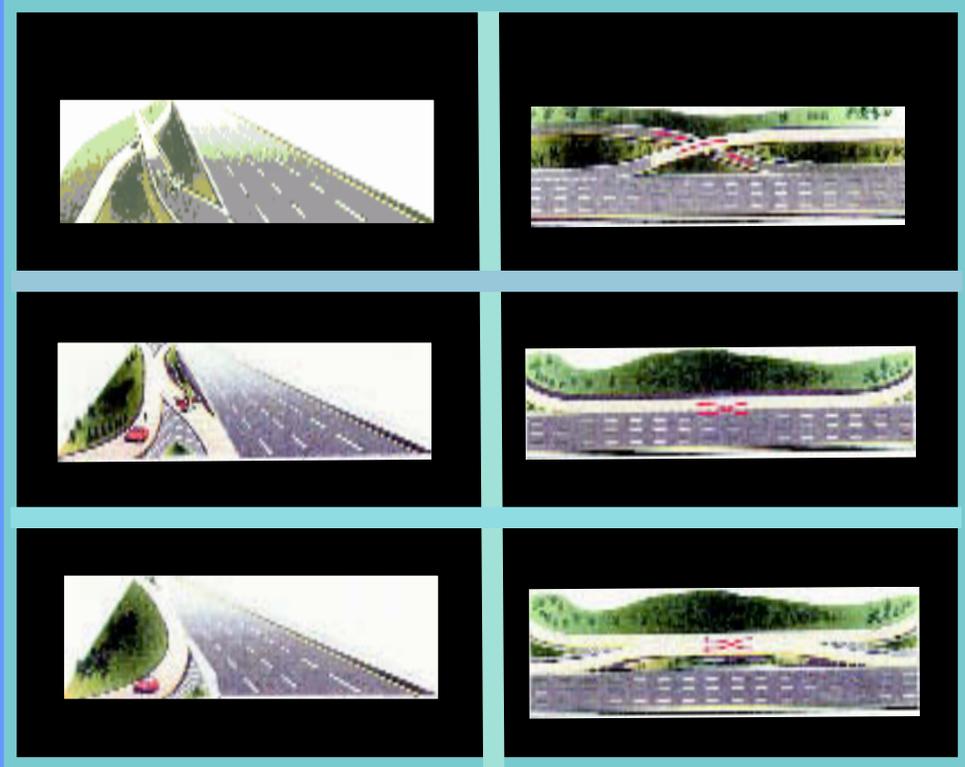


February 2002

PRELIMINARY MINOR PUBLIC FACILITY AMENDMENTS



to the
1990 Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan (planning area 73)
the
1993 Approved Landover and Vicinity Master Plan (planning area 72)
and the
Master Plan of Transportation



The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

www.mncppc.org

Abstract

TITLE: Preliminary Minor Public Facility Amendments

AUTHOR: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

SUBJECT: Minor Public Facility Amendments to the 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan*, the 1993 *Approved Landover and Vicinity Master Plan*, and the *Master Plan of Transportation*

DATE: February 2002

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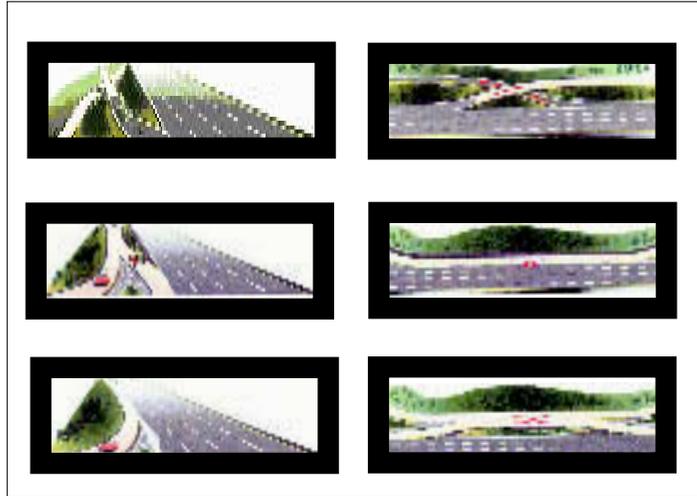
SERIES NUMBER: 42602152405

NUMBER OF PAGES: 20

ABSTRACT: This document contains text and maps in support of three proposed amendments to the 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan*, the 1993 *Approved Landover and Vicinity Master Plan*, and the *Master Plan of Transportation*. The three proposed amendments were recommendations of the MD 202 Corridor Study, which was completed in 1997 with the cooperation of citizen groups and developer representatives. The amendments specifically under consideration would include the following: (a) the conversion of the I-95/I-495/Arena Drive interchange to full-time operation; (b) the deletion of the planned MD 202/Lottsford Road interchange in favor of an at-grade intersection; and (c) the deletion of the planned I-95/I-495/Campus Way interchange in favor of retaining an overpass, with no access to the Capital Beltway, at this location. In response to the desire of citizen groups who participated in the effort, the Planning Board and the District Council have initiated a minor public facility amendment process to further study these changes. This document only addresses the three amendments under study; it does not make any recommendations concerning the zoning of property nor does it contain any recommendations concerning nontransportation planning issues. Consideration of these three proposed amendments will be the initial step toward implementing the recommendations of the MD 202 Corridor Study.

