

Chapter 2



Chapter 2: The Vision for Largo Town Center Metro Station and Beyond

The Largo Town Center Sector Plan envisions the transformation of the Largo Town Center Metro Station area into one of Prince George’s County’s premiere mixed-use “downtowns” and 24-hour activity centers by 2035. The core area is anchored by a new Regional Medical Center plus a satellite university campus with the possibility of a future U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) tenant. The core area also features a mixed-use retail district along an extended Harry S Truman Drive. Largo Town Center is Prince George’s County’s primary local government center, offering a variety of services for county residents and businesses. A range of large and small businesses serve both the needs of citizens who reside within walking distance of the Largo Town Center Metro Station and the needs of visitors from the greater Washington metropolitan region. A wide range of sit-down restaurants, performance venues, public and private open spaces, and other cultural attractions add to the regional attraction of the new Largo Town Center area.

The sector plan area’s high-density, mixed-use core is bordered to the north by an expanded government services district and health-related service activities. New medium- to high-density residential development rings the sector plan area’s southeast quadrant between Arena Drive and Harry S Truman Drive, east of Lottsford Road. New townhomes occupy a formerly undeveloped site east of Landover Road (MD 202).

The maximum buildout scenario for the Largo Town Center sector plan area envisions a new Regional Medical Center, expanded university satellite campus, or GSA tenant within one-quarter mile of the Metro station entrance. Under this scenario, housing stock in the area has expanded to a total of 4,350 new and preexisting dwelling units. Approximately 5,000,000 square feet of commercial office and institutional space provide a rich mix of employment and business service opportunities. Some 400,000 square feet of reconfigured retail space line part of the extended Harry S Truman Drive and make up two smaller retail focus areas within the sector plan area.

The downtown area or Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) core contains the tallest buildings, with 6- to 10-story office, institutional, and residential towers surrounding the Largo Town Center Metro Station. The Regional Medical Center features building heights ranging from 5 to 14 stories. The TOD core transitions into outer neighborhoods with a range of high- and moderate-density civic/institutional, commercial office, and residential mixed-use development. Buildings in these areas range from 4 to 8 stories in height. East of Landover Road, a new community of three-story townhomes has been built. (See Map 6: Recommended Building Heights Plan on page 23.)

Largo Town Center serves as a major multimodal transportation hub with excellent highway and transit (bus and Metrorail) connections to support the new development. The area is buffered by a network of trails and open spaces that provide needed green and open space for residents. The roadway network is transformed into a network of pedestrian- and bicyclist-friendly complete streets.

Vision Elements

A new mixed-use TOD core that focuses on the Largo Town Center Metro Station. The TOD core is anchored by the extension of Harry S Truman Drive north to Arena Drive as a boulevard-like landscaped green street. The preferred buildout scenario for the TOD core features a major new institutional use—a new Regional Medical Center, expanded university satellite campus, or GSA tenant—on a site south of Arena Drive and within convenient walking distance of the Metro station. Along



with the new institutional use, a complementary mix of residential and commercial uses fosters round-the-clock activity and a genuine sense of place. A compact, connected grid of streets includes many small blocks and a variety of street and building types. The TOD core functions as a place to live, work, play, and visit, with its interrelated uses and built environment forming a cohesive, vibrant whole.

The former Boulevard at the Capital Centre shopping center has been replaced by a new main street commercial retail district that lines both sides of Harry S Truman Drive Extended. The new main street includes destination and neighborhood-oriented retail uses on ground floors with offices and residences on the upper floors. A smaller cluster of retail uses links Harry S Truman Drive to a new public green at the Metro station via a new local street. (See Map 7: Illustrative TOD Core Concept Plan on page 24.)

Expanded primary civic center to consolidate county services. The consolidation of a variety of county services at a single location has resulted in an expanded civic center north of the TOD core. The expanded government services center is an employment and cultural destination with a mix of government, cultural, educational, office, and hotel uses. New road connections make the TOD core accessible by transit and on foot. The modified street grid is punctuated and complemented by civic places that accommodate a variety of needs from public gatherings and cultural activities to quiet contemplation.

Healthcare center. The existing private healthcare complex at this location (Kaiser Permanente) has been joined by more specialized, mostly private health care providers in several medical services buildings. Healthcare-related retail uses are located in ground floor space in one or two of the new buildings.

