

## LAND USE

### OBJECTIVES

The land use plan guides physical growth and development within the Sector Plan Area through the following objectives:

- Stabilize existing residential neighborhoods and encourage compatible quality residential development and redevelopment
- Upgrade existing commercial development
- Ensure existing and future land uses are served by adequate public facilities
- Ensure future retail, residential and office development is transit-oriented
- Protect and integrate environmental assets with development
- Phase out incompatible industrial uses
- Interrelate various land uses for better functionality

### EXISTING SITUATION AND ISSUES

The Sector Plan Area, comprised of several land uses, requires a comprehensive approach to ensure better integration of compatible uses and potential new development. Achieving quality infill development and redevelopment and linking different land uses to ensure functional and aesthetically pleasing places will require addressing key issues and challenges such as:

- Adverse environmental and other impacts from existing heavy industrial uses
- Potentially inadequate public facilities and services for the level of development envisioned for the Core Area

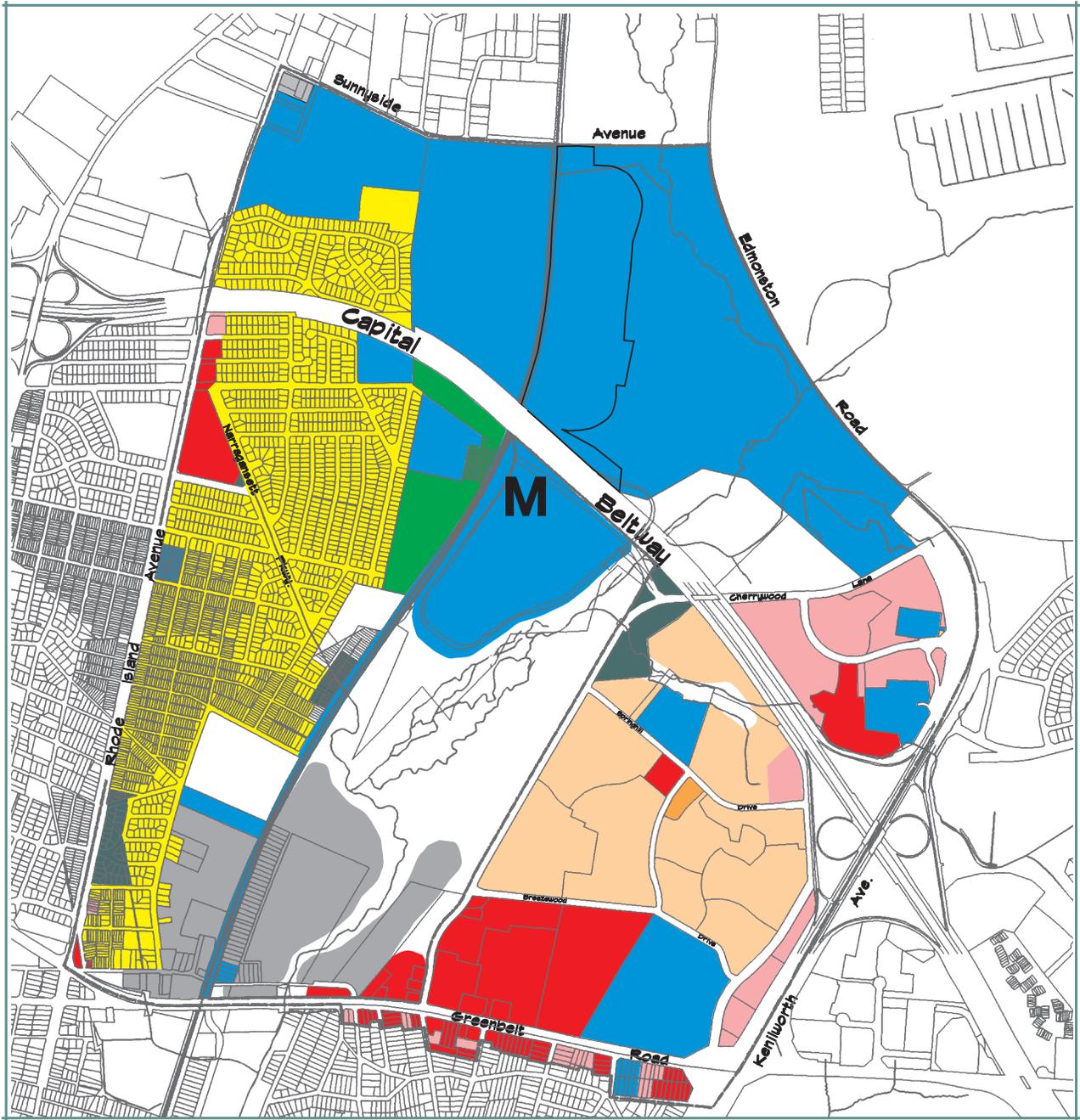
**Existing Land Uses**—The Sector Plan Area contains approximately 1,646 acres of land, or 2.57 square miles, and encompasses a combination of industrial, residential, retail, office, institutional, and open space land uses. Map 3 and Table 1 illustrate existing land uses in the Sector Plan Area. Table 2 details existing and approved pending development (pipeline development) profiled by subareas, land use types, acreage, densities and Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

