

II. PROJECT HISTORY

The Blue Ball Properties Transportation Improvements Project is located north of Wilmington in New Castle County, Delaware in the proximity of U.S. Route 202, Delaware Route 141 and Foulk Road (*Figure 1*). More specifically, the study area extends from the U.S. Route 202/I-95 Interchange north to the existing AstraZeneca entrance north of Delaware Route 141, and from the new Rockland Road bridge on Delaware Route 141 east to Murphy Road/Wilson Road/Foulk Road intersection.

The U.S. Route 202 and Delaware Route 141 corridors in the Blue Ball area have experienced residential and commercial development, traffic congestion and safety problems for many years. At the same time, local residents and civic groups have been interested in preserving several tracts of land from high density development for two principal reasons: 1) maintaining the open space in the area, and 2) avoiding the additional traffic problems that would likely result from continued residential and community development.

Previously, in May 1992 an Environmental Assessment (EA) was approved for Delaware Route 141 improvements, from Delaware Route 2 (Kirkwood Highway) to U.S. Route 202. The EA evaluated potential impacts to the widening of a 4.5-mile section of Delaware Route 141. As part of the EA, four alternatives were presented for the 2.4-mile corridor between Montchanin Road (Delaware Route 100) and U.S. Route 202. Alternative D1 consisted of an urban diamond interchange at Foulk Road and U.S. Route 202, the interconnection of Rockland Road and Augustine Cut-Off, and an optional tunnel connection from Rockland Road/Augustine Cut-Off to U.S. Route 202 (*Figure 2*).

A Public Hearing was held for the project and as a result of public input and plans for changes in future land use projections, Alternative D1 was modified to include six lanes over the Brandywine River at the Tyler McConnell Bridge, provide interchanges at Alapocas Drive and Old Murphy Road, and modify the Foulk Road/U.S. Route 202 interchange. Later in 1992, a phased approach to building the improvements along Delaware Route 141 was presented, with a bridge over Rockland Road being constructed first, then a new six-lane bridge over the Brandywine River, and finally the improved interchange between I-95, U.S. Route 202, and Delaware Route 141. In December 1992, it was announced that the six-lane bridge over the Brandywine River would only be a four-lane bridge.

Between 1992 and 1994 public concern over the Preferred Alternative increased. As a result, the approved transportation improvements were re-evaluated. Two (2) phases of the project, the widening of the Tyler McConnell Bridge and the Foulk Road / U.S. Route 202 Interchange were put on hold while the following two phases were advanced to construction:

