

## Chapter 1: Introduction



This sector plan is prepared in response to the 2006 Urban Land Institute (ULI), Technical Assistance Panel Planning Study recommendation for redevelopment of the area. The ULI study (completed in March 2006) identified planning issues and developed a long-range vision for the study area that could be implemented through a sector plan process. The sector plan also responds to the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan* goals for the Developed Tier and Regional Centers. Upon the approval by the District Council, this sector plan will amend the applicable portions of the 1993 Approved Landover and Vicinity Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment, Planning Area 72, and the 1990 Largo-Lottsford Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment, Planning Area 73, and applicable functional plans.

### Plan Purpose

- Identify future uses for the former Landover Mall site, and plan for the revitalization and redevelopment of the site and adjacent properties, thereby enhancing the quality and character of the Landover Gateway area.
- Encourage quality economic development, identify needed transportation and pedestrian improvements, ensure efficient use of existing infrastructure and investment in and around the Landover Mall site, and protect environmentally sensitive land.
- Fulfill the General Plan vision for the Developed Tier as a network of sustainable, transit supporting, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, medium- to-high density neighborhoods.
- Produce a comprehensive plan and a redevelopment phasing plan for the sector plan.

### Planning Area Boundary and Regional Setting

The sector planning area boundary (see Map 1: Sector Plan Boundary on page 7) covers approximately 591

acres, which are partly within the incorporated area of the City of Glenarden, including Woodmore Towne Centre at Glenarden and Glenarden Apartments. The City of Glenarden lies directly west, east, and north of the sector plan area. The City of Glenarden is a stable residential community incorporated as a municipality in the State of Maryland in 1939. This sector plan focuses generally on the former Landover Mall site and the commercial and residential properties located within approximately a half-mile radius of the former mall site. The 88-acre mall site, located west of the Capital Beltway and northeast of the intersection of MD 202 and Brightseat Road, comprises the heart of the sector area. Other adjoining properties include Landover Crossing Shopping Center (19.55 acres) on the south side of MD 202; a used car dealership (3.88 acres), south of Brightseat Road; Glenarden Apartments (27.2 acres) and Maple Ridge Apartments (18.4 acres), west of Brightseat Road; a handful of surviving retail and service businesses; and the future Woodmore Towne Centre development site (245 acres), east of the Capital Beltway. The sector area also includes a 49.6 acre parcel owned by WFI Stadium, Inc., located to the south of Brightseat and Sheriff Roads. The sector plan area is located within 2.2 miles of four existing Metro stations: Landover (Orange Line), New Carrollton (Orange Line), Largo Town Center (Blue Line), and Morgan Boulevard (Blue Line).

### Background

#### Existing Conditions and Trends

The evolution of the sector plan area is closely tied to changes that have occurred at the former Landover Mall, which was once a thriving commercial center and one of the region's largest shopping destinations. Home to three major department stores, a movie theater, a Sears store, and other destinations in its heyday, Landover Mall experienced decline during the 1990s as regional competition and negative perceptions of the area contributed to poor sales and vacant retail space. The mall officially closed in 2002, and currently, all that remains on the property is a Sears store and two small auto-related businesses.

Many of the defining structures in the Landover Gateway area were constructed during the 1960s and 1970s. The former Landover Mall opened in 1972, and the Landover Crossing Shopping Center was completed a few years later in 1975. Residential development both preceded and followed this commercial development, such as the construction of the Maple Ridge apartment complex in 1964 and the later development of Glenarden Apartments I and II from 1969–1970.

Since 1993, when the county initiated the previous planning effort for the area, substantial new development has occurred, including FedEx Field, the Prince George’s County Sports and Learning Complex, and the recent development of townhomes on Brightseat Road. Aside from changes in the tenant mix of the area’s commercial properties, the major land uses in the area remain largely the same.

The 88-acre former Landover Mall site is now largely cleared of its former structures and offers a unique development opportunity on an unusually large site inside the Capital Beltway. To understand the full scale and potential of the Landover Mall site and the sector plan area as a whole, it is helpful to compare Landover Gateway to other notable regional centers. For example, at approximately 591 acres, the entire sector plan area represents land that is larger than the Village at Shirlington in Arlington, Virginia. It is also comparable in size to the Clarendon community of Arlington, Virginia, the Federal Triangle portion of downtown Washington, D.C., and most of Old Town, Alexandria.

The former mall holds a prominent location, highly visible and served by major roadways, such as the Capital Beltway (I-95/I-495) and MD 202. The Landover Mall site is also well-positioned to build upon and complement the already-approved 245-acre Woodmore Towne Centre mixed-use development, which will include a total of 684,617 square feet of retail (including Costco and Wegmans as anchors), 1,000,000 square feet of office use, two hotels and a conference center, and residential development consisting of 191 single-family homes and 731 townhomes and condominiums.

