

REHABILITATION OF BROAD BRANCH ROAD, NW WASHINGTON, DC

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION

PUBLIC HEARING

November 5, 2013 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm



WELCOME

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), in cooperation with the National Park Service (NPS), are proposing the rehabilitation of the 1.5-mile segment of Broad Branch Road, between Linnean Avenue and Beach Drive, NW along the western border of Rock Creek Park. The Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

PURPOSE OF THE HEARING

The purpose of tonight's Public Hearing is to afford all interested persons the opportunity to provide comments regarding the project. The displays placed around the room provide information on the purpose and need for the project, describe the proposed alternatives, and summarize the environmental impacts of the alternatives.

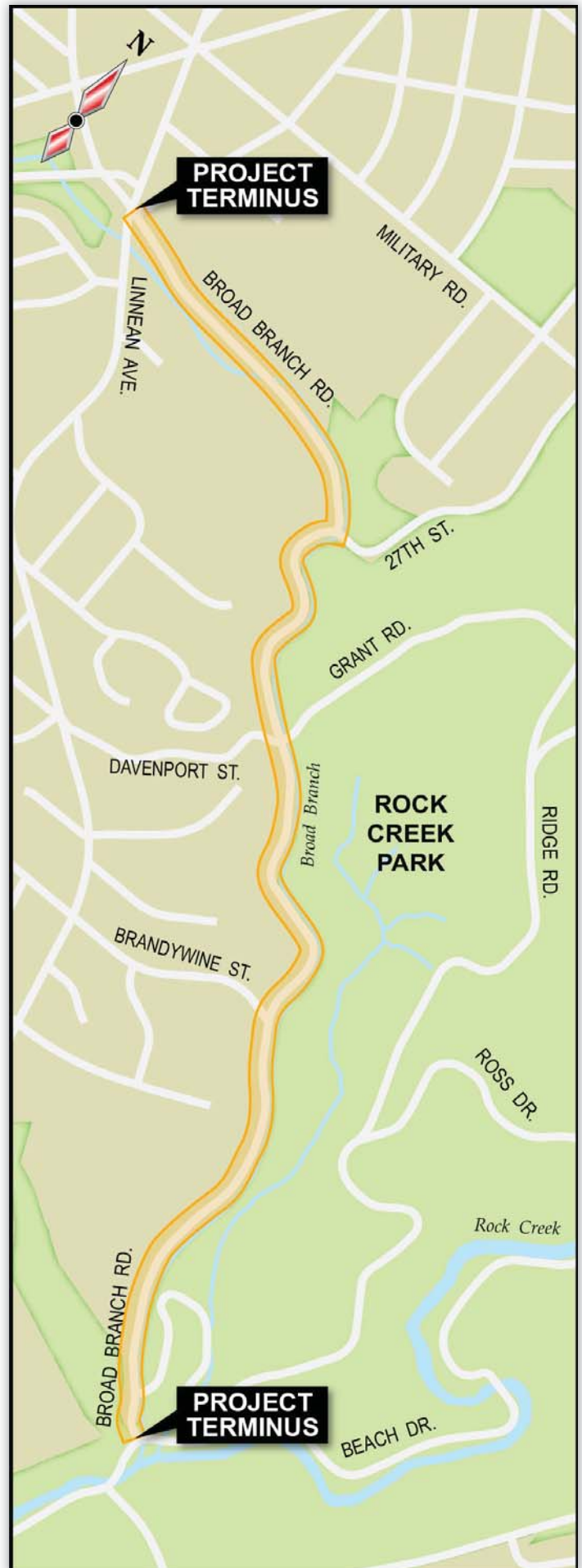
Public testimony will begin at 7:30 pm. If you wish to provide an oral statement, please sign-up to do so at the receiving table. Public officials will be allowed to speak first, followed by citizens in the order of the sign-up sheet. In the interest of accommodating all who wish to speak, citizens will be limited to 3 minutes of testimony.

BACKGROUND

The rehabilitation of Broad Branch Road was originally placed on DDOT's schedule of planned improvements because of the apparent needs for roadway repair and the desire for a safer facility. Failing drainage, poor lighting, limited sight distances, and speeding are creating unsafe conditions. Aging infrastructure has also been cited as a deficiency in the roadway corridor, in particular, the culvert carrying Broad Branch Road over Soapstone Creek, which has been temporarily repaired after partial collapse and requires permanent replacement.