### Industrial Uses

**Core Area**—The principal industrial activity in the Sector Plan Area occurs on approximately one-half of the A.H. Smith property in the Core Area. This tract of land, directly adjacent to the CSX railroad and close to the Greenbelt Metrorail/MARC station, has retained industrial land uses for many years including sand, gravel and asphalt processing. These industrial uses are not compatible with the transit



*A.H. Smith, P.G. Scrap and other Core Area industrial properties.*



- |  |                    |                        |
|--|--------------------|------------------------|
| Single-Family Detached Residential (Low & Medium Suburban Density) | Retail Commercial  | Public or Quasi-Public |
| Single-Family Attached Residential                                 | Industrial         | M-NCPPC                |
| Multifamily Residential (Medium Density)                           | Private Open Space | Municipal Park         |
| Office Commercial  |                    |                        |

center development that this plan envisions for the station site, the surrounding neighborhoods, and the Greenbelt Road corridor. Furthermore, the approved 1989 *Langley Park-College Park-Greenbelt Master Plan* recommended office development, as opposed to retaining these industrial uses, for the entire Core Area.

Other industrial uses exist in the South Core Area. These properties are generally less than 10 acres and include uses such as warehouses, auto body shops and a recycling scrap metal operation.

**Branchville Industrial Area**—The Branchville industrial area, as defined for the purposes of this sector plan, includes the Branchville Industrial Park, west of the CSX railroad tracks and east of Rhode Island Avenue, and all nonresidentially zoned properties in the Branchville area. The industrial uses are classified as light industrial with office and storage facilities.

Because most of these properties lack direct access to Greenbelt Road or Rhode Island Avenue, trucks use residential streets, such as 51st Avenue. The traffic issues and the incompatibility with the surrounding low-density neighborhood present another challenge this plan will address.

**Residential Uses**—Two distinct residential areas exist within the Sector Plan Area. These areas include North College Park, west of the CSX railroad tracks, and Springhill Lake east of Cherrywood Lane.

**North College Park**—North College Park is a community consisting of approximately 1,300 single-family detached dwellings. The neighborhood generally offers quality, affordable single-family detached houses that are attractive, well maintained and framed with landscaping and local parks. However, opportunities for compatible residential infill development exists.

**Springhill Lake**—There are 120 townhouses and 2,769 rental garden apartment units which exist in Springhill Lake and cover approximately 165 acres. Springhill Lake has been moderately maintained, but nevertheless does not provide adequate linkages to surrounding developments and is ultimately inconsistent with the development envisioned for the rest of the Sector Plan Area. Additionally, the community does not provide home ownership opportunities. This large, transient community experiences significant crime and other quality of life problems.

