

# Intensive-level Survey and Determination of Eligibility Report

Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation  
Authority (SEPTA)

King of Prussia Rail



Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County, and  
Upper Darby Township, Delaware County, Pennsylvania  
ER# 2013-1006-091

Prepared for:  
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA)  
1234 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19107



Prepared By:

**AECOM**

625 West Ridge Pike, Suite E-100  
Conshohocken, Pennsylvania 19428

July 2016

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Transportation Authority (SEPTA)  
1234 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

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July 2016



**Historic Resource Report Summary Form**

ER#	2013-1006-091
DATE	4/17/2016

PROJECT CHECKLIST: Please fill-out this checklist and include it with your report submission, (including management summaries or draft reports). This form may be downloaded and expanded as needed, but please do not eliminate any fields.

- Title** Intensive-Level Survey and Determination of Eligibility Report
- Principal Investigator** Katherine Farnham (  MS,  PhD)
- Firm/Institution/Organization** AECOM
- Final Report Date** (Month/Day/Year) 04/14/2016
- Number of Pages** 46
- Reason for the Survey**  Grant Funded  Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Planning  State or Federal Compliance  
 Federal or State? (circle one)  
 Agency: FHWA
- Report Type** Intensive-Level Survey/Determination of Eligibility
- Number of Properties Surveyed** 11
- Area Surveyed** (hectares) 185.2
- How was Area Determined** Survey area included properties within 500' of the centerline of the project in Upper Merion Township and 100' of the centerline of the project in Upper Darby Township, based on the nature of the work proposed.
- Are any properties already in CRGIS database?** If so, attach a list of their locations and associated Keynumbers, or refer to a page on which reviewer can find this information: See Table 1, page 15
- Project Area County/Municipality** (list all)
 

County	Municipality
Delaware	Upper Darby Township
Montgomery	Upper Merion Township
- Quad** Lansdowne, Norristown, Valley Forge

## ABSTRACT

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), in cooperation with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), is preparing a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS), under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), that examines and evaluates a proposed extension of the existing Norristown High Speed Line (NHSL) to the King of Prussia area, known herein as the King of Prussia (KOP) Rail Project. Since this Project will be federally funded, it constitutes a “federal undertaking” and is subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as amended, and the implementing regulations, 36 CFR Part 800.

In 2015 and early 2016, AECOM undertook a survey of historic architectural resources in the vicinity of work proposed for the King of Prussia Rail Project in Upper Merion Township in Montgomery County, and Upper Darby Township in Delaware County. AECOM conducted the survey on behalf of SEPTA to comply with Section 106.

AECOM identified 24 historic properties within the Project’s area of potential effects (APE) that are more than 50 years of age as of 2016, including 14 which had been previously identified and 10 which were identified by the current survey effort. It was determined that 12 of the previously identified resources had been evaluated for the National Register of Historic Places and did not require further evaluation. Three of these resources, all of which are linear transportation resources, had been determined to be eligible for the National Register: the Pennsylvania Turnpike: Delaware River Extension (BHP Key No. 155879), the Philadelphia and Western Railway; Norristown High Speed Line (BHP Key No. 128825), and the Market Street Elevated Railway Historic District (BHP Key No. 105499).

Two previously identified resources in the APE did not have an eligibility determination. One of these was excluded from further survey, as it had been previously documented and evaluated under another BHP number. The other resource (Wills Building, BHP Key No. 097653) was evaluated along with the 10 newly identified resources.

For the 11 resources included in the present survey effort, all of which are located in Upper Merion Township, AECOM conducted field investigations, photographing each resource, compiling field notes, and assessing condition and integrity. Archival and online research was performed to prepare a background history of the Project areas and related resources. Evaluation of the National Register eligibility of the 11 resources followed completion of the documentary and field investigations. One resource, the American Baptist Churches U.S.A. Mission Center, is recommended eligible for the National Register, and the other 10 surveyed resources are recommended not eligible. This report presents the results and conclusions of the investigations and evaluation.

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), in cooperation with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), is preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) that examines and evaluates a proposed extension of the existing Norristown High Speed Line (NHSL) to the King of Prussia area, known herein as the King of Prussia (KOP) Rail Project. Since this Project will be federally funded, it constitutes a “federal undertaking” and is subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as amended, and the implementing regulations, 36 CFR Part 800. Under Section 106, the impacts of any undertaking on historic properties within the Area of Potential Effect of the undertaking must be evaluated. Historic properties are defined as “any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places” (NRHP).

This Intensive-Level Survey and Determination of Eligibility Report was prepared to support the DEIS under NEPA and is also an element of SEPTA’s consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA. This report examines and evaluates historic architectural resources within the proposed Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative of the King of Prussia Rail Project in Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County, and Upper Darby Township in Delaware County. The Area of Potential Effect was defined by SEPTA in a February 2016 report.

The purpose of this report is to document the results and conclusions of an intensive-level survey of historic architectural resources in the APE of the King of Prussia Rail Project (see Figures 1a-1b and 2a-2e). The survey methodology consisted of preliminary background research, including a search of the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) CRGIS database, as well as reconnaissance-level field survey to assess the presence of potential historic architectural resources in the APE. Based upon preliminary findings, no further survey work was recommended in Upper Darby Township. Intensive-level survey was recommended for 11 resources that appeared to be more than 50 years of age, based upon physical appearance and review of historic aerial views of the area, within the APE in Upper Merion Township. AECOM, the cultural resources consultant for the Project, surveyed these resources, documenting them with field notes and photography. Upon the completion of fieldwork, AECOM conducted background research to establish the history of the APE. This research effort entailed a search of the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission’s (PHMC) resource files, and a review of pertinent primary and secondary source materials at local repositories and online. Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Forms (eight abbreviated and three full forms) were completed to evaluate the National Register eligibility of these 11 potential historic resources in the APE of the proposed work.

Section 106 consultation was initiated with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) on March 27, 2013. An APE report was submitted to PHMC in January 2016, and the proposed APE was concurred with on March 7, 2016. On March 3,

2016, SEPTA, FTA, AECOM, and PHMC held a conference call to discuss historic architectural resources encountered in the APE and the level of documentation to be used for the eligibility assessment. As the Section 106 process for the Project continues, FTA and SEPTA will invite consulting parties to participate in the process and will seek input from those parties regarding resource eligibility for the NRHP, effects of the Project on those resources, and resolution of adverse effects, as warranted. Consulting parties' input will be documented and will be considered by FTA and SEPTA in the Section 106 decision-making process. A consulting parties meeting is planned for late summer 2016.



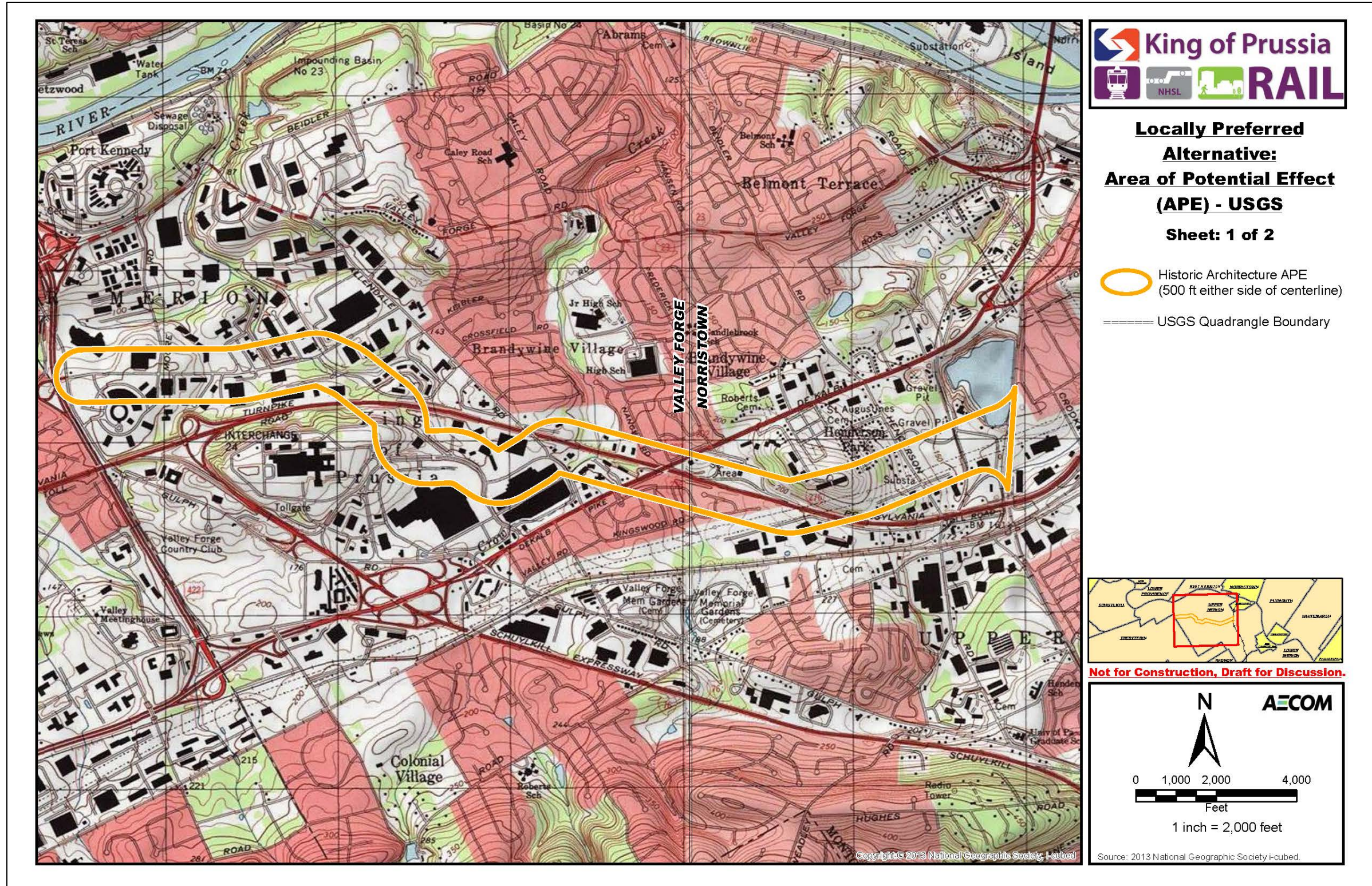


Figure 1a. Project Location Map, Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County.