The uncontrolled runoff from elevated parcels to the west of the roadway has contributed in large part to the deterioration of this two-lane roadway. The large volume of stormwater has had detrimental effects on the adjacent streambeds in Rock Creek Park, which is owned by NPS and located immediately east of Broad Branch Road over most of its length. The need for a total solution involving improvements on national park properties has resulted in the NPS serving as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the EA.

The District Department of the Environment (DDOE) is currently working with DDOT and NPS in conducting a stream restoration "daylighting" project to an unnamed tributary of Broad Branch near the northern end of the proposed roadway improvement.



PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the proposed action is to rehabilitate Broad Branch Road to satisfy operational, safety, and multi-modal transportation needs. Context sensitive solutions will take into account the adjoining land uses – residential, foreign diplomatic properties, institutional developments, and wooded areas including Rock Creek Park.

The needs for improvements to Broad Branch Road relate primarily to:

- Deficiencies in the existing roadway infrastructure and stormwater management system;
- Safety of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists; and,
- Linkages to serve pedestrian and bicycle travel along the roadway and into Rock Creek Park.



The existing roadway has deteriorated pavement and poor drainage and lacks safe means for bicyclists and pedestrians.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives development consisted of a multi-step collaborative process with the DDOT study team, stakeholders, and the public to develop a range of alternatives that incorporate elements to address each of the project's needs: roadway improvements, stormwater management, and bicyclist and pedestrian facilities.

Input was gathered during two rounds of public and agency meetings to assist in the development of alternatives. Seven different concepts were developed at the public meetings ranging in width from 22 to 33 feet. In addition, 22 concepts were developed by agency representatives, ranging in width from 22 to 41 feet. The existing right-of-way ranges from 33 feet to 120 feet wide.

Along its 1.5-mile length, Broad Branch Road also varies in its topography and roadway cross-section. Therefore, the project considered variable cross-sections based on the project's purpose and need and the available right-of-way.

Ultimately, the No Action Alternative, three Candidate Build Alternatives, and three options to complement the proposed improvements in the roadway corridor were analyzed in detail in the EA. These alternatives are described on the following pages.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE 1

Under the No Action Alternative (Alternative 1), the improvements to Broad Branch Road would include short-term minor restoration activities (safety and routine maintenance) that maintain the continuing operation of the existing roadway. While the No Action Alternative does not meet the purpose and need of the project, it provides a basis for comparing the environmental consequences of the Candidate Build Alternatives (see Summary of Environmental Impacts on page 7).

CANDIDATE BUILD ALTERNATIVE 2

Alternative 2 represents the minimum width alternative that meets the project's purpose and need. This alternative consists of two 10-foot wide travel lanes with standard curb and gutter on the east side with either a standard curb and gutter or linear rain garden (bio-swale) to capture stormwater runoff on the west side. The 10-foot wide linear rain garden will be provided for approximately 1,000 feet south of Linnean Avenue. Retaining walls will be provided on both sides of the

roadway as needed to keep proposed improvements within existing DDOT-owned right-of-way. The existing storm drain outfall locations will be maintained and stormwater management will be improved by providing bio-swales/rain gardens where space is available along with water quality catch basins. The proposed improvements also include replacement of the Soapstone Creek culvert. The total estimated project cost is \$29.0 million. The approximate construction duration is 24 months.

CANDIDATE BUILD ALTERNATIVE 3

Alternative 3 consists of two 10-foot wide travel lanes, a 6-foot wide sidewalk on the west side of the roadway for the entire length, and standard curb and gutter. A 10-foot wide linear rain garden will be provided between the sidewalk and roadway for approximately 1,000 feet south of Linnean Avenue where the curb and gutter will be located along the east side only. South of that, a 4-foot wide planting strip will separate the sidewalk and roadway. The proposed sidewalk will be extended from the end of the DDOT right-of-way to the Rock Creek Park parking lot just north of Beach Drive. Additional right-of-way will be required in some locations to accommodate the proposed sidewalks and planting strips. Retaining walls will be provided on both sides of the roadway as needed to minimize steep side slopes. The existing storm drain outfall locations will be maintained and stormwater management will be improved by providing bio-swales/rain gardens where space is available along with water quality catch basins. Similar to Alternative 2, the Soapstone Creek culvert will be replaced. The total estimated project cost is \$34.2 million. The approximate construction duration is 30 months.