February 2002

PRELIMINARY MINOR PUBLIC FACILITY AMENDMENTS



to the
1990 Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan (planning area 73)
the
1993 Approved Landover and Vicinity Master Plan (planning area 72)
and the
Master Plan of Transportation

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

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- 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.
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Introduction

About These Preliminary Plan Amendments

Pursuant to Section 27-641 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Prince George's County Planning Board has prepared three minor public facility amendments to the 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan* and the 1993 *Approved Landover and Vicinity Master Plan*. Each of these amendments additionally would amend the 1982 *General Plan* for the Maryland-Washington Regional District within Prince George's County. The minor public facility amendments specifically under consideration would include the following:

- The conversion of the I-95/I-495/Arena Drive interchange to full-time operation (the current master plans only allow traffic operations at this interchange in connection with special events at FedEx Field or the Capital Centre).
- The deletion of the MD 202/Lottsford Road interchange in favor of an at-grade intersection (the current master plan shows a modified diamond interchange at this location).
- The deletion of the I-95/I-495/Campus Way interchange in favor of retaining an overpass, with no access to the Capital Beltway, at this location (the current master plans show a partial interchange with ramps to and from the north at this location).

The MD 202 Corridor Study was completed in 1997. The recommendations of the study were developed with the cooperation of citizen groups and developer representatives. The final report presents the results of a number of analyses which, taken together, provided a staging plan for the development of an area generally north and east of MD 202 and Lottsford Road.

In response to the desire of citizen groups who participated in the effort, the Planning Board has included a study of three transportation elements which were recommended by the MD 202 Corridor Study in the FY1999-2000 budget. This would be the initial step toward implementing the recommendations of the MD 202 Corridor Study.

The study area for these preliminary plan amendments includes an area within Planning Areas 72 and 73, which is bounded as described below:

- **Within Planning Area 72 (1993 *Approved Landover and Vicinity Master Plan*):** An area bounded by the Capital Beltway, Ardwick-Ardmore Road, Brightseat Road, Redskins Road, Rajon Road, Garrett A. Morgan (previously Summerfield) Boulevard and MD 214.
- **Within Planning Area 73 (1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan*):** An area bounded by the Capital Beltway, MD 214, the Western Branch, the Bald Hill Branch and Ardwick-Ardmore Road.

Based on an evaluation of the pertinent issues, this preliminary document sets forth recommendations concerning the three proposed amendments. As these preliminary plan amendments are being conducted solely to address the question of the three interchanges described, this amendment does not include any recommendations for transportation facilities outside of the study area. Also, this preliminary plan document does not make any recommendations concerning the zoning of property nor does it contain any recommendations concerning nontransportation planning issues.

This preliminary plan document has been prepared by the Planning Department staff pursuant to Section 27-642(d) and Sections 27-643 through 27-648. It was initiated by the District Council as a minor public facility amendment in May 2000, and is consistent with the Goals, Concepts and Guidelines approved by the Council on November 26, 2001.

In support of the analyses in the Background and Basic Issues section of this Preliminary Plan, Planning Department staff prepared the MD 202 Corridor Study. This study is not an essential part of the preliminary plan and its associated recommendations but is available from the Transportation Planning Section of the Countywide Planning Division of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Preliminary Minor Public Facility Amendments

Goal

- To recommend appropriate changes to the approved transportation network along MD 202 and the Capital Beltway in accordance with the recommendations of the MD 202 Corridor Study.

Objectives

- To maintain planned service levels and accommodate planned development while reducing the impact of roads on the immediate community.
- To facilitate the safe and orderly movement of both local and nonlocal traffic by minimizing conflicts between them.
- To plan roads linking the regional transportation facilities with regionally significant employment areas while minimizing dislocation and disruption of the local community resulting from the construction of such road facilities.

These preliminary master plan minor amendments incorporate and reaffirm the Transportation Goals and Objectives of the 1982 *General Plan*. To the extent possible, this document has considered the goals and objectives outlined in the initial draft of the 2002 General Plan. However, approval of a 2002 General Plan will likely result in an update of the Master Plan of Transportation, and through that process the entire planned transportation network will be made consistent with the policies within that plan.

