

Methodology

for the
Proposed Sectional Map Amendment

for the
*2013 Approved Central Branch Avenue
Corridor Revitalization Sector Plan*

May 2026



1. Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) to the 2013 *Approved Central Branch Avenue Corridor Revitalization Sector Plan* is to rezone properties in a comprehensive manner that are necessary to implement the vision, goals, policies, and strategies of the plan. The approval of the SMA will result in the revision of the Prince George's County Official Zoning Map for the affected properties in the SMA area. The District Council initiated this SMA on May 5, 2026, through Council Resolution CR-XXX-2026. The sector plan presents opportunities to create communities that are vibrant, attractive, and sustainable by redeveloping underutilized retail centers into compact, pedestrian-friendly, transit-accessible places. This SMA is intended to help turn these opportunities into reality.

Zoning is the process of regulating the land use and building design (height, size, spacing and use) within a community. Generally, zoning determines what can be developed and where and how it can be developed. Zoning helps protect public and private interests, preserve critical areas, promote orderly growth, and encourage development to occur at a rate and manner that the community desires.

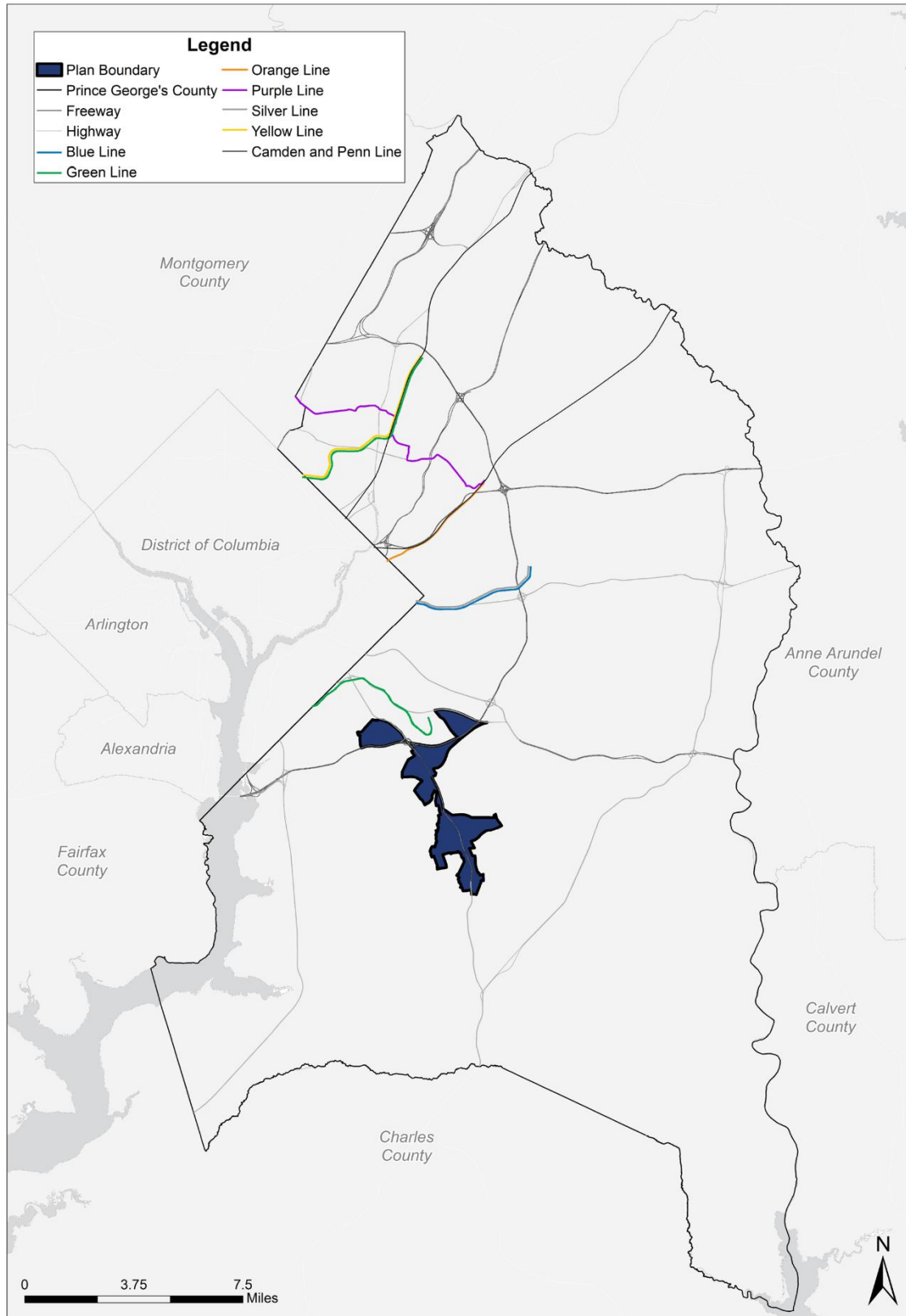
A sectional map amendment (SMA) is a comprehensive rezoning of one or more properties within an entire geographic area, such as a subregion, planning area or part of a planning area. An SMA revises zoning patterns to conform to recommendations of the applicable area master or sector plan. SMAs are adopted for most plans with the exception of the general plan and functional master plans. An SMA is a legislative function, provided for in Section 27-3503 of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance.

Planning History

The 2009 *Joint Base Andrews Naval Air Facility Washington Joint Land Use Study* recommended revitalization of commercial areas adjacent to the base and promotes compatible land uses in the airport impact area. The 2009 *Approved Subregion 5 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* recommended a more detailed study of the Clinton commercial core. The 2010 *St. Barnabas-Beech Road Industrial Study and Action Plan* recommended initiating a sector plan to examine the land use pattern in the St. Barnabas-Beech Road industrial area so that the adjacent residential areas can be more adequately buffered from industrial uses and the overall area can be enhanced. Additionally, the 2006 *Camp Springs Arts District Planning Study* also suggested that an art-themed, mixed-use center may be appropriate for Camp Springs' commercial area near Branch Avenue.

Other functional area plans and documents provide background information and a framework for the plan. These other plans and documents include: the *Educational Facilities Master Plan*, the 2009 *Approved Countywide Master Plan of Transportation Bikeways and Trails*, the 2008 *Approved Public Safety Facilities Master Plan*, the 2010 *Approved Historic Sites and Districts Plan*, the 2010 *Approved Water Resources Functional Master Plan*, and the 2005 *Approved Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan* (replaced by the 2017 *Approved Prince George's County Resource Conservation Plan: A Countywide Functional Master Plan*).

Map 1. County Context of CBA



Source: Prince George's County Planning Department

Sector Plan Overview

The Central Branch Avenue sector plan area extends from the intersection of MD 5 (Branch Avenue) and MD 414 (St. Barnabas Road) in the north to the Southern Maryland Hospital Center (Surratts Road and Branch Avenue) in the south, with northeastern and eastern boundaries along Suitland Parkway, MD 337 (Allentown Road), and MD 223 (Woodyard Road). The plan boundary includes portions of the Camp Springs and Clinton communities along Branch Avenue, Auth Road, and Woodyard Road; the Town of Morningside and Skyline neighborhood along Suitland Road; the Beech Road commercial-industrial area and adjacent Gordon's Corner neighborhood; and the Temple Hills community along St. Barnabas Road.

