

MEMORANDUM

September 21, 2010

TO: Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment Committee

FROM: Glenn Orlin, ^{GO}Deputy Council Staff Director

SUBJECT: Briefing—Purple Line in the Bethesda Central Business District (CBD)

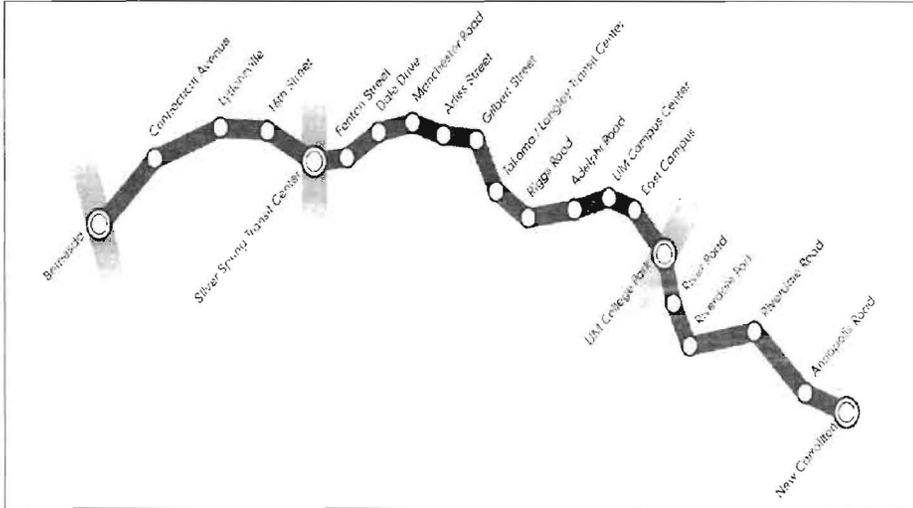
State and County staffs have been working on three interrelated sets of designs that pertain to the Purple Line as it passes through the Bethesda CBD:

1. The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) has been working over the past year to refine the Purple Line's Locally Preferred Alternative selected by the Governor during the summer of 2009, including the portion of the line and the parallel trail at and near the Bethesda light rail station. Michael Madden is the study manager for MTA.
2. In 2006 the Council appropriated \$5 million (revenue bonds backed by the Liquor Fund) for MTA to design of a new southern entrance to the Bethesda Metrorail Station, which would also tie directly to the Bethesda Purple Line station. (Subsequently the Council programmed an additional \$55 million in General Obligation bonds for its construction; these funds are programmed during the latter half of the FY01-06 Capital Improvements Program.) This design effort was initiated in September 2008. Matt Fenton is the study manager for MTA.
3. The County Department of Transportation (DOT) is in the latter stages of completing the scope of work in the Bethesda Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities CIP project created in the 1990s as a follow-up to the 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan. The last segment to be designed and built under this general project is a master-planned on-street bikeway connecting the Georgetown Branch Trail at Elm Street Park to the Capital Crescent Trail at Woodmont and Bethesda Avenues, following along Willow Street and Bethesda Avenue. Gail Tait-Nouri is the study manager for DOT.

During this briefing MTA and County DOT staffs will present the status of the designs of these three projects, the existing and future outreach to stakeholders, and their respective schedules. For background, attached are:

<u>Purple Line</u> project information form in the Draft FY11-16 CTP	©1
<u>Bethesda Metro Station South Entrance</u> project description form in the Approved FY11-16 CIP	©2
<u>Bethesda Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities</u> project description form in the Approved FY11-16 CIP	©3-4
MTA presentation re Purple Line and South Entrance	©5-31
<u>Bethesda Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities</u> project September 2010 status report	©32-40

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PROJECT: Purple Line

DESCRIPTION: 16-mile light rail line between New Carrollton (in Prince Georges County) and Bethesda (in Montgomery County).

JUSTIFICATION: The Purple Line would serve a highly congested corridor in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties connecting the Metrorail Red, Green and Orange lines to key employment, residential and institutional destinations. This transit line also connects the MARC Brunswick, Camden and Penn lines as well as Amtrak at New Carrollton. In addition, the Purple Line connects to existing regional and local bus services. The project is estimated to generate transit ridership of 68,000 in 2030.

SMART GROWTH STATUS: Project Not Location Specific or Not Subject to PFA Law

- Project Inside PFA
- Project Outside PFA
- PFA Status Yet to Be Determined
- Grandfathered
- Exception Will Be Required
- Exception Granted

ASSOCIATED IMPROVEMENTS:

- Paul S. Sarbanes Transit Center -- Line 8
- Takoma/Langley Park Transit Center -- Line 36

STATUS: New Starts application to enter preliminary engineering phase to be submitted during current fiscal year.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGE FROM FY 2010 - 15 CTP: Funding increased \$185.7 million to support completion of Preliminary Engineering and Right-of-Way Acquisition.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FEDERAL	<input type="checkbox"/> GENERAL	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER					SIX	BALANCE
PHASE	TOTAL ESTIMATED COST (\$000)	EXPEND THRU 2010	CURRENT YEAR 2011	BUDGET YEAR 2012	PROJECTED CASH REQUIREMENTS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY				YEAR TOTAL	TO COMPLETE	
				2013.....2014.....2015.....2016.....			
Planning	57,425	40,425	14,500	2,500	0	0	0	0	17,000	0	
Engineering	135,900	0	7,500	27,500	57,800	43,100	0	0	135,900	0	
Right-of-way	84,100	0	0	0	20,200	63,900	0	0	84,100	0	
Construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	277,425	40,425	22,000	30,000	78,000	107,000	0	0	237,000	0	
Federal-Aid	187,015	25,015	11,000	15,000	56,000	80,000	0	0	162,000	0	

Funding is contingent upon successful entry into the New Starts program.

Bethesda Metro Station South Entrance -- No. 500929

Category
Subcategory
Administering Agency
Planning Area

Transportation
Mass Transit
General Services
Bethesda-Chevy Chase

Date Last Modified
Required Adequate Public Facility
Relocation Impact
Status

January 09, 2010
No
None.
Preliminary Design Stage

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000)

Cost Element	Total	Thru FY09	Est. FY10	Total 6 Years	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design, and Supervision	5,894	0	5,194	700	250	250	50	50	50	50	0
Land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	53,700	0	0	53,700	0	0	3,050	1,550	22,050	27,050	0
Other	406	406	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	60,000	406	5,194	54,400	250	250	3,100	1,600	22,100	27,100	0

FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000)

G.O. Bonds	54,594	0	194	54,400	250	250	3,100	1,600	22,100	27,100	0
PAYGO	406	406	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Bonds: Liquor Fund	5,000	0	5,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	60,000	406	5,194	54,400	250	250	3,100	1,600	22,100	27,100	0

DESCRIPTION

This project provides access from Elm Street west of Wisconsin Avenue to the southern end of the Bethesda Metrorail Station. The Metrorail Red Line runs below Wisconsin Avenue through Bethesda more than 120 feet below the surface, considerably deeper than the Purple Line right-of-way. The Bethesda Metrorail station has one entrance, near East West Highway. The Metrorail station was built with accommodations for a future southern entrance.

The Bethesda light rail transit (LRT) station would have side platforms located just west of Wisconsin Avenue on the Georgetown Branch right-of-way. This platform allows a direct connection between LRT and Metrorail, making transfers as convenient as possible. Four or five station elevators would be located in the Elm Street right-of-way, which would require narrowing the street and extending the sidewalk.

The station would include a new south entrance to the Metrorail station, including a new mezzanine above the Metrorail platform, similar to the existing mezzanine at the present station's north end. The mezzanine would use the existing knock-out panel in the arch of the station and the passageway that was partially excavated when the station was built in anticipation of the future construction of a south entrance.

ESTIMATED SCHEDULE

Design: Fall 2009 through Spring 2012.

Construction: To take 24 months but must be coordinated with State Purple Line project and is dependent upon State and Federal funding.

OTHER

Part of Elm Street west of Wisconsin Avenue will be closed for a period during construction. Every effort will be taken so that this temporary road closure does not coincide with the temporary closure of Woodmont Avenue during the construction of the Bethesda Lot 31 Parking Garage project.

FISCAL NOTE

The funds for this project were initially programmed in the State Transportation Participation project. Appropriation of \$5 million for design was transferred from the State Transportation Participation project in FY09.

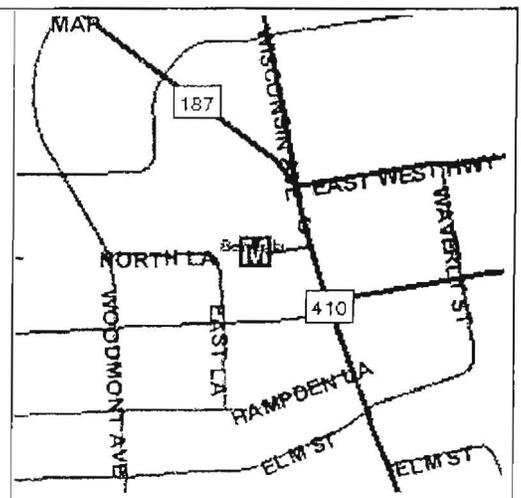
Project schedule has been delayed as implementation plan is subject to the construction of the Purple Line.

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA		
Date First Appropriation	FY09	(\$000)
First Cost Estimate		
Current Scope	FY09	60,000
Last FY's Cost Estimate		60,000
Appropriation Request	FY11	0
Appropriation Request Est.	FY12	0
Supplemental Appropriation Request		0
Transfer		0
Cumulative Appropriation		6,100
Expenditures / Encumbrances		406
Unencumbered Balance		5,694
Partial Closeout Thru	FY08	0
New Partial Closeout	FY09	0
Total Partial Closeout		0

COORDINATION

Maryland Transit Administration
WMATA
M-NCPPC
Bethesda Lot 31 Parking Garage project
Department of Transportation
Department of General Services

Special Capital Projects Legislation (Bill No. 19-08) was adopted by Council June 10, 2008.