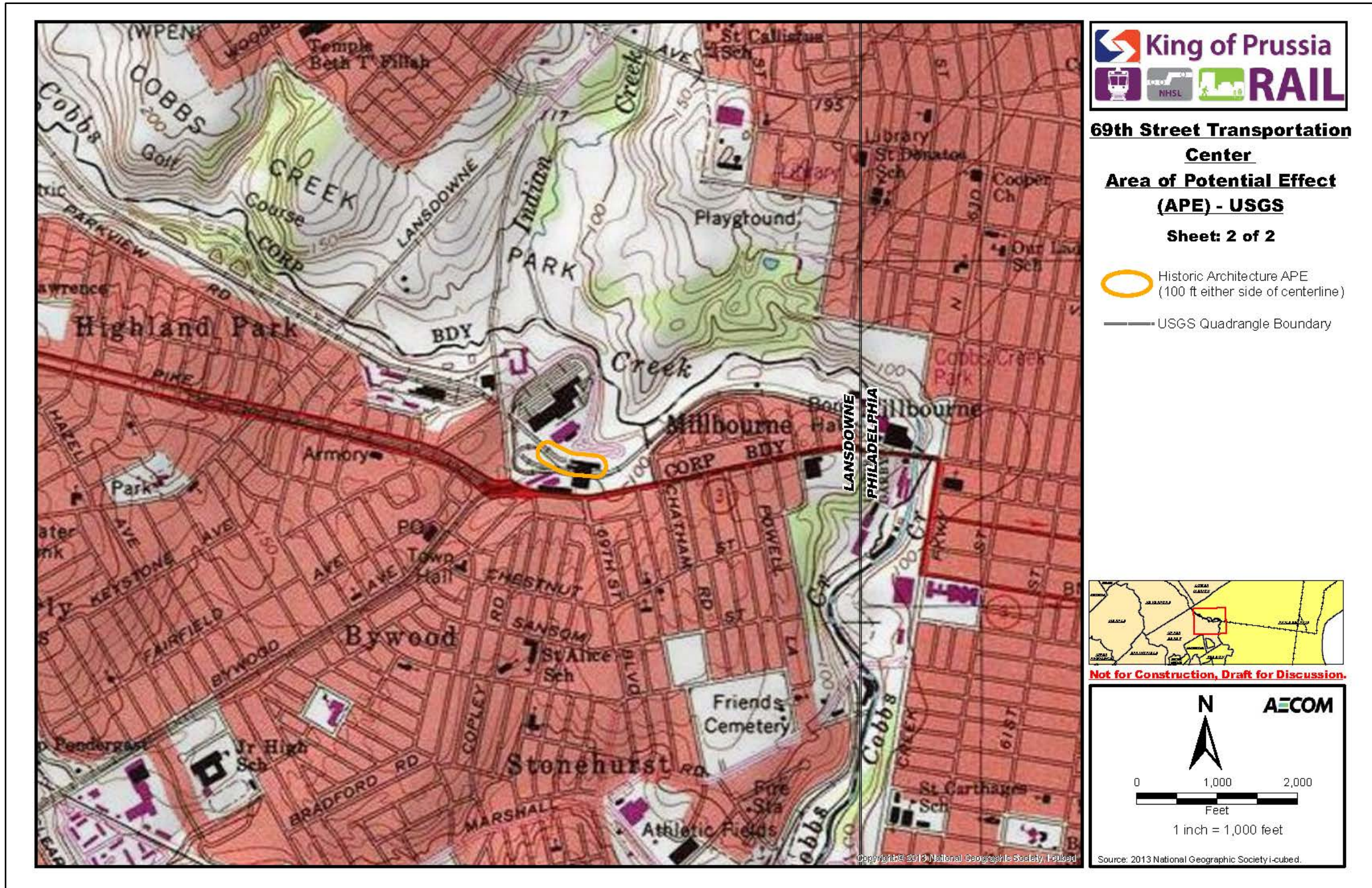
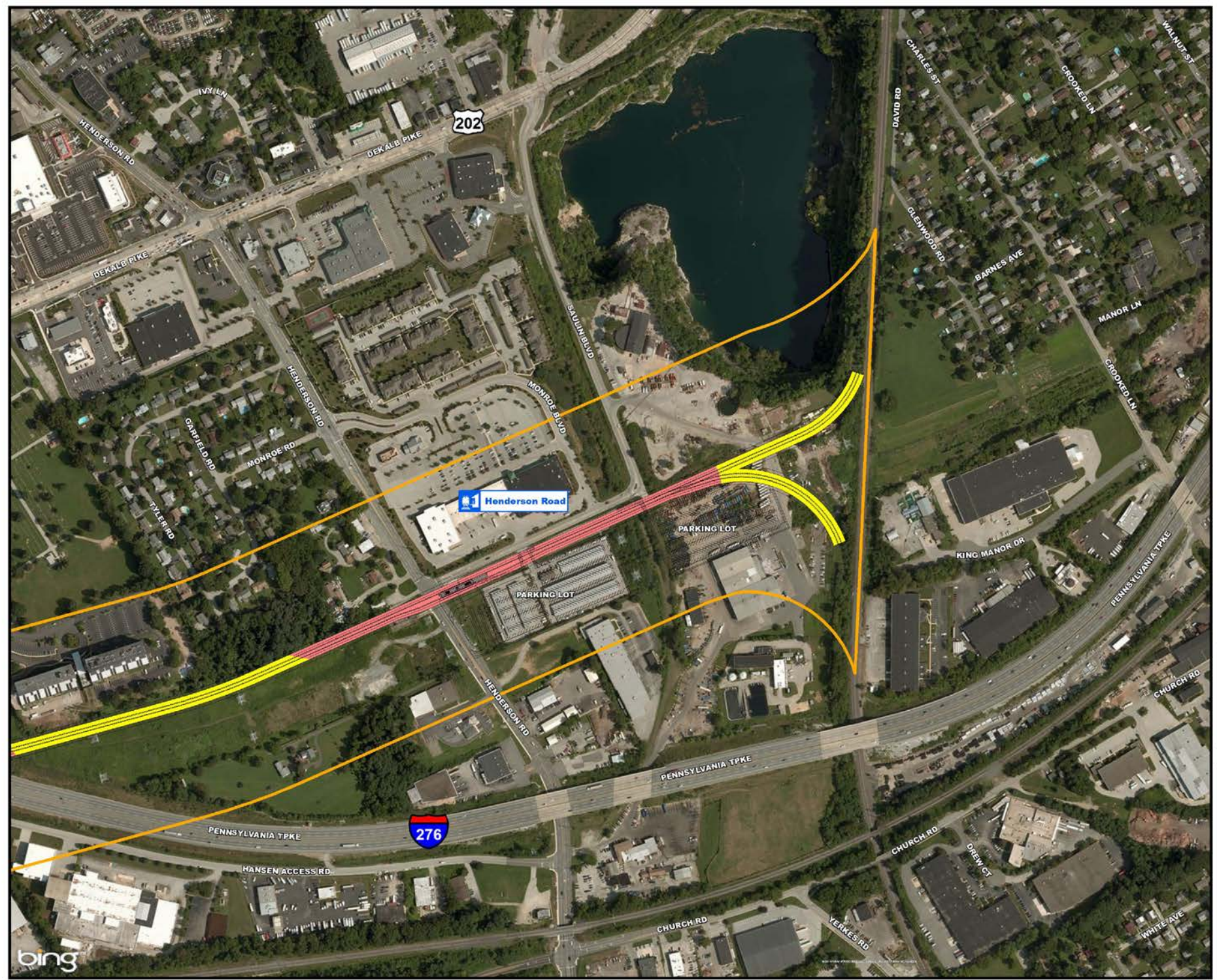


Figure 1b. Project Location Map, Upper Darby Township, Delaware County.

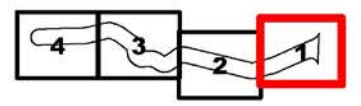


**Locally Preferred  
Alternative:  
Area of Potential Effect  
(APE)  
Sheet: 1 of 5**

Historic Architecture APE  
(500 ft either side of centerline)

- Permanent ROW
- Aerial Structure
  - At-Grade
  - Retained Fill
  - Platform

Station Name    Station Name



**Not for Construction, Draft for Discussion.**

**AECOM**

N

0    200    400    800

Feet

1 inch = 400 feet

Source: USGS Earthstar Geographics SIO, 2015 Microsoft Corp.

**Figure 2a.** Project Location Map, Area of Potential Effects (Sheet 1).



Figure 2b. Project Location Map, Area of Potential Effects (Sheet 2).

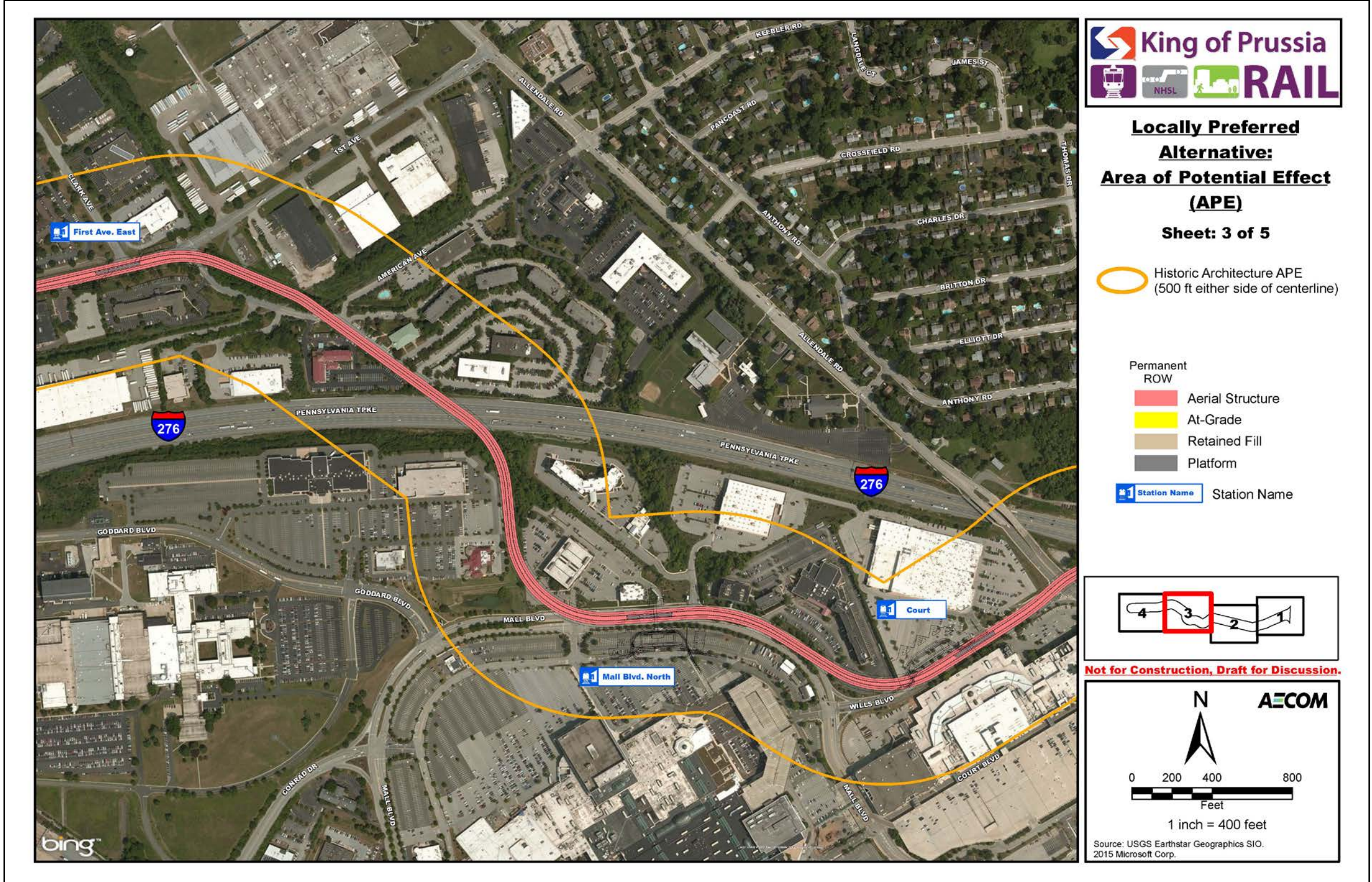







Figure 2c. Project Location Map, Area of Potential Effects (Sheet 3).

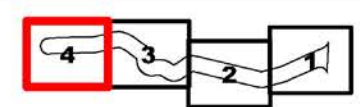


**Locally Preferred  
Alternative:  
Area of Potential Effect  
(APE)  
Sheet: 4 of 5**

 Historic Architecture APE  
(500 ft either side of centerline)


- Permanent ROW
-  Aerial Structure
  -  At-Grade
  -  Retained Fill
  -  Platform

 Station Name    Station Name



**Not for Construction, Draft for Discussion.**

**AECOM**

N  


0    200    400    800  
Feet

1 inch = 400 feet

Source: USGS Earthstar Geographics SIO,  
2015 Microsoft Corp.

**Figure 2d.** Project Location Map, Area of Potential Effects (Sheet 4).

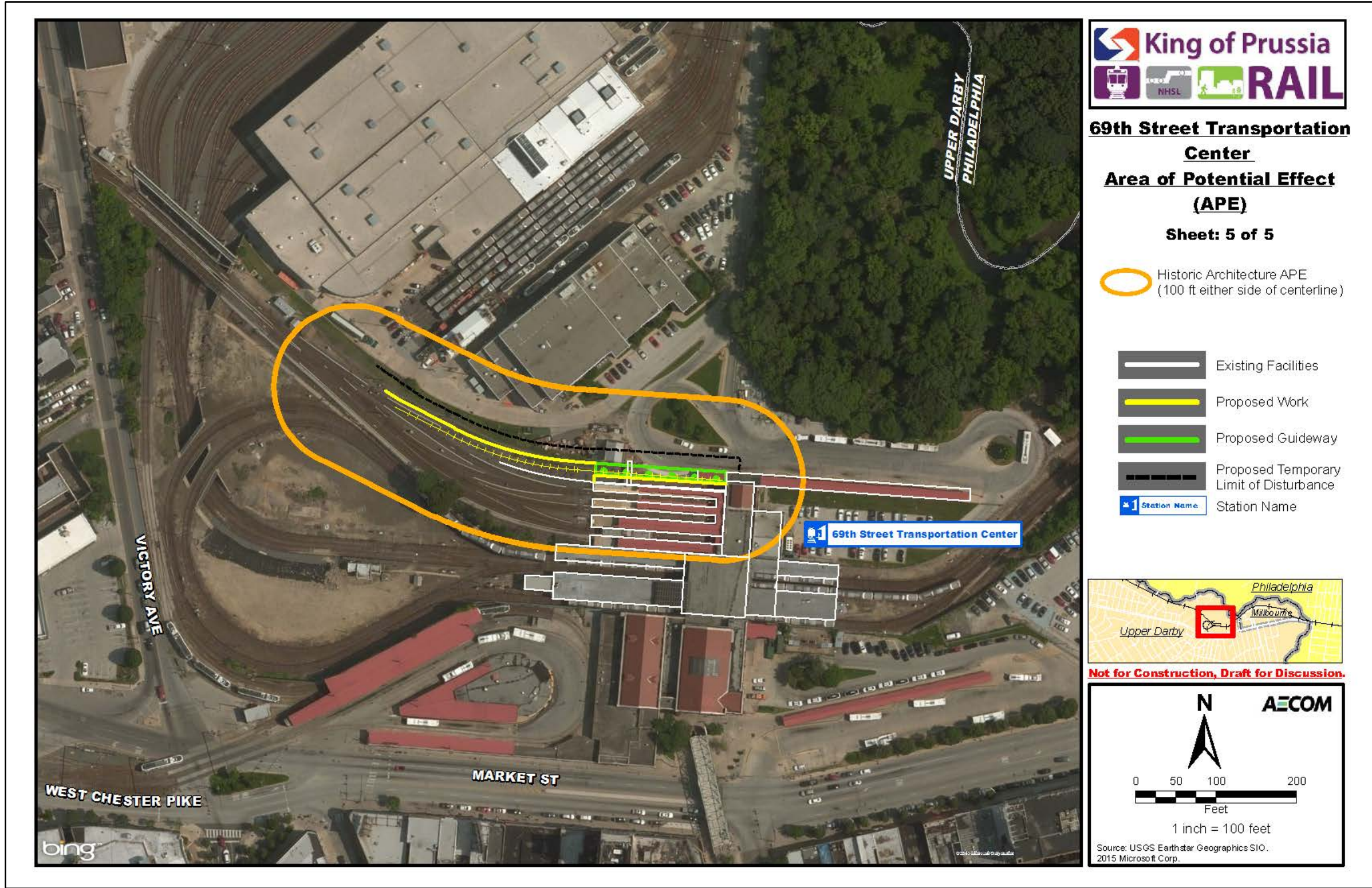


Figure 2e. Project Location Map, Area of Potential Effects (Sheet 5).

## **2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **2.1 King of Prussia Rail Extension**

The purpose of the proposed Project is to provide faster, more reliable, public transit service that:

- Offers improved transit connections to the King of Prussia-Valley Forge area from communities along the existing Norristown High Speed Line, Norristown and Philadelphia;
- Improves connectivity between major destinations within the King of Prussia-Valley Forge area; and
- Better serves existing transit riders and accommodates new transit patrons.