## Relationship to Other Plans

### *The 1992 Maryland–Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act*

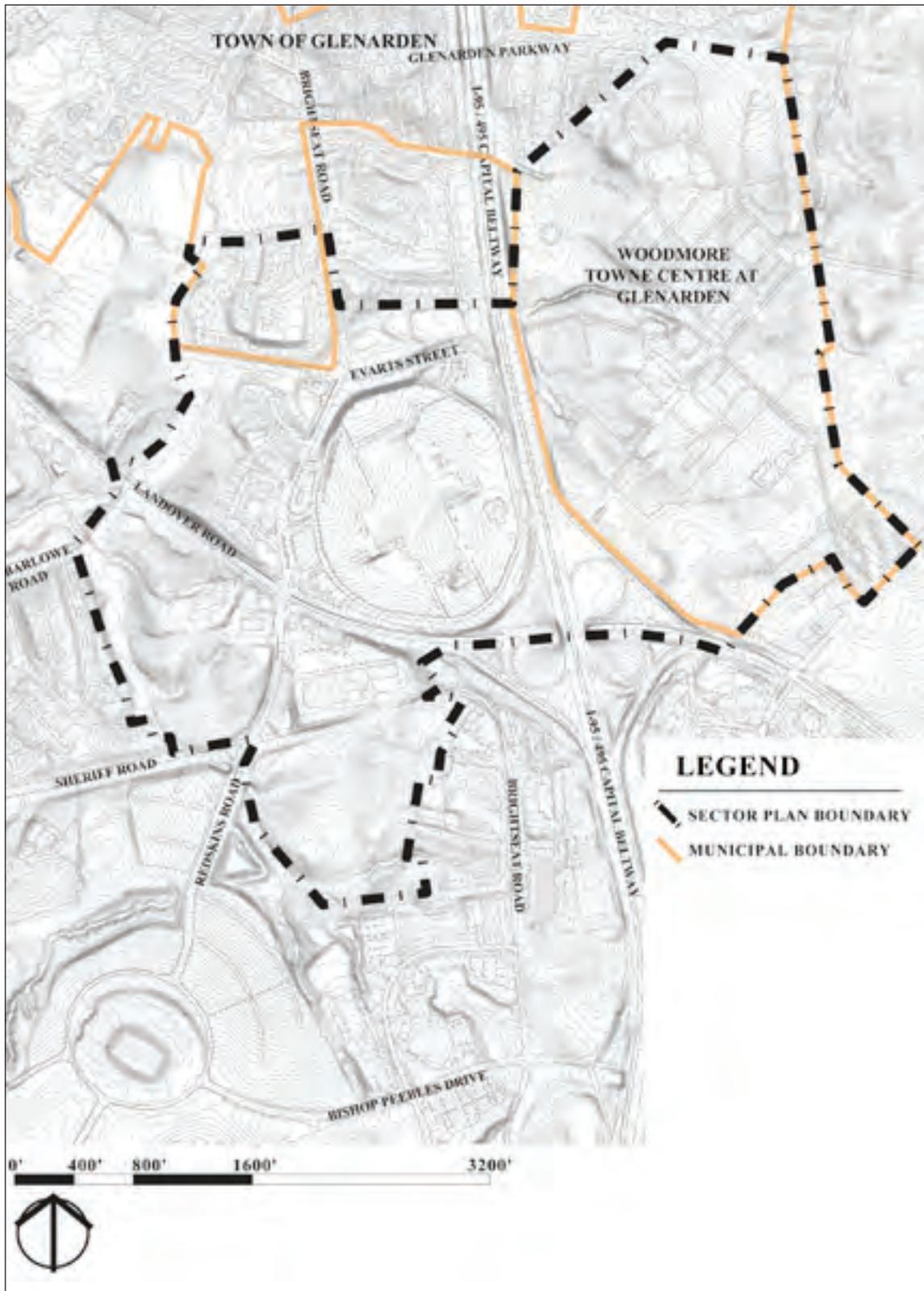
This legislation was enacted to encourage economic growth, limit sprawl development, and protect the state’s natural resources. It establishes consistent general land use policies to be locally implemented throughout Maryland. These policies are stated in the form of eight visions:

1. Development is concentrated in suitable areas.
2. Sensitive areas are protected.
3. In rural areas, growth is directed to existing population centers, and resource areas are protected.
4. Stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and the land is a universal ethic.
5. Conservation of resources, including a reduction in resource consumption, is practiced.
6. To assure achievement of one through five above, economic growth is encouraged, and regulatory mechanisms are streamlined.
7. Adequate public facilities and infrastructure under the control of the county or municipal corporation are available or planned in areas where growth is to occur.
8. Funding mechanisms are addressed to achieve these visions.

The eight visions are a set of guiding principles that describe how and where growth and development should occur. The act acknowledges that the comprehensive plans prepared by counties and municipalities are the best mechanism to establish priorities for growth and resource conservation. Once priorities are established, it is the state’s responsibility to support them.

### *The 1997 Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Act*

This act builds on the foundation of the eight visions adopted in the 1992 act, as amended. The act is nationally recognized as an effective means of evaluating and



Map 1: Sector Plan Boundary

implementing statewide programs to guide growth and development.

In 1997, the Maryland General Assembly enacted a package of legislation collectively referred to as the Neighborhood Conservation and Smart Growth Initiative. The Maryland Smart Growth program has three basic goals: to save valuable remaining natural resources, to support existing communities and neighborhoods, and to save taxpayers millions of dollars in unnecessary costs for building infrastructure to support sprawl. A significant aspect of the initiative is the Smart Growth areas legislation, which requires that state funding for projects in Maryland municipalities, other existing communities, and industrial and planned growth areas designated by counties will receive priority funding over other projects. These Smart Growth Areas are called Priority Funding Areas.

