



Gaithersburg
A Character Counts! City

City of Gaithersburg

LAND USE PLAN

A Master Plan Element

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2009
MASTER PLAN

CITY OF GAITHERSBURG 2009 MASTER PLAN

LAND USE ELEMENT

Planning Commission Approval: 11/16/2011, Resolution PCR-1-11
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CITY OF GAITHERSBURG 2009 MASTER PLAN

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1. Purpose and Need

The City of Gaithersburg is empowered, under Article 66B, *Land Use*, of the Annotated Code of Maryland, to exercise autonomous planning and zoning powers. Article 66B establishes the requirements of a municipal comprehensive master plan and its required elements, and the procedures for approving said master plan. Codified in Article 66B, Section 3.05(a)(4)(ii) requires the development of a Land Use Element as part of the City's comprehensive master plan. This element describes and makes recommendations for general land use and zoning categories for identified properties. The recommended land uses and zoning proposed are intended to be the most appropriate and desirable for both public and private land while being consistent with the State and City visions laid forth in the City's *2009 Process and Overview Element*.

A Master Plan Element, this plan is an update of the *2003 City of Gaithersburg Land Use Plan*. The 2009 Land Use Element will serve as an informational and policy document to the Mayor and City Council, the Planning Commission, other boards and committees of the City, and the residents of Gaithersburg. This element will also identify the needs of, and provide recommendations for those issues related to the proposed land uses and zoning, such as transportation or policy changes. Ultimately, this Element will support the visions, policies, and principles of the City, as well as the other Master Plan Elements.

2. Introduction

Under Maryland's "Smart, Green & Growing legislative package," adopted in 2009, the City of Gaithersburg is required to incorporate twelve specific visions that will direct the goals of the Master Plan and help develop and implement a sound growth and development policy. The State's visions are actualized through the City of Gaithersburg's commitment to fulfill each vision and will be achieved in the Master Plan through the incorporation of specific guiding strategies based upon the City's adopted Strategic Directions.

As stated in the adopted *Municipal Growth Element*, the overall vision for future City growth will retain the goal of providing for diversity in demographics, economics, and housing types, while addressing the need to increase employment opportunities in this ever-growing region. Future development in the City will be centered around infill redevelopment opportunities and through annexations.

The long-term developments within the City will comply with the City's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, Environmental Standards, Green Building Design Criteria, and Storm Water Management regulations. This growth and development will occur in such a way that assures the protection of the City's historic, architectural and cultural resources as defined in the adopted *Historic Preservation Element*.

Recommendations for 2009 Map Designations are based upon the conditions, projections and assumptions about what future populations and conditions would be and reflect the goals and objectives of the City at that time. Unless identified under this current element for a new

recommendation, the recommendations for an area made under previous adopted master plans carry forward. The Land Use Plan is intended to be an ongoing or "living document" where the plan is continually expanded and changed to respond to updated demographic projections, market conditions, housing assumptions and to changes in the goals and objectives of the City.

2.1 Maryland State Planning Visions

State Vision 1:

Quality of life and sustainability: 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

State Vision 2:

Public participation: citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are sensitive to their responsibilities in achieving community goals

State Vision 3:

Growth areas: growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to these centers, or strategically selected new centers

State Vision 4:

Community design: compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character, located near available or planned transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources and preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas, and historical, cultural, and archeological resources

State Vision 5:

Infrastructure: growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sustainable manner.

State Vision 6:

Transportation: 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

State Vision 7:

Housing: a range of housing densities, types, and sizes provides residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes

State Vision 8:

Economic development: 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;

State Vision 9:

Environmental protection: 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

State Vision 10:

Resource conservation: waterways, forests, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems, and scenic areas are conserved

State Vision 11:

Stewardship: government, business entities, and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection

State Vision 12:

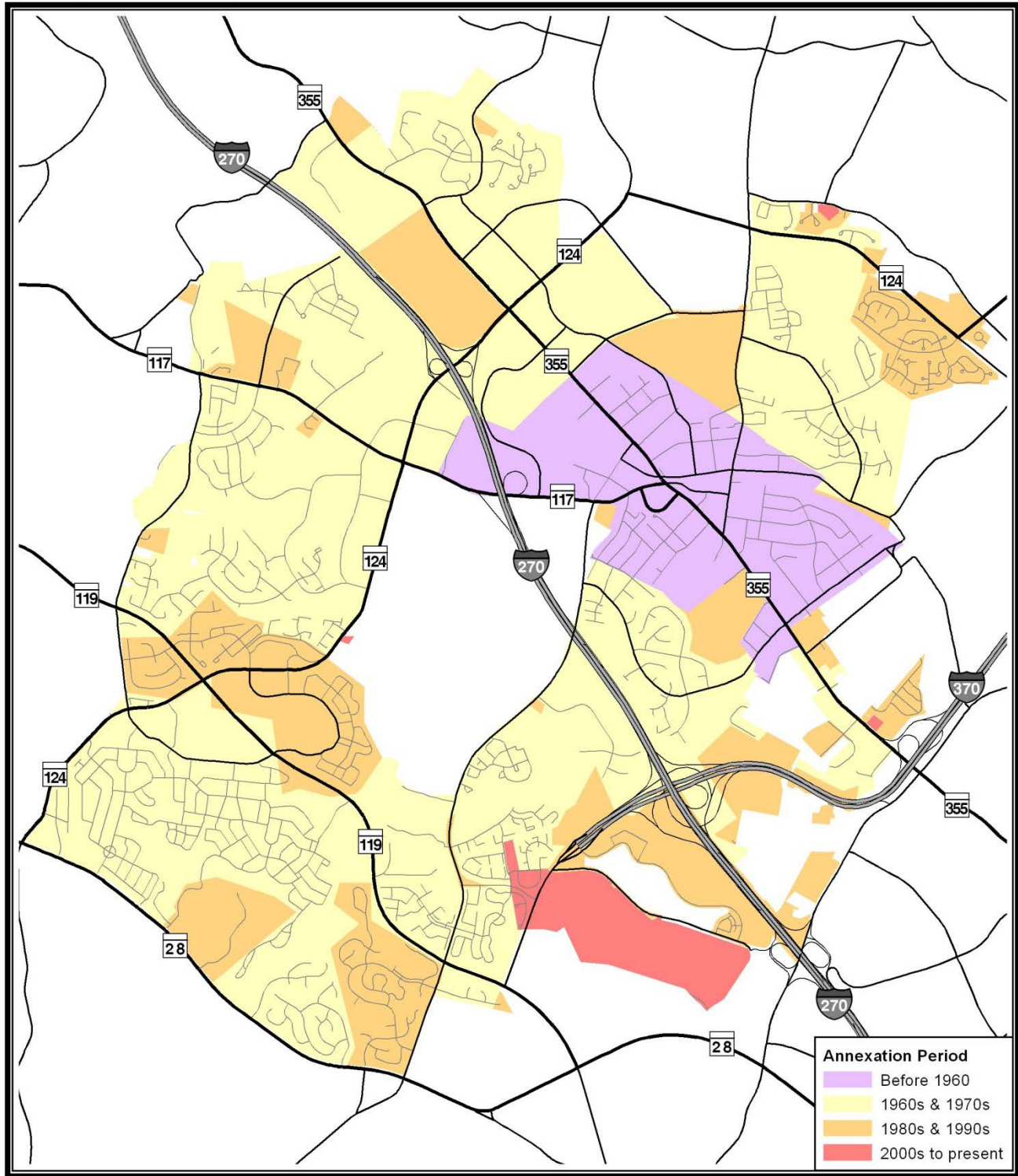
Implementation: strategies, policies, programs, and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, state, and interstate levels to achieve these visions

