



SOUTHERN GREEN LINE STATION AREA PLAN
Bringing transit-oriented development to Prince George's County

Preliminary Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment



SOUTHERN AVENUE



NAYLOR ROAD



SUITLAND



BRANCH AVENUE

Abstract

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Southern Green Line Station Area Plan

Preliminary Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment

May 2013

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
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The Commission has three major functions:

- The preparation, adoption, and, from time to time, amendment or extension of the 2002 Approved General Plan for Prince George's County for the physical development of the Maryland Washington Regional District;
- The acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of a public park system; and
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Foreword

The Prince George's County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is pleased to make available for review and comment the Preliminary Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment. This plan addresses opportunities to bring transit-oriented development (TOD) to the four Metrorail station areas along the Southern Green Line of the Metrorail system: Branch Avenue, Suitland, Naylor Road, and Southern Avenue. These stations are a major asset for Prince George's County and the plan makes recommendations to maximize their value for economic and community development.

Policy guidance for this plan came from the 2002 *Approved Prince George's County General Plan*, the 2000 *Approved Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for the Heights and Vicinity (Planning Area 76A)*, the 2008 *Approved Branch Avenue Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*, the 2006 *Suitland M-UTC Development Plan*, and county functional master plans including the 2005 *Countywide Green Infrastructure Functional Master Plan*, 2008 *Approved Public Safety Facilities Master Plan*, 2009 *Countywide Master Plan of Transportation*, and 2010 *Water Resources Master Plan*.

The goals, concepts, guidelines and public participation program, approved by both the Planning Board and the District Council in February and March 2012 outlined the major issues, challenges, and opportunities that informed the plan and helped to provide its structure. Public participation from October 2011 to February 2013 consisted of stakeholder outreach, including interviews with key land owners, developers, business owners, county and state officials, and government agencies, and a series of community workshops.

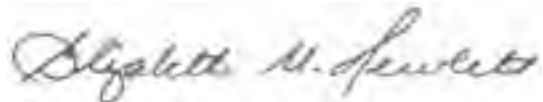
The Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan sets a vision for each of the four stations based on a detailed real estate market analysis and the available opportunities for infill and redevelopment within an easy walk of the four Metro stations. The recommended future land use plan is carefully shaped to encourage creative response from developers by providing flexibility in use, while also guiding and shaping growth that is the right fit for each station, including reserving land at the Branch Avenue station area for the establishment of a regionally important employment center. Provision of pedestrian and bicycle facilities is a crucial component of creating transit-oriented development, and the plan makes detailed recommendations for improving non-motorized access to each of the four station areas. Major projects to create a more integrated roadway network are also outlined, along with a basic recommendation to establish a grid of walkable streets around the stations. The plan also outlines implementation strategies, including conceptual recommendations for new TOD zoning districts and specific recommendations for rezoning through the Sectional Map Amendment, where existing zoning districts can be applied to facilitate plan implementation.

Placemaking, park, and urban design features are also included in the plans for each station, working with and improving on existing assets and landscape features. This plan envisions the Southern Green Line as a place to live, work, and shop with transit access and walkable neighborhoods at the center of community life. New investment in the immediate station areas will also support revitalization and conservation of existing residential areas.

The Prince George's County Planning Board appreciates the contribution and active involvement of the community and stakeholders in this innovative planning effort. We, along with the District Council, look forward to your continued input on the preliminary sector plan during the joint public hearing that is scheduled for July 2, 2013. Your comments at the joint public hearing will be reviewed by the Planning Board prior to adoption of the sector plan.

We look forward to seeing you on July 2, 2013.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth M. Hewlett
Chairman
Prince George's County Planning Board.

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Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

Why Plan?

The Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) seeks to bring transit-oriented development (TOD) to southern Prince George's County by way of the Metro Green Line. This transit line experienced more growth in jobs and households than any other transit line in the Washington Metropolitan Area between 2000 and 2010, though the District of Columbia realized most of this growth. However, the extension of this Metro line into southern Prince George's in 2001 has opened up an important new, but unrealized, opportunity for capturing a portion of projected regional growth, particularly transit-oriented development, over the next 20 years in this area of the county. Currently, the station areas are undeveloped and underdeveloped but offer sites of sufficient scale to create significant development projects within a ten-minute ride to the District of Columbia. The transit line runs through older communities and commercial corridors where growth has been stagnant and where the best opportunity for revitalization and redevelopment rests with the ability of the Metro stations to attract transit-oriented development. This development model delivers higher property values, makes use of significant transit investments, is attractive to 'millennials' and seniors, has positive environmental impacts, and is more sustainable. It integrates uses, is compact and walkable, and provides a range of housing and transit options, and urban amenities.

This sector plan establishes a vision for the individual station areas, the project area as a whole, and presents a comprehensive strategy for achieving TOD. The vision and strategy rely upon a real estate market analysis that measured growth potential and opportunity, stakeholder input representing all levels of government, developers and property owners, civic organizations and areas residents, and a tailored development program for each station that builds upon the station area assets and key characteristics and combines the essential elements of transit-oriented development. Additionally, the plan provides an implementation strategy that identifies immediate actions that will be necessary to facilitate short-term development

opportunities as well as a long-term development scenario for the Metro corridor. Plan recommendations address land use, mobility and access, urban design and place making, public facilities, and community participation.

The plan recognizes the importance of preserving and enhancing existing communities within the project area and integrating development opportunities around the four Metro stations. It leverages the area's robust transit service and identifies opportunities for attracting new residents, shoppers, and major employers and it supports existing area businesses and government centers.

Partnership for Sustainable Communities

An opportunity to partner with the federal government through its Partnership for Sustainable Communities served as the impetus for the sector plan. The partnership seeks to help communities improve access to affordable housing and provide more transportation options while protecting the environment. In 2010, the Prince George's County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) applied for and received a Challenge Grant from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development to prepare an action plan to bring transit-oriented development to the southern Metro Green Line stations. Key planning objectives noted in the grant proposal were to increase the county's share of regional job growth; address income, jobs, and transportation disparities; increase quality affordable housing through mixed-income projects; increase transportation options; improve reverse commuting patterns; enhance connectivity and linkages to and between Metro stations; and stabilize and preserve nearby communities. As a grant recipient, the commission and county are required to align its planning effort with six livability principles that form the cornerstone of the partnership. The livability principles and the manner in which the sector plan seeks to achieve them are described below.

