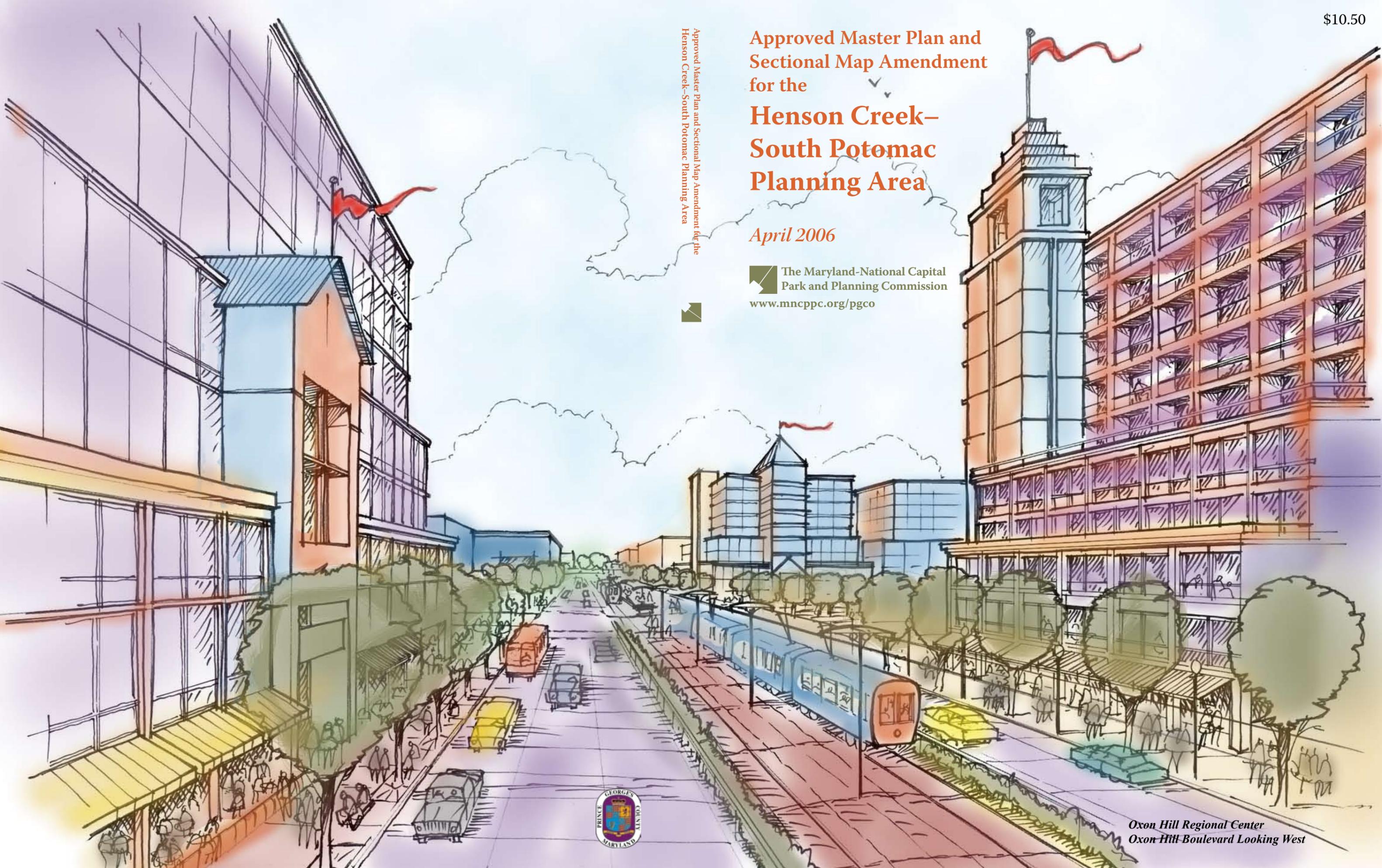


Approved Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for the Henson Creek-South Potomac Planning Area

April 2006

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
www.mncppc.org/pgco

Approved Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for the Henson Creek-South Potomac Planning Area



Oxon Hill Regional Center
Oxon Hill Boulevard Looking West

Abstract

Title: Approved Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for the Henson Creek-South Potomac Planning Area.

