



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
National Capital Parks - East
1900 Anacostia Drive, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20020

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L30 (NPS-NACE/RM)

February 26, 2014

Dear Sir or Madam:

The National Park Service (NPS) announces the start of a 30-day public scoping window to solicit comments on the purpose, need and conceptual alternatives for the MD 4 at Suitland Parkway Interchange Construction Project, as proposed by Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA). Public Scoping is the first step to involve the public in the Environmental Assessment (EA) process. NPS uses your comments to ensure that it is considering all of the possible alternatives for the management of the resource.

The SHA is proposing improvements that would upgrade the existing four-lane section of MD 4 (Pennsylvania Avenue) in Prince George's County, Maryland. SHA's proposal includes lowering the profile of MD 4 and raising the elevation of Suitland Parkway to construct a signalized diamond interchange, at the current MD 4 intersection with Suitland Parkway. Suitland Parkway, which is owned by and under the jurisdiction of the NPS National Capital Parks-East, was constructed in 1944 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Project construction would require a special use permit from NPS for temporary and permanent impacts to Suitland Parkway, including a land exchange between NPS and SHA. The NPS permit of authorization and exchange constitutes a federal action requiring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (1969, as amended), and implementation of regulations 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508, and NPS Director's Order #12 and Handbook, Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-Making (DO-12). Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 is occurring in parallel with the NEPA process. The EA will analyze the potential impacts of multiple transportation alternatives, including the no action alternative, on park resources.

The purpose of the action is to improve the traffic operations and safety at MD 4 and Suitland Parkway to address existing and future traffic capacity needs. Improvements are needed to address safety concerns and provide sufficient roadway capacity to meet existing and projected travel demands along MD 4, in the study area. Planned residential, mixed-use, and military development along the MD 4 corridor will cause the already congested intersection operations at Suitland Parkway to further deteriorate, thereby increasing travel time, crash potential, and roadway congestion.

The no action alternative (Alternative 1) serves as a baseline by which all other alternatives are compared. No NPS permit authorization would be required under the no action alternative.

There would be no significant reconstruction of the existing at-grade signalized intersection of Suitland Parkway with MD 4 beyond routine maintenance and repairs. The no action alternative assumes that planned residential, mixed-use, and military development along the MD 4 corridor will continue as approved by Prince George's County.

Conceptual Alternative 2 consists of a diamond roundabout interchange; under which the profile of MD 4 would be lowered and Suitland Parkway would be raised, enabling Suitland Parkway to travel over MD 4. Double roundabouts would be constructed on Suitland Parkway at the ramp terminals from MD 4, on both the east and west sides of MD 4. This alternative would impact approximately 8.8 acres of NPS property to facilitate the improvements of the intersection of MD 4 and Suitland Parkway.

Conceptual Alternative 3 is similar to the Conceptual Alternative 2 to the extent that the profile of MD 4 would be lowered and Suitland Parkway would be raised, enabling Suitland Parkway to travel over MD 4. However, signalized intersections would replace the roundabouts proposed under Conceptual Alternative 2 and a two-lane directional ramp would be constructed to facilitate movement from northbound MD 4 to westbound Suitland Parkway. This alternative would impact approximately 7.0 acres of NPS property to facilitate the improvements of the intersection of MD 4 and Suitland Parkway. Depictions of both conceptual alternatives are attached to this letter and available online.

Comments on the purpose, need, and conceptual alternatives for the MD 4 at Suitland Parkway Interchange Construction Project may be submitted on-line by following the appropriate link at:

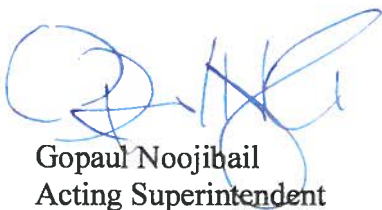
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/md4>

Note to Reviewers and Respondents:

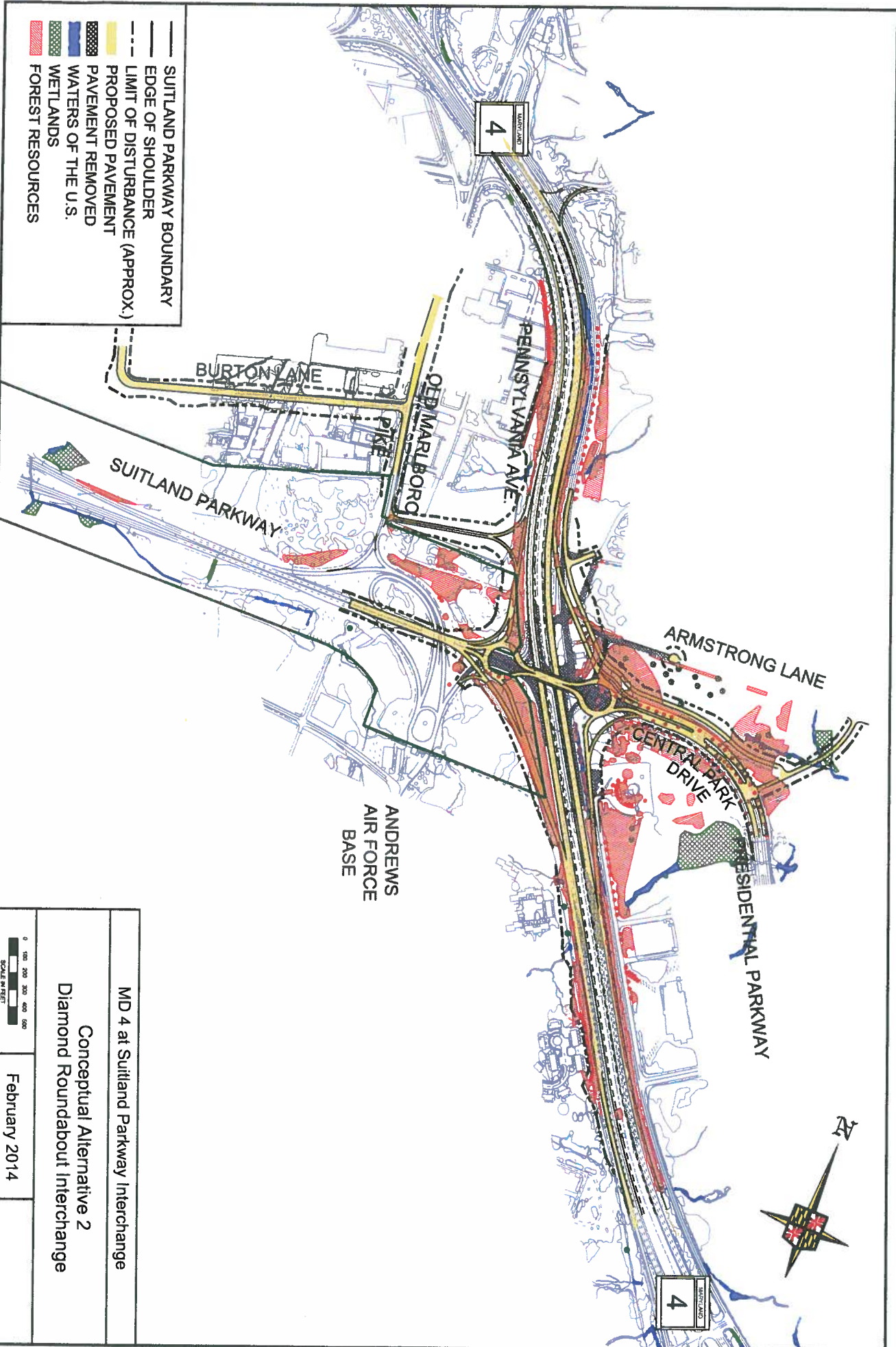
Comments will only be accepted electronically. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Comments will be accepted through March 22, 2014. Thank you for your interest and participation in this process.

