

# Abstract

## Title: Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment

**Author:** The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
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**Abstract:** The Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment seeks to bring transit-oriented development to the four Metrorail station areas along the Southern Green Line: Branch Avenue, Suitland, Naylor Road, and Southern Avenue in order to maximize the potential for economic and community development, and identifies opportunities for infill and redevelopment, sets a vision for each station area, and makes recommendations for future land use, creation of new Transit-Oriented Development zoning districts, regional and local roadway projects, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities and outlines implementation strategies, including specific recommendations for rezoning through the approved SMA where existing zoning districts can be applied to facilitate plan implementation.

**Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment**  
**February 2014**

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- The preparation, adoption, and, from time to time, amendment or extension of the 2002 Approved General Plan for Prince George's County for the physical development of the Maryland Washington Regional District;
- The acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of a public park system; and
- In Prince George's County only, the operation of the entire county public recreation program.

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# Foreword

The Prince George's County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is pleased to make available the 2014 *Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*. This plan addresses opportunities to bring transit-oriented development (TOD) to the four Metrorail station areas along the Southern Green Line of the Metrorail system: Branch Avenue, Suitland, Naylor Road, and Southern Avenue. These stations are a major asset for Prince George's County and the plan makes recommendations to maximize their value for economic and community development.

Policy guidance for this plan came from the 2002 *Approved Prince George's County General Plan*, the 2000 *Approved Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for the Heights and Vicinity*, the 2008 *Approved Branch Avenue Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*, the 2006 *Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan*, and county functional master plans including the 2005 *Countywide Green Infrastructure Functional Master Plan*, 2008 *Approved Public Safety Facilities Master Plan*, 2009 *Countywide Master Plan of Transportation*, and 2010 *Water Resources Master Plan*.

The goals, concepts, guidelines and public participation program, approved by both the Planning Board and the District Council in February and March 2012 outlined the major issues, challenges, and opportunities that informed the plan and helped to provide its structure. Public participation from October 2011 to February 2013 consisted of stakeholder outreach, including interviews with key land owners, developers, business owners, county and state officials, and government agencies, and a series of community workshops.

The Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan sets a vision for each of the four stations based on a detailed real estate market analysis and the available opportunities for infill and redevelopment within an easy walk of the four Metro stations. The recommended future land use plan is carefully shaped to encourage creative response from developers by providing flexibility in use, while also guiding and shaping growth that is the right fit for each station, including reserving land at the Branch Avenue station area for the establishment of a regionally important employment center. Provision of pedestrian and bicycle facilities is a crucial component of creating transit-oriented development, and the plan makes detailed recommendations for improving non-motorized access to each of the four station areas. Major projects to create a more integrated roadway network are also outlined, along with a basic recommendation to establish a grid of walkable streets around the stations. The plan also outlines implementation strategies, including conceptual recommendations for new TOD zoning districts and specific recommendations for rezoning through the Sectional Map Amendment, where existing zoning districts can be applied to facilitate plan implementation.

Placemaking park and urban design features are also included in the plans for each station, working with and improving on existing assets and landscape features. This plan envisions the Southern Green Line as a place to live, work, and shop with transit access and walkable neighborhoods at the center of community life. New investment in the immediate station areas will also support revitalization and conservation of existing residential areas.

On July 2, 2013, the Prince George's County Planning Board and the County Council held a joint public hearing to solicit comments on the preliminary plan and proposed sectional map amendment (SMA). The Planning Board adopted the plan and the sectional map amendment on September 26, 2013, with modifications pursuant to PGCPB Resolution No. 13-98. The District Council held a work session and proposed amendments to the adopted plan and SMA. On January 14, 2014, a second joint public hearing was held on the proposed amendments. The District Council approved the sector plan and the sectional map respectively on February 25, 2014.

 appreciates the contribution and active involvement of the community and stakeholders in this innovative planning effort.  
Sincerely,

Elizabeth M. Hewlett  
Chairman  
Prince George's County Planning Board.



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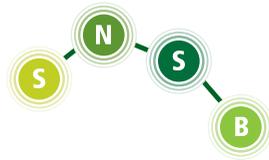
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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### Why Plan?

The 2014 *Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment (SMA)* seeks to bring transit-oriented development (TOD) to southern Prince George’s County by way of the Metro Green Line. This transit line experienced more growth in jobs and households than any other transit line in the Washington Metropolitan Area between 2000 and 2010, although the District of Columbia realized most of this growth. However, the extension of this Metro line into southern Prince George’s County in 2001 has opened up an important new, but unrealized, opportunity for capturing a portion of projected regional growth, particularly TOD, over the next 20 years in this area of the County. Currently, the station areas are undeveloped and underdeveloped but offer sites of sufficient scale to create significant development projects within a ten-minute ride to Washington, D.C. The transit line runs through older communities and commercial corridors where growth has been stagnant and where the best opportunity for revitalization and redevelopment rests with the ability of the Metro stations to attract TOD. This development model delivers higher property values, makes use of significant transit investments, is attractive to millennials and seniors, has positive environmental impacts, and is more sustainable. It integrates uses, is compact and walkable, and provides a range of housing, transit options and urban amenities.

This sector plan establishes a vision for the individual station areas, the sector plan area as a whole, and presents a comprehensive strategy for achieving TOD. The vision and strategy rely upon a real estate market analysis that measured growth potential and opportunity, and input from stakeholders, including all levels of government, developers, property owners, civic organizations and area residents. The plan creates a tailored development program for each station that builds upon the station area assets and key characteristics and combines the essential elements of TOD. Additionally, the plan provides an implementation

strategy that identifies immediate actions that will be necessary to facilitate short-term development opportunities as well as a long-term development scenario for the Metro corridor. Plan recommendations address urban design, land use and zoning, mobility and access, and public facilities

The plan recognizes the importance of preserving and enhancing existing communities within the sector plan area and integrating development opportunities around the four Metro stations. It leverages the area’s robust transit service and identifies opportunities for attracting new residents, shoppers, and major employers and it supports existing area businesses and government centers.

### Partnership for Sustainable Communities

An opportunity to partner with the federal government through its Partnership for Sustainable Communities served as the impetus for the sector plan. The partnership seeks to help communities improve access to affordable housing and provide more transportation options while protecting the environment. In 2010, the Prince George’s County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) applied for and received a Challenge Grant from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to prepare an action plan to bring TOD to the Southern Green Line Metro stations. Key planning objectives noted in the grant proposal were to increase the County’s share of regional job growth; address income, jobs, and transportation disparities; increase quality affordable housing through mixed-income projects; increase transportation options; improve reverse commuting patterns; enhance connectivity and linkages to and between Metro stations; and stabilize and preserve nearby communities. As a grant recipient, the commission and County are required to align its planning effort with six livability principles that form the cornerstone of the partnership. The livability principles and the manner in which the sector plan seeks

to achieve them are described below.