Author: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Subject: Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for the Henson Creek-South Potomac Planning Areas 76B and 80.

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Abstract: This document contains text and maps of the approved master plan and sectional map amendment for the Henson Creek-South Potomac Planning Areas 76B and 80. This plan supercedes the 1981 Master Plan for Subregion VII and updates the 1984 Approved Subregion VII Sectional Map Amendment. It also amends the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan* and other functional master plans. This plan was developed primarily during a communitywide, seven-day planning charrette. This document provides visions, goals, background, policies and strategies for numerous planning elements. The Development Pattern element generally reinforces the low-density character of the planning areas. High-intensity development is encouraged at the National Harbor Metropolitan Center and medium- to high-intensity redevelopment is encouraged at the Oxon Hill Regional Center. There is a strong emphasis on mixed-use, transit- and pedestrian-oriented development patterns in these areas. It also encourages low- to moderate-intensity mixed-use development at designated corridor nodes, activity centers, and other mixed-use areas. The plan recommends enacting conservation subdivision regulations and other flexible standards that place a premium on conserving open areas and protecting environmental features. Land use and urban design concepts and illustrations are included that encourage mixed-use, compact and pedestrian-friendly development. The Areawide Infrastructure element addresses environment, transportation, schools, fire, police, library, parks and trails. The Community Character element addresses economic development, historic preservation, urban design, and revitalization issues. The Implementation section provides short- and long-term implementation strategies and recommends specific properties and areas for future rezoning to achieve the visions and goals for those areas. The General Plan Rural and Developing Tier boundaries are redefined, the corridor along MD 210 is removed, and a new transit corridor along Oxon Hill Road is recommended.

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Henson Creek–South Potomac Planning Area**



April 2006

**Prince George's County Planning Department
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772**



The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
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The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is a bicounty agency, created by the General Assembly of Maryland in 1927. The Commission's geographic authority extends to the great majority of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties: the Maryland-Washington Regional District (M-NCPPC planning jurisdiction) comprises 1,001 square miles, while the Metropolitan District (parks) comprises 919 square miles, in the two counties.

The Commission has three major functions:

- The preparation, adoption, and, from time to time, amendment or extension of the General Plan 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.

The Commission operates in each county through a Planning Board appointed by and responsible to the County government. All local plans, recommendations on zoning amendments, administration of subdivision regulations, and general administration of parks are responsibilities of the Planning Boards.

The Prince George's County Department of Planning (M-NCPPC):

- Our mission is to help preserve, protect and manage the County's resources by providing the highest quality planning services and growth management guidance and by facilitating effective intergovernmental and citizen involvement through education and technical assistance.
- Our vision is to be a model planning department comprised of responsive and respected staff who provide superior planning and technical services and work cooperatively with decision-makers, citizens and other agencies to continuously improve development quality and the environment and act as a catalyst for positive change.

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The County Council has three main responsibilities in the planning process: (1) setting policy, (2) plan approval, and (3) plan implementation. Applicable policies are incorporated into area plans, functional plans, and the general plan. The Council, after holding a hearing on the plan adopted by the Planning Board, may approve the plan as adopted, approve the plan with amendments based on the public record, or disapprove the plan and return it to the Planning Board for revision. Implementation is primarily through adoption of the annual Capital Improvement Program, the annual Budget, the water and sewer plan, and adoption of zoning map amendments.

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Foreword

The Prince George’s County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) is pleased to make available the approved master plan and sectional map amendment (SMA) for the Henson Creek-South Potomac Planning Area. This community-based plan/SMA sets preliminary land use and development policies for the area, addressing physical and policy changes since the approval of the 1981 master plan for Subregion VII and the 1984 sectional map amendment.

The plan’s comprehensive “charrette” approach to public participation was a successful collaborative effort and provided an open forum for residents, property owners, business owners, and developers to participate in the plan preparation. During the charrette, visions for the areas were established, prominent issues were identified, alternative concepts were developed, and a preferred plan that set development policies for the area was produced.

This document contains recommendations for land use, transportation, environment, urban design, public facilities, parks, historic preservation, and other important planning elements. The plan assumes rapid transit connecting key destination points in the planning area. It recommends mixed-use pedestrian-oriented development at designated centers such as Oxon Hill and National Harbor, and other designated activity centers and corridor nodes. It also encourages an alternative mix of compact mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented use to replace existing small retail and commercial areas that exhibit high vacancy rates. It reinforces the existing residential development pattern.