The Project need stems from deficiencies of current transit services in terms of long travel times, delays due to roadway congestion, required transfers leading to two or more seat trips, and destinations that are underserved, or currently not served, by public transit. These needs are strengthened by growing population and employment, concentrations of major commercial development in King of Prussia, and significant planned commercial, industrial, and residential development for the area.

The DEIS will document SEPTA's process for developing and evaluating alternatives to address the Project purpose, including a No Action Alternative, a preliminary Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative, and other alternatives. For purposes of Section 106 consultation, FTA is consulting with PHMC for the Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative.

#### **2.1.1 No Action Alternative**

The No Action Alternative assumes no improvements to the transportation system in the study area other than those contained in the financially constrained element of *Connections 2040 Plan for Greater Philadelphia*, the long-range transportation plan of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. The No Action Alternative projects consist primarily of planned capacity and operational improvements to regional and local study area roadways, particularly US 422 and the Pennsylvania Turnpike. In addition to these significant planned projects, the No Action Alternative consists of highway and transit networks, transit service levels, traffic volumes, and forecasted demographics for the horizon year 2040.

#### **2.1.2 Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative**

The Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative was identified as a result of a rigorous screening process during development of the DEIS. Ultimately, it was identified for a combination of reasons:



- Number of stations within Upper Merion Township-designated Mixed Use Transit-Oriented Development areas
- Service to areas with the most redevelopment potential
- Service to areas with ease of new zoning
- Access to jobs
- Least number of full residential acquisitions
- Least potential for visual effects
- Ridership
- Capital and operations and maintenance costs
- Broad acceptance by key stakeholders and political leaders

The Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative, known in the DEIS as PECO/TP-1<sup>st</sup> Ave., would provide a new railroad line extending roughly west from the existing Norristown High Speed Line (NHSL) and terminating near the intersection of First Avenue and North Gulph Road at the Valley Forge Casino Resort (VFCR) (Figure 1a).

The Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative would use portions of the PECO electric utility corridor and PA Turnpike as its trunk, passing behind (to the north of) the KOP Mall, turn north to use a portion of the former industrial track right-of-way before turning west along First Avenue as its branch and ending near the intersection of First Avenue and North Gulph Road near the VFCR.

As part of the Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative, two tracks would be provided on primarily elevated guideway. However, the tracks would be at grade in the turnoffs adjacent to the existing NHSL and on a hilltop area within the PECO corridor a short distance west of Henderson Road. The at-grade and elevated guideway sections are shown in Figures 2a-2d. The route includes five stations, including Henderson Road, the Court, Mall Boulevard North, First Avenue East, and the terminal station 1<sup>st</sup> & Moore. The Henderson Road and 1<sup>st</sup> & Moore stations would include park-and-ride facilities, currently configured as a surface lot at the Henderson Road station and a multi-story garage structure at 1<sup>st</sup> & Moore.

As the elevated guideway approaches the western terminal station, 1<sup>st</sup> & Moore, the two-track guideway structure would widen from approximately 34 feet to a three-track cross-section approximately 50 feet wide. In the widened area, the third track would provide SEPTA with the necessary track capacity for efficient train operations at the terminal station and along the Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative alignment.

In the Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative, extending NHSL service into King of Prussia would require SEPTA to add one new station track at SEPTA's 69th Street Transportation Center in Upper Darby Township, Delaware County (Figures 1b and 2e). The new track would be aligned along the north side of the existing NHSL tracks, stopping at the existing building along the north side of the existing northern platform. The ballast embankment supporting the existing NHSL tracks would be widened to the north to accommodate the new track. Adjacent to the northern platform, the new track would be supported on an elevated guideway structure. The purpose of using structure

rather than continuing the embankment up to the building is to avoid impacting the existing bus stop and turnaround area underneath and adjacent to the new track.

The northern platform would be widened to serve the new track. As with the existing NHSL service, the new track and widened platform would be designed to enable level passenger boarding. The existing windbreak wall along the northern edge of the existing platform would be removed and rebuilt along the northern edge of the proposed guideway structure. Elements to be removed include a short section of existing turnout track along the proposed alignment as well as an existing stairway used by passengers exiting from the north platform and by SEPTA personnel. The existing track embankment retaining wall would be relocated to the north edge of the new embankment and the existing track turnout would be replaced. Other portions of the 69th Street Transportation Center would not be affected or changed by the proposed Project.

## **2.2 Area of Potential Effects**

The APE for historic architectural resources in Upper Merion Township extends 500 feet on either side of the centerline of the proposed route between the existing NHSL and the western terminus on First Avenue (Figures 1a and 2a-2d). This boundary encompasses all proposed infrastructure, including guideways, bridges, stations, park-ride facilities, and access roads.

The APE for historic architectural resources at the 69th Street Transportation Center in Upper Darby Township extends 100 feet from either side of the centerline of the proposed additional track section.

The historic architecture APE for the Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative was determined in relation to the character of the proposed work. The Upper Merion Township section of the Project would involve constructing all-new infrastructure, including stations and elevated guideways. The new line, for the most part, does not follow an existing rail corridor and would create a highly visible change in the landscape. As such, an APE extending 500 feet on either side of the centerline of the route was deemed appropriate. This APE encompasses the area within which the Project may cause changes in the character or use of standing resources listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The APE also includes resources from which the Project may be visible and/or create a visual impact to the integrity of a listed or eligible resource.

The eastern edge of the APE in Upper Merion Township follows the alignment of the existing NHSL. The two proposed Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative turnoffs would run at grade to the west of the NHSL for approximately 500 feet. It is anticipated that there would be no visual impacts on properties to the east of the NHSL from the Project, due to the at-grade turnoffs being screened from view by the NHSL embankment and surrounding vegetation.

The APE for the 69th Street Transportation Center improvements was based upon the relatively low profile of the work proposed (Figures 1b and 2e). The Project area is an existing rail corridor and the undertaking consists of a short additional track within that corridor, as well as related station improvements. Due to topography and the height/density of existing buildings in proximity to the track area to be improved, the proposed improvements have limited or no visibility from the surrounding area. An APE of 100 feet was thus deemed appropriate.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Background Research**

This Project commenced with background research and a reconnaissance survey designed to document the general appearance, condition, and integrity of resources 50 years or older within the Upper Merion Township portion of the Project area. Background research was conducted on May 12, 2015 using the PHMC's online cultural resources database, the Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS), to determine if there are cultural resources in the Project area that are listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP. Information was also gathered on resources that were inventoried and documented in PHMC's files, but may not have been evaluated for NRHP eligibility. In addition to CRGIS, various digital archives were also consulted to gather background information (such as historic maps and atlases, aerial photographs, and local and regional histories) that would inform the study. This search included the NRHP website, JSTOR, the Library of Congress, and Internet Archive, as well as digital cartographic archives maintained by the USDA and USGS. AECOM submitted a PASS, HRS, and Archaeological Survey Report Data Request to the PHMC on November 25, 2014 and the requested data was made available on December 16, 2014.

In preparation for the historic architectural field reconnaissance, architectural historians reviewed current and historic aerials as well as Montgomery County property records to determine the location of historic architectural resources within the Project area. By virtue of their age, any building, structure, object, or district over 50 years of age, has the potential to be eligible for listing in the NRHP. This information was used to guide the field reconnaissance, to understand the historic context and built environment of the Project area, and to develop the limits of the study area.

The operational requirement of additional track and platform work at the 69<sup>th</sup> Street Transportation Center necessitated additional background research in November 2015 to determine whether there are previously-documented cultural resources in the vicinity of the Transportation Center. Field reconnaissance of the Transportation Center Project area and surrounding neighborhood was conducted to identify previously undocumented historic architectural resources. Although three previously documented resources were present adjacent to the Project APE, no new resources were identified, and no further survey work was conducted in Upper Darby Township.

### **3.2 Previously Identified Historic Resources**

Background research conducted online through the CRGIS resulted in a total of 14 previously-identified architectural resources within the Upper Merion Township and Upper Darby Township APEs. Table 1 lists the previously identified resources and their locations (the Philadelphia and Western Railway is listed under both Upper Merion and Upper Darby). Of those resources, three have been previously determined eligible for listing in the NRHP; all of these are linear transportation-related resources. A total of nine resources have been previously determined by the SHPO to be not eligible for listing in the NRHP.

One previously identified resource within the APE, the Philadelphia Transit Co. Building in Upper Darby Township (BHP Key No. 079220), is not individually eligible, but is a contributing resource for two eligible historic districts (Market Street Elevated Railway Historic District and 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal Square Shopping District). The Philadelphia Transit Co. Building is within the boundaries of the Market Street Elevated Railway Historic District, but is excluded from the boundaries of the 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal Square Shopping District, which lies south of Market Street/West Chester Pike, adjacent to the Project area but outside the APE.

Two resources have been surveyed in the past, but the SHPO had insufficient information to make an eligibility determination (shown as “undetermined” in the table). Figures 3a and 3b show the locations of the previously-identified architectural resources in relationship to the Project APE for the Recommended Locally Preferred Alternative.

AECOM prepared an APE Report for the Upper Merion Township and Upper Darby Township Project areas and submitted this report to PHMC in February 2016.

Based on reconnaissance results, AECOM prepared recommendations for resources to be surveyed in Upper Merion Township and the level of documentation required for each. Following consultation between AECOM staff, SEPTA, FTA, and PHMC (see Appendix C) about these recommendations, field survey was conducted in early March 2016 to document 10 newly identified resources and one previously identified resource (Wills Building, BHP Key No. 097653) that had no eligibility determination. One additional previously identified resource (Philadelphia and Reading Railroad) is mapped in CRGIS within the Project area, but has not been previously evaluated. Research determined that this resource, documented in CRGIS as an aggregate file, was the same as the Chester Valley Railroad (BHP Key No. 140474), which had previously been evaluated and determined not eligible. As this resource at present is a vacant right of way over the former railbed, PHMC agreed that no further investigation or survey was necessary

**Table 1: Previously Identified Architectural Resources in the Project APE**

<b>BHP KEY NO.</b>	<b>RESOURCE NAME</b>	<b>NRHP STATUS</b>	<b>NRHP STATUS DATE</b>
<b>Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County</b>			
155879	Pennsylvania Turnpike: Delaware River Extension	Eligible	4/7/2005
128825	Philadelphia and Western Railway; Norristown High Speed Line	Eligible	6/21/2004
155708	Philadelphia and Reading Railroad (aggregate file)	Undetermined	N/A
097653	Wills Building	Undetermined	N/A
201132	Allendale Corporation	Not Eligible	12/18/2014
140474	Chester Valley Railroad	Not Eligible	3/10/2011
136874	DeKalb Pike Bridge (South of Turnpike)	Not Eligible	3/5/2007
126333	Henderson Park Historic District	Not Eligible	10/30/2003
126329	Holstein House	Not Eligible	10/30/2003
126337	Quick Service Inc.	Not Eligible	10/30/2003
125158	Valley Forge Homes	Not Eligible	6/13/2003
125162	William Carver Farmhouse	Not Eligible	6/13/2003
<b>Upper Darby Township, Delaware County</b>			
128825	Philadelphia and Western Railway; Norristown High Speed Line	Eligible	6/21/2004
105499	Market Street Elevated Railway Historic District	Eligible	8/1/1996
079220	Philadelphia Transit Co. Building	Not Eligible but contributes to two eligible districts: BHP Key No. 105499 (Market Street Elevated Railway Historic District) and BHP Key No. 156448 (69 <sup>th</sup> Street Terminal Square Shopping District)	1/11/2013

After completion of the field survey, background research was conducted for both the Upper Merion Township and Upper Darby Township Project areas to gain an understanding of the Project area's historical and architectural development, and how the surveyed resources related to local history. Property-specific research was performed for three resources that were documented with full Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey

Forms. Abbreviated HRSF forms were prepared for the remaining resources. Research was conducted at numerous repositories including the Montgomery County Recorder of Deeds in Norristown, the Montgomery County Historical Society in Norristown, Temple University Library in Philadelphia, and Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, NJ. Online sources yielded archived news articles, publications, and other information, as well as aerial and bird's-eye views.