Background and Basic Issues

The amendments proposed in this preliminary plan originally were recommendations of the MD 202 Corridor Study. This study was completed as part of the Planning Department's FY1997 work program. The study originally began in support of a Sectional Map Amendment generally including properties within an area bounded by MD 202, the Capital Beltway, Lake Arbor Way and the proposed alignment of Campus Way. During the course of the study, it evolved into a visioning and implementation study. Much of the direction of the study was the result of collaborative discussions within a series of study group meetings. The study group (termed the planning group) was composed of technical staff, citizen representatives and developer interest representatives.

From a transportation perspective, the MD 202 Corridor Study involved a comprehensive study of transportation in the MD 202 corridor. This comprehensive study included:

- Traffic analyses of intersections within a study area along MD 202 adjacent to the properties forming the focus of the study.
- Consideration of the development of the study area properties along with the development of other undeveloped zoned properties in the area.
- Identification of the transportation facilities needed in the future to provide adequate transportation facilities.

- Development of a plan for staging necessary transportation improvements to occur coincidentally with development on the subject property and other undeveloped zoned properties in the area.

The traffic analysis indicated that the transportation network identified in the 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan*, as modified by a 1996 amendment to the plan adding a special-use interchange at I-95 and Arena Drive, was required to serve a buildout level exceeding 5.0 million square feet within the MD 202 Corridor Study Area. The planning group, after considering the transportation facility requirements for several development scenarios and the likely development patterns which could occur, indicated their support for a cap of 2.7 million square feet within the study area properties.

Based on the results of the traffic analysis and the recommendations of the planning group, the MD 202 Corridor Study recommended that the Largo-Lottsford and the Landover master plans be reexamined. There are three significant transportation proposals that were determined to be potential master plan amendments. These proposals include:

- Deletion of the proposed interchange at MD 202 and Lottsford Road
- Provision of 24-hour operations at the I-95/Arena Drive interchange
- Elimination of the ramps at the location where Campus Way North crosses I-95

These proposals form the basis of these proposed minor amendments and are discussed in more detail below.

The conversion of the I-95/I-495/Arena Drive interchange to full-time operation:

The concept of a possible interchange at the Capital Beltway (I-95/I-495) and Arena Drive (A-30 on the 1993 *Approved Landover and Vicinity Master Plan*) has been under consideration for many years. The 1973 *Model Neighborhood Area Master Plan* and the 1977 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan* each included a schematic diagram for a partial interchange at the Beltway and Arena Drive. This schematic included a loop ramp from southbound I-95/I-495 to eastbound Arena Drive and a directional ramp from westbound Arena Drive to northbound I-95/I-495. This partial interchange remained a part of the 1982 *General Plan and Master Plan of Transportation*. The 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan* included Arena Drive (the A-30 facility) as an arterial facility crossing the Beltway to connect MD 202 with Brightseat Road. However, the proposal for a partial interchange was deleted with the following language under its description of A-30: "a previously planned interchange with the Beltway has been deleted from the master plan— since it was not in conformance with the Federal Highway Administration's interchange spacing policy for interstate highways." The 1993 *Approved Landover and Vicinity Master Plan* did not show an interchange at the Beltway and Arena Drive; however, it included a recommendation to extend the A-30 arterial facility from Brightseat Road to Ritchie Road (A-31 in the plan, alternatively known as Summerfield Boulevard and more recently, Garrett A. Morgan Boulevard).

At the time that an application was filed for the use of the Wilson Farm as the site for a 78,600-seat stadium, the State Highway Administration (SHA), with the cooperation of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and the County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T), initiated a study to determine the necessary improvements to serve the proposed stadium. After extensive review of traffic projections and environmental constraints, the provision of an interchange at I-95/I-495 and Arena Drive (A-30 on the master plan) was recommended to support traffic operations at the proposed stadium. The resulting master plan amendment further

endorsed the proposal to construct the now-existing diamond interchange at I-95/I-495 and Arena Drive. This interchange was approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) subject to a condition that the interchange not be open to full-time traffic, but would instead be a special-use interchange opened during limited hours to support improved access to the proposed stadium on the Wilson Farm and to the Capital Centre. The amendment was approved in 1996, and the interchange was constructed shortly thereafter. Map 1 shows the location of proposed master plan amendments (all maps are provided at the end of the text).

The primary difficulty in operating the I-95/I-495/Arena Drive interchange full-time concerns the close spacing between the ramps to and from Arena Drive and the ramps that serve the adjacent MD 202 and MD 214 interchanges. Closely spaced ramps result in a weave, which is defined as the crossing of two or more traffic streams traveling in the same direction along a significant length of highway without the aid of traffic control devices. Weaves require many drivers to complete lane-changing maneuvers over a section of highway, and these maneuvers deteriorate the quality of traffic operations on the highway, thereby reducing the capacity of the highway. In general, FHWA requires at least one mile spacing between interchanges along the Interstate Highway System within urban areas.