CANDIDATE BUILD ALTERNATIVE 4

Alternative 4 is the widest of the project alternatives and consists of two 10-foot wide travel lanes, a 6-foot wide sidewalk on the west side, a 4-foot wide bike lane on east side, and standard curb and gutter on both sides of the roadway. A 10-foot-wide linear rain garden will be provided between the sidewalk and roadway for approximately 1,000 feet southward of Linnean Avenue where the curb and gutter will be located along the east side only. South of that a 4-foot wide planting strip will separate the sidewalk and roadway for the western length of the project and the curb and gutter will be located on both sides. Alternative 4 also extends the proposed sidewalk to the Rock Creek Park parking lot. Retaining walls will be provided on both sides of the roadway as needed to minimize steep side slopes. Like Alternative 3, additional right-of-way will be required in some locations to accommodate the proposed sidewalk and planting strip, as well as the retaining walls on the east side. The existing storm drain outfall locations will be maintained and stormwater management will be improved by providing bio-swales/rain gardens where space is available along with water quality catch basins. The culvert carrying Soapstone Creek will also be replaced. The total estimated project cost is \$37.1 million. The approximate construction duration is 36 months.

OPTIONS

OPTION A – EXPANDED RETAINING WALL (Candidate Build Alternative 2 only)

Option A includes an expanded retaining wall along the west side of the roadway in a segment bordering residential development. This option increases the length of the retaining wall from approximately 70 feet to approximately 560 feet. The longer wall will reduce the amount of cut for roadway side slopes required for rehabilitation of the roadway within the existing right-of-way. The shorter (70 foot) retaining wall meets the desired requirement to maintain the existing right-of-way but would require additional cut for side slopes, increasing the potential for erosion in this area.

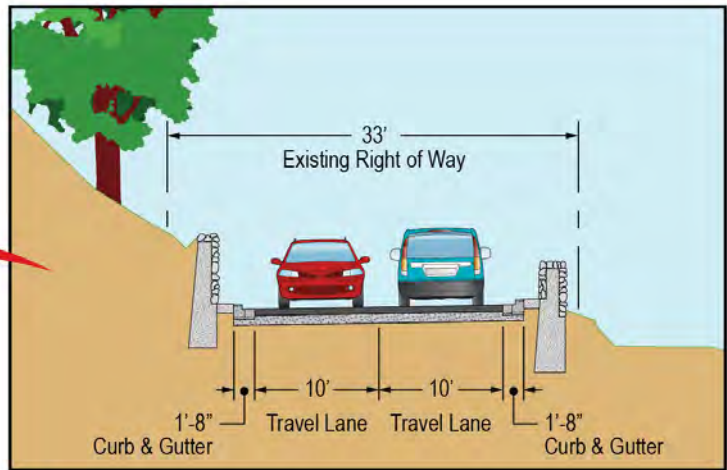
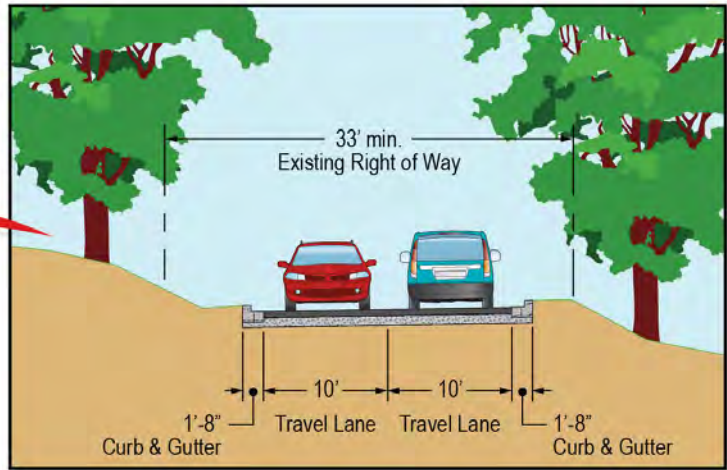
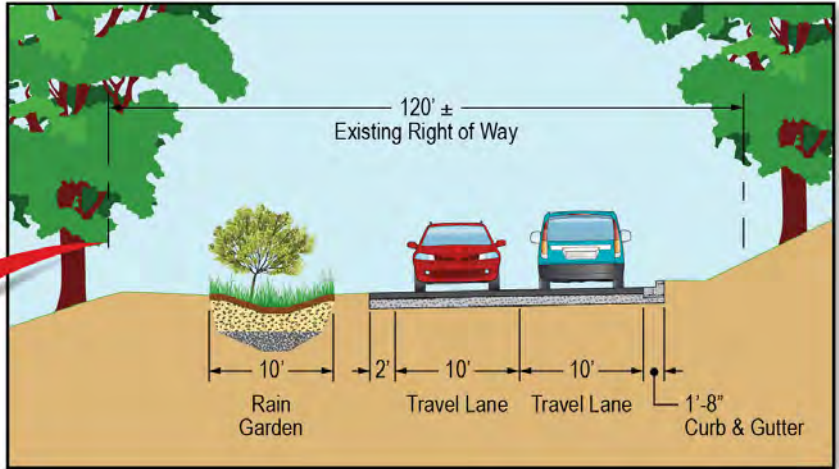
OPTION B – SIDEWALK (Candidate Build Alternative 2 only)