Bethesda Bikeway and Pedestrian Facilities -- No. 500119

Category
Subcategory
Administering Agency
Planning Area

Transportation
Pedestrian Facilities/Bikeways
Transportation
Bethesda-Chevy Chase

Date Last Modified
Required Adequate Public Facility
Relocation Impact
Status

January 08, 2010
Yes
None.
On-going

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000)

Cost Element	Total	Thru FY09	Est. FY10	Total 6 Years	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design, and Supervision	1,413	1,071	0	342	0	0	342	0	0	0	0
Land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	200	80	0	120	0	0	120	0	0	0	0
Construction	1,806	1,256	0	550	0	0	550	0	0	0	0
Other	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3,420	2,408	0	1,012	0	0	1,012	0	0	0	0

FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000)

G.O. Bonds	3,420	2,408	0	1,012	0	0	1,012	0	0	0	0
Total	3,420	2,408	0	1,012	0	0	1,012	0	0	0	0

DESCRIPTION

This project provides bikeway network improvements and pedestrian intersection improvements as specified in the Bethesda Central Business District (CBD) Sector Plan to complete the requirements of Stage I development.

ESTIMATED SCHEDULE

This project is on hold for the construction of the Bethesda Lot 31 Parking Garage (No. 500932). The construction costs and estimated schedule for the remaining projects (Bethesda Avenue bike facilities, 47th Street bike facilities, and Willow Lane bike facilities) will be updated upon completion of the parking garage.

JUSTIFICATION

The Bethesda CBD has little net remaining capacity for employment under the current Stage I development restrictions. It is desirable to get the Bethesda CBD into Stage II development to increase employment capacity. The Bethesda CBD Sector Plan of 1994 recommends that certain bikeway and pedestrian improvements be implemented (see Table 5.2 of the Sector Plan) to allow the area to go to Stage II development.

Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan, July 1994.

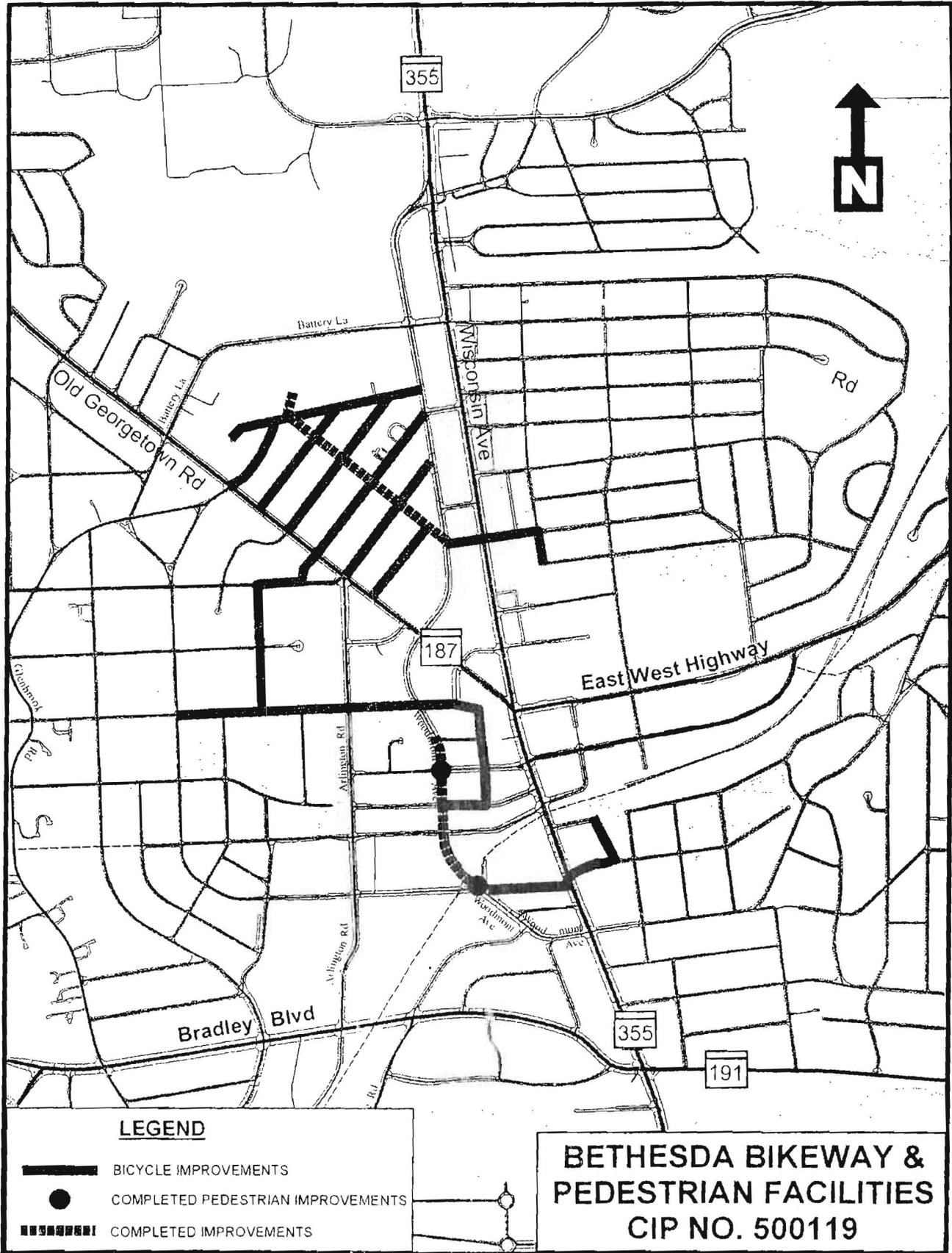
OTHER

The scope of work was planned and coordinated with local communities, property owners, and the Bethesda Urban Partnership before cost estimates for final design and construction were developed. Costs could be further refined and amended once feasibility is determined during the design process.

OTHER DISCLOSURES

- A pedestrian impact analysis has been completed for this project.

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA	COORDINATION	MAP																																																			
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>Date First Appropriation</td> <td style="text-align: center;">FY04</td> <td style="text-align: right;">(\$000)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>First Cost Estimate</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">3,366</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Current Scope</td> <td style="text-align: center;">FY01</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Last FY's Cost Estimate</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">3,420</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Appropriation Request</td> <td style="text-align: center;">FY11</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Appropriation Request Est.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">FY12</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supplemental Appropriation Request</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transfer</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cumulative Appropriation</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">3,420</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenditures / Encumbrances</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">2,465</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unencumbered Balance</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">955</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Partial Closeout Thru</td> <td style="text-align: center;">FY08</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New Partial Closeout</td> <td style="text-align: center;">FY09</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Partial Closeout</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> </table>	Date First Appropriation	FY04	(\$000)	First Cost Estimate		3,366	Current Scope	FY01		Last FY's Cost Estimate		3,420				Appropriation Request	FY11	0	Appropriation Request Est.	FY12	0	Supplemental Appropriation Request		0	Transfer		0				Cumulative Appropriation		3,420	Expenditures / Encumbrances		2,465	Unencumbered Balance		955				Partial Closeout Thru	FY08	0	New Partial Closeout	FY09	0	Total Partial Closeout		0	<p>Bethesda Chevy Chase Regional Services Center (BCC) Bethesda Urban Partnership Montgomery Bicycle Action Group Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission Maryland State Highway Administration Bethesda CBD Streetscaping Hard Surface Trail Design and Construction Resurfacing Park Roads - Bridges Maryland Mass Transit Administration Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority</p>	<p>See Map on Next Page</p>
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BETHESDA STATION

SOUTH ENTRANCE & CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
T&E COMMITTEE
PROJECT BRIEFING
SEPTEMBER 23, 2010**



Agenda

1. Project Description

- Ridership and Operation
- Benefits
- Schedule

2. Elevator

Layouts/Concepts

3. Impacts on Elm Street

4. Renderings

5. Streetscape Schemes

6. Animation Video

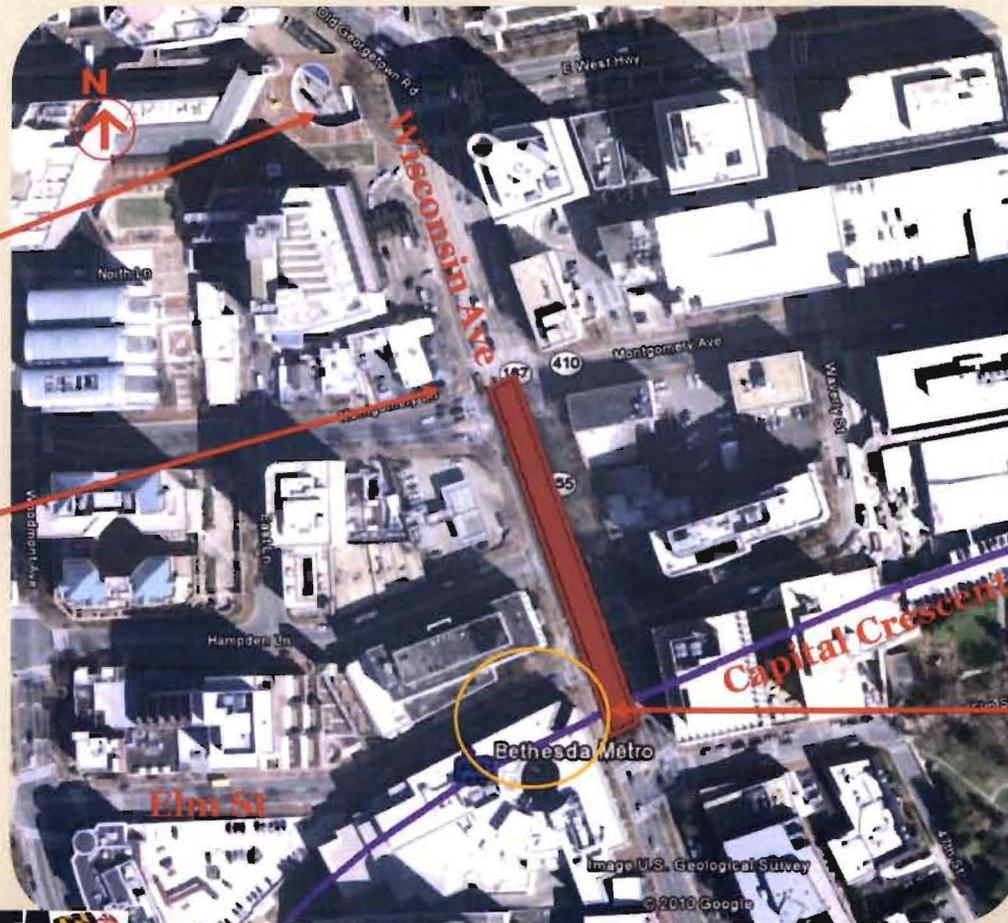
7. Trail Connections

8. Tail Track Detail

9. Comments & Questions



Bethesda Station Vicinity



North Entrance

North Elevator

Proposed South Entrance

Capital Crescent Trail



Project Description



- The purpose of this project is to provide:
 - High speed elevators
 - Vent shafts
 - Emergency stairs from Metro to Elm Street
 - Stairs from Purple Line to Elm Street
 - New mezzanine and pedestrian passageway at the south end of the Bethesda Metro Station
 - Service rooms required for the Bethesda Metro Station and Purple Line Transitway



