

Section 8: PREFERRED CORRIDOR

The preferred corridor presented in this study represents a planning level design. Additional coordination between applicants and private/commercial landowners would be necessary during the application and design phases to finalize the exact alignment. In addition to modifying the preferred corridor to be a 100% shared use path facility type, other refinements were made. **Figure 8-1** shows the modifications of the preferred corridor based on feedback from the STAG and localities and additional detailed investigation. **Figure 8-2** displays the preferred corridor with a 100% shared use path facility type, as well as the associated locations (along the roadway or off-road). Approximately 22 miles of the corridor would be off-road and approximately 22 miles would be along a roadway facility. The preferred corridor would consist of 11.7 miles of new active transportation facility. The following minor modifications were made for the preferred corridor (north to south):

1. Relocation of Chickahominy River Crossing
 - Modified due to concerns with implementation of a bridge under the electric transmission line along the Dominion Energy easement.
 - Crossing moved approximately 100 feet east of the existing Dominion Energy transmission line.
 - This modification did not change potential wetland or stream impacts.
2. I-295 Crossing
 - Modified due to cost concerns (i.e. costs associated with bridging over or tunneling under interstate) to utilize Francis Road and Greenwood Road and connect back to Dominion Energy easement.
 - This modification did not change potential wetland or stream impacts.
3. Utilization of Villa Park Drive
 - Requested by Henrico County in order to avoid concerns with elevation changes along the Dominion Energy easement which the transmission line follows.
 - Modified to follow Villa Park Drive from E Parham Road crossing to connect to Dominion Energy easement south of Villa Park Drive.
 - This modification did not change potential wetland or stream impacts.
4. Alignment between Dumbarton Road and Hilliard Road
 - Requested by Henrico County to reduce potential impacts to right of way and floodplains and to be consistent with Henrico County plans.
 - South of Lakeside Recreation Area, the alignment was moved to east adjacent to Brook Run Drive, crossing Upham Brook to reach the crossing of Dumbarton Road.
 - This modification led to a 0.2-acre reduction of wetland impacts; however, no change to stream impacts.
5. Bryan Park Alignment
 - Henrico County identified safety and operational concerns with the alignment on Hermitage Road between the Henrico County limits and Westbrook Avenue in the City of Richmond and suggested that consideration be given to routing the trail through Bryan Park.
 - Multiple locations and alignments were studied, however, due to preliminary cost and environmental resource comparisons, the preferred corridor was modified to enter Bryan Park along Park Street and Bryan Park Avenue and utilize trails

through Bryan Park to connect to Bellevue Avenue and subsequently Hermitage Road.

- This modification did not change potential wetland or stream impacts.
6. City of Richmond Downtown Alignment
 - The City of Richmond suggested modifying the route through the City to accommodate the 100% shared use path facility in an urban setting.
 - Multiple locations and alignments were studied; however, due to preliminary cost and environmental resource comparisons, the preferred corridor was modified in the City of Richmond. Consistent with the alignment for the bicycle lane improvements currently identified in the 2015 Richmond Bicycle Master Plan and under design and development for implementation planned for 2020, the modification utilized the T. Tyler Potterfield Memorial Bridge for crossing the James River. North of the river, the corridor will follow Brown’s Island Way, 2nd Street, Byrd Street, 3rd Street, Franklin Street, and 1st Street until connecting to Duval Street, where it will continue until turning north on Chamberlayne Parkway.
 - This modification did not change potential wetland or stream impacts.
 7. Jefferson Davis Hwy (Route 1) / Chippenham Pkwy (Route 150) Interchange
 - The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation noted safety concerns with the at-grade crossing of Route 1/Route 150 interchange.
 - Modified corridor option to cross Route 1 north of Route 1/Route 150 interchange and generally follow Falling Creek west, past the interchange to Dundas Road.
 - This modification led to a 0.1-acre reduction of wetland impacts, however, no change to stream impacts occurred.
 8. Seaboard Property Adjustment / North of Swift Creek Lake
 - Concerns with right of way along the Seaboard Coast Line north of Swift Creek Lake near Branders Bridge Road.
 - Modified corridor option to the southwest to connect to Kelmarbi Road and Branders Bridge Road.
 - This modification did not change potential wetland or stream impacts.