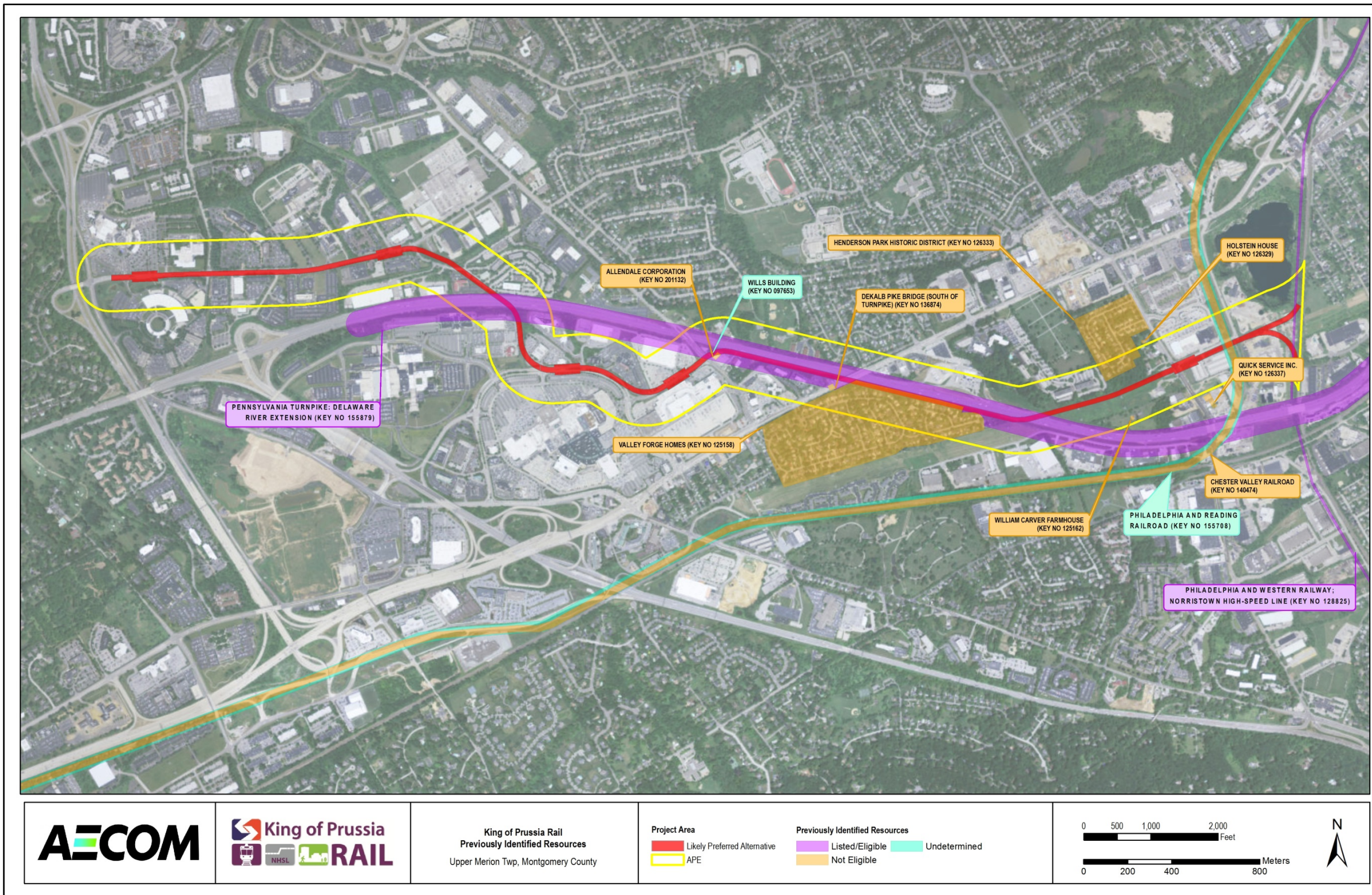
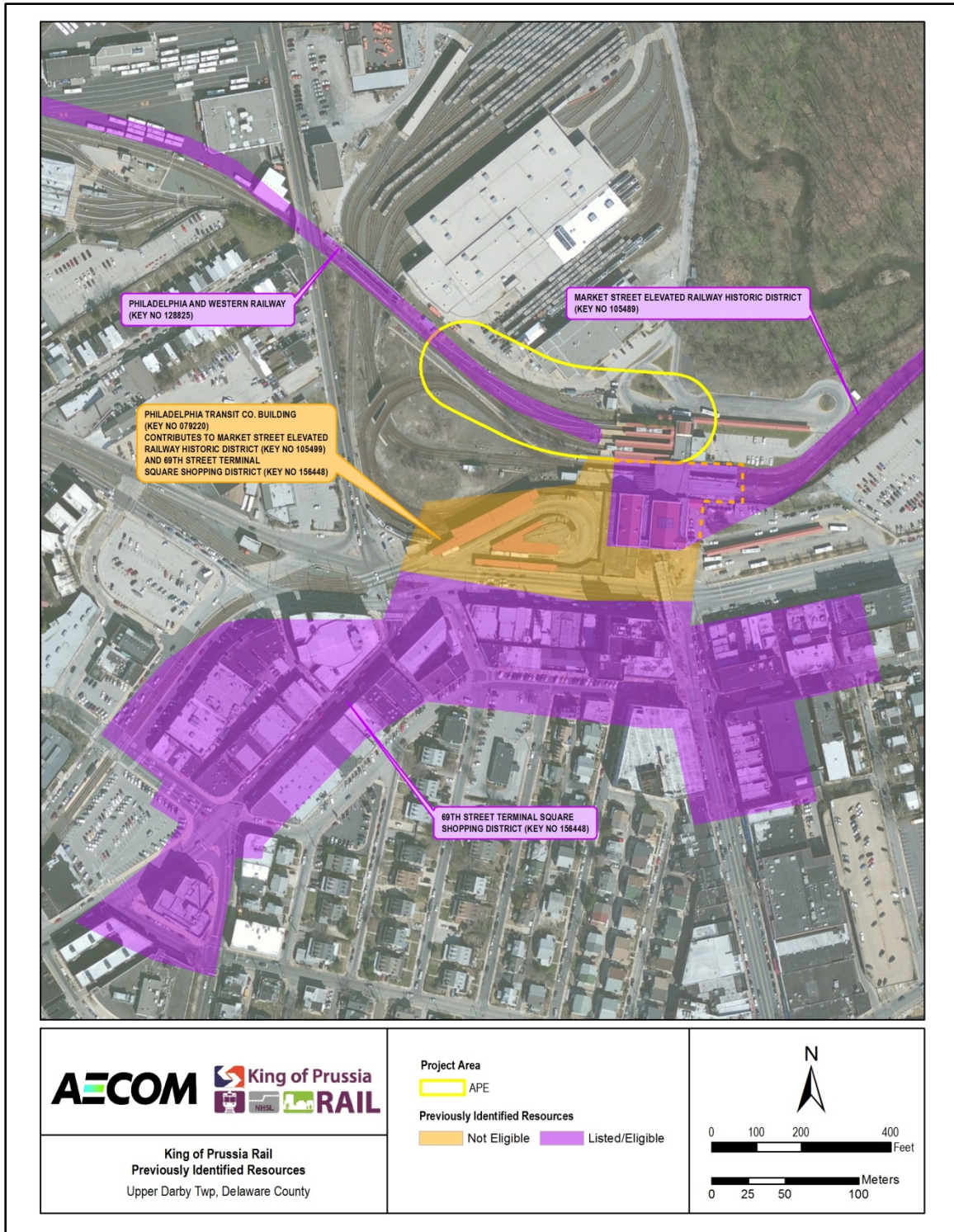


Figure 3a. Previously identified architectural resources in the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the King of Prussia Rail Project, Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County



**Figure 3b.** Previously identified architectural resources in the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the King of Prussia Rail Project, Upper Darby Township, Delaware County.



## **4.0 HISTORIC CONTEXT**

For purposes of this report, the King of Prussia Rail Project has two discontinuous Project areas, with one in Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County, and the other in Upper Darby Township, Delaware County. Separate historic context statements were prepared for the two Project areas.

### **4.1 Upper Merion Township**

Montgomery County (part of Philadelphia County until September 10, 1784) saw its first permanent European settlement in 1682 when forty Welsh Quakers settled along the Schuylkill River near Libertyville (Narberth/Penn Valley) in Lower Merion Township. Full right and title to the land was subsequently secured by William Penn through a series of purchases carried out between 1683 and 1697. To support their hopes for a self-governing, Welsh-language settlement, William Penn formally established the Welsh Tract in 1687 at the urging of John Roberts and other Welsh Quakers. It encompassed 40,000 acres “north of Philadelphia and west of the Schuylkill [River]” that stretched across portions of Delaware, Chester, and Montgomery Counties. Owing to continued Welsh Quaker immigration, supplemented by smaller numbers of Anglicans, Baptists, and Presbyterians in addition to English and German settlers, most of the Welsh Tract was occupied by the early eighteenth century. In 1695, Welsh settlers erected the county’s first house of worship in Lower Merion Township, a log structure that served as a Friends Meetinghouse until it was replaced by a stone structure in 1713 (Bean 1884: 1, 139-140; Hunsicker 1923: 25; Magda 1998).

Between 1655 and 1675, Swedes began moving up the Schuylkill River away from their new Dutch and later English rulers. In 1712 a number of Swedish settlers including members of the prominent and extensive Rambo family removed from Chester Upland and settled on fertile land along the Schuylkill River in Upper Merion Township. The area was known variously as “Mattssong,” “Matzong,” or “Matson.” On Gunner Rambo’s property, they established Christ Church in 1735. Initially nine families were associated with the small Lutheran church at Mattssong. In 1760, the original log structure of the church was replaced with a more substantial stone structure that was subsequently incorporated “into the present house of worship” in 1837. As late as the 1870s, members of the Rambo family were still conspicuous in eastern Upper Merion Township, operating quarries and limekilns. In the nineteenth century the Swedish name for the area survived as Matsunk and was applied alternately to Swedesburg, where Christ Church is located, or Swedeland (est. 1846) on Matsunk Creek. (Smith and Wistar 1848; Buck 1859: 24-25; Gillette 1860; Hopkins 1871; USGS 1896, 1952a, 1952b; Hunsicker 1923: 340; Eastwick 1960: 11-13).

Gradual settlement of the area continued into the eighteenth century; the Rees family settled at King of Prussia (Reesville) in 1719, operating a tavern there (The King of Prussia Inn) after 1769; by 1724 European settlers had erected numerous “fishing dams, wears [sic], and kettles” across the Schuylkill River in sufficient numbers to concern older downriver communities; the county’s first school was erected east of King of

Prussia in 1740; and a grist mill was in operation south of Bird-in-Hand (Gulph Mills) by 1747 (Bean 1884: 120, 1118-1120).

Upper Merion Township saw some limited involvement in the American Revolution. When the campaign of 1777 closed and General Howe withdrew his troops, Washington broke camp at Whitemarsh and marched his forces west across the Schuylkill River at Swede's and Matson's fords on improvised bridges. Ammunition was stored at the Old Gulph Mill grist mill, and Washington's troops remained in southeastern Upper Merion Township from December 12-19, 1777 before moving on to their winter camp at Valley Forge (Develin 1922:31; Hunsicker 1923: 50-52).

By the 1780s, Upper Merion Township supported several grist mills and sawmills as well as a fulling mill, three taverns, and numerous farms, but at the county-level population grew relatively slowly throughout the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1790 Montgomery County had 22,918 inhabitants (approximately five percent of Pennsylvania's total population); in 1850, the population reached 58,291 (approximately three percent of the state total), and in 1890, it stood at 123,290 (two percent of the state total). During the same period, the slave population of the county declined from a high of 113 in 1790 to just one in 1830 (Bean 1884: 1120-1121; University of Virginia Library 2007).

Upper Merion Township— supported by a diversified economy of agriculture, extractive industries, and industrial production—enjoyed steady demographic and economic growth during the nineteenth century. In 1832 the township boasted five grist mills, three saw mills, one stone mill, and three cotton factories, as well as three taverns: the Swedes Ford, the Bird in Hand, and the King of Prussia. Local farmers produced grains, potatoes, wool, tobacco, milk, and butter. Limestone, marble, and iron mining and quarrying, lime burning, iron smelting (at Port Kennedy and Bridgeport) and (later) paper production became the township's major economic activities during the nineteenth century. Undoubtedly, the opening of the Schuylkill Transportation Company Canal connecting the Susquehanna and Schuylkill Rivers in 1827 and the Chester Valley (est. 1853) and Philadelphia and Reading Railroads (est. ca.1839-1842) with stations at Henderson, Port Kennedy, and Swedeland encouraged economic development in the township (Gordon 1833: 292, 306; Smith & Wistar 1848; Hopkins 1871; Hunsicker 1923: 110-112, 157, 283-285).

In contrast to the crossroads communities, riverside villages, and dispersed farmsteads established in the eighteenth century, during the nineteenth century new densely occupied urbanizing industrial communities sprang up, typically at the intersections of the Schuylkill River, the Schuylkill Transportation Company Canal, and the railroad. Port Kennedy, supported by lime burning and iron production, was established ca. 1828. Bridgeport Borough (incorporated in 1851) was home of the Minerva [Textile] Mill (1854) “among the largest plants in Pennsylvania,” and by 1883 it boasted Isaac Smith's cotton and woolen mill, several paper mills, a creamery, a lumber yard, a coal yard, two flouring mills, seventeen stores, two restaurants, and four hotels (Hunsicker 1923: 356).

Still, in the 1870s, with the exception of the villages of King of Prussia and Shainline, much of the Project area remained rural and sparsely occupied (Figure 4). King of Prussia boasted several residences, a hotel, a store, a post office, a tannery, a woolen mill, and a marble quarry. Shainline included a few residences, limestone quarries, and limekilns clustered near the intersection of the Chester Valley Railroad and the State Road between King of Prussia and Bridgeport. This distribution of settlement (i.e., scattered residences with modest nucleation at King of Prussia and Shainline) persisted into the late 1930s, as seen in Figure 5 (Hopkins 1871; USGS 1896; USDA 1937a, 1937b).

Between 1900 and 1920 Montgomery County's population grew steadily from 138,995 to 199,310 before jumping to 265,804 in 1930, an increase of more than thirty percent. In 1920, industrial businesses in the area (concentrated in Bridgeport) employed over 1,500 workers, mostly in textile and iron manufacturing. The borough's industries included "iron, cotton, silk, paper, yarns, pipes and tubing, crushed stone, felt goods and meat packing" (Hunsicker 1923:284-285, 356; University of Virginia Library 2007).

In the two decades before 1950 the population of Upper Merion Township grew very slowly and the area remained largely rural (Figure 5). Adding only twenty-five new residents annually the township's population increased from 5,889 residents in 1930 to 6,404 at midcentury (Bureau of the Census 1932:737; Bureau of the Census 1957). Apart from Bridgeport Borough and neighboring Swedesburg on the Schuylkill River and modest crossroads villages at Port Kennedy, King of Prussia, Swedeland, and Gulf Mills, the area consisted primarily of agricultural properties, woodlots, and rural industries, like lime-burning, brick making, and quarrying. Little suburban commercial or residential development occurred in the township before the 1950s, the exception being the Kings Manor residential development built by the DeKalb Realty Company outside Bridgeport in 1916 on the Philadelphia and Western Railroad line (Fegley 1935:98-100; USGS 1896, 1952a, 1952b). Nevertheless, transformative events were already underway that would make new types of suburban communities possible and render bucolic Upper Merion Township unrecognizable.