### **2002 General Plan**

A number of previously approved plans and policy documents provide background information and framework for the Landover Gateway Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment. The 2002 *Prince George's Approved General Plan* provides broad guidance for the future growth and development of Prince George's County. The countywide goals of the 2002 General Plan are to encourage quality economic development, make efficient use of existing and proposed county infrastructure and investment, enhance the quality and character of communities and neighborhoods, preserve rural agricultural and scenic areas, and protect environmentally sensitive lands.

The Landover Gateway sector plan area is located in both the Developed and the Developing Tiers. The portion of the sector area located west of the Capital Beltway (I-495/I-95) falls within the Developed Tier. The area east of I-495/I-95 falls within the Developing Tier. This portion of the Developed Tier falls within a state-designated enterprise zone and, hence, qualifies for priority funding, the highest priority for expending public funds.

Goals for the Developed Tier include strengthening existing neighborhoods; encouraging appropriate infill; encouraging more intense, high-quality housing and economic development corridors.

In the Developing Tier, the 2002 General Plan seeks to reinforce existing suburban residential areas; to reinforce

planned commercial centers as community focal points; to develop compact, planned employment areas; to preserve and enhance environmentally sensitive areas; to increase utilization of transit; and to balance the pace and expansion of development with provision of adequate transportation and public facilities.

The 2002 General Plan also designates the Landover Gateway sector plan area as a community center within the Landover Gateway sector area. As described in greater detail in Chapter 3 (Development Pattern Element), the land use mix and development intensity recommended for community centers in the 2002 General Plan are incompatible with the new downtown area envisioned in this sector plan. Therefore, this sector plan recommends redesignating the Landover Gateway area as a regional center.

A regional center designation allows for a higher concentration of land uses and economic activities, including a higher density and intensity of development. For regional centers, the 2002 General Plan does not impose a maximum residential density or maximum floor area ratio.

### ***The Landover and Vicinity Master Plan (1993) and the Largo-Lottsford and Vicinity Master Plan (1990)***

The 1993 *Approved Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for Landover and Vicinity (Planning Area 72)* designates the former Landover Mall site as a regional shopping area with uses such as retail, office, and hotels and/or motels as supporting uses that could strengthen this retail destination center. In addition, the 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford and Vicinity Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment (Planning Area 73)* includes recommendations for the portion of the sector plan area located east of I-95/I-495. The sector plan area is also located in a state-designated Smart Growth area, a priority funding area, and one of the county's enterprise zones (specifically, the Cabin Branch sub-zone).

### ***Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel***

This sector plan builds on concepts developed by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) special panel that explored and evaluated potential development scenarios for the former Landover Mall. In early 2006, ULI established a

technical assistance panel composed of design, planning, and economic development professionals to brainstorm alternative land-use concepts for the former Landover Mall site. Working with The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) staff over a two-day period, the panel developed three preliminary concepts for the area. This effort represented the first attempt to think about the future potential of the former Landover Gateway sector plan area and served to kick-off the sector planning process. The three preliminary scenarios developed by the ULI panel included a “mixed-use urban village,” an “induced demand” scenario that featured the development of a medical mall complex, and an “interim holding” strategy emphasizing interim uses of the mall site until the market could support more intensive development. It should be noted that the current sector boundaries encompass a larger land area than the area considered as part of the ULI effort. Since the ULI study, various property owners have made new decisions and commitments pertaining to key properties in the sector plan area, adding new variables and opportunities to influence planning decisions.

## Plan Making Methodology

### *Planning Partners*

From the outset, and throughout the planning process, there was close collaboration with key county agencies and elected officials, both of whom will play a critical role in implementing the development strategies envisioned in the plan. The key agencies involved were the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T), SHA, Maryland Department of Transportation, Police Department, DHCD, Department of Environmental Resources, and Economic Development Corporation. The M-NCPPC project team and county agency staff met regularly to plan for community workshops. Working together, the team understood the issues affecting the study area and the need to work with stakeholders to create a community vision for future redevelopment of the Landover Gateway area.

### *Public Outreach and Public Participation Process*

Public outreach began in January 2006 with stakeholder interviews, and community meetings convened for the ULI technical assistance panel. The dialogue about the future of Landover Gateway continued in the months leading



*Post Charrette*

up to the initiation of the sector plan and its associated public participation program. The public participation process began in July 2006 and continued through February 2007. During this time, the project team held one-on-one meetings, communitywide workshops, and a five-day planning and design charrette/post-charrette to develop the vision for this area.

### *Pre-Planning Community Meetings*

As a bridge between the ULI technical assistance panel’s outreach and the start of the sector plan process, M-NCPPC staff organized two community meetings in October and November 2006 for residents of the Town of Glenarden and neighboring community groups, including Royal Gardens, Kenmore, and Palmer Park. The purpose of these meetings was to inform residents of the status of the planning process and gather information on sector area issues and opportunities, which generated meaningful early feedback regarding current conditions in the sector area and opportunities for the future.

### *Stakeholder Interviews*

Beginning in January 2007, the planning team conducted interviews and briefings with property owners, elected officials, state and county agency staff, community groups,

and school representatives. In addition to bringing key stakeholders up-to-date on the sector plan process, these meetings also yielded useful information on the sector area that would be incorporated into the analysis and visioning that follow. A second round of key stakeholder interviews occurred during the charrette process as part of the stakeholder feedback loop during plan development.