Bryan Park (Henrico)

Figure 8-1. Preferred Corridor Modifications

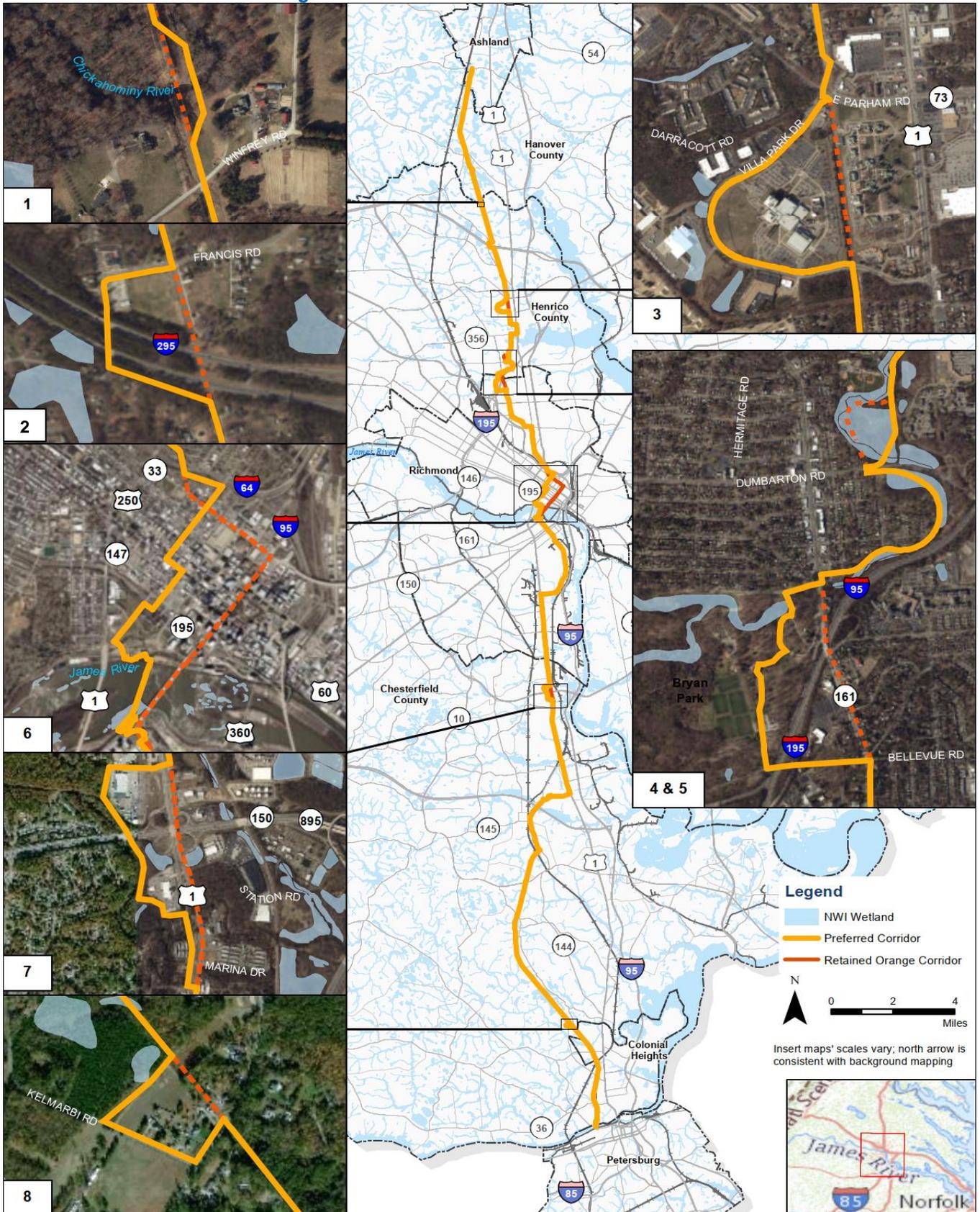


Figure 8-2. Preferred Corridor (1 of 6)