The overall goals of the Central Branch Avenue sector plan are to:

- Encourage a mix of uses at key locations to create vibrant places with quality housing, expanded job opportunities, and better retail options.
- Concentrate neighborhood-serving retail in appropriate locations and repurpose obsolete commercial centers to better serve the community's needs.
- Ensure that new development is well-designed to complement and enhance nearby neighborhoods.
- Reduce reliance on automobiles by providing enhanced and expanded access to transit, sidewalks, trails, and a bike network to create a healthier environment.
- Create a grid system of walkable streets with short block lengths to improve access to neighborhoods, community facilities, and activity centers.
- Create a green network of streetscapes, parks, and natural areas that enhance the public realm, expand recreational opportunities, and preserve valuable open space.
- Improve water quality and wildlife habitats by implementing innovative environmental policies and practices.
- Provide a range of housing types to attract a diverse population and encourage transit ridership.
- Ensure that land uses are compatible with Joint Base Andrews operations as well as provide opportunities to capitalize on the presence of the base. (pp. 59-60)

The driving forces that necessitated this sector plan at that time included potential future growth at Joint Base Andrews, the planned expansion of services and office space at Southern Maryland Hospital, and a planned transit line known as the Southern Maryland Rapid Transit (SMRT) line, which will either be light rail transit (LRT) or bus rapid transit (BRT), between the Branch Avenue Metro station and Charles County, along MD 5 (Branch Avenue). The Central Branch Avenue sector plan provides a strategic direction for redeveloping retail centers into moderate density, compact, mixed-use, and pedestrian- and transit-oriented places, each with a unique identity and sense of place for the communities they serve.

The foundation of the corridor revitalization strategy outlined in the sector plan is organized around the revitalization and redevelopment of the six focus areas that currently serve as important activity centers. The six focus areas are:

1. Beech Road
2. Allentown Road-Suitland Road
3. Camp Springs
4. Coventry Way

5. Clinton Commercial Area
6. Southern Maryland Hospital Center

Within the sector plan, there are detailed strategies for each focus area, and the plan recommends a distinct role for the focus areas along the corridor. A long-term vision, land use recommendations, and market-based development program with an illustrative concept is presented for each focus area where a new land use and development pattern is recommended. Additionally, for each of these areas, recommendations for connectivity and circulation, open space, and site and building design are provided to define community character consistent with the goals of the plan.

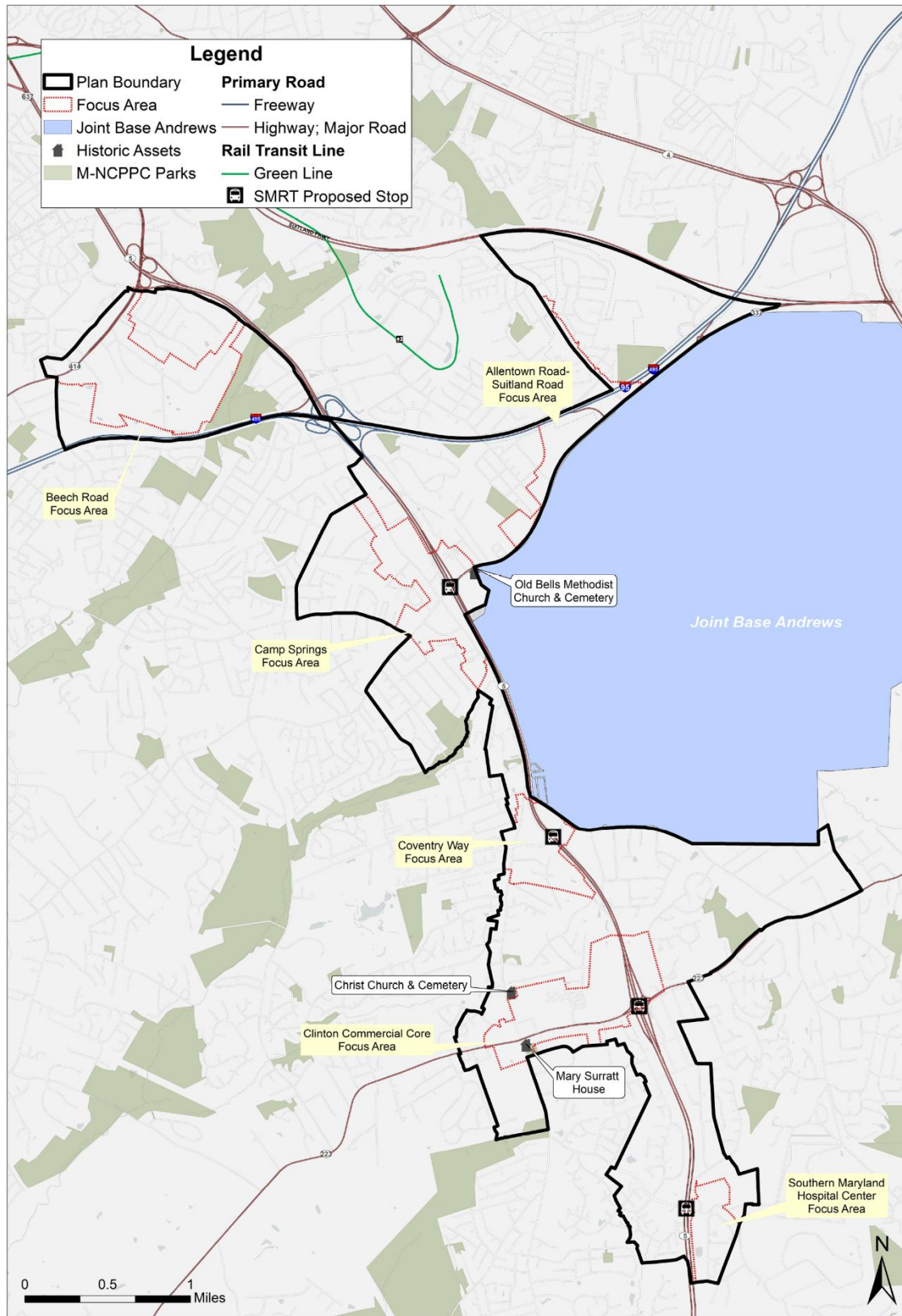
The sector plan provides land use recommendations for all properties within the plan area through the Corridorwide Future Land Use Map, as well as the six focus area land use maps. However, the plan includes language that guides rezoning recommendations only for select properties located within the six focus areas. The rezoning methodology for this Sectional Map Amendment was utilized to make all other rezoning recommendations for the remaining properties within the plan's boundary.

The *Central Branch Avenue Corridor Revitalization Sector Plan* was adopted by the Prince George's County Council, operating as the District Council, on April 2, 2013. Per the plan, it was "anticipated that upon approval of this plan rezoning will occur through a sectional map amendment....to implement new land use recommendations." (CBA, p. 62) The current Zoning Ordinance was adopted by the District Council on October 23, 2018. The adopted new Zoning Ordinance reduced the number of zones in the County from 74 in the current Zoning Ordinance to 43. The District Council approved the Countywide Map Amendment (CMA) on November 29, 2021. The CMA process of applying the new zones was a technical rezoning effort to transition all properties in the County to the new zones that were most similar to their existing zones. The CMA process did not consider the approved visions, goals, and strategies of any of the County's master or sector plans when applying new zones to properties Countywide. This CBA SMA process allows the sector plan's future land use vision to be implemented through the application of the appropriate zoning classifications.

Sectional Map Amendment Structure

This Sectional Map Amendment is organized to follow the structure and format of the Central Branch Avenue sector plan as seen in Chapter IV, Strategic Plan for Redevelopment and Revitalization. The sector plan lists for each of the six focus areas a Vision Statement, land use recommendations and zoning implications; and a recommended development program unique to that focus area. All but one focus area (Beech Road) has further recommendations for connectivity and circulation, open space, and building site and design. The sector plan provides policies affecting the whole of the corridor, including community design and appearance, transportation, the environment, parks and recreation, and historic preservation.