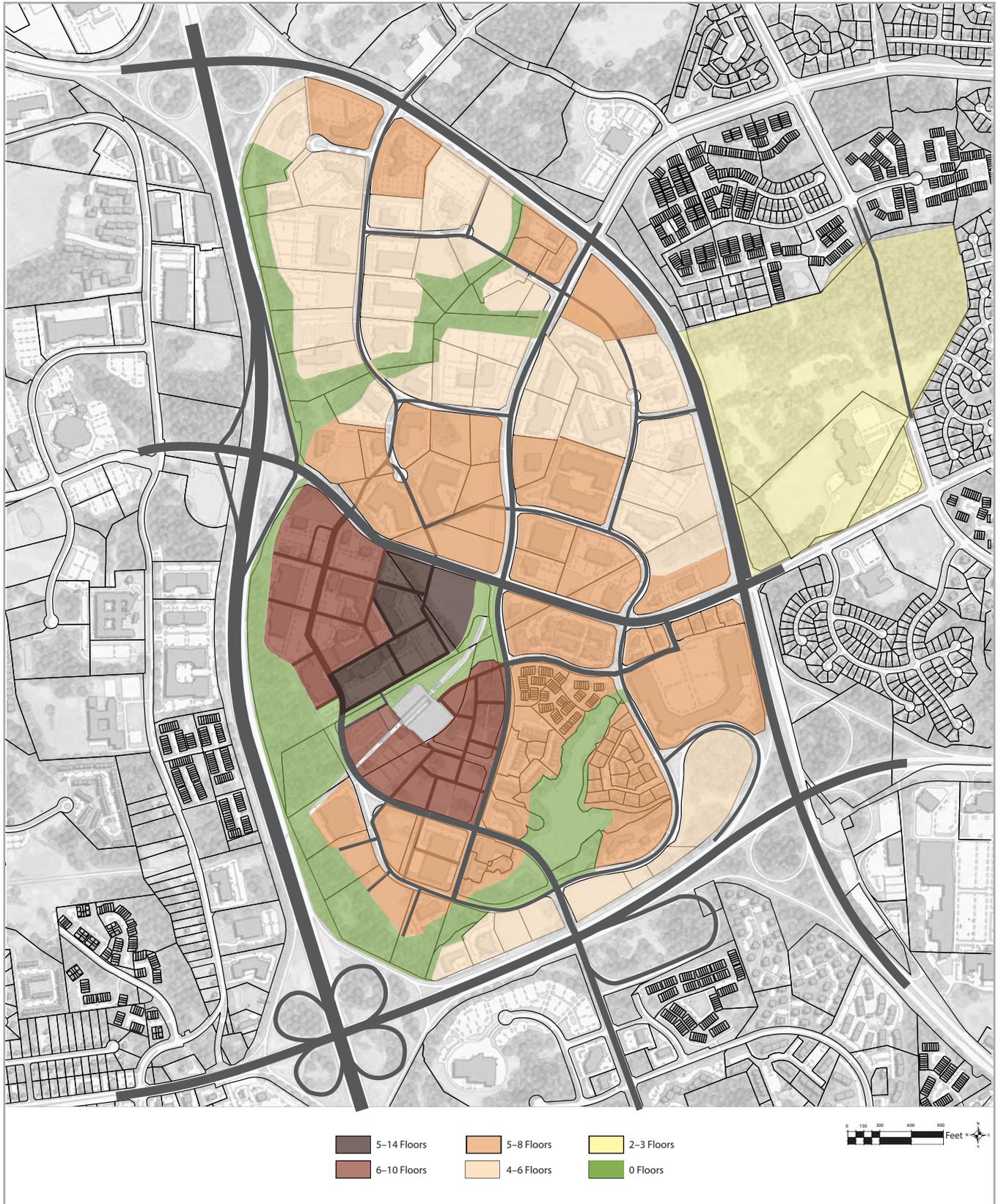
A variety of neighborhoods with a range of housing types. Largo Town Center includes a variety of neighborhoods, including housing integrated into mixed-use districts; high-density multifamily residential neighborhoods; and townhome neighborhoods. A large concentration of high-density multifamily residential units are located in the TOD core west of Lottsford Road. East and south of Largo Center Drive, moderate-to medium-density multifamily residential development buffers the sector plan area from the highway noise of Landover Road and Central Avenue (MD 214). The old

Largo Town Center Shopping Center has been replaced by new medium-density multifamily residences over reconfigured retail services that continue many of the services offered by the former shopping center. This mixed-use residential complex fronts Arena Drive and is no longer set back from the street, enabling greater access and walkability. A large townhome community sits on formerly undeveloped land that is bisected by the now-completed Campus Way North.