Ridership and Operation Information

• Ridership

- Bethesda Metro Station ranks #3 in ridership of the WMATA Metrorail stations in Montgomery County
- Approximately 70% of passengers arrive by foot hence the need for additional elevator and stair access
- No Metro parking garage near station
- Currently only one ADA accessible elevator located at the north entrance

• Operation

- This project is being funded by Montgomery County, managed by the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and designed and constructed in accordance with WMATA's standards.



Project Benefits



- The addition of the new entrance:
 - expands ADA accessibility
 - improves safety, circulation and usability of the station
 - will provide travel time savings for many METRO riders
- The addition of the new entrance also supports the Montgomery County Master Plan.
- The proposed components serve to connect Elm Street, the Bethesda Metro Station, which is part of the Metrorail Red Line, the Woodmont East Development and the proposed Purple Line Transitway.
- This project is separately funded and vital to the area regardless of the construction of the Purple Line.

Schedule



Concept Design	September 2008 – October 2010
Public Meetings	Fall 2010
Preliminary Design	November 2010 – May 2011
Final Design	May 2011 – May 2012
Construction	To Be Determined



Arrangement of Elevators - Previous Studies

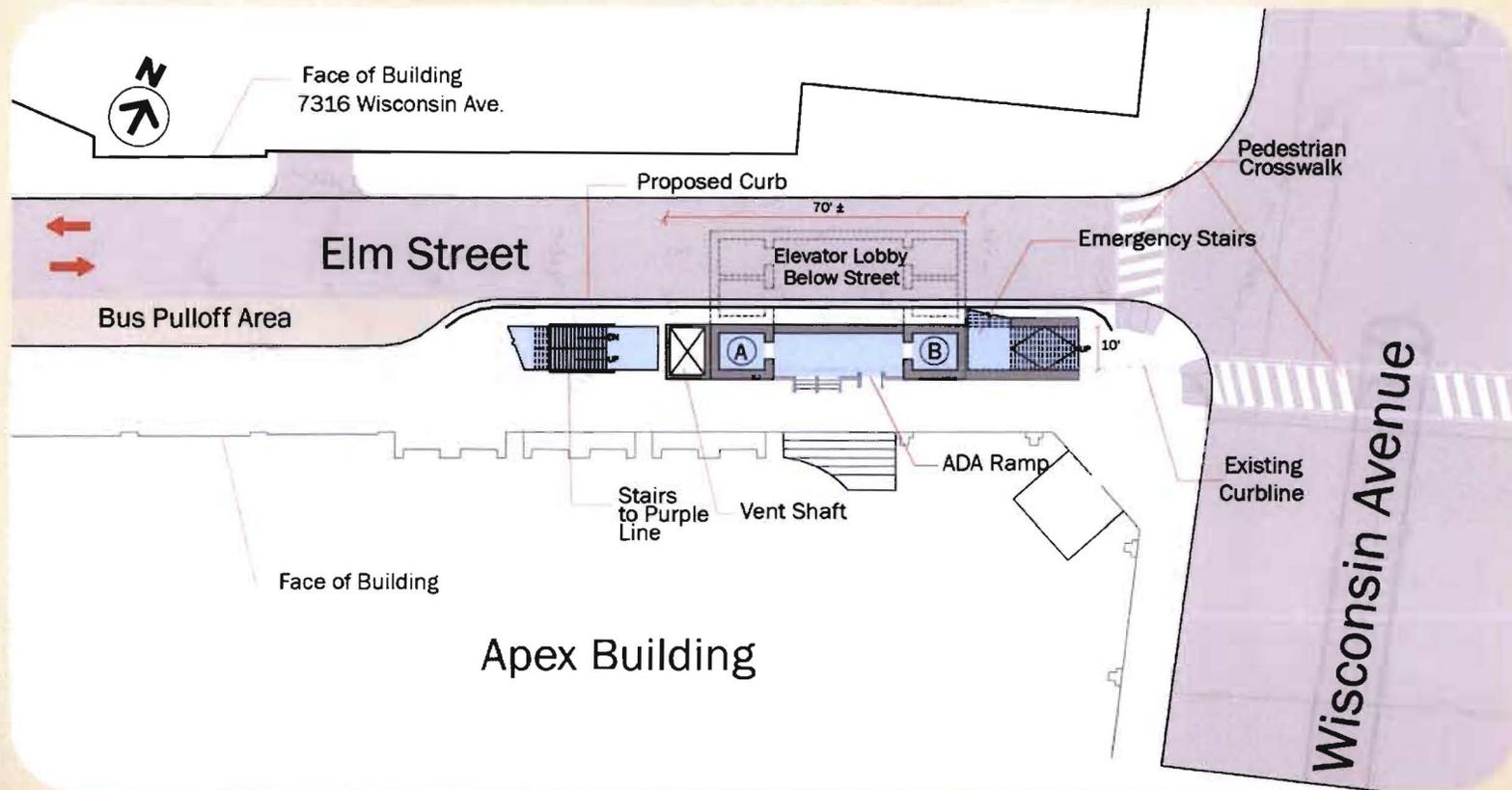


- *Concept 1* – Four Linear (2001 WMATA Study)
- *Concept 2* – Four Clustered from Purple Line to Red Line and Two from Elm St. to Purple Line (2010)