An optional 6-foot wide sidewalk with a retaining wall can be provided on the west side of Broad Branch Road from Soapstone Creek to the parking lot entrance just north of Beach Drive. This option improves linkages between park facilities along the roadway. Portions of the proposed wall and sidewalk occur to the west and south of DDOT-owned right-of-way and are located on privately owned and NPS-owned properties. Construction of the sidewalk and wall would be accomplished through a combination of right-of-way acquisition on private property and temporary easements on NPS property.

OPTION C – T-INTERSECTION AT BRANDYWINE STREET (All Candidate Build Alternatives)

A new T-intersection is proposed at Brandywine Street to replace the existing forked Y-intersection. The reconfiguration of this intersection is being proposed to reduce the paved area and incorporate additional low impact development (LID) techniques in the roadway design with rain gardens in the interior corners of the new intersection. The reconfigured intersection will also improve roadway safety by minimizing crash risk for northbound drivers on Broad Branch Road turning left onto Brandywine Street. Requiring drivers to stop at a stop sign at the T-intersection, instead of yielding as with the existing Y-intersection, will also reduce speeds at the intersection.

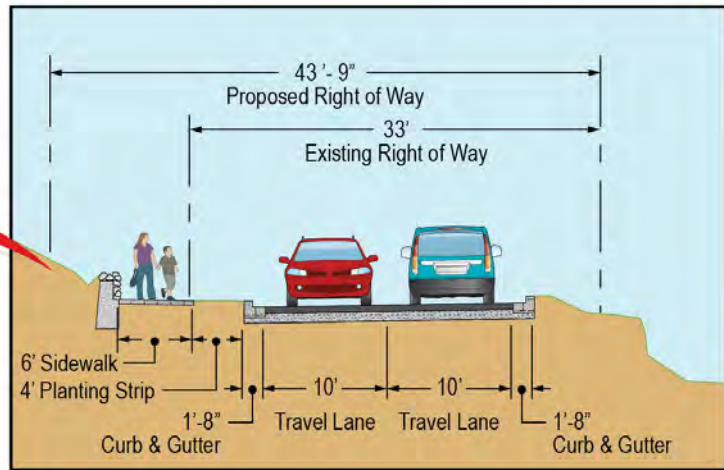
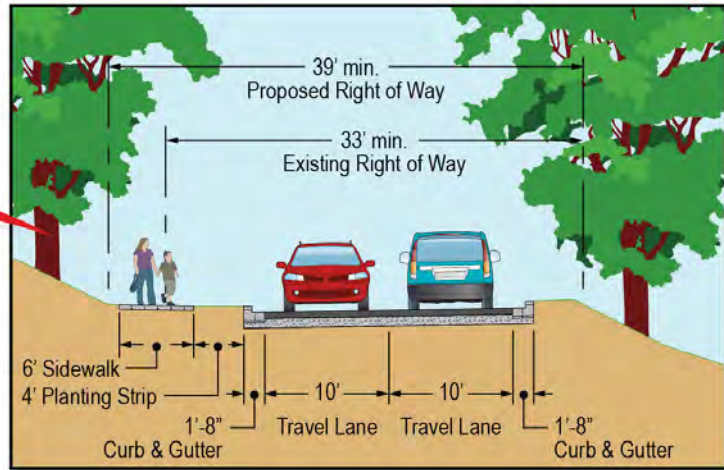
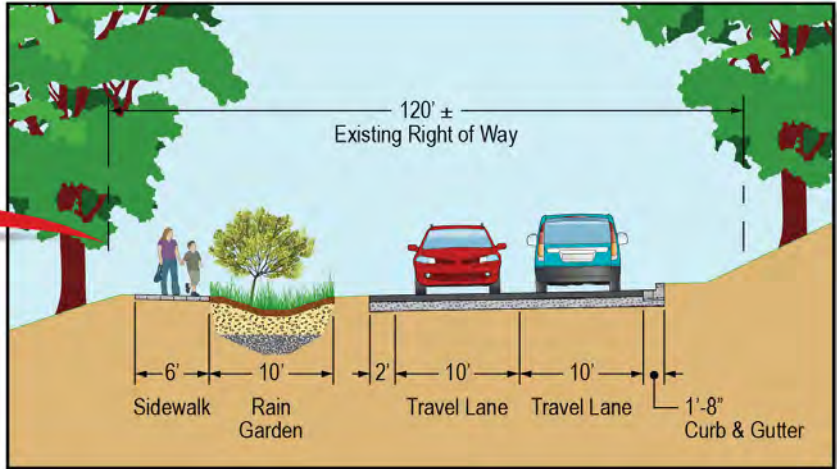
CANDIDATE BUILD ALTERNATIVE 2