1. *Provide More Transportation Choices*: increasing transportation choices is a key recommendation of the sector plan. The plan recommends accommodating all modes of transportation including walking and bicycling to the stations through the provision of safe sidewalks, trails, and bicycle amenities; and to support bus transit to supplement existing rail transit; and promote the expansion and better coordination of bus routes to improve services to the stations.
2. *Enhance Economic Competitiveness*: the real estate market analysis suggests a changing marketplace and a strong opportunity within the sector plan area to accommodate a larger share of the region’s job and housing needs. Success will depend upon creating demand drivers for all land uses (multifamily residential, professional office, and lifestyle retail) that are necessary for TOD.
3. *Promote Equitable, Affordable Housing*: the plan recommends preserving market-rate affordable housing in existing neighborhoods as well as increasing mixed-income housing near the transit stations.
4. *Support Existing Communities*: recommendations to better connect existing communities to transit and to provide nearby opportunities for employment and greater housing options will benefit these communities. Additionally, higher-value TOD will help improve property values in adjacent communities, thereby creating opportunities for reinvestment.
5. *Coordinate Policies and Leverage Investment*: the planning process provided a unique opportunity for jurisdictions with a stake in the Metro corridor to work together towards TOD, including reconciling conflicting policies and priorities, coordinating programs and services, and collaborating on development opportunities.

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6. *Value Communities and Neighborhoods*: the plan recommends an array of infrastructure improvements including road and trail extensions, new sidewalks, and new public facilities that will benefit surrounding and new transit communities.

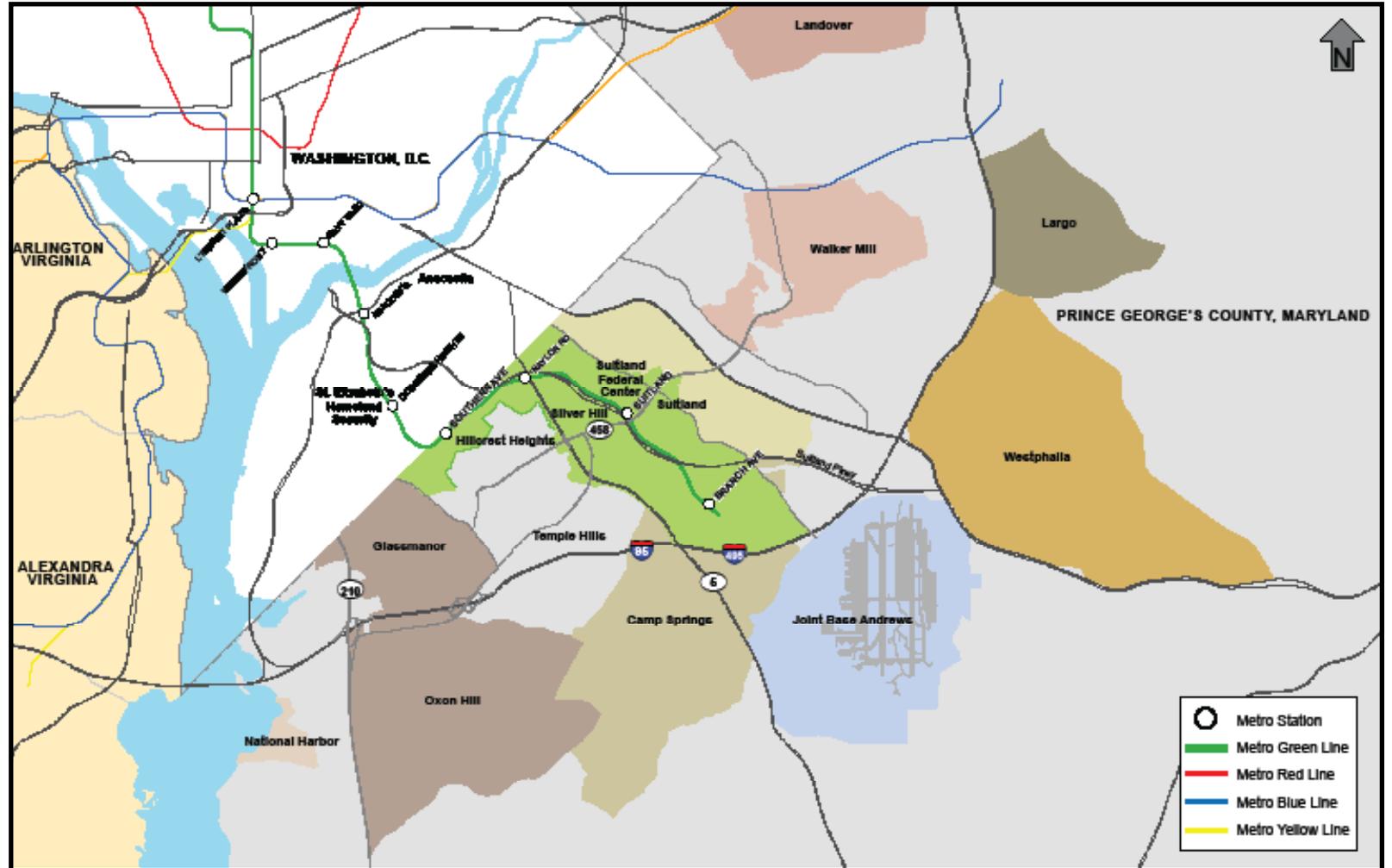
## Sector Plan Area Boundary

The sector plan area boundary is organized around the last four Metro stations on the Southern Green Line in southwest Prince George’s County, approximately four miles in a straight line from the Mall in downtown Washington, D.C. It is roughly bounded by Southern Avenue to the west, Suitland Road (MD 218) to the north, Branch Avenue (MD 5) to the south, and the Capital Beltway (I-495) to the east and lies between the district line at Southern Avenue and Joint Base Andrews Naval Air Facility on Allentown Road. The area is best known by its individual neighborhoods—Suitland, Silver Hill, Camp Springs, Hillcrest Heights, and Temple Hills; all of which are unincorporated, U.S. Census-designated places. The sector plan boundary encompasses over 3,700 acres and contains approximately 25,000 residents.