The Prince George’s County Planning Board and the County Council held two joint public hearings to solicit comments from the property owners, residents and the general public. All comments and recommendations presented at the public hearings became a matter of public record and were summarized and reviewed by the Planning Board and the County Council in their deliberations prior to approval of the plan and SMA by the District Council on April 25, 2006.

Sincerely,



Samuel J. Parker Jr., AICP
Chairman

Introduction



Plan Highlights

The Henson Creek-South Potomac approved master plan recommends policies and strategies to guide the area's future growth and development. (See Map 1, Plan Concept.) The sectional map amendment brings the zoning into conformance with the land use recommendations.

The plan updates the 1981 Subregion VII master plan for Planning Areas 76B and 80. It further refines and amends the goals, objectives, policies and strategies of the approved 2002 General Plan for this area.

Amendment to the General Plan

- ❑ Deletes the corridor designation for Indian Head Highway, south of the Capital Beltway.
- ❑ Designates a new corridor along the proposed transit line from the Woodrow Wilson Bridge to St. Barnabas and Brinkley Roads.
- ❑ Reclassifies the 21.35-acre tract on the southwest corner of Indian Head Highway and Old Fort Road North from the Rural Tier to the Developing Tier.

Development Pattern

Rural Tier

- ❑ Recommends enacting conservation subdivision design regulations and other flexible design standards that place a premium on conserving open areas and protecting environmental features.
- ❑ Recommends development within the Developing Tier adjoining the historic district be consistent and compatible with the prevailing Broad Creek historic character.
- ❑ Encourages the implementation of a transfer of development rights program, pursuant to county legislation.

Developing Tier

- ❑ Directs future growth to the proposed mixed-use areas such as the National Harbor Center, the two activity centers along Indian Head Highway (MD 210), the Padgett's Corner activity center on Allentown Road, and the large, undeveloped properties north of Rosecroft Raceway.
- ❑ Encourages an alternative mix of compact mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented development to replace existing small retail and commercial areas that exhibit high vacancy rates.

Developed Tier

- ❑ Reinforces the existing small-lot residential development pattern that characterizes the tier and moderate- to high-density residential at the western end of Brinkley Road and at designated mixed-use areas.
- ❑ Provides strategies for the redevelopment and revitalization of properties in the Branch Avenue Corridor near its intersection with Allentown Road with a mixed-use, arts and cultural theme.
- ❑ Recommends that Andrews Manor Center and Andrews Manor Apartments be redeveloped as mixed-use in a manner that promotes a new identity and sense of place as a "Gateway to Andrews Air Force Base."

Centers and Corridors

- ❑ Recommends a new General Plan growth corridor along the proposed transit line from the Woodrow Wilson Bridge to St. Barnabas and Brinkley Roads.
- ❑ Reinforces the approved development plan for the National Harbor Center along the banks of the Potomac River as a major mixed-use commercial and entertainment venue of metropolitan significance and recognizes the potential for a high-density residential component in the future.

- ❑ Recommends specific boundaries for the Oxon Hill Regional Center and a moderate- to high-intensity mix of residential and nonresidential uses organized to create an urban character and feel.

Areawide Infrastructure

- ❑ Protects sensitive environmental features using the green infrastructure network established in the *Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan*.
- ❑ Proposes rail transit between Virginia and the Branch Avenue or Suitland Metro Stations with transit stops at National Harbor and Oxon Hill Centers. Bus rapid transit is proposed along the Indian Head Highway, Brinkley Road, and Branch Avenue Corridors.
- ❑ Identifies needed road improvements and trail network to provide an efficient circulation system.
- ❑ Identifies sites for future police station, fire stations, schools and parks.

Economic Development, Housing, and Community Character Elements

- ❑ Identifies opportunities and strategies for economic development in the centers, corridor nodes, other mixed-use areas, and planned activity centers.