1. *Provide More Transportation Choices:* increasing transportation choices is a key recommendation of the sector plan. The plan proposes to accommodate all modes of transportation

including walking and bicycling to the stations through the provision of safe sidewalks, trails, and bicycle amenities; and to support bus transit to supplement existing rail transit; and promote the expansion and better coordination of bus routes to improve services to the stations.

2. *Enhance Economic Competitiveness:* the real estate market analysis suggests a changing marketplace and a strong opportunity within the project area to accommodate a larger share of the regions job and housing needs. Success will depend upon creating demand drivers for all land uses (multi-family residential, professional office, and lifestyle retail) that are necessary for TOD.
3. *Promote Equitable, Affordable Housing:* the plan proposes to preserve market rate affordable housing in existing neighborhoods as well as increase mixed income housing as a strategy for the provision of affordable housing near the transit stations.
4. *Support Existing Communities:* recommendations to better connect existing communities to transit and to provide nearby opportunities for employment and greater housing options will benefit these communities. Additionally, higher value TOD will help improve property values in adjacent communities, thereby, creating opportunities to reinvest in these older communities.
5. *Coordinate Policies and Leverage Investment:* the planning process provided a unique opportunity for jurisdictions with a stake in the Metro corridor to work together towards TOD, including reconciling conflicting policies and priorities, coordinating programs and services, and collaborating on development opportunities.
6. *Value Communities and Neighborhoods:* the plan recommends an array of infrastructure improvements including road and trail extensions, new sidewalks, and new public facilities that will benefit surrounding and new transit communities.

Introduction

Project Area Boundary

The project area boundary is organized around the last four metro stations on the southern Green Line in southwest Prince George's County, approximately four miles in a straight line from the mall in downtown Washington. It is roughly bounded by Southern Avenue to the west, Suitland Road to the north, Branch Avenue to the south, and the Capital Beltway (I-95/495) to the east and lies between the district line at Southern Avenue and Joint Base Andrews Naval Air Facility on Allentown Road. The area is best known by its individual neighborhoods—Suitland, Silver Hill, Camp Springs, Hillcrest Heights, and Temple Hills; all of which are unincorporated, U.S. Census designated places. The project boundary encompasses over 3,700 acres and contains approximately 25,000 residents.

The four Metro stations are:

- Southern Avenue
- Naylor Road
- Suitland
- Branch Avenue

The Southern Avenue Station is located on Southern Avenue just across the D.C. line in Prince George's County. It lies on the western edge of the Hillcrest Heights community and is the most isolated of the four stations because of its location between the Oxon Run stream and a 100-foot bluff west of the station. The Naylor Road station sits between Naylor Road and Branch Avenue at Suitland Parkway, also close to the D.C. border. About two miles away is the Suitland Metro Station at Suitland Parkway and Silver Hill Road (MD 458) which sits immediately west of the 240-acre Suitland Federal Center. The last station on the line, Branch Avenue, is one half mile from Branch Avenue (MD 5) and the Capital Beltway. Developable land surrounds the station in every direction and recent residential development close to the station more appropriately defines the market for TOD. A half-mile radius around each station roughly defines the station areas.

Several major transportation routes exist within and near the project area. They include Suitland Parkway, Branch Avenue

