

## 9.4/WOOLMARKET

### Overview

#### Land Use

Woolmarket's existing land use pattern is generally rural with a mix of single-family residential, mobile homes, undeveloped open space, and local-serving businesses and services. Land use in the northern section of Woolmarket is predominantly agriculture and forestry. Woolmarket Road and Lorraine Road are low-intensity corridors with scattered pockets of commercial and other land uses. There is a significant amount of commercial zoning along these roadways, particularly along Highway 67 north of the I-10 interchange, creating the potential for increased commercial development in the future.

#### Key Issues

- Development pressures are resulting from Woolmarket's inland location; availability of vacant, environmentally unconstrained land compared to the rest of Biloxi<sup>1</sup>; and accessibility to I-10. These pressures are evidenced by recent requests for rezoning of properties zoned Estate Residential or Agricultural to higher-density uses.
- Recent development proposals have been proposed in scattered locations without public sewer or water service or adequate road access. In addition, they have generally lacked buffers or transitional areas from high-density to low-density single-family uses.

#### Transportation

Interstate 10 runs east-west through Woolmarket; an interchange at Highway 67 connects the neighborhood west to Gulfport and beyond and east to Cedar Lake, D'Iberville, and beyond. Old Highway 67 and the recently constructed Highway 15 provide access to the Greater Biloxi Planning Area (see Chapter 11) and inland areas to the north. Other minor arterial and collector roads include Woolmarket Road (providing an east-west connection across Woolmarket), Lorraine Road, Shorecrest Road, and Cedar Lake Road (providing a connection to North Biloxi and the Cedar Lake Regional Activity Center south of the Tchoutacabouffa River).

#### Key Issues

- As described in Chapter 4 (Transportation), the need for an adequate regional network of roadways is critical to the mobility and safety (evacuation during storms) of Biloxi's residents. Key roadway improvement projects in West Biloxi that are in the planning stages include:
  - A new arterial roadway (extension of Highway 67) south across the Tchoutacabouffa River to Popp's Ferry Road;
  - A new I-10 interchange in conjunction with improvements to Shorecrest Road;
  - Extension of Woolmarket Road west across the Biloxi River to O'Neal Road in Gulfport; and
  - Replacement of the Lorraine Road Bridge across the Biloxi River.
- The Coast Transit Authority (CTA) currently does not serve Woolmarket.

<sup>1</sup> Of 6,410 acres of undeveloped or vacant land in Biloxi lacking floodplain, wetlands, and steep slopes, 4,884 acres or 76% are located in Woolmarket. North Biloxi has 919 acres or 14% of this environmentally unconstrained vacant land, West Biloxi has 573 acres or 9%, and East Biloxi has 35 acres or less than 1% (source: WRT analysis of City of Biloxi GIS data, note these figures include undeveloped land classified as agricultural or woodland use).