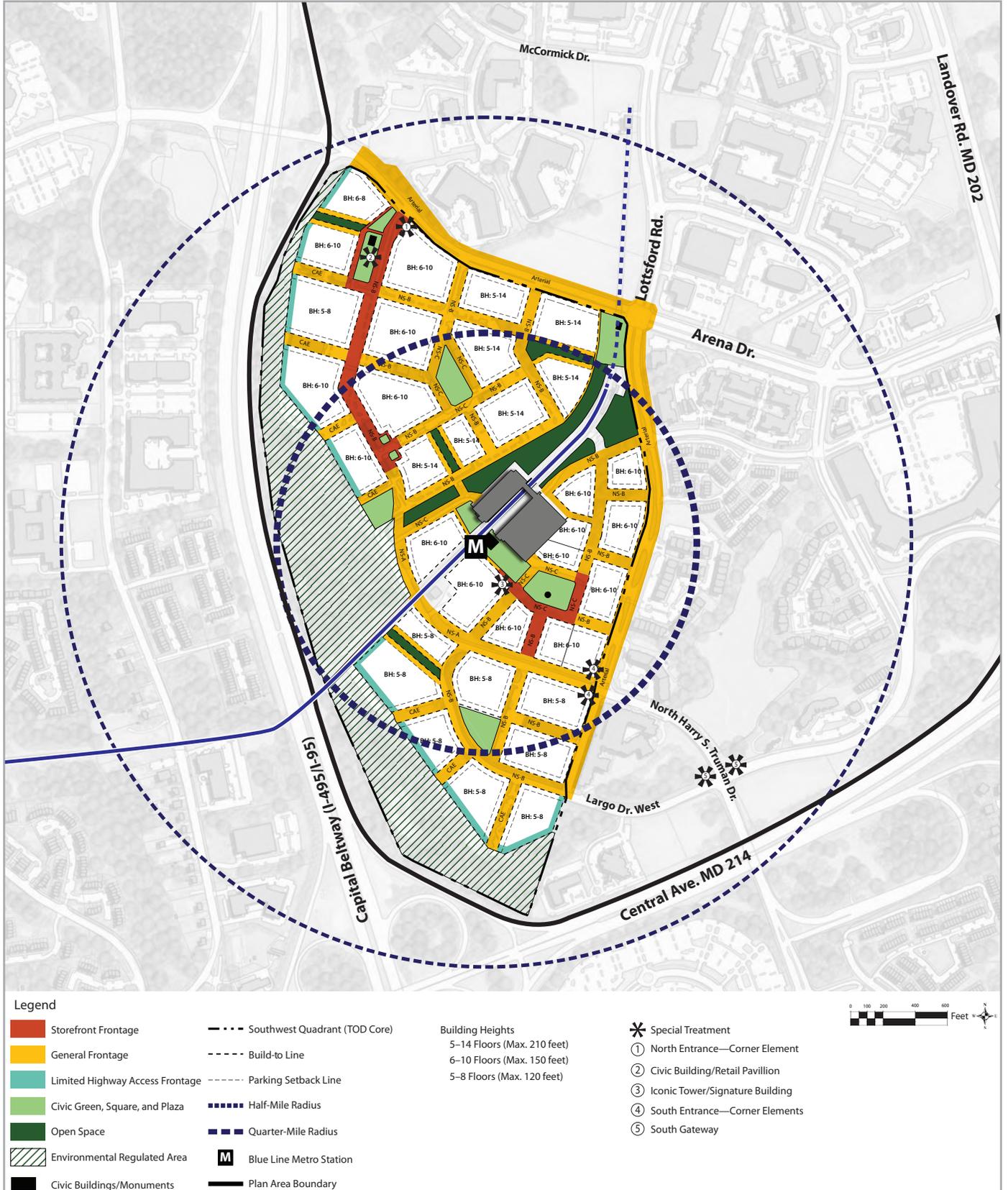
These neighborhoods achieve a successful housing mix, offering housing opportunities across a broad spectrum of ages and incomes. The area includes mixed-income and workforce housing in a variety of housing types, which range from single-family attached townhomes to higher-density apartment buildings of various sizes. The housing mix accommodates older adults and families with children, as well as singles and couples seeking an urban lifestyle in Prince George's County. The multifamily units throughout the sector plan area are a mix of rental and condominium units, but most will be rental units in the near term due to market forces. As the market shifts, rental units should be incentivized for conversion to condominiums with tenants having the right of first refusal. Ultimately, rental and condo units will be located throughout the entire plan area in addition to the for-sale single-family attached townhomes. In short, county residents in the Largo Town Center sector plan area now have the option to "age in place" without fear of involuntary displacement or other loss in their quality of life.