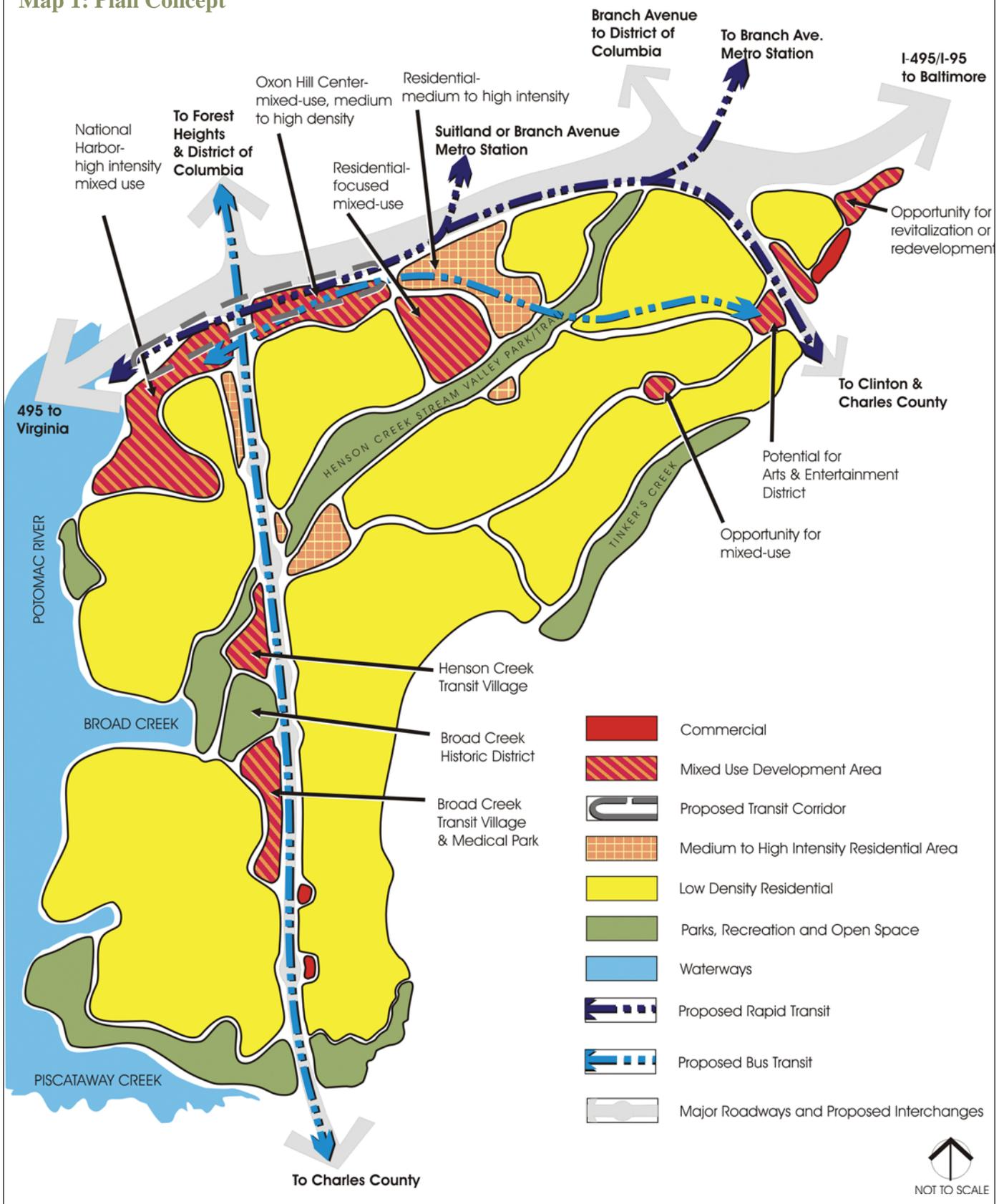
- ❑ Outlines strategies for providing high-quality and high-density housing for all price ranges within the centers, at selected locations along corridors, and in mixed-use areas.

- ❑ Identifies areas to be considered for a revitalization overlay zone designation.
- ❑ Provides urban design framework, guidelines and best practices for compact mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development.
- ❑ Updates the inventory of historic resources to be evaluated for designation as historic sites and provides strategies for the maintenance of the Broad Creek Historic District and preservation of historic sites and resources.