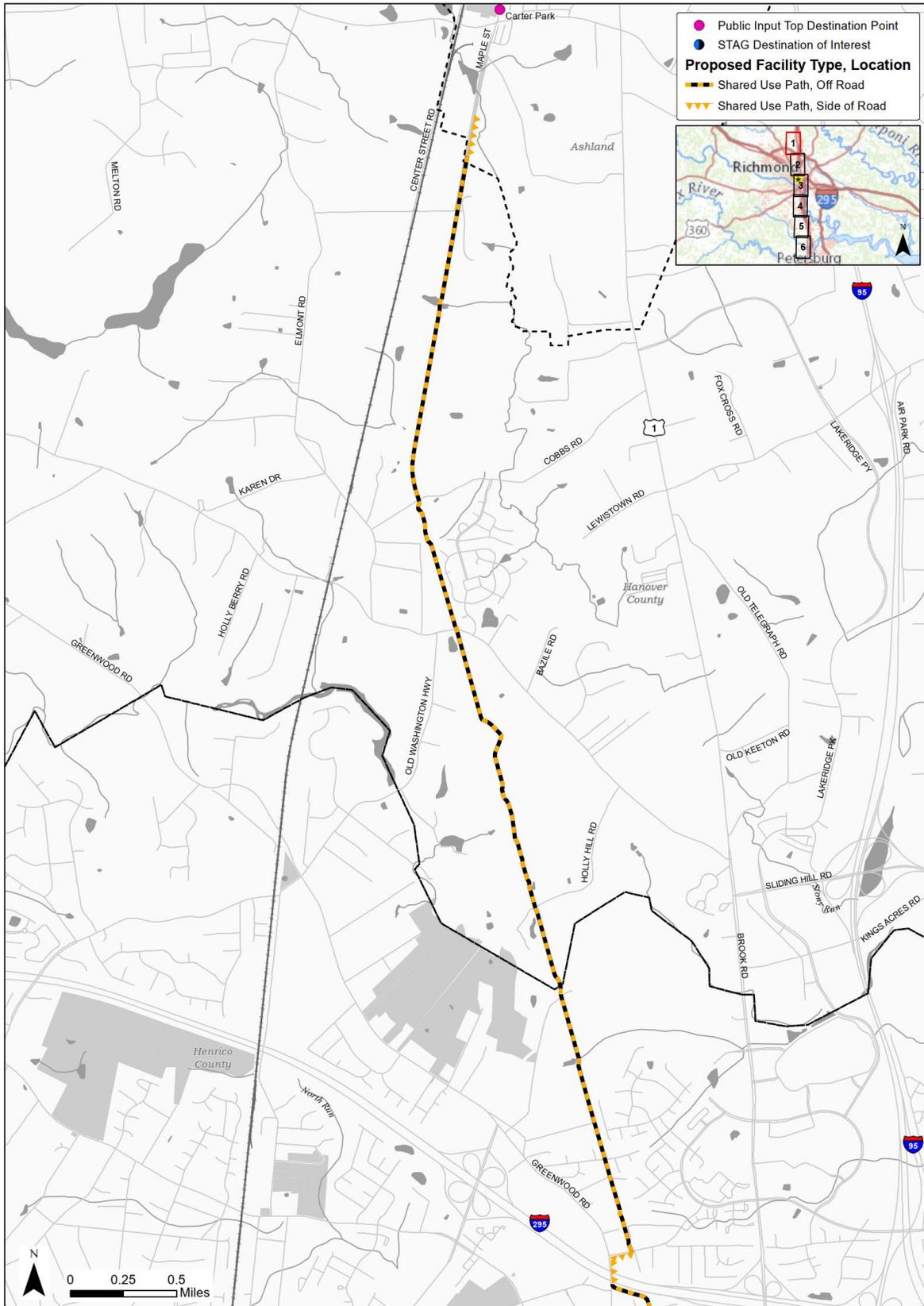


Figure 8-2. Preferred Corridor (2 of 6)