2.2 Fiscal Year 2012 City Strategic Directions

1. Ensure that all planning and development considers and responds to the City's environmental, transportation, economic, social, and civic needs. **(Planning)**
2. Improve ease of travel in Gaithersburg by implementing traffic and transportation planning and management strategies that address safety, structure and function of streets, transit, bikeways, and sidewalks. **(Transportation)**
3. Actively pursue economic and business development programs and strategies. **(Economic)**
4. Maintain and enhance priority City services. **(Services)**
5. Implement programs that improve current housing stock and pursue development and redevelopment opportunities that provide an appropriate mix of housing types in inclusive communities. **(Housing)**
6. Maintain Support of Neighborhood Community Public Safety Programs. **(Safety)**

7. Provide quality parks, diverse cultural, artistic, and recreational opportunities for all ages and interests. **(Parks)**
8. Meet the environmental, social and economic needs of the City without compromising future generations' ability to meet these same needs. **(Environment)**
9. Ensure effective and consistent communication activities and implement programs that promote and enhance citizen involvement. **(Communication)**
10. Maintain and improve the City's existing infrastructure and invest in new facilities, roadways, and real property assets. **(Infrastructure)**
11. Identify needs and collaborate on service provision to strengthen and enhance the quality of life for all City residents. **(Quality of Life)**

Map 1: Gaithersburg Annexations by Decade



3. Land Use and Zoning Categories and Maps

3.1 Land Use Categories

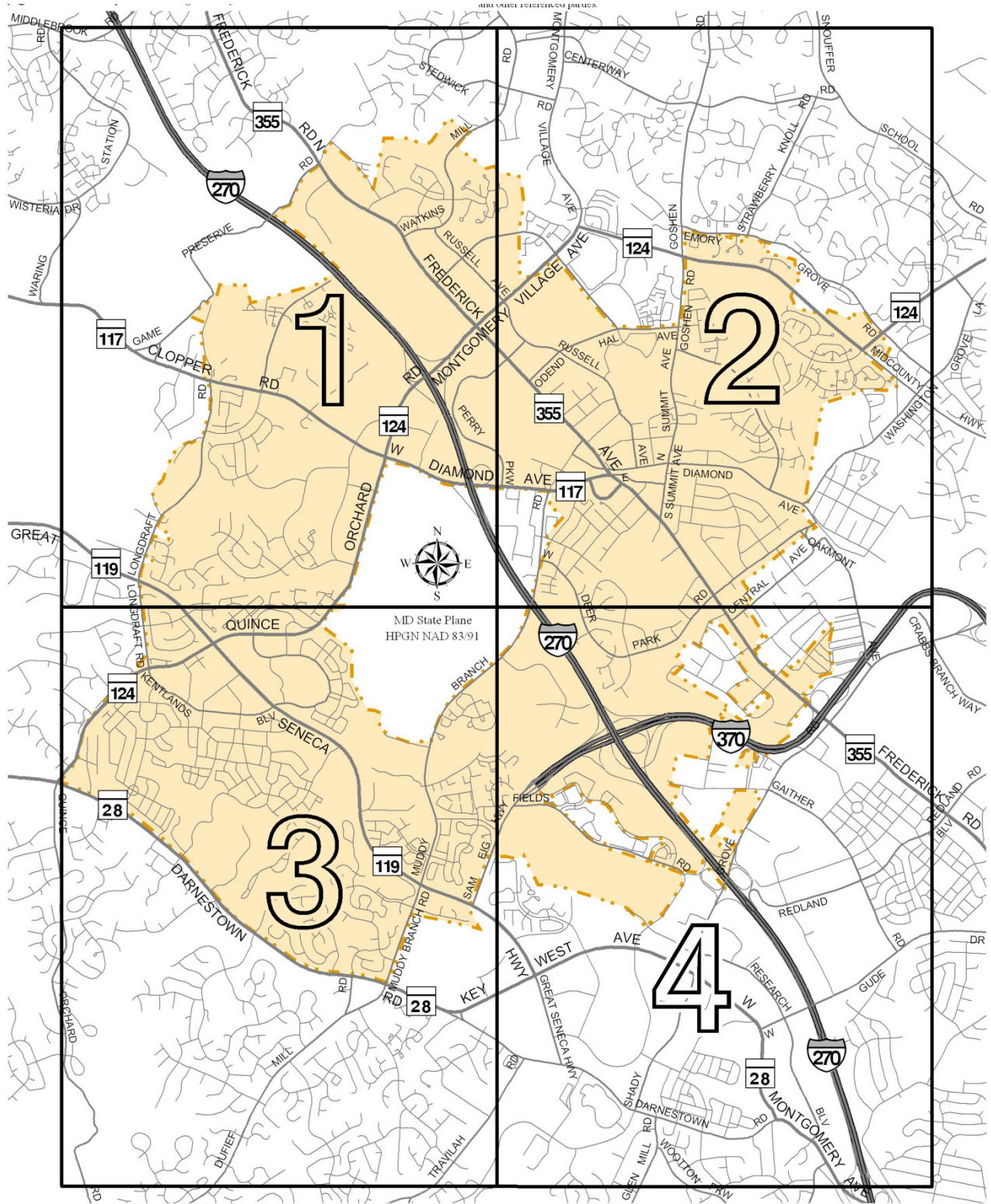
This Gaithersburg Master Plan Land Use section contains a variety of land use designations to describe and establish current and intended land uses in different areas of the City. The land use designations contained in this Master Plan are described below.