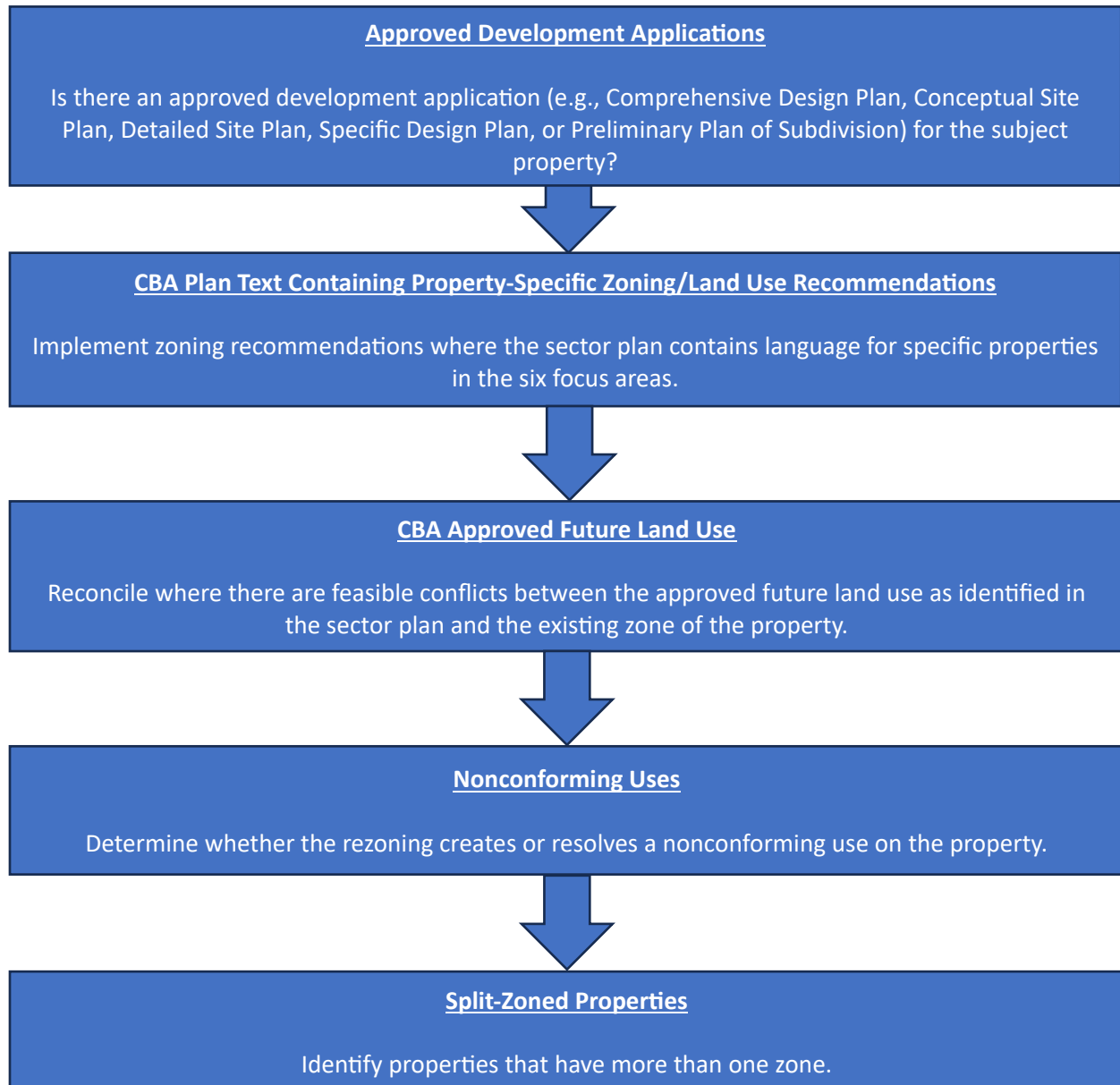
Map 2. Context Map of Central Branch Avenue Sector Plan Area



Source: Prince George's County Planning Department

2. Methodology

A comprehensive examination of all properties within the Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) area was conducted including research on approved development applications, previous zoning change requests, existing uses, future transit stations, and site visits. Multiple factors played into the proposed zone reclassification decisions proposed by this SMA. The following is the sequential step-by-step methodology used to determine the appropriate rezoning for all sector plan properties:



Following this methodology allows for this Sectional Map Amendment to implement the sector plan's zoning recommendations, realize the vision for the sector plan area determined by the future land use map, and make sensible zoning proposals based on existing conditions, where applicable.

An initial step in the process was the analysis of testimony from the 2021 Countywide Map Amendment (CMA) requesting a rezoning of a property. Research was conducted to evaluate zoning change requests submitted into the legal record for the CMA to determine if any requests for a new zone were in conformance with the CBA's vision, goals, and policies. The comment period for the CMA opened on March 23, 2020, with the record closing on September 29, 2021. Testimony for the CMA included 383 written exhibits and verbal testimony from 92 speakers. Analysis determined that there were no zoning change requests for any properties within the CBA area.

a. Approved Development Applications

Property owners who hold approved development applications within the Sectional Map Amendment area are allowed to proceed with their development projects under the regulations of the zoning ordinance, so long as the validity period for the application has not expired. Staff checked for current development proposals including Specific Design Plans, Preliminary Plans of Subdivision, Detailed Site Plans, Conceptual Site Plans, and Comprehensive Design Plans.

- If a development application was submitted for the property and pending approval, its zoning classification was retained to ensure that ongoing development would still be permitted.
- If a property has an approved development application, the property will either retain its existing zone or be reclassified to a different zone that allows development of the property by right.

b. Plan Text Containing Property Specific Zoning/Land Use Recommendations

The sector plan contained vision and zoning/land use recommendations for select properties within each of the six focus areas that provided guidance and informed their proposed zone. Absent of any approved development applications, the guidance from the plan's text was the next step in the process to determine the proposed zone for properties. For properties within the focus areas, rezoning decisions were based on either the approved land use recommendation or the most appropriate zone given the property's context within the built environment.

c. Approved Future Land Use

The CBA establishes policies for how land should be used in the future within the focus areas and the corridor. These policies are the guide for future development and redevelopment in the sector plan area. Absent of approved development applications or guidance from the plan's text, the next step in the process is to propose zones for properties based on the plan's approved future land use.

The CBA provided sufficient guidance towards the recommended minimum and maximum densities in certain areas based upon land use categories. If the existing zone aligns with the future land use map, the existing zone is retained. If the existing zone does not align with the future land use map, the SMA proposes a zone that does align with the future land use map (see Table 1 of this SMA). However, there

