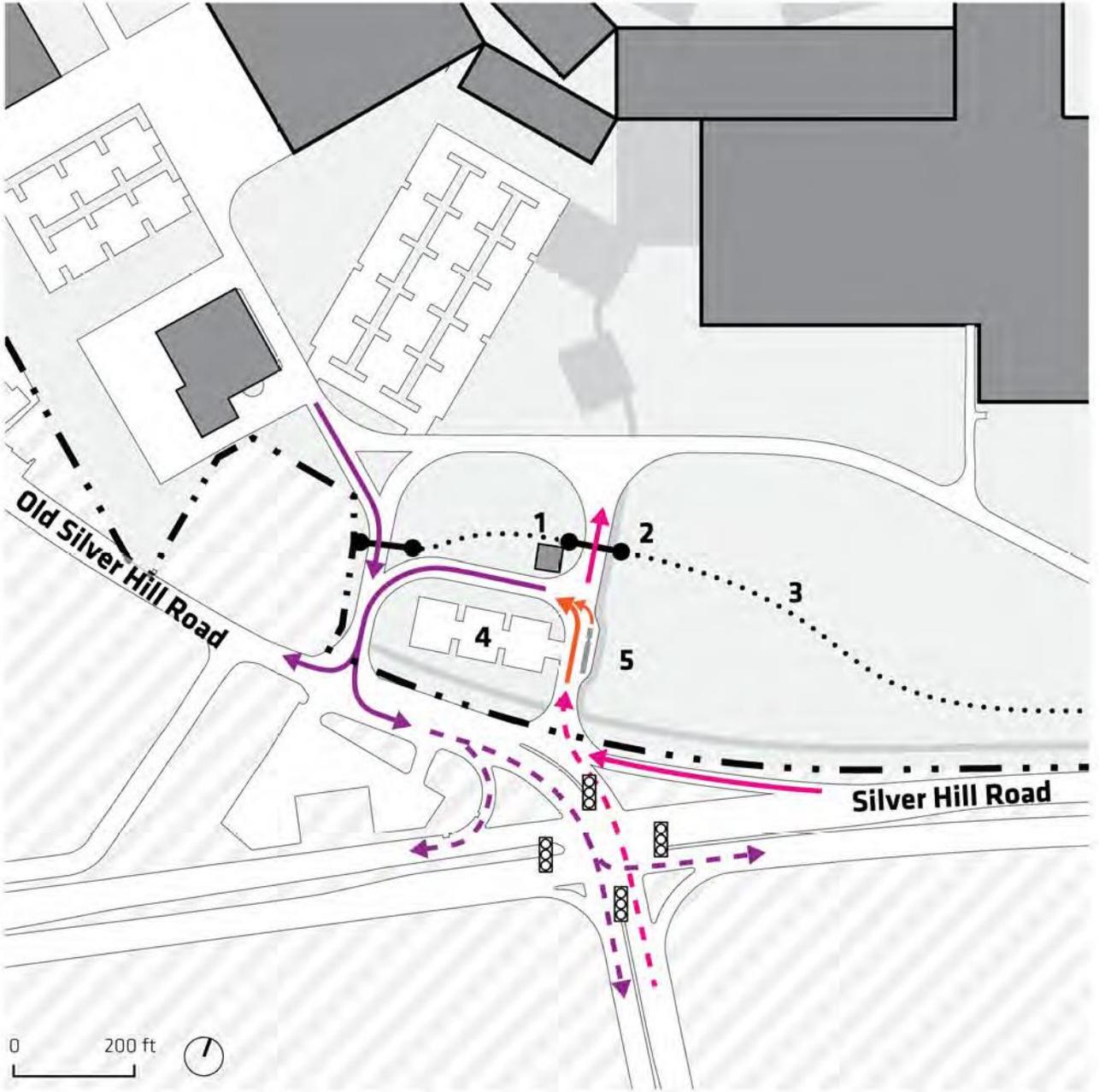


Figure 3-26: Proposed Site Plan: Campus Entrance and Circulation

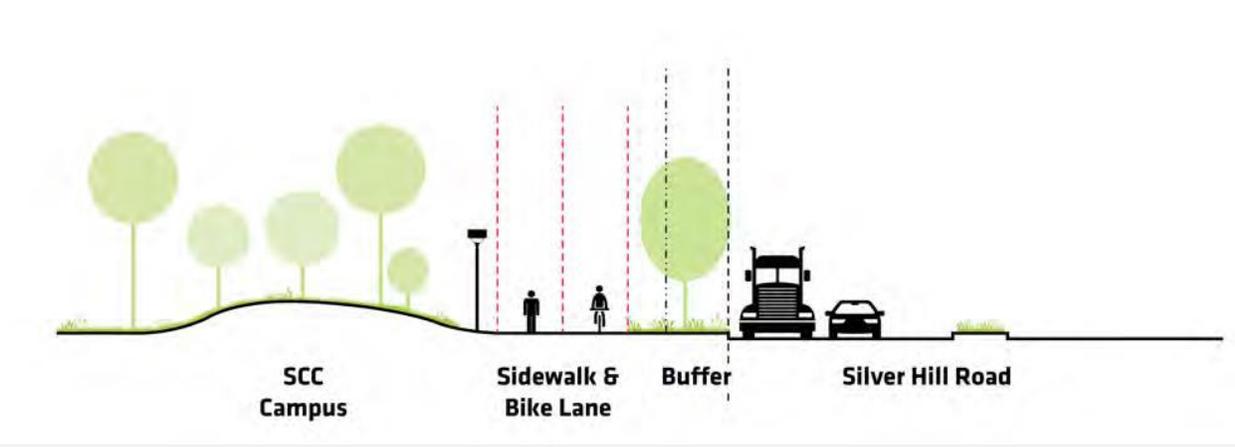
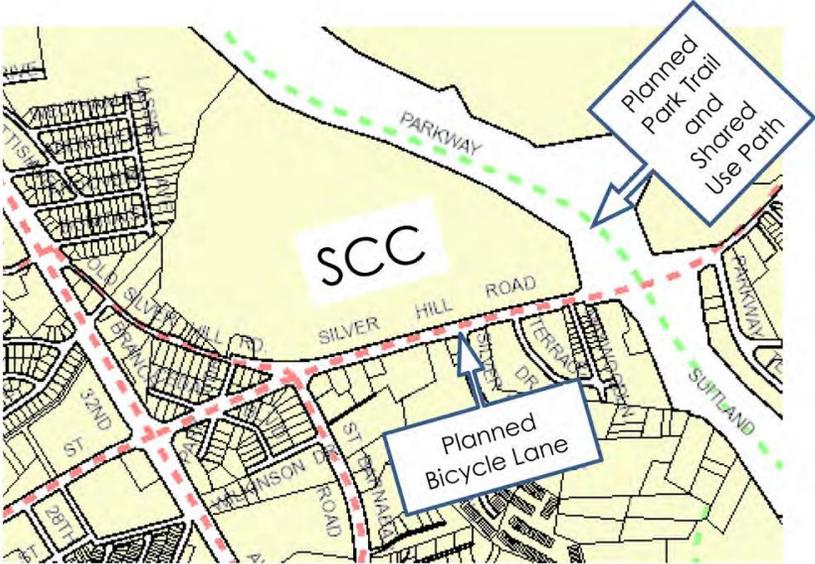
- ▲ Primary Vehicular Access
- ▲ Primary Pedestrian / Emergency Vehicular Access
- Vehicular Circulation
- - - Emergency Vehicular Circulation
- Pedestrian Circulation
- ▲ Primary Building Entrance
- Existing / Planned Buildings
- New Development
- Internal Circulation
- Ⓟ Bike Station
- Ⓜ Electric Cart Station
- Ⓟ Parking
- Fence

# Site Access – Primary

- 1. Visitor Center
- 2. Security Gate
- 3. Fence
- 4. Visitor Parking
- 5. Large Vehicle Inspection
-  Ingress Traffic
-  Egress Traffic
-  Rejected Vehicle Path
-  Existing Traffic Lights