By the 1950s, the postwar suburban housing boom, spurred by outmigration from Philadelphia (which began losing population between 1950 and 1960), and the extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike from Valley Forge to the Delaware River, began to erode the rural character of the eastern half of the Project area. In the 1950s, extensive suburban residential housing development (e.g., the Valley Forge Homes and Brandywine Village) began springing up between King of Prussia and Bridgeport. Soon thereafter the completion of the King of Prussia Mall in 1963 accelerated the suburbanization of the western half of Upper Merion Township (USGS 1952a, 1952b; USDA 1958a, 1958b; Dakelman & Schorr 2004: 103-104; University of Virginia Library 2007).

The most significant development of the early twentieth century was the rapidly increasing use of automobiles for personal and public transportation. Faced with large numbers of automobiles on outdated roads and rapidly worsening traffic conditions, federal, state, and local governments passed legislation and allocated funds to modernize and extend America's roads and highways—of national importance were the Federal

Highway Act of 1921 and the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 (Ames 2003; Federal Highway Administration 2015; Independence Hall Association 2014). The completion of the Pennsylvania Turnpike from Harrisburg to King of Prussia in the autumn of 1950, the easterly extension of the turnpike to New Jersey in 1952-1956, and the completion of the Schuylkill Expressway connecting Philadelphia to the Pennsylvania Turnpike via King of Prussia in 1959 drastically reduced travel times between Harrisburg, Philadelphia, New Jersey and Upper Merion Township (Bauman 2015; The News Herald October 26, 1950; Moriarty 1965; Splain 2015; Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission 2016).

Of secondary but by no means minor significance were changes in home financing beginning in the 1930s that made home ownership a possibility for unprecedented numbers of Americans. Long-term fixed-rate mortgages, federal mortgage insurance administered through the Federal Housing Authority, and postwar housing benefits offered to GIs made new kinds of suburban communities feasible (Ames 2003). Cognizant of the newly-discovered potential, developers and speculators acquired the open land beyond older streetcar suburbs and along new transit corridors for the development of working class residential “freeway suburbs” (Ames 2003; Moriarty 1965).

By 1952, Upper Merion Township’s first postwar suburban residential developments, Brandywine Village (northeast of the intersection of Allendale Road and DeKalb Pike) and Valley Forge Homes (located south of the DeKalb Pike-Pennsylvania Turnpike underpass), were developed, as well as a dozen units at Hughes Park, situated north of the Crooked Lane-Yerkes Road intersection (USDA 1937a, 1937b; USGS 1952a, 1952b). These subdivisions are evident in Figure 6. Residential construction continued through the 1950s; by 1958 the swath of suburban neighborhoods which began with Brandywine Village had more than tripled in area, crawling northward in fits and starts almost as far as the Schuylkill River. This was accompanied by new housing stock at neighboring Belmont Terrace and near the Montgomery-Chester County border south of the Schuylkill Expressway (Figure 7). New residential developments were completed at Henderson Park, near the intersection of Henderson Road and DeKalb Pike, and south of the Hughes Park subdivision. Amenities like a drive-in theater, parks, and public schools came with the explosion in housing construction (USGS 1958a, 1958b). To deal with a school population that tripled in a decade and a half, the township spent \$10 million on new schools just to keep pace with demand (Moriarty 1965).

Already in 1958, the Upper Merion Township Planning Commission recognized that their community had experienced only a “brief potential as a ‘bedroom community’” focused on Philadelphia and was transitioning to “a hub of employment as well as an attractive residential township” (Upper Merion Township Planning Commission 1958:1). The commission identified issues of concern for the township including its rapidly growing population, insufficient educational facilities, dwindling green space for parks and recreational facilities, the need for infrastructure improvements and proactive zoning regulations (Upper Merion Township Planning Commission 1958:36-38).

Planners' concerns aside, development continued at a rapid pace during the 1960s. Alongside ongoing residential construction, commercial and light industrial properties began infilling the remaining open space in and around the DeKalb Pike and Gulph Road corridors offering goods, services, and employment opportunities to the area's rapidly expanding residential population. King of Prussia was part of the national trend of suburban development of corporate campuses and office parks, a new type of workplace driven by the restructuring of American corporations, coupled with the general relocation of population out of cities, the booming economic climate, and Americans' preference for a "pastoral" environment. Cabot, Cabot & Forbes, a Boston-based real estate developer of office parks, purchased the Irwin farm north of the Turnpike in 1957 and platted 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue between N. Gulph Road and Allendale Road. This office park, which developed rapidly during the 1960s, became the first office-light industrial zone in King of Prussia, and spurred similar developments elsewhere in the township (Mozingo 2011:2-3).

In the twenty years since the completion of the Pennsylvania Turnpike from Harrisburg to King of Prussia the population of Upper Merion Township had nearly quadrupled, reaching 23,743 in 1970. In 1963, Morris A. Kravitz opened the Plaza at King of Prussia shopping center, featuring a J.C. Penney department store, an Acme market, and an E.J. Korvette discount store; two years later they were joined by a John Wanamaker's department store and a Gimbels. Kravitz's shopping center was the nucleus of what would become the King of Prussia Mall. General Electric, Western Electric, Smith Kline and French, and Pennsalt Chemicals all established a presence in the township during the 1960s; corporate campuses, office parks, small-scale manufacturing facilities, and retail stores proliferated. A 1965 newspaper article dubbed King of Prussia "Boomsville." Citing its convenient location to New York, Philadelphia, western Pennsylvania, and Ohio for the community's prosperity, the article noted that in 1950 "the township's real estate assessment totaled a little more than \$6 million. Today, it exceeds \$54 million" (Behan 2016; Moriarty 1965; NETR 2016; USDA 1958a, 1958b).

Despite the efforts of planners, by the early 1970s (Figure 8), the crowded, poorly-integrated jumble of residential, commercial, and industrial properties typical of the area today was firmly established (NETR 2016). This development pattern has continued since, resulting in a landscape largely devoid of greenspace and characterized by densely-occupied residential neighborhoods abutting high-speed transportation corridors and sprawling commercial districts.

## **4.2 Upper Darby Township**

Although acquired by English colonists through grants and purchases as early as 1781, the area west of Cobb's Creek above Marshall Road (including the 69th Street Transportation Center area) was not a recognized place of "permanent settlement" until 1683. Part of Darby Township, the area featured widely dispersed farmsteads, sawmills, and fulling mills arrayed along Cobbs Creek and its tributaries: Naylor's Run and Indian Run. Miles from the rapidly growing commercial settlement on the Delaware River that William Penn named Philadelphia, much of Darby Township remained sparsely settled

and preserved its rural character well into the nineteenth century (Hills 1808; Holme 1687; Jordan 1914:291; Scull and Heap 1750).

Samuel Sellers (1655-1732), an English Quaker from Belper, Derbyshire, settled the wooded hills on the west side of Cobbs Creek above Naylor's Run in 1682, where he built a stone house known as Sellers Hall and operated a successful business weaving cloth and wire screens. While mid-eighteenth century mapping depicts a single residence, the Moore farmstead, in the vicinity of the modern transit terminal, it was actually situated on the east (opposite) side of Cobbs Creek above the mouth of Indian Run. Sellers Hall, located approximately 1,500 feet south of the terminal, is not depicted (Holme 1687; Scull & Heap 1750; WITF 2011).

In the early 1800s, the 69th Street Transportation Center area was part of a 200-acre estate known as New Belper, owned by George Sellers. Although no residences are depicted within 1000 feet of the 69th Street Station Terminal location, one or more mills likely built by John Sellers (1728-1804) on Cobbs Creek, as well as associated millraces, sluices, bridges, and a mill pond are depicted adjacent to the Project area in mapping from 1808, 1810, 1816, and 1848 (Ash 1848; Hills 1808, 1810; Melish 1816; WITF 2011). By 1870, the 69th Street Transportation Center area was part of a 35-acre property owned by Sarah Pennock. In addition to a riparian woodlot on its western third, the Pennock property featured a West Chester Turnpike Road toll gate (est. ca. 1848), a residence near the former location of the Sellers mills, and two unidentified structures on its eastern edge. The former millpond and sluice are still visible as a wooded riparian area and a short north-south oriented tributary to Cobbs Creek flanking the turnpike road (Everts & Stewart 1875; Hopkins 1870). An 1889 railroad map depicts the toll gate, two brick buildings and a frame building on the Pennock property (Smith 1889).

Built in 1907, the 69th Street Terminal integrated urban, suburban, and regional passenger service (Figure 9). Its facilities included an engine house, a boiler house, workshops, and passenger stations for Philadelphia & West Chester Traction Company electric streetcars (offering service to suburban Delaware and Chester Counties), Market Street Elevated Passenger Railway Company trains (serving center city Philadelphia); and the Philadelphia & Western Railway Company's high-speed electric commuter service to Strafford (Desai 1999:2-3; Mueller 1909).

Realizing that ridership had rapidly surpassed the terminal's capacity, in 1922, A. Merritt Taylor of the Philadelphia & West Chester Traction Company purchased land along West Chester Pike from real estate speculator John McClatchy, and, at a cost of \$85,000, moved the road fifty feet to the south. The new space allowed for the construction of additional loading tracks and when the expanded station opened a year later, developers, aware of the business opportunities the terminal's growing ridership promised, began building stores on the south side of West Chester Pike (Desai 1999:3). By the end of the decade, the new construction included J.H. McClatchy Place, featuring a dozen two- and three-story brick commercial properties opposite the terminal. This group of buildings was punctuated at the 69th Street intersection by the seven-story concrete, Telephone &

Telegraph Building (built in 1928) and the ornate, four-story, Art Deco-style John H. McClatchy Building (built in 1927) (Klinge 1929; Sanborn 1939; Ujifusa 2005:12-13).

By the 1930s, ridership once again exceeded the terminal's capacities, and further expansion was needed. The accepted plan involved the construction of a vendor-lined concourse connecting the main station building and the new trolley and bus platforms to the west. The resulting construction cost \$486,000, resulted in the demolition of part of the original 1907 terminal building, and included the construction of a movie theater, aptly named the Terminal Theater. The newly renovated and expanded station opened in 1936 (Figure 10). Over time, additions were made to add new parallel platforms and tracks to the north of the original platforms (Figures 11 and 12). Additional alterations occurred during the 1980s, including the partial reconstruction of the 1923 south wing, the addition of a new brick gable, the renovation and extension of the 1924 wing to create a new bus terminal, and partial restoration of the original gabled entrance to the terminal (Desai 1999:3-5). In 1982, a concrete and steel pedestrian overpass was built by Upper Darby Township outside the original entrance to the terminal west of the West Chester Pike-69th Street intersection (Esack 2002). In 2011, the terminal was rebranded the 69th Street Transportation Center. Recent alterations include the reconstruction of pedestrian ramps, partial platform reconstruction, road and track replacement, and safety improvement completed in 2016 (SEPTA 2016).

The Market Street Elevated Railway Historic District (of which the 69th Street Terminal was identified to be a contributing element) was determined eligible for inclusion in the NRHP in 1996 under Criterion A and Criterion C. The 69th Street Terminal, also known as the Philadelphia Transit Company Building (BHP Key No. 079220), was determined to be individually eligible for inclusion in the NRHP in 1985 (Desai 1999:1), but on January 11, 2013, the 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal was determined not individually eligible by PHMC. However, the 69th Street Terminal remains a contributing resource in the Market Street Elevated Railway Historic District (BHP Key No. 105499) and the adjacent 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal Square Shopping District (BHP Key No. 156448), the latter having been determined eligible for inclusion in the NRHP in 2011.

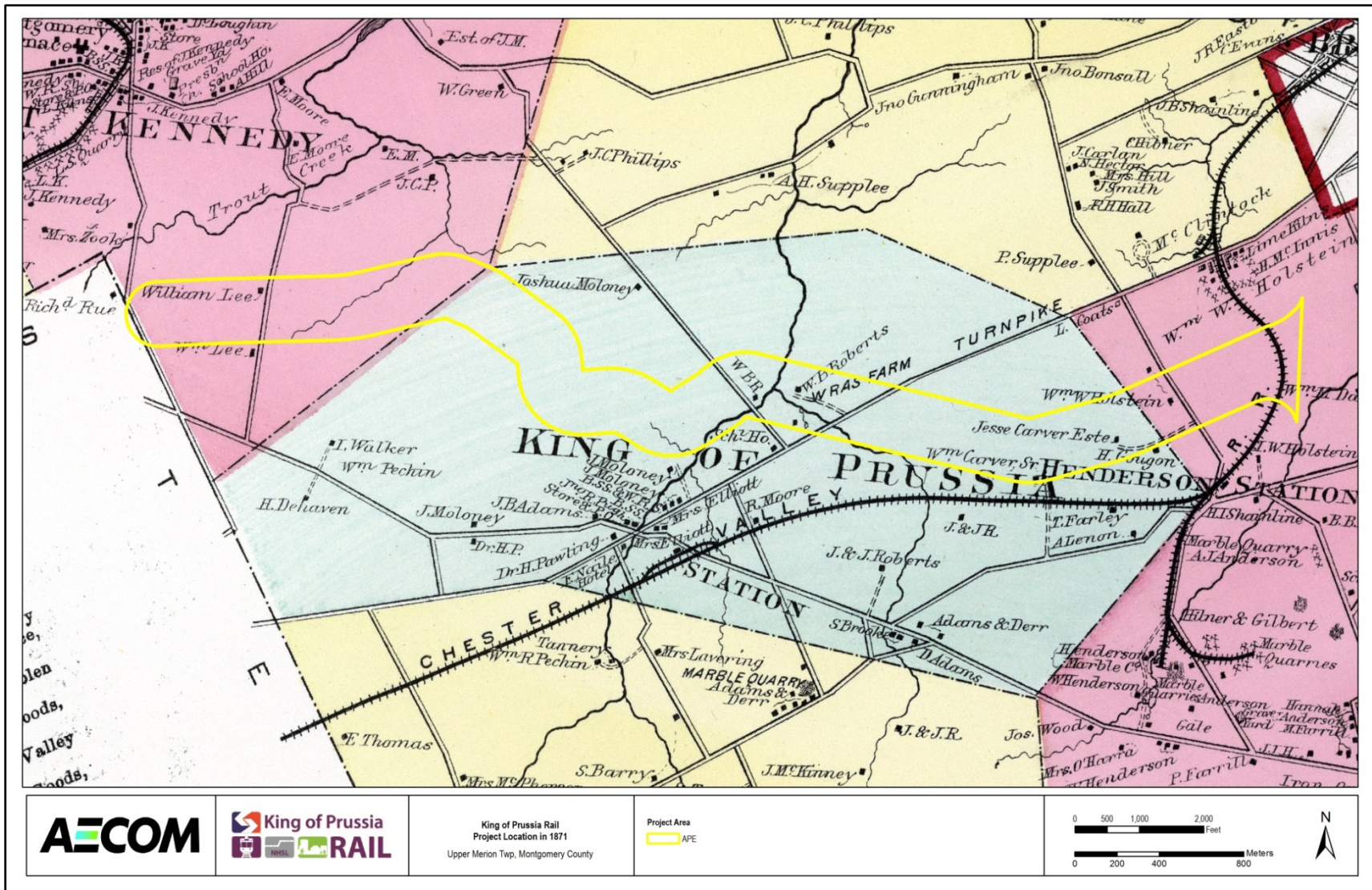


Figure 4. Project area shown on the 1871 G.M. Hopkins map of Upper Merion Township.