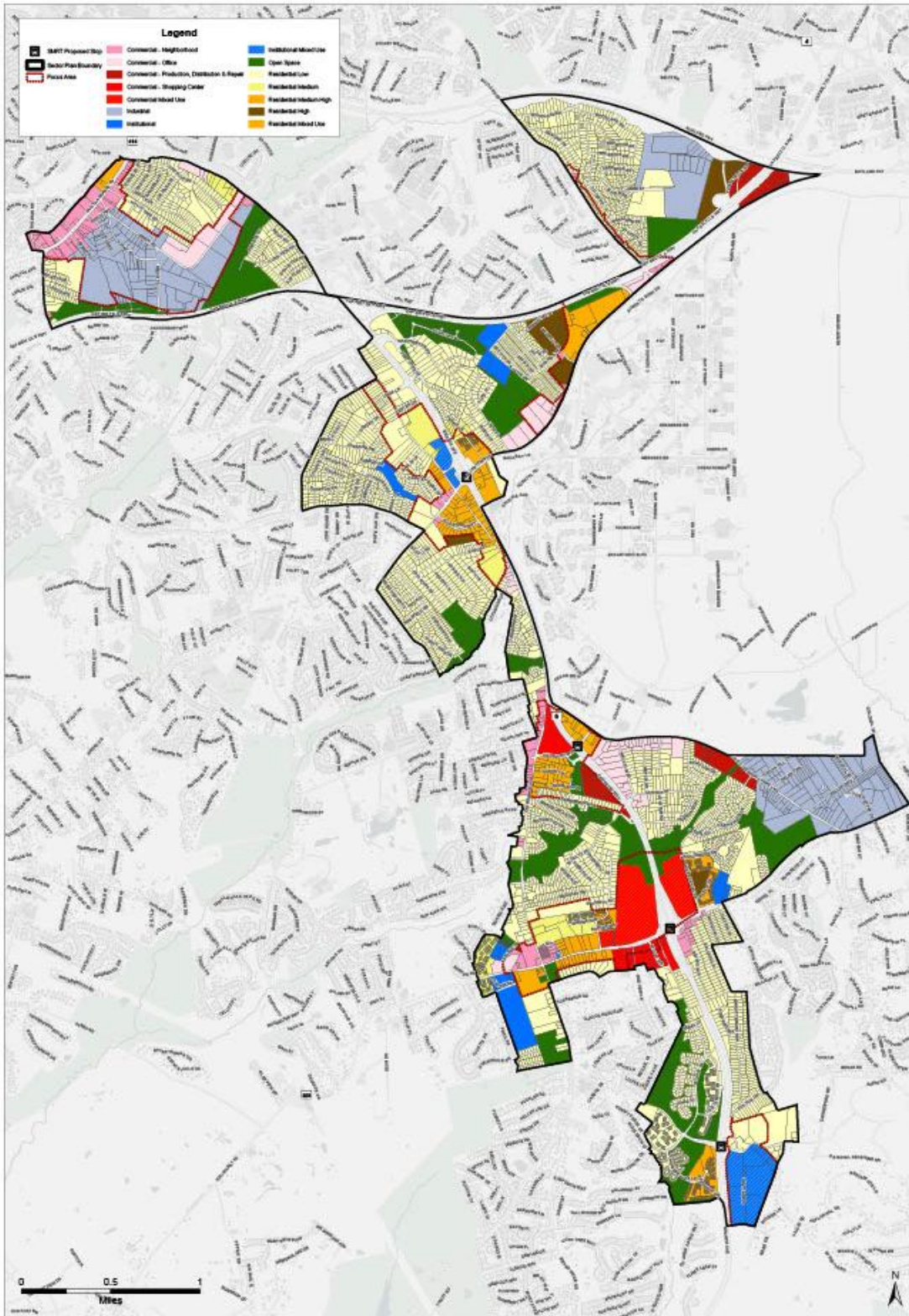
are unique situations where the existing zone was retained, even if it did not align with the future land use. If the existing zone already permits the future land use from the plan text, no change is proposed, therefore the existing zone is retained. For properties outside of the focus areas, the impetus for zoning changes, where applicable, was a conflict between the approved future land use map and the existing zone of the property.

The future land use policy for the corridor retains the mostly Residential Low and Residential Medium land use classifications with pockets of Residential Medium High, and Residential High along major corridors, mainly Branch Avenue. Elsewhere throughout the corridor, industrial land use classifications are concentrated near Joint Base Andrews and south of St. Barnabas Road. The CBA recommended a "Commercial - Production, Distribution and Repair" use, which is closely associated with commercial services uses, to create a transition zone between industrial and other land uses near the base. A commercial land use classification is retained along existing commercial corridors - St. Barnabas Road, Allentown Road, Old Branch Avenue, Old Alexandria Ferry Road, and Woodyard/Piscataway Road. New Mixed-Use classifications, namely Residential Mixed Use and Commercial Mixed Use, replace land use policies that encourage single uses in order to recognize existing uses, but at the same time encourage medium to high residential development, largely along the recommended light rail or bus rapid transit lines at station stops or where market conditions support residential development over commercial. Institutional Mixed Use is introduced to encompass larger medical facilities where expansion is desired or planned, making access to mixed use essential to future development at these sites. Open space classifications are spread out throughout the sector plan area, representing existing public institutions and public parks, and identifying newly recommended green spaces on private and public lands. (CBA, p. 111)

The CBA also made future land use recommendations based upon the 2009 *Joint Base Andrews Naval Air Facility Washington Joint Land Use Study (JLUS)*. There is a small but established residential area near the south side of the base that lies within the Accident Potential Zone 1 (APZ 1). Per the 2009 JLUS, APZ 1 discourages residential uses close to the runway at the base, given the higher potential for aircraft accidents. As a result, the CBA recommends an industrial land use classification. The land use classification is consistent with the land use policy for surrounding areas, which is also zoned light industrial, as opposed to a heavy industrial zone, which is not recommended because heavy industrial uses locating next to existing homes could have a detrimental effect on the quality of life for current residents. (CBA, p. 111)

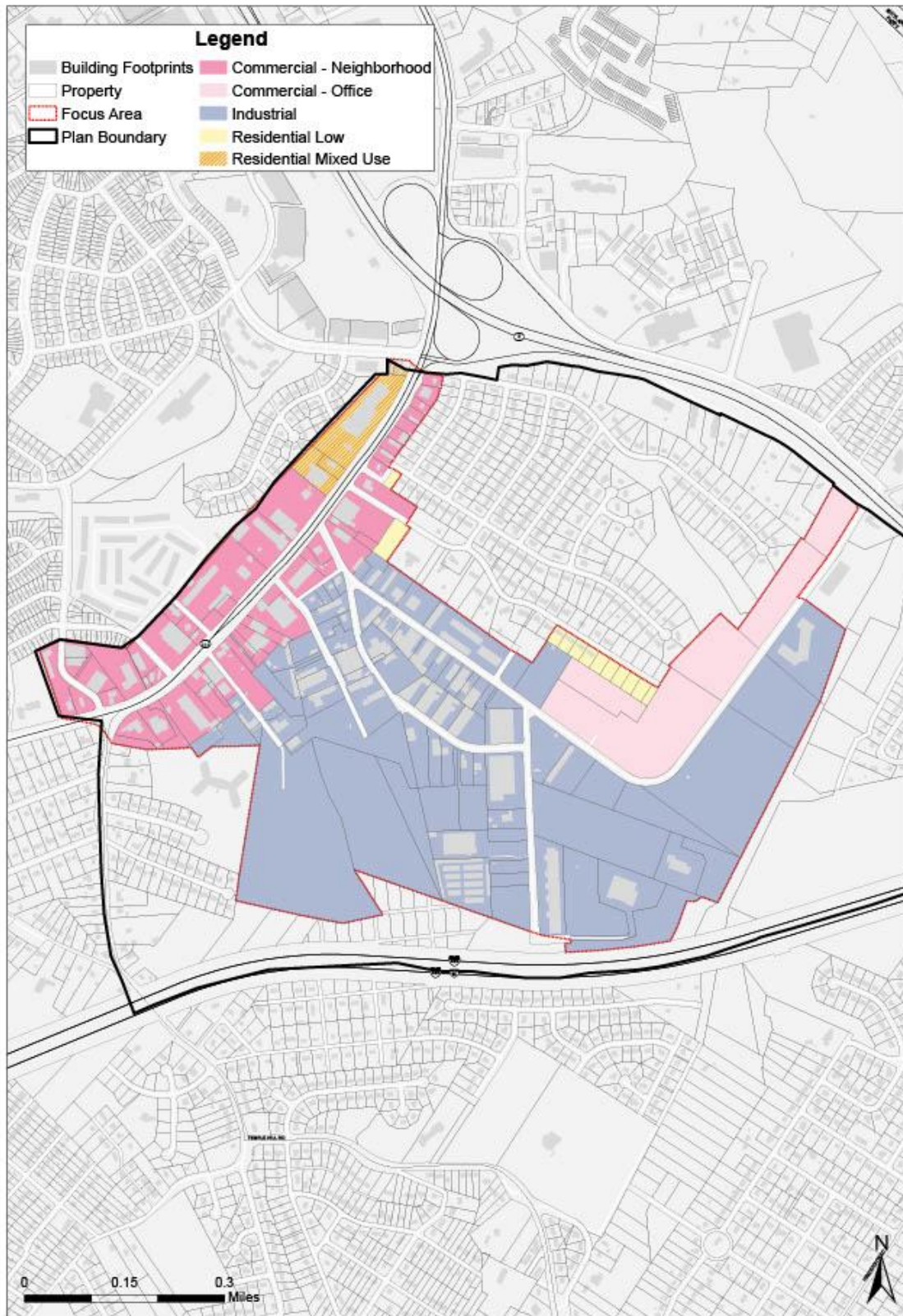
The following maps (Maps 1 through 9) show the future land use for the entire CBA corridor, as well as the six focus areas. Following these maps is a table (Table 1) that was used to assign proposed zones within this SMA. This table is based on descriptions of generalized uses and densities associated with land use categories and subcategories. This table was created using "Table 8. Land Use Categories," from the CBA (p. 64) and pairing each land use category and subcategory with appropriate zones from the current Zoning Ordinance.