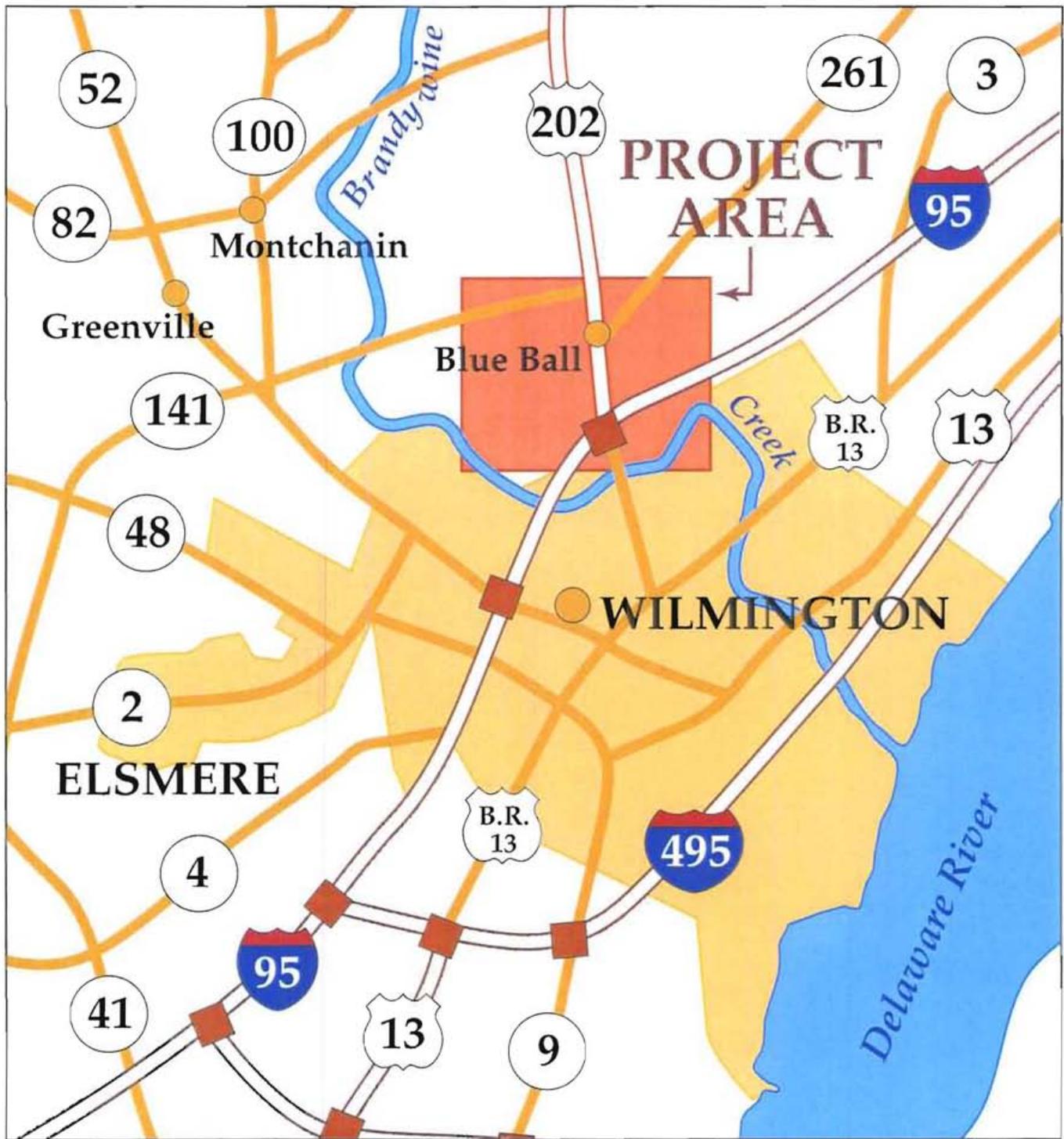
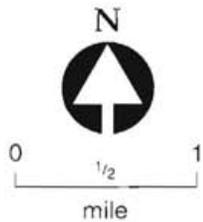