②



Concept 2 – Elm St. Level

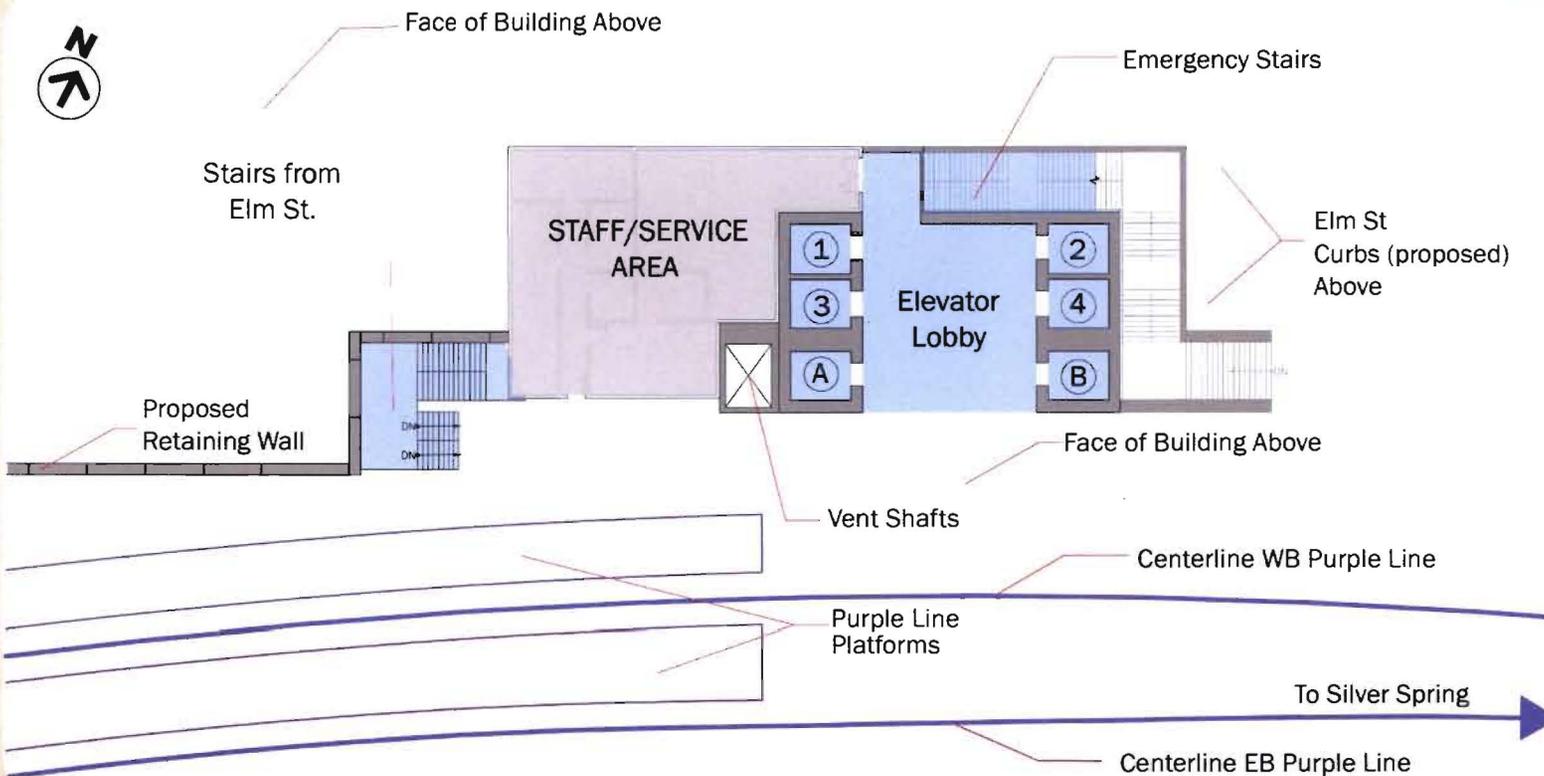


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2010

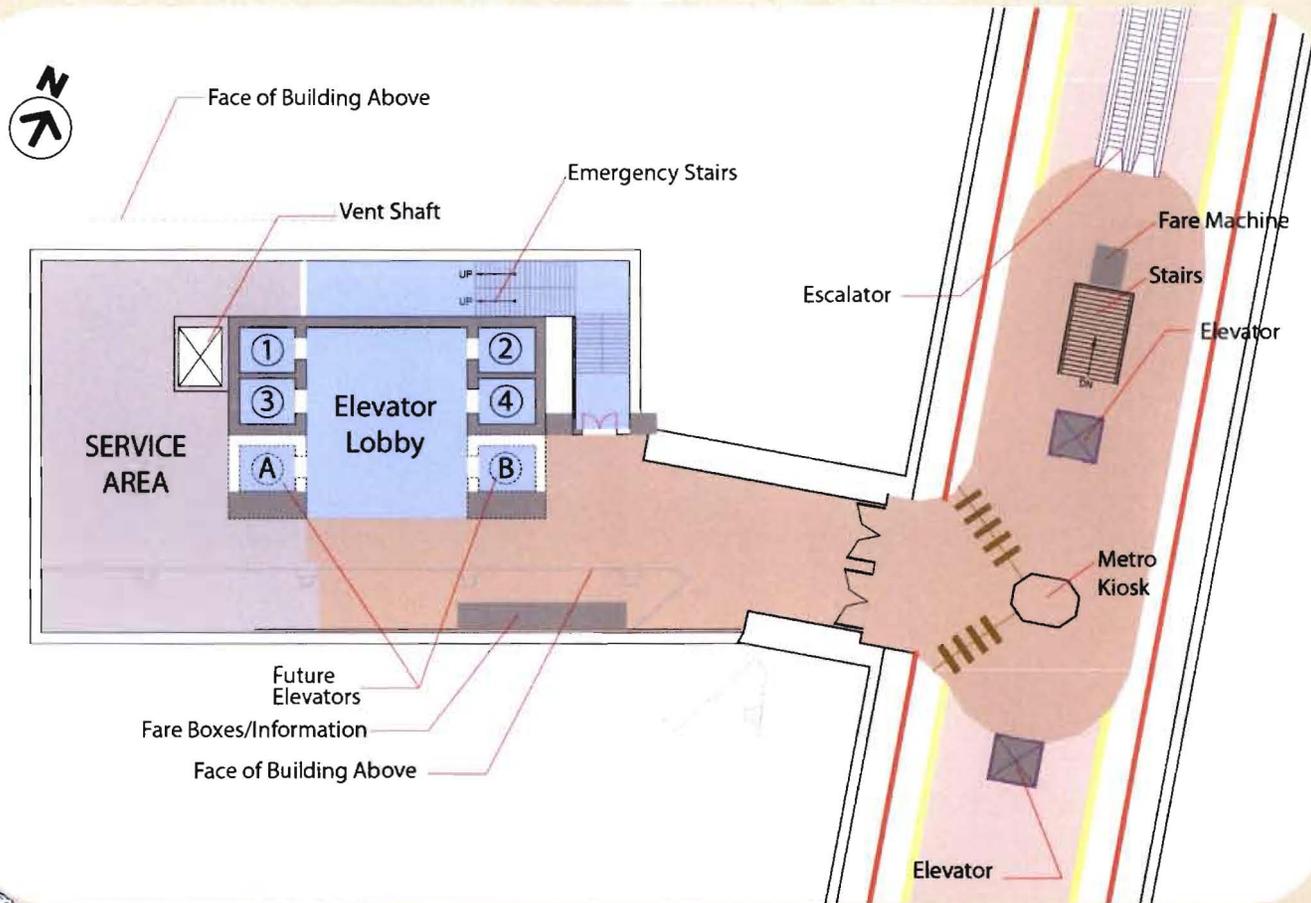
Concept 2 – Purple Line Level



2010



Concept 2 – Red Line Mezzanine Level



2010



Concept 2 Design Development

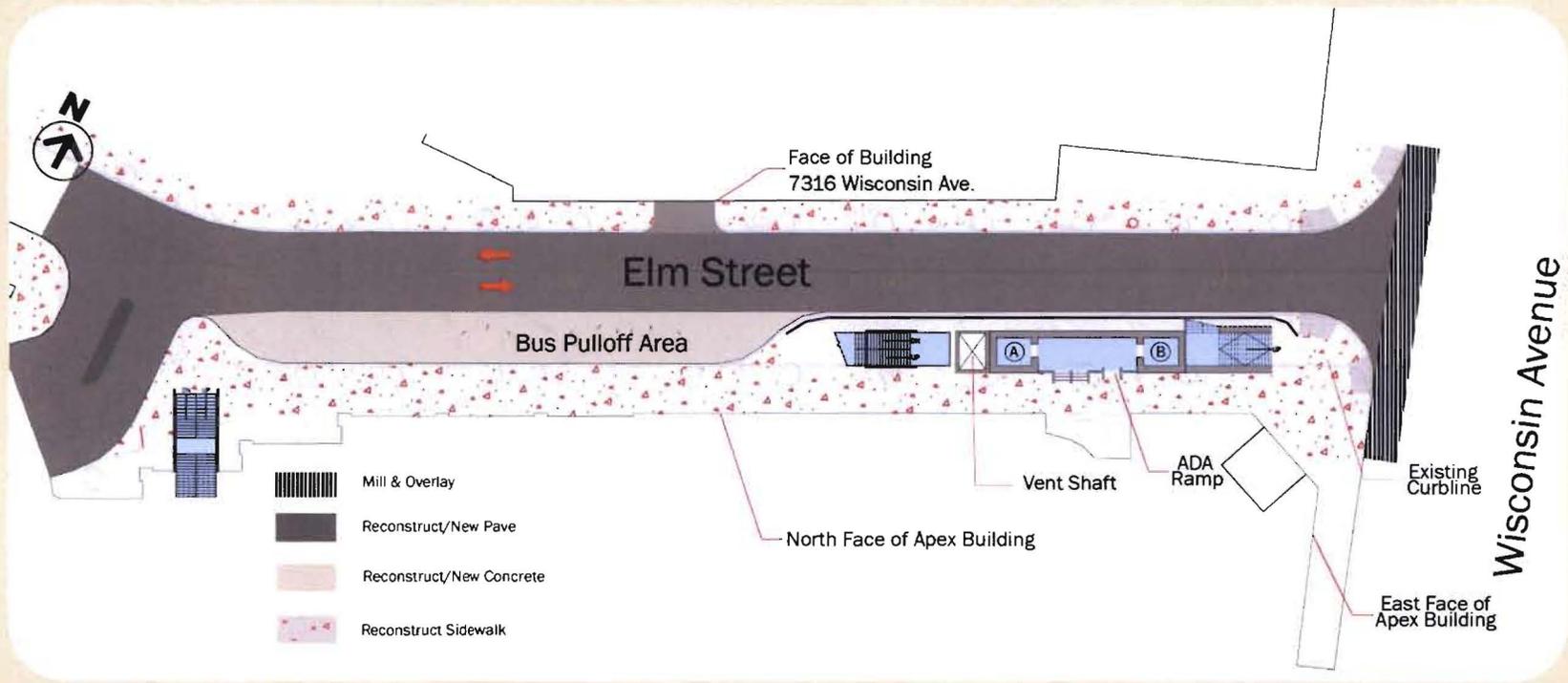


- Requirement by Montgomery County to maintain Elm Street as two-way
- Addition of stairs from Elm Street to Purple Line level
- Updated vertical circulation analysis indicates four elevators required to accommodate patrons between Metro and Purple Line and two elevators required between Purple Line and Elm Street

(1)