The four Metro stations are:

- Southern Avenue
- Naylor Road
- Suitland
- Branch Avenue

The Southern Avenue Metro Station is located on Southern Avenue just across the Washington, D.C. line in Prince George’s County. It lies on the western edge of the Hillcrest Heights community and is the most isolated of the four stations because of its location between the Oxon Run stream and a 100-foot bluff west of the station. The Naylor Road Metro Station sits between Naylor Road (MD 673) and Branch Avenue (MD 5) at Suitland Parkway, also close to the Washington, D.C. border. About two miles east is the Suitland Metro Station at Suitland Parkway and Silver Hill Road (MD 458) which sits immediately west of the 240-acre Suitland Federal Center. The last station on the line, Branch Avenue (MD 5), is one-half mile from Branch Avenue (MD 5) and the Capital



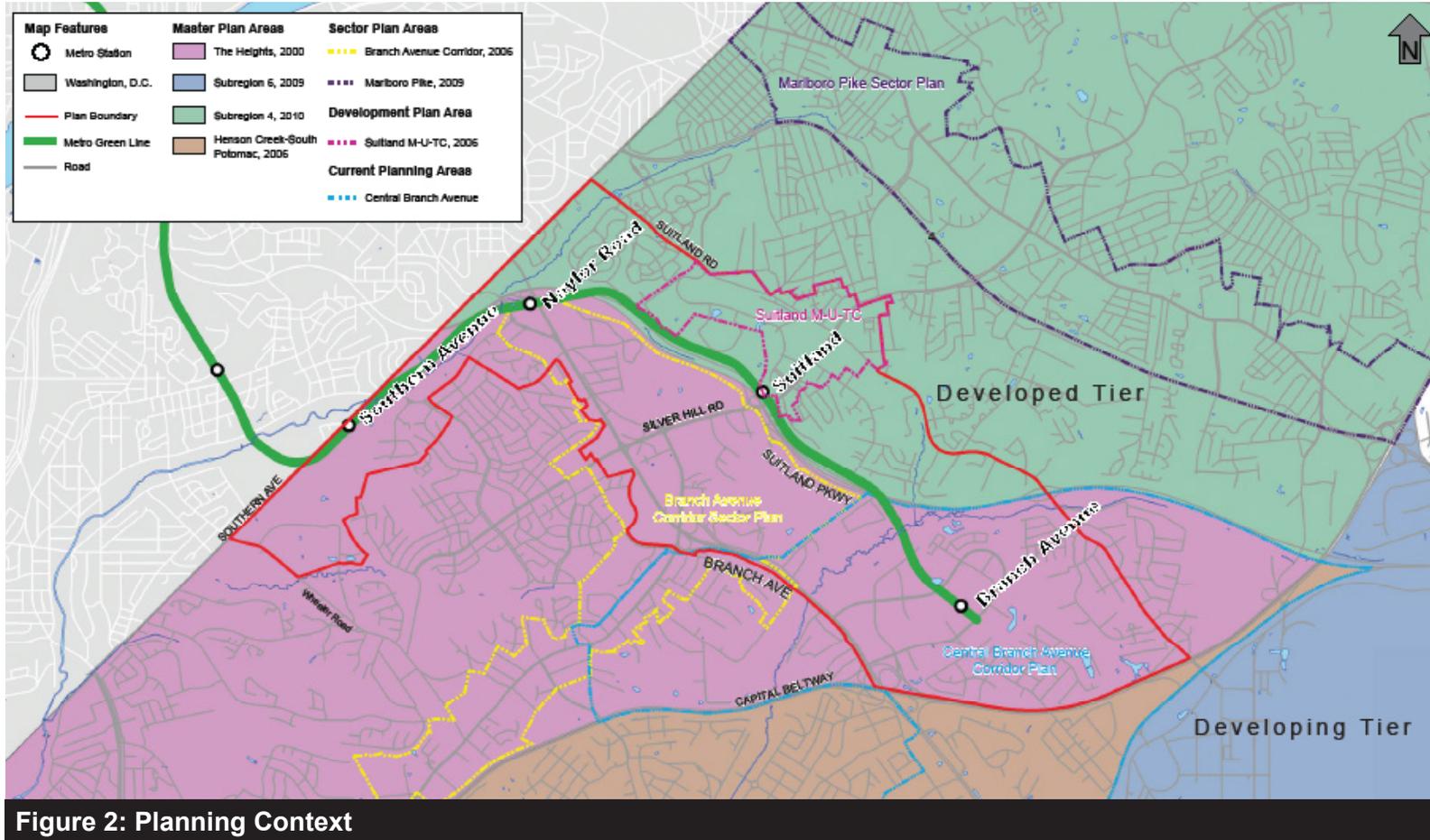
**Figure 1: Regional Context**

Beltway (I-495). Developable land surrounds the station in every direction and recent residential development close to the station more appropriately defines the market for TOD. A one-half mile radius around each station roughly defines the station areas.

Several major transportation routes exist within and near the sector plan area. They include Suitland Parkway, Branch Avenue (MD 5), and Pennsylvania Avenue (MD 4), all major expressways

leading into Washington, D.C., and the Capital Beltway (I-495) which provides access to the whole Washington metropolitan area. Silver Hill Road (MD 458) is the only arterial connection between Pennsylvania Avenue (MD 4), Suitland Parkway, and Branch Avenue (MD 5) between Southern Avenue and the Capital Beltway (I-495).

## Relationship to Other Plans, Policies, and Initiatives



**Figure 2: Planning Context**

Portions of the sector plan area fall within the boundaries and policy framework of several recent plans in addition to the 2002 General Plan, several countywide functional master plans, and the area is under the jurisdiction of state planning policy. This sector plan, however, represents the first time that planning has occurred along the entire length of the southern Metro Green Line in Prince George’s County. More recent sector plans have primarily focused on individual stations and adjacent communities thereby missing an opportunity to understand how the stations relate to and can potentially complement each other, and how they could benefit from an integrated TOD strategy. This sector plan is both

informed by and will update these plans as necessary to reflect new policies, priorities, and strategies that relate to land use, development patterns, and urban design; zoning; transportation and other public-facility improvements; and parks and recreation facilities. These planning efforts are organized below in their respective categories including master plans, sector plans, and related studies; countywide plans; and state planning initiatives.

**Master and Sector Plans**

The following plans cover a portion of the Southern Green Line area including one or more of the Green Line Metro stations:

The 2000 *Approved Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for the Heights and Vicinity* predates the opening of the Southern Green Line stations and, in fact, the Naylor Road Metro Station was under construction at the time the plan was developed. The plan includes three of the four Metro stations though it addresses them within the context of the surrounding neighborhood not in relation to one another. The Suitland Metro Station is outside the boundaries of the sector plan area. The Heights plan recommends new land uses at the stations to promote development intensities that take advantage of the new transit infrastructure. With the exception of the Naylor Road Metro Station area, the plan established the zoning patterns currently in existence today. Office zoning encompasses most of the Southern Avenue Metro Station area while a mix of zoning districts permitting office, residential, commercial and mixed-use development were put in place in the Branch Avenue Metro Station area. The 2007 *Branch Avenue Corridor Plan* established the current zoning at the Naylor Road Metro Station. The Heights plan also predated the 2002 General Plan that later established the development tiers and Metro station classifications.