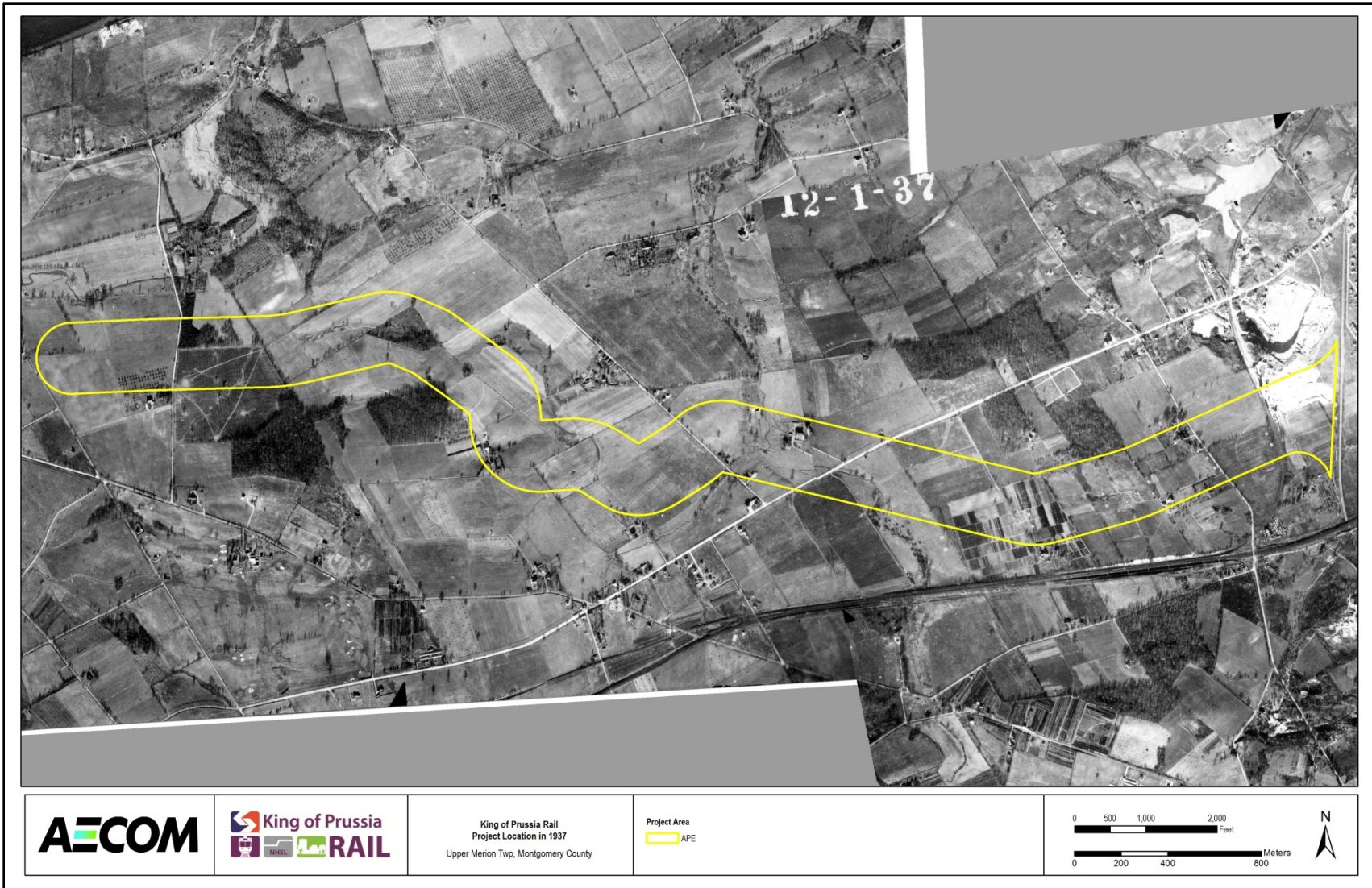


Figure 5. Project area shown on the 1937 USDA aerial view of Upper Merion Township.

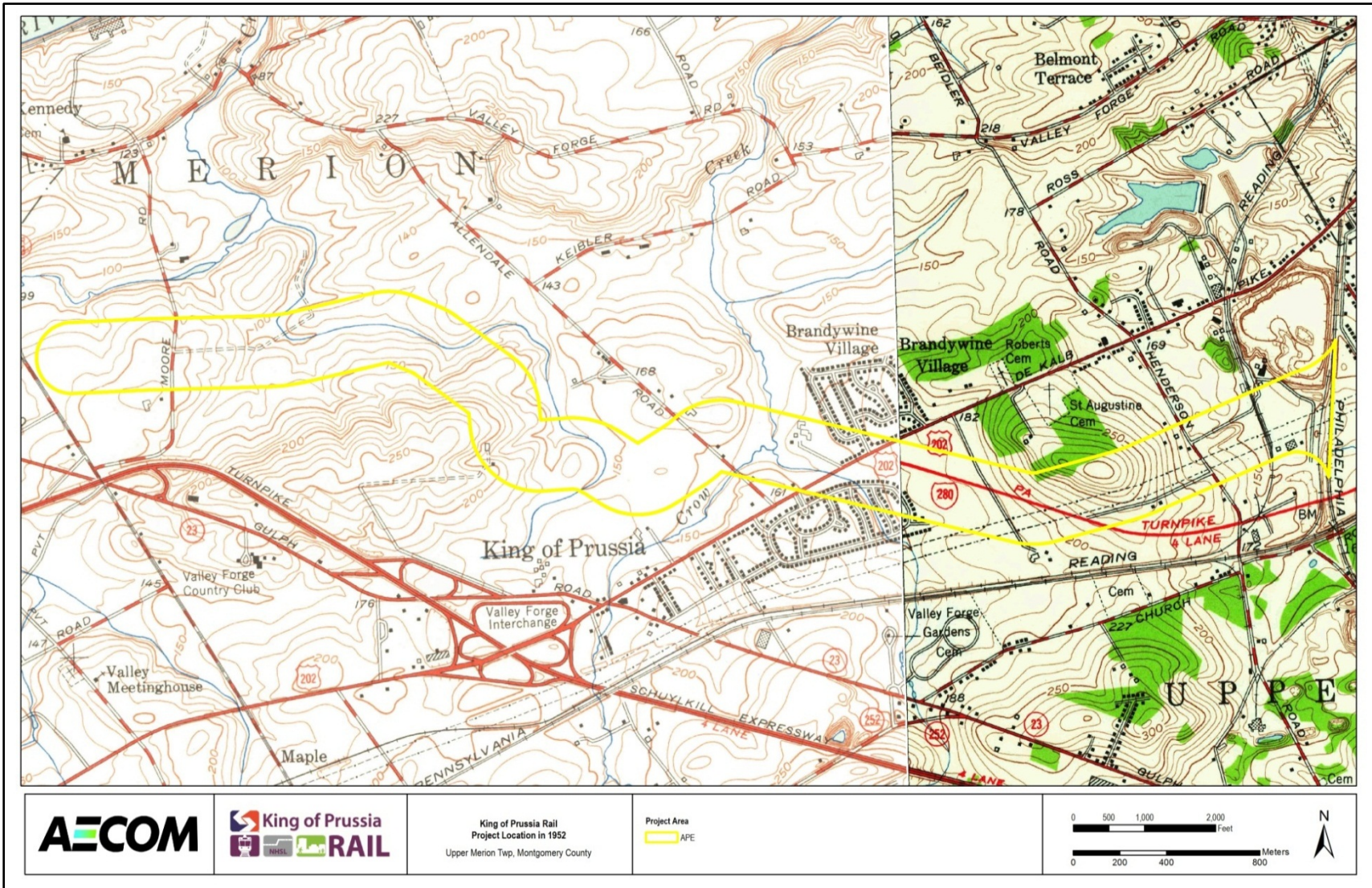


Figure 6. Project area shown on 1952 USGS Valley Forge and Norristown topographic maps.