Map 1. Future Land Use, Full CBA Corridor



Source: Prince George's County Planning Department

Map 2. Future Land Use, Beech Road



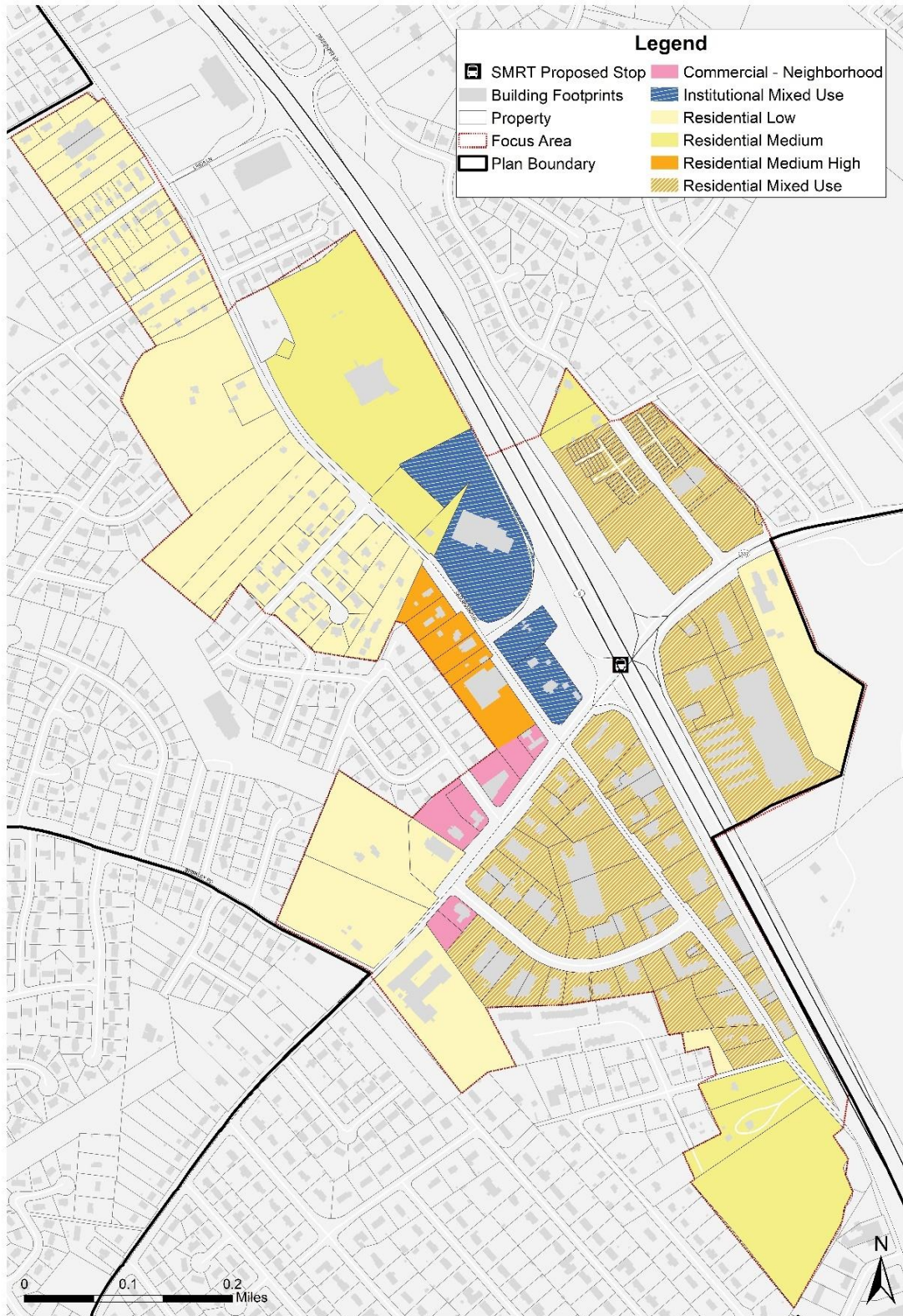
Source: Prince George's County Planning Department

Map 3. Future Land Use, Allentown Road-Suitland Road



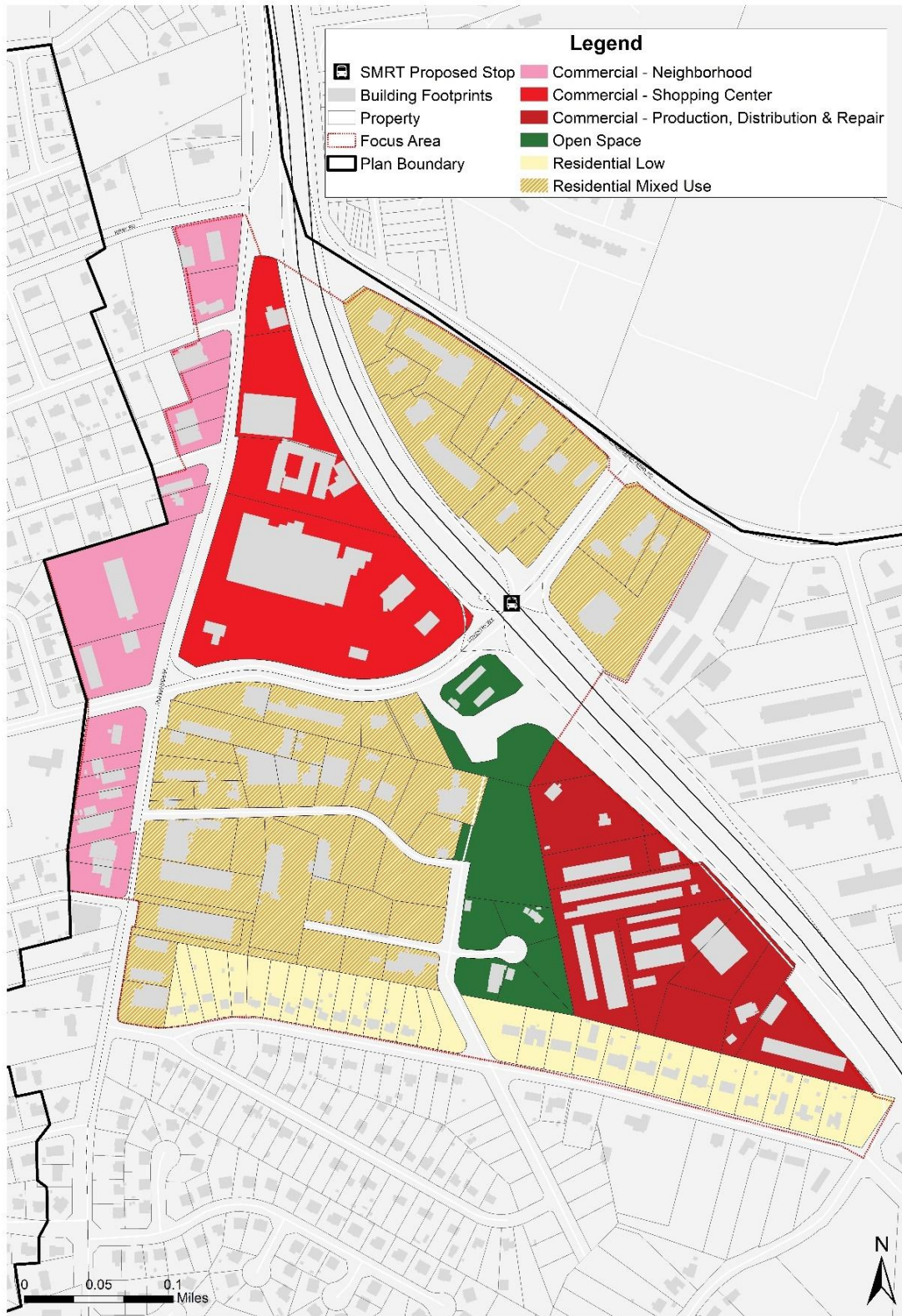
Source: Prince George's County Planning Department