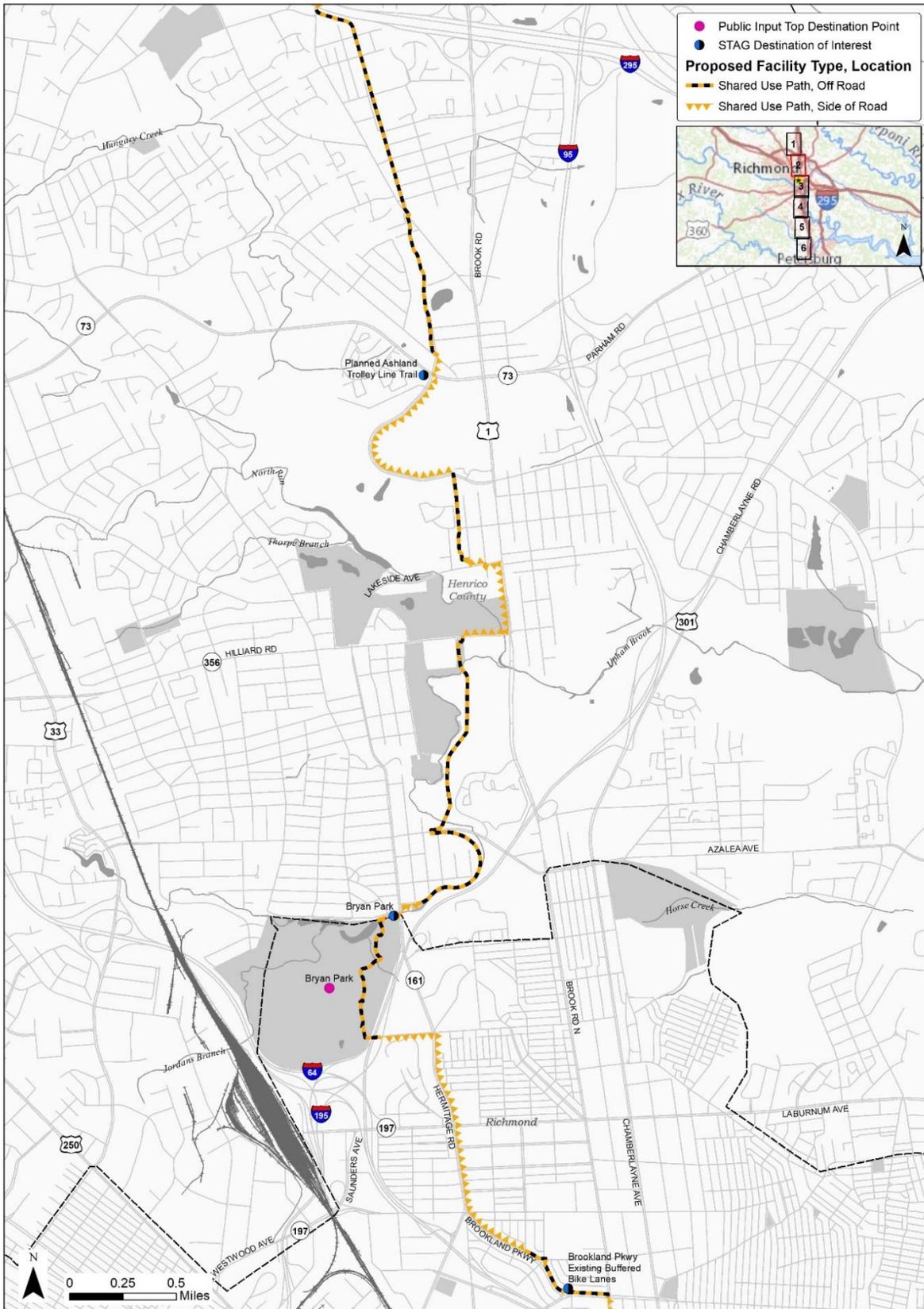


Figure 8-2. Preferred Corridor (3 of 6)