FIGURE 1: PROJECT LOCATION/REGIONAL CONTEXT



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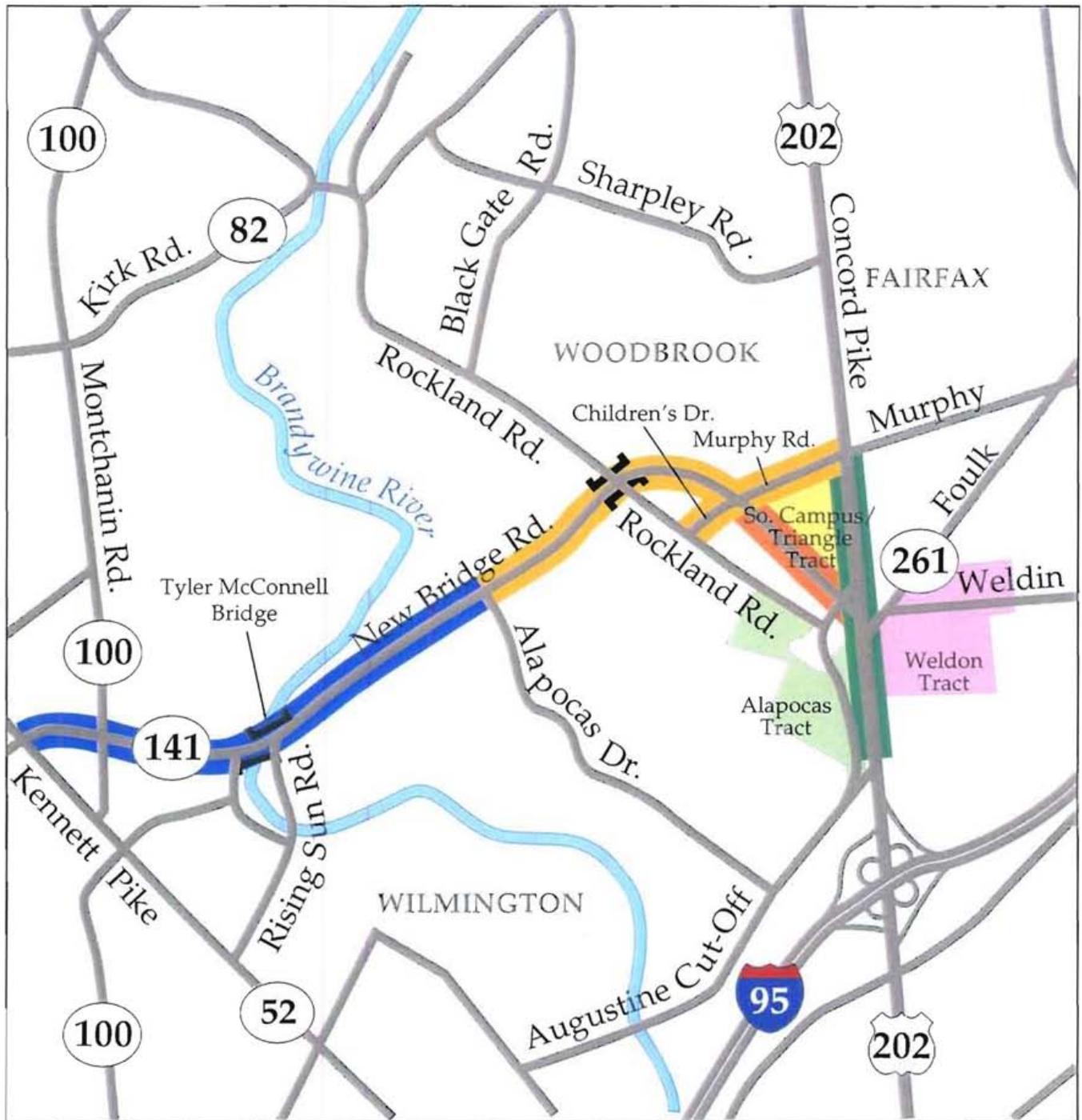


FIGURE 2: COMPONENTS OF PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED ROUTE 141 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

- US-202 Safety Improvement (Completed)
- Powder Mill Road Widening / Rockland Road Bridge (Completed)
- Route 141 Relocation (Not Completed)
- Delaware Route 141 Improvements and Tyler-McConnell Bridge (Not Completed)



Not to Scale



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- *Delaware Route 141, Rockland Road to U.S. Route 202.* This project, completed in 1997, included the grade-separation of the Delaware Route 141/Rockland Road intersection; an alignment shift of Delaware Route 141 between Rockland Road and U.S. Route 202; and improved intersections with Childrens Drive, the pharmaceutical company Zeneca's entrance, and U.S. Route 202.
- *U.S. Route 202 Safety Improvement Project.* Recently completed in 2000, this project consisted of improvements from Augustine Cut-Off to Delaware Route 141. The alignment of U.S. Route 202 was shifted slightly to eliminate many minor curves. Additional capacity was added at the Foulk Road and Delaware Route 141 intersections, and a southbound transit "diamond" lane was added between those two intersections.

In 1999, the England-based drug company Zeneca merged with the Sweden-based drug company Astra, to form the fifth largest pharmaceutical company in the world. Because of the economic development benefits represented by such a large corporate expansion, the Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) offered several incentives to attract the expansion to Delaware. A competition between Delaware and Pennsylvania to host the North American headquarters and the 5,000 new high-tech jobs it would bring, was won by the State of Delaware. The selection of the Delaware location was based on infrastructural improvement commitments made by the Delaware State Government. These commitments were:

- Creation of an attractive location for the company
- Development of transportation improvements to address the existing traffic problems in the area.
- Development of significant open space/recreational facilities for the area and the state as a whole.

The proposed AstraZeneca expansion would include an additional 2,000,000 square feet of office and research and development facilities (beyond the 1,000,000 square feet currently located at Delaware Route 141 and U.S. 202). As part of the agreement, the state was to provide adequate transportation improvements, and acquire the two tracts of land known as the Alapocas tract and the Weldin tract, to develop for open space and recreation.