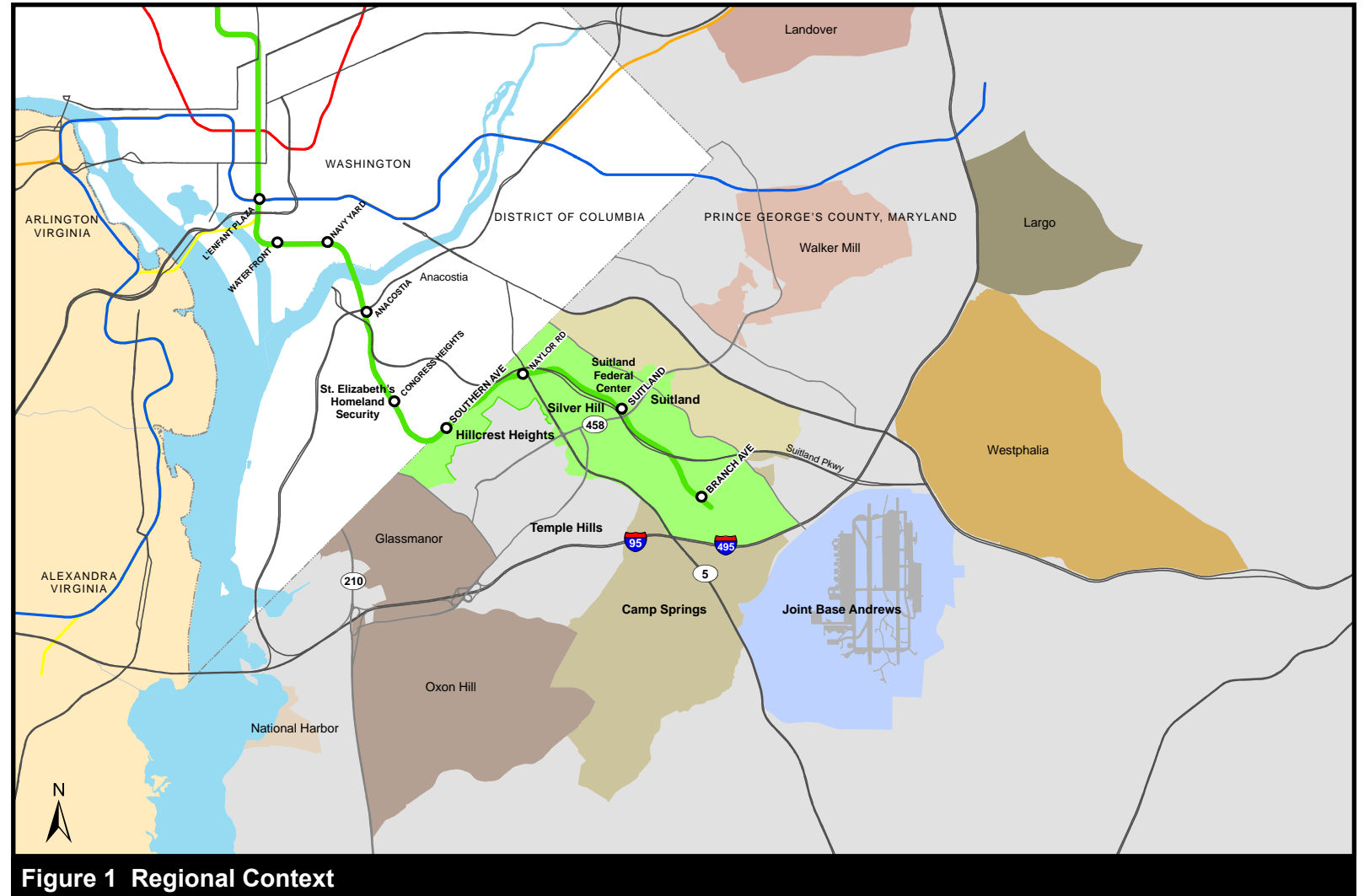


Figure 1 Regional Context

(MD 5), and Pennsylvania Avenue (MD 4), all major expressways leading into the District of Columbia, and the Capital Beltway (I-95/495) which provides access to the whole Washington metropolitan area. Silver Hill Road (MD 458) is the only arterial connection between MD 4, Suitland Parkway, and MD 5 between Southern Avenue and the Capital Beltway.

Relationship to Other Plans, Policies and Initiatives

Portions of the sector plan area fall within the boundaries and policy framework of several recent plans in addition to the 2002 General Plan, several countywide functional master plans, and the area is under the jurisdiction of state planning policy. This sector plan, however, represents the first time that planning has occurred along the entire length of the southern Metro Green Line in Prince George's County. More recent sector plans have primarily

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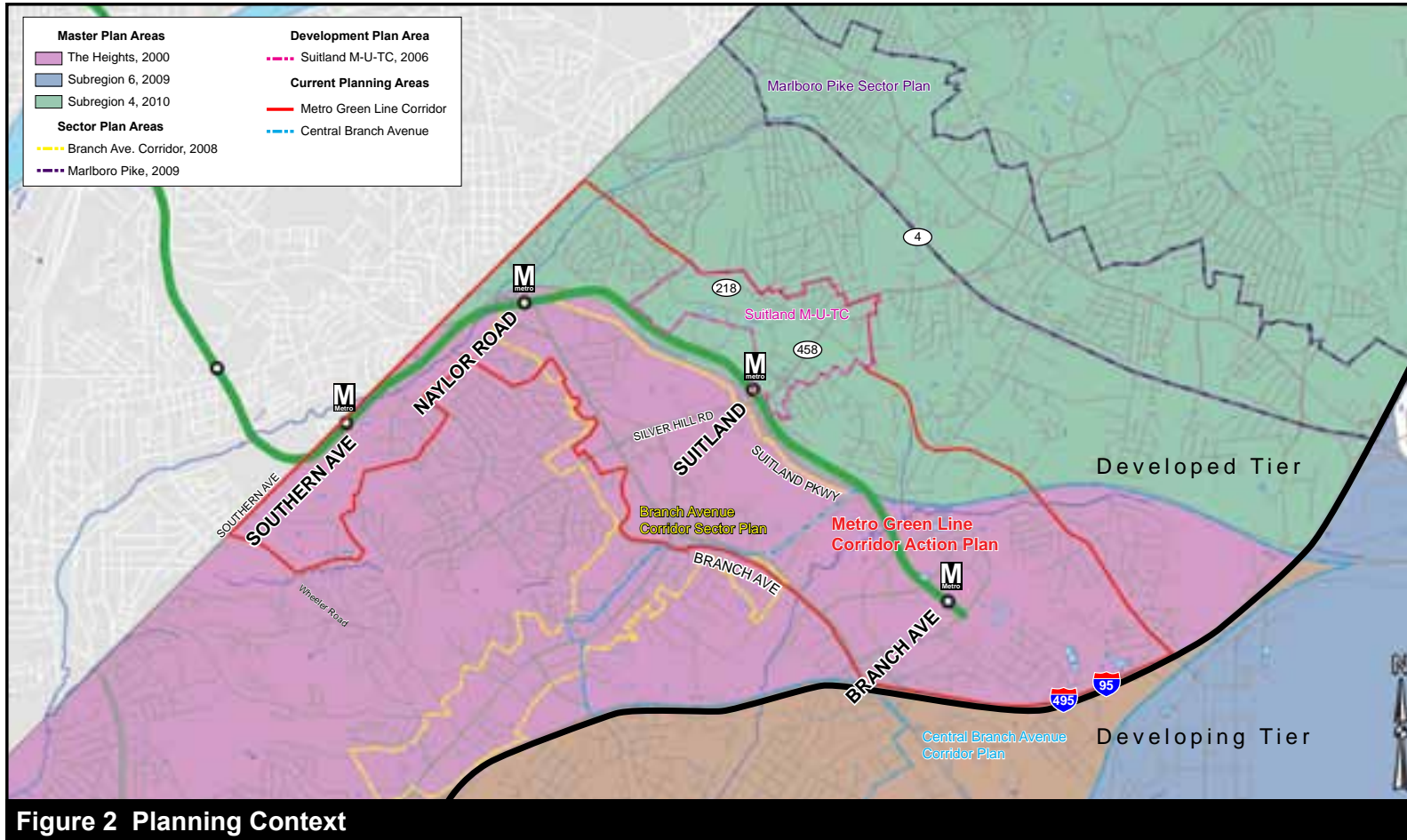


Figure 2 Planning Context

focused on individual stations and adjacent communities thereby missing an opportunity to understand how the stations relate to and can potentially complement each other, and can benefit from an integrated TOD strategy. This sector plan is both informed by and will update these plans as necessary to reflect new policies, priorities, and strategies that relate to land use, development patterns, and urban design; zoning; transportation and other public facility improvements; and parks and recreation facilities. These planning efforts are organized below in their respective categories including master plans, sector plans, and related studies; countywide plans; and state planning initiatives.