At the time that the special-use interchange was approved, it was recognized that the Arena Drive interchange would be reviewed for the purpose of recommending full-time operations in the future. Full-time operation is desirable at this location to serve planned Metrorail stations that are currently under construction along Morgan Boulevard and at Largo Town Center, and to serve existing and future development in the area. Since its approval as a special-use interchange, a number of configurations using collector-distributor roads along the Beltway as well as revised ramp configurations for the ramps at the MD 202, Arena Drive, and MD 214 interchanges with I-95/I-495 have been reviewed. In 1997, SHA completed a feasibility study that concluded that full-time operations could be provided at the I-95/I-495/Arena Drive interchange. Three options were identified as feasible, and these options were given extensive review:

Option 1—This option is illustrated on Map 2. It would involve the construction of an overpass for the southbound ramp from MD 202 over the southbound ramp to Arena Drive (this ramp arrangement is often termed a basket weave). It would also involve the relocation of both the loop and the outer ramps in the southeast quadrant of the I-95/495/MD 202 interchange in order to maximize the weaving section north of Arena Drive along the northbound Beltway. This option, at \$18 million in 1997 dollars, is the lowest cost option; preliminary investigations indicate that it would have the least environmental impact and require the least right-of-way. FHWA does not support this option at this time because the weaves along the northbound Beltway, both north and south of Arena Drive, are not eliminated.

Option 2—This option is illustrated on Map 3. It would involve the construction of two basket-weaves. One would involve an overpass for the southbound ramp from MD 202 over the southbound ramp to Arena Drive (similar to Option 1), and the second would involve an overpass for the northbound ramp from Arena Drive over the northbound ramp to MD 202. This option would also involve the relocation of the loop ramp in the southeast quadrant of the I-95/I-495/MD 202 interchange. This option would cost \$26 million in 1997 dollars, and would involve greater impacts on right-of-way and environmental features than Option 1. FHWA does not support this option at this time because the weaves along the northbound Beltway between MD 214 and Arena Drive are not eliminated.

Option 3—This option is illustrated on Map 4. It would involve the construction of three basket-weaves. This option is similar to Option 2 except that it adds an overpass for the northbound ramp from MD 214 over the northbound ramp to Arena Drive. Additionally, this option combines the Arena Drive and MD 202 ramps into a single ramp, with MD 202 traffic continuing under Arena Drive. This option would cost \$32 million in 1997 dollars, and has been estimated to have the greatest impact on right-of-way and environmental features of the three options reviewed. FHWA supports this option; it is not supported by SHA at this time because of the greater cost and the greater environmental impacts.

Two other options were studied by SHA and were dropped from further consideration. Both options considered a collector-distributor (C-D) roadway system between MD 202 and MD 214. The C-D roadway system is a one- or two-lane roadway, parallel to but separated from the main highway, that allows merging, weaving, and exiting operations to occur separately from through traffic. The options involved pavement separation and jersey barrier separation. Both had substantial costs and environmental impacts while providing minimal benefits to traffic operations.

Given the findings, planning staff concludes that full-time operation of the I-95/I-495/Arena Drive interchange is indeed feasible and can be included on the area master plans and the Master Plan of Transportation. No alternate needs to be designated on the plans; text accompanying the symbol for this interchange would not include any traffic restrictions. The next steps would involve a detailed environmental study by SHA to accompany an Interstate Access Point Approval request to the FHWA. Through these processes, a selected alternate would be identified for final design and eventual funding for construction. As noted in the discussions for each option, the cost of implementing full-time operation at the I-95/I-495/Arena Drive interchange ranges from \$18 million to \$32 million, in 1997 dollars, depending upon the alternate chosen.

The deletion of the MD 202/Lottsford Road interchange in favor of an at-grade intersection:

The 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan* was the initial plan which depicted a planned interchange at MD 202 and Lottsford Road. The need for this interchange resulted substantially from the rezoning of a number of properties within the MD 202 Corridor Study Area from residential to employment zoning. The master plan estimated an aggregate density of up to 5.5 million square feet of office space could be developed within the limits of Employment Area 3, as described in the Largo-Lottsford master plan. The current master plan with the location of the proposed MD 202/Lottsford Road interchange is shown on Map 1.

Three significant changes have greatly reduced the need for an interchange at this location. These changes include:

- A 79-acre piece of land at the southeast corner of MD 202 and Lottsford Road, that had been rezoned in 1988 from R-R to I-3, was approved for residential development under the R-M zone.
- An interchange was constructed at the location where Arena Drive crosses the Capital Beltway. This was not contemplated by the 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan*; that plan showed Arena Drive as an overpass, with no connecting ramps, at this location. Although this interchange was approved and built as a special-use interchange, the possibility that it could be opened full-time in the future would serve to reorient traffic, thereby placing less emphasis on MD 202 as the sole means of accessing the Beltway from the area.