### *Pre-Charrette Workshop*

At the community brainstorming workshop held on Saturday, April 21, 2007, participants provided feedback on four preliminary concept alternatives, each based on a particular theme (government center, education/cultural campus, lifestyle center, and medical mall/senior living). Although participants responded favorably to elements of each concept, most preferred a hybrid of all four concepts. Participant comments also provided a mandate for “thinking big” and generating a development concept that would respect the value and visibility of the land, while creating a destination and promoting economic development.

### *The Charrette*

Utilizing the vision established at the pre-charrette meeting and refined in the weeks that followed, participants collaborated with the project team during a five-day design charrette from May 9-15, 2007, to further develop the sector plan concepts. The event included two briefings to property owners and elected officials, a public progress report meeting on the second day of the charrette, and a series of key stakeholder interviews.

### *Post-Charrette*

Following the charrette, the project team further refined the concept developed during the charrette and presented the final concept to the community on Saturday, June 16, 2007. Comments provided at this session were the basis for additional plan revisions, as reflected in this document.

## **Planning Process (timeline)**

The project team completed the preliminary sector plan within eight months of its initiation and obtained Planning Board Permission to print in November 2007. A joint public hearing was advertised and held on January 22, 2008. At the public hearing, Planning Board and District Council heard oral testimonies and received

letters from stakeholders and public agencies. The letters from public transportation agencies did not support recommended land use densities due to inadequate road capacity concerns. The Planning Board declined to adopt the Preliminary Landover Gateway Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment and directed staff to undertake a transportation staging analysis.

The Planning Board reinitiated the sector plan on May 29, 2008, and the District Council’s initiation followed on June 17, 2008, which authorized the project team to prepare a transportation staging analysis. A plan refinement process was approved to engage stakeholder (property owners, residents, elected officials, and interested parties) participation through three additional communitywide meetings to discuss the transportation infrastructure issues. The plan process chart outlines the major project milestones (see Figure 1A: Project Timeline—18-Month Process Chart on page 11 and see Figure 1B: Plan Refinement Schedule on page 11).

## **Challenges**

Key planning challenges identified during the planning process included:

### *Land Use, Zoning, and Urban Design Issues*

- Identifying appropriate future uses for the former Landover Mall site.
- Bringing new transit service to Landover Gateway to support planned development.
- Improving the overall physical appearance of the area and its image throughout the region.
- Maximizing the advantages of proximity to the Capital Beltway while mitigating the extent to which the Beltway serves as a physical barrier and noise generator.
- Creating a development program that incorporates the existing Sears store, which plans to remain on the site.
- Determining the future of nearby apartment complexes and achieving needed redevelopment while preserving affordable housing and enabling existing residents to remain in the area (see Map 2: Existing Zoning on

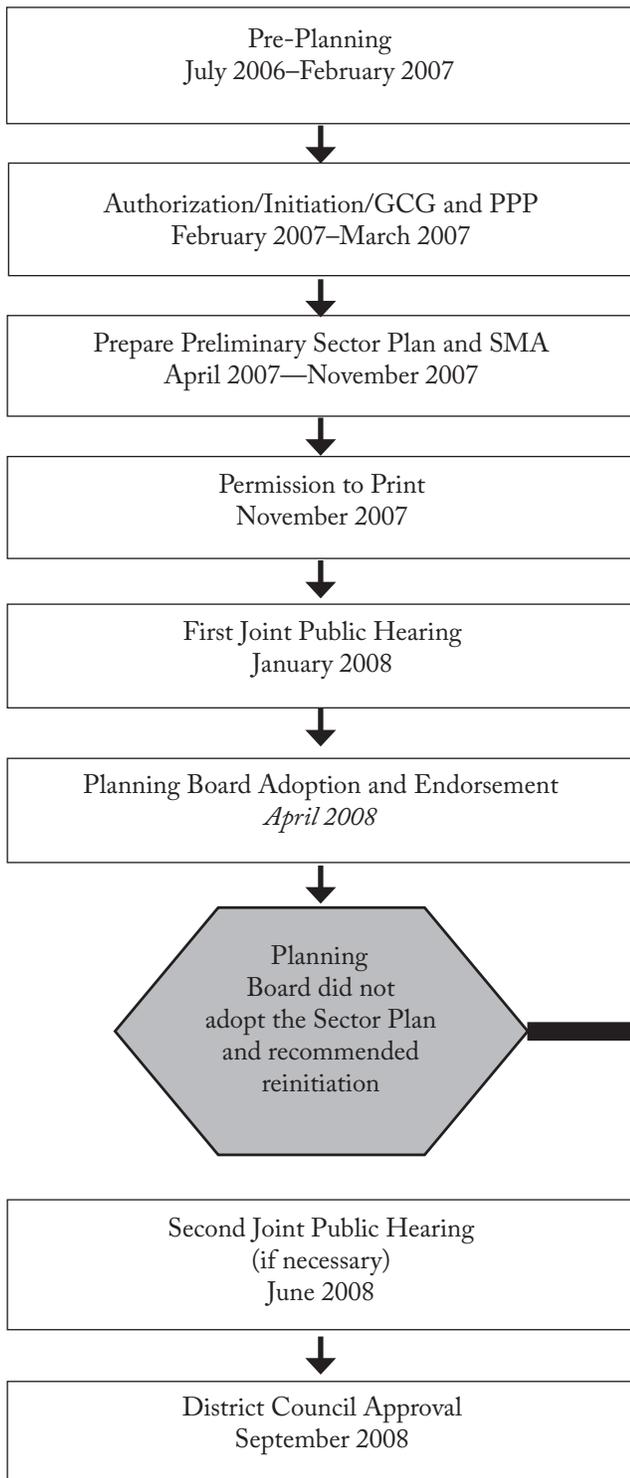


Figure 1A: Project Timeline—18-Month Process Chart

See Pages 9-10 for details on Plan Making Methodology and Schedule.