Master and Sector Plans

The following plans cover a portion of the Southern Green Line station area including one or more of the Green Line Metro stations:

2000 *Heights and Vicinity Master Plan and SMA* predates the opening of the southern Green Line stations and in fact, the Naylor Road station was under construction at the time the plan was developed. The plan includes three of the four Metro stations though it addresses them within the context of the surrounding neighborhood not in relation to one another. The Suitland Metro Station is outside the boundaries of the plan area. The Heights plan

recommends new land uses at the stations to promote development intensities that take advantage of the new transit infrastructure. With the exception of the Naylor Road station area, the plan established the zoning patterns currently in existence today. Office zoning encompasses most of the Southern Avenue Station Area while a mix of zoning districts permitting office, residential, commercial and mixed-use development were put in place in the Branch Avenue Station Area. The 2007 *Branch Avenue Corridor Plan* established the current zoning at the Naylor Road station. The Heights plan also predated the 2002 General Plan that later established the development tiers and Metro station classifications.

2006 *Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan* presents a land use concept for a town center in Suitland including new retail, office, and residential uses at a development intensity appropriate for a Metro station location. The boundaries include the Suitland Metro Station and the adjacent community. The plan established the Mixed-Use Town Center Zone (M-U-TC) to implement the development plan for the area. The zone permits land use flexibility and provides unique design standards and guidelines for commercial and residential development consistent with the plan. The district has its own by-right development review process that involves a local development review committee and administrative sign-off of development applications that are in conformance with these standards and guidelines. The Southern Green Line Station area plan encompasses the entire Suitland M-U-TC area within its boundaries but proposes to leave the M-U-TC zone in place.

2007 *Branch Avenue Corridor Sector Plan and SMA* recommends an urban mix of uses integrated with new office buildings within walking distance of the Naylor Road Metro station. It also recommends mixed-use, medium- to high-intensity land uses with emphasis on commercial development at the Iverson Mall and Marlow Heights Shopping Center. The plan provides design concepts, standards, and guidelines to ensure transit- and pedestrian-oriented redevelopment in urban form. The plan rezoned property, along the Branch Avenue corridor from the Naylor Road station to Marlow Heights Shopping Center, to Mixed-Use Transportation and a 20-acre parcel, at the southwestern quadrant of the intersection of Silver Hill Road

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and Suitland Parkway, from R-18 (multi-family medium density residential) to R-10 (multi-family high density residential).

2013 *Central Branch Avenue (CBA) Corridor Revitalization Sector Plan* includes the Branch Avenue Metro Station Area within its boundaries but acknowledges that this area is the subject of the Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan. The CBA plan focuses on communities along the Branch Avenue corridor between the station and Southern Maryland hospital and recognizes the station area as a major development opportunity along the corridor. The Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan will update the Central Branch Avenue plan as it relates to the station area.

Related Studies

Other planning initiatives and studies currently underway that directly affect the Southern Green Line Corridor include the following:

- 2010 *Branch Avenue Station Access and Joint Development Study* completed by WMATA. The study includes a development concept for the 33-acre WMATA station site and identifies station access and facility improvements needed to ensure efficient operation of the transit facility as the area builds out.
- 2011 *Naylor Road Metro Station Area Accessibility Study* identifies hindrances to pedestrian accessibility and provides recommendations for improvement and associated costs for improvement options.
- *Naylor Road Metro Station Access and Capacity Study* currently underway, will identify access and facility improvements needed to efficiently operate the transit facility based on the Branch Avenue Corridor Sector Plan projected build out estimates.

Countywide Plans

Several countywide plans, including the 2002 General Plan, establish policies and recommendations for future growth and development in the county. These plans informed the Southern Green Line planning process and the resulting plan will update these countywide plans in order to reflect new policies and

implementation strategies.

The 2002 General Plan sets forth goals, objectives, policies, and strategies for the county. It divides the county into three growth policy tiers: Developed Tier, Developing Tier, and Rural Tier to distinguish different development patterns and the form and intensity of development. These policy areas designate areas of significant economic development, residential development, and preservation. The Developed Tier includes communities within the Capital Beltway including all four Southern Green Line Station Areas. The Developed Tier contains more than half of the county's households and nearly half the employment. The General Plan vision for the Developed Tier is a network of sustainable, transit-supporting, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, medium-to high-density communities. Policies for the Developed Tier emphasize quality infill and redevelopment, provision of adequate public facilities to serve existing and future residents, as well as preservation and enhancement of the environment.

The general plan also targets growth to a number of designated centers classified as Metropolitan, Regional, or Community Centers. These centers capitalize on existing infrastructure by locating homes, jobs, and shopping centers closer to transit services. The Southern Avenue Metro station area is designated a "community center" which is envisioned as having concentrations of activities, services, and land uses that serve the immediate neighborhoods. The Naylor Road and Suitland Metro station areas are both designated "regional centers." Regional Centers are locations for regionally marketed retail destinations, office and employment areas, higher education facilities, and possibly sports and recreational complexes serving Prince George's County. High-density residential may be an option if the needed public facilities and services can be provided.

The Branch Avenue Metro station is designated a "metropolitan center" which is the highest intensity development classification in the general plan. Perhaps the best existing example in the county of the type of development sought at a metropolitan center is National Harbor, with plans for other areas such as New Carrollton also moving into implementation as a designated metropolitan center. These metropolitan centers are to have

a concentration of economic activities that attract employers, workers, and customers from other parts of the Washington metropolitan area, such as large government offices and major private sector employers, major educational complexes, or high-intensity commercial uses. High-density residential development may also be located at a metropolitan center.