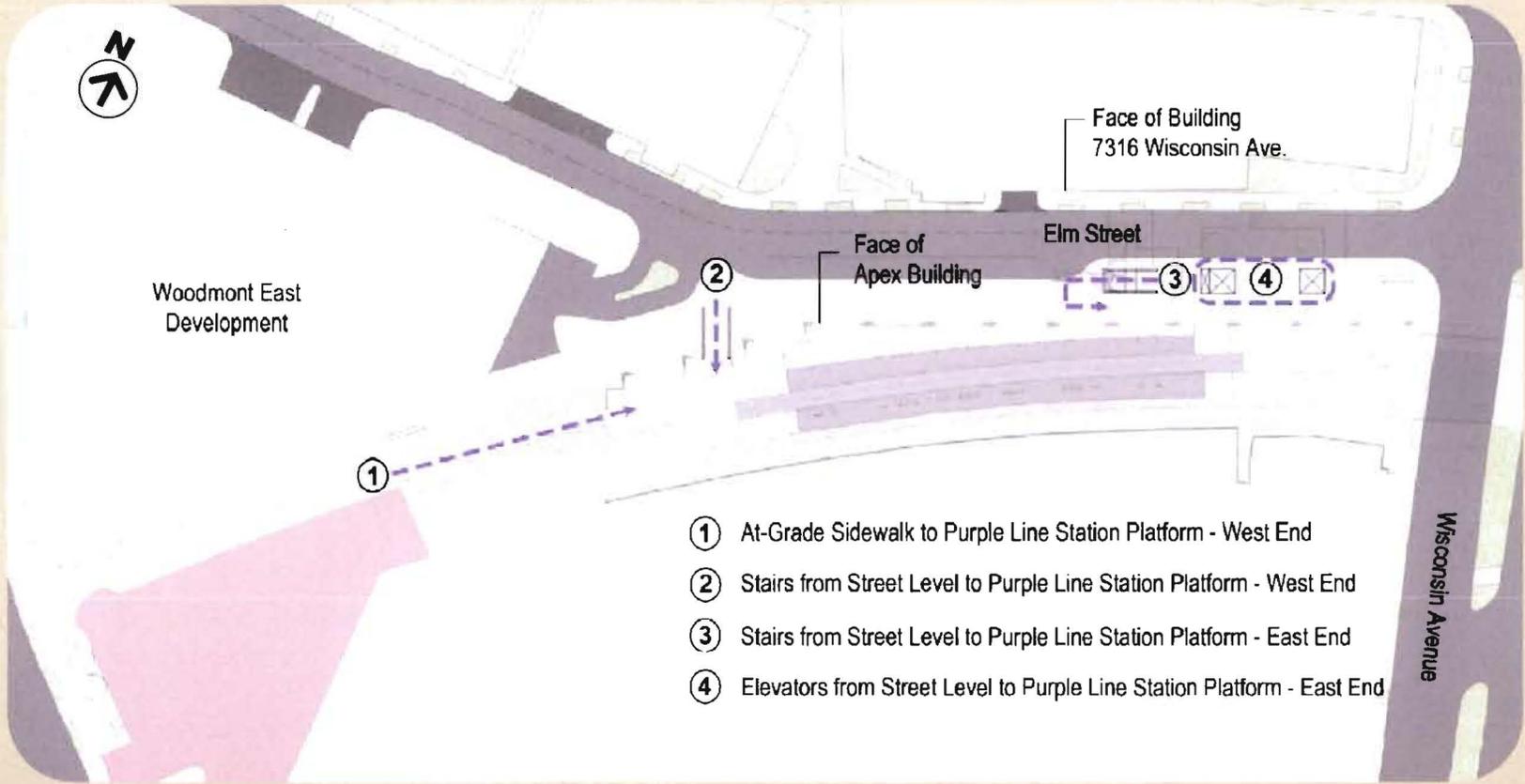


Paving & Restoration



Street Level Access

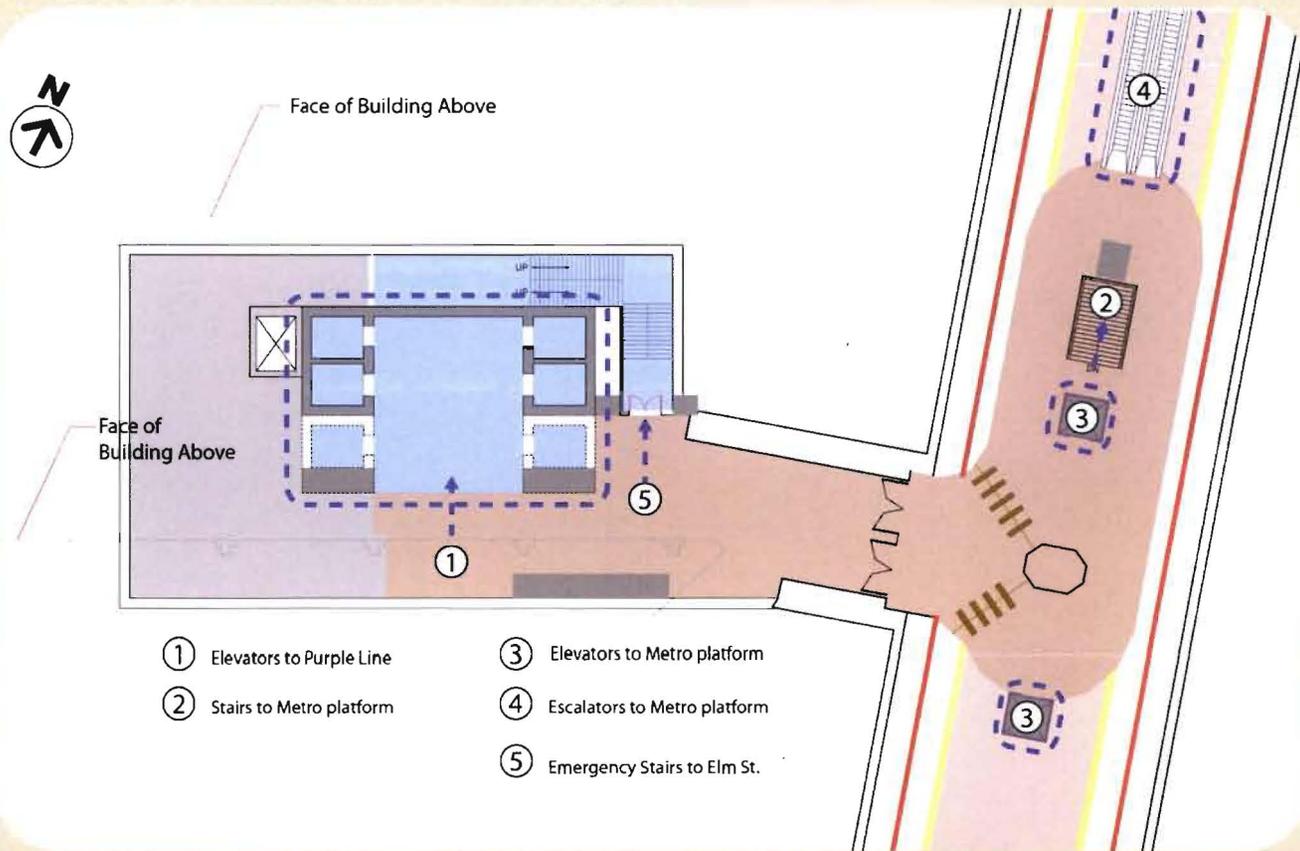
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- ① At-Grade Sidewalk to Purple Line Station Platform - West End
- ② Stairs from Street Level to Purple Line Station Platform - West End
- ③ Stairs from Street Level to Purple Line Station Platform - East End
- ④ Elevators from Street Level to Purple Line Station Platform - East End



Metrorail Red Line Mezzanine Access



Elevator and Stair Massing



12



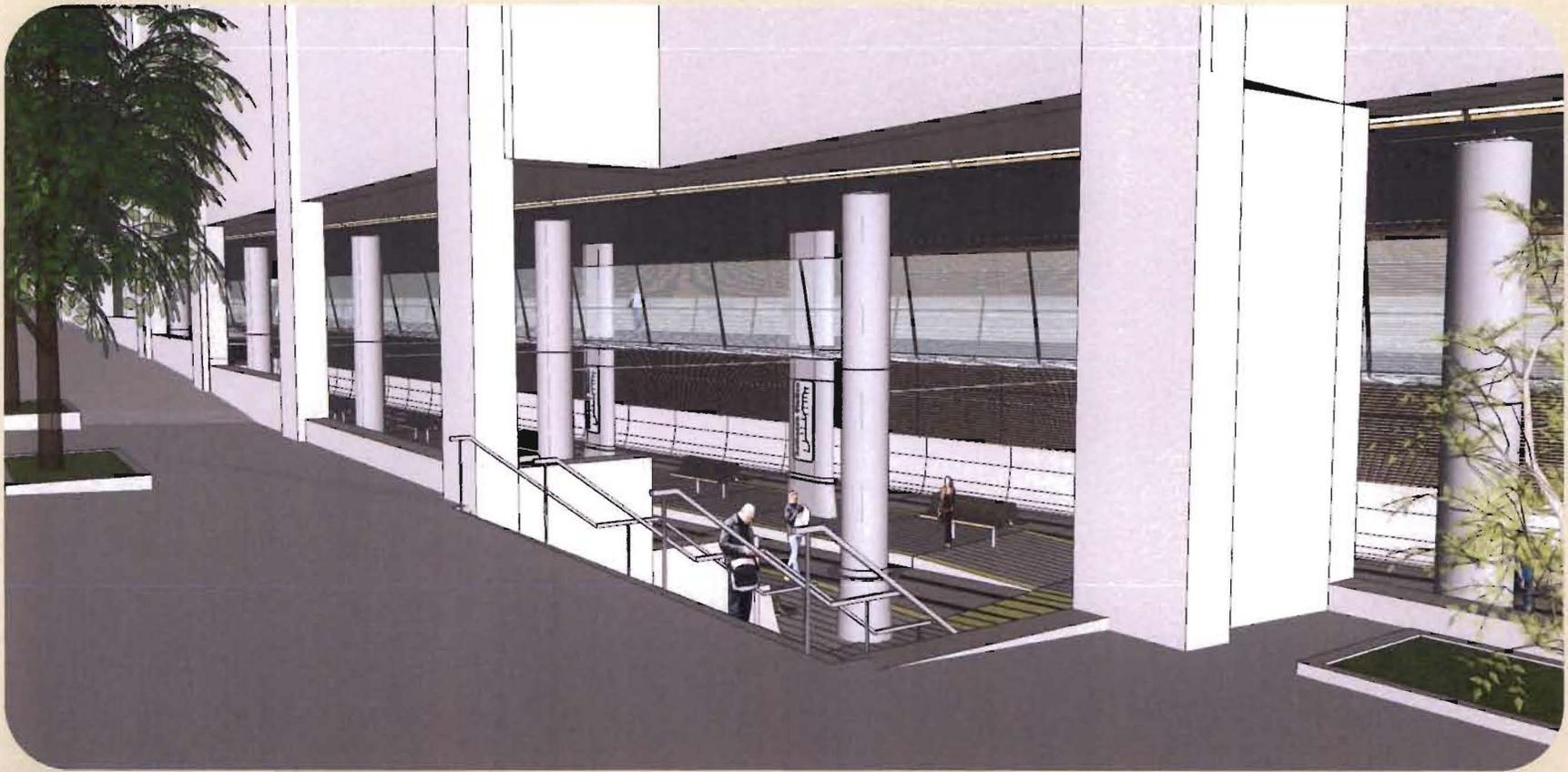
Elevator and Stair Massing – Looking SW



22



West Stair Entrance to Purple Line



93



Streetscape Scheme: Tree Selection

Bethesda CBD guidelines call for Chinese Elms as the street tree for Elm Street.