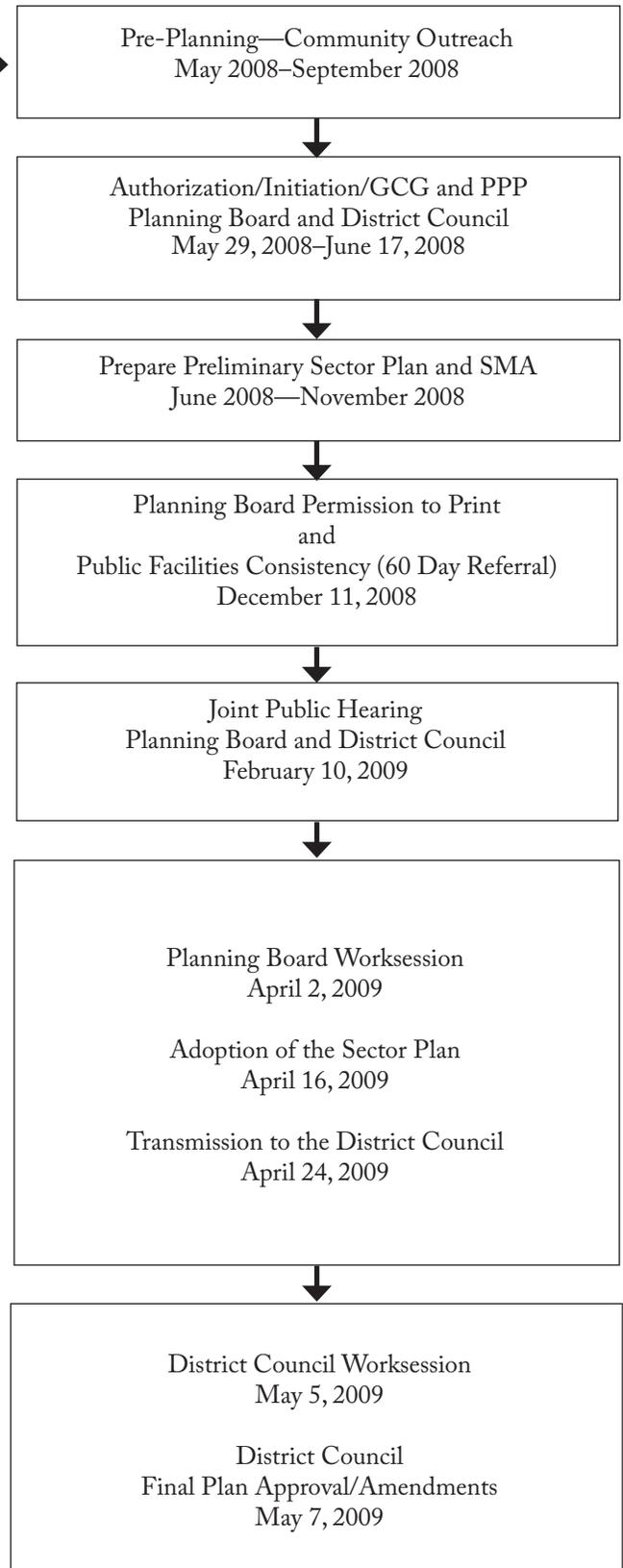


Figure 1B: Plan Refinement Schedule

page 13, Map 3: Existing Land Use on page 14, and Map 4: Approved Zoning on page 15).

### *Housing Issues*

- Creating opportunities for mixed-income housing throughout the sector plan area.
- Reducing the concentration of low-income housing in the sector plan area.

### *Transportation Issues*

- Transforming the roadways, especially the major thoroughfares of Brightseat Road and MD 202, into pedestrian-friendly environments with continuous sidewalk networks.
- Improving public transportation linkages to the sector plan area.
- Mitigating traffic congestion, especially during events at FedEx Field.

(See Map 5: Access and Circulation on page 16.)

### *Economic Development Issues*

- Addressing the existing vacant and underutilized retail space and the current lack of community-serving retail.
- Reconciling market realities with the community's and county's visions for the area and identifying strategies to induce market demand as needed.