The 2005 *Countywide Green Infrastructure Functional Master Plan*, 2008 *Approved Public Safety Facilities Master Plan*, 2009 *Countywide Master Plan of Transportation*, 2010 *Water Resources Master Plan*, and 2010 *Prince George's County Historic Sites and Districts Plan* amended and updated functional elements of the 2002 General Plan. This sector plan further amends these countywide functional master plans to achieve the community vision for the future of the Southern Green Line.

State Planning Policy

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

The Maryland General Assembly enacted this legislation to encourage economic growth, limit sprawl, and protect the state's natural resources. The Act establishes overarching land use policies to be locally implemented statewide.

These policies are stated in the form of eight visions. The 1992 *Maryland Planning Act* was updated with the passage of the 2009 *Smart and Sustainable Growth Act* (see discussion below).

The 1997 *Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Act*

This act builds on the foundation of the eight visions adopted in the 1992 *Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act*, as amended. The act is nationally recognized as an effective means of evaluating and implementing statewide programs to guide growth and development. The Maryland smart growth program has three goals:

1. To save valuable remaining natural resources.
2. To support existing communities and neighborhoods.
3. To save taxpayers millions of dollars in unnecessary costs for building infrastructure to support sprawl.

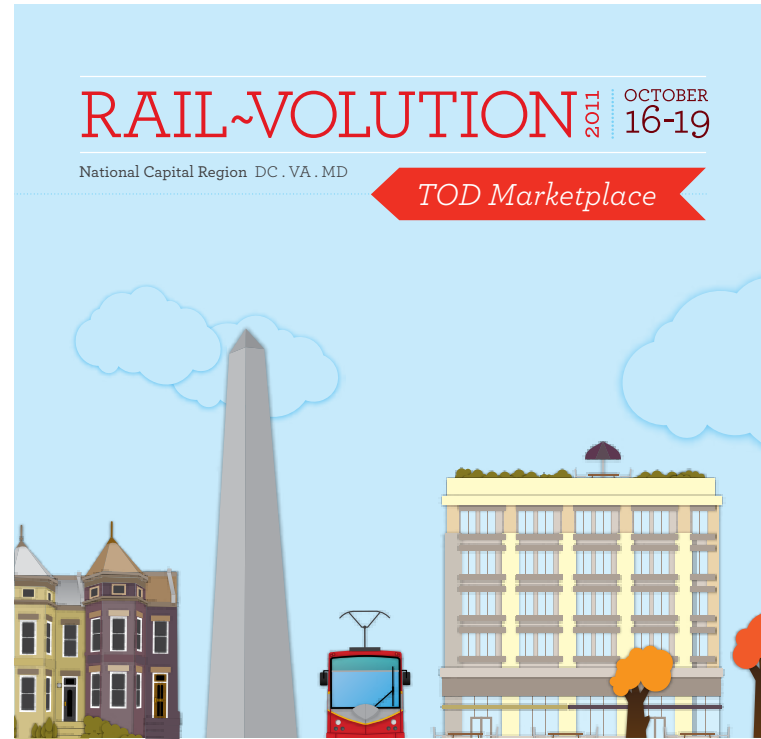
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A significant aspect of the initiative is the smart growth areas legislation that requires that state funding for projects in Maryland municipalities, other existing communities, industrial, and planned growth areas designated by counties will receive priority funding over other projects. These smart growth areas are called priority funding areas (PFA). The entirety of the sector plan location is designated a PFA by the county and the state. The sector plan recommends a phasing plan and identifies additional tools for implementation to take full advantage of the PFA designation.

2009 *Smart and Sustainable Growth Act*

The 2009 *Smart and Sustainable Growth Act* clarifies the link between local comprehensive plans and local land use ordinances. The bill reinforces the importance of planning for sustainable growth and development in all local jurisdictions within the state. The eight plan visions stated in the 1992 *Maryland Planning Act* are replaced with an updated and expanded list of twelve visions:

1. A high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water, and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment.
2. Citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are sensitive to their responsibilities in achieving community goals.
3. Growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to these centers, or strategically selected new centers.
4. Compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near available or planned transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources; preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas; and historical, cultural, and archeological resources.
5. Growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sustainable manner.
6. A well-maintained, multimodal transportation system



- facilitates the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods, and services within and between population and business centers.
7. A range of housing densities, types, and sizes provides residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes.
 8. Economic development and natural resource-based businesses that promote employment opportunities for all income levels within the capacity of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities are encouraged.
 9. Land and water resources, including the Chesapeake and coastal bays, are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems, and living resources.
 10. Waterways, forests, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems, and scenic areas are conserved.
 11. Government, business entities, and residents are responsible

for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection.

12. Strategies, policies, programs, and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, state, and interstate levels to achieve these visions.

Together, the twelve visions provide guiding principles that describe how and where growth can best occur without compromising the state's natural and cultural resources. The act acknowledges that the comprehensive plans prepared by counties and municipalities form the best mechanism to establish priorities for growth and resource conservation. Once priorities are established, it is the state's responsibility to support them.

Supplemental Documents

The planning process for this sector plan involved the preparation of several supplemental documents that informed the plan goals, vision, and strategies; and provided more in depth information and analysis of key issues. The list of supplemental documents includes the following:

- *Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Pan Report* (ULI TAP) (August 2011).
- *Southern Green Line Station Area Plan Market Study and Action Plan, Prince George's County* (November 2012).
- *Southern Green Line Station Area Plan Existing Conditions Report* (2013).
- *Southern Green Line Station Area Plan, Transportation Access and Mobility Report* (March 2013).
- *Southern Green Line Station Area Plan Urban Design Report* (May 2013).
- *Southern Green Line Station Area Plan Final Report* (June 2013).



Join us at a **Community Mixer!**

Great communities are being built along the Green Line. Help shape the next great places at Southern, Naylor Road, Suitland and Branch Avenue Metro Stations.