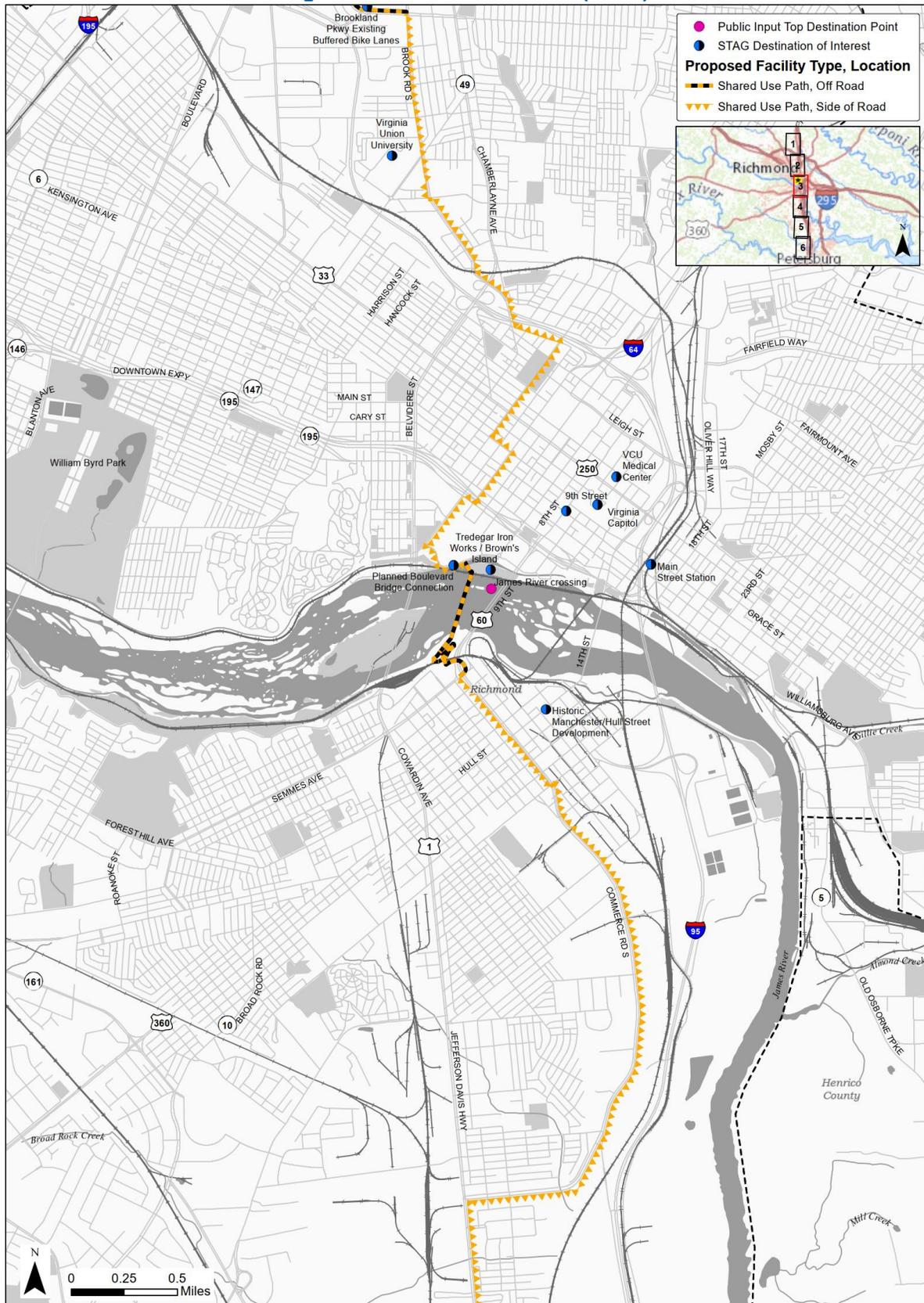


Figure 8-2. Preferred Corridor (4 of 6)

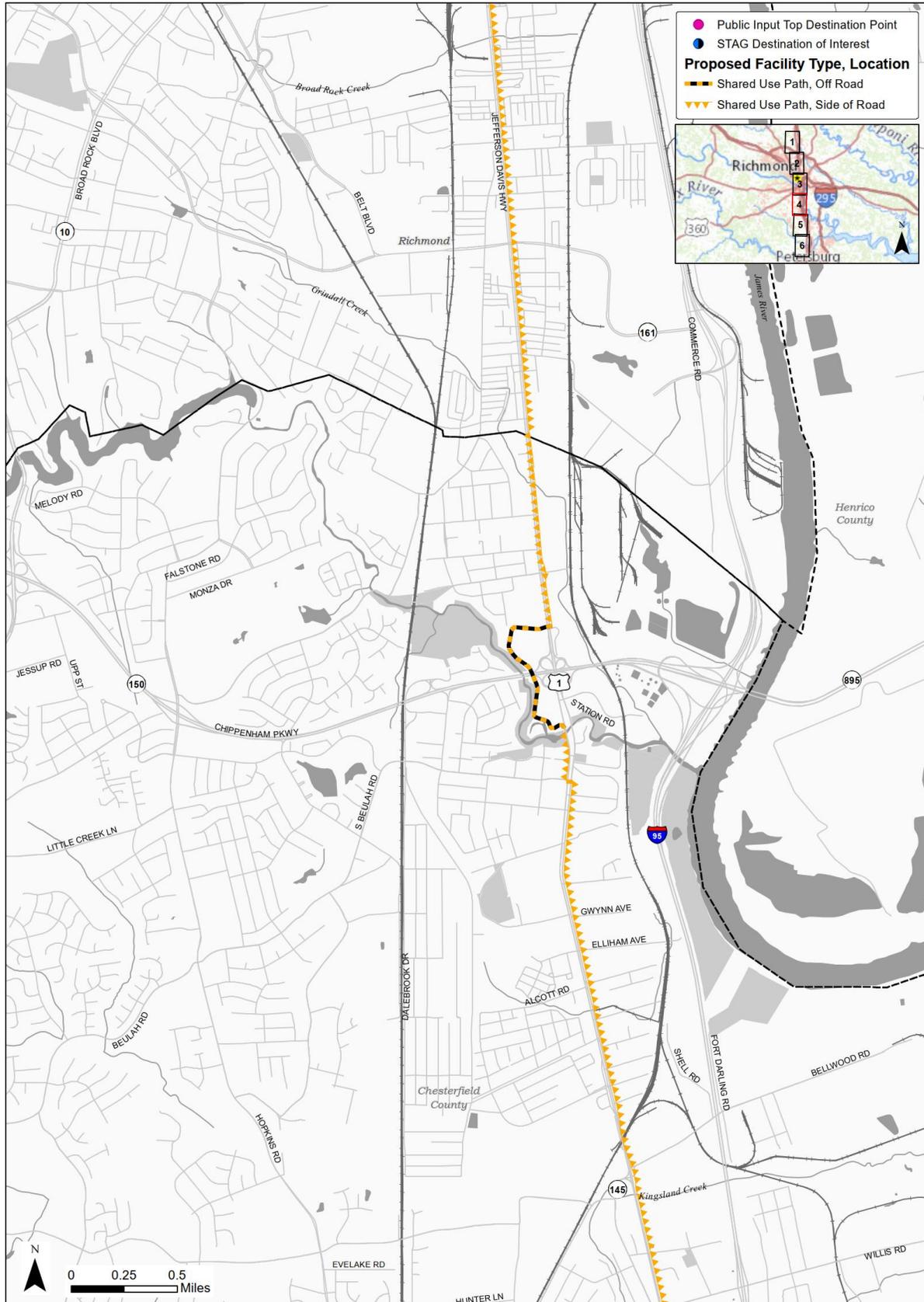


Figure 8-2. Preferred Corridor (5 of 6)