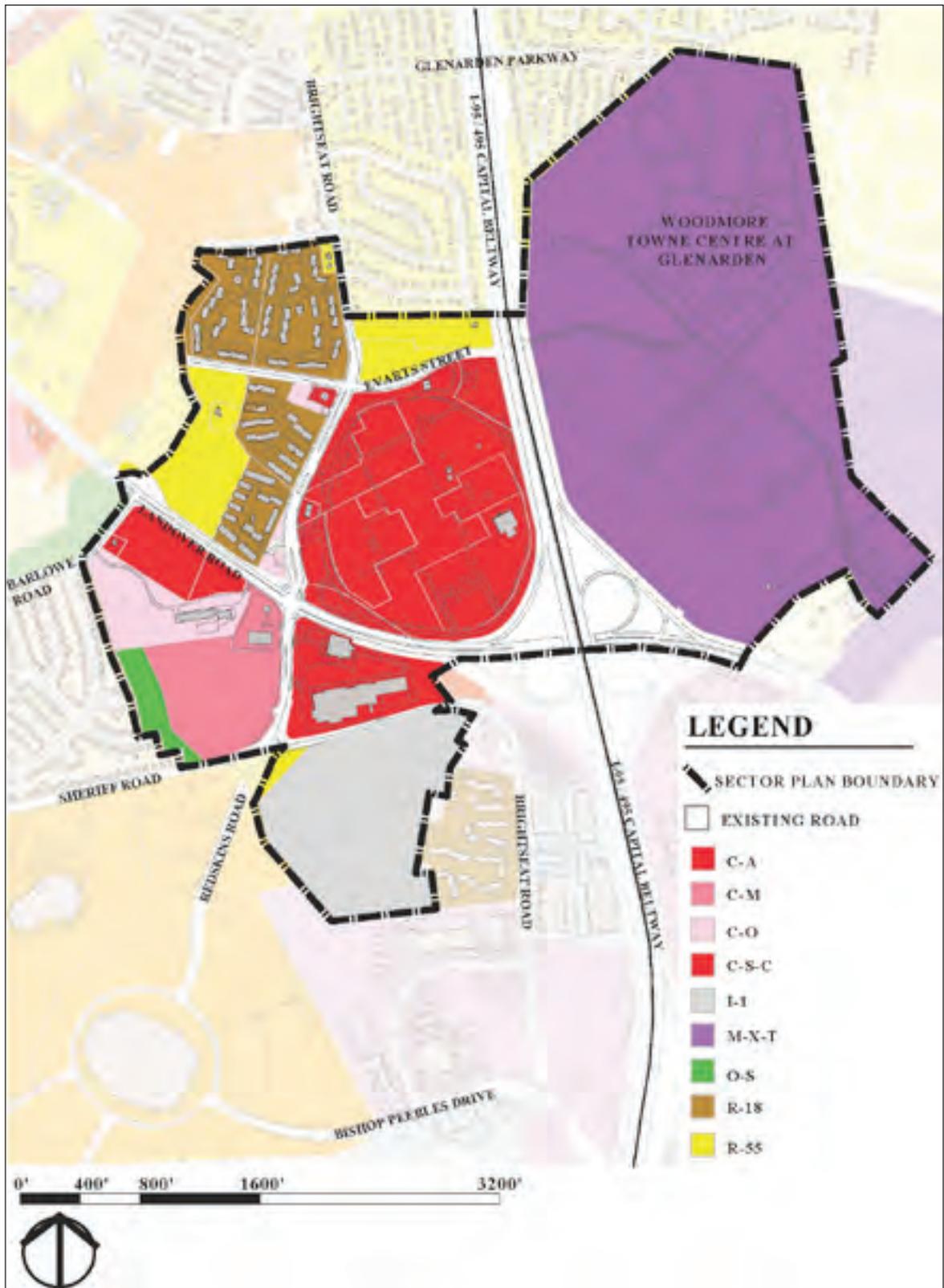
(See Map 3: Existing Land Use on page 14.)