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

Please join us at one of these locations:

JUN 21 Suitland Metro Station
Thursday, June 21, 2012
Suitland Elementary School
4650 Homer Avenue, Suitland, MD 20746

JUN 26 Southern Avenue & Naylor Road Metro Stations
Tuesday, June 26, 2012
Hillcrest Heights Community Center
2300 Oxon Run Drive, Temple Hills, MD 20748

JUN 27 Branch Avenue Metro Station
Wednesday, June 27, 2012
Carmel Midtown Square
4500 Telfair Blvd, Suitland, MD 20746

All meetings will be held from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm.

WWW.PGPLANNING.ORG/GREENLINE.TOD.HTM

Community Participation

The Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment is a result of an extensive and diverse outreach and engagement strategy for key stakeholders and community members. The approach was fundamental to identifying key issues and concerns and generating feedback on plan recommendations. Sustained participation by stakeholders will be critical to the success of this plan and effective plan implementation will require stakeholders to be advocates for and stewards of the plan during its creation but also well beyond formal approval.

The goals for community participation were to:

- Inform and educate residents about transit-oriented development and the opportunities that exist in the project area.
- Ensure that all members of the community had an equal chance and multiple opportunities to engage in the planning process, and provide input and feedback on the plan recommendations.
- Provide support for long-term, community-based advocacy for implementing the plan elements.
- Identify resources and partnerships for implementation.

Below is a summary of the diverse community engagement methods used during the planning process.

Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel: one of the first public outreach initiatives for the Southern Green Line Station Area Plan was the use of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) of Washington Technical Assistance Program (TAP) to identify issues, opportunities, and an overall strategy for bringing development to the Southern Green Line project area. The ULI TAP provides expert, multidisciplinary advice on land use and real estate issues facing public agencies and nonprofit organizations in the Washington Metropolitan area. Understanding the regional economic position of the project area and suggesting strategies for future economic development was crucial to the Southern Green Line Station Area Plan project. The ULI panel held a two-day workshop to collect and analyze data on the project area and make preliminary recommendations on development strategies to community leaders

and other key stakeholders. These recommendations were included in a final report for use in the planning process.

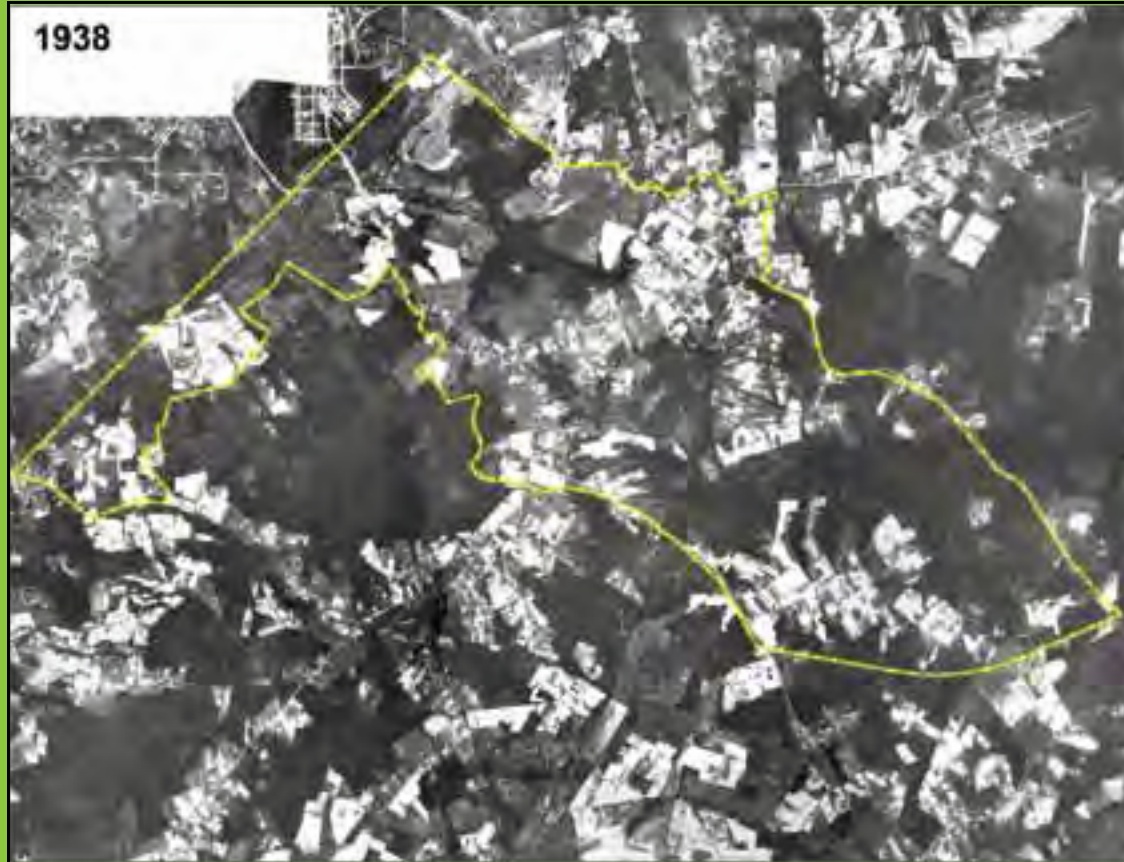
Rail-Volution Conference: Rail-Volution, a national organization promoting rail transit and transit-oriented development, hosted its annual conference in Washington, D.C. in October 2011 and selected the Suitland community for a mobile workshop and charrette. Conference attendees and community members including public agencies met in Suitland in a day-long session to discuss issues and design concepts. Community members embraced concepts developed in the workshop, which were then presented to a panel of developers at the conference.

Technical Advisory Committee: provided an opportunity to engage technical staff from county, state, and regional government agencies during the planning process to identify issues, generate and test recommendations, and reach consensus on a course of action. The technical advisory committee participated in a two-day charrette for its input on preliminary development concepts including related public improvements and available resources.