The 2006 *Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center (M-U-TC) Development Plan* presents a land use concept for a town center in Suitland including new retail, office, and residential uses at a development intensity appropriate for a Metro station location. The boundaries include the Suitland Metro Station and the adjacent community. The plan established the Mixed-Use Town Center zone (M-U-TC) to implement the development plan for the area. The zone permits land use flexibility and provides unique design standards and guidelines for commercial and residential development consistent with the plan. The district has its own by-right development review process that involves a local development review committee and Planning Department administrative signoff of development applications that are in conformance with these standards and guidelines. This sector plan encompasses the entire Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center (M-U-TC) area within its boundaries but leaves the Mixed-Use Town Center (M-U-TC) zone in place.

The 2007 *Branch Avenue Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* recommends an urban mix of uses integrated with new office buildings within walking distance of the Naylor Road Metro

# Introduction

Station. It also recommends mixed-use, medium- to high-intensity land uses with emphasis on commercial development at the Iverson Mall and Marlow Heights Shopping Center. The plan provides design concepts, standards, and guidelines to ensure transit- and pedestrian-oriented redevelopment in urban form. The plan rezoned property, along the Branch Avenue (MD 5) corridor from the Naylor Road Metro Station to Marlow Heights Shopping Center, to Mixed Use-Transportation Oriented (M-X-T) and a 20-acre parcel, at the southwestern quadrant of the intersection of Silver Hill Road (MD 458) and Suitland Parkway, from Multifamily Medium Density Residential (R-18) to Multifamily High Density Residential (R-10).

The 2013 *Central Branch Avenue (CBA) Corridor Revitalization Sector Plan* includes the Branch Avenue Metro Station area within its boundaries but acknowledges that this area is the subject of the 2014 *Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan*. The CBA plan focuses on communities along the Branch Avenue (MD 5) corridor between the station and MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center and recognizes the station area as a major development opportunity along the corridor. The 2014 *Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan* updates the *CBA Corridor Revitalization Sector Plan* as it relates to the station area.

## Related Studies

Other planning initiatives and studies currently underway that directly affect the Southern Green Line sector plan area include:

- The 2010 *Branch Avenue Station Access and Joint Development Study* completed by Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). The study includes a development concept for the 33-acre WMATA station site and identifies station access and facility improvements needed to ensure efficient operation of the transit facility as the area builds out.
- The 2011 *Naylor Road Metro Station Area Accessibility Study* identifies hindrances to pedestrian accessibility and provides recommendations for improvement and associated costs for improvement options.
- The 2012 *Naylor Road Metro Station Access and Capacity Study* identifies access and facility improvements needed to efficiently

operate the transit facility based on the *CBA Corridor Revitalization Sector Plan* projected build-out estimates.

## Countywide Plans

Several countywide plans, including the 2002 *Approved General Plan*, establish policies and recommendations for future growth and development in the County. These plans informed the Southern Green Line planning process and the resulting plan will update these countywide plans in order to reflect new policies and implementation strategies.

The 2002 *Approved General Plan* sets forth goals, objectives, policies, and strategies for the County. It divides the County into three growth policy tiers: Developed Tier, Developing Tier, and Rural Tier to distinguish different development patterns and the form and intensity of development. These policy areas designate areas of significant economic development, residential development, and preservation. The Developed Tier includes communities within the Capital Beltway (I-495) including all four Southern Green Line station areas. The Developed Tier contains more than half of the County's households and nearly half the employment. The General Plan vision for the Developed Tier is a network of sustainable, transit-supporting, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, medium- to high-density communities. Policies for the Developed Tier emphasize quality infill and redevelopment, provision of adequate public facilities to serve existing and future residents, as well as preservation and enhancement of the environment.

The general plan also targets growth to a number of designated centers classified as Metropolitan, Regional, or Community Centers. These centers capitalize on existing infrastructure by locating dwellings, jobs, and shopping centers closer to transit. The Southern Avenue Metro Station area is designated a Community Center which is envisioned as having concentrations of activities, services, and land uses that serve the immediate neighborhoods. The Naylor Road and Suitland Metro Station areas are both designated Regional Centers. Regional Centers are locations for regionally marketed retail destinations, office and employment areas, higher-education facilities, and possibly sports and

recreational complexes. High-density residential development may be an option if the needed public facilities and services can be provided.

The Branch Avenue Metro Station is designated a Metropolitan Center which is the highest-intensity development classification in the general plan. Perhaps the best existing example in the County of the type of development sought at a Metropolitan Center is National Harbor, with plans for other areas such as New Carrollton also moving into implementation as a designated Metropolitan Center. These Metropolitan Centers are to have a concentration of economic activities that attract employers, workers, and customers from other parts of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, such as large government offices and major private-sector employers, major educational complexes, or high-intensity commercial uses. High-density residential development may also be located at a Metropolitan Center.

The 2005 *Approved Countywide Green Infrastructure Functional Master Plan*, 2008 *Approved Public Safety Facilities Master Plan*, 2009 *Approved Countywide Master Plan of Transportation*, 2010 *Approved Water Resources Functional Master Plan*, and 2010 *Approved Prince George's County Historic Sites and Districts Plan* amended and updated functional elements of the general plan. This sector plan further amends these countywide functional master plans to achieve the community vision for the future of the Southern Green Line.

## State Planning Policy

The Maryland General Assembly enacted the 1992 Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act to encourage economic growth, limit sprawl, and protect the state's natural resources. The act establishes overarching land use policies to be locally implemented statewide.

These policies are stated in the form of eight visions. The 1992 Maryland Planning Act was updated with the passage of the 2009 Smart and Sustainable Growth Act.

The 1997 Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Act builds on the foundation of the eight visions adopted in the

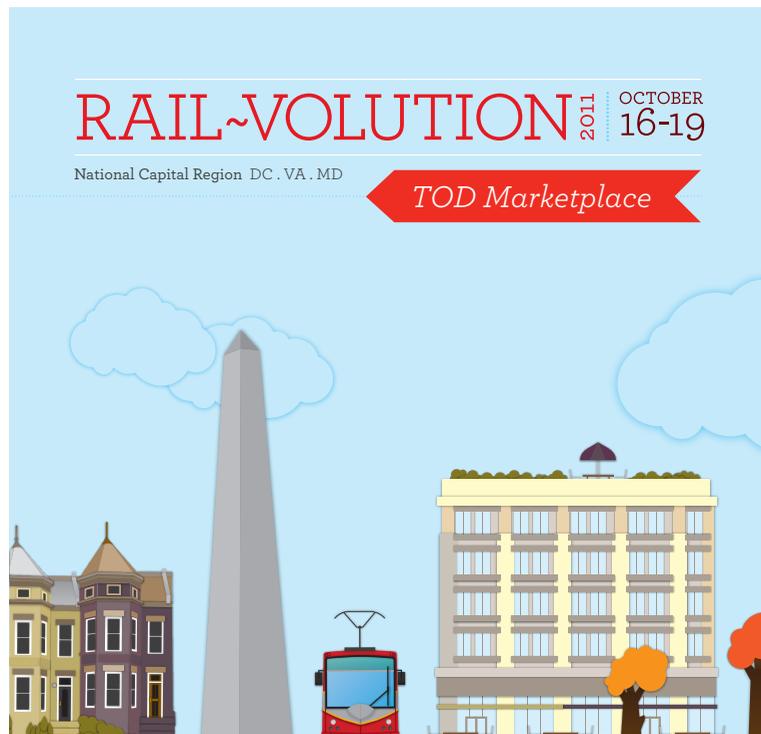
1992 Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act, as amended. The 1997 act is nationally recognized as an effective means of evaluating and implementing statewide programs to guide growth and development. The Maryland smart growth program has three goals:

1. To save valuable remaining natural resources.
2. To support existing communities and neighborhoods.
3. 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 that requires that state funding for projects in Maryland municipalities, other existing communities, industrial, and planned growth areas designated by counties will receive priority funding over other projects. These smart growth areas are called Priority Funding Areas (PFA). The entirety of the sector plan location is within the Targeted Growth and Revitalization area as shown on the County's Plan Maryland Designated Places map and is designated a PFA by the County and the state. The sector plan recommends a phasing plan and identifies additional tools for implementation to take full advantage of the PFA designation.

The 2009 Smart and Sustainable Growth Act clarifies the link between local comprehensive plans and local land use ordinances. The bill reinforces the importance of planning for sustainable growth and development in all local jurisdictions within the state. The eight plan visions stated in the 1992 *Maryland Planning Act* were replaced with an updated and expanded list of 12 visions:

1. A high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water, and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment.
2. Citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are sensitive to their responsibilities in achieving community goals.
3. Growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to these centers, or strategically selected new centers.
4. Compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing



community character and located near available or planned transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources; preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas; and historical, cultural, and archeological resources.

5. Growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sustainable manner.
6. A well-maintained, multimodal transportation system facilitates the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods, and services within and between population and business centers.
7. A range of housing densities, types, and sizes provides residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes.
8. Economic development and natural resource-based businesses that promote employment opportunities for all income levels

within the capacity of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities are encouraged.

9. Land and water resources, including the Chesapeake and coastal bays, are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems, and living resources.
10. Waterways, forests, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems, and scenic areas are conserved.
11. Government, business entities, and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection.
12. Strategies, policies, programs, and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, state, and interstate levels to achieve these visions.

Together, the twelve visions provide guiding principles that describe how and where growth can best occur without compromising the state's natural and cultural resources. The act acknowledges that the comprehensive plans prepared by counties and municipalities form the best mechanism to establish priorities for growth and resource conservation. Once priorities are established, it is the state's responsibility to support them.

### Supplemental Documents

The planning process for this sector plan involved the preparation of several supplemental documents that informed the plan goals, vision, and strategies; and provided more in-depth information and analysis of key issues. The list of supplemental documents includes the following:

- *Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel Report (ULI TAP)* (August 2011)
- *Southern Green Line Station Area Plan Market Study and Action*

FROM **PLANNING** TO **Action**

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**SOUTHERN GREEN LINE STATION AREA PLAN**  
Bringing transit-oriented development to Prince George's County

**Join us at a Community Mixer!**

Great communities are being built along the Green Line. Help shape the next great places at Southern, Naylor Road, Suitland and Branch Avenue Metro Stations.

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
Prince George's County Planning Department

Please join us at one of these locations:

- JUN 21** Suitland Metro Station  
Thursday, June 21, 2012  
Suitland Elementary School  
4650 Homer Avenue, Suitland, MD 20746
- JUN 26** Southern Avenue & Naylor Road Metro Stations  
Tuesday, June 26, 2012  
Hillcrest Heights Community Center  
2300 Oxon Run Drive, Temple Hills, MD 20748
- JUN 27** Branch Avenue Metro Station  
Wednesday, June 27, 2012  
Carmel Midtown Square  
4500 Telfair Blvd, Suitland, MD 20746

All meetings will be held from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm.

WWW.PGPLANNING.ORG/GREENLINE TOD.HTM

*Plan, Prince George's County* (November 2012)

- *Southern Green Line Station Area Plan Existing Conditions Report* (2013)
- *Southern Green Line Station Area Plan, Transportation Access and Mobility Report* (March 2013)
- *Southern Green Line Station Area Plan Urban Design Report* (May 2013)

### Community Participation

The 2014 *Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* is the result of an extensive outreach and engagement strategy for a diverse group of key stakeholders and community members. The approach was fundamental to identifying issues and concerns and generating feedback on plan recommendations. Sustained participation by stakeholders is critical to the success of this plan. Plan implementation will require stakeholders to be advocates for and stewards of the plan during its creation but also well beyond approval. The goals for community participation were to:

- Inform and educate residents about transit-oriented development (TOD) and the opportunities that exist in the sector plan area;
- Ensure that all members of the community had an equal chance and multiple opportunities to engage in the planning process, and provide input and feedback on plan recommendations;
- Provide support for long-term, community-based advocacy for implementing the plan elements; and
- Identify resources and partnerships for implementation.

Below is a summary of the community engagement methods used during the planning process.