### *Environmental Issues*

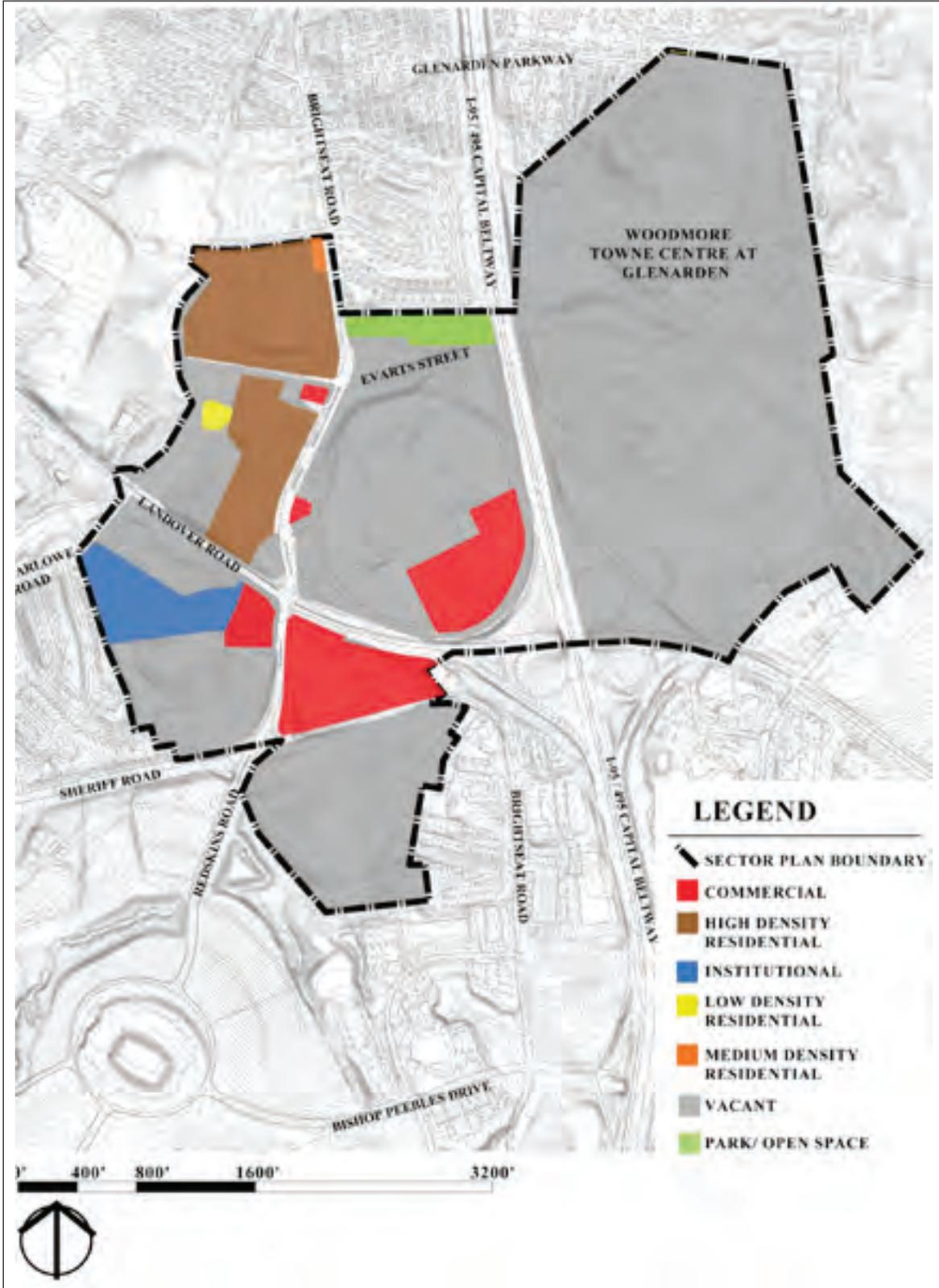
- Preserving environmentally sensitive land while incorporating these areas as natural assets to the community.
- Addressing poor water quality in local waterways by limiting the amount of paved surfaces in the sector area and incorporating best practices in stormwater management into all new development.

### *Public Facility and Safety Issues*

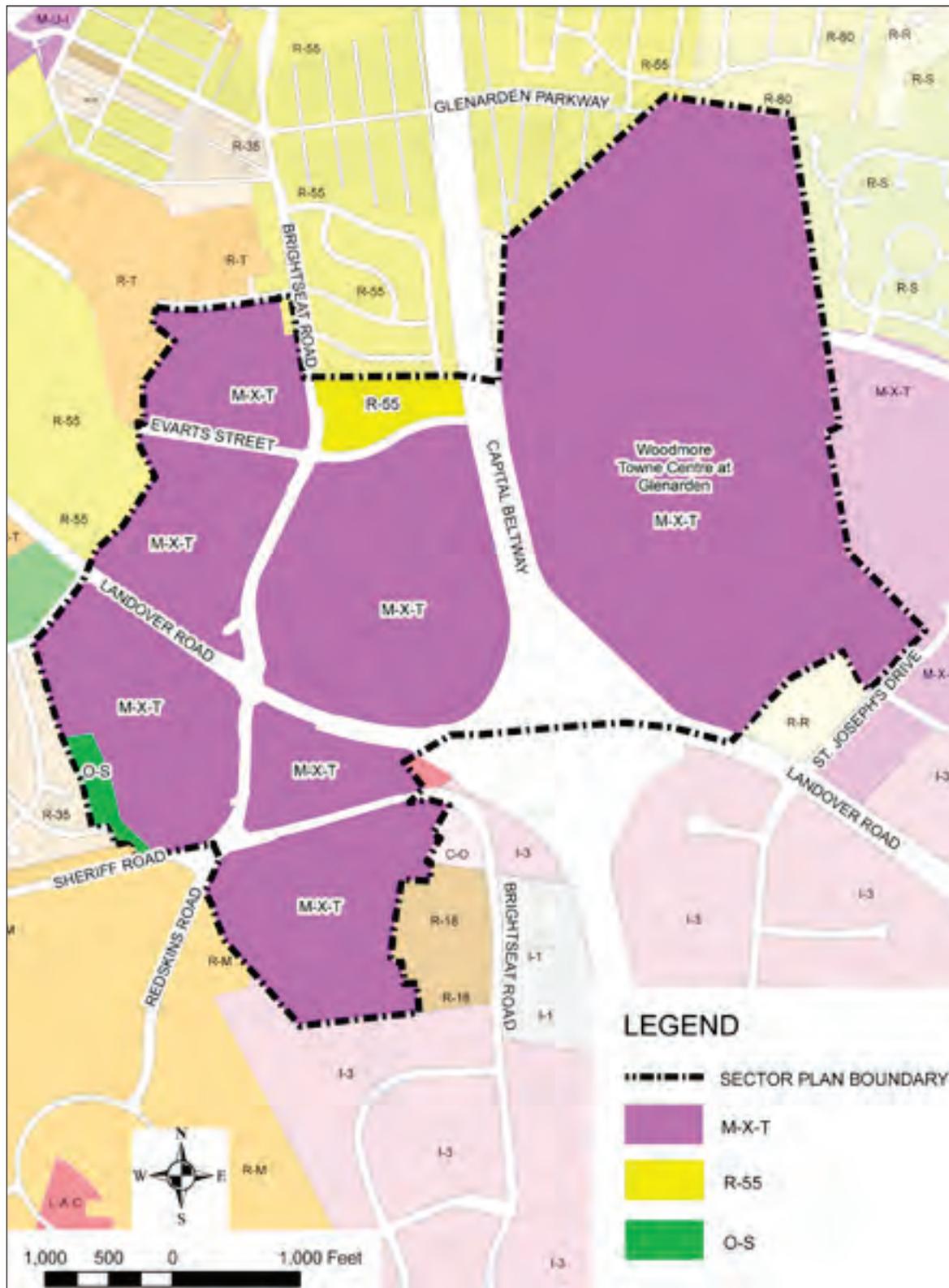
- Expanding the amount of accessible open space to complement the existing Henry P. Johnson Park.
- Ensuring that the quality and capacity of school facilities meet the needs of future residents.
- Improving public safety in the sector area.