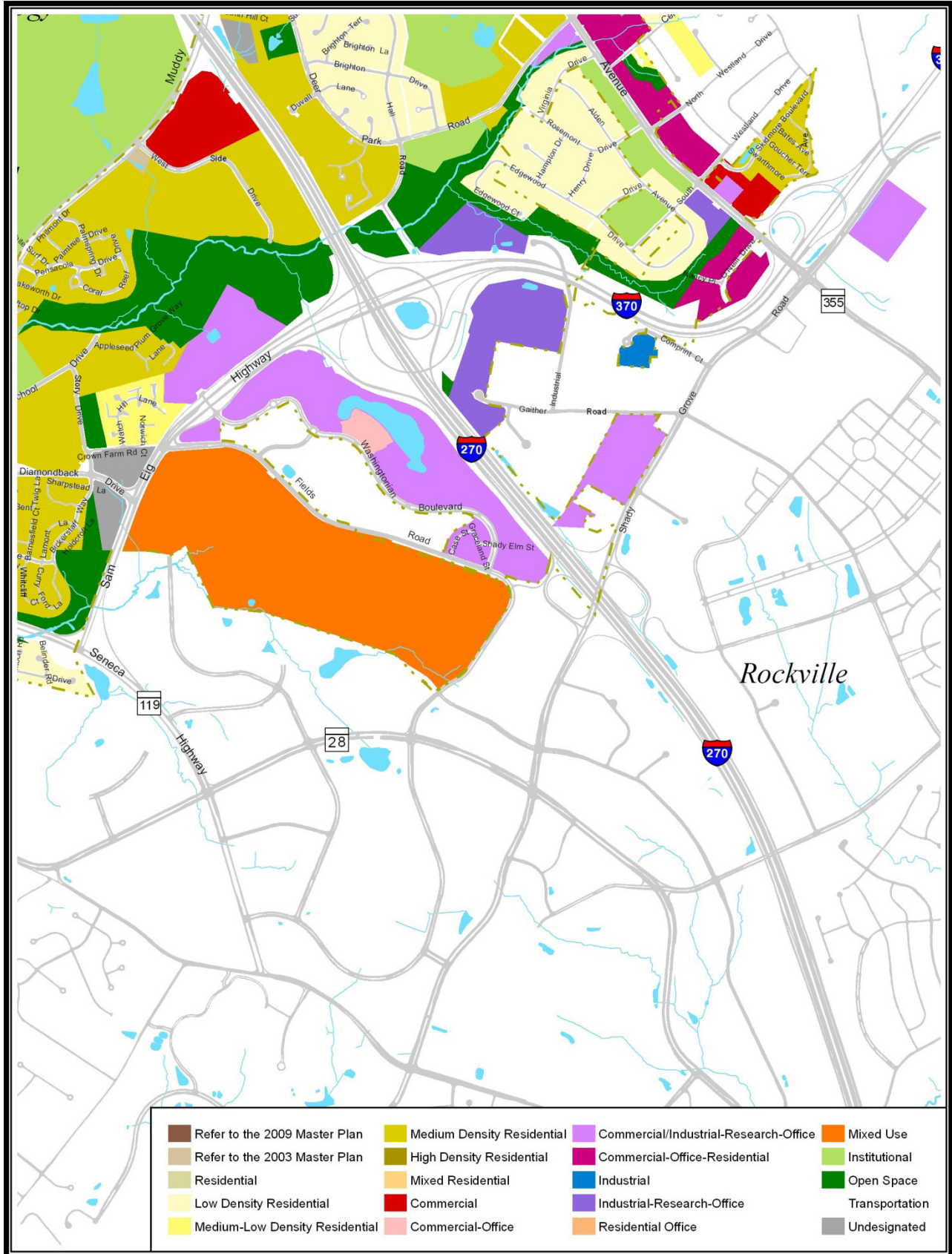
Land Use Categories

- Low Density Residential
- Medium-Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Residential
- Residential Office
- Mixed Use
- Commercial-Office-Residential
- Commercial
- Commercial-Office
- Commercial/Industrial-Research-Office
- Industrial
- Industrial-Research-Office
- Institutional
- Open Space
- Transportation

Please note that the following City-wide maps reflect the land use recommendations of the most recent master plan, site development plan, or annexation agreement. The maps may contain “undesigned” land use for properties that have been recently annexed into the City of Gaithersburg and do not have an adopted land use designation. Additionally, the maps will indicate “refer to master plan” for those properties that have more than one recommended land use designation (scenarios) in the Master Plan.