Economic development and a vital economic mix. The area offers a variety of employment opportunities and generates substantial tax-based revenue for the county, especially with the addition of the Regional Medical Center. Largo Town Center accommodates a diverse mix of business opportunities, having attracted anchor office tenants to this regional destination with its rich mix of retail and restaurants. At the same time, needed neighborhood-oriented services are found at several select locations within the sector plan area. By combining compatible uses within walking distance of each other, the area achieves a synergy and vitality that continues well past the end of the workday. In this 18- to 24-hour-a-day regional destination, residents and visitors patronize local and national businesses; cultural uses enliven the TOD core and civic center; and major employers provide a daytime and, in the case of a Regional Medical Center, nighttime population to support businesses.

Map 6: Recommended Building Heights Plan



Map 7: Illustrative TOD Core Concept Plan



A fully-integrated, multimodal transportation system. The vision for Largo Town Center provides a comprehensive, multimodal transportation network that fully accommodates public transit, automobiles, pedestrians, and bicyclists through the application of complete street principles. A key component of the vision for Largo Town Center is enhanced highway and Metrorail access to other key destinations in the region, including downtown Washington, D.C., Montgomery County, northern Virginia, and all three regional commercial airports (Ronald Reagan Washington National, Washington Dulles International, and Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall). An urban street grid with smaller blocks and no cul de sacs encourages travel on foot and bicycle within the area by providing a safe pedestrian/bicyclist environment.

All former one-way streets in the area south of the Metro Blue Line rail overpass have been converted to two-way streets with abundant on-street parking. Arena Drive, McCormack Drive, and Lottsford Road have been transformed into boulevard-like streets with green medians, curb bumpouts at intersections, lighted bus stop shelters with real-time transit service information, pedestrian-scaled streetlights, and pedestrian-activated crossing signals with countdown displays. The former flying right-turn entrance ramp from Largo Center Drive to westbound Central Avenue has been reconfigured into a 90-degree, three-way intersection with Largo Center Drive. East of Landover Road, a completed Campus Way North provides direct connections between residential areas northeast and southeast of the sector plan area and helps to divert local traffic away from Landover Road. (See Map 22: Illustrative Street Network on page 78.)

An enhanced and expanded network of open space and civic places, Largo Town Center includes an expanded open space network that comprises publicly and privately owned greens and plazas, linear parks, promenades, natural resource-based parkland, and recreational amenities. The open space system provides focal places in the hearts of neighborhoods, settings for public gatherings and events, opportunities for quiet contemplation and appreciation of nature, attractive connections between destinations, and opportunities for passive and active recreation that are located in safe places. The open space system is tied together by expanded trail connections linking Largo Town Center with surrounding areas.

Improved pedestrian, bicycle, and trail connections. The Largo Town Center area encourages residents and visitors alike to leave their automobiles behind. All destinations are accessible by a continuous network of sidewalks, safe pedestrian crossings, bicycle routes, and new trail connections. New development emphasizes pedestrian and bicycle linkages to schools, parks/recreational areas, and commercial and employment centers for all ages. Largo Town Center's pedestrian- and bicyclist-friendly built environment encourages its residents to make much healthier personal mobility choices. (See Map 24: Illustrative Community Open Space and Bicycle Path Plan on page 85.)

An environmentally sensitive and security-conscious site design. Largo Town Center incorporates environmentally sensitive design and stormwater management practices that (1) minimize and manage stormwater at its source, thereby protecting local and regional watersheds from harmful runoff; and (2) counteract the “urban heat island effect” through a reduction in heat-retaining impervious surfaces (i.e., building roofs, paved surface parking lots, and too-wide streets). The area includes open spaces that combine stormwater management functions and publicly and privately owned amenities. New development minimizes impervious surfaces and employs other low-impact design techniques. Following a “green streets” model, Largo Town Center features many street trees and multipurpose green spaces that function as community amenities as well as areas for stormwater infiltration. In sum, the Largo Town Center sector plan area features an expanded network of green spaces and places that connect with natural resource areas.

All new public buildings and most—if not all—new privately built buildings in the sector plan area are designed to qualify for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification (LEED Gold or better for public buildings). Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles have also been incorporated into the design of buildings and public spaces throughout the sector plan area to minimize or eliminate opportunities for crime. Key CPTED features include continuously lighted public streets and open spaces, building façades that promote “eyes on the street” surveillance, and publicly accessible spaces whose design invites use and “ownership” by residents and visitors.