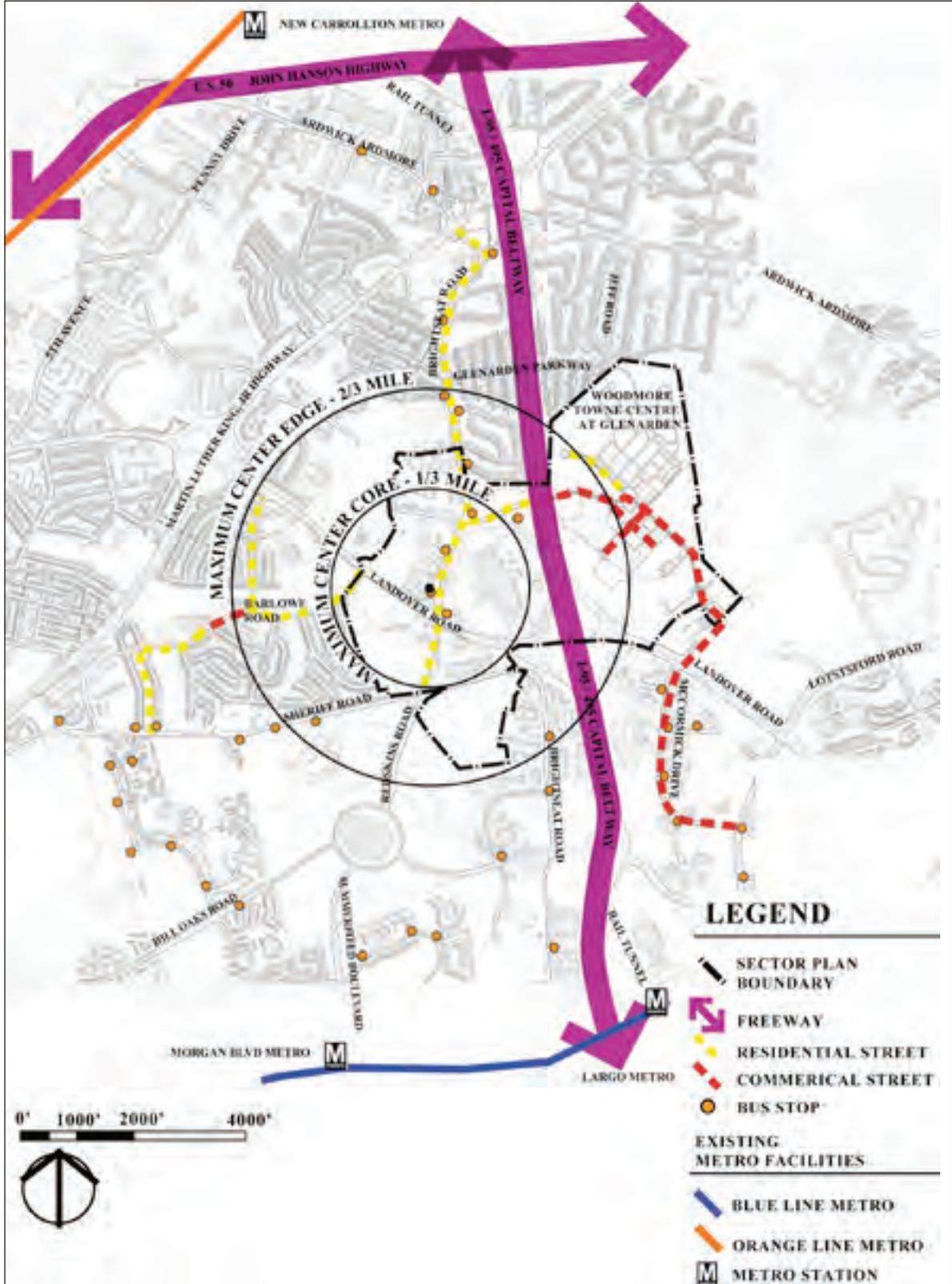
Map 2: Existing Zoning



Map 3: Existing Land Use



Map 4: Approved Zoning



Map 5: Access and Circulation