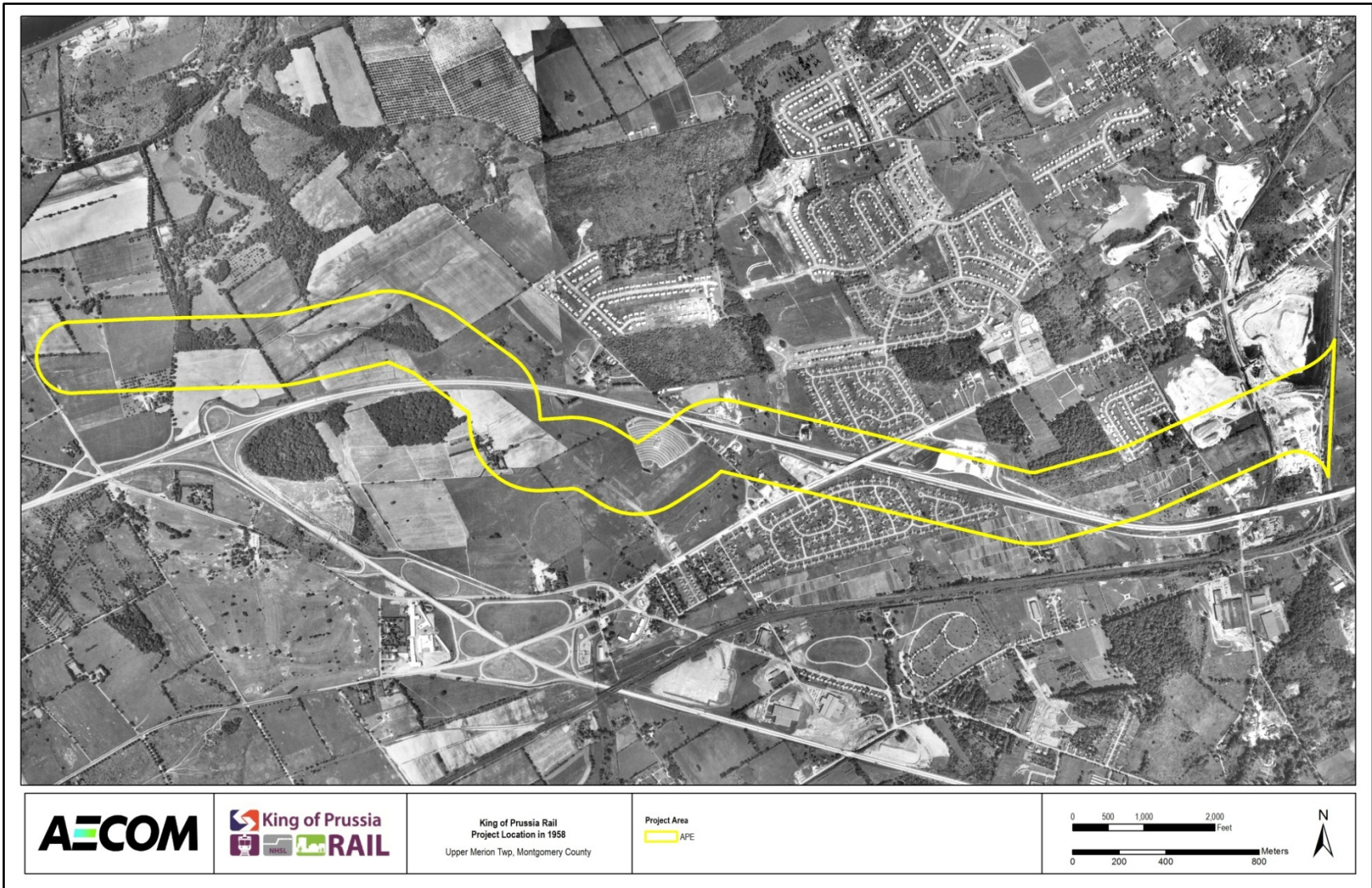
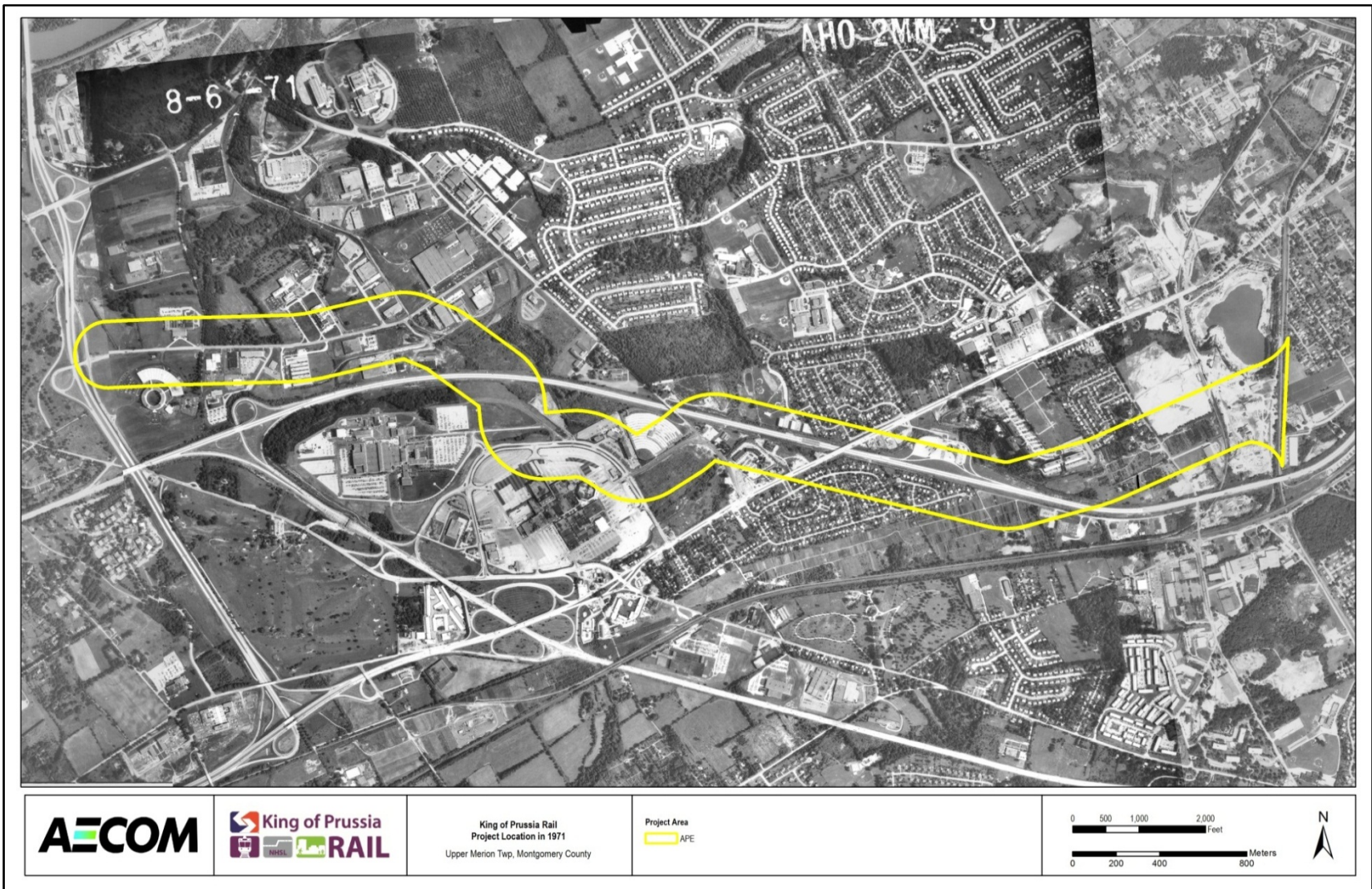
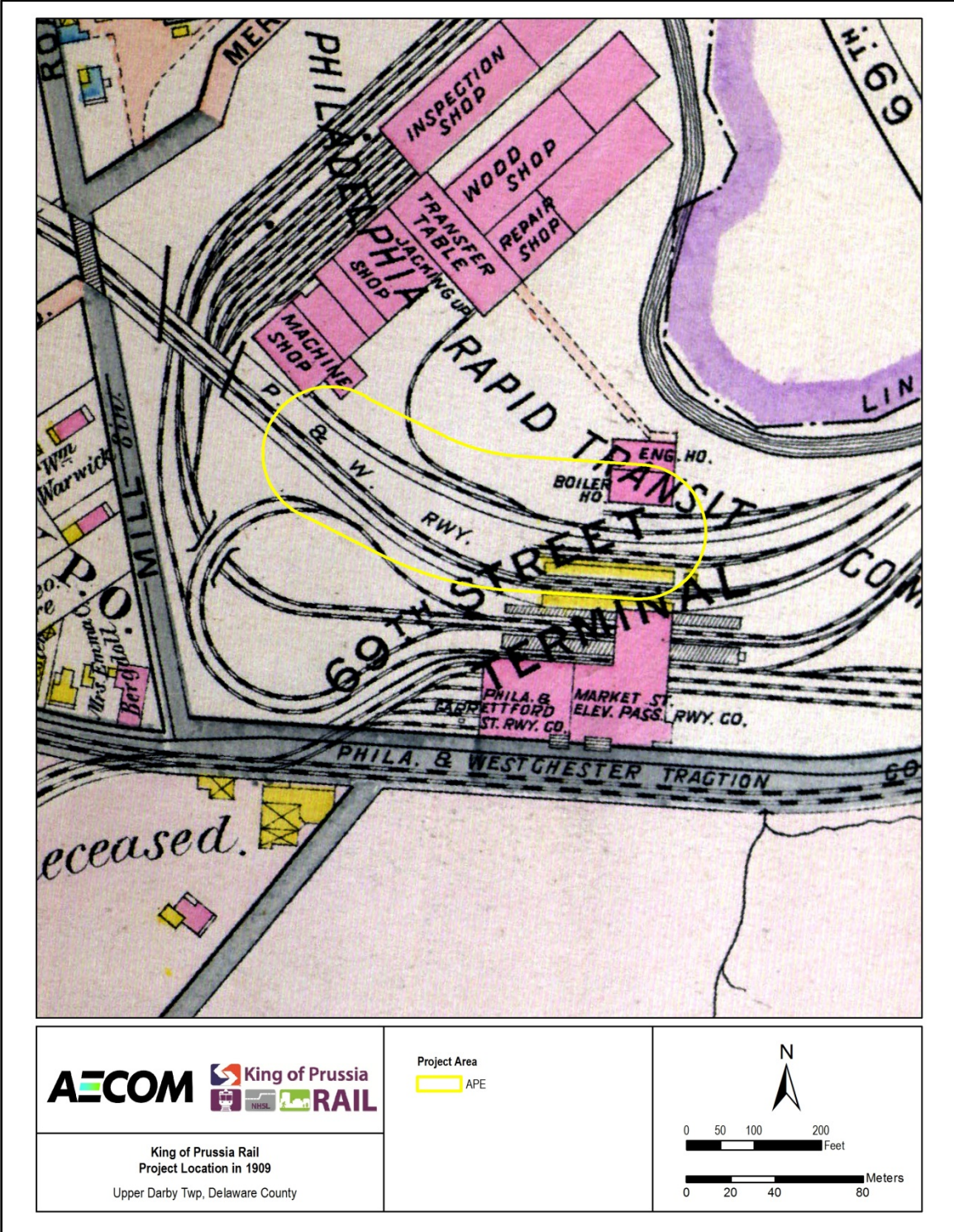


Figure 7. Project area shown on the 1958 USDA aerial view of Upper Merion Township.



**Figure 8.** Project area shown on the 1971 USDA aerial view of Upper Merion Township.



**Figure 9.** Project area in Upper Darby Township from the 1909 Mueller Atlas of Delaware County.

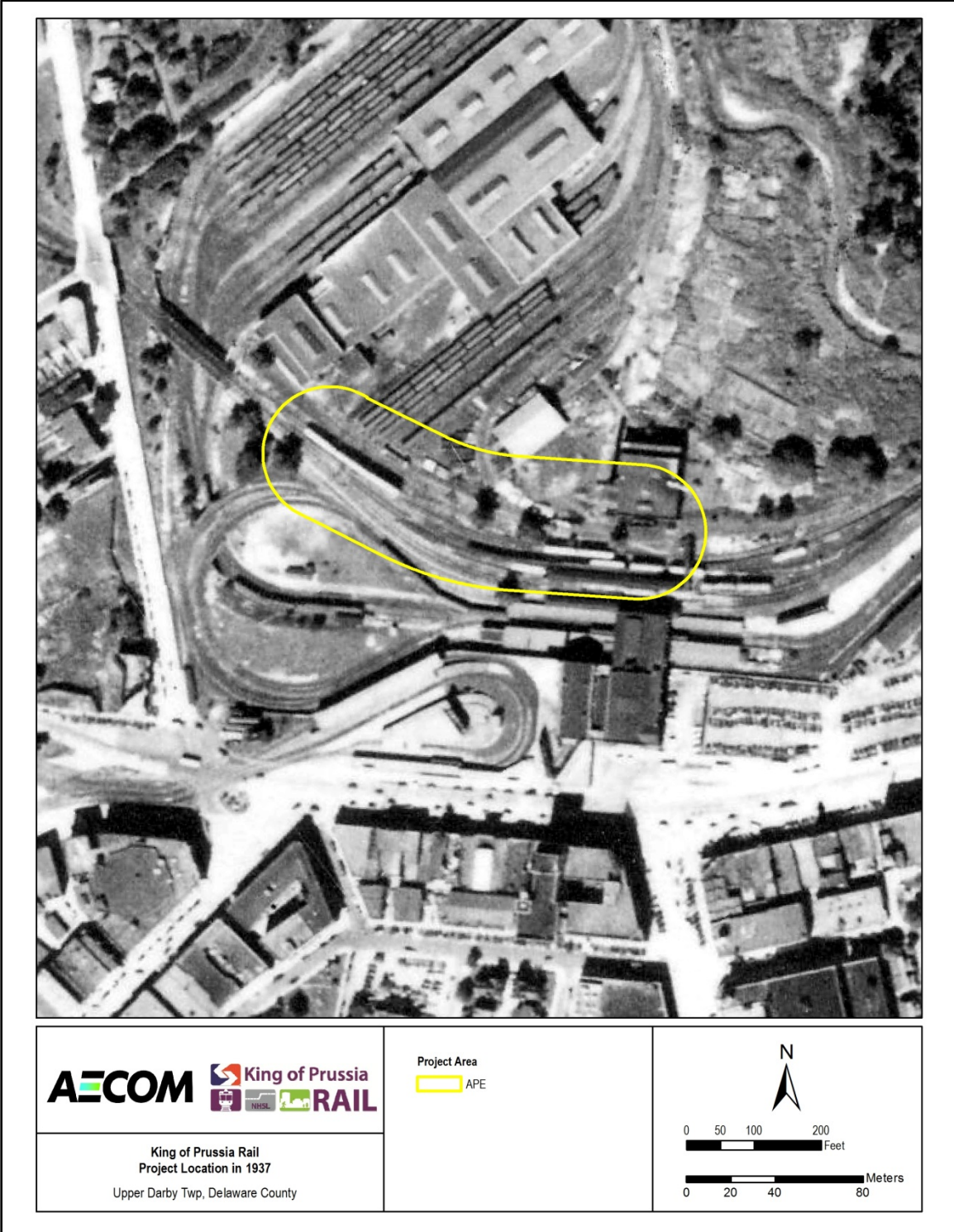
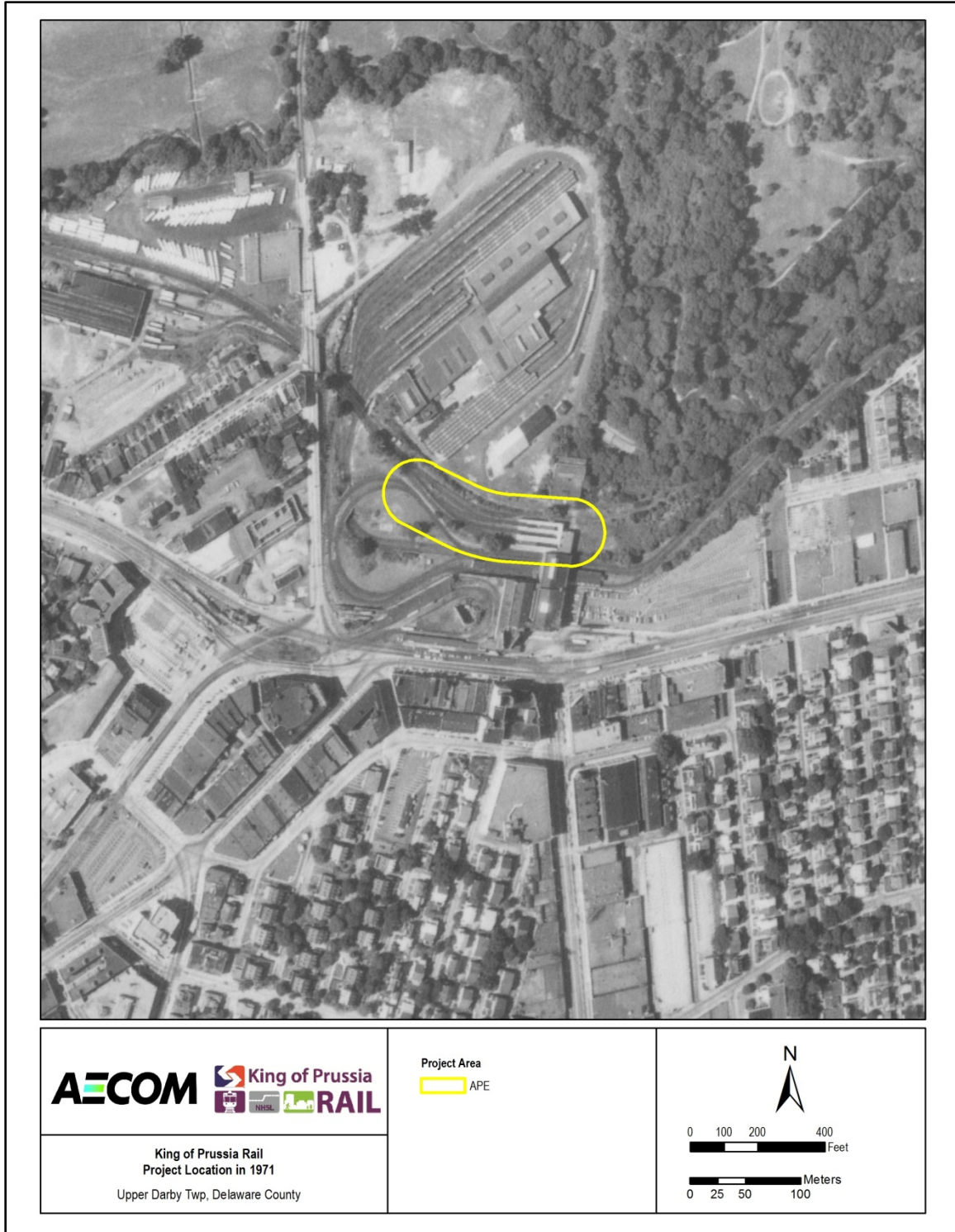


Figure 10. Project area shown on the 1937 USDA aerial view of Upper Darby Township.