Implementation

- ❑ Provides short- and long- term implementation strategies.
- ❑ Recommends rezoning of specific properties and areas for future rezoning to achieve the visions and goals for those areas and to conform to the land use plan.
- ❑ Recommends future rezoning of the proposed mixed-use areas by application to comprehensive design zones or other appropriate mixed-use zones to implement a compact, transit-oriented, mixed-use development.

Map 1: Plan Concept



Planning Background

Plan Purpose

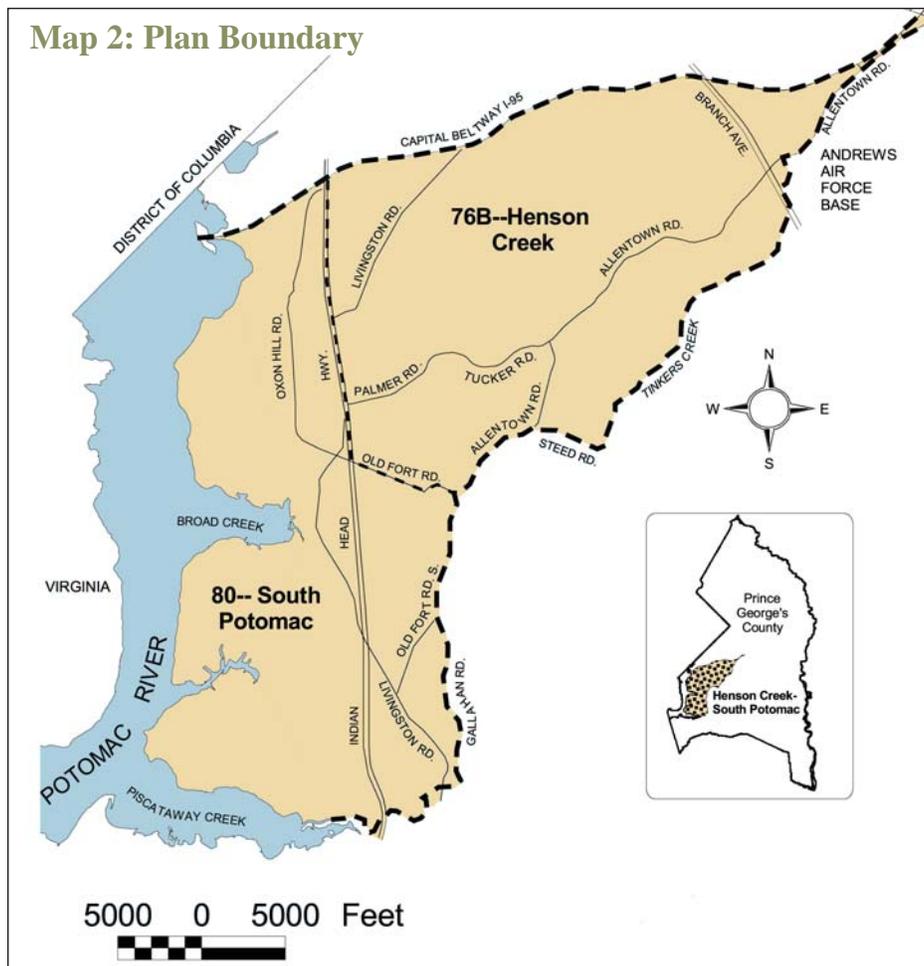
This plan supersedes all earlier plans of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) for the Henson Creek and South Potomac planning areas (PA 76B and 80), except functional master plans for the area.

The basic purposes of the plan are:

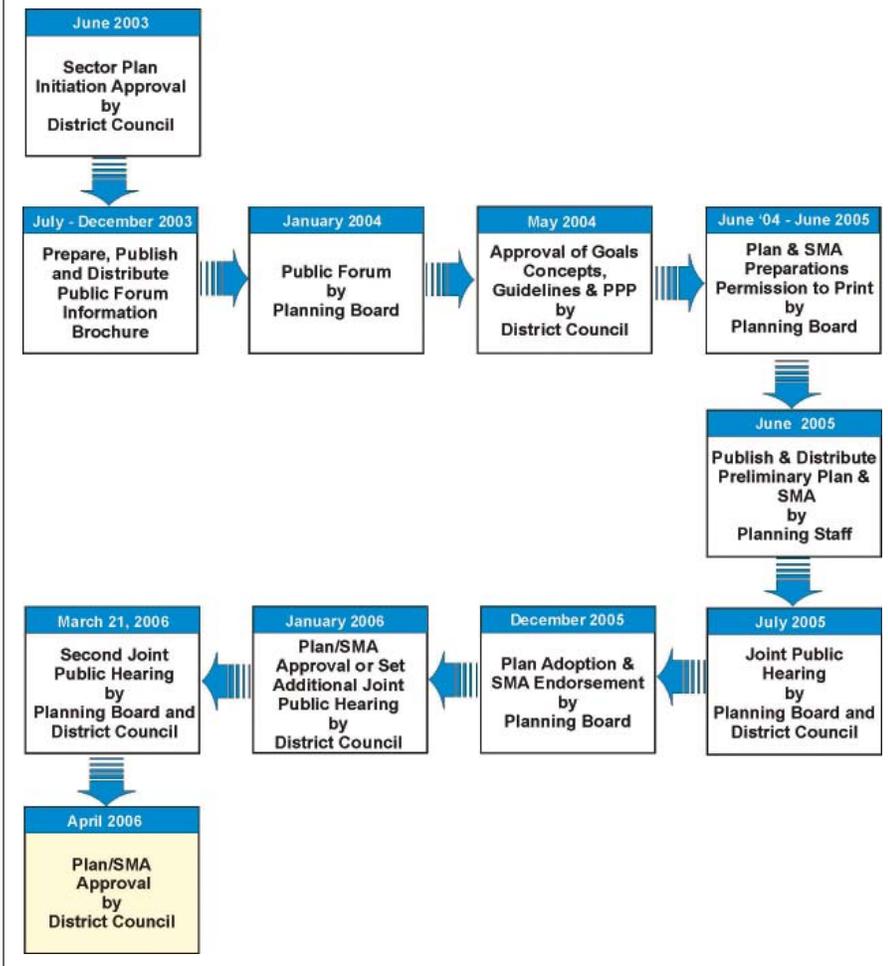
- To implement the 2002 General Plan and assess its implication on the planning area.
- To replace the 1981 master plan for Subregion VII for Planning Areas 76B and 80.
- To amend the zoning map to implement the land use recommendations through a sectional map amendment.
- To analyze existing development and current zoning patterns for consistency with the county’s development policies
- To set policies that will guide future development in the planning area.

Planning Area Boundary

Henson Creek is generally bounded to the north by I-95 and the Suitland Parkway; to the west by the Potomac River; to the south by Piscataway Creek; and to the east by Gallahan Road, Old Fort Road, Allentown Road to Steed Road and Tinkers Creek, Meetinghouse Branch, the western boundary of Andrews Air Force Base, and Allentown Road.



Plan Process



Citizen Participation

Citizen involvement started in August 2003, when a meeting was held with civic association representatives to get an initial idea of the planning area's perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This information contributed to the issues contained in the Public Forum Information Brochure. On January 13, 2004, a public forum was held to announce the intention to prepare a new master plan. More than 300 citizens, especially property owners, attended this event. It provided an opportunity for citizens to comment on the issues contained in the information brochure and to provide additional planning issues that would be addressed during the "charrette process."

A pre-charrette workshop was conducted on October 18, 2004, to develop vision statements for the area and prioritize issues. From November 3–10, 2004, a planning charrette was conducted—an intensive planning exercise that included vision refinement, alternative concept development, three feedback loops, and draft preferred plan development and refinement. On December 6, 2004, a post-charrette meeting was held to receive comments on the refined preferred plan. The citizen input and staff and consultant efforts resulted in a document that reflects the position of many in the planning area. This document was available to citizens of the area for their review 30 days prior to the July 2005 Planning Board and County Council joint hearing to receive public testimony.



Relationship to Other Applicable Plans and Policies

A number of previously approved plans and policy documents, such as the *Master Plan of Transportation*, the *Master Plan for Public School Sites*, the *Countywide Trails Plan*, the *Historic Sites and District Plan*, and those described below, provide background information and a framework for the plan and SMA.