**Retail and Office Uses**—Two major retail concentrations and two office employment areas constitute a large portion of the Sector Plan Area. Currently, retail uses exist along Greenbelt Road, including a large shopping area, Beltway



*Branchville Industrial Park.*



*North College Park.*



*Springhill Lake rental garden apartment community.*

Land Use	Acres	% of Sector Plan Area
Residential	457.72	27.8
Single-family Detached	297.8	18.1
Single-family Attached	1.85	0.1
Multifamily	158.07	9.6
Commerical & Employment	249.38	15.1
Retail Commercial	95.92	5.8
Office Commercial	51.33	3.1
Service Commercial	3.39	0.2
Industrial	98.74	6.0
Public	518.74	31.6
Public/Quasi-Public	477.24	29.0
Municipal Park	18.96	1.2
M-NCPPC Park	22.54	1.4
Vacant	194.03	11.8
Subtotal	1,419.87	86.3
Right-of-Way	226.09	13.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,645.96	100.0

Plaza, and in smaller neighborhood centers. Major employment projects in the Sector Plan Area include Capital Office Park and a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) office complex. Six individual office buildings exist along Edmonston Road, east of Springhill Lake and include employers such as Greenhorne & O'Mara (a multiservice engineering and design firm) and Nationwide Insurance. All of the office areas generally provide an attractive setting in the Sector Plan Area with adequate landscape plantings and quality signs. (The USDA office complex, while primarily used for office purposes, is a Federal property and thereby exempt from the local planning and zoning authority. This area will be addressed below in the Public/Quasi-Public section).

**Greenbelt Road Commercial Corridor and Beltway Plaza—**Built in the 1960s, Beltway Plaza has been improved and expanded as an shopping/activity center, with approximately 112 tenants. Aside from an enclosed mall, in-line, freestanding shops and restaurants fronting Greenbelt Road also exist



*Greenbelt Road commercial strip development.*

as part of this center. Along the south side of Greenbelt Road, strip retail and office uses exist as part of the automobile-oriented commercial corridor. Although efforts have been made to improve the physical appearance of this area, continuous

Table 2 Existing and Pending Development Profile by Subarea (May 2000)					
Area	Existing Development Types and Sizes	Approved Pending Development	Appropriate Sub-area (acres)	Residential Density (DU/AC)	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
<b>Core Area</b>	Metrorail/MARC station, parking lot, sand, gravel and asphalt processing plant and operation, metal scrap plant, construction materials warehouse, auto service, bank, electric transmission substation, drug store, car wash, vacant land	P.G. Scrap - one office building	<u>combined total</u> 287	N/A	N/A
<b>Springhill Lake</b>	Apartments and townhouses: 2,907 rental units	N/A	<u>combined total</u> 165	18	N/A
<b>North College Park</b>	Single-family detached: 1,297 units Retail/Office: 73,000 SF Industrial: 245,000 SF	N/A N/A N/A	338 11 35 <u>combined total</u> 384	3.8 N/A N/A	N/A 0.15 0.17
<b>Greenbelt Road Beltway Plaza</b>	Beltway Plaza: 793,400 SF Other commercial properties: 232,200 SF	N/A N/A	19 44 <u>combined total</u> 63	N/A N/A	0.28 0.34
<b>Capital Office Park and Federal Courthouse</b>	Office: 840,000 SF Hotel: 221,000 SF Courthouse: 180,000 SF	Office: 602,000 SF	64 <u>combined total</u> 118	N/A	0.59 (including pipeline dev.)
<b>USDA/BARC Office Complex and Other Public Property</b>	Office: 365,000 SF Metro Service & Inspection Yard Open Space	N/A N/A N/A	44 85 216 <u>combined total</u> 345	N/A N/A N/A	N/A N/A N/A
N/A: Not applicable					

streetscape improvements and functional integration with the surrounding neighborhoods are necessary for business retention and economic vitality.

Beltway Plaza West, west of Cherrywood Lane, includes an office building, a service station, a vision store, a drug store and a restaurant. These two Beltway Plaza developments are situated at a proposed gateway leading into the Core Area and deserve special attention.

*Springhill Lake Commercial Center*—One small commercial center exists in the central portion of Springhill Lake with uses such as the Giant training center, a dentist office, a small convenience store and a dry cleaner. This center is not as



*Beltway Plaza shopping/activity center.*



*Springhill Lake commercial center.*

successful and viable as it could be because businesses have moved out and the physical appearance of the center is outdated. This retail area has the potential for revitalization with the proper planning and marketing to reintroduce neighborhood retailers into this community.