**Figure 11.** Project area shown on the 1958 USDA aerial view of Upper Darby Township.



**Figure 12.** Project area shown on the 1971 USDA aerial view of Upper Darby Township.



## 5.0 RESULTS




AECOM identified 10 properties that are more than 50 years of age within the Project's APE in Upper Merion Township and not previously identified, as well as one property that previously had been identified but had not been evaluated for the National Register.




Table 2 contains information on each resource surveyed and the eligibility recommendations for all of the resources, and Figure 13 shows all of the resource locations. Of the 11 properties covered by the survey, eight appear to be not eligible during reconnaissance survey, and these properties were documented with Abbreviated Historic Resource Survey Forms, based on consultation with PHMC on March 3, 2016. The eight properties were recommended not eligible due to lack of significance, loss of integrity, or both.

Three of the 11 properties appeared to be potentially eligible, and they were documented with standard Historic Resource Survey Forms. Of these three properties, AECOM is recommending two (Survey #AE-02, Brandywine Village, and Survey #AE-9, the Arkema Campus) not eligible due to lack of integrity. Survey # AE-11, the American Baptist Churches U.S.A. Mission Center, is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C and Criteria Consideration A as a landmark example of the work of Philadelphia architect Vincent G. Kling.

Completed PHMC survey forms for the 11 surveyed properties are in Appendix B.

**Table 2: Resources Surveyed**

AECOM Survey #	BHP Key#	Resource Name	Address/Location	Date	NR Status	NR Recommendation	Photo
AE-01	N/A	McCoy Quarry	200 Saulin Boulevard	Ca. 1940	N/A	Not Eligible	
AE-02	N/A	Brandywine Village	N/S of US Route 202, E of PA Turnpike	Ca. 1950	N/A	Not Eligible	
AE-03	N/A	King of Prussia Arms Apartments	519 Williams Road	Ca. 1962	N/A	Not Eligible	
AE-04	N/A	Elwood Powell House	158 Allendale Road	Ca. 1860	N/A	Not Eligible	
AE-05	097653	Wills Building	206 Allendale Road	Ca. 1945	Undetermined	Not Eligible	
AE-06	N/A	Gatti Morrison Construction Materials	801 1 <sup>st</sup> Avenue	Ca. 1965	N/A	Not Eligible	
AE-07	N/A	Southern Wine and Spirits of Pennsylvania	460 American Avenue	Ca. 1970	N/A	Not Eligible	
AE-08	N/A	ProMetrics	480 American Avenue	Ca. 1970	N/A	Not Eligible	

AE-09	N/A	Arkema Campus	900 1 <sup>st</sup> Avenue	Ca. 1960	N/A	Not Eligible	
AE-10	N/A	Devon International Group	1100 1 <sup>st</sup> Avenue	Ca. 1964	N/A	Not Eligible	
AE-11	N/A	American Baptist Churches USA Mission Center	588-590 N. Gulph Road	Ca. 1962	N/A	Eligible	

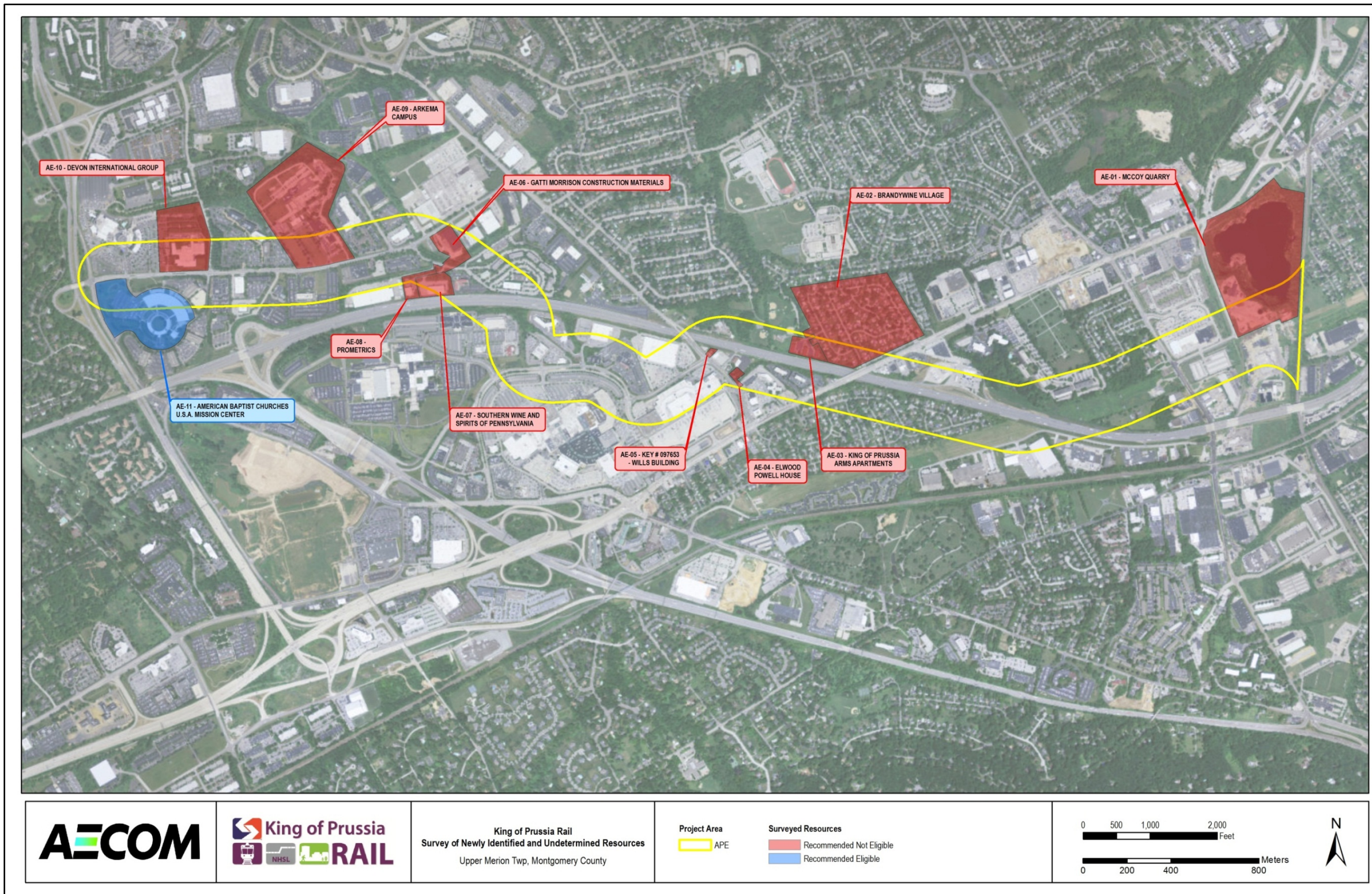


Figure 13. Map of 11 resources documented in the current survey.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Of the 11 properties surveyed, National Register eligibility is recommended for the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. (ABCUSA) Mission Center, located at 588-590 N. Gulph Road and bordering the south side of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue (Photographs 1 and 2). This property is a corporate campus constructed ca. 1962 for the American Baptist Convention to unite its scattered mission agencies and religious-materials publishing house at a single location. The four-building campus was designed in a unique Modernist style by Vincent G. Kling, who intended the circular complex to demonstrate the “unity and strength” of the American Baptists. Part of the outer sector of the campus was sold off and redeveloped in the 1980s, but the core building complex and some original landscape features remain.

The ABCUSA Mission Center is recommended eligible under Criterion C and Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties as an example of a Modernist office building complex. The property’s primary significance is derived from the architectural distinction of its buildings rather than its religious associations. Despite being constructed for Baptist missionary and support work, the Mission Center is functionally office, dining, and light industrial space that could be used by a secular corporation. Though Baptist principles influenced its circular design, the complex is not religious in appearance and lacks outward symbols of Christianity. The highly intact building complex is a creative and distinctive facility that embodies characteristics of midcentury Modernist architecture. Kling’s design, with its high level of detail, zigzag motifs, innovative use of concrete as a structural element, interrelationship of the different buildings and outdoor spaces, and monumental scale, clearly has high artistic values and represents the work of a master.

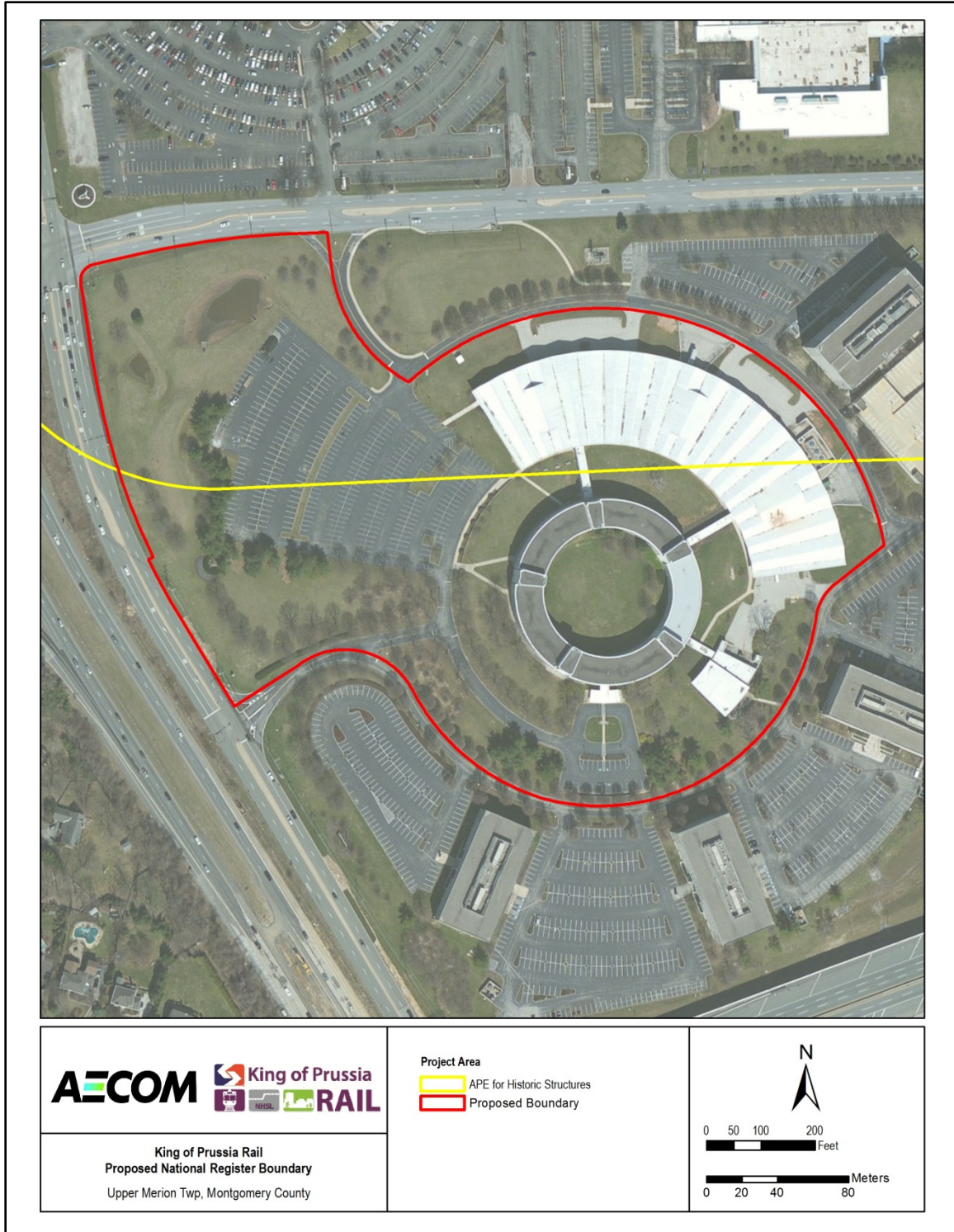
The recommended National Register boundary of the property (Figure 14) reflects the current tax parcel boundary. This boundary contains the four core ABCUSA Mission Center buildings and remaining original campus landscape features (northwest lawn, courtyard, parking lots, sidewalks, and terraces) which reflect the property’s period of significance (ca. 1962-1980).



**Photograph 1.** South elevation of the Office and Conference Center building, view to east.



**Photograph 2.** View of the Graphic Arts Building, looking northeast.



**Figure 14.** Proposed National Register boundary for the American Baptist Churches U.S.A. Mission Center.



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