The 2002 General Plan

The 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan* sets broad goals, objectives, policies and strategies to guide development. It designates growth tiers, centers and corridors that establish the policy basis for preparation of more detailed master plans and provides the benchmark against which plan recommendations can be evaluated. The General Plan places the Henson Creek-South Potomac planning area in three growth policy tiers and identifies two centers and two corridors:

DEVELOPED TIER—Approximately 17 percent of the planning area is in the Developed Tier. Its policies emphasize sustainable, transit-supporting, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, medium- to high-density, quality infill and redevelopment, streamlined review policies, and the highest priority for the expenditure of public funds.

DEVELOPING TIER—Approximately 81 percent of the planning area is in the Developing Tier. It is intended to be an area of low- to moderate-density suburban residential communities, distinct commercial centers, and employment areas that are transit serviceable. Its policies emphasize balancing the pace of development with the demands for adequate roads and public facilities and encouraging contiguous expansion of development where public facilities and services can be more efficiently provided.

RURAL TIER—Approximately two percent of the planning area is in the Rural Tier (generally the Broad Creek basin). Its policies encourage the protection of woodlands for wildlife habitat, recreational and agricultural pursuits, and preservation of the rural character and vistas that exist. Planning policies in the Rural Tier are intended to balance pressure for residential development and landowners' equity with the desire to maintain rural environments and character.

CENTERS—Two centers are designated: National Harbor Center and Oxon Hill Regional Center. They are targeted for intense mixed-use development appropriate to metropolitan and regional scales, respectively.

This plan implements the key recommendations of the General Plan and proposes amendments as discussed below.

Amendments to the General Plan (See Map 3)

This master plan is in accordance with the 2002 General Plan with the exception of the following proposed amendments:

1. Removal of the corridor designation along Indian Head Highway (MD 210) south of the Capital Beltway.
2. Designation of a new corridor along the proposed Purple Line transit line and Oxon Hill Road from the Woodrow Wilson Bridge to a potential future transit stop near the St. Barnabas Road/Brinkley Road intersection.
3. Reclassification of the 21.35-acre tract on the southwest quadrant of Indian Head Highway and Old Fort Road North from the Rural Tier to the Developing Tier.

The 1992 Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act

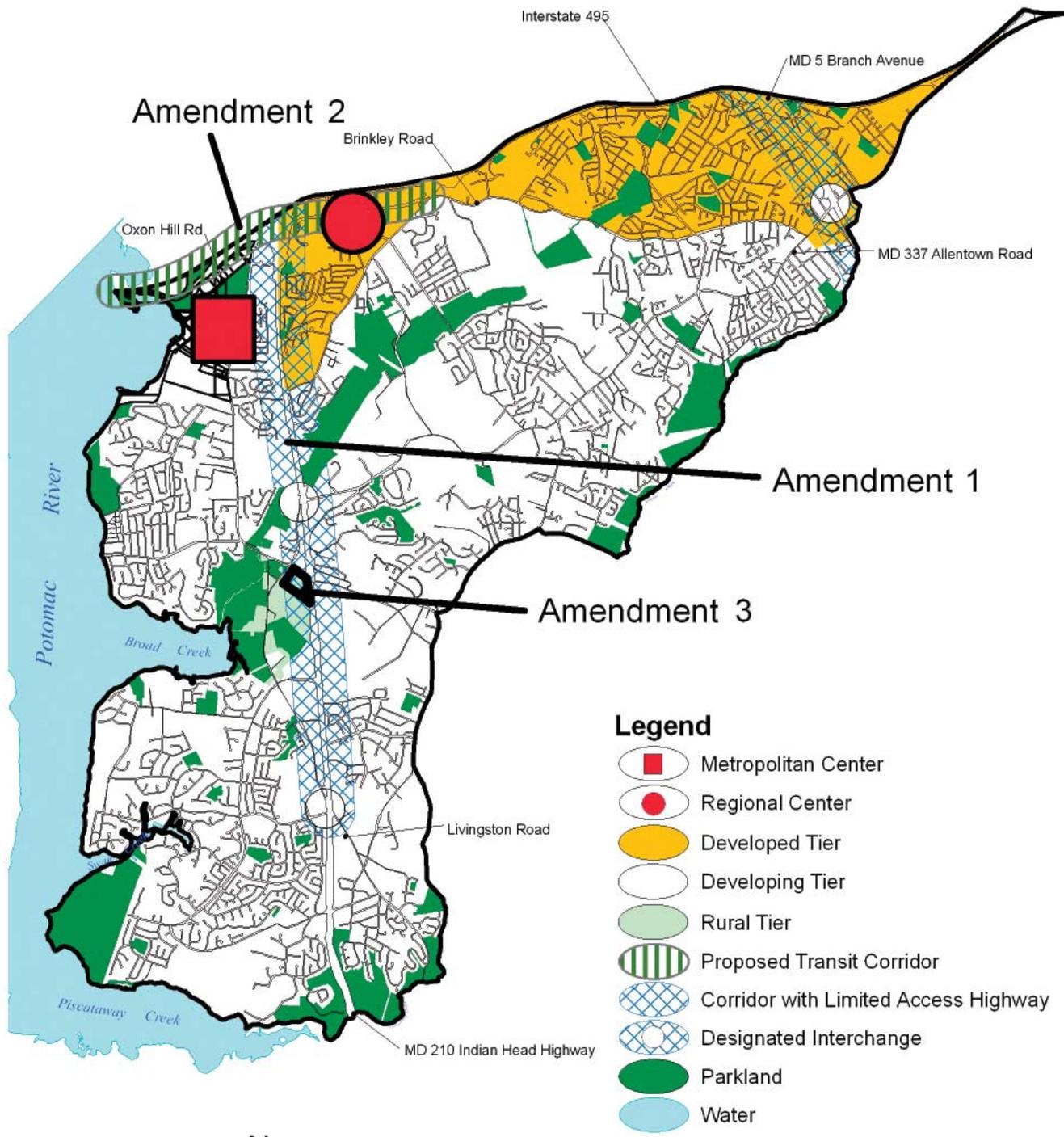
This legislation was enacted to encourage economic growth, limit sprawl development, and protect the state's natural resources. It establishes consistent general land use policies to be locally implemented throughout Maryland. These policies are stated in the form of eight visions.