Map 2: 2009 Master Plan Land Use Map

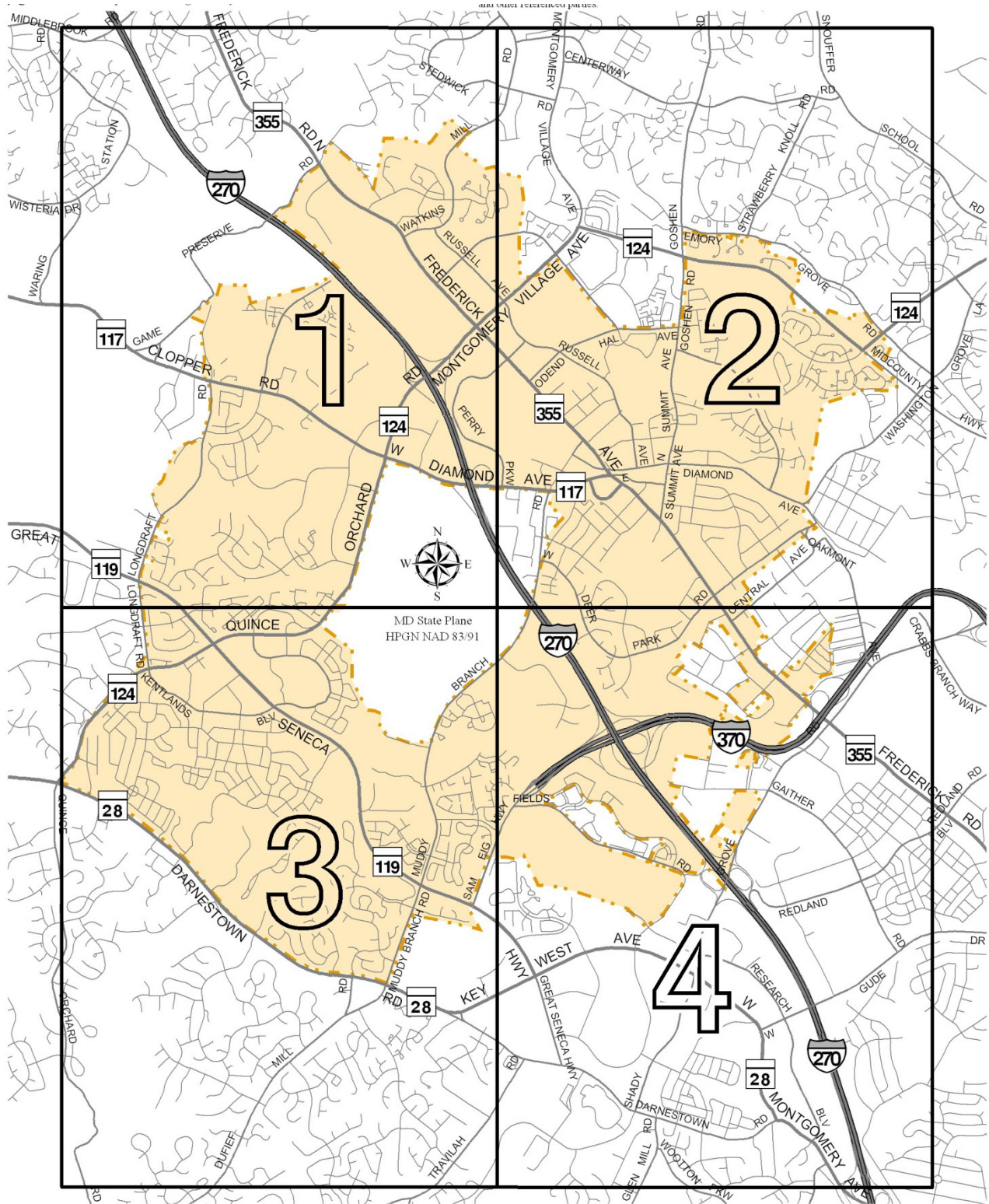




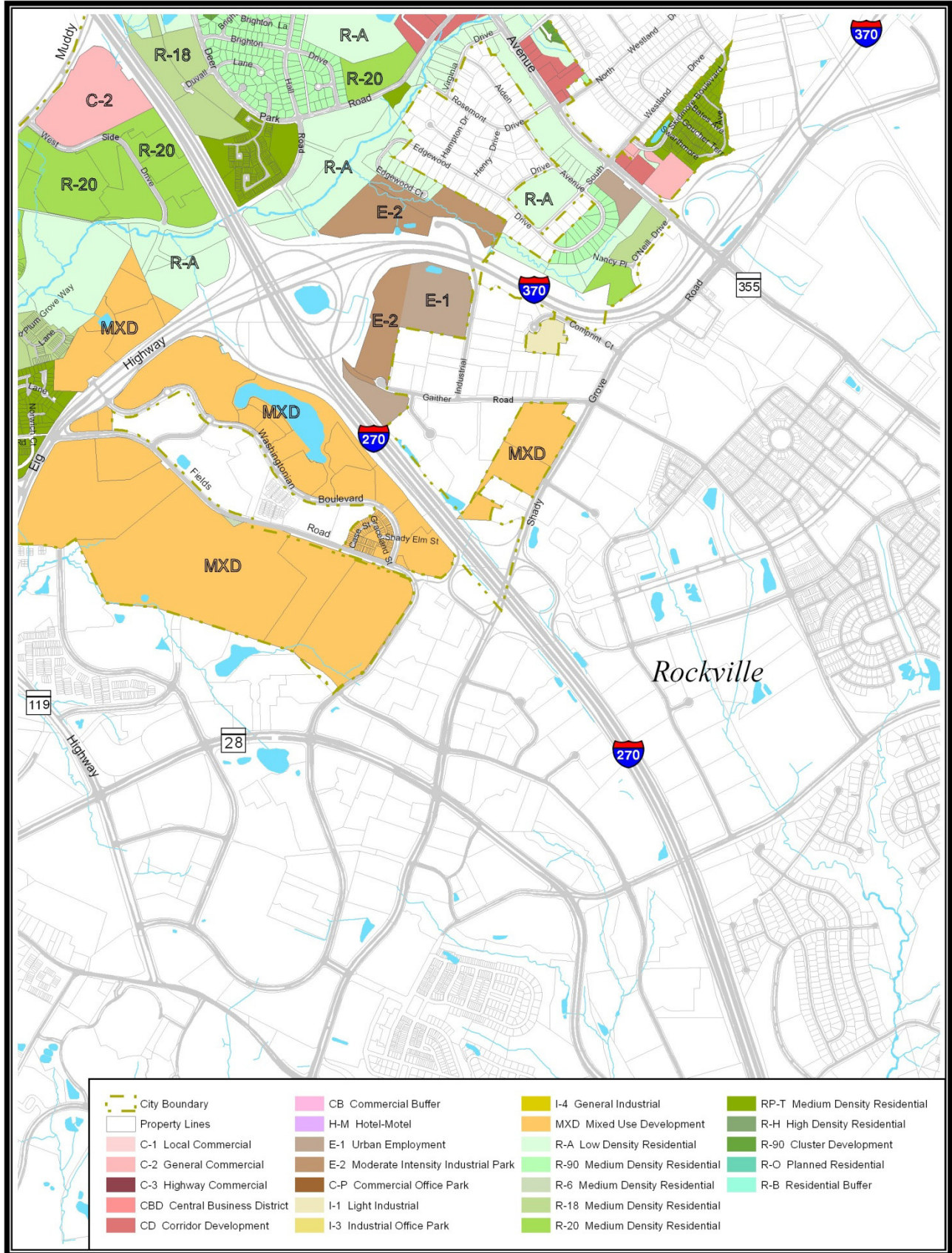
3.2 Zoning Categories

R-A	Low Density Residential (20,000 sq.ft. minimum land per unit)
R-B	Residential Buffer
R-90	Medium Density Residential (3 units /acre maximum)
R-90C	Cluster Development (3.5 units/acre maximum)
R-6	Medium Density Residential (6 units/acre maximum)
RP-T	Medium Density Residential (9 units/acre maximum)
R-18	Medium Density Residential (18 units/acre maximum)
R-20	Medium Density Residential (21.5 units/acre maximum)
R-H	High Density Residential (54 units/acre maximum)
MXD	Mixed Use Development
R-O	Planned Residential
CBD	Central Business District
CD	Corridor Development
C-B	Commercial Buffer
C-1	Local Commercial
C-2	General Commercial
C-3	Highway Commercial
C-P	Commercial Office Park
H-M	Hotel-Motel
E-1	Urban Employment
E-2	Moderate Intensity Industrial Park
I-1	Light Industrial
I-3	Industrial and Office Park
I-4	General Industrial

Map 3: Existing Zoning Map¹



¹ The zoning maps depicted on the following pages are effective as of March 24, 2011