### Urban Land Institute (ULI) of Washington's Technical Assistance Panel (TAP):

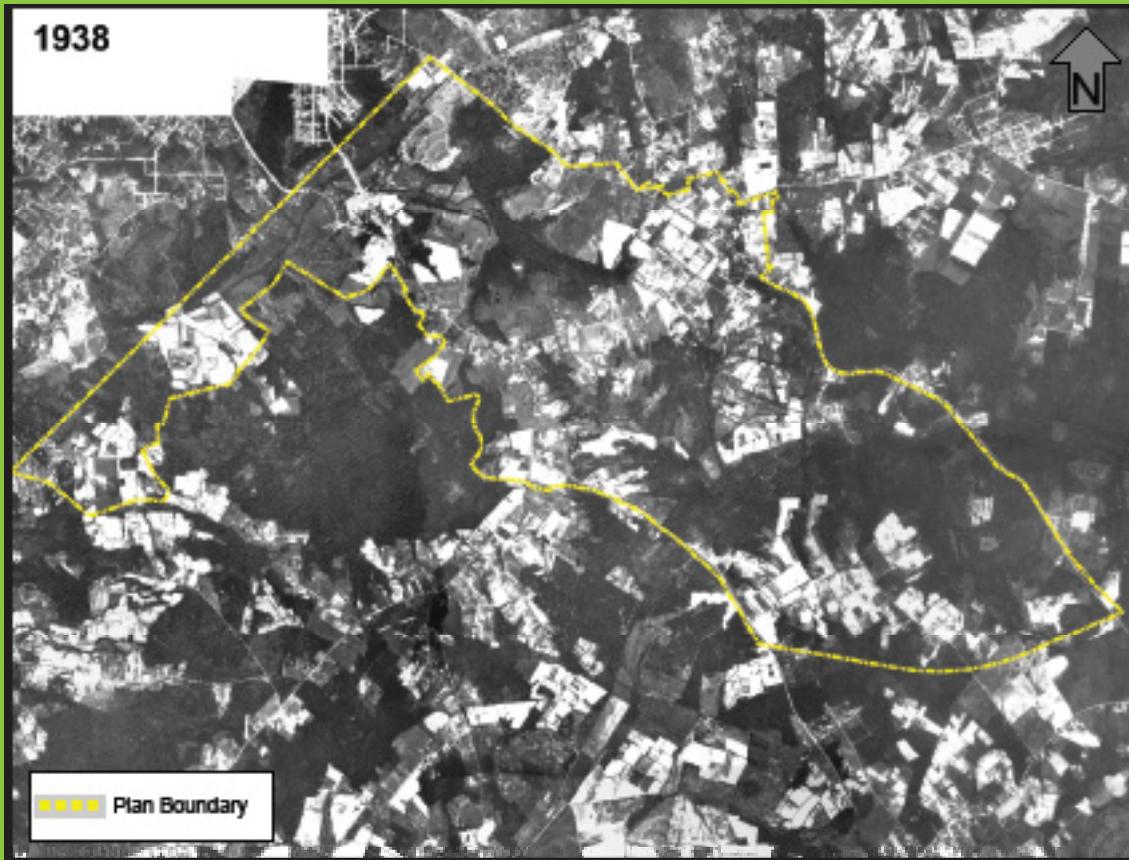
One of the first public outreach initiatives for the Southern Green Line Station Area sector plan was the use of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) of Washington's

Technical Assistance Panel (TAP). ULI TAP was used to identify issues, opportunities, and an overall strategy for bringing development to the Southern Green Line sector plan area. The ULI TAP provides expert, multidisciplinary advice on land use and real estate issues facing public agencies and nonprofit organizations in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Understanding the regional economic position of the sector plan area and suggesting strategies for future economic development was crucial to the Southern Green Line station area sector plan project. The ULI panel held a two-day workshop to collect and analyze data on the sector plan area and make preliminary recommendations on development strategies to community leaders and other key stakeholders. These recommendations were included in a final report for use in the planning process.

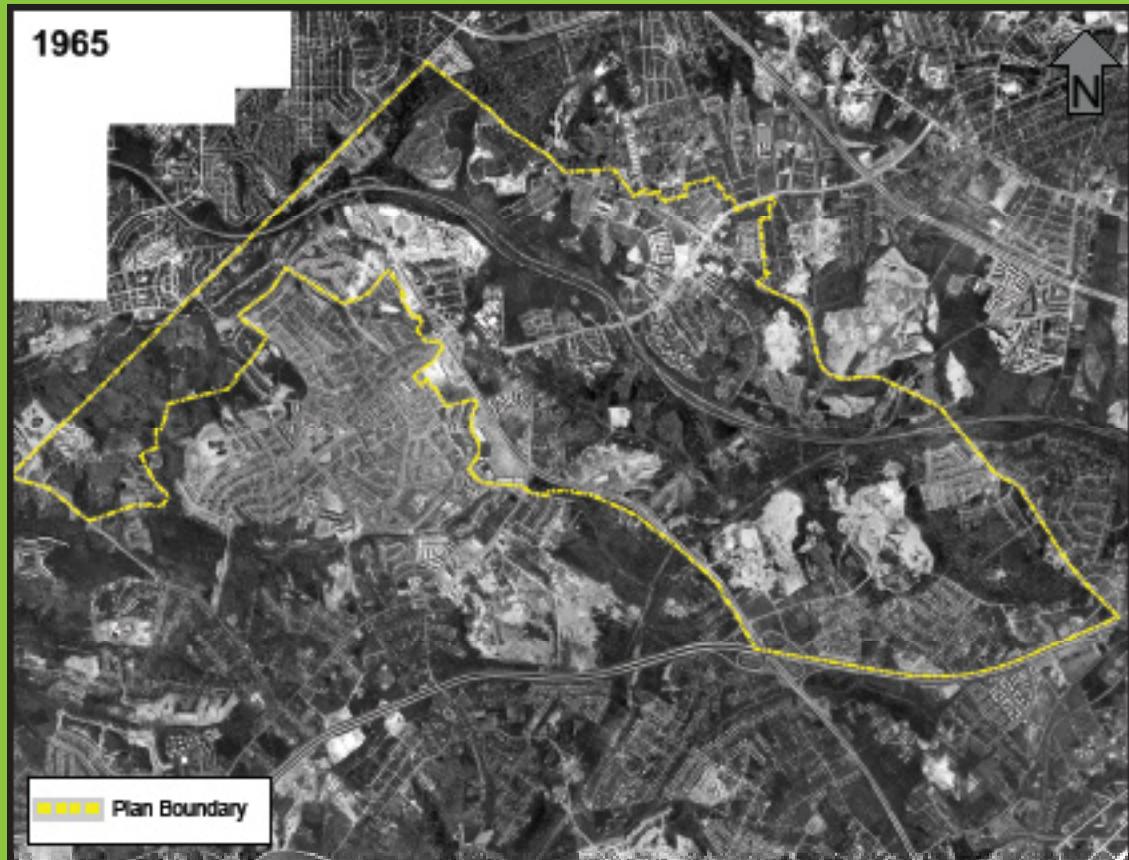
**Rail-Volution Conference:** Rail-Volution, a national organization promoting rail transit and TOD, hosted its annual conference in Washington, D.C. in October 2011 and selected the Suitland community for a mobile workshop and charrette. Conference attendees and community members, including public agencies, met in Suitland in a day-long session to discuss issues and design concepts. Community members embraced concepts developed in the workshop, which were then presented to a panel of developers at the conference.

**Technical Advisory Committee:** The creation of a technical advisory committee provided an opportunity to engage technical staff from County, state, and regional government agencies during the planning process to identify issues, generate and test recommendations, and reach consensus on a course of action. The technical advisory committee participated in a two-day charrette for its input on preliminary development concepts including related public improvements and available resources.

**Steering Committee:** A steering committee of senior staff representing local, state, federal and regional governments, and nonprofit organizations involved in TOD was established in order to identify programs and activities affecting development along the Green Line and create an environment for interagency coordination and collaboration. The following organizations were represented on the committee:



An aerial photograph from 1938 shows the rural character of southern Prince George's County. The bright white to grey areas are generally cultivated fields, showing the small-scale agricultural use of the land going back to the first settlement by Europeans. The impediments to agriculture are also shown in the darker areas that are steep slopes with trees and stream valleys. A large forested area is shown to the south of the sector plan area. Silver Hill Road (MD 458) can be seen with a concentration of fields and other uses and a hamlet at the crossroad with Suitland Road (MD 218), this being the Suitland community.