Map 4. Future Land Use, Camp Springs



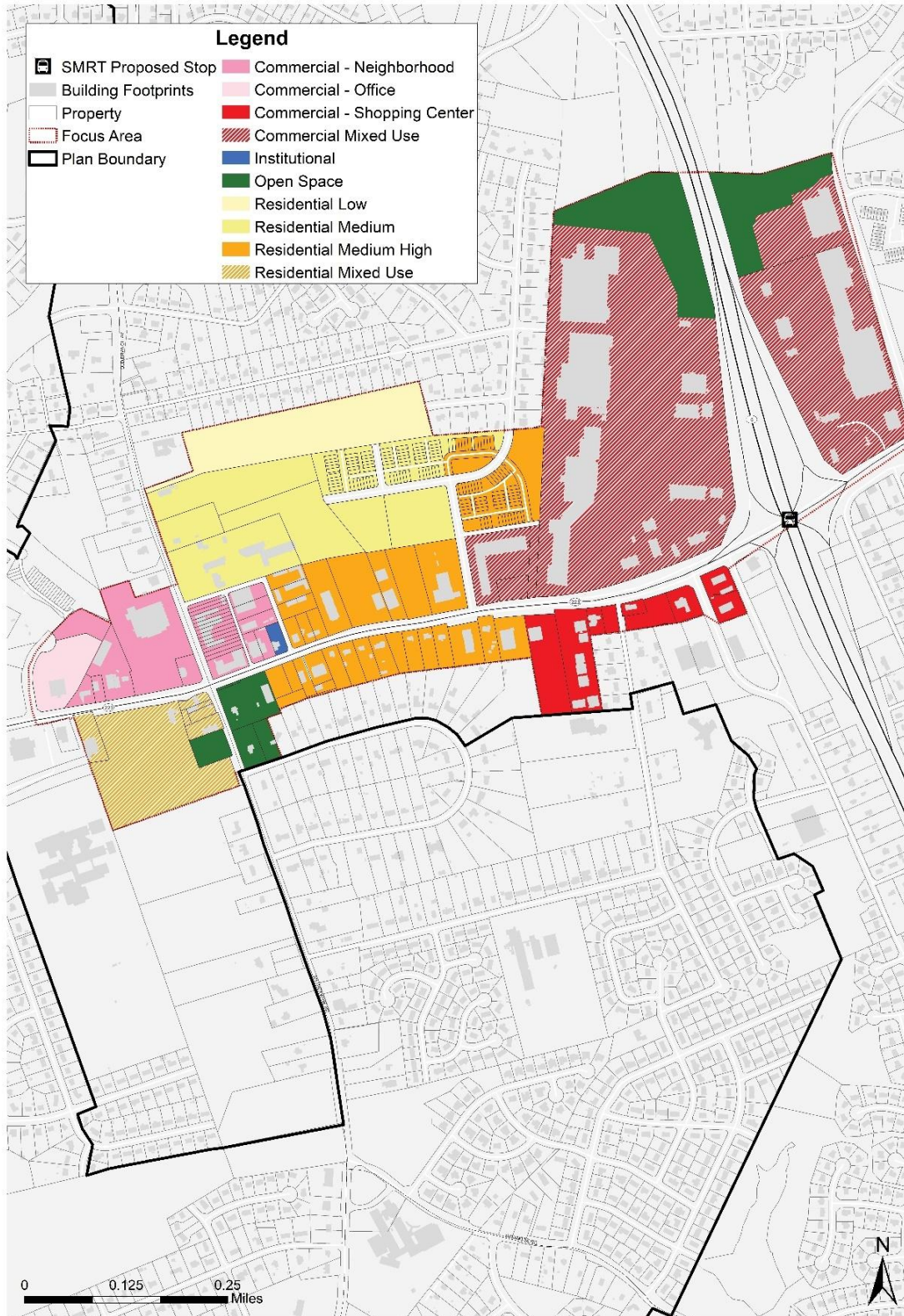
Source: Prince George's County Planning Department

Map 5. Future Land Use, Coventry Way



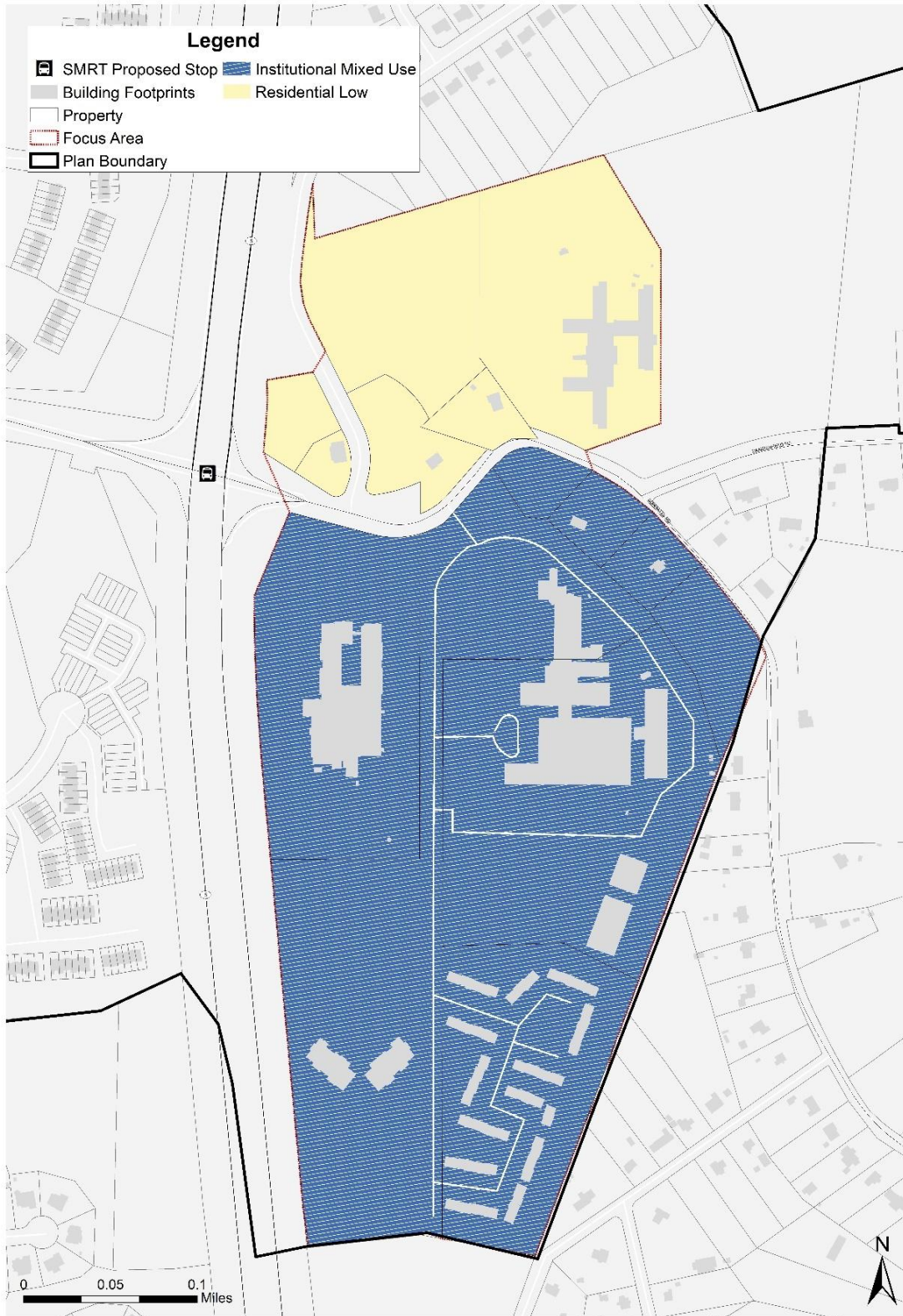
Source: Prince George's County Planning Department