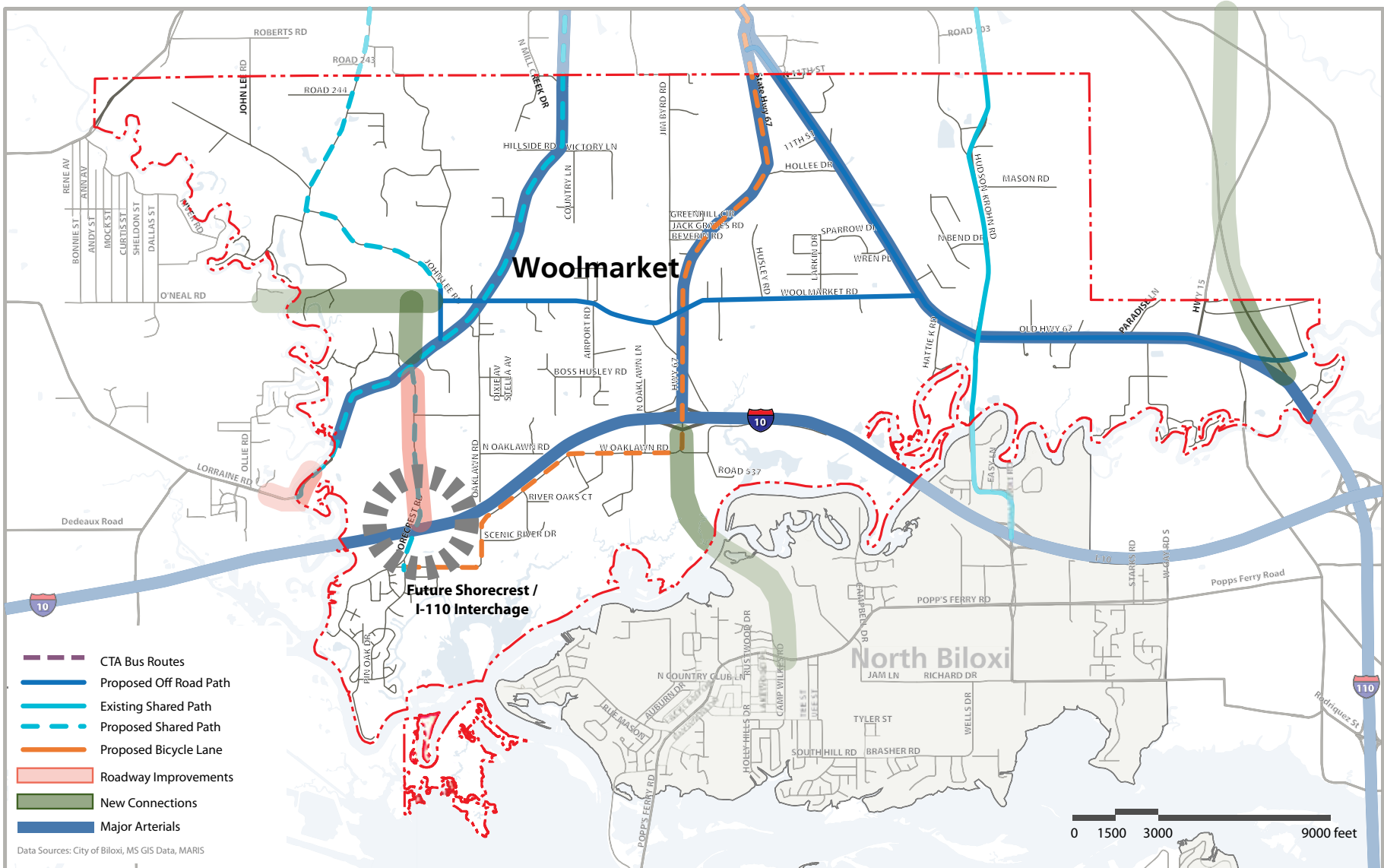


FIGURE 9.4.2/WOOLMARKET EXISTING TRANSPORTATION NETWORK WITH PLANNED/PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

### Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources

Woolmarket's boundaries are partly defined by Tchoutacabouffa and Biloxi Rivers. Significant floodplain and wetland resources occur along these rivers and several tributary streams. In general, elevations are higher and there is more environmentally unconstrained land in Woolmarket north of I-10 than in other areas of Biloxi. However, developed properties south of I-10 along the Tchoutacabouffa Biloxi River suffered significant storm damage during Hurricane Katrina.

#### *Key Issues*

- Continued development in flood hazard areas increases Woolmarket's vulnerability to future storms.
- Private sewage systems in rural areas of Woolmarket can have significant water quality impacts.
- Forested and agricultural lands in northern Woolmarket at the fringe between the City and DeSoto National Forest to the north form a "greenbelt" that provides a natural "edge" to development and helps maintain water quality. As Biloxi grows to the north, these important resources should be maintained by focusing development into compact centers consistent with the Land Use Element (Chapter 3).

### Community Facilities and Services

South of I-10, Woolmarket is served by public sewer and water. Existing development north of I-10 is served by private wells, on-lot sewage systems, and a limited number of neighborhood treatment systems. The City has a program to extend water and sewer lines along Highway 67 into currently unserved areas of Woolmarket over the next five years. In addition, the Harrison County Utility Authority is planning to construct a new wastewater treatment plant to serve the area.

The Biloxi Fire Department operates Fire District 8 in Woolmarket. The Department is planning to develop three new stations, each with a 1.5-mile radius coverage area, as Woolmarket develops. The Woolmarket Library, Woolmarket Elementary School, and the Cedar Lake Christian Academy are located in Woolmarket. The neighborhood lacks public parks and recreational facilities, an issue of concern for residents.