**Hollywood Commercial Center**—For the purposes of this plan, retail uses in North College Park, east of Rhode Island Avenue, are addressed. The Hollywood Commercial Center is automobile-oriented and generally contains several free-standing buildings that are occupied by a variety of small businesses.<sup>1</sup> This commercial center, however, is fragmented by streets, lacks an overall site design, does not provide strong pedestrian linkages to the surrounding neighborhood and is characterized by some physical deterioration.



*Hollywood commercial center east of Rhode Island Avenue.*



*Typical office building in the Capital Office Park area.*

**Capital Office Park Area**—The Capital Office Park area includes the Capital Office Park complex (six office buildings), the Marriott hotel, a State Highway Administration (SHA) office building, a Federal Courthouse and an historic cemetery. It is one of the largest employment concentrations in the County. The privately owned portion of Capital Office Park contains 840,000 square feet of office space. It is expected that an additional 602,000 square feet of office or related uses will be constructed; this additional office space was previously approved and is in the County development pipeline. The Capital Office Park area contributes to a “quality” image in this part of the County. It is important to explore methods of linking this area more efficiently to the multimodal transit station and to discourage single-occupant vehicle (SOV) trips.

An undeveloped piece of land is located at the northwest end of the Capital Office Park and is a recorded conservation easement by the approved subdivision of Capital Office Park Phase III (Subdivision Case 4-94080).

**Public/Quasi-Public Uses**—Almost one-third of the Sector Plan Area is owned by Federal, State, County and local governments or quasi-public agencies.

**United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC)**—A large portion of the Sector Plan Area north of the Beltway is within the BARC property. BARC was established in the early 1900s for agricultural research, concentrating on animal and plant research. The BARC property was historically divided into five farm areas that still exist today. A portion of one farm, referred to as the Linkage Farm, is located within the Sector

<sup>1</sup> Occupants include a recreational equipment store, a drug store, restaurants, lock shop, apparel store, beauty salon, offices and others.



*USDA office complex.*

Plan Area, and contains a USDA office complex, croplands and a large wooded wetland and floodplain.

Completed in the late 1990s, the USDA/BARC office complex, approximately 365,000 square feet of office space, is located on the south side of Sunnyside Avenue, approximately 2,500 feet east of its intersection with US 1. This 115-acre property is presently zoned Reserved Open Space (R-O-S). This zone is designated for the preservation of undeveloped land even though a portion of this property is used for office purposes. This property, like all Federal properties, is exempt from the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance requirements.

Since construction of these office buildings was completed, traffic impacts on local roads have become primary issues facing this area of the Sector.

**Greenbelt Metrorail/MARC Station and Metro Service and Inspection Yard**—This is a multimodal station and its location in the County affords a number of development opportunities, such as air-rights development. The Metro station and

yard, owned and operated by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), on the east side of the railroad tracks are the terminus of the Green Line. These two facilities are separated by the Capital Beltway. The station and its associated parking lot provides approximately 3,360 surface parking spaces for commuters only. Lastly, WMATA stores approximately 112 cars at the Metrorail yard and the view of this facility from adjacent USDA property could be problematic.

**Other Institutional Land**—Two public and one private schools, including the Springhill Lake Elementary School, the Greenbelt Middle School and the Al Huda School, and one church along Greenbelt Road exist in the Sector Plan Area.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