Sincerely,



Gopaul Noojibail
Acting Superintendent











MD 4 at Suitland Parkway Interchange

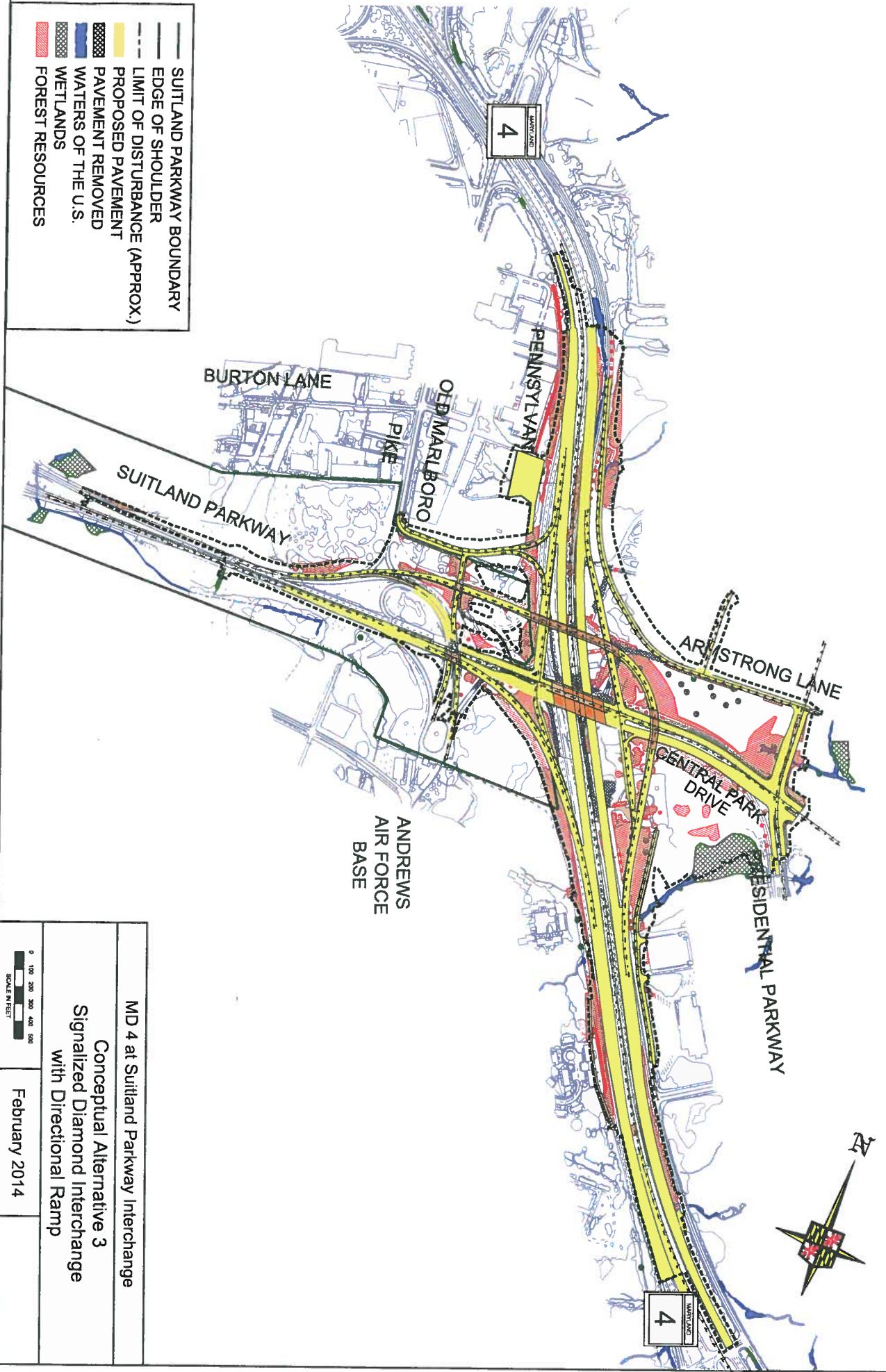
Conceptual Alternative 2

Diamond Roundabout Interchange



February 2014

-  SUITLAND PARKWAY BOUNDARY
-  EDGE OF SHOULDER
-  LIMIT OF DISTURBANCE (APPROX.)
-  PROPOSED PAVEMENT
-  PAVEMENT REMOVED
-  WATERS OF THE U.S.
-  WETLANDS
-  FOREST RESOURCES



MD 4 at Suitland Parkway Interchange		
Conceptual Alternative 3		
Signalized Diamond Interchange		
with Directional Ramp		
February 2014		