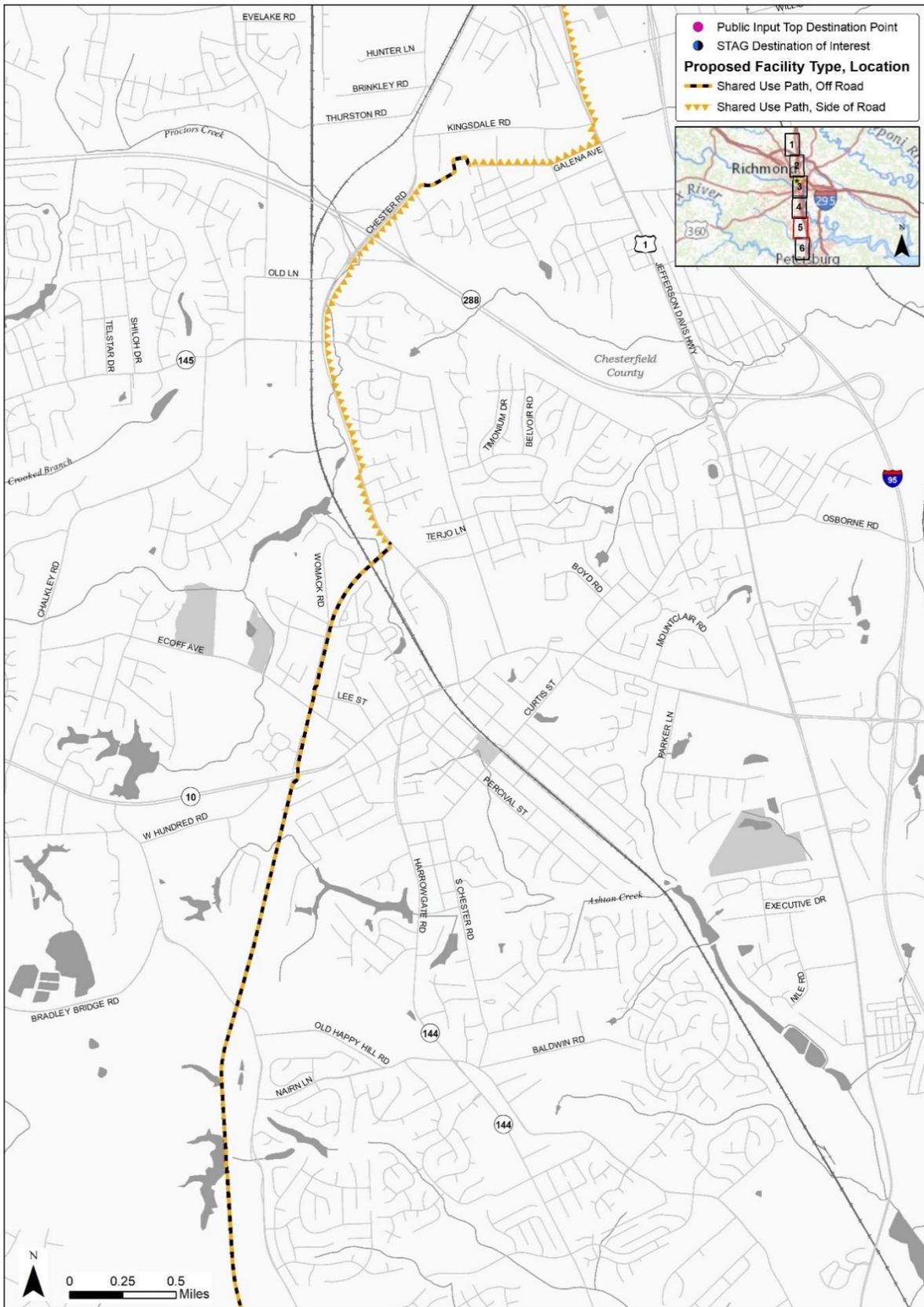
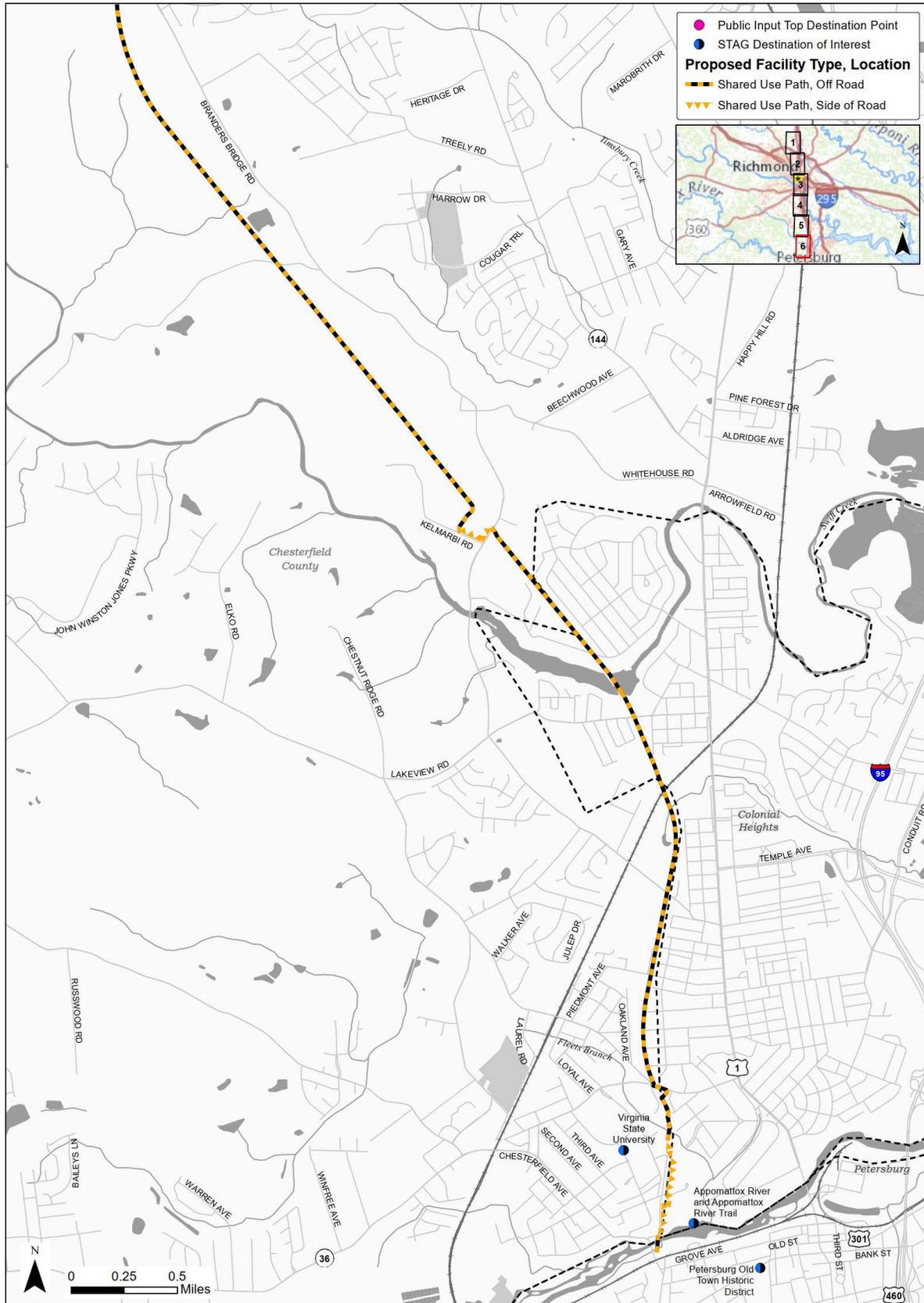