Only 30 years later the area was almost wholly suburban in character. Massive roadway projects, including the Capital Beltway (I-495), Suitland Parkway and Branch Avenue (MD 5) have been completed. Agricultural uses have all but vanished, replaced by subdivisions and the gravel pits providing the material for construction. The Hillcrest Heights neighborhood, where a large forest had stood in 1938, can be seen center left. The U.S. Census Bureau buildings can be seen at Suitland, center right.

**Figure 3: Historic Aerial Photographs**

# Introduction

- Prince George’s County Office of the County Executive and County agencies including the Departments of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T), Economic Development Corporation (EDC), Revenue Authority, and Redevelopment Authority
- Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS)
- The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC)
- Maryland Departments of Business and Economic Development, Transportation (MDOT), and Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
- United States General Services Administration (GSA)
- United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Coalition for Smarter Growth
- Urban Land Institute (ULI) of Washington
- Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
- District of Columbia Office of Planning

The steering committee met periodically over an 18 month period for its reaction to recommendations and approaches for meeting project objectives and to define the role that individual member organizations might play in plan implementation.

**Stakeholder Interviews:** Interviews included key community stakeholders and developers in the sector plan area and greater Washington, D.C. region. They were interviewed in a series of one-on-one meetings for their candid input on opportunities and challenges facing the corridor. Some of the community organizations represented included the Auth Village Civic Association, Branch Avenue in Bloom, Fleischman’s Village Civic Association, Hillcrest-Marlow Heights Civic Association, Hunter Memorial Church, Town Center at Camp Springs Homeowners Association (HOA), and Suitland Civic Association.

**Community Meetings:** A series of public meetings and workshops

were held throughout the process to engage stakeholders. These meetings provided a forum to educate stakeholders on the goals of the project, provide examples of and discuss successful TOD, identify community concerns, and solicit input and feedback on different issues, ideas, and recommendations for the sector plan area and the areas around each Metro station. Meeting planners used electronic polling to measure support for key recommendations from diverse stakeholders. This approach not only provided immediate feedback on each recommendation, but also organized the feedback based on each participants’ demographic information.

**Southern Green Line Coalition:** A coalition of community organizations and interested stakeholders formed during the development of the plan to advocate for implementation of the approved sector plan as well as serve as a voice for the sector plan area.

## Plan Organization

This sector plan is organized into eight chapters.

- Chapter 1: Includes the foregoing introduction and discussion of the plan purpose and impetus, sector plan area boundary, planning context including relationship to recent plans, policies and statewide planning initiatives, and supplemental documents. This chapter also includes a discussion of community participation in the development of the sector plan and concludes with a review of the history of the sector plan area.
- Chapter 2: Summarizes existing conditions and key findings for the sector plan area as a whole and identifies plan goals and the vision for the area including specific policies pertaining to land use and zoning, transportation and other public facility improvements.
- Chapters 3 – 6: Provide for each station area an existing condition summary, a detailed description of the station area’s typology and vision, and a development program

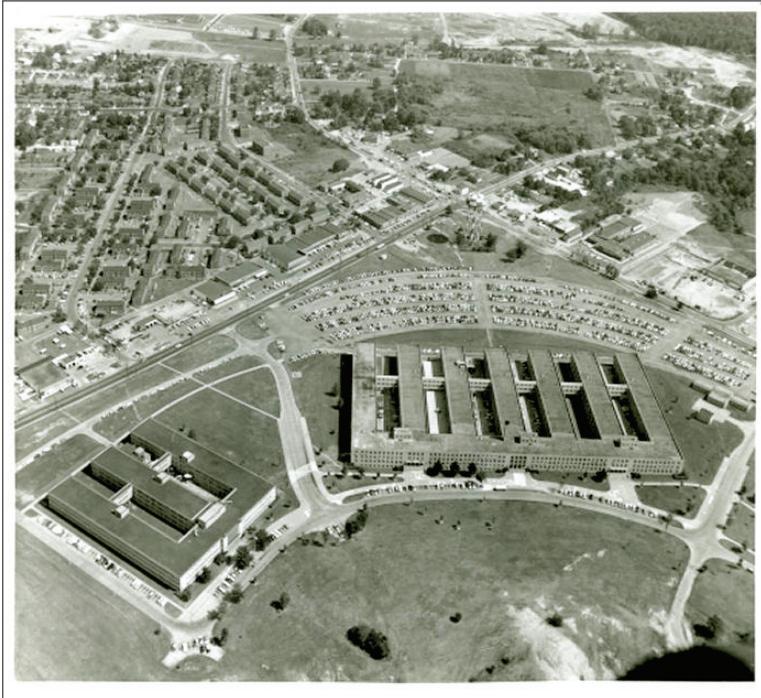
along with concepts, illustrative plans, and key land use, zoning, and transportation policies.

- Chapter 7: Presents the implementation plan that summarizes key policies, strategies, and priorities, and identifies agency roles and responsibilities. It summarizes this information within a matrix for easy reference and use.
- Chapter 8: Reviews land use and zoning policies and practices in Prince George’s County, and presents the sectional map amendment to implement the vision for the sector plan area. It identifies all rezonings and justifications.

## Sector Plan Area History and Development

Prior to World War II, southern Prince George’s County was primarily an agricultural area, that specialized in the cultivation of tobacco, a major cash crop. In the sector plan area, small truck farms grew a variety of produce for the City of Washington, D.C., located only a few miles away. Rapid change to the landscape began during World War II when the War Department moved quickly to construct the Fighter Command Station Access Parkway, later renamed Suitland Parkway in 1944, from Bolling Air Force Base to the Camp Springs Military Reservation, later renamed Andrews Air Force Base and currently named Joint Base Andrews. This road also made the connection to the new federal campus at Suitland where the U.S. Census Bureau constructed its headquarters.

Following World War II, the agrarian landscape gave way to rapid suburban development, supported by large roadway projects such as Branch Avenue (MD 5) and the Capital Beltway (I-495). While much of the suburbanization occurred in a piecemeal fashion, one subdivision at a time, the large community of Hillcrest Heights, was planned and constructed in the 1950s and 1960s. The automobile suburb incorporated a separation of land uses, which included large swaths of ranch dwellings and duplexes, and a commercial shopping center area at the intersection of Branch Avenue (MD 5) and Iverson Street. Iverson Mall was the anchor of the commercial center, opening as the first indoor shopping mall in



Post-1941 photo of Suitland looking east and showing the original U.S. Census Bureau and Suitland Manor apartment buildings. This area was redeveloped over the period 1993-2009; the buildings seen here are no longer extant.

the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area in 1967. This new style of commercial development, located at a key intersection along a new modern highway, stood in contrast to the smaller retail buildings along Silver Hill Road (MD 458) in Suitland. Incrementally, this area, once described as a rural village, came to be dominated by new auto-centric, strip shopping centers.