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 1 through 5 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 county's General Plan is in conformance with the eight visions and this master plan is guided by the applicable General Plan policies for the planning area.

Map 3: General Plan Amendments



Legend

-  Metropolitan Center
-  Regional Center
-  Developed Tier
-  Developing Tier
-  Rural Tier
-  Proposed Transit Corridor
-  Corridor with Limited Access Highway
-  Designated Interchange
-  Parkland
-  Water

The 1997 Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Act

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

Approximately 80 percent of the planning area is within the PFA. This master plan concentrates development at centers and at nodes and reinforces the existing low-density development pattern in other areas, thereby supporting the Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Act.

The 1988 Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Overlay Zones

The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area law was enacted by the Maryland General Assembly to foster more sensitive development along the shorelines of the Chesapeake Bay so as to minimize damage to natural habitats and degradation of water quality. The law requires each local jurisdiction containing land within the critical area to develop and implement a program to:

1. Minimize adverse impact on water quality.
2. Conserve fish, wildlife and plant habitats.
3. Establish land use policy to accommodate growth while assuring that developments are well planned and minimize impacts on the environment.

This plan reinforces the Prince George’s County program of an “overlay zoning” along the Potomac shoreline.

Planning Area Profile

The following statistics¹ describe the existing situation for the Henson Creek-South Potomac master plan area:

- Land Area: 32.5 square miles—6.6 percent of county
- Population
 - 2000: 72,189 persons—nine percent of county (census)
 - 2030: 78,300 persons (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Forecast)
- Population mix (2000 census)
 - 74 percent black
 - 15 percent white
 - 6 percent Asian
 - 3 percent Hispanic/Latino
 - 2 percent other races
- Dwelling Units
 - 2005: 28,484 total dwelling units—8.9 percent of county (M-NCPPC inventory)
 - 20,283 single-family detached
 - 1,583 townhouses
 - 6,618 multifamily units
 - 2030: 31,583 total dwelling units (COG forecast)
- Employment (COG forecast)
 - 2000: 15,483 jobs—4.6 percent of county
 - 2030: 38,437 jobs
- The existing development pattern is shown on Map 4.

¹ Based on 2000 U.S. Census, COG Cooperative Forecast (Round 6.4), and 2005 Prince George’s County Planning Department Dwelling Unit Inventory and Population Estimates.

Map 4: Existing Development Pattern