Note: The three illustrations shown above are representative of the typical cross-sections for this alternative; however, they will vary slightly depending on the physical features along the roadway. All views are looking northbound along the roadway.

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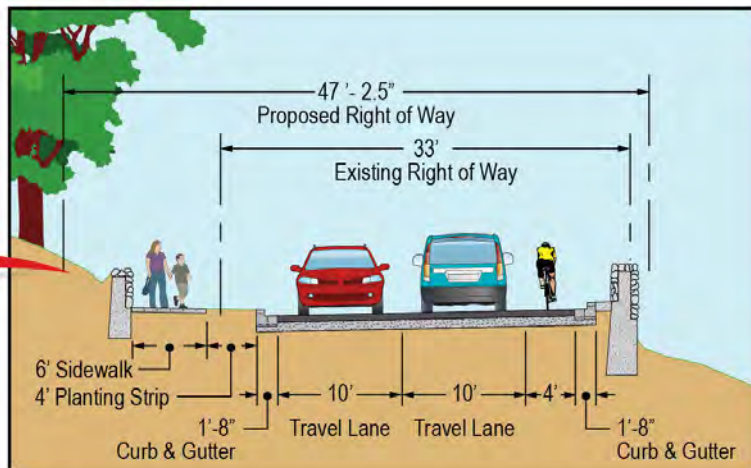
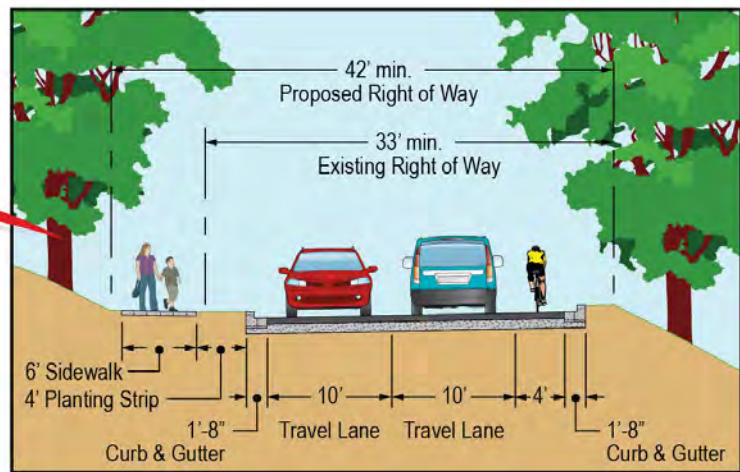
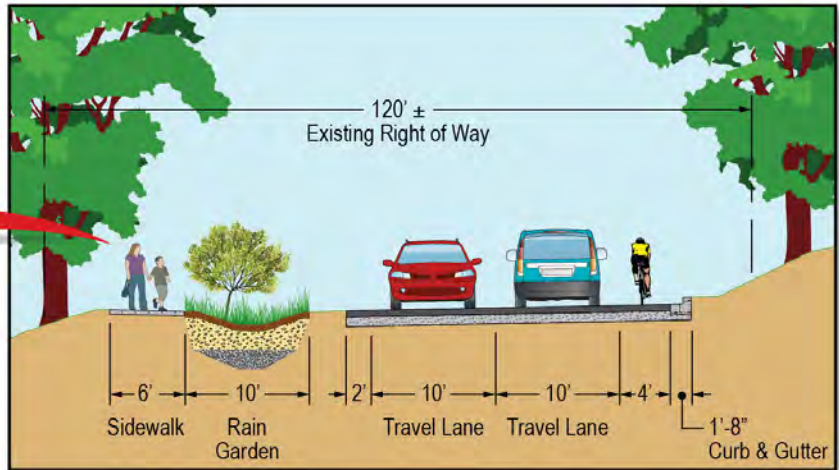
CANDIDATE BUILD ALTERNATIVE 3



Note: The three illustrations shown above are representative of the typical cross-sections for this alternative; however, they will vary slightly depending on the physical features along the roadway. All views are looking northbound along the roadway.