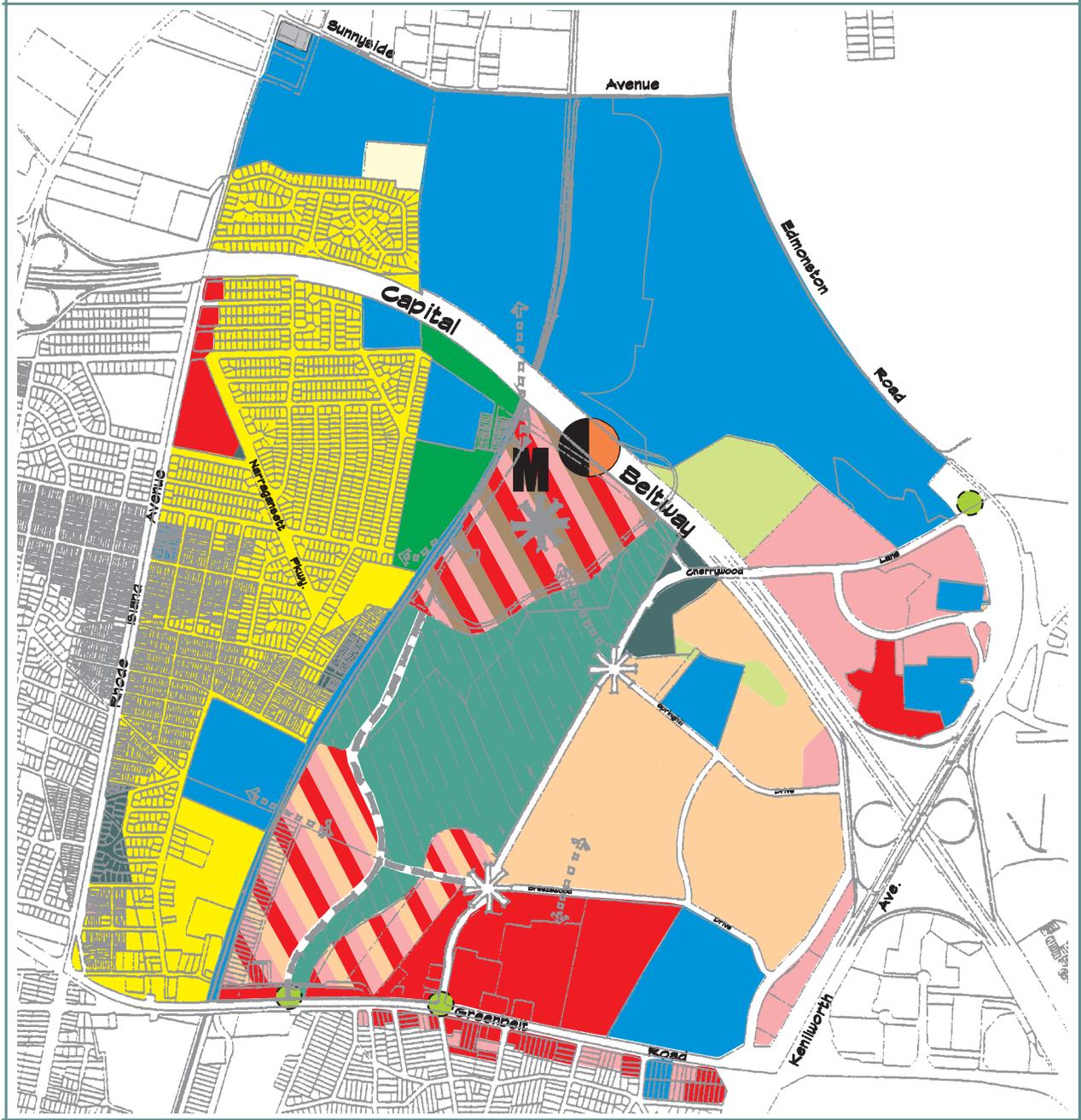
Map 4 illustrates the land uses proposed for the Sector Plan Area to carry out the Land Use Concept. Recommendations for these land uses are categorized as follows:



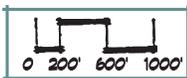
*Metro Service & Inspection Yard.*



*Greenbelt Metro and MARC stations.*



- |  |  |  |                             |  |                                     |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
|  | Low-Suburban Density Residential (Avg. 1.85du/acre)        |  | Mixed Use                   |  | Primary Focal Point                 |
|  | Medium-Suburban Density Residential (Avg. 4.20du/acre)     |  | Light Industrial            |  | Secondary Focal Point               |
|  | Medium-Urban Density Residential (Avg. Range 20-30du/acre) |  | Public or Quasi-Public      |  | Proposed Pedestrian Connection      |
|  | High-Urban Density Residential (Avg. 40du/acre)            |  | M-NCPPC                     |  | Proposed Road                       |
|  | Office Commercial  |  | Municipal Park              |  | Primary Gateway                     |
|  | Retail Commercial  |  | Dedicated Public Open Space |  | Improvement to Existing Interchange |
|  |  |  | Private Open Space          |  |                                     |