STREET TREE PLAN

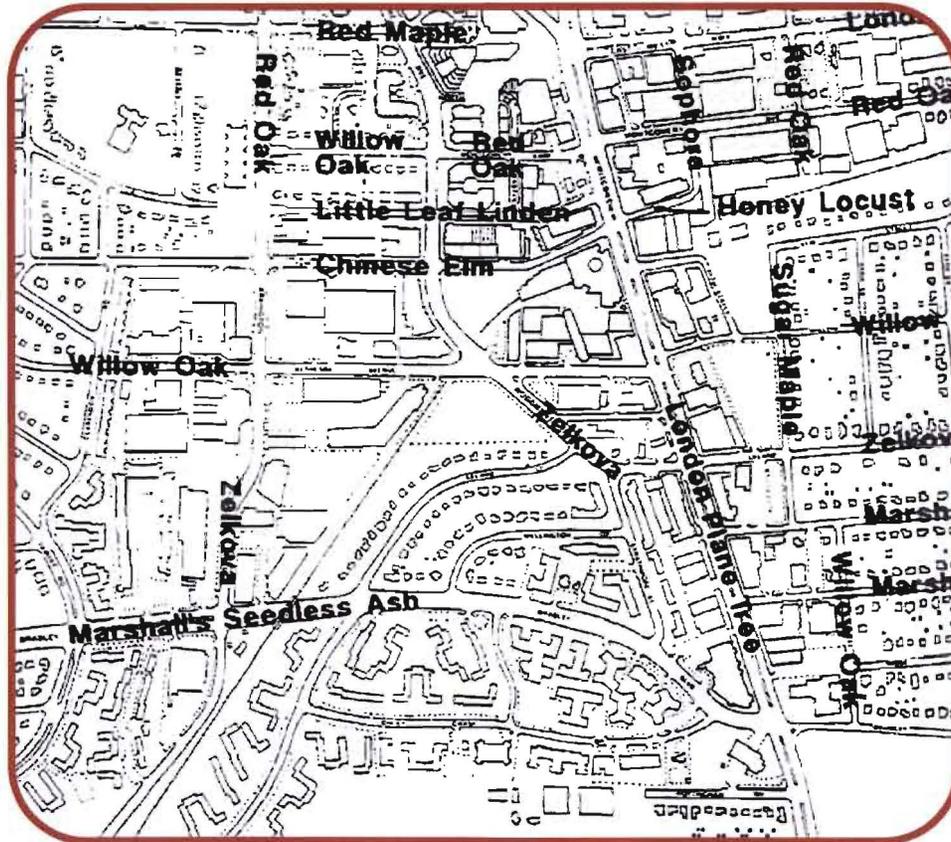
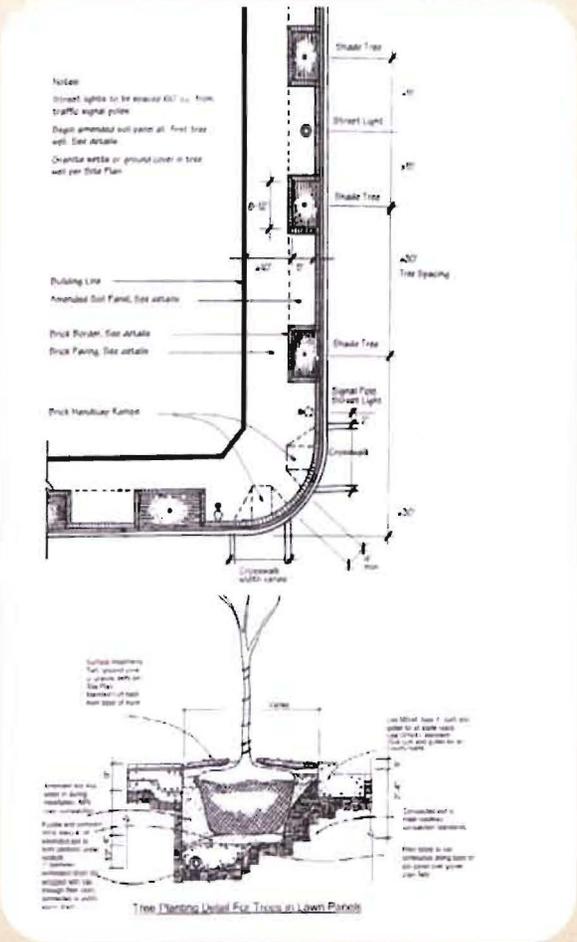


FIGURE 6.5



Streetscape Scheme: Cutout Treatments



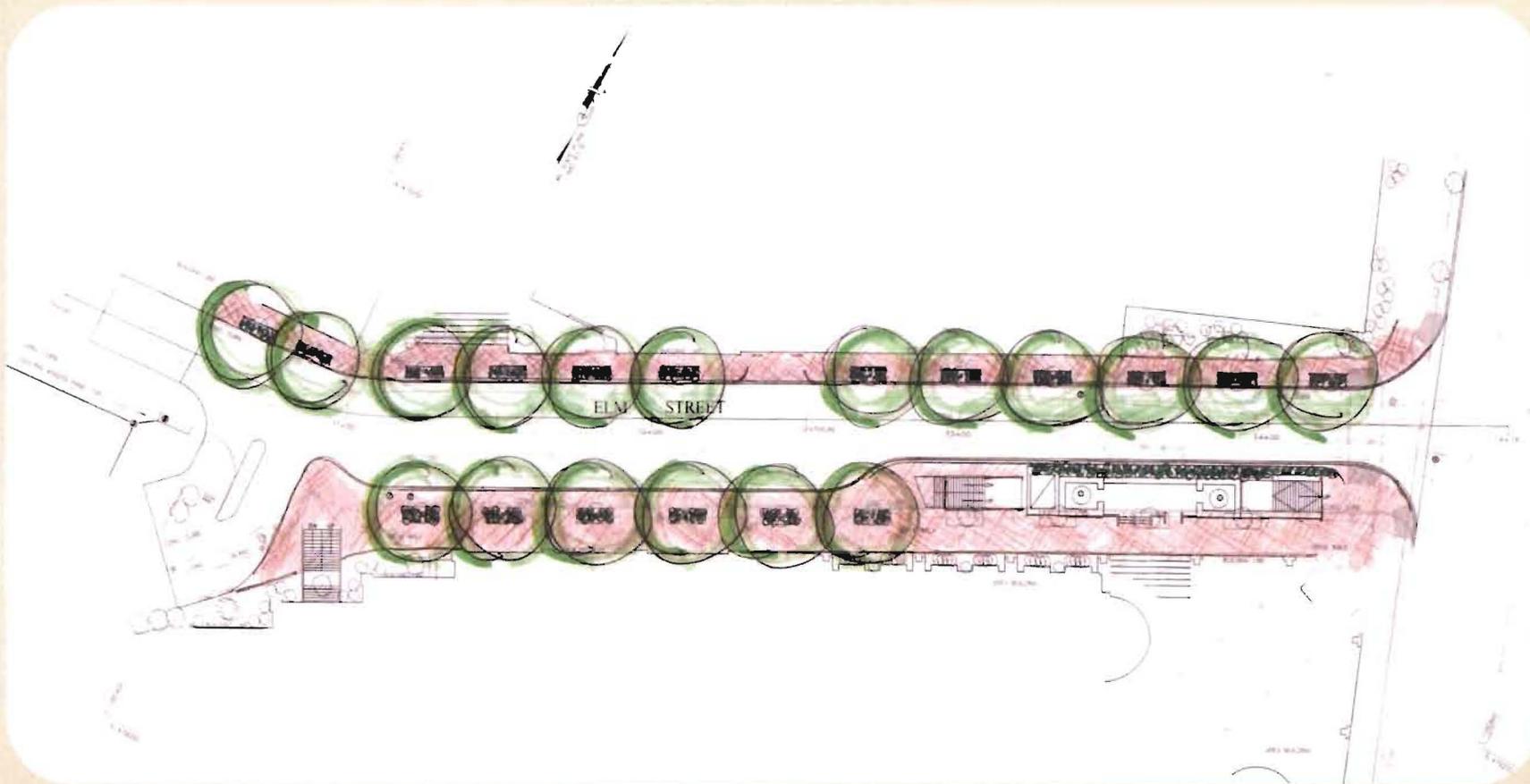
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Streetscape Scheme: Layout



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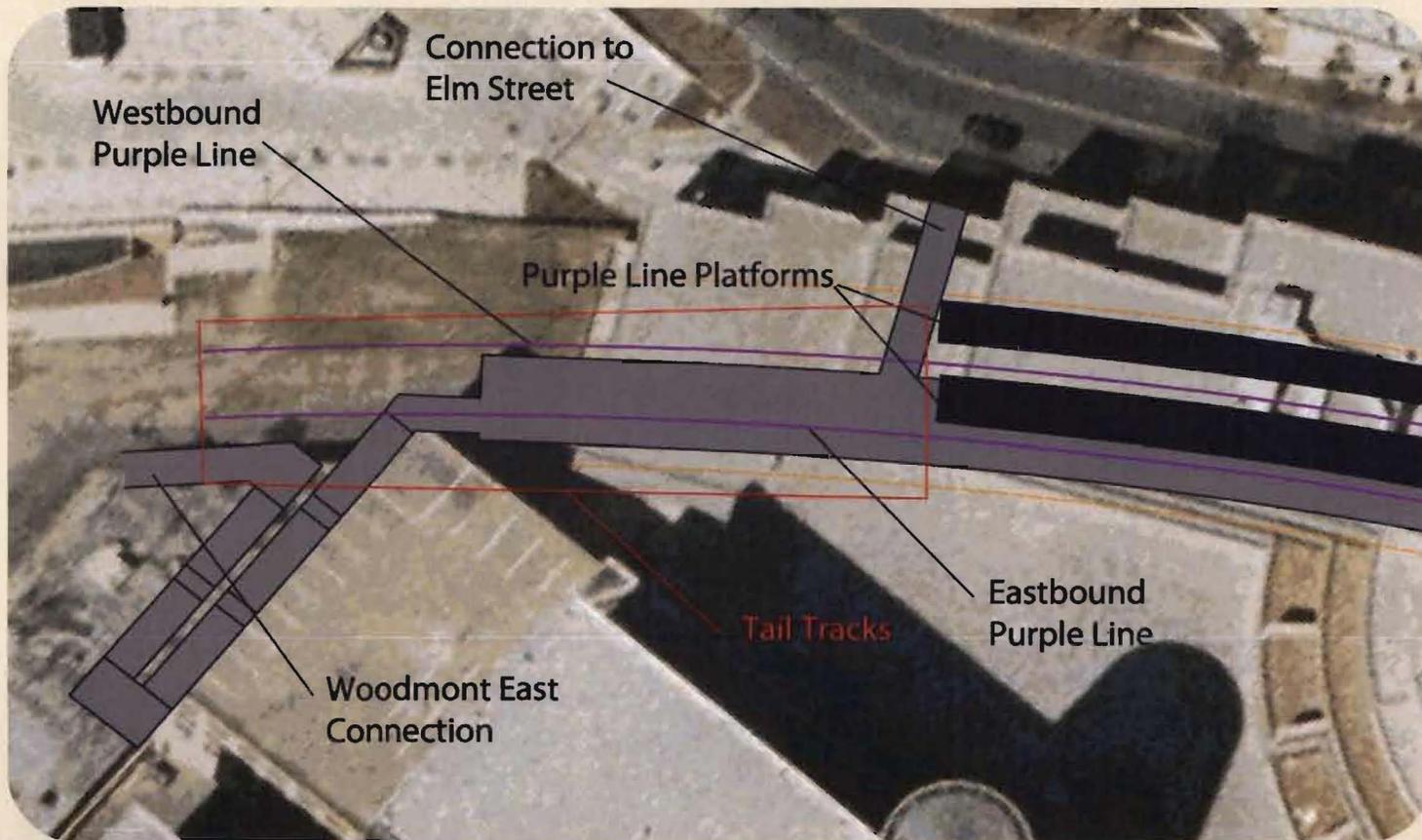
Animation