To coordinate the planning and future development of the Blue Ball Properties, the State of Delaware initiated the development of a Master Plan. This Master Plan became a "blueprint" for land use which in turn guided subsequent design efforts for transportation, recreation, environmental enhancement and cultural resource preservation (*Figure 3*).

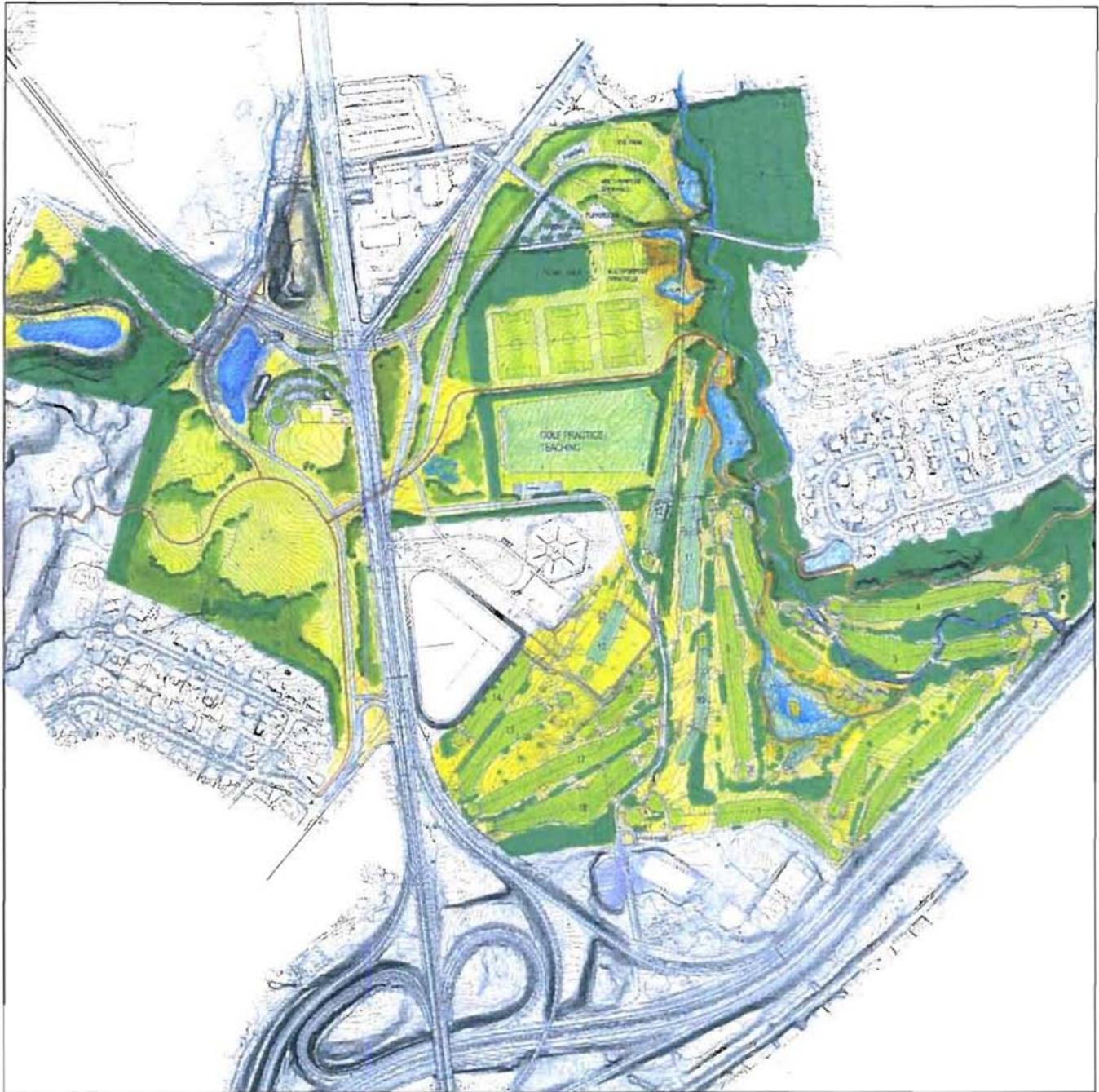


FIGURE 3: BLUE BALL PROPERTIES MASTER PLAN



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Blue Ball Properties