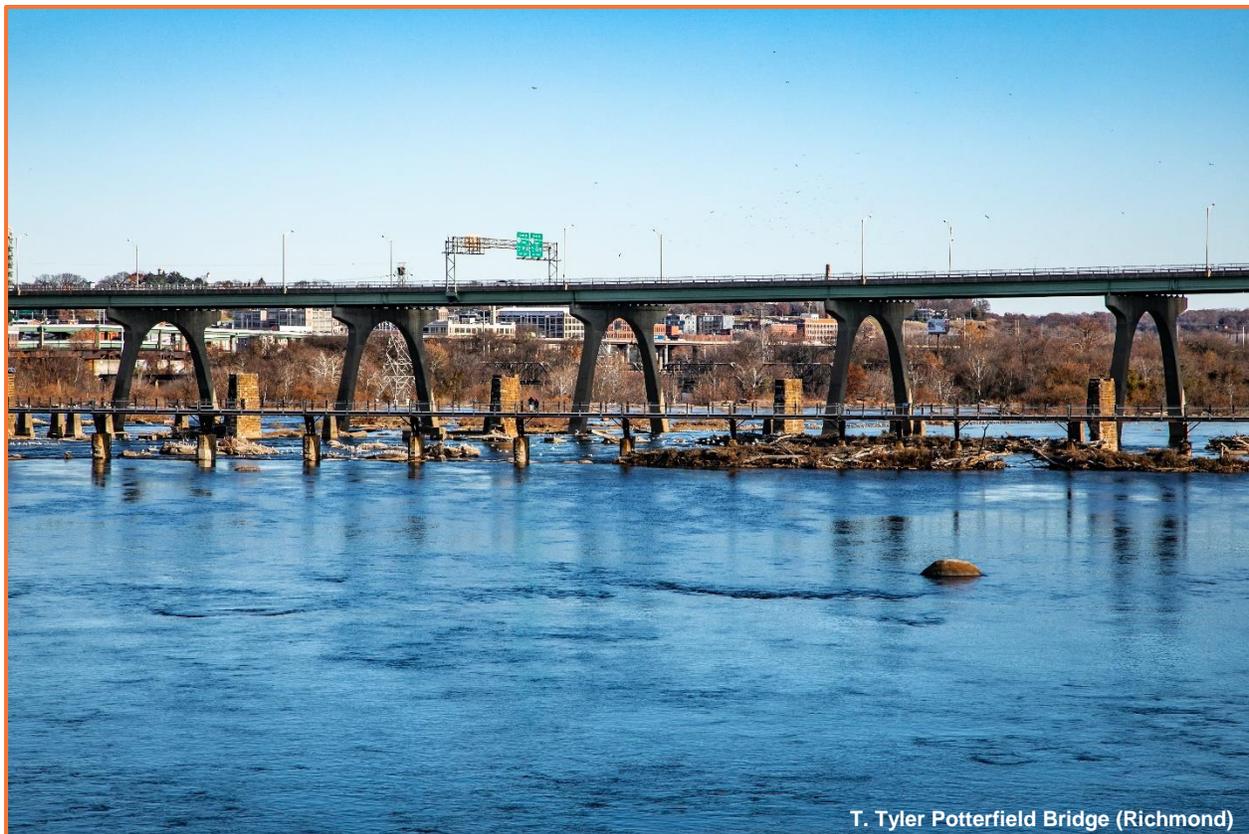


