

Approved

# Branch Avenue Corridor

## Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment

BOAC



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

September 2008

# Abstract

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- ABSTRACT:** The Approved Branch Avenue Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment comprises text, maps, illustrations, and pictures. The sector plan amends portions of the 2000 *Approved Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for the Heights and Vicinity (Planning Area 76A)* and the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan*. Developed with broad public participation, this document presents background information, the vision for the area, and a discussion of the five elements that frame the vision—Land Use and Economic Development, Design and Appearance, Infrastructure to Support the Plan, Quality of Life, and Community Involvement. The plan recommends the designation of the Naylor Road Metro Station as a Regional Center with a mixed-use, high-density residential/office/retail land use classification, and the Iverson-Marlow Heights Mixed-Use Center as a node on the Branch Avenue Corridor with a mixed-use, medium-density residential/office/retail land use classification. The plan contains policies and strategies for land use, economic development, urban design, parks and recreation, transportation systems (including roadways, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and trail facilities), revitalization, public safety, and community involvement. The overall objective of these policies and strategies is to revitalize and redevelop the sector plan area, thereby improving its visual appeal and providing pedestrian- and transit-oriented, mixed-use development that will create a positive sense of place and attract new residents, quality retail, and jobs while preserving and strengthening the existing residential neighborhoods. The sectional map amendment (SMA) contains zoning changes to allow implementation of the plan vision and the land use concepts in the sector plan.

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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.
- ❖ 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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**FROM TOP TO BOTTOM:**  
Futuristic perspectives of Naylor Road,  
Marlow Heights, and Iverson Mall respectively.

# Foreword

The Prince George's County Planning Board is pleased to make available the *Approved Branch Avenue Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*. The community based plan and sectional map amendment (SMA) reflect the collective thoughts, values, and hopes of the community for its future. They also set land use and development policies for the area. The plan addresses physical and policy changes that have occurred since the approval of the master plan and sectional map amendment for the Heights and Vicinity Planning Area 76A and the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan*.

The planning workshops and design charrette approach to public participation provided an open forum for residents, property owners, business owners, and developers to participate in the plan preparation. Between October 2006 and May 2007 a series of interviews were conducted with community leaders, business owners, developers and county officials. The public participation process also included “man on the street” surveys, several community meetings, three planning and design workshops, a four-day charrette, and a post charrette.

The Prince George's County Planning Board and the County Council held two joint public hearings to solicit comments from property owners, residents, and the general public. Comments and recommendations presented at the public hearings became a matter of public record and were summarized and reviewed by the Prince George's County Planning Board and the District Council prior to approval of the sector plan and SMA by the District Council on September 30, 2008.

The Branch Avenue Corridor sector plan represents a unique opportunity for Prince George's County to create a livable pedestrian-friendly and vibrant community. The plan's focus includes the following goals:

- ❖ A safe, vibrant, and attractive community that is pedestrian friendly.
- ❖ Pedestrian linkages from residential neighborhoods to shops, recreational areas, and transit.
- ❖ Strengthening and preserving the existing stable residential neighborhoods.
- ❖ Redevelopment of a segment of Branch Avenue from the Naylor Road Metro Station to the Iverson/Marlow Heights Shopping Center with a mix of land uses and emphasis on transit-oriented development.

The plan establishes the vision for the area and contains recommendations for land use, economic development, urban design, parks and recreation, transportation systems (including roadways, transit, and trails for cyclists and pedestrians), revitalization, public safety, and community outreach and support. The SMA includes zoning changes to facilitate implementation of the plan vision and land use concepts.

The county's continued commitment to revitalizing older residential neighborhoods and commercial districts implements smart growth policies by focusing economic growth in these older areas, discouraging sprawl development, and protecting our natural resources. Implementation of this revitalization plan will require a collective effort from residents, business and property owners, and public/private partnerships.

Sincerely



Samuel J. Parker, Jr., AICP

Chairman

Prince George's County Planning Board



County Historic Site 76A-004, the  
St. Barnabas Episcopal Church.



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Illustrative concept of Branch Avenue redevelopment, showing possible new building footprints, streets and green spaces for mixed-use development. This illustration portrays only one of many possible long-range redevelopment scenarios that may result from implementation of the recommended land use concept for this area.