- As discussed earlier, the planning group for the MD 202 Corridor Study, after considering the likely development patterns which could occur, indicated their support for a cap of 2.7 million square feet within the study area properties - far lower than the 5.5 million square feet that was originally cited in the master plan.

The MD 202/Lottsford Road interchange would have involved the construction of a full-movement interchange to replace the existing at-grade intersection at MD 202 and Lottsford Road. Staff's analyses during the course of the MD 202 Corridor Study determined that the MD 202/Lottsford Road interchange would have provided roadway capacity for an additional 2,000,000 square feet of development within MD 202 Corridor Study Area. In light of the planning group's recommendation that development within the area would not exceed 2.7 million square feet, other planned facilities, including the addition of a fourth through lane along MD 202 and the provision of an overpass and partial interchange at MD 202/McCormick Drive/St. Joseph's Drive, were deemed to be sufficient to serve planned development in the area.

Because this master plan recommendation involves the deletion of a planned facility, there is no cost associated with the facility recommended by this amendment.

The deletion of the I-95/I-495/Campus Way interchange in favor of retaining an overpass, with no access to the Capital Beltway, at this location:

The 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan* was the initial plan which depicted a planned interchange at I-95/I-495 and Campus Way. Previous plans had recognized Campus Way (A-29) as an arterial facility between Harry S Truman Drive (A-38) and Lake Arbor Way (A-30), but in recognition of the increased commercial density which was approved by the master plan, along with a need for a significant buffer between commercial and residential land use, the 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan* extended A-29 northward and westward, and included a crossing of the Capital Beltway near existing Evarts Street to an intersection with Brightseat Road (which was shown on the 1993 *Approved Landover and Vicinity Master Plan*). The need for this interchange resulted substantially from the rezoning of a number of properties within the MD 202 Corridor Study Area from residential to employment zoning. The master plan estimated an aggregate density of up to 5.5 million square feet of office space could be developed within the limits of Employment Area 3, as described in the Largo-Lottsford master plan. The interchange was limited to ramps to and from the north, and the ramps were needed to augment traffic operations at the existing I-95/I-495/MD 202 interchange. The current master plan and the location of the proposed Campus Way crossing is shown on Map 1.

The MD 202 Corridor Study did not review the impact of ramps at this location on development patterns in the area. Discussions with state highway officials at the time that the I-95/I-495/Arena Drive interchange was approved indicated that new ramps at Campus Way would be very unlikely to receive federal approval. With the construction of the special-use ramps at Arena Drive, SHA officials indicated that FHWA officials would tend to favor strategies to upgrade these ramps to full-time use over the construction of another set of ramps only one mile away at Campus Way. Additionally, other planned facilities in the area were determined to be sufficient to serve planned development in the area, particularly given the 2.7-million square foot cap which was endorsed by the planning group and included in the recommendation for the MD 202 Corridor Study.

The extension of Campus Way over the Capital Beltway would remain on the two underlying master plans. This extension, when analyzed within the MD 202 Corridor Study, was determined to have a

benefit in redistributing traffic in the area, and it provided roadway capacity for an additional 360,000 square feet of development within the MD 202 Corridor Study Area. However, at the Capital Beltway there would only be an overpass, and no ramp connections to the Capital Beltway would be retained on the master plan.

Because this master plan recommendation involves the deletion of a planned facility, there is no cost associated with the facility recommended by this amendment.

Concept

Most of the areas adjacent to these proposed amendments are in areas that were characterized as Category III Policy Areas in the 1982 *General Plan*. Category III areas are described as being "primarily undeveloped areas without water and sewer service and are proposed for staged future development in existing area plans." Policies for Category III areas include expanding water and sewer service areas to comprehensively planned neighborhoods where provisions for the necessary roads are fully accommodated by site reservations or dedications.

The areas included within the MD 202 Corridor Study were identified in the 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan* as Employment Area 3. The master plan makes a number of land use, design, and staging recommendations for this area. Specific to transportation, the master plan recommends that issues such as limits on the development potential of the area, staging of transportation improvements, and possible trip reduction strategies be more fully explored, preferably through a comprehensive traffic study of the area.

The MD 202 Corridor Study was conducted in 1996 and 1997. One of the most significant elements of that effort was the completion of a comprehensive traffic study that analyzed the possibility of a development cap and considered strategies for staging future facilities. As noted earlier, the recommendations of the MD 202 Corridor Study were developed with the cooperation of citizen groups and developer representatives. The preparation of these amendments represent the initial step toward implementing the recommendations of the MD 202 Corridor Study, and the recommendations presented herein are consistent with the recommendations of that study.