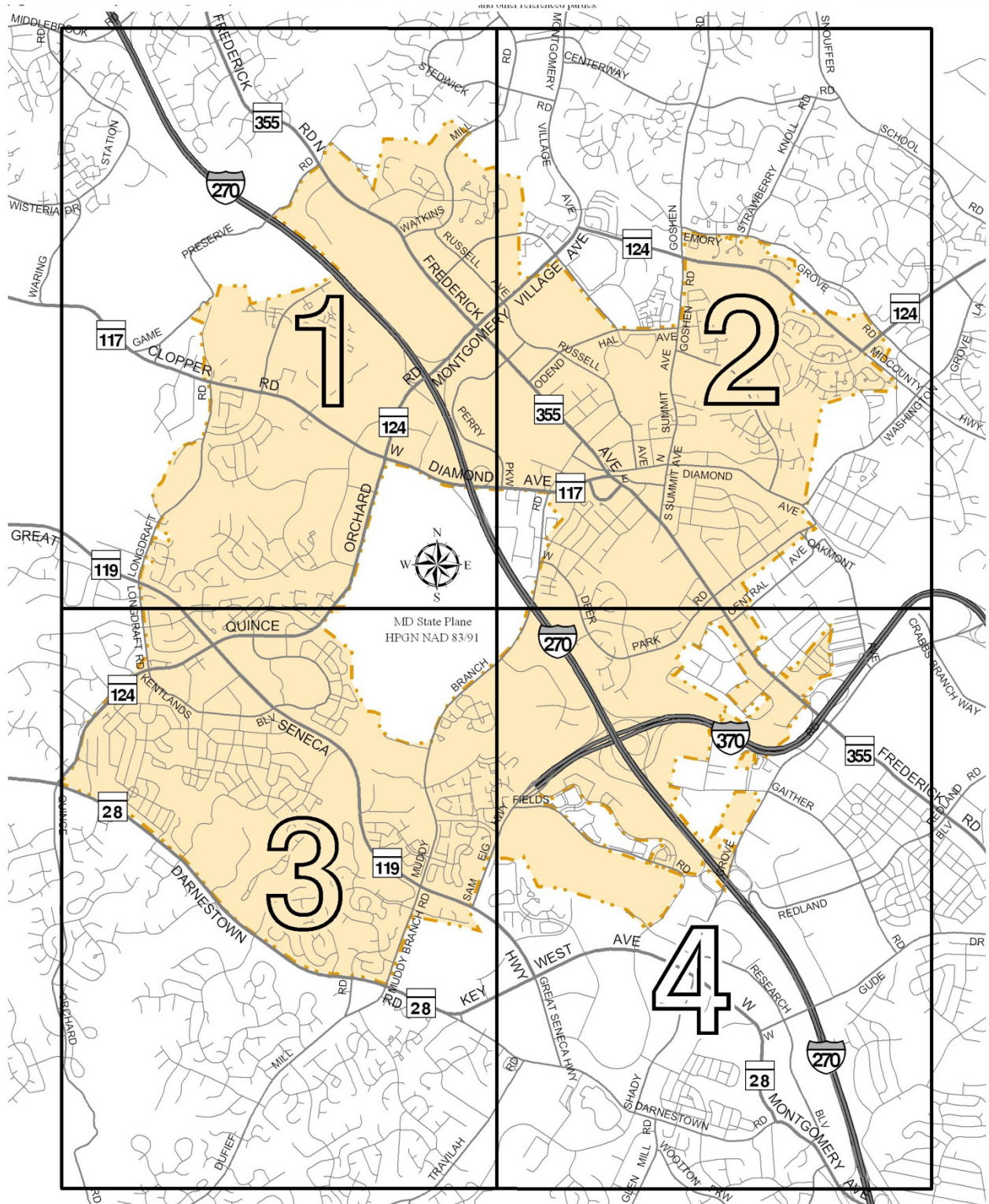


4. Map Designations

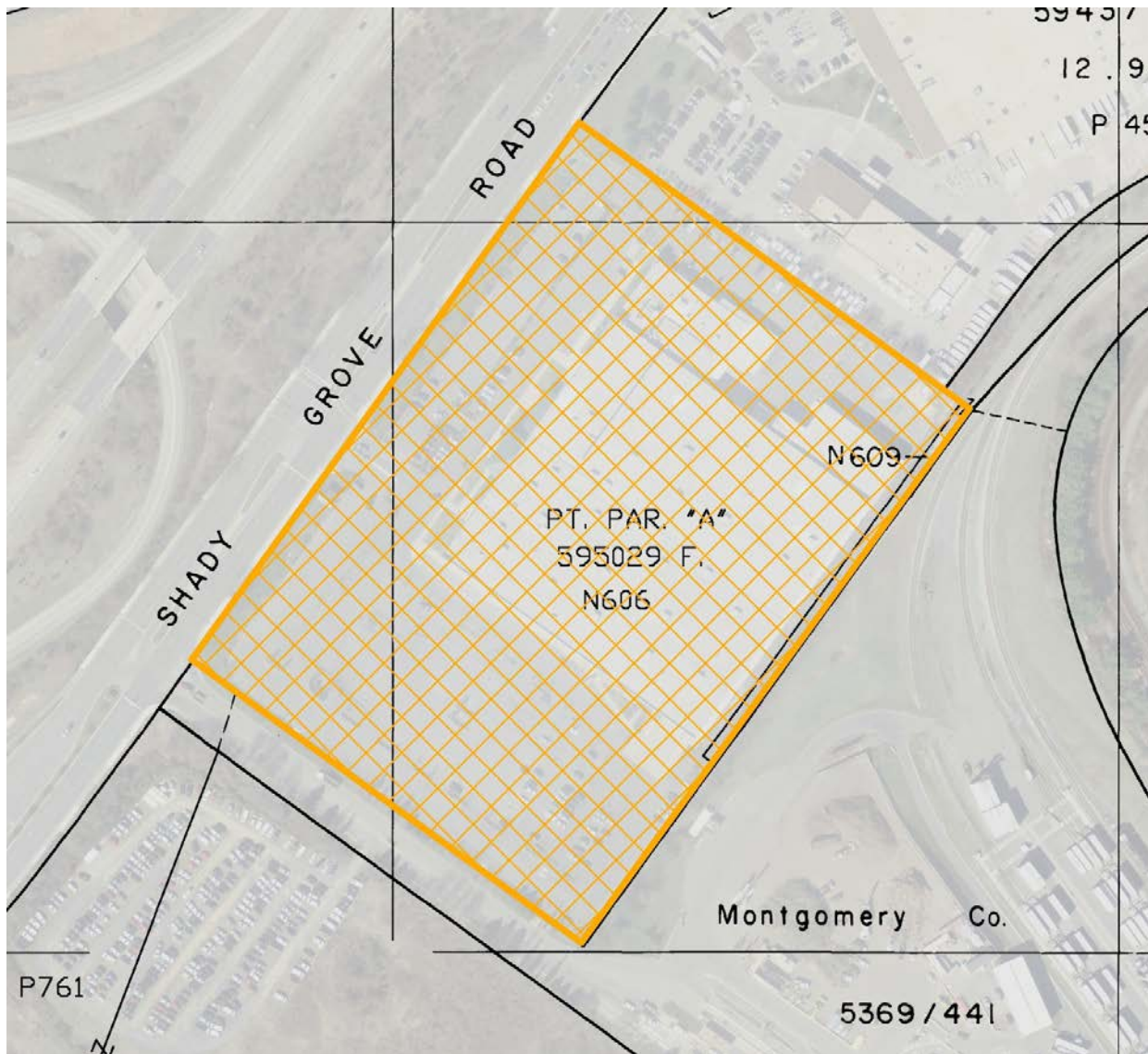
Table 1: Summary of Map Designations

Map Designation	Acreage	Number of Parcels	Description
1	11.4	5	Rosenthal Auto Dealership
2	24.7	5	Fitzgerald, King, & Sheehy Auto Dealerships
3	3.4	3	Watkins Mill Road houses
4	8.8	1	Hechinger Property / Great Beginnings
5	2.1	5	Travis Avenue vacant land
6	94.3	7	McGown Property
7	50.7	12	Metropolitan Grove east of Watkins Mill Town Center
8	14.1	9	Criswell / Motel 6 / Senior Center
9	17.3	4	Diamond Square
10	4.6	1	14 Firstfield Rd
11	4.7	2	Diamond Farm Office Condos
12	22.3	2	Quince Orchard Park - Meadows
13	11.7	4	Quince Orchard Park - CCT Station
14	33.4	2	Izaak Walton League
15	23	4	Johnson Property
16	7	2	Potomac Valley Shopping Center - City
17	4.7	3	Potomac Valley Shopping Center - County
18	5.3	1	Potomac Gardens Center
19	7.4	1	GE Technology Park - City Lot
20	9.5	1	Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)
21	178.5	8	Crown Farm
22	17	3	Rosedale & Casey Trust
23	13.8	2	The Great Indoors
24	8.3	2	Walnut Hill Shopping Center
25	4.7	6	Berlin's Addition / Goodwill
26	54.4	9	Londonderry
27	8	1	WSSC Property