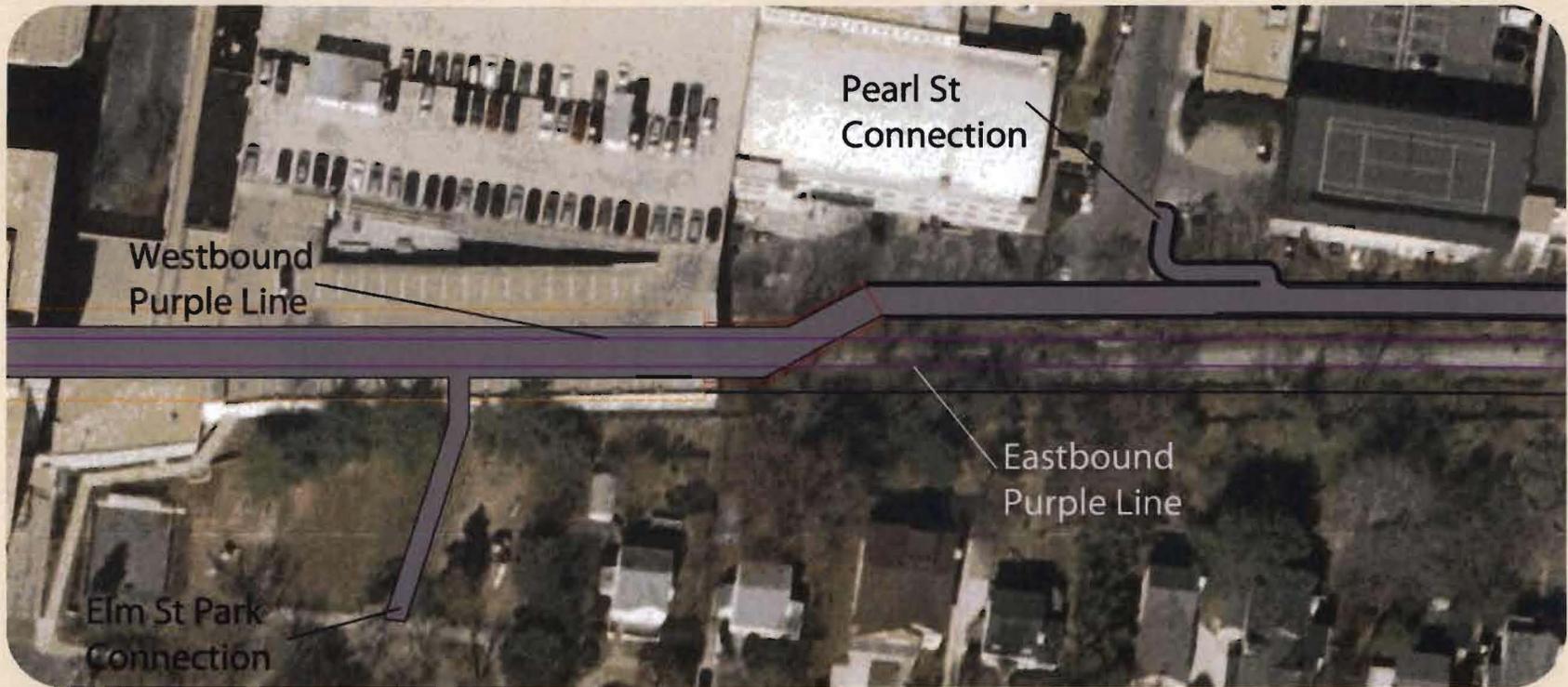
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Trail Connections

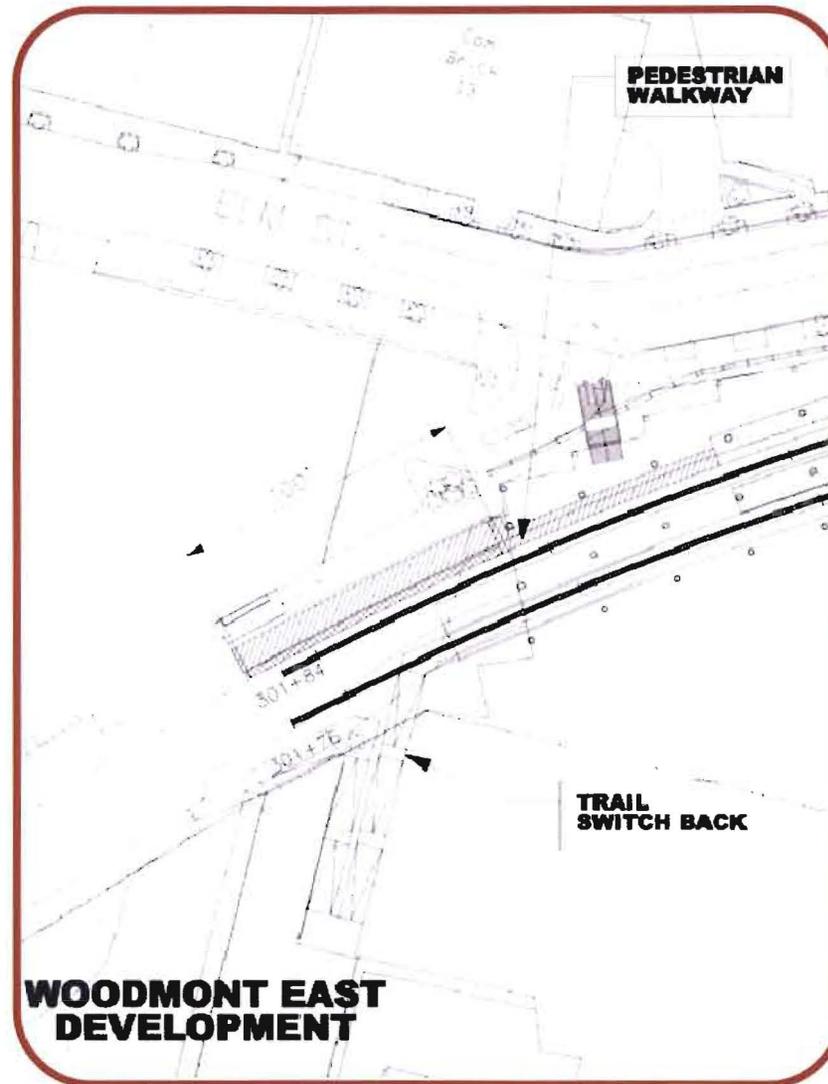


Trail Connections



Tail Track Detail

Note: 100'
dimension is
approximate



Comments or Questions?



31



Bethesda Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities (CIP 500119)
September 2010 Status

BACKGROUND

The Bethesda Bikeway and Pedestrian Facilities project (CIP 500119) is to plan, design and implement the vision to provide continuity to the County's overall bikeway network, improve pedestrian circulation and access, and improve transportation/pedestrian deficiencies at key intersections.

To date, this CIP project has completed the following tasks:

LOCATION	CONSTRUCTION COMPLETED
WOODMONT AVE/MONTGOMERY LANE BUMP-OUTS	DEC 2004 (FY05)
BETHESDA AVE/WOODMONT AVE. INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT	SPRING 2006 (FY06)
NORFOLK AVE (RUGBY/GLENBROOK-WOODMONT AVE.) BUMP-OUT INSTALLATION; BIKE FACILITIES	SPRING 2006 (FY06)
WOODMONT AVE BIKE FACILITIES	SPRING 2006 (FY06)
ROUTE H SIGNING	FALL 2007 (FY08)
CHELTENHAM/SLEAFORD DIRECTIONAL SIGNING	FALL 2007 (FY08)
ROUTE H DIRECTIONAL SIGNING	FALL 2007 (FY08)
METRO STATION ACCESS ROUTE DIRECTIONAL SIGNING	FALL 2007 (FY08)

Bethesda Lot 31 Parking Garage Schedule (500932)-Construction Schedule

The Division of Parking has informed that the General Development Agreement with the developer stipulates the construction of the garage to

Bethesda Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities (CIP 500119) September 2010 Status

begin no later than February 2012 (FY12) with the garage opening by February 2014 (FY14).

Bethesda Bikeways & Pedestrian Facilities (500119)–Remaining Tasks

The Department is mindful that the construction of Bethesda Lot 31 Parking Garage will have considerable impacts on parking and traffic. Thus, it postponed all improvements related to Bethesda Avenue, Willow Lane and 47th Street.