#### *Key Issues*

- The planned water and sewer improvements and new wastewater treatment plant will greatly increase development pressures in the Woolmarket area. Water and sewer line extensions should be planned to support compact, mixed-use centers consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and to discourage sprawling development patterns.
- Woolmarket lacks a full complement of community facilities. There is an opportunity to provide parks, trails, and other facilities incorporated into a pattern of mixed-use centers and neighborhoods as the area develops.

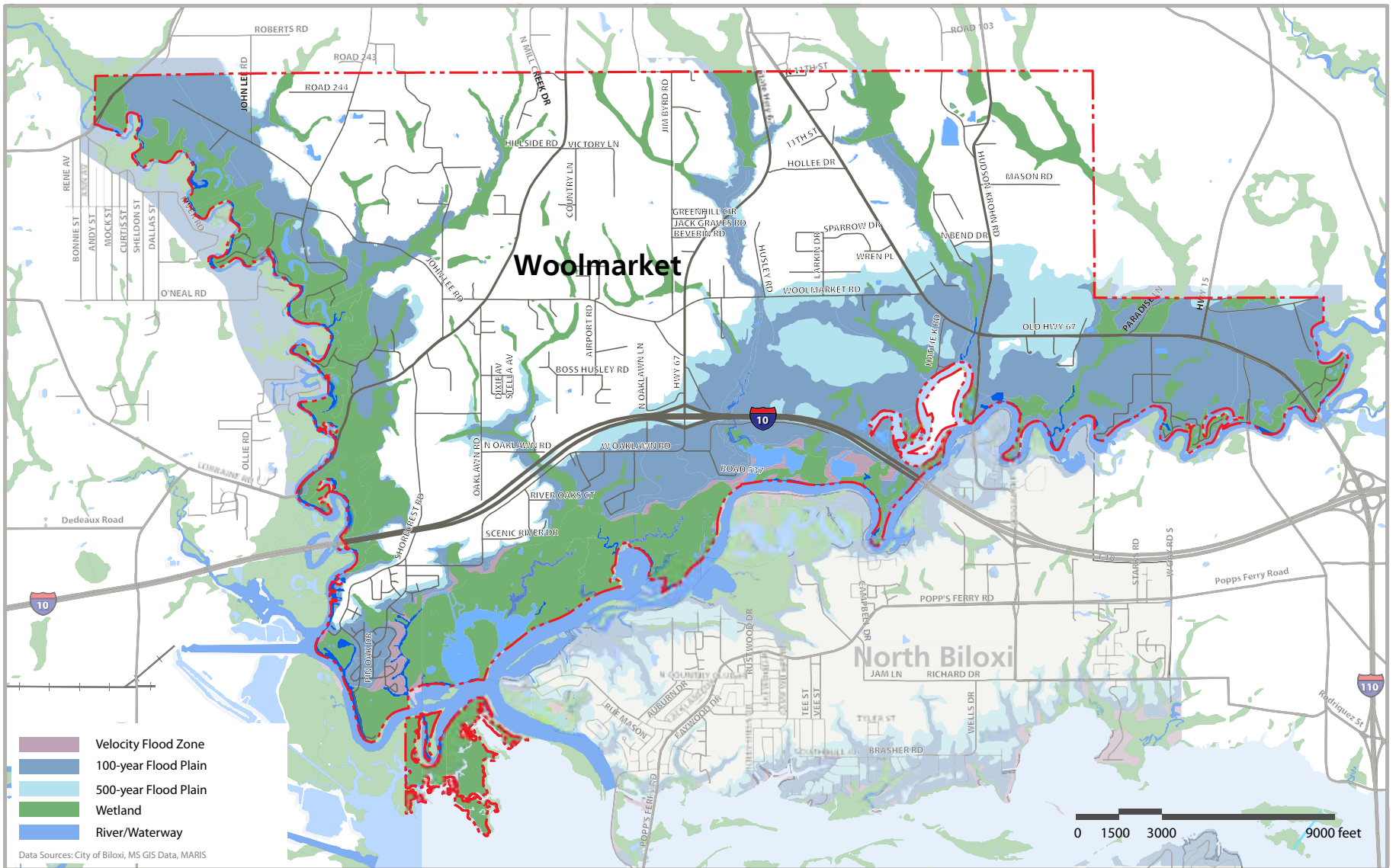


FIGURE 9.4.3/WOOLMARKET NATURAL, HISTORIC, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