# Silver Hill Road Improvements



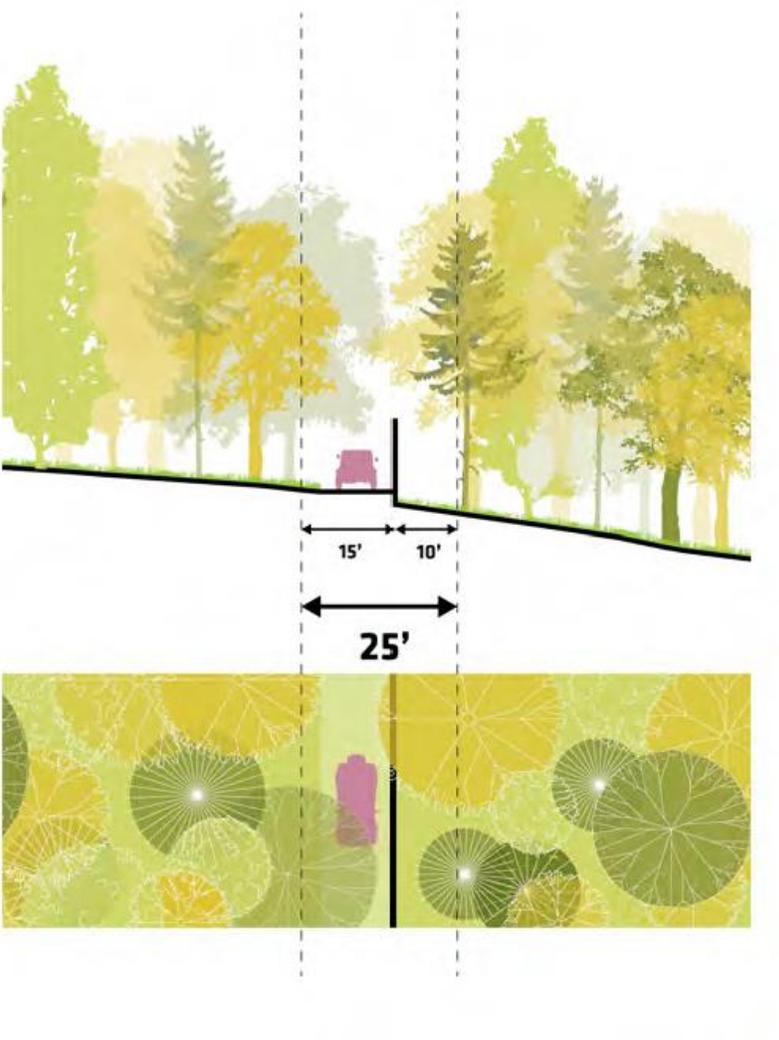
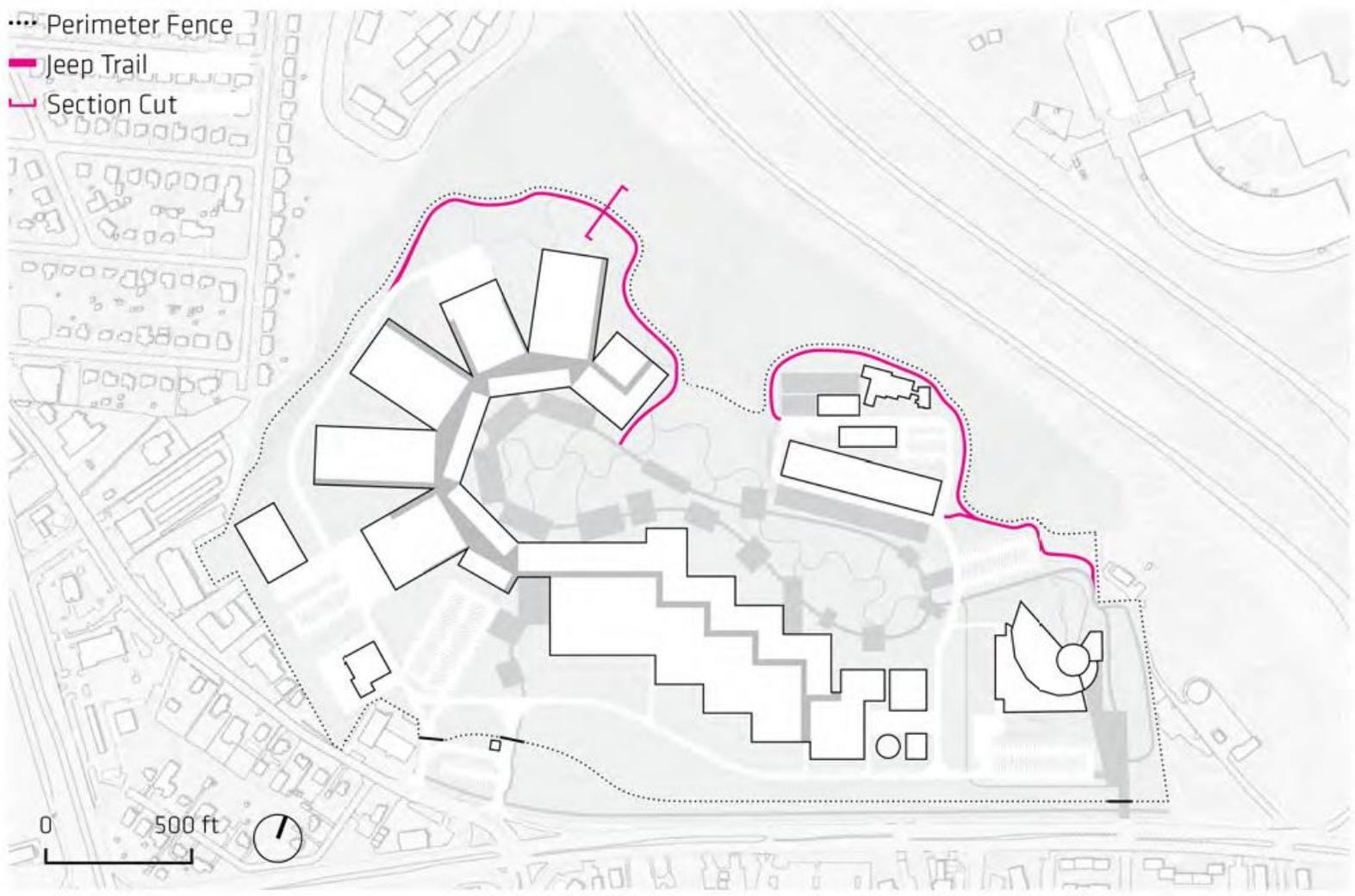
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) plans for bicycle lanes on Silver Hill Road



Proposed pedestrian and bicycle improvements to Silver Hill Road in Draft Master Plan



# Security Fence



# Draft Master Plan – Views



# Draft Master Plan – Views



Existing

Proposed