Figure 8-2. Preferred Corridor (6 of 6)



In order to identify a cost-effective solution that would satisfy the design requirements for an active transportation facility meeting the study's purpose and need, a number of crossings at the James River were considered. The preferred corridor initially incorporated a crossing of the James River over the existing Manchester Bridge. The preliminary cost estimate used in the initial detailed evaluation of a crossing over the Manchester Bridge included necessary improvements to the bridge structure in order to implement the recommended facility. A new crossing of the James River was not evaluated due to the cost implications.

In a meeting on August 23rd, 2019, the City of Richmond met with the study team to discuss potential crossings using existing bridges. During the study process, evaluation of existing James River crossings indicated that the Belle Isle Pedestrian Bridge (suspension bridge) and Boulevard Bridge pedestrian facility would not meet design standards, and that substantial modifications would be required in order for either crossing to be utilized as part of an Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 accessible bicycle and pedestrian facility; therefore, these existing James River crossings were not considered further. The T. Tyler Potterfield Bridge was considered as an alternate option. Utilization of the existing T. Tyler Potterfield Bridge crossing was included in the re-evaluation in order to find a new preferred corridor route through downtown City of Richmond. This approach will allow for shared use path installation, aligning with the guidance from STAG comments that the trail should be entirely shared use path.



T. Tyler Potterfield Bridge (Richmond)

Additional EAWG Considerations

The preferred corridor and associated segments will be subject to additional analyses as required by NEPA and related environmental statutes and regulations. In preparation of the necessary additional analysis, preliminary coordination occurred with the USACE regarding cultural resources and threatened, endangered and special status species. However, official documentation with the USACE regarding cultural resources and threatened, endangered and special status species has not taken place and will be coordinated, as applicable, during implementation of individual project segments.

Based on a preliminary analysis of the corridor options, cultural resources are not anticipated to be adversely impacted. Additionally, any potential use of parks or historic properties are anticipated to be considered by FHWA to be *de minimis* under Section 4(f)¹⁵. For individual projects along the preferred corridor that VDOT advances with federal transportation funds, it is anticipated that future identification, evaluation, and assessment of effects to cultural resources will be conducted in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106¹⁶.

Additionally, threatened, endangered and special status species were considered. A planning-level query of USFWS's Information for Planning and Consultation project planning tool identified the Northern Long-eared Bat, Sensitive Joint-vetch, and Swamp Pink as species that may potentially be located within the study area. Potential opportunities to mitigate impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species will be evaluated as individual projects along the preferred corridor advance. During project development, environmental permits will be obtained with close coordination among resource agencies. This coordination will assist with mitigation and minimization measures (e.g. time of year restrictions) to ensure protection of these species during project design.

¹⁵ Section 4(f) is implemented by FHWA under the USDOT Act of 1966 which provides for consideration of park and recreational lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites during transportation project development. A determination of *de minimis* impact can be made only if the project would not adversely affect the features, attributes, or activities of the Section 4(f) property.

¹⁶ For locally administered projects, the identification, evaluation and assessment of effects to cultural resources would be conducted in accordance with VDOT's Locally Administered Projects Manual (Chapter: 15.4 Cultural Resources): http://www.virginiadot.org/business/locally_administered_projects_manual.asp.