This preliminary master plan amendment endorses concepts and recommendations contained in the 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan* and the 1993 *Approved Landover and Vicinity Master Plan* that seek to further the use of public transportation. While the elimination of the interchange at MD 202/Lottsford Road and the ramps at I-95/I-495/Campus Way are fairly neutral in addressing the use of transit in the area, the conversion of the I-95/I-495/Arena Drive interchange to full-time usage would assist greatly with access to transit. There is a need to improve access to a planned Metrorail station at the Largo Town Center, as well as to other planned transit-oriented commercial developments in the immediate area. Converting this interchange to full-time usage will greatly improve access to the future Metrorail station from the Capital Beltway.

Recommendations

These preliminary master plan amendments endorse the following proposals which were recommendations of the MD 202 Corridor Study which was completed in 1997:

- The conversion of the I-95/I-495/Arena Drive interchange to full-time operation. This is an early

need which should be implemented to support access to the Largo Town Center Metrorail station, which is currently under construction, and planned development adjacent to the station. The current master plans show this interchange as a symbol, with associated text describing the restrictions. The revised master plans should continue to display a symbol, with no usage restrictions in the text.

- The deletion of the MD 202/Lottsford Road interchange in favor of an at-grade intersection.
- The deletion of the I-95/I-495/Campus Way interchange in favor of retaining an overpass, with no access to the Capital Beltway, at this location.

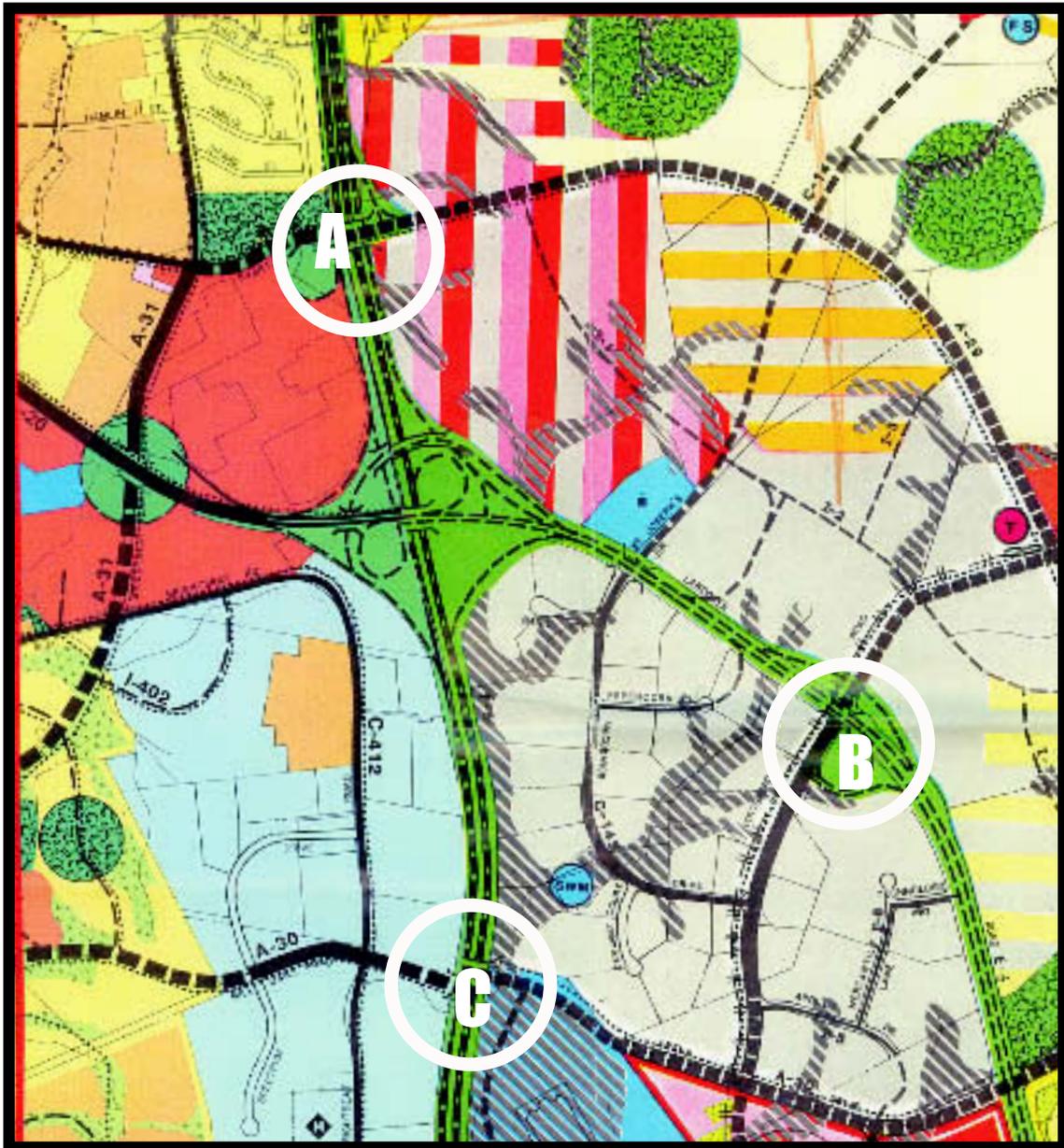
In recommending the deletion of the ramps at I-95/I-495/Campus Way, the recommendation reaffirms the need for a future street connection for Campus Way over the Capital Beltway in the vicinity of Evarts Street. This connection is a later need associated with the development of the M-X-T property on the east side of the Capital Beltway and the buildout of Employment Area 3.