At such time when the Lot 31 development is completed and the public parking garage is opened (now scheduled for February 2014), the construction of the three remaining tasks will immediately follow.

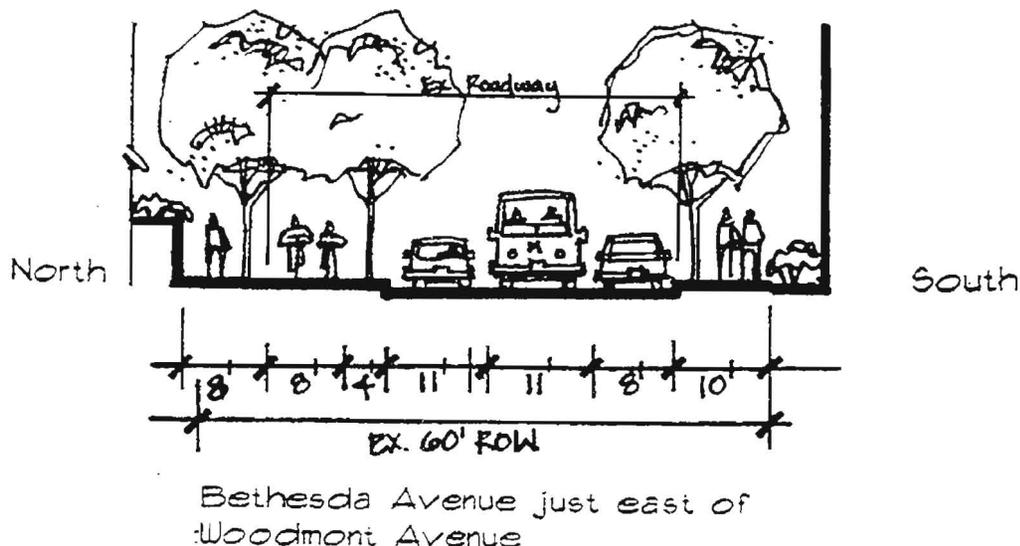
The 3 remaining tasks include:

1. North Side Bethesda Avenue Off-Road Share Use Path (Woodmont Avenue–Wisconsin Avenue)

The Department strongly supports the coexistence of the tunnel, the future Purple Line, and the street level trail.

The Department proposes to incorporate the Master Plan vision for Bethesda Avenue which is street level bike facility intended to serve as an alternative coexistent path to the Georgetown's Interim Bike Path Tunnel. This route is specified in the 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan, (see page 160, Table 5.2 of the Sector Plan) which states that the CCT will have a street-level (and a tunnel) route allowing easy access to many businesses and will contribute to the vitality of the area. Its high visibility is likely to be a preferred route for some users (see page 157–9 and 166 of the Sector Plan).

Bethesda Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities (CIP 500119)
September 2010 Status



The proposed concept would remove the existing north side on-street parking while trying to preserve the existing trees (at the request of the community). See attached *Bethesda Avenue Typical Sections* for more information.

The community also requested the Department to consider the other Master Plan proposal which is the Woodmont Avenue–Leland Street Route. See *Bethesda Bike Facilities Aerial Map* attached typical sections for more information. DOT agreed that this option will be added to Facility Planning–Transportation CIP and studied in the future for its feasibility.

2. Willow Lane Shared Use Path (Wisconsin Ave–47th St)

Willow Lane is one-way street that allows eastbound vehicular movement within the study limits. The Department is proposing to construct an off-road shared use path along the north side of Willow Lane as per the Master Plan.

Bethesda Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities (CIP 500119)
September 2010 Status

3. **47th Street Contra-Flow Bike Lane (Willow Lane-Elm Street Park)**

REQUIRES APPROVAL FROM THE TOWN OF CHEVY CHASE

47th Street is one-way street that allows northbound vehicular movement within the study limits. The original proposal included an off-road shared use path along the east side of 47th Street, adjacent to the Elm Street Park, which required the removal of existing on-street parking as well impacts to trees. The Town of Chevy Chase opposed the concept due to the impacts. In an effort to address the many concerns of the Town, DOT proposed an on-road contra-flow marked bike lane along the one-way section of 47th Street.

The alternative proposal recommends the installation of a six-foot wide contra-flow bike lane along the west side (through striping and directional signs) of 47th Street between Elm Street and Willow Lane. The contra-flow bicycle lane will permit southbound bicycle movement along the northbound one-way section of 47th Street. Northbound cyclists would continue to utilize the same pavement area as the motor vehicular traffic. The advantages of the 47th Street Alternative include:

- Meets the goals of Sector Plan by providing an alternative route for cyclists in addition to the tunnel route;
- Provides on-road bike facility that is safe and accessible 24 hours a day;
- Provides a separate facility for cyclists traveling against motor vehicle traffic, which reduces conflicts between different road users;
- Avoids removal of trees within the Elm Street Park;
- Reduces number of cyclists having to use the path through Elm Street Park thus avoiding pedestrian/cyclist conflicts; and
- Is low maintenance.

Bethesda Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities (CIP 500119) September 2010 Status

In a letter dated May 4, 2009 (See *May 2009 TCC Letter* for more information), the Town opposed this proposal until such time other safety improvements are completed (stop sign at Willow/47th Street and the completion of Bethesda Avenue bikepath).

SUMMARY

In summary, upon the completion of Bethesda Lot 31 Parking Garage and its opening which is scheduled for **February 2014**, the construction of the three remaining tasks will immediately follow.

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OVERVIEW OF STUDY AREA PROPOSED AND EXISTING BICYCLING FACILITIES

- EXISTING BIKEPATH
- - - PROPOSED CIP BIKEPATHS
- - - OPTIONAL BIKEPATH TO BE EVALUATED IN THE FUTURE



GIS NAME 2006

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

APPROVED FOR APPROVAL _____ DATE _____

Chief Design Engineer _____ DATE _____

DATE, Division of Transportation Engineering _____ DATE _____

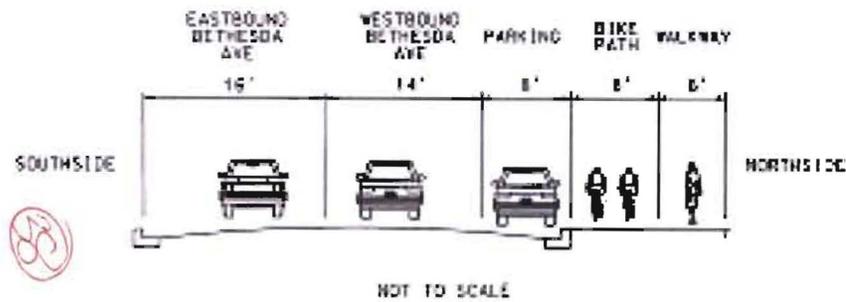
Designed by _____ Drawn by _____ Checked by _____

**BETHESDA
BIKEPATH STUDY AREA**

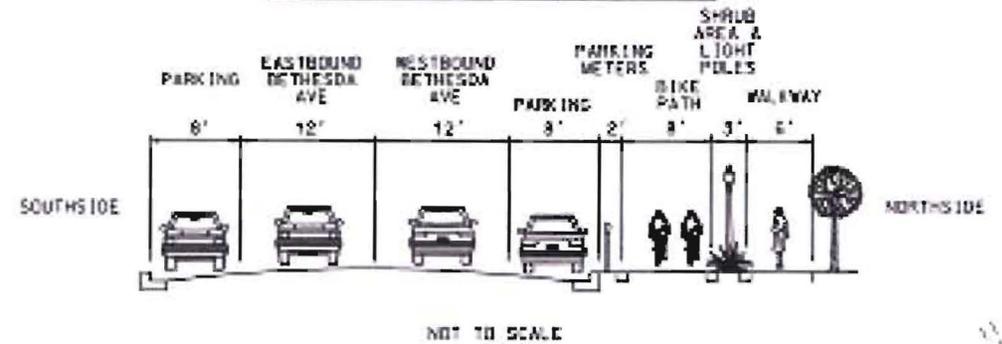
DATE 2/2009

Project No. 1_500119

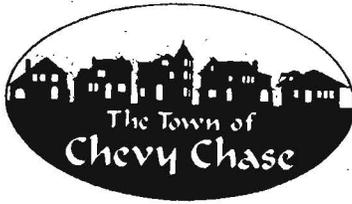
BETHESDA AVE NEAR WOODMONT



BETHESDA AVE NEAR WISCONSIN



11/11/11



2009 APR 27 AM 9:50

Town Council
Kathy Strom, *Mayor*
Robert Enelow, *Vice Mayor*
David Lublin, *Secretary*
Linna Barnes, *Treasurer*
Al Lang, *Community Liaison*

May 4, 2009

Mr. Bruce E. Johnston, Chief
Division of Transportation Engineering
101 Monroe Street, 9th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Johnston,

Thank you for your letter dated February 23, 2009 regarding the alternative proposal to create a bike path along the west side of 47th Street between Willow Lane and Elm Street. The Town appreciates the willingness of the County to seek the Town's input on this proposal.

Though there are certain improvements that have been added to this alternative, the Town still has many concerns regarding the safety and feasibility of the plan, and therefore we continue to oppose the use of the Town right-of-way for the following reasons:

1. The current proposal places the bikeway through the intersection of Willow Lane and 47th Street which currently does not have any stop signs to regulate traffic – which is problematic to pedestrians and cars now. There are no stop signs regulating traffic traveling east and west along Willow Lane or entering the highly used parking lot at this intersection. The creation of this bike path would add cyclists to this already precarious mix of traffic causing further safety hazards.
2. The current proposal still does not address the fact that the path will strand bicyclists at the busy intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Willow Lane without a clear path to follow forward. Until work at the end of Bethesda Avenue is completed and a permanent bike path can be added there, we believe this proposal is too dangerous to implement.

Therefore, until further changes or assessments are made, the Council cannot give its support for the Town's right-of-way to be used for this proposal.

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Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Kathy Strom
Mayor

cc: Town Council
Aruna Miller
Michael Mitchell
Gail Tait Nouri