Steering Committee: a steering committee of high-level staff representing local, state, federal and regional governments, and non-profit organizations involved in TOD was established in order to identify programs and ongoing activities affecting development along the Green Line and create an environment for interagency coordination and collaboration. The following organizations were represented on the committee:

- Prince George's County Office of the County Executive and county agencies including the Departments of Housing and Community Development, Public Works and Transportation, Economic Development Corporation, Revenue and Redevelopment Authorities.
- Maryland Departments of Business and Economic Development, Transportation, and Housing and Community Development.
- Prince George's County Public Schools.
- Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation.
- District of Columbia Office of Planning.

Introduction



An aerial photograph from 1938 shows the rural character of southern Prince George's County. The white to bright grey areas are generally cultivated fields, showing the small scale agricultural use of the land going back to first settlement by Europeans. The impediments to agriculture are also shown in the darker areas that are steep slopes with trees and stream valleys. A large forested area is shown to the south of the project area. Silver Hill Road can be seen with a concentration of fields and other uses and a hamlet at the crossroad with Suitland Road, this being the Suitland community.



Thirty years made an enormous difference to the project area; by the time of this photograph in 1965 massive roadway projects were complete, including the Capital Beltway, Suitland Parkway and MD 5. Agricultural uses are gone, replaced by subdivisions and gravel pits providing the necessary materials for building all the new roads. Perhaps most interesting is the view of the new Hillcrest Heights neighborhood where the large forest had stood in 1938. The U.S. Census Bureau buildings can be seen at Suitland, and gravel pits north of the Beltway where the Branch Avenue station is now located.

Figure 3 Historic Aerial Photographs

Introduction

- The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.
- United States General Services Administration.
- Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- Coalition for Smarter Growth.
- Urban Land Institute of Washington.
- Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

The Steering Committee met at strategic decision points over an 18 month period for its reaction to recommendations and approaches for meeting project objectives and to define the role that individual member organizations might play in plan implementation.

Stakeholder Interviews: key community stakeholders and developers in the project area and greater Washington region were interviewed in a series of one-on-one meetings for their candid input on opportunities and challenges facing the corridor. Some of the community organizations represented included the Auth Village Civic Association, Branch Avenue In Bloom, Fleischman's Village Civic Association, Hillcrest-Marlow Heights Civic Association, Hunter Memorial Church, Town Center at Camp Springs HOA, and Suitland Civic Association.

Community Meetings: a series of public meetings and workshops were held throughout the process to engage stakeholders. These meetings provided a forum to educate stakeholders on the goals of the project, provide examples of and discuss successful TOD and identify concerns, and solicit input on issues and feedback on ideas and recommendations for the project and individual station areas. Meeting planners used electronic polling to measure support for key recommendations from diverse stakeholders. This approach provided immediate feedback including distinct preferences among diverse stakeholders as summarized by select demographic information about participants.

Southern Green Line Coalition: a coalition of community organizations and interested stakeholders formed during the development of the plan to advocate for implementation of the

approved sector plan as well as serve as a voice for the project area.

Plan Organization

This sector plan is organized into eight chapters as described below.

- Chapter 1: includes the foregoing introduction and discussion of the plan purpose and impetus, project area boundary, planning context including relationship to recent plans, policies and statewide planning initiatives, and supplemental documents. This chapter also includes a discussion of community participation in the development of the section plan and ends with a review of the history of the project area.
- Chapter 2: summarizes existing conditions and key findings for the project area as a whole and identifies project goals and the vision for the area including specific policy recommendations pertaining to land use and zoning, transportation and other public facility improvements, and station area typologies.
- Chapters 3 – 6: provide an existing condition summary for each station area, respectively, and describes in detail station area typology and vision, the development program for each station along with concepts and illustrative plans and key land use, zoning, and transportation recommendations.
- Chapter 7: presents the implementation plan that summarizes key policy recommendations, strategies, and priorities and identifies agency roles and responsibilities. It summarizes this information within a matrix format for easy reference and use.
- Chapter 8: reviews land use and zoning policies and practices in Prince George's County, and presents the proposed sectional map amendment to implement the vision for the sector plan areas. It identifies all rezoning proposals and justifications and it describes proposed zoning for new land use categories.

Project Area History and Development

Prior to World War II, southern Prince George's County was primarily an agricultural area with tobacco cultivation a major cash crop. In the project area, small truck farms operated on level ground, where it could be found, growing a variety of produce for the city of Washington, D.C., only a few miles away. Rapid change to the landscape began during the war when the War Department moved quickly to construct the Fighter Command Station Access Parkway, later renamed Suitland Parkway in 1944 from Bolling Air Force Base to the Camp Springs Military Reservation, later renamed Andrews Air Force Base (now Joint Base Andrews). This road also made the connection to the new federal campus at Suitland where the U.S. Census Bureau constructed a headquarters.

Following World War II, the agrarian landscape gave way to rapid suburban development, supported by large roadway projects such as MD 5 and the Capital Beltway. While much of the suburbanization occurred in a piecemeal fashion, one subdivision at a time, the large master planned community of Hillcrest Heights was planned and constructed in the 1950s and 1960s. This community was organized around access by private automobile with a separation of land uses according to the plan, which included large swaths of residential in the form of ranch homes and duplexes and a commercial shopping center area at the intersection of Branch Avenue and Iverson Street. Iverson Mall was the anchor of the commercial center, opening as the first indoor shopping mall in the Washington metropolitan area in 1967.

This new style of commercial development, at a key intersection, along a new modern highway stood in contrast to the smaller retailing that fronts on Silver Hill Road up into Suitland. Yet, while Suitland was a much older rural hamlet, the new strip center drive up shopping also came to dominate just outside the federal center.

Beginning in 1941, the construction of the Suitland Federal Center at the intersection of Silver Hill and Suitland Roads brought a large office development to the project area, a land use that was entirely new. The relocation of the Census Bureau out of downtown Washington, D.C., established a major federal presence in this part of the county on 437 acres of land bought by the government on both sides of the new parkway along the north side of Silver Hill

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Historic photo of Suitland showing the original U.S. Census Bureau buildings and the Suitland Manor apartment buildings. These buildings are now gone.