Guidelines

This preliminary master plan amendment reaffirms all other Transportation and Circulation Guidelines contained in the 1993 *Approved Landover and Vicinity Master Plan* and the 1990 *Approved Largo-Lottsford Master Plan*. In considering these previous plans, the final design for the I-95/I-495/Arena Drive interchange should be reviewed in the context of several guidelines:

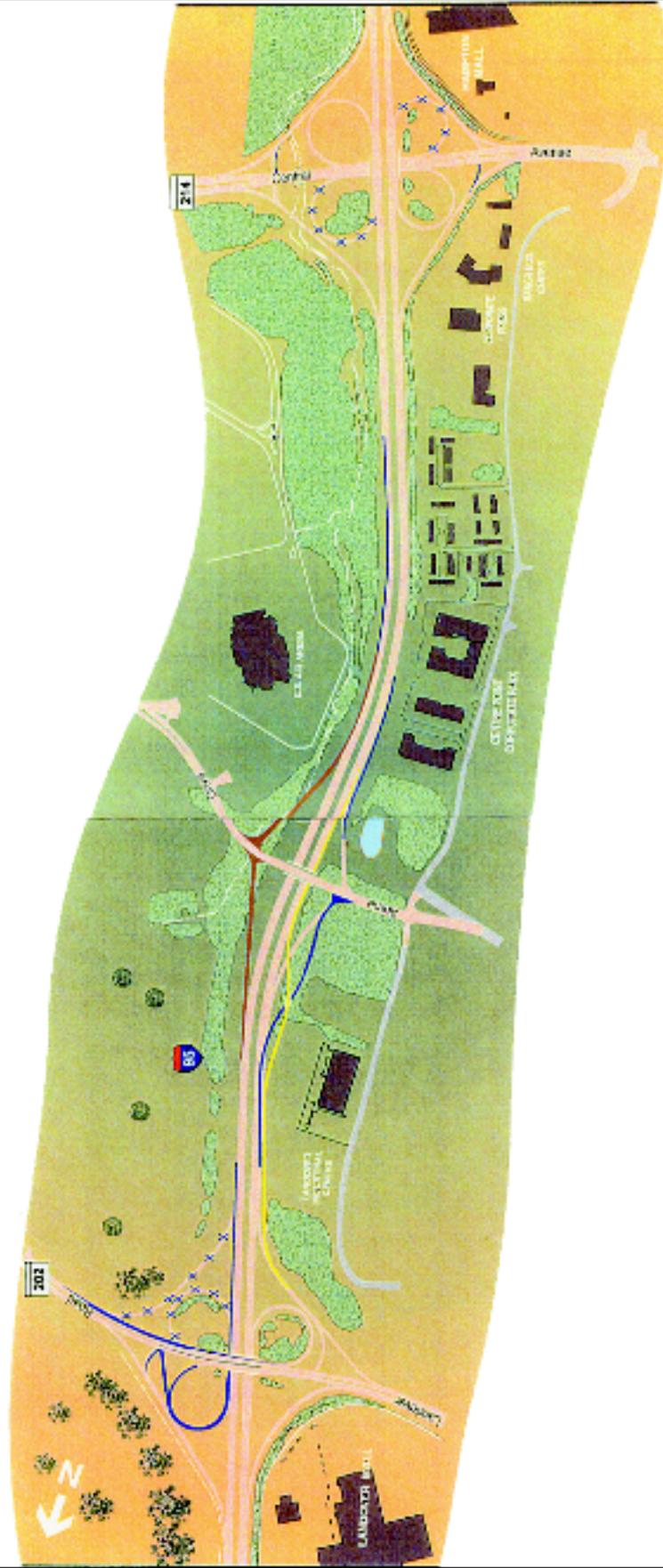
- Any proposed interchange ramp design at I-95 and Arena Drive should allow the safe flow of traffic along I-95 between MD 202 and MD 214. The operation of these ramps should maintain the orderly flow of traffic on this section of the Capital Beltway at all times.
- The final design must accommodate any planned bikeway and trail linkages in order to enhance the development of a comprehensive nonvehicular system in the area and should enhance connections to mass transit facilities.
- The final design should consider and minimize environmental impacts.