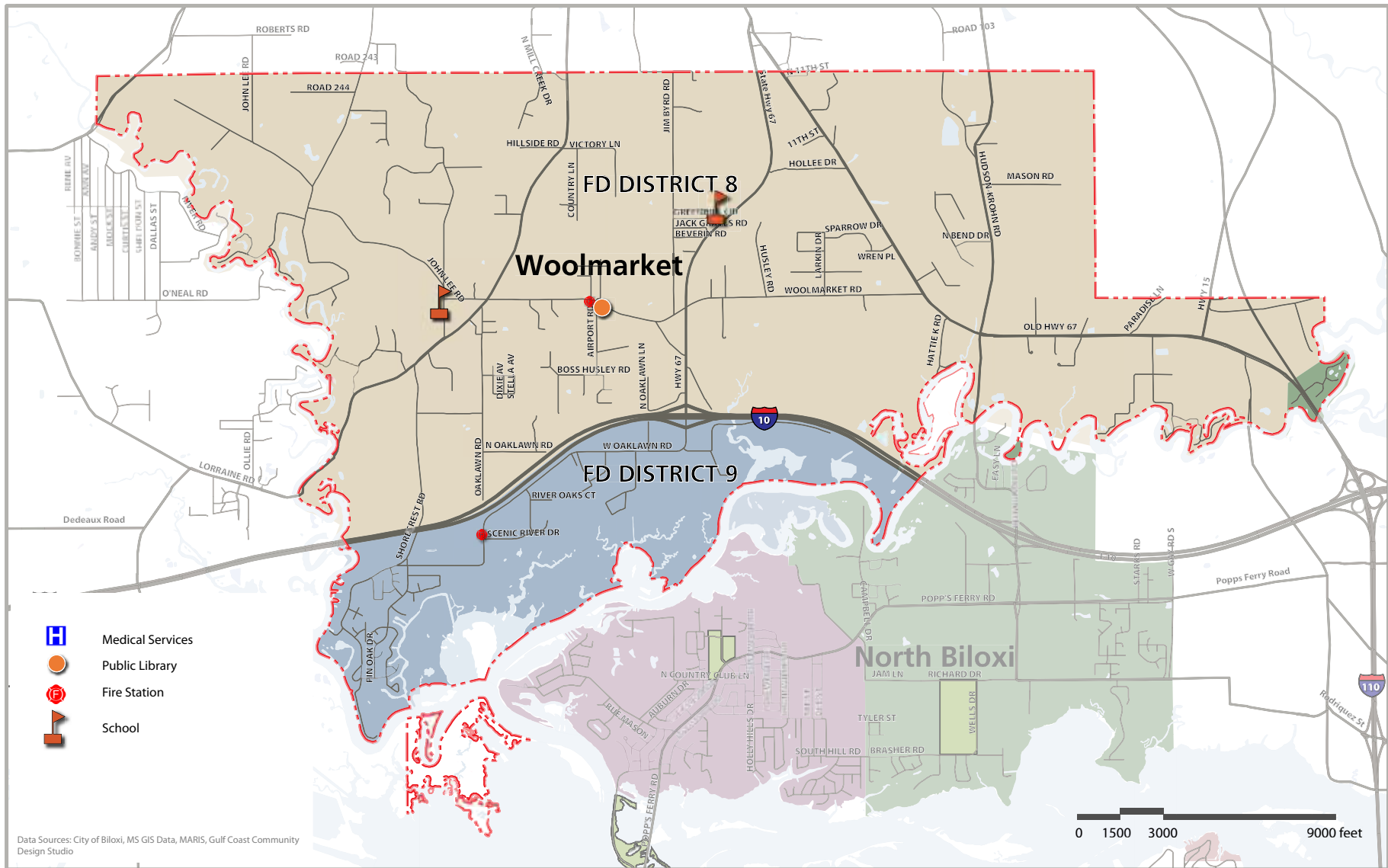


FIGURE 9.4.4/WOOLMARKET COMMUNITY FACILITIES