Road. The area to the west of the parkway was transferred to the Smithsonian Institution beginning in 1951, with additional land transferred to the Silver Hill Volunteer Fire Department and the State Roads Commission for widening Silver Hill Road in 1964. The Smithsonian developed their land for storage and office facilities. This is separate from the Suitland Federal Campus that occupies 226 acres of land to the east of the parkway up to Suitland Road. Over the decades the federal campus has also developed to include a variety of federal agencies, with facilities for Naval Maritime Intelligence, the National Archives, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). A new NOAA Satellite Operations Facility Building was completed in 2005. The Census Bureau's website explains the deteriorating relationship with the surrounding community by saying that: "Through the mid-1980s,

the grounds of the Suitland Federal Center were open to the public and the entrances to FOB 3 were left unguarded. However, in the late 1980s, car thefts in the parking lot and petty theft in various offices brought about the need for enhanced security.... A chain link fence, topped with barbed wire, was erected around the perimeter of the complex, but was replaced in January 2000 by the current, more neighborhood-friendly, black wrought-iron fence."

The design and site layout of a new 1.5 million square foot U.S. Census Bureau, which opened in 2007, also takes a defensive stance to the surrounding community. But a master plan for the campus developed in 2002 by the General Services Administration takes a different approach to future development with a grid of streets and blocks along Suitland Road that would re-engage the campus with the Suitland community.

The Auth Road area in Camp Springs has experienced a series of different land uses in the post-war era, from truck farms to gravel pits, to planned industrial uses. Gravel pits were scattered around the whole project area, most likely in response to the large-scale road building which requires a gravel base. The pits in the Auth Road area were later filled and a wide horseshoe shaped road constructed to allow for truck traffic looping off MD 5 in what was planned to be a light industrial district. But, as the decades of lawsuits over the final alignment of the Green Line settled on a route roughly following Suitland Parkway, serving the federal center, and a terminus station was constructed between the horseshoe of Auth Way and Auth Road, the planned industrial use never materialized. Instead real estate developers sought to construct large multifamily condominium and apartment buildings within walking distance of the Metro station. The new century and the new rail line brought the era of transit-oriented development to the southern Prince George's County. The real estate market crash of 2007 stalled further construction, providing a period of time for the Southern Green Line Station Area Plan process to consider the best way to maximize the value of the new Metro line.

Project Area

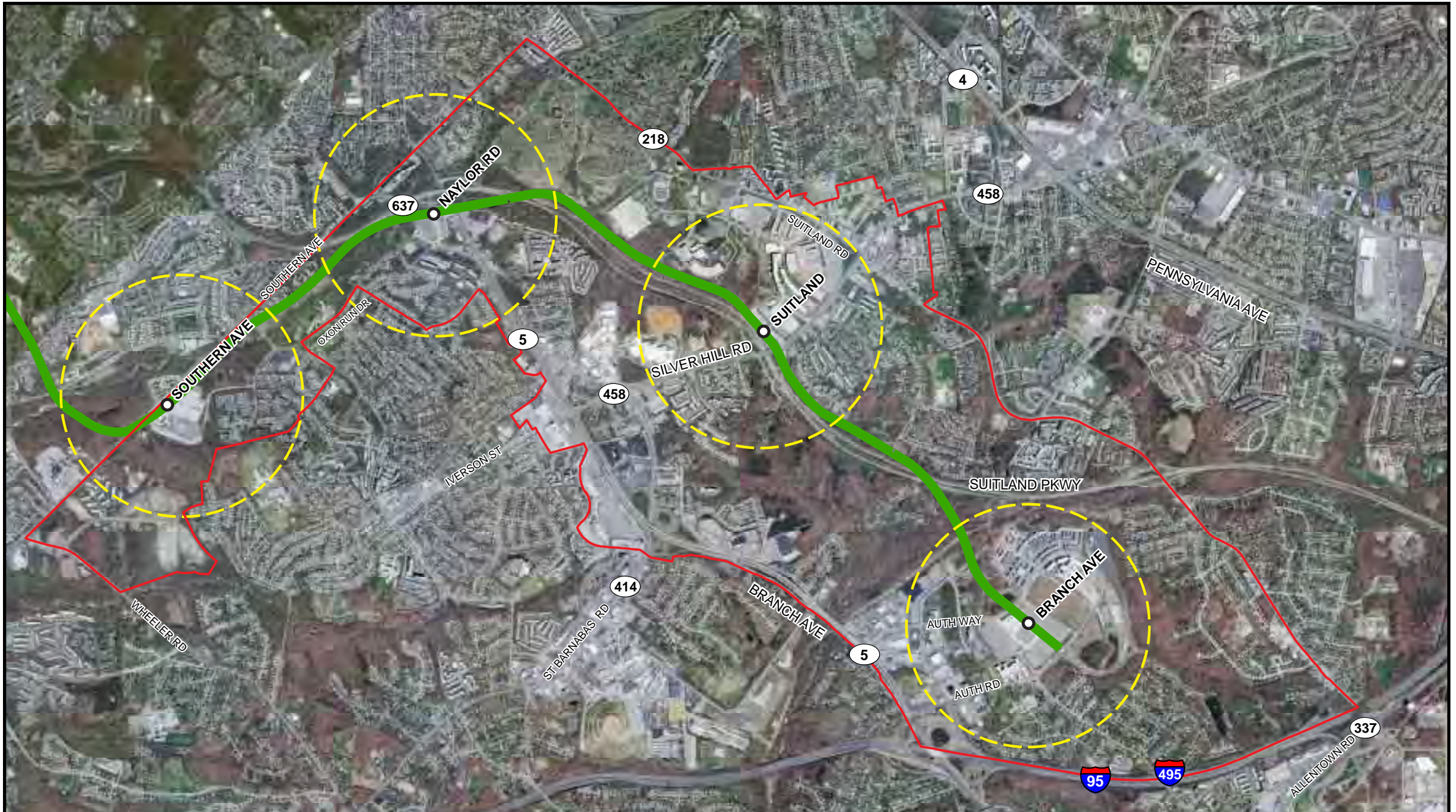


Figure 4 Aerial Photograph from 2009 with Project Boundary and Metro Stations with Half-Mile Walk Circles