# Land Use Plan

**Approved Land Uses**

**Mixed-Uses - Core Area** —To fulfill the sector plan vision of creating a unique, integrated and inviting mixed-use community, the plan recommends a mixed-use development in the previously developed areas of the North and South Core Areas and a recreational and open space destination in the central Core Area, to:

- Optimize existing public investment in infrastructure and services.
- Promote compact development that would minimize automobile traffic and increase transit ridership.
- Protect and integrate environmentally sensitive features with development.
- Minimize new or increased impervious surfaces by concentrating development where it has already occurred.
- Encourage flexible and creative site design.
- Dedicate sites for recreation, open space, trails and other public and civic purposes that benefit the greater community.

These objectives would focus new growth on the Greenbelt Metro Station vicinity, implementing both County and State Smart Growth policies. They promote the achievement of major transit-oriented development along the Metro system and in the designated priority growth centers identified in the Developed Tier of the County by the Prince George's County Interim General Plan.

The plan recommends a high-quality, transit-oriented mixed-use development in the Core Area. The plan envisions a mix of retail, office, entertainment and residential land uses that achieve a high-intensity, 24-hour development at a multimodal center in the north, and a medium-intensity mixed-use development in the south.

Furthermore, the plan recommends that each land use category comprise at least 10 percent of the total gross leasable square footage, and provide at least 3 of the 4 uses (residential, office, retail, entertainment and hotel) in the North Core Area and 2 of the uses in the South Core Area. While the mix of uses may be market driven, the physical development should encourage transit ridership and foster transit-supporting concepts such as Smart Growth.

To create mixed- and transit-supportive development uses in the North and South Core Areas, mixed-use centers shall be combined in the manner described in the following chart:

Land Use Category	Core Area—Mixed-Use Centers*
Residential	30-60%**
Retail Commercial, Entertainment, Hotel	10-40%**
Office Commercial	30-60%**
Industrial	Not Permitted
*These percentages describe the total for each mixed-use center. **The percentages listed in the chart represent the proportion of the floor area of the land use category to the total floor area of the development. The first number is the minimum percentage and the second number is the maximum percentage. (See the Development District Standards.)	

To encourage intensive, vertically mixed-use and transit-supportive development that does not encroach on the Environmental Envelope, the floor area ratio (FAR) should be a minimum of 1.0 in the North Core Area and should be a minimum of 0.5 in the South Core Area.

The development intensity of the Core Area mixed-use centers should be guided by:

- The provision of adequate public facilities to accommodate any proposed development.
- The preservation and protection of sensitive environmental features in compliance with the environmental objectives and guidelines established in the plan. See the Environment chapter.
- The protection of adjacent residential communities by following the height guidelines established in the Subarea Design Policies and Guidelines section of this plan. Specifically, see *The Core Area: Design Policies*.
- Comments and suggestions from adjoining municipalities and communities through the standard site plan referral process.

This plan also recommends that the Central Core Area include an Environmental Envelope that protects environmental features while providing recreational and open space for use by the adjacent communities and the region. See the Environment and Recreation and Open Space chapters.

**Industrial Uses**

**Core Area**—The sector plan recommends that industrial uses be phased out of the Core Area and that a comprehensively planned, transit-oriented community be developed on the combined WMATA, A. H. Smith and other Core Area

properties. In the event that the smaller industrial properties are developed individually, the plan recommends that the proposed uses and patterns be compatible and harmonious with the Core Area recommendations and standards. See *Mixed-Use Recommendations* above.

**Branchville Industrial Area**—The plan recommends phasing out incompatible industrial uses and replacing them with medium-density residential development as a long-term proposal to fulfill the Land Use Concept's vision of high-quality, multimodal, mixed-use development near the Greenbelt Metrorail and MARC rail station.

### **Residential Uses**

**North College Park**—The plan recommends retention of the residential character and uses in this community and recommends compatible residential infill development. The plan also recommends that pedestrian and bicycle connections, both within the community and to surrounding developments, be improved.