28	2.3	2	Lilac Gardens / Summit Hall Apts
29	0.4	1	100 West Diamond Ave
30	4.6	4	Standard Supply / Meem Ave
31	2.6	5	Wilson Property
32	2.6	5	South Summit Ave properties
33	64.8	3	Fairgrounds
34	20	3	Sam's Club & Burlington Property
35	103.3	8	Lakeforest Mall
36	15.7	5	Guardian Realty / Lakeforest Office Park
37	7.5	5	Sports Authority/Odend'hal Ave commercial
38	15.9	15	Whetstone Apts / 400 Block N Frederick

Map 4: Location of Map Designations



23. The Great Indoors, 2 parcels, 13.8 acres



Tax Map GS13 Parcels N606 and N609

This 13.8-acre area contains a large one-story retail building (The Great Indoors) with a large surface parking lot. This property is within the City's Maximum Expansion Limits, is contiguous with the City's current boundary, and could be annexed without creating an enclave. This property is currently surrounded by a mix of warehouse and industrial uses.

Applicable Strategic Direction: Planning, Economic

Land Use and Zoning Actions:

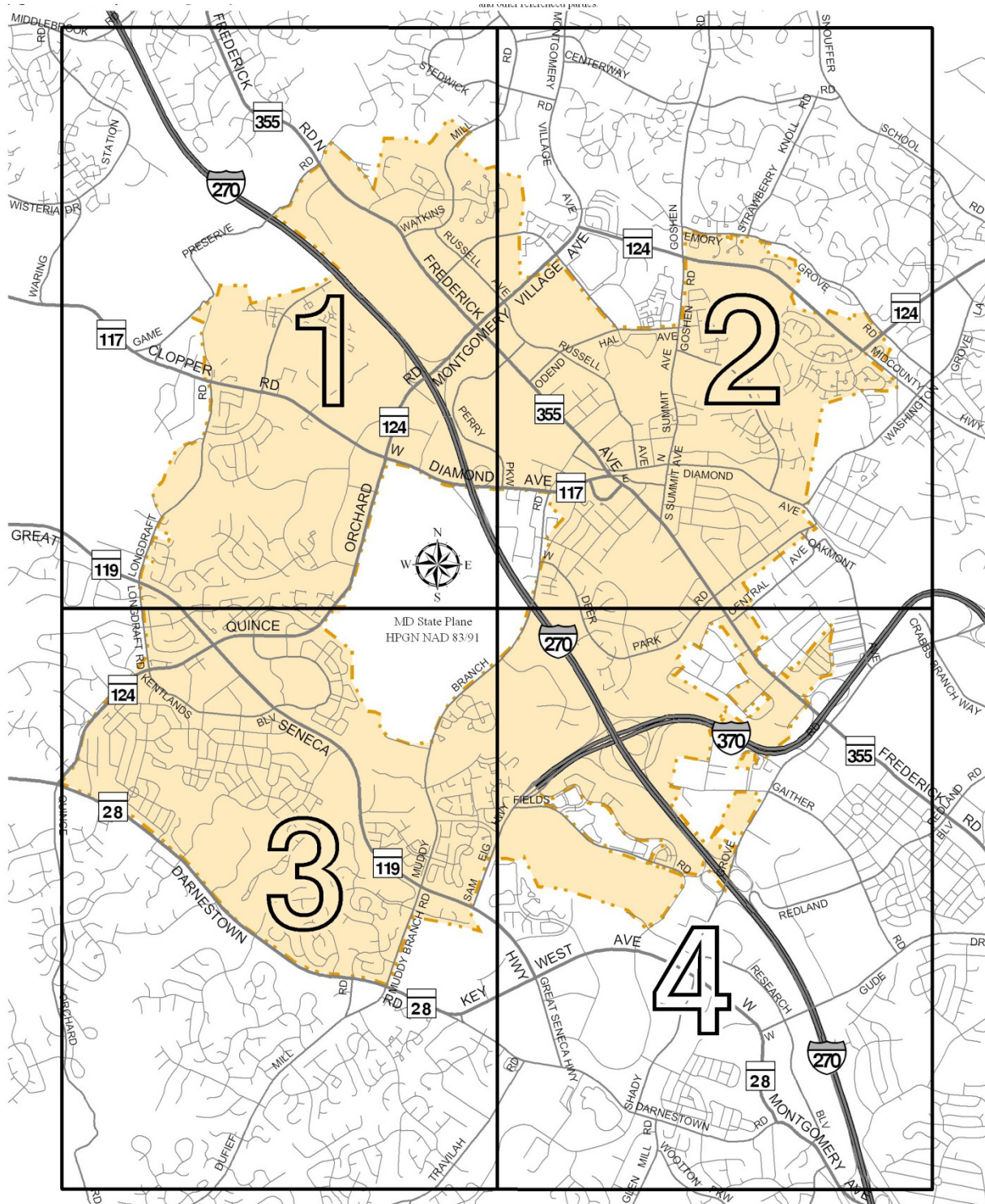
- Adopt Commercial/Industrial-Research-Office land use designation, if annexed
- Recommend CD or MXD Zoning, or a future zone that facilitates sustainable development standards, if annexed