Beginning in 1941, the construction of the Suitland Federal Center at the intersection of Silver Hill Road (MD 458) and Suitland Road (MD 218) brought a large office development to the sector plan area, a land use that was entirely new to the region. The relocation of the U.S. Census Bureau out of downtown Washington, D.C., established a major federal presence in this part of the County. The federal government had purchased 437 acres of land on both sides of the new parkway along the north side of

Silver Hill Road (MD 458). The area to the west of the parkway was transferred to the Smithsonian Institution beginning in 1951, with additional land transferred to the Silver Hill Volunteer Fire Department and the State Roads Commission for the widening of Silver Hill Road (MD 458) in 1964. The Smithsonian Institution developed their land for storage and office facilities. This is separate from the Suitland Federal Center that occupies 226 acres of land to the east of the parkway up to Suitland Road (MD 218). Over the decades the federal campus has also developed to include a variety of federal agencies, with facilities for Naval Maritime Intelligence, the National Archives, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). A new NOAA Satellite Operations Facility Building was completed in 2005. The U.S. Census Bureau's website explains the deteriorating relationship with the surrounding community by noting: "Through the mid-1980s, the grounds of the Suitland Federal Center were open to the public and the entrances to FOB 3 were left unguarded. However, in the late 1980s, car thefts in the parking lot and petty theft in various offices brought about the need for enhanced security...A chain link fence, topped with barbed wire, was erected around the perimeter of the complex, but was replaced in January 2000 by the current, more neighborhood-friendly, black wrought-iron fence."

The design and layout of a new 1.5 million-square foot U.S. Census Bureau building, which opened in 2007, also takes a defensive stance to the surrounding community. But a master plan for the campus developed in 2002 by the General Services Administration (GSA) takes a different approach to future development with a grid of streets and blocks along Suitland Road (MD 218) that would re-engage the campus with the Suitland community.

The Auth Road area in Camp Springs has had a variety of land uses in the post-war era, from truck farms to gravel pits, to planned industrial uses. Gravel pits were scattered around the whole sector plan area, most likely in response to the large-scale road building which requires a gravel base. The pits in the Auth Road area were later filled and a wide horseshoe shaped road constructed in the early 1900s to allow for truck traffic to exit Branch Avenue (MD 5) in what was planned to be a light-industrial district. However, once the location of the Green Line alignment was settled after

decades of lawsuits, the constructed Metro line and terminus station, located between the horseshoe of Auth Way and Auth Road, altered any plans to develop the area for industrial land use. Instead real estate developers sought to construct large multifamily condominium and apartment buildings within walking distance of the Metro station. The new century and the new rail line brought the era of transit-oriented development (TOD) to southern Prince George's County. The great recession of 2007 stalled further construction, providing a period of time for the Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan process to consider the best way to maximize the value of the new Metro line.

# Introduction

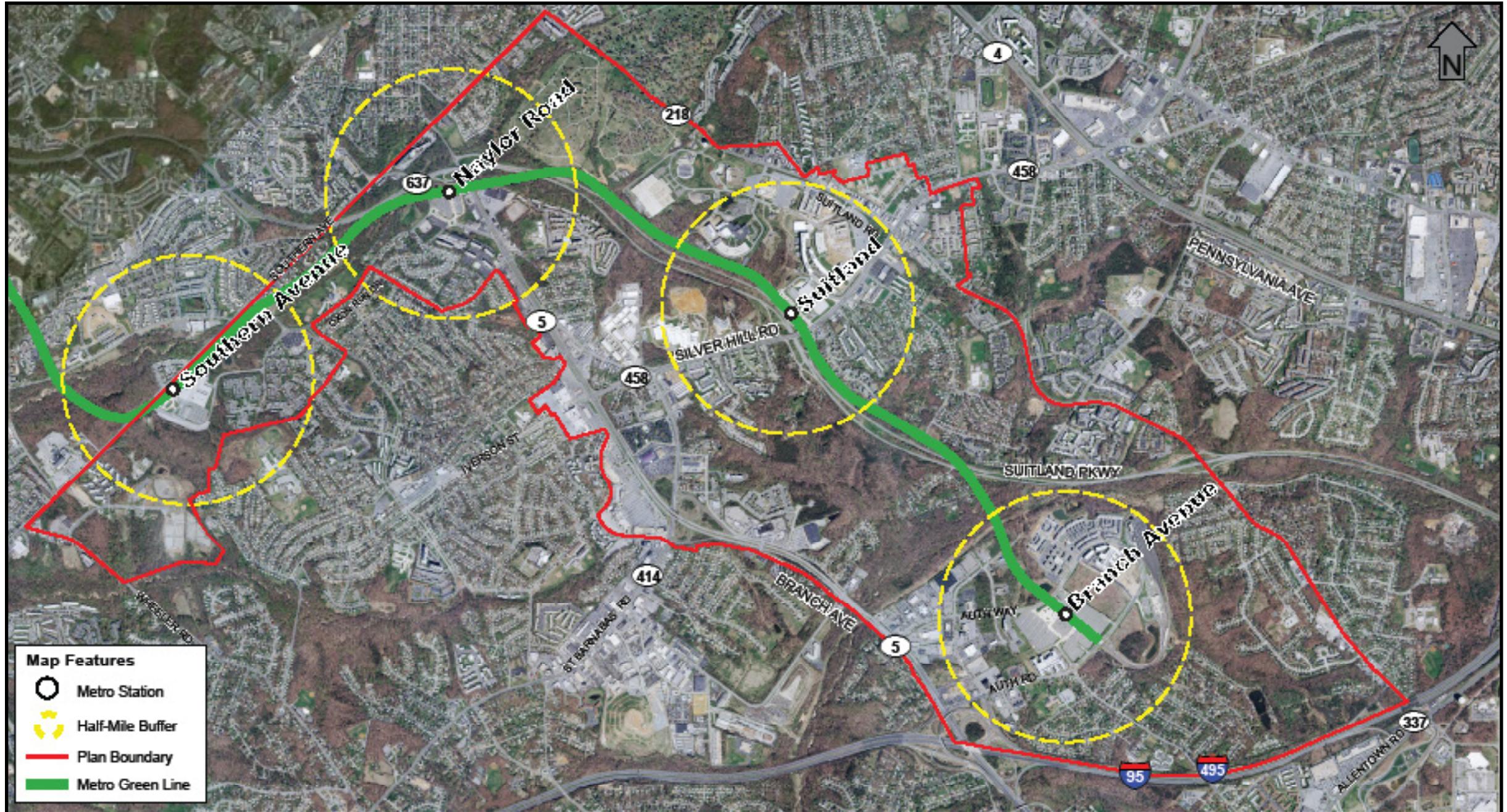


Figure 4: Project Boundary (2009 Aerial)