**Springhill Lake**—The plan recognizes the existing rental housing complexes in Springhill Lake. In the short term, proper maintenance and aesthetic and/or functional improvements and upgrading of the existing housing stock to initiate a mix of rental and ownership units are recommended to maintain a habitable, safe, and pleasant community. In the long term, Springhill Lake is envisioned as a quality Metro-related community. Redevelopment of Springhill Lake should be emphasized on the objectives of achieving more diversified housing types, quality public spaces/connectors and strong community identity.

The plan recommends the phased redevelopment of Springhill Lake to fulfill the sector plan vision of creating a transit village within close proximity to the Greenbelt station. The plan recommends creating a residential community with a mixture of housing types and rental and ownership options focused around a small mixed-use center, community open spaces and trails. The plan recommends that the redeveloped community be physically and visually integrated with adjacent properties. The plan recommends the current density be maintained for future redevelopment of Springhill Lake.

### **Retail and Office Uses**

**Greenbelt Road Commercial Corridor and Beltway Plaza**—The plan recommends revitalizing the commercial properties along Greenbelt Road and in Beltway Plaza, including the properties west of Cherrywood Lane through streetscape and circulation improvements. This revitalization scheme should be closely integrated with Springhill Lake and Berwyn Heights to encourage compatible design and pedestrian- and

bicycle-friendly linkages such as sidewalks, multiuse trails, pedestrian crosswalks and public open spaces. The plan recommends retention of existing retail and office uses along the Greenbelt Road commercial corridor. An advisory business/community association should be organized to assist the County in implementing the design standards through the site plan approval process.

The plan recommends the enhancement of these commercial properties as niches of the retail market that service the local neighborhoods and wide community and independently complement the uses recommended for the intense mixed-use Core Area. Beltway Plaza is envisioned as a major community activity center for its surrounding residential neighborhoods in the 1989 master plan and should establish an appropriate physical orientation toward the Springhill Lake community. In the long term, Springhill Lake is envisioned to be redeveloped as a quality Metro-related community. The plan recommends that Beltway Plaza West be developed and/or redeveloped for general retail and/or office uses.

**Springhill Lake Commercial Center**—The plan recommends that the Springhill Lake commercial center be redeveloped as a village center in connection with the redevelopment of Springhill Lake into a transit village. The plan recommends that this area be developed as a mixed-use center, centrally located in the community and adequately linked to the community and the Greenbelt station site. (See *Springhill Lake* above in the Residential Recommendations).

**Hollywood Commercial Center**—The plan recommends that the Hollywood Commercial Center continue revitalization efforts with additional streetscape and facade improvements. A business development and neighborhood revitalization association should be organized to formulate an action plan to implement the design guidelines included in this document.

**Capital Office Park Area**—The plan recommends retention of the existing uses and approved pending development and continued maintenance of the properties. Additionally, the plan recommends that more effective integration with the transit facility occur.

The plan recognizes that relocating the existing SHA salt dome is critical for establishing a gateway at the entrance to the Capital Office Park and creating a positive image for the Greenbelt Metro sector area.

**Other Commercial Property**—The plan recommends that the office buildings along Edmonston Road be retained and the commercial construction office at the intersection of Sunnyside Avenue and Rhode Island Avenue also be retained.

### ***Public/Quasi-Public Uses***

*USDA/BARC*—The plan recommends the retention of current office uses for the USDA/BARC office complex and that it be linked more effectively with the Greenbelt station site to adequately provide access for employees and visitors.

The plan also recommends that the undeveloped lands on either side of the USDA/BARC office complex remain as open space to avoid additional adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods and to maintain the integrity of Indian Creek Stream Valley system. Continued preservation of this area will improve water quality within the Indian Creek Watershed and protect the greenway network along this stream valley. The land area west of the USDA buildings is designated as cropland or grazing land in the BARC master plan and is recommended to remain as such by this plan.

*Greenbelt Station and Service & Inspection Yard*—The plan recommends retaining the existing transit-related uses.

*Other Public/Quasi-Public Land*—The plan recommends that the existing school bus lot be retained as publicly held land for possible school or park expansion. The plan also recommends that other school sites be retained as such. Lastly, the plan recommends that any existing park and/or recreational lands/uses remain.

For specific details on each area, see the Subarea Design Policies and Guidelines and the Sectional Map Amendment section.