Map 1
Locations of Proposed Master Plan Amendments



OPTION 1

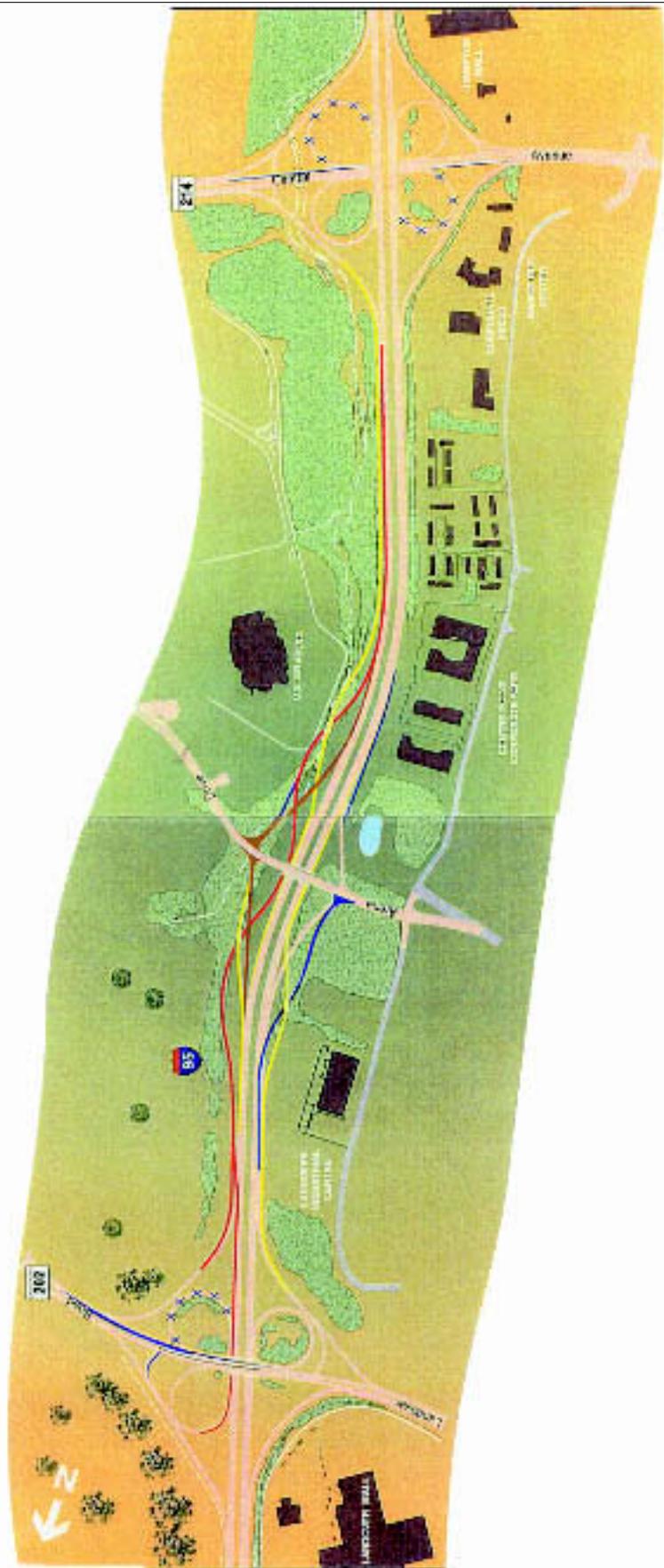
Map 2
Option 1: Full-Time Operation of the I-95/495/Arena Drive Interchange



- LEGEND**
- Arena Drive Ramps / Collector/Displicter Ramps
 - Flyover Ramps
 - Collector/Displicter Ramps / Ramp
 - Interchange / Ramp

OPTION 3

Map 4
Option 3: Full-Time Operation of the I-95/495/Arena Drive Interchange



- LEGEND**
- Arena Drive (Black) Gateway Street Construction
 - Arena Drive (Orange)
 - Arena Drive (Yellow)
 - Arena Drive (Blue)

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Interchange maps and cover figures courtesy of the Maryland State Highway Administration, from the *Feasibility Study for Full-Time Operation of the I-95/I-495 Interchange at Arena Drive—Study Overview Brochure*, December 1997