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CANDIDATE BUILD ALTERNATIVE 4



Note: The three illustrations shown above are representative of the typical cross-sections for this alternative; however, they will vary slightly depending on the physical features along the roadway. All views are looking northbound along the roadway.

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Improvements to Broad Branch Road with Alternative 1 (No Action Alternative) would include short-term minor restoration activities (safety and routine maintenance) that maintain the continuing operation of the existing roadway. However there would be no improvements to stormwater management, bicycle and pedestrian travel, or safety. With each of the Candidate Build Alternatives and Options, no major disruption to the surrounding topography is expected with the proposed actions as they follow the existing roadway alignment.

The table below highlights some of the potential environmental issues associated with each of the proposed alternatives. Please see the EA for a full listing of impacts that were considered and additional findings from the environmental evaluation.

	NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE 1	CANDIDATE BUILD ALTERNATIVES		
		ALTERNATIVE 2	ALTERNATIVE 3	ALTERNATIVE 4
Meets Purpose & Need -Road Conditions -Stormwater Management -Multimodal Needs -Safety	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Right-of-Way Acquisition (square feet)	0 ¹	0 ² 3,737 (Option B)	28,827	41,823
Improvements to Stormwater Management	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Floodplain Encroachments (acres)	0	0.04 0.12 (Option B)	0.12	0.28
Stream Impacts (linear feet)	0	296	367	599
Wetlands Displaced (acres)	0	0	0	0
Threatened and Endangered Species	None	None	None	None
Loss of Trees (diameter at breast height > 4 inches)	0	285 45 less (Option A) 6 more (Option B) 3 more (Option C)	462 3 more (Option C)	460 3 more (Option C)
Archeological Resource Impacts	None	Possible Impacts	Possible Impacts	Possible Impacts
Historic Structure Impacts	None	Adverse Impacts	Adverse Impacts	Adverse Impacts
Land Use and Zoning	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change
Environmental Justice Populations Affected	0	0	0	0
Retaining Walls – Viewed from Broad Branch and Rock Creek Park	None	Potential impacts to aesthetics and visual quality Adverse impacts to historic properties	Potential impacts to aesthetics and visual quality Adverse impacts to historic properties	Potential impacts to aesthetics and visual quality Adverse impacts to historic properties
Retaining Walls – Views from Residences	None	Potential impacts to aesthetics and visual quality	Potential impacts to aesthetics and visual quality	Potential impacts to aesthetics and visual quality
Area of Permanent Park Impacts (square feet)				
Rock Creek Park	0	0	39	2,252
District Triangle Park	0	0 3,502 (Option C)	600 3,502 (Option C)	600 3,502 (Option C)
Pedestrian Improvements	No	No Yes (Option B)	Yes	Yes
Cyclist Facilities	No	No	No	Yes
Air Quality Impacts	None	None	None	None
Noise Impacts	None	None	None	None
Hazardous Materials	None	None	None	None
Construction Costs (millions)	N/A	\$29.0	\$34.2	\$37.1
Construction Duration (months)	N/A	24	30	36

¹ The existing roadway is within DDOT right-of-way, with minor exceptions. These exceptions occur in six short sections along the project corridor where the existing roadway was constructed outside DDOT-owned property. These small areas account to a total area of 923 square feet. The EA will serve to provide the appropriate action needed to correct these inconsistencies, which may include an easement, land transfer, or permit.

² Activities outside the existing right-of-way (beyond the area of existing pavement previously mentioned) would be accomplished through easements.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Milestone	Date
Project Kick-off	March 2011
Public Scoping Meeting	July 13, 2011
Initial Alternatives	Summer 2012
Public Alternatives Meeting	November 8, 2012
Environmental Assessment	October 21, 2013
<small>WE ARE HERE</small> Public Hearing	November 5, 2013
Decision Document	Winter 2013 / 2014

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Tonight

- Provide oral testimony
- Fill out a comment form
- Talk to the Court Reporter

Email

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Mail

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Project Website

www.BroadBranchRdEA.com

Comments must be received by November 22, 2013

Thank you for your interest and participation in this project.

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