Map 6. Future Land Use, Clinton Commercial Core



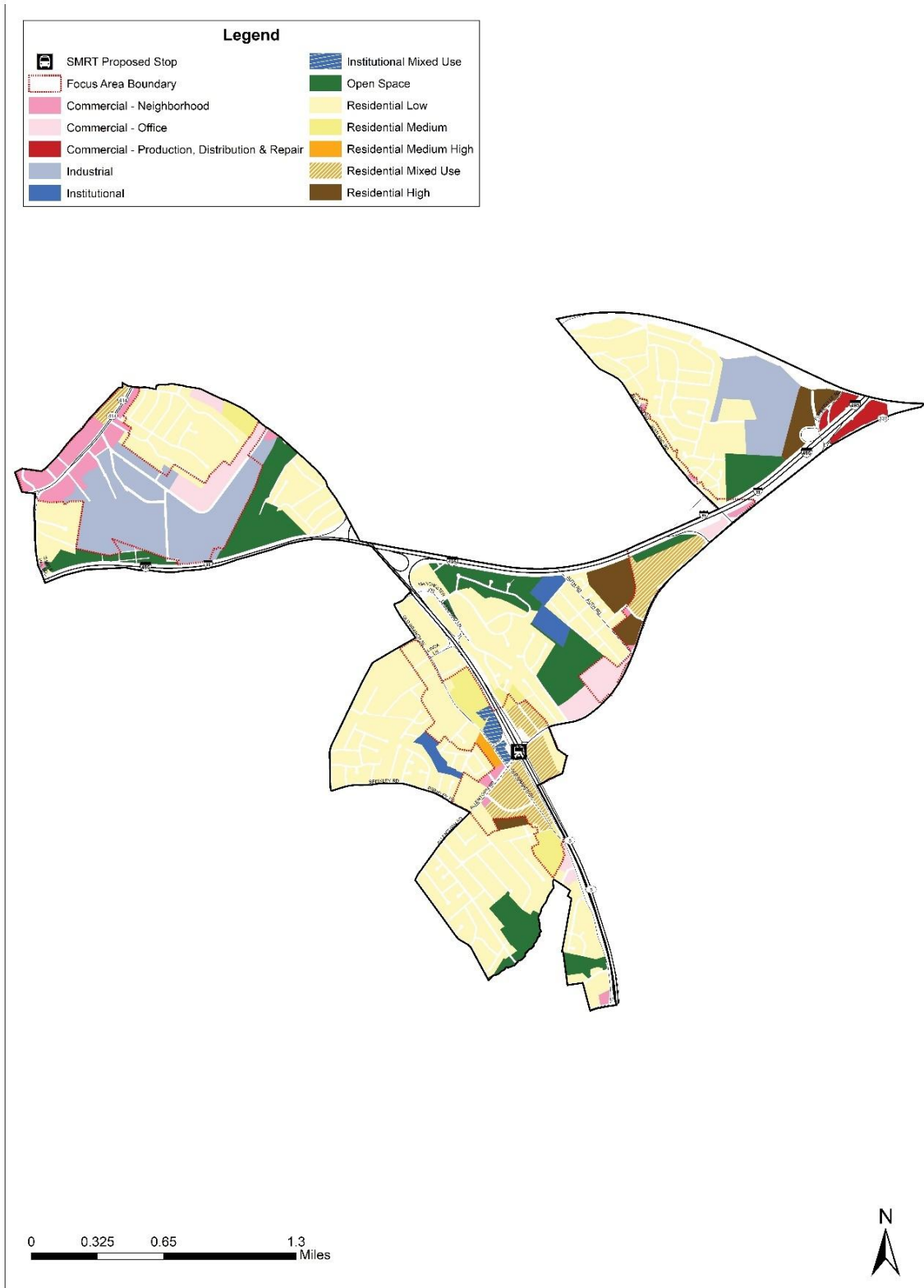
Source: Prince George's County Planning Department