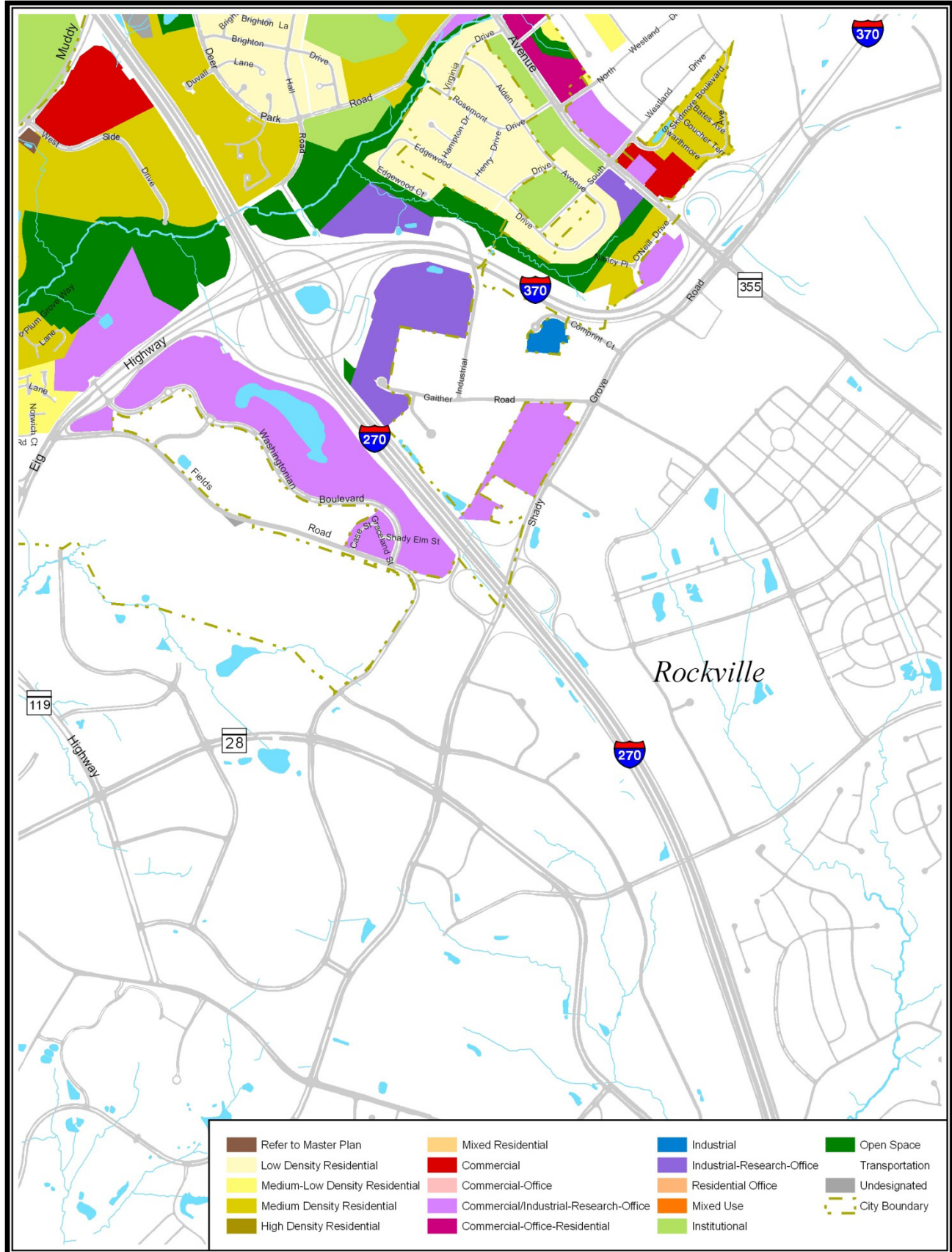
Applicable Strategic Direction: Planning, Economic**Land Use and Zoning Actions:**

- Adopt Commercial-Office-Residential land use designation for the residual Frederick Avenue right-of-way
- Adopt Commercial-Office-Residential land use designation for Parcel B, if annexed
- Recommend CD Zoning for the residual Frederick Avenue right-of-way
- Recommend CD Zoning for Parcel B, if annexed

5. Appendix A: Existing Land Use from 2003 Master Plan

Map 5: 2003 Master Plan Land Use





6. Appendix B: Location of Topics in the Master Plan

Table 2: Subjects That Are Found in The Gaithersburg Master Plan³

Subject/Topic	Master Plan Element		
	Municipal Growth	Land Use	Community Facilities
Land Use Map		X	
Growth Areas Map	X		
Maximum Expansion Limits Map (MEL)	X		
Map Designations / Special Study Areas Map		X	
Acreage Inventory by Land Use / Zoning	X		
Development Capacity Analysis / Zoning	X		
Annexation Policies/Guideline	X		
Existing/Proposed Development in Map Designations / Special Study Areas		X	
Build-out Acreage Inventory by Land Use / Zoning	X		
Acreage Demand for Future Development	X		
Number and Types of Units Projected	X		
General Recommendations / Guidelines for Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Land Use and Development		X	
Design Guidelines / Growth Patterns		X	
Definitions / Description of Individual Land Use Categories and Densities		X	
Historic Growth Patterns	X		
Existing Community Facilities Inventory			X
Total Facilities Needed at Build-Out	X		
Present Shortages / Problem Areas			X
Projected Additional Facilities Needs / Locations			X
Recommended Timeline for Facilities Needed to Implement Plan	X		X
Growth / Development Impact on Facilities Beyond Municipal Boundaries	X		
Goals, Objectives, and Policies	Process and Overview Element		

³ This table is a modified version of Table 1 on Page 6 of the Maryland Department of Planning's "Models and Guidelines Volume 25: Writing the Municipal Growth Element to the Comprehensive Plan"