Map 7. Future Land Use, Southern Maryland Hospital Focus Area



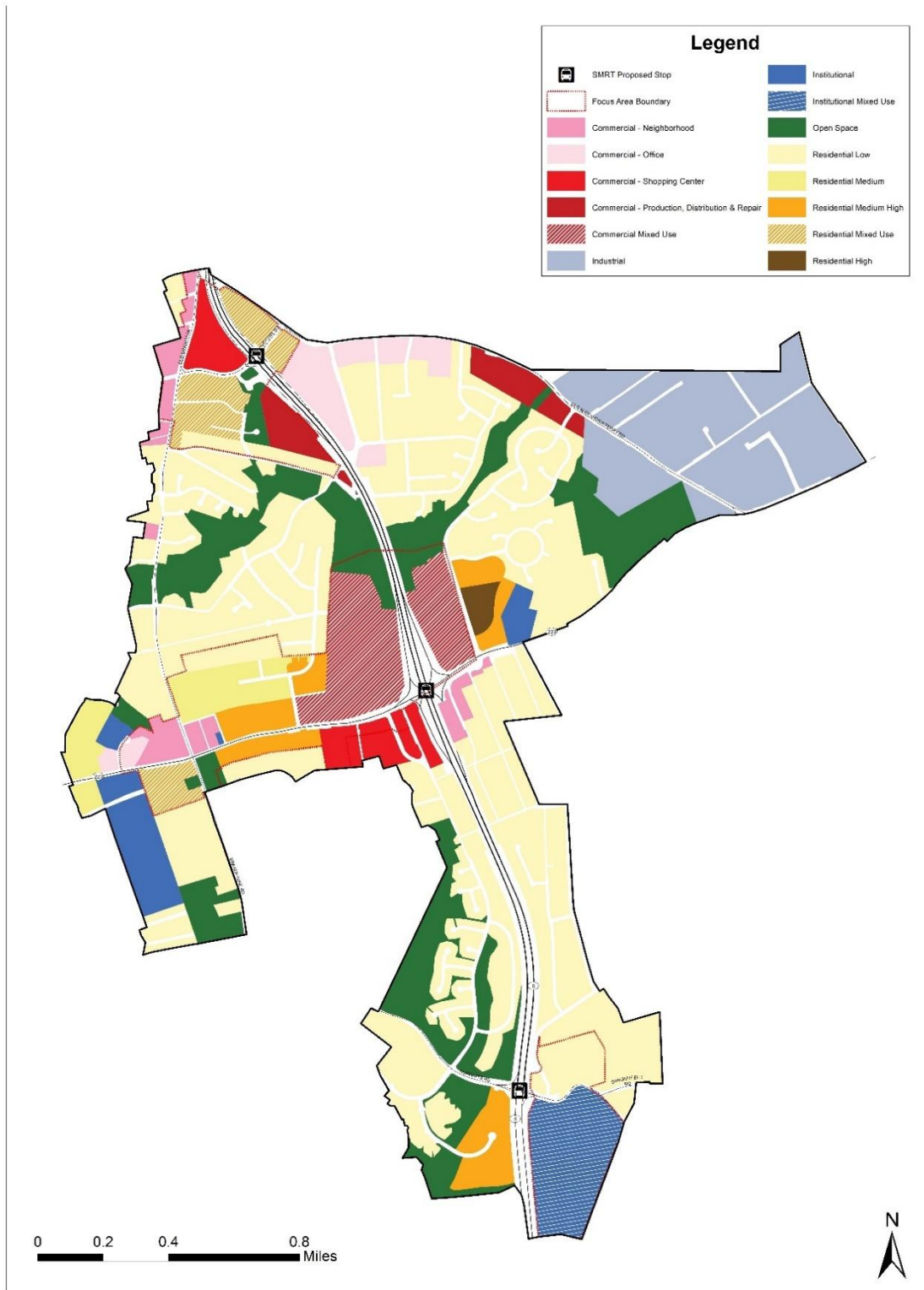
Source: Prince George's County Planning Department

Map 8. Future Land Use, Outside Focus Areas – North



Source: Prince George's County Planning Department

Map 9. Future Land Use, Outside Focus Areas – South



Source: Prince George's County Planning Department

Table 1. CBA Land Use Categories with Corresponding Applicable Zones¹

CBA Land Use Categories	CBA Land Use Subcategories	CBA Density (du/ac) (if applicable)	Corresponding Current Zone
Commercial	Commercial-Neighborhood		CN
	Commercial-Office		CGO
	Commercial-Production, Distribution, and Repair		CS
	Commercial-Shopping Center		CGO
Industrial			IH
			IE
Mixed Use	Residential Mixed Use		RMF-48 RMF-20 RMF-12 CGO
	Commercial Mixed Use		CGO
	Institutional Mixed Use		CGO
Open Space			ROS
Residential High		>20	RMF-48
Residential Medium High		8.0-20	RMF-20 RMF-12
Residential Medium		3.5-8.0	RSF-A RSF-65
Residential Low		<3.5	RSF-95 RR RE

d. Nonconforming Uses

This SMA strives to be responsible in its support of property owners engaged in current development projects. It also strives to help bring forth the vision of the CBA, through zoning changes either based on plan recommendations or efforts to align the zoning map with the plan’s future land use map. Another responsibility the SMA strives to meet is the avoidance of creating nonconforming commercial or industrial uses that are incompatible with single-family (attached or detached) residential neighborhoods. Per Section 27-2500 (Definitions) of the Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance, a nonconforming use is, “The use of any building, structure, or land which is not in conformance with a requirement of the zone in which it is located.”

The SMA avoids the creation of nonconforming uses where feasible, however there are certain circumstances where the creation of a nonconforming use is a valid means to implement the vision, goals, policies, and strategies of the sector plan and can at times serve as a tool to realign the property with the sector plan’s vision in the hopes that future development actions will align with the adopted plan vision.

Consideration of the creation of nonconforming uses was given if there was no approved development application on the property and no plan text recommendation for the property. The future land use map and the existing zone may not align, but because of existing conditions on or adjacent to the subject

¹ Information on CBA land use categories and densities are found in Table 8. Land Use Categories, in the CBA. Information on Corresponding Current Zones are found in the Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance. Per 27-4102(b) of the Zoning Ordinance, “The order of intensity of zones is as follows, beginning with the least intense zone and progressing to the most intense: ROS, AG, AR, RE, RR, RSF-95, RSF-65, RMH, RSF-A, R-PD, RMF-12, RMF-20, RMF-48, CN, NAC, CS, LMXC, CGO, LCD, MU-PD, IE, IE-PD, IH, LMUTC, NAC, TAC, LTO, RTO-L, RTO-H, NAC-PD, TAC-PD, LTO-PD, RTO-PD.”

property, it may be disadvantageous to pursue an alignment between the future land use map and the zoning map. In one case, for example (Zoning Change 14), the future land use map has made a single-family residential land use designation on a parcel with existing commercial uses and also currently sits in a Nonresidential (Commercial) zone. Proposing a zoning change on this parcel would make the existing commercial uses nonconforming. In this case, the SMA proposed a change to a zone more appropriate for the existing uses.

e. Split-Zoned Properties

The strategic elimination of split zones, when practical, is a goal of this SMA to further implement the plan’s land use recommendations. There are several properties within the CBA SMA area that were split into two zones. In the absence of plan text recommendations, the SMA recommends that a split-zoned property should be unified under a single zone, based on field observations and the existing use or uses on the subject property. There are also some instances where split zoning is practical and should remain in place, and this SMA does propose that certain split zoning should remain in some cases.

The following are listed as examples to demonstrate the rezoning process utilizing the SMA’s methodology:

Example 1 – Plan Text Recommendation		
a.	Is there an approved development application on the property?	No
b.	CBA Plan Text Containing Property Specific Zoning/Land Use Recommendations	Yes. “Apply the commercial shopping center land use designation to properties defined by Old Branch Avenue, Coventry Way, and Branch Avenue.” (CBA, Coventry Way focus area, p. 89)
c.	Future Land Use Map	N/A
d.	Does the proposed zone create a nonconforming use?	Yes
e.	Is the property split zoned?	No
	Analysis	Plan text provides guidance for the proposed zone. The CGO zone is assigned to properties within the Commercial Shopping Center land use category (Table 2.) Plan text takes precedence over nonconforming uses.
	SMA Proposal	CGO

Example 2 – Conflict between Future Land Use and Existing Zone		
a.	Is there an approved development application on the property?	No
b.	CBA Plan Text Containing Property Specific Zoning/Land Use Recommendations	No
c.	Future Land Use Map	Residential Low
d.	Does the proposed zone create a nonconforming use?	Yes
e.	Is the property split zoned?	No
	Analysis	The Land Use map provides guidance for the proposed zone. Any of the RSF-95, RR, and RE zones can be assigned to properties within the Residential Low land use category (Table 2.). Nonconforming use considered. The subject property is located within an RSF-95 zoned neighborhood, the proposed zone would ensure that future development maintains the community character.
	SMA Proposal	RSF-95

Example 3 – Approved Development Application		
a.	Is there an approved development application on the property?	Yes: Conceptual Site Plan CSP-19002 is an approved development application on the property that will bring mixed-use development, including 40-60 single-family attached dwelling units, 180-250 multifamily dwelling units, and 75,000-94,000 square feet of commercial/retail space.
b.	CBA Plan Text Containing Property Specific Zoning/Land Use Recommendations	N/A
c.	Future Land Use Map	N/A
c.	Does the proposed zone create a nonconforming use?	No
d.	Is the property split zoned?	No
	Analysis	The CGO zone permits the mix of uses and densities in the approved Conceptual Site Plan
